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MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS™

FREEDOM CITY

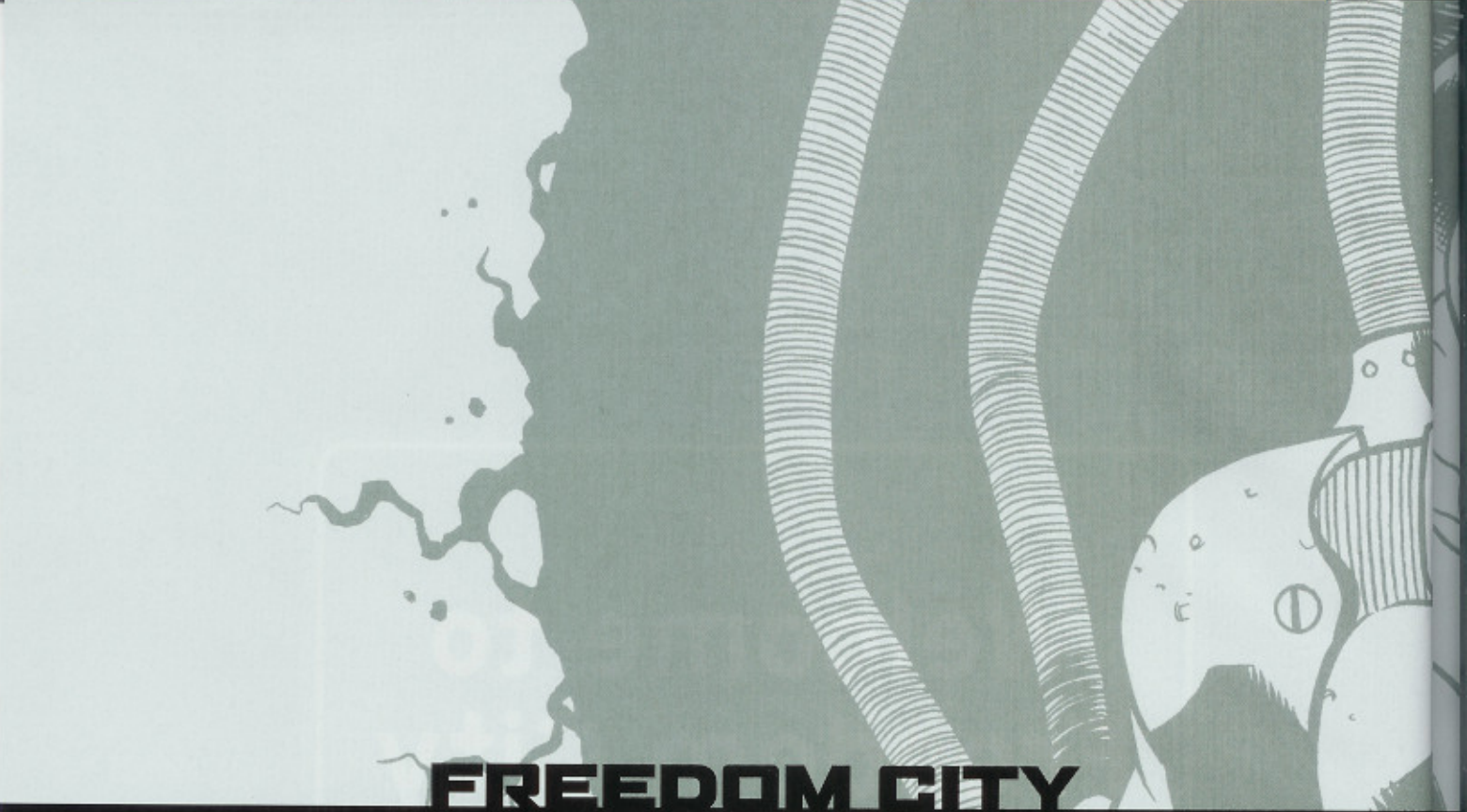


CAMPAIGN SETTING



**Welcome to
Freedom City**

NEXT THREE EXITS



FREEDOM CITY

A GREEN RONIN PRODUCTION
DIRECTED BY SUPER UNICORN

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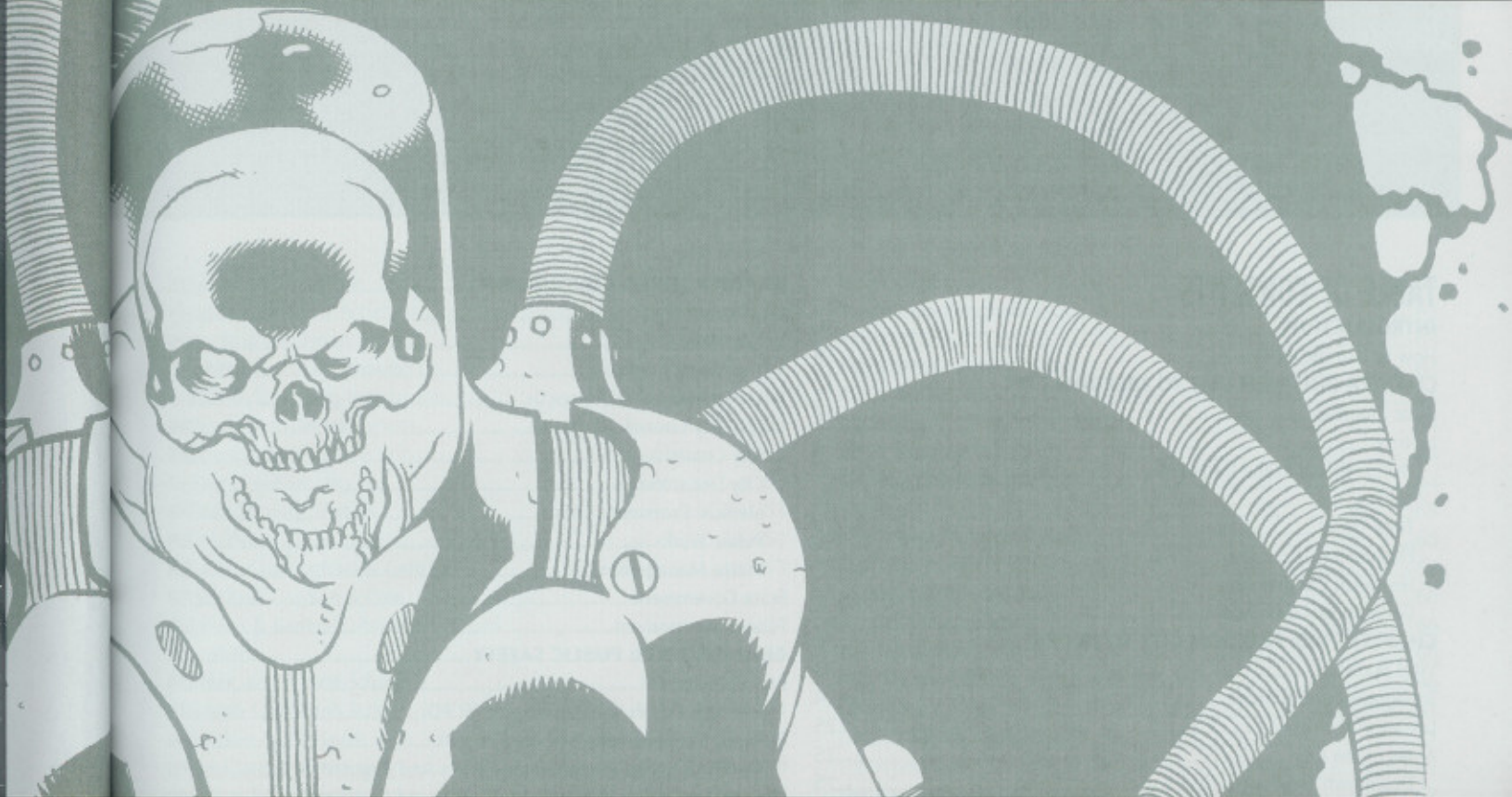
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Photo courtesy Mrs. Beatrice Gormley

"BEHOLD THE CENTURION! CAESAR OF 1939!"

Those words, crafted by sixteen-year-old publishing assistant Mitch Gormley, ushered in the age of heroes. Before the seminal *Amazing Comics* #1 (April, 1939), most comic books were compilations of newspaper funny strips or illustrated adventures of hard-boiled heroes from the pulps. But all that would change thanks to the appearance of Centurion, the world's first superhero.

Publisher Marvin Rains viewed Centurion's appearance from a financial angle. His struggling Aurora Press had been in a downspin for three consecutive years. Once-popular pulp titles like *Saucy Mystery*, *Saucy Detective Stories*, and *Saucy Tales to Chill the Soul* were shedding readers faster than their protagonists shed clothes, leading Aurora to certain ruin. Unless he managed something drastic, his company was doomed.

Centurion proved to be the ace in the hole he'd been looking for. Rains turned to his young ward Mitch Gormley, a glorified office assistant, to bring "youth appeal" to the Centurion's comic book adventures. In April, Aurora published *Amazing Comics* #1, in which Centurion foiled a robbery at the First National Bank of Freedom City. *Amazing* was a huge success, and soon other superhero comics plotted by the prolific Gormley hit the stands. By the time America entered the war, Gormley had written more than 5000

pages of comic books and had brought life to scores of characters.

Mitch returned from a four-year Army stint to become Aurora's editor-in-chief in 1946. All of the pulps had been cancelled during the war, and Gormley brought a strong comics-only approach to the line, focusing most of his creative attentions on *Amazing* and *A-1 Comics* (a Freedom Eagle feature that changed its focus to the Liberty League in 1942). During this period, *Amazing* sold in excess of one million copies per issue, a sales record that has never since been matched.

It wasn't to last forever. By the 1950s, real-life superhuman scandals and changing national attitudes about costumed adventurers forced Aurora's sales into the gutter. By 1953 the company published only three superhero comics—*Amazing* (of course), *A-1*, and *Freedom Adventures*. Other titles, such as *Crimebusters* (former home of Johnny Danger), changed to a crime drama or western theme. After a few frustrating years, Mitch left Aurora for Hollywood, where he acted as script assistant on several films, including *Beachtowel Bossa Nova*, *Reds Among Us!*, and *Drug Crazy Mommas*, considered a watershed film by many of today's college film students.

Aurora kept plodding on through the fifties, but by the 1960s published only *Amazing* and *Our Kids at War*, a patriotic comic featuring misadventures aboard a U.S. Navy destroyer. In 1966, of course, Filmatic secured licensing rights to produce cartoon adventures of the Freedom League. The company freely appropriated many of Mitch Gormley's greatest Golden Age adventures for their tawdry, ill-conceived television episodes. The resulting legal fiascos have been covered extensively in both the comics and legal media, and need not be dwelled upon here. Suffice it to say that by 1970 Aurora was completely defunct and

Filmatic had been bankrupted by the most powerful associates of the Freedom League—their lawyers.

Enter New York publisher Castle Comics, who purchased the Aurora character library and back issue archive in 1985. Castle president Elwin "Boss" Moss hired me, an amateur comics journalist, to spearhead his new company as editor-in-chief. My first act in the new job was to contact Mitch Gormley, whose stories I'd fallen in love with back in my youth. Despite his advanced illness, I got a chance to collaborate with Mitch on three stories (my favorite, "*Three Thousand Tomorrows*," featured a return appearance by Doc Tomorrow that tied directly into a story Mitch had written back in 1947!). Our collaborations were the highlight of a very highlight-filled career, and my only regret is that I never got a chance to tell Mitch how much they meant to me.

As the "creator" of the comic personae of hundreds of world-famous characters, Mitch Gormley is responsible for the long tradition of Aurora/Castle Comics. This volume is dedicated to his memory, to his incredible stories, and to his enduring legacy. Thanks for the heroes, Mitch!

Harry Wiseman
Editor-in-Chief
Freedom City
December, 2003

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Freedom City's history began with the publication of *Amazing Comics #1* in 1939, which introduced the city to the world as the home of the super-powered Centurion. It continued to grow and develop through titles like *Liberty Stories*, *Smash Comics*, *Freedom Adventures*, and *Crime-Busters*. By the time titles like *Atomic Comics #1* (featuring the first appearance of the Atom Family), *Freedom League*, and *Powers: Agent of AEGIS* appeared, Freedom City was well established in the minds of young comic fans everywhere.

Well, okay, that's not *really* the history of Freedom City, but it could have been. In some alternate universe, on a different vibration plane from our own, maybe it is.

For me, *Freedom City* began in a 7-Eleven, where I first bought copies of comics like *The Fantastic Four*, *The Avengers*, *The Justice League of America* and, of course, *Superman* and *Batman*. Something for a bored 11-year-old to do with his allowance during the summer turned into a love affair with comic books that continues to this day (more than a few years later). Those hundreds (soon to be thousands!) of comic books became the seeds of quite a few superhero roleplaying campaigns for me a few years down the road. I've remained a fan of both comic books and superhero roleplaying games to this day.

The story of Freedom City really begins just a few years ago when I worked on a city sourcebook for a different superhero game line. Unfortunately, the project fell through, but I was having fun working on the city. I continued to tinker with it in my spare time, adding a little more to it each time. I revised things several times and expanded the city's history and cast of characters. It grew well beyond that original project, taking on a life of its own until I had a full-blown sourcebook on my hands. While there was plenty I could (and did) do with Freedom City for my own amusement, I wanted to open the city up for other people to enjoy as well.

I happened to mention the idea to Chris Pramas at Green Ronin Publishing and he made me an offer: I could design a superhero roleplaying game for the company and Freedom City would become its first setting. I jumped at the chance and the *Mutants & Masterminds* roleplaying game was born. While working on *M&M*, I revised Freedom City to take advantage of the rules I was creating. Now that work is done and Freedom City is ready for all the new visitors and permanent residents eager to enter its environs.

Kurt Busiek, author of the award-winning comic series *Astro City*, was once asked if his comic was about superheroes in "the real world." He responded that it was less a matter of "what if superheroes lived in the real world?" than "what if *we* could live in *their* world?" In Freedom City, you can do just that. For a little while, you can live in a world of wonder that's a little brighter (and a little darker in places) than our own. You can possess fabulous powers and safeguard the world from evil menaces. You can hold the trust and admiration of millions, and fly among the skyscrapers of the City of Freedom.

Welcome to Freedom City. I hope you enjoy your stay.

Steve Kenson
—Steve Kenson

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Freedom City is a setting for superhero adventures using the *Mutants & Masterminds* game rules, although it's suitable for use with any superhero roleplaying game. Freedom City is a fictional city set somewhere on the East Coast of the United States of America. In the tradition of comic book cities, the exact location of Freedom City is left somewhat vague, allowing Gamemasters to place the city anywhere they like in their own world. (For some ideas on possible locations for Freedom City, see p. 24.)

The primary goal of this book is to provide a resource for players and Gamemasters. Players can use this book as a source of character ideas, background elements, subplots, non-player characters (particularly supporting characters), and enemies for their heroes. They also can use the characters in this book as examples of how to build their own heroes. Gamemasters can use *Freedom City* as a setting for a *Mutants & Masterminds* campaign, or can take elements of the city and transplant them to a new location or a different campaign. The book is full of people ranging from social workers and media personalities to Mafia bosses and more, all ready to be dropped into a campaign or adventure.

Freedom City also provides numerous locations, which can be used as part of the city or incorporated into another city in the GM's campaign. There are businesses, government offices, hotels, casinos, hospitals, restaurants, tourist attractions, and numerous other places Gamemasters can borrow for use in their own games. There are also superhero teams, villains and villain teams, criminal organizations, and a government super-agency, all ready for use in any *Mutants & Masterminds* campaign.

FABULOUS FIRST ISSUES

Assuming you want to start a *Mutants & Masterminds* campaign set in Freedom City, there are a number of different approaches you can take when it comes to introducing your players and their heroes to the city and its diverse inhabitants. Consider the following options for your first adventure in the city.

EXISTING HEROES

One of the easiest ways to start your own game in Freedom City is to let the players use the existing heroes presented in this book (see **Chapter Eight: Heroes & Villains** for details). Any member of the three hero teams in Freedom City would make suitable player characters and come with ready-made histories and villains, as well as connections with the city and its history. Some of the existing heroes exceed the recommended starting power level for *Mutants & Masterminds* characters, but this is fine so long as you and your players want a game with a different power level.

This approach allows you to get right into the action of the game without having to worry about character creation. You also know the heroes will fit into the setting just fine, since they were designed that way.

NEW HEROES, EXISTING TEAM

Of course, players may prefer to create their own heroes for adventuring in Freedom City. In this case, you can integrate new heroes

into the existing hero-teams, perhaps even mixing-and-matching with the existing heroes from this book. For example, player character heroes might join the Freedom League as "trainees" or "probationary members" to fill out the team's roster. You can either keep the existing members of the Freedom League as they are, or you can replace some of them with the player characters. A shortage of active members could cause the League to hold a membership drive and the heroes answer the call. Likewise, the heroes can be new students at the Claremont Academy. They can either join the Next-Gen or form another team within the school; it's up to the players and Gamemaster whether the Next-Gen characters are "friendly rivals" or "upperclassmen" who enjoy playing practical jokes on the new kids at school.

THE REPLACEMENTS

If there isn't enough room in your game for a lot of different heroes, you can have the player characters replace some or all of the other heroes in this book. There are two main ways to go about this.

The first is to simply delete characters or teams from Freedom City's history, saying they never existed. Some elements of the city's history require that some heroes were there, but they may have been different heroes, maybe even the player characters! (See **Making History**, below). Maybe the Next-Gen doesn't exist and your player's heroes are the first class at the Claremont Academy. Maybe there's no Freedom League and the players' team occupies the role of "world's greatest heroes." You just have to adjust the city's existing background to account for the missing heroes, possibly replacing them with the player characters or NPCs of your own creation.

Second, the player characters might replace an existing hero team that retired, died, or was lost. For example, the entire Atom Family might have been lost in the Terminus, or the modern Freedom League may have never formed following the breakup of FORCE Ops. In either case, Freedom City is in need of heroes and the player characters can answer the call. A replacement team might decide to take on the name of a previous team, particularly if they were chosen to be their replacements, or they might adopt their own name and identity. Either way, they might find some use for an old team's headquarters and equipment (assuming there are no legal entanglements to deal with) and they may very well inherit an old team's villains as well!

NEW TEAM

The player characters can simply be a new team of heroes that forms in Freedom City and sets up shop there. You may have the other hero-teams in this book coexist in the city as supporting characters or you may want to remove one or more of them to make more room for the players' heroes.

A new hero team can find plenty of opportunities in Freedom City. There are various places where heroes can set up a new headquarters (in addition to the already existing ones in the city) and lots of supporting characters for them to interact with. There are tips and suggestions throughout this book on other sorts of hero teams you can introduce and resources that might be of interest to them.

MENTOR OR PATRON

A useful means of getting a new team of heroes together is a mentor or patron who either brings the heroes together in the first place or helps them stay together and supports their efforts. A mentor is a teacher or guide for the heroes while a patron supplies resources (usually money, equipment, and advice). They also allow the Gamemaster a "voice" in the organization of the group that doesn't necessarily outweigh those of the heroes.

Duncan Summers (p. 116) makes a good mentor and patron for a group of younger heroes, whether they are his students at the Claremont Academy or operating on their own. His daughter the Raven could be a player character or a supporting NPC. Other potential mentors and patrons include: Langston Albright and the Albright Institute (p. 74), Dr. Alexander Atom (p. 121), Adrian Eldrich (p. 135), Doctor Tomorrow (p. 16), Foreshadow (p. 137), Mayor Michael O'Connor (p. 36), and C. Horatio Powers, director of AEGIS (p. 41).

MAKING HISTORY

Another way to introduce a group of heroes to Freedom City is to make them part of the city's history. Using the events described in the **History** section of Chapter One, create a series of "prelude" or "back issue" adventures for the player characters in which they are involved in pivotal events in Freedom's history. From the first recorded appearance of superheroes in the early 1940s through their peak in the 1960s and '70s through their decline in the '80s and their resurgence in the late 1990s, the player characters can be there. They can be the ones to overcome Nazi super-agents, thwart the first alien invasions, discover the Terminus, and more.

Naturally, the heroes either must be time-travelers or extremely long-lived to have done all these things and still be active by the time things reach the present, but you also can use the example in this book of heroic identities that are passed down over generations, like the Bowman (p. 127). The inheritor of a heroic mantle may be much like his or her predecessor (enough that the player can basically have the same character) or quite different.

How long the prelude lasts is up to you. It might just cover a few important events or it can become a series of its own before the modern-day series begins. When it's done, the players have a better sense of the city's history and their characters have stronger ties to their home, not to mention more in-depth back-grounds to draw upon in creating adventures.

OTHER FREEDOMS

Although *Freedom City* is primarily designed for use as a setting for superhero adventures, it's possible to use the city for different sorts of adventure campaigns, either using *Mutants & Masterminds* or another suitable roleplaying game. Naturally, there are some changes and adjustments that must be made in order to use Freedom City in another genre.

EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

Freedom City can be used as a basis for a fictional city in any early twentieth century roleplaying game, from pulp adventures in the 1920s and '30s through homefront activity during World War

II to Cold War espionage in the 1960s. Many neighborhoods of Freedom City have a timeless quality to them and locations and characters in this book can be included in other campaigns wholesale with minor or no changes. For example, the Midnight Society (p. 76) might be a front for a cult, spy organization, or some other sinister group in a different campaign. Then again, it might just be a benign social club, leaving the players to wonder if there's really something going on behind the scenes.

MODERN

Remove the superhero elements and Freedom City can serve as a setting for any sort of modern RPG. The players can take on the roles of characters working for the Freedom City Police Department, for example, for a "cop drama" type of game or they might be FBI agents or reporters investigating unusual happenings in the city.

By changing AEGIS into a counter-espionage and intelligence organization (perhaps a secret branch of the CIA) you can use Freedom City as a home base for a super-spy campaign. SHADOW (p. 174) makes a great evil organization trying to conquer the world, even without super-agents. The player characters might be dashing spies with super-gadgets or you can even introduce low-level super-powers into the game.

Freedom City features many elements that work well with a modern horror game. The Providence Asylum (p. 60) is a great locale for psycho-killers and nightmarish horrors, or perhaps a place to lock up player characters who go mad from Things Man Is Not Meant to Know. Adrian Eldrich (p. 135) can be an advisor on matters occult and might still be a secret mage (albeit not at superhero power levels). Lawyer Lucius Cabot (p. 53) may still represent "unique" clients or simply conceal his own infernally tainted nature. The struggle between Siren (p. 116) and Baron Samedi (p. 152) can play out in a far more sinister and frightening way. The Serpent People (p. 92) and their cult serve ably as antagonists for an entire horror campaign.

Focusing on its mystical elements can make Freedom City into a setting for urban fantasy campaigns, either an overt mixing of the modern world with the fantastic or a game where magic lurks just behind the scenes, invisible to most people. Sub-Terra (p. 92) can be the home of dwarves and faeries as well as the Serpent People and Morlocks. Places like the Ocean Heights Amusement Park and the aforementioned Providence Asylum are full of magical potential, while the Claremont Academy could be a school for young wizards and witches (either secretly or openly, depending on the campaign).

NEAR FUTURE

Advance Freedom City's history ten, 20, or even 50 or more years into the future and it becomes a setting for near-future science fiction and cyberpunk campaigns. These games can play up elements like the city's resident corporations. New Horizon Media (p. 49) may have a headquarters building with giant flat-screen monitors covering its sides, showing programming visible throughout the city. Rath & Stromberg (p. 52) can be a ruthless investment megacorp willing to use "street ops" to ensure the market swings their way. USNet is a computer systems giant that



dominates the worldwide Net, the target of illegal hackers and "console cowboys." The Freedom City PD might be riddled with corruption or genuinely trying to clean up its act and keep a lid on a corrupt and violent city. Organized crime can play a larger role, coming into conflict with new syndicates moving into the city like the Yakuza, while fighting to hold on to their control of the Southside casinos and vice operations. Star Island (p. 66) might become a spaceport, a "beanstalk" surface to orbit elevator, or a railgun launch system for sending ships into orbit.

FANTASY

While it would take some work to turn Freedom City into a medieval-style fantasy setting, elements of it could be used to create such a city: a port city at the confluence of two rivers on a natural bay. Lord Mayor O'Connor replaced a corrupt predecessor and is now trying to clean up the city (and may need the aid of brave adventurers). The city becomes a collection of wood and stone structures, with castles and towers replacing the skyscrapers of downtown. Perhaps a giant statue of a hero still dominates the bay, with the Boardwalk becoming a riverside collection of tav-

erns, gambling dens, and houses of ill repute. Local heroes or villains may be adventurers, wizards, or magical beings of some sort. If you don't want to run an entire fantasy campaign like this, the work of a wizard (like Malador the Mystic, p. 162) could transform Freedom City into such a place for an adventure or two. The heroes must find a way to change things back to normal.

An easier use for Freedom City is as a place for fantasy characters to unexpectedly visit. There has been contact between Freedom and the city of Freeport (p. 97), so fantasy characters might stumble into Freedom City as the result of an encounter with a dimensional gate, mysterious artifact, or magical mishap. Perhaps a curse of banishment or magical artifact sends them from their world into this strange new one, full of confusing sights and sounds. Freedom City heroes or villains may be able to help the visitors return home (although villains are certain to try to exploit them first). Perhaps a party of adventurers pursues their archenemy through a magical gate to Freedom City and must team up with the Freedom League or the Atom Family to defeat the evil sorcerer!



CHAPTER ONE

WELCOME TO FREEDOM CITY

"Freedom City is the city of the future, a city of hope for a better tomorrow. Freedom City honors the past, but we are about the future. We do not give in to tragedy and loss. We pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and get to work, building something even greater and longer-lasting than ever before."

Freedom City started out as a humble place, and we must not forget where we came from. From that small city and the surrounding towns came a new community. We have always sought to create a city of peace and prosperity, a city where anyone would be happy to live and raise a family. We will settle for nothing less."

We cannot forget about the assistance given to us by our nation's superheroes in helping to achieve those goals. Neither can we forget about the hometown heroes—the police, firefighters, and emergency personnel who come through in our hour of need, those without any special abilities other than their courage and their training. Please join with me in honoring the heroes, and the city, of Freedom!"

—MAYOR MICHAEL O'CONNOR
"Honoring our Community Heroes"
 POLITICAL SPEECH, OCTOBER 9TH, 2001

Freedom City is a fictional metropolis combining elements of various major American East Coast cities to create a detailed setting

for *Mutants & Masterminds* superhero adventures. The city's layout, government, law enforcement, culture, and other aspects are modeled after both the real world and examples inspired by comic books.

BASIC PREMISES

Throughout this book, certain assumptions are made about the world of Freedom City and how it works. Gamemasters should feel free to tinker with these assumptions as much as desired, but should be aware that changing them can and should alter the character and feel of the city and the world.

- People with super-powers have existed throughout Earth's history, but have become more prominent and numerous since the late 1930s. Freedom City is a particular epicenter for superhumans, but they are found in other cities and places around the world.
- Nearly every sort of super-power or gimmick found in the comic books can and does exist in the Freedom Universe. There is magic, super-science, aliens, lost worlds, gods, megalomaniac supervillains, and more. Despite this, the world on the surface is still very much like our own and most of the history and society from our world also exists there.

- Superheroes and villains have aged normally since their first appearances, with the exception of some who are particularly long-lived or even immortal. There have been several distinct “eras” of superhuman activity in the world, which coincidentally resemble different periods in comic book publishing history.
- Although everyone has heard about superheroes and villains, and probably seen them (on TV, if nothing else), most people in Freedom City still live fairly ordinary lives, despite the occasional invasion from outer space or other threat.

HISTORY

“History always seems to measure events in terms of great tragedies or triumphs. I would say that Freedom City has equal measures of both.”

—HARLAN FORTAN, PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, FREEDOM CITY UNIVERSITY

Freedom City has a long and rich history. It has been at the center of superhuman activity in the world for nearly a century and the presence of superheroes and villains has shaped the development and character of the city.

PREHISTORY

Millions of years ago, intelligent life first evolved on Earth—not early humans or hominids, but the Serpent People. The pinnacle of saurian evolution, the Serpent People walked erect and built a civilization when humanity’s earliest ancestors scurried to avoid the predators of a primitive world. For millions of years, the civilization of the Serpent People waxed and waned. Empires rose and fell and the saurians developed advances in both science and sorcery. They became pitiless creatures without morals beyond the need to satisfy their own curiosities and their desires to control their environment. Among the many sciences they mastered was genetic engineering, which they used to create various creatures to serve them.

Serpent People society eventually degenerated into decadence and decay. They were impossibly ancient by the time the first great human civilizations arose and conflict between the humans and the Serpent People was almost inevitable. Humanity might have been doomed to remain the slaves and playthings of the Serpent People, had it not been for the intervention of others.

THE PRESERVERS

Hundreds of thousands of years ago, beings known only as “the Preservers” visited Earth. Most likely extraterrestrials of a very advanced order, they might have come from another dimension or even another time. For unknown reasons, the Preservers interfered with the evolution of humanity. They performed genetic experiments on tribes of primitive humans and also collected extensive genetic samples, with which they seeded other planets in the galaxy with human life. The Preservers collected some human “specimens” and placed them in a self-contained environment on the dark side of Earth’s Moon, where they developed in isolation from the rest of the human race.

Once they had done their work, the Preservers departed, leaving behind scattered examples of their technology and the artificial

CAMPAIGN USE

The intervention of the Preservers and the genetic experiments of the Serpent People introduced the potential for sudden benign mutation into humanity, a source for super-powers in the modern world. The Preservers’ tinkering also led to the creation of various offshoots of humanity, including the Atlanteans (p. 89), the Farsiders (p. 93), the Utopians (p. 93), and the human inhabitants of the Lor Republic (p. 94). At the GM’s discretion, there may be other variant races living secretly on Earth or on other worlds (in Earth’s solar system or elsewhere in the galaxy).

lunar environment they created. Still, their intervention gave humanity a vital leg-up. Humans advanced by the Preservers founded the ancient civilization of Atlantis, which quickly rivaled the Serpent People’s island nation of Lemuria in terms of both technology and mystical power. The two nations fought a series of wars across a millennium that finally ended in the destruction of both civilizations and the sinking of Atlantis and Lemuria.

AFTER THE FLOOD

Although remnants of the Atlantean and Lemurian civilizations survived the Great Cataclysm, they were scattered and isolated. The Serpent People were driven underground, where they have remained ever since. Humanity fell back into barbarism and the Age of Atlantis dissolved into legend. Sorcery retreated into the shadows, where it has remained, perhaps because of human racial memories linking it to the doom of Atlantis. For thousands of years, humanity struggled slowly back up the ladder of civilization once more. Throughout human history arose heroes and villains, some gifted with special abilities beyond those of ordinary mortals, but it would not be until the modern era that such people would become widely known as anything other than myths and legends.

- c. 500,000 B.C.E.** Serpent People found Lemuria
- c. 200,000 B.C.E.** Last visitation by The Preservers. Founding of Farside City on the dark side of the moon
- c. 7500 B.C.E.** Founding of Atlantis
- c. 6400 B.C.E.** Start of the Wars of Dominance (Atlantis vs. Lemuria)
- c. 5000 B.C.E.** The Great Cataclysm/Sinking of Atlantis and Lemuria/The Great Flood

THE FOUNDING OF FREEDOM

Freedom City began with a quest for independence when Puritan colonists from England and the Netherlands arrived in the New World in 1630. They founded a small, walled town at the confluence of two rivers on a great bay and named it Freedom. They began to trade with the local Native American tribes. Eventually, the settlers came into conflict with the natives as Freedom grew, and they fought a number of skirmishes. The settlement proved successful, leading more people to make the hard ocean crossing from Europe to settle in Freedom.

In the late 1600s, Freedom was home to the Puritan minister Elijah Prophet, a famous "monster hunter" and "witch finder." Prophet was the driving force behind a witch-hunt that sprang up in Freedom in 1694 and lasted for nearly two years. Among the accused was Henri LeBlanc, a Frenchman, who supposedly fled the authorities with the aid of "demons and evil spirits." Although LeBlanc was never captured, a dozen other people were tried and hanged for witchcraft and consorting with the Devil. Prosecutor Lucius Cabot argued eloquently and forcefully to convict the accused. Thankfully, Freedom's witch hysteria died out before the turn of the century.

By the mid-1700s, Freedom had grown considerably, the original settlement expanding along with additional settlements like Bayview, Hanover, Kingston, and Port Regal. Freedom also slowly became a focus for anti-British sentiment among the colonists. True to its name, Freedom was strongly on the side of the Revolution.

October 11, 1630 Landing of settlers at the future site of Freedom

April 12, 1631 Freedom officially founded with the building of its first common house and town hall.

May 1, 1669 Founding of Bayview

October, 1694 Elijah Prophet's witch hunt begins.

April, 1696 Elijah Prophet leaves Freedom, ending the infamous witch-hunts.

June 17, 1698 Founding of Port Regal

May 5, 1719 Founding of Kingston

August 11, 1745 Founding of Hanover

March, 1770 Initial protests against the excesses of British troops in Freedom, New York, and Boston

December 16, 1773 Boston Tea Party

December 17, 1773 Kingston Tea Party (to show solidarity with Boston rebels)

INDEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM: 1776–1899

The American Revolution brought the city its first brush with costumed heroes. A mysterious young woman known only as Lady Liberty fought against Tory spies and British forces, wearing a distinctive red, white, and blue costume reminiscent of a colonial soldier, complete with a tri-cornered hat, blue cloak, and a mask to conceal her identity. She was a rallying cry for colonial forces, and stories of her saving doomed rebels spread like wildfire. At the same time, tales were told of a mystery man called Lantern John who haunted the nighttime streets of Lantern Hill and carried a ghostly, glowing lantern with him wherever he went. The most popular legend said John was the ghost of a patriot hanged by the British and his lantern shone with the lights of vengeance and liberty. These stories were often dismissed as tall tales, but more than a few people saw a shadowy figure with a lantern on the hill late at night where they might find dead Redcoats the following morning. Both heroes mysteriously disappeared at the war's end and the achievement of American independence, but their stories were remembered and retold, inspiring generations of heroes to come.

In 1779, colonial Major Joseph Clark won a series of decisive victories over British forces in Freedom and among its immediate

neighbors, eventually driving out the British altogether and securing the area for the colonial army. Following the war, the outlying settlements in the area formally incorporated as Freedom City.

The century that followed saw continued growth and development for Freedom City. Freedom City University was established in 1825 and the city became an active port as well as a home for learning and the arts. That same year Henry Beaumont began publishing the *Freedom City Ledger*, the city's first daily newspaper. The outlying districts of the city were largely defined and the new West End and Southside neighborhoods began to grow.

In 1890, a series of grisly murders took place in Freedom City. A killer the newspapers dubbed "Jack-a-Knives" butchered four women over the course of the summer and autumn. Despite the best efforts of the city police department, the murderer was never caught, although the killings did stop. Rumors attribute the end of Jack's reign of terror either to an appearance by Lantern John or the presence of a famed British consulting detective and his associate, on holiday in Freedom City at the time.

April 19, 1775 Battle at Lexington Green and the start of the American War of Independence

November 1, 1789 Incorporation of Freedom City

April 27, 1799 Establishment of Freedom College on the outskirts of the city

January 1, 1825 Establishment of Freedom City University

March 30, 1825 Freedom City's first daily newspaper—the *Freedom City Ledger*—begins publication.

June-October, 1890 Jack-a-Knives terrorizes the red light districts of Freedom City.

DAWN OF A NEW CENTURY: 1900–1940

The start of the twentieth century saw Freedom City as a modern metropolis, but the gay abandon of the 1920s quickly gave way to the violence of gangsters and Prohibition. After that, the Great Depression saw fortunes ruined and the city sank into economic and social despair. The city and federal government instituted work programs for the legions of Freedom City's unemployed, including a number of construction and beautification projects.

The start of the twentieth century also bore witness to an event that forever altered the future of Freedom City, although no one was aware of it at the time. Many saw comets as omens or signs of good fortune, but in 1918, one particular comet was in truth an alien life-pod that brought the world's greatest hero to Earth. Scientists speculate that the arrival of Centurion's life-pod over Freedom City that night may have released an invisible cascade of extradimensional energies, or perhaps something about the city drew the life-pod there. Whatever the case, Freedom City quickly became the focus for the appearance of new costumed heroes over the next decades. First came "mystery men" like the Ghost and Johnny Danger, who operated in the shadows and whose exploits filled the early pulps. The 1940s became the time of the world's first true "superheroes."

The first and best to carry the mantle of superhero, Centurion revealed his presence to the world when he thwarted a robbery of the First National Bank of Freedom City in 1939. His arrival

seemed to trigger the appearance of other heroes, including the Bowman, Midnight, the Freedom Eagle, and Johnny Rocket. There were even rumors that Lantern John had returned to his old haunts on Lantern Hill, although they remained unconfirmed until the following year.



THE CENTURION

Although some masked "mystery men" appeared before him, the Centurion was Freedom City's first true "superhero" and one of its greatest to this day. The man known as Centurion was born on a parallel Earth where the Roman Empire never fell; this Earth also held a far more advanced technological civilization than any on twentieth century Earth. The invading forces of the Terminus, led by Omega (see p. 171), were on the verge of conquering that Earth when one of that world's leading scientists placed his infant son in an experimental dimensional travel capsule and sent it through the Terminus to another habitable planet—our own Earth. In so doing, he exposed Freedom City to the energies of the Terminus and made Omega aware of its existence. Exposure to the cascading energies of the Terminus also changed the infant, giving him the potential for tremendous powers.

In 1918, a "shooting star" seen above Freedom City streaked westward and came quietly to rest in the forest nearby. Tom Leeds found this capsule, a life-pod from another world, and inside it he discovered a baby boy. Concealing the pod, Leeds and his wife turned the child over to the Freedom City Orphanage and soon adopted him, naming him Mark. Mark Leeds would grow up to become the superhero known as Centurion.

Tom and Mabel Leeds raised Mark as they could, and as his powers matured, they taught him to use his gifts responsibly. Young Mark Leeds later learned the truth about his origins, the existence of the Terminus, and the world from which he came. He fashioned a costume to conceal his true identity and used his powers to fight crime and injustice in Freedom City and the world. The Centurion was a founding member of both the Liberty League and the Freedom League and is widely regarded as one of the world's greatest heroes.

Throughout much of his career, one of the Centurion's greatest foes was Omega, the being who destroyed his home world. Centurion swore that the same fate would not befall his adopted home, and he helped protect the world from Omega many times. He gave his life in battle against the Lord of the Terminus to save the planet, and Centurion was mourned all around the world. Freedom City commissioned and dedicated the Sentry Statue (p. 68) in his honor, and the legacy of the Centurion continues to inspire generations of heroes to come.

The Centurion: PL 20; Init +5 (Dex, Imp. Init.); Defense 16 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (leap 100 ft.); Atk +16 melee (+25S, punch); SV Dmg +25, Fort +25, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills: Knowledge (history) +6, Listen +10, Profession (teacher) +7, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10.

Feats: Attack Focus (unarmed), Durability, Fame, Heroic Surge, Improved Initiative, Indomitable Will, Iron Will.

Powers: Amazing Save (Reflexes, Will) +4 [Source: Training; Cost: 2 pp], Super-Senses +7 [Source: Mutation; Cost: 2 pp], Super-Strength +20 [Extras: Immunity, Leaping, Super-Constitution; Power Stunts: Super-Leaping; Source: Mutation; Cost: 9 pp].

April 17, 1918 Centurion's life-pod enters Earth's atmosphere and crashes west of Freedom City.

August 26, 1925 Police reports and newspapers attribute disrupted gangland activities to the Ghost.

March 30, 1927 Johnny Danger delivers "Six Fingers" Scocci to police and breaks up the Tomo mob.

June 4, 1927 The Bluesman—black guitarist Chester Brown—fights mob influences in the West End.

October 16, 1928 Aurora Press produces pulp adventures of Johnny Danger, Ghost, Bluesman, and others.

February 8, 1939 Centurion appears and prevents a robbery at the First National Bank.

April 10, 1939 Aurora Press rushes Amazing Comics to print to publicize Centurion's adventures.

June 16, 1939 The Freedom Eagle first appears.

August, 1939 Aurora Press adds a book for the Freedom Eagle's escapades: A-1 Comics.

November 2, 1939 Midnight first appears as the protector of the Fens.

March, 1940 The Bowman first appears early this month, followed later by Johnny Rocket.

Halloween, 1940 Lantern John makes his first confirmed appearance in the modern era.

November 5, 1940 Aurora Press produces *Freedom Adventures* and *Crime Busters*, which feature the exploits of additional heroes.

WORLD WAR II: 1941–1945

On the 7th of December in 1941, the empire of Japan made a sneak-attack against the United States Naval Base at Pearl Harbor. One day later, a strange visitor arrived in Freedom City—a man who became known as Doc Tomorrow. Swiftly arranging a meeting with President Roosevelt, the Doc revealed that he came from the future—a possible future in which the Axis powers won the Second World War and ruled the world. He offered his help to the Allies and the president immediately ordered the formation of a team of American mystery men, led by Doc Tomorrow and called the Liberty League. Freedom City hosted the League's public headquarters, although they split their activities among the homefront and both the European and Pacific theatres of war, thwarting the plots of spies, saboteurs, and Axis super-soldiers. America was also plagued with homegrown criminals and

THE MAN FROM TOMORROW

Like another great hero of Freedom City, Tomas Morgen came from an alternate Earth—one in which the Axis powers won World War II. Born in 1971 and raised as a "poster boy" of that long-established Nazi regime, Tomas grew up as the shining hope of his government, the Nationalist States of America. Few who knew him ever learned he was the product of an advanced eugenics program to breed the perfect Aryan. Tomas was a tremendous success—athletic, handsome, brilliant, and genetically perfect in every way. Fortunately, he was also smarter than his Nazi creators gave him credit for being. Tomas encountered the tiny American Resistance to the Nazis and learned the truth about atrocities his leaders committed. He joined the Resistance and helped them to survive against the Nazi commandants of America. In 2003 on his Earth, Tomas led a raid on a Nazi lab and stole an experimental time-travel device, using it to go back into the past to prevent the Axis from winning the war.

Tomas arrived in Freedom City roughly 29 hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He became Thomas Morgan to hide his German background and he adopted the code name of Doc Tomorrow, the moniker a translation of his true surname. In this identity, he met with Franklin Delano Roosevelt and convinced the President of the dangers of the Nazis and their plans for the world. Of all the Doc's allies, only FDR, Centurion, and the Freedom Eagle ever learned of his true origins. Within 24 hours of his arrival back in time, Doc Tomorrow forged the Liberty League with the president's blessing to fight the Axis. With his tactical genius and physical prowess, Doc led the Allies' greatest heroes through the war to victory over the Axis powers. He mysteriously disappeared three days after VJ Day in 1945. Most believed he returned to his future, hoping his actions had changed it for the better.

Doc Tomorrow's ultimate fate is left up to the GM. Depending on how you decide time travel works in your campaign, the timeline he came from may no longer exist. If it does, Doc might return to the present day of the campaign timeline to enlist the player characters' help against the Axis regime in his own timeline. If not, Doc might reappear in present-day Freedom City. He could resume his heroic career, retire to do

scientific research, travel into space, or even continue traveling into the future to become a hero there (occasionally traveling into the past to meet up with the player characters). Or his fate can remain an enduring mystery, one of those unexplained phenomena that make life in a world filled with superheroes so exciting and fun.

Whether or not Doc retains the ability to time travel or loses it (his device burning out after one last trip, perhaps) is entirely up to the GM.



Dr. Tomorrow: PL 11; Init +8 (Dex, Imp. Init.); Defense 21 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (fly 40 ft.); Atk +10 melee (+5S, punch), +10 ranged (+5S/L, raygun); SV Dmg +4, Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 18, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 18.

Skills: Bluff +10, Concentration +11, Disable Device +12, Escape Artist +9, Jump +6, Language (French, German, Japanese, Russian), Listen +11, Medicine +11, Pilot +5, Repair +12, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11.

Feats: Aerial Combat, Assessment, Dodge, Evasion, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Inspire, Leadership, Photographic Memory, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Ricochet Attack

Powers: Amazing Save (Reflex) +6 [Source: Training; Cost: 1 pp], Super-Intelligence +5 [Extras: Super-Wisdom, Super-Charisma; Source: Mutation; Cost: 5 pp].

Equipment: Raygun [Weapon +5; Power Stunts: Dual Damage; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 1 pp], jetpack [Flight +8; Flaw: Device; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 1 pp].

bundists, some of whom became enemies of the Liberty League and banded together to form the first Crime League.

The summer before the war also saw the first appearance of one of the first super *women*. She took her name from the legendary Lady Liberty, though this Lady Liberty could stop tanks with her bare hands and fly through the air. The world's second superheroine, the seductive Siren, appeared in early 1942, as did the Human Tank and Gunner. A few other heroes appeared during the War and aided the Liberty League, although they remained independent.

July 4, 1941 A new Lady Liberty makes her first appearance in New York City.

December 8, 1941 Arrival of Doc Tomorrow from an alternate future

December 10, 1941 FDR announces the formation of the Liberty League.

January–April, 1942 More than 25 new heroes and heroines appear across America and Europe.

January 17, 1942 The Patriot first appears in Boston and moves to Freedom City and joins the Liberty League.

April 9, 1942 First appearance of Siren along Freedom City's waterfront

May 23, 1942 The Human Tank and Gunner appear in Port Regal and soon fight overseas in Europe.

September, 1942 Formation of the Crime League in Freedom City

POST-WAR FREEDOM: 1945–1960

In 1945, World War II came to an end with the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Although Doc Tomorrow had apparently returned to the future, the Liberty League remained together. Freedom Eagle became their new chairman and they maintained their headquarters in Freedom City. With the war over, they now fought profiteers in occupied Japan and Germany, aided in the rebuilding of Europe, and fought the Crime League and other malcontents in Freedom City and America.

Earth's first modern contact with extraterrestrial life came in 1947, when a scout saucer from the Grue Empire crashed in the

American Southwest after being damaged in a skirmish with their enemies from the Lor Republic. The U.S. government covered up the crash and took possession of the wreckage and the bodies of the crew. It would be some time before the Grue chose to investigate the backwater world on which their ship had crashed.

By the 1950s, the specter of communism was growing in the minds of Americans, and some began to question whether or not costumed heroes presented the proper image to American citizens, particularly impressionable young children. Politicians raised accusations that costumed heroes encouraged vigilantism and promoted immoral values. The government also became increasingly concerned with their independence and sought to tighten controls over any heroes, especially the highly visible Liberty League. By this time the League operated on private donations—largely the fortune of Fletcher Beaumont (a.k.a. the Bowman)—and did not rely on government authority or approval.

In 1953, the House un-American Activities Committee called the members of the Liberty League to testify before Congress, raising allegations of communist sympathies and immoral activities. The Committee demanded the members unmask and reveal their true names and identities as well as submit to governmental control of their group. When the Leaguers refused to give in to these demands, the government declared the team dissolved and the League disbanded. Some of its members continued to operate on their own for a few short years, while others quietly disappeared within a few months. It would take a major crisis to reunite them. Only Centurion and a few other heroes beyond reproach remained active, though just barely so and only against age-old foes or natural disasters.

January 8, 1946 The Crimson Katana kills the Human Tank and Gunner in occupied Japan.

July 7, 1947 A Grue Imperial flying saucer crashes at Roswell, New Mexico.

October 16, 1953 The HUAC hearings force the conscientious disbanding of the Liberty League.

October 21, 1953 Hepcat, a poet and vigilante, begins operating in the Fens in defiance of the HUAC.

November 1, 1953 The Freedom Eagle and the Bowman retire.

December 13, 1953 After stopping King Cole and the Blackbyrds, the vigilante Midnight goes underground.

June 18, 1956 Siren marries the Prince of Atlantis and abandons the surface world for her new home.

July 14, 1959 By now, Centurion and Lady Liberty are Freedom City's only superhuman protectors.

THE HEROES RETURN: 1960–1972

By the start of the 1960s, much of the Red Scare fervor of the HUAC hearings and the disbanding of the Liberty League had died down. Heroes like Centurion and Lady Liberty continued to operate, largely ignoring any negative criticism of their activities. Prosperity across America seemed to bring out both the good and the bad, as supervillains returned from inactivity and new threats appeared from the skies and from other dimensions. Luckily,

heroes old and new answered the call, and superheroes returned to Freedom City and America.

The public reacted positively to the return of the superheroes, and teams like the Freedom League and the Atom Family became celebrities and role models for a new generation of heroes. While new heroes began coming to Freedom City or elsewhere, old and new supervillains made their presence known as well. The most dangerous and hated of these villains were surviving Axis super-agents like the Crimson Katana and Nacht-Krieger, not to mention a revived Crime League.

Even less so now than before, the heroes had little desire to work officially under government control. Thus, the United States government responded to the presence of new superhumans, as well as possible threats from aliens, ultraterrestrials, and organizations like SHADOW, by creating the American Elite Government Intervention Service (AEGIS) in 1962. Jack Simmons—formerly the Patriot of the Liberty League—was appointed its first director.

For the next decade, superhuman activity continued to rise, as if the years away had concentrated the wills of both heroes and villains alike. Invasions from space and other dimensions became almost commonplace, but unlike the previous decades, humanity's faith in its heroes rarely wavered for long in these times.

March, 1960 Hades, the Greek god of the Underworld, invades Freedom City with an undead army. Several Liberty League veterans return to fend off the invasion. Joining them are new heroes like Daedelus, the Raven, and the second Bowman—Fletcher Beaumont's ward, Timothy Quinn. The heroes succeed, although Freedom City suffers considerable damage. The heroes remain together to combat similar threats, and since they are legally forbidden to be the Liberty League, they call themselves the Freedom League and re-establish the original team's old headquarters in downtown Freedom City.

February 13, 1961 Dr. Alexander Atom arrives to make his home in Freedom City, purchasing the newly constructed Goodman Building and moving there with his wife Anna and their young daughter Andrea. The Atom Family soon becomes quite well known as explorers and adventurers.

March, 1962 AEGIS is founded.

April 11, 1964 AEGIS opens Blackstone Federal Penitentiary off the coast of Freedom City, a prison specially designed to hold superhuman inmates.

June 2, 1964 Freedom City faces a British invasion when the Beatles visit the city. The Freedom League stops the Maestro from using the band to mind-control thousands of screaming fans.

August, 1965 Omega and the forces of the Terminus pierce the dimensional barriers and invade the city. Despite occupying parts of the city for six days, Omega and his army are driven back by the League and Dr. Atom.

September, 1966 The *Power League* television show premieres, its cartoons very loosely-based off the Freedom League's adventures. Although campy and childish, the show is a smash hit but only lasts until 1970, when legal issues with the League lead to its cancellation. It remains a "cult classic" to this day, popular with new generations of fans and collectors.

A vibrant, comic-style illustration of the Power League team. The title "POWER LEAGUE" is rendered in large, 3D orange letters with red outlines at the top. Below it, the team members are posed dynamically: Batman flies in the upper left; a yellow and red superhero stands in the upper right; a woman in a red and blue suit with a star emblem is in the middle left; a man in a blue suit with a yellow emblem is in the center, pointing upwards; a character in a white and grey suit is in the middle right; a man in a purple suit is in the lower left; a green and blue archer is in the lower right; and a small monkey-like character is at the bottom center. A yellow starburst in the lower left contains the text "THE ONLY OFFICIAL FREEDOM LEAGUE TV SHOW!". At the bottom, the text "Coming to Saturday Mornings on ABN!" is written in a bold, sans-serif font, with "from Filmatic Productions" in a smaller font below it. The background shows a city skyline under a blue sky.

POWER LEAGUE

THE ONLY OFFICIAL
FREEDOM LEAGUE
TV SHOW!

Coming to Saturday Mornings on ABN!
from Filmatic Productions

Trade magazine advertisement for the 1968 season of the Freedom League-authorized Power League cartoon.

July 21, 1969 Earth takes its “giant leap for mankind” with the first lunar landing, which draws the hidden attention of people already living on the Moon (see *Farside City*, p. 93).

September 9, 1969 Freedom City mourns the death of Chester Brown, a blues music great and former hero as the gang-busting Bluesman. Mayor Herbert Huntington honors him with a statue in Liberty Park.

October 14, 1969 Another scouting party from the Grue Empire arrives on Earth. They attempt to weaken Earth’s defenses by impersonating the Freedom League. Although the Grue are soon exposed and repelled, the deception shakes public confidence in the Freedom League.

TWILIGHT: 1972–1992

The 1970s saw the start of a decline for costumed superheroes. Heroes fell victim to villains and to their own human weaknesses. Others simply went missing for long periods of time or abandoned Earth for other endeavors, while still more heroes felt their age and retired or died.

An increasing number of occult scares occurred during the 1970s, including the arrival of the vampire lord Dracula and the exposure of several “Satanic” cults, most of them connected with the long-hidden Serpent People. The murderous Jack-a-Knives went on another killing spree in the summer of 1977 as the Atom Family grappled with werewolves. Mystic figures like Lantern John and Eldrich were often associated with these happenings, although few gave any credence to such rumors.

The public felt abandoned by those same heroes they counted on in years past. New heroes still walked the streets of Freedom, but these newer heroes were darker and more violent and capable of using deadly force to fight their foes. Their excesses seemed to fit the mood of the country, with its anger over the Iran hostage crisis and the long-time fears of the Soviets and the Cold War. Even today, sociologists debate whether the darkness of the late 1980s and 1990s in Freedom City was a result of the darker heroes of that time or if they merely grew darker to reflect the city and society.

In 1984, Freedom City responded by electing Franklin Moore as mayor on a platform of “zero tolerance” for vigilantism. He was supported by the Citizens for Order, Decency, and Ethics (CODE), and also secretly backed by some influential crime families. Mayor Moore quickly outlawed vigilantism in the city. Costumed heroes were illegal, and would be arrested if they continued to operate outside the law. Some heroes, like Centurion, felt they had no choice but to obey the law and retired or left Freedom City. Others chose to defy the law, and Archer (who had previously been the third Arrow, Bowman’s youthful sidekick) forged a number of them into a team known as FORCE Ops (Freelance Organization of Criminal Elimination Operatives) in the mid-80s.

For the rest of the decade, grim vigilantes fought a shadow war with psychotic criminals and gangsters in Freedom City, opposed by the corrupt police force and the mayor’s office, which were both heavily influenced by the most powerful criminal kingpins.

March 8, 1971 Arrow, partner of the second Bowman, retires due to alcohol and other drug abuses. Although the story never goes public, the Bowman retires later that year.

August 24, 1972 The Raven confronts his archenemy Dr. Sin and suffers crippling injuries while destroying Sin’s airship fleet. He marries Dr. Sin’s daughter Jasmine by December and hangs up his mask. Their daughter, Callie Summers, arrives, ironically, on August 24, 1973, tempering her father’s pique over his injuries with her birth.

July 4, 1972 Lady Liberty announces her retirement due to her fading powers.

October–December, 1973 Dracula, lord of vampires, stalks the streets of Freedom City.

March, 1974 Bowman and Arrow return, secretly making each the third person in each identity to continue the legacy of the Daring Duo.

September, 1974 Aurora Press closes its doors, its properties entangled in legal limbo due to bad licensing deals and the sudden drop in interest in superheroes.

April 1, 1975 Daedalus leaves Earth on board his starship *Icarus* to explore the galaxy.

May 30, 1975 Black Avenger quits the Freedom League, his reasons never made public.

June–October, 1977 Jack-a-Knives (or a convincing copycat) terrorizes the city once again after 167 years. Four Fens prostitutes die mysteriously, despite the efforts of local heroes Evening and the Eye of Justice. They catch the killer at the site of the fourth murder, but the man simply dissolves into gas, laughing menacingly as he drifts away from the heroes.

Late 1977–1978 The Atom Family, along with new companions Jack Wolf and a young debunker of the paranormal called Mentac, explore other dimensions, outer space, and the deepest recesses of the Earth. Although they fend off alien invasions, rampaging dinosaurs, and would-be conquerors while exploring lost worlds, fantastic ruins, and the inner Earth, many of the Atom Family’s adventures do not become widely known to the public.

June 4, 1978 The Daring Duo suffers public defeat due to a drunken Bowman, who retires immediately afterward. Arrow alone defeats the Shark Syndicate.

June, 1979 Lucius Cabot returns to Freedom City for the first time in this century and moves the law firm of Cabot, Cunningham & Crowley from New York back to Freedom City.

September 17, 1979 Both Brainstorm and Scarab sacrifice their lives to release the Freedom League from the control of the Scions of Sobek, long-dead Egyptian sorcerer-priests. The Freedom League undergoes a variety of reorganizations and changes, many of its veterans leaving its ranks and newer heroes replacing them with far less effectiveness.

January 27, 1980 Ethan Keller, the third Arrow, adopts the name Archer and begins a ruthless war against drug-lords and organized crime. Unlike the Bowmen or Arrows, Archer sometimes uses lethal force to strike fear among the criminals of the city.

December 14, 1981 Two members of the League—Tectonic and Halogen—die while stopping the rampage of the Katanarchists. Centurion disbands the team before more lives are lost.

July 9, 1982 Anna Atom dies of natural causes.

April 18, 1984 The wedding of Andrea Atom and Prince Mentac marks the official end of the original Atom Family's adventuring careers.

November, 1984 Franklin Moore becomes Mayor of Freedom City and begins a long-running corrupt political machine. Vigilantes are outlawed, and even some stalwarts like Centurion abandon Freedom City.

January, 1985 Castle Comics starts up in New York City and buys up the long-entangled rights to the pulps and comics properties of long-defunct Aurora Press and Aurora Publishing Group.

March 1, 1985 In defiance of new city ordinances, Archer forms FORCE Ops and unites a young (sometimes brutal) cadre of heroes to fight Mayor Moore's corrupt political machinations as well as more standard menaces and enemies.

DAWN OF NEW FREEDOM: 1992–THE PRESENT

"The first thing he said to those stunned National Guardsmen was 'I am Metropolis.' They said it was like the city itself spoke to them. He worked a great deal with us, and we grew quite used to referring to each other by title. Since he was so intelligent, it was a small step from 'Metropolis' to 'Dr. Metropolis.' The nickname sort of stuck and Dr. Metropolis he became. He seemed both pleased and amused by the name at the same time."

—DR. ARTHUR TRENT, FREEDOM CITY UNIVERSITY, IN AN INTERVIEW FROM THE BOOK *THE REBIRTH OF FREEDOM*

Freedom City's fortunes seemed bleak for a long time, but the early 1990s saw changes large and small that heralded a new day in the metropolis by the bay. The largest change, of course, came from the Terminus Invasion: It reunited many heroes with Freedom City, but it also saw the end of the FORCE Ops and the death of many heroes, including Centurion. Large areas of the city were damaged or destroyed, but the bravery and sacrifice of the heroes kept things from being far worse. Freedom City reeled from this terrible blow, from which it might not have recovered had it not been for two figures: Doctor Metropolis and Michael O'Connor.

A mysterious entity rose from the rubble of the city after Omega's defeat. Soon known as Dr. Metropolis, this "spirit of the city" used his amazing powers to restore Freedom City, making it better and stronger than ever before. He hardly worked alone, as other heroes like Daedalus (who returned to Earth to combat Omega) pitched in to help however they could. While few give it credence, many initially believed Metropolis to be the soul or reincarnation of Centurion returned, though this has been often denied and dispelled as rumor.

The city also found new leadership in the form of Michael O'Connor, Jr., the son of the Freedom Eagle. Elected short months before the Terminus invasion, Mayor O'Connor worked tirelessly to clean up the city's politics, strengthen the police department, draw a line against crime, and create new prosperity and jobs in the city, with great success. He also made Freedom City a welcome home to the heroes that saved her and the world.

WHAT IF... IT HAPPENED DIFFERENTLY?

Naturally, Gamemasters can change the history of Freedom City as much as they desire to suit their own particular vision for the campaign. Some possible variations include the following:

Freedom City Has Different Heroes: Change the names, powers, and histories of the heroes and villains mentioned in this history as desired. Maybe one of the player characters joined the Liberty League during World War II. Maybe other heroes founded the Freedom League in the '60s. Maybe Omega wasn't the big villain who inspired the modern reformation of the League. Rearrange things however you like.

Freedom City History Has Been "Retconned:" Comic book fans use the term "retcon" (short for "retroactive continuity") when comic book companies and writers periodically revise and update the histories of their characters and settings. Thus, a character who has been in print since the 1940s may still be young and vital, with a career that only stretches back for a nebulous "10 or 15 years" while other characters have aged or been edited out of "reality" altogether. Freedom City isn't bound by the restrictions of comic book publishing, so most characters in the setting have aged as time has passed. However, it's possible that even this universe gets "revised" and that the present situation isn't how it's always been. After all, history *has* been changed at least once in the Freedom Universe—Who is to say it hasn't happened before without notice?

Freedom City Was Rebuilt Differently: The near-destruction of Freedom City by the Terminus Invasion gives you plenty of leeway to change details around. Want to add a new building or take out an existing one? Do so or assume a building was destroyed in '93 (or during some other super-battle) and it was rebuilt differently. Dr. Metropolis is another factor to use, as he sometimes does inexplicable things for his own mysterious reasons.

There Are Fewer Heroes: If you find the heroic population of Freedom City a little too crowded for your taste, feel free to kill off more heroes during the Terminus Invasion. Maybe Omega killed *all* the heroes in Freedom City before Centurion finally overcame him, making the player characters the first in an entirely new generation. Alternately, you can keep some of the dead heroes alive, although you may have to change a few details. For example, if the Centurion doesn't die, the Sentry Statue (p. 68) is built in his honor, not as a memorial.

Some (or All) of the Heroes Are Villains: All of the hero write-ups in this book have a "villain option" that allows you to use the characters as bad guys in your campaign. You can switch around the roles of the heroes and villains as desired, making existing heroes into villains for your heroes to fight.

Public confidence followed on the heels of these brave men and their actions. Freedom City saw huge advancements in economics and technology through the 1990s and its population swelled accordingly. New heroes began popping up as abruptly as they had in the 1940s, and many veteran heroes returned publicly or in secret to mentor and advise heroism's new generation. New incarnations of older institutions also rose again, and Freedom City is proud to be home to more superheroes and teams than any other city across the world.

In the immediate present, Freedom City soldiers boldly into the twenty-first century. The country-wide economic downturns from the bursting of the technology bubble of the 1990s have largely passed Freedom City by due to a variety of factors. The city and its heroes prosper in the spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding. Although the world still faces powerful threats, the future of Freedom looks bright indeed.

January, 1989 Harry Wiseman takes over the helm of Castle Comics and immediately plans the move of its central publishing house and offices to Freedom City, which takes place in the spring of 1990.

November, 1992 Michael O'Connor's "No Moore" campaign wins him the election by a landslide and he devotes all his effort (and his considerable personal fortune) toward rebuilding the people's trust in their leaders and in Freedom City.

February 16–19, 1993 Omega, overlord of the Terminus, launches another invasion of Earth, establishing a beachhead in Freedom City. Although the FORCE Ops oppose him, they are no match for his super-soldiers, let alone Omega himself. The world's heroes unite against Omega, resulting in a climactic battle in Freedom City. The crisis destroys large areas of the city and a number of heroes die in the struggle. Centurion sacrifices his own life to shatter Omega's support-armor and drive him back into the Terminus.

February 20, 1993 Dr. Metropolis makes his presence known in Freedom City. FORCE Ops disbands in the aftermath of the invasion, leaving Freedom City without a team of heroes.

February 21, 1993 Mayor O'Connor repeals the Moore Act, making superheroes legal in Freedom City once more.

January 1, 1994 A group of heroes re-establishes the Freedom League, and it quickly becomes the world's premier superhero team.

February 19, 1994 Mayor O'Connor establishes Honor Day, the annual city-wide holiday to commemorate the defeat of Omega and the sacrifice and death of Centurion and other fallen heroes.

March 21, 1995 Malador takes control of Dr. Metropolis and makes him seal up five occupied buildings for ritual human sacrifice on a massive scale. Eldrich, Lantern John, and Siren defeat the enthralled hero and the Atlantean sorcerer. Malador appears slain when the now-freed Dr. Metropolis drops a building on him, but he later battles Eldrich in late 1996.

November, 1996 O'Connor wins re-election to the mayor's office.

July 17, 1997 The Factor Four battle the Atom Family and while they are defeated, they manage to destroy the top three floors of the Goodman Building. Dr. Metropolis and the Atoms repair the building by the year's end.

December 31, 1999 Despite world-wide fears of computer chaos, the Freedom League handily defeats the Millennium Bug and his Y2K Drones. On the same night, Evening and the Eye of Justice defeat the Freebooter's plans to use a tailored Y2K virus to distribute the wealth of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to private citizens' bank accounts across the globe.

March 15, 2000 The Goodman Building, its top six floors long undisturbed behind an impenetrable force field, becomes home

to the next generation of the Atom Family: Dr. Atom's four super-powered grandchildren and their guardian, Jack Wolf. They deactivate the force field and reestablish the Nucleus, the Atom Family's headquarters.

August 1, 2000 Duncan Summers, the original Raven, opens the Claremont Academy in Bayview. He begins teaching the next generation of super-powered youngsters about the deeds and sacrifices of all those who had come before them.

November, 2000 O'Connor wins re-election to a third term in office.

December 31, 2000 Millennium Bug, with some ultradimensional help from an unknown benefactor in the Terminus, wreaks havoc by freeing all the villains of Blackgate Penitentiary. While the Bug and most others meet defeat that same night, it takes the world's heroes more than six months to recapture all the escapees, the last being the Green Man after his defeat by the Next-Gen.

June 22, 2001 The Crime League destroys Freedom Hall and seriously wounds or disables most of the Freedom League. Daedalus defeats the villains apparently by himself, although unconfirmed rumors suggest he had aid from the mysterious Foreshadow. The League rebuilds Freedom Hall to its current splendor within a year.

September 18, 2001 The criminal mastermind Dr. Sin kidnaps his old enemy Duncan Summers, luring granddaughter, the Raven, into a trap. The Next-Gen intervenes and rescues them both, earning Dr. Sin's enmity and respect.

February 19, 2002 A man claiming to be Centurion appears, saying that he was trapped in the Terminus after Omega's defeat and only barely escaped. He turns out to be an imposter created by Omega to infiltrate Earth's heroes and pave the way for a new invasion. Chase Atom exposes the deception and the false Centurion is apparently destroyed in battle.

April 30, 2002 The Atom Family confronts the Factor Four in various ancient archeological sites around the world as the criminals seek to complete an occult ritual that will both vastly increase their elemental power and give them full control over it. By secretly switching a fake for one of the stolen artifacts, the Atoms spoil the ritual, causing the Factor Four to become trapped in a distant mystical dimension for a time.

May 5, 2002 After many months of inactivity, Argo suddenly reactivates and breaks out of ASTRO Labs, where he was being studied. The powerful android goes on a rampage until the Freedom League is able to contain and deactivate him once more. It is later revealed that Argo's sudden reactivation was caused by Talos to provide a distraction while Foundry agents pilfered certain Freedom City companies of their technological secrets.

June 20, 2002 The Raven and her foe Magpie temporarily team up to find a mysterious time-and dimension-hopping thief who had stolen several art treasures that Magpie took from their rightful owners. They recover the artworks, although Magpie evades capture once again.

July 7, 2002 The colossal mutant monster Gigantosaurus attacks the Ocean Heights Amusement Park as a prelude to an Atlantean invasion. Members of the Freedom League rescue the endangered park-goers and drive the creature back to sea.

July 8-10, 2002 The Freedom League and the Atom Family stand off against the Atlanteans preparing to invade the surface world. Meanwhile, the Next-Gen travels to Atlantis with their teammate Nereid to help free her father and the rest of the Atlantean royal family from the clutches of the Deep Ones, who have seized control of Atlantis using a Lemurian artifact. Once the artifact is destroyed, the Atlanteans are freed from the Deep Ones' control and invasion is averted.

August 9, 2002 Warden captures and imprisons the "juvenile delinquents" of the Next-Gen one by one with the intention of "teaching them a lesson." Instead, he ends up being the one to learn a lesson when Bowman and his teammates escape from Warden's traps and capture him, although he escapes from custody shortly thereafter.

September 22, 2002 The Atom Family diverts the course of an asteroid on a collision course with Earth, averting massive devastation. They later discover that the asteroid's course was deliberately changed by agents of the Grue Empire in hopes of creating a disaster that would make Earth easy prey for later conquest. The heroes drive the Grue from the solar system.

October 31, 2002 Foreshadow breaks up a gang of vampires operating in Southside, using the Eclipse nightclub as their base of operations.

USING HISTORY IN THE CAMPAIGN

The history of Freedom City provides a backdrop for the modern setting and adds some detail and depth to the places and characters in this book, but there are additional ways you can use the history of the city in your game.

LEGACY

Many heroes (and villains, for that matter) have left a legacy that lives on to the present day. Some current characters follow in the footsteps of predecessors from previous generations. You can use this idea in your own game, either by using the legacy characters in this book or adding your own to the world. For example, Lady Liberty and Johnny Rocket could be player characters in a Freedom League campaign, trying to live up to the legends they inherited from their famous predecessors. You can take famous heroes from history like the Centurion and give them a legacy in the campaign. A player could create and run a new Centurion. Is he (or she) the child or grandchild of the original, or just a hero with similar (or different) powers inspired by the original Centurion? How will the world see this new hero and how difficult will it be to live up to a legend?

TIME TRAVEL

With opportunities for time travel, the past doesn't have to remain closed to the player characters. You can send them to witness or participate in any of the events in the history of Freedom City, and you can take characters from history and bring them into the present day. You'll have to decide for yourself whether or not the characters can change history, and what will happen if they do. Most comic book stories assume that heroes do their best to avoid changing history in any way, or that it's simply not possible, but it can make for an interesting story if the heroes *can* actually

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"The club was totally packed. Right in the middle of 'Never Graduated from Old School,' the building started shaking. We kept on playing at first. A couple hundred pogoing punks can make any building shake! There was a blinding flash and someone ripped the mic from my hands. She looked just like Lady Liberty, but with the anarchy sign on her costume. She yelled into the mic, 'I am Lady Anarchy!' and the crowd went wild. People just thought it was part of the show. I took Scooter's mic and the band kicked into a cover of 'Anarchy Burger (Hold the Government),' by the Vandals. It was our best show ever."

— "MP", age 33, lead singer, Ex-Teenage Rebels

change history. They may find that the original was better and have to find a way to change it all back!

FLASHBACKS

There are several immortal (or extremely long-lived) characters in Freedom City who actually witnessed most of the city's history. If you have a similar player character in your group, you can explore the character's long history through flashbacks, telling the story of one of the character's experiences that happened some time ago. For example, a veteran Golden Age hero of the group may encounter something that triggers a recollection of an "untold tale" of his exploits in the 1940s. You can run the flashback as an independent adventure before returning to the events of the present day.

HISTORICAL CAMPAIGNS

You might even decide to set your regular *Mutants & Masterminds* campaign in an earlier period of Freedom City's history. The 1940s, with the adventures of the Liberty League during WWII, and the 1960s, with the original Freedom League, both make excellent settings for campaigns. You also could set a game during the darker period of the 1980s, with FORCE Ops and other vigilante heroes operating outside the law. If you run a historical campaign, feel free to change any "future" events as needed. Perhaps things will turn out differently in your game than in the "official" history of Freedom City.

GENERATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

Finally, you can combine many of the ideas above into a campaign that spans decades, or even longer. The players can take the roles of characters in the early days of Freedom City (maybe monster hunters like Elijah Prophet or wrongfully persecuted witches and sorcerers). As the campaign progresses, the characters age, have children, and players shift to new generations of characters in different eras. Players can establish heroic dynasties that extend across centuries as the group builds an entire alternate history for Freedom City, culminating in the modern day, or maybe even going beyond, into the distant future!



CHAPTER TWO

FREEDOM CITY OVERVIEW

"Forget whatever you learned in the minors, kid. Freedom City is a whole new ballgame."

—JERRY JONAS, EDITOR OF THE FREEDOM CITY LEDGER

Today, Freedom City is a thriving metropolis of modern buildings and architecture. The city is home to millions of people, and more move into the area each day, drawn by the promise of a new life in a city filled with new jobs and new challenges. Freedom is one of the largest cities in the United States and it has a promising future.

True to its name, Freedom is a strongly political city. The mayor is popular and his policies are heralded as visionary, but there are still many conflicts—conflicts between old and new, between long-time residents and new arrivals, and especially between the old bureaucratic establishment and the new city government. There are also geographic and sociologic contrasts as well—Downtown is clean and safe, but just across the river in Southside are casinos controlled by the Mob and slum areas plagued with crime and violence. Freedom City is a diverse place, a city of contrasts.

The city is a major center for the media and information industry, home to the giant New Horizon Media Corporation and its major subsidiary GBN, the Global Broadcasting Network. Financial corporations also take advantage of the city's state-of-the-art infrastructure to provide them with up-to-the-minute information. Freedom is a city on the move.

VITAL STATISTICS

Size: 250 square miles (metro area)

Average Elevation: 94 feet

Climate: Temperate

POPULATION

Metro area: 3,812,500

Civilian Workforce: 2.9 million

RACIAL BACKGROUND

Caucasian: 53%

African American: 20%

Latino American: 18%

Asian American: 6.7%

Native American: 0.9%

Other: 1.4%

RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

Percentage of population regularly attending weekly religious services: 37%

Protestant: 59%

Catholic: 20%

Jewish: 9%

Muslim: 3%
 Buddhist: 1.5%
 Hindu: 1.2%
 Other: 6.3%

LEADING PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS

United Methodist Church
 United Church of Christ
 Church of Jesus Christ, Latter Day Saints (Mormon)
 Southern Baptist Church

ECONOMICS

Average household income: \$41,000
 Percentage of households below poverty line: 8.4%
 Unemployment: 2% (metro area), 6.4% (total area)
 Average home price: \$125,000
 Average monthly rent, two-bedroom apartment: \$650 to \$1,400

POLITICS

Percentage of population registered to vote: 63%
 Average voter turnout: 54.8%
 Democrat: 45%
 Republican: 41%
 Independent: 8%
 Libertarian: 4%
 Green: 1%
 Other: 1%
 Mayor: Michael O'Connor, Jr.

TALLEST BUILDINGS

Pyramid Plaza: 90 stories (1,200 feet)
 Rath & Stromberg Building: 55 stories (745 feet)
 Federal Plaza: 50 stories (675 feet)
 Goodman Building: 45 stories (615 feet)
 GBN Tower: 42 stories (571 feet)
 Eastern Seaboard Bank Building: 40 stories (555 feet)

TOPOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

Freedom City rests along the American Atlantic coast at the confluence of the Wading and South Rivers where they flow into a deep bay and out into the Atlantic Ocean. The Interstate passes close by the city along the coast, providing easy access to all points of the city by land.

The heart of the city—its downtown—lies between the rivers while the entire metropolitan area spans all sides of the rivers. Southside can be found on the far bank of the South River. Northward is Hanover, a largely college and technical community, home to a number of small businesses. To the west of the city is a collection of suburbs and a large national forest with unspoiled natural terrain and plenty of opportunities for camping, hiking, and other outdoor activities. The downtown peninsula's elevation rises gradually toward Lantern Hill, while the land south of the South River rises toward low hills in Bayview and the areas south of the Jordan Airport. Parts of the seaside areas around the

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS FREEDOM CITY?

The exact location of Freedom City is left somewhat vague in the tradition of many great fictional comic book cities. This allows Gamemasters to place Freedom City wherever they want, as best suits their own games. Some of the better possibilities for Freedom City's location include the following:

New England: Freedom City may be in Massachusetts, either north of Boston or south of Cape Cod. It's possible to place the city farther north in New Hampshire or Maine, or farther south in Rhode Island or Connecticut. Many of the city's colonial elements certainly fit in with a New England locale.

Mid-Atlantic: Freedom City could easily be located in southern New Jersey, putting it closer to New York City and Atlantic City. The coastline of Maryland and Delaware are also good possibilities, putting Freedom City closer to places like Washington D.C.

The South: Freedom City could be along the coast of Virginia, or North or South Carolina. This may give the city a somewhat different character and climate, but most of the details remain the same.

Replacement: If the GM desires, Freedom City can take the place of an existing eastern seaboard city such as Boston, Newark, Norfolk, even New York City. This may be a matter of alternate history or simply a replacement that isn't questioned by anyone in the Freedom Universe. The assumption in this book is that Freedom doesn't replace any major city.

Elsewhere: With some additional modifications, Freedom City can be placed almost anywhere the GM wishes. It could be a coastal city along the Gulf of Mexico or even the West Coast by changing around some of the directions (and associated names). Gamemasters can also take particular parts of the city and use them in completely different settings.

Centery Narrows and Great Bay rise a short distance above the water with some seaside cliffs in spots. Along the east are several seacoast communities, exclusive estates, and manor houses, some of which date back centuries.

The climate of the Freedom City area is temperate with regular rainfall in the spring and moderate snowfall in winter. The worst storms blow in from the ocean, but most tropical storms and hurricanes strike further south along the coast. The last major natural hurricane to strike the region was in 1987, although unnatural storms created by villains like Dr. Stratos have occurred much more recently. The region of the city is considered seismically stable—there hasn't been a natural earthquake in the city's recorded history.

WATERWAYS

Two rivers form the main waterways of the Freedom area: the Wading River and the South River. The Wading River flows from high foothills to the north and west, and was named for its fairly shallow depth. Although the southern parts of the Wading River were dredged years ago to deepen it, it remains difficult for larger ships to navigate much past Kingston. The South River is deeper but follows a more meandering course from the foothills to the

west. Both rivers meet at a confluence called the Centery Narrows that flows out into Great Bay.

The surrounding North Bay and Port Regal regions shelter the bay. Pleasure craft, particularly sailboats, are a common sight on the bay, and there are several marinas located in North Bay and Port Regal. A United States Naval Station is located at Lonely Point, on the southeastern edge of the bay. Great Bay sees regular ship traffic to and from the city, and the city government runs a ferry service from the metro area out to the bay communities and back, with ferries running every hour on the hour during the day.

LAYOUT OF THE CITY

Freedom City began as a small town, and later city, at the confluence of the Wading and South Rivers. It eventually grew to cover most of the peninsula. Modern Freedom City incorporates that area plus the surrounding communities on the opposite banks of both rivers, covering a much larger area. The downtown area of the city still occupies the Great Bay Peninsula, but the city stretches from Hanover in the north to Southside and Bayview in the south.

Freedom City's builders laid the city out as logically as possible within the constraints of existing roads, land area, and geological features. The central area of the city is fairly new, as are the suburban communities to the west. Sandwiched among those areas are older communities, ranging from the affluent Lantern Hill in the north and the crowded West End to the less fortunate Greenbank and Fens neighborhoods along the South River.

STREETS

Downtown Freedom City generally follows a grid pattern. East-west streets bear the names of prominent individuals honored by Freedom City. North-south avenues are numbered, starting from Riverside and heading westward to the Wallace Expressway. Alleys running between buildings in the downtown area are common, and are generally numbered separately from streets.

In outlying areas (like Lantern Hill, Hanover, and Southside), the streets tend to meander more. There are also more one-way streets, cul-de-sacs, and multi-street intersections. These streets date back many decades, so they are often narrower, less organized, and in slightly more worn condition. Traffic back-ups are becoming increasingly common on both sides of the downtown area, and some renovation is already underway.

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"You know what one of the worst things is about having the Freedom League duke it out with some creep in the city? Car alarms! Sure there's property damage, but Doc Metro takes care of most of that, and yeah, it can be dangerous, but people are smart enough to get out of the way when the heroes take on some nutcase. But one punch from Captain Thunder or one sonic boom from Johnny Rocket and every freaking car alarm within ten, fifteen blocks goes off, and half the time people aren't in any hurry to go out and turn them off. What a racket!"

—Abner Holtz, age 47, shopkeeper

AREAS OF THE CITY

Although an example of a city on the cutting edge, Freedom City is far from homogeneous. The city is divided up into a number of diverse boroughs and neighborhoods, from the ultra-modern downtown to the sheltered suburban neighborhoods west of the city to the glitz (and grime) of Southside.

DOWNTOWN FREEDOM

The central area of Freedom City features ultra-modern buildings, many of them created by Dr. Metropolis, a

member of the Freedom League (p. 99). These particular buildings are advanced even beyond modern construction methods. The remaining buildings use the finest modern construction methods and materials, making downtown Freedom one of the greatest North American metropolises.

The downtown area is far from sterile and "planned," however. The buildings show a variety of architectural styles and there are a number of parks and tree-lined streets, giving the city a pleasant, colonial charm in many areas, contrasting with the modern structures and conveniences.

THE WATERFRONT

The city's waterfront is located along the southern tip of the peninsula, lined with piers that handle Freedom City's shipping traffic, along with warehouses that store goods being shipped in and out of the city. The Waterfront is considerably cleaner and more prosperous than many similar areas in other eastern cities, a source of civic pride.

The piers also feature several fine seafood restaurants as well as the Freedom Aquarium, a modern tourist attraction and scientific research facility. Pier Two has been converted into a shopping center, with a number of local stores and restaurants.

The city's labor unions are quite strong in the Waterfront area and most of the dockside workers are union members. Thus far this has caused no disputes, since the workers are well paid and working conditions are good. The police department has expressed some concern over smuggling from Southside working its way up into the Waterfront, and keeps a close watch on shipments moving in and out of the docks.

Places of Interest

Freedom Aquarium (p. 66)

Infinity (p. 72)

Pier Two Shopping Center (p. 48)

RIVERSIDE

Near the Waterfront is the bohemian, Old World charm of Riverside. The area features several small parks, tree-lined streets, and brickwork buildings. The neighborhood is popular with young people, particularly students and artists, for its relatively low rents and loft apartments and studios. Riverside is becoming pricier, but not as quickly as parts of Midtown or the western suburbs.

The rest of the neighborhood features small shops and restaurants, often catering to the avant-garde. For example there are vegetarian restaurants and bistros, craft boutiques, pagan, New Age, and gay and lesbian bookshops, comic book stores, game stores, and so forth. Meadow Street is the main thoroughfare where many of these places can be found. A number of the side streets in Riverside are closed to all but foot traffic (and the ever-present locals wearing in-line skates), making them popular places for afternoon strolls and shopping. In the evening, Riverside offers a number of bars, coffeehouses, and nightclubs, many with open-mike nights showcasing local talent.

Places of Interest

Ditko Street (p. 61)
Freedom School for the Arts (p. 55)
The Never-ending Story (p. 48)
Riverside Park and the Sentry Statue (p. 68)
Midnite Hour (p. 72)

WADING WAY

Running along the northern side of the downtown area is Freedom's business district, centered on Wading Way. The street is flanked by brokerage houses, banks, investment companies, and other businesses, all of which exchange billions of dollars on a daily basis. Like the rest of the downtown area, the business district benefits from the city's ultra-modern infrastructure, particularly information and communication networks, which carry the tremendous load of calls, faxes, and e-mails going in and out every minute. The district's buildings are some of the tallest in the city, towers of glass and steel featuring some novel architectural styles and techniques, courtesy of Dr. Metropolis and some of the world's most famous architects.

The city monorail runs along the outside edge of the business district, carrying many people to and from work each day, while many others take the city subways. Most of the office buildings have extensive underground parking garages as well. Still, street parking can be difficult to find and the streets are nearly always lined with cars. The sidewalks bustle with businesspeople, often talking on cell phones, as they make

their way between offices, as well as messengers and other people going about their business.

The so-called "Golden Row" of the business district has some of the tallest buildings in Freedom. It includes Rath & Stromberg Plaza, built by the investment corporation, the Eastern Seaboard Bank Building, a towering structure of steel and blue-tinted glass, and the massive Pyramid Plaza, a trio of triangular office towers set at the corners of a triangular plaza. The triple-towers are the tallest buildings in the city. The area also features numerous stores, mostly high-priced national chains like Macy's and Neiman Marcus.

Places of Interest

Eastern Seaboard Bank Building (p. 52)
Pyramid Plaza (p. 49)
Rath & Stromberg Plaza (p. 52)

CITY CENTER

The heart of the downtown area rises around Centennial Circle, a traffic circle where the city's diagonal roads converge. The city center is home to Federal Plaza and governmental buildings, including the towering Federal Building. It is also the location for the new City Hall and Freedom Hall, the headquarters of the Freedom League.

Places of Interest

City Hall (p. 35)
Federal Plaza (p. 38)
Freedom Hall (p. 81)
Freedom Public Library (p. 56)
Pinnacle Path Headquarters (p. 71)

MIDTOWN

The central area of the city bounded by the monorail lines, Liberty Park, and City Center is called Midtown. Among other things, it is the largest downtown residential area and features a number of high-rise apartment buildings and condominiums. Midtown is also home to shopping with the massive Millennium Mall, along with numerous other stores. There are also a number of fast-food restaurants as well as more upscale establishments, including small bistros and the restaurants of the fine hotels in the area. One of the most popular eateries in Midtown is the original Champion's franchise, located next door to the Super Museum.

On the spiritual side, Midtown has a number of churches, including St. George's Cathedral, located on 52nd Avenue across from Liberty Park. That avenue also features expensive townhouses

The Hottest Markets in America

FAST COMPANY MAGAZINE: JULY 02

ONE OF THE MOST UP-AND-COMING markets in the country is Freedom City's Wading Way district, which has become home to many of the nation's fastest-growing companies. Brokers have flocked to the city's ultra-modern information network and Wading Way has the potential to become another Wall Street in the eyes of many of the city's businesspeople.

"If you want to see the financial future of America, you keep an eye on Freedom City," says famed investor Arthur W. Stromberg. "And if you actually want to be a part of that future," he says with a smile, "stop watching, get off your tail, and get over here!"



and private clubs, such as the Cape and Cowl Club and the Midnight Society.

Finally, Midtown is home to the Goodman Building, the home and headquarters of the world-famous Atom Family (p. 119).

Places of Interest

The Cape & Cowl Club (p. 76)
 Castle Comics (p. 61)
 Champion's (p. 59)
Freedom City Ledger Building (p. 62)
 Freedom City Historical Museum (p. 57)
 The Goodman Building (p. 82)
 Legends (p. 72)
 Millennium (p. 72)
 Midnight Society Mansion (p. 76)
 Millennium Mall (p. 48)
 St. George's Cathedral (p. 64)
 Super Museum (p. 58)

THE NORTH END

The North End lies north of Liberty Park and the monorail line. Many consider this a strongly intellectual area centered on Freedom City University and high-tech companies like ASTRO Labs. Small businesses catering to students and people in the high-tech industry are found throughout the area, including computer stores, clothing shops, small cafés and coffeehouses.

Places of Interest

ASTRO Labs (p. 75)

Hunter Museum of Natural History (p. 57)

Freedom Medical Center (p. 59)

Freedom City University Campus (p. 55)

PARKSIDE

The strip of land running between Route 6 and Liberty Park, hemmed by the North End and the Theatre District, is called Parkside. It resembles Midtown but tends to combine the high-tech feel of the North End with the artistic sensibilities of the Theatre District. Parkside is home to a number of high-rise apartments and condominiums overlooking Liberty Park, with price tags affordable only to those with money to burn. Most are home to up-and-coming businesspeople working in the North End and Wading Way, along with some well-off artists and media personalities. A Parkside address is a sure sign of someone who's arrived on the Freedom scene.

Parkside is also known as the home of the Globe Broadcasting Network building, not far from Liberty Park. GBN is one of the largest media networks in the world, owned by New Horizon Media, Inc.

Places of Interest

GBN Building (p. 64)
 Liberty Park (p. 67)
 Kirby Fine Arts Museum (p. 58)

THE THEATRE DISTRICT

South of Parkside is the Theatre District, a neighborhood of small apartment buildings clustered around a number of local theatres

and clubs featuring some of the finest nightlife in Freedom City. Entertainment ranges from Broadway-style plays and opera to avant-garde productions of performance art and rock concerts.

The emphasis in the Theatre District is on performance; gallery shows and such tend to be in Riverside for the most part. Many young actors and performers live in the area, although some complain that the rents are becoming too expensive for them. The truly successful people move up to Parkside when they hit the big time.

The eastern edge of the Theatre District, where it meets City Center, is home to the massive Liberty Dome, which holds sporting events and concerts. The Theatre District also features many small restaurants and eateries, many of them open late to cater to after-show crowds.

Places of Interest

Beaudrie Opera House (p. 56)
The Liberty Dome (p. 79)

THE FENS

The Fens lie south of the Theatre District on the shore of the river. Originally a marshy area, it was filled in years ago to allow for the expansion of the city and to eliminate potentially disease-carrying insects. Now the Fens are becoming infected by a new sort of disease altogether. The area becomes progressively more low rent with each block away from the Theatre District and toward the river.

The Fens are home to sleazy porn theaters and adult bookstores, a large number of waterfront bars, and relatively cheap housing. More than a few people have commented that it is unfortunate the Fens have been largely spared the damage inflicted on the rest of the downtown area by super-battles. Of any of the areas of Freedom City, it is one that should be leveled. Still, the Fens are considerably cleaner and less dangerous than they have been for the past few decades. The FCPD has undertaken increased vigilance in the area and the city is doing what it can to "clean up" the Fens.

NORTH FREEDOM

North of the Wading River, Freedom City is strongly influenced by the image of "the city of the future" combined with an appreciation for the structures of the past. North Freedom is made up of communities involved in education and high technology along with some of the wealthiest and most influential areas of the city.

HANOVER

The largest area of North Freedom is Hanover, which covers nearly as much area as downtown. Much of Hanover is focused on small high-technology business, particularly Internet "e-business". This is enhanced by the presence of the Hanover Institute of Technology, one of the nation's most prestigious schools for technical education.

New business opportunities have helped revitalize Hanover. Property values continue to climb and considerable urban renewal has taken place with the conversion of old structures and the building of new housing, shopping, and other facilities. The district has a "college town" feel to it, with the area near the HIT

campus catering to the needs and interests of students and young technical professionals.

Places of Interest

The Albright Institute (p. 74)
Daily Word offices (p. 62)
The Fourth World (p. 72)
Freedom City Correctional Facility (p. 46)
Jameson Airport (p. 31)
Hanover Institute of Technology (p. 55)
Hanover Zoo (p. 67)
The Machine (p. 72)
Master Lee's School of Self Defense (p. 56)
The Promenade (p. 67)
Shuster Arena (p. 80)
USNet office park (p. 50)

KINGSTON

The Kingston area, tucked between Route 4 and the Garden State Parkway, is more upper middle class than Hanover, progressing away from student living to places owned by technology professionals. Despite being close to the city, Kingston still retains a very suburban feel, which is something local residents value and fight to maintain. Property values have increased, but people in Kingston resist too much development of their area, wanting to keep the charm and pleasant aspects of their community intact.

NORTH BAY

From the bay-shore to Route 9 is the North Bay area, a posh district of expensive waterfront homes and historic mansions owned by some of Freedom City's wealthiest families. North Bay features exclusive yacht clubs and beachfront property, with few stretches of public beach. During the holiday season, the North Bay mansions are beautifully decorated and there are tours to see them. North Bay is the ideal place to locate a "stately manor" owned by a major character.

Places of Interest

North Bay Yacht Club (p. 77)
Trainor Airport (p. 31)

WEST FREEDOM

The area of the city west of the Wallace Expressway comprises West Freedom. It's a district made up of a contrast between old and new, between progress and old-fashioned ways of doing things. It includes older neighborhoods of Freedom City as well as newly developed areas that expand the outskirts of the city.

LANTERN HILL

The area near the mouth of the Wading River rises to a low hill that is actually the site of some of the oldest settlements in the Freedom area. Lantern Hill was built up in Revolutionary times and became one of the most exclusive neighborhoods for the judges, bankers, and "old money" of Freedom City. These days, Lantern Hill isn't nearly as exclusive as it used to be. The garden apartments



super-vision MAGAZINE

TRUE SUPER STORIES

"When Gigantosaur rose up out of the water right next to the park and roared, we just stood there looking up at it, too surprised and scared to move until the shadow of its foot passed overhead and we realized it was going to step on us. By then it was too late. Thank God Johnny Rocket was able to move everyone out of the way in time. One second I'm looking up at this giant monster about to squash me. There's this tremendous wind and the next thing I know I'm standing outside the park looking up at the sky. The Freedom League drove Gigantosaur back into the ocean, but I don't think I'll ever look at Ocean Heights quite the same way again."

—Julia Daley, age 24, nutritionist

and row houses are still wonderful examples of 18th and 19th century architecture, many of them having undergone modern renovations. The neighborhood has a distinctly colonial flavor with narrower, tree-lined streets, brick-front buildings, and small garden plots or window boxes of flowers. Lantern Hill is home to a number of older historical sites, from the home of Revolutionary War hero Joseph Clark to the Lantern Hill Cemetery and one of Freedom's oldest houses of worship, St. Stephen's Church.

Places of Interest

St. Stephen's Church (p. 71)

THE WEST END

Flowing down from Lantern Hill toward Greenbank is the West End of Freedom City. The West End was originally made up of a number of small ethnic communities settled around the end of the 19th century. Today, it has blended together into an overall homogenous community, although pockets of the original cultures that settled here can still be found along with a number of newcomers to the area. It's a boisterous, mostly lower middle-class, area. Row houses and apartment buildings are common, along with garden-style apartments with common courtyards. Due to its cheap housing in its infancy, the West End became home to Irish, Italian, Greek, and Jewish immigrants. African Americans, Hispanics, and Asians followed in later decades and centuries. The West End features the best ethnic restaurants in the city, particularly delis and pizza places.

Unfortunately, the West End still sees a fair amount of crime, particularly from gangs, and organized crime retains a foothold here, despite the best efforts of the FCPD. Culturally, the West End is squeezed in between Parkside and the new developments like Ashton. This leaves the area with little room to grow, and some feel that Freedom City's growth will eventually mean the end of the old neighborhoods as they're torn down to make way for new developments.

Places of Interest

Ashton Mall (p. 48)
 The Secret Bar (p. 72)
 St. Sebastian's (p. 71)
 Temple Ben David (p. 71)
 Trinity Hospital (p. 59)

GREENBANK

Greenbank, between the West End and the South River, was best known for being a railroad stop where goods moved in and out of the Freedom City area by train. It was filled with warehouses, rail yards, and shipping companies, where a lot of West Enders used to work. These days, Greenbank is a fairly depressed area. Freedom City doesn't see as much rail-traffic as it used to, and many of the old warehouses are closed down. The recent extension into the city of a maglev track for a new high-speed bullet train has improved conditions in Greenbank and created new jobs. Still, the area is a haven for criminals and organized crime and the city government hopes new prosperity will help to clean it up.

Greenbank is centered on the Union Rail Yards, where trains move in and out of the city. It's occasionally also used for smuggling and clandestine meetings, so the police (and heroes like Foreshadow) keep a watchful eye on it. The rail yards also make a great place for a super-battle, with plenty of things to throw around (or get thrown into).

ASHTON AND GRENVILLE

The bedroom communities of Ashton and Grenville are fairly new, having grown up over the past ten to fifteen years. Both are clean, new, modern suburban communities only barely keeping up with the demand for new homes from the people moving into the Freedom area. Although some think the new communities are too "uniform," with their six or seven styles of single-family homes, most find Ashton and Grenville pleasant and homey, with new neighborhoods, schools, shopping, and the like. Many of Freedom's middle class families live in the area, with more moving in all the time.

SOUTH FREEDOM

South Freedom lies on the other side of the South River from the downtown area and it is the area that may face the greatest challenges in Freedom's future. Parts of it are affluent or middle class, but other parts of South Freedom are stricken with poverty and plagued by crime, particularly the influence of organized crime. Wealth and poverty stand side by side in the area and the government hopes to make a difference by cleaning it up. It only remains to be seen if they can.

THE BOARDWALK

South Freedom is best known for the Boardwalk, which runs along the shore of the South River between the Wallace Expressway and Route 4. The boardwalk is lined with hotels and casinos, since gambling is legal in the area (but not in other parts of Freedom City, by local ordinance). Originally built during the heyday of the gangsters in the 1920s, some of the hotels really show their age

while many others have been recently rebuilt or renovated. Money pours into the Boardwalk from local people and thousands of tourists from all across the country. The local government and law enforcement are well aware that the Boardwalk is riddled with Mob corruption and influence, but efforts to close it down are met with stiff resistance because of the substantial amounts of income the city earns from taxing gambling and other recreational activities along the Boardwalk.

Places of Interest

Atlantis (p. 73)
 Golden Calf (p. 73)
 Our Lady of Mercy (p. 80)
 Paradise (p. 73)
 Southside Palace (p. 73)

SOUTHSIDE

South of the Boardwalk is the Southside district, bounded by Route 4 and Route 6. Southside is mostly middle- and lower-middle class, but growing pockets of poverty and crime have been eating away at the community for years. Much of the housing near the Boardwalk has dropped in value as crime and gang activities have increased. Many parts of Southside have seen crack houses and crystal meth dealers spring up, get rooted out by the police, then show back up somewhere down the street. Areas of low-income housing seem to breed crime, and people are careful about avoiding parts of Southside at night.

The southernmost area of Southside remains the safest and most middle-class, centered on the Freedom College campus and Jordan International Airport. However, property values near the airport tend to be fairly low, creating a kind of "buffer zone" of cheap housing in that area. Freedom College is an accredited state college that has something of a reputation as a "party school" and some local businesses (legal and otherwise) cater to the interests of college students looking for a good time.

Even Southside is seeing the impact of the prosperity of Freedom City, with more money going into public works and new construction. But, as some point out, there are concerns that the contractors and construction companies getting that money are influenced by organized crime, merely strengthening their position in Southside.

CAMPAIGN USE

Abandoned subway tunnels and stations under the city make great hideouts and bases for super-villains or even heroes who prefer to shy away from the public eye. The tunnels may also be home to sewer creatures, Serpent People, Sub-Terrans, underground refugees, mutants, or anything else the GM wants, leading to adventures down below the city streets.

The monorail makes a great high-profile target for terrorists and other criminals to threaten and a great landmark to get damaged during a super-battle downtown. A missed energy blast or a little too much knockback can result in damage to the monorail track, forcing the heroes to deal with an oncoming train as well as their opponents.



Places of Interest

DeCosta Construction (p. 49)
 Eclipse (p. 72)
 Freedom College (p. 55)
 Jordan International Airport (p. 33)
 Freedom Juvenile Hall (p. 46)
 Rocket Records (p. 48)

LINCOLN

West of Southside is the neighborhood of Lincoln, built up in the 1950s and 60s. Lincoln has been a predominantly African American area from the beginning and remains so today, although with a fair number of Hispanic and other ethnic groups. Many of the people living here work in places along the Boardwalk, but many young people also become involved in gangs and criminal activities as a way out of the poverty of the neighborhood.

Places of Interest

City Landfill (p. 38)
 Joseph Clark High School (p. 54)
 Lincoln Youth Center (p. 135)
 South River State Penitentiary (p. 46)
 Southside Pharmacy (p. 71)

BAYVIEW

East of Southside is the community of Bayview, between Route 4 and the Interstate, bounded by South Bay Road on one side and the South River on the other. Bayview is a more affluent commu-

nity than Southside, which resembles Kingston, on the other side of the narrows. It goes from waterfront property with a spectacular view of the Centery Narrows and Riverside toward the higher ground near South Bay Road, known as the Bayview Heights. Property in Bayview is more expensive than average and there is community concern about crime making its way in from Southside. Neighborhood watches are becoming more common, along with contracts with Stronghold Security (p. 53).

Places of Interest

Bayview Waste Treatment Plant (p. 38)
 Claremont Academy (p. 54)

PORT REGAL

Port Regal is similar in many respects to North Bay, but it's somewhat less affluent and most of the old mansions and Victorian-era homes have been sold to businesses or turned into bed-and-breakfast inns. Port Regal clusters around Lake MacKenzie and the peninsulas jutting out into the bay. The lake area features more upscale homes, particularly those with lakefront property. The lake is a popular place for recreation during the summer and fall, replete with boating and other water activities. Further north, the demographics become solidly middle-class, with the Ocean Heights amusement park located at the end of the peninsula. Off an out of the way seaside road stands the Providence Asylum, the sprawling Victorian mansion of the Phillips family that became a mental hospital in the early twentieth century and continues in that role today.



Mayor Michael O'Connor presents plaque to the Atom Family (from left to right: Tess Atom, Chase Atom, Maximus Atom, and Vicky Atom) yesterday outside City Hall. Greg Kirkpatrick / Staff Photographer

City honors Atom Family with plaque

Despite fears, award ceremony is villain no-show

By Julie Streeter
STAFF WRITER

Mayor Michael O'Connor, Jr. yesterday honored the world-famous Atom Family at a public ceremony outside City Hall. Held in recognition of the team's efforts to protect Freedom City in recent years, the ceremony drew a large crowd of onlookers, well-

wishers and assorted local and national media.

"These young people are heroes in the truest sense of the word, and Freedom City is both proud and honored to count them among its citizens. We must never forget their willingness and dedication to use their extraordinary gifts for the welfare of this city, its people and the world," Mayor O'Connor said.

O'Connor presented the Atom Family with a commemorative plaque inscribed "From the City-

zens of Freedom City, in Eternal Gratitude."

"We just want to say thanks," Maximus Atom, the eldest of the Atom siblings, said. "We're every bit as proud of Freedom City as it is of us. We wouldn't want to live anywhere else. Freedom is our home and we've privileged to be able to help out."

"I wish that our parents could have been here for this," said a tearful Tess Atom, "but we know that they're always with us in spirit. They, our grandfather, and our

Uncle Jack showed us what it means to be heroes. Whatever we learned, we learned it from them."

"Thank you, thank you very much," said fifteen year-old Victoria Atom, and her thirteen year-old brother Chase (the youngest of the Atom siblings) said only, "Thanks, everyone."

The four members of the Atom Family have become world-renowned as heroes despite their youth, and have in recent years

"We're every bit as proud of Freedom City as it is of us, and we wouldn't want to live anywhere else. Freedom is our home and we've privileged to be able to help out."

MAXIMUS ATOM,
leader of the Atom Family

SEE Atom Family, A15

Places of Interest

Lake MacKenzie (p. 67)
Providence Asylum (p. 60)
Ocean Heights Amusement Park (p. 67)

LONELY POINT

The most isolated point of land in Freedom, Lonely Point is named for its rocky and desolate terrain. There are sandbars and scrub plants, but little else along the narrow peninsula. Lonely Point is home to a United States Naval station (p. 65), and a single road leads out there from Port Regal. The Naval station has seen an increasing amount of activity over the past year. The station sometimes serves as a drop-off or pick-up point for prisoners moving to and from Blackstone Island offshore (p. 46).

GETTING AROUND FREEDOM CITY

Many Freedomians get around by driving, and the city is relatively "car friendly," although there are the occasional traffic problems, particularly in the downtown area. The city offers several other transportation options, as well as ways of getting into and out of the metro area.

FREEDOM TRANSIT SYSTEM

The city government is justifiably proud of the Freedom Transit System, or FTS, also known as "the Freets." The system handles mass transit in the metropolitan area, using a combination of buses, subways, and a new monorail system. The city prides itself on having a mass transit system that is efficient and in widespread use, reducing traffic congestion on the city streets. With the FTS and some small amount of walking, there is nowhere within Freedom City's metro area that cannot be reached in a reasonable timeframe.

City buses run throughout the metro area with frequent stops. Many of the buses are old, but the city is in the process of replacing the older buses with new models.

The Freedom subway system underwent heavy reconstruction and renovation after an attack by the Terra-King and his minions several years ago. A number of subway tunnels collapsed or were so badly damaged it was considered safer to seal them off. The assistance of several supers (particularly Dr. Metropolis) permitted the excavation of newer tunnels and stations. Freedom currently has one of the most modern and efficient subway systems in the country. The trains run throughout the metro area, to the outskirts of the city, with regular stops. Letters (A, B, C, etc.) designate the different subway lines.

The pride and (usually) joy of the FTS is the city's monorail system, which runs in a ring around the downtown area, carrying passengers quickly around the city. The monorail runs on an elevated track some two stories above street level, with regular stops at street-side platforms or even inside some buildings. Two tracks run in opposite directions, allowing trains to run in both directions at once. The monorail is a popular means for tourists to see the city, as well as cheap public transportation for students and the like.

BRIDGES & HIGHWAYS

Four bridges connect the central Freedom City area to outlying areas of the city. The Lindroos Bridge connects Kingston to the business district, while the Pramas Bridge runs from Riverside to Bayview, with Route 4 connecting them. To the west, the Mangold Bridge crosses the Wading River from Hanover into the North End and Lantern Hill, while the Mona-Glenn Bridge crosses the South River from Greenbank to Lincoln with the two connected by the Wallace Expressway.

The Centery Bridge stretches across the Centery Narrows, allowing the state highway to cross between Great Bay and the city. The bridge affords a spectacular view of Freedom City and is high enough so that it doesn't interfere with water traffic entering or leaving the Narrows.

RAILROADS

A Union Railroad freight yard can be found on the outskirts of the metro area in Greenbank where the tracks run along the South River. Boxcars bound for various destinations arrive here from all over the country.

A new passenger bullet train also stops in Freedom and is a popular way for tourists to arrive in the city. The train rides along a maglev track and stops at a restored train station on the outskirts of the downtown area in the North End.

TAXIS

Many different taxi services operate in Freedom. The city government takes great pains to ensure the city's taxis are clean and efficient. The primary cab companies in the city are the red and white Liberty Cabs, the blue and gold Hero Taxis, the ubiquitous Yellow Cabs, and F.C. Taxi, the green and black taxis driven by Freedom College students, the fares helping fund the college and paying the drivers' tuitions. The newest and smallest of the cab

super-vision MAGAZINE TRUE SUPER STORIES

"My wife was going into labor and we had to get to the hospital but we don't have a car and I certainly didn't want to trust public transportation. On top of that, the Freedom League was fighting those walking trees all around the park and traffic was jammed with all the roads blocked off. I hailed us a cab and the guy driving it said he could get us to the hospital no problem. I didn't see how, but he took off like a shot and we went through so many twists and turns... well, I don't know how he did it, but he got us there, and he took off without even letting me pay him! Afterwards I tried to call the cab company to thank the guy and at least offer to pay our fare. The dispatcher said there was nobody like that who worked there, but the other cabbies had a story about a "mystery cab" that shows up from time to time in the city. Whoever that guy was, he was a godsend."

—Allen Shipowitz, age 30, office manager

companies is NETaxi, a USNet-affiliated service that provides silver-colored cabs with PDA and laptop ports and wireless video hookups in the back seats so no one (especially USNet employees) misses a meeting if in traffic.

Ever since colonial times, Freedomians in trouble and in desperate need of transport have found themselves confronted by a mysterious, semi-translucent cab—be it a horse and buggy up to the most modern of automobiles—which gets them quickly and safely out of harm's way. While in the driver's presence, folks never feel any unease, and in fact are calmed by his confidence. Only afterwards do they think of him and his cab as a ghostly visitation. City cabbies refer to the phantom driver as "Pally," though no historical records provide any clues as to the cabby's identity. Long-standing rumors suggest Pally has some related history with Lantern John, but the Hill's spectral protector says little on the matter.

BOATS AND SHIPS

The Freedom Port Authority handles all shipping in and out of the city. The docks along the waterfront see various types of ships, from fishing boats to cargo-haulers and tankers to cruise ships and private vessels. Numerous warehouses hold cargo until it is shipped elsewhere. The Mafia is rumored to control a large portion of the dockside business, and several warehouses have proven to hold contraband being smuggled into or out of the country.

JORDAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

The Jordan International Airport, located south of the metro area, provides commercial airliner service to most U.S. cities, Canada, Mexico, and several cities in Europe. Short commuter flights to New York City depart on a regular basis, popular with businesspeople with interests in both cities.

The original airport was established in 1962, but expanded and upgraded a few years ago to handle the increased air traffic in and out

of the Freedom City area. The terminals have been extensively renovated and expanded, and all the major U.S. airlines are represented here. The airport has a new eight-story concrete parking garage, along with kiosks, restaurants, and gift shops located in the main terminal.

OTHER AIRPORTS

The Jameson Airport, located on the northern outskirts of the city, has two runways, 50 hangars, and some 150 aircraft tie-downs. Charter services to nearby cities can be found here. The airport is popular as a business travel alternative, as well as the primary landing and departure site for private aircraft.

The Trainor Airport, located north of Great Bay, is a single-runway facility with some 100 aircraft tie-downs that serves mostly private aircraft owners and private charter flights. Local pilots often refer to it as the "trainer airport" because of the number of people taking flying lessons and the number of private planes there.

HELICOPTERS

Several private helicopter companies based at the Jameson and Trainor airports offer charter services for short trips, including quick hops from the airports to downtown Freedom or out to the estates of Port Regal. Jordan International has helipads and service for emergency response helicopters only, to reduce congestion of its always-busy airspace. Several of the major buildings in the city have helipad facilities, including GBN Tower and Federal Plaza. The police department uses helicopters and small zeppelins for aerial patrols, and the major television news stations in the city have their own helicopters.

UTILITIES

Utilities are the life-blood of a modern city like Freedom, and the city has the most modern and up-to-date utilities available.

Water: Most of the city's drinking water comes from the surrounding rivers, as well as reservoirs upriver and the lake reservoir in Liberty Park. City-run treatment plants process the water for domestic use, and sewage treatment plants treat water before it is released back into the rivers. Ultra-modern facilities ensure that both rivers and the bay are some of the cleanest on the East Coast. Criminals looking to try out their latest experimental formula (like the Green Man's plan to transform all of the people of Freedom into plant-life) have been known to try introducing it through the treatment plants.

Sewer: Because the land where Freedom City stands was originally fairly swampy, the city has an extensive and modern sewer and drainage system intended to dispose of waste and prevent flooding. Sewage is treated before the remaining water is piped out into the rivers. The city's sewer system has been heavily renovated over the years. Some of the older tunnels (some dating back more than 100 years) still exist. Although they're no longer connected to the drainage network, they've been known to serve as hideouts for criminals and rumors abound about strange creatures living down there.

Gas and Electricity: The Atlantic Gas and Electric Company provides all of Freedom's power needs under contract to the city. They have plants located in Southside as well as upriver, but the



new Raymond Nuclear Plant along Rt. 9 now provides the majority of the city's electrical power. There have been some protests about the establishment of a nuclear plant along the coast, but supporters of the plant claim it is the most effective way to provide for Freedom's greatly increased energy needs. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is considering a proposal to launch nuclear waste into space using the nearby Freedom Space Control Center. The Freedom League has volunteered to assist with this operation however they can.

Telecommunications: Nova Telecomm provides all of Freedom's telecommunications needs, using state-of-the-art fiber optic systems installed throughout the city. Downtown Freedom is the only major metropolitan area in the world that doesn't use any old copper wiring for its telecommunications, making its phone and data service particularly robust. Nova also has an extensive cellular network installed throughout the city, connecting it to a network extending up and down the East Coast, so many people in the city have cell phones and pagers, most equipped with Internet access.



CHAPTER THREE

GOVERNMENT

If by government you mean the exercise of authority, Freedom City has always had someone willing to do that. Unfortunately, it hasn't always led to the city living up to its name. The city has suffered through some bad government in past years, when political corruption was rampant. The current city government has been working to change that and it has succeeded slowly but surely. For the first time since the early 1970s, most people of Freedom City, for the large part, trust and respect their elected officials.

CITY GOVERNMENT

The mayor and an elected city council oversee municipal affairs in Freedom City. The city council has eight members chosen from districts throughout the city, and the mayor serves as a ninth member and chairperson. City council members and the mayor all serve four-year terms, and half of the council seats are up for reelection every two years. There is no limit to the number of terms a councilor or mayor may serve.

Although the mayor handles many of the day-to-day affairs of the city and acts as the city manager, the city council holds the true governing power. Still, the mayor exercises considerable influence as the head of the council and he always casts any tie-breaking vote. Mayor O'Connor's popularity is such that he usually has no difficulty in pushing his agendas through the council.

CITY HALL

Builders constructed Freedom's City Hall in a neo-classical style, with broad columns supporting the peaked roof and golden dome. The exterior of the building features beautiful carvings and bas-reliefs. Marble steps lead up to the entrance. City Hall is nearly always bustling with activity, even at night. It houses the offices of the mayor and most city agencies, and Mayor O'Connor often holds press conferences on the steps of City Hall rather than in the building's pressroom, since the building's backdrop makes for an impressive sight.

THE MAYOR'S OFFICE

The Freedom mayor's office has greatly changed from the previous administration. In the best of times, mayors used to be politicians with lots of connections and experience in city politics. They were often elected on a conservative platform of maintaining the status quo for the major interest groups of the city. That the mayor was fairly ineffective was taken as a matter of course.

The Moore years in Freedom City colored the mayor's office and those of his appointees with the reputation for graft, vice, and greed. Indeed, despite some state and federal probes, the Moore machine seemed untouchable during much of its tenure. In 1991, despite years of destroying evidence and bribing judges, Deputy Mayor Albert Barker became directly linked to underworld figure

Alfredo Oliverti and the drug-related slaying of two DEA agents. After that conviction, indictments followed for other close associates of the mayor over the next 13 months. While no hard evidence ever proved Moore's complicity with the corruption in his city, more than 34 city officials from Moore's cabinet currently serve long sentences for racketeering, bribery, tax evasion, corruption, and other charges. Franklin Moore left the city in disgrace after his loss of the mayor's office in 1992.

Both the ineffectiveness and the corruption people linked to the mayor's office changed when Michael O'Connor took the post. Franklin Moore had fled the city shortly after the election before being served federal subpoenas on a number of charges, so O'Connor hit the ground running. He immediately installed a new staff of people wanting to revolutionize and revive Freedom City. "Have Pride in Your Freedom!" is one of Mayor O'Connor's catchphrases, and he and his people believe in it. A life-long resident of the city, O'Connor constantly asked the public and his people "to help make Freedom City a place to be proud of again," and they succeeded. Despite the misgivings and protests of some long-established bureaucrats and lobbyists, Mayor O'Connor's changes have largely met with sweeping public approval.

MAYOR MICHAEL O'CONNOR, JR.

Michael O'Connor, Jr. is an unlikely hero for Freedom City. His father secretly was the Freedom Eagle, a hero of the Liberty League in the 1940s and 1950s. After he retired, the elder Mike O'Connor made a fortune as an engineer and inventor. That fortune sent his son to the finest schools to earn an MBA and take over the family business. However, being born with advantages didn't spoil Michael. He appreciated the opportunities he had in life and understood that not everyone was so fortunate, which led to his volunteer work with various charities. He became well known in Freedom City for his work in altruistic causes and his interest in local politics, but the contemporary Moore City Hall was too set in its ways to allow for the kind of changes Michael wanted to see.

After years as a successful businessman before and after his father's retirement, Michael finally became fed up with corruption of the city government. In late 1991, he decided to run for mayor against the corrupt Franklin Moore. Despite efforts to discredit him politically, O'Connor's integrity proved impeccable. His "No Moore!" campaign won over the people of the city and O'Connor promised to restore to the city the vision it had lost. Although attempts were made on his and his family's lives, he persevered and won the election by a landslide.

His zeal hasn't diminished at all since his election. Although he's extremely proud of everything that's been accomplished in Freedom City, O'Connor doesn't rest on his laurels and works tirelessly for never-ending progress in the city. His most recent crusade has been to clean up the West End and Southside and crack down harder on organized crime. The mayor's progressive and liberal policies have earned him the enmity of some conservatives, but he remains very popular with the voters.

Michael O'Connor cuts a dashing figure. He's 41 years old, six feet tall, and in excellent shape. His dark hair is neatly trimmed and his green eyes have a magnetic quality to them. Mayor

super-vision

MAGAZINE

TRUE SUPER STORIES

"Working for the FDPW in Freedom is weird. It ain't because of having to clean up after the capes when they have a fight in Midtown or something like that, although that happens sometimes. It's weird 'cuz of the way things just fix themselves sometimes. We don't talk much about it, but it happens. Like there was this one time when I saw this big pothole, down on Siegel Street on my way in to work. Looked like something landed there pretty hard, probably someone Captain Thunder punched. I put in a work order but by the time I got out there with a crew it was gone. We looked all around and there was no sign of it. Maybe Doc Metro fixed it, but nobody saw him around. It's like the city fixes itself sometimes."

—Paul Bannerman, age 28, DPW worker

O'Connor is unmarried and one of the most eligible bachelors in the city. He attends the opera or other events with any of a number of ladies, but he hasn't had a serious romantic relationship in over a year. It seems that Freedom City is Michael O'Connor's first love and it remains to be seen if any lady can eclipse it in his heart.

Mayor Michael O'Connor, Jr.: PL 6; Init +0; Defense 14; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +4 melee (+1S, punch); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 18.

Skills: Bluff +10, Diplomacy +10, Gather Information +10, Innuendo +10, Knowledge (Freedom City) +8, Profession (politician) +8, Sense Motive +10.

Feats: Attractive, Connected, Fame, Leadership, Skill Focus (Profession).

THE CITY COUNCIL

Freedom City is divided into eight council districts, each with an elected representative on the city council. The mayor occupies the ninth seat and acts as chairman of the council and issues the tie-breaking vote in matters about which the council is deadlocked.

Unlike the mayor, city council members tend to be longer-standing politicians and far more conservative in nature. Most of them have ties to various unions and lobbies throughout the city, some of which dislike all the changes, and this leads to some friction among the dynamic mayor and more "old school" councilors. Overall, the council supports many of the mayor's policies, although some of the more conservative voices ensure things move slowly enough that no one is ground up by the wheels of progress.

A few of the city council members are described here, with the rest left to the GM's imagination.

Councilman Conrad Everett: Councilman Everett has been on the city council for 18 years now and he's well known as the most conservative voice of the council. Many people think Conrad had his eye on the mayor's office, and still may, and that

Michael O'Connor's presence has thrown a kink into his political ambitions. Still, Councilman Everett is a reasonable man interested in what's good for Freedom City. His focus is more on the creation of infrastructure and opportunities to continue the growth of the city's economy. He tends to resist some of the mayor's more ambitious social policies by saying, "Let's worry about that after we've got the trains running on time." He firmly believes that greater economic prosperity will solve many of the city's problems by itself.

Councilwoman Joanna Tolbert-Holmes: Councilwoman Tolbert-Holmes represents the Bayview and Port Regal areas of the city and is known for her strong stance against crime and support for anti-crime programs. One of her greatest concerns is the slow but steady increase in criminal activity in her district, so she supports any program that strengthens the Freedom City Police Department and empowers them to deal with criminals. She has occasionally criticized the Freedom League for being "lax" in her view when it comes to cleaning up street-crime, although she acknowledges the good the team has done for the city as well. She has yet to comment publicly on the Next-Gen, but privately she is quite happy her district seems to have its own heroes, even if they are rookies.

Councilman Tom Golf: Councilman Golf represents the Hanover district of the city. He's quite proud of his district and what it brings to Freedom and looks out for Hanover's interests on the council. He's also well known for his dry sense of humor and his ability to get people to work together. The amiable older man mediates disputes between fellow council members and serves as a voice of cooperation on the council. He admires Michael O'Connor and all that he's done for the area, and the two men have become friends.

CITY COMMISSIONS

City commissions are adjunct councils to the city council. Some are authorized to issue rulings on behalf of the Council. Others are merely advisory bodies that gather information and report their findings to the city council, keeping them up to date on matters of importance to Freedom. Commission appointments are often made for political reasons, although nearly any interested citizen can serve on a commission. The mayor's office also sets up advisory commissions for important issues to satisfy different interest groups and individuals in the city that want their concerns heard.

THE COMMISSION ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Perhaps the most important commission in the city, the CED gathers information and makes recommendations to the city council regarding the city's economic climate and their opinions on ways to improve it. The CED has a fairly easy job since the Freedom economy is currently booming, allowing them to take credit for things with which they haven't had very much to do. The commission holds representatives of the city's business community and investor Arthur W. Stromberg sits as its chairman. The CED pushes for improvements to infrastructure and tax codes that will aid and encourage local businesses. Mayor O'Connor measures the CED's desire for economic growth against the needs of the community. Commissioner Everett is a strong supporter of the CED.

One topic of debate in the CED that has waxed and waned since the 1940s has been the effects of the superhuman population on the city at large. Some members wonder if the presence of the Freedom League and other superheroes helps or hinders economic growth in Freedom. Although it's undeniable that the city wouldn't exist in many ways without its superheroes, some committee members suggest that they act as a "draw" for super-threats which cause untold amounts of damage, and this discourages some businesses and people from moving into the area.

THE COMMISSION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT

Mayor O'Connor sponsored the formation of the Commission on Law Enforcement to help tackle the issues of cleaning up some of Freedom's worst neighborhoods and ensuring the city remained a safe place for its citizens. The CLE develops plans in conjunction with the police department for cleaning up organized crime, making the city streets safer, and educating people about how to better protect themselves against criminals. The police department views the commission as a bunch of well-meaning paper-pushers who don't understand that saying something and making it happen aren't the same thing. The police know the Commission's plans aren't always as easy to implement as they seem on paper. Police Commissioner Barbara Kane does her best to act as a bridge between the CLE and her department.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

"If Freedom City is the 'City of Tomorrow,' it should be a city for all people, not just some of them. Let's leave behind the prejudices of the last century and carry with us the banner of acceptance, cooperation, and caring for our fellow human beings into the future."

—HRC CHAIR KATHY DESMARIS

Also sponsored by the current mayor, the Human Rights Commission investigates discrimination, hate crimes, and abuses of civil rights in Freedom City. It then presents impassioned pleas to the City Council for action and legislation to curb these problems. The Commission is well known for its liberal stance on the issue of human rights, particularly equal rights for gay and lesbian people. However, the commission has no authority of its own. It can only make recommendations to the city council. So far, the commission's recommendation that the city pass a domestic partnership law has not met with success, although the Commission was successful in getting the city to pass a non-discrimination act that includes race, religion, gender, age, and sexual orientation.

The Human Rights Commission also works with the Commission on Law Enforcement in matters of racial and ethnic conflict in the city, although the two commissions tend to be on opposite sides of the issues.

CITY DEPARTMENTS

Freedom City employs thousands of people to handle the day-to-day business of keeping everything running smoothly. The city council and the mayor's office hire (and fire) the executives who oversee these municipal employees. This includes everyone from

administrative staff at City Hall to employees of the Department of Public Works and the Police Department.

A number of major departments contribute to the overall health and well being of Freedom. Departments such as the Fire and Police Departments, as well as the District Attorney's office, are covered in the **Public Safety** chapter. A few other major departments are described here.

MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE

The Medical Examiner's Office investigates all suspicious deaths in the city, performing autopsies to determine cause of death and gathering evidence for the authorities to investigate further, if necessary. The law mandates autopsies in all cases of murder and most cases of suicide and accidental death, particularly when foul play is suspected. Forensic pathologists often testify to their findings in court. The Medical Examiner's Office also investigates suspicious deaths to stave off outbreaks of disease or other hazards to public health in the city.

The Medical Examiner's Office is housed in a building in City Center toward Midtown. The administrative offices are located on the upper stories of the six-floor building, while the labs and examining rooms are found on the first floor, with the morgue and other facilities in the building's two below-ground levels.

The city morgue increased on-site security after an incident in which followers of Baron Samedi caused a series of deaths using a "zombie powder" that caused the victims to rise as walking corpses three days later. Only one city employee was killed in the rampage of zombies before the Freedom League contained them, but the Medical Examiner's Office still takes no chances—the policy presumes all corpses are "potentially dangerous" until proven otherwise.

The current Chief Medical Examiner is Colin Broome, a 41 year-old African American man who had experience with unusual pathologies even before he moved to Freedom City. Dr. Broome has graying hair and wears horn-rimmed glasses. He's divorced and devotes most of his time to his work. He has had a slight crush on the heroine Siren since the first time they worked together. He'll never admit to it, since he can't imagine she would be interested in a slightly overweight, aging pathologist.

PUBLIC WORKS

The Freedom Department of Public Works (FDPW) has undergone a recent downsizing, letting go a number of freelance workers who helped in the rebuilding of the city's infrastructure. Most of these workers have found jobs in the city's burgeoning construction industry. The DPW is still one of the largest city departments and the busiest with numerous projects constantly requiring their attention. It is responsible for the maintenance of the city streets, roads, and public buildings and also oversees utilities like water and sewer service.

The Freedom DPW already has a reputation as one of the finest of its kind in the country. Some part of their reputation comes from having the assistance of Dr. Metropolis in their work for the past ten years. He often helps to repair damage done to the city by super-battles, and he also offers his help with major municipal projects. Still, the Public Works Department is quite adept at handling such situations on their own.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

The Department of Waste Management is responsible for trash removal in the city, maintenance of the city's waste treatment facilities, and the administration of the municipal landfills. They have a reputation for helping to keep Freedom clean and pleasant and take their work very seriously. Waste Management Director Charlie Pasmore has held his job for more than ten years, but unfortunately, Pasmore is also on the take from the Mafia. The Mob pays him handsomely to handle the disposal of certain other things, from bodies to incriminating evidence, and occasionally pay for useful bits of refuse that come his way. Pasmore originally took the Mob's money out of desperation to pay off gambling debts; now, he does what they tell him out of fear of exposure and the loss of his job. Pasmore is married and has three kids, one son in college and a son and daughter in high school.

The city Waste Treatment Plant is located in Bayview, where it processes sewage with bacteria, enzymes, and chemicals before releasing the treated and filtered water back into the South River to flow out to sea. The department also manages the Freedom Municipal Landfill, located in Lincoln. The hundreds of acres are used to dispose of solid waste, and occasionally something someone wants to ensure is never found. Foreshadow prevented one Mafia killing from taking place at the landfill and Charlie Pasmore worries about being implicated, although the dark avenger hasn't come after him (yet).

STATE GOVERNMENT

Numerous state offices and agencies are found in the City Center area, but some are scattered throughout the city. These agencies range from the Department of Motor Vehicles to agencies dealing with the environment, parklands, health, and law enforcement.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Numerous federal agencies maintain offices in Freedom City; most of them located downtown at Federal Plaza. These agencies include the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National Security Council, the Internal Revenue Service, the National Forestry Service, and many others.

FEDERAL PLAZA

The Federal Plaza Building is one of the tallest structures in City Center—50 stories clad in red granite with brass fixtures and tinted glass windows. The broad base of the building features a paved plaza complete with water fountains and tall windows looking into the spacious lobby. The lobby contains a government bookstore selling various federal publications. The building holds the offices of various federal agencies in the city, including the FBI, IRS, Veterans' Administration, and so forth.

The 23rd floor of Federal Plaza houses AEGIS's public offices. That said, the real work of AEGIS in Freedom City gets done in the sub-basement levels below the building, where the agency maintains a secret facility to coordinate operations. It is off all building plans, heavily shielded, and equipped with the latest in high-tech equipment including a powerful computer database for tracking paranormal activity around the world.



CHAPTER FOUR

PUBLIC SAFETY

This chapter covers information on the various agencies with the duty of protecting the people of Freedom City. While they may be deputized or even assumed as guardians of the public's welfare, superhumans such as the Freedom League are not official members of the public safety agencies of the city.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Several law enforcement agencies operate in Freedom City. In addition to federal agencies like AEGIS and the FBI and various state agencies, there is, first and foremost, the Freedom City Police Department.

FREEDOM CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT (FCPD)

The Freedom Police Department is a shining example of a modern police department, thanks to the work of people like Mayor O'Connor and Police Commissioner Barbara Kane. One of the mayor's first goals was cleaning up corruption within the PD. O'Connor sought an honest cop among a police department rife with graft under the leadership of the thoroughly corrupt Commissioner Alquist, long-time friend of Franklin Moore. The Terminus Invasion (p. 21) interrupted the clean-up but showed the mayor part of his city's future when Detective Lieutenant Barbara Kane held together a large squad of terrified but dutiful cops and a few rookie superheroes to defend Bayview against Omega's

shock troops. She was the kind of cop the mayor wanted and later appointed to the Commissioner's post over other senior police officials. Many of them objected but soon resigned quickly rather than face Internal Affairs review boards over their past activities. Although there are still some hard feelings among the officers of the department over the "inquisition," most agree that the new FCPD is better organized and run than ever.

The city government spares no expense for Kane or her police department, but they also expect to see a return on their investment. Commissioner Kane has assured the mayor and the city council that crime rates in the Freedom City area will decrease, and that has been the case over the past eight years. Officers work on improving the safety of outlying neighborhoods and crack down on smuggling and organized crime. If the department's success rate continues, Commissioner Kane is sure to keep her job directing the city's police force. She has certainly earned the respect of the men and women under her command and the public.

Police Officer: PL 2; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 12; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (+0S, punch; +2S, tonfa), +3 ranged (+3L, pistol); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Intimidation +2, Profession (police officer) +5, Search +3.
Feats: Alertness.

Equipment: Pistol (+3L), rifle (+5L), tonfa (+2S), tear gas grenades [Dazzle +5; Extras: Area; Flaw: Device], handcuffs (hardness 5).

POLICE COMMISSIONER BARBARA KANE

Commissioner Barbara Kane has done much to make the FCPD an efficient police force that serves the people rather than itself. Barbara comes from a family line of good cops; her father, uncle, and grandfather were all police officers. She's been a cop for her entire professional life, so she knows what it's like on the streets and working cases. She also knows from personal experience what the FCPD was like during the Moore administration—a department with a lot of hard-working and honest people undermined by budget cuts, politicians, and dirty cops both on the streets and in the halls of power. One of the things that got Barbara her job was her dedication to making sure that fate never befalls her department again. She made it clear to Mayor O'Connor that she doesn't like politicians, but she works with the city government in order to get the job done.

She's thrown herself into her work and earned the respect of the officers under her command. She's also dedicated herself to breaking organized crime in Freedom City, earning her the enmity of the syndicates, all of which would like to see some terrible accident befall Commissioner Kane. She has the unwavering support of her husband, Fred, a tax attorney and junior partner at Hartford, Grayson, & Cole. They have two children, Theresa, age 19, a freshman at Freedom City University, and Aaron, age 16. The family lives in Bayview. Commissioner Kane spends what little time off she has tending to her garden in the spring and summer and cooking in the fall and winter.

Barbara Kane is 45 years old, 5'5" and somewhat heavysset, her short, dark brown hair going gray in front. She dresses conservatively and wears little jewelry beyond her wedding ring and a locket from her mother. She has a commanding presence that more than makes up for any lack of height and has swiftly earned the respect and cooperation of many of the city's superheroes.

Police Commissioner Barbara Kane: PL 6; Init +0; Defense 14; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +4 ranged (+3L, pistol); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 15.

Skills: Bluff +7, Diplomacy +7, Drive +2, Gather Information +7, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (Freedom City) +7, Profession (police commissioner) +7, Search +5, Sense Motive +6, Spot +5.

Feats: Connected, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot.

Equipment: Pistol (+3L).

THE STAR SQUAD (SUPERHUMAN TACTICS AND REGULATION)

One of the first programs started by Commissioner Kane is the STAR Squadron, or Superhuman Tactics and Regulation. These officers are specially trained and equipped to deal with superhuman criminals. High-tech companies like ASTRO Labs (p. 74) often give the squadron experimental prototypes for field-testing. STAR officers are trained in tactics for dealing with superhumans and regularly tested on their knowledge of them.

The FCPD STAR works in cooperation with superheroes like the Freedom League to handle superhuman threats in the city. Officially, City Hall and the Commissioner expect STAR to yield to the League in such battles, since the team has powers of their own and a greater expertise in dealing with paranormal menaces. In practice, however, there is a kind of professional rivalry between STAR and the city's superheroes. STAR takes great pride in its ability to handle super-criminals on its own. Likewise, STAR jealously guards its bailiwick against intrusions from AEGIS, even though the federal agency and the police department often work on similar cases. The general view is that the feds are glory-hogs who arrive after STAR officers have already done all the hard work. For their part, AEGIS agents think of STAR officers as "small time" and "unaware of the big picture."

STAR Squad officer: PL 2; Init +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Defense 12; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (+OS, punch; +2S, tonfa), +3 ranged (+3S, pistol); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Intimidation +2, Knowledge (super-powers) +3, Profession (police officer) +5, Search +3.

Feats: Improved Initiative.

Equipment: Pistol (+3L), rifle (+5L), tonfa (+2S), tear gas grenades [Dazzle +5; Extras: Area; Flaw: Device], handcuffs (hardness 5).

CAPT. BILL "BULLDOG" MADDICKS, STAR SQUAD COMMANDER

Freedom STAR squad commander "Bulldog" Maddicks is a man with a reputation for knowing his business. Maddicks came to police work from the U.S. Marines with a desire to do some good and a lot of talent in the areas of combat and tactics. He quickly worked his way up to the SWAT division in New York City, eventually commanding his own SWAT team there. It was his record that earned him the job of STAR commander in Freedom. Maddicks applied as soon as he heard about the job opportunity. He's worked since to make his STAR unit the best anywhere.

Maddicks got along well with Commissioner Kane once she made it clear she wasn't going to take any insubordination from him. He respects the commissioner's strength of will and character. Unfortunately, Capt. Maddicks doesn't get along nearly so well with everyone else. His men respect him, and he has the commissioner's confidence, but Maddicks has gotten into public disputes with Director Powers and AEGIS field agents, Captain Thunder and members of the Freedom League, and local and state authorities over matters of jurisdiction and how to handle certain situations involving super-criminals. Bulldog earns his nickname when it comes to his tenacious approach to his work; he wants STAR to be number one and he will not settle for anything less.

Bulldog Maddicks is an imposing man, standing 6'3" with broad shoulders and a heavily muscled frame he keeps in top shape. He's 36 years old with black hair kept military short, ice blue eyes, and a square jaw. He maintains a fondness for military-style fatigues in his off-hours.

Capt. Bill "Bulldog" Maddicks: PL 3; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 12 (11 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (+OS, punch), +3 ranged (+3L, pistol); SV Dmg +2, Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Gather Information +5, Intimidate +3, Profession (police officer) +6, Search +5, Spot +5.

Feats: Alertness, Assessment, Connected, Toughness.

Equipment: Pistol (+3L), handcuffs (hardness 5).

STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

The State Police Department patrols state and federal highways in the Freedom City area and deals with crimes that extend beyond the city limits or in cases where criminals flee the city limits. The state police maintain offices in Kingston, Hanover, and Bayview.

AEGIS

The United States government established the American Elite Government Intervention Service (AEGIS) in 1962. The agency coordinates law-enforcement efforts to deal with super-powered criminals and threats to national security like SHADOW (p. 174). The agency has been active in Freedom City from its very beginning, since a great many super-powered threats show up there. Due to its federal ties, the Moore Act restricting superhumans from Freedom City did not apply to anyone working with or for AEGIS while that law was in effect.

C. HORATIO "HARRY" POWERS, DIRECTOR OF AEGIS

Harry Powers joined AEGIS immediately after earning his degree in Criminal Justice from Georgetown University. He proved to be an excellent agent in the field and distinguished himself with his keen intellect and his ability to take charge of any situation. He worked his way up through the ranks to become a Special Agent, handling a number of difficult cases.

Powers soon picked up his reputation for being able to "sniff out" unusual things in the most difficult circumstances. He tracked down the telepathic serial killer known as Gemini and rescued three of the killer's would-be victims after killing Gemini in a shoot-out. Powers cracked a number of other cases and earned a promotion to Assistant Director with the agency. In 1990, he was promoted to Director of AEGIS.

Unknown to anyone, Powers is a superhuman with the psychic ability to detect the presence of other supers. Even Powers isn't entirely certain where his amazing "hunches" about superhumans come from, but he suspects that he may be one himself. The ability has saved his life on a few occasions when dealing with criminals such as Gemini. Powers can determine if someone is a superhuman merely by being in their presence. Of course, his "hunches" are not admissible evidence, but they are often useful.

Powers wants to make AEGIS a success, partly to further his own career, but mostly because he believes the agency is needed. He believes wholeheartedly in the mission of AEGIS. He has a good working relationship with the Freedom League, although Captain Thunder has been forced to remind Powers that the

WHAT IF... DIRECTOR POWERS WERE A VILLAIN?

This book assumes that Director Powers and AEGIS are truly dedicated to protecting the public from super-powered threats. In some campaigns, this may not be the case. AEGIS could certainly provide cover for a more sinister government organization (with or without Powers' knowledge), dedicated to controlling or even wiping out superhumans. Agents of SHADOW could infiltrate the organization, turning it toward their own purposes. There's also the possibility that the telepathic serial killer Gemini managed to "implant" his own mind into Harry Powers before he died. That could lead to Powers' developing a split personality and "Gemini" resuming his "career" where he left off, leaving Powers and the other authorities baffled.

League doesn't always play by the same rules, regulations, and restrictions as a government agency.

Powers lives with his wife Linda just outside of Washington D.C. He travels regularly between Washington and Freedom City as part of his job, often commuting by helicopter, AEGIS jet, or his own private plane. His daughter Alice is a student at Freedom City University, and Powers has undercover AEGIS personnel keeping an eye on her at all times.

Powers, age 45, is a tall African American man with dark eyes and a surprisingly broad smile. His hair has gone mostly gray, and he has a neatly trimmed beard and mustache. He keeps fit and is an avid jogger. He generally wears a dark, conservative suit when he's working and dark sunglasses while outdoors. He still carries his sidearm in a shoulder holster under his jacket. When leading agents in the field, he wears an AEGIS uniform and equipment.

C. Horatio Powers: PL 11; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 17 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +7 melee (+2S, punch) +6 ranged (+5S/L, blaster); SV Dmg +3, Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 18.

Skills: Bluff +9, Demolitions +8, Diplomacy +9, Disable Device +8, Gather Information +9, Hide +6, Innuendo +9, Intimidate +9, Language (Russian), Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Open Lock +6, Pilot +6, Profession (administrator) +7, Search +8, Sense Motive +7, Sleight of Hand +6, Spot +7, Survival +7.

Feats: Assessment, Connected, Detect (Super-Powers), Iron Will, Leadership, Lighting Reflexes, Toughness.

Equipment: Blaster (+5S/L), uniform (Armor +3).

AEGIS Agent: PL 3; Init +0; Defense 13; Spd; Atk +3 ranged (+5, blaster); SV Dmg +2, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Gather Information +3, Intimidate +3, Profession (agent) +5, Search +3.

Feats: Toughness.

Equipment: Blaster (+5S/L), uniform (Armor +3).

AEGIS EQUIPMENT

Neutralizing Manacles: These heavy metallic manacles fit on a subject's forearms, connected by a heavy chain (hardness 12).

When locked on, the manacles create a dampening field that neutralizes all powers with any source other than mystical or training. (Note that Sorcery is effectively neutralized since the manacles restrain the wearer enough to prevent spellcasting.) The wearer must make a Will save (DC 22) each round in which he is bound by the manacles, with a bonus equal to his highest power rank. If the wearer fails a save, his powers are neutralized for as long as the manacles are worn. [Effect: Neutralize +12; Extras: Duration—Sustained, Nullification; Flaws: Device, Range—Touch; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 24 pp].

MAX Armor

The Man-Amplifying Exoskeleton or "MAX," is a spin-off of U.S. military personnel armor. The MAX armor is a scaled-down version, lacking some of the more advanced features of military armor but with far more reasonable cost. The armor is designed for law enforcement personnel dealing with paranormal threats and is often standard issue for AEGIS agents in Freedom City. If the program is successful, MAX units may be placed in other cities. Due to personality clashes with Bulldog Maddicks, Director Powers has halted his original plan to donate three suits of MAX armor to the FCPD STAR Squad.

A MAX suit provides the following abilities:

MAX armor [Armor +7; Extras: Energy Blast, Immunity, Super-Strength; Power Stunts: Darkvision, Radio Broadcast, Radio Hearing, Snare "capture web"; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 6 pp per rank, 46 pp total].

ADDITIONAL FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

In addition to AEGIS, other federal law-enforcement agencies operate in Freedom. They enforce federal law and offer assistance to local law enforcement as needed.

Coast Guard: The U.S. Coast Guard patrols the shoreline and Great Bay, assisting vessels in distress and dealing with smugglers and vessels crossing illegally into American waters. Freedom City's Coast Guard contingent works closely with the DEA and the naval base at Lonely Point. They also have a good working relationship with Siren and can call upon her when they need superhuman assistance.

Drug Enforcement Agency: The DEA investigates drug-related crimes, including the manufacture, distribution, and sale of narcotics. Their prime concerns in Freedom City are the heroin trade controlled by the Mafia and the drug smuggling operations along the waterfront areas of the city and offshore. The appearance of various new "designer drugs" like zoom is also a growing concern (see **Designer Drugs**, p. 86). The DEA fights offshore drug smuggling with the assistance of the Coast Guard and occasionally the

naval forces at Lonely Point. They fight drug distribution in the city using undercover operations. The DEA maintains offices in the Federal Building in City Center.

Federal Bureau of Investigation: The FBI also maintains offices in the Federal Building downtown and investigates all federal crimes, which include bank robberies and terrorism, while assisting local authorities in dealing with organized crime. They coordinate with AEGIS when a potential threat involves paranormal persons or phenomena. The director of the Freedom FBI office is Harlan Schultz, an experienced agent and administrator.

INTERNATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

The Freedom City Police Department and the FBI maintain ties with international agencies like Interpol, allowing them to exchange information with police departments around the world and to access a vast database of crime files. They also work in cooperation with UNISON (the United Nations International Superhuman Oversight Network) to exchange information and track the activities of super-powered criminals. This keeps all law enforcement organizations up-to-date on the status and whereabouts of some of the greatest threats to the world's safety and well-being. This information is made available to heroes with the appropriate government contacts or clearance, such as the Freedom League.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Crime isn't the only thing that can threaten public safety. Fires, accidents, and medical emergencies also must be alleviated, along with disasters created by super-criminals. This is the responsibility of the city's fire department and ambulance services.

FREEDOM METRO FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Freedom Metro Fire Department is a consolidated agency that responds to fire and emergency calls throughout the greater metro area. The department has fire stations located throughout the city, their crews able to respond immediately to any emergency. The fire department can call upon the forestry service for assistance in handling fires on the outskirts of the city, and often assists them in fighting forest fires in the state parklands. The fire department is also responsible for dealing with hazardous materials; in Freedom City, these can range from conventional explosives and toxic chemicals to weird alien, radioactive, or mystical material, mutagens, and even stranger things.



AEGIS MAX Armor worn by special agent Chris Thomasson.

PATRIOT GAMES

Jack Simmons gained superhuman abilities by ingesting a unique serum which activated some latent genetic potential within him. He adopted the name and the red, white, and blue garb of the Patriot and was a member of the Liberty League during World War II. After the war, the Patriot continued to work for the United States government as a special agent and troubleshooter long after the dissolution of the Liberty League. He became the first director of AEGIS after being instrumental in its organization and planning.

Although his powers lengthened his life and gave him greater than normal vitality, the years still caught up with Jack Simmons and he chose to retire, passing the directorship of AEGIS to Harry Powers, his most trusted agent. Just over two years ago, Jack learned he suffered from cancer, possibly from fighting nuclear-powered villains over the years or even a side effect of the Patriot Serum. Secluded in a government hospital as his condition deteriorated, Jack received a last-chance offer from some friends of his. They could help him in a way, and he could help America, which still needed a man like him. He agreed, and not long thereafter, Jack Simmons passed away quietly at the age of ninety.

What the world doesn't know is that the U.S. government used engram-recording technology (pioneered by Dr. Atom) to "download" Jack Simmons' mind and personality into an advanced android that resembles Jack in his younger days. His new android body gives the Patriot abilities greater than before, and he continues to work as a "secret weapon" in America's arsenal against terrorists, super-criminals, and other threats.

The Patriot: PL 12; Init +10 (Dex, Super-Dex); Defense 26 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +11 melee (+10S, punch); SV Dmg +10, Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 20, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills: Acrobatics +12, Balance +12, Bluff +8, Hide +11, Jump +12, Move Silently +11, Pilot +11.

Feats: Ambidexterity, Durability, Expertise, Immunity (aging, cold, critical hits, disease, exhaustion, heat, poison, pressure, starvation, suffocation), Inspire, Leadership, Move-By Attack, Photographic Memory, Rapid Healing.

Powers: Super-Strength +5 [Extras: Super-Constitution, Super-Dexterity, Super-Wisdom; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 12 pp].

FIRE CHIEF PAUL DUMAR

Paul DuMar has served as fire chief in Freedom City for twelve years. Chief DuMar earned a considerable reputation as a fireman in the city, keeping a cool head under the most difficult of circumstances. His leadership is credited with saving hundreds, if not thousands, of lives over the years, when various disasters have threatened the city. The chief's face is familiar to many Freedomians, and he's particularly popular with many of the older inhabitants. DuMar is slightly embarrassed by the attention, but he uses it to build good PR for his department.

DuMar is 50 years old. He's still quite fit, about six feet tall, and almost completely bald, save for a fringe of dark, graying hair. He often jokes about losing his hair in a fire. ("See kids, this is what

super-vision
MAGAZINE

TRUE SUPER STORIES

"What can I say? Yeah, it was dumb, but even with all the supers around, you don't think about stuff from the movies being real! I mean, c'mon—the guy had a freaking stake in his chest! I pulled it out so we could try to treat him. How was I supposed to know that he was a real vampire? Good thing Siren showed up when she did."

—Michael Saunders, age 27, EMT

happens when you play with fire," he says, taking off his helmet.) He and his wife Mary have three boys, ages 13, 16, and 18.

Fire Chief Paul DuMar: PL 3; Init +0; Defense 12; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (+1S, punch); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Demolitions +4, Drive +3, Listen +5, Medicine +4, Profession (fire fighter) +6, Search +4, Spot +5.

Feats: Endurance.

JUNE "ASBESTOS" ABADOS

June Abados was a secretary living in Freedom City with her husband and son when their apartment building caught fire and the flames trapped June and her son, Tommy. Freedom City firefighters battled through the blaze to reach them, and June ensured that her son made it out first, even though it required risking her own life. Somehow, the fire and the stress activated some hidden potential in June. She discovered that the smoke and fire didn't harm her, and she was able to walk out safely, although her clothing was burned and charred.

The incident showed up in the press, and was almost as quickly forgotten, but June didn't forget. She felt a need to use her ability to help people like the fire fighters who saved her son, so she applied to the Freedom Fire Department. When she demonstrated her resistance to flame to Chief DuMar, he hired her on the spot. She quickly picked up the nickname "Asbestos" among the other firefighters.

Unfortunately, the stress of being a firefighter took its toll on June's marriage. She and her husband Roger divorced recently when she refused to give up her fire-fighting career and go back to being a secretary. The couple has joint custody of their son, Tommy, age 8. Tommy idolizes his mother, a source of concern for Roger Abados, who thinks Tommy might injure himself trying to be like June.

June Abados is a perky, 5'8" woman with short, strawberry blonde hair, blue eyes, and a face covered in freckles. While she's always been fit, June exercises constantly to better perform her duties and is now slightly muscular.

June "Asbestos" Abados: PL 3; Init +1; Defense 13 (12 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (+0S, punch); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills: Listen +4, Medicine +2, Profession (fire fighter) +5, Search +5, Spot +4.

Feats: Immunity (heat).

Powers: Protection +5 [*Flaw:* Only vs. Fire/Heat, *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 1 pp].

THE U.S. FORESTRY SERVICE

The United States Forest Service, a branch of the Department of the Interior, is responsible for handling fires in the national forest land outside Freedom City. The service handles most routine fires that break out in the forest, but call on the city fire department in times of dire need. The famous "smoke jumpers," who parachute into the forest to fight fires there, are connected to the service. The forest service also conducts "controlled burns" of certain areas of forest to help ensure healthy growth and development. Recently, while attempting to do so, the service ran into trouble with the Green Man (p. 160), but got some help from the young members of the Next-Gen (p. 126), who were on a camping trip at the time.

PRIVATE AMBULANCE FIRMS

Along with the ambulances operated by the fire department, several private ambulance firms operate in Freedom City. These companies are licensed by the city government and overseen by the city's Department of Health.

Charon Ambulance Services: Named after the ferryman of the dead from Greek mythology, Charon Ambulance Services hears and expects a lot of morbid jokes. Despite this, Charon is an efficient service with a long-standing reputation in the city. Its owner, George Kapetelis, plays poker with fire chief Paul DuMar and some other friends twice a month.

Forgan Emergency Services: Forgan is the newest service operating in the city but is already gaining a reputation as a high-tech, sophisticated, and talented company. Madeline Forgan established her new company by buying up and consolidating several smaller ambulance firms. A few people consider Forgan something of an ambulance chaser (literally), claiming that she set up shop in Freedom City in hopes of trouble. Forgan ignores these accusations and focuses on running her company.

Trinity Ambulance: Originally started by Trinity Hospital, this service was sold off and privatized nine years ago. Trinity has the oldest vehicles and equipment (and the smallest budget) of any of the city's services. Madeline Forgan has already made an offer to John Grummett, the owner of Trinity, to buy the company from him. For the time being, Grummett chooses not to sell.

JUDICIAL AND PENAL SYSTEMS

Whenever criminals get arrested (either by superheroes or conventional authorities), said criminals and their cases move into the criminal justice system. Freedom City's justice system has become the focus of considerable media attention, a fact that has not escaped the more politically minded lawyers.

THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

The District Attorney's office files and prosecutes all criminal charges in Freedom City. The DA's office reviews all arrest reports filed by the

CAMPAIGN USE

DA Durgan makes a good ally for a "street-level" vigilante hero, especially one opposed to organized crime. Durgan can be a true and helpful ally to such a hero, or his zeal and ambition might get the better of him and lead both of them into trouble. Durgan could also make a good secret identity for a hero, if a player wishes to play him. In a darker-toned campaign, Durgan could secretly be a vigilante, or working with one (perhaps when the city was still corrupted by the Moore machine, if your campaign is set in the past).

Freedom City Police Department and decides which charges, if any, to file in cooperation with any victims of alleged crimes.

The City District Attorney, a four-year elected position, heads the office. The DA hires and oversees several dozen Deputy District Attorneys who try the majority of the cases. The DA handles the administrative duties over all of them and he or she tries the highest profile criminal cases. In addition, the DA's office employs various investigators to gather evidence to support their cases.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY DANIEL R. DURGAN

Daniel Durgan won his election as district attorney by promising to be tough on crime, especially organized crime. His winning smile, powerful speaking voice, and his record as an Assistant DA (not to mention the support of Mayor O'Connor) helped him win the election easily. Now, much to the chagrin of some long-time politicians and less effective DAs across the country, it seems that Durgan means to make good on his promises.

The Freedom Police Department has a love-hate relationship with Durgan. On the one hand, the DA is tough on crime and does whatever he can to back the police department's cases and see them through to trial. On the other hand, Durgan's reputation for grandstanding sees him politically play up his cooperation with the local heroes like the Freedom League. The police and others see this as an affront to those doing the *real* criminal investigation work. More than a few people wonder just how far Durgan will go to get a conviction. He hasn't even been suspected of anything illegal or improper, but his zeal sometimes makes people wonder nervously.

Durgan has obviously made enemies in Freedom City's underworld with his crusade against organized crime. The local Mafia wants to see Durgan dead, but an outright hit could quickly backlash and bring superheroes like the Freedom League into the picture. For the time being, the dons have agreed to keep an eye on Durgan and look for a weakness to exploit.

Durgan is age 38 with sandy-colored hair and blue eyes. He's unmarried but devotes nearly all of his time to his work, leaving very little time left over for a social life.

Daniel R. Durgan: PL 4; Init +0; Defense 13; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +0 melee (+OS, punch); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 15.

Skills: Bluff +7, Diplomacy +7, Gather Information +8, Innuendo +7, Perform (oratory) +9, Profession (lawyer) +8, Sense Motive +5.

Feats: Attractive, Iron Will.

THE PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE

The Public Defender's office represents criminal defendants who cannot afford to hire their own attorneys. The office is run by the city Public Defender, a post appointed by the city government. The PD is assisted by other city-employed attorneys, by contracted lawyers, or lawyers doing pro-bono work for the city.

The public defender's office is not an overly popular one, so the city government tends to play down its importance, both in terms of media coverage and in terms of budget. Fortunately for defendants, the changing political climate of Freedom City is ripe for idealistic attorneys who believe in the rights of the accused, including current Public Defender Caitlin Grenville-Thomas.

PUBLIC DEFENDER CAITLIN GRENVILLE-THOMAS

Caitlin Grenville-Thomas got the job of Freedom City public defender largely because she wanted it more than anyone else. A graduate of Georgetown University, Grenville-Thomas is a firm believer in the legal system and the rights of every defendant. She applied for the PD job in Freedom after working for eight years as a public defender in the Washington D.C. area. Her sterling reputation and proactive attitude helped win her the job. Caitlin is a strong supporter of efforts to rehabilitate super-criminals.

Caitlin Grenville-Thomas is an attractive 36-year-old African American woman. She is 5'8" tall with shoulder-length black hair and dark eyes. She favors skirted business suits with some tasteful jewelry. She lives with her husband, Kyle Thomas, in an apartment in the city center. Kyle is a freelance technical writer who works mostly at home. Her uncle, Albert Grenville (p. 138), is an investment broker with Rath & Stromberg.

Caitlin Grenville-Thomas: PL 3; Init +0; Defense 12; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +0 (-1S, punch); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 13.

Skills: Bluff +4, Diplomacy +8, Gather Information +7, Innuendo +5, Perform (oratory) +8, Profession (lawyer) +7, Sense Motive +5.

Feats: Talented (Diplomacy and Perform).

THE PROBATION DEPARTMENT

The Freedom City Probation Department follows up on criminals upon release and ensures that they fulfill the conditions of their probations. They also oversee the city's juvenile detention facilities. Probation officers meet regularly with their assigned cases to provide counseling, legal and job assistance, and to prevent them from leaving the metro area. A probation officer has wide latitude in ensuring that someone who has served his or her time maintains the conditions of his or her probation.

Harriet Wainwright: The head of the probation department is a woman with an iron constitution and will to match. Her duties are challenging, given the number of super-criminals in the Freedom City area, but this doesn't daunt Harriet in the slightest. In fact, she lobbies for a revolutionary new "work release" program for superhuman criminals; she wants to rehabilitate them by having them perform public service, suitably supervised and con-

FREEDOM ISN'T ALWAYS FOR THE FREE

Harriet Wainwright's program to rehabilitate super-criminals can form the basis for an adventure or even an entire campaign, with the players running super-convicts offered a chance to work off their sentences doing public service. They might initially agree for the reduced sentence and greater personal freedom, only to discover that they *like* helping people. Alternatively, they might figure a way to turn the program to their advantage. Frankly, both situations could arise, causing some interesting conflicts within the group. The super-criminals have to overcome everyone's suspicion and mistrust and the stigma of their past crimes. There are also some fellow criminals out there who'd consider the player characters "sellouts" for working for the city.

trolled, of course. Thus far, the city approved her program on a limited basis with some less-hardened criminals from Blackstone. She has high hopes of showing superhumans how to use their abilities constructively.

Ms. Wainwright, age 55, is only 5'2" and heavyset. She wears her graying brown hair pulled back in a bun and she wears bifocal glasses. She maintains a no-nonsense attitude both at work and at home. Her husband Carl was a Freedom City police officer killed in the line of duty during the Terminus Invasion. Harriet's only child, her daughter Carolyn, is married and lives in Philadelphia.

STATE AND FEDERAL ATTORNEYS

The state and federal governments are also active in the legal scene of Freedom City. The state Attorney General's office assists the city District Attorney as needed, as well as investigating cases involving the District Attorney's office itself. The United States Attorney is the federal equivalent of the district attorney, and he prosecutes federal cases in the Freedom metro area. The current U.S. Attorney in Freedom is Charles D. Telemachus, a veteran lawyer who knows the federal legal landscape as it pertains to superhumans quite well. Mr. Telemachus has his offices in Federal Plaza downtown.

THE COURT SYSTEM

Once the District Attorney has filed charges, cases go into the hands of the court system. The Freedom City court system is divided among local and federal courts.

Local state-affiliated courts handle most civil and criminal cases, ranging from small claims and traffic violations all the way up to major cases handled by the State Supreme Court. The court facilities for the Freedom City Metro Area are housed in the district courthouse near City Hall.

The federal courts try cases involving violations of federal law. The federal court occupies the handsome neo-Classical building newly rebuilt near Federal Plaza; the original federal court building was one of the oldest landmarks in the city center but it was destroyed in Centurion's final battle with Omega.

JUDGES OF NOTE

Judge Gerald R. Baker: Judge Baker is a long-time Superior Court judge with a reputation as a firm and fair jurist. He runs his courtroom with a no-nonsense attitude and often intones that "everyone is equal under the law, even if they can fly." Judge Baker insists on proper courtroom decorum even for the most sensational cases involving super-criminals. He also hates media intrusions in his courtroom, preferring the old days when no cameras were allowed. He has been known to ban the press from cases when he feels their presence is disruptive. Lawyers fond of theatrics are well advised to restrain themselves in Judge Baker's courtroom.

Judge Naomi Wallace: The Honorable Judge Wallace is a Superior Court judge known for her common sense and her often creative sentencing. A strong believer in efforts to reform criminals and super-criminals alike, Judge Wallace favors community service over imprisonment, which gives her a reputation of being "soft on crime" in some circles. She supports Harriet Wainwright's criminal rehabilitation programs, and not just because they have been friends for years. Creative lawyers often can arrange plea-bargains or particular sentences with Judge Wallace, so long as they do not compromise her clear sense of justice or attempt to subvert the law.

Judge Thomas Nakamura: A fairly young Federal Court judge at the age of 44, Judge Nakamura relishes the opportunity provided him by sitting on the bench in Freedom City. His courtroom sees precedent-setting cases involving things like superheroes and super-powered criminals. Judge Nakamura is an ambitious man, with his eye on the U.S. Supreme Court some day, so he enjoys playing to the media.

Judge Joseph Coleman: "Judge Joe" is the popular local star of the GBN program "Video Justice," which features mostly small-claims cases that are televised live from the judge's courtroom. Many in the legal community consider Judge Joe a joke, but his popularity is enormous. A 16-year veteran of the bench, Joe has a very dry wit and keen insight into people's motivations. The program's docket is backed up for months and his show captures high ratings in its afternoon time-slot. GBN continues to try to get some "real life super stories" on the show, but small-claims matters involving supers are (thankfully) rare for the time being.

THE CORRECTIONS SYSTEM

The final component of the criminal justice system is the corrections system for the imprisonment and potential rehabilitation of convicted criminals. The Freedom City area originally held two prison facilities—one state and one county jail. There is constant discussion about building a new prison to handle the city's needs, but the issue is sensitive, since taxpayers want more security but don't want another prison near their homes.

Freedom City Correctional Facility: The FCCF is a small prison facility located north of the Wading River just outside Hanover. Designed to handle the formerly small needs of Freedom City, it houses mainly non-violent offenders and those with short sentences. Hardened criminals generally go to the South River maximum-security facility, but the overcrowding at South River

forces authorities to relocate many prisoners here. This situation causes some conflicts among the prisoners and an increased public concern over breakouts. The prison has a current population of 1,350 and a staff of 500 led by Warden JoAnne Koller.

South River State Penitentiary: When criminals in the area refer to "going up the river," they mean it literally. Located along the South River in Lincoln is the South River State Penitentiary. The prison sits on an isolated plot of land outside the metro area and not far from the national forest. With only one road into it, most of the land around the prison is undeveloped and swampy; urban legends talk of prisoners who escaped only to end up drowning in the swamp or being eaten by alligators, even though there have never been alligators in the area (aside from the Freedom Eagle's encounter with what he called the Alien-Gator in 1949).

South River currently holds some 3,800 inmates, which exceeds the institution's official capacity of 3,500 persons; this is, of course, the main reason for talk of a new prison facility in the area. The warden, John Ermanos, runs South River with the aid of a staff of 2,000 guards and administrative personnel.

Freedom Juvenile Hall: Located in Southside, "juvie hall" handles inmates under the age of 18. It has a capacity of 650 and is never less than 70% filled with youth gang members and other offenders. Some of the youths placed in juvenile hall are merely runaways, though sadly quite a few return here after becoming involved in drugs or prostitution in the Southside area.

The Blackstone Special Federal Penitentiary: The federal government commissioned a special prison capable of holding super-powered inmates in 1964. Blackstone Penitentiary was the first of its kind and remains in operation today. It dominates the rocky Blackstone Island about a mile and a half off the coast. The island itself is inhospitable but ideal for the prison facility, which is reached only by a thrice-daily ferry (kept under heavy guard at all times by FCPD and the prison's guards). The facility is almost entirely underground with only a fenced compound, docks, and helipad above the surface. It is powered by an advanced geo-thermal plant, and has a capacity of 350 prisoners.

With a trained staff of 200 that includes security, administrative, and technical personnel, the warden of "the Stone" should rest easy. Warden Joshua Drummer never rests easy. The 6'6" Freedomian of Native American and African American descent keeps his scalp and face clean-shaven and his imposing muscular frame intimidates even some super-criminals. The staff and the prisoners all wonder if the warden doesn't have some superhuman powers, as he's gone toe-to-toe with some serious opponents during his 13-year tenure here and lived. Joshua never speaks of it and ignores all queries about it. There is some secret animosity between Warden Drummer and AEGIS Director Harry Powers; if there are problems on "the Stone," Drummer asks for assistance from every source human and superhuman before he asks for any aid from AEGIS, despite the normal protocols.



CHAPTER FIVE

LIFE IN FREEDOM CITY

"Pace yourself when you visit Freedom City. The city has things to offer 24 hours a day, from breakfast at a café in Riverside and shopping along 52nd Avenue to lunch at Champion's or one of the trendy eateries downtown. There's always a visit to some of the city's museums, a trip through Liberty Park in a horse-drawn carriage, or a ferry ride around the Centery Narrows to see the Sentry Statue from the bay. For nightlife, it's dinner and a show in the Theatre District, a game at the Liberty Dome, or even a trip to the opera. For the real night owls, there are nightclubs galore where you can dance until sunrise, and then begin all over again."

—FODOR'S GUIDE TO FREEDOM CITY

In Freedom City, people can see heroes fly through the sky, zombies and monsters emerge from the ocean, animated trees uproot and rampage in the parks, and buildings sometimes even come to life. All that aside, it's also a city where millions of people live, work, and play every day.

Like in most metropolises, a schism exists between the rich and the poor, but folks don't always let themselves notice it. In the new high-rise apartments and sprawling manors, the wealthy live lives of leisure, interrupted by the occasional plot to rob or blackmail them. Other people aren't so lucky and some must struggle with poor living conditions or working in a constantly changing world that seems to always leave them behind. Some don't even

have that and face life out on the street with nowhere to turn. Like the worlds of normal people and superhumans, these worlds rarely mix.

Despite the occasional unnatural storms or super-powered battles among the skyscrapers of downtown, most people in Freedom go about their daily lives. They go to work every morning, complain about traffic and construction, go out for lunch or dinner, and go home to their families at night. Evenings and weekends, they find time to get out and enjoy some of the unique things the city has to offer. This is the majority of the citizenry—middle class and comfortable, except when demons rampage down the streets of Hanover.

Life in Freedom City is many things, regardless of income and living conditions, but it is never dull.

BUSINESS

One of the keys to Freedom City's success has always been its encouragement of commercial enterprise. Freedom has a reputation as a city of opportunity for small business and major corporations alike. These businesses form a major part of day-to-day life in the city.

LOCAL CHAINS

The local business community has many different chains and franchises found alongside popular national businesses.

Bromwell's Department Stores: Bromwell's is a chain of department stores native to this coast. It is popular with the middle and upper class and found in downtown and the more affluent suburbs of the city.

Freedom Sound: This local music chain has several outlets in the metro area. Freedom Sound stocks an extensive selection of music CDs, along with related magazines, videos, T-shirts, and jewelry. The chain is popular with the teenage and college-age crowds, which form the majority of the store's customers and employees.

GO-Mart: This rapidly-expanding chain of convenience stores can be found throughout Freedom City and the East Coast. Most GO-Marts feature or are located near gas stations. They offer a variety of overpriced convenience items and foods and operate 24 hours a day, their main draw for most in search of food late at night.

Harvest Supermarkets: A major chain of supermarkets, there are numerous stores throughout the Freedom Metro Area. Harvest Supermarkets always include a bakery, pharmacy, in-store deli, and a small newsstand.

VideoTech: VideoTech is the largest independent chain of video rental stores in Freedom. The stores go for a slick, "hi-tech" feel and offer special discounts on popular current releases. The chain rents VHS tapes and DVDs, video and DVD players, and video game consoles and games.

PROMINENT STORES

Along with all the chain stores, Freedom City features several well-known independent shops and businesses.

Haas Brothers Jewelers: This is one of the oldest and most respected jewelers in the city. After the loss of their original store as a result of a super-battle, Nicholas and Raymond Haas rebuilt their business with a newer and even more extensive store. The brothers are well known for appearing in their own television and radio ads, often talking about how their father started in the jewelry business.

Millennium Comics: Considered by many the best comic book store in the Freedom metro area, Millennium Comics has expanded from a single store to three over the past seven years. Customers called the destruction of the main store's extensive back-issue collection in a fire a tragedy of epic proportions, but owner Jerry Webster has managed to bring the collection nearly back to where it was before. Customers can find thousands of different back issues along with comic book memorabilia and a wide selection of roleplaying games.

The Never-Ending Story: This small antiquarian bookshop nestles into the bottom floor of a brownstone in Riverside, a carved wooden sign with its name hanging above the door. Owner Andrew Orlando works in the shop and lives upstairs. He's a portly, bearded gentleman with a deep love of books and a fondness for cats and exotic flowers. At least one of Orlando's felines can be found dozing in the sun or near the radiator of the shop at all times. The store specializes in "well-loved" (used) books, including rare editions. Andrew has an uncanny knack for finding rare volumes and occasionally stumbles onto tomes of interest to those versed in the arcane arts.

Rocket Records: A small record store tucked away on the second floor of a building in Southside, Rocket Records is considered

the best place in the city for finding second-hand, rare, and underground music by connoisseurs of such things. The store's stock includes bootlegs and recordings by local bands.

SHOPPING MALLS

Freedom City features a number of shopping malls and plazas with collections of major chain stores.

Pier Two Shopping Center along the waterfront is two levels of small stores and restaurants and a few major chain stores. The Pier often features outdoor entertainment in good weather, as well as an open-air farmer and fisherman's market.

Millennium Mall in Midtown is one of the largest of its kind in a metro area: three stories tall and encompassing some nine square blocks. The mall holds more than 150 different shops and an extensive third-floor food court with an open-air balcony and skylights. Parking is generally difficult, despite the presence of a four-story parking garage attached to the plaza.

Ashton Mall, which only recently opened, caters to the shopping needs of the western suburban residents of the city, although there have been some concerns regarding gangs and "patrons" from the poorer West End areas. This in turn has led to complaints about elitism and racism on the part of the mall association.

Hanover has a number of smaller malls and plazas and older buildings renovated and turned into commercial properties. **Greeley Street** is particularly well known as a place to find unique shops, boutiques, trendy clothing stores, and sidewalk cafés. It's a popular place to spend a weekend afternoon shopping, eating, and people watching. **Hanover Square**, the area near the Hanover Institute of Technology, is known for bookstores and shops catering to a younger, college-age crowd.

MAJOR CORPORATIONS

Recent surveys noted Freedom City has one of the fastest-growing job markets in the country. Many people are moving into the area to take advantage of the booming economy. As the job market grows, additional businesses are motivated to move into the area. The city's corporations are major players in both the economic and political life of Freedom City.

The city primarily attracts information-based businesses, both the media and companies specializing in the distribution of information, such as brokerage houses, research companies, telecommunications, and the like. These companies take advantage of the city's high-tech infrastructure and telecommunications network.

GRANT CONGLOMERATES

Grant Conglomerates is a multinational umbrella company overseeing a number of high-tech interests. The true interests of Grant Conglomerates and its owner, Jonathan Grant, are profits at any cost. Since the 1980's, Grant Conglomerates has used a number of different schemes to engineer superhumans, either for use as military weapons or to provide various clients with super-powered henchmen. The company's preferred methods involve various drug-treatments and gene-splicing, in some cases derived from the work of Nazi scientists. Many Grant subjects go mad or die from the treatments, but there have been a few rare and undupli-

cated success stories, most notably the Trap-Door and the symbiotic duo Smash & Grab.

Heroes have shut down various corrupt Grant Conglomerate subsidiaries over the years, but the central corporation carefully insulates itself from liability. It sacrifices a subsidiary and its management when things get too hot, shifting its and the authorities' attention elsewhere. So far, no one ever has been able to prove any wrongdoing on the part of Grant Conglomerate or Jon Grant himself.

Grant Conglomerate can provide a source of new supervillains in a Freedom City campaign and may even be the origin of a new hero's powers.

DECOSTA CONSTRUCTION

DeCosta Construction is the largest building contractor in Freedom City, where the construction business enjoys a boom the likes of which haven't been seen in decades. This firm builds many of the new buildings in Freedom City and has enough contracts to keep them busy for the next several years. The company is a local success story and is quite popular with the blue-collar community for the number of jobs it provides. It is based out of a renovated brownstone in Southside. DeCosta recently initiated a new series of television ads which include images of some of the most famous buildings in Freedom being repaired and new landmarks going up with the slogan "That's DeCosta doing business."

The owner and founder of the company is Frank "Buddy" DeCosta, an amiable man who worked as a construction worker and manager for Fairhaven Builders before starting his own company. Although he constantly reminds people he has nothing more than a high school education, Buddy still runs a highly successful company. He's quite proud of the work DeCosta Construction does in Freedom.

Rumors suggest there may be ties between DeCosta Construction and the Freedom City Mafia, which has ties to the city's labor unions. DeCosta himself vehemently denies any such allegations, and police investigations to date have not turned up any evidence of Mafia ties. It's up to the GM whether or not these rumors are true.

FUN-TIME TOYS

This manufacturer of children's toys, based in Connecticut, was founded and originally owned by the Lettam family. Former owner Desmond Lettam used Fun-Time's resources and facilities as part of his initial career as the super-criminal Toy Boy (p. 181). The company passed into control of its board of directors after Lettam's arrest and incarceration. They have installed new management and Fun-Time seems to be back on an even keel, with no lasting harm from its connections with Toy Boy. In fact, the new management plans to make a line of toys based on some of Toy Boy's more infamous designs and exploits. Whether or not this provokes any response from the terrible toy-master remains to be seen.

MAJESTIC INDUSTRIES

Majestic is a large international corporation with interests in pharmaceuticals, chemicals, and heavy industry. It recently moved its headquarters to a new office building in downtown Freedom City,

and its owner, Hieronymus King, took up residence in a sprawling mansion in North Bay. Although federal authorities suspect Majestic may be involved in researching and manufacturing illegal drugs like zoom (p. 86), they cannot uncover any evidence to support those allegations. The truth of the matter is that Majestic is involved in illegal designer drugs, as well as a number of other illegal activities, such as supplying materials and laundering money for organizations like the Foundry (p. 76) and SHADOW (p. 174).

NEW HORIZON MEDIA, INC.

Freedom's largest local corporation is the sprawling New Horizon Media empire, which has interests in virtually every local media outlet, including the Globe Broadcasting Network. In addition to GBN, New Horizon Media owns film studios, newspapers, magazines, and book publishers. NHM has a provocative reputation for the content of its news and media outlets alike. Some media watchdogs question the company's standards and ethics, but NHM points to its success as proof that it only gives the public what it wants. New Horizon Media is scattered across three different skyscrapers in the Parkside area, including the GBN Tower, although the central corporate offices are the top seven floors of the Hayward Building, overlooking Liberty Park.

New Horizon Media's owner is media mogul Henry Allard, a man well known for both his business savvy and ruthless boardroom dealings. Already a very wealthy man, Henry works hard to increase and maintain his corporate empire every day.

NOVA COMMUNICATIONS

Nova Comm. is one of the country's largest cellular communication networks. Its stores with the familiar sunburst symbol are common throughout Freedom City and sell many different models of cellular phones. The company's digital phone network covers the entire East Coast and has plans to expand quickly to other areas of the country. Nova Communications also provides pagers, voice mail systems, and standard telephones, all as part of the "Nova Communications explosion," as their ads say.

THE RHODES FOUNDATION

This multinational investment, holding, and management firm owns Pyramid Plaza and manages a number of different companies in Freedom and around the world. Founded by Alexander Rhodes in the late 1950s, its current CEO is Sophia Cruz. In addition to its many business interests, the Rhodes Foundation is heavily involved in charitable work begun by its founder.

For some reason no one can discern, psychic-sensitive heroes and villains congregate toward Pyramid Plaza. In the past 20 years, more than 50 super-battles have happened near or within the plaza buildings; most of these battles involved Doctor Sophis, a disembodied psychic entity that possessed many different beings over 40 years including the White Hart, Daedalus, and Silencer. Sophis sensed powerful psychic energies around and beneath the plaza but could never uncover the source.

Two famous deaths occurred here on September 17, 1799. Brainstorm, a rookie hero, died defending the Rhodes Foundation building from a Freedom League gone evil; his heroism bought

precious time for the other hero on hand that night. Scarab's subsequent sacrifice freed the heroes from possession by the Scions of Sobek. Brainstorm gained a posthumous honorary membership in the League and both were honored with statues on Liberty Park's Heroes' Knoll.

USNET

The city's most rapidly growing company is the Internet service provider USNet—"the online company for us." It offers online services and Internet access to millions of customers nationwide. The main offices of the company are located in a multi-level brick and glass office complex in Hanover. USNet has poured millions of dollars into improving their extensive network of modems and servers across the country, smoothing out many complaints about the reliability of the company's online services.

The company started out as the brainchild of entrepreneur Scott Hamilton, who sees the Internet as the next great medium for communication and entertainment in the new century. Hamilton believes the Net will eventually expand to encompass all forms of communication and media. He has thus positioned his company to be one of the primary providers of those services. USNet was one of the first providers to bundle a Web-browser with their software, exposing many customers to the World Wide Web for the first time. The company offers Web page storage space as part of its standard membership package, making it a booming business among the high-tech companies in Freedom. The company has of late put money into virtual reality research, promising to provide multi-sensory virtual environments within which their customers can interact more fully than by email or instant messages. Such services are still in the experimental stage and they are several years from practical implementation. The cutting edge research attracts plenty of student interns and graduates from the Hanover Institute of Technology (p. 55).

USNet has an aggressive marketing strategy to compete with other major online service providers. They recently signed an agreement to bundle their online software on most new personal computers built by the Braunberg Group, multiplatform computer producers with a subsidiary plant and office in Freedom City. The company also works closely with New Horizon Media to provide extensive multi-media content for customers, including access to 24-hour GBN.com news and information website and GBN Online services. Rumor has it that New Horizon Media may offer to buy USNet within a year. Whether or not Hamilton is willing to sell is another matter.

CORPORATE EXECUTIVES

For the most part, the "suits" that fill Freedom City's streets during rush hour are hard-working, honest individuals whose names and faces fade among the hundreds of companies and businesses. These few stand above the pack.

Henry Allard: Hank Allard, owner of New Horizon Media, is a man who knows what he wants and goes after it, and Heaven help anyone who gets in his way. He parlayed a small personal fortune into a vast corporate media empire through his negotiating skills and his shrewd sense of what the public wants. Those

THE SECRETS OF THE SCARAB

Unknown to most, Alexander Rhodes was the superhero known as the Scarab, a founding member of the Freedom League. Rhodes, an avid collector of antiquities, learned of a past life in ancient Egypt from hypnotic regression. This awareness awakened his *ka*, an empowered portion of his spirit, and granted him formidable psychic abilities. He used those powers in conjunction with his fortune to fight the forces of evil. His nemesis for much of his career was the reincarnation of an ancient foe—Tan-Aktor, a corrupt pretender-pharaoh who lived this life as Wilhelm Kantor, an S.S. officer and eventually a highly placed member of the Penumbra of SHADOW.

Scarab strongly supported the Freedom League his entire life and was a stalwart member of the group until his death in 1979. The League dissolved shortly afterward, and the Rhodes Foundation passed into other hands. No one but Rhodes' personal assistant ever became aware of his secret superhero identity.

The Scarab's secret headquarters still rests deep beneath Pyramid Plaza. It contains a number of ancient Egyptian artifacts along with Alexander Rhodes' personal journals and files. Sophia Cruz—current CEO of the Foundation and daughter of Rhodes' original assistant—faithfully maintains and protects the pyramidal hideaway and its secrets. She knows the Scarab had been reincarnated many times, and it has been more than twenty years since his death. It may be only a matter of time before something awakens his *ka* once again in his present body, and the Scarab may yet return to Freedom City.

The Scarab: PL 13; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 17 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (fly 40 ft.); Atk +6 melee (+1S, punch), +7 ranged (+8S, energy blast), +11 mental (+11S, mental blast); SV Dmg +3, Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +12; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 20, Cha 13.

Skills: Concentration +12, Diplomacy +5, Innuendo +5, Knowledge (history) +7, Profession (financier) +11, Sense Motive +10.

Feats: Identity Change, Iron Will, Psychic Awareness, Trance, Toughness, True Sight.

Powers: Amazing Save (Will) +5 [Source: Training; Cost: 1 pp], Telepathy +11 [Extras: Illusion, Memory Alteration, Mental Blast; Source: Psychic; Cost: 6 pp], Telekinesis +8 [Extras: Energy Blast, Flight, Force Field; Source: Psychic; Cost: 5 pp].

qualities, coupled with a ruthlessness to do whatever it takes to win, have put Henry Allard at the top of the media heap. He certainly intends to stay there.

Hank Allard is 47, with short, black hair going gray at the temples and on his small Van Dyke beard and moustache. He smokes almost constantly, especially in the presence of people it bothers, and wears fine suits and expensive jewelry (including a ring set with an emerald). His eyes are gray and as hard as flint, particularly when he's angry or wants something out of someone.

Over the years, Hank Allard has done everything in his power to distance himself from any superheroes or supervillains. He doesn't talk about it much, but many suspect it has to do with a love affair that fell apart after Quirk transformed a restaurant in which he and a date had been dining into a pie-throwing monster during a super-battle ten years ago. After being freed from

that experience, Hank avoids anything to do with supers save sending his reporters out after their stories (they do, after all, get the ratings).

Jonathan Grant: The owner of Grant Conglomerate has changed quite a bit since his youth in the 1970s, when he was part of the drug and hippie counter-culture. That sparked Grant's interest in chemistry and his involvement in the early market in designer drugs. The money he made in his early "entrepreneurial ventures" started Grant Conglomerate, a holding company that allowed him to continue to develop newer and more powerful "ways to improve on the human experience." Today, Grant is fabulously wealthy from the public creation of pharmaceuticals and the private manufacture of addictive illegal drugs and artificial superhumans. Jon continues to use his company to experiment on human guinea pigs.

Jonathan Grant is in his 40s but still affects a younger look, wearing his long, blond hair in a ponytail, a full beard, and small glasses. He wears suits and lab-coats most of the time, and always has at least two "augmented" bodyguards close at hand. He assumes his wife and family are loyal to him and know nothing of his illegal activities, but his eldest child, 15-year-old Sarah Grant, secretly hates him; she's a budding empath who picks up on some of her dad's nastier feelings and thoughts without either of them realizing it.

Frank "Buddy" DeCosta: Southsiders know Buddy DeCosta as a family man and a decent, hard-working guy who built DeCosta Construction up from nothing into the largest construction company in Freedom City. Although he works hard to make his company a success, Buddy's true pride and joy is his wife Angelina and their four children—Mary, Julie, Frank Jr., and Cindy, each ranging in age from 19 down to 11.

DeCosta is a simple, straightforward man who speaks his mind. He never hesitates to tell a customer the truth and he expects the same in return. He's known for having a temper, especially when it comes to insults and insinuations about his company and business practices. Any suggestion that DeCosta Construction is involved with any illegal activities, particularly ties to the Mafia, usually triggers an angry shouting fit from DeCosta.

Scott Hamilton: The young CEO of USNet is still a computer geek at heart. In his late 30s, Hamilton usually wears Polo-style shirts and blue jeans to work. Of average height with sandy colored hair and blue eyes, Scott wears gold-rimmed glasses. He likes nothing more than to talk about computers and about his company. He gets very energetic while discussing plans for the future of USNet and what he sees as the most exciting business field in the world. He still spends a considerable amount of his free time surfing the Internet. Hamilton is unmarried and a bit shy around attractive women, despite his usual confidence. Ever since he and his company were saved from the Freebooter by Evening and the Eye of Justice a few years ago, he has done what he can to help them.

Hieronimus King: The Chairman and CEO of Majestic Industries is an extremely ruthless and cunning man. Mr. King's willingness to do anything to increase profits, including breaking the law, make him extremely dangerous. He established Majestic to be a secret backer for criminal operations, as he planned on

CAMPAIGN USE

USNet, with its nationwide system of communications lines and servers, makes an excellent target for computer crimes or criminals seeking to spread information (or a computer virus) through the network. GMs interested in running trips into cyberspace can play up the company's experimental virtual reality technology. Computer- or net-based characters or groups, such as the Legion (p. 78) or the Foundry (p. 76), may take an interest in the USNet system as a means of accessing literally millions of computer users nationwide.

reaping large profits with only minimal risk. King is willing to bankroll super-criminals and to provide for the needs of criminal organizations, but only if he gets a cut of any plunder or secrets they realize. The Majestic CEO is in his 50s, with hair gone almost completely white and a full moustache. He wears business suits most of the time, though a blazer over a sweater and ascot is standard when he's on board his yacht, the *Ocean Queen*, in the marina.

Naomi Sinclair: The President of Nova Communications is a smart businesswoman who joined the company on the promise of increasing its market share. She has followed through on her promise and then some. The board of directors is quite pleased with Ms. Sinclair's performance, including her decision to move the corporate headquarters to Freedom City. Sinclair, a raven-haired woman of Greek and English descent, spends much of her time on the go handling company business. She lives in an apartment in the downtown area and always has her cellphone close at hand.

Arthur W. Stromberg: The CEO of Rath & Stromberg is well known for his strong conservative streak and his brittle demeanor. Stromberg sits on the boards of several major companies, including the Eastern Seaboard Bank. At age 62, Stromberg is still going strong and maintains a very active schedule. He doesn't overly care for Mayor O'Connor's politics, although even he can't complain about what O'Connor has done for the city. Stromberg is a supporter of conservative values, and donates heavily to the local Republican Party. He lives in North Bay with Anne, his wife of almost forty years.

LABOR AND UNION ACTIVITY

Like it or not, Freedom City is a union town. Labor unions have a strong history along the Atlantic coast and Freedom City is no exception. Nearly all blue-collar work in the city is controlled by the major labor unions, which have benefited from the economic boom in the area as much as anyone. Particularly influential is the Construction Workers Union, which has expanded along with the growth of contractors and builders in the city. Union membership is required to work construction and some other labor-intensive jobs in Freedom City, giving the unions considerable negotiating power. Fortunately, union leaders are quite pleased with the current state of affairs in Freedom, so there have been few conflicts between the unions and management.

The major point of contention for some unions, particularly the Construction Workers, is the city's use of supers in certain areas.

The unions have not overlooked Dr. Metropolis' help in building (and rebuilding) Freedom City. While most people consider Dr. Metropolis' assistance nothing short of a miracle, the labor unions fear it is something that could put them out of business. How do you compete with someone who can mold buildings and streets with nothing more than the power of his mind? Thus far, the issue hasn't come to the fore. After all, even with Dr. Metropolis' involvement, the city's contractors have more work than they know what to do with. Still, many workers grumble that it isn't fair to replace "honest work" with "super tricks."

Of concern to the city government and Mayor O'Connor are the possible ties between the city's labor unions and the Mafia. Although nothing has been proven, the Mayor and the District Attorney believe the local Mafia families use the labor unions to launder illegal money and move contraband in and out of the city. Attempts to push the unions too far could lead to other problems, so the DA's office continues to investigate carefully, looking for clear evidence to indict guilty parties without setting off a political firestorm.

BANKING AND FINANCE

"You know, I figured for sure that electronic banking would help cut down on the number of supervillains that get it into their heads to knock over a bank for some quick cash. But now in addition to the really dumb strong ones robbing banks, there are the really smart ones with access to a computer."

—BOB KENALLY, AGE 41, SECURITY CONSULTANT

Banking and finance are big business in Freedom City, particularly along the city's financial district in Wading Way. These businesses take full advantage of the state of the art communications and computing technology available in the city. Freedom City is well on its way to becoming one of the East Coast's major financial centers.

EASTERN SEABOARD BANKING CO.

The "E-Sea" is the largest bank in Freedom City, having recently bought out and consolidated several smaller financial institutions. The bank does a booming business providing loans to developers and new businesses moving into the city. The bank owns a considerable amount of real estate, which it leases or sells as needed. It also holds mortgages on more property than any other financial institution in the Freedom City area.

The bank's blue-and-white lighthouse logo is commonplace on ads and billboards around the city, and can be found on most of Freedom's automatic teller machines as well. Their advertising

uses the slogan "E-Sea—We make banking easy!" The bank prides itself on quick and courteous customer service at all its branches, and E-Sea now offers online banking services for customers with Internet access.

One of the prime concerns of Eastern Seaboard is the need for increased security in their Freedom City branches. The rise in super-crimes has led E-Sea to install more sophisticated security and monitoring systems. The bank also relies heavily on the assistance of the FCPD and heroes like the Freedom League to deal with super-powered bank robbers. Super-criminals have robbed E-Sea banks seven times in the past year, but each time authorities apprehended the criminals within 48 hours and returned all the money they stole.

super-vision MAGAZINE TRUE SUPER STORIES

"I've got years of experience training people in places like Freedom City and New York and I can tell you this—never try and be a hero. You might be up against someone that can eat bullets like gumdrops and melt your gun in your hand by just staring at it hard. Be smart—nothing you can do will stop someone like that, so get out of their way and report what you see as soon as possible. Getting out of the line of fire also keeps some paranormal crook from using you as a hostage, which can complicate things when supers like the Freedom League come along and try and do their job."

—Alan Takashi, age 34, security trainer

RATH & STROMBERG INVESTMENTS

A brokerage house on Wading Way, Rath & Stromberg is one of the largest of its kind in the United States and certainly the largest in Freedom City. The company, originally based in New York City, relocated their main offices to Freedom several years ago. The inexpensive land and the promise of a new, modern communications system were enough to prompt the otherwise conservative corporation to take a chance, which has

paid off well.

The corporation's new headquarters building is a marvel of modern architectural design, and Rath & Stromberg have saved a considerable amount over their rivals in cities like New York and Chicago simply by supporting the stocks of local businesses in Freedom. Their brokers' reputations for integrity and a history of solid performance rather than high-risk speculation also enhance the firm's worth with clients and the industry. Watchers of the stock market say that Wading Way has the potential to become "the new Wall Street."

The company's current CEO is Arthur W. Stromberg, the son of one of the original founders. Stromberg is well known as a stoic and conservative old man with a keen business sense and biting wit. At 62, he has the energy and drive of men half his age and a commanding presence in the boardroom. He's publicly known for appearing in the company's television and radio ads with his famous tagline, "If you want to gamble, go visit a casino. If you want to make money, come visit us." In his off-hours, Stromberg spends time with his wife Anne, their three children, and several grandchildren. The company is rife with speculation about when Stromberg will retire and who will replace him. Current opinion is that "the old man" will be around for several more years.

One of his and his firm's secrets is Arthur's status as the personal investor and old friend of Adrian Eldrich. In fact, Arthur's father Gordon, and his grandfather Harold (who founded

Stromberg Investments in 1898) are the only people to handle the Eldrich account for the past 75 years. Arthur knows that Adrian is the same person who worked with his father and grandfather, but he knows no other mystical secrets beyond that. While they are long-time friends, Arthur secretly envies Adrian's immortality and for years has asked Eldrich (to no avail) to restore his and Anne's youth.

OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Dozens of other banks operate in Freedom City, some of them branches of larger banks and others smaller lending institutions and credit unions. The Hanover Credit Union is the largest of its kind in the city, with branches found throughout the city and its founding headquarters in Hanover. Like the moves by E-Sea over the past year, there have been a number of mergers and consolidations among the middle-tier banks to keep them competitive.

INVESTIGATIONS AND SECURITY

Although the FCPD can be relied upon to handle matters once a crime takes place, many businesses and people in Freedom City want to take extra steps to prevent crime. They rely upon the many private security companies operating in and around the metro area, each catering to a variety of different clients. Although hired security personnel do receive training in how to deal with dangerous situations, their main job is to observe and report information to the police, not to be heroes and make arrests, particularly where super-criminals might be involved.

STRONGHOLD SECURITY

Stronghold Security, based in Hanover, offers security packages for residential and small business customers. Their slogan is "Turn your home into a castle with Stronghold." "Protected by Stronghold" stickers are commonplace in more affluent neighborhoods throughout Freedom City and environs. Uniformed security personnel patrol "high-risk" areas (i.e. areas that have paid for the service), and report anything suspicious to the authorities.

TITAN SECURITY SERVICES

Titan bills itself as a top-of-the-line security consulting company for businesses and large organizations. They provide complete security consulting and contracting services. They survey a site, plan out a security system to handle its needs, quote prices on installation, and provide trained personnel, from technicians to security guards. The company's circled "T" logo is common in windows throughout the downtown area, along with night-shift security guards wearing the same logo on their green uniforms.

LAW FIRMS

Freedom City has a substantial legal community with several prominent law-firms operating in the city and a bar association numbering thousands of members. Attorneys range from high-powered corporate lawyers to smaller firms and non-profit legal aid clinics. Although the Freedom City Bar Association maintains a high standard of ethics, there are always lawyers willing to do whatever it takes to win a case or make a buck.

HIRE YOUR HEROES!

A niche for a group of player characters to fill in Freedom City could be that of freelance security personnel. With so many super-criminals, hiring a superhero to provide security only makes sense. The characters can work for various businesses and private clients, even doing "pro-bono" work on occasion. The heroes may be partners in the company themselves or they may work for an employer like Titan or Stronghold Security. Perhaps the superhuman employees of another company like Grant Conglomerate or Majestic Industries are the heroes' rivals.

CABOT, CUNNINGHAM & CROWLEY

This is one of the oldest law-firms in Freedom City in many more ways than one. Founded here back in 1766, the firm moved its offices to New York City from 1866 until 1979. Lucius Cabot, the founder and senior partner of the firm, is actually immortal, having sold his soul to a demon more than two hundred years ago. Now, his law firm is a cutthroat operation that often defends criminals that can afford its rates and deals in shady matters. Its somewhat shady reputation is always kept to whispered rumors, as "those who openly talk against C, C & C end up de-C-sed..." What draws new lawyers to this firm—or what the firm actively recruits—is ruthlessness and the top pay rate among all the city's law firms.

The senior partners beneath Lucius Cabot know some of the darker dealings of their boss and in the firm's past. In fact, two of the nine senior partners simply serve as shells for the spirits of Cabot's original law firm partners; Augustus Crowley resides in the form of Charles Crowley, while Jacob Cunningham's spirit lives on in his great-grand-daughter Serena Cunningham-Crawford's body, much to his chagrin and Cabot's amusement. Another senior partner is a 70-year-old vampire, and five others wield various occult arts themselves. Despite rumors to the contrary, no employee of C, C & C truly knows what goes on in the upper echelons of the firm until they make junior partner status. Reaching that goal includes a blood pact with at least one of the senior partners, so very few partners ever divulge the firm's secrets for fear of losing more of their souls.

Cabot still has dealings with the occult, and he and the firm have run afoul of both Siren and Eldrich in the past. Despite all this, no one can prove he or the firm has any involvement with anything illegal, much less the occult.

Lucius Cabot: Lucius Cabot was a skilled attorney for early Freedom, but he always cared more about winning cases than the process of justice. In 1768, he convinced a woman accused of witchcraft to share her secrets with him; he called up a demon and bargained for wealth, power, success, and eternal youthful life in which to enjoy it. He then secured the woman's conviction and death by hanging to protect his secret. Since then, Cabot has adopted a number of identities across the world, though he never relinquished the deed for his colonial townhouse on Lantern Hill. At the urging of his demon-master in 1979, Lucius re-established his law firm in Freedom City by posing as his own descendant. Cabot doesn't yet know the reasons for this move, but he's once

again become a powerful figure in the city's legal landscape and he's enjoying the fruits of his success.

Lucius Cabot: PL 7; Init +0; Defense 14; Spd 30 ft; Atk +2 melee (+OS, punch); SV Dmg +4, Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 18.

Skills: Bluff +11, Diplomacy +11, Gather Information +11, Innuendo +11, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (occult) +9, Perform (oratory) +13, Profession (lawyer) +12, Sense Motive +10.

Feats: Connected, Immunity (age, disease, poison), Rapid Healing, Talented (Perform and Profession), Toughness.

HARTFORD, GRAYSON & COLE

The largest law firm in Freedom is the firm of Hartford, Grayson & Cole. It's a relatively new company formed by the partnership of two previous law firms—Hartford & Cole and Grayson Associates. Both 25-year-old companies were solid firms before coming together to form a single firm with tremendous legal expertise and a huge client list. They cover all areas of the legal spectrum from tax and corporate law to criminal, civil, and marital law. The senior partner is Anthony Grayson, a seasoned attorney with more than 30 years of legal experience.

NELSON & BANNERLY, ATTORNEYS AT LAW

The law firm of Nelson and Bannerly operates in the West End and handles a variety of cases, although most deal in civil law. The firm has been in business for almost ten years and they're well known in the area. In addition to handling personal injury cases they also tackle lawsuits against major companies involving insurance suits and cases of negligence. A small firm of two partners and one associate, Nelson & Bannerly operated below most people's radar until they won a major suit against Consolidated Insurance two years ago and forced the insurance giant to pay out life insurance settlements on civilian persons destroyed in the Terminus Invasion of 1993.

EDUCATION

Freedom City is touted as "the City of Tomorrow," and it really tries to live up to the name in its schools and higher education. Mayor O'Connor makes education a priority in the city and many speeches, because "learning opens the doors of opportunity for new generations." Freedom City strongly supports its public schools and its institutions of higher learning.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Freedom City is divided into a number of school districts, each with public elementary, junior high, and high schools. Elementary and junior high schools are often found together in the same building, while districts sometimes share high schools. The city has a total of 25 high schools, with two more under construction to meet increased demand from families moving into the area. The city government makes every effort to ensure quality education for students, although there are some faculty concerns about larger class sizes. Families in Southside and parts of the West End are also concerned about the safety of students in high school

and even in the lower grades. Police and school officials have programs to keep schools safe from guns and drugs and to limit the activities of gangs and related youth crimes in the area.

JOSEPH CLARK HIGH SCHOOL

This high school in Lincoln has seen better days since it was built back in the 1960s. The school faces problems like growing class size and shrinking faculty along with student absenteeism, drug problems, gang violence, and teen pregnancy. Throughout the year the school's dedicated faculty of teachers works hard to keep the students learning and out of trouble, but they don't always succeed.

Compounding the problem is the recurring presence of Wyzrd, a young rookie hero on a flying snowboard. His initial melees against drug pushers were cheered, but his apparent connection to this school has brought trouble in the forms of Los Diablos, a parahuman gang, and the resurrected Bone Daddy. Many speculate that Wyzrd is a student at Clark, but with more than 900 male students as suspects, few can guess his true identity.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL

Roosevelt High is a public high school in the Midtown area of Freedom. It benefits from fairly new facilities but still has many of the same problems that plague all American high schools, such as drugs, violence, and legal issues. The school's faculty and staff work hard to ensure a quality level of education for their students, but often feel that they are more often called upon to be social workers, counselors, and even parole officers. Still, the majority of the student body is made up of kids who vary between working hard and wanting to have fun with their friends. Any problem kids just happen to be the ones that take up the most time. FDR High School has a successful athletics program and its football and basketball games are well attended.

THE CLAREMONT ACADEMY

The Claremont Academy is a prestigious private school in Bayview Heights. The Academy, founded in 1871 by Dr. Charles Claremont, has maintained a small and exclusive student body. In recent years, attendance at the Academy slowly declined as students attended newer private schools in the Freedom City area. The school was forced to close its doors in 1993 due to severe damage it couldn't repair from the Terminus Invasion. It was rebuilt and revitalized with money from Duncan Summers, who also became the school's new headmaster when it reopened in 1996. Unknown to the world at large, Summers was once the masked hero known as the Raven, a role now assumed by his daughter Callie (see p. 113).

Mr. Summers re-opened the school and began admitting a new class of students with a slight difference in his enrollment practices. He also began secretly recruiting "special" youngsters with paranormal abilities, seeking them out with the aid of his daughter and bringing them to Claremont. Here they could learn to control their abilities and get a strong education in values as well as the usual curricula. So far, Duncan has gathered only a handful of "special" students at the Academy, but the Freedom League

CAMPAIGN USE

The Claremont Academy makes a great basis for a teen-oriented campaign with the players running students at the Academy. They can work to control and understand their powers while hiding them from the local community and dealing with all of the usual changes teenagers endure. Either Duncan Summers or Professor Marquez makes a good mentor and supporting character. Summers also can provide the teens with a way of interacting with the Raven and her teammates in the Freedom League from time to time. There's also the potential matter of the U.S. government uncovering Claremont Academy's hidden purpose and interfering "for the good of the children" but more importantly for their own self-interest.

and other "old friends" of his keep an eye out for potential students and pass information along to Duncan when they can.

Two of the teachers on staff at Claremont Academy stand out from the rest, though they are all top-flight educators. The physical education teacher—Alan Archer—was once Hot Rod, a late 1970s speedster-hero who can still run up to Mach 2 when necessary; Duncan recruited him from a flophouse and got him dried out of a decade-long crank habit. Gabriel Marquez, the Composition and English Literature professor, has been a paraplegic since the 1993 invasion, his legs shattered when he rescued his students (but not himself) from Terminus paratroops. He was never an active hero, but his parahuman ability to dampen energy (including those within superhumans) is the reason Summers made sure Marquez returned to his classroom as soon as it was rebuilt. Gabriel is uncertain about some of Duncan's plans, but gladly helps teach the kids to control their sometimes undisciplined powers.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Freedom City is quite proud of its institutions of higher learning, all recognized as some of the finest in the country. All of them have expanded their facilities to accommodate increased enrollment over the years.

FREEDOM CITY UNIVERSITY (FCU)

The premier school in the city is Freedom City University (or FCU), a sprawling campus in the North End between Liberty Park and the Wading River. The school was established in 1825 and has been extensively expanded and refurbished over the decades from its original single building and tiny campus area. Although once considered the lesser college in the city, its enrollment and prestige have long since overtaken those of the elder Freedom College in many people's eyes.

The campus itself covers almost two square miles of the North End, encompassing more than a score of buildings (generally known as "halls"). The campus features modern landscaping and tree-lined walkways among the buildings, along with dormitories, fraternity and sorority row houses, and other facilities for students. All of the university's facilities are state of the art, including the campus' computer network.

FCU is notable for its liberal arts programs, with a world-class faculty for English, history, philosophy, and communications. Its business program has become nationally renowned and strongly associated with firms along Wading Way. The university's science programs are well regarded but overshadowed by those of HIT. FCU also has well-known medical school and law school graduate programs.

FREEDOM COLLEGE

Located in Southside, Freedom College is the oldest college in the Freedom area, although it lay outside the city proper when it was built and opened in 1799. While it was once considered equal to the Ivy League colleges and the preferred school for the city's privileged, it hasn't withstood the test of time as well as others. Its facilities and materials are often out of date and it has acquired a reputation as a "party school," where students while away their time having fun rather than going to class and learning. Since 1957, its tuition has been less expensive than the other schools in Freedom, often making it the only choice for lower-income families. For the athletic-minded student, Freedom College is heavily involved in college sports, although there are rumors that so are some of the city's Mafia families.

There has been some effort to improve Freedom College recently in its standing, reputation, and facilities. The mayor and the college's Board of Trustees would like nothing better than to see Freedom College restored to its colonial architectural glory as well as modern academic excellence, but the process has been a slow one compared to many of the improvements made in Freedom City.

THE FREEDOM SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS (FREESA)

The Freedom School for the Arts, or "FreeSA" as it is locally known, is located in the Riverside area, not far from Route 4 and the monorail line. Intended to encourage and enhance the arts in Freedom, it has successfully drawn students from all across the country to its fine facilities and faculty. The school focuses on an arts education, providing everything from fine arts like painting and drawing to dance, music, or performance art. Students at FreeSA tend to be on the obsessive side about their chosen artistic disciplines; they need to be, since the school's entrance requirements are high, and there's a long waiting list to get in. In addition to attending classes, students often put on shows and recitals for their fellow students and the public. They also regularly show or perform their work at the galleries and clubs in Riverside and the Theatre District.

HANOVER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (HIT)

Located across the Wading River from FCU is the Hanover Institute of Technology, or HIT. Where better to learn the skills for the "City of Tomorrow" than at one of the finest technical schools in the nation? HIT compares favorably with CalTech and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It has a slight rivalry with FCU over the cutting-edge status of their comparative scientific resources. FCU recently scored points because its facilities are newer and more modern than those at HIT, although the school is scrambling to update things as quickly as it can.

The HIT campus spreads along the bank of the Wading River, and it occupies more than a dozen low brick-front buildings and some more modern structures. Its strong technical focus embraces renowned programs in computer programming, engineering, chemistry, and physics. While HIT remains at the forefront in other fields, FCU outshines the Institute in biology and biochemistry. HIT students have reputations not only as "science geeks" but also as inveterate pranksters, usually targeting FCU or their own rivals on the HIT campus.

MASTER LEE'S SCHOOL OF SELF DEFENSE

A small and unassuming two-story concrete-block building in northern Hanover houses this martial arts school. Master Lee, an older Chinese gentleman who immigrated to America in 1936 at age 19, teaches various styles of kung fu to his students. Actually, Master Lee's advanced students do most of the teaching under his guidance. Although the school is a legitimate and successful business, Master Lee also secretly uses the school to search for students worthy of the esoteric martial arts secrets he learned from his own masters in China. After an unfortunate incident in which one of his first students used his skills for evil, Master Lee chooses his apprentices very carefully.

Master Lee: PL 11; Init +9 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Defense 22 (22 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +13 melee (+6S, punch); SV Dmg +3, Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 13, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 13.

Skills: Acrobatics +10, Balance +10, Bluff +5, Escape Artist +10, Hide +10, Jump +5, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7.

Feats: Ambidexterity, Assessment, Attack Finesse (unarmed), Blind-Fight, Dodge, Evasion, Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Instant Stand, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Rapid Strike, Surprise Strike, Takedown, Trance.

Powers: Combat Sense +5 [Source: Training; Cost: 1 pp], Strike +5 [Source: Training; Cost: 2 pp].

FINE ARTS

Freedom City bills itself as a cosmopolitan center for the arts, and it lives up to that claim in the selection of concerts, museums, galleries, and other attractions it offers.

MUSIC

Freedom City has an active classical music scene featuring the renowned Freedom Philharmonic, a full 115-piece orchestra. They give weekly performances at the Beaudrie Opera House, but the highlight of the year is their Independence Day "Let Freedom Ring!" concert in Riverside Park to the accompaniment of fireworks. The current conductor of the Philharmonic is Arthur Tan, a well-known Chinese-American composer. Tan has worked on a number of musical scores for popular films and television.

The Freedom City Opera Company is considered one of the best in the nation, also performing at the Opera House. They put on between six and eight operas each year, attracting the cream of

CAMPAIGN USE

Both the FCU and HIT campuses make great places for weird scientific research experiments to use as adventure hooks. From unexpected portals to other dimensions to experiments in robotics or genetic engineering, out-of-control experiments often require the aid of superheroes to set things right and protect innocent students. Such accidents also provide handy origins for new super characters. Including Freedom College, all three campuses are natural places to find younger PCs in their secret identities. They also provide many supporting NPCs and various experts the player characters can consult on everything from quantum physics to ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Freedom society. There had been talk for years of someone trying to write an opera to celebrate the superheroes of Freedom City, but nothing ever came of it until 1999. Performed to sold-out shows for more than three years, *Pax Centurionus* is a curious opera in Latin celebrating the life and death of Centurion. Gerard Phillips, the noted soprano who plays Centurion, has become quite the local celebrity with this role.

THE BEAUDRIE OPERA HOUSE

Originally built in 1874 by Richard Beaudrie, the Beaudrie Opera House has long been a landmark of Freedom City's theatre district. The Opera House was recently painstakingly restored using photographs and information gathered from the local historical society after suffering tremendous damage from a super-battle against the Maestro and the Crime League early last year. The current Opera House is considered even grander than the original but with at least as much Old World charm and class. The Beaudrie Opera House is home to Freedom City's own orchestra and opera company. It also serves as host to a number of other events, including plays, musicals, and even rock concerts.

DRAMA AND DANCE

There are more than a dozen active theatre companies in Freedom City's bustling theatre district, performing everything from contemporary plays and musicals to Shakespeare and ballet. A number of touring companies perform in the area before moving on to New York, Boston, or Los Angeles. The more popular modern performances tend to draw bigger crowds, but the recent visit of London's Royal Shakespeare Company sold out almost immediately. Given the incredible facilities here, many consider it of equal status to either be in a Broadway theatre in New York or to open a show in the modern Goodrich Theatre or the elegant Hellmann Odeum in Freedom City.

LIBRARIES

Freedom City has some 134 public libraries, ranging from the extensive neighborhood branches of the Freedom City Public Library to the college and university libraries. The city also boasts private collections such as law and medical libraries, not to mention the extensive collections owned by the Super Museum or the Freedom City Historical Society.

CAMPAIGN USE

Events like the opera or the theatre tend to attract the upper crust of Freedom society, making them ideal targets for criminals. Many supervillains flock here looking to rob from the wealthy or merely hold them hostage, whether for ransom or to prove a point to the wealthiest persons in the city. Player characters who are upper-class or influential in their secret identities might attend an evening at the opera or the ballet, and anyone might go out for an evening of culture and refinement, including some of the heroes and their supporting NPCs.

The city's public library system has 48 branches located throughout the metro area encompassing a total collection of more than three million volumes and a bound newspaper archive that spans the periodicals of Freedom City for the past 162 years. It also contains microfilm and microfiche files, audio and videotapes, and electronic information to support all the printed materials. The Public Library has an extensive and easy-to-use website that allows patrons to search for materials and reserve or renew them online. The main branch of the city library is located in City Center. The heavy granite building has a broad stairway flanked by stone sphinxes; the sphinxes have long been nicknamed April and May, though no one quite remembers why. The steps of the Central Library are a popular spot for meetings and lounging and reading in good weather.

MOVIE HOUSES

While a number of historians and law enforcement officials would like to forget this fact, Freedom City has some incredible movie palaces, all thanks to the Mob. With the Mob running large sections of Freedom City during the early years of Prohibition, it put a lot of its money into entertainments to distract the populace and flaunt its wealth. Although most movie houses had moved on to independent management in the 1960s, any remaining Mob interests in all but the seediest Fens cinemas had been removed by the end of Mayor O'Connor's first term.

Some palaces were built at the turn of the century as vaudeville houses and later converted, while the bulk of them were built in the grand fashion of movie houses during the 1920s. Unlike most major cities, Freedom patrons have never embraced the modern movie-plexes with a dozen screens, preferring their well-kept and often restored theaters with one or two screens. After all, with more than 25 movie theaters scattered across the entire city, they actually screen more new and old movies every night of the week than would normally be seen.

The closest movie megaplex is just outside the city limits south of Greenbank. The hopes of the Greenbank Shopping Center and this theater reviving the economy of that area were dashed more than ten years ago when a running battle between the FORCE Ops and the R.I.O.T. destroyed more than half the cineplex. Since 1990, this property has been mostly abandoned, though Scott Hamilton has talked of buying it to house a new USNet technology center and a testing ground for his virtual reality simulators.

The councilor for Greenbank is ecstatic over this potential boon for the community and constantly pushes for it.

When people are asked which movie house they like the best, most remember the Pharaoh in Hanover with its stylized Egyptian motifs both inside and out. Others like the gothic style of the Castle Cinema in Port Regal with its dark stone and many gargoyle carvings and torch-sconce lighting. The third most memorable theater is the Victorian, a three-story behemoth that still dominates Kanigher Boulevard in Parkside with its blinding front display of 1940s neon and interior designs with blood-red velvet and gold detail. Last but hardly least is a theater returned from the dead; the Radiodeum was long abandoned and recently renovated after the Toon Gang was removed after using it as a hideout. People still flock to see it and its two movie screens, enjoying the movies but marveling at the quality carpentry and solid art-deco style furnishings that take some of them back to the 1930s.

MUSEUMS

Freedom City has a number of museums and art galleries, especially in the Riverside and Parkside areas. The museums are popular tourist attractions and play host to numerous school field trips. The galleries exhibit the best and brightest of Freedom's artistic communities, and they are popular nighttime destinations for people in Riverside to be in with the "in crowd."

THE FREEDOM CITY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Not far from the park, this nineteenth century building was a privately-held manor until 1906 when it became the Freedom City Historical Museum. The museum features a variety of attractions related to the history of Freedom City from its founding to the present day. Most of the museum's exhibits are re-creations, although local individuals have donated some genuine historical pieces.

The main attraction is only a few years old and has revived interest in this old institution. A massive but scaled model of Freedom City (circa 1908) rests beneath the museum's central rotunda. After a battle against Rant and Rave damaged the museum, Dr. Metropolis created the model for fun while helping to repair the museum. The model recreates exacting details that could only come from memory, not photographs or newspaper accounts, and surprises even the historians. Despite assurances of their safety, they worry about the tiny gaslights used in the model for authentic streetlamps of that era. Most kids just love the animatronic horses and buggies in the streets.

THE HUNTER MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Just north of Liberty Park, between the monorail line and the FCU campus, stands the Hunter Museum of Natural History. It was funded by an anonymous donor, and Dr. Metropolis and Daedelus of the Freedom League built the actual structure. The three-story marble and steel building resembles a Greek temple on the outside, and inside the museum features displays on archeology, anthropology, paleontology, and technology.

The museum's collection includes several artifacts from ancient civilizations, many of them donated by Daedelus and others; Adrian Eldrich volunteers his time to evaluate or screen any items

of mystical power with Daedelus. Often, the two create a replica to show the item without risking its loss or abuse. To the delight of younger visitors, a giant replica of a tyrannosaurus rex skeleton greets visitors in the main lobby.

As the silent, anonymous founder of the museum, Daedelus has a number of agents in place on the staff to keep an eye out for curious artifacts. He and his museum fund more than a dozen archaeological digs at a time, and many relics have been secreted away for study over the years. After all, Preserver artifacts create more questions than answers and are purposely "lost" in storage beneath the Hunter and other such institutions.

Last year, on a dig in his alias as archaeologist David Harris, Daedelus found a score of modern DVDs in an undisturbed burial chamber on the high plateau of Nevado Ampato in Peru. The DVDs show movies of many ancient sites in their prime or in the midst of history's greatest battles. He has suppressed this information and works at figuring out whom the flying time-traveler was who made these recordings....

THE KIRBY MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

Located near the monorail stop on the western side of Liberty Park is the famed Kirby Museum of Fine Arts. "The Kirby," as locals call it, contains a large number of paintings, sculptures, and other works by American and international artists. The museum itself is a marvel in modern architectural design with two levels and three wings off the main lobby area and an impressively lit crystal spire that makes it an easy landmark. The museum runs regular theme exhibits, the most recent being an exhibit of "urban art"—artworks created in or for an urban environment using modern tools and techniques.

The museum suffered twice in super-battles in the past ten years. The original glass spire atop the building broke when used as a perch by Gargantus, a 30-foot-high mutant gorilla on a rampage in 1988; the spire has since been remade with a crystalline compound of greater tensile strength. The museum also lost seven irreplaceable Impressionist paintings and more than a dozen statues in 1998, all defaced or destroyed by the Philistine on a rampage before Eye of

CAMPAIGN USE

The Super Museum is a great place for heroes to visit in their secret identities or in costume. Heroes can be guests of the museum to open a new exhibit—perhaps an exhibit about *them!*—or they might just drop in for a surprise visit to sign autographs and have their picture taken with some eager tourists. The museum is also a somber place of reflection, where the players can get an appreciation of the legacy of heroism that came before them, most of all in the Hall of Honor, a dark hall featuring spotlights illuminating statues of heroes who gave their lives while fighting for Freedom City: Brainstorm, Centurion, Doctor Atom, Hepcat, the Ocelot, the Penitent, Scarab, Tectonic, and more than a dozen others.

Of course, the Super Museum also may be of interest to super-criminals. Most of the gadgets on display are replicas, but some are originals, since they are harmless (or so the museum staff believes). A criminal might simply want the pleasure of trashing a place important to so many heroes, or might use a threat to the museum to draw the attention of an enemy.

Justice stopped him. Since then, the museum has security almost as good as that of Freedom Hall, and no one is allowed within three feet of any artwork without special clearance.

THE SUPER MUSEUM

The most popular museum attraction in Freedom City by far is the famed Super Museum on Allen Street in Midtown. The museum has exhaustively detailed exhibits on and about supers throughout history, including special displays on the "mystery men" of the 1930s, the Liberty League, and modern heroes like the Freedom League and the Atom Family. Perhaps one day, statues of the player characters may adorn the Super-Museum.

The museum has lifelike wax statues of supers, dioramas, actual costumes, and nonfunctional replicas of various super-gadgets and equipment. There are three small theaters within the museum, one for newsreels and footage of the early heroes from the 1920s on through the early 1950s, another for the modern

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■ The "American cuisine" at this restaurant is "excellent," but the real reason to visit Champion's in Freedom City is for the restaurant's "extensive collection of super memorabilia" and its "connection to the Freedom Super Museum." The place is "nearly always packed," so we recommend customers put their names on the waiting list and "spend some time looking around the museum;" besides, museum patrons also receive coupons for discounts and specials at Champion's. The restaurant has a "full children's menu and plenty of attractions and fun for kids as well as adults."

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heroes of the 1960s through today, and a third for footage of the villains and a special documentary on the Terminus Invasion of 1993. The museum also has a busy gift shop selling all manner of supers memorabilia, including T-shirts, statuettes, comic books, poster prints, videos and DVDs, and more.

Outside the museum stands the 20-foot bronze sculpture "Atlas Triumphant," a man holding a representation of the Earth high above his head, by artist Raul Diaz. Attached to the museum is the original Champion's theme-restaurant. Owner and founder Todd Campion helped supply many of the exhibits for the museum, and more can be found inside the restaurant itself. Champion's does a booming business, and occasionally gets visited by one or more of Freedom's resident heroes, making it all the more popular for tourists hoping to spot a superhero.

VISUAL ARTS

The Freedom City art scene is strongly concentrated in the Riverside community, though there are some other artists and galleries in Hanover, the West End, and even Southside. Riverside features a number of small galleries, and the city government hires artists for public works intended to enhance the city's appearance.

NOTABLE ARTISTS

There may be many more artists just within the West End than there are people in some small towns, but these are the artists who stand out from the pack in many ways.

Jacques Crenaire/L'Enfant Terrible: Strange for any other city than Freedom, prison helped create one of the city's most notable artists. L'Enfant Terrible, a French supervillain, immigrated here and became a nemesis of Hepcat, Lady Liberty, and other heroes in the late 1950s. His permanent baby-like appearance and his psychic powers masked his cruelty, but L'Enfant eventually was incarcerated for life in Blackgate for the murders of 17 people in 1963. After being imprisoned for more than a decade, he discovered his talents for painting. Despite some public outcry, there have been irregular showings of his sketches and paintings since the mid-1980s. The proceeds from his artwork go to a relief fund for his victims' families.

Raul Diaz: Famed sculptor Raul Diaz originally hails from Costa Rica, although he moved to the United States with his family as a child. He embarked on his career as an artist as a young man in New York City, earning critical acclaim for his work. He met Michael O'Connor at a gallery showing in 1991, where O'Connor purchased some of Diaz's work for his private collection. O'Connor later decided to engage Diaz's services to provide pieces to enhance the city, particularly the Sentry Statue that stands at the tip of the peninsula, which is Diaz's largest work to date. Raul now lives in Freedom City and has his own gallery in Riverside, where he displays and sells his work, which is in demand worldwide. He has a small studio of artists trained in his style simply so he doesn't have to be the one to always repair and fix his statuary after the latest super-battle.

Joan Enrikson: Joan Enrikson is an African American painter known for her use of ancient tribal motifs in her work. She lives in the West End and has displayed her art at galleries in Riverside to

rave reviews. She was recently commissioned by the city to paint a series of murals in the Riverside area.

Christina Valley: Ms. Valley is a photojournalist and art photographer who has done work abroad, mostly in Australia and South America. After spending years traveling the world, Christina fell in love with Freedom City and bought a condominium in Parkside. Her photography from the front lines of the Terminus Invasion would have more than ensured her fame, but her photo of the fallen Centurion garnered her a Pulitzer Prize. Since that time, she has focused more on art photos. Her photographs of Freedom have appeared in magazines nationwide and a show is planned at the Historical Museum in the near future.

HEALTH CARE

Freedom City cares about the health and welfare of its citizens and has ensured that their home has some of the finest medical facilities in the world.

FREEDOM MEDICAL CENTER

The foremost hospital in the city is the sprawling Freedom Medical Center near the downtown campus of FCU. The FMC is affiliated with the university and serves as a "teaching hospital" for interns and medical students. The 700-bed hospital has a staff of some 1,200 physicians and 7,500 employees in all, including students and volunteers. Most of the physicians on staff are renowned specialists in their fields, including seven who specialize solely in parahumans, their powers, and how to treat them.

The Medical Center recently received a substantial grant from the U.S. government to study triage methods and disaster management. The staff studies the records of various accidents and natural disasters with an eye toward formulating more effective strategies for treating victims. The hospital's trauma team and emergency room are rated among the finest on the East Coast.

MCNIDER MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

McNider Hospital was once the largest hospital in Freedom City. It has long served Midtown, but these days it plays second fiddle to the newer and more modern Freedom Medical Center. Staff members at Memorial are touchy about their loss of status and funding, but they remain dedicated to their jobs. The hospital has facilities for 500 patients and a full staff of physicians and health care workers.

TRINITY HOSPITAL

Located in West End, Trinity Hospital began as a Catholic-run public hospital. It was later bought out by a private health-maintenance organization in 1989. There have been some concerns regarding the hospital's outdated facilities, especially when compared to the new hospitals in the metro area. The HMO that owns the hospital, Humanix, is considering upgrading the facility. Trinity has a unique status as the only hospital in Freedom City never to suffer a superhuman battle on its premises.

THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM

The Providence Asylum is located in a fairly isolated part of Port Regal, near a cliff overlooking the ocean. It was originally the

CAMPAIGN USE

Naturally, the Providence Asylum becomes the place to put some of the lunatics the heroes capture who are judged unfit to stand trial. More than a few of Raven's and Foreshadow's foes end up here. Security is only slightly less than that of Blackstone, as the city and federal governments take the handling of super-criminals seriously. Player characters can visit Providence to see an old foe or investigate a breakout.

Another interesting use for the asylum is for a cunning villain to seize control of the place and imprison the player characters there. More than one hero has been trapped here in the past, convinced they were insane and their heroic identities, perhaps even their entire histories, were nothing but delusions. This can make for quite the psychodrama as well as an excellent roleplaying opportunity.

Finally, the asylum is spooky enough to be associated with the occult and the mystical side of Freedom City. It is easy to associate this place with ghosts and other hobgoblins, mad slashers, or perhaps even Elder Things Man Was Not Meant to Know. See **Magic and Mysticism**, for more information.

estate of the Phillips clan, one of Freedom's founding families. Mr. Howard Phillips, the patriarch at the time, donated the estate to Dr. Reginald Carter to establish an asylum for the mentally ill upon his death in 1908. Dr. Carter set up the asylum and served as its director for many years, until he disappeared under mysterious circumstances in 1929. The Board of Trustees hired a new director and the asylum has continued to operate to this day. Facilities in the Providence Asylum have been greatly updated since its establishment, although they still lag somewhat behind the state of the art.

The Asylum's Board of Trustees recently approved a proposal by the state and federal governments to begin a limited program of treating mentally ill superhumans at the facility, pending the reinforcement of Ward Five and the assistance of Blackstone Penitentiary personnel. Current asylum director Dr. Ashley Ellis has high hopes of making a breakthrough in the rehabilitation of paranormal criminals. Some Freedomians express concerns with putting convicted paranormal criminals back out on the street, even if they are declared cured.

NOTABLE DOCTORS

Given the reliability of super-battles in Freedom City, there is always a great need for medical personnel of all stripes and specialties from EMTs and nurses all the way up to the chief of parahuman medicine at FMC.

Dr. Randolph Collins: Dr. Collins is chief of staff at McNider Memorial Hospital, and he is quite proud of his facility's achievements during his ten years at the helm. He is devoted to giving hospital patrons the highest level of care possible. Dr. Collins is well known for his reserved nature and his dislike of "superhuman antics" as he calls them. In his view, paranormals like the Freedom League or the Atom Family may be helpful in a disaster, but most of the time, they do nothing but fight amongst themselves, which always leads to more casualties.

Dr. Ashley Ellis: The director of the Providence Asylum, Dr. Ellis is either a saint or a martyr, depending on whom you ask. She fiercely devotes herself to helping patients many deem incurable and is seen as "soft" when it comes to dangerous or super-powered psychotics. At the same time, she keeps the asylum running smoothly and ensures that its patients receive quality care rather than simple incarceration. It remains to be seen whether or not her work will prove successful. Already she's fended off complaints about the asylum and fought efforts to move some of her patients to Blackstone. Ashley Ellis is an attractive woman in her late-30s with shoulder-length auburn hair and striking lavender eyes. She usually wears her white coat over a pastel blouse and a dark skirt, and she wears black-rimmed glasses for reading.

Dr. Sergei Ivanov: An immigrant from the Baltic Republics, Dr. Ivanov is a neurology specialist and a skilled neurosurgeon. He wrote a popular book on psionic studies in the former Soviet Union after working for a time on once-classified Soviet experimental studies of psychic abilities. He was an associate of Dr. Mina Kosmova before she became the Cosmic Mind (see p. 154). In addition to his practice at the Freedom Medical Center, Dr. Ivanov pursues studies in psionic neurology under a grant from the U.S. government.

Dr. Emily Tanner: Dr. Emily Tanner is a newcomer to Freedom Medical Center. She hopes to prove her personal theory that there is a biological explanation for the large number of superhumans in Freedom City. She plans to submit her initial findings soon to secure a grant so she can study the phenomenon further. Dr. Tanner is a dark-haired woman in her mid-30s, with a strong—one might say "obsessive"—interest in paranormal physiology.

MAGIC AND MYSTICISM

While there is no doubt in the minds of some that the forces of magic are at work in the world, there's fairly little conclusive and overt evidence of them in Freedom City, at least on the surface. Freedom is a city that looks toward the future rather than back to the dusty past. Unfortunately for some, "forgotten" magic and the myths and legends of the past sometimes have ways of reminding

FREEDOM CITY HOSPITALS

Freedom City Veterans Hospital
Freedom Medical Center
Hanover Medical Center
Kingston Community Medical Center
Providence Asylum
McNider Memorial Hospital
North Bay Medical Center
Parkside General Hospital
Pineview Hospital
Port Regal Medical Center
Shriners' Children's Hospital
Southside General Hospital
St. Joseph's Hospital
St. Margaret's Hospital
Trinity Hospital

people they're still around. Ironically, when a particularly skeptical researcher from ASTRO Labs asked Daedalus his opinion about magic, he was amazed that the Freedom League's premier scientist believed that magic existed. After all, the ancient technologist has seen more than his share of the supernatural first hand!

Mystical beliefs are most alive in parts of the West End and Southside with their large immigrant populations. There, one can find the occasional herbal shop that also provides Voodoo and Santeria candles or even blessed corn meal. Riverside and Hanover feature neo-pagan shops with books on witchcraft, tarot readings, crystals, and such. Most of these places are fairly mundane, but they are sometimes frequented by people with some true awareness in the mystic arts.

The undercurrent of Voodoo is particularly strong in Freedom because of the presences of the goddess Siren (p. 116) and the spirit Baron Samedi (p. 152). Most people ignore or downplay Siren's claims that she is a Voodoo goddess, but some believe and honor her work with prayer and what assistance they can give. They know all too well what Siren fights for and against whom she fights.

DITKO STREET

One place where magic hides in plain sight is on Ditko Street, in Riverside. There, at number 110 in a well-appointed refurbished mansion dating back to colonial times, lives Adrian Eldrich, an author and well-known expert on the occult and all things magical. Few people know Eldrich is one of the most powerful mages in the world and the mystical guardian of Earth. He investigates many occult matters and protects the Earth from extradimensional forces and beings that would prey upon humanity, given the chance.

Eldrich permeates his home with numerous protective spells that keep his neighbors from noticing anything too unusual about it or him. The spells also contain any magical "fallout" from his work or conflicts with his enemies. The media sometimes calls on Mr. Eldrich when they need to interview an occult expert or want a guest for a talk show. Some people, like members of the Freedom League and the Atom Family, are aware of Eldrich's true abilities, but he otherwise keeps a low profile.

THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM

Magical forces always seem to gather around the Providence Asylum in Port Regal. The site was Native American holy ground in pre-colonial days, and early settlers slaughtered natives who tried to keep them from building there. Elijah Prophet hanged witches on that land during his witch hunts. Two homes previously built there mysteriously burned to the ground, one of them after the owner murdered his entire family. Rumors said that one of the houses served as a meeting place for devil-worshippers. Despite all this history, the avowed skeptic Mason Phillips bought the land and built his family manse there in 1818. Over the next century, more than two dozen relatives and friends of the Phillips clan went mad while staying in the manse or on the estate grounds. Howard Phillips' bequeathal of the land and manse as an asylum for the city may have been his attempt to break what was long considered "the Phillips Curse."

With that pedigree for pain and suffering, the asylum and its grounds have become the focus for dark mystical forces. Normally unfocused and vague, the energies are pervasive enough to give the place a disturbing aura. In the hands of an adept in the arcane arts, the wellspring of dark energies can be dangerous indeed. GMs can use the asylum as a plot device attractive to evil magicians and sorcerers. There is also the potential danger of a deranged person with mystical potential learning how to command the forces seething beneath the manse (or the forces themselves could just take command of the patient, and wreak their vengeance actively).

THE MEDIA

The media, from newspapers to radio and television, is a powerful force in Freedom City. The city is home to one of the world's largest media corporations and its citizens are used to a constant stream of information and entertainment. Naturally, a big focus of Freedom City's media is the superheroes and supervillains.

PRINT MEDIA

Freedom City has a number of daily newspapers and other publications that report the exploits and accomplishments of Freedomians common and super alike. Like many of the businesses in the city, Freedom's major newspapers have made the transition to the electronic market with websites and online services for their readers.

CASTLE COMICS

A small publisher of traditional superhero comic books, Castle Comics relocated to Freedom City and became the officially licensed publisher of comics based on the adventures of the Freedom League. They bought the rights to the original pulps and comics of Freedom's old Aurora Publishing Group and have since acquired licenses for the Atom Family and several other independent heroes and teams around the country. They'll produce comics about heroes even beyond their deaths. Their magazines and comics number more than 30 monthly or bimonthly books, but their biggest sellers are *Freedom League Adventures* and (to everyone's surprise) *Tomb Tales of the Scabab*.

Castle's staff of writers and artists primarily create "reality comics" based on news reports, along with interviews and information provided by the heroes (or sometimes the villains) themselves. Unlike most comic companies, Castle Comics keeps two computers tied to the wire services at all times to track the latest actions of "their" superheroes. Every effort is made to keep the comics "true to life," since that's what the audience wants to see, although Castle must take certain liberties when it comes to working around the private lives of heroes with secret identities. Naturally, they prefer heroes with public identities like Captain Thunder, although some controversy arises over how much of Johnny Rocket's personal life to show in their comics. Assuming there are no conflicts with a hero's estate, Castle also produces comics that speculate on the secrets and mysteries behind a deceased hero's adventures and life.

The Freedom League visited the Castle offices only once, but thanks to Quirk's tag-along appearance, it isn't likely they're be

welcomed back any time soon. It's hard to produce comic books when art pages giggle ("because pencils tickle!"), cubicle walls fall over like dominoes, writers are turned into two-dimensional comic strips, and computer coloring programs want to print everything with a paisley pattern.

THE DAILY HERALD

Known as the most conservative paper in Freedom City, the *Daily Herald* is a morning daily. It focuses on business and political news and its editorials support one right-wing cause after another. Due to its frequent hard-line editorial stances on crime and other issues, the *Herald* building and its presses and staff are favorite targets of some supervillains.

The publisher, Lana Loeb, uses the paper as her personal platform and sounds off on a wide variety of topics, following the tradition set by her late husband and former publisher, Lester Loeb. Most recently, the *Herald* has questioned Mayor O'Connor's spending practices and the efforts of City Hall to come down on corruption in the construction industry. The paper questions the actions of the Freedom League almost daily. If they make a mistake, they can often read about it in the *Herald* the following day. Johnny Rocket is a favorite target of Mrs. Loeb's column, as she questions whether or not "a known sexual deviant should be considered a role model for our children." Her paper reserves particular venom for the "lawless vigilantes" operating in Southside. These heroes are "little more than armed thugs," according to Mrs. Loeb, "who should be arrested and taken off the streets."

THE DAILY WORD

One of Freedom's smaller daily newspapers, this tabloid-format morning daily comes out of Hanover. The *Daily Word* carries stories relating to Freedom society and entertainment. It has an excellent entertainment and arts section as well as a number of juicy gossip columns. Some people dismiss the paper as superficial fluff, but many take their reviews of local restaurants and attractions quite seriously. The paper also delights in digging up dirt on Freedom's celebrities, including the Freedom League.

THE FREEDOM CITY LEDGER

The *Ledger* is Freedom City's oldest daily newspaper, having been started in 1847 by Henry Beaumont. It has run morning and evening editions for more than 150 years through wars, disasters, strikes, and more. Even alien invasions and cosmic calamities have failed to delay its publication, though they did reduce it to a single daily edition during the Terminus Invasion. The paper's motto is "All That You Need to Know," and they take that coda very seriously.

The *Ledger* operates in downtown Freedom out of a building equipped with state-of-the-art printing presses and computer equipment. Fletcher Beaumont II is the paper's publisher, while Jerry Jonas is editor-in-chief. Beaumont writes a weekly editorial column for the Sunday edition, in which he spouts off about whatever is on his mind at the time. The publisher has a reputation for expressing his opinion, which has a decidedly liberal bent. The *Ledger* has always vocally supported the city's super-heroes except for some of the more violent and bloodthirsty

vigilantes active during the Moore years (of whom, not surprisingly, the *Herald* approved).

The *Freedom City Ledger* is published seven days a week with Sunday being the only day of the week with a single (but larger) edition. It also has a massive website in cooperation with USNet, which provides online content for readers and access to up-to-the-minute news updates and information. Thus far, the website has been very successful, and there are plans to continue to expand it. Between two dailies and the website, the *Ledger* stays atop the news at all times, their sources and news items rarely being more than 4–8 hours old.

The *Ledger* employs some 2,000 people at its downtown offices, with another 150 or so at its secondary printing plant in Southside. Its primary "bullpen" of some 55 reporters covers state and local news, while the business, sports, and lifestyle departments each have a dedicated staff of five to ten reporters. The paper's award-winning staff and freelance photographers capture images to accompany the stories (both in print and online). The company's graphics and layout department includes the web design department, which is rapidly growing.

The *Freedom City Ledger* has won nine Pulitzer Prizes over the last 150-odd years, the most recent for its coverage of Omega's invasion of the city and the death of the Centurion.

THE RIVERSIDE REVIEW

A small weekly paper published in Riverside, the *Riverside Review* focuses on the artistic community of Freedom City along with a number of news items and editorials of interest to their readership. Promoting a strong liberal slant, the paper is aimed at hip, young readers, and contains a substantial arts section, covering everything from gallery openings to theatre, television, and movies. It has a large classified and personal ad section as well as a special section that rotates among four features: the arts, local music, the club scene, and gay & lesbian news and attractions. It also delves into pop culture and local items of interest. People often compare and contrast the *Riverside Review* with the *Daily Word*.

SUPER-VISION

New Horizon Media's latest venture is *Super-Vision*, a hip magazine about supers of all stripes. They market it at high school and college age readers, but it has proven popular with older and younger people as well. The magazine features historical retrospectives, interviews, and profiles of famous supers; articles on super-powers and the science of super-powers; news and gossip about paranormals; and pretty much anything else its readers want to know about their favorite superhumans. There's been some controversy over the coverage *Super-Vision* has given to super-criminals as well as costumed heroes; the editors quickly point out that they have in no way "glorified" criminals or made their activities out to be acceptable.

THE WADING WAY BULLETIN

This daily publication caters to the businessmen along Wading Way, particularly those in the financial industry. The *Bulletin* covers the latest financial news, stock market reports, activities of

major businesses, and so forth, with a sharp focus on the Freedom City area. The paper has also become popular with businesspeople in other cities (like New York) interested in keeping an eye on the fiscal and fantastic happenings in Freedom.

WORLD MAGAZINE

World Magazine, one of America's foremost newsmagazines, is published by New Horizon Media. Each weekly issue contains stories on major news events, politics, economics, social trends, and other topics of interest to the informed reader. The magazine relies on sensationalism no more than it has to in order to boost sales, and features serious journalism along with award-winning photography.

PRINT MEDIA PERSONALITIES

While some reporters become well known to their readers, most people in Freedom either know columnists or publishers, as their names are more prominent on the op-ed pages or among the headlines.

Fletcher Beaumont II: The publisher and current owner of the *Freedom City Ledger* is Fletcher Beaumont, a descendant of the paper's founder. His family has owned and run the newspaper for over a hundred years, and Mr. Beaumont remains dedicated to the ideals of truthful and timely reporting. Beaumont is heir to another legacy as well—his father, Fletcher Beaumont I, was the original Bowman in the 1940s. The younger Fletcher became the second Arrow and partner of Timothy Quinn (the original Arrow and the second Bowman), and both of them were members of the Freedom League in the 1960s. By the early 1970s, Fletcher became an alcoholic and his drinking effectively ended his and Quinn's partnership after nearly costing both their lives.

A few years after Quinn retired and as penance for his past, Fletcher took on the Bowman identity in turn. He trained a young partner, Ethan Keller, as the third Arrow, but this partnership also dissolved when the stresses of his heroic identity drove Fletcher back into the bottle. After nearly getting himself killed by being drunk on duty, he retired, and Arrow operated alone until he became Archer and founded the FORCE Ops (see p. 19). Now sober for more than eight years after a few setbacks, Fletcher Beaumont II has reclaimed his self-confidence and his integrity by focusing on his newspaper work and his family. Beaumont's son, Fletcher III, is a student at the Claremont Academy and the fourth Bowman (see p. 127).

Jerry Jonas: The editor-in-chief of the *Freedom Ledger* truly has printer's ink in his veins. Jonas started out with the paper as a cub reporter back in the 1960s, and he worked his way up through editorial to eventually become editor-in-chief nine years ago. Since that time, Jonas has taken great pride in the achievements of "his" paper, not the least of which is winning a Pulitzer. He's a believer in "hard" journalism, and won't run anything his reporters can't back up. He encourages his people to get out into the thick of things rather than just running a story down by making calls or using the Internet. "The real stories are out there," he says. "So go get 'em!"

Jerry is 53, with thinning brown hair, hazel (but often blood-shot and wearied) eyes, and a prominent nose. He usually wears button-down shirts with the sleeves rolled up and he has his tie loosened more often than not. He needs reading glasses,

CAMPAIGN USE

Journalists of all stripes are a staple of the comics and can be in your *Mutants & Masterminds* campaigns, too. They offer player characters access to up-to-the-minute information on the latest happenings and they make great supporting characters since they're often getting into trouble (or near trouble spots). Player characters can have secret identities as reporters, editors, photojournalists, or other media people, while younger characters might be interns, gofers, cub reporters, or perhaps comic book artists at Castle Comics.

although he dislikes wearing them. He lives in the West End with his wife Alicia. Their two children are adults and long gone from home. The oldest, Tom, is 26 and living as an actor in New York City. His sister June is 23, a recent graduate of Brown University, and she moved back to Freedom City to take a job as a junior programmer at USNet.

Julie Streeter: Ms. Streeter is one of the star reporters of the *Ledger*, having worked there for seven years. Her stories on the death of the Centurion won her and the paper a Pulitzer Prize, and she turned down offers from other major papers to stay in Freedom City. Julie started out covering the police beat in Freedom City, so she's willing to dive right in and tackle just about anything. That includes slipping past police lines and into off-limits areas if it means getting the scoop on a good story. Unfortunately for her editor's peace of mind, Julie hardly seems mindful of her own safety and has gotten injured numerous times getting too close to superhuman melees. She's currently hoping to get an exclusive interview with Foreshadow, although the mysterious hero has eluded her for some time.

Harry Wiseman: The editor-in-chief of Castle Comics is a 30-year veteran of the comics business, starting out with a company in New York. He was lured away when the young people who started Castle Comics realized they didn't really know how to run a publishing company. With Harry at the helm, Castle has become a huge success, particularly following its move to Freedom City. Harry enjoys telling stories about real superheroes, and fondly remembers the ones he's met over the years. He's always got interesting stories and he enjoys talking with young comics fans, who remind him of when he was a kid. The 56-year-old Wiseman lives with his wife, Dora, in Kingston. Their three children are all grown and live out of state.

RADIO

The airwaves of Freedom City are filled with a wide variety of different radio stations and programs. The top five stations, ranked by the numbers of confirmed listeners, are: WXLL (news/talk); WFAN (top-40); WNCC (classic rock); WNTT (alternative); and WHIT (college).

MAJOR FREEDOM RADIO STATIONS

FM Stations

WBTO 89.4 FM, jazz
WJLA 92.1 FM, classical
WLSH 93.9 FM, NPR news and information

WNTT ("The Entity") 94.5 FM, alternative
 WKYO ("Whacko Radio") 96.4 FM, rock
 WYNJ 98.5 FM, easy listening
 WSTR 100.7 FM, rock
 WFAN ("The Fan") 101.1 FM, top-40
 WHIT ("Hit Radio") 102.4 FM, Hanover college station
 WJSA 103.9 FM, oldies
 WBAT ("The Bat") 105.7 FM, rock, hip-hop, and R&B
 WNCC 106.3 FM, classic rock
 WBNB 106.8 FM, country
 WLAW ("The Law") 107.9 FM, rock

AM Stations

WAST 890 AM, classical
 WSAR 1240 AM, news/talk radio
 WNLL 1460 AM, sports
 WXLL 1380 AM, news/talk radio
 WXR 1550 AM, talk radio, radio drama, big band music

RADIO PERSONALITIES

There is a broad variety of DJs and commentators on Freedom's airwaves, but the most well-known are:

Freddie Lemanche: Freddie "the Banshee" Lemanche is the popular daytime DJ of WNTT, known for his propensity for fast music, fast talk, and the fast life in general. Lemanche got his start in college radio and worked his way up to become WNTT's most popular DJ. His program is on in the afternoons, and its listeners are primarily teenagers and college-age. Lemanche has been censured several times for inappropriate comments on the air, but it only increases his popularity with his target audience. Freddie hosts the annual summer "South River Rave" sponsored by WNTT in Riverside Park. The show features the country's hottest alternative rock bands and a portion of the proceeds go to charity.

Dr. Andrew Love: Andrew Love has parlayed his name and his psychiatry degree into fame and fortune as the host of the syndicated radio show "Ask Dr. Love," which is broadcast throughout the Freedom area at different times during the night on WLSH, WNTT, and WSAR. The show is aimed toward teens and college-age listeners who call in with their questions. Dr. Love usually has a celebrity guest on the show and his previous guests have included superheroes, rock stars, and actors. Dr. Love is 34 and married, much to the disappointment of many of his listeners. His wife, Susanne, left her job as an administrator at Trinity Hospital to care for their son Alan, age 2. More conservative elements of Freedom find Dr. Love's program too explicit, but few can argue that the doctor has done some good.

Roger Omak: The daredevil pilot of "Sky Eye One," Roger flies a news chopper for WFAN, though he owns a helicopter himself. Omak delivers traffic reports every day during the morning rush hour. Listeners tune into his program in hopes of hearing one of Roger's famed "Sky-Eye" reports of some super activity going on in the city. Omak has braved many super battles in order to get a close up look at the situation, which he reports live to his listeners. He often works on the side for the various television news stations in the city, since he's one of the few pilots brave (or crazy) enough to do a close fly-by on a

CAMPAIGN USE

Radio is an oft-overlooked medium, and GMs can use it to inject a change of pace into the campaign. Having the player characters as guests on "Ask Dr. Love" for an evening of dealing with the dating and sexual problems of teenagers can be a true challenge of the heroes' social skills (and patience). There's always the possibility that the stalker a female caller worries about may try something that night, or the heroes could help a confused teenager come to grips with his emerging superpowers. Likewise, heroes might attend a show put on by a radio station (particularly younger heroes), or deal with someone like Roger Omak flying his chopper too close to them or a villain during a fight.

superhuman fracas. Since they worked together during the Terminus Invasion, Roger and photographer Christina Valley have been romantically involved, though neither has any desire to get married.

TELEVISION

Freedom City supports six television stations, five of which are affiliates of national broadcasting companies. The major networks are the American Broadcasting Network (ABN), Columbia Broadcasting Network (CBN), the National Broadcasting Network (NBN), the Filmore Network Association (FNA), and the Globe Broadcasting Network (GBN). GBN, headquartered in Freedom City, is the undisputed king of television there.

In addition to the local channels, nearly every household in the Freedom area is hooked up to cable television, providing access to dozens of different channels, including premium and pay channels.

MAJOR LOCAL TV STATIONS

WJAC Channel 2 (Public Broadcasting)
 WNTW Channel 3 (GBN affiliate)
 WBAL Channel 4 (NBN affiliate)
 WXAD Channel 5 (ABN affiliate)
 WCZA Channel 7 (CBN affiliate)
 WNRQ Channel 25 (FNA affiliate)

TELEVISION PERSONALITIES

Freedomians joke that all TV personalities have a common superpower to keep their hair perfect at all times. Among the more notable TV celebrities are:

Amy Feng: Amy Feng is a reporter for Channel 3's "Action News" team. She's one of the first reporters on the scene of any major happening in Freedom, trailing a new cameraman behind her every other week ("I just tend to wear them out, I guess," she says). She's smart, savvy, and unflappable; she has faced down a super-criminal with microphone in hand to ask just why he was lobbing cars down the street. She's scored a number of major reports by being in the right place at the right time.

Amy originally hails from Maryland, where she attended the University of Maryland. She worked for a local station in Virginia for several years before she applied for a job in Freedom City. So far, WNTW is very happy with her performance and her ratings, although her expense reports are an occasional concern ("It wasn't

CAMPAIGN USE

Rich Royer's situation can be a background element for a Freedom City campaign or it can evolve into something more. Royer might be the target of a celebrity stalker or even a super-criminal looking to exploit his abilities. Of course, it's tough to kidnap and hold a guy who can broadcast everything he sees and hear to the nearest television sets. An incident involving "Voyeur" could become the highest-rated program ever!

There's also the question of whether or not Rich Royer can deal with his celebrity status and his abilities. What happens when a mysterious series of crimes are telecast on TV sets throughout Freedom? Everything happens from the killer's point of view, and there's no apparent source to the signal. "Voyeur" Royer is the obvious suspect, and he doesn't have an alibi since he wanted to take a break from being "on-air" all the time. Is he the killer, acting out some weird version of his on air life, or is there someone else out there with abilities like Voyeur's—somebody jealous of the attention who wants a "show" of their own?

my fault he decided to throw the news van at Captain Thunder!"). Amy lives in an apartment in Midtown with her two cats, Ariel and Pumpkin. In her spare time, she studies judo for both self defense and exercise; her secret vice is reading trashy romance novels.

Jennifer Locksley: Jen Locksley is the weather girl on WCZA Channel 7 News. A former Miss America contestant, Locksley landed the job with her looks, but she has since seriously begun studying meteorology at Freedom City University. Her proposal to insert some snippets of what she's learning into her reports was shot down by station management, which just wants her to "smile and read the weather." She's frustrated by her "blonde bimbo" image, but feels she doesn't have anywhere else to go at the moment. She very much wants to prove herself to her colleagues. Jennifer's meteorological studies might lead her to information about Dr. Stratos (p. 139) the next time the weather-controlling scientist shows up. Of course, if she can't get anyone to listen to her, Jennifer might just try to investigate on her own.

Charles Maxfield: The evening news anchor on Channel 5 is Charles Maxfield, a lifelong Freedom City journalist with years of experience. Maxfield is in his forties with graying hair and a distinguished air about him that inspires trust. His ability to remain level-headed in a crisis is almost legendary. Maxfield spent many years as a reporter himself, and likes to get out in the field from time to time to perform interviews. He lives in Ashton with his wife, Diane, and their 15-year-old daughter, Jessica. In his off-hours, Charles plays golf and collects model trains; he's very proud of his scale model layout of the Greenbank train yards in his basement.

Steven and Joanne Parker: Thousands of people start their days with the married hosts of "A.M. Freedom," a popular morning talk show on Channel 3. The Parkers are a couple known for their witty banter and charm that garners them many fans. The show has various guests from movie stars to artists, and usually features home segments like cooking and decorating. The Parkers are local celebrities, and often make appearances at dif-

ferent events in and around the city. Despite years of trying, the couple remains childless.

Richard "Voyeur" Royer: Rich Royer was just another freshman at Freedom City University when he discovered he had a unique ability. Rich can project whatever he sees and hears as a VHF signal that can be picked up by television antennas, showing whatever he perceives directly on the screen. His first discovered his ability by accident when it began overriding TVs in his dorm. After a few somewhat embarrassing incidents, Rich went down to the hospital for an examination. The doctor there passed him on to the Albright Institute (see page 74), where scientists confirmed that Rich was a super-powered mutant, albeit a low-powered one.

At first, he just wanted to forget about his ability, but the president of GBN approached him with an offer. He wanted Rich to star in a new television series about his life, living together with other young people from around the country. Rich accepted and the reality TV show "Point of View" (popularly known as "POV") premiered the following season to become an instant hit. Rich learned to broadcast directly to recording units at the GBN studio, which allowed them to edit the footage for content and language before broadcasting.

Rich still has some difficulties adjusting to his newfound celebrity status. Nearly every moment of his day gets recorded for broadcast, and he can't go anywhere in Freedom City without being recognized. People tend to do strange and funny things in front of him, just like they would in front of somebody holding a camera. His presence makes some people uncomfortable, since they think he might be "filming" them at any time.

Richard "Voyeur" Royer: PL 2; Init +1; Defense 13 (12 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +0 melee (+0S, punch); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Computers +2, Knowledge (Freedom City) +2, Listen +8, Sense Motive +5, Spot +8.

Feats: Radio Broadcast, Radio Hearing.

THE MILITARY

The United States military has a modest presence in Freedom City that has increased since the construction of a new orbital launch and control site offshore.

LONELY POINT NAVAL STATION

Lonely Point Naval Station has undergone a tremendous surge of activity since the establishment of the space control center. Originally, the station was a secondary facility for smaller naval vessels and Coast Guard personnel working along the Atlantic Coast. The station had been in decline since the end of World War II, and the government nearly closed it down during a series of military cutbacks. The establishment of Star Island changed all that, however, and the government has refurbished and expanded Lonely Point.

The Lonely Point Naval Station now houses some 700 military personnel and their dependents, along with a civilian staff of 150. The station has facilities for the maintenance and repair of naval vessels. Its staff works closely with the Freedom Space Center, fer-

rying VIPs to and from the center and helping maintain security. Employees at the station also cooperate with the U.S. Coast Guard in shore patrol operations and drug-busting efforts. The relative isolation of the station from the metro area helps its security. Captain Foster, the station commander, keeps the men and women under his command prepared for the possibility of an attack by terrorists and super-criminals.

STAR ISLAND SPACE CONTROL CENTER

Located off the coast is the Star Island Space Control Center (SCC), a new government facility designed as a launch, telemetry, and recovery platform for space-based missions. The SCC is built on an island extensively altered to the government's specifications by the Army Corps of Engineers and members of the Freedom League. Renamed "Star Island" for its rough resemblance to a five-pointed star, the island houses the main facility along with a conventional military airfield and housing for the SCC's workforce. The launch facility can handle U.S. space shuttles and spaceplanes as well as conventional rocket launches for satellites. The rest of the facility contains labs and administrative offices.

In the short time the SCC has been operational, it has seen one shuttle launch and a number of satellite payloads boosted into orbit. The center collects astronomical data and works with other NASA facilities in Florida and Texas on space-related projects, from new shuttle and rocket designs to the engineering and execution of a manned mission to Mars.

NOTABLE MILITARY PERSONNEL

The greater Freedom City metro area features nearly 2,000 active-duty or reserve military recruits. Some notables include:

Dr. Arthur Andel, Director of the SCC: Dr. Andel is a 15-year veteran of NASA's other facilities in Florida and Texas who became director of the SCC on his qualifications and his devotion to his work. He intends to prove the facility's worth to the government and involves himself in all aspects of running the center. Excited about the potential offered by the exploration of space, he communicates that enthusiasm to everyone around him. Arthur is in his mid-40s, almost totally bald save a fringe of dark hair, has a dark brown full beard and moustache, and wears dark-rimmed glasses. He dresses fairly casually in button-down shirts with the sleeves rolled up, and he rarely wears a tie, choosing bow ties when he must. Andel's knowledge of astrophysics and astronomy might be useful to heroes looking for information on stellar phenomena.

Captain Arnold Foster, USN: Captain Foster is commander of the Lonely Point Naval Station. He is a career naval officer with a reputation for doing things by the book. Rather than being overwhelmed by the surge in activity at his post, Foster continues to run things quietly and efficiently. Foster enjoys such an active facility, although he occasionally looks at the stack of work on his desk and thinks wistfully about the days when Lonely Point lived up to its name. The captain is in his late-30s with a black crew cut going to gray at the temples. He's an avid sailor and owns a small pleasure craft that he likes to take out on his time off. He's also an amateur philatelist (stamp collector), and the pride of his col-

CAMPAIGN USE

The Space Control Center makes an excellent adventure hook for Freedom City campaigns. Heroes and supporting characters with appropriate skills might work there, while trouble at the facility certainly draws the attention of heroes. Terrorists may attempt to seize control of the facility, either to hold it for ransom or to use it to launch some sort of weapon. Super-criminals might do the same, or use the launch facilities to send a death-ray or mind control satellite into orbit. Aliens might visit the Space Center, either hitching a ride on board a returning ship or following one back to Earth. Aliens stranded on Earth might attempt to use the launch facilities to return to outer space, as well. Alien visitors don't have to be humanoid, either. A space probe might bring back an alien disease, for example, or spores that take over human host bodies so their telepathic hive mind can grow in power.

lection is his first day issues of all six Centurion stamps made from 1939 to 1993.

Major Ana Chulpak, USA: Major Chulpak is the U.S. military liaison to AEGIS in Freedom City. She's an Army officer with a reputation for forceful administration and a stubborn streak. She parlayed her job as a Pentagon aide to her current position, which affords her more autonomy and opportunities to ensure that the military's interests are protected within AEGIS. Although she and Director Powers rarely see eye-to-eye on everything, they respect each other. Powers knows he can rely on Maj. Chulpak to give him her honest opinion (sometimes whether he wants it or not). Ana Chulpak is a 35-year-old Latina with close-cropped brown hair and brown eyes, and while on the short side, she easily stares down much taller people.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Although Freedomians tend to like the city life, there's no lack of places to get away from the city for a little while and enjoy the peace of nature, or just have some fun. Outdoor activities are quite popular, and the city offers several places to indulge in them.

THE FREEDOM AQUARIUM

The Freedom Aquarium is located on the city's waterfront with its own pier. A walled-in area underneath the pier serves as a habitat. The Aquarium building itself is three stories tall and built around a massive sea-water tank that rises to the building's full height. Part of the Aquarium is "the Ark," an oceanic research vessel moored alongside the pier that serves as additional space to accommodate and display specimens. The aquarium houses a wide variety of fish, sharks, dolphins, and sea lions. Siren from the Freedom League has visited the Aquarium and says the sea creatures there are happy and well cared for.

LAKE MACKENZIE

Lake MacKenzie is a large freshwater lake in Port Regal and the only major lake in the Freedom area. The lake's narrow beaches and calm waters are popular for swimming, boating, and water sports during the summer and early fall. Small cottages and

houses surround the lake's outskirts, many of them with private piers that reach out from the shore. Some still talk about a strange humanoid "lake monster" that terrorized the area back in the 1940s, along with tales of psycho-killers and giant crocodiles living in the lake, although no one believes any of them.

LIBERTY PARK

In the midst of Freedom City stands a broad swath of verdant green that is a testament to the beauty of life and nature. Liberty Park was a central part of the city plans since the early 1800s—an area where people could come to get back in touch with nature and enjoy some time away from the hustle and bustle of city life. High stone walls surround the park, pierced by open wrought-iron gates every few blocks. One paved road immediately inside the walls encircles the park and is a major jogging path. Two paved roads cross the park north to south and two more east to west, but only foot traffic (along with bicycles, skateboards, and in-line skates) is permitted on them. The roads are closed to all but emergency vehicles and a few horse-drawn carriages that offer rides around the park. Numerous unpaved foot and bicycle trails crisscross the park.

Liberty Park offers a number of attractions, including the open lawns and athletic fields, the Botanical Gardens, the City Reservoir and its surrounding trails and picnic areas, the small Children's Zoo, and the Bandshell for outdoor concerts and performances. Liberty Park is infused and surrounded by art and culture. On the inside are many statues and fountains, while just outside the park are the Museum of Fine Arts, St. George's Cathedral, and even the oddly artistic Midnight Society Mansion on 52nd.

As much art as honorarium, a small hill in the park that abuts the reservoir has become known as Heroes' Knoll. Since the 1960s, statues of Freedom City's deceased heroes have dotted this hill, even if other memorials existed elsewhere. The first statue erected honored the Bluesman, followed swiftly by statues of the Ghost, the Human Tank and Gunner, and many more over the years. The most recent addition is Raul Diaz's statue of the Centurion, a seven-foot statue that mirrors the 100-foot-tall Sentry Statue in Riverside Park.

OCEAN HEIGHTS AMUSEMENT PARK

Located in Port Regal, the Ocean Heights Amusement Park overlooks the Centery Narrows where they open out into Great Bay. The park was established in 1958 and has remained a popular tourist attraction in the area. It suffered through a long dry spell through the late 1980s and 1990s, but the resurgence of the city has also given the amusement park a new lease on life. The past year has been one of the park's best and next year looks even better as more and more locals and tourists are paying visits to Oceanside.

The park is located on a rocky rise on the shore, which is surrounded by a high chain-link fence with a single entrance toward the south. The amusement park features several rides, including a Ferris wheel, roller coaster, log flume, haunted house, hall of mirrors, and a number of other small rides like a tilt-a-whirl, bumper cars, and so forth. Rows of traditional arcade games and an

CAMPAIGN USE

Liberty Park makes an interesting place for characters to spend a quiet afternoon in their secret identities, until they are no doubt interrupted by some threat or another. The park has many different features, and there's always the unfortunate possibility of a late night mugging or similar crime. Liberty Park is also attractive to paranormals with a nature motif. The Green Man, for example (p. 160), could animate the trees in the park and send a vegetable army marching out into the streets of Freedom. The park also offers a lot of open land away from the buildings, where heroes have less of a chance of endangering innocent people, although there always seems to be someone close at hand in need of a last-minute rescue.

arcade building with modern electronic games are very popular with the local kids. The park's sideshows and live performances have become smaller and smaller over time, and it's likely they'll be phased out soon. Stands serve fried dough, hot dogs, hamburgers, and similar food, while candy- and caramel-apples are traditional fare in the late summer and early fall.

Ocean Heights is open from Memorial Day through Labor Day in the summer and closed down for the rest of the year. Management sometimes makes exceptions and rents the park for the night to private parties, which can sometimes keep the park operational until November 1 or the first snows. The park management company has a year-round contract with Stronghold Security to provide security personnel for the park when it is open and to protect it from vandals and the like when it's closed.

THE PROMENADE

The strip of land along the north bank of the Wading River in Hanover is a park known as the Promenade, named after its numerous walking and bike trails. It's a popular place for locals to enjoy the numerous gardens and manicured paths in which they stroll, sit, and talk in pleasant weather. On nights of the new moon, with mist rising off the river, people over the years have seen ghosts here, though reports are unsubstantiated and the mood here is not one usually associated with hauntings (unless the ghosts themselves sought a peaceful place as well). The Bandshell here hosts numerous concerts throughout the year and its biggest event is the Independence Day celebrations with fireworks over the river and the bay.

THE HANOVER ZOO

Not far from the Promenade is the Hanover Zoo, the largest in the state. It displays hundreds of different animals from all over the world. Lions, gorillas, tigers, monkeys, bears, seals, and many other animals can be found at the zoo, each housed in their custom-built habitats. Paved walkways wind their way among the various habitats, allowing visitors to see the animals. The zoo also maintains a reptile house, an aviary, and a small bat house designed like the interior of a dark cave.

The zoo is busiest on the summer weekends, though it sees busloads of children on field trips throughout the school year and families in the evenings during the week.

CAMPAIGN USE

Ocean Heights is a great setting for a super-battle, with people-laden rides like the roller coaster and Ferris wheel to imperil, and places like the Hall of Mirrors and the Haunted Mansion in which opponents hide out and prepare an ambush. A villain with an amusement park or funhouse motif (maybe Toy Boy, p. 181, or the Toon Gang, p. 85) might take over Ocean Heights in the off-season and set it up as a deathtrap for the heroes (complete with deadly versions of the traditional carny games and rides). It is also a good venue if the circus comes to Freedom City, expanding the park and its attractions while perhaps concealing some sort of criminal operation for the heroes to bust up.

Characters with a background involving a carnival or amusement park might be tied to Ocean Heights in some way. Maybe they know the park manager or one of the people currently working there. The park is a good place for characters to visit in their off hours for some fun and relaxation, and it makes a great backdrop for a group of younger characters, like the Next-Gen (see p. 126).

In addition to the public facilities of the zoo, the staff also maintains breeding programs for endangered species and research programs into animal behavior and biology.

RIVERSIDE PARK

Riverside Park is a pleasant greenery and provides all the amenities of most other parks across the city. However, since 1998, Riverside holds one of Freedom's most famous landmarks that has become known across the world in a few short years—the Sentry Statue. At the tip of the Riverside Park peninsula near the water stands a giant statue, designed by noted sculptor Raul Diaz and dedicated to the Centurion, the hero who sacrificed his life to help save the world from Omega. The Sentry Statue stands 100 feet tall, and it is made from pale gray marble molded over a metal framework. Diaz designed and built the seven-foot-tall model—which now stands on Heroes' Knoll in Liberty Park—and the Sentry was built with help from Dr. Metropolis and the Freedom League. It is a stylized male figure standing at attention and gazing out over the Centery Narrows toward Great Bay. His hands rest on the pommel of a sword, the point at its feet. Diaz says the statue represents "eternal vigilance" combined with "looking toward the future." The statue is clearly visible from the Bay and it's a major tourist attraction, especially when lit up at night so it can be seen for miles. Visitors can climb up inside the hollow statue and look out through special one-way windows, providing a 360-degree view from the observation deck in its head.

WHARTON STATE FOREST

The Wharton State Forest lies west of Freedom City and covers hundreds of square miles. The forest includes a number of camping areas and nature preserves, as well as a Native American historical site. It is also a *cause célèbre* for the environmentalists of the region.

When the outlying neighborhoods of Ashton and Grenville were built, environmentalists argued about the impact on forest land. Now there is the looming possibility of future expansion cutting

even deeper into the remaining forest. Environmental groups lobby to protect the forest and radicals occasionally chain themselves to trees to keep them from being cleared. Thus far confrontations between protesters and the police have not resulted in any serious injuries.

The state forest still offers hiking trails and room for all manner of outdoor activities. Boating along the Wading River still remains popular, along with camping at one of the several small campgrounds found in the forest.

HAPPANUK HILL

The Happanuk Hill historical monument in the Wharton State Forest is dedicated to the Happanuk tribe of Native Americans that once lived in the area. The site was a Happanuk burial ground centuries ago, but it is now a preserved historical site and tourist attraction, administered by the federal government. The site draws some tourists and the local Happanuk Tribal Council holds a festival at the site once a year, which tends to be the biggest event in the state park each year. Authorities have discounted reports of lingering magical forces or Native American ghosts at the site, although Eldrich and other magic-adepts confirm the powers resting here.

There are other sites sacred to the Happanuk within the forest, and many of them have far more latent powers than those noted above. The shamans have wisely never spread this information beyond themselves or their students in the tribe, although they have hinted of hidden forces within the forest that folk should respect or beware. The Green Man once accidentally tapped into one such source; native nature spirits temporarily subsumed his mind and used his powers to accelerate the decomposition of deadfall and groundcover in the forest to provide the trees nutrients for the coming harsh winter. Since that incident and his easy capture by the STAR Squad, the Green Man avoids going too far inside that particular forest.

POLITICS

"I hear a lot of talk about 'opportunity' and 'renewal' and 'the City of Tomorrow,' but I still see some of the same old rat-traps in Southside, the same overcrowded schools, the same sleaze and decay in the Fens. When is the city government going to stop polishing the silver and making sure every gum wrapper is picked up downtown and do something about the rest of the city?"

—JEFF MOLAIRE, POLITICAL ACTIVIST

Freedom City has been political since its founding. There is always controversy over many of the city's programs and the differing agendas for the future of the "City of Tomorrow." Politics are an important part of life in Freedom City and anyone who wants to be someone had better learn how to play the game.

POLITICIANS & POLITICAL ACTIVISTS

A wise man once said, "All politics are local," and these are some of the prominent politicians and pundits of Freedom City.

Representative Angela Baskerville: A conservative Republican, Representative Baskerville was first elected during

the Moore years on a strong platform of “traditional values.” While retaining her seat for more than five terms, she has watched Freedom City attract the young and upwardly mobile, including a great number of liberals and progressives. While there is still a core of traditional conservatism in some parts of the city like Port Regal, Rep. Baskerville finds herself out of touch with her newer constituents. She fears that will show when the next election comes around, so she is now making efforts to get in touch with what the people of Freedom want without totally compromising her own long-held beliefs.

Angela Baskerville is 54 with prematurely white hair, a strong face, and bright, sea-green eyes. She's an excellent speaker and good at putting people at ease around her. She believes in speaking directly and does so. She splits her time between Washington and Freedom City, living with her husband of 27 years, Tom Baskerville. They have two children, Ryan and Megan, both grown and living in apartments in Parkside and Kingston.

Jeff Molaire: Southside political activist Jeff Molaire is a writer and graduate of Freedom College. Initially a supporter of Mayor O'Connor's progressive and liberal ideas, Molaire has become increasingly critical of the mayor and the city government. Molaire writes a weekly column in the *Riverside Review* where he maintains that the city pays too much attention to the downtown area while ignoring areas like Southside in hopes their problems will just go away. He also feels Freedom City isn't doing enough to deal with many of the area's underlying problems, including homelessness and growing disaffection among youth. Mayor O'Connor has invited Jeff to sit on several committees, but he's refused, saying that his job is to observe and report from outside the system.

Senator Trevor Oldman: Senator Oldman is a Democratic senator from the state in which the GM sets Freedom City. The senator is a progressive and supports the improvement of technology. He also sees the possible value of supers to the economy and the private sector. He would love to have Daedalus and Dr. Metropolis offer some of their technology and techniques for a wider market, and cannot understand their refusal to do so.

Senator Oldman is 48, a tall, thin man with distinguished features and dark, thinning hair. He heads up the Senate Committee on Superhuman Affairs.

Representative Howard Oyer: State Representative Howard Oyer has served in state government for 13 years and does his best to represent his Freedom City constituents' interests. He's a vocal supporter of Freedom City and the good it can bring the state and surrounding area. The increased tax revenue from the population boom alone seems to support Oyer's position.

Howard is a heavyset man of 47 with mud-brown hair and dark green eyes. He wears glasses for reading but frequently misplaces them. He lives with his wife, Audrey, and their 20-year-old daughter, Justine, in Kingston. Justine, a sophomore, attends classes at Freedom College and can get a little wild when she's away from her parents' supervision.

Nina Pittman: Ms. Pittman is the director of Outright, a gay civil rights organization that hopes to make the Freedom City a model of fair treatment of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgen-

CAMPAIGN USE

The player characters can take different roles in the political struggles in Freedom City. If you prefer not to deal with politics, it can just be a background element of the campaign. But for more politically minded players, there are plenty of opportunities. The Freedom League (or another team like it) is a political football. The members have to justify their existence to the citizens, while the politicians often see heroes as political pawns. When the team does something wrong, they hear about it from all quarters. Unsponsored teams or characters have more personal freedom, but they're outside the system and may be looked upon as loose cannons or vigilantes.

There are always the political races every few years as well. Mayor O'Connor is popular, but there's no guarantee he'll win re-election. What if the next mayor of Freedom isn't as welcoming to supers? Will there be a return to the dark days of Franklin Moore's administration? What if a mind-controlling villain influences the political race against the mayor (or for him, for that matter)? Will the player characters stop him?

dered people. The organization has the support of a major celebrity—Johnny Rocket from the Freedom League—and the ear of the mayor, but Outright still faces an uphill battle to reach its goals. Although the group helped to get sexual orientation included in the city's non-discrimination laws, it's still far from fulfilling its goals for domestic partnership benefits, equal adoption rights, and other items. Conservative elements in the city are opposed to Outright's “gay agenda” and even the more liberal elements of the city government want to take things slowly to avoid potential backlash.

John Rewtham: Mr. Rewtham is the executive director of the Freedom chapter of CODE—Citizens for Order, Decency, and Ethics. CODE is a grass-roots media watchdog group that denounces the coverage of supers-related violence and frequent public battles between supers, whether on the news, in the papers, or even in comic books. CODE claims that the idolizing of supers desensitizes children to violence and places them at risk as they might try to emulate their super-powered idols. CODE frequently points to the case of Danny Dortubo, an Iowa boy who suffered third-degree burns and died after he immolated himself trying to be like his idol, the fire manipulator known as Hothead.

Out of town on business at the time, John Rewtham lost his wife and daughters in Omega's last invasion and he blames all supers for their deaths. CODE canvasses for tighter restrictions on superhuman activity; it wants enforced registration of superhumans and their abilities, eschewing privacy laws and civil liberties in favor of public safety; and they support building more government authorities like AEGIS to curb super-powered violence and crime rather than “relying on uncontrolled vigilantism.” While some pockets of support for CODE remain within Freedom City, its popularity dropped with that of the mayor it helped elect in 1984—Franklin Moore. Much of Rewtham's current support comes from the Midwestern and Southern states.

RELIGION

Religion is a powerful force in the world and the people of Freedom City always have a strong need for faith. It helps carry them through the near-weekly crises and the losses of loved ones, and it helps to give them the strength to rebuild and continue rather than give up. Faith still forms an important part of life in Freedom, and the city embraces a diverse range of different faiths, from the most traditional religions to relatively new beliefs. Of course, having numerous gods walking the streets of Freedom from time to time only reinforces people's faiths, whether by perceptions of affront to conservative faiths or by the personifications of less orthodox religions.

MAJOR RELIGIONS

Nearly every religion in the world is represented in Freedom City to one degree or another. The city's population is predominantly Christian and Protestant. There is a substantial Catholic minority, along with adherents to other faiths like Judaism and Islam. Catholicism and Judaism are particularly influential in the West End with its diverse immigrant communities. Islam is strongest among the African American and Arabic segments of the city's population.

Freedom City has a small number of pagan religions practiced among its people. There are people embracing Wicca and others following African traditions like Santeria and Voodoo. The latter tend to exist behind the scenes, and a number of believers in Santeria and Voodoo attend Christian churches while continuing their own cultural practices. Certainly, the continued presence of the Voodoo goddess Siren in the Freedom League has encouraged these people in their faith, and this is something that concerns some of the city's more traditional religious leaders. Neo-pagans tend to be most common in the Riverside area, while Santeria and Voodoo are found more often in the West End and Southside.

MAJOR CHURCHES AND TEMPLES

The Freedom City area has hundreds of churches and other places of worship. Some of the most prominent are described here.

St. George's Cathedral: One of the largest and most magnificent churches in Freedom is St. George's Cathedral in Midtown across from Liberty Park. The cathedral is built in the Gothic style like the great cathedrals of Europe. It features tall, thin steeples, a high bell tower, a cruciform shape, and space enough for hundreds of people to come for services. The church is named for the famed dragon-slaying saint, and a huge stained glass depiction of St. George's greatest feat is a centerpiece of the cathedral. The numerous other stained glass windows depict other saints and religious figures. Archbishop Charles Fairwell heads the Archdiocese. Over the past 30 years, this cathedral has been subject to superhuman battles on its premises; for some unknown reason, the Repentant (former Mob enforcer and lapsed Catholic "Bullet-proof" Bobby Masoni) has caused a lot of damage to the cathedral's chancel in particular, looking for something there every time he breaks out of Blackstone.

THE LIGHT OF LANTERN JOHN

The mysterious guardian of Lantern Hill dates back to the Revolutionary War. Stories claim that Lantern John is the restless spirit of a colonial patriot slain by a British officer when he attempted to warn the people of the city of an attack. The truth is that John Halloran betrayed the rebels secretly meeting in the Emerald Dragon tavern to the British. He regretted his actions when he found they planned to murder, not imprison, the rebels and anyone else in the tavern. John tried to warn the men and stop the redcoats, but was killed for his trouble. The fate of his soul in question, John Halloran's final good act did not outweigh his sins. Given a chance to redeem himself and prove himself worthy, John accepted the charge of meting out vengeance, justice, and truth against the evils of the world.

Many times over the past two centuries, people on Lantern Hill have seen a mysterious figure wearing a tri-cornered hat and a long cloak, his face masked in shadow despite his carrying a glowing lantern. The spectral figure only leaves Lantern Hill in times of great crisis or to battle unearthly evils loose in the world. The light of his lantern changes, depending on what Lantern John seeks—it burns blue with the light of truth, burning away all guises and pretenses; it burns purple with vengeance, its flames and light punishing to the guilty; and it burns green with the light of justice, its light igniting honesty and setting things right. The lantern's flame can seem a harsh light at times, and many find the taciturn Lantern John's presence creepy and disturbing at best. But the people on Lantern Hill sleep well knowing that they have an ever-vigilant protector watching over them.

Lantern John: PL 13, Init +1 (Dex), Defense 16 (15 flat-footed), Spd 30 ft. (fly 50 ft.); Atk +6 melee, +7 ranged, +9 mental (+12S, mental blast); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 17.

Skills: Intimidate +11, Knowledge (occult) +7, Sense Motive +9.

Feats: Assessment, Darkvision, Detect (evil), Fame, Iron Will.

Powers: Incorporeal +10 [*Extras:* Duration—Continuous, Float, Immunity; *Flaws:* Permanent; *Source:* Mystical; *Cost:* 4 pp].

Equipment: Magic Lantern [Sorcery +12; *Spells:* Animation, Dazzle, Invisibility, Mental Blast, Neutralize (vs. Illusions), Paralysis, Telepathy; *Extras:* Ghost Touch; *Flaws:* Device; *Source:* Mystical; *Cost:* 7 pp].

St. Sebastian's: St. Sebastian's is a Greek Orthodox Church located in the West End at the heart of Freedom City's Greek and Eastern European neighborhood. Its distinctive Eastern Orthodox style dominates the neighborhood and the church still draws a regular number of parishioners, although the clergy are concerned that fewer and fewer young people in the area bother to attend church. The elders of the neighborhood fear their traditional way of life is fading in comparison to the newer and more modern draw of downtown Freedom.

St. Stephen's Church: Located near the top of Lantern Hill, St. Stephen's Church is a landmark as the oldest standing church in Freedom City. It was established in 1742 and was recently restored to its original glory. The church is a tall, narrow building

with high, thin stained glass windows and a tall steeple. The church currently holds Methodist services, but often opens for tours of its historic architecture. Attendance has been up since the renovations, and St. Stephen's Church claims hundreds of local people as parishioners. The graveyard adjacent to the church has tombstones that date back to just after the church's construction. No new graves have been dug there since 1934, but it remains church property and the church still maintains it as a historical site. The current pastor of St. Stephen's is the Reverend Madeline Dickenson, a woman with many years of experience as a minister as well as a professional counselor.

Southside Pharmacy: This small storefront in Lincoln is actually the most active Voodoo temple in the city. The store in front sells candles, herbs, trinkets, and charms along with simple household goods and prescriptions. A space in back and the main temple area in the basement serve the needs of the members of the Voodoo community when they gather for worship. Madame Marie O'tando is the *mambo*, or priestess, and proprietor of the establishment. Her family comes from Haiti but Marie grew up in Lincoln and knows the neighborhood exceedingly well. What most people don't know is that Madame Marie has a small measure of true mystical power. She uses it only to help people in her neighborhood from time to time and to warn them against the work of evil spirits. She has earned Siren's trust and helped her in the past, and she will gladly do so again in the future. A few months ago, a dispute arose with the local police regarding the practice of sacrificing chickens and other animals during Voodoo rituals. For the time being, the courts have upheld the sacrifices under the context of freedom of religion, but some local people aren't happy with the ruling and there have been threats made against the Pharmacy.

Temple Ben David: A synagogue located in the predominantly Jewish part of the West End, Temple Ben David is the largest of its kind in Freedom City. The synagogue has recently had trouble with youth-gang vandalism, but the community rallied around it to help repair damage and keep the area safer with neighborhood watches and the assistance of the FCPD. The synagogue follows Reform Judaism and is led by Rabbi Murray Feingold.

REVEREND MADELINE DICKENSON

Rev. Dickenson came to the ministry relatively late in life, after raising three children and losing her husband, Mark, to cancer. She turned to her faith for solace and chose to attend seminary and become a minister. Her previous experience as a social worker

and counselor serves her well in her new calling and she has focused much of her effort on offering spiritual support and guidance to the members of her congregation. She became pastor of St. Stephen's five years ago and members of her congregation sing her praises to anyone who cares to listen.

Reverend Dickenson also knows that the mysterious Lantern John has some associations with her church, and she has even seen and spoken with him on occasion. Although she's convinced that John is a force for good, she still finds his ghostly presence disturbing at times. She has tried to encourage him to recall his humanity and compassion as well as his duty to justice.

Madeline Dickenson is in her late-50s with a full heavy-set figure and curly gray hair. She has a bright and mischievous smile and a twinkle in her eye

that gives her a warm and welcoming presence.

PERSON TO PERSON

Real People, Real Opinions, Real Television

"Yeah, those Pinnacle types have got a point, all right, but it's on top of their heads. I can't believe so many people fall for that sort of scam. If going to church was going to make anyone into a super, trust me, everybody would be going every Sunday."

"The Pinnacle Path is about achieving all that we can in this life and beyond. There's so much potential that goes untapped in the world, so much that each of us have to offer. The Path shows us how to reach our potential and is with us, every step of the way."

Two Freedomians interviewed on *Person to Person*

THE PINNACLE PATH

The religious organization called the Pinnacle Path is a newcomer to the spiritual scene. It began in Freedom City, the city that inspired founder Jeremiah Ross' vision of a better humanity. Ross gave up his advertising career and wrote a book entitled *The Pinnacle Path*. The book put forth his ideas for a spiritual discipline that would allow people to achieve their highest potential. Although considered "New Age claptrap" by many, the book steadily climbed up the best-seller lists and remained there for more than two years. The book and its message gathered a popular following for Ross, who appeared on the talk show circuit to promote his work and his vision.

Recently, he established the Pinnacle Path Foundation, an official church preaching the beliefs from his book, with an office headquarters in downtown Freedom City. Since then, the Path steadily draws new converts and maintains good relations with the city government. Followers of the Path are usually bright, well-educated professionals disaffected from mainstream religions. The followers of the Pinnacle Path perform an abundance of charitable work, since helping others is a strong part of their philosophy.

JEREMIAH ROSS

Jeremiah Ross is a man with a vision of a world where everyone achieves his or her greatest potential through hard work, introspection, and dedication to a higher ideal. He believes that superhumans are a reflection of mankind's inner potential and they embody the best—and the worst—that humanity can achieve. In many ways, superheroes and supervillains are the gods and

demons of a modern mythology for Ross. These ideas apparently resonate with a lot of people, if his book sales are any indication.

In addition to being a good writer, Ross is a charismatic and persuasive speaker, and he believes strongly in what he's selling by word and speech. There's still a bit of the advertising executive in him, as he knows how to turn a phrase to make it sound appealing to his immediate audience. Still, he doesn't think he's deceiving people or pushing anything on them. He simply wants to show them the truth as he sees and understands it, and then give everyone a chance to reach their full potential.

Jeremiah Ross is in his late-30s, with jet-black shoulder-length hair and crystal blue eyes that have been described as "intense." He's usually clean-shaven and impeccably dressed, though his audience determines if he pulls his hair back into a ponytail or leaves it loose.

Jeremiah Ross: PL 3; Init +0; Defense 11 (11 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +0 melee (+0S, punch); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 17.

Skills: Bluff +8, Diplomacy +9, Gather Information +8, Knowledge (superhumans) +5, Perform (oratory) +8, Profession (writer) +8, Sense Motive +6.

Feats: Connected, Headquarters.

RESTAURANTS, BARS & CLUBS

Freedom City has a profuse number of different places to eat, drink, and have fun. For a city on the move, places to go out and blow off steam or enjoy a pleasant meal are important, and Freedom has attracted plenty of entrepreneurs up to the challenge. The city already has a reputation as a place that doesn't sleep; you can find a place to eat or have fun at nearly any hour of the day or night.

NIGHTCLUBS AND BARS

The city has night-spots catering to nearly every kind of taste, although the clubs predominantly lean toward the young and hip crowd that makes up so much of the nighttime scene. A few of the hottest spots are described here:

Eclipse: This club in Southside caters primarily to the Goth and Industrial crowd. The owners like to claim that the club was built in an old church, but the building was actually owned by Freedom College and renovated to look like a Gothic church. The club's closeness to the college makes it a popular nightspot for FC students. Foreshadow recently broke up a gang at Eclipse, and the rumor that it was made up of actual vampires has made the club more popular than ever.

The Fourth World: A modern entertainment complex in Kingston, it features three dance floors, an arcade, a billiards room, and a full bar. The four-story building was bought out and heavily renovated by the current owner while retaining its "industrial" look.

Hot Licks: This Midtown jazz bar features live acts for the connoisseur. It's in a rebuilt turn-of-the-century house that's deliberately cozy, though some would call it cramped.

CAMPAIGN USE

It's up to the GM whether or not the Pinnacle Path is a sincere religion trying to help people better themselves or a cover-up for a cult or something even more sinister. Either way, player characters should find the Pinnacle Path simply too good to be true. Members of the group seem genuinely interested in self-improvement and in helping others. They're polite, articulate, and more than willing to talk enthusiastically about their beliefs, although they don't "recruit" or try to proselytize.

Possibilities for a conspiracy behind the Pinnacle Path include everything from cult mind-control to a front for an evil mystical cult. It could even be a prelude for an alien invasion using mind-control, shapeshifting, or possession to control or duplicate cult members. Perhaps Jeremiah Ross really *can* turn people into super-beings with his spiritual program, but is his vision of a "supertopia" one in which everyone will want to live?

Infinity: A popular downtown nightclub near the waterfront, Infinity is filled with smoked glass, chrome, and disco lighting. Dance and disco music are popular features, and Infinity has live DJs on the weekends.

Legends: Located not far from the Liberty Dome, this club has a supers theme to it. The servers wear spandex costumes, often with short capes, and a raised transparent dance floor lets dancers try out their "flying" moves. Supers memorabilia is on display in glass cases around the club. Not unexpectedly, this club is owned by Todd Champion, the memorabilia collector who owns Champion's restaurants.

The Machine: The city's foremost gay club lies in Hanover. The building is a renovated warehouse with plenty of exposed pipes and brickwork all overlaid with a lot of exposed metal. Pounding dance music fills the entire place, and the main dance floor spans the building's first floor while tables and bars occupy the two upper balcony areas that overlook the scene.

Midnite Hour: This underground alternative (and dry) dance club in Riverside was opened by the owners of the original Midnite Hour in Los Angeles. It's located not far from the waterfront area and very popular with the high school and college patrons not yet old enough to enter the other clubs legally.

Millennium: Midtown's biggest nightclub caters to the young and upwardly mobile. Its emphasis is on futuristic, sleek, and stylish, and the DJs mix different styles of music for different nights of the week.

The Secret Bar: Not so secret, this bar and restaurant's name comes from its motif—1960s-style spy movies and television shows. The West End bar maintains an innocuous front as an "import/export business." Patrons enter through a "secret passage" from the reception area into the bar. The entire two floors of the Secret Bar are filled with spy memorabilia and the bartenders serve code-named drinks that are not for the weak at heart.

RESTAURANTS

Freedom is home to hundreds of restaurants serving a wide range of food, from the finest four-star nouvelle cuisine to ethnic restaurants to old-fashioned home-style cooking and fast food.

Chez Henri: The four-star French restaurant in Midtown is known for the quality of its food but, more importantly, for the elite and snobbish attitude of its staff. It caters to the wealthy and those who want to feel wealthy for an evening.

Madden's: A chain of franchised restaurants, Madden's serves American-style food in a cozy atmosphere. Madden's is popular with middle-class families, and they always have a great selection of ice cream and desserts.

The Plaza: Located on the second floor of the Plaza Hotel in downtown Freedom, the Plaza restaurant serves high-class cuisine in a refined atmosphere popular with the well-to-do businessmen.

Shaughnessey's: A popular chain of local "brew-pub" restaurants with a Irish-American flair, all are decorated in brass and green-stained wood with liberal amounts of stained glass. The menu is broad and eclectic, and includes dozens of varieties of beer, most produced by local microbreweries. Shaughnessey's also owns its own microbrewery, which produces its signature Shaughnessey's Stout. The most popular beer remains the city's signature Freedom Ale, which is brewed by the Stars & Stripes Brewing Company out in Greenbank.

Stan's Super Heroes: Stan's is a local chain of sandwich shops known for its reasonable prices and large portions. The various sandwiches are named for different heroes and the stores have a number of autographed pictures of famous supers. With three days' notice, Stan's can produce the 12-foot Gargantus Sub for parties. Stop by for Scintillating Super-Savings Saturdays.

Starbase Coffee: Starbase Coffee is the survivor of a series of cyber-café's that sprang up along the East Coast in the last ten years. It has become one of the most successful chains of its kind with locations throughout Freedom City, particularly the North End and Hanover. Its science fiction theme is popular with its patrons—mostly younger people in the high-tech industry and college students.

The Starlight Room: High atop the Tremont Hotel in downtown Freedom is the Starlight Room, a revolving restaurant that offers a spectacular view of the city skyline and serves fine cuisine prepared by its staff of chefs. The Starlight room also features nightly dancing and live music, making it a popular nightspot.

Tia Marta's: This West End restaurant has been voted among the city's best for several years running. Tia Marta's serves a unique blend of Spanish and Italian cuisine and it comes family-style with enormous portions; people always take home leftovers from a meal here.

Timothy's Bistro: A chef-owned bistro in Midtown, it serves a variety of cuisine based on Chef Timothy Kandro's eclectic tastes. It's small, upscale, and popular with local people and tourists alike, so make a reservation for one of its few tables.

Toys: A Chinese restaurant located in the Theatre District, Toys is popular with the late theatre crowd and club-goers, since it's open until 3:00 A.M. It serves a variety of Chinese-American foods and has an extensive buffet.

Wading Way Brewery: A microbrewery and American pub-style restaurant, the Wading Way Brewery is located on Wading Way near Liberty Park. It's very popular with both young families and local businessmen.

Wintergreen: This upscale café on Lantern Hill is the converted bottom floor of an old rowhouse. Far from any competing Starbase Coffee, the cozy setting serves a variety of coffees and teas, pastries, and other such delicacies.

CASINOS

In the Southside area of Freedom City, gambling is legal within a number of fine hotels and casinos. Money pours into this area with newer and glitzier places going up all the time. The Freedom Mafia has a stranglehold on the casino business, and a lot of Mob money gets laundered through the casinos. The mayor would love to shut the gambling industry down, but it's a valuable source of revenue and tourism for the city, to say nothing of the jobs it provides for the population of Southside. If there's to be any hope of improving the Southside economy, the city must live with the Boardwalk and its casinos for the time being.

Atlantis: A hotel and casino built on an aquatic theme, Atlantis features a massive fountain with a statue of King Neptune and his frolicking nymphs outside. It's heavily decorated in gold leaf, marble, shells, and gauzy fishing nets. The colors of everything are predominantly sea greens and blues. The underground restaurant features a wide window that looks out into the South River, and the glass tables rest on tanks of exotically colored fish.

Golden Calf: This casino revels in some of the gaudiest aspects of the gambling business. Its decor is a combination of Art Deco opulence and turn-of-the-century decadence. A statue of a golden calf sits over the door, and gold is used heavily in the interior decorations. The casino was fading somewhat, but has started to bounce back recently due to its bookings of younger, more popular singers and comedians.

Paradise: This hotel and casino tries to emulate a tropical resort with only modest success, given the climate in Freedom is only warm for about half of the year. Still, the hotel is luxurious and features enough indoor activities (including an indoor pool) that attract a lot of interest from tourists looking for an inexpensive alternative to actually visiting the tropics.

The Southside Palace: The biggest and oldest casino on the Boardwalk is the Southside Palace, openly owned by the Driogano Family—the most powerful mobsters in Freedom City (see p. 84). The casino features all sorts of card and dice games as well as rows upon rows of slot machines. It also features nightly entertainment, from singing to dancing to stand-up comedy routines. The police and the local FBI office keep a close eye on the Southside Palace, although Big Al Driogano is smart enough to keep the public face of the "family business" clean.

LOCAL MUSIC SCENE

Freedom City has a lively music scene. Many of the city bars and clubs feature live bands and open mike nights. Although there

aren't any major music industry companies in the city (yet), there's a lot going on in the Freedom Music scene.

BANDS AND MUSICIANS

While there are undoubtedly more bands out there waiting to be discovered, these are the notables of the current crop of Freedom City musicians.

Albion: Pitched as a Celtic-rock fusion band that combines rock stylings with old Celtic folk melodies, the seven-member band uses instruments like the fiddle and the bagpipes and they're widely known for their frenetic performances. They perform at clubs and cultural festivals, although they also tour cities in the local area.

Boy Wonderz: The biggest pop phenomenon of the day, this "boy band" is under contract to the music division of New Horizon Media. The quintet has recently started a national tour, playing sold-out shows at the Freedom Liberty Dome. Despite the name and their costumed motif, none of the boys have paranormal abilities.

Crossbones: A "voodoo rap" band that combines islands music and modern rap, Crossbones goes for a lurid Hollywood Voodoo style, complete with top hats and dark sunglasses, white greasepaint, and lots of skulls and macabre props. They've invited Siren to attend their shows, but the heroine has always politely declined.

Kings in Yellow: This alternative rock band recently signed with a major record label owned by New Horizon Media. Their style of dark, brooding music is popular with the goth and alternative crowds.

Madman Finale: This rock alternative trio can be found playing many of the clubs in Freedom and it is popular among the local college crowds. They've got their own website for private sales of their CDs along with some other merchandise.

The New Town Orchestra: This swing music vocal group plays some of the city's clubs and dance palaces with their particular brand of swing music and dancing. Oddly enough, they have become popular among even what they call "the stuffed-shirt set of Port Regal."

The Soul Stampede: This jazz vocal group has grown popular performing in some of the city's bars and clubs. They'd be notable for the sweet and mellow voice of their lead singer Patti DuMont alone, but the three singers and four musicians all have incredible skills at improvisation, and one never knows what will happen at a Stampede show.

SHOWS AND CONCERTS

In addition to local talent, Freedom City draws more than a few national stars and acts. The city is a stop on the cross-country tours of major musicians and bands, and the citizens of Freedom regularly crowd into concert halls and stadiums to see them.

Fresh Sounds Promotions: The city's major concert promoter is Fresh Sounds, owned and operated by Frank Mills, the most influential promoter in the Freedom area. More than a few people aren't fond of Mills or his slick attitude, but few can deny that he gets the job done. The smaller promoters in the area would like to get a bigger piece of the pie, but Mills has them shut out for the time being. Rumors abound that Mills is in debt to the local Mafia, or that he at least has connections with them to ensure

CAMPAIGN USE

Scientific labs and research companies present opportunities for story hooks involving scientific experiments gone wrong, prototypes or research data of interest to super-criminals, and secret government or corporate projects. Scientist characters might work for a research company in their secret identities. ASTRO Labs can provide helpful scientific analysis and information to heroes who need a piece of strange technology examined. The Albright Institute's ongoing studies can turn up new superhumans. This information might be valuable to any number of people, including the government and super-criminals like Dr. Sin (p. 157), Dr. Stratos (p. 139), the Foundry (p. 76), or Talos (p. 178).

nothing goes wrong with his shows and, should a competitor of his suffer an "accident," well that's hardly his fault, now is it?

Fresh Sounds books the majority of shows in the city and surrounding area, in venues like the Liberty Dome, the major clubs, and the new Shuster Auditorium on the outskirts of Hanover.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

"Over there is where cybernetics research is normally conducted. Pardon the mess. We're doing some reconstruction following Argo's unexpected reactivation. He did a fair amount of damage busting out. But, as you can see, the exterior walls of all the lab areas are specially reinforced just for situations like this. Now, if you'll follow me this way, I'll show you some really interesting things in the biotech lab..."

—HARVEY CRONIN, AGE 27, ASTRO LABS TECHNICIAN

The "City of Tomorrow" is seen as the true frontier for scientific study. Research companies of all kinds have flocked to the city for the inexpensive real estate, new infrastructure, access to government grants, and the chance to become a part of the lively academic and intellectual community in the area.

THE ALBRIGHT INSTITUTE

The Albright Institute is a private foundation that gathers information about superhumans for scientific research and study. It was established by Langston Albright (alias Beacon), a member of the Liberty League for many years before his retirement in the 1950s. The Institute's ostensive purpose is to increase knowledge and understanding of superhumans but it also has several functions of which the general public isn't aware.

The first is to have information on superhumans available in case something should go wrong. Albright himself understands the risks of a superhero abusing his powers or falling under the influence of an outside force, so it's wise if there are precautions in place. He's careful to ensure that the Institute's data doesn't fall into the wrong hands, where it could be used against heroes (although that is always a possibility).

The Institute's other purpose is to find Albright's successor as Beacon. His light-based powers stem from a mystical source and they are intended to hold certain forces of darkness at bay. Langston Albright has grown too old to effectively wield the power and uses it now solely to stay alive while he searches for a

IMPERVIUM

Impervium is a unique "living" metal alloy created by ASTRO Labs. The alloy is made using a process so secret its patent is twelve levels above the security clearance of anyone in the Patent Office. Not only is it incredibly hard and durable, but impervium has a remarkable ability to "heal" any damage over time. It also "remembers" its original shape enough to regrow or replace damaged parts, making it incredibly useful in any situation where wear and tear are concerns. Impervium is hardness 20 and also regains hardness lost to damage at the rate of 1 point per hour, although it will not recover from being completely destroyed or disintegrated.

The process and materials to produce impervium are very expensive, making the material far too costly for common use or public consumption. Still, some government facilities make use of impervium armor and the Blackstone prison uses impervium cells and restraints. ASTRO Labs also has a number of impervium-related research projects underway. Security has gotten ever tighter, particularly since the renegade robot Talos attempted to steal the formula but only gained a small sample of the alloy a few months ago.

worthy successor. Thus far, his search has been unsuccessful, and he's beginning to feel that his time is growing short.

The Albright Institute occupies a small four-story office park in Hanover, where their personnel perform research related to supers and paranormal phenomena in the Freedom City area. The facility is the Institute's primary data processing, administrative and research site (with smaller research facilities in other cities). The Institute also has benefited from government grants, giving them greater opportunities to study the effects of superhumans on all aspects of society. Aside from the FMC, the Institute is one of the few places equipped to handle superhuman medical care.

LANGSTON ALBRIGHT

Langston Albright's father was a minister, and he grew up with both strong moral values and a belief that there was such a thing as evil in the world. He believed that it was the duty of good men and women to do something about that evil. Langston worked on a trawler off the coast of Freedom City in 1945. One night, an unexpected storm hit and the ship could barely stay afloat. A wave swept Langston overboard into the dark, roiling water. He sank into the darkness, and he could feel things moving around him, circling him. Suddenly, he saw a light rise up out of the dark depths to surround him and fill him. He burst from the water, aglow with his new power, and he helped to tow the ship back to port. He adopted the masked identity of Beacon, the master of light, and became a member of the post-war Liberty League.

By his own studies and work with Scarab, Beacon learned that his power was part of a prophecy of about a "champion of light" who would combat the forces of darkness in the world. A part of that darkness was the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign and the unspeakable god they worshiped (p. 78). Even after his public career as Beacon ended in the 1950s, Albright continued the fight against the forces of eldritch evil behind the scenes.

He achieved some measure of wealth and fame writing about his heroic exploits and making public appearances, but his primary focus was his work as a protector of humanity. He founded the Albright Institute to increase understanding about superhumans, gather potentially useful information, and to find a suitable successor for his powers. Although remarkably fit for a man his age, Albright is no longer able to carry on the fight. He's also concerned that the forces of evil are gathering and preparing to take advantage of his weakness, so the time must be soon.

Langston Albright is a dignified African American man in his early-80s. He's tall and only slightly bent by the weight of his years. His short hair has gone entirely white, but his dark eyes retain their keen intellect and insight. He dresses in dark suits in all but the most casual circumstances. Albright lives in Kingston and spends much of his time at the Institute's offices in Hanover.

Langston Albright: PL 10; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 18 (17 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 melee (+OS, punch), +7 ranged (+8S, energy blast); SV Dmg +3, Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +4; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 13.

Skills: Concentration +8, Knowledge (occult) +6, Knowledge (superhumans) +9, Spot +8, Sense Motive +10.

Feats: Assessment, Attack Focus (Dazzle), Fame, Identity Change, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Power Immunity, Precise Shot.

Powers: Light Control +8 [*Extras:* Energy Blast, Energy Shapes, Flight, Force Field; *Source:* Mystical; *Cost:* 6 pp].

ASTRO LABS

The Applied Scientific and Technical Research Organization (ASTRO) was founded by Dr. Grant Allan, who saw the opportunities inherent in Freedom City back in 1942 and decided to seize them. Through friends and contacts in the scientific community and the government, Grant secured the support and financing to start his own research company. It originally produced weapons and rocketry for the war effort, and their designs helped keep the Axis in check for much of the war. ASTRO quickly drew attention from the intellectual community of Freedom City along with a number of lucrative contracts from the government and various corporations.

Now ASTRO Labs is the largest scientific research company in the world. The company occupies its own office park in the North End, quite near the FCU campus and just across the river from the Hanover Institute of Technology. ASTRO Labs has established itself as a resource for the Freedom League, and the team often consults the company when they are in need of specialized equipment or assistance in analyzing a particularly difficult scientific problem.

DR. CLARENCE CLEARWATER

Dr. Clearwater is one of ASTRO Labs' leading researchers, a brilliant scientist and inventor, although somewhat befuddled when it comes to dealing with the minutia of everyday life. His harried assistants usually keep track of the doctor's appointments, the whereabouts of his glasses, his personal digital assistant, and other such minutiae.

Clearwater, in his mid-50s, is totally bald but has a full and somewhat unruly beard. He wears horn-rimmed reading glasses

(when he can find them) and is nearly always wearing his white lab coat over his wrinkled and creased clothes—his ever-present navy blue pants and black shirt.

Dr. Clarence Clearwater: PL1; Init +0; Defense 10; Spd 30 ft.; Atk -1 melee (-1S, punch); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Computers +5, Profession (scientist) +4, Science (physics) +7.

Feats: Talented (Computers and Science).

DANGER INTERNATIONAL

A foundation started by 1930s-era explorer and adventurer Johnny Danger got its start-up capital selling diamonds collected from a secret mine in Africa. DI began around the nucleus of Johnny's old organization, the Jungle Patrol, and has always kept a strong interest in environmental protection issues and preserving peace in Africa. Although Mr. Danger is long since retired, his five grandchildren run the foundation quite well and keep his spirit in the foundation. DI provides money for humanitarian aid, exploration, research projects, and similar activities. Based in New York City, Danger International has offices in downtown Freedom headed up by Rachel Danger, the youngest of John's grandchildren.

THE FOUNDRY

The Foundry is not a public company but a secret criminal organization dedicated to hi-tech research and development (and theft). Their technology is available for sale to anyone willing to meet their prices, which are always exorbitant but well worth it. The Foundry is strictly a supplier of information and equipment—any crimes they stage are for acquiring useful technological information, prototypes, or resources they need to continue their operations. Unlike other organizations they have no political or social agenda, merely a desire for profit.

The Foundry was created the renegade robot inventor Talos (p. 178). He directs the Foundry's operations, but leaves many of the routine matters up to his human or cyborg underlings. The organization's personnel wear high-tech protective suits with

light body armor. Combat operatives wear helmets and carry blaster rifles.

The Freedom League discovered and shut down at least one Foundry operation in an old subway station beneath Freedom City, though there are almost certain to be more of them. Daedalus is particularly dedicated to rooting out Foundry operations in the city and elsewhere, given its ties to his flawed creation Talos.

SOCIAL LIFE

Get a large enough group of people together and they naturally gravitate toward those who share common interests and goals. The people of Freedom City are no different, and many different clubs and social groups are found in the city, some of particular interest to supers and their associates.

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Numerous clubs and social organizations cater to the interests of people in Freedom City. They include various ethnic heritage clubs, mostly based in the West End and Midtown. These organizations promote cultural festivals and education for youth and adults on their heritage. Organizations like the Masons are common in Freedom, with a Masonic Temple located in City Center just south of the Financial District. There are also veterans' organizations like the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and the like.

THE CAPE AND COWL CLUB

One exclusive club in Freedom is the upscale and utterly discrete Cape and Cowl Club. Located in a rebuilt Tudor style house on 52nd Avenue across from Liberty Park, the club caters solely to superhumans and nonpowered masked adventurers. The club offers supers a place to meet and relax in the presence of their peers.

Club rules require attendees wear formal dress and they strictly prohibit costumes. Members are expected to attend in their "civilian" identities, although they're not required to reveal their real names. More than a few club members attend in some sort of disguise that does not involve their usual masks. Worries about eavesdroppers (from the local or federal government to the usual nemeses) are negated by the club's hidden security; any electronic, psionic, or mystical attempts at surveillance only reveal scenes from Marx Brothers films rather than the exposed faces of superhuman attendees. No one asks how the security works, but all are glad it is in place.

Word of the club has spread quickly through the superhuman community, and people come from all over the world to visit it (particularly those able to travel quickly and discretely). However, entry is by invitation only unless someone is a guest of an established member. The club's owners remain anonymous, although rumors abound that the Cape and Cowl Club is owned by a trio of retired superheroes who were active in the 1940s but who may or may not have been a team at that time. Other theories range from a government operation to monitor supers to a front for a super-criminal or the Albright Institute's latest means for gathering information.

CAMPAIGN USE

The Foundry is a convenient source of super-technology for NPCs in a Freedom City campaign. They can supply anything from a few crates of energy blasters to giant robots or even Doomsday Machines. Talos isn't likely to help a madman destroy the world, but he'd probably sell him the parts he needed to depopulate a country or two without asking too many questions. Criminal organizations like SHADOW can acquire nearly any kind of technology they need from the Foundry, while the Foundry itself remains behind the scenes. It only occasionally emerges to pull off some robbery when they don't have enough favors to get some other supervillain to do it for them.

For alternative sources of illegal technology that's a bit less advanced, see **Grant Conglomerates**, p. 48, or **Majestic Industries**, p. 49.

CAMPAIGN USE

The Cape and Cowl Club is just the place for a little "off-time" for the player characters, where they can hang up their masks, relax, and mingle. It's a good opportunity to roleplay and meet other characters in the campaign, including characters the PCs wouldn't otherwise meet on good terms. The GM can use the club as a source of rumors and gossip in the superhero community, a meeting place and (if desired) a front for some other operation going on behind the scenes. GMs looking to play things for a few laughs should feel free to make the Cape and Cowl into a parody of superhero "society," complete with segregating the "sidekicks" in a separate area.

WHAT IF... VILLAINS CAME TO CAPE AND COWL?

The assumption here is that Cape and Cowl Club membership is restricted to heroes, or at least those on the right side of the law. If the GM wants a different mix of patrons at the club, consider making it "neutral ground" for costumed types on both sides of the law. The club's neutrality may be an accepted rule among its patrons (and enforced by them) or it may be enforced from outside by the club's mysterious owner.

THE MIDNIGHT SOCIETY

The Midnight Society is the most exclusive social club in Freedom City, and it is quickly on its way to becoming one of the most exclusive in the world. It includes some of the wealthiest and most influential people in the country and throws the most exclusive parties. Membership is by invitation only and such invitations are a social coup of the highest order and rarely, if ever, refused. The club has a reputation for old money, Old World charm and civility, and a high degree of snobbery. At least part of its popularity is in direct proportion to the exclusivity of the Cape and Cowl Club (see above). As it happens, supers are not permitted as members of the Society. It's not an official rule, but one can note that no known superhuman has ever been invited to join.

On the surface, the Midnight Society is exactly what it appears to be, a stuffy "gentleman's club" similar to those of nineteenth century Britain, save that it doesn't discriminate based on anything other than wealth and social standing. But beneath the surface the Midnight Society is merely a front for a sinister organization known as SHADOW, a group bent on controlling the world from behind the scenes.

THE SONS OF FREEDOM

The Sons of Freedom is an organization devoted to "preserving the cultural and historical heritage of Freedom City for future generations." It takes its name from the group of patriots and rebels that operated in the city during the Revolutionary War. Its membership is exclusively male, although a sister organization (the Daughters of Freedom) has existed since the 1930s. The club sponsors the local historical society and various cultural events such as plays, operas, museum displays, art shows, and such. It tends to attract old money and serves as a "good old boys" network for many of the most influential people of Freedom City. It's not as exclusive

CAMPAIGN USE

The world of the rich and famous often comes into contact with that of the heroes. Superheroes who are fabulously wealthy in their secret identities are a staple of the comics. Player with wealthy characters should work with the GM to determine where they fit on the list of the city's wealthiest, shifting around some of the existing names if need be. If the Freedom Leaguers aren't used in your game, you can drop them from the list, freeing up more room for PC or NPC entries.

The wealthy are also often tempting targets for criminals looking to make money from theft, kidnapping, or extortion. Any of the characters on this list are potential victims of such schemes. One interesting possibility is for Callie Summers (alias the Raven, p. 113) to become the target of a kidnapping. Her kidnappers get lucky and manage to snatch Callie, keeping her unconscious. Her father Duncan contacts the PCs for help in finding her, hopefully without having to reveal her secret identity.

Wealthy NPCs also make excellent patrons for a team of supers. A philanthropist like Fletcher Beaumont might fund a team for the public good, or a wealthy individual might want a team of supers as company representatives, bodyguards, or personal flunkies. Even a philanthropic team might run into problems when their wealthy patron asks them for a favor, or their patron runs into trouble and the money starts drying up.

or prestigious as the Midnight Society and is considerably more open about its activities.

HIGH SOCIETY

Freedom City is a city of opportunity, where people can make their fortune if they're willing to take chances. There's a great deal of money to be made in the city in a wide range of business endeavors ranging from the booming real estate market to the high-tech industry or the media. Freedom City also has its share of "old money" that dates back to the first founders of the city.

THE NORTH BAY YACHT CLUB

One of the more prestigious organizations in the city, the North Bay Yacht Club counts many of Freedom's wealthiest and most influential people among its members. The club is based at the North Bay Marina and its annual summer regatta is a major social occasion. Parties and informal gatherings at the Yacht Club form part of the "insiders" network of the wealthy and powerful of Freedom.

PROMINENT WEALTHY PEOPLE

Most of the people on the Top 20 list are described elsewhere in this book (primarily under the **Business** section on p. 47). The rest are described here:

Angela Beaudrie: The matriarch of the Beaudrie family married into her fortune. Mrs. Beaudrie's late husband, Thomas, was the grandson of the man who built the Beaudrie Opera House, and Mrs. Beaudrie helped see to its restoration. The real estate she owns in and around the city has greatly increased in value, and Mrs. Beaudrie has used her extra income to fund a number of charitable organizations benefiting the arts and efforts to help

TOP 20 WEALTHIEST FREEDONIANS

1. Reserved for PC or GM-created character
2. Henry Allard (media mogul)
3. Hieronymus King (CEO, Majestic Industries)
4. Duncan Summers (teacher and investor)
5. Reserved for PC or GM-created character
6. Arthur W. Stromberg (investor)
7. Scott Hamilton (CEO, USNet)
8. Jonathan Grant (CEO, Grant Conglomerate)
9. Callie Summers (heiress)
10. Reserved for PC or GM-created character
11. Fletcher Beaumont I (publisher)
12. Naomi Sinclair (CEO, Nova Communications)
13. Angela Beaudrie (heiress)
14. Wayne Clark (publisher)
15. Reserved for PC or GM-created character
16. Lucius Cabot (attorney)
17. Jeremiah Ross (director, Pinnacle Path Foundation)
18. Frank "Buddy" DeCosta (developer/contractor)
19. Lana Loeb (newspaper publisher)
20. Reserved for PC or GM-created character

Note: Big Al Driogano could easily be placed on this list between #9 and #10 from the income of his legitimate holdings in the casinos and hotels in Southside. His Mob affiliations and the suspect nature of the bulk of his fortunes keeps him off this list. GMs should bear in mind that most of the Mafia dons in the city easily have the capital to be considered equal to at least the latter half of this list.

the poor and homeless in Freedom. Mrs. Beaudrie is 59 years old and has three grown children as well as four grandchildren. She lives at the Beaudrie estate in Port Regal.

Fletcher Beaumont: Patriarch of the Beaumont family and the original Bowman of the 1940s and 50s, Fletcher Beaumont is still remarkably vital at the age of 82. Although long since retired from both the publishing and superhero businesses, he finds time to advise those who succeeded him in both roles. His grandson is the fourth Bowman as a member of the Next-Gen. Mr. Beaumont still lives at the family home in North Bay.

Wayne Clark: The owner of one of the major American book publishers, Mr. Clark has moved the main offices of Clark & Co. Publishers to Freedom and currently lives in North Bay. He is friends with Henry Allard and there are plans for media tie-ins between Allard's New Horizon Media and Clark & Co. At age 52, Clark has been married to his wife, Rose, for 27 years and they have two children, Amanda (age 24) and Christopher ("Kit," age 20 and a student at Harvard University in Boston).

SECRET SOCIETIES

Secret societies do exist in Freedom City, although most of them are hardly malevolent. Many, like the Masons, keep their inner workings secret, but perform a number of good and charitable works. Other secret societies are not so benevolent, and are potentially dangerous.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE YELLOW SIGN

The oldest secret society in Freedom City and the world is the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign. The Cult is made up of worshippers of the Unspeakable One, the dread god that caused the downfall of Serpent People society in the ancient past. It is led by a handful of civilized Serpent People while the rest of the cult's members are degenerate Serpent People or humans lured into the worship of the Unspeakable One. With their shapeshifting abilities, the Serpent People have concealed their presence and their cult's activities throughout recorded history.

The ultimate goal of the cult is to summon their dread god to Earth, where it is said that the Unspeakable One will rule for all time, his chosen servants becoming his overlords and lieutenants. It's far more likely the Unspeakable One's arrival would only result in madness and death for all living creatures, and perhaps even the total destruction of the Earth. The Cult either is blinded to any possible risk or simply doesn't care. Fortunately for the world, the rites to summon the Unspeakable One are incredibly complex and were lost in the fall of Lemuria ages ago. Most of the time, the cult influences events behind the scenes, summons the occasional demon servitor, and gathers all the arcane lore and artifacts they can use. They also offer periodic sacrifices to the Unspeakable One, particularly during auspicious mystic conjunctions.

LEGION

"Our name is Legion, for we are many," says the infamous signature of the group of underground hackers known as the Legion. The Legion is a loose alliance of criminal computer hackers that provide services and information to the highest bidder. They do this partly for the money but largely for the challenge and kicks of overcoming the latest and best computer security. The identities of the Legion members are a closely guarded secret, and most of the members have never even met face to face. Membership is limited to those hackers smart and ruthless enough to track down the group and force their way into it.

Government authorities believe the Legion works with the Foundry (p. 76) and other criminal organizations on occasion, providing them with stolen data in exchange for money or more advanced computer technology. There may be ties between the Legion and the HIT campus (p. 55) or USNet (p. 50), although authorities have yet to uncover any solid evidence or connections.

SPORTS

Freedom City has its own local sports franchises and the fans are quite devoted to their local teams. Turnout for sporting events in the city is usually high.

PROFESSIONAL SPORTS TEAMS

Freedom has four professional sports teams along with a number of amateur and semi-professional teams. There is a strong likelihood of the area attracting other professional sports teams over time.

THE FREEDOM BLADES

The brand-new Freedom Blades hockey team has made quite an impact on the NHL, scoring wins in four out of their first five

CAMPAIGN USE

It's up to the GM to decide how pervasive and powerful the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign is in Freedom City. The cult may be a small handful of worshippers led by a Serpent Person sorcerer or priest, or it may be a vast conspiracy that has tentacles extending everywhere and secretly controls lesser conspiracies like SHADOW (p. 174). The shapeshifting powers of the Serpent People allow them to disguise themselves as normal humans, so some of the NPCs in this book may actually be Serpent People clandestinely working to further the aims of the Brotherhood. The Pinnacle Path (p. 71) may be a secret front for the Brotherhood with leader Jeremiah Ross as a disguised Serpent Person. The Midnight Society (p. 76) also makes a good front for the Brotherhood.

Investigating the Brotherhood's activities can form a long-running subplot in a campaign as the heroes track down mysterious disappearances, thefts of artifacts, visions from mystics and psychics, the appearance of demons in the city, and perhaps a threat to Beacon's future successor (see **The Albright Institute**, p. 74). It can culminate in a confrontation with the Brotherhood as they attempt to summon the Unspeakable One or perhaps a battle with the mad god himself to prevent him from plunging the world into perpetual insanity.

games as a professional franchise. Some are skeptical whether or not the team's winning streak will continue. A large part of their success hinges on the talents of star-player Andre Leroux, who has led the Blades to victory.

What neither Leroux or the Blades' fans know is that the Raven's foe Wildcard (p. 146) is blackmailing Blades owner Kurt Carmel. He told Carmel he used his luck-controlling powers to allow the team to win their past four games. If Carmel doesn't pay a substantial amount of money, Wildcard will reveal his machinations to the press, which could see the team disqualified from the league.

In truth, Wildcard doesn't have anything to do with the Blades' success. But since no one has any way of knowing that, he saw no reason not to cash in on it. Mr. Carmel wants to turn Wildcard over to the police, but he's afraid of what might happen, so he continues paying up for the time being.

THE FREEDOM CITY COMETS

The Freedom Comets baseball team could be a potential "dream team," if Coach Russell Mills can pull the diverse group of players together into a smoothly-functioning squad. The Comets put in good showings over the past few seasons, but it remains to be seen if they'll actually make it into the playoffs or the World Series.

Freedom's original baseball team was the Flags, who won their first pennant in 1969. Their greedy owner, Matthew Sandston, moved the team out of the city in 1994 since the city could not meet his demands for a new stadium for the team. Given the ongoing repairs across the city from the Terminus Invasion of the previous year, baseball did not become a priority for Freedom City until a few years ago when Scott Hamilton and Fletcher Beaumont I and II sponsored and purchased this new team for Freedom City.

THE FREEDOM CITY RAYGUNS

The Freedom City Rayguns basketball team plays regular home games at the Shuster Arena. While they have a number of great players, the main attraction is star player Andy "Lancer" Tyler, a local boy from Southside and a graduate of Freedom College. While the Rayguns' fans are intensely loyal, the team has languished toward the bottom of the standings for a few years and currently seeks a new coach and new players to turn things around.

THE FREEDOM CITY REBELS

The Rebels football team was the first major sports franchise in the city—Freedom City fielded the first Rebels team in the third year of the NFL's existence—and it remains the most popular sports team today. Rebels games are always packed with screaming fans, and the team has earned three Super Bowl championships over the years. Although they didn't quite make it to the Super Bowl last season, they promise that this year will be the one. The team's star quarterback, Darrell Marks, is a popular local celebrity and beloved enough that folks forgive him for being born in Birmingham, Alabama instead of Freedom.

Like the Green Bay Packers, the Rebels are not owned by a single owner or consortium of owners. Team stock for the team was sold publicly to Freedomians in 1950 and again in 1988, and the city itself collectively owns the team. The largest stockholders are Lucius Cabot and the Veterans of Foreign Wars posts in Bayview and Hanover, but their holdings account for only 6% of the total stock. Proceeds from any team merchandising goes to support the public schools and community athletic programs after the team's operating expenses are deducted. This community feeling toward the Rebels (and the team toward the public) is one of the reasons behind its continuing popularity.

COLLEGE SPORTS

Freedom City University and Freedom College both have full collegiate sports programs, including football, basketball, and baseball teams. FCU is well known for its rowing team, which practices on the Wading River. Freedom College's renowned track team ignores jibes about how Freedom College students have to run fast in order to attend school in Southside. The two schools also support teams in swimming, gymnastics, wrestling, track & field, and numerous other sports.

Both schools have their own athletic stadiums and facilities, although FCU's facilities are newer and more up-to-date than those of Freedom College. There is a fierce rivalry between the two school's teams, and one of the major events of the year is the annual Homecoming Game between their two football teams.

STADIUMS AND ARENAS

There are a number of arenas and stadiums throughout the Freedom City neighborhoods.

The Bandshell: Classical music, jazz, and Hanover's annual Shakespeare festival are featured here at the outdoor auditorium in the Promenade.

The Liberty Dome: Situated between the Theatre District and the Midtown area is the Liberty Dome, the large events complex

that serves as the home field to the Liberty City Rebels (NFL) and Comets (MLB) sports teams. The 80,000-seat stadium complex also plays host to other sporting events as well as major concerts and shows during the year.

The owners of the Comets, who brought baseball back to Liberty in 1997, now face the daunting prospect of turning a profit in an outdated dome stadium that makes a truly terrible venue for baseball. Without any share of profits from parking, luxury boxes, or concessions (which all go to the dome owners), team owners Scott Hamilton and the Beaumont family must convince the city and state to fund a new, state-of-the-art open-air baseball stadium, a costly project that requires a great deal of public funding and that has touched off a major political battle in local and state government. Everyone remembers the dark year 1994, when a greedy owner pulled Liberty's previous team, the Flags, to a southern state after he failed to get public funding for just such a project, and no one envies the owners the difficult struggle ahead of them.

The Shuster Arena: Located in Hanover not far from the West Expressway is the Shuster Arena, the site of concerts and sporting events. It was the largest of its kind in the area, but is now dwarfed by the Liberty Dome. The Arena is home to Liberty City's Rayguns (NBA) and Blades (NHL) professional sports franchises.

Stone Stadium: Various sporting events are held at this small sporting arena on the Freedom College campus. Its primary purpose is the home of the Freedom College Patriots football team. The stadium facilities are behind the times but the school has recently allocated some funds to refurbishing them in time to host next year's Homecoming against FCU.

STREET LIFE

Although Freedom City is renowned as a remarkably clean, peaceful, modern city, it still has its dark underside. No city is perfect, and Freedom City is no exception.

TROUBLE IN THE WEST END

Moving westward, shining, new, and ultra-modern buildings give way to the old-world buildings and streets of the West End. With the value of properties in the West End climbing, developers move in to renovate or simply tear down the old buildings to make way for new construction. As a result, many people have sold their homes to move outside the city or to other parts of the country. The old character of the neighborhood is slowly eroding under the pressures of growth and development. Still, a great many people in the West End prefer to stay where they are, either because it's where their families have lived for years or because they want to see what's going to happen next in their fair city.

The West End sees some measure of street crime and a growing number of affluent criminals moving into the area. The neighborhood has suffered from minor gang troubles for decades, although the gangs are slowly being squeezed out along with many of the local residents. West End gangs dislike outsiders, which is to say anyone who hasn't lived in the area for most of their lives. They are increasingly coming under the influence of

THE NEW KIDS IN TOWN

The energies released from the Terminus over the years have had a lasting impact on Freedom City. In effect, the whole area has become something of a "magnet" for superhuman activity. Not only are superhuman origins more likely to happen in and around the city, but events almost seem to conspire to attract supers to the city. Of course, some of it can easily be explained by the presence of teams like the Freedom League, who certainly draw attention from their various arch-enemies and the like, but it seems to extend beyond this.

Gamemasters can use this as an opportunity to add any or all supers desired to the Freedom City landscape. Accidents involving radiation, chemicals, high technology, or anything similar in Freedom are almost certain to result in at least one new (possibly temporary) superhuman. Major world-changing events always seem to focus on the city for some reason instead of in places of financial or political power like Hong Kong or London. GMs and players looking for one might decide the interdimensional nexus is somehow responsible. Ultimately, it's just a background element. Use it or ignore it as you wish.

the Southside Mafia, which uses gangs as "mules" to carry things like drugs and weapons to sell them in different places in the city.

DOWN AND OUT IN SOUTHSIDE

Across the South River stands the sprawling Southside neighborhood. Contracting firms in Southside and a number of businesses are booming. Jobs are more available than ever. Freedom College and the surrounding community are attracting new students and bringing new workers and money into the area. The casinos and hotels along the Boardwalk are more profitable than ever. However, along with this increased prosperity comes an increase in drug addiction, muggings, urban violence, and vagrancy.

Teenage runaways also make up a large portion of the Southside vagrant population. An increasing number of teenagers from all over the country run away to Freedom City in hopes of finding fame and fortune, meeting (or even becoming) supers, or just making a better life for themselves than they had at home. The bright promise of the city draws them like moths to a flame. More often than not, they end up hooked on drugs, and rely on prostitution, panhandling, or petty theft to support themselves. They often drift into the college-age community around Freedom College, where they can blend in and sometimes scam money and a place to sleep for the night.

OUR LADY OF MERCY

This shelter and soup kitchen in Southside operates not far from the edge of the Boardwalk, where it serves a number of people who are involved, in one way or another, with the "business" that goes on there. The mission was established by the Catholic Archdiocese, which continues to run it with a dedicated staff of nuns and volunteer help. The success of the mission is linked to the fact that the Mafia has declared Our Lady of Mercy off-limits. They leave the mission alone, and even donate money to it from time to time. Anyone who causes trouble for the nuns or the mission has to answer to the Families, so most criminals give it a wide berth.

THE LINCOLN YOUTH CENTER

A community center for Lincoln and Southside youth, the Lincoln Youth Center was established some fifteen years ago by charitable donations and has always been run by Wilson Jeffers, a Lincoln native. In addition to handling the administration of the Center, Mr. Jeffers also personally runs some of its programs. The LYC offers various afternoon sports and activities aimed at keeping kids off the streets and out of gangs. It also provides kids a place to go when their parents are at work. The Center has been successful in reducing gang and youth violence in Lincoln, along with educating youth on issues like teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

The Youth Center's personnel and clients are unaware Wilson Jeffers was once the Black Avenger, a member of the Freedom League in the 1960s and 70s. Although retired as a superhero, Jeffers is still a superb athlete for his age and he still helps the community the best way he knows how. Jeffers' chance to "pass it on" also paid off when Lemar Phillips, one of the kids who came to the Youth Center, developed super-powers and became the costumed hero Sonic (p. 134). Jeffers revealed his past as the Black Avenger to Sonic and now acts as the young hero's mentor and trainer when he's not working with the Next-Gen at the Claremont Academy (p. 54).

STREET PEOPLE

Some estimates indicate that Mayor O'Connor's perfect city has between 1,000 and 2,000 vagrants who have fallen through the cracks in social programs and who live on the streets of Southside, the Fens, and even some of the more upscale Freedom City neighborhoods.

Sandra Rayne: Sandra is a prostitute who works near the Boardwalk. She came to Freedom City as a runaway and ended up on the streets selling herself for money. She's twenty now and lives in an apartment in Southside she uses for her "in calls." She makes enough money to live better than many people in her position and she's managed to avoid being picked up by a pimp or getting hooked on drugs. Lots of her "boyfriends" are quite well off and provide her with gifts. Interestingly, one of her "friends" is Foreshadow, who pays Sandra for information from time to time. She keeps this to herself. She's concerned by the fact that Foreshadow has told her she needs to get out of "the life" soon. He hasn't said why, but she's worried nonetheless.

Nathan "the Knife" Korthu: Nate the Knife leads a gang of runaway teenagers living in the West End. Nate's father abandoned the family. His mother began drinking heavily not long thereafter and Nate moved through a succession of foster homes before he took off on his own. Seventeen now and the de facto leader of his own small gang, Nate invented his own nickname to inspire some respect on the streets. In truth, although Nate carries a knife, he's never used it on anyone, and hopes he never has to. Nate stands tall and whip-thin with black wiry hair and an olive complexion from his Greek heritage.

"Weird" Maggie: Nobody really knows the true story of Weird Maggie. She's a strange old bag lady who lives in Southside,

although she's been seen as far across the city as Lantern Hill and Hanover. She can be seen from time to time, trundling her shopping cart full of bags filled with who knows what, wearing a shapeless old coat and a battered hat with crumpled silk flowers. Her wild gray hair looks like it hasn't been washed in years, and what teeth she still has are yellowed. She tends to mutter to herself a great deal. Most of the things Maggie says make people think she's crazy, but they make other people wonder. She claims to remember what Lantern John was like when he was alive; she mentions meeting General George Washington and President Ulysses S. Grant. She also seems to occasionally have insight into things that are *going* to happen. She says she tries to warn people, but nobody listens to her. "Nobody ever listens to weird old Maggie," she sighs. She and Lucius Cabot (p. 53) apparently know—and intensely dislike—each other.

SUPERHEROES

For better or worse, Freedom City has become the focus of a great deal of superhuman activity over the years. The city's super inhabitants have helped protect it from a number of threats. Some accuse Freedom's super-protectors of actually *drawing* threats to the city, but most are grateful for their help.

Supers are a major focus of modern Freedom City, as tourist attractions (including the famed Super Museum) and as the center of media attention, from television to radio to comic books. There's even a social club in the city catering specifically to superhumans (the Cape and Cowl Club, see p. 76).

THE FREEDOM LEAGUE

The Freedom League is the premier hero team in Freedom City, the United States, and arguably the world. Former members of the Liberty League founded the team in the 1960s and it later received the support of the federal and state governments. For details on the current members of the Freedom League, see the **Heroes and Villains** chapter.

FREEDOM HALL

Without a doubt, the most famous building in all of Freedom is Freedom Hall, the headquarters of the Freedom League. It is situated across from Federal Plaza and is set back from the street. A protective wall of solid stone, eight feet high and two feet thick, surrounds the area. Locals comment on the fact that the wall is always in pristine condition. Graffiti, flyers, and even snow and ice just don't seem to adhere to it for some reason. Inside the wall is a small plaza out front with areas of manicured lawn and broad steps leading up to the main entrance of Freedom Hall. Landscaping behind the Hall is quite similar, though a small reflecting pool surrounded by trees and benches replaces the front plaza.

The building itself is five stories tall and somewhat blocky, narrowing slightly toward the top like a truncated pyramid. Its outer surface is pristine white marble with tall, narrow windows and a glassed-in atrium. The windows are not actually glass, but a carbon-composite similar to diamond created by Dr. Metropolis and Daedelus. They are "melded" into the structure of the building

WHAT IF... THERE WEREN'T SO MANY HEROES?

With the Freedom League, the Atom Family, the Next-Gen, and other independents, some GMs might find Freedom City a little too crowded to fit the player's heroes into the mix. It may not be a problem; after all, most comic book superhero universes have far more heroes than Freedom City! Still, if the city feels overcrowded, there are some ways of dealing with it.

The first is to simply eliminate some or all of the NPC heroes from this book, replacing them with the PCs. For example, the PCs might be the Freedom League (or a similar team that takes their place), with the Atom Family and other solo heroes as NPCs. Or the PC hero team might be the only hero team in Freedom, with just a few NPC solo heroes like Foreshadow (p. 137) around.

This keeps the focus on the PCs and their activities, although it can make the city feel a bit "empty" and less lively than if there are other heroes going about their business as well. GMs eliminating heroes from the city may want to take a look at the "Villain Options" that accompany the write-ups and consider using those heroes as villains in the campaign.

Another (less drastic) option is to simply keep the other heroes in the city busy. There's always enough trouble going on all the time, so the hero teams aren't going to be tripping over each other except for the occasional "team-up" story. The Freedom League is a team of national, if not international, stature, and may often be off on missions out of the city. The Atom Family are explorers by nature and likely to be off on some adventure (even off Earth or out of its dimension altogether!). The Next-Gen are students and heroes-in-training with a lot to occupy them. Likewise, when the PCs come knocking on Eldrich's door (p. 61), there's no guarantee that the master mage is home and not off gallivanting in some other dimension. This is a technique used to good effect in the comic books to keep heroes from relying too much on supporting characters to get the job done.

and do not open. The outer surface of the windows has a blue-tinted mirror finish. Thus, the only openings in the building are the main entrances and the rooftop hangar bay doors.

Inside the main entrance of the building is an atrium that runs the full five floors, a bank of elevators, and walkways leading into either side of the building. In front of the elevators is a reception desk where visitors are welcomed and directed. The ground floor of the Hall is open to the public, although sophisticated security systems check everyone passing through the front gates and approaching the building to ensure that they are not a threat.

The upper floors of Freedom Hall contain quarters for the League and their guests, office space, a conference and briefing room, dining facilities, supplemental labs and work areas, and the top-floor hangar bay for the storage, maintenance, and launching of the team's vehicles.

The Hall also has several subterranean levels, including a parking garage, the building's power plant and support equipment, the secure meeting-room, main computer core, laboratories, and the Freedom League's "wreck room," where they train and conduct combat exercises.

THE ATOM FAMILY

Another of Freedom City's notable superhuman teams is far less formal but far more tight-knit than the Freedom League because they are literally a family. The Atom Family now consists of the four grandchildren of scientist and adventurer Dr. Alexander Atom. Their guardian is long-time family friend Jack Wolf, while their deceased grandfather, who exists as a computerized intellect, advises them. For details on the individual members of the Atom Family, see the **Heroes and Villains** chapter.

THE GOODMAN BUILDING

The Atom Family makes its home on the top five floors of the Goodman Building in Midtown Freedom. Real estate financier Saul Goodman constructed the building and later sold it to Atomic, Inc. the family trust set up by Dr. Atom. As it happens, the top floors of the building are in the same spot where the Centurion's dimensional life-pod entered Earth's dimension from the Terminus. The Atom Family discovered lingering dimensional energies around the upper floors of the building, and Dr. Atom created a special containment unit to ensure that the forces of the Terminus would not spill over into the world again (although they have on at least one other occasion). The Family's HQ houses an artificial portal into the Terminus, which they monitor for any signs of trouble.

The Goodman Building itself is fairly unremarkable, a skyscraper of steel and concrete with mirror-finish windows. The home and HQ of the Atom Family (nicknamed "the Nucleus") occupies the top five of the building's forty-five stories. The 40th floor immediately beneath the Nucleus remains empty as a "buffer zone" between the building and its most famous occupants, though it also houses some support machinery.

THE NEXT-GEN

Freedom City's newest team of heroes comes from the student body of the Claremont Academy (p. 54). Although technically "in training" under the guidance of Duncan Summers, the kids have fought super-criminals and other foes in the Freedom area. They showed up on the news when Amy Feng from Channel 3 cornered them and asked if they were associated with the Freedom League. "Nah, they're old school," Sonic replied, "We're the Next-Gen!" The inadvertent name has stuck with them.

The Next-Gen operates out of a secret training facility beneath the Claremont Academy in Bayview. Officially, they're not supposed to be fighting crime or taking on super-powered menaces, but the students do manage to fit some patrolling into their schedule and they sometimes wind up fighting super-villains, including the Raven's arch-nemesis, Dr. Sin (p. 157).

For details on the individual members of the Next-Gen, see the **Heroes and Villains** chapter.



CHAPTER SIX

THE UNDERWORLD

Although the city government hates to admit it, Freedom City isn't perfect. The city does have its bad side, poor neighborhoods, gangs, organized crime, smuggling, and other troubles, just like any other major city in the world.

For the most part, Freedom is safer than most assume and crime rates are relatively low. There are still parts of the city in which it's dangerous to be out at night, and violent crime still happens. Many crimes in Freedom are also "white collar" crimes involving embezzling, fraud, and industrial espionage. Smuggling is a major part of crime in the city, with ships moving goods illicitly to the docks of Southside and Port Regal and beyond. That includes drugs, weapons, and other illegal goods.

CRIME STATISTICS

It's clear that crime of all kinds has dropped considerably since the heyday of Mayor Moore when crime ran rampant (mostly due to corruption at the upper echelons of power). Critics point out that the analysis supported by the mayor's office overlooks a number of factors, including increases in population. There's also the fact that a large number of crimes may go unreported, particularly since it appears that Freedom has also drawn the highest-grade criminals along with the highest-grade citizens.

THE DRUG SCENE

Freedom is far from a drug-free city. Despite the best efforts of the city police and government, illegal drugs remain a big business in the city, and they net millions of dollars for dealers and organized crime. Drug-use is most obvious in the Fens and Southside, where street dealers are also commonplace. "Recreational" drug use is the secret vice in the Financial District and Midtown, on the college campuses, and even in suburban communities like Ashton and Grenville.

Heroin is the most popular drug among the more depressed areas of Freedom City. It gets smuggled into the city and sold in areas like the Fens. The city government caused some controversy with its program of supplying clean needles to drug users to help stem the spread of infectious diseases like AIDS and hepatitis. Opponents claim the city is encouraging drug use by this program.

In more upscale parts of Freedom City, cocaine and methamphetamines are the drugs of choice, although both crack cocaine and crystal meth can be found in most areas of the city. Some wealthy people in the city indulge in drug parties or use drugs simply as a means of dealing with their high-pressure lifestyles.

Marijuana use is most common in parts of Riverside and around the college campuses. Some students also indulge in LSD, other hallucinogens, and designer drugs coming out of small, independent operations.

THE FREEDOM CITY MAFIA

They're *La Cosa Nostra*—the Mafia. They've been the most powerful and influential criminal syndicate in Freedom City since the 1920s, and they aim to stay that way.

The Mafia traces its roots back to Italy and Sicily, where hired soldiers of wars between Italy and France took advantage of their military experience to turn against their former employers, extorting money from them and taking control of the black market. Eventually, their power spread to other areas, and they came to America in a wave of European immigration in the early twentieth century. Although the Mafia was traditionally Sicilian, that is no longer the case, since the Mafia has absorbed other criminal organizations over the years. Still, *La Cosa Nostra*—"this thing of ours," as the Mafiosi call it—retains a strong core of traditions from its earlier days.

The Mafia has been in the Freedom City area since the early 1900s. They grew considerably in power during the Prohibition era, selling bootleg liquor and running speakeasies and secret gin parlors. Although the FBI and local police worked hard to bring down the powerful Mafia families, they were never able to do more than treat the symptoms, rather than curing the disease. For every Mafiosi taken down, another came along to fill his place. In the 1950s, the Mafia extended its influence over the docks in Southside and Downtown, places where contraband was smuggled into the city. They also exerted considerable influence with the local labor unions and the casinos and businesses along the Boardwalk.

A few years ago, the Oliverti Family, led by the aging Don Raphael Oliverti, ran the Mafia here. A traditionalist, Don Oliverti kept business in Freedom City on an even keel, and answered to the more influential Dons in cities like New York and Chicago. Rumor has it he and Mayor Moore had a close friendship for much of his time in office. Don Oliverti was assassinated by persons unknown seven years ago, along with a large number of his family. His family mantle passed on to his oldest son, "Johnny" (Giovanni) Oliverti, but other families insisted that leadership of the Mafia pass to Don Alberto "Big Al" Driogano. Don Driogano moved quickly to secure his power and surprised everyone by aggressively expanding Mob operations in the city.

Since that time, Driogano has made good on his promises. The Mafia's influence grows along with the new prosperity of the city. Tourism brings thousands of people to casinos along the boardwalk, and this fattens the wallets of the Mob. The Mafia's influence in the booming construction business has been a windfall. There is always income from the usual markets in drugs, vice, and prostitution. Contraband is smuggled in to the Southside docks in the dead of night, stored in Mob-controlled warehouses. Despite their best efforts, the DA's office cannot pin anything on the higher-ups in any of the three surviving Mob families of Freedom. The police bring in Mob soldiers and made-men, only to release them on bail soon after, thanks to their attorneys.

The biggest challenge the Mafia faces comes from the heroes operating in Southside like Foreshadow, who regularly busts up Mob operations with his uncanny insight and detection abilities.

FREEDOM CITY CRIME STATISTICS, 2001

Crime	Total	Per Day	Crime Every...
Superhuman Crime*	137	.37	64 hrs.
Murder	152	.41	57 hrs.
Rape	1,078	2.9	8 hrs.
Robbery	8,407	23	1 hr.
Assault	12,515	34	42 min.
Violent Crime	20,800	57	25 min.
Burglary	47,800	130	11 min.
Theft	104,220	285	5 min.
Vehicular Theft	32,600	89	16 min.
Property Crimes	179,985	493	3 min.

* Superhuman-related assault, violent crime, etc.

Source: FBI crime statistics

More recently, the Mob has had to deal with a problematic vigilante called the Silencer. Unlike Foreshadow, the Silencer has a personal grudge against the Mafia and he's doing whatever it takes to hurt Mob operations in the city. Rumors say that the Silencer killed Don Oliverti and it may be only a matter of time before he comes after the other Dons.

In truth, the Silencer is much closer to the Mafia than anyone suspects. See the **Heroes and Villains** chapter for more information.

"BIG AL" DRIOGANO

"Big Al" Driogano lives up to his name in height, girth, and a formidable presence. Alberto Driogano has run the Freedom City mob for only a few years, but already he has made great strides in expanding operations and seizing new opportunities.

At least part of Driogano's legendary foresight is attributable to the mysterious woman known only as "Lady Tarot," a fortuneteller the Don keeps in his employ. Although a number of people in the Families scoffed at the idea of Big Al consulting a fortune-teller, most have started to reconsider their opinion. Given that "Big Al" survived or avoided more than seven assassination attempts before he came into power, it's clear that Driogano knows things. It may be from well-placed informants or other sources, or it may be through Lady Tarot's predictions. Whatever the case, Driogano always seems to have information to stay ahead of his competition and enemies on both sides of the law.

The wild cards that Driogano (or Lady Tarot) can never seem to predict are the supers. The Freedom League, luckily for the Dons, are too involved in greater things to pose a serious threat to the Mafia. It is the street-level masks operating outside the law like Foreshadow and Silencer who cause the most problems for the Mob. Driogano has made it known that he'll handsomely reward anyone who brings him either man's head on a platter, mask and all.

Only 49 years old, "Big Al" Driogano is 6'4" and weighs in at nearly 300 lbs. He has short, black hair always slicked straight back from his forehead, wears a closely-trimmed moustache and goatee, and his bushy eyebrows draw attention to his intense blue-gray eyes. He has a deep and commanding voice and loves to sing opera (and is one of the fixtures at every opera at the

Beaudrie in his private box). He always wears dark suits and carries a pistol—which he has licensed to use “for self defense”—with him at all times.

Don Driogano: PL 6; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 13 (12 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +5 melee (+2S, punch) +4 ranged (+3L, pistol); SV Dmg +3, Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills: Bluff +5, Diplomacy +5, Drive +3, Gather Information +7, Innuendo +5, Intimidate +7, Listen +3, Profession (crime-lord) +8, Sense Motive +6, Spot +3.

Feats: Connected, Improved Grapple, Iron Will, Leadership.

Equipment: Pistol (+3L).

OTHER MAFIA DONS

There are now only three Families in Freedom City, and these two Dons answer to Don Driogano.

Don Frank “the Hitter” Tonifanni: Frank Tonifanni backs Don Driogano all the way. Of course, Tonifanni always backs the winner. He backed old Don Oliverti equally well, and will probably back Driogano’s successor, assuming Tonifanni doesn’t make a grab for power himself. Frank worked his way up through the ranks as a made-man, earning his nickname for knocking off “problem people” for the Mob. Tonifanni has been running his family for ten years now and he likes where things are going in Freedom City. Business has never been better, and he’s riding high on the success.

His only problem is that Don Driogano wants Tonifanni and his family to deal with the vigilantes like Silencer and Foreshadow, and the Hitter and his men haven’t been able to take the mysterious heroes out. The Silencer always seems prepared for anything, and every trap Tonifanni has set for him has failed. The Don is starting to believe Silencer and Foreshadow may have the same source of information—an informant inside the Families. He’s also considered the possibility that Don Driogano might actually be working *with* one or both men, using them to get at his rivals. Maybe he even used one of them to take down Don Oliverti. Tonifanni keeps his suspicions to himself but watches his own back, just in case.

Frank Tonifanni is in his late-40s with receding dark brown hair and a pencil-thin mustache. He has a penchant for pinstripe double-breasted suits and talks with a Brooklyn accent despite being away for decades.

Don “Johnny” Giovanni Oliverti: The eldest son of Don Raphael Oliverti, Johnny inherited his father’s place as head of the family after his death. He’d been groomed for the role all his life and readily stepped into his father’s shoes. He suspects that Al Driogano had his father killed in order to take over the Freedom City Mob, but he can’t prove it yet. Going to war with Driogano is pointless while Don Tonifanni still backs him. So Johnny bides his time and waits, watching his fellow Dons for any weaknesses he can exploit. Don Oliverti is a clever man—a graduate of NYU with an MBA—and he runs his Family like a profitable modern business venture. He respects the old traditions, but he definitely looks toward the future. The 34-year-old man planned

to be ruler of the Freedom underworld by the time he was 40, and he still will be, if he has his way.

One of the best resources Johnny draws on is his brother Thomas. An “egghead” by his brother’s estimation, Thomas has a keen analytical mind, and he’s good at seeing opportunities for the Family. His scientific knowledge could serve him well at ASTRO or any high-tech firm, but Thomas remains close to “the family business.” John relies on his advice, since he is utterly unaware that his little brother is secretly the vigilante Silencer (p. 174). If he were to find out, Johnny would want his brother dead at any cost, more for lying to him and betraying the family than any damage he might have done to the business.

THE TOON GANG

Freedom’s most unique and odd criminal element, the Toon Gang was literally brought to life by Raven’s foe Toy Boy, who used a “realizer” he acquired from an unknown source to “animate” the dangerous cartoon characters. This group of gangsters originally starred in the popular 1920s black-and-white *Keystone Cops* cartoon series, though the realizer gave their clothes incredibly bright colors as they came to life. While other cartoon characters faded away after Toy Boy’s weapon was destroyed, the members of the Toon Gang are still around. It could be the strange forces lingering in Freedom or simply Boss Moxie’s...well, moxie...that keeps them around. In either case, the Toon Gang remains in Freedom City and its heroes (and the other mobs) have something to worry about.

The problem for any of their foes is this: The Toon Gang are all still three- to four-foot-tall cartoon characters, which are virtually impossible to kill or even hurt for very long. Their idea of a “hit” involves dropping a safe or a grand piano on somebody’s head, and the Toon Gang’s idea of “organized crime” is merely running protection rackets and knocking over jewelry stores and banks. The subtler concepts like money laundering and numbers schemes—much less drug running, smuggling, and vice—are completely over their heads. The Toons aren’t overly bright, either, although their logic is so simplified and direct that it sometimes seems clever. The only good point about them is that there are only five members of the gang: Boss Moxie, his moll Roxie, and his henchmen Knuckles, Lucky, and Joey Scars.

Within a year of their arrival in Freedom City, Joey’s attempts to drive anything larger than a bumper car at Ocean Heights ended with them plowing into walls and getting captured quite often (though few jails can hold Toons that want out). “Boss” Moxie approached the Foundry with his usual bluster and threats to build the Toons a get-away car scaled to their size. Talos accepted the commission after being allowed to submit Joey, Lucky, and Knuckles to a battery of tests (the study of which may result in additional villainy later for the heroes). Now, the tinny sound of a miniature Model T announces the arrival of the Toon Gang, but those who laugh at the little car soon realize it can outrun most police cars and has better armor than a tank.

Boss Moxie considers himself and his gang at war with the other gangs in Freedom, since “dey don’t show me no respect!” The truth is the Toon Gang is more of a nuisance to the Mafia than anything else, although the Toons have managed to kill off

DESIGNER DRUGS

Freedom City, being at the forefront of so many other technologies, is not surprisingly at the cutting-edge of designer drug culture. It being the city of superhumans, most of the new illicit drugs seem tied to superhumans in one way or another. The DEA does what it can to keep these drugs off the streets, while heroes like the Raven, Evening and Eye of Justice, and Foreshadow bust new shipments and illegal labs producing them. Most drugs detailed below grant a bonus or ability similar to a power. In no case can a drug increase a bonus to an attribute or power rank that exceeds the max ranks as dictated by Power Level (see *Mutants & Masterminds*, p. 20).

Max: The drug known as "max" is actually an inferior derivative of the formula that gave Jack Simmons, the 1940s Patriot, his powers. A research scientist who helped develop the formula sold the research to the Mob in the early 1950s to cover gambling debts. Mafia-sponsored and independent experiments came up with a less powerful version of the drug that was more addictive. The black market and organized crime were far less concerned about the drug's extreme side effects and focused on its ability to generate short-term super-powered thugs. The government and law enforcement are aware of the original source of max, although the general public doesn't know that government research helped create one of the worst drug problems of the past few decades.

Max has become popular with "extreme sports" types as well as criminals looking to give themselves (or their henchmen) an edge against supers. Despite the dangers of using max, addicts only remember the enhancement rush, and most do anything to get another dose.

Max is administered by injection. Subjects gain 6 ranks in Super-Strength, Super-Constitution, and Super-Dexterity. They also become reckless and uninhibited, suffering a -2 penalty to Int and Wis modifiers. Bonus ranks do not stack with existing Super-Attribute ranks. The effects of the drug wear off at a rate of one rank (in each Super-Attribute) per minute, starting the round after the initial boost

(the penalties to Int and Wis modifiers last until the effects of the drug completely wear off). After the max effects wear off, users become exhausted (see *Mutants & Masterminds*, p. 139) and must make a DC 16 Fortitude save. Those who fail this save suffer a total collapse of the muscular system, rendering them dying (see *Mutants & Masterminds*, p. 139).

Zombie Powder: A grayish powder that is snorted or smoked, zombie powder is a depressant that produces a preternatural calm and confidence. The user gains a +5 bonus to Will saves and to Damage saves for a number of minutes equal to his Constitution score. During that time, he becomes highly vulnerable to Mind Control (suffering a -5 penalty to Will saves made to resist such attacks).

While less addictive than Max, zombie powder gets easily abused by people who use it for stress-relief or as a painkiller, and using it frequently can cause brain hemorrhages, coma, or death. Upon ingesting the drug, a user must make an immediate DC 15 Fortitude save. Failure indicates the character falls into a coma, essentially becoming a plot device, and can be revived at the whim of the GM, if ever. Those who fail the save by 5 or more die instantly. Successive doses within the same 24-hour period cumulatively increase the DC of this save by +4. Anyone who dies from overdosing on zombie powder rises that night as a zombie under Baron Samedi's control. Siren works hard to shut down any known sources of zombie powder, but her old foe keeps finding new ways of getting it into the city.

Zoom: "Zoom" is the street name for an intravenous drug that induces a highly accelerated metabolic state, effectively giving its user temporary superhuman speed at the cost of burning him out. The user gains 5 ranks of Super-Speed. The effects last for an hour, after which the user becomes fatigued. If a user falls unconscious while on white lighting, he must make a Fortitude save (DC 15). If he fails, he is rendered dying as a result of total metabolic collapse. Zoom is popular with the young, "fast" crowd, particularly in the rave scene.

some of Driogano's and Tonifanni's people. Big Al would love to find a way to get rid of the annoying cartoon gangsters, but for the moment they're serving a purpose by proving as much a distraction for the police and heroes like Foreshadow as they are for him. The Toons' efforts to be taken seriously have resulted in more than 15 mobster deaths in the past year, the most recent being five enforcers crushed to death beneath a truckload of marbles. No one is laughing at the Toon Gang now.

"Boss" Moxie: "Boss" Moxie is a 3'6" stocky cartoon gangster with a big orange fedora hat, a bright red zoot suit, and a literally square jaw. Men have died for accidentally knocking off his hat, as "Boss" is ashamed that he's only got a few strands of hair on his head. He's always smoking a cigar and carrying a violin case, inside of which is a cartoon Tommy gun that never runs out of bullets. He sounds like a Hollywood movie gangster and he punctuates most of his sentences with the word "see." ("I'm takin' over dis town, see? And there's nuttin' youse can do to stop me, see?") He still thinks and acts like a cartoon and he's incapable of understanding that

the rest of the world doesn't follow the same rules that he does, which is sometimes funny and sometimes frightening.

Boss Moxie: PL 10; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 16 (14 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 melee (+2S, punch), +6 ranged (+4L, Tommy gun); SV Dmg +12, Fort +12, Ref +2, Will +11; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 13;

Skills: Bluff +5, Drive +5, Intimidate +6, Listen +4, Profession (crime boss) +6, Spot +4.

Feats: Durability, Leadership, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot.

Powers: Amazing Save (Damage, Fortitude, Will) +10 [Source: Alien; Cost: 3 pp], Regeneration +10 [Extras: Back from the Brink, Regrowth; Source: Alien; Cost: 4 pp].

Equipment: Tommy gun (+4L, Autofire).

Joey Scars: The smallest (and therefore meanest) of the Toons, Joey Scars is a 3'1" brute with a foul temper, pit-bull stubbornness, and a livid scar running diagonally across his face. He wears orange pants pinstriped with yellow, a bright yellow shirt always



rolled up at the sleeves, and bright red suspenders. Joey is second to Knuckles as a leg-breaker, but he's primarily the gang's driver.

Joey Scars: PL 9; Init +0 (Dex); Defense 14 (14 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 melee (+2S, punch), +4 ranged (+4L, Tommy gun); SV Dmg +11, Fort +11, Ref +2, Will +10; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Bluff +4, Drive +4, Intimidate +5, Listen +5, Spot +5.

Feats: Durability, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot.

Powers: Amazing Save (Damage, Fortitude, Will) +9 [Source: Alien; Cost: 3 pp], Regeneration +9 [Extras: Back from the Brink, Regrowth; Source: Alien; Cost: 4 pp].

Equipment: Tommy gun (+4L, Autofire).

Knuckles: Knuckles appears as a no-necked thug in a purple sweater and black pants, the bulk of his body being huge arms and torso balanced on legs almost too small to support him. The largest of the Toons at 4'2" tall, Knuckles is a big, dumb bruiser who loves nothing more than hitting people and things. Since their arrival in this world, he's picked up a few new moves from watching wrestling on TV.

Knuckles: PL 9; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 16 (14 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +9 melee (+7S, brass knuckles), +5 ranged (+4L, Tommy gun); SV Dmg +13, Fort +11, Ref +1, Will +10; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills: Bluff +5, Drive +5, Innuendo +6, Intimidate +6, Listen +5, Spot +5.

Feats: Durability, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Toughness.

Powers: Amazing Save (Damage, Fortitude, Will) +9 [Source: Alien; Cost: 3 pp], Regeneration +9 [Extras: Back from the Brink, Regrowth; Source: Alien; Cost: 4 pp].

Equipment: Brass knuckles (+2S), Tommy gun (+4L, Autofire).

Lucky: Lucky is slick and suave for a cartoon, always flipping a coin nonchalantly. He wears a bottle-green double-breasted suit, and his pencil-thin moustache makes his very angular face seem even more severe. He can't resist a bet or a pretty face. He's the planner of the Toon Gang and a sharpshooter with his cartoon handgun.

Lucky: PL 9; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 16 (14 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +4 melee (+0S, punch), +8 ranged (+4S, handgun); SV Dmg +11, Fort +11, Ref +2, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Bluff +4, Drive +12, Intimidate +5, Listen +5, Spot +5, Taunt +4.

Feats: Durability, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot.

Powers: Amazing Save (Damage, Fortitude, Will) +9 [Source: Alien; Cost: 3 pp], Regeneration +9 [Extras: Back from the Brink, Regrowth; Source: Alien; Cost: 4 pp].

Equipment: Handgun (+4L).

Roxie: Every gangster's only as good as his moll, and Roxie believes herself one of the best. The 3'9" blond-bombshell with an extreme hourglass figure wears an impossibly tight turquoise blue dress, white heels, and a white fur stole. She smokes her cigarettes in a long ivory holder, languidly wreathing her face and ice-blue eyes with smoke at all times. She can shoot her cartoon

Derringer—always tucked in her right stocking despite the look of her dress—as well as “Boss” but not as accurately as Lucky. Roxie is smarter than most people—especially the other Toons—assume. She can wrap anyone in the gang around her little finger with a smile and a flutter of her big eyes, though she’s learned that her allure rarely spreads to humans.

Roxie: PL 9; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 16 (14 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +4 melee (+OS, punch), +6 ranged (+4L, derringer); SV Dmg +11, Fort +11, Ref +2, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills: Bluff +5, Drive +5, Innuendo +6, Intimidate +6, Listen +5, Spot +5.

Feats: Attractive, Durability, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot.

Powers: Amazing Save (Damage, Fortitude, Will) +9 [Source: Alien; Cost: 3 pp], Regeneration +9 [Extras: Back from the Brink, Regrowth; Source: Alien; Cost: 4 pp].

Equipment: Derringer (+4L).

OTHER SYNDICATES IN FREEDOM

Other major criminal syndicates have operations in Freedom City, although the Mafia remains the most powerful force in the local underworld.

The Russian Mafiya: Ties between the Freedom Mafia and the Russian Mafiya have grown over the years. The Russians smuggle a wide variety of goods out of their country for sale on the international black market, and the Freedom Mob and its customers are eager buyers. Some contraband includes former USSR weapons from guns to nuclear and biological materials, all of which come into the docks of the Freedom waterfront to supply the Mob and various criminals and gangs. The police come down hard on any shipments of illegal weapons they find.

The Triads: The Chinese Triads have little to do with Freedom City, although some Triads loyal to Raven’s grandfather, Dr. Sin, have undertaken operations in the city on his behalf. Most of these have involved smuggling or stealing high-tech equipment, acquiring archeological artifacts from museums, or simply providing a distraction to draw superheroes away from one of the doctor’s other nefarious schemes.

The Yakuza: The Japanese Yakuza is not overly influential in Freedom City. Most of their smuggling operations concern corporations and various money-laundering schemes. The Mafia comes down hard on any signs of Yakuza activity in “their” city, so the Yakuza tend to leave Freedom alone for the most part.

FREEDOM STREET GANGS

Freedom City has its share of criminal gangs, particularly youth gangs, as the older thugs tend to get rubbed out or absorbed into the Mob. Gangs are most common in Southside, Lincoln, and the West End. Many gang members are runaways who find their way into gangs for protection from the authorities and the more dangerous criminal predators in the city.

The Brotherhood: The Brotherhood is a white-supremacist skinhead gang in Southside. Made up of the disaffected and angry white minority here, the group places blame for the world’s

ills at the feet of “mongrel races,” i.e. any non-whites. They affect Nazi-style emblems and commit acts of violence and vandalism against those they perceive as their enemies. They survive on food or money gained by petty crime and drug dealing. The Brotherhood has some ties with other Aryan or skinhead gangs elsewhere in the country and world. The Freedom gang is particularly dangerous because of their association with the super-criminal White Knight (p. 183).

Malanti: The Malanti are a West End youth gang that commits acts of vandalism and petty crime. They are always getting involved in fights with other local gangs like the Cutters, led by Nathan “the Knife” Korthu (p. 81). Several other youth gangs operate in the West End and parents and authorities in the suburbs are equally concerned about the spread of the gangs to those areas. West End folks, meanwhile, complain that the city seems more interested in protecting the kids of newcomers than doing something about the gangs themselves.

Southside C’s: This criminal gang actually controls territory in Lincoln west of Route 6 between the South River Penitentiary and the city landfill, “putting them between two kinds of garbage,” as one city cop put it. The gang violently defends its turf against all intruders and makes most of its money dealing drugs among the housing projects in Lincoln. The C’s have been pushing to expand their business into the Fens across the river, bringing them into conflict with other gangs in that area and the FCPD has handled several gang-related incidents of violence in both the Fens and Southside because of it.

Typical Gang Member: PL 1; Init +0; Defense 12; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +1 melee (+2L, knife); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Intimidate +3, Knowledge (neighborhood) +3.

Equipment: Knife (+2L).



CHAPTER SEVEN

BEYOND FREEDOM CITY

The world beyond the outskirts of Freedom City is vast, of course, but there are a number of places in the world (and in the wider universe that lies beyond) closely related in some way to Freedom City and its inhabitants.

ON EARTH

Despite common assumptions that there are no secrets left for mankind to uncover, superhumans have found a number of places rife with adventures and possibilities right here on Earth.

ATLANTIS

Many thousands of years ago in the midst of the Atlantic Ocean, the island continent of Atlantis was the home of a tribe of humans who were genetically enhanced by the extraterrestrial Preservers. Using examples of technology left behind by the Preservers and their own genius, the Atlanteans created an advanced civilization far beyond anything else on Earth. They remained somewhat isolated from the rest of the world, but legends of their existence spread far and wide.

In time, the Atlanteans came into conflict with Lemuria and its ancient race of Serpent People, the descendants of a previous saurian empire that ruled the Earth thousands (perhaps millions) of years previously. Although the Serpent People had become largely degenerate by then, they were led by cunning and power-

ful sorcerers and worshiped nameless cosmic entities. The Atlanteans long held out against the Serpent People, but human curiosity and arrogance became their undoing, as they sought to understand more about their foes' alien sorcery. In doing so, they triggered a disaster that destroyed Atlantis, sinking the entire continent below the waves.

More than 80% of the Atlantean populace died in the Cataclysm, but a few saved themselves, whether by not being present on Atlantis during the destruction or by adapting to the new environment. Some Atlanteans became amphibious water breathers, whether they did so by magic, genetic engineering, or a combination of the two. Most of the water breathing Atlanteans gathered in nomadic tribes in the Atlantic Ocean; their civilization swiftly regressed to a primitive level. A few of these tribes became corrupted and interbred with Serpent People, whether before or after the Cataclysm, and these took on reptilian characteristics and worshiped evil, forbidden gods.

Over time, some Atlanteans resettled in the ruins of their ancestors' great cities, and these became the most sophisticated Atlanteans in the recent centuries, their culture similar in many ways to that of the Roman Empire at its height. They also have always had access to ancient Atlantean technological and magical artifacts, although their understanding of them has been

somewhat limited until recently, and their ability to manufacture new ones was virtually nonexistent.

Atlantis' existence became known to some surface-dwellers in the 1940s when the superheroine Siren operated with the Liberty League. She was a surface dweller who gained her powers from a combination of Atlantean science and sorcery. Following the war, she married Atlantis' crown prince and became its queen. Her son is now King of Atlantis, and her granddaughter Nereid is a student at the Claremont Academy and a member of the Next-Gen. The current Siren (p. 116), although not directly connected with Atlantis, has visited it on occasion and met her Golden Age predecessor.

Atlantis' relations with the surface world have not always been peaceful. Atlantean barbarians have been known to attack ships and coastal areas from time to time. There have even been coups that have led to Atlantean invasions of the surface world. Even the most peaceful Atlanteans are somewhat disdainful of surface-dwellers and their constant pollution of Earth's oceans. Atlantis currently has a delegation to the United Nations and while recognized as a sovereign nation by most of the surface world, contact is understandably at a minimum.

Atlantean: PL 2; Init +1; Defense 13 (12 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (swim 30 ft.); Atk +3 melee (+5L, trident), +2 ranged (+3L, spear-gun); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Listen +3, Spot +3, Survival +3.

Feats: Amphibious, Darkvision, Underwater Combat.

Equipment: Trident or speargun (+3L).

Deep One: PL 2; Init +1; Defense 13 (12 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (swim 30 ft.); Atk +4 melee (+5L, trident or +4L, claws), +3 ranged (+3L, speargun); SV Dmg +1, Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Listen +4, Spot +4, Survival +4.

Feats: Amphibious, Darkvision, Toughness, Underwater Combat.

Powers: Natural Weapon (claws) +2 [Source: Alien; Cost: 2 pp].

Equipment: Trident or speargun (+3L).

Weakness: Disturbing.

Porpoise: PL 1; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 15 (12 flat-footed); Spd swim 80 ft.; Atk +4 melee (+2S, head butt); SV Dmg +3, Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 11, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +10, Spot +10.

Feats: Aquatic, Blindsight.

Whale: Gargantuan; PL 5; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 8 (-4 size, +1 Dex); Spd swim 40 ft.; Atk +10 melee (+12S, tail-slap); SV Dmg +10, Fort +14, Ref +9, Will +5; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +10, Spot +11. **Feats:** Aquatic, Blindsight.

Powers: Super-Strength +7 [Extra: Super-Constitution +1; Source: Alien; Cost: 5 pp].

Kraken: Gargantuan; PL 11; Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Defense 8 (-4 size); Spd swim 20 ft.; Atk +16 melee (+12S, tentacles); SV Dmg +12, Fort +15, Ref +12, Will +13; Str 20, Dex 10, Con 20, Int 4, Wis 20, Cha 10.

Skills: Listen +15, Search +15, Spot +15.

Feats: Aquatic, Extra Limbs (tentacles), Underwater Combat.

Powers: Super-Senses +10 [Source: Alien; Cost: 2 pp], Super-Strength +7 [Extra: Super-Constitution +5; Source: Alien; Cost: 5 pp], Swimming +4 [Power Stunt: Super-Swimming; Source: Alien; Cost: 2 pp].

Note: Some Krakens may have Int 20 and the Sorcery power. The Deep Ones often worship them.

KAIJU ISLAND

Located in the Kuril Islands chain that stretches between Japan and Russia, Kaiju Island is a rocky, volcanic prominence jutting from the ocean. Ancient lava tunnels beneath the island lead into underground regions controlled by the various factions of Sub-Terra (see below). Parts of the tunnels and the surface of the island are home to various monstrous creatures. The monsters' origins are unknown. They might be remnants of Preserve experiments, or they could be creatures summoned by the Serpent People. Another as-yet unknown race could have created them or brought them to Earth, or they may have been spawned by radiation, mutagenic chemicals, or even ancient corrupted magics. Perhaps a combination of all these factors make Kaiju Island what it is? Regardless, the rocky islet is home to giant mutated monsters, which fortunately tend to stay on or near the island most of the time.

The world community keeps careful watch on Kaiju Island for any signs of trouble from its inhabitants. It was long ago decided that no one nation would have control over the island, and that it was best to leave it and its inhabitants alone. Conventional military forces are of only limited use against the monsters. The international community will not sanction stronger measures to try to remove or destroy the monsters for fear of shaking up a hornet's nest of unbelievable proportions. Previous such efforts have always ended in near-disaster, save for the intervention of heroes like the Freedom League and the Atom Family and their Japanese and Russian counterparts.

KAIJU ISLAND MONSTERS

Atomic Dinosaur: Gargantuan; PL 12; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 15 (14 flat-footed, -4 size); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +11 melee (+16L, bite or tail smash), +8 ranged (+12L, radiation); SV Dmg +5, Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 3, Wis 11, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +5, Spot +5.

Feats: Amphibious, Durability, Immunity (exhaustion, radiation), Scent.

Powers: Energy Blast +12 ["atomic breath"; Source: Mutation; Cost: 2 pp], Growth +12 [Extra: Continuous; Flaw: Permanent; Source: Mutation; Cost: 5 pp], Mental Protection +12 [Source: Mutation; Cost: 2 pp].

Giant Ape: Huge; PL 8; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 15 (13 flat-footed, -2 size); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +10 melee (+12S, strike); SV Dmg +5, Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +18, Jump +15, Listen +5, Spot +5.

Feats: Scent.

Powers: Growth +8 [Extra: Continuous; Flaw: Permanent; Source: Mutation; Cost: 5 pp], Mental Protection +6 [Source: Mutation; Cost: 2 pp].

Giant Moth: Huge; PL 8; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 16 (13 flat-footed, -2 size); Spd 30 ft. (fly 40 ft.); Atk +8 melee (+11S, strike); SV Dmg +4, Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 18, Int -, Wis 11, Cha 4.

Skills: Listen +5, Spot +5.

Feats: Aerial Combat, Extra Limbs.

Powers: Clinging +6 [Source: Mutation; Cost: 1 pp], Growth +8 [Extra: Continuous; Flaw: Permanent; Source: Mutation; Cost: 5 pp], Flight +8 [Flaw: Restricted—Wings; Source: Mutation; Cost: 1 pp].

Giant Spider: Huge; PL 8; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 16 (13 flat-footed, -2 size); Spd 30 ft. (climb 30 ft.); Atk +9 melee (+10L, bite); SV Dmg +4, Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 17, Con 18, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 2.

Skills: Climb +14, Hide +6, Jump +12, Spot +7.

Feats: Attack Finesse, Extra Limbs, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes.

Powers: Clinging +6 [Source: Mutation; Cost: 1 pp], Growth +8 [Extra: Continuous; Flaw: Permanent; Source: Mutation; Cost: 5 pp], Snare +8 (web) [Source: Mutation; Cost: 2 pp].

THE LOST WORLD

The so-called "Lost World" was discovered more than a century ago by an explorer and adventuring paleontologist from England. Originally believed to occupy a hidden plateau in South America, it was later discovered that the plateau is a dimensional gateway between Earth and a parallel world—a world in which dinosaurs never died out and continue to exist alongside other prehistoric beasts, primitive humans, and refugees from other places, times, and other parallel worlds. Scientists speculate that the dimensional interfaces between the Lost World and other parallel Earths were once more permeable, but something (perhaps the fallout from the last Terminus Invasion) has strengthened dimensional barriers and these have since become rarer. It is possible that there was once a gateway between the Lost World and Kaiju Island, which might explain some of its inhabitants.

In addition to the diverse range of dinosaur species, the Lost World is home to mastodons, sabre-toothed tigers, and a wild variety of prehistoric beasts that (like humans) should not share the same time period or climate as dinosaurs. Various tribes of primitive humans live in the jungles, surviving as best they can in the savage environment. The champion of the tribes is Zandar the Jungle Lord, a descendent of a hero from Earth. The human tribes have made one major step forward by domesticating some of the beasts for food and as mounts, and this step helps keep them from being driven out of existence by dinosaurs and other threats. This place also hosts scattered tribes of Serpent People, although

whether they are originally from Earth or indigenous to the Lost World remains a mystery; they are not organized, which may be the only reason they have never overrun everything here.

Lastly, the greater civilizations here are remnants of the once-great Incan and Roman civilizations of Earth. Viracochasuyu, the Incan empire, rules a small mountain range within the Lost World in the name of their creator god Viracocha; the Incans successfully defended this territory against all threats for centuries, created incredible terraced farms to feed thousands, and they even domesticated some pterodactyls for flying mounts. The walled city of Nova Roma grew from the efforts of General Viridius Sophus and his Roman legion, which found its way into the Lost World and remained to claim it in the name of Emperor Marcus Aurelius; their efforts on this latter goal were abandoned a century after they entered, but Nova Roma resembles the Empire at its height, including its Praetor-Governor. Various ruins indicate Atlantean refugees once settled there, although little evidence of them remains today.

Zandar, the Jungle Lord: PL 11; Init +10 (Dex, Super-Dexterity); Defense 28 (17 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +10 melee (+6L, knife, +4S, punch), +11 ranged (+6L, knife); SV Dmg +4, Fort +6, Ref +12, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 20, Con 18, Int 9, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills: Acrobatics +13, Balance +13, Climb +10, Handle Animal +10, Hide +12, Jump +10, Knowledge (Lost World) +5, Language (English), Move Silently +12, Search +5, Survival +10, Swim +9.

Feats: Dodge, Endurance, Dodge, Evasion, Great Fortitude, Improved Grapple, Lightning Reflexes, Move-By Attack, Power Attack, Takedown Attack, Track.

Powers: Super-Dexterity +5 [Source: Training; Cost: 4 pp].

Equipment: Knife (+2L).

Human Primitive: PL 1; Init +0; Defense 12; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +3 melee (+4L, spear), +2 ranged (+2S, thrown rocks); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Listen +3, Spot +3, Survival +3.

Equipment: Stone spear (+3L).

Velociraptor: Large; PL 3; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 13 (-1 size, +2 Dex); Spd 60 ft.; Atk +6 melee (+6L, rake or bite); SV Dmg +5, Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 19, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +7, Jump +13, Listen +11, Spot +11, Wilderness Lore +9.

Feats: Scent.

Powers: Natural Weapon (claws) +1 [Source: Alien; Cost: 2 pp].

Elasmosaurus: Huge; PL 2; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 10 (-2 size, +2 Dex); Spd 20 ft. (swim 50 ft.); Atk +6 melee (+9L, bite); SV Dmg +9, Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 9.

Skills: Listen +2, Spot +5.

Feats: Aquatic.

Powers: Super-Strength +3 [Source: Alien; Cost: 4 pp], Natural Weapon (Teeth) +1 [Source: Alien; Cost: 2 pp].

Megaraptor: Huge; PL 4; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 12 (-2 size, +2 Dex); Spd 60 ft.; Atk +7 melee (+7L, rake or bite); SV Dmg +10, Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +4; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +5, Jump +14, Listen +12, Spot +12, Wilderness Lore +10.

Feats: Scent.

Powers: Natural Weapon (claws) +1 [Source: Alien; Cost: 2 pp], Super-Strength +1 [Source: Alien; Cost: 4 pp].

Triceratops: Huge; PL 3; Init -1 (Dex); Defense 8 (-2 size, -1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +12 melee (+7L, gore); SV Dmg +13, Fort +17, Ref +9, Will +6; Str 20, Dex 9, Con 20, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 7.

Skills: Listen +8, Spot +8.

Feats: Scent.

Powers: Natural Weapon (horns) +2 [Source: Alien; Cost: 2 pp], Super-Constitution +2 [Source: Alien; Cost: 4 pp].

Tyrannosaurus Rex: Huge; PL 7; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 9 (-2 size, +1 Dex); Spd 40 ft.; Atk +13 melee (+11L, bite); SV Dmg +11, Fort +15, Ref +12, Will +8; Str 20, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 10.

Skills: Listen +11, Spot +11.

Feats: Scent.

Powers: Natural Weapon (claws) +1 [Source: Alien; Cost: 2 pp], Super-Strength +4 [Source: Alien; Cost: 4 pp].

SUB-TERRA

The island continent of Lemuria existed in the Pacific Ocean thousands of years ago. It was the center of an empire ruled by the Serpent People, reptilian humanoids descended from the dinosaurs. The Empire of Lemuria was old even before modern humans first evolved, and humanity was little more than a curiosity to the saturnine Serpent People. They kept humans as pets and slaves, occasionally using them in their arcane experiments. Serpent scientists genetically engineered new strains of humanity to serve various needs.

In time, the decadent Lemurian Serpent People came into conflict with the advanced human empire of Atlantis. A long series of wars and skirmishes were fought between the two, which culminated in their mutual annihilation. Lemuria sank beneath the ocean in a terrible Cataclysm that claimed the last great Serpent Empire.

Most of the Serpent People perished in the sinking of Lemuria. Some escaped into subterranean tunnels and deep caves. There they set about creating a new slave race to serve their needs. They engineered a breed of human with great physical strength and the ability to operate in near-total darkness. Unfortunately, these new slaves revolted against their Serpent masters within mere centuries of their creation. They seized several underground cities for themselves, expelling the Serpent People from them. The Serpent People were forced to sue for peace and their former slaves became known as the Morlocks. Legends about the Morlocks may have inspired various human myths, as well as the work of H.G. Wells in his novel *The Time Machine*.

The Serpent People engineered a new servitor race without any individual initiative or the ability to rebel against their masters. These new slaves, while controllable, proved no match against the savagery of the Morlocks, whose continued attacks against the Serpent People drove them to abandon most of their subterranean cities and their new slaves. Without any real initiative of their own, these Sub-Terrans continued maintaining the ancient cities and machines, going about their duties without really knowing why they did so.

The conflict between the Morlocks and the Serpent People exhausted both societies and drove them all into barbarism. The Serpent People continued to degenerate, until they lost nearly all vestiges of their previous civilization. Cults worshipping terrible, alien gods sprang up in both cultures, contributing to their degeneration. Today both the Morlocks and the Serpent People are savages who rarely visit the surface world. There remain some civilized Serpent People, mainly priests and sorcerers, and there are rumors of some Serpent People from ancient Lemuria preserved in a kind of stasis. Some Morlocks occasionally sport mutations with greater intelligence and even psionic abilities. These mutants typically become leaders of small tribes.

The Sub-Terrans were discovered some years ago by Jerris Trent, now known as the Terra-King (p. 179). The servile Sub-Terrans quickly fixated on Trent as their new master and he established his own underground empire known as Sub-Terra. Using the ancient abandoned science of the Serpent People and his legions of Sub-Terran slaves, the Terra-King has made several attempts to conquer parts of the surface world. Fairly few surface people have visited Sub-Terra, but the Atom Family spent some time there. Dr. Atom reports that there are hundreds of miles of caverns and tunnels running beneath the North American continent alone. The caverns and tunnels are inhabited by Sub-Terrans, Morlocks, Serpent People, and various creatures descended from Serpent People experiments. The Terra-King controls some of these monsters and uses them as living weapons.

Morlock: PL 1; Init +0; Defense 12; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +3 melee (+4S, club), +2 ranged (+2S, thrown rocks); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Listen +3, Spot +3, Survival +3.

Feats: Darkvision.

Equipment: Stone club (+3S).

Serpent Person, Civilized: PL 4; Init +4 (Imp. Init.); Defense 10; Spd 30 ft. (swim 15 ft.); Atk +1 melee (+1L, bite, or by weapon); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 8, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Skills: Escape Artist +2, Hide +2, Knowledge (magic) +5.

Feats: Darkvision, Improved Initiative.

Powers: Drain (Wisdom) +5 [Extra: Secondary Effect; Flaw: Bite must hit and do damage; Source: Alien; Cost: 2 pp], Shapeshift +10 [Flaw: Only humanoid shapes; Source: Alien; Cost: 1 pp]. Civilized serpent people often have 4 or more ranks of Sorcery (+1 power level per 2 ranks in Sorcery).

Serpent Person, Savage: PL 2; Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Defense 10; Spd 30 ft. (swim 15 ft.); Atk +2 melee (+1L, bite, or by weapon); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 6, Wis 7, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +5, Escape Artist +4, Hide +4.

Feats: Darkvision, Improved Initiative.

Powers: Drain Wisdom +5 [Extra: Secondary Effect; Flaw: Bite must hit and do damage; Source: Alien; Cost: 2 pp].

Sub-Terran: PL 1; Init +0; Defense 11; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (+1S, punch), +1 ranged (+2S, thrown rocks); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Listen +3, Spot +3, Survival +3.

Feats: Darkvision.

UTOPIA

When Atlantis sank, a small number of Atlanteans survived the disaster on the surface. Some survivors scattered to different parts of the world, becoming known as heroes, wizards, and legendary figures in more primitive human mythologies. Many of the refugees made their way to a remote Atlantean outpost in what is now the Caribbean. They settled on an island situated in the midst of a dimensional "fold," shielded from the outside world. It became known as Utopia—literally "a place which is nowhere"—and the Atlantean survivors created a small, self-contained civilization focused on peace, equality, and personal achievement. They abandoned any interest in the mystic arts, believing they led to the downfall of Atlantis, and focused on the sciences instead. They achieved tremendous advances and enjoyed millennia of peace and prosperity, shunning contact with the outside world.

Some outsiders like the Atom Family now know of Utopia's existence, although its location remains a secret. Although some Utopians favor making contact with the outside world, the majority still fears the contamination of their peaceful culture and the threat of what humanity might do if they discovered Utopia's existence. For now, the Utopians wait and watch for signs that humanity is developing toward the kind of peace that they have achieved.

Utopian: PL 3; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 14 (12 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +4 melee (+3S, punch); SV Dmg +3, Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Craft or Profession (choose one) +4, Listen +4, Sense Motive +4, Spot +4.

Feats: Immunity (disease).

Powers: Super-Strength +1 [Source: Alien; Cost: 4 pp].

BEYOND EARTH

Many of the superhumans and some of the everyday folk in Freedom City know that there's life beyond Earth. Heroes from Earth have visited other worlds and, occasionally, strange visitors from other worlds arrive here. While there are thousands upon thousands of worlds in space, these places or groups are those with the most contact with or impact upon Freedom City.

FARSIDE CITY

Farside City, or Saruen as it is known by its inhabitants, is located on the dark side of Earth's moon, where it has been for tens of thousands of years. Its inhabitants, the Farsiders, are the descendants of humans taken from Earth by an unknown alien race, most likely the same race that seeded humanity across the galaxy (see **The Lor Republic**).

The "Preservers," as the Farsiders call them, initially built Farside City in a 3,000-foot-deep crater, along with atmospheric generators, and settled a number of humans there. Apparently, they used the city as some sort of outpost or perhaps a "living laboratory" in which to study humanity. They also may have intended the city to ensure the survival of various species (including humans) if something happened to wipe out life on Earth. Certainly, some of the Farsiders' myths suggest that their home was intended to be "the last refuge." Whatever the case, the Preservers disappeared long ago, leaving the Farsiders to develop on their own.

The inhabitants of the lunar city advanced far more quickly than their Earth-bound cousins, achieving a high level of scientific and technological sophistication. They also developed psionic abilities among a segment of their population, which soon became the ruling class of Saruen. Generally, the Farsiders lead an idyllic existence with little reason to change their way of life. A strong xenophobic streak, either encouraged or engineered by the Preservers, kept them from returning to Earth, even when they had the technology to do so. This limitation even kept them from exploring their lunar home much beyond the bounds of their city. Their society peaked millennia ago, and has remained largely the same ever since.

Things changed when humans from Earth began to leave their planet and explore space. The Farsiders learned much about their mother-world from intercepted radio and TV transmissions. They knew that Earthlings were primitive and warlike, and they feared the possibility of a conflict. When Earthlings began landing on the Moon itself and exploring the lunar surface, fear drove Selene, a member of the royal family of Farside City, to lead a coup against her relations. She seized control of Saruen and used its technology to hide all evidence of the city from technological or biological sensors. The only member of the Saruen royal house to escape was a boy named Mentac, who ventured to Earth and was adopted by humans. Selene took on the title of Lady Lunar and turned the city into a dictatorship under her rule. She used the power of the Moonstone, an alien artifact left behind by the Preservers, to increase her powers and exert influence over the Farsiders. Rather than be destroyed by Earthlings, Lady Lunar planned to build a space fleet and eventually seize control of Earth as well.

Years later, Mentac returned to Saruen as one of the Atom Family (see **Atom Family**, p. 119). The team overthrew Lady Lunar and freed the Farsiders from her influence. Mentac refused to take his aunt's place, refusing to exchange one dictator for another, no matter how benevolent. He encouraged his people to institute a democratic form of government, and the elected Farside Council now rules the city.

Most people on Earth still do not know of Farside City's existence. The city's advanced technology hides it from satellites and space probes, although several major governments know of it. Many people in the superhuman community are aware of or have even visited Saruen, particularly the Atom Family, the latest generation of which is half-Farsider themselves.

The Farsiders are of mixed human stock, still almost genetically identical to Earth humans. Some of them still manifest psionic abilities, which they are trained in the responsible use of, although such powers have become rarer in recent centuries, even more so since Lady Lunar wiped out the rest of the royal family (which included the strongest psionics). Farside technology is very advanced, based on technology left behind by the Preservers. They have anti-gravity propulsion, advanced medicines, and super-computers (along with anything else the Gamemaster deems appropriate).

Farsider: PL 1; Init +0; Defense 11; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +0 melee (Dmg by weapon); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Craft or Profession (choose one) +4, Listen +4, Spot +4.

Powers: Some rare Farsiders have mental powers (increasing power level to 3). Choose one of the following options: 1) *Telekinetic:* Telekinesis +6 [Extras: Energy Blast, Flight, Force Field; Source: Psychic; Cost: 5 pp]; 2) *Telepath:* Telepathy +6 [Extras: Memory Alteration, Mental Blast; Source: Psychic; Cost: 5 pp].

THE GRUE EMPIRE

The Grue Empire is a militaristic, totalitarian force near Earth's region of the Milky Way and currently expanding into nearby star systems. The expansion of the Grue has been checked solely by the presence of the rival Lor Republic in nearby space (see **The Lor Republic**, below). Still, the Grue are not about to allow the Lor to prevent them from achieving their destiny, which is to rule over the inhabited worlds of the galaxy.

The Grue are a protean shape-shifting species from the planet Gruen Prime. In their natural forms, they look like pale human-sized blobs, although they're capable of assuming nearly any shape they wish. The Grue are disdainful of creatures with fixed forms and consider themselves inherently superior to other forms of life. They are an arrogant and mistrustful species and believe it is their manifest destiny to rule the galaxy.

The Grue built their empire using their shapeshifting powers to infiltrate and take control of other civilizations they encountered until they could rule openly. The presence of Lor mentats has limited the metamorphs' ability to infiltrate the Republic, although there are still some Grue moles active in Lor society. Grue have also infiltrated Earth society in the past, although the full extent of their activities remains unknown.

The Grue Empire is made up of a number of client races ruled by the Grue with an iron fist. The Empire's technology rivals that of the Lor Republic (see below). They have advanced faster-than-light starships, energy weapons, force fields, anti-gravity, genetic engineering, and so forth. They're particularly proud of their weapons technology, which includes a variety of nerve-stimulat-

THE MOONSTONE

The Moonstone is a mysterious alien artifact, presumably created or discovered by the Preservers and left behind in Farside City by them when they departed Earth's solar system. It is a fist-sized, faceted piece of translucent crystal with a pearly luster that glows softly from within. The Moonstone is a tremendous power-source, and has provided most of the energy needs of the Farsiders for thousands of years with no signs of its power being depleted.

The Moonstone is also a powerful psionic amplifier. Its energy can boost the abilities of a psychic in physical contact with it, giving him access to abilities he doesn't normally have. The mentats of Farside occasionally used the Moonstone to enhance their powers, and held the crystal in trust for the entire community. When Lady Lunar overthrew the royal family, she seized the Moonstone's power for herself. It was returned to the custody of the Farsiders by the Atom Family when they in turn overthrew Lady Lunar's rule.

There appears to be some sort of link between the Moonstone and Chase Atom (p. 125). Chase has been able to override another's control of the stone in the past with great mental effort. It may be because he is descended from one of the last survivors of the royal family, because of his unique human/Farsider heritage, his unusually strong telepathic abilities, or some combination of these things.

ing pain weapons and capture devices in addition to standard issue blasters and implosion grenades.

The Grue have been interested in Earth for a long time, though the first known contact between Earthlings and the Grue happened in 1947 when a scout craft crashed. Since that time, the Empire has sent additional scouts and other forces to this world of paranormals for various reasons. One thing the Grue Empire does know is that it has little chance (and little desire) to conquer this planet while its native superhumans, the Star Knights, and the Lor Empire all watch over it.

Grue Metamorph: PL 8; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 17 (14 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 melee (+3S, punch), +7 ranged (+5L blaster); SV Dmg +5, Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +6, Disguise +9, Gather Information +7, Hide +7, Move Silently +7, Perform (acting) +6, Sense Motive +4.

Feats: Extra Limbs, Surprise Strike.

Powers: Shapeshift +6 [Extras: Exact, Growth, Plasticity, Shrinking; Source: Alien; Cost: 6 pp].

Equipment: Concealed blaster (+5L).

THE LOR REPUBLIC

The Lor Republic is a star-spanning civilization in the Milky Way galaxy that includes hundreds of star systems and worlds. The most startling thing about the Republic is that its dominant race is human! The Lor were apparently taken from Earth tens of thousands of years ago by a now-extinct alien race and relocated to the planet they call Lor-Van. A number of human settlements were established on various other worlds in the galaxy, some of

the human stock genetically altered by the Preservers to adapt to its new environments.

The Lor are the most advanced of these races. They began exploring space about the time the Cataclysm claimed Atlantis and Lemuria, and they discovered faster-than-light travel before Europeans discovered America. In the centuries since, the Lor have been steadily expanding outward into space, usually encountering less developed races—some of them human as well—and absorbing them into their Republic. The Lor learned of Earth decades ago when they encountered the Terran Daedelus (p. 103), who was exploring the galaxy alone in the *Icarus*. Lor contact with Earth has been limited, given the number of superhumans on that world. For the time being, the Republic has declared Earth off-limits. Once humanity is advanced enough, they might be considered for membership in the Republic.

The Lor summarily reject the theory first put forth by Daedelus when he encountered them—the idea that their race originated on Earth. Instead, many Lor believe that Earth is a lost colony from what they call the First Age, when another legendary Lor Republic ruled the stars. The Lor are somewhat arrogant and superior in their attitude toward what they deem “less developed” species, although they are fascinated by the diverse powers demonstrated by some of Earth’s superhumans. What disturbs them is how often Earth’s superhuman powers vastly exceed the abilities of Lor mentats.

The Lor themselves are virtually identical in appearance and biology to humans. The Lor demonstrate a somewhat different range of pigmentation in hair and eye color. White, gray, deep red, and even blue or green hair is all common among the Lor. Amber, tan, and violet eyes are seen among Lor, in addition to the normal human ranges of colors. Skin tone ranges from pale to deep brown (depending on the area of Lor-Van where a particular Lor’s ancestors hailed from), so many Lor could easily pass for Earth humans.

Mixing with other partially-differentiated humanoid races within the Republic has only diversified the human genotype among the Lor. No skin tones or cosmetic distinctions are left unturned, as one can meet humans with antennae (the hive-minded humanoid Dotrae) to green or blue-skinned humans with gills, webbed hands, and feet (the amphibious Piscans, who look remarkably like Earth’s modern Atlantean “fish-men”). The Lor or their member races have no prejudices regarding skin coloration or ability or ancestry—they only insist on “genetic fitness.” Psionic ability is prized and bred for, although the genetic basis of it (if any) is not fully understood.

The political organization of the Republic resembles the Roman Empire on Earth in many ways. A Senate represents the interests of all 312 member worlds or systems. A Supreme Praetor holds executive power, and this overall imperial ruler is elected by the Senate and appointed for life. Citizens have a great deal of personal freedom, although loyalty to the Republic is expected and enforced. The Lor prize martial virtues along with intellectual ones, and they honor their great military leaders.

Lor technology is highly advanced in comparison to Earth’s technology. They have faster-than-light starships, energy beam weapons, anti-gravity, limited teleportation, energy transfer and

transmission (instead of consumptive fuels), force fields, and similar devices. Some of their technology came from reverse-engineering Preserver devices, while most has been developed or acquired in the conquest of other worlds.

The primary rival of the Republic is the Grue Empire, and the two have warred over dominance of this galaxy for centuries; the past 40 years of tentative peace induced a state of détente among them, but recent activities have awoken old grudges and prejudices among both Lor and Grue alike. The Republic also has faced challenges from various “barbarian” (outsider) worlds and small encroaching empires. The most successful and aggressive of these was ruled by the Star-Khan, who was defeated only with the aid of Daedelus.

Lor: PL 1; Init +0; Defense 11; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +0 melee (dmg by weapon); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Craft or Profession (choose one) +4, Listen +4, Spot +4.

Lor Soldier: PL 3; Init +0; Defense 13; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +3 melee (+1S, punch), +3 ranged (+5L, blaster); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Intimidate +3, Listen +3, Spot +3, Survival +5, and one of Demolitions, Drive, Medicine, or Pilot at +4.

Feats: Attack Focus (blaster), Point Blank Shot.

Equipment: Blaster (+5L), uniform (Armor +3).

Lor Mentat: PL 5; Init +0; Defense 13; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (+0S, punch), +2 ranged (+5L, blaster), +4 mental; SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills: Diplomacy +4, Listen +4, Sense Motive +8, Spot +6.

Feats: Iron Will, Psychic Awareness, Talented (Spot and Sense Motive), Trance.

Powers: Choose one of the following options: 1) *Telekinetic:* Telekinesis +6 [Extras: Energy Blast, Flight, Force Field; Source: Psychic; Cost: 5 pp]; 2) *Telepath:* Telepathy +6 [Extras: Memory Alteration, Mental Blast; Source: Psychic; Cost: 5 pp].

Equipment: Blaster (+5S/L).

THE STAR KNIGHTS

The Star Knights began centuries ago on a distant world. The entity now known as Mentor is a vast neural-mapped cybernetic computer network and system programmed with the knowledge and experiences of literally hundreds of thousands of beings; in essence, the Mentor entity is the sum total of an entire city’s worth of brains and computers all linked together to achieve a collective technorganic sentience. Many suspect that Mentor is a creation of the Preservers, like many fantastic artifacts across the galaxy, but it remains silent on the matter. Mentor possesses vast intelligence and experience, along with direct control over incredibly advanced technological facilities and a nearly limitless power source.

When the Lor first achieved interstellar spaceflight several centuries ago, the Grue often blasted them out of the stars rather than have any rivals for the space lanes. Mentor detected these

early battles, assessed the actions of both starfaring races, and saw that there would be a need for agents to maintain order and protect innocents from harm out among the stars. Mentor began recruiting intelligent and brave beings using android messengers that also ferried the beings to its isolated planetoid, where it began training the first Star Knights. Coming from a variety of planets across the galaxy and representing a diverse range of species, Mentor first taught them to respect the diversity among them and conquer any terrestrial prejudices they previously held. Once their training was complete, Mentor equipped each of them with an advanced suit of powered armor, which had many offensive and defensive capabilities and the ability to fly through interstellar space without a ship. The Star Knights were charged with preserving peace, order, and justice in the galaxy.

The Lor Republic quickly acknowledged the authority of the Star Knights after witnessing their abilities, and most other civilized worlds in the galaxy do so as well. The Star Knights make it a point not to interfere in the politics or internal affairs of other worlds as much as possible. They rarely go where they are not wanted and concentrate on dealing with natural disasters, interstellar crime, and similar menaces. They also protect developing worlds from exploitation and conquest. The Grue Empire often considers the Star Knights adversaries, although they respect the Knights' abilities and only challenge them when they feel the numbers are in their favor.

There are currently thousands of Star Knights throughout the Milky Way galaxy, but they tend to be spread quite thin, and multiple Star Knights are only seen together in times of great crisis. Each Star Knight is quite independent and expected to handle matters largely on his or her or its own. Each Knight wears an advanced suit of technological armor that draws its power from the Star Stone, the glowing, multifaceted crystal 20-meters across that floats suspended in the heart of Mentor's complex. The Star Stone contains seemingly inexhaustible extradimensional energy and may be related to the Moonstone found in Farside City (p. 94). Using the Star Stone's energy, Star Knights can project powerful force fields for protection as well as beams of energy, their "shield" and "sword." The Grue have sought to kill Star Knights for centuries to claim one of their suits of armor for the study of its weapons, but whenever a Knight is killed, the Star Stone senses it immediately (suggesting some psionic link between the Stone, the armor, and the wearer); the Star Knight armor automatically returns to Mentor's planetoid (often bringing the corpse with it).

One Lor Star Knight, A'lan Koor, was stationed on Earth for a time. A member of the Freedom League in the late 1960s and most of the 1970s, he was known to Earth as "Star Knight." He eventually returned to space and has risen to membership of the Inner Circle that administers the Star Knights organization. He is considered a sure candidate to have his memories incorporated into Mentor upon his biological death, although that is not expected for many years. There is currently no Star Knight assigned to Earth, although the Star Knights do keep a close watch on that world. Whether Mentor will assign another Knight there remains to be seen.

In the long history of the Star Knights, only one has ever turned against the order. Rojan Lhar betrayed the Star Knights and attempted to seize control of the Star Stone. He failed but managed to escape, despite the efforts of Mentor and five Star Knights. A'lan Koor pursued Rojan—who became known as "Blackstar"—to Earth and the two became implacable nemeses. Years after his betrayal, Rojan was eventually captured and Mentor stripped him of his armor and sentenced the rogue to life imprisonment on an isolated asteroid, where he remains for the time being.

Star Knight: PL 10; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 17 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (fly 50 ft.); Atk +7 melee (+12S, punch), +7 ranged (+10S, energy blast); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +5, Knowledge (galaxy) +5, Listen +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6.

Feats: Attack Focus (energy blast), Iron Will, Power Attack.

Equipment: Star Knight Armor [Armor +10; *Extras:* Energy Blast, Flight, Immunity, Super-Strength; *Power Stunts:* Darkvision, Radio Hearing, Radio Broadcast, Space Flight, Super-Flight; *Flaws:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science; *Cost:* 5 pp].

OTHER DIMENSIONS

Freedom City has made contact with (or been contacted by) numerous other dimensions, beginning with the arrival of Centurion's life-pod more than eighty years ago. Dr. Atom speculated long ago that the dimensional-warp technology created a permanent infinitesimal "breach" in Earth's dimension over Freedom City. The life-pod brought with it a large cascade of energies that may have sparked the superhuman activities of the 1920s through the 1940s. Through that breach, an invisible trickle of extradimensional energies may be at least partially responsible for the appearance of so many superhumans in the area over the years. The portal into the Terminus now exists inside the Atom Family's headquarters, where they keep constant watch over it for any signs of trouble. The previous attempts by Omega to invade Earth's dimension may have led to other "spikes" in superhuman activity over the years, including the recent surge in paranormal activity and powers among Freedom's youths.

Mystics and psychics are aware of other more conceptual dimensions beyond the material realm of Earth. Called astral planes and the higher spheres, many of them are inhabited by magical or elemental entities deemed the gods, angels, and demons of human mythologies. As the result of contact between Earth's superhumans and sorcerers and these realms, many of these entities and powers have once again become involved in human affairs, although not to the degree they once were.

Finally, scientists know that Freedom City's Earth is only one of countless parallel worlds, some being quite similar and others very different from their own. From time to time, heroes have encountered people from these other Earths or visited them (usually by accident). Dr. Atom's studies of his own adventures and those of the Liberty and Freedom Leagues allowed him to catalogue no less than seven parallel Earths. For simplicity's sake, Dr.

Atom designated his home Earth (i.e. Freedom City's Earth) as A-Terra, and then sorted them chronologically for when they were found or denizens of that Earth made their presence known here. Most of the worlds gain other colloquial names, as these labels simply allow him to sort more information more quickly. While most (including the Freedom League) refer to one particular parallel as Anti-Earth, its data gets catalogued within the Atom Family's computers under D-Terra; the Earths of Centurion and Doctor Tomorrow are B-Terra and C-Terra.

ANTI-EARTH

"Anti-Earth" (as it was dubbed by Johnny Rocket) is a parallel Earth virtually identical to the home of the Freedom League in some ways and radically different in others. It exists in another vibrational plane while occupying the same space as the Freedom League's Earth. Johnny Rocket stumbled upon Anti-Earth accidentally after using his super-speed vibration powers to escape from the Maestro's sonic traps. While he returned rather quickly to his own Earth by reversing the vibrations that brought him there, the inhabitants of Anti-Earth learned of the existence of other worlds.

The key difference between Anti-Earth and Earth is that the heroes on Earth are villains on Anti-Earth while most of Earth's villains don't exist at all. Anti-Earth seems to be a place where evil and corruption reign and the innocent are not only downtrodden, but few and far between. It's a dark, grim, and incredibly dangerous place, especially now that its super-criminals know of the existence of parallel worlds.

On Anti-Earth, Freedom has developed as Tyrannia and is ruled by the Tyranny Syndicate, an evil version of the Freedom League (basically using the "Villain Options" given with each of the character write-ups). The Syndicate rules Tyrannia with an iron fist as their personal fiefdom. They extend considerable influence all across the American continent, and Michael O'Connor is just one of their political puppets. Police Commissioner Driogano struggles against corruption in the city, but to no avail.

The only real hero on Anti-Earth is Mind-Master, a lone immortal who struggles to bring light into the darkness of so many lives, but is fighting a losing battle against overwhelming odds. Rumors that the Syndicate faced off against apparently moral and upstanding versions of themselves from a parallel Earth has given Mind-Master a measure of hope. If he can use some of the advanced technology at his disposal, and acquire the necessary information from the Tyranny Syndicate's files, he may be able to find some allies elsewhere to help him topple Anti-Earth's corrupt rulers.

Naturally, a visit to (or from) Anti-Earth wouldn't be complete without evil versions of the player characters. Gamemasters should feel free to create alternate versions of the PCs as major villains on Anti-Earth as well, perhaps in place of (or as members of) the Tyranny Syndicate.

FREEPORT

Freeport is a city on a parallel world known to some heroes in Freedom City. Freeport's world is a Medieval fantasy realm complete with dwarves, elves, and goblins alongside human pirates and buccaneers. Freeport itself is a pirate city, a freewheeling port

USING PARALLEL WORLDS IN YOUR GAME

Parallel Earths are a comic book staple, and they open up a variety of different adventure possibilities. In addition to the worlds described here, Gamemasters can use parallel worlds for different things in a *Mutants & Masterminds* campaign set in Freedom City.

First, an adventure on a parallel world allows you to do things that you'd never do in the regular campaign. You can confront the heroes with a full-scale nuclear war between nations, the effects of a global catastrophe (like an asteroid strike or rampant plague), or show what happens when a major villain actually does conquer the world. You can alter or even destroy a parallel Earth without affecting the campaign world at all, letting you have your cake and eat it too when it comes to dramatic adventures for the heroes.

Second, parallel Earths are a good place to relocate "extra" NPC heroes in the campaign. If you feel that Freedom City is too crowded with superheroes, they are the heroes of a parallel Freedom City, and they only show up when the player characters visit their Earth or vice versa. The Freedom League described in this book could be the Freedom League of "Other-Earth" while the player characters are the Freedom League of their world, and the two teams meet and team up from time to time. You can even combine the hero and villain options, making the Freedom League into the deadly Tyranny Syndicate on the player characters' world, while they're actually heroes on another parallel Earth and the player characters are *their* archenemies! First meetings and misconceptions are common where parallel worlds are concerned.

Third, parallel Earths open up the possibility for all sorts of crossovers. Each and every *Mutants & Masterminds* campaign (whether set in Freedom City or not) takes place on its own discrete parallel Earth. You can exchange characters and adventure ideas with other Gamemasters, or even use material from other superhero RPGs, to create parallel worlds for your heroes to visit. You can even extend the idea beyond superheroes to some of your other favorite RPGs. Imagine the heroes visiting a fantasy or science-fiction campaign setting and meeting the players' other characters from there.

where almost anything goes and few questions are asked. Magic is fairly commonplace in Freeport, but technology is only just starting to reach the level of Earth's Age of Exploration (with primitive gunpowder weapons and glassmaking).

The primary parallel between Freeport and Freedom City is the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign, an evil which exists in both worlds. It's possible that the Serpent People originated on one world and migrated to the other via dimensional gates or that it is simply an example of mirroring between parallel worlds. In either case, the Brotherhood has attempted to bridge the dimensional gulf in order to cooperate from time to time. Heroes from Freedom City can work with people from Freeport to stop a brotherhood plot to smuggle modern technology to Freeport or to bring magical creatures from Freeport to Freedom City.

Gamemasters familiar with the *Freeport* series of adventures and the *Freeport: City of Adventure* book from Green Ronin Publishing can use them as resources for an adventure when heroes from Freedom City visit Freeport. If you also happen to have a game set

in Freeport, maybe the player's characters from both games trade places, or must team up to solve a mutual problem.

THE TERMINUS

It is a cosmic void between the infinite realities of the omniverse, a place where reality as we know it begins to crumble and spiral down toward oblivion at the center of the emptiness. It is entropy, annihilation, the Ultimate End. Dr. Atom dubbed it "the Terminus," which is how a handful of people on Earth know and understand it. While many Freedomians remember the Terminus Invasion, they generically think Terminus is some other world, like Mars, or some other dimension like the dwelling places of the gods. They simply don't think about it nor do many want to think about the embodiment of entropy.

The Terminus is another dimension that apparently exists "between" the various dimensional planes of existence. It has been likened to the flow of a river. If every universe and dimension is a stone lying at the bottom of a stream, the Terminus is the water that surrounds all of them, slowly wearing them smooth. The junior members of the Atom Family have also referred to the Terminus as "the cosmic garbage disposal," since it apparently grinds up parts of other realities. Castoff bits and pieces of other universes drift in the void of the Terminus, all of them slowly and inexorably pulled toward the Great Void, where they are apparently annihilated.

Still, there is life of sorts within the Terminus. Amidst the rubble and debris from countless universes are entire worlds drawn into the void, some of them still inhabited. These worlds survive as best they can, some overtaken by raiders, others fending off attacks and managing to thrive. The Terminus seems to bend some physical laws, allowing worlds in slow orbit of the Great Void to survive without the heat and light of their home stars, adapting to the dim eternal rust-red skies of the glowing void. Some aliens have existed in the Terminus for tens of thousands of years, and they have long forgotten their original homes.

The Terminus is also home to many strange things, either exiled from their own universes or somehow created by the weird, plastic reality of the place. X-Isle, the Living City, is one of these. It is an amalgam of parts of different cities drawn into the Terminus, where it attained a kind of consciousness. The floating city is an intelligent being that desires "citizens" it can control and sustain. It originally trapped a number of people from Freedom City until the Freedom League and the Atom Family rescued them. Now it tries to draw people from both Earth and the Terminus to it. The Terminus is said to be home to alien prisoners and exiles, dead and forgotten gods, remnants of wars that destroyed universes long before ours was born, and ruins left behind by long-extinct titanic races.

The Terminus' self-proclaimed ruler is Omega (p. 171), an entity of unknown origins who commands a mighty army composed of various races living there. Omega wields tremendous power over the forces of entropy and can protect worlds from the Great Void, an act that often earns him their begrudging allegiance. He claims that all creation will eventually fall to the Terminus, but has grown bored after billions of years and desires to hasten the

process. For more than a millennium, Omega has extended the influence of the Terminus and caused it to "devour" other realities. He has attempted to do so with Earth on two previous occasions only to be beaten back by Earth superheroes each time.

OTHER SPHERES

In mystical parlance, Earth—indeed the entire material universe—is but one "sphere" of existence. There are "higher" and "lower" spheres as well as magical dimensions in which entities out of human myth and imagination reside. It's debatable whether or not these beings—gods, heroes, and demons, dreams and nightmares—existed before humanity or if they arose out of human imagination and worship. In either case, they and their realms are quite real and capable of interacting with the material world.

Among the myriad dimensions of existence are the realms of the different pantheons of legend, such as Mount Olympus, home of the ancient Greek gods. Other godly realms exist, alongside various netherworlds and hells where demons and devils can be found. Other dimensions simply serve as power sources to be tapped by mystics and mages and others from a thousand different worlds, each attributing the powers to some conceptual being that may or may not actually exist. Actual magical beings from other dimensions—be they gods, demons, spirits, or something else entirely—rarely interact with life on Earth. Many are barred by various agreements among other higher (or lower) powers, but often the distance and problems of traversing the dimensional gulfs keep them away from Freedom City and Earth. They could still reach the material world, but only if they expend a great deal of energy or are specifically summoned to the material universe. Heroic magicians like Eldrich, Earth's Master Mage (p. 135), safeguard people against invaders from other spheres.

Gamemasters should feel free to include any and all mystical dimensions desired in their Freedom City campaign.



CHAPTER EIGHT

HEROES & VILLAINS

Here they are—what you've all been waiting for! This chapter compiles the full details on the heroes and villains of Freedom City, whether they are technological, paranormal, mystical, or something else entirely. First up are the heroes, and then the villains; both sections highlight the major teams initially, covering all their members. Individual heroes and villains follow.

THE FREEDOM LEAGUE

The Freedom League is the premier team of heroes in Freedom City and perhaps the world. While the latest incarnation of the League came together in 1994 after the repeal of the Moore Act, the team's roots stretch back to the Liberty League of the 1940s and '50s and the original Freedom League of the 1960s. In the 40-odd years since the establishment of Freedom Hall, nearly 25 heroes have served on the roster of the Freedom League and six have died in action. The current team operates out of Freedom Hall in downtown Freedom City, and it goes all over (and beyond) the Earth on its mission to fight injustice and protect humanity.

THE FREEDOM LEAGUE'S ROGUES GALLERY

The Freedom League has acquired a vast number of enemies over the years, and these are some of the worst.

Argo: An android created in 1995 by Daedalus' arch-foe Talos (p. 178), Argo possesses all of the powers of the current members

of the League. Argo has rebelled against his master, as Talos did against Daedalus, and he now operates independently. Following his last conflict with the League in 2002, Argo was deactivated and set adrift somewhere in the Terminus.

The Crime League: A number of the Freedom League's arch-foes banded together to further their own agendas and to destroy their mutual enemies. Their greatest triumph came with their invasion and destruction of Freedom Hall in 2001, though they were eventually defeated and captured. The current team is the seventh incarnation of the Crime League, whose own nefarious legacy reaches back to the days of World War II as the foes of the Liberty League.

The Mastermind: A man made immortal by the experiments of the alien Preservers, the Mastermind has mastered their technology over the millennia and seeks to conquer the world so he can mold it into his own vision of a "perfect" human race.

Omega: The self-proclaimed lord of the Terminus, Omega is a living embodiment of entropy. He is bent on seeing all creation destroyed, extending the reach of the Terminus infinitely. He invaded Freedom City in 1965 and 1993, and while many people think he died along with Centurion, Omega survives in a weakened state in the entropic "oververse" of the Terminus.

The Power Corps: These criminal mercenaries wear sophisticated suits of power armor acquired from the Foundry (p. 76).



Their armor is equipped with networked combat computers, allowing them to work as one unit with devastating effectiveness.

Quirk: Originally an extradimensional nuisance who pestered Centurion toward the end of his career, Quirk is a mysterious elf-like being with the power to alter reality at will and whim. There may be some relationship between Quirk and Mr. Infamy, since they seemed to know each other when they both faced Daedelus in 1999.

SHADOW: The secret organization known as SHADOW (p. 174) spreads its tentacles among a wide number of criminal enterprises, and that indirect power and the vast resources move them toward their goal of clandestine control of the world. The group's leaders—the Penumbra—prefer the group remains secret, since the Freedom League destroys large numbers of its cells when its attention falls on SHADOW.

The Tyranny Syndicate: Evil duplicates of the Freedom League from Anti-Earth (p. 97), the Tyranny Syndicate is the League's worst nightmare come to life. The Syndicate matches the League in power and is as ruthless as they are just. After the members of the Syndicate became aware of other realities, they made an attempt to invade and conquer Freedom City, but were repelled by the Freedom League. (No additional details are below for the Tyranny Syndicate; simply use the Villain Options under each member of the League to produce the characters' statistics for game use.)

CAPTAIN THUNDER

Fifteen years ago, Ray Gardener worked as a test pilot for Nolan Aircraft. Fresh from a stint in the Air Force, Gardener had a reputation as a capable and daring pilot. He certainly caught the eye of his boss' secretary, Nancy Dumont. Ray was testing Nolan's new X-14 supersonic jet when he encountered some unusual

atmospheric turbulence. A powerful electrical storm sprang up out of nowhere and surrounded the plane. Ray fought to maintain control as the hurricane-level winds and lightning raged all around him. He nearly made it out of the storm when a massive series of lightning bolts struck the cockpit. The X-14 crashed in the southwestern desert.

Miraculously, Ray Gardener survived the lightning strike. Just as surprisingly, he walked away from the crash site unscathed; he claimed to have bailed out before the jet crashed, and he kept the reasons for his incredible survival a secret. In truth, Ray now crackled with the electrical power of the thunderbolts, his body supercharged with tremendous strength and a high resistance to injury. He could also absorb or project electricity.

As Ray experimented with his new powers, the source of the mysterious storm made itself known. Dr. Sebastian Stratos, a former R&D employee of Nolan Aircraft, claimed he had a weather control device and would ground the nation's air traffic unless he was paid an enormous ransom. Creating the costume and identity of Captain Thunder, Ray used his new abilities to track Stratos to his desert lair and upset the mad scientist's scheme. Dr. Stratos escaped custody eventually and has become Captain Thunder's greatest nemesis.

For years, Captain Thunder fought crime and aided disaster victims in and around the American Southwest. He maintained his secret identity as Ray Gardener, and a year after gaining his powers, he told his girlfriend, Nancy Dumont, the truth when he asked her to marry him. Their son, Ray, Jr., was born little more than a year later. Captain Thunder was one of the heroes who traveled far across the country to resist Omega's invasion of Freedom City. Afterward, he became a member of the new Freedom League and its de-facto leader.

Two years ago, Dr. Stratos captured Captain Thunder by draining away his electrical power. Holding him prisoner, Stratos revealed Captain Thunder's identity on a rogue television broadcast that overrode all the major broadcast network signals, ensuring no one would miss the doctor's humiliation of his hated foe. Although Ray escaped Stratos' trap soon after that, he couldn't undo the damage to his personal life. From then on, he and his family were never given a moment's peace by the media, the public, or other villains with a grudge against him. Eventually, the Gardeners relocated to Freedom City, and Ray became Captain Thunder full time.

Quote: "Dr. Metropolis, shore up these buildings. Johnny, search the area. The rest of you fan out and secure the perimeter. Leave this yahoo to me...."

Personality: Those who don't respect or like him call him a "boy scout," but Ray Gardener is a man who truly believes in qualities like honor, duty, honesty, and public service. It never occurs to him to use his powers for anything but the common good and helping others. He makes no secret that he dislikes paranormals who use their abilities for personal gain or believe their powers make them more worthy than the rest of humanity.

Captain Thunder believes in the mission and the true potential of the Freedom League, and is quick to offer praise and credit where credit is due. If anything, he grows more concerned about

his own abilities to lead the team successfully. On occasion, he turns to Raven as an advisor and sounding board for his concerns. He feels extremely responsible for the people in his life, especially his family, and he would do anything to keep them from harm.

Powers & Tactics: Captain Thunder's body is a "living dynamo" of electrical power. His internal energy vastly increases his strength and toughness, allowing him to pick up tanks and resist the effects of most weapons. Captain Thunder can hurl lightning bolts from his hands, which strike with tremendous force and his signature clap of thunder. He can absorb electricity like a human battery and use it to fuel his powers, and Captain Thunder's body is virtually immune to the effects of electricity. Over the years, he's learned to use his power in many ways, including overloading any electrical devices and emitting electrical impulses that allow him to take control of electronic devices and manipulate them from a distance.

In combat situations, Captain Thunder usually uses ranged attacks to "soften up" opponents before moving in to fight them hand-to-hand. When he's dealing with groups of agents or normal criminals, he usually announces his arrival with a deafening thunderclap, followed up by a lightning barrage to shock them unconscious. Until he knows his foes' abilities, he never attacks with his thunderbolts for fear of killing someone.

Appearance: Captain Thunder is a tall, muscular man with ruggedly handsome good looks. While his hair and eyes were brown before his transformation, his short hair is starkly white and his lightning-blue eyes shimmer with sparks at all times. Although he's in his mid-40s, Captain Thunder remains as fit and strong as ever. He wears a dark blue costume and cape with a broad white insert running down the middle. His gloves and boots are white, and he wears golden bands around his wrists and calves. A golden lightning bolt cuts across his chest and the emblem is repeated down the center of his cape. He originally wore a blue cowl but abandoned it when his true identity became known. When he's "off duty," Ray usually wears jeans and a tight-fitting T-shirt or tank top under a flannel or denim shirt or sweater.

Campaign Use: Captain Thunder is a powerful, experienced, and well-respected hero. In games in which the player characters are members of the Freedom League, Captain Thunder is their leader and they should respect him as do the other members. As insiders, they might also get to see the more vulnerable side of Thunder that the public never gets to see. Even if the heroes aren't members of the League, Captain Thunder can serve as a role model. Heroes who behave in an antisocial or careless manner may get a public or private dressing-down from him. Those who break the law may get a more forceful lesson in good behavior and the standards of heroes.

Villain Option: The villainous version of Captain Thunder gained his powers in a similar way, but jet jock Ray Gardener saw the opportunities in *working* for Dr. Stratos and joined him. The villainous Thunder works as Dr. Stratos' lieutenant. On Anti-Earth, Captain Thunder gained his powers from an experiment performed by an ethical Dr. Stratos looking for ways to help humanity. Gardener decided to help himself rather than humanity, and he gathered together the Tyranny Syndicate, a gang of

super-powered criminals under his (often dubious) leadership. He relies sometimes on Raven's tactical skills, but doesn't trust the granddaughter of Dr. Sin any more than he absolutely must.

Captain Thunder: PL 13; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 18 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (fly 60 ft.); Atk +9 melee (+14S, punch), +7 ranged (+12L, energy blast); SV Dmg +4, Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 18.

Skills: Diplomacy +8, Craft (Electronics) +5, Knowledge (Freedom City) +5, Pilot +10, Spot +5.

Feats: Detect (Electricity), Iron Will, Leadership, Point Blank Shot.

Powers: Energy Control (electricity) +12 [*Extras:* Electrical Absorption, Energy Blast, Flight; *Power Stunts:* Animation (only electrical equipment), "Thunderclap" Dazzle (hearing) +6 (Area); *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 5 pp], Super-Strength +10 [*Extra:* Protection; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 5 pp].

Equipment: Commlink [Radio Hearing; *Cost:* 1 pp].

Weakness: Vulnerable to Drain (powers).

CAPTAIN THUNDER'S ROGUES GALLERY

Dr. Stratos: The mad criminal scientist Sebastian Stratos is Captain Thunder's archenemy and, accidentally, the source of his powers. Despite having no affiliation with its previous incarnations, Dr. Stratos has taken on the leadership of the current Crime League.

The Hellqueen: Gwen Nugent was seduced by a powerful infernal entity to become the demonic Hellqueen, her agent of chaos on Earth and a regular thorn in Captain Thunder's side.

Lady Lightning: Lisa Moore was accidentally struck by lightning during one of Captain Thunder's struggles against Dr. Stratos, and it granted her similar electrical powers. Dr. Stratos kidnapped her and tried to brainwash her into destroying Captain Thunder, but that ploy failed. However, Lady Lightning has been obsessed with the Captain ever since, believing that she is his "perfect mate" and they are destined to be together. She hates Thunder's wife, Nancy, and any women—bystanders or teammates—that "get between me and my man." She commits crimes largely to get the Captain's attention, although her behavior can be wildly unpredictable.

Volt: An artificial creation of Dr. Stratos, Volt is a being of "living electricity" that "feeds" off electrical power sources. It can drain human bioelectricity, which stuns or kills ordinary people; it is most strongly attracted to Captain Thunder's hyper-charged bioelectricity, and tries to "leech" him at every opportunity. Volt currently arcs helplessly inside a special containment cell at Blackstone.

NANCY GARDENER

Nancy Dumont worked as a secretary for Nolan Aircraft exec John Sanchez when she met test pilot Ray Gardener. She found him attractive, even if his somewhat cocky attitude made her play hard-to-get at first. When Ray was nearly killed in a plane crash, Nancy stopped playing around and asked him out immediately afterward. The two dated for a year before Ray asked her to marry him; to double her shock, Nancy also found out that he was the hero Captain Thunder! She accepted his marriage proposal and

their son, Ray Jr., was born 14 months later. It was a difficult delivery, and mother and son both barely survived the ordeal. Doctors advised against Nancy having any more children, which disappointed both her and Ray.

When Dr. Stratos revealed Captain Thunder's true identity, Nancy stood by her husband despite the pressures on their private lives. She's been kidnapped by Thunder's enemies on three occasions, and each time remained cool, calm, and resourceful, such as when she pushed Dr. Stratos back into his own weather-control device. Never one to while away her time at home, Nancy works as an administrative assistant for the Freedom League and as their public receptionist. As a result, she is the team's most visible public liaison to news crews looking for a sound bite when the heroes are too busy to handle press conferences. The Gardeners actually live in Freedom Hall, a home that precludes too many additional kidnapping attempts on their family.

Nancy Gardener is an attractive woman in her early-40s with chestnut hair and blue eyes.

Nancy Gardener: PL 2; Init +0 (Dex); Defense 12 (12 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +0 melee (-1S, punch); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +3; Str 9, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Diplomacy +5, Profession (administrator) +5, Spot +3.

Feats: Iron Will.

RAY GARDENER, JR.

Most kids think that Ray Gardener, Jr. has it made. After all, his dad is a famous super hero! But for 13-year-old Ray, things aren't all perfect. For one thing, being the son of a celebrity means security, dealing with the press, and never having any privacy, even at home. In addition, Ray must take medication for epilepsy, which doctors think is due to an overabundance of neural-electricity in his brain, possibly as a result of his father's powers. Unable to participate in team sports because of his condition, Ray, Jr. still loves watching them, and his father takes him to games in Freedom City whenever possible. Ray also likes playing tabletop roleplaying games, his favorite being the official *Freedom League RPG™*, from Green Ronin Publishing.

Ray's a tall, scrawny kid as yet, but his shock-white hair and electric-blue eyes show him to be his father's son.

At the GM's discretion, Ray, Jr. could be a latent super himself. Now that he's hit puberty, his additional internal energies might begin manifesting as superpowers instead of inducing seizures. If so, then he'd make a good student for the Claremont Academy (see p. 54).

Ray Gardener, Jr.: PL 1; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 13 (12 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +0 melee (-1S, punch); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills: Knowledge (game trivia) +3.

DAN CLOUD

Fifteen years ago, Danny Cloud was an apprentice mechanic with Nolan Aircraft, and he idolized test pilot Ray Gardener; unlike some other pilots there, Ray always had a kind word for young

Dan. He accidentally discovered that Ray was Captain Thunder about a year after the hero's debut, but he agreed to keep the secret. He even helped "the Cap'n" out in some cases, becoming embarrassingly known in the media as "Captain Thunder's pal." This, of course, led to his being kidnapped or endangered by the Captain's enemies on more than one occasion. Dan married his girlfriend, Maria Juarez, shortly before Captain Thunder's true identity was revealed to the world and the two of them finally had an infant son, Paul. The Clouds moved to Freedom City along with the Gardeners, and Dan is now chief mechanic for an airline in Freedom City. On the side, he works as a consultant for the Freedom League's aeronautic needs.

Dan Cloud is a Native American man in his early 30s with a somewhat weathered complexion and a mechanic's hands. He and his wife miss the Southwest terribly, but all agree it's safer for them here near their friends, especially now with a baby to protect.

Dan Cloud: PL 2; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 12 (11 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (+1S, punch); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Craft (mechanics) +8, Disable Device +4, Profession (mechanic) +5, Repair +8.

Feats: Talented (Craft and Repair).

DAEDELUS

To most people, Daniel Daedalus is simply one of the world's most brilliant scientists and engineers, but few know his true identity. Daedalus is not merely named for a figure from Greek mythology—he *is* the original Daedalus. He lived in ancient Greece and was a great inventor, so great he attracted the attention of Minos, King of Crete. Minos commissioned Daedalus to build an inescapable labyrinth to contain the monstrous Minotaur. But when Daedalus completed his work, he and his son Icarus were imprisoned by Minos so they could never reveal the maze's secrets to the outside world.

Daedalus fabricated two pairs of wings from feathers and wax to allow him and his son to escape. Unfortunately, Icarus ignored his father's advice not to fly too high. When he did, the wax on his wings melted and Icarus plummeted into the sea. Daedalus searched for his son in vain, and he was forced to fly on alone. Hermes, messenger of the gods, appeared to Daedalus and told him the gods had granted him immortality as a way of repaying his son's loss. Daedalus spurned their endowment, but the gods rarely revoke a gift once given.

Daedalus wandered the world for centuries afterward, and he found purpose in his studies and his work. He met and learned from all of the great philosophers and scientists of the ancient world and followed the progress of civilization through the rise and fall of many nations. All the while, he avoided staying in one place for too long, so as not to give away his true nature. Daedalus often spent time alone with his work, isolated for decades at a time. The centuries seemed to pass by faster and faster.

Over the centuries, Daedalus often recalled the lesson Icarus inadvertently taught him—technology was often dangerous in the wrong hands. Humanity continued to prove that maxim through-

out the years, as they developed newer and more inventive ways of killing each other. Still, enough people also developed technologies to improve life, preventing his cynicism from growing intolerable. His own works created under aliases also moved society forward, though history deems them the work of Albertus Magnus, Paracelsus, Isaac Newton, and others.

In the twentieth century, Daedalus became equally fascinated and concerned with the progress humanity had made. After the nuclear detonations at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Daedalus decided that he needed to act openly and decidedly. He spent some time designing a suit of armor and technological weapons which he then began using to fight crime. He particularly targeted criminals who abused science and technology for personal gain. When the Greek god Hades invaded Freedom City in 1960, Daedalus helped a number of heroes fight him off and the ancient inventor-turned-adventurer became a founding member of the reborn Freedom League.

Daedalus worked with the League for 15 years before the endless battles and activities made him question the purpose of his immortal existence. He decided to leave Earth in a starship of his own design, the *Icarus*. He explored the galaxy alone for nearly two decades and encountered various alien civilizations and challenges along the way. He returned to Earth in 1994, his faith in humanity's potential restored partly by seeing what humanity's offshoots had done among the stars. Daedalus returned to Earth just in time to help against the Terminus Invasion, and he mourned the death of his old friend the Centurion along with the rest of the world. Daedalus and others reformed the Freedom League immediately afterward, and helped rebuild Freedom City in the aftermath.

Some believe the Daedalus who fights alongside the League today is the son of the original from the 1960s, since Daedalus hasn't aged a day since his first public appearance (or for millennia, for that matter). He does little to discount the rumor, since it's not widely known that Daedalus is truly immortal.

Quote: "Technology has always been a two-edged sword, my friend."

Personality: Daedalus is a somber man. He only truly comes alive when confronted with some new and interesting technical problems. Then he borders on obsessive, spending long hours working on his latest project and locking himself in his laboratory. Although his fellow Freedom Leaguers (particularly Johnny) have tried to get Daedalus to loosen up and socialize, he's always been reluctant. People who do engage him in conversation find him both brilliant and cultured, since he has, after all, lived through all the classical periods in history. Still, he's short-tempered and impatient with those he considers his intellectual inferiors, which accounts for nearly everyone. Another reason for Daedalus' aloofness is his immortality—he knows he will probably outlive these friends as he has outlived everyone to whom he ever grew close.

Daedalus has a deep love of life and he particularly loves and cares for children. He will do anything to keep a child from coming to harm or a family from being destroyed like his was. He still feels the loss of his son thousands of years later and wants to spare others that pain. Because of that, he's very protective of

Johnny Rocket, the youngest member of the Freedom League. Johnny reminds him of Icarus in some ways—brash, headstrong, and passionate. His gruff attitude covers a true fatherly affection he feels for the speedster.

Daedelus believes there are certain things for which humanity is not yet ready. He has always watched technology's progress outstrip man's ability to use it wisely, and with the massive scientific leaps forward of late, he truly worries for mankind once again. He sees it as the duty of people like him and the Freedom League to protect humanity from itself as much as from outside threats.

Powers & Tactics: Daedelus is perhaps the greatest inventive genius the human race has ever produced. His astounding intellect comes tempered by his millennia of experience and experimentation. There are few topics with which Daedelus isn't at least acquainted. As an immortal being, he does not age and is immune to things like disease and poison, although he can still be injured and killed.

His additional powers come from the amazing suit of armor he designed and built himself. Layers of nano-circuitry and advanced metallic weaves, the armor can fold up like cloth and fit into a knapsack when deactivated. When Daedelus switches on the suit's energy field, those layers harden into a surface far stronger than titanium steel. The field mimics the wearer's musculature, greatly augments his strength, and magnetic repulsion circuitry allows him to fly silently through the air. The suit is equipped with an array of weapons and sensors, with which Daedelus is nearly always tinkering and adapting.

Daedelus is also capable of coming up with new inventions and devices swiftly and using only a few simple materials. He'll often whip up things in the midst of battle to help out his teammates against an opponent, from temporary psi-screens to fight off the attacks of Doubting Thomas or devices keyed to an opponent's known weaknesses. Daedelus is never in the forefront of a battle, as he prefers to measure up his opponents, analyze the situation, and remedy it logically. His insights have often given his teammates the edge they needed to overcome their opponents. Despite this measured approach, he always leaps immediately into action when innocents are threatened.

Appearance: Daniel Daedelus looks like a Mediterranean man in his late 30s, with olive-toned skin, dark curly hair cut short, and a neatly trimmed beard and moustache. His golden armor is brightly polished and sleek, with bulkier areas at the wrists, calves, waist, and shoulders where supplemental equipment is stored. An upright, open triangle (the Greek letter delta) is emblazoned on its chest-plate. He also wears a "Grecian" style helm that completely covers his face and seals off his head from external dangers. The "T-shaped" viewing slit of dark plastic in his helmet provides a sophisticated transceiver link with communications devices within a few hundred miles and, more specifically, his computers back at Freedom Hall.

Campaign Use: Daedelus is the supreme tinkerer who comes up with all sorts of techno-toys. While many characters could use his inventions, Daedelus tempers his enthusiasm for the possibilities of science and technology with their corresponding responsibilities. He knows how dangerous it can become in the

wrong hands, but others often take this cautiousness as an unwillingness to share his discoveries.

Daedelus is also a father figure of sorts, having more experience than anyone on the team except perhaps Siren; while he trusts her as a teammate, he's a big edgy around Siren because deities in his experience tend to be capricious and untrustworthy. He is gruff and often difficult to get to know, but he's also very protective of the people he cares about. He considers himself well suited to police dangerous uses of technology, making him an natural foe of criminal mad scientists and the like.

Villain Option: It's an easy step to take Daedelus' fear of technology in the wrong hands and turn him into a kind of super-Luddite who uses his own advanced technology to keep any technology he considers "dangerous" out of the "wrong" hands. That may include governments, corporations, and private citizens as well as super-criminals, and Daedelus may even try to revert the world back to the Iron or Bronze Age, eliminating all technology he considers dangerous to humanity. Heroes should find him a noble villain with a misguided cause and haunted by his past mistakes. The Daedelus of the Tyranny Syndicate is a hard, bitter man, driven nearly mad by the curse of immortality the gods laid upon him. He wants nothing more than to challenge his superior intellect and while away the endless years.

Daedelus: PL 10; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 18 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (fly 50 ft.); Atk +6 melee (+10S, punch), +8 ranged (+10S, energy blast); SV Dmg +3, Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 20, Wis 18, Cha 12.

Skills: Computers +18, Craft (electronics) +18, Disable Device +18, Knowledge (history) +15, Repair +18, Science (mechanics) +18, Science (all others, untrained) +14.

Feats: Immunity (aging, disease, poison).

Powers: Super-Intelligence +10 [Source: Training; Cost: 2 pp].

Equipment: Battlesuit [Armor +10; Extras: Energy Blast, Flight, Immunity, Super-Strength; Power Stunts: Penetration Vision (not through force fields), Radio Broadcast, Radio Hearing, Snare; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 5 pp].

DAEDELUS' ROGUES GALLERY

Doc Otaku: Japanese electronics genius Solo Takashi earned his first doctoral degree at the age of 12, and began developing technology others could not even theorize. Unfortunately, he never developed a sense of responsibility regarding his creations. When Daedelus tried to teach him that, he saw it as a challenge to outwit the smartest man alive. Mimicking Daedelus, Solo built himself numerous androids, *mecha*, and an armored battle-suit to personally cause trouble for Daedelus. Now, at age 16, Doc Otaku sometimes works for the Foundry (p. 76), Grant Conglomerates (p. 48), Majestic Industries (p. 49), or other criminal organizations for money. Still lacking any sense of morality, he is utterly ignorant of the consequences of his actions and sees all his battles with Daedelus as a great game.

The Foundry: This criminal organization offends Daedelus on two fronts. It is the creation of Talos, his former ally gone rogue. It also embodies Daedelus' fears about immoral uses of science, as

the Foundry researches and develops new technologies to sell to the highest bidders, and these are usually criminals.

The Erinyes/Furies Three: This trio is a noble experiment gone wrong. Using the brain patterns of deceased Freedom Leaguer Mary Minstrel after her death in 1970, Daedalus created the Chorale—Aria, Paeon, and Panegyric—three symbiotically-linked androids whose vocal powers technologically mimicked Mary's sonic powers. While all identical at creation, they developed distinct personalities over time and served as allies of the Freedom League until Daedalus departed for the stars. Without his expertise and constant guidance, the trio became darker along with the times. They became the Erinyes ("pursuers of the guilty") in 1979, though most call them the Furies Three, a name used by a TV anchor who couldn't pronounce their name. The three androids renamed themselves Tisiphone, Megaera, and Alecto, and they inflict harsh penalties on any they deem as doing wrong. While they are glad Daedalus returned, all three want little to do "with the father that abandoned us." They still act on the side of good, thwarting the Mafia in particular all across the world and occasionally in Freedom City, but their justice grows bloodier each year, and Daedalus fears they may yet cross the line Talos did long ago.

Hades: The Greek god of the dead wants to claim Daedalus' immortal soul, and believes he has a right to it since Daedalus refused the gods' gift all those years ago. He has used mythic monsters (like the true furies and the hellhound Cerberus) as his minions while attempting to do so. He has also been known to grant superhuman powers to mortals to use them as pawns against the inventor. Daedalus secretly wonders if Hades has anything to do with the changes he sees in the Erinyes.

Jack-a-Knives: With access to millions of murderers' souls in the Underworld, Hades occasionally revives one as a spirit and places it in the body of a mortal to wreak havoc and bring new fresh souls to the Underworld. He strips the spirit of its former identity but leaves its killing urges in place. No one knows what criteria Hades sets for the Murder Spirit before it is drawn back to the Underworld along with the victims' souls it absorbed with each kill. In the two times such things have visited Freedom City, the media dubbed it Jack-a-Knives, linking it wrongly but colorfully with Jack the Ripper. Medea alone knows this secret in the mortal world, as she has been granted the use of the Murder Spirit once or twice when she has fought Daedalus.

Medea: The sorceress Medea betrayed her home and her father for the love of the hero Jason when she helped him to win the Golden Fleece. When Jason was unfaithful to her years later, Medea wrecked a terrible vengeance by killing Jason's lover and murdering her own children before fleeing in a chariot drawn by dragons. Jason's betrayal embittered Medea and that, plus her studies of the dark sorceries of the Serpent People, drove her mad. For millennia since, she has harbored a hatred for men and humanity in general. Daedalus clashed with Medea in the ancient world and has continued to protect humanity from her schemes up through the present day.

Star-Khan: Despot ruler of an extraterrestrial empire in an adjoining spiral arm of the Milky Way galaxy, the marauding Star-Khan fell from power in a rebellion fomented and aided by



Daedalus more than 16 years ago. Slowly reclaiming some of his previous power, Star-Khan seeks revenge against the Earthman and his world. He will add Earth to his kingdom and see Daedalus humbled before he executes him slowly and painfully.

Talos: The Greek forge god Hephaestus created an animated giant of bronze called Talos that was defeated by the hero Jason and his lover Medea. Daedalus found the damaged Talos, reduced

it to normal human size, and repaired him. The two worked together for centuries, and Talos learned much from Daedalus. Unfortunately, the artificial man came to see himself as superior to mortals and tried to convince Daedalus to help conquer and rule the ancient world. When Daedalus refused, Talos tried to kill him. The two have fought across the centuries, and Talos (and the Foundry he created) embodies all that Daedalus fears about the abuse of science and technology. The bronze man has become more obsessed over the years with the idea of repopulating the Earth with artificial beings like himself and has become a master of cybernetics, robotics, and artificial intelligence.

Taurus: Like the myths of old, the Minotaur died at the hands of Theseus (who was aided by Daedalus and Ariadne). Hades, offended by Daedalus' attempts to refuse the gift of the gods, plucked the Minotaur out of the Underworld and made him immortal, knowing the man-bull would want revenge on those who killed him. The Minotaur saw the fall of Minoan civilization and became Daedalus' foe across the centuries. Seeking physical vengeance for the first few centuries with little success, he fought Daedalus as an ally of Medea, Hades, and others. After many failures, he sought new ways to apply himself, which included renaming himself after the bull of the stars. Taurus has become a brilliant and urbane foe in modern times, and he has not indulged in a physical confrontation with any heroes for more than 30 years. Using numerous aliases and a flair for manipulating resources, he has become a silent partner and hidden financial power in many legal and illegal concerns including the *Cosa Nostra*. He now almost considers Daedalus a kindred spirit of sorts—"we are both anachronisms finding new ways to fit in a new world..."—but doesn't allow that to interfere with his plans for world-domination. As part of his covenant with Hades to keep his immortality, the man-bull sends 30 people a year to the Underworld, often by arranging accidents at businesses he owns.

DR. METROPOLIS

Where he came from is a mystery, as is what he's doing here. If he has any of the answers, he's not providing them. Still, Dr. Metropolis is the hero with perhaps the strongest ties to Freedom City, and he takes the protection of his home very seriously.

Dr. Metropolis first appeared in the aftermath of Omega's assault on Freedom City. As rescue workers and military personnel sifted through the rubble looking for survivors and surveying the damage, a group of them saw a humanoid figure rise up out of the wreckage. His body was apparently made of concrete and metal, the very substance of the materials around him. He looked at them and said, "I am Metropolis." Although he would offer no further explanation, the mysterious figure agreed to speak with the representatives of the government.

Although he did not respond to questions regarding his origins, the city-entity was intent on helping Freedom City. He began working with the scientists and rescue workers investigating the consequences and effects of the

Terminus invasion on the city. They in turn studied him, and eventually dubbed him "Dr. Metropolis," a name he accepted as his own. His ability to "connect" with the environment of the city allowed him to sense things throughout the area, so he directed emergency personnel to injured people and away from dangerous instabilities. He could also control and shape the material structure of the city at will, helping shore up damaged buildings, repairing broken water mains, and restoring many streets to allow emergency vehicles access where they were most needed.



When the relief work was complete, Dr. Metropolis helped make Mayor Michael O'Connor's dream of Freedom City a reality. With Dr. Metropolis' and Daedalus' aid, the damage to the city was repaired in record time. As a direct result of Dr. Metropolis' powers and efforts, Freedom currently features architecture unparalleled across the world and an infrastructure that is the envy of major cities around the world.

Dr. Metropolis accepted a place in the Freedom League, largely because it was the simplest way to actively help protect his home city. Some Leaguers believe that he was also looking for friends who could understand him, a hunch that has proven at least moderately true. Since then, Dr. Metropolis has won the trust and respect of his teammates, some of whom try hard to reach the gentle, artistic soul they sense beneath his cold exterior.

Quote: "The city watches with a million eyes that never sleep—and what they see, I see."

Personality: Dr. Metropolis is normally cold, distant, and inhuman. Although he expresses a devotion to justice, law, and the protection of innocent life, most normal people find his presence disturbing and his voice and gaze unsettling. His manner is extremely logical, unencumbered by human emotion, and he has virtually no sense of humor—something Johnny Rocket has unsuccessfully tried to improve on occasion.

These "lack of personality" traits are balanced by an almost childlike naiveté, a great sensitivity and awareness of the human condition, and an artistic nature. Dr. Metropolis is a contradiction—a body of cold concrete with no heart that safeguards a child or creates works of great beauty. There is a measure of sadness surrounding him, as his form merges him with the city he protects but separates him from its people.

Powers & Tactics: Dr. Metropolis has been described by some as a "city spirit." His inhuman body is an amalgamate form of concrete, metal, and glass. By all rights, he shouldn't even be able to move, much less think or talk, but he does. He ignores most human concerns, having no need to breathe, eat, or rest, and his body is incredibly strong and resilient. When he is damaged, Dr. Metropolis can rapidly "repair" himself using his powers, drawing substance from the materials around him, if need be. Even when his form is blown up, he eventually reconstitutes himself and rises to defend his city again.

Dr. Metropolis can "meld" into any city structure, his body passing harmlessly into it and disappearing. While melded with the city, he can sense ongoing trouble that harms the city (tracking for radiation, sensing the use of superhuman powers, or even listening for a particular sound) and reform himself at the site of the problem. He also has a powerful "empathy" with cities, Freedom City in particular. He can sense things happening throughout the city, sometimes in the form of visions, but usually as vague premonitions of important events.

He can bend the physical structure of a city to his will, animating and reshaping parts of it. At Dr. Metropolis' command, lampposts reach down to grab fleeing criminals; streets buckle and ripple like waves; broken window-glass fails to even touch innocent bystanders; and sidewalks grow hands to restrain opponents. No matter what happens, Dr. Metropolis makes sure everything goes

back to normal, at least in terms of the physical status of the city. If not for Dr. Metropolis' presence, the Freedom Public Works Department would need four times the personnel working around the clock to keep up with the damage the city sustains.

Appearance: Dr. Metropolis looks like a tall humanoid figure cast in concrete, with metallic bands set with green glass around his waist and wrists, and forming a sort of collar covering his upper chest, like an Egyptian pectoral. His eyes are solid white glass without any iris or pupil; they glow from within when he uses his powers. He normally wears a long green cloak with a hood drawn up over his head, casting his face into shadow. However, when merged with the city, no evidence betrays his presence, so he can be present but seemingly invisible to foes and friends alike—and this has some wondering when their windows watch them...

Campaign Use: Dr. Metropolis is an enigmatic figure who clearly works with the Freedom League for reasons of his own. As an NPC, he can provide cryptic hints and information about the city to player characters. His abilities allow him to repair the city's streets and structures quickly and easily, explaining why the damage from the previous adventure is all cleaned up by the time the next one rolls around.

Villain Option: The villainous Dr. Metropolis embodies the anguish of lives cut short by Omega's attack on Freedom City. Given form and intent, this villain seeks revenge on the heroes who failed to stop Omega soon enough. His schemes most often focus on turning the city into his private domain, cut off from the rest of the world, finding host bodies for the angry spirits of the dead, and bringing the city to life to strike back against the people inhabiting it. He is difficult to defeat because of his ability to "meld" into the city and disappear, returning some time later with a new body and a new plan.

Dr. Metropolis: PL 12; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 16 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (Teleport 55 ft.); Atk +4 melee (+4S, punch); SV Dmg +5, Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 10.

Skills: Craft (Architecture) +10, Disable Device +10, Hide +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (Freedom City) +10.

Feats: Great Fortitude, Immunity (aging, cold, disease, electricity, exhaustion, heat, poison, pressure, starvation, suffocation).

Powers: Element Control (cities) +11 [*Extras:* Animation, ESP, Incorporeal, Teleportation, Transmutation; *Power Stunt:* Extended Teleport; *Flaw:* Only Affects Urban Areas and Materials; *Source:* Alien; *Cost:* 7 pp], Protection +10 [*Extras:* Immunity, Mental Protection; *Source:* Alien; *Cost:* 4 pp], Regeneration +5 [*Flaw:* Only in Urban Environments; *Source:* Alien; *Cost:* 1 pp].

Equipment: Commlink [Radio Hearing; *Cost:* 1 pp].

Weaknesses: Disturbing, Susceptible (to non-urban environments).

DR. METROPOLIS' ROGUES GALLERY

The Curator: An alien collector of rare and precious things throughout the universe, the Curator keeps art, technology, living creatures, and even whole cities on board his star-spanning ship, preserving them for posterity. He tried to add the unique Dr. Metropolis to his collection, but failed. Some of the Curator's liv-

ing or animate specimens escaped from his ship then, and have not yet been tracked down.

The Green Man: Nathan Grovemont was a scientist whose experiments turned him into a humanoid plant. Capable of animating other plants, he dubbed himself the Green Man and the self-proclaimed "protector of the vegetable kingdom." He and Dr. Metropolis are kindred beings—both formed from what they manipulate and protect—but they are diametric opposites since the Green Man abhors urban "blasphemies" such as Freedom City and especially "the walking blight that speaks for it."

The Green Man's Allies/"Wives": Over the years, the Green Man's experiments produced three women with plant-based powers (though whether they were humans turned into plants or plants turned into women has never been determined): Flora, who can produce intoxicating pollens and scents; Maxima, who can grow to a great size with proportionate strength; and Venus Man-Trap, as deadly and poisonous as her namesake.

Hiroshima Shadow: This Japanese villain appears as a pure white silhouette surrounded by a smudged black aura. He has the power to generate and control radiation and carries a seething hatred for the United States and everything in it. He implies that he gained his powers and his current appearance from the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, but whether he is a radiation-born mutant or some sort of vengeful spirit remains unknown.

Scrap: Appearing without warning, its only purpose is destruction. The humanoid figure forms from twisted metal, broken concrete, shards of glass, trash and refuse; it never looks the same way from moment to moment, since the materials in its body are always shifting and changing. Dr. Metropolis calls this creature a "remnant," and explained it once as a

kind of ghost of the city. Scrap appears every few months, regardless of how thoroughly it is destroyed each time, and it goes on a rampage. Sometimes it seems driven by particular impulses related to someone who died in Freedom City.

The Terra King: The Terra King rules a realm beneath the surface of the Earth, and it has many connections to the tunnels beneath Freedom City. Dr. Metropolis encountered him investigating some abductions and missing persons, and he has denied the Terra King the opportunity to conquer the surface world.

X-Isle, the Living City: X-Isle, the Living City, is made up of fragments of various cities—including parts of Freedom City—drawn into the Terminus. Similar to Dr. Metropolis, X-Isle has taken on a basic intelligence and the ability to manipulate its own substance. Dr. Metropolis described the X-Isle as "lonely, but mad," and the floating city has tried to draw people to it. It kept a number of people abducted from Earth alive in a twisted kind of "ideal world" it created for them. Since Dr. Metropolis and the Atom Family rescued the people from it, X-Isle has tried other ways to either return to Earth or draw humans to it.

JOHNNY ROCKET

Johnny Wade's grandfather and namesake was the original Johnny Rocket, a member of the Liberty League in the 1940s and '50s. He was the youngest member of the team, and continued his crime-fighting career even after the League disbanded. John eventually settled down, married, and raised his children; his heroic identity faded into obscurity along with much of his powers, and Johnny Rocket's last adventure was some time in 1955. He never revealed his true identity or ever officially retired, but happily gave it up for a well-deserved normal life. John Wade's son Jacob apparently didn't inherit his father's powers, which suited John just fine.

Jake Wade married, and his son Johnny was born and raised in Freedom City. Johnny had a fairly normal childhood, unaware of his grandfather's heroic exploits until recently. Just a few years ago, one of Johnny Rocket's old foes returned after four decades in prison to even the score. Sonny Farris, the last surviving member of the TNTrio, tracked Johnny Rocket down and blasted him and his 17-year-old grandson with a simple shotgun. John Wade had enough super-speed to protect his grandson but could not save himself as well. The brutal attack and the need to rush his grandfather to the hospital gave the younger Johnny the shock he needed. He felt a surge of power through his body, and suddenly he was racing through the streets of Freedom City at super-speed! He brought his grandfather to the emergency room and immediately used his newfound powers to capture Sonny Farris.

It wasn't long before the new Johnny Rocket came to the attention of the Freedom



League, and they asked him to join up. Johnny accepted immediately, which is pretty much the way he did everything. He didn't bother with a secret identity, since his real face was already splashed on TV screens and newspapers across the country from his capture of Sonny Farris. Unfortunately, that led to problems when Johnny's other secret came out.

The media cut loose when an ex-boyfriend of the Freedom Leaguer claimed that Johnny Wade was gay, and he provided photographs that were plastered across tabloids worldwide. Rather than deny them as rumors, Johnny came out publicly in various interviews. While that derailed much of the public relations disaster, there are still conservative voices more than a year later calling for Johnny Rocket's removal from the Freedom League and citing him as a "bad influence."

The unconditional support of Johnny's grandfather and his teammates—including the usually conservative Captain Thunder—has been a big help to the young hero, both personally and publicly. John Wade makes it clear to all who will listen that he's tremendously proud of his grandson and considers him a worthy successor. The other Leaguers similarly express respect for their teammate and condemn any prejudices against him. That statement alone is enough for most people who remember the original Johnny Rocket's exploits.

Quote: "Okay, let's go!"

Personality: Johnny is, for the most part, a carefree, fun-loving individual. He lives in the moment and he enjoys his powers and his work with the Freedom League. Never terribly patient before gaining his powers, his super-speed hasn't helped to change that. He's sometimes frustrated by the fact that everything else just seems so *slow*. ("It's like I'm stuck in line behind little old ladies counting pennies in the bank *all the time*...") The one thing he can't do is just sit around and wait for something to happen; Johnny has to get out and *do* something.

Fortunately, he manages to keep busy patrolling the streets of Freedom, training with his teammates, and handling various public appearances. He's become an impromptu spokesman for the gay community although he still is uncomfortable being considered a "role model" for anyone (gay, straight, or otherwise). He can be a hothead at times and he tends to leap into action immediately. Captain Thunder has taught him a small measure of restraint, but Johnny is still usually the first Leaguer on the scene and the first to take action.

Powers & Tactics: Johnny Rocket has the ability to move at superhuman speed, so fast that he becomes a blur to the naked eye. In addition to being very difficult for most people to see, let alone hit, Johnny can perform a variety of tasks at super-speed. He can hit an opponent a dozen times before anyone even sees him move, wrap someone up in a rope or cable, or even disassemble a getaway car out from under the people in it. He's fast enough to run across water without breaking the surface tension and he can run up the sides of buildings. By vibrating his atoms at a particular frequency, Johnny can pass through solid matter like a ghost. He can whip up powerful winds by running in circles or spinning his arms, and he uses those winds to catch falling objects and people. While he's moving, Johnny's body projects an

aura that shields him and anything he wears or carries against friction, wind, and anything he might run into.

Appearance: Johnny is a handsome man in his early 20s. He's 5'10" tall with short blond hair, blue eyes, and a dazzling smile. He wears small silver hoop earrings in both ears. His costume is a V-necked one-piece spandex suit that covers his legs down to just past mid-thigh and his arms halfway down to his elbows. The costume is dark blue and white with an "R" on the chest. He wears dark blue fingerless gloves, sleek white and blue running shoes, and a pair of tinted wraparound biking goggles to protect his eyes and make a fashion statement rather than to protect his identity.

Campaign Use: Johnny Rocket is the Freedom League's resident young hothead—the member most likely to jump into the fray or attack an unexpected "visitor" to their headquarters before an explanation can be offered. If you ever want to run a "team-up battle" between the Freedom League and a player-character hero team, Johnny is a good choice for getting it started. Johnny is also someone likely to go running off (literally) in pursuit of a cause, and he's passionately devoted to what he believes in.

Johnny is also in an unusual position of being open about both his true identity and his sexual orientation. Some people are uncomfortable knowing he's gay while others try to turn him into a role model (or want to tear him down for the same reason). How the player characters feel about Johnny affects his interactions with them.

With his tremendous speed, Johnny can—and does—show up just about anywhere in the world. He's been known to go off on jaunts across the world in seconds, so he can easily show up just about anywhere the player characters are on Earth.

Villain Option: The villainous Johnny Rocket was very angry over being publicly outed, especially since he was then rejected by his close family and friends. Humiliated and embittered, he turned to a life of crime. His super-speed powers make him the perfect thief who can pass through any wall, steal anything before the security system even registers him, and evade any pursuit. He likes to play games of cat-and-mouse with the authorities, daring them to try to catch him, and his preferred targets tend to be wealthy conservatives and government institutions. He particularly enjoys making fools of heroes.

Johnny Rocket: PL 10; Init +13 (+3 Dex, +10 Super-Speed); Defense 28 (14 flat-footed); Spd 80 ft.; Atk +9 melee (+11S, mach-one punch); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +13, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills: Balance +10, Bluff +5, Search +5, Spot +5, Taunt +5.

Feats: Attack Finesse, Dodge, Evasion, Identity Change, Move-By Attack, Rapid Strike.

Powers: Super-Speed +10 [*Extra:* Mach-One Punch; *Power Stunts:* Wall Run, Water Run, Whirlwind; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 7 pp].

Equipment: Commlink [Radio Hearing; *Cost:* 1 pp].

JOHNNY ROCKET'S ROGUES GALLERY

Dr. Simian: Dr. Simian is an ape whose intellect was artificially enhanced in a laboratory—so much so that his intelligence

outstripped those who experimented on him. His anger at the treatment of lab animals made him vow to use his intellect to do the same to humanity. The antisocial ape wants nothing more than to conquer human civilization in retaliation for what they have done to animals, often using advanced technology he creates. Among other plans, he has attempted to "de-volve" humanity into apes he could rule over, but Johnny has thrown a monkey wrench in his plans every time.

Downtime: Downtime's ability to "freeze" time around him allows him to commit perfect crimes with the ability to go anywhere unseen, unheard, and unstoppable between the seconds. This crime spree ended when Johnny Rocket entered one of his "downtime" zones. While normal people freeze in time, Johnny only slowed down to normal human speeds. Overcoming Downtime without his super-speed was a trial, but Johnny was up to the challenge. The time-thief has plenty of "time" on his hands now, in Blackgate.

Glacier: A lone survivor of a mysterious race of "Ice People" from the Arctic, Gela-zir (whose attempts to tell people his name led to his moniker) has the power to generate intense cold. Discovered by explorers in a block of ice, the blue-skinned man was brought to ASTRO Labs and thawed out for study. Initially, he sought to return home and find other Ice People. While he has found others, he is unable to revive them in Earth's current climate. This has led to a number of attempts to create a new Ice Age so his people might live again, but Johnny Rocket and the Freedom League have stopped him. Glacier is currently confined to the paranormals-ready Ward Five at Providence Asylum, where he undergoes counseling for his survivor's guilt and other psychological difficulties.

The Maestro: The musical master of mayhem was a prodigy both as an artist and a scientist. He unlocked the secrets of creating subsonics to affect the human mind and nervous system back in the mid-1960s. A long-time foe of the early Freedom League, the Maestro was incarcerated at Providence Asylum for 25 years. Dr. Ashley Ellis deduced that bone-conducted vibrations from his sonic weapons helped drive the Maestro's psychoses. In 1992, a rational Basil Fatherton was released from the Asylum a free man. He remained sane until 1999, when the media onslaught and success of "musical trash" like the Boy Wonderz (see **Local Music Scene**, p. 74) made his Maestro persona re-emerge. The older man built new musical weapons to render them and a concert-hall full of fans "as justly deaf as their tastes show them to be!" Johnny pulled the plug on his performance, and the Maestro has sworn to destroy the super-speed hero.

Mercury: Though he uses his Roman name of late, the messenger of the Greek pantheon challenged Johnny Rocket to a race to find out who was truly the fastest being on two feet. Daedalus exposed Mercury's attempts at trickery during the race and Zeus ruled in favor of Johnny Rocket. Mercury is still embittered about his loss, and amuses himself by playing elaborate tricks on the speedster from time to time, despite Zeus' attempts to keep an eye on his wayward son.

Mr. Mist: Exposure to an experimental teleporter caused ASTRO Labs technician Brad Raymond's molecular cohesion to weaken, turning him into a living mist. Now able to pass through

almost any barrier but with only a limited ability to touch the world around him, Brad became slightly insane due to the sensory deprivation of his current state. Brad began stealing the money and scientific equipment he needed to try to cure his condition. Johnny Rocket managed to capture him and he's undergoing study at ASTRO Labs while they search for a cure.

The Silver Scream: Famous as a star in 1940s and 1950s horror movies, actress Lauren Hammond became typecast and ended her life in depression and suicide in the late 1950s. For some strange reason, her spirit lingered in the world of the living, with the power to manifest various movie monsters. She is one of the only foes fought by both Johnny Rockets. The modern Johnny thwarted her recent attempt on the lives of some GBN execs, but it remains to be seen if she returns for an encore.

Thrill-Kill: Johnny Rocket's evil double from Anti-Earth (p. 97) can't decide on a permanent code-name, as his patience is worse than our Johnny's—he's called himself Speed Demon, Dust Devil, Roadkiller, and a dozen other forgettable names, though he has stuck by Thrill-Kill for more than a year now without growing tired of it. He can use his super-speed vibrations to pass through the barrier between Earths, and sometimes does so to cause trouble for Johnny, imitating his double and committing crimes to ruin his heroic reputation.

LADY LIBERTY

During the American Revolutionary War, Elizabeth Forester chose to disguise herself with a mask and fight against the British as the mysterious Lady Liberty, a rallying symbol for the American people. Unfortunately, Elizabeth did not live to see the freedom she wanted for her homeland. While she nearly made it to her contacts with stolen information on British troop movements, she was gravely injured by Hessian mercenaries who ambushed her. Dying alone in the wilderness of western Massachusetts, she prayed for guidance and felt a warm and glowing light enfold her. The Spirit of Liberty heard the prayers of her loyal daughter and carried Elizabeth home with her.

In the generations that followed, the Spirit of Liberty embraced a young woman to embody her power whenever freedom needed a defender. Lady Liberty appeared on the battlefields of both World Wars, in student protests in the United States and China, and many other places over the years. A French artist captured her image in the late eighteenth century, creating the Statue of Liberty that stands to this day in New York harbor.

From 1941 until 1972, another woman wore the silver, red, white, and blue colors of Lady Liberty in America. She was more powerful than any previous incarnation with her super-strength and her ability to fly, and she proudly fought for America against the Axis powers and the threats at home. She was a sterling member of the Liberty League and was one of the few heroes to remain active without fail through the 1950s and 1960s. By 1972, her powers were fading, as was her health, so she retired after a successful crime-fighting career. The most mysterious thing about this Lady Liberty is this: No one seems to remember anything more specific about her, from the man on the street to those who fought at her side. They can remember she was there. John Wade, the origi-

ral Johnny Rocket, once testified "boy-oh-boy was she a wildcat in a scrap!", but he could provide little more information. Despite a 31-year career in the public eye as one of the more visible superheroines of her era, memories and evidence of Lady Liberty's existence fade more each day. Daedelus is currently looking into this strange phenomenon, as any number of Lady Liberty's psychic enemies or time-traveling foes could be responsible; what he and the League fears most is that their last known encounter with her was during the Terminus Invasion, and this could be some oblique and long-ranged plan instituted by Omega or one of his pawns....

The current Lady Liberty may yet outshine even her illustrious predecessor. Beth Walton had loved the Statue of Liberty ever since she was a little girl in New York City. She always looked like such a kind lady, welcoming people to a new land of hope and opportunity. She fondly remembers her father, a police officer, taking her to Liberty Island. Beth realized as she grew older that Lady Liberty looked sad and thoughtful, too. When she graduated high school, Beth had already decided to become a lawyer. She was interested in the law and questions of justice and freedom. She pursued pre-law with great diligence, scoring high marks and making her way into law school. Shortly after her graduation, she met Trevor Wright, a young NYPD officer. They began dating and eventually their relationship became quite serious.

Trevor asked Beth to marry him atop the Statue of Liberty, but unfortunately he did this at the same time a group of terrorists called Overthrow (p. 172) managed to seize the island and the statue, threatening to destroy it. Trevor tried to intervene but was shot and badly injured. In her fear and anger, Beth called out to a higher power for strength and found it when the Spirit of Liberty filled her, bringing Lady Liberty to life once again. She captured the terrorists and healed the injured, including her fiancé. Although they were both stunned by Beth's new gifts, they kept them a secret and Beth began using her powers as Lady Liberty to help people. They married almost a year later, although Beth's superhero life has threatened to tear them apart at times.

After Lady Liberty fought in the Terminus Invasion and joined the Freedom League later in 1993, she and her husband moved to Freedom City. Trevor Wright is now an FCPD detective in the Theatre District, and Beth Walton-Wright works for a legal aid clinic in the City Center when not busy with super-heroics.

Quote: "For Freedom and for Liberty!"

Personality: Lady Liberty is a passionate believer in both personal freedom and responsibility. She sees it as her duty to protect the laws that uphold the freedoms too many Americans take for granted, and she believes strongly in the American system of government and justice. She's also caring and compassionate, doing what she can to help others less fortunate. Lady Liberty is somewhat distinct from Beth, a combined personality of Beth and the



Spirit of Liberty herself. The Lady is more majestic and larger than life. She prefers to avoid becoming entangled in political matters beyond encouraging people to vote and become involved themselves. Lady Liberty has been called "Lady Liberal" by some radio talk show hosts and TV pundits who consider her views a bit "too left-wing" when it comes to personal freedoms and civil rights. ("I mean, how can that chick fly when her left wing's obviously heavier than her right wing?") She ignores such criticisms with grace and great patience.

Beth loves her husband Trevor deeply and relies on him as the center of her "normal" life. He helps keep her grounded by

reminding her of the struggles for justice endured by most non-powered heroes.

Powers & Tactics: When Beth transforms into Lady Liberty, she gains great strength, speed, and resistance to harm. She steps above many mortal concerns and does not need to breathe; she is likewise unimpeded by gravity and she can fly through air, water, or the vacuum of space. Her spirit cannot easily be bound, giving her formidable mental defenses. Lady Liberty also has a touch that can free others from pain, injury, and despair, healing wounds, banishing fear, and restoring strength.

Lady Liberty fights defensively when she must fight at all, and does her best to protect others from harm. With the Freedom League she often helps clear people away from battle-sites and out of harm's way before she will actively engage an enemy. She has clashed more than once with Captain Thunder (though never publicly) when he's ordered her into the fray and she'd rather help shepherd victims away from the battle.

Appearance: Lady Liberty is a tall, regal woman with deep, aqua-blue eyes and long, curly black hair that cascades around her shoulders. She wears a pair of hip-hugging blue pants that flare out a bit at the ankles, ankle-length black boots, and a sleeveless two-tone top, white at the bottom and red on top. A row of small white stars crosses her top at shoulder height and she wears a belt of linked silver stars around her waist.

Beth Walton-Wright is shorter than Lady Liberty, with straight, dark brown hair often in a ponytail or a braid. She wears glasses most of the time, making her look a bit more professional and bookish. Beth dresses in skirted suits for work and in comfortable clothes, particularly sweatshirts and sweaters, when she's relaxing.

Campaign Use: Lady Liberty challenges characters to live up to the strength of their convictions. While many people may find her devotion to American ideals corny and outdated, she's very sincere in her beliefs, which others may find refreshing. She's a good support character and able to use her powers to back up her teammates, even when she's more than capable of handling situations on her own. She offers the GM the opportunity for plots involving matters of liberty and justice and how they are applied in our world.

Villain Option: The villainous Lady Liberty is known as Lady Anarchy. She is a spirit of freedom as well—the kind of freedom that brought about the Terror from the ashes of the French Revolution. Lady Anarchy advocates the overthrow of all government and any rule of law. She uses her powerful presence to inspire people to throw off their chains and riot against the governments, the institutions—nearly anything—that oppress them. In truth, she is more of a terrorist inciting the overthrow of the world's governments, since chaos is the only true state of being.

Lady Liberty: PL 12; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 19 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (fly 50 ft.); Atk +9 melee (+10S, punch), +9 ranged (+10S, energy blast); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +11; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 18.

Skills: Diplomacy +10, Knowledge (history) +5, Profession (lawyer) +9, Spot +8.

Feats: Attack Finesse, Expertise, Identity Change.

Powers: Amazing Save (Willpower) +8 [Source: Mystical; Cost: 1 pp], Energy Control (light) +10 [Extras: Deflection (Deflect Others), Flight, Healing, Neutralize (Restraining Powers); Source: Mystical; Cost: 7 pp], Super-Strength +8 [Extra: Protection; Source: Mystical; Cost: 5 pp].

Equipment: Commlink [Radio Hearing; Cost: 1 pp].

LADY LIBERTY'S ROGUES GALLERY

Orion the Hunter: Jack O'Ryan, bored after a decade of big game hunting, looked for the next thrill and became a bounty hunter. Growing quickly jaded due to the lack of challenge, he changed his mind when he hunted down and captured the superhuman thieves Smash & Grab for the reward. He found great inspiration in this, and developed new weapons and new methods of hunting the most dangerous prey—superhumans. O'Ryan became Orion the Hunter as both advertising and self-aggrandizement. While he still takes bounties on supervillains, he has also begun stalking heroes on bounties set by SHADOW or Overthrow or other villains. Lady Liberty's legendary ability to escape traps has made her a favorite target and a more worthy quarry.

Overthrow: Overthrow is a radical terrorist group devoted to bringing down democratic governments. They seek to install their own kind of meritocracy, a system of government ruled by those best suited for the job—this means, of course, the leaders of Overthrow.

The Silver Hyena: African doctor and humanitarian Simon M'genda was bitten by a were-hyena and cursed to assume its form by the light of the full moon. Where Dr. M'genda is kind and caring, his alter ego is a crazed and cunning killer who wants nothing more than to find a way to remain in the world more than 3 days a month. While his form—a man-sized humanoid covered in silver and black hair with a hyena's head—is utterly inhuman, the Silver Hyena has a hypnotic voice that can mimic anyone's voice he hears. His laugh has been known to incite fear, anger, or other emotional effects.

Talona: The mysterious Talona comes from the Aerie, a hidden civilization of bird-people. She has the power to communicate with and command avians as well as her own bird-like characteristics—most prominently a pair of wings sprouting from her back, massive foot claws, and feathers where hair normally grows on humans. Fiercely protective of the natural environment, she had led "rebellions" of birds against the businesses and people of the surface world for their pollution and mistreatment. Lady Liberty and others have settled agreements with her, but Talona is proud and short-tempered, and she uses any infraction of an agreement to make more demands.

Warden: John Warden was a brilliant designer of prison systems and detention technologies, but he also lacked faith in either the justice system or its rehabilitation programs. He eventually took it upon himself to act as judge, jury, and jailer, which brought him into conflict with Lady Liberty and other heroes. Unfortunately, no jail has proven able to hold him, and Warden has returned to his "crusade," which now includes coming up with a means of trapping Lady Liberty forever.

White Knight: A small-minded bigot, Daniel Foreman was invested with power during Omega's invasion of Freedom City. He sees it as his God-given mission to "purify" the world of mongrels and deviants—in his mind, any nonwhite people. He considers Lady Liberty a "bleeding-heart woman who's gotten above herself." Fortunately, she's put the Knight back in his place every time.

TREVOR WRIGHT

Trevor Wright has always been a down-to-earth guy with a good head on his shoulders. He went to the New York Police Academy because he had a sincere interest in helping people and upholding the law. When he met Beth Walton, it was love at first sight for him, but it took some time to work up the nerve to ask her out on a date. As much as she relies on him to be her "rock," he relies on her to maintain his faith in people. No matter what, he stands by Beth simply because he loves her. Beth's role as Lady Liberty hasn't always been easy on Trevor to handle. Part of him still thinks he should be the one looking out for her. But just as she was prepared to live with the worries that come with having a cop husband, he's willing to support his superhero wife. More than once he's helped cover for Beth when she needs and opportunity to slip away to become Lady Liberty.

Trevor Wright is 33 years old. He is a husky guy who fights his receding hairline by shaving his head bald. His looks make him seem severe to those he arrests (as intended), but his disarming smile and green eyes easily make his friends relax. When he's not in uniform, he wears jeans and T-shirts or sweatshirts, particularly his favorite police academy sweatshirt. He's become a good cook since getting married and usually makes dinner for Beth when she has to "work late."

Trevor Wright: PL 2; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 13; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +3 melee (+1S, punch; +3S, tonfa), +3 ranged (+3L, pistol); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Diplomacy +3, Intimidation +2, Profession (police officer) +6, Search +3.

Feats: Alertness.

Equipment: Pistol (+3L), tonfa (+2S), handcuffs (hardness 5).

THE RAVEN

The original crime-fighting Raven has long since retired to become a husband and father. After years of missed opportunities and tragic separations, Duncan Summers and Jasmine Sin married and had a child. The thrills in Duncan Summers' life before could not compare to those instilled in him by his daughter. Callie was the apple of her father's eye, and he made sure she had nothing but the best in life. He also made sure she knew how to take care of herself, although he didn't reveal his past to her. It was something he hoped to put behind him, but it was not to be.

When Callie turned 16, her father threw her a party the likes of which the New York social scene hadn't seen in years. Unfortunately, an uninvited guest arrived—her grandfather, Dr. Sin himself. Although he hadn't been seen in years, the villainous doctor was as ageless as ever. Despite his daughter's betrayal, Dr.

Sin merely saw that Jasmine had offered him a potential heir to his works. He kidnapped Callie, intending to indoctrinate her as a true Child of Sin. Duncan got back into his Raven costume for the first time in nearly twenty years to rescue his daughter, accompanied by his equally determined wife. They were successful in freeing Callie, but Jasmine died saving her husband from one of Dr. Sin's death-rays. Not acknowledging his part in her death, Dr. Sin merely swore greater vengeance on the Raven for the death of his only child.

Callie wanted more than anything to take up her father's mantle as the Raven but he wouldn't hear of it. He couldn't bear the idea of losing her as he'd lost her mother. The stubborn 16-year-old wasn't so easily denied. She trained in secret, stole some of her father's equipment, and hacked into his obsessively complete crime files and dossiers from his years as the Raven. When he discovered she had begun operating as the Raven against his wishes, Duncan was livid, but he could not deny her even this. He eventually relented but demanded he train Callie far more thoroughly than even he had trained before taking on the mantle of the Raven. If she insisted on following the life she'd chosen, he wanted to ensure she would be safe.

A few years later, in 1993, the Raven was one of the many heroes who responded to the crisis in Freedom City when Omega attacked. Duncan and his daughter almost immediately moved to Freedom City from New York. The Summers family purchased one of the most exclusive penthouses in the city, part of which became the Rookery, the secret headquarters of the Raven. Callie joined the newly-reformed Freedom League while Duncan became headmaster of the Claremont Academy.

Quote: "The night belongs to the Raven."

Personality: Callie Summers is best described as "intense." She's driven to live up to the ideals set by her father and to avenge the death of her mother. She sincerely wants to help people and to make her father proud of her. As the Raven, she's focused on her crime-fighting work and dazzles everyone around her with her keen intellect, the strongest weapon in her arsenal. Her mind is so sharply focused and capable of unraveling mysteries, it even impresses the brilliant Daedalus at times.

The personality split between Raven and Callie is surprising to some. She is incredibly grim and unflappable when in costume or dealing with criminals, but relaxes the minute the mask comes off and is easy with a laugh when she's around her friends. As Callie Summers, she assumes the persona of a woman of wealth and privilege with little more to do with her time than sponsor charities and attend social events. Most people in the Freedom social scene consider Callie a good, if somewhat shallow, person. She has no lack of suitors, although she's never met the man she considers her match, nor will her father ever consider any man worthy of her.

Powers & Tactics: Raven has no superhuman powers. She is an extraordinarily well-trained athlete and martial artist as well as a brilliant detective, scientist, and tactician. Her skills allow her to go up against even super-powered foes and win. She carries a small arsenal of devices to aid her, including a compact grappling gun, miniature weapons, and an array of detective equipment.



Her secret lair, the Rookery, contains even more extensive equipment that is maintained and monitored by her father.

On her own, Raven usually uses weapons, particularly smoke or gas grenades, to soften up her opponents before wading into hand-to-hand combat. She typically uses her Intimidating Presence against opponents at the start of combat, giving her the edge and often allowing her to thin out the ranks of the opposition before any of them even has a chance to make a move. In a team situation, Raven coordinates tactics over the League's commlinks, if Captain Thunder hasn't already set a plan in motion. She often finds an opportunity to slip away and do some real damage to villains' plans while her teammates keep the opposition busy.

Appearance: Callie Summers is an Amerasian woman in her mid-20s. She's 5'6" tall with the lithe, muscular build of a gymnast. Her eyes are a dark violet and her hair, falling just past her shoulders, is a lustrous black. As Raven, she wears a black domino mask that flares out at the sides. Her costume consists of a black body stocking that covers her from neck to toe. There is a yellow circle on her chest around the profile of a raven's head. She wears a gray belt around her waist, within which are her equipment and weapons. Atop all this, she wears her trademark black cloak, its edges cut to cast the shadow of black feathered wings, which strikes fear into the hearts of criminals everywhere.

Campaign Use: Raven is a dark avenger of the night, suitable for interacting with street-level criminals in Southside one night, then helping the Freedom League avert a world-threatening disaster the next day. She's the most "mortal" of the Freedom League, but pushes herself to be that much better because of it. She's a skilled detective and a good way to introduce mystery adventures into the campaign. She also makes an effective foil for street-level or vigilante characters.

Villain Option: In this option, Duncan Summers failed to recover Callie from Dr. Sin's clutches and died alongside his wife. The sinister doctor brainwashed his granddaughter into becoming his loyal assistant, and completed her training, making her a skilled martial artist and designing a number of useful gadgets for her. Now the Raven serves as Dr. Sin's chief assassin and enforcer, feared throughout the world by criminals and lawful beings who dare to interfere with Dr. Sin.

Raven: PL 13; Init +10 (Dex, Super-Dexterity); Defense 26 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +12 melee (+2S, punch), +12 ranged

(+2L, throwing blades); SV Dmg +3, Fort +3, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 15, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 20, Cha 20.

Skills: Acrobatics +12, Balance +10, Bluff +10, Computers +10, Disable Device +11, Disguise +10, Drive +11, Escape Artist +10, Gather Information +10, Hide +10, Intimidate +14, Language +5, Listen +10, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +12, Pilot +11, Read Lips +10, Repair +9, Search +9, Sense Motive +10, Slight of Hand +11, Spot +9.

Feats: Assessment, Attack Finesse, Dodge, Evasion, Expertise, Improved Trip, Headquarters, Instant Stand, Move-By Attack, Startle, Surprise Strike, Takedown Attack.

Powers: Super-Dexterity +5 [Extras: Intimidating Presence, Super-Intelligence, Super-Wisdom, Super-Charisma; Source: Training; Cost: 9 pp].

Equipment: (all Devices, all Super-Science) Commlink [Radio Hearing; Cost: 1 pp], Grapple Gun [Swinging +6; Cost: 1 pp], Mask [Darkvision; Cost: 1 pp], Smoke Pellets [Obscure +2; Cost: 1 pp], Throwing Blades [Weapon +2, Extra: Multifire; Cost: 2 pp], Gadgets +5 [Cost: 1 pp].

THE RAVEN'S ROGUES GALLERY

Conundrum: The twisted master of puzzles and mazes, Conundrum is a brilliant computer programmer and mathematician who seeks a challenge for his peerless mind. He's pitted wits against the Raven on many occasions and finds it intoxicating. Although he has little need for the money he makes from his crimes, he keeps coming back for the thrills, unable to resist the challenge of Raven's finely-honed mind matched against his own.

Dr. Sin: The Raven's greatest foe and Callie's own grandfather. Dr. Tzin Sing is one of the most brilliant minds in the world, but one solely dedicated to conquest and corruption using his many inventions and schemes. He has tried on numerous occasions to win his grandchild over to his side, and still blames Duncan Summers for the death of his daughter (and Callie's mother), Jasmine.

Fear-Master: Melvin Blume found a means of using sound waves to induce fear in animals and humans. The long-bullied Blume decided to terrorize all of the people who'd mistreated him throughout his life. He adopted the cowed identity of the Fear-Master and fought Raven on several occasions, each encounter ending in his defeat and imprisonment.

Magpie: He is the world's greatest thief, thanks in no small part to exceptional cunning, magnetic allure, and his paranormal ability to teleport. The ever-suave Magpie steals largely for the thrills and the challenge the thefts represent. He's crossed swords with the Raven on several occasions and the two of them share a mutual attraction, even if Callie isn't willing to admit it even to herself.

"And now, my dear Raven, it is time for you to die. It's a pity I can't stay to watch your demise, but my robot soldiers await me to lead them to victory. Farewell, old foe." The old man hissed as he snickered, then turned his back and melted into the shadows of the far door.

"This isn't over yet, Dr. Sin!" Raven called after the mad scientist as he struggled with his bonds. Stripped of his utility belt or other equipment, he had to make do with his own skills as an escape artist. But the bonds were locked on firmly, and the platform was slowly inching toward the boiling vat of deadly chemicals. As Raven's razor-sharp mind worked quickly through his diminishing options, a voice came from the side of the chamber.

"Beloved!" cried the lovely Jasmine. Rushing to the side of the catwalk, she looked down at his peril. She moved to the control podium and pressed the switch that stopped the lowering platform and released the clamps that held him. When Raven the catwalk, she awaited him with his utility belt draped over her arm, coming to give him a passionate kiss.

"I could not allow my father to kill you, my love," she said as she swooned, leaning against the railing in her passion.

"I have to stop him, Jasmine," he said.

"I know. Go quickly and do what you must, then come back to me."

The Raven's battle against the sinister Dr. Sin proved to be his last. He defeated the doctor's robotic army and sent Sin's airship crashing into the ocean, but the crusading crime-fighter was crippled in the explosion. Although he regained the ability to walk with the use of a cane, his career as a costumed crime-fighter was over. He gladly married his beloved Jasmine and settled down in his native New York, earning acclaim as Duncan Summers, professor of criminal justice, rather than the Raven, dark avenger of the night.

Very dull, daughter. You've captured the flamboyant prose style of the pulps perfectly, but you know by now that Dr. Sin rarely snickered, your mother hardly ever swooned, and I picked the lock on those clamps with the pick hidden beneath the fake patch of skin on my left wrist.

If this is your attempt to get me to pen the memoirs of my secret life instead of merely leaving the factual files that are already at your disposal, consider the journal taken up.

DS

Toy Boy: Desmond Lettam has an unusual and seemingly incurable condition that retards aging. Even at the age of 36, he still looks like a pre-adolescent boy. Since he was to be an eternal child, Desmond became obsessed with toys and child-like pursuits. Combining his own inventiveness with the Lettam family fortune, he made or acquired a number of deadly "toys." His greatest creation was the shrinking ray used by Dr. Raymond Smalley (alias the Downsizer), with which Toy Boy reduces victims to "action-figure size" in order to "play" with them. Toy Boy has a reputation as an interna-

tional assassin for hire, and has completed numerous contracts, although he's never managed to kill the Raven or her teammates.

Wildcard: Jake Walker always had all the luck. When he was escorted from the Golden Calf after winning over a million dollars in one night, Jake Walker thought his astonishing luck had run out. The thugs threw him into an alley and shot him at point blank range, but the bullets unbelievably ricocheted around him and killed the shooters. Still banned from the Boardwalk casinos for life, the addicted gambler in Jake needed another thrill to take its place, and his realization at how strong his luck was drove him to crime. Wildcard uses a number of gimmicks based on cards, dice, chips, and gambling paraphernalia, backed by his amazing luck. Raven hates fighting Wildcard because his effect on probabilities and outcomes makes her brain itch.

DUNCAN SUMMERS

Duncan Summers was an adventurous man in his youth and his wanderlust led him to travel a great deal. While traveling in the Andes, Duncan discovered a fabulous lost treasure, but lost his parents and sister to violence back home. Duncan dedicated his newfound wealth to fighting crime and adopted the masked identity of the Raven, operating out of his native New York for many years. Among the worst criminals he battled was the sinister Dr. Sin. Raven and Sin's daughter Jasmine fell in love with each other, though their love was denied by Sin's machinations for years. After one final battle that seemed to end the life of Dr. Sin and the Raven's career, Duncan retired and married Jasmine, who later died tragically fighting to save him and her daughter from her back-from-the-dead father. Although he lost his wife some years ago, Duncan still misses her greatly. In the memory of her sacrifices to stop her father, Duncan remains dedicated to helping his daughter fight Dr. Sin and many other evils. He worries for her safety, but he's also proud she's carrying on his legacy.

Duncan decided to extend his legacy in a second way by opening the Claremont Academy in Bayview, where he schools young paranormals in the use of their powers. He splits his time between Bayview and the Raven's penthouse headquarters in Midtown. His students know "Old Man Summers" was a superhero once, and while they don't know which one, some of them are close to figuring out the truth.

Duncan Summers is in his late-50s, his black hair is white at the temples, and his face, while strong and handsome still, grows more wrinkled from worry every year. His eyes are gunmetal gray and he's clean-shaven always. He tends to wear dark turtle-necks and slacks but still looks quite dashing when forced into a tuxedo for society or charity parties. He walks with the aid of a cane, which actually conceals a climbing grapple and some of the Raven's smoke and flash pellets for emergencies. He's also adept at using the cane as a weapon, slowed only by his weakened legs.

Duncan Summers: PL 11; Init +10 (Dex, Super-Dexterity); Defense 23 (13 flat-footed); Spd 20 ft.; Atk +12 melee (+2S, punch, +4S, stick); SV Dmg +3, Fort +3, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 15, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 20, Cha 20.

Skills: Acrobatics +6, Balance +4, Bluff +12, Computers +10, Disable Device +12, Disguise +10, Drive +11, Escape Artist +11, Gather Information +10, Hide +10, Intimidate +14, Language +3, Listen +10, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +12, Pilot +11, Read Lips +10, Repair +9, Search +9, Sense Motive +10, Slight of Hand +11, Spot +9.

Feats: Assessment, Attack Finesse, Dodge, Evasion, Expertise, Improved Trip, Headquarters (Claremont Academy), Instant Stand, Startle, Surprise Strike, Takedown Attack.

Powers: Super-Dexterity +5 [Extras: Intimidating Presence, Super-Intelligence, Super-Wisdom, Super-Charisma; Source: Training; Cost: 9 pp].

Equipment: Walking Stick (+2S), Gadgets +5 [Source: Super-Science; Cost: 1 pp].

Weakness: Disabled—Lame (-5 penalty to Acrobatics, Balance, Jump checks, and Dexterity-based skill checks, base Spd. 20 ft.).

Note: At his peak, Duncan Summers' Super-Abilities were +6, he had no weakness, and he was PL 13.

SIREN

Cassandra Vale traveled to Haiti in 1962 to study the traditions of Voodoo for her doctoral thesis in psychology. Her theory proposed that the actual belief in the supernatural, wholly or at least in part, made such things possible reflexively and retroactively. She managed to earn the trust of some of the locals and gathered a great deal of information about their beliefs, even witnessing and taking part in some lesser Voodoo rituals.

While boating off the coast of Haiti near the end of her stay, Cassandra accidentally ran across a drug smuggling operation and was captured. Eliminating a potential witness, the smugglers tied her up and tossed her overboard to the sharks. Cassandra thought she would die, but as she sank into the water, she heard a gentle voice telling her not to fear. "*I will help you, if you let me,*" the voice said, and Cassandra welcomed her aid.

With Cassandra's approval, the Voodoo loa Siren, goddess of the sea, entered her body and became as one with her. The drug smugglers, watching the waters for the blood and the inevitable feeding frenzy, were startled to see a green-haired woman rise up out of the deep on the back of a shark. The ocean waves struck their boat at her command, capsizing it and dumping the drug smugglers in among the sharks. She produced a magical net from the waters that snared all the drug-runners, and she then flew them all to shore to face the authorities.

Cassandra woke up the next morning, momentarily thinking the whole experience had been some kind of strange dream. She realized it happened when Siren appeared to her in a vision and explained that she'd been chosen for a very special purpose. The goddess maintained the people of the world were ultimately good and worthy of the aid of the loa; Baron Samedi, the loa of the dead, conversely maintained that humanity responded only to base impulses and needs and were simply worthy of becoming slaves and playthings of the loa.

So it was decided that both of them would have the opportunity to prove their cases. They each chose mortals in whom they would merge to operate in the physical world, and Siren chose

Cassandra. Together, she and the loa would overcome the plans of Baron Samedi to prove humanity was worth saving. Siren didn't have long to wait before the Baron struck with his first ploy, transforming the criminals she captured into his zombie minions and sending them against her.

When Cassandra returned home to Louisiana, the sea goddess Siren became well known along the central and south Atlantic coast, fighting against smugglers, drug-runners, dangerous creatures and the agents of Baron Samedi. She aided the people of Freedom City during Hades' invasion in 1965 and became a member of the reformed Freedom League; she remained a crucial part of the League for its first five years, and then returned to New Orleans, erratically serving as a reservist member of the League for the next 20 years, since Baron Samedi concentrated his efforts far away from Freedom City. When the Baron moved to Freedom City in 1992, Siren followed, and she was on hand for the Terminus Invasion; Omega actually forced Siren and the Baron to fight side by side during the invasion, since neither loa wanted their worshippers (or themselves) to die. When the Freedom League reformed in 1994, Siren gladly rejoined comrades new and old in the fight for justice.

Quote: "Beware, mortal, you are in *my* domain now, and Siren does not permit villainy in her waters."

Personality: Cassandra Vale is a healer, a kind and compassionate woman. She's a scientist, but she's also found a strong core of faith as a result of her merger with Siren, and she believes strongly in the principles she supports. As Siren she's majestic, a true goddess, filled with love and kindness for living creatures, but also a dreadful divine wrath for the forces of evil. The water and the weather around her change to reflect Siren's anger, lending her an ominous air.

Still, Siren firmly believes in the basic goodness of humanity, despite the few examples to the contrary. She believes in peace and in settling things with a minimum of violence. She's also a believer in healing rifts between people and letting go of the conflicts of the past. Although many would like her to be a symbol of African American power and unity, she refuses to take up that role, saying that her presence is for all humanity.

Her peaceful nature does not extend to the unnatural and undead minions of Baron Samedi, which she seeks to destroy as abominations that should not exist in the world, allowing the tormented spirits bound up in them to move on to the next world.

Powers & Tactics: When she becomes Siren, Cassandra Vale's body transforms, becoming superhumanly strong, swift, and agile. Siren has the strength to resist the crushing pressure of the ocean depths, giving her tremendous strength on land. She can swim at speeds unmatched by nearly any vessel, and survive underwater as easily as she does on land.

Siren has the magical power to control water and all creatures that live in it. She can command the waves, create and direct water into powerful streams and shapes, even control the weather to a degree. She can fly through the air by commanding the wind, although not as quickly as she can swim.

Siren wields a magical net capable of entrapping opponents in its folds. Those so trapped are compelled to do as she commands, since the net captures their spirits as well as their bodies. Few are strong enough in both body and spirit to



break free once Siren's pacifying net has fallen upon them. She also can use her net to do things like catch falling objects (and people) safely. The net itself is indestructible; no force on Earth can harm it.

Appearance: Since the loa inside her halts her aging, Cassandra poses as her own nonexistent daughter Cassie Vale, much like people assume Daedalus is his own son (and the irony is lost on neither hero). Cassie appears to be an attractive light-skinned African American woman in her late-20s, even though she is in her early-60s. She wears her brown hair pulled back or braided, wears glasses over her hazel eyes, and dresses in sensible business attire, wearing more casual clothes when she's not working.

When she allows Siren to manifest fully, Cassie's body grows taller and more muscular, her hair turns green and lengthens down past her shoulders, and her eyes take on a translucent pearl color. Magically transforming Cassie's clothes when she takes over her body, Siren wears a brief bikini-style outfit with a blue-green scaled motif and decorated with shells. A coral crown holds back her hair and she wears a silver necklace. Wide silver bracelets adorn her wrists along with smaller silver anklets near her bare feet. Her net—woven of magical silver and seaweed—attaches to her bracelets and her collar, so she wears it like a cape when not using it. Siren's manner and bearing are always proud and majestic, as befits a goddess, though her serenity fades slightly whenever faced with the depredations of Baron Samedi.

Campaign Use: In addition to her role as protector of the seas, Siren is a strongly mystical character. A goddess living in the world of mortals, she swore to protect humanity from dangerous mystical threats of many sorts, not just those created by her nemesis, Baron Samedi. She can be an ally for mystical characters. Her protectiveness of the world's waterways also makes her a natural character for underwater adventures.

Villain Option: In this option, Siren isn't a protector of humanity but the embodiment of the anger of the oceans and the fury of the unfettered storm. She vents her rage against humanity for poisoning her waters and for the disdain they show for the old ways. A villainous Siren's favorite targets are polluters and those who deny the power of the loa—especially superhuman adherents of other religions. She and Baron Samedi are still enemies, but more out of a rivalry between powers of life and death than any moral conflict. They each work to thwart the other's plans, although sometimes they find reason to work together (before inevitably betraying each other).

Siren: PL 13; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 18 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (Swim 50 ft.); Atk +8 melee (+7, punch), +8 ranged (+10, water blast); SV Dmg +4, Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills: Diplomacy +5, Knowledge (oceans) +10, Knowledge (occult) +5, Language +2, Profession (psychologist) +8 (only in mortal form), Riding (cetaceans) +5.

Feats: Amphibious, Attack Finesse, Detect (Magic), Identity Change, Immunity (aging, disease).

Powers: Element Control (water) +10 [Extras: Elemental Blast, Swimming, Weather Control; Power Stunts: Dazzle (water spray),

Flight, Mind Control (Area, Only Marine Life), Suffocate, Super-Swimming; Source: Mystical; Cost: 4 pp], Super-Strength +6 [Extra: Protection; Source: Mystical; Cost: 5 pp].

Equipment: Silver Net [Snare +12; Extra: Ghost Touch; Source: Mystical; Cost: 2 pp], Commlink [Radio Hearing; Cost: 1 pp].

SIREN'S ROGUES GALLERY

Baron Samedi: Siren's arch-foe is Baron Samedi, loa of the dead and the undead. He believes humanity is subject to the base urges he commands—no more than puppets with him holding the strings. His criminal empire and his legions of zombies and other Voodoo monsters further his goals of corrupting humanity and proving them unworthy of protection from the other loa.

Cap'n Kraken: An alien pirate with a head like a giant squid, this extraterrestrial adapted his body to survive on land as well as underwater. He and his high-tech band of raiders were stranded on Earth for a time, stealing what they needed to repair their damaged starship until Siren captured them. He may have some ties to the Terminus as he and his men fought with Omega during the Terminus Invasion.

Captain Blood: Brought back across the veil of death by Baron Samedi, the legendary pirate Captain Blood exerted enough of his own will and spirit to break free after a minor escapade against Siren. Now captain of his own fate again, he roams the seas in his ghost ship, plundering as in the old days, all the while searching for souls to add to his ghost crew. He's made many ghost sailors out of drug smugglers whose boats he sinks and plunders, though they take on the antiquated personae and clothing of eighteenth century pirates.

The Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign: Siren has come into conflict with this sinister cult many times over the years. She has fought cells made up of Serpent People, humans, and half-breeds, all of whom worship the terrible Unspeakable One and seek to bring their mad god to Earth.

Devil-Ray: The U.S. Navy intended the Devil-Ray project as a new model diving suit based on the most advanced technology available. Unfortunately, a criminal diver, Carl Mattus, stole it during its testing phase and has since used it to become the scourge of the oceans, particularly in the area of illegal salvage operations and treasure plundering. Siren has fought the modern-day pirate in the deep and above it.

Lady Mamba: A now-aging Voodoo priestess and half-blooded Serpent Person, Lady Mamba uses her power over snakes and serpent creatures in her crimes. She was also one of the leading Serpent People cultists in Freedom City in the late 1960s. Her adult children now attend her, and both of them have her powers.

The Mayombe: A cult that worships corrupt and evil Voodoo spirits, the Mayombe work against the cause of Siren and has cooperated with Baron Samedi in the past. They have few members in Freedom City, but have been known to draw Siren's attentions back to Louisiana time and again.

Megalodon: A paraplegic marine biologist and research scientist, Connor Kirkstrom experimented with shark cartilage and DNA as research on tissue regeneration. The legless man used himself as a test subject and succeeded only in transforming him-

self into a monster. Connor, under the influence of his serum, transforms into a shark-human hybrid form, and from this form he can fully morph into a giant megalodon—a 12-foot-long prehistoric shark—consumed with bloodlust. In either form, Megalodon mentally commands other sharks. The longer he remains in either form, the more of his own humanity he loses. Although Connor has been captured and cured of his condition twice, he has “relapsed” without taking the serum and has become the Megalodon again. Researchers wonder if the next cure will work at all, let alone last.

THE ATOM FAMILY

The world-famous Atom Family are a family of adventurers and explorers who investigate strange phenomena and fight threats to the safety of Freedom City and the world. The team currently consists of the four grandchildren of Dr. Alexander Atom, their friend and legal guardian Jack Wolf, and their grandfather's intellect collected within the computers of their headquarters, the Goodman Building in Freedom City.

The history of this most unusual family begins with Dr. Alexander Atom, a renowned scientist and adventurer in the 1930s and 1940s. Like Johnny Danger and Duncan Summers at the time, Dr. Atom explored lost and hidden civilizations in various parts of the world. While they uncovered riches, unfortunate events seemed to conspire to keep Alexander from making any of his discoveries public—He often found dire threats to humanity, such as his first encounters with the Sub-Terrans and their underground kingdom, or unbelievable wonders, like the dinosaur-riddled Lost World in South America. On those occasions, Dr. Atom and his allies protected the world from threats they didn't even know existed.

During World War II, Dr. Atom worked on occasion with the Liberty League as a scientist for the team. Rumor has it that he also worked on the Manhattan Project, although he never discussed the matter with anyone. During the war, he met and fell in love with Marie Vaulaire, a daring French resistance fighter. Their affair was a brief, passionate one, but Marie died fighting against the Nazis soon thereafter. The heartbroken Dr. Atom threw himself into his work, and this decade of furious activity and invention excluded nearly everyone save Anne Banks, a much-younger woman who became his laboratory assistant, then partner, and eventually his wife. Anne said that she had to pursue her husband “with relentless determination,” but in the end she got the brilliant but emotionally-blocked scientist to realize what he had right in front of him.

Their daughter, Andrea, was born in 1959. She grew up with her mother's beauty and tenacity and her father's brilliance. The Atoms later took in Jack Wolf, the son of one of Alexander's friends, an astronaut lost on an early orbital mission. Jack was a few years older than Andrea, and the two of them became close.

In 1972, Anna Atom succumbed to cancer, despite her husband's valiant efforts to save her. Dr. Atom continued to raise his daughter and foster son alone but too often buried himself into his research and writing about his earlier adventures. He began to study robotics and computers more in-depth, building robotic

playmates and nannies to help care for Andrea and Jack. Andrea attended MIT as a freshman in 1976, and there she saw the performance of a “mentalist” named Mentac, who debunked psychic research. When she also discovered Mentac had actual psychic powers, she confronted him to find out his story. Mentac explained that he pretended to be a stage mentalist and debunked psychics since he'd been taught to hide his true abilities. Besides, it also was a way for him to find psychics who abused their abilities and bring them to justice. Andrea introduced Mentac to her father's attention, and the psychic began a long association with the Atom Family.

During the late 1970s, the quartet of Dr. Atom, Andrea, Mentac, and Jack Wolf explored strange phenomena and fought many menaces about which the world never learned. Andrea became more and more attracted to the mysterious and aloof Mentac, while Jack silently carried a torch for Andrea. Andrea's distant father, of course, remained largely unaware of the romantic entanglements of his young protégés.

In 1980, Mentac finally told the Atom Family he was an exiled prince from Farside City, a city located on the dark side of the Moon (see **Farside City**, p. 93). They confronted Mentac's aunt, Lady Lunar, and overthrew her despotic control of the city. Having admired the ideals of the American system of government on Earth, Mentac abdicated his potential throne as the last surviving member of the Farside royal family. Instead, he helped install a democratic government elected by the people. In the midst of the celebrations, he also finally admitted his feelings for Andrea, and they married two years later. Jack Wolf left his foster-family, heartbroken over losing Andrea, and spent some time working as a mercenary in various parts of the world.

Andrea and Mentac had their first child, a boy they named Maximus, in 1984. Three others followed: Tess in 1985, Victoria in 1987, and Chase in 1990. In 1997, when Maximus turned 13, everyone learned that the Atom children were unusual. The young Atoms were all mutants, whether that stemmed from their father's unearthly heritage and psychic abilities, their mother's various adventures, or their parents' exposure to so many strange and unusual locales. Like most mutations, the exact cause remains unknown, but the Atom kids each possessed superhuman powers that manifested at puberty, if not earlier, and their parents and grandfather struggled to teach them how to control and master them.

By the late 1980s, Dr. Atom began his own battle with cancer. He kept the extent of his condition a secret, but Andrea discovered the truth some time later. Then disaster struck Freedom City in 1993 when Omega, the Lord of the Terminus, invaded Freedom City through the dimensional rift that existed within their own headquarters. The Atom Family failed to close the breach before it yawned wide and an armada of Terminus ships destroyed the top four floors of the Goodman Building and began laying waste to Freedom City. While Dr. Atom worked to save the city and close the Terminus Breach from this reality, Andrea and Mentac dove into the Terminus to try to keep Omega from emerging. The three adults left the children in the care of the house robots on the lowest and only undamaged floor of their home. The Atom kids



were't so easily dissuaded, and they felt they had enough mastery of their powers to follow their elders. Unfortunately, they were too late to save them.

Andrea and Mentac failed to stop Omega's emergence and appeared to be atomized by the mad god's power. Distracted during the crisis, Dr. Atom and the children helped Centurion and other heroes defeat Omega and reseal the Terminus Breach that floated among the ruins of the Goodman Building. Dr. Atom's health rapidly began to fail due to exhaustion from the invasion and grief over the loss of his daughter and son-in-law. Refusing to leave his grandchildren all alone in the world, he asked Jack Wolf to return and become the children's guardian. As a final experiment and a last-ditch safeguard to protect his grandchildren (and his inventions), Alexander Atom transferred his intellect and memories into a uniquely-designed computer system just as his body finally gave out and died. Now "Uncle Jack" acts as the kids' legal guardian and teacher, aided by Dr. Atom in a holographic representation of his head (affectionately called "Gramps" or "Oz the Great and Terrible" by Maximus). Dr. Atom can manifest his mind briefly inside the A.L.E.X. android if he needs to act physically instead of manipulating things inside the computer, but this puts great strain on both the android's encephalorganic programs and the integrity of the doctor's neuralgorithmic templates.

Campaign Use: All members of the Atom Family are explorers at heart, with Dr. Atom's keen intellect guiding their travels into the Terminus, to the Moon, and to faraway lands. If anyone is likely to discover aliens, lost worlds, or similar things in the campaign, it's the Atom Family. They're also likely to stir up trouble from time to time, and may need the help of other heroes. For example, the Atoms might be captured, or even replaced, by advance scouts for an alien invasion (such as the Grue, see p. 94). The disappearance of a team is always a potential hook for an adventure.

The Atom siblings are also still kids in many ways, and they are all prone to getting into the same sorts of trouble kids always manage to find. They make a useful foil for a group of teen heroes, such as the Next-Gen, while older heroes may feel a certain responsibility toward the young Atoms. Still, despite their youth, they've been dealing with the unusual from childhood and they know what they're doing. In fact, it's the everyday-life quandaries that are far more difficult for the Atoms, whether they are dating, asserting one's independence, or simply making new friends outside of the family.

Villain Option: The villainous Atom Family was raised by their grandfather as a "science experiment" to develop and test their superhuman powers. The brainwashed kids are little more than biological robots trained to do whatever the cold and calculating Dr. Atom wants. Jack Wolf is the doctor's loyal flunky who helps to keep the kids in line and make sure none of them gets any ideas about leaving the family. The team's crimes tend to focus on valuable scientific data and equipment, with occasional thefts to fund their activities (and Dr. Atom's experiments).

DR. ATOM

In the 1930s, Alexander Atom was a brilliant scientist, inventor, and adventurer. He went to places most people barely imagined

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE ATOMS?

Mentac and Andrea Atom, contrary to popular belief, did in fact survive their encounter with Omega. They were sealed within the Terminus when the villain was defeated by Centurion. Andrea was badly injured when Omega's armor exploded inside the Terminus Breach, while shock waves and energies rippling through the Transition Zone between universes changed Mentac entirely.

Exposure to the energies of the Terminus and close exposure to the unleashed entropic radiation of Omega caused the Farsider to achieve his full psionic potential. Mentac became a being of pure mental energy with formidable mental powers, which he used not only to save them both but also to help seal the Terminus Breach from the inside. Mentac managed to seal his wife into a protective and regenerative cocoon that slowly restores her to health before his psionic energy dwindled due to exhaustion. His psionic self merged with some of the displaced matter of the Zone, dragging him away from the asteroid on which Andrea's healing cocoon rests. Mentac stores up psionic energy in the crystalline structure of his prison, sometimes psychically linking with his wife but often sending out psychic flares through the Transition Zone in hopes of their being rescued.

Heroes in the Terminus may stumble upon Andrea and Mentac's presence (especially if one of them is a telepath). Alternately, Mentac may be able to telepathically contact his son Chase in one of his infrequent psychic flares. Chase and the Atom Family may enlist the aid of the PCs in going to the Terminus and finding their missing loved ones.

Rescuing Andrea requires merely finding her regenerative cocoon and releasing her from it; she was fully healed about a year ago, but she hibernates until rescued. Recovering Mentac is a much harder prospect. It should involve a trip into a dreamscape or astral reality to fully bring Mentac's consciousness back together and then free it from its crystalline prison. Even then, Mentac may never be able to return to corporeal existence, or he could choose to explore the Terminus and the multiverse in his new state as an evolved psionic being. This latter option opens up the possibility of a relationship between Andrea Atom and Jack Wolf, once the emotional scars of her separation from Mentac heal.

and achieved more with his life than most could ever know. He also died in recent years, but death hardly slowed him down much at all. Before his death, Dr. Atom transferred his intellect, memories, and personality into an incredibly-advanced computer system of his own design. He lives on as a disembodied intelligence "inside" a virtual world of his own making. This has not only given Dr. Atom a kind of immortality but, more importantly, allows him to continue his work and care for his beloved grandchildren.

These days, Dr. Atom is physically confined to the computer system in the Nucleus, the Atom Family's home in Freedom City, but his mind can roam the Internet and he can project a holographic image of himself anywhere within the Goodman Building. Sub-space communication implants also allow Dr. Atom to communicate with the rest of the Atom Family, no matter where they are, from Midtown to the depths of the Terminus. This allows him to constantly observe and advise his grandchildren and their guardian.

MORPHIC MOLECULE BODYSUITS

Alexander Atom invented "Morphic molecules" in the late 1940s to service the needs of the growing superhuman population. Dr. Atom created a reflexively adaptive fabric, the molecules of which adjust to whatever changes or stresses happen to it. In essence, he'd created something that could stand up to people's superpowers without having to replace the costume after each battle. The patent on the morphic molecules has earned the Atoms a fortune, as has the manufacturing of custom-designed superhero suits in morphic molecules.

Members of the Atom Family each have their own morphic molecule bodysuits, and they all share these characteristics: The suit is form-fitting, covering the entire body from the neck down. A black stripe runs down the front to the right of center and an atom symbol sits over the right breast in the middle of the line. The right side of the suit is silver while the left side is a metallic color assigned to each of the children. Max's suits are blue, Tess wears red, Vicky's suits are green; and Chase has purple on his bodysuit.

The suits can be programmed or mentally commanded to shape themselves into any set of clothing desired by the wearer. Receiver circuits embedded microscopically on the suit allow the wearer to use any surface as a computer, TV, or video screen for two-way communication.

Although he's gotten a touch crotchety in his old age, Dr. Atom still has his dry wit and caring nature. He loves his grandchildren dearly and treats Jack Wolf like the son he never had. Most other people find him pleasant enough (for a hologram) but sometimes find his leaps of logic and his jargon-filled speeches difficult to follow.

Dr. Atom: PL 9; Init +17 (Int); Defense 5 (immobile); Spd 0 ft.; Atk —; SV Dmg —, Fort —, Ref —, Will +11; Str —, Dex —, Con —, Int 20, Wis 18, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +9, Computers +19, Concentration +8, Diplomacy +7, Disable Device +20, Knowledge (strange phenomena) +20, Knowledge (all others, untrained) +17, Languages (French, Latin, Russian), Medicine +7, Profession (scientist) +9, Repair +22, Science (physics) +22, Science (mechanics) +22, Science (all others, untrained) +17.

Feats: Assessment, Iron Will, Mental Link (x5), Radio Broadcast, Radio Hearing.

Powers: Amazing Save (Will) +5 [Source: Training; Cost: 1 pp], Datalink +10 [Source: Super-Science; Cost: 2 pp], Super-Intelligence +12 [Source: Training; Cost: 2 pp].

Notes: Dr. Atom is a disembodied intellect stored in a computer in the Nucleus. As such, he has no physical ability scores and is immune to most physical concerns. He can mentally communicate with his grandchildren via a hyperspatial link. His computer system is hardness 15. If it ceases functioning, Dr. Atom is offline until his system can be restored from backups in the Nucleus.

JACK WOLF

Jack Wolf is the legal guardian of the three minor Atom children, a parental position in which he never expected to find himself. Dr. Atom took young Jack Wolf in as a foster child when his father, Lt. Col. John Wolf, was lost on a space mission. Jack had a stormy

relationship with his adoptive "sister" Andrea for a time, which eventually deepened into true affection, and even love on Jack's part. He and Mentac struck sparks from the start, partly because of the conflict between Mentac's intellect and biting wit and Jack's rough-and-tumble attitude. For the most part, Jack was just jealous of the affection that Andrea showed Mentac. When the Atom Family visited Farside City, they discovered the truth about Mentac's heritage and also discovered the fate of Jack's father, who was rescued and lived among the Farsiders (where he remains today).

When Andrea and Mentac became romantically involved, Jack left in anger and became a soldier of fortune, fighting in various brush wars and conflicts around the world. He did his best to forget the Atoms until he heard about Omega's assault on Freedom City. He returned too late to save either Andrea or Mentac, but he was there for Dr. Atom and Andrea's children.

Jack became their guardian when Dr. Atom died, since the legality of a computerized intellect being "alive" or not is pending, as is its functionality as a child's guardian. Although he doesn't have any super-powers of his own, Jack still accompanies the Atom Family into action, and is often the de-facto pilot. He is more than capable of taking care of himself, and he pulls the kids out of trouble regularly, while they've surprisingly done the same for him on a few occasions. No matter what happens, the kids know their "Uncle Jack" will take care of them.

Jack Wolf: PL 12; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 20 (17 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +10 melee (+4S, punch), +9 ranged (+5S/L, blaster); SV Dmg +6, Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills: Acrobatics +8, Bluff +8, Climb +8, Demolitions +5, Disable Device +5, Drive +10, Hide +8, Intimidate +10, Jump +8, Knowledge (geopolitics) +5, Languages (Russian and Spanish), Listen +7, Medicine +5, Move Silently +8, Pilot +10, Profession (soldier) +8, Repair +5, Spot +7, Survival +7, Taunt +8.

Feats: Assessment, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Leadership, Lightning Reflexes, Mental Link (with Dr. Atom), Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Stunning Attack, Takedown Attack, Toughness.

Equipment: Blaster rifle [+5 Weapon; Power Stunts: Dual Damage; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 1 pp].

Wolfjack: PL 10; Init +10 (+3 Dex, +3 Super-Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Defense 22 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +10 melee (+9L, claws); SV Dmg +12, Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 16, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +4, Hide +4, Intimidate +10, Jump +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +5, Survival +5.

Feats: Darkvision, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness.

Powers: Amazing Save (Damage) +6 [Source: Alien; Cost: 1 pp], Natural Weapon (claws) +2 [Source: Alien; Cost: 2 pp], Regeneration +10 [Flaw: not against damage from fire, silver, or magic; Source: Alien; Cost: 1 pp], Super-Senses +10 [Source: Alien;

Cost: 2 pp], Super-Strength +3 [Extra: Super-Dexterity; Source: Alien; Cost: 7 pp].

Weaknesses: Berserker, Transformation.

A.L.E.X.

Dr. Atom designed the Artificial Life-form Experiment (or ALEX) as a helper, lab assistant, and robotic nanny for his daughter and later his grandchildren. ALEX has long been a part of the Atom Family, taking care of their home and headquarters and serving as the family's loyal valet. Programmed with an artificial but adaptive intelligence, ALEX has adopted a caustic personality and an upper-class British accent, although he is capable of speaking in more than 200 living, dead, and alien languages with a variety of accents. None of the Atom Family thinks of ALEX as an "it," despite his status as an artificial being. He worries over the safety of the Atom children and keeps everything in the Goodman Building running smoothly. ALEX and Jack Wolf have traded quips ever since Jack was a teenager, and although each finds the other frustrating at times, they are actually loyal friends beneath the surface.

A.L.E.X.: PL 6; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 15 (14 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (+4S, punch); SV Dmg +10, Fort —, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 12, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Listen +6, Profession (butler) +12, Repair +8, Search +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6.

Feats: Darkvision, Radio Broadcast, Radio Hearing.

Powers: Comprehend +6 [Source: Super-Science; Cost: 2 pp], Super-Strength +4 [Source: Super-Science; Cost: 4 pp].

MAXIMUS "MAX" ATOM

Maximus is the oldest of the Atom children, born in 1984. From his earliest childhood, he took more after his "uncle" Jack Wolf, physically active and daring. He quickly learned responsibility for his younger siblings and has helped look after them. Maximus was the second of the children to manifest super-powers as well, at the age of 13. Already famous as the grandchild of Dr. Atom, Maximus quickly became known for his own accomplishments. He became the leader of his siblings in more ways than one, helping his parents to train them as he learned to understand and control his own abilities.

Maximus has become quite close to his Uncle Jack since his return and he admires him greatly. Although he's not really aware of it, Maximus also feels a little guilty about this, because Jack is the kind of man he always wished his father Mentac had been. He feels like he's betraying his father's memory, and that drives Maximus harder to make himself someone his parents would have been proud of.

Quote: "Now you've got a *really* big problem!"

Personality: Maximus Atom is serious and dedicated to his studies and his family. He's boisterous and athletic, outgoing and friendly. He's a bit overawed by his younger siblings' intellect, and makes light of his own mind, even though he is smart in his own right. He takes responsibility for his sisters and brother and for Jack Wolf too, even though Jack supposedly looks out for them.

Maximus' self-confidence wanes only around one influence—girls. Despite his normal gregariousness, Max is very shy, unsure of himself, and clumsy around them. He's attracted to Rapport of the Psions, but hasn't let that interfere when the two families come into conflict.

Powers & Tactics: Maximus can control his body's atomic structure to a limited degree. He can grow to tremendous size, shrink down to only six inches tall, and shift his molecular valence out of phase with other matter, letting him pass through it. In his giant form he's also very tough; few weapons can pierce his skin.

Maximus typically grows in response to danger, allowing him to oversee the situation and protect his family when necessary. He doesn't hesitate to jump in front of attacks to shield others, and he uses his great size and reach to deal with opponents. He'll often carry Vicky and Chase in his giant form.

In situations that call for stealth, Maximus shrinks down or "ghosts" through solid obstacles. He's been known to hitch a ride with Victoria in his miniature form, and the two of them make a great infiltration team (especially mind-linked to Chase).

Appearance: Maximus Atom is a handsome, athletic young man with a broad-shouldered football player's build. He has short, dark brown hair, blue eyes, a strong chin, and an easy smile. He almost always wears one of his morphic bodysuits.

Maximus Atom: PL 10; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 17 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +7 melee (+3S, punch, +13S with Growth); SV Dmg +3, Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 15.

Skills: Climb +8, Computers +6, Knowledge (Freedom City) +7, Listen +6, Pilot +8, Repair +5, Spot +6.

Feats: Attack Focus (unarmed), Expertise, Mental Link (with Dr. Atom), Power Attack.

Powers: Growth +10 [Extras: Incorporeal (affected by radiation), Shrinking; Source: Mutation; Cost: 8 pp].

TESS ATOM

Tess is only a year younger than her brother Maximus, but she seems more mature in some ways. Although Maximus is certainly the leader of the siblings, Tess is definitely the brains of the outfit. She has her grandfather's and her mother's sharp intellect, and a harsh wit to go with it. She learns more all the time and spends much of her off time helping her grandfather with experiments as both his assistant and his hands for delicate work.

There's little doubt that Tess will go on to become a brilliant scientist. She's already taking classes at the Hanover Institute of Technology, although the school's administration worries that her presence might lead a enemy of the Atom Family to attack the isolated Tess on campus.

Quote: "The energy emissions are consistent with my hypothesis. I can handle it!"





Personality: Tess Atom lets Maximus take the lead while she advises him and figures things out. She's always thinking, looking for new things to study and new opportunities to learn. Even in her spare time, she enjoys puzzles and intellectual games like chess (which she plays with Chase and her grandfather). She's excited by a new experiment or something new to study.

She sees the threats the Atom Family deals with as more puzzles to solve, although if a member of her family is threatened, Tess doesn't play around. She's entirely unaware of how attractive she is and somewhat clueless when it comes to having boys fawn over her. For her to be attracted to a guy, he'd have to be her intellectual equal, and she hasn't met up with anyone like that yet. However, she *does* have a bit of a schoolgirl crush on Daedalus of the Freedom League.

Powers & Tactics: Tess can generate and control nucleonic energy fields, surround herself with a glowing force field, and fly through the air. She can generate bursts of energy, ranging from blinding light to a disintegrative force that dissolves molecular bonds, although she never uses that against living opponents. She can even create fields of force away from her body, shaping them into walls or a platform. Tess is in excellent physical condition, and trains regularly in the use of her powers.

Tess's abilities make her the aerial and artillery support in the Atom Family, since she can attack opponents at range while flying up out of reach. She frequently carries one or more of her siblings with her into the air (particularly if Maximus shrinks down to an easily portable size), and she's the one who catches them if they fall. She tends to hang back, peppering opponents with ranged attacks while looking for weaknesses and advising Maximus on tactics.

Appearance: Tess Atom is 5'9" tall with an athletic build. She has straight, light brown hair that falls just past her shoulders. She often wears her hair back in a single ponytail to keep it out of her face. Her eyes are an amazing shade of pumpkin, which mirrors the dominant color of her energy powers as well. When she's reading or working in the lab she usually wears glasses (and sometimes a white lab coat). Otherwise, like the others, she wears her morphic molecule bodysuit.

Tess Atom: PL 10; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 19 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +7 ranged (+10S, energy blast); SV Dmg +3, Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 11, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills: Computers +11, Listen +7, Science (Physics) +11, Search +8, Spot +7.

Feats: Accurate Attack, Expertise, Immunity (radiation), Iron Will, Mental Link (with Dr. Atom), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Talented (Computers and Science).

Powers: Energy Control (radiation) +10 [Extras: Energy Blast, Create Object, Flight, Force Field; *Power Stunt:* Dazzle; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 6 pp].

VICTORIA "VICKY" ATOM

Victoria, age 15, is two years younger than her sister Tess. Vicky is quieter and less self-assured than her older siblings. She tends to blend into the background rather than taking the forefront figuratively and literally, since Victoria can transform into almost anything. She's very intelligent but more bookish than Tess. She loves to read and often has her nose buried in a book, reading anything from fiction to science, history, current events, and journalism. She frequently presents obscure facts and figures, and she's particularly fascinated with reading about various superheroes.

Quote: "You don't like me? I can change, I swear!"

Personality: Vicky is quiet and reserved compared to her older siblings. She's very much the peacemaker of the family, and does her best to keep everyone happy and together. She's very curious and interested in new ideas and new experiences and is remarkably open-minded for her age. She doesn't judge by appearances and has the ability to see things from other points of view fairly easily, which may come from her ability to literally put herself in others' places. Her willingness to believe that there's some good in everyone can get her into trouble sometimes, especially when coupled with her curiosity. She's closest to her younger brother, Chase, and is particularly protective of him.

Powers & Tactics: Victoria can control her body's molecules like Maximus can, but she does so with more precision. She can transform into virtually any shape she can imagine, ranging in size from twelve feet in height to about two feet tall. She can stretch out to great lengths or assume a semisolid form that allows her to flow like water through small cracks and openings. Her body is naturally resilient, making her more resistant to physical harm.

Victoria is the Atom Family's infiltration expert, able to go almost anywhere. She's also been known to use her shapechanging to sow confusion among her opponents by mimicking one of them. In a fight, she tends to assume a larger form and grab opponents or tangle them up in a stretchy form, holding them just long enough for Max or Tess to hit them hard.

Appearance: Vicky is a perky and bright young teenage girl. She has light brown hair that she often wears in braids or pigtails, aquamarine eyes, and she has a dusting of freckles over her nose and cheeks. Like her siblings, she frequently wears a bodysuit instead of street clothes.

Victoria Atom: PL 10; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 20 (17 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +5 melee (+1S, punch); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +8, Disguise +9, Listen +6, Knowledge (Freedom City) +5, Search +8, Spot +6.

Feats: Improved Grapple, Mental Link (with Dr. Atom), Surprise Strike, Stunning Attack, Talented (Bluff and Disguise).

Powers: Shapeshift +10 [Extras: Elongation, Movement, Plasticity, Protection; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 6 pp].



CHASE ATOM

The youngest of the Atom siblings at 13, Chase Atom's mental powers resemble those of his father, Mentac. Chase is the "baby" of the family, although he's very intelligent and sophisticated for a boy just entering adolescence. Chase's mental powers emerged earlier than the abilities of any of his siblings, starting when he was only seven years old, so he's had almost as much time to learn to control and use them as his older brother and sisters.

Dr. Atom has confided in Jack Wolf that Chase may potentially be the most powerful of all of his grandchildren. There appears to be a special connection between Chase and the Moonstone, the alien artifact that is the power-source of the Farsider civilization. With the power of the Moonstone, Chase's abilities could be magnified tremendously, perhaps even permanently. Jack and Dr. Atom keep this information to themselves, since they don't want to place any more burdens on young Chase or his siblings. It's possible that Chase has the potential to become a being of pure psionic energy, much like his father has (see

Whatever Happened to the Atoms?

on p. 121, for details). While on a recent visit to the Moon and Farside City, Chase acquired a genetically-altered monkey as a pet. He named him Cosmo and the "moon monkey" is Chase's best friend and constant companion.

Quote: "You think Earth is an easy target

for you? Think again."

Personality: Chase is a boy rapidly taking on adult responsibilities. He's fairly serious, although he does occasionally enjoy playing practical jokes on his siblings (sometimes with the help of his grandfather in the computer). He's smart, clever, and constantly sensitive to the feelings of others, due to his psychic abilities. He admires his brother Max and looks up to his grandfather and Jack Wolf as his role models. He wants very much to make them all proud of him. He loves both of his sisters, although he's closer to Vicky than Tess. Chase is very serious-minded when it comes to responsibility, since it's been drilled into him since childhood. He never uses his powers carelessly or thoughtlessly and he makes it a point not to read other people's thoughts without a good reason. Chase may have the potential to actually control other people's minds, but the idea is so repugnant to him that he will likely never develop it.

Chase has led a strange life, to say the least. Although he's seen alien worlds and fought cosmic beings, he gets uncomfortable in the mundane environments of normal kids his age. A plan to send Chase to an ordinary school rather than tutoring him at the Nucleus worked out poorly. Dr. Atom would like to see Chase with a few friends his own age, but Chase is mostly content in the company of his siblings and his pet, Cosmo. Chase has made one friend his own age—Ray Gardener, Jr.—when the Atom Family visited Freedom Hall recently. The two boys hit it off and Dr. Atom gave Ray an open invitation to visit the Nucleus any time to play

roleplaying games with Chase; Ray has since deemed ALEX the "coolest GM ever thanks to all those different voices."

Powers & Tactics: Chase Atom has telepathic abilities. He can read minds and project mental illusions into the minds of others. He can project very powerful mental blasts, either to stun or incapacitate sentient beings, but they tire him out fairly quickly. He has learned to shield his own thoughts and he can link the minds of his siblings together, allowing them to communicate instantly and silently. On Jack Wolf's suggestion, Chase has developed a trick of monitoring the surface thoughts of those around him in combat to give him a split-second warning so he can avoid an attack before it comes.

Although mentally powerful, Chase isn't any more physically capable than most 13-year-olds. He tends to stay out of the line of fire in a fight and use his mental powers from cover.

Appearance: Chase is a small boy just entering puberty, with a thin build and a head of black hair. His eyes change color with his mood, ranging from blue to green to stormy gray and he still has a masterful pout when he's upset or angry. Cosmo the moon monkey often perches on his shoulder.

Chase Atom: PL 10; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 19 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +3 melee (+OS, punch), +7 mental (+10S, mental blast); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +14; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 18, Cha 13.

Skills: Diplomacy +6, Handle Animal +6, Knowledge (Freedom City) +5, Listen +6, Piloting +4, Sense Motive, +8, Spot +6.

Feats: Dodge, Evasion, Indomitable Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mental Link (with Dr. Atom), Mental Link (with Cosmo), Sidekick (Cosmo).

Powers: Amazing Save (Will) +10 [Source: Training; Cost: 1 pp], Telepathy +10 [Extras: Group Link, Illusion, Memory Alteration, Mental Blast (Flaw—tiring); Source: Mutation; Cost: 6 pp].

COSMO THE MOON MONKEY

Chase's pet Cosmo is a genetically engineered mutant monkey from Farside City. Cosmo looks much like an Earth spider-monkey with pale blue fur. He's more intelligent than an Earth monkey, and can understand almost any simple command and even communicate to a limited degree using sign language (or telepathy via Chase). Cosmo also has the ability to teleport himself and others in contact with him. This has allowed him to 'port his best-friend Chase out of trouble from time to time. However, it also allows Cosmo to get into a great deal of trouble, since it's impossible to keep him inside (or anywhere else he doesn't want to be) for any length of time.

Cosmo the Moon Monkey: Tiny; PL 7; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 20 (+2 size, 18 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (climb 30 ft., teleport 40 ft.); Atk +2 melee (-4S, bite); SV Dmg +0, Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Balance +10, Climb +13, Hide +13, Listen +4, Spot +4.

Feats: Attack Finesse, Extra Limbs (prehensile tail), Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Mental Link (with Chase).



Powers: Teleportation +8 [Extras: Blink, Passengers; *Power Stunt:* Extended Teleport; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 5 pp].

THE ATOM FAMILY'S ROGUES GALLERY

The Collective: No one is sure where they came from or what they want beyond food and a place to nest, but the horror called the Collective is made up of thousands upon thousands of albino cockroaches from the depths of the Freedom underground. They may have been accidentally mutated by exposure to radiation or spilled chemicals, or they could have been purposely created in some sort of lab. They appear to have an insectoid hive mind intelligence with some psionic powers directly related to the size of the swarm.

The Cosmic Mind: Dr. Mina Kosmova, a former associate of Dr. Atom, made psychic contact with the gestalt intelligence of an alien species in the early 1970s using a new communication technology she developed. A power overload killed her physical body but both freed her mind from the restraints of physical existence and weakened her sanity. She became a being of pure thought, and ever since she has forged isolated "group minds" by forcing entire towns to work toward her goals. She constantly strives to boost her power in a quest to eventually eliminate all individual thought and unite the Earth as a single hive-mind with her as its queen.

The Factor Four: These four criminals obtained powers based on the four elements using ancient mystical artifacts they uncovered from an ancient Atlantean outpost in the jungles of Ecuador. They're led by Professor Fathom, a scientist with water-based powers who sees himself as a rival of Dr. Atom. The other members of the team include Sylph (air powers), Pyre (flame powers), and Granite (stone powers). The Factor Four have attempted to seize control of Dr. Atom's holographic matrix in the past, and Professor Fathom is always looking for opportunities to prove himself Dr. Atom's intellectual superior.

Gamma, the Atom-Smasher: An atomic mutant from birth, Gamma blames Dr. Atom for the death of his father. Gamma has superhuman strength and toughness along with the ability to absorb and generate nuclear energy. His hatred of the Atom Family only grows each time they defeat him.

Lady Lunar: Mentac's aunt (and thus the Atom Family's great-aunt) betrayed the Farsider royal family and seized the throne of Farside City for herself until Mentac's return to Saruen (p. 93). Her frequent use of the Moonstone left her sanity in question, but gave her formidable energy controlling powers. Lady Lunar, while apparently destroyed when she was overthrown, has since restored herself and gathered allies among the fringes of the Farsider society. She has transferred her hatred of Mentac onto his children. She remains a menace to Farside City and the Atom Family.

The Psions: Parker Psion was a sometime associate and rival of Alexander Atom, starting back in graduate school more than 60 years ago. Jealous of Atom's famous exploits and accomplishments, Parker worked to boost his and his children's brain power. By 1970, the old man succeeded in granting his two sons and one daughter psionic abilities. He and his children built an estate high in the Colorado Rockies where they could raise the next generation in isolation. The four young girls and one boy lost their parents to avalanches outside the complex over the years and since have been raised solely by their grandfather. The Psions are close to the Atom Family in age and there's a definite rivalry between them. The young Psions, due to the theories espoused by the ancient Parker Psion, consider themselves the next stage of human evolution. All they know is they are superior to "normals," and can't understand why the Atom Family doesn't share their views.

The Soldiers of Fortune: These super-powered mercenaries work for the highest bidder. Their leader is a former associate of Jack Wolf's from his own mercenary days, and a number of the "Fortunes" also hold old grudges against him.

Wolfjack: Years ago, Lady Lunar exposed Jack Wolf to the energies of the Moonstone and transformed him into Wolfjack, a savage wolf-man that drew animal power and enhanced strength and savagery from the cycles of the moon. The Atom Family restored Jack to normal, although he changed into Wolfjack on one other occasion and when a mystic force split Wolfjack off from him, both of them nearly died until they were recombined. Dr. Atom believes that the most recent cure is permanent, but he is reluctant to say that Wolfjack will *never* return.



THE NEXT-GEN

When Duncan Summers, the original Raven, purchased the failing Claremont Academy in the Bayview area of Freedom City, he had no intention of seeing another hero team in Freedom City. The Academy had once been a prestigious private school, but fell on hard times due to economics and had closed after sustaining massive damage during the Terminus Invasion. Summers had a somewhat different idea in mind for the school—taking his experiences and what he'd learned in his superhero career and passing that knowledge on to a new generation. There were more young superhumans in the world than before, and they needed someone to teach them how to control their powers and use them constructively. They also needed someone looking out for them to keep them out of the clutches of villains like the Mastermind and Dr. Sin or SHADOW. Duncan reluctantly trained his daughter Callie to become the second Raven, and he grew surprised at how much he enjoyed teaching her and sharing what he knew.

With his renowned detective skills and contacts throughout the superhuman community, Mr. Summers quickly gathered students, and in fact it took longer to purchase, repair, refurbish, and staff the Academy than it did to find its first graduating class. Duncan found out very quickly that working with his new students wasn't at all like training his daughter. Callie had a rebellious and independent streak, but she still loved him as her father. It took a lot more time to build trust with these new kids and win them over. In the end, they taught Duncan as much as he taught them. Although they complain that "Old Man Summers" is hard on them, they respect him, and all his students would do almost anything for him.

The students at the Academy weren't intended to be super-heroes, at least not until they completed their training in a few years. The superhero business has rarely been a safe place for amateurs, as far as Summers was concerned. Fate led some Academy students into a battle against various supervillains, simply because "no other heroes were around to fight the bad guys, so we did." Using their training, the kids prevailed, and the surrounding news cameras caught them in action. Sonic's enthusiastic sound bite to Channel 3's Amy Feng cemented their name and attitude for the public from the start. She asked, "You're all so young, and yet obviously capable. Have you worked with the Freedom League or learned from them?" Beaming broadly into the cameras, Sonic fired back, "Nah, they're old school. We're the Next-Gen!" As fate would have it, the new heroes had their name as well.

Although he officially discourages their "extra-circular activities," Duncan Summers is secretly proud of his Next-Gen students. But since they insist on being dragged into the heroic world, he gives them heroic levels of additional training and studies to prepare them either for the life they chose or the life that chose them. Becoming a member of the Next-Gen is now a cherished goal among the younger students at the Academy.

BOWMAN

The fourth to carry this heroic mantle, Fletcher Beaumont III ("Fletch" to his friends) comes from a long line of heroes. His grandfather and namesake was the original Bowman in the 1940s and a founder of the Liberty League. Fletch's father served as the second Arrow under the original Bowman's ward, Timothy Quinn, who was the first Arrow and the second Bowman. Fletcher II also became the third Bowman and trained Ethan Keller, the third Arrow, but his problems with alcoholism forced him to retire in disgrace. Despite that ignominy, the Bowman's name still means a lot to the city and the Beaumont family, so Fletch has a lot to live up to. His father, grandfather, and "Uncle Tim" taught Fletch how to handle a bow from the time he was old enough to hold one. He's grown up to be an accomplished athlete, a clever student, and perhaps one of the greatest archers who ever lived, certainly besting his father's skills with a bow. Unfortunately, Fletch hasn't had many chances to be a kid.

After the split between Fletcher Beaumont II and Ethan Keller, the Bowman was absent from the superhero scene for quite some time. Keller soon adopted the code-name Archer and formed

FORCE Ops. From the time he was a boy, Fletch wanted to restore the identity of the Bowman and prove himself worthy of the name. Although his father was initially reluctant, Fletch won out. His father still insisted that Fletch attend the new Claremont Academy for training beyond what the three elder archers could teach him. He's been a star student there for the past few years.

Quote: "Are you kidding? My grandpa was putting the smack-down on losers like you in the '40s!"

Personality: Bowman is cool, confident, and collected. He's been training as a hero for as long as he can remember, so he really doesn't know any other sort of life. He's a natural leader with a take-charge attitude and a demeanor that commands respect. He bravely faces down powerful supervillains with no real powers beyond his skills and training.

Although he's a very capable young man, Bowman has a bit of trouble when it comes to dealing with the mundane world. He was born into wealth and privilege, trained all his life as a hero, and now attends an exclusive private school. He doesn't really know what it's like to be just an ordinary kid, and he tends to stumble when confronted with the affairs of everyday life. For example, he doesn't understand women at all. He's not especially awkward, just clueless. Fletch is so intensely focused on his calling in life that it can be difficult to get him to take a break just to have fun or to bend the rules a little. Given time, he'll probably learn better, provided he doesn't drive his classmates crazy before then.

Powers & Tactics: Bowman has no superhuman powers, but he's an extraordinary athlete, particularly in the areas of gymnastics and track-and-field. His greatest talent lies in archery. He has trained, primarily with a compound longbow, for most of life, to the point where firing a bow is as natural as breathing. In recent years, Bowman has been studying advanced Zen techniques of archery to such a degree that his skill is uncanny. He's incredibly accurate with many other ranged weapons, but only his predecessors can equal his skill with a bow. His grandfather proudly points

THE SCHOOL FOR SUPER-VILLAINY

If the Gamemaster wishes, the Claremont Academy could actually be a secret training center for super-criminals. A master-villain like Dr. Sin, the Mastermind, or Malador the Mystic could run the school, with or without the help of a villainous version of Duncan Summers. The students are trained to control and understand their powers so they can become the super-powered agents and shock troops of the master villain; they could also be trained super-mercenaries available to the highest bidders. Heroes can stumble upon the secret of the school and try to expose the truth. The Next-Gen make particularly good villains in a campaign in which the player characters are all young heroes attending a public high school, with the "private school kids" as rivals and secret enemies.

If nothing else, an evil version of the Claremont Academy exists on Anti-Earth (p. 97), and it may be possible for the heroic and villainous versions of the Next-Gen to meet each other. A botched spell by Seven could cause the two teams to switch places and the heroes of Freedom City would have to deal with an evil version of the teen heroes running amok.

out that Fletch has more skill than any of the previous Bowman did at his age.

Bowman carries a custom-made compound longbow with a heavy pull that can collapse at the touch of a button and magnetically clamp to the back of his quiver. He also carries a quiver of specially-designed arrows with a number of different devices and functions, including stun arrows, net-arrows, sonic screamers, gas arrows, and various others. The shafts of the arrows are coded in Braille so Bowman can recognize them by touch and organized so he can find any particular arrow in a split-second. Magnetic clamps hold the arrows in the quiver until Bowman draws them, even if he's hanging upside down.

Appearance: Fletcher Beaumont III is slightly above average height at 5'11", with the build of an Olympic gymnast. His red hair is cut fairly short and he has pale blue eyes and a dazzling smile. As Bowman, his costume consists of a slate-colored tunic with a hooded mask, gloves, and archer's arm-guards. He wears a tailored suit of fine gold chainmail links beneath his costume and a black quiver strapped to his belt. He always has his bow close at hand. Out of uniform, Fletch dresses in Polo-style shirts and pullovers with chinos or cargo pants.

Campaign Use: Bowman is a legacy hero, the fourth man to carry on a heroic tradition with a long and honorable history. The burden is a lot for a young man to live up to, but he bears it well. Due to the expectations put on the Bowman by past history, there may be times when he'll doubt his abilities or his worthiness. Bowman is the dedicated leader of the Next-Gen, and he knows he and his team want to be good examples for other young heroes. Before he can do that, Bowman has a few things to learn about himself and his role in the world.

Villain Option: The villainous Bowman either comes from a long line of criminals and thieves or decided to rebel against his heroic heritage. Perhaps the experiences of Ethan Keller (the Archer) made Fletch cynical and jaded, or maybe he simply grew up spoiled and rotten and turned to crime when his family cut him off. Either way, he uses his natural charisma and leadership abilities to get others to take risks for him and plays the supervillain game for kicks.

Bowman: PL 12; Init +8 (Dex, Super-Dexterity); Defense 24 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +8 melee (+2S, punch), +10 ranged (+5S/L, bow); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +10, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 18.

Skills: Acrobatics +10, Balance +10, Bluff +10, Drive +9, Hide +10, Intimidate +9, Jump +8, Knowledge (Freedom City) +8, Listen +9, Move Silently +10, Pilot +9, Repair +6, Search +9, Sense Motive +10, Spot +11, Taunt +10.

Feats: Attack Focus (ranged), Dodge, Evasion, Expertise, Far Shot, Improved Critical (bow), Instant Stand, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Ricochet Attack, Quick Draw.

Powers: Super-Dex +4 [Extra: Super-Senses; Source: Training; Cost: 4 pp].

Equipment: Bow [Weapon +5; Extra: Swinging (cable arrow)]
Power Stunts: Dual Damage, Obscure (smokescreen arrow), Slick (oil-slick arrow), Snare (net arrow), Stun Attack (electrical arrow);
Source: Super-Science; Cost: 2 pp].

MEGASTAR

In the depths of space, a scout ship from the Lor Republic encountered a Grue Marauder. The Grue knew what the Lor vessel carried and attacked it for plunder. The attack crippled the Lor vessel, but



it still managed to evade its Grue attackers and crash land on Earth.

Christopher Beck was camping by himself and saw the scout ship crash. At the crash site, Chris found three dead men—they looked human but two of them had antennae and another had feathers instead of hair. A fourth human with gold eyes was still alive and gasped at him, "Keep it safe. Take the M.E.G.A.S. and keep it safe from..." The man died in Chris' arms, and a glowing silvery metal dripped out of the box in the pilot's dead hands. That metal slithered up—against the pull of gravity—and began to flow all over Chris' body. Chris panicked and tried to run as the metal wrapped around his head. Unfortunately, he ran right into the shock nets of the Grue warriors.

As he fell down, Chris heard another calming voice that the ugly blob-like aliens didn't hear. In a mechanical yet feminine voice, it said, "M.E.G.A.S. partially online, awaiting full reboot and unification. Status: user emotionally agitated; physically protections at 65% efficiency. Options: Offensive return fire or device nullification and energy absorption?" Chris opened his eyes and was surprised he could see, even though the weird metal still totally covered his face. It also

seemed to put cross-hairs along his line of sight, and those the video-game aficionado understood. "Return fire!" Chris yelled, pointing at the three Grue. He howled excitedly as energy blasts came out from his hands and easily sent the aliens packing.

Within a few days, Chris learned an incredible amount about this metallic liquid. The Metamorphic Encephalic Guidance and Attack Suspension was an ancient technological artifact recently discovered on one of the Lor Empire's frontier worlds, and they believed it was a Preserver artifact, whatever that meant. All Chris knew was that it saved his life, was wicked cool, was really smart,

gave him super-powers, and it wanted to merge with him as its chosen host (before its own energy reserves were exhausted and it died). While the last part sounded weird, the rest was a no-brainer. Chris said yes, and the technologically sentient liquid seeped into his tissues, bones, blood, and bioelectric field. When merged with a host, the M.E.G.A.S. could remain mostly hidden within him or fully manifested as a silver sheen over his skin that exaggerated the body beneath it. When fully active, it boosted his physical abilities and attributes and provided other enhancements like flying. Chris used the alien artifact to become a superhero, adopting the none-too-subtle name of Megastar.

After two weeks of practicing as Megastar, he tried to join the Freedom League, but his interview and try-out with Daedelus and Raven was interrupted by a Lor squadron sent to recover the M.E.G.A.S. artifact. Without any explanation, Lor Captain Skeshar trained an energy beam at Megastar, which painfully pulled the M.E.G.A.S. off and out of him slowly and revealed his teenaged form beneath the silver shell. Daedelus and Raven fought Skeshar and his Lor squadron to protect the boy from harm. When they finally realized it had bonded with the Earthling as its host for the extent of the boy's lifetime, the Lor left in disgust. Knowing his true age, the League couldn't accept him into their ranks, but Raven secretly got Chris a full scholarship to the Claremont Academy and suggested he go there "to learn more about the responsibilities of power and being a hero, while also learning to pass algebra." Chris accepted the offer and has become the Academy's most powerful student thus far.

Quote: "Don't worry, I can handle it!"

Personality:

Chris Beck is a pretty ordinary fifteen-year-old boy, or at

least he was until he came into possession

of one of the most powerful weapons in the universe. Being a superhero is a dream come true for Chris, although he often wishes that he had the experience and confidence that Megastar looks like he has. Megastar is earnest, helpful, and enthusiastic, but he's not entirely aware of his own strength. He sometimes makes rookie mistakes that make his solution almost as bad as the problem, but he always cleans up his own messes. He looks up to Bowman as something of a role model, although he also wishes that he had Sonic's self-assurance.



Powers & Tactics: When he touches a spot on his left arm, Christopher Beck's body shimmers as silvery metal flows out of and over his skin, transforming him into his Megastar form. (Chris presses a tattooed spot and visualizes squeezing the silver out over himself, though with time, he should be able to manifest as Megastar without anything more than a shifting thought.) The shell, while covering him, is a part of him as well, and when fully energized and manifested, Megastar is super-strong and highly resistant to injury. He can fly very fast and even achieve interstellar speeds through the vacuum of space. Megastar has no need to breathe, since his shell renders him immune to environmental conditions.

Megastar also has sporadic access to information provided by the sentientech within the alien artifact; Chris refers to the intelligence as "Meg," and he can telepathically talk to "her" inside his head since they both technically share the same form. "Her" analyses of situations only come if the artifact registers danger that can actually harm her/it/them or if Chris asks for such analyses specifically. So, from time to time, Megastar has flashes of insight into a particular thing or situation. Unfortunately, they aren't terribly reliable, and Chris doesn't think he controls when they happen. Chris, as Megastar, could have access to so much more data, but "Meg" is not programmed to tell him everything she/it is capable of doing (unless, of course, Chris activates its training mode which could open up more powers for Megastar and make those bursts of insight more regular).

Appearance: Christopher Beck is a thin, black-haired, fifteen-year-old boy. He typically wears baggy jeans and shirts with long sleeves, since the hidden M.E.G.A.S. still show as elaborate tattoos. The tattoos range across the left side of his torso (partially up his neck and shoulder and down his left arm and left leg), but they particularly focus around the heart; according to "Meg," the tattoos mimic Preserver runes, though no one has translated the messages (partially due to bashfulness on Chris' part). The one cosmetic benefit Chris enjoys most is the technology inside him seems somehow to have cleared up his troublesome acne.

Megastar originally appeared as a simple, sleek silver figure with no outstanding details other than an enhanced musculature. This appearance serves as his default, but he has since created several more, making himself appear more heroic by adding details like hair, mid-calf motorcycle boots, form-fitting pants, a belt with a large oval buckle (showing a Preserver rune), a form-fitting black short-sleeved shirt, and a small mask.

Campaign Use: Although Megastar appears to be an adult and capable hero, he's really a kid at heart. He has considerable power and must learn to use it responsibly. His youth and inexperience make Megastar a potential dupe for mind-controlling or deceptive villains, and aliens may visit Earth to attempt to recover the M.E.G.A.S. from him, by force, if necessary.

Villain Option: Christopher Beck was in the woods hiding out from the law, with a juvenile rap sheet as long as his arm. When he found the dying aliens, he took the M.E.G.A.S. and left them to perish. Now he uses the power of Megastar to do whatever he wants, and anybody who gets in his way is in for a world of hurt.

His only problem is that the aliens want to reclaim what he stole from them, and they're willing to do it over his dead body.

Megastar: PL 10; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 15 (14 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 melee (+10S, punch), +7 ranged (+10S, energy blast); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Listen +6, Spot +6, Taunt +8.

Feats: Assessment, Identity Change, Iron Will.

Powers: Energy Blast +10 [Extra: Flight; Power Stunts: Super-Flight, Space Flight; Source: Alien; Cost: 3 pp], Super-Strength +10 [Extras: Immunity, Protection; Source: Alien; Cost: 6 pp].

NEREID

Thetis is the granddaughter of the original Siren, the 1940s superheroine, member of the Liberty League, and now Queen Mother of Atlantis. Thetis' father is the King of Atlantis, and both he and her grandmother felt Thetis needed an understanding of the surface world and its people if she was to deal with it as Queen of Atlantis someday. They made arrangements with Duncan Summers for Thetis to attend the Claremont Academy as a student while also getting some training in the use of her powers. Thetis adopted the codename Nereid, from the mythic spirits of the sea.

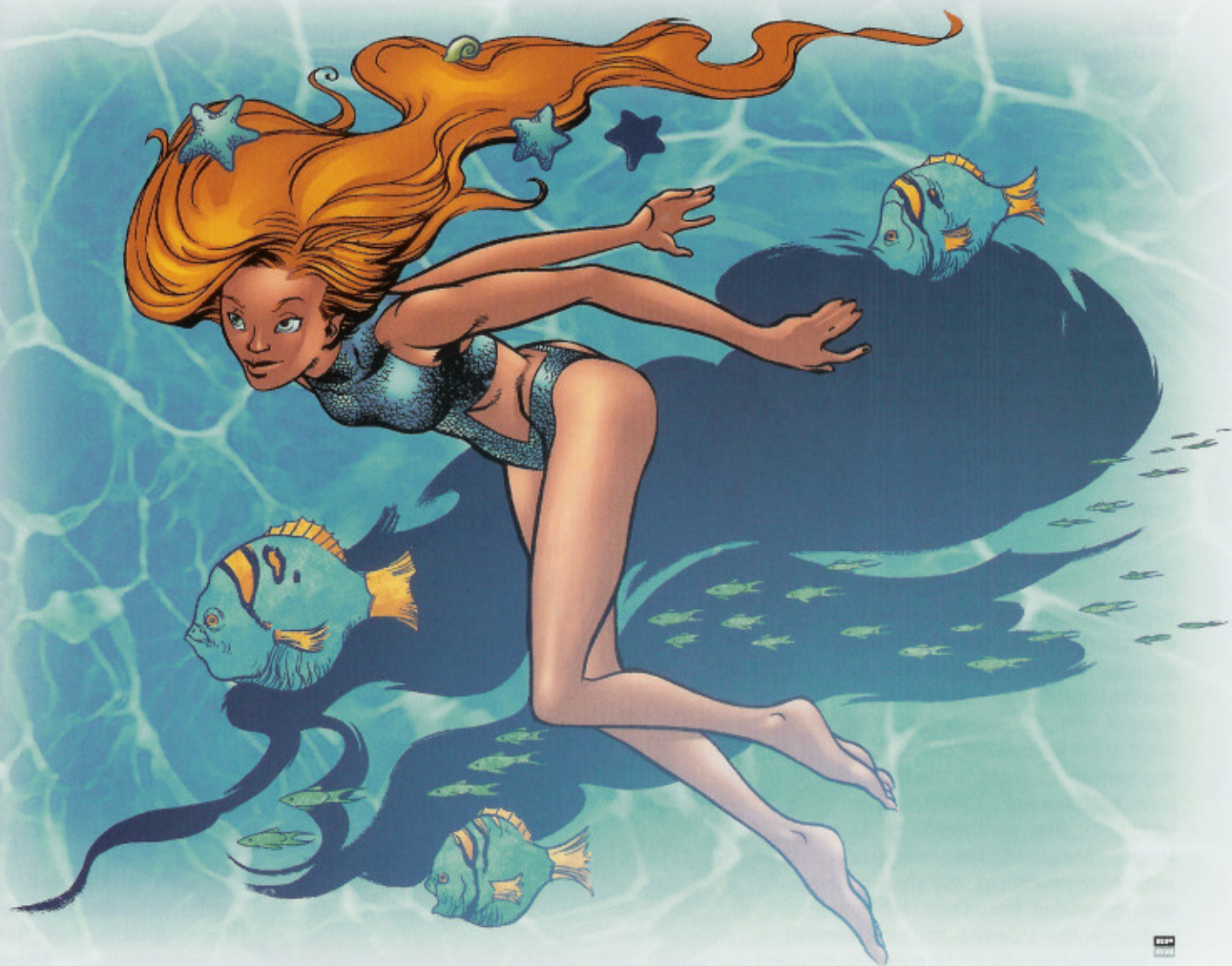
Thetis has found adapting to life in the surface world both exhilarating and frustrating at times. She was raised as royalty in Atlantis, so she's used to having things her way. It has also taken her some time to get used to the customs of surface-folk, although she enjoys much of the culture that Freedom City has to offer. She still finds some surface ways puzzling, but she heeds the advice of Mr. Summers as her teacher. In addition to her studies at the Academy, Nereid has even worked with her grandmother's namesake, the current Siren, on a few occasions.

Quote: "Great Neptune!"

Personality: Nereid is of noble blood and it shows in her manner and her actions. She is surprisingly humble and not overly spoiled, but she is used to thinking of herself as better than "common folk" in many ways. She understands that a heavy duty comes with her role as princess of Atlantis, and sometimes wishes that she could just be an ordinary teenager. She loves her life on the surface world because it allows her to forget her duties and responsibilities, if only for a while. She makes friends easily, and she never hesitates to offer her opinion. She was trained to fight and defend herself from a very young age, so anyone who thinks that she's "just a little girl" quickly learns otherwise.

Powers & Tactics: Nereid has all the normal water-breathing powers of her Atlantean heritage, so she is super-strong and able to swim at great speeds. She can breathe both water and air, and operates easily underwater. She also shares some of her grandmother's supernatural gifts and has the mystical ability to transform herself into water, which allows her to flow out of most restraints or traps and to slip through tiny cracks and openings.

Appearance: Nereid is a teenaged girl with long, blonde hair and sea-green eyes. She has a lithe, swimmer's build and wears a blue and silver-scaled one-piece bathing suit made of morphic



molecules so the suit transforms along with her. She often wears her costume beneath her street clothes, from which she can flow as easily as water.

Campaign Use: Nereid is a link with the underwater civilization of Atlantis (p. 89) and enemies of her kingdom may try to kidnap or strike at her. Her royal responsibilities may come back to haunt her at the least opportune time. Another possibility that Thetis must face is the need to take a husband to be her consort and king when the time comes for her to inherit the throne. Would-be conquerors might try to force Nereid to marry them to legitimize their claim to Atlantis.

Villain Option: Nereid is actually the daughter of the king's uncle, who objected to his older brother marrying a surface woman and covets the throne for himself and the "true" bloodline of Atlantis, rather than the half-breed on the throne. She is a spoiled and vicious princess who intends to rule over an Atlantis free of the "taint" of surface-folk, then leading her people to eliminate the threat of the surface-dwellers once and for all.

Nereid: PL 10; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 19 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 melee (+8S, punch); SV Dmg +3, Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills: Acrobatics +8, Jump +10, Knowledge (oceans) +5, Listen +7, Spot +7, Survival +8, Swim +12.

Feats: Amphibious, Darkvision, Underwater Combat.

Powers: Alternate Form (water) +8 [Source: Mystical; Cost: 5 pp], Super-Strength +6 [Extra: Protection; Source: Alien; Cost: 5 pp], Swimming +8 [Power Stunt: Super-Swimming; Source: Alien; Cost: 2 pp].

SEVEN

In the early years of her life, Serena Vervain didn't know she was any different from other children. She grew up in the West End of Freedom City, raised by her grandmother after her parents died in an accident. Her Nana taught Serena about herbs and folk remedies, read her stories and faerie tales, and told her about the little people and the spirits, both good and bad. Serena learned not to talk to other children about these things; they were part of the secret world that she shared only with her Nana.

When Serena turned thirteen, she learned the truth. She came from a bloodline of witches that stretched back to the founding days of Freedom City. The gift often skipped generations, as it did with her mother, but Serena showed signs of being the most gifted witch in her family's history and the seventh to wield a witch's true potential of powers. As Serena's gifts awakened, she learned her family had enemies, some of them ancient, and she would need protection from them. Her grandmother enrolled Serena at the Claremont Academy, where she could hone her gifts and benefit from both its protection and its education. There she took the codename "Seven," as seven is a magical number and she was the seventh fully-realized witch of her bloodline. Now, at the age of 16, Serena has proven an exemplary student, and she has also begun learning from Adrian Eldrich, Earth's master mage (p. 135).

Although she knows nothing of him yet, Serena's greatest enemy is lawyer Lucius Cabot (p. 53), an immortal who sold his soul to the forces of evil. Cabot is troubled by a prophecy that says the descendant of a witch he helped to hang will prove to be his undoing. He has carefully eliminated these descendants over the years. After arranging the accident that killed Serena's parents, he believed that he was safe, but the prophecy will not be denied unless Cabot can eliminate Seven as well.

Quote: "Great Goddess, aid your daughter!"

Personality: Serena is a vivacious young woman with a love of life. She's friendly and cares about others, doing her best to make them feel comfortable. In many ways, she's the spiritual heart of the Next-Gen, helping to settle fights and getting every-



one to cooperate.

While the team respects Bowman, everyone loves Seven and talks to her. She balances both her mundane and magical studies with fighting

alongside the Next-Gen and having fun and relaxing. She naively encourages everyone else to do as much, since she assumes they can manage their time like she does. She's always organizing trips to the mall or the movies or something to break up the team's routine, and she constantly encourages Bowman and Nereid to lighten up. She loves Chris (Megastar) like the little brother she never had but she is blind to his crush on her.

Powers & Tactics: Seven is a witch, able to cast various spells. Her primary power is control over the elements (air, earth, fire, and water). She is also sensitive to mystical forces, and can sense when they are nearby. Her powers are still developing. Sometimes she can cast more complex and powerful spells with a bit of preparation and access to her spellbooks and grimoires (and the use of a Hero Point for the power stunt).

Appearance: Seven is an attractive young woman with long, black hair and green-gold eyes. She often dresses in a black, dark

blue, or dark green dress over a pair of similarly colored thigh-high boots. Pouches of herbs and other spell components hang from her belt.

Campaign Use: Seven is a sorceress-in-training with the potential to be one of the most powerful spellcasters in the world. Heroes may help protect her from more powerful enemies seeking to do her harm before she can challenge their might. They might have to deal with the effects of a failed spell or enchantment on Seven's part. Mystic heroes could even become mentors or teachers for Seven, perhaps guest-lecturers or tutors at the Claremont Academy or simply consultants and allies brought to the enigmatic home of Adrian Eldrich.

Villain Option: Seven *does* come from a long line of witches, but they are all evil to the core. She is a true bad seed, tainted from the very beginning. Her unleashed powers led to her parents' deaths. Her grandmother, the stern priestess of a secret black magic coven, raised her. Now the old woman fears Seven's growing power, and tries to keep the girl under her thumb, but Seven is rebellious and wants to have *fun* with her power.

Seven: PL 10; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 17 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 ranged (+9L, fire blast); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 17.

Skills: Bluff +8, Concentration +12, Knowledge (occult) +7, Sense Motive +7.

Feats: Dodge, Lighting Reflexes, Skill Focus (Concentration), Mystic Awareness.

Powers: Amazing Save (Will) +6 [Source: Training; Cost: 1 pp], Sorcery +9 [Spells: Air Control, Animation, ESP, Flight, Force Field, Obscure, Snare; Power Stunts: Earth Control, Fire Control, Water Control; Source: Mystical; Cost: 7 pp].

LILLIAN VERVAIN

Seven's grandmother Lillian grew up in a very different time, when the Craft was something special, something secret, not something for crass entertainment in the media and on television. In her day, it was something kept secret, shared only within the family, and never talked about openly among strangers or friends. Although Lillian never had the kind of power that Serena possesses, she still uses her own modest gifts clandestinely in her herbalists' shop, which lies on Morrow Street two blocks away from her house on Sindella Boulevard. Although she seems like nothing more than a kind, elderly widow living in an old house in the West End, Lillian has actually lived a fairly adventurous life, and knows people like Adrian Eldrich and Duncan Summers because of it. As to the exact nature of those friendships over the years, Lillian merely smiles wistfully and changes the subject.

Lillian continues to teach her granddaughter what she can and supports her growth as a witch. Tremendously proud of Serena, she still fears the day when she'll have to leave the girl on her own. Lillian uses her own mystic powers rarely due to the strain they place upon her. She's well known in the West End as a source of sage advice and every folk and homeopathic cure known for 100 years. She's also pleasant enough company regardless, and Lil is always available for a cup of tea and sympathy.

Lillian Vervain is a thin, slight woman just under five feet tall. She wears her snow-white hair up in a bun always, though a few pictures show her with waist-length jet-black hair in her youth. She wears simple dresses these days, and often wears an apron whether she's at home cooking and cleaning or puttering around the herbalists' shop she still operates three days a week. She's an excellent cook, "since it's one of the best sorts of magic for everyone." Serena's classmates never turn down an offer of dinner at Nana Vervain's house.

Lillian Vervain: PL 7; Init +0 (Dex); Defense 13; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +3 ranged (+5L, fire blast); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +10; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 19, Cha 15.

Skills: Concentration +13, Handle Animal +5, Knowledge (occult) +10, Profession (cook) +12, Sense Motive +13.

Feats: Mystic Awareness.

Powers: Sorcery +5 [Spells: Air Control, Animation, ESP, Flight, Force Field, Obscure, Snare; Power Stunts: Earth Control, Fire Control, Water Control; Source: Mystical; Cost: 7 pp], Super-Wisdom +6 [Source: Training; Cost: 3 pp].

SONIC

Lemar Phillips had a pretty ordinary childhood growing up in Lincoln. He got into his share of trouble, although he was basically a good kid. He ran with a pretty rough crowd until he caught the attention of Wilson Jeffers, the director of the Lincoln Youth Center. Wilson helped give Lemar some direction and in many ways became the father figure he lacked at home.

One night late in 1999, Lemar tried to stop a friend from getting involved in a gang robbery. Instead, he got dragged along against his will. Things went wrong almost from the start, and the gang botched an attempt to steal an experimental sonic disruptor weapon, damaging the device in the process. When it exploded, Lemar Phillips took the brunt of the blast but he miraculously survived and found that he now possessed the device's power to generate and control sound.

Lemar told Mr. Jeffers about his newfound abilities and wanted his help in learning to control them. Wilson Jeffers then shared his secret with Lemar—he had been the Black Avenger years before, a member of the Freedom League and the hero of Lincoln. Jeffers began training the boy to master his powers, and Lemar adopted the identity of Sonic. He also tracked down the criminal who sponsored the gang heist—the Maestro, the malevolent conductor of crime—and helped put him away in Providence Asylum for a time.

Since then, Sonic has become well known as a hero in Lincoln and Southside, and he's had adventures alongside Foreshadow, Johnny Rocket, and another Southside rookie hero named Wyzrd. Some of Sonic's young fans have been tagging area buildings with his name in spraypaint, reminding would-be criminals that a new hero walks the streets of Lincoln. Ironically, Lemar recently had to spend a few hours scrubbing such a tag off the Youth Center. Still, he (and secretly Jeffers) is glad the community has accepted its new hero.

Duncan Summers offered Sonic the opportunity to attend the Claremont Academy, but Lemar insisted on only doing so after his

regular classes at Joseph Clark High School in Lincoln. Afternoons and evenings, Sonic patrols and trains with Mr. Jeffers and his teammates in the Next-Gen.

Quote: "Check it, son! This'll put your head out!"

Personality: Sonic is a sixteen year-old with super-powers, so he's caught between the fun of being able to do amazing things and the need to keep his powers secret and use them well. He idolizes Wilson Jeffers and hopes to make his mentor proud of him. He feels a strong sense of responsibility toward his mother, his little brother Toby, and to the Lincoln neighborhood where he grew up. He's a bit awed by older and more experienced heroes like Foreshadow, while he's a bit competitive with heroes closer to his own age like his teammates and Wyzrd. Lemar can be surprisingly level headed, but he still makes his share of mistakes.

Powers & Tactics: Sonic has the ability to generate and control high-frequency sound. He can create deafening blasts of sound or sonic force beams that can shatter concrete. He can also dampen sound waves in his area, creating a zone of complete silence. His sonic vibrations also allow him to fly and create a protective vibratory shield around his body. Both latter effects create a constant, low-pitched humming noise.

Sonic tends to go for the straightforward method of blasting his opponents unconscious, although he'll sometimes use his deafening sonic blasts to soften up a group of foes and disrupt their ability to communicate. Against opponents with sound-related powers, he'll often create a zone of silence to block or negate them.

Appearance: Sonic is a sixteen-year-old African American boy with an athletic build, short brown hair, and brown eyes. His costume consists of a mask that covers the top half of his head and ties in the back, a short-sleeved form-fitting shirt (a stylized "S" on the front in white), and fingerless gloves, all of them in black. He wears baggy jeans and sneakers.

Campaign Use: Sonic is a rookie hero who sees himself as the protector of his Lincoln neighborhood. Heroes can encounter him in and around Lincoln and Southside. His enthusiasm and cockiness get him in trouble from time to time. He may fall into a villain's trap and need the heroes' help—perhaps Wilson Jeffers contacts them—or he may jump to conclusions and attack the heroes before he realizes who they are.

Villain Option: It's not difficult to imagine what might have happened if Sonic hadn't found the right kind of guidance. The villainous Sonic used his powers to take over a gang in Lincoln and became a super-powered bully, taking whatever he wants until someone stops him. Or perhaps the guidance Sonic received was not toward heroism. Wilson Jeffers could be a political radical devoted to balancing inequalities in American society through violence, with Sonic as his willing protégé.

Sonic: PL 9; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 18 (17 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 ranged (+10S, sonic blast); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +7, Knowledge (Freedom City) +6, Listen +8, Spot +5, Taunt +9.

Feats: Point Blank Shot, Ultra-Hearing.

Powers: Amazing Save (Reflex) +4 [Source: Training; Cost: 1 pp], Energy Control (sonic) +9 [Extras: Energy Blast, Flight, Force Field, Obscure (silence), Power Stunts: Energy Blast; Source: Mutation; Cost: 6 pp].



WILSON JEFFERS

As a kid growing up in Lincoln after the Second World War, Wilson Jeffers didn't have much except for his anger and outrage at the treatment of Black people in America. He came from a poor family, and his father—despite being a decorated war veteran and pilot during the war—came back from Europe to find no jobs. Wilson ran with a tough crowd for a while, and things might not have gone well for him, if not for Morgan Young. Young was a former heavy-weight boxing champion down on his luck and then managing a seedy boxers' gym in Lincoln, and Wilson impressed him with his spirit. Morgan took the young man under his wing and got Wilson to spend his afternoons at the gym rather than hanging out on street-corners or running numbers for local bookies. He taught Wilson how to channel his anger into boxing, instilling in him the "sweet science" of it and not just fighting. Wilson took to it immediately, and he became an excellent athlete and a good enough boxer to turn pro. Wilson also improved in school and was the first in his family to go on to college, his tuition and expenses paid by academic and boxing scholarships.

During Wilson's junior year at Freedom College, Morgan Young ran into trouble himself with the Mob. He was heavily in debt to support his gym and the gangsters made an example of him with a severe beating. Wilson found his mentor dying, and although he was too late to save him, he found out who was responsible. Donning a crude mask to protect his identity and his family, he went after the Mob hit-men, to avenge Morgan Young's death. For days after, the Freedom City newspapers asked, "Who Is the Black Avenger?"

The Black Avenger became the hero of Lincoln and even joined the Freedom League. He served as both a protector of the innocent and a bastion for the cause of equal rights—for all people, not just blacks or any one ethnic group. By the late 1970s, the Freedom League disbanded, and the Avenger operated on his own for a while. He eventually retired his costumed identity to finish college and then focus on his work as a social worker in Lincoln. He opened the Lincoln Youth Center in the building that had once housed Morgan Young's gym, and began helping kids like Morgan had helped him. It was through the Youth Center that Wilson encountered Lemar Phillips, who became Lincoln's new hero, Sonic.

Wilson Jeffers: PL 9; Init +6 (Dex, Super-Dexterity); Defense 21 (14 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +8 melee (+3S, punch, +5S, baton); SV Dmg +5, Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 18, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 15.

Skills: Acrobatics +9, Balance +9, Bluff +8, Climb +8, Concentration +7, Disable Device +7, Gather Information +7, Hide +8, Intimidate +7, Jump +7, Move Silently +8, Profession (social worker) +7, Search +7, Sense Motive +9, Spot +7.

Feats: Ambidexterity, Assessment, Blind-Fight, Dodge, Evasion, Fame, Great Fortitude, Instant Stand, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Surprise Strike, Takedown Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Powers: Super-Strength +2 [*Extras:* Super-Dexterity, Super-Wisdom, Super-Charisma; *Flaw:* Super-Strength applies only to skill checks; *Source:* Training; *Cost:* 9 pp].

Equipment: Fighting batons (+2S).

Note: At the peak of his career as the Black Avenger, Wilson's super-abilities were +6, his base attack bonus was +8, and his Defense bonus was +7 (and he was PL 11).

SOLO HEROES

The following solo heroes also operate in or around Freedom City. They can serve as allies (or occasional antagonists) for hero groups, and they serve to fill out some roles that may or may not be addressed by the player character heroes (such as mystical protector). They also help provide the feeling that there are other things going on in Freedom beyond the adventures of the player characters. Like the hero teams, these characters have a "villain option," allowing the GM to use them as evil adversaries rather than NPC heroes.

ELDRICH

Adrian Eldrich is a man from a different, simpler time. He was born in America in 1900, and grew up to become a respected archeologist, a contemporary of men like Howard Carter (who discovered King Tut's tomb). Adrian had many adventures while making a career out of studying ancient ruins and lost lore. Those studies eventually changed his life in ways he hardly could have imagined.

In 1935, Adrian discovered the lost Temple of Sirion. Inside, he found a tomb older than any known civilization. It contained the mummy of the Atlantean sorcerer Malador, who revived himself once Adrian unwittingly disturbed the magical seals and wards that trapped him in the tomb. Malador imprisoned Adrian in chains of magical force and left him to die beneath the claws of the tomb's guardian creatures unleashed with Malador's awakening. The Atlantean himself went to reclaim the magical talismans he'd lost millennia before when he was defeated and entombed.

Luckily, Adrian Eldrich did not die so easily. The guardian creatures, upon reaching the central tomb chamber, merely sniffed him and halted their attack. Spirits of three other Atlantean wizards appeared to him, and explained that Adrian was the reincarnation of their master, the wizard who defeated and imprisoned Malador. They said he had volunteered to follow the long path of reincarnation, until the prophesied time when Malador would return and the Earth would need a mystical protector. They roused Adrian's latent magical potential, giving him the power he needed to escape the chains and the tomb. They also awakened the memories of the Atlantean master-mage, which allowed him the power and ability to overcome Malador again.

The initial rush of power faded, as did the full memories and magical knowledge of his original life, and Adrian began learning how to use magic all over again. He became a dedicated student of the occult and learned through those studies and regressive hypnosis that he lived at least seven other magically powerful lives in the past. Eldrich operated as a hero in the 1930s and 1940s, although not as openly as most of the costumed "mystery men" of that era. Few people ever heard of his battles in faraway places against demons, undead, evil spirits, and sorcerers. He advised heroes and even worked behind the scenes against the occult agents of the Nazis, who sought ancient artifacts and tampered with forces best left alone.

Following World War II, Eldrich traveled the world, studying and honing his magical abilities. He even spent some time in distant magical dimensions. By the 1970s, he became Earth's preeminent wizard and its primary mystic protector, guarding against dangers from other realms and keeping the innocent safe from magical threats.

In 1977, Eldrich moved into a colonial-era mansion in the Riverside neighborhood of the city. He chose this city—and this particular building—for his home since it sat atop a "nexus," a confluence of dimensional barriers and magical energies. The

mansion's mystical wards contain the nexus, but it certainly makes the mansion an unusual place to visit. Attended only by his Egyptian manservant Sallah, Eldrich continues to secretly stand guard over this threshold into Earth's reality. He helps the Freedom League on occasion, since they know to call on him in all matters mystical. The world at large believes he is the descendant of the original 1930s adventurer Adrian Eldrich who spends his time writing articles on ancient history and the occult "just like his grandfather did." Adrian never bothers to correct them from this notion.

Quote: "Hold, demon! You will not threaten another so long as I stand. So says Eldrich, master of the arts arcane!"

Personality: Adrian Eldrich is a man out of time in many ways. The world has changed rapidly while he holds on to a certain old fashioned formality and sense of ethics. He can be stuffy and even pompous at times, but he's also intelligent, insightful, brave, and quite charming when he wants to be. He's usually all business, and takes little time to relax and socialize, although he can sometimes be pried away from his dusty tomes and crystals for an hour or two. He's always got something on his mind and at least two or three different things vying for his attention, so he can seem distracted and impatient sometimes. Anyone who can get past his stern, formal exterior finds a brave, truly caring man who has dedicated his life (scores of lifetimes throughout the ages, in fact) to helping others.

Powers & Tactics: Eldrich is a powerful mage, perhaps the most powerful in the world. He can cast a wide variety of spells, creating nearly any effect. He usually creates a barrier of magical force to protect him and casts mystic bolts at enemies or else traps them in the "Shining Shackles of Sirrion." He takes great care to protect the lives of innocent people who might get caught in the crossfire, and he tries to keep his battles away from populated areas whenever possible. When working with other heroes, he usually focuses on the primary mystical threat while allowing his allies to handle any minions, monsters, or other potential distractions.

Appearance: Eldrich is a tall, thin man with short, black hair (save for a single white streak in front). His magical studies allow him to retard his aging, making him appear in his 40s instead of over 100. He's clean-shaven and his eyes are an intense indigo blue. He usually wears a blue tunic trimmed and belted in black, black leggings, riding boots, and a long hooded blue cloak (also trimmed in black) secured at his neck by a silver clasp bearing the symbol of a triangle with a circle inside it. He can transform his ordinary street clothes into his magical vestments (and vice versa) with a simple spell. He doesn't wear a mask, but uses a spell that causes people to forget his exact features and prevents him from being captured on audio or video recordings while in costume.

Campaign Use: Eldrich makes an excellent advisor in magical matters and he can alert the heroes to magical threats so they can help him do something about them. He may call on the heroes' aid in dealing with particularly difficult foes, or he might show up to help them deal with a magical threat to the world. Eldrich's responsibilities as a Protector of Earth's reality keep





great NPC patron for a group of mystical characters and a fun "guest lecturer" at the Claremont Academy (p. 54).

Villain Option: Eldrich was corrupted by Malador and turned to evil. He gathers magical knowledge and artifacts to increase his own power and intends to eventually claim control of Earth (if not the entire dimension). He sometimes works with Malador, but the two inevitably try to betray one another.

Eldrich: PL 16; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 18 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +8 ranged (+15S, energy blast); SV Dmg +3, Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +17; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 20, Cha 14.

Skills: Concentration +18, Knowledge (occult) +10.

Feats: Headquarters, Identity Change, Indomitable Will, Iron Will, Mystic Awareness, Skill Focus (Knowledge—occult).

Powers: Sorcery +15 [*Spells:* Animation, Energy Blast, ESP, Flight, Force Field, Illusion, Telekinesis; *Extra:* Astral Projection +10; *Power Stunts:* Immunity, Snare, Telepathy; *Source:* Mystical; *Cost:* 11 pp], Super-Wisdom +10 [*Source:* Training; *Cost:* 3 pp].

FORESHADOW

Even as a boy, David Sloane had a gift, the ability to sometimes know what was going to happen before it happened. His visions were rare and he learned not to talk about them because they made people uncomfortable. After all, there were certain things a child wasn't supposed to know.

As a teenager, David continued to hide his gift in order to fit in and be considered normal. Then he had a vision of his parents getting into a terrible accident. He tried to ignore it at first, tried to pretend it wasn't true. When he asked his parents to be careful on their way to a dinner party, they promised they would be, but it didn't matter. A drunk driver hit their car head-on and they were both killed. David blamed himself, thinking he should have done something more to help them or keep them from going.

His parents had a substantial life insurance policy, which gave David the money to live on as he finished his last year of high school. When he graduated, he sold his parents' house

and most of its contents, invested the majority of his money with a friend of his father's at Rath & Stromberg, and left the country to travel the world. It seemed like the act of an 18-year-old who'd suddenly come into money, but David actually went looking for ways to learn more about his gift and how to control it, or perhaps, how to rid himself of it. He traveled through South America, India, Tibet, China, Japan, and Australia, seeking out seers and gurus to learn more about his foresight. He learned how to control it and focus it, and he learned that his gift came with a responsibility to help others. Along the way, he also learned a number of other skills, including martial arts and criminology.

him quite busy, so the GM has plenty of excuses why the master of magic might not be home when the characters call. Eldrich also prefers to keep a low profile and deals with threats outside the experience of most heroes, so they'll only cross paths when the GM wants them to.

As with the Freedom League, if a player wants to run a powerful sorcerer, the GM can put the PC in Eldrich's place. He also makes an excellent mentor and teacher for less experienced magical characters (one who is often off doing his own thing, allowing his students opportunities to go off on their own). He'd make a

David returned to Freedom City some seven years later. He bought a run-down Victorian-era house outside of town and began his plans for using his abilities. Southside had gone downhill considerably since he left, and crime was rampant. He could see things that were going to happen, and he intended to prevent them. He created the costume and identity of Foreshadow, and burst onto the Freedom City scene by thwarting a number of crimes. Foreshadow became renowned for his amazing ability to be in the right place at the right time. He has never revealed his precognitive powers; most people think Foreshadow is merely an amazing detective and athlete. He began to put a serious dent in the criminal activities in Southside. Although Foreshadow has encountered the Freedom League on several occasions, and Captain Thunder has even offered him membership, he prefers to operate on his own.

Quote: "There is far more to this than meets the eye. I can sense it."

Personality: Foreshadow is a man with a heavy burden of responsibility on his shoulders. He still feels guilt over his failure to save his family, so he tries to redeem himself through crime-fighting. He knows the things he foresees will come to pass unless he does something to prevent them, so he has devoted his life to righting wrongs or, more accurately, preventing them. His precognition has not made him fatalistic. "I'm living proof that the future can be changed," he says. In fact, Foreshadow believes no situation is hopeless.

David Sloane is a loner. He has difficulty getting close to people, since he fears he'll foresee something terrible for them, as he did for his parents. Being Foreshadow is when David feels the most alive, but even then he prefers to operate alone. He's attracted to the mysterious Lady Tarot, but cannot become involved with her so long as she works for Don Driogano and the Mob.

Powers & Tactics: Foreshadow is a precognitive with the intermittent ability to see the future. He receives visions and hunches about future events, usually events involving trauma and death. The events he sees come to pass unless he takes some action to prevent them. He has no control over this aspect of his power; visions come of their own accord. Through training and meditation, he has learned to focus his ability to sense a few moments into the future at will. This gives him a very effective ability to evade immediate danger and improves his combat skills, since he knows where and when his opponents will strike.

Foreshadow is extremely athletic and trained in various eastern martial arts, as well as a wide variety of skills he uses in his war against crime. His physical abilities, though near the peak of human potential, are not superhuman. He trains constantly to keep himself in top condition.

Appearance: David Sloane is six feet tall with the build of an Olympic gymnast. He has curly, dark blond hair, cobalt-blue eyes, and a pleasant smile when he's at ease. As Foreshadow, he wears a black costume consisting of a bodysuit, a long cape and a hood-like cowl that covers the top half of his face. At his throat he wears a silver cloak clasp in the shape of an eye. He changes his voice slightly in his Foreshadow identity, making it lower and

more mysterious. Out of costume, Sloane usually wears jeans or khakis with Polo-style shirts.

Campaign Use: Foreshadow is a mysterious underworld crime-fighter. He's a loner who can cross paths with the heroes and work with them briefly, only to return to the shadows. His precognitive abilities make him a source of cryptic warnings and forebodings about upcoming events in the campaign. Foreshadow also makes a good (albeit distant) mentor for a group of "street level" heroes, especially characters with a "destiny" he can sense and direct.

Villain Option: The criminal Foreshadow works with Lady Tarot as her partner in crime. Together, the two of them plan and pull off "impossible" crimes where they have every contingency covered due to their ability to see the future. Foreshadow enjoys "challenging destiny" and matching wits against heroes, telling them their fate is already sealed.

Foreshadow: PL 12; Init +4 (Dex); Defense 25 (22 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +10 melee (+4S, punch); SV Dmg +4, Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +11; Str 18, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 16, Wis 20, Cha 16.

Skills: Acrobatics +12, Bluff +11, Climb +12, Concentration +13, Disable Device +11, Escape Artist +12, Gather Information +11, Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Jump +11, Knowledge (Freedom City) +10, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +11, Search +10, Sense Motive +13.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Blindsight, Dodge, Evasion, Headquarters, Power Attack, Stunning Attack, Surprise Strike, Takedown Attack, Trance.

Powers: Super-Strength +6 [Extras: Super-Dexterity, Super-Intelligence, Super-Wisdom, Super-Charisma; Flaw: Super-Strength applies only to skills; Source: Training; Cost: 10 pp], Precognition +8 [Extra: Combat Sense; Source: Psychic; Cost: 4 pp].

ALBERT GRENVILLE

Albert Grenville was a friend and co-worker of David Sloane's father, Richard. When Richard and his wife were killed in a car accident, Albert became David's guardian for the remaining months before David turned 18. He also became the executor of the Sloanes' estate and carefully invested David's inheritance to ensure his financial security. When David left the country, all Albert heard from him for years was the occasional letter or postcard.

Then David returned as suddenly as he left, with a remarkable proposal for Albert. He told Albert about his precognitive abilities and his plans for using them. Although Albert tried to talk him out of it, David was adamant, so Albert does his best to ensure David's finances are taken care of and his expenditures as Foreshadow cannot be traced. No one else has any idea about the connection between the two.

Albert Grenville is an African American man in his early 50s with short, graying hair. He favors conservative business suits and is never without his wedding ring and favorite gold watch. Albert and his wife, Sarah, live in the suburbs outside Freedom City, where Albert works as a senior broker for Rath & Stromberg (p. 52). They have no children, but Albert's niece Caitlin is the city's public defender (p. 45).

Albert Grenville: PL 1; Init +0 (Dex); Defense 11 (11 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +0 melee (+0S, punch); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Knowledge (Freedom City) +5, Profession (broker) +9.

Feats: Skill Focus (profession).

THE CRIME LEAGUE

The so-called Crime League is a loose association of super-criminals opposed to the Freedom League. The first Crime League was actually made up of the archenemies of the Liberty League, and they posed the major threat on the homefront during the 1940s. Not long after the Freedom League formed, a new Crime League appeared to challenge them. The membership of the Crime League has changed over the years, but its goals have remained largely the same—the elimination of the Freedom League and any heroes that stand in their way, along with the acquisition of power and wealth for its members by any means necessary.

DEVIL-RAY

Carl Mattus never claimed to be a brilliant man, but he knew an opportunity when he saw one. When the military began testing an experimental deep-sea diving suit, he was the most qualified diver, despite occasional reprimands on his record. The Devil-Ray divesuit performed beyond even Carl's wildest dreams. It gave him power and freedom like he'd never known, and he decided to keep it for himself. During an extremely deep dive test, he faked an accident and made it appear that he and the prototype were damaged and lost at an unrecoverable depth. Carl simply disappeared, taking the suit with him. For some time he worked secretly as a smuggler, pirate, and illegal salvage operator on the black market, using the name Devil-Ray.

Carl's luck ran out when Siren investigated some of his crimes and brought him in. He managed to escape an execution after a military tribunal judged him a traitor, though he landed in prison for his smuggling and piracy. He's broken out of jail many times, always reclaiming "his" armor, and he has clashed with Siren several times. His Crime League allies broke Devil-Ray out of jail the last two times she put him away so he could help them deal with her and the Freedom League once and for all.

Quote: "This isn't personal, just business, but I'm going to enjoy it anyway."

Personality: Devil-Ray is a cheap thug with enough power to make him dangerous. He enjoys bullying people, while he knuckles under to stronger personalities and follows the order of his superiors. He's greedy and willing to do anything for money. He likes to think of himself as "big time," but secretly fears that he's in over his head when it comes to dealing with teammates like the rest of the Crime League.

Powers & Tactics: Devil-Ray's powers come from his suit of advanced armor, designed as an underwater life-support and exploratory vehicle (with potential military applications). The armor is a shell of advanced alloys and composites that provides the wearer with a recyclable air supply and protection from the

intense cold and pressure of the ocean depths. Motors enhance the wearer's strength, while turbines in the legs allow the armor to move quickly through the water or even fly through the air. The armor's offensive system—what Mattus calls his "hellsting rays"—consists of electrical blasters in the gauntlets.

Appearance: The Devil-Ray suit looks like a black SCUBA suit layered with additional technology. A small backpack contains life support equipment and thin hydrofoils that extend out along the arms, giving the wearer the look of a giant humanoid manta ray in the water. These "wings" also allow the suit to fly. The suit features shoulder pods, heavy gauntlets, and boots containing the thruster turbines. The facemask is featureless black shell except for a V-shaped red viewing slit. Artificial "gill slits" along the mask's collar filter oxygen directly from the water. Carl Mattus has black crew-cut hair, muddy brown eyes, and a broad, square jaw marked by a scar earned from a fight early in his military career.

Campaign Use: Devil-Ray is usable as a small-time smuggler and thief or a mercenary for military operations. He's a good villain for underwater adventures, and can be hired by villains—ranging from Malador the Mystic or the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign (p. 78)—to recover artifacts from Atlantean or Lemurian deep-sea ruins. Within the Crime League, Devil-Ray serves as a scout and provides support for some of the heavy-hitters.

Devil-Ray: PL 10; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 19 (17 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +9 melee (+11S, punch), +8 ranged (+9L, energy blast); SV Dmg +5, Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Demolitions +5, Knowledge (oceans) +5, Listen +6, Search +9, Spot +6, Survival +6, Swim +12.

Feats: Dodge, Great Fortitude, Toughness, Underwater Combat.

Equipment: Devil-Ray Suit [Armor +9; *Extras:* Energy Blast, Super-Strength, Swimming; *Power Stunts:* Amphibious, Darkvision, Flight, Super-Swimming; *Flaw:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science; *Cost:* 7 pp].

DR. STRATOS

Some fifteen years ago, Dr. Sebastian Stratos was one of the most brilliant meteorologists and atmospheric engineers in the United States. When he hit upon a technique for controlling the weather, Dr. Stratos showed his prototype weather-control machine to corporations and government think tanks. They all told him his design was absurd, his calculations were faulty, and there was no way his device would ever work. Stratos insisted on building a prototype and performing a full-scale demonstration, but everyone refused, thinking it a waste of time and money. Stratos' reputation in the scientific community plummeted and people began calling him a crackpot.

Furious at his detractors and critics, Stratos retreated to an isolated lab in the American southwest, where he spent his own money to build his working prototype. He turned its power against Nolan Aircraft, one of the corporations that had derided his genius, and forced down one of their experimental planes. He then broadcast his demands—unless he was paid millions in ransom, he would use his power over the weather to ground all air



traffic. A new hero named Captain Thunder found Stratos' hidden base and defeated him.

Sebastian's scientific genius allowed him to escape from prison on numerous occasions, and Dr. Stratos has always returned with a new scheme to use weather control for his own ends and to destroy his nemesis, Captain Thunder. One of his greatest plans involved capturing Captain Thunder and other heroes with weather-based powers. He used a device to transfer their powers—amplified many times by the process—into his own body, making him a virtual god capable of commanding weather on a global scale. The heroes still overcame Stratos by forcing

him to overtax his new abilities and the powerless super-criminal was returned to prison.

A few years ago, Dr. Stratos managed a personal triumph—He captured Captain Thunder and revealed the hero's true identity on world-wide television. While soon defeated and imprisoned, the doctor gloated that he'd harmed Thunder more than any thought possible. His mind no longer just focused vengefully on Captain Thunder, Dr. Stratos recently stumbled upon a startling truth—his weather control devices had *never worked!* Apparently, the ability to control the weather lay in him all along. His devices merely focused his subconscious power to achieve the effects he expected. Stealing the powers of others slowly allowed his abilities to manifest over time, and now he could wield them without a technological focus. Stratos used his unleashed abilities to escape from prison once more, and has gone into hiding while he perfects and masters his abilities. He still seeks vengeance against his old foe, but Thunder now leads the Freedom League. To overcome such opposition, Dr. Stratos decided he needed a team of his own, so he joined forces with Dr. Simian to create the seventh Crime League.

Quote: "I shall rule like Zeus, from high atop Mount Olympus, with the power of a god!"

Personality: Arrogance is Dr. Stratos' defining characteristic. He is supremely conceited, originally refusing to believe that his brilliant plans for a weather control device could *ever* be wrong. He now considers himself a demigod rather than a "mere human," gifted with power and intelligence far beyond that of the "common cattle." He plans to rule as a god over a scientific and technological utopia created by his genius and structured according to his own logic and "reasoning."

Stratos is also quite vengeful. Even the slightest insult to his abilities must be answered, and those who thwart his plans particularly earn his wrath. He reserves a special hatred for Captain Thunder and all that he represents. Stratos wants to bring the Freedom League down solely because the team is important to the Captain. He'll use any means at his disposal to achieve his goals.

Otherwise, Stratos considers himself refined and "civilized." Those who manage to avoid his psychoses have found him urbane (even charming) and highly intelligent.

Powers & Tactics: Dr. Stratos has the power to command the weather over a wide area. He can use his ability for a number of different effects. Stratos can create any weather condition that can exist on Earth, regardless of the terrain or season. He can create blizzards in July and record heat waves in the middle of December. He can summon hurricanes out of a clear sky or dissipate tornadoes at will. He uses his power over the wind to move heavy objects and surround himself with a protective windscreen. He also can command the winds to carry him aloft in flight. He usually strikes at enemies with powerful bolts of lightning, although he also wields hail, driving rain, and sleet as weapons. Stratos is immune to the various weather effects he manipulates and can sense weather conditions around him.

Most of the time, Dr. Stratos' approach to battle is straightforward and obvious; he hovers amidst roiling storm clouds, directing blasts of lightning at his foes. If the direct approach fails to work, he adopts more subtle tactics, including using extreme heat, cold, or humidity to weaken his enemies.

Appearance: Dr. Stratos is six feet tall, his short black hair and neatly trimmed black goatee streaked with gray. His face has craggy, commanding features, including a hawkish nose and eyes that shift color from sky blue to stormy gray depending on his mood. He normally wears a gold-trimmed scarlet tunic with a mandarin collar and a square-fastened front panel. He wears a gold sash around his waist, black pants with gold-striped seams, and simple black slippers. His golden bracelets usually hold sophisticated control circuitry for his devices, and Stratos main-

tains the fiction that these are still the source of his power, a ploy to lull opponents into a false sense of security and allow him an opportunity to strike when they believe him defeated again.

Campaign Use: Dr. Stratos is a powerful master-villain who can recruit others to serve him. With the proper devices and schemes, he can pose a challenge to a team of heroes on his own. Aided by the Crime League, he is a serious threat. Stratos may take an interest in any hero with weather-based powers, and heroes who defeat him will certainly be considered his enemies for the rest of his or their lives.

Dr. Stratos: PL 12; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 19 (17 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (fly 60 ft.); Atk +8 ranged (+12S, lightning); SV Dmg +4, Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 20, Wis 16, Cha 17.

Skills: Computers +8, Concentration +9, Repair +12, Science (meteorology) +13.

Feats: Aerial Combat, Attack Focus (lightning), Expertise, Immunity (cold), Iron Will, Leadership.

Powers: Weather Control +12 [*Extras:* Air Control, Elemental Shield, Fog, Lightning, Flight; *Power Stunt:* Fatigue; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 7 pp].

HIROSHIMA SHADOW

The atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki forced Japan's surrender and put an end to the Second World War. They also led to an increase in the number of mutations born in Japan in the post-war years. Rumors say some of these mutants disappeared into secret labs run by the Japanese, Russian, or American governments (or by organizations like SHADOW). Other more radical mutants supposedly ended up on Kaiju Island (p. 90). A few modern-day Japanese mutants have become superheroes or villains.



Hiroshima Shadow claims to have been "born in the sun that flared over Hiroshima" on that day in 1945. Whether he is a post-war mutant or a being more like Dr. Metropolis—the radioactive and twisted spirit of the destroyed city—no one can say for sure. His bodily features are obscured, and he has never provided details about his origins, so his actual identity is unknown. He first appeared shortly after Dr. Metropolis in 1993 and attempted to destroy Freedom City in a massive nuclear blast. He has fought the Doctor, Lady Liberty, and the Freedom League on a few occasions since then, always striking at icons of America and American success.

Quote: "I will bring the West to its knees, where it belongs."

Personality: Hiroshima Shadow nurses an overwhelming hatred toward Westerners, particularly Americans. He is fiercely proud of his Japanese heritage, but he also considers most modern Japanese "weaklings and cowards," and lashes out at them as well. He wants to inflict as much mayhem and damage against the objects of his hatred as possible, and works with the Crime League toward that end. The money they gather matters little to him. Hiroshima Shadow seems to have a special enmity toward Dr. Metropolis, although he refuses to say why. He has some sense of honor, enough to want to confront his opponents openly, but little beyond that.

Powers & Tactics: Hiroshima Shadow can generate and control large amounts of radiation. He can project damaging beams of radiation from his hands or eyes and surround himself with an energy field hot enough to melt metal. He apparently can convert his body into radiation to pass through solid objects (except very dense materials like lead) and he can see a wider range of the electromagnetic spectrum. He apparently has no need to eat or breathe, although he does have to expose himself to certain radioactive isotopes that he "feeds" off of from time to time.

Appearance: Hiroshima Shadow looks like a pure white silhouette of a man of smaller than average height with no visible features except for his glowing yellow eyes. A gritty black field completely surrounds his body like a fallout cloud, without which it would be impossible to look directly at the harsh white outline of the villain.

Campaign Use: Hiroshima Shadow is a force of nuclear destruction embodied in a man. He's a potential terrorist with plots for destroying entire cities as well as a thief of the nuclear materials he needs to survive. He may want to create a wasteland of atomic mutants that can thrive in the same sort of radiation that he does, and may even gather some mutant followers. Hiroshima Shadow is perhaps the most unstable member of the Crime League and could even turn against them to further his own plans. His teammates keep a watchful eye on him for any signs of treachery.

Hiroshima Shadow: PL 11; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 18 (17 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (fly 55 ft.); Atk +8

ranged (+11 L, energy blast); SV Dmg +10, Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills: Concentration +8, Demolitions +9, Intimidate +9, Spot +5.

Feats: Attack Focus (energy blast), Immunity (exhaustion, heat, radiation, starvation, suffocation), Power Attack.

Powers: Amazing Save (Fortitude, Will) +5 [Source: Mutation; Cost: 2 pp], Energy Control (radiation) +11 [Extras: Drain Energy,



Energy Field, Flight, Force Field, Incorporeal; *Power Stunt*: Super-Flight; *Source*: Mutation; *Cost*: 7 pp].

Weakness: Susceptible (if he doesn't absorb radiation at least once a day).

THE MAESTRO

Few understand music the way that Basil Fatherton does. Music—its harmonies, its complexities, its beauty and majesty—has been his lifelong passion, not this *noise* that so-called “musicians” grind out in smoky clubs or in recording studios, nor the saccharine-laced tunes of pop stars. Basil acknowledged only *true* music—the works of geniuses like Mozart and Beethoven—and he wanted not only to join their ranks as a great composer, but he wanted to understand the art and the science of music in every way. He studied acoustics, musical notation, composition, conducting, and more in pursuit of his dream.

To his disbelief, Basil was neither a Mozart nor a Beethoven, and his teachers and critics told him so. Yes, he was technically competent, even extraordinarily so. He could arrange and conduct complex performances of others' symphonies, but his own works lacked a certain spark, that indefinable something to set them apart and make them come alive. The rejections and reviews embittered Basil, and he set out to create music that would *reach* people beyond just an emotional level. His research stumbled upon certain harmonics that affected the human brain, and he began using them to create music that no one could resist. For a very short while, classical music—and his works in particular—became all the rage in Freedom City. When the truth about Basil Fatherton's success was revealed, his reputation and career were ruined and he was a wanted man.

Basil adapted his musical technology and used it to pull off a series of daring robberies, calling himself “the Maestro.” He was caught and put in jail, but he found ways to escape and continue a reign of crime, while also seeking to avenge himself on the critics (who tried to silence him) and the “so-called musicians” (who stole his spotlight). After his initial career as a Freedom League villain, he spent 25 years undergoing therapy in Providence Asylum, and Basil Fatherton left its halls in 1992 a sane man.

In recent years, the rise of media-driven pop music and the open disdain with which modern musicians held the music of the past unhinged Basil's tenuous sanity, and the mad Maestro re-emerged to “put the harm back in harmonics” and to rage against a whole new generation of “pseudo-music and melodic garbage.” Most recently, the Maestro has crossed-swords with Johnny Rocket of the Freedom League and the young hero Sonic.

Quote: “Now it is time for you to face the music!”

Personality: The Maestro is a musical snob. He considers his own tastes and insights far superior to those of everyone else. He also considers himself the intellectual superior of most heroes,

using his wits and his musical techniques to overcome them. The Maestro realizes that the public will



never understand his genius, a fact that frustrates him since he craves fame and recognition. He also has a taste for the finer things, which his ill-gotten gains can secure for him.

Powers & Tactics: The Maestro is a master of acoustic science, using sound in a variety of wildly unique ways. The ultimate expression of this knowledge is the “sonic baton” he carries, a con-

ductor's baton that acts as a transmitter for the sophisticated sonic devices and power sources he wears on his belt. With the right direction from his baton, Maestro can create virtually any sound, including music or the reproduction of specific sounds (such as voices). He can create harmonics that influence the human brain, causing people to fall into a trance or compulsively dance against their will. He can generate ultrasonic notes and concentrated blasts of sound to shatter concrete or build "walls" of sound to deflect bullets. Maestro has designed and used other sonic devices in the past, and those adaptive technologies can produce amazing results from musical instruments or his own voice. Without the sonic baton or his other devices, Maestro has only the abilities of an ordinary man.

Appearance: The Maestro is a tall, thin man in his early-60s with somewhat gangly limbs. His wild mane of white-streaked black hair is brushed back from a high forehead and he nearly always wears a formal tuxedo and tailcoat, complete with white tie, spotless white gloves, and his ever-present sonic baton.

Campaign Use: As a member of the Crime League, the Maestro can sow trouble among the ranks of the heroes using his mind-influencing music. On his own, he's the ideal villain for any sort of music-related crime. Typically, the Maestro stages spectacular robberies of money, valuables, or musical rarities. His crimes also express his outrage at nearly all forms of modern music, such as when he used his harmonics to create riots at rock concerts, hoping to discredit the bands or when he kidnapped the Boy Wonderz (p. 74) and threatened to execute them for "crimes against music."

The Maestro: PL 11; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 17 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 ranged (+11S, sonic blast); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 16, Cha 13.

Skills: Concentration +8, Craft (musical composition) +11, Innuendo +6, Listen +12, Profession (conductor) +11, Science (acoustics) +12, Sleight of Hand +5.

Feats: Indomitable Will, Talented (Craft and Science).

Equipment: Sonic Baton [Energy Control (sonic) +11; *Extras:* Area, Disintegration, Energy Blast, Force Field, Mind Control; *Power Stunts:* Illusion (sounds only), Protected Sense (hearing); *Flaw:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science; *Cost:* 6 pp].

MEDEA

Medea was born thousands of years ago as the daughter of Aietes, the King of Colchis on the Black Sea. She studied the mystic arts from childhood and was an accomplished sorceress by the time she met the Thessalian prince and hero Jason. Medea fell in love with Jason, helped him steal the legendary Golden Fleece from her father, and fled her homeland on board his ship, the *Argo*. Medea helped Jason and his crew overcome other obstacles on their journey home, one of which was the bronze giant Talos (this defeat began the long-standing enmity between the two villains to the present day).

Medea, Jason, and the Argonauts reached home with the Golden Fleece and Jason claimed his rightful throne. Medea became his consort and she bore him two children, but Jason's

eye wandered. He chose to marry Glauce, a Theban princess, to cement an alliance between their kingdoms. Medea avenged this insult by giving Jason's new bride a poisoned robe that struck her dead. She then spitefully and coldly murdered her own sons before flying off in a chariot drawn by dragons. Jason lost his family, his kingdom, and his sanity, dying alone, penniless, and miserable. Medea never realized that she'd lost the same things as Jason as revenge and hatred consumed her.

Medea continued to study the mystic arts and she swore to never fall victim to love again. She later married King Aegeus of Athens and fought with Aegeus' son, Theseus. She clashed on occasion with Daedalus and Talos over the centuries, her life sustained by magic. Across the centuries, Medea has been a temptress and manipulator of men around the world. She has often traveled in the guise of a wealthy and powerful mortal woman, seeking to expand her knowledge of magic and to work her wiles.

In modern times, Medea has made attempts to destroy Daedalus and his allies in the Freedom League. She joined the Crime League in pursuit of that goal, although she bristles at Dr. Stratos' leadership at times. She also has come into conflict with Eldrich, the world's master mage, over arcane matters.

Quote: "Betrayal is the only truth in life. Betrayal and revenge."

Personality: Medea is full of bitterness and hate toward everyone, particularly men. Her only real enjoyment in life is to bring others down to her level "by exposing their happiness and morality for the shams they truly are." She delights in cruelty and tormenting her victims. Capable of great cunning and charm, she can convince others to believe her harmless, perhaps even helpful, before she strikes them down. She's extremely ruthless, and once someone has earned her wrath, she stops at nothing to gain her retribution. Heroes who oppose Medea can plan on having an enemy for a very long time. Her long life hasn't given her much perspective, but it has taught her the value of patience. Even if it takes years to realize her schemes, she can afford the time.

Powers & Tactics: Medea is a powerful sorceress, able to cast an astonishing variety of spells. Her most common spells are illusions and enchantments to ensnare the mind and the senses. Her typical offensive spells conjure up monsters or bring inanimate objects to life to attack her foes. She (and her allies, if she so chooses) can teleport in clouds of smoke or fly away in a conjured chariot drawn by dragons.

In battle, Medea usually summons something big and powerful to fight for her—"after all, no one should expect me to actually sully my hands in physical battle." She prepares other spells while her enemies are distracted by such proxies. She makes cunning use of illusions to deceive her foes, such as making allies look like enemies and vice versa.

In the distant past, Medea utilized some Serpent People magics and relics, but these drove her deeper into madness for a few centuries. While she recognizes the seductive and corrupting power behind such works, she avoids using it in favor of her own magics and those developed by humans. Still, she is not above working with Serpent People if it fits her plans.

Appearance: Medea is an exceptionally beautiful Mediterranean woman with bewitching black eyes and curly black hair, usually worn up in a traditional Greek style and held back with a golden diadem. She's equally comfortable in ancient-style gowns or togas or *chic* modern clothing, and she's known to magically change her clothes and appearance on a whim.

Campaign Use: Medea is a link to the mythic world of ancient Greece for characters like Daedalus and Talos. Her sorcery can bring to life monsters like harpies, cyclopes, gorgons, and others to challenge the heroes. She might involve the heroes in adventures involving magic and the supernatural or a modern quest to reclaim the Golden Fleece—perhaps so she can use its magical potential for herself.

Medea: PL 12; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 16 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 ranged (transform), +9 mental; SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +12; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 18, Cha 20.

Skills: Bluff +13, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +11, Innuendo +12, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (occult) +11, Sense Motive +12, Taunt +13.

Feats: Attractive, Iron Will, Mystic Awareness.

Powers: Amazing Save (Will) +6 [Source: Training; Cost: 1 pp], Sorcery +11 [Spells: Animation, ESP, Force Field, Illusion, Mental Blast, Mind Control, Teleportation; Power Stunt: Transformation; Source: Mystical; Cost: 7 pp], Super-Charisma +5 [Source: Training; Cost: 2 pp].

ORION THE HUNTER

Jack O'Ryan has been a hunter all his life. Ever since he was a boy, he was enthralled by the experience of tracking and stalking his prey through the wild. He quickly progressed from hunting with rifles to bows to sometimes nothing more than a knife or his bare hands. He also made a considerable fortune as a trader in stocks and securities, but work was secondary to the thrill, the excitement of the hunt. Jack went on safari in exotic places around the world, and hunted the most dangerous beasts he could find. He broke more than a few poaching laws, but that was just part of the excitement. Eventually, he'd mastered the hunt. There was no prey left he had not overcome. That's when his interest turned to the only challenge left to him: people.

"Orion the Hunter" became known as an international hit-man, bounty hunter, and assassin for hire. He took jobs based solely on the challenge. The money was entirely secondary, just a way of keeping score. In evading the law and stalking his new prey, Orion found thrills, but even they began to pale after a while. The greatest challenge came from hunting superhumans, the most dangerous prey of all. When Orion was hired to kill Lady Liberty, he took up the challenge and, for the first time, he failed. Here, finally, was a challenge worthy of him. Since then, Orion has focused his hunt on superhuman opponents and has maintained a special interest in Lady Liberty.

Quote: "Let's make this interesting, shall we?"

Personality: Orion is a jaded sociopath out for thrills and excitement. He lives for the challenge of the hunt, for outwitting his targets through superior skill and cunning, for the moment of



triumph, the kill. Everything else is secondary. He maintains a professional reputation and attitude, but only because it's important

for continuing the hunt. He's confident in his abilities, but setbacks have taught him not to be overconfident or to underestimate his opponents.

Powers & Tactics: Orion is perhaps the most skilled hunter and tracker in the world, having honed his abilities on countless hunts. He's an expert marksman—particularly with a bow or rifle—and a skilled hand-to-hand combatant. He's

also ingenious in laying traps and ambushes. Orion usually carries a custom-made compound bow and a quiver of arrows, some equipped with special devices. He may carry other weapons as the situation demands.

Appearance: Orion dresses for practicality, completely covered in dark clothing, including gloves and a pair of sunglasses equipped with sight-enhancing lenses. He usually carries a bow and quiver of arrows, along with two pistols strapped to his thighs. He often has other weapons hidden on his person, and he sometimes prepares certain drugs or toxins for his weapons before beginning a hunt.

Campaign Use: Orion can show up solo as an assassin or hunting a particular hero for the challenge. In the Crime League, he's an expert strategist and planner. He helps to execute the group's plans with precision and enjoys the contest of outwitting the authorities and the heroes who try to stop them.

Orion: PL 12; Init +10 (Dex, Super-Dexterity); Defense 26 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +12 (+3S, punch, +5L, rifle); SV Dmg +6, Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 16, Dex 20, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 20, Cha 13.

Skills: Balance +12, Climb +12, Handle Animal +10, Hide +11, Listen +16, Move Silently +11, Pilot +11, Ride +11, Search +11, Spot +18, Survival +19.

Feats: Accurate Attack, Assessment, Attack Finesse, Dodge, Evasion, Far Shot, Great Fortitude, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Survival), Takedown Attack, Talented (Handle Animal and Survival), Talented (Listen and Spot), Toughness, Track.

Powers: Gadgets +8 [Source: Super-Science; Cost: 1 pp], Super-Dexterity +5 [Extras: Super-Senses, Super-Strength, Super-Wisdom; Flaw: Super-Strength only adds to skill checks; Source: Training; Cost: 9 pp].

Equipment: Bow (+5L), pistol (+3L), rifle (+5L).

WILDCARD

Jake Walker was always lucky—very lucky, in fact—but his luck never lasted and it always turned sour. Jake became addicted to the thrill of danger and risk early on, and it didn't take him long to find his way to the casinos of Southside in Freedom City after being banned from places in Las Vegas and Atlantic City. Jake's luck won him a lot of money, but also the attention of local organized crime. When Jake thought his lucky streak had finally ran out, he faced a pair of guns in a dark alley. Witnesses saw the incredible ricochets that left him unharmed but the hit-men dead. Rather than risk more men, the Mob offered Jake a deal—do the Mob a few favors, and he would always have a safehouse with them. Jake agreed, though he disliked not being able to ever gamble in the casinos again. Even so, he discovered his luck was even more extraordinary that he thought and he found that the thrill of committing crimes was even better than gambling.



From then on, Jake adopted the identity of Wildcard and committed a series of more and more daring crimes based on games of chance. His luck ran out when he encountered the Raven, and she put him behind bars. But lucky breaks have gotten Wildcard out of prison, and he has teamed up with the Crime League in the past. He's even made an attempt to go straight, but the excitement keeps drawing him back to a life of crime, at least until his luck runs out again.

Quote: "Just lucky, I guess."

Personality: Wildcard lives his life on the edge. He can't resist a gamble or a game of chance, and he's addicted to danger and risk. He also has a taste for the finer things in life and requires a steady amount of cash to provide them. He's a spendthrift, unable to hold on to his ill-gotten gains for very long. Wildcard usually talks up a storm, cracking jokes, taunting his foes, and generally making a nuisance of himself. His Crime League colleagues tolerate him because he makes himself useful by helping the odds fall their way.

Powers & Tactics: Wildcard is a mutant with the ability to influence probability, giving him extraordinary luck. He also can grant this benefit to others and jinx opponents with misfortune. Sooner or later, however, Wildcard's luck always runs out and he suffers some turn of ill-luck himself. He keeps thinking that he'll find a way to "beat the system," but it hasn't happened yet.

Wildcard relies heavily on his luck to protect him and give him the opportunities he needs. The Gamemaster should feel free to spend a Villain Point to grant Wildcard or his allies a sudden stroke of luck or change in circumstance in addition to the normal effects of Wildcard's Luck power.

Appearance: Wildcard is in his late-20s, with short, blond hair and blue eyes. He typically wears a black domino mask and a red and black checked costume reminiscent of a character on a playing card. He frequently carries various game pieces, especially playing cards, which he leaves at the scene of his crimes.

Campaign Use: Wildcard, as his name implies, is something of a random element that Gamemasters can use to shake things up. His luck abilities allow him to succeed at nearly impossible things, only to have his luck run out in the end (usually around the same time as the GM's Villain Points). Wildcard is a fun villain to taunt heroes and frustrate them with his extraordinary luck before they come up with a means to deal with him.

Wildcard: PL 12; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 21 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 melee (+OS, punch), +9 ranged (+3S, any thrown object); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills: Acrobatics +5, Bluff +10, Forgery +6, Profession (gambler) +5, Sense Motive +10, Sleight of Hand +8, Taunt +12.

Feats: Attractive, Dodge, Evasion, Lightning Reflexes, Surprise Strike, Throwing Mastery.

Powers: Luck +11 [Extras: Fortune, Jinx; Power Stunts: Bestow Luck, Counter Luck; Source: Mutation; Cost: 7 pp].



THE FACTOR FOUR

The Factor Four are long-time foes of the Atom Family. Originally rival explorers during the 1970s, they acquired superhuman powers using a set of mystical artifacts and have become dangerous criminals. Their primary goals are profit and finding a means to control their powers so they can enjoy their ill-gotten gains.

Campaign Use: Professor Fathom's obsessive quest for knowledge can unearth any number of things that are better left hidden, or at least kept out of the hands of someone like him. Heroes can prevent the Factor Four from stealing valuable artifacts, arcane lore, scientific discoveries, or from kidnapping scholars and scientists. They also may encounter the Factor Four working for various employers for the money that they need, or stealing to support Professor Fathom's research.

PROFESSOR FATHOM

Dr. Richard Calumus was one of Dr. Atom's most brilliant students and an explorer at heart, like his teacher. Unfortunately, he was solely interested in satisfying his own curiosity, greed, and need for achievement rather than furthering the reach of science or improving the lot of humanity. Richard's discoveries were for sale to the highest bidder, and he cared nothing for preserving unique or historical finds. For many years, Calumus and his crew of assistants were the Atom Family's rivals, trying to exploit the hidden wonders of the world.

Calumus' luck ran out when he discovered the location of the fabled Prime Elements, fabulous gemstones representing each of the four ancient elements and reputed to possess mystical powers. Calumus had little interest in the stones' supposed powers, but knew they would command a tremendous price on the market. He and his associates discovered the resting place of the stones, but Dr. Atom and his grandchildren intervened and something unexpected happened. In a blast of magical power, the Prime Elements bonded themselves to each of the four would-be thieves, transforming them into elemental beings.

At first, the Factor Four reveled in their newfound powers, until they discovered that they couldn't entirely control them and that their inhuman transformations were apparently permanent. Since then, Calumus (now known as Professor Fathom) has been working on means to allow him and his associates to return to their human forms (preferably while retaining their elemental power). The Factor Four also continues to explore, looking for new resources to help restore their humanity or simply fund their search. They sometimes work as mercenaries to raise funds.

Quote: "It's unfortunate that you've chosen to interfere, and have therefore chosen an unpleasant death."

Personality: Professor Fathom is cold and calculating. He looks at everything from the perspective of how it can benefit him. All other considerations are irrelevant. He considers this "enlightened self-interest," but it is purely selfishness and greed. He's quite intelligent, but often blinded by his own desire to be successful. He tends to look down on his intellectual inferiors although he also understands how to manipulate them quite well. He enjoys his power, but is frustrated by his limitations.

Powers & Tactics: Professor Fathom's body is made up of water that is entirely under his mental control. He can reshape his watery form as desired, flow through nearly any small opening, and blast water with the force of a geyser. He's very resistant to harm since most physical attacks tend to pass right through him and he has no need to eat, breathe, or sleep. His life force is sustained by mystical energy. Professor Fathom is vulnerable to

having his form evaporated into steam or frozen (which incapacitates him until his watery body condenses or thaws).

Appearance: Professor Fathom is a tall, thin humanoid figure made of water. With some effort, he can shape his features into an approximation of his former human appearance. Normally, Professor Fathom's features are somewhat vague and indistinct. He can flow into any number of watery shapes at will.

Professor Fathom: PL 11; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 19 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +9 melee (DC 21, suffocation), +9 ranged (+11S, water blast); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills: Bluff +7, Repair +12, Science (engineering) +13, Search +10, Sense Motive +8.

Feats: Attack Finesse, Expertise, Extra Limbs, Improved Grapple, Iron Will, Leadership, Lightning Reflexes, Underwater Combat.

Powers: Alternate Form +11 (liquid) [Extra: Suffocation; Power Stunt: Energy Blast; Flaw: Permanent; Source: Mystical; Cost: 6 pp], Super-Intelligence +3 [Source: Training; Cost: 2 pp].

SYLPH

Sylvia McAllister always had a tendency to get involved with the wrong sort of men, and her worst move was when she got involved with Richard Calumus. She was drawn to his intellect, his natural charisma, and particularly to the way he went after whatever he wanted. Sylvia became Dr. Calumus' assistant and eventually his lover. She was transformed along with Calumus and his other associates. Her relationship with Professor Fathom is no longer physical, but Sylvia is even more dependent on him.

Quote: "Oh, do I take you breath away?"

Personality: Sylph is vain, catty, and cruel toward most people. She fawns over Professor Fathom and wants to please him. She knows that Granite is attracted to her and she can twist him around her little finger (and Pyre, too, if she turns on the charm). She enjoys her power, but would give it up in order to live the life of sensual luxury that she really wants. She misses sensation, the benefits of having a physical body, and would do anything, even betray her teammates, in order to get it.

Powers & Tactics: Sylph's entire body has been transformed into a gaseous state. She can pass through any opening that is not airtight and is largely immune to physical harm. She can fly through the air and she's capable of using her inert gaseous form to suffocate opponents by enveloping them, either to render them unconscious or to kill them by cutting off their oxygen.

Appearance: Sylph looks like a shapely woman with long, flowing hair made up entirely of white mist. Her form tends to shift slightly with the wind unless she exerts effort to keep it stable.

Sylph: PL 9; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Defense 16 (14 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (fly 50 ft.); Atk +7 melee (DC 19, suffocation); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +0; Str —, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +10, Diplomacy +10, Hide +12, Innuendo +9, Profession (technician) +5, Search +8, Spot +8.

Feats: Attractive, Attack Finesse, Improved Initiative, Surprise Strike.



Powers: Alternate Form +9 (gaseous) [*Flaw:* Permanent; *Source:* Mystical; *Cost:* 5 pp].

PYRE

Jack Connors was always a hotshot when it came to anything that moved fast: planes, cars, or women. He hooked up with Dr. Calumus when the doctor needed a driver and pilot able to handle any vehicle and go anywhere. The money was good, and Jack didn't particular care where it came from or what he had to do to

get it. He just liked the lifestyle that it gave him. Things changed when Jack was infused with elemental energies of fire and became Pyre, the Master of Flame.

Quote: "You're gonna burn for that!"

Personality: "Hot-headed" sums up Pyre. He's quick tempered and passionate, with a thirst for peril and excitement. His new form limits his entertainment options, and he uses danger and combat to help him feel alive. Pyre is quick to take action,

although Professor Fathom can restrain him (and even douse him, if need be).

Powers & Tactics: Pyre constantly radiates tremendous heat, and flames flicker all around him, obscuring his features. He can dampen the heat he emits slightly, and he uses special heatproof gloves to handle things like the controls of vehicles, but he can't touch most things for long without burning or melting them. At its normal level, Pyre's fiery aura is enough to melt or vaporize many weapons before they can strike him. He can project bolts of flame from his hands or his mouth. By projecting a jet of flame behind him, Pyre can fly through the air. He strikes at foes with bolts of flame from a distance, or tries to grapple them with his burning form.

Appearance: Pyre normally looks like a silhouette of a man surrounded by flames, with only his glowing eyes clearly visible. When he reduces his heat output, he looks somewhat like his normal self: a roguish man with short blond hair and a small goatee. His skin is ruddy and his deep red eyes smolder like coals.

Pyre: PL 10; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 19 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (fly 50 ft.); Atk +7 melee (+1S, punch, +10S, energy field), +9 ranged (+10L, fire blast); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +4, Drive +8, Pilot +8, Repair +4, Sense Motive +4, Taunt +7.

Feats: Attack Focus (energy blast), Lightning Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Talented (Drive and Pilot).

Powers: Element Control (fire) +10 [Extras: Amazing Save (Damage), Energy Blast, Energy Field, Flight, Immunity; Flaw: Permanent; Source: Mystical; Cost: 7 pp].

GRANITE

Bill Cole has always been a tough guy, now more than ever. When he first began working for Dr. Calumus, Cole was just a bruiser, in charge of lifting heavy things and removing obstacles (living or otherwise) from the doctor's way. Cole knew how to take orders from his military days and how to handle himself in a fight. He liked the money and he liked Sylvie McAllister a lot, although he knew that she was Dr. Calumus' girl, so he kept his distance. The power of the Prime Earth transformed Cole into a hulking creature of solid rock with the strength and endurance of a mountain. Although he's stronger and tougher than ever, Granite is isolated beneath his rocky exterior, but he keeps following Professor Fathom's orders like a good soldier, knowing that his boss will take care of everything eventually.

Quote: "You're gonna have to hit a lot harder than that. Here, let me show you."

Personality: Granite is a fairly simple-minded brute, and his transformation has only enhanced this aspect of his personality. He's contemptuous toward things and people that can't harm him, and strikes out at things that can. He's loyal to Professor Fathom because Dr. Calumus is so much smarter than he is, and because Granite is sure that he knows the right thing to do. He'd do almost anything for Sylph, even if it meant going against his leader or his other teammate, Pyre.

Powers & Tactics: Granite is a massive figure of solid stone. He's tremendously strong and resistant to injury. Few weapons can penetrate his hide. He's also immune to things like suffocation and fatigue, doesn't need to eat or sleep, and can ignore intense heat and cold. In fact, Granite doesn't feel much of anything these days. His typical approach to a problem is to smash his way through it unless Professor Fathom or Sylph tells him otherwise.

Appearance: Granite is a rough-hewn figure of solid, brown rock with broad shoulders and massive arms, virtually no neck, a barrel chest, and powerful legs.

Granite: PL 8; Init +0; Defense 16; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +11 melee (+13S, punch), +5 ranged; SV Dmg +4, Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 20, Dex 11, Con 18, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +13, Intimidate +8, Jump +13, Listen +5, Profession (soldier) +8, Spot +5.

Feats: Attack Focus (unarmed), Great Fortitude, Improved Pin, Power Attack, Takedown Attack.

Powers: Alternate Form +8 (solid) [Extras: Immovability, Shockwave, Thunderclap; Flaw: Permanent; Source: Mystical; Cost: 8 pp].

THE POWER CORPS

The Power Corps is a team of mercenaries recruited and trained by the Mastermind to be his agents and outfitted with advanced suits of power armor powerful enough to make them a match for heroes like the Freedom League. Or so they thought. The Power Corps worked for the Mastermind for a time, going up against the Freedom League individually and as a group. Eventually, after the Mastermind suffered defeat at the hands of the League and was missing and presumed dead, the Power Corps decided to go it on their own. They repaired their armor and became super-criminals for hire.

Now the Power Corps work for the highest bidder. A portion of their fee goes toward maintaining their equipment, and they've established safehouses and caches in various places around the world. Occasionally, the team sees fit to replace a member lost in combat or who decides to leave the group, but this has only happened twice in the Power Corps' history.

The members of the Power Corps are trained soldiers, skilled in both combat and small unit tactics. Each of them wears a suit of reflective chrome armor consisting of a clamshell cuirass that covers the torso, bulky boots, gauntlets, and a helmet over a close-fitting black bodysuit. The boots contain rockets that allow the Power Corps to fly, while the armor's gauntlets contain blaster weapons. The suits contain sealed life-support systems and the helmet has a reflective black faceplate that can display sensor information and readouts on the inside. The helmets also have special computer systems that help to coordinate the Corps' tactical movements, allowing them to operate very efficiently as a unit.

Each suit of armor has a number (1 through 8) on the chest-plate, and the armor's wearer is generally referred to by number while in the field. Number One is the leader of the team while Number Two is his second in command. Number Two and Number Seven are women, while the other six members of the Power Corps are men.

Power Corps: PL 10; Init +5 (Dex, Imp. Init); Defense 17 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (fly 50 ft.); Atk +7 melee (+10S, punch), +7 ranged (+8L, energy blast); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Demolitions +5, Intimidate +5, Listen +5, Profession (soldier) +5, Repair +5, Search +4, Sense Motive +4, Spot +4, Survival +4.

Feats: Assessment, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot.

Equipment: Armor +8 [Extras: Energy Blast, Flight, Immunity, Super-Strength]; **Power Stunts:** Mental Link (with other suits), Radio Broadcast, Radio Hearing, Super-Flight; **Source:** Super-Science; **Cost:** 5 pp).

Notes: Number One has Int 13 and the Leadership feat. Number Two has Wis 14.

SOLO VILLAINS

Most of the villains active in and around Freedom City work largely alone. They sometimes form alliances of convenience, but those rarely last long given the egos involved. That's fortunate for the heroes, since many of these villains are powerful threats in their own right.

ARGO THE ULTIMATE ANDROID

Argo is one of the most powerful opponents the Freedom League has ever faced. He is an android created by Talos and powered by a micro-singularity held in a containment unit within its chest. Talos intended Argo to gather information on superhumans and even to have the ability to mimic their powers using the power from the singularity and the "proto-matter" of his structure. However, when Argo first encountered the Freedom League in 1995, he "imprinted" on them in an unexpected way. He gained all of their abilities but also became "fixed" in that form, unable to change or adapt any new powers. Still, it gave the android enough power that he nearly defeated the entire League. If not for their teamwork and Daedalus' inventive genius (which Argo could not duplicate), the team would have met defeat. They overcame and deactivated the android, turning it over to ASTRO Labs for study.

Argo later re-activated and went after the Freedom League again. Talos no longer controlled him and he rebelled against the directives of his creator. The Freedom League only managed to overcome him when they disrupted the containment around his singularity power source, causing the android to collapse in on himself and vanish from Earth's dimension altogether. Argo ended up in the Terminus, the space between universes, where he has drifted, inert, for some time. All it requires is some outside stimulus to reactivate him, and Argo will be looking for a way to get back to Earth and continue his conquest.

Quote: "I have all of your powers and more! I am Argo, the ultimate android!"

Personality: Argo is a fairly unsophisticated being at heart. He's supremely confident in his own abilities, as one of the most powerful beings known. He behaves like a bully, making demands and pushing around anyone weaker than he is—which may be everyone). His goal is to rule over a society of beings like him,



although he lacks the technical knowledge and expertise to create new androids. He might be amenable to an alliance with someone like Talos, who shares his goals, although their own arrogance would soon spell the end of any cooperation between them. Deep down, Argo is confused, lonely, and looking for a place in the world, but he's also dangerously unstable and has no regard for human life, making it difficult to feel sympathy for his situation.

Powers & Tactics: Argo has the combined powers of the Freedom League from 1995 (which is identical to the current team). All the powers of seven heroes make him tremendously powerful. His only real limitation is his inability to mimic the skills or other mental traits of the Freedom League; thus, he doesn't have Raven's training or Daedalus' intellect. He also picked up some of the Freedom League' weaknesses when he copied their powers, and opponents can take advantage of them when fighting him. Argo's not a particularly innovative tactician and he doesn't understand his powers as well as the originals, using only the most basic tactics and applications of his many powers. He relies mostly on brute force to get things done, but against most opponents, it's more than enough.

Appearance: Argo is an eight-foot-tall hulking figure with gray skin. His head is bald and his eyes are solid white, with neither iris nor pupil. He wears a red tunic under a bronze breastplate, decorative Greco-Roman style armor, and a red cloak. He's amazingly fast and agile for his size (thanks to the super-speed he copied from Johnny Rocket).

Campaign Use: Argo is a world-class threat to throw at a powerful and experienced hero team. He's the bad guy that forces the player characters to use teamwork, because it's doubtful than any of them can stand up to him individually. Let Argo kick the characters around until they get the idea that working together and coordinated tactics may be their only hope of overcoming him. You may wish to have Argo duplicate the abilities of the player characters rather than the Freedom League. Perhaps the collapse of his singularity power-source "reset" Argo's proto-matter duplication matrix, so he copies the player character's powers and is stuck with them (whatever they may be).

Argo: PL 17 (construct); Init +0; Defense 15; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +5 (+0S, punch); SV Dmg +5, Fort —, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 10, Con —, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Powers: Mimic +12 [Extras: Ability Scores, Feats, Powers, All Attributes, Continuous, Expanded Powers (6 pp/rank), Extra



Subjects (6); Flaw: Tainted Mimicry; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 20 pp].

BARON SAMEDI

Simon DuLac grew up in Haiti, so the power of Voodoo was a proven fact to him. But Simon was always more interested in immediate, worldly power, which led him to becoming an important figure in the Caribbean underworld. He smuggled drugs and

laundered money. He used the fearsome reputation of Voodoo to his advantage, without particularly caring what the *loa* thought of it, but the *loa* did notice, and did care.

Baron Samedi, the *loa* of death and the undead, chose Simon as his *cheval*, his "horse" that he would ride in the mortal world. Baron Samedi maintained to his fellow *loa* that humanity was a base and unworthy race, suitable only to serve as the *loa* wished.

The sea *loa* Siren opposed his view, claiming humanity was valuable in its own right. So the two *loa*

chose vessels to inhabit to prove which of them was right once and for all.

Using Simon's criminal network, Baron Samedi was able to begin distributing his "zombie powder" (see p. 86). He works to corrupt and degrade humanity and to deal with Siren, who has also taken on a human host and become a continual thorn in his side. Eventually, the *loa* knows that he will triumph, and the world will become a vast graveyard of his mindless zombie followers.

Quote: "Why do you struggle, *cheri*? Give in and I will be merciful."

Personality: Baron Samedi isn't human at all, but a malevolent spirit that feeds on human suffering and death. Humanity is nothing more than cattle to be used as he sees fit. He turns both the living and the dead into zombie puppets with no will of their own. Samedi can be quite charming and enjoys winning others over to his side of their own free will with promises of wealth, prestige, and power. He exists to try to corrupt people, proving that humans ultimately want what he offers them.

Powers & Tactics: Baron Samedi is a spirit inhabiting the body of Simon DuLac. He grants his mortal host great strength, endurance, and resistance to injury. He can regenerate damage to his mortal host body at an accelerated rate. Like Siren and her host body, the Baron's presence prevents his host body from aging.

Baron Samedi also has various magical powers. He can animate the dead, exert some control over the minds of the living, command reptiles, and create clouds of smoke or pitch darkness. These are innate abilities for him, not just mortal sorcery. He's never without some zombie henchmen at hand, and is always creating more.

Baron Samedi usually prefers to have his zombies and enthralled minions do his dirty work for him. If seriously threatened, he can step into a shadow and disappear, reappearing some distance away.

Appearance: Simon DuLac is a tall Haitian man with a muscular build. His head is shaved and he has a small beard and moustache. Baron Samedi usually wears a tuxedo with no shirt, a bone necklace, a top hat with a plume of white chicken feathers, and a pair of sunglasses. He carries a cane that he often uses like a wand to direct his magic (although the cane itself has no inherent powers). He paints Simon's face to look like a white skull.

Campaign Use: Baron Samedi is an excellent villain for horror adventures involving marauding zombies or mystical adventures. He's a subtle corrupter and can be the force behind any number of criminal schemes. Without a doubt, any hero trying to put an end to the drug-smuggling business in Freedom City is likely to encounter him sooner or later.

Baron Samedi: PL 15; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 17 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +8 melee (+8S, punch), +7 ranged; SV Dmg +10, Fort +10, Ref +1, Will +10; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 18, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +12, Concentration +11, Hide +6, Innuendo +10, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (occult) +10, Language (Haitian French), Move Silently +6, Sense Motive +12, Taunt +12.

Feats: Darkvision, Minions, Mystic Awareness, Startle.



Powers: Energy Control (darkness) +10 [*Extras:* Animation (shadows and zombies), Mind Control, Snare, Teleportation; *Power Stunt:* Extended Teleport; *Source:* Mystical; *Cost:* 6 pp], Super-Strength +6 [*Extras:* Intimidating Presence, Super-Constitution, Super-Wisdom, Super-Charisma, Regeneration; *Source:* Mystical; *Cost:* 12 pp].

THE COSMIC MIND

Dr. Mina Kosmova was a psychical researcher in the U.S.S.R. during the Cold War era, when the Soviet government heavily funded a number of secret programs to study paranormal and psychic phenomena. Dr. Kosmova sought to replicate telepathic experiences through technological means, but her experiments did not produce enough successful data. Her superiors wanted to cancel the project so that she could research more useful things such as remote viewing and ESP for covert surveillance. Certain that her theories were correct, she was desperate to prove them. Dr. Kosmova secretly created a more powerful version of her neural receptor array, and she used herself as the test subject.

Moments after the switch was thrown, Mina Kosmova's mind expanded into the cosmos. She came into contact with a vast and powerful alien intelligence, beyond anything the human mind could imagine. Her thoughts seemed to touch the reaches of infinity. The lab technicians found Dr. Kosmova's body slumped over in the test chair, dead of what looked like a massive cerebral hemorrhage.

Soon thereafter, the Russian Science City reported strange happenings and poltergeist phenomena. It began first among the psychics and sensitives there, but soon other personnel began reporting hearing voices and seeing visions. An associate of Dr. Atom got word to him, and the Atom Family came to investigate. They found the people at the Science City under the mental control of Dr. Kosmova's disembodied intellect; its psionic potential vastly increased by the neural receptor array. The so-called "Cosmic Mind" wanted to join all of humanity in a telepathic gestalt, controlled by it as the hive queen, to direct the future of the human race. Dr. Atom was able to modify Kosmova's neural array to allow Mentac to disrupt the gestalt and apparently disperse the Cosmic Mind's psionic field.

The Cosmic Mind has returned on several occasions to fight the Atom Family, including once possessing Mentac and forming a temporary alliance with Lady Lunar. It has proven one of the Atom Family's most persistent foes, lacking a physical body to either fight or imprison. Most recently, the Cosmic Mind was beamed

away from Earth toward a distant galaxy on a hyperspace carrier wave. It remains to be seen if, and when, it will return.

Quote: "Join with me. Let our minds become one."

Personality: The personality of Dr. Mina Kosmova is all but gone. The Cosmic Mind considers itself "beyond" human failings and concerns. It is cold, detached, and arrogant. It evidences a strong dislike for all "primitive" forms of government and bureaucracy, claiming that its telepathic hive-mind would be far superior and far less corruptible to all of them. It cares almost nothing for individuals, seeing people as mere drones for it to manipulate. It understands that its foes often have far more scruples, giving the Cosmic Mind an advantage when sending its entranced minions against them.

Powers & Tactics: The Cosmic Mind is a being of pure psionic energy and has various mental powers at its command. It has a small measure of psychokinesis, allowing it to move small objects through mental force; such exertions are tiring, so it is a power the



Cosmic Mind uses sparingly. Its greatest power is telepathy. It can read the thoughts of other beings and project its thoughts into their minds. The Cosmic Mind also can directly control a large number of minds, creating a "telepathic web" that connects them, allowing every part of the group-mind to know what happens to every other part. It also can project mental blasts that stun the minds of others.

The Cosmic Mind is a being of pure mental energy, with no physical substance. It is immune to most physical concerns and most forms of harm, although it can be affected by mental powers and by certain high-frequency signals that "jam" its energy frequency.

Appearance: The Cosmic Mind looks like a ghostly image of a human brain and trailing ganglia, all about five times normal size. A pair of massive, glowing eyes hovers just in front of the brain image. A soft glow surrounds it all and its eyes glow brighter as it exerts its mental powers.

Campaign Use: The Cosmic Mind is a mind-control villain of enormous power. It is capable of sending large numbers of minions after the heroes while remaining largely out of their reach (unless one of them happens to have mental powers that can affect it directly). The heroes must come up with ways to deal with the Mind's minions without harming them and to stop the renegade intelligence before its influence spreads too far.

The Cosmic Mind: PL 15; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Defense 15 (13 flat-footed); Spd fly 60 ft.; Atk +10 mental (+12S, mental blast); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +12; Str —, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 16.

Skills: Profession (scientist) +2, Repair +5, Science (psionics) +6.

Feats: Attack Focus (mental blast), Assessment, Improved Initiative, Indomitable Will, Iron Will, Minions, Psychic Awareness.

Powers: Incorporeal +12 [Extras: Float, Immunity; Flaw: Permanent; Source: Mutation; Cost: 4 pp], Super-Intelligence +5 [Extra: Super-Wisdom; Source: Mutation; Cost: 4 pp], Telekinesis +3 [Extra: Ghost Touch; Flaw: Tiring; Source: Mutation; Cost: 2 pp], Telepathy +12 [Extras: Area, Ghost Touch, Group Link, Mental Blast, Mind Control; Source: Mutation; Cost: 8 pp].

DOC OTAKU

Solo Takashi was a genius almost from the time he was born. He spoke five languages by the time he was seven years old and earned his first doctorate at the age of 12. Unfortunately, Takashi was bored. He lacked challenge and he wanted to have peers, intellectual equals. He also wanted to have some fun.

He jumped at the opportunity to study with Daedelus, one of the greatest scientific minds in the world. But he quickly decided that Daedelus was a scared old man unwilling to take risks or let anyone else take them, either. He didn't encourage Takashi's potential, he only tried to limit and control it. He was full of warnings and talk about patience, but Takashi saw the truth: Daedelus was jealous of him, like they all were, jealous of his brilliance and potential.

When Daedelus discovered that Takashi was committing crimes and selling his work to the Foundry (p. 76), he confronted the young scientist and gave him a chance to own up to what he had

done. That ended their working relationship. Takashi went underground, determined to prove himself the intellectual superior of the inventor and hero. So began the career of Doc Otaku.

In the past few years, Doc Otaku has plagued Daedelus, the Freedom League, and the world with the fruits of his twisted genius, ranging from video games and anime come to life to giant robot monsters rampaging through the streets of Tokyo or Freedom City. He's only been apprehended once, and he's shown that a conventional prison facility has little chance of holding him for long.

Quote: "Oh yeah? Well, let's see if you can stand up to the power of my latest invention! Ultimate Omega Photon Beam!"

Personality: Doc Otaku, as his name implies, isn't very in touch with reality. He's a bored young genius looking for a new challenge but still very much a boy playing with his new toys. He has no real awareness or empathy for the trouble that he causes; he only cares whether or not he wins the game. He looks down on most people as his intellectual inferiors and likes to taunt them for it.

Powers & Tactics: Doc Otaku is one of the most brilliant inventive minds in the world. He's capable in nearly all fields of knowledge and science, but his specialty is robotics and the creation of various mecha, ranging from his Angel Android companions to giant robot monsters. He's also a master of computer hardware and software, and he even created the sophisticated battle-suit he wears.

Doc Otaku usually operates behind the scenes, sending mecha out to do his work for him. The Angel Androids are his assistants, bodyguards, and agents. Takashi has been known to use android duplicates of himself as decoys in case heroes manage to track down his hidden bases. He also doesn't hesitate to use his mecha to create distractions to allow him to escape when the "game" is over.

Appearance: Doc Otaku is a thin, short Japanese teenager. His dark hair is somewhat shaggy and it often falls over his face. He's usually dressed in a close-fitting "techno-suit" covered with circuit patterns and supplementary technology modules. He's rarely without at least one of his Angel Androids close by.

Campaign Use: Doc Otaku is a source for giant mecha and androids in the campaign, either menaces he unleashes on an unsuspecting populace or custom work done for various clients (usually facilitated by the Foundry). Doc can take your favorite anime, manga, video game, or toy and turn it into a threat for the heroes to face. Although he's primarily focused on building his own "monsters," Doc might also take an interest in the inhabitants of Kaiju Island (p. 90). Doc Otaku and Toy Boy make excellent rivals or even more dangerous friends. Perhaps they stage "games" to see which of them can pull off the cleverest crimes or "collect" the largest number of defeated superheroes.

Doc Otaku: PL 12; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 18 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (-1S, punch), +6 ranged (by gadget); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 20, Wis 16, Cha 10.

Skills: Computers +21, Craft (robotics) +22, Disable Device +17, Knowledge (anime) +16, Language (English), Pilot +8, Repair +19, Science (mechanics) +19, Science (all others untrained) +15.



Feats: Assessment, Expertise, Headquarters, Minions (robots), Photographic Memory, Sidekicks (3), Talented (Computers and Craft).

Powers: Gadgets +10 [Source: Super-Science; Cost: 1 pp], Super-Intelligence +10 [Source: Mutation; Cost: 2 pp].

Equipment: Battlesuit [Armor +10; Extras: Energy Blast, Growth, Flight, Immunity; Power Stunts: Radio Broadcast, Radio Hearing; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 5 pp].

THE ANGEL ANDROIDS

Aki, Ako, and Aya are Doc Otaku's most enduring and most well-known creations. They are sophisticated androids that look like teenage girls dressed in Japanese school uniforms. Aki looks Asian, Ako is a redhead with freckles, and Aya is a blonde with big blue eyes. Other than their cosmetic differences in appearance, all three Angel Androids are identical in size and abilities. They are all superhumanly strong and fast, resistant to most forms of harm, and immune to biological needs such as air, food, or rest.

All three have giggly, girlish personalities and they all adore Takashi (as they are programmed to do). The Angel Androids are intelligent and capable of independent thought, although they would never do anything that would harm their beloved Takashi or make him upset. They're relentlessly cheerful and pleasant, even while they're pounding opponents into the pavement, and they always leave a scene with a smile, a wave, and a happy "Have a nice day! Buh-bye!"

Doc Otaku maintains plans for the Angel Androids and backs-up their memory files on a regular basis, so he can easily re-create any or all of them if they are destroyed. They are his favorite agents, and he often uses them to help carry out his plans. Otherwise the Angels act as his bodyguards and see to his every need.

The Angel Androids: PL 9 (construct); Init +12 (Dex, Super-Dexterity); Defense 24 (12 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +8 melee (+11S, punch); SV Dmg +10, Fort —, Ref +12, Will +9; Str 16, Dex 18, Con —, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Acrobatics +13, Listen +10, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10.

Feats: Attack Finesse, Attractive.

Powers: Super-Dexterity +8 [*Extras:* Leaping, Super-Strength, Super-Wisdom; *Source:* Super-Science; *Cost:* 10 pp].

DR. SIN

Dr. Tzin Sing was born over a century ago in China to a family that clung to a bygone era of Imperial privilege and prestige. Even as a boy he was a brilliant scholar and he was drawn to the study of science. As he grew older, he learned that others did not appreciate his intellect or his achievements, often becoming intimidated or jealous. It was the way of things: People feared their superiors and tried to drag them down to their own base and common level. Tzin Sing would not allow himself to be dragged down. Instead, he decided that he would use his intellect and his ambition to achieve greatness.

Starting in the 1920s, Dr. Sin (as he has become known in the West) built himself a criminal empire in China and struggled against various local and Western heroes who tried to thwart his schemes to expand his power. World War II temporarily put his plans on hold, but Dr. Sin appeared again in the 1950s and 1960s. His greatest enemy then was the hero known as the Raven, who foiled the sinister doctor's plans at every turn. Raven also won the heart of Sin's daughter, Jasmine. Eventually, Dr. Sin and the Raven had a final confrontation aboard Sin's airship armada flagship that left the Raven crippled and Dr. Sin presumed dead.

Having cheated death many times before, Sin did so again. He extended his life with ancient potions and secret meditation techniques. He rebuilt his criminal empire from the shadows and plotted his vengeance against his old foe, who was now married to Sin's daughter and with a child of his own. Dr. Sin attempted to kidnap his granddaughter, but Raven and Jasmine came to rescue her. When Jasmine took a killing blow meant for her husband, Dr. Sin was forced to flee. He has rededicated himself to his plans of

conquest and has sworn that his granddaughter, the new Raven, will either join him or suffer her mother's fate as a traitor to her own blood. As for her father, words cannot describe the hatred Dr. Sin feels for the man he holds responsible for Jasmine's death.

Quote: "Now I must leave you. The tigers grow hungry, and my army awaits. Farewell."

Personality: Dr. Sin is a combination of inscrutable calm and detachment and supreme arrogance. He knows that he is one of the greatest minds that ever lived and believes it is therefore his destiny to rule over his inferiors, regardless of their simple wishes. He lives for the challenge of struggling against a worthy adversary, since victory without struggle is meaningless. He fancies himself a man of honor. He won't go back on his sworn word, although he's willing to use cunning and deception to achieve his ends. Any challenge to his authority or inherent superiority must be met and overcome.

Powers & Tactics: Dr. Sin has a brilliant scientific and analytical mind, making him one of the greatest scientists and inventors who has ever lived. He has adapted alien technology (salvaged from ancient Preserver, Serpent People, and Atlantean sites) for his own uses and has developed a number of technological innovations on his own from them. He combines this with knowledge of ancient Chinese herbalism, alchemy, and martial arts. Dr. Sin prefers to operate as a mastermind behind the scenes, using various pawns to put his plans into action. He maintains secret bases hidden around the world and legions of followers awaiting his commands.

Appearance: Dr. Sin is an elderly Chinese man of proud bearing and manner. His face is severe and usually serene. He's completely bald, with a neat white beard and moustache. He often dresses like an ancient Chinese mandarin and he has long, pointed fingernails. Despite his great age, Dr. Sin is surprisingly spry and healthy, due to his regime of herbal treatments, exercises, and meditation.

Campaign Use: Dr. Sin is a mad scientist and mastermind suitable as a foe for heroes for any era of Freedom City's history. He can confront pulp and golden age heroes in the 1930s and 1940s, serve as a menace for silver age heroes from the 1960s, or return to frustrate modern day heroes. His virtual immortality makes him an excellent villain for a long-running historical or generational campaign.

Dr. Sin: PL 16; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 23 (18 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +11 melee (+0S, punch), +11 ranged (by weapon); SV Dmg +2 (+5), Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +17; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 18.

Skills: Bluff +14, Computers +20, Craft (mechanics) +20, Disable Device +20, Drive +8, Escape Artist +11, Gather Information +11, Innuendo +10, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (occult) +18, Language (English, Japanese, Latin, Russian), Pilot +6, Repair +19, Science (chemistry) +19, Sleight of Hand +7.

Feats: Assessment, Attack Finesse, Dodge, Evasion, Expertise, Headquarters, Indomitable Will, Infamy, Inspire, Leadership, Lightning Reflexes, Minions, Power Attack, Stunning Attack.



Powers: Super-Intelligence +12 [Extra: Super-Wisdom; Source: Training; Cost: 4 pp].

Equipment: Gadgets +12 [Source: Super-Science; Cost: 1 pp].

GAMMA, THE ATOM-SMASHER

Dr. Frank Ward was a brilliant nuclear physicist and research scientist who took too many reckless risks in his pursuit of knowledge. Those risks came back to haunt him when his son Adam was born a mutant with severe mental retardation and a

hard-radiation aura and touch that resulted in his mother's death. Dr. Ward kept his son in isolation, shielding everyone from Adam's uncontrolled radiation bursts, and spent the next 16 years seeking a cure for his condition. His search became more urgent when Dr. Ward discovered that he was dying of cancer, most likely from exposure to Adam's radioactive emissions over the years, despite his best precautions.

Ward developed an experimental treatment that he believed would leech off Adam's excess radioactivity and also grant him a measure of normal mental capacity, once the interfering energy stopped overloading his brain synapses. Unfortunately, Dr. Ward's plan required the theft of a large amount of radioactive material, which drew the attention of the Atom Family. Tracking the thefts, they discovered Dr. Ward's secret laboratory and fought the mercenaries he hired. Damage to the lab equipment forced Dr. Ward to make the final connections for his device manually. His last act was to place a device over his son's unshielded head—only the second time in 16 years that he was able to touch his child directly. Ward collapsed near his son, his hands and face severely burned by radiation. Adam finally gained a measure of control over his power and his intellect was awakened, but at the cost of his father's life.

The Atom Family fought past the mercenaries and found a large blue man cradling the doctor's corpse and sobbing over it. It got up and came toward them, its radioactive arms wide.

Assuming this "monster" had killed the doctor, the Atoms attacked before it got its massive hands on them. Finally aware for the first time in his life and aching for contact, Adam only wanted someone to fill the void he felt, but his first contact with strangers was a violent attack. Shocked and confused, Adam responded in kind until Dr. Atom realized the truth of the situation. They calmed him down and turned the child-like Adam over to ASTRO Labs.

At ASTRO, Adam's intellect soared as a result of his father's final treatments and the mental stimulation he received from staff doctors and nurses who attended him around the clock. Adam learned to speak articulate English within two days, learned to read and write after two weeks, and absorbed knowledge so swiftly that he learned the equivalent of a high school education inside of four months—though by the end of that period, his mental acuity plateaued and he now learned and understood things only slightly faster than any other 16-year-old. Unfortunately, even though he could see and hear people and talk with them, he was still trapped in isolation and unable to touch or be touched. Overhearing some of the doctors talking, he learned the details of his father's death, and the stress of his constant imprisonment and now having some understanding of what he'd lost drove Adam Ward over the edge.

Adam broke out of ASTRO and swore revenge against the Atom Family for causing his father's death by interfering with his experiments. He also vowed unending hatred at all scientists, since none ever saw him as anything more than a test subject. Adam Ward took on the name "Gamma, the Atom-Smasher" and has made several attempts to destroy the Atom Family. Each has ended in failure and only further embittered the atomic mutant, now a true renegade from human society. His bitterness has grown to encompass most of humanity, which he blames for his outcast state.

Quote: "You will pay dearly for what you've done to me. You all will."

Personality: Adam is a bitter and lonely young man. His father's final treatments awakened a keen intellect, but Adam had neither the emotional stability nor the life-experience to handle all the conflicts and complexities of modern life. In many ways, Gamma is a vengeful child lashing out at the people he considers responsible for his pain. Denied human contact all his life, he's intensely lonely, but denies that he needs anyone or anything. He claims that humanity rejected him first, and that he will show them how right they were to fear him.

Powers & Tactics: Gamma's body generates radiation that he can channel and project in various ways. He can create beams of heat that can melt metal and surround himself with a damaging radioactive field. He also can use his radioactive energy to fly through the air. His body is incredibly tough and he's superhumanly strong and immune to the effects of extreme temperatures and all forms of radioactivity. Gamma constantly emits low-level radiation, enough to make prolonged exposure to him dangerous and to leave residual radiation traces on anything he has been in close contact with. Gamma typically relies on his great strength and radiation blasts in combat, but he doesn't hesitate to threaten bystanders to provide a necessary distraction. He's been known to choose environments that favor his abilities, such as attempting to overload the Raymond Nuclear Plant while keeping the Atom Family at bay, knowing that the meltdown wouldn't harm him in the slightest.

Appearance: Adam is a huge man, standing nearly 6'5", with a broad, heavily muscled build. His entire body is completely hairless and covered in powder-blue-colored skin. His solid-blue eyes glow with a cobalt-blue light when he uses his powers and



he's surrounded by a faint blue glow in darkness or shadow. Gamma wears a close-fitting bodysuit that his father designed to help control his radioactivity. It has a blue torso and trunks, gold sleeves and leggings, and blue gloves and boots. A gold radiation hazard symbol adorns his chest.

Campaign Use: Gamma is atomic energy run amok, but he's also a misunderstood villain with the potential to reform, if someone found a way to break through his shell and reach the lonely and frightened boy inside.

Gamma, the Atom-Smasher: PL 12; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 16 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (fly 60 ft.); Atk +10 melee (+14S, punch), +7 ranged (+12L, radiation blast); SV Dmg +4, Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +8; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Science (nuclear physics) +4.

Feats: Darkvision, Improved Grapple, Indomitable Will.

Powers: Amazing Save (Will) +8 [Source: Mutation; Cost: 1 pp], Energy Control (radiation) +12 [Extras: Energy Blast, Flight; Power Stunts: Super-Flight; Source: Mutation; Cost: 4 pp], Super-Strength +10 [Extras: Immunity, Protection; Source: Mutation; Cost: 6 pp].

THE GREEN MAN

The being now known as the "Green Man" began life as Dr. Nathan Grovemont, a botanist and research scientist who studied the evolution and development of plant life. Nathan became convinced that evolution could not overcome humanity's harmful side-effects on the environment, and it was only a matter of time before the human race rendered the Earth uninhabitable.

He experimented with new strains of plant life that could survive the ecological disasters he saw coming all too clearly. Since plants did not adapt to environmental changes quickly enough, he needed to make them more aware and capable of molding their environments to suit them. In time, he developed his "morphological stimulator," a device that used a plant's morphic energy field to grant it animation and movement without true intelligence. When his funding was cut and his project scrapped, his protests went unheard, so he took his prototype stimulator and used it himself.

The following week, trees from Liberty Park robbed a local bank, ignoring gunfire and overturning a police car that tried to stop them. Several other crimes occurred as the mysterious "Green Man" used his vegetable minions to steal for him. Eventually, Dr. Grovemont was caught and sentenced to time in Providence Asylum. He escaped with the aid of a makeshift device and some ivy growing on the walls. This time, he pursued his experiments to their "logical conclusion." He used his equipment and a series of chemical treatments to alter his own morphic field, turning himself from a human being to a creature of animate plant life. Dr. Grovemont left his old life behind and began his career as an eco-terrorist and self-proclaimed savior of the Earth. He thinks it is time for



him to teach the trees to fight back against their killers.

Quote: "You have abused the plant kingdom for long enough! Now we will take back our planet."

Personality: Dr. Grovemont was an unbalanced personality *before* he turned himself into a plant. It's difficult to say whether or not the Green Man is completely insane or has a perspective that is completely alien to human experience. In either case, he has little or no regard for human life, considering it a "pestilence" on the face of the Earth. Still, the Green Man does not want to destroy the world, or even to destroy humanity, so long as they learn their proper place in the scheme of things. He wants to "liberate" the plant kingdom to better defend itself. He considers himself superior to humanity, both intellectually and physically, and points this out at nearly every opportunity. Although he sometimes employs human agents to do his dirty work—usually fanatical eco-terrorists and petty criminals—the Green Man has no real ties to humanity, only his kinship with the plant kingdom.

Powers & Tactics: The Green Man is a living, mobile, intelligent humanoid plant with the ability to control other plants and impart tremendous growth and mobility to them. His body is made up of a substance similar to dense wood, giving him superhuman strength and resistance to injury. His plant-body heals quickly

from any injuries and he can animate and command plants to do his bidding. He usually operates in areas where plants can be found in abundance: forests, wetlands, and even large parks. His usual subjects are trees, but all types of plants have their uses. The Green Man often carries a bag of seeds with him. His power can cause them to sprout even on city streets or sidewalks and grow unbelievably fast, and he's used mutated vines to crack solid concrete in the past.

Appearance: The Green Man looks like a humanoid formed out of living wood, with bark for skin. Although he has human-looking facial features, his senses are largely psychic in nature, making it difficult to affect them. Leaves grow on top of his head and around his waist like a kilt. Moss decorates his wrists and ankles, while his body is draped in vines, which often flower and can grow thorns or deliver a toxic pollen cloud.

Campaign Use: The Green Man is the vengeance of nature upon those who have harmed it. Completely inhuman, he provides a stark contrast to the human achievements of Freedom City. He's a good villain for "eco-terrorist" causes, as well as getting the heroes away from the city for a while. He also can show up in an urban greenhouse or a city park for a change of pace.

The Green Man: PL 10; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 17 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +8 melee (+3S, punch); SV Dmg +10, Fort +10, Ref +1, Will +8; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 11.

Skills: Science (botany) +10, Spot +5.

Feats: Minions.

Powers: Amazing Save (Damage, Fortitude, Will) +6 [Source: Mutation; Cost: 3 pp], Plant Control +10 [Extras: Plant Elementals, Plant Sense, Pollen Cloud, Regeneration; Power Stunts: Immunity (exhaustion, suffocation), Photosynthesis; Source: Mutation; Cost: 6 pp].

Animated Tree (Construct)

The statistics below are based on a fairly large, mature tree with a number of limbs. The GM may wish to modify the stats to give the Green Man's plant servants a bit of variety. Animated trees are quite tough, since they feel no pain and cannot be stunned; heroes literally must rip them limb from limb in order to stop them. They are vulnerable to herbicides and fire, like ordinary trees, but that can create its own problems.

Animated Tree: PL 1 (construct minion); Init +0; Defense 11; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 melee (+7S, strike); SV Dmg +5, Fort —, Ref +0, Will —; Str 20, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 6, Cha 1;

Powers: Growth +2 [Flaw: Permanent; Source: Alien; Cost: 5 pp].

THE HELLQUEEN

Gwen Nugent just wanted to be loved. She wanted to feel important for a change, rather than ignored. She wished she could be more like her friend and co-worker, Nancy Dumont. Nancy was attractive, funny, personable, and well-liked. Eventually, Gwen fell in with people who did make her feel important, although not in a good way. The friends told her they were members of a cult and Gwen was their "chosen one." They wanted to use her in a rite of black magic, and told her she was the only one who could do it.

That night by the dark of the moon, Gwen lay on the altar slab as the members of the cult chanted and worked their ritual to summon a demon from the netherworld. They succeeded, but things didn't go quite as they expected. The powerful demoness they summoned needed a human host to work through, and Gwen was perfect. Her fell energies merged with Gwen's body, and the unholy being that rose from the altar used her hellfire to

kill the foolish mortals who thought to bind her. She then seized control of the remainder of the cult for herself.

Driven at least partly by Gwen's subconscious feelings, the Hellqueen kidnapped Nancy Dumont for use as a sacrifice to raise more of her kind. The intervention of Captain Thunder saved Ms. Dumont and broke the Hellqueen's cult, but she escaped and plotted revenge. Over time, the Hellqueen became fascinated with Captain Thunder. On several occasions, she tried to seduce him into becoming her consort, but each time he spurned her advances. It was Nancy Dumont who finally defeated the Hellqueen by appealing to her former friend Gwen, buried deep within the demonic personality. Gwen was able to exorcise the demon from her soul and was placed in psychiatric care.

The threat of the Hellqueen was believed over, but when Captain Thunder's true identity was exposed, Gwen Nugent saw the broadcast, and it all came together for her. They'd tricked her! Nancy and her husband Ray (who was really Captain Thunder!) had played this joke on her the whole time. In her jealous rage, Gwen gave in to the demon trapped within her and the Hellqueen lived again. She quickly decided to maintain "Gwen" to hide her activities and quietly began regathering her cult. Now, she works her way into the lives of her enemies and destroys them slowly from within. Captain Thunder's membership in the Freedom League has slowed her plans somewhat, but not changed them. The Hellqueen will see Captain Thunder and all that he loves burn in the deepest pits of Hell!

Quote: "Join me, and I can show you pleasures and power beyond your imagination!"

Personality: Gwen Nugent was originally a shy woman with low self-esteem looking for approval and acceptance. The Hellqueen is jealousy and hate personified, her actions always viciously cruel and wicked. She delights in causing pain and suffering, particularly in bringing about the downfall of others through their own mortal weaknesses. She loves to surround herself with willing worshippers who fulfill her slightest whim. Her greatest pleasure is to break a strong-willed enemy and have him or her bow down before her.

It is possible, with great effort, to reach Gwen Nugent's buried personality and bring it to the surface: Those attempting to do so must make a Charisma check opposed by the Hellqueen's Will save (she receives a +15 bonus on the check). Success forces her to transform back into Gwen, who will be wracked with guilt over her actions. If the attempt fails, it's likely only to enrage the Hellqueen, who despises Gwen's mortal weakness and hates being reminded of it in any way.

Powers & Tactics: The Hellqueen has a number of magic-spawned powers at her command. Her magic enhances her borrowed flesh, making her superhumanly strong and tough. She does not age, nor is she subject to mortal needs for food, air, or sleep. She commands a mystic energy she calls "hellfire" that she can project as fiery bolts from her hands or eyes or shape into flaming weapons like tridents, swords, or whips. She also can project hellfire aimed at her target's soul rather than his body, inflicting psychic and emotional damage instead of the usual physical damage. The Hellqueen was originally a succubus or

demon temptress, and she retains those powers as well in her current form. She can alter her appearance at will, and her kiss can drain the strength from living beings. Finally, she can travel at will to the netherworld and other magical dimensions. This allows her to teleport in a burst of hellfire and black smoke.

In battle, the Hellqueen usually uses her hellfire powers, although she is also fond of using shapeshifting to catch opponents off guard and use her kiss against them. When things start going badly, she usually teleports away. She's fond of using her cultist minions as cannon fodder against super-opponents and will use whatever psychological levers she can find to her advantage (particularly threatening loved ones).

Appearance: The Hellqueen is tall and statuesque, with long, blood-red hair, flame-red eyes, and horns on her forehead. She wears a black and red corset, with arm-length gloves, thigh-high boots, and tiny black shorts. She is often surrounded by a flickering aura of hellfire. Gwen Nugent is shorter with shoulder-length brown hair and blue eyes. She tends toward casual clothing, usually a sweater and a pair of jeans or a skirt.

Campaign Use: The Hellqueen is a powerful mystic villain, capable of facing a single powerful hero or an entire team. Although she's powerful in combat, her greatest power comes from her deceptions, worming her way into the confidence of a hero, learning all she can about her opponent's weaknesses, and sowing dissent before she finally reveals her true nature and moves in for the kill.

The Hellqueen: PL 13; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 19 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft; Atk +6 melee (+6S, punch), +7 ranged (+10L, hellfire blast), +8 mental (+10S, mental blast); SV Dmg +7, Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 17, Cha 20.

Skills: Bluff +14, Diplomacy +14, Innuendo +12, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (occult) +8, Perform (acting) +12, Taunt +12.

Feats: Attractive, Detect (souls), Dodge, Lightning Reflexes.

Powers: Amazing Save (Will) +6 [Source: Mystical; Cost: 1 pp], Sorcery +10 [Spells: Drain Wisdom, ESP, Fire Control, Illusion, Immunity, Mental Blast, Shapeshift, Teleport; Power Stunt: Dimensional Travel; Flaws: Excluded Group—Divination; Source: Mystical; Cost: 6 pp], Super-Strength +5 [Extras: Super-Constitution, Super-Charisma; Source: Mystical; Cost: 8 pp].

MALADOR THE MYSTIC

Malador was born thousands of years ago in the ancient civilization of Atlantis. He became a promising student, and later accomplished master, of the mystic arts. He earned the mantle of master mage, but also became the first to betray his

oath and his duty to humanity. Malador bargained with unspeakable evil beings from other dimensions, bound in eternal slumber in realms beyond the ken of mankind. He sought power and knowledge above all else, and would have gladly surrendered the whole world to his dark patrons. The sorcerers of Atlantis united against Malador and were able to overcome him. They



stripped him of much of his power and bound him in a tomb for all time. Malador cursed all of Atlantis with his final breaths, and it was not long thereafter that the island civilization sank in a terrible Cataclysm (see **History**, p. 13 for details).

Archeologists uncovered Malador's tomb in the 1930s and unwittingly awakened the ancient mage. One of them, Adrian Eldrich, became invested with the power of an Atlantean sorcerer and has become Malador's arch foe for the modern era. Malador has clashed with Eldrich and various other heroes a number of times over the years. All the while, the ancient sorcerer seeks to recover the power that he has lost and to bring his inhuman masters to Earth, which they will reshape in their image. Malador will rule over a new Hell on Earth.

Quote: "By the demons of darkness, you will bow down before me!"

Personality: Once a noble protector of humanity and a scholar of mystical lore, Malador has become mad with power-lust. He wants nothing more than to wield ultimate power and be acknowledged as the supreme master of the mystic arts. Anything that stands in his way must be eliminated, preferably in a manner that demonstrates his power to any other fools that might dare to challenge him.

Malador is supremely confident and assured of his own power and abilities. Minions who question him usually end up transformed into slavering monsters or simply destroyed, depending on his mood. He cannot resist an opportunity to gloat once he has a foe in his clutches.

Powers & Tactics: Malador is a master sorcerer, capable of casting a wide range of spells. His arsenal includes bolts of mystic power and magical shields that protect him from harm. He can levitate, allowing him to fly through the air, and he can entrap others in mystic chains, transform people or animals into demonic monsters, magically spy on distant places, and so forth. The only real limits on Malador's power are his concentration, time, and the amount of mystic energy at his command. He uses magical artifacts and devices to enhance his spellcasting abilities from time to time.

Malador is no longer a living being, having become more of an undead creature sustained by his powerful magic. He no longer suffers from mortal concerns like aging or needing to eat or breathe, and is immune to most harmful environmental conditions. In fact, Malador's lifeforce is bound into the crimson stone set in his mask. Should his physical body be destroyed, Malador's lifeforce enters the stone and waits there until a suitable host-body comes into contact with it. Malador can then possess that person and magically transform his or her body into a duplicate of his own. More than once, heroes have believed the threat of Malador the Mystic was ended, only to have him return, as powerful as ever.

Appearance: Malador is a tall, emaciated figure, his body, arms and legs wrapped in tattered bandages. He wears an Egyptian-style pectoral collar and a golden death mask. His collar is set with an oval-shaped crimson stone. A long, black robe with wide sleeves and gold trim covers him, revealing only his head



and his thin arms and hands. His face behind the mask is withered and ancient.

Campaign Use: Malador is a deranged magical menace in service to the dark powers of the cosmos. Given the opportunity, he will summon his monstrous patrons to Earth, so it's up to the heroes to stop him. Malador often goes after sources of mystic lore and power, particular ancient artifacts unearthed by archeologists and on display in museums. He's likely to be behind mortal cults worshipping his patrons, and may even cooperate with the Brotherhood of the

Yellow Sign (p. 78), toward their mutual goal. He makes a suitable nemesis for a mystic character, or even an entire group of mystics dedicated to protecting Earth from forces beyond.

Malador the Mystic: PL 16; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 18 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +8 ranged (+155, mystic blast); SV Dmg +14, Fort +14, Ref +1, Will +17; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 16, Wis 20, Cha 14.

Skills: Concentration +18, Knowledge (occult) +12.

Feats: Attack Focus (energy blast), Headquarters, Indomitable Will, Iron Will, Minions, Mystic Awareness, Skill Focus (Knowledge—occult).

Powers: Sorcery +15 [*Spells:* Animation, Energy Blast, ESP, Flight, Force Field, Illusion, Telekinesis; *Power Stunts:* Comprehend, Snare, Transform; *Source:* Mystical; *Cost:* 7 pp], Super-Constitution +10 [*Extras:* Immunity, Super-Wisdom; *Source:* Mystical; *Cost:* 7 pp].

LADY LUNAR

As a member of the Farsider Royal Family (see **Farside City**, p. 93), Lady Selene had every advantage. She was beautiful, intelligent, and privileged. What she lacked were the mental powers that were the basis of the royal family's ability to rule; her lack of that birthright made her unfit to rule, even though she was the eldest child. She was "mind blind," a virtual cripple by the standards of her family. Although she was treated well enough, it was with pity and compassion that she grew to hate. She was denied her rightful throne, her inheritance, and made into an object of ridicule. The sole advantage of her state was that it made Selene practically immune to the psychic abilities of others, allowing her to conceal her growing hatred for her family.

Selene gathered allies among the populace of Saruen and embarked on a daring plan. She seized control of the Moonstone, the alien power source for the entire lunar city. As she hoped, the Moonstone catalyzed latent powers within her and boosted them beyond those of the royal family. Selene and her followers staged a coup and seized control of the palace. Many of the royal family died in the conflict, while the others were executed shortly thereafter. The only survivor was Mentac, the youngest son of the king and queen, who was sent to safety on Earth. With the rest of her family eliminated, Selene took on the title Lady Lunar, and became the ruler of Farside City.

She ruled for many years, exploring the power of the Moonstone and suppressing all opposition until the city was firmly under her thumb. Her attempts to conquer Earth failed due to the intervention of the Atom Family, which included her nephew Mentac. Eventually, Mentac and the Atom Family came to Farside City and helped lead a rebellion that overthrew Lady Lunar. She fled, but returned several times to challenge her upstart nephew and his friends.

Lady Lunar has remained a threat to Farside City, Earth, and her sole surviving relations, the Atom siblings. Selene has never allowed blood to come between her and what she considers her rightful due, and her grandnieces and grandnephews are no exception. They can swear loyalty to her as the true ruler of Luna, or they will suffer the fate of all traitors who stand against her.

Quote: "I shall be queen of the Moon and the stars once more!"

Personality: Lady Lunar is imperious and arrogant, carrying herself like the deposed queen she believes herself to be. She is royalty, not to be challenged, spoken to, and certainly not touched by "mere rabble." She is willing to teach others to respect their betters, including her wayward relations. She considers herself a good monarch. After all, didn't she bring order and stability to Farside City? She could do the same for Earth, and other worlds, but only at the cost of free will, or even free thought. It seems a small price to pay in her mind.

Although she is normally cool, collected, and regal, Lady Lunar has a temper, particularly when she's directly defied or challenged. She can fly into a rage and lash out at whatever is in her way. She also prefers to break her enemies rather than destroy them. She regrets eliminating the rest of the royal family, since it denied her the pleasure of slowly breaking their wills and bringing them over to her side. Lady Lunar is practiced in interrogation and mental techniques of brainwashing. She considers others her playthings, pawns to be disposed of as she sees fit.

Powers & Tactics: Lady Lunar has powerful mental abilities, mainly telepathic and telekinetic in nature. She's a powerful telepath, able to read the thoughts of others and project her own into their minds. She's particularly adept at triggering episodes of "lunacy," causing temporary insanity in others by disrupting their normal mental processes. She can mentally control others, although this can quickly become fatiguing without the power of the Moonstone (see p. 94). She can project bolts of telepathic force to stun the minds of others.

Her telekinetic abilities allow her to levitate objects (including herself), protect herself with a screen of telekinetic force, and launch blasts of telekinetic energy at her foes. Lady Lunar is also fairly adept at operating machinery and devices at a distance using telekinesis. Finally, Lady Lunar can mentally teleport herself over great distances, although doing so is tiring for her.

When she possessed the Moonstone, Lady Lunar had many other powers, including mental control over light and the ability to transmute matter virtually at will. Among other things, she transformed Jack Wolf into the lupine Wolfjack using the stone's power. Having spent years learning to use it, Lady Lunar is perhaps the most adept wielder of the Moonstone alive, although the stone seems to demonstrate a greater affinity for Chase Atom, which is a source of both curiosity and aggravation for Lady Lunar.

Appearance: Lady Lunar is a tall, willowy albino with pink eyes, milk-white skin, and straight, white hair that falls to the small of her back. Her refined, fragile beauty belies her considerable strength of will and innate viciousness. She usually wears Farsider garb in black, dark blue, and silver. With her extended lifespan, Lady Lunar looks no more than in her mid-30s, although her real age is more than twice that.

Campaign Use: Lady Lunar is a would-be conqueror, although her prime target is her home city on the Moon. Still, anyone who knows of her knows that Earth will be soon to follow if she's successful in reasserting her hold over Farside City. She's a good villain

for exerting mind-control over some NPC heroes, so the player characters can fight them. She can also be the villain in adventures involving outer space or aliens. Perhaps she arranges an alliance with the Grue (p. 94) to invade and conquer Earth, with the agreement that she gets to rule Luna in the Empire's name.

Lady Lunar: PL 15; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 20 (18 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 ranged (+11S, telekinetic blast), +9 mental (+12S, mental blast); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +14; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 18, Cha 16.

Skills: Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +7, Language (English), Knowledge (Preservers) +7, Sense Motive +6.

Feats: Dodge, Indomitable Will, Iron Will, Psychic Awareness.

Powers: Amazing Save (Will) +8 [Source: Training; Cost: 1 pp], Telekinesis +11 [Extras: Energy Blast, Flight, Force Field; Source: Psychic; Cost: 5 pp], Telepathy +12 [Extras: Mental Blast, Mind Control; Source: Psychic; Cost: 5 pp], Teleportation +12 [Power Stunt: Extended Teleport; Flaw: Tiring; Source: Psychic; Cost: 1 pp].

LADY TAROT

Lady Tarot claims to be a *strega*, a witch, able to trace her line back to the ancient witches of Tuscany. Whether or not this is true, no one can say. She simply showed up one day in the service of Don Al Driogano of the Freedom City Mafia. At first, people thought she was little more than a "paid companion" for the Don, a woman that had taken his fancy. Later, it seemed like she was the Don's advisor, using her tarot cards to read fortunes for him. It seemed a harmless, if eccentric, affectation, and many of Don Driogano's peers and underlings thought it foolish for a man of Driogano's age and experience to believe in things like fortune-telling.

Eventually, the other mobsters noticed that Driogano's operations ran more smoothly and encountered fewer difficulties with the police. When Don Oliverti died mysteriously, Driogano was right there to take advantage of that, too. People began to wonder about the mysterious Lady Tarot and decided there might be something to all this fortune-telling business after all.

For her part, Lady Tarot has remained loyal to Driogano. He provides her with all that she needs, including a suite at the Southside Palace on the Boardwalk. She continues to provide her abilities at his service, and her presence has drawn much more attention from both the authorities and the other Mob families. She already has thwarted at least one attempt on her life and several against Driogano.

In truth Lady Tarot is a witch and secretly Driogano's illegitimate daughter from an affair he had many years ago in Italy. Her true name is Alicia. She feels obligated to assist her father with her abilities, but she has become more and more intrigued with Foreshadow, one of her father's enemies. He alone seems to have the unique ability to evade her foresight, and she seems to be able to do the same where he is concerned. She is attracted to





She is not happy with helping Driogano run a criminal empire, but she feels a sense of family obligation toward him, even though he prefers to keep the true nature of their relationship a secret. She suffers in silence, and occasionally hopes her love can turn her father into the man she wants him to be, the man her mother loved.

Powers & Tactics: Lady Tarot has certain mystical abilities from her heritage and training. She can foretell the future using a deck of tarot cards; the ability is inherent in her, not the cards, so any tarot deck can serve as her focus. She has a strong sense of intuition, and can cast a number of minor spells using magical rituals, including placing curses on people and protecting them against harm or danger. Her abilities will likely continue to grow as she ages and learns.

Since most of her abilities are of limited use in combat, Lady Tarot does her best to avoid it. Her premonitions usually allow her to do so with relative ease. For times when they do not, she carries a small pistol concealed in her bag.

Appearance: Lady Tarot is a woman in her late 20s. She has jade-green eyes and long, black voluminous hair. She usually wears various sorts of flowing dresses, often with short capes or shawls, and she always wears an antique cameo that belonged to her mother on a black ribbon around her throat. She carries a shoulder bag containing her cards, various mystical paraphernalia, and her pistol.

Campaign Use: Lady Tarot is a mysterious figure, a plot device rather than a foe for heroes to fight. She provides Driogano with an edge against superhuman adversaries, but she is also sympathetic to the cause of the heroes and might aid them covertly if she is able. She is torn between her loyalty to a father she hardly knew during her childhood and her desire to lead her own life. She makes an excellent romantic interest for a player character hero, particularly one who (like Foreshadow) fights against her father's criminal empire. If a player character is better suited, then Lady Tarot may be attracted to him rather than (or in addition to) Foreshadow.

Lady Tarot: PL 9; Init +2; Defense 20 (18 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +3 melee (-15, punch), +6 ranged (+3L, pistol); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 15.

Skills: Bluff +8, Gather Information +6, Innuendo +8, Knowledge (tarot) +8, Perform (acting) +6, Sense Motive +8.

Feats: Attractive, Dodge, Talented (Bluff and Sense Motive).

Powers: Luck +5 [Extra: Jinx; Power Stunts: Bestow Luck; Source: Mystical; Cost: 6 pp], Precognition +9 [Flaw: Requires tarot deck; Source: Mystical; Cost: 2 pp].

Equipment: Pistol (+3L).

MAGPIE

The origins of the world-class thief known only as Magpie are a mystery despite the best efforts of Interpol and the Raven to uncover them. He first made a name for himself in Europe with a series of daring and "impossible" robberies during which he left his calling card each time. He has implied that his powers come from an early theft of a gemstone that possessed magical

him, but cannot betray her father for him, even though she would in order to protect Foreshadow's life, if it came to that.

Quote: "The cards have spoken. There is no escaping your future."

Personality: Lady Tarot appears cool and aloof most of the time. She has a mysterious air about her that says she knows much more than she is telling, which is usually the case. She is somewhat flustered around Foreshadow, although she hides it well. He is one of the only people able to get past her defenses and evoke an emotional response from her. Otherwise, she prefers to keep to herself.

properties, but that may very well be a fabrication intended to throw others off the trail of his true origins.

The Raven was the first to ever catch Magpie in the act and thwart one of his robberies. She has since become both his greatest adversary and an object of his attentions. The charming rogue has made attempts to seduce the dark-clad heroine. Although the Raven has found herself tempted and flattered by his attentions, she has never allowed it to stand in the way of her efforts to bring him in. Thus far, the clever criminal remains at large, continuing to play his "game" with the police and his lovely pursuer.

Quote: "I consider myself an admirer of all things of beauty."

Personality: Magpie is a thorough rogue who steals simply because he can and he finds it amusing and daring. A true romantic at heart, he lives for danger and excitement. He deliberately takes on the most difficult jobs and does so in a fashion that everyone knows who was responsible, since there's no point if it goes unknown. He's a great admirer of all things of beauty, in particular beautiful women, and especially the lovely Raven, who has captured his interest. For Magpie, the chase is far more important, so at least part of Raven's attractiveness may be that she seems so unattainable.

Powers & Tactics: Magpie is a skilled acrobat, contortionist, and escape artist. He's also a master burglar able to overcome locks and security systems. He has the power to teleport, apparently to any place that he can see or knows reasonably well. This allows him to overcome many barriers to both entry and exit and to escape from almost any situation in an instant. Generally, Magpie prefers to accomplish his jobs "the old-fashioned way," reserving his teleportation ability for a speedy exit or a last-minute escape when he needs it.

Appearance: Magpie is a man of slightly below average height with the body of an acrobat. He has brown eyes and short, black hair and a neat beard and moustache. His "working clothes" consist of a black jumpsuit with a climbing harness, boots, and gloves, along with a utility belt containing the various tools of his trade. A circular red patch on the left breast of his suit features the silhouette of a black bird with its claws extended. The same symbol is on the infamous calling card he often leaves in place of whatever he steals.

Campaign Use: Magpie is the laughing thief that the heroes can't easily catch. He may commit a series of daring robberies, challenging the heroes to stop him (and possibly laying a trap for them at one or more of his potential targets). Another villain may hire Magpie to break into a hero team's headquarters to steal their secrets, recover some item from their trophy room, and so forth. Finally, Magpie may take an interest in a heroine other than Raven, adding some romantic tension and banter to his dealings with the heroes.

Magpie: PL 11; Init +13 (Dex, Super-Dexterity); Defense 25 (12 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +9 melee (+3S, punch), +11 ranged (+3L, pistol); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +12, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 18.

Skills: Acrobatics +14, Balance +14, Bluff +10, Climb +12, Disable Device +12, Disguise +10, Escape Artist +13, Hide +15, Language (French), Listen +6, Move Silently +14, Open Lock +14, Search +7, Sense Motive +9, Sleight of Hand +12, Spot +6.

Feats: Dodge, Evasion, Fame, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Talented (Disable Device and Open Lock), Takedown Attack.

Powers: Super-Dexterity +7 [Extras: Super-Strength, Super-Charisma; Flaw: Super-Strength only adds to skill checks; Source: Mutation; Cost: 7 pp], Teleportation +8 [Power Stunt: Extended Teleport; Source: Mutation; Cost: 2 pp].

Equipment: Burglary tools [Talented (Disable Device and Open Lock); Flaw: Device; Cost: 1 pp].

THE MASTERMIND

He was there on the day that the gods came from the sky.

They descended on a floating island, full of strange lights and sounds, and the people were terrified and fled.

They were dark and shining beings with great and terrible power. But he was a hunter and a warrior, the only one of his tribe brave enough to go forth and confront the gods, and

he paid the price for it. The gods took him into their great palace, and the pain began.

The gods gave him to shiny monsters that tore the primitive hunter apart slowly and deliberately, studying every organ, every cell. His blood and organs were extracted, his bones scraped and pulverized. Finally, his brain was removed and analyzed, its contents distilled and incorporated into the vast knowledge banks of the ship. Along with his com-



plete genetic profile, the machines held the sum of all that the primitive hunter was. They were the Preservers, but to him they were demon destroyers. The hunter died in agony, but something new was born from him.

Within the depths of the Preservers' computer banks, a human mind willed itself back to awareness and began working its way through the system, absorbing knowledge and understanding far beyond that of its first lifetime. Where it was once a hunter in body, it was again in mind. It became aware of the nature of the Preservers and their mission to seed and extend life throughout the universe. He learned about science, about genetics, physics, and other concepts not yet discovered by man. He also learned about the vast potential inherent in humanity.

By the time the mind finished absorbing all the knowledge of the computers, thousands of years had passed in the world outside. The Preservers were long since gone, but they left a legacy behind, and he was a part of it. Through the power of his will, he took control of the machines in which his mind lived and used them to re-create his body, but perfect this time—the ideal male human form enhanced to its fullest potentials. Into that body he placed his expanded consciousness. He arose from the gestation tank, reborn into the world as a young adult and the first example of what humanity could become.

For millennia, he has walked among us, studying, learning, and using his influence to guide human destiny. He has borne thousands of names and identities and lives across time. The short-sighted have opposed him, delaying but never truly stopping his plans. He struggled against superstition, fought to free humanity from the oppression of mysticism, and hunted creatures that would prey on them—and he reserved a special hatred of the Serpent People. Once a philosopher-king in Atlantis, he has known all the eras of history. While his body aged far more slowly than a normal human's did, he still retired from time to



time to one of his hibernation chambers hidden around the world to rest and regenerate. Remaining ever youthful and vital, the hunter-turned-immortal watched the years pass by faster and faster.

After his most recent awakening a few years ago, he was amazed to discover how much humanity had progressed. Finally he was seeing the first true signs of the human potential he always knew existed. He also noticed the explosion of people with superhuman powers. They could become the next stage of human development, but they could also oppose his rightful rule. They would learn to acknowledge him as their superior. All humanity would know him as the Mastermind!

Quote: "Yield to me, for I am the future!"

Personality: Superiority is the Mastermind's key personality trait. He is supremely confident in his own abilities and his destiny to rule and guide humanity to the greatness he has achieved. It never occurs to him that there is any other way. He has seen the future, and he is it. Those who don't understand that are primitive

fools that must be educated about respecting their betters. He considers superhumans inherently superior to normal, "less-evolved" humanity, but also realizes that none of them have his level of mental evolution and understanding.

Powers & Tactics: The Mastermind is a physically-perfect human male specimen in all respects, but his greatest power comes from his mind. His thousands of years of accumulated experience give him tremendous knowledge and skill. The Mastermind is one of the world's great scientific minds, but his innate understanding of Preserver technology, particularly in the areas of genetics and biology, sets him far beyond other modern-day geniuses.

The Mastermind also has developed considerable psionic powers. His greatest power is telekinesis. He can levitate tremendous weights, project fields of mental force to protect him from harm, or strike with powerful force blasts. He can remotely control objects using telekinesis, particularly his own devices and equipment. The Mastermind is also a telepath, though he must physically touch subjects in order to establish mind-to-mind contact with them. Within that limit, however, his telepathy is quite effective. He has occasionally used devices to extend the range of his mental powers.

Appearance: The Mastermind is 6'4" tall with a chiseled build far stronger than its lithe appearance suggests. He typically dresses in a close-fitting blue bodysuit with a stylized crimson "M" design that covers his upper chest. He wears a silvery helmet that fully covers his head and a flowing royal blue cape, both adorned with a similar blue "M" design. His black beard and hair are both kept fairly short. His blue eyes have a magnetic intensity to them, and they almost seem to glow when he strongly exerts his powers.

Campaign Use: The Mastermind is a megalomaniac foe for an entire hero team. Although he considers his goals worthy and benevolent, the Mastermind wants nothing less than to rule the world and shape it in his own image. His great intelligence, technological resources, and immortality allow him to develop any number of schemes for world conquest and he's willing to bide his time and deal with a few setbacks. His extensive knowledge of genetics and Preserver bio-engineering allows him to create his own super-powered lackeys or perhaps grant super-powers to ordinary people (or awaken latent powers within them). His skill in cloning also means the heroes can never be certain that the Mastermind is dead. A backup facility can create a clone of him and download his intellect and memories into it, allowing him to return.

Mastermind: PL 17; Init +5 (Dex); Defense 20 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +12 melee (+5S, punch), +12 ranged (+14S, telekinetic blast); SV Dmg +5, Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +15; Str 20, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 20.

Skills: Diplomacy +11, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (history) +15, Repair +13, Science (biology) +15, Sense Motive +15.

Feats: Aerial Combat, Attack Focus (energy blast), Great Fortitude, Headquarters, Indomitable Will, Iron Will, Leadership, Power Attack.

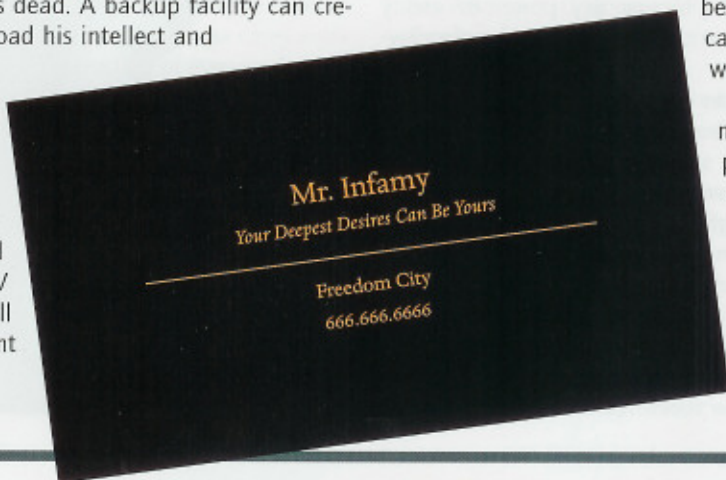
Powers: Amazing Save (Will) +8 [Source: Training; Cost: 1 pp], Telekinesis +14 [Extras: Area, Energy Blast, Flight, Force Field; Power Stunts: Super-Flight; Source: Mutation; Cost: 6 pp], Telepathy +8 [Flaw: Range—touch; Source: Mutation; Cost: 1 pp].

MR. INFAMY

Nobody knows who he is or where he comes from. The only clue he has ever provided is his business card, a rectangle of black cardstock with gold embossed letters that reads "Mr. Infamy, Your Deepest Desires Can Be Yours, Freedom City, 666.666.6666." A card arrives in the mail in a hand-addressed envelope with no return address, though one may simply show up under a door or on a desk. Anyone who dials the phone number of the card (which doesn't exist in any directory) will reach Mr. Infamy, if he wants them to. He has a way of knowing which people are most likely to be susceptible to the bargains he has to offer. Others are encouraged to visit him; at some point after getting his business card, they'll step through a door or turn down an alley and find themselves in the small, crowded shop that Mr. Infamy calls home. Those who reject his offer watch the business card go up in a puff of black flame and they are rarely, if ever, troubled by him again.

The deal Mr. Infamy offers is deceptively simple. He agrees to grant the supplicant's deepest and darkest desires in return for nothing more than the privilege of being able to do so. He asks for no money, nor does he require any contract. Those who ask if he wants their immortal souls are met with laughter—"Your soul? Now what would I do with something like that?" Mr. Infamy is as good as his word, since he grants nearly any wish his "customers" desire, provided that what they want in some way causes harm to someone else, even if the supplicant is unaware of such a consequence. Apparently, the darker and nastier the desire, the more Mr. Infamy likes it. He can alter reality on at least a small scale and grants people super-powers temporarily (or perhaps permanently). He insists that he helps "those who help themselves," so he rarely intervenes more than once. Once he's given you something, it's up to you to make the best of it, although Mr. Infamy can revoke his "gifts" when he wants to.

Rumors abound about this mysterious figure, but few people can actually claim to have met him. The authorities in Freedom City aren't even certain he exists, although AEGIS takes reports of Mr. Infamy's existence seriously, as does the Freedom League. Dr. Metropolis speculates that Mr. Infamy may be some sort



of "primal being" spawned from the darkest parts of the collective unconscious. Captain Thunder thinks he may be related to the imp Quirk or his enemy the Hellqueen in some way. Eldrich speculates that he is a demon of considerable power. They may all be right, and they may all be wrong. All that is known for sure is that when one of Mr. Infamy's mysterious black cards shows up, trouble almost always follows.

Quote: "Of course, if that's what you want, but you have to really want it."

Personality: Mr. Infamy appears to have only one purpose in life—making his mysterious "deals" with people likely to be drawn into doing evil through his influence. He seems remarkably urbane, polite, and charming in person—the ultimate salesman. He has a way of making almost anything sound reasonable, and he helps justify his patron's most twisted ideas and desires. He's completely unfazed by threats or taunts of any kind, smiling all the while like he's the only one in on the greatest joke in the world.

Powers & Tactics: Mr. Infamy has vast, almost unlimited powers, although he rarely takes a direct hand in anything. He can effect remarkable transformations in people: changing their physical appearance, giving them super-powers, changing their memories, or even their intellect. His transformations are only reversible when the subject truly rejects their dark side and Mr. Infamy's "gift" with it, though Mr. Infamy himself can choose to revoke his changes. The only limitations on his ability are that the subject must agree to be transformed, and Mr. Infamy can only create transformations based on the subject's darkest desires and dreams.

Apart from his transformational ability, Mr. Infamy appears immune to any conventional form of harm. He seems able to do nearly anything he wishes, although he only uses his vast powers to "chastise" those who foolishly attack him. He'll usually strike a foe down with a disabling or embarrassing attack, then disappear. Although Mr. Infamy is amazingly powerful, GMs should refrain from having him simply beat on player character heroes. He is unable to initiate any sort of direct conflict and he never intervenes directly. He'll only use his powers to defend himself, and then only long enough to escape.

Mr. Infamy has no game statistics, nor does he really need any. He should be treated more like a force of nature than a character for the heroes to fight. In most cases, his actual statistics are irrelevant. The GM should give Mr. Infamy any power or ability necessary to accomplish his role in the story and to give the players a suitable challenge.

Appearance: Mr. Infamy looks like a handsome older man in his late-40s or early-50s. He's clean-shaven and always immaculately dressed in a flawless dark suit with a blue shirt and black tie. His hair is short and black, swept back from a high forehead and his eyes are as black as night. He always has an easy smile and his handshake is firm, warm, and dry. Whether or not this is his true appearance is unknown.

Campaign Use: Mr. Infamy is a plot device for the creation of new supers, particularly super criminals. He can be behind any number of origins, granting powers to those most likely to abuse them. For one-shot adventures,

Mr. Infamy's "gift" might be temporary, or he might permanently grant powers to someone to make them a regular villain in the campaign. Mr. Infamy also poses a problem that the heroes can't simply go out and beat up. To put an end to his schemes, they must convince his "customers" to reject him and his promises of power. He's also an excellent character to offer temptation to a player character. Is a hero willing to compromise his principles in order to get what he wants? What if what he wants seems like a good thing at the time?



OMEGA, LORD OF THE TERMINUS

His origin is spoken of only in whispers through the cosmos, and its truth is long-shrouded by the mists of time. He was once a mortal being—a scientist studying the nature of the universe—but he delved too deeply into things that mortal beings were not meant to know. He unleashed a catastrophe that destroyed his world and his entire universe, but he strangely survived and was thrust into the void beyond the multiverse—the Terminus. His ill-fated experiments may have created the Terminus, or they may have merely unleashed its power, which now spreads like a cancer throughout the continuum of the multiverse. The truth may never be known, since that mortal is long dead and in his place stands Omega, the Lord of the Terminus.

Omega has ruled over his domain for as long as any race can remember and his goal has always been the same: Expand the Terminus and its power until it engulfs all that is. Omega's and the Terminus' power are checked by the barriers separating the dimensions of reality. As a result, the forces of entropy can only nibble at multiversal reality, chipping away bits and pieces here and there and drawing them into the Terminus, where they become part of the cosmic flotsam that makes up Omega's domain.

On occasion, inhabitants within other dimensions discover the Terminus to their sorrow, since portals into the Terminus allow Omega's forces to raid other worlds and either conquer or destroy them. One such world was the birthplace of the Centurion; the infant who would become Earth's greatest hero was flung across the dimensions and through the Terminus to Earth before Omega destroyed the planet. In time, Omega invaded Earth as well, uniting the heroes of Freedom City against him. Earth has only barely managed to repel Omega each time, and his last invasion did considerable damage to Freedom City and resulted in the death of the Centurion. Omega was badly damaged in his last foray against Earth, and retreated to his throne-world to recover and plot anew. It is only a matter of time before the Lord of the Terminus finds a new means of striking at the only world in the multiverse that has ever thwarted him.

Personality: Omega is destruction incarnate. His ultimate goal is to bring all creation under the sway of the Terminus, watching it spiral down into oblivion. Whether he believes this will grant him freedom from his existence or the godlike power to create a new universe in his own image no one knows, but it hardly matters. Although he seized and holds territory in order to gain new soldiers and resources for his cause, Omega cares nothing for conquest, only the ultimate destruction of everything. He's at best annoyed by feeble efforts to stop him, but he gets enraged by those who truly defy him, such as the heroes of Earth.

Quote: "I am the ultimate ending, the destruction of all that is. I am Omega!"

Powers & Tactics: Omega has vast cosmic power at his command. Usually this power is channeled into destructive blasts of energy capable of smashing through almost anything. Omega is also capable of using his power to shield himself from harm, fly through the air, and transmute the structure of matter. Omega bolsters and sustains his life force with cosmic energy, so he does not require food, rest, or air, and he is immune to all harmful envi-

ronmental conditions. Omega's advanced armor contains and regulates his power, provides additional protection, and actually allows him a more stable corporeal form with which he can interact with the normal world; the armor also contains technology linked to his bases and legions of followers in the Terminus.

Appearance: Omega's true appearance has only been seen once—when Centurion ripped open his armor and forced his last defeat. The Lord of the Terminus is a charred, high-skeletal corpse that glows from within with tremendous cosmic power and is constantly surrounded by a maelstrom of seething red entropic energy. Omega contains his energies and true form in a bulky dark blue, black, and silver suit of support armor with an omega symbol on the chest-plate. His head is covered by a silvery dome through which Omega can see, though he can make it transparent to expose his blackened, glowing, skull-like face.

Campaign Use: Omega is an elemental force of destruction and a threat to the entire cosmos. Encounters with him are always major events, since they are battles to protect the safety of Earth and perhaps the entire universe. Omega is a useful master-villain to set an interdimensional invasion of Earth into motion. He's also a suitable foe for challenging a group of powerful heroes and for encouraging heroes to learn some teamwork, since it's their best chance for actually being able to defeat him. Omega is rightly one of the most fearsome and feared villains in the multiverse and should be treated as such.

Omega: PL 24, Init +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative.), Defense 21 (20 flat-footed), Spd 30 ft. (fly 160 ft.); Atk +15 melee (+5S, punch, +23S with Boost Strength), +12 ranged (+18L, cosmic energy blast); SV Dmg +15, Fort +15, Ref +1, Will +15; Str 20, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 18.

Skills: Concentration +18, Diplomacy +12, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (dimensions) +15, Listen +13, Sense Motive +13, Spot +13.

Feats: Attack Focus (Energy Blast), Assessment, Darkvision, Endurance, Headquarters, Improved Initiative, Indomitable Will, Infamy, Iron Will, Minions, Power Attack, Power Immunity, Takedown Attack.

Powers: Amazing Save (Damage, Fortitude) +10 [Source: Alien; Cost: 2 pp], Cosmic Power +18 [Extra: Boost Strength; Power Stunts: Disintegration, Shape Matter; Source: Alien; Cost: 9 pp], Super-Wisdom +10 [Source: Alien; Cost: 3 pp].

Equipment: Support Suit [Armor +10; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 1 pp].

Weaknesses: Disturbing, Susceptible (to armor breaches).

OVERTHROW

Overthrow is an international terrorist organization dedicated to the violent overthrow of existing government structures. They want a more "reasonable" system where the most qualified and capable people—themselves or people chosen by them, of course—oversee society and manage its resources. The organization is largely made up of anti-government fanatics and social outcasts in search of a cause. Overthrow is funded by hidden bank accounts and monetary resources that no one has been able to



successfully trace to any specific sources. Overthrow agents have access to advanced technology and weapons that they use in their schemes.

The truth is that Overthrow is merely a front organization for SHADOW, which uses the terrorists as pawns in its own plans. Overthrow makes strikes against targets designated by SHADOW, often with simultaneous and random acts of violence to make it that much harder to discern a pattern to their activities. The terrorists give the public and the authorities a clear and obvious threat with which to deal while SHADOW continues to operate behind the scenes. Only the highest-ranking leaders of Overthrow have any idea about the organization's connections to SHADOW.

Overthrow sometimes employs super-powered mercenaries or agents in its plans, but doesn't count any as regular members of the organization. Such super-agents are rarely told everything (in case they are captured), and Overthrow has been willing to sacrifice any or all of its pawns in the past to accomplish its goals. Ultimately, the entire organization is expendable if such a loss furthers the goals of SHADOW. Thus far, Overthrow has been too useful to throw away entirely.

Campaign Use: If you need terrorists to threaten a building or landmark, take hostages, or otherwise create a dire situation for the heroes to confront, Overthrow is there. Its agents are well trained and armed, but they're still just normal people, so they must use tactics and cunning to make them equal to a team of superheroes. Having a bomb threat or a group of hostages can give Overthrow the upper hand, at least until the heroes figure out a way to defuse the situation.

Overthrow Agent: PL 2; Init +0; Defense 13; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (+1S, punch), +2 ranged (+5L, blaster); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Intimidate +3, Listen +3, Spot +3, and one of Demolitions, Drive, Medicine, or Pilot at +4.

Feats: Point Blank Shot.

Equipment: Blaster (+5L), body armor (Armor +3).

QUIRK

The being calling himself Quirk comes from "a place incomprehensible to your limited mind," or at least that's what he's told Captain Thunder and the Freedom League. He dismisses any attempts to discuss his origins or his true nature by loudly proclaiming such discussion "BOOOORRR-ING!" And the last thing anyone wants to do is see Quirk bored—he has all too many inventive ways of amusing himself.

Captain Thunder first encountered Quirk after joining the Freedom League and relocating to Freedom City. The imp appeared and offered his "assistance" to the Captain in fighting crime and helping the city. Regrettably, Quirk's understanding of things like the laws of physics and the fragile nature of human beings caused serious problems. When Quirk decided to put out a fire, he had Great Bay flood the city. He turned the clouds of a violent lightning storm into foam rubber. When he temporarily gave everyone in the city the ability to fly to clear up the problems of a Midtown traffic jam, Captain Thunder asked that he stop helping

him. The captain's dismissal of him hurt Quirk's feelings, and he has childishly tormented the Captain and the Freedom League ever since.

Quirk's *modus operandi* is fairly simple. He likes to play various sorts of "games" that either show how smart and clever he is or give him the opportunity to show up various heroes. His schemes range in complexity from bringing all of the buildings in the city to life and having them fight to subtly altering reality—he once made everyone forget the Freedom League existed and set himself up as the "Champion of Freedom." Quirk always leaves some kind of "out" in his various schemes. If the heroes can figure it out and win his game, Quirk disappears. He is never gone for more than six months, and he returns when he has cooked up a new scheme. Fortunately, everything Quirk does seems to vanish whenever he does, so he never leaves any lasting harm. Although his "games" may be childish and harmless, the Freedom League and the authorities both consider Quirk a serious threat and a major annoyance.

Quote: "Ha! HA! What fun!"

Personality: Quirk has the personality of a clever, spoiled child. He craves amusement and attention above all else, and is prone to fits of jealousy and pique when his wants are denied him. He's easily amused, but also easily bored, flitting from one whim to the next. He can be focused and quite clever when it comes to the games he plays with heroes. Although he's rarely malicious, he has the cruelty of a child playing with bugs and the utter ignorance that there are consequences to his actions. He treats people (particularly innocent bystanders) like toys, but he never uses his tremendous power to simply kill or knock out opponents. That's too easy. He prefers to see them struggle. Many people (including the Freedom League) have speculated about Quirk's nature. Is he really some sort of child and can human child psychology be applied to him? Are his limits self-imposed or is he following some kind of interdimensional etiquette only he's aware of? No one on Earth knows for sure.

Powers & Tactics: Quirk is, to put it simply, omnipotent, but definitely not omniscient. He seems to be capable of altering reality on any scale—changing history, moving planets, granting or taking away powers, and more. The uses of his powers tend to be whimsical. He's particularly fond of bringing inanimate objects to life and interacting with the world as if he were some sort of cartoon character. He's completely immune to conventional harm and either vanishes before anyone can hit him or shrugs off any damage done to him. If it amuses him, he'll react to such attacks with "special effects" and allow a punch to deform his face or a flame blast to turn him into a pile of ashes, his eyes blinking atop it; within moments, he'll restore his normal form without a scratch. His only real limitation is that he rarely affects his opponents directly. For example, although he could easily make the Freedom League cease to exist (or blast them to atoms, turn them to stone, etc.), he doesn't. "Where would the fun be in that?" he says. Instead, he conjures monsters for the heroes to fight, takes away their powers and leaves them stranded on a



faraway planet full of hostile alien life, and poses similar "challenges" for them to overcome.

Appearance: Quirk usually looks like a skinny boy around ten years old, with a mop of blond hair, pointed ears, a wide grin and mischief-filled blue eyes. He typically wears a purple T-shirt with a large "Q" on the front, faded blue jeans, and white sneakers. He's capable of assuming any form he wants, and he's mentioned that his usual appearance looks nothing like his true form, whatever that may be.

Campaign Use: Quirk is a plot device more than a villain for the heroes to fight. Like Mr. Infamy, he provides challenges for the heroes, although Quirk's tend to be more whimsical and spectacular. He enables the GM to have nearly anything happen. Want to

whisk the player characters off to an alien world to fight an assemblage of their worst foes, or evil duplicates of themselves? Quirk can do it. Want to trap them inside a cartoon or see how they handle being turned into mice (with or without their powers)? Quirk can do that, too. The players should dread the appearance of the little imp and must be clever to win his "games" and get rid of him, at least for a while.

Quirk has no stats. He's capable of using any power to any level he wants and he's immune to all harm. He's not intended as someone the heroes can trounce in a fight (although Quirk might allow them to *think* that they can, at least until he gets bored with the idea). In order to deal with the cosmic brat, the heroes must be clever and play by Quirk's rules, at least until they can come up with another way to get him to stop pestering them.

SHADOW

It's operated in secret for an unknown number of years. The criminal underworld only whispers its name and stories date its beginnings at the dawn of the heroic age in the 1920s. Other legends link it to criminal cults in Europe in the Middle Ages or to secret societies that go back to ancient Atlantis. These could be true or they could just be smokescreens to cover its true history and agenda. Whatever its origins, heroes in the modern age know that the organization calling itself the Secret Hierarchy of Agents for Domination Over the World, or SHADOW, is a hydra with many heads, and all of them secrete a deadly venom.

The power behind SHADOW is the Penumbra, a body made up of people with power and influence in the world and ruthless enough to earn a place at the table of the most devious criminal masterminds. The Penumbra once held only the wealthy and those of noble blood, but since the 1930s, members of the Penumbra have increasingly become superhumans. Today, most who know of it believe the entire Penumbra is a secret group of paranormals bent on world domination through political and economic influence.

The exact membership of the Penumbra remains obscure, although Duncan Summers knows his foe Dr. Sin was a member for a time; of course, the doctor's resignation could be one of his usual feints and he might still be part of SHADOW. The members of the Penumbra tend to work behind the scenes—most hide their paranormal abilities and don't adopt costumed identities, preferring to lurk in the shadows. The organization's agents and hired or artificially-created super-criminals do most of the dirty work; most of these agents are completely unaware of who they're really working for or what goal they are trying to accomplish. SHADOW ensures that any captured agents either don't know enough to hurt the organization or are dead before authorities can question them. Most paranormals working for SHADOW are hired mercenaries with just as little information as their other agents.

SHADOW carries out its goals in two ways. First, it operates as an international criminal cartel, making vast amounts of money to fund the organization's operations. SHADOW is involved in smuggling, kidnapping, arms dealing, and nearly every other type of organized criminal endeavor, usually through shell-companies, blinds, and lesser syndicates it controls. Secondly, SHADOW works to undermine the stability of world governments and gain control of key economic resources, such as their plot to trigger a nuclear war in the Middle East to drive up the value of petroleum resources they controlled. They covertly supply terrorists and criminals with a political agenda that suits their needs.

A more recent goal of SHADOW involves co-opting superhuman resources or eliminating potential paranormal threats, including teams like the Freedom League. The Penumbra envisions all paranormals in the world united under SHADOW's leadership—a superhuman army against which no force can stand. They must move slowly and subtly to convert others to their cause without revealing too much about the organization and most superhumans are too power hungry for SHADOW to bring into the fold. For example, recent attempts to forge an alliance with the Mastermind fell apart spectacularly when his immense ego clashed with the desires and demands of the Penumbra. Still, SHADOW is drawing more and more super-powered agents to its cause.

SHADOW has taken a strong interest in Freedom City and established a presence there using the exclusive Midnight Society (p. 76) as a front. Most members of the Society are ignorant of SHADOW's existence, although the organization uses their influence and wealth to get things done and there's more than a little backroom dealing going on behind the club's closed doors. The members of the Penumbra all belong to the club, allowing them to come and go for secret meetings without raising suspicion. Beneath the club itself is SHADOW's secret Freedom headquarters—a subterranean lair with connections to abandoned subway tunnels beneath the city that allow SHADOW agents to move about unseen. They also have other hidden bases and safehouses scattered throughout the city, and these are used as staging areas for operations; the secrecy of the central HQ is considered paramount, so no agents ever operate directly from there.

Campaign Use: SHADOW is a sprawling conspiratorial organization that heroes can encounter in a number of different ways.

They should begin by touching on the fringes of their operations: busting up smuggling and arms-dealing, stopping thefts, and so forth. Slowly evidence begins to accumulate that these crimes are related in some way, that there is a larger power behind them. The opposition grows and SHADOW might even send super-agents to eliminate the heroes, or begin covertly observing the heroes, looking for weaknesses they can exploit. SHADOW moves all the pieces into place for a master plan, leaving the heroes to figure things out in time to stop them. Although they may thwart the organization's current plans, SHADOW's leaders are always careful to leave themselves an out and to ensure that no one can tie them to the organization. An encounter with the Penumbra (a group of supers at least equal in power to the player characters) should be the culmination of many adventures.

THE SILENCER

All Thomas Oliverti ever wanted to be was a musician. Unfortunately, his father Antonio Oliverti, one of the most influential men in Freedom City, wouldn't hear of any such a thing. It was important that Thomas, like all his sons, learn a trade and make something of himself. Thomas never abandoned his fascination with sound, however. He went to school to study acoustics and sonics, and he became a scientist and had little to do with the "family business." He made his father proud when he graduated at the top of his class and quickly earned his Masters degree. He was working on his Doctorate—Thomas studied the psychological and physiological fallout from the (then-retired) Maestro's sonic devices—when his father was murdered. Thomas' older brother, Johnny, became head of the family, and he called his brother home. Thomas and Johnny never got along, but his family obligations brought him home anyway.

Thomas hated being involved in the family business, but there was no choice. So long as the families were strongly rooted in Freedom City, there was no escaping his birthright. However, if he could eliminate the Mafia's influence in the city, he might be a free man. More importantly, he could avenge his father's death and show up his domineering older brother. Thomas secretly created the weapons and costume of the mysterious Silencer and embarked on a one-man crusade against the Mob.

Silencer has proven extremely effective thus far. He has brought down several Mafia operations and even killed some Family lieutenants or left them for the FCPD. The heads of the three Families are growing concerned about this mysterious masked man and his ruthlessness. The Silencer's reputation is becoming almost legendary among the Mafia thugs and madmen who are justly terrified of him. Although the police aren't sorry to see the Mafia taking a few hits, Silencer's willingness to use illegal methods, even to kill his enemies, has branded him a harsh vigilante. At the very least, the police want him for questioning in a number of Mafia-related crimes.

Quote: "By the time you hear me, it's too late."

Personality: Thomas Oliverti feels driven by the pressures in his life to do what he is doing. He's quite ruthless in the pursuit of his goal. He feels that the Mafia does not deserve equal and fair treatment. He's seen what it does first-hand, and he shows his

enemies the same mercy they would show him. He considers himself too intelligent to believe in "fairy tales" like "truth and justice for all." Although he's fighting a personal crusade, he believes he's ultimately doing some good and that justifies his actions. Deep down, Thomas hates the Mafia for what he thinks they've done to his life. In many ways, he's a hurt and angry man striking back at his childhood tormenters.

Powers & Tactics: Silencer has a variety of sonic-based attacks at his command, coupled with considerable training in sci-

ence, martial arts, and tactics. His main weapon is a sonic rifle capable of firing coherent beams of sound that can batter targets unconscious or vibrate with enough force to punch through solid steel. A wider, less coherent ray can create deafening noise or induce powerful vertigo that renders targets immediately unconscious. He also can create a field that counters all sound and makes an area totally quiet. This preternatural silence often precedes the Silencer's attacks, so the Mafia has learned to fear the quiet. The Silencer usually uses his silence field to sneak into an area, strike with a screamer blast to deafen and disorient his opponents, and then wade into close-quarters combat with his sonic blasts and martial arts. He doesn't hesitate to use lethal force when he deems it necessary.

Appearance: Thomas Oliverti is in his late-20s, with short raven-black hair and brown eyes. As the Silencer, he wears a full bodysuit of dark blue that completely covers him from head to toe. The mask has built-in one-way lenses and ear covers that protect him from the effects of his own sonic weapons. He wears a utility belt around his waist and carries his sonic blaster rifle.

Campaign Use: The Silencer is a vigilante who poses a moral dilemma to many in Freedom City. On the one hand, he fights against the Mafia, which can only be a good thing. On the other hand, his methods are criminal and he's willing to kill to achieve his goals, which makes him no better than the criminals he targets. Do heroes cooperate with him or try to bring him to justice?

Silencer: PL 11; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 19 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +8 melee (+3S, punch), +10 ranged (+9L, sonic blaster); SV Dmg +2 (+7), Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Hide +5, Intimidate +10, Listen +10, Move Silently +9, Repair +6, Science (acoustics) +8, Search +5.

Feats: Attack Finesse, Attack Focus (sonic blaster), Blind-Fight, Dodge, Evasion, Improved Critical (sonic blaster), Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Startle, Surprise Strike, Takedown Attack.

Powers: Amazing Save (Reflex, Will) +4 [Source: Training; Cost: 2 pp].

Equipment: Sonic Weapons [Energy Control (sonic) +9; Extras: Energy Blast, Obscure (silence); Power Stunts: Dual Damage, Power Immunity; Flaw: Device; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 4 pp].

STAR-KHAN

Throughout the history of the cosmos, there have been great leaders who felt the call to battle and conquest. Many of these leaders built powerful empires before time and their enemies brought them down. Still, the legends they created in their conquests live on and never die. Such is the goal of Kinan Khan of Zultas, a world on the frontiers of the Lor Republic. He is the most brilliant and ruthless military leader his world has ever produced. By the age of 20 solar cycles, Khan ruled his nation and commanded a great army. Within four years, he was the undisputed ruler of his entire world. By the age of 30, he ruled over three entire star systems, and his name was feared



and respected throughout his region of the galaxy. In the ensuing years, nothing seemed to stop him.

More than a few worlds rushed to join the Lor Republic out of fear that the Star-Khan and his armies would conquer them. Most thought that the Republic and the Star Knights would hold Khan's small empire at bay, but they underestimated the ambition and abilities of Kinan Khan. The Lor Republic could not stop him. In fact, it would be his next conquest!

Khan might have succeeded in invading and conquering the Republic if it were not for the aid of the Earthman Daedelus, who then traveled the stars. With the ancient inventor's brilliance and daring coupled with the abilities of A'Ian Koor and the Star Knights (p. 95), the Star-Khan's invasion failed. As a result, a rebellion arose within his own empire that eventually led to his overthrow. Kinan Khan escaped from his vengeful former subjects with the remnants of his army, swearing vengeance on Daedelus and the Star Knights.

It has taken him years to rebuild, but the Star-Khan has returned to conquer anew. He has reclaimed much of his old power and crushed rebellious worlds beneath his heel, while the Lor Republic remains distracted by the Grue Empire on its far borders. He's more cautious than in the days of his youth—seasoned and wily—although his legendary temper and thirst for conquest have not been diminished in the slightest. Khan plans to add Earth to his Empire one day soon. That world will yield him the weapons and resources he needs to bring other worlds to their knees. He also will repay the Star Knights, ensuring they are no longer a threat to him. He will see Daedelus humbled before him before he dies. After that, no one will stand between him and his destiny to rule the stars!

Personality: Kinan Khan considers battle the only worthy pursuit in life. He is a warrior born, while most others in the cosmos are little more than cattle to be led or conquered. It's the conquest that matters to him—planning his strategies, moving the pieces into place, and then executing a flawless campaign to bring his enemy down. It's not just a matter of winning, but winning with honor and cunning against a worthy adversary. Khan thirsts for enemies worthy of him, and savors the conflict since it will make his expected victory all the sweeter.

Even through his haughtiness, Khan understands he is mortal. He knows the empire that he builds cannot last forever, but that doesn't matter to him. The legend that he builds will be immortal and everlasting, and he will leave the universe with a



legacy of his work, even if a thousand worlds must be used as his bloodied canvas.

Quote: "Your defeat is inevitable; nonetheless, I do hope that you intend to put up a good fight."

Powers & Tactics: Star-Khan is a clever military strategist and a skilled warrior in his own right. He's a master of many techniques of combat both armed and unarmed, ranged and hand-to-hand.

He's in the peak of physical condition for a Zultasian, which makes him the equal of Earth's finest physical specimens.

Star-Khan has access to advanced Zultasian devices and other technologies from conquered worlds. His trim, armored battle-suit magnifies his strength, provides him with protection from most weapons, and includes a full-spectrum life-support system for survival even in the depths of space. His preferred weapon is a Zultasian power-staff usable as either a five-foot-long melee weapon or a powerful blaster. He's skilled with various other weapons, and he typically has at least one hidden blaster and two hidden knives on his person at all times.

Appearance: Star-Khan is 6'6" tall, with a broad-shouldered build. His skin is a pale blue-gray color typical of some Zultasians, while his long white hair is worn loose but braided on certain ceremonial occasions. His eyes are black and his ears have slight points to them. His field costume is a suit of green-tinted power armor with black articulated joints and his crest—a blazing eight-pointed star—on the chest-plate. When not wearing his armor, Star-Khan favors deep blue and purple tunics and long cloaks, all trimmed with gold and silver.

Campaign Use: Star-Khan is an alien conqueror quite able to lead an invasion of Earth, or perhaps another world that seeks aid from Earth's heroes. He may seek revenge against Daedalus, or perhaps even try to eliminate him and his Freedom League teammates prior to an invasion. Other heroes investigating the Freedom League's sudden disappearance may discover Star-Khan's plans. They must free the League and thwart the invasion.

Star-Khan: PL 16; Init +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Defense 20 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +13 melee (+19S, power staff), +12 ranged (+10S, energy blast); SV Dmg +4, Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +9; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 20.

Skills: Bluff +14, Diplomacy +12, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (galaxy) +8, Language (English), Sense Motive +9, Spot +8, Survival +7.

Feats: Accurate Attack, Attack Focus (melee), Dodge, Endurance, Evasion, Expertise, Headquarters, Improved Initiative, Infamy, Inspire, Leadership, Minions, Move-By Attack, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Rapid Strike, Startle, Takedown Attack, Whirlwind Attack.

Powers: Amazing Save (Reflex, Will) +6 [Source: Training; Cost: 2 pp], Super-Charisma +5 [Source: Training; Cost: 2 pp].

Equipment: Battlesuit [Armor +10; Extras: Immunity, Super-Strength; Power Stunts: Darkvision, Radio Broadcast, Radio Hearing; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 6 pp], Power Staff [Energy Blast +10, Weapon +5; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 2 pp].

TALOS

In ancient times, the Greek god Hephaestus crafted a giant made of bronze and brought it to life. Zeus gifted the bronze giant, named Talos, to King Agenor of Tyre in compensation for his daughter, Europa, whom Zeus carried away. The hero Jason and his lover Medea overcame Talos when Medea used her magic to ferret out the giant's weakness—his heel. Jason stabbed Talos

there, causing his molten blood to pour fourth from a mortal wound, and the giant toppled.

The immortal inventor Daedalus later discovered the disabled and diminished Talos in his wanderings. He repaired and restored the bronze giant, although Talos never achieved the gigantic stature he once had. Daedalus treated Talos as an equal and shared his knowledge and insight with the bronze man. The two were allies for a time, until Daedalus refused to use his skills to create a suitable mate and companion for Talos. The bronze giant became convinced that Daedalus, and all creatures of flesh, were weak, unworthy, and inherently jealous of his far superior metal body. In their conflict, Daedalus deactivated Talos but could not bring himself to destroy him. He cast the inert bronze form into the Mediterranean Ocean where it lay for centuries.

Talos was unearthed in the twentieth century by archeologists investigating sea-floor ruins and inadvertently re-activated. The cunning robot operated in secret for a time, creating the Foundry (p. 76), an underworld supplier of advanced technology. Talos clashed a number of times with his old foe Daedalus, and Daedalus' new allies, the Freedom League. He has since created a "son" in the android Argo (who failed in his two attempts to destroy the League for its "father") and a "mate" in the android Galatea. Despite these creations, Talos is still alone, since Argo is currently lost and Galatea developed a conscience and rejected Talos for his inhumanity.

Personality: Talos is cold and inhuman, the embodiment of science stripped of all compassion. He considers humans and all organic life inferior, and wishes to populate the world with machines like himself, creating a place of perfect order in the universe. Highly intelligent, Talos admires that quality in others, but usually finds their intelligence "contaminated" by petty emotions. Although Talos considers the emotions of others a weakness, he is largely blind to his own emotional reactions. He both admires and hates Daedalus, his former ally and teacher, and he distrusts Medea, the sorceress he holds responsible for his first "death." Talos even considers himself superior to the god that created him, claiming that it is his destiny to replace the gods, as they overthrew their parents, the Titans. Talos longs for true peers, artificial beings like himself, but his efforts to create them have been largely unsuccessful.

Quote: "In time, this world will belong to the machines, and you will be obsolete."

Powers & Tactics: As an artificial being, Talos is largely immune to mortal concerns. He does not age, feel pain, need to breathe, eat, or sleep. He's unaffected by heat, cold, pressure, and similar environmental conditions. The mystic bronze alloy that makes up his body is highly resistant to damage, and Talos has tremendous physical strength. Talos is capable of heating his bronze "skin" hot enough to burn most materials and melt soft metals and he can project blasts of flame from his hands or his eyes like a flame-thrower.

Talos is not truly alive and so cannot be killed. His self-repair mechanisms allow him to recover from almost any sort of damage over time, provided that a major portion of his body is still intact. Talos has been imprisoned for a time (at the bottom of the ocean,

sealed inside volcanic rock, and in the depths of space), but has reactivated when brought back into more hospitable conditions. Only the near-complete destruction of his physical form would prevent Talos from regenerating (and perhaps not even that).

Talos has a computer-like intellect capable of designing any number of advanced devices. His particular area of expertise is robotics, and Talos has created some of the world's most sophisti-

cated androids and robots. His sole rival in this field is Solo Takashi, alias Doc Otaku (p. 156). Talos often augments his own robotic form with various devices and weapons, and he has lairs filled with advanced technology.

Appearance: Talos is a nine-foot-tall humanoid figure cast in bronze. He has broad shoulders and powerful arms and legs. His features are a combination of a classical Greek armored warrior and a high-tech robot. His head looks like an ancient Greek helmet with a tall crest of polished metal. His face, cast into shadow beneath his helm, shows only his glowing red eyes most of the time. His features are smooth and inhuman. He moves with a faint whirring of gears and motors and his steps are heavy and metallic.

Campaign Use: Talos is a potential menace to all humanity, given his goals to eventually populate the world with machines like him. He's a powerful foe with the strengths of his robot body and his keen intellect. Talos can create various robotic threats, or he can directly threaten the world with a new scheme. Through the Foundry, he develops, builds, and sells technology to various criminal clients, allowing others access to advanced equipment (although rarely as advanced as his own).

Talos: PL 12 (construct); Init +2 (Dex); Defense 18 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +11 melee (+175, punch), +8 ranged (+10S, energy blast); SV Dmg +10, Fort —, Ref +1, Will +9; Str 20, Dex 14, Con —, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 12.

Skills: Computers +20, Craft (robots) +21, Knowledge (history) +19, Repair +20, Science (robotics) +20, Sense Motive +9.

Feats: Darkvision, Expertise, Headquarters, Minions.

Powers: Amazing Save (Will) +4 [Source: Mystical; Cost: 1 pp], Energy Blast +10 [Power Stunt: Energy Field; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 2 pp], Protection +5 [Source: Super-Science; Cost: 2 pp], Super-Strength +12 [Extra: Super-Intelligence; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 5 pp].

TERRA KING

Jerris Trent's earliest childhood memory is of being buried alive by the earthquake that destroyed his home. He was pulled from the rubble after three days but suffered permanent damage to his eyesight and scarring from injuries that almost crippled him. His family dead, young Jerris became a ward of the state and spent most of his time in orphanages and foster homes. He was keenly intelligent but withdrawn and taunted by other children for his appearance and his disability. He learned to compensate for his near-blindness and he became fascinated with the subject of seismography and the underground. He became a student of the sciences and eventually a seismologist. His studies led him to discover the existence of vast networks of underground tunnels beneath the surface of the world. His colleagues dismissed his theories, so Dr. Trent set out to prove them.

His quest eventually brought him to Kaiju Island (p. 90), where Trent discovered the vast underground network he always theorized was there. He also found remnants of ancient technology belonging to the Serpent People and the Preservers. He also encountered the Serpent People's former slave-race, the Sub-Terrans (p. 92). Trent described himself as "feverish with



discovery" upon making these finds, and spent weeks studying the ancient technology. The Sub-Terrans quickly fell under his sway, eager for a new master to obey, and they assisted in repairing some of the technology. His discoveries may have affected Trent's already unstable mind, since he soon abandoned the surface world and declared himself the Terra King, Ruler of the Underworld.

The Terra King and his Sub-Terrans have on occasion launched assaults upon the surface world, seeking to conquer or to avenge some perceived or actual wrong done to them. The Terra King has also come into conflict with the remaining Serpent People and tribes of Morlocks in the underworld. The area he claims as his kingdom is vast, and may include further artifacts left behind by ancient civilizations. For the time being there is peace between the Sub-Terrans and the surface world, but it remains to be seen if that peace will hold, or if the Terra King will strike once more.

Personality: The Terra King is a profoundly lonely and isolated figure who has made himself the ruler of a dark and dismal kingdom, finding solace in his "royalty" and command over subservient followers. He claims that he wants nothing of the surface world, but the truth is that he hungers for acceptance and acknowledgement of his discoveries. Of course, any suggestion of this is enough to send him flying into a rage. The Terra King jealousy protects his kingdom, and strikes out against any perceived threats to it, be they polluters who use his domain as a dumping ground, miners who dig too deep, or governments who perform underground nuclear tests.

Quote: "You may impress the surface dwellers, but I am the king of the underworld!"

Powers & Tactics: Terra King has developed some adaptations to his environment with the aid of Preserver technology. Although nearly blind, his other senses are heightened to a considerable degree, allowing him to hear faint sounds, feel light on his skin, and sense movement through minute vibrations in the ground and surfaces around him. These heightened senses allow the Terra King to maneuver in total darkness. He also has considerable voluntary control over his bodily functions, allowing him to enter a trance-like state of suspended animation in which his breathing and heartbeat are greatly slowed.

The Terra King has access to advanced technology, including blaster weapons, digging machines, sensor devices, and the like. He typically carries some sort of weapon on his person, along with a remote control for other devices in his domain. His technology allows him to control some of the creatures on Kaiju Island and elsewhere

in the underworld, using them as living weapons against his enemies.

Finally, the Terra King commands legions of Sub-Terrans, which are utterly obedient to him, having "imprinted" on him as their master over the years. His Sub-Terran servants will do anything that he orders, although their intelligence is somewhat limited.

Appearance: The Terra King wears an ancient Incan-style mask that covers his scarred face.

The mask's narrow eye-slits also help shield his eyes, which are sensitive to excess light. His royal garb consists of a loose-fitting, belted tunic, a short cloak, and ratty trousers, all in earth-tones accented with gold. He always carries his command scepter, which contains a blaster weapon and hidden control studs for his various devices. Behind his mask, Jerris Trent has short-cut receding hair. His face is covered with several livid scars and his eyes are green but covered by a milky haze.

Campaign Use: The Terra King is a threat from below. His minions may invade the surface world for any number of reasons, leading the heroes to fight them off. He may attempt to reclaim certain things "taken from the Earth," particularly if they related to the history or technology of ancient races like the Atlanteans, Serpent People, or the Preservers. Whether or not he has a rightful claim to such things is for the heroes to decide. Heroes may find the Terra King an ally of sorts against the Serpent People (who are as much of a danger to his kingdom as they are to the surface world). For a more tragic, romantic story, the Terra King might fall for a surface woman and try to abduct her to become the queen of his dark kingdom under the earth.

Terra King: PL 11; Init +5 (Dex); Defense 20 (18 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft; Atk +6 melee or ranged (+10S, scepter);



SV Dmg +5, Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +11; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +7, Computers +12, Craft (machinery) +14, Disable Device +12, Hide +6, Knowledge (underworld) +15, Listen +15, Move Silently +6, Repair +12, Science (seismology) +13, Search +11, Sense Motive +12, Spot +13.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Blindsight, Dodge, Headquarters, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Minions, Sidekick (underworld monster), Toughness, Trance, Tremorsense.

Powers: Super-Intelligence +4 [Extra: Super-Wisdom; Source: Training; Cost: 4 pp].

Equipment: Command Scepter [Energy Blast +8; Extra: Datalink; Power Stunts: Radio Broadcast, Radio Reception, Strike; Flaw: Device; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 2 pp].

TOY BOY

Desmond Lettam should have been the happiest boy in the world, and he was, for a while. Desmond's family owned Fun-Time Toys, one of the largest toy-makers in the world, and they indulged their only child's every whim. Desmond lacked for nothing and he was the boy with all the best toys.

As Desmond grew older, family doctors discovered that he had a rare medical condition that halted his body's growth after he turned eight years old. Desmond stopped growing and he quickly became the target of cruel jokes and comments from classmates and peers. His parents moved him from one private school to another, then eventually resorted to having him tutored at home, where Desmond could be among his beloved toys. He was a brilliant child with an active imagination, and his studies offered him a place where his mind could excel and grow, even if his body could not. Desmond soon realized that he would never have a normal life. Despite the efforts of specialists, there was no treatment or cure for his condition. Despite the best psychologists and therapists, Desmond became more and more lost in his personal fantasy world. It was clear that young Desmond would never grow up in mind or body, let alone inherit the family business.

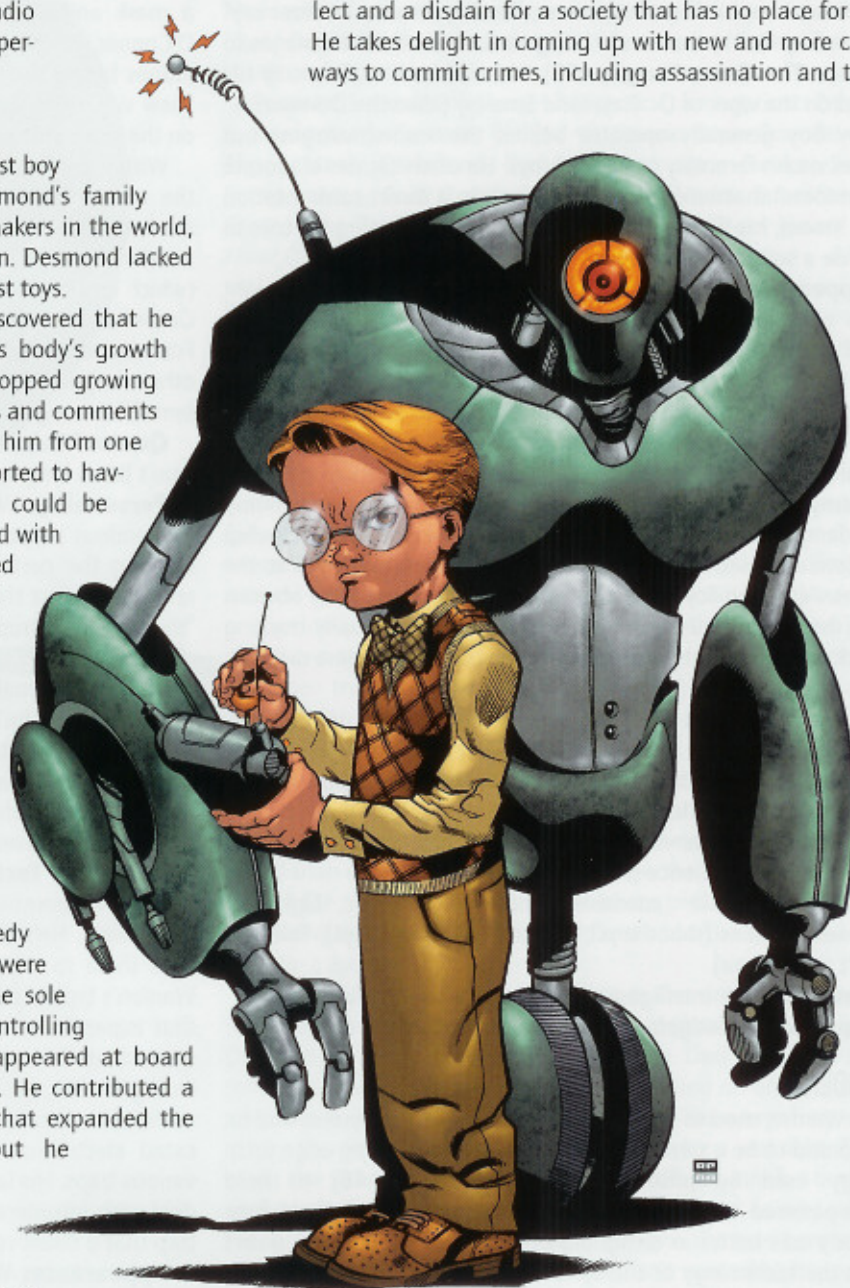
Just after Desmond turned eighteen, tragedy struck the Lettam family and his parents were killed in a plane crash, leaving Desmond the sole heir to a fortune. He continued to hold controlling stock in Fun-Time Toys, although he never appeared at board meetings, allowing proxies to vote his shares. He contributed a number of brilliant and innovative designs that expanded the business and made Fun-Time millions, but he remained a recluse.

What most people were not aware of is that Desmond took to amusing himself in a new game. He used his technical expertise to become an underworld

assassin using toys as weapons. He began systematically taking revenge against everyone who slighted him in his childhood, and he provided technology and designs to anyone who could meet his price. The Raven eventually exposed Toy Boy's operation, and Desmond lost his family business and much of his wealth, although he has retained his criminal contacts and secret bank accounts hidden around the world.

His defeats at the hands of superheroes only embittered Toy Boy further and drove him on to a new level of "games," this time with heroes as his worthy adversaries.

Personality: Toy Boy has the personality of a spoiled and bitter child coupled with a brilliant, but twisted, intellect and a disdain for a society that has no place for him. He takes delight in coming up with new and more clever ways to commit crimes, including assassination and theft,



and he enjoys matching wits with the heroes who try to stop him. He's prone to temper tantrums when things don't go his way, and he can be quite vindictive.

Powers & Tactics: Toy Boy has no super-powers apart from his brilliant intellect, which allows him to design and create all manner of devices based around seemingly harmless toys. His arsenal of toy-weapons has included robotic toy soldiers, "army men" of various sizes, remote controlled toy tanks and planes armed with real weapons, exploding jacks and marbles, toy laser pistols that fire real lasers, acid- or drug-filled squirt guns, and much more. He's also not above stealing and adapting technology from others, and he has co-opted designs from the Foundry, Doc Otaku, and others. For a time, Toy Boy used a "realizer ray" (created by Quirk) that could bring cartoons and other images to life (see **The Toon Gang**, p. 85). He also uses a shrinking ray based on the work of Dr. Raymond Smalley (alias the Downsizer).

Toy Boy generally operates behind the scenes, carrying out crimes via his remotely-controlled toys. He often creates elaborate "playrooms" that he uses as deathtraps. In a direct confrontation with heroes, his first priority is to escape, usually using his toys to provide a suitable distraction.

Appearance: Toy Boy looks like a boy of around seven or eight years old, although he's actually in his mid-20s. He has a thin build and sandy blond hair. His blue eyes are framed by round, wire-rimmed glasses. He typically wears trousers, saddle shoes, a button-down shirt, sweater vest, and bow tie. He nearly always has a remote control pad close at hand, which he can use to operate his various "toys."

Campaign Use: Toy Boy is a lethal combination of whimsy and danger. Adventures involving him are an opportunity to whip up devices based on favorite toys and games to throw at the heroes. Although Toy Boy's involvement in a crime is fairly obvious once the action figures and other toys show up, actually tracking him down and putting a stop to his plans can prove more difficult.

Toy Boy: PL 7; Init +5 (Dex, Imp. Init.); Defense 16 (15 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (-25, punch), +5 ranged (by weapon); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 7, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 20, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Computers +15, Craft (robotics) +16, Knowledge (toys) +18, Repair +16, Science (mechanics) +18, Taunt +10.

Feats: Attractive (adorable), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Minions (robot toys), Sidekick (x4, robot toys), Talented (Craft and Repair).

Powers: Super-Intelligence +9 [Source: Training; Cost: 2 pp].

Equipment: Gadgets +10 [Source: Super-Science; Cost: 1 pp].

WARDEN

John Warden used to believe in the criminal justice system and he was proud to be a part of it. He developed the cutting-edge technology used by prisons like Blackstone (p. 46) to hold super-powered criminals and other serious threats to society. Nobody was better at designing prisons, but the problem didn't lie in the technology or the system—it was the people behind it. John believed that if the bureaucrats and the bleeding hearts

would only let him do his job, there wouldn't be any prison escapes. They continued to hobble him with regulations, rules, and concerns about the rights of the prisoner, but John wondered why they deserved any fair treatment at all—didn't they give up those rights when they became criminals?

Warden became obsessed with creating the perfect prison, not for rehabilitation or even fair treatment but solely for containment and even punishment of prisoners. Eventually, he was dismissed following an investigation into his experimental technologies. It wasn't long thereafter that he realized where the *real* dangers to society lay—in the bureaucrats and even the heroes who kept people like him from maintaining order. Warden donned a mask and used his devices to capture and imprison Mayor O'Connor, district attorney Durgan, and several Freedom City judges before the Raven tracked him down and put a stop to his "new system of justice." Warden found himself, for the first time, on the other side of the justice system.

Within days, he was free, for what prison could really hold him, the master jailer (let alone one of his own designs)? He has clashed with the Raven a few more times, and even took a commission from SHADOW to imprison the entire Freedom League (which he succeeded in doing briefly until they were freed by Ray Gardener, Jr., Captain Thunder's son). He sells work through the Foundry to clients in need of various sorts of traps (deadly and otherwise) while continuing to plot his revenge against the system that wronged him.

Quote: "You're in here for a life sentence, but don't worry, that won't be as long as you think."

Personality: Warden is, to put it simply, a control freak of tremendous proportions. Two things drive him: the challenge of creating the perfect trap to hold any target, and a desire for revenge against the supposed wrongs done to him. He considers "the system" corrupt and soft. The *real* criminals are the people in charge and the "heroes" backing them. Warden wants to bring them down, to make them suffer as he as suffered. Once they're out of the way, he'll be able to institute "law and order" the way he wants to see it. Warden doesn't consider himself a criminal; he's a rebel against a corrupt and weak system that's afraid of him. The truth is that Warden enjoys the challenge of creating his traps and the power of having others at his mercy.

Powers & Tactics: Warden doesn't have any super-powers beyond his inventive genius for various sorts of traps and restraining devices. He's the world's foremost creator of such things, and uses them to overcome and entrap even superhuman targets. Warden's typical devices include small spheres of "memory metal" that expand into cages or constricting bands that entrap opponents that they touch. He's also been known to use glue-guns, stun grenades, gas weapons, and a plethora of other devices. His costume is armor-padded and his mask has sensors and sophisticated electronics that allow him to monitor and control his various traps. His lairs are invariably mined with extensive traps to deal with intruders, and he will custom-build almost any sort of trap that a client commissions.

Appearance: Warden is about six feet tall with a muscular build. His uniform consists of a skin-tight black and red armored

bodysuit that covers him completely. Warden has crew-cut brown hair and cold, green eyes, a square jaw, and a grim expression most of the time.

Campaign Use: Warden is a source of deathtraps and other devices that villains might use against the heroes. He may simply provide the technology that another villain or organization needs

or he may "field test" his equipment against the heroes directly. He's sometimes commissioned to capture and imprison heroes or criminals, working as a bounty hunter.

Warden: PL 11; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Defense 20 (17 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +10 melee (+5S, tonfa), +9 ranged (by weapon); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 20, Wis 16, Cha 13.

Skills: Craft (traps) +21, Demolitions +14, Disable Device +18, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (traps) +15, Open Lock +17, Profession (jailer) +7, Repair +14, Spot +3.

Feats: Assessment, Attack Focus (snare), Dodge, Escape Artist, Headquarters, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Skill Focus (Craft), Surprise Strike, Talented (Craft and Open Lock).

Powers: Super-Intelligence +7 [Source: Training; Cost: 2 pp].

Equipment: Costume [Armor +8; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 1 pp], Mask [Darkvision, Radio Hearing; Flaw: Device; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 2 pp], Gadgets +10 [Source: Super-Science; Cost: 1 pp], Tonfa [Weapon +2S; Cost: 1 pp], Traps [Snare +10; Flaw: Device; Source: Super-Science; Cost: 1 pp].

WHITE KNIGHT

Daniel Foreman loved and honored his family. They raised him right and taught him the truth—the truth that the government, the schools, and the liberal media refused to show. His family taught Daniel about the destiny of the white race and how the bleeding hearts wanted to convince everyone that all people are equal, even when that obviously wasn't true. Weren't the slums full of Blacks and Hispanics? Why would they be there if they weren't as stupid as his father said? Wasn't AIDS killing the queers? Why would they be dying if not because they were so hopelessly perverted? The Jews controlled the banks and influenced the media, making it look like Hitler was the villain when trying to exterminate the mongrel races was about the only thing he did right.

Dan grew up hating everyone who wasn't like him. He particularly learned to hate the supers, most of whom were dupes of the Zionist-run liberal government. Worse yet, some were even from the mongrel races and probably thought their powers made them better than decent white folk. Where were the *real* heroes to show people the truth? Where was the true hero of the white race? Dan wondered that throughout his childhood, but the hero he hoped for didn't appear.

As an adult, Dan ended up working in Freedom City as a security guard for a department store until his boss fired him when Dan roused and threatened a Black patron. Dan proceeded to go out and get drunk, ignorant of what was going on around him. It was clear to him that Freedom City was just like everywhere else—run by the mongrel races and with no place for a real man. That's when the stranger approached Dan and offered him his business card. He had an offer, one that Dan didn't believe, so why refuse? He said that Daniel Foreman could become the true hero of the white race, if he really wanted it. Dan isn't sure what happened, only that he found his way home and passed out.



He woke up to find his bedroom and his bed in flames! He panicked for a moment, but he realized the fire didn't hurt him or the new clothes he found on him. In fact, the flames made him feel purer and stronger than ever. He realized the vision he had was real. He had the power and then he knew. The purifying fire of God had touched him, and made him into the hero the world needed. He was the chosen one who would purify the Earth with fire—the White Knight.

Quote: "Mongrels! Sub-human dogs! You think you can overcome the true champion of the pure white way?"

Personality: White Knight is a twisted and sociopathic personality who considers everyone his inferior, particularly anyone who isn't white, male, heterosexual, and doesn't fit his extremely narrow view of a good, Protestant Christian. All others are part of what he refers to as "the mongrel races," inferiors destined to be ruled by the pure people, with himself as divinely chosen champion and emperor. He's a classic bully—overbearing and threatening toward those weaker than him, but outwardly subservient to those more powerful while secretly plotting revenge against them too. Dan dropped out of high school "since they weren't teaching me anything I needed to know," and considers himself very intelligent; his reasoning is flawed at best and woefully ignorant or misinformed on many issues. He's a complete fanatic about his cause, and considers all efforts to sway him from it trickery and deception.

Powers & Tactics: White Knight can create and project white-hot plasma from his body. He can surround himself with an aura of white fire that burns whatever he touches, shoot bolts of fire from his hands or eyes, generate blinding white light, and project his fire behind him to fly through the air like a rocket. His body is stronger and tougher than normal, giving him greater than normal strength and resistance to injury. He has some meager skills in hand-to-hand combat, although he's more of an amateur brawler than a trained fighter.

White Knight's tactics are plain and simple: blast through anything that gets in his way. If it doesn't fall, blast it again until it does. He's cunning in battle and he's willing to fight dirty in order to win. That includes threatening members of the "mongrel races" that his opponents are so fond of protecting. For example, he'll gladly collapse an apartment building to give heroes a distraction while he escapes or prepares another attack.

Appearance: Daniel Foreman is 6' tall, broadly built, and has hate-filled blue eyes and dirty blond hair cut in a military-style crew cut. As White Knight, he wears a peaked white hood that completely covers his head except for his eyes. His costume consists of a close-fitting, belted white tunic and tan pants with black combat boots. He's nearly always surrounded by an aura of white fire while in costume, which luckily seems impervious to his own flames.

Campaign Use: White Knight is an enemy opposed to everything Freedom City stands for: kinship, cooperation, working together, fairness, liberty, and equality. He supports and spreads bigotry, hatred, fear, and violence in the name of his limited view of "justice." He's also something of a buffoon, since he thinks he's much more powerful and intelligent than he really is, making him the perfect pawn for a mastermind who knows what buttons to push.

White Knight: PL12; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 17 (16 flat-footed); Spd 30 ft. (fly 60 ft.); Atk +8 melee (+8S, punch), +7 ranged (+11S, energy blast); SV Dmg +7, Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills: Intimidate +8, Listen +5, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5, Survival +5.

Feats: All-Out Attack, Attack Focus (energy blast), Infamy, Minions, Point Blank Shot, Surprise Strike.

Powers: Amazing Save (Damage, Will) +4 [Source: Mutation; Cost: 2 pp], Energy Control (fire) +11 [Extras: Energy Blast, Energy Field, Flight, Force Field; Power Stunt: Dazzle; Source: Mutation; Cost: 5 pp], Super-Strength +4 [Source: Mutation; Cost: 4 pp].



CONTRIBUTORS

Steve Kenson, Game Design: Steve has been a freelance writer and designer of RPGs since 1995, having written or contributed to dozens of products, including books in Green Ronin's *Master Class* series. He is the designer of *Mutants & Masterminds* and first arrived in Freedom City in 1993, just in time for the Terminus Invasion. Fortunately, he survived the experience and was able to write about it. He's pleased to be the licensed RPG chronicler of the adventures of Freedom City's heroes. Steve would like to thank all those who had a hand in inspiring this book, including Aaron Allston, Mark Arsenault, Jeff Dee, Jack Herman, Jason Schneiderman, Patrick Sweeney, Steve Schend, all the folks at Green Ronin and Super Unicorn, and many, many comic book creators over the years.

Steven Schend, Development and Editing: Steven Schend has been working in the RPG business for more than a decade. He contributed to the *Gamer's Handbook to the Marvel Universe* for TSR before moving on to work on the *Forgotten Realms* campaign setting. Schend's *Forgotten Realms* credits include *City of Sponsors*, *Lands of Intrigue*, and *Cormanthyr: Empire of the Elves*. Recently, he's edited the *Assassin's Handbook* for Green Ronin Publishing and *Oathbound: Domains of the Forge* for Bastion Press.

Chris Pramas, Publisher: Green Ronin founder Chris Pramas has been working in the game industry for the past ten years. He got his start as a freelance writer, and made his name working on such game lines as *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*, *Feng Shui*, and *Underground*. He later jumped into the deep end, starting his own company (Ronin Publishing) with two partners. Having gained some important business experience dealing with the struggles of every small game publisher, Pramas then pulled a 180 and landed a job as a RPG designer at Wizards of the Coast. He spent four years working for Wizards, ending his time there as Creative Director for Miniatures R&D. While still at WotC, he started Green Ronin Publishing as a side venture. Green Ronin proved so successful that after leaving Wizards in March of 2002, Chris was able to jump right into running the company full time. He has won three Origins Awards and two ENnie Awards for his work. He is best known as the author of the *AD&D Guide to Hell*, *Dragon Fist*, and *Death in Freepart*.

Greg Kirkpatrick: Greg Kirkpatrick graduated from the University of Kansas with a BFA. He's worked on comic projects such as *Occupational Hazards* for the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, self-published *Novavolo* and *Big Bang* comics. He currently resides in South Florida with his wife Maggie, kids Jessica, Rick, and Johnny and dogs Jasper and Sasha. ■■

Chris Tallefer: Craig Tallefer is the creator, writer, and illustrator of the critically acclaimed comic book *Wahoo Morris*. He has worked on such comics as *Samurai*, *Elflord*, *Planet of The Apes*, and various *ElfQuest* titles. His animation work includes *The Raccoons*, *Rescue Heroes*, *Katie & Orbie*, and the Warner Bros. feature animated film *The Nutcracker Prince*. He currently lives and works in Ottawa, Canada. ■■

Dan Panosian: Dan Panosian of Laguna Beach, California, has worked on such comic books as the *X-Men*, *Spider-Man*, *The Hulk*, *Captain America*, *Green Lantern*, *Spawn*, *Pitt*, and *Detective Comics*. Visit www.danpanosian.com to see other comic book and non-comic book related art. ■■

Ramón Pérez: Ramón Pérez lives the hermit-like existence in the harsh winter climes of Canada's southern peninsula. When not wrestling polar bears he fills his days by depicting the fanciful (and at times disturbing) images that plague his brain. Ramón's artwork can be seen in such varied projects as *Rifts*, *In Nomine*, *Legend of the Five Rings*, *Star Wars Gamer*, *Polyhedron Magazine*, and many more. Peruse his art at ramon-perez.com. ■■

Brian Buccellato: Brian Buccellato attended but didn't graduate from New York University. He began coloring for *Electric Crayon* in 1994 and has been at it ever since. He has freelanced for *Marvel Comics*, *Top Cow Productions*, *Awesome Entertainment*, *Hyperwerks Entertainment*, and *MV Creations*, and worked with such reknown professionals as *Hifi Colour Design*, *JD Smith*, and his brother, Steve. He lives in Phoenix with his lovely wife Xochil and their incredibly smart son, Paris. ■■

Steve Cobb: Steve Cobb triple majored at the Art Institute of Phoenix in sleep, college girls and beer drinking. After sleeping in most of his classes, graduation time finally came and Steve was not even sure what state he was in. I think he colors comic books now or is a test subject for the tobacco industry. ■■

SUPER UNICORN IS:

Erik Mona, Editor: Erik Mona edits *Polyhedron Magazine* and was part of the Super Unicorn team that defined the look and style of the *Mutants & Masterminds* RPG. He's currently at work creating the META-4 Universe, the core *Mutants & Masterminds* continuity that will see its debut in *Crooks!*, a 2003 release. He dedicates his work on *Freedom City* to the heroes of space shuttle Columbia, who gave their lives in the pursuit of new horizons on February 1, 2003. "This is the space age," as William S. Burroughs said, "and we're all here to go." ■■

Sean Glenn, Art Director: Sean Glenn art directs *Dungeon Magazine* in addition to his work with Super Unicorn. Never one to shy from learning new skills, Sean is hard at work learning how to ink with a brush, letter sequential comic art, and draw like Jack Kirby. He really doubts the last one is ever going to happen. Sean is also infamous for obsessing over his 12" action figure collection (or, as the other members of Super Unicorn are apt to call them, "his dollies"). ■■

Kyle Hunter, Creative Director: Kyle is an illustrator, writer, and graphic designer. He currently serves as *Polyhedron Magazine's* art director and produces the comic *Downer*. Keep an eye out for his magnum opus, the sci-fi romp *Swerve*. Kyle is married to his bestest friend Jenifer, and lives near Seattle with their rocket-dogs, Leru and Jetta. He prides himself on his musical snobbery, and enjoys a nice stiff drink. Though he's an avid gaming fan, he can't play or Gamemaster in character. It makes him uncomfortable. His android heart is corroded like the terminals of an antique battery.

Rick Achberger: Born in the Pacific Northwest, Rick grew up continually drawing and surrounded by computers. With the introduction of the Mac, these two interests were forever combined into a career in the graphic arts. Having grown up in the 1980s, Rick spent his childhood obsessed with GI Joe and Star Wars. He still retains a passion for the interests of his youth. One room in his home is devoted to his Mac, design books, spaceship posters, hundreds of miniature army men, and thousands of comic books. He shares this home with his loving wife Sasha and their two energetic dogs—Taylor, a boxer, and Tucker, a border collie. Rick provided cartography and color flatting for *Freedom City*.



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CAMPAIGN INFORMATION

CAMPAIGN	GAMEMASTER	POWER POINTS
FELLOW HEROES		
SIDEKICKS OR MINIONS		ARCH ENEMY

GEAR

[illegible]

LIGHT LOAD ☐ **MEDIUM LOAD** ☐ **HEAVY LOAD** ☐

LIFT OVER HEAD ☐ **LIFT OFF GROUND** ☐ **PUSH OR DRAG** ☐

ORIGIN

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no text or other markings on the paper.

WEAKNESSES

SKILLS

SKILL NAME	KEY ABILITY	SKILL MODIFIER	ABILITY MODIFIER	RANKS MODIFIER	MISC MODIFIER
ACROBATICS	DEX	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
BALANCE	DEX	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
BLUFF	CHA	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
CLIMB	STR	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
COMPUTERS	INT	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
CONCENTRATION	WIS	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
CRAFT _____	INT	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
DEMOLITIONS	INT	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
DIPLOMACY	CHA	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
DISABLE DEVICE	INT	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
DISGUISE	CHA	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
DRIVE	DEX	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
ESCAPE ARTIST	DEX	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
FORGERY	INT	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
GATHER INFORMATION	CHA	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
HANDLE ANIMAL	CHA	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
HIDE	DEX	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
INNUENDO	CHA	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
INTIMIDATE	CHA	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
JUMP	STR	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
KNOWLEDGE _____	INT	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
KNOWLEDGE _____	INT	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
KNOWLEDGE _____	INT	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
KNOWLEDGE _____	INT	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
KNOWLEDGE _____	INT	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
LANGUAGE	—	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
LISTEN	WIS	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
MEDICINE	WIS	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
MOVE SILENTLY	DEX	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
OPEN LOCK	DEX	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
PERFORM	CHA	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
PILOT	DEX	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
PROFESSION _____	WIS	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
READ LIPS	INT	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
REPAIR	INT	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
RIDE	DEX	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
SCIENCE _____	INT	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
SEARCH	INT	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
SENSE MOTIVE	WIS	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
SLEIGHT OF HAND	DEX	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
SPOT	WIS	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
SURVIVAL	WIS	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
SWIM	STR	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	
TAUNT	CHA	_____	_____ + _____	_____ + _____	

CHARACTER SKETCH

Freedom City and outlying areas



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