

# ICONS

SUPERPOWERED ROLEPLAYING

OFFICIAL GAME ADVENTURE

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## JAILBREAK!

By Eddy Webb

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CAN THIS BE?! ARE SAGUARO AND ALL-AMERICAN GIRL ACTUALLY BRAWLING WITH PRISON GUARDS? YES! THIS IS NO 'IMAGINARY STORY' --

# IT'S A JAILBREAK!!



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## JAILBREAK!

Jailbreak! is an adventure for an ICONS superhero group. If you are intending to play in this adventure, turn back now! The material in this file is for the Game Master's eyes only, and reading it could lead to all sorts of terrible accidents (or, more likely, will ruin your enjoyment of the adventure).

Okay, Game Master, now that your players are gone – let's talk for a bit, just between us. Before you dive in, you should familiarize yourself with the ICONS game rules if you haven't already. Sure, there will be suggestions and tips on how to run it, but we're not going to slow down and talk a lot about how to use the main rules within this adventure. But don't worry; even if you're not a pro, just read over ICONS and this adventure, and your players will think you've been writing comicbook adventures since you were born. We've got you covered.

This adventure is designed for a group of about three to six heroes. If you go with a dynamic duo or a single superhero, you might need to toss them a couple of extra points of Determination to help even the odds. On the other hand, if you're dealing with a legion of superheroes, feel free to increase the numbers on some of the bad guys, or toss in a few of those supervillains you've been meaning to try out.

While much of Jailbreak! is written with the understanding that the players have an established superteam, it isn't required. You can have the heroes start off not working together at all, each independently working with SHARD (see the sidebar) only to be thrown together as they fight their way out of the evil machinations of the Killer Gamemaster. If the heroes decide to form a superteam after this adventure, or if Jailbreak! is intended to be the start of establishing a superteam the players have already agreed to, go a little easy on them and let them tweak and adjust some things like team aspects as they play. (You can read more about it under "Choosing Aspects During Play" in the ICONS book, p.78.)

Each of the following chapters covers one part of the story. We've broken things down to put relevant material together for easier access, but feel free to move things from one chapter to another, or to add events between chapters. At the end of the day, how your group of heroes gets together and fights to defeat the Killer Gamemaster is all up to you!

By the way: the Killer Gamemaster is a supervillain in this story. Because he's evil, we'll always put "Killer" in front of his name to remind you. You, however, are the Game Master – two words, not one. Whether you're a killer or not is between you and your group, but we'll stick with plain old "Game Master" when we're talking about you. So, Killer Gamemaster is a supervillain controlled by the Game Master. Sound good?

## *THE STORY SO FAR*

To help you hit the ground running, here's the backstory of Jailbreak! - feel free to modify it to suit your game's needs:

SHARD – the Super Human Affirmative Response Division – is trying out a new high-tech security compound. Nicknamed "the Icebox", this underground superhuman jail prototype is located somewhere in the remote reaches of the Alaskan wilderness. SHARD has asked the heroes to test it out for them. As soon as the heroes are locked in, though, the jail's inventor turns out to be the pawn of the Killer Gamemaster, who has rigged the entire jail to be a series of puzzles (with deadly consequences) for the heroes.

# CHAPTER 1: CELL BLOCKED

This adventure starts when the heroes are locked into their cells and attempt to escape. Once they do, however, they discover that the guards have been replaced with evil robotic duplicates!

## *A SMALL FAVOR*

To start things off, work out how you want to introduce the players into Jailbreak! Some groups of players work best if you just drop them into the thick of things with a brief explanation (“You’ve been asked by SHARD to test out their new super-jail, and now you’re in individual cells, thinking of ways to escape. What do you do?”), but others might want to play through a lead-in first. Depending on the nature of your superteam, this could be as simple as the leader of SHARD (Lt. Joanna Mars) calling up the team and asking them for help, or as elaborate as an entire adventure that introduces the superteam to SHARD and establishes a relationship between the two organizations before SHARD makes the offer. Figure out what sort of introduction works best for your game, but keep in mind that the longer or more complex the introduction, the more you should consider providing opportunities for Determination so the players don’t use it all up before the adventure even begins!

If the heroes ask Lt. Mars about the Icebox, she tells them that it was developed and built by a Dr. Bertram Lucky. Construction took longer than anticipated, but it’s finished now, and they want to give it a field test to make sure that it’s capable of containing supervillains. That’s why they’re asking the heroes as sympathetic superhumans to try to break out from the Icebox from within. She won’t share much more beyond that, though – the less they know about the Icebox in advance, the more accurate the test conditions will be.

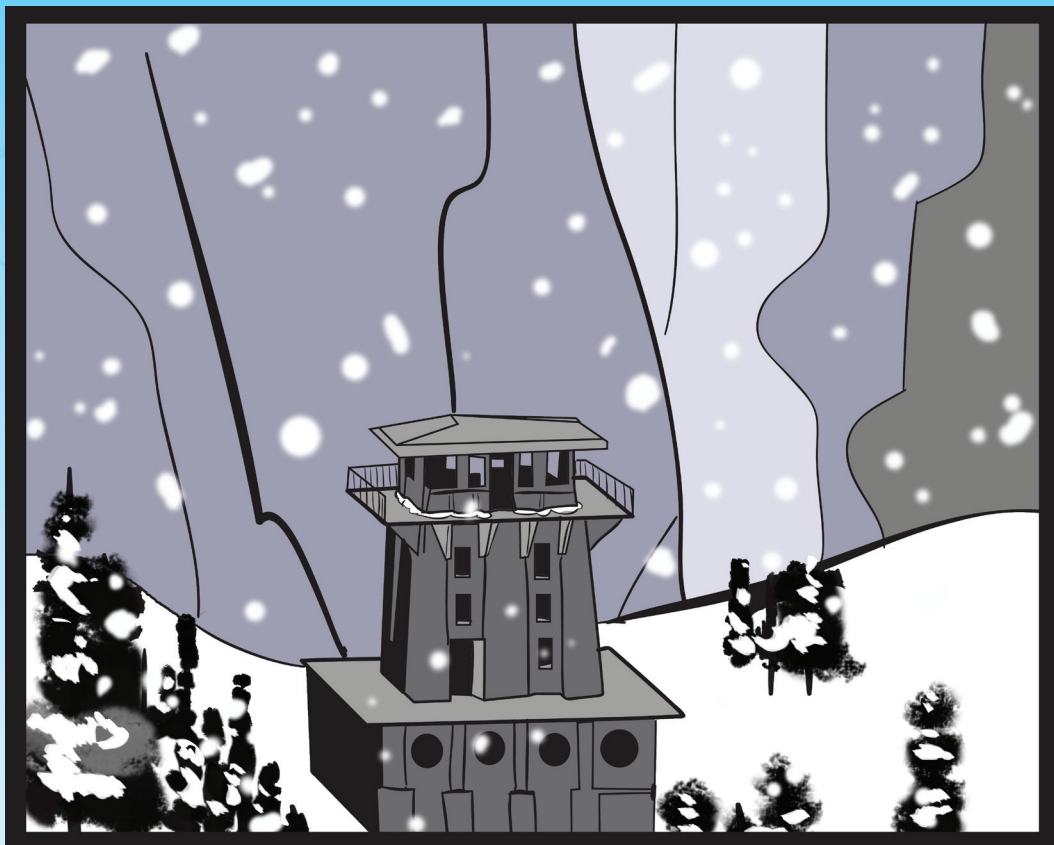
## *A NIGHT IN JAIL*

The building the heroes are given directions to is very nondescript. When they arrive, it’s very small, about the size of a small house – way too small for a jail. As they enter, they find that the building only consists of a guard station (which has a SHARD agent waiting for them, dressed in a plain black suit) and a large elevator that takes up almost the entire building. The agent greets them and explains that the jail is actually entirely underground. The heroes pile into the elevator, and they go down for quite a long time.

The Icebox is very high-tech, with lots of metal walls, brushed steel, and large video screens showing other parts of the complex. The heroes go through a series of security checkpoints and scanners, while the agent explains that each checkpoint can be closed and shielded against a wide variety of energy types and physical attacks, and the scanners help to analyze and predict the power potential of the incoming prisoners. Further, the entire complex is fitted with an elaborate self-destruct sequence with multiple redundancy measures, so that they can collapse any portion of the complex in the case of a full-scale riot.

Any heroes that derive their powers from gadgets and items will be asked to place them in a large metal box with wheels, which is pushed with them by the guards. (If their mask is part of their equipment, a black mask that covers their whole head will be provided – SHARD isn’t trying to learn their secret identities.) The guards are all dressed in high-tech powersuits. If asked, the agent will explain that each guard is issued a High-Energy Adjusted Threat suit (or HEATSuit for short). It increases many of their physical capabilities and provides a measure of protection against enemy attacks. Each guard is also equipped with a “null ray” that reduces a superhuman’s effectiveness. The guards don’t respond to any questions or comments, but instead work in stony silence. This is because the real guards have all been replaced with robotic duplicates while SHARD was organizing this field test, but neither SHARD nor the heroes realize this yet.





After going down several floors and through endless checkpoints and scans, the heroes arrive at their cells. They are fitted with metal collars which the agent calls “null collars.” These collars are material Strength of 7 and have Power Nullification at level 9 (have each player roll for any powers that remain on their heroes), but their effects last as long as the character is wearing the collar. The boxes with their equipment are left outside the cell door, so they can reclaim it as soon as they manage to escape. Once everything is ready, the cell door is closed and sealed.

The cell itself is spartan – a bed made out of a solid block on the floor, and a thin mattress, pillow, and blanket on top. Walking toward the back wall causes the sink and toilet to come into view. They remain solid enough to be useful, but disappear soon afterward. (The sink and toilet have Phasing at level 7.) The rest of the cell is empty. The walls have a material Strength of 10, and the room is air-tight.

### *I CAN SEE THE FUTURE!*

Certain characters may have the ability to sense danger (such as Danger Sense) or even see the future (like with Precognition). If it makes sense for the heroes in your game, try to hold off on the surprise and predictions until the heroes are in their cells. However, they might want to look into the future to see what happens, or they might become curious about the guards and want to examine them more closely. Offer them some Determination to quell their curiosity, either by compelling their aspects or creating the temporary challenge of “This all looks legitimate.”

If the heroes simply will not be swayed, give them hints and predictions as per the normal ICONS rules. Once the heroes start acting in ways that don’t follow the Killer Gamemaster’s plans (which he can tell from watching things through cameras planted in his robotic guards), he’ll start things off early – jump ahead to where the guards attack the heroes in “Get Out of Jail, Free,” and skip over where they have to escape from their cells.

Let each player have a few panels to examine their cell and try things out. Entertain any creative solutions. If they think of something that isn't covered in the above description, don't feel like you have to invent a reason why it wouldn't work – it just means they might have discovered a flaw in the design! Also, be generous with cell design-related retcons, but not with things like guards accidentally leaving keys behind or forgetting to close the door. Finding a hidden flaw in the system is okay, but assuming that SHARD or the robotic guards are idiots is unlikely. Once each hero escapes (or fails to escape), move to the next hero until everyone has had a chance to try and bust out.

## *GET OUT OF JAIL FREE*

As soon as every hero has made an attempt to escape, the lights turn red and the doors all open simultaneously. The heroes have just enough time to step out and reunite when the robotic guards turn and attack!

There should be at least seven guards (for reasons that will become clear in the next chapter), but if you want to add more to really challenge your heroes, go ahead. The remaining guards are fighting SHARD personnel somewhere else in the complex, but you can throw more at the heroes from time to time whenever things get slow. The robotic guards are treated as minions (ICONS, p. 71).

### *SHARD GUARD (ROBOTIC DUPLICATE)*

**Prowess** 4

**Coordination** 3

**Strength** 4

**Intellect** 3

**Awareness** 3

**Willpower** 3

**Stamina** 7

#### **POWERS:**

Invulnerability 4 (HEATsuit)

Life Support 5 (Robots - breathing, eating, sleeping, pathogens, toxins.)

Power Nullification 3 (Null Ray).

## CHAPTER 2: KILLER PUZZLES

The Killer Gamemaster reveals himself, and tells them they have to solve his puzzles and escape within the hour, or the jail will explode!

### THE KILLER GAMEMASTER REVEALED!

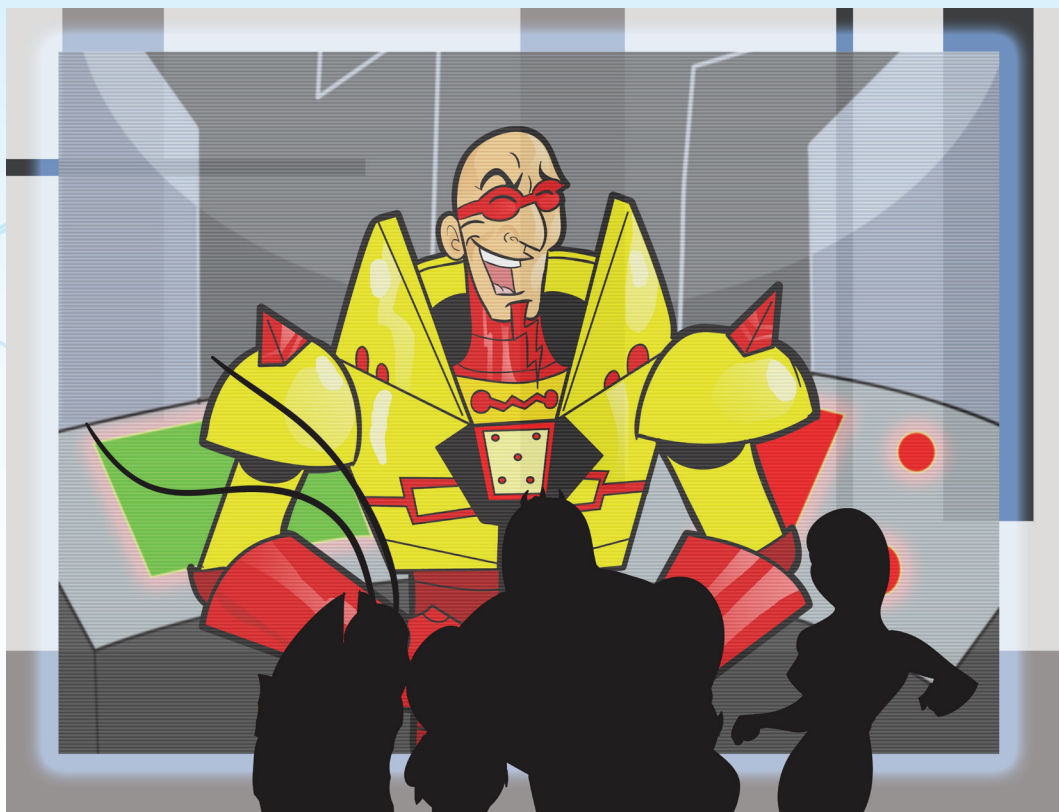
Once the robotic guards are dealt with, the Killer Gamemaster appears on every video screen all over the complex, and his voice can be heard over the intercom.

*"Welcome to your doom, do-gooders! I am the Killer Gamemaster, and tonight we will play a game called 'Judge, Jury, and Executioner'... and I will be all three!"*

At this point, let the heroes banter with the Killer Gamemaster a bit – he can hear them through a number of microphones implanted all over the compound. He will claim that he built the Icebox under the guise of Dr. Bertram Luck (although it was actually Void who did so), but he has converted it into a deathtrap for the heroes. The reasons for him luring the heroes into the trap are up to you as Game Master. Maybe he's crossed paths with these heroes before, and wants them out of the way once and for all. Maybe he's been hired by other supervillains as part of an elaborate assassination attempt. Maybe he's just really crazy and likes putting heroes through lethal games for his own amusement.

After the characters exchange threats, the Killer Gamemaster tells them a riddle:

*A prisoner was going to be sentenced, but the judge decided to give him one last chance to redeem himself. The judge said "I will allow you to make one final statement before this court. If your statement is true, I'll only sentence you to four years in prison. If it's false, however, I'll sentence you to six years." The prisoner thought about it for a moment, and made his statement. The judge, after hearing the statement, was forced to honor his word and let him go free. What did the prisoner say?*



The answer is “You’ll sentence me to six years in prison,” but let the players puzzle it out for a bit before going to dice rolls. A moderate success will give the hero a clue, a major success will give part of the answer, and a massive success will give the complete answer. There aren’t any immediate consequences for getting the riddle wrong (aside from gloating from the Killer Gamemaster), but the point of this exchange is to give the players a sense of what the Killer Gamemaster is like and what kinds of puzzles are in store for them in this adventure. If you want to add more tension to this scene, you can send a robotic guard after them for the first answer they get wrong, two for the second answer they get wrong, three for the third incorrect answer, and so on until they get it right.

## GOING UP?

Regardless of the answer the heroes ultimately give, the Killer Gamemaster judges them guilty and tells them that their sentence is that they have one hour to try and defeat his puzzles and his minions to escape, or the self-destruct sequence in the Icebox will activate and send them all to oblivion!

### S.H.A.R.D. FACILITY - “ICEBOX”

REINFORCED OSMIUM SHELL, HOUSED IN GRANITE. NUCLEAR RESISTANT CORE, INDEPENDENT POWER SUPPLY.



GUARD STATION

VAULT LEVEL 1 - STREET LEVEL METAS

VAULT LEVEL 2 - SERIOUS THREAT LEVEL METAS

VAULT LEVEL 3 - “PURGATORY”

ARCHITECTS: JOHN AND MICHAEL PARKER  
ENGINEER: VICTOR BRADLEY AND JESSICA MILTON



Their first challenge to overcome is to get the elevator at the end of the hallway to work. The original keycard pass retracts into the wall, and is replaced with a keypad containing every letter of the alphabet, as well as a display that shows seven letters – they need to input a seven-letter word to enter the elevator. Again, if you want to add some more tension to this puzzle, every time the heroes put in the wrong word, they are attacked by guards like in the previous scene (one for the first wrong answer, two for a second wrong answer, and so on).

The password is COLDITZ, and there are a couple of ways for the players to figure it out. The first is if they tag the Killer Gamemaster's challenge of "Can't Help But Provide Clues" to retcon clues and hints as to what the answer is. If they don't think of this (or in addition to the clues the players invent for themselves), the heroes might notice that each of the seven initial guards had a letter on its chest: C-D-I-L-O-T-Z. If the players are completely stumped, they can try making a roll, and you can gauge how much information to give them based on their success, as per the previous scene.

Once the heroes enter the correct passcode, the elevator opens, and they go up a few floors while the Killer Gamemaster mocks them for how much time they've wasted.

### *THE TICKING CLOCK!*

Because ICONS is run in narrative time units like panels, pages, and chapters, it's hard to get a sense of when an hour goes by. The best way to keep the pressure on the heroes is to use the ticking clock as a challenge, rather than a hard time limit.

As soon as the Killer Gamemaster announces the amount of time they have to escape, give the entire superteam five temporary challenges. In order, they are "Tick tick tick," "Running Out of Time," "Halfway to Destruction," "Can We Make It In Time?" and "It's Gonna Blow!"

At the end of each chapter, the group loses the topmost challenge on the list. Also, you can compel a hero with one of the challenges at any point to give them a point of Determination (as per the rules in ICONS, p. 78) – if they accept the Determination, the challenge is taken off the list as well. Write these in order on a piece of paper that the players can see, and cross out each one in order as they are used, so the players always have a sense of how much time they have left. Once you cross off "It's Gonna Blow!", the self-destruct sequence activates and the heroes will all go to 0 Stamina at the end of that page.

In reality, you're not likely to ever cross off that final challenge. The idea is to get the players down to "It's Gonna Blow!" by the last chapter, but they're probably not going to cross that last one off, no matter how much you compel it. That's okay – the idea that it could be crossed off at any moment should be enough to get across the pressure of time they're under. Besides, when's the last time you saw a bomb get defused with several minutes to spare?

## CHAPTER 3: NULL & VOID

The heroes are confronted by the deadly duo of Null and Void, as well as by another fiendish elevator puzzle!

### NULL AND VOID

After a few floors the elevator lights start to flicker before they finally go out and the elevator grinds to a sudden halt. The door opens a crack, but the heroes will have to force the doors open (difficulty 5, material Strength 10).

Once they get out of the elevator, they notice that the entire floor is dark, save for a few flickering lights and the occasional spark from a guard suit. Each of the cells has a guard in it, but these appear to be the human guards in suits, rather than the robotic ones (although a few robotic ones appear to be smashed as well). Even the screens are black and the intercom is silent. Many of the guards are hurt, and all of them are unconscious, but none of them need emergency care. However, if the heroes want to spend time to help the guards out, they can. If for some reason they manage to get a guard or two upright and can cobble together a working suit or two, use the stats for the robotic duplicates of the SHARD guards on p. 5.

As the heroes make their way over the broken robots toward the elevator at the other end of the floor, they find one of the guards looks different – his suit is entirely black and hard to make out. As soon as one of the heroes touches him (or they otherwise make a move that shows that they aren't falling for the subterfuge), the “guard” immediately attacks. It's actually Null, one of two supervillains working with the Killer Gamemaster! As soon as Null attacks, Void will phase through the wall on the opposite side of the heroes and attack on the next page. Null will be silent throughout the fight, while Void will dance around the heroes and pepper them with insults and jibs.

The stats for Null and Void can be found in the appendix at the end of this adventure.

Null actually absorbs power into himself – once he's able to nullify a heroes' power, he can use that energy to activate his Invisibility power for the rest of the chapter. Both Null's Power Nullification power and Void's Power Theft power requires skin-to-skin contact with their intended victim. Null and Void are supposed to only neutralize the heroes (so that the Killer Gamemaster can gloat over them), but they love violence too much to be able to stop. Null and Void will do what they can to try and kill the heroes!

Void is actually the scientist who invented much of the technology in the Icebox, under the guise of Dr. Bertram Luck. If heroes pick up on the similarities of the powers (or trick him into revealing the information during the fight), they can tag Void's “Inventor of Icebox Tech” Quality and use Determination in creative ways based on their experiences in previous chapters, as the basis for that technology was Null and Void's own inherent powers – tactics the heroes used to defeat that technology before may work again.

Null and Void have intentionally cut power to the area. This creates a “Darkness” Challenge that you can compel, or that players can tag for their own uses. Both Null and Void have night-vision goggles built into their masks to allow them to see, but creative heroes might be able to disable those during the fight. Also remember that, if the fight goes long and the players run low on Determination, you can compel one of the ticking clock Challenges (see p. 8) as an additional source of conflict.

### PRESS YOUR LUCK

Once Null and Void are both taken care of, the power flickers back to life. The Killer Gamemaster will appear on the screens again, and lament the loss of his “partners.” As the heroes make their way to the working elevator, he offers the heroes a deal – they can take the elevator to the next stop, but it's a slow elevator, and it will take time to get where they need to go. However, if they want to press their luck, they can give themselves more time before the compound explodes, or they might doom themselves to a more rapid death.

The keycard pass for the elevator retracts much like the last one, and is replaced with a slot machine lever and a call button. If they want to take the slow route, they can just push the call button, and the elevator will arrive and take them to the next floor. In game terms, the next challenge on the ticking clock list will be crossed off, as normal.

However, if any of the heroes pulls the lever, then the monitors show spinning slot machine wheels and the clock of how much time they have left. The player makes a straight d6-d6 roll. They can use Determination for a retcon to reroll, but they have to take whatever the new roll is. Heroes with Probability Control can retcon for a reroll and take the best roll (if it's "good luck" control) or the worst roll (if it's "bad luck" control). Of course, the Game Master can use the Killer Gamemaster's own Probability Control power to force even more rerolls, if desired.

### *PRESS YOUR LUCK RESULTS*

**+5:** The characters get the full hour – all of the ticking clock challenges are available to be compelled again.

**+3 or +4:** The characters get a little more time – restore the last ticking clock challenge crossed off, and don't cross off the next one after this chapter is over.

**-2 to +2:** The clock is paused for a moment – don't cross off the next ticking clock challenge.

**-3 or -4:** The clock speeds up – cross off the next two ticking clock challenges after this chapter is over (unless this would require you to cross off "It's Gonna Blow!", in which case treat this as a -5 roll).

**-5:** The clock jumps ahead – cross off all challenges except "It's Gonna Blow!"

## CHAPTER 4: DOUBLE DOWN

As the clock counts down towards oblivion, the heroes step out of the elevator to find... themselves!



### CRITICAL HIT SQUAD

The elevator opens onto the top floor, leaving just one set of checkpoints to navigate before the final elevator and freedom. As the doors open, however, they are confronted with another group of heroes that looks like robotic versions of themselves. The elevator slams shut, and the Killer Gamemaster appears on all of the screens. He says that all of the scanners they went through gave him a precise map of their own abilities, which he has had integrated into these robotic duplicates that he calls the “Critical Hit Squad.” He then tells the heroes that he has to be going, but not before ordering the Critical Hit Squad to attack.

The Critical Hit Squad attacks without speaking. If possible, they’ll try to attack heroes that would be more susceptible to their strengths – the fire duplicate would attack the ice hero or the mental duplicate would attack the hero with the lowest Willpower, and so on. If that’s not obvious or if you just want to save a little time, you can have each duplicate attack the hero they’re copying.

The fight should be tough, but the heroes have an additional advantage aside from their ability to spend Determination. If two heroes attack one duplicate at once, the robot can’t handle the amount of data and fights much less effectively – difficulties to attack the robot are at -2 while two heroes are attacking it simultaneously. Once this is discovered, players can tag the robots’ “Unable To Handle More Than One Attack” aspect to use their Determination in other ways.

This battle is also a good time to try and cross off some of those ticking clock Challenges. Again, the idea is to get the players down to “It’s Gonna Blow!” in order to keep them nervous about that last Challenge. If the fight’s going well, however, don’t worry too much about this – it’s only meant to be something to add flavor to a fight that might take a while to resolve, as well as give the players an additional flow of Determination to help them during the battle.

## MAKING THE CRITICAL HIT SQUAD

Since we don't know what your players' heroes are like, we can't give you stats for the Critical Hit Squad, but they're easy to make. Either before the game starts, or right when this chapter begins, take the player's character sheets and copy down their statistics. Then, use the Determination they get at the start of each issue and add it to one of the levels on the character sheet – the power or ability that the hero most uses. For example, if the Speedster is known for his Super-Speed, add his Determination of two to his Super-Speed level. If this would push a hero's level above 10, put the excess points into another power or ability. The goal is to make characters that are slightly more powerful than the heroes.

Keep any Qualities or Challenges that make sense for a robotic duplicate. All of the Critical Hit Squad have an additional Challenge as well: "Unable To Handle More Than One Attack."

## AFTER HIM!

Either after the fight with the Critical Hit Squad or during it (if one or more heroes break off from the fight to go after the Killer Gamemaster), the heroes go up the large elevator leading to the surface only to find the Killer Gamemaster climbing onto a board that looks like a deck of cards and holding a device in his hand. The board starts to fly away as the heroes approach – the heroes only have a single page to try and capture him.

The Killer Gamemaster will use his Probability Control to try and escape the heroes. This means it's pretty likely that the Killer Gamemaster will escape. However, he has the device that controls the self-destruct sequence in his hand, and he'll be willing to lose that to help facilitate his escape. This is something you can negotiate during Determination use ("He'll use his own Determination to avoid being shot down by your flame blasts, but just so it's not a complete loss, I'll let you shoot the self-destruct device out of his hand").

The device has a simple button that stops the countdown as soon as they press it. However, given the Killer Gamemaster's propensity for trick thus far, the heroes might not believe it's so simple. Let them agonize and examine it for a while before threatening to cross off the last Challenge.

If the heroes do manage to capture the Killer Gamemaster, don't cheapen the moment. They earned the victory fair and square, and they should have the satisfaction of seeing Killer Gamemaster put into jail... although perhaps not the same one he invented.



## CONCLUSION

If the heroes do manage to capture the Killer Gamemaster, SHARD agents come to collect him and take him off to jail. Lt. Mars apologizes for the inconvenience, and thanks the heroes for their help. If the Killer Gamemaster escapes, Mars is disappointed, but still appreciative of the heroes' efforts to uncover the conspiracy.

Either way, the future of the Icebox is uncertain. Obviously the jail can't be used as it is, but the experience of the team shows that there's a lot of potential in the core structure of the jail. Depending on whether you want to use the Icebox in future adventures (see "Further Adventures" below), this might be a lead-in to future issues, or just a footnote before wrapping up the adventure.

If the heroes are all defeated, or if the Icebox is destroyed, SHARD reinforcements arrive and chase off Null, Void, and the Killer Gamemaster. The soldiers storm the jail and pull the heroes free, getting them medical attention as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, SHARD and the heroes will be laughingstocks throughout the superhero community, which could lead to future tensions between the groups (as well as setting up the Killer Gamemaster for appearances in future issues).

## EXTENDING THE ADVENTURE

Jailbreak! is designed to be a straightforward adventure to challenge the players, but it's easy to add new elements in to make the story longer. Simply add new challenges, puzzles, and conflicts for the heroes to overcome between chapters one and four, and the story can last as long as needed. Generally, adding one fight and one puzzle per chapter (or floor of the jail) seems to be a good balance, but you can play with the formula to find just the right pacing for you. Look around on the Internet for puzzle websites and pages of riddles to give you ideas. For the fights, maybe SHARD put a few high-priority supervillains in the jail even before the heroes arrived, and the Killer Gamemaster let them escape to challenge the heroes. If you do add new chapters to the story, be sure to add another temporary challenge to the ticking clock, or be more conservative in marking them off as the heroes progress.

Part of the design of this story is to stretch the heroes in different ways, between giving them puzzles that doesn't rely on their powers and taking those powers away at various points of the story. As you extend the adventure, keep this in mind. Even if you decide to throw in a situation or two that allows the heroes to use their powers to the fullest, keep in mind that other parts of the story aren't designed like that, so you might want to stagger your extended chapters accordingly (perhaps putting them after chapter three so the heroes can have a breather before going into the big fight with their robotic duplicates).

## FURTHER ADVENTURES

**Killer Gamemaster:** Odds are pretty good that the Killer Gamemaster will escape, leaving plenty of opportunity for him to return in a future adventure. He may decide to come after the heroes on his own, act as a mercenary paid by another supervillain to dispatch the heroes (although now he has a personal incentive to take the job), or even position himself as an arch-villain leading a group of villains against the heroes for a lot of payback. Given his propensity for puzzles and games, he's a character that's best used sparingly, as his schemes tend to be much more elaborate than the kind of villain that breaks into a bank and steals some cash. On the other hand, because his schemes are so elaborate, that means he has even more opportunities to escape again, making him a great recurring villain for your series.

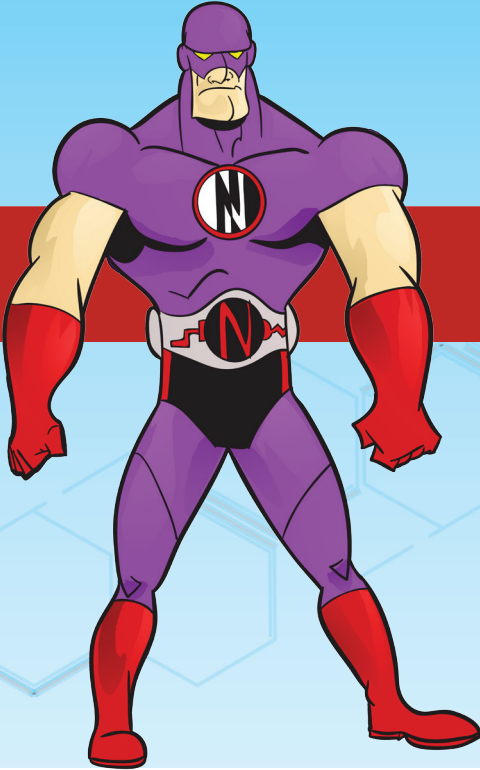
**Null and Void:** Killer Gamemaster's partners don't have to continue their relationship with him. They can easily be spun off into their own villainous pair to confront the heroes in future. Although Void is much smarter than Null, neither is a deep thinker, making them good henchmen for a bigger villain in future. Or, perhaps Null and Void can be rehabilitated, and turned into superheroes!

**SHARD:** No matter how the heroes handle their escape, SHARD will keep the heroes on their radar in future. While odds are good that SHARD will have a positive opinion of the heroes, even if the team fails badly, SHARD will still want to make sure to keep tabs on the team – if nothing else, they know a lot about SHARD now, and that makes them “parties of interest” to the organization. Mars and SHARD make great patrons for forming a superteam, or a good reason to introduce different kinds of stories from time to time. If SHARD is going to become a major player in your series, you should decide how much influence and resources the organization has, and the relationship they have with various law enforcement agencies and other superteams.

**The Icebox:** If you need an established super-jail in your series, you can have SHARD hastily refurbish the Killer Gamemaster’s designs and turn it into a fully-functional incarceration facility for your series. You can also go the opposite route and have SHARD completely abandon the facility, leaving it open to become a villain’s hideout in the future. Finally, you can walk the middle road and have the reconstruction of the Icebox take a while to complete. Perhaps SHARD needs the heroes to perform a few favors for them to help finish the construction of the new facility? Ultimately, the Icebox should stick around in your series for exactly as long as it’s entertaining, and not a panel longer.



# NULL



## QUALITIES

*MYSTERIOUS ASSASSIN*  
*LOYAL TO VOID*

ABILITIES										
PROWESS	6									
COORDINATION	5									
STRENGTH	5									
INTELLECT	4									
AWARENESS	5									
WILLPOWER	5									
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10										
HEIGHT: 6'5"    WEIGHT: 300										
FIRST APPEARANCE:										

POWERS										
POWER NULLIFICATION										
<i>(no feedback damage)</i>										
INVISIBILITY										
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10										

SPECIALTIES										
POWER: Power Nullification										
STEALTH										
										STAMINA
										7

## CHALLENGES

*INVISIBILITY ONLY WORKS WHEN ANOTHER  
POWER IS NULLIFIED*  
*DOESN'T SPEAK*  
*STOLEN INTELLECT*

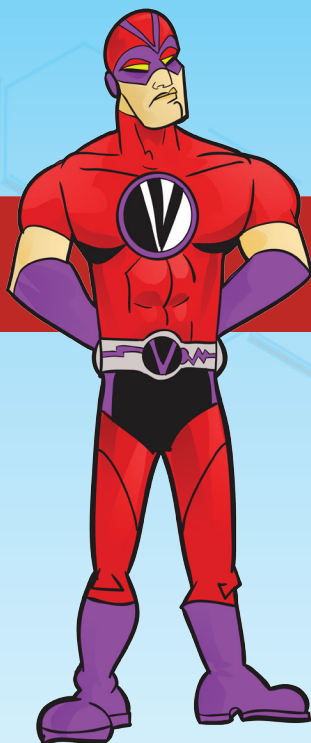
Vadim Nul was a smart kid. He was born and raised in Karachev, Russia, an ancient city that was still trying to recover from being devastated in World War II. When he was a teenager, he managed to slip aboard a shipping frigate and worked his way across the ocean. Once he landed, he educated himself, and managed to work his way into an internship with a renowned local scientist – Simon Voyt. Simon was in the process of testing a new form of computer processor that more closely resembled the workings of the human brain. Vadim volunteered to have his brain mapped as a test to develop the quantum circuitry of the processor.

Unfortunately, things went wrong. The equipment malfunctioned, and the equipment scanning Vadim's brain backfired, sending massive amounts of energy into his head. The energy triggered something in Vadim's body, and he became completely invisible. He was unconscious for days, completely missed by the medical team that came for Simon. It was only when a police investigator came back to the lab for a piece of evidence days later (after the invisibility had worn off) was Vadim found and rushed to emergency care.

The doctors did everything they could, but Vadim was brain-damaged. He was unable to speak, and much of his intelligence was lost in the accident. When he woke up, the only thing he knew was that Simon Voyt would take care of him. He broke out of the hospital and snuck back to the lab to find Simon Voyt – now calling himself "Void."

The pair tried a few small crimes, but were soon discovered by the Killer Gamemaster and put to work on his latest scheme. Vadim (now Null) didn't understand much of what the two men talked about, but he knew that he would do whatever Void asked of him.

# Void



## QUALITIES

*QUANTUM ENGINEER OF DESTRUCTION*  
*INVENTOR OF ICEBOX TECH*

ABILITIES										
PROWESS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
COORDINATION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
STRENGTH	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
INTELLECT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
AWARENESS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
WILLPOWER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10										
HEIGHT: 5'7"      WEIGHT: 215										
FIRST APPEARANCE:										

POWERS										
POWER THEFT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PHASING	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
WIZARDRY GADGETS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10										

SPECIALTIES										
SCIENCE: ENGINEERING	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SCIENCE: QUANTUM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PHYSICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
POWER: POWER THEFT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
										STAMINA
										7

## CHALLENGES

*LEADS FROM THE REAR*  
*TALKS TOO MUCH*  
*DOESN'T FEEL REAL*

Simon Voyt was a brilliant inventor and scientist specializing in practical applications of quantum theory. His dream was to create a new form of computer processor that worked like a human brain, instead of using an elaborate collection of on and off states. He found a bright exchange student named Vadim Nul to ask as his intern, and used Vadim's brain as a map for his processor.

However, something went wrong with his equipment. The brain scanner backfired, sending enough energy into Vadim's head that Simon thought he was vaporized, before the computer housing his experimental processor exploded and knocked him into the far wall. Simon awoke in the hospital, but found that all of the intravenous tubes and monitors attached to him just fell through his body. He walked right through the wall of the hospital and escaped. He decided that he had a new destiny in store for him.

He snuck into the police impound and started stealing back his laboratory equipment to understand what had happened to him. Although he didn't know how, he came to realize that he existed in a state between reality and non-existence. During his studies, Vadim showed up at the lab – brain-damaged, similarly empowered, and apparently loyal to Simon. Simon decided that since they no longer existed as the people they were before, they should take on new names – Null and Void.

Void organized a few small crimes with Null to pay for their new lives, but soon he was approached by the Killer Gamemaster with a proposal – help him build the most elaborate trap ever seen in the world. Void found the challenge intriguing, and worked with him to help invent much of the technology of the Icebox. But as Void invented and built this incredible new technology under the guise of Dr. Bertram Lucky, he also felt less and less real. Yet every time he snuck out and got into a fight with a superhero (or even another villain) as Void, he felt alive. By the time the trap was ready to be sprung, Void had his own agenda: to try and kill as many heroes as possible in order to complete his transformation into a completely real entity.



# KILLER GAMEDMASTER



## ABILITIES

**PROWESS**

**COORDINATION**

**STRENGTH**

**INTELLECT**

**AWARENESS**

**WILLPOWER**

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

HEIGHT: 5'5" WEIGHT: 130

FIRST APPEARANCE:

## POWERS

**PROBABILITY CONTROL**

**ILLUSION**

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

## SPECIALTIES

POWER: PROB. CONTROL

TACTICS

STAMINA

8

## QUALITIES

MASTER OF GAMES AND PUZZLES

"YOU'LL NEVER SOLVE MY PUZZLES!"

FASCINATED BY TECHNOLOGY

## CHALLENGES

CAN'T HELP BUT PROVIDE CLUES

TWISTED SENSE OF FAIR PLAY

FORCED TO WORK WITH OUTSIDERS

Magnus Hoyle was a mild-mannered man, acting as the puzzle editor at the Springfield Gazette. He was content with his life of studying and solving puzzles all day, until a supervillain ran into the Gazette building with a bomb, and the superhero that came to stop him ended up totally most of the building in the process. Somehow, though, he survived – the odds were a million to one, but he was able to walk away with a scratch.

It turned out that Hoyle was born different, and the trauma of the fight awoke the hidden potential inside of him – the ability to manipulate probability (including the probability that light would bounce and reflect in such a way as to create convincing illusions). Unfortunately, seeing his livelihood destroyed also caused his mind to snap, and he decided that superheroes were too stupid to continue as they were. They would have to be shown that brains were far superior to brawn before they paid for their ham-fisted antics. And thus was the Killer Gamedmaster born.

The Killer Gamedmaster isn't a scientist by trade, but he has a great appreciation for gadgets and technology, and so he spends much of his time tricking or convincing scientifically-gifted individuals to work on his elaborate schemes. He is quick to pick up on the application of highly experimental devices, but he just has no talent for inventing them himself. This forces him into a variety of bizarre and strenuous relationships as his plans grow and evolve.