

BEDLAM CITY



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games*



CAMPAIGN SETTING

BEDLAM CITY

By James Thomson

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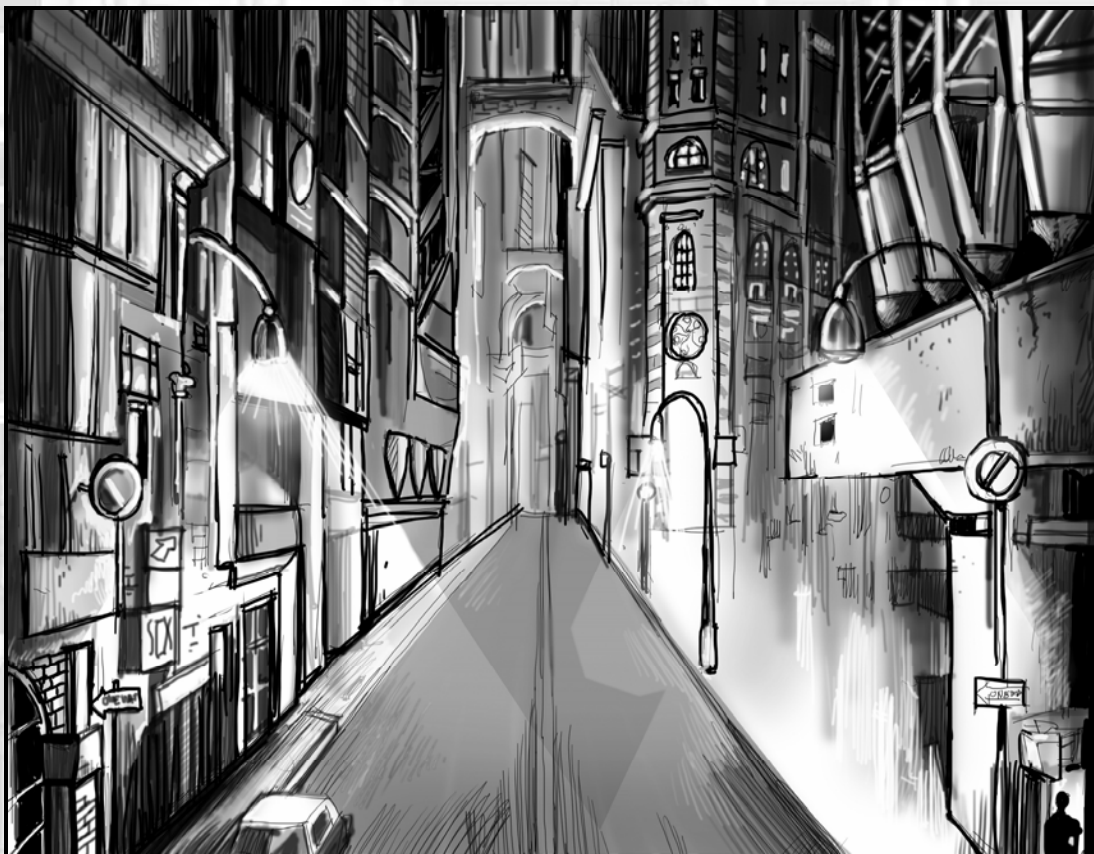
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INTRODUCTION: WELCOME TO BEDLAM



Thanks for Visiting Bedlam

Welcome to Bedlam—the meaner, poorer, smaller, town next door to your main campaign city. The Gary, Indiana to its Chicago, the Newark to its New York, the Compton to its Los Angeles. The town where your PCs can go to have grim urban adventures for a change of pace.

At least, that's the way we conceived of it. If you would rather make Bedlam the home city for your campaign, go right ahead, but we thought its dark and corrupt atmosphere might be better for an occasional visit than for a whole campaign. This grim and gritty stuff can get pretty depressing after a while (just ask a certain pointy-eared Dark Knight.) It's probably not a great setting for a traditional four-color campaign. It's not a very four-color kind of place.

What You Will Need to Use This Book

This is not a stand-alone game or an adventure module (although we do have a couple of adventures for you in the back.) It's a setting for Savage Worlds super-adventures, a fully-fleshed-out city that you can drop right into your campaign with NPCs and neighborhoods and plot hooks all ready to go. You are going to need a copy of the Savage Worlds core rulebook (the Explorer's Edition would work best), the Supers Companion (or the superb plot-point campaign "Necessary Evil") and a bunch of willing players. And that's about it, apart from the dice and snacks. While we've imported some NPCs from other Plain Brown Wrapper Games' products (The Bad Guys, More Bad Guys, Another 13 Shades of Darkness) you won't need any of those books to use this one.

BEDLAM BASICS

Bedlam is a medium-sized city, probably located either on the East Coast or in the Upper Midwest, somewhere near a much bigger metropolis (unless the GM decides otherwise.) It has a waterfront, a harbor and a shipping terminal, but whether its harbor opens onto an estuary or a lake we're leaving up to the GM.

Formerly an industrial town, Bedlam's factories have largely closed. For a while everyone hoped that the new shipping terminal on Rook Island would bring prosperity back to the city. Instead it brought vast amounts of pollution and a resurgence in organized crime. Then, through corruption and mismanagement, the shipping terminal began to lose its clients. Bedlam gained a reputation as a place where shakedowns were common and everybody wanted a bribe, so most of the big ships stopped coming here.

The municipal government has fallen into default on its loans. To keep the city's services functioning a lot of them have been sold off to private contractors who are now accountable to no one and provide exactly the kind of service you'd expect.

It's the kind of town where a visit to the Department of Transportation won't get a pothole fixed, but a visit to the local Mafiosi probably will. Bedlam's cops are famously crooked and trigger-happy—more on them below. No major world-class superheroes make their home here (unless the GM decides otherwise) but there might be a vigilante or two lurking in the shadows.

HOW BIG IS BEDLAM?

Because we don't know how big your main campaign city is, we won't set a specific population figure for Bedlam. It's somewhere between 120,000 and 500,000. Not a huge city, but a big enough to have a

skyline, a waterfront and some big city problems. The stats we have included should work for any city in that size range. If you want to make it significantly bigger, add some more wards, some extra police and fire stations, and increase the size of its Municipal Council. If it's smaller, reduce them. You can still use the same map either way—just assume there are either more or less little side streets in between the big main ones.

WHERE IS BEDLAM?

We've carefully avoided including any details that fix the location of Bedlam in any one state. New Jersey and Pennsylvania would make a lot of sense. So would Michigan or Wisconsin. You could locate it California or the Pacific Northwest, but that would take more fudging and require more changes. It would be even harder to locate Bedlam in the Southeast or Texas without changing a lot of the details. It's meant to feel like an East Coast or a Rust Belt town.

But of course you don't even need to specify a part of the country. Bedlam is really located in the comic book territory of Gothic Urban Wasteland: Night.

WHICH WAY IS UP?

One of the things we haven't specified is where exactly Bedlam is in relation to the larger metropolis. It could be in any direction and anywhere up to about a hundred miles away, to make it simpler for you to integrate. For this reason, we haven't marked the directions on the Bedlam map. While the top of the page could well be north, it doesn't have to be. Use whichever set of cardinal directions makes the most sense in terms of where your main campaign city lies.

BEDLAM'S ECONOMY: HOW BAD IS IT?

Let's face it—not *everyone* in Bedlam can be a criminal or unemployed. Not everyone can be on public aid. Just how bad is Bedlam's economic crisis and where do the people with jobs get them? Here are the statistics.

Unemployment in Bedlam is at a totally shocking 12%. That's about the same as Flint, Michigan or Gary, Indiana and it's nearly three times the national average. The Median income is \$27,200 for individuals (\$35,000 for men, \$24,400 for women) and \$32,205 for households. The per-capita income is \$14,383. More than a quarter of the population (25.8%) lives below the poverty line. This puts it firmly in the worst twenty cities in America in terms of poverty and unemployment. In most years, it makes the bottom ten or even the bottom five.

The largest employers in Bedlam are the Rook Island Shipping Terminal, the Greely Point Docks, the Airport (which is actually expanding its employment opportunities), the Greely toy factory, the Snacktastic candy company and the host of smaller businesses associated with the harbor, docks and airport (longshoremens, warehousing, service and maintenance for airport vehicles, etc.)

Except for the Greely Point docks, the airport and the businesses associated with it, all of these sources of employment are in decline and have experienced multiple rounds of layoffs in recent years.

CRIME IN BEDLAM: HOW BAD IS IT?

Bedlam is not a post-apocalyptic ruin (where nobody has a real job and everyone is a criminal.) At least not yet. It's nowhere near as bad as, say, Baghdad. The crime rate is one incident per 100 people, and in some neighborhoods (like the Country Club) it rises to an astonishing 1 per 20 residents.

In an average week you can expect there to be about 240 felony offenses in Bedlam, of which 140 will be violent crimes and 100 will be crimes against property. Add to this 870 misdemeanors (thefts, car thefts, vandalism, etc) and you have a city that is by American standards positively overrun with crime. But these are no worse than the conditions that really exist in some smaller US cities right now. There are cities in other countries that have far more serious problems with crime and poverty (Lagos and Calcutta for example.)

As bad as things are in Bedlam, more than half the population has a job, not all the local industries have entirely collapsed and some areas (Greely Point and the Meadows) are actually experiencing economic growth.

But of course how bad Bedlam is depends most of all on how bad the GM wants it to be. If you picked up this book looking for a post-apocalyptic ruin, then feel free to shut down Rook Island, cripple Greely Point, put everyone out of work, and dial the crime rate up to something insane like 1 per 10. Then buckle on your body armor and load up some extra magazines.

CITY OF NOW

Bedlam never really had a nickname, so in the 1990s the Redevelopment Commission spent a lot of money trying to give it one. At first they wanted to use "The Steel City," despite the fact that Bedlam's steel mills were always a minor part of its economy. Huge numbers of promotional buttons, banners, fliers and refrigerator magnets were produced. A public statue was commissioned and a giant gala celebration scheduled to launch the new name, along with a series of television commercials featuring a lovable mascot (a dog in a hardhat named "Steel Hound".)

Alas, it turned out the city of Gary, Indiana already had the rights to the name "The Steel City" and they threatened to sue. So the campaign had to be scrapped before it was ever launched.

Without much development money left, the Commission went to a lower-end publicity firm, which devised the slogan "The City of Now." The Commission launched a considerably scaled-back promotional roll-out, which didn't get the kind of attention they hoped.

The logo looks old and dated, no one uses the motto if they can help it, but until they get the funds to come up with something better, Bedlam remains the City of Now. Although some people really have started calling it "the Steel City" which, it's generally agreed, is a much cooler nickname.

WHY ARE THERE SO FEW SUPERHEROES?

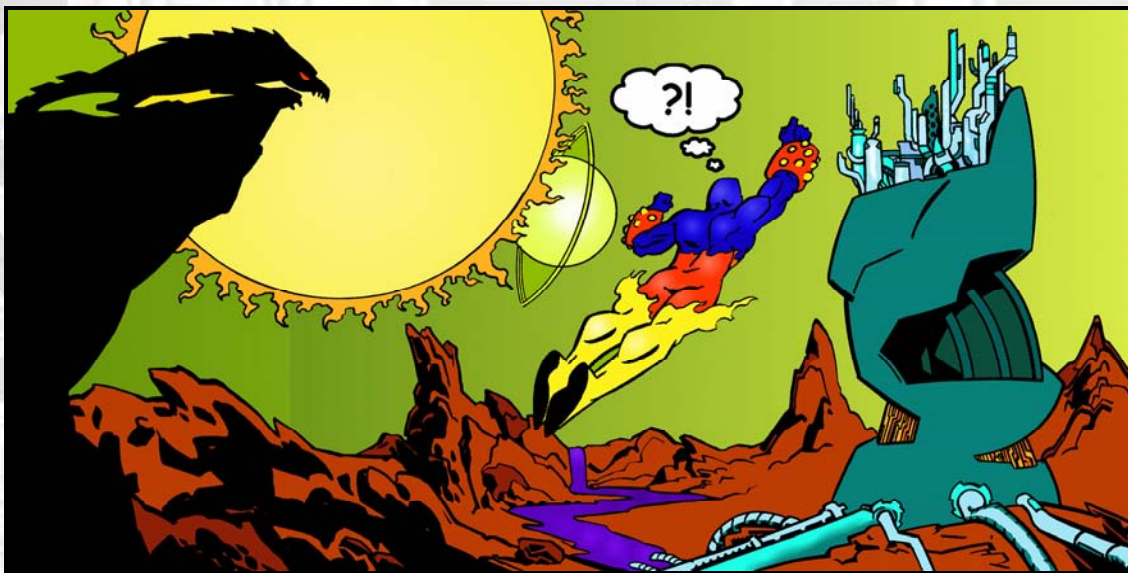
Because we want to give your PCs a chance to shine. The official rationale is that Bedlam is a smaller city and statistically speaking it doesn't have enough of a population to have more than a handful of superheroes and vigilantes looking after it. But in fact, it's because we want to put your PCs at the center of the campaign, where they should be. When the city is in danger, there will be no one else to save it.

Nocturne is too hard to get in touch with and the other two vigilantes care only about their individual neighborhoods. If the PCs don't try to clean up Bedlam, who will? Not the Hammer of Justice or the Midnight Shadow—they're part of the problem. And not Nocturne, either, since he's so focused on bigger, national issues and doesn't feel much connection to his adopted city. It's all in the hands of the Player Characters. The decisions they make, their mistakes, their victories and their defeats are going to matter.

This also accounts for the relative scarcity of super-villains in this book. It's true that a town this size probably wouldn't have a whole massive horde of superhuman criminals living in it, but we also wanted to throw the GM's own villains into sharper relief by giving them less competition. There are plenty of supervillains listed at the end of this book but most of them are either hired guns that organized crime can bring into Bedlam as needed, or else menaces from out of town who might show up and go on a rampage. There are relatively few home-grown super-criminals to clutter the stage and get in the way of whatever villains the GM dreams up as antagonists for our heroes.

Of course, it's possible that the GM might not have the time or the inclination to devise their own villains, in which case you can either have new ones roll into town on a regular basis (this happens in the comics all the time) or have one or more villain decide to settle down in Bedlam and make it their home.

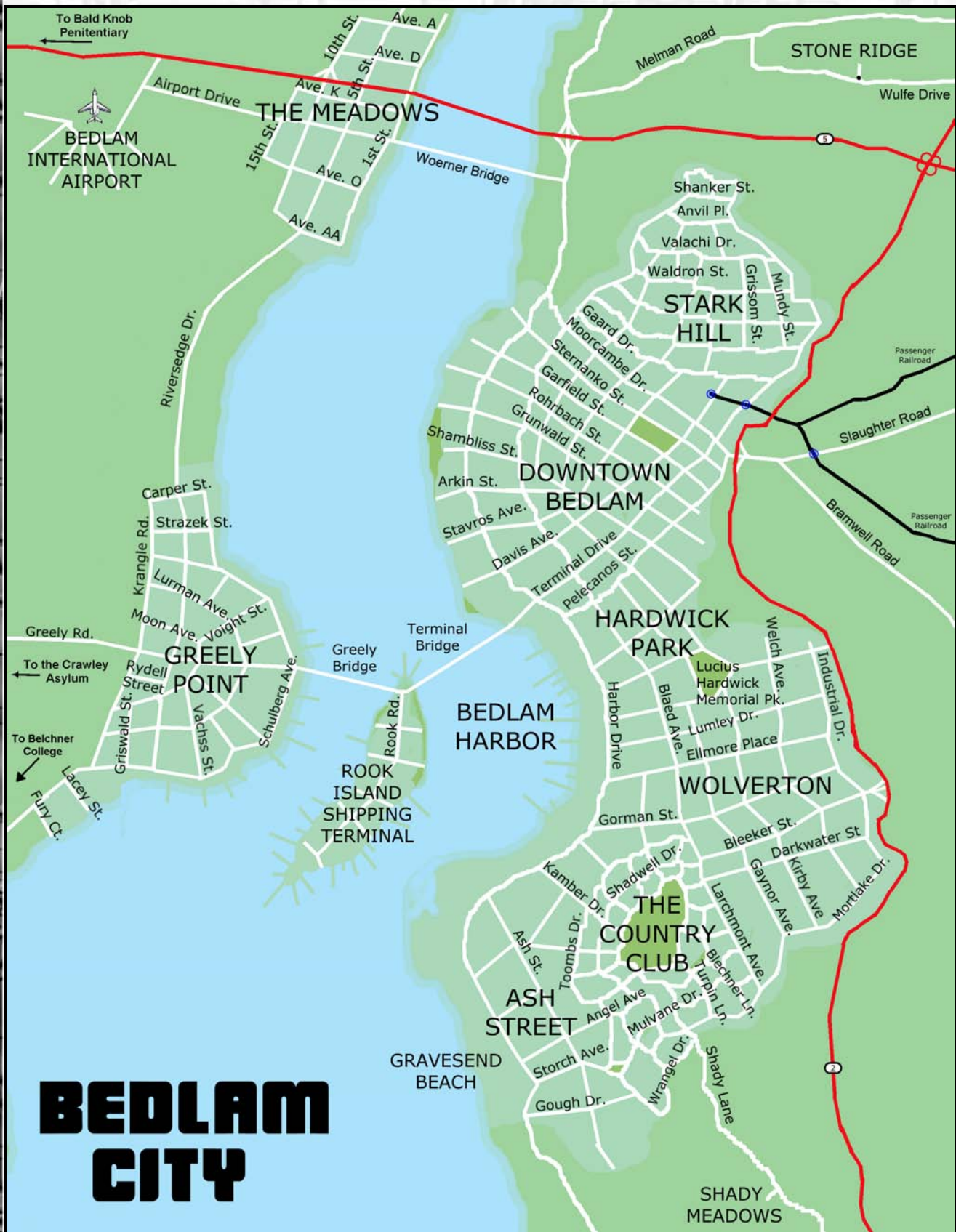
LOST LANDS AND OTHER WORLDS



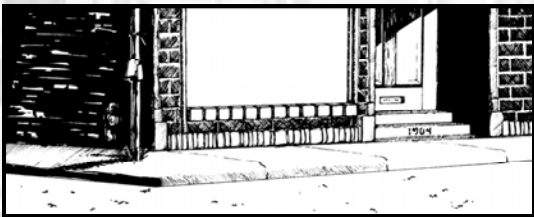
Enclaves of dinosaurs hidden at the Earth's poles, secret fairy tale kingdoms in the alps, alien civilizations sprawling across the stars—I'm afraid we don't have any. As I mentioned back in the introduction, we want Bedlam to fit as smoothly into your campaign as possible, without distorting its edges. For that reason, we haven't included anything at all about the Secret History of the World, the True Nature of the Universe or anything else that's going to contradict your campaign's back-story. We're sure you already have an alien Star Empire and an undersea kingdom or two. We don't want

our view of Atlantis or the galaxy's political balance to interfere with yours.

For this reason, we've tried really hard not to include any NPCs with origins or back-stories that might conflict with your broader campaign history. There are no aliens, no Princes of Lost Atlantis, no gods—not even any exiles from secret science cities full of talking gorillas. (though I must admit I was gravely tempted by that last one.) Bedlam is really intended as an adjunct to your campaign world, not as a universe in its own right. It's frankly a challenge to try to write it this way, but I think it's worth the extra effort.



NEIGHBORHOODS OF BEDLAM



Here's a brief guide to the city's individual neighborhoods, including the bedroom community of Stone Ridge, and the unincorporated area outside the city limits that everyone informally calls "The Meadows."

The Country Club

Bedlam's wealthiest citizens invested a lot of money into creating a first rate golfing resort and country club, on some wooded hills overlooking the harbor. They had a good view of Rook Island and the charming old Rook Island Naval Station.

The club was nearly ready to open when the Navy sold Rook Island, which shortly became a freight terminal. Giant cranes and derricks worked day and night rebuilding the island, ripping up the old 19th century buildings and replacing its trees with a sea of concrete. The Country Club was already getting unpopular by the time the first of the giant ocean-going container ships arrived. Soon you could hear the deafening blasts of their horns at any hour of the day or night, and the huge old trees around the country club began to die from the clouds of reeking exhaust.

Today the country club stands empty, its putting greens gray and dead, its trees bare skeletons clutching at the sky. Ironically enough, the shipping terminal which killed the club is now dying, too.

The name "The Country Club" has come to apply to the surrounding neighborhood, where fine old homes have been divided and subdivided into apartments for people who can't afford to live anywhere else. The meandering streets stink of exhaust and the police venture here only in groups. A brisk trade in narcotics

goes on in the Country Club itself, but only the inexpensive kind. Even dealers and junkies leave this neighborhood as soon as they can afford anything else. It's the roughest place in Bedlam, and yet only the lowest levels of organized crime operate here. The mob doesn't want to dirty itself with the Country Club, just as the country club wouldn't have admitted them.

Ash Street

Known informally for the largest street that runs through it, Ash Street is a commercial district near the harbor, between Gravesend Beach and the smog-poisoned heights of the Country Club. Ash Street was dying even before the new shipping terminal opened and choked it with diesel exhaust. It's not as polluted as the Country Club, because it's at the base of the hill rather than up on top. Still, the failure of the beach to attract business and the overall economic decline has shuttered most of the stores on Ash Street. There are a few shabby resale and thrift shops, a storefront church or two but for the most part Ash Street is utterly desolate. Even criminals avoid this place, for the most part, since no one here has anything worth stealing. The low level of street crime and abundance of abandoned buildings have made Ash Street Bedlam's Skid Row.

Most of the buildings along Ash Street itself are two-story shop fronts, in a style best described as "ugly." Everything here seems to be made out of brown brick, smudged with smoke from the diesel fumes. It smells of exhaust, like most of the neighborhoods near the shipping terminal. The horns from the giant ships are very loud here, and can be heard at all hours of the night (although not quite so much, now that Bedlam's port is failing.) Trash collection isn't very good, and there are a lot of papers and old plastic bags blowing through the desolate streets. No aluminum cans, though. Collecting discarded cans is the

only form of ready employment this neighborhood offers.

Gravesend Beach

Bedlam never did have much of a beach. The sand at Gravesend is cold and hard and slopes down too sharply into the water, creating vicious undertows. In recent years it has eroded a great deal, leaving what remains of the beach narrow and uncomfortably small. It's a truly excellent place to go if you would like to find cigarette butts and broken beer bottles under your beach blanket.

The city's Department of Public Works used to post lifeguards here all summer. Now they post signs that say "Swim at Your Own Risk" instead, since that's a lot cheaper.

Most sections of the beach are accessible directly from the street, and yet not many people visit. Not because of the trash or the cold and dangerous water, but because of the shipping terminal across the harbor. The giant container ships that dock there make so much noise and release so much diesel exhaust that if one is pulling into port, a day at the beach can become unbearable.

Now that less ships come to Bedlam it's not quite so bad, but people have yet to rediscover the dubious pleasures of Gravesend Beach.

Wolverton

This is the neighborhood that most people think of when they think of Bedlam. Impoverished, dangerous, predominantly African-American, Wolverton is wracked with street crime and has a serious problem with drug-dealing gangs. It sits between the mean streets of Hardwick Park and the meaner streets of the Country Club. The ruined factories of Industrial Drive hem Wolverton in on the East.

The people who live here aren't as badly off as the folks in the Country Club. Property values are low, but that means that most residents own their own homes. Wolverton consists of one-story houses on small lots, with occasional commercial strips here and there—most of them no more than one street wide. There are few apartment

buildings, and the ones that do exist tend to be in very bad repair.

There is a real shortage of locally owned businesses here and there are no supermarkets or department stores at all. People buy food from little corner markets and convenience stores, which offer high prices and not much variety.

The police and other emergency services are notoriously slow in this neighborhood. Emergency response time is double what it would be in Stark Hill. In the winter, their streets always seem to get plowed last (but only because the Country Club's streets never seem to get plowed at all.)

Hardwick Park



Within sight of the towers of Downtown you can find the troubled neighborhood called Hardwick Park. Mostly small drab apartment buildings and little shopfronts, it clusters around Lucius Hardwick Memorial Park, Bedlam's largest and most dangerous public space.

Formerly an Italian and Polish neighborhood, it has slowly become the home of most of Bedlam's Hispanic residents. There are just a few bitter holdouts from the old neighborhood here and there, yearning angrily for the days when the Mafia ran Hardwick Park.

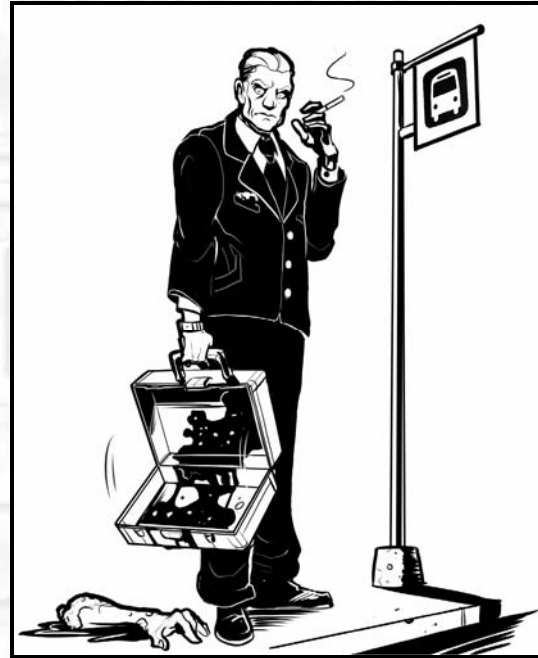
Most of the people who live here came from El Salvador, but some are from Puerto Rico, Honduras and Mexico. It's a tight-knit community, for the most part, but it has a serious gang problem.

Smaller than Wolverton, in some ways it's a better place to live and in other ways it's worse. More of its businesses are still functioning, and almost all of them are locally owned. There are lots of little streetcorner bodegas and resale shops here, and numerous pupusa stands. Not many of the storefronts are boarded up and empty. But it has other problems. Almost everyone here rents their home, and a few rich Anglo landlords from Stone Ridge own most of the neighborhood. They have grown even richer by cutting corners and letting their buildings fall apart. Since many of the folks who live here are either illegal aliens or don't trust the American legal system or both, complaints are rare no matter how bad conditions get.

For the most part the people in Hardwick Park work hard and try to stay out of trouble, but organized crime has gained a deep foothold in the neighborhood.

A Honduran gang called the Mara has reportedly grown very strong here, pushing out all the other street toughs and establishing a firm hold on the local drug trade. They say the Mara is no simple youth gang, but a national network with chapters all over the Western Hemisphere. They are said to practice weird and bloody occult rites that resemble a kind of tainted Santeria and to execute their rivals in human sacrifices. No one knows if any of this is true (a Streetwise roll at a -4 reveals that it's half true—the Mara do have other chapters scattered around the country in a kind of loose federation and they do like to scare people by claiming to practice the occult.)

Stark Hill



Once Bedlam's toughest neighborhood, Stark Hill has now long since been surpassed by places like Wolverton and Hardwick Park. A mixed Irish, Italian and Polish community, it sprawls over the hills behind downtown, a maze of twisting narrow streets where it's hard to find your way around unless you've lived here all your life. Someone keeps taking down the street signs, which makes it even harder.

Stark Hill is full of cheap bungalows, ancient rowhouses, pizza joints and corner bars. A working-class place, it has always been the kind of drab, dreary neighborhood that ambitious kids try to escape. Now that hard times have come to Bedlam, it's gotten worse. Most of Stark Hill's residents are over fifty. The few young people who stay in town could wind up as dock workers or bartenders or running errands for the Mafia. There aren't a lot of other options. An atmosphere of shabby decay hangs over the whole neighborhood, many of the shops have closed. Yet there is almost no street crime here, no muggings or burglaries or stick-ups. For this is the stronghold of the

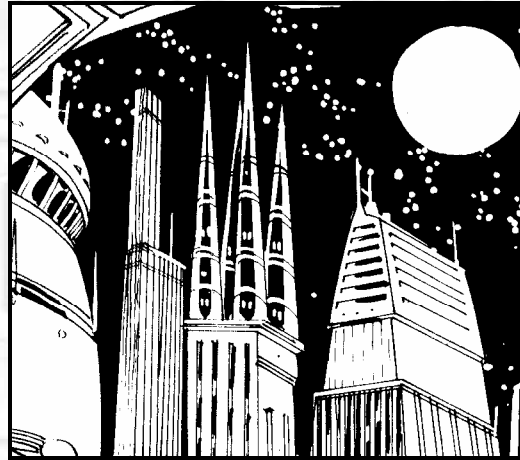
Bedlam Mafia. Many eyes watch the street. Outsiders are instantly noticed and quickly made to feel unwelcome. Local residents know better than to report things to the cops, who in any case are likely to owe more loyalty to the Scarpia family than to the Municipal Council. Their grip may be weakening elsewhere, but in Stark Hill the Mafia still controls absolutely everything.

It used to be that Stark Hill was divided into an Irish and a smaller Italian neighborhood, separated by an invisible line. But once Hardwick Park became a Hispanic neighborhood, most of its Polish and Italian residents fled to Stark Hill, and jumbled things up considerably. Now the only important consideration for being accepted in Stark Hill is being white. Black and Hispanic families have tried to move into the neighborhood more than once, but they always get driven out. In fact, the reason the Mob has always held such a powerful clutch on Stark Hill is that they keep non-whites out of the neighborhood, so people regard them as the lesser of two evils. There is a lot of casual prejudice here—and some of it isn't so casual. A black person who gets lost and wanders into Stark Hill may find themselves in serious danger.

"Dapper Donny" Scarpia, Bedlam's most powerful Mafiosi, still lives in Stark Hill. Unlike a lot of Mob overlords he has never felt the urge to move to the suburbs. Supposedly he hangs out with the same buddies at the same arcade (it doesn't really have a name—the sign above the door just says "Arcade") playing the same pinball games as he did when he was a teenaged streetcorner thug. Some people wonder why he clings to this dying world, but in fact it gives him a huge advantage over his competitors, the Gorganzua family.

Dapper Donny knows everything that happens on his streets, stays intimately in touch with his supporters and so gets much more loyalty out of them. People serve him out of fear, but a lot of them love him too. And love, as he says, is a commodity you can't buy, steal, or beat out of anybody.

Downtown Bedlam



Bedlam has an impressive skyline for a town its size. It has more than ten skyscrapers over thirty stories high, and a whole cluster of lesser towers in the 20-30 story range. If you saw Bedlam from a distance, at night, you would have no idea that it was in so much trouble. At least until you looked a little closer, and saw the amputated stump of the Gorman Tower looming unlit over downtown.

Bedlam built most of its skyscrapers early, back in the first part of the twentieth century. A redevelopment push in the 1980s added some strange looking postmodern buildings to its art-nouveau skyline. Presently its architecture is a peculiar mix of crumbling gothic stone facades and cold, weird asymmetrical steel and glass designs. Either one would be charming and strange by itself. The combination looks odd and ugly.

At street level downtown is a mess. Bedlam suffered through some bad riots in the late 1960s and parts of the central city still haven't recovered all these years later. There were massive redevelopment efforts in the 80s and 90s, but they failed midway through. Many of the older buildings are in poor repair, their baroque facades stained and crumbling. There aren't enough renters for all the office space, so large parts of the bigger buildings sit vacant. Then there is the Gorman Tower. This ugly monstrosity was only half-built before they abandoned

it, yet at forty stories high it is still the tallest building in Bedlam. For years it has marred the downtown skyline, jagged and incomplete. The city doesn't have the funds to demolish it and there is no way to do bring it down safely in any case. So it hulks there, deserted except for the rats and derelicts.

Rook Island Shipping Terminal

The heart of what remains of Bedlam's economy, freighters from around the world dock at the Rook Island Terminal, taking advantage of Bedlam's low taxes and loose safety regulations. Once freight is unloaded at Rook Island, it travels to the mainland either on trucks, across the Terminal and Greely Bridges, or by boat, into Bedlam Harbor or the smaller dock facility at Greely Point.

Ten years ago Rook Island was a quiet, wooded place. An old 19th century naval station stood here, though the Navy didn't use it for much anymore. It was a local tourist attraction, with its huge trees and picturesque old brick buildings.

Then the Navy ceased operations on the island altogether, and turned it over to the Bedlam City Government. The Municipal Council arranged to bring a new shipping terminal to the island and with it new prosperity for Bedlam. The deal was approved behind closed doors, the public was shut out and so the Rook Island Shipping Terminal got built without a lot of oversight or controls. Almost all the island's trees were cut down and all but one of its beautiful old buildings were bulldozed. There are still a few tiny strips of trees and marsh up at the North end of the island, but they're dying. Most of Rook Island is a concrete maze of giant cranes, derricks and warehouse facilities. Even the largest cargo ships can dock here, which ironically has done the city more economic harm than good.

Rook Island is much too close to a populated shore for giant freighters to dock there safely. These huge vessels give off clouds of pollution that have made whole neighborhoods undesirable places to live. Their thunderous horns can be heard at any time of the day or night, deafeningly loud.

A lot of people have moved away and a lot of local businesses have closed, while a handful of investors have grown very rich. The shipping terminal has also enriched the Mafia, which is deeply involved in every aspect of the facility, and strengthened their grip on the city. Even Bedlam's wealthy families have suffered (see the section on "The Country Club".) The pollution from the big ships isn't as bad as it used to be, now that the Terminal is failing.

Tours of the island are not regularly available to the public. However, there is a small (and rather shabby) Naval Museum located at the north end of the island, in the last of the Naval Station's old brick buildings. Open from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, it receives few visitors.

Bedlam Harbor



After the Rook Island Shipping Terminal opened, Bedlam Harbor flourished for a while. The Scarpia crime family flourished with it. They already had their claws deep in the harbor and controlled what little trade came through it. When Rook Island opened for business, they had a sudden windfall. Then they blew it. Greedy and disorganized, the Scarpias stole too much, took too big a cut, roughed up people unnecessarily and gave Bedlam a bad reputation among shipping companies and freighter captains alike.

They have now officially killed the goose that laid the golden egg. Few ships come to Rook Island anymore, and the warehouses at Bedlam Harbor sit half empty most of the time. The smaller facility across the river at Greely Point gets most of the

trade that still comes through Rook Island, which causes the Scarpas no end of exasperation, since it's controlled by Bedlam's other mafia family, the Gorganzuas.

Bedlam Harbor is a scary place at night. The streets are deserted, there is nowhere to eat or have a cup of coffee, the dead warehouses loom on either side of the darkened street, unlit and silent.

Greely Point

The smaller port across the river from Bedlam Harbor, when the local Mafiosi were dividing up turf, Greely Point was the booby prize. The big and powerful Scarpia family took Bedlam Harbor and threw Greely Point to the smaller, weaker Gorganzuas. But because the Gorganzuas were less organized and less thorough than the Scarpas, they weren't able to lock Greely Point down as tightly as the Scarpas controlled Bedlam Harbor. In the long run this worked to their advantage. Freighter captains didn't experience as many shakedowns at Greely Point and the harbor officials weren't as crooked, so they came to prefer it to Bedlam Harbor or Rook Island. Both ports are in a state of decay, but Bedlam Harbor has decayed a lot faster and worse. There is still money to be made at Greely Point—a little of it anyway.

The commercial and warehousing district behind the docks goes up a steep hill. People joke that you need four-wheel drive here when it snows.

Most of the construction on this side of the river is shabbier and more recent than it is in Bedlam proper. There are no skyscrapers. Everything looks tall and narrow, hunched together on the hill as if scared of falling off.

There aren't a lot of residential neighborhoods in Greely Point, but some people do live here. Up on top of the hill (past Moon Avenue) there are some big old 19th century homes, mostly subdivided onto apartments. And over on the south slope of the hill is one of Bedlam's last wealthy neighborhoods, where huge oaks and elms tower over fine old houses around Griswold Street. Most of the remaining residents are

elderly and some of their beautiful old houses are starting to fall into disrepair.

The hill is steeper on the north slope, and just where it's at its steepest point, between Lurman and Moon, is Bedlam's oldest Italian neighborhood. It's a small place, just a few blocks wide, where tall, narrow row-houses pile up the steep hillside, seemingly on top of one another. This is the stronghold of the Gorganzua crime family. It isn't as scary and desperate looking as Stark Hill, but you can see that it's old and poor. Just as in Stark Hill, there is almost no street crime in this part of Greely Point and outsiders don't feel welcome here. Sailors from the ships docked at Rook Island know better than to walk into any of the little neighborhood bars around Lurman Avenue.

The Meadows

An unincorporated zone out near the airport, the Meadows is the only one of Bedlam's neighborhoods that seems to be growing, rather than shrinking. The airport's relative success has spawned a host of other businesses—warehouses, machine shops, building suppliers and so forth, and this has in turn brought in workers, who need restaurants to eat at, gas stations to fill up their cars and places to live. Poorly zoned and loosely controlled, the whole area has sprung up at random, outside the city's jurisdiction.

Not very heavily built-up, the Meadows looks like sprawl, which it is—all strip malls and gas stations with lots of empty space in between. Almost no buildings here are more than two stories tall. All the streets are named for letters or numbers. There is a vague plan to name them after presidents or famous people at some point, but no one has gotten around to it yet.

For the most part this is still a commercial district. Only a few actual residents have moved in, most of them in apartments above storefronts. But as the population of the Meadows grows, so will its problems. Local police services are provided by the county sheriff's office—the Bedlam police occasionally come over here, but not often. Nor does the overworked Bedlam

Fire Department make a priority out of calls from the Meadows. It is unclear at the moment where children from the Meadows are supposed to go to school.

The Meadows also falls into a gray area in terms of its relations with organized crime. It's a boomtown with a slow police response time, which makes it a prime target for Bedlam's Mafia families. But it didn't exist when they last drew up the boundaries of their turf, so it doesn't officially belong to either of them. The Gorganzua family got a head start here, but the Scarpias are rapidly moving in. This causes confusion and resentment on the part of local business owners—people don't know who to pay their protection money to. So far the two families have avoided directly confronting each other, but it's unclear how long this can last.

Stone Ridge

There are still rich people in Bedlam—or at least right outside of it. The wealthy gated community of Stone Ridge offers exclusive living for what remains of the city's moneyed class. It's beyond the jurisdiction of the city government, so they have been able to hire their own utility contractors, their own garbage collection service and of course their own private security firm.

Surrounded by an eight-foot stone wall with broken glass covering the upper two feet, guarded by hulking armed guards night and day, Stone Ridge is effectively its own separate community—run at a profit. Stone Ridge has its own tennis club, shopping plaza and detention center. You could grow up there without ever having to leave it at all.

Instead of taxes, everyone pays

homeowner fees. Instead of local ordinances, it has rules, enforced rigidly by the homeowner's association. No deviation from their standards of clean, tidy lawns and blandly right-wing politics are allowed. The wrong political bumper sticker earns you a fine. Wearing the wrong kind of clothes earns you a bigger one. If you have a problem with the way your trash gets picked up or a security guard who intimidated your spouse for no reason, you don't have anyone to complain to but the Association, and whether your complaint gets heard depends on how well-connected you are.

Stone Ridge has roughly three types of houses. Huge and ugly, gigantic and ugly and enormous and ugly. Officially there are six different "styles" of house available, but they all look more or less the same.

There are no sidewalks—here people get in their cars to drive to the community shopping center a block away. Built quickly and cheaply, the immense houses are prone to electrical faults and a host of other problems. Most of the residents came from the neighborhood around Bedlam's country club (see "the Country Club") and didn't have much time to be choosy.

Many of Bedlam's wealthiest and most prominent citizens live here, including Channel 13's anchorman, Obediah Brick and (it is rumored) "Young Junior" Gorganzua, head of the Gorganzua crime family. No one ever sees Young Junior around the neighborhood, but then again, no one has a clear idea of what he looks like, either.

IMPORTANT LOCATIONS IN BEDLAM

Here is a brief and far from comprehensive list of locations in Bedlam. We hope it's detailed enough to give your PCs a feel for the city, but loose enough to give you plenty of room to add your own locales.

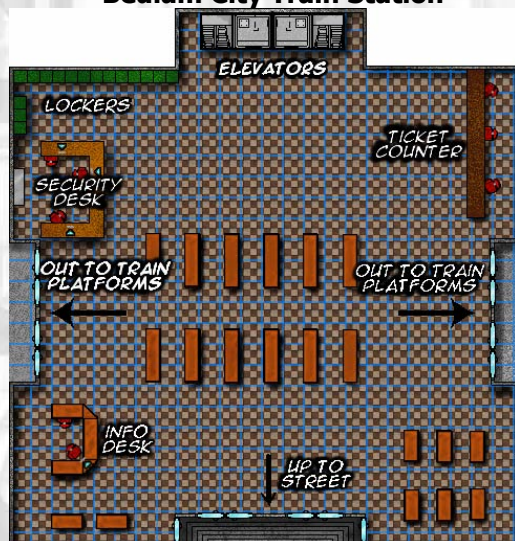
City Hall

Bedlam City Hall is presently closed for renovations, and has been for five years. Cost overruns and a corruption scandal halted the refurbishment and then the city's ongoing fiscal crisis kept them from starting construction up again. The city fathers have spent a lot of time reassuring the public that City Hall will reopen soon, better than ever. But then, for the last year or so, they have gradually stopped talking about it.

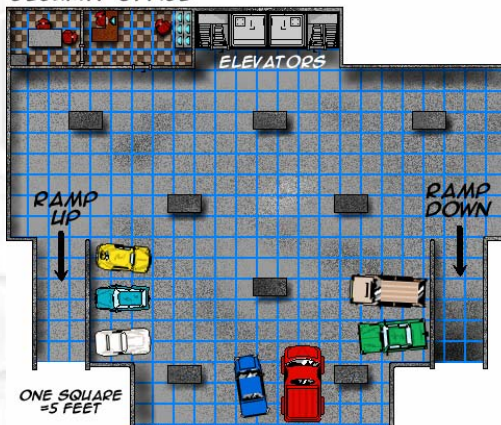
Home to rats, winos and the occasional temporary crack den, the huge, decaying old building with its classical façade was recently featured on the news, when it was discovered that one wing had become infested by venomous snakes.

When they have to hold private meetings, the City Council either use one of the conference rooms at the County Courthouse, or gather in one of their private residences. They tend to hold public meetings in school auditoriums.

Bedlam City Train Station



SECURITY OFFICE



BEDLAM TRAIN STATION PARKING GARAGE

The trains may not run on time in Bedlam, but they do still run. Unlike a lot of medium-sized American cities, Bedlam still has a functioning passenger train station. Perhaps "functioning" is too kind a term.

Built back in the city's glory days at the turn of the twentieth century, Bedlam Station is a graffiti-scarred hulk of a building where the intercom never works right, the floors are never clean, the employees are notoriously surly and drugs and other illegal commodities can be purchased in the restrooms.

Big for a city this size, the station building itself is magnificent, with a high arched ceiling, crumbling Art Nouveau statues and a giant skylight in the middle of the main hall. A little sun still dimly filters through the layers of grime on the skylight.

Bedlam Bus Terminal

Serving both Trailways and Greyhound, the Bedlam Terminal is where folks come when they can't afford any other way to get out of town. The terminal has been officially under construction for years, but the last contractor defaulted on the project and after

that the city ran out of money. They've been trying intermittently to find another contractor, but no one wants to do it for the amount of money they can afford to offer. In the meantime, the ticketing office and waiting rooms are housed in a large trailer, located under a freeway overpass.

There are fans set up in the corners of the waiting room, but it still gets stiflingly hot in summer. It's also too small. People who can't find a seat inside sit around the dusty parking lot, waiting for their buses to arrive. Some sit on the steps, some lean on the rails, some just flop down in the dirt.

Two years ago someone threw an air conditioner off the overpass and it punched a three-foot-wide hole in the waiting room ceiling. The hole is still there, covered by a sheet of plywood.

The restrooms are housed in a separate, smaller trailer across the lot. Yet for some reason the waiting room smells like a busy latrine. The actual bathrooms smell like nothing of this earth.

The ticket agents sit in a hastily constructed bulletproof glass cube at one end of the terminal. They often leave the door of their cube open, since it tends to get unbearably hot inside.

Drug dealers sell crack in the bathrooms, and underage boys sometimes sell other services there as well. Yet the Bedlam Terminal isn't as crime-ridden or dangerous as the bus stations in big cities like New York and Chicago. There are no dark corners for muggers to hide in and no one here has anything worth stealing, which keeps violent theft at a minimum. There aren't even very many panhandling vagrants around, since no one here has any spare change.

The Gorman Tower

Forty stories high and only half complete, the Gorman Tower is an eyesore on the Bedlam skyline that no one seems to know how to get rid of. Its history is a sad lesson in how this city works (or fails to.)

In the late 1990s, Bedlam Redevelopment Commission approached an eccentric internet tycoon named Dick

Gorman with an offer to build his new corporate headquarters in Bedlam. This is the city where he grew up, he felt some sentimental attachment to his hometown, and the package of incentives they offered him looked very generous. Building regulations were circumvented, five or six office buildings were acquired through eminent domain and then bulldozed, and work began on the Gorman Tower.

It was planned as an eighty-story monolith, with a shopping mall and state-of-the-art meeting center on its lower floors. But at around the time the frame of the building reached the fortieth floor, Dick Gorman quarreled with the city authorities and decided to locate his headquarters elsewhere. Work was suspended and the legal battles began.

The City of Bedlam's underfunded and disorganized attorneys were no match for Dick Gorman's lawyers. The city's attorneys showed up late for court dates, failed to file papers on time and generally bungled their case so badly that not only did the judge (and later the appellate court) rule that Mr. Gorman didn't have to pay for demolishing the structure, but that the city had to cover all his court costs. They have been quietly paying it off in installments ever since. In the meantime, they have a huge, dangerous eyesore in the middle of downtown. The city has boarded up its entrances, which has not kept out the derelicts and rats. They have posted warning signs around it, which does not stop little pieces of the building from falling off and puncturing roofs blocks away.

There was some talk of reopening the case, but Dick Gorman's commercial empire collapsed in 2002 and there doesn't seem to be much point in suing him any more. A court injunction keeps the city government from blowing the building up, but in fact they don't have the money to have such a huge structure demolished, anyway.

More and more pieces seem to fall off each year—and they're getting bigger. How long will it be until the whole thing comes down?

Bedlam International Airport

One of the few really vibrant parts of Bedlam, the airport is beginning to outgrow its current facilities, but there are as of yet no funds available to expand it. Meanwhile, a whole neighborhood is growing up around it and taking part in its economic success (see "The Meadows" on Page 16.)

Bedlam has tried and tried to attract at least one national airline to its busy little airport, but no one has taken them up on it. For now it mostly serves cargo planes, although two state airlines run irregular flights off its runways. Facilities for passengers are fairly primitive. There are no jetways here—passengers walk out onto the runway to board the aircraft. Nor is there anywhere to eat or buy a newspaper inside the terminal. Just rows of dusty vending machines full of snacks that haven't been replaced in a while. Yet Bedlam's low taxes and loose regulations make this an ideal cargo transshipment point, even though the Mafia takes a bite of everything moving through the facility.

Initially the Mob ignored the airport. When they divided up the city's turf, Bedlam's organized crime groups paid little attention to it—they were much more focused on the docks and the Rook Island Shipping Terminal.

And so it became Gorganzua turf. But since the Meadows aren't officially anyone's territory, the bigger, meaner Scarpia Family has been hijacking cargo once it leaves the facility. This is the single thing most likely to provoke a mob war in Bedlam. It's a war the Gorganzuas probably couldn't win—unless they were to cheat and bring in hired superhuman talent from out of town...

The Citadel

People don't like to talk about the Citadel. It covers most of a block downtown, with a wide stretch of dirt and concrete out front that was supposed to be a public park. Still only half-constructed, this was going to be the headquarters of Bedlam's one and only

superhero group—Justice Xtreme. Its official name is the "Citadel Xtreme" but people think that sounds stupid, so they just call it the Citadel, when they can be persuaded to speak about it at all.

Ten years ago Bedlam's Redevelopment Commission managed to talk a nationally recognized superhero team into relocating here. "Justice Xtreme" was having some troubles just then, although no one realized quite how bad their troubles were. They had a new team leader (Mister Extreme), a brand-new lineup of heroes and they needed a new base of operations.

The deal Bedlam offered them was generous. The city paid for everything and promised them the cooperation of local law-enforcement. But there was a condition. The Redevelopment Commission wanted to change the team's name to "Maximum Xtreme."

Mr. Extreme didn't like the new name, because he hadn't thought it up himself. He also didn't like the statue they city built outside the main entry hall. A generic statue of a superhero soaring into the sky, he felt it didn't look enough like him.

Despite these warning signs that all was not right with Justice Xtreme and its leader, construction continued and Mister Extreme continued to audition new team members at the city's expense. He seems not to have wanted to pick anyone who might overshadow him. The results of this policy became disastrously apparent when Justice Xtreme faced its first battle in Bedlam. The newly reconstituted team failed so disastrously and so publicly that no one could ever look at them the same way again. See Page 283 for a full account of the terrible events that happened that day.

The police asked the surviving team members not to return to Bedlam for their own protection. Everyone sued everyone, the whole mess is still tangled up in appeals and the headquarters sits half built and unoccupied, ten years later.

People in Bedlam still feel so hostile to Justice Xtreme that the city has had the statue encased in a concrete block to prevent it from being defaced any further. Only its feet stick out.

The Wolverton Community Center

This small building is called a beacon of hope for the neighborhood, by everyone who doesn't know better. A huge banner above the door says "Aspire", which is the center's motto. It hosts drug treatment programs, public meetings, midnight basketball and a dozen other programs to help keep kids off the street and on track.

The center is run by Ellwood "Big Daddy" Grimes and his protégé, Justice "Big Daddy Junior" Jackson. They both have checkered pasts. Justice was a talented but angry student who got sent to prison for threatening a teacher. Big Daddy was a former drug dealer who experienced an epiphany in prison and took Justice under his wing. He helped the boy survive and the two of them determined that when they got out they would dedicate their lives to keeping other kids from the same fate.

Both became heavily involved in the Community Center and now the two of them run it. They are smart, charming, articulate guys who hold forth at great length about how the Community Center serves the youth of Wolverton. Big Daddy Junior is actually a poet, and intends to be the next Langston Hughes if he can't become the next Andrew Young. Anyone who makes a Streetwise roll at a -2 will find that the Community Center is an excellent place to buy drugs, get an illegal loan or put out a contract on somebody's life. Rock Johnson, one of Wolverton's two reigning crime lords, has effectively made the Community Center his own. When Big Daddy and Big Daddy Junior tell their inspirational story, they somehow neglect to mention the fact that they sell kids dope or sometimes execute them when they can't pay.

Lucius Hardwick Memorial Park



Would you like to get mugged in the middle of the afternoon? Then visit Lucius Hardwick Memorial Park, where feuding crack gangs make every stroll an adventure.

Named after one of Bedlam's oldest and meanest city fathers, this beautiful old park was his gift to Bedlam—or at least to the other rich people who lived in his neighborhood. Rumor has it that mean old Mr. Hardwick hated his sons so much that when he died, he willed all his money into the construction and landscaping of this park (his sons had to go out and make their own huge fortunes.) It does look expensive, with arcaded stone walks and decorative arches, caked now with many layers of graffiti. A scowling, long-jawed statue of Lucius Hardwick stands in the park's very center, glaring with disapproval at the state his legacy has fallen into.

The Honduran street gang called the Mara controls all the open-air drug sales in Hardwick Park, but there is friction among the different crews who operate there, and it has turned violent in the past. Worse, the fact that crack is available in the park means that desperate addicts are always skulking around, looking for ordinary folks to rob so that they can go buy another hit. But all of

these things happen in the south end of the park. What few people outside the neighborhood know is that the north end of Hardwick Park has been declared off-limits to drug traffic and armed confrontations. The Mara want there to be a place where local families can go to enjoy a little sunshine and fresh air, so the park's northern end is kept rigorously safe. All the playground equipment and basketball courts are located up there, and on any nice day you can see kids playing with their parents and scary looking gangbangers taking the day off to shoot a few hoops and relax. There are always a few thugs looming around in their gang colors, but they aren't here to hurt anybody—they're here to make sure nobody gets hurt. This is not as nice as it sounds. The safe end of the park is small and crowded, and the Mara don't extend their protection to anyone who isn't of Honduran decent. If you are, for example, African-American and you want to spend time in the park, you are out of luck.

The Celestial Spirit Fellowship

A glimmer of light in the darkness that is Bedlam, Father Dennis' youth shelter offers a helping hand to any lost or runaway child who seeks it.

There is one central headquarters on Ash Street, with a half dozen other safe houses scattered around the city. Each physical location can house between ten and twenty children. Father Dennis also knows a whole network of good, caring families around Bedlam who can take in a child in need. The PCs may be aware that he has quietly used his network of contacts to help parahuman children—even to hide them if they are being threatened by some powerful foe.

The Fellowship never has enough money, they are always short on beds and Father Dennis is forever robbing his own meager income to help out someone or other.

Ostensibly a church, the shelter is nondenominational and doesn't try to impose any one set of spiritual beliefs on its young charges. Father Dennis himself is an Episcopalian priest, but the Celestial Spirit Fellowship is completely independent of the

Episcopal Church. Despite being ordained, Father Dennis has no congregation and little formal contact with the Episcopal hierarchy.

He seems to have no political agenda, no desire to make a name for himself. His reputation is quietly growing inside the city, but he does nothing to promote it. Running the network and counseling his young charges takes up all his time, from the moment he rises to the moment he goes to sleep. He has no social or private life left over.

The Smirlock Building

Bedlam experienced two big waves of downtown construction—one at the turn of the 20th Century and one in the 1980s. This means that it almost completely missed the Art Deco movement. Bedlam's only real example of an Art Deco Skyscraper is the Smirlock Building, constructed in the early 1930s. It was commissioned by the celebrated banker Norton M. Smirlock, who was so stolid and unimaginative in his other affairs that no one could understand then or now how he could have dreamed up a work of such visionary grandeur. This thirty story tower is a unique example of the Art Deco style, strange and asymmetrical in its proportions. It's hard to discern its outline properly from a distance—people keep misjudging its height and even its position on the Bedlam skyline. Inside it's even odder, with slanting ceilings and strangely shaped halls.

It was intended to house the Smirlock Bank and provide luxury apartments in the upper floors. Yet every major business that has moved into the building has failed and it never caught on as a place to live—it's too sterile and too weird and people who spend much time there tend to develop mysterious headaches.

As an odd footnote to its history, more people have disappeared inside the Smirlock Building than in any other structure in Bedlam. There have been no less than six mysterious disappearances within the building, including Norton M. Smirlock himself.

The Bedlam City Paper recently ran a humorous article on the Smirlock Building,

in which they published old photographs of its exterior and interior over the years. Both the inside and the outside of the building have come to look progressively stranger and more elaborate as the years have passed, yet there has never been any reconstruction or remodeling project. In 1936 it looked almost normal. Now it looks like it was jointly designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and H.P. Lovecraft.

Industrial Drive

There are light industrial districts in Greely Point and out near the airport, but nearly all of Bedlam's large factories are located on Industrial Drive, a grim, six-lane thoroughfare that marks the western boundary of Wolverton.

Bedlam's factories nearly all stand derelict and deserted. Giant trucks no longer roar down Industrial Drive at all hours of the night and the smokestacks no longer belch filth into the air, but this is still a dangerous place. Many of the dead factories have become drug dens or meeting places for the underworld. Others turn into illegal nightclubs once the sun goes down. One of Wolverton's most prominent gangsters, a gentleman known as "The Rock" (see Page 230) makes a good part of his income from these illicit clubs and he is said to live full time in one of them—no one knows quite where.

Even now that most of the trucks are gone, it is still incredibly dangerous to cross Industrial Drive. It doesn't have nearly enough stoplights and people drive very fast down its six pockmarked lanes.

Corporation Yard

Bedlam's Department of Transportation has long since been sold off to subcontractors with dubious connections to the city government. Corporation Yard, the Department's old headquarters, out near the end of Industrial Drive, is vacant and silent. This was a grand old building—it looks as though it has come straight off of some 1930s poster for the WPA. The police still use it to store and maintain their helicopters, but otherwise it's completely deserted. The Department's tractors, snowplows and dump trucks sit abandoned under tarps. The offices are locked, with chains across the door.

What perfect place for a superhero battle! If only some villain would come and take up residence here...

Ellmore Place

Officially there aren't any public housing projects in Bedlam. Instead of building cheap housing for the city's poor, they issue "Section 8" housing vouchers which the destitute can use to buy decent housing for themselves anywhere in the city. The problem is that the only buildings that accept Section 8 Housing vouchers are all run-down apartments on Ellmore Place, on the boundary between Hardwick Park and Wolverton. This effectively crams the poorest citizens of Bedlam into low-rise tenement slums that aren't much different from the public housing projects elsewhere. These six blocks of misery act as a kind of buffer zone between the African-American gangs of Wolverton and the Hispanic gangs in Hardwick Park.

Shady Meadows



They also take Section 8 Housing vouchers in Shady Meadows, a giant mobile home park outside Bedlam's city limits. However, most people from the city prefer not to move there. It's a dangerous place, full of bikers and meth labs. More violent and prone to mayhem than Bedlam's inner city, this is where the county and state dump the worst of their hard-luck cases.

It's hard to get to Shady Meadows from the city—you have to follow Shady Lane out from the Country Club into the wooded areas to the south of town. If you follow Shady Lane into town, you'll find yourself in the Country Club or Ash Street, and neither neighborhood has much to tempt visitors. They don't have any businesses that folks from the trailer camps would like to patronize, and they're both dismal, run-down neighborhoods that are no fun to visit. As a result, people from Shady Meadows don't go into the city much at all, and do most of their shopping and hellraising in small towns and bars out in the countryside.

HISTORY OF BEDLAM

1780

Bedlam is founded by the semi-literate explorer, evangelist and opium fiend Zebediah Scarlett. He hopes to lead a group of like-minded religious maniacs into the woods to found a perfect Christian republic where he can fondle as many underage girls as possible, far from the world's unforgiving gaze. He calls the town "Bedlam" because he's confused the name with "Bethlehem." Within three years, Scarlett is murdered by his friend and confidante Rule Hardwick, who subsequently hogs both the opium and the girls for himself. Scarlett's vengeful ghost plagues the community for a while, until offered up a sacrifice of girls and opium. It is rumored that he still demands this tithe today, once every few years.

Note: If Bedlam is anywhere but the East Coast, move this date up to 1830.

1810

Bedlam is now a thriving center of trade, thanks to its position at the mouth of an estuary. Rule Hardwick has long since been murdered by his son, Measure, who has subsequently steered the community away from religious lunacy and toward making lots of money (though the girls and opium continue to be a major benefit of leadership.) The presence of large numbers of pliable, opium-dependant girls has proved a boon to Measure's money-making efforts.

Note: If Bedlam is anywhere but the East Coast, move this date up to 1850.

1860

A large metropolis (whichever one is the dominant setting for your campaign) is growing rapidly near Bedlam, which shares in its expanding wealth. The Hardwick, Greely and Stark families remain Bedlam's most prosperous citizens. They hate one another viciously and build mansions in

widely separate parts of town. The city's first master villain arguably turns up this year. He is a masked copperhead (a supporter of the Southern cause in the Civil War) who calls himself the Phantom Emperor and claims to lead a "Phantom Empire" that stretches nationwide. He certainly seems to control an army of armed anti-abolitionist fanatics in Bedlam.

1863

The Phantom Emperor is killed by a mob of enraged citizens. Oddly, Lucius Hardwick, the town's richest man and most prominent banker, vanishes forever on the very day the Phantom Emperor meets his doom.

1900-1910

The prospering city undergoes a massive period of construction, embracing the new "skyscrapers" before almost any American town of its size. Bedlam soon has an impressive skyline.

1905

G. Morgan Stark, one of Bedlam's wealthiest landowners, brings in large numbers of Italian and Polish immigrants to work in his toy factory. He does this in direct competition with his arch-rival Langhorne Greely, who has already started bringing in Italians to slave away in his slaughterhouses. In his efforts to outpace Greely, Stark expands his factories too fast and many gruesome accidents happen in the toy-works.

Stark settles most of the new arrivals near the city's old Irish community, a safe distance away from decent folk. The neighborhood comes to be known as "Stark Hill."

As soon as large numbers of immigrants start arriving, the Phantom Empire suddenly undergoes a resurgence and a new Phantom Emperor is crowned. In response to their bloody incursions, the folks

on Stark Hill organize armed resistance groups, and the first stirrings of the Bedlam Mafia begin.

1910

Lucius Hardwick Jr. is stabbed to death by a Sicilian immigrant named Joe Igglioni. A large wave of anti-Italian sentiment follows—yet the Phantom Empire fails to capitalize on it. They seem to be undergoing some kind of crisis in their leadership.

1917

Large numbers of African-Americans from the South arrive in Bedlam to fill the factory jobs left open by the First World War. The Phantom Empire grows in strength as local residents respond to the newcomers with fear and resentment.

1919

Some people whisper that this is the year Zebediah Scarlett came back angry and in force. No one is quite sure how the city fathers manage to drive him off (or appease him.) However, conspiracy theorists will later note that Bedlam's most exclusive girl's school closes that year in the wake of some terrible nameless tragedy. Some of the surviving girls found a weird mystical order called "The Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars." Their goal is revenge and they intend to have it by one day gaining the means to destroy Bedlam and the men who rule it.

1920-1933

Prohibition leads to the growth of huge organized crime networks throughout the country, including in Bedlam. The Phantom Empire reaches its zenith in 1922, effectively controlling local politics until 1925, when the newly strengthened Mafia wrests control of the underworld away from the Irish gangs and the Phantom Emperor suddenly has to deal with them as equals. Now that no one leads armed raids into Stark Hill anymore, the Phantom Empire loses its appeal for its rank-and-file members and over the next ten years the organization slowly melts away.

1921

Dr. Harwood Crawley founds the Crawley Lunatic Asylum on the deserted grounds of the Bedlam Girls' Academy. Over the next eighty years it will be home to many of Bedlam's most famous maniacs and crazed supermen.

To this day, some mystics wonder about the wisdom of founding an asylum on a spot so thoroughly tainted by dark and sinister forces from beyond. But of course no one listens to them.

Dr. Crawley himself commits suicide within just a few years, but his legacy carries on to this day.

1930-1939

Bedlam is weathering the Great Depression better than many small cities, but crime and poverty remain a problem. The dominant mafia families in town are now the Gorganzuas and the Igglionis, although the dynamic young Scarpia Family is rising fast.

But the field is wide open and lots of colorful gangsters rise and fall during the thirties. Hook-Hand O'Grady, No-Nose Muldoon, "The Queer Fellow" and many others vie for a chunk of the action. Bedlam's number one police detective, Sammy "Snap-Brim" Hammer and his Flying Squad manage to put a handful in jail and a dozen or so in the morgue, but never manage to take down the Bedlam Mob itself.

1940

Lucius Hardwick III dies, leaves the beautifully landscaped Lucius Hardwick Memorial Park to the city, with a covenant stating that no colored people are ever to be allowed inside.

1942

Bedlam is menaced by a crazed cabal of Bundist Nazi sympathizers called "Der Blutbanner." "Snap-Brim" Hammer breaks them up with the help of a mysterious masked vigilante called the Scorpion. While Snap-Brim claims that the Blutbanner contained many old members of the Phantom Empire, he is never able to prove it.

1943

Sammy "Snap-Brim" Hammer forced into retirement.

1943-1950

The Scorpion is seen more and more in Bedlam and crime really does seem to be abating. By 1950 the city is at its economic zenith.

1951

The Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars finally discovers the mystical power that it has been seeking. They begin a plan that will take fifty years to complete.

1960

Bedlam's economic heyday draws to a close. A period of stagnation begins.

1963

The Scorpion suddenly disappears.

1966-1973

Bedlam police and city leaders grow paranoid about "hippies" and do everything in their power to keep them out of town. Four different student activists and black community leaders die in police custody under suspicious circumstances during this period.

1967

After an unnamed incident, long term enmity begins between the Bedlam Mafia and the Chicago Outfit. Fortunately for Bedlam's three major crime families, they are under the aegis of the New York Commission, which forbids Chicago from wiping them out. Yet relations with Chicago never really improve and Bedlam's mobsters are never welcome there again.

1968

Race riots erupt in nearly every major city around the US. The National Guard is called into Bedlam and for three weeks there are tanks on the city's streets. The Bedlam police and the guard behave quite badly in the African-American neighborhood of Wolverton and local people remember their brutality to this day. Big sections of downtown are damaged in the riots and

Bedlam's downward spiral accelerates.

1970

Since the cops can't be trusted to protect Wolverton, a champion middleweight boxer named Clayton Stone decides to become the neighborhood's defender. He never wears a costume or adopts an alias, but people start calling him "Black Anvil" all the same. Stone's older brother Lincoln Stone becomes a rising force in Wolverton's organized rackets at around this same time. Over the next few years, the brothers will have numerous confrontations, ending in tragedy in the 1980s.

1972

A major parahuman scandal comes out—the youthful counterculture superhero team called "The Now" are sent to prison on charges of corruption, drug abuse, inappropriate relations with minors and most shockingly, human sacrifice. Despite the fact that the whole thing was a frame-up, this puts the final nail in the counterculture's coffin.

1973

Clayton Stone kills Leo Gorganzua Jr. After a brief internal struggle, Don Leo's son "Young Junior" emerges as the new head of the family. Clayton Stone leaves town and his older brother agrees to give half his operation over to the Scarpia family in exchange for protection from the Gorganzuas. The Scarpas are now the biggest of the city's crime families.

1975

Mob war bloodies the streets of Wolverton. A rising young hooligan named Rock Johnson tries to take over the rackets with the backing of the Iggioni family. After a brief but bloody period of warfare, the Rock and the Stone decide to share Wolverton between them. They still do, to this very day.

December 1977-January 1978

A masked fiend who calls himself "Capricorn" begins stalking and slaughtering people in Bedlam. The city is on the edge of a hysterical panic. Everyone is talking

about Capricorn. They say he has superhuman powers.

Capricorn taunts the police and the press with numerous messages, some in code, inviting them to figure out the pattern to his killings, and stop him. No one does. He kills nine people in hideous ways and then vanishes. Nobody ever cracks the code.

1980

A vigilante called the Blue Shield appears in the Stark Hill neighborhood. He will later change his name to the Shield of Justice, and then to the Hammer of Justice (despite having never carried either a hammer or a shield.) Over the next thirty years, he wages a brutal, zero-tolerance, one-man war on crime. He never strays very far out of Stark Hill, and he spends nearly as much time keeping black people out of the neighborhood as he does fighting actual street crime. Despite being a two-fisted crusader of justice, he never does anything about the Bedlam Mafia, even though he lives and works in their biggest stronghold, Stark Hill.

December, 1980-January, 1981

Capricorn is back. He claims that he's going to kill another nine people, and that he's going to go on doing it every three years "until my work is done."

But then they catch him. Capricorn has claimed eight victims, when the police apprehend Wilbur Coote, an unemployed man from Hardwick Park, and the murders stop. Coote maintains his innocence, but a huge amount of circumstantial evidence links him to the crimes.

Three years later the killings start again, right on schedule.

1983

Donny Scarpia is now the de-facto leader of the Scarpia family, running all their operations on the ground in Stark Hill and controlling access to his ailing father.

December 1983-January, 1984

Capricorn returns. His voice sounds the same as it always has and his messages are in the same handwriting. It's not a copycat

killer—he performs all the same mutilations on the bodies, including the ones the police never made public. He kills ten people this time, to make up for the one he missed in 1981.

1986-1989

The crack boom hits Bedlam, hard. Chaos and violence erupt on the city streets and downtown businesses start relocating elsewhere.

Mystics claim that there is a barefoot man who walks the streets of Bedlam, helping people. He somehow embodies the city's soul. He can hear his town's misery and listens to the things she whispers on her reeking asphalt breath. They call him the Ratcatcher. He has been an alcoholic ever since some time in the late sixties, but now he's grown addicted to crack.

Somewhere the remaining members of the Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars are cackling.

December 1986-January, 1987

Capricorn returns. He delivers more messages, and a reporter notices that he seems to be drawing some kind of weird occult diagram on the city, marking its corners with mutilated bodies. Following this pattern, the police figure out where he is likely to strike next, and they catch him red-handed, in the midst of a murder. Controversy rages for years over whether they let him kill an innocent person so as to be able to catch him in the act.

Capricorn fights the officers who apprehend him so vigorously that afterwards they speculate that he really may have superhuman powers. In fact they are only able to subdue him with the help of the vigilante known as the Blue Shield.

Once he is captured, Capricorn never says another word. He has no ID and his fingerprints aren't in any national database. To this day he sits in the Crawley Asylum, staring blankly at the walls, his identity unknown.

Three years later there is a brief panic as the end of December draws nigh. But the murders have stopped for good.

1988-1999

The Bedlam Redevelopment Commission brings new hope to the ailing city. Over the next eleven years, they will attract a lot of new business and build a lot of weird, ugly postmodern skyscrapers downtown, before their efforts finally fail.

1989

Clayton Stone is back in town. He insists that he is retired, but people in Wolverton give Black Anvil a hero's welcome anyway. Then someone shoots him in the head.

Lincoln Stone is prosecuted for the crime. He insists that he is innocent, but is sent away to prison for life. He continues to run his half of Wolverton from behind bars.

1990

Zelma Goltz takes over as the head of the Redevelopment Commission. Her intentions are good, but her judgment is poor and over the next ten years she commits Bedlam to some very dubious projects, wasting the city's dwindling resources on silly, grandiose schemes. Among them are the gigantic and defective Endler Library, a disastrous attempt to bring the world's largest mall to town and perhaps worst of all, Bedlam's one and only superhero group, "Justice Xtreme," which collapses on its very first mission.

1991

Jamaican Posses start moving into the southern part of Wolverton. Incredibly violent and audacious, it looks at first as though they will disrupt the whole order of the Bedlam underworld. But this doesn't happen. The posses are way too flamboyant and draw far too much attention to themselves. The Shield of Justice gives them his special attention, as do the Bedlam Police and the Mafia. Within ten years there are just a few scattered remnants left. By 2008 there is only one small posse in Bedlam, the "Invincible Ya-Ya," and it's a shadow of its former might.

1992

Rogue architect Anton Endler wins the competition to design Bedlam's new public library. So begins a torturous, nigh endless process of cost overruns and catastrophes,

which will end years later with the opening of the much-hated Endler Library downtown (see Page 35 for more information on this infamous local landmark.)

1993-1995

The Iggcioni crime family has long controlled the neighborhood around Hardwick Park. They rule the streets largely because they've always managed to keep black people from moving into the neighborhood and local residents see them as the lesser of two evils. However, over this period of time Hardwick Park rapidly turns Hispanic, and the Iggcioni are so focused on terrorizing African-Americans that they fail to spot this trend until it's too late to stop. By 1995 their power base is rapidly eroding.

1995

The Scarpia Family decides not to wait for the Iggcioni to fall. In a single night they kill all their leaders. No fool, "Dapper Donny" Scarpia offers full membership to the Iggcioni soldiers, most of whom accept the deal. The Scarpias are now vastly more powerful than their sole remaining rival, the Gorganzuas. At a sit-down meeting, the two families re-divide their turf based on the new balance of power. "Young Junior" doesn't like this, but he has no choice.

1996

Lucius Hardwick IV retreats into his mansion near the park that bears his father's name and never leaves it again. Is he still alive in there today? No one knows.

1997

In desperation, the Redevelopment Commission entices a Canadian firm to build one of the largest malls in North America under downtown Bedlam. The city itself pays for almost everything, gambling on the hope that the ultra-mall (called the "Liberty Shoppes") will bring new jobs and tourists to their ailing city. This does not work. Within three years the mall is a dangerous crime-ridden hell-pit and most of its stores have closed.

1998

A huge and unsavory scandal erupts at Bedlam's office of Child Protective Services. It seems that two of the Deputy heads of the agency have been operating a black-market baby ring, selling children off to the highest bidder. Arrests are made, careers are ruined and the agency lapses into a state of disarray from which it never fully recovers.

1999

Zelma Goltz manages to get a second-string superhero team called "Justice Xtreme" to relocate to Bedlam. The city spends most of its remaining reserves on building them a headquarters, the "Citadel Xtreme" downtown.

The team has lost most of its original members and its new leader, "Mister Extreme" has some personality problems that make it hard for him to be effective. Despite signs that the group is in disarray, Justice Xtreme recruits some new members and sets out to clean up Bedlam. The results are an utter and absolute debacle. For a complete account of what went wrong, see Page 283. The Citadel Xtreme has been deserted ever since. Mister Extreme, his former teammates and the city are all still suing one another well into the next century.

But not Zelma Goltz. While the team was getting established, she was already preparing to go pursue her lifelong dream of working on a kibbutz. She never returns to the United States. Close friends say that she had been losing interest in the Redevelopment Commission for some time.

Fifteen Years Ago

A group of Bedlam's wealthiest families puts the finishing touches on their new country club, in the heart of the town's oldest, richest neighborhood, previously known as Scarlett Hill.

At the same time, the Rook Island Naval Station is decommissioned and a group of investors promises to turn it into a brand-new shipping terminal, ready to bring prosperity back to Bedlam.

Ten Years Ago

The fumes and noise from the Rook Island Shipping Terminal have killed the Country Club and turned Scarlett Hill into a wasteland. Most of the former residents have crammed themselves into the gated community of Stone Ridge outside of town, despite its high prices, ugly homes and restrictive rules. Others have left town.

Five Years Ago

The Rook Island Shipping Terminal is falling into decline—the Scarpas have taken too big a bite of the trade coming through the terminal and freighter captains are starting to avoid it. The Bedlam airport and the docks at Greely Point are doing a little better. Both are Gorganzua turf and the Scarpas start to show signs of resentment.

Two Years Ago

The Honduran cult called the Mara pushes all the other Hispanic gangs out of Hardwick Park and begins to move in on the rackets in Wolverton. A coalition of most of Wolverton's gangs manages to hold them at bay, under the leadership of "Tiny Z."

Last Year

Tiny Z dies in a spectacular, public and blatantly unnatural incident—devoured by rats from the inside out. Or maybe it was bugs. Some guys who were there say it was bugs. His hair-trigger little brother, "Eentsy Z" assumes leadership of the coalition at the tender age of thirteen. Young in years, he's old in blood and may have already killed as many as six people.

Right Now

The Scarpas and the Gorganzuas stare menacingly at each other across the river. Which family will try to seize the Meadows first? The specter of an impending gang war looms over Wolverton and Hardwick Park. Everyone fears the Jigsaw Man, the Mara's mysterious leader. They say he has magic powers. Eentsy Z laughs and says he's got powers of his own. Strange rumors drift down out of the ruined Country Club. They say someone has taken up residence there. Someone big and bad.

YOUR GUIDE TO BEDLAM'S CITY GOVERNMENT

Space doesn't allow us to be totally comprehensive here—and in any case your PCs are unlikely to be spending much time down at the Department of Public Works. This is meant as a brief and simple guide in case your PCs ask you any questions about, for example, the Mayor's Office, the City Council, the Police Department, etc. We have a much more thorough description of Bedlam's police and criminal justice system in the next chapter.

The Mayor's Office

Bedlam has not had a mayor for some time. The post is in any case largely ceremonial and carries no actual authority. Bedlam is run by a hired City Manager.

A large aerospace firm that prefers not to be named provides city management for a fee and Bedlam is one of the largest in the country to use their services. They do not publicize the manager's name or the location of his office, nor does he make public appearances. However, he is widely known to be Wilfred Krebbs, a gray, balding little man with thick glasses who speaks in a droning monotone and cares little for Bedlam's future. His job, as he sees it, is to get the city's administrative work done, not to clean up its corruption or fix its other problems. Eventually, if all the paperwork gets filled out on time, his bosses will assign him to some other, better job.

For what it's worth, the City Council is presently trying to hire a new high-profile celebrity mayor—preferably a professional wrestler or an actor with a reputation for being tough. Perhaps a superhero might fit the bill? Perhaps a Player Character?

Municipal Council

The Bedlam Municipal Council has 8 members—one from each of the city's 6 wards, and 2 "At Large" members elected by the city as a whole. The Council is supposed to meet at City Hall, but the building has been under renovation for five years, so they either convene at the County

Courthouse or in whatever other meeting space is handy.

Unable to pay for city services with Bedlam's declining tax base, they have had to sell more and more of its departments off to contractors, some of them dubious. There are often savage debates over which contractor gets awarded a particular city service, since some of the councilmen have different mob connections from the others.

At the moment, the reigning powers on the Council are Big Andy Czernik and the Reverend Willie Boggs. Both men hate each other furiously, and they have managed to divide the council between them.

Big Andy is a florid, red-haired giant who still wears a pompadour, decades after it has gone out of fashion. Hugely corrupt, he is deeply involved with the Scarpia crime family, and is said to play golf with "Dapper Donny" Scarpia every weekend (this is not true—Dapper Donny has nothing but contempt for a rich, whitebread game like golf—in fact they play pinball.) A consummate machine politician, Big Andy gets things done for his constituents, within Bedlam's limited resources, and they love him for it. There's a lot of vote fraud in his ward, but it's not necessary.

Reverend Boggs speaks up for the city's African-American community. He's personally quite corrupt, easy to bribe and too tightly entangled with some shady boxing promoters, but he's not a tool of the Mob and he seems sincere in his efforts to improve life for his constituents.

Other notables on the Council include Righteous Townsend, an ambitious young politician who is trying to unseat Willie Boggs' hold on the city's African-American neighborhoods, Ron Cordell, a violent-tempered, white-haired ranter who sticks up for the Gorganzua crime family's interests, and Mollie Schwartz, a rich housewife from Stone Ridge who has held an At-Large seat for many years, and carries on a tireless crusade against corruption and mismanagement. So far, Mrs. Schwartz'

efforts have gone exactly nowhere. Big Andy lovingly refers to her as “the Conscience of the Council” and seems to like her. As well he should. There is nothing better for a man in his position than a completely ineffectual crusader. It sets the right example.

City Commissions

In addition to the Municipal Council, there are numerous commissions that oversee various elements of Bedlam’s governance. Some have the authority to make policy decisions, others are mere advisory bodies. Most are comprised of a combination of Council members and prominent local citizens (business leaders, community activists and so forth.) A spot on one of the Commissions is often the first step on the path to becoming a Municipal Councilman—in fact that’s how Righteous Townsend got his start. Here are some of the most prominent commissions.

The Commission on Water, Sewage and Safety

Big Andy Czernik sits on this Commission, along with Councilman Ron Cordell, representatives from Bedlam’s water board and the major utility contractors. Officially their mission is to ensure the safety and quality of Bedlam’s utilities and sanitation services. And they do in fact keep them safe—fro outside scrutiny. They also do a very thorough job of making sure that only contractors with connections to Big Andy or Ron Cordell’s political machines are assigned any work. Councilman Cordell constantly complains that his guys always get the short end of the stick in these negotiations.

The Commission on Economic Growth

This powerful commission includes the heads of most of Bedlam’s remaining industries. Big Andy sits on this commission as well, along with Mollie Schwartz. It’s the main forum through which Bedlam’s rich people make their wishes known. Big Andy usually gives them what they want, and in exchange they don’t mess with his grip on Stark Hill. But sometimes the balance of power is uneasy. Ron Cordell and the Reverend Willie Boggs keep campaigning for

a seat on this commission, but so far neither one has managed to break through.

The Parade Commission

This large commission handles planning and logistics for all of Bedlam’s big public festivals, parades, etc. They also fund local block parties and neighborhood events, and a lot of this money tends to disappear in sneaky ways.

Righteous Townsend got his start on the Parade Commission. He never cleaned up its corruption, but he did manage to politicize it, and to use its meetings to talk about social inequity in Bedlam. After Righteous became an at-large Municipal Councilman, the Reverend Willie Boggs managed to get him forced off. He left with barely a struggle, already focused on bigger things.

The Redevelopment Commission

One of the most famous, high-profile Commissions in the city’s history, these days they have been reduced to a skeleton, without any staff, a budget or a regular meeting place. Their mission is to bring Bedlam up out of poverty and obscurity, restoring it to its former greatness. Through the late 1980s and all of the 1990s, they were led by a hired consultant named Zelma Goltz, who spent the city’s remaining funds on a series of disastrous, grandiose and ridiculous schemes. By 1998 she had dragged the Commission to its knees and nearly taken the city with it. But in her defense, the other Commissioners did no better. Bedlam’s problems called for genius, not well-intentioned mediocrity.

Among the Redevelopment Commission’s projects over the years: Spending a gigantic amount of money creating a new slogan, logo and mascot for Bedlam (“The Steel City”) only to discover that another city already had the rights to the name. (they hastily renamed Bedlam “The City of Now” and came up with a much more cheaply designed logo—see Page 8 for the details)

Attracting maverick billionaire Dick Gorman to construct his corporate headquarters in Bedlam, a project that failed halfway through and left Bedlam with the

gigantic, half-constructed stump of the Gorman Tower defacing its skyline, (see Page 19.)

Getting a Canadian firm to build the world's third-largest mall under Bedlam's streets (within a few years most of its stores closed and the place became a crime-ridden danger zone—see Page 154.)

Getting a world-renowned (if insane) architect to build their new public library, without having upgraded any of its services (see Page 35.)

And perhaps most disastrous of all, getting the troubled superhero group "Justice Xtreme" to relocate to Bedlam, with results that were so awful no one even wants to talk about it.

These days Zelma Goltz lives on a kibbutz and is unavailable for comment, but people who knew her well, including Municipal Councilor Mollie Schwartz, say that her heart wasn't really in it for the last few years.

The Commission on Human Rights

This is one of Bedlam's newest city Commissions, charged with stamping out discrimination and preventing human rights abuses. Bedlam's leaders love to point to the Commission whenever anyone accuses the city government of racism, it gets a lot of play on local news and everyone seems happy that Bedlam is making such important progress toward equality and social justice.

What they don't publicize is the fact that the Commission is a purely advisory body, with no actual power. Nor do they point out that its tiny budget and limited staff make it impossible for the Commission to keep up with all the work it gets assigned, let alone investigate complaints about abuse.

Mollie Schwartz and Willie Boggs both sit on the Commission, as do numerous neighborhood leaders and local activists. Councilman Righteous Townsend is eager to get on, but Willie Boggs keeps blocking him. Reverend Boggs senses that Townsend would use the position as a platform to defame him. He's right.

Mollie Schwartz is strongly dedicated to the Commission, even though she knows they aren't yet where they need

to be in terms of resources and influence. She has put a lot of her own money into keeping them going, hiring staff, providing her house as a meeting space, etc.

Bedlam Police Force



We're going to describe the Bedlam Police in much greater detail in the next chapter. The following is really just an overview.

No one has gotten around to privatizing the Bedlam City Police yet and they're very proud of the fact. To help keep their treasured independence, they ran off every police chief the city tried to hire for them. They haven't had a chief in years and the six Precinct Captains run their sectors like their own individual little kingdoms. They pretty much answer to no one and you can imagine the level of professionalism that this encourages. Some of the Precinct Captains are crooked. Some are brutal. Some are crooked and brutal. Some are crooked, brutal and incompetent.

The same could be said of Bedlam's Patrol Officers and detectives. Not all of them are prone to taking bribes, extorting money from local businesses or using excessive force. But the ones who aren't are almost all willing to ignore vicious and corrupt behavior on the part of their fellow officers. Guys who feel differently about it don't last long.

Their gear is outdated and their uniforms look old. Their cars are battered-up old hulks. Too many of their Patrol Officers have to drive their beats alone, without partners, thanks to staffing shortages. This not only puts their lives in danger, but also encourages corruption and brutality, since there is no one around to watch them.

The pride of Bedlam's police force (if it has any pride) is their anti-parahuman unit, the Special Assault Squad. Short on equipment but long on expertise and determination, they have managed to take down quite a few supervillains without any help from the capes. They also have a reputation for shooting first and asking questions later, and they don't show much concern for innocent bystanders. You can find out more about the Special Assault Squad on pages 63-67.

Because Bedlam only pays its Patrol Officers \$25,000 a year, many of them take second jobs as security guards and bouncers, further complicating their relationship with the community. There was a serious incident last year when a couple of bouncers at an illegal nightclub beat a patron to death, and then produced their badges and arrested all the witnesses.

Bedlam Parking Authority

In a city where so much is dirty and run-down, Bedlam's parking meters are surprisingly new and clean. Graffiti-resistant, amazingly hard to vandalize, they are served by a fleet of fast, efficient meter maids in crisp new uniforms who ride soundless electric carts. They are ruthless in their pursuit of parking scofflaws. A parking ticket is one of the few things that neither Councilman Big Andy Czernik nor the Bedlam Mafia can fix for you.

Few people realize that the meter maids don't actually work for the Bedlam Police Department. In fact they don't work for the city at all—the Parking Authority is a for-profit, wholly owned subsidiary of the giant aerospace company which runs the City Manager's office. As you might imagine, they have a very favorable contract with the city. Almost all of the money from

parking meters and fines goes straight into their coffers. The city barely gets any.

While none of this is secret, it isn't exactly public knowledge either. Both the city government and the Parking Authority are aware that the public might find the arrangement objectionable, so they've done their best to keep it out of the papers. Only tiny left-wing rags like the Bedlam City Paper have reported on the Parking Authority, and while their readers are indignant, no one listens to them.

While the city government tries to keep the Parking Authority out of the news, recent events have been drawing too much attention. When they took over the city's old parking records, the Authority began computerizing them. They have finally finished entering them into a master database, and have begun to make use of it, issuing citations and fines for unpaid parking tickets that the city had long since stopped chasing. Some of them are as many as thirty years old.

The citizens of Bedlam are not pleased about getting harassed for decades-old parking tickets and they are complaining to the City Council in record numbers. The Council has in turn approached the Authority, asking them to ease up before the whole thing becomes a major embarrassment, but the authority's parent company doesn't care if it embarrasses the city or not—they have a signed contract and that's that. It hasn't occurred to them that in a place like Bedlam, frustrated people might start smashing parking meters, beating up meter maids and vandalizing the Authority's corporate offices. This hasn't happened—yet.

Costumed crusaders who would like to bring the Parking Authority's dubious practices to light might find an unlikely ally. The Scarpia crime family would dearly love to get a taste of the money that parking tickets generate. As of yet they haven't figured out how, but anything that hurts the Authority or weakens its position is a good thing, in the Mob's eyes.

The Coroner's Office

The office of the Coroner is a county, rather than a municipal position. They do not work

well with Bedlam's police, largely because administrative issues make it hard for them to cooperate—there are too many ambiguous, gray areas in the regulations about how County and City officials are supposed to coordinate their efforts.

The coroner's office runs the morgue, which is why it's the County Morgue instead of the City Morgue. Sanitary Conditions at the underfunded morgue got really bad two years ago, and they developed such a chronic problem with losing or misidentifying corpses, that the State authorities intervened and prosecuted them. The state won, and when the Coroner's Office could not pay the fine, they assigned them a probation officer. Fortunately, he was an old friend of Councilman "Big Andy" Czernik and he reports to the state that everything is fine at the County Coroner's Office, when in fact nothing has changed.

The County Coroner is presently Wallace Hoople, an ancient, doddering political appointee without much medical skill, who many in the press accuse of being senile. The Coroner's Office has a small Crime Lab of its own, with a reputation for losing and mishandling evidence. To be fair, they're severely understaffed and have a lot of inexperienced personnel. If you acquire a good reputation here, you usually move on to a better city before too long, so they have way too much turn-over. This is one of the few institutions in the city that doesn't have a problem with corruption—just incompetence.

Department of Public Works

The Bedlam Department of Public Works is chiefly in the business of producing t-shirts. Under the guidance of the City Manager, they have farmed out virtually all their services to private contractors, some of them responsible professionals and some of them very dubious indeed. The city produces green t-shirts that say "Bedlam Department of Public Works" for the various contractors to wear.

The Department has offices in one of the skyscrapers on Davis Avenue, and a toll-free line that people can call for service, but their customer service (which has been

farmed out to a call center in Bombay) is notoriously poor. Complaints are particularly hard for them to address, since most of the city's contractors have long-term contracts that indemnify them.

City government is quick to point out that most of the problems people have encountered with DPW aren't with the main contractors, but with subcontractors who they have had to hire in a rush when they are overworked. Since a lot of these subcontractors have ties to the Mafia, it's relatively easy to get problems resolved if you talk to a city councilman with the right mob connections—Big Andy Czernik, for example. One result of this is that neighborhoods like Wolverton and Hardwick Park experience much worse service than, for example, Stark Hill, since their councilmen aren't as well connected.

Department of Public Health

Like the Department of Public Works, the Department of Public Health has been farmed out completely to a private contractor. This was partly a union-busting and partly a cost-saving measure. The contractor is a small consulting firm based in Northern Virginia called CH2M Services, but their employees don't identify themselves as contractors—they just call themselves Health Inspectors. Most people aren't aware that the Department has been sold. It's not a secret but the city certainly doesn't go out of its way to publicize the fact.

It used to be that the city's Health Inspectors were prone to taking payoffs and to shaking restaurants down for protection money—planting rats and filth in their kitchens and demanding bribes not to shut them down. They still do things like this all the time but now CH2M Services aggressively sues anyone who tries to make a public fuss about it. This has greatly improved the Department's image, for you don't hear about any scandals or abuses in the press anymore.

Municipal Office of Sanitation

In many cities Sanitation is a subdivision of the Department of Public Works. In Bedlam it's a division of the Department of Public Health. It was moved under Public Health in

the early 1990s, in an effort to free the Office of mob influence. This worked for a little while. Then the Municipal Council privatized Sanitation and the Mafia put its claws right back in.

It used to be that in order to get a job with the Office of Sanitation you had to go see the Scarpia or the Gorganzua crime families (or the now-defunct Iggioni Family.) Now you need to see them in order to get a job with the contractor—Waste Resources Inc. Waste Resources has its own fleet of garbage trucks, many of which are getting old and breaking down. The city has put a lot of money into buying them new trucks, but quite a bit of it seems to have disappeared.

Waste Resources' trucks and uniforms are a distinctive yellow and black color that has given them the nickname "garbage wasps." They officially offer recycling service to anyone who requests it, but they don't yet have a recycling plant to take it to. Astute observers have noticed the garbage wasps dumping materials from recycling bins straight into the back of their garbage trucks. When questioned about the issue, Waste Resources says that they hope to have a functional recycling plant soon, that the Municipal Council has already allocated the money to build them one, and that in the meantime they want to get people used to the idea of separating out their recyclables. This has been their official answer for years. No one seems to know what happened to the money that the city gave them to build the new recycling center.

You might expect this state of affairs to cause public outrage, but in fact few people are even aware of it. The last time a reporter did a story on the city's recycling situation, the Scarpia family had a talk with her about it, and she soon moved to another city.

Department of Education

No one is sure precisely how many people work for the Bedlam City School District. They have never computerized their payroll records and they aggressively resist all attempts to do so. It's unclear how many of their workers actually show up for work on daily basis and how many just collect

paychecks. Nor does anyone know how many of their employees are real and how many are on the books in order to funnel money to crooked politicians or organized crime.

It's not quite fair to say that the Department of Education is one of the few branches of the city government that hasn't been privatized. Troubled by under-performance for many years, plagued with a central office that siphoned off far too much money to shadowy unknown parties, Bedlam's schools underwent a major round of reforms ten years ago. At Councilman "Big Andy" Czernik's urging, the entire system was scheduled to be sold off to private contractors. His arch-rival, the Reverend Willie Boggs (also a city Councilman), objected vociferously. The Department of Education was part of his turf and one of the major sources of kickbacks for his supporters.

After endless debate, the two men reached a compromise. The schools themselves would largely be privatized, but the central administrative office is still a part of the city government, and has not changed its ways.

Big Andy is a man of his word. Now that he has cut a deal with Willie Boggs he will not break it. Nothing is going to change at the Department of Education any time soon—Big Andy will see to that. Everyone is happy with this deal, except perhaps for the teachers, parents and students (Big Andy's own kids go to Catholic school.)

For a more in-depth account of how Bedlam's schools function under the new system, along with a list of individual schools and some NPCs to go with them, see Pages 125-140.

Bedlam Public Library

People who see the Endler Library for the first time immediately assume it's Bedlam's City Jail. Then they wonder why it's up on stilts.

In the late 1980s, the Redevelopment Commission decided that Bedlam needed a new public library. The Main Branch had for years been housed in a rented warehouse space, awaiting the funds to refurbish the old Greely Library on

Grunwald St. The Commission had the old library torn down and launched a nationwide architecture contest to find a design for the new building. The contest was won by a brilliant and slightly mad neo-modernist named Anton Endler. His design wasn't the prettiest or the most practical, but he was the most prestigious architect to respond (despite some critics accusing him of senility and growing megalomania), so he won the prize.

He produced a crazed masterpiece of the Neo-Brutalist school. It's a fanciful, gruesome battleship of a building, perched on stilts. The roof leaks and is so strangely shaped that it's impossible to clean, the administrative areas are cramped, uncomfortable and plagued with walls that don't meet at right angles. But Anton Endler was more than satisfied.

The project did however cost vastly more money than Endler had estimated. The huge cost overruns and years of delays may have been the thing that finally crippled the Redevelopment Commission. Some people would say that this was a good thing.

The interior of the Endler Library has beautiful reading rooms, grand meeting spaces, and not very many books. The Redevelopment Commission didn't allocate any money toward buying more printed materials. During the day it is largely populated by derelicts and crack fiends. Drugs are sold in its bathrooms, which is also where the winos go for a little quick romance.

The stacks contain a sad collection of dusty paperbacks and tattered old textbooks. People sometimes get mugged back among the shelves. The security guards are mostly off-duty Bedlam cops. They have a tough time keeping order in the restrooms, and don't have enough time left over to patrol the stacks.

The one really valuable resource in the Library (if crack and anonymous loving don't interest you) is the Lucius Hardwick Collection, where books and rare documents concerning Bedlam's history are kept.

There are three branch libraries. The Greely Point Branch is located in a converted row-house in the old Italian

neighborhood at the top of the hill. The Wolverton Branch occupies a converted fast food restaurant and the Liberty Shoppes Mall has a small branch of its own.

The Library system has recently been reorganized and reformed, under the watchful gaze of Bertha Stumpf, a burly, one-eyed, battle-scarred old veteran of the Wolverton Branch. She has decided to raise funds by turning overdue library fines over to collection agencies—some of them prone to very heavy tactics indeed. This has caused some friction with the public.

Department of Transportation

This used to be the department in charge of maintaining roads, street-cleaning and snow-plowing. The city manager sold all these functions off to various subcontractors, and Corporation Yard, where the department's motor pool was based, sits dark and silent. The Bedlam Police Department still uses its facilities to service their helicopters, but no one ever goes inside the main building anymore. Nobody is quite sure what happened to all the equipment that was stored at the Yard.

Office of Tax Assessment

Located in a temporary office space on the 13th floor of a downtown skyscraper (until City Hall eventually gets repaired), the Tax Assessment Office is one of the last sections of the Bedlam City Government to avoid being privatized. This is odd. It's exactly the sort of purely administrative office that could be easily farmed out. There would be no public outcry if property tax assessments were carried out by someone else. Yet the Czernik machine, which normally pushes hard for outsourcing city services, always fights to keep the office from being privatized. In fact the city pays an exorbitant rent on their office space—and the building doesn't even belong to one of Big Andy's cronies! What is going on here? Some observers wonder if something important to Big Andy and his political organization is happening behind the closed doors of the Tax Assessor's Office.

The office itself is relatively small, with a staff of thirty or so employees working out of a single office suite. It's a

very nice suite and they have better creature comforts than most city office workers. Their official job is to determine the value of buildings and other property in Bedlam, and determine how much property tax the owners owe. The actual on-site property-tax assessments are performed by a contractor (JX Services) and the office seems a little top-heavy with managers and other political appointees, most of them connected to Big Andy's political machine.

They are neither swift nor efficient, but not especially corrupt. If you want to use a bribe to reduce your property taxes, you should pay it to the assessor JX Services sends around to look at your property, not to the office staff downtown.

The current head of the office is Operations Supervisor Gladys Tork, a ferocious, inarticulate lady from Stark Hill who is rumored to have Attention Deficit Disorder. Her sister is married to Big Andy Czernik's little brother.

Child Protective Services

This agency never really recovered from a bad scandal that came to light ten years ago. A judge named Hedda Scharff used to sell babies on the open market with the help of some high-ranking officials in the Bedlam Department of Child Protective Services. For two decades, her chief confederates, Darlene Wicker and Maisy Landrum (both Deputy Chiefs of BCPS) would alert Judge Wicker to any young mothers with questionable backgrounds. Judge Scharff would then declare the mother unfit, and have the baby turned over to Wicker and Landrum. They would place the child in care of the Happy Hands Company, an orphanage/day-care provider that all three conspirators had heavily invested in. Happy Hands would then turn the infant over to whoever Wicker and Landrum suggested (anyone who wanted a baby and could pay the going rate to their Mafia contacts) but continue drawing state funds to support the child.

After twenty years of this scam, there were a lot of phantom children on Happy Hands' books. So many that by the time the state police started taking an interest, it was impossible to conceal the

fact that they simply didn't have the kids. Where had the children gone? At her trial, Darlene Wicker claimed that she only participated in the scam to save the children from Bedlam's foster care system, and that only good and deserving parents who couldn't go through the state's torturous adoption process ever actually received babies. But in fact the Russian Mob bought some, a cult called the Hand of the Bloody Moon bought some, others were sold to Mafia associates whose criminal records prevented them from adopting children.

It's impossible to ask Hedda Scharff why she did it or where the kids went. She checked into Our Lady of Sorrow Hospital (see Page 113) for a biopsy and died on the operating table before she could be indicted.

However much contempt we might feel for Darlene Wicker, it is true that Bedlam's foster care system was a mess. There weren't enough case workers or foster parents, so kids were always getting shuttled around between homes, never getting a chance to stay anywhere for long. A lot of foster parents were taking on ten or twelve kids at once, keeping the stipend they got for each one, feeding them the minimum required to survive and working them like slaves until they turned eighteen.

Between the scandal and the department's other problems, no one raised much objection when the whole thing got privatized five years ago. A Human Assets Management company called ThetaCare now oversees the operation. They farm the social work out to various small firms and contractors, but the actual Asset Management (by which they mean feeding and sheltering orphans) is handled by the Happy Hands Company.

They may be under new management, but there are a lot of familiar faces at Happy Hands. Most of the foster parents they enlist are the very same people who served under the old Bedlam Department of Child Protective Services. And that's not all. Darlene Wicker got stabbed to death her first week in prison, but Maisy Landrum cut a deal with the DA's office and served just two years probation. These days, she's a Senior Executive Vice President at Happy Hands.

Adventure Seed

One winter morning a naked child comes running down the street. Sobbing, filth-caked, stumbling over piles of dirty snow. He runs right into a PC, looks in their face and says "please!" Just before the cops come around the corner.

"Hey!" they yell. Stop that goddamn kid!"

How much the PCs are going to learn about this situation depends on what they do. These are officers from the juvie squad. The boy is trying to run away from his foster home—a hell-pit run by Myron and Elvira Cain. They keep their charges locked in cages, feed them the absolute minimum and make them spend all day assembling ugly stuffed dolls, which proudly bear the "Made in the USA" label.

It's going to be difficult to prove any of these allegations against the Cains. They're very well connected to the Czernik machine and no one wants to investigate them. PCs who mess with them may soon find the local authorities turning hostile, and if they lean on them hard, they may beg the Mafia to hire a supervillain to get the PCs off their case.

Perhaps the ideal solution to this problem would be to secretly break the kids out and turn them over to Father Dennis of the Celestial Spirit Fellowship. He has quietly dealt with matters like this before (see Page 358.) Of course, PCs who have a problem with breaking the law may have some scruples to wrestle with.

Bedlam Fire Department

More and more neighborhoods in Bedlam are coming to rely on volunteer fire brigades, since the city's fire department is in such bad shape. Unfortunately, the volunteers aren't adequate to the job either. The gated community of Stone Ridge has actually gone so far as to hire its own private contractor to provide fire and emergency services.

The Bedlam Fire department is supposed to have eight fire houses manned around the clock. In fact they have five—they had six, but one of them recently

burned down. Perhaps as many as twenty-five percent of the fire hydrants don't work. They have seven working ambulances for a city that needs at least thirty. Chronically short on personnel, they have undermanned shifts, obsolete equipment and a history of trying to hide their inadequacies with bureaucratic tricks. They also have a bad reputation for refusing to promote black and Hispanic firefighters and for taking much too long to respond to emergencies in inner city neighborhoods.

The current fire chief is Lucy Szmuda, who the City Council brought in from York, Pennsylvania, where she made a name for herself getting their troubled fire department in order. A skinny, scowling little woman of about fifty, she has a gravelly voice and a harsh demeanor.

Not that her toughness has done her much good on this job. The department resents her for being a woman and for being an outsider. They have begun a steady campaign of harassment to force her out. Not a day goes by without Chief Szmuda getting another death threat or being the victim of some ugly prank. This weighs on her. She is starting to lose sleep, to get irrational and paranoid, to scream at her staff over trivial matters. She's thinking about leaving soon.

MAJOR POLITICAL FIGURES

Here we have stats and background information for some of Bedlam's movers and shakers, including the City Manager and the most powerful members Municipal Council. District Attorney Cord Killingsworth is also pretty powerful, but we have him listed separately, under the DA's Office.

City Manager Wilfred Krebbs



Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Notice d10, Knowledge (Civic Administration) d10, Knowledge (Early Radio Memorabilia) d10

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 4

Hindrances: Cautious

Edges: Arcane Background (City Manager, runs the whole town), Connections

Gear: Bulletproof Briefcase (Toughness 12)

Background: The most powerful man in Bedlam wasn't elected by anyone. He's Wilfred Krebbs, and he's the city's Account Manager. He plays something like the role of a mayor, overseeing Bedlam's daily functions, making sure the trash gets picked up and the streets get policed. For the most part that means seeing that the sub-contractors who oversee these functions get paid on time.

Krebbs doesn't work for the City of Bedlam, he works for a giant aerospace company which it might be better not to name (but see Page 141.) They provide city management services for a fee, and send someone like Krebbs in to do the actual management. They run somewhere between three and eight small cities around the country, and they are looking to expand into bigger markets. They don't like drawing attention to this program, since it makes people uneasy to know that their city government has been privatized.

It's not fair to say that Krebbs' first loyalty is to his company. In fact it's to himself. He sees Bedlam as a difficult assignment that he might be able to leverage into a position as one of his firm's Vice Presidents if he does it well.

Unfortunately, his definition of doing it well doesn't involve making any kind of changes or improvements to the city. In fact his bosses would hate it if any major scandals or corruption came to light on his watch—this rocks the boat and draws attention to their involvement in city governance. Instead he wants to master the high-impossible task of making sure that the city gets through the day with all its paperwork filled out.

Krebbs works in a small unmarked office on the 30th floor of the Grunewald

building downtown. A gray, joyless, tightly-wound little man, he speaks in a robotic monotone and never raises his voice. He is unmarried and has an enormous collection of early radio memorabilia at his condo in a larger city near Bedlam. He is one of the few people who commutes into town each day.

More or less totally devoid of feeling, apart from ambition and a desire to show off how much he knows about early radio, he's not the right kind of guy to beg for sympathy. Messy emotions like that make him uncomfortable. You can tell what kind of person Krebs is by looking at the walls of his office. They have no decorations at all.

No one has the heart to tell him that he has devoted his life to a doomed cause. Unmarried guys never make VP.

Councilman "Big Andy" Czernik



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d10+2, Taunt d6+2

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;
Toughness: 5

Edges: Charismatic, Connections, Inspire, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Persuasion and Taunt)

Background: One of the two most powerful elected leaders in the city, Big Andy Czernik shares Bedlam with the Reverend Willie Boggs, but he has the bigger share. About half the Municipal Council owes fealty to him, but it's the stronger half.

A red-faced, red-cheeked, red-headed giant of a man, Big Andy has a deep loud booming voice and a kind of aggressive friendliness that scares his allies and his enemies alike. He's a natural born bully and has been one all his life. He's also really smart and tries to keep his bullying under control, tries not to intimidate people unless there's something to gain by it—but sometimes he just can't resist.

A lifelong resident of Stark Hill, he draws his support from the old neighborhood and he looks out for its interests above all else. Except possibly for the Mafia's interests. In his youth, Big Andy ran with the mob-affiliated street gang called the Coronets, and some people say he became close pals with Bedlam's leading mobster, Donny Scarpia, back when they were both juvenile delinquents.

Whether or not Big Andy is in fact the pawn of the Mafia, he certainly spends a lot of time hanging out with Donny and the old crowd. In a way Andy, like Donny, is still a teenaged hood, and he still wears his hair in a big, sweeping pompadour to show his respect for his origins. It looks like the crest of a rooster, people say.

Always grinning and jolly, unless he's bellowing threats and insults at the top of his lungs, Andy is never any less than three times bigger than life—so they say. He's also more crooked than Lucifer himself. Great at playing machine politics, Big Andy gets things done for his constituents. A lot of them are bad things.

Despite being both a product of and a central player in the politics of Stark Hill, he is not himself a racist. He certainly does his part to keep non-whites out of Stark Hill and to steal as much as possible of the city's

resources away from them, but he does not adhere to any stupid ideas about racial superiority. He would never underestimate the intelligence of an enemy like Willie Boggs and he would be willing to work with anyone to get his goals accomplished.

Most of Big Andy's considerable wealth is in his wife's name or the names of his brothers and sisters (he's the oldest child of ten.)

He lives in a Stark Hill bungalow with so many extensions and additions that the extra add-ons are bigger than the original house. He is, he likes to say, lord and master in his home, and all nine of his own kids are deathly afraid of him. They are an amazing collection of neurotics and failures (mostly due to their dad's constant bullying) and a source of endless disappointment to him. Andy reportedly gets a little crazy when any young man tries to date one of his three shy, fat, nervous daughters.

Councilman Willie Boggs
Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Intimidate d6, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d10, Taunt d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;
Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Loyal, Quirk (always tries to help his neighborhood)

Edges: Inspire, Natural Leader

Background: The Reverend Willie Boggs has been the leading voice of Bedlam's African-American community for decades. He's the minister of the Good News Thunderous Hammer Church of God in Christ—the largest church in Wolverton. But he ministers to his community's political needs as much as to its spiritual

needs.

A charming old scoundrel with an eye for the ladies, Willie Boggs is devoted to getting Wolverton its fair share by whatever methods are required. If that means playing machine politics and funneling graft back into the community to give people the jobs and money they need, then so be it. Bedlam is hopelessly crooked anyway, so why not steal a piece of the action for the folks who need it most, before somebody else steals it first?

He knows better than to confront the Rock or the Stone, Wolverton's two leading crime lords, but he absolutely refuses to take money from either one of them, much to their disgust. Neither one has ever taken any corrective action against him, because he's popular and does well by Wolverton.

Oddly, while he won't directly accept money from the mob, and rails in every sermon against the "thug life" and the gangs, he does take money and gifts from some shady boxing promoters who are almost certainly associated with the Scarpia crime family.

In person, Willie is a charmer. He's also a great public speaker, although he uses an odd kind of rhyming slang that he seems to have made up himself. Cheerfully cynical and obscene in private, he's also amazingly generous and spends a lot of time trying to help people.

He lives in one of Wolverton's biggest houses, asprawl with recent additions. His property is surrounded by a spiked wrought iron fence and he has armed bodyguards on the premises 24 hours a day.

His wife Dot plays a major role in administering his church. She is as grim and humorless as he is pleasant and cordial.

Councilman Ron Cordell

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Intimidate d6, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Persuasion d8, Taunt d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 3

Edges: Strong-Willed

Hindrances: Loyal, Mean, Quirk (bad temper)

Background: The councilman from Greely Point, Mr. Cordell brings excitement and unpredictability to any meeting. Constantly bitter, surly and sullen, he always looks as though he has just been crying. Sometimes he explodes over trivial things and he has twice physically assaulted witnesses giving testimony before the council. He even tried to rough up Big Andy once, but thought better of it and scampered back to his chair before Mr. Czernik could lay hands on him. Big Andy still chuckles about it.

A whiner, a grumbler and a fatalist, Ron's attitude might be best summed up by his favorite phrase "it's always us that gets it."

He's a little confused and sometimes gets angry with people who are actually agreeing with him, because he has misunderstood what they have said. Who does he mean by "us" when he say that it's "always us that gets it"? Surely not Greely Point, which is doing better than most parts of Bedlam. The general feeling is that he means the Gorganzua Crime family, which doesn't get nearly as much graft as its bigger, fiercer neighbors the Scarpas do. It's kind of an open secret that Ron is the Gorganzuas' boy.

He spends so much of his time on the council wrangling over the arcane details of one or another construction contract (hunting for the Gorganzuas' share) that he's nearly blind to the real crises facing Bedlam.

Ron lives in the small Italian neighborhood on Lurman Avenue with his ailing wife, Mona. Their kids are in college and none of them are likely to come back to Bedlam any time soon. He's alienated them all pretty thoroughly. A short, plump old guy with thinning white hair, he has big bushy eyebrows and a permanent miserable scowl.

Councilman Righteous Townsend



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidate d6+2, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d10, Streetwise d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Charismatic, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate and Taunt)

Hindrances: Vow (to clean up Bedlam)

Background: Righteous Townsend is the absolute opposite of the Reverend Willie Boggs. A tall and handsome man, with premature gray at his temples, he is utterly incorruptible and all but totally humorless. At his core he's ambitious and cold. Always polite, he's always formal and a little stiff, too. But he's an amazing public orator, with tremendous energy and a deep, booming voice.

He is desperate to clean up Wolverton and Bedlam itself, because he thinks it will help advance his own political career. If he thought he could get away with being a crook, he would, but other crooks already have that angle sewed up tight, so he has opted to be a crusader instead. He's focusing his efforts on undercutting the Boggs machine, right now, for not only is Willie Boggs his most immediate rival, but he's a lot safer to tangle with than, for example, Big Andy Czernik.

Righteous never seems to sleep. He's constantly in motion, making deals with preachers who view Willie Boggs as a rival, listening to constituents who have been shafted by the Boggs machine. He's not the best guy to talk to if you want to get a pothole fixed, but he's the right guy to tell if you've heard that a particular city contractor is giving kickbacks to Willie Boggs.

Unmarried, Righteous Townsend is considered one of the city's most eligible bachelors, because no one has realized that he's gay (his long-term boyfriend is Buddy Dean, the managing editor of the Bedlam Informer.)

He lives in Wolverton, in a converted bungalow with a huge finished basement that he uses for a meeting space with community leaders. He absolutely will not take a bribe and he absolutely will not bend the rules for you. His mom raised him to be hard, he says. Because life is hard.

Councilor Mollie Schwartz

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Guts d8, Knowledge (Civics) d8, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Persuade d8+2

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Charismatic, Connections (Bedlam City Government, Community Groups), Rich

Hindrances: Stubborn, Heroic

Background: Mollie Schwartz is the nicest person in Bedlam politics, and perhaps the least effective. She's relentlessly cheerful, even in the face of total disaster, sweet and optimistic no matter what. About three years ago she got mugged, and gently told the mugger he ought to wear a scarf on such a cold night. He later got caught for a more serious crime and she still visits him in prison.

Constantly active in community

service and the Stone Ridge Garden Club, no one knows where she finds the energy to do it all (in fact she has a prescription for amphetamines.) An old, dear friend of Zelma Goltz, she claims that the former head of Bedlam's Redevelopment Commission isn't a bad person or a flake. She just had a difficult job to do. Then again, Mollie was also a dear friend of Dr. Melvin "The Mad Dentist" Flickinger before his crimes were discovered. In fact he was her dentist, though he never once harmed her. This is all typical of Mollie. She truly, genuinely cares about people, but she's not very good at understanding them.

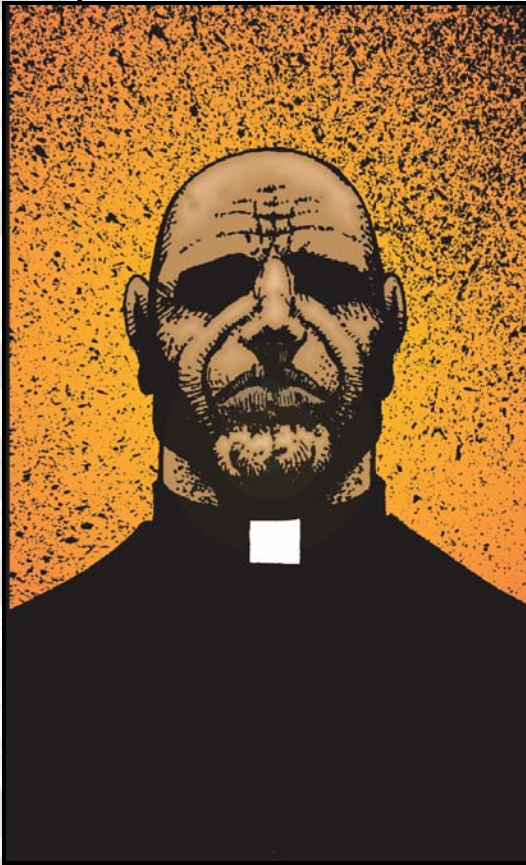
Although she's a crusading reformer and impossible to corrupt, "Big Andy" Czernik claims to like and respect her. "The conscience of the Council" he calls her. It's really valuable to have a token reformer in the City Government, and even better to have one who has no hope of ever getting anything accomplished.

Mollie lives in Stone Ridge with her husband, a semi-retired partner at the law firm of Spengler, Gibbons and Pugh (see Page 156.) Their kids have all grown up and moved to better places. Now Bedlam is Molly's child.

District Attorney Cord Killingsworth

Bedlam's DA is a tall, stern, handsome man with a hook for a hand. Grim and sober, he seldom smiles. He's on a personal crusade against superhumans who break the law. And also superhumans who don't. While he isn't corrupt himself, he has little interest in rooting out the corruption all around him. He's much more focused on putting capes behind bars and on getting enough major cases prosecuted that he can move on to higher office and get the Hell away from Bedlam. We have his stat block and complete background information for him on Page 92.

Bishop Sloat



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Knowledge (Catholic Church) d8, Knowledge (Supernatural) d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d10+2

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: Charismatic, Connections, Inspire, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Persuasion and Taunt)

Hindrances: Vow (to wipe out the supernatural), Quirk (intolerant and self-absorbed), Quirk (hates wicked little boys)

Background: Cardinal Scarpetti is the nominal head of the Church in Bedlam. However, until his current legal difficulties are resolved he can't leave the precincts of the Vatican City. In his absence Bedlam's faithful are overseen by Bishop Lemuel Sloat.

Bishop Sloat is what they call a no-nonsense priest. During his tenure as the headmaster of Our Lady of the Five Wounds

School for Boys, he implemented a program of corporal punishment more rigorous than anything seen since the 1950s. Two of the boys he personally attended to died while receiving discipline, and this might have caused the Holy Mother Church some difficulties if their parents had been less devout, so Monsignor Sloat was hastily promoted to Bishop and placed in an administrative position. He finds it deeply frustrating not to be able to have direct contact with the faithful any more, and now that he's become Bedlam's chief administrator he feels more remote from the flock than ever. It weighs heavily upon him. All he ever wanted to do was minister to the faithful and crush wickedness from the hearts of boys. Why must he busy himself with endless piles of paperwork and dismal Planning Committee meetings?

He was always grim, terse and short-tempered. These days his gruffness has grown far worse. His weekly radio sermons sound as if he is delivering them from the grave—and his deep, scratchy voice doesn't help.

Recently Sloat has become aware of the actual, literal existence of the supernatural and this knowledge obsesses him. He's determined to do everything in his considerable power to stamp out every hint of this blasphemous taint from Bedlam. He has been in touch with a gang of ruthless fanatics called the Opus Ombræ (see Page 204) and if the GM wants, he may be helping them to establish a chapter house in Bedlam. Sloat will annihilate this city's wickedness if it kills him—or anyone else.

He's also deeply entangled with the Mafia. He knows they do questionable things, but they donate a lot of money and (more importantly) they keep the blacks out of Stark Hill. A staunch ally of the Czernik machine, at least in theory, these days he's often too distracted or depressed to give them his full support.

Bishop Sloat is aware that sometimes bad children tempt priests into touching them in inappropriate ways (although he has never felt tempted in this way himself—hurting children appeals to him far more than caressing them.) He has

worked hard to root out this problem. Now whenever a family comes forward with that kind of accusation, the Church immediately sues them and threatens to have their children taken away by the courts. Then they have the family socially ostracized by their neighbors. If they persist in their wickedness, the Bishop may have his Mafia contacts start calling them up and making threats in the middle of the night. This new program of getting tough with Holy Mother Church's enemies has been so successful that other dioceses around the country are starting to take note, and may soon try to imitate Sloat's success.

Chief Librarian Bertha Stumpf



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidate d8 +2, Knowledge (Administration) d10, Knowledge (Library Science) d10, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Notice d10

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7

Edges: Connections (Bedlam City Government), Frenzy, Strong Willed, Tough as Nails

Hindrances: One Eye, Stubborn

Background: A battle-scarred veteran of the Wolverton Branch Library, she lost an eye in an encounter with a patron, and she still managed to subdue him and perform a Citizens' Arrest. Bertha does not bother to cover her missing eye with a patch. If it bothers people, that's their problem, not hers.

She has always felt that people should pay more for overdue books and with the library's new computer system in place she at last has the means to track down the scoundrels and make them all pay. She has implemented a policy of turning overdue fines over to collection agencies, some of them Mafia-affiliated firms that are prone to using heavy-handed tactics. And with her records computerized at last, she can track down violators who may have committed their offenses ten or even twenty years ago.

As the loudest and most aggressive department head in the city, she has a surprising amount of pull with the Municipal Council, although she never seems to use her influence to actually buy any new books. She has grown far more concerned with spending her money on punishing bad readers than on rewarding good ones. After all, for a good reader, reading is its own reward.

Bertha lives by herself in a bad part of town, just off Ash Street. The love of her life, a teacher named Netta Torkleson, has recently left her. Bertha is heartbroken and now pours her whole life into her work. So let library scofflaws beware.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN BEDLAM

As in every city, criminal justice in Bedlam is divided into three parts. The police, who investigate crimes, the courts, who prosecute them and the correctional authorities who attempt to punish them. We'll start here with an in-depth look at Bedlam's police force, then move on to the courts and prisons.

The Bedlam City Police Force

The Bedlam Police are one of the few divisions of the city government that hasn't been privatized. They are fiercely proud of this status, and wary of outsiders being brought in to manage them—fearful that this is the first sign that the City is planning to sell the Department off. The City Council recently brought in a famous police chief from Inglewood, California, named Duke Manning. The department made his job hell until he left and the position remains open. In the absence of a chief, the force technically answers to its Acting Executive Officer, an overworked bureaucrat named Lester Dunwoody, but in fact the Precinct Captains pretty much run things like their own personal fiefdoms.

Officially Bedlam has a force of thirteen hundred officers, organized into six precincts. The sad truth is that many of these positions are "currently unfilled" for lack of funds, and two of the precinct houses are officially under construction (one of them still has a fast food restaurant operating on the site where it is supposed to be.)

In fact Bedlam can muster a force of about nine hundred officers. Their equipment is old—none of the cars have computer terminals, so officers are forever having to call the dispatcher to look up license plates and so forth, jamming their crowded radio bandwidth.

Because their uniforms haven't been updated in a while, they have a distinctly retro look, with hexagonal black hats and

heavy leather topcoats. They use handheld radios rather than shoulder-mounted units.

Bedlam's cops are known for their uncompromising attitude toward crime—they will not rest until they have had a taste of the action. Notoriously corrupt and quick to resort to force, they have low morale and tend not to feel as though anyone in power is looking after them. This promotes both bribery and brutality, as well as a kind of insular "code of silence" that makes them more willing to cover up one another's transgressions.

How to Bribe a Bedlam Cop

As with everything, there are procedures and etiquette to follow in successfully bribing a Bedlam police officer. You don't want to get it wrong and offend them—that may result in their demanding a higher bribe.

The first step is to see if this policeman seems likely to accept a bribe. Some Bedlam cops will make this easy—they'll shake you down for one whether you have committed a crime or not. For the others, you should tentatively ask them if there is a fine for the offense you're being charged with, and if you could "take care of it right here."

Of course some Bedlam cops are clean. By certain estimates it might be as high as 15% of the force. But even if a particular cop doesn't take bribes, he or she is unlikely to be offended by the offer and very unlikely to report it. They know that this is how things are done and that it's not a good idea to be seen making trouble about it. If they don't want to accept a bribe, they usually just won't respond to the suggestion. If you don't seem to get it, they'll say "no, thanks." Only a few crazy crusading zealots will try to arrest you for attempting to bribe them, and they tend not to last long on the force.

Once a cop has indicated that it would be acceptable to "take care of it right

here" you should ask how much the fine might be. They'll probably quote you a vague figure ("might be as much as...".) You are entitled to haggle unless the crime is serious. If the cop indicates that they don't want to haggle "no, I already told you how much it could be") then stop trying to haggle before they raise the price on you.

Once they have agreed to a price, hand them your identification with the money folded underneath.

If you aren't "connected" to the Bedlam Mob or city government, a cop probably won't accept a bribe to let you off the hook for a violent felony, but most other crimes are negotiable.

Thirty dollars usually fixes a moving violation, twenty lets you off the hook for vagrancy. Fifty will get you out of a DUI where no one was hurt. Downgrading a domestic dispute to a warning is about \$200 unless the cop really hates wifebeaters.

While crimes like murder and bank robbery aren't negotiable (unless arranged in advance with the powers that be) a fleeing suspect might be able to get a cop to look the other way for \$500 or so.

Bedlam City Police Radio Channels

- 1: Precinct One
- 2: Precinct Two
- 3: Precinct Three
- 4: Precinct Four and Five (they share a channel between them)
- 5: Records Division (used to call in license-plate and identity lookups, this channel sees a lot of traffic and is often hard to get through on)
- 6: Tactical Operations (SWAT) Channel
- 7: Tactical Operations Two (used mostly, but not exclusively, by the Special Assault Squad)
- 8: Car-to-Car (this channel is much too close to some of the CB stations truckers use, and if you are anywhere near the freeway, it can pick up a lot of interference)
- 9-10: Unassigned as of yet

Structure of the Bedlam PD

The Bedlam Police are organized into the following divisions and subdivisions (we'll describe each one in detail later on.)

Patrol Services

First Precinct (Downtown and part of Hardwick Park)
Second Precinct (Stark Hill)
Third Precinct (Wolverton and part of Hardwick Park)
Fourth Precinct (Ash St. and the Country Club)
Fifth Precinct (Greely Point)
Sub-Station One (aka "Precinct 5½")
Dispatch Center
Highway Patrol
Traffic Control
Special Operations
 Aviation Detail
 K-9 Detail
 Mounted Detail
 Harbor Patrol Unit
 Tactical Operations (SWAT)
 Special Assault Squad
Community Relations Bureau
 Neighborhood Police Program

Detectives Bureau

Investigative Resources
 Crime Statistics Unit
 Police Laboratory
 Photographic Unit
 Hostage Negotiation Unit
 Bomb Squad
Homicide Squad
Robbery Squad
 Auto Crime Unit
Burglary Squad
Organized Crime Squad
Vice Squad
Narcotics Squad
Computer Crime Squad
Juvenile Crime Squad
Special Victims Liaison Unit
Gang Task Force
 Anti-Graffiti Vandalism Unit

Administrative Services

Office of the Chief of Police
Fiscal Affairs and Human Resources
Records Division
Public Affairs
Internal Affairs

Training Bureau

Ranks of the Bedlam Police

Police Chief
Executive Officer
Captain
Lieutenant
Sergeant
Patrol Officer

Note: "Detective" is not a rank—see the section on the Detectives Bureau below.

Explanation of Ranks

Technically, the head of the entire force is the Chief of Police. Alas, there is no such person. As mentioned above, the force drove off the last Chief the Council tried to impose on them and they don't yet have a new one.

The Executive Officer is the head of Administrative Services, and is widely considered to be the Chief's second-in-command, charged with making sure that all police operations run smoothly.

Each of the five precincts is headed up by a Captain, as is each Detective Squad, and most of the other individual units (the Bomb Squad, the Special Assault Squad, the Harbor Patrol, etc.)

A Lieutenant acts as Watch Commander for each of the three shifts at each precinct. Lieutenants also head up some of the smaller units—the head of K9 is a Lieutenant, for example, as is the head of the Anti-Graffiti Vandalism Unit.

Sergeants directly supervise the individual Patrol Units. Typically a Patrol Unit consists of two officers in a squad car (all too often there is only one patrol officer available.) Each sergeant will usually oversee five or six units. Sergeants do sometimes go on patrol themselves, but their main responsibilities are to manage the Patrol Officers and oversee booking (hence the term "Desk Sergeant".)

Patrol Services

These are the uniformed officers who patrol Bedlam's streets. Low on equipment, manpower and morale, they struggle to carry on in the face of the near certainty that they'll be privatized in a few years. This is the biggest division of the Bedlam Police Force, and the one the PCs are most

likely to encounter, so we're going to go over it in a lot of detail.

The Patrol Officers are organized into five precincts, plus one smaller "Substation." Highway Patrol, Traffic Control, Dispatch and the Special Operations Division (including SWAT, the Special Assault Group and a few oddball units like the mounted police and K-9 officers) are also part of Patrol Services, but are separate from the precincts and are based in Police Headquarters downtown.

As mentioned above, they don't have shoulder-mounted radios and their squad cars don't have computers. They rely on belt-mounted walkie-talkies and their car radios to communicate with one another and the Dispatch Center. If they want to run a car's plates or check a suspect for outstanding warrants, they have to call it in. As a result, their radio channels are often jammed with traffic.

Each precinct house is led by a Captain, and is supposed to have three Lieutenants (two of the five precincts have only one Lieutenant each.) Patrolmen are divided up into three eight-hour shifts, each led by a Watch Commander (normally a Lieutenant, but some watches are commanded by Sergeants if no Lieutenant is available.) Every shift is supposed to comprise 20 officers, although they tend to be a little shorthanded. A Sergeant acts as the immediate supervisor of between ten and twelve patrol officers, reporting to the Watch Commander on their performance.

During the day, officers can patrol alone, but at night they always ride in pairs. At least in theory. In practice they often have to drive alone, due to personnel shortages.

We'll start our detailed breakdown of Patrol Services with a description of each of the five precincts, as well as police headquarters, then move on to stats and background information for a generic Bedlam Patrol Officer, a police car, and a "paddy wagon" used to transport criminals. Then we'll have stats and background material for individual patrol officers and then for some of the ranking command personnel who oversee them.

We'll follow this by describing each of the smaller branches of Patrol Services (Special Operations, Dispatch, Traffic Control, etc) with stats for generic officers and write-ups for some individual ones. We'll include stat blocks for special vehicles and equipment (police helicopters, for example) where necessary.

The Five Precincts

Without a Chief, the individual Captains run their precincts the way they please. This varies a lot with the individual Captain. Some are lazy, some run a tight ship. Some are decent, some are outrageously bad. Here is a brief guide to Police Headquarters and to each of Bedlam's five precincts.

Police Headquarters

This scarred-up old behemoth of a building has served as Police Headquarters since the late 19th Century. Made of smog-stained brick, it looks grim and imposing. Administrative Services, the Police Laboratory, Special Operations, the Detective Bureau, Dispatch and the First Precinct are based in this building. The department's motor pool is located here as well, in a lot out back, surrounded by rusty concertina wire.

Headquarters has more holding cells than any of the other precinct houses, but they're still overcrowded. The Department doesn't make this public, but a couple of trailers parked in the motor pool lot are being used as extra holding cells. They're not exactly escape-proof.

It's an open secret that the department's anti-parahuman unit, the Special Assault Squad, is based in this building. Their temporary containment facility for parahuman prisoners is not here, however. Its location is a much more closely guarded secret.

There is always a police helicopter stationed on the top of the building, ready to respond to emergencies. It's usually kept half-fueled-up, for budgetary reasons.

The First Precinct

Based in Police Headquarters downtown, this is the largest precinct. It covers the downtown area and part of Hardwick Park.

The First Precinct is in the same building as a lot of the police administration services, and its officers hassle the administrative staff into giving them the biggest share of the Department's limited resources. Their equipment gets replaced quicker, their paperwork gets processed faster and so forth.

This is a fairly corrupt precinct. The same people have been running it for more than ten years and they have had time to get deeply entrenched, to build big networks of graft and forge lasting relationships with crooked politicians. It's also the most efficient and probably the most competent precinct, since officers compete with one another to get a chance to work here.

Captain Norris "Sharkey" Muldoon runs the First Precinct with an iron hand. Sharkey's a stern disciplinarian with a reputation for doing his job well. He's also amazingly crooked—they say that he can hear a five-dollar bill hit the ground a block away.

A fearsome-looking guy with a black beard and a constant scowl, he wears sunglasses indoors and always seems to be chewing something.

The Second Precinct

Based in Stark Hill, this precinct has the least turnover and the best morale in the Department. Most of the officers who work here are actually locals and know the neighborhood well. They treat its Mafia overlords with deference and respect, never asking for more than their own traditional piece of the action. Cliquish and clubby, they resist being transferred out of the precinct and make outsiders feel unwelcome.

As you might imagine, this is the most crooked precinct in the city. It may or may not be the most brutal, depending on how you look at it. The officers who work here are certainly rough on any Hispanics or African-Americans who wind up in their clutches. In fact more than one non-white suspect has died in their custody. But if a suspect is from the neighborhood, they are lax and congenial—sometimes a little too lax.

Captain Willy Grogan is a friendly, easygoing boss, and very popular with his men. A beefy old Irish guy with a white moustache, he doesn't like to work hard and doesn't really bother to keep his boys in line. He's not a crook, but has no interest in cleaning up his Precinct—or in running it.

The real power behind Captain Grogan is his First Watch Commander, Sergeant "Big Chuck" O'Ryan. The force's most decorated veteran and its biggest, strongest officer, Big Chuck is a legend among his fellow officers. You can find out more about him under his individual listing on Page 55.

The Third Precinct

The Third Precinct squats on Wolverton like an invading army. Few of the officers who work here are Hispanic or African-American and almost none are from the neighborhood itself. Despite the efforts of the Community Police Program, they have done little in the past sixty years to gain the residents' confidence. This drastically increases the hold that gangs and organized crime have on the neighborhood, since local people don't trust the cops and turn elsewhere for help.

Part of Hardwick Park is in the Third Precinct and part of it is in the First. This has created turf conflicts and confusion. The Third Precinct also covers Bedlam Harbor, as best it can.

While there are patrolmen in the Third Precinct who shake down criminals and small business owners for money, they aren't entangled with the local crime scene the way the Second Precinct is. No one here likes or trusts them enough.

But things may be about to change. The new Captain, Moses Runyon, is eager to update the way the Third Precinct operates. He grew up in Wolverton and he's an old friend of Rock Johnson, one of the neighborhood's reigning crime lords. With a little work, Runyon hopes to soon have a relationship like the one the Second Precinct has with the community in Stark Hill.

The Detective Bureau's Gang Task Force is based in the Third Precinct and this might complicate the new Captain's plans.

The Fourth Precinct

Captain Titus Bloch runs the Fourth Precinct. He's an older guy with a grey brushcut and a very square looking head. A few years back, Captain Bloch got taken hostage by a Supervillain called Damocles Faust, and he was never quite the same afterwards. Blank and stiff, he sometimes tries to talk to furniture, says "lunch" instead of "Squad Car" or discharges his sidearm at invisible enemies. His lieutenants are trying to cover for him.

Bloch is completely clean these days and cannot be bribed. If you bring him evidence of a crime that's been committed in his department then he will try to ferret out the culprits. But he is so hopelessly odd that he's fairly ineffective as an ally. Worse, he still has a mind-control implant in his head and anything you tell him will immediately get back to the supervillain underground. The control unit for the implant in his head has been sold many times and could turn up in the hands of any villain the GM likes.

In the meantime, Bloch's precinct runs itself. It's fairly crooked, but its major problem is its lax discipline. With the Captain too addled to really notice whether his men are doing their job, slothfulness and under-performance run rampant here. They aren't especially brutal, by and large, having mostly given up the war on crime.

Perhaps that's for the best. Their turf covers the Country Club, the skid row down around Ash Street and Gravesend Beach. Not exactly fertile ground for the seed of law and order to flourish in.

The Fifth Precinct

As noted above, we leave the Fifth Precinct entirely in the GM's hands, to staff with whatever NPCs he or she would like. It covers Greely Point.

The Sub-Station

Sometimes called "Precinct 5.5", the small police substation at the Liberty Shoppes Mall is effectively its own independent entity. They patrol the giant mall on foot and drive around it in their squad cars, but they don't claim to have it completely secure. They

venture into the Food Court only in groups of three or more.

Captain Ed Dunker was assigned to lead this unit after a bad nervous breakdown. He's pretty much recovered, although he's still awfully paranoid and always carries his sidearm around unholstered.

His men like working the mall. Not only are there plenty of gang members to shake down, but plenty of small shops to extort protection money from, too—all in one convenient location. Morale is high. They like their crazy Captain, like the way he screams at civilians and sticks his gun in kids' faces over nothing, his endless angry rants about freemasons and the CIA. Few of them would want to be transferred anywhere else.

A Crime Scene: Who's in Charge?

Technically a Sergeant is required to secure the scene of a major incident. In practice, there aren't enough Sergeants to go around and this often doesn't happen. Until the Sergeant or the detectives arrive, the first officer at the scene is responsible for securing it and for directing other emergency response personnel.

If federal law enforcement personnel present themselves at a crime scene, the local cops are instructed to cooperate with them. If they state that they are investigating this incident as a federal crime, then they take charge. Usually this means that the patrol officer, Sergeant or detective in charge of the scene remains responsible for securing the site, but takes direction from the feds.

Rarely, the feds will take over the entire scene, order the local cops away and bring in their own forensics people. This only happens if something really major is going on.

How Does Graft Work?

In precincts that have organized networks of dirty cops, the individual patrol officers (or detectives, if it's a crooked Detective Squad) all pool the money they collect in bribes and "protection" each week. They call this fund the "Pad" and it gets divided back up among all the officers who participate, according to their rank.

A rookie gets one share. A Patrol Officer gets two. A Sergeant gets three, a Lieutenant gets four, a Watch Commander (usually a Lieutenant) gets five and a Captain gets six.

Some precincts have pads that go all the way up to the Captain and involve nearly every officer who works there. Some don't.

They frown on guys who keep bribe money for themselves instead of contributing it to the pad, though they tolerate it if it doesn't get out of hand. But holding back protection money can get you reported to Internal Affairs for taking bribes.

Bedlam Patrol Officer

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Investigate d4, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Quick-Draw

Gear: Tonfa (d8+1), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1)

Background: Bedlam's police are sometimes called "the finest", but people mean it in an ironic kind of way. Two recent corruption scandals have left them with an unsavory reputation.

The city claims to have thirteen-hundred patrol officers on the force, but in fact there are only nine-hundred or so. A typical beat cop patrols in a battered up old Crown Victoria squad car, either with or without a partner as the precinct's budget allows. Officially everyone has a partner and the Department would never send an officer out unprotected and alone. But this is blatantly untrue.

Quite a few of Bedlam's finest can be bribed, but contrary to popular belief not all of them shake people down for protection money or run errands for organized crime. Their cruisers are old and worn-down looking, with no computers and dented fenders. They have to call suspicious license plate numbers in to the dispatcher to have them looked up—they can't do it themselves from the car.

Patrolmen carry Glock 9 millimeter handguns and sometimes non-standard weapons that they've bought themselves. Too often they have notches carved in their nightsticks. What this means, you don't want to know.

They don't all hold the same views about superheroes and costumed vigilantes, which means that a Bedlam police officer may help, hinder, or attempt to arrest a Player Character at the GM's whim.

Individual Patrol Officers

You can place any of these patrolmen in any of the five precincts. You can even partner some of them together if you like (although Les Savage and Randall Blick would make a very odd couple indeed.)

Patrol Officer Randall Blick

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Investigate d4, Notice d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d4, Streetwise d4

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Habit (compulsive Eater, Obese, Quirk (astonishingly lazy)).

Gear: Tonfa (d8+1), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1)

Background: The moment most people see Officer Blick out of uniform, they immediately assume he must work in tech support. His huge girth and ratty, unkempt beard give it away. But in fact he's a cop, known throughout his precinct as the laziest officer in his shift, and the fattest.

Blick is famous for never getting out of his squad car. If you do make him get out of the car, he'll be pretty mad about it.

He will not chase a suspect under any circumstances.

For the most part he limits his police work to yelling angrily out the squad car window at people to "stop that!" or "get outta there!" Sullen and surly, constantly stuffing his face, Blick is pretty depressed and the 300 plus pounds he's lugging around with him doesn't do much to improve his energy level.

Blick is willing to take a bribe but doesn't have it in him to shake down businesses or extort money out of anyone. No one has ever asked him to carry out any errands for the Mob, nor are they likely to ask.

While he's always in a bad mood, he'd never beat up a suspect in his charge—that would be too much work. Not a very strict cop, he's always letting people off with warnings, even for surprisingly serious crimes, because he doesn't want to go to all the trouble of apprehending them. His squad car is such a mess that he has difficulty finding partners and often patrols alone at night. This suits him fine. Sometimes he pulls over into a parking lot and sleeps through his shift.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Investigate d4, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Connections (police force, Stark Hill street gangs), Quick-Draw

Hindrances: Loyal, Mean

Gear: Tonfa (d6+1), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1)

Background: Officer Ferrante has worked every detail available to a policewoman, from dispatcher to plainclothes decoy. She likes being a patrol officer the best. A former gang girl from Stark Hill, she still has "Property of the Dukes" tattooed on her forearm. She proudly displays her gang tattoos and still feels a lot of loyalty to the Dukes—many of whom became cops.

She is intensely devoted to the force and will do anything, including planting evidence and lying under oath, to protect her fellow officers. She would probably be willing to go to jail for them. She likes roughing suspects up (although she's never killed one)—it reminds her of the days when the Dukes would rumble with the Viscounts. In fact she's always looking for a chance to cause someone a little harm.

A short, curvy woman in her late thirties, she used to have big hair but now police regulations force her to pull it back in a ponytail. It's getting gray, so she dyes it black. She usually has an unpleasant smile. Officer Ferrante is more than willing to take a bribe and enjoys coercing them out of shopkeepers. She is very insensitive to rape victims, perhaps because of what she had to go through during her own gang initiation, and has been disciplined for this.

If there is one thing Officer Ferrante really hates, it's people who think they are smarter or better than she is. She is always on the lookout for someone who might fit this description and is ready to cause them extra grief.

While Ferrante drinks a bit, she's not a lush. She likes to use cocaine while she's partying, but she's no addict.

Ferrante is aware that some of the stuff she has done is pretty bad, but feels that her regular trips to the confessional booth have shriven her of any sin, so what does she have to worry about?

She has only ever dated other cops or gang members, with the exception of the man she married. Her husband, Artie, is a big, friendly guy from Stark Hill who has been in love with her since high school. He works in the Greely Olde Tymme Toy Factory and spends a lot of time taking care of their five kids (two of his own and three from previous relationships.)

Unfortunately for Artie, Theresa still likes to party with her fellow cops and is constantly unfaithful to him, right under his nose. He doesn't know how to cope with it—her cop friends scare him half to death and they bully him terribly. This is really starting to wear on him, but what can he do?

Patrol Officer Lance Stroessner

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Investigate d4, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Quirk (looking for a man with a leash).

Edges: Quick-Draw

Gear: Tonfa (d8+1), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1),

Background: A big, silly, fun-loving kid at heart, Officer Stroessner never completely outgrew being a juvenile delinquent, even now that he's in his thirties. He still likes to make homemade bombs and blow them up in vacant lots. He rousts teenagers having parties and drinks their alcohol once he's confiscated it. He chews gum with his mouth open, grinning like a big sleazy dog.

Speaking of dogs, when he gets really bored, he likes to shoot strays. He nearly got in serious trouble doing that a couple of years ago. He was driving by himself, at night, and he felt really bored, so he spotted a stray dog, rolled down his window and shot it. Then a guy holding a leash walked out from behind a tree. Lance took off as fast as he could, but he's not completely sure the guy didn't get his number. He tells this story often and it never fails to get a laugh from his fellow cops. But he worries about it, too.

Lance has devoted considerable effort to tracking down the guy with the leash, to make sure he doesn't make some kind of a thing about this. Once he finds that little creep, he'll give him the kind of scare a guy never forgets. Last year he thought he found the guy and he truly put the fear of God and Lance in him. But later he found out it couldn't have been the right guy. The jerk he leaned on had only just moved to Bedlam—he didn't live here when Lance shot the dog. Some of the guys rib him about that one, but he bears it with good humor.

Lance looks like a cop. Not a fat moustache-wearing cop, but a crew-cut wearing, bodybuilding cop. He wears thick

horn-rimmed glasses that look really odd on his heavy-boned brutal features. Except for his glasses, he resembles an action figure.

Lance is between girlfriends, He lives by himself in a shabby apartment on the outskirts of the Meadows.

Patrol Officer Lester "Les" Savage

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Investigate d4, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Mean, Quirk (hates crime, hates criminals, hates this town).

Edges: Frenzy

Gear: Tonfa (d6+1), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1),

Background: The corruption Les sees all around him disgusts him deeply. So does the city itself. But nothing disgusts him as much as crime.

He grew up in Wolverton and saw all kinds of bad things happen to his neighborhood. His dad was a cop, who could never stand the level of corruption in the Bedlam PD and refused to participate in it. The other cops hated his dad and made life tough for him any way they could. This in turn made him drink. He was not a good guy when drunk, and Les still has the scars to prove it.

These days Les follows in his father's footsteps. He knows he can't do anything about the crooked stuff going on in the Department, so he tries to ignore it. He takes his anger out on suspects, and potential suspects and guys whose faces he just doesn't like. He hands out beatings like Christmas fruitcake, and the guys at the precinct house are starting to think he's a bit of a fruitcake himself.

Nothing makes Les feel as great as nabbing a couple of teenagers who are probably up to no good and watching them get more and more scared as he screams at them in the back seat of his patrol car. Except for the moment when he starts hitting them with his nightstick. Not that either one of these things actually makes

him feel all that great. Nothing seems to satisfy his anger. He has begun to drink more and more when he's off-duty.

Divorced, his ex-wife took both his kids away and he's only allowed to see them with a social worker supervising the contact. He doesn't remember hitting them (although they sure seem to remember it themselves), and this frightens him.

He's a skinny, wiry African-American guy with deep scowl lines in his forehead. His hair and his moustache have gone prematurely white.

Ranking Officers

On the following pages we have stats and background information on a few Sergeants, Lieutenants, etc. for you to use as needed. "Big Chuck" O'Ryan works at the Second Precinct, but you can place the others anywhere.

Sergeant Roscoe Cleetus Jackson Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Healer d6, Investigate d8+2, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Knowledge (Law) d6, Knowledge (Philosophy) d6, Notice d8, Persuade d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6+2

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Heroic

Edges: Investigator, Steady Nerves

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1)

Background: A mild-mannered African-American guy in his fifties, Roscoe has held a lot of positions in the Bedlam Police Force. Since joining up as a patrolman fifteen years ago he has at times risen all the way to the rank of Lieutenant and he's worked as a detective in Homicide and Theft. But despite being a quiet, respectful, hard-working man he never won the trust of the higher-ups and has always been busted back to the ranks. He's recently been promoted back to Sergeant after spending two years as a lowly patrolman.

It's not that people think Roscoe is a snitch. He has never, to anyone's

knowledge, reported on any of the crooked stuff he sees going on around him. But he quietly refuses to take part in any of it. He won't take a bribe, he's gentle with suspects, won't plant evidence or perjure himself in court—who could ever trust a guy like that?

One of his old bosses tried transferring him to Internal Affairs, just to see if he was the kind of rat who would take an assignment like that, but he quietly refused. They kicked him out of the Homicide Squad anyway, just to be safe.

Other cops sometimes ask Roscoe why he won't take graft or rough-up suspects. He smiles and says that he became a cop to help people. Everyone has a good laugh over this joke, but then they walk away wondering what his real angle is.

In fact he doesn't know himself. Every day he wonders why he stays in Bedlam and tries to help a city that doesn't seem to want to be helped. But he supposes somebody has to.

Roscoe is divorced, his kids live in another state and he never gets to see them. He lives in an apartment on the edge of the Country Club. It's pretty depressing, so he spends most of his spare time unofficially looking up leads on cases and trying to help people out as best he can.

Honest, good-natured and smart, he seems like a natural ally for costumed vigilantes looking to clean up Bedlam. But in fact he mistrusts superheroes. He's from South Carolina, originally, and masked vigilantes remind him far too much of the Klan. It will take a lot of effort for a Player Character to win him over. In fact, he's more likely to become the PCs' nemesis than their ally. If he discovers that they have done something illegal (and most of a vigilante's activities are illegal) he will doggedly pursue them, tirelessly working to bring them to justice.

Sergeant Charles "Big Chuck" O'Ryan **Wild Card**

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Driving d8, Fighting d10, Guts d10, Healing d6, Intimidation d10+2, Investigate d6, Knowledge (Stark Hill) d8, Knowledge

(Criminal Underworld) d10, Notice d8, Persuade d8, Shooting d8, Streetwise d8, Swim d6, Taunt d10+2, Throwing d8

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 9;

Toughness: 9 (1)

Edges: Block, Combat Reflexes, Connections (crooked cops and Mafiosi), Improved Frenzy, Level-Headed, Quick-Draw, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidation or Taunt), Sweep, Tough as Nails

Gear: Tonfa (d12+1), 9mm Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest), Tactical Helmet (4 armor, only protects his head), spare gun 2d6 damage—but he never fires it. See below).

Background: Bedlam's number one hero cop, Big Chuck is something of a legend. Unquestionably the largest, strongest man on the Bedlam Police Force, he has made more arrests than anyone else and has risked his life countless times in the line of fire. This is the guy Crazy Sherry Stavros (see Page 78) fears and respects. He has worked as a detective before, but he's always gone back to being a patrolman. It's more satisfying, he says. That's where the real contact with the public happens.

Immensely popular within the department, he's a Stark Hill cop of the old school. He may be a hero, but he's not too big to take a little graft now and again or shake down a shopkeeper for a little folding money, just like the regular guys do. He knows the Mafia keeps Stark Hill white and he figures that's a good thing, so he's prepared to tolerate them and he knows to stay out of their way. He also knows that mistakes sometimes get made in the line of fire, so sometimes you have to plant a little evidence just to make sure the story comes out straight. He always carries a clean gun on his person in case he accidentally shoots an unarmed civilian. Once he plants it on their corpse, he's off the hook. He has his ethics, as he says, and would never do that to a white person. Unless someone important asked him to.

Big Chuck realizes that cops don't make a lot of money and he understands that sometimes a guy has to boost a little dope from the evidence room or help the mob kill a stoolie to help make ends meet. He wouldn't hold it against any of his brother cops—God knows he's done enough stuff like that himself.

There are rumors within the Bedlam Police that Big Chuck is the Scarpia Crime family's liaison to a crew of crooked cops within the Second Precinct—guys who sell dope, burglarize suspects' homes and carry out contract killings for the mob. No one says this very loud, however, since people who cross Big Chuck usually wind up dead.

A lifelong resident of Stark Hill, Big Chuck lives with his two brothers in the same brownstone where they all grew up. His brothers, Mack and Pat, are both cops, as was their father, their grandfather and all their uncles.

Presently single, Big Chuck's ex-wife was murdered during a break-in while she was in the process of divorcing him. Guys around the station house whisper that two of his girlfriends died the same way. They don't whisper it very loud, though.

A great-big red-cheeked Irishman, Chuck has a square face, a thick neck, a graying moustache and a lot of scars. There are deep laugh lines around his eyes, and he smiles a lot.

Friendly, charismatic and violent, Big Chuck likes superheroes, particularly if they beat up a lot of black people or talk about being "tough on crime" (which he thinks means the same thing.) He openly admires the vigilante called the "Hammer of Justice" and he would be more than willing to work with the PCs, provided they don't say anything that offends him. Saying bad things about cops offends him, as does saying good things about minorities. And you don't have to annoy Big Chuck very much to wind up dead in an alley.

He would make a powerful ally within the department, but he will expect favors from the PCs in return. Some of these favors are sure to be illegal and some of them are likely to be serious felonies. If they ever refuse, or ever cross him in any

other way, he will at once attempt to have them killed.

Lieutenant Morton Dilley

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d4, Healing d6, Investigate d4, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Cautious, Quirk (always nervous), Yellow.

Edges: Dodge

Gear: Tonfa (d6+1), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1),

Background: Constantly terrified, Mort Dilley is always sure he's about to get killed. He's seen the things that happen in Bedlam and they give him nightmares every time he goes to bed.

Lieutenant Dilley has wide, watery eyes and disheveled gray hair. He is constantly fidgeting. Dilley was hired from rural Wisconsin and isn't used to big-city police work. It has been an eye-opening experience. He has no idea that most cities aren't this corrupt and violent. Mort isn't interested in getting a piece of the action for himself, but he would never dream of reporting any of the crooked cops around him to Internal Affairs. Nor is he likely to cooperate with the PCs.

He has begun to drink a lot, but it hasn't affected his work yet. He's a sad, maudlin drunk, not a belligerent one.

If he is cornered, he may lose his cool and do something unethical, but he'd never break the rules otherwise—that might cause trouble, and trouble is one thing that he doesn't need any more of.

Dilley was supposed to bring his wife and kids out to Bedlam a year ago, when he first took the job, but he can't bring himself to do it. They still live with his mother-in-law and his wife is on the verge of divorcing him. He wishes he could explain his reluctance to relocate the family, but he doesn't want to burden his wife with the knowledge of the terrible things he has seen.

Captain Norris "Sharkey" Muldoon



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Driving d8, Fighting d8, Guts d10, Healing d6, Intimidation d10+2, Investigate d6, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Knowledge (Criminal Underworld) d10, Notice d8, Persuade d8, Shooting d8, Streetwise d8, Swim d6, Taunt d10+2, Throwing d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (1)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Command, Connections (crooked cops), Hold the Line, Inspire, Improved Level-Headed, Nerves of Steel, No Mercy, Quick-Draw, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidation or Taunt), Tough as Nails

Gear: Brass Knuckles (d8+1 damage), Tonfa (d8+1), .44 Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists

2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest)

Background: Sharkey Muldoon is completely crooked, but it's an honest kind of crooked. He's the Captain of the First Precinct, Bedlam's largest, and one of its most corrupt (the Second Precinct and the Substation inside the Liberty Shoppes Mall are arguably worse.) Sharkey's a stern disciplinarian who wants his men to look as professional as possible. He takes his responsibilities seriously. The "pad" of illegal graft is always fairly divided on his watch, stoolies are always given a warning the first time they snitch and a beating the second time. He only has chronic snitches killed. Sharkey regularly negotiates squabbles between his officers over this or that piece of the action and he always does so fairly, without stealing it all for himself. If someone buys him, he stays bought. If someone makes a deal with him, he keeps it. There are plenty of brutal racists in his precinct but he himself has no objection to working with non-whites. Nor does he have a problem with the capes. PCs will find him completely open to becoming their ally. They'll have to pay him, or do questionable favors for him, but once they fulfill their end of the bargain he'll uphold his. If someone else offers him more money to betray them, he'll do it without a flicker of hesitation, but it's nothing personal. Just business.

A scary guy, Sharkey looks like the very picture of a bad cop with his beard and his muscles and his sunglasses. Constantly chewing gum with his mouth open, he never takes his shades off, even indoors. He speaks in a low, threatening monotone when he isn't shouting at people. When he smiles, it's a cruel smile.

Sharkey lives in Stone Ridge with his third wife, four of their five kids, and seven of his grandchildren. A lot of his pay goes out the door as alimony and child support, but he collects enough graft to make up for it.

Squad Car

Acc/Top Speed: 20/40; **Toughness:** 13 (3); **Crew:** 1+5

Features: Police Radio, rear doors that don't open from the inside.

Description: About half of Bedlam's Patrol Officers drive 2001 Crown Victorias. The rest make do with 1995 Chevrolet Caprices (that was the last year Chevy offered the police package.) The Caprices often have small mechanical problems, like broken air conditioning or a window that won't roll down. As of yet, Bedlam's squad cars still don't have computer terminals, so cops have to call dispatch every time they need a license plate or driver's license checked.

Paddy Wagon

Acc/Top Speed: 20/40; **Toughness:** 14 (3); **Crew:** 1+8

Features: Police Radio

Description: The SWAT teams ride around in big old vans of various makes and models, with metal sheeting riveted to the inside for armor plating and bars across the windshield. Cops also use these vehicles to transport prisoners, especially if they have to apprehend a lot of them at once. There is a funny story about how the Third Precinct bought a van from a church in Hardwick Park, fixed it up and armor-plated it, only to discover a few months later that there was a bag of heroin hidden inside one of the seats.

Dispatch Center

Based in Police Headquarters, the Dispatch Center handles all radio and telephone communications between officers in the field, the precinct houses, headquarters and the public. They answer 911 calls and coordinate police response. As mentioned above, the radio channels that the Bedlam Police use are constantly overloaded with traffic—mostly because officers don't have computers in their cars and have to call Dispatch every time they need information on a suspect or a license plate.

The dispatchers get accused of favoring the First Precinct over all the others, responding to them faster and allocating more time to assist them. This is perfectly true and the dispatchers don't

bother to deny it. They work in the same building as the First Precinct and they have to live with these guys. If they started treating the other precincts better, they'd get hassled about it all the time.

Highway Patrol

The Bedlam City Police have a small Highway Patrol Unit. They are charged with enforcing the rules of the road on Bedlam's freeways. Normally this is a function of the State Police, but they are presently at loggerheads with the city and refuse to patrol in Bedlam, so the local Police Department has filled the gap. Apparently the state got tired of the fact that they encounter more crime and lose more officers on the freeways that surround Bedlam than they do anywhere else. They also don't care for the lack of cooperation they get from the local authorities. "Lack of cooperation" may be putting it mildly. There have actually been armed confrontations between State Troopers and Bedlam cops.

Some of Bedlam's Highway Patrol cops operate in two-man motorcycle teams while others are assigned to squad cars. Motorcycles are more maneuverable in tight traffic than automobiles and ideal for running down vehicular offenders. Yet most of the officers assigned to the unit would rather work in cars, which offer them a little more protection.

For this is actually one of the most dangerous assignments in all of police work. A huge number of arrests are made a result of routine traffic stops. A perp with a felony warrant will break some traffic law or get caught with expired license plates, the highway patrol officer who stops them will run their ID through the system and discover that they're wanted for a serious crime. In fact, because Bedlam's Detective Division is less-than-stellar, the majority of felony busts in the city get made this way.

Criminals know this, and they know that the easiest (if not the safest) method to evade getting caught is to shoot the Highway Patrol officer who has pulled you over, so Highway Patrol has the highest rate of injuries and fatalities in the Department. It's a thankless job, writing tickets on the

scorching hot asphalt or in three feet of dirty snow, risking your life to admonish drivers about broken tail-lights.

As a result, the very worst and the very best Bedlam patrol officers tend to pull this detail. Stubbornly honest cops who annoy their crooked superiors and vicious, trigger-happy drunks both wind up working Highway Patrol as a punishment. It's hard to tell which one has pulled you over until it's too late, so look out!

Traffic Control

One of the least glamorous branches of police work, these officers direct traffic and occasionally hand out tickets. Other cops often mock Traffic Control officers as not being real cops. And in fact quite a few of them are actually "Auxiliary Police", hired through one or another big temp agency, with no real arrest powers. For this reason, if a traffic control officer encounters a dangerous situation, they are supposed to call for backup rather than intervene themselves. This is not a high-status assignment.

The official reason why the Department uses so many Auxiliary Police for Traffic Control is that they don't have enough officers. That's partly true, but the real reason is that a lot of traffic cops get hit by cars and it was starting to raise their insurance rates. Temps, of course, aren't insured by the Department.

Special Operations

A division of Patrol Services, overseen by Captain Rafe Blarski, Special Operations includes all kinds of non-traditional police units. Tactical Operations, the Special Assault Squad, the Airborne Detail, Mounted Police, K-9 Units and the Harbor Patrol all fall under Captain Blarsky's authority. Blarsky himself has ambitions of running for DA (although he's pretty untelegenic, resembling a bad-tempered walrus), and he is reportedly very anxious about the reputation of the units under his command. Does this make him quick to cover things up when they go wrong? We wouldn't care to guess.

Airborne Detail

The Bedlam Police have five Bell UH-1 Huey Helicopters at their disposal. At least officially. In fact they have the fuel and motor oil required to keep about three of them in active service at any one time. They store them at the Dept. of Transportation's old Corporation Yard out on Industrial Drive, but that's an inconvenient place to patrol the whole city from, so they always keep one on the helipad at Police Headquarters downtown. For budgetary reasons, it's fuel tank is kept half full.

They use the helicopters for search-and-rescue, and also to give officers on the ground support when they are pursuing suspects. Each helicopter is equipped with a PA system, a giant spotlight and a blade on the nose to cut through telephone wires. The choppers are durable, but old (built in the early 1960s) and each one has some peculiar quirks.

Helicopter pilots are all sworn personnel with arrest powers. Technically they are a part of Patrol Services, although their hiring track is separate. Most of them are former military pilots. Unlike some branches of Special Operations, they don't have a reputation for being reckless. On the contrary, they don't want to risk their irreplaceable machines, so they are perhaps a little too cautious with them. This causes some resentment from the rest of the force.

Bedlam Police Helicopter

Acc/Top Speed: 20/50; Climb: 20; Toughness: 13 (2); Crew: 2
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K-9

The Bedlam Police have eight K-9 units, each one staffed by a single officer and their dog. Officers are all volunteers and they own the dogs themselves. The city reimburses them for their expenses and upkeep. K-9 Officers are not Sworn Personnel, do not have arrest powers and can use their dogs only under the supervision of actual police officers (unless they're doing search-and-rescue work.)

There have been some irregularities in the unit—cases where dogs behaved

more aggressively toward suspects than they should have. It looks as though the Department should check the volunteers' backgrounds and credentials a little more carefully. But they claim not to have the funds to do this. Anyway they don't have enough K-9 Units as it is.

Strangely, while there are eight K-9 units listed in the city budget, there only seem to be four volunteers presently. So where are the extra reimbursement checks going?

Police Dog

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

Hindrances: Disabled (color blind, has no hands)

Special Abilities

- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Fleet Footed:** Dogs roll a d10 when running instead of a d6.
- **Go for the Throat:** Dogs instinctively go for an opponent's soft spots. With a raise on its attack roll, it hits the target's most weakly-armored location.
- **Size -1**

Harbor Patrol Unit

Bedlam's small fleet of patrol boats is charged with keeping order on the waters of the estuary, the river and the harbor. For the most part they serve as traffic cops, helping to guide smaller vessels around the giant container ships as they come in to the Rook Island Shipping Terminal, and enforcing laws against reckless boating. They do also patrol for crime along the shore and across the water, but it's hard to catch anyone with their slow and clumsy boats, so it's a relaxed, easy beat.

Harbor Patrol is beyond any doubt the cleanest section of the Patrol Services Division. But this isn't because it's manned by the best officers. There's really no way for them to shake people down for bribes and they have few opportunities to get brutal with suspects. The lack of "action" has left them a disgruntled bunch.

Harbor Patrol Boat

Acc/Top Speed: 20/60;

Toughness: 10 (2 pts Heavy Armor)

Crew: 2+10

Mounted Police Unit

If you look at the police web site, you will see that the Department has a small staff of mounted officers and police horses, which they mostly use for ceremonial occasions. You will learn such interesting facts as that the horses are all named after policemen who have fallen in the line of duty, and that the motorcycle police are also a part of this unit.

The problem is, none of this is true. The web site is actually describing the Mounted Police program that the Department intends to implement, once they have enough funds and can locate some suitable stables. As of yet they have not found a good stable or been able to acquire any horses, but they continue to spend money on searching for a facility. Or something. The force strongly and categorically denies that any of those funds are being stolen or used as political graft—let alone getting diverted to organized crime. Perish the thought.

SWAT

Bedlam's Special Weapons and Tactics Unit (known simply as "Tactical" to anyone inside the Department) has suffered a recent scandal. Last year, a filing clerk's accidental discovery in the police archives set federal prosecutors on the trail of a burglary ring operating inside the tactical squad. Officers were looting crime scenes for valuables.

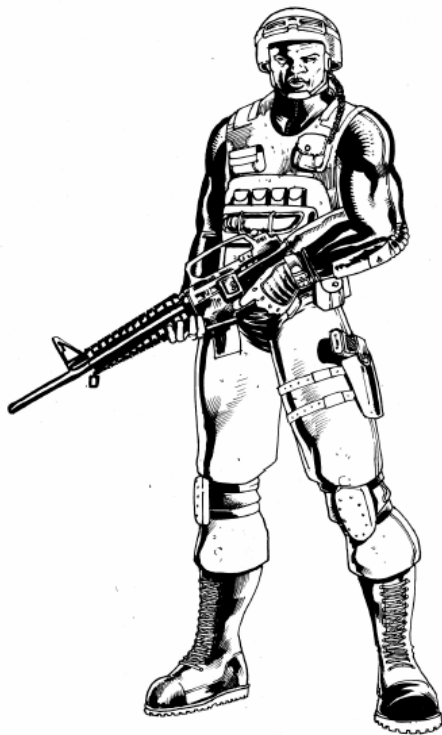
There were indictments, firings. Councilman "Big Andy" Czernik stood up for the cops and made angry speeches. In the end about fifteen officers lost their jobs. To everyone's relief, it never came out that some of the guys on the squad had been carrying out contract killings for the Scarpia crime family, as well.

Reorganized under Captain Duke Braddock, the new Tactical Operations Squad is now one of the cleanest divisions of the Bedlam PD and never gets accused of

anything worse than using excessive force. They get accused of that a lot, however. Captain Braddock has an unofficial policy of not bothering to take any suspects into custody unless it's absolutely necessary. Normally, they just shoot the perp and go home. His team is full of trigger-happy adrenaline junkies and they've caused a surprising number of civilian casualties over the past two years. They are known for going in with guns blazing and no proper plan, shooting at anything that moves. But at least they don't steal anything they find at the scene. And if one of their stray bullets winds up in a child or a pregnant mother three blocks away, they can always blame it on the bad guys.

There are four separate rapid-response teams in Tactical Operations, each led by a Lieutenant. D-Squad has the highest concentration of twitchy psychopaths, and they're Captain Braddock's favorite. He often leads them on raids himself.

SWAT Team Member



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d6, Guts d4, Intimidation d6, Investigation d4, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6 (2/4)

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Gear: Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest), Tactical Helmet (4 armor, only protects his head), Billy Club (Damage: d6+1), Light MG (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, ROF 3, AP 2, Three round burst)

Captain Duke Braddock

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d8, Guts d4, Intimidation d10+2, Notice d6, Shooting d10, Streetwise d4, Taunt d6+2

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 8 (2/4)

Edges: Charismatic, Combat Reflexes, Command, Dead Shot, Inspire, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Persuasion and Intimidation), Tough as Nails

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Heartless

Gear: Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest), Tactical Helmet (4 armor, only protects his head), Billy Club (Damage: d6+1), Light MG (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, ROF 3, AP 2, Three round burst)

Background: Captain Braddock always seems to be amused by something. It might be the way a perp thrashes and screams with a .30 caliber bullet in his guts. It might be the look in a rookie's eyes when he realizes that he's bagged his first civilian. It might be the way a junkie streetwalker's voice cracks when she realizes that Duke's going to pay her with a beating. Life is full of things to amuse him. He loves his job, loves the life he's living and he's sure it won't last long, so he's determined to get as much fun in as he can.

Braddock likes violence, likes suffering (his own included—it makes him feel alive) and has a habit of putting cigarettes out on his arms and chest when

he needs to prove a point. He doesn't much care for people, but he does like the noises that they make when you hurt them. While he is absolutely and totally brave, he would sacrifice any one of his men's lives for his own. If he dies, the fun stops.

He's not interested in taking bribes or stealing money. He'd be delighted if he found any of his men doing it, because then he'd get to hurt them. Trying to pay him off makes you look vulnerable and this is not a guy you want to look vulnerable in front of. He's no racist, but he might use racist epithets on someone if he thinks it would hurt them.

Braddock has carefully stocked D Squad with adrenaline freaks and psychopaths like himself and greatly enjoys leading them into combat. He doesn't much bother to take suspects alive unless he absolutely has to.

The Captain lives alone in an apartment in Stark Hill. His neighbors never see him because he's always out and his place barely even has any furniture.

Officer Erwin Moody



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d6, Guts d4, Intimidation d4, Investigation d4, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6 (2/4)

Hindrances: Death Wish

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Gear: Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest), Tactical Helmet (4 armor, only protects his head), Billy Club (Damage: d6+1), Light MG (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, ROF 3, AP 2, Three round burst)

Background: Erwin Moody wants to die. He's felt this way more or less since his Junior year of high school. He was a point guard, on the varsity basketball team, they were playing against their biggest rivals for the quarter-finals, when he realized that nothing had ever felt like anything to him, so he lay down on the court and stared at the floor, as the crowd's cheers turned to cries of indignation, and then to curses and threats. He waited until he was eighteen to drop out and join the Army.

He thought he might find peace in the blood and dust of Iraq, but in fact no matter what kind of horror and misery he saw there, it all just felt like nothing to him. When he got home, he joined a small rural Sheriff's department where they didn't require a degree in criminal justice and then he transferred to the Bedlam Police. When they saw his impressive history of combat experience, they quickly agreed to his request to be placed in a tactical unit. After watching Moody on the job, they decided that D Squad was the right place for him.

Erwin approaches his work with the same absolute lack of fear that he demonstrated as a soldier. He wants very badly for someone to kill him, so he always volunteers to be the first through the door and never retreats until he's ordered to. His sergeant has figured out that he's suicidal, but figures that's a good thing. Somebody has to be the first through the door. And Moody's bravery sets a good example for the other guys in D Squad. While he isn't exactly a straight-arrow, Moody isn't particularly brutal, either. Hurting other

people gives him no special thrill. He wants them to hurt him. Or better yet, kill him.

Officer Moody got married while he was on base in Germany, but it didn't work. He says he's separated, by which he means that he walked away from his wife when he found that she didn't make him feel anything. He sends her checks, but no letters.

He's willing to go out drinking with the guys from the squad, but he's quiet on these occasions and haunts the edges of the room, unable to feel much but a desire to get back to work and die.

Police Sharpshooter

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d6

Charisma: 0 **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Marksman, No Mercy, Steady Hands, Trademark Weapon (Sniper Rifle)

Gear: Body Armor (+2/+4 vs. bullets), Sniper Rifle (2d10 Damage AP 3, 48/96/192 10 Shots, RoF 1), Scope (+2 to hit targets at Medium range or farther)

Background: The Bedlam Police don't have enough snipers, and try their best to hang onto the ones they have by giving them the best pay and benefits the city can afford to offer. This has made some of their sharpshooters get dangerously careless, since it's so hard to get fired, even if you accidentally hurt a civilian.

Because the department regards sharpshooters as a precious asset, Tactical Operations is under instructions to keep their snipers as safe as they can.

Special Assault Squad

The pride of Bedlam's police force, if it can be said to have any pride, is the Special Assault Squad—a tactical anti-parahuman unit which, despite having little money and aging equipment, has managed to rack up some impressive victories against superhuman crime. They also have a high attrition rate, and this has given them itchy trigger fingers. They may have a good record of bringing in supervillains, but they aren't that great at bringing them in alive.

Nor do they always do such a good job of distinguishing between heroes and villains.

Most people just call them "Assault Squad." The guys on the squad like it, so they've adopted the name themselves.

While the exact location of their headquarters is supposed to be secret, most people guess that like Special Weapons and Tactics, Assault Squad is based in the First Precinct downtown. However, no one is sure where they keep captured super-beings before they turn them over to the corrections system. It isn't Police Headquarters, that much is clear.

Bedlam Police Special Assault Squad



Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Drive d8, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Investigation d4, Knowledge (Tactics) d6, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 7 (1)

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Hindrances: Loyal

Gear: Body Armor (+1, Heavy Armor), Tactical Helmet (+4, Heavy Armor), Light MG (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, ROF 3, AP 2, Three round burst), three grenades (Range 5/10/20, Damage 3d6, Medium burst template).

Background: A badly underfunded unit, constantly short on the equipment and resources they need to fight superpowered crime, they nonetheless have some of the

highest morale among Bedlam's police. They also have relatively little corruption within their ranks—which does not mean that they are totally clean. It's not surprising that morale is so good. Despite their lack of funding, they have an excellent record of killing supervillains, and a fair-to-medium record of capturing them alive. They are separate from the city's SWAT teams, better trained, better equipped and less casual about the safety of innocent bystanders (though there have still been one or two unfortunate incidents.)

The members of the Special Assault Squad have fought enough superbeings and taken enough casualties doing it that they regard anyone in a costume with suspicion, whether they're a hero or a villain. While the GM may decide to have them cooperate with the PCs, they are more likely to interfere with or even attack them.

While they may hinder or even come into direct conflict with the heroes, the GM should remember that the members of the Bedlam Police Special Assault Squad are innocent bystanders attempting to protect the city and its denizens. If the PC's start endangering the lives of Bedlam's Finest, their reputation will suffer.

Captain Elvis Aaron Stokes

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Drive d8, Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d6, Investigation d4, Knowledge (Tactics) d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Streetwise d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 7 (1)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Take the Hit

Hindrances: Loyal, Quirk (member of a weird cult)

Gear: Body Armor (+1, Heavy Armor), Tactical Helmet (+4, Heavy Armor), Light MG (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, ROF 3, AP 2, Three round burst), three grenades (Range 5/10/20, Damage 3d6, Medium burst template).

Background: Captain Stokes is a member of a small strange sect called the Church of the All-Devouring Redeemer. Based in rural Alabama, they have all kinds of peculiar beliefs. They handle snakes and drink

strychnine and speak in tongues. Among their stranger ideas, they think superheroes are a sign of the end times—an abomination that must be cleansed from the Earth. Stokes knows better than to say this aloud, but the belief informs every policy decision he makes.

His faith requires him to proselytize and his men find this habit annoying. He has made no converts and his constant hectoring about the need to cleanse your life of pornography, cigarettes and television has endeared him even less. There's no denying that he's a skillful tactician or a fearless combatant. But he's so irritating that they can't stand to be around him. Stokes is aware that his men hate him, but he is convinced that Jesus will magically help him turn the situation around. When this fails to happen, he will start to get crazier.

Captain Stokes lives in the Stone Ridge gated community with his wife, her two sisters and their ten kids. Polygamy is also one of the church's tenets, but they don't share this fact with outsiders. All female members of his family are required to wear kerchiefs over their heads when they go out in public, as the Law of God demands.

A clean-living man, he is scrupulously honest and tithes a large part of his income to charity. But he doesn't feel overly concerned about minimizing civilian casualties—if it's God's will that someone die in the crossfire, who is he to question it? Anyway if they weren't members of the Church of the All-Devouring Redeemer then they were probably wicked sinners.

Sergeant Vinnie "the Weasel" Angiotti

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Drive d8, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Investigation d4, Knowledge (Tactics) d6, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 7 (1)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Dodge

Hindrances: Heartless, Quirk (always looking out for his own survival)

Gear: Body Armor (+1, Heavy Armor), Tactical Helmet (+4, Heavy Armor), Light MG (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, ROF 3, AP 2, Three round burst), three grenades (Range 5/10/20, Damage 3d6, Medium burst template).

Background: Vinnie the Weasel is a small, suspicious man, quick as a snake and sharp as a knife. He has an inadequate moustache, wiry muscles and darting, ferrety eyes.

Since Captain Stokes isn't a very effective leader, Vinnie has stepped into the gap. He's one of the most skilled men on the Assault Squad and the other guys look up to him. He's chiefly skilled at avoiding getting hurt himself—his combat feats are almost all defensive and he's strongly averse to taking personal risks. But this actually makes himself look like superman to the other guys. He's forever making it out of situations that look impossible to survive. The guy clearly knows how to stay alive and that's what the average Assault Squad member wants most to do.

Vinnie the Weasel lives in Stark Hill with his weaselly little wife and his weaselly little furry-eyebrowed daughters. He's devoted to his girls and he's teaching them all his crafty, furtive wisdom.

Bud Garman

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d6, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Tactics) d6, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 8 (1)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Frenzy, Tough as Nails

Hindrances: Clueless, Illiterate

Gear: Body Armor (+1, Heavy Armor), Tactical Helmet (+4, Heavy Armor), Light MG (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, ROF 3, AP 2, Three round burst), three grenades (Range 5/10/20, Damage 3d6, Medium burst template).

Background: Bud the Blockhead has

fifteen notches in his riot stick—more than he has teeth in his mouth. He sleeps with his stick in his arms and sometimes late at night he fingers the notches and he smiles. He's not very good at remembering stuff, but he remembers every one of the fifteen skulls he's cracked. Each one was different, each one was special.

A gigantic man with a stubbly shaved head, prognathus brows and unbelievably chapped lips that he's always sucking, Bud is really too fat to be allowed on the Assault Squad, but his monstrous strength makes up for it and anyway it's useless to ask him to lose weight. He won't understand you. In fact you're lucky if he understands you when you tell him to run *that way* and hit *those* people.

Bud is only really happy when he's beating on somebody. He doesn't have a girlfriend, so he beats on suspects, mostly, and on prostitutes who haven't learned to avoid him yet. It's hard to tell his age by looking at him. His stubble is largely gray and he's probably past thirty-five, but he could be as young as twenty-eight or as old as fifty. He lives by himself in a reeking studio apartment over a nail salon. Nobody has yet figured out that he can't read.

Beefing up the Special Assault Squad

As written, the Special Assault Squad are fairly typical "Super-Agents" and might or might not be up to giving a Player Character a serious challenge. Any PC with a lot of Impervious Toughness, for example, may be able to just wade through their ranks as though they barely existed. With this in mind, you can give the Special Assault Squad limited access to some heavier equipment.

Not every member of the team will be equipped with an anti-tank weapon or a grenade launcher. These weapons are carefully guarded and brought out on special occasions—the Squad doesn't have enough of them and doesn't want to risk losing them.

Penetrator Bullets

If the Assault Squad knows it's going up against a target with super-tough skin, they may issue a clip or two of these Teflon-jacketed bullets, with spent uranium cores. They don't have very many of them in the arsenal and don't give out more than two clips per squad at a time. Available in multiple different calibers, Penetrator bullets do the normal 2d6 or 2d8 Damage, and can be used on autofire, but they have 4 levels of Armor Piercing and count as a Heavy Weapon. Some people claim that they also cause Gulf War Syndrome, and that they are prone to jam on full autofire, so use them judiciously.

Remington Blockstopper



Range: 12/24/48 **Damage:** 2d10+2
Rate of Fire: 3 **Weight:** 10 **Shots:** 30
Minimum Strength to Use: d8 in autofire mode, d6 in single-shot mode
Armor Piercing: 7 (counts as a Heavy Weapon) **Toughness:** 8
Features: Autofire (3 round burst)

Description: This ugly weapon was designed specially for use against super-tough targets. It's a fully automatic shotgun that fires armor-piercing sabot slugs. These needle-sharp flechettes are tipped with Teflon to ensure better penetration and are built around a thin sliver of superheavy spent uranium. The ammunition is actually more expensive than the gun. Naturally,

this counts as a Heavy Weapon.

A Blockstopper has two grips, one under the barrel and one where the stock should be. Amazingly enough, it isn't meant to be fired from the shoulder. Which is, we concede, just nuts. As you might imagine, it requires a lot of strength to keep it from twisting out of your grasp when it's on full auto, so most guys use it strictly in single-shot mode.

LAW Rocket

Range: 24/48/96 **Damage:** 4d8+2, area effect (use the Medium Burst Template)
Armor Piercing: 3 **Toughness:** 5
Features: Snapfire, Heavy Weapon

Description: Light anti-tank weapons are easy to carry and use. Some of the anti-tank rockets in Assault Squad's arsenal explode on impact in a huge fireball and do burst-radius damage. Others carry shaped charges made specifically to punch through heavily armored targets (Armor-Piercing 8.)

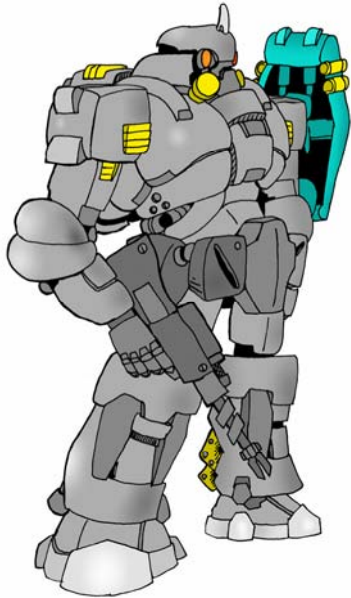
SK-7 Grenade-Launcher

Range: 24/48/96
Toughness: 10
Damage: Variable (see below)

Background: This multishot grenade launcher works like a giant revolver, with grenades in separate rotating chambers. You can fire it almost as fast as a conventional handgun. The Assault Squad usually keeps their launchers loaded with the following rounds (and of course it counts as a Heavy Weapon):

- 2 Conventional Anti-Personnel Concussion Grenades (4d8 Damage, Medium Burst Template)
- 3 Anti-Tank Shaped-Charge Grenades (3d8 Damage; 7 Armor Piercing)
- 1 Vibronic Scrambler Grenade (Stun, Elemental Trick: Sound, Medium Burst Template)

SLAM Powersuit



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d6, Streetwise d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 9(4)

Hindrances: Pick 3 or 4

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Power Points, Mechanical Genius

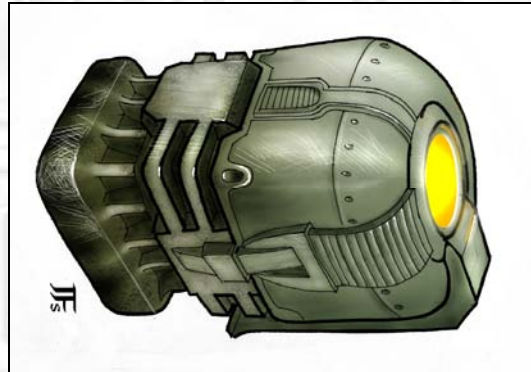
Gear: Armored Power Suit (see below)

Super Powers: (All powers in Power Armor, a Device)

- **Armor:** Armor +3, Heavy Armor
- **Attack, Ranged:** 3d6 Damage, counts as a Heavy Weapon)
- **Broadcast:** Extra Range
- **Force Control:** Level 4 (Str d12+1), Force Field (+4 Toughness)
- **Super Attributes:** Strength +1 step. Vigor +1 step.

Background: If you want the Assault Squad to be able to go hand-to hand with your PCs, you can give them a few of these army surplus battlesuits. They won't make the pilot the equal of a superhero in combat, but at least it will give them a chance.

The Scrambler



Toughness: 4 (But its carrying case is Toughness 12)

Damage: Negate superpowers 8 (Doesn't work on technologically-based superpowers like battlesuits, guns, etc.; uses the large burst template, centered on the device)

Description: If and only if you really want to give Assault Squad an edge, you can claim that they recovered a few of these weird wonder-science weapons from the personal effects of a supervillain. They don't know how they work. A scrambler is a bulky device that weighs nearly sixty pounds. They normally carry it inside a locked steel case (Toughness 12) about the size and shape of a World War II field radio. A panel on the back of the case opens to let the operator flip the toggle switch and turn it on. This takes only a single action. No one knows exactly how many of these devices Assault Squad has, but there can't be a lot of them—they guard each one like the Crown Jewels.

Community Relations Bureau

Intended to put a human face on the department and help the citizens of Bedlam trust their police force, Community Relations officers work with local neighborhood watch groups and community leaders to help make neighborhoods safer. They send officers into the schools to talk in front of

classrooms, work with youth groups, host Midnight Basketball programs and give public safety lectures.

They have met with an unexpected level of success in Wolverton, where more than one Community Services Officer has gotten too tightly entangled with the gangs. There was nearly a serious scandal last year when it came out that Officer Jane Klebbins was hanging out with (and having sex with) underage members of Eentsy Z's crew. Fortunately the press never found out that she was hiding stolen cash and drugs for them, too.

Neighborhood Police Program

A subdivision of Community Relations, these officers act as liaisons to networks of civilian "Neighborhood Police", urging them to report any suspicious activity on the part of their neighbors. Could your neighbor be one of the Neighborhood Police? You'll never know until the cops show up at your door.

Detectives Bureau

These are the men and women assigned to investigate crimes. They are divided into a number of "Squads," by the type of crimes they are supposed to investigate.

In Bedlam (as in most cities) "Detective" is an assignment rather than a rank. The bulk of them have worked their way up through Bedlam's Patrol Services division. They can be reassigned to Patrol Services and find themselves driving a beat or directing traffic if they don't work out.

Detective work is a prestigious assignment, so most of the men and women who wind up working for the Bureau have already proved themselves and gained some kind of higher rank. Most Detectives are Sergeants. Some are Lieutenants and the leader of each squad is a Captain.

Technically, the squads are supposed to yield to one another if an investigation turn up some other class of

crime (for example if a narcotics case turns up evidence of a homicide, the Homicide Squad is supposed to take over the case.) In practice, there aren't enough detectives and they seldom want to have new cases handed off to them, so the detective who first got assigned to a case is likely to be the one who winds up closing it, regardless of what they discover along the way. An average Bedlam detective has about forty cases at any one time. It can get worse than that. Faced with this kind of workload, they have to carefully pick and choose which cases to invest their time and energy into.

Most of the Squads operate out of Police Headquarters, but the Gang Task Force is based in the Third Precinct and the Organized Crime Squad is based in the Second Precinct. You may notice that unlike a lot of metropolitan police departments, the Bedlam PD has no "Major Case Squad." Instead they assemble task forces to deal with high-profile cases on an ad-hoc basis.

A detective makes about \$35,000 per year. That's a lot better than a Patrol Officer, which means that less of them have to moonlight as security guards and bouncers. This also seems to make them less prone to corruption, to taking bribes and shaking people down, although that might also be because they have less daily contact with the public.

Detectives have dress uniforms, which they are expected to wear on ceremonial occasions, but they normally dress in "office casual" clothes on the job. Some wear suits and ties, but most prefer polo shirts and chinos. Detectives who have been assigned to work undercover can dress however the situation demands.

We'll start this section by talking a little about each of the individual squads. Then we'll move on to a generic set of stats for a typical Bedlam Detective, and then stats and descriptions for some individual detectives, including the infamous, controversial "hero cop" Sherry Stavros, aka Crazy Sherry.

Investigative Resources

While they are officially a part of the Detectives Bureau, the staff who work for the Investigative Services Division aren't actual sworn personnel and don't make arrests. The sole exception to this rule is the Hostage Negotiation Unit, which draws most of its personnel from other squads on a part-time basis.

Crime Statistics Unit

Purely responsible for producing and analyzing data on crime in the city, this unit reports to the Detective Squads as needed, but it also makes reports directly to the Municipal Council, the Commission on Quality of Life and the City Manager's office. Their stated function is to help city officials understand how best to allocate resources. In fact, they more see their job as covering up how bad crime is in Bedlam and how ineffective the city government has been at suppressing it.

Police Laboratory

These are the forensic technicians who collect and analyze evidence for the department. In theory, anyway. In fact the city doesn't have a crime lab, so the technicians have to send all their samples out to private labs, as the funds become available. Because they are underfunded, there is always a backlog, and they have found some fairly creative ways to store evidence while waiting for the chance to have it analyzed. They have a pair of small refrigerators in their office suite to hold body fluid samples (and their lunches.) Other stuff gets crammed into closets or left to molder in basement storage rooms or even in leaky old public storage units.

Because they are understaffed, their administrative procedures are also less-than stellar and this fact, combined with the bewildering number of labs they outsource work to, has led to some embarrassing mix-ups in test results.

Photographic Unit

These folks are assigned to take crime-scene photos, mug shots and to maintain the department's photographic archives. The last job keeps them especially busy, since the archives are scattered between Police Headquarters and the precincts, and aren't always very well organized.

Most smaller police departments use independent contractors to take crime scene photos, but in Bedlam the cops resist all efforts at privatizing the department, so actual department employees get the job.

Hostage Negotiation Unit

There isn't a lot of need for full-time negotiators, so everyone in this unit is a part-time volunteer. Each negotiator works for some other unit (usually a detective squad, but sometimes they're patrol officers) and remains on-call twenty-four hours a day in case they are needed. Hostage negotiators are carefully trained in how to speak with hostage-takers, how to talk them down and win their trust. They have to take a lengthy series of courses and then pass a certification test.

There is presently a shortage of negotiators, so the department has issued "temporary certifications" to a number of officers who haven't yet completed the program. In fact, some of them just need the extra money that comes from being a hostage negotiator and have no training at all. Normally the Precinct Captains won't call up a negotiator whose credentials they know are fraudulent, but they don't always know who's for real and who isn't.

You can use the generic detective stat block for a "hostage negotiator" who doesn't really have the training. For a real, authentic negotiator, use the stats below. We've also included stats and background material for a couple of individual members of the squad in case you need them.

Generic Hostage Negotiator (authentic)

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Investigate d6, Knowledge (Psychology) d8, Notice d8, Persuade d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5 (2/4)

Edges: Charisma

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest)

Detective Sergeant Raymond Monchek

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Investigate d4, Knowledge (home furnishings) d6, Notice d4, Persuade d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d4

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5 (2/4)

Edges: Quick-Draw

Hindrances: Quirk (Constantly distracted and henpecked), Quirk (knows he's a phony, gets terrified when he's actually called upon to do any hostage negotiation.)

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest)

Background: Ray Monchek just can't seem to make ends meet. He puts in lots of extra hours as a security guard for Garvin and Torsberg (see page 162), he's paid the bribe to get Hostage Negotiator credentials and still the bills keep piling up. If only his wife had been content to live in Stark Hill—but no, she had to have a place in Stone Ridge. It's not safe in the city, she said. Her mother kept asking when they were gonna move, she said.

Now he's got a mortgage he can't cover and a crappy, poorly made house where things are always falling apart and racking up the bills and he's not sure how the hell he's supposed to pay for it all. He's never been good at shaking people down and there's not enough graft in the world to plug the giant black hole that is his house.

Plus, his neighbors look down on him for being a working guy, so his wife needs lots of new stuff to win them over and show them she's got class.

Ray doesn't know anything at all about hostage negotiation—he just bought some temporary credentials because he needed the extra money. He's too preoccupied by his financial troubles to feel scared of getting found out. But if he ever gets called up for an actual hostage situation he will suddenly discover what a huge mistake he's made. He will try to improvise, but he has no idea what to say to a hostage-taker, and anyway his mind may be mostly occupied by worrying about some new problem with his house. His wife may very well call him while he's on the job to complain about the new water heater leaking or some other household disaster. He'll actually put the hostage-taker on hold while he talks to her.

Detective Sergeant Gianni Iggioni

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidate d8 +2, Investigate d6, Knowledge (Psychology) d8, Notice d8, Persuade d10, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d8, Taunt d8+2

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5 (2/4)

Edges: Charismatic, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidation or Taunt)

Hindrances: Heartless

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest)

Background: Amazingly smooth, poised, charming and manipulative, everyone in his squad thinks Igglioni talked his wife into killing herself, but they say it with respect and awe. He may or may not have talked three different hostage-takers into doing the same thing.

He's easily the best negotiator on the Bedlam force. A bit of a scoundrel, cheerfully crooked, Igglioni's impossible not to like, and he is greatly beloved by his brother officers, even though they all know not to trust him.

People sometimes wonder about his last name. Is he a surviving member of the extinct Igglioni family that used to dominate organized crime in Hardwick Park? He's not offended when people ask him about this. It's got to be a coincidence, he explains. And if you think about it for a second, he says, you'll see why. If he really were one of *those* Igglionis, he would have changed his name or gone into hiding, right? And anyway those guys are all gone. A bigger family wiped them out. And it's not like anybody could have just talked his way out of a situation like that, right? So it's got to be a coincidence.

Presently staying with friends, he hasn't had a stable place to live since his wife died. He always seems to be somebody's house-guest.

It's easy to bribe Igglioni, but you might not want to. He drives a very good bargain.

Bomb Squad

Although most of the ordnance technicians who actually dismantle bombs work for the Fire Department, they are under the auspices of the police. A Lieutenant oversees and directs them at the scene—without, of course, having to come into direct contact with a bomb.

The Fire Department is even more underfunded than the Police and their gear is in bad shape. The bomb squad has no remote control robots and not enough bomb suits. So all too often technicians must go in and dismantle explosive devices with inadequate protection. You might see one

wearing part of a bomb suit, a bulletproof vest, or possibly some improvised armor they've thrown together themselves (phone books and duct tape can be made to serve, sometimes.) In a real emergency they might manage to talk some other municipality into loaning them extra gear, but they will be in serious trouble if it gets damaged.

Homicide Squad

The Homicide Squad is responsible for investigating suspicious deaths. This is a prestigious unit, but it had suffered some problems in recent years.

They have experienced a sudden improvement in the number of cases they successfully solve, thanks largely to the efforts of detective Parnell Slope and his clique within the squad (for more information about Detective Slope and his friends, see Page 76.)

Captain Stibbs commands the Homicide Squad, but he's a newcomer, just hired from Florida, and he is still finding his way around his new assignment.

Robbery Squad

This is the largest squad and it's where most detectives get their start. They investigate hold-ups and muggings, for the most part. They have a lot of turnover, since everyone is eager to prove themselves and move up to other positions. As a result, robbery detectives tend to be inexperienced rookies or burnt-out old failures. Captain Headly Grimes falls firmly into the latter category. An incoherent drunk, he probably should have been forcibly retired ten years ago, but his men cover for his lapses and his odd behavior because he lets them get away with all kinds of stuff.

Auto Crime Unit

This subdivision of the Robbery Squad has just one Detective assigned to it at present. He's neither a green rookie nor a drunken old washout. His name is Monty Coulter (see his description on Page 77) and stolen cars are his absolute passion. He's been such a success that Captain Grimes has

been looking hard for guys to partner with him. So far, no one meets Coulter's standards.

Burglary Squad

While they are supposed to investigate every burglary in the city, this is an impossible task that they don't even try to keep up with. Unless a really large amount of money got stolen or the victim has excellent connections with the city government, detectives don't even respond to break-ins. This Squad is kind of a career dead-end. It's where detectives who didn't make Homicide or Vice wind up. As a result, morale is very low here.

Their leadership doesn't help. Captain Daisy Milk is determined to whip her squad into shape and then use the victory to get transferred out of here. It's really tough for women to get leadership roles in the Bedlam Police and she hates being shunted into Burglary. In order to show her bosses that she doesn't belong here, Captain Milk has decided to make the squad into a crack unit—the envy of the force.

A cruel, petty disciplinarian, she intrudes on her detectives' personal lives, insults people and jerks them around over tiny stuff. How she expects this to make things get better is unclear. She does appear to get a real thrill out of it, though.

Organized Crime Squad

Based in the Second Precinct, in Stark Hill, this squad is assigned to prevent and investigate organized crime. And to infiltrate groups of peace activists, Quakers, Unitarians, etc. Not all of their detectives are completely crooked or in the pay of the Scarpia Crime family. The ones who aren't get assigned to disrupting peace marches and provoking fights between marchers and the cops. Organized Crime is a coveted assignment, because you can make a lot of money here. But they're picky about who they will accept. For the most part, they only want guys they know to be...reliable. Anyone else who gets assigned here will soon find themselves sitting in a church basement trying to talk a bunch of old hippies and soccer moms into bombing something.

Vice Squad



Like the Organized Crime Squad, this is a great place to make money. And it can have other fringe benefits as well. These are the detectives assigned to stamp out prostitution and illegal gambling. For some reason they have failed to do this.

The network of crooked cops that everyone in the Department calls "the O'Ryan Boys" has its claws sunk deep into Vice. But even the worst detectives on this squad are forced to do some actual police work now and again. Lots of people try their hand at prostitution and not all of them are connected to the mob. Arresting them is the easiest way to eliminate the competition. And sometimes pimps commit high-profile murders or steal money from their bosses or otherwise need to be removed from the scene.

Some of the messiest, nastiest crimes you are ever likely to see come to the attention of the Vice Squad. It's no wonder that so many of the guys feel entitled to take a little extra.

Not that Captain Grizzard has that excuse. The head of Vice is one of those strange people who isn't bothered by even the worst degradation, or the least flicker of conscience. He also wears a cowboy hat indoors, and muttonchop sideburns. As

crooked as he is arrogant, he loves flaunting his ill-gotten wealth and wears a lot of diamonds and gold jewelry. He never smokes cigars that cost less than a meal at a really good steakhouse, he boasts. All this looks even less appealing on such a short, hairy man.

Narcotics Squad

This squad is assigned to prosecuting drug-related crimes. Their superiors don't want them messing around with the people at the top of the organized crime ladder, so they mostly set up undercover stings, buying drugs from minor dealers, or selling pot to high-school kids and then dragging them off to jail. They have proved to be a very useful tool for some parties in organized crime. If a dealer is misbehaving and you don't want to go to the trouble and expense of having them killed, throw them to the narcotics squad.

Large amounts of cash are sometimes present in drug deals and this can be tempting for the underpaid detectives who bust them. For this reason, corruption seems to be more deeply ingrained in Narcotics than anywhere else but the Organized Crime Squad.

Missing Persons Squad

Charged with investigating disappearances and unidentified corpses, this squad has the lowest morale in the department. Detectives assigned to this detail have little opportunity to break major cases and less to collect graft. A punishment assignment, it is staffed by guys who couldn't make it on the Burglary Squad.

The head of Missing Persons is Captain Terry Kaenner. He's a bit of a missing person himself, and seldom bothers to show up for work any more, spending most of his time at home, drunk.

Computer Crime Squad

This small unit mostly investigates credit card fraud and identity theft. While they do spend a certain amount of time behind their computers, their equipment isn't really sophisticated enough to track hackers, spammers and bot-herders across the depths of cyberspace, so they stick largely

to traditional police work, knocking on doors, interviewing potential witnesses and so forth. None of the four detectives on the squad are crooked, but they are all savvy enough to know better than to try to bust any of the big credit-card fraud rings that organized crime runs. They're more concerned with arresting teenagers who steal grandma's Discover card and buy online porno with it.

Fraud Squad

Reorganized after a quiet but ugly scandal last year, the Fraud Squad doesn't presently have any detectives assigned to it. The Department assures us that they will have it staffed and running soon. In the meantime, their duties have been assigned to other detectives—mostly in the Robbery Squad. A little investigation will reveal that even though this phantom squad has no detectives, they are still requisitioning a lot of equipment and training hours. Where is all that money going?

Juvenile Crime Squad

These detectives have been specially trained in conducting juvenile line-ups, in speaking with parents and guardians and in all the difficult work involved in dealing with minors. They are Bedlam's *de facto* truant officers. They also spend a lot of time arresting the boyfriends of underaged girls (usually as a result of a complaint from the girl's family.) The Juvie Squad frequently works with Child Protective Services, the Special Victims Liaison Unit and sometimes Vice.

They became entangled in an unsavory scandal a few years ago, when it came to light that some officers on the squad were helping crooked CPS officials run a child-theft/slavery ring, taking kids away from their parents and then selling them on the open market. People were fired and the squad was reorganized. They still have a bad reputation for treating young suspects brutally.

Special Victims Liaison Unit

This new unit was once a subdivision of the Vice Squad. They investigate sexual abuse and domestic violence. In addition to the

detectives on the team, they have a group of "Liaison Facilitators"—female officers who are specially trained in interviewing rape victims. A lot of the Facilitators come from District Patrol and are here to make a few extra bucks. Some of them are surprisingly brusque and unsympathetic with the victims they are supposed to be helping.

Lieutenant Harvey Gluk is the Squad leader, but he spends most of his time working domestic violence cases and doesn't pay as much attention to running the squad as he should. He's the only detective on the Bedlam force who really enjoys working on domestic violence and other detectives are constantly dumping these cases on his desk. For more on Detective Gluk and his private obsessions, see his individual description on Page 76.

Gang Task Force

Technically, the Gang Task Force is supposed to be a joint operation with the State Police, the County Sheriff's Office and the Department of Justice. But the Sheriff and the State Troopers refuse to work with the Bedlam Police, who in turn won't cooperate with the Department of Justice. This has left them with less resources than they would like.

Right now, their major priority is keeping the Honduran gang called the Mara in check. The Mara are scary, get headlines and are expanding their turf rapidly. Clearly they need to be the Task Force's major focus. If they can't be stopped, they can at least be contained, or taught to keep a lower profile. It's going to be tough to work on the Mara without any information from the state authorities or the Department of Justice, since they're a national gang.

There isn't a lot of organized, entrenched corruption in the Gang Task Force, although some individual detectives are dirty—shaking down gang members for money and drugs or getting involved in their crimes.

Anti-Graffiti Vandalism Unit

A sub-unit of the Gang Task Force, these lucky detectives are assigned to clean up

graffiti and arrest chronic taggers. They have made about as much progress on both fronts as you might imagine. Because it's hard to bust graffiti artists, and boring to direct clean-up crews, members of the unit spend a lot of time conducting stakeouts of likely-looking walls. Frequently, they use the time they are supposed to be spending on stakeout to go work second jobs as security guards.

Bedlam Police Detective



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Investigate d4, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5 (2/4)

Edges: Quick-Draw

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest)

Captain Norville Stibbs

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Investigate d6, Knowledge (police work) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 6 (2/4)

Edges: Dodge, Quick-Draw

Hindrances: Quirk (trying hard to look like he knows what he's doing)

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest)

Background: The new head of Bedlam's Homicide Squad is still settling into the job. A big, tall guy with bulging muscles and an Abraham Lincoln beard, he fancies himself a swinger and spends a lot of time off-duty trying to pick up women in bars.

Not terribly bright or mature for his age (thirty-eight) he feels unprepared to run such a big, important department and he doesn't know half of what's going on around him. He's used to seeing cops take graft and he wouldn't mind a taste of it himself, but he would be shocked if he discovered the depth of the corruption he's surrounded by. For now, he's so eager to be liked that he's willing to overlook all sorts of minor misbehavior from his men. Presently single, he has been married four times and a lot of his paycheck goes to alimony and child support.

He likes to dress entirely in black, and often wears a gold chain. He thinks his beard makes him hip, but in combination with his long face and North Florida hick accent it makes him look more like a farmer.

Detective Lieutenant Marsh Bronfeld

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d10, Intimidate d8, Investigate d4, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5 (2/4)

Edges: Frenzy

Hindrances: Habit (alcoholic dope fiend), Habit (compulsive gambler), Habit (beats up young men with long hair), Mean

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest)

Background: Bronfeld is a desperate loser and it's clear to everyone that he's on his way down. But he could still manage to do some damage along the way. He barely even bothers to work cases any more, spending most of his time drinking in places like "Classy Live Nude Girls" (see the listing for this unsavory joint on Page 193) and trying to score crack. He will gladly run any dirty, sordid errand the Mafia might ask of him, but he's almost sure to do it badly and screw it up.

Addicted to gambling, he owes huge debts to various bookies and loan sharks. They're talking about taking one of his thumbs soon. Eager to win his money back on just one more bet, he may accept foolish and dangerous wagers.

At one point he was a coward, but now he's far too desperate to have much fear of physical danger. He needs money and needs dope and he'll do whatever is required to get them. A devout Catholic, he used to feel a lot of guilt over his behavior, but he's past that. Nothing is beyond him presently.

He has a secret vice, apart from his public ones. He likes to hang around behind shopping centers and attack young men with long hair. He doesn't know why he gets such a thrill out of it—he's always hated guys with long hair, but the delight he gets from shoving them around is out of all proportion to the hatred he feels.

It's possible for a PC to buy off Bromfeld—he's very easy to bribe. But he's an incompetent hireling, he won't stay bought and once he's in your circle of acquaintances he'll keep asking you for bigger and bigger favors. Never let him extort a bribe from you, or he'll constantly come back looking for more.

Detective Bronfeld lives with his wife, mother-in-law and his two elementary school aged kids in a bungalow in Stark Hill. He yells at his kids a lot, particularly when he's on crack, and he got into a drunken brawl at a recent PTA meeting.

He looks like a sack of old clothes, fat disheveled and covered in stubble. The very picture of a bad cop. It's up to the GM as to whether he ever dances around naked and screams abuse at phantasmal visions of Jesus.

Lieutenant Harvey Gluk

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Investigate d8+2, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Knowledge (Psychology) d8, Notice d10+2, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5 (2/4)

Edges: Investigator, Quick-Draw

Hindrances: Quirk (close-mouthed, intimate with no one)

Background: Most detectives hate to work domestic violence cases. They're ugly, hard to close, thankless and they make you enemies. And frankly, some detectives think Domestic Violence isn't really such a serious crime—who hasn't wanted to belt the old lady when she gets out of line? Detective Gluk (he insists that it's pronounced "Glook") has stepped into the niche this leaves open and made it his specialty. Before the Squad was established, other detectives gave him all their domestic violence cases anyway, so he was the logical choice to head the Squad.

At the moment, he's a one-man team. Gluk does all the investigative work, assisted by a team of five policewomen who have been trained in counseling and talking to victims. Gluk himself is desperately overworked, and as a result he's sometimes brusque with the women he helps. He wants results, and he's very impatient with women who won't testify against their abusers, so he often applies verbal and sometimes physical intimidation to get them to fill out complaints. He's only subtly threatening. He certainly doesn't hit them. It's more in his tone of voice and his body language. But a woman who has been beaten is usually very sensitive to these kinds of cues and knows that they imply

violence. It's all a bluff. He'd never dream of actually hurting them.

Does he care more about the victims or more about closing cases? That's hard to say. He's a guarded, quiet kind of guy who doesn't talk much about his motives. Local battered womens' shelters regard him as a vital resource, but they have some reservations about him, too.

A sour, driven, grey-haired hound-dog of a man, Gluk never seems to smile. He has a wife and two kids up in Stone Ridge, but he never talks about them and he must not go home to see them very much—he's always working.

Detective Lieutenant Parnell Slope

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Investigate d4, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Knowledge (Police Department), Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5 (2/4)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Connections (Bedlam DA's office), Quick-Draw

Hindrances: Enemy ("Fido" Turwood), Heartless, Mean, Quirk (will do whatever it takes to make it to the DA's office)

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest)

Background: A cruel, corrupt and incompetent cop, Slope nonetheless gets results. He intends to be an Assistant DA one of these days, and he knows that you get there by solving lots of high-profile cases and sending lots of perps to death row. It's all about the kills, he says. And the fastest way to rack them up is by taking on more cases than you can reasonably handle, then beating as many confessions out of innocent people as you can. Not all of them will be willing to sign confessions, even with a gun to their heads, but enough will be to ensure a steady stream of kills. He's sent eight people to the death chamber so far and the folks downtown really are

starting to notice his good work.

For the most part Slope doesn't investigate the deaths of single, unmarried folks if he can help it—he wants to have a spouse he can terrorize into confessing. He also doesn't much like investigating dead white people, since it bothers his conscience if he sends a fellow white man off to his doom.

He used to write the confessions up himself, composing them aloud while the perp blubbered and bled all over the interrogation room table. Now he's found that this takes too long, so he has a bunch of them pre-written, and he's always looking for a perp who might fit them.

Slope is not above collecting a little protection money from local businesses or turning over a suspect to the Mafia if they request it (and he certainly knows better than to hassle any "made guys"), but he's not willing to take a direct bribe—unless it's a really big one.

Detective Sergeant Wilbur Gorch

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d10, Investigate d4, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6, Taunt d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5 (2/4)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Mighty Blow, No Mercy, Quick-Draw

Hindrances: Heartless

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest)

Background: A violent fireplug of a guy, Gorch is the shortest man ever to have received a football scholarship at the University of Pennsylvania. He's only five foot three, but he can bench-press four hundred pounds and he's built like a Sherman tank.

Not an especially skilled investigator, he made detective after doing some dirty work for Parnell Slope, and he remains Slope's bully-boy-in-chief, always ready to lend a hand in interrogations and

terrorizing witnesses. Gorch does whatever Slope tells him without hesitation, no matter how illegal or immoral it might be. But he isn't particularly loyal. He sees Detective Slope as his ticket to the top, not as his friend. If his own skin is on the line or someone else makes him a better deal, he will cheerfully betray Slope and think nothing of it. Gorch is African-American himself, but Slope's racism doesn't get on his nerves.

A party animal, Gorch looks like he's in a good mood more or less all the time, even when he's threatening or torturing someone. He approaches life with a cheerful, laid-back outlook, taking each day as it comes and trying to have as much fun as possible. He does like hitting people, but he gets enough of it on the job and doesn't beat up his girlfriend or get in bar fights.

While Gorch has no objection to lifting a few bucks from a murder victim's wallet or to collecting a little graft for Detective Slope, he doesn't regularly take payoffs himself. Offer him a big enough bribe and he might get interested, but he probably won't shake you down for one.

Single, Gorch has a regular girlfriend and he lives at her place, but he's no more loyal to her than he is to Detective Slope and he cheats on her every time a chance presents itself.

Detective Sergeant Monty Coulter

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d8, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Investigate d8, Knowledge (Auto Theft) d10 +2, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Knowledge (organized car-thief rings) d8+2, Notice d8, Repair d10+2, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5 (2/4)

Edges: Mr. Fix-it, Scholar

Hindrances: Loyal, Quirk (obsessed with finding stolen cars)

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest), repair kit.

Background: A short, plump, musclebound man with a mullet, a moustache and sideburns, most people know at once that he must be either a cop or an auto mechanic. In fact he's both. He's not a very good speaker—words come to him with difficulty, but he's not dumb.

Detective Coulter is Bedlam's leading expert on stolen cars. He has made it his hobby and his passion. Everyone else on the Robbery Squad defers to his expertise. In fact they've given him his own task force, consisting of himself and a couple of well-connected timewasters who don't do any work.

There are huge numbers of stolen cars on the streets of Bedlam. The underworld uses them as currency, criminals use them for transportation and too many ordinary people are willing to buy them because they have no other way to afford a vehicle.

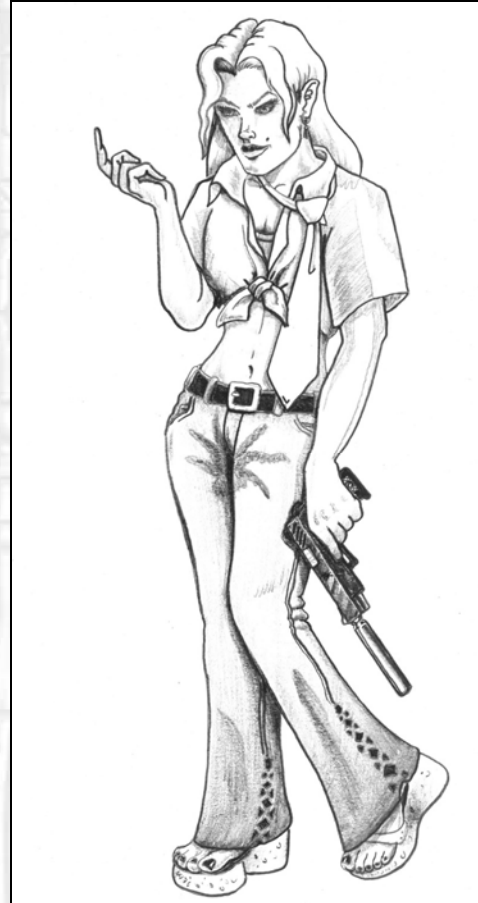
Coulter can spot the telltale marks of a jimmy on a car door from half a block away. He knows which little mom-and-pop car lots illegally sell dealer tags and can recognize them instantly. He knows which automotive shops sell stolen parts and which crime networks control them. He knows seemingly everything there is to know about cars, how to fix them and how to steal them.

He generates way too much work for the DA's office to keep up with, so most of the people he arrests go unpunished. But that's okay. He makes a whole lot of money shaking down car thieves when he catches them. This makes both his superiors and the other guys on the Squad very happy—he's the pad's biggest earner and that's why they gave him his own task force. Scrupulously honest about his crookedness, he always turns his whole take over to the pad and never keeps anything back for himself.

If the PCs would like to get his expertise on stolen cars, they couldn't ask for anyone better. But they shouldn't expect him to give up his crooked ways. He's very proud of being the squad's most valuable player and he would never want to fail his department by giving up shakedown.

Coulter's girlfriend currently has a restraining order out against him. Normally quiet, he has trouble controlling his temper when drunk.

Detective Lieutenant Sharon "Crazy Sherry" Stavros



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d10, Guts d10, Intimidate d8+2, Notice d6, Shooting d12, Stealth d6, Taunt d10+2, Throwing d10

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Habit (crank-fiend), Mean, Quirk (hates superhumans)

Edges: Arcane Background (superpowers), Attractive, Charismatic, Combat Reflexes, Dead Shot, Improved Dodge, First Strike, Improved Frenzy, Improved Level-Headed, Marksman, Nerves of Steel, No Mercy, Quick, Quick-Draw, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist the effects of Intimidation or Taunt)

Gear: Brass Knuckles (d6+2+ 2d6), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1+2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), May or may not be equipped with Penetrator Bullets (which turn her pistol into a Heavy Weapon)

Powers: Attack, Melee +2d6 damage, (adds to whatever melee attack she is making—this represents her nigh-superhuman skill as a combatant), Attack, Ranged (any ranged attack she makes does an extra 2d6 damage, up to a maximum of 5d6—this represents her nigh-superhuman marksmanship).

Background: Every police force seems to have one detective who is more talented than all the others. Bedlam's best cop is, unfortunately, Detective Lieutenant Sharon Stavros. Controversial inside and out of the department, she is a phenomenally skilled combatant but has an unstable, hotheaded personality. Sherry has a problem with alcohol and a problem with crystal meth and a problem with all the men in her life. She takes insane risks in combat, and people whisper behind her back that she was indirectly responsible for the deaths of her last four partners.

She gets into fistfights in bars, on public transit and sometimes in the waiting room of her psychiatrist's office. If she wins, she taunts her opponent and kicks them while they are down. If she starts to lose, she produces her badge and arrests them.

Sherry's second partner was killed by a supervillain, and from that moment forward she has hated all parahumans, good and bad, with the same lunatic fury that she normally reserves for her five ex-husbands (there were six but one got shot in the back of the head while walking home with his new wife—no perpetrator was ever found.)

Any PC who works the streets of Bedlam has heard of Crazy Sherry and her bad reputation with a Streetwise roll, or some appropriate Knowledge skill ("Bedlam Police Department," for example).

She was suspended after an ugly incident in which a young hooligan tried to mug her new boyfriend. Sherry was off-duty, but had a gun on her person and chased the assailant off with it. Then she

shot the kid in the back as he ran away and demanded that he return her boyfriend's wallet. The kid groaned that he had already dropped it, so Sherry shot him in the back again and angrily told the bystanders not to call 911. "Let him die!" she said (someone called anyway and the kid didn't die.) She then made some unfortunate remarks about African-Americans, which got into the newspapers. Sherry was high on crystal meth at the time the incident occurred, which didn't help matters.

Although she is on suspension, Sherry still has a lot of friends in the department who respect her skills and admire her attitude. She is particularly well-liked within the Bedlam Police Special Assault Squad, since so many of them share her attitude about superhumans. Although it's illegal, Sherry has been informally riding with them on patrol, and may well encounter the Player Characters if they run afoul of the squad. Sherry will be very quick to resort to violence. Frankly she'd sooner take a cape's life than not.

Detective Lieutenant Johnny Valentine

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Investigate d8, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Knowledge (Psychology) d8, Notice d8, Persuade d10, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d10

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5 (2/4)

Edges: Attractive, Charismatic, Connections (the DA's office and the Bedlam Police)

Hindrances: Quirk (see Page 369—but only if you're the GM)

Background: A tall, handsome, distinguished African-American guy in his mid-thirties, Detective Valentine is seldom seen around the precinct house, for he spends most of his time undercover. Charming and funny, he has an impressive list of academic credentials and juries love him. The Department knows this and they keep him very busy testifying in cases. He has a PhD in psychology and another one in criminal justice and he displays a keen insight into

the workings of the human mind when he's on the witness stand.

Friendly to nearly everyone, Valentine may or may not know the PCs, but if he does then he is more than willing to work with them or share what he knows about a given case. He has no beef with superheroes, or seemingly with anyone. In his undercover work he has spent time around some very dangerous people, but doesn't seem to bear them any malice, even when he's testifying against them.

Because he spends so much of his time doing undercover work, Detective Valentine is difficult to get in touch with. He just shows up, smiling and helpful, as if out of nowhere. He has never been known to take a bribe, but he has been known to bend the rules for people in trouble. It's unclear how much he's gotten his feet dirty in the course of his undercover work, but he does not seem to be in the pay of the Mob.

Despite being kind of a mysterious guy, his home life is extremely normal. Johnny Valentine lives with his wife and three daughters in a bungalow in Wolverton. His oldest girl is in high school, the twins are in fifth grade. It may seem dangerous for someone who has arrested or given testimony against so many local criminals to live in the same neighborhood, but he seems unconcerned.

Administrative Services

The folks who process payroll, keep records, procure supplies and so forth are not for the most part "Sworn Personnel." They don't have badges, don't have police powers, aren't trained in law-enforcement and don't have the power to make arrests. The exception to this rule is the Internal Affairs division, which is staffed by police detectives.

Apart from Internal Affairs and the Records division, cops can't get transferred into Administrative Services or vice-versa. They are two entirely separate entities.

Administrative Services is based in the grim-looking, battered-up old Police Headquarters downtown. Most of the purely administrative functions (payroll and human resources, for example) have actually been

moved to a small brick building across the street.

Administrative Services staff don't have police ranks (unless they work for Internal Affairs) and instead have position titles like "Filing Clerk" "Administrative Assistant," etc.

Lester Dunwoody is the current Executive Officer who heads up Administrative Services. He's the highest ranking authority in the Bedlam Police. However, he isn't "sworn personnel," doesn't wear a uniform and doesn't see himself as anything like a police chief. Frankly he's busy enough trying to keep his administrative offices functioning to spend any time trying to run the rest of the police force. Anyway it's not his job.

Generic Administrative Worker

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d4, Knowledge (administrative procedures) d8, Knowledge (Bedlam Police) d6, Notice d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Loyal, Quirk (Lazy)

Executive Officer Lester Dunwoody

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Knowledge (administrative procedures) d8, Knowledge (Bedlam Police) d10, Notice d6, Shooting d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Connections (Bedlam City Government)

Hindrances: Dependant (wife), Loyal, Quirk (trying hard to do his best at an impossible job)

Background: Overworked, disheveled and constantly anxious, Dunwoody is a capable administrator but he's barely able to keep up with the work in front of him, let alone change anything. He focuses on keeping his administrative offices going with the limited resources available—which is often quite a challenge. It leaves him absolutely no time or strength left over. He works hard and sincerely cares about what he's doing. But

he's so focused on the work in front of him that he's nearly blind to the force's larger problems. And frankly, he's afraid of standing up to guys like Big Chuck O'Ryan and Sharkey Muldoon. Big Chuck already mocks him and bullies him whenever he gets a chance—what's he going to do if Dunwoody starts cutting into his action?

Plus, Dunwoody's own past isn't completely clean. When he was a district patrol officer he took money from the station house's pad of graft, just like all the other guys. He did it because he wanted to fit in and didn't want any trouble. As soon as he had enough seniority, he stopped taking the money. But he knows it would be easy to blackmail him if he were ever to start rocking the boat.

Dunwoody always looks like he's on the verge of bursting into tears. And his job is enough to make a grown man cry. He has to somehow make sure that a department as crooked and chaotic as Bedlam's gets supplied with everything from bullets to paperclips to health insurance. To his credit, he mostly manages to get this done.

He deeply loves his ugly old wife Hattie, and regrets that he has so little time to spend with her. They were never able to have kids and he's all Hattie's got, apart from her five Shi Tzu dogs. This is about to get worse. Any moment now Hattie will discover that she has cancer and Dunwoody's life is going to get a lot more miserable. Will he neglect his work, or neglect his dying wife? Which path leads to a deeper pit in Hell?

Office of the Chief of Police

The position of Police Chief may be vacant, but the office certainly is not. His five personal assistants and their own small administrative staff continue to draw paychecks and continue to show up for work—although there isn't a lot for them to do without a boss. All twelve of them are from Wolverton and have connections to the Reverend Willie Boggs' political machine, so Lester Dunwoody's efforts to have them suspended have gone nowhere. He wishes he were brave enough to really take a stand about this.

Fiscal Affairs and Human Resources

This is the largest division within Administrative Services and the one that Executive Officer Dunwoody spends the most time overseeing. They do everything from managing the department's budget to overseeing vehicle maintenance, to processing payroll.

Dunwoody manages to keep corruption out of the Payroll and Human Resources areas. No one is actually stealing money or sending paychecks to nonexistent officers. But it's impossible for him to keep them entirely clean. If some crooked cop wants a favor from Human Resources (for example, access to someone's personnel file) he's probably going to get it.

Records Division

Records are kept in the basement of Police Headquarters. It's a dark, dank place where the lights are on timers and only illuminate one little section of the room at a time.

Water drips from the ceiling in places. Many of the records have been damaged by moisture and the staff try all kind of ingenious ways to keep the rest of them dry.

Because the basement is overflowing with records, a lot of the older boxes have been shipped off to a rented warehouse in the Meadows, where the very lowliest clerks try to tend them.

Most of the staff who keep the Department's records are just administrative workers, but some are actual police officers who have been reassigned here. In neither case do they have police powers while they are on the job. Nor do they wear uniforms.

Being assigned to Records is a dead-end career track, whether you are an administrative worker or a cop. Because it's a punishment assignment, some of the best and some of the worst cops wind up here.

Some of the filing clerks are willing to steal or alter records at the behest of the Mob or other crooked cops in the Department. But some are totally clean. In fact one was responsible for the last major police scandal coming to light. So, if a filing clerk suddenly dies under suspicious circumstances, a Player Character might

want to take an interest in which files they were working on.

Public Affairs

The Chief Public Affairs Officer is responsible for making statements to the press, appearing on TV and attending public events. There are two Assistant Public Affairs Officers who attend events when the Chief Officer can't make it or doesn't wish to go (although one of these positions is currently vacant.)

The Chief Public Affairs Officer is presently Brooke Pringle, a former weather girl and local TV personality from Dubuque, Iowa. She is known for her wide-eyed, vacant, Stepford Wife grin. Although she is not "Sworn Personnel" and has no powers of arrest, she wears a custom designed uniform for the cameras.

Chief Public Affairs Officer Brooke Pringle



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d4, Knowledge (acting) d8, Knowledge (the press) d8, Notice d4, Persuasion d8,

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Attractive, Connections (Bedlam City Government)

Hindrances: Quirk (desperate for attention and approval)

Background: Brooke is from Iowa and has held minor jobs in the entertainment industry all around the Midwest. Mostly she's done human interest fluff for local newscasts, but once she got to be the host of a cable feature on Bigfoot. She has even appeared in two direct-to-video movies that you may have seen late at night on Cinemax. Now that Brooke is in her thirties she's no longer young enough to be a cute, giggly weather girl, so she became Chief Public Affairs Officer for the Bedlam Police.

While she's a stiff, wooden actress, she has taken to the job with enthusiasm, and it shows. She looks horribly insincere, but in fact she feels really strongly about her work and sometimes gets a little too carried away with it. Off-duty, she talks a lot about how difficult it is to be a cop despite the fact that she isn't one and never has been.

Divorced, she lives in the Stone Ridge gated community. Rumors link her romantically to famed local newscaster Obediah Brick.

Internal Affairs

This small unit is staffed by a mixture of administrative personnel and detectives. It has just six investigators at present, three of them Detectives and three of them Administrative Services staff. They are charged with investigating wrongdoing within the department.

Whenever a police car gets into a fender bender or an officer's weapon gets discharged, Internal Affairs reviews the incident. At least in theory. In fact they are so swamped with incident reports that most of them get by without more than a cursory glance.

There is some question as to whether they should get to review complaints against officers from the public. Internal Affairs itself opposes having to do

this, since they are already drowning in paperwork. But no one else wants the job either, so at present complaint reports just pile up in Records, unreviewed by anyone.

Internal Affairs sees its job as protecting the Police Department from lawsuits, by making sure no one does anything that could cause litigation. They do investigate crimes committed by police personnel, but they spend more of their time making sure that no one in the

Department leaks any of its dirty laundry to the press. Contrary to popular belief, they are not presently running any undercover operations inside the rest of the force, nor are they looking to take down any particular cop.

Because they are an administrative section, they are not supposed to arrest anyone. If they decide that a police officer needs to be arrested for a crime, they contact the officer's superior or the appropriate detective squad. This has caused problems in the past, when crooked officers have been tipped-off by their friends and turned fugitive. In a couple of cases, officers with outstanding arrest warrants have continued to serve, because no one wanted to arrest them.

One of the three Internal Affairs detectives is crooked, and reports directly to Sergeant "Big Chuck" O'Ryan, who leads a ring of dirty cops (see "the O'Ryan Boys" on Page 246.) But which one is it? Whoever it is, you can expect any important information that Internal Affairs receives to be in the hands of the Scarpia crime family within 24 hours.

Training Bureau

Bedlam doesn't have a full-time police academy. Instead they offer courses on Criminal Justice in every fall session of Bedlam Community College, with supplementary courses at Police Headquarters in the summer. Most instructors are real active-duty police officers who need the extra pay that comes with teaching courses. A few are retired officers trying to supplement their pensions.

Federal Law Enforcement in Bedlam

Not very many federal police agencies maintain field offices in Bedlam, despite the high level of crime here. It's too small, and the bigger city nearby almost certainly has field offices for most of the major agencies (FBI, DEA, ATF, etc.) already. When a US attorney or an ATF tactical team show up in Bedlam, they have flown or driven in from the outside.

Federal Bureau of Investigation

The FBI has just under sixty field offices around the country. None of them are located in Bedlam. Nonetheless, they do quietly rent office space here, since so many of their agents from the nearest field office wind up spending time in town. Their office suite is located just off downtown. It's a modest, unassuming set of rooms adjacent to the US Attorney's office. No plaque on the wall identifies them as FBI. The sign on the door says "DOJ" (for Dept. of Justice.) But the presence of so many large men with brush-cut hairdos and the lack of any paintings or other ornamentation on the walls may give it away (no FBI office is permitted to put any art on its walls, nor are agents allowed to have any personal items on their desks.)

Sometimes the Bureau will establish smaller offices (called "Resident Agencies") in locations that don't need a full-fledged Field Office, but that's not really what the Bedlam Office is. Instead it's just an extension of the Field Office in the bigger city next door. As such, it doesn't have a "Special Agent in Charge." Instead they assign various "Acting SACs" as needed. This is usually Special Agent Enzo Falcone (he prefers to be called Rick), a beefy giant with a gray brush-cut, a thick Chicago accent and a growing waistline. He has more seniority than any of the other agents and he knows Bedlam better than they do, so he's almost always ASAC. Rick is deeply familiar with the Mafia and its workings. Some people in the Bureau whisper that he's maybe a little too familiar.

If the FBI takes a suspect into

custody, they won't hold them in the local office and instead will transport them to the nearest field office for interrogation. They don't have a proper interrogation room here. There are rumors that the Bureau also maintains a safe house somewhere in the Country Club, and that they occasionally carry out debriefings and field interrogations there. No one knows if this is true.

The FBI's main reason to keep a presence in Bedlam is to monitor organized crime. They have as yet been unable to infiltrate the Scarpia family, but they have two informants inside the Gorganzua family, both of whom may need to enter the Witness Protection Program before long.

Generic FBI Agent

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidate d6, Investigate d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Hindrances: Loyal (to the Agency)

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Gear: Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Two Extra Clips, FBI Laptop (Toughness 10)

Acting Special-Agent-in-Charge Enzo "Rick" Falcone

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Investigate d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Hindrances: Loyal (to the Agency—and perhaps other parties as well)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Connections, Take the Hit, Tough as Nails

Gear: Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Two Extra Clips, FBI Laptop (Toughness 10)

Background: Special Agent Falcone is the primary contact for both of the stooges inside the Gorganzua organization, so he works out of the Bedlam office most of the time. He's an expert on the Mafia and knows them intimately. Sometimes people wonder aloud if he is perhaps on terms with the Mob that might be described as slightly too intimate. Remarks like that don't phase him. If somebody says this to his face, he points out that if that were true, it would be the Chicago Outfit he was too close to, and they're the traditional enemies of the Bedlam Mob.

Drug Enforcement Administration

The "A" doesn't stand for "Agency" as many people mistakenly believe, but instead for "Administration" (we know, it doesn't make sense to us either—Nixon thought it up.)

The DEA has less agents but more Field Offices (nearly 240) than the FBI. They don't advertise their presence, but they have a field office in the Meadows, right across from Bedlam proper. They are located in a big, wide, ugly two-story building with an enclosed parking lot and no sign on the door.

The local office operates with a lot of autonomy—the Agent in Charge has gone a little crazy and no longer trusts anyone, including his superiors. He files reports and claims to take orders, but half of what he writes is fabricated and he operates effectively free of oversight.

There are fifteen agents in the office, all of them intensely loyal to AiC Willard Gurley. After some bitter experiences, they have learned not to trust local law enforcement and seldom if ever cooperate with them.

The Bedlam office runs deep undercover operations, for the most part.

They've been playing extremely fast and loose with the rules, getting in much too deep and breaking all sorts of laws. They have bought, sold and used drugs. They have undertaken criminal errands up to and including murder in order to infiltrate gangs. AiC Gurley is malignly obsessed with bringing down the Mara from the inside, and his loyal troops have actually been willing to help wipe out some of the Mara's enemies in exchange for being brought closer into their world.

This is not the only operation they currently have in play. Whenever the PCs encounter a gang of drug-dealers, whether it's in Wolverton, the Country Club, the Shady Meadows mobile home park or even Stone Ridge, there is always a small chance that one or more members of the gang is actually an infiltrator from the local office of the DEA. The only criminal organization they aren't presently investigating is the Bedlam Mafia, since that's the FBI's turf and the two offices don't get along. Gurley himself is getting increasingly paranoid and fanatical, and he's been taking far too much speed.

Generic DEA Agent

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Investigate d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Loyal (to AIC Gurley)

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Gear: Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1) or Submachine Gun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 4, Shots 40).

Willard Gurley

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidate d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Dependant (wife and kids), Habit (coke addict), Paranoid, Vengeful, Vow (to wipe crime out of Bedlam)

Edges: Charismatic, Command, Hold the Line, Inspire, Frenzy, Quick, Quick-Draw

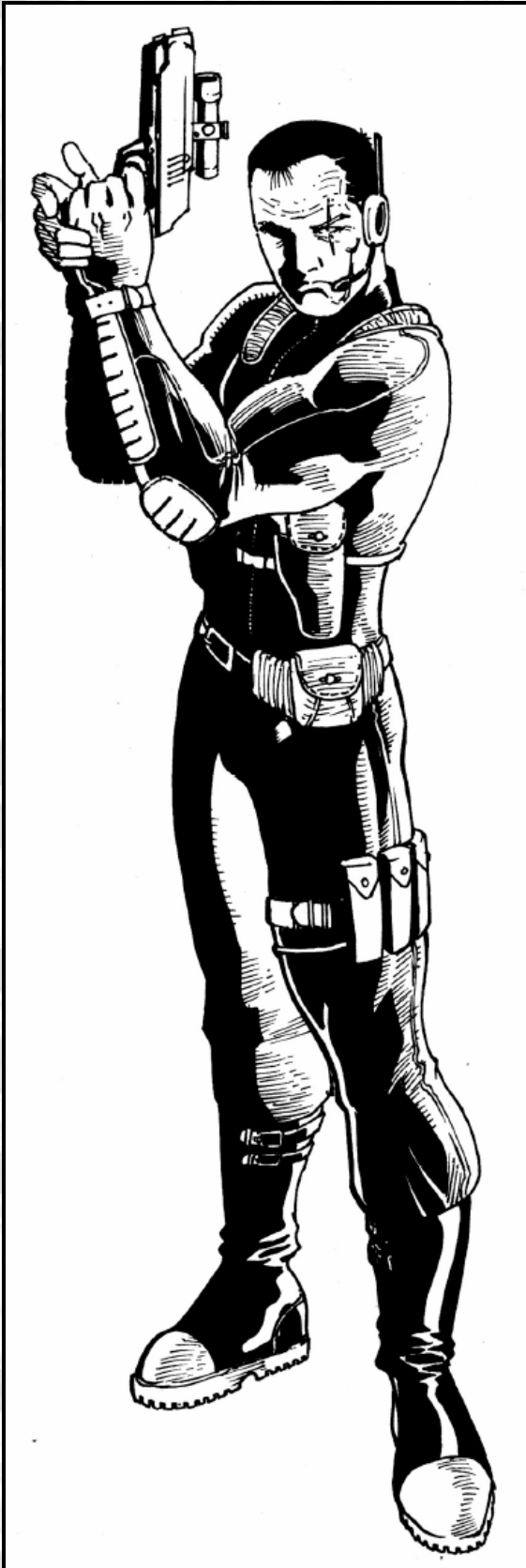
Gear: Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1)

Background: Willard Gurley has always been wound too tight. Angry, paranoid and vengeful, he has a reputation as something between a tireless crusader and a dangerous fanatic. That's why his superiors sent him to Bedlam. They wanted to keep him busy in a place where he couldn't do much harm to the DEA's reputation (after all, no one cares if Bedlam gets shot up a little worse.) But the city has driven him around the bend. After a few encounters with crooked Bedlam cops he has decided that no one but the men in his unit can be trusted—even his superiors in DC are suspect. He files false reports on his activities and refuses to cooperate in any way with the local authorities.

He's also grown extremely trigger-happy. He shot one of his own men for disloyalty about six months ago, and is convinced that he was manipulated into doing it by the Mob. There are probably other traitors in the group, he's decided. Who knows what they might get him to do next? His speed addiction has been getting worse, too, and he seldom sleeps for more than a few hours at a time.

Gurley is a small but athletic African-American man with a furrowed brow and bloodshot eyes. He's a sharp dresser, favoring colorful silk shirts and expensive sport jackets. He wears his shirt open, revealing his thin gold chain—a gift from his wife. She lives in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, DC with his son and daughter. He hasn't spoken to them in months. He keeps calling, but as soon as he hears their voices on the phone he can't bear to speak to them and he quickly hangs up.

The UNICORN



Conspiracy theorists talk about a secret government agency with an unknown budget, vast resources and virtually no oversight from anyone. The feds swallow nervously when you ask them about these rumors, for they have all heard them too.

It's impossible to say whether such a thing exists, somewhere outside the law, in the shadowy world of secret budgets and classified locations. Both conspiracy theorists and actual government wonks have taken to calling this mysterious, unseen shadow agency "the UNICORN," for it is a mythic beast, seldom glimpsed, whose very existence is in doubt. Out of a sense of pride, the men and women who actually work for the UNICORN have started calling it that, too.

UNICORN isn't a single monolithic entity. Since it's an "off-the-books" agency, not even its own personnel know precisely how large it is or how many government agencies it has its tendrils in. It has no official name, but UNICORN will do for now.

Not exactly an espionage organization, they are mostly concerned with creating, monitoring and neutralizing parahumans. Part super-soldier crèche, part commando squad, part secret detention program, they build superhumans, use them in covert operations overseas, and when necessary, they make them disappear. A large part of their work is done under the auspices of the Department of Defense, but they routinely ignore the Third Amendment provisions about operating on American soil.

If the GM likes, there have been two public scandals involving the UNICORN. In the 1970s, Senator Frank Church uncovered the CIA's secret mind-control and parahuman research program, MK Ultra (this really happened in our world, too.) The Church Committee hearings revealed all kinds of irresponsible, illegal and unethical experiments that MK Ultra's doctors were performing on American and Canadian citizens, with no legal authorization whatsoever. Repulsive Nazi doctor stuff, often with little scientific basis. They gave LSD and lobotomies to unsuspecting people, performed sick medical experiments on prisoners and on graduate students and on random people snatched off the street.

It appears that former CIA Director Allen Dulles thought the Chinese had developed a secret brainwashing technique which could destroy and rebuild the human personality (this wasn't true) and that it was critical for America to close the "brainwashing gap," that desperate measures were called for (still part of our own history, every bit of it—read the Church Committee's findings if you feel skeptical.)

These hearings led to the CIA publicly apologizing, turning many of its records over to public scrutiny, firing a lot of its personnel and reorganizing itself. But in the game world where Bedlam is set, we're going to assume that a lot of MK Ultra's weirder projects escaped the Church Committee's notice and were hastily reassigned to the Pentagon. Most of their programs on creating and neutralizing superhumans, for example, never saw the light of day and vanished into the Department of Defense, where they became the nucleus of the UNICORN.

If you like, there may have been a second scandal much more recently, within the past ten years, where the existence of the UNICORN was publicly revealed after a botched mission in the Middle East resulted in a lot of civilian casualties. A second set of Senate hearings questioned whether or not the UNICORN really existed, whether anyone knew how big they had grown, how many secret bases they operated, how many different super-soldier programs they might be running. Supposedly the Department of Defense came clean, cut the program drastically and curtailed its growing power—but nobody knows if that's true. How can you say for sure how big an organization with a secret budget really is? Or how much power they still have? If this second set of hearings took place in your game world, than the name "UNICORN" is common knowledge, but everyone thinks it isn't really the organization's name, that the term "UNICORN" was thought up by conspiracy theorists and encouraged by the gullible media.

Researchers who study the UNICORN say that it seems to be organized into a number of separate "Projects" that all have bland, military sounding code names.

Project SHIRAZ, Project OUTLOOK UNLIMITED, Project DAMOCLES—who knows what sinister things may be lurking under these opaque titles? Their operatives are officially assigned to one or another secret military unit (PDI, the Pentagon Defense Force, the National Reconnaissance Office) and may not know they work for the UNICORN. Sometimes the different Projects may fight one another, unaware that they're working toward a single goal.

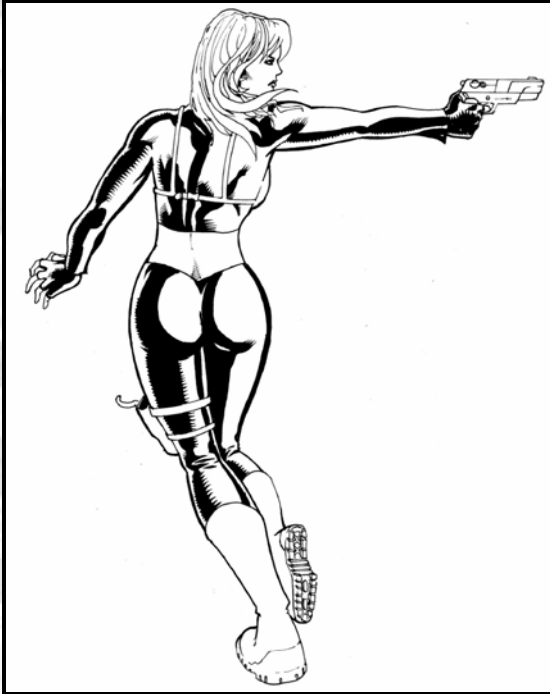
A lot of their agents have superhuman powers. Perhaps as many as one in four of them will have some minor abilities (invisibility, mind-reading, etc). They have access to much tougher agents as well, but not very many of them. At least a few of their battlesuits, psychics and cyborgs are in the same power range as Player Character superheroes. A few may be even tougher. They sometimes hire superhuman agents from military/security contractors like Executive Solutions or Corporate Consultations to supplement their superhuman muscle. They almost always recruit military or intelligence personnel—the organization seems to have little to no reach inside the federal law-enforcement agencies (FBI, DEA, the Federal Marshals, etc.) Yet they are not officially a military outfit and seem to be very careful about not allowing any of their personnel to salute, call their superiors "sir" or refer to themselves by their military rank.

Some observers will tell you that the most frightening thing about the UNICORN is actually how disorganized it appears to be. It's possible that it's become so secret and so compartmentalized that not even its leaders are fully aware of its scope or of what all of its branches are doing. It's frightening enough to think of it as a shadow government, but worse to think of it as a pilotless juggernaut, crashing endlessly forward with no one at the helm.

Newer operatives often ask what the acronym UNICORN stands for. They are told that this is strictly need-to-know information which they aren't cleared for. But in fact it probably isn't an acronym at all and doesn't stand for anything.

Does the UNICORN have operatives in Bedlam? No one knows.

Agent of the UNICORN



Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d8, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Government Secrets) d6, Notice d6, Persuade d6, Shooting d8, Streetwise d4, Stealth d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6 (1 point of Heavy Armor)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Quick-Draw

Gear: Body Armor (+1, Heavy Armor), Stiletto (Damage: d6+1), Souped-up pistol (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d6+1, ROF 3, AP 2), Hidden Communicator.

Background: Typically, the UNICORN's best agents won't know their own names. They've mostly come out of secret commando units, but some have followed much stranger career paths. Many are on loan from a variety of other secret agencies. Quite a few are former agents for one or another of America's enemies. There is a brainwashing firm in northern Virginia that selectively edits the memories of their operatives, so that they can't betray compromising secrets under interrogation. Some even carry on double lives, with jobs and families outside the world of espionage, only reverting to their agent personality when activated by a code phrase. The

mind-wipe program is strictly voluntary, but most agents opt to use it. Once you've worked for the UNICORN, you'd probably prefer not to remember some of the things you've done.

PFPA Psychic Agent



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Intimidate d8+2, Knowledge (Government Secrets) d6, Knowledge (Psi) d8, Notice d8, Stealth d6, Taunt d10

Charisma: +1, **Pace:** 6, **Parry:** 4, **Toughness:** 4

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Charismatic, Danger Sense, Mentalist

Hindrances: Habit (addicted to psi-drugs), Loyal, Quirk (has done terrible things, sometimes wakes up crying just thinking about them)

Super Powers:

• **Awareness:** Danger Sense

● **Attack, Ranged:** Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6. (Mind Blast)

● **Deflection:** -4 to incoming ranged attacks.

● **Illusion (4):** 16" cubed, Targeted

● **Mind Control:** Mind Wipe

● **Mind Reading:** Mind Rider

● **Telepathy**

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1)

Background: The Pentagon Force Protection Agency is officially a civilian Dept. of Defense group assigned to protecting the grounds of the Pentagon itself. Their budget is completely "Black" for security reasons. No one is allowed to know how much money they are spending or what it's for. As a result, it's a convenient cover for the UNICORN to spend as much money as it likes on whatever it likes. For the most part, it uses PFPA to house its superhuman agents. They don't manufacture cyborgs and psychics—that's all handled by various secret research projects, scattered through the system. Instead, they pay them, and organize them into strike teams.

Some of their psi agents are relative weaklings, but if they think they're going up against actual superbeings (the PCs, for example) they'll send one of the really heavy hitters—like the agent listed here.

PFPA Cyborg

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+1, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Notice d4+2, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 9

Hindrances: Habit (constantly takes painkillers in order to function), Loyal, Terminally Ill

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Power Points

Super Powers:

● **Attack, Melee:** +2d6

● **Darkvision**

● **Leaping 3:** (8 inches Vertical, 16 inches Horizontal)

● **Heightened Senses**

● **Toughness +2**

● **Wall Walker**

Gear: Machine-Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, Rate of Fire 3, Autofire, Armor Piercing 2, Three round burst)

Background: Not all of the Pentagon's efforts to create super-soldiers ended in failure. These cybernetically enhanced agents aren't as tough as actual superheroes, but they are far stronger and more durable than men made out of mere flesh and bone.

There are some drawbacks to the process. The cybernetic implants cause them tremendous discomfort and shorten their lifespan unpredictably. Some guys go psychotic from the pain, if they don't take enough medication to control it or their nervous system just happens to be wired the wrong way. Others suddenly go into shock and drop dead for no apparent reason. How long you stay in the program and how long they keep the implants in you is therefore something of a calculated risk. With constant monitoring, most guys manage to serve for six or seven years without shaving more than twenty off their life expectancy.

As you might expect, the program attracts some very driven guys. Some of them are willing to endure the pain of service out of patriotic fervor, some do it in order to show that they are the best, some are looking for adventure and a few really dig pain.

Most of them are recruited from military intelligence, but they find a few in commando units as well. It's hard to tell what branch of the armed forces they come from since they don't wear uniforms—instead they dress a lot like Secret Service bodyguards, with conservative suits and sunglasses. Most of them are in their thirties, but some are a little older. They are almost always quiet and professional, and seldom speak.

Despite the fact that they wear civilian clothes, they are all military service personnel, with ranks. While they are attached to the Pentagon Force Protection Agency their ranks are merely provisional—whether they are captains, lieutenants or humble NCOs in the mainstream armed forces, while they serve under PFPA they are all just "Agents."

Powered-Armor Agent



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d6, Streetwise d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 9 (3 points of Heavy Armor)

Hindrances: Loyal

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Power Points

Gear: Armored Power Suit (see below)

Super Powers: (All powers in Power Armor, a Device)

- **Armor:** Armor +3, Heavy Armor.
- **Broadcast:** Extra Range
- **Darkvision**
- **Force Control (13):** Super-Attributes Level 4 (Str d12+1), Force Field (+4 Toughness)

Background: They don't call them in very often, but when they need the extra muscle the UNICORN can produce a seemingly unlimited number of goons in powered armor. This is way too indiscreet for most missions, so if you ever even see these guys, you know their bosses must be feeling desperate. These agents aren't as tough as a typical armored superhero, but they can throw them at a target in waves if they have to.

The suits themselves are prone to a host of technical problems, including

inadequate radiation shielding that leaves most operators sterile in a few months and gives nearly all of them cancer within ten years. Yet despite this and other drawbacks, there is never any shortage of volunteers.

It's possible that the UNICORN might have some much tougher super-suits on the shelf somewhere, waiting for a super-being to piss them off badly enough to activate them.

Researcher for the UNICORN



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d6, Healing d8, Knowledge (pick two or three fields) d10+2, Notice d6, Repair d8+2,

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 4

Edges: Arcane Background (Weird Science), Gadgeteer, Mechanical Genius, Mister Fix-It, Scholar

Hindrances: Cautious, Loyal, Quirk (Crazy, has no conscience or feels tormented by the awful things they have to do in the service of their country—pick one)

Super Powers: Inventor

Background: The UNICORN draws its researchers from all quarters of the Mad Science community. Some are former CIA associates from Third World countries, who used to perform medical experiments on the behalf of America's interests until Amnesty International and the war crimes tribunals got too close. Some are former super-criminals who managed to cut a deal. Some were recruited from Soviet death-labs after Communism fell and the risk of prosecution grew too great for them to stay in Russia. A few may be actual Nazi researchers, still alive and toiling away in the pursuit of science after all these years. But the majority of them are just brilliant kids, recruited straight out of college with the promise of exciting work in the service of their country. Some of these bright young things go mad after they see the kind of stuff that they will have to do for the UNICORN, some defect or have to be executed, but most learn to cope, or even to enjoy the work.

The Court System

There are basically three types of courts. Municipal courts handle smaller matters like traffic violations, small claims and sometimes minor crimes like disorderly conduct. They are overseen by judges and don't require juries. Trial courts handle serious crimes and serious lawsuits. Criminal cases are heard by juries, civil cases (lawsuits) are decided in trial courts, by juries or by judges. Appellate courts review the decisions of lower courts.

Federal trial and appellate courts are a separate system from local and state courts. The feds have their own prosecutors

(called US Attorneys) who serve under the Attorney General and are appointed by the President. Federal courts and prosecutors only prosecute federal crimes.

There is no federal courthouse in Bedlam—it isn't big enough. Federal cases are heard in the nearby metropolis that Bedlam sits in the shadow of.

The District Attorney's Office

In Bedlam, the DA is an elected position, rather than an appointed one. Yet the current DA, Cord Killingsworth, was not elected—at least at first.

DA Monkowski got removed by the state authorities for corruption, wire-fraud and deviancy and the Governor appointed Killingsworth as his temporary replacement. That's illegal, but the city didn't have the resources to litigate, and anyway Killingsworth was efficient, capable and popular. He won an election last year, and the issue of his legitimacy has gone away.

DA Killingsworth seems to be on a mission to clean up Bedlam and he's willing to cut corners to do it. He does not take bribes to go easy on organized crime, but he doesn't stop his Assistant DAs from doing it. Nor does he tell them to break the law, plant evidence, intimidate witnesses or perjure themselves. There is an unspoken understanding that they are supposed to increase the conviction rate, and they do what is required to ensure that this happens. The boss ignores evidence of wrongdoing. Or perhaps he throws a bad Assistant DA to the wolves if it becomes impossible to sweep things under the rug.

Right now, the two fastest rising stars in the DA's office are Ronnie Hagstrom, who has been doing most of the really shady stuff and Kim Casteel, who never breaks any rules, and seems to get by purely on her good looks, boundless energy and talent. Neither one seems to be on the take, but neither one seems anxious to meddle with the Mafia, either. Casteel in particular is always eager to give mob defendants a good deal. It's almost as if they had something on her...

DA Cord Killingsworth

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidation d8+2, Investigation d4, Knowledge (Law) d8, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Notice d6, Persuade d6, Streetwise d4

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Attractive, Charismatic, Connections (Bedlam City Government), Strong-Willed (+2 to to resist Intimidate or Taunt)

Hindrances: One Arm, Vow (get revenge on all superhumans everywhere)

Background: They call him “the Hook” because of his prosthetic left arm. He has some ugly scars on that side of his body, as well. He jokes that he got them trying to scratch himself with his hook. That’s about as close to being funny as he gets. Grim, driven, all-but humorless, he never smiles. Handsome, in a hawk-nosed, dark-haired, brooding kind of way, he has some scars on the left side of his face but they just add to his rugged appeal.

He’s on a lonely crusade for justice. Ten years ago, while he was still an Assistant County Prosecutor, a supervillain called “Eat ‘em Up Jack” tore off his arm and Killingsworth has been obsessed with vengeance ever since. Eat ‘em Up Jack died in prison two years after the incident, so instead the Hook is going to have his revenge on all superhumans and mask-wearing bastards everywhere. He does what he can to hurt them from his position as DA, but he has much grander ambitions. He intends to get to a higher office, where he can accomplish a lot more. Possibly as high as State Attorney General or even Governor. To get there, he’s going to have to do something about crime in Bedlam. Increasing his conviction rate is his key to higher office. And he’ll do whatever it takes to bring those numbers up. He’s aware that this means convicting people who may be innocent. But no one is innocent, he feels, especially if they’re from Wolverton or Hardwick Park.

Back when he was an Assistant County Prosecutor, he had to plant evidence

and get a few witnesses to lie in order to get convictions. He knows that’s how it’s done. In fact that’s why Eat ‘em Up Jack went berserk in the courtroom and ripped off his arm—he realized that he’d been set up. However, Killingsworth thinks it’s beneath his dignity to do dirty stuff himself, so he relies on his Assistant DAs to do it for him.

The Mafia doesn’t worry him as much as the capes. And it’s hard to get convictions against them in Bedlam—it can be hazardous to your health, too! Killingsworth is beyond caring whether he lives or dies, but if he gets killed he can’t continue his crusade and all those parahuman @#%s will go unpunished for what they did to his arm. The Hook’s wife divorced him years ago, and while people think of him as an eligible bachelor, he is interested in only the most casual kind of affair. His wife says she left him because he had become so crazy and morose after he lost his arm, but he’s sure she just couldn’t stand the sight of his hideous, crippled body. He has always disliked handicapped people for being so contemptibly weak, but now he hates them so much he can barely stand to look at them.

His daughter keeps trying to call him—she’s nine and she desperately misses her dad. But she has Cerebral Palsy and she disgusts him, so he won’t take her calls. He’s thinking about having a restraining order taken out against her.

Generic Assistant DA

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d4, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Investigation d4, Knowledge (Law) d6, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Notice d6, Persuade d6, Streetwise d4, Taunt d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Connections (Bedlam City Government)

Background: Most of the Assistant DAs are loyal to Killingsworth and willing to bend a few rules for him. Only a few are willing to bend as many rules as Ronnie Hagstrom (see below.)

Assistant DA Wally Slocomb

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d4, Guts d6, Knowledge (Law) d4, Knowledge (Bedlam) d4, Notice d6, Persuade d6, Streetwise d4

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Connections (Bedlam City Government)

Hindrances: Obese, Quirk (Lazy, cowardly, avoids work, fear and pain equally), Ugly, Yellow

Background: DA Killingsworth has tried to keep councilman "Big Andy" Czernik's people out of his department. He's afraid they'll steal money or do something flagrantly corrupt and get the state or federal authorities breathing down everyone's neck. That's how Monkowski got removed. But he hasn't been able to completely keep them out.

Wally Slocomb acts as Big Andy's eyes and ears within the department. Fortunately, he's too lazy and incompetent to do much harm, and too untrustworthy for the Scarpas to call on him for any really important favors.

Slocomb is a big fat drunken mess with a patchy attempt at a beard. He often shows up late or calls in sick. He throws away his money at the dog track and while he'd be happy to supplement his income with a bribe or two, he lacks the energy required to extort one from anybody. Nor does he have the force of personality required to intimidate a slug, or the brains required to do a good job of planting evidence. He always looks baffled and nervous, as if at any second somebody might find out that he has no idea what's going on around him.

Assistant DA Ronnie Hagstrom
Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidation d8+2, Investigation d4, Knowledge (Law) d6, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Notice d6, Persuade d6, Shooting d8, Streetwise d4, Taunt d8+2

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Attractive, Charismatic, Connections (Bedlam City Government), Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate or Taunt)

Hindrances: Heartless, Mean, Quirk (Ruthless bully, will do whatever is required to advance his career)

Gear: Big Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 10)

Background: A rising young guy in the DA's office, Ronnie Hagstrom has the good looks and charm for higher office and he knows it.

A grinning blonde bully, both in and out of the courtroom, he's headed for the top by whatever means prove necessary. The way to get there, he thinks, is to kill as many non-white defendants as possible, so he's racking and stacking 'em, sending as many guys to the death chamber as he can. Whether or not any of them are guilty is isn't really his chief concern. Nor, he suspects, will it be a problem for the folks whose votes he wants. Black and brown faces on death row are what they like to see. To speed the process along, he has gotten involved with Detective Parnell Slope (see his individual description on Page 76) who has been torturing up a steady stream of dubious convictions for him. This is a whole lot easier than going to all the trouble of coercing witnesses and planting fake evidence himself—although he still does. It's too much fun to resist. The look on some poor guy's face when he realizes that he's been set up, that he's actually going to die for no good reason, it's priceless, a thing of beauty. Hagstrom gets along great with Detective Slope and his crew. Once he gets elected District Attorney, he's sure to make Slope an Assistant DA to follow in his footsteps.

Hagstrom fancies himself a pretty tough guy, and he is. He lifts weights constantly, boxes at a private health club three nights a week and most importantly, has the stone-cold psychopathic viciousness that most actual criminals yearn for. He always goes armed—not because he expects trouble, but because he might like to start some.

Assistant District Attorney Kim Casteel



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Knowledge (Law) d8, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Notice d4, Persuade d10, Shooting d4, Stealth d8

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8

Edges: Attractive, Charismatic, Sweep

Hindrances: Disability (Color Blind, no Sense of Smell), Quirk (Trying much too hard to be human), Quirk (Doesn't know how to repair herself), Quirk (never sleeps)

Special Abilities

- **Armor +1:** (Heavy Armor)
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Does not suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fearless**

Background: Assistant DA Casteel works harder than anyone else in the department. A little too hard, people say. They are starting to notice the tireless, dogged way she pursues cases, her flawless memory for facts, the number of hours she puts in and wonder out loud if she ever finds time to sleep. And not as a joke.

Kim is a little too pretty to be an Assistant DA, really—she looks more like an actress hired to play one on TV. Always carefully formal, she smiles a lot, but it looks

odd and fake. When she isn't at work, she devotes time to six or seven volunteer organizations, takes courses, participates in ballroom dancing competitions and runs marathons.

She is not presently involved with anyone, although she goes on casual dates all the time—sometimes as many as three in one night. None of her dates ever gets more than a kiss on the cheek, but that's okay by most of them. Despite being conventionally beautiful, there is something about her that turns most guys off. Something hard to define.

People are starting to whisper behind her back that she's a robot—probably one of "Master-Bot's" failed creations (you can find out more about this annoying arch-villain on Page 348.) She must have bought some fake ID from the Mafia and moved to Bedlam, where people don't ask very many questions. After all, she never prosecutes any cases against organized crime, as if they had something on her.

If this is true, then the city could be in a lot of trouble. Should it be proved in court that she has no actual law degree—that she isn't even human, it would allow all the dozens of cases she's worked on to get appealed. And the mess gets even bigger if she turns out to have been influenced by organized crime. For now her boss is covering for her. Meanwhile the rumors are spreading.

Adventure Seed: Bride of Master-Bot

Someone spots the infamous supervillain known as Code Name: Wifebeater at Bub's restaurant in downtown Bedlam, talking with some of the Sicilian guys who hang out there late at night. This is one of the places where Donny Scarpia hangs out. Has the Scarpia Family hired a supervillain? If so, then why?

Not long thereafter, the Player Characters hear that a document forger named Willy Ying has disappeared. He lived over a crummy Chinese restaurant in the Meadows called "Good Chinese" (more commonly known "Bad Chinese".) One or two witnesses swear they saw Code Name: Wifebeater lurking around Good Chinese.

Then one of the witnesses vanishes and the rest abruptly clam up.

And then the robot attacks begin. Dozens of Model 111 robots (Master-Bot's primary servitor-model) begin showing up in public places, smashing stuff and demanding that Master-Bot's wife come home. Master-Bot has a wife?

The PCs will have several chances to tangle with the robots in public. During one such incident, the robots show up outside the offices of the District Attorney, yelling that "stupid bad-life humans are am all return Master-Bot's bride to us!"

Code-Name: Wifebeater arrives at the scene and is caught completely unawares. A three-way battle ensues and the PCs capture Wifebeater (if they can't do it by themselves, then he gets injured by a robot and it slows him down enough for them to catch up with him.) He won't say anything about what he was doing there.

Once they have a high-profile defendant like Wifebeater, the Bedlam criminal justice system moves with uncharacteristic haste. Wifebeater is to be arraigned the next day. Assistant District Attorney Kim Casteel is assigned to the case. As his captors, the PCs are called to testify.

Wifebeater represents himself, giggling and cutting up and carrying on in the courtroom. Just as the court is about to get down to business, robots swarm the building. Master-Bot has come in person and he's brought a whole bunch of big tough com-bots with him. A huge battle erupts throughout the building. Wifebeater may or may not get loose.

Then, as Master-Bot himself strides into the courthouse, one of the stenographers meekly steps forward and says that she'll go back with him. All she ever wanted was to see what the world was like. She pulls off her fake skin, revealing gleaming metal underneath. (this is Steel Selina—see Page 349.) Oddly, her voice sounds exactly like Kim Casteel's.

Wifebeater's case is declared a mistrial. The two robots leave together, Selina hanging her head sadly.

If the PCs talk to Kim Casteel about this incident afterwards, Code Name

Wifebeater suddenly pops up out of nowhere and advances on them. Then he gets a phone call. "Really?" he says into his cell phone. "So it's off? I am still getting paid, I assure you!" Then he waves goodbye to the PCs and to Ms. Casteel and walks away.

What was really going on here? The Scarpia Borgatta found out that Master-Bot was back in town before anyone else knew about it. They hastily decided to eliminate both Kim Casteel herself and the forger who prepared her fake documents. If it comes out that she was (as they suspect) a robot, and that she was going easy on mob defendants, it would direct far too much attention to the family. Willy Ying did a lot of good work for them over the years, but it was time for him to go. Killing a robotic Assistant DA posed some unknown challenges, so Dapper Donny reluctantly consented to hire a supervillain.

When Wifebeater confronted Kim after the attack, he planned to finish her off, but since Master-Bot wasn't actually after Kim there was no longer any risk of exposure and no reason to kill her. It's a shame they can't bring Willie Ying back from the dead, but life goes on.

Judges of Note

Not a comprehensive list by any means, here are some of the judges that Player Characters might find themselves in front of.

Judge Howard Leeth

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d8, Investigation d4, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Knowledge (Law) d8, Notice d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 4

Hindrances: Quirk (deeply depressed)

Background: The city is eating him alive—he can barely stand it anymore. Judge Leeth has tried to retire three times. He's always been turned down, so he staggers on. He's a mournful, disheveled looking man in middle age, with a thick untidy mop of gray hair that he doesn't bother to comb, stubble on his cheeks, a long, horsy face

and sunken, bloodshot eyes. Everything about him seems to slump. He moves slowly, as though in pain, and never, ever smiles.

Weary, exhausted and depressed, he hears most cases with his head propped in his hands. When he gets really unhappy, he puts his face down flat.

There are actually some advantages to drawing Judge Leeth. He's too tired of life to be intimidated or take a bribe. In fact that's why the city is killing him. A more callous man would be able to take the things he has to see in stride. Instead he complained about it so much to his wife that she killed herself. His kids hold him responsible and want nothing more to do with him.

Judge Barry Krummel

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Knowledge (Law) d4, Notice d4, Shooting d6, Taunt d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5 (2/4)

Edges: Connections (Bedlam City Government)

Hindrances: Quirk (bigot), Stubborn

Gear: Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest)

Background: They call him "Barry the Hammer." He's a tough old guy from Stark Hill who looks like he played football in college and seems to comb his hair with buttered toast. His face is battered, lined and constantly red with fury, but you can see he was once handsome.

A famously outspoken jurist, he claims to be "tough on crime", by which he means tough on people from Wolverton. Barry the Hammer is famous for his no-holds barred approach to cleaning up the streets. So long as the perpetrators aren't white or rich or cops or connected to the Bedlam Mafia, he gives them the maximum penalty the law allows. He's also known for making outrageously racist remarks to the press, and for his close personal friendship with Municipal Councilman "Big Andy"

Czernik. He doesn't know the law very well, and will often dismiss precedents cited by the defense with the words "I ain't heard of that ruling, and even if I did I wouldn't go by it."

Prosecutors love him, because he takes their side. The press loves him because he's a loudmouth and sometimes inflicts weird and humiliating punishments on defendants. The Mafia loves him because he does whatever they tell him to.

Judge Krummel still lives in Stark Hill, in the same row-house where he grew up, and is fond of saying so. He has a second home in Florida, and spends as much of his time there as he can.

Judge Miriam Burdett

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d4, Knowledge (Bedlam) d4, Knowledge (Law) d6, Notice d4 (-2 to notice via auditory senses)

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 4

Edges: Rich

Hindrances: Clueless, Elderly, Hard of Hearing, Quirk (sometimes acts weird and unpredictable)

Background: The oldest jurist in the state, Judge Burdett hasn't been quite right for years. Her husband and son look after her at their huge house in Stone Ridge. Mr. Burdett has no useful source of income, while their son is a Star Trek watching slacker, so it's imperative that they keep her on the bench.

The city needs her too, since they don't have nearly enough judges and the court calendar is already packed far over capacity. Everyone tries to cover for her lapses and odd behavior on the bench. The clerks of the court do their best to keep really important, high-profile cases away from her, but sometimes they get overloaded and there's no one else.

She can run a courtroom competently enough. But her short-term memory sometimes fails her and at times she will blurt out non-sequiturs or do something unaccountably strange. She's particularly prone to random outbursts of swearing.

Judge Burdett is a tiny, hunched woman with thinning white hair and a seemingly endless collection of huge, outrageous hats.

Judge Alton Pfeffner III

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d4, Knowledge (Bedlam) d4, Knowledge (High Society) d8, Knowledge (Fine Wines) d8, Knowledge (Law) d4, Notice d4, Shooting d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Connections (Bedlam Society), Rich

Hindrances: Quirk (not paying much attention to what's happening in his courtroom)

Background: He never wanted to be a judge, but he didn't know what else to do with his time, apart from whiling it away in a deck chair on a yacht. He hates the law, hates everything to do with it. All of his brothers and cousins became partners at major firms in New York, or sat on the federal bench judging the legality of corporate mergers, never having to dirty themselves by hearing sordid criminal cases. But here he is, past fifty and still stuck in a dead-end job as a Bedlam city judge. He prefers to hear civil cases, but even these are boring and ugly and he pays little attention. Tall, thin, handsome and tanned, with elegant white hair and a fatherly smile, he always looks as though he has just come in off the tennis court and he usually has. He's notoriously inattentive, frequently getting details wrong or mishearing things people say. His command of the law is weak, but he will listen and nod wisely while lawyers present him with complicated arguments, his mind a thousand miles away.

He drinks too much and likes cocaine, although he isn't an addict. He's nowhere near so wild as he was back at Yale—he's pretty sure he did something unforgivable at one of those frat parties, something that could haunt him. He can't quite remember what it was.

Judge Pfeffner lives in Stone Ridge with his wife Lillian. They have two daughters. Alberta is presently raising hell

at a private high school in Pennsylvania and Ida is already on the rampage at Yale, the little Dickens.

The Probation Department

Bedlam's probation officers are responsible for making sure that parolees and people on probation meet the terms of their release, that they show up for court dates, community service and any mandatory therapy (drug rehab, for example, or anger management counseling.) Probation officers answer directly to the DA's office, rather than to the Bedlam Police.

Badly understaffed, they don't have enough time to give most of their cases anything more than cursory attention. Unless of course your probation officer decides that they don't like you, or gets pressure from above to come down hard on you, or decides to shake you down for bribes. In fact shakedowns are rare, since the job is so notoriously thankless that most really crooked officers seek other, easier work. Instead this tends to be the realm of unambitious timewasters, failures and drunks, as well as the occasional crusader out to do some good.

As official officers of the court, probation officers can make arrests. Some, but not all of them choose to carry handcuffs and sidearms.

The Office of the Public Defender

A small, underfunded and frequently misunderstood section of the criminal justice system, the Public Defender's office is supposed to ensure that every defendant in the court system gets competent representation, whether they can afford a lawyer or not. If you opt to have "an attorney appointed by the court" they will send you one of the overworked drudges from the Public Defender's office.

The head of the office is the "Public Defender" herself, Tawanda Johnson. The Public Defender is a largely ceremonial post—they don't actually work cases. That falls to the dozen or so Assistant Public Defenders. This is actually a good thing. PD Johnson is a political appointee, and while she has strong roots as a community activist in Wolverton, and great connections

with the Reverend Willy Boggs' political machine, she isn't a terribly competent attorney. In fact there are conflicting reports as to whether or not she has ever actually passed the bar exam (the fact that she has legally changed her name to "Attorney Tawanda Johnson" encourages this kind of speculation.)

"Attorney" Johnson is good-hearted but inarticulate, and sometimes seems to have difficulty understanding the things people say to her. She's an inspiringly passionate public speaker, even if her remarks sometimes make no sense. It's an open secret that she's being treated for bipolar disorder.

Kindhearted though Ms. Johnson is, you probably wouldn't want her to represent you in court. Too many of the Assistant PDs aren't much better. In fact the city has been sued more than once by defendants whose court-appointed lawyers showed up drunk, slept through hearings, or simply failed to appear. There are judges who would dearly like to put some of the least competent PDs in jail for negligence and contempt of court, but there's already a critical shortage of them. Some are ambitious young law school graduates who want to make a difference in the community, some are burnt-out, drunken failures who can't find other work and a few are competent attorneys who lack the charisma to make good trial lawyers. And then there's Fido.

Larry "Fido" Turwood is a great fat ruin of a man with a scruffy beard and an irritating, nasal voice. He smokes constantly and drinks too much in his off-hours. His clothes are rumpled and frayed, his expression is meek. And he's an incredible, amazing trial lawyer. Fiercely committed to protecting innocent people, he's quite annoying and easy to underestimate. He's also a cunning, fearless, ruthless debater. He has an uncanny ability to provoke people who have something to hide into exploding at him and revealing too much. His record is far from perfect and he has seen too many innocent people get shafted by the system, but he wins a surprising number of cases.

Unfortunately, this is raising his profile and making the Bedlam Police Force take notice. Last year he got an unjustly accused kid off of a high-profile murder rap, then got the detective who framed the kid fired—and then went on to find the real killer himself! This will not do. Poor Fido may have a fatal accident if he keeps doing stuff like that. But the stress of the job and his personal habits may kill him first.

NPCs for the Office of the Public Defender

Here's a handful of Public Defenders, in case you need them. PDs are a mixed lot. Some are good, some are bad. Some practice this kind of law because they love it, others because they can't find decent work.

Generic Public Defender

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Drive d6, Guts d4, Intimidation d4, Investigation d4, Knowledge (Law) d6, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Notice d6, Persuade d6, Streetwise d4, Taunt d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Background: This is a typical specimen of the breed—neither one of the good ones or one of the bad ones. They are probably pretty young and this is likely to be one of their first jobs after passing the bar.

Larry "Fido" Turwood Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Guts d10, Intimidation d6+2, Investigation d8+2, Knowledge (Law) d8, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Knowledge (Music) d8, Notice d8+2, Persuade d8, Streetwise d6+2, Taunt d8+2

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 0;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Alertness, Charismatic, Investigator, Level-Headed, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate and Taunt)

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Habit (chain-smokes), Habit (drinks too much when off-duty), Heroic, Obese, Ugly

Background: He looks like a mess. Fido Turwood weighs close to three hundred pounds, has deep lines in his faces and a graying beard. He smokes and he smells like it. His dress shirts are rumpled and his tie has coffee stains. His eyes are deeply sunken on either side of his shapeless nose and never look as though he's slept well. He's also cursed with a braying, nasal voice.

But a sharp mind and a fearless soul lurk behind his shabby exterior. He's completely dedicated to the cause of justice and he fights with every ounce of his considerable strength for it. Yet he's also a humble, unassuming guy who never boasts about his accomplishments. While there are a number of people in the justice system he deeply hates (Assistant DA Ronnie Hagstrom and Detective Parnell Slope are particularly high on his list) he doesn't make pompous speeches at them or throw tirades when they run into each other—he limits himself to a few dry witticisms.

You wouldn't know it from his cheerful demeanor and his deadpan wit, but he finds this life incredibly stressful. He smokes three packs of cigarettes a day and drinks more than ten cups of coffee. In his off hours he sucks down bourbon and brushes up on casework. Divorced, he's pretty lonely and hopelessly lusts after every cute girl in the office.

It might surprise people to know that he sings with a chorus, and that he has a superb tenor voice, nothing like the reedy whine he speaks with. But he doesn't get enough opportunities to sing, his job consumes him so completely.

His cigarettes and his drinking and his weight may kill him soon, but it's possible that if he keeps winning cases something else will kill him first.

Mitzi Fickerling

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Drive d6, Guts d4, Intimidation d6, Investigation d4, Knowledge (Law) d6, Notice d4, Persuade d6, Streetwise d4, Taunt d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 0; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: Attractive, Connections (Bedlam City Court System)

Hindrances: Quirk (full of herself), Quirk (dislikes minorities)

Background: Just a few years out of law school, Mitzi took her current job because it was the only thing available that would give her actual courtroom experience. She has already started to tire of it.

Thoughtless and shallow, she doesn't have much sympathy for her clients. Early on she represented a couple of defendants who were guilty of some awful crimes, so now she assumes out of hand that all her clients are guilty and deserve whatever punishment the court throws at them. Anyway the details of her cases are often icky and gross so she tries not to pay very careful attention. She's also afraid of non-whites, although she wouldn't ever admit this to herself, and always speaks to her black and Hispanic clients in a slow, condescending tone of voice.

"Fido" Turwood gently pokes fun at her for her lack of empathy, and she despises him for it. She also thinks he's physically attracted to her (he is) and this makes her loathe him all the more.

She's a moderately pretty blonde, with short hair and a square, plain face. Her hairdo and pantsuits are always up to date. Her favorite retort is "what-*ever*."

Mitzi is already looking for a job as a paralegal, or a document reviewer. Anything that will take her out of the Bedlam Public Defender's office and away from that creepy Fido guy.

Corrections

Once the police and the courts have (hopefully) done their work, the corrections system takes over. There are three types of correctional institutions. Jails hold people who are awaiting trial or who are serving sentences for minor, municipal violations (unpaid traffic tickets, for example.) Prisons hold inmates who have been convicted of state or federal offenses. Then there is the strange, vague world of institutions that house prisoners with no legal rights—mental institutions and juvenile detention facilities, for example.

We'll cover all three in order, starting with Bedlam's City Jail.

Bedlam City Jail

A bulky old brick building that resembles a 19th century factory, Bedlam's jail is showing its age. Its wiring is ancient and faulty, its walls are crumbling, its security systems are hopelessly outdated. The guards don't carry guns, because the jail can't afford them. Instead they rely on their truncheons and their physical strength. They carry huge old walkie-talkies covered with duct tape that often don't work.

This is where people who have broken municipal statutes get sent to serve their time. If you get convicted of driving drunk or too many traffic tickets or a domestic assault, you will probably serve your time at the City Jail. It's also where suspects wait for their trials. There is currently a backlog of untried cases at the courthouse. Therefore, Bedlam's overcrowded City Jail sometimes has to hold suspects for more than two years before their day in court. The authorities are trying to solve the problem by putting lots of suspects under house arrest, but there is presently a shortage of body beepers (and a lot of the ones they have don't work properly) so too many young men continue to languish in the city jail for years at a time, without ever having been convicted of anything.

A typical cell at the jail holds six inmates, has Toughness 15 walls and a door made of Toughness 12 bars. Some of the doors (about one in twenty) are prone to jamming open or shut.

This is meant to be a 3,000 bed facility, but it currently houses about 5,000 inmates and pretrial detainees. The ratio of guards to prisoners is about 1/15. That's downright dismal, and it's no surprise that it's hard for them to keep order. Many guards resort to making inmates fear them as a way of exerting control. The best way to do this is to beat someone for no reason. Clobber them senseless in front of their cellmates when they haven't done anything and everyone in that cell will treat you differently.

Because of all the rumors of abuse at the City Jail, it is now official jail policy that any time guards enter an inmate's cell they must carry a camcorder and tape the entire encounter, to make sure no one does anything that could get the city sued. So whenever they want to give an inmate a beating, the guards note in the log that the camera isn't working today.

There are security cameras all over the jail, but they seldom have a guard to spare for monitor duty, so all kinds of bad stuff happens right in front of the cameras and never gets reported or even noticed. The guards rarely even bother to turn the security cameras off before they clobber someone.

There is no computer database for keeping track of prisoners at the City Jail. Instead records are filed on numbered slips of paper in a huge bank of wooden drawers that resembles a card catalogue. This slows down their administrative procedures considerably. Some detainees have missed their trial dates or release dates because the jail couldn't find them in time.

Perhaps as many as half the guards at the jail are willing to take bribes. A few shake down prisoners or their families for protection money. Not many of them have very good connections, so the dope they can supply you with is pretty inferior, as are the cigarettes and booze. It's hard for an inmate here to get much special treatment no matter how much they pay for it, since there are so few amenities to go around. Most mob guys can't wait until they get out of the Bedlam jail and into state prison, where life can be a lot better for a Mafiosi with favors and money to spend.

Officially, the guards in the Bedlam Jail work for the County Sheriff's department, rather than the city. But the Sheriff's Department knows how crooked they are and keeps them on a totally separate career track from the other deputies, to prevent the corruption from spreading.

There is no superhuman containment unit in the Bedlam City Jail. This is not where the Special Assault Squad takes captured superhumans to await trial.

Where do they take them? No one seems to know.

Bald Knob Penitentiary

Down Route 5, past the Bedlam Airport (off the left edge of the map on Page 10) are two exits marked simply "Authorized Traffic Only: Shoot-to-Kill Rule Enforced." These exits lead to the former state prison at Bald Knob (the big, bare, stony hill the prison stands on.)

These days the facility is privately run by a big firm called Incarceration International. They also run prisons in Kazakhstan.

Bald Knob is a medium-security facility, but it has a maximum security wing, a supermax facility in the basement and a special ultramax unit designed specifically to hold supervillains. Sometimes parahuman prisoners have been mysteriously transferred out of the ultramax wing and into federal custody. No one seems to know exactly where they go. There are rumors that the feds may run a secret facility further upstate.

Bald Knob is what they call a rough joint. Incarceration International has been maximizing its profits by cutting services. Their medical facilities are completely inadequate, their law library is dangerously out of date, the food is bad and overcrowding is getting steadily worse. Then there are the guards. A lot of them are locals from the nearby town of Bald Knob, but the ones assigned to the highest security wings are from Kazakhstan and live in staff dormitories on site. Brutality is common and corruption is rife among the staff. Particularly the Kazaks, who also don't seem to speak English.

As a result of all these factors, prisoners have come close to rioting on several occasions. The Administration has coped with this by making deals with the prison gang-leaders. The Mara are strong here, but the two prison warlords the administration deals with most are former Bedlam racketeer Lincoln Stone and Scarpia family underboss "Joey Sideburns" Medrano. So now both the Mob and Lincoln Stone's associates get all kinds of special privileges.

These privileges unofficially include being allowed to kill people.

Juvenile Hall

Not quite every kid's worst nightmare (that would be Rainbow Acres Therapy Center), it's close enough. This is where young offenders go if they aren't tried as adults. No matter what your crime, the state has to release you on your eighteenth birthday. Sometimes, through incompetence or malice, a kid's paperwork get lost or delayed and they wind up staying much longer. The oldest resident is twenty-three.

Every parent with a kid in Juvenile Hall complains that the facility is too far out of town. Located west of Bedlam on Route 2, it's hard to visit if you don't have a car. Juvenile Hall looks like a run-down elementary school, except for the concertina wire around the playground. Few of the buildings are taller than one story. They have dormitory-style facilities for 1,500 boys and 600 girls. These are not separate cells, but big open barracks with rows upon rows of triple-decker bunk beds. Sometimes terrible things happen here after lights-out. Or during the middle of the day, for that matter.

Seven out of ten kids in Juvie are black. You might think that would mean that Eentsy Z's coalition would rule the roost, but in fact a lot of their mortal enemies, the A's, are confined here too. That divides the black population enough that the Mara have a significant amount of power too and no one gang really rules Juvie. The guards are about evenly divided. Some owe their loyalties to the A's, some to the Mara and some to the "Last of the Last" (as Eentsy Z's boys are sometimes called.)

There is an organized black market among the guards as well. Too many of them took this job because they like to inflict beatings and...other things on young boys. Small pretty boys are currency among a certain segment of the staff. They're careful not to mess with anyone affiliated with the major gangs, however. Or to interfere with them as they go about their business. You might think that wouldn't leave them with a lot of boys to choose from, but in fact there is always a never-

ending supply of frightened kids with no gang affiliations who got sent here for shoplifting or curfew violation or because their parents wanted to teach them a lesson. A boy will indeed learn many lessons here.

The current Chief Facilitator (warden) at Juvenile Hall is Gary Spicer. A huge, fat, choleric man, he will proudly tell you that he used to be a gang kid himself (he ran with the Stark Hill Viscounts), before a career in corrections turned his life around. That's true. In fact he did time in this very same Juvenile Hall, where he picked up his lifelong taste for what he still calls "lights-out delights." The man takes a lot of satisfaction in his job. For him, Juvenile Hall is a veritable palace of pleasure.

The Crawley Asylum

Officially named the Harwood Crawley State Hospital for the Criminally Insane, everyone in Bedlam just calls it the Crawley Asylum. It has been in operation since 1921. Many a madman's tears have watered its cold brick walls. Many prayers have echoed unanswered down its bleak corridors.

Based on a fifty acre lot in the forest west of Bedlam (down Greely Road), the Hospital is comprised of a dozen or so brick buildings that have all seen better days. Perhaps as many as six of them have become structurally unsound and either lie vacant or are stuffed with old broken furniture and boxes of medical records, slowing soaking up the rain from the leaking roof.

This used to be a girl's school, but then it abruptly closed, back in 1919 (see the Bedlam Timeline, on Page 25.) It was organized around sororities with an "international" theme. There is a faux Greek temple where the girls of "Greek House" once lived, a sad little windmill with its vanes missing, a green pagoda (perhaps the only pagoda you've ever seen with a screen door) and other ersatz international buildings.

The central structure was once the school's administrative center and senior dormitory. It has a huge atrium/ballroom with three tiers of balconies above it. The

dorm rooms open directly off of the balconies. They've all been converted to padded cells now. The wings of the main building are slowly falling apart. No one is officially allowed down there. The ceilings keep caving in and spilling boxes of old records everywhere.

In 1920, Dr. Harwood Crawley founded a private psychiatric hospital on the grounds of the Bedlam Girl's Academy. Within five years he became the first director of the asylum to take his own life. Three others have since done the same.

These days the State Hospital is run by a public-private partnership. Unfortunately, the Bedlam City Government is one of the partners and they manage to siphon off a lot of the hospital's resources. As a result the facility suffers from chronic underfunding and its grounds are a mess. They have a lot of administrative problems, too—not the least of which is that no one wants to work here for very long. Even if you don't count the dismal working conditions and dangerously dilapidated infrastructure, something about this place oppresses people. Or makes them dangerously obsessed with it. A surprising number of the staff have themselves developed mental illnesses while working here.

The patients are an unusual group. No one is much interested in serial killers anymore. The psychiatric community feels it has learned about all it can from these monsters and no longer bothers to study them very much. For the most part they get sent straight to death row for execution, rather than to a mental hospital, even if they are obviously insane. They can't be rehabilitated, so why bother keeping them alive? But in Bedlam a lot of psycho-killers got sentenced to indefinite psychiatric care before the current fad of executing them took hold. Many of them are still around.

Wilfred Skutch, the infamous Stark Hill Strangler, is here. So is Harlan Wayne Fuchs, the "Cannibal Killer." So is "Johnny Smooth" Mulligan, who used to kill prostitutes by injecting them with bleach. So is Capricorn, Bedlam's most notorious and mysterious serial killer, whose real name remains unknown. The hospital is

also home to Doctor Melvin "The Mad Dentist" Flickinger, who never actually killed any of his patients, but did some unbelievably disgusting things to their mouths. There are other maniacs in residence, less famous but equally horrible.

And there are worse monsters here. If an insane superhuman gets committed, this is where they get sent, by default. Over the years the hospital has developed a cocktail of medications that will, if administered regularly, suppress psychic abilities, and will also hold in check many powers based on other, stranger phenomena (magic, the ability to manipulate cosmic forces, and so forth.) There are radical side effects to the "Crawley Cocktail", which vary from patient to patient, but tend to include uncontrollable shaking and dry mouth.

Seymour "Sparky" Sanders, the pyromaniac supervillain known as Doctor Scorch, has responded so well to the treatment, and has been such a helpful and cooperative patient in general, that he has been granted exercise and library privileges. Few other supervillains have been as successful. Many haven't left their cells in years.

Sometimes there is no way to really incapacitate a supercriminal's powers. In a case like that, they keep them doped up on so much heavy sedation that they lie in bed all day like vegetables. Officially, all of the really dangerous prisoners are kept in the padded cells in the main atrium, but in fact the hospital is too overcrowded and too disorganized for that to really be true.

While the Crawley Asylum is supposed to be for violent cases, there aren't enough beds in the psych wards at any of the Bedlam's three hospitals. So there are always a few patients in Crawley who have suffered garden-variety nervous breakdowns or senile dementia. The staff house non-violent patients in the outbuildings and try to keep the maniacs

away from them.

Among the patients in the Alzheimer's ward is Sammy "Snap-Brim" Hammer (see Pages 25 and 26.) Once the scourge of the underworld, now he seldom even knows his own name. His family has long since forgotten him.

The current head of the Crawley Asylum is Ramona Blackmore, an unusually young psychiatrist to be given the job. At sixteen, Dr. Blackmore was the youngest pre-med graduate in the history of Stanford. She had her MD by the age of 19, although no one was willing to let her practice. She had a PhD at 25 and she's only thirty-two now.

She has been trying to reorganize the hospital, without much success. People close to her say that she may be starting to get seriously depressed, and that she has been spending too much time in therapy sessions with some of the more delusional patients. She has said something about a common theme to their madness. Something to do with the occult.

That shouldn't surprise mystically inclined PCs. Any Player Characters who can sense unnatural forces will know that the grounds of the Crawley Asylum are awash in nightmarish otherworldly forces. Something very big and very bad happened here about a hundred years ago, and the whole place is haunted by fiendish presences from beyond. Some are ghosts, some are worse things, drawn from the far side by the loathly aura that the hospital emanates. Every once in a while these sinister entities teach one or another inmate how to conjure up horrors.

Mystical heroes and occult investigators have found themselves walking the halls of the Crawley asylum more than once in the past fifty years to stanch some new wound in the side of reality. Previous chief administrators have had arrangements with one or another paranormal hero, but Ramona Blackmore doesn't yet.

Doctor Ramona Blackmore, PhD



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d6, Healing d6, Knowledge (Psychology) d12+2, Knowledge (Medicine) d8+2, Notice d6, Persuasion d10

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 4

Edges: Attractive, Scholar

Hindrances: Quirk (getting ever more strange and spacy)

Background: Dr. Blackmore has always pushed herself hard. A child prodigy, she spent her whole life years ahead of everyone around her, always keeping busy, always moving forward. She had boyfriends in college, but never got close enough for

any of them to be more than “friends with privileges.” She didn’t have time for anything else. While she has a superb command of psychological and psychiatric theory, people are largely something she appreciates in the abstract, like a complicated Sudoku puzzle.

Yet she isn’t exactly cold or ruthless. She seems poised, distant and detached, but she genuinely wants to help her patients, and she’s gotten ahead by working really hard, not screwing people over. She wants to help her patients because it’s her job and because it’s a challenge and because it’s the ethical thing to do—not because she feels some kind of emotional connection to them (or anyone.)

Dr. Blackmore isn’t doing very well right now. It’s not so much that she feels depressed by the hellish conditions at the Crawley Asylum. In fact she regards fixing the Asylum’s problems as an interesting problem to solve. But she’s totally unused to having so much spare time on her hands. She’s taken to wandering around the halls aimlessly, talking to patients who’ve been regarded as incurable for decades, and in her perambulations she thinks she may have stumbled across something. A deep, dark mystery surrounds the asylum, she has grown convinced of it. There is a pattern to the terrible events that have haunted this place—a reason for the miasma of dread that hangs over its walls. She has been interviewing its most disturbed and dangerous residents, compiling accounts of their delusions, and she thinks she is on the verge of seeing the truth take shape.

This obsession has begun to eat her up from the inside, and some part of her can see that and watches in helpless detachment. Where precisely this will lead her is up to the GM. It could take her down the path of heroism or villainy or madness or suicide. She could become a paranormal investigator or a sorceress or the mindless pawn of some monstrous thing from beyond the void. Or she could just go insane.

Dr. Blackmore has been neglecting her regular duties and falling behind on her work, for the very first time in her life. That can’t be a good sign.

Rainbow Acres Therapy Center

Back in the 1980s, medical service providers figured out a wonderful new way to make money. It costs a lot less to treat kids who don't really have any mental illnesses. And a minor's parents can have them committed to psychiatric care for any reason or none. So a whole range of new "treatment centers" sprung up around the country, specializing in care for "behavior disordered" teens. If your teenager gives you too much lip, or you just want them out of the way for a while, you can pack them off to a psychiatric care facility and let your insurance plan baby-sit them for as long as you like.

Because most of the facilities that specialized in this kind of "care" were run by fairly unprincipled people (no one with any professional ethics would participate in such a scheme), the living conditions they offered for kids were pretty poor. And they were prone to giving teenagers brutal forms of "therapy" as punishments. Medication with horrible side-effects, hydrotherapy, even shock treatment in some cases. It's a lucky thing that pre-frontal lobotomies were no longer commonplace by the 1980s, or they would have surely have used that technique as well.

Unfortunately, the authors of this new trend in therapy hadn't counted on one important factor. Kids grow up. And when they grow up, they can sue you. In the early '90s a blistering wave of lawsuits and scandals spooked the investors and the whole "Behavior Disorder Clinic" movement collapsed. Everywhere but Bedlam.

Rainbow Acres is one of the last of these hospitals in operation. This is the place kids fear worse than Juvenile Hall. Every teenager in Stone Ridge knows someone who knows someone who got sent to Rainbow Acres for mouthing off to their parents one too many times.

They're never quite the same when they come back.

As minors and mental patients, the kids at Rainbow Acres have no constitutional rights at all. The faculty can literally do anything they want to them in the name of therapy. It's all just a question of whether or not the parents will make a fuss and the insurance will pay for it.

Therapy centers like these have always attracted a particular type of employee. The kind of doctor who is blessed with a certain ethical flexibility, and enjoys working with kids in a no-holds-barred, hands-on therapeutic environment. With so few of these centers left around the country, therapists, nurses and orderlies who prefer this kind of work have flocked to Rainbow Acres.

The business offices are located in one of the skyscrapers downtown. This is where parents drop off and pick up their kids. The location of the actual treatment facility is not made public. There have been too many escape attempts and rescue attempts for them to want anyone to know precisely where the campus is. But every teenager in Bedlam knows that it's in the woods on Bramwell Road, east of town. Or maybe in one of the buildings on Industrial Drive. Or it's part of the "Liberty Shoppes" mall.

Kids who have spent time in the facility say that the staff transport you there in mini-vans that you can't see out of. The treatment center has no windows and it all appears to be located in a single large building. The only place you ever glimpse the sky is a small exercise courtyard surrounded by plastic plants. Everything inside the center is painted in warm, Crayola primary colors. Or it was back in the 1980s, before it started getting smeared with vomit, excrement, etc.

The current head of the psychiatric faculty at Rainbow Acres is Doctor Byron Shreve. He answers to a chief administrator and a board, but Dr. Shreve is effectively in charge of all on-the-ground operations at Rainbow Acres (although he often defers to his Head Nurse, Norman "Butch" Dinkle, on matters of security—Dinkle scares him half to death.) Dr. Shreve is forbidden from working with children in the state of Oklahoma, but Bedlam's state doesn't have a reciprocity arrangement with Oklahoma, so he can practice freely here. He doesn't molest his patients—at least in the conventional sense. He does however enjoy breaking them just a little too much.

Parents come visit their kids at the downtown office. One of the minivans drives the patients there to meet them. The ride is sometimes short and sometimes long. There's no predicting it.

Why did Rainbow Acres manage to stay in business when so many other behavioral therapy centers failed? It's a simple question of economics. Most of them collapsed because lawsuits made them a poor investment risk, but in Bedlam investors could count on being able to pay off the judges. All they had to do was to bring Municipal Councilman "Big Andy" Czernik in on the scheme. He's always felt that kids need to learn more respect, anyway.

NPCs for Rainbow Acres

Just in case the PCs ever try to break anyone out of Rainbow Acres, here are some stats for Doctor Byron Shreve, Butch Dinkle and a generic orderly/nurse/guard.

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d8, Healing d6, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (Psychology)

d8, Knowledge (Medicine) d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Taunt d8

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Quirk (sadist, careful not to get caught)

Background: Doctor Shreve would never do anything inappropriate to a patient. He has driven two of them to suicide, and has permanently damaged the minds of many others, but he has never broken the rules. He has never struck a patient, never touched one inappropriately—never come into physical contact with one at all, in fact. Any violence he cares to inflict on them is done by nurses and it's all done for the good of their health.

While he does get a kick out of torturing uppity kids with hydrotherapy, shock treatment and medications that have brutal side-effects, he much prefers to hurt them without anyone ever laying a finger on them. It's more of a challenge. Most of all he loves to psychologically abuse them in therapy, winning their trust and then cutting them down, getting into their secret thoughts and offering his merciless commentary. Of course this is much more effective when they know he holds their fate in his hands. It also makes them desperate to get on his good side, despite the fact that he doesn't have one.

This wouldn't be an effective strategy with really disturbed people—they'd lose control of themselves and attack him. But with a captive population of sane, vulnerable teenagers, he's able to do quite a bit of damage. He knows that there are other members of the staff who aren't as careful about the rules, and tries not to know anything about their activities, so that none of it can ever be connected to him.

Dr. Shreve is divorced—his wife

was also a therapist, but she was actually cruel enough that it frightened him, so he feigned an affair and got her to cut him loose. He won custody of his daughter, who is now in high school.

A devoted, kind father, he gets his aggressions out at work and doesn't bring them home with him. Despite his doting attentions, his daughter has tried to commit suicide three times. Her mother had a harder time leaving work at the office and she messed the kid up good and proper.

Norman "Butch" Dinkle

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Healing d6, Knowledge (Nursing) d8, Knowledge (Stamp Collecting) d8, Notice d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 7

Edges: Block, Brawny, Mighty Blow

Hindrances: Mean, Quirk (hates kids, loves order)

Gear: Short Club (d10+1 damage), Taser (Range 5/10/na, Damage 2d6 nonlethal)

Background: A big fat male nurse with huge muscles, acne and thick aviator glasses, Butch Dinkle rarely makes any facial expression at all. He doesn't talk much, either, except to quietly tell people to do things. Sometimes he speaks too softly for you to understand, which is good. He really prefers it when kids don't do what he says, because then he gets to hit them. He particularly likes to grapple kids and twist their limbs into painful positions. Especially if they're pretty girls.

Butch has more than a trace of obsessive-compulsive disorder and he doesn't like having his routines disrupted, even though it allows him to hit people. He collects stamps, and can often be seen at his station, going over a new stamp or

two with a magnifying loop. Yet despite his social maladroitness and his nerdy hobby, he's a beer-drinking member of the Coronets' street gang from Stark Hill. He hasn't spent much time hanging out with them for a while, but he lets any member of the Coronets who gets sent to Rainbow Acres treat the other kids pretty much however they please.

He's not very clean for a guy with OCD, and his glasses are always smeary with thumbprints and speckled with dandruff.

Generic Nurse/Orderly

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Healing d6, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (Nursing) d8, Notice d6, Stealth d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6

Gear: Short Club (d10+1 damage), Taser (Range 5/10/na, Damage 2d6 nonlethal)

Background: A typical nurse at Rainbow Acres is a short-tempered guy from Wolverton who couldn't get a job at the City Jail and has no patience at all for kids. But there are others who have made their whole careers out of working in facilities like Rainbow Acres and greatly enjoy the opportunity to interact with kids in an environment free of consequences. Some have moved hundreds of miles across the country to Bedlam, in order to find work in one of the very last such institutions in the US. Doctor Shreve knows this, so he tries hard to find out anything that could implicate him.

HOSPITALS AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Bedlam Fire Department has just seven working ambulances, with equipment that hasn't been updated in years. This puts a lot of pressure on the paramedics who work for Bedlam's three hospitals, each of which maintains its own small ambulance fleet. There have been arguments between dispatchers over which ambulance should pick up a given patient. People have died while waiting for the dispatchers sort out their disputes.

Below, we have some information on the Bedlam Fire Department, followed by hospitals and then Animal Rescue.

THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Bedlam's Fire Department doesn't have enough manpower or ambulances and the number of non-working fire hydrants in the city may be as high as one in four. On paper they have eight fire stations (supplemented by a few volunteer companies) but in fact two of them have "temporarily" closed for lack of funds, and one has burned down. For some reason the City Fire Department is often unwelcome in Stark Hill, where the locals prefer to rely on their own two volunteer companies. This may be because they have started hiring non-whites. Yet the department also gets accused of taking longer to respond to calls from Wolverton and Hardwick Park than the rest of the city.

People had high hopes that the new Fire Chief, Lucy Szmuda, would be able to change things, but instead she's had to spend all her energy fighting to keep her job, and may be about to give up soon. She's really tough, but everyone has a limit.

Below we have some sample firemen and a paramedic, as well as a couple of generic templates.

Bedlam Fireman



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Healing d6, Investigation d4, Knowledge (fire) d6, Notice d6,

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Dodge

Gear: Topcoat (2 armor vs. flame), Helmet (3 armor, only protects head), Axe (d6+2 damage)

Background: While there are a number of volunteer companies scattered throughout the city, actual Bedlam firemen are a vanishing breed. We have included stats

and background information for a few individual firefighters the PCs might at some point encounter.

Firefighter Pete Kistler

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Healing d6, Intimidate d6, Investigation d4, Knowledge (fire) d6, Notice d6, Taunt d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Dodge

Hindrances: Mean, Quirk (loves to jerk people around), Stubborn, Vengeful

Gear: Topcoat (2 armor vs. flame), Helmet (3 armor, only protects head), Axe (d6+2 damage)

Background: A fat guy with sideburns, everyone who sees him assumes that he must be heavily into Star Trek. But in fact he's into power.

He got a bachelor's degree in Fire Science in college, and was a certified firefighter for years before he could actually find a job in the field. He worked in a series of convenience stores in the meantime, burning up with anger over how unfair it was. A firefighter should command respect and obedience but here he was taking people's crap like a regular slob. Now that he's a real firefighter, he intends to make the most of the power it gives him, and pay everyone back for all the disrespect they gave him as a clerk.

While Pete has only been on the team for a few years, he loves to order new firemen around, bullying them and telling them that they're doing everything all wrong. On the job, he loves giving civilians the same kind of treatment, yelling at them for minor safety infractions, making up imaginary regulations that he can harangue them about breaking. The other guys at the firehouse think this is funny and encourage it, although they also think Pete's a fool.

He's kind of chicken about actual physical danger. Fighting fires isn't the part

he likes. Giving orders is more his thing. Hopefully he'll make sergeant soon and be able to spend less of his time risking his neck and more of his time telling other people what to do.

He's presently single, to his amazement. He understood that chicks dig firefighters—so where are all his chicks? It's not fair.

Firefighter Travis Hickel

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d10, Healing d4, Knowledge (fire) d4, Notice d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Dodge, Frenzy, Mighty Blow

Hindrances: Quirk (has an unhealthy fascination with fire and with breaking stuff)

Gear: Topcoat (2 armor vs. flame), Helmet (3 armor, only protects head), Axe (d10+2 damage)

Background: A gigantic, immature, overgrown kid, Travis has never wanted to be anything but a fireman his whole life. Firemen get to chop down doors and smash windows and order people around and break stuff. Plus, there's nothing quite so great as fire. He's been making homemade explosives since he was ten and fascinated with fire for as long as he can remember. He gets very excited at the prospect of getting to chop down doors, break windows or otherwise cause property damage and he'll do it on any flimsy pretext. He also likes pushing civilians around and giving them orders, although he's not as good at thinking that stuff up as Pete Kistler.

A huge man with a big grin, he's totally fearless around fire and will sometimes linger too long in situations where a saner guy would have left. This might make him a hero some day, but it's more likely to make him a corpse.

Travis lives with his long-term girlfriend Ashley DeMarco in Stark Hill, with their three kids. He's an indulgent dad

when he's home (which isn't often) and his kids adore him.

Daryl Sweet

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Driving d8, Fighting d8, Guts d10, Healing d6, Intimidate d6, Knowledge (Medicine) d6, Notice d6, Taunt d8, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Quick

Hindrances: Habit (addicted to amphetamines), Quirk (aggressive troublemaker who cares about nothing)

Gear: Medical Kit, Ambulance, Switchblade (1d6+1 Damage)

Background: Daryl is what they call a live wire. A paramedic, he probably should have been eased into some kind of administrative position or fired years ago, but there aren't enough ambulance drivers and he's better than nothing—usually. A twitchy, grinning speed freak, he's prone to picking fights with patients and destroying property for no reason. He carries a little plastic devil's head in his pocket, and hangs it from the rearview mirror of whichever ambulance he's driving. He says awful, insensitive things in front of patients and loves to tell "hilarious" anecdotes about the unspeakable stuff he's seen on the job, relishing the way people squirm.

Sometimes he shakes patients down for money or offers to sell them drugs (usually injections of morphine or other painkillers) while they're lying on the gurney in pain, but it's not a regular thing with him. He just does it if he's feeling particularly diabolical.

Funny and charming in a loudmouthed, outrageous kind of way, he likes superheroes and would be glad to be the Player Characters' pal, although it's questionable whether they'd want him as a friend. Burly and thick-necked, he has a goatee, close-cropped hair and a tattoo of a lightning bolt on his neck. A big ugly scar runs through his left eyebrow.

Arson Investigators

The most understaffed section of the Fire Department is, unfortunately, the Arson Investigation Unit. These men and women are tasked with investigating suspicious fires and determining their causes. In many other cities, these investigators are called "Fire Marshals", but in Bedlam they're "Arson Investigators." With a mystery arsonist ("Torchy the Firebug", see Page 267) terrorizing the city, they have their hands full.

Bedlam's Arson Investigators are "sworn" law-enforcement officers with the power to make arrests (although they normally arrest people only for arson or fire-safety violations.) They carry guns. Most rose through the ranks of the Fire Department, but a few are police detectives who completed the necessary coursework and took the Arson Investigator Exam. While they do have dress uniforms they normally wear plain clothes on the job.

We have stats below for both a generic Arson Investigator and for three individual investigators the PCs might encounter.

Generic Arson Investigator

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Investigation d6, Knowledge (fire) d8, Notice d6,

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Dodge

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Topcoat (2 armor vs. flame), Helmet (3 armor, only protects head). Seldom wears full protective gear while making investigations.

Background: Despite the high case-load, morale tends to be higher here than in the rest of the Bedlam Fire Department, although their repeated failure to catch the city's most prolific arsonist (see "Torchy the Firebug" on Page 267) weighs heavily on some of them.

Lyle Smedberg

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Investigation d8+2, Knowledge (fire) d10, Notice d8+2

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Investigator, Tough as Nails

Hindrances: Stubborn, Ugly, Quirk (drones on tediously about fire all the time), Quirk (dangerously obsessed with catching Torchy the Firebug)

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Topcoat (2 armor vs. flame), Helmet (3 armor, only protects head). Seldom wears full protective gear while making investigations.

Background: One look at him and you'll know he hates fire. A skinny, stoop-shouldered man of indeterminate age with a shock of bright red hair, Smedberg's back and arms are covered with ropy burn scars. His face isn't as bad, but it's been marked by the flames, too. One eye is half-buried under knotted pink scar tissue. The worst scars are actually on his legs, where they took the skin grafts to rebuild his face and back, but no one ever sees them. He wears long pants even in summer.

Smedburg is a capable investigator but also a tedious droning nerd who never seems to think about anything but fire safety and model trains. He had a wife at one point, but she left him long ago. He could probably push for custody of their daughters but he has never bothered. In fact he seldom remembers his visitation days.

People sometimes wonder if he's autistic. Not only is he completely obsessed with arson and toy trains, he also has no sense of his own safety and frequently gets way too close to the flames. Off duty he drinks and tinkers with his Lionel train layout.

In recent years he has become fixated on one day catching Torchy the Firebug (see Page 267.) His failure to apprehend Bedlam's most prolific arsonist has been undermining his tenuous mental

stability, making him drink more and sometimes say odd, disconnected things.

Smedberg is a friend of Doctor Scorch—one of the few people who gets along with and understands this peculiar, dangerous man (you can find out all about Doctor Scorch on Page 295.) Sometimes he visits him in jail or the psychiatric hospital. Scorch is worried about Smedberg, who as he says "isn't doing so well." If a lunatic like Doctor Scorch thinks Smedberg's going crazy, how nuts can he be?

Hawley "Hal" Blevins

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Investigation d4, Knowledge (fire) d6, Notice d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Connections (shady parties in the Bedlam City Government), Dodge

Hindrances: Quirk (bigot)

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Topcoat (2 armor vs. flame), Helmet (3 armor, only protects head). Seldom wears full protective gear while making investigations.

Background: A big, red-cheeked, beer-bellied guy from Stark Hill, Blevins is loud, talkative and prone to using racist epithets. He's very suspicious of anyone whose skin is darker than his own and quick to accuse them of setting fires. As far as he's concerned, if a black guy isn't guilty of arson he's probably guilty of something else and taking another one off the street can't be a bad thing.

In any case he investigates, he's less concerned with finding the culprit than figuring out how to pin the crime on somebody from an ethnic group he doesn't like. It amazes many people that he can get away with openly hating black people in a modern work environment. When people ask him about it he laughs and says that yeah, he's the last of a breed all right. In fact he keeps his job because he's in thick with the Czernik machine. Willing to take bribes, if the Mafia needs a fire investigator

to come confirm that something they burned wasn't arson, they ask for Blevins.

He lives in a big house in Stone Ridge that he can't afford, with his wife and five loud delinquent sons who all want to grow up to be firemen. With his white beard, florid complexion and big belly he resembles a malign Santa Claus.

Becky Lee Mumford

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d6, Investigation d8, Knowledge (fire) d8, Notice d8, Repair d6, Stealth d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Dodge

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Topcoat (2 armor vs. flame), Helmet (3 armor, only protects head). Seldom wears full protective gear while making investigations.

Background: One of the few female Arson Investigators in the state, Becky Lee is a special favorite of Chief Szmuda, and puts up with endless crap from her colleagues for it. Quiet and watchful, she always seems guarded. Partly this is because she's often the target of abuse, partly it's because she's embarrassed by her thick Georgia accent, but it's mostly because she's a pyromaniac, and is constantly afraid that she's about to get caught.

A firebug from an early age, Becky Lee grew up in a family of small-town firefighters in north Georgia. She has struggled with the impulse to set fires all her life, and suspects that her father and brothers may have, too. She was the only girl in the family who went into firefighting and the only one to go to college. She was their favorite child, until she lost control of her impulses one too many times and had to leave town under a cloud of suspicion.

In Atlanta she trained as an investigator and she has since put that training to good use in evading capture. Still, she has left every job she's ever had in just a few years, either under suspicion or afraid that she was about to be. Here in Bedlam things are a little more slipshod, so

she's gotten away with setting fires for longer. She's also been more careful. A reckless love of flame has cost her two marriages and the custody of her kids. She doesn't intend to have to uproot her whole life again any time soon.

The strange thing is, she isn't Torch the Firebug. She has used his prolific arson spree to conceal and cover up her own crimes, but she doesn't waste much time wondering who he (or she) might be. Becky Lee is too busy struggling with and trying to conceal her own vice to care much about anything else.

HOSPITALS

Bedlam has three hospitals—a bad one, a mediocre one and a good one. There is also a free health clinic in Wolverton and another one in Hardwick Park. Details on each of these facilities can be found below.

Bedlam General Hospital

Sometimes referred to by people from better neighborhoods as "Downtown General", this is Bedlam's oldest, largest hospital, and its most troubled.

Located just off Industrial Drive, near the old warehouses and abandoned factories, it has stood for more than a hundred years, and its age shows. Made of smoke-weathered brown bricks, it looks like an institution out of a Dickens novel. Gloomy and gothic, many of its windows are broken and the rest are covered with iron gridwork.

It's a big facility, with 600 beds, but it's still so crowded that they have patients sleeping on gurneys in the hall. A lot of local people from Wolverton and Hardwick Park are unable to afford physicians and have to use Bedlam General's emergency room to treat most of their health-care needs, so the waiting time in Triage is astonishingly long.

Understaffed, underfunded and depressing, Bedlam General does not attract the highest caliber of health care worker.

Their computer system was last updated some time in the late 1980s and it's prone to baffling outages. Since they don't have enough staff, administrative mistakes get made and some of them can have ugly consequences for the patients. Bedlam General has been cited many times by both the City and State Authorities for unsafe working conditions, sanitary violations and so forth, but if they fine the hospital or shut it down, that will only make things worse for the people it serves. What's more, they might start flooding the other two hospitals.

Bedlam General has a fleet of six ambulances, four of which are presently in working order. People say their sirens have distinctive "whoop-whoop" sound, probably because they haven't bought any new ones in years.

Please note that Bedlam General Hospital has been infiltrated by both the Mara and Eentsy Z's coalition. More than one nurse or administrator is either an active gang member themselves, or the wife or girlfriend of one. If a patient gets admitted who is of interest to either gang, they will know about it in 1-20 hours (the GM can either decide or roll at random.)

Neither the Scarpia nor the Gorganzua family have any agents here, but both the Mara and Eentsy Z owe the Scarpias fealty, so assume any such information gets back to them within 2-40 hours. It can happen much faster if they have been told to be on the lookout for a patient. While there are security guards who might be willing to look the other way during a mob hit, no one has ever actually carried out an assassination here, yet.

Our Lady of Sorrow

Bedlam's smallest hospital and its second oldest, Our Lady of Sorrow was built by a group of Catholic Working Men's associations back during the 1920s. It is located at the base of Stark Hill and primarily serves that community. Heavily remodeled during the 1960s, it's an ugly, brick-shaped pile of glass and steel, all fly-specked windows and harsh, squat rectangles. It was rebuilt to withstand riots in a style known at the time as "Neo-Brutalist" and bears some resemblance to

the way most people imagine Soviet hospitals must have looked. Its windows are high and narrow, like gun-slits, with massive concrete slabs between them.

A privately run Catholic hospital, Our Lady of Sorrow is fairly large, with 195 beds, but it's always crowded. It offers mediocre care (getting a post here has more to do with your connections than it does your skills) but a great many people in Stark Hill are fiercely devoted to it and refuse to be treated anywhere else.

They have a fairly large ambulance fleet (8 working vehicles) for a hospital of this size, yet they are very stingy about responding to emergency calls. They don't like admitting patients who aren't from Stark Hill and they don't like responding to emergency calls from Wolverton and Hardwick Park. In fact they have a bad reputation for turning away black and Hispanic patients, or giving them substandard care and then rushing them out the door as quick as possible. Most folks from Wolverton remember that back in the 1960s, if a black woman gave birth in Our Lady of Sorrow she would sometimes get sterilized, as a kind of joke. Most people from Wolverton prefer not to seek treatment here unless they absolutely have to.

The Mafia has completely infiltrated Our Lady of Sorrow. Mob guys get special, no-questions asked treatment here, and they get to bypass the lines in the emergency room. Both the Scarpias and the Gorganzuas use Our Lady of Sorrow—this is part of the peace accord between them. But only the Scarpias get to use it to launder money.

If a patient who either crime family is interested in gets admitted to Our Lady of Sorrow, they will know about it in 1-5 hours (or less if it's someone the admitting nurses have been told to look out for.) While the security staff at Our Lady of Sorrow would surely turn a blind eye if the Mafia needed to perform a hit there, they've never had to. The Mob has more than one doctor on staff who is willing to kill patients for them, either with lethal injections or by medical "mistake." In cases where Dapper Donny Scarpia wants to set an example, a patient might get accidentally scheduled for some

unnecessary surgery and die of complications.

Our Lady of Sorrow has won two awards for being the hospital with the lowest rate of malpractice suits in the state. The awards are proudly on display in the lobby. People have considered suing them on occasion, but most have hastily reconsidered after a visit from the hospital's backers.

Beth-El Hospital

Bedlam's second largest and arguably its best hospital isn't located inside the city limits. Beth-El is a large private hospital with 455 beds, located off Melman Road near the Stone Ridge community.

It primarily serves Stone Ridge, since it's too far away from the city proper for its ambulances to reach very many emergency calls before the crews from Our Lady of Sorrow or Bedlam General Hospital get there. It's also difficult for residents of the city's poorer neighborhoods to get to Beth-El on their own, since many of them lack cars, and the Bedlam City bus system doesn't go there. In any case they don't treat uninsured patients. As a result, the hospital is quiet and not overly crowded. Many of its beds go empty. They have the state's second best trauma center and a superb radiological facility. Many of their patients are elderly and they have a state-of-the-art facility in a separate building that specializes in gerontological medicine. It has a fleet of eight ambulances, all of which are in better shape than the ones used by the Fire Department and the other hospitals.

The Chief of Staff is also the Chairman of the hospital's board. Dr. Elliot Glazier has fought long and hard to keep Beth El from getting bought out by one or another of the giant health-management firms. He is very proud of its independence. A small, trim man with a white goatee, he's a neurologist by trade but has dedicated much of his career to studying the curious physiology of parahumans. The mechanisms by which superpowers work are barely understood by conventional science. Dr. Glazier confesses to being fascinated by this mystery. He's widely regarded as one of the country's leading experts in this

peculiar field, although he dismisses all such claims with a fatherly wave of his hand. A lot of people wonder why a neurologist of his stature is working in Bedlam instead of at the Mayo Clinic—or for that matter why he isn't teaching medicine at an Ivy League school. He says that this is where he feels he can do the most good.

PCs may be relieved to know that the hospital has now resolved its security problems. For some weeks, a disturbed woman named Eleana Morgenstern kept appearing at the admissions desk, raving that the hospital had stolen her son, Josiah. There is no record of any such child having ever been admitted to Beth-El, of course, and eventually the police managed to apprehend her. She has not returned and is no doubt under psychiatric care. Let us hope that she gets the help she needs. Oddly, there was a similar incident two years ago.

Perhaps emotionally disturbed people have been attracted to the story of Captain Gladius, a superhuman who was said to have checked into Beth-El after a battle downtown with an unidentified group of parahuman criminals. He never checked out, which caused some confusion, until it was discovered that the rumors were false and he had never checked into Beth-El in the first place. He has since dropped out of the public view and so is unavailable to comment on the matter.

The Wolverton Free Clinic

Based in a converted bungalow, the free clinic offers medical services to anyone. They don't have enough supplies or equipment and they're not very good at dealing with trauma and injuries, but they do provide fairly solid basic care.

Most of the doctors and nurses who put in volunteer hours at the free clinic work at Bedlam General, which is not known for the quality of its staff, and most of them are really tired after working long shifts at the hospital, so it's usually better to pay a doctor if you can. Yet the Free Clinic is a whole lot better than nothing.

The local hoodlums regard the Clinic as a valuable community asset, and have declared it neutral territory, where anyone

can seek treatment without being harassed by gang members. All rivalries and vendettas are to be put aside the moment you walk through the clinic's doors. For the most part, this arrangement works. There have been one or two fights in the clinic, but not many.

The Hardwick Park Free Clinic

This small free clinic operates out of a storefront on Blaed Drive. It provides basic medical care for anyone who needs it—provided that they don't owe the gangs any money. The Mara completely dominate the clinic and effectively control its operations. They don't steal its supplies and seldom intimidate any of the doctors or nurses who work here, but they strictly control access. To get care at the clinic, you have to be in good standing with the gang. No one who owes them money or drugs is admitted, nor are people who don't pay them for protection.

As you might imagine, not a lot of doctors or nurses enjoy working under conditions where they may be asked to stop treating a patient to go patch up a wounded gang member, or where scary guys with tattoos hulk around the premises giving them orders. Doctors come and go here, but most of them are doing court-ordered community service, or have been assigned here as punishment for screwing up at Bedlam General Hospital. None stay longer than they have to, with the exception of Dr. Susan Yang, who has always liked gang guys and who has become the Mara's personal physician and occasional moll.

Suzie Yang, MD

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Healing d8, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Popular Culture) d8, Knowledge (Medicine) d8, Notice d6, Persuade d6, Streetwise d6, Taunt d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Attractive, Connections (the Mara)

Hindrances: Habit (compulsive partier) Heartless, Quirk (seeks out liaisons with criminals)

Gear: Medical kit, stethoscope

Background: The daughter of a conservative, hardworking Chinese family, Suzie has always had a fatal weakness for bad boys. She was utterly forbidden to associate with the opposite sex, so from Junior High School onward she would set up fake study sessions with her girlfriends, and whichever bunch of Wolverton gang-bangers she was partying with would deposit her on her doorstep at dawn, too drunk to stand. She would crawl up the steps to her room on all fours and tell her parents that her allergies were acting up again. Amazingly enough they never suspected a thing. And somehow she managed to get all her homework done.

Suzie became a doctor, just as her parents wanted. No one who went to medical school with her understands how someone who partied so hard managed to get all her work done on time, but she did. In fact she excelled. And her amazing ability to do without sleep for long periods of time served her well as an intern.

These days she works at Bedlam General, but with her level of talent and drive she'll surely get a better assignment soon. In the meantime she puts in as many hours as she can at the Hardwick Park Free clinic, where she has become the personal physician and sometime girlfriend to the Mara.

Dr. Yang knows right from wrong in an abstract kind of way, but she'd do anything at all for her gang friends. This including denying a patient treatment or giving them a lethal injection (they haven't asked her to do that last thing, yet.) She knows it's wrong, she says, smiling winsomely, but these guys, they're just so hot. Can you really blame her?

ANIMAL CONTROL

More than one local agency is in charge of animal rescue. There is no municipal dog pound any more, and a patchwork of city agencies, nonprofits and private companies house strays and deal with animal-related problems. One look at the number of strays wandering Bedlam's streets, hungry and vicious, and you can see that the current system isn't working. Read on to find out how and why it has failed.

Bedlam Animal Control Service

Until recently, Bedlam's animal control services were handled by the police. Budget cuts forced them to drop the whole division, which the city promptly sold off to a subcontractor. Animal Control officers still wear the same bright yellow vests, but they aren't allowed to carry weapons and they can't make arrests. Like meter maids, they can issue tickets and citations, but they spend most of their time telling owners to keep their dogs quiet or checking the tags on stray animals. Most of them are minimum wage workers without a lot of skills, since they are cheaper to hire.

Because they don't have the capacity, equipment or training to do much rescue work, Bedlam has seen a number of tiny private contractors who specialize in animal removal emerge. Most of these are little mom-and-pop outfits, consisting of one guy with a pickup truck and some traps. A lot of them are pretty dubious, and none of them have a reputation for being gentle with the animals they "rescue."

If the animal control officers encounter a situation where they need someone to physically remove an animal, they call one of the contractors.

The ASPCA

Bedlam's chapter of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has been kicked out of the national organization, and aren't legally allowed to use the name any more. That's why they always refer to themselves as "ASPCA of Bedlam."

They operate two shelters, one on Stavros Avenue and one on Voigt Street.

Both are abysmal. They got kicked out of the national organization for misappropriating funds. From the filthy, crusted cages and starving animals you can see where the money got siphoned away from.

Because they don't have enough room, turnover on animals is high. They say they give an animal two weeks before they euthanize it, but that's usually a lie.

Class D Licensed Animal Collectors

Anyone who cares to pay for a license can get certified as one of Bedlam's Class D collectors. These stalwart men and women patrol Bedlam's streets looking for stray animals that they can sell to medical research companies, or (sometimes) eat themselves. A surprising number of them are actually off-duty cops taking on a little extra work to make ends meet.

Actually, the animal doesn't always have to be a stray. No board reviews the collectors' certification—there's no administrative process for revoking a license and no agency to review complaints about them. Anyway swiping a pet is a misdemeanor and usually gets punished with a fine, if it comes to trial at all. So keep Tabby and Fido out of the front yard, unless you're there to protect them, or there's no telling where they might end up!

Kindness Animal Shelter

A while back, a bunch of Class D Licensed Animal Collectors decided to get all legitimate and respectable. So they founded Kindness Animal Shelter, and started soliciting for donations. A lot of local businesses pitched in, unaware of what kind of shelter this was going to be, and United Way has provided them with some funds as well.

They don't publicize the location of their facility (it's an old metalworking shop on Industrial Drive, and every inch of it is full of tiny metal shards that can easily lodge in your skin) but they do have an 800 number you can call to report a stray animal. Fortunately, the animals in their care never spend long in their tiny, unsafe cages. Unfortunately, that's because they go straight to the labs.

Officers for Kindness Shelter wear brown uniforms and often try to pass themselves off as official city personnel. They're not above lifting the occasional pet from somebody's yard.

Stone Ridge Animal Shelter

This small but exceptionally well-funded animal shelter is located in the Stone Ridge gated community, just outside of Bedlam. At-large City Council member Molly Schwartz is one of their board members and their largest contributors.

They never euthanize any animals brought to them, and instead care for them in their cages until a good owner can be found for them. Of course, they don't have very many cages, and when they are full (as they nearly always are) they send new arrivals straight to ASPCA of Bedlam or to Kindness Animal Shelter.

Office of the Dogcatcher

Since the late 19th century, this elected officer was supposed to oversee Bedlam's dog pound. However, since the 1960s the Bedlam Police have taken care of Animal Control. Yet the Office of the Dogcatcher still exists, unconnected to anything.

The Bedlam City Government doesn't publicize the fact that the Dogcatcher isn't part of Animal Control, and every election a new dogcatcher gets the job. Normally they then cede their position to some well-connected city official, who collects the extra paychecks without having to do any work.

It's impossible to find the Office of the Dogcatcher in the Bedlam Phone Book, and the city government switchboard (located in Bangalore, India) doesn't have a listing for them. Because of course, there is no physical office at all.

John Otter and his Rescue Rangers

When the Bedlam Police stopped handling Animal Control, Officer John Otter went a little crazy. He kept his uniform and his credentials and he still drives around Bedlam

in his van claiming to be an Animal Control Officer.

A burly, square-jawed guy, he looks like a cop and few people question him. He does his job the way he's always done it, rescuing animals, threatening cruel or negligent pet owners with arrest, writing citations (he still has a pad of them) and generally doing all the stuff the new, fake "Animal Control" officers won't do.

He's superb at his job and loves animals. Easily moved to tears, he often weeps over hurt or neglected pets, which looks pretty weird on such a big, tough guy.

His old partner, a short, pretty woman named Vera Cuvier, often rides with him on his lonely patrols. She has kept her old uniform, too, although she no longer wears her gun. She's not crazy, but she is hopelessly in love with John (though she's too shy to tell him) and wants to see if she can somehow help him before he completely self-destructs.

Lately her teenage brother, Brendan, and his friends have started helping them, and the whole group has started calling itself the "Rescue Rangers." They have created their own makeshift animal shelter in a deserted mansion near the old Bedlam Country Club, though John himself seldom spends much time there. He's always on the move and sleeps in his van.

Every one of the Rescue Rangers knows this situation can't last. It's just a matter of time before John gets caught and sent to prison for impersonating a police officer and they can't carry on his crusade without his incredible skills.

Privately John doesn't think going to prison will be much of a problem. He'll never let them take him alive. But there's no time to think about that. The work goes on and there's no one else to do it.

Brendan has recently got the crazy idea of running John Otter for dogcatcher in the next election, and if John lives long enough to do it, this could upend everything.

UTILITIES

Bedlam's power, water, gas and telecommunications services all come from private providers rather than the city itself. They vary in quality, as the following overview shows.

Electricity

Bedlam gets its electricity from Universal Power and Light, a big national company from another part of the country which has little penetration in this state, apart from Bedlam itself. The Universe, as people call it, got the job recently—they seem to be somehow affiliated with the aerospace firm than runs so many of Bedlam's services. They don't have a local generating station and instead trade electricity with other markets around the country. People call their management style prone to excessive risk-taking and Bedlam has paid the price for it in periodic blackouts, the worst of which lasted six days. Their customer service has been outsourced to Bangalore, India and is notoriously unresponsive. They do not keep a local office in Bedlam.

Telephones

Bedlam has the unusual distinction of having all of its original copper wiring. There are no fiber-optic lines at all in the central part of the city. This makes both phone service tinny and the internet slow.

Two telephone companies serve Bedlam, a big clunky one and a little scrappy one.

Conglomerated Communications

Bedlam's official telephone service provider is the last vestigial stump of the giant octopus that was once Ma Bell. Spun off during the breakup of AT&T,

they kept most of their old equipment and corporate culture intact. They have only a few markets left, scattered around the country in places like Bedlam, where the local authorities weren't strong enough or rich enough to replace them with a more up-to-date utility. Although they are no longer a giant multinational they still behave like one. The services they offer are limited and expensive. No special deals, no free weekends or unlimited long-distance packages. They have three rates—one for peak hours, one for off-hours and one for Sunday. And that is all. Customer Service is unfriendly, remote and slow to respond. They do not offer internet and their cell-phone service is designed to keep other companies from being able to get a connection. You would think that they'd cause so much dissatisfaction that other companies would have long-since pushed them out of the market, but in fact their forty-year contract with Bedlam's city government gives them a total monopoly and is completely iron-clad. All payphones in Bedlam bear the ugly yellow-and-black logo of Conglomerated Communications.

Their motto is "Conglomerated Communications Connecting People" and they print it on everything with huge initial caps that make it look like "CCCP" at a distance. And it does in fact provide the kind of service that reminds a lot of people of the old Soviet Union.

Ultrawow

This small, struggling telecommunications company offers all the services and extras that Conglomerated Communications can't—and at a really low price. They're able to give you wireless internet bundled together with three hundred channels of cable TV and free long-distance on weekday afternoons. They can do this because they contract out just about

everything to other providers and rent time on other companies' equipment. They have a small office downtown and a smaller one in the Liberty Shoppes Mall, but no actual telephone equipment at either one. They are purely a service provider on paper, buying and selling time on other companies' hardware. This scattershot approach, combined with CC's hostile attitude and constant efforts to shortchange Ultranow have made their service pretty unreliable. They are prone to inexplicable outages and weird signal distortion.

Ultranow farms out its repair service to independent contractors who make house calls when it pleases them. They only get paid for the visits they complete, so they tend to forget about service calls from customers who live well outside their established routes. If they don't make enough visits in a day they won't make enough money to survive, so if they get five calls in one neighborhood and one call from somebody over in the next neighborhood, they'll do the distant one last if at all.

Ultranow runs loud, flashy, poorly made commercials on local television and is clearly pitching their services to Bedlam's minority community. They have also tried guerilla advertising campaigns of questionable legality. They pay graffiti artists to put their logo on buildings. They hire homeless people to tag public telephones with stickers that list an 800 number you can call to use their super-cheap long distance service. There were rumors that they had paid gang members to go around Wolverton at night and smash residents' satellite dishes (then it came to light that this false rumor was being spread by Conglomerated Communications.) People in Bedlam look forward to seeing what Ultranow will try next.

"I Don't Care" Long Distance

If you make a long distance call from a Bedlam payphone, the CC operator is required by law to ask you what provider you would like. Anyone who answers "I don't care," or "I don't know" or "anybody" is in for a surprise. All three of those names are owned by an entrepreneur named Frankie Scalvino, and he charges three times the going rate for long distance.

Frankie operates his three phone companies out of his home office in Stark Hill. Anyone who has a complaint about his business practices can come discuss it with him at his favorite arcade, where they will find him playing pinball with local mob overlord "Dapper" Donny Scarpia.

Water

Bedlam's water tastes funny. That doesn't surprise people who know its history. Bedlam's infrastructure is old, but its water system is the oldest part of all. Large portions of it were built more than a century ago.

A few years ago it came out in the press that Bedlam's water treatment plant had failed two quality tests in a row. Bacteria counts and algae were both unacceptably high and the city was now in real trouble with the state authorities.

Councilman Andy Czernik's office expressed indignation at the leak and the councilman personally launched an investigation into how the information could have gotten out to the press. After a lot of time and money, the results were inconclusive—although a number of workers at the water treatment plant were fired, just to be safe.

The city's Water Department went into federal receivership shortly thereafter, with a court-appointed guardian to make sure the quality of the supply improved. Just in the nick of time, before a major political disaster could

erupt, the city manager sold the water department to a company called Zed-Com. Since Zed-Com wasn't under indictment and the city Water Department no longer existed, the court-appointed overseers no longer had access to the city's water-quality tests.

In any case things have improved a lot under Zed-Com's management. They are a private entity, so they don't have to share their records with anyone and they aggressively sue anybody who leaks inside information about them to the press. In one case they even managed to have a whistleblower prosecuted.

Only a few people know that in the meantime, despite hefty pay-offs to state officials they have continued to fail their safety tests, with unacceptable levels of *e. coli* and fecal bacteria in nearly every sample. To cope with this crisis, they are considering spinning off the division that runs Bedlam's Water Department and disassociating themselves from it. It's an expensive solution, but not as expensive as having to fight all the lawsuits they are sure to suffer otherwise—and nowhere near as costly as actually fixing the problem.

People sometimes joke that the reason no supervillain has ever tried to contaminate the city's water supply is that there's nothing they could do to make it any worse. That *is* a joke, right?

Gas

The Bedlam Gas Company is a public-private partnership, based on Industrial Drive. The customers actually buy shares in the company and run it like a giant co-op. This arrangement has lasted for more than eighty years, and although Bedlam Gas doesn't have enough money or enough service technicians, it's actually worked pretty well. They don't cut the gas off if you're freezing and they don't let big landlords demand special treatment at everyone else's expense.

The Mob has long been frustrated by its inability to scam any money out of the Bedlam Gas Company and they have tried to run it out of business more than once. "Big Andy" Czernik may be gearing up for another attempt to crush them.

The Sewers of Bedlam



Bedlam's sewers are huge and old, built in the grandiose style of ages past. Oversized and hard to fix, they were largely constructed at the dawn of the twentieth century, and have been heavily modified and expanded ever since. The city authorities have completely lost track of where they all lead. At the moment not even the Department of Public Works claims to have a complete and accurate chart. The storm sewers (which do not connect to the wastewater sewers—at least in theory) are particularly large and especially full of unmapped sections.

For a hundred years people have told urban legends that the city fathers built a network of tunnels *beneath* the sewers downtown, in order to move freight between the buildings on miniature rail cars. They say the Phantom Empire used this warren of passageways for more sinister purposes as well. This maze of tunnels may extend as far south as Ash Street and as far north as Stark Hill. But no one knows for sure whether or not it even exists.

There are rumors that a crazed DPW official named Llewellyn Philbrick spent most of the 1980s exploring the Bedlam sewers and constructing a complete map, and that the map itself is somewhere in Bedlam's deserted City Hall. No one has ever taken the trouble to look for the lost map and find out if it exists. Nor does anyone seem to know what became of Philbrick. More than one supervillain has taken advantage of the generous size of Bedlam's sewers and set up shop down there in the darkness. This makes the city authorities even less willing to fully explore them. Some of the previous occupants may have left booby traps, or worse things.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN BEDLAM

There are three ways of getting around Bedlam without your own car—by train, by bus and by cab. None of these options are safe or pleasant. But then neither is driving in Bedlam. Or walking, come to think of it.

The “Bedlam Subway”



Bedlam doesn't exactly have a subway—it's not big enough or rich enough to support one. But your PCs will still want to fight villains in subway tunnels and rendezvous with seedy contacts on underground train platforms. So we've come up with a compromise solution.

A commuter line runs from the Bedlam train station to a much larger city nearby. In a spasm of optimism, the Redevelopment Commission decided in the 1990s that Bedlam could become a hip new bedroom community for young professionals. After all, the hip crowd is always looking for new neighborhoods to discover and gentrify—why not Bedlam? There are, alas, a great many answers to that last question, and despite the new commuter rail line, the yuppies never came.

The train runs beneath Bedlam's streets like a subway. It makes three stops inside Bedlam, one on Slaughter Road, one on Terminal Drive and of course one in the Bedlam Train Station (the line goes no further.)

Trains run every thirty minutes at rush hour and then every 60 minutes until

10PM. It costs \$5 to ride into the big city nearby but only \$2.50 to ride from one Bedlam station to the next. A few people use it to commute to work across town, but for the most part the trains pull out of the stations half-empty.

There is no special police detail assigned to watch the trains. Cops only come down to the stations if they are called. As a result, the platforms can be dangerous at night, full of panhandlers, con men and drug dealers. Apart from the ticket sellers in their fly-specked bulletproof booths, there is usually no representative of authority present on the trains or platforms.

Recently, a few “urban pioneers” (mostly young bohemians who can't afford the rent in the big city nearby) have actually started moving into the neighborhood around the Terminal Drive station and a little enclave of hipsters has formed there, just like the Redevelopment Commission predicted ten years ago. So far there aren't enough of them to have much impact on the local economy.

The Bus

Bedlam's city buses are big, green and old. People call riding the bus “taking the Green Limousine.” They have small windows that don't open very far and only a few of the newer models have air conditioning. Bus routes in Bedlam are listed by numbers from one to 13, followed by a decimal point and then a second number indicating the sub-route they follow. So for example the buses that travel down Ellmore Place (the unofficial dividing line between Wolverton and Hardwick Park), are the 4.1, the 4.5 and the 4.7

The Bedlam Transit Authority used to be a division of the city government, but it went into receivership and got sold off to a contractor. It still has the same name and most people aren't aware that it's been privatized. That's a good thing, because a lot of the subcontractors who provide services like vehicle maintenance are friends and business associates of Big Andy Czernik.

The current owner of the BTA is Allied Holdings, a financial services company which absorbed the remains of Consolidated Transit Services when some unwise

investments made them vulnerable to takeovers. Allied Holdings has tried to increase the profitability of the BTA by reducing the quality of its service—although it's hard to see how its quality could be reduced any further. They are heavily subsidized by the city and state, but that's just more money to be siphoned off the top.

BTA contracts out personnel management to a firm called People First, which subcontracts to a local Bedlam agency called Human Needs, which is partly owned by the Scarpia crime family. This means that to get a job as a bus driver or a dispatcher, you will need a family connection to either the Scarpias or the Czernik machine. As a result a lot of drivers live in Stark Hill and they have a bad reputation for being rude to African-American passengers, making culturally insensitive remarks and so forth.

As a concession to the Reverend Willie Boggs, Big Andy has arranged for more African-American drivers to get hired.

Bedlam City Bus

Acc/Top Speed: 5/30; **Toughness:**

Body 14 (2); Windows 2; **Crew:** 1+40 or more (depending on how bad rush hour is and how late the bus has arrived at its stop)

Description: Built like a tank, with a diesel engine and solid steel body, these old warhorses are battered and rusty but incredibly durable. Many are missing lights or have windows that have cracked or else jammed open or shut. The seats are barely-padded steel benches and only one bus in three is handicapped-accessible.

Cab Companies

The life of a Bedlam cabbie is tough. It's hard to make enough money to stay afloat, unless you're one of those guys who can live in his cab and take fares 24 hours a day, catching sleep in naps (you'd be surprised how many cabbies really do this.) This is also one of the most dangerous ways to make a living in America—more cabbies die by violence than any other occupation apart from police officers. Many cabbies carry firearms and most of the veterans have at least a tire jack or a pair of needle-nosed pliers close at hand.

Because the life of a Bedlam cabbie is so rough, people tend not to stick with it. It's the kind of job a new immigrant can get, but after they've tried it for a while most of them give it up. This is why so many cabbies are

new and don't know their way around the city very well. The inexperienced guys don't get experienced—they leave, to be replaced with other inexperienced guys.

Because both of Bedlam's biggest cab companies are unpopular, many people are willing to trust the independent gypsy cabbies who ply Bedlam's streets illegally. Buyer beware. Some of these independent, part time operators are good honest guys trying to make a living, but some of them are crooked and will try to trick or intimidate an unwary customer into paying an exorbitant rate. Since most unlicensed cabs don't have meters, always get the driver to agree to a price up front.

Red Apple Cab

"Rotten Apples" some people call them. Or "red lemons." Their ads proclaim that this is Bedlam's only locally owned cab company. But that's not true. In fact it was bought out years ago by a holding company owned by a Texas millionaire, who pays little attention to it, provided that it continues to make a profit. It does this by paying its drivers as little as it can. It provides the cars, which the drivers rent for a share of their take, it provides uniforms, and charges the drivers to wear them and takes back their meager pay in a dozen other little ways as well.

Few drivers can make a living working for Red Apple, but there are always more suckers willing to give it a try (mostly recent immigrants.) As a result, their drivers are seldom experienced, often don't speak English and don't know the city very well. Red Apple pays the absolute minimum to maintain its aging fleet of vehicles, so they are smelly and in poor repair.

Yellow Cab

Despite what you'd expect, Yellow Cab really is a locally owned company. In fact there are dozens of different Yellow Cab companies in cities all over the US, all independent of one another. Bedlam has one of the smaller ones. It's actually a collective, owned and operated by its drivers, who pay a share to join and who own their own vehicles.

They used to have the best drivers in Bedlam, but as it's gotten harder and harder for a cabbie to make a living here, a lot of their older guys have drifted away, to be replaced by newcomers who don't stay long. There is a real camaraderie among

the long-term drivers, which has an ugly undertone. If one of them rips off a passenger or beats up an irritating fare, the others will all cover for them. They also have a bad reputation for getting tough with other cabbies and throwing them off their "turf," chasing them away from places like the train station and the downtown cab-stands. Now that they have fallen on bad economic times, people say they may have taken to doing errands for and borrowing money from the Mafia.

Yellow Cab shares a dispatcher with Red Apple. Even though it's a different phone number, the same bored voice will answer and say "taxicab service" when you call.

Regency Crown Cab

A small cab company, based in the Meadows. All twelve of their drivers are members of Nigel Garwood's immediate family. A scowling, short tempered Jamaican, Nigel feels that only fools let themselves get taken advantage of, so every fare he cheats must be a fool. He and his brothers and sons and nephews drive cabs without meters and charge whatever they think the passenger can pay.

Because they work in the Meadows, an unincorporated zone that is technically beyond the city's limits, they don't have Bedlam cab licenses, so no one can revoke them. Bribes to the local cops have kept them from getting arrested so far. But it's just a matter of time before Nigel gets in real trouble. Because Regency Crown is located in the Meadows, they can get anywhere in that neighborhood faster than any other cab company.

They often listen in on the dispatcher that Yellow Cab and Red Apple use, and swipe fares out from under Red Apple drivers (Nigel has decided not to mess with Yellow Cab after they beat up two of his nephews and started leaving death threats on his voice-mail.) If you call for a Red Apple and a Regency Crown shows up, make sure to bargain with the driver in advance.

Classy Productions Limousine Service



This limo service is based downtown. They supply everything from old Lincoln town cars to stretch Hummers. Their drivers all seem to be big older guys with sunglasses, who don't talk much and are good at looming ominously.

Run by the Bedlam Mafia (Donny Scarpia's mom owns the business on paper) they are an excellent way to launder money, transport drugs or hide unwanted corpses. Not all of their drivers are willing to

participate in illegal errands for the mob. In fact many of them don't know that this is who they work for, but enough do to keep things running smoothly.

The owner never appears in person at the lot. It's managed by a short, fat nervous man with sunken eyes named Reggie Russo, who always seems to say everything twice. "Reggie the Echo" they call him. He's not a killer or a "made guy" but he's capable of homicide if he gets scared enough.

The Death-Cab

For more than a hundred years, there have been tales of a monstrous, ghostly cab that stalks the streets of Bedlam, hungry for blood and meat. At the turn of the 20th century, it was supposed to be a sinister black carriage driven by a faceless man with a cloven hoof. Ever since the 1940s it has taken the form of a battered up old "checker" cab with its license plate obscured by grime. Once you get inside, most people want to get back out immediately. There is an evil smell and the remains of previous passengers are strewn around the interior. Razor blades,

barbed wire and pieces of bone are embedded in the walls.

Getting out is trickier than it looks. The seat belts won't open once you put them on. The doors open only from the outside and the door handles are booby-trapped, injuring anyone who tries to leave the hellish cab before they reach their destination.

The destination itself varies. Sometimes it takes passengers to some evil dimension where demons gnaw their flesh. Sometimes it drives them around endlessly, battering them against the walls of its interior until they slowly die. Sometimes the cab takes passengers where they want to go, at terrifying speed, and then its doors flop open as it goes around a curve, dumping them at their destination at eighty miles an hour, to splatter like eggs on the sidewalk.

The driver can't be seen clearly through the grimy partition (although passengers can hear his horrible voice clearly enough.) He is known only as "Mac." Most people think he's the devil.

Rumor says that Lucius Hardwick once went for a ride in the Death-Cab. It politely dropped him off at his destination and the driver refused to be paid.

BEDLAM'S SCHOOLS

Not counting Juvenile Hall, Bedlam's public educational system oversees eighteen elementary schools, three middle schools and six high schools. There are also twelve private schools, eight of them parochial.

Of the eighteen K-5 schools that the Bedlam Department of Education oversees, two are presently under renovation and have been for so many years that no one expects them to reopen. School 115 in Hardwick Park busses its students to spare classrooms in Grissom High School. School 113 is in the Country Club, and the few remaining kids in that district have been scattered through other Elementary Schools throughout the system.

Bedlam's public schools were once known only by three-digit code numbers. Elementary schools all start with "1", Middle Schools with "2" and high schools with Zero. Over the years most, but not all of them, have been renamed after famous Bedlamites or US Presidents.

It may be a misnomer to call them "Public Schools." Bedlam passed a charter school law which allows the actual on-the-ground management of the schools to be handled by for-profit companies. None of them are run by the city anymore. The state authorities claim that this is illegal, that Bedlam has no authority to pass such a law and they have successfully prosecuted them for it. The municipal government ignores this and continues to run its school system its own way (ignore this last part if you decide to place Bedlam in the state of Michigan—the one place in the United States where it's actually legal to farm schools out to for-profit entities.)

Bedlam's service provider is American International Educators (people sometimes jocularly call them "AIEEE!".) They're a division of a Dubai-based corporation called American International Corrections, which mostly runs prisons. They have broken the back of Bedlam's once-mighty teachers' union and as a result

they have been able to greatly increase the school system's profitability. They aren't as fussy about making sure that teachers have all the correct certifications so they can afford to pay them a lot less. They have also learned that big advertising firms will pay a lot of money to let you put ads in school cafeterias, in classrooms, inside textbooks and so forth. Kids are very impressionable, and the product loyalties you teach them at an early age will stay with them for life. It's incredibly valuable to be able to catch them between the ages of five and eighteen, and plenty of ad agencies will pay extra for the privilege.

But of course all that money goes straight back to the parent company in the Persian Gulf. To actually run the schools themselves, they depend largely on funds from big sporting goods manufacturers, who regard urban schools as farms for the athletes who sell their products to the public. How much money they give you depends on how prominent your teams are and how many award-winning athletes you produce, so as a result, a talented jock can get away with nearly anything in a Bedlam school. Teachers can be replaced and the school won't lose a dime. But if they get a reputation as a school that's unfriendly to star athletes, their funding takes a nosedive.

Nor are they much interested in stamping out their gang problem—or for that matter admitting that it exists. In Stark Hill, Grissom High has actually turned security duty over to the street gang called the Coronets, because they keep order and don't charge for their services.

In most of Bedlam's schools, security is provided either by G and T (you can find out all about this firm on Page 162) or by the Bedlam Police, which assigns patrol officers to the schools as a punishment if they screw up too many times on the job.

Here is a brief list of Bedlam's schools, with a little information about each one.

Public High Schools

There are six public high schools in Bedlam. They vary a lot in quality. All of them but Pemberton High are underfunded and plagued by violence.

High School 019

Located in Greely Point, on top of the hill overlooking the docks, this is one of Bedlam's oldest schools. It's made of brown bricks and while it isn't very large, it's half-deserted. Not many teenagers live in Greely Point and most of them attend Catholic School.

They don't have enough kids to get a really decent football team (the pool of students who are interested is just too small) so they bus teenage athletes in from Wolverton. These are just about the only black kids in the school. They are all enrolled in the "Vocational Tech" program, which means that they attend separate classes, on a different schedule from the other students. They arrive and leave at different hours, they eat their lunch at other times and they never come into contact with the white kids. This, of course, is racial segregation, and it's completely illegal. But so far no one has said a word to the federal authorities about it.

Austin Pemberton High

Small, new and clean, Pemberton is a two-story building that looks like it belongs in an office park. All shiny blue windows and gleaming metal fixtures, it is impossible to get to on foot. The school is right across Wulfe Drive from the Stone Ridge gated community and no sidewalks lead there. Students who don't have cars take the bus—and endure a lot of teasing for it.

This is a strictly regulated campus. Students have to swipe their ID cards to open all doors both inside and out of the building—which may cause a serious tragedy the first time there is a fire. The school's central computer knows every student's schedule and only opens classroom doors that they are supposed to be in. This creates awful problems when students change classes, or switch extracurricular activities, or get sent to some

other room by a teacher, so staff, faculty and students alike have found numerous ways of subverting the system.

Most of the kids at Pemberton live in Stone Ridge, but it's also a magnet school, and some are talented students who have been bussed in from the city.

If you go to Pemberton, it means your family couldn't quite afford Walgrove Prep, or that you didn't meet their admissions standards. But the social hierarchy is still extremely rigid and extremely ruthless here. They are particularly dependent on their sports teams to bring in money, so jocks can get away with anything at Pemberton. This school is the least violent in Bedlam, but it has the highest suicide rate.

You can still buy drugs at Pemberton, despite all the draconian security.

Double Zero High

In fact this is High School 005, the oldest school in Bedlam. But everybody calls it Double Zero. Even the staff and faculty have taken to calling it that.

Located on North Ellmore Drive, it's on the border between the Hispanic neighborhood of Hardwick Park and the African-American neighborhood of Wolverton. That's why kids sometimes call it "Ground Zero."

It's a huge, ugly building, four blocks long and four stories high, that seems to have grown at random, with extensions in different styles sprawling down the street. Not as bad as Bleeker or Herzog, an uneasy truce seems to be holding here between the Hispanic and African-American kids. This also helps keep drug-dealing down (and the violence that goes with it), since no one group dominates the school. But there have been incidents, some of them bloody. And if the gang warfare between Wolverton and Hardwick Park heats up, kids could start getting killed here every week.

Helmut Herzog High

Smaller than Bleeker or Double Zero, Herzog High is the worst-funded school in Bedlam. It's a shabby little three-story building with a

lot of broken windows. It serves all the students in Hardwick Park who don't go to Double Zero. The overwhelming majority of them are Hispanic—mostly Mexican, Salvadoran or Honduran.

Like most inner-city schools, Herzog isn't as dangerous as people like to think. It's important to remember that most really bad kids skip school. The majority of students at Herzog just want to socialize with their friends, make passable grades and get through the day, just like all high school students everywhere. Only a few are actual gang members or troublemakers. But it's still a tough school. There are fights here every week, and back in 2002 a teacher was actually killed by a student. The mood at Herzog is more subdued than it is at Bleeker, its big rival in Wolverton. The Mara have a strong presence here and the school authorities are afraid to tangle with them.

Teachers and administrators are perfectly safe from the Mara, so long as they don't interfere with their drug sales and show gang members the proper respect. Most play along, and so things actually run pretty smoothly. In a weird way the Mara keep order—they don't want the police to get called to the school and that keeps most fights between students from getting out of hand.

Security is officially provided by G&T, and there are a few cops on duty in the school as well, but security is kind of a joke here. Neither the policemen nor the guards (most of whom are also off-duty cops) will interfere with the Mara. The ones who aren't being bribed still know enough to look the other way.

Langdon Bleeker High

Most students in Wolverton attend Bleeker. It's a huge old concrete battleship of a building that dates to the 1950s. The school looks like a giant grey slab. Built to withstand riots, its windows resemble gun slits. Four stories high and four blocks long, it has yet to be filled to capacity.

This is a tough school, but as mentioned above, that doesn't mean that teachers live in fear of their students or that you take your life in your hands walking

down the hall. It's a rowdier place than its arch-rival, Herzog. Wolverton's gangs aren't as well organized as the Mara, and they don't control the administration or the security guards. This is a good thing, but they also get into occasional rumbles with one another in the halls (although this has died down a bit since Eentsy Z built his coalition of street gangs). No one has died in a gang-related incident on school property since 1996, and they've never actually had a teacher get killed.

A great deal is wrong at Bleeker, but their football team, the Wolverton Wolverines, dominates the city's high-school circuit.

Thaddeus Grissom High

Grissom High is the toughest school in Bedlam. It's located in Stark Hill, on the street that bears its name, but most of its students are bussed in from Wolverton and Hardwick Park. This is the school they send you to if you get expelled from Bleeker or Herzog. It is a rigorously closed campus, with security guards and student hall monitors posted at every exit, metal detectors and drug-sniffing dogs. Most of the doors are chained shut in defiance of the fire codes. Many of the windows have bars and nearly all have the glass broken out.

The Principal of Grissom is "Dandy" Joe Slorkin, who is controversial for his idiosyncratic approach to discipline and security. He has implemented such severe measures that even the higher-ups at American International Educators are starting to worry about him. He says that to run a school this tough, you need to take some pretty tough measures.

Among his more controversial innovations, he has created a student security group to patrol the halls and enforce classroom discipline. Slorkin points out that this is more effective than conventional policing. His kids know their peers better than any of his G&T security guards and they can spot problems that the guards cannot. It's true that most members of his team are part of the Stark Hill street gang called the Coronets, but that's because they're the best kids for the job. They're

tough and savvy and they know exactly how to spot drug dealers.

Kids whisper that Slorkin is a hypocrite—he's the biggest drug dealer in the school, and he's in tight with the Mob. His crazy security measures are there to keep rival gangs and other dealers out. That can't be true, can it?

Public Middle Schools

Bedlam has three public middle schools. Randall Burkhardt M.S. serves Stone Ridge, Sewell Blottman M.S. serves Stark Hill and Hardwick Park, while Carmichael Stokely M.S. serves Wolverton. Officially kids from Greely Point are supposed to attend Stokely, but in fact their elementary schools run through 8th grade (even though this is against state law) and they only send their worst students over the river.

Randall Burkhardt Middle School

Named after the only Bedlam native ever to become the Undersecretary of the Treasury (during the Coolidge Administration), this junior high school serves the 6th, 7th and 8th grade students who live in Stone Ridge. Officially it also covers the forested area down Wulfe Road, although few people live there. A few impoverished rural kids seem to attend every year, and swiftly find themselves tormented beyond all endurance by their classmates. Randall Burkhardt is actually in the same building as Pennington High School, across Wulfe Road from Stone Ridge. However, its students enter the building through separate doors, use different classrooms and have passing periods at different times than the high school students, so they never encounter one another.

The middle school operates under the same elaborate, dysfunctional security protocols as the high school, although the students and faculty have key cards that open different doors at different hours. It also has its own completely separate (and totally redundant) administrative staff and its own custodial workers. The two administrations don't communicate very well and they don't share a coordinated disaster plan. If there is ever a fire or another serious emergency in the building,

evacuation will be a nightmare, and then a tragedy.

Sewell Blottman Junior High

Named after one of Bedlam's most prominent bankers and, ironically, its most ardent foes of integration. Mr. Blottman would no doubt flip his wig if he saw his school today. Located in Hardwick Park, near the edge of downtown, it serves kids from Stark Hill all the way down to Ellmore Place. Unlike Helmut Herzog High School, the Mara have little influence over anything at Blottman. Because kids from Stark Hill get bussed there, the Mafia have issued standing orders that the school is off-limits to any of Hardwick Park's gangs. Over the past few years this arrangement has slipped a little. It's impossible to completely keep the Mara out, but they have learned that so long as they only hassle Hispanic kids, and don't interfere with any of the Stark Hill gangs' drug sales, the Scarpas won't do anything about it.

The school itself is an overcrowded hulk of a building, constructed over a long period of time, with additions in various ugly styles tacked onto to its grim Victorian central wing. It looks a little like a 19th century slaughterhouse, with a light industrial construction facility, a warehouse and a garage somehow growing out of its sides.

There aren't enough faculty, custodial staff or security guards here, and there are far too many students. Kids are packed in forty-five to a class, and there may be more teacher layoffs next year. One whole wing of Blottman has been temporarily shut down for structural instability and no one is sure how or when they'll get the money to repair it.

Carmichael Stokely Junior High

One of the Redevelopment Commission's last projects, Carmichael Stokely was meant to be a school unlike any other, which would dominate the landscape and show Wolverton how much the city cares about educating its youngsters. Instead of a conventional three or four story building covering a block or two, they opted for a narrow, eight-story tower, looming down

from the hillside near the edge of the Country Club. In order to look properly imposing, the school was constructed in the Brutalist style, and is often mistakes for a prison (which actually makes AIE administrators more comfortable working here.)

The facility was grandiose, with its own greenhouse and an indoor Olympic-sized swimming pool. Escalators connected the floors, since students and faculty couldn't be expected to walk up and down eight flights of steps all day. Best of all, Stokely didn't cost the city a dime. It was the outright gift of a giant software company that was anxious to improve its image.

Unfortunately, a building like Stokely Junior High takes an enormous amount of maintenance, and the city just didn't have to money to keep it up. Within a year all the escalators had failed and the pool had drained into the pump room underneath. When pipes burst in the winter cold, the water leaks down two or three floors at least, damaging all the rooms in its path. There are four freight elevators at the corners of the building, but no more than one or two of them seems to work at any given time, and of course no one but disabled students and maintenance staff are allowed to ride in them. No one has used the greenhouse for anything but storing old building materials in years, and the pool has lain, dark shuttered and empty, since the year after Stokely opened.

The donors wanted the school to have a scuba team, and hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of aqualungs, rebreathers and other gear lies abandoned in the rooms off the pool. The vigilante Nocturne has a temporary lair in one of those rooms, and camps out here about once every two weeks.

Rod Anger, Bedlam's favorite right-wing radio talk show host, loves to point to Stokely and its problems as proof that the residents of Wolverton can't be trusted with anything nice, and that government intervention never helps anyone. Of course, it was in fact a private company that conceived the project, but he usually doesn't mention that part.

Elementary Schools

Of the eighteen public elementary schools in Bedlam, sixteen are partly functioning and two are more or less permanently closed for renovations that never seem to happen. Here are the ones that are still operating. Space doesn't allow us to go into nearly as much detail for each one as we have for the high schools and middle schools, but then again the PCs aren't as likely to visit them, since fewer crimes are committed there.

Darius Mortlake Elementary

Not actually located on Mortlake Avenue, despite the name. This is the biggest elementary school in Greely Point. Like Greely Point's only high school, it doesn't have enough students, even though it keeps them through the eighth grade. The building itself is a huge old brick cavern that's impossible to heat.

Technically it's against the law for them to teach 7th and 8th graders here rather than sending them to a middle school, but Councilman Ron Cordell (see Page 42) has done a great job of keeping the city authorities off their backs.

Thurgood Marshall Elementary

The smallest and newest of Wolverton's elementary schools, Marshall was built with a federal grant back in the 1990s and it's in better shape than the other schools in the neighborhood. It was intended to be a magnet school for gifted kids at first, but there were too many ordinary kids crammed into overcrowded classrooms elsewhere. So now they run a separate gifted program inside the school, while teaching regular K-5 classes in most of their other classrooms.

Unfortunately, a disgruntled school administrator named Henrietta Diggs is irate over the way Marshall is "misusing" the grant and she's been raising hell with the Federal Department of Education about it. Soon their grant may get pulled thanks to her efforts, and the school will swiftly go downhill.

Woodrow Wilson Elementary

Located in Wolverton, this school has the best pee wee football team in the city. In fact they're a little too good. There are

rumors that the school authorities have been “red-shirting” promising athletes—holding them back a year or two in order to make them bigger and stronger. Some of their players may be twelve or thirteen and weigh as much as 150 pounds.

Lincoln Darger Elementary

Just off downtown on the edge of Hardwick Park, this small school is where most of the kids from the Meadows and the apartments around Terminal Drive get bussed. It also has a lot of kids from Hardwick Park and a serious shortage of Spanish-speaking teachers.

While it's no worse than many of Bedlam's public schools, Darger is presently infamous, for this is the place where a teacher named Ashley Gutreau had an inappropriate affair with one of her sixth-grade students, and where the principal tried to cover the incident up rather than report it. A cloud still hangs over Darger, while Miss Gutreau languishes in prison.

Ellwood Holmes Elementary

Wolverton's largest elementary school, located on Ellmore Avenue near “Double Zero” High. It has absorbed many of the students from the closed School 119 and it's packed to capacity. They bus kids here from all across the neighborhood and it's often standing room only on the busses once they fill up, in direct violation of the safety standards. A lot of kids from Hardwick Park go here too, but there are almost no Spanish-Speaking teachers, which causes constant trouble.

There are a lot of discipline problems at Holmes. Average class size is now up to fifty and there's just no good way for the school's limited staff and faculty to keep order.

Elementary 118

Hardwick Park's biggest elementary school, there have been efforts to rename it after one or another community leader, but Hardwick Park doesn't have enough pull on the Municipal Council to get it changed. There are also rumors that certain forces on the Council don't like the idea of a school with a Spanish name., and have been

actively blocking it. It's as overcrowded as Ellwood Holmes and has many of the same problems.

Marion Darkwater Elementary

While it's named after the same Bedlam real-estate tycoon, Darkwater Elementary isn't anywhere near Darkwater Street. In fact it's on Mortlake, in the southern part of Wolverton, which causes a lot of confusion when people from outside the neighborhood go looking for it.

Overcrowded, but not quite as bad as Holmes, this is where most of the children from Bedlam's small Jamaican community attend classes. There is a lot of friction between the Caribbean kids and the students for some reason.

This is Eentsy Z's old elementary school, and it's locally infamous as the place where he killed his first human being, at the age of six, in a dispute over the rules of freeze-tag. Students will tell you that you can still see the blood on the ground where it happened, but of course you can't.

Lucius Hardwick Elementary

This school is actually located in Wolverton, rather than Hardwick Park. Built by the Lucius Hardwick foundation, it reflects Mr. Hardwick's personal feelings about education. Built specifically to resemble a prison and remind children to fear their teachers, this grey cement block has tiny windows and bare concrete walls. This actually makes it harder to keep order, since the building is hellishly hot in the spring and fall thanks to its foolhardy design, and this makes students restless. Its high narrow hallways are not suited to the school's overcrowded passing periods and make it even harder for teachers and security to maintain control. It has wound up being a school where teachers fear their students, rather than the other way around.

Horatio Hoggard Elementary

Located just to the south of Lucius Hardwick Memorial Park, this school was built in the late 60s and it shows unmistakably in its architecture. The principal and administrators have somehow gained the ire of the gang called the Mara, although no

one is exactly sure how. Very ominous graffiti has begun to appear on the walls and someone has been leaving crucified dogs on the front steps. Where this might lead, no one knows

Langhorne Greely Elementary

Most kids in Stark Hill attend Catholic school. For those whose families can't afford it, there are also a couple of underfunded public elementary schools, although it's regarded as a real social stigma to go there. Because they don't have enough students, a lot of their classroom space sits empty. This has made it very easy for the mob to strike crooked deals with the school's contractors, stealing materials and selling them off elsewhere. The Reverend Willie Boggs has been trying hard to get the school to let Wolverton bus them some of their excess kids, but Councilman "Big Andy" Czernik has always blocked him, saying that "this is how it starts."

We presume he means letting any black people into the neighborhood, even for a few hours a day, would somehow weaken the barriers against them. Most residents of Stark Hill agree.

Elementary 114

There are safer places to locate a school than the north end of Industrial Drive. The six lanes of traffic roaring past are dangerous enough for the school busses, let alone the students. At least there's no longer very much pollution from the dying factories.

Sometimes objects fly off the back of passing trucks and bounce into the playground, so the kids are no longer allowed to go outside for recess. Last year a car came crashing into the second story of the building and it's still stuck there now. No one seems to know how to remove it or what to do about it. Some people say it's made the building structurally unsound, but all the local schools are so overcrowded that it wouldn't make sense to shut 114 down.

Dorothea Weybright Elementary

This is Greely Point's second elementary school, located on Moon Avenue on the

edge of the city's oldest Italian neighborhood. It's a tall, narrow, building, made of weathered bricks.

Kids say there is something wrong at Weybright. The place is haunted. Seriously haunted. Two teachers and three students have gone insane and attempted to commit suicide there in the past five years.

Anthony Martucci Elementary

This was Stark Hill's original public school, and it was once beautiful—a grand brick structure in the art nouveau style with wedding cake curlicues all over the walls. It even has ivy growing on one side.

Inside it's not as nice. The Mafia steals every dime it can from the school's budget and its facilities are falling apart. The Municipal Council likes to hold public photo-ops on the front steps, because it looks a lot like City Hall, but is in much better shape.

Calvin Coolidge Elementary

Wolverton's oldest and most run-down elementary school. Its facilities are in worse shape than any other school in the system and nearly half of it has had to be shut down thanks to black mold and collapsing ceilings. Many classes are held in the parking lot in trailers, which the school calls "modular classrooms." The trailers are very hot in summer and very cold in winter and they smell bad.

Some community activists have actually been calling for Coolidge to get torn down. But then where would all the kids go?

Roland Woodworth Elementary

This school serves the children of Stone Ridge. It's a gleaming, shiny new cube of bulletproof glass, located on Wulfe Road directly across from the Stone Ridge gated community. It is of course impossible for students to walk to and from school, but most Stone Ridge parents think that's a good thing and will keep their kids out of trouble. Nowhere is there more advertising in the Bedlam public schools than at Woodworth, since these are the kids who will grow up to have disposable income.

Elementary 105

On Storch Avenue, near Ash Street, sits Bedlam's smallest elementary school. It serves the needs of the few remaining kids from the Country Club, as well as those who are unlucky enough to live on or around Ash Street. It's also where about half of the children from the giant trailer park called Shady Meadows attend school—the other half go to rural schools run by the county. This mix of impoverished inner-city kids and trailer trash has led to an explosive atmosphere. The city authorities aren't fully aware of the fact, but this is the school with the worst discipline problem in the city. More fights happen on the playground here than at any school in Wolverton or Hardwick Park. Frequently brawls spread out across the whole yard and become impossible to break up without calling in the police. It also has the worst record of parents physically intimidating or assaulting teachers (these incidents usually happen when teachers attempt to discipline children whose parents are members of Shady Meadows' dominant biker gang)

Private and Parochial Schools

But of course not every kid in Bedlam has to attend its failing public schools. For the lucky few whose parents can afford it, there are alternatives. See below for some of them. The GM should feel free to invent more.

Hugo Grimm Friends' School

The Quakers were once a despised minority in Bedlam and their children were forbidden to attend the town's schools. They were allowed to build a school of their own, a safe distance away from town, on what is now Krangle Street in Greely Point. It is now the best and most coveted private elementary school in Bedlam, teaching only the children of its richest citizens. Everyone in Stone Ridge hopes to get their kindergartener into Hugo Grimm.

It's a beautiful red-brick building surrounded by tasteful landscaping and huge elm trees. Inside, the best-paid teachers in the city watch over tiny classes. It's a bit of an academic pressure-cooker,

piling far more work on its students at a far younger age than most experts think is safe or healthy, in order to help them get ahead. It's the only elementary school in Bedlam where students commit suicide on a regular basis.

Of course, the very richest families can pay for the "Accelerated Program," an alternative "free-school" within the school where students get to learn at their own pace, lounging around and taking endless breaks, fiddling with projects when it suits them.

Walgrove Prep

This exclusive private school is down Wulfe Road from the Stone Ridge gated community, just off the edge of the map. The campus looks old, with brown brick buildings covered in ivy. But in fact Walgrove is new—it was constructed within the past ten years, after Stone Ridge opened. Its brick facades cover walls made of hastily-poured concrete and the ivy is constantly tended by the groundskeeping staff. Walgrove costs a lot of money but their admissions standards aren't very high and the faculty aren't very distinguished. A lot of them have PhDs, but most of them are here because even with a PhD they can't find jobs at the University level.

Getting admitted to Walgrove is all about your personal interview, which in turn is all about finding out which family you come from. Once you are admitted, the faculty's job is to bend over backwards to give you as many A's as possible so that you can get into an Ivy League school on the basis of your inflated GPA.

Walgrove is officially a boarding school, although most of its students have their own cars and live so close by that they go home almost every night and use the dorms mostly to party in. There is a small unhappy group of scholarship students from all around the country who do not have that privilege. They are here to give the school some academic standing and its students some low-class nerds to persecute. These kids live in the dorms full-time, so jocks always know where to find them when it's time to beat someone up and destroy their stuff.

Our Lady of the Five Wounds

The largest educational institution in Stark Hill, this parochial school offers instruction for Kindergarten through the 12th grade, although not all in one building. There are in fact three separate campuses, one for Kindergarten through sixth grade, one for seventh and eighth grade and one for high school students. All three have the same archaic, faux-gothic look, with lots of ornate fake stonework made out of cement and rusty cast-iron fences with spikes on the top.

Our Lady of the Five Wounds is not very progressive as far as Catholic schools go. Bishop Sloat (see page 44) was once the headmaster here, and he implemented the most severe system of corporal punishment in decades. He used to implement a lot of the physical discipline himself, and after two boys died while he ministered to their disciplinary needs, he was hastily promoted to a position where he would have no direct contact with students and parishioners. But his legacy lives on.

In a lot of schools, physical punishment is confined to a single room, administered with a paddle under strict guidelines. While they certainly have paddles at Our lady of the Five Wounds, the monks and nuns who teach there don't feel confined to use them, and are free to get students' attention by slapping them, or twisting their ears, or picking them up by their hair (if they're small and light enough) etc. Sometimes they hit kids for breaking the rules and sometimes they do it to make sure they're listening, or to emphasize a point, or for no reason at all.

There is some question of whether or not the disciplinary procedures at Our Lady of the Five Wounds are strictly legal. But Municipal Councilman "Big Andy" Czernik has done a good job of shielding them from official inquiries—he doesn't see why today's kids shouldn't have to go through all the suffering he went through himself back in school.

While all three campuses of Our Lady of the Five Wounds are better funded than the Bedlam Public schools, they are still in a state of decay, with a declining number of students and crumbling facilities.

Textbooks and lab supplies are in particularly short supply, and students often have to share a book.

Abundant Tabernacle Christian Academy

This Pentecostal "True Love Christian School" instructs children in the One Way, along with reading and basic math. They proudly teach their students only "the Truth of Christian-Based Science" as opposed to actual science. Nor do they teach children the corrupting and satanic "irrational" numbers, like Pi and its demonic ilk. Quadratic equations, which have also been shown by Revealed Interpretation of the Law to be satanic in origin, are never taught here either.

Abundant Tabernacle has more than one campus. Their main facility is located in the Meadows, in a large, tacky white building shaped something like a tent or a postmodern church, covered with windows. They also operate smaller, store-front schools in strip malls in Wolverton, Hardwick Park and Stark Hill. They also have a branch in the Liberty Shoppes Mall that's exclusively for 7th and 8th graders.

There are rumors that some of their older students have formed a more radical clique within the school, and have been talking about taking Direct Action against the unrighteous, perhaps with pipe bombs. More than one teacher sympathizes with their aims and may be encouraging them. Nor is it clear whether or not they are just talking tough, or whether they actually have the means to put these plans into action. If rival cliques of adolescents start getting blown up by pipe bombs, we'll know for sure.

Notable people within the Bedlam School System

Some are the stat-blocks and background material on the next few pages are meant for teachers, while some are for administrators. Apart from Principal Joe Slorkin, none of them are tied specifically to any one school—you can spread them round wherever you need them for your stories.

Principal Headly Dingman

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (educational theory) d4, Knowledge (school administration) d8, Notice d4, Shooting d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Clueless, Mean, Paranoid, Quirk (hates and fears kids)

Edges: Frenzy

Gear: Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his torso), Helmet (3 armor, only protects his head), Baseball Bat (d4+2 damage)

Background: Headly Dingman has gone a little nuts. The stress of his job and his constant fears for his own personal security have made him a paranoid loon. He communicates with students through a bullhorn and routinely wears riot gear at public assemblies. He never goes anywhere without an armed escort of security guards. Constantly convinced that students are mocking him and plotting against him behind his back, he sometimes holds impromptu "security Sweeps", raiding lockers and classrooms at random, terrorizing any kids unlucky enough to get in his path. He's also getting unstable, hearing voices and developing weird rituals and delusions.

All his craziness has left him a less-than capable administrator, and a lot of the school's problems are growing out of control under his nose.

Dingman is a completely bald man with huge bug-eyed glasses and deep lines in his face. He often seems to be looking past you, rather than at you as he speaks.

Principal Hermann Stultz

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d4, Knowledge (educational theory) d6, Knowledge (school administration) d6, Notice d4

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Habit (Alcoholic), Obese, Quirk (has completely given up)

Background: Stultz has totally given up on his school, his job and anything else apart from punching the clock. He is seldom seen in the corridors of his school and some kids are starting to wonder if he even exists. For the most part he stays barricaded in his office, wasting time at his desk, playing Minesweeper on his laptop (the office doesn't have a PC) and waiting until the bell rings. He leaves almost all the day-to-day details of running the school in the hands of his assistants and they aren't doing it very well. He has also taken to drinking during the day.

Those few students and faculty who have seen Mr. Stultz report him to be a great fat orca of a man with dangling jowls, and a lot of stubble on his cheeks. His voice is thick, met and indistinct. He dresses with the absolute minimum level of formality he can get away with—jeans and a dress shirt with no tie. Frankly, if he could come to work in a bathrobe, he would.

Principal Nellie Rittle

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d8, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (educational theory) d6, Knowledge (school administration) d8, Notice d8, Taunt d8, Stealth d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 4

Hindrances: Big Mouth, Quirk (sadist, loves to hurt kids emotionally), Vengeful

Background: A spindly little loudmouth bully, Rittle claims to be a tough, take-no-prisoners, "zero tolerance" principal. But that's really kind of a joke. She is good at pushing kids around and devising bizarre punishments for them, but she knows better than to ever actually mess with any gang members and carefully avoids noticing any of the real criminal activity going on in her school.

It's just a job to her. She privately feels that she has no hope of changing anything, so why bother trying? But it's a lot of fun to shove kids around and it makes

her popular with the parents. Anyway she has to do something to fill her day.

A genuine sadist, she gets a particular thrill out of verbally abusing pretty girls. It's even better if they look shy and vulnerable.

A tiny woman with hunched shoulders, she might have been pretty fifteen years ago but her personality has begun to inscribe itself indelibly on her face. She never raises her voice, and speaks in a quiet, menacing purr.

Principal Lloyd Poke

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Knowledge (educational theory) d4, Knowledge (school administration) d4, Knowledge (football) d8, Notice d6, Throwing d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Attractive, Fleet-Footed, Inspire

Background: Poke has a couple of secrets that he'd like to conceal. First, he doesn't actually have a degree in education—he's just a football coach who was willing to go along with crushing the teachers' union, and that's the only reason he got this job. He's not up to it, and has no training as either a teacher or an administrator. He does know a lot about coaching football and the teams have done well under him. But in other regards his school is falling apart. His other secret is a little more serious.

A huge, muscular guy, he has always been attractive to teenage girls. And he's weak and foolish enough to take advantage of the fact. To tell you the truth, he's been going through them like popcorn, ever since he took this job. The Mob has found out about his problem, and they are blackmailing him with it. As long as he runs his school, drugs will be sold there without any interference from his office.

For his part, Poke is so scared about his inadequacy as a manager to worry much about his other situation. He's a big, impressive looking African-American guy with a moustache. He always dresses impeccably, with an expensive suit and carefully dimpled tie. Girls swoon over him.

Principal Joe Slorkin

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d8, Guts d10, Intimidation d8+2, Knowledge (Bedlam Underworld) d8, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Streetwise d10, Taunt d8+2

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6 (2/4)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Connections (Bedlam Mafia), Level Headed, No Mercy, Rock and Roll, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidation or Taunt)

Hindrances: Mean

Gear: Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest), Great Big Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Assault Rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, ROF 3, AP 2, Three round burst)

Background: Grissom High is the toughest school in Bedlam. It takes a tough guy to run it, or so Joe Slorkin will happily tell you. He has made all kinds of reforms, intended to tighten security and stamp out crime. Grissom's security services, for example, are provided by Garvin and Torsberg Ltd, but they don't have enough officers to patrol the halls, they don't speak the kids' lingo and they aren't present in classrooms. So Principal Slorkin has created a student security group made up of kids he can trust (all of them members of the Coronets street gang and its affiliates) to help keep order in ways that the regular security guards cannot. They use this power to harass more or less anyone they want, all with the principal's help and encouragement.

They have also helped him bring the school's drug problem under control. The Coronets sell all the drugs in his school and he takes a piece of the action. Anyone caught selling drugs who isn't one of his boys will get sent to Juvenile Hall and very swiftly get killed there.

This is making him really rich and getting him a lot of respect from the Scarpia Crime family. He's not Sicilian, so he can never be a Made Guy, but he's a valued associate and they would take it ill if anything bad were to happen to him.

Slorkin is a short, fat, violent man with huge furry eyebrows and sunken red-rimmed eyes. He dresses in hideous brown polyester suits and has offensive body odor. The Scarpias call him "Dandy Joe", but it's ironic (much like "Dapper" Donny Scarpia) He usually goes around the school flanked by two of his largest hall monitors.

Amazingly for a high school principal, he is openly racist, and wants to make sure his Coronets keep their boots on the black kids' necks. Slorkin has a bad temper and is prone to striking people who annoy him, but he keeps it under control at school. He also has a cruel sense of humor and likes to make ugly jokes at the expense of his black and Hispanic students. He never does this around grown-ups, however.

Seen as a rising power within the mob, he has somehow gained the enmity of "Little Junior" Gorganzua, Young Junior's wastrel son. Little Junior seems to think that some of Slorkin's Coronets showed him disrespect, but he might just feel jealous of him as a rising star. If Pookie (see Page 249 for more about this biker warlord) tires of working for crazy Little Junior, he will probably try to switch over to Dandy Joe Slorkin's bunch, and may find himself appointed Assistant Principal of Grissom High.

It's important to remember that most people don't know Principal Slorkin is a crook, and neither do most of the students at Grissom. To the world he's just a tough guy with a tough job to do.

Julie Wylde

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d4, Knowledge (Arcane Secrets) d6, Knowledge (English Literature) d8, Knowledge (popular culture of the flower

child epoch) d8, Notice d6, Stealth d4,

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 4 (3)

Hindrances: Curious, Overconfident

Edges: Arcane Background (Magic), Charismatic, Inspire, Soul Drain

Powers: Armor 3 (special version, only protects her from magical attacks), Detect/Conceal Arcana, Dispel

Background: It's hard to believe, but Miss Wylde actually commutes into Bedlam every morning on the train from the larger metropolis nearby, in order to work at an inner city school. She does this because she feels it's the right thing to do.

Wispy and willowy, with a soft, diffident voice and long grey hair, you can guess instantly that she's former flower child, even before you see her peasant skirt and her hippie jewelry. She has recently separated from her long-term boyfriend and has thrown herself deeper into her work. She's determined to make a difference. Julie wants to be involved in her students' lives and she sometimes gets a little too involved. Many of her students have wound up sleeping on her couch when they couldn't safely go home and she has done even riskier things. Not once has she ever slept with a student, but she has smoked dope with them on occasion and by the standards of the Bedlam school system, that's nearly as bad. She's also been teaching Marxism in her class, but no one in the administration pays any attention to this.

It's only a matter of time before her recklessness gets her into serious trouble, either with the gangs or with the law. Or with worse things. Julie is a practicing witch, although not a very powerful one. If one of her students gets in trouble with sinister unseen forces, she will try to help them. Julie knows just enough about magic to get them both in really serious danger.

Euclid D. Farnham



Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d10, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d8, Knowledge (Electronics) d10, Knowledge (Engineering) d10, Knowledge (Weird Pseudo-science) d12, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6+2 (only gets bonus when he's wearing his goggles), Repair d10, Stealth d4,

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6/ Fly 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 4

Hindrances: Curious, Overconfident

Edges: Arcane Background (Weird Science), Gadgeteer, Jack-of-All-Trades, Mechanical Genius, McGyver

Super Powers:

• **Inventor**

(All powers below are Devices)

• **Force Field:** +3, Partial

• **Broadcast:** More Range, Manipulation

• **Darkvision**

• **Flight:** Same Speed as Pace

• **Healing**

• **Heightened Senses:** Eagle Eyes

• **Interface:** Code Breaker

• **Stun:** Beaker or flask full of weird exploding liquid, uses Medium Burst Template

• **Speak Languages**

• **And even more!** There's no telling what kind of device he might have handy.

Background: Mr. Farnham teaches science at one of Bedlam's inner-city schools. It could be a high school or a junior high or just possibly a grade school (although this would be harder to fit.)

The other science teachers on the faculty resent and are perplexed by him. With his PhD and multiple engineering degrees, he could be making real money in the private sector. What is he doing teaching science in Bedlam? It's almost like he enjoys teaching underprivileged kids—but that's so crazy no one wants to believe it. At any rate he's clearly not one of them, so they avoid him. He doesn't seem to care.

Wildly enthusiastic, with a crazy mop of hair that hangs in his eyes, he's the very picture of the mad scientist. Farnham is not actually that great a teacher—he talks too fast and seldom spends enough time on review, but he's certainly a memorable instructor and he really does get kids interested in science.

A real live gadgeteer, his theories were too startling for the mainstream research community, most of whom dismissed him as a crackpot. That's why he's a public school teacher instead. And a lot of his theories really are confused bunk. He seems to have dabbled in nearly every crackpot pseudo-science theory out there, from cryptozoology to Orgonne therapy to the theories of Immanuel Velikovsky.

Euclid Farnham seems to be one of those gadgeteers who can make weird machines with the power of his mind, rather than a bona-fide scientific genius. He leads the school's Science Club and many of his best students are members. All of them are smart inner-city youngsters who love Mr. Farnham—or at least love the incredible things that he's shown them (Farnham himself is kind of a wild-eyed enigma and sometimes a little scary.) They have started calling themselves the League of Science and they may be about to get into deep, bad trouble.

Euclid Farnham has already taken them on an incredible voyage to the insides of their minds and one into another dimension, and he nearly lost a few of them both times. He's much too absent-minded and focused on his loony theories to really

care very much about his students, and he's totally irresponsible.

Right now the League of Science is building a rocketship out of junk, down at an old salvage yard on Industrial Drive. This ridiculous contraption will really work, so long as Mr. Farnham is there to watch it launch, and it will be capable of inter-planetary (and possibly even interstellar) flight. This adventure could put them in a truly amazing amount of danger, but it's nothing compared to what might happen if they form a detective agency and start using forensic science to solve local crimes in Wolverton. Their teacher isn't nearly brave or capable enough to protect them against the likes of Eentsy Z or the Jigsaw Man.

And there's all kinds of other trouble they could get them into. If a dimensional rift gets opened in a classroom or a school robotics project falls in love with a cheerleader or a bunch of students get shrunk down to microscopic size, you can be sure that Euclid D. Farnham is mixed up in it somewhere. He's also filling his students' heads with useless rubbish that isn't real science.

Reggie Matusik



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Drive d8, Fighting d6, Guts d4, Intimidation d4, Investigation d4, Knowledge (sports) d8, Knowledge (guns) d6, Shooting d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Edges: Frenzy, Take the Hit

Hindrances: Dependant (daughter), Vow (to avenge her abuse and death)

Gear: Baseball Bat (Damage: d8+2), Lots of pistols (Most of them are Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 1, Rate of Fire 1), Shotgun Range 12/24/48, Damage 3d6, Armor-Piercing 1, Rate of Fire 1), Mac 11 Submachine Gun (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 4, Shots 40)

Background: Mr. Matusik is a bluff, hearty Driver's Ed. teacher. He used to coach wrestling, but his back got too bad for it, so now he teaches kids how to drive. Loud and enthusiastic, he can be a little overbearing but he's never cruel.

He's a big guy, with hands like knotted tree roots and a floridly red face. Divorced, he collects guns in his off-hours and he drinks too much. He has an uneasy truce with his shy, bookish teenaged daughter, Marissa. They inhabit the same house but have little to do with each other. This is about to change.

Marissa is going to come home one night sobbing. Some jocks caught her in the halls and threatened to do things to her, soon. Reggie attempts to have them brought up for discipline, but finds that under the current regime, the school isn't willing to do anything about the problem. Each day the same crowd of boys taunts Marissa with her impending fate, and no one does a thing. Then one night, she doesn't come home until dawn. They got her. She commits suicide the next day.

Sensing that Reggie might be feeling a little raw about this, the boys who assaulted his daughter start taunting him about it. So he decides to teach them a lesson in Driver's Ed. The GM can let this play out in one of two ways.

The Driver's Ed Teacher

After drinking and crying all night, Reggie Matusik comes into school with some guns from his collection and holds the whole place hostage. He's sobbing and talking incoherently and he isn't completely sure what he wants. It's revenge, though. He's pretty sure of that. He's going to try to get all the athletes who attacked his daughter

into the Driver's Education simulator room, along with the principal and any other administrators he has a grudge against. If he can get them down there, he will force them into the simulators, tape them in place with duct tape and play the simulation with them, shouting out questions about what they ought to do in this or that driving situation. If they get a question wrong, he shoots them or hits them with a sledgehammer or sets them on fire.

By now a SWAT team has assembled in front of the building. If they storm the place everyone is likely to die, including innocent kids who may get caught in the crossfire. If a superhero wants to go into the building and negotiate with the crazed driver's ed instructor, the cops will give them a few minutes.

The Driver's Ed Teacher II: In-Car

Reggie drinks himself to death the night before he was planning to go postal at the school. But he comes back from the dead a few weeks later, just a little decayed and thirsty for revenge. He will steal one of the school's drivers' ed training cars, weld a bunch of fishhooks and razor blades to the body, make some lethal modifications to the interior and go hunting jocks. He will run some of them over, but others he will take on terrifying rides with him, quizzing them on driving safety and then either killing them in the car or dumping them at high speed when they get a question wrong.

Driver's Ed Teacher Double Feature

Or feel free to combine the two plots. If Reggie gets killed during Scenario One, have him come back from the grave for Scenario Two.

Reggie Matusik, Undead Driver's Ed Teacher from Hell

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Shooting d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Special Abilities

• Fear 2

• Fearless: immune to Fear and Intimidation.

• Invulnerable: The Driver's Ed Teacher can only be harmed by his Weaknesses. He can be Shaken but never Wounded by anything else.

• Undead: +2 Toughness. +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage

Hindrances:

• Vow: to avenge his daughter's death.

• Weakness (Automobile Accidents):

Unlike most forms of physical damage, getting hit by a car will wound or kill the Driver's Ed Teacher normally

• Weakness (Sunlight): Mr. Matusik will begin to crumble if any part of his skin is exposed to direct sunlight. After that he suffers 2d10 damage per round until he turns to dust. Armor does not protect him against this effect.

HIGHER EDUCATION IN BEDLAM

There are two colleges in the vicinity of Bedlam. A two-year community college and a four-year private school. Both are troubled, but they have very different problems. See below.

Bedlam Community College

BCC has three campuses. One is located downtown, on the third through the eighth floors of a skyscraper. There is also a very small campus in Greely Point, near Griswold Street. It consists of a single small nondescript brick building, shaped like a concrete block. BCC's auto and diesel program is located in a big garage in the Meadows.

Their automotive program is pretty good. The rest of their departments are maybe not so great. Particularly in the area of Liberal Arts.

Publicly funded school buses pick students up from three locations in Stark Hill and one location on Ellmore Place, on the boundary between Wolverton and Hardwick Park. The young people who go to Bedlam CC are a pretty rough crowd, apart from the Drama and Communications students. The seats on the buses are all slashed up and covered with gang graffiti. Members of Irish

and Italian gangs from Stark Hill regularly come into contact with their traditional enemies from Wolverton and Hardwick Park on campus, so brawls are common and sometimes bloody.

Meanwhile the Drama and Communications Departments continue to function in a whole separate world up on the eighth floor of the downtown campus. They have recently started offering courses in TV production and the local PBS station is produced in their facilities.

There is a small bohemian crowd of theater students who hang around near the college downtown. They are just starting to discover the Circle Perk Coffee Shop (see page 191.)

Belchner College

Down Krangle Road from Bedlam (to the west, if you're using the map the way it's printed instead of turning it on its side) you can find America's least prestigious private college. It's a small, red brick campus with ivy on its dignified-looking old buildings and beer cans strewn everywhere. A lot of the beautiful leaded glass windows have been smashed out by successive generations of students. It's not uncommon to see heavy 19th century furniture lying on the quad, soaking up the rain.

Belchner has been serving America's rich and troubled youth for more than a hundred years. A private institution, its tuition is as high as Amherst or Princeton, but its admission standards are more like Bedlam Community College. This makes it the place of last refuge for privileged students who have managed to get themselves kicked out of Dartmouth, Georgetown, Tufts, etc. It has the singular distinction of always being rated dead last in US News and World Reports' annual list of private colleges and universities. And to be fair, its focus on academics isn't as strong as it might be. Fortunately for athletes and less-motivated students in need of a degree, they offer majors in fields like Hotel Management, in addition to more traditional curricula.

Social life at Belchner revolves around its venerable fraternities and sororities. A small Greek Row spills down a

country lane behind the college. It's not a good place to find yourself on a Saturday night if you don't belong to one of the fraternal orders.

Belchner's football team is surprisingly good, but that's because they bring in talented inner-city athletes and house them separately from the other kids. Even though they aren't comprised of mainstream students, Belchner's teams inspire fanatical loyalty among the frats. Whenever the team wins its homecoming game, the frats raid the student dormitories, drag underclassmen's belongings out onto the quad and set them on fire. The administration regards this tradition with a nod and a wink. Boys will be boys, after all, and when they are men, they will be able to write big checks for the school's endowment.

The one real problem with life at Belchner, according to most students, is the lack of any nightlife in the area. The school is off in the forest and the nearest town is Bedlam. More and more students have started exploring Bedlam as an entertainment option. For now they seldom venture further than the Meadows, but a few of the more adventurous have taken to haunting the illegal nightclubs on Industrial Drive. They often feel uncomfortable there, but the steady supply of teenage girls from Stone Ridge keeps them coming back.

Groups of hellraising Belchner frat-boys are becoming a more and more common sight in Bedlam. They frequently go armed and they always travel in big groups. This has already started to cause serious friction with some of the locals, who are frequently armed themselves.

The campus cops have standing orders to retrieve Belchner students who get into trouble in the city before the Bedlam police have a chance to. So long as the kids confine their antics to the Meadows, this is easy. Police response time there is slow and it's not within Bedlam's city limits. Getting them out of trouble on Industrial Drive is a lot trickier. If students get taken in by the campus cops, they're sure to get a stern talking-to from the Dean. In the custody of the Bedlam Police, who knows?

BUSINESS IN BEDLAM

Despite what you may have heard, business is not dead in Bedlam. Here is a guide to some of the City of Now's biggest employers. Please note that this list is not comprehensive. There is room for more, depending on what your campaign needs. Perhaps Toxicorp (see Page 181), the world's largest manufacturer of poisons, has a chemical plant out on Industrial Drive. Perhaps some sinister corporation from your own campaign has opened a Bedlam office.

Wolfram Aerospace

(name suggested by John McMullen)

We keep making reference in this book to "a large aerospace firm" which runs a lot of Bedlam's government institutions at a profit. They are Wilfred Krebbs' employer (you can find out more about Bedlam's City Manager on Page 39) and they own all of Bedlam's parking meters, among other things. We intended to leave the firm's identity open for the GM. Every campaign world seems to have at least one vast and sinister corporation with evil plans and a bottomless lust for power. Choose whichever you like. But if you don't actually have one prepared, here's Wolfram Aerospace to use as a placeholder. None of our future publications will tie them into the background of Bedlam in such a way as to make it hard to replace them with your own Big Awful Company—we promise.

Wolfram Aerospace has been in operation since the 1930s. They are huge, but quiet and low-key. In all their years of existence, they have never run a television commercial. The company was founded by Max Wolfram, maverick inventor and aviator, though he soon lost control of the firm to his more aggressive and business-savvy partner, Mort Stuckey. Although Wolfram himself died in poverty and despair, Stuckey kept the name. He also kept alive the image of the lone inventor, and often spoke fondly of his late friend's gumption and pioneer spirit. Max Wolfram didn't need no union or no New Deal to get

ahead, Stuckey often remarked. He made his destiny with his own two hands.

Wolfram had left all kinds of incredible designs and engineering marvels behind him, and once Mr. Stuckey had the FBI confiscate the plans from his old business partner's widow, he was set for the next forty years. He became the confidante of kings and presidents—an essential man. A lot of American corporate executives were sent to prison for doing business with the Nazis during World War Two, but there was never any question of doing that to Mort Stuckey.

Yet while his name was known and feared in the corridors of power, Stuckey and Wolfram Aerospace came to avoid the public eye. Other captains of industry enjoyed being in the limelight, but Stuckey always felt more at home in the shadows. And so not many people today know his name, or for that matter the name of his company. They're as big as Lockheed or Boeing, but no more better known than, for example, the Carlyle Group.

This suits a company whose best work has always been on secret projects. Max Wolfram's chief innovations were in jet engines—he was decades ahead of anyone else. So they built high-altitude spy planes and super-fast fighter-craft and the missiles that could shoot them down. Their best money-makers weren't declassified for decades after the Air Force had retired them. When the age of spy satellites dawned they were at the very forefront. They also researched anti-parahuman measures and got entangled with some of the government's most secret agencies in an effort to secure live test subjects for this work. They were one of the first commercial manufacturers of armored battlesuits, although they've never managed to make them as effective as the designs that some superheroes have developed, or cost-effective enough to equip an entire army with them. They have a special permit from the federal government to equip their own security staff with powered-armor,

although each of their suits is so expensive and requires so much maintenance that it's isn't practical to have more than a few of them active at a time. It's less well known that a number of their suits have been prone to lethal malfunctions or that the average lifespan of their pilots is something like five years.

Artificial intelligence was one of their other major areas of research, although they don't talk about what successes they might have achieved here. They also acquired one of the country's leading pioneers in cybernetics (Body-Hammer LLC) and through them they have built the Pentagon Protection Force's small staff of cybernetic bodyguards (see Page 89.) This project has not been without its challenges. Few of their cyborgs can endure the pain and neurological damage that the process causes for more than a few years. There have been incidents. The only really successful test subject cost something like six billion dollars to build, and that's not exactly cost-effective.

In 1974 President Nixon was forced to resign and this so enraged Mort Stuckey that he died of a heart attack. But his spirit still guides the company—and perhaps his brain as well. His head was placed in cryogenic suspension upon his death, and there are rumors that it still presides over meetings of the board.

The current CEO of Wolfram does not advertise his name in the press. No one is quite sure who it could be. Their home offices are in Delaware, but their construction and testing facilities are mostly located in Nevada, New Mexico, Kazakhstan and (it is rumored) Antarctica. Possibly on the floor of the Pacific Ocean, as well. They don't have an office in Bedlam.

City management is strictly a sideline for Wolfram Aerospace. Player Characters who attempt to tamper with their affairs will soon find that not only do they have a small army of power-armored thugs, but the capacity to hire a seemingly unlimited number of supervillains. Wolfram also has an enormous amount of clout with some of the Federal Government's scariest agencies.

Humanity, Inc.

These days, one of Bedlam's biggest employers is a temp firm. Humanity Inc. employs huge numbers of day-laborers at countless sites all over Bedlam. They've been instrumental at undermining the longshoreman's union down at Bedlam Harbor, although the Gorganzua crime family has largely kept them out of Greely Point. If you see a bunch of wretches toiling outside at some miserable unskilled job (picking up scraps and broken pieces of metal on a construction site, for example) then they probably work for Humanity. If you see them doing it without proper safety gear, then you know it for sure. Humanity has always kept its profits high by keeping its costs low. It's cheaper to bribe safety inspectors, for example, than it is to buy your men work gloves and goggles. And should a worker lose a finger or an eye, there are plenty more guys to fill his boots.

Humanity's local offices are downtown, but the facility where men wait to be sent out on jobs is a giant Quonset hut by a broken-down factory on Industrial Drive. Not really constructed for human habitation, it's very cold in winter, very hot in summer and there's nowhere to sit down. They also have a pickup location in Hardwick Park, behind the burnt-out ruins of a Wunder-Chuk restaurant. Large numbers of undocumented Hispanic workers stand patiently around the lot in the pre-dawn chill, waiting for trucks to pull up and foremen to start yelling for "guys who want to work today."

It's better than the other places you can wait for day labor—Humanity doesn't pay much, but at least you know for sure that they really will pay you at the end of the day. And they never ask uncomfortable questions about your immigration status or your criminal record.

Because it's a valuable resource, the gang called the Mara control access to the pickup point in Hardwick Park. You have to pay them a fee to wait there, and you have to be in good standing with the gang (no members of your family can owe the Mara money or have shown them disrespect.)

Councilman "Big Andy" Czernik doesn't like Humanity. The dockworkers'

union has been good to him and to his supporters, and the giant temp firm has undercut them pretty badly. Unable to get Big Andy's patronage, they have become political allies of the Reverend Willie Boggs and his political machine. The local chapter of the Dockworkers' union was largely made up of guys from Stark Hill and Greely Point, who always discouraged African-Americans from joining, so Boggs feels no loyalty to them.

Humanity is owned by a group of investors in Sweden called the Karsten-Borghelm Group. They have branches all over the United States, Eastern Europe and South Africa. So far as anyone knows no actual company executive has ever set foot in Bedlam.

Reliable Mortgage

One of the nation's largest mortgage brokers has come to Bedlam, offering incredible deals at low-low rates that can't possibly last! You'd think that Bedlam wouldn't have such a vibrant housing market, but that hardly even matters to the good folks at Reliable Mortgage. Most of their local clients are in fact refinancing their homes to pay off other debts—or just to stay alive through another Bedlam winter. And that's no problem. Second mortgages, third mortgages, seemingly anyone can get a variable-rate loan approved through Reliable Mortgage, as if by magic.

For some reason their shiny new downtown offices kept getting vandalized, so now they keep their administrative staff and management carefully separate from the brokers who actually deal with clients. Management works on the upper floor of a downtown skyscraper, while the brokers work in store-front offices elsewhere. There's one in Hardwick Park, one in Stark Hill, one in the Stone Ridge Community Center, one in the Meadows, one in a small office building in Greely Point and one in the Liberty Shoppes mall. There was one in Wolverton, but somebody burned it down. After a few unfortunate incidents with former clients, they have hired huge looming security guards from Garvin and Torsberg (see Page 162) to protect their brokers on the job.

Bedlam is already seeing the results of Reliable Mortgage's generosity. Wolverton is suddenly awash in foreclosures. They sell sucker loans to desperate people, often showing the client forged documents that offer different rates than what they'll really be getting. A few months into the deal they jack the rates through the roof, the client loses their house and they sell it to the next sucker. Or to some stupid yuppie in another state who thinks he's going to make a killing in the real-estate market.

Of course a lot of people are also desperate to move out of the city and into Stone Ridge. And here Reliable is happy to help you too. They'll sell you a big ugly house you can't afford and when they dial up the rates and take it away from you, there's always another poor bastard standing in line for it.

A lot of people know by now that refinancing through Reliable is a sure way to lose your home, but then again, a lot of people are totally desperate for cash. If your kids are hungry and it's thirty-five degrees inside your house because you can't pay the heating bill, you might be willing to entertain dubious options.

Big Andy Czernik's political machine has figured out what Reliable Mortgage is up to, and they approve. Frankly anything that hurts Wolverton is okay in their book. Big Andy's Mafia associates have had a quiet word with Reliable's Stark Hill office, which now offers its services to them as a money laundering scheme, refinancing mortgages on properties owned by Mafiosi at incredible rates that never go up. They've also been putting a few little old Italian grandmas out of their houses, but so long as the money remains good, the Mob is prepared to accept it.

The Greely Olde Tymme Toy Factory

This is the last of the really big factories still in operation on Industrial Drive, and one of Bedlam's major employers. There aren't a lot of toy factories left in the United States that can compete with cheap imports from the Far East. But the Greely Olde Tymme Toy Factory staggers on, clinging to a small niche market and its heavy government

subsidies. It's been in operation for more than a hundred years.

Here they make old fashioned toys (teddy bears, rocking horses, wooden soldiers, etc) the same way they have always made them. And with the same safety standards! But perhaps that's unfair. While the toy-works have been plagued with unpleasant accidents in recent years, it's nowhere near as unsafe as a typical 19th century factory. But it isn't anywhere near as safe as a 21st century factory, either. And even back when the Greely family owned the factory itself, it was always a notoriously unsafe place to work. No one knows how many of its laborers have been maimed or mutilated in the toy-machines over the years.

Presently owned by a holding company called 4QMOM Associates, the factory manages to evade the watchful gaze of the safety inspectors every year, mostly because it's one of the few American toy factories left. Bribes to the local officials keep them at bay, but even the feds are reluctant to come down too hard on them and put so many people out of work.

After four rounds of layoffs, the remaining workers at the Greely Olde Tymme Toy Factory are desperate to keep their jobs and never seem to report unsafe practices. In fact, more than one potential whistleblower has suffered fatal "accidents" on the job at the hands of their co-workers. Of course, now that there are barely enough of them left to run the machines, shifts are longer and mishaps are more common.

4QMOM Associates is based in Dubai, but may soon get acquired by a far more ruthless Australian firm called Blue Kangaroo, which may decide to squeeze the factory for its government subsidies by laying off even more workers and lowering safety standards still further—then keeping the money this saves for themselves.

Drago and Grubb

Most of the apartment buildings in Hardwick Park are owned by either the Pennington family (see Page 148) or the Smirlocks (see Page 148.) Neither one prefers to play any direct role in how these properties are managed, so they have both employed the

firm of Drago and Grubb, Ltd. to do the dirty work for them. And the work is often surprisingly dirty. Link Drago and Harry Grubb do their best to keep expenses down by shortchanging the aging buildings on maintenance, heat, security and other amenities. They need the extra money to pay off the building inspectors, after all. In the past, when residents complained to city authorities, Link Drago hired bullyboys to intimidate them. Some tenants tired of complaining to the government, and took their complaints to the Jigsaw Man instead.

Mr. Drago is no stranger to violence, as his multiple felony convictions and a few ex-girlfriends can attest. But the Mara give him pause, so with Mr. Grubb's cooperation he has arranged to pay them to do his intimidation work from now on. They cost a little more, but the new arrangement seems to have fixed the problem, and he can always take the extra cost out of next winter's bills by heating the buildings a little less.

Harry Grubb is a good deal fatter and less physical than lean, stringy, hollow-eyed Mr. Drago. He takes care of the financial end of things, and knows some truly amazing ways to squirrel away cash. The Penningtons and Smirlocks prefer not to know the details of how either business partner handles their affairs, though they're certainly happy to take the money they bring in.

If a member of Bedlam's rich old families were to need help with a seriously illegal matter, they might ask Link Drago for assistance. He would be the very man for the job.

The offices of Drago and Grubb are just off downtown, in a shabby three-story brick building that dates from the 19th century. Here Mr. Drago and Mr. Grubb preside over five office workers, coordinating the activities of a few dozen contractors who actually perform maintenance and fix things (or don't.) Contractors are seldom invited onto the premises in person. By an odd coincidence, the FBI occupies the space right above them, a fact which causes Mr. Drago and Mr. Grubb absolutely no concern at all.

Link Drago



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (building maintenance) d6, Notice d8+2, Repair d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6, Stealth d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Connections (the Mara), Nerves of Steel, Take the Hit

Hindrances: Heartless

Gear: Lead Pipe (d8+2)

Background: What does Mr. Drago do for a living? This and that, he says. He supposes he could say that he does whatever is required. Quiet unless he needs to intimidate somebody, he's always looking for an angle. You're perfectly safe around Drago, until you have something he wants or you let your guard down for a minute. If you ever let him get the advantage of you, he'll take it, no matter who you are. He would certainly betray his current bosses if he could see some long-term advantage to be gained by it, but he's unlikely to ever see an advantage that would outweigh the costs. Vindictive by nature, he usually

doesn't let his vengefulness and cruelty get in the way of making good business decisions. But sometimes he just can't help himself. He's only human, he shamefacedly admits. But he's being too hard on himself when he says that—he's only just barely human.

Happy Hands Daycare

"When mom goes off to work, whose hands does she trust enough to leave her children in? Happy Hands!"

Or so say the commercials.

Actually, it's more like *"whose hands are available"* than *"whose hands do you trust."* Bedlam doesn't have nearly enough daycare providers, and Happy Hands has rushed in to fill the gap. They operate more than twenty daycare centers around Bedlam, some big and some small. In fact they expanded so rapidly into this market that they haven't bought or built any facilities themselves. Instead they license local providers to put the Happy Hands logo on their own centers. Some Happy Hands daycare facilities are in strip malls, others are in private homes, or in rented school classrooms. Some are big, some are small but all of them are overcrowded. Most of them are actually run by tiny little organizations. Typically it's one family, or even one person. They pay a franchise fee to Happy Hands and in exchange they get to buy supplies from the parent company at discount rates and more importantly, to piggyback on their ubiquitous advertising.

Their public-relations work is nothing short of first rate. They've actually managed to make most people forget that in 1998 they were involved in a black-market baby scandal. They falsified records to help a ring of crooked child welfare officials take infants away from their mothers and sell them to the highest bidder. Of course in those days they were primarily a foster-care provider rather than a day-care franchise. And they are now under completely different management. Or almost completely different (see Page 37.)

They have done such a good job cultivating local editorial boards and politicians that you never even hear about the scandal on the news anymore. If a

reporter did ask them about it, they would explain that they have no connection with the old management. Then they would contact the reporter's editor and ask that the story not be run. Some of the older executives may still have Mafia contacts that they could get in touch with, too.

While Happy Hands is making a lot of money in Bedlam, they have expanded a little too fast, and they're having trouble keeping track of all their new service providers. As a result, they make only the vaguest effort to check their credentials or their criminal records. There just isn't enough staff time to do it (without impacting revenue.) Some of their providers have happier hands than others.

Snacktastic Candy Company

They make the most snacktacular candy in Bedlam, according to their ads. We suppose that's probably true. They are the creators of such beloved local treats as Goober Balls, Chock-O-Splat and Liquid Yum.

Snacktastic runs one of the few factories left on Industrial Drive and they are a major source of employment for Bedlam. This has made health inspectors less-than anxious to probe too carefully into their sanitary practices. But candy doesn't have to be sanitary in order to be snacktacular, does it? Few of their dubious treats have managed to achieve much market penetration in the US, but there are places in the less savory parts of the Third World where they do a brisk export business.

But alas, their squalid working conditions and unpleasant candy are the least of their awful secrets.

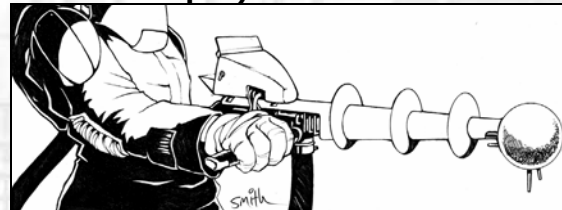
Everyone knows that Snacktastic is owned by Bedlam's richest, oldest man—Lucius Hardwick IV. It used to be the Hardwick Candy Company. Mr. Hardwick has long since retreated into his mansion and hasn't left it or spoken to anyone but his lawyers since the '90s. Do you think he could be brewing up incredible new recipes for candy, alone in his mansion at night? We don't either.

For the truth is that he no longer owns a controlling share of Snacktastic. He sold out years ago to the only man who might be older, richer and meaner than himself. This would be Alois Brunner, the Nazi supervillain known as the Black Eagle (see Page 314.) Brunner is the head of a worldwide cabal of doddering old ex-Nazis, called Der Oktopus, and they make a lot of money off their candy company. They'd be quite annoyed if anyone were to start meddling with it, and they might hire supervillains to deal with the situation.

Der Oktopus doesn't directly interfere with the way the factory is run. None of the people who work there or manage it have any idea who is really writing their paychecks. Upper-level management is aware that a Swiss holding company called Amalgamated Associates own the majority stock, but they assume it's a front for Lucius Hardwick, set up to avoid paying taxes.

Nonetheless, if you need a location for some secret old Nazi wonder-weapon, left over from the war, feel free to bury it under the Snacktastic Candy Company. And if Der Oktopus decides they want a hidden base in the US, staffed with gun-toting mercenaries in colorful costumes, this is probably where they'll put it.

Der Blitzenschlagger (a Secret Nazi Wonder-Weapon)



Weight: 150 pounds

Toughness: 8

Effect: 5d6 Ranged Attack (Elemental Trick: Electrical)

Known Drawbacks: This cranky weapon is hard to repair. Anyone trying to fix it suffers a -2 penalty to their Repair roll. It's also prone to shorting out and killing its operator whenever that would be dramatically appropriate.

Snacktacular Nazi Assassins



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6,

Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d8, Guts d4, Intimidation d4, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6, Tracking d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6 (1)

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Gear: Body Armor (+1, Heavy Armor, all over), Tactical Helmet (+4, Heavy Armor), Big Knife (Damage: d8+1), Nightvision Visor (enables them to see in total darkness), Submachine Gun with silencer (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, ROF 3, AP 2, Three round burst)

Background: Killers for hire, most of them don't know or care who they are

working for. While many of these guys are thoroughgoing Nazis, that's only because a whole lot of European thugs

and mercenaries are ultra-right-wing racial supremacists. It's just a coincidence that they happen to be working for the Black Eagle. Few of them have any loyalty to any particular employer, but most of them are intensely loyal to their own warrior code—which demands that they never betray their boss, whoever it might be this week.

Bedlam High Society

Bedlam's three great families, the Starks, the Greelys and the Hardwicks have all lapsed into decay. The Starks are extinct. The Greelys have fallen on hard times and seldom return to Bedlam. Lucius Hardwick IV is the last surviving scion of his family and he hasn't left his mansion or spoken to anyone in years. The demise of the Country Club hurt Bedlam's old money families badly and they've never really recovered. But there is still Society in Bedlam, even if it's not as vibrant as once it was. Here is a brief guide to some of Bedlam's most prominent families. We've left the GM plenty of room to add more.

Hoggard

Long regarded as new-money parvenus by Bedlam's oldest families, the Hoggards were western cattle barons, originally. Then they made money from railroads. Until about 1930 they were too rich to ignore but too vulgar to embrace. Then they married into the Stark family and gained Society's grudging acceptance. These days they have fallen on hard times, due to unwise investments by the last heir, Horatio Hoggard III. He bought heavily into the Country Club and these

days survives largely by collecting fees for the defunct club from its former members.

Lurman

Cousins of the Greelys, the Lurmans are about all that's left of the Greely line in Bedlam itself. They never moved into Stone Ridge, largely because they didn't live on Scarlett Hill and so didn't lose anything when the fiasco at Rook Island devastated the neighborhood. The Lurmans have always lived in the tall, narrow old houses above Greely Point, they have always been doctors and they have always been more than a little strange. People say the current family head, B. Hugo Lurman, is mentally retarded from inbreeding. Other people say that's pernicious rubbish—he's just crazy.

Pfeffner

The Pfeffners made their fortune in butchery and meat-packing, but for five generations they've been idlers, playboys and violent troublemakers. A lot of them are alumni of Belchner College (see Page 140) and they give heavily to support it. They live in Stone Ridge and it looks as though they may finally be just a generation or two of bad financial decisions away from exhausting the family fortune.

Pennington

The Penningtons own most of the apartments in Hardwick Park and a lot of the skyscrapers downtown. They are the surviving remnant of the Stark family—cousins by marriage.

Blake Pennington Sr. made a tremendous amount of money from the collapse of Scarlett Hill and the founding of Stone Ridge. He lives in an especially

big mansion in a walled off area at the gated community's north end. His wife, Dahlia, is the leading society hostess in Bedlam and one of the founding members of the Stone Ridge Garden Club.

Blake Pennington Jr. and his younger brothers are known to be worthless, thrill-seeking drunks and often pal around with younger members of the Pfeffner family. They get up to all sorts of hijinx.

Smirlock

Bankers who have gone into the real estate market, the Smirlocks own an even bigger piece of downtown than the Penningtons. This includes the peculiar architectural monstrosity known as the Smirlock Building at Blaed Avenue and Rohrbach Street. (see Page 22.) The Smirlocks were the prime beneficiaries of the death of Scarlett Hill and the largest investors in the Stone Ridge Gated Community. They grew so much richer that now they barely have to do anything at all. The Smirlocks are in fact too wealthy to reside in Stark Hill and instead live on their own country estate, down some wooded lane or other outside of Bedlam.

Hardwick

An anomaly, they are the richest and most distinguished family remaining in Bedlam, but play no role in the social life of its upper crust. There is only one Hardwick left and he is never seen in Society. Lucius Hardwick IV retreated into his mansion when the neighborhood around him turned Hispanic, and he hasn't come out since. No one is sure whether or not he's actually alive in there, although his lawyers still do a good job of looking after his business interests.

BEDLAM LOW SOCIETY

At the other end of Bedlam's social hierarchy from the Smirlocks and Penningtons are the denizens of Ash Street. In fact you can use the NPCs in this section for anywhere in Bedlam. There are certainly homeless people downtown, and many of them congregate near the Bus Station, but Ash Street is the city's skid row and there are more derelicts sleeping on the sidewalk here than in any other part of Bedlam. Partly that's because it's where a lot of the city's remaining social services, shelters and soup kitchens can be found, but it's also because the area has a lot of abandoned buildings.

Sometimes vicious packs of teenagers come down to Ash Street and hurt the poor lost folks who live here. But not so much lately. There are rumors that something strange has been happening on Ash Street, that something has been scaring the frat boys and gang kids away. No one seems to know what it is, but the street people have begun to whisper the name "the Nowhere Men" in fear and awe. See Page 285.

Generic Homeless Person



Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Notice d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Outsider, Poor

Background: Here are some stats for a generic street person. The homeless on the streets of Bedlam are a motley bunch. Some of them have mental problems and some are just down on their luck. Some have recently lost their homes and others have been on the streets for years. We have some individual personalities and stats listed below, in case you need something more specific than a generic template for an encounter with the PCs. They are here strictly as a resource in case the GM needs them.

Morris Fridley

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Knowledge (Roofing) d8, Notice d6, Repair d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Poor

Background: A battered-up old African-American gent who wears an army jacket, Morris Fridley has had hard luck all his life. He's fifty, but looks older. His thin arms are covered with muscles and his big hands are covered with scars from a life spent working construction. Not very articulate and a little withdrawn, he always seems to think long and carefully before he speaks.

He was a roofer in Maine, but he lost his job and came home to Bedlam, where there weren't any jobs at all. Now he lives in a shelter and collects aluminum cans for money, while he tries to figure out some way to get back on his feet. His options all look grim. Not only aren't there enough jobs, but his third grade reading level and missing front teeth make it hard for him to compete for the few spots available.

No fool, Morris has applied for food stamps (he uses a post office box for his address), but he still needs money for laundry, new underwear, deodorant and so forth, so he swallows his pride and hunts for cans, begging a little to supplement it. It's humiliating, but he reminds himself that if he looks like a smelly unshaven wretch then

his odds of getting a new job sink even lower.

Never a raging alcoholic, he drinks when he gets depressed and he's been doing too much of it lately.

Morris is fundamentally honest and would always try to help someone in trouble. If he found your wallet, he would return it to you without touching any of money inside (although he would feel tempted.)

Sergeant Martha Blaylock

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d4, Knowledge (Military Administration) d6, Knowledge (Secret Military Procedures and Protocols) d6, Shooting d4

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Outsider, Poor, Quirk (crazy)

Gear: Plastic bags, the clothes she is sleeping in, thick glasses, military ID card.

Background: A middle-aged African-American lady with thick glasses, she has struggled with her mental health all her life. Odd and twitchy, she sometimes seems not to hear you correctly when you speak, and often blurts out strange things.

She's a ten-year veteran of the Air Force, people are surprised to hear. Martha worked in military administration for her entire career, managing paperwork and processing requisitions. She never felt up to the job, always felt overwhelmed by it and never quite felt that she knew what she was doing. When she's manic, she's extremely focused and can work really hard. When she gets depressed, she becomes totally unable to cope. And she's always kind of disturbed, peculiar and prone to blurting out inappropriate things.

Martha did well enough during a prolonged manic period that she got promoted to Sergeant and put in charge of a whole administrative team. She was completely unprepared to be a manager and went spiraling off the rails into a major depression. This in turn led her to start drinking and getting into fights with her colleagues. Shortly thereafter, she received a dishonorable discharge.

Martha had nowhere to go but her mother's apartment in Bedlam. The old lady immediately began trying to make her feel unwelcome enough to leave. She kept pestering her daughter to get help from the VA for her problems. In fact the VA wouldn't help her since she didn't have a psychiatric discharge, but at her mother's urging she kept going to see them, getting turned away time and again. Finally she stopped going and her mom used it as an excuse to kick her out on the street. If anyone asks her to help her child, she will sullenly mutter that she did all she could for Martha and that the girl ought to get herself to the VA.

These days Martha is bitter and angry, but not very good at explaining why. She isn't dangerous or cruel, but she's prone to outbursts of yelling when she gets vexed and sometimes she scares people away. If you can catch her in one of her lucid periods she can actually be rather sweet.

Layton "Cappy" Jones

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Notice d6, Persuade d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Charismatic

Hindrances: Heartless, Outsider, Poor

Background: Cappy Jones is the kind of guy who gives homeless people a bad name. A panhandler and con man, you can see him cadging for spare change or day labor at intersections all over the city with his dog, Snuff. Sometimes he claims to be a veteran, sometimes he claims to have been released from prison with nowhere to go—whatever he thinks will generate sympathy. His dog, a little yellow droopy-eared mutt, is great for getting sympathy.

He treats the dog decently, since Snuff is an important part of his act, but that's about the best you can say for Cappy. He lives in his car—a beat-up old Ford Torino that he parks near wherever he sets up shop for the day. When the weather gets bad or there is a big football game, he

moves in briefly with his aunt, who has a plasma screen TV.

Cappy spends the money suckers give him on crack and on gas for the car. If someone offers him work for the day, he's not above taking it, but he's also not above stealing from them the moment their back is turned. He also knows some shabby tricks to con cashiers out of a few dollars, which he uses when he needs crack and can't wait for panhandling to get him enough funds. He would commit more serious crimes if he thought he could get away with them, but he's cunning and savvy enough to know that he probably couldn't. Cheerfully free of conscience, he could easily murder someone, but would never do that unless he was sure there wouldn't be any consequences.

It's impossible to tell from looking at Cappy whether he's Anglo, Hispanic or African-American, his skin is so deeply sunburnt and so covered with grime. He takes showers when he can, and doesn't smell as bad as some homeless guys, but you can still tell that he's been living outdoors just by getting a whiff of him.

Smart, streetwise, reasonably brave, he makes a good ally so long as you never show him any weaknesses that he could exploit. He's even sort of charming, in a cynical kind of way.

Wanda Daucher

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Guts d4, Knowledge (Romance Novels) d6, Knowledge (History) d6, Streetwise d4

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Outsider, Pacifist (Major), Poor, Quirk (deeply depressed)

Gear: Rolling bag full of clothes, paper cup.

Background: Constantly afraid of the violence she sees around her, constantly feeling vulnerable and exposed, Wanda would sit around the Women's Shelter all day if they let her. And with good reason. Homeless women get victimized a lot, and the Bedlam City Police don't worry much about protecting them. Even a shapeless, gray-haired lady in her forties like Wanda is

a target and she knows it. Sometimes she collects cans, sometimes she panhandles. But most of the time she's too weary and depressed to do either and instead sits in the public library and reads. There are times when the shelter fills up before she can reach it and she has to spend the night sleeping outdoors. She fears these nights, and with good reason.

How did a forty-one-year-old divorced woman with two years of college wind up homeless? It was easier than you might think. Wanda was always prone to depression, from early childhood. It messed up her college career and got her fired from office jobs. It destroyed her marriage and got her husband custody of her two daughters. There have been periods of her life where she simply becomes unable to function and sits there, doing nothing but reading paperbacks and feeling miserable. Whenever things grew so bad that she got kicked out of her apartment, she always moved in with her mom until she got her head together. Now her mom is dead.

Not long after her mother's demise Wanda went through another of her black patches, lost her job as a receptionist, couldn't pay her rent and got thrown out on the street. She tried to take care of her cat, but he wasn't used to being outdoors and got run over within a few days, which of course made her even more unhappy.

Now Wanda is truly stuck. She has no job and can't get another one, since no one would hire somebody with no address. She has thought about going to her ex-husband or some old friends for help, but can't bear for anyone to see her this way. It's been a year and half now and she's coming out of her funk, although she still cries a lot for no reason.

Gentle and kind, Wanda does not have the same anger or self-absorption that plagues many chronically depressed people. She cares about others and tries to help anyone in trouble. Not physically brave, she avoids confrontations but doesn't panic if she's faced with a bad situation.

Wanda's voice is low and rueful. While she does have a sense of humor about herself and her situation, she always

looks as though she's been crying recently (and she has.)

Howard Haggerty

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Knowledge (Bad Poetry) d6, Streetwise d4, Taunt d6+2

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Charismatic

Hindrances: Delusional, Habit (alcoholic), Outsider, Poor, Quirk (crazed streetcorner ranter), Stubborn

Gear: Knife (Str+2 damage), blanket roll, filthy bandana

Background: At some point Howard Haggerty stopped being fashionably poor and became actually poor. He somehow slipped over the line between being a colorful bohemian who drank too much and sometimes slept in the street, to a homeless drunk with nowhere else to sleep.

An undergraduate student for eight years, it took him a long time and a lot of stupid drunken antics to completely alienate his family and get kicked out of every school they sent him to. A stoner and a party animal, he always had to be the center of attention, always had to be the wildest and most outrageous guy in the group. If he had been just a little smarter or a little more talented the professors and college administrators might have been willing to tolerate his bad behavior, but he was only slightly better than average. Howard thought he was the new Chuck Bukowski, but in fact he's just another drunken poseur. He's been living on the streets full time for about a year now, after his last group of friends finally threw him off their couch. Approaching a nervous breakdown, he's still trying to comprehend what has happened to him.

Howard looks like a scrawny little deadhead with a long beard and a dirty tie-dyed shirt. His skin is wrinkled and his beard is prematurely streaked with gray—you would never guess that he's only twenty-eight. He's belligerent and mischievous when drunk, but shy and sad when sober. Sometimes he stands on streetcorners and reads his mediocre poetry

in an angry drunken rant. He's pretty entertaining when he gets worked up.

Yolanda Washington

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidate d6, Notice d4, Streetwise d4

Charisma: -4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Berzerk, Frenzy

Hindrances: Delusions, Mean, Outsider, Poor

Gear: Knife (d4+2 damage), trash bag full of junk

Background: An African-American woman whose age is impossible to judge, Yolanda is a reasonably functional schizophrenic. She understands the world around her most of the time, although she is inarticulate and prone to sudden outbursts of cursing. She looks haggard, careworn, angry and depressed, with an eerie psychotic stare. No one on the street has ever seen her smile.

Too weird, explosive and confused to hold a job, she lived with her father in Wolverton until she was well into her thirties. She had violent quarrels with other members of her family and once stabbed her aunt in the arm in a dispute over a disposable packet of ketchup. Her father was always there for her, however, despite having no money and mental problems of his own. Then one night they got into an argument over some trivial thing, and she stabbed him to death in his sleep.

Yolanda was confined to psychiatric care, and then released when the Crawley Asylum got too crowded. The DA's office has made some desultory efforts toward having her sent up on criminal charges (she did after all commit a bloody premeditated murder) but her obvious craziness has discouraged them from pursuing the matter. Anyway they don't have enough resources to prosecute any number of far more pressing cases.

Bouncing between institutions and the street, Yolanda became more savage and depressed. Her aunt (the same one she had stabbed) briefly took her into her large, crowded home, but she fought with some of

the other relatives living there and set the place on fire while they slept. Miraculously, no one was killed, but this did alienate Yolanda's family and make it impossible for her to get any more help from them. Unbeknownst to the authorities, she has killed twice more, stabbing other homeless people in explosive fits of rage over small things.

Yolanda has no room in her damaged heart for anyone's sorrow but her own. She is incapable of feeling the slightest empathy for anybody—her own pain is too great and it blots everything else out. Yet she has a weirdly sentimental side, and will try to look after lost animals until she gets frustrated, loses her temper and kills them.

The other street people in the vicinity know that Yolanda is dangerous and may warn the PCs about her.

SHOPPING IN BEDLAM

Just because Bedlam is in a state of economic collapse doesn't mean it's not a fun place to go shopping. Here is your guide to some of the most popular places left to shop in the City of Now.

Food World

This chain of discount supermarkets has a location in the Meadows, and a bigger one just outside of town on Route 2. With its everyday low-low prices and monopolistic business practices it has managed to squeeze most of the little mom-and-pop grocery stores out of Bedlam—largely by threatening suppliers who do business with them.

Yet neither of their two locations makes enough money to stay in good economic shape. Without enough revenue, they haven't hired enough staff, and too many of the folks they do manage to employ leave as soon as they can, because it's such an awful place to work. The chain has recently diversified into toys, pets, automotive technology and housewares, making the giant stores even harder for the employees to keep track of.

Barely anyone seems to be in charge here. The fish are eating one another in the pet section's uncleaned tanks. Gang tags mark the shelves here and there. People have gotten mugged in the endless canned goods aisles.

The Shambliiss Street Market

Held every other Wednesday on Shambliiss Street, in Hardwick Park, this impromptu market sprawls along for a block or two, covering the sidewalks and spilling out onto the asphalt. Sometimes it centers on one block, sometimes on another, according to where the vendors happen to set up.

It's like a combination flea market and food market. The richest vendors have little portable stalls, but there are plenty who pile their stuff on rickety card tables or just spread it out on a blanket. It's bewildering, chaotic, full of loud noises and pungent smells.

You can find just about anything legal here, sold or resold for cheap, including some of the freshest fish to be had outside of the Omega Diner (see Page 197.) If you know who to ask, nearly anything illegal can also be found here, under the tables. In fact this is one of the best places to buy "clean" guns in the city. The locals do tend to cast a suspicious eye on outsiders and the Mara is everywhere, so keep your wits about you and shop with care!

Colossal Guns

Out on Slaughter Road, directly across the street from Bedlam's biggest liquor store, is the largest firearms retailer in three states. It's as big as a small department store, with every kind of firearm you could possibly want—and more! Their savings are always colossal, as their cheaply produced commercials say, because they accept job-lots of discontinued and slightly irregular guns—though they don't mention this fact in their commercials.

Very proud of their status as a Bedlam institution, their logo is a snarling gorilla (who strongly resembles Gorgah) wearing bandoliers and firing two submachine guns into the air. In fact they have a giant fiberglass statue of their

lovable mascot looming over their parking lot

Owner Harry Plutzer is a licensed dealer and collector of fully automatic weapons, supplying a small clientele of movie producers, police departments and hobbyists around the country. Does he ever sell them to anyone else? He gets very indignant when he hears people suggest such a thing. The mob would kill him if they thought he was competing with them for the illegal gun trade.

Harry has staffed his shop with as many pretty, enthusiastic young women as he can find. He dresses them up in identical sunglasses, vests and baseball hats that bear the logo of Colossal Guns. They are instructed to grin and be perky, though their smiles look a little stiff and frayed by the end of their shift.

The very same bus that takes you to the Courthouse stops at Colossal Guns, so recently released defendants can stop by on their way back into town and stock up on firearms in preparation for their next indictment. Perhaps if they hurry they can also pick up some liquor across the street in time to catch the next bus.

Liberty Shoppes

One of the Redevelopment Commission's most popular ideas was to lure a designer of giant malls to Bedlam, and let them create an arch-uber-mall like few seen outside of Canada. In order to attract them to Bedlam, a number of tax incentives were provided, as well as construction subsidies. The city actually lost money on the deal, but hoped to recoup it in terms of jobs and economic growth.

And so Bedlam gave birth to the gargantuan mall called the Liberty Shoppes. Most of the complex is underground. Initially the Redevelopment Commission wanted to bulldoze a good-sized chunk of Wolverton to make way for Liberty, but the Reverend Willie Boggs managed to lead a successful campaign to have that stopped. The designers selected an alternate site and built down instead of up. Liberty Shoppes goes down five stories into the ground and has its own stop on the commuter rail service. It contains an amusement park, a

gigantic fifty-screen megaplex theater, an ice rink, its own police substation and a day-care facility that watches your kids while you shop. An on-site apartment complex allows residents to never leave the mall at all, even to go home and sleep.

Intended as a shopping destination for the bigger metropolis nearby to Bedlam, it was conceived of as an outlet mall, initially, but most of its discount anchor stores failed within the first year. Its amusement park shut down shortly thereafter. The carnival rides are still there, but Funland is closed and silent (and perhaps waiting for some deranged clown with an army of circus freaks to move in.) The day care center (run by the Happy Hands Corporation) closed over some irregularities and lawsuits from parents.

Now huge sections of the Liberty Shoppes are deserted and dark. More than three quarters of the stores are vacant. They turn the lights way down in places, to save on electricity. It still has a flea market, a huge Goodwill store, a few dollar stores, resale shops and an enormous food court. A few kiosks in the middle of the hallways sell tattoos, piercings, drug paraphernalia and smoothies. The megaplex is also still partly in service, although most people don't like to go there—it's become a dangerous place. But then a lot of Liberty Shoppes has become a bad neighborhood. Gang kids roam the lower floors and get into huge brawls on the ice rink. The police only venture into the food court in groups of three or more. Winos, derelicts and crack fiends stumble around the benches and urinate where they like.

A firm called Iron Talon Security is in charge of keeping the mall safe. They're the same firm that provides security for the gated community at Stone Ridge (and a lot of unspecified services for the US government in Afghanistan and Iraq.) They send their worst, least-competent guys here. Iron Talon does not get along with the police in the Liberty Shoppes Substation and they are presently feuding over a confrontation that turned violent. The cops here are mostly interested in shaking down the remaining businesses for protection money and the gangs for bribes. They

make little effort to keep order, particularly down on the lower levels.

Iron Talon is more unpredictable. A lot of their guys have post-traumatic stress disorder and are prone to overreacting when provoked. Sometimes they raid areas like the food court and the megaplex, beating on kids for no discernible reason and dragging some of them off to the Detention Center under Funland.

Most of the apartment units were turned over for use as employee dorms. A lot of illegal immigrants live there, crammed in ten or twelve to an apartment. So do a few rich people, who pay Iron Talon extra for additional protection. People say that Wolverton crime lord Rock Johnson may be one of them.

The Liberty Shoppes are no single gang's territory. You are as likely to encounter Italian hoods from Stark Hill as you are to run into black gangs from Wolverton or the Mara or packs of troublemaking rich kids from Stone Ridge.

Perhaps the mall will fail altogether soon, but for the moment it's a massive tax write-off for its parent corporation and the city subsidies keep coming in.

Papal Discount Warehouse

"Attention all priests, ministers and reverends of the faith—get yourself down to Crazy Father Orloff's Papal Discount Warehouse, where the savings are out of this world! We have baptismal fonts, altar cloths, clerical collars of every style and size, and yes, even monstrances! And at prices so low, the Holy Spirit Himself doesn't know how we do it! What's our secret? Volume! Volume! Volume! We pass the savings on to you! Baptismal fonts available only to certified members of the clergy and are not to be used in a manner inconsistent with their proper function."

Located in a strip mall in the Meadows, this store is much larger than it appears to be from the outside. It's huge, and it really does have enormous quantities of mass-produced religious paraphernalia. They are in fact the biggest supplier of

these items for three hundred miles in any direction. Budget-conscious clergy from all across the state come here.

The Jigsaw Man shops here, as does the supervillain known as "Th' Pope." In fact, the Bedlam Police are concerned that the Pope may secretly own Papal Discount Warehouse. He may even have a lair buried underneath it. This could cause considerable trouble if the Mara come in looking for crucifixes to immerse in dog's blood, and get into a brawl with the staff when they refuse to sell them a baptismal font.

Fat Planet Comics

On the shabby edge of Ash Street, surrounded by failed porno shops, stands Bedlam's one and only comic book store. Proprietor Selwyn Krump has enjoyed his total monopoly for more than twenty years. He's a short, thick, furry-eyebrowed man with perpetual five o' clock shadow and deep-set, calculating eyes. Krump is notorious for charging whatever the market will bear for his comics, so don't look too enthusiastic when you want to buy something or he'll jack up the price.

But first you have to find it. Over the years, Fat Planet Comics has grown stuffed to bursting. The shelves creak under the weight of comics, church tables piled high with boxes fill the middle of the shop—you actually have to turn sideways to get through the narrow spaces that this leaves. Nothing is in any particular order and the boxed comics on the bottom layers are getting crushed. Some areas of the store are nearly inaccessible and look as though Krump himself may not have seen them in months. Still, you can find some remarkable stuff at Fat Planet if you're willing to dig for it. Just don't let Krump see you smile. And bring cash. He doesn't take checks or credit cards.

Rumor has it that Delbert Graves, the Warlord of Shady Meadows' dominant biker gang, likes comic books and can sometimes be found shopping at Fat Planet.

Lawyers and Law Firms

Crime fighters tend to spend a lot of time in court. Whether they are trying to have a villain sent to jail, defending themselves against false charges or suing a rival for infringing on their trademark costume, superheroes regularly wind up in front of a judge. And the kinds of battles they wage there are very different from the ones they fight in the street. A good lawyer can be as difficult and as dedicated a nemesis for a hero as any masked arch-villain.

This is not meant to be an absolutely comprehensive list of every prominent lawyer in Bedlam. Rather, it's a resource for the GM and PCs—a list of different lawyers that the GM can produce to face down a PC in court, or who they might hire to protect their own interests.

Law Firms

Firms have personalities and histories of their own, distinct from the individual lawyers who work for them. Here are a few of Bedlam's most notable.

Spengler, Gibbons and Pugh

This venerable law firm has its headquarters in a beautiful old brick mansion on top of Greely Point. There are three senior partners and about a dozen junior partners, with a staff of twenty paralegals of so. The firm represents most of Bedlam's wealthiest families. They are not seeking new clients.

They are small for a firm that represents so many powerful interests, but then again Bedlam isn't a very large city. For the most part they do transactional law, preparing contracts and setting up business deals, but they litigate when they have to and on occasion they even find themselves defending one or another of their wealthy clients from criminal prosecution. They are particularly good at this last task, since so many of the judges and prosecutors they face would love to one day be asked to join the firm.

Spengler, Gibbons and Pugh represent a very narrow slice of the city's interests. They are no friends of Big Andy Czernik or the Bedlam Mafia. They do not have any allegiance to Wolfram Aerospace (or whatever company plays that role in your game.) They serve Bedlam's old money. Except for Lucius Hardwick, who has a whole law firm of his own to serve his needs (see "Dransfield, Stavely and Spalt".)

Glickman, Smerznak and Feagles

"Have you suffered an injustice? Call Glickman, Smerznak and Feagles and get justice in your pocket and back on your side!"

Everyone in Bedlam has heard this ad, during the doldrums of mid-afternoon TV. The largest independent contingency law firm in Bedlam, they do most of their work for no money up front, apart from a \$200 consulting fee. Instead they take a percentage of whatever damages the client gets awarded. Unlike most struggling law offices, they don't handle bankruptcy or probate or all the other little services that lawyers pay their bills with. Instead they're all about lawsuits, and in particular, all about getting settlements. They'll take on any case, no matter how improbable. It costs them nothing but time if they lose, and many companies are willing to buy them off with a settlement rather than pay their own (rather more highly-paid) lawyers' fees. This means that their clients are usually getting a good deal less money than they're entitled to, even before the firm takes a cut, since they're always angling on getting the quickest settlement they can.

They employ nearly two dozen lawyers, most of them young ambitious members of Herschel Glickman's family. Glickman's kids and nieces and nephews are all eager, talkative, snaggle-toothed young people with poor posture, and they all look weirdly alike—male or female. Because they only make money when they win settlements, quite a few of them take on outside work. Nearly any one could be persuaded to defend you in a criminal trial, although their skills would probably not be up to it.

The firm's offices are located downtown on the 13th floor of a skyscraper that has seen better days, and are far too cramped for the number of lawyers working there. You can hear old man Glickman yelling at his progeny from his back office while everyone bustles around in an atmosphere of barely controlled chaos. Sid Smerznak and Irving Feagles have the good sense to avoid the office altogether and spend most of their time playing golf.

Cromlich, Dooven, Dooven and Dahl

This firm provides secure legal services for a select clientele. Yet they're no snooty bunch of snobs, they're quick to say. Regular guys like Donny Scarpia and "Dracula Jack" Gagliano feel completely comfortable using them.

Mr. Cromlich, Mr. Dooven and Mr. Dooven (who weren't related, oddly enough) are all deceased. Mob lawyers are prone to a host of ailments—cranial lead poisoning, Concrete Overshoes Syndrome and other related health problems. And many vanish altogether—a strange phenomenon thought to be related to Concrete Overshoes Syndrome. But Norman Dahl carries on, despite having lost both his thumbs in separate accidents. He heads up a staff of about ten hungry young lawyers, eager to make their mark on the city. Despite his anxious demeanor Mr. Dahl must inspire a lot of loyalty in his junior partners for none of them ever seem to leave the firm.

They keep their main offices in a large and respectable-looking downtown skyscraper, with really superb security arrangements. But they maintain a second office in Stark Hill, in an old converted row-house, where many of their oldest and most trusted clients come to see them.

Dransfield, Stavely and Spalt

A small, old and extremely wealthy firm, Dransfield, Stavely and Spalt has been serving the needs of the Hardwick family for more than a hundred years. These days the firm is the only visible evidence that any trace of the Hardwicks still exists.

The firm quietly tends the affairs of Lucius Hardwick. They never state directly whether their client is still alive. They haven't litigated against anyone on Mr. Hardwick's behalf in years, but they would if need be. The firm has offices in a beautiful old three-story building downtown, but none of the partners ever seems to be in.

H. Symington Dransfield typically handles the old man's business arrangements. A superb transactional attorney, he's not as good a trial lawyer as Ervin Spalt, who is rarely seen, save on those few occasions when one of them has to go before a judge.

H. S. Dransfield is old, slumped, and covered with liver spots. He speaks in a choking whisper and never shows any sign of emotion. Leman Stavely is a dapper, charming old gentleman with a moustache and a bow tie. Always superbly dressed, he mostly communicates with people over the phone, but will sometimes unexpectedly appear instead of Mr. Dransfield. Ervin Spalt is a big, handsome, aggressive young man with a Brooks Brothers' suit and a mean smile. He's a diabolically effective trial lawyer and superb at threatening people.

All three partners go everywhere accompanied by two or three paralegals. The paralegals are big, silent young frat-boys who appear to be fresh out of Ivy League law school. The paralegals never speak, but sometimes lean forward and whisper comments in one of the partners'

ears. For some reason all of the paralegals who follow Mr. Spalt around are attractive young women in sober-looking pantsuits.

Most people in Bedlam haven't heard of Dransfield, Stavely and Spalt, since they keep a low profile and don't advertise their services. Among Bedlam's wealthy families, there is a rumor that the firm serves only Mr. Hardwick and doesn't accept other clients. That isn't true. In fact quite a few of the reigning old-money families have hired them for one or another matter that they didn't feel comfortable entrusting to Spengler, Gibbons and Pugh. They have always handled these affairs with their usual discretion.

Layton Spengler

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Guts d10, Intimidation d10+2, Knowledge (Law) d10, Knowledge (Bedlam) d10, Knowledge (Arts and Culture) d8, Notice d8+2, Persuade d10, Streetwise d6+2, Taunt d8+2

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 0;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Alertness, Charismatic, Connections (Court System and Government), Filthy Rich, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate and Taunt)

Hindrances: Elderly, Loyal

Background: Head of the firm of Spengler, Gibbons and Pugh, he represents the interests of Bedlam's wealthiest families, as his own family has done for generations. He has been a federal judge and a State Deputy Attorney General. Now he has returned to private practice, where he tends the affairs of Bedlam's declining moneyed class. His connections in the local courts are second to none, but he really excels as a trial lawyer, particularly when it comes to bullying witnesses without losing the jury's sympathy. Most of the local judges are a little in awe of him—he's leading the life they hope to one day.

Dr. Spengler (he's a Professor of Law) is known jocularly by his colleagues as "the Prince of Darkness." It suits him.

Frankie Baranzanno



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d10, Intimidation d8+2, Knowledge (Law) d8, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Knowledge (Mafia Lore) d8, Notice d8, Persuade d8, Shooting d8, Streetwise d10, Taunt d8+2

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Block, Combat Reflexes, Connections (Bedlam Mafia), Frenzy, Rich, Quick-Draw, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate and Taunt)

Hindrances: Heartless, Loyal

Gear: Body Armor (1 pt of Heavy Armor, only protects hid torso), Silenced Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Brass Knuckles (d8+2 Damage), Stiletto (d8+1 Damage)

Background: This battle-scarred old mob lawyer has been one of Young Junior Gorganzua's closest confidantes for decades. He has become an actual, official "made guy" in exchange for all the services he has rendered the Gorganzua crime family and he is the closest thing they have to a

Consiglieri. Barranzanno has personally executed traitors within the family on at least three occasions, although he hasn't had to actually kill anyone for years. He never goes anywhere without a pistol or his favorite weapon, a pocket-knife. While he's short, he's formidable, both physically and professionally. His voice is deep and commanding, his manner threatening and forceful.

He has represented mob clients at many trials, but these days spends most of his time working on the family's crooked business arrangements. If the Gorganzas send him in person to defend someone, that's a sure sign that it's someone important.

Wally Kramm

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d10, Knowledge (Law) d8, Knowledge (Bedlam City Courts) d8, Notice d8, Persuade d8, Streetwise d4, Taunt d6+2

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Block, Connections (at the Bedlam Courthouse), Dodge, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate and Taunt)

Hindrances: Stubborn

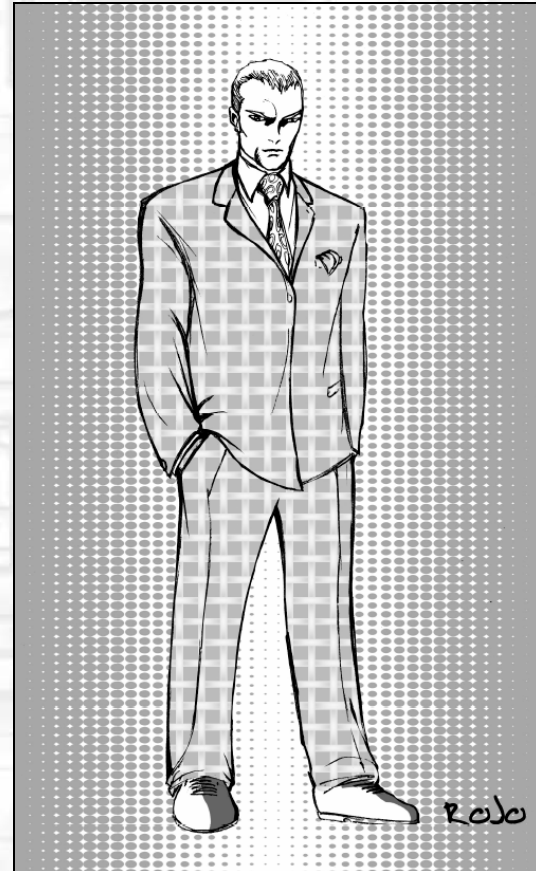
Background: This frizzy-haired, balding trial lawyer spends most of his time down at the courthouse, cruising the endless lines at the Municipal Courts for clients. He wears a rumpled suit, a polyester tie and running shoes. His moustache, clothes and hairdo make him look like a sleazy ambulance chaser, but that's not quite what he is.

Not an especially gifted lawyer, Kramm has devoted himself to learning the ins and outs of the courthouse like no one else. He's the personal friend of seemingly every clerk, receptionist and security officer. He knows all the little rules, he knows who will bend them and how much. He has the skills to shuttle his cases through the system faster than anyone. If you need a small matter quickly resolved, you can't do better. But you might not want him to represent you in a criminal case or a big civil action. The sharks who prowl those courtrooms in their thousand-dollar suits would eat him

alive. Kramm is eager to get a big case, and isn't aware that he wouldn't be up to it.

Charming and funny, in a wild, crazy kind of way, he's pretty persuasive and seems to know no fear. Great at remembering names and dates, he'll send you birthday cards years after he represented you.

Mel Lutz



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Guts d4, Intimidate d4, Knowledge (Law) d6, Knowledge (Bedlam City) d6, Notice d6, Persuade d8, Shooting d4, Streetwise d4, Taunt d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Connections (at the Bedlam Courthouse)

Hindrances: Quirk (desperate to ingratiate himself with the Mob)

Background: This young lawyer hopes to join the firm of Cromlich, Dooven, Dooven

and Dahl soon. Until then, he's trying to make a name for himself as a criminal defense attorney for lesser associates of the Scarpia Crime Family. He's available for all sorts of legal work. Setting up new companies, guiding you through the loopholes in the tax-laws, but he really excels at defense work. He doesn't have the right personality or a very strong command of criminal law. But he does have the right kind of connections in Stark Hill and on the Bedlam Police Force.

This is all by design, rather than chance. Ever since childhood he's loved gangsters and wanted to be one. From his adolescence through college he affected all the trappings of hip-hop culture, but when he actually tried hanging around with real gangstas, he found that he would never be welcome among them no matter how hard he tried to imitate the way they talked. So he shifted his focus during law school and moved to Bedlam, where he actively cultivated the Czernik political machine and sought out wiseguy clients. It took three years to win their trust.

In the end he actually had to get himself arrested and go to jail (for unpaid parking tickets) in order to introduce himself to the people he wanted to meet. It was absolutely worth it. Lawyers are like gold in the joint. He loved the way everyone treated him with respect there, and he finally made the connections he needed. He hasn't yet won the confidence of the Scarpias themselves but he's represented their associates in all kinds of matters. If Luca "Stabbo the Clown" Stegnetti needs a lawyer on short notice, he'll probably ask for Mel.

A strange, arrogant young guy, Mel doesn't seem to grasp the seriousness

of the things his clients do. It's like he thinks he's living in a movie. He also seems absolutely determined not to be a wimpy Jewish nerd. To be tough by association. He dresses like a mob lawyer, in suits he can't afford and he's starting to affect an accent. He's also growing a goatee, for some reason.

Orville Sudley

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d4, Knowledge (Law) d4, Knowledge (Music) d8, Notice d4, Persuade d8, Streetwise d4

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Charismatic

Hindrances: Overconfident, Quirk (weak-willed unreliable idiot)

Background: A pudgy young man with a beard and a mullet, Orville toils at many different jobs. He's trying to promote himself as a country-western singer (download his clips from MySpace and you'll see why he hasn't been more of a success), he handles skip tracing and debt collection on a contract basis. He tends bar and sells pot.

Always smiling, always full of wild money-making schemes, he is pretentious, self-absorbed and hopelessly unreliable. But he talks a good game, smiles a lot and never lacks for clients. He is desperate to get a high-profile defendant—a supervillain or a serial-killer with a good gimmick so that he can sell the book and movie rights. Then his career as a country music star can really take off, he figures. Orville has no concept of his own ineptitude and will take on cases that are far beyond his abilities.

Marla Zarinovsky

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d10, Investigation d6+2, Knowledge (Law) d10+2, Knowledge (Bedlam City Courts) d10+2, Knowledge (Neopagan Lore) d6, Knowledge (Psychology) d8, Notice d8+2, Persuade d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d6+2

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Alertness, Arcane Background (Magic), Charismatic, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate and Taunt)

Hindrances: Heroic, Stubborn

Powers: Armor 4 (special version, only protects her from magical attacks), Detect/Conceal Arcana, Dispel

Background: One of Bedlam's finest lawyers has never passed the bar. She's the legal advocate for one of Bedlam's women's shelters, and she knows far more about how the law applies to domestic violence than any of the Assistant D.A.s or States' Attorneys that she works with. So she coaches them and tells them what to do, effectively practicing law without a license. She does this because somebody has to. While she does have a law degree, her primary field is psychology and she's never had the time or the inclination to study for the state bar. There's far too much work to do.

Funny, perceptive and fearless, she can tell you stories that will make your blood run cold about the things she has seen on the job. Yet it hasn't broken her or burnt her out—just made her more determined to help people. She knows Detective Harvey Gluk (see page 76) the

head of the Bedlam Police's Special Victims Liaison Unit and she has some reservations about him. Still, he's a valuable resource and she frequently goes to him for help. She has also met Larry "Fido" Turwood, but he made a bad first impression on her and she doesn't think much of him.

While she is Jewish, if you look close you can see that the star around her neck has five points instead of six. She's a practicing neopagan, but she claims not to be a fundamentalist about it—it's more something she turns to for spiritual comfort than anything else. She doesn't expect the Goddess to save anyone who can't save themselves—that's Marla's job.

A native of Brooklyn, she has a fairly strong New York accent and a very Brooklynese kind of wry amusement at the world and its follies. She dresses like a New York Wiccan, in lots of black with flowing peasant skirts. She wears her hair long and straight.

Divorced, Marla lives with her boyfriend in the tiny struggling bohemian enclave near the Terminal Drive train station, but she's never home. Everyone is surprised to learn that she isn't gay and that she doesn't have a cat. She herself would be surprised to learn that the defensive wards she has cast really work, and are genuinely protecting her from magical attacks.

SECURITY FIRMS

In a city where there aren't enough policemen, private security firms flourish. This list covers the major players, but there are sure to be some smaller companies around, as well.

Maximum Safeguard

This is the largest security firm in Bedlam. They provide guards for banks, apartments, supermarkets and for nearly all of the downtown office buildings. Maximum's advertising materials claim that all of their personnel are ex-special forces or SWAT team personnel. In fact most of them are recent immigrants who don't speak English very well and have already tried Bedlam's other menial jobs (cab driver, street vendor, gas station attendant, etc.) A lot of them work second jobs and spend their shifts half-awake.

Maximum Safeguard is a national firm that operates under various names around the country. They have a corporate office in downtown Bedlam and a recruiting and training office in the Meadows. They give their staff nearly two whole weeks of training before putting them in the field.

Typically, a guard's biggest worry on the job is that someone might figure out that they don't speak English and have only the vaguest understanding of what is going on around them.

Garvin and Torsberg Limited (G & T)

This firm can provide you with off-duty Bedlam police officers for any security need, short-term or long. They are largely used by Bedlam's entertainment community, providing bouncers and

doormen for nightclubs and bars. That includes the illegal nightclubs out on Industrial Drive (but probably not Club Death—see Page 195.)

G and T acts more as a referral service than an employer. They don't offer benefits—although if one of their employees gets arrested they will send legal counsel to assist them. Nor do they offer any training or perform background checks. After all, the Bedlam police have already done that.

This is a wonderfully lucrative business, requiring almost no overhead. They don't even pay for their employees' uniforms. Nor do they need to advertise very widely.

It will surprise no one to learn that Larry Garvin is married to one of the Reverend Willie Boggs' sisters or that Otis Torsberg is the former head of Bedlam's police union. They are wired in tightly to the Bedlam political machine, or at least the part of it that Councilman Boggs oversees.

Their downtown office is in one of the shinier, newer buildings, but it's small and has just a few staff on duty (neither Garvin nor Torsberg ever bothers to visit.) The operation only needs a very few people to run smoothly.

Iron Talon International

This firm helps provide paramilitary services to a wide range of government agencies. They guard nuclear power plants for the Department of Energy, guard embassies for the State Department, and provide a lot of unnamed services for the armed forces in places like Afghanistan and Iraq.

They hire ex-military guys and offer them good salaries and benefits, along with a chance to continue living the life of a professional soldier. They recruit former Special Forces and Navy SEALs as much as possible. When a member of one of the elite units screws up and gets kicked out of the armed forces, they can always find a home at Iron Talon, no questions asked. They do not comment on allegations that they have provided minions for numerous supervillains as well.

In Bedlam, Iron Talon International provides security services for the Stone Ridge gated community, and the huge underground Liberty Shoppes Mall.

Guarding a gated community full of spoiled rich people is not a dream assignment for most of these guys. Iron Talon tends to place guys in Stone Ridge who have suffered too much battle fatigue or who have committed deeds that could embarrass the company if they remained on duty in Iraq. Liberty Shoppes is an actual punishment assignment, reserved for guys with chronic discipline or drug problems.

Iron Talon personnel are immune to prosecution in Iraq and some have difficulty adjusting to the rules and strictures they have to operate under in the States. Fortunately, they don't have to abide by all the same restrictions as, for example, cops.

They don't have the power to arrest anyone, so anybody they take into custody hasn't technically been arrested, just "detained." This means they don't have any Miranda rights, like a phone call or a lawyer. Nor is there really a limit to how long they can hold you. They aren't a government agency, so their records aren't subject to Freedom of Information Access requests and they don't have to tell your lawyer or your family whether or not they are holding you.

They tend to use this power judiciously, which is to say, they don't use it on anyone important or well-connected.

Iron Talon Security Consultant



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6,

Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 7 (2 armor, see "Gear")

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Hindrances: Quirk (On edge. Not used to working in an environment where there are consequences for misbehavior).

Gear: Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects the torso), 9mm pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 1, Rate of Fire 1)

PRIVATE DETECTIVES



There are a number of different private investigation firms in Bedlam. Some are tiny one-man operations, others are large, with a dozen people or more on staff. Some are reasonably honest, others are crooks who can be hired to perform any kind of dirty deed. The GM should feel free to add more to the list below. A city this size could easily support more private investigation firms—Gary, Indiana has twenty-eight.

Big Firms

Firms with more than one or two licensed detectives on staff. We have independent investigators (including firms with just a couple of PI's and some other researchers and administrative staff) listed in the next section. Despite what you see in old movies, actual one-man operations are

rare, since it's tough for a single person to keep up with all the administrative work.

International Investigations Inc. (or "Triple-Eye")



Yes, that's actually their name. This is one of the largest detective agencies in the country, with more than 90 offices nationwide. Their logo is three eyes and their motto is "Always Watching."

They claim in their ads to offer "qualified professionals for every aspect of investigation—former government operatives and intelligence personnel to handle all your security and investigations needs." The truth is that they're more like a franchise than a single giant agency, and the quality of the various offices that use the Triple-Eye name varies wildly.

The Bedlam office is pretty good. Their ads may be terminally sleazy, but the agency looks professional. They rent office space in a skyscraper downtown, with six full-time "Investigator Associates" (all of them former Bedlam cops) working cases, a research staff of four, and three administrative assistants. Everyone wears a tie. Bland watercolors hang on the wall. It looks like an insurance office or a real estate brokerage.

The Investigator Associates are efficient and handle just about any aspect of investigations work competently. Unfortunately, they are a wholly owned subsidiary of the Scarpia crime family,

which is also their biggest client. If any of their detectives finds out anything that might interest the Scarpas, they will immediately pass the information along.

The current head of the Bedlam office of Triple-Eye is Gianni Gavrillo (known to his associates as "Gavrillo the Gorilla".) He's a great big linebacker of a man, with an expensive Italian suit, a diamond earring, a ponytail and a constant self-satisfied smirk. He's young for the job, about thirty, but his career as a Bedlam police detective was attracting too much attention from Internal Affairs, so his real bosses moved him here. He hasn't been running the agency for very long and while he's a capable investigator he doesn't yet quite have the hang of office management.

Triple-Eye's home office in Anaheim, California, has no idea that the Bedlam branch has become the tool of the Mafia. Then again, they also wouldn't care.

Generic Investigator Associate

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Investigate d8, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6

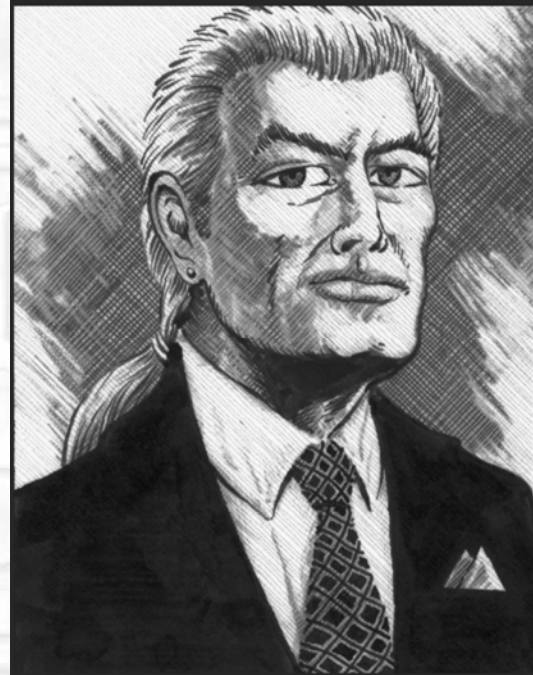
Hindrances: Heartless

Edges: Connections (underworld),

Gear: Flashlight (d6+1 Damage), .38 Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 1, Rate of Fire 1)

Background: A typical investigator for Triple-Eye may or may not know that the Mob is their boss. However, the kind of private eye who would wind up working for them wouldn't care one way or the other. Anyone with more ethics would already have gone looking for a different job.

Gianni "the Gorilla" Gavrillo



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d8, Guts d10, Intimidate d8, Investigate d4, Knowledge (Criminal Underworld) d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 8

Hindrances: Heartless, Loyal

Edges: Brawny, Connections (Bedlam Mafia), Nerves of Steel, Take the Hit, Improved Tough as Nails

Gear: Baseball Bat (d10+1 Damage), 10mm Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Sawed-Off Shotgun (Range 5/10/20, Damage 3d6, Rate of Fire 1 or 2),

American Investigators

Despite the clunky name, this is a solid, competent firm. Their one real weakness is in electronic surveillance. They don't have a

lot of bugs or spy gear.

Based in Wolverton, they share a three story building with two dentists and a mortgage broker. This is a family business, run since the 1970s by the Joneses. There are three generations of women working there. All eight of their staff (six detectives and two support personnel—both of whom are itching to become investigators) are female and all eight are African-American. Each of them is Jackie Jones' daughter, granddaughter or niece. They range in age from eighteen to fifty-eight.

Jackie herself is still in great shape for a woman who is nearly sixty and she still takes on casework. All of the ladies of the agency share her eerie calm. Always polite, never upset, they face confrontations with a smooth blank smile that's a lot scarier than an icy stare could be. The agency claims to handle only investigative work. They don't get physical with anybody, they don't do muscle-work and they don't break the law.

Once, back in the 1970s, Jackie took a more dangerous approach to life, and was forever getting caught up in crazy, violent adventures. She'd do anything, take any risk to help someone in trouble. But since then, something has died in her. Or perhaps she has just grown up. Now she risks nothing for no-one.

Her middle daughter, Latisha, is the hothead of the group (although she looks as outwardly serene as any of them) and could easily be enticed into doing something more dangerous than her mom would approve of, if she thought it was in a worthy cause.

It is rumored that Jackie knows local crimelord Lincoln Stone personally and may have dated him. This is actually true, but she owes nothing to the mob and wouldn't do them any favors if they asked. She has visited "the Stone" in prison, but only to reminisce about old times. These days she treats him with the same polite detachment she uses with everyone.

Generic "Jones Girl"

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Healing d6, Investigate d8, Knowledge (Law) d6, Knowledge (Wolverton) d8, Notice

d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Loyal

Edges: Connections (in Wolverton)

Gear: Flashlight (d6+1 Damage)

Background: In fact the Jones girls vary a bit in their strengths and abilities. But here's a typical one.

Jackie Jones



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Guts d10, Healing d6, Investigate d8+2, Knowledge (Law) d6, Knowledge (Wolverton) d10, Lockpicking d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d8, Streetwise d10+2

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

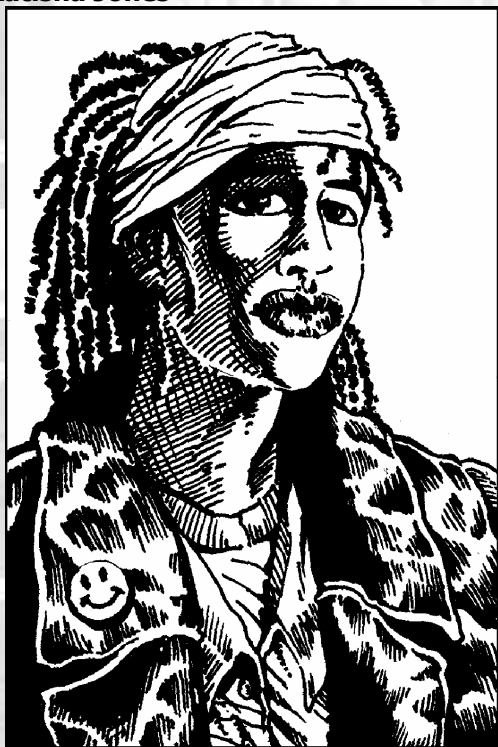
Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Code of Honor

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Connections (in Wolverton), Investigator, Improved Level-Headed, Nerves of Steel, Strong-Willed, Tough as Nails

Gear: Flashlight (d6+1 Damage), Lightweight Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 1, Rate of Fire 1), Shotgun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 3d6, Rate of Fire 1)

Latisha Jones



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Investigate d6, Knowledge (Law) d4, Knowledge (Wolverton) d8, Lockpicking d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Riding d10, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 8;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Heroic, Loyal, Quirk (wants to be a hero like her mom)

Edges: Ace, Attractive, Block, Fleet-Footed, Quick, Quick-Draw

Gear: Flashlight (d6+1 Damage), Shotgun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 3d6, Rate of Fire 1), Motorcycle

Background: Most of the Jones girls would be unwilling to use violence or directly face danger on behalf of a client. For Latisha, Jackie's youngest daughter, it would depend on the client. She loves helping people, wishes her mom still believed in it, and is eager to have adventures. She hasn't yet had any, but the PCs might just bring her the case that makes her a hero. Or a corpse.

If Latisha manages to get herself in trouble, her mom will do everything in her power to help her.

Tamika Jones

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d4, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Investigate d4, Knowledge (Law) d4, Knowledge (Wolverton) d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d4, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Curious, Heroic, Quirk (eager for adventure), Young

Edges: Attractive, Dodge

Gear: Flashlight (d6+1 Damage),

Background: Jackie's granddaughter Tamika is officially just the office's part-time receptionist until she graduates from high school. But she's aching to get in the game herself. She's learned a lot about the business of investigation (although not as much as she thinks) and she's convinced that she's ready to be a full-fledged detective *now*.

If the PCs bring a case to American Investigators that is too dangerous or too irresponsible for them to handle, Tamika may well try to take the job on herself, hoping to prove to her grandma that she's ready to be a Jones Girl. She won't tell the Player Characters that she doesn't have the firm's permission or a PI license. She's good friends with her aunt Latisha and if the PCs have something really dangerous in mind, she might talk Latisha into coming along with her on the adventure.

Independent Investigators

None of these little firms may have more than one or two PIs on staff. PI Rod's operation is relatively large, with three or four support staff. Pete Lord and Curtis Spaulding both work alone. Spaulding doesn't even have an office. There is room for a lot more of these little guys in a town the size of Bedlam. They're just meant as examples.

PI Rod

"Have you been the victim of a fraudulent lawsuit? Have you been the target of identity theft? Do you need someone on your side? Get PI Rod, the name you can trust to back you up. Process Serving! Marital Infidelity! Surveillance! Background Checks! Malpractice! Get PI Rod on the case!" So says Rodney Starvik's website.

Look more carefully and you can see that PIRod.com is really a free site hosted by Yahoo. Located over a strip mall in the Meadows, the offices of PI Rod, Investigator, sprawl over a good-sized part of the building. He employs about six people. A team of three paralegals for research, an administrative assistant and a junior investigator named Ralph Brimley who has just graduated from college, and wants to have a little adventure before he settles down and gets a real job. Rod also employs a hulking ex-cop named Rufus, who serves in an unspecified capacity (intimidation and thuggery.)

Rodney himself is surprisingly professional, given his sleazy advertising material and low-rent address. He's a former FBI agent, with ten years experience as a police detective prior to working for the bureau. A short but powerfully built guy, he wears tasteful suits and speaks standard English. He's overbearing company, talking too loud and too much, constantly boasting about his law enforcement credentials and trying to push clients into ordering extra services. He's also wildly irresponsible, prone to taking crazy risks and not above breaking the law if he's paid well enough.

Mostly he does process-server work, delivering court notices to people who are trying to avoid them, but he loves taking on the occasional dangerous, exciting job. While he isn't the most ethical guy in the world, he does not work for the Mafia and wants no entanglement with them or their world. But he might be tempted to spy on them, for the money and for the thrill.

Rodney Starvik, Private Eye

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Healing d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Investigate d8, Knowledge (Law Enforcement) d8, Knowledge (Bedlam City) d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5 (1)

Hindrances: Big Mouth, Quirk (Pushy. Too brash for his own good)

Edges: Charismatic, Connections (in law enforcement)

Gear: Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects the torso), 9mm Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, 7 shots, Rate of Fire 1)

Lord Associates, Investigative Services

Pete Lord (his original name was Pietro Franconi) has always been looking for an angle. He's been a lawyer, a part-time tabloid journalist, a collection agent and occasionally a criminal. He's always done okay. But now he's forty-six and still looking for his big score.

He rents space in the law offices of a big successful downtown firm, to make it look as though he's somehow associated with them. He wears a trim grey beard and a Brooks Brothers' suit to look fatherly and respectable. He wears tinted glasses to look threatening.

Mr. Lord is not a member of the Bedlam mob, but he does know them and he certainly wouldn't turn them down if they offered him work. Nor would he turn down the good guys. He can be hired for any job, honest, dishonest or evil, in either his capacity as a lawyer or as an investigator. He would love to have the chance to blackmail a really rich client, or to sell information about a client to parties who might need it—including organized crime.

He's a competent investigator and a good defense attorney, although he's

better at legal maneuvering behind the scenes than he is in the courtroom—juries just don't trust him, somehow. Perhaps it's the way he never takes off his tinted lenses. Quietly menacing, he's always guarded, picking his words carefully. No one ever sees his eyes behind his tinted glasses, but you can feel them watching.

Pete Lord

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Investigate d8, Knowledge (Law) d6, Knowledge (Bedlam City) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d8

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5 (1)

Hindrances: Greedy, Heartless

Edges: Connections (Bedlam government and underworld)

Gear Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects the torso), Snub-Nosed Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, 7 shots, Rate of Fire 1)

Curtis Spaulding

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Investigate d8, Knowledge (Bedlam City) d8, Notice d10, Persuasion d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5 (1)

Hindrances: Elderly

Edges: Level-Headed, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate or Taunt)

Gear: Flashlight (d4+1 damage), Big old-model Chrysler.

Background: A scrawny old guy in his seventies, Mr. Spaulding is a man who has learned the value of patience. He has held a PI's license ever since the early 1960s. A quiet old bachelor without any close friends, he has nowhere to go at the end of the day and nothing better to do than work cases. Not that he minds. He's long since learned to take life as it comes.

Spaulding is superb at surveillance work. He looks like any frail old man you might see doddering around in a too-big suit and a porkpie hat. No one ever suspects him of being a detective. He still drives a car (it's a huge old 1985 Chrysler LeBaron) and he does a lot of stakeout from his vehicle, with the radio switched to "Easy Listening" to keep him company. He doesn't carry a gun. In case of trouble, he has a flashlight. But trouble never seems to come his way. He avoids cases that require him to confront anyone and sticks to the stuff he's good at—watching people and finding out what they're up to.

While he knows how to do skip tracing and has a police contact he can bribe to run license plate checks, the finer points of modern electronic surveillance are beyond him. He's a legwork guy.

It's hard to tempt or threaten Mr. Spaulding, since he no longer cares about much of anything.

Mr. Spaulding can't afford an office and sets up all of his business by phone. When he has to meet a client in person he does it in his car. Despite looking like somebody's grandfather, he's totally unshockable. You can use any kind of language you like around him, although he never seems to curse himself.

SPORTS IN BEDLAM

Bedlam is too small for a major-league sports franchise. But they have a troubled minor league hockey team (the Bedlam Lunatics) and a fairly successful minor league baseball team (the Bedlam Maniacs) and both have ambitions of becoming feeder teams for bigger franchises.

Bedlam's baseball team, the Maniacs, have recently generated national attention by hiring former major league pitcher "Spanky" Trombino, who is sometimes known as the bad boy of baseball. They say that he was too hard for even a major league coach to control, so it remains to be seen how good a job the Maniacs can do of keeping him out of trouble.

The Lunatics

When the Lightning League formed in 2003, the rush was on for businesses to buy or start their own hockey teams. A lot of investors were willing to be lured by the idea of summer hockey and the money was flowing like crazy. It was, as they say, raining suckers.

Local Bedlam impresario Dutch Angelo quickly bought a team and set about finding them a venue. The best he could do was to buy them time at the Belchner College skating rink, but it's hard to make people drive that far out of town and there are problems with parking, so he kept the team on tour most of the time.

Dutch didn't focus much on winning games—he couldn't afford the kind of players who'd do that for him. Instead he focused his efforts on getting the most savage, brutal players he could find. Guys other teams didn't want because they spent too much time in the penalty box. If he couldn't have the best team in the Lightning League, he could at least have the most controversial. Endorsements are all about how much face time you get on TV. And you can get there by other routes than winning games. Their motto is "Blood on the Ice at Every Game!" Unfortunately, the Lightning League collapsed in a tangle of

lawsuits and federal prosecutions just as they were starting to build a reputation.

The Lunatics tried to join the International League and the American League, but while they were in negotiations, Dutch got indicted on federal extortion charges (unrelated to his activities in the Lightning League) and he decided for the good of the team to sever his association with them. They have decided to sit out this upcoming season but they say that in a couple of years they'll be back—crazier than ever.

The Maniacs

Bedlam's newest sports team has attracted controversy since long before its founding. Back in 1914, Bedlam was the original home of a baseball team called the Bedlamites, who moved to another city, changed their name and became incredibly famous and successful. For a long time there has been a "bring back the Bedlamites" movement in Bedlam, although they have never had any real hope of getting it accomplished. When Municipal Councilman Big Andy Czernik announced plans to bring minor league baseball to Bedlam, not only did it seem to people like the kind of wasteful project the Redevelopment Commission used to try, but it also offended the fans who hoped against hope for the Bedlamites to one day return.

The Reverend Willie Boggs loudly opposed building a baseball park and Big Andy found himself in the single toughest fight of his political career. He won, but the contest weakened him.

They say that a lot of the Mob's money went into building Maniac Park, out on Slaughter Road, and that a lot of their enemies are buried in its foundations.

The Maniacs are owned by Sports Ventures International, a large chain based somewhere in New Jersey. They don't micromanage the team or the baseball park, which is run by local contractors from Stark Hill.

The Maniacs have been reasonably successful in their first two seasons, but

their big coup came this year, when they hired disgraced major league pitcher "Spanky" Trombino, the self-proclaimed "Bad Boy of Baseball." Trombino has always been a great headline getter, known at least as much for his outrageous behavior as for his pitching. He has been in prison twice for vicious assaults, but he shows no sign of changing his behavior. The team swears that he tests drug free. He openly laughs at this and asks what they would do if he didn't? Fire him?

Spanky has bought one of the biggest houses in the Stone Ridge gated community, which has been the scene of some very wild parties. There are rumors that an elephant was in some way violated at one of them. It remains to be seen if his new team can bring him to heel before he gets himself sent back to prison. Until he does, the stands at Maniac Park are packed for the first time in three years.

The Maniacs' mascot, Marvin the Maniac (a loony wearing a straightjacket) has been awarded the prize for the most annoying mascot in the league for two years running. He has also raised concerns from mental health care advocates, as has the fans' signature cheer, the "Maniac Chop." As of yet they have achieved little traction, Marvin the Maniac still capers gleefully on the sidelines of every game and they still pass out cardboard meat-cleavers to the fans for the Maniac Chop.

Lawrence "Spanky" Trombino

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d10, Streetwise d6, Throwing d12

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 7 (1)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Marksman, No Mercy, Rich, Rock and Roll, Steady Hands, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist being Intimidated or Taunted)

Hindrances: Big Mouth, Heartless, Overconfident, Quirk (has to indulge every violent whim that pops into his head)

Gear: Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest), Baseball Bat (Damage:

d8+2), Light MG (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, ROF 3, AP 2, Three round burst)

Background: As you can see from the equipment list above, Spanky has been doing some shopping. He's talked Harry Plutzer, owner of Colossal Guns (see Page 153) into selling him some very dangerous and illegal weapons. Spanky says he doesn't want them for any "sicko reasons," he just likes shooting stuff with them. Player Characters who try to arrest him, for example.

An Adventure with the Bedlam Maniacs: Take Me Out to the Madhouse

It's a warm spring day at Maniac Park, and Spanky Trombino is up to pitch. It's the middle of the eighth inning. The score is tied at three to three. The other team has men on first and second base and they're only halfway through the batting lineup. Can Spanky save the day?

Suddenly, a voice screams out from behind the bleachers "Your hour has come, Trombino!"

The fans all gasp and stare, as an enraged animal trainer rides an elephant onto the field. The beast appears to be wearing some kind of gigantic hernia truss. Tears pour down the trainer's face as he screams "We're gonna crush you, big man, for what you did to Peanut! Yer eyes have gazed in wonder at their last dawn!"

The vengeance-crazed duo charge the pitcher's mound. To the crowd's amazement, Spanky not only holds his ground, but starts taunting the elephant trainer. Can the PCs get down to the field in time to prevent a tragedy without revealing their secret identities?

Things go very wrong if they don't. Spanky waits until the elephant is close and then throws a fastball straight into its hernia. Poor Peanut lets out a trumpet of pure agony and stumbles, throwing her trainer to the ground, where Spanky begins to kick the crap out of him. If the PCs don't intervene, he's likely to beat the guy to death, while the crowd laughs and cheers and does the Maniac Chop. Spanky may even figure out some way to kill the elephant. And if he goes back to jail, Bedlam's morale might not recover.

THE MEDIA IN BEDLAM

We have envisioned Bedlam as a smaller city in the shadow of a nearby metropolis. If that is the role you want it to play in your campaign, then assume that Bedlam gets most of its television from its giant neighbor. The same is true for newspapers and radio stations. There are local papers and radio stations, but they have a hard time competing with the bigger market next door.

NEWSPAPERS

There are two local newspapers in Bedlam but both are owned by distant media conglomerates and both are struggling for readership in a market dominated by the city's larger neighbor. As a result, one has a small circulation and the other has a tiny one.

The Bedlam Informer

Until recently, there were two daily papers and a weekly in Bedlam. The Informer used to be the smaller and trashier of the two daily newspapers, but the owners of the Bedlam Beacon made some poor business decisions and got absorbed by a huge national media giant. The Informer tried to make a selling point out of the fact that it was the only locally owned news outlet in the city, but within a few years it sold out to the same conglomerate. The distant corporate headquarters in New York decided that two papers were too many for one small market, so they decided to publish them both under the Informer's byline. Because of some contractual obligations they had to the Beacon's former owners, it

still exists as a weekly supplement inside the Informer. Mostly an editorial page, the Beacon contains little but angry rants against the Informer's editorial policies. They no longer have any actual staff or offices, so they can't really do much else.

The Informer's staff has also been reduced. They get all their national and international news from the main office in New York, and they no longer employ full-time reporters. Everyone who writes a local story or a column for them is a stringer—an independent contractor who gets paid by the piece.

The Informer used to be known for its trashy, lurid, gossipy style of reporting, but it has become much tamer in recent years and much less critical of the city authorities. They still favor shocking headlines and gruesome crime stories, but they no longer rail against local politicians or do exposes on the city's failing services.

The Informer's political position is vaguely right-wing, pro-war and anti-affirmative action. They like Councilman Big Andy Czernik a lot and always support his policies. A typical subscriber to the Bedlam Informer is an older white male from a working class background who lives in Stark Hill or Greely Point and admires the Mafia. It's published in a tabloid format (naturally) and features at least four pages of color photos per issue. Often these are gruesome crime-scene pictures, although for some reason they seldom report on Mob hits.

The Informer's Managing Editor is Buddy Dean, a smooth, handsome, insincere man who never yells at reporters or keeps his promises to them. He looks at himself in the mirror a lot, when he thinks no one is watching.

Their most prominent reporter is currently Rona Romita, a loudmouthed hack who is famous for aggressively pestering the relatives of people who have died in tragic accidents. A skinny, leathery woman with expensive hair and cold little eyes, she admits to being thirty-five but is in fact a decade older.

Buddy Dean

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidate d6, Knowledge (business of publishing) d8, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d10, Taunt d8

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Attractive, Charismatic, Connections, Dodge

Hindrances: Quirk (Untrustworthy, insincere and utterly devoid of professional ethics)

Background: Buddy Dean is not your friend. Older reporters always give this warning to the new guys. It's amazing how many of them are fooled anyway. Buddy is a charmer, friendly and warm. He's vulgar if he thinks you want him to be and refined if he senses that's what would put you at ease. He always agrees with everything you say. If you pitch him a story idea that he doesn't like, he'll nod and tell you how great it is and then he'll forget to publish it. The only way you can ever figure out what he's thinking is through his actions. And his actions reveal him to be a pretty ruthless guy.

Buddy will print exactly what he thinks will make money, and does his best to play his writers off against one another in pointless rivalries so that they won't get organized and demand a bigger share of the take. He screws the printers out of every nickel he can, he outsources every job he can justify sending overseas.

The Informer runs whatever stories Buddy thinks will make his advertisers happy. Because he's aware that circulation isn't where you make your real money. You make the important revenue from advertising, and you do that by telling people what their bosses want them to hear. It almost doesn't matter if your readers like or agree with anything you have to say. They're only paying you a dollar each, while the people who employ them are paying you way more for advertising space.

He would love to be able to break a big national story that would get the

Informer lots of attention. But not if it would annoy his advertisers.

Buddy's personal life is something of a mystery. No one ever seems to see him outside the office and no one is precisely sure where he lives.

Rona Romita



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d10, Intimidate d6+2, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Knowledge (the press) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Stealth d6, Taunt d8+2

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Attractive, Charismatic, Connections, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Persuasion and Taunt)

Hindrances: Mean, Quirk (will do anything to get the story)

Background: It's tough being a plucky star reporter in a market as downscale as Bedlam. There's only one newspaper, unless you count the "alternative" weekly rag, and they already have too many stringers competing for their limited amount of newsprint.

Rona is constantly toiling away at articles for national magazines, on every subject from art history to video games, but she scores most consistently with the Bedlam Informer. In order to survive, let alone prosper, she has to write whatever will sell. It doesn't matter if it's true. It doesn't matter if it hurts people. It doesn't

matter if it expresses a point of view that Rona herself disagrees with (although to be fair, she doesn't really have much point of view.) The only factor is "will someone buy this?" And this philosophy has guided her into becoming the closest thing Bedlam has to a star reporter.

She has absolutely no objection to using her good looks to promote her work, or to help her get a good interview. While her willingness to do things other reporters won't do has led her pretty far, she knows that time is running out for her. She's already in her mid forties and her looks won't last forever. She needs a big national story and she needs it now. To this end, she is going to try to get way too close to as many supervillain battles as she can, taking crazy risks in order to get the stories that no one else is able to.

If she encounters the PCs she will see them as a potential means to an end, and won't mind trading them information for access. But she won't date them—Rona has been linked romantically to a number of prominent Bedlam bachelors, but she prefers to keep the name of her actual long-time boyfriend a secret.

She'll keep any deal she makes with the PCs for exactly as long as it seems worthwhile. It's nearly as difficult to make an enemy out of Rona as it is to make her a reliable ally. She will do or say whatever is expedient and has no time for grudges or for sentimental attachments.

Rona starves and vomits to keep herself dangerously skinny, and it's made her skin get loose and sag. She has already had some plastic surgery to correct this, but the results look weird and unnatural when you see her in person. Some people say her cold little eyes look as though they were painted onto her head. But that's not the plastic surgery.

THE BEDLAM CITY PAPER

Part of a Chicago-based chain of "alternative" weekly newspapers, the Bedlam City Paper is the Informer's only competitor. Distributed largely through record stores and coffee shops, the City Paper is free, supported entirely by advertising. It gets its columns and its

cartoons from the home office in Chicago. In fact that's where they do layout and print it, too. If you have a story or photos to submit, you send it to their PO box and a remailing agent sends it straight to Chicago.

The City Paper employs no full-time reporters. All the lead stories are written by stringers. In most cities these would be largely enthusiastic young amateurs, but in Bedlam a lot of professional journalists use the City Paper as an outlet for stories that the Informer would never publish. As a result, it is feistier and more controversial than most members of the "City Paper" franchise. It's a genuine muckraking journal, exposing crime and corruption in every corner of this unhappy little burg.

Because the paper is produced in Chicago, it's impossible for the local mob families to lean on the publisher—the Chicago outfit is unfriendly to both of Bedlam's Mafia families and won't let them operate on its turf. They can harass individual reporters, but a lot of them write under pseudonyms or anonymous bylines. Anyway no one actually reads the City Paper apart from a few bitter students with too many facial piercings. Even they tend to skip over the feature articles and go straight to "Zippy the Pinhead."

It's kind of a shame that all of this brave reportage goes unheard by the public at large. PCs may or may not know that the local left-wing record-shop rag is in fact a great source of inside information.

WHAT'S ON TV IN BEDLAM?

Most of Bedlam's television comes from the bigger city nearby. They have no big network affiliates at all. But they do nonetheless have three locally produced channels and an unusually active and interesting Public Access cable station.

There is a scrappy little UHF channel, a VHF station that buys most of its programming through syndication and a struggling PBS channel that is forever begging for money. Their call signs depend on whether you decide to locate Bedlam on the East Coast, or somewhere West of the Mississippi. We've included two sets of call letters for each station.

Channel 13 (WERD or KRUT)

Bedlam's own VHF station, part of the new "Your Power Network" which a failing movie studio called "Power Pictures" is funding in a last-gasp effort to diversify itself. "Your Power Network" has about fifteen affiliates nationwide, and produces or buys some of the worst sitcoms ever made. They will probably go under in a couple of years, in which case Channel 13 will go back to buying all its syndicated programming itself. In the meantime, they have access to the network's four or five hours of daily programming and fill the rest of the air-time with infomercials and "classic" episodes of 1970s game shows. They actually have a studio space just off downtown and produce their own local news program. Their news team is pathetically small and incompetent, with a reputation for putting cheerful, positive spin on any hideous new disaster.

In a risky effort to win over more viewers, they have recently hired a famous anchorman named Obediah Brick, whose violent temper and bottomless appetite for drugs have made him untouchable by any of the major networks. A huge, athletic, angry man with a bristling moustache, he holds Bedlam in open contempt and seldom ventures out of his brand-new mansion in Stone Ridge to do anything but go to work or (it is rumored) score dope. He doesn't even party locally—he goes to the bigger city nearby to get his kicks.

Channel 13 News is also the home of legendary local sportscaster Barry Bulger. One of Bedlam's most beloved celebrities, Barry is a fat, white-haired old ruin with a grotesquely misshapen nose. He's completely and blatantly senile, but they keep him on the air despite his weird behavior and rambling, pointless commentary. He's a local hero, after all, and no one can bear to tell him that it's time to quit.

Channel 23 (WHUT or KRAK)

Not as big or as well-funded as channel 13, Channel 23 doesn't have a studio of its own,

and rents space from Channel 13 when it's available. They broadcast off-brand music videos for much of the day, along with whatever cheesy kung-fu movies they can find for cheap. They have a small but devoted following of kids who love bad Shaw Brothers films from the 1970s. However, their one real claim to fame is the Saturday Afternoon Blood Feast. Hosted by the curvaceous Count Skankula (a former stripper named Glenda Dumbrowski) it features some of the most disgusting low-budget horror movies you can see on broadcast television—barely edited down at all. But the real attraction is the lurid and cheesy Count Skankula herself, who has gotten carried away and let the audience glimpse her surgically augmented assets more than once. As Count Skankula herself often says (in her bad fake "Transylvanian" accent): "Thank goodness no one is actually watching this crap."

Channel 64 (WKLM or KLAM)

Bedlam just barely still has a public television station. Supported largely by one or two major donors and produced by students for college credit, Channel 64 exists in a constant state of fiscal crisis. They show big blocks of local advertising between programs and they run paid infomercials for much of the day. And their pledge drive never seems to end.

Channel 64 does in fact have a studio with a few small and shabby sets (the landlord of their building is one of the two anonymous local donors who keeps the station alive) and they produce some of the worst children's' educational programs in the country. Mostly they do music shows, since that costs less money than science or reading—but of course they can't afford the rights to any decent songs. They have just enough resources to do one set of episodes per week, so they repeat each block of educational programming five times. This would surely drive you mad if you watched it every day. Fortunately, no one ever watches it at all.

LOCAL TELEVISION PERSONALITIES

Obediah Brick



Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d10, Intimidate d6+2, Knowledge (current events) d4, Knowledge (broadcasting) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Taunt d10+2

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Attractive, Block, Charismatic, Connections, Level-Headed, Rich, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Persuasion and Taunt)

Hindrances: Habit (addicted to cocaine), Overconfident

Background: Obediah Brick was made for finer things than Bedlam and his scorn shows. He was a serious journalist with a national reputation and he worked on

stories that changed the world. He was one of the first newscasters to tell America that Saddam Hussein had the atomic bomb, that New Orleans had been successfully evacuated by FEMA and that American troops were being welcomed as liberators by the grateful Iraqis. He isn't so much concerned with whether or not these stories were true as with the effect they had. He was Obediah Brick and the world felt his stamp.

Confront him with questions about how many of his world-shaking stories were gravely in error and he'll shrug and say that he just reads what's on the teleprompter. Persist and he'll physically attack you. Seemingly fearless, he has survived broadcasting assignments in a lot of the world's most dangerous places and he has a very high opinion of his own manly prowess. He has gotten into public brawls on a number of occasions and seems to particularly hate nosy members of the press taking his picture in public. This strikes some people as ironic. He's big and strong, constantly works out and practices boxing, but he's no match for an average PC. Still if you beat him up, he could pretty much ensure that you get bad press coverage for a long time.

He claims to work hard and play hard—and it's certainly true that he plays hard. After his cocaine addiction and violent rages made him a pariah in the world of network news, he was forced to look for jobs in markets like Bedlam. They made him a far more generous offer than they could really afford. In fact he makes about as much now as he did when he worked for the networks. He actually has far more power here than he did when he was a part of the national press. To keep him at the station, they would let him broadcast any story he wants. He never uses this privilege, however and seems content to go on reading the teleprompter forever.

Brick has no bias for or against superheroes, unless his producer tells him to. In fact he feels the same way about most things. He is pretty well devoid of opinions on any of the most important topics of the day, (apart of course from his

own greatness) but if he's told to act as though he has an opinion, he will.

People who have worked for Obediah Brick report that he is a demanding boss, prone to throwing tantrums over small details and to hitting assistants. But it's worth it to have a celebrity of his stature in Bedlam, everyone hastily agrees.

Brick has become the friend of fellow "bad boy" celebrity Spanky Trombino (see Page 171), who arrived in Bedlam under similar circumstances. They both party pretty hard, and when they're together, anyone who gets in their way had better watch out.

Barry Bulger

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d6, Knowledge (sports history) d10, Knowledge (Bedlam's history) d8, Notice d4 (-2 to notice sounds)

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Charismatic, Rich

Hindrances: Bad Eyes, Clueless, Elderly, Habit (gets fresh with female guests), Habit (wets pants)

Background: This deeply confused but rather sweet old man has been Bedlam's most beloved sportscaster for decades and he's not giving it up now that he's hopelessly senile. Nor is the city letting him give it up. They need their celebrities desperately.

Baseball was always Barry's favorite game, and when a minor league team came to Bedlam (the "Maniacs", see Page 170) it brought him back to life. He had been slipping into depression and it showed on the air, but now he's as lively and as wild as ever. He can't keep track of the plays and he often blurts out bizarre nonsense or calls things so completely wrong that he seems to be watching a different game entirely, but his enthusiasm is still infectious. Anyway most Bedlamites are glad just to have him around.

He's a puffy old man with round cheeks, a wild mop of vividly white hair and a bulbous, cracked, misshapen red monstrosity of a nose. People don't want to

look at his nose, but find they can't look away.

Barry doesn't have very good control of himself anymore and sometimes tries to kiss visiting female celebrities too long and too hard. He also wets his pants when he gets really excited, but that's actually become part of his persona. "It's going! It's going! I wet my pants!"

RADIO BEDLAM

Radio is doing better than television in this market. There are no major network affiliates on Bedlam's airwaves (apart from NPR), but plenty of little independent stations. Because there is a bigger city within FM radio range it's hard for Bedlam's local FM stations to compete. But this has just led to a richer wealth of short-range AM channels. There are also a couple of pirate stations that the local authorities don't seem to be able to shut down. More on them later.

FM STATIONS

WFVR or KFVR 98.7 ("The Fever")

Middle-American bar rock, served tepid. If you want to hear Journey, Kansas, or Foreigner, this is the station for you. And may God have mercy on your soul.

WFFL or KHUD 101.3 ("Radio 101")

Top-Forty pop station that also features Bedlam's most popular call-in advice program: Doctor Freak. The good Doctor is an angry, judgmental "Professor of Christian Studies" who berates and belittles most of her callers. Her signature line is: "you sick freak!"

WULF or KBST 102.5 ("The Beast")

"Hard rock" station that sometimes plays heavy metal. Home of Bedlam's two most popular local DJs: shock-jock Dave "The Filthy Beast" Odnarski and "Vampire" Steve Kravitz with the Late-Late-Late Show.

WTRD or KRPP 103.8

Adult contemporary for all your easy listening needs, soothing those worktime

cares away with the gentle sounds of Michael Bolton and Kenny G.

WUMP or KLUD 104.6

Bedlam's most popular hip-hop and R&B Station. An ever-increasing amount of their time is given over to crunk, much to the distaste of some older residents of Wolverton.

WFLP or KFLP 107.3

Christian rock station. Plays blander music than AM 790 and isn't as successful. It's a wholly owned subsidiary of the Abundant Tabernacle Ministries (see Page 208) and their pastor, Ross Bewley, does a three-hour show every weekend and an hour each weekday. The best-funded radio station in Bedlam, it has a gigantic transmitter and comes in clear as a bell a hundred miles away.

am stations

WKLM or KLAM 880

Bedlam's NPR affiliate is on AM, much to their chagrin. The sister station to TV's Channel 64, they are just as strapped for cash and just as slim on local programming. AM 880 is produced by students at Bedlam Community College and it shows. Officially the one local classical station, it mostly plays NPR talk and news shows.

WADD or KRMV 790

Christian rock station. This one plays louder, harsher music than FM 107.3 and gets more listeners. People joke that AM 790 plays music for skate punks with the crucifixion tattooed on their chests. That's certainly who they are aiming for.

WXLX or KVGR 1066

Easy listening for older listeners. The last station in the Bedlam area to play Mitch Miller and his Orchestra.

WZRD or KLIP 1110

"Classic Rock" station. Officially it plays "all the hits of the fifties, sixties, seventies, eighties and nineties" but in fact it mostly runs acid-addled late 60s psychedelia, including stuff from all kinds of obscure Bay Area bands like Moby Grape and The Liquid Sofa-Bed. Late-night DJ Captain Plantastic is so fuddled and out of it that many people tune in to his

show just to hear what mixed-up non-sequitur he'll blurt out next. Few people are aware that it's an act—he's really Dave Odnarski.

WEZL or KRDD 1210

Another Christian station. This one largely runs talk shows and sermons. They sometimes broadcast Ross Bewley's show here.

WHCK or KRNK 1300 ("Your Lucky 13")

Another R&B and hip-hop station. This one has almost entirely switched over to crunk. Late-Night DJ Leonora X seems to work coded messages to Wolverton's gangbangers into her commentary, functioning as a kind of underground communications network for the gangs. No one seems to know who she really is and the station's management isn't telling.

Some people whisper that local gangster Lincoln Stone secretly owns Your Lucky 13. "The Stone" has been in prison for years, but they say he still controls half the vice in Wolverton. For more on the Stone, see the section on organized crime in Bedlam (Page 232)

WANK or KNUT 1320

All talk-radio all the time. Features Rod Anger, Bedlam's most popular right-wing radio talk-show host. Mr. Anger raves for three solid hours a day about how anti-war activists should be executed as traitors and black people shouldn't be allowed to sit on juries and even more hateful things. His crude impersonations of Jews and Asians have gotten him in trouble many times, but he maintains a rabid local following nonetheless.

WLHS or KLHS 1390

Spanish language station. Popular in Hardwick Park, it plays a lot of Honduran folk music in addition to Latin pop hits and older stuff like sambas and mambos. Dave Odnarski works here too, under the name "Manny Ibarra."

WDRK or KNRD 1460

Bedlam Community College's other radio station. This one is intended for students on campus, and it has a very weak, fuzzy signal. Even though most students at BCCC are into the kind of generic rock they play on "the Fever," AM 1460 is the closest thing Bedlam has to an "alternative rock" station, playing songs by depressed European bands with enormous hair.

LOCAL RADIO PERSONALITIES

Dave "the Filthy Beast" Odnarski

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d8, Intimidate d8+2, Knowledge (music) d10, Knowledge (radio) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Taunt d10+2

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Charismatic, Connections, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Persuasion and Taunt)

Hindrances: Habit (can't resist being obnoxious on the air)

Background: He's the Filthy Beast on Your Morning Zoo and he's half a dozen other radio personalities as well. In a small market like Bedlam one radio show isn't enough to keep you alive without a day-job, so Dave Odnarski takes whatever opportunities he can find.

One day he'll tape a few weeks worth of one show under one name and the next day he'll tape a few weeks of another show under another name. He's psychedelic groove master Captain Plantastic. He's Latin Salsa Master Manny Ibarra. He's even "Vampire Steve" Kravitz, despite the weird hours this forces him to keep.

The life suits him. All he's ever wanted is to be a Rock-and-Roll DJ. Silly and shallow, he has a lot of opinions that he hasn't thought through and that he blurts out on the air. Sometimes this gets him into trouble but more often it gets him listeners.

He's not exactly venal or ambitious—he isn't making a lot of money and he seems uninterested in rising beyond his status as a local radio personality in a crummy market. But he will ruthlessly attempt to crush anyone who starts to horn in on his tiny niche of the world.

In person he's loud, manic and kind of obnoxious. Shorter and fatter than everyone expects, he wears cowboy boots and a graying ponytail and he thinks of himself as a hipster. You won't know why they call him "the Filthy Beast" until you see him eat. His table manners are a little...undeveloped.

Dave hasn't had a girlfriend in a while, and while it doesn't show much on the

surface, the loneliness is starting to eat at him. Sometimes he looks at his wrinkled, pudgy face in the mirror and he starts crying, although he's not sure why.

He sometimes likes superheroes and sometimes he doesn't. When he does, he can be a useful ally and sway public attention in their favor. When he doesn't, he'll mock and taunt them on the air until he gets distracted by something else and loses interest.

Rod Anger

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d8, Intimidate d8+2, Knowledge (drama) d8, Knowledge (current events) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Taunt d10+2

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Charismatic, Connections, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Persuasion and Taunt)

Hindrances: Obese, Quirk (living a lie as hard as he can)

Background: Bedlam's most prominent and influential gay man is not Righteous Townsend, it's Rod Anger, the city's number-one right-wing talk-radio host. For three hours a day he spews out his hate-filled rants. He says that welfare mothers should be sterilized, that African-Americans shouldn't be allowed to sit on juries, that global warming is a plot dreamed up by certain people in Hollywood to keep us tied to Israel, and even more noxious things. It all has a frenzied stream-of-consciousness quality about it, because the thing that really concerns him most is the need to fill a three-hour show with something.

Rod doesn't really believe any of it (although he is afraid of black people) and sees himself as an entertainer. He has a whole bunch of different jobs around Bedlam, toiling away in community theater, doing summer stock work when it's available and teaching courses in drama at Bedlam Community College. Rod Anger isn't the only radio character he's ever created, but he's the only one who ever brought him much recognition and the show is the main thing that lets him pay his bills.

A great plump goober of a man, he's six foot five and weighs nearly 350 pounds, but he's too soft and blubbery to look dangerous. He wears glasses and a bow tie and has a beautiful high tenor voice. Meet

him when he's out of character and you will instantly know he's a professor of drama.

He does a lot of damage in his radio persona, but he tries not to let it bother him. It's just a role he plays, and he's just giving people what they want to hear. It's no more wrong to play a character like Rod Anger on the radio than it is to play a villain like Iago or Captain Hook on stage. Or so he tells himself.

Presently single, his long-term boyfriend died of HIV complications two years ago, sending him on a series of angry on-air rants about how the gay community is destroying the country and how everyone with the virus should be rounded up and put in isolation camps and every other horrible, vicious homophobic thing he could think of. It was very cathartic, and really helped him work out his grief. It may or may not have inspired a group of high school kids from Stark Hill to beat a gay man to death in the park, a week later. Perhaps the timing was a coincidence—he tries not to think about it.

Not nearly as many people know him as Trent Fetherton, drama critic and occasional reviewer for Channel 13 News, but this is the closest character he plays on the air to his real personality. Smug, silly, opinionated and full of himself, but not evil or crazed with hatred. He somehow manages to see himself as Trent, unsuccessful drama critic and man about town, rather than as Rod Anger. It helps that Trent Fetherton is his real name.

Pirate Stations

Unlicensed stations come and go. Normally they have a short range and are broadcast out of some malcontent's basement until the cops or the FCC shut them down. The penalties for being a pirate broadcaster aren't very severe, but they confiscate your hardware, and most radio pirates can't afford to replace their gear.

Right now there are three illegal broadcasters in Bedlam: Captain Violent, White Apocalypse and Nine-Pound Balls.

Captain Violent is a teenaged loner who broadcasts from his parents' home in Stone Ridge. A classic angry young twerp,

he hates Stone Ridge, the private school he attends, his parents and the rest of the world more or less equally. He calls his station "The Pro-Social Values Hour."

Stone Ridge has a very rigid set of policies about what kind of music is allowed inside its boundaries. Captain Violent has a huge contraband collection of unauthorized songs and most of his listeners are Stone Ridge teenagers who can't hear this music any other way. In between songs, he complains about life, jocks, his parents and urges his listeners to "smash stuff and hurt things."

The Stone Ridge Homeowners' Association is desperate to track down Captain Violent and punish him. They seem positively obsessed with it and respond to questions about Captain Violent from the press with irrational, histrionic fury. They may get some unexpected and extremely unwanted help. There is a supervillain named "Captain Violent" (see Page 332) and he isn't pleased about some kid stealing his name.

White Apocalypse gets much less attention from the authorities that Captain Violent, but you could argue that he's far more dangerous. He broadcasts from somewhere in the sprawling, crime-ridden warren of mobile home parks at Shady Meadows. He's the voice of Bedlam's skinhead community, and he seems to have much better equipment than Captain Violent—you can hear him all over Bedlam. It's unclear which of Shady Meadows' biker gangs or skinhead groups supports White Apocalypse. He may in fact be independent from any of them.

Nine-Pound Balls is very different from either of them. Weird for its own sake, he broadcasts surreal, Dadaist rants from somewhere near the Bedlam Community College campus, and may be a student. A typical Nine-Pound Balls program would consist of a lengthy diatribe ("Rental Cars are the Devil's Tuna!") followed by an "interview" with a sock puppet, followed by the first few seconds of a George Michael song repeated over and over for an hour. Nine-Pound Balls is getting quite a following, even though his range is so short, and he may soon be contemplating a podcast.

ART AND CULTURE

Bedlam has at least four galleries and museums, as well as a zoo. There may be more little art galleries at the GM's discretion. We'll start with the biggest—the Bedlam Museum. It's also the oldest.

The Bedlam Museum

This huge old Art Nouveau wedding cake of a building looks like it was constructed for a turn-of-the-century World's Fair. Its bricks were once a cheery red and it has brightly colored mosaics on its walls. It would look downright jaunty if it weren't covered in so many years worth of grime.

Most of the building was once Bedlam's post office, although additions and extra wings have grown out of it at random over the years. Formerly the Stark Museum of Power and Industry, its grand halls were once filled with hulking 19th century machines—steam pumps and industrial drills and dynamite layers and a locomotive or two. There are still a lot of these corroded old hulks taking up space in the display halls, for they are much too heavy to haul away.

When a city commission took the museum over from the ailing Stark Foundation, they expanded it into an art gallery and a museum of natural history as well. Science displays can be found in the wings and additions, art galleries are upstairs.

One whole wing of the museum has had to be closed for structural instability. They use it to store broken furniture and boxes of old papers.

The display areas are crowded, dusty and old. None of the museum's collections are very good. Old mislabeled dinosaurs stand in poses long known to

be inaccurate. The hall of gems and minerals proudly holds the world's second-largest cubic zirconium. The display on Early Man still lists Zinjanthropus and only recently got rid of Piltdown Man.

They have a lot of interactive displays meant to show how machines work, almost all of which seem to be broken. That's certainly a good introduction to the way things work in Bedlam!

These days the Museum is run by a board of local philanthropists. Because the last curator objected to the kinds of exhibits they were bringing into the museum, they have appointed one of their own members to the position.

Grace Gibbling isn't a scientist or a curator by profession, but she knows a lot about marketing and has the right contacts with the corporate foundations. The museum's staff hate Chief Curator Gibbling, both for not being an academic and for her condescending, insincere attitude. She sounds like a parody of an obnoxious marketing executive when she speaks, even in private.

Because the museum's own holdings are so meager, Gibbling accepts any traveling exhibitions she can get ahold of, no matter how dubious their educational content, and she has aggressively sought out corporate sponsorships of every type imaginable.

Toxicorp, the world's largest manufacturer of pesticides and other poisons, has sponsored their "Hall of Chemicals" which explains all the wonderful things the good people at Toxicorp are doing to make a brighter future for everyone. Firestone has funded the Pavilion of Tires and the National Toast Council has generously donated the Hall of Toast. Kids say that if you look

carefully, you can find the one remaining bakelite handset in the Hall of Toast that still works, and if you listen carefully after you press the big red button, you can still hear the faint, scratchy tape-recorded voice say "Toast is... our friend."

The museum is open Mondays through Fridays from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Admission is \$15.95 for adults, \$7.95 for kids.

NPCS for the Bedlam Museum

Dozens of people work in the museum. Here are a few of the most prominent.

Chief Curator Grace Gibbling

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d10, Intimidate d8+2, Knowledge (business) d8, Knowledge (foundation grant-making process) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Taunt d8+2

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Attractive, Charismatic, Connections, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Persuasion and Taunt)

Hindrances: Mean, Quirk (world's worst boss)

Background: There are some people who despite having good administrative skills really shouldn't be placed in management positions. Grace Gibbling is a talented publicist and she's great at making the kinds of corporate and foundation contacts that a museum needs to survive. However, she finds it so exciting to be able to hurt people that she can't resist abusing her authority. Some part of her knows it's counter-productive, but she would actually rather mess with her underlings than get good work out of them.

And a museum is precisely the

wrong place for somebody with her problem. It's full of science nerds—the very people who rouse her predatory instincts the most. For a while her bullying actually worked, for it motivated people to avoid her wrath by working harder. But as the months have gone by it's become increasingly clear to many of her staff that here is no way to satisfy her, no "right answer" which would stop her from picking on you.

In her off-hours Grace attends illegal bare-knuckled fighting events, dates successful young professionals like herself and cruelly trains her neurotic little Chihuahua. She's also fond of the nightclubs on Industrial Drive, even though at age 29 she's older than most of the patrons.

You can tell whenever the Chief Curator's mother calls her at work. Grace normally sounds cheerful, even when she's tormenting her staff. But when her mother gets her on the phone her voice instantly turns into a furious hissing snarl.

Dr. Seymour Stoppleman, PhD

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d10, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d4, Knowledge (archeology) d10+2, Knowledge (ancient civilizations) d12+2, Notice d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Scholar

Hindrances: Cautious, Elderly, Quirk (shy, easily bullied)

Background: The Curator of Archaeology at the Bedlam Museum, he is the most senior member of the research staff and answers directly to the Chief Curator. A plump, meek, grandfatherly old man with a shy smile, he is easily cowed by bullies and the curator has sensed this. She's been tormenting him about being a geek

and a nerd, cutting him down and sniping at him whenever a chance presents itself. No one has done this to him since college and he doesn't know how to react. He's become her toady, desperate to please her, going along with her mockery in the hopes that it's all a game. This never worked in college and it won't work now. It just makes her more prone to pick on him.

Stoppleman is a very competent archeologist and knows a great deal about ancient Egypt. He can even read hieroglyphics. He should be the perfect person for the PCs to go to for help if they find out about the impending crisis with the mummy of Ptah Narthu-Tep, but he's so completely under Grace's thumb that he could never risk defying her. Just thinking about her makes him wince. He never realized that he could both feel physically attracted to someone and fear and loathe them at the same time.

On any topic but Ptah Narthu-Tep, he is incredibly helpful, especially if one of the PCs is an attractive young woman. He's the best archeologist in Bedlam and he knows all kinds of incredible things about ancient civilizations, including some cultures that most people don't know ever existed (Atlantis and Lemuria, for example, if they exist in your campaign.)

Dr. Stoppleman lives alone in a rundown apartment building on Rydell Street in Greely Point. His apartment is cluttered with books and he has too many cats. He keeps intending to go down to the adult book store and help himself to some naughty videos but he always chickens out.

An Adventure in the Bedlam Museum

For more than fifty years, the mummy of Ptah Narthu-Tep has sat, miscataloged in a dusty side hall of the Bedlam Museum, dreaming darkly. He was the legendary

Lost Pharaoh, whose name was stricken from every record of the third dynasty for his unthinkable crimes. No man could kill him, so they mummified him alive.

For decades he has haunted the dreams of every curator who has run the museum, making helpful comments and suggestions. He has been a guest in many different museums over the past hundred and fifty years and he knows a great deal about how they are run. Ptah Narthu-Tep is a crotchety old creature who phrases most of his suggestions as threats, but with a little effort most of the curators have been able to get along with him and put his ideas to work.

Unfortunately, Grace Gibbling, the new curator, has been ignoring his advice. When he grew frustrated and started making ominous remarks about a curse of a thousand scorpions, she had him moved to the unused wing, facing a blank wall. She has grown amused by his feeble efforts to send her nightmares and has begun taunting him, threatening to do terrible things to his helpless, inert body.

In a fury, he sends dreams to a mystically inclined PC and begs them for help against this awful woman. If they don't do something soon, he's going to start invading the dreams of everyone in the city, clouding their slumber with horrors.

Grace doesn't want a truce. She enjoys pushing the old monster around and scaring him. Anyway she can't quite remember where in the dead wing she had him relocated, so it's going to be hard for her to have him moved back to his display case. But if she gets him mad enough, everyone will discover that he really is capable of moving under his own power when he gets sufficiently angry. In fact, he's still spry enough to go on a deadly rampage. The Curse of a Thousand Scorpions is real, too.

Ptah Narthu-Tep, the Evil Mummy



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d10, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) d8, Knowledge (Museum Administration) d10, Notice d6, Spellcasting d12

Charisma: -4; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 9

Hindrances: All Thumbs, Distinctive Appearance, Elderly, Mean, Quirk (wants to be listened to), Stubborn, Ugly, Vengeful

Edges: Arcane Background (Evil Mummy), Power Points

Super Powers:

- Ageless (2): Very Old
- Awareness (2): Requires Activation
- Fear (3)
- Speak Language
- Super-Sorcery: Level 3
- Telepathy: Broadcast (can reach every mind in Bedlam)
- True Regeneration: Rolls to recover from wounds every round
- Undead

Background: Very old and very evil, he's used to having minions carry out his every command. But they don't anymore. In fact they haven't for a long, long time. This has made him feel lonely and useless. He used to have ambitions of ruling the world and calling down unclean gods from beyond time and space to ravage the cosmos in the name of darkness. But none of it ever happened.

These days his ambitions are smaller. He wants a useful job, he wants people to listen to him and show him a little respect. For the past few decades he was as near contentment as he had ever been in his long and wretched existence.

He has had a lot of time to develop the nightmares he uses to communicate with the living and they are elaborate and baroque. Hot desert sands, black pyramids beneath a bloody moon, leering animal-headed gods and waves of scorpions all feature prominently.

If he throws a tantrum and starts lurching around, he'll attack anything and anyone on his way to his intended target—curator Gibbling and the board who appointed her.

If he starts flooding Bedlam with nightmares instead, then in every terrifying dream he sends, he'll demand that the curator speak with him—it's like a grassroots e-mail campaign, with a twist.

Cross, crotchety and difficult to get along with, prone to calling everyone fools and threatening them with curses, he will listen to reason if you show him respect.

The Lurman Gallery

By appointment only, one can view the private art collection of the late Doctor Phminster Lurman—the wealthy Bedlamite who Lurman Avenue is named after. In his later years Doctor Lurman took little interest in running his medical supply business and devoted himself almost exclusively to collecting pornography.

He accumulated a truly remarkable set of oil paintings, statues, woodcuts and watercolors. It's one of the most outstanding collections of its kind. But his tastes grew darker as his hobby deepened. The outer layers of the Lurman Gallery are startling to some viewers, but the inner rooms are more than most visitors can bear. Here you find works by madmen and artists of the outré, many with no overtly pornographic themes. It seems that Doctor Lurman had found a more refined definition of obscenity by then.

The paintings of the infamous Richard Upton Pickman can be found here, as can the prison artwork of "Cannibal Killer"

Harlan Wayne Fuchs. Worse, the gallery holds many strange and horrifying statues by the enigmatic sculptor known only as "Lucifer Chicken 1." Many of his nightmarish abstract forms seem to move as you walk around them. No one has ever been able to explain precisely how Lucifer Chicken 1 achieved this effect, or why his formless statues are so disturbing. There are many other works by less famous yet equally distressing artists. But the gallery's crowning glory is the Serpent Room.

The story of the Serpent Room continues to appall and fascinate the public, all these years after the events themselves. Most visitors are amazed to learn that it is real.

Just before the First World War, the story goes, G. Morgan Stark, the toy magnate, commissioned an artist named Forrest Howling Phipps to paint an image of a serpent on one wall of his private study. Mr. Stark considered the serpent his personal motif, and was eager to show off the room, recently refurbished with leather walls and elegant fittings, to his new mistress, Leonora Quigley.

Phipps had a reputation as one of the most troublesome and difficult of the "New Artists." A fiend for the occult and for Picasso and for drugs, he was precisely the sort of dangerous young scoundrel whose work would make an impression on a jaded modern girl like Miss Quigley. Phipps took the commission, and Stark took Miss Quigley on a tour of Europe while the artist went to work.

When Mr. Stark returned, he found that Phipps had apparently gone mad. The house was full of freeloading Bohemian scum, three of the servants were pregnant and the artist himself had descended into a shambling morphine stupor and the room—it was indescribable. Instead of painting a single coiled serpent over the fireplace, he had slathered paint all across the leather walls and ceiling, serpents coiling, writhing, lashing over every surface in a lunatic frenzy of scales. You could not tell where one left off and the next began. And it gave the bizarre impression that it moved when you weren't looking at it.

Mr. Stark nearly bit the waxed tips off his moustache with rage. He chased Phipps around the house, intent on giving him a horsewhipping. While Miss Quigley laughed hysterically, Stark pursued the artist into the Serpent Room, lashing at him with a buggy whip. But the perspective in the room had grown distorted and wrong and he flailed about blindly, unable to judge the distance between himself and his quarry. Miss Quigley said that she heard him bellowing with fury for some time, his voice growing fainter and fainter, lost in the depths of the Serpent Room. This continued, off and on, for a day or so, until his voice faded entirely away. No trace of C. Morgan Stark or Forrest Howling Phipps was ever seen again. They were the first to vanish in that room's odd nooks and crannies, but not the last.

After his disappearance, Stark's business empire fell prey to his arch-rival, Langhorne Greely, who took over his toy factory and made it his own (in fact it's still the Greely Olde Tymme Toy Factory today.) He took Miss Quigley, too.

The Serpent Room is hard to find your way around. Some weird trick of perspective makes its walls seem to bend at unnatural angles and it's easy to lose track of where the door is. There are strange little nooks around the room that people sometimes discover by mistake and have difficulty getting out of. Sometimes they open on deeper, stranger alcoves, some of them surprisingly large. On four or five occasions someone has wandered in too far and never come out again.

Dr. Lurman bought the Serpent Room when the Stark mansion came up for sale and he had the whole thing transported in its entirety to his own house. He seems to have spent hours in there, enjoying other works from his collections, with no obvious ill effects.

After his death, Dr. Lurman's foundation opened one wing of his house on Griswold Street (in Greely Point) as a public gallery. They don't advertise and you have to make an appointment with the docent to be admitted, but discerning aficionados find there way there all the same. There is no charge for admission and they are very

accommodating about setting up visits at unusual hours.

The Bedlam Zoo

Bedlam isn't large enough or rich enough to have a very big zoo, or a very good one. Yet it is becoming famous nonetheless. For Bedlam's zoo has the distinction of having the highest rate of unexplained animal deaths in the country. But perhaps this is unfair. When you look at the zoo's miserable little concrete cages and bare iron bars, it hardly seems inexplicable that so many of their animals die.

The Zoo's Director, Professor Perkin Fowler, is not a very eloquent man, but he speaks passionately about conditions at his zoo, saying "any animal lucky enough to live in our zoo with the three meals a day that they get is, you know, he's a lucky #@%&in' animal is what he is, gettin' to sleep inside and like that."

Located between Ash Street and the Country Club, it is a popular daytime haunt for winos, junkies and elementary school tours. The Zoo's hours are rather limited, partly for budgetary reasons but also to help keep homeless people from sleeping there. It's open from 10:00 AM to 4:30 PM, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. It's open from noon to four on Saturday.

The zoo's major attraction is a huge state-of-the-art penguin house, built with a grant from Amalgamated Munitions. Unfortunately, the grant money ran out before they were able to acquire very many penguins and their colony seems to be dying off.

Locals will tell you to skip the penguins. The real reason people go to the zoo is to see Gorgah—a gigantic old nine-hundred pound gorilla who has turned a little psychotic with rage and boredom over the years. They call him the Lady-Killer, because he's beaten his last three mates to death (which is considerably more abnormal for a gorilla than, for example, a human being.)

Whole generations of Bedlamites have made a sport out of taunting Gorgah into a frenzy of rage. He hasn't ripped his way out of his cage and torn any of them limb-from-limb, yet.

For some reason venomous snakes keep disappearing from the Zoo's reptile house. Zoo officials are quick to scoff at the suggestion that a gang of crooked herpetologists is selling them off to drug dealers as pets.

NPCs for the Zoo

More people work at the zoo than we can provide you with individual stats and backgrounds for. Here are a few who are likely to get involved in adventures, along with a stat block for a generic zookeeper.

Generic Zookeeper

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Knowledge (zoology) d4, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Throwing d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Quirk (Loves animals. Or alternatively, *hates* animals—this is the Bedlam Zoo, after all)

Edges: Dodge

Gear: Net, Dartgun (1d12 damage, doesn't do lethal damage unless you make a called shot)

Dr. Skarman Slether

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Knowledge (Zoology) d8+2, Knowledge (Herpetology) d12+2, Notice d8, Shooting d4, Throwing d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 8

Hindrances: All Thumbs, Quirk (obsessed with snakes)

Edges: Beast Bond, Block, Danger Sense, Dodge, Scholar, Tough as Nails

Gear: Snake stick, venom collection vials.

Powers: Immunity to poison

Background: Head of the Bedlam Zoo's herpetology department, old Doc Slether has been bitten by more venomous snakes than any other human being alive. He's lost track of the number of times he's been envenomated, but it's more than two hundred. He's developed such an incredible

resistance to snake venom that he was actually able to survive the bite of the Western Taipan snake back in 1987—the only time anyone has ever lived through it. His fingers are stiff, knobby lumps of scar tissue that barely look human any more, but he's surprisingly deft and nimble with them. The venom has affected his metabolism in other ways, too. He feels not the faintest trace of arthritis, despite his age. He looks like a disheveled, poorly preserved sixty-year-old, but in fact he's eighty-seven. He joined the zoo staff during World War Two.

The constant exposure to snake venom may have affected his brain, too. His behavior is odd and unemotional. He speaks in a whispering monotone.

While he is certainly creepy, there's no better expert on venomous snakes, should the PCs want to talk to one. He particularly understands the effects of their venom, since he's experienced nearly every type of it. Never married, he is completely devoted to his snakes, and to his vast collection of pornography. He hasn't been selling off either one to any drug dealers, although we're not sure we can say the same for all his staff.

Gorgah Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8 (animal), Spirit d10, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Guts d10, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d4, Throwing d4

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11

Edges: Berzerk, Brawny, Improved Frenzy

Hindrances: Mean, Quirk (hates everything, can't control his rage), Vengeful

Special Abilities

• Size +2

Background: Gorgah slumps in his cage and dreams of violence. His fur is grizzled with white, his face is scarred, his features lined from a lifetime of hopeless rage and grief. Huge and hideously strong even for a gorilla, he has grown old and insane and very tired of life. He has one secret desire. One single faint, mad hope that keeps him from beating his head into the wall of his cage until he dies. But it's too awful to relate here. If the GM were to peek into the section at the end of this book entitled "horrible secrets" (on Page 367) they might learn something unexpected about the miserable old monster.

Adventure Seeds for Gorgah the Lady-Killer

1) A crazed inventor runs amok with his new shrink-ray at the zoo, certain that this demonstration will prove to the world that he isn't crazy and that his theories were right all along. But the ray malfunctions and hits Gorgah, making him fifty feet tall. Fun and hijinks ensue. Perhaps the ray's effects are reversible and perhaps they are not. If not, the PCs have a brand-new recurrent supervillain to fight.

2) A gang from Hardwick Park gets into an argument with the staff at the reptile house—it's something to do with buying venomous snakes. When they fail to get satisfaction, the gang goes on a tear across the zoo, roughing up keepers and frightening patrons. As they pass in front of Gorgah's cage, the gorilla's keeper attempts to remonstrate with them and they decide to make an example out of him. They force the old man to his knees and begin to administer a beating. The PCs witness this incident and no doubt try to intervene. Then, to everyone's shock, Gorgah rips his way out of his cage and attacks the gang members. They gun him down and run away, (or perhaps the Player Characters apprehend them.) Dying, the giant ape reaches out to his wounded keeper, and gently clasps his hand. Then he tries to wrench his arm off. For Gorgah long ago decided that no one would kill his hated keeper but Gorgah himself.

3) A group of sixth-grade girls from Stark Hill decide they don't like their classmate, Theresa Bucco. She's too pretty and too much of a goody-two-shoes and she won't go with them to shoplift or help them beat up nerds and she never gets anything less than an "A." So on a field trip to the zoo, they tip her into Gorgah's enclosure and start trying to taunt the Lady-Killer into one of his rages. This creates a delicate situation. Theresa's leg is broken and she can't flee. Gorgah doesn't actually want to hurt her—he thinks she's little and cute. But he can feel the anger coming over him as the other girls taunt him and he knows he can only contain his rage for so long. If a Player Character goes into his enclosure, he will attack them, but it's because he wants them to render him unconscious. If they kill him, they will become very unpopular in Bedlam. He's everyone's favorite animal at the zoo.

Professor Perkin Fowler

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d8+2, Knowledge (Zoology) d4, Knowledge (Public Relations) d4, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Taunt d8+2, Throwing d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Mean, Quirk (Sadistic bully who enjoys hurting animals and humiliating people), Stubborn, Vengeful

Edges: Connections, Dodge, Nerves of Steel, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist the effects of Intimidate or Taunt)

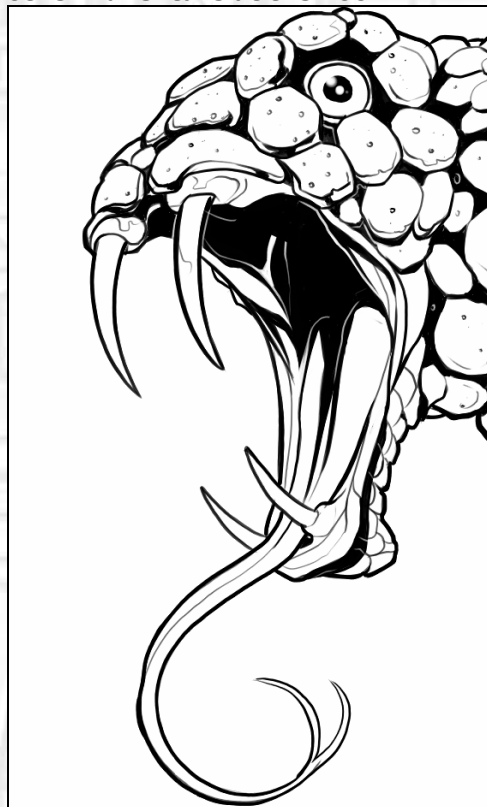
Gear: Big Pistol (2d6+1)

Background: Vulgar, cruel and inarticulate, Dr. Fowler may not know much about zoology or public relations, but he is great at raising funds from local businesses (a failing zoo is a wonderful tax shelter and an excellent way to keep certain kinds of income off the books) and he has superb connections with some scary people in Africa who do semi-legal animal collecting.

His staff fears and hates him for his violent temper and threatening attitude. The animals hate him for the very same reason. He isn't above taunting them for laughs. He finds the sight of monkeys trying frantically to brush hot cigar ashes out of their fur to be particularly hilarious, so he's always flicking his cigars at them.

Dr. Fowler is presently banned from zoo property by a court order (he was making death threats against some of his employees) but the case is under appeal and he continues to raise funds for the zoo in the meantime.

Another Adventure at the Zoo



Annoyed at his refusal to sell them any of his snakes, the Mara break in on Doctor Slether late one evening and make their displeasure known. They break some of the most evil-looking snakes they can find out of their cases and force them to bite him, one after the other.

To their amazement, he's incredibly resistant to the venom, so they break out even more snakes and pump even more venom into him. In the end it takes the bite of more than thirty of the world's deadliest reptiles to make his heart stop beating.

But then a funny thing happens. After the Mara leave, and the police and ambulance arrive, Doc Slether's heart begins

to slowly beat once more. He has survived.

But while he is resting in the hospital, he starts to change. Soon his wrinkled skin grows scaly and his teeth turn into fangs. He has been transfigured in some weird way by all the venom in his system into something more than human—and less. He vanishes from the hospital, and the last images of him on the security monitors look very strange indeed.

He now has the power to exert mental control over snakes and soon captains of the Mara are dying horrible deaths, bitten by their own pets. But he is not interested in revenge. That thought is far from his cold reptilian mind. Instead, he wants to liberate these snakes from their owners, who have been mistreating them.

The PCs may well get into a running battle with him as he moves around Hardwick Park collecting snakes. The Mara's mortal enemies in Wolverton may get wind of what is going on and may actually send gang members over into Hardwick Park to try and stop the PCs from interfering with Doc Slether's rampage. If the PCs fail to stop him, or if they make peace with him, Dr. Slether will make his way back to the zoo, accompanied by his scaly little friends, and try to resume his old job there. He can't speak anymore, but he's a more competent herpetologist than ever, and even Director Fowler is afraid to fire him. The Jigsaw Man swears revenge.

The Wolverton Petting Zoo

Ask even the most hardened Wolverton street thug about the Petting Zoo on Darkwater Street and they will probably crack a wistful smile. This small, privately-run institution has been the favorite refuge of three generations of Bedlam's children. The tiny zoo is funded entirely by donations, on a small scrap of land in the middle of the city. It has rabbits, a couple of goats, a myna bird,

guinea pigs and even a tame deer for kids to pet.

Various local businesses give what funds they can to keep the zoo in operation, and when they can't cover it, the gang leader named Eentsy Z quietly covers the shortfall. His only happy memories of childhood were all at the Wolverton Petting Zoo.

Luella Johnson is the volunteer who puts in the most hours at the zoo. A fat, seemingly ageless woman with a high squeaky voice and a gentle smile, she is nearly as beloved as the zoo itself, and inextricably associated with it.

An Adventure at the Wolverton Petting Zoo

It could cause troubles for the zoo if it came out that they were taking money from the gangs. But right now they have bigger problems. The Mara have begun sneaking over in the middle of the night and killing the animals. This may seem like sick, crazy behavior, but in fact it's a totally calculated move. They are doing this to disrupt morale and to make Eentsy Z look weak.

Luella Johnson has a heart attack when she walks in one morning and finds the guinea pigs dead, their heads arranged in a circle on the floor with insulting messages scrawled in Spanish all around them. No one knows if Miss Luella will live or die herself.

The next night the Mara torture the myna bird to death, tape-record its dying agonies, and post them on YouTube.

The zoo has always tried hard to avoid getting entangled with any of the neighborhood's criminal enterprises, and when Eentsy Z offers to protect them, he is angrily rebuffed. He has killed people for showing him far less disrespect. Yet to everyone's surprise he doesn't harm any of the zoo's staff. Instead he posts guards at the zoo, and Miss Louella's room in Bedlam General Hospital (he has correctly surmised that the Mara will also consider her a target.) His arch-rival,

Chunk-Style of the gang called the A's, does the very same thing and this causes some friction when multiple groups of armed and dangerous youths show up in the middle of the night to protect the same targets.

The conflict over the Petting Zoo could lead to serious warfare between the Mara and Eentsy Z's coalition. It's a war that Eentsy Z would probably lose, but for once he feels too emotional to care. He may however have the presence of mind to ask the PCs for help. Even if he doesn't, they may find out about the situation on the news—and what group of Player Characters wouldn't try to intervene?

The Naval Museum

When the Rook Island Naval Station got converted into the new shipping terminal, the developers promised Bedlam that they would preserve the beautiful old 19th century buildings and keep the site's "historic character" intact. This was almost a total lie. But not completely. They left one building standing and they put a small museum in it.

Located at the north end of Rook Island, the shabby little Naval Museum has some plaques and models showing Rook Island as it used to be. There is also a display on the history of Bedlam, which no one has bothered to edit the embarrassing parts out of. All the really sordid stuff from the 18th and 19th century section of the "Timeline" on Page 24 can be found here.

Kept open only as part of a contractual obligation (and so that the city can put phantom employees on its books and spirit their wages away to unknown parties), sometimes days go by without the museum getting a single visitor. It's officially open from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The bored interns from the Bedlam Historical Society are always shocked to see a visitor.

Nightlife in Bedlam



You can have a pretty good time in Bedlam after dark, if you're not too choosy. Here's a guide to the city's nightlife.

Maxx

Down on the edge of the Meadows is Bedlam's last heavy metal nightclub. Located in a huge blank rectangle of a building, Maxx still books acts like Poison, Anthrax and WASP.

Former angry young men with grey in their mullets come from more than a hundred miles around to find the one place where everybody still rocks out the way you're supposed to. It's also one of the few spots you can go to hear guys complain that Grunge and that Seattle \$#!+ are messing everything up—all these years after Grunge has petered out to nothing.

More than one supervillain who never outgrew the '80s has shown up at Maxx. The crowd usually welcomes them like celebrities and so far there haven't been any ugly incidents.

An Adventure at Maxx

Skid Row is playing at Maxx and every Sebastian Bach fan from here to Scranton is

lining up around the block. The supervillain known as #@%&face has been sighted twice in the Meadows prior to the event, and PCs who do a little research on him (with a Streetwise or Investigation roll) can learn that while he is certainly a metalhead, he hates Skid Row and thinks they stole Poison's sound.

If the PCs go poking around the Meadows at the sites where he was spotted (he bought some cigarettes at a gas station and picked up a burger at Wunder-Chuk) they'll find a piece of crudely painted graffiti on a wall behind Wunder-Chuk's. It reads "JSB Will Die Die Die!"

Maxx's owners are out of town, and the club's manager will not want to shut the venue down—he doesn't have the authority to do that without word from the owners, who can't be reached. The band is in transit, running late and can't be contacted in time to warn them away. In fact they'll arrive at the gig just barely in time to go on, and they won't want to cancel their appearance at the last second on the PCs' unsupported word. Nor will the local authorities want to intervene. In fact, because this is the Meadows, there's some dispute as to who the local authorities even are.

The PCs are going to have to watch the crowd or watch the door—and watching the door might not do any good, since #@%&face can walk through walls.

Almost midway through the show, a Player Character glimpses #@%&face in the middle of the crowd, glaring at the stage. It's tough to keep track of his movements through the jam-packed room and tougher still to get through the crowd to confront him. He seems to be working his way up to the stage. The audience is packed in tight, hundreds of potential hostages are all around.

At some point word will spread through the crowd that #@%&face is here (particularly if the PCs shout out a warning or try to confront him.) The moment the crowd realizes that he's in the club, they give him a hero's welcome, cheering wildly and shielding him with their bodies from the PCs. The band loves him too—just because he's no fan of theirs doesn't mean they

aren't fans of his, and they'll actually invite him up on stage with them.

Totally shocked by all the attention, #@%&face will decide that Skid Row is awesome after all, and he'll behave himself for the rest of the concert, dancing with the crowd and basking in the attention. If the PCs try to apprehend him, they'll have a riot on their hands. If only there were some way to lure him outside...

The Circle Perk

In the late nineties, someone had the brilliant idea of marketing a chain of "independent urban hipster" coffee shops. One brand-identity challenge immediately presented itself. How do you market a chain to people who hate the corporate world?

They came up with the Circle Perk, a coffee shop with a late 1970s punk-rock theme. Pictures of Johnny Rotten and Joe Strummer hang on the walls. Razor blades and safety pins decorate the bar. No syringes though—that would be going too far. The booths are upholstered in a leopard-print pattern. The wait-staff are encouraged to take the studs out of their lips and noses and temporarily replace them with safety pins. Their heavily sugared coffee drinks have names like "Boring Rubbish" and come in sizes like "Too Big" and "Sod Off."

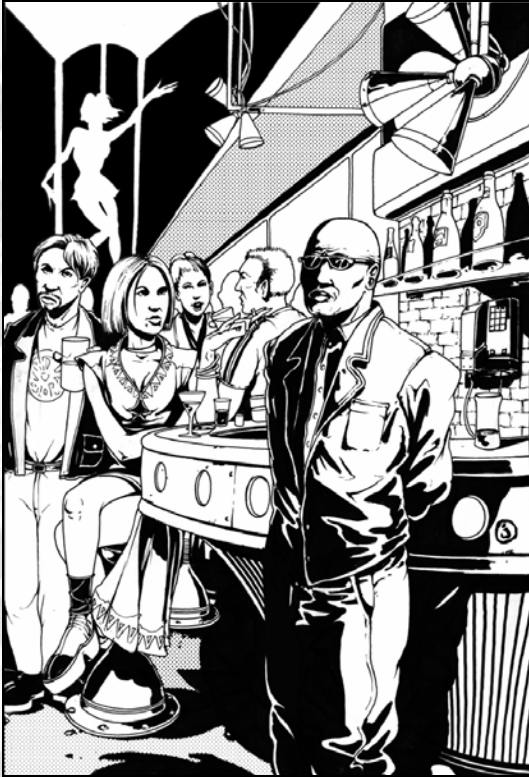
Most punk songs from the period are too unseemly for their PA system, so instead they play music by New Wave bands from a few years later (Bow Wow Wow is a perennial favorite, as are Adam Ant and Billy Idol) and any songs by the Ramones that don't involve hitting anyone with a bat or sniffing glue.

Down near the Terminal Drive train station, there is a small, struggling colony of urban pioneers. This is the first wave of gentrification. The bohemians who move into bad neighborhoods for the low rent and make it hip enough for yuppies to come squeeze them out. They have had a lot more difficulty getting established in Bedlam than in some other places, but they have become deeply rooted enough to make the local Circle Perk into their own neighborhood coffee house. They hold poetry slams every

week and some of their own favorite bands have started to play there.

If you would like to be snubbed on a Saturday night by people who think they are cooler than you, there's nowhere better than the Terminal Drive Circle Perk.

Club Nowhere, Club Nothing, Club Nada, No Such Club, etc...



Out on Industrial Drive, you can find illegal nightclubs in the run-down old factories and warehouses. These places operate without liquor licenses or regular visits from the Health Inspector. They do not cut patrons off at three drinks and they don't close their doors at 2:00 AM like most of Bedlam's bars. Nor do they check ID at the door. None of them have names, so people informally call them things like "Club Nothing" or "The Nowhere Lounge." No sign identifies a No-Such Club from the outside. Nor will they admit just anyone. Friends bring friends who they know can be trusted—which makes it a real status symbol for a teenager to get admitted. Cliques jealously guard their access to the clubs, carefully doling introductions out as favors.

Security tends to be provided by off-duty Bedlam Police Officers. It pays much better than being a cop.

A typical club has a bar (sometimes hastily improvised), some slot machines, a space for a DJ or live band, one or more dance floors, depending on how the space is laid out, and a few tables for people to sit and talk. If they have more than one dancing area, then at least some of the dance floors will have mini-bars of their own. Invitations to some rooms are harder to get than others. While you can probably buy drugs and other illegal stuff anywhere in the club, in the back rooms these things are much more freely and openly available.

Wolverton's underworld overlord Rock Johnson ("the Rock") owns most of these enterprises and rumor has it that he lives in one of them.

The Airport Inn

There is life beyond Branson, Missouri. Bedlam's Airport Inn looks like an odd place for a music scene. Directly adjacent to the Bedlam International Airport, this ten story beige obelisk looks exactly like every other mid-level airport hotel on earth. You could spend an entire visit there without ever going outside and without any way of knowing whether you were in Bedlam or Dubuque or Hong Kong.

Tacky, cheesy, boozed-out former singing stars who have long since had to leave Vegas, Reno, Lake Tahoe, North Vegas, Elko, the Indian casinos and Branson Missouri sometimes find themselves with no options left but Bedlam's Airport Inn. Its lounge has become the last refuge for musical acts that are unwelcome anywhere else on earth. A surprising number of one-hit wonders you thought you'd forgotten have come to live in one or another of the hotel's hospitality suites and perform there on weekday afternoons.

Unfortunately, rich young frat-boys from Belchner College have discovered the Airport Inn and have started to haunt the lounge, heckling the performers, hassling the guests and getting fresh with the waitresses.

Classy All-Nude Girls

Aficionados of classy all-nude girls should be sure to check out this club in the Meadows. Not that it's actually classy in any conventional sense of the word. Nor could very many of the wrinkled, sagging drunks prancing around on the stage still reasonably be called "girls." But they are certainly nude, and the fact remains that despite its sticky floors, \$10 watered beer and the grime on the performers' feet this is unquestionably the nicest strip club in Bedlam.

From the outside, Classy All-Nude Girls looks a lot like an abandoned Stuckeys with its windows painted over. Inside, it's not quite as pleasant.

Please ignore the gentlemen from the Gorganzua crime family who sometimes gather in one of the booths to count money and mutter grimly to one another. They really won't like it if you look at them.

The Chinch Bug

To the West of Bedlam, on Highway 2, is a desolate-looking truckstop where non-truckers feel instantly unwelcome. If you go behind it, an unmarked trail leads up to an even less friendly place—the redneck bar and grill known as the Chinch Bug.

Part of the Chinch Bug is a double-wide trailer, the rest is a kind of crude wooden extension built on the back. The remains of another, burnt-out trailer sit next door. Appliances and rusted-out car chassis litter the "parking lot" (a wide patch of bare dirt.)

People who find their way to the Chinch Bug usually wonder why there aren't more Harley Davidsons parked outside. The truth is that bikers are afraid to go into the place.

It was always dangerous—a spot for mean, drunken farm hands to meet their crystal meth dealers and hold impromptu Klan meetings. The owner kept underage girls in the back and some of them were chained to their beds. But now it has

become the favorite haunt of the man-monster known as Geech.

Geech is a jolly, silly, gigantic mountain of muscles with the mind of a child. We have some stats and an illustration for him on the next page. His mother took a lot of terrible drugs, his father was her brother *and* her cousin, but all this seems inadequate to explain him. He's much stronger than a human being is supposed to be, and somewhat larger (7'9" or so.) He could probably beat Gorgah in a wrestling match. But not at an IQ test.

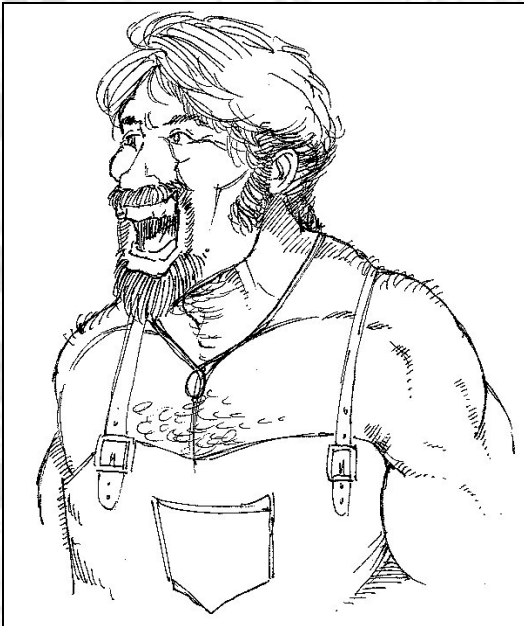
He's mild and gentle. The worst you could say about him is that he's completely obsessed with the Allman Brothers (he has an encyclopedic knowledge of every gig they have ever played.) At least until he drinks. Once he gets inebriated, Geech becomes a terrifying monster, insisting that everyone discuss the Allman Brothers with him, violently disagreeing with everything they say about the band, growing more and more savage and vehement until he explodes in a destructive rage. No one has yet died as a result of one of his rampages, but that's an absolute miracle.

Nobody knows what to do about it. The owner has tried poisoning him and he's been shot twice and it's never had much effect. People have talked about killing him in his sleep, but no one knows where he sleeps.

Geech doesn't show up every night, so he hasn't quite chased everybody away yet. And there are always a few truckers who haven't heard of Geech and still come stumbling into the Chinch Bug unawares. But business is on the brink of collapse—even Delbert Graves and the Brotherhood Motorcycle Club have begun to fear and avoid the joint.

Geech has taken to muttering darkly in his cups that people had better keep showing up regular to talk about the Allman Brothers with him, or he'll go hunt them down in their homes.

Geech



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d10, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Guts d4, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d4, Throwing d4

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11

Edges: Berzerk, Brawny, Improved Frenzy, Take the Hit

Hindrances: All Thumbs, Clueless, Habit (Vicious drunk), Quirk (Obsessed with the Allman Brothers)

Powers:

• **Size +2:** Monster

Club Death

Wolverton's other kingpin, Lincoln Stone ("the Stone") is rumored to own an illegal nightclub that's much worse than any of the Rock's joints. A place called "Club Skull" or "Club Death" where the craps tables are out in the open and drug menus are posted over the bar and snuff films play continuously on

video monitors. Supervillains sometimes congregate there.

Rumors about Club Death circulate in whispers throughout Bedlam's high schools. Every kid in Stone Ridge is aching to get in—it would be the ultimate social coup.

The True Meaning of Christmas

Those who know where to go and who to ask (make a Streetwise roll at a +2) will find that Bedlam has a whole lot of secret underground Santa-Claus-themed leather bars. Hidden in warehouses or over rows of dead shops, these bars have names like "The North Pole" or "Kris Kringle's Hidey Hole." They're the kinds of places you can go to see big dudes dressed like Santa whip guys dressed up as reindeer and bellow "*now dash away, dash away, dash away all!*" Joints where you can get a tattoo of a burning tannenbaum on your face at the bar and the jukebox always seems to be playing "*It's a Holly Jolly Christmas.*"

The discerning visitor to Bedlam will swiftly learn that if you know just who to ask and how to talk to them ("*Hey man, I want to learn the true meaning of X-Mas!*"), it's always the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!

The Shadwell Drive Gentleman's Club

On Shadwell Drive in Bedlam's worst and most polluted neighborhood, a guy named Jimmy Hoover has put his rusted-out van up on blocks and taped a sign to the windshield that says "Shadwell Drive Gentleman's Club—Serious Drinkers Wanted." A case of warm beer and a lot of empties sit in the back. Membership is by invitation only.

FINE DINING IN BEDLAM

Some of Bedlam's most notable eateries are listed here, in order from best to worst. The GM is of course free to invent more. We don't have nearly enough room to list every last place to eat in Bedlam. In any city this size there are sure to be dozens.

Ruth Christopher's Chop House (name suggested by John Polojac)

A major national chain of high-end dining facilities, the Chop House looks as clean, bland and generic as an airport Hilton—and it has nearly as much charm.

Not technically located in Bedlam itself, the Stone Ridge gated community to the north of town has one of these establishments in its Community Center, surrounded by an acre or so of perfect, rolling green lawn. They reserve the right to refuse service to anyone, and they rigorously exercise that right.

If you are lucky enough to get to eat there (reservations are often booked months in advance) you might well find yourself sitting next to such local celebrities as news anchor Obediah Brick, City Councilman "Big Andy" Czernik or even crime lord Leo "Young Junior" Gorganzua himself. If you do, be sure to be prepared to pay \$200 and up for your meal, and to watch yourself around any temperamental local celebrities you might find yourself seated next to. Cameras are definitely a no-no at the Chop House, as Obediah Brick has taught more than one would-be amateur paparazzi.

Doctor Ghastly's

A supervillain theme restaurant where you can get an Evil-Burger topped with Sinister Sauce (their name for salad dressing) served to you by a bored, embarrassed teenager in a rayon costume.

Not quite fast food and not quite fine dining, it occupies a Fuddruckers kind of place on the restaurant ladder. The host/greeter dresses like an arch-villain and the wait staff and busboys dress like henchmen. In fact they call them "Masterminds" and "Mooks" instead of greeters and waiters.

The staff are instructed to talk like cackling villains ("and for the next stage of my fiendish plan, would you care for a diabolical item from our depraved dessert menu?") but most of them are too embarrassed by this to really put much effort into it.

Pneumatic supervillain robots like evil versions of the ones in a Chuck-E-Cheese line the walls and sometimes utter threats and soliloquies at the diners. Not much though—they often break down and are expensive to fix, so most of the time they are switched off.

With three locations in Bedlam, Dr. Ghastly's is desperately overextended and will probably close soon. Always half-empty, each location is ridiculously huge—they seem to have expected to make most of their money through banquet rentals, but this isn't working out either.

For low employee morale and dysfunctional robots are the least of their worries. There are a lot of people who have lost friends and relatives in supervillain attacks and they don't like Dr. Ghastly's at all. While there haven't been any organized protests, people regularly make ugly scenes or vandalize the property. Worse, actual supervillains sometimes take umbrage at the way they are portrayed at Dr. Ghastly's. There have been three supervillain attacks on these restaurants in the past year alone and one of them was bloody—six people died. There are increasing calls to shut the

chain down as a public menace. For now, the city government continues to subsidize Dr. Ghastly's with leftover money from the Redevelopment Commission.

Wunder-Chuk

This second-string fast-food restaurant has all but failed completely in most of America. Just occasionally you can find a dreary-looking holdout in a tired, forgotten strip mall on the edge of some little town. People just didn't want to buy "Chukburgers" and "Groundhog Shakes" from staff dressed up in furry vests and hats with ears. Poor Wally Woodchuck, the franchise's leering, sunglasses-wearing biker rodent failed to inspire love—despite his mid 1990s makeover into a woodchuck with "attitude."

Yet the franchise is alive and well in Bedlam, which boasts no less than fourteen Wunder-Chuks. Interestingly, the franchise is owned by the same folks who own Pizza-Bucket, an equally unsuccessful national chain, and most of the Wunder-Chuks in Bedlam's poorer neighborhoods are also Pizza Buckets, allowing you to order items from either menu and drastically increasing the odd of getting your order confused.

Bedlam's residents have never really taken the concept of pizza served in a cardboard bucket to heart, but no one else has, either. To be fair, it's more a glutinous mass of fried dough and congealing melted cheese than it is a pizza, anyway. Teenagers love them, because they're fun to throw at people, and can do a surprising amount of damage when they're really hot. In fact so many people have taken to calling Pizza Buckets "Teenage Napalm" that this is usually the name you order them by ("hey man, gimme some napalm.")

The drive-through is the most memorable and innovative part of the

Wunder-Chuk dining experience. You place your order with a grinning robotic woodchuck, which grimaces with "attitude" as you tell it what you want to eat and try to understand what your server is saying through the tinny speaker. A lot of the drive-thru robots have been vandalized and some are missing eyes or heads.

The staff on the other end of the intercom may have more attitude than Wally Woodchuck himself. It used to be that high-school kids worked at Wunder-Chuk, but they cost too much and made too many demands, so a lot of the restaurant's employees now come from an innovative prison work-release program, or from mandatory drug rehab.

An Adventure at Wunder-Chuk

A safecracker named Arlo Gump leaves a message for a PC. Meet him at the Wunder-Chuk on Moorcambe Drive. He wants to sell out the supervillain who calls himself #@%&face. He offers few details, but in fact he worked with #@%&face on a job and earned his enmity over some pointless little thing. Gump's in fear of his life now and he wants to get #@%&face before #@%&face gets him.

When the PCs arrive, early in the morning, Gump is sitting in a corner booth, away from the windows. He tells the PCs to get him a cup of coffee, with three sugars. And a Doublechukburger. He can't talk business without a Doublechukburger. But a loud, angry, red-faced businessman is ahead of them in line, yelling at somebody named Stan on his cell phone. A big, gawky, scared-looking teenager waits to take his order. "Number four super value-chuk meal!" he snaps at the kid.

The kid looks as if he wants to cry. "Sir, that comes with a complimentary side, and... and a drink. Wh-what side

would you like, sir?"

The business guy keeps yelling at Stan.

"Sir?" the kid asks timorously "Sir, um, I'm sorry but the computer won't let ring you up until I know what side you want, so..."

"Hang on, Stan." The business-guy wheels on the kid "Can't you see I'm *talking* on the *phone*!?" He screams in a pop-eyed rage. Tears start to leak down the kid's cheeks as the business guy shouts. "Your supervisor! Here! Now!!!"

Laughter, whoops and cheers erupt throughout the restaurant. "Man, you tell that dork!" somebody yells in admiration.

"Now *that's* what I'm *talking* about!" Someone else shouts.

A short, fat, African-American lady (the supervisor) makes a placating gesture to the angry customer, then takes the kid over to one side and starts talking to him, angrily and quietly as tears roll down his face.

"But if I lose my job they'll send me back to juvie," he moans. She throws her hands up as if to ask whether or not that's her problem.

"Hey!" the business-guy yells "Number four super value chuk-meal! Chop-chop!"

The kid hangs his head and looks at his feet, the ridiculous furry ears on his hat bobbing as he cries. Then he grabs a cutting knife from somebody's station, vaults over the counter and seizes the business-guy. "I'm not going back to juvie!" He screams "They'll do stuff to me!" He holds the knife up to his hostage's throat.

The business-guy spots the nearest PC "Hey, super-f@&&*+!" He yells at them "You're getting me out of this without a scratch, or you are in serious #@%&in' trouble!"

Arlo Gump wants no part of this. He stands up and walks for the door, shooting the PCs a look of baffled contempt. And at that very moment,

#@%&face comes smashing through the window with murder on his mind.

Bub's

This little diner doesn't look like much—just a cracked-up glass door in the side of an ugly concrete building. There isn't even a sign. A piece of paper taped over the door has the word "Bub's" on it. Yet the food here is legendary. "Wherever you go, whatever the food is like" people say "it can't possibly be as bad as Bub's."

Look through the window behind the unclean counter and you can see the manic depressive, stoop-shouldered short order cook smoking a cigarette as he prepares your food.

There are two waitresses with a single hideous beehive hairdo among them. Big Zelda is silent and evil, while Little Zelda is loud and evil. Big Zelda is as huge as an orca, while Little Zelda is as tiny as a viper. Neither one will serve you fast or get your order right.

Because there aren't enough places to eat downtown, a lot of office workers have to resort to taking lunch at Bub's, grumbling about it for the rest of the afternoon.

Late at night, scary guys with gold chains and scars come in and hog the only booth, muttering in Sicilian. Sometimes they like to harass people they think don't belong there. One of them is Dapper Donny Scarpia himself.

The Omega Diner

Despite conventional wisdom, the food at the Omega Diner is actually worse than Bub's. Their unofficial motto is "Omega, the last place you'd want to eat." All of the letters in their sign have been smashed out by vandals, except for the Omega.

Run by immigrants from Chechnya, none of whom speak much English, it serves a bizarre mixture of fried spaghetti dishes, meatball subs, burgers, strange Chechen entrees and milkshakes, often with generous extra portions of hair.

The owners don't seem to have quite figured out US cuisine, but since most of the food comes from rusty cans, it almost doesn't matter. Not that most people come here to eat, anyway. The jittery crack-fiends and nervous, twitchy-eyed gang members sitting on the slashed-up stools and uncomfortable chairs (or sometimes lying on the floor) are here to buy and sell drugs, not to relish the dubious, hairy milkshakes.

Any sort of behavior is acceptable in the Omega Diner. Patrons can do anything they like to one another or themselves. The staff never intervenes and never reports anything to the police. They may not know how. Yet they are themselves quick to anger and swiftly resort to violence if they think a customer is insulting them.

Sometimes it's impossible to tell what has set them off or what obscure taboo you've accidentally violated until they start shouting and stabbing you.

Don't order the fish. While the staff behind the counter barely speak English, if you ask any one of them for fish he will scowl, lean forward and grunt "you want the *fresh* fish, eh?" Whatever you reply he will shake his head, grin unpleasantly and say "no, you are want the *fresher* fish I think." It doesn't matter what you say next. He will chuckle, deep and ugly and then say "no, no, you are want the *freshes* fish of *all!*" and produce a smelly bucket full of live, wriggling eels from under the counter. "Which fish you want?" he will ask, gesturing at the squirming, writhing creatures.

Scabies

What is such a "difficult" nouvelle cuisine restaurant doing in Bedlam? It's a long story.

Maverick restaurateur Philmo (he has only one name, like Cher, or God, he explains) had grown tired of New York, LA and Dubai. In an attack of ennui he pioneered the concept of the "New Hatred" and announced that he would

open a restaurant based on the aesthetics of absolute cruelty, with food too advanced for anyone to ever understand, even Philmo himself. And for the final touch of utter degradation, he would open it in Bedlam. Thus was born Scabies. Philmo's revenge upon the universe was now complete.

Located on the penthouse floor of one of the downtown skyscrapers, it has two bars, and a number of different "Affliction Zones" (dining areas) each devoted to a different theme (Psoriasis, the works of Franz Kafka, "Echolalia" and others less easily understood.) The décor varies from Zone to Zone (each holds about five weirdly-shaped asymmetrical tables and a random assortment of painful, evil-looking chairs.) But it's always disturbing, incomprehensible and above all, unclean.

Plates may be triangular, or amoeba-shaped, or the food may be served on antique mirrors, or just splatted down on the table with no plate at all (but only if Philmo really likes you.)

There is no menu. The Maitre D' decides what dish you deserve. The waiters are all either disdainful or awkwardly, fawningly obsequious and inappropriate (which is an ironic form of disdain.) Large, burly men with beards, they all dress like Japanese schoolgirls, complete with pigtails. Screeching atonal music mixed in with the sounds of wounded animals completes your dining pleasure.

Philmo's strange travesty of a restaurant has been every bit as successful as you might guess and the entire place is half-deserted even on Saturday night. Yet investors continue to throw money at it. Weirdly, they're right.

In about six months a reality TV show based around Philmo's bastard stepchild of a project (called "Philmo's Bastard Stepchild") is going to take off. Celebrities will start coming to Bedlam from all across the globe and the "New Hatred" will spread around the world like...scabies.

BEDLAM'S MUSIC SCENE

Nearly dead now, Bedlam's music scene was once thriving. In the 1920s this was one of the best places outside of Mississippi to hear the Blues, although it has been unfairly overlooked by many music historians. During Prohibition it had a huge number of speakeasies and its own distinctive style of Jazz (best exemplified in the "Bedlam Rag" that so many artists have since performed.)

The Blues actually outlasted jazz in Bedlam, and the tiny but revered Club Del Morocco continued to attract aging bluesmen well into the 1950s. Howlin' Wolf and Robert Johnson both played the Del Morocco. Now the club stands empty and boarded-up under a freeway overpass. No one but a few ancient folks in Wolverton even seems to remember Bedlam's blues scene, yet no one ever writes any graffiti on the Del Morocco's walls and no bums ever sleep there.

Punk came late to Bedlam, and it was a peculiar species of the breed. While for the most part the movement had already metamorphosed into Hardcore by 1983, in Bedlam bands like the Vomit Comet and the Sons of Sewage were playing music that sounded like London punk from the late 1970s. And unlike anywhere else but Washington, DC, a lot of these bands were black.

When hip-hop swept over Bedlam like a juggernaut, a lot of its black punk acts got caught up in it, which led to a harsher, uglier, more humorous and less funk-influenced kind of sound which Bedlam is still known for today. The music you would go to hear at one of the illegal clubs out on Industrial Drive is usually a lot like trip-hop, slow and heavy (but danceable), with an ugly, fuzzy, undercurrent of growling noises and with rap lyrics shouted over the beat. It often uses electric guitars, with the distortion turned way, way up.

There was a vigorous Heavy Metal scene in Bedlam in the '80s but it's as dead as the Del Morocco now. There is still one good venue left for hair metal bands—Maxx, out on the edge of the Meadows, but they

don't need to book local acts when they can still get WASP and the Scorpions.

Meanwhile, the Sons of Sewage soldier on. The members of the band own a group house up in the Country Club and they play shows in their backyard for whoever wants to pay ten bucks for a place to sit. Everyone still asks for their biggest hit: "I'm a Punk-Rock Mutha#@%&ah!!"

Rock Hard and the Mighty Ones

Bedlam's most commercially successful band actually plays none of its own music. They strictly do covers, and although their range is wide, it's all firmly in the middle-of-the-road. They can play a loose, flabby bar-rock rendition of everything from Louie Louie to Wooly Bully to 99 Red Balloons. But their real passion is for guitar-pop bands of the late seventies and early eighties. Foreigner, Journey, Styx, Loverboy and others too awful to name.

They're the hardest working band in Bedlam, playing every last bar mitzvah, wedding, corporate retreat and outdoor festival they can find. As a result, turnover is high among band members and Rock Hard himself (aka Vern Stazinsky) is quick to fire his players at the first sign that they're burning out or starting to overshadow him.

DJ Supermax

Unlike a lot of gangster rappers, Supermax is a genuine street thug. He has actually lived the life he's singing about. But he's never been that great at expressing it. His lyrics are all stale clichés and his rhymes are uninspired. There's nothing about his work that seems especially authentic or for that matter any different from any other low-end rapper. He doesn't even have a good gimmick.

Still, he was the closest thing Bedlam had to a hip-hop star until about ten years ago, when he got sent to prison for aggravated manslaughter.

Now that he's out, his raps aren't just uninspired, they're also ten years out of date. And he refuses to get with the times,

stubbornly insisting that he's doing it the right way and that all that Wu-Tang \$#!+ is messing everybody's mind up. With no national labels interested in his act, he performs at block parties and local clubs and sells his own CDs on the street. People buy them, but mostly out of sympathy and nostalgia.

His career as a gangster is more or less over, too. The guys from his old set have died or moved on, and Eentsy Z doesn't like him, so these days he earns his living by pushing a mop.

Whispers from Uranus

Somewhere on beyond Emo lies a depressed, big-haired, languid land where Uranus softly whispers. You know as soon as you look at them that at least one band member believes himself to be the reincarnation of some drug-addicted French poet or other. You can hear their wispy, elfin noodlings at the Circle Perk on Terminal Drive. In fact it's the only gig they ever seem to be able to get. The manager apparently likes them, and may be dating their lead singer, a languid young beanpole named Rimbaud Dulac (his real name is Mike Czenarik.)

Whispers from Uranus may be about to hit it big. The word is that Rimbaud may have briefly dated a producer with national connections and the band may be on its way out of Bedlam.

Lou Ragusa

Once a crooner who opened for the likes of Mel Torme and Bobby Vinton, Lou Ragusa was a minor member of the Rat Pack and was once allowed to hold Frank Sinatra's coat, while the Chairman of the Board took a leak on somebody's car.

Lou's drug problem ended his career in Vegas, Tahoe and eventually the Indian casinos, so these days he sings afternoon shows at the Bedlam Airport Inn. Waitresses know to beware his roving hands and not to mention his hideous toupee.

Lou's voice was always a little fragile, and fifty years of total, absolute dissipation have left it a fractured, scraping wreck, but his remaining fans don't care.

Thudhammur



Bedlam's newest heavy metal act is an authentic garage band, put together by a teenage stoner named Jordan Glickstein. Jordan is a Junior at Pennington High and he founded the band so that he'd have an extracurricular activity on his college applications that would make him stand out. But now that he's gotten into the whole business of arranging gigs and scheduling the band's activities, it totally consumes him and he's Thudhammur all the way.

Through chutzpah and determination he's landed them gigs all over the city, and a few of them pay more than tips. He's actually managed to alarm Rock Hard and the Mighty Ones into threatening them and telling them to stay away from bar mitzvahs—the bar mitzvahs in this town belong to Rock Hard.

But despite Jordan's tireless efforts to promote his band there's one small problem with Thudhammur that he's never been able to fix—they suck. They stink so badly, in fact, that almost no one would ever invite them back for a second gig. Perhaps more rehearsals would help, but then again, their absolute lack of talent might still be an insurmountable barrier. At the moment they have a bigger problem to

worry about. Jordan lives in Stone Ridge and heavy metal music is strictly against the gated community's rules. The neighborhood watch knows that someone on Jordan's block has been playing heavy metal and they're trying to track down where the noise is coming from. If they finger Jordan, his parents may be in a lot of trouble.

The <@~+s



Best known for the song "Sniff my <@~+," this group of angry young ladies is determined to make post-punk safe for grrrls, by screaming loud and throwing stuff at the audience. Their line-up changes a lot, people drift in and out, so their sound changes, too. But it's always loud, shrill and poorly tuned. The <@~+s don't care much about their musicianship anyway. They really just like to act outrageous and piss off the audience. They'll do anything at all to provoke the crowd—it's just not a good night if it doesn't end in violence. They never seem to rehearse and they often shown up late and drunk.

They used to play the Terminal Drive Circle Perk, but got kicked out for being obscene and getting into fist-fights with the patrons. They aren't sure where they're going to play next, but the band has always been more about hanging out and

being buddies than playing music, anyhow. They all live in a group-house near Terminal Drive and pool their food stamps and the money parents send from home.

Special Love

John Love is an obnoxious Christian stage-parent who home schools his ten mentally-challenged kids in the trailer park at Shady Meadows. His wife is a worn-out wreck and lacks the strength to oppose him on anything, so when he got it into his head that the family should become a band, she raised only the feeblest concerns. So for the past two years he has hectored and browbeaten his ten little angels through countless auditions and endless rehearsals at home. They show up for every last talent show and public festival in Bedlam.

A perfectionist, a control freak and a manic depressive, John Love is difficult for most people to be around for very long. Once a venue gives in to his pressuring and books him, John inevitably starts making all kind of nitpicking demands and gets crazy if they aren't met. He also doesn't want any non-Christians to come into contact with his kids, even briefly, and there are a whole host of weird biblical taboos that he insists on observing.

When all twelve members of the family play at once, the result is a kind of nervous, up-tempo pop sound, a bit like a really messed-up Partridge Family. They're surprisingly competent musicians—much better than Thudhammur or the <@~+s. However, ten instruments is way too many for any group to sound less than completely irritating. Don't try telling that to John Love. Don't ask him why all ten of his children have mental disabilities, either.

The Sons of Sewage

Bedlam's oldest punk band has given up on traditional success altogether. They no longer have a label and produce their own audio cassettes when they feel like it (they've never gotten into making CDs.) The only venue they play is their back yard in the smogged-out neighborhood called the Country Club. You have to find out by word of mouth when they're going to play, but they still get huge crowds in their back yard at every concert. People drink and make

noise and beat on cars and the party goes on for as long as it lasts.

They haven't updated their look or play list much in all the years they've been doing this and they still sound a lot like punk in its earliest phase. Somewhere between the Ramones and the Sex Pistols, with maybe a bit of Iggy Pop. They wear their hair spiked and are clad in an assortment of hideous, tattered-up suits in eye-scorching colors. Some people compare them to Green Day, which never fails to elicit a snarl from lead singer Johnny Vomit.

A lot of people are surprised to learn that the Sons of Sewage are an African-American band, but in Bedlam that wasn't so weird, at least in the early '80s. Johnny Vomit must be past fifty now, but he says he'll keep playing punk rock 'til he dies.

Frisco Willie and the Railroad Choo-Choo Fun Club

Who told Frisco Willie that he could sing? This strange, skinny old guy thinks he's the next Pete Seeger, bound for greatness in the folk music scene. He dresses like an engineer and howls out classic railroad songs in a reedy, tone-deaf voice. He's incapable of staying on key or carrying a tune.

Some people say he's astonishingly bad. Others say he's flat-out Ed Wood crazy awful. But through dogged and delusional persistence, he has managed to land gig after gig on Bedlam's local public television, teaching a whole generation of school children how to sing wildly off key. These days he has a whole band of equally deluded and talentless performers backing him up—although he might have done just as well recruiting actual hobos for his Railroad Choo-Choo Fun Club. At least they might have done a better job playing the harmonica.

Local Labels

Bedlam has two tiny, struggling record labels, \$#!+-%@& Records and Scumbag Records. \$#!+-%@& has represented Bedlam's tiny punk community for decades, off and on. They signed a couple of sludge-metal acts back when Bedlam had a scene

of its own, but these days they stay in business by issuing occasional CDs of older material. They used to be run by Mo Bosley and his partner/girlfriend Staci Staples. Then Staci got a law degree, broke up with Mo and started working evictions cases for the giant apartment management firm of Drago and Grubb. For a long time \$#!+-%@& Records had a storefront office on Ash Street, but then Torchy the Firebug burned it down (see Page 267 to learn more about Bedlam's most prolific arsonist.)

These days the label operates out of Mo Bosley's basement in Wolverton. He would dearly love to sign a new band.

Scumbag Records doesn't even have a basement. It still exists mostly on paper and in the mind of its impresario, a disreputable would-be music producer and full-time criminal named Chuck Roast. He's got a lot of money saved up from various evil schemes and he's looking for legitimacy. A rap act might be the very thing for his new label, but the African-American guys in Wolverton all hate him and there aren't any white rappers around who seem interested. He says he's got some incredible new project lined up, but he won't say what it is. Meanwhile, he's been hiring homeless people to put posters up all over town advertising Scumbag records, and he calls every radio show he can to promote it on the air.

A Local Music Personality: Gravy the Freak

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Knowledge (Bedlam's Music Scene) d12, Notice d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Charismatic, Dodge

Hindrances: Loyal, Quirk (acts like a lunatic), Quirk (obsessed with the Sons of Sewage)

Background: This stringy, wild-eyed lunatic dresses up in a purple and green suit and sells bootleg tapes on streetcorners in

Wolverton. Quite a showman, he holds forth loudly and at great length about his wares, making up rhymes and non-stop nutty jokes as he hawks his tapes. He records all the best stuff that the DJs in the illegal nightclubs out on Industrial Drive put together. But his real passion is the Sons of Sewage. Gravy the Freak has taped every last backyard performance they have ever put on, and he carries copies of the whole collection around with him.

Under his raving-mad demeanor he's a gentle soul and looks out for the kids on his regular streetcorners. If a child is in trouble he asks after them and lets their parents know. He's also older than people think. He looks and sounds like a badly-preserved, leathery twenty-eight year old who has spent too much time outside. But in fact he's forty.

SOCIAL LIFE AND CLUBS

A number of social clubs cater to the interests of Bedlam's more discerning citizens. Here are a few of the most well known.

The Country Club

People are often surprised to learn that Bedlam's Country Club still exists. The clubhouse and the putting greens are long since abandoned and dead, but the club itself is still around on paper. Most of the members live in Stone Ridge. Horatio Hoggard III, the club's Acting President, claims that while their activities are on hiatus, they'll find a new space eventually. In the meantime he continues to collect the club's outrageously large membership fees. Most members are so afraid of being cut out of their social set that they continue to pay him. But at the same time club morale has sunk so low that members seldom even mention the group's existence.

The Calabria Workingmen's Benevolent Association

This small fraternal lodge and social club has its headquarters on Lurman Avenue in the Greely Point neighborhood. Most members of this invitation-only social club seem to be small businessmen from Greely Point's Italian neighborhood.

The lodge itself is a high, narrow building, detached from the row houses around it. Made of weathered brown bricks, it's clearly of 19th century construction and resembles a small church or Masonic temple. Unassuming though it looks, a great many of its members have gone on to prominent positions in Bedlam's business community—you'd be surprised if you ever got a look at their membership rolls as to how many well-known Bedlamites are members. But of course they don't make their rolls public.

No sign advertises the building's function, but everyone seems to know what it is. Older residents take off their hats as they walk past the club, out of respect.

The Shadwell Drive Gentleman's Club

See Page 194 to learn all about Bedlam's most exclusive social club. Few are ever asked to join.

SECRET SOCIETIES

For the discriminating Bedlamite, the city has always offered a few social clubs that don't advertise their existence to the public. Here are some of the most prominent.

Saturday Night Shots

This adventurous group of students communicates online and via text messaging. Most of them are members of frats and sororities at Belchner College (see Page 140 for a description of this illustrious academic institution) but some are high school seniors who live in the Stone Ridge gated community. To join Saturday Night Shots, you have to be invited, and to be

invited, you have to be rich, white and willing to take risks. They organize impromptu social gatherings and parties at local bars and nightclubs. The illegal clubs out on Industrial Drive are becoming their favorite hangout.

If you read the messages they post on their online forum or their text logs, you will find that they largely consist of boasts about drunken savagery, comparisons of expensive toys that mummy and daddy bought them and torrents of racial invective. They do not like or feel comfortable around the "Faceless Hordes" of non-white kids they party with in the clubs, but they are thrilled by getting to dance next to such awful people and perhaps stab them or have casual sex with them.

A hint of violence is always lurking just under the surface of Saturday Night Shots. This club could easily turn to entertainments like bum-fights or setting homeless people on fire or vicious brawls with the gangs. If they get around to committing any serious crimes, they will all back one another's alibis and hire formidable lawyers.

The Phantom Empire



Does the Phantom Empire still exist in some form or another? Sammy "Snap Brim" Hammer thought it did as late as the 1930s, and that Lucius Hardwick remained its Emperor. If some vestige of the Empire still survives today, then it has gone deep underground. Instead of an organized militia of thugs, determined to chase Catholic immigrants out of Stark Hill, it would be a network of powerful old men, working behind the scenes and guiding Bedlam's affairs from the shadows. If they are real, then instead of having legions of

hooded troublemakers they hire professionals when violence is required. But mostly they would exert influence behind the scenes.

But this begs the question—what is their real agenda? It can't have been kicking the Irish out of Stark Hill. They failed to do that, and if this were their sole purpose then they would have faded away by now. It's not acquiring wealth and power. Their leaders were already some of the richest and most powerful men in the city. Could it be something far more sinister?

Opus Ombra



Any pious weakling can follow God's laws on Earth in hopes of eternal bliss. But only the strong can do the Lord's work with nothing but an eternity of darkness for their reward. How noble it is to be damned in the service of God. How true it is that Judas was the greatest of the Lord's disciples, for only he was blessed with a chance to do God's will, knowing that Hell awaited him for it. So say the tenets of the Opus Ombra. They do God's work in the shadows, they claim. They undertake the work that the blessed

cannot. Excommunication was a small price to pay compared to the infinite sorrows that await them on the other side of the grave, and they have embraced it gladly.

Opus Ombra is either a secret, fanatical subdivision of the Catholic organization called the "Doctrine of the Faith" (the branch of the Church that was in former years called the Holy Inquisition) or else they are a fanatical cult founded in the 1850s by a mad monk called "Brother Belpigor." It's unclear to anyone which they really are (and we're leaving the truth of the matter up to the GM.)

They have, however, managed to master what they call the "Ars Ombra" pretty thoroughly. More than half of their agents can use at least some magic and they have a few sorcerers in their arsenal who are strong enough to fight superheroes on equal terms.

They are dedicated to stamping out every trace of the supernatural from the world and they make no distinction between benign and sinister forces. It's all against God's law. So are the forces that they use themselves, and they fully expect to spend eternity in Hell for using them.

Opinion is divided within the Order about superhumans. Some of them have powers that clearly come from Satan, everyone agrees on this. And it's clear that they all need to be killed, just to make sure that the satanic ones are exterminated with the rest of them. But there are two schools of thought about how urgent the problem is. Either superheroes need to become a major priority or they can wait their turn with the rest of the witches, heretics and abominations.

Opus Ombra has no compunctions about accidentally killing civilians, or murdering innocent people who've they've mistaken for witches, vampires, etc. If these innocents are good, then they will go to Heaven. If they are bad (or if they are not practicing Catholics) they will go to Hell, where they belong. Either way God's will is done. For the same reason, they have no problem with murdering witnesses to their crimes. Yet there are certain things they won't do. They will not kill a human being without administering the Rite of Extreme

Unction over them. They will not attack a human being on holy ground—which makes it possible to meet and negotiate with them in Churches.

A typical cell of the Opus Ombra will have between ten and twelve members. The individual cell members tend to be pretty tough—Wild Cards up to the Veteran level. Some times, if they expect a target to be especially tough, they will bring in their superhuman agents. Most cell members spend their time as house guests in one or another believer's home. They have a network of these safe houses that stretches around the globe. In some major cities (Rome, for example) they have actual monasteries where they train and meditate and keep their volumes of arcane lore. This is the kind of "Chapter House" that Bishop Sloat (see Page 44) hopes to help them found in Bedlam.

Whether the organization is a giant international conspiracy with ties to the Vatican, or an isolated gang of lunatics with a hundred or so members we leave up to the GM.

Brother of the Opus Ombra

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d6, Guts d10, Intimidation d8, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) d6, Knowledge (Theology) d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Spellcasting d8, Streetwise d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6 (1)

Edges: Arcane Background (the Occult), Champion, Combat Reflexes, Soul Drain
Hindrances: Heartless, Vow (Fanatically determined to eliminate magic from the world)

Powers:

- Awareness
- Detect/Conceal Arcana
- Dispel
- Immunity to Magical Attacks: Takes half damage from direct magical attack
- Negation 4

Gear: Body Armor (+1, Heavy Armor), Silver Dagger (Damage: d6+d4) Heavy Target Pistol (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d6, ROF 1, AP 2)

Background: This is a typical Brother, but there are some with much stranger abilities. In addition to this basic-model sorcerer they have a few telepaths (replace Dispel with and Immunity with Telepathy and Mind Control 6), and pyromancers (replace magical powers with a 3d6 Ranged Attack and the Elemental Trick "Fire") and others.

Pater Ombra

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d12, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d6, Guts d10, Intimidation d8, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) d10, Knowledge (Theology) d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Spellcasting d12, Streetwise d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6 (1)

Edges: Arcane Background (Superpowers), Champion, Combat Reflexes, Soul Drain

Hindrances: Heartless, Vow (Fanatically determined to eliminate magic from the world)

Powers:

- Awareness
- Detect/Conceal Arcana
- Dispel
- Super-Sorcery: Level 3

Gear: Body Armor (+1, Heavy Armor), Silver Dagger (Damage: d6+d4) Heavy Target Pistol (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d6, ROF 1, AP 2)

Background: If they need to call on them, the Order has a tiny handful of *really* powerful sorcerers. Informally known as Pater Ombra (father of shadows), each is as tough as a superhero. At least one of them is actually a woman. Every Pater Ombra uses a greek letter as a code-name (Pater Alpha, Pater Epsilon, etc.) Supposedly, no one in the Order knows their real names, but in a group this close-knit that seems unlikely.

Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars



This was once Bedlam's most exclusive sorority, open only by invitation to girls from Bedlam's very best families. They seem to have been founded in the wake of whatever nameless tragedy forced the Bedlam Girls' Academy to close. That puts the date of their founding at 1919 or 1920. People in Society were still whispering uneasily about the group as late as the mid 1930s. Do they still exist, all these years later? There are conspiracy theorists who think so, and they have all kinds of crazy ideas about what the girls may have been up to.

The legend goes that some of the girls who survived the incident at the Academy blamed their fathers and all of Bedlam's wealthy families for what had occurred there. They decided to take their revenge. Did they ever find the means to achieve it? No one knows. But some people point ominously to what became of the Bedlam Country Club and to the rich families who used to live in the big houses on Scarlett Hill, and wonder, is the Sisterhood cackling in triumph out there somewhere?

RELIGION IN BEDLAM



A town like Bedlam needs a lot of religion—for the same reason that it needs a lot of alcohol. Here's your guide to some of its major churches. This is not a totally comprehensive list. We've left plenty of room for other religious groups of the GM's own design.

Bedlam Cathedral

Located on Voight Street in Greely Point, Bedlam Cathedral glowers down the hill at the harbor. It's old and in poor repair. The Catholic Church is still pretty strong in Bedlam, but like all of its institutions they are slipping into decline. Part of the transept has been closed off for structural instability, so they use it to store old furniture. Because the cathedral was expanded and remodeled so many times in the 19th and early 20th centuries, there is some confusion over just how many rooms it has and there is no completely reliable map of its lower floors.

The offices of the diocese are based in the cathedral's rectory, behind the main building. It's a high, narrow, forbidding structure—a fitting lair for Bishop Lemuel Sloat. From here Sloat runs the Church's affairs in Bedlam. He's a lot scarier and

more forbidding than the rectory. Not many people actually attend Mass at the Cathedral—it largely serves the old Italian neighborhood in Greely Point, and that community is slowly dying off. Sloat himself gives communion here, to the half-empty nave.

There are persistent rumors that the cathedral is the home of a grisly apparition called the Bleeding Nun, but this is untrue. Last year Bishop Sloat trapped and destroyed the poor unhappy creature.

St. Anthony's, St. Fabian's, St. Perpetua's and St. Casimir's

These four churches serve the spiritual needs of Stark Hill. One large church could probably work more efficiently than four half-empty ones, but from time immemorial, the Irish attend St. Anthony's, the Italians attend St. Fabian's, the Poles attend St. Casimir's and the Croats attend St. Perpetua's. People from the wrong ethnic group will swiftly be made to feel uncomfortable if they show up at the wrong church. Stark Hill's Catholics have learned to live next to one another, but it only goes so far.

St. Athol's Basilica

The fifth church in Stark Hill serves the neighborhood's small Serbian community. Despite its grand name, this is a tiny Orthodox church, with a congregation of no more than two hundred people. Yet folks in Stark Hill are forever grumbling about it, and about the Serbs. They just aren't Catholic and there's no way around it. Who knows what evil stuff they get up to in that church of theirs? They call it "Saint @\$\$#0!&'s" when they think the Serbs aren't listening.

Father Radovan, who oversees St. Athol's, is a violent-tempered old drunk who has devoted himself to proving that the Serbian war atrocities in Bosnia never happened. But he is, his flock agrees, better than no priest at all.

St. Romuald's

Located on the verge between Hardwick Park and downtown Bedlam, this Catholic church is run by the huge and ferocious

Father Miguel Zalamanca. Father Miguel is very tough in the confessional and seems determined to root sin out of his flock. He's scared of the Mara, though and desperate to keep his church free of their influence, so he's careful never to speak out against the gang in any of his sermons, and turns a deaf ear if any of his parishioners complain about them. He doesn't want his church to end up like Our Lady of Xichumel. Anyway it's much easier to bully kids and little old ladies than angry young men with guns.

Our Lady of Xichumel

This beautiful, ornate church has become a wholly owned subsidiary of the Mara and its priest is one of their captains. His name is Alfredo Guzman, but everybody calls him "Father Chuey." You can find out a lot more about him on Page 240. He uses his church to host the Mara's sinister rites and to store stolen goods. In his sermons he tells his parishioners to pay their protection money on time and not to squeal on the gangs. If they confess to snitching, he sometimes shoots them right there in the confessional. The church itself is falling apart from neglect.

The Good News Thunderous Hammer Church of God in Christ

The largest church in Wolverton is also one of the neighborhood's strongest institutions. They sponsor countless community programs and feed large numbers of people through their food bank. The Reverend Willy Boggs is their minister and he has used this position to become a municipal councilman and one of the most powerful men in Bedlam (see Page 41.)

They have a giant worship center at the intersection of Larchmont Avenue and Mortlake Drive, and smaller offices scattered around the city. The building looked shiny and new when it was built in 1975, but it's starting to get a little dingy now. They have added lots of additions over the years, spoiling its clean lines.

True Word Baptist Church

Baptists look down on the Church of God in Christ and its ilk. For Wolverton's stuffier residents, the True Word Baptist Church

offers more singing and less shouting and rolling in the aisles. Less tolerance and brotherhood and more blood-and-thunder.

They're the second largest church in Wolverton, and their minister, Cleveland Wallace, is Willy Boggs' rival. He has allied his political fortunes with Righteous Townsend, which puts Mr. Townsend in an odd predicament.

Reverend Wallace hates Reverend Boggs because he tolerates gay people in his congregation. A loud homophobe, Reverend Wallace has dedicated himself to stamping homosexuality out of Bedlam's black community. It's the cornerstone of his ministry and the thing he talks about most in his sermons. But Righteous Townsend is himself gay. He's not exactly closeted—he just doesn't talk about his orientation one way or the other. Councilman Townsend is normally pretty ruthless, but his allegiance with Cleveland Wallace has begun to trouble him.

Abundant Tabernacle Ministry

Part of a national franchise, Abundant Tabernacle claims to be no denomination but "Christian." They answer to a distant mega-church in Florida, but the local franchisee, the Reverend Ross Bewley, has a lot of independence and can run his churches more or less the way he pleases. Reverend Bewley is a plump, self-satisfied little man with a weirdly effeminate manner. He also uses far too much hair cream.

Instead of a single big church, they have lots of little storefront operations scattered all over Bedlam, run by assistant pastors. Reverend Bewley visits them from time to time, but his biggest ministry is on the radio and on local television. He broadcasts a three-hour show every Sunday on Channel 13 and does one-hour programs every other day of the week.

He makes a lot of money from donations but even more comes from the Abundant Tabernacle School (see Page 133) and bible camps. They have just opened a Christian Therapy Center to cure homosexual teenagers of their unclean impulses and this is bringing in a lot of revenue, too. Reverend Bewley takes a particular interest in this new project and

spends a lot of time offering patients his personal guidance and counsel. The main church in Florida sucks most of the donations out of Bedlam, but there's still enough left over for some youth outreach programs and for the Reverend to live in one of the biggest mansions in Stone Ridge.

Bewley's devoted wife, Dot, appears with him on stage and ministers to the faithful herself. She is as huge and statuesque as her husband is tiny, and her gigantic hair makes her look even bigger. No matter how many times Reverend Bewley gets arrested for soliciting male prostitutes, she stands by his side and so does his congregation. It's happened three times so far, for the Devil surely wishes to crush the righteous Reverend Bewley with his infernal lies. But the rock of his faith stays firm. Every member of the congregation knows better than to believe these things could be true.

The Reverend Earl Hubbs, the church's distant leader, is a little annoyed by Reverend Bewley's indiscretions but he sympathizes—Reverend Hubbs himself knows only too well the Devil's mischievous tricks. Anyway Bewley is one of his best money makers, so he's not about to pull the franchise out from under him.

There is a more radical group of young Christian warriors within Abundant Tabernacle, who have been talking about taking Direct Action against the unrighteous. However, they have yet to successfully build any pipe bombs, so their crusade has not yet gotten under way.

Temple Beth-Israel

A small synagogue with an elderly congregation, it's still the largest Jewish house of worship in Bedlam. Despite its name, this is actually a conservative synagogue (usually it's only Reform synagogues that use the term "temple"). It used to be located in a beautiful old building in Stark Hill, but it burned down too many times, so the congregation has relocated to an ugly brick structure just off Bedlam Harbor. Despite the congregation's efforts to decorate the building, it still looks like a warehouse.

Someone has been attacking and vandalizing Temple Beth-Israel. No one is sure who it could be, but the graffiti has been getting increasingly threatening and ominous. Perhaps they'll have to move to the Meadows soon.

The Church of the All-Devouring Redeemer



This strange backwoods cult is little-known in Bedlam, but it does have a few local adherents, most notably the head of the Special Assault Squad, Captain Elvis Aaron Stokes. As its central tenet, they believe that the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist is blasphemous, for it posits that Man is fit to eat the flesh of Christ. Surely it is more fitting for Christ to dine on the flesh of men.

They practice polygamy and force their women to cover their hair outside and enforce a host of other biblical rules. They also kill unbelievers who have learned the secrets of their faith. If any member of the church thinks they have met a heathen who knows too much, they will notify the cult's leaders back in Alabama. The elders will then send a member of their hardcore inner cadre up to assassinate the unclean one—usually by drowning them.

ORGANIZED CRIME IN BEDLAM



While organized crime won't play a role in every adventure, PCs who are based in Bedlam should probably have some vague idea of how it works. This will make the setting feel more three-dimensional and alive. But of course not everyone in Bedlam knows precisely how the Mob operates. Make the following information available to them only if they ask for it, and make a Streetwise roll. We have a section on Page 213 about how much you have to beat the roll by in order to get each individual piece of information.

This chapter gives you a broad overview. We break things down in much greater detail in the next section, but read the overview first to keep it from getting confusing.

Here is the most basic and important fact to remember about organized crime in Bedlam. There are many criminal gangs here, large and small, but they all exist at the sufferance of the Mafia. The shadowy Honduran gang called the Mara, the streetcorner gangstas in Wolverton, all owe fealty to Don Scarpia or Don Gorganzua.

The Mob doesn't micro-manage the other gangs or tell them what to do—the Mara are free to go to war with Eentsy Z if they want to. But they take a cut of everyone's income and they reserve the right to issue them an occasional order (usually something like "find and kill such-and-such a person" or "this construction

firm is under our protection—don't steal from them".)

The only exceptions to this rule are the desperate, drug addled street gangs of the Country Club. No one has bothered to take them over or bring them under their wing—why go to the trouble? This means that you might actually be able to hide out from the Mob in the Country Club, even though you still wouldn't exactly be safe there.

Bedlam has two Mafia families, the Scarpias and the Gorganzuas. There used to be three, but when Hardwick Park turned into a Hispanic neighborhood, the Igglionis lost their power base and in their weakened state they became easy prey for the Scarpias, who killed their leaders and absorbed their soldiers. Both of the remaining families owe their loyalty to the big bosses in New York City, but are allowed to run things in Bedlam without much interference. They are not on good terms with the "Chicago Outfit" or most of the other gangs of the Midwest, for reasons that are buried in the shadowy secret reaches of Mob history.

The Scarpias are bigger and more dangerous than the Gorganzuas, but aren't as wealthy. They are based in the working class neighborhood of Stark Hill, and have incorporated the local Irish and Polish gangs into their structure. They control "Big Andy" Czernik, the most powerful City Councilman and take a bite of any and all trade that comes in through Bedlam Harbor. Unfortunately, the smaller harbor across the river at Greely Point is becoming more profitable, and it's under the control of the smaller Gorganzua family. The Scarpias would have long since crushed the Gorganzuas and taken it over, but the big guys in New York have ordered them not to.

The current head of the Scarpia crime family is "Dapper Donny" Scarpia, a slovenly fat man with a ragged beard who dresses in stained tracksuits and frayed old athletic clothes. Some mafia dons wear

thousand dollar Italian suits. But the most expensive item of clothing Dapper Donny owns is his nylon windbreaker jacket. It's charitable to call the thing growing on his face a beard—it's more like a collection of long stringy hairs that sprout from his cheeks and chin in random clumps. He's arguably the most powerful man in Bedlam, but he looks like an aging street thug—which of course he is.

Dapper Donny rose through the ranks and he is still a little unpolished. To be less polite about it, he is vulgar, coarse, ugly and rude. He hates art and culture and unlike many high-ranking Mafiosi he thinks opera is just so much noise. He still lives with his mom in a run down bungalow in Stark Hill. All of this makes him incredibly popular with his men—he's still one of the guys, still in touch with the neighborhood, doesn't put on airs.

Dapper Donny loves pinball, and ancient video games like Asteroids and Lunar Lander (he has a whole philosophy of life based around Lunar Lander, which he would be happy to share with anyone who asks.) No one is quite sure where his base of operations is, but it's widely suspected to be an arcade in Stark Hill (the place has no name—the sign out front just says "Arcade") where he plays pinball with the same crowd of parking lot thugs he's been hanging out with since the 1960s.

The Gorganzuas keep a much lower profile. Don Leopardo "Young Junior" Gorganzua lives in the exclusive gated community of Stone Ridge, in a huge and tasteless mansion. He never makes public appearances and few people outside the Mob know what he actually looks like (he's a skinny old man with a bitter look in his eye.) He seldom leaves his house and leaves most of his business arrangements to his daughter, a 400 pound rhinoceros of a woman called "Tiny" Tina.

While Tiny Tina has a terrible temper, the crime family she runs tries to kill as few people as possible and to operate as quietly as they can. They don't interfere with any of the Scarpas' operations and they don't try to steal their turf. By and large, they control the East side of the river and the Scarpas control the West side. The

Gorganzuas run the harbor facilities at Greely Point, which are turning out to be a lot more profitable than Bedlam Harbor itself. This has yet to make Dapper Donny come wipe them out, but only because the big guys in New York have told him not to.

The Gorganzuas haven't integrated the Irish or Eastern European gangs into their structure as well as the Scarpas. Almost every one of their soldiers and "button men" are directly related to Leo or his daughter's late husband, Rocco "The Stick" Mazzarello. No one quite knows what happened to the skinny, shifty eyed, furtive little Stick, but everyone in the family thinks Tiny Tina beat him to death in one of her rages.

Both families collect protection money and demand occasional favors from the street gangs in Hardwick Park and Wolverton. These gangs have reached an interesting stage in their development.

The Hispanic street gangs of Hardwick Park have in recent years been united under the banner of a large Honduran group called the Mara. They have a deeply sinister reputation. Everyone says the Mara are a national or even an international network, that they practice black magic and drink the blood of their enemies. They are led by a shadowy figure called the Jigsaw Man, whose body is supposed to be covered with scars and who studies the entrails of his rivals in order to divine the future.

This is partly true. Founded in Honduras, the Mara do have chapters scattered around ten or twelve cities in the US and Central America. They do have contacts in the federal prison system who can do favors for them on the inside. But they are far from an organized international network like the Mafia or the Triads. They are a loosely organized federation of street gangs, held together by kinship and national identity. Not all of the chapters get along with one another and there are plenty of cities where they have no presence at all. The chapter in Bedlam is about the biggest and most powerful one in the network.

Their reputation for black magic has been greatly exaggerated as well. The Mara do practice a kind of Honduran Santeria,

and their initiation rituals have a distinctly religious/occult flavor. They relish their scary reputation and try to play it up at every opportunity, talking about curses and black magic and human sacrifices in order to terrify their rivals. The Jigsaw Man has actually killed some of his rivals in ritualistic human sacrifices, but he didn't do it to appease any dark gods—he did it because they were his enemies and he wanted to kill them in as frightening a way as possible. Ultimately, the Mara are an organized crime family with occult trappings, not a fanatical blood-drinking cult.

Unless the GM decides otherwise. Perhaps in your game world the Jigsaw Man really does have magical powers, or suddenly stumbles across a demonic summoning that really works. The Mara could make an interesting foe for a team of occult investigators. If you do use them that way, then you should also try to beef up their arch-rivals—the African-American gangs of Wolverton.

It used to be that the youth gangs in Wolverton went by the names of sports teams, and showed their gang allegiance by wearing baseball hats and jackets with their teams' names on them. There are still a few of these independent groups left (the "Os" and the "A's" and the "Ravens") but most of the gangs have recently been united into a confederation against the growing threat of the big Honduran gang called the Mara. The group that untied them is an astonishingly savage pack of junior high-school aged kids, under the leadership of a fifteen-year-old psychopath called "Eentsy Z." (younger brother of the late "Little Z".) Everyone is impressed by Eentsy Z's inspired brutality and wicked sense of humor. A guy that scary might be the very thing to fend off the Jigsaw Man.

Which brings us to the reason why open warfare has never erupted between the Mara and the Z. Eentsy Z knows that the moment the Mara get destroyed, the confederation he has put together will fall apart. He likes having power and doesn't want it to come to an end. Outright war with the Jigsaw Man has only two possible outcomes. Either Eentsy Z loses, or he wins, in which case he also loses.

The Mara are expansionist by nature, and they do push against the gangs of Wolverton from time to time, but they don't have the manpower or the community support required to run all of Wolverton's rackets in addition to their own, so they are unlikely to launch an all-out assault on Eentsy Z's domain. The result is an uneasy, never-ending stalemate with occasional eruptions of violence. This state of affairs suits Eentsy Z just fine.

Of course the youth gangs have always been a training ground and talent pool for higher-level organized crime. While Eentsy Z may run most of the street level drug-dealers in Wolverton, the high-end rackets (sports betting, prostitution, loan-sharking, illegal nightclubs and so forth) are run by two gentlemen named Rock Johnson and Lincoln Stone. "The Rock and the Stone" as people call them, have quietly divided up Wolverton's rackets between them for twenty years and more, with little friction. Both of them pay a substantial cut of their profits to the Scarpia family.

The Rock is a huge bald man with deeply pitted skin who dresses as flashy as possible and acts like a jovial grandfather when he isn't having people killed. He lives over one of the illegal nightclubs he runs in a burnt-out factory on Industrial Drive.

The Stone is a scowling, white-bearded patriarch who is presently serving two consecutive life sentences in state prison, and runs his whole organization from his cell. He's as ferocious and threatening as the Rock is laid-back and cordial, but in fact they're equally ruthless.

Both the Rock and the Stone are disturbed by how much power and prestige Eentsy Z is accumulating, but they aren't sure what to do about it (the Scarpias don't care, since he pays them his tithes like everyone else.) Anyway he helps keep the Mara at bay, and that has to be a good thing.

Too many of Bedlam's cops owe their loyalty to Dapper Donny or Leo Gorganzua. But in addition to merely crooked cops, there are at least two full-fledged criminal "crews" operating inside the Bedlam Police Department. They steal dope from the evidence room and sell it on the

street, they transport contraband in their squad cars, they run prostitutes and perform the occasional contract killing. These are independent groups—not officially a part of either of Bedlam's Mafia families, but they owe fealty to either the Scarpas or the Gorganzuas and pay them a cut of their proceeds, just like all the other gangs in Bedlam.

The giant mobile home complex at Shady Meadows is a wild card in Bedlam's underworlds politics. Most of the people who live there are impoverished Anglos. Biker gangs and crank labs are deeply entrenched in Shady Meadows. No single faction dominates the place, which is prone to late night gun battles and general mayhem. It's much less quiet than Stark Hill or Wolverton. The police are in Shady Meadows almost every night.

Dapper Donny wants the situation calmed down—it attracts far too much attention. It has been so tough to control that he is in the process of making a gift of the turf to the Gorganzua Family. The shift is causing even more chaos.

While no single group completely dominates Shady Meadows, the biker gang known as the Brotherhood seems to be the strongest force right now. They are one small chapter of a national network, but here in Bedlam they pay the Mafia a cut of all their proceeds.

The Warlord of the Shady Meadows chapter is Delbert Wayne Graves. Everyone just calls him Graves. He's a skinny little maniac with a drooping handlebar moustache, who never takes off his reflective sunglasses. He doesn't actually live in the trailer park—no one is sure where he sleeps, but it's probably one or another farmhouse off in the woods. Graves is a scary guy, who talks little and has no really close friends, but he's reasonable in his dealings with other criminals and won't try to rip off or wipe out groups that he knows to be tougher than his own.

For some reason Shady Meadows produces a lot of weird little gangs of crank fiends who all dress up in costume around various oddball themes. It has seen gangs of mimes, gangs of faux beatniks, a gang that dressed like Santa Claus and too many

others to name. It is also a notorious recruiting ground for supervillain henchmen.

How Much Should a PC Know About Organized Crime in Bedlam?

Of course, it's up to you as to how much information you want to give your PCs. The following is intended as a helpful guide—depart from it however you like.

Any cop or vigilante will know that the Mob has an unhealthy amount of influence over Bedlam and its politics and that there are large, well-organized dangerous gangs in Wolverton and Hardwick Park. Assume even the most naive PC knows that much.

A Streetwise or Investigation roll at a -2 will reveal that Stark Hill and Greely Point are controlled by the Mafia and that they exert far too much influence over the shipping operations at Bedlam Harbor. It will also reveal that a Hispanic gang called the Mara has taken over Hardwick Park and is uniting the gangs of Wolverton into a big coalition to resist them. It will also reveal that biker gangs run Shady Meadows and that you can buy crank there.

A Streetwise or Investigation roll at a -4 will reveal all of the information listed in the section "Organized Crime in Bedlam" on pages 210 to 214, minus the following: It won't tell you that there is more than one Mafia family in Bedlam, or anything about either family's internal politics. It won't tell you that Lincoln Stone is still running his organization from behind bars. Instead it will suggest that someone else is running his organization in his name until he gets out. Perhaps most important of all, it won't tell you that Dapper Donny is the head of a mafia family. Instead he'll appear to be the street-level guy who runs their operations in Stark Hill for somebody else.

A Streetwise or Investigation roll at a -6 reveals all the information listed in the section "Organized Crime in Bedlam" on pages 210 to 214. It will still take individual Streetwise or Investigation rolls to get each piece of information listed under the expanded section "Organized Crime in More Depth" on pages 215-266. The penalty can be up to a -4 or so.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU PISS OFF THE MOB?



The PCs may not immediately come into conflict with the Mafia, even though they have a hand in so many of the things that are wrong with Bedlam. Most superheroes spend a lot of their time focused on supervillains rather than organized crime. But it's almost inevitable that the Player Characters will eventually shut down some criminal enterprise or other that the Scarpas or the Gorganzuas are making money from. When they do, the Mob's response depends on the GM's needs. You can have them react swiftly and violently. Or they could respond in some intermediate kind of way. They might try blackmailing the PCs into leaving Bedlam, or have crooked cops frame them for a crime, or send one of their own superpowered allies around to warn the PCs not to meddle in the Mob's affairs, etc. Or they might remain eerily silent, for now.

If you aren't ready to have the PCs face hordes of gun-toting goombahs, then there are all kinds of reasons why the Mafia might not come after them immediately. The Capo who is making money from the scam the PCs shut down might have bigger problems to worry about, or get killed over some other matter before he has a chance to react. The Mob might feel that the potential losses from a dust-up with a superhero team don't equal the loss from having one operation shut down.

However, either eventually or right away, the Mob will probably decide to have something done about the PCs. Their response could range from attacking their

reputation to turning the city authorities against them to having them killed. They would really prefer to fight superheroes by proxy, sending other superhumans to fight them, rather than watching their own cousins and nephews get mowed down by the capes. There is a long list of villains in the back of this book that they could hire, one at a time or all at once, to start hitting and harassing the Player Characters at every opportunity. To make it sinister and scary, the Mafia itself should remain a vague force in the background, striking from the shadows, insidious and hard to come to grips with.

If they do find themselves in a direct conflict to the death with a superhero team, one of the first things either Dapper Donny or Young Junior would do is to make themselves scarce. While Donny likes to run his organization as directly as possible, there is absolutely no reason why he couldn't continue to lead the group from anywhere in the United States. And Young Junior's organization has been on automatic pilot for years. In the event of an all-out war with a super-team, they will both become maddeningly hard to find.

The Player Characters should not be allowed to just walk up to the Don and kill him. That would break the atmosphere and spoil the fun. Finding the head of the Family should be difficult. And if they do kill a Don, or put him in prison, another one is going to take over.

ORGANIZED CRIME IN MORE DEPTH

Here are more detailed breakdowns of the different factions in Bedlam's criminal underworld. We'll start with the biggest.

THE MAFIA



Some guys will tell you that "MAFIA" is actually an acronym. It stands for "Morte Alla Francia Italia Anela." In English that would be something like "Death to the French Cry the Italians" Like most organized groups of bandits, they originated as guerilla fighters—in this case to kick Napoleon out of Sicily. It has been a long, long time since that goal was achieved, and yet the Mafia soldiers tirelessly on.

Both the Scarpia and Gorganzua families are very traditional Mafia organizations, and stick to the old ways more closely than some. You absolutely need to be 100% Sicilian to gain membership to either one as a "made guy", although both have plenty of Associates and "Button Men" working for them who aren't of Sicilian descent.

Both families (they call them "Borgattas" in private) are organized the same way. It's a lot like a franchise, or a multi-level marketing scheme.

At the bottom of the pyramid are the Associates and "Button Men." They call them the "Piciotto" in private. These guys are connected to the Borgatta and operate with its limited protection, in exchange for giving them a share of any money they make. Button Men are usually trying to work their way up the ladder and become "made men"—actual official members of the Borgatta. But many Associates have no such ambitions. You can have a successful

career as an Associate of a mob family, with your own independent gang of crooks, without ever having to become a full-fledged member.

Actual made men ("sgarrista" is the term they use for "made men" or "wiseguys" when no non-Sicilians are around) operate in crews of ten to twenty. Each sgarrista pays his captain ("caporegime") a fixed amount every month to remain a member in good standing of the crew. Typically it's five thousand dollars. He can get that money anyway he likes. Borrow it, steal it, run a legitimate business, mug old ladies—the only thing that matters is that each month the money is there. Each Capo, in turn, has to pay the head of the Borgatta (the "Don") a fixed amount each month. Usually it's twenty thousand dollars. Money always flows up, never down.

At the top of the pyramid sits the Don, who almost never engages in any kind of illegal activity himself. He doesn't have to, with ten or so captains each paying him twenty-thousand dollars a month!

The Don's three closest advisors are normally the "capo bastone", his most prominent captain and second-in-command (sometimes called the "underboss"), his "contabile" or accountant, and his "consigliere", an older, retired mobster who acts as his advisor.

Sometimes the real boss is officially the organization's capo bastone or consigliere. Mafiosi have tried all kinds of ways to conceal the chain of command. But in Bedlam both Dons are who and what they appear to be. Neither one really has an active consigliere. The Scarpia consigliere is Paulie Gambone, who has been hospitalized for years and is nearly a vegetable, while the Gorganzuas haven't gotten around to appointing one—their Don is already the oldest man in the organization.

The rules of the Mafia are simple. Don't steal from your boss. The penalty is death. Don't mess with a Made Man in any

way unless you yourself are a sgarrista. The penalty is death. Don't fail to pay your monthly dues. The penalty is death. Don't talk to the cops or betray the organization's secrets. The penalty is death. Don't disobey or contradict your captain in any way, even if you know what he is saying to be false or ill-informed. The penalty is death. Obey all orders, under penalty of—well, you know.

Why is the penalty for everything death? Because everyone in the organization is a thief and no one can, by definition, be trusted. The only way of ensuring obedience is to immediately kill anyone who starts to disobey. At least in theory. In fact guys constantly disobey, screw up, and rip each other off anyway. So a lot of them have to be killed. An older Mafiosi will typically have murdered as many people as a really successful serial killer.

Superhuman Resources Available to the Bedlam Mob

Apart from their two tame vigilantes, the Bedlam Mafia doesn't have supervillains in its ranks. Nor does either Dapper Donny or Young Junior have superhuman bodyguards. It's not safe having those guys around you. However, in any situation where superhumans, good or bad, started tearing up their business and making life tough for either family, they would immediately hire out-of-town super-muscle to deal with the problem.

While both families sometimes hire supervillains on a short-term basis, Donny Scarpia is more resistant to the idea than Leo Gorganzua and less prone to calling in the capes. Even though people inside the family regard Young Junior as an old-time traditionalist, he is surprisingly quick to call in super-guys if he thinks they'd be right for a job. As the leader of Bedlam's underdog crime family he has to make the most of what advantages he can find, and supervillains are a great force multiplier.

If they need the right kind of job done, they might call for Captain Condor or the Brain-Raper or even Smashface. If Young Junior finds himself in serious need of a superhuman bodyguard or two, he might hire \$#!+face or Code Name:

Wifebeater (Dapper Donny is more resistant to the idea of having super-guards, but in a crisis he might break down and hire one, too.)

There are plenty of other villains for hire who either family might be able to get in touch with. Feel free to use any from your campaign or from Plain Brown Wrapper Games' published collections of supervillains (the Bad Guys, More Bad Guys, 13 Shades of Darkness, Another 13 Shades of Darkness, etc.) Just remember, they won't hire would-be world conquerors or villains with strong affiliations to other organized crime networks (the Russian mob, secret martial arts brotherhoods, the Phantom Empire, etc.) Nor will they want to deal with anyone who doesn't have a proven track record of working with the Mafia.

The Scarpia Borgatta

The Scarpias are reigning power in Bedlam's. If a nickel falls on their side of the river, they hear it. They are a large, old, aggressive family, which has been operating in Bedlam since the early 20th century. They have more than three hundred soldiers presently, many of them former members of the defunct Igglioni Borgatta, which the Scarpias wiped out in 1995. They take a cut out of the earnings of every organized crime group on their side of the river, from the Mara to the Rock and the Stone to the biker gang called the Brotherhood. Only the "Invincible Ya-Ya Posse" and the tiny, fragmented gangs in the Country Club don't owe them fealty, and that's only because they don't have anything that the Scarpias want.

No one seems to be able to touch them on their home turf in Stark Hill. They have the whole neighborhood completely in their grip and they appear to be able to commit crimes with total impunity there.

Everyone within the family agrees that they owe their current success in large part to the responsible leadership of their current boss "Dapper Donny" Scarpia. A workaholic and something of a micromanager, he takes a much more "hands on" approach to the family than a lot of Mafia Dons, and has never left the old neighborhood in Stark Hill to move to the

suburbs. His Underboss, "Joey Sideburns" Medrano, is in prison, so Donny has more contact with the street-level troops than most Mafia chieftains.

Although he commands a lot of loyalty from his men, Donny sometimes worries about the former Igglioni soldiers in his organization. He's split them up into different crews and he's been slowly weeding out the ones he thinks might not be loyal, but he has been trying to conduct this purge slowly and carefully to avoid a rebellion.

Much quicker to resort to violence than the Gorganzuas, the Scarpas are not supposed to kill civilians, reporters or cops who aren't crooked, but it's hard to enforce this rule all the time. With other criminals (or with anyone else foolish enough to get involved with them) they have no scruples, mutilating or murdering anybody who shows them any resistance. Their empire was founded on blood and death and no one who does business with them is ever allowed to forget it.

But it's not completely true to say that all their power comes from terror and murder. A lot of it comes from racism, too. They draw their strength from the way they dominate the Stark Hill neighborhood. And people in Stark Hill allow the Scarpas to lord it over the neighborhood because they keep out black families.

The Scarpas' Consigliere is Paulie Gambone, but he's been in a coma for so long that the family soldiers have taken to calling him "Paulie the Corpse." Donny never got along with Paulie but he isn't eager to find a replacement either. He doesn't like sharing authority with anyone.

For many years, most of the Scarpas' business and legal affairs have been handled by the firm of Cromlich, Dooven, Dooven and Dahl. They treat their attorneys pretty roughly and few die of natural causes.

Although they're the strongest criminal network left in Bedlam, even the Scarpas are beginning to suffer from the city's economic decline. There just isn't very much left to steal. They're still strong and dangerous now, but their revenues are down every year, and this trend can't

continue indefinitely.

Meanwhile, their smaller rivals, the Gorganzuas, are actually making more money than ever from their relatively limited turf. Partly this is because they've been taking better care of it and partly because they got lucky enough to have Bedlam's small airport on their side of the river, and it's actually bringing new wealth into the city. The Scarpas are starting to take note, and to wonder if it's time to renegotiate their agreement with the Gorganzuas—or just wipe them out. They have been instructed by the old Mafia overlords on the New York Commission not to start any new wars in Bedlam. But Donny is a resourceful guy, and he may yet think of a way around it.

The Murder Machine

The Scarpia family has set up a "Murder Machine" out near the Bedlam Airport. This is a small warehouse where a specially chosen crew kills people and dismembers their bodies as cleanly as possible, leaving no evidence behind.

Hidden away behind a barbed wire fence and a grungy little parking lot, the one-story warehouse is small and has no name. It looks like it could be a light industrial space or a storage building. Or it could be deserted.

The interior looks like a run-down office with some mismatched furniture for the guys to sit around on and a TV set. There is nothing on the walls and the floor is concrete, covered with plastic sheeting. At the back is a steel door. None of their visitors have ever come out from behind it alive.

To save on bullets and limit the forensic evidence, they normally kill victims with a taser, a set of plastic hand-ties and a dry-cleaner's bag. The procedure is simple. The "meat" is escorted or dragged through the steel door into the long narrow corridor on the far side. Once they are in the corridor, whoever is standing behind them stuns them with the taser, cuffs their hands behind them with the tie and slips the bag over their head.

If the meat takes too long to "cook" then they tase the victim again and use a

hammer to tap an icepick into the base of his skull. Once the meat is cooked, they roll it onto a dolly and take it to the room at the end of the hall, which contains two bathtubs, some cans of industrial solvent and a lot of tools, used for removing teeth, fingers and other identifying marks. Once the meat has been processed, a tub full of industrial solvent dissolves them further and whatever is left of the remains gets packed up in a plastic bag and shipped out to wherever the Scarpia's want it buried.

It takes a while to process someone in the machine, and it's not really practical to use it if for really large-scale executions—there's only so much meat they can handle in a given amount of time. But if a single person needs to disappear, the Murder Machine is the Scarpia Borgatta's best way of doing it. The machine has only been in operation for a few years, but it has already processed a whole lot of meat.

The Graveyard

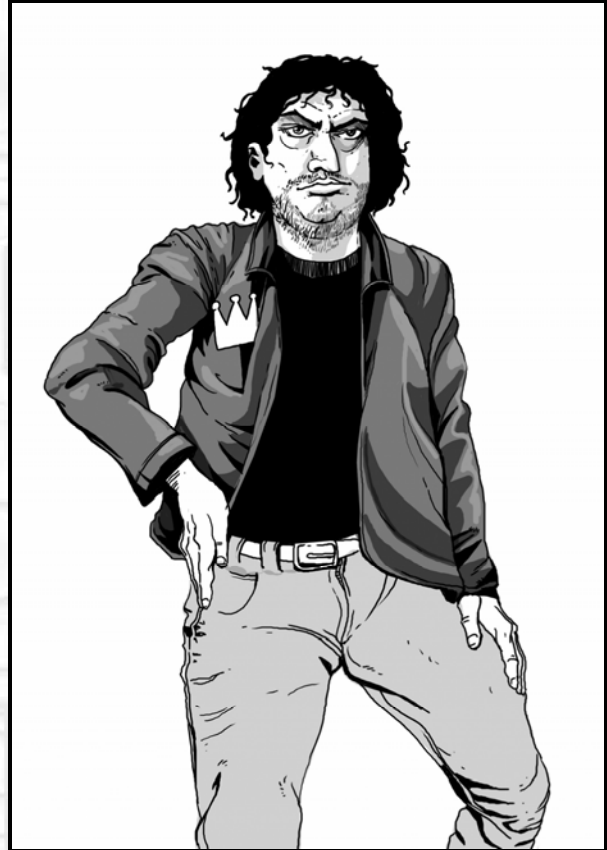
Back in the mid 1990s, the Scarpia's annihilated their arch-rivals, the Iggioni family. They killed all their leaders and loyalists in a single night. And of course that's far too much meat for the Murder Machine to be able to handle in one gulp. They've carried out other mass executions since, although nothing on that scale. Where has all that meat gone?

The answer is one of the Scarpia Borgatta's mostly closely guarded secrets. We have a suggestion for the GM on Page 381, but it's not the only possibility. They may even have more than one graveyard. Donny keeps meaning to dig his graveyard(s) up and run the meat through the Murder Machine, but other stuff keeps getting in the way and anyhow there's always a backlog of meat to be processed.

Important Members of the Scarpia Borgatta

On the following pages we have stats and background information for some of the most prominent members of the family. It's far from a complete list, so feel free to add more. There are at least ten Captains serving under Dapper Donny and we've only detailed two of them.

"Dapper Donny" Scarpia



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidate d10+2, Knowledge (Criminal Underworld) d12, Knowledge (Bedlam) d10, Notice d10

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Charismatic, Command, Combat Reflexes, Connections (Criminal Underworld, major), Filthy Rich, Followers, Inspire, Leader, Level Headed, Natural Leader, Strong Will, Trademark Weapon (pocketknife)

Hindrances: Heartless

Gear: Pocketknife (does d8+3 in Donny's expert hands. Would only do Strength+1 for anybody else), Windbreaker jacket, half a roll of quarters.

Background: People who know Dapper Donny say that there are only six topics of conversation that interest him: Money. Power. How to get more money. How to get more power. Who might be trying to take money or power away from him. And Pinball.

That's a pretty accurate description, except that he doesn't really talk much about pinball. Donny has worked long and hard to become Bedlam's criminal overlord and he's working hard to hang on to it. He puts in a lot of hours running his various scams and business concerns, and he has no time to think or worry about anything else. As a result, he doesn't look or sound much like the gangsters you see in the movies. He makes no effort to be funny and never seems to tell a joke. He doesn't have time to watch TV and he doesn't know anything about what's on it. He doesn't get any pop-culture references you might make and he's not interested in them. Occasionally you might hear him make some general observation about life, and he has a whole philosophy based on the game Lunar Lander that he'd be happy to share if he's in a good mood, but for the most part he's strictly business. His guys say he's a workaholic, but they say it with admiration.

He plays a lot of pinball and ancient video games (Space Invaders, Asteroids and above all Lunar Lander) to blow off steam, but he does it while he's conducting business and he's thinking about business the whole time. Constantly guarded, watchful and calculating, his deeply sunken eyes bore right into you as he speaks.

Donny hangs around the same arcade with the same crowd of hoods as he did when he was a teenager. Uninterested in the finer things money can buy, he still dresses in jeans and his old windbreaker jacket, when he isn't lounging around the house in a track suit. He lives with his mom in her row-house. While he could easily afford a mansion and thousand dollar suits, he has never seen any good reason to buy them.

Unlike a lot of Mafiosi, he doesn't particularly like Sinatra or Tony Bennett or for that matter opera. Music leaves him unmoved. So does art. Extremely crude in his personal habits, he has nothing but

contempt for high culture.

By staying a part of his community and having daily contact with his street-level troops, he has become immensely popular. His vulgar crudity helps him here, too. He knows everything that's happening in his turf, he lives the same way his guys do and he's still one of them. Local people can come to him directly with their concerns and he knows at once what they are talking about. He sees, hears and knows everything that is happening in Stark Hill.

Like a lot of Mafia chieftains, he keeps himself carefully isolated from his money. He's officially unemployed. All of his holdings are in his mom's name, or his little sister's name, or the name of one or another of his cousins. Donny hasn't signed a check in years. He has no Social Security number.

Paranoid about security, he never speaks on the phone, under any circumstances. The feds have had his mom's line tapped for years, but all they ever hear is her gossiping with her friends and complaining about her infirmities. He does all his business in person, either in the arcade or in his car or in some sleazy diner or other. Most of all he likes to take walks with his underlings and talk business while they're strolling around.

A very smart psychopath, Donny is totally ruthless but completely reasonable. If you can show him why it would be to his advantage to cooperate with you, he will listen. He'll be willing to work with you until the exact moment when it makes more sense to screw you over.

He looks like a slob. His hair is a wooly, tangled mass of curls that comes almost to his shoulders. Overweight and cursed with a receding chin, he barely shows any detectable jaw line. He has a sort of thin, straggly beard but most of it bristles out of his neck. Despite fifty years of constant effort, he has failed to grow a convincing moustache. His eyes lurk in deep pits to either side of his beaky nose, watchful and calculating.

Dandy Joe Slorkin



One of Donny's best money-makers isn't a Made Guy at all. He's an Associate who happens to run the toughest high school in Bedlam. Dandy Joe controls all the drug trade and other criminal activity at Grissom High, while maintaining the illusion that he's a tough-as-nails, law-and-order principal. The press loves him and his "take no prisoners" approach to school discipline. For a detailed description of Dandy Joe, along with a stat block, see Page 135 under the entry on Bedlam's schools.

Luca Stegnetti, aka "Stabbo the Clown"

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Heartless, Quirk (misogynist), Quirk (has little self-control)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Improved First Strike, Fleet-Footed, Frenzy, Mighty Blow, Improved Nerves of Steel, Quick, Quick-Draw, Tough as Nails, Two Fisted.

Gear: Two large knives (Str +1, Range 3/6/12).

Background: One of Donny's favorite assassins, Luca Stegnetti isn't yet a "made guy" but he'll be one soon at the rate he's going. He's also the Scarpas' court jester, a crazy, funny, fast-talking lunatic who's constantly mugging for attention and saying outrageous stuff. And stabbing people. In fact his penchant for stabbing people is actually what's holding him back from becoming a full-fledged member of the organization. He's perhaps a little too eager to get stabby.

Nobody knows it yet, but Luca is in fact a superhuman. The stat block above describes him before he discovers his powers. For a much more detailed background entry on Stabbo the Clown, look under his description in the section on Supervillains, (Page 293.) There's a picture, too.

"Dracula Jack" Gagliano

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d8, Intimidate d8+2, Knowledge (Criminal Underworld) d10, Knowledge (Bedlam City) d8, Notice d14, Shooting d8

Charisma: -1; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 4

Edges: Connections (Criminal Underworld, major), Rich, Strong Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate and Taunt)

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Mean

Gear: Sawed-Off Shotgun (3d6 damage)

Background: One of Dapper Donny's most feared Captains, Dracula Jack oversees the "Murder Machine" which the Scarpas use to make people disappear. No one outside Dapper Donne's inner circle is exactly sure where this kill-center is located. They murder and dismember people there and dispose of their remains in tiny pieces (see Page 217.) The whole process has been turned into an assembly line and they can convert a living man into an unrecognizable pile of meat in less than three hours.

Overseeing an operation of this nature requires a special type of guy, and that's Dracula Jack. He pitches in with the

actual work, eating pizza while he cuts corpses apart. Sometimes he sleeps in the kill-room, surrounded by processed human parts. These things don't bother him at all—hence his name.

He's an angry, skinny old man with thick white hair that he combs straight back, a widow's peak and bulging hyperthyroid eyes that don't point in the same direction. It's weird talking to him and watching those froggy eyes fail to look at you. Always snarling, sneering or scowling, he's a little out of it and a little crazy. Sometimes he seems not to have understood what you have said to him. He has been known to take mortal offense over tiny things. While he is prone to having his bodyguards chop body parts off of people who offend him, he kills them just as often. His habit of flying off the handle and murdering people causes Dapper Donny some concern. The Gaglianos are an important part of his network and he can't offend them by having their pop killed, so he has put Jack in a position where the old maniac can murder as many people as he wants. Maybe that'll help him get it out of his system. So far Jack shows no sign of slowing down. If anything, he's getting crazier.

Paul Gambone, aka "Paulie the Corpse" aka "Paulie the Vegetable"

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: none

Edges: Connections

Hindrances: Disability (Major—can't talk, move or think anymore), Elderly, Stubborn, Terminally Ill, Vengeful

Gear: Automatic Bed, Life Support Machine, Feeding Tube

Background: For along time the biggest thorn in Dapper Donny Scarpia's side was his father's lifelong friend Paulie Gambone. Paulie was the old man's mentor and his Consigliore. He advised old Mr. Scarpia on nearly everything and everyone expected Donny to take his advice, too. And nothing Donny ever did was good enough for him.

Paulie strongly opposed going to war with the Iggliani family in 1995 and made his views known to the rest of the organization—a serious breach of protocol.

Yet having him killed for it would have been an even more serious breach of protocol.

Wiping out the Iggliani was the best move Donny ever made and it cemented his position as the most powerful Mafiosi in Bedlam. Paulie became sullen and withdrawn after that, and still kept insisting that it had been the wrong thing to do. Then he had a stroke. And then another one.

At present Paulie resides in the very best room at Our Lady of Sorrow Hospital in Stark Hill. Dapper Donny pretends that the old man still talks to him sometimes and that he still takes his advice. In fact Paulie hasn't spoken a word in years. Donny makes sure he gets the best possible care, for he isn't eager to appoint a new Consigliore. They're more trouble than they're worth.

Word has leaked out about the old man's condition. Now everyone calls him "Paulie the Corpse" or "Paulie the Vegetable" whenever they think Donny isn't listening.

Giuseppe Medrano, aka "Joey Sideburns"

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidate d10, Knowledge (Criminal Underworld) d12, Knowledge (Bedlam) d10, Notice d10

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Charismatic, Command, Combat Reflexes, Connections (Criminal Underworld, major), Filthy Rich, Followers, Inspire, Level Headed, Natural Leader

Hindrances: Heartless

Gear: Shank (d8+1 Damage), little black notebook

Background: The Scarpia Underboss, and Dapper Donny's second in command. He's been in prison for a while, which complicates his position in the family. He can't run things the way an Underboss is supposed to from behind bars, but he's too valuable for Donny to demote him or pick somebody else.

No one would ever dare tell Joey Sideburns that his haircut is out of fashion.

But in fact, his look hasn't changed since 1978, when he first became a full-fledged Mafioso. He's been way too focused on being a gangster to pay much attention to men's fashion since then. He still wears the enormous sideburns that he grew back in the disco era, and they look especially silly on his round, wide face. But no one is brave enough to tell him this, and anyway he probably doesn't care.

People say he's a workaholic, a one-man crime wave, constantly orchestrating a dozen or so schemes at once. When he got sent to Bald Knob Penitentiary for thirty years without parole, some of the guys thought it would finally give Joey time to relax, but in fact he works harder than ever. He's got a whole prison to run now.

The Bedlam Mafia's man inside the state prison system, he's truly a power to be reckoned with in the joint and he can get more or less anything he wants. The only prison overlord who equals his power is Lincoln Stone, and he works with Joey most of the time, rather than wasting all the energy required to oppose him.

Joey has no conscience, no scruples and no time to waste as he tirelessly plugs away at his job. He's abrupt, impatient, and prone to interrupting people, but seldom gets mad. When he's angry, it's a cold kind of angry.

If the PCs remove Donny Scarpia from power, Joey Sideburns will take the whole operation over, and he's actually safer from them in prison than Donny was in Stark Hill.

Joey has a wife back in Bedlam and three sons, but he was never home even before he went to prison and he isn't very close to any of them. They don't bother to visit him at Bald Knob, and he doesn't mind. In fact he wouldn't have time to see them even if they wanted to visit.

The Gorganzua Borgatta

Much quieter, more cautious and low-key than the Scarpas, you could almost forget that the Gorganzuas' fortune is built on blood and bones. But not for long.

They don't have nearly the same amount of influence with Bedlam's police and civic authorities as the Scarpas, so they

have to operate with a lot more discretion. They never assassinate anyone unless they feel they have to, and then never without the approval of the Don. Of course it's easy to get his approval—he no longer cares very much about the family or its business.

As Don Leo grows more distant and remote from the family's affairs, up in his mansion in Stone Ridge, his daughter, "Tiny" Tina Gorganzua has come to be the leading power in the family. This is pretty unusual for the Mob. Power really should devolve on Leo's son, but he's a weak, unstable, trigger-happy lunatic and can't be trusted, so Tina has had to fill the role, assisted by the family's redoubtable lawyer, Frankie Baranzanno.

Tina has an awful temper and has broken the rule about unauthorized assassinations more than once. Still, the family has managed to keep a low profile in spite of her explosive rages and her older brother's crazy antics.

The Gorganzuas control organized crime on the west side of the river (if you are using the map of Bedlam right side up.) They don't have much competition in Greely Point, where they've been entrenched for many generations. The small Italian neighborhood around Lurman Avenue is their main base of support. Like Stark Hill, the neighborhood is in decay. Nearly all of the street gangs they used to recruit new members from have vanished and it's unclear where their next generation of soldiers supposed to come from.

The wide-open, sprawling neighborhood called the Meadows is a major source of their revenue, but they have never precisely worked out whether they or the Scarpas own it, and their rivals from across the river are starting to move in. This causes them a lot of concern. If war erupts, they'll lose—they just don't have enough soldiers. They've also been deriving a lot of income through smuggling and theft at Bedlam's airport, and while they've been trying to conceal how much money this is really making them, it's only a matter of time before the Scarpas find out and decide to take it away.

Both families have been instructed by the New York Commission to divide their

turf equitably and not to war with each other, But the Commission itself is growing weaker these days and it's harder for it to enforce its edicts. Even though they are making a lot of money, morale in the family is fairly low. Everybody's getting older, everybody expects the Scarpas to come kill them all, everybody worries about Leo's son "Little Junior" and the heat he's sure to bring down on them. But no one knows what to do.

When the Gorganzuas do have to kill somebody, they always make sure to make them vanish completely—they don't leave mutilated bodies around to send a message. They have an ingenious method for disposing of unwanted bodies. See below.

Tranquil Repose

When Young Junior says "it's your funeral" he really means it. The Gorganzuas own a big funeral parlor in Greely Point called "Tranquil Repose," which has more crematory ovens in its basement than you'd expect for a place this size. They dispose of corpses here, although they don't have the capacity to do more than a few at a time.

Only on special occasions does anyone go into the flames alive. When someone has annoyed the leadership enough, the Gorganzuas may actually hold a mock funeral for the doomed man, who lies gagged and sobbing in his casket while people laugh and drink and tell jokes. Sometimes they get up and make speeches about what a bum the dead guy was and how much he deserved to die. Sometimes, for laughs, they bring the victim's wife and kids in to say goodbye to him. Har-har!

Young Junior never turns up at these events himself, but he's proud of them. Dapper Donny would never let his guys have fun like that, he's quick to point out. It's all work work work with that guy.

Important Members of the Gorganzua Borgatta

As with the Scarpas, we want to give you plenty of room to add your own Mafiosi, so we've barely detailed any of the Captains who serve under Young Junior. The listings on the following pages detail the family's

leadership (apart from Frankie Baranzanno, the family lawyer, who we have described on Page 158) but there's a lot of extra room for you to fill in.

Don Leo "Young Junior" Gorganzua



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidate d8+2, Knowledge (Criminal Underworld) d12, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Notice d10,

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 4

Edges: Connections (Criminal Underworld, major), Filthy Rich, Strong Willed

Hindrances: Mean, Quirk (depressed and argumentative, minor)

Equipment: Enormous Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 10), big ugly house, giant mountain of cash.

Background: His grandfather's name was Leopardo and so was his father's. That makes him "Young Junior" even though Old Junior has been dead for decades. His fat and useless son Leo is "Little Junior."

Young Junior is a man with a lot of regrets. There's all kinds of stuff he could have stolen, all kinds of big scores he could have made, but his family didn't have the

manpower or firepower to do it. His biggest rivals, the Igglioni Family, collapsed and fell into disarray and he was unable to capitalize on it. The Scarpas muscled him out of it, just like they always seem to muscle him out of everything. These days the smuggling operations at Greely Point and the Bedlam Airport are doing a lot better than anyone expected, but Young Junior is sure the Scarpas will take that away from him, too. What can he do? There are more of them.

These days he's rather spend his time watching the History Channel than running the family anyway. All that gangster stuff's a load of crap—but then so is everything else.

Cranky, vicious, mean and old, Young Junior is still a scoundrel, through-and-through, and still personally dangerous. He never goes anywhere unarmed and he has a violent temper. Over the years he has killed more than twenty people and he thinks nothing of it at all. Not only is he still a killer, but he's also still a thief. Being a criminal and a rascal is in his nature. If he can see a way to get out of paying a fifty-cent parking meter, he'll do it. He still shoplifts whenever he gets the chance and he never dines in a restaurant unless he's using a stolen credit card. The food just tastes better to him if it's stolen.

For the most part he stays in his giant, ugly house in the gated Stone Ridge community and spends little time on the streets of his old neighborhood in Greely Point. People think he does this to stay aloof and mysterious, but in fact he does it because he no longer cares very much about what happens to the neighborhood. He lets Tiny Tina run the family, for the most part, but she still answers to him whenever he feels like exerting himself.

Unlike Dapper Donny, Leo takes a keen interest in the world around him and loves documentaries on history—particularly the history of World War Two.

Cantankerous and aggressive, he loves to pick arguments with people and is capable of turning almost any conversation

into a fight. This makes his underlings even more anxious to deal with Tiny Tina rather than the boss himself, despite her uncertain temper. It seems odd to a lot of people that a man with no conscience should have so many regrets.

"Tiny" Tina Gorganzua



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Knowledge (Criminal Underworld) d10, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Notice d6

Charisma: -3; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 7

Edges: Connections (Criminal Underworld, major), Frenzy, Rich

Hindrances: Mean, Obese, Quirk (nervous, violent temper, minor)

Background: In most mafia families, it would be unthinkable for a woman to inherit the role of Don. But Tiny Tina's brother "Little Junior" is such an absolutely useless clown that she has had to step into the role of heiress and de-facto Underboss.

A nervous woman, she copes with her many anxieties by shouting, throwing tantrums and stuffing her face. She's a sloppy eater with the table manners of a rampaging Hun, and always seems to have food on her face and on her expensive,

tasteless clothes. Everything about her is grandiose and immense. She has "big hair" like few people have seen since the 1990s. She wears screamingly bright colors and she talks very loud, with great sweeping gestures that make her outsized jewelry clank and jangle. She likes guys a lot, the smaller and more waif-like the better. But she has been without a regular boyfriend for a while. The love of her life was a skinny, buck-toothed chinless little guy named Rocco "The Stick" Mazzarello, but he disappeared a couple of years ago. Everybody always assumed that he was either dating her to get closer to her dad, or that she was somehow blackmailing him into being her boyfriend. They whisper behind her back that she must have killed him in one of her temper tantrums. Maybe she figured out that he wasn't really into her?

While she does have a violent temper, Tina tries hard not to kill anybody unless it really has to be done. The Gorganzuas have survived by being low-key and killing as few people as possible, and she understands this policy. Still, she has lost control and made mistakes on occasion. But not like the kind of mistakes her useless brother Leo has made.

She is a good tactician, if not a great one, and she's determined to make a success out of the family business, enfeebled though the Gorganzuas are these days. She lives in the old Italian neighborhood in Greely Point, on Moon Avenue. She also spends a lot of time at her father's house in the Stone Ridge gated community, learning the old man's secrets and taking down his instructions.

They say that Tiny Tina can smother a man to death in the folds of her flesh, and that she has done this on occasion to henchmen who have failed her. She neither confirms nor denies this rumor. She does however get really mad if anyone mentions it in front of her.

Leo "Little Junior" Gorganzua



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8,

Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Knowledge (Criminal Underworld) d8, Knowledge (Bedlam) d6, Streetwise d8

Charisma: -3; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Connections (Criminal Underworld, major), Frenzy, Rich

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Mean, Quirk (has no self-control, minor), Yellow

Background: A constant screw-up, weak and unstable, if Little Junior weren't Don Leopardo's son he would have long since been buried in an unmarked grave. Not that he isn't violent. In fact when he's depressed he's downright bloodthirsty. But that's part of the problem. He's totally unpredictable and badly out of control.

In person he's a big fat middle-aged guy with an untidy mop of curly hair that never behaves no matter what he

does to it. He always seems to be sweating and his skin looks shiny and wet. He cries and laughs really easily, sometimes at once.

Little Junior sometimes picks fights with people for no reason and kills or maims them. He also gives people outlandish gifts for no reason. He'll decide that someone is his best buddy, chum around with them constantly, taking their advice and imitating their mannerisms, making an absolute overbearing pest of himself, then he'll suddenly weary of their company and have them beaten up or worse. Right now, outlaw biker Bruno "Pookie" Mordella is in the process of becoming his new best pal.

A chronic and compulsive gambler, Little Junior makes stupid bets, plays cards badly and then tries to cover his losses by killing the guys he owes money to. He's also really jealous, and he'll get fixated on other peoples' success and try to do them harm.

Right now one of the Scarpia Family's associates, "Dandy Joe" Slorkin, is the object of his jealous hatred. Little Junior doesn't think it's fair that somebody who isn't even Sicilian should have risen so far so fast, while he, who should have everything by right, gets sidelined by his pop. He's positively obsessed with Dandy Joe and looking hard for a way to hurt him.

Wile he is technically a "Made Guy" it's only because he's the boss' son and none of the other capos give him any respect. Little Junior actually has a fairly large crew, but they're all either ambitious climbers who are trying to get closer to the Boss through his son, or hopeless, useless losers like Little Junior himself. So they're either fundamentally disloyal, or can't be trusted to go across the street by themselves without screwing it up.

EENTSY Z AND THE LAST OF THE LAST

This federation of African-American gangs doesn't really have a name. The gangs themselves are all named after sports teams, and wear the teams' hats and insignia as their gang colors. Eentsy Z himself is a Devil Ray.

The way in which you wear your colors also provides coded information about you. If for example your cap-brim is turned to the left, it means that they are here unofficially, on their own business. If the cap is turned to the right, it means they are here on official gang business.

Most street gangs in Wolverton are really coalitions. It's a feudal arrangement. Each gang will be comprised of a number of different "sets" of small groups of friends, that all owe fealty (in theory) to a single Warlord or President. So for example, Eentsy Z's old gang, the Devil-Rays, is made up of smaller groups like the Stone Killah Devil Rays, the Notorious Mortlake Devil Rays, Lucifer's Own Devil Rays, the Larchmont Avenue Devil Rays and others.

A gang member's first loyalty is often to their set, not their President. The individual sets aren't necessarily all located in one area—often they're spread around and interpenetrate other gangs' territories. The sets in a gang don't always get along with one another, either. And sometimes a whole set will switch its affiliation to another gang (in fact that's how the infamous nation-wide gang called

the Bloods got founded, when some renegade sets of the Crips in Compton broke away and made common cause with their enemies.)

Eentsy Z's group is therefore really a coalition of coalitions. They're big. He can call on more than thirty sets and has well over three-hundred troops. Most of the individual sets are loyal to the common cause (the Mara are pretty scary) but it's hard for Eentsy Z to bring force rapidly to bear on a target when he has to talk to all the individual presidents and have them each call up their individual sets. The Mara are way better organized, and while they may have less guys, they can call more of them up quickly and direct them at a single target.

While their habit of wearing sports-team clothes as a means of gang identification used to throw off the cops and school authorities, they've long since cracked the code, so these days they don't wear their colors as openly. The only certain way to identify a member's gang and set is by their tattoos. While the coalition doesn't really have an official name or a specific tag, some members have taken to writing a stylized "Z" or the number 26 in strategic spots to warn the Mara away from their turf. Some of them (especially Eentsy Z's own Devil Rays) have taken to calling the coalition "the Last of the Last" because Z is the last letter of the alphabet.

They hate the letter "M" and will always replace it with either a 3 (an M turned on its side) or a "W" (an M turned upside down.) While they have no official hand-sign, some members have taken to signaling by drawing a "Z" in the air with one finger.

Eentsy Z



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d8+2, Knowledge (Bedlam Underground) d8, Notice d8+2, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d8, Taunt d6+2, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Alertness, Charismatic, Command, Improved Dodge, First Strike, Hold the Line, Level-Headed, Natural Leader, Quick, Strong Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate and Taunt)

Hindrances: Mean, Enemy (Chunk-Style), Enemy (the Jigsaw Man), Youth

Gear: Sword (1d8+1d4 Damage unless he has heated it up in his flamethrower, in which case it does 1d8+1d6), Flamethrower (Damage 2d10, uses the Cone Template. The user makes a shooting roll at a +2 bonus. Then anyone standing in the template must try to beat that roll with an Agility roll or get scorched)

Background: By the time he was in fifth grade, Eentsy Z had killed more people than either of his older brothers. By now he has personally executed at least twelve and possibly a lot more. He likes to kill people for trivial reasons (stepping on his perfect white tennis shoes, cutting him off in traffic, interrupting him while talking on the phone) but only because it makes him look crazy and dangerous. He's not the kill-crazed homicidal psychopath he pretends to be. In fact he's totally in control of himself. Human life doesn't mean a thing to him, one way or another, so he doesn't really take any pleasure in killing people. He only does it if he thinks he can gain some advantage by it. Of course "looking scary and tough" is an advantage, so no one around him is ever exactly safe.

He has somehow managed to construct an improvised, short-range flamethrower out of a blowtorch, and constantly wears it on his back. He also carries a faux-Japanese sword that he boosted from a martial arts shop when he was six. He lugs the sword around partly for sentimental reasons—it's the first thing he ever saw in a shop window and wanted badly enough to steal. But he also carries it because people are scared to death of the weapon. Sometimes he heats it up with his flamethrower and does terrible things to people with the glowing hot blade.

It would be a mistake to say that he loves setting guys on fire with his flamethrower. In fact he more sort of loves how afraid everyone gets when they see him do it. People will do all kinds of stuff to avoid having him use the flamethrower on them. And it's very important to have a way to make people fear him more than the Mara.

Eentsy-Z's Soldiers

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: —

Hindrances: —

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 7)

OTHER GANGS OF WOLVERTON

There are still at least three independent street gangs who have for one reason or another refused to join Eentsy Z's coalition. They are the "A"s, the "O"s, and the secretive Ravens. Like all of Wolverton's gangs, they are named after sports teams and they wear the caps and sometimes the jerseys of those teams to identify themselves.

In order for the GM to have a gang of his or her own to detail, we aren't going to provide any information about the Os, apart from the fact that they are less numerous than the Ravens or the As. We're also going to leave the size of the three gangs a little less than totally precise, so that the GM can have them able to provide however much cannon fodder seems drastically appropriate for a scene.

THE A'S

The third largest criminal group in Wolverton, bigger than any single gang in Eentsy Z's coalition. They hate the Mara, who impinge directly on their territory up by Ellmore Avenue and they are aggressive in keeping them out of their turf. Their leader, Chunk-Style, is charismatic, resourceful and a solid tactician. They seem like ideal allies for the coalition. But Eentsy Z killed Chunk-Style's younger brother in a playground dispute over a game of freeze-tag, and

Chunk-Style has sworn revenge. This was Eentsy Z's first kill and Chunk-Style has waited nine years for the boy to get old enough to pay for his crime. He's not about to give up his vengeance now.

While the As are more than willing to fight the Mara, they're badly outnumbered and suffer from a shortage of firearms. Eentsy Z has been using his influence with the Rock to choke off the A's supply of guns, in hopes of forcing them to join him.

The As have about six loyal "sets" (the Ellmore A's, the Insane Killah A's, the Larchmont A's, the Skull Mafia A's, the Trey Bleeker A's, and the South Ellmore A's) who Chunk-Style can always count on, and another two who are less reliable (the "Original A's" and the Playa' Dog A's.) This gives him maybe a hundred troops, plus a lot of hangers-on who like the A's parties but wouldn't take a bullet for them.

Because they hate Eentsy Z's group, the A's never use the letter Z, and will try to replace any word that contains a "Z" with one that rhymes with it. Their usual symbol is an "A" or the number 1. Their hand-signal is either the index finger touching the pinky (this looks a little like an "A") or one index finger upraised. This last gesture makes Eentsy Z call them "nosepickers", and the insult hurts, so they don't use it as much anymore.

Because Eentsy Z's coalition is starting to be known as the "Last of the Last", the A's sometimes refer to themselves as the "First of the First."

The A's have three primary safe houses, all of them single-family bungalows that look no different from the homes around them. Chunk-Style lives out of the back of his SUV—an older model Cadillac Escalade with badly scratched-up doors. He calls it his "mobile command center" and he seldom gets out of it, conducting all his business while in motion.

Someone has been trying to kill Chunk-Style over the past few months. He's been shot at six times in public places, always from a distance. No shooter has ever been caught. Is the Mara trying to do away with him? Is it Eentsy Z? Is it someone else?

Chunk-Style Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 7; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 7

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Notice d8+2, Shooting d10, Streetwise d10, Throwing d6

Edges: Alert, Command, Fleet-Footed, Improved Dodge, Hold the Line, Rock and Roll

Hindrances: Obese, Vow (to avenge his little brother's death, no matter what the cost to himself or anyone else)

Gear: Mac 10 Machine Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 4, Shots 40), really expensive (but now outdated) cell phone

Background: Everyone is shocked at what a great dancer Chunk-Style is. He's incredibly light on his feet for such a massive guy, and an elusive target in combat. He's also extremely cautious, and very good at sensing danger. This trait continues to keep him alive.

Chunk-Style never looks scared. He scowls a lot and does a good job of looking like a threat (his massive bulk helps) but he keeps his many anxieties on the inside.

He still weeps for his little brother, and even though some part of him knows it's foolish, he'll do anything, make any sacrifice, to bring down Eentsy Z. His troops haven't figured this out yet, which is a good thing for him. If they do, they're sure to start wondering if they're really willing to be sacrificed for his personal crusade.

THE RAVENS

The Ravens (or the Darkwater Ravens") were formed as a kind of mutual defense society for kids who felt pressured to join other gangs (especially the A's, who had a number of sets on Darkwater Street.) A gang for kids who didn't want to join any gangs, they had no leaders at first. They accepted boys and girls alike and banded together to repel outsiders, but were uninterested in grabbing turf or selling dope.

Then Lawanda Corby showed up. She was Melvin Hampton's girlfriend. No one knew precisely what school she went to or who her parents were, but she was beautiful and fascinating. She seldom spoke and sometimes said strange things that made no sense, or that made people run screaming for no obvious reason.

Someone murdered Melvin last year and Lawanda grew deeply morose. Most of the remaining gang members were completely obsessed with her by then, and her single-minded pursuit of Melvin's killers has only made them more fanatically dedicated to her now.

These days the Ravens are a sort of personality cult surrounding Lawanda Corby. They are both more and less organized than the other gangs. All one giant set, they all act in concert, but they don't have any official rules or any grand plan of action, apart from avenging Melvin and worshipping Lawanda. Relatively small, they don't have a lot of weapons, but they do have fanatical devotion to their cause and to one another. These kids would strap on suicide bombs for Lawanda if she asked them. She may ask soon.

Eentsy Z didn't pressure the Ravens very hard to get them to join up. They've always stuck to themselves—that's what they're all about. And anyway he doesn't trust Lawanda.

The Ravens use the team colors, purple and black. Their hand-signal looks like fingers walking, pointed down (sort of like a capitol "R") but they seldom use it, since most members know one another by sight. Their tags include a raven or a stylized "23", and a five pointed star with a moon over it. 23 is of course the number of the letter "R." It also has some interesting meanings in the Cabala.

The Rock and the Stone

For decades, the serious rackets in Wolverton have been divided up between Rock Johnson and Lincoln Stone. The street gangs used to be recruiting pools for them, the same way the gangs of Stark Hill feed the Mafia's hunger for new talent.

They also used to rely heavily on them for manpower and muscle. They supplied the gangs with drugs and guns and (most important of all) the promise of upward mobility, and in exchange the kids did favors for them. These favors included acts of violence, and it was cheaper to let the kids kill their enemies for nothing than it was to hire full-time thugs. Perhaps they came to rely on the gangs just a little too much.

Now that Eentsy Z has united so many of Wolverton's gangs under one banner, he has gained a lot more bargaining power, although he doesn't seem to realize it yet. And to the amazement of Wolverton's aging criminal overlords, he has so many troops that they might not actually be able to take him, if they had to.

Both Rock Johnson and Lincoln Stone have crews of their own, made up of battle-scarred older guys with names like Red Deuce and Minnesota Jones, but they don't have a huge amount of manpower. They take a cut of the profits from pimps and fences and in that sense their circle of influence is pretty wide. However, it's all de-centralized, and their inner cadre of enforcers isn't very large. Each of them

has maybe sixty guys at most—though all of them are tough old veterans.

Neither the Rock nor the Stone knows quite what to do about this situation, so for now they do nothing and hope Eentsy Z takes a while to figure out his own strength. Or that the Mara keep him busy.

Below we have stat blocks and background material for Rock Johnson, Lincoln Stone and some of the most prominent members of their respective crews.

Rock Johnson



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidate d6, Knowledge (Criminal Underworld) d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d10, Shooting d6, Streetwise d10, Taunt d8, Throwing d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 8 (2 Heavy Armor)

Edges: Charismatic, Command,

Connections, Followers, Inspire, Sweep, Wealth

Hindrances: Heartless

Gear: Concealed body armor (2 points of Heavy Armor, which does not cover his head), Cane (1d10+1d8 Damage), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 8)

Background: They call him the Rock, and he does in fact resemble a rock, all hairless and pitted and huge. His skin looks as though it would scrape and gash you if you brushed up against him, like the skin of a shark. This too is an apt comparison.

A grinning, easygoing, jovial giant of a man—everyone is always totally shocked when he kills them. Friendly, congenial and polite without fail, he always, always smiles. He'll smile when he kills you, he'll smile if you defeat him, and he'll ask if you'd like another slice of cornbread. As he likes to say, he's everybody's friend, but friendship only runs so deep.

A cheerful liar, he never keeps his word and he betrays his allies the moment it's to his advantage. He holds no grudges and he keeps no promises. Everything is all just business to him. Beat him with style and he'll actually be amused, rather than vengeful.

No one really knows where the Rock lives. If he wants to talk to you, he'll have you sent for, but he'll always meet you at one of his businesses. A nightclub or a pool hall or a chop shop or a warehouse full of stolen goods. They say he lives over one of the illegal nightclubs that he runs, but these places change location so frequently that this doesn't really narrow it down too much.

Lincoln Stone



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d10, Intimidate d10+2, Knowledge (Criminal Underworld) d10, Notice d8, Shooting d6, Streetwise d10, Taunt d8+2, Throwing d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8;

Toughness: 7

Edges: Block, Command, Connections, Followers, Frenzy, Hard to Kill, Hold the Line, Improved Nerves of Steel, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate and Taunt), Tough as Nails, Wealth

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Heartless, Mean

Gear: Homemade knife (1d8+1d4 Damage)

Background: They call him the Stone and he does in fact resemble a stone, all gray and cold and hard. He is old now, but he hasn't exactly mellowed with the years.

With his huge muscles, long white beard and glaring eyes, he looks like an Old Testament prophet, or perhaps like a wrathful God. He has scowled so long and so hard at the world that his brows are crinkled in a permanent frown. He probably couldn't stop scowling if he wanted to, but he never wants to.

Despite all the terrible things that he has done, he was condemned to live out his

life behind bars for a crime he swears he did not commit—his brother's murder. And to be truthful, family is very important to him. It's perhaps the one thing he believes in.

The Stone is loyal, in a way that the Rock is not. If he gives his word, he will keep it no matter what the cost to himself or anyone else. This is not always a good thing. When he gives his word, he's usually swearing revenge on someone. His grudges run long and deep. If you were his brother or his friend he'd defend you to the death, but his brother is dead and the Stone is nobody's friend.

Despite having been incarcerated in Bald Knob Penitentiary for years, he has no difficulty running his organization from behind bars and he still knows everything that happens in Wolverton. Not that people come visit him very much. Everybody knows where to find the Stone, he says, but nobody wants to. Not his four ex-wives, not his seven kids and none of his sixteen grandchildren. Only Jackie Jones (see Page 166) seems to be able to tolerate his company. If you meet him, you'll see why.

Johnny DeWinters

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (Criminal Underworld) d8, Notice d6, Shooting d4, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8;

Toughness: 8 (2 Heavy Armor)

Edges: Block, Brawny, Connections, Dodge, Improved Frenzy, First Strike, Hard to Kill, Harder to Kill, Mighty Blow, Sweep

Hindrances: Heartless, Mean

Gear: Concealed body armor (2 Heavy Armor, only covers his torso), Brass knuckles (1d12+1d6 Damage)

Background: Former heavyweight boxing champion turned mob enforcer, he prefers to be called "the baddest mother#@%&er in the universe." In a universe without superheroes, that might actually be true. He's Lincoln Stone's most visible presence in the neighborhood, regulating rackets and collecting on debts. They send DeWinters when they need to scare the crap out of

someone and he does this without having to try very hard.

His reputation alone is enough to do that. He killed three men in the ring, and the third one he bit to death when it became clear that he would lose the fight. He did some time for that last one and in the joint he hooked up with Lincoln Stone. Now that he's back outside DeWinters can't get a job in the world of boxing, but finds to his surprise that he prefers being a thug even more. It's way more fun to hit people who can't fight back.

He's a gigantic bald guy, as big as a football player, with a shaved head, a goatee, sunglasses and a gold hoop earring. He wears a thousand dollar handmade leather coat with the emblem of the Chicago Bulls on the back. He speaks with a lisp, and sometimes stutters. Beware him when he starts stuttering. It means he's losing his temper.

DeWinters is totally cold-blooded, capable of any crime, but he's also impulsive, prone to take offense over tiny things and to fits of open-handed generosity. If he sees a group of kids sitting on the curb in front of an arcade, he might scream at them to get the hell out of his way, or he might dig a bunch of quarters from his pocket and tell them to go play video games. If an old lady tells him that the landlord is going to throw her out on the street, he might go beat the landlord up, or he might give her the rent money on the spot, or he might throw her out on the street himself, through the nearest window.

Kelvin Jones

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d10, Intimidate d8+2, Knowledge (Wolverton) d10, Lockpicking d6, Notice d8+2, Persuasion d10, Shooting d8, Streetwise d10, Stealth d8, Taunt d8+2, Throwing d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 8 (2 Heavy Armor)

Edges: Alertness, Charismatic, Combat Reflexes, Connections, Level Headed, Improved Dodge, Improved Nerves of Steel,

No Mercy

Hindrances: Heartless

Powers: Fearless

Gear: Concealed body armor (2 points of Heavy Armor, which does not cover his head), Straight Razor (2d6 Damage), Silenced Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 8)

Background: One of Rock Johnson's chief lieutenants, everyone calls him "Six Degrees Kelvin" because he seems to know every last person in Wolverton—and because he's so cold. "DeWinters is cold" they say, "but not like Six Degrees Kelvin." He's the guy Rock Johnson sends to deal directly with the gangs, so a certain cool is required of him. They're all a little in awe of his quiet menace.

He's a tall, dark-skinned man, built like a basketball player, with close cropped hair and a faint, distant smile. He dresses elegantly, with a long black overcoat and Armani suits. For some reason he wears spats. Every time you see him he seems to be wearing a different pair of designer sunglasses. Underneath, his eyes are a startling blue. No one knows where he lives—like the Rock himself, he comes and goes.

Immune to fear, compassion or guilt, he has a wicked, low-key sense of humor and always seems faintly amused. His voice is deep, but quiet and he picks his words carefully. Some people say Kelvin lives by his own personal code of honor. That's not true, not even remotely, but he is extremely reasonable, and he never takes insults personally—a dead man can say whatever he pleases.

It is said that Kelvin Jones has some kind of serious beef with Detective Johnny Valentine (see Page 79) but if that's true he gives no visible sign of it. A patient man, he is always prepared to wait for revenge. They also say that he's Jackie Jones' ex-husband and the father of at least one of her daughters. She denies this and says the name is a coincidence. A lot of folks are named Jones, she says. When asked about it, Kelvin just smiles.

Elwood "Big Daddy" Grimes

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (Criminal Underworld) d8, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d10, Shooting d6, Streetwise d8, Stealth d8, Taunt d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 8 (2 Heavy Armor)

Edges: Charismatic, Combat Reflexes, Connections, Level Headed, Nerves of Steel

Hindrances: Heartless, Quirk (loudmouth hypocrite)

Gear: Concealed body armor (2 points of Heavy Armor, which does not cover his head), Knife (1d8+1d4 Damage), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 6)

Background: Big Daddy has the voice of a preacher, the eyes of a martyr and the soul of a hungry python. Stringy, ropy and long, everything he says sounds like a scriptural quotation, as spoken by an eloquent barracuda. He speaks long and passionately about the need to keep kids off the street, to give them a chance to aspire, to pick the path of the righteous. Then he beckons them into the Wolverton Community Center, where he sells them drugs and stolen guns and sometimes executes them. Under his stern moral guidance, the Community Center has flourished, offering midnight basketball, self-improvement courses and heroin to those who attend. And sometimes death, but only if they owe Big Daddy money.

"Aspire," says the sign over the door. He's fond of pointing to it, for it's his favorite word. And he does indeed have aspirations. He will explain to anyone who listens that he knows the temptations of the street. He dealt drugs and did unrighteous things once. He still does, of course, but he usually leaves that part out.

His aspirations have carried him a long way, from low-level street dealer to one of Rock Johnson's most important henchmen, entrusted with the Community Center itself. Lincoln Stone's men often stop by to chat, or to pick up shipments of

drugs, as does Eentsy Z. "Six Degrees" Kelvin appears from time to time. Cops from the local precinct also come by to give talks and to get to know the kids and Big Daddy is strengthening his ties to them as well.

An interesting kind of hypocrite, he won't stop his patter about striving, aspiring and uplifting himself even while he's selling drugs or having somebody killed. His strongest ally is a brilliant young hooligan he recruited in prison, named Justice Jackson. Justice is his acolyte, his prodigy, the son he never had (well, actually he has four sons, but they hate him and never come to visit.)

Justice is incredibly loyal to Big Daddy, but it doesn't go both ways. He'd cheerfully sacrifice his prodigy if it gained him a moment's advantage, but for now the boy is far too useful.

Justice Jackson, aka Justice Grimes, aka Big Daddy Junior



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Knowledge (Criminal

Underworld) d6, Knowledge (Poetry) d6, Notice d8+2, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Streetwise d8, Stealth d8, Taunt d8, Throwing d6

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 8 (2 Heavy Armor)

Edges: Alertness, Attractive, Charismatic, Connections, Fleet-Footed, Improved Dodge, Quick

Hindrances: Loyal, Stubborn, Youth

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 6)

Background: A lot of kids dream of getting out of Wolverton by becoming athletes or criminals. Justice Jackson actually tried poetry instead. This worked even less well than you'd expect.

A talented fifteen-year-old writer, the darling of every English teacher he ever had, Justice dreamed of becoming the next Langston Hughes. Although he was big and strong enough to be an athlete, he avoided team sports as carefully as he avoided the gangs, focusing all his efforts on writing. The results were promising, if overwrought. The kind of stuff a talented adolescent would be expected to write. His poems were largely polemics about how tough things were in Wolverton—gangster rap with a more complicated rhyme scheme.

He submitted a bunch of them in person to his school's literary magazine. As he handed them to the editor, he impulsively said "you better be careful, there's a bomb in there."

He meant that his poetry was explosive, but the cops didn't care. And he was unlucky enough to draw Judge Barry Krummel, aka "Barry the Hammer" (you can find out more about him on Page 96.) Tried as an adult for making a bomb threat, he was not allowed to tell the jury that he had meant the word "bomb" purely as a metaphor. Judge Krummel held that the only thing at issue was whether or not Justice had uttered the offending words. Sent to Bald Knob Penitentiary, Justice endured a lot of horror and misery over the next two years. He joined Lincoln Stone's prison gang purely for survival and soon learned how to defend himself.

His prison mentor was Elwood "Big Daddy" Grimes, and the two of them were released at around the same date. Justice's father wanted nothing more to do with him, so Elwood became his dad. He's totally dedicated to the man and often gives his last name as "Grimes." The two of them run the Wolverton Community Center as their own personal fiefdom under the distant but watchful eye of Lincoln Stone.

Handsome, dark-skinned and small for his age, Justice isn't bulky but he's wiry and as quick as a snake. He often speaks in rhyme.

Justice's experiences have made him bitter, angry, and increased his sense of narcissism. He's an eloquent speaker, but don't let it fool you. He's boiling with rage behind his smile. The fact that he can't seem to write poetry anymore just makes it worse.

Justice has never committed an act of violence against a woman or a child, but that's mostly because Big Daddy has never asked him to. He'd do anything at all for his surrogate father and he'd rationalize it afterwards, but he'd find harming an innocent to be pretty distasteful. He would never take a hostage to save his own life or freedom, but he might do it to save Big Daddy.

Coffin and Toombs (both share the same stat block)

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidate d6+2, Knowledge (Criminal Underworld) d6, Lockpicking d8, Notice d8+2, Shooting d10, Streetwise d8, Stealth d10, Throwing d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 8 (2 Heavy Armor)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Dead Shot, Improved Level Headed, Improved Nerves of Steel, Marksman, No Mercy, Quick, Quick-Draw, Steady Hands, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate and Taunt), Trademark Weapon (light-caliber pistol)

Hindrances: Heartless

Gear: Concealed body armor (2 points of Heavy Armor, which does not cover his

head), Silenced Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 1, Shots 8)

Background: Leroy Coffin and Wallace "Silky" Toombs are getting old, but they're still Wolverton's premier hit men. They normally work as a pair, but they take on independent work as well. Both will freelance out to either the Rock or the Stone, but they won't kill members of either one's inner circle without explicit permission from both of them. It could cause hard feelings if they knocked over a man's drinking buddies without asking him first.

Everybody in the neighborhood has heard of these guys, but no one seems to know what they look like. That's by design, as Toombs would say. They are both careful, cautious men who know that in their profession staying a shadow is an important part of staying alive. They strike from behind, in the dark, when you aren't expecting it. Usually even the target never sees them. And unless they've been asked to send a message, they either disappear the mark or they make it look like a robbery. They take particular pride in their ability to stage accidents, but neither the Rock nor the Stone likes their enemies to die in fake accidents. They want their fellow denizens of the underworld to know it's a murder and heed the warning. While this is disappointing, both Coffin and Toombs take it all in stride, as they do most of life's disappointments.

They aren't related, but they look almost identical, and they have the same stats. Skinny older guys with shaved heads, black leather jackets and fedoras, an indefinable air of menace surrounds them both. Their faces look quiet, watchful, guarded and blank. People tend to fall silent when either one of them walks into a room, without being sure why.

Their personalities and backgrounds are actually rather different. Leroy Coffin is from Chicago, where he has a wife, six kids and ten grandchildren. He lives a double life, and tells his family that he works as a tramp electrician when he isn't around.

Silky is from the deep woods of Georgia. A lifelong bachelor, he lives alone with his books. Coffin likes to poke fun at

his "ignorant countrified ways" but in fact Toombs is the deep thinker of the two. He reads Plato and Thomas Paine and has a poster of Martin Luther King on his wall. Coffin, on the other hand, takes no interest in anything but shooting pool, playing with his grandkids and killing people.

Both men love pool and are diabolically good at it. That's usually where you'll find them if you need them for a job. Shooting pool and talking quietly in some smoky little basement dive. Their aim never fails.

THE MARA



Everyone fears the Mara. But while they work really hard to keep up their sinister reputation, a lot of it is just for show. They don't always, for example, cut the heads off their enemies' children, but they have done it enough times to make everyone think they might.

Like the gangs of Wolverton, the Mara are organized into "sets" or smaller gangs. Unlike the sets that comprise Wolverton's gangs, these are not semi-autonomous groups. Every last member owes personal loyalty directly to the Jigsaw Man and the Mara as a whole, not to their individual set. When the Mara need to attack a target, every team's leader gets a page on their beeper and they immediately

mobilize as one force. Most gang leaders only dream of being able to do that.

The Latin Aces have been absorbed by the Mara and they have been allowed to keep their gang colors, but they are being allowed to live on probation, and they obey the Jigsaw Man as completely as any of the other sets. Yet the individual sets inside the Aces do still get into fights with one another over old grudges and drug turf. That's a big part of what makes Lucius Hardwick Memorial Park so dangerous.

Associate members of the gang are known as Xangadors, team leaders are called Brujo Boys or Witch-Boys. Their leader's official title is the Bababruja, or the Rey des Brujas, but everyone just calls him "the Jigsaw Man" or "Him." No one knows his name. There are no photographs of him. They say his face does not come out in pictures.

Unlike Voodoo, Macumba or Candomble, the version of Santeria that the Mara practice is more influenced by Central American Indian beliefs than by African tribal religions, although they have gathered in bits and pieces from all kinds of different occult traditions. They sacrifice blood and booze and pain to the Santos (sometimes they call them Orishas or Nomnos) and hold rituals at certain phases of the moon.

Chief among their Santos is Xango, lord of fire and steel. He is the Santo de Guerre who offers victory in war and protection from bullets.

The Mara's gang symbols are also the symbols of their religion. A black rooster, a crucified dog, the cross with the letter "M" superimposed, the number seven. Their most common symbol is three sticks bound together in a shape like an asterisk. No one outside the group knows what this means. Their members frequently have the images of saints tattooed across their bodies, along with the number seven and/or crucified dogs. Sometimes they call their inner cadre the "Sangre Seven."

Their hand-sign is made with seven fingers. Hold up five fingers on one hand

and two fingers on the other, then cross one hand over the other, with the two fingers in front. They also sometimes use the Seven of Spades as a symbol, or the letter X (for Xango) or a bloody-mouthed angel they call "Madre de Sangre", who seems to be their version of the Virgin Mary.

Whether or not the Jigsaw Man has actual superhuman powers depends on how big a threat you would like to make him, and on how prominent you want the war between the gangs of Wolverton and Hardwick Park to be. With this in mind, we've given you two different versions of the Jigsaw Man—one with powers and one without.

For a "big finish" ending, the Jigsaw Man might wind up calling down the power of Xango, transforming himself into a living god just in time for the Player Characters to kick down his door and fight him. We've given you stats for the living incarnation of Xango, just in case. Please remember that Xango is too strong for a human body to contain for very long, and anyone who undergoes the transformation is on a suicide run. To give the Jigsaw Man henchmen who measure up, assume that the vast majority of his troops are just gang kids, but give him an inner circle of Witch-Boys who are more formidable. We've included two versions of his core group, with two sets of stats. One has magic powers, one does not.

Even if the Mara have access to real magic, it's probably better for dramatic purposes if their powers are limited to casting elaborate rituals, or to techniques that don't have visible effects. So, for example, they might have a ritual that grants them some points of Protection from bullets, but it wouldn't make them glow or make bullets visibly change course to avoid them. Instead of having the ability to shoot lightning bolts or breathe flame, they should whisper prayers over their guns that make them do more damage. The Jigsaw Man himself might have the ability to make his enemies fall down and die just by looking at them, but even this is pushing it a little.

Generic Chollo



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Knowledge (secret rites of the Mara) d4, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: —

Hindrances: Loyal (to the Mara)

Gear: Machete (d6+2 Damage), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 7)

Brujo Boy (Low-Powered Version)

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (secret rites of the Mara) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d8, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Improved Frenzy

Hindrances: Heartless, Loyal (to the Mara), Vengeful

Gear: Machete (d6+2 Damage), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 7)

Background: To become a member of the Jigsaw Man's inner circle, you have to prove yourself many times in combat. Each of the Brujo Boys is a veteran of countless fights. They claim to be fanatically loyal to the Jigsaw Man, but it would be more accurate to describe them as being really scared of him.

Brujo Boy (With Magic Powers)

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (secret rites of the Mara) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d8, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 7 (2 points of Heavy Armor)

Edges: Improved Frenzy

Hindrances: Heartless, Loyal (to the Mara), Quirk (deathly afraid of the Jigsaw Man), Vengeful

Powers:

- **Armor (2):** Heavy Armor, requires Activation

- **Detect/Conceal Arcana**

- **Dispel**

- **Immunity:** Takes only half damage from bullets

Gear: Machete (d6+2 Damage), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 7), Cell-Phone

Background: Despite being more powerful, these Brujo Boys are even more afraid of the Jigsaw Man than his mundane henchmen, since they have a better understanding of what he can do to them. They normally use their "Artificer" feat to make magical potions and powders, which is why they have the skill "Craft (Chemical.)"

The Jigsaw Man (Without Superpowers)



The Jigsaw Man (With Powers) Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d10, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (secret rites of the Mara) d10, Notice d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Survival d6, Streetwise d8, Throwing d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 7 (2 points of Heavy Armor)

Edges: Charismatic, Command, Connections, Fervor, Improved Frenzy, Hold the Line, Improved Nerves of Steel, Take the Hit

Hindrances: Distinctive Appearance, Enemy (Eentsie Z and the Last of the Last), Heartless, Mean, Vengeful

Powers:

- **Armor (2):** Heavy Armor, requires Activation
- **Awareness**
- **Detect/Conceal Arcana**
- **Danger Sense**
- **Dispel**
- **Heightened Senses**
- **Mind Reading**
- **Immunity:** Takes only half damage from bullets
- **Smite:** +1d6 to attacks, can make an attack into a Heavy Weapon

Gear: Machete (d6+2 Damage), Uzi (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 4, Shots 40), Cell Phone

Background: The GM has some choices to make with the Jigsaw Man. He is either a charlatan with no real magic powers, or an actual sorcerer. We've provided you with two sets of stats for him, so you can have it either way.

Whichever he is, the Jigsaw Man's background remains much the same. And even if he doesn't have magical powers, he's plenty scary enough.

Born, like the Mara, in the steaming jungles of Honduras, he's a member of a little-known ethnicity called the Garifuna. They're partly the descendants of African slaves from the Caribbean and partly descended from the last vestiges of the Caribbean's indigenous population. They live deep in the swamp along Honduras' wild northern coast and have little contact with the world. They've handed down some strange traditions from Africa, mixed in with some stranger ones from their Indian ancestors.

The Jigsaw Man is light-skinned for a Garifuna but very dark for a Honduran. People used to have difficulty determining his ethnicity, even before he picked up all the disfiguring facial scars. He didn't get his scars in a single episode. They accumulated over time, in fights and accidents and sacrifices to his weird dark gods.

His name, should anyone ever learn it, is Ysidro Azul. He hasn't used it in years.

The Jigsaw Man tells himself that he isn't really a torture-crazed psychopath. He does terrible things to his enemies and their families because it makes people fear him, and fear is strength. He's fooling himself. In fact he revels in carnage and horror. The only thing that keeps him from stalking people at random or going berserk in public is that he already gets enough savagery to slake his blood thirst on the job.

Being feared, being respected and being a successful gangster are actually more important to him than his own life, as anyone who comes up against him in a fight will swiftly learn. If he found a way to go out in a blaze of glory, he would pick it over

being taken alive. A lot of gangsters say that about themselves, but he actually means it.

For some reason he takes giving his word really seriously. If he makes a promise he will keep it. For this reason, he never makes them.

Xango

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+1, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d10, Notice d6, Throwing d8

Charisma: -4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 14 (2 Heavy Armor)

Hindrances: Clueless, Distinctive

Appearance, Mean, Terminally Ill (has less than half an hour to live), Ugly

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Brawny, Hard to Kill, Mighty Blow, Power Points, Take the Hit!

Super Powers:

- **Attack:** Melee +3d6, Armor Piercing 4, Knockback 1d10

- **Fearless (2)**

- **Growth (1):** Size +1, Monster

- **Super Attributes (6):** (Super Strength)

- **Toughness:** +5, 2 Heavy Armor, Hardy

Background: If you want a big finish to a long campaign against the Mara, perhaps the Jigsaw Man transforms himself into the living incarnation of the great god Xango (or at least his own twisted version of it) just as the Player Characters kick down his door. He won't live long like this—blood is already pouring out of his mouth, ears and eyes. And no man can bear the power of Xango for more than thirty minutes or so. But he'll survive long enough to give the PCs one hell of a fight.

"Father Chuey"

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (Theology) d4, Notice d6, Persuade d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Streetwise d8, Stealth d6, Taunt d8

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 7 (counting 2 Heavy Armor on his torso)

Hindrances: Heartless

Edges: Ambidextrous, Connections, Dodge, Marksman, No Mercy, Quick, Quick-Draw, Two Fisted.

Gear: Two Pistols (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), Body Armor (2 Heavy Armor, only protects his torso), Clerical Robes

Background: Our Lady of Xichumel is one of Hardwick Park's biggest churches. It's in pretty poor repair, but it's popular with young people. This is largely because of its hip young priest, Father Alfredo Guzman. Everyone calls him "Father Chuey."

He's an important member of the Mara and uses his church to store drugs and stolen goods for them. The little old ladies of the neighborhood are bewildered to hear him say that they must be good and pay the Mara their protection money on time, or he won't give them Holy Communion and they'll go to Hell. But they obey him anyway. He's their priest, after all.

A grinning, tattooed psychopath with a ponytail and a lot of gold teeth, he has something like the status of a Brujo Boy within the organization, although he has no official rank. When he gives orders, everyone knows to obey him.

Popular with young boys because he's lenient about handing out penance, you can tell him almost anything in the confessional booth without shocking him. But if you confess to snitching on the Mara, he may just execute you right there on the spot, without even leaving the booth.

He's a little forgetful about doctrinal matters, particularly when he's stoned, and his answers to most religious questions are often hilariously slapdash. Frankly he has more urgent things to worry about than the nature of the Trinity or the Doctrine of Miraculous Transfiguration.

Sometimes he holds midnight services for private gatherings. These services are usually sit-down meetings for the Mara, complete with weird and unsavory rites. Everyone in the neighborhood knows to stay far away from Our Lady of Xichumel on these nights.

OTHER GANGS OF HARDWICK PARK

The Mara have Hardwick Park clamped down pretty tightly. The Jigsaw Man has much tighter control over his turf than, for example, Eentsy Z. But there are two other gangs that share Hardwick Park with him. The Latin Aces, who are effectively his vassals, and the tiny, crazy girl-gang called Los Furies, which is completely independent, and which he is about to crush.

There may also be a few scattered remnants of the neighborhood's older gangs like the Reyes and the Chosen Few, nursing their wounds and plotting revenge. They probably won't survive long enough to get it. The Jigsaw Man is committed to eliminating every last trace of resistance to his grip on the neighborhood. Just because he has his rivals on their knees doesn't mean that he's forgotten about them or that he's going to let them live.

THE LATIN ACES



Primarily a Mexican and Puerto Rican Gang, they used to be the second largest group in Hardwick Park. They made common cause with the Mara against the Reyes, back when the Jigsaw Man was still a rising power. He executed most of their leaders anyway and put the rest in mortal fear of him.

They fit right into his system of captains, but he lets them wear their old gang colors. This helps keep Mexican and Puerto Rican kids from going out and forming their own new gangs to oppose him. They can join the Latin Aces instead and have his support instead of his enmity.

Most of the older members of the gang are pretty subdued these days. They've all seen the Mara do unspeakable things to guys who opposed them—and to their families. They have been allowed to live on probation and they are frequently reminded of this fact. Going to them for protection from the Mara will not work. In fact they are frantically eager to show their loyalty to their new boss.

Unable to take their frustrations out on the Mara, the individual sets in the Aces have begun to turn on one another over old feuds and turf. The Jigsaw Man doesn't care, and may be encouraging this pointless self-destructive warfare.

Their symbol is an Ace of Spades with two crossed daggers plunging through it. Their colors are black and red. Sometimes they tag street corners with an "A" superimposed over an "X." These days they always put a squiggly little "M" on top, like a crown. This signifies their subjugation by the Mara. Their hand-signal is an upright palm with crossed fingers in front of it (this sort of resembles a spade with crossed daggers) or an upraised thumb, with the fingers extended perpendicular to the wrist. This looks sort of like an axe ("AX".)

Every night, each of the surviving three captains of the Aces has to call a certain number, and whisper "thank you" into the silence. They all live haunted by the knowledge that the Mara are probably going to kill them off anyway.

Los Furies



Most of the Latin girl-gangs in Hardwick Park are adjuncts to male gangs. They have never had any real independence. The girls hide stolen goods, help cut drugs, shoplift food for the gang and put out for any member who tells them to. They don't have any power of their own at all. But when credit card fraud became a major source of income for the Mara their girls started to gain a little more power and respect. Here was a major criminal enterprise they could really participate in.

It was only a matter of time before they started to assert themselves, and the resulting backlash was brutal. Quite a few girls died or got beaten up in the purges that followed. One of them, Lupe "Dead-Girl" Zamora, lived through a near fatal stabbing and decided to take revenge on the men who had injured her. These days, Dead-Girl Zamora leads a breakaway faction of "Eightball Chicks" who call themselves Los Furies.

They are pledged to defending their sisters and any other woman who comes to them for help. Anyone who joins must renounce all ties to men, to their families, to God and to anyone

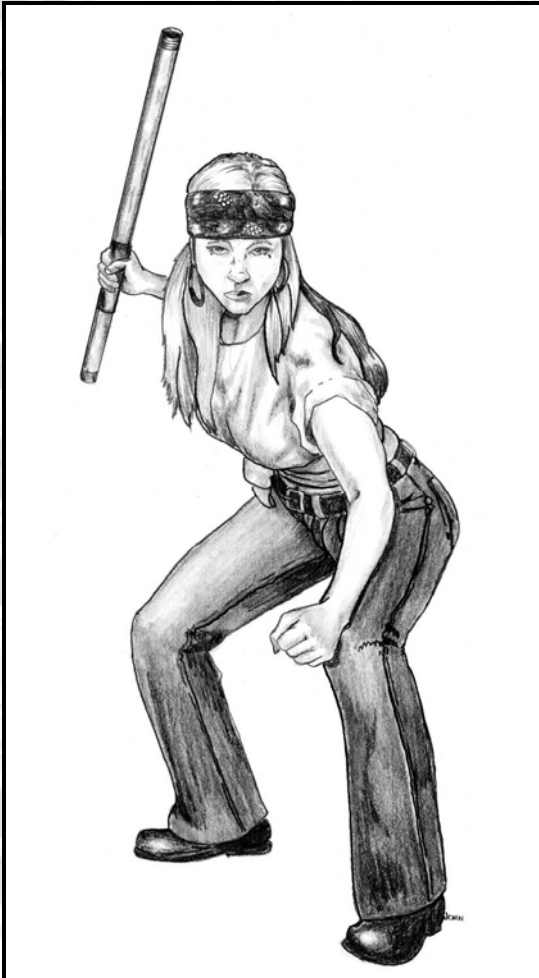
outside the sisterhood. Their purpose is to protect one another and the rest of their gender. At first revenge on the Mara was not one of their objectives—even Dead-Girl didn't want to do anything that would give the Jigsaw Man an excuse to wipe them out. But now their sisters have been turning up with their heads cut off and it's clear that the Mara intend to kill them all anyway, just because they set a bad example. So they've decided—what the hell, they may as well go on the offensive and die fighting.

The Furies have always had a cash-flow problem. They sometimes assault men who have abused women and take their money, they have held up a few small businesses owned by men who they believe are abusers but they don't have a steady supply of drugs or weapons to sell. Some of them work minimum wage day jobs and they try to steal as much food as they need. Still, if the Mara don't execute them all, the lack of funds and ammunition will surely cripple them before long. Without telling Dead-Girl Zamora, a small group of the girls are about to start robbing banks to provide more funds. But even this won't work out right. The average take from a bank robbery is only about two-thousand dollars.

At present, the Furies control three safe houses, scattered around Hardwick Park. They have about twenty dependants—women who have come to them for protection—some of them have brought their kids. That's a lot of mouths to feed.

Dead-Girl's best friend, Mouse, has the keys to a small warehouse space in Greely Point, and the gang may relocate over there if things get really desperate.

Generic Member of Los Furies



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6

Edges: Frenzy

Hindrances: Loyal (to their Sisters in the Gang)

Gear: Knife (Str+1) or Club (Str +1) or just possibly a Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 7)

Background: Somewhere between thirteen and twenty years old, she's likely to have seen a lot more horror and death than you would ever expect from such a young girl. Feverishly loyal to the gang, they are always trying to outdo one another and they can become extremely dangerous when in a group. Morale is very high among rank-and-file members of the gang, despite their impending doom.

Dead-Girl



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Notice d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Heroic, Loyal (to her gang-sisters), Quirk (doesn't trust men).

Edges: Charismatic, Command, Leader, Quick-Draw

Gear: Huge Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 10)

Background: Small but noisy, Dead-Girl is intensely charismatic in a fast-talking, jittery kind of way. She's eighteen, but she has lived pretty rough since she was twelve and looks a lot older. These days she dyes her hair pink and her skin is unusually pale. Most people don't know she's Hispanic until they hear her speak.

Dead-Girl has a teenager's sense of outraged justice and is constantly trying to help people. Often this gets her into trouble. She does not trust men and does not like Anglos very much.

She's Salvadoran by birth. Her father still lives and works in Hardwick Park. He's an unreliable booze-hound and wants nothing more to do with his crazy, troublesome little girl. Her mother died of alcoholism some years ago, but she was a sweet woman even when drunk and Dead-Girl spent a lot of her time caring for her.

Dead-Girl took up with a gang called the Latin Aces before they got absorbed into the Mara. She was always too smart and outspoken for them and got hit a lot. When some of the girls started asserting

themselves more last year, the Mara decided to make an example out of her. She hides her facial scars under her hair but her emotional ones are a lot more difficult to conceal.

Mouse



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 7

Hindrances: Loyal (to her gang-sisters), Quirk (quiet and shy), Take the Hit.

Edges: Tough as Nails

Gear: Big Knife (d8+1 damage), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 10)

Background: A big, strong, quiet girl, Mouse has been Dead-Girl's protector since kindergarten. She has always been fascinated by and in awe of her hyperactive little friend. An athlete, Mouse avoided the gangs and drifted apart from Dead-Girl when she vanished into that world.

Then Dead-Girl turned up mutilated and dying on her doorstep. Mouse knew a lot about first aid and helped her as much as she could. Then she sat beside Dead-

Girl's bed in the hospital every day. Mouse got kicked off the basketball team and lost her chance at an athletic scholarship by spending all her time with Dead-Girl in the hospital and missing practice. She doesn't really care that she threw away her one ticket out of Hardwick Park for Dead-Girl. In fact she feels terrible for having wanted to leave. She abandoned Dead-Girl when she most needed support—or that's the way it seems to Mouse. Maybe she can make up for it by dying with her.

Mouse stands just over six feet tall and looks like an athlete. She's pretty, but looks intimidating. She seldom speaks, except to whisper in Dead-Girl's ear.

Lucia "One-Eye" Cortez



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d6+2, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d6+2

Edges: Dodge, Strong Willed, Trademark Weapon (pump-action shotgun)

Hindrances: One eye, Vengeful

Gear: Shotgun (3d6 damage)

Background: As the Mara put their cigarettes out on her eyeball, Lucia Cortez stopped trusting men for good. She had been one of a group of girls who ran credit card scams for the Jigsaw Man and who had started to assert their independence a little more. She wasn't really a ringleader, but she had an exceptional head for numbers, so the Mara assumed that she must have

been one of the ones causing all the trouble and they made a special example out of her.

After they beat her up, they used her left eye as an ashtray, sliced off her mom's head and left. It wasn't long before she decided to take revenge on all men everywhere. She has joined Los Furies in order to get her chance.

One of the gang's most enthusiastic combatants, she is always the first to suggest going on the attack and she always leads the charge. She's also their best accountant and has been made club treasurer. She sometimes takes unnecessary risks and she always goes out of her way to hurt men. Dead-Girl likes her, but is a little afraid of her. Mouse thinks she's trouble.

For her part, One-Eye Cortez envies the close relationship between Mouse and Dead-Girl and subtly tries to undermine it—so far without success. She is at the center of the group of girls who have decided to go rob banks, for she knows and worries more about the group's financial difficulties than anyone.

It would be pretty dumb for her to participate in bank robberies herself. She looks way too distinctive. One-Eye has a black eyepatch and wears her hair long and straight. She likes to dress up as a revolutionary and often wears camouflage or long black overcoats with red turtlenecks. She is never seen without her black cap. She carries a shotgun, although that's not such a good weapon for somebody with almost no peripheral vision to have.

One Eye has two little sisters in the foster care system somewhere. She hopes they'll be safe from the Mara there. If the Jigsaw Man finds them, he will most certainly try to use them against her.

GANGS OF STARK HILL

The venerable "youth clubs" of Stark Hill have been running street level rackets for fifty years and more. They are and have always been the primary recruiting ground for the Bedlam Mob.

It used to be that there were five gangs, arranged in a loose confederation against the black gangs of Wolverton. They

were the Half Moons, the Coronets, the West Viscounts, the Overlord Viscounts and the Dukes. Now, as Stark Hill decays and their numbers dwindle, they have reorganized into three gangs, the Coronets, the Viscounts and the Dukes.

The Half Moons committed some crime so terrible that they were disbanded and wiped out, never to be spoken of again, while the Overlord Viscounts slipped into such decay that their remaining members got absorbed by the Coronets.

Their whole rationale for existing is to keep black kids out of the neighborhood, but in recent years as Bedlam's Hispanic population has grown they have grown more and more hostile to the Spanish gangs of Hardwick Park.

The exact size of each gang fluctuates, but the Viscounts are always the biggest, about twice the size of the Coronets and three times as large as the Dukes. All these gangs are decades old—their new tags overlap older, fading versions of the same graffiti that may have adorned the same crumbling walls since the 1950s.

Stark Hill's gangs have long, proud and elaborate rituals for initiations, expulsions and for conducting official club business. All three are structured much the same way. A President oversees everything, and is officially the leader, but is often a figurehead for the Secretary of War, who is in charge of all matters pertaining to the club's defense. There is also usually a Treasurer who is in charge of the club's finances. Answering directly to the President and the Secretary of War are the various Block Captains, each of whom has a group of boys under their direct control.

The individual Block Captains sometimes grow strong enough to have gang-names and colors of their own, which they wear on top of their main gang colors. So, for example, the Skulls are a subdivision of the Dukes. They wear black satin windbreaker jackets with red trim and a gold crown on the back, just like all members of the Dukes, but they also wear pins or bandannas or sometimes t-shirts with skulls on them.

Initiation into one of these gangs involves an all-night ritual in which the

initiate is blindfolded, made to answer a lot of cryptic sounding questions, and then pummeled to a bloody pulp by everyone present. After their ceremonial beating, they are given their new club jacket.

The Scarpia crime family recruits soldiers from their ranks—particularly Dapper Donny's old gang the Coronets, but they stay aloof from gang affairs. They sometimes ask individual members for favors, and since everyone knows that doing favors for Dapper Donny is the right way to become a Made Guy, most are eager to comply. After a young man has proved himself on a few missions, then they may check his background to make sure he is completely Sicilian and that there is no stain on his family history, and if what they find looks good, they'll bring him on board as a "Button Man" and give him a chance to earn his way into the family itself.

You do not have to be Sicilian to join one of Stark Hill's youth gangs. Just white and Catholic. While only Sicilian kids have been asked to formally join the Mafia, plenty of Polish, Irish and Czech guys go on to become mob associates—among them City Councilman Big Andy Czernik.

Stark Hill's Youth Clubs do not usually carry heavy firearms, but they all have arsenals that they can draw on if they have to. Their usual weapons are the switchblade knife and the baseball bat, but if they need to face down (for example) the Mara, they will break out the Uzis and AK-47s.

Each of the three gangs has its own Girls' Auxiliary—comprised of girlfriends and camp followers who hide stolen goods, shoplift and serve the troops in other ways. You can usually identify a Stark Hill gang girl by her brightly colored silk scarf. Only the really bold ones wear actual gang jackets—it can make you a target for cops and rival gangs. These girl-gangs are completely under the thumb of their male counterparts and have no real independence.

Generic Stark Hill Gang Member

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Knowledge (Stark Hill) d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: —

Hindrances: —

Gear: Switchblade (Str+1 Damage) or Tire Iron (Str+2 Damage).

The O'Ryan Boys



While quite a few Bedlam cops are dirty, willing to break the law or run errands for the Mafia on an ad-hoc basis, there are two actual criminal "crews" within the Bedlam City Police, who make a full-time living out of crime. They transport dope and other contraband in their squad cars, help fence stolen goods, steal valuables from the homes of crime victims, and carry out contract murders for whoever can pay them. They are in effect fully functioning "associate" crews of the Bedlam Mafia.

The first crew is based out of the Second Precinct (which includes the Stark Hill neighborhood) and is run by hero cop "Big Chuck" O'Ryan and his brothers, Pat and Mack.

We're going to leave the second crew completely undefined, so that the GM can have one in reserve if every member of the first crew gets put away. They might be loyal to the Scarpias or the Gorganzuas, they might be based in any one of the precincts, or scattered throughout the system. Whoever they are, the O'Ryan Boys don't know them.

There are roughly twenty members of the O'Ryan Boys' crew. All of them are Irish, Polish or Italian. No Hispanics or African-Americans are ever allowed to join as full-time partners. Most of them are former members of the Viscounts street gang in Stark Hill. They run any number of illegal operations, from prostitution to smuggling to murder, but their main function is as enforcers for the Scarpia Crime family, and as the family's eyes and ears within the Bedlam Police.

They have contacts in every division of the Police Department, as well as corrections, the sheriff's office and the state police. These contacts are willing to provide them with information or to look the other way, but they usually can't be called on to commit serious crimes themselves. The core members of the crew, on the other hand, are up for anything.

About half of them are patrolmen and half are detectives—including one of the detectives in Internal Affairs. At least five of their hardcore members are part of the SWAT tactical team and all of them can get their hands on heavy military hardware if they have to. They do not, as of yet, have any core members in the Special Operations Squad, but they would love to expand their influence there. They have exceptionally good relations with Stark Hill's masked vigilante, the Hammer of Justice.

The Brotherhood

They say that only one percent of the bikers in America are actual criminals. So outlaw gangs like the Brotherhood proudly call themselves "One-Percenter." The Brothers themselves are more like half-percenters—even for outlaw bikers they are unusually savage and violent.

It is one of the Brotherhood's many rules that members of the club cannot have straight jobs. They must support themselves entirely through crime. Mostly they do this by selling and manufacturing crank, but they also mug people who stray onto their turf, carry out contract killings (at four-hundred dollars per murder, their rates are extremely reasonable) and sometimes

individual members rob banks. They occasionally extort protection money from the other residents of the Shady Meadows Mobile Home Park, but not in an organized way. Anyway most folks in the giant trailer park don't have much money to take.

On occasion the Brotherhood tears into Bedlam and causes some havoc, but they never range north of the Country Club or Ash Street. The Scarpia crime family sometimes asks them for favors or squeezes a little money out of them, but mostly leaves them to run their own affairs.

With just a hundred members or so, the Brotherhood isn't big enough to be organized into a lot of separate crews. Instead they are a single unit, under their current Warlord, Delbert Graves, a quiet, calculating, cold-hearted little man whom everyone fears. His bodyguards, Fifi and Pookie, are his chief lieutenants and enforce the Brotherhood's elaborate code. A lot of their rank-and-file members are bad-tempered, ill-disciplined drunks; Graves inspires enough respect and fear to keep them in line, so long as he is around.

While their numbers are relatively small, they are linked into a much larger nationwide network of meth dealers, biker gangs and white supremacists. With a few days' notice, Graves could call in more than a hundred extra troops. Give him a week and he can bring in supervillains.

People in Shady Meadows don't like the Brotherhood and tolerate them mostly out of fear. It is of course a violent, unpredictable place and there is no guarantee that the Graves and his gang will be welcome there forever. For the moment they are the best organized and most numerous group of criminals in the trailer park, so no one else is challenging them. If outsiders turn up in Shady Meadows, looking for trouble with Graves, no one but his own men will bother to warn him.

The Chop Shop

Graves has recently bought a small, run-down garage and repair shop near Ash Street. He intends to use it to dismantle stolen cars, but he's been using it to dismantle people instead. The power isn't on yet and none of the equipment still

works, but he has a bathtub and some gas-powered chainsaws in the back and he's trying to find a cheap acid that will liquefy human flesh (so far with no success). The Chop Shop isn't anywhere near as efficient as the Scarpia crime family's "Murder Machine" and if he has any neighbors they would already be complaining about the noise and stink. Graves hasn't figured out what to do with the bodies one he's taken them apart and they're slowly piling up in there.

But while Graves admits that the Chop Shop isn't perfect, yet, it is within walking distance of Fat Planet Comics and he greatly appreciates the convenience.

Generic Cycle Brother

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Notice d6, Ride d8, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: —

Hindrances: —

Gear: All have knives (Str+1 Damage) and motorcycle chains (Str+2 Damage). They could also be equipped with:

- Pistols (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 7)
 - Shotguns (Range 12/24/48, 3d6 Damage)
 - Submachine Guns (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 4, Shots 40).
- And of course each one rides a Harley Davidson motorcycle.

Delbert Graves

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d10, Notice d6, Ride d10, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Command, Connections, Dodge, First Strike, Hold the Line, Nerves of Steel, Quick

Hindrances: Heartless, Mean, Vengeful

Gear: Huge Knife (d6+1 Damage)

- Motorcycle chain (d6+2 Damage).
- "Broom-handled" Mauser Automatic Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, AP 3, Shots 10)
- Shotgun (Range 12/24/48, 3d6 Damage)
- Submachine Gun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 4, Shots 40)
- Fragmentation Grenades (3d6 damage, Medium Burst Radius)

Background: A cold, hard, savage little man, Graves is as devoid of human mercy as an arctic winter night. But his complete lack of sentimentality makes him a reasonable boss. He doesn't let grudges or enmity contaminate his thinking. He might keep his word and he might not—it's all a question of what he thinks would work best.

Or at least that's the impression he tries to give. People who have watched him carefully say his coldness is a sham. He's actually petty, vindictive and vengeful—but pretends to be emotionless. Which is true? It's hard to tell. If his scary blankness is a façade, it's one he never lets down.

A small, skinny guy with a handlebar mustache and ropy, prison-hardened muscles on his arms, Graves never seems to take off his sunglasses. If he did, there would be little difference. His eyes are just as empty as the black lenses he wears over them.

Graves seldom speaks, and when he does his voice is a quiet purr. Even when he's hurt or defeated, he doesn't show much emotion. He's a totally implacable foe if he thinks you have something he wants. While he knows a lot of repulsive things that can be done to the human body with the right set of tools, he never tortures anyone unless it's to make a point. He doesn't trust the things people say under torture, so he doesn't bother to use it to get information.

Graves became Warlord of the Brotherhood by moving swiftly and aggressively to kill off any competitors. He knows this approach works, so he's very quick to kill anyone he even suspects of plotting against him before they have a chance to usurp him. He doesn't think it's a good idea to leave the families of his enemies alive, since they're sure to want revenge. Nor does he think it's a good idea

to leave witnesses, and he'll go to extraordinary lengths to eliminate them.

Not much of a gloater, he doesn't really care whether his enemies know he was the one who screwed them over, or why he did it. They're just obstacles to be eliminated—it's nothing personal to him. Or so he says.

Graves has no regular "old lady" and serves his needs with one-night stands. He spends a surprising amount of time off prowling around on his own, and has a lot of secret caches of weapons and dope scattered around the countryside. No one knows where he sleeps. Not even his hulking bodyguards, Fifi and Pookie.

Pookie



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d10, Notice d8, Repair d8, Ride d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d8, Throwing d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 7

Edges: Connections, Improved Nerves of Steel, Take the Hit, Tough as Nails

Hindrances: Heartless, Ugly

Gear: Motorcycle chain (d6+2 Damage), Submachine Gun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 4, Shots 40), Fragmentation Grenades (3d6 damage, Medium Burst Radius), Harley Davidson motorcycle

Background: Bruno Mordella, better known to his associates as "Pookie" has been an outlaw biker for twenty years. He's a gigantic bald brute who relishes the way his appearance makes the squares flinch. Graves' looming bodyguard, he's even quieter than Graves himself.

Pookie looks like a dumb slob but he's not. In fact he's a cunning, calculating guy who would love to expand his power within the Brotherhood. While he is willing to commit any horrible crime that Graves might ask him to, he would not hesitate to betray the boss if he thought he could gain some advantage by it.

Pookie has killed on numerous occasions but he never does it in anger. He kills if he's told to or if he sees something to be gained by it. Like most "One-Percenter" he treats women very badly, but only because it's expected of him. He has murdered women for insulting a fellow member of the Brotherhood or complaining too much, but never because he felt personally riled with them.

For the most part the Brotherhood and the Bedlam Mafia stay out of each others' way. But Pookie is Sicilian by birth and he has begun to spend time with Young Junior Gorganzua's unstable, loser son "Little Junior." While Pookie knows that Little Junior is an unreliable flake, this might be his ticket into the Mafia. He could even wind up a "Made Guy."

Graves is aware of Pookie's shifting loyalties but isn't sure what to do about it except to start training a new bodyguard. He isn't about to tangle with a Mafia chieftain's son over one guy. Anyway who knows, Pookie might turn out to be a valuable contact if he does become a Mafiosi.

For his own part, Pookie is already starting to get disillusioned with Little Junior and is looking to establish some kind of connection with his arch-rival, Dandy Joe Slorkin. He doesn't yet realize just how upset that would make Little Junior, or that it might provoke an actual mob war like no one has seen in Bedlam since the Igglionis met their doom back in 1995.

Fifi



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d10, Notice d6, Repair d6, Ride d8, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 7

Edges: Tough as Nails

Hindrances: Dependants (two wives and five kids), Quirk (trying hard to impress Graves)

Gear: Big Knife (d10+d6 Damage), Submachine Gun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 4, Shots 40), Harley Davidson motorcycle

Background: Huge, tough and eager to please, Curtis Wayne "Fifi" Choate is a capable bodyguard and tries hard to do his best. He's an impulsive, emotional guy and he knows it, so he's trying very hard to stay calm and do a good job around Graves. Fifi isn't nearly as smart as Pookie and he talks a lot more. But Graves appreciates how hard he tries to be a good bodyguard and

is amused by how eager he is to prove himself.

Fifi is not completely devoid of conscience, and he's afraid it shows. He's looking for an opportunity to do something really despicable for Graves, in order to prove himself. If he gets the chance, he'll smother his remorse and throw himself into it as hard as he can.

He used to drink a lot, but he tries really hard to stay straight around Graves and is never inebriated when he's on duty. Always laughing and joking, he's good at intimidation, but it's a jovial kind of bullying, very different from Pookie's silent glare.

Fifi grew up in the biker culture and knows no other life. He has two old ladies, Montana Sue and Bobbi the Retard. Between the two of them he has five kids, (the oldest is eight years old) who all adore him.

GANGS OF THE COUNTRY CLUB

No single large gang dominates the Country Club, although there is a fairly good-sized Jamaican Posse on the neighborhood's northern edge (see "the Invincible Ya-Ya Posse" on Page 259.) For the most part the Country Club's gangs are tiny little groups of criminals who form around a single charismatic leader for mutual protection and to get drugs. They tend not to have names and to only number ten or so members each. Yet these can be some of the most dangerous criminal organizations in Bedlam. Twitchy and violent, they have no loyalty or allegiance to anybody and very little reason not to kill anyone. Some are full of trigger-happy psychopaths, others are more cautious. None are trustworthy.

THE TRIADS

Bedlam doesn't have a Chinatown, in the traditional sense of the word. There is no Dragon's Gate, no colorful district with shops covered in plaster dragons and neon. Neither the triads nor their American counterparts in the tongs maintain a big presence here. However, their influence is felt in Bedlam nonetheless. Two separate organizations, the Iron Wind Society and the Yip-Wing Tong, have arrangements with the Scarpia crime family to smuggle illegal immigrants, drugs and fake documents through the Rook Island Shipping Terminal.

There is a cluster of apartment buildings over in the Meadows, where the Yip-Wings keep the illegal immigrants until they can find jobs for them elsewhere. Conditions there are pretty bad—people sleep as many as twenty to an apartment. The Iron Wind Society keeps their human cargo in even worse conditions, in a set of prefab housing units on a storage lot near Bedlam Harbor. The units haven't been hooked up to the power grid or the water mains. The Scarpias get a cut of both operations, and don't interfere with them much.

Neither group maintains much of a presence in Bedlam. The Iron Wind Society may keep as few as ten soldiers watching over the operation at any one time, and the Yip-Wings have no more than fifteen. Both groups have been good and respectful guests and have gone out of their way to avoid trouble with the locals.

If a superhero (a PC, for example) were to start breaking up their operations and causing them grief, they would both ask the Scarpias for permission to bring in more soldiers and perhaps some superhuman talent to hunt them down. The Scarpias would probably approve.

We have some background information and some sample NPCs for both of these triads listed below.

THE IRON WIND SOCIETY

Based in the big cities of the southern Chinese coast, this Cantonese secret society

claims to be able to trace its origins back to the Ming Dynasty. They have sometimes been freedom fighters but more often they have been smugglers, gangsters and assassins. They are steeped in tradition, have an elaborate honor code (most of which boils down to "obey orders and don't snitch"), and lots of cryptic, half-mystical ceremonies and rituals. Their soldiers all practice a strange offshoot of White Crane Kung-Fu called the "Iron Wind of Heaven" and they prefer to carry out assassinations with traditional weapons like swords and axes.

Eager to look threatening and to get respect from American gangsters, the Iron Wind Brotherhood dress with ostentatious bad taste. You can recognize them by their brightly colored open-necked silk shirts, flashy jewelry, gold teeth with diamonds embedded in them, shaved heads (or long flowing hair) and acres of tattoos. And by all their scars, of course. They look dangerous, even when they aren't holding any martial arts weapons or AK-47s.

They rotate the leaders they send to Bedlam. Most of them are younger lieutenants from the Chinese mainland, eager to make a name for themselves.

For the past year, the operation in Bedlam has been run by a muscle-bound oaf named Charlie Chong, who never wears a shirt and never goes anywhere without his cowboy hat. He's not a very good record-keeper and may well be on his way to getting replaced. See stats and background information on Mr. Chong below.

Despite their pretensions, the Society is a pack of ruthless thugs like any organized crime family. They import people to America under unsafe conditions, treat them like slaves, brutalize any who complain and murder anyone who stands in their way without a flicker of remorse. And while they may talk about the noble traditions of their sword-brotherhood, the Iron Wind of Heaven is a mediocre style and the Society is mostly interested in making money.

Chinese law enforcement officials can immediately recognize the stylized characters that members of the Brotherhood have tattooed above their hearts. Anyone

else must make a Streetwise or Knowledge (Asian Organized Crime) roll at a -4.

Brother of the Iron Wind

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: --

Hindrances: Quirk (Unwilling to lose face, even if the alternative is death)

Gear: Axe (2d6 Damage) or Submachine Gun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 4, Shots 40), expensive but fake Rolex watch.

Charlie Chong Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d8, Notice d4, Shooting d4, Throwing d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 7

Edges: Improved Frenzy, Mighty Blow, Take the Hit, Tough as Nails

Hindrances: Mean, Quirk (constantly looking for any sign of disrespect to his honor or his hat)

Gear: Axe (1d10+1d6 Damage), cowboy hat.

Background: Charlie Chong loves hitting people. He's always smacking his subordinates around. When he's happy, he play-fights and wrestles with them, when he's mad he shoves and backhands them. He's an emotional guy and he's not a very good talker, so he speaks with his fists. Not that he ever roughs any of his men up seriously. He has had to execute one or two of his guys, but he doesn't want them to hate him. In fact he really enjoys being liked and he's as generous as he is violent.

While he's brutal with his enemies and with anyone he thinks is trying to make him look like a fool, he has a deep sentimental streak. Foolishly loyal to his friends, he also has a weak spot for animals and for cute kids. Anyone who harms either one in front of him will suffer one of his

rages. And he can be terrifying when enraged. On one occasion he actually tore a rival limb from limb. While he's a klutz with guns, he doesn't let it bother him. He actually prefers to kill people with his bare hands.

He won't explain why he never wears a shirt, and anyone who criticizes or damages his cowboy hat will drive him into a foaming frenzy of rage. Unless they're a cute kid or an animal.

Some people say Charlie's not smart enough to lead a cell, but his men seem to like him enough to make up for his shortcomings as a planner. He will never betray or testify against any member of his crew, no matter what he's threatened with. They probably don't feel the same way about him, but he doesn't care. It's the um, what do you call it? The principle of the thing.

THE YIP WING TONG

A Chinese-American organization, based in the US, the Yip Wing Tong is a street gang that has chapters in half a dozen cities. While they have strong contacts with the Triads overseas, they don't have any actual chapters outside the States. Human trafficking is a sideline to them—they mostly deal in drugs, prostitution and extortion schemes. But it's a profitable sideline nonetheless and they would be willing to expend a lot of resources to keep their operation in Bedlam going.

They've been around in one form or another since the 1970s but they've only come to prominence within the past ten years. They are known in the underworld as young, brash, ambitious and prone to unpredictable fits of violence (although they have behaved themselves very well in Bedlam so far.) While some members wear loud Hawaiian shirts with gold chains and earrings, the group in Bedlam dress conservatively, in expensive suits with (real) Rolex watches and \$500 Ray-Ban sunglasses. BMWs and Mercedes' are their favorite vehicles. They favor drive-by shootings as their method of assassination. They love guns. A typical gang lair is

bristling with automatic weapons. They are known in the underworld for using far more ammunition than they have to—never one bullet when fifty will do the job. A site they have attacked will be positively riddled with holes. Their soldiers typically fire pistols in each hand.

Yet so far there have been no crazed gunfights in Bedlam. They know to keep a low profile here, and the local leader, Jimmy Yip, holds his men tightly in check.

Older than most of his troops (who all seem to be between eighteen and twenty-five) Jimmy Yip has been overseeing the Bedlam operation for more than five years. He likes Bedlam and has moved into Stone Ridge, where everybody thinks he owns a chain of dry-cleaning stores (and in fact he does.)

The Yip-Wings hold official business meetings in the back of a huge tacky Chinese buffet called "Good Heaven Palace" on C Street in the Meadows, about a block from the apartment complex they control.

Soldier of the Yip-Wing Tong

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Knowledge (Hong Kong) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Heartless

Edges: Quick-Draw

Gear: Submachine Gun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 4, Shots 40), real Rolex watch.

Jimmy Yip Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Knowledge (Hong Kong) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Heartless, Quirk (Pretentious lout who thinks he's a philosopher).

Edges: Ambidextrous, Dodge, Quick, Quick-Draw, Two Fisted.

Gear: Two .45 pistols (2d6 damage Range 12/24/48)

Background: Jimmy Yip is a poet and a philosopher, he has convinced himself. He reads condensed versions of the Taoist classics and silly paperbacks on feng-shui. He makes pretentious, muddled-up remarks about the nature of fate and life every time he kills somebody. He has no idea what he's talking about, and his philosophical observations frequently make no sense, but his boys still think it's amazingly cool. Or maybe they're just afraid to tell him how goofy and lame it looks. Jimmy isn't like Justice Jackson—a real orator with a sinister agenda lurking under it. His attempts to be deep are downright incoherent. For example, Justice might try to explain some awful thing he's done with a specious but moving lecture about the way fate works. In the same situation, Jimmy would say something like "yeah, well the harmonies of earth and sky all align on the guy who attains the perfection of the achievement of will. You know?"

Don't ask about his poetry. It's so bad you won't be able to stop laughing and he'll shoot you for it.

Despite his pompous delusions, Jimmy is a vicious, shallow thug. He lacks the depth to understand how bad it is to brutalize and murder people, and he always has a kind of flat, scary blankness that his boys also think is really cool, and that they try to imitate. It's really hard to tell if he's mad until he shoots you. In fact he's not very good at knowing what he's feeling himself. Many of his worst and most shocking episodes of violence have come as a total surprise to him. While he has behaved himself as a guest of the Bedlam Mafia, and hasn't lashed out at any civilians, that's mostly because everyone has treated him with respect so far.

There really isn't anyone he isn't willing to kill. He's never actually murdered an elderly person or a child, but that's because he's never yet had a reason to. He will most certainly torture captives for information, although he probably won't do it for thrills.

His bad taste doesn't extend to men's fashion. He's an elegant dresser and

seems to have a different Brooks Brothers' suit for every occasion. On this subject he's far from inarticulate, and the reason his men dress like young investment bankers is that he's taught them how.

THE ORGANIZATSIYA

The Russian Mob doesn't have much of a foothold in Bedlam, but they do sometimes smuggle goods in through Bedlam Harbor or the Airport (with the approval and cooperation of the Bedlam Mafia.) There are a lot of different gangs of Russian hoodlums. The group that Bedlam's Mafia families are most used to dealing with is called the "Vorovskoy Bratva." However, since that just means "Brotherhood of Thieves", it's not likely to be their real name.

Since the fall of Communism, there have been two major divisions of Russian organized crime. First, there is the old, traditional "Thieves World", which goes back to the Czarist days. This underground network has elaborate rituals and codes of behavior. Members of these gangs have a whole coded system of tattoos that identify the gangster's status, accomplishments and history, with very specific and precise meanings. Their honor-code of behavior is elaborate and unyielding, and revolves more than anything else around a policy of total non-cooperation with the authorities, or with society's laws. A thief may not work, for example. He must steal.

The Thieves' World was persecuted by the communist authorities. By the Brezhnev era it mainly existed in the Soviets' vast prison system. When the Red Star finally set, and the Soviet Union fell apart, the Thieves' World was beset by new troubles. For now the cops had turned to crime. Most of the new criminal organizations that rose in the new Russia were run by former intelligence and police personnel, in coordination with crooked government officials. Now that the authorities were competing with them for their share of the action, a lot of the traditional thieves fled the country, looking for better pickings elsewhere.

The "Vorovskoy Bratva" are mysterious, but they appear to be a

traditional, "World of Thieves" organization, complete with tattoos. If they are even a single gang. It's possible that more than one group has done business with the Bedlam Mob under that name.

Unlike the Triads, the Vorovskoy Bratva maintain no long-term presence in Bedlam. They only show up when they have business to transact. They are not as good guests as the Triads or the Yakuza. While they will usually ask permission before they undertake an operation in Bedlam, they don't always, and this has caused friction with Bedlam's ruling Mafia families. Nor do the Vorovskoy Bratva always behave themselves on the Mob's turf. They don't take insults or disrespect from civilians or cops and there have been a few ugly incidents. For now, their money is still good, but their relationship with Bedlam's criminal overlords could rapidly sour.

Russian Mobster

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Hindrances: Heartless

Gear: Bulletproof Vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 7), Knife (d6+d4 Damage)

Background: A typical "Thief-in-Law" will have short hair, a lot of tattoos and will dress with expensive ostentation. Their favorite cars are Mercedes. A lot of them have changed their names to blend in better with American society and a surprising number don't have Russian accents. They have an alarming policy of never leaving witnesses and of wiping out a victim's entire family to prevent their kids from growing up to take revenge. They do not have a good system worked out yet for disposing of corpses while they are in Bedlam, so they tend to just let their victims lie where they fall.

The Red Queen



Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d8+2, Knowledge (Business) d8, Knowledge (underworld) d10, Lockpicking d8, Notice d10+2, Persuasion d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d10, Taunt d8 +2

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Alertness, Attractive, Charismatic, Command, Connections, Improved Dodge, Level Headed, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist the effects of Intimidate or Taunt), Trademark Weapon (straight razor)

Hindrances: Heartless

Gear: Small Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 7), Straight razor (d6+d4 Damage)

Background: The leader of the largest faction of the Vorovskoy Bratva is the notorious "Red Queen." She got this name back in Brooklyn because of her Russian ancestry, and although the Bratva are as fiercely anti-Communist as anyone in the "World of Thieves" she likes having a nickname and has embraced it. She wears red dresses, red makeup, red lipstick, etc.

Female leaders are rare in the Russian Mob, but not unknown, especially at the lower levels. She has managed to hold a good-sized gang together through her personal magnetism, good business sense and astonishing ruthlessness. The fact that she can't physically beat up her goons only occasionally becomes a problem—if any of her lads looks as though he's going to make an issue out of it, she immediately has him killed.

The Red Queen started out, like most of the Russian Mob's women, in forgery and credit card theft. But she's also a talented sneak-thief, shoplifter and con artist. She's the daughter of a Brooklyn mob accountant everyone called "Uncle Bob" and she inherited his amazing talent for numbers, which made her extremely valuable to Uncle Bob's crew. He got killed ten years ago and she rallied the remnants of his crew around her, slowly killing and replacing the troublesome or ambitious ones. Her control over them isn't as complete as she would like—sometimes they act up and cause trouble despite her best efforts to keep them in line. But sometimes you have to let the boys blow off a little steam.

She has a Russian accent when she wants to act threatening but it vanishes when she needs to pull off a con. Enchanting when she needs to be, she is cold and blank when she's surrounded by her boys. Her looks are starting to fade now and there is a little gray in her hair. She knows that her beauty is one

of her big assets and she may be planning to retire before she starts to lose her grip.

People think of her as extremely callous, but not sadistic. That's not true at all. In fact she's astonishingly cruel, has gleefully watched dozens of acts of terrifying violence that would leave a normal person's mind scarred forever. But she is so pragmatic and levelheaded that she never lets it get out of control, never makes a rash move or takes an unwise risk. She loves to kill children best of all, because they're so disgustingly weak and puny. But she would never kill one without a good excuse. That would be unprofessional.

The Red Queen has two weaknesses. One is Russian folk dancing, to which she is completely addicted, and which she's willing to expose herself to considerable risk in order to attend. She also has a daughter, living in foster care in Philadelphia, who she sometimes visits secretly. Sometimes she wonders if it would be exciting to kill her little girl. But then the strange thought crosses her mind that she would have to kill herself afterwards. Her daughter is the closest thing on Earth to someone she actually loves.

THE YAKUZA

There is no Japanese neighborhood in Bedlam and no local Yakuza gang to prey on it. Japan's crime lords don't have any business interests in town and maintain no long-term presence here. If, however, someone they are pursuing were to flee to Bedlam, they would send gunsels or possibly even Shinobi after them. If this happens, they will first contact the Scarpas, to ask their permission to operate on their turf. They might or might not think to ask their rivals, the Gorganzuas, and if they don't, Tiny Tina might get annoyed at the lack of respect. If she does, the Gorganzua family may leak it to the PCs that the Yakuza is in town.

If the PCs interfere with the Yakuza while they are hunting a target in Bedlam, they will first ask the Scarpas' permission to retaliate and then bring in hordes of Ninja and perhaps a full-fledged supervillain or

two as well. Whenever the Yakuza carry out an operation in Bedlam, they will be acutely conscious of how exposed they are, how far from home and short on allies, and they will try to operate as discreetly and quietly as possible. This means that the GM should portray them as a mysterious, silent foe that strikes from behind when you are at your weakest and then vanishes.

We have stats below for a typical Yakuza gunman, as well as for one of the Shinobi they might employ. Only seldom will the PCs encounter any of them in Bedlam.

Typical Yakuza

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Nerves of Steel

Hindrances: Loyal

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 7), Big and Extremely Sharp Knife (Damage 1d6+1d4)

Background: The gumi make a huge fetish out of being tough, and they each seem to affect a different style to show how fearsome and sinister they are. No two look quite alike but most are still instantly recognizable as Japanese gangsters. They are forever trying to gain face in one another's eyes by displaying their physical bravery and stoicism. This makes them look a little crazy to most other gangsters. Any one of these guys might slice off his own finger to make a point.

The Yakuza love to threaten people and throw their weight around. But they're pretty careful not to actually kill civilians unless they really have to. Japanese cops don't really care so much what the Gumi do to one another. But if they start killing ordinary people, that's another matter entirely. However, this doesn't mean your average person is exactly safe around them. Gumi are even more touchy than the Triads about their honor. If you insult one, he'll really have no choice but to try and avenge the slight, even if he knows it isn't a good idea to attack you.

Shinobi



Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Notice d6, Stealth d10, Throwing d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Loyal, Stubborn, Vengeful.

Edges: Acrobat, Dodge, Frenzy

Gear: Weird Ninja Weapons (Kusari Gami, Sai Daggers, Shuiken, etc., all do 2d6

Damage, Range 3/6/12)

Background: Of course there's no such thing as ninjas. But just try telling that to these guys. The kind of Shinobi who the Yakuza can hire to put the hurt on Player Characters is usually a gifted athlete who has watched too many movies and has a really bad case of ADD. They tend to be wildly enthusiastic about their work, eager to throw their lives away in combat or take crazy risks. And they're always competing with one another as to who can be the most suicidally brave. That's why they have a bad habit of taking turns to attack Player Characters instead of rushing them from all sides, and why they'll keep attacking even after they've seen a PC take out twelve or so of their buddies.

The Narcotrafficanes

With the American Mafia in decline, people wonder who will rise to claim their place at the top of the criminal pyramid. Unless the current trend reverses, it will probably be the Narcotrafficanes. Mexico's drug cartels are rapidly becoming the biggest and best organized in the world. They're also unusually ruthless and prone to violence—about as vicious as the dreaded Medellín drug cartel was back in the 1980s. There is no criminal enterprise they won't engage in and there are seemingly no lengths they won't go to for profit or revenge.

They don't keep a very high profile in Bedlam. The Mara owe them fealty in a distant, disconnected kind of way and the biker gang called the Brotherhood handles certain types of crime for them, but they have no direct presence in Bedlam. If they ever do decide to move in on the Bedlam Mafia, the results are sure to be bloody.

If the cartels ever needed to exert themselves in Bedlam, they would probably use the Mara as their tool and they probably wouldn't ask the Mafia for permission. This could cause friction, but is unlikely to lead to an all-out war unless the cartels try to get the Mara to do something directly contrary to the Mafia's interests (steal something they want to steal, kill a Made Guy, etc.)

Ellmore Place

Ellmore Place divides Wolverton from Hardwick Park, so the people unfortunate enough to live there are caught between the Mara and Eentsy Z. It serves as a buffer between the two warring factions, a no-man's land where neither one is welcome.

There are officially no public housing projects in Bedlam. If you're on public aid, they issue you a Housing Voucher (called a "Section 8") that you to spend on rent wherever you like. Unfortunately, the only place in Bedlam where they accept the vouchers are the run-down, wretched apartments on Ellmore Place.

The apartments are a six-block strip of concentrated misery, dominated by no single criminal faction. The lower three blocks are controlled by a maniac who calls himself Baby Love, who has knocked out the walls of one entire building, turning it into his own personal fortress. For some reason he refuses to wear clothes, and acts like a baby.

There are smaller, scattered gangs as well, none of which have names. Even Baby Love has no more than sixty troops at his disposal. But his reputation for being crazy and unpredictable keeps both the Mara and their rivals at bay. Eentsy Z secretly gives Baby Love guns, drugs and ammunition to help keep the buffer zone intact.

There is a small enclave of Southeast Asian Immigrants in the Ellmore Place Apartments. They occupy three or four buildings up on the northernmost block. No one is sure what country these folks come from (in fact it's Laos) or how they came to be here. They were Stone Age farmers one generation ago and have brought many peculiar customs and traditions over from their native land. Local residents have learned not to tangle with them. Guys who try to mug or intimidate them tend to disappear.

Baby Love Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Command, Frenzy, Quick

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Quirk (Crazy, violent, acts like a baby), Quirk (Never wears clothes)

Gear: Shotgun (3d6 damage)

Background: Marcus Dewayne Coolidge has always been a little odd. In school people used to ask him if he was autistic, but after he bit a finger or two off his classmates they stopped. These days he insists on being treated like an infant, lounging nude inside his building in a huge pile of silk sheets, reliving himself wherever he feels like it, clutching a double-barreled shotgun like a security blanket.

Unpredictable, crazy and violent, no one is safe on his turf. A fussy eater, he lives only on foot loops, chocolate milk and ice cream. Anyone who offers him some other kind of food is sure to provoke a vicious outburst.

He was able to pull himself together during his teens, and assembled a gang that was tough enough to wrest control of the Ellmore Place Apartments away from the Jamaican Posses that dominated it. He recruited drug addicts, prostitutes and drag queens from around the neighborhood, gave them dope and guns and turned them loose on the posses. They took a lot of losses but fought with crazy determination and the Jamaicans all left for the Country Club, which seemed safer.

Local residents actually liked Baby Love at first, figuring that anybody had to be better than the Rastafarians. But his mental health has been slipping since then, and his popularity has declined as well. For now he is the closest thing Ellmore Place had to a leader, but one of his gang could get sick of him and grease him at any moment. Hence the shotgun. For now he lounges naked among his gun-toting drag queens, wallowing in his own filth and ruling

the Ellmore Place apartments like a mad god.

The Love Patrol

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Frenzy

Hindrances: Distinctive Appearance, Poor, Quirk (unstable, trigger-happy and histrionic)

Gear: Submachine Gun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 4, Shots 40), pills, really outrageous outfit.

Background: Here are some stats for Baby Love's inner cadre—the Love Patrol. A pack of crazy, drugged-out gun-toting drag queens, they're nearly as unpredictable as Baby Love himself. No one is completely safe around them. If the Mafia ever sent an envoy to negotiate with them, they might kill him on a crazy whim, regardless of the terrible consequences that would surely follow.

It's hard to tell if they're getting tired enough of Baby Love's antics to kill him. Nor is it clear who, if anybody, would emerge as a leader in his wake. And there's the shotgun to consider.

INVINCIBLE YA-YA MASSIVE

Everyone used to fear the Jamaican posses the way they now fear the Mara. For a while in the early 1990s the rastas seemed to be the rising criminal force in Bedlam. Their brash style, savage propensity for violence and absolute disregard for law-enforcement made them something truly new. These were guys who would attack police stations with automatic weapons in broad daylight. But their star faded fast. They had learned their trade on the streets of Kingston, and the techniques that work in a third-world country like Jamaica don't work nearly as well in a more organized

place like the United States. The posses attracted too much attention to flourish. By 1998 they were mostly dead or in jail.

Now there is only one large posse left in Bedlam—the Invincible Ya-Ya Massive. They're an uneasy coalition of the two largest surviving Jamaican gangs, and they have no more than seventy members in total. Their turf is largely on the north side of Scarlett Hill, in the neighborhood everyone calls the Country Club, but it extends into Wolverton's small Caribbean neighborhood. Eentsy Z probably has enough men to wipe them out but he doesn't bother. The Posse stick largely to themselves and he's got bigger enemies.

Like all the authentic Jamaican posses in the United States (as opposed to gun-toting wanna-be's in dreadlocks) the Invincible Ya-Ya Massive are an offshoot of a neighborhood militia in Kingston. These groups are the enforcement wings of Jamaica's two dominant political parties, the Labor Party and the People's National Party. The local militias provide protection and services for the people who live in their respective neighborhoods—at least in theory. They're in constant need of more money and ammunition and they have opened chapters in the US and Great Britain to funnel more resources back to the main organizations in Jamaica. But the Invincible Ya-Ya Massive are having some difficulties with the leadership back home and they've been effectively stranded in Bedlam with no support and little contact for years.

They are the only large organized crime group in Bedlam that owes nothing to the Mafia, directly or indirectly, and might be willing to defy them.

Like all traditional posses, they have a three-tiered organizational structure. The leaders at the top never touch or even see the illegal drugs and other contraband that the guys at street-level sell. They maintain their power strictly by organizing things and by killing anyone who doesn't pay them their cut. The soldiers directly underneath them never actually sell or transport illegal merchandise themselves, they just manage the kids who do. Often they manage them brutally. Posse members are very touchy about honor and reputation and they lash

out at anybody they think is showing them disrespect

Ludlow Crichton and Neville Soames are the posse's two Generals at the moment, operating in an uneasy alliance. Crichton dresses in a faux military uniform and lounges around one of the Country Club's deserted mansions, with his bodyguards and sycophants. Soames stays constantly on the move, conducting all his business by payphone.

Neville "the Devil" Soames is the crazier, younger and more violent of the two, but General Crichton has a more imposing personality. He's also bigger, stronger and a better shot than Neville the Devil. For the moment they are working together. How long this can last is anybody's guess.

Neville Soames and his group used to haunt the Ellmore Place Apartments, but they tangled with the strange, insular group of Southeast Asian immigrants who live there and had to flee. He never talks about the incident or explains what happened. That's because he doesn't know. His men just started disappearing.

"General" Ludlow Crichton



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidation d8+2, Knowledge (Bedlam Underworld)

d8, Notice d6, Persuade d8 +2, Shooting d6, Streetwise d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 7 (2)

Edges: Charismatic, Combat Reflexes, Command, Inspire, Tough as Nails

Gear: Body Armor (+2, Heavy Armor), Machete (Damage: d6+1), Light MG (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, ROF 3, AP 2, Three round burst)

Background: The General knows how to put on a show. Even now that his posse has been reduced to eighty men or so, perhaps half of whom he can fully trust, he always looks dignified and in command. He lives in one of the deserted mansions up on Scarlett Hill, near the gates of the Country Club., surrounded by armed bodyguards, hired girlfriends and faded grandeur.

He's constantly giving orders, making decisions, looking at maps, listening to aides. The whole thing looks so crisp and efficient that you would never suspect how much his power has faded and how little he still controls. A big, tall, dignified looking man with a deep voice and a commanding presence, he looks the role. In fact he's a lot more selfish and irresponsible than he seems, but he's superb at projecting wise, dignified authority. He always looks stern and commanding and he rarely favors his subordinates with a smile.

A first-generation Jamaican immigrant from the Trenchtown neighborhood of Kingston, he was born to command. His family have been the right-wing Labor Party's political bullyboys for generations and he grew up around the family's generals. He learned at an early age to lead men, although he was so willful and unreliable that the family sent him away to America.

He has six sons and three daughters by his various girlfriends and he loves playing the role of a magnanimous father, even though he'd never lift a finger to help care for them. While he isn't a

very religious man, he's a practicing Rastafarian and the walls of his mansion are hung with gaudy oil paintings of Haile Selassie, Marcus Garvey and other major figures in black history. He despises Bob Marley and won't have any of his music played in his presence, for Marley was associated with the Peoples' National Party, who Crichton regards as his mortal enemies.

Neville "the Devil" Soames
Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d10, Knowledge (Criminal Underworld) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Streetwise d8, Taunt d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Mean, Quirk (tries to act as scary and crazy as possible).

Edges: Ambidextrous, Combat Reflexes, Improved Nerves of Steel, Rock and Roll, Two Fisted.

Gear: Twin Submachine Guns (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 4, Shots 40),

Background: A grinning, ratty little guy with wild eyes and a submachine gun in each hand, Neville Soames is always eager to burnish his reputation for being crazy. He's co-general with Ludlow Crichton, but it's an uneasy partnership. His maniacal laugh is as chilling as Stabbo the Clown's.

Yet he's not as crazy as he looks. Neville the Devil would never have lived this long if his lunacy weren't at least in part an act. He knows how to make people fear him and understands its value. With his high-pitched voice and slump-shouldered, scrawny build he'd never be able to project the same kind of dignified

grandeur as General Crichton, so instead he projects craziness.

Like his fellow general, he never actually handles any contraband material himself. That's all done by intermediaries. Instead he shoots people, often enough to make sure everyone is sufficiently scared to give him a share of their earnings. He's known for mutilating himself in order to show people how little he fears pain, walking on broken glass or gouging his arm with a knife while laughing hysterically.

Neville knows that his arrangement with Crichton can't last forever and he's naturally kind of paranoid, so he tries never to sleep in the same place twice. He'll crash out in an alley like a derelict or on a friend's couch or a rooftop. He does not carry a cell phone or a beeper and conducts business through a series of payphones where subordinates take and leave messages for him.

He seems not to care whether he lives or dies, but in fact this is just an act. He's actually pretty cautious and intends to sell his life dearly when his enemies finally come for him.

Generic Yardie

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6

Edges: —

Hindrances: —

Gear: Machete (d6+1), Assault rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8-1, RoF 4, Shots 40), Large knife (Str +1, Range 3/6/12), 1 extra magazine of 30 bullets.

Background: The Invincible Ya-Ya started out as a British gang, and they brought the slang name "Yardie" with them from the UK. Morale is low among the troops, but they keep fighting for the cause. What else can they do?

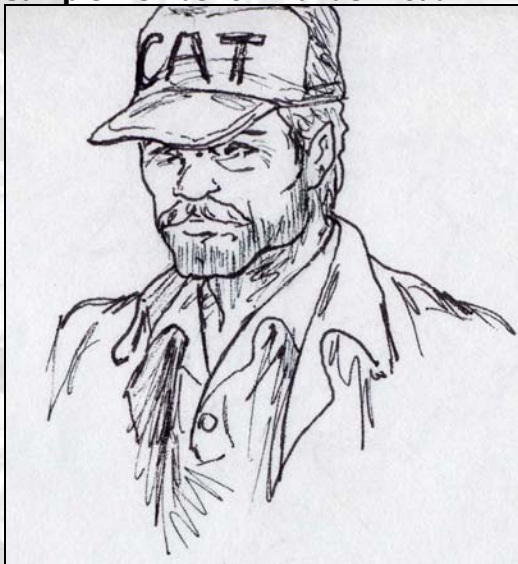
THUNDER ROAD

A network of crank-dealing truckers who sometimes dabble in pimping, loan-sharking and contract murder. No one is sure precisely how many members of Thunder Road there are, since they're constantly on the move. Their network can transport drugs and other contraband from one side of the country to the other faster than nearly anyone else, and there's no better way to dispose of a hot weapon than to turn it over to them. They can have it buried in a forest in Oregon or a farmer's field in Texas within eighteen hours.

They can be tricky to deal with. Violent, unpredictable and sometimes irrational, most members take way too much speed. They seem to recognize one another by all wearing "CAT" caps and by playing or humming the song "The Ballad of Thunder Road" (not the Bruce Springsteen song, but the Robert Mitchum tune from the 1950s.)

Out of all of Bedlam's criminal gangs, only the Brotherhood have regular contact with Thunder Road. There's a truck stop east of town on Route 2 where you can sometimes find them. It's kind of a scary place, but of course the Brotherhood are scary guys themselves.

Sample Member of Thunder Road



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Drive d8, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6

Edges: —

Hindrances: Habit (takes amphetamines)

Equipment: Tire Iron (Melee Weapon, d6 +1 Damage), Revolver (Ranged Weapon, 2d6 Damage), Mack Truck



It's dull in Stone Ridge. There isn't even much challenge in rising to the top of the teen social ladder—your dad's position pretty much takes care of that. So a group of Stone Ridge's most prominent "mean girls" have decided to make life more interesting. They have formed a gang. At first they weren't sure how to do it—what rules it should have and what kind of codes and symbols it should use. The closest any of them had ever been to really bad kids

was buying coke and hanging around the illegal nightclubs on Industrial Drive. But they all listened to enough hip-hop and had seen enough movies to figure most of it out. The details they left to Jane.

Jane Tharp is a bright, shy girl who most of the ruling clique ignored. She was pretty enough to be one of them but lacked the force of personality. Madison Nylander, the gang's founder, was having a hard time coming up with a name, a hand-sign, a list of rules and so forth. It was a lot more work than she had thought. Madison knew Jane from AP English and Calculus, knew she had a flair for the dramatic and a powerful creative mind, and asked her to design a gang.

Jane knew it was wrong, knew Madison was up to no good, but she was flattered, too. Not conceited about her looks, she was fatally vain about her mind.

The result was the Murder Club. Thanks to Jane, they have an elaborate initiation ritual, with oaths and ordeals and crimes (you have to kill the pet of someone you know and drink its blood at your ceremony) a secret tattoo you aren't allowed to show anyone but fellow gang members (a rose with crossed daggers) a series of ranks and a code of honor.

The penalty for revealing the Murder Club's secrets is to die slowly. Jane would never have betrayed them, but Madison didn't want to let her in the club, so she has accused Jane of snitching, and the girl is presently marked for death. She will be their first actual kill.

So far the Murder Club has been terrorizing teachers they don't like and students they disapprove of. The Stone Ridge authorities refuse to acknowledge the gang's existence and the one teacher who tried to make a public fuss about it got fired. Having the girls arrested will be even more difficult. Madison has managed to get some of the Iron Talon security staff on her side by promising them underage girls to party with (she wouldn't sacrifice any actual members of the club that way, but there are always pledges and wanna-be's who'd do *anything* for a shot at admission.) Anyway most of the members are from much too important families.

Madison has been trying to expand the club's ties to gangs in the city and score them a reliable coke connection. Next year

she's going away to college, but she doesn't intend to go any farther than Belchner (see Page 140) and she'll run things from a distance. In her absence her Lieutenant, Missy Pfeffner probably won't be able to keep the same kind of hold over the group.

There are presently about thirty active members of the Murder Club. Their colors are purple, gold and a particularly rich shade of red, which only the Slaughter Girl (the club president) is allowed to wear. They use a stylized version of the rose and crossed daggers as a tag, but they put it in strange places (the insides of pencil sharpeners, for example) where no one would ordinarily notice it.

Once the girls make their first kill, and realize how easy it is, they are going to get a lot more dangerous. Things may start rapidly spinning out of control.

The Murder Club—an Alternate Version

For an extra twist, what if Jane Tharp struck first? In this version of the Murder Club, Jane realized that Madison was about to denounce her to the group, so she denounced Madison first. No one wanted to believe that the Slaughter Girl herself could have told anyone the club's secrets, so she forged a bunch of text messages to Madison's therapist that "proved" it. The messages also said all kinds of cruel and snarky things about her fellow club members.

Poor Madison swiftly went from being the Slaughter Girl to the Slaughtered Girl. Beaten and stabbed to death by unknown assailants, she got a huge funeral at which many of the girls who killed her wept very convincingly. She was the gang's first kill, but hardly their last. They've murdered six people so far and they're getting more and more casual about it.

In this version, Jane is officially the gang's Madame Librarian and treasurer, but in fact she runs everything. Madison's little sister Jenny is officially Slaughter Girl, but she's terrified of Jane. For her part, Jane has tried not to be evil—but it's just so tempting. She always claimed not to want to be one of the popular girls, but now she's their queen and she finds it intoxicating. Everyone who ever picked on her is going to pay, pay, pay. Then she'll go to Princeton and forget all about this.

The Slaughter Girl: Madison Nylander



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d10, Intimidate 1d8+2, Knowledge (Kid Culture) 1d10, Notice d6, Persuade d8+4, Shooting d6

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Attractive, Charismatic, Frenzy, Strong-Willed

Hindrances: Heartless

Background: Blank-eyed and scary, beautiful and cruel, nothing is beyond this little girl. Fortunately, she doesn't have much imagination and hasn't yet realized that her behavior has no limits. Otherwise the people around her would have started dying long ago. She's the kind of girl who would want to start a gang of murderous criminals but then wouldn't want to do the work of thinking up a name for them.

Her grades are mediocre—she's in advanced classes but gets Bs. Her father is a big mean aggressive guy who gets in the face of any teacher who gives her a C, so she slides by. Although she's a legacy at Dartmouth, she'll probably wind up going to Belchner College instead. In fact it's tailor-made for students like her, who have money but no ambition to do or learn much of anything.

The Slaughter Girl: Jane Sharp



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d8, Intimidate 1d6+2, Knowledge (Mathematics) 1d8, Knowledge (Physical Science) 1d8, Notice d6, Persuade d6, Stealth d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Attractive, Jack of All Trades

Hindrances: Cautious

Background: Much smarter and more cautious than Madison, Jane is trying hard not to let her grades slip while she deals with the distraction of running a gang. College will be her chance to get out and away from all this. She does not want to blow it.

Jane is smart enough to know that she's got a tiger by the tail. If she tries to leave the group now, or doesn't feed the beast that she's created with enough blood, she will die painfully. Or at least that's what she tells herself. Deep down Jane is far more cruel than she would ever admit and some awful part of her is really enjoying this. She rationalizes that since she needs to send the girls out to harass people, the people they go after might as well be the ones she hates.

BEEFING UP THE RESISTANCE: ORGANIZED CRIME

If you want Bedlam's organized crime problem to be at the center of your campaign, you may need to make the opposition a little tougher. The Mafia can of course hire as many supervillains as they want, but Dapper Donny Scarpia, Eentsy Z and the rest are still a little flimsy to be recurring nemeses for a group of PCs. While Bedlam would be an interesting place for a low-powered campaign, you'll also need options for beefing up the mob. Here are a few, to be used only if you need them. If you plan on using any of them, make sure to mention them early on in the campaign, so that your players don't feel like you're pulling this stuff on them out of nowhere.

DOOM

A large aerospace company that we probably shouldn't name once came up with a novel way to test their new battlesuits under actual urban warfare condition. They shipped them through a troubled part of West Africa and allowed one of the local warlords to steal them. Soon the suits had fallen into the hands of his enemies as well, and before long they were available on the international black market. You can buy one almost anywhere in the world now. Any large organized crime network will have a few in it's arsenal in the same way that every group of prohibition-era gangsters had a Tommy gun or two.

Most of the suits have the numbers 300D printed down one leg, and when you look down at your leg the numbers look a lot like the word "DOOM", so that's what people call them. They are dangerous to wear. Inexperienced operators can easily break their own limbs just walking around in a DOOM suit, and there isn't enough internal radiation shielding. The average lifespan of a pilot is about three years. But it's a sure way to prove yourself if you want to become a Made Guy.

It's probably stretching things a little to let the Mara or the Brotherhood or Eentsy

Z have access to this hardware without a good explanation. Perhaps they asked the mob to loan them a suit, or they stole one from a warehouse down at Bedlam Harbor.

Typical DOOM Suit Pilot



Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6/Fly 12; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 8 (3)

Hindrances: Size +1

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Power Points

Gear: Armored Power Suit (see below)

Super Powers: (All powers in Power Armor, a Device)

- Armor (4): Armor +3, Heavy Armor.
- Broadcast (1)
- Force Control (13): Level 4 (Str d12+1), Flight (2x Pace), Force Field (+2 Toughness)
- Super Attributes (1): Strength +1 step. Vigor +1 step.

The Regulus Effect

Over the years, the UNICORN has developed quite a number of dangerous, unstable techniques for creating superhumans. Formula X, Induced Brain Lesion Therapy, the University of Minnesota Protocol—but this one they discarded as too irresponsible to ever use. If you like, it may have fallen into the hands of the Mafia, or even be

within the reach of street gangs like the Mara or the Last of the Last.

There is a drug called Mnemodrine 6, intended to stop visual hallucinations, that has some interesting side effects if you use it on people with certain kinds of chemical imbalances in their system. Someone with Attention Deficit Disorder will develop superhuman levels of coordination if you give them enough, and if you lock them in a sensory deprivation tank for a week or so, the ones who don't go into convulsions and die will develop full-blown superpowers (usually psychic or energy projection abilities—but sometimes super-speed.)

The catch is that the Regulus Effect burns out your nervous system. First the subject goes blind and then they die. If you use Mnemodrine 6 to soup up your reaction time, it cuts your lifespan to about a year. You'll probably go blind in eight months. If you undergo the full-blown treatment, you will only live for a few days—possibly hours. The UNICORN had some kind of trick that enabled them to keep test subjects alive for longer. Some of their “volunteers” lived as long as five years. No one outside of the federal government knows how they did that.

Mnemodrine 6 is almost ridiculously easy to make. It's actually less difficult to synthesize in a basement lab than meth or PCP. The only reason why the country isn't awash in jittery mayfly supermen is that the details of the technique aren't widely known, and an improperly prepared version will just screw up the subject's eyesight or kill them. There are always suicidal idiots willing to try it, but most of them wind up with white canes or pine overcoats pretty quick. Unbeknownst to your average suicidal idiot, a few street chemists have the technique down, and Eentsy Z or the Brotherhood or, who knows, maybe Los Furies could find a reliable source. There are of course other ways of beefing up the Mara, but their fanatical determination would also make them good candidates for using the Regulus Effect.

As a variation on the theme, perhaps Mnemodrine 6 is actually difficult

and expensive to make, and only a few designer drug experts can brew it up. Someone like Rock Johnson or Eentsy Z could probably get their hands on a dose or two if they needed it badly enough, but they wouldn't pass it out to their troops like hard candy.

The Crawley Cocktail

Researchers at the Crawley Asylum (see Page 102) have come up with a combination of drugs that will suppress superhuman powers if it's administered on a regular basis. What if there were also a quick-acting version that you could inject into a superhuman to knock their powers out for a while? Call it Negation 5 (all powers.) Make it work for 2d6 hours.

Really devious GMs might even come up with a version that can be taken orally and slipped into a drink. This is something that a street gang wouldn't have regular access to. They'd have to buy it from a crooked orderly at the Crawley State Hospital for the Criminally Insane and they wouldn't have a big supply. But whenever the GM needs them to be able to knock out a Player Character's superhuman abilities, you can rationalize their having a dose.

The Hand of the Madre Sangre

Toughness: 2 **Size:** No bigger than a withered-up mummified hand, -2 to hit
Powers: Negation (anyone within the Large Burst Template must make an Opposed Spirit Check vs. 1d10 or have three levels of each of their powers negated for 2d6 rounds)

If you want the Mara to have an equalizer against your PCs, you could let them discover the Mano Madre Sangre. This mummified hand has a candle made of human fat on each finger, and it suppresses superhuman abilities in whoever its light shines on. This will of course also neutralize any powers that the Jigsaw Man and his Brujo Boys have themselves, but they are likely to rely on them less than the PCs. And they could also give it to a flunky with a suicide bomb.

LEGENDARY CRIMINALS

Supervillains and gangsters aside, Bedlam is presently home to at least three truly spectacular criminals, none of whom have ever been caught. These are the guys who drive the Bedlam City detectives nuts. The guys who they just can't seem to catch. Would a Player Character superhero deign to help chase down Bedlam's most wanted? Any PC who does succeed in apprehending one of them will instantly achieve local fame.

Mr. Nobody

One of the most prolific burglars in the city's history, Mr. Nobody has committed an astonishing number of break-ins over the past three years. The police don't like to talk about him, or about their failure to catch him, but little details have slipped out.

It seems astonishing that he could have committed more than two hundred and fifty successful burglaries in just three years. But the police really do seem to consider him a suspect in that many breaking-and-entering cases. He only hits downtown office buildings and he has a technique for beating alarm systems that is totally unique, and that instantly identifies the crime as his work. The cops won't say what it is. There has been a lot of speculation that he might be superhuman.

Cops started calling him "Mr. Nobody" because they couldn't catch him and the moment the press heard the name, it was too cool not to use. There was a flurry of media activity around Mr. Nobody last year (the cool name helped them sell the story) but they lost interest after no one caught him or turned him in.

A lot of people have already forgotten about him and most would be surprised to hear that his crime spree has gone on unabated.

The cops put together a task force to catch him last year. They failed and the task force is "being reorganized" (meaning that it has temporarily disbanded.)

A Missing Clue

Any PC who tries investigating the Mr. Nobody case has a chance of finding one salient fact that the Task Force overlooked. Anyone who makes an Investigate roll at a -2 penalty will realize that all of the buildings Mr. Nobody has robbed used a company called Maximum Safeguard as their security provider. That might be significant, but then again Maximum Safeguard is the largest security company in Bedlam.

If a Player thinks to ask what security companies each building used, then you don't need to make them roll. Just tell them.

Torchy the Firebug



Bedlam's number-one arsonist has been killing people and destroying their homes for more than ten years. He is

responsible for an amazing amount of death and destruction—worse than anything any supervillain has ever done to the city. Yet he has never been apprehended and continues his reign of terror today.

He haunts the city's poorest neighborhoods, setting fires in Wolverton and the Country Club. Only seldom does he venture further afield. He sets fires to private homes, with an incendiary device placed on the front or rear porch. He doesn't seem to like apartment buildings or stores as much, but he has set a few of them on fire. There seems to be little pattern to his victims, although most of them are poor and black.

Torchy always seems to strike in the pre-dawn hours and he always uses the same kind of incendiary device (the authorities won't say what kind he uses.) Whatever his MO, it's simple, quick and it leaves him plenty of time to get away.

He doesn't send taunting letters to the authorities and he doesn't seem to stick around to gloat over his crimes. He's clearly angry and sadistic—he always places his devices where they trap people

and block them from exiting. Yet it looks as though he does not know his victims and has no personal grudge against them. There are rumors that he may be a pyrokinetic, or some other kind of superhuman, possibly the product of a horrible secret experiment. The police won't confirm or deny any of this.

All of these factors seem to point toward Seymour Sanders, the insane pyromaniac supervillain who calls himself "Doctor Scorch." (see his description and stats on Page 295) The problem is, Doctor Scorch has been locked up in a mental institution for most of the past fifteen years and he simply, physically, could not have committed these crimes. Could he?

The Cannon

Bedlam's most successful master criminal hasn't even alerted the police to his presence. Therefore no one is even looking for him, at least in this city. For more about the Cannon and the ancient form of crime he has mastered, see the "Horrible Secrets" section on Page 377. But only if you're the GM!

CREEPY RUMORS AND SINISTER FORCES

The Bus to Nowhere

There are consistent stories that black buses with tinted windows and no license plates pick people up on streetcorners downtown in the dead of night. Who drives them? Where do they go? People talk about the buses working for aliens, secret cults, or a hidden base buried in mountain somewhere outside of town, where an evil doctor performs depraved experiments on living human test subjects. None of this can possibly be true, can it?

The Ghost Fleet

They say that back around the turn of the 20th century, a huge freighter called the Agamemnon sank in the river outside of Bedlam Harbor. It was only one of a series of vessels that foundered and sank in these waters—there used to be mysterious whirlpools and sudden squalls that pulled down boats with disturbing regularity.

No one is precisely sure where the wreck of the Agamemnon lies, or for that matter whether or not there was ever such a vessel. However, it is said that on certain dark nights you can see the lost ships glowing faintly through the black water. Some people say that you can see the Agamemnon and its sister ships moving back and forth down there.

This is, of course, sheer demented lunacy. We think. But there have been multiple attempts to salvage cargo from the ghost fleet—two of them by well-known supervillains who seemed to think there was something pretty valuable to be recovered.

The river is murky, old and deep. Who knows what may be dreaming down there in the dark?

Lucius Hardwick IV



What is mean old Mr. Hardwick doing, locked up in his huge, crumbling mansion for all these years? No one seems to know. In fact no one seems to know if he's even still alive in there. All his affairs are handled by the small but powerful law firm of Dransfield, Stavely and Spalt (see Page 157) and they answer no questions about Mr. Hardwick himself. But everyone knows that he hasn't left his house since 1996, and that he was ancient even then. How old would he be now? Ninety-five? A hundred? Older?

Some people in Bedlam's business community say that he must still be alive—his legal team vigorously defends his financial empire and they'll ruin anyone who tries to intrude on his turf. Other people point out that this doesn't really mean anything.

The mansion itself is surrounded by a twelve-foot wall and a lot of tangled-up old oak trees—all that's visible from the street is its sagging roof. Sometimes, late at night, a light can be seen burning in one of the uppermost attic windows, but there is never any sound. What this might mean, no one can say.

Berth 13

Down at the Bedlam docks, there is a ship that never seems to weigh anchor. A big old freighter, it sits moored in its berth, never leaving. No one comes aboard or leaves.

The harbor authorities discourage people from asking about Berth 13 and the ship that rests there. And the rumors about it vary according to who you ask. Some people say it's Berth 13, some say it's Berth 119 or 127. Sometimes they say that no other ships ever dock anywhere near it. Other guys leave that part out. Supposedly there are never any lights on board. Unless sometimes there are mysterious lights in the middle of the night.

The Club Del Morocco

The Club Del Morocco sits moldering beneath a freeway overpass on the outskirts of Wolverton. It's an ugly little concrete box of a building, not much bigger than a bungalow, wrapped in fading, tattered posters from its long-vanished heyday. The place looks so meager that you would never guess blues legends like Howlin' Wolf and Robert Johnson played here many times. Until you look more carefully at the posters flapping by the door.

No one has ever vandalized this place. No winos have ever tried to peel the boards off the door and sleep inside. You have to do quite a bit of asking around to find out why. That's because no one is exactly sure. The place just makes them uneasy.

If you manage to find a psychotic bum (any crazed derelict will do—they just have to be crazy enough) they will tell you that the Del Morocco is haunted. Haunted bad. Guys have died or gone insane messing around with the thing that lives in there. If you ask them what it is, they will cackle toothlessly and ask you how much you know about the history of the Blues.

Mack the Hack

There have been legends in Bedlam for more than a century about an evil cab. Supposedly this sinister hack prowls the streets looking for people who are truly, supremely happy. Then it entices them inside, and takes them on a ride to hell. Some say the cab deposits them on the devil's doorstep or abducts them to Mars. Some say the cabbie is a maniac who feasts on their living flesh. Some say the truth is worse than either.

In the oldest versions of the tale, the death-cab is a horse-drawn hackney, elegant and expensive looking, but spattered with mud and grime. These days they say it's a beat up old "checker", with a license plate that's impossible to read under all the dirt. But everyone agrees that you never see the cabby's face. They call him "Mack." For more on the evil cab, see Pages 124 and 382.

Worse Things Than the Jigsaw Man

There are whispers that up on the ruined streets of the Country Club, the dead have begun to walk. The Jigsaw Man is said to be alarmed by this development, which is pretty shocking, since he isn't afraid of anything.

Your Tax Dollars at Work

People on the street say they've seen hulking men in suits and sunglasses prowling Bedlam's dark alleys. Guys who can punch through walls and lift cars over their heads. Who do they work for? What do they want? No one knows. A beautiful woman in an expensive Italian suit sometimes appears with them.

Doctor Death

If you are a psychic and you live in Bedlam, then at some point over the last thirty years you have almost certainly woken up screaming the name: "Doctor Death." Nearly every sensitive in town has had at least one dream they can't quite recall about Doctor Death. They wake, sweating and terrified, certain that someone was murdered last night, murdered cruelly and foully and that Doctor Death casts his shadow over the city once again. But there is no such person. No supervillain by that name has ever terrorized Bedlam, and a quick scan of the morning newspaper never shows any sign of any mysterious murders having been committed. No masked fiend is on a rampage (or if some masked fiend is presently on a rampage, it's no one named Doctor Death.)

You wake from the dream convinced that Doctor Death is among the worst arch-criminals the world has ever seen. He has killed and killed and killed like

no one else ever has—you're sure of it. But then why has no one ever heard of him?

These dreams are rare. You may not even have the experience more than once. But if a Player Character ever tries mapping out the times and occasions when people have dreamed of Doctor Death, they will find that the highest concentration is actually in the Stone Ridge gated community. But that makes even less sense. It's the quietest neighborhood in Bedlam. Nothing ever happens there.

TO LIVE AND DIE IN BEDLAM: RUNNING A BEDLAMITE CAMPAIGN



We really intended Bedlam to be an adjunct to your main campaign—a place your PCs can go to have grim “Iron Age” adventures for a change of pace. However, there is no reason why you can't make Bedlam the center of your campaign. If you do, you are going to have to make an important decision before the game starts: how much are the PCs going to be allowed to change Bedlam? How big an impact can they ultimately have on the city's corruption and crime? This is

going to be vital to getting the tone of your campaign right. Consider, if the PCs immediately run out and take down Dapper Donny and the Gorganzua crime family, throw Big Andy Czernik in jail and put good, honest politicians in office to replace the Czernik machine, it's going to change the nature of the setting, and then it won't be Bedlam anymore. If on the other hand the GM constantly fouls their efforts to improve things, railroading plot developments and exercising “GM fiat” to keep the campaign's major villains from ever getting permanently defeated, it's going to aggravate your players. There are a number of different ways you can tackle this dilemma.

First, remember that crime is like a hydra. Cut off its head and it grows two more. It is possible to take down, for example, Dapper Donny and Young Junior, but other Mafiosi inside the Scarpia and Gorganzua crime families will immediately take their place (or the New York Commission will send in new guys in to take over for them.) Perhaps it's possible for a vigilante to completely wreck either family, but the moment the Bedlam Mafia gets brought to its knees, the Russian Mob moves in, or the Mara suddenly take over the city's rackets. Eliminate the Rock and the Stone, and their rackets get taken over by Eentsy Z. Kill off Graves and the Brotherhood and some other pack of skuzzy meth-heads takes over Shady Meadows.

This approach makes a depressing amount of sense. Bedlam's real problems are economic. So long as its poverty persists and there aren't enough legitimate ways to make a living, organized crime will flourish. Whether or not it completely dominates the city's affairs is a question of how well the PCs do at keeping it out.

The same is true for political corruption. If Big Andy goes to jail, either another pawn of the Bedlam Mafia takes his place, or a different bunch of crooks (possibly the Rock and the Stone) use this opportunity to put one of their own guys in position.

Ideally, Player Characters should be able to change Bedlam for the better. But it should be difficult, slow and full of setbacks. Sort of like the kind of progress Batman

makes in "Year One" or his most recent movies.

Of course, some PCs actually won't try to change things. They'll be content to solve the most recent crime and chase the latest supervillain out of town. Or they may actually like crime and sleaze, relishing the way the city gives them a never-ending stream of jerks to bash in the chops. If this is the way they want to play it, let them. It effectively lets you off the hook.

It also makes your life easier if PCs focus on cleaning up one part of town—making life better on Ash Street or breaking the Mara's grip on Hardwick Park or even clearing out the Country Club. Then they can have the satisfaction of making the world a better place without disrupting the overall backdrop of crime and misery too badly.

To Kill or Not to Kill?

Is it okay for superheroes to kill people? Damned if I know. I do know, however, that in a setting like Bedlam the subject is sure to come up and you are sure to get into some bitter fights over it if you're not careful. Something about an ugly setting brings this question out in players. It also encourages some of them to play badly and brutally. To keep your gaming session from degenerating into hours of impassioned quarreling, you will probably need to set the ground rules up front. The rules can be "no killing" or they can be "killing has serious legal consequences and the GM will feel free to impose them on you", they can be "only kill if all else has failed" or they can even be "your characters disagree about whether or not it's okay to kill people, so roleplay some arguments about it whenever the issue comes up." But let the players know up front what your policy is or you are asking for trouble.

What Kind of Characters Work for a Bedlam Campaign?

Any kind of characters. Rid yourself of the notion that all characters in an "Iron Age" setting have to be ex-special-forces mercs with automatic rifles and needle tracks on their arms. Batman works perfectly well in this kind of setting and so does Green

Arrow, and they're both as four-color as can be. If a player shows up in Bedlam with a smiling, do-gooder, boy-scout farmboy who can leap tall buildings in a single bound, it will create an interesting frisson. So let them do it.

From the early 1970s onwards, all of Captain America's best, most memorable stories have revolved around immersing him in the ugliness and ambiguity of the real world (or something more like the real world than the Golden Age comics of the 1940s.) You could make the same argument about Green Lantern. So, bring on your mystics, your super-soldiers, your living atomic bombs, thunder gods and royalty from lost Atlantis. Let them get their feet dirty, for a change.

A Smaller Pond Means Bigger Fish

One interesting effect of setting a campaign in a small city is that the PCs are magnified in importance. The reason why we don't have huge long lists of local heroes for Bedlam is that the PCs are probably going to be its dominant super-team. The fate of the city rests in their hands. Most of the major national law-enforcement agencies and super-teams have already written this town off as hopeless. If the PCs let Bedlam down, no one is going to save it.

Getting a Team Together

Because this setting resembles the comics of the eighties and nineties, you are likely to get a superhero team full of dark shadowy avengers of the night, and/or cynical bounty hunters with "X-Treme attitude" (whatever that means.) Characters like that tend to be loners in the comics, but in a role-playing game the protagonists have to operate as a team. Not only is it trickier to run a team full of lone wolves, it's especially hard to get them to form a group during the course of play.

Perhaps your gaming group is so trustworthy that you know they'll put aside their temptation to glower menacingly at one another instead of working together. But if they aren't, you're going to need some extra glue to hold them together. There are two approaches you might try.

The easy way is to announce that they are a team before play begins. Just assert it and ask them to build characters who are part of a group, ask them how they work together, what team tactics they've developed and so forth. Maybe start them thinking about all kicking in a few points to build a headquarters. You could also bring them altogether with some big dramatic event that forces them to cooperate, although this can backfire if you don't handle it right. To really hedge your bets, try something like this. A big menace (either an out-of-town supervillain who is about to move in on Bedlam or some local threat like the Jigsaw Man or the Mafia) decides to eliminate all of Bedlam's masked protectors at once, in order to get them out of the way before some major crime. Each of the PCs receives a mysterious message luring them all to the same place, (role-play this as quickly as possible, or better yet start with them already assembled at the rendezvous) where a whole squad of assassins attack them from every side, forcing them to all fight together and giving them a reason to continue working as a team (who is trying to kill us all? Why?)

You could make this plot the seed of their first adventure, but it may work better if you keep the villain behind the scenes for a few sessions, letting the group get involved in other plot-threads along the way.

Possible Locations for Your Team's Headquarters

There are a few ready-made places where a group of Player Characters might set up shop. Don't let the list below confine you—these are just suggestions. Places we designed with this purpose in mind

Berth 13

There is a ship that has sat in its berth on the Bedlam docks for years. On Page 381 we have a number of options for what the ship really is and who really owns it. In one version, this ship (the *Andromeda*) was formerly used as a secret base by the vigilante who calls himself Nocturne, and

although he's abandoned it he left a lot of his crime-fighting equipment on board. The ship is held by a dummy corporation and it can sit at its dock indefinitely without anyone ever looking inside. Nocturne's computers and other gear are state-of-the-art for 1969. But even though they're hopelessly outdated they do still work and the PCs could upgrade them.

Liberty Shoppes Mall

Bedlam's giant underground mall has room to spare, and it's in desperate need of a superhero or two to clean it up. PCs could open a storefront "Heroes for Hire" operation or a secret base in a deserted store or just lurk the mall's dark areas, sleeping where they feel like it.

Neither the gangs nor the trigger-happy security guards from Iron Talon Consultations will be happy to see them, especially if there are already secret things buried in the mall (see page 105) but the Bedlam Police won't care. The small police substation in the mall has enough problems of its own to worry about.

City Hall

Infested by rats and winos, Bedlam's City Hall has been deserted for more than five years. It's a solidly-built old structure, with an imposing gothic creepiness about it. Player Characters who aren't too choosy could easily make a home here, away from prying eyes. There is no electricity or heat in the building, but due to an oversight on the part of Conglomerated Communications, the phone jacks still work.

The Country Club

Even less choosy Player Characters might set up shop in the Bedlam Country Club. Its facilities and putting greens have fallen into a state of total neglect, but no one is likely to bother you up there. It should be easy for technologically savvy Player Characters to tap into the city's power and phone grids from this location. We really meant the club to be the lair for whatever major villain you would like to have come rolling into town, but it's hard to tell some Player Characters, from the villains, anyway.

The Citadel Xtreme

Some years ago, the City of Bedlam tried to lure a national superhero team into making their home here (you can find out all about this on Pages 20, 29 and 283.) It ended very badly, and the team's headquarters was never more than half-constructed. A group of enterprising PCs could make it their own. A lot of its rooms are unfinished, and a lot of its systems don't work, but with a few repair checks and a little money, the Player Characters could have a viable headquarters.

They would probably want to conceal the fact that they are living here to avoid legal difficulties. And there may be worse problems with the location. The Bedlam Police may be using the site to store captive superhuman criminals and the leader of Justice Xtreme is vindictive enough to take action against the PCs if they squat on his turf. See Page 297.

What Will a Hero Find on Patrol?



If you decide to stalk Bedlam's dingy rooftops and alleyways, how much crime will you encounter in a given night? Of course the short answer is "whatever the GM wants." If the GM would like you to stumble across a lead on a big case, or to run afoul of someone who is going to be a recurrent enemy, it's going to happen. But GM fiat aside, what can you expect to find?

See the crime statistics listed above, under the section "Crime in Bedlam: How Bad is It?"

As you can see, the odds of just stumbling over a crime in progress while you're skulking around at random are actually pretty low. How does Batman manage to find so many of them? Presumably, he's staking out spots where he knows criminals have been operating—an alley where a particular gang mugs people on a regular basis, a streetcorner where the local market has been robbed twice in the past week, a parking lot where crackheads come every night to meet their dealers.

PCs who take this route should have a much higher chance of witnessing an actual crime. To simulate this in game terms, let PCs make Knowledge (Bedlam), Streetwise and Investigation skill rolls. If they make all three, they can learn where a crime is likely to be committed some time within the next couple of days. Then if they stake out that particular spot, assume there is a ½ chance each night of the crime going down there.

The crime itself could be whatever the GM wants to throw at them. There could be a purse-snatcher working this block, or a mugger who has made this particular alley his stalking ground, or a pusher who uses this corner to make deals, or etc.

The PCs should have the chance to accept or reject a given lead. Why bother chasing down some kid dealing pot when Dr. Frightful is back in town?

Of course, when you stake out a likely-looking spot there is a chance you might get spotted yourself, but your typical Shadowy Avenger of the Night has such a huge Stealth rating that it's barely worth worrying about.

PCs who listen in on police radio broadcasts can try a completely different approach, and try to beat the cops to their emergency calls. In a town like Bedlam, with its notoriously slow police response time, this option can work pretty well. The GM should decide when and if the cops interrupt a PC vigilante at the scene, and how they react.

If you'd like a system to help determine the odds of the cops showing up, consider that the police response time downtown is about 10 minutes, while it's a speedy 5 minutes in Stark Hill (if people even bother to call the police), a sluggish 15 minutes in Greely Point, Gravesend Beach and Ash Street (and also at Bedlam Harbor), a wretched 25 minutes in Hardwick Park, Wolverton and the Meadows, and an abysmal 30 minutes in Shady Meadows and the Country Club. It seems unlikely that the PCs would try staking out the quiet streets of Stone Ridge, but if they do, they'll find that police response time there is astonishingly quick. A security team will arrive in 1-5 minutes. Stone Ridge's hired thugs are much quicker to open fire on anything that looks weird or threatening (a guy in a costume, for example) than actual cops would be.

Bear in mind that there's always a small chance that a patrol car might already be in the vicinity when somebody calls 911, and surprise the PCs in half the listed response time or less. The odds of this happening are about one in four.

You should also note that cops are much quicker to respond to reports of violent crimes in progress than anything else (halve the expected response time.)

How the cops react if they interrupt a PC at a crime scene depends on too many variables to simulate with a game mechanic. It depends on the cop, on the PC's reputation, but most of all, on what precisely is happening at the crime scene when the cops arrive and on how they interpret it. As a rule, most Bedlam cops resent vigilantes (apart from the Hammer of Justice, who is known as a stand-up guy) but aren't anxious to risk their lives trying to apprehend known superhumans without backup.

METAPLOTS AND GRAND DESIGNS

Now it's time to say a few words about the grand plot arc we're going to be developing in future materials for the "Bedlam City" setting. There isn't one. We swear. We will not get all White Wolf on you and start changing the campaign setting just as you're getting used to it. This is your setting now, not ours. You paid for it (or at least I hope you did) and we're not going to introduce some new back-story that makes the book you bought obsolete.

There may be a few awful secrets (in other words, "back-story elements") lurking in the shadows of Bedlam (see the chapter "Horrible Secrets" on Pages 356-389) but they are all modular—you can use them or discard them at your convenience. Nothing we're going to publish later will require you to include any of them. We'd rather sell you products because you know we do good work than lure you into buying a whole line because you "have to."

HEROES OF BEDLAM

Bedlam has three different masked vigilantes (and it may be about to get a fourth—see “Blacktop” on Page 299.) No one is sure if any of them have superpowers. It was also briefly home to a genuine superhero team, back in the 1990s, with the unfortunate name of “Justice Xtreme” (we’re sorry—it was the Iron Age.) We have stats and background material for each of Bedlam’s vigilantes, and a write-up on the short, sad history of Justice Xtreme.

NOCTURNE



"If you look out your window and don't see anyone, it means I'm there."

Real Name: No longer remembers it himself

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d8, Driving d10, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Healing d6, Intimidation d8+2, Investigation d8+2, Knowledge (Government Secrets) d8, Lockpicking d10, Repair d8, Notice d10+2, Stealth d12, Streetwise d8+2, Swimming d8, Tracking d8

Face: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9 (2 Heavy Armor)

Edges: Alertness, Arcane Background (Super Powers), Combat Awareness, Combat Reflexes, Connections, Fleet-Footed, Improved Dodge, Investigator, Improved Sweep, Quick, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate and Taunt)

Hindrances: Heroic, Quirk (Talks little, works alone), Stubborn

Gear: Armored Costume (2 Heavy Armor), Gas Mask, Handcuffs (Toughness 12), Nightvision Goggles (gives him Darkvision while he wears them), 3 Stun Gas Grenades (Stun, uses Medium Burst Template),

Super Powers:

- **Melee Attack:** Str+2d6
- **Lair:** Average Condition, Command Center, Garage, Specialty (Crime) Lab, Secure Access, Well-Hidden, Workshop
- **Vehicle:** The Delta Interceptor—see below

Background: Nocturne says that he views himself as a big dog who has turned savage on his master. That's a pretty apt description. He's one of the last surviving products of the CIA's infamous Project MK Ultra—their mind control and parahuman research division.

Over the course of the fifties and sixties, MK Ultra produced a number of parahuman assassins for the CIA, as well as a lot of messy failures. Nocturne is a bit of

both. He was one of the last and best metahuman soldiers they managed to create. Nocturne uses more of his brain than an ordinary human being, and his muscles respond more strongly to his nerve impulses. He's faster, stronger and more nimble than any Olympic athlete and he's been superbly trained. He also has a profound natural talent with building gadgets, and has constructed a lot of his own spy gear, often years ahead of its time (or at least years ahead of the early 1970s, when he learned his skills.)

He doesn't remember his life before the program, although he suspects that he was a soldier, and that he probably served at least briefly in Laos with some kind of commando unit. He's certain that he was a naïve patriot and that he had no idea of the full scope of the CIA's clandestine activities, or else he wouldn't have been so shocked at some of the assignments they sent him on.

Early in his career, he was sent to defeat and capture a team of counterculture superheroes called "The Now." This felt very wrong to him. The Now weren't Communists or Soviet infiltrators, just kids on a mission to fight crime and supernatural evil. He beat them anyway, and then helped discredit them and get them all sent to prison on false charges.

He felt really troubled and confused about this mission and hoped to lose himself in his work so that he wouldn't have to think about it. The next job they sent him on was even worse.

He was supposed to find and eliminate a new Soviet psychic asset in East Berlin. She turned out to be an eight-year-old girl. Orders were orders. He did his very best to kill her, and even though he failed, he still bears that brand upon his soul.

Six weeks after returning to the US in disgrace, Nocturne took everything he knew about Project MK-Ultra to Senator Frank Church, who launched a Senate investigating committee that exposed some of the program's secrets and got the whole thing shut down. Nocturne slipped into a deep depression afterwards, and then suddenly went AWOL, taking his special combat vehicle, the Delta Interceptor, with

him. Within a few months he had found and destroyed the files showing the locations of a number of CIA safe-houses and illegal surveillance posts around the country. He has used them as temporary bases ever since.

Then he set about locating all the sections of MK Ultra that the Church Committee never found out about, and putting them permanently out of business himself (Note to the GM: At your discretion, he may have missed some of them, or have been unable to dismantle some of them, in case the CIA still runs mind-control experiments in your campaign.)

In the course of this work he found out about some unsavory ties between some former US intelligence personnel and the international drug trade, and began a campaign to break these operations up, too. He had some successes and some failures here—he didn't manage to predict or put a stop to the Iran-Contra operation, for example.

His work fighting the drug cartels gave him a reputation as a costumed vigilante, although he has always tried to stay out of the public eye. The PCs may very well have heard of him (it's the GM's call) but if they have, they still don't know much about him. He keeps a very low profile and tries to make sure that his existence is more of a rumor than an established fact. There are no official photos of him.

He doesn't have a regular secret identity. If he appears out of his costume using an assumed name, it's always a temporary ploy and he's always wearing a disguise.

Nocturne carries around a big load of post-traumatic-stress disorder, which makes it very difficult for him to get close to anyone. He likes people, wants to help them, but he's too paranoid to ever let his guard down around them. As a result, he has no friends at all, and lives completely apart from human society.

These days he's beginning to reassess his life and to wonder what comes next. He's past the age of fifty, and although he doesn't feel his body slowing down, it's just a matter of time. Less and less of his secret bases are still in operation,

and their facilities (particularly their computer systems) are getting hopelessly obsolete. Even his beloved Delta Interceptor is starting to show signs of age. Instead of healing, his psychological problems actually seem to be getting worse with age—he's more paranoid than ever, and he has noticed a tendency to get dangerously obsessive about certain dead-end conspiracy theories (particularly the Kennedy assassination.) He feels that he needs to make some kind of change in his life, but he doesn't know what or how.

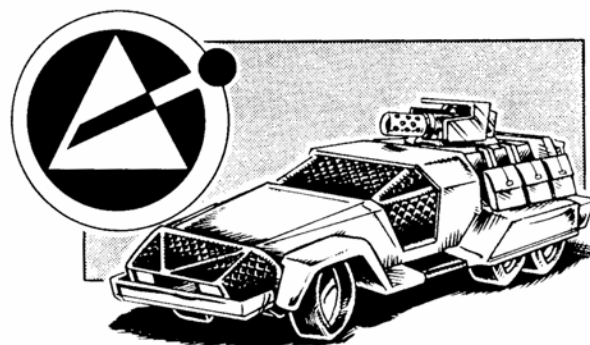
For the moment, Nocturne makes his lair in an old base hidden under the parking garage of the Bedlam City Train Station. It's a little cramped and it's none too clean, but he doesn't need much in the way of creature comforts.

There are people in the upper echelons of military intelligence who know all about Nocturne and his "secret" bases. They let him live because he's useful for shutting down illegal projects that are run by rival agencies. He's the perfect deniable asset—an agent who doesn't even know he's an agent. Paranoid he may be, but poor Nocturne isn't nearly paranoid enough.

Combat Tactics: Nocturne likes to observe a prospective target for a while from a distance, assessing their strengths and weaknesses. He doesn't like to go up against anyone without a plan. But if he doesn't have time, he'll forgo all that and strike whichever opponent looks strongest first.

A close-in fighter, Nocturne's first move in any combat is to close the gap between himself and the target. He jumps around constantly as he fights and tries to avoid getting into combat in settings where he can't perform a lot of acrobatic maneuvers. A big construction site would be his ideal place to stage a battle. He hates to kill people, but he knows he's capable of it if he absolutely has to.

He's not as levelheaded in a fight as he would like to be—even after all these years he still gets impulsive when he gets mad.



DELTA INTERCEPTOR

Acc/Top Speed: 30/60; **Toughness:** 14

(5 Heavy Armor); **Crew:** 1+5

Offensive Powers: Cannon (3d6 Damage, Heavy Weapon)

Defensive Powers: 5 Heavy Armor, Immunity to Gas or Suffocation (applies to anyone inside)

Other Powers: Can be operated by remote control

Background: Nearly a character in its own right, the Delta Interceptor is getting old, but it's still pretty dangerous, just like Nocturne himself. While its gadgets and communications gear may be totally out of date, its engineering is solid and Nocturne takes very good care of it.

The Delta Interceptor has been his sole companion on countless adventures and it feels like an extension of his own body to him. He's not very sentimental about his possessions, but if his car ever gets destroyed, he will be distracted for a moment, staring at its remains in mute regret.

HAMMER OF JUSTICE



"What kind of sewer do we live in, where Crime walks free, but Justice must go masked? Take last night. I saw some pretty suspicious looking characters hanging around behind your shop—good thing I was there to scare 'em off. A place like this could get broken into real easy. Know what I'm saying?"

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d8, Driving d6, Fighting d12, Guts d12, Healing d6, Intimidation d10+2, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Bedlam's Secrets) d8, Knowledge (Stark Hill) d10, Lockpicking d8, Repair d6, Notice d8, Stealth d10, Streetwise d10, Swimming d8, Taunt d8+2, Throwing d10, Tracking d8

Charisma +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 9 (2 Heavy Armor)

Edges: Alertness, Block, Combat Awareness, Charismatic, Combat Reflexes, Connections, Improved First Strike, Hard to Kill, Improved Frenzy, Improved Level-Headed, Improved Nerves of Steel, Mighty Blow, No Mercy, Improved Sweep, Quick, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate and Taunt), Take the Hit

Hindrances: Heartless, Quirk (Will never rat on a cop or the mob), Stubborn, Vengeful

Gear: Armored Costume (2 Heavy Armor), Billy Club (1d6+1d12+2), Badge-Shaped Throwing Blades (1d6+1d12), Throwing Handcuffs (Toughness 12), Nightvision Goggles (gives him Darkvision while he wears them), Minibinoculars, 5 Smokebombs (Obscure, Medium Burst Radius)

Background: Originally known as the Blue Shield, and then later the Shield of Justice, he has never actually carried a shield, but then again he's never carried a hammer either. Everyone is much too afraid of him to ask why.

He's a one-man protection racket, who cloaks his crimes in the cape of justice. Most people aren't aware that he extorts money from the folks he "protects." Bedlam's other superheroes aren't aware of the depth of his corruption, since they rarely come into contact with him.

The city's oldest and most respected crime-fighter, he restricts his regular patrols to Stark Hill. A rough, tough, take-no-prisoners kind of vigilante, he attracts a certain amount of controversy for his uncompromising attitude to crime. He has no tolerance for criminal behavior, he's unimpressed by arguments about rehabilitation and bad childhoods. He's not afraid to torture or terrorize information out of a suspect. In fact he's not afraid to beat a confession out of them, if that's the only way to get one. When you become a criminal, you step outside the rules and he can do what he likes to you. Unless of course you're a Made Guy. The Hammer of Justice has worked hand-in-glove with the Scarpia Crime Family for decades. He does enforcement work for them when they ask, coming down hard on their

competitors and keeping their streets free of petty crime. He gives them a share of the protection money he collects from frightened business owners and occasionally he rubs someone out for them.

He sees no contradiction in any of this. The Mafia maintains order and helps keep the blacks out of the neighborhood. The Hammer of Justice devotes a fair amount of his own efforts toward chasing out black families when they try to move in, but he can't be everywhere at once.

In his secret identity he is Officer Charles "Big Chuck" O'Ryan, a highly decorated cop with a reputation for bravery. A bluff, friendly giant of a man, he has an unsavory history of brutalizing black and Hispanic suspects in his custody. Just about everyone on the force knows or suspects that Big Chuck is dirty. But he's so charming and personable that they all like him anyway.

He used to collect protection money from his squad car. Then the Mob told him this was attracting too much attention, so now he has to put on a mask and do it by night. This annoys him. His father was a cop and he did things the old fashioned way. His grandfather was a cop and he did things the old-fashioned way. It was good enough for them—why isn't it good enough for him? Has the world gone crazy?

THE MIDNIGHT SHADOW



"Geez! Stop bleeding all over the place. It's embarrassing."

Real Name: Varies (different people wear the suit at different times) but these days it's most often Dino Spagnoli

Wild Card (when it's Dino wearing the suit)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d6, Drive d6, Fighting d8, Guts d10, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Greely Point) d8, Knowledge (Underworld) d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 7

Edges: Block, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Frenzy, Nerves of Steel, Quick, Take the Hit

Hindrances: Habit (addicted to angel dust and crank), Heartless, Quirk (abuses women), Quirk (will put the beat-down on anyone who fails to show him respect), Vengeful, Vow (of loyalty to the Mafia)

Gear: Brass Knuckles (d10+d4), Bulletproof vest (2 armor, resists 2 Armor-Piercing, 4 armor vs. guns, only protects his chest)

Background: A lesser-known counterpart to the Hammer of Justice, the Midnight Shadow patrols Greely Point, and never ventures across the river. He's even more mysterious than the Hammer of Justice, but we do know a few things about him for sure. He focuses his efforts on protecting the old residential neighborhoods at the top of the Hill, up around Moon Avenue and Lurman. That's a mob neighborhood, but he never seems to crack down on organized crime. Local businesses seem to pay him for his services.

In fact, just like a smaller-scale, lower-key version of the Hammer of Justice, he's a one-man protection racket, shaking people down for cash and running errands for the Mafia. He's much less directly confrontational than the Hammer of Justice, however. Usually his mere

appearance is enough to frighten people into paying up or to scare non-whites out of the neighborhood. If he does need to get tough with someone, he relies on stealth and hits them from behind, or leaves a sinister warning on their pillow while they sleep. This is a wise policy on his part. He doesn't have any actual powers, and barely any special training.

Unlike the Hammer of Justice, the Midnight Shadow isn't a single person, he's a bunch of guys from the Gorganzua crime family, and a mask. Different guys wear the outfit at different times. Anyone can do it, so long as they have the right build. Lately, however, one of the guys has taken to wearing it more than the others.

Dino Spagnolli is a crazy, weightlifting, wifebeating dope fiend. He's desperate for respect above all else, and he feels like he gets it when he wears the suit, so he volunteers for it as much as possible. The other guys think this is silly and a little weird, but not eccentric enough to have him killed over it, yet. Whenever he dons the suit, Dino makes sure to get wasted on his own special blend of PCP and crystal meth, which actually does give him a significant edge in combat. He is also a big, strong guy with some combat experience in Iraq. He's still not up to fighting a full-fledged superhero, although he may be crazy enough to try.

Using the Midnight Shadow in your Campaign: The Midnight Shadow works best as a kind of red herring. If the PCs start to suspect that one or more of

Bedlam's vigilantes may be working for the mob, you can use him to draw attention away from the Hammer of Justice. Or in a scenario where all of Bedlam's superheroes show up at once for some important job, and one of the group betrays the others, it can help to have more than one NPC hero in the room as potential suspects.

The Midnight Shadow has a reputation for being shadowy and secretive, and you should play this up. If anyone but Dino Spagnolli is wearing the suit, the Midnight Shadow will avoid coming to grips with the PCs, appearing and vanishing mysteriously. Where the Hammer of Justice confronts rival superheroes, the Midnight Shadow evades them. He also has the uncanny ability to survive his own death (they wash the costume and give it to somebody else.)

To encounter him, you have to go to Greely Point. Even Dino knows better than to cross the river into Scarpia territory. He has no desire to encounter the Hammer of Justice in a cranky mood.

Because he can't stand up to even a single Player Character in a fight, you should try to delay the final battle as long as possible, building the tension like crazy before they finally lay their hands on him and discover that he's just some jerk in a funny costume.

If the PCs ever manage to take down the Hammer of Justice, the Midnight Shadow will suddenly expand his range across the river, and they'll have a whole new crooked vigilante nipping at their heels—one with a very different style and very different secrets.

JUSTICE XTREME



In 1998, the Redevelopment Commission tried their final scheme to bring the city out of impoverishment and obscurity. They attempted to lure a nationally recognized superhero team to Bedlam. After many failures and false starts, they managed to find a team that was in the process of reorganizing itself after some losses and some bitter infighting. Formerly the "Street Saviors", they had just adopted the new name "Justice Xtreme" after their new team leader, "Mister Extreme." A nineties kind of name for a nineties kind of team, he felt (although in fact he called it a "new-jack team for a new-jack world", which sort of tells you all you need to know about poor silly Mister Extreme.)

The team had reached an unstable point in its history. Most of the original lineup was gone. This left Mister Extreme the leader by default (you can find his stats and background on Page 297.) Some people would contend that he was not equal to the job. Shortsighted, self-centered and

not terribly bright, he knew a lot more about marketing and getting corporate sponsorships than he did about being a hero. Only new recruit Suicide Lad and the mysterious Doctor Oculus stuck by him.

He was actively engaged in recruiting new members when the team relocated to Bedlam. Almost immediately Bedlam's home-grown superhero "Lord of the Blacktop" (Blacktop for short) joined up and began to quarrel with Mr. Extreme. A poor kid from the Section Eight housing on Ellmore Place, Blacktop was everything Mr. Extreme wanted to be—urban, streetwise, a real ghetto kid who knew how real ghetto kids actually talked. Mister Extreme despised and feared him at once.

The Redevelopment Commission wanted to change the team's name to "Maximum Extreme" but Mr. Extreme thought that sounded stupid (mostly because he hadn't thought it up himself.) This caused a lot of needless friction. Things got worse when new recruit "Kid Infinity" said he liked the new name, and Suicide Lad agreed with him.

At the public expense, Bedlam built the team a crime-fighting headquarters downtown, (the "Citadel Xtreme") with a gigantic statue in front. It's still there, deserted and caked with insulting graffiti. The statue has been encased in cement to protect it from vandals. Only its feet protrude from under the ugly concrete block.

That statue nearly caused the team's demise—Mr. Extreme didn't like it, thought it was too generic, and although he never said so, would almost certainly have preferred a statue of himself. This was nearly the last straw for the city government. It might have been better for everyone involved if the team had failed right then. Instead, Smashface (see his description on Page 344) came lumbering into town. Justice Xtreme mobilized to fight him. This was to be their first major battle. And their last.

Mr. Extreme refused to leave the Citadel. He was still feuding with the city about the statue and didn't want to do anything that might prejudice the lawsuit he was planning against them. But he did run

interference for his inexperienced group from inside their base, alerting the media and coordinating his team of publicists to make sure the fight got the absolute maximum amount of coverage.

As the battle was joined, Smashface knocked Suicide Lad to the ground. Kid Infinity happened to be standing closer than any of his other teammates, so he stepped forward, prepared to engage Smashface, and froze. He lost his nerve—couldn't make himself intervene. And Smashface killed his teammate right in front of him. Suicide Lad's last words were "Help me, Kid Infinity!"

Mister Extreme had done a good job of alerting the press. Half a dozen TV crews filmed the whole incident. Things actually went downhill from there. Smashface strolled deeper into the city, the rest of the team made desultory attacks on him from time to time but failed to have any discernable effect on him at all.

Blacktop managed to provoke Smashface into toppling an abandoned building on himself. But all this did was to kill a homeless family that had (unbeknownst to Blacktop) been living there and end his own crimefighting career.

Smashface killed eight more civilians and twelve policemen before he got bored and walked back out of town.

This was bad, but to make matters worse, within a day, local news acquired footage of Mister Extreme telling one of his contacts at the Redevelopment Commission that now that Suicide Lad was dead and Kid Infinity was in disgrace, he was pleased to say there was no longer any support for changing the team's name. This callous behavior did not endear him any further to the public.

Convinced that one of his teammates had leaked the story to embarrass him, Mister Extreme fired everyone and announced that he was building a new team from scratch. The Redevelopment Commission refused to accept this, so he sued them. Meanwhile, public outrage against Mr. Extreme, Justice Xtreme and the Redevelopment Commission reached such a fever pitch that the Bedlam police warned every member of the team to

stay out of town for their own protection. Their headquarters sat incomplete, the city's funds were withdrawn, a hastily written court order banned Mister Extreme from Bedlam and the head of the Redevelopment Commission moved to Israel to pursue her lifelong dream of working on a Kibbutz.

Months later, a young man hanged himself outside the gates of the Citadel Extreme. The body has never been identified, and the dead boy's identity remains a mystery to this very day. But no one ever saw Kid Infinity again. Blacktop vanished too, consumed with self-loathing and shame. He had gotten into the superhero game to help the folks society ignored, and wound up killing them instead.

Mister Extreme will tell you that his team still exists, that he is recruiting a band of Extreme new heroes for an Extreme new century (although his search is on temporary hiatus while he tries to get more funds and pursues other projects) and that they'll soon be back, bigger and badder and more extreme than ever. But of course no one listens to him any more.

The Street Savors, Bedlam's Other Superhero Team

Not very many people know that Bedlam almost had a second superhero team. After Justice Xtreme collapsed, the vigilante known as the Hammer of Justice took some of the surviving team members under his wing and offered to train them. He insisted that they weren't a team and that he wasn't really their leader—he was just showing them how to survive. The Hammer of Justice works alone.

They agreed, hoping to be able to resurrect the Street Savors after they had learned how to function as a unit and had really become ready to take on the challenge. But the group was plagued with bad luck. The Hammer of Justice kept leading them into ambushes and deadly situations and more of them kept dying. It was almost like he was trying to get them killed. The two surviving team members left town in a hurry, never to return, and the Scarpia Crime family congratulated the Hammer of Justice for having done such a good job of keeping the capes away from Bedlam.

HOMEGROWN MENACES

The villains in this section are all native to Bedlam (or are intimately linked to its history—like Mister Twisted) , but none of them are critical to the setting. The Ratcatcher, Capricorn and the Scarlet Man all play roles in Bedlam's secret history, but since you don't actually have to use that back-story, you don't need to include them if you don't feel like it.

We have one team for you (the Nowhere Men) and a handful of independent villains. As we've said elsewhere, Bedlam isn't really big enough to support a huge supervillain community of its own. Most of the super-threats that turn up here come stealing and murdering their way into town from somewhere else.

THE NOWHERE MEN

Membership: Woodchuck Man (A scrofulous, lice-ridden and unsavory human woodchuck, who prowls the city's alleys late at night, looking for food), The Ratcatcher (arch-wino and urban shaman, he communes with the pavement and knows all the secrets of the rat, the pigeon and the roach), Grim Diddle (a hapless, insane old derelict who moans instead of speaking, and who has been cursed with the ability to drain the life force out of others.)

Background: They say that something haunts skid row. Even the gang kids won't go there after dark in groups of less than ten. Bums whisper to one another that something has claimed the territory for its own, and although none of them will say the name, they all know where to find the fresh graffiti that reads "The Nowhere Men." Now

the tabloids are starting to take an interest, which might prove to be unwise...

The Nowhere Men are a collection of misfits and outcasts who live in the tunnels underneath Bedlam. They steal food to survive and occasionally come to blows with gangs who prey on homeless people. Setting derelicts on fire used to be a popular way for the city's youth to spend their evenings, but it isn't any more.

Out of the three Nowhere Men, only the one called Grim Diddle is actually dangerous, and even he isn't precisely evil—just muddled and insane.

The one called the Ratcatcher is a sort of urban shaman who lives in communion with the city and can feel disturbances in the flow of its systems. Some time last year he detected a pair of strange presences, lost and hungry, wandering through the tunnels beneath the streets. He was curious about these strangers, and had the city lead them to his lair. They were a weird but friendly woodchuck-man and an insane old derelict whose skin glowed blue in the dark. The three of them banded together for mutual support and they have been looking after one another ever since.

Once they started getting in fights with gang-kids, the Ratcatcher came up with the idea of painting their name on their turf, to show that certain locations were under their protection. That way they wouldn't have to get in fights all the time—the kids would know to avoid Ash Street and leave the homeless people there alone. This policy has worked, although it has also led to rumors and urban legends about the "Nowhere Men" and may lead superheroes to come investigate them.

Bedlam's homeless population doesn't know much about them, apart from the name, although they are certainly aware

that someone has been keeping the gangs off their case. Most of the city's derelicts would be willing to aid and shelter the Nowhere Men in a crisis, particularly the Ratcatcher, who has long been a semi-mythical folk hero to the wretches on Ash Street.

We don't know quite where Grim Diddle and Woodchuck Man came from—neither one of them can speak articulately. When the Ratcatcher found them Woodchuck Man was already trying to care for Grim Diddle on his own. For the GM's convenience we're going to leave it undetermined. Perhaps they both broke out of the same bio-warfare lab or perhaps Woodchuck Man just found Grim Diddle lying in an alley somewhere and decided that he needed help.

Threat Level: Scary though they can seem, the Nowhere Men aren't much of a threat to anything. They want to be left alone, and to keep any more bums from getting burned alive. This seems to be the limit of their ambition. They aren't even particularly interested in hurting the gangs—they just don't want them to set anyone else on fire. Grim Diddle can be a menace if left to his own devices, but they try to keep that from happening as much as possible. Still, there are occasions when Woodchuck Man is out scavenging for food and the Ratcatcher is too drunk to keep Grim Diddle from floating off on his own, moaning and muttering and spreading fear as he goes.

Base of Operations: The Nowhere Men live in the storm sewers under Bedlam, near Ash Street. Seldom do they sleep in the same place twice. They don't need much space, just enough for the three of them to lie down. The Ratcatcher is inhumanly gifted at finding them one good niche or other in which to hide.

Wherever they have set up their lair, it looks much the same—a pile of flattened out boxes with old clothes heaped on top of them to provide a sleeping space, with empty bottles of inexpensive wine scattered all around.

Woodchuck Man will probably have set up a web of threads nearby, which ring

a tiny bell next to his ear and wake him if anyone approaches them while they sleep. The Ratcatcher can detect intruders with his powers, but he's often too drunk to do it.

Organization: The Nowhere Men can barely be said to have any organization at all. They don't exactly have a leader, since each of them has personal limitations that prevent them from playing that role. Grim Diddle is too crazy, the Ratcatcher is too drunk and Woodchuck Man can't speak. In any case they don't really seem to need a leader. They just share their meager resources and give one another support.

The Ratcatcher watches over Grim Diddle while Woodchuck Man is off stealing food and Woodchuck Man watches over them both when the Ratcatcher is too drunk to be of much use. They like one another and they get along very well—even Grim Diddle seems comforted by the presence of the other two.

Tactics: If they are trying to fend off a group of young toughs who are intent on setting winos on fire, the Nowhere Men will try to act as frightening as possible when they attack, while at the same time roughing the kids up as little as they can. The Ratcatcher's ability to control rats, roaches and pigeons works well here, as does Woodchuck's Man's foul smell and fearsome appearance.

If they are about to scare off some kids, then the Ratcatcher will summon up a swarm of roaches, rats or pigeons, make them spell out some kind of threatening message, and then once everyone is already freaked out by the sight, Woodchuck Man and/or Grim Diddle will suddenly pop up and look scary. This is the only strategy they have. It has always worked, every time they use it, the kids all run away. The Nowhere Men have no idea what they would do if they tried it and the kids didn't run—they'd probably get scared and flee the scene themselves.

In any actual brawl they will all fight as individuals, with no coordination whatever, but they're much more likely to panic and try to get out of there.

Using The Nowhere Men in Your Campaign

The Nowhere Men are a mystery to be solved as much as an enemy to fight.

Even though they aren't that tough, the GM can make them plenty scary by keeping them mysterious. Adventures that involve the Nowhere Men should have lots of dark, dingy alleys, hissing steam grates, figures glimpsed for an instant on rooftops, roaches and rats scuttling around in a weird and unnatural way (the Ratcatcher loves to scare people off by having his little friends spell out "Stay Away" or "The Nowhere Men.") Everything should happen at night.

Once the Players have solved the mystery of who and what the Nowhere Men are, they will then have to resolve the more difficult question of what to do about them. They really don't mean anyone any harm, yet they have to steal to stay alive.

It's not going to be possible to reintegrate Woodchuck Man into normal human society, especially if sinister forces are ready to drag him off to a secret lab the moment he resurfaces. Grim Diddle's chances look almost as bleak, and Woodchuck Man won't let anyone take him away.

If the PCs decide to let them continue their shadowy existence, the Nowhere Men won't hold a grudge even if the PCs beat them up.

The Ratcatcher is a wonderful source of information when he's sober, and could make an excellent part-time ally.

An Adventure With the Nowhere Men: Guardians of Nowhere

The PCs are drawn to Ash Street by the reports of mysterious happenings there. Or perhaps they have a midnight encounter with Woodchuck Man, stealing some edibles from a shuttered fast-food restaurant, and the strange creature flees to Ash Street.

The homeless folks who inhabit the area after dark aren't willing to say much about the Nowhere Men, but they are willing to point out the graffiti which the Ratcatcher leaves to mark their turf. As soon as the PCs see the graffiti, the Nowhere Men notice them and strange stuff starts to happen. Rats and crows seem to watch them. Swarms of roaches cross their path. Perhaps they catch a brief glimpse of Woodchuck Man watching them from a rooftop, or hear Grim Diddle moaning and muttering in the storm sewers beneath them.

Then, while they are out patrolling for signs of the Nowhere Men, the PCs come across a bunch of cruel rich teenagers from Stone Ridge (under a bridge or in a vacant lot or possibly even in the tunnels under the street, if the PCs have gone there), who are nervously trying to work themselves up to doing something—the PCs can't quite see what it is. They are whispering about the Nowhere Men, and why nobody does "this" anymore, but it's all too unclear to make out. There's a lot of nervous giggling.

Then a swarm of roaches erupts across a facing wall, the rustle of pigeon wings is heard from everywhere and rats begin to scuttle across the edges of the scene. Before everyone's horrified eyes, the swarming roaches form the words "Get Out!" and the rats all squeak at once. Then, Woodchuck Man leaps out into plain view, waving his arms and chittering freakishly, while Grim Diddle appears on the other side, glowing and moaning and floating through the air. The teenagers scream and run. If the PCs choose this moment to intervene the Nowhere Men panic and run for it too, except for poor Grim Diddle.

As soon as the PCs enter the fray, they can see that the teenagers were about to set an unconscious bag lady on fire. How they deal with this situation is up to them.

WOODCHUCK MAN



"Squeak! Chee-chee!" (gestures inquisitively at a PC's wristwatch)
"Eep-squeak?"

Real Name: Unknown (may not even have one)

Wild Card

Race: Some kind of woodchuck-man

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d12

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Guts d8, Notice d10+4, Stealth d10, Tracking d8+2

Charisma -2, **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 8

Edges: Alertness, Arcane Background (Super Powers), Block, Improved Dodge, Fleet-Footed,

Hindrances: All-Thumbs, Clueless, Curious, Distinctive Appearance (looks like a filthy great woodchuck), Heroic, Loyal

Gear: Ratty overcoat, hat.

Super Powers:

- **Burrowing**
- **Melee Attack:** Str+1d6
- **Heightened Senses:** Tracking
- **Tru Regeneration:** rolls to recover from injury once per round.

Background: A scabby, filthy, lice-ridden woodchuck-man, who roams the city at night, looking for things to eat. His hygiene is appalling, his habits are gross and uncivilized, he knows nothing of humanity's laws. Yet he is also friendly and cheerful, happy and good natured. He can't speak and only understands a few words of English, but if approached the right way he's more likely to offer the PCs some of his meager food than he is to attack them.

Woodchuck Man is extremely loyal to the other Nowhere Men, particularly Grim Diddle, who he senses is unwell and needs protection. He's better equipped to scavenge for food than they are and spends more time away from their lair. He is likely to be the first team member the PCs encounter, as he is the one who commits the most crimes (theft, breaking and entering, skulking around looking like a giant woodchuck, etc.)

If confronted while stealing food his first impulse will be to drop everything and run away. He'll fight if cornered, or if he has some item he's unwilling to drop.

Not a particularly sophisticated tactician, he will always be more interested in escape than in hurting anybody. He won't attack non-combatants and he certainly won't take hostages.

Woodchuck Man may present a moral dilemma for heroes who capture him. He's a lawbreaker, but he's not malign. Prison clearly isn't the right place for him and removing him from the urban environment isn't really a viable way to help him. He knows nothing but the city and the sewers. If some well-meaning superhero released him into the wild he would be terrified and all but incapable of coping. Integrating him into human society is going to be a slow and difficult process. Perhaps the best option is actually to leave him alone, but supply him with enough food so that he doesn't have to steal. Contrary to what you might expect, he fears and hates the fast food restaurant "Wunder-Chuk" and feels deeply distrustful of Wally Woodchuck, their mascot.

Woodchuck Man bears the scars of many surgical procedures under his fur, but although he's clearly escaped from some

kind of illegal lab somewhere, he can't really explain how or where.

The GM should feel free to use him to lead the PCs to whichever mad scientist or secret gene-warfare lab seems appropriate to the campaign. This will help to link adventures together, and to move the Player Characters from the Nowhere Men to more powerful opponents.

Two Adventures With Woodchuck Man

1) Somebody Stop That Woodchuck!

One night at around 2:00 AM, Woodchuck Man finds a woman lying on a street corner near Terminal Drive. She is dying from the injuries her fiancé gave her while explaining his concerns about the state of their relationship.

Woodchuck Man can tell that she is sick, so he brings her to a place where he can see lots of other humans (the coffee shop called the Circle Perk, on Terminal Drive—see Page 191) and leaves her there. She has a wonderful shiny thing around her neck, which he keeps, unaware that it's a diamond necklace. He also doesn't realize that at least twenty people saw him stooped over her form, and that one of them took his picture.

Soon the city is in an uproar, panic is in the air and everyone is talking about the monster. His victim languishes in a coma, unable to tell the story of the attack, but her injuries speak for themselves.

Her fiancé, Chad Armitage, is distraught and wracked with remorse at having lost the necklace. It belonged to his grandmother and it's supposed to be given to the woman who will become his wife—it's a family tradition. He's desperate to have it back.

By an odd coincidence he's a member of the underground network of cruel young rich people called "Saturday Night Shots" (see Page 203), and he used to set bums on fire down on Ash Street

with them. He has actually seen the Nowhere Men once before, and has some idea where to find them. He also has some bored, violent young friends from Saturday Night Shots who would be willing to help him hunt for the necklace, and maybe do the Nowhere Men some harm just for old time's sake. Meanwhile Chad and his influential family pester the authorities and the press about having the monster caught and the necklace recovered.

The Player Characters should enter this situation unsure of what is really going on. Then, as Chad, the police and perhaps an angry mob are about to get into a confrontation with poor puzzled Woodchuck Man, the victim wakes up and tells everyone what really happened. But is there still time to prevent a lethal conflict?

2) Woodchuck Man to the Rescue

A new Wunder-Chuk restaurant is opening up on Storch Avenue, near Ash Street. Their Grand Opening Ceremony runs on into the evening, and the light and noise attracts the attention of Woodchuck Man. He watches the festivities from the shadows across the street, keeping a safe distance—he fears and loathes their mascot, Wally Woodchuck, and doesn't want to come anywhere near its lair.

Then, disaster strikes. Some poor shlub in a Wally Woodchuck costume comes out of the restaurant, waves to the crowd, and leans down to say hello to a little girl. She cringes and bursts into tears, and Woodchuck Man completely misunderstands the situation. Thinking that the other woodchuck intends to harm the girl, he overcomes his fears, races across the street, snatches her up and resuces her, running off down the sidewalk with the shrieking girl slung over his shoulder.

Can the PCs catch up with Woodchuck Man before the cops or an angry mob does?

THE RATCATCHER



"Well sit yerself down young feller. The city told me you'd come—whispered it to me on her reeking asphalt breath. I know you're here to kill me, but yer still a guest until you do, so pull up one a them cushions an' let's us talk a while."

Real Name: Jacob "Jake" Bukowski
Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d12, Knowledge (Bedlam) d12+2, Notice d12+4, Repair d6, Persuade d10, Streetwise d12, Tracking d10

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 8

Edges: Alertness, Arcane Background (Super-Powers), Charismatic, Hard to Kill, Harder to Kill, Improved Level-Headed

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Habit (addicted to alcohol and crack), Outsider, Pacifist (minor), Poor

Powers:

Animal Control: Swarm of rats, roaches or pigeons, Summoning, Telepathic Link

Awareness: Danger Sense

Super-Attribute (4): Vigor enhanced from d4 all the way up to d12

Jinx

Mind Control: Only works on native-born residents of Bedlam

Obscure: Medium Burst Template, cloud of bugs or pigeons

Telepathy: Only works on native-born residents of Bedlam

Note: None of the Ratcatcher's powers work outside the Bedlam city limits, including his enhanced vigor. Nor does he have the Edges "Hard to Kill" or "Harder to Kill" once he leaves the city. Out there he's just a muddled old alcoholic with a Vigor of d4 and a Toughness of 4.

Background: A grinning, filth-smeared wino who wears a motley assortment of mismatched clothing. He looks a bit like a clown with his comical assemblage of clothes, and his five-o'clock shadow and constant smile reinforce this effect. The

Ratcatcher communes with the city's living heart and knows its hidden ways. He can speak the language of the pavement and learn who walks or drives upon her. He is friend to the pigeon, the rat and the roach. He speaks their secret tongues and can see through their eyes.

He doesn't much care for violence, but he will reluctantly protect his two comrades if he must, smiling and uttering strange drunken/wise pronouncements about the city all the while. He's not a sadistic man, and would never take hostages or endanger innocents. While he can call upon swarms of vermin to protect himself and his compatriots, the Ratcatcher only does this as a last resort—he's afraid of getting his little friends hurt.

While he is usually drunk and often incoherent, he knows an enormous amount about the city and will gladly share his knowledge with anyone who cares to ask. He's almost always happy and has a kind of jovial Zen-like calm, having found Enlightenment in the bottom of a wine bottle. Rats and roaches crawl across him constantly and he treats them like his children. Is he the living incarnation of the city's spirit? That's hard to say—he didn't just appear out of nowhere, he has a birth certificate and parents and a former life. If he is some kind of living urban deity then he became one, rather than being born that way. If the Player Characters approach the Ratcatcher as a friend rather than an enemy, they'll find him to be an incredibly useful source of information, when he's coherent enough to talk. Befriending him is easy. Helping him get off the streets is difficult. He prefers to live in the tunnels and he wants to remain a drunk. In fact his powers and his role as an urban shaman are both dependant on his being

a kind of arch-derelict and he doesn't want to neglect his duties as the city's secret confessor. If he isn't there to listen to the city's awful hidden agonies, who will be?

GRIM DIDDLE



"Unnnh! Maaaaa! Whether up through my skins of flaming heart burning burning so cold over the sky—Lutes! Lobsters! Nuuuuuuuh!"

Real Name: Unknown (does not remember it himself)

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d12+2

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d4, Intimidation d4, Notice d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 5/ Fly 10; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 9

Edges: Hard to kill, Harder to Kill

Hindrances: All Thumbs, Clueless, Delusional, Elderly, Illiterate

Powers:

- Darkvision
- Flight (4) moves at 2x Pace
- Lower Stat (per the core rulebook, requires a Touch Attack, lowers the stat by one step)
- Paralysis

Background: A lost, tormented street psychotic, incapable of taking care of himself. Grim Diddle doesn't even have what it takes to survive as a bum.

Instead of speaking, he moans. His skin is pale and glows faintly in the dark. His eyes do not look human.

Woodchuck Man and the Ratcatcher tend to him, try to calm him through his nightmares and see that he is fed. They are amazingly patient and understanding with him, and somehow he senses their affection, and knows not to use his powers on them. Yet from time to time he escapes their care and wanders off to attack people at random.

Grim Diddle has been cursed with the ability to suck the lifeforce out of anyone he comes near. Constantly cold, he craves the warmth of others and when he isn't curled up in a heap or rocking back and forth muttering to himself, he roves aimlessly around seeking warmth to drain. His companions try hard to keep him from wandering off and drawing attention to himself, but Woodchuck Man is often gone and the Ratcatcher is frequently too drunk to know what's going on.

Although he won't attack his caregivers, no one else is safe from him. When he comes floating down the street at midnight, glowing a ghostly blue and mumbling insane nonsense, look out! He isn't so much merciless as he is unaware of the harm that he does—perhaps incapable of understanding. In combat, he really doesn't use any tactics at all. He directly approaches his chosen target, but can get distracted if some other warm body gets in the way. If hurt, he retreats. If cornered, he lashes out. He won't take hostages or threaten non-combatants—that's far beyond his mental capabilities. No one but the other Nowhere Men can reason with him, even via telepathy, but he'd respond well to Emotion Control.

No one really knows where he came from or how he got his powers. The other Nowhere Men have no idea, and if anyone ever manages to cure his shattered mind, they'll find huge gaps in his memory that effectively obscure it.

Like Woodchuck Man, Grim Diddle can be used as a bridge to the monster-making mad scientist or secret government laboratory of your choice. Once the PCs have subdued and studied him, they can follow the clues (his surgical scars, the place where Woodchuck Man and the Ratcatcher found him) back to the master villain (or sinister conspiracy) responsible.

STABBO THE CLOWN



"I'm a one-man stab-tacular circus of blood! Ha-ha-ha-huh-ha-heh!"

Real Name: Luca Stegnetti

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d12+1, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidate d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d8, Taunt d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** Supersonic; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Heartless, Quirk (misogynist, will always attack any woman in a group of opponents first and hardest), Stubborn, Wanted

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Charismatic, Improved First Strike, Mighty Blow, Quick, Sweep

Super Powers:

• **Ranged Attack:** Throwing bits of debris at hypersonic speed; Range 8/16/32; 2d6 Damage, Autofire

• **Speed (12):** Supersonic (-8), Pummel

• **Super Attributes (2):** (Hyper-Agile)

Gear: Big Knife (d8+d6 damage; 4pts Armor Piercing and counts as a Heavy Weapon when wielded at hypersonic speed)

Background: A supervillain in the making, Luca Stegnetti hasn't yet figured out that he has superpowers. In fact he's a speedster, and he's going to discover this fact whenever it would be least convenient for the PCs.

Luca isn't a Made Guy yet, but he's on his way. A crazy, wild-eyed speed freak, he's already picked up the nickname "Stabbo the Clown" among the Scarpas and their associates long before he discovers his abilities. They call him that for his crazy sense of humor, his demented laugh and his hair-trigger capacity for violence. He loves to stab people and he does it at the drop of a hat. In fact, he's so stab-happy that it's actually holding his career back. Dapper Donny is a cautious guy and he wants to make sure Luca can hold it together before he lets him in the family. For now, Luca is something like the Scarpas' wacky mascot, always hanging around Donny's favorite arcade and making people laugh with his nutty antics.

Unlike most of the Scarpas' associates, Luca was never a member of the Coronets, the Viscounts or any of the other Stark Hill street gangs. Instead he was a loner and a misfit and a nut. His mom was a useless, violent drunk and their house was a filthy pit of squalor and everyone teased him about both these things. After getting picked on from kindergarten through the eighth grade, he reinvented himself in high school, trying to be the craziest and the wildest and the funniest kid around. At first he got beat up regularly, but by his junior year most of the gang kids thought of him as a hilarious diversion. Now he's twenty-five and he's hanging around with their fathers and uncles.

A couple of stints in juvie and some failed relationships with girls have left Luca with a huge pile of anger under his giddy charm. His meth addiction makes this worse. Over the years he has found that there are women who will put up with him,

but they're all passive lumps. None of them are the funny, charming girls he craves. This and his hatred of his mother have made him a dangerous guy for women to be around. Any girl foolish enough to succumb to his giddy charm will get beaten on, a lot. In fact his current girl, Marie Tucci, has suffered so many savage beatings that her face is barely recognizable as human anymore. He teases her about this, calling her "the Elephant Girl" and he doesn't let her go out in public any more. He learned from his mom how to terrorize someone smaller and weaker than you into obedience and it seems unlikely that Marie will escape him before she dies. He hasn't actually killed any of his girlfriends before, but once he does, it'll become irresistible to do it again and again.

In person, Luca resembles a homicidal Jim Carrey, flailing around and acting out and trying to get attention. He's actually pretty funny. Constantly flirting with any attractive girls he sees, Luca doesn't know when to stop harassing them. His flirting always has an aggressive, mean undertone. He's forever grabbing women and trying to force them to dance with him. An unnerving opponent, he doesn't seem to care whether he wins or loses a fight. The harder you beat him, the louder he laughs.

He may abuse women, but he hates people who hurt children and he may actually go kill an abusive parent or two once he gets his superpowers. While he is capable of any crime at all against adults, Stabbo claims to have a soft spot for kids and animals. He can't bring himself to kill either one, he says. But the very first time he has to kill a child or an animal, he'll discover that this isn't true, and that in fact it doesn't bother him at all. What a relief!

Using Stabbo the Clown in Your Campaign:

At first, Luca is the kind of minor villain Player Characters love to hate and love to beat up. He's annoying, scary and vile all at once, if you play him right. But the first time the Player Characters get in a fight with him, he'll discover that he has superpowers and become a vastly greater menace. What happens next depends on how the PCs react and on how you want to use him.

He'll love his new powers, start wearing clown makeup and embrace the name "Stabbo the Clown." Then depending on the circumstances, he'll either go on a rampage, lie low and wait for a chance to strike back at the PCs, or become a fast-rising power in the Bedlam mob. Dapper Donny doesn't want anyone in the family who would draw unwanted attention or who might eclipse his own stature, so he will put off making Stabbo an actual "Made Guy" for as long as he can. He certainly won't help Luca if he's running around on a public rampage, making headlines and getting superheroes involved. He may even want the PCs to put his former mascot away—although he won't want him to get a chance to testify. If Stabbo has to work outside Dapper Donny's organization, he'll soon assemble his own crew and start trying to carve out as big a piece of the underworld for himself as he can. He'll surely lose in the long run if he starts a war with the Scarpas—they can afford to hire an unlimited number of supervillains to bring him down, but he's certain to do a lot of damage along the way.

Stabbo works best if the PCs encounter him several times in different sessions, and get to watch him grow and mature as a villain. At first he's a memorably unpleasant mook, then he's a rampaging supervillain, then he's a crime lord and possibly even a worthy arch-nemesis.

DOCTOR SCORCH



"The world is on fire, the air's full of screams and the Doctor is in!"

Real Name: Seymour "Sparky" Sanders

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8,

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Distinctive Appearance, Habit (Compulsive Pyromaniac)

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers)

Super Powers:

• **Attack, Ranged (12/24/48):** Damage 4d6, Area Effect (Large Burst Template), Elemental Trick: Fire

• **Deflection:** (-5 to incoming attacks), Elemental Trick: Fire

• **Energy Control (fire):** Large Burst Template, Elemental Trick: Fire

Background: He's not really a doctor, he's quick to say, just a creepy little pyromaniac with a bad case of attention deficit disorder. It is unusual to find a pyromaniac who has this much of a sense of humor about himself, but then again it's also unusual to find one who can set fires with his mind.

Doctor Scorch is a pyrokinetic—which perfectly suits his personality and hobbies. Unlike many people with his ability, he isn't immune to the effects of his own powers and is covered with small burn scars from various accidents.

Not exactly a career criminal, in that he makes no money from his crimes, Doctor Scorch burns things purely for the sheer twisted joy of it. His favorite targets include odd or eccentric looking historic buildings, big tacky fiberglass statues used to advertise stuff, and anything that looks like it would be really tough to burn. He's grown adept at seeing what a particular structure would look like on fire, and he's become quite a connoisseur.

Most pyromaniacs set fires to hurt and dominate people, but Doctor Scorch just likes watching things burn. He actually tries hard to keep bystanders from getting harmed by his obsession. While he is excited by all the screams and running around that a fire produces, he gets no thrill from burning people. Alas, the nature of his obsession makes it difficult for him to keep from hurting innocents, and despite his best efforts he has caused more than one death over the years. If an orphanage is unlucky enough to be situated in a really beautiful old building, look out!

He's aware of how bad his compulsions are, and that it would be better for everyone if he were locked up again. Yet he honestly can't control the urge to burn things. Nor can he really suppress the urge to be free, since he can't burn things when he's in custody. It is lucky for him that his powers are easy to suppress. Otherwise they would have lobotomized or killed him long ago. As

it is, a simple combination of anti-hallucination drugs keeps his powers in check, although it also gives him the shakes and messes up his fine motor coordination. By now he has spent about two thirds of his life institutionalized. They made the mistake of releasing him only once, but he does have a disturbing tendency to get loose during the periodic mass prison breaks that super-prisons and mental asylums seem oddly prone to.

Rueful and self-deprecating, he is clearly ashamed of the stuff he does. When confronted, he'll greet the PCs by name and say something like "Gee, I'm kind of glad you guys are here. I sure screwed up this time."

His attention deficit disorder is clearly visible. Manic and excitable, he can never keep still, his hands and eyes are always moving and he makes big wide gestures as he speaks. A chronic fidget, instead of doodling or biting his nails, he sets things on fire. He wears a costume, not only because he needs as much protection from the heat as he can get, but because he finds it really exciting.

While he does want to be stopped, he won't go down without a fight. Doctor Scorch prefers not to hurt his opponents too badly, so instead of attacking them directly he will try to undermine whatever they are standing on, drop burning trees on top of them and so forth. He is as adept at figuring out how a fire will behave as any fireman, and can launch indirect attacks with great precision. He won't take hostages, but if cornered he's not above setting a nearby building or vehicle on fire so that the PCs will have to leave him and go rescue whoever is inside.

Doctor Scorch has threatened Bedlam on many occasions. These days he's locked up in the Crawley State Hospital for the Criminally Insane (see Page 102) and isn't trying actively to break out. In fact he wants to stay confined and he wants to get better. But he's not very good at controlling himself, and if he had an opportunity to escape, he'd probably take it, even though he would know that it's the wrong thing to do. An unknown firebug has plagued Bedlam for fifteen years, causing untold damage and mayhem. It's not Doctor Scorch. "Torchy the Firebug" (see Page

267 for more information on his career) committed some of his worst crimes while the Doctor was behind bars. Anyway his MO is completely different. Seymour has some good insights into what motivates "Torchy", which he'd be happy to share if anyone wants to ask. He doesn't like Torchy. The guy strikes him as very, very cruel—something that Dr. Scorch has always tried not to be.

Using Doctor Scorch in Your Campaign:

Doctor Scorch is a good recurrent opponent for less experienced superteams. The nature of his powers and his habit of putting lots of innocent lives at risk makes him capable of holding off a much bigger group of heroes that his character sheet would indicate. A Doctor Scorch plot-arc is usually pretty simple.

Escape, rampage, get locked up, repeat as needed. Things can suddenly get a lot more complicated if Sparky Sanders ever remembers who he really is. In fact he's the living incarnation of the trickster-fire-god. The thing the ancient Norse called "Loki." He has a mother and a father here on earth, he was born, rather than falling from the sky, but he's Loki all the same.

If some other reincarnated Norse god ever recognizes him (and it's not certain they will—that's entirely up to the GM) then Sparky will suddenly become one of the toughest superhumans on earth, with roughly the same powers but jumped up to a vastly higher level, and he will get a whole lot more ambitious. If the GM wants, Loki may be interested in things like ruling the world or blowing it up, but he's more likely to want revenge on any other surviving Norse deities.

His personality won't change, although he'll get both craftier and more self-confident. He likes to burn things even more, but he's better at keeping the impulse under control.

If you would like to use this plot thread, but the god Loki already plays another role in your campaign, then Doctor Scorch is his son. He can still undergo a sudden leap in power and change in objectives once he figures this out, as above.

MISTER TWISTED



"Is that extreme enough for ya—I mean twisted enough for ya?"

Wild Card

Real Name: Dick Reed

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Knowledge (Marketing) d6, Notice d6, Persuade d4, Stealth d4, Taunt d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 9

Hindrances: Mean, Stubborn, Quirk (Resents any hero who succeeds where he has failed), Vengeful

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Hard to Kill, Rich

Super Powers:

• **Altered Form:** (Rubbery Skin), More Elastic (x2), Fall Proof

• **Ensnare (6):** Stronger

Background: Some people are born to be superheroes. Selfless, noble and

brave, blessed with an innate sense of fairness and justice, they may take up the cape even if they don't have any special powers. Mister Extreme was never that kind of guy. His superhuman abilities haven't really made a hero out of him, despite his best efforts. Not terribly bright, easily distracted by fads and fashions, he's much too shallow to keep from being petty. Driven to seek success, and cursed with an enormous ego, he's incredibly jealous and vain. The only thing that has kept him from realizing that he'd make a better villain than a hero is his lack of imagination.

He speaks in a kind of fake skate-punk slang that he's picked up from commercials and Saturday morning cartoons, and which was already out of date when he started using it in the nineties. He particularly overuses the word "extreme" and heroes who have worked with him say it makes him embarrassing to be around.

He's the son of the late "Mister Amazing" whose exploits thrilled the world in the 1960s, and he grew up in the superhero community. He was admitted to the "Street Saviors" partly because of his father's reputation and partly because he had inherited enough money to be one of its major sponsors. When half the team resigned all at once he was the closest thing they had left to a leader and became their de-facto chief. The first thing he did was change their name to "Justice Xtreme", after himself.

Mister Extreme was not up to the challenge of leading the group. The only mission he had the chance to organize was a sickening disaster, and caused the team's final dissolution in a flurry of lawsuits (see Pages 283-284.) As

mentioned on those pages, his team's half-completed headquarters still stands in downtown Bedlam. It's possible that the PCs may try to move into it. If they do, Mr. Extreme is going to go berserk—but it may not even take that much to make him their enemy.

In the years since Justice Xtreme fell apart, he has sulked on his father's estate, bitterly nursing his anger. You would never know he's brooding if you spoke to him. He remains as outwardly cheery, upbeat and enthusiastic as ever. He says that Justice Xtreme will be back soon, with an extreme new lineup of extreme new heroes for an extreme new world. In the meantime he's pursuing other projects. If you ask him what those other projects are his mood darkens. The truth is that no one wants to work with him anymore, his father's business empire is slowly falling apart and his life has gone completely to hell.

If he sees some other team start to clean up Bedlam, when he failed, it's going to drive him into a crazy jealous rage. If they move into his old headquarters it may unhinge him completely. He'll start by suing them, and trying to get court injunctions against them. If this seems not to be working, or if the public reacts negatively, then he may snap and try a more direct form of action. He'll modify his costume (see the illustration,) take the name "Mister Twisted" and become their supervillain nemesis, using every opportunity to screw them up.

Mister Twisted won't directly challenge them to a fight, but he'll play vicious pranks on them, set booby traps for them, throw pies and dead animals at them when they make public appearances and generally try to make them look absurd.

He will never admit that he's really Mister Extreme and the PCs shouldn't be aware of it at first. If they manage to lock him up, Mr. Extreme will of course disappear and stop suing them, which may get them curious about whether or

not there is some kind of link. They may also notice that Mr. Twisted and Mr. Extreme have the same powers, although Mr. Twisted uses them in much grosser and more offensive ways.

For his part, Mr. Twisted is really starting to enjoy being a crazy villain, cackling maniacally and doing disgusting things with his stretching powers. Why had he never thought of this before?

Using Mr. Twisted in Your Campaign:

You can use Mr. Twisted as a largely off-screen nuisance, hassling the PCs at a distance and defaming them in the press. Or he can turn into an active threat, haranguing and mocking them in public, playing grotesque stunts on them and popping up whenever it would be least convenient. His pranks may stay harmless but annoying, or they may get steadily more dangerous and irresponsible, depending on the direction the GM wants to take the character. If they keep defeating him he may become meaner and crazier and graduate to actually trying to cause them harm, or even to stalking their loved ones.

It's hard to damage him and it's hard to keep him confined. But the best way for the PCs to neutralize him might actually be to try and discover why he hates them so much, and possibly win him over. They will have to proceed with care if they try this. For if he ever mistakenly thinks they've discovered his true identity, and are about to reveal it to the world, he may abruptly become suicidal, or homicidal.

As a variation on the theme, you can have him assemble a group of villains who have all been defeated or humiliated by the Player Characters, and call it his "League of Twisted." The sole purpose of this twisted league is to take vengeance on the PCs. He'll initially want to do it by publicly humiliating them, but if some of the other guys want to take revenge by, for example, eating the PCs' children, then he'll get swept up in the moment and go along with it.

BLACKTOP



"The thing about criminals is, they're morons. But then so is everybody else."

Real Name: Terrance Martinez

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d8, Driving d10, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Healing d6, Intimidation d8+2, Investigation d8+2, Knowledge (Bedlam) d8, Lockpicking d8, Repair d10+2, Notice d10+2, Stealth d10, Streetwise d8+2

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6/ 12 Swinging;

Parry: 8; **Toughness:** 9 (2 Heavy Armor)

Edges: Alertness, Block, Combat Awareness, Combat Reflexes, Fleet-

Footed, Improved Dodge, Investigator, McGyver, Mechanical Genius, Mr. Fix-It, Quick, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate and Taunt)

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Heroic, Mean, Quirk (never admits to being wrong), Quirk (can't swim), Stubborn

Gear: Armored Costume (2 Heavy Armor), Gas Mask, Handcuffs (Toughness 12), Nightvision Goggles (gives him Darkvision while he wears them), Stun-Spray (2d6 nonlethal damage, Range 5, ineffective past that range), 3 Smoke Bombs (Obscure, uses the Medium Burst Template), 5 Sonic Stun Grenades (Stun, uses Medium Burst Template), Radio Com-Link (Can monitor police channels and intercept cell-phone communications),

Super Powers:

- **Awareness:** Danger Sense
- **Inventor**
- **Swinging:** Device

Background: Ten years ago, the "Lord of the Blacktop" was a rising local hero, looking to do his part to make Bedlam a better place for ordinary folks. Then his whole life came crashing down.

He's from the public housing ghetto called Ellmore Place—the city's worst neighborhood apart from the Country Club, and he grew up dirt poor. There was no single moment or violent trauma that pushed him into becoming a masked vigilante. It just seemed to him that the cops and the superheroes alike ignored the problems of folks like his family and friends on Ellmore, so he set out to see if he could make a difference himself.

He was a bona-fide kid genius, and a talented athlete as well, but it's still hard to explain how he was able to cobble together the incredible devices he used to fight crime. Some people have suggested that he is in fact a mutant or a psychic with the ability to mentally manipulate

machines. He may even be a sort of urban elemental like the Ratcatcher. We simply don't know (so it's up to the GM.) We do know that he met with spectacular success, despite his limited resources. His old costume was just a hooded sweatshirt with a black mask underneath and at first his gadgets seemed to be made from household objects and junkyard scraps.

Although the mask completely covered Blacktop's face, The Hammer of Justice immediately figured out that he was African-American, and the old bigot tried to run him out of Bedlam. This embittered Blacktop, but he was too stubborn to run away. His big break came just a few months later. Mister Extreme was recruiting a whole new superhero team from the remnants of the Street Savors. Blacktop joined up and at once began feuding with Mr. Extreme.

Blacktop may have been young, but he was pretty streetwise, and it was clear to him that the team leader was a poseur and a fool. Plus, Mister Extreme kept trying to talk to Blacktop in faux hip-hop slang that was so awful and embarrassing it made him physically cringe. Just to annoy the boss, Blacktop announced that he liked the name "Maximum Extreme."

He was actually preparing to challenge Mister Extreme for leadership of the team when their first mission unexpectedly fell into their laps. The supervillain known as Smashface had come walking into Bedlam and was crushing everything in his path (for no particular reason—he just felt like crushing some stuff.)

Mister Extreme was sulking in their new headquarters so Blacktop wound up trying to lead the fledgling team against Smashface. The results were such a horrendous disaster that Blacktop turned his back on being a

vigilante for the next ten years. See Page 283 for the awful details. In brief, a homeless family died because of a decision that Blacktop made.

The very next year he considered coming out of retirement. He had heard that the Hammer of Justice had quietly recruited some former members of Justice Xtreme and was leading them on nighttime patrols. He had also gone back to calling them the "Street Savors," which was a much less embarrassing name than "Justice Xtreme." But it soon became clear to Blacktop that the Hammer of Justice had not experienced a change of heart about his racism. Worse, while Blacktop couldn't prove anything, it looked to him as though the Hammer of Justice was actually trying to get his inexperienced new students killed. And in fact within two years every member of this new version of the Street Savors was dead or had left town. Most people aren't even aware that the team ever existed in that form.

Blacktop toiled away at low-paying jobs for ten years and tried to find a new direction for his life. He got a degree in Social Work from Bedlam Community College, but he was too angry and judgmental to be any good at that job. He also got married, but he was no better at being a husband than he was at being a social worker and that soon ended, too. At one of his crummy jobs he actually worked next to Torchy the Firebug, Bedlam's most notorious arsonist, without ever realizing it (if Torchy is ever caught and his identity is at last revealed, Blacktop is going to be pretty angry.)

Finally, in desperation, he has decided to go back to doing the one thing he was good at—fighting crime. He has worked for two years to put together a sleek new costume and some gadgets, and at last he thinks he may be ready.

He's a lot meaner and more self-righteous than he was in the old days, and he's going to view any other superheroes working on his turf as a threat. In fact, the moment the PCs turn up in Bedlam he's going to try to chase them away.

Using Blacktop in Your Campaign:

Blacktop hasn't come out of retirement yet. It's up to the GM as to when precisely he will feel ready to put his mask back on. Seeing the Player Characters stomping around Bedlam might very well be enough to provoke him to return. He's fated to be the PCs' deadly rival and perhaps their nemesis.

He may come off as a big jerk, but he isn't evil the way, for example, the Hammer of Justice is evil. Yet he is probably going to come into conflict with the Player Characters. He is so desperate to redeem himself and so intolerant of any competition for "his" town that he'll actually try to physically intimidate the PCs into leaving. You might think these are bad lessons that he learned from the Hammer of Justice—that he actually thinks it's the way masked vigilantes are supposed to operate. But in fact Blacktop is much too smart to have ever been taken in by that psychopath's line of crap. He's really just being a bastard.

It's tough to have a civil conversation with Blacktop. He's used to being the smartest person in the room, used to being surrounded by idiots and used to being the only person who understands what is going on. This makes him automatically discount anyone who disagrees with him as a fool. It actually makes sense for him to take this attitude. Most of the people who have disagreed with him really have been fools,

compared to his own massive level of intellect, and some of them (like Mister Extreme) have been dangerous fools, whose moronic advice will get you killed. As a result, Blacktop can never admit that he's wrong about anything or that anything is his fault (*except* for the tragedy that destroyed Justice Xtreme—that he's still stricken with guilt over to this very day.) Once he thinks you're an unreasonable idiot, that he's in the right and you're in the wrong, he's totally implacable and he'll never let up about it—in fact he hasn't spoken to his own mother in years because of some argument he couldn't back down from. And he's so aggressive, prickly and easy to offend that you're almost sure to get on his bad side.

But this is not the only way fate is conspiring to make him your PCs' opponent. As soon as Blacktop comes out of retirement, both the Hammer of Justice and Mister Twisted (the former Mister Extreme—see Page 297) will try to turn the authorities against him. Mister Twisted will actually get so jealous and angry that he'll impersonate Blacktop and frame him for a crime. And if the PCs try to bring Blacktop in, or even just to question him about the crime, he will refuse to cooperate and things will almost certainly turn violent.

Rod Anger, Bedlam's favorite right-wing radio talk show host, will get into the act as well, calling loudly for Blacktop's arrest and trying hard to turn public opinion against him. This plus the Hammer of Justice's efforts to have Blacktop declared an outlaw will probably result in Ellmore Place's protector getting hunted by the authorities and likely the Player Characters, too.

CAPRICORN



"Good Evening Bedlam. This is Capricorn. I've been gone, but now I'm back, and I have all kinds of new stuff to show you."

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d12+1

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidate d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 8;

Toughness: 8 (1)

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Gimmick, Servitor, Stubborn, Wanted

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Fast Healer, Improved First Strike, Fleet-Footed, Improved Frenzy, Hard to Kill, Harder to Kill, Strong-Willed (2 points of resistance to Intimidate and Taunt)

Gear: Armored costume (+1 Toughness), .357 magnum pistol (2d6+1 Damage)

Super Powers:

• **Attack, Melee (5):** Device, Str+2d6+4 (big magical kitchen knife), Focus

• **Fear:** Scary (-2 to his Charisma)

• **Fearless**

• **Intangibility:** Special version that does not protect him from attack—it only lets him walk through walls.

• **True Regeneration (10)**

Background: In the seventies and eighties, Bedlam was intermittently terrorized by a masked serial killer who taunted the police and the press with letters and phone calls. He challenged them to figure out where he would strike next, and sent them elaborate coded messages with weird occult overtones. No one is really sure why he called himself "Capricorn", and his code has never been broken.

Every three years Capricorn returned, always between the months of December and January, ready to kill another nine people. In 1981 the Bedlam Police caught a suspect named Wilbur Coote, and the murders stopped. Coote always maintained his innocence and there were no eyewitnesses, but a huge amount of circumstantial evidence linked him to the crime. Then in 1984 the killings continued. Capricorn's new letters were in the same handwriting as the old ones, and he performed the same strange and senseless mutilations on his victims—including things that no detective had ever told the press. Wilbur Coote was released, although he was murdered shortly thereafter by the father of one of Capricorn's victims.

In 1987 a reporter figured out the pattern to Capricorn's killings. He was drawing some kind of huge diagram across Bedlam, marking each vertex with a corpse. Acting on this information, the police managed to capture him at the scene of his next crime. To this day there is controversy as to whether or not they let him kill

THE CAPRICORN MURDERS



another victim so as to be able to catch him in the act. Capricorn fought vigorously, and it was only with the help of the Vigilante known as the Blue Shield (now known as the Hammer of Justice) that they were able to subdue him. His costume was very elaborate—real supervillain stuff, and its gaudy look proved instrumental in his apprehension. He was much easier to spot in that outfit than he ever would have been in his street clothes.

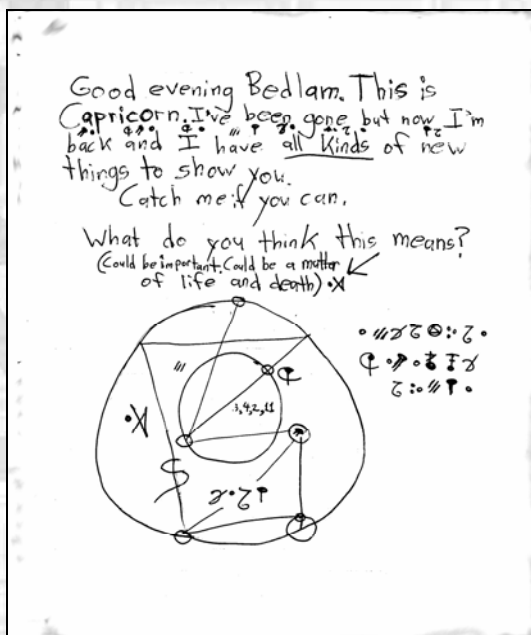
Capricorn never said anything after being taken into custody. No one has ever been able to figure out who he is. His

fingerprints don't match anything in any Police database. Neither does his DNA. There was no ID on his body and no one has ever come forward to identify him.

He's a white male, about five feet, ten inches tall, weighs 160 pounds and has shoulder-length brown hair. More than this we do not know. For now, Capricorn resides in the Crawley Asylum, where he does not participate in his therapy and barely responds to stimulus at all.

As you may have guessed, the murders are about to begin again.

Using Capricorn in Your Campaign:



Capricorn is only scary if the Player Characters have already heard about his reign of terror before they have a chance to encounter him. For that reason he probably shouldn't be the first villain they ever fight. They should have heard at least vaguely about his baffling and heinous crimes, in addition to the rumor that he had superpowers.

Feel free to hold some things back—they'll almost certainly start looking through old newspaper and police files as soon as the first bodies turn up, so it's good to have a few facts in reserve for them to discover.

There is an old tradition in the comics that Capricorn fits into neatly. He's the villain who commits crimes and leaves baffling clues as to where he will strike next, taunting the PCs to stop him, like the Riddler, the Clock King, Two-Face, etc. Can our heroes crack his fiendish code and catch up with him before he kills again?

There are two ways to re-introduce Capricorn to Bedlam. Either the nameless man in the Crawley Asylum suddenly escapes, or someone completely different takes up the mask. In either case, it's clearly Capricorn. It's his voice, his handwriting and he's performing the same ritual mutilations on the corpses—including the ones the cops never released to the public. But how can that be?

If Capricorn is back and there is blood on the moon, it will mean that the Player Characters are just one or two steps away from learning some very deep dark secrets about Bedlam (see the section on Capricorn in the "Horrible Secrets" chapter on Page 388.) You may or may not allow them to uncover those secrets. It's largely up to the GM. Either Capricorn has left no trail leading back to the forces he really serves or else he has.

The Scarlet Man



"Gnaah! Girls! Dope! Gimmie!"

Real Name: Zebediah Scarlett

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Guts d12, Intimidate d10, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) d8, Notice d6, Taunt d8, Stealth d8, Spellcasting d12, Throwing d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Clueless, Illiterate, Quirk (has no self-control, cares for nothing but girls, opium, and revenge)

Gear: Thrown objects (d6+d4)

Powers and Special Abilities

- **Awareness**

- **Ethereal:** Not a material being, he can only be harmed by magical attacks.

- **Illusions 2:** Can create illusions up to 4" cubed in volume

- **Invisibility**

- **Fear -2:** causes a Guts checks at -2 when he lets himself be seen.

- **Super-Sorcery:** Level 2

- **Telepathy:** Broadcast, can reach everyone in Bedlam at once

- **Telekinesis:** Strength 1d10

- **Teleport:** 12"

Background: Some cities, like some superheroes, get really spectacular arch-enemies. Fiends with diabolical schemes and cunning plans and a lust for conquest. Poor old Bedlam has to make do with the Scarlet Man.

Zebediah Scarlett founded the city of Bedlam. Reverend Scarlett led an obscure sect of fanatics, back in the late 18th century (or the 19th, depending on where Bedlam is located—see the Timeline on Page 24.) He took his followers into the wilderness where he could control them better and where the world's prying eyes would not peer too closely at his business. His vices of choice included underage girls, opium and sinister occult rites. He indulged all three quite freely in the settlement he founded, until he was betrayed and murdered by his chief henchman, Rule Hardwick. He thirsts for revenge—but not very hard. He thirsts for girls and opium a whole lot harder.

From time to time his unclean spirit appears to the city fathers in their dreams and threatens to lay waste to Bedlam. Then they do their best to placate him. If he did ever attempt to destroy the city, he'd get bored and distracted and give up halfway through—but of course Bedlam's leading citizens don't know that. For the past few decades they have been trying to keep him from coming back, using one occult technique after another—some of them very shameful indeed. (See "Capricorn" on Page 388.)

By now Lucius Hardwick and his old-money associates have figured out that the Scarlet Man probably doesn't have the power to annihilate Bedlam, but he certainly has the power to kill all of them, so they will continue to do whatever it takes to appease him or ward him off. Keeping him at bay turned out to be a better plan than appeasement. The last time they paid him off, the surviving girls formed the Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars and caused Bedlam no end of woe. Any time the GM chooses, Mr. Hardwick's efforts to keep the Scarlet Man out of Bedlam may fail.

Not very smart, Zebediah Scarlett never did learn how to read and he's easily distracted or fooled. While the GM can present him as a looming threat, he isn't anything like the equal of his reputation.

Using the Scarlet Man in Your Campaign



A looming threat with a twist. The Player Characters shouldn't even know about the Scarlet Man's existence until they start

plumbing the depths of Bedlam's secret history. When they learn what the Phantom Empire was really up to, what Lucius Hardwick and his cabal of creepy old coots have been trying to ward off, they should feel alarmed. But then when actually meet the Scarlet Man, they'll find that he's only a moderately powerful villain. He's also really lazy, and kind of an idiot.

While he's certainly capable of committing unthinkable atrocities, he's not very good at thinking them up. It won't, for example, occur to him to try and find a Player Character's loved ones and hold them hostage. And if it did, it would sound like too much work. Nor will he think of taking hostages, or of threatening to kill one random person every hour if his demands are not met or any other such stuff. Instead of launching complicated schemes and cunning plans, he'll just show up, demand girls, drugs and perhaps alcohol and try to scare you into giving them to him. If he ever discovers game shows or crack he will immediately become addicted to them, and somewhat easier to deal with (since he'll be more interested in watching the Game Show Network and smoking crack than in taking his revenge on anybody.)

It's impossible to make an ally out of the Scarlet Man. He's too selfish to grasp the concept. Nor would anyone who gets to know him want him as their friend. He always works alone.

Lucius Hardwick really should have called in the superheroes to deal with this problem long ago. But to do so would have been unthinkable—airing his family's private matters in front of some vulgar person in a cape! Just imagine! Far more acceptable to have Capricorn stalk helpless victims in the night.

EAT-'EM-UP-JACK



"Yer gettin' a lump of fist in yer Christmas stocking, ya bum."

Real Name: Jack Grady

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+6, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d10, Intimidate d8, Notice d6, Throwing d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 15

Hindrances: Dependant (Daughter), Distinctive Appearance, Stubborn, Quirk (Devoted Father), Quirk (just wants to be left alone)

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Brawny, Hard to Kill, Harder to Kill, Nerves of Steel, Power Points, Take the Hit!

Super Powers:

- **Melee Attack:** +3d6 Damage, Armor Piercing 4, Knockback 1d10
- **Fearless**
- **Growth:** Size +1, Monster
- **Leaping:** Vertical 32 inches, Horizontal 64 inches.

• **Super Attributes (6):** (Super Strength)

• **Toughness (8):** +2, Hardy

Background: The house at 665 Turpin Lane is falling apart. Boards cover most of its windows. A tall, badly constructed fence slumps and sags around the property. The trees are all dead. The house, the dead gray lawn and the remains of the fence are all covered with signs. GO AWAY! NO TRESPASSING! STAY OFF LAWN! VICIOUS

DOGS LOOSE ON PROPERTY!
TRESPASSERS WILL BE VIOLATED!

If there were any neighborhood kids, they would stay far away. But this is the Country Club, and more than half the houses on this block are completely deserted. There don't seem to be any dogs on the property, but sometimes at night you can hear something growling. For this is the lair of Eat 'em Up Jack, a former supervillain who is now just trying to be left alone. He's not ready to be around people yet.

It's pretty dangerous for him to hide out in Bedlam. Some years ago a young County Prosecutor named Cord Killingsworth set Jack up for a vicious murder. This gravely offended him. He supposed it was okay if society wanted to punish him for crimes he'd actually committed, but it wasn't fair to send him up for something like that—something he never would have done. In a rage, he tore Killingsworth's arm off right there in the courtroom. Killingsworth has wanted him dead ever since.

These days Killingsworth is Bedlam's District Attorney and his hatred for Eat 'em Up Jack has turned outwards toward all superhumans (see Page 92.)

While Jack was on death row, he was approached by people who claimed to work for the government. They offered to fake his death, and spirit him out of prison, if he would go kill Osama bin Laden for them. Jack agreed, so they arranged for him to be declared dead and then dropped into Afghanistan.

It soon became clear that there was no way to find his target, let alone kill him. Jack was sure his new bosses would execute him whether he accomplished the mission or not, so he walked away. He'd wanted to quit being a supervillain for years, anyhow. Now he finally had a chance. He walked into China and managed to hide on a freighter bound for the states. By a weird twist of fate, he wound up in Bedlam, where his daughter Moira lives.

These days she's nearly his only link with the outside world. She buys him groceries and batteries and talks to him through the door. Right now he's resting, trying to get his head together, trying to avoid opening all of his old mental scars.

His only other contact with humanity is the Shadwell Drive Gentleman's Club (see Page 194) where he goes to drink at night with his new buddy, Jimmy Hoover.

An old time Irish thug, Jack speaks in gravely 1940s slang ("shaddup ya bum!") and curses a lot. He always tried to be a stand-up guy, not to kill innocent bystanders if he could help it, not to let his team down or show up drunk for a job.

If he got into a fight these days he'd try even harder not to cause any unnecessary harm. Unless the guy he's clobbering is a wifebeater. Jack truly despises guys who beat on women—it reminds him too much of his pop.

He's pretty powerful—one of the few guys who might be able to take Smashface in a fight. If some crisis gravely threatens Bedlam, or worse, threatens Moira or Jimmy, he'll come roaring out of retirement to save them. But even if he gets to save the whole city, DA Killingsworth will relentlessly attempt to have him sent to death row.

Jack still has the costume the feds gave him and he thinks it's pretty swell, even though it's really just a sarong and a utility belt. He uses the pockets on the utility belt to store his smokes. If he has to give up his life or his freedom doing something heroic, he might just put the costume on one last time.

Using Eat-'em-up Jack in Your

Campaign: This character is meant to be a rabbit you can pull out of a hat when the occasion requires it. He's a fairly sympathetic villain and he's as likely to try to help the PCs as he is to work against them, particularly if the city is being menaced by some huge looming threat. Ideally the PCs should feel at least a little conflicted about bringing him in. After all, he just wants to be left alone and only takes action to protect the people he cares about (or his privacy.)

To help build him up as a foe, let the PCs find out about his past and his connection to the DA before they ever have a chance to meet him.

THE QUEEN OF SKULLS



"Fear not. Your cares are at an end."

Real Name: To be determined

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d12+2, Strength d6, Vigor d12+2

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) d8, Notice d6, Spellcasting d12

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 16 (7 pts. Heavy Armor)

Hindrances: Servitor, Vow (make one up), Heartless, All Thumbs

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Attractive, Improved Level-Headed, Mentalist, Power Points,

Super Powers:

- **Ageless (2):** Very Old

- **Ranged Attack:** 5d6 Damage, 8 Armor Piercing, Uses Cone Template

- **Awareness (2)**

- **Damage Field:** Every adjacent foe takes 2d6 damage just for being near her.

- **Darkvision**

- **Decay:** Rapid Decay, Strong (all Vigor rolls to resist are at a -2)

- **Environmental Protection**

- **Fear (5):** Anyone she uses this power on must make a Guts roll at a -5 penalty or flee in terror

- **Fearless**

- **Infection:** Anyone who touches her with their bare skin must make a Vigor roll at -2 or die instantly. She cannot turn this power off or decide to spare a victim.

- **Intangibility**

- **Obscure:** Uses the Large Burst Template

- **Super Sorcery (9):** Level 3

- **Teleport:** 60"

- **Toughness 7:** 7 Pts Heavy Armor

Background: She has come to blot out the stars and drown the world in silence. Where she walks, she leaves emptiness. The Queen of Skulls is a world-devouring nightmare-villain of the first rank. She does not want to rule the earth, or be acknowledged as its greatest inhabitant. She cares nothing for worship or for insults or for anything else, apart from oblivion. You can yell all the pithy quips you like at her. She won't react at all. Fortunately she doesn't exist quite yet, but she may appear in Bedlam soon.

If the GM likes, the Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars may be plotting to bring the Queen of Skulls into our universe so that she can destroy Zebediah Scarlett and the city he founded. Whether she also destroys the world is really none of their concern.

If you are using this plot-thread then the most important question is, who is she? The Sisterhood arranged for her to be reincarnated some years ago, but she doesn't yet know who she is. She thinks she's a mortal, and if someone doesn't remind her of the truth, she may live and die as one. At the GM's option, the Queen of Skulls could be Lawanda Corby, or Dr. Ramona Blackmore, or Madison Nylander or

Jane Tharp or the "Red Queen", or Yolanda Washington or even Naked Man (he suddenly realizes that he's not supposed to be the Man in Nothing—he's supposed to be a man in a dress!) Pick whichever one seems most dramatically appropriate, and don't tell your PCs.

The circumstances that could trigger her transformation vary according to who you pick. Dr. Stone might figure it out in the course of her researches at the Crawley Asylum. Jane Tharp might try to kill herself when the police come to break up the Murder Club, only to rise, reborn.

One particularly dramatic way to do it is to have her visit the Serpent Room at the Lurman Gallery. Whoever she is, she will get weirdly excited and happy as she wanders through the gallery's collection of heinous obscenities, and when she comes at last to the Serpent Room, she will vanish in its depths. If the PCs go searching for her, she will suddenly reappear with a very peculiar smile on her lips. "I remember," she says "I finally remember who I am." And the Queen of Skulls is born.

Her personality is much like you would expect for a Goddess of Night and Death. She is not particularly cruel. Pain is much too active an emotion for her to feel anything but disgust for it. Incapable of lying or deceiving anyone, she has no sense of humor and often doesn't respond to the things people say to her. Her only motive is the destruction of Bedlam and she won't do anything which doesn't serve that end. She holds eerily still when she has no reason to move.

The Queen speaks only when she wants something, or to express her absolute distaste for everyone and everything. Life is repugnant to her and she reacts to intense displays of it (love, panic, convulsions, etc.) by wincing in dismay. That's the only emotion you ever see her express. While she finds intense feelings unpleasant, you can't use it to ward her off—that just gets her attention, and not in a good way.

If someone asks her why such a solemn and dolorous entity dresses like she's going to Mardi Gras, let alone wears black lipstick and nail polish, she replies "This is the way you imagined me. Would

you like to see what I really look like?" The correct answer is "NO!"

Using the Queen of Skulls in Your Campaign:

There are two ways to use the looming threat of the Queen of Skulls. You can have the PCs try to foil the efforts of the Sisterhood to bring her into the world, or you can have them try to stop her from destroying Bedlam once she has already appeared.

You probably only want to use this villain on your PCs once they already know a bit about Bedlam's secret history. They should at least have a chance to figure out what they're dealing with, what she wants and how they might stop her. Please remember as well, the Queen of Skulls doesn't even have to exist in your game world. She's here only if you decide to use that plot thread.

An Adventure With the Queen of Skulls: Doom Comes to Bedlam

Once she appears in Bedlam, the Queen's first objective is to find the Ratcatcher, Bedlam's living soul, and kill him. To do this she will recruit a gang of henchmen, up in the Country Club. If Doc Zombie or some other necromancer has already set up shop there, they will hastily get out of town (perhaps Doc Zombie broadcasts one last commercial, announcing his Going Out of Business Sale—everything must go!) She will then take over whatever organization they had, which probably includes Bedlam's only surviving Jamaican posse. They will scour the streets for the Ratcatcher, who may in turn come to the PCs for help.

If the Ratcatcher dies, the Queen of Skulls will then go on a big rampage in the middle of the city, killing everyone and everything in her path. If she gets as far as devastating Wolverton, the Ghosts of the Del Morocco will rise to fight her, but they will lose. For silence trumps even the Blues.

If the Player Characters can stop her, well and good. If not, they can try summoning the ghost of Zebediah Scarlett and feeding him to her. She will be appeased by this, and go back to wherever she came from. She might even leave her host behind.

BIG SCARY GUYS FROM OUT OF TOWN

Bedlam doesn't have a really large supervillain population. It's not big enough and there isn't enough here to steal. There are a few local villains, like the Nowhere Men, but for the most part super-criminals tend to leave town once they get successful enough to move away (just like everybody else.) However, the general lawlessness and crooked police force do attract outside supercriminals from time to time. On the following pages we have a list of villains who might show up in Bedlam for a big score or try to take over the local scene. Sort of like Gotham City on the old 1960s Batman program, where a new colorful villain would roll into town each week with a gang of henchmen and a heap of terrible puns. *"Holy \$#!+ on a pogo stick, &*%\$-Man! The @\$\$ Meister is back in town!"*

The villains listed below vary in power from chronic losers to arch-fiends. Some have appeared before in other publications from Plain Brown Wrapper Games and some are completely new. But none of them are tied closely to any specific game setting or "universe," except of course for this one.

DOC ZOMBIE



Real Name: Dr. John deBlanche

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) d8, Notice d6, Spellcasting d12

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: All Thumbs, Clueless, Heartless, Servitor

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Charismatic, Dodge, Hard to Kill, Power Points, Take the Hit, Tough as Nails

Super Powers:

- **Awareness (2):** Danger Sense

- **Fear (3)**

- **Improved Jinx:** Foes suffer a Mishap on a 1 or 2

- **Lair:** Ruined Country Club. Pathetic Condition, Personal Quarters (for twenty or so), Specialty Library (Voodoo)

- **Minions:** (Seemingly limitless hordes of zombies, plus forty or so Rastafarian gangsters)

- **Puppet:** This power functions as per the core rulebook

- **Zombie:** This power functions as per the core rulebook

Gear: Knife Consecrated to a Thousand Gods of Darkness (does Strength +2d8 damage, counts as a Heavy Weapon)

Background: The "creepy rumor" about the dead walking the streets of the Country Club is really meant to let you place your own necromancer up there. However, if you don't have one you'd already like to use, here's Doc Zombie to fill the gap. He showed up in the Country Club quite recently, drawn by Bedlam's pain. Something worse than a mere murderer, he brings the dead howling back from beyond the void and bends them to his will.

PCs who work with ghosts on a regular basis will find that every haunt in Bedlam fears whatever it is that has moved into the Country Club, though none of them know its name. But most of the living do. As soon as he slithered into town from parts unknown, Doc Zombie started running ads on local television.

Cheaply made and widely ridiculed, they show Doc Zombie sitting in a finished

basement, surrounded by trashy, touristy looking voodoo paraphernalia and what appears to be a giant skull-shaped bong. "Doc Zombie has the power!" He solemnly intones "The power of the juju, the power of the snake, the lion, the worm. All life am bow to Doc Zombie. All fall on bended knee before the Macumba Man!"

There is a poorly-made video effect resembling thunder and lightning. Then a man and a woman (both wear dreadlocks) turn toward the screen, hold up wads of money and say "Thank you, Doc Zombie!"

A grandmother bursts out of a very fake-looking grave, surrounded by her grinning relatives. "Thank you, Doc Zombie!" they all say, and hold up big handfuls of cash.

A man dressed like an evil chicken appears above a baby's cradle and crows. Doc Zombie steps into the shot and holds up his hand. "Enough!" he cries, and the chicken utters a feeble hiss and tries to cover its face with its wings. A full-grown man in a baby bonnet rises from the cradle holding fistfuls of cash, "Thank you Doc Zombie!" he says.

Then a whirling occult design appears on the screen with a lurid flashing skull in the middle. "I've got something for you!" a voice cries.

Is this an advertisement? A boast? A threat? It's all so weird and so incompetently made that it's impossible to tell for sure. Other commercials follow, but they are just as incomprehensible. Some people report feeling nauseated by his commercials, but this might just be because they are nauseatingly bad.

Soon Doc Zombie starts renting billboard space, and puts up giant posters of his face with the words "Doc Zombie Get You All" in red. People who check the web address on the billboards find that his MySpace page is infrequently updated and makes no sense. You could say the same about his blog.

As soon as the commercials start to play in regular rotation, Doc Zombie will seize control of about half of Bedlam's one remaining Jamaican posse (see Page 259.) Then he'll start killing the other half and turning them into the living dead.

His objectives are rather less shadowy and mysterious than his reputation. He wants money, power and respect. His objective in coming to Bedlam is to take over its underworld, and he'll try all sorts of schemes to do it. He owes fealty to no particular faction and fears neither the Jigsaw Man nor the Mafia. Once he gets firmly rooted in the Country Club Doc Zombie can become a fixture on Bedlam's crime scene for a long while. Or he can suddenly pull up stakes and leave town, for no apparent reason.

Using Doc Zombie in Your Campaign:

He can be a short-term villain who appears just long enough to go on a rampage or he can be a lasting foe. Vengeful, he will certainly want to make life Hell for any superheroes who foil his plans.

He's one of those master villains who goes everywhere surrounded by hordes of henchmen, but he's also pretty formidable on his own. No crime is beyond him, no scheme is too dastardly or too improbable or too insane. He actually has terrible judgment and isn't really very bright, despite his impressive command of arcane lore.

He always speaks in a slow, creepy monotone and he never shows any emotion behind his sunglasses. You can undercut this for humorous effect by having the PCs come across him while he is doing some totally normal thing like brushing his teeth or picking up his dry-cleaning or standing in line at the DMV. He mostly kills other criminals, but he'll gladly make an exception in your case if you trifle with him or stand in his way.

An Adventure With Doc Zombie: Deadfellas



In his effort to take over the Bedlam Underworld, Doc Zombie hits on a plan so fiendish it actually makes him giggle (and normally nothing is capable of making him crack even the faintest smile.)

He manages to locate a secret Mob graveyard where the Scarpas have been burying their enemies, and he brings the Iggioni Family back to life. Living corpses with gold chains and thousand dollar suits start rising from the dead, eager for a little of their favorite Sicilian pastime—Vendetta.

The resurrected Iggionis are only semi-intelligent, but they remember how to talk and some of them can aim guns and drive cars and all of them know where to find the Scarpas. Soon terror stalks the streets of Stark Hill. Known

members of the Scarpia family are being dragged out of their cars, yanked away from their tables at sleazy restaurants and strip clubs, and eaten alive.

Why should the Player Characters care? First, because innocent people are getting caught in the crossfire and second because the Scarpas are sure to try to bring in some supernatural muscle of their own, unleashing God-knows-what on Bedlam.

In fact they ask their contacts in the Catholic church to ask for help, and the Church puts them in touch with the maniacs who run the Opus Ombra. (you can find out more about these unbalanced monster hunters on Page 204.)



I'VE GOT SOMETHING FOR YOU!

The Black Eagle



"The dust of burning nations makes a splendid sunset."

Real Name: Alois Brunner

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d4-1, Vigor d4-1

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d8, Intimidate d8+2, Knowledge (Evil Secrets) d8, Knowledge (Secret Nazi Underground) d10, Knowledge (Fine Wines) d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Taunt d8+2

Charisma: -3; **Pace:** 3; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Elderly, Enemy (the Mossad), Heartless, Lane, Mean, One Eye, Quirk (racist, can't work with people he considers his natural inferiors).

Edges: Command, Fervor, Followers, Hold the Line, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidation or Taunt)

Gear: Bulletproof Vest (2 Heavy Armor, only covers his chest), Luger Pistol (2d6+1 Damage), Cane (1d4 damage)

Background: Contrary to popular belief, the chief architect of the Holocaust is alive and well and living in Damascus, where he

has advised the Syrian intelligence services for the past fifty years. Alois Brunner was Adolph Eichmann's second-in-command—the man given direct oversight of implementing the Final Solution. He pursued these duties with zeal, and unlike Eichmann, he never claimed to have been "just following orders." When Paris Match interviewed him in 1995, they asked him if he had any regrets. He replied: "not having killed more Jews." For him the Holocaust was both a duty and a joy, a place where his personal inclinations meshed perfectly with his job.

After the war he spent a little time in Paraguay, a little time in Spain, but as soon as the state of Israel came into being, he moved to Syria, which suddenly had need of his talents. These days he lives in a penthouse suite at the Hotel Ambassador, the finest address in Damascus. That's sort of a relative term. In fact the hotel has seen better days and looks a lot like the VIP lounge of a 1960s airport. But he cares little for luxuries in any case.

Herr Brunner is remarkably fit for a man in his nineties and has yet to retire. He's slim and white-haired and has an eyepatch (courtesy of the Mossad, which nearly managed to repay him for his past kindness in the seventies), and he walks with a cane. He dresses impeccably—he's the sort of older European gent who turns up for breakfast in a suit and tie.

While Brunner still freelances as a part-time consultant for the Syrians, he spends most of his efforts running a worldwide mutual support network for former members of the Third Reich. Originally called "Der Spinner" (the Spider) these days it more often goes by the name of Oktopus. His code name within the organization is the Black Eagle. Oktopus has resources all over the world.

If there is already a secret underground Nazi cabal in your game world, then they are separate from it, but they know them and can sometimes get help from them. The Oktopus are not interested in world domination, or restoring the Third Reich to power, although if an opportunity to actually do either of those things came within their reach they would certainly give

it a try. For the most part, they care about staying alive and maintaining their wealth in a hostile world.

Oktopus does not have a lot of contacts in the neo-Nazi movement. They actually find skinheads scary and weird. They do however know where to hire some of the world's best assassins and they will meet any challenge to their existence with lethal force. They also know where a lot of old Nazi wonder-weapons are buried, and if anyone gets too close to uncovering one they will act to snuff out the intruder. And there is one in Bedlam.

Doctor Gertrund Harder (see Page 357) was a pediatrician who conducted some truly obscene experiments on children at Buchenwald concentration camp, and she learned some incredible secrets in the course of her researches. She lives in Stone Ridge—by an odd coincidence her house is directly across the street from Young Junior Gorganzua's.

Hale and hearty in her 100th year of life, she is one of the leading lights of the Stone Ridge Garden Club. She still practices pediatric medicine, at Beth El, although I doubt you'd want her as your own child's doctor. Dr. Harder knows the location of a prototype weapon she took with her to America, and could have it operational in less than twelve hours. What and where this weapon might be, we leave up to the GM. She is still in regular contact with Oktopus and anyone who threatens her comfortable suburban existence is in grave jeopardy.

Using the Black Eagle in Your

Campaign: Brunner is a long-range villain. Tucked safely away in Syria, he'll play deadly chess games with the PCs from halfway around the globe, but unless a miraculous youth formula or a world-destroying weapon is at stake, he'll never leave Syria to fight them directly. His usual method is to throw assassins and supervillains at his foes, and then to send

them threatening, boastful postcards if he fails. While he is an evil, spiteful old man, and has no objection at all to murdering his enemies' children, spouses, etcetera, he loves a good opponent and will say so in his letters.

If the PCs ever encounter him in person, it should be at the end of a long, dramatic series of adventures. They should already know him well from his letters, and be itching to give him the comeuppance he deserves. As an added twist, perhaps he dies just as they are about to confront him. Or perhaps he has had his head transferred onto a cyborg body and gives them a fight they weren't expecting! Here's a sample cyborg body, in case you decide to go that route.

The Iron Eagle

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+1, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidate d8+2, Knowledge (Evil Secrets) d8, Knowledge (Secret Nazi Underground) d10, Knowledge (Fine Wines) d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Taunt d8+2, Throwing d6

Charisma: -4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 11

Hindrances: Distinctive Appearance, Enemy (the Mossad), Heartless, Lane, Mean, One Eye, Quirk (racist, can't work with people he considers his inferiors).

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Brawny, Power Points, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidation or Taunt), Take the Hit!

Super Powers:

- Attack, Melee (4): +2d6
- Construct: +2 to recover from being Shaken; does not suffer from Wound penalties, immune to disease and poison.
- Fearless (2)
- Growth (1): Size +1, Monster
- Heightened Senses (1)
- Super Attributes (5): (Super strength)
- Toughness (7): +2, Hardy

CAPTAIN CONDOR



"I'm not a chicken, damnit! I'm a condor!"

Real Name: "Rhode Island" Red Pullette
Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Lockpicking d4, Notice d4, Repair d6, Shooting d4, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6/Fly 18; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 9 (3pts Heavy Armor)

Hindrances: Big Mouth, Gloater, Quirk (touchy about his ridiculous-looking costume), Stubborn

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Block, Gimmick (has to put on his suit to get his powers), Improved Dodge, Power Points

Gear: Armored Power Suit (see below)

Super Powers: (All powers in Power Armor, a Device)

• **Armor:** 3pts of Heavy Armor

• **Melee Attack:** +1d6 to Strength Damage (wing-strike)

• **Flight:** 3x Pace

• **Super Attributes:** Agility +1 step.

Background: People might take Condor Man a lot more seriously if his costume didn't look so much like a chicken. Then again, perhaps not.

He's experimented with using the name "Night Raven," but most of the time he's Captain Condor. Widely thought of as a joke by superheroes and villains alike, he's struggled hard to find work as a costumed criminal and even harder to find respect. His high-strung, foolhardy, self-important personality doesn't help.

Captain Condor's origin story has changed a lot over time. He used to claim that he was bitten by a radioactive condor. Then when people made fun of that story he said he was an ornithologist whose jealous colleagues refused to accept his radical theories about the Red-Breasted Piping Plover, so he turned to a life of crime. These days he says that he is the reincarnation of an ancient Egyptian warrior-priest, who worshipped the condor god. This actually makes even less sense than the one about the radioactive condor but he stubbornly sticks to it.

His personality is about what you'd expect from a muscle-bound thug who dresses up like a chicken (no, wait, I mean a condor—or is it a raven?) When he's not wearing the suit you can see that he has a mullet and a big gap between his front teeth. He dresses with expensive bad taste. \$500 silk shirts in garish colors, heavy gold chains, etc. His spiky mullet somehow makes him look even more like a chicken, as do his weak chin, skinny neck and beaky nose.

He loves being a villain and tries to rant like one, but whenever he comes up with some pompous long-winded speech his lack of education shows. He doesn't really know enough about birds to have ever been an ornithologist, nor does he know enough about Egypt to have lived there in another incarnation. It seems likely that he in fact acquired his incredible suit by stealing it. But that begs the question of who would build a flying suit that looks like a chicken in the first place.

Stubborn, bull-headed and foolishly determined, he has read a lot of self-help books and believes everything they say about not letting obstacles stand in your way. He will keep fighting after a battle is lost, he will refuse to flee when his team retreats. A bit like a rooster, actually. Yet his courage sometimes abruptly fails him. He routinely gets himself into trouble with his big mouth and then has to run for his life.

He's not casually murderous. In fact he's prone to sudden, impulsive, sentimental acts of kindness. But if he gets frustrated or scared he's capable of any stupid, vicious atrocity. If he kills a hostage or an innocent bystander, he'll feel really bad about it until he gets distracted by something else.

A manic depressive, he lapses into long periods of gloom between jobs. But when he's working on a heist he's cheerful, wildly enthusiastic and fun to be around (so say a number of his ex-girlfriends.) Hitting girls is against his "Condor Code." He absolutely won't hit women unless he's really mad or really

scared or lashing out in a fit of drunken depression.

Using Captain Condor in Your Campaign:

Mainly intended as a hireling with a touch of comic relief, Captain Condor might try robbing a bank or a jewelry store on his own, but he's more likely to hire on with a master villain and do their evil bidding—or try to as best he can. He has no intentions of blackmailing the country with a nuclear bomb or taking over the world. In fact, if he learned that his boss were about to do something that bad, he would seriously consider betraying them to the PCs.

Ideal for those hard-to-reach places, you can also enlist Captain Condor in any "ad hoc" teams you might need to throw together to fight your PCs or to attempt some really big crime. His idea of a big crime would be knocking over an armored truck, not replacing the President of Sweden with a robot duplicate, although frankly he'd be no less likely to screw up either job.

Captain Condor would be glad to be a Player Character's arch-nemesis if somebody puts that thought into his head. If it's a really well-known PC he'll be incredibly proud and grateful to be their greatest foe, and he's sure to call them up all the time and try to keep them on the phone for way too long, getting sentimental over all the times they've fought, all the incredible adventures they've shared (on opposite sides) etc. He's actually more unpleasant to be around when he's trying to be your buddy than when he's trying to kill you.

DOCTOR FRIGHTFUL, MD



"I makes a scruddly chuddly experiment on you, I makes it real tasty-like."

Real Name: Doctor Tetsuo Fearington Blood, Jr. (but see below)

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+1, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Notice d6+2, Stealth d8, Throwing d6

Charisma: -4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 11

Hindrances: Clueless, Delusional (Crazed irrational weirdo who thinks he's a master criminal), Distinctive Appearance, Habit (draining the body fluids of superhumans into his own flesh), Heartless, Ugly, Wanted

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Berzerk, Brawny, Frenzy, Power Points, Take the Hit!

Super Powers:

• **Attack, Melee:** +2d6 Damage

• **Growth:** Size +1, Monster

• **Heightened Senses**

• **Super Attributes (5):** (Super strength)

• **Toughness:** +2, Hardy

• **Lair:** Pathetic Condition, Personal Quarters (1 occupant), Research Lab, Well-Hidden

Gear: Long Cruel Hollow Needles, which he inserts under his fingernails to drain your fluids off into himself (eew!), Rusty Surgical Tools (which do anywhere from Strength +1 Damage for a Scalpel to Strength +6 Damage for a rotating surgical saw.

Background: He doesn't really have a name. Father called him "Frightful" or

"My First and Worst Mistake" and kept him chained up in a little room behind the laboratory. He would peek under the crack of the door and watch Father make experiments, and hear the lovely screams and smell the lovely smells. He kept breaking his chain and trying to get out of his little room, which made Father angry and afraid and meant he had to have many beatings and shocks from the awful hurt-stick. He did not like that stick, but he loved Father.

Sometimes when people had been bad, Father would put them in Frightful's little room and he would play with them and make experiments on them himself.

One day bad men in capes with terrible powers came to hurt Father. Frightful snapped his chain and came out of his room and did things to them. The laboratory was ruined, but Frightful and Father escaped and built new labs in many places, mostly in the tunnels under the city, far from the cruel light of the sun. Someday Frightful will climb up there and crush that sun, when he isn't so afraid of it.

After he helped Father with the men in capes, he didn't have to stay in his room much anymore and he helped Father with his experiments and to catch new test subjects and fight off bad men in capes. It was best of all to do experiments on bad men in capes, Father told him, so they could find out why they had powers. Also it was the most fun.

Frightful did his best to help, but he was clumsy and got mad sometimes and forgot how easy Father's parts could break. After a while Father got to be really scared of him and this made Frightful even more mad.

Father stopped talking or doing experiments and after that he got broken so bad that Frightful couldn't figure out how to fix him. So Frightful decided that he would have to be the Doctor now and

make experiments and build laboratories and things. For a while he carried Father around with him to see if he could find a way to fix him, but then Father fell apart and his pieces got lost.

Now Doctor Frightful grabs guys with powers and makes experiments on them whenever he can. Sometimes they hurt him and he has to run away and make a new laboratory, but they've never caught him.

Using Doctor Frightful in Your

Campaign: A brute who thinks he's a master villain, Doctor Frightful is tragic, horrible and macabre. He stalks and snatches unsuspecting superbeings, both hero and villain alike, and subjects them to disgusting, pointless and fatal surgical procedures until they die, get rescued or break loose.

The authorities completely misunderstand what Doctor Frightful is. Feel free to feed your players the following "official story" before they come to grips with him.

Doctor Frightful is widely supposed to be a neurosurgeon of British-Japanese ancestry named Doctor Tetsuo Fearington Blood. Doctor Blood grew up and attended medical school in Tokyo. He received his MD some time around 1935. He would be at least ninety years old by now.

Despite all the prejudice he endured over his European heritage and occidental appearance, Doctor Blood was ruthless, determined and smart enough to get assigned to a secret Japanese medical facility in Manchuria, where he participated in some of the most cruel and depraved experiments ever performed on human beings. Their hapless patients appeared on official records as "logs" so the doctors jokingly called their facility "the Sawmill." Not one log ever passed out of the Sawmill alive—a record of

absolute evil that even the Nazi death-doctors never quite achieved.

To this date Doctor Blood is the only physician to ever have been prosecuted for these crimes. The others went on to prominent positions in medical schools or became the heads of pharmaceutical firms or otherwise prospered. Some of them are still enjoying a comfortable old age in the Tokyo suburbs as we speak.

Doctor Blood's ancestry made him a scapegoat, however, and he was called to account for his crimes before an American military tribunal. Instead he vanished, taking his secrets with him (or perhaps was spirited away by unscrupulous elements within the War Department, depending on how paranoid a campaign you are running.)

Whatever happened, in 1961 he somehow turned up inside the United States, carrying on his dreadful experiments in a secret lab beneath the streets of your campaign's home city! Over the next ten years he fought superheroes from time to time, and killed or lobotomized a few. He also made some breakthroughs in the understanding of parahuman neurophysiology, although the details remain unclear.

For a while he vanished altogether, and when he turned up again in the early 1970s he seemed to have undergone some kind of horrible transformation (although in fact he had been replaced by his hulking, freakish lab assistant.) He wanted to be called "Doctor Frightful" now, presumably because of his hideous appearance, and he was worse than ever.

The GM should remember that no one knows the true story, so sinister organizations, the Mob and possibly even

rogue elements of the US intelligence community may still come to seek the Doctor's expertise and be willing to bargain with him, despite the fact that he's effectively nothing but a psychotic, unpredictable torture-killer. He's perfectly willing to tell the PCs the truth about himself if they fall into his clutches.

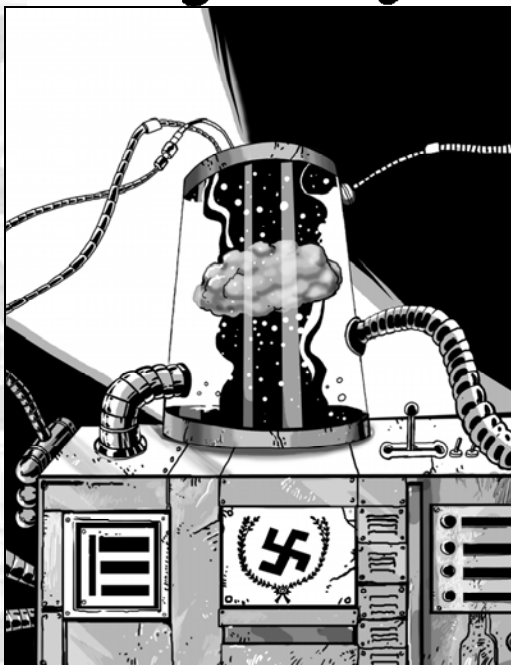
While he's crazy and incapable of dealing with the world, he did participate in a lot of Doctor Blood's experimental work, and at the GM's discretion he may still know a few techniques by rote, or still have a supply of a miracle serum (or some such substance) that actually does have an effect on parahuman abilities.

Doctor Frightful also has a secret vice. He likes to drain the juices from parahumans directly into his own tissue, with a set of hollow needles that he inserts under his own fingernails. He claims that this gives him their powers, but of course it doesn't. Instead it gives him sick thrills and the occasional STD. Some people think this habit is his least appealing trait, others say it's not that easy to choose one.

Doctor Frightful is too addled to really serve as anyone's nemesis, but if somebody hurts him he will remember it and if he encounters them again he will try to punish them for it. Although he's not a long-term enemy, he does have a bad way of getting obsessed with one or another parahuman, stalking them relentlessly until he finds a chance to snatch them.

His "laboratories" are generally located underground (or sometimes in an abandoned building if he can't find a suitable location beneath the streets.) None of them look like the kind of place you'd want to have surgery.

HITLER'S BRAIN



"Glug! Glug! One blood demands one Reich! Gurgle!"

Toughness: 3 (Tank)/ 8 (Support Machinery)/ 1 (Hoses)
Edges: Followers
Stats, Skills, Hindrances, Pace etc: n/a (see below)

Background: The rumors are true. When the Soviets found Hitler's corpse, his brain was already missing. That's why Stalin kept having the body exhumed and re-examined. He wanted to see if there was some way to figure out what had happened to Hitler's Brain.

Either Martin Bormann or the Nazi supervillain of your choice smuggled the brain out of Berlin in a hastily-assembled tank of nutrient fluid. One villain or another has gotten their hands on it since then. The damn thing turns up like a bad penny, wherever megalomaniacal evil is found.

At some point in the mid forties, someone outfitted the tank with a

loudspeaker that you can use to listen to the brain's thoughts. At least so the story goes.

The truth of the matter is that while that really is Der Fuhrer's brain, preserved in some kind of cloudy, vile-looking fluid, it's been dead for more than sixty years. In fact it was dead when it was placed in the tank. Yet one or another scoundrel keeps passing it off as a living, thinking being, broadcasting their own commands out of its loudspeaker and duping fools. Quite a few Nazis old and new have been tricked into giving up their money and in some cases their lives in the service of Hitler's long-dead brain.

When you look at the fake life-support contraption hooked up to the tank you may feel a pang of doubt. The thing looks extremely shabby and ramshackle. But when the speaker crackles to life and a voice with a harsh Austrian accent starts bellowing out of it, most true-believers are prepared to put their doubts aside, fall to their knees and worship it.

Using Hitler's Brain in Your Campaign:

More of a stage-prop than a villain in its own right, the Brain can cause minor wars between Nazi villains eager to possess it, or it can turn up in the hands of a con artist who needs to recruit some fanatical followers. Or both. You can take a minor menace and turn him into a big one by putting the brain in his hands and letting him use it to recruit a huge army of lunatics.

If the Black Eagle (see Page 314) ever learns that the brain is out there, he'll stop at nothing to retrieve it, although it's unclear whether he really thinks the brain is alive or just wants to use it to increase his legitimacy.

The best way for the PCs to destroy the brain's effectiveness isn't to smash the thing, it's to reveal that it's a fraud. They could even try to use it for their own purposes, if they're unscrupulous enough. For example, what if they were to use the brain to "prove" to the neo-Nazi community that Hitler's spirit repents his former anti-Semitism, and has returned from the beyond with a message of peace, tolerance and love for all mankind?

Hell-Girl and God-Boy



Hell-Girl's Stats

"I'm no good for you! I'm bad! I mean just look what I did to that little girl's kitten!"

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d10

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Notice d6, Swimming d6, Taunt d8

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6/ Fly 24; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 9 (2 pts Heavy Armor)

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Attractive, Improved Frenzy, Power Points.

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Mean, Quirk (goes out of her way to be as evil as possible), Wanted

Powers:

Melee Attack: +2d6 Damage, 3 Armor Piercing, Counts as a Heavy Weapon

Awareness: Danger Sense

Darkvision

Environmental Protection: Per the core rulebook

Flight: 24"

Infection: Causes Fatigue in anyone who fails their Vigor roll

Toughness: 2 Pts Heavy Armor

God-Boy's Stats

"No, baby, you're not bad! What you did to that kitten—that's not you. Now just put the little girl down and let's talk."

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d8

Skills: Driving d8, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Notice d6, Persuade d8, Repair d6, Swimming d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6/ Fly 24; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 9 (4 pts Heavy Armor)

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Charismatic, Improved Dodge, Frenzy, Power Points.

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Distinctive Appearance, Heroic, Loyal, Vow (protect Wanda from herself), Wanted

Powers:

Melee Attack: +2d6 Damage, 3 Armor Piercing, Counts as a Heavy Weapon, Device (Flaming Sword)

Darkvision

Environmental Protection: Per the core rulebook

Flight: 24"

Toughness: 3 Pts Heavy Armor

Background: Two young superhuman kids on the run, they might come crashing into Bedlam in a pile of wreckage and dysfunctional hormones at any minute, if the cops don't gun them down on the highway first. Neither one is sure where their powers come from. They got them in a car accident, back in Indiana. Wanda talked her boyfriend Wayne into dropping acid and playing chicken with a mysterious black car that had been terrorizing kids along the back roads and farm lanes. You would have had to have been under the influence of some pretty heavy drugs to want to go anywhere near that car, let alone antagonize it. No one knew who the driver was—some kids swore it must be Death.

Even back then Wanda knew she was rotten and that she didn't deserve Wayne. She tried to talk him into charging the mystery car in order to prove that she was too bad for him, that he couldn't really love her.

They both closed their eyes at the last second before the impact. When they opened

them, the mystery car was gone, never to return to that part of Indiana. They noticed their superhuman powers almost immediately. Wanda's eyes didn't look human anymore, and they glowed. Wayne had wings. Neither one of them is sure where their costumes came from, but they've been wearing them pretty much ever since. For the past few months they have both been wondering if they really died in the car crash. If anything that has happened to them since has been real. But it is.

Wayne seems to have become some kind of angel, and Wanda, well...she seems to have joined the other team. But of course she was always kind of demonic, constantly trying to get Wayne into trouble and lead him astray, to prove to him that she was no good.

Not long after the incident with the black car, Wanda burned Wayne's house down to show him that she was too bad to love. His grandmother died in the blaze and he knew that he was going to have to take Wanda on the road to keep her safe from the police. He was only half-right. The cops think he did it. In fact they have blamed him for nearly all Wanda's subsequent crimes and think he may be holding her hostage.

Hell-Girl and God-Boy have cut a jagged arc across the country ever since the night Wayne's house burned down. They can both fly, but they need a car to carry their stuff, so they've been stealing them. Wayne always makes some feeble effort to pay for the food and vehicles they have stolen, or at least to do something nice for the people they've ripped-off.

Wanda on the other hand tries to hurt everyone they come into contact with. After she has committed some heinous deed she'll sob in Wayne's arms, crying that she's bad, she's evil, that he can't really love her, that she doesn't deserve him, while he comforts her and tells her that she's good and tries to think of some way to make amends for her latest awful crime. He cares a lot about people, hates hurting them, hates stealing from them, but he loves Wanda and he's desperate to save her from herself.

Here's an example that illustrates how the dynamic between them works. Wanda once met a little boy with a puppy, standing on a pier. She talked to the boy for a while, found out that he couldn't swim and then kicked his puppy into the water. She teased

the boy about it and asked him why he wouldn't go save the poor drowning dog. Didn't he really love his dog? Was he letting the dog die because he didn't love him enough? Then Wanda threw the boy in after the dog, to "help" them both.

Wayne arrived and saved both the dog and the boy, despite Wanda's efforts to fight him off. Then he grabbed Wanda, who was sobbing that she was bad and that he couldn't possibly love her, and held her and comforted her. This wasn't really her, he said. She isn't bad. He promises.

They get in terrible fights and he has to wrestle her down to keep her from going on another maniacal killing spree. Sometimes he wins these battles and sometimes she does. Wayne will protect Wanda to the death, although he can't bring himself to actually kill anyone and would be utterly horrified if he caused someone's death by accident. If Wanda saw Wayne in serious danger, she'd probably run away, weeping that she isn't worthy to die for him.

True love is a wonderful thing, isn't it?

Using Hell-Girl and God-Boy in Your

Campaign: Rampaging villains with a twist, you can use Hell-Girl and God-Boy as a one-shot villainous duo who appear, briefly disrupt life in Bedlam and then get gunned down or dragged off to prison. Or they can show up several times in a row, possibly seeking revenge on a Player Character for things that happened in previous encounters.

They aren't hirelings and they don't have any grand master plan. Instead they are driven by their own strange, dysfunctional relationship. Because that's the most interesting thing about them, the PCs should get a chance to figure out what makes them tick. They should hear about Hell-Girl and God-Boy before they ever meet them. They should come across the aftermath of at least one awful thing Hell-Girl tried to do and hear confusing reports from eyewitnesses about how God-Boy stopped her and then helped her to escape, telling her over and over again that she isn't evil, that this isn't really her.

If one of them gets killed or imprisoned, the other will surely try to rescue or avenge them (although for very different reasons.) It goes without saying that God-Boy isn't nearly as ruthless a long-term foe as Hell-Girl.

THOR



"Bow, mortals, before the unthinkable cosmic might of Thor... Stop laughing! You stop laughing right the #@%& now!"

Wild Card

Real Name: Delton Voeltz

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d6, Driving d6, Fighting d10, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Swimming d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 13

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Power Points

Hindrances: Paranoia, Mean, Stubborn, Vengeful (Major)

Super Powers:

- **Attack, Melee:** Damage Str+5+3d6, Focus, Knockback 1d10", (Magic Hammer)
- **Attack, Ranged (15):** Damage 3d6, (Electrical) (Magic Hammer), Elemental Trick
- **Super Attribute:** Strength +4 steps, Vigor +2 steps. (Super Strength)
- **Toughness:** +6

Note on Thor's Powers: Thor's hammer is the source of all his powers, but since it teleports instantly back to his hand if it's taken away from him, it doesn't count as a "Device."

Background: He's Thor, son of Odin, god of thunder. He insists on it.

An electrician by trade, Delton Voeltz worked at nuclear power plants around the country, leading an itinerant, aimless life, until he realized that he was Thor.

He's not actually the first person to come across the Thunder Hammer, and whoever picks it up seems to get afflicted by the same delusion. He's the latest in a long line, but he seems to have a particularly bad case.

The Thunder Hammer first turned up in the hands of the Allies during World War Two. It seems strange to some people that it wasn't a German weapon, but in fact it seems to have been smuggled out of Norway while the Nazis were invading. It looks a lot like a stage prop and doesn't much resemble any artifact from the age of the Vikings. But it certainly works, although not for everyone who picks it up. Sometimes it kills its wielder with a massive jolt of electricity. Sometimes it does nothing. But sometimes the person who lifts the hammer becomes imbued with superhuman powers and decides that he's Thor. Every one of the hammer's wielders has suffered from the same delusional pattern, which is oddly at variance with the actual Norse Eddas in some small details.

The first was British Captain Rex Lockhardt, who used the hammer in a raid against German forces in Norway in 1941. The raid was a disaster, Lockhardt treated the lives of his own men with casual disregard and many of them died. When he returned to Britain he demanded to be treated as a god, and started killing anyone who refused. He was taken into custody by British Military Police while he slept, and within a few years of being kept separate from the hammer, returned to sanity. A broken man, he drank himself to death in the fifties.

The hammer disappeared from British custody before the war's end, and

next turned up in the United States in the mid sixties, where a West Coast cult leader named Thurgood Sparks somehow came into possession of it. An African-American, he christened himself "Black Thor", and set about building a network of worshippers—most of them young hippie girls. People mistook him for a superhero for a while, but his casually murderous attitude toward his followers and anyone else who didn't instantly obey him soon revealed the truth.

He was the toughest version yet, and the one who retained the most of his original personality. It took a coalition of Bay Area heroes to bring him down, and he took his own life rather than face capture. The hammer disappeared again. It remained lost until last year when Delton Voeltz somehow acquired it.

Touchy, high-strung and extremely aggressive, Thor wants you to believe that he's really a god, but there's no way to convince him that you do. If you say you don't, he'll become hostile. If you say you do, he won't believe you, and he'll become even more hostile. There is no way to avoid the topic and no way to satisfy him.

He treats people like slaves and expects instant obedience. He kills anyone who shows him the slightest disrespect. He also kills people for things like not obeying him fast enough, or looking like they resent obeying him. Fussy, fastidious and obsessively tidy, Thor is also extremely vain about his appearance. Getting mud on his costume or his perfect boots is a sure way to provoke him into a homicidal rage.

He's familiar with Norse mythology, but the version he knows doesn't quite correspond to the tales in the Eddas. Some observers think he may have learned it from a children's book instead. Yet if you read his mind, he genuinely has memories of fighting the Frost Giant Thrymn, defeating the Midgard Serpent and all the other legendary deeds of Thor.

The first thing most people notice about Thor is that he's a surprisingly little

guy for the god of thunder. His voice is high and tends to squeak when he gets excited. He speaks in a fussy, precise way, and never uses any contractions. He always refers to himself in the third person (as in "Thor wills it")

Using Thor in Your Campaign: If the Norse Gods already exist in your campaign and this version of Thor doesn't fit the pattern, you can still use him. The "real" Thor may laugh at his pretensions or regard them as a deadly insult. But he works even better if the PCs don't know if he's for real or not.

Thor doesn't really want to take over the world or destroy it. He wants people to acknowledge that he's Thor. It would also be nice if they worshipped him as a god.

If he shows up in Bedlam, he's either on a pointless rampage, killing anyone who doesn't fall down and worship him—and also anyone who does (he can see they don't really mean it.) He may try to challenge the most powerful superheroes in the vicinity to come acknowledge his greatness and then try to beat them into admitting that he's Thor. If they claim to already believe that he's Thor, he'll accuse them of lying and attack them anyway. He might also attack the Crawley Asylum (see Page 102) and try to kill Doctor Scorch, convinced that the Doctor is his evil brother Loki.

If Dr. Scorch and Thor ever meet face to face, the Doctor will suddenly remember that he really *is* Loki (see Page 296.) But of course that doesn't mean that Thor is really Thor.

There are always a few sad pathetic cultists who follow Thor around, despite what unsafe company he is. He kills them for all sorts of trivial reasons. Perhaps the PCs could be drawn into a conflict with Thor when the worried parent of one of his followers contacts them?

Code Name: Wifebeater



"Go on, beg me to stop—that would make this perfect!"

Real Name: Willy Zeiss; although his real name isn't known to anyone (including himself) and no one who remembers him as Willy Zeiss is still alive.

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d8, Driving d10, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Healing d6, Intimidation d8+2, Investigation d8+2, Knowledge (Government Secrets) d8, Lockpicking d10,

Repair d8, Notice d10+2, Stealth d12, Streetwise d8+2, Swimming d8, Tracking d8

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 8;

Toughness: 9 (2 Heavy Armor)

Edges: Alertness, Arcane Background (Super Powers), Block, Charismatic, Combat Reflexes, Connections, Fleet-Footed, Improved Dodge, Improved Sweep, Quick, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate and Taunt)

Hindrances: Big Mouth, Heartless, Mean, Quirk (tries to act as evil and terrifying as possible)

Gear: Armored Costume (2 Heavy Armor),

Super Powers:

- **Melee Attack:** Str+2d6
- **Device:** Shield, allows him to make Spirit rolls to resist attack at d10 instead of a d8

Background: He doesn't actually have a wife to beat, he quickly assures anyone who asks. But he has worse habits. He's dedicated his whole life to the art of vicious atrocity and he's proven himself to have a rare talent for it, time and again.

A self-made supervillain, Code Name: Wifebeater always dreamed of being a thug for hire and he's had to struggle long and hard to become one. He's an amazingly competent soldier, disciplined, talented and determined, but the supervillain underground is full of other guys who can shoot like Olympic marksmen and kick Navy SEALs to death with their hands tied behind their back. It's his brilliant sadism that makes him stand out from the rest.

All of his hard work and tireless self-promotion have finally paid off. From the smoke-filled back rooms of Tokyo to the sordid alleys of New York, the whole criminal underworld knows that if you want a really dirty job done fast, call Code Name: Wifebeater.

No one is precisely sure of his origins. He speaks English, Spanish and French with a German accent. People who have heard him speak German say that he sounds like an upper-middle-class person from Brandenburg. He talks a lot about himself, so anyone who spends much time around him will learn that he was a skinhead, that he beat a Turkish immigrant to death and had to go into hiding, that he joined the French Foreign Legion in order to hide out, and that they recognized and cultivated his phenomenal talent for violence. He served two tours in their elite paratrooper regiment and

saw combat in Africa on a number of occasions. It was as good as he had always hoped.

He either left the Legion to pursue his dream of being a freelance killer, or else he got kicked out for being a loudmouth and for bullying new recruits. Sometimes he tells the story one way, sometimes he tells it another.

After he left, Wifebeater came to the United States, where all the best muscle jobs could be found. He hired on with a big, scary security firm that has contracts to provide bodyguards for the State Department, covert operations squads for the Department of Defense and hired thugs for dubious parties worldwide. In this capacity he served on the personal staff of a number of master villains, and proved his worth to them as a tough, determined hireling with a refreshingly complete lack of scruples.

His German accent and threatening appearance always served him well here. Within a few years he had enough contacts in the supervillain world to go out on his own as an independent consultant. He hired an ad firm to design him a costume, bought some illegal wonder-weapons and got some very expensive tissue implants taken from captured superheroes. On the advice of an arch-villain called the Hammer of Doom, he selected the most hostile and offensive code name he could think of, to make himself more memorable. He is now in the process of building a client list and a good investment portfolio for his nascent business.

He can be hired for any job, no matter how dirty. In fact, he's trying to carve out a niche for himself as the guy you can go to for jobs no one else will do.

To help reduce his vulnerability and make himself immune to blackmail,

he systematically hunted down and killed his whole family, as well as every childhood pal, former girlfriend, elementary school teacher, etc. that he could find. Then he hired a psychic he had once done some work for to erase all his early memories. Now there is no one who could ever be used as a hostage against him, no one who knows his secrets (including himself), no human being left alive that he ever felt any sentimental attachment to. He can't reveal his own name under torture because he doesn't know what it is. He boasts about these things to prospective clients and to anyone else around him, in the hope that it will give him a competitive edge.

Absolutely loyal, but not entirely fearless, he would never reveal an employer's secrets for money but he's not sure he wouldn't if his life were at stake. To keep himself from blabbing under torture, he has purchased an expensive set of mental blocks (from the same psychic who erased his memory) that prevent him from ever betraying a client. It is important that everyone know this, friend and foe alike, so he tells anyone who will listen.

He is manic, hateful, cruel and never seems to stop talking. This is partly a pose, intended to make him stand out against the competition. There is no such thing as bad publicity, he is keenly aware—especially in his occupation. Anyway he's a bullying blabbermouth by nature so he may as well try to make it work to his advantage.

Code Name: Wifebeater speaks very good English, although his French is even better. In any of these three languages, he is adept at coming up with inventive taunts and threats. Cheerfully violent, devoid of mercy and honor, he's capable of any vicious atrocity, but he won't go crazy on civilians or cause wanton damage without a good reason. He may look totally out of control, but it's an act. He'd never do anything that might

give him a reputation for being unreliable.

He often chats with his victims about his own private affairs—the stocks he's thinking of investing in, the difficulties of finding office space in New York, the way a canker sore inside his mouth bothers him. He never drops any information that you could use to inconvenience his employer, but he's weirdly open about everything else. He's also a busybody, constantly asking teammates and enemies alike about their personal lives and offering them scary, useless, bad advice ("You look like life has got you all grumpy and frowny-face. You should find a woman and stab her. That will turn your frown upside-down, yeah?")

Using Code-Name Wifebeater in Your Campaign:

A hireling who can turn up for any kind of job, his gimmick makes him stand out from the crowd (or at least we hope it does). He's really, really evil. So evil that it's often funny, if you play it the right way. To let your PCs experience how outrageously unpleasant he is, let him talk to them while they fight, or call them on a payphone to chat while they're trying to track him down. It's probably easier to let him offend them with his remarks than it is to let them see him commit some unthinkable atrocity—letting him throw a baby carriage into traffic will just upset your players. Then again, if some villain or organized crime figure wants an unspeakable deed committed, he's the guy they'll call.

Strictly a villain for hire, he doesn't normally go around robbing banks and jewelry stores on his own. Nor will he run amok in public, unless that's part of the job. If you encounter Wifebeater, he's sure to be on a mission for somebody, pursuing some objective with ferocious determination. The objective itself could be almost anything. While he likes dirty jobs best, he'll take on any assignment he's given. Anybody from the Invincible Ya-Ya Posse to Wolfram Aerospace might hire him.

Officer Friendly



"Are you sure you're not guilty of something, sir? Think carefully."

Real Name: Unknown

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d1d12, Vigor d12+1

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d10, Intimidate d8+2, Notice d8+2, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d8+2

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 8 (1)

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Stubborn

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Alertness, Fast Healer, Improved First Strike, Improved Frenzy, Hard to Kill, Harder to Kill, Strong-Willed (2 points of resistance to Intimidate and Taunt)

Gear: 9mm pistol (2d6+1 Damage), Handcuffs (Toughness 12), Squad Car (see below)

Super Powers:

- **Attack, Melee (5):** Device, 1d12+1d6 (billy club), Focus

- **Environmental Protection:** (per the Core Rulebook)

- **Fear:** Scary (-2 to his Charisma)

- **Fearless**

- **Intangibility:** Special version that does not protect him from attack—it only lets him walk through walls.

- **True Regeneration (10)**

Background: We don't know where it comes from or why. People have suggested that it might be the vengeful ghost of a cop who was killed by his crooked partners or perhaps the living embodiment of our collective fears about the police. But all we know for sure is that it is malignant, that it wants our blood and souls. Nobody is quite sure who came up with the name "Officer Friendly" to describe it, but the name somehow fits.

Officer Friendly wears a police uniform that doesn't quite look like the ones the Bedlam cops wear. Nor does his patrol cruiser have the right emblem on the side, and it's hard to say what model of car it might be. His badge bears the number 0 and the image of a skull. He wears what appears to be a white stocking over his head, with a smile crudely painted on. No one has seen what his face looks like underneath.

He doesn't seek out confrontations with superheroes. Instead he pulls over ordinary citizens, late at night, asks them to step out of their cars, subjects them to cruel and humiliating abuse, and then executes them with either his nightstick or his gun.

He always behaves as though his victims have committed some kind of crime, and he is punishing them for it. But none of them have. In fact he seems to specifically select people who haven't done anything. He's amazingly cruel, and often plays sadistic tricks on his victims, offering to let them go if they confess to something or perform some gruesome act of self-abasement. He never actually lets them go, of course. If you agree to make a confession you can never guess what it is he wants you to admit to (because there is no right answer). If you consent to do some horrible thing to yourself in

the hopes that he'll let you go, he'll act disgusted and beat you harder.

He can talk, but he rarely says anything apart from threats, commands or cop clichés ("Step out of the car, please." "Freeze! Hands on your head." "Do you know how fast you were going, sir?") He never takes hostages—he doesn't understand the concept, because he doesn't grasp the idea that one human being might want to prevent another from coming to harm. He has no objection to killing innocent bystanders, but he makes no particular effort to eliminate witnesses to his crimes. While he doesn't get fixated on revenge, he will sometimes get very focused on killing a particular victim, and he will pursue them relentlessly for days, weeks, or however long it takes to catch them. This could of course give a Player Character a chance to stop him, when someone he's stalking comes to them for help.

Officer Friendly seems to have few interests, apart from murdering and torturing people. He doesn't commit robberies or blackmail cities with death rays. This makes him hard to catch, since no one knows where he'll strike next. In fact few people even know that he exists. The tabloids have published rumors about him for years and urban legends about him circulate by word of mouth, but not many superheroes are aware that he is real.

PCs who try to figure out what he is are in for a puzzle. He's not a robot, he's made out of flesh, but he doesn't have a heartbeat or a pulse. If you try to run DNA tests on him, they come back "anomalous" or else the samples disappear from storage.

If you read Officer Friendly's mind you can tell what he intends to do next in combat or whether or not he's going to try to escape or other things that relate to the present moment. You cannot, however, use telepathy to learn the secrets of his origins. Probe his memory

and you'll find that he doesn't remember where he came from or where he goes when he disappears. He remembers lots of driving and committing many horrible crimes and that's about it. Like his dialogue, his inner monologue is all a string of ominous clichés.

Using Officer Friendly in Your

Campaign: The nice thing about this villain is that you have absolute control over where and when the PCs encounter him. They may not even have heard of him before one of his victims comes running to them for help, or they encounter him at random.

He works best if you give him a long, slow, ominous build-up before the fight. You can have the PCs stumble across the aftermath of one of his crimes or you can give Precognitive PCs visions of him drawing closer to Bedlam. If one of the PCs is a psychic investigator they can track him and play cat-and-mouse with him for a while before a big climactic encounter. His motives are simple. He wants to hurt people. But you can easily come up with enough variations on his MO to keep him from getting repetitive. There are a lot of bad things we fear cops might do to us, after all.

If the PCs ever unmask him, they'll find out that he has no face, just a smooth blank expanse of skin. If captured, he sits silently and passively, refusing to respond to anything until he gets a chance to escape.

Officer Friendly's Squad Car

Acc/Top Speed: 20/60; **Toughness:** 17 (5 Heavy Armor)

Crew: 1+5

Notes: Amphibious (Acc/Top Speed: 3/15); Heavy Armor, Intangibility (Applies to anyone in the vehicle), Teleportation (More Range—up to 60"), Wall-Walking (the car can drive straight up or down a wall, or along the ceiling)

CAPTAIN VIOLENT AND DOCTOR STUPID

(aka Stupid and Violent)

Teenaged psychopaths turned supervillain, Captain Violent and Doctor Stupid would like to be feared and respected as professional criminals. However, they spend as much time causing random havoc and misery as they do committing crimes for gain. They might rob a bank, but they are just as likely to set an orphanage full of retarded children on fire.

Captain Violent is the dominant partner. He thought up their names, he plans their crimes and directs their actions. Back in school Doctor Stupid was the bully who picked on Captain Violent. Now it's the other way around.

They don't yet have a stable base of operations or a lot of contacts in the underworld, but they are looking hard for both (in between acts of pointless mayhem.) They would love to hire out to some bigger villain or underworld organization, but Captain Violent hates authority so much and has such a hard time taking anything seriously that he probably wouldn't do a good job as a henchman. Doctor Stupid follows his lead.

Captain Violent is still a minor, but that almost doesn't matter. The crimes these two have committed are so heinous that any court in the country would try them both as adults.

Using Stupid and Violent in Your Campaign:

Rampaging psychos with no particular ambitions, Stupid and Violent are extremely flexible antagonists. You can use them as hirelings, or as random forces of evil who decide to tear up Bedlam for no reason, or even as recurrent villains with a

grudge against the PCs. Because they don't have a long-term agenda of their own, you can set whatever temporary agenda works best

They're weak enough that most PC groups can probably beat them, but tough enough that they won't drop on the first round. This lets them fight dirty and take hostages and generally make things exciting, but the PCs will almost certainly have the satisfaction of beating them silly by the end of the scene. And they're so despicable that beating them should be very satisfying indeed.

Adventure Seed: Captain Violent and the World Vengeance League

At a certain point, Captain Violent may take it into his head to start a supervillain team. If he gets a lot of money through some heist or other, he'll try to hire \$#!+face, #@%&face, Captain Condor, and the Brain-Raper to join his new team, which he'll call the "World Vengeance League."

They'll try to find some kind of headquarters in Bedlam. Possibly the Country Club or the Citadel Xtreme, or the Gorman Building, and begin a bloody and incompetent crime wave. Except for #@%&face, who will be desperate to get along with everybody, they won't make a good team or a good bunch of roommates and they'll fight one another as much as the heroes.

Then Captain Violent will get the idea to start filming life around their headquarters, and posting it on the web as a reality TV show. And then unscrupulous network executives get in touch...

Captain Violent



"Something about your face just makes me want to slap the \$#!+ out of it. I know you must get that a lot..."

Wild Card

Real Name: Victor Rhee

Skills: Guts d8, Intimidate d8+2, Taunt d10+2

Charisma: -4; **Pace:** 6/ Fly 12; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 10

Edges: Power Surge, Strong-Willed (2 resistance to Intimidate and Taunt rolls), Sweep

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Mean, Quirk (Constantly tries to be as evil as possible)

Super Powers:

- Fearless (2)
- Heightened Senses (1)
- Super Attributes (5): (Super strength)
- Toughness (7): +2, Hardy
- Attack, Melee (4): +2d6
- Attack, Ranged (15): Damage 3d6, Rapid Fire (RoF 3)

Background: As far as Captain Violent is concerned, there's no such thing as collateral damage. It's all good! In fact, the more civilian casualties he can cause, the more misery he can spread around, the better he likes it. As he says, it's just not a good day if he can't screw it up for somebody. Perhaps later he'll calm down, but right now he's still reveling in his powers and in all the destruction and hurt he can cause with them.

He's actually a lot more dangerous with his partner around, because he's anxious to impress him with his savagery. On his own, he isn't nearly so bad. Nobody is safe from him while Doctor Stupid is there.

Articulate, sarcastic and cruel, you can tell that he's a psychopathic kid from the suburbs the moment he speaks. He suffered a lot of teasing and bullying about being an Asian nerd during Junior High and High School. Victor was on the

verge of going messily postal when an angel with fifty eyes and a hundred wings appeared to him in a dream, and offered him something better.

The angel said Victor had been chosen for his greatness of spirit to become one of the world's mightiest heroes, protector of the innocent and defender of the downtrodden—if he felt worthy. He agreed to give it a try, and the angel led him on a series of five mighty challenges to test the strength and purity of his soul. Each of the five challenges was marked with a letter, and the letter was always "V."

V for Valor, the angel explained. V for Vigilance. V for Vigor. V for Veracity. And lastly, V for Virtue. He passed every challenge and woke up with the power of a minor god. The costume was waiting. He put it on and gleefully started committing crimes.

He didn't want superheroes to come pound the crap out of him, so he made sure to sneak over into the next town, where no one knew him, before engaging in acts of twisted mayhem. He vandalized a children's mural, burned down an art museum, roasted a seeing-eye dog or two and killed an old lady's pet parrot.

It wasn't long before the angel came back and demanded to know what he was doing, why he was abusing his power so terribly. Victor disagreed, saying that he felt he was using his powers correctly. His actions were the deeds of a hero, he explained, and it gratified him to know that the angel had chosen so wisely.

The angel asked him who his worst enemy might be. He thought for a moment, and then explained that this would be Charlie Platz, the bully who had tormented him since preschool. He hoped the angel would go give Charlie

superpowers so that he'd have an arch-nemesis to fight. His prayers were answered.

Victor went looking for his old enemy a couple of days later and found that Charlie had grown so big he feared to leave his house. They fought and neither one could beat the other. In the course of the battle, Charlie's abusive alcoholic stepfather got killed, and Charlie thought that was pretty great. So they became pals.

The angel appears to Victor nearly all the time now, even when he's awake, begging him to stop his vicious rampage. Lately it has begun to sound more tired and mournful and depressed, although he still has a lot of fun teasing it.

Captain Violent would like to be a well-known supervillain. He supposes that means hiring out his services to organized crime and pulling off spectacular robberies and making lots of money. But he's just as interested in savage, pointless acts of destruction. Ruining famous works of art, destroying public landmarks, blowing up children's petting zoos—that kind of thing. And the more people it hurts, the better.

A couple of things might bring him to Bedlam. The Mafia or some other crime network might make the mistake of hiring him. Or he might get wind of the fact that a pirate broadcaster in Stone Ridge is using the name "Captain Violent" and take umbrage. Or Stupid and Violent might just show up looking for kicks, since Bedlam is such a notoriously dangerous place.

His parents have figured out that he's Captain Violent and they are still looking for him, convinced that he must have gone insane from his powers or even been demonically possessed. If he gets caught, they will find the best lawyer they can for him.

doctor stupid



"Will you look at that? I can't believe I actually tore a goddamn baby in half. I SAID LOOK AT IT!!!"

Real Name: Charlie Platz

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+1, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (Pop Culture) d6, Notice d4, Throwing d8

Charisma: -4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 11

Hindrances: Distinctive Appearance, Heartless, Mean, Quirk (trying *way* too hard to be tough)

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Brawny, Power Points, Take the Hit!

Super Powers:

- Attack, Melee (4): +2d6
- Growth (1): Size +1, Monster
- Leaping (4) Vertical Distance 16 inches, Horizontal Distance 32 inches.
- Super Attributes (5): (Super strength)
- Toughness (7): +2, Hardy

Background: Charlie Platz was always sullen and big. The popular kids all avoided him, so every day he'd find some poor little nerd who no one wanted to hang out with, act like his friend, push him around all afternoon and then kick the crap out of him. This didn't give him much pleasure, truth be told, but it was the only thing that kept him sane.

His drunken stepdad Luther was always on his case, always trying to be his buddy and trying to beat him silly at the same time. Charlie loved Luther, he hated him, he wanted to be him, he wanted to kill him, but most of all he feared him. Victor Rhee was one of his favorite targets. The look of fear and hatred in his eyes was irresistible. But in high school Victor started wearing a long black trenchcoat and talking about guns all the time, so Charlie eased up on him.

And then, one night after Luther had kept Charlie up late, beating on him and buddying up to him and forcing him to watch the same episode of "The Virginian" over and over again, an angel appeared in Charlie's room. It was beautiful and terrifying and sad. And it had fifty eyes. The angel said that time was running out

and the powers of evil were loose in the world. Would he accept the mantle of the Earth's protector and fight the forces of darkness?

He hoped this included Luther, so he eagerly agreed. The angel explained that there had been a terrible mistake, that a wicked person had been given great power and that it would be Charlie's job to fight them. To his surprise, the angel told him that his new nemesis was Victor Rhee. The angel then took him on a cosmic voyage where he was to take five tests of his purity and will. He failed the first two tests miserably, so the angel curtailed that part of the process and told him that time was too short and he could have the power anyway.

When he woke up, the costume was waiting. And he was eight feet tall. He couldn't leave the house like this, so he hid in his room and tried to figure out what to do, while Luther beat on his mom downstairs.

Then Captain Violent tore the roof off. They fought and fought. Luther didn't understand what was going on and died while trying to protect Charlie, who was both horrified and elated.

It grew clear to Charlie over the course of the fight that he was going to lose, that Victor was just slightly stronger than he was. So he hit on a desperate ploy to befriend him. "Cool," he said, looking down at his stepdad's body. "You wanna see what it's like to screw a corpse?" Victor didn't, but this did get him laughing and Charlie knew at that moment that he was going to live.

The last few months have been a nightmare. Captain Violent leads him around, acting like a maniac, doing all kinds of sick \$#!+ and Charlie has to pretend like he's into it. It's just the way things were with Luther, only worse. Fortunately, Charlie has spent his whole life learning how to survive situations like this. And he has to admit, Victor can be a lot of fun sometimes,

in a twisted kind of way. And all the property damage has been pretty cool. But that angel keeps showing up, begging him to stop Victor, and this is really starting to wear on him.

Charlie is capable of nearly any atrocity, but only if Victor is looking. He's an ill-tempered sullen thug at the best of times, but he's no maniac. He just has to act like one in front of Victor. He actually *tore a goddamn baby in half!* He still can't believe he did that.

An Adventure with Doctor Stupid: Only Losers Take the Bus

For laughs, Doctor Stupid tries to knock a schoolbus off the freeway overpass by Industrial Drive. But the joke's on him. He isn't nearly heavy enough to stop a careening schoolbus and he goes over the side with it. Captain Violent gets a good chuckle out of this and then he flies away.

When the PCs arrive at the scene, the bus is lodged vertically in an old chemical warehouse, with its rear end sticking out of the roof. The kids are still alive, but some of them are hurt pretty badly. Doctor Stupid is trapped under the front end of the bus. He's more than strong enough to lift a schoolbus full of children, but he's at an awkward angle and can't get leverage. If the PCs try to lift the bus out of the roof, he will chuckle evilly and ask the PCs if they think it's a good idea to set him loose. How many kids do they think he could kill before they could stop him? Clearly the right way to evacuate the kids is to carry them out through the bus' rear window. But while the PCs are trying to do this, the chemical warehouse starts to burn. Can they get the kids to safety without accidentally letting Doctor Stupid loose before barrels of toxic compounds start exploding all around them?

And just to add a little spice to the proceedings, while the PCs are in the process of evacuating the kids, Captain Violent comes back and attacks them.

NAKED MAN



"Clothes are Un-American."

Wild Card

Real Name: John Friend (although this may in fact be an alias, it's still the name he thinks of as his own)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Government Secrets) d10, Notice d8, Persuade d12, Shooting d8, Streetwise d4, Stealth d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6/ Flying 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Edges: Charismatic, Combat Reflexes, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist the effects of Intimidate and Taunt)

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Delusional, Distinctive Appearance, Enemy (the UNICORN), Pacifist (Will never cause lethal harm and will never use his "Decay" power on a living target), Vow (to make everyone take off their clothes), Quirk (won't wear clothes)

Powers:

Awareness

Decay: Rapid Decay 2

Deflection: -8 to hit him with ranged attacks. Requires Activation.

Environmental Protection

Flight: Moves at the same rate he walks

Force Control 1d10: Force Field, Medium Burst Template

Obscure: Space seems to ripple, distort and flow around him, uses the Large Burst Template

Telekinesis: d12 Strength

Teleport: 60"

Gear: Empty Briefcase, Earpiece (picks up secret channels used only by the UNICORN), Sunglasses

Background: Formerly one of the UNICORN's most dreaded superhuman agents, (you can find out all about this sinister government conspiracy on Page 86), John Friend got a little weird on a recent mission and he has dedicated his life to a whole new endeavor.

He worked for a division of the UNICORN that conspiracy theorists have come to call the "Men in Black." Roving agents in suits and ties who investigate and stamp out unauthorized paranormal weirdness. He doesn't really remember his original name—John Friend is the latest in a long string of aliases. He was an ideal agent, utterly lacking in remorse, imagination or innovative thought. Then they sent him to investigate the matter of Moonbase Zero.

A joint project between NASA's secret X Division and an agency that doesn't have a name, Moonbase Zero was an attempt to simulate conditions on a lunar installation as realistically as possible. They constructed an entire base inside a giant aircraft hanger in the Nevada desert.

They didn't tell the astronauts that it wasn't real. A few researchers and agents were embedded in Moonbase Zero's crew, but they had all undergone extensive post-hypnotic suggestion to submerge their real identities and themselves didn't know it was a simulation. The self-contained moonbase module performed well for a year and a half. Then it came under attack by aliens.

The crew claimed to have made contact with an even older, even more secret base (they called it Moonbase Minus One), where the scientific staff had accidentally

woken up some terrible thing that had lain sleeping under the lunar surface for eons. Moonbase Minus One had already fallen and Moonbase Zero was now under assault.

This was of course, so utterly impossible that Division X called for the Men in Black. To avoid breaking the simulation, they sent John Friend and his team into the hanger in spacesuits, after putting them through an extremely realistic simulated spacecraft ride. So realistic that he began to doubt the cover story, and to wonder if Moonbase Zero was in fact real. It was his first original thought, ever, and it deeply troubled him.

They were warned not to remove their spacesuits if they ever ventured out onto the fake lunar surface, for fear of compromising the experiment.

Despite their best efforts, the Men in Black lost the battle for Moonbase Zero. John had to take ever-increasing doses of psi-enhancing drugs in order to fend off the alien invaders, and the combination of a semi-lethal overdose and making contact with the vast and utterly inhuman minds of the invaders made him snap.

He staggered out the airlock onto the lunar surface, and used his rapidly-escalating powers to make it bloom, bloom with flowers, through they shriveled in the vacuum and radiation as fast as he could make them sprout. Then he ripped off his spacesuit, and the clothes he wore underneath, and standing there in the Sea of Tranquility with the Earth overhead he screamed into the airless void that he was now the Man in Nothing! Then he smashed through the side of the hanger and out into the mercilessly bright Nevada sunshine. The experiment was proclaimed a success, and the hunt for the Man in Nothing began.

Now John Friend wanders the world, holding his briefcase in one hand, clad only in his earpiece and his sunglasses. He divides his time between battling his former bosses and running away from them. In his crazier periods, he screams at people that their minds are a trap, that reality is a trap, and that most of all their clothes are a trap, defining them the way his black suit defined him. Take it off! Take it all off! He might well come to Bedlam in the course of his wanderings, trying to evade his pursuers and convert people to his

lonely nudist crusade.

Nocturne (See page 276 for more information on this lonely vigilante) actually knows John Friend from the old days, and although he always disliked him, he'll sympathize with him now and may well try to help him. If he knows the PCs and they have a gadgeteer or mystic on their team, he may attempt to enlist their help. He hopes to cure his old colleague's madness, then learn his secrets and perhaps enlist him as an ally.

Using Naked Man in Your Campaign: If he comes to Bedlam, you can play John Friend as a lunatic on a ridiculous crusade to make people take their clothes off, or a tragic figure who they have to rescue from ruthless government assassins or both. If he shows up completely mad then he'll start yelling at people in public to undress, that their clothes are a trap and that he will set them free. He's a strong enough psychic to make them do it, too, which can lead to all sorts of comic silliness. He won't hurt anyone, except for the agents who are chasing him, and his powers are such that he doesn't even have to hurt them very badly.

When he uses his "Obscure" effect reality seems to warp and flow and distort around him, making it impossible to aim at anything or judge distances. Blindsight still works against it, though.

After the PCs have subdued him, sinister Men in Black will ask them to turn him over. Here too, you can play the scene as comic ("We're from the Department of Inexplicable Phenomena. This phenomenon is completely inexplicable, so it falls under our jurisdiction") or genuinely ominous.

If Naked Man's captors refuse to give him up, the agents will withdraw, for now, but whoever interferes with the UNICORN's affairs will themselves become a target. Whether or not Nocturne gets involved, this could be the campaign's bridge to adventures that involve shadowy government conspiracies and weird intrigue. Or not, just as you prefer.

Perhaps the agents who come after the PCs tell them that John Friend's story about having been a Man in Black is a delusion, and he's really a used car salesman from Tucson who developed telepathic powers and flipped out. Maybe that's even the truth.

\$#!+FACE



"It don't matter if you lock me up for ten #@%&in' years or one #@%&in' day. It all feels th' same to me."

Real Name: Charlie Brown (although everyone assumes this is an alias, it's his actual name)

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d12+1, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Notice d4, Throwing d8

Charisma: -4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 10

Hindrances: Clueless, Habit: (Booze-Hound), Distinctive Appearance, Ugly

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Brawny, Power Points, Take the Hit!

Super Powers:

- Attack, Melee (4): +2d6

- Heightened Senses (1)
- Super Attributes (5): (Super strength)
- Toughness (7): +2, Hardy

Background: \$#!+face will never lead a normal life, he's come to realize. He's hideous, and everything he tries to hold, he breaks. Nor has he ever been able to find a good way to kill himself. This makes him really depressed. It also makes him drink. That's where he got his supervillain name, in fact, from his constant drunkenness. He's not exactly an alcoholic—he's not dependant on the booze itself. He just needs something to shut out his misery, and he can't inject heroin through his super-tough skin. It takes a whole lot of alcohol or formaldehyde or turpentine or window cleaner to fuzz him out to where he can deal with things, so he always seems to be nipping away at a bottle of something or other. Or a barrel. Or a vat.

\$#!+face would never have chosen this life. He escaped from some kind of secret government lab a few years ago and he accidentally maimed a guard in the process. After that he was stuck. He had no ID, no means of supporting himself. If he had made his way home to Flint, Michigan, he supposed his family would have hidden him, but he didn't want to burden them like that—they had enough problems of their own. So he stole, because he had to eat, and tried to keep anyone from getting hurt in the process. Inevitably superheroes came to beat him up and he fought them as hard as he could, desperate not to be sent back to the lab and dissected. He was only just barely able to stay ahead of the law and figured there might be safety in numbers, so he hooked up with whichever criminal masterminds would hire him. He had way too much conscience to be able to work for any of them for long, until he signed on with Th' Pope.

Now \$#!+face is His Holiness' comically drunken and depressed hench-thug. He spends much of his time lying on the floor in a stupor with a bottle or a keg in his hand and has to slowly stir himself whenever the Pope asks him to do anything.

He's sort of like Paul Schaeffer to the Pope's David Letterman, feeding him straight lines and responding to all his rhetorical questions with "gee, I dunno." He's grown very fond of his ridiculous boss and will fight very hard to keep the old man out of jail. He normally tries not to kill people, or to use his full strength on anyone who can't take it, but if he sees Th' Pope killed or injured he may go berserk.

Amazingly obscene, \$#!+face can stick swear-words in the middle of any sentence, no matter how benign. It's almost like he isn't aware he's doing it.

He's much kinder and much smarter than anyone expects. He's better at playing chess than the Pope himself, for example, and he will sometimes interject with some ludicrously obscene but very cogent observation, in between taking sips from a bottle. Try something like this: "No, the contract language is #@%&in' simple. Look, it says the party of the first part agrees to pay the party of the second part *if* the conditions in clause #@%&in' three are met, not *unless* they're #@%&in' met. That's what clause mother#@%&in' fifty says."

Sometimes he writes poetry, but he's shy about showing it to anyone.

Using \$#!+face in Your Campaign: A sympathetic, hapless villain who's been screwed by fate, \$#!+face won't strike to kill and he won't pursue revenge—he doesn't have the energy and anyway he doesn't resent you for beating on him. In fact, he kind of thinks he deserves to get beat on. If you get the drop on him or hold his beloved boss hostage, he'll put his hands up, sigh and say, "Yeah, yeah, okay. You #@%&in' got me."

You can play him as tragic or comic, but he works best if he's both. To help make him funny, each time the PCs see him he should be drinking from a larger container of even more potent stuff. Start out with a flask of gin. When next they see him it's a fifth of vodka. Then it's a quart of

rubbing alcohol. Then it's a gallon of brake fluid. Then... well, God knows. He'll probably be drinking from a drum of formaldehyde at some point.

He would be happy to try being a hero instead of a villain, if it doesn't mean abandoning Th' Pope. But of course that isn't ever going to work. He's wanted for multiple felonies, the feds would like to have him back on a table in a lab and no judge in the country is going to give him amnesty.

An Adventure With \$#!+face: Drinking Buddy

\$#!+face robs a bank. He seems to have acquired a sidekick—a big fat unshaven guy in a stained white dress shirt who looks very drunk. \$#!+face calls him "Pal."

Less than an hour later, they rob another bank, although by this time their both so inebriated that they drop a lot of the money on their way out. Where will they strike next? And what the hell is going on here, anyway?

In fact \$#!+face new drinking buddy is Marvin Slobowski, an unsuccessful businessman from Stark Hill. They met in an alley behind a bar that they had both been asked to leave and they've been on a binge together ever since.

Poor Marvin owes a lot of money to a loan shark, who is going to take one of his kids if he doesn't pay. \$#!+face wants to help, but he knows better than to just go beat up the loan shark. If he does that, the Scarpas will surely have Marvin killed and they may get his kid, too, just to make a point. So instead Marvin and \$#!+face robbed a bank. Unfortunately, they didn't get nearly enough money to pay off the debt, so they're going to rob as many banks as it takes, unless they get killed or pass out in a drunken stupor first.

\$#!+face is very protective of Marvin and will fight hard to keep him alive and out of jail. If he has to surrender to the PCs, \$#!+face will beg them to save his buddy's kid. But that of course is another adventure.

#@%&face



"Wanna see something #@%&ed-up?"

Real Name: Brandon Weiner

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Notice d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Streetwise d4

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6/ Fly 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Distinctive Appearance, Mean, Quirk (obsessed with hair metal bands from the eighties), Vengeful

Edges: Improved Dodge, Quick

Powers:

- **Darkvision**
- **Environmental Protection:** (per the Core Rulebook)
- **Flight (1):** Moves at the same rate as he walks.
- **Immunity:** to Disease and Poison
- **Intangibility:** Phazer
- **Paralyze**
- **Stun**

Gear: Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1),

Background: The only villain out there with a ruder name than \$#!+face, #@%&face hates \$#!+face for stealing his

shtick. Someday he's gonna kick that guy's @\$\$.

He would love to be a mercenary villain, to take on jobs for scary guys in castles and corporate boardrooms—maybe even help some cackling arch-villain take over the world. But it's not going to happen any time soon. For now he's just a slob on a rampage.

It's the story of his whole career. #@%&face was sixteen when his life went careening off its rails. He was over at his friend's Pilar's house, helping her watch her little stepbrother. While he stayed downstairs, drank her dad's beer and played Maximum Killer on Nintendo, Pilar got bored and tried showing her little brother some new Kung-Fu moves she had thought up. Brandon could hear them wrestling upstairs, could hear that they were getting too carried away, but he didn't think much of it. He was drunk and wrapped up in his game and anyway those two fought and wrestled all the time. Then he heard Pilar start screaming.

He stumbled upstairs, but it was too late. Pilar's little stepbrother wasn't breathing. They called 911 and they tried to revive the kid with CPR (not that either one of them really knew how) but he was dead.

The cops didn't believe that Brandon had been downstairs. They were sure he must have helped Pilar kill her stepbrother. When one of them asked Brandon how he could have done such a thing, he misunderstood her—he thought she meant “how could you have sat there playing video games while Pilar killed her brother upstairs?” But in fact she meant “how could you have beaten a child to death?”

He answered “I dunno. I was drunk.” Those words doomed him.

Both teenagers were charged with the crime, and to help save herself, Pilar testified that Brandon had done most of the beating. He was tried as an adult and got forty-eight years. Then a routine test revealed that he was a parahuman, and he briefly became a celebrity—a vicious young supervillain who had beaten a child to death for thrills.

In fact Brandon had no idea until the moment the test results came back that he had the potential to develop superpowers. Confined to a solitary cell in a secret facility somewhere, he raged and wept and plotted revenge on the whole world. Years later, they offered him a deal. If he would participate in a dangerous, illegal set of tests to unlock his superpowers, they would put him on a black ops team and let him have exciting adventures all around the world. That sounded okay to him.

After a lot of pain and horror, he became the thing he is now. A weird, ghostly, inhuman creature that walks through walls and drains the life out of stuff.

He screwed his first mission up really badly, and rather than go back to base and face god-knows what kind of punishment, he ran away. It was the year 2002. He had been in prison for more than ten years.

These days he dresses like heavy metal album cover art, and uses the name #@%&face. He never really outgrew his Guns n' Roses phase and he finds newer music weird and scary. It absolutely drives him nuts when people mock his favorite bands. Strangely for a guy who looks so odd, he claims to hate weirdness. By “weirdness” he means anything that isn't Metal. And by Metal, he means Metal as of 1989 or so.

In a lot of ways he's still a teenage stoner. He never really had a chance to grow up. Across his upper back, he has the words

I'm Awesome tattooed in elaborate gothic

letters. He has misspelled the word “Awesome.” And that about sums him up.

He supports himself through theft, because he has no other way to do it, and dreams of finding some way to make the big time. While he enjoys making threats and acting tough, he feels bad about killing people and he would never harm a child. He still has nightmares about what happened to Pilar's little brother. But all those years in solitary have made him very, very angry. He kills domestic pets whenever he sees them and he's prone to attacks of savage rage. Civilians and bystanders have died when he's lost control of himself. He's presently wanted for something like a dozen murders, all of them people he lashed out at in a fury.

As life continues to frustrate him, he gets madder and madder and he's slowly losing the ability to keep his rage in check. While he'd never admit it, he feels anguish over every last person he has ever killed and he's starting to contemplate committing “suicide by superhero.”

Using #@%&face in Your Campaign: A loser villain who will hire out to anyone, he has terrible judgment and can get involved in all kinds of stupid, ill-advised capers. If an obviously crazy villain makes a foolhardy bid to take over the world, or destroy it, #@%&face is the henchman for the job. He's so desperate for respect and comradeship that he'll ignore how insane or how unspeakably evil his current boss is, or how unlikely the plan is to succeed.

He's also a good villain to have come wandering into town alone, committing pointless crimes and tangling up with superheroes. Or he can show up at the nightclub called Maxx to catch one of his favorite hair-metal bands from the eighties (see Page 190), not particularly looking for trouble. Or he can go berserk in public in the hopes that the PCs will come kill him.

Normally he tries to avoid hurting civilians, but if he gets frustrated or depressed he'll lash out at whoever is closest with lethal force. Vindictive by nature, he'll try to hunt down anyone who has beaten, frustrated or humiliated him, but he's an inept hunter and won't plan any kind of elaborate revenge. It might or might not occur to him to strike at their loved ones, depending on how angry he's feeling.

SMASHFACE



"Guess what color car drives past next, and I'll let one member of your family live."

Real Name: Leonard Low-Horn

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d12+8, Vigor d12+2

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d10, Intimidate d8, Notice d6, Survival d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 18 (9 Heavy Armor)

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Mean, Quirk (Kills anyone who trifles with him in even the slightest way. Also kills lots of people who don't), Vengeful

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Brawny, Combat Reflexes, Frenzy, Hard to Kill, Harder to Kill, Improved Nerves of Steel, Mighty Blow, Power Points, Sweep, Take the Hit!

Super Powers:

- Attack, Melee +5d6, Armor Piercing 6, Knockback 1d10
- Fearless (2)
- Leaping (5): Vertical 32 inches, Horizontal 64 inches.
- Toughness (11): 9 Heavy Armor, Hardy

Background: Not long ago, Smashface saw a nature documentary on lions. He was fascinated by the way a male lion will chase off a rival, assume leadership of the pride, and kill every cub that is not his own. His new wives may howl with grief, but they dare not interfere. It was amazing to watch—he'd been doing the same thing for years. Now he knew why he always killed the children of any woman he dated. He had thought it was to show his mastery of her, but in fact it was because he had the heart of a lion. His chest swelled with pride. Now whenever he throws a new girlfriend's children out the window, or drowns them in the tub or crushes them in their beds, he always explains to her about the lions and how this act ennoble him—shows that he is truly a king.

He has about fifty kids of his own now, he figures. He would have more but a lot of women aren't strong enough to survive the force of his love. He supposes that's good and proper, too. Only the strong should be allowed to bear his noble seed.

Usually by the time his kids are starting to speak in complete sentences, he's already moving on for one reason or another, so he hasn't had much of a chance to get involved in their lives. But he does make sure that all of his boys are named Leonard, after him. So are all the girls. He won't allow anything else.

Smashface doesn't remember his own childhood very well, although he's sure it must have been awful since every time he tries to think about it he gets so overwhelmed with anger that he starts to cry. He does know that he discovered his powers in reform school on an Indian

reservation and set about testing their limits after he broke out. His powers were strong. None of the superheroes who faced him were able to stand against him. For a while he sought them out, one after another, looking for the toughest ones, to see if he could beat them. But then he got bored.

These days he walks around and does as he pleases. He kills most of the people he encounters, unless he doesn't happen to feel like it. When policemen try to stop him he kills them, too.

While he does not really need money for anything, he enjoys having it, so he's willing to take on jobs for organized crime, and he keeps a few post-office boxes where they can get in touch with him. If the Bedlam mob gets desperate enough to hire Smashface, they will try hard to isolate themselves from him. He's prone to killing people for whims or for reasons that make no sense and that includes his employers.

One of his previous clients paid him by hiring a designer to produce a really sleek looking costume for him to wear. Smashface liked it so much that he killed the designer, to make sure that she never made one as cool for anybody else. While he has never been seriously injured in a fight, he doesn't like being struck in the eyes, mouth or nipples—it's irritating, so his costume covers his face more or less completely, and armor-plates his upper chest.

You might think that the world's mightiest heroes would have banded together to defeat Smashface long ago. But the fact that he kills most of the people he runs into means that he isn't very widely known, and the authorities are not aware of just how dangerous he is.

It's also hard to find him. He walks around at random, stealing cars when he feels like it, so it's difficult to track his whereabouts. Sometimes he sees a girl he likes and moves in with her for a while (whether she wants him to or not) sometimes for two or three years at a time. He lavishes gifts on his girls, stealing and taking on jobs for other criminals as required and he is very gentle with his own children—though he never changes a diaper

or plays any other kind of role in their care.

For more than forty years he has lived this wandering existence and he seems pretty contented by it. He's surprisingly calm and soft-spoken, in the way that so many absolute psychopaths are. He talks a lot, but the only topic that interests him is himself. It has never occurred to him to wonder whether or not he is an evil person. If someone asks him about it, he will reply that God must want him to do the things he does, or else God wouldn't have let it happen. If God wants him to do these things, then they must be good.

A strangely honorable opponent, he won't strike from ambush, won't take hostages, won't hit an opponent who is down. That would be unworthy of him. Then again, he's never been beaten in a fight, and we suspect he wouldn't like it at all.

Should this ever happen, he'll become obsessed with the person who beat him and start killing all their enemies at the first convenience. He does this because they are unworthy to be the foes of his foe. There should be room for no one in their roster of enemies but him.

Using Smashface in Your Campaign:

Here he is, our signature character. The guy from the front of the book.

Before the PCs face Smashface, you should let them have a fair warning about what they're up against. Give him as much dramatic buildup as you can, he deserves it. Let them find out what happened the last time he came to Bedlam, let them figure out what no one seems to have grasped about him (he's one of the most dangerous men ever to walk the earth) before they actually come across him. He's so utterly loathsome that the more the PCs learn about him the more they'll want to defeat him, and this too helps build dramatic tension.

Because he's both a rampaging villain and a hireling, you have complete freedom to spring him on the PCs whenever you like, without them having to go looking for him. If they do go seek him out, you have an excuse to make him hard to find.

Th' Pope



"Kiss my ring, punk!"

Real Name: His Holiness, Pope Innocent X
Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d8, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (Weird Secrets) d8, Knowledge (Catholicism) d8, Knowledge (Loathesome Secret Vices) d8, Notice d8, Persuade d8, Shooting d6, Taunt d10

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 4;
Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Gloater, Habit (unspeakable vices), Obese, Pacifist (can't kill, wouldn't let an innocent come to harm).

Edges: Charismatic, Command, Fervor, Followers, Hold the Line, Inspire

Powers: Lair (Average Quality, Well-Hidden)

Gear: Bulletproof Vestments (2 Heavy Armor, does not cover his head), Staff (1d4+1d6 Damage, contains a hidden radio that can pick up most police bands, can give off a 2d6 nonlethal electric shock with a range of 5/10/20, or emit a cloud of foul,

reeking incense smoke which counts as an Obscure in the Medium Burst Radius), large hat (usually full of food and/or pornography), pad of blank papal indulgences.

Background: We'll let him explain his origins in his own words. He looks and sounds a lot like an unshaven Sidney Greenstreet in pontifical robes, so imagine Mr. Greenstreet's deep, rumbling voice.

"I come to you a former sinner, of the least lunchitudinous sort. For I was, in my youth, prey to the most popish sort of papacies.

I was a two-fisted pope. 'Kiss my ring, punk!' was my motto. I put rocket engines and machine-guns on the Popemobile. I was infallible. And yet I was, alas, not a success at my chosen trade. Indeed, so poor a pope I made that they have since expunged all records of my name, and would have excommunicated me, had I not excommunicated them first*.

It was not my crapulence or my obesity, my unshaved whiskers or my unlikely sexual practices that brought me to this end. The Council of Cardinals did not object to my slobbering perversities or to my habit of paying for meals in restaurants with blank papal indulgences ('Here kid, have a get-out-of-Hell-free card. Fill in whatever sin you want.') No one cared what those stains on my surplice were, or where I might have stuck that monstrosity. But I acquired a cruel mistress. One that has ruined many a man.

Flintstones push-ups. The 'Yabba-Dabba-Doo Orange' flavor. Not a pretty name, is it? But do not look away. For its cruel seductions might yet claim you too. So no matter how appalling you find my tale, stop and think, 'But that might have been me, if I were Pope, and a monstrous shambling deviate.'

Since no one but a foul degenerate Pope would ever want to eat Yabba-Dabba-Doo Orange Flavor Push-ups, I was forever stealing vast sums from the Papal Bank to

* A hasty field-excommunication—it left me the Church's only member. In retrospect, I might have reconsidered.

keep the brand afloat. This too, was not enough to doom me. For many Popes had loaned far greater sums to men with mirrored sunglasses and foreign accents. And I was, after all, infallible.

Soon the Swiss Guard adjusted to the sight of His Holiness emerging from a heap of empty push-ups and the lowest sort of porno, blessing all and sundry in a slurry bloodshot stupor. The Cardinals grew accustomed to hearing his Eminence cry 'I worship #@%&! My prayers are filthy dreams!' at random intervals.

It was when I had the Shroud of Turin dry-cleaned that I wore out their patience. I did it in a Yabba-Dabba frenzy, all giddy from my vice. 'What is this filthy thing?!' I bellowed. 'Have it cleaned, by #@%&!'

They begged, they pleaded, but I was in the grip of Yabba-Dabba-Doo. 'By all the crimes and bugg'ries in God's infinite design, it shall be cleaned!' I cried 'Are any of you infallible? No? Then by Satan's hairy balls it laundered shall be!'

And it was. And so I fell. From the pinnacle of popery to the nadir of nothingness. Til I found the solace that there is in lunch. For Lo! The true God cares not where you have stuffed your rosary beads, nor what he can smell on your breath. God only cares for lunch. I once was lost, but now am found. 'Twas lunch that made me free.

And if you doubt any part of my ghastly tale, check for yourself and see if the name of Innocent X has not been expunged from all the records of the Popes so thoroughly that no trace of him can be found. For this proves that it is all true."

Th' Pope periodically shows up with a gang of crackheads dressed like altar boys or nuns or cardinals or saints (complete with cheesy fake halos) and tries to steal things. Religious artifacts mostly, but sometimes money. He also loves to play absurd and harmless (if disgusting) pranks on officials of the Roman Catholic Church and on anyone

else who strikes him as an uptight moralistic prig. He seems to have a particular grudge against Bedlam's chief ecclesiastical officer, Bishop Sloat, for some unknown reason.

Th' Pope is a dreadful ham and a bit of a sentimental old fool. No one has ever been seriously hurt in one of his capers and he'd feel terrible about it if they did. He loves to make jokes about his supposed Infallibility or other points of Catholic dogma. He also likes to write papal indulgences absolving people for their sins (in fact he carries a pad of them around with him) and he sometimes tries to pay for things with them.

No one knows who he really is or where he comes from. He resolutely sticks to his ridiculous story (an embittered Pope turns to a life of crime) and never breaks character. At least one part of his story is true. He really does love those nauseating "Yabba-Dabba-Doo Orange" flavored Flintstones' push-ups and there's always a big pile of empties around him.

A genuine pervert, he has been seen at some of Bedlam's Santa Claus oriented leather bars (see Page 194 to find out more about the true meaning of Christmas.) Yet he only does kinky things with his fellow grown-ups and would never harm a child. Which is more than we can say for some members of the Church hierarchy.

If he's too weak for your campaign, try partnering him with the drunken, depressive Powerhouse who calls himself \$#!+face, who can act as His Holiness' bodyguard. If they are partners, then Th' Pope is very fond of \$#!+face and willing to take a lot of risks to get him out of prison. If the two of them need to go somewhere fast, Th' Pope will cry "Quickly \$#!+face! To the Popemobile!" And he'll jump onto his giant henchman's shoulders. Off down the street they'll go, with Th' Pope riding piggyback as \$#!+face takes another long pull of booze.

Using Th' Pope in Your Campaign: In a weird kind of way, he's a classic Silver Age villain—a colorful mastermind with a shtick, who turns up with a gang of absurdly costumed henchmen and tries to rob something. Like most of those villains, he has no real superpowers of his own and is actually kind of fragile if superheroes start beating on him. To prevent them from killing him, keep him funny and sympathetic and don't let him harm any bystanders.

He's forever trying to steal sacred relics and to embarrass officials of the Roman Catholic Church. But he has no master plan to conquer the world or proclaim himself Supreme Pontiff. If he wants to snatch the Hand of St. Asquinox the Flayed from the Bedlam City Museum, it's not to summon any dark and terrible forces from beyond. He wants to defile it, or put it in his collection or boil it down and drink the broth. If it turns out the Hand is cursed, or will grant you three wishes or summon things up from other dimensions he'll regard this as a mere nuisance.

Minions of th' Pope (Cardinal or Altar Boy or Dubious Nun)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Loyal, Quirk (crazed deviate).

Edges: Take the Hit

Gear: Club or religious artifact or big floppy rubber sex toy (Melee Weapon, Strength+1 Damage), Holy Water, Rosary

Background: Geez, what kind of player character would sock a nun in the jaw, anyway? I guess it's the kind who would go adventuring in Bedlam.

Sister Sin (Th' Pope's Hench-Person Extraordinaire)



Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climb d6, Fighting d12, Guts d8, Knowledge (Theology) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 8;

Toughness: 7(2)

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Habit (shameful secret vices few people even know exist), Loyal, One Eye, Stubborn, Vow (to uphold the one true Pope)

Edges: Ambidextrous, Arcane Background (Super Powers), Attractive, Dodge, Fast Healer, First Strike, Fleet-Footed, Sweep, Two Fisted

Gear: Armored costume (Heavy Armor +2), Rosary, Leather Wimple

Super Powers:

• Attack, Melee (5): Device, d8+2d6 (Twin Daggers), Focus

Background: Once she was one of Opus Ombra's most feared assassins (you can find out more about this insane cult on Page 204). She did things for them in the

name of God that would damn a thousand saints to hell. But she never found the work fulfilling, was never able to completely muffle her conscience in order to do her duty. She understood that Opus Ombra had been excommunicated, so her actions cast no stain on Holy Mother Church and that it was her duty to burn in Hell so that others might be saved. And yet some small voice within her whispered "no." Then they sent her after "Th' Pope."

Her instructions were to kill him as painfully as possible. But instead of murdering him, she became ensnared by his extraordinary personal magnetism. They talked all night, and then he managed to entice her into visiting one of Bedlam's Santa-Claus-Themed leather bars with him. After just a little taste of that scene, she at once became the Pope's most dedicated minion.

She has updated her look a bit, to reflect her new love of blasphemy and kink, and is seen by th' Pope's side whenever she isn't completely preoccupied with sampling depraved vices few people even know exist. She has a passionate (and entirely platonic) bond with her new boss, but he knows better than to try to keep her around all the time, so she comes and goes. While she enjoys giving and receiving pain a great deal, she has sworn off killing people entirely.

An imposing figure, she's six foot four in her bare feet and wears huge platform shoes.

Sister Sin was recruited by the Opus Ombra straight out of Carmelite convent and she's still a little naïve about certain things—she has no idea how to make, for example, a dishwasher or a cell phone work and she tends to trust people a little too readily. Yet

she comes off as totally ferocious, laughing and snarling and spouting inventively blasphemous one-liners in combat.

Opus Ombra has refused to send anyone after her—they're so horrified by what she has become that they've stricken her name from their records altogether and try their best not even to think of her.

Using Sister Sin in Your Campaign:

Her primary function is to give the GM a convenient way to beef up Th' Pope. Her schtick works well with his and her personality makes her a good minion. She's jealous of \$#!+face and the amount of attention Th' Pope gives him, so she doesn't work well with him.

You can of course use her on her own if you'd rather. She doesn't go around robbing banks or trying to blackmail cities with thermonuclear weapons, but she does despise hypocrites enough that she might take a swipe at a public figure or two.

Alternately, the PCs could get caught in the crossfire between Sister Sin and some other villain. A fairly sympathetic antagonist, she wants to protect th' Pope, humiliate puritanical idiots and have a good time. She does not crave money, power, or revenge. Hurt her beloved boss or subject her to some brutal, humiliating punishment and she might start contemplating getting even with you. And if she develops a crush on a hero (probably a really pure and innocent one) she won't know how to deal with it, and may menace them in public to get their attention.

She won't kill, won't endanger innocents and won't abandon th' Pope. She would only torture an opponent if she were really mad at them, or sensed that they were secretly into it.

MASTER-BOT



"That haircut not am correspond to criteria for normalcy. Change it or die, puny human."

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d12 Vigor d12+2

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d10, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Robots) d10, Notice d6, Shooting d8,

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 13

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Extra Power Points, Hard to Kill, Harder to Kill

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Distinctive Appearance, Gloater, Heartless, Mean, Stubborn, Quirk (petty, takes minor slights way too seriously), Quirk (Fears and dislikes "weirdness," nonwhites), Vengeful

Super Powers:

• **Armor:** Armor +4, Heavy Armor,

• **Attack, Ranged:** Range 12/24/48, Damage 4d6, AP 4, Knockback 1d4", Medium Burst Template,

• **Attack, Melee:** Damage 3d6, AP 5, Knockback 1d6",

• **Broadcast (1)**

• **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; does not suffer from Wound penalties, immune to disease and poison.

• **Darkvision**

• **Lair**

• **Minions:** Loads and loads of robots!

• **Super Attribute:** Vigor +2 steps

Background: It claims to have no emotions and says it doesn't care when people make rude jokes about its name. "Why it am for to bother us when stupid humans make

joke?" it says. But anyone can see this isn't true and that taunts really get it riled. It is in fact insufferably prideful, touchy and petty—easily hurt and easily moved to murderous rage. It insists that it has no heart in its chest, but it wears its heart on its sleeve. It will take tremendous risks to get revenge on someone for some trivial or unintended slight, all the while rationalizing its anger and claiming to lack any human feelings. Its voice really does sound inhuman and emotionless. But its actions speak much louder. Pointing out that it behaves like a spoiled brat is sure to provoke its murderous wrath.

Master-Bot is officially bent on ruling the world but never seems to make much progress toward that goal. It's constantly getting distracted by petty quibbles and pointless vendettas. Prudish and small-minded, it is scandalized by anything that smacks of weirdness and mistrusts non-whites. It wastes a lot of its time following and getting indignant over celebrity scandals, which it claims are evidence of "How stupid am all Mankind are being." For long periods of time it disappears from the scene. It claims to have been working on "mighty plans your stupid mind am not comprehend." But it seems more likely that it just gets really depressed and sits around unable to do much of anything.

Sleek and imposing, Master-Bot speaks in a garbled, fractured mass of sentence fragments and non-sequiturs ("All of you of humanity am stupid, stupid bad-life for to die!")

It doesn't know who built it. In fact it claims rather loftily to have built itself, for no mere puny human could have created its astounding magnificence.

If Master-Bot shows up in Bedlam, it will claim to have some kind of plan to conquer the world (or to cleanse it of "that disease which am called life and like that") but in fact it's here to get revenge on someone, probably for something stupid and trivial.

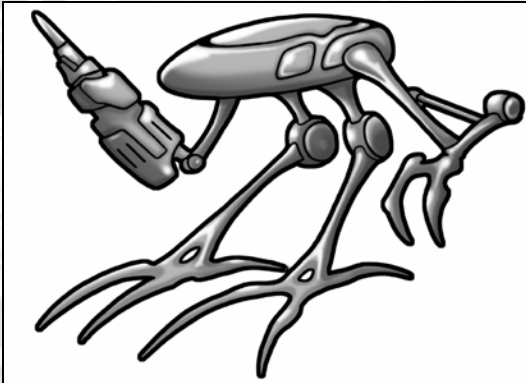
As you might expect, it places no value on human life and will maim, brutalize or kill nearly anyone—especially if they have a funny haircut or "look gay" to it. But it won't take hostages or break its word.

Sometimes it keeps captive heroes alive for much longer than is really safe. It's hard to say why it does this, but people have speculated that it gets really lonely and wants someone to talk to.

MINIONS OF MASTER-BOT

Master-Bot has manufactured a lot of different constructs with a lot of different specialized functions. Here are some of the ones you are most likely to encounter.

Model One-One-One



Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Notice d4, Shooting d4, Stealth 1d4

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 4

Hindrances: Clueless, Disability (Color Blind, no Sense of Smell) Loyal, Small

Special Abilities

- **Broadcast (1)**
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Does not suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fearless**

Background: Master-Bot's basic minion model. Clumsy, foolish and incompetent on their own, they need a lot of instructions on the battlefield, and Master-Bot has always been terrible at real-time strategy games, despite all the hours it has wasted playing them. It keeps meaning to have the Model One-One-One upgraded, but never gets around to it. On the plus side, they are very cheap to manufacture and you can make a lot of them quickly.

Steel Selina



Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d4, Persuade d10, Shooting d4, Stealth d8

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 8

Edges: Attractive, Charismatic

Hindrances: Clueless, Disability (Color Blind, no Sense of Smell)

Special Abilities

- **Armor +1**
- **Broadcast (1)**
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Does not suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fearless**

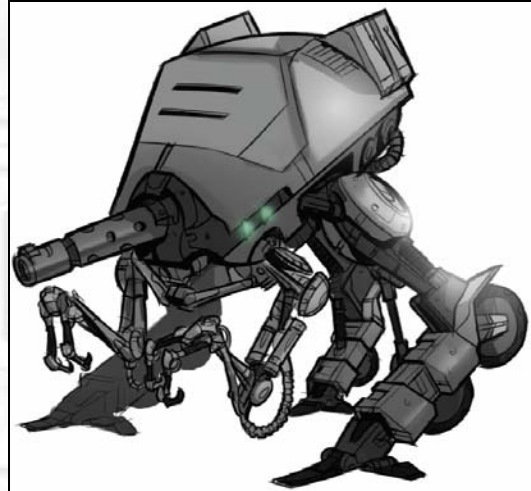
Background: Master-Bot did not actually design this infiltration-unit. It came across the plans that a 1930s era villain called the Hooded Terror had drawn up. The plans looked very art-deco and Master-Bot was captivated by the elegant design. He has built three of them, so far. Two have run away from him. Steel Selina is thinking about it.

Rather than letting them go about their business of infiltrating human society and gathering intelligence, Master-Bot always wants to keep them around the lair, gazing at them rapturously and making awkward attempts at conversation. It's boring, it makes them unhappy and it vaguely creeps them out.

For now, Steel Selina puts up with Master-Bot, because she sees no alternative. But the moment she gets a human disguise and is sent on an assignment, she's going to run away, move to a big city and try to get a job.

Can a single female robot make it on her own as a plucky career gal in the big city? How will her roommates cope with her constant cleaning and the fact that she never needs to sleep? Will there be a wacky neighbor? She certainly expects there to be one. Virtually everything she knows about human society she has learned from watching "classic" sitcoms (Master-Bot finds more recent TV comedies too weird and confusing for her to be allowed to watch them).

Destructor-Bot



Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d12+1, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d4, Shooting d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10

Edges: Mighty Blow

Hindrances: Clueless, Disability (Color Blind, no Sense of Smell) Loyal

Special Abilities

- **Armor +4**

- **Broadcast (1)**

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Does not suffer from disease or poison.

- **Fearless**

Background: These are Master-Bot's favorites. His combat robots come in many different versions, some on legs and some on treads, but these Destructor-Bots completely match the criteria for awesome, as far as Master-Bot is concerned. As a result, it's reluctant to use them because they might get all shot up. They're also expensive and difficult to replace. If Master-Bot decides to bring them out, it's a sure sign of desperation.

DOCTOR ZOOGE AND THE DISCO PIRATES



"Dig th' righteous power of my atomic disco ray! Outa-sight!"

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d6, Driving d6, Fighting d10, Guts d6, Notice d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 11;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Fleet-Footed, Followers (disco pirates), Improved Dodge, Quick, Power Points.

Hindrances: Pacifist (won't kill or intentionally allow anyone to come to serious harm), Quirk (doesn't care about anything but making people dance)

Gear: Atomic Disco Ray (see below).

Super Powers:

- Fearless
- Mind Control Device (Atomic Disco Ray. Doesn't work the same way as this power usually does. Anyone struck by the ray has to make an opposed Spirit check vs. a d12, or spend the rest of the encounter dancing. There is no specific time limit—no particular number of rounds or minutes until the ray

wears off. It just lasts until the end of the scene. Characters who are dancing can direct their own movement at a Pace of 3, but can't do anything else. They can't attack or make skill rolls or activate any superpowers).

- Deflection: -3 to incoming ranged attacks,
- Parry: -3 to incoming melee attacks
- Teleport: More Range, 60"

Background: From the deepest darkest depths of the Disco Dimension comes... Doctor Boogie! Checking in from the weird year 197X on our lifeless, gray, nigh-disco-free reality, he's here to teach us all how to get funky.

Or so he says. Who and what Doctor Boogie really is remains a mystery. He can appear out of nowhere with a whole crew of henchmen, but is he really coming to us from the "Disco Dimension?" Could there truly be an "actual factual universe where the seventies never ended—'cause time there is different-like, you dig?" And while he does speak a version of late 1970s hipster slang, he sometimes gets little details wrong. But maybe it's because he's from a parallel universe. He is capable of making people dance against their will—sometimes huge crowds of people. And in order to compel them to dance, he really does have to zap them with a big, silly-looking beam weapon that he lugs around with him. But could that thing really be an "Atomic Disco Ray" the way he claims? It looks like a cheaply-made stage prop for some Sid and Marty Kroft show. And the noise it makes resembles a poorly-produced sound effect.

Doctor Boogie is always accompanied by music. Sometimes these are recognizable dance hits from the seventies (for some reason he never plays "The Hustle") but sometimes they're other songs in the same style, which no one in our dimension has ever heard before.

He first appeared in 1992, long after the seventies were over. It used to

be that Doctor Boogie would show up every few years with a new group of henchmen, and give everyone in the area dance fever, ranting and cackling like an out-of-control DJ as passers-by unwillingly got their freak on. He particularly liked to show up in crowded public places full of people who weren't having any fun. The Department of Motor Vehicles, the Post Office on Tax Day, and so forth. It was of course illegal for him to force people to shake their booties, and sometimes it was a serious nuisance, but it was never actually dangerous.

He never seemed to have the same group of henchmen twice. Once it was his "Legion of Groovy", once it was the "Roller Boogie Armada." He didn't start committing serious crimes until he hooked up with the Disco Pirates.

Unlike Doctor Boogie himself, we know exactly where the Disco Pirates came from, and it wasn't the deepest darkest depths of the Disco Dimension. In fact it was the deepest, darkest depths of Bedlam. They were one of the weird little costumed gangs that turn up in the Shady Meadows Mobile Home Park. Outrageously gay and completely addicted to crystal meth, they had pulled a number of flamboyant daylight robberies before they ever encountered Doctor Boogie. They look like, well... like a bunch of disco pirates. Each one dresses a little differently, but they all find ways to incorporate both themes into their costumes.

As soon as they became his henchmen, the doctor changed his MO. Now he appears out of nowhere in a swirl of crazy lights and sounds, accompanied by a dozen or so of his leering, scurvy crew. Then, as he zaps people with his Atomic Disco Ray and commands them to boogie down, the pirates run amok and steal stuff. Sometimes they hit antique stores, sometimes they hit museums or banks or expensive furniture boutiques. Sometimes they attack grocery stores and make off with food.

Some time within the past two years, Doctor Boogie has acquired a flying pirate ship for his crew. It's all decked out in eye-searing colors and has an immense mirrored ball hanging from its bow. The figurehead resembles Gary Glitter. Sometimes they appear with their ship and sometimes they don't. It can move without anyone steering it, and it would try to come to their rescue if they got in serious trouble.

No member of the crew has ever been captured, but if they ever are, they will claim not to know who the Doctor really is or if any of what he says about himself is true. When they vanish into thin air aboard their flying pirate ship, they find themselves in some weird otherspace full of music and swirling color, where they party like mad until they get bored or run out of food again. Time and perception seem to be strangely distorted there, and none of them are ever sure how long they've been away. Then again, they are also taking a lot of drugs.

Using Doctor Boogie in Your Campaign:

A completely light-hearted villain, he isn't interested in hurting anyone—he just wants to make them dance. He takes defeat cheerfully and he holds no grudges. Revenge isn't mellow, so he's not into that scene. Even his disco pirates aren't looking for blood. They might tease and hassle the people they rob or even rough them up slightly if they look "square" or say something insulting. They certainly won't kill them—at least not on purpose. If one of the pirates gets into a blind panic he might take a hostage, but he wouldn't actually harm them. The doctor himself would never even go that far.

You can play Doctor Boogie and his disco-crazed crew as classic villains in the Silver Age mode (can Our Heroes chase them off before they finish looting another Ikea?) without ever worrying about who and what they really are. Or you can use them as a baffling enigma. Who and what the hell is Doctor Boogie, really? Unless the GM wants the PCs to find out, they will probably never even come close to the truth.

Doctor Boogie's Disco Pirates

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Knowledge (disco) d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Taunt d8, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Dodge

Hindrances: Habit (addicted to crank)

Gear: Cutlass (2d6 Damage) or Ray Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6 Nonlethal, RoF 1, AP 4, Shots 10)

Disco Pirate Ship

Acc/Top Speed: 50/200; **Climb:** 40;

Toughness: 18 (4)

Crew: 1/150

Weapons: Stun (Elemental Trick: Light; The giant mirrored ball hanging from the bow of the ship can blaze brighter than a thousand disco suns), Stun (Elemental Trick: Sound; The cannons on board the pirate ship don't actually launch any shot, but they *do* make an incredibly loud noise)

Notes: Amphibious (Acc/Top Speed: 5/25); Heavy Armor

THE BRAIN-RAPER



"Gonna rape yer brains! Rape 'em good an' sloooow."

Real Name: Dylan Gerber

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Notice d8, Stealth d6, Taunt d10

Charisma: 0, **Pace:** 6, **Parry:** 4, **Toughness:** 5

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Danger Sense

Hindrances: Bad Luck, Phobia (deathly afraid of psychotherapists), Quirk (emotionally unstable idiot with no attention span or self-control)

Super Powers:

- **Attack, Ranged:** Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, Medium burst template). (Mind Blast)

- **Deflection:** -4 to incoming ranged attacks.

- **Illusion (4):** 16" cubed, Targeted

- **Mind Control:** Mind Wipe

- **Mind Reading:** Mind Rider

- **Telepathy**

Background: We suppose the name really should be "the brain-rapist", but he fears and hates the term "rapist." "The

rapist" sounds too much like "therapist", and therapists are the one thing he fears. As a teenager he was imprisoned in the Rainbow Acres Retreat—a kid-prison that masquerades as a psychiatric treatment center (you can find out more about it on Page 105.) He was guilty of crimes like sassing his teachers and staying out late, so his parents had him committed.

He misbehaved and acted up at Rainbow Acres, which is not a wise idea. They gave him lots of therapy, battering and twisting his mind with drugs that had horrendous, painful and humiliating side effects.

Dr. Myra Hluger, who was at that time the facility's chief physician, didn't so much want to control him or even to punish him. It was more that he had been unfortunate enough to catch her attention. He was particularly defiant, and looked especially comical staggering around drooling and spasming from the drugs, so she loaded him up as heavily as she could get away with. And perhaps just a little bit more.

Quite by accident, she hit the right combination of drugs, intimidation and trauma to unlock his superhuman powers. She later perfected this process and went on to use it to become rich and respected. But she didn't have time to study Dylan, who broke out of Rainbow Acres and went on a cross-country rampage. He has calmed down a bit since then, but he's still dangerous to be around.

Constantly manic and twitchy, he talks non-stop and his hands always seem to be in motion. He had Attention Deficit Disorder even before he got his powers and it's gotten a lot worse. He's a loud combatant, forever taunting his foes with hilarious, long-winded, nonsensical rants about how badly he's going to beat them up. But any scary-looking opponent sends him into a panic the moment they call his bluff. He's great at provoking trouble for

no reason, and even better at running away once it starts.

At the first sight of anyone who looks like a doctor, or worse, a psychotherapist, he goes into a shrieking frenzy of fear and flees. If confronted by a hero whose code-name starts with "Doctor" he will cautiously ask them if they're a doctor of psychiatry. If they say yes, he screams and runs.

Crude and ugly in his behavior toward women, he doesn't know how to talk to girls and they make him nervous, so he throws stuff at them and threatens them. But when he says he's going to "rape yer brain" he doesn't mean anything sexual by it. In fact he's scared of sex and wants nothing to do with it. He means that he's going to take control of your mind or send you ugly, frightening visions.

These days the Brain-Raper wanders around without much purpose or plan. He lives in hotels, mostly, ordering the staff to give him food and spa treatments. Afterwards he wipes out their memories of his having stayed there, and sometimes leaves them with weird compulsions. He steals whatever clothes he likes (he likes white tuxedos a lot) and wears a turban to cover the scars on his head where he once tried to cut out part of his brain (it didn't work.) While he has never actually killed anybody it's because he has never needed to. If cornered he's as vicious as a rat, capable of any deadly, crazy, desperate act. Surround him on a street corner and he'll order pedestrians to throw their kids into traffic, just to slow you down. And if he's sure that he's about to get captured, he'll try to hurt as many people as he can before you can stop him.

Using the Brain-Raper in Your Campaign:

Supervillains and organized crime have discovered a safe way to hire the Brain-Raper, and they sometimes use his services. A dedicated internet troll, he hangs around discussion boards, making stupid and disruptive comments everywhere from tabletop RPG discussion groups to sewing-club lists to academic forums on Noam Chomsky. You can contact him by responding to one of his posts with a private message, and while he doesn't need or use money, he enjoys going on missions and he'll take whatever job he's offered.

Hopelessly irresponsible, he can't be trusted to tie his own shoes without getting distracted, so mostly he gets hired to perform very simple tasks. "Create a diversion" is a typical Brain-Raper assignment.

You can use him as a very low-rent hireling, or he can come blundering into Bedlam on a rampage, with no particular plan in mind, or he can return to take his revenge against Rainbow Acres. It will be tough for him to achieve this last objective. He can't remember where the facility is located and anyway, if he did find it his crippling fear of therapists would make it hard for him to attack.

Sometimes he comes up with a grand master plan of his own, but his schemes never work or even make any sense.

Plagued by headaches that always seem to be getting worse, the Brain-Raper has begun to suspect that he's slowly dying. He's right.

HORRIBLE SECRETS

(for the GM Only)

It's all so much worse than you think! But isn't it always? In this section we have all the secrets too terrible to tell your players—things so awful that only the GM can be trusted with the knowledge. These are all strictly optional. Because your PCs will never read this section (in an ideal world, anyway) you have more leeway with these "facts" than you do with the rest of the book. So use them, ignore them or distort them as it suits you. Sometimes we'll even present you with multiple versions of the same awful secret. Because one just isn't awful enough.

Each section here purports to tell the "real truth" about something from the rest of the book, so look up the page reference at the beginning of the entry and read the public information about that thing, character or organization first, then skip back here to learn the rest of the story.

Denizens of Ash Street: Sergeant Martha Blaylock

Martha Blaylock doesn't know it, but she did a lot of administrative work for the sinister and secretive branch of the government that conspiracy theorists call the UNICORN (for more information on this shadowy conspiracy, see Page 86.) She still knows a lot of their procedures by heart. If you wanted to talk your way into some secret base that the UNICORN operates, and you convinced Martha to help you, she could probably help you bluff your way inside, if she keeps her wits together for long enough. She even still has her old uniform, tucked into her Air Force duffel bag.

The Bedlam Train Station

Locker #147 contains a dusty submachine gun and \$10,000 in hundred-dollar bills, none of them newer than 1970. Whoever left it there, all those years ago, they're probably not coming back.

There is even stranger stuff in the train station. The UNICORN used to use this place for message drops and to store emergency caches of weapons and equipment. Remodeling has destroyed all but one of them over the years. There is still a hidden compartment on the wall behind where the Information Desk now stands (spotting it takes a Notice roll at a -6—it's been painted over many times), which contains a rusted-out blaster carbine, placed there in 1968. The gun no longer works, but has a cool retro look—like something Jim Sternanko would have drawn.

The Smirlock Building

Norton M. Smirlock's daughter, Elvira Smirlock, exerted her influence over her father to have a troubled young architect named Myron Mordwell design his new bank building. As a founding member of the Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars, Elvira may not have had her father's best interests at heart—or those of Bedlam.

Mordwell's loathing for humanity was equaled only by his hatred for the entire natural world. How he longed for the happy day when it would all be paved over with concrete and reduced to a realm of perfect angles, where machines could thrum in endless, pointless rows for eternity!

Under Miss Smirlock's influence, the Sisterhood was able to coax young Mister Mordwell from neurosis into full-blown lunacy. Then at last he was in the right frame of mind to begin. With their occult advice and the right combination of genius and madness festering in his brain, he created a building that would act as a lens for malignant geomantical energies, twisting and warping the flow of the city's energies in a kind of horrible anti-feng-shui. He succeeded.

The Smirlock Building has worn a thin spot in the fabric of reality, where bad things sometimes seep through from outside. The building is almost alive and very nearly sentient—though its consciousness is so profoundly alien that it would be hard for a human being to communicate with. As time has passed the building has grown and changed to better suit its role as a focus for weird energies—it used to be just twenty-five stories tall and now it's thirty! Every now and then it eats somebody, or transports them to some dismal alien dimension.

Mordwell was its first victim—he threw himself off the roof the moment the skyscraper was complete. But his notebooks are still tucked in some quiet spot inside the building and they might reveal quite a bit about the Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars.

What role the Smirlock Building plays in the Sisterhood's plans remains the GM's choice. It depends a lot on what those plans are and on whether or not then Sisterhood is still around to execute them. If you like, the building can be a critical focusing point for their efforts to bring the Queen of Skulls into the world (see Page 309) or it can be the place where they perform their sinister rites. If they are still around, then quite a few of them live there and it has become something like their headquarters. It could even be that the building is itself is the fruition of their plans—that this is the thing which has been corrupting Bedlam and sapping its strength for all these years. If that's the case, then it may be a hard opponent for the Player Characters to fight. How do you battle a skyscraper? And how would you knock it

down without wrecking a good-sized chunk of the city?

Secrets of Stone Ridge: Doktor Gertrund Harder

Gertrund Harder was one of the Nazis' least ethical scientists. A clinical psychiatrist by training, she rose to prominence performing all sorts of radical new brain surgeries on prisoners and "genetic undesirables" (children, for the most part.) Then she put what she had learned to work as a weapons designer, building numerous devices that relied on disrupting the human psyche. By 1944, the Nazi elite grew desperate enough to let her try using them, but Germany collapsed before she could move any of them beyond the prototype phase. Most of her best work she did for the Americans after the war.

She's still alive, amazingly enough, watched over by US Marshals as a guest of the Witness Protection Program. She lives in a huge ugly house in Stone Ridge, surrounded by cuckoo clocks, ornamental beer steins and all kinds of other faux Bavarian folderol. By an odd coincidence, "Young Junior" Gorganzua lives just across the street.

Rosy-cheeked, hale and hearty at the age of one hundred, Doctor Harder uses the alias "Joy Lavish" and still leads an active life. A pediatrician, she divides her time between her private practice and ruling Stone Ridge Garden Club with an iron hand.

Despite her age, Doctor Lavish still sees patients every day, though she seldom gets the chance to hurt any of the little darlings very much. She looks sweet and grandmotherly and always calls everyone "Dear." Her eyes twinkle and her thick German accent only adds to her charm. Yet beneath her merry smile and cheerful demeanor she is as devoid of mercy as a cat, and just as unable to tolerate boredom. She's desperate to escape her knick-knack cluttered townhouse and Bedlam, and she'll cheerfully help anyone who comes to her with an evil scheme.

It may be confusing for your players to have to treat a sweet little old German lady like a supervillain. To emphasize the kind of person Gertrund Harder really is, the

GM might want to let the PCs' overhear the following reminiscence: *"Little Ari was such a clown, such a sweet little scamp of a Jew-child. He made all of us at the clinic laugh with his jokes and his winning ways. Until it was his turn, you know, to be dissected."*

Or something of the sort—she has a lot of happy memories like that from her days in the service of the Reich.

It might be ill-advised to tangle with her. Not only do the Federal Marshals have her under their protection, but she is a member of the ex-Nazi cabal called Der Oktopus, and a personal friend of its leader, the Black Eagle (see Page 314.) She also knows the location of at least one of her old wonder-weapons from the forties and believes she could have it functioning again within twelve hours. We leave the details of this fiendish device to the GM. It might not even still work.

Gertrund Harder
Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d6, Healing d8, Intimidate d8+2, Knowledge (Medicine) d10+2, Knowledge (Physiology) 1d10+2, Notice d8, Repair d8, Taunt d8+2

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 4

Edges: Arcane Background (Weird Science), Charismatic, Command, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist being Intimidated or Taunted), Gadgeteer, Scholar

Hindrances: Elderly, Heartless, Quirk (Immoral, depraved monster and sweet little old lady at the same time)

Super Powers: Inventor

Father Dennis and the Celestial Spirit Fellowship

Father Dennis has never trusted the Bedlam Department of Child Protective Services. He trusts them even less now that they're managed by Happy Hands (see Pages 37 and 145.) Because he feels that someone ought to do something about this situation, Dennis has quietly been running his own, separate foster care network, getting orphaned children into the hands of parents who will love and take care of them. His

network spreads invisibly across the country, although he only has the resources to help a dozen or so children a year. He's particularly good at placing parahuman kids—children who have developed or may develop superhuman powers.

How he manages to get paperwork for his kids remains a mystery to everyone in his network, but the papers he provides are always unimpeachably solid. None of them realize that he is working with the vigilante known as Nocturne. Which explains where he gets the papers and why they're so good.

Nocturne used to work for the UNICORN and has the capacity to get airtight identity papers for anyone. He keeps his involvement in this project very quiet, just as he does all of his activities. It probably wouldn't surprise anyone who knows him to learn that he was the one who alerted the state authorities to the black-market baby ring operating out of the Department of Child Protective Services, or that he had to blackmail and physically intimidate someone from the Governor's office to get it done.

"Big Chuck" O'Ryan

The stat block listed under his entry is a total lie. In fact, Big Chuck is the vigilante known as the Hammer of Justice, and uses those stats instead (see Page 279.) He's just as crooked and vicious in his costumed identity. He's also gauche enough to spend a lot of time in his civilian identity talking about how great he thinks the Hammer of Justice is.

The Bedlam Mob suspects that Big Chuck and the Hammer are one and the same. But they don't really care, so long as they both share a cut of the proceeds and follow orders.

Where Does Assault Squad Keep Captured Superhumans?

This is one of the city's most closely guarded secrets. To keep your PCs guessing, we're going to give you multiple options here. Use just one, or use all three, or use one and then have them resort to another option as a backup plan, if the Player Characters bust up their main facility.

1: Corporation Yard

After Bedlam's Department of Public Works got privatized, their huge old facility at Corporation Yard was mothballed (see Page 23.) It's still there, down at the end of Industrial Drive. The main building was constructed in the 1930s and it has a kind of grandiose Art Deco look to it. Officially the police still keep helicopters here (see Page 59) but in fact they have another, far more secret use for the Yard. In the basement of the main building are a group of about twenty suspended-animation tubes, which the city recovered from the effects of a defeated supervillain called Damocles Faust. No one is precisely sure how they function (in fact three of the tubes don't work quite right, and can badly injure anyone confined there) but they know how to activate them. Assault Squad keeps supervillains with really dangerous innate powers locked up inside until it's time for them to stand trial. Then they shoot them up with sedatives, load them into a waiting helicopter and hope for the best. Faust also left them some power-suppression manacles which they can use to immobilize prisoners in transit, but these are prone to sudden inexplicable failures, so they prefer to rely on sedatives when they can. If you have decided to use the "Crawley Cocktail" option outlined on Page 266 to give the authorities more power when dealing with superhumans, then they will definitely use it as well.

2: The Citadel

The headquarters of the defunct superhero group "Justice Xtreme" sits half-completed downtown. See Page 283 for the unfortunate history of the team. Mr. Xtreme wanted to build a supervillain holding facility in his headquarters and he had it about half-finished when the team collapsed in violence and lawsuits. There are fifteen cells in the basement that are designed to negate the powers of various different types of superhumans. Cells made of super-tough alloys to defeat ultra-strong villains. Psi-proof cells and flame-proof cells and all kinds of other such technology. Most of them still work, and the Assault Squad holds superhumans here until they're ready to stand trial.

No one really knows where Mr. Xtreme got this technology—although it seems likely that he just inherited it when he took over the team. Whether or not it's his, he wants it back. Right now the ownership of the holding cells is tied up in litigation and the City of Bedlam isn't technically allowed to send anyone within a hundred and fifty feet of them. Assault Squad gets around the court order by ignoring it, and not telling anyone. If the ownership of the fifteen power-suppression units is ever resolved, they may find themselves in an awkward position, particularly if the cells get repossessed with live supervillains inside.

If the Player Characters themselves intend to take up residence in the Citadel, it might make for an interesting plot complication when they encounter a team from the Assault Squad trying to hide a captured supervillain in their basement. Perhaps they could actually work out a way to share the facility, and perhaps cooperate in other ways as well. At the very least, it would give the PCs something they could blackmail the Bedlam Police Department with. And what superhero couldn't use a little extra leverage with the cops?

3: Berth 13

There is a mysterious ship in Bedlam Harbor that never seems to leave its dock. As noted on Page 381, the Assault Squad may be using it to hold superhuman prisoners.

As that section explains, the Bedlam police lack the resources to build and staff such a facility. In fact the government agency called the UNICORN has been using it to store supervillains in suspended animation capsules since the sixties. They let the Assault Squad use it, too—it's easier that way for both of them. The UNICORN may have forgotten about a few of the villains in their charge, down on the lower decks.

Obviously, you shouldn't use this option if you already plan on using the "Berth 13" rumor for something else.

Other Options: The containment facility could be located under the Liberty Shoppes Mall. This would certainly explain why the Bedlam city government tries so hard to keep the mall open, and why they've hired

such a heavy security contractor (see page 163.)

If the UNICORN (see Page 86) has a secret base near Bedlam, the Assault Squad may not even need to have a containment facility of its own. In this case, they may just turn all their superhuman captives over to representatives of that sinister, shadowy organization. This may in fact be what the black busses (see Page 269) are carrying.

It could also be that Assault Squad has struck a devil's bargain with some arch-villain (possibly Master-Bot, if you want to choose one from this book.) In this case, they would have an agreement where the villain holds onto any superhumans they capture. In exchange, the Bedlam Police won't interfere with the master-villain's plans

Operation Salami

Back in 1942, as America was entering the Second World War, the federal government struck a deal with the Bedlam Mafia. They offered the Mob immunity from prosecution in exchange for keeping Nazi spies and saboteurs out of Bedlam Harbor. They also wanted the Mafia to prevent any strikes or other union activity that might slow down work (in fact strike-busting was the most important part of the deal—no one seriously expected a lot of spies or Bundists to show up in Bedlam.)

This deal worked pretty well. But it didn't end on VE Day. In fact, the FBI continued to have contact with the Bedlam Mafia all through the 1950s, intermittently using their help to crush pinkos and labor agitators. Eventually the last of the FBI agents assigned to "Operation Salami" retired and the unauthorized contacts ceased. However, the Gorganzua crime family still has enough evidence stashed away to implicate the feds. If the federal government ever comes down hard on them, they'll release it and cause a scandal. It won't help that the FBI used the insulting, culturally insensitive name "Operation Salami."

Rick Falcone, the Acting Special Agent in Charge of Bedlam's FBI office (you can find out more about Rick on Page 84), knows all about Operation Salami. It's why

he hasn't been quicker to act against the Gorganzua Family, despite having a couple of really prize informants on the inside. He wants to find a way to neutralize the evidence, but he's not sure how. He also doesn't know how much the Scarpia family might have (in fact they don't have any physical evidence at all, though they certainly remember Operation Salami.)

Rainbow Acres Treatment Center

The GM has three separate options for the secret location of Bedlam's juvenile psychiatric care facility.

1) It's located on the upper floors of the same skyscraper where the business offices are located. The vans just drive the kids around for a while to disorient them, then head straight back into the parking garage.

2) Rainbow Acres is located in a single large, unmarked building on a back road near the Chinch Bug Bar and Grill. It looks like an office building. No fence or wall surrounds the facility, since the kids inside never even get close to a door. Despite what kids who've been imprisoned there will tell you, there are plenty of windows on the building. The patients are kept deeper inside and never get to see them.

3) The treatment center used to be located in the woods near the Chinch Bug, but they found an irresistible new lease in some of the unused space on the lowest level of the Liberty Shoppes mall.

Things at Rainbow Acres are slightly worse than they appear to be. Butch Dinkle is still an active member of the street gang called the Viscounts, and he makes sure that his fellow gang members get special treatment while they're inside, and that they can treat the other kids however they like. He also runs the hospital's underground drug traffic. But the hospital has an even shadier connection.

Shreve's predecessor, Dr. Myra Hluger, took an interest in psychiatric research. She also figured out a way to make insurance pay for some very

expensive experimental drugs that the pharmaceutical companies wanted tested. She tinkered with this new combination of drugs and that. It caused some interesting reactions. It also activated one young patient's latent psychic powers. There was an ugly incident (see the "Brain-Raper" on Page 354.)

Shortly thereafter, the UNICORN got in touch (to find out more about this shadowy government agency, see Page 86.) They wanted to propose a deal. Any kids who suddenly manifest superpowers at Rainbow Acres will immediately get turned over to the UNICORN for study. In exchange, they will offer their assistance in catching and containing any such threats.

This arrangement has worked well. Dr. Hluger was enticed to come work for the UNICORN in some unnamed capacity as a researcher, although she gave it up within a couple of years to accept a much more highly-paid position as a Vice President at a pharmaceutical company.

Elementary 113

They say that unscrupulous people in the state government may have been hiding toxic waste in urban settings. Whether or not that's true, someone has been hiding it in the Country Club.

Public School 113 has been closed for years, its doors chained shut, its windows boarded over. Tattered yellow signs read: "No Trespassing. Chemical Hazard." The signs are right. The school's basement is filled with rusting oil drums of toxic waste. Trucks no longer arrive to drop off the unmarked barrels, so it would be hard to investigate just who has been storing them here. Whoever they were, they almost certainly did it with the connivance of corrupt local authorities.

Only one person has the keys to the locked chains across the doors. It's not a member of the city government.

The state welfare office hands out work assignments here to punish clients

they don't like. Officially the job title is "School Janitor." They never stay long once they find out what kind of school they've been assigned to. The present janitor (and holder of the keys) is Clevon Jackson, a middle-aged alcoholic who has no objections to working here, for he cares about nothing at all. If you can locate him, he'll gladly show you around E113, unless he's feeling ornery.

Whether or not any of the monstrous toxic glop kept here has the power to create giant mutant cockroaches (or worse things—like Pre-Pubescent Kung-Fu Geckos!) it could certainly cause a dandy political scandal. The kind that could make the mob start killing people.

Adventure Seed at ES 113

Here's a scenario you can run right after the PCs talk with Clevon Jackson and find out about the barrels in the basement of School 113. Clevon talks to the PCs as they walk down Shadwell Drive after leaving the school, holding forth about various subjects in an angry drunken slur (he's actually pretty funny when he gets on a rant, so play this up.) They walk past Jimmy Hoover's rusted out van, which sits up on blocks by the curb. Jimmy has taped a sign on one window that says "Shadwell Drive Gentlemen's Club, Serious Drinkers Wanted"

"Hey Clevon!" Jimmy yells out the window "You got to get with the club!"

"#@%& you!" Clevon replies, just he does every day.

"Haw!" a gravelly voice chuckles from further back in the van "that Clevon! Wotta bum!"

As they reach the end of the block, Clevon turns to go back to work. But as he walks up the street, a big black Cadillac pulls up next to him and a couple of heavies from the Scarpia family leap out and seize him.

"You got a big mouth!" the one with the mullet snarls. The one with the shaved head and the goatee adds "Yeah!"

The old man has no fear of death and he laughs and cusses and struggles with them as they force him into the car.

It should be no trouble at all for the PCs to run the car down and beat up the mooks inside. But once they do, all hell is going to break loose in the Country Club. When word reaches Dapper Donny that Clevon Jackson has talked to the capes, and that they've found the drums, he's going to hire every supervillain he can get ahold of and then leave town while they go after Clevon and the PCs. But if these hired super-thugs come close to hurting or hassling Jimmy Hoover, they'll have a much worse enemy on their hands—see Page 307.

If Eat-'em-Up Jack himself gets involved, the Scarpas will hire Smashface to deal with him, and then try hard to stay out of the way. And if a major villain like Doc Zombie (see Page 311) has already taken up residence in the neighborhood, he won't be pleased by all the commotion on his doorstep, and will take action of his own.

Greely Bridge

A lot of the money that's officially gone to maintaining the bridge has vanished into the pockets of Big Andy Czernik's family and the Bedlam Mob. As a result, the whole bridge has become dangerously unsound. There are a number of people in the city's upper echelons who know that there may be a problem with the bridge—the state authorities have complained about it more than once. However, their response to the problem has been to bribe the inspectors and intimidate the press into ignoring it. This has worked pretty well so far, but it's not going to keep working if the bridge comes tumbling down.

There is an additional complication. A former inspector named Ralph Fordyce got hounded out of his career for talking too loudly about the bridge. These days he doesn't leave his

house much (it's just off Ash Street.) Fordyce is determined to show everyone that the bridge isn't safe—to throw it right in the faces of all the jerks who mocked him. And all the guys in high school who picked on him as a math nerd, too. Soon, the city will feel the wrath of—Dr. Vengeance!

Adventure Seed: Hour of Vengeance

Ralph Fordyce decides that his hour has finally come. They laughed, they mocked, but now he'll show them all!

First, to get everyone's attention, he sets a bomb off in front of the boarded-up City Hall. On the wall behind where the bomb goes off, he has written the words "ARE YOU SAFE?" in gigantic letters. He has signed his name, "Doctor Vengeance" at the bottom.

Then he calls local radio DJ "Vampire Steve" Kravitz on the air and says "This is Doctor Vengeance. Are you safe?" There is an explosion in the background. He has just set off a bomb at the base of the Gorman Tower.

Over the next three days he will set off more bombs and more public locations, and leave clues at the scene for any Player Character who wants to try tracking him down. Unfortunately, like most really obsessed people, he's terribly self-absorbed and the clues he leaves are almost indecipherable to anyone but himself.

His voice, if the PCs hear it, doesn't sound like a typical mad scientist. He sounds fairly young, and talks like a working-class guy. While the PCs are puzzling over his clues, he calls them and angrily asks why they haven't figured out his clues yet. It's the bridge, he explains, the Greely Bridge. He's there right now and he needs them to come stop him before a lot of people die.

The Player Characters and the news crews arrive just in time to witness a serious crisis. Doctor Vengeance has spent the past few weeks putting bombs

all along the bridge's structural supports. He's strapped a bomb to himself as well, and he's down under the bridge right now, threatening to blow it up. The SWAT teams are having a very hard time getting into a position where they can target him, and anyway they're afraid that if they shoot him it will set off the bomb and trigger a collapse.

A Repair or Investigate roll reveals that his bombs are placed at strategic weak points in the bridge's structure—and there seem to be a lot of them. Way too many, in fact. This bridge is in seriously bad shape!

He's demanding to speak with the PCs and with local reporter Rona Romita (see her description on Page 173.) The authorities don't want to allow this, but you know the PCs will try to do it anyway.

Ms. Romita wants to go with them and will offer them a deal. If they bring her up under the bridge when they confront Doctor Vengeance, she'll give them favorable press coverage whenever she can.

When they confront Doctor Vengeance, he will tell them his whole story, in perhaps more detail than they want to hear (he's kind of obsessive-compulsive.) He wants to blow the bridge up this way, he says, after it's been cleared of traffic, so that it doesn't collapse and take a lot of innocent people with it. But he doesn't want it to be known as the suicidal act of a madman, either. People have to know, to understand why he did it.

The Player Characters will have some difficult choices to make. If the story does actually come out, the PCs will have made powerful enemies downtown. It will also have gained them a temporary and unreliable ally in the person of Rona Romita. If they manage to take Doctor Vengeance into custody, he won't live long in the hands of the Bedlam City police.

Doctor Vengeance



Doctor Vengeance

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d10, Intimidate d6+2, Knowledge (Engineering) d8, Notice d6, Repair d10, Taunt d6+2

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5 (1 armor)

Hindrances: Gloater, Mean, Quirk (obsessive-compulsive), Vengeful

Edges: Mister Fix-it, Strong Will (-2 to all efforts to Intimidate or Taunt)

Gear: Armored Costume (1 Armor), Repair Kit, Detonators, Gobs of Explosives, Huge Backpack-Mounted Bomb (4d6 damage, Large Burst Template)

The Serpent Room

There are number of ways that a GM can use the Serpent Room. You can make it a mysterious portal to weird and loathsome dimensions, for which no explanation is ever found. Unpleasant things can come slithering out of it. Supervillains can try to hijack it and use its power for sinister plans of their own. Player Characters can use it to sneak in through Hell's back door.

Alternatively, you can present it as an active menace that the PCs have to shut down before it contaminates the world or lets some obscenity from beyond get in and

start conquering things. If that's the case, you're going to need more of a back-story. We have one below, presented courtesy of John Polojac.

While most people enter the Serpent Room through the Lurman Gallery, there are a few other entrances and exits. If you wander around its nooks and ante-chambers long enough, you can find a portal that leads into an upstairs closet in a deserted house in the Country Club. Another one leads to the thirtieth floor of the Smirlock Building downtown (see Page 356.) Another one leads to a shed in Lucius Hardwick's back yard. Another leads out of a locker in the Bedlam Train Station (it's easy to unlock from the inside.) Another leads to the forlorn little pagoda on the grounds of the Crawley Asylum (see Page 102)—although this portal is seldom open. And for some reason, there is also an opening leading to and from the most cluttered-up and inaccessible corner of Fat Planet Comics (See Page 155.)

Brave and savvy Player Characters may come to use the Serpent Room as a kind of secret highway, linking different areas of Bedlam together when they need to get across town fast. But be warned—portals that lead to all sorts of unsavory dimensions are buried further back in the Serpent Room's recesses, and every time you venture into its depths there's a chance you'll meet with some horrible thing that has come shuffling in from the beyond.

Here are some stats for the room, if you need them, but don't regard these as fixed in stone.

Toughness: 18

Attributes: Smarts d10, Spirit d12

Skills: Intimidate d8, Notice d8

Powers:

- **Teleport** (Others)
- **Illusions** (32" Cubed, Targeted)

A Horrible Thing From Beyond



Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12+1

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d6, Swimming d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9

Special Abilities:

- **Ageless (Very Old).**
- **Claws/Teeth:** Str+2, Heavy Weapon.
- **Darkvision:** Suffers no darkness penalties.
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Frenzy:** May make an additional attack at -2 to Fighting rolls.
- **Intangibility:** Can't attack while Intangible, but can only be hurt by magical attacks while in this state
- **True Regeneration:** May make a Natural Healing roll once per round.
- **Size +1:** The Thing is bigger than a normal human being
- **Hindrances:** Alien Form, Disabled (no hands), Habit (eats sentient life), Quirk (acts like a Loathly abomination from beyond infinity), Ugly

A Back-Story and Adventure Seed (Suggested by John Polojac)

Forrest Howling Phipps lay slumped in an opium daze, sprawled across one of G. Morgan Stark's most expensive divans and the back of a girl whose name he could not recall. He tried to remember if opium was all he had taken—had there been something else? Something more exotic? Then the vision slammed into his brain with the force of a thunderbolt.

A terrible ophidian monster pursued him, through an endless maze that folded back in on itself at impossible angles. The beast was a reptile that walked like a man. A horror of scales and fangs. Yet its ghastly slitted eyes gleamed with a malice that was something worse than a mere predator's lust to devour. It hated him. Why would it hate him?

Through the winding turns Phipps ran, slipping and stumbling as the implacable monster gained ground. Why did it wear a smoking jacket? There was no time to wonder. The thing was upon him. It seized him in its scaly paws. It ripped, it rent, it hissed with fury. The agony was astonishing—wasn't he supposed to wake before he died in a dream? And wake he did, to find his hair turned partly white and the girl beneath him screaming.

He had seen the moment of his death. In a panic, he set to work, building a room where the thing couldn't find him—with niches and corners and hiding places outside of space and time itself. He had to take more and more of that other drug (what was it called? The Black Lotus?) to do it, had to make terrible deals with the Chinaman who supplied his needs, but at long last the Serpent Room was finally complete.

But so was his doom. G. Morgan Stark returned from abroad to find his trust violated and his house a mess. In a blind fury he pursued Forrest Howling Phipps into the depths of the Serpent Room, lashing at him with a buggy whip. And as he blundered through the room's weird deeps, its power and his anger began to distort him, warp him into something less than human—and more. He grew scales and fangs and monstrous rippling muscles and a

great lashing tail. He became, in fact, the very creature that Phipps had seen in his vision.

Through the winding turns Phipps ran, slipping and stumbling as the implacable monster gained ground. Why did it wear a smoking jacket? There was no time to wonder. The thing was upon him. It seized him in its scaly paws. It ripped, it rent, it hissed with fury. The agony was astonishing...

The Serpent Room dreams uneasily. It doesn't like the anomaly in its guts—the time-loop lurking at its core. If the Player Characters get inside, they may be able to break the loop, going back in time to the moment when it first started and saving Forrest Howling Phipps. The room itself may provide them with a passage back in time to do this, and send them visions that explain what it needs.

However, to go back they will first have to get past G. Morgan Stark. These days he calls himself the Serpent King, and he has no desire to be edited out of reality, or turned back into a mere mortal with a bald patch and a bad back. Long years in the Serpent Room have made him terribly formidable, and he will do his best to stop the PCs. And of course they'll have to fight him again once they go into the past and try to keep Phipps out of his scaly clutches (although he won't be as tough here.)

Meddling PCs ought to be warned. If they break the time loop without finding some way to send Phipps the vision that made him create the Serpent Room in the first place, they run the risk of editing it out of history altogether, and it will vanish with them inside. No one will remember that it ever existed. If this happens they will need to be rescued, or to enter one of the other dimensions accessible through the room and find their way home from there. Of course, most of them are the kinds of places that you'd like even less than the Serpent Room itself.

There is also a risk that the Serpent King might rouse himself from his self-satisfied reptilian torpor and start taking an interest in the world beyond his room, once the PCs get his attention.

The Serpent King (Now)



The Serpent King (Now)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d8, Notice d4, Stealth d6, Throwing d8

Charisma: -6; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 11

Hindrances: All Thumbs, Clueless, Distinctive Appearance, Mean, Heartless

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Fleet-Footed, Power Points, Take the Hit!

Super Powers:

- Attack, Melee (4): +2d6
- Darkvision
- Growth (1): Size +1, Monster
- Heightened Senses (1)
- Jinx
- Super Attributes: (Super strength)
- Super Sorcery: Level 3
- Teleport: Teleport Others
- Toughness (7): +2, Hardy

The Serpent King (Then)

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate

d8, Notice d4, Stealth d6, Throwing d8

Charisma: -6; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 11

Hindrances: All Thumbs, Clueless, Distinctive Appearance, Mean, Heartless

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Fleet-Footed, Power Points, Take the Hit!

Super Powers:

- Attack, Melee (4): +2d6
- Darkvision
- Growth (1): Size +1, Monster
- Heightened Senses (1)
- Super Attributes: (Super strength)
- Toughness (7): +2, Hardy

A Different Back-Story

No one in Society likes to discuss the details of Doctor Phminster Lurman's death. The truth of the matter is that he simply disappeared one day, while sitting in the Serpent Room. Some years later he was declared dead, but to his family's dismay, his foundation inherited all his money and used it to preserve his shameful museum. His descendants actually had to suffer the indignity of making their own fortunes, and while they did, they don't like to talk about why. Very few people in Bedlam know the real story.

This is as he likes it. Doctor Lurman sits deep in the Serpent Room, his own death suspended as he floats outside of time. He can see the whole world up here, from the killing fields of Burma to the blood-soaked wastes of Darfur to the secret graves of Argentina to the glorious city of Bedlam. Mankind killing and killing in a frenzy of wild mad joy, back to the dawn of time. It's all so beautiful—it's a whole new level of pornography. But even this is beginning to lose its kick. He's starting to wonder if he should start opening doors to even more entertaining dimensions and let the things that live there come scampering through into our own reality.

Doctor Lurman

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d8, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) d8, Notice d10, Spellcasting d12

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Elderly, Heartless, Quirk (depraved voyeur with no plans beyond the present moment)

Edges: Tough, Telepathy, Arcane Background (Super Powers), Power Points,

Super Powers:

- Ageless (1)
- Awareness (2): Requires Activation
- Darkvision
- Deflection: -5 to hit with Ranged Attacks
- Jinx (2)
- Super Sorcery: Level 3
- Teleport: Teleport Others

Gorgah the Lady-Killer

This psychotic 900 pound gorilla has been one of the Bedlam Zoo's biggest attractions for years. People love to taunt him, for he goes into spectacular rages. Old, bitter and dangerously disturbed, he's much more aggressive than any normal gorilla. He's also much larger, weighing in at a spectacular 900 pounds.

Filled with hatred for the entire world, only one dim hope keeps him alive. A long time ago, a little boy teased Gorgah into such a violent rage that he threw a tantrum and beat his mate to death. She was his first love, his only love, the only thing in the entire hateful universe that he didn't want to smash. And he killed her. He was never quite sane after that. For decades, he has waited to see that little boy again, but he has never come. When and if he does, Gorgah has plans for him. He's aware that the boy must be an adult by now, but he's sure he'd recognize him (and he's right.) When next they meet, Gorgah plans to yank the boy's wife or child through the bars, and then pull them apart as slowly and horribly as he can. Then perhaps he'll give in to the impulse he has felt for so long and beat himself to death against the walls of his cage.

To complicate matters further, the little boy is City Councilman Andy Czernik. Traumatized by the sight of Gorgah bashing his mate to death, he has always avoided the zoo since that day. But if for some reason he had to attend a political event or fundraiser at the zoo, Gorgah might come face-to-face with his nemesis at last. In the meant time, there are plenty of other plots you can use Gorgah for.

The Office of Tax Assessment

Journalists who track Bedlam's corruption tend to assume that this office is a dumping ground for incompetent friends and relatives of the Czernik Machine. A place where any lazy idiot or ne'er-do-well can draw a paycheck in exchange for their family's loyalty. But in fact something far more sinister is going on here. The office's Operation Manger, Ginny Pusey (Gladys Tork's second-in-command) has been approving fraudulent tax-refund checks to shell businesses that are owned on paper by her relatives. The money then gets transferred out of those accounts into the hands of dubious parties across the city. Over the past ten years they have stolen close to thirty million dollars. It's the single largest crooked deal the city has going and the Bedlam Mafia's largest single source of funds.

The scam itself is surprisingly simple. One of Ginny Pusey's assistants, Roberta Starkey or Dolly Boyle (both of whom are her cousins) sets up a fake company in the name of one of their relatives. Then they issue a tax refund check directly to the fake company's account. One or the other of them walks it down to the bank in person and deposits it, so there is no record of a wire transfer. Then they pull the money out of the dummy corporation's account and send it wherever the Czernik Machine and the Scarpia crime family need it sent.

The phony corporations are extremely flimsy. They haven't bothered to register or incorporate any of them. Nor have they written up any tax paperwork for them (tax returns, etc.) They just issue the checks. Any detailed search of their offices by someone looking for documentation on

the phony companies will quickly reveal that there isn't any. In fact one suspicious bank manager or even a teller could upset the whole scheme.

Amazingly, in ten years only one bank manager has ever questioned the transactions, and Dolly Boyle swiftly intimidated her into backing down. If someone does start asking awkward questions, and doesn't get shouted into submission on the spot, their life will be in danger.

Only Ginny Pusey, her family, a network of ten or so other office workers and the highest-ranking members of the Czernik machine know about this scheme. If a PC manages to expose it, Andy Czernik will suffer a serious blow.

Ginny Pusey has never signed any of the checks herself, but she's coordinating the whole scheme right under Gladys Tork's nose. Poor Ms. Tork is far too lost in her own emotional problems to pay much attention to what's happening in the office around her. This will make her a good scapegoat if the scam ever gets exposed and the forces that rule Bedlam need to throw someone to the wolves.

Gladys Tork

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d4, Notice d4, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Connections, Frenzy, Rich

Hindrances: Clueless, Habit (drinking problem), Quirk (wild mood swings, cries often, sometimes hits people)

Gear: Big ugly house, big ugly SUV, big ugly jewelry

Background: A long time ago, back in high school, Gladys Tork got bullied into becoming a kind of "girlfriend at large" for the Stark Hill street gang called the Coronets. She still bears a lot of physical and emotional scars from the years she spent with them—perhaps a little brain damage, too. Sometimes she's not completely coherent and is unsure what's going on around her.

City Councilman "Big Andy" Czernik was a member of the Coronets in those days and he's always tried to look out for Gladys

in the years since. He got her the job as the head of this office. She's far too addled and out-of-it to follow what's really going on. She's prone to outbursts of anger and weeping as well as sloppy, overly generous attacks of sentimentality. No one in the office likes her at all, which will make it easier to make her the scapegoat when the scam finally gets revealed. Big Andy will feel bad about having her sent off to prison, but then again he already feels a lot of regret about having done far worse things to her as a teenager, and he survived that, too.

She lives in a big, untidy house in the Stone Ridge gated community with her mother, who takes care of her when she's too crazy to go in to work.

Ginny Pusey

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d10, Intimidation d8+2, Knowledge (City Procedures) d10, Knowledge (Finance) d8, Knowledge (Law) d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6, Taunt d6+2, Throwing d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Connections, Rich, Strong Will (+2 to resist the effects of Intimidation or Taunt)

Hindrances: Heartless, Mean, Vengeful

Gear: Huge Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, Armor-Piercing 2, Rate of Fire 1), License for huge pistol, inexpensive cell phone, oversized purse to carry huge pistol, license and cell phone in.

Background: Virginia "Ginny" Pusey has taken crap about her name all her life, and it has made her a sour, vindictive person. She knew Gladys Tork in high school, but didn't hang out with the same crowd. Ginny was a social outcast because of her awful name and never got to hang out with the popular kids (of course, Gladys wound up being a little *too* popular, but Ginny still resents her for it.)

Small, sharp-featured and beady-eyed, she affects a completely false and exaggerated friendliness which puts most people off. If vexed or thwarted, she keeps her horrible death-rictus smile in place and begins to plot revenge. She's capable of

murder, although she has never done it, yet. Once her back is to the wall, who knows?

She presently lives with her husband and sons in the old neighborhood in Stark Hill. Her spouse and boys are scared to death of her.

Detective Johnny Valentine

It would be easy for the PCs to come to rely on friendly, helpful Detective Valentine. That would be a grave mistake. If you examine his court records, a disturbing pattern emerges almost immediately. Valentine is so good at giving testimony, so persuasive and poised on the witness stand, that the city keeps him in court constantly. He barely has time for any detective work. In fact, considering just how many cases he given evidence in and how little time he spends on the street, he can't possibly have been involved in all the cases where he's giving testimony.

For as the Bedlam Police have discovered, Johnny Valentine is a chronic, pathological liar. He'll say anything about anyone they tell him to, and say it convincingly. He has no PhD, has completed none of the advanced coursework in Law and Criminal Justice that he claims. His false testimony has sent a great many innocent people to prison—and a great many guilty ones, too.

If you get to know Johnny, you'll find that he's a big silly kid at heart, eager for attention and desperate to please, constantly making up stories and anecdotes as they occur to him. He likes superheroes a lot and would love to attach himself to one, helping them crack cases, testifying for them in court, going on adventures with them if he can. He's too shallow to experience a lot of fear and he can talk his way into or out of nearly anything. But you still wouldn't want him on your side. Johnny can't keep his lies up forever. Eventually he's going to get caught and every case where he's ever testified will get called into question. This means that if the PCs have ever relied on

him to help put criminals away, they are all going to be back on the street at once.

At the DA's office they are only half aware of Johnny's problem with lying. They know he'll say anything they tell him to on the witness stand, true or not. But they aren't aware that his academic credentials are fake, and this could unexpectedly jeopardize everything. If some reporter or defense attorney thinks to probe too deeply into his background, they may expose him before the DA has time for a cover-up, and send the whole house of cards tumbling down. Frankly, it's amazing that no one has already.

Telepathic PCs may catch on to Johnny pretty quick. Anyone else might try visiting him at home. His wife is a tall beautiful woman who is as vain and selfish and shallow as Johnny himself. His oldest daughter, Lenore, is much the same. But the twins, Chauntel and Chauntay, regard their dad with total eye-rolling contempt and will gladly tell anyone who visits about how he's always telling stories.

The DA's Office

Assistant DA Ronnie Hagstrom has a sinister secret lurking in his past. In college, he and his fraternity brothers got so drunk they gang-raped some nerdy guy who was walking home late. The nerd killed himself shortly thereafter, so Hagstrom doesn't have to worry about him talking. But the possibility that one of the other frat boys might have an attack of conscience still worries him. For that reason, he keeps careful track of his college buddies. If one of them gets really depressed he might just send Detective Slope around to kill them. And that could set off a scandal that would make the Kim Casteel matter look trivial.

Dave "The Filthy Beast" Odnarski

Unbeknownst to himself, Dave Odnarski is one of the most powerful psychics ever to walk the face of the earth. He's strong enough to warp reality completely, and he's so terrified of this fact that he has

buried it in his unconscious. He will never, ever use the power willingly. In fact he doesn't know how, doesn't even remember that he has it. But sometimes it leaks out, and creates things from the deep recesses of his brain.

This power to unconsciously re-edit reality is a total plot device. You couldn't convincingly simulate it in game terms—for one thing it has no limits. Dave can build whole new universes with his mind. In fact he may have built this one. He created the angel with fifty eyes that came to Captain Violent and Doctor Stupid and granted them their powers (see Pages 332-335.) He created Doctor Boogie (see Pages 351 and 389.) He made Master-Bot (see Page 348.) Unless of course you decide that someone else did. If he were ever to die, all of his creations would vanish or lose their powers.

His creations seem totally real, because they are. He has re-edited reality to include them. Nor does he read positive for superpowers himself. He has edited them out of the world. He can't even use them to defend himself. If the GM wants, Dave might unconsciously summon up some weird thing from his unconscious to protect him if he were in mortal danger, but then again he might not. And he's entirely mortal, these days. If he dies, he dies, and he takes all his creations with him.

He's edited his own life pretty thoroughly, but in what other ways has he changed reality? If the GM likes the idea, perhaps the world we know is a second draft. Perhaps Dave Odnarski actually tried to use his powers, had all kinds of adventures, made terrible mistakes and thoroughly goofed-up the world. Desperate to undo the damage and guilty about the awful things he had done, he frantically wished he had never discovered his powers, that he had instead become some carefree nobody, of no consequence to anyone, powerless and happy. And so it was. Every change he made to reality

unknitted itself and he became Dave the Filthy Beast with Your Morning Zoo.

Or not. The GM can reject this if it would complicate the back-story of their game world too much.

Do the PCs have any chance of finding out about Dave? This too is up to the GM. It can be inconvenient for your PCs to have an omnipotent ally. If they have powers like Telepathy, Mind-Control or the ability to transform other characters they may decide to forcibly remove his mental blocks and put him in touch with his true self. If they are cunning enough to do this, and you don't want to have to deal with the consequences, then the moment Dave is remade he remakes himself again. Either he undoes everything, goes back to being plain old Dave and the PCs remember nothing (although their Players certainly will) or he turns into a glowing humanoid shape, too bright to look at directly, cries "I see Everything! I Am Everything! I Am... the Infinite Man!" And vanishes forever, transcending this feeble little reality and becoming something utterly beyond it.

If the GM wants the PCs to stumble over Dave's true nature, here is a clue they might find. If they travel back in time to before 1992, Dave doesn't exist. His birth and tax records appear, fully formed and completely real, in February of 1992.

The Calabria Workingmen's Benevolent Association

This social club has done a lot of good for Bedlam's Italian-Americans over the years. As the name implies, they limit their membership to Calabrians—Sicilians are not welcome in their ranks and neither are northern Italians. Yet they have worked to benefit the whole community and not just their own members.

The club is exactly what it claims to be, and isn't a front for anything. They have assiduously kept the Mafia out of their ranks, for fear that they would loot the Association's finances. For their part, most of Bedlam's Mafisosi respect the

Association and the good work it's done on behalf of the whole community and they leave it alone.

Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars



A long, long time ago, a terrible thing happened to the students at the Bedlam Ladies' Academy and the school closed for good. The girls who survived determined to have their revenge. It took them thirty-two years, and a lot of terrible bargains, but by 1951 they had at last found the occult power to accomplish it.

The exact nature of their plan is up to the GM, as is the sisterhood's current status. The girls of their school were offered up as a sacrifice to the ghost of Zebediah Scarlett, Bedlam's dubious founder, in exchange for not destroying the city. In fact he wouldn't and couldn't have destroyed the city itself (see Page 305) but he might have wreaked havoc on Bedlam's oldest and most distinguished families, so they gave up their daughters to appease him. The remaining girls decided to avenge themselves and their departed sisters by either summoning a whopping great monster to devour Bedlam, or conjuring up some kind of slow, creeping malaise to rot the city out from the inside. In either case this was a long-term plan, and the original members of the Sisterhood didn't expect to live to see it come to fruition.

If the plan was to slowly poison Bedlam with some kind of supernatural corruption, then it may actually have been happening since 1951. If the plan was to summon a city-destroying monstrosity,

then the monster may arrive any day now. In either case, the members of the Sisterhood are all long dead.

Alternatively, there may be a few left, doddering on into their nineties, or they may have continued to recruit new members from the daughters of Bedlam's most distinguished families, looking for smart, responsible girls who hate the city of Bedlam with the right level of maniacal passion.

If the Sisterhood are still around then it might be possible to foil their plot. If they're slowly killing the city with some kind of sinister rituals then you could stop them. This shouldn't be difficult. None of them have any superhuman powers apart from the feat "ritualist" and a lot of Arcane Lore. If they are gearing up for a big single incantation that will doom Bedlam all in one fell swoop, then they're probably contemplating some kind of group suicide to consecrate the ritual—saving the life of even one of them may be enough to ruin the whole thing.

Really diabolical GMs may decide to mislead the PCs into thinking that the Sisterhood is still an active organization, still scheming to bring about Bedlam's downfall. Let the PCs learn that they plan to consecrate the ritual with some kind of mass suicide, but then let them discover that it already happened, decades ago.

If they are all dead and the plot is underway, then there may be little the Player Characters can do to stop it. But if the plan was to conjure up a city-devouring entity, then at least the PCs may be able to defeat it once it arrives. We have provided you with an example of the kind of monster the Sisterhood might have tried to invoke. We have called her "The Queen of Skulls" and you can find her description and stat block on Page 309.

If you decide to use the Queen of Skulls, then she is already alive and living in Bedlam—she just isn't a supervillain yet. We have a number of different options for who the Queen of Skulls could turn out to be. You don't have to pick one

until it's dramatically appropriate. The important thing to remember is that she doesn't yet have any idea who or what she really is, and is trying to live her life normally, without a hint of the terrible things yet to come

The adventure seeds below are not consistent with each other. In each one the GM has made completely different choices about what the Sisterhood is planning and how the PCs might stop them. I hope they illustrate the range of possible options.

An Adventure With the Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars: Bedlam is Dead, Long Live the Queen

Over the course of other adventures, the Player Characters come to learn a little of Bedlam's awful secret history. As they find out more and more about the Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars and its terrible plans for the city, a girl starts appearing to them and offering them clues. She appears to be about fourteen, or maybe just a little younger. Strange, sober and grave, she never smiles. She says her name is Eudora, if anyone asks.

Eudora sometimes appears without warning and gives the PCs some critical bit of information that will help them out of a jam. Sometimes she appears in person and sometimes she turns up in their dreams. She also starts telling them things about the Sisterhood. They are planning a huge and terrible ritual to bring something called the Queen of Skulls into the world. Eudora is terrified. She's a member, recruited by her older sister Alberta, but even though she hates Bedlam as much as anyone she finds this plan enormously frightening—and not the least because she thinks the sisters are all going to kill themselves at the ritual's climax. Eudora doesn't know when or where it will happen, but she thinks it will be on the grounds of the school. The Queen of Skulls has already been born, she says, it's just a matter of waking her up.

The PCs subsequently discover that the school has not actually been torn down in the years since it closed. In fact, it's become the Harwood Crawley State Hospital for the Criminally Insane, where all kinds of weird and terrible things have been happening for the past seventy years or so.

Meanwhile the Crawley's Asylum's troubled, brilliant young Director, Ramona Blackmore (see Page 104) has been getting more and more obsessed with her hospital's mysterious past. She thinks she's on the verge of uncovering some huge and terrible mystery here—and she's more right than she knows. If the PCs don't come to her looking for help, she comes to them. She's been getting thin and strange, neglecting her duties and spending time talking to incurable maniacs, but she's still coherent enough to help them. Together, the PCs and Doctor Blackmore go over the Asylum's architectural records and find a secret room under the old library. This matches the description Eudora gave them of the place where the ritual will be performed. It has to be performed in an octagonal room.

As soon as they go looking for the secret chamber, all hell breaks loose in the Asylum. The power goes out and the patients go berserk, screaming and battering themselves against the walls of their cells. Some of them get loose and go rampaging down the halls. One of them is Capricorn, Bedlam's most notorious serial killer (see Pages 302 and 388.) He hasn't said a word or responded to any kind of stimulus since he arrived here years ago, but he's certainly spry enough now. He'll try very hard to kill Dr. Blackmore before the PCs can get her to the room.

Reports come in over the intercom that security staff have seen an unidentified, unauthorized group of women enter the grounds (although this never comes out on videotape.)

To add an extra-strange touch, just before Capricorn attacks you might let

one of the PCs make a Notice roll. If they succeed, they have noticed that Dr. Blackmore's voice sounds a lot like Leonora X, the mysterious late-night DJ on AM 1300 ("Your Lucky Thirteen.") If they ask her about this, she frowns and says "Oh, that." She explains that she does it as a hobby—she actually records the tapes in her office and mails them into the station. She just says whatever pops into her head—it's like a kind of therapy. PCs who know Leonora X's reputation for sending coded messages to the gangs about current events on the street may find this explanation very strange, but it's true (unless of course you have decided that somebody else is Leonora X.) In any case Capricorn attacks them at this very moment, leaving no time to pursue the matter.

When the PCs and Dr. Blackmore reach the secret room, Eudora and the Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars are waiting for them. The Sisterhood are all dead. Their bones have been gathering dust in this room for more than fifty years. They lie sprawled in a circle, holding hands. One of them wears the very same tortoiseshell barrette as Eudora.

"You're late." Eudora says gravely. "Why didn't you save me?" Then she fades away forever.

But the PCs suddenly have other things to worry about.

"I remember!" Doctor Blackmore says. It's the first time they've seen her smile. Something looks wrong with her smile, actually. It's kind of unnerving. "I remember who I am!" And the Queen of Skulls is born.

Here let us leave our poor unfortunate Player Characters. You really don't want to see what happens next. Or, if you do, go the adventure "Doom Comes to Bedlam" on Page 310.

Another Adventure: The Stars Are Screaming

The Ratcatcher (see Page 290 to find out more about this living incarnation of Bedlam) sees something coming—

something that will reduce his city to rubble. Unable to cope with this terrible vision, he has lapsed into an alcoholic stupor, and then delirium tremens. As he suffers and sweats through the sickness and hallucinations, the city begins to convulse. Power systems flicker erratically, in disturbing patterns. Vermin come scuttling up from the sewers, making patterns that spell out frantic, incomprehensible messages. Street psychotics chant ominous scraps of Shakespeare and Baudelaire.

After the Player Characters have seen a few of these weird signs and portents, a deformed pigeon comes to them. Fluttering crookedly with its malformed wings, it tries to lead the PCs to the Ratcatcher's sickbed. The PCs must overcome Woodchuck Man's suspicions (see Page 288), help keep Grim Diddle from getting loose (see Page 292), and interpret the critical clues that the Ratcatcher gives them in his raving delirium.

Meanwhile, on a rooftop high above the city, the Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars nears the completion of their work. It has taken them more than eighty years to create this moment, and now within a day they will draw down destruction on the city. For the stars have aligned and the rituals have been performed and the coming of the Unthinkable One is at hand!

The Unthinkable One kills cities, but it doesn't just munch them up like Godzilla—it rots them from within, kills their soul, invisibly wrecks their economy and fragments their populace. Over the next few years Bedlam will fall to wrack and ruin, with the invisible miasma of the Unthinkable One hanging over it all.

It will begin with the death of the Ratcatcher (from alcohol poisoning.) No arch-derelect will rise to replace him and the city's screams will go unheard, unsoothed by drink.

The Sisterhood conducts its rites on top of a bizarre-looking art deco skyscraper called the Smirlock Building

(see Pages 22 and 356.) It looks like the work of a madman, and it is.

The strange, non-Euclidian designs on the roof serve as a focusing lens for unwholesome energies, and the building has been the site of a surprising number of bizarre deaths and weird disappearances. In fact anyone who lives there for any length of time starts to develop odd compulsions and neurotic habits, which they practice in secret. None of the PCs have ever been inside.

All five of the ranking members of the Sisterhood are wealthy society doyennes in their eighties or nineties. Four of them are confined to wheelchairs.

There are about twelve younger members, ranging in age from seventy to sixteen—all of them morbid, shy women from the city's best families.

When the ritual reaches its climax, all seventeen cultists will jump off the top of the building, trusted nurses shoving the older members' wheelchairs over the side. None of them will ever hit the ground, or ever be seen again.

Breaking up the ritual or preventing the mass suicide will permanently foil the Sisterhood's efforts, and gain the players their enmity. A lot of these ladies have the money and power required to do the Player Characters some serious damage. But a wave of depression and suicide decimates their ranks not long after the PCs stop them, limiting their ability to strike back.

The Ratcatcher recovers, and the city lumbers on its way.

Mr. Nobody

Here he is, the most successful burglar in Bedlam's history. He doesn't know that he's the number one thief in the city, nor does he realize that people call him "Mr. Nobody." If he found out either one of these things, he'd be both embarrassed and proud.

Wilmer Zaragoza, Jr., a.k.a. "Mister Nobody"



Wilmer Zaragoza, Jr., a.k.a. "Mister Nobody"

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Guts d4, Knowledge (Construction) d8, Knowledge (Downtown Bedlam) d8, Lockpicking d6, Notice d8+2, Persuade d8, Repair d8, Shooting d4, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Cautious, Greedy, Habit (addicted to cocaine), Wanted

Edges: Alertness, Fleet-Footed, Jack-of-All-Trades

Background: Wilmer Zaragoza always wanted to be a construction worker, like

his dad. Wilmer Senior was the owner of a small but successful building firm. His son loved hanging around on his work-sites and doing projects with him around the house.

In high school, Wilmer Junior started running around with a party crowd and picked up a coke habit. His erratic behavior and drug problem pretty well alienated his old man. His mom is the only person in the family who still talks to him. So instead of joining his dad's company, he has worked in all-night copy shops ever since he dropped out of community college. Every shop he's ever worked in has been located on the ground floor of one or another of the skyscrapers downtown—and this fact led him directly into a life of crime.

He enjoys working in a copy shop. Like a lot of coke addicts, he's a fiend for order, precision, and organization. He loves doing really complicated, challenging copy jobs (with tabs, and cross-referencing and color coded pages and multiple types of report covers and so forth) especially while he's high.

When he can't buy coke, he gets pretty depressed, and his job doesn't bring in enough money to support his habit. One night, he got to thinking about the remodeling that some construction firm was doing up on the thirtieth floor. He had helped his dad on a lot of jobs like that. The walls they were installing up there were probably nothing more than big sheets of drywall on a lath frame. More like the illusion of a wall than an actual barrier to anything. His dad used to hate those cheap jobs and to complain that you could rip drywall open with a claw-head hammer—hell, you could dig through it with your bare hands. You might as well make walls out of cardboard.

That night Wilmer went up there, ripped his way through one of the brand-new walls and stole a stack of laptops. He's been pulling the same trick every week since. Sometimes twice a week, or more. He normally carries a small claw-head hammer in his pocket, or a drywall cutting tool, but sometimes he just burrows through the

wall with his hands.

It's all been incredibly easy. Every office in the city has a silent alarm on the door. But he doesn't go through the door, so no alarm ever rings.

Having worked late nights in a lot of office buildings, Wilmer has become acquainted with quite a few security guards, and he's learned that the ones who work for Maximum Safeguard are almost all trying to hide the fact they don't speak English. Not one of them will challenge somebody who looks like an office worker who's here to put in some late-night overtime. Nor do they usually pay much attention to the cameras.

On the rare occasions when he has run into people who really are working late, it's always been easy to bluff his way past them. He looks like an office worker. And he's got an easy line of banter.

No one has ever come close to catching him. The robbery squad has his fingerprints from a dozen or so crime scenes, but they don't match anything in any of the national databases. He has never been arrested. Wilmer's friendly grin has served him well in more than one tight spot. Although his apartment is on the edge of Hardwick Park, he's not really from that community and he only barely speaks Spanish.

There are coke dealers who actually get annoyed with him for bringing them so much stolen merchandise. But none of them have ever figured out that he's Mr. Nobody. Most dealers have never even heard the name—they don't pay that much attention to the news. Nor does Wilmer himself.

Torchy the Firebug

Bedlam's most prolific arsonist has been on a rampage for more than ten years, but he's been setting fires a lot longer. It's the way he lets off stress and within the past decade his life has become very stressful. Here are his stats and background information. Most people would be surprised to learn who he really is.

Raymond Biggs, aka "Torchy"**Wild Card**

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Guts d10, Investigation d4, Knowledge (Setting Fires) d10, Notice d8, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Quirk (Compulsive firestarter), Wanted

Gear: Bottle of gasoline (1d6 damage, flame)

Background: Sometimes little men can cast a long shadow. Torchy the Firebug has been terrorizing Bedlam for years, but he's so completely unlike the towering figure of menace most people imagine that no one has ever once suspected his real identity. People say he must be a supervillain, or a fireman or a white-supremacist on a hate crusade to depopulate Wolverton. They're all wrong.

Raymond Biggs is a polite, cheerful, middle-aged black man from Wolverton. Short and rotund, he lives alone and has no close friends, but he says hello to his neighbors every day and he remembers all their birthdays and anniversaries. He doesn't look like an angry guy. In fact he's almost unnaturally calm. He doesn't feel like an angry guy, either, and doesn't really understand why he does the things that make him different. That's because his anger is so deep that he'd be unable to bear its heat if he were to face the flames head-on.

There is little in his background to explain his obsession with fire and death. The youngest child of a huge, sprawling family, he didn't get much affection from his harried parents, but wasn't cruelly abused, either. He was always obsessively clean and tidy, and prone to strange compulsions.

He set his first fires in his teens, burning down a few places around the neighborhood where he liked to hang out. He had no particular reason for selecting those places. He just thought about them a lot, because they were the shops and diners where he spent time after school. It never entered into his thinking that he couldn't hang out there anymore if he burned them

up.

For the rest of his life, whenever Raymond has felt a lot of pent-up stress he has set fires to relieve it. Over the years he's developed a simple, effective technique. He wakes up and goes out around three in the morning. No one is on the street, so no one sees him. He finds a place that has caught his attention during the day, and sets a plastic bottle full of gasoline in front of its exit. The bottle's neck is stuffed with a cloth wick, usually torn from old clothes that he buys at Goodwill. Because gasoline itself doesn't burn (it's the vapors that burn) the gas won't ignite until the wick melts the plastic bottle and it spills (letting the vapor out.) This built-in timing mechanism lets him get out of the vicinity before the blaze starts.

Sometimes he'll come back to watch, but only after the fire engines are already at the scene and a crowd has already gathered. He has twice participated in rescuing people from buildings that he set on fire and found the experience very exciting.

What makes him select a particular target? It's the people who live there, usually. If he sees a happy family sitting down to dinner or sees a guy who looks interesting and successful or who has an intriguing walk, he'll notice them and start thinking about them. And you don't want him to start thinking about you, because he sets fires at the places that catch his interest.

He's completely unaware of the fact that he feels jealousy and rage toward happy families or successful guys with interesting walks. In fact he doesn't grasp why it's so satisfying to set their homes on fire. Pretty girls set him off, too. And so do cute kids.

Ray may not understand his own motives for setting stuff on fire, but Doctor Scorch does. Although he's locked away in the Crawley Asylum, this supervillain would be happy to help the PCs catch Torchy, offering his own (eerily accurate) insights into Torchy's mind.

For the past decade and a half, Raymond has worked at the Wunder-Chuck on Larchmont Avenue in Wolverton. His

work station is incredibly clean and well-organized and all his co-workers like him. No one there works harder, complains less or understands their system better. But while he takes enormous pride in being a good fry cook, the job is incredibly stressful. Long hours, hellish working conditions, with a tiny paycheck at the end of it all. And although everyone at his restaurant knows he's a superb cook, no one else thinks fast food even counts as a real job. His family is especially dismissive about it. These days the stress is so bad that he goes out looking for trouble more than once a week.

Any PC who can catch him will be instantly famous in Bedlam. However, it's going to be very difficult to make any charges against him stick. Most of the evidence of his crimes burns up at the scene and there are never any witnesses. That's why the police haven't caught him yet. To find him the Player Characters will probably have to use psychic or magical means, and these techniques aren't usually admissible in court. And now of course they will have caught Raymond's attention themselves...

The Cannon

Pickpockets are the neurosurgeons of the underworld. It's nearly impossible for a detective to catch a really skilled one in the act. The crime itself happens in less than a second, concealed, in a crowd. Not everyone can master the craft, but if you do, you're a ghost. Only bad luck can trip you up. And if you do get caught, it's highly unlikely that a Prosecutor's office will want to waste its resources nailing your hide to the wall. Even if they do have some reason to make an example out of you (if for instance you accidentally picked the pocket of someone really important) they can never justify holding you without bail—you've committed a non-violent crime and you probably don't have any prior convictions. So you pay your bail and you vanish to some other town.

A good pickpocket is known to his fellows as a pistol. Rufus Dayne is a cannon. One of the best pickpockets in the country, he makes close to a million dollars a year and has no criminal record at all. He has homes all around the country and

spends a little time in each one, never sticking around long enough for any undercover detectives to get to know his face.

Even the Bedlam Mafia doesn't know much about him. He pays a share of the money he steals in Bedlam to Rock Johnson through a crooked lawyer who never sees him in person. The Mob knows there's a cannon who visits Bedlam from time to time, but not his name, face or address.

He maintains a house on the outskirts of the Meadows—a brand-new bungalow with beautifully painted interior walls and almost no furniture. He bivouacs there with his team of five apprentices, who are also his de-facto wives. All of these ladies are between the ages of thirty and fifty, and look carefully nondescript. If one of them gets busted (which almost never happens) he posts bail and all six of them skip town for a while. Here are some stats for Rufus and his girls.

Rufus Dayne Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Climb d6+2, Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidate d6, Lockpick d8+2, Notice d10+2, Persuade d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d10+2, Streetwise d10

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Cautious

Edges: Alertness, Danger Sense, Dodge, Followers, Improved Level Headed, Quick, Rich, Thief.

Gear: Expensive coat with secret pockets, half a dozen IDs in various names.

Background: One of the most skilled professional thieves operating in America today, Rufus looks totally unremarkable. A quiet African-American guy in late middle age, he's small and skinny with a long face and a shaven head. He likes to wear white suits and fedoras at home and on the town, but when he's at work he dresses in whatever clothes would make him blend in best.

While he seems quiet, watchful and

a little shy, he actually has kind of a big ego and loves to taunt the police. If he thinks there is a police detective who is catching on to him, he'll leave town immediately, but he might not be able to resist calling them up from another state to chat about how close they did or didn't come to catching him. He once called a reporter who had written a story about pickpockets to discuss his trade with her, to explain what she did and did not get right in the article. He never sounds cocky when he does this—just friendly and cordial.

Rufus learned his trade from his mother, who was a skilled pickpocket and sneak-thief in Atlanta. She was a real pistol, but she never even approached her son's prodigious level of talent. She may have been a career criminal, but she was a good, attentive mother and took excellent care of Rufus. Retired now, she lives in a house he bought for her in North Georgia.

While he's a cautious, patient guy, averse to taking needless risks, Rufus worries that he might not be capable of actually murdering someone to protect his secrets. In his world, this is a serious failing. His mom raised him a little too well, he fears.

He has tried not to father any unwanted kids, since he's too focused on practicing his art to be a good dad, but to his chagrin he has two illegitimate children by different former apprentices and he diligently sends money to support them.

Any cop, vigilante or superhero who manages to lock up Rufus Dayne will earn a special degree of fear and respect in the criminal underworld. Robbery detectives are also keenly aware of how hard it is to catch a really good pickpocket, and they will treat anyone who can do it with deference.

Rufus Dayne's Girls

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Climb d6+2, Fighting d4, Guts d8, Intimidate d6, Lockpick d8+2, Notice d10+2, Persuade d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d8+2, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 4;

Toughness: 5

Edges: Alertness, Dodge, Thief.

Gear: Coat with secret pockets, fake ID

Background: Rufus selects his girls for brains, dexterity and caution. He picks them carefully, trains them thoroughly and treats them well. There are, he says, just two rules in his house. Don't leave the stove on and don't do anything stupid (which also kind of includes rule #1.)

All five of his apprentices have personalities a lot like his own. Thoughtful, calculating and slow to anger. None of them from broken homes and none of them show any trace of emotional instability. This last trait is especially important, since Rufus isn't sure he could bring himself to kill a girl if she started acting unstable and taking stupid risks.

Lucius Hardwick IV



Bedlam's richest citizen is also one of its deepest enigmas. Many years ago he stopped leaving his mansion and he hasn't seen anyone but his lawyers for decades. Perhaps he doesn't even see them—no one outside the firm's senior partners knows. There are a number of possibilities for what Mr. Hardwick has been up to all these years, but they all turn around the same theme.

Ever since the 19th Century, the Hardwick family has been trying to find some way to keep Zebediah Scarlett's vengeful ghost from returning to destroy them (see the Bedlam Timeline on Page 24 for more information about the shameful role that Reverend Scarlett and the Hardwicks played in the city's early history.) He's come close on a couple of occasions and they've had to take some pretty drastic measures to prevent it.

For many years, Lucius Hardwick has been trying to find a way to thwart Scarlett's return, or placate him if there's no way to stop him from coming back. Mr. Hardwick has a small but powerful network of supporters among the city's oldest families (the Penningtons, the Smirloks and others) who he can call upon to help him, or

to stop other people from interfering in his plans.

It's up to the GM to decide how deeply Lucius Hardwick has himself become enmeshed in the unseen world. He might be studying the occult himself, or he may have just farmed the research out to various scholars around the country. We have options you can use below if Mr. Hardwick a sorcerer, a vampire, or a ghost himself. It's also possible that he's nothing more than a horrible old man, kept alive by dread and spite, or that he's been dead for years and that his lawyers carry on his work. It may be that there has only been one Lucius Hardwick down through the years or he may in fact be the great-grandson of the original.

Ironically, Zebediah Scarlett isn't even a very powerful ghost. He's more than Lucius Hardwick and his country club cabal would be able to handle, but any team of mystical superheroes should be able to bring him down. It has never occurred to Mr. Hardwick to go to a superhero team for help. There are also plenty of Voodoo practitioners who would have been happy to eliminate his problem, but of course they're all black, and he cannot stand to have nonwhites so much as mentioned in his presence.

Whatever you decide is the truth is about Lucius Hardwick, his physical appearance remains much the same. He's the only person in Bedlam who looks even older and even meaner than Young Junior Gorgonzua. Mr. Hardwick has a thick, tangled head of white hair and dresses in the dusty remnants of his once expensive suits. Shrunken and scrawny, he's about two sizes too small for his clothes. His facial expression has been described as "twenty times meaner than the Devil himself" but perhaps that's an exaggeration.

Lucius Hardwick—Vampire



Lucius Hardwick—Vampire

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d10, Intimidation d12, Knowledge (finance) d8, Knowledge (awful secrets of Bedlam) d12, Taunt d8+2, Notice d8, Throwing d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10

Special Abilities

- **Change Form:** As an action, Mr. Hardwick can change into a wolf or bat with a Smarts roll at -2. Changing back into humanoid form requires a Smarts roll.
- **Children of the Night:** Has the ability to summon and control wolves or rats. This requires an action and a Smarts roll at -2. If he succeeds, 1d6 wolves or 1d6 swarms of rats arrive in 1d6+2 rounds.
- **Claws:** Str +d4.
- **Improved Frenzy:** Mr. Hardwick can make two attacks per round without

penalty.

- **Invulnerability:** Can only be harmed by his Weaknesses. He can be Shaken by other attacks, but never Wounded.

- **Level Headed:** he acts on the best of two cards.

- **Mist:** Can turn into mist! This requires an action and a Smarts roll at -2.

Puppet: As per the power in the core rulebook

- **Sire:** Anyone Mr. Hardwick kills, in any way whatsoever, has a 50% chance of rising as a vampire themselves in 1d4 days. This doesn't just happen if he kills them by drinking their blood—if he shot them or pushed them off a cliff they would still have a 50% chance of coming back from the dead thirsty.

- **Undead:** +2 Toughness. +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage (except to the heart—see below). No wound penalties.

- **Weakness (Sunlight):** Catches fire if any part of his skin is exposed to direct sunlight. After that he suffers 2d10 damage per round until reduced to dust. Armor does not protect him against this effect.

- **Weakness (Holy Symbol):** A character with a holy symbol may keep Mr. Hardwick at bay by displaying the symbol to him. If he wants to directly attack the victim he must beat them in an opposed test of Spirits.

- **Weakness (Holy Water):** If he's sprinkled with holy water he becomes Fatigued. If immersed, he combusts as if it were direct sunlight (see above).

- **Weakness (Invitation Only):** Cannot enter a private dwelling without being invited. He may enter public domains as they please (but he seldom leaves his house in any case).

- **Weakness (Stake Through the Heart):** If he is hit with a called shot to the heart (-4) he must make a Vigor roll versus the damage. If successful, he takes damage normally. If it fails, he disintegrates into dust.

Lucius Hardwick—Sorcerer

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills Guts d12, Intimidate d10+2, Knowledge (arcane occult lore) d8, Knowledge (finance) d8, Knowledge (awful secrets of Bedlam) d12, Notice d8, Stealth d6, Taunt d8+2, Spellcasting d12

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 4

Hindrances: All Thumbs, Elderly, Enemy (the Scarlet Man), Enemy (Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars), Greedy, Mean

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Connections (Bedlam City government, Major), Filthy Rich, Improved Nerves of Steel, Power Points, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate or Taunt), Telepathy

Super Powers:

- Ageless (2): Very Old
- Awareness (2): Requires Activation
- Fear (3)
- Jinx (2)
- Super Sorcery (6): Level 2

Lucius Hardwick—Ghost

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d12, Intimidate d12+2, Knowledge (finance) d8, Knowledge (awful secrets of Bedlam) d12, Notice d12, Taunt d10, Stealth d12+4, Taunt d8+2, Throwing d12

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Enemy (the Scarlet Man), Enemy (Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars), Greedy, Mean

Powers and Special Abilities

- **Ethereal:** Mr. Hardwick is not a material being and can only be harmed by magical attacks.

- **Fear -2:** causes a Guts checks at -2 when he lets himself be seen.

Lucius Hardwick—Mean Old Bastard Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d12, Intimidate d10+2, Knowledge (finance) d8, Knowledge (awful secrets of Bedlam) d12, Notice d8, Stealth d6, Taunt d8+2

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: All Thumbs, Elderly, Enemy (the Scarlet Man), Enemy (Sisterhood of the Screaming Stars), Greedy, Mean

Edges: Charismatic, Connections (Bedlam City government, Major), Filthy Rich, Improved Nerves of Steel, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate or Taunt), Tough as Nails

Gear: Cane (d4+1 damage), mansion, vast piles of money.

Club Del Morocco

So powerful was the sadness and longing conjured here that the spirits of the Blues still haunt the ruins of the Club Del Morocco. Should Wolverton ever be in deadly danger, or the Club itself be threatened with destruction, the ghosts of the Del Morocco will rise and undead bluesmen will stalk the streets, singing songs of dire woe and laying waste to all those who dare threaten their home.

There are six of them, though their features change as they walk, so perhaps each one embodies many lost bluesmen of yore. One wields a guitar. Another has a horn. One has a harmonica. One plays the saxophone. One has a giant double-bass and one makes music only with his ghostly, howling voice. All of them wear sunglasses and they all share the same stat block—see below.

Ghost of the Del Morocco

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Guts d12, Intimidate d10, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) d8, Knowledge (the Blues) d10, Notice d8, Spellcasting d10, Stealth d8, Throwing d6

Pace: 6/ Flying 12; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 6

Edges: Hard to Kill, Harder to Kill

Hindrances: Quirk (never speaks), Vow (to protect Wolverton)

Gear: Musical instrument, out-of-style suit, fedora.

Powers and Special Abilities

- **Ranged Attack:** 3d6 Damage; Elemental Trick (Sound), uses Cone Template

- **Awareness**

- **Darkvision**

- **Ethereal:** Not a material being, can only be harmed by magical attacks.

- **Illusions 2:** Can create illusions up to 4" cubed in volume

- **Invisibility**

- **Fear -2:** causes a Guts check at -2.

- **Fearless**

- **Flight 12"**

- **Super-Sorcery:** Level 3

- **Telepathy:** Broadcast

- **Teleport:** 12"

Berth 13

We have four different versions of the "truth" about Berth 13. Use whichever one you like.

1) The freighter is the "Sea Witch" and its registration shows that it's owned by a bogus company in the Canary Islands. A little more work will trace its ownership back to the Scarpia crime family. They use it as a sort of graveyard. When they need someone to disappear, and they don't have time to put them through the "Murder Machine" (see Page 217) they leave their corpse here. As the years have gone by, the ship has grown more crowded. Anyone who manages to expose its contents will be in serious danger. Then again, so will the Scarpias. A whole lot of dead Igglionis and other enemies of the family are on board.

2) The ship has no name or registration marks at all. This is where the Special Assault Squad takes superhuman prisoners to hold them before trial. The ship is full of suspended animation capsules that can be used to store parahumans indefinitely.

SAS doesn't actually have the capacity to build and staff a place like this. In fact it's a joint project with the feds—with the UNICORN specifically (you can find out more about them on Page 86.) This

shadowy agency has been keeping superhuman prisoners here since the sixties and they have forgotten about some of the ones on the lower decks. It is possible that some incredibly powerful long-forgotten villain from the mid-twentieth century may suddenly wake up.

3) The freighter is the Andromeda. Its ownership has been in dispute for decades. Since neither of the parties is in business anymore and the city doesn't want it (they'd be liable for vast amounts of back-taxes) the Andromeda sits at Berth #300, untouched by anyone. Nocturne, the vigilante, (you can find out more about him on Page 276) used it as one of his secret lairs for a while, and left some of his crime-fighting equipment in it. His equipment is drastically out of date, but the Andromeda would still make a great secret base for some other superhero—or perhaps the PCs?

4) There is no Berth 13. The whole thing is a silly urban myth. However, a group of would-be teenaged detectives from the Stone Ridge gated community have started nosing around the docks looking for it, and they are starting to attract the wrong kind of attention from the Mafia.

Mack the Hack

Here he is, the diabolical phantom cabbie who haunts Bedlam's streets by night.

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d12+1, Vigor d12+1

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d10, Intimidate d8, Notice d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d8, Throw d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 8;

Toughness: 10

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Hard to Kill, Harder to Kill

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Gloater, Weakness (Sunlight: Catches

fire if any part of his skin is exposed to direct sunlight. After that he suffers 2d10 damage per round until reduced to dust. Armor does not protect him against this effect.)

Powers:

• **Darkvision**

• **Fear 2**

• **Fearless**

True Regeneration: Checks to Recover from damage every round.

• **Undead:** +2 Toughness. +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. No wound penalties.

Gear: Tire Iron (d6+d12+1 Damage), Evil Cab (see below), snap-brim hat.

Mack the Hack's Evil Cab

Toughness: 15 (2 Heavy Armor)

Offensive Powers: Smite 3d6, Armor-Piercing 4 (Note: Smite can affect targets inside the cab as well as out), Ensnare 10 (Note: this only works on targets inside the evil cab)

Defensive Powers: Intangibility (and confers the benefit of being Intangible to anyone inside.)

Movement Powers: Teleport 45" (Note: for some reason the cab can only teleport when no one is looking at it)

Doctor Death

Bedlam's worst serial killer is not Capricorn, or even Torchy the Firebug. It's Doctor Lyle York, who practices gerontology at Beth El Hospital.

York is a handsome guy in his late fifties, with perfect hair and a brusque, distant manner. A dapper dresser, he is seldom seen without his signature bow tie. Some patients like him and some don't. He's a skilled gerontologist, but every last thing he says sounds like a pre-rehearsed speech. And it is. No one sees his real self. Not his pretty young blonde trophy wife, not the Asian child they've adopted. Not his colleagues or his dad (his mother is dead.)

He has killed more than three hundred of his patients over the past thirty years. After he has given each victim their lethal injection, he has a brief chat with them and explains what he's done, how many people he has killed and how unlikely it is that anyone will ever stop him. And in fact no one has ever suspected a thing. His patients are old, and old people die.

It's hard to tell what motivates him, but he's no mercy killer. If you study his list of victims, he appears to select patients who

lead healthy, active lives, do important volunteer work and have grandchildren who love them. Perhaps he thinks it wouldn't mean anything to take life away from someone whose life wasn't really valuable? Perhaps he wants to cause much harm and sorrow with each death as he can?

It will probably take a telepath or some other kind of psychic hero to catch him. A Player Character who talks to the dead might also be able to do it. Periodically, one or another of his victims will haunt Bedlam briefly and try to alert a psychic or a medium to the doctor's evil deeds (see "Creepy Rumors and Sinister Forces" on Page 270.) But too often they are taken so completely by surprise that they can't muster enough rage to hang onto the world for very long. When your death comes as a total, bewildering shock, you usually don't have time to whip up enough anger or desperation to be a lasting ghost—especially if it's painless.

If York thinks the law is closing in on him, he'll try to escape, but it would be beneath his dignity to put up a struggle. Once he's directly confronted he'll surrender to the PCs without a word and will make no effort to defend himself if they pummel him (although his lawyer will certainly have something to say about it.)

If Doctor Death is ever caught, he stops speaking and never says a word to anyone about his motives, or anything else, ever again.

Rocco "The Stick" Mazzarello

Tiny Tina did not kill the Stick. In fact he isn't dead. He was one of the FBI's three informants inside the Gorganzua Family, but he got tired of being scared all the time and asked to go into the Witness Protection Program. Tiny Tina is almost certain that this is what really happened to him, but despite his betrayal, she loves him and she figures the best way to keep him safe is by letting everyone think he's dead. So she allows the rumors that she killed him to spread unchecked, and even feeds them a little. FBI Special Agent Enzo "Rick" Falcone is the only one in Bedlam who knows the truth, and he's not likely to tell.

For his part, the Stick really loved her too. He's always dug outsized women and they don't come more outsized, in every respect. He's starting to miss her terribly and he is toying with the idea of calling her, even though that would be absolutely against the rules and might get him kicked out of Witness Protection. If the Family becomes aware that the Stick is alive and that he betrayed them, Tiny Tina may have no choice but to have the love of her life killed, after all.

The Triads

Despite the long and peaceful relationship the Triads have had with the Bedlam Mob, there may be trouble on the horizon. Both of the Triads we have mentioned are under the protection of the Scarpas, not the Gorganzuas, and the Gorganzuas resent having them in the Meadows, which they view as their turf (although in fact it's nobody's turf.) They are too smart to challenge the Scarpas directly. However, they are considering a deal to bring in a third Triad—the Black Lotus Chamber, and let them run a similar operation from the docks at Greely Point.

This would be a disaster. The Black Lotus is a blood-drinking cult, crazy and murderous, whose leaders may be vampires or sorcerers or something even worse. They are universally despised by groups like the Iron Wind Society (the Yip-Wings have never heard of them) and they'll surely get into a violent feud with them the moment they discover each other. The Black Lotus thugs will also throw their weight around, kill civilians for no reason and generally misbehave until the Gorganzuas, the Iron Wind Society, the PCs or all three kick them out of Bedlam. The hard feelings this may cause could also set off a mob war between the Gorganzuas and the Scarpas, which could in turn lead to hired supervillains slug-ging it out in the streets. Perhaps someone can talk Tiny Tina out of bringing in the Sons of the Black Lotus before it's too late.

The Black Lotus Chamber

Masters of the Seven Forbidden Cruelties, devotees of the Bleeding God, the Black Lotus Chamber is feared throughout the South-

east Asian underworld. Although most of their members are of Chinese ancestry and speak Mandarin as their mother tongue, the Chamber's primary base of operations is in Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand. They are relatively small for an organized crime family but they are dangerous for their size. People say they sometimes eat their enemies, and they certainly drink their blood. Part drug cult, part organized crime family, the Chamber's main function is to gather enough money and power to protect, grow and harvest the evil plant they are all addicted to—a sinister toxic flower called the Black Lotus, which is not only their favorite vice, but their favorite tool of assassination, as well.

Each new member is put through a harrowing initiation, where they are subjected to the Seven Unspeakable Violations and given the Kiss of the Black Lotus—a semi-lethal dose of the drug. About 75% of them survive, but most aren't quite right afterwards. Henceforward they live only to kill for the Bleeding God and to experience the rapturous, tormented visions that he sends them.

They all look a little crazy, and tend to dress without much care or attention to their appearance. Some of them wear jeans and windbreaker jackets, or ill-fitting sport coats with no shirts underneath, or fine clothes they've scavenged from some victim or other. While not all of them are elite fighters, they are all totally fearless, crazy, unpredictable and violent. They will keep attacking until they are incapacitated or dead, even if faced with an obviously superior foe (a superhero, for example.)

Initially there won't be very many of them in Bedlam—just ten or so, led by the bloodthirsty, half-crazed Feng-Chou. But as they start to menace civilians and get into brawls with the cops and the Iron Wind Brotherhood, they may call for help from overseas.

The Black Lotus can induce psychic powers in some individuals, even while it rots their brains in other ways. Perhaps as many as one in five members of the cult have some minor paranormal ability. But if a full-scale war erupts in Bedlam, they will start bringing in more powerful assets from

the far side of the Pacific Rim. They have an elite squad of killers called the Sons of the Bleeding God and they may have some outright supervillains (probably martial artists or gunslingers) and sorcerers if the GM thinks they really need them.

What lies at the heart of the Black Lotus Chamber? No one knows for sure who leads the cult. There are rumors of deathless sorcerers, cannibal pygmies, living idols from before the Hsu Dynasty, vampires and ghosts. But it could just as well be a cabal of creepy old degenerates. The truth is up to the GM.

Generic Thrall of the Black Lotus

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 5

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Delusional, Mean, Quirk (crazy fanatic, ready to kill or die for the Bleeding God).

Edges: Danger Sense, Improved Frenzy, Nerves of Steel.

Powers:

May have Invisibility or Fearless or Darkvision or Mind Control

Gear: Staff, sword or axe (d8+d4 damage)

The Sons of the Bleeding God

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d10, Intimidate d8+2, Notice d6, Stealth d8, Throwing d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 5

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Delusional, Mean, Quirk (Demented fanatic, eager to die for the Black Lotus Chamber).

Edges: Improved Frenzy, Improved Nerves of Steel, Quick, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate or Taunt), Sweep.

Powers:

• Danger Sense

• Fearless

Gear: Staff, sword or axe (d8+d4 damage)

Feng-Chou

Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d10, Intimidate d8+2, Notice d6, Stealth d8, Throwing d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7;

Toughness: 5

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Delusional, Mean, Quirk (unpredictable violent lunatic).

Edges: Charismatic, Command, Improved Dodge, Improved First Strike, Improved Frenzy, Improved Nerves of Steel, Quick, Strong-Willed (+2 to resist Intimidate or Taunt), Take the Hit.

Powers:

- Danger Sense
- Fearless

Gear: Big Axe (d8+d6 damage)

Background: Feng-Chou is a functional psychotic. You can see it in his crazy stare. There is something deeply unsettling in his gaze. Something unbalanced and unfathomable. Something not entirely human. He's capable of understanding what's going on around him most of the time, but he's much too crazy to experience things like empathy or conscience or fear or love. He lives for the Bleeding God, he kills for the Bleeding God and he'll die for the Bleeding God. Nothing else in his life was worth anything, so he threw it all away.

You'd never guess from the scarred-up, staring lunatic in front of you that he has a PhD in Mathematics and a Master's in business, or that he was a researcher who became a corporate executive, or that his wife (who is also an executive and a scientist) has never stopped looking for him since the night he walked out of their penthouse apartment in Shanghai and vanished.

His skill list doesn't reflect his prowess in business, tensor calculus or classical piano, because his brain is far too damaged to use them anymore and anyway they no longer interest him.

The Narcotrafficates

It's not actually true that the Mexican cartels have no presence in Bedlam. Unbeknownst to the Bedlam Mafia, they have set up an outpost in the Country Club.

One of the big old houses up there has become the home of a traveling group of criminals who call themselves the Bloody Cross. They're a white-supremacist skinhead group, with deep ties to prison gangs across the western United States. They answer directly to the Mexican Mafia, and handle credit card scams and other errands for them. It's hard to see how they reconcile their white-supremacist ideology with working for the Mexican cartels, but they don't seem to see the contradiction.

Oddly, most members of the Bloody Cross are middle-class kids from Southern California. The gang actually grew out of LA's Hardcore punk scene in the mid 1980s, as a way for skins to protect one another in juvie.

They are not supposed to be here. If the Bedlam Mob found out about their presence they would be pretty annoyed. But of course the Bloody Cross can pull electronic scams from anywhere, and the fact that they're in the middle of a city where they're not supposed to have a presence makes this an ideal hiding spot. Unfortunately, a lot of individual members of the crew have difficulty staying out of trouble. They didn't become Nazi skinheads because they like to obey rules and respect authority. This could easily attract the wrong kind of attention.

Right now the house on Mulvane Drive is a maze of cables and electronics equipment, with elegant old furniture and dirty mattresses scattered here and there. They have spray-painted Nazi symbols all over the expensive wallpaper and strewn trash here and there.

This crew only has about twenty members, but they're well-connected and if they had to they could call in either a white supremacist supervillain or one who works for the Narcotrafficates within twenty-four hours. But they're more likely to flee than to stand and fight. They have a mis-

matched collection of old vans parked outside, with the peeling emblems of various churches and Christian youth groups painted on the side. If they have to run for it, they'll dismantle their electronics, throw their possessions in the vans and all leave Bedlam in different directions.

Women play a special role in the Bloody Cross. They are treated like slaves, but they also do a lot of the gang's trickiest work. They infiltrate banks and credit card companies. They buy or steal supplies and deal with the outside world for their tattooed, shaven-headed boyfriends. They also participate in combat and sometimes carry out assassinations for the crew. If the group has to evacuate the Country Club in a hurry, all the vans will be driven by normal-looking young women. Their scary-looking skinhead boyfriends will be hiding in the back.

Soldier of the Bloody Cross

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges: —

Hindrances: Heartless, Quirk (bigot)

Gear:

Club (d8+d4 Damage), Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 7)

Background: It would be a serious mistake to underestimate the Bloody Cross as a bunch of illiterate slobs. In fact most of them are smart (if maladjusted) young men who live the criminal life because they choose to. By now they're all hardened killers and far more dangerous than you would expect of kids from such comfortable middle-class backgrounds.

Chuck Bundy

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 8

Edges: Hard to Kill, Nerves of Steel, Tough as Nails

Hindrances: Heartless, Mean, Quirk (violent crankhead, clobbers anyone he thinks is questioning his authority), Stubborn

Gear:

Machete (d10+d4 Damage)

Background: The current leader of the Bloody Cross' Bedlam Crew, Chuck feels uneasy in this role and inadequate to lead. As a result, he's constantly ill-tempered and always looking for any challenges to his authority. He shouts a lot and he's quick to lash out at anybody he thinks is showing him disrespect, either inside the group or out.

He killed the group's old leader, Hammer-Hand Mike, and took over the gang, but he didn't have a clear idea of what he'd do next and he's feeling a little lost. His crank habit hasn't improved things.

Chuck is from Orange County, California, the hyperactive screw-up son of a real-estate magnate. His family were classic nouveau-riche Orange County millionaires, but Chuck could remember being poor and never seemed to fit into their new world. He hung around with other violent losers and by the time he was twenty he was a bona-fide thug. But his sense of social unease never left him.

He's a doer, rather than a planner. A huge scary brute who was seemingly born to do enforcer work. But leading a crew requires you to think before you act. If he doesn't learn this quick, Chuck may shortly

be sharing a room with Hammer-Hand Mike in Hell.

One look at Chuck and you'll know he could never function in normal society. His Nazi tattoos go right up over his face. He has snakes' eyes tattooed on his eyelids.

Gom the Unspeakable

Up at the north end of the public housing on Ellmore Place, you can find three buildings inhabited by immigrants from Southeast Asia. No one in the neighborhood seems to know much about this small, insular group of hill tribesmen. Some people say they're from Laos, other people aren't so sure. State welfare records list their ethnicity as "Yao", but that's not what they call themselves. Although nobody quite knows who they are, everyone around Ellmore Place does know that they are not to be trifled with. When the Jamaican posses tried to extort money from the Yao, they retaliated so heavily that the posses actually left that part of Bedlam altogether. No one outside of the posses or the Yao themselves know what they did to the Jamaicans, but it was enough to drive off the most aggressive organized crime group in the city.

In fact the surviving members of the posses don't themselves know what the Yao did to them. They just know that their comrades started rapidly disappearing, vanishing from places where no one could have reached them. Some of the Jamaicans decided to leave for a less dangerous part of town, but most decided to go down fighting the Yao. None of the ones who decided to stay were ever seen again.

Who are the Yao, really? During the secret war that the United States fought in Laos in the early seventies, a lot of mountain tribesmen sided with the U.S. and against the Laotian central government. They acted as scouts and commandos and guides. Known collectively as the "Yao" they were in fact a diverse collection of different tribes and spoke a wide variety of different languages. After the war was lost, the Americans relocated a lot of these tribesmen to the United States, and a few hundred made it to Bedlam. They keep to themselves and don't want to be bothered.

How do they make people disappear? Most of them don't know themselves. They practice an odd religion that resembles medieval Chinese Taoism, and some of their priests do have a little magic power, but not enough to obliterate a gang of wild eyed, gun-toting thugs in a blink of an eye. Some of them are still pretty skilled jungle fighters, and most of their young men practice an ancient unarmed fighting style that they call "The Way of the Silent Fist." But the posses were pretty tough, too, and the Way of the Silent Fist doesn't give the Yao that much of an edge. The truth, known to no more than one or two people in Bedlam, is that Gom the Unspeakable protects them.

Most of the people we call the Yao arrived in Laos and Vietnam some time during the Ming dynasty. But the small tribe that one day moved to Bedlam had been there for much longer. And when they first arrived in the one mountain valley where they made their home, they found artifacts and relics left by people who had been there long ages before. And among them was a strange little idol made from some greasy, greenish stone they had never seen before.

It was a fierce idol, and it frightened them, so they gave it to their chief priest so that he could protect them from it. They never spoke of the evil little thing among themselves and soon they forgot about it. But every chief priest since then has heard the idol call to him in his dreams, begging to be worshipped, offering to do favors, craving blood. They never used the idol during their long doomed war with the Marxists, for the priest they had in those days loathed and feared it and would have thrown it away, were he not sure that it would go out into the world and wreak much wickedness. But he died a few years ago, and the new chief priest, Xong, is not as resolute. He has called on the idol, worshipped it in secret and fed it with his blood. In return, it called forth the demon known as Gom the Unspeakable, who is not seen, who walks through walls and takes men away to the land of wind and ghosts, to feast there on their entrails for eternity.

Xong fears that the little nameless idol will ask him for more favors, or come to dominate his soul, but in fact it is content

with a little blood and prayer. It's just a small god and has only small ambitions. A kindly old white-haired man, Xong is looking more and more careworn these days and spends much of his time worrying about the idol. But he needn't.

Oddly, Nocturne knows the Yao. They like him, they remember him and they consider him their friend. He has no conscious memory of the time he spent visiting their tiny little mountain valley, since that's in the portion of his memory that has been blacked out (along with his childhood and his name.) For this reason he finds their company unnerving and avoids them when he can.

Gom the Unspeakable



Gom the Unspeakable Wild Card

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength

d12+1, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Notice d4, Stealth d12, Throwing d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 11

Hindrances: Distinctive Appearance, Ugly

Edges: Arcane Background (Super Powers), Brawny, Power Points, Take the Hit!

Super Powers:

- Attack, Melee (4): +2d6
- Darkvision
- Growth (1): Size +1, Monster

- Heightened Senses (1)
- Intangibility
- Invisibility
- Super Attributes (5): (Super strength)
- Teleport (More Range 3)
- Toughness (7): +2, Hardy

Background: A shy and lonely creature, Gom doesn't much like being a monster. It likes people, likes being around them and watching what they do. It wishes it could join in all the interesting stuff they seem to be up to—perhaps become some child's imaginary friend or a pretty girl's secret protector. But it seems to be doomed to a life of stalking the enemies of the Yao, when it gets to visit our world at all. The rest of the time it skulks around the formless void where it hails from. Gom doesn't much like the void—it's all black and icky. Sometimes it lurks in our world longer than it should have after it's finished its task.

Capricorn

All these years later, people still flinch at the name "Capricorn" as though it could cut them. This masked fiend terrorized the city for more than a decade. Every three years he would return and kill another nine people, taunting the news and the police the whole time. People came to hate his bland, pleasant voice the way they hated cancer, or death.

There seemed to be no pattern to who he struck. Young, old, rich, poor, when the constellation of Capricorn shone in the cold winter sky, no one was safe from him. He claimed there was a logic to his killing, though no one ever managed to completely decipher it. But he was not lying. Here at last is the truth.

In the murky dawn of Bedlam's history, its founder, Zebediah Scarlett, was murdered by his protégé, Rule Hardwick. The city was founded on a crime, and in crime it tried to find salvation.

From time to time Zebediah Scarlett's murderous ghost would come slouching up out of Hell with revenge on its mind (see Page 305.) The city fathers tried appeasing it, tried keeping it at bay, and then they hit on the plan called Capricorn.

Sour old Lucius Hardwick found a way to make Bedlam taste so bad to Reverend Scarlett that he would avoid it. He hired a cabal of magicians called the League of Silence to cast an enchantment that would make Bedlam an unappetizing place for its founder. But it had to be consecrated in blood and terror. They took a drifter and wiped his mind clean. And then they made him into the monster called Capricorn. He set out to inscribe the necessary sigils on the city in screams and gore.

Thirty-six innocent lives were required. But so was the city's fear. Every three years, when the Constellation Capricorn shone ascendant in the sky, another nine Bedlamites would have to meet their doom. Their names and identities were unimportant. What mattered were the places and hours at which they died, and the mutilations performed upon their bodies. When the season of the goat came to an end, the killer would wander back to his waking life and three years later they would select another man to wear the mask of Capricorn. Terror was an essential part of the spell, so Capricorn did his best to horrify the city, taunting the public and mocking their fear.

The second and fourth Capricorns both got caught before their work was complete. The project might have recovered from the first loss, but not from the second. In any case the League of Silence was getting old, losing members and slipping into decline. All those people ultimately died for nothing, and Zebediah Scarlett may return to Bedlam soon.

Or, if the GM wants, Hardwick's lawyers may have found another group of sorcerers that's willing to start the project all over. Who knows, next January Bedlam's streets may once more echo to the sound of screams.

The Terrible Truth About the Diabolical Doctor Boogie

The being who calls himself "Doctor Boogie" isn't really a person at all. He's a comic book character that local Bedlam DJ Dave "The Filthy Beast" Odnarski drew when he was a kid.

Dave Odnarski is an incredibly

powerful psychic—one of the strongest in human history (see Page 369.) But he's so afraid of his powers that he has buried them in the deepest darkest depths of his own unconscious mind. Dave has conjured Doctor Boogie into existence and has created a whole pocket universe for him to inhabit when he's not out troubling the good citizens of Bedlam.

No one is ever likely to notice the connection, but Doctor Boogie only ever appears when Dave is asleep and dreaming about him. Of course, the fact that he's a DJ with a completely irregular schedule means that the good doctor and his disco pirate crew could appear at any hour of the day or night. He never remembers the dream when he wakes up.

The Doctor has such a strong psychic shield because he barely has a mind at all. If you do manage to read his mind, you will find it to be a colorful place, simple and brightly-hued, like an old set from The Electric Company. He sincerely believes all his silliness. If you search his mind for his origin, his real name, etc, you'll find a ridiculous story about how the Goddess of Funk had a secret love child with the God of Groovy and their fantastic, plantastic creation was born dancing in giant platform shoes. "Hey what's happening mom and pop? Can you get down like this?" their infant asked them. And he proceeded to par-tay so hip that they named him Doctor Boogie.

He really believes this. And he remembers it all in vivid color. His mom, the Goddess of Funk, smelled a lot like reefer and hair-care products.

The pirate ship is also one of Dave's creations. But it actually formed in response to the Disco Pirates' wishes. They've been exerting their own influence on Doctor Boogie, making him more like them. And this in turn has affected Dave's own mind—helped him rediscover his taste for late '70s dance music and made his drug problem worse. If "The Filthy Beast" were to suddenly die, the pirate ship would reappear with the confused pirates still on board it and then fade away forever, taking Doctor Boogie with it wherever dead dreams go.

APPENDIX A: ADVENTURES IN BEDLAM

We have two adventures for you here. They showcase very different sides of Bedlam and serve different needs for a campaign. One is lighthearted and short. The other is longer and more serious. They both give Player Characters an introduction to Bedlam, to what it's like and how it works.

SHOWDOWN AT PAPAL DISCOUNT WAREHOUSE

An altercation breaks out at Papal Discount Warehouse while the PCs happen to be there (or perhaps they get called in to break it up.) Some boys from the Mara come sauntering into the store—they want to buy some crucifixes to immerse in dog's blood and a baptismal font. The staff won't sell them a font without ID showing that they've been ordained, and after a brief, tense standoff they slink back outside.

Soon they return with a sleazy looking priest who has a lot of tattoos ("Father Chuey"—see Page 240 for a full description of the Mara's favorite minister) and he tries to buy the font for them. The staff behind the counter are adamant. They won't sell anyone a baptismal font to anyone but an ordained member of the clergy, and it's perfectly clear to them that the Mara just found somebody in the parking lot to buy for them.

Father Chuey starts yelling and making threats, grinning like a wolf the whole time. He says he knows Monsignor, that Bishop Sloat is a personal friend and he drops darker hints still about what might happen to the store if they don't sell him the font.

"I can appeal to a higher power, you know!" he sneers wickedly.

A deep voice roars out from the back of the shop: "Higher than Th' Pope?"

It looks like the rumors are true (see Page 155.) The supervillain who calls himself "Th' Pope" really does own Papal Discount warehouse, and he's just returned from the adult bookstore with his gang of trashy leather nuns. His gigantic super-

human henchmen \$#!+face is there as well, and they're all carrying huge, funny-shaped rubber novelties that they've bought at the store. His nuns all look strangely like former strippers and lady bodybuilders in corsets and wimples—except for the ones who are obviously transvestites. Battle is joined! People are beating on one another with crosses and monstrosities and huge floppy rubber sex toys, guns are going off in every direction. The Mara aren't as powerful as Th' Pope and his nuns, but there are more of them and they're better armed. They also have no compunctions at all about taking hostages or using patrons as human shields. Can Our Heroes stop this blasphemous bash-fest before someone gets seriously hurt?

MAP OF PAPAL DISCOUNT WAREHOUSE



GUIDE TO THE MAP OF PAPAL DISCOUNT WAREHOUSE

The building itself is made of solid reinforced concrete—Toughness 14. The one internal wall, between the office and the main sales area, isn't nearly as strong. It's only Toughness 9. There are no windows, except in the office, and it will be pitch black in the sales area if the lights go out.

Both the internal and external doors are made of steel with tasteless fake wood-grain decals on them. They are Toughness 12 and if locked they will require an unmodified Lockpicking roll to open. Snap off a door to use as a weapon, and it will do Strength +1d8 Damage.

The ceiling is supported by four square concrete pillars. Each one is Toughness 14, and does Strength +2d6 Damage if you snap it off and use it as a club. Be warned, though, if more than two of them get destroyed then the roof is going to collapse on the next round and do 3d6 Damage to anyone caught underneath it.

The counter has glass windows in the front but will still give full Concealment to anyone who crouches or lies prone behind it. Made of heavy wood, it's Toughness 8. Rip it out of the floor and you will find that it comes in sections. Each section weighs 400 pounds, fully loaded with expensive religious paraphernalia, and does Strength +1d8 Damage if used as a weapon.

The big heavy antique cash register on the counter weighs 60 pounds and does Strength +1d6 Damage if you clobber somebody with it.

The giant, overloaded shelves are all Toughness 7 and weigh about 800 pounds each. Each one will do Strength +1d10 Damage if used as a weapon, but they're so awkwardly shaped and clumsily balanced that there is a -2 penalty to hit anything with them. If a shelf tips over and falls on top of a character it does 1d10 Damage and may immobilize them, unless they can lift 800 pounds or more. At the GM's option, it may be possible to set off a chain reaction of shelves tipping over onto one another.

If you use a baptismal font or a big heavy cross or a monstrance or some other piece of merchandise as a weapon, it will do up to Strength +1d8 Damage. The GM should feel free to improvise.

STABBO THE CLOWN'S BIG WACKY ADVENTURE

It's a long slow day down at the Bedlam Courthouse, but it's about to get a whole lot more interesting. Luca "Stabbo the Clown" Stegnetti is going to have his day in court and the results will make headlines for weeks. The PCs are likely to play a pivotal role in these events.

Prologue: Getting the Adventure Started

While the PCs could get in on the adventure after things are underway, it's probably more fun if they're involved from the beginning. To do that, you're going to have to find some way to get them down to the courthouse in time for the first act. There are a number of ways of doing this. They could be here on some legal matter of their own (nothing too pressing, or it could overshadow the events of the adventure.)

They may have heard that a close associate of the Scarpia Crime family is about to get indicted, and want to come down to make sure nothing weird happens.

If they have Precognition or some other such power, they could be guided to the courthouse by a vision (a supervillain will be born here today—they're sure of it.)

If all else fails, perhaps the UNICORN has been monitoring Luca Stegnetti and they know that he's about to come into his superhuman powers. They have decided to manipulate the PCs into a confrontation with him, in hopes of removing him from the picture before he becomes a major threat. To this end, they send each of them an anonymous message on plain white paper. It says "Bedlam Courthouse, Hearing Room 3, 2:00 PM." If the PCs won't even take bait like this, roll your eyes and let them join the story after it's already in full swing

Part 1: Zany Courthouse Frolics

Judge Howard Leeth (see page 95) presides over the case that Bedlam is going to be talking about for years. It's just his bad luck. Disheveled, depressed Judge Leeth is hearing cases with his head in his hands, the way he always does. Bored bailiffs patrol the courtroom, eager to spot someone

chewing gum or putting their feet up or any other tiny violation of the rules. A big family from Stark Hill is sitting in the observation gallery, making too much noise. A lot of big hair and gold chains are on display up there.

Next on the docket is a domestic violence case. Luca Stegnetti's girlfriend, Marie Tucci, wants to press charges against him for hitting her.

At the States' Attorney's table sits Detective Gluk of the Bedlam Police (see Page 76) and Marla Zaranovsky (see Page 161), legal counsel for the women's shelter where Marie has been staying.

Mr. Stegnetti himself is here, sitting with his family in the observation gallery until his case is called (these are the loud guys from Stark Hill.) He's his usual wacky, charming self and his whole family has turned out to show him their support. His attorney is rising mob lawyer Mel Lutz (see Page 159) who calls Luca to the stand and asks him about the circumstances of the incident in question.

Gesturing wildly and grinning, Luca explains that he was exhausted, that his girlfriend had left their apartment in a terrible mess, and when he came home late, to the house she hadn't cleaned, she started screaming at him. It was like she was yelling at him to put him on the defensive, to keep him from getting annoyed with her about the huge mess in their living room. He knows she's unstable, he makes allowances. But it just seemed so unfair. She shoved him, he snapped, and he shoved her back. He knew it was wrong when he did it and he knows it was wrong now. But he knows he can't take it back, he says, smiling ruefully.

His family makes sympathetic noises and some of them shout encouragement to him. The bailiffs angrily shut them up. It looks as though Mr. Lutz is going to enter a guilty plea and ask for six months probation, suspended.

Marla Zaranovsky says something quietly to the Assistant State's Attorney, who gestures. Marie walks into the courtroom, and everyone abruptly falls silent. Her face has been demolished. Many, many beatings have reduced her features to an inhuman-looking mask. This clearly isn't the

result of a single incident. This looks like it was done to her over the course of months or years. Her nose has been broken, rehealed and been broken again so many times that it's just a blob. Most of her teeth are gone and she can't close her mouth properly.

Mel Lutz can't close his mouth either. It's hanging open in total, horrified shock. Judge Leeth puts his face down flat, and hears the rest of the trial that way. Luca is the only person in the courtroom who's still smiling. "Hey, it's the Elephant Girl!" he quietly says, and giggles.

That ugly moment should be enough to doom him by itself, but he actually manages to make things worse. Way worse, in fact.

Marie tries to give her statement, but her voice is so quiet and mushy that Judge Leeth is having trouble hearing her.

Luca rises from his chair and tries to talk to Marie. Judge Leeth doesn't even bother to tell him he's out of order, he just gestures to the bailiffs. Luca's still smiling as they push him toward the courtroom door. "Sir, you're going to have to leave. Sir, calm down."

"I'm calm, I'm calm! It's cool!" he grins "I just need to—I just want to talk to her."

They've got him halfway to the door when things get freaky. Luca abruptly gives up on talking to Marie, spins on his heel and prepares to march out of the courtroom. But first he plants his elbow deep in the one female bailiff's sternum.

Now, here we should pause to note that being a bailiff is one of the most boring jobs in law-enforcement. The reason so many bailiffs are such total sticklers about the rules is that catching somebody drinking a can of pop may be the most interesting thing they get to do all day. They live for those rare moments when something actually happens, and they're all grinning as they pile onto Luca Stegnetti.

This might be a good time for the PCs to rise from their chairs and intervene. If they don't, three bailiffs tackle Luca just as he steps out through the courtroom's swinging doors. As the doors swing back and forth, the Player Characters can see

little bits of what's happening outside. Five bailiffs, then six, then seven, are savaging Luca at once, kicking and beating him as he laughs and laughs. The PCs don't see Luca put a huge overdose of Mnemodrine 6 into his bloodied mouth.

Then a bailiff comes flying through the doors and lands with a thump in the aisle. Through the swinging doors the crowd can see Luca beating the living crap out of all seven of his assailants, his fists and feet flying at superhuman speed, bones cracking and blood spraying into the air. He laughs and laughs, louder and higher. Stabbo the Clown has just been born. Any PCs with the power to sense superhuman abilities didn't pick anything up from him before, but now he's blazing like a bonfire with parahuman might. He takes off running down the hall and out of the courthouse at twice the speed of sound.

The PCs may be able to catch him and they may not. But either way you should let them see the dramatic aftermath. Either outside the building or else right there in the courtroom, Mel Lutz walks up to Marla Zaranovsky with his hands spread wide. He looks like he wants to cry. "I didn't—I didn't know." He stammers.

"Get the #@%& away from me."

Marla says. Startled, Mel makes one more attempt to speak but she cuts him off and he slinks away. The Stegnetti family looks very subdued as they shuffle out of the courtroom.

Part 2: The Sad and Lonely Fate of Vegas Wet and Wild

Marla would very much like the PCs' help. So would Detective Gluk. If the PCs tried to intervene, or even if they just showed up in costume, one or both of them will ask for their assistance. Stabbo the Clown is out there somewhere. God knows what he'll try to do next. To Marie, to the next woman he hooks up with, to whatever cops try to apprehend him. He's an associate of the Scarpia crime family, and although they may want to wash their hands of him after his performance in court today, they probably won't want him to get apprehended and they'll use their influence to screw up the investigation. Zaranovsky and Gluk are right about all of this.

The Bedlam Police put together a special task force to go after Stabbo the Clown. They're not convinced that he's really superhuman, so they don't put Assault Squad

on the case, yet. For some reason no one in the Police Department is talking about the possibility of using him as a way to get information on the Scarpias. But Acting Special Agent In Charge "Rick" Falcone of the FBI certainly is (you can find out more about him and Bedlam's FBI Office on Page 83.) At some point in the adventure, he'll approach the PCs in public and ask them to go easy on Stabbo. The FBI would like to offer him a deal.

Stabbo gets sighted at an arcade in Stark Hill. It's the very same arcade where mob boss "Dapper Donny" Scarpia hangs out (you can find out more about him on Page 218.) It looks as though Stabbo showed up, got into a conversation with some of the aging hoods who hang around the place, went berserk, smashed out some windows, knocked over some pinball machines and ran away. If the PCs show up at the scene they'll find that every last person there claims to have been in the toilet when the incident occurred.

If a Player Character reads someone's mind, they'll learn the truth. Stabbo came to see Donny, begging him for protection. Donny was noncommittal, but he did give Stabbo some money and told him to make himself scarce. Sensing correctly that this meant his mafia career was over, Stabbo threw a tantrum and left. He actually destroyed his own favorite pinball machine, Vegas Wet and Wild, he felt so unhappy. This is the only thing he's ever done that he'll ever feel any regret about. That was his favorite game since he was a kid—how could he have done that to it? What's wrong with him? This haunts him in a way that all the people he has brutalized and killed never do.

Part 2.5: Your Government Needs Your Help

If the GM thinks it would be amusing, large men from the UNICORN suddenly confront the PCs in the middle of the night. These humorless drones are very different from Agent Falcone. Their suits fit better and they wear sunglasses at night (use the stats for the Pentagon Force Protection cyborgs and send a psychic with them if you think they'll need one.)

They say they're from "Your Government." And your government needs your help. Stabbo the Clown must be taken alive and he must be turned over to their custody, not the police. They explain that he took a huge overdose of an experimental drug

called Mnemodrine 6 just moments before he developed his superhuman powers. He's not the first superhuman to get his powers from that drug. But the thing of it is, in order to actually develop superpowers, you have to spend about a week in a sensory deprivation tank after you take Mnemodrine 6. And no one who has done this has ever lived for more than twenty-four hours without some additional treatments (the details of which are classified, so don't ask.) Your country needs you and it needs Stabbo the Clown. Don't disappoint America.

Part 3: Grandad's Wacky Joke Emporium

Meanwhile, Mel Lutz has an attack of conscience. He contacts either the PCs or Marla Zaranovsky and tells them how to find Mary Conklin, who has been Stabbo's best friend (and on-again, off-again girlfriend) since childhood.

If the PCs don't hit the shabby streets of Stark Hill, Detective Gluk does. Unless they find her first, he will locate Mary Conklin. The moment Gluk sees the fading bruises on her face he knows that she's been seeing Stabbo again. He buys her a hamburger at Wunder-Chuk and they have a long talk. He later calls that burger "the best two dollars I ever spent."

Mary reveals to the PC (or to Gluk, if he speaks to her first) that Stabbo has been staying in her apartment over a novelty shop ("Grandad's Wacky Joke Emporium".) He's feeling really down, she says. His whole family and all his friends have turned against him—she's all he's got left. He's started taking this whole supervillain thing really seriously and he has begun painting his face like a clown. He's also really self-conscious about the way his face got all ripped up during the fight at the courthouse. He made it worse when he punched out all those windows at the arcade and he's always taking little injuries when he runs at super-speed. He'll look like the Jigsaw Man soon, he complains. He lost one of his front teeth, too, and it really bothers him.

If Gluk learns this information then the police Task Force gets wind of it, and they'll send a SWAT team to Mary's place. She lives with her ailing mother, and there's a strong chance that this could turn into a hostage situation. Bedlam's SWAT units aren't known for dealing well with hostage crises.

Gluk would like the PCs to try and get there first. If they do, Stabbo will give them quite a fight in the cramped confines of the apartment. You might want to let the battle spill over into the novelty store downstairs, since that fits Stabbo's "theme." If they catch him, he goes to prison giggling and swearing revenge. But there are rumors that the FBI is going to put him in Witness Protection.

Part 4: Funland

If Stabbo gets away, he'll hole up in Funland, the closed amusement park at the bottom of the crime-ridden Liberty Shoppes Mall (see Page 154.) By the time the PCs catch up with him, he'll have recruited a teenaged gang of gun-toting misfits and painted them all in clown makeup. His first order of business is to find out the secret location of the women's shelter where Marie found refuge and to have his revenge against every woman there. Taking over the underworld comes next.

Aftermath

Stabbo the Clown goes off to jail or his grave or a bigger criminal career. Donny Scarpia breathes a sigh of relief.

Two weeks later Detective Gluk manages to secure his first authorized vacation in three years. He returns to find his desk buried under a giant load of files—more than twenty new cases.

Judge Leeth decides he's had enough and puts in a fourth request for retirement. They reject it and for a week he hears all his cases with his face down.

Marie Tucci meets a big, strong, gentle young man who works as a janitor in Stark Hill. His face has been disfigured in a fire. Within a month they have moved in together. If a PC asks her, Marie shyly says that Detective Gluk introduced them.

Mel Lutz goes on a cruise to "get his head together." When he returns, he feels a lot better, forgets his earlier attack of conscience and goes back to hustling for the mob.

There is no vacation for Marla Zaranovsky. She must be near the top of Stabbo the Clown's "to-do" list, but she seems unafraid. You can find her any given weekday in court.

The city grinds on its weary way.