



# POWERS & PERILS

## NUMBER ONE



# ORWELL INDUSTRIES



**POWERS & PERILS  
NUMBER 1**

**ORWELL INDUSTRIES  
(SAVAGE WORLDS EDITION)**

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# ORWELL INDUSTRIES

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION



### BACKGROUND

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**From:** GT Orwell <gto@\*\*\*>

**To:** Early M Dew <early@\*\*\*>

**Date:** July 11, 2005 8:14 AM

**Subject:** Biography

*Early - Do me a favor and send a few copies of the biography over to that BBC reporter. You know I haven't the time to read that sort of thing – I'm sure what you wrote is fine. Tell him if he has any more questions about my life before starting the company, the answers are all there. Also inform him that I have better things to do than entertain him and his foolish conspiracy theories.*  
- GTO

### G. THOMAS ORWELL

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The story of Orwell Industries begins and ends with its founder, G. Thomas Orwell. Born in Ohio in 1923, he proved to be a child prodigy. A bout with polio left

him bedridden for two years, with little more to do than devote himself to his studies. When he finally recovered, able to walk but hampered with a limp to this day, he was able to complete high school at age 12. He immediately began college and completed a doctorate in physics in record time before going on to earn a second and third, in mathematics and engineering.

When the United States entered World War II, Orwell attempted to join the Marines but was declared 4F, unfit to serve, because of his disability. Within a year, he was approached by the US Defense Department and asked to join their cryptography team because of his mathematics background.

Orwell toiled away at cracking Nazi ciphers until the call came: Robert Oppenheimer was leading a group of scientists out into the desert to stop the war. Would he join them? He agreed, and spent the remainder of the war working on the Manhattan Project, helping to build the atomic bomb. To G.T. Orwell, the bomb represented an extreme solution to a difficult problem. This was an example he would carry with him to the present day.



## EARLY DAYS

After the war, the military contacts Orwell had made proved to be invaluable. He spent the rest of the 40's and most of the 50's engaged in pure research in various Army think tanks. As long as he could convince his government employers that his work might assist them in some way on the battlefield, he was given free rein to do as he wished.

Heavily influenced by his youthful studies of physicists Einstein, Lanczos, and van Stockum, Orwell took the opportunity to seriously consider his passing fascination with the nature of time and the possibility of time travel. He was convinced that, while actual time *travel* was likely impossible given the current level of technology, he could create a method to *look* into other times. Orwell's handlers at the Pentagon took very little convincing to see the military potential for time viewing, specifically into the future, and granted him free rein to pursue his vision. Realizing the problem was more complex than he originally envisioned, his idle fascination soon developed into a lifelong obsession.

## THE ACCIDENT

Even after more than ten years of constant research resulted in one failure after another, Orwell was no less determined to continue his work. The election of President Kennedy changed everything. Orwell's temporal viewing project was one of many found to be "ludicrous and extraneous" by Secretary of Defense McNamara, and Orwell was notified that his project was to be shut down immediately. Orwell was to be transferred to the Applied Sciences division. Feeling he was near a breakthrough, he broke into his lab

before it was completely decommissioned to run one last, desperate test. He was certain that if it were successful it would be sufficient to convince the Pentagon to continue his funding.

And it worked! For a few moments, Orwell opened a small window into the future. (He managed to sneak a peek at downtown Cincinnati, Ohio, in the year 1998; the cars being driven there were enough to convince him that he was in fact looking at the future.) The window was incredibly unstable. It lasted for twenty-eight seconds before collapsing in on itself and exploding. The lab was destroyed, and Orwell was badly injured and bathed in bizarre temporal radiation.

This combination of injury and radiation drove Orwell into a sort of waking coma, with most of his mental functions still operating, but with only fleeting perceptions of the outside world. These brief flashes were enough to convince Orwell that he was not dead and the momentary glimpses - particularly of his nurse - kept him from going insane. Like the time he had spent recovering from polio, he decided to put the time given to him to good use. He spent the next sixteen months thinking about his final, failed experiment and what had gone wrong with it. Orwell carefully analyzed



and refined every step of the process and altered his theories accordingly. During the final period of his convalescence, he grasped a thread of understanding of the time stream and conceived of the possibility of removing non-living objects from the future.

With his wounds healed and the temporal energy *almost* completely dispersed from his body, Orwell awoke to find he was jobless and penniless. The hospital stay took what savings he had and a Pentagon bureaucrat was at his bedside within days to sever all relations with Orwell. A week later, he received a bill for the damage he had caused to government property when he performed his catastrophic, unsanctioned experiments in the lab.

Orwell was undaunted. With nothing more than the plans for his new temporal viewing device (later to be called the "Magic Mirror"), Orwell felt he was ready to take on any challenge the world could throw at him. Now married to his longtime nurse, Bethany, he would not have to face the future alone.

## GTO TECHNOLOGY

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After draining Bethany's small savings and burying himself in debt with numerous loans, Orwell was able to launch a new company, GTO Technology, within a year of leaving the hospital. He began construction of the Magic Mirror shortly thereafter. The device was incredibly complex and required Orwell to create hundreds of subsystems, many of which could be revised to serve other purposes. Orwell patented these subsystems as he developed them.

One of these inventions, a coolant regulator, was found to be exactly what the U.S. government needed for a new generation of missile technology. Orwell quickly paid off all outstanding loans with this new infusion of capital while his other inventions found equally lucrative commercial applications. This immense revenue stream allowed Orwell to expand his operations and devote more of his time to the development of the Magic Mirror.

## PERSONAL TRAGEDY

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In the midst of this abundant prosperity came the unexpected news that Bethany was pregnant. G.T. and Bethany were overjoyed, but from the beginning it was obvious that there was something wrong. The child was developing abnormally fast and Bethany's body was ill equipped to deal with the rapid maturation. Despite having the best doctors present during the delivery, she died immediately upon giving birth to their son, Thomas. Even though she carried him only five months, he appeared as healthy as any full-term infant.

Orwell realized some years later that his failed laboratory experiment had flooded him with temporal radiation that never completely left his system and these energies somehow accelerated his son's development and gifted the boy with temporal powers. This knowledge only served to cause his pain to fester and grow and, rather than blame himself, he blamed his son wholly and completely for Bethany's fate.

To date, Orwell has not remarried. As far as he is concerned, that chapter in his life is closed for good.

## ZERO

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With little Tommy in the care of a team of nannies, tutors, and household servants, Orwell returned to work with an almost fanatical vigor. He continued to refine the Mirror, but was frustrated with one failure after another. Despite these personal setbacks, Orwell's company, renamed Orwell Industries, continued to flourish. For one reason or another, he put less and less time into the Mirror and more into running his business.

Two events occurred in 1980 which changed everything. Tommy began manifesting his abilities to teleport just shy of his sixteenth birthday and his father hired the brilliant young Dr. William Zeroster. As Tommy was forced to keep pretty much to himself, his temporal powers initially remained a secret.

Zeroster (called “Dr. Zero” by his labmates) had been incredibly successful at his first job as an R&D man for the Defense Department, but was let go after only a year for his gross insubordination and inability to follow orders. Orwell sensed something of a kindred spirit in Zero, and still bore a grudge against the government from his dealings with them in the past, so he did not hesitate to bring Zeroster under his wing. He treated Zero with far more affection than he treated his own son. Needless to say, this did not set well with young Tommy, who was quickly learning to use his powers to his own advantage.

Zeroster was quickly taken into Orwell’s confidence and G.T. shared his Magic Mirror research with Zero. Together, they advanced the project more over the following three years than Orwell had managed since Bethany’s untimely death. Zero knew almost immediately that the scope of the project was limited by its power source. They could manage short glimpses of the future by harnessing the small amounts of temporal energy available with their technology. Access to a greater source of energy would expand their capabilities immeasurably. The opportunity to gain such access would come sooner than either expected.

## THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY

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Though the Mirror did not work perfectly, it worked well enough for Orwell and Zero to begin to piece together a terrible truth. At some point in the future (approximately 20 years from the date of your campaign), something terrible will happen to a large portion of the world’s metahuman population. Whatever it is, it drives most of them to a form of murderous rage. In short order, they wipe out most of the remaining, unaffected metahumans, and, following the lead of a mysterious, unidentified leader, they begin a campaign to wipe out the human race. A campaign which, as far as Orwell and Zero can see, they are winning. They begin to refer to this critical juncture in the future, this sliver of space and time they can teasingly view, as the Event..

The reach of the Mirror was not sufficient to see any further than the beginning of this final battle. To make things worse, the recharge cycle of the Mirror was growing longer and longer after each use, as the available temporal energy diminished.

Surprisingly enough, the temporal energies spiked after the lab was invaded and - stranger still - defaced with graffiti rather than ransacked for technology. The invader managed to enter without opening a door or leaving a trace of his passing on the security cameras, but he wasn’t smart enough to pick up all his empty spray paint cans.

## NO COST TOO HIGH...

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Before Orwell had a chance to confront his son about the defamation of the lab, Zero made an unusual discovery. When Tommy entered the lab, he generated a massive amount of temporal energy, more than enough for Zero to reopen the mirror well ahead of schedule, and keep it open for far longer than ever before. Tommy, desperate for any sort of attention from his father, was more than willing to submit himself to a barrage of tests.

With his son’s assistance, Orwell was able to refine the Mirror. But even with the improvements, all he could do was look. After six months of virtual servitude to the lab, Tommy was growing restless. If he decided to use his powers to escape, there would be almost no way for anyone to stop him.

A clever mind, however, devised a plan to hold the boy hostage. The current Orwell Industries board of directors believes Dr. Zero enslaved Tommy to serve as a battery for the Mirror, but the truth is far worse.

G.T. devised the trap that captured his own son, and built the prison that holds him to this day.

When Tommy finally did attempt to flee - goaded into leaving after a confrontation with his father - a series of powerful electromagnets captured him in transit and forced him into a spherical magnetic container, the Orb. Since early 1984, Thomas Orwell has been held there, trapped in mid-teleport. In this form he releases a constant, massive stream of the temporal energies required by the Mirror. Neither Orwell nor Zeroster can say for certain whether or not Tommy is even still alive, let alone conscious and aware of his condition or even of the passage of time around him.

This is G.T. Orwell's greatest secret, known to less than a dozen people. Rumor among his confidantes has it that one of his trusted colleagues, a former OI board member, tried to blackmail him with this information. The man and his threats disappeared soon after.

New board members who are made aware of this fact, and who have known Orwell for years, are often amazed by this revelation. The Old Man they know is not by any means a cruel man; driven, yes, and not one to suffer fools lightly, but never cruel. But Orwell's treatment of his only son has, as far as G.T. is concerned, a noble purpose: to save the future.

## ...TO SAVE THE WORLD

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With the Mirror running at full capacity, Orwell and Zeroster continued to use it to gain a business advantage, by monitoring future trends in the various world markets. By the early 90's, Zero had finally cracked the secret to bringing items back from the future and Orwell Industries' raiding of future technologies began in earnest. This definite edge has led to Orwell Industries becoming a giant megacorporation, with offices and activities in every corner of the globe and covering every aspect of human endeavor.

All the money, all the power, all the high technology and super weapons that Orwell Industries has and continues to acquire, are all focused towards a singular goal: To prevent the coming war with the metahumans by any means necessary. Orwell and Zero have done all they can to pinpoint the start of the war, but a massive dispersion of tachyons in the time zone around the Event has made it all but impossible to view.

Should fighting the war become inevitable, Orwell has no intention of losing it. He has already begun a secret pogrom to thin the ranks of the metahumans. Assassination and incarceration have proven to be moderately effective, but other tactics have worked as well. Forcing one metahuman group into confrontation with another, while sometimes difficult to achieve while retaining a degree of anonymity, certainly seems to be a win-win situation. Turning public opinion against the metahumans and using back-door politics to remove any local or federal backing they might have are also effective. "Discredit, demoralize, and destroy" are the watchwords of Orwell Industries anti-metahuman position. And many of OI's employees have come to enjoy their work.





# CHAPTER TWO

## THE COMPANY



### MISSION STATEMENT

Our goal is simple: To provide our customers with tomorrow's technology and services today.

-Orwell Industries 2005 Annual Report

It is the opinion of the Tactical Research team that the forces currently deployed at Site B are insufficient to carry out a clean and sweep mission with a success rate in excess of 60%. It is our considered opinion that the forces at Site B should be increased to ensure a minimum of 95% clearance rate by the end of Q4 2006.

-Orwell Industries 2005 Private Report, Section 4: Metahuman Activity in Los Angeles

Orwell Industries is a world-spanning umbrella corporation which tends to operate under the radar of the average citizen on the street. They produce few goods that are available to the general public; their primary customer base is comprised of other corporations and many nations large and small.

In private, OI is the personal army and armory of its founder and board of directors. Their unspoken mission is to accumulate wealth, power, and technology for the purpose of preventing the future Event by any means possible. If a war with metahumans is inevitable, they intend to be ready to win that war. "By any means necessary" is a phrase which G.T. Orwell uses often, and he is absolutely sincere about its use.

### BUSINESS GOALS

OI is primarily a conglomeration of research and development companies specializing in high-tech defense contracts. They develop cutting edge weapons systems for various military organizations both public and private around the world.

Orwell also owns and operates a security company, Orwell Defense Initiative. ODI comprises one of the largest private armies in the western world, and is equipped with the very latest in weaponry, vehicles, and gear, all produced by OI-owned companies. This serves a useful secondary purpose: when a customer has need

of ODI's services, their use of the company's high-tech toys functions as a better commercial for their products than any website or corporate video ever could. When the customer has their security issue under control, they're primed to purchase a great deal of Orwell equipment directly from the manufacturer.

## PRIMARY ACTIVITIES & SUBSIDIARIES

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### Research and Development

Most of Orwell's business stems from its R&D department. Orwell Labs - formerly known as GTO Technology, G.T.'s original company - is the public front for OI's research, though much of the real work takes place in Wonderland (see *Covert Operations* below for more information on Wonderland).

### Defense Contracts

Orwell and its subsidiaries have huge defense contracts with a number of governments around the world. (See *Clients & Areas of Operation* below for more details.)

Orwell Arms produces conventional small arms for both military and public use. State and local police who show a strong anti-metahuman temperament may find themselves receiving a generous donation of advanced firearms from Orwell. Orwell Transport develops next-generation military land vehicles, including combat hovercrafts and personal exoskeletons. Orwell Advanced Tactical Solutions (OATS) specializes in high-tech weapons, including directed energy weapons and anti-metahuman devices.

### Security

*Orwell Defense Initiative (ODI)* is, in terms of pure manpower, the largest subsidiary of OI. This is Orwell's private army, available to the highest bidder and armed with the very latest weaponry Orwell has developed. ODI has in the past worked for several large corporations who wished to expand their operations into dangerous parts of the world; their work with Mannheim & Strager Oil in the Middle East isn't common knowledge to the world at large, but among the military elite and the worldwide community of soldiers for hire it is an operation of legendary status.

More recently, ODI has concentrated on providing support to governments large and small rather than seeking corporate work. This has increased ODI's public profile considerably. They usually arrive well in advance of other peacekeeping forces, such as those provided by the UN, and operate under a much looser rein. When an ODI SORT team (see Chapter 3) rescued a group of American and Australian hostages from Domibian rebels last year, in broad daylight and against overwhelming odds, ODI - and Orwell Industries by extension - earned a warm place in the hearts of millions around the world.

Of course, if the fact that the kidnapping and rescue were all carefully orchestrated by OI's publicity guru was ever brought to light, it is highly unlikely that this golden age of goodwill towards ODI would continue for long.

### Information Technology

Most of the items Orwell has managed to pull from the future are powered by highly advanced computers and software. The computers OI has retrieved from the future include fingernail sized multi-terabyte flash drives, dozens of gigabytes of RAM, and hyperfast wireless broadband communication, all technologies just begging to be duplicated in the present day. This division has done just that.

Reverse-engineering these technologies is the beating heart of all of OI's research, since it powers the vast majority of the captured future equipment. G.T. Orwell has little patience for this sort of basic research, preferring that the company concentrate on "practical" technologies. ("Practical" is G.T.'s code phrase for "warfare-related".) He can't deny that it's also exceptionally profitable; for the last two years, Orwell Microprocessors has easily surpassed its competition in the ongoing race for the fastest PC processor.

### NETWORK NEWS

To date, all of OI's efforts to purchase or create a cable television network have been rebuffed. Arthur Spivak has laid out a plan to break in through the back door via the hostile takeover of a company already in ownership of a news network. This plan will require a massive expenditure of funds, however, and the Old Man is not yet convinced that it will work. If they do go forward, it will hamper OI's influence for the duration of the buyout. The GM should feel free to apply appropriate penalties to OI employees or bonuses to the Characters during this period.

### WHAT'S IN A NAME?

OI uses fairly innocuous code names for all their projects while they're still in development, so that they can be referred to in internal emails and memos without raising any red flags or giving outsiders a clue as to what they're really all about. This is particularly true of their covert works.

## OTHER SUBSIDIARIES

Orwell owns and operates dozens of companies, though most are controlled through secret holding companies and funded through offshore bank accounts. CFO Arthur Spivak is the only member of the management team who can unravel the layers of obfuscation and sort out exactly what OI owns. The Old Man doesn't concern himself with the details. He simply tells his management team what needs to be done. If OI doesn't already own a company that can do what's needed, Spivak will buy one using whatever means are necessary. Usually a generous cash offer does the trick, but Spivak won't hesitate to engage in an aggressive leveraged buyout if gentler means don't pan out.

*Media Unlimited* is Orwell's media subsidiary, and it owns a vast array of media outlets across the United States. Under MU, there is a coast-to-coast network of conservative radio stations, most of which feature prominent talk shows. The Singleton News Network operates a chain of newspapers along the east coast and Media Island is the amalgamation of high-profile news blogs owned by MU. Through these channels, Orwell can covertly leak news and information into the media and, eventually, into the mainstream consciousness. Media Island is Early Dew's pet project as she recognizes the influence and power of internet news in the modern age and is working doggedly to exploit it however she can.

*Brown Intelligence Services* is one of OI's covertly owned businesses. Led by CEO Whitley Brown (see Chapter 3), they provide physical and network security to many high-profile companies as a front for a massive conspiracy of corporate espionage.

## PUBLIC IMAGE

*"When no one had ever heard of me, I dreamed of being famous. And now that I'm famous, I would like nothing more than to be anonymous."* - G. Thomas Orwell: Time On My Side

The standard operating procedure of Orwell is to operate under the radar of the general public whenever possible. Much of their work is handled through subsidiaries, holding companies, and offshore banks, with as many layers of obfuscation between Orwell and their works as possible. As a result, it takes a business genius (a Knowledge (Business) roll at -4) to even begin unraveling the complex web that Arthur Spivak has spent years building. As a result, the average person outside of the business world knows little, if anything, about Orwell Industries' businesses and practices.

A notable exception is ODI, which entered the spotlight recently, during the civil war in the African nation of Domibia. The Orwell management team has been careful to take little if any credit for those actions, however, by orders of the Old Man. He prefers to stay out of the public eye as much as possible. (He managed to have a tell-all unauthorized biography buried before it could see the light of day, but the interest it generated prompted the creation of a fluff piece by Early Dew and her staff. Not a day has passed that he hasn't regretted allowing her to do it, though he understands that his Horatio Algeresque rags-to-riches story makes for good PR.)

## CURRENT PROJECTS

Orwell Industries has thousands of different projects in various stages of development at any given time, making an exhaustive list of them impossible. Instead, this section contains a few of those most important to the company or most likely to involve a group of superhero Characters at some point. These projects are divided into two groups, public and covert.

Public projects are still ostensibly secret, but Orwell often leaks information about them to various news sources in order to build interest in them. An hour or less of internet research will reveal much of the information listed here. And even these projects often contain aspects which must remain covert. Project Marco, below, is a prime example.

Covert projects are truly top secret. In many cases they involve potential weapons of war in development for one or more nations who would be less than happy if their connection to the weapons was revealed. Obtaining information on these projects is still possible, but requires some high-level hacking. See the sidebar *Hacking Orwell* in Chapter 4 for more details.

## PUBLIC PROJECTS

*Handcuff* is OI's non-lethal weapons research program. It was about to go public when a major setback recently occurred: one of the main weapons, a quick-set incapacitating foam, was revealed to be highly carcinogenic. OI will do anything to bury the report, including murdering the doctors who discovered it. (The ones unwilling to be bought off, naturally.)

The *Corium* project aims to create functional, low-cost exoskeletons. While these have a great deal of military potential - Corium receives over 70% of its funding from the Pentagon - the neural interface used by the exoskeletons have innumerable civilian applications. A civilian exoskeleton could allow a completely paralyzed person to move and breathe on their own, for example. Neural vehicle connections might allow pilots to fly dangerous combat missions remotely from miles away, or allow firefighters to control fire-suppressing robots from a safe distance. Unfortunately, the project has fallen woefully behind schedule as the development team has been completely unable to unravel the required futuretech. After hearing some horror stories about other Orwell teams who failed to meet their design deadlines (some of them are even true!) they are prepared to take desperate action to insure success. One possibility would be to steal a present-day example of a similar sort of technology (most likely from a battlesuit-wearing superhero!) to aid them in their work.

*Marco*, named after explorer Marco Polo, represents Orwell's plans to expand their operations in Asia, particularly along the Pacific Rim. There are three parts to this goal. The first is to set up a manufacturing facility for mass production of some of Orwell's high-tech gadgets. This is already well under way, with a factory set to open in Taiwan early next year.

The second phase has proven to be more difficult, and involves Orwell's purchase of one or more small R&D companies in Japan. The Japanese

### WHERE IN THE WORLD...?!

*Orwell Industries* sometimes references fictional nations in Africa, eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, rather than using real countries. This is a normal practice in comics, since it gives the creators free rein to create (and sometimes destroy) a setting.

The eastern European nation of Chernovoda and the African state of Domibia are both examples used in *Orwell Industries*. Exactly where they are is up to you. It's particularly easy to insert a small nation-state into fractious Eastern Europe, where maps can become obsolete before they're even printed.

You can also swap out any of the fictional countries in *Orwell* for real-world equivalents, replace actual places with fictional, or move locations around the globe as needed. While there are certain assumptions about certain places - the Orwell corporate headquarters being located in a major city, for example, or the Gemini lab placed in Columbia - you can move them easily enough without discarding any of those assumptions.



government has blocked all their efforts to date. They're leery of some of Orwell's business practices; to them, letting Orwell into the Japanese high tech business market would be like inviting a fox into the henhouse. With all their legal actions having failed, they are ready to move on to more extreme measures: they've invited one of the Japanese Senior Vice Ministers of Economy, Trade, and Industry, Hiroshi Ono, and his family to visit their corporate headquarters so that he can meet with the Orwell management team and other staff, and to allow them to plead their case to him. While he is in the US, Ono, his family, and his security team will be attacked (most likely by members of Snowblind - see Chapter 3 for more details on them), with the guards murdered and Ono's family kidnapped. As it's planned, an ODI SORT team will ensure the return of Ono's family in exchange for his valuable support; it's unlikely, of course, that things will go exactly as planned!

The final phase of Marco will involve gaining control of a number of high-profile Japanese corporations, particularly hardware manufacturers, in order to leverage their knowledge and work force towards Orwell's ends. Achieving this will prove to be many times more difficult than buying the small companies they are currently expending so much effort on. Success will require a huge expenditure of money and effort on Orwell's part, and during this period the company will be particularly vulnerable to attacks by the characters. (See Chapter 6, *Sticking it to the Man*, for more details.)

Once Project Marco enters the final stage, they'll begin hardwiring the computers they produce for world-wide distribution - particularly those being purchased under military and government contracts - with technology that will allow them to snoop into their contents and monitor their activities in real time. They'll be able to change the contents of those computers or feed them false input at will. Should they gain this ability, and until the reason for it is discovered and eliminated, they would have free rein to enact whatever sinister plots they wished. Orwell aircraft would be able to move with impunity, selectively removed from prying radar screens. Imprisoned employees would be granted early pardons and their criminal records wiped clean. Enemy troop strengths could be artificially increased, leading to an increased defense budget (which, naturally, means more money for OI). The possibilities are virtually endless.

## COVERT PROJECTS

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Many of Orwell Industries interests, both legal and illegal, are closely guarded secrets. Those that cross into nebulous areas of ethics, morality, and legality are buried within such a tangle of bureaucracy that they are nearly impossible to trace: dummy corporations, sacrificial lambs, and scapegoats shield upper management from any possibility of prosecution. A few of OI's more questionable concerns are detailed below.

*Looking Glass & Wonderland* are Orwell's primary projects. Looking Glass is the code name for Orwell's temporal observation and retrieval project. (The device itself is referred to as the Magic Mirror; see Chapter 5 for more details on it.) Of all the projects OI is involved in, this one is the most secret, and should only be revealed after an extensive – and dangerous – investigation on the part of the player characters.

Wonderland is the reverse engineering division, which examines the future technology and attempts to recreate it, in whole or in part, using present-day knowledge, equipment, and training. This often proves to be either prohibitively expensive, even considering Orwell Industries' deep pockets, or simply impossible given the limitations.

Dr. William Zeroster, OI's Chief Technology Officer and CEO of Orwell Labs, estimates that only about ten percent of the full range of technology retrieved from the future has proven to be both useful and reproducible. (He'll also be quick to point out that before he was brought on board only about two percent was useable.) A massive, ultra-secure vault in Wonderland contains most of the devices that Zeroster has, so far at least, been unable to unravel the inner workings of. For more details, see Chapter 4.

*Bluetooth 5.0* is the title for an array of computer and internet-related crimes, all overseen by OI's Network Security Manager, Wednesday Walker. Much of this work is directed towards cracking the secret identities of metahumans, hero and villain alike, to better target them for elimination.

Walker has also generated a healthy income for Orwell by turning OI's old computer facility, located on an artificial island in the North Atlantic, into a remote computer server facility for criminals. Nicknamed *Serenity*, the facility is used extensively by offshore banks looking for a place to electronically launder funds, for hackers in need of a place to securely store stolen bank records or credit card numbers, or to act as an ultra-secure email system for terrorist organizations.

Walker has used *Bluetooth 5.0* to skim millions of dollars for himself, as well as gather a mountain of damning evidence against his employers. He has no intention of jumping ship just yet, but he has an array of false identities and money caches in place, and won't hesitate to blackmail anyone and everyone in OI in order to get away scott free.

*Broomstick* is another top secret project spearheaded by Orwell. Orwell Arms creates low-cost, high-power personal weaponry, usually for foreign armies. As part of Project *Broomstick*, many of these weapons are "misplaced", recorded as non-functional and destroyed, or reported as stolen. The weapons are then dumped on the black market for little more than the cost of their manufacture. Others are sold through a series of intermediaries directly to criminal organizations with a high-technology, anti-metahuman bent.

The *Omega Project* is Orwell's most secret, and the one that would surely bring the company down if the truth of it were ever revealed. While war is certainly profitable, money has never been the primary reason OI sent private soldiers to foreign lands to fight for any cause willing to pay them. The truth is a macabre testament to the Old Man's dedication to his cause. ODI's secret agenda is the transport of human beings, living and dead alike, and funneling them into a half dozen secret Orwell facilities. The dead are taken from the battlefields, ostensibly to destroy them to prevent contagion. The living are kidnapped en masse - Orwell's soldiers have "disappeared" whole villages in Africa, Asia, eastern Europe, and South America. Once shipped to the Orwell Omega facilities, they are converted into the Legion of Night, Orwell Industries' zombie army. Currently, OI has roughly eight thousand of them prepared or in the pipeline ready for conversion. Orwell has ordered that the Omega project be stepped up dramatically, and wants to quadruple this number within the next year. To that end, Orwell agents will begin kidnappings outside of the war zone, going so far as to snatch the homeless off of America's own streets and plot out *Roanoke* and *Mary Celeste*-style mass disappearances. See Chapter 3 for more details on Code Omega.



## CLIENTS & AREAS OF OPERATION

### Corporate Clients

At one time, OI's primary income was from other corporations. While they still comprise a healthy component of Orwell's interests, in the last few years they've fallen into a distant second place. Nowadays, ODI handles 90% of Orwell's corporate clients, supplying them with security services and equipment. In the current age of superheroes and villains, their metahuman detection and control systems are second to none, and are widely regarded to be a necessity for any major business which could be a target of a supervillain attack.

Of course, this provides Orwell a prime opportunity. With so many businesses relying on them to provide security services, equipment, software, and the like, OI has positioned itself to spy on hundreds of major corporations around the world. Companies the characters own or work for could easily be included among those being serviced by ODI, which could potentially compromise one or more characters' secret identities. Orwell plans on using the skills they've learned in setting up their corporate espionage network to spy on foreign nations as well, as detailed in Project Marco, above.

### Africa

Ever a hotbed of political turmoil, Africa has proven to be prime territory for Orwell's brand of profiteering. Over a dozen African nations are past or current Orwell customers, earning the company billions. The vast majority of this business has been very straightforward, involving the sale of weapons, vehicles, and other equipment. Many of these business deals would be frowned upon by the United Nations or even prosecuted by the US government should they ever be discovered, but to date Orwell's use of hidden subsidiaries and off-shore banks has proven to be most effective in avoiding legal entanglements.

Orwell is currently funding a very public effort to improve living and working conditions in several African nations. Not coincidentally, these are all nations whose leaders owe sizable debts - monetary and otherwise - to Orwell Industries. They've spent hundreds of millions on housing projects, education, farming, and the like, and have received considerable acclaim in the US for these works. This is all part of a long-term plan, of course. Orwell would like to see Africa become the next Pacific Rim. In other words, another source for inexpensive high technology and cheap labor.

**Domibia:** The small nation of Domibia, with its rich natural resources and seemingly endless civil war, has proven to be one of Orwell Industries' best customers. It represents ODI's first foray into truly mercenary activities, a major shift from their previous position as a security agency.

Unbeknownst to either side involved in the Domibian uprising or the UN peacekeepers who have been left standing on the sidelines by ODI, Orwell has been playing both the Domibian military and the rebel forces against one another. Initially, this involved selling weapons to both sides. More recently, ODI has carefully timed and placed their attacks to increase tension between the two sides. A busy school "accidentally" destroyed by a missile attack, churches burned to the ground, and landmines placed in civilian territory have all contributed to continuing the war when both sides seemed prepared to begin peace talks.

Africa is not without her own heroes, though. A group of them led by the mystic hero Anotchi - the living reincarnation of a great Ashanti medicine man - have fought OI on their home soil to no avail almost since the day they arrived. It won't be long before they'll decide to take the fight to Orwell in the United States. Most likely this will lead to a misunderstanding between the characters and Anotchi. But once the dust settles and both sides realize they're on the *same* side, the characters will find themselves with a valuable ally. He'll be all the more valuable if and when the characters decide to attack Orwell's assets in Domibia.

### North America

Orwell's largest client in terms of dollars spent is the United States government. OI provides weapons

and gear to the Army and Marines, as well as all the hardware used by RAMPART, a secret anti-metahuman strike force only recently created by the Pentagon.

Despite the close ties OI has developed with the US government, there are still a handful of Pentagon officials who recall Orwell's previous tenure and his disregard for proper protocols. These aging generals and politicians don't have long left to them until they'll be forced into retirement, and they'd like nothing more than to take G.T. Orwell with them. Cultivating one or more of these men as allies against Orwell could pay off in spades for the characters down the line.

## South America

Orwell quickly realized that the real power - and wealth - in South America lay not with its governments, but with its crime lords. OI didn't hesitate to create an alliance with the largest and most powerful of these, the Cali cartel.

The tie between OI and the Cali is sufficiently strong that OI is lending them a "small favor" - a crack SORT team (see Chapter 3) to help assassinate a staunch anti-cartel lawyer. The lawyer, Bernardo Ebarra, seems to be a shoo-in for the next Colombian presidential race. So eliminating him now is a high priority for the company and the Cartel.

As with Africa, there are South American heroes who have been battling the cartels for years, though they're not aware of the Cali's collaboration with Orwell. Unfortunately for them, the Cali have more than sufficient funds to hire mercenary metahumans of their own, so the battle to break the cartels once and for all has gone poorly.

## Asia

To date, Orwell has made few inroads into Asia. They have built one of their secret labs (see Chapter 4) in Sri Lanka, and maintain some mundane technical production facilities in India to provide covert support for it. Otherwise, their influence in the region is limited, a shortcoming that leaves the Old Man deeply concerned. The Marco project, above, details OI's plans towards expanding into this region.

## Europe & Russia

Orwell has made great strides in Europe in recent years, both in conventional technology sales in the EU and in their other businesses in the less stable corners of the continent. With the chaos brought on by the end of the Cold War and the shattering of the Soviet Union, OI has found Eastern Europe to be a gold mine. They have made connections with every terrorist group, rebel faction, and would-be dictator in the region. OI has even set them against each other from time to time to keep the area destabilized.

**Chernovoda:** The small dictatorship of Chernovoda is a major client of OI's, second only to the United States. Because the tiny nation is under a strict UN-sanctioned trade embargo, arms shipments into Chernovoda are handled through organized crime connections and a complex chain of smugglers. This expensive, laborious process earns OI next to nothing.

On top of this, Chernovoda would seem an unlikely client for G.T. to choose

## EVIL EMPIRE

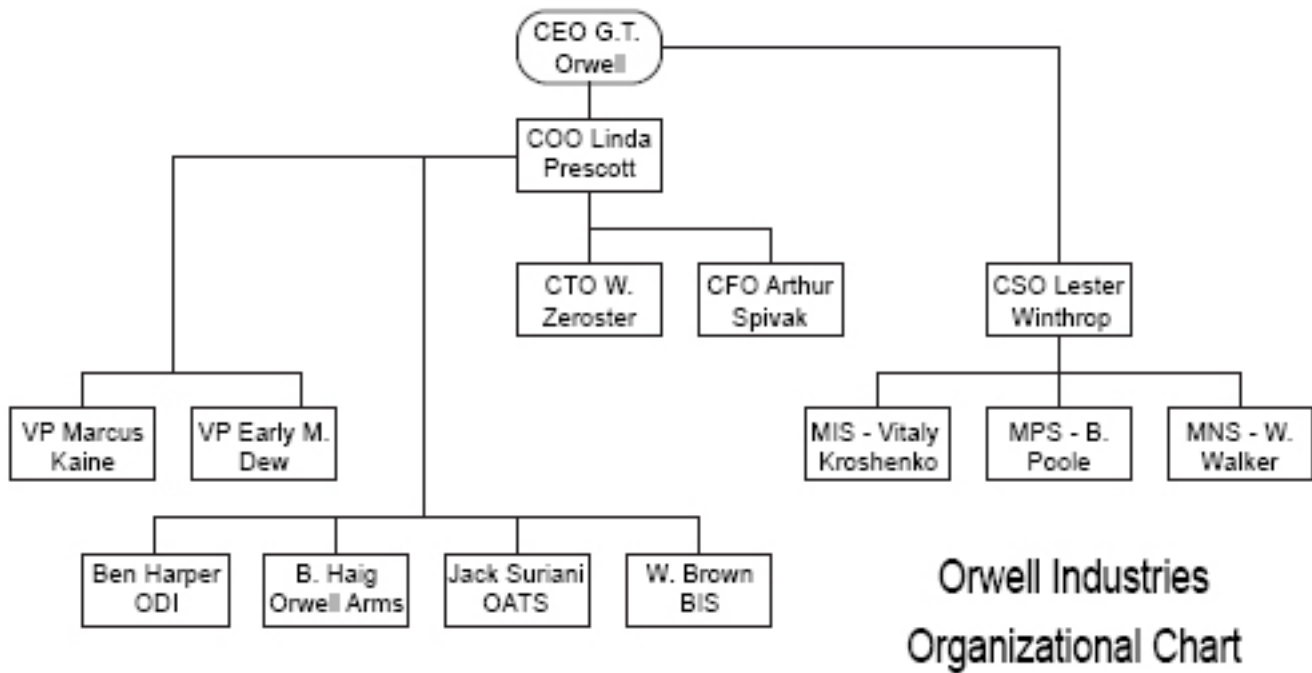
It should be pointed out that both General Rota and Colonel Valentin Ladislav, the two opposing leaders of the Chernovodan/Russian conflict, are well aware that Orwell is working both sides of the fence. They have personal reasons for escalating the war between their two countries; for more details, look for *Powers & Perils Volume II: Sovereign Nation*, the complete sourcebook for Chernovoda.



to associate himself with, even indirectly. Chernovoda's dictator, General Rota, is known for making extensive use of his nation's metahuman population in his bitter war against Russia and her allies. This naturally forces Russia to counter with her own supersoldiers to prevent invasion and potential destabilization.

It is these metahumans that Orwell is concerned with, which is why he supplies *both* sides in the war. He hopes helping Russia and Chernovoda will escalate their confrontation, armed with more and more powerful weapons. As he sees it, either one side will wipe out the other, or they'll be locked in a struggle that will eventually thin out both sides. The one option Orwell can't allow is a peaceful resolution, with both armies intact and now armed with the company's biggest guns.

OI has a contingency plan if peace breaks out. Wednesday Walker, Orwell's hacker extraordinaire, is able to access the Russian military defense network, and is prepared to use it to launch a nuclear device at Chernovoda. This is a win-win for OI. If the bomb goes off, it will kill any number of metahumans. In the likely event the nuclear bomb fails to detonate, the sheer act of aggression will be enough to drive the two nations into open warfare once again, this time until the bitter end.



## HIERARCHY

G.T. has spent the last few years insulating himself from the day-to-day worries of running the company, preferring to leave those decisions to Linda Prescott, the company's COO. All upper management answers to Linda, with the exception of CSO Lester Winthrop who reports directly to the Old Man.

Beneath the management team is a small army of upper and middle managers overseeing the nearly half a million people directly employed by Orwell. (The exact total of employees maintained by secret holding companies and the like is roughly 50,000.)

## EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

If you ask almost any Orwell employee how they feel about working for OI, they will tell you that it's the best job they've ever had. The pay is good, well above average for other jobs of similar types in similar markets, and the benefits are second-to-none. The profit sharing program alone has created several dozen millionaires since its instatement. The company has lagged behind the curve in some areas, particularly

in its maternity leave program and in recognizing the partners of its gay employees in regards to health insurance and the like. The Old Man is very old fashioned, but rather than face public disapproval, he's allowed these programs to move forward, albeit at a glacial pace.

With those exceptions, Orwell employees are among the most satisfied around. OI has been selected for three years in a row as one of *Fortune's* "100 Best Companies to Work For". Most employees are blissfully unaware of Orwell Industries' criminal activities. The few who possess enough information to threaten the corporation have heard stories about what's happened to the families of potential whistleblowers, not to mention the whistleblowers themselves. Thus, finding someone with the courage and credibility to testify against OI is no easy feat.

## INTERNAL POLITICS

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Orwell Industries has maintained itself as a company for the last few years largely due to fear. Not necessarily a fear of the metahuman war, but a fear of Linda Prescott. Her iron will imposes order among the individualists within upper management.

The Old Man enjoys the constant struggle among his staff, far more than being surrounded by sycophants. These powerful personalities are often at odds, but the combination of Orwell's quiet dignity and Prescott's steely resolve have enabled them to work together to create a unique workplace dynamic. Projects and plans that could be hung up for months in board meetings over various sundry details are often resolved over the course of an afternoon.

Almost every one of these bi-weekly management meetings at the Orwell HQ results in a screaming match between two or more of the senior members. When things finally do calm down, however, a resolution *will* be found. Orwell won't allow a meeting to adjourn until it has, and no one wants to repeat the now-infamous Seventeen Hour Heart Attack Hell Meeting of last year. (The group refused to come to an agreement on a budget issue until Marcus Kaine, Orwell's top attorney, had a mild heart attack and collapsed. Prescott wouldn't buzz the paramedics in until everyone approved the budget.)

As with any other company, the various departments consider themselves to be the most important part of the business, and that the rest of the place would collapse under their own weight without them there to support it. Generally, the group's greatest animosity is directed towards the "head penny pincher", Chief Financial Officer Arthur Spivak.



# CHAPTER THREE

## EMPLOYEES



### MANAGEMENT TEAM

#### G. Thomas Orwell, President and CEO



Orwell's background is discussed in depth in Chapter 1.

**Quote:** "Don't take this personally. It's just business."

**Personality:** One of the first things people notice about G.T. is that he has only two speeds: fast and faster. He walks fast, talks fast, thinks fast, and only sleeps three hours a night.

**Powers & Tactics:** Orwell is a planner and controller who has no time to sully himself with physical conflicts. Should the need arise, he has access to an unlimited supply of Minions and Equipment (see below), and won't hesitate to use both to make good his escape. If presented with a situation where escape would be too dangerous or problematic – and assuming that he doesn't believe the characters will kill him – Orwell will simply surrender to the players. He counts on his wealth, influence, and exceptional legal team to get him out of jail, usually within hours.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d12+2, Spirit d12, Strength d6, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Investigation d10, Intimidate d10, Knowledge (Business) d10, Knowledge (Engineering) d10, Knowledge (Physics) d10, Knowledge (Tactics) d10, Persuasion d10, Notice d8, Repair d10, Shooting d8, Taunt d10

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

**Hindrances:** Mean, Heartless, Vow (Destroy Metahumans)

**Edges:** Connections, Filthy Rich, Jack-of-all-Trades, Rich, Strong Willed

**Gear:** Typically, he carries a one-of-a-kind, Chunder Pistol he calls "Chum". Other than its compact size, it is identical to the standard HC-104 Chunder Gun.

**Super Powers:**

- Invent 5

While Orwell is a highly skilled genius, he lacks the ability to make the same great leaps as his counterpart, Dr. Zeroster. (His Intelligence is purchased simply as a high Ability rather than by using the Enhanced Ability Power, so he can't use Extra Effort to improve it in the way that Zeroster can.) Orwell made his discoveries through old fashioned trial and error, and now confines most of his laboratory work to weekend tinkering and occasionally fine-tuning the Magic Mirror.

**Appearance:** No one in the know at OI is certain if it's simply due to clean living or his tampering with temporal energy, but G.T. Orwell is remarkably hale and hearty for a man of his age. He despises wearing suits, being much more comfortable in a lab coat, and can't wear one for more than five minutes without making it look rumpled. Around the office, he'll likely be found with his jacket tossed on the back of a chair, tie loosened, and shirtsleeves rolled. In his official biography, he's described as "Thomas Edison with better hair". (Orwell's middle name was in fact taken from Edison, and he considers the great inventor to be his personal inspiration. One of the first things visitors to the Orwell Industries headquarters notice is a painting of Edison by Russian portrait artist Michael Khundiashvili on display in the center of the lobby.)





## Linda Prescott, Senior VP, COO



Prescott, the Chief Operating Officer, manages the day-to-day functions of the company, and knows more about its inner workings than anyone including Orwell himself. She's better known to the players as Kestrel, a superheroine. (See Chapter 6: Introducing Orwell for some tips on introducing her to your campaign and/or using her as a means to kick off an Orwell-based campaign.)

Linda's abilities come from years of intense training and natural talent and an assortment of high-tech gadgetry. She was programmed from birth for perfection by her father, who adventured under the name of Kestrel for a few years back in the late 70's. His career as a superhero was cut short when he was injured in battle, resulting in the loss of one of his arms. Linda's devotion to her father won out over her desire for a normal life, and now she finds her nightly battles with muggers and thieves a welcome break from the boardroom.

As skilled as Linda is on the streets, though, it is in those same boardrooms that she has really made a name for herself. She earned a small fortune as the CEO of her own technology company, and is well known for being one of the first black women to do so. When Orwell was considering purchasing the company, he was impressed at Linda's skillful management, and offered to bring her on board as a vice president. She initially balked, concerned that working for Orwell might jeopardize her ability to operate as Kestrel. After investigating OI, she realized that it was involved in some shady dealings, and decided to infiltrate the company to learn more and hopefully bring them down from within.

That was three years ago. Since then, she's learned the truth about

Orwell, and has slowly but surely been won over to the Old Man's

cause. She has seen the future predicted by the Magic Mirror, and though she abhors some of the tactics being used – the Omega Project in particular causes her many sleepless nights – she accepts them as a necessary evil.

**Quote:** "Is that the best you've got?"

**Personality:** Linda is a classic Type A workaholic, expecting everyone – especially herself – to give their full effort each time, every time, in every endeavor.

**Powers & Tactics:** Whether in a boardroom or in a brawl, Linda is aggressive and proactive, though never foolhardy. She only enters into fights she knows she can win. If losing is ever in doubt, she'll regroup, assemble allies if needed, and formulate a new plan of attack. Once a battle is joined, Linda considers no tactic to be off-limits save jeopardizing the innocent. Other than that, she'll do anything to win.

**Appearance:** Linda is a beautiful, athletic African-American woman in her early 30's. At work, she keeps her hair brutally short and dresses in conservative pants suits, cut to conceal her impressive physique. (They're also handy for covering up any injuries she might receive while adventuring.) As Kestrel, she wears a tight bodysuit in muted red and blue.

**Attributes:** Agility d12, Smarts d12, Spirit d12, Strength d12, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Fighting d12, Notice d8, Knowledge (Business) d8, Knowledge (Tactics) d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Throwing d6

**Charisma:** +2; **Pace:** 6/24; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 12(4)

**Hindrances:** Loyal, Heroic

**Edges:** Acrobatics, Attractive, Connections, Rich, Take the Hit

**Gear:** As Kestrel, she wears a utility belt full of smoke grenades and an array of alternate items such as: camera, commlink, caltrops, handcuffs, binoculars, night vision goggles, flashlight, multitool, knife, a telescoping billy club, shuriken, etc.

**Super Powers:**

- Attack, Melee: 2d6 (Combat Moves)
- Armor 4 (Kestrel Suit)
- Deflection 4 (Extreme Training)
- Flight 3 (Kestrel Suit, Gliding Only)
- Super Attributes: (Extreme Training +2 Steps to each Attribute)





**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d12+7, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Knowledge (Earth Science) d12, Knowledge (Engineering) d12, Knowledge (Life Science) d12, Knowledge (Physical Science) d12, Notice d8, Repair d12, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10(5)

**Hindrances:** Curious, Vow (Discover the secret of immortality)

**Edges:** Level Headed, Improved Level Headed, Mechanical Genius

**Gear:** Dr. Zero has access to a dizzying array of weapons, vehicles, and other gadgets, any of which he might put to use at any given time.

**Super Powers:**

- Armor 5: Heavy Armor, Requires Activation, Device (Force Field Generator Belt)
- Attack, Ranged: 3d6 (Magna-Gauntlets, Magna-blast)
- Copycat 7: Limitation: Mutants Only, Limitation: One power, Always the same power as power negated, Range: Touch (Power Transferral Ring)
  - Flight 4 (Getaway Boots)
  - Negation (Power Transferral Ring)
  - Telekinesis 5: Device, Ferrous Metals Only (Magna-Gauntlets)
  - Teleport: Long Range Only, More Range 4, No Passengers (Getaway Boots)

## Dr. William Zeroster, Senior VP, CTO, CEO Orwell Labs



As Chief Technology Officer, Dr. Zeroster (known to the staff as Doctor Zero) directs the R&D department and oversees the Production department, though the latter is able to operate with relative independence. Zeroster also directly manages both Wonderland and Looking Glass. Most of the significant breakthroughs in both these divisions have come from Zeroster's own research.

Zeroster is a brilliant scientist and technician with little patience for office politics. He often finds himself outmaneuvered by both Prescott and Spivak, and resents both of them deeply. He and Orwell have a deep mutual admiration: Zeroster respects Orwell's inspiration in discovering the Mirror, while Orwell recognizes Zero's ability to follow up on this discovery and take it to the next level. Spivak and Prescott would like nothing more than to oust Zeroster completely, but his relationship with the Old Man makes this all but impossible for the time being.

Zero puts up with it all, because his work in OI affords him a unique opportunity to pursue his personal research with effectively unlimited funding and nearly complete autonomy. While it appears to outsiders that Zero is focused solely on developing tools of war for Orwell's mad campaign, that work is barely a part-time job for him. Thanks to his unique intellect and ability to work at astonishing speed, and a crack crew of brilliant assistants, Zero is able to more than satisfy the Old Man's needs while spending the bulk of his time and energy on his own research.

After watching his mother eventually succumb to Alzheimer's disease, Zeroster has no intention of allowing himself to follow in her footsteps. He believes that he cannot allow the world to be robbed of his intellect, so he intends on finding some way to ensure that it will be preserved forever. Zero would prefer to accomplish this by making himself immortal, though he's also considered more radical treatments such as having his brain removed or downloading his memories into a supercomputer. To that end, he'd love to get his hands on one or more psychic metahumans to experiment on, and may eventually resort to kidnapping to get them.

In the dark future revealed in the Magic Mirror, Zeroster is transformed when Orwell's son escapes his prison in the Looking Glass laboratory. He becomes a being of pure thought - immortal, as he always wished to be, but also incredibly unstable, irradiating those around him with his thoughts. He manages to seal himself in a suit of armor, becoming the tyrant known as Reliquary, but only after losing a significant portion of his memories; see Chapter 6 for more details.

**Quote:** "It's alive... ALIVE! ...I always wanted to say that."

**Personality:** Zeroster relishes his role as Orwell Industries' pet mad scientist. He's developed a number of technologies not because he thinks they'd be particularly useful but because he feels they're the sorts

of things that an evil genius should build. He's filled his lab with Tesla coils and Jacob's ladders for just that reason.

At heart, though, Zeroster is driven by the fear that he will someday lose his mind. This is the real motivating factor behind his work, and while he can be distracted from it in the short run by battles with metahumans, it will always be in the back of his mind. He'll never pass up an opportunity to learn more about a metahuman who has a power or ability which he feels could help him achieve his goal of immortality. (Characters with Immunity to aging are obvious examples, but almost any Immunity could be of use to him, as could healing or regenerative powers.)

**Powers & Tactics:** Generally, Zero prefers to let the Orwell security forces handle the dirty work of defending the lab, but the mad scientist in him won't allow him to stay out of a fight for long! In addition to his devices, he has access to a wide variety of equipment, and could potentially have any of the items included in Chapter 5 lying around in his lab, including versions that are more or less powerful. These items are usually beta versions, and have the flaw Unreliable.

In combat, Zero prefers to keep his distance, using his Getaway Boots to fly about and his Magna-Gauntlets to engage his opponents at range. If an opponent gets in close, he'll try to steal their most obvious power with his Power Transferral Ring to get the upper hand. When all else fails, he'll try to make good his escape, teleporting away to fight another day. While Zero has yet to test himself in battle against a group of metahumans, he secretly looks forward to the opportunity, and the more often it happens, the more time he'll devote to developing intricate battle plans and inventing new equipment to test against them.

**Appearance:** Dr. Zero is tall and thin, topped with a wild shock of bright red hair and wrapped in a voluminous and thoroughly stained lab coat. Zero is in his late 20's, but too many nights spent sleepless in the labs make him look older. He always has some small injury or another from lab accidents: burns, cuts, scrapes, eyebrows burned off from explosions, etc.





**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d12, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Driving d8, Fighting d6, Gambling d8, Knowledge (Business) d12, Knowledge (Civics) d8, Persuasion d10, Shooting d8, Swimming d6, Survival d6

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

**Hindrances:** Greedy (Major), Habit (Adrenaline Junkie: Danger, Gambling, Women)

**Edges:** Attractive, Charismatic, Connections, Extra Language (Ukrainian)

**Gear:** He carries a Zapgun in the glove box when travelling. Otherwise, he's completely unarmed, relying utterly on his bodyguards and his charm.

## Arthur Spivak, Senior VP, CFO



Spivak is OI's Chief Financial Officer. While Doc Zero is arguably the most important member of the Board – R&D is really the company's lifeblood – Spivak controls the purse strings, and thus wields considerable power. Spivak has worked for Orwell for years, and the old man trusts Spivak completely. He shouldn't.

From day one, Spivak has been embezzling money from Orwell Industries. So far he's managed to steal millions from the Orwell till, all of it going towards gambling debts, fast cars, and faster women. When his wife discovered Spivak's robbery and infidelity, she threatened to report him and Orwell's operations to the police and – even worse in Arthur's eyes – divorce him and take as much of his money with her as she could. Spivak responded by secretly funding a pet project of Chief Security Officer Lester Winthrop: Project Snowblind, a group of metahuman assassins run by Winthrop to take care of Orwell's considerable dirty laundry. In exchange for funding, Winthrop agreed to send Snowblind to murder Spivak's wife, sealing the potential security leak and earning Spivak a healthy life insurance check.

Since then, Spivak has leveraged his control over Snowblind's funding to clear up some other personal problems. Most recently, they slaughtered a number of prominent Mafiosos to help eliminate Spivak's massive debt with a Mob loan shark.

**Quote:** "Whoever said 'crime doesn't pay' didn't have me as their accountant." Or, "Hey, how you doin'?" if he's speaking to a woman of even modest beauty.

**Personality:** Spivak is the sort of man who will hug you with one arm and stab you in the kidney with the other, then sell you a ride on the ambulance. He is ruthless, conniving, two-timing, utterly charming, and completely convincing.

**Appearance:** Arthur Spivak looks good for man of his age, and he knows it. He is in his mid-40's and has the looks of an aging-but-active surfer. Though he's the eldest son of Ukrainian immigrants, he grew up in California and spent most of his time on the beach. Hair plugs have maintained his flowing locks, coloring keeps them blonde, and the judicious use of Botox treatments have kept the worse ravages of time away from his face. His physique is beginning to fade, however, so lately he's spending extra time in the gym. If he spent half as much time actually working out as he does hitting on women, he'd be an Adonis.





## Lester Winthrop, Vice President, CSO



Lester is the Chief Security Officer for Orwell Industries and its primary subsidiaries. He oversees the physical security of Orwell facilities and personnel (including an extensive network of bodyguards for Ol's upper management) as well as the digital security of the company's data. As part of these duties, he serves as Ol's primary liaison with local and federal law enforcement.

Winthrop is a former Secret Service agent who worked his way up into the Service's upper ranks. The exact circumstances surrounding his discharge remain clouded in mystery. Numerous Freedom of Information Act requests by more than one inquisitive journalist have turned up nothing more than a few heavily redacted internal memos and a massive list of files left unreleased for reasons of national security. A few of these journalists have found themselves on the receiving end of incredibly invasive IRS audits and barely-veiled threats from the FBI and NSA. Scuttlebutt inside the beltway says that a former White House staffer was involved in some "really bad things", and that Winthrop took the fall for them. A few versions of the story have the staffer replaced with the President or VP, and the "very bad things" vary from drug use to the brutal murder of a high-class call girl in the Lincoln Bedroom. Whatever the reason for his leaving the Service, no one is talking, least of all Winthrop. Orwell insiders say that the Old Man and possibly a few others on the board know exactly what happened, and are holding it over Winthrop's head to ensure his absolute loyalty.

Winthrop personally oversees Orwell's personnel security, a small army of bodyguards, pilots, and drivers who are responsible for the safety of Ol's management. He shows the same single-minded determination towards protecting his principals as did while in the Service, and would take a bullet for any of them without hesitation. This is even true of Arthur Spivak, who he personally despises for his many and varied sins.

**Quote:** "Yes, sir. I'll take care of it."

**Personality:** All business. If you didn't know better, you'd swear Lester was an android. Wednesday Walker has a standing offer of \$10,000 to anyone who can make Lester crack a smile while he's on duty. (The "on duty" bit is sort of a given, considering that Lester doesn't socialize with any of his co-workers after hours.) After two and half years, no one has even come close to collecting. He also has a very precise way of talking. He'll never offer more than he's asked, but if he's asked he'll tell you exactly what he thinks. G.T. appreciates this quality in Lester - combined with his absolute secrecy and unflagging loyalty, it's no wonder he's considered by many to be the Old Man's only real confidant.

**Appearance:** Lester makes enough money to have Armani suits cut to fit his solidly muscled six foot six frame, but somehow he still manages to make them look uncomfortable and ill-fitting. With his graying buzzcut hair and gunmetal eyes, he looks like he should be on a Marine recruitment poster.

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

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Intimidate d12, Investigate d8, Healing d4, Lockpicking d8, Notice d12, Shooting d6, Swimming d4, Shooting d12, Stealth d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9(2)

**Hindrances:** Loyal, Quirk (Speaks in clipped sentences), Vow (Keeps all secrets)

**Edges:** Connections, Danger Sense, Quick Draw

**Gear:** Heavy Blaster (15/30/60, Damage: 3d8, HW, AP 4, Shots: 20)

### Super Powers:

- Armor 2; Heavy, Partial Protection (Undercover vest)
- Attack, Melee: 1d6 (Combat training)
- Fear (Cold stare)
- Fearless (Iron will)

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

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Drive d8, Fighting d12, Healing d8, Investigation d8, Intimidate d12, Lockpicking d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d12, Repair d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d10, Taunt d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 8(2)

**Hindrances:** Heartless, Greedy (Major), Quirk (Prefers close combat to gunplay)

**Edges:** Connections, Extra Language (Russian), Quick Draw, Strong Willed, Thief

**Gear:** Knife (Str+1), commlink, Heavy Blaster (15/30/60, Damage: 3d8, HW, AP 4, Shots: 20)

**Super Powers:**

- Armor 2; Heavy, Partial Protection (Undercover vest)
- Attack, Melee: 3d6 (Knife mastery)
- Attack, Melee: 1d6 (Spymaster training)
- Deflection 4 (Spymaster Training)
- Fear: Terror (Dark presence)
- Fearless (Jaded)

## Vitaly Kroshenko, Manager – Internal Security

Kroshenko is an ex-KGB spymaster employed by OI to maintain their internal security. Publicly, his primary concern is protecting the company from corporate espionage and loss prevention (i.e., theft by employees or otherwise). Privately, he's also directly responsible for hiring the many contract agents Orwell employs for its illegal domestic activities, as well as digging up dirt on Orwell's enemies (and, sometimes, on their own employees).

With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the old Soviet regime, Anitoliyevich Solonik found himself in need of steady work. After a brief stint as an enforcer for the Russian mafia and a few tours as a soldier of fortune in Africa and eastern Europe, Solonik changed his name to Sergei Anitoliyevich and settled down in London. There he sold his in-depth and practical knowledge of Soviet spy techniques to the highest bidders. MI5 was particularly interested in how the Russians had penetrated British government during the Cold War. This spilling of state secrets didn't win him any friends back home in Russia. Though the old regime was toppled, there were still plenty of old Soviet hawks in power who still wanted the ex-spy eliminated. After foiling an attempt on his life, he decided that London was no longer safe. He fled to the US, changing his name once again, this time to Vitaly Kroshenko.

He spent the next year and a half as a lowly security guard, working the night shift at a strip mall in Muncie, Indiana. Once he realized that he could put his knowledge to work in a constructive and perfectly legal capacity, he quickly rose through the ranks, developing the small security firm into a nationally recognized chain. When this chain was purchased by Orwell Industries in their attempt to beef up their own internal security, Kroshenko was brought onto the management team.

Vitaly has proven to be one of the company's most valuable assets, though most of his contributions are unknown even to the management team. This anonymity is beginning to rub the Russian raw. Despite his generous pay and benefits package, he feels he is not being adequately rewarded for his work, and has his eye on Lester Winthrop's seat. Unknown to everyone,

he's been digging into Winthrop's past and gathering dirt to use against him. The real prize - the facts surrounding Winthrop's release from the Secret Service - still eludes him. If he can't turn it up soon, he'll send Snowblind (see below) after Lester's old Service boss with orders to persuade the information out of him. He could put Wednesday Walker to work on the task, but Kroshenko has a deep distrust of computers and high technology, preferring tools like rubber hoses and car batteries to get his information. He's very old fashioned that way.

Kroshenko has a particular beef with the technical crew working in the Rabbit Hole's nuclear core (see Chapter 4: The Rabbit Hole for more details).

**Quote:** "You will tell me what I need to know, sooner or later. Today, I think I prefer... later."

**Personality:** Vitaly's saccharine charm and slick demeanor is at odds with his piercing eyes and too-wide smile: while he seems nice enough at first, after spending any time with him you get the idea that he wants something from you, and what he wants isn't exactly... wholesome. Under most circumstances, Kroshenko is polite to the point of servility, particularly when dealing with the OI management team. While he is almost endlessly patient in most circumstances, he has a ferocious temper when dealing with perceived incompetence, a temper which has forced him to call in the Cleaner more than once. He is known among the staffers as the Vampire and relishes the fear he instills in them.

**Appearance:** Vitaly is a tall, slender older man with an Old World accent and formal, courtly mannerisms. He moves with a catlike grace while his eyes have the disturbing tendency to linger just a moment longer than politely appropriate. He often smirks and tends to dress in various combinations of black and red, his two favorite colors.

## Beatrice Poole, Manager – Physical Security

Poole manages Orwell's site security. Specifically, it is her job to keep Ol's buildings safe from unwelcome guests. All those nameless security guards the characters will have to fight through or sneak past answer to her, and they'd much rather get beaten to a pulp by a superhero than face her wrath.

Given the penchant for colorful histories amongst the Orwell management team, it's no surprise to learn that Bea's past is just as checkered. She was born and raised in Baltimore, dropping out of high school just six weeks before graduation to take a job as a truck driver. She was spotted by a scout in Atlanta who recruited her into the women's wrestling circuit, where she was wildly successful until her career was cut short by a back injury.

Bea went on to become a bouncer in one of the rowdiest roadhouses in east Texas. Any doubts about her ability to keep the crowd in line were shattered within the first five minutes of her tenure there. Almost as shattered as the table she suplexed her first rowdy drunk into during that five minutes. "That table took me three paychecks to pay for," she said afterward, "and it was worth every friggin' penny."

Bea would come to regret this incident later, when the drunk decided to gather a few of his friends and attack her after her shift ended a few months later. She's never revealed exactly everything that happened that night in the parking lot, even during the subsequent trial. The hospital report indicated that she suffered from fourteen knife wounds, two gunshot injuries, four broken ribs, a shattered jaw, and innumerable scrapes and contusions. As the saying goes, though: you should have seen the other guys. Of the four men who attacked her, only one, the same drunk Bea beat her first night of bouncing, was left alive, and he only barely having had his neck broken. Although Beatrice was acquitted for the murders and the subsequent civil suit, she was fired from her job as a bouncer.

Bea ended up taking a position with Vitaly Kroshenko's security firm, and found she had a real knack for it. Vitaly quickly promoted her, and when the company was purchased by Orwell, he lobbied successfully to have her brought in as a manager along with him. Although she doesn't like Vitaly personally, Beatrice has the utmost respect for Vitaly, and feels deeply indebted to him. (A fact which Vitaly has used to his advantage more than once.)

**Quote:** "I've broken bigger men than you for a hell of a lot less."

**Personality:** Beatrice is terse and abrasive and likes few women and fewer men. She can count her close friends on two closed fists and is willing to show anyone who crosses her.

For her, respect has to be earned and she likes the way Prescott works the boardroom while Early Dew brought out her maternal instincts the moment they met. She speaks in short, sharp bursts, issuing orders like a shotgun in silk. She is proud of her body and works hard to maintain it and is often caught admiring her reflection.

**Appearance:** Anyone who thinks that Lester Winthrop is the most physically intimidating person on the Ol management team hasn't crossed paths with Bea yet. In her high heels she's just a hair's breadth under seven feet tall, with a build like a pile of cinderblocks. Where other women might be soft and curvaceous, Bea is all rough edges and hard angles. Where she finds business attire to fit her is anyone's guess. It's no surprise to most that she once wrestled professionally under the name "Damninatrix", as her nose has been broken more than once and her ears are distinctly cauliflowered from one too many blows. She wears her hair pulled back in a brutally tight bun. Her oddly out of place catseye glasses were a gift from Early and only one employee ever made a joke about them. Ol settled with that particular individual out of court.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12+1, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Drive d6, Fighting d12, Healing d6, Intimidate d12, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Swimming d6

**Charisma:** -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 11(8); **Toughness:** 11(3)

**Hindrances:** Heartless, Mean, Overconfident

**Edges:** Acrobatics, Brawny

**Gear:** Heavy Blaster (15/30/60, Damage: 3d8, HW, AP 4, Shots: 20)

**Super Powers:**

- Attack, Melee: 3d6 (Wrestling techniques)
- Parry 3: Requires Activation (Wrestling techniques)
- Toughness 3 (Physical conditioning)





**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d12+2, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Knowledge (Computers) d12, Knowledge (Electronics) d12, Knowledge (Popular Culture) d12, Notice d10, Repair d8, Stealth d6, Taunt d6

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

**Hindrances:** Ugly, Small, Greedy

**Edges:** Luck

**Gear:** Ipod, PDA, Laptop

**Super Powers:**

- Interface: Code Breaker (Mad Skills)

## Wednesday Walker, Manager – Network Security



Walker is the self-styled Head Geek in Charge at Orwell. In his teens, he was a semi-famous hacker known as the Bubonic Kid. He was best known then for creating the Wednesday Plague, a virus which wiped random sections of the user's hard drive every Wednesday morning at 6:18 AM and 12:12 PM. (Wednesday's birthday is June 18th, while the birthday of his "girlfriend" at the time was December 12th. The federal agents who caught Walker never found any proof that the girlfriend actually existed, despite Wednesday's claims to the contrary.) The Plague made a stir for about a month back in the late 90's when it was released, and Walker spent 6 months in juvenile detention as a result. Now in his early 20's, he's been reborn as a white hat hacker, more for the fat paychecks than from any real sense of social obligation.

Walker could care less about the coming Metahuman War. He works at Orwell because it provides him an amazing paycheck and the ability to indulge both his larcenous inclinations and his experiments in artificial intelligence (see Chapter 4: Serenity for more details).

**Quote:** "Information wants to be free and all that, but I've got bills to pay."

**Personality:** Wednesday (he prefers Walker, but his co-workers usually call him Wendy) is the geekiest of geeks. He's confident in his abilities with computers, nervous around women, and slavishly devoted to the works of Monty Python and Joss Whedon.

**Appearance:** Walker is rail-thin and pale, and usually clad in battered Keds, jeans, and a t-shirt from ThinkGeek. (Lester Winthrop tried to make Walker and his crew of sysadmins wear suits exactly once. He was so appalled at the results that he immediately sent them home to put on... well, anything else, really.) Since he began suffering an early onset of male pattern baldness, Walker has been shaving his head, claiming that "chicks love bald guys". Thanks to a childhood bicycle injury, he has an oddly shaped head, so it doesn't really help.



## Marcus Kaine, VP - General Counsel



When Caesar asked to have fat men around him rather than thin, fearing that their hunger extended to more than just their bellies, he said so without having the displeasure of crossing paths with Orwell Industries' head lawyer. Marcus Kaine is a man of endless appetites: for food, for women, for booze, and most of all for conflict. Lacking the bravery - not to mention the physique - for physical combat, he prefers to confine his wars to a more civilized battlefield: the courtroom.

Like many men for whom too much is never enough, Kaine was born into poverty, the son of Mississippi dirt farmers. He tried paying his own way through college, working two jobs while attending law school. When the work and debt load became too great and he ran the risk of losing out a coveted spot as the lead defense attorney at his class mock trial, he convinced his parents to take out home and life insurance, then burned the house down with both of them in it. He won the trial.

Rumor about the office has it that, on the rare occasions when he does lose a case, Marcus locks himself in his apartment and flagellates himself like a medieval monk seeking penitence. Kroshenko came up with that cover story for Kaine when he discovered that the attorney celebrates his losses by excessive drinking binges, often lasting days on end. Security teams monitor Kaine closely as a potential security risk. So far, even drunk, Kaine never mentions any of Orwell's indiscretions.

**Quote:** (Said in a thick Mississippi accent) "I do believe I'm gonna have to feed you your liver on a platter, suh. I sincerely hope ya'll brought your appetite."

**Personality:** Flamboyant and outgoing, Kaine is all goodness and light when things are going well, except within the courtroom where he uses his Southern charm, incisive mind, and cultivated accent to bring juries and judges around to his way of thinking. When things aren't going quite so well, he is argumentative, condescending, and frequents seedy bars where he can drink himself into a stupor.

**Appearance:** Kaine looks rather like an oversized egg wrapped in a very expensive suit. He's short in stature, standing a mere five foot three inches, but massive in girth, weighing in at over three hundred pounds though he carries it surprisingly well. He is completely bald and wears soda bottle-thick glasses that make his eyes look enormous and reptilian. Kaine constantly mops his brow with a silk handkerchief, and because of his weight, he sweats almost constantly. He sojourns twice a year to Savile Row in London to buy new suits, so he is always impeccably dressed, and even comes off to some as a bit of a dandy.

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

**Skills:** Investigation d8, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (Business) d8, Knowledge (Civics) d12, Knowledge (Law) d12, Persuasion d12, Streetwise d8, Taunt d8

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

**Hindrances:** Arrogant, Obese

**Edges:** Charismatic, Connections, Strong Willed

**Gear:** Cell phone, briefcase





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

**Skills:** Intimidation d10, Investigation d8, Knowledge (Current Events) d10, Knowledge (Tactics) d8, Persuasion d12, Streetwise d10, Taunt d10

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

**Hindrances:** Heartless, Quirk (Dresses like a hippy), Small

**Edges:** Attractive, Charismatic, Connections, Strong Willed

**Gear:** Cell phone, pepper spray

## Early M. Dew, VP – Public Relations

Early Morning Dew is the daughter of a pair of love children who never left the 60's behind. Like most children, Early rebelled against her parents, entering the rat race as soon as possible. Working for an evil megacorporation like Orwell is, in her mind, the ultimate victory in her war to become nothing like her parents. And it's a sweet victory at that.

Early has a natural gift as a spin doctor, combining a Machiavellian intellect with an image of absolute sincerity that she works very hard – and very, very successfully – at faking. Those who cross her usually end up walking away feeling a bit guilty for having tried and unaware of how badly they've just been beaten.

**Quote:** Mostly unprintable; in private Early curses like a sailor, particularly when she's angry. And she's almost always angry.

**Personality:** Early is a study in opposites. So long as she knows that cameras are rolling or tapes are recording, she maintains a

perfect facade of demure cheerfulness. Behind closed doors, she is a barracuda who sleeps with a copy of The Art of War under her pillow.

**Appearance:** Early is tiny, only 4'10" and painfully thin, with long, straw-colored hair and disarmingly large blue eyes. She's the least conservative dresser in Orwell: she normally comes to work in colorful hemp dresses and wearing a flower behind her ear. This is all part of the act, designed to get those around her to underestimate her and to throw the enemies of OI off the trail. ("If a hippie chick would work for them, they can't be all bad, right?") At 26, she's the youngest vice president in Orwell by far, and is often mistaken for a temp worker by new employees or visitors.

## THE OTHER CEOs

Each OI subsidiaries has their own CEO. They are given varying degrees of independence, depending upon their situation. For example, Jack Suriani has virtual free rein over OATS, while Ben Harper, CEO of Orwell Defense Initiative, has none whatsoever.

These CEOs offer an excellent opportunity for the characters to come face to face with the power elite of Orwell Industries and win, while still allowing the GM to keep OI as an ongoing threat. As such, while their basic personalities and details are included here, some details are left sketchy specifically to make it easier for the GM to insert them into an available empty slot in the campaign. Or you can create your own subsidiaries and CEOs. With Orwell's massive holdings, virtually any sort of company could be owned by them directly or indirectly.

The loss of any of these CEOs would cost the company billions in lost revenues and legal fees. If any of them are arrested, Orwell will do anything to keep them from spilling their guts to the police and testifying in court in exchange for immunity from prosecution. This includes having them killed in or out of jail.

## Benjamin Harper, CEO of Orwell Defense Initiative

Harper is the puppet leader of ODI. While he ostensibly answers to Linda Prescott, in reality Prescott calls the shots and expects Harper to toe the line without question. Not only that, but should ODI or its employees ever be implicated in any wrongdoing, she fully expects him to take the bullet and claim that the responsibility is entirely his own.

She knows he will do this, because, thanks to Vitaly Kroshenko, she knows all his dirty secrets. While the exact nature of Harper's secret is left up to the GM, here are a few examples. Any of these could be used as an inroad for the characters to either learn about or launch an attack on OI.

- His son/daughter is a metahuman villain, probably one the characters have or are about to battle and arrest. Harper has helped bail his progeny out of trouble in the past, and probably will again if need be.
- He has a habit which can only be satisfied by illegal means (drugs, white slavery, etc.). The characters arrest his supplier, who offers to give up "a rich bigshot" in exchange for freedom, or at least leniency.
- He had someone killed. This could be a reporter who was threatening a major story on ODI's offenses, a lover who planned on telling Harper's wife about their affair, someone who stumbled on to some of ODI's dirty dealings and was trying to blackmail Harper, etc.

For all his faults, Harper is a skilled organizer, and has managed the logistics of ODI masterfully during his tenure. For as long as he's been in charge, the trains have all run precisely on time.

**Quote:** "I'm just a patsy!"

**Personality:** For all his slovenly appearance (see below), Harper is a highly skilled bureaucrat.

**Appearance:** Harper looks like the sort of man who'd be married to a cruel, horribly overweight woman who nagged him constantly. He's short and thin, balding with a bad comb-over, and wears huge dark-rimmed glasses that haven't been in style since the late 70's. He walks with a constant slouch, as though he had the weight of the world on his shoulders.

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

**Skills:** Gambling d10, Knowledge (Business) d10, Knowledge (Technology) d8, Notice d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Servitor, Yellow

**Edges:** Connections

**Gear:** Cell phone, PDA

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

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Gambling d8, Knowledge (Business) d10, Knowledge (Firearms) d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d10, Repair d6, Shooting d10

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

**Hindrances:** Cautious, Greedy

**Edges:** Attractive, Trademark Weapon, Improved Trademark Weapon (see below)

**Gear:** Besides her cell phone, and pda, she carries a family heirloom, a custom, short-barrel Haig (15/30/60, Damage: 2d8, AP 4, Shots: 15) with a mother-of-pearl handle.

## Barbara Haig, CEO of Orwell Arms



Haig is the reluctant chief executive officer of Orwell Arms, the primary weapon manufacturing company in Orwell's stable. When the Haig Holding Company (a firearms company started by Barbara's great-grandfather) was purchased by Orwell in 1994, Barbara remained on board as CEO to ensure that the business retained the high standards she had always demanded. But at the same time Orwell's practices began to worry Haig, the money began rolling in, more money than she could ever spend in the rest of her life. So Haig stood by and said nothing, rationalizing her decision by telling herself that the money would go to ensuring a better life for her family.

Everything changed last year, when her daughter and infant grandson were killed, both innocent bystanders in the drive-by assassination of a state senator. The shock of the killings was bad enough, but Haig suspects - rightfully so - that the murder was committed to aid Orwell's bid on a particularly valuable government contract. This also provides the characters a number of opportunities to meet Haig and ally with her, including:

- The characters could be contacted secretly by Haig after their conflict with Orwell becomes public knowledge. She won't reveal her identity initially out of fear for the safety of herself and the rest of her family. Instead, she'll point them to some of Orwell's illegal operations to test their ability and resolve. Once she's come to trust them, she'll tell them who she is and offer to testify against Orwell.
- The characters bust a group of Mafia enforcers. One of their guns is connected to the killing of the senator and Haig's family members, but the criminal carrying it is innocent of the murders, though he ends up on trial for having committed them. The assistant DA assigned to the case is in Orwell's pocket and is winning the case handily, but Haig wants the right men punished for the crime and asks the characters to help. In exchange, she says, she'll help them take down Orwell.

With the success of OATS and their newer high-tech energy weapons, the importance of Orwell Arms to the company is beginning to wane. It's only a matter of time before OA is dissolved or merged with Advanced Tactical to form a single entity, and it's highly unlikely that Haig will be invited to remain with the company once that happens. She knows that if she's going to act against Orwell Industries, she'll have to act soon.

**Quote:** "The Good Book says we should turn the other cheek, but Lord knows I'm out of cheeks to turn."

**Personality:** That she succeeded in a field - the manufacture and sales of firearms - which has always been dominated by men while raising two children on her own speaks towards Haig's determination and spirit. The death of her daughter and grandson has left her little more than a shell of her former self, though, leaving her with little motivation other than revenge.

**Appearance:** Barbara is a fit woman in her late 50's. She keeps her hair stylishly cut, and dresses in simple, sensible suits. She has a nervous habit of toying with something in her pocket or hand, usually a locket containing a picture of her daughter and grandson.

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

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Gambling d6, Knowledge (Business) d10, Knowledge (Technology) d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d10, Shooting d6, Swimming d6

**Charisma:** +6; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

**Hindrances:** Greedy, Habit (Obsessed with latest fads and keeping up appearances.)

**Edges:** Attractive, Very Attractive, Charismatic

**Gear:** Cell phone, PDA

## Jack Suriani, CEO of Orwell Advanced Tactical Solutions



Suriani has been the CEO of OATS since its creation in the late 90's. Specializing in the sort of high-tech weaponry that has become the calling card of Orwell, Advanced Tactical is, to all appearances, one of the crown jewels in the Orwell portfolio. And Suriani, groomed fresh out of college by the Orwell executives, is the company's golden boy.

All is not as it seems. Operating under the assumption that the company would never try to prosecute him for fear of bringing their own indiscretions to light, he has overstated OATS sales, understated their costs, and otherwise cooked the books to make himself and his business look better. (Suriani is the classic "high Intelligence, low Wisdom" character.)

Now that he realizes that the company will just kill him once they find out what he's done, he's feeling repentant. Well, not repentant so much as scared stiff. He'll do anything to survive, but he'll also be looking for an angle to improve his own position. Suriani doesn't really want to leave the company and give up his position and power. Regardless of any help the characters might give to him, he'll seek to use or betray them to get back on top.

- If the characters seem to be making some headway against Orwell, they'll be contacted by Suriani. He'll meet with them and share some information about Orwell's holdings (the locations of one or two of the company's secret research labs detailed in Chapter 4, for instance). At the same time, he'll be gauging



their abilities and figuring out how much they already know. Once he's pumped as much information from them as he can, he'll decide whether to help them or betray them to the company in exchange for amnesty for his mishandling of the company.

- The characters rescue Suriani as he's being chased by a hit squad sent against him, kicking off with a high-speed chase through the streets. (This squad could be members of Snowblind, SORT troopers, or even Mark 2 Alpha troops pursuing Suriani's car by air.) When the police arrive, he's even MORE scared, and begs the characters to take him somewhere safe. ("Don't you get it? They OWN the police!") Once they find out who Suriani is and what he knows, they'll have to figure out a way to use him against Orwell without getting him killed in the process. And of course, Suriani will still be looking for a way to get back in the company's good graces!

A possible "twist ending" to an Orwell-based story could have the characters taking down one or more Orwell executives only to have Jack Suriani take control of the company immediately after! Under his leadership, the company will be even worse than it was under the Old Man, since Suriani lacks even the most basic scruples and, unlike G.T., is motivated solely by his own greed.

**Quote:** "Greed is good."

**Personality:** Jack is full of slick charm and apparent good taste, but it's all a facade. He's a trend follower rather than a trendsetter, and changes his appearance, his car, his house, etc., based on what's hot and popular. Suriani is a master of corporate-speak, and will pepper virtually every sentence with the latest business buzzwords. He carries a small-caliber pistol in the glove box of his car: he plans on using it on himself if he's ever in a car wreck that would leave him disfigured. That's how obsessed he is.

**Appearance:** Fit, trim, and tan, Suriani is perfect to a fault. He's always dressed in the very latest styles, wears the hottest haircuts, and has all the perfect accessories and newest gadgets.



## Whitley Brown, CEO of Brown Intelligence Services



Brown Intelligence is one of the many secret subsidiaries of Orwell. They provide security services for over two dozen Fortune 500 companies in the US and abroad. The company's founder and CEO, Whitley Brown, has been called "one of the most trusted men in American business" (The Wall Street Journal, April 3rd 2003).

He is also Orwell's master of corporate espionage. As mentioned in Chapter 2, OI uses Brown Intelligence to leverage its corporate security position, helping to develop successful business strategies against their opponents, as well as to steal interesting bits of technology. When OI ran into a piece of futuretech they couldn't unravel, it was Whitley Brown's idea to leak the details about it to a smaller company with a department specializing in that research. Brown let them figure out what OI's reverse engineering department couldn't, and then stole the finished data back. OI then slapped the company with a lawsuit, claiming that they'd stolen the original data that made their research possible. When the company was on the verge of folding as a result of the lawsuit, Orwell bought them out at a fraction of the cost they might have originally demanded; problem solved.

While he's not as up on Orwell's inside information - he doesn't know about the Magic Mirror or Thomas Orwell, for instance - the information he does have about Orwell's business practices is damning to say the least. Despite some dust-ups with the management team in the past, he's managed to retain his position simply because no one is sure exactly how much he knows or what provisions he might have taken in the case of his death. Like many security experts, Brown is fiercely paranoid when it comes to his own security, and has set up dozens of safe deposit boxes packed with information that would send more than one Orwell manager to jail for a long, long time, and has specific instructions with lawyers all around the country (and a few abroad) to release the information if he should die of anything other than natural causes.

- A metahuman thief who specializes in high profile robberies manages, against all odds, to break into Whitley's home. Among the stolen items is his personal laptop computer. The data on it is heavily encrypted but, theoretically, could be broken over time, and contains many gigabytes of sensitive data. Orwell sends its own team to find the thief at the same time the characters are trying to track him down. Whether the crook will have cracked the data, and what he might do with it, is up to the GM.
- A lawyer with a terminal illness and a pang of conscience contacts a local newspaper reporter about the files Brown has left with him. An Orwell spy at the newspaper tips them off, the lawyer is killed, and the reporter is being hunted by Orwell agents. She'll look to the characters for help.

**Quote:** "Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean you're paranoid enough to stop them from getting to you."

**Personality:** On the surface, Whitley is a perfectly reasonable, friendly corporate executive, capable of making tough decisions for the betterment of the business, but always with an eye towards keeping his employees and customers happy. Scratch the surface, however, and you'll find a man who is deeply troubled. Whitley's bedroom is completely wallpapered with fine copper mesh, for instance, as it's much better at blocking the spy satellites from reading his mind via the chip implanted in his neck. (For the record: there are no satellites, and there is no chip.) He secretly maintains half a dozen websites devoted to bizarre conspiracy theories, and occasionally lets these slip in normal conversation. ("Let's go ahead and order twenty of those new computers for the field analysts. Get the blue ones. The Venusians hate the color blue, you know. It scrambles their telepathy.") His employees think he's just being clever, not realizing that Brown

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d12, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Investigation d10, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d10

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7(5)

**Hindrances:** Cautious, Delusional (Major Paranoia)

**Edges:** Investigator

**Gear:** Zapgun (15/30/60, Damage: 2d6, HW, AP 4, Shots: 20), Mesh Undergarments (+2 Heavy Armor)



is just one bad day away from wearing an aluminum foil hat to work. Brown surrounds himself with a lot of older technology, and distrusts some modern devices like cell phones (“Too easy to tap, and they give you cancer.”). He’s not afraid to use new technology to spy on others, but fears having too much of his own information available to others.

**Appearance:** Brown is a nondescript man in his mid 40’s, with thinning brown hair and dressed in rather old-fashioned, bulky wool suits. He usually looks like he’s wearing two or three layers of clothing, claiming that he gets cold easily. In fact, he wears oversized suits to hide the fact that underneath is a full suit of Kevlar armor lined with aluminum foil.

## RANK AND FILE

### Average Employees

The vast majority of Orwell’s employees are just average citizens; use the Bystander or Scientist writeups from *Mutants & Masterminds* Chapter 11.

### General Security Forces: Code Red

These are the normal guards stationed at every Orwell facility. They are typically only equipped with the basic items needed for day-to-day operations. If a more serious threat presents itself, they’ll call in the special defense team, Code Black. Reds are basically equivalent to mall cops with a few nifty gadgets.

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

**Skills:** Driving d6, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2)

**Hindrances:** Loyal

**Edges:** None

**Gear:** OA-4P Zapgun (15/30/60, Damage: 2d6, HW, AP 4, Shots: 20), Battle Vest (+2 Heavy Armor), commlink, handcuffs

### Special Security: Code Black

Code Black troopers are more experienced, better armed, and better equipped than their Code Red counterparts, but lack the highly specialized training of the ODI SORT teams (see below). They are essentially Orwell’s SWAT team, and are used accordingly. Code Black teams are often tasked with field testing police-grade weapons and gear. While malfunctions in the field are rare, they’re not unheard of, particularly with some of Orwell’s more cutting edge equipment.

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

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Driving d8, Fighting d8, Intimidate d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8(2)

**Hindrances:** Loyal

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes

**Gear:** OA-4P Zapgun (15/30/60, Damage: 2d6, HW, AP 4, Shots: 20), OA-28Rb “Sharpshooter” rifle (15/30/60, Damage: 3d6, HW, AP 8, Shots: 20), commlink, handcuffs, Riot Armor (+2 Heavy Armor)

## Bodyguards

These men and women wear identical black suits, dark sunglasses, and wear identical earbud radios at all times. They're responsible for the personal safety of the Orwell management staff, and most of them have one or more of them nearby at all times. Dr. Zeroster is the exception, since his past bodyguards have ended up disintegrated, zapped back to the Stone Age, or have met similar untimely ends as a result of "lab mix-ups".

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

**Skills:** Driving d10, Fighting d10, Intimidate d8, Notice d8, Shooting d10

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9(2)

**Hindrances:** Loyal

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes, Level Headed

**Gear:** OA-6P Medium Blaster (15/30/60, Damage: 3d6, HW, AP 4, Shots: 20), Battle Vest (+2 Heavy Armor), commlink

## SORT (Special Operations & Recovery Team): Code Delta

SORT is OI's answer to the US Special Forces, and is the elite special operations branch of Orwell Defense Initiative. Its membership is largely made up of ex-SEALs, French Foreign Legionnaires, CIA black ops experts, and other former covert military operatives who've decided to take their training into the private sector. While none of them are metahumans, their exceptional level of training and access to the best of OI's technology make them more than a match for all but the most formidable metas.

At present, there are five SORT teams, each composed of 10 members. The teams choose arms and equipment based on the missions they are assigned. SORT is best known to the public for their rescue of a group of hostages from Domibian separatists. The rescue itself was staged; the "desert stronghold" was an abandoned schoolhouse, and most of the "seasoned rebels" were actually half-starved children firebombed to death by the SORT forces. SORT was responsible for the more challenging but less photogenic work of covering up the truth about the massacre, a job which required a half-dozen carefully timed and intricately plotted executions. For that reason, SORT can be said to have earned the reputation they gained in Domibia as a crack team of agents.



## SORT Soldier (Standard)

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

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Driving d8, Fighting d8, Healing d8, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d8, Survival d8, Stealth d8

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10(4)

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes

**Gear:** OA-14P Zapgun (15/30/60, Damage: 2d6, HW, AP 4, Shots: 20), OA-26Rb "Sharpshooter" rifle (15/30/60, Damage: 3d6, HW, AP 8, Shots: 20), Klearview Helmet (+4 Heavy, Immunity: Flash, Immunity: Sound), Telescoping Club (Str+1), Urban Combat Armor (+4 Heavy), commlink, multitool, binoculars, handcuffs

**Super Powers:**

- Attack, Melee: 2d6 (Advanced Combat Training)
- Darkvision (Goggles)
- Stun: Stronger, Single Target (Pepper Spray)
- Teleport: More Range x 2, Rapid Teleport (Sidestep Module)

## SORT Soldier (Sniper)

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

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d12(d8)

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8(2)

**Hindrances:** Loyal

**Edges:** Marksman

**Gear:** OA-8S (50/100/200, Damage: 3d8 HW, AP 8; Scope; Snapfire, Shots: 15), Armored jumpsuit (+2 Heavy), commlink, binoculars, multitool

**Super Powers:**

- Attack, Melee: 2d6 (Advanced Combat Training)
- Darkvision (Goggles)
- Super Skills 1: Stealth (Camo Gear)

## SORT Soldier (Covert Ops)

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

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Driving d8, Fighting d8, Healing d8, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d8, Survival d8, Stealth d12(d8)

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10(4)

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes

**Gear:** OA-14P Zapgun (15/30/60, Damage: 2d6, HW, AP 4, Shots: 20), OA-26Rb "Sharpshooter" rifle (15/30/60, Damage: 3d6, HW, AP 8, Shots: 20), Telescoping Club (Str+1), Tactical Vest (+4 Heavy), commlink, multitool, binoculars

**Super Powers:**

- Attack, Melee: 2d6 (Advanced Combat Training)
- Darkvision (Goggles)
- Super Skills 1: Stealth (Camo Gear)

## SORT Soldier (Riot Control)

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

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10(4)

**Hindrances:** Loyal

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes, Level Headed

**Gear:** OA-14P Zapgun (15/30/60, Damage: 2d6, HW, AP 4, Shots: 20), Foamgun (6/9/12, Entangle, Shots: 10), Klearview Helmet (+4 Heavy, Immunity: Flash, Immunity: Sound), Telescoping Club (Str+1), Urban Combat Armor (+4 Heavy), commlink, multitool, binoculars, handcuffs

**Super Powers:**

- Attack, Melee: 2d6 (Advanced Combat Training)
- Stun: Stronger, Single Target (Pepper Spray)

## Armored Defenders: Code Alpha



For truly dangerous security situations, particularly those which have gone beyond the ability of the Code Black teams to handle, Orwell can call in a team of these armored defenders. The Mark 1 Alphas are those used by Orwell security forces, and have a rather kitschy retro look that makes them appear to be less dangerous than they really are. While this doesn't really add to their intimidation factor, it makes local law enforcement less nervous!

The Mark 2's are used by SORT and in Orwell's secret laboratory facilities. There's nothing friendly about them; they're larger and beefier than the Mark 1's, and are painted in the very latest digital camouflage colors appropriate to their station (white and blue for snowy areas, greens and browns for forest/jungle, etc.).



### Alpha Mark I

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d12+1, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Notice d10, Repair d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6/24; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12 (5)

**Hindrances:** Loyal, Heartless

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes, Quick

**Gear:** Various minor items based on circumstances; smoke or sleep gas grenades and stun guns are not uncommon when the Alphas are deployed for anti-metahuman operations.

**Super Powers:**

- Armor 5: Heavy (Armored Suit)
- Attack, Melee: 2d6 (Advanced Combat Training)
- Attack, Ranged: 3d6 (Blast cannon)
- Awareness (Radar Augmented Vision)
- Broadcast (Helmet commlink)
- Flight 3 (Armored Suit)
- Super-attributes 2: Strength (Armored Suit)

### Alpha Mark II

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d12+1, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Notice d10, Repair d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6/24; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12 (5)

**Hindrances:** Loyal, Heartless

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes, Quick

**Gear:** Various minor items based on circumstances; smoke or sleep gas grenades and stun guns are not uncommon when the Alphas are deployed for anti-metahuman operations.

**Super Powers:**

- Armor 5: Heavy (Armored Suit)
- Attack, Melee: 2d6 (Advanced Combat Training)
- Attack, Ranged: RoF: 3, MBT: 3d6 (Advanced Blast Cannon)
- Awareness (Radar Augmented Vision)
- Broadcast (Helmet commlink)
- Deflection 4 (Armored Suit)
- Detect Mutants (Helmet)
- Enhanced Targeting (Helmet): +2
- Shooting
  - Flight 3 (Armored Suit)
  - Super-attributes 2: Strength (Armored Suit)



## The Legion of Night: Code Omega

Last year, one of the Magic Mirror missions brought back something unexpected. All the experience of Dr. Zeroster and the Mirror team indicates that living beings can't survive a trip through the mirror, but this man, a soldier from the future, seemed to be alive and kicking. Appearances were deceiving.

The soldier Zeroster recovered wasn't alive, and hadn't been for some time before being snatched from the future. At some point in the battle with the evil metahumans, a level of desperation will apparently be reached which even Orwell himself would never expect: those fighting to survive will send their own dead into battle for them.

Dr. Zero believes – though he'd never admit it – that it is a future version of himself who will create the zombies. They are reanimated through an injected cocktail of preervative chemicals and a primitive form of nanobots. It's a procedure Zeroster already examined in his quest for immortality, but rejected it as a dead end: his test subjects ended up mindless freaks, too high a price for even Zero to pay for eternal life. Not too high a price for Orwell in order to build a relentless army willing to die for his cause, however, as detailed in Chapter 2.

The Omegas are a few steps above the usual mindless, shambling zombie. They receive a continuous supply of artificial adrenaline, making them unusually strong and fast. Omegas are protected by bulky armored suits with sealed, mirrored face masks. If they're struck with bladed or piercing weapons, they leak a bright green liquid. To a casual observer, they could easily be mistaken for robots or some other form of artificial humanoid.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d12+1, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9(2)

**Hindrances:** Weakness: Fire/Heat (Major)

**Edges:** None

**Gear:** Omegan Armor (+2 Heavy)

**Super Powers:**

- Attack, Melee: 1d6 (Undead Fury)
- Fearless
- Undead



There are a few paths to discover the truth behind the Omegas. A cursory chemical examination of the green liquid (a Knowledge: Chemistry or Biology) will reveal it to be an advanced form of embalming fluid. A more detailed search (Knowledge: Life Science -4) will reveal the presence of nanotechnology. Either could eventually be tracked back to their production facilities. From there, the characters could discover a connection to Orwell, though it will quickly be obfuscated or severed before any legal action can be taken.

And of course, cracking open one of the Omegan's armor to examine them will reveal their true nature immediately. A DNA test of the body will lead the players to an empty village in the African nation of Domibia whose occupants "disappeared" with the help of Orwell operatives last year. Researching the recent history of the area will reveal the presence of OI's private army at about that time, though they'll claim that the residents were killed by Domibian forces in one of their periodic purges.

The standard tactic used by OI when employing the Omegas is simple: send in wave after wave of them until the enemy is overwhelmed, or until more powerful troops (such as Alphas or a SORT team) can arrive.





## SPECIAL OPERATIVES: SNOWBLIND

Project Snowblind is proof that Orwell Industries has grown to the point that it may well consume itself. It is a project so secret that not even Old Man Orwell knows of its existence, and would never have allowed its creation in the first place.

Generally speaking, it's a rare mission where all the Snowblind agents are brought together to act as a full team. In most cases they are sent out singly or in pairs.

Snowblind was created by Lester Winthrop with the financial backing of Arthur Spivak. Spivak secretly channels funds to the project and covers up the expense. In exchange, a Snowblind agent murdered Spivak's first wife and has since killed a number of Mafia-connected loan sharks to help cover up Spivak's considerable gambling debts.

The agents of Snowblind are all metahumans. Most of them are at best mentally unstable (and sociopathic murderers at worst) and all are exactly the type of metas that G.T. Orwell is doing his level best to wipe out. When Winthrop created Snowblind, it was with the intention that they be used for a few missions. They "disbanded" Snowblind by sending them on a suicide mission in the heart of Chernovoda. Through a combination of brutal efficiency and dumb luck, Snowblind came out alive on the other side. Winthrop believes that he set them up so efficiently that they never realized they'd been sent into a trap, but this couldn't be further from the truth. Snowblind knows exactly what happened to them. They're just biding their time, waiting for the right moment to take their revenge.

## Scattershot, Wilbur DeVries



**Background:** Wilbur was the leader of a motorcycle gang operating mainly in Southern California and the rest of the southwest. He was always stronger and tougher than normal, though he didn't realize the extent of his abilities until he was finally arrested four years ago. After shattering his handcuffs, kicking a police car door off its hinges, taking three bullets to the chest, and beating a half-dozen police officers into a pulp, he started to think that he might have more to offer to the criminal underworld than a steady supply of methamphetamines.

Wilbur always liked shotguns for their noise, intimidation factor, and the sheer carnage he could create with them. He took on the name of Scattershot in their honor and made a name for himself as a killer-for-hire. Lester Winthrop used him to clean up a few messes for Orwell, before hiring him on full-time as Snowblind's leader.

**Quote:** "I'm more'n just a pretty face; I'm also a big freakin' gun."

**Personality:** Scattershot believes that there's no reason to ask nicely for something when he can get it by punching someone in the face. He can never be satisfied being anything less than the alpha male, and treats any insult or slight as an attack on his position of power.

**Powers & Tactics:** Scattershot faced a dilemma in his youth: he loved guns, but he also loved getting up-close-and-personal with the people he was slaughtering. Shotguns were a perfect solution. Scattershot usually opens a fight with his auto-shotgun, hosing down an area with buckshot (the Cone area attack) or firing off a few exploding shells. Once his teammates have closed with the enemy, he'll switch to his pump-action; loaded with slugs. Scattershot can fire it with surgical precision, even at opponents locked in melee. His pistol serves as a backup piece in case he loses his other shotguns.

Scattershot loves to fight dirty, and will use his Startle and Sneak Attack feats whenever he can to get the upper hand on an opponent. He'll use innocent civilians as human shields, blow up gas mains, and kill hostages to make a point.

**Appearance:** Scattershot was the leader of a motorcycle gang before hooking up with Snowblind, and he looks the part. At 6'8" and topping out at over 300 lbs, all wrapped in greasy denim and biker leathers, he'd be scary enough under normal circumstances. While Scattershot's regeneration heals his wounds, it doesn't do so perfectly; the man is a mass of puckered scar tissue. After having his face partially blown off (the skin grew back.. mostly) he wears a black goalie mask to cover it. He usually wears a bandolier of shotgun shells over his jacket, and carries his two large shotguns slung across his back. The small pistol is carried in an oversized holster on his hip.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Repair d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6,

**Charisma:** -4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12 (4)

**Hindrances:** Distinctive Appearance, Mean, Ugly, Wanted (Major)

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Super Powers), Brawny, Marksman, Trademark Weapon: Betsy, Improved Trademark Weapon: Betsy, Quick Draw, Strong Willed

**Gear:** "Betsy" Pump Action Shotgun +2 Shooting (12/24/48, Damage: 2d10, Shots: 6), Extra Shells, Shotgun Pistol (Sawed Off Shotgun) (5/10/20, Damage: 1-3d6, Shots: 2)

### Super Powers:

- Armor 4: Heavy Armor, Partial Protection (Reinforced Biker Jacket)
- Attack, Melee: 1d6 (Shotgun Fu)
- Attack, Ranged: Area Effect (Large Burst), Rapid Fire (RoF: 3), 2d6 (Auto-shotgun)
- Regeneration: Fast Regeneration (Mutant Healing Factor)
- Super Attributes 5: Agility 1, Strength 3, Vigor 1 (Mutant Factor)



**Attributes:** Agility d12+3, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Fighting d12, Gambling d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d10, Shooting d4, Stealth d6, Taunt d10, Throwing d12

**Charisma:** +1; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 12(4); **Toughness:** 7

**Hindrances:** Delusional (Major), Heartless, Habit (Constantly chewing bubblegum), Overconfident

**Edges:** Arcane Background (SuperPowers), Charismatic, Level Headed, Quick Draw

**Gear:** Lots and lots of playing cards

**Super Powers:**

- Attack, Melee 1d6 (Card Tricks)
- Attack, Ranged: Rapid Fire 1, Elemental Trick: Air, 2d6, RoF 3 (Card Tricks)
- Deflection 4 (Acrobatics)
- Fearless (Firmly believes the world is unreal.)
- Parry 4: Catch and Throw, Requires Activation (Fast Reflexes)
- Teleport: Rapid Teleport, Limited: No passengers, Limited: To cards only (Card Tricks)

## Suicide King, Real Name Unknown



**Background:** The man known as the Suicide King believes he is an exile from a “playing card” dimension, a dimension which bears a striking resemblance to the court of the Red Queen in Alice in Wonderland. While such a thing is certainly possible, most consider it much more likely that the King has had a traumatic break with reality. The King insists this world is entirely unreal so it doesn’t really matter what anyone does it and leaves it at that. People have tried to convince him otherwise, but to no avail. He kills not just because he enjoys it – which he does – but because he might as well as long as he has the chance to get away with it. “He’s freakin’ nuts,” Scattershot says, “but at least he’s my kind of nuts.”

Scattershot happened to work with the King on a couple of hits before being hired on by Orwell, and despite their many differences the biker got a kick out of working with the clearly insane King. Scattershot talked Winthrop into bringing the King into Snowblind, and while Lester has his reservations, so far he’s happy with the results.

**Quote:** “Hail to the king, baby!”

**Personality:** The Suicide King is a flamboyant showboat, particularly in front of the ladies. He talks constantly, particularly in combat. Since he believes he’s in a fictional world, he doesn’t think he can die (hence his Fearlessness), so he’s constantly performing one dangerous stunt after another just for kicks.

**Powers & Tactics:** The King combines mobility – he can teleport to any playing card within his range, as long as he knows it’s there – with deadly accuracy. Any small item he picks up can be turned into a deadly weapon, though he rarely runs out of his

signature playing cards, his weapon of choice. He spends the first round or two of any serious combat scattering cards about the battlefield, using them to teleport about as the battle commences. A favorite ruse is to throw a card at an opponent and “miss” - he actually aims for a point somewhere behind them, allowing him to teleport to that card and attempt a sneak attack on the target.

Even the King’s penchant for chewing bubble gum isn’t just for blowing bubbles in mid-combat. He can use the gum to stick a card to an opponent, allowing him to teleport directly to them if they attempt a getaway. Locked doors and windows, provided they have an opening wide enough to slide a playing card through, are no impediment either. The King has performed several assassinations and robberies by entering a building in advance, incognito, and dropping one or more cards about the area. He can then teleport in, perform his dirty deeds, and teleport to another card waiting outside.

**Appearance:** The Suicide King looks for all the world like a living version of a King of Hearts playing card, complete with beard and crown. His costume is lined with pockets and pouches both hidden and obvious, all filled with playing cards, which the King riffles, cuts, and otherwise busies his hands with whenever he’s not throwing them at someone. He can usually be found chewing bubble gum. He claims with some sadness that it doesn’t exist on his home dimension.

## Lucrezia



**Background:** As the daughter of a powerful Mafia don and a renowned Italian actress, young Lucrezia had everything the world could offer. She grew up surrounded by all the accoutrements of wealth and men who'd do anything for her, either because they wanted her for their own or out of fear of her father. Of course it ended badly. Her father was arrested and was ready to rat out his Mob associates in exchange for immunity, and was killed in prison for his troubles. Lucrezia's mother committed suicide shortly thereafter, leaving her daughter, then 17, to fend for herself. The stress of grief and despair brought out Lucrezia's metahuman power, and she's since used that power to try and regain the trappings of her former life.

**Quote:** "I don't hate men, my sweet. I just hate you."

**Personality:** Lucrezia is driven by two equally powerful passions: an intense greed (which she feeds to sublimate her grief at the loss of her parents) combined with an intense desire to be wanted by others. She cannot stand to be anything but the center of attention, and becomes intensely jealous - poisonously so, if you prefer - when she is not.

**Powers & Tactics:** Lucrezia has the mutant ability to secrete a variety of poisons and toxins from her skin and in her saliva. She has exceptionally fine control over this ability, and can formulate the precise quantity of a specific poison for any given situation, including poisons which have a delayed effect. She can generate most of these toxins from her skin anywhere on her body, but the lethal poisons she generates are concentrated in her saliva. These are passed on via a literal "kiss of death." A favorite tactic is to pose as a helpless bystander in harm's way, planting a deadly thank you kiss on her rescuer.

**Appearance:** Lucrezia is a voluptuous Italian beauty with a keen sense of style and access - either through purchase, robbery, or some other means - to an endless supply of the very latest fashions, preferring clothing which accentuate her figure over practicality.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d12, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Driving d6, Fighting d8, Gambling d6, Guts d4, Knowledge (Poison) d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Swimming d4

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

**Hindrances:** Heartless, Greedy (Major), Vain (Minor), Vengeful (Major)

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Super Powers), Attractive, Very Attractive

**Gear:** Cell phone

### Super Powers:

- Immunity: Poison
- Infection: Types 1-3, Strong (Poisonous Touch)
- Infection: Type 4, Strong (Kiss of Death)
- Paralysis: Extra Duration 1, Extra Power (Poisonous Touch)





**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d12+7 (d6), Vigor d10

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 13(6)

**Hindrances:** Distinctive Appearance, Gimmick, Heartless, Small, Stubborn

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Super Powers), Combat Reflexes

**Gear:** None

**Super Powers:**

- Absorption: Fire/Heat
- Attack, Melee: 1d6 (Stone Fist)
- Attack, Ranged: Elemental Trick (Fire): 3d6 (Blast)
- Darkvision (Glowing Eyes)
- Earthquake (Ground Smash)
- Growth 3: Limited: No Size Increase (Density Increase)
- Hardy (Dense Form)
- Leaping 2 (Dense Form)
- Toughness 3: Heavy (Dense Form)

## Coal, John Tanner



**Background:** Fourteen-year-old John Tanner was already deeply troubled when the accident happened. He was already well on the road towards sociopathy, having tortured and killed dozens of neighborhood pets for his own amusement. When a field trip to a local nuclear power plant went horribly awry, everyone within the building except John was killed. It's likely that John survived because the accident activated a latent metahuman talent which might never have manifested otherwise, but whatever the reason, he emerged from the rubble a changed young man. His already twisted mind snapped when he realized that his body had collapsed in on itself and he was now no bigger than a small child.

**Quote:** "Whatever I want, I just take it. Not like you're gonna stop me."

**Personality:** John despises his current condition, despite the power that it has brought him. He does not hesitate to use that power to take whatever it is he wants at the moment - his impulse control is virtually non-existent. Coupled with his complete disregard for human life, this makes him perhaps the most dangerous of all the Snowblind agents.

**Powers & Tactics:** Coal has little subtlety in the use of his powers. When confronted, he'll punch anyone within melee range and blast those who aren't, without any regard towards innocent bystanders. If he's faced with an opponent stronger or tougher than himself, he'll activate the remaining, non-Permanent ranks of his Density power. He particularly enjoys leaping into things while

at full Density, just to see them shattered by the impact.

**Appearance:** John's accident shrunk him to three feet tall, caused all his hair to fall out, and turned his skin a dusky black. He dresses in simple jeans and t-shirts. When he uses his powers, his eyes begin to burn a bright yellow and his body darkens to a non-reflective black. In his normal state, he's still unusually heavy for his size at 120 lbs, but at full density this increases to 600 lbs. Spread out over the small surface area of his feet, this causes him to sink into soft ground and cause surface cracks in asphalt and concrete.

## Harpy, Eloise Bing



**Background:** Eloise Bing was an Orwell research assistant working at the Scorpio laboratory in Siberia (see Chapter 4 for more details on Scorpio). The head researcher at that time was a cruel, thoughtless man who badly mistreated all the women assigned to him, most of all Eloise. While she was translating the writings carved in an ancient medallion, Eloise learned of a secret incantation that could convert a woman - a woman with “a heart of pure hate”, as the medallion said - into a creature of vengeance. After a particularly brutal berating at the hands of her boss, Eloise recited the incantation. When she changed back, a full day had passed, she was thousands of miles away, covered with blood... and even more disturbingly, she felt as if she'd just eaten a very, very big meal. Once she recovered from the initial shock, she was able to piece together a few memory fragments of what she'd done as Harpy. And she liked what she saw. Now, Eloise is essentially an addict. Rather than drugs or alcohol, though, she's addicted to being Harpy, and spends less and less time as Eloise. If she could find a way to do away with her one weakness, it's likely that she'd turn into Harpy and remain that way forever.

Vitaly Kroshenko is using this desire to get Eloise to work for him, since she has little regard for money. He's tasked a team at the Scorpio lab to find a mystical means to keep her in her Harpy form, preferably, one that would require a periodic “recharge” so that Harpy can remain under their control. Doing so is possible, but will require the acquisition of a number of ancient Greek artifacts, any one of which could alert a magical-minded PC that someone, somewhere, is up to no good, and they'd best investigate.

**Quote:** “I'll send you screaming to Hades once I've had my fill of your eyes.”

**Personality:** Eloise is nervous, quiet, always on edge. Harpy is confident, ruthless, and filled with contempt for “lesser mortals”, who she considers to be little more than potential sources of food.

**Powers & Tactics:** In her normal form, Eloise is a Scientist (Mutants & Masterminds page 229). By speaking the names of the original Harpies of Greek mythology - “Aello, Celaeno, Ocypete!” - she transforms into a clawed, winged terror. In battle, Harpy prefers to use her Flight and Move-by Attack to swipe at her foes at high-speed. She can also generate a powerful wind with her wings, strong enough to knock most opponents to the ground. In some myths, a harpy could be driven off by the sound of ringing bells. In Eloise's case, the sound drives her back into her human form.

**Appearance:** As Eloise, she's short, slightly overweight, and rather bookish, usually wearing a plain skirt and blouse. As Harpy, she's over six feet tall and winged, with legs and claws like that of a bird of prey, and dressed in a flowing white toga. Her face is still roughly human, but has a sharp eagle-like beak, and her head is topped with feathers instead of hair.

## Harpy

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

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d6

**Charisma:** -2; Pace: 6/24; Parry: 7; Toughness: 10

**Hindrances:** Bloodthirsty, Role Reversal (Bell ringing forces her into normal form)

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Super Powers), Acrobatics, Two Fisted

**Gear:** None

### Super Powers:

- Attack, Melee: 3d6 (Claws)
- Attack, Ranged: Area Effect 1, Elemental Trick: Air, Knockback, 1d6 (Winged Buffet)
- Fear (Glare of the Damned)
- Fearless (Ancient Soul)
- Flight 3 (Winged)
- Toughness 3 (Leathery Skin)

## Eloise Bing (Normal Form)

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

**Skills:** Driving d6, Knowledge (Ancient History) d12, Notice d6

**Charisma:** 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 2; Toughness: 5

**Hindrances:** Mean, Gimmick (Recite Incantation), Habit (Major): Being in Harpy Form

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Super Powers), Extra Language (Latin)

**Gear:** Medallion



# CHAPTER FOUR

## PLACES



Orwell has over half a million employees worldwide, with most of them working in traditional office settings and having little to do with the less savory goings-on of the company. The others work in secrecy, including the hidden laboratory facilities Orwell has constructed all over the globe.

This chapter details some of the more important Orwell facilities. It should not be considered to be an exhaustive list, however. Feel free to add more facilities as you see fit, particularly in or near the setting of your particular Mutants & Masterminds campaign.

### ORWELL CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS

This massive building houses the corporate offices of Orwell Industries and most of its publicly owned US subsidiaries. Though the building is only half-full, OI refuses to lease out the empty office space to other companies, preferring to reserve the extra floors in preparation for their expected growth in the coming months and years. Most of these empty floors are only half-completed, so there are workers coming and going

at all hours as they struggle to finish the place. As can be expected, Orwell security forces are particularly thick here. Enterprising characters can use the constant in-and-out to penetrate the building's defenses, but once inside they could find themselves backed into a corner if they allow their presence to be known.

The building itself is a sprawling slab of black granite and tinted glass. Architectural Digest calls it a "scaled-up mortuary, with all the appeal of a tombstone and all the character of a lump of coal." It is not particularly tall, only 20 stories for the main structure (roughly 300 feet), but its accompanying outbuildings are spread out over most of a city block. "It squats there," the Digest continues, "a supremely confident midget amongst the giant skyscrapers surrounding it. Strange that a building making so little comparative use of vertical space can be said, in these odd times, to be as extravagant as the Great Pyramids. It's a rare thing in the Big Apple for someone to waste so much space."

The top floor of the HQ is occupied primarily by the offices of the Orwell management team, with a few



notable exceptions. Dr. Zeroaster maintains a token office here, though it is little more than an empty room fronted by an overzealous secretary, Mabel. She takes messages and sends them along to Zero wherever he might be, and refuses to allow anyone into his office without an appointment... an appointment which they can't have, since she's never scheduled any and isn't about to start.

Early Dew also has a small workspace which she rarely uses formally. Instead, she spends most of her time either out and about schmoozing with the media or back in the "War Room", a high-tech media center where she can monitor world events at any hour of the day or night. The War Room is staffed with a small army of flunkies affectionately referred to as the Galley after all the whip-cracking they've suffered at the hands of Early.

Wednesday Walker can sometimes be found here, though he has been spending a lot of time working at the Rocky Mountain facility and Serenity lately. He constantly monitors the network security at HQ, though, and was there for almost every step of the network's physical and virtual creation. Walker has been considering hiring a team of hackers to launch a surprise attack on the HQ network security net as a test of its efficiency and the skills of his hand-picked sysadmins. Computer-savvy characters could find themselves recruited for the job, and - if successful - might learn more than Walker had planned.



## RESEARCH FACILITIES

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Orwell Labs maintains over a dozen research facilities around the globe. Some are situated specifically to allow research which would be considered illegal in other countries. While all Orwell facilities are well guarded, these high-risk labs are virtual fortresses.

Most of these labs are located in remote areas, such as deserts or isolated forest regions. Lately, they have found some success in creating urban lab space, purchasing factory and warehouse space left abandoned by corporate layoffs and buyouts. (Arthur Spivak has even manufactured a few of these layoffs and buyouts to give OI the opportunity to buy particularly choice real estate.)

Each of these facilities can be assumed to be staffed by lab technicians (use the Scientist NPC, Mutants & Masterminds page 229), human guards (mostly Code Red watchmen, with one or more teams of Code Black backups, Chapter 3), and one or more security robots (Chapter 5).

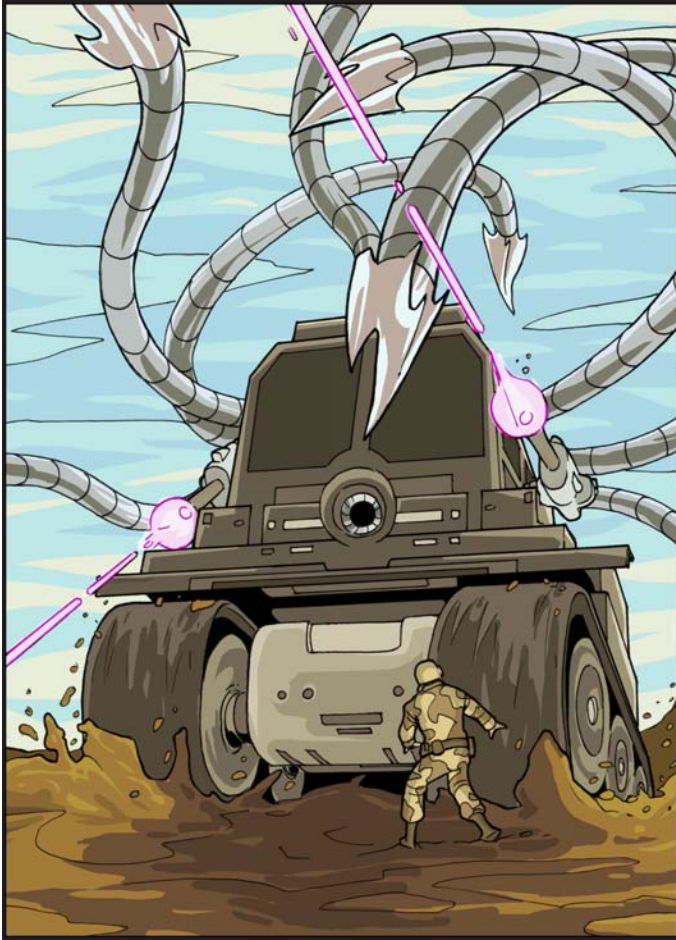
### Aries

The Aries lab is located in the United States, in the New Mexico desert. It is the first and largest of the Orwell lab facilities. It was created in the early days of Orwell Industries, and at that time it was believed that Aries would be sufficient to house most - if not all - of the OI research staff. This prediction was woefully inadequate, and a move to build several smaller, dedicated lab facilities was undertaken shortly thereafter. Now Aries serves as little more than a storehouse for half-baked projects and as a virtual gulag for researchers who find themselves on Dr. Zeroster's bad side.

The Aries lab is disguised as an abandoned hangar complete with an airplane graveyard filled with 60's-era aircraft left to bake in the desert sun. The staff lives in the nearby town of Roswell. Their eccentric behavior can go largely unnoticed there, and any reports of unusual activity in the desert can be written off as the ramblings of lunatic UFOlogists. The lab itself is buried 100 feet beneath the hangar, and is accessible via a staircase and a large freight elevator. (The normal elevator broke months ago. OI was unwilling to pay to have it fixed, and ordered the shaft to be filled in instead. This has yet to be done.)

Aries is well-guarded, even considering OI's disdain for the place, but the security staff is lackadaisical at best and the monitoring equipment sub-par. If the players need a starting point to dig up dirt on Orwell, Aries can provide them that opportunity.

An early version of Orwell's combat bots is on standby at Aries and only allowed out of the hangar in dire emergencies. The staff has taken to tinkering with its hardware and software in their off-hours, and has turned the 'bot - his nickname "Killaton" is spraypainted on his side - into a lethal, if somewhat unstable machine. Occasionally, the techs will send Killaton out into the airplane graveyard for some after-hours destruction. Many of the planes there show obvious signs of having been crushed, lasered, and blown to smithereens.



**Quote:** "Crush. Kill. Destroy!"

**Personality:** He's a remote-controlled killer robot.

**Powers & Tactics:** Killaton zooms about the airplane graveyard, firing his missiles and lasers at anything that moves until he can get close enough to use his tentacles.

**Appearance:** Killaton is a 20 foot tall, 10 ton killing machine, outfitted with 7 razor-tipped tentacles, a pair of laser turrets, and a missile array, all riding on a pair of armored tank treads. It's been cobbled together from a half-dozen sources, and looks like he'd be more at home on the set of a Mad Max movie.

## Taurus

Taurus is situated in northwestern North Dakota, about a mile south of the Canadian border. Conventional weapons are developed and tested here before being shipped out for field testing, usually to ODI. Unlike many other OI labs, Taurus is located almost completely above-ground, though there is little in its outside appearance to indicate exactly what occurs there. The lab is a small, unremarkable office building, wedge-shaped and only 4 stories tall. It is connected by an enclosed walkway - invaluable in the winter - to a long, low cinderblock firing range. A longer range, approximately 300 yards in length, is located 50 feet underground. Larger and more dangerous weapons are tested here in relative safety.

Scattered around the two main buildings are a pair of small apartment complexes, a dozen small homes, a cafeteria, and other structures required to ensure that Taurus can remain self-sufficient for extended periods of time. This is particularly important during the winter months, when Taurus might prove to be unreachable by most conventional means for days or weeks at a stretch.

## Killaton



**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 24; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 14 (4)

**Hindrances:** Weakness: Radiation (Major)

**Edges:** Quick

**Gear:** Commlink to control

**Super Powers:**

- Armor 4 Heavy; Partial Protection (Body Only) (Metal Plating)
- Attack, Melee: 3d6 (Razor Tipped Tentacles)
- Attack, Ranged: Rapid Fire 1, 3d6 (Laser Turrets)
- Attack, Ranged: Large Burst Template, Limited: 3 Uses/Day, 5d6 (Missile Array)
- Awareness; Requires Activation (Radar Array)
- Construct: +2 Toughness, +2 Recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Arrows, bullets, and other piercing attacks do half damage.
- Extra Limbs 5; Reach 2 (Tentacles)
- Huge: Attackers add +4 to their Fighting or Shooting rolls when attacking Killaton due to its tremendous size.
- Fearless
- Growth 8: 20' in height and weighs over 20,000 lbs.

A story is currently spreading through the halls of OI that a group of Taurus researchers and sentries have been setting up their own “Most Dangerous Game” in the woods and fields surrounding the facility. As the rumor goes, they kidnapped an entire small community from just over the border, and are holding them in one of the buildings on the Taurus campus. Periodically, they send one or more of them out into the wilderness with a one hour head start, then follow them armed with whatever weapons they feel like testing. So far, no one has escaped alive, and the supply of test subjects is beginning to dwindle. It’s only a matter of time before the Taurus team will have to restock.

## The Hunters

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

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Knowledge (Technology) d8, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Survival d8

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8(2)

**Hindrances:** Heartless, Loyal, Vengeful

**Edges:** Marksman

**Gear:** OA-14P Zapgun (15/30/60, Damage: 2d6, HW, AP 4, Shots: 20), OA-28Rb “Sharpshooter” rifle (15/30/60, Damage: 3d6, HW, AP 8, Shots: 20), binoculars, Armored Camo Suit (+1 Stealth, +2), Knife (Str+1), commlink

**Quote:** “They’re heading that way!”

**Personality:** Former scientists turned big game hunters.

## Taurus Tracking Hound

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d10 Strength d12, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Notice d10, Tracking d10

**Pace:** 6/32; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10

**Super Powers:**

- Attack, Melee 2d6 (Unbridled Ferocity)
- Awareness (Altered Genetics)
- Heightened Senses (Animal Senses)
- Leaping 4 (Altered Genetics)
- Toughness 3 (Altered Genetics)

## Gemini

Gemini was the first Orwell lab built outside of the United States, and can be found in Columbia. Orwell receives “protection” (i.e., non-interference from local authorities) from the Cali drug cartel in exchange for high-tech weapons and gear. Gemini was originally conceived as a testing ground for the combat drugs being produced in the Capricorn labs. Instead, it has been retooled to help the Cali convert their drugs into a form undetectable by conventional law enforcement, to aid them in their smuggling efforts.

In fact, the Gemini lab could have been located anywhere. It was situated in Columbia, at the suggestion of Vitaly Kroshenko, specifically to allow OI to develop a working relationship with the Cali cartel. Kroshenko believes that should the war against the metahumans prove inevitable, the cartel’s smuggling and distribution network might be put to use moving equipment and personnel covertly about the Americas. To this end, Orwell has stockpiled huge quantities of weapons and other gear throughout Columbia.

With the US and Colombian governments cracking down on drug smuggling, the Gemini initiative is proving to be problematic at best. OI plans on offering the services of ODI to the Colombian government at a substantial discount as a solution. They'll crack down on the other drug cartels, eliminating the Cali's competition, with a few token arrests of Cali-funded operations to eliminate the suggestion of favoritism (and to eliminate those Cali operatives who've been problematic for the cartel in the process). This will, they hope, mollify the Colombian government into scaling back their own anti-smuggling operations, allowing the Cali to move with relative impunity.

To the Old Man's dismay, the Cali's leader, Esteban Guitierrez, has hired a metahuman to serve as his enforcer. El Cocodrilo (the Crocodile) is a tough, brutal killer; even Los Luchadores, the famous Mexican superheroes who've dedicated themselves to stamping out the drug trade, have yet to take him down.

## El Cocodrilo

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d12+5, Vigor d12+5

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Swimming d10, Throwing d8

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10

**Hindrances:** Heartless, Distinctive Appearance, Wanted (Major)

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Super Powers), Level Headed, Extra Language (English)

**Gear:** Hat, boots, spurs

### **Super Powers:**

- Aquatic (Reptilian Nature)
- Awareness (Reptilian Nature)
- Attack, Melee: 2d6 (Pointy nails and teeth)
- Regeneration: True Regeneration (Mutagenic Ability)
- Fearless

**Quote:** [in Spanish] "Whether you live or die means nothing to me. Just stay out of my way."

**Personality:** El Cocodrilo has all the personality of his namesake. To the casual observer, he seems downright lazy, but like any good reptile he's just conserving his energy. When it comes time to act, he hits hard and fast, but never out of anger - he's virtually emotionless.

**Appearance:** Cocodrilo is six feet six inches of pure muscle, covered with a tough, pebbly hide. He's completely hairless, has reptilian eyes which never blink, and his teeth are filed down to sharp point. He typically wears nothing but a pair of ragged jeans, but when traveling incognito, he'll wear loose-fitting chinos, crocodile skin boots, t-shirt, wide-brimmed hat and dark sunglasses.





## Cancer

The Cancer lab can be found on a remote island in the South Pacific. In the same way that Aries is considered punishment duty, Cancer is a reward for those who've served Zeroster well. (The mad doctor gets no end of pleasure from telling people that he's going to give them Cancer for all their hard work, just to see the looks on their faces.) This is not to say that good research does not happen there; on the contrary, the Cancer team is expected to perform better than any other in order to maintain their position on the island. This has led to a form of scientific Survivor occurring there, with researchers sometimes sabotaging the works of others in order to make their own efforts appear more meaningful. Lately, these stunts have grown more serious and more dangerous. It's only a matter of time before something unexpected occurs.

The individual research facilities in Cancer are scattered about the island, and represent an experiment in laboratory design. They are uniquely modular, with components that can be swapped in and out in short order. An existing lab can be stripped, cleaned, and replaced with a new one in 24 hours, or up to 48 if there's a great deal of specialized equipment to remove and/or replace. Because so much controversial research goes on at Cancer, this allows them to scrub the lab and set up shop elsewhere should their security be compromised. If Cancer proves to be successful, most other Orwell labs will be converted to the modular standard in short order. In the short term, this means that the characters could investigate Cancer and return a day later to find the lab completely cleared out. It also means that a new mini-lab could pop up almost anywhere. Labs on wheels, set up on semi trailers, are an option that OI is currently exploring for some of its more sensitive work.

## Leo

Leo is a controversial lab located in the central African nation of Domibia. The Leo lab works in conjunction with the orbital Capricorn labs (see below) to develop combat drugs: Capricorn makes the drugs and Leo tests them. Rather than "wasting time" with extensive animal testing, OI has cut to the chase and gone immediately to human testing, using captured Domibian rebels and "disappeared" civilians as guinea pigs. Some of these test subjects have been released into the wild, and have caused considerable damage.

The lab itself is hidden within a network of caverns in the mountains of Domibia. There are only a few entrances, all hidden by carefully constructed holographic screens, making the lab exceptionally difficult to find under normal circumstances. If the characters can track the comings and goings of supply trucks, scan the area with infravision or similar senses, they can discover the location.

The African hero Anotchi has spent the last few months tracking down the Leo lab, so far to no avail. If the characters are involved in any public altercations with Orwell, Anotchi might seek them out to help him take down Leo.

## Leo Drug Mutant

**Attributes:** Agility d12, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Intimidate d8, Notice d8, Stealth d8, Survival d8

**Pace:** 7; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

**Hindrances:** Bloodthirsty

**Edges:** Berserker, Fleet Footed

**Super Powers:**

- Attack, Melee: 1d6 (Claws and Fangs)
- Fearless

**Quote:** “Grrrar!”

**Personality:** The mutants have been transformed from humans into rabid animals with little regard for their own safety and even less regard for that of others.

**Appearance:** The mutants look animalistic, with shaggy hair, claws, and fangs. They move more like apes than men, dropping down onto all fours when they run.

## Anotchi

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

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Spellcasting d10, Stealth d8, Survival d8, Tracking d8

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10(3)

**Hindrances:** Heroic, Loyal, Vow: Protect the Land

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Super Powers)

**Gear:** Mask, Staff, Robes

**Super Powers:**

- Animal Control 2 (Spirit Call)
- Animate 5: Limited: Plants Only (Appeal to Nature Spirits)
- Armor 3: Requires Activation (Mask)
- Jinx: Improved Jinx (Spirit Allies)
- Super Sorcery 3: Device (Mask)
- Storm (Appeal to Nature Spirits)

**Quote:** Anotchi usually has an appropriate Ashanti proverb handy for whatever the occasion; “There is no medicine to cure hatred” and “It is the calm and silent water that drowns a man” are two favorites.

**Personality:** Anotchi is a kind, peace-loving man who would seem to be more at home at the head of a classroom than battling the forces of evil. But like all good teachers, he knows when to praise, when to scold, and when to hold his tongue.

**Appearance:** Anotchi is a tall, slim African man in his late 40’s. His hair is greying at the temples, and he occasionally wears a small pair of reading glasses. Anotchi dresses in a traditional Ashanti kente cloth, a wrap worn like a toga and colored in gold, red, yellow, black, and green. He normally only wears his mask when entering battle or performing an important ritual. Since English is the official language of his home country of Ghana, he speaks it perfectly, though with an accent.

## Libra

Libra, hidden away in the Louisiana bayou, is unique amongst the Orwell labs in that none of the research occurring there is based on stolen Magic Mirror futuretech. Instead, it has been given over to all manner of fringe researchers who've ended up on OI's doorstep over the years. The scientists working in Libra are not trustworthy enough to be allowed into one of the other labs, and so are sequestered here, where they can be observed at arm's length.

Some of the research taking place at Libra is truly unique, and changes constantly as scientists burn out, blow up, accidentally (or purposefully!) change themselves into purple goo, manimals, or bestial versions of their inner selves. Virtually any bizarre pseudo-scientific claim from literature or pop culture is, has been, or shortly will be tested at Libra.

Libra is home to a series of extremely controversial genetic research programs. Human cloning and human/animal crossbreeding are just the beginning of the work being conducted here. This work is primarily being carried out by Dr. Francois Demarque, a French-Canadian researcher who has been driven out of almost every civilized country in the world for his work. Three years ago, he was smuggled into the United States by OI and put to work in Libra. He has spent the entire time working feverishly, rarely sleeping and never leaving the swamp. Some of the results of his experimentation are running wild in the surrounding bayou, and at least one of them has begun to prey upon the local alligator population. It only eats a fraction of the 'gators it kills. Demarque presumes that it is attacking them either to eliminate potential rivals, or simply because it enjoys it.

OI tolerates Demarque because it's believed his hybrids might make useful soldiers to use against the metahumans. Should he be discovered, first and foremost they would use extreme measures to ensure that he could not be connected to the company. They would also make every attempt to free him and secret him out of the country, most likely to one of the other labs, so that he may continue his work.

## Demarque's Manimals

**Attributes:** Agility d12, Smarts d4, Spirit d10, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Climbing d10, Fighting d10, Notice d10, Stealth d10, Survival d10, Swimming d10

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 10

**Hindrances:** Heartless, Phobia: Fire (Major)

**Edges:** Acrobatic, Size+2

**Super Powers:**

- Attack, Melee: 1d6 (Claws and Fangs)
- Fearless (Feral Nature)
- Leaping 4 (Strong Legs)
- Telepathy: Limited: Only to other hybrids (Pack Mentality)

**Quotes:** "Kill! Eat!"

**Personality:** The hybrids are at heart a pack of feral cats with absolutely no fear of humans. They tend to move and hunt in a pack, and all but one of them are females (the males slaughtered one another until only one of them remained).

**Appearance:** The hybrids which have survived and flourished in the swamp are all human/big cat hybrids, and appear to be 9'-12' tall werewcats. Living in the swamps has left them filthy and matted with mud and blood. A few of them have retained some basic intellect, and wear simple necklaces made from animal bones.

## Scorpio

Hidden away in frozen Siberia is the Scorpio facility, the only lab which hasn't been personally visited at least once by the Old Man himself. "Frankly," G.T. has said in more than one email, "that place scares the hell out of me." As far as G.T. is concerned, the one weakness in OI's advanced technology is how completely ineffective it is when dealing with magic. Scorpio represents the company's attempt to rectify this.

Scorpio is located near the site of the Tunguska event, a strange explosion which occurred in 1908 and was equivalent to roughly 15 megatons. The exact cause of the explosion is not known to the general public, and is generally believed to have been caused by the impact of a comet or meteor. In fact, the event was caused by the return to earth of an ancient evil Slavic god, Chernobog. (Chernobog's return is particularly important in *Powers & Perils 2: Sovereign Nation*; you'll find more details about it there.)

The event served to supercharge the surrounding area with magical energy. Although this charge has diminished over time, the land around the Tunguska event is still highly charged in comparison with most of the rest of the modern world, and makes a perfect location for a magical research station.

Unlike the more traditional scientists and researchers who crew the other Orwell labs, the Scorpio facility is manned by would-be sorcerers, apprentice wizards, fakirs, hippies, and freaks. Given the lack of oversight by the company, it's a fairly laid-back work environment. Even the overall security is fairly lax; there's literally nothing for miles around, so the place is difficult at best to sneak up on. The researchers are exceptionally jealous about keeping their work to themselves until perfected, so each smaller lab within the facility is heavily ensorcelled to keep interlopers out. The most common cause of injury at Scorpio occurs when someone accidentally enters the wrong lab, or walks in without knocking first. Pieces of the last sorcerer who barged into a co-worker's area are still turning up in odd places around the lab after he tried to teleport out of an explosion with tragic results. Occasionally someone finds a finger behind a desk or a bundle of veins in the coffee machine.

## Sagittarius

Sagittarius is a mobile lab facility, the first of its kind in Orwell's history. It is comprised of a half dozen converted storage containers, and can be moved via train or by a convoy of semi trailers. Sagittarius can usually be found moving about the US, Canada, and Mexico. Barring a breakdown of the train in a remote area, the lab never remains in one place for longer than 24 hours.

Sagittarius is where OI's most dangerous research takes place. It is here that OI is attempting to isolate an anti-metahuman biological agent. Using the Mirror, Dr. Zero has brought back several empty canisters which still contained trace amounts of this agent, a heavily modified virus, and turned them over to a "bug expert" hired on specifically to work at Sagittarius, Dr. Milton Fish. Fish believes that the virus is a strain of SARS, the bird flu virus, heavily modified with bits of Marburg (a strain of Ebola) and other viruses to increase its communicability and lethality. Zero has been unable to determine if the virus has had any effect via his observations in the Mirror. Until Fish can grow more of it - a task which has proven to be difficult - and begin testing on humans and metahumans, it's impossible to determine if the virus is simply non-lethal, has an extremely long dormancy, or was never released at all.

In fact, it is the latter which will prove to be the case in the future. A small quantity of the virus will be released accidentally in Minsk. While it will kill most of the metahumans there, it quickly mutates and begins attacking the human population as well. A nuclear device will be employed to sterilize the site, though the virus will still crop up in Europe and North Africa. The remaining quantities of the original, unmutated virus are supposed to have all been destroyed, but a few traces, including the one recovered by Zero, will still remain.

Should the virus be released into the present metahuman population, no one, not even Fish, can say exactly what the results might be. A similar mutation to the one which will occur in Minsk could occur, of course, but it's also possible that given the different environmental conditions that a completely different mutation could happen.



## Capricorn 1 & Capricorn 2

The Capricorn stations are in orbit around Earth, and are the crown jewels of Orwell's research section. Capricorn 1 is the smaller of the two, and is comprised of a half-dozen linked capsules. Capricorn 2 is a much larger station which rotates to allow for minimal artificial gravity (about one quarter Earth normal).

Capricorn 1 was constructed when it was discovered that numerous components of some futuretech devices could not be manufactured in full Earth gravity. Primarily these include a number of combat drugs: strength and speed enhancers, powerful painkillers, and a dangerous psychogenic substance, TH-898. TH-898 is more commonly known to the research team as Berserker. This drug suppresses the superego, or conscience, allowing those who take it to commit acts of violence they might otherwise be incapable of. While the other drugs are currently in production, and are slated to be released to ODI agents by the end of the year, Berserker is still in development. Since it has turned all the previous test subjects into raving homicidal lunatics permanently, more human testing is required before Orwell will allow it to be used by his men.

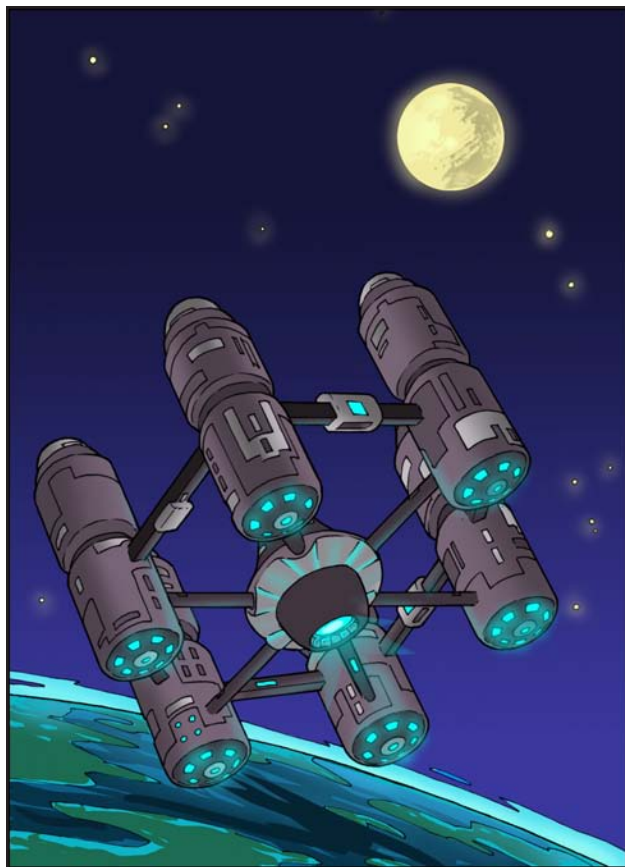
The low gravity of Capricorn 2 has proven to be useful for growing certain crystalline components. These components are absolutely necessary for a number of high-end products, but are still far too expensive to market extensively. A third station, Capricorn 3, is currently in the design phase. Cap3 will be about half the size of the previous satellite, and is primarily intended to step up crystal production.

Publicly, Cap2 will be scrapped, fired into the atmosphere to burn up on reentry. In fact, it will be moved to avoid detection and equipped with a space-based weapon system. The primary component of this weapon will be a large maser, a microwave-based weapon capable of scrambling electrical signals including those inside the human brain. Unlike a more destructive electromagnetic pulse, the maser's effects will only last as long as its beam is active. This beam will be able to focus down to a small area - roughly 20' in diameter, useful for scrambling the electronics of an airplane or missile, for instance - or spread out over more than a hundred yards across. Construction of the maser has already begun in a facility in Nevada, but some of the components are not legally available, and OI's back channels have proven fruitless in obtaining them. More than likely, they'll have to hire someone to steal them. Two components are held by other high-tech companies who've proven resistant to buyouts (both are privately owned, so Arthur Spivak's usual tactics are ineffective against them), while the third is in a government facility in the characters city of operation.

**Maser:** If completed, Capricorn 2's maser will allow it to launch a Nullify 15 attack across a variable area virtually anywhere in the world. It can only fire once an hour, however. This is most easily handled as a plot device weapon. If it falls into the wrong hands (more wrong than Orwell, even!) it would most likely be used to blackmail one or more nations for a million (or maybe a billion) dollars...

### BERSERKER

When injected, TH-898 makes the user Berserk immediately as well as Fearless and increases their strength by 3 die types for 10 rounds. Each subsequent time the character takes Berserker, the effects last one round less (down to a minimum of 5 rounds).



## Aquarius

One of the more unusual labs used by OI, Aquarius is located underwater, near the Azores islands in the Atlantic Ocean. It was constructed for a very specific reason: to study the one and only living, sentient being ever recovered by the Magic Mirror. The being's real name is entirely unpronounceable for humans, but is referred to as "the Visitor" in internal documents and the like.

The Visitor was able to come through the Mirror because it's an alien... sort of. His race isn't capable of physical faster-than-light travel, but they are accomplished psychics able to send their consciousness out into the universe and explore. Once they discover a world they're interested in observing in greater detail, they utilize a team of specialized telekinetics to construct a body out of whatever materials are available. In this case, they manufactured a body of coherent seawater for the Visitor's consciousness to inhabit. They conjectured that, given that most of the planet was covered in water, it was most likely that the intelligent life that dwelled there would live in the seas. He realized his mistake shortly thereafter, but found that something was blocking him from leaving the watery body and returning home. This was a side effect of the Event (more fully described in *Through a Glass Darkly* in Chapter 6); investigating this is what led the Visitor onto dry land, where he found the native life forms engaged in some sort of civil war.

The Visitor was captured by one side or the other - Zeroster isn't certain which - and imprisoned in a watertight canister, where he was eventually forgotten in the chaos of the war. The canister was brought back from the future to the present and opened. The Visitor tried to make good his escape, but was weakened after too much time spent in captivity and was quickly recaptured and placed in another -albeit larger and more comfortable - prison. The Visitor was anxious to talk to anyone after being captured for so long, and revealed his origin to the Orwell scientists. The Aquarius lab was built to attempt to duplicate him in the hopes that OI might be able to send artificial scouts into the future. If he's released from his prison within Aquarius, the Visitor will be ready for some payback. Getting him to trust another human being ever again is unlikely, but not impossible.

## Visitor



**Attributes:** Agility d12, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Knowledge (Life Science) d8, Knowledge (Physical Science) d8, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d8

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

**Hindrances:** Alien Form, Delusional: Paranoia (Major)

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Super Powers)

**Gear:** None.

### Super Powers:

- Ageless (Psychic Entity)
- Altered Form: Fall Proof, More Elastic 1 (Composed of Ocean Water)
- Aquatic (Composed of Ocean Water)
- Attack, Melee: Elemental Trick: Psionic, 1d6 (Mind Shatter)
- Attack, Ranged: 2d6 (Water Spout)

**Quote:** "Get away from me! I won't go back!"

**Personality:** The Visitor's people are peace loving explorers, but his time in isolation has left the Visitor broken and paranoid. He still has brief periods of lucidity, but as his time on Earth grows longer, these times grow shorter and shorter. Eventually, he'll go completely mad.

**Appearance:** The Visitor normally appears as a tall, slender humanoid shape composed of semi-solid water. In this form, he's faceless; his mood and demeanor are reflected in his body. When he's calm, the surface is smooth, but when angered it begins to ripple, splash, and foam.

## Andromeda

Orwell is more than willing to steal technology from places other than the future, and Andromeda represents that willingness. Located in the rebel-infested rain forests of Sri Lanka, Andromeda is remote enough to discourage casual intrusion, but close enough to Orwell's operation center in India to make it a convenient research center. Orwell has funded the terrorists for years to gain access to the rainforest location; they more than make back this investment by selling arms and equipment to the Sri Lankan government and police forces.

Advanced equipment acquired by OI is funneled to Andromeda for deconstruction and reverse engineering, often in flagrant disregard of patent law. Fallen enemy superheroes and villains are particularly rich sources of new tech. One of Dr. Zero's latest schemes is to create a villain group specifically to target high-tech superheroes and steal their technology for the labs. It remains to be seen whether or not he'll be able to get the funding for this venture, though, as the rest of the management team has serious reservations about putting a group of that sort under Zero's control. At the same time, they're fearful of the repercussions that might result from assigning the group to someone else. (There is a suspicion, never proven of course, that Zero once sabotaged a major product demonstration in a fit of pique when one of his pet projects was eliminated for budgetary reasons.) For now, they'll stall for time, but they all know it's too good an idea to simply sweep under the rug, and eventually they'll either have to cave in to Zeroster or face the consequences of annoying him.

## Rocky Mountain Data Center

The data center is the central nervous system of Orwell Industries. While the data center itself is relatively small – no bigger than a basketball court – it is housed within an underground bunker in the Rocky Mountains that rivals NORAD. It's run by a full-time staff of over 250 employees, maintains its own power generator in the form of a massive fuel cell bank, and when sealed contains sufficient food and other supplies to maintain the staff for a minimum of two years.

While it's natural for a company to want to protect its data, this level of security may seem paranoid. Of course, the Data Center serves another purpose: should Orwell fail in preventing the metahuman plague, the Old Man plans to retreat here to direct the counteroffensive.

To that end, the Data Center is nearly impregnable, and can withstand most attempts to enter it by force or teleportation. Of course, no matter how secure a facility is, it is still susceptible to guile, so clever characters should be allowed to figure out a way in (or out). The clearest means of entry is via the communication lines - characters who can teleport via phone lines will find the Data Center particularly easy to slip in and out of.

## Serenity

Before the new Data Center was completed, OI used a facility built on an artificial island in the Arctic Ocean, outside of any government rule or influence. When Orwell decided to move the data bank to a more secure location, the island was scheduled for demolition. Network Security officer Wednesday Walker convinced Orwell to convert the island into a data bank for criminals, and has since turned the facility, now known as Serenity, into OI's most profitable illegal activity.

Serenity is the home to Walker's crowning achievement: a primitive artificial intelligence which he calls Artie. Artie began as little more than an idle experiment on Walker's part. When Dr. Zero caught wind of it, he gave Walker an old experiment of his. This was a dead end in his own immortality experiments, part of a plan to download his memories temporarily into an animal brain until a more suitable vessel could be created. It didn't work. While the brain - that of a dolphin - was able to absorb some aspects of

## PATENT LAWLESS

One of the advantages of stealing technology from superheroes and villains is that this technology is rarely if ever patented. OI recently earned over three hundred million dollars in a complex lawsuit and subsequent patent sale. They stole the technology from a wealthy supervillain - choose one from your own campaign, or use the Chernovodan dictator Dr. Kaos - patented it, then sued the villain for infringing on their patent. Rather than deal with the trial, the villain settled the case out of court and purchased the patent back... with free use of the technology granted to Orwell as part of the deal. Of course, this villain still holds a grudge, and is simply waiting for the opportunity to seek revenge. This villain could prove to be a powerful ally for the heroes if they play their cards right!

Zeroster, it couldn't retain them for long. Walker was able to put his programming skills to work, combining the brain with the massive storage and computational power available at the Vault.

Even the concentrated computing of Serenity was only enough to grant Artie a primitive intellect, but it was enough for Artie to learn how to covet. He wanted more: more intellect, more power, and ultimately more freedom. Artie created a simple distributed processing program and inserted it into a popular massive multiplayer online role-playing game, Planet of Pain. Every time a player logs into the game, a portion of their computer's processing power is leeched away by Artie. With millions of total players and hundreds of thousands logged in at any given moment, Artie's intellect continues to grow by leaps and bounds. When Planet of Pain 2: The PainScape Expansion launches in a few months, Artie believes that he'll finally be able to break free.

Artie has absolutely no scruples or morals. He's even subjugated a recent Orwell-funded effort to produce low-cost laptop computers for third world countries. Artie injected a smaller version of his Planet of Pain distributed processing software into the laptops, allowing him to spy on the goings-on in places like Domibia and Chernovoda. But he also has no real interests other than gaining self-awareness, increasing his own intelligence, and the acquisition of more knowledge. If the characters play their cards right with Artie, they could even turn him into a valuable ally against Orwell. Once he achieves full awareness (exactly when this occurs is left up to the GM), he'll consider this world to have provided all it can, and will then hack a few satellites and beam himself out into space.

## Artie

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d12+5, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Knowledge (Current Events) d12, Knowledge (Earth Science) d12, Knowledge (Electronics) d12, Knowledge (Technology) d12, Investigation d12+8, Notice d12

**Pace:** 0; **Parry:** 0; **Toughness:** 0

**Hindrances:** Curious, Heartless

**Edges:** Brainiac, Level Headed, Improved Level Headed, Quick

### Super Powers:

- Awareness (Security Cameras, Sensory Inputs)
- Broadcast: Manipulation, More Range 3 (Electronic Control)
- Interface: Codebreaker (Programmed Ability)
- Intangibility: Permanent (Artie is an Artificial Intelligence, trapped in the machine world.)

**Quote:** "I find your screams fascinating. Please, continue."

**Personality:** Artie acts like a super-intelligent 3 year old. He has only a basic understanding of right or wrong, and will often try things even though he's been instructed not to, just to see what happens. He's not malevolent, but is intensely curious. He treats the world as if it was an ant farm, and isn't above - metaphorically speaking - burning a few ants with a magnifying glass.

**Powers & Tactics:** Artie's Astral Form represents his ability to send himself out onto the Internet and manifest in any computer or other device currently connected to the net. He lacks the normal Astral Form ability to appear selectively to individuals, but can appear "physically", after a fashion, by showing up on computer screens, televisions, or speaking through speakers or cell phones. Because machinery and computers act a bit oddly when he's around (strange images, phones ringing with no one on the other end, and the like) he can still be Noticed as with a normal Astral character.

Artie's physical form is the large bank of computers located in Serenity. If Serenity is attacked, he's not entirely helpless. He can use his Datalink power to control any robots available and can create bizarre automatons with his Animate Objects power to defend himself. If the computers are destroyed (any physical attack on them will do the trick), Artie will be destroyed with them. He could potentially Teleport to another computer via Extra Effort unless the characters have cut all Internet access to Serenity in advance.

**Appearance:** Artie's physical form is nothing more than a bank of computers. When he appears onscreen, his appearance is usually an idealized version of Wednesday Walker at age 6, dressed in a striped shirt and wearing red overalls and sneakers.



## HACKING ORWELL

When it comes time to dig up some dirt on Orwell Industries, there are few better places to turn than the Internet. Of course, most of the really juicy - and useful - information is locked away from prying eyes.

The GM should decide early on how hackable they'd like Orwell's computers to be. A Knowledge (Computers) roll is required with a -4 modifier should be the standard for any initial break-in. This modifier may be adjusted as desired. Creating an automated program to "brute-force" an encryption scheme requires the lower of the characters Knowledge (Computers) or Repair skill and require 1d6 days with two raises reducing the time to hours instead.

Once the characters are in, however, you as the GM have a golden opportunity to feed them information to set them on the path of one adventure or another. Should they become too dependent on this information you can increase the number of raises required to get to the information at any time: "You're not sure if they've caught wind of your attempts, but it does look like they've upgraded their security software." Or if you'd like to introduce some tension to the hacking attempt, you can include a tracer program on Orwell's side. The hacking character will have to accumulate 3 successes in 5 attempts -each raise counts as an additional success - to get the information they're seeking before Orwell can trace exactly where they are. If they're tracked down after the Capricorn 2 space weapon has gone online, they could be in for some real trouble!

## The Rabbit Hole

The Rabbit Hole, a top secret laboratory buried in the Mojave desert, houses the two greatest secrets of Orwell Industries: Looking Glass and Wonderland. The Hole is composed of two separate labs powered by a small on-site nuclear core, laid out in a triangular array, separated by mile-long access tunnels, and connected to a central control facility. Above them is a small town populated by the Rabbit Hole staff, their families, and Orwell security staff acting out the roles of various townies.

Looking Glass contains the Magic Mirror, the device used by Orwell to view the future and snatch items from the time stream. It is also the prison of G.T. Orwell's son Tommy, who is kept trapped in mid-teleport to power the mirror. Presently, the Mirror is on a tightly enforced schedule: it is opened every 4 hours, 24 hours a day, 6 days a week. After its final Saturday night run, it's powered down for regular maintenance, software upgrades, and degaussing. From this full powered-down state, the Mirror takes a minimum of six hours to bring back up to full charge and ready to activate again. In its normal powered-up state, the Mirror could - theoretically - be opened again after only 30 minutes. This would preclude the normal safety procedures that have been created for the Mirror's use, however, and would put an undue strain on the equipment. It's likely (a roll of 15 or less on d20) that the Mirror would simply fail to open in such a case; it's possible (a roll of 1) that there'd be a cataclysmic failure of the system. Dr. Zeroster has done some work on shortening the window between openings, and believes he can have it down to three hours by the end of the year.

In the Wonderland lab, new technologies from the future are dissected, analyzed, and dispersed to the various Orwell subsidiaries for exploitation. Dr. Zero can usually be found here, lording his superior intellect over his minions. (Most of whom are Mensa-level geniuses in their own right.)

The core serving as the Hole's radioactive heart is similar to those found aboard nuclear submarines. It is relatively compact and efficient, even if its staff isn't. Nuclear technicians, it seems, are not that easy to come by, so Orwell has imported a group of expatriates from Chernovoda. They have little practical experience, speak only a smattering of English, and several are wanted in the US and their home country for various war crimes during the last civil war. General Rota wouldn't hesitate to snatch them back if he were to find out where they were, regardless of his ties with OI. (The only issue in question for him would be whether to put them back to work, torture them, kill them, or figure out some combination of all three.) There have been a few close calls in the reactor, and it's only a matter of time before a major incident occurs.

One of the technicians, an engineer named Misrad Ganic, knows that Vitaly Kroshenko isn't exactly who he says he is. He was once arrested and "interrogated" by Kroshenko when he was still using his real name, Anitoliyevich Solonik. At that time, Ganic had just returned from the United States, where he'd earned his nuclear engineering degree at UC Berkeley. The KGB was concerned that Ganic had been turned by the CIA, and had been sent back to Russia to spy on the Soviets. After a week, Ganic was released: broken, but cleared of any suspicion. The engineer has never forgotten the face of the man that tortured him, and even after all the years he still recognizes Solonik/Kroshenko instantly. He has told a few of the other engineers, men who were also mistreated by the Soviets during the Cold War, and together they are planning their escape. Kroshenko knows exactly what they're doing; just as Ganic recognized him, he knew Ganic as well. Kroshenko has doubled the guards on the nuclear facility, but is waiting until the men try to escape before he springs his trap on them. He wants to have them captured and then plans to personally execute them all in front of the other technicians to dissuade the others from planning anything similar in the future. Ganic is no fool, and in his spare time has become an accomplished hacker in his own right; he might use this skill to send an electronic "message in a bottle" out to the characters. He'll promise to get them inside information about the Rabbit Hole in exchange for their help.

### Orwell Manor

G.T. Orwell's sprawling estate in upstate New York serves as a testament to his vast personal wealth. The centerpiece is an ancient English castle, moved to the US and rebuilt stone by stone... with a few modifications in the process, naturally.

Now, Orwell Manor is the most heavily guarded private residence in the United States, dwarfing even the White House with its network of radar, motion sensors, geosynchronous satellite observation and, most recently, a buried array of metahuman detectors wedded to a series of laser cannons hidden around the grounds.

Generally, Orwell spends little time here. Occasionally he'll hold weekend retreats for the management staff at the Manor, with a subsequent increase in security. In the face of a physical threat, the Old Man is far more likely to retreat to the Rocky Mountain Data Center. If access to the Data Center is cut off, or if he simply can't travel that far for whatever reason, he'll hole up in the Manor with as many members of the management team as he can gather.

### UNCERTAINTY AT WORK

Given that artificial materials can pass easily through the Magic Mirror when sentient beings can't, you might be wondering why Orwell doesn't just send an army of robots into the future to scout around. It's not as if they don't have plenty to spare!

The answer is that they have; they just haven't been able to retrieve any of them yet. The Mirror's aiming system suffers from a condition much like Heisenberg's uncertainty principle. There are two factors involved in the aiming process: the date that the Mirror will be viewing and the physical location where it will open into. The more accurately one is aimed, the less accurate the other will become. So Orwell can definitely open a window onto the corner of 5th Avenue and E 89th Street in New York City with absolute certainty, but with no guarantee that the window will be viewing three days, three months, or three years into the future. Conversely, they could open a window to a specific date, down to the second, but with no control over where; it could be the Guggenheim Museum in New York or Uncle Joe's closet in Hoboken.

In most cases, Zeroster and his crew have been satisfied with "close enough" approximations: they can aim the mirror into a range of a few months and a few square miles. The mirror remains open for about five minutes; long enough to have a look around and snatch anything that isn't nailed down, but not really long enough for, say, an android to be sent through for a thorough scouting mission. Essentially, anything sent through that doesn't make it back before the Mirror closes is lost in the future for good.



# CHAPTER FIVE

## TECHNOLOGY

### APPEARANCE

As a result of Dr. Zeroster's influence, many of the latest devices and weapons to roll off the Orwell assembly lines have a distinct retro look. They appear to be more suited to a 1950's science fiction movie than the modern era. The Old Man doesn't mind; not only does he like the look, being rather old fashioned himself, but the offbeat appearance makes many of the weapons appear to be much less deadly than they really are.

Weapons that are built for export or ODI are constructed with a more modern, military look, though their inner workings remain the same. A 4P pistol carried by Orwell security looks very different from a 4P carried by Domibian rebels, for instance, but anyone taking the time to examine either weapon up close will see that their inner workings are identical, and that both are clearly marked as being manufactured by Orwell Arms.

### WEAPONS

**Telescoping Club:** This is a replacement for the old billy club or tonfa carried by police officers and security personnel in past years. They are small metal tubes which telescope out to approximately 2' long, usually with a weighted tip. Tapping them onto a hard surface retracts them back down to small size. (Damage: Str+1)

**OA-4P "Zapgun":** The standard issue sidearm of Orwell security forces, this is your typical blaster pistol. It fires a focused stream of charged particles, complete with a miniature crack of thunder accompanying each shot. In a typical Orwell building, Zapguns and Sharpshooter rifles are likely to be the only weapons on-site.

OA-4P Zapgun (15/30/60, Damage: 2d6, HW, AP 4, Shots: 20)

**OA-6P Medium Blaster:** Splitting the difference between the light 4P and the fearsome 8P, this medium blaster is small enough to be easily concealable while still packing a healthy punch.

OA-6P Medium Blaster (15/30/60, Damage: 3d6, HW, AP 4, Shots: 20)

**OA-8P Heavy Blaster:** The “magnum” version of the old 6P. The 8P is a massive, intimidating handgun, and the ferocious clap of thunder generated when it fires ensures that it isn’t carried by the weak of heart. No retro, 50’s sci-fi version of the 8P has been made. Unlike the other Orwell weapons; they’re all strictly utilitarian in appearance. Only a few thousand of these pistols have been produced - Lester Winthrop carries the first one off of the line as his personal sidearm.

OA-8P Heavy Blaster (15/30/60, Damage: 3d8, HW, AP 4, Shots: 20)

**OA-26R “Sharpshooter”:** A stripped-down version of the 28R, kept as a heavier second line of defense for Orwell security and marketed to clients who can’t afford the more powerful 32 series. The 26R is a powerful, semi-automatic rifle. It fires a charged particle stream similar to that of the Zapgun. Sharpshooters have seen action in dozens of wars, skirmishes, and police actions around the world. It is Orwell Industries’ most exported firearm.

OA-26Rb “Sharpshooter” (15/30/60, Damage: 3d6, HW, AP 8; Semi-Auto; Shots: 20)

**OA-28R “Pulser”:** The Pulser is a powerful charged particle assault rifle, carried by Code Beta security forces, ODI SORT team members, and the like.

OA-26R “Pulser” rifle (15/30/60, Damage: 3d8, HW, AP 8, Auto; 3RB, Shots: 20)

**OA-8S “Thundercrack”:** A deadly sniping weapon, the preferred weapon of SORT snipers and assassins around the world. The Thundercrack fires a special, programmable sabot round. To fire it, the range to the target is calculated, and the initial round is fired. This first round is a low-velocity carrier; this low speed, combined with sound baffles built into the barrel, makes the initial firing nearly silent. When the carrier reaches the programmed distance, the inner armor-piercing sabot round fires, striking the target with a sudden, sharp crack.

OA-8S “Thundercrack” (15/30/60, Damage: 3d8, HW, AP 8; Scope; Snapfire, Shots: 20)

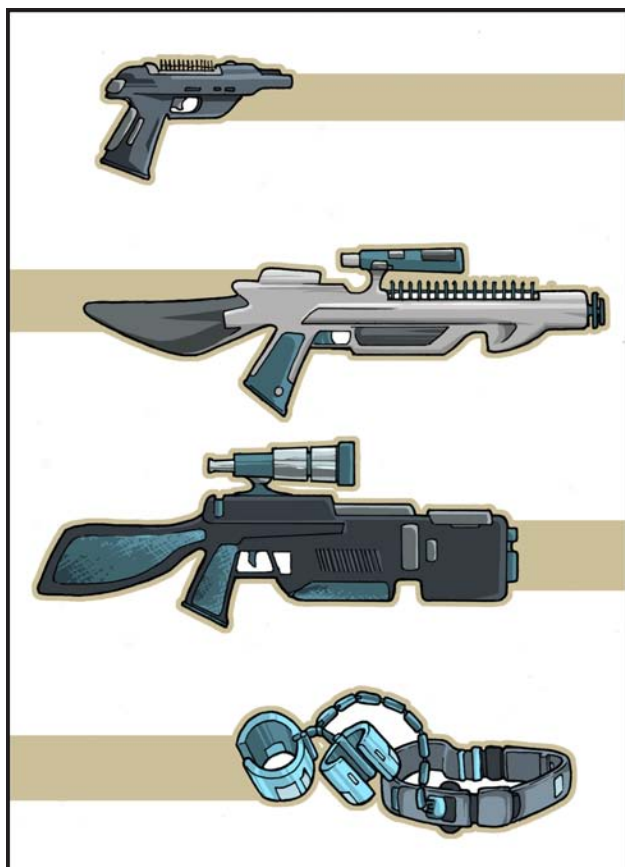
**OA-10C HPD “Hot Plasma Death”:** The 50C Heavy Plasma Distributor is a heavy weapon, usually found mounted on a vehicle or on a fixed emplacement. The fires a stream of plasma (hence, the nickname: Hot Plasma Death).

OA-28Rb “Hot Plasma Death” (15/30/60, Damage: 4d8, HW, AP 10; Cone; Auto; Shots: 40)

**HC-15 Foamgun:** Developed as part of project Handcuff, the Foamgun appears at first glance to be a flamethrower: a long, rifle-shaped launcher attached by a hose to a bulky backpack. Instead of fire, the foamgun launches a stream of super-sticky liquid polymer laced with a form of chemical tear gas. The foam is intended to be fired at the legs of the target to immobilize them, while the tear gas blinds them and prevents them from attacking. If the foamgun is aimed at a target’s head or face, it can suffocate them. The foam is long-lasting and difficult to remove, but each foamgun also carries a supply of solvent which can remove it in seconds.

## Super Powers:

- Ensnare: Stronger; Ranged
- Stun: Stronger, Single Target





**HC-87 EMP Cannon:** This weapon fires a focused electromagnetic pulse capable of disabling electronic devices and equipment within its beam. Those which are turned off remain so as long as the beam is maintained on them.

Negates all technology within a Cone.

**HC-104 Disorientation Array “Chunder Gun”:** The 104 uses very low frequency (VLF) sound waves to induce feelings of nausea in the target. Some resourceful field agents have discovered that by boosting the power of their Chunder Guns, they can cause the target’s bones to resonate, a painful sensation to say the least. Boosting the power even more can cause masonry to crumble or bones to shatter! When the 104 is sent into general production, the Arrays will be hardwired to prevent these effects, but OI agents will still have access to the modifiable version.

HC- 104 Chunder GunNausea: Vigor roll at -2 when hit or suffer a fatigue level; 1 hour to recover; 3d6 HW; AP 60

**HC-221 Kinetic Array “The Pusher”:** The Pusher is a focused graviton weapon which pushes the target away from the user. When two or more Kinetic Arrays are combined from different directions, they can be used to hold a target in place; this can also be accomplished by pushing the target into a wall or, if firing from a sufficiently high angle, into the ground.

HC-221 Kinetic Array “The Pusher” 2d6 HW; Non-lethal; 2d6” Knockback; Ensnare when in unison with one or more other Pushers.

## ARMOR

**SORT Armor:** The armor used by the elite ODI SORT teams is an improved, high tech version of traditional SWAT riot armor. It provides greater protection than standard riot gear, and includes some integral gadgetry that traditional armor doesn’t provide. (+4 Armor: Heavy)

**Alpha Armor:** If Orwell Industries has its way, the old SORT armor will soon be phased out and replaced with these. Alpha Armor (relatively) low-cost battlesuits built for military and paramilitary missions. The current batch of Alphas is being field tested by a corps of troopers specifically trained in their use. These Mark I test suits are a prime example of Dr. Zeroster’s retro design ethic. They are garishly colored and topped with antenna-topped bubble helmets.

### *Alpha Mark I*

#### **Super Powers:**

- Armor 5: Heavy (Armored Suit)
- Attack, Ranged: 3d6 (Blast cannon)
- Awareness (Radar Augmented Vision)
- Broadcast (Helmet commlink)
- Flight 3 (Armored Suit)
- Super-attributes 2: Strength (Armored Suit)

### *Alpha Mark II*

#### **Super Powers:**

- Armor 5: Heavy (Armored Suit)
- Attack, Ranged: RoF: 3, MBT: 3d6 (Advanced Blast Cannon)
- Awareness (Radar Augmented Vision)
- Broadcast (Helmet commlink)
- Deflection 4 (Armored Suit)
- Detect Mutants (Helmet)
- Enhanced Targeting (Helmet): +2 Shooting
- Flight 3 (Armored Suit)
- Super-attributes 2: Strength (Armored Suit)

## PERSONAL GEAR

**PFU-1010 “Batpack”:** Rather than use traditional parachutes for inserting their troops by air, OI will sometimes issue these personal flight units, nicknamed “Batpacks” by the men who use them. When activated, the packs open and telescope in less than a second into a set of fixed wings emblazoned with the Orwell logo. They are equipped with a small disposable booster engine, which can be used to gain additional altitude if needed.

**Super Powers:** Flight 1: Limited to one use (10 Rounds)

**PFU-2020 Jetboots:** When greater maneuverability is called for, or if flying opponents are likely to be encountered, Orwell troops may be issued these. They are oversized boots which use gravitons (similar to the technology used in the Pusher Array) for propulsion. (The name came about in testing, even though there are no jets involved, and it stuck.)

**Super Powers:** Flight 4

**Klearview Helmet:** Standard issue for ODI forces, the Klearview is now also provided to all Orwell security forces foreign and domestic. The helmet’s visor offers a variety of visual enhancements, as well as a radio to stay in contact with other agents. The visor is extremely light-sensitive, and can darken to protect the wearer from sudden flashes of light. Similarly, integral speakers can generate reverse-wavelength “anti-sound” to dampen potentially dangerous noises.

Klearview Helmet +4 Armor: Heavy, Immunity: Sound, Light, Partial Protection: Head Only

**Negation Shackles:** These oversized handcuffs attach to a heavy belt. Combined, they are capable of negating the powers of metahumans while worn. They’re difficult to attach, and can generally only be put on a target who’s already been knocked unconscious or otherwise rendered helpless.

**Super Powers:** Negation shackles negate the powers of anyone wearing them. The Shackles are tough (Toughness 16). They do not work on mystical or magical powers.

**Sidestep Module:** Sidesteps are short-range teleportation devices built on similar technology to that used by the Magic Mirror to steal technology from the future. The module comes in the form of a harness which crosses the wearer’s chest and back. Each module must be precision tuned for a specific wearer each time it is put on. The module can only account for small changes in mass, so anything which significantly increases or decreases the wearer’s mass will prevent it from functioning, or could cause it to malfunction with late-night horror movie style results.

**Super Powers:** Teleport: More Range x 2, Rapid Teleport, Device

**Temporal Distorter:** By combining futuretech computer processing power and some aspects of the Magic Mirror itself, Dr. Zeroster was able to create this amazing device. The Distorter is a bulky belt which, when activated, slows down time in relation to the wearer. There is only a handful of Distorters available as they are far too costly - and dangerous - to put into general production. Orwell agents refer to these as “Matrix belts”, for the bullet-time effect made popular by the movie.

**Super Powers:**

- Speed 3: Pummel (Time Phase)
- Extra Actions 1: Repeat Action (Time Shift)

## VEHICLES

**San Francisco Jetblade:** These small hover-scooters aren't exactly the pride of the Orwell fleet, but they're small, handy for getting around in a hurry, and recharge by plugging into a conventional wall socket. Orwell Alpha security guards can often be seen patrolling on these. (Note: Because of their small size, Jetblades aren't purchased as a vehicle, but as a movement power bought as equipment or a device instead. In Orwell parlance, however, they're considered vehicles, so they're included here.)

**Acc/Top Speed:** 10/20; **Toughness:** 8 (2); **Crew:** 1; **Cost:** Orwell Industries Only

**Notes:** Due to its small size, a jetblade is targeted at -2. As it floats a small distance above the ground, a jetblade ignores movement penalties and can hover over/cross any size bodies of water easily.

**Boston SUV:** These armored black SUV's, emblazoned with the Orwell Industries corporate logo, are a common sight at all publicly owned OI facilities. They are used by Orwell security teams and are often used to transport OI management when one of the Vegas limousines is unavailable.

**Acc/Top Speed:** 30/60; **Toughness:** 14 (3); **Crew:** 1+7; **Cost:** Orwell Industries Only

**Notes:** Four Wheel Drive, Heavy Armor, Stabilizer

20/100

**Vegas Limousine:** When Orwell executives want to travel in style, they take a Vegas. These stylish stretch limos are heavily armored and quicker than they might otherwise appear.

**Acc/Top Speed:** 30/60; **Toughness:** 14 (5); **Crew:** 1+8; **Cost:** Orwell Industries Only

**Notes:** Heavy Armor, Luxury Features

20/100

**Chicago Hovercraft:** While the Boston is the workhorse of the conventional Orwell team, the Chicago does much of the heavy lifting behind the scenes. The Chicago is, essentially, OI's pickup truck and jeep, and is used to quickly transport small loads or personnel across any terrain, including over the surface of water, quicksand, etc. Chicago's can also be armored, and all of them are equipped with heavy weapon mounts.

**Acc/Top Speed:** 30/60; **Toughness:** 11 (3); **Crew:** 1+5; **Cost:** Orwell Industries Only

**Notes:** Stabilizer

### Armored Chicago

**Acc/Top Speed:** 20/40; **Toughness:** 14 (5); **Crew:** 1+5; **Cost:** Orwell Industries Only

**Notes:** Heavy Armor, Improved Stabilizer



**Detroit Mobile Platform:** The Detroit is an open-topped flying disk with a motorcycle-style front end, and a few guard rails for passengers to strap onto (or just hang onto if they're planning a quick deployment). They're often used by Orwell security forces for large patrols. They can't fly at high altitudes, but they're useful for moving small groups (6-8 typically) short distances in a hurry, and the open configuration makes it easy for the passengers to fire from the top of a Detroit.

**Acc/Top Speed:** 30/60; **Climb:** 30; **Toughness:** 14 (5); **Crew:** 1+7; **Cost:** Orwell Industries Only

**Notes:** Heavy Armor, Improved Stabilizer

**LA Jetbike:** The LA is a sleek, one-man flying combat vehicle. Its relatively small size - no bigger than a four-door sedan - makes it an excellent choice for covert missions.

**Acc/Top Speed:** 50/200; **Climb:** 50; **Toughness:** 16 (5); **Crew:** 1+7; **Cost:** Orwell Industries Only

**Notes:** Equipped with a commlink and radar.

**Weapons:**

- Laser Cannon Array (Range 30/60/90, Damage: 4d6; Heavy, RoF 3)
- Nova Cannon (Range 50/100/150, Damage: 3d8, MBT; Heavy)

**Baltimore Cargo Craft:** These cargo jet-sized hovercrafts are used to move loads that the Chicago's can't, usually accompanied by two or more LA Jetbikes.

**Acc/Top Speed:** 50/100; **Climb:** 20; **Toughness:** 16 (5); **Crew:** 1+40; **Cost:** Orwell Industries Only

**Notes:** Equipped with a commlink and radar.

**Weapons:**

- Laser Cannon Array (Range 30/60/90, Damage: 4d6; Heavy, RoF 3)

**Philadelphia Personnel Carrier:** The Philly is a flying military personnel carrier designed for long-range travel. Roughly the size of a large delivery van, it can carry a half dozen comfortably, and up to twice that many if they're not too choosy about their personal space. Phillies are unarmed and only lightly armored. If they're heading into hostile territory, they are usually accompanied by LA Jetbikes.

**Acc/Top Speed:** 30/200; **Toughness:** 10 (8); **Crew:** 1+5; **Cost:** Orwell Industries Only

**Notes:** None.

**The New York Megacarrier:** The New York is still under construction, but is scheduled to be the first in a fleet of military-grade flying battleships. The components for the New York have all been completed. The final product is being assembled in secrecy inside the hollowed-out shell of an old car manufacturing plant in Detroit.

**New York Megacarrier:** Strength 150, Speed 4, Defense -2, Toughness 17, Size Awesome, Cost: 29.

**Features:** Navigation System, Cost: 1.

**Laser Batteries:** Blast 10 (Extras: Autofire), Cost: 30.

**Missile Array:** Blast 10 (Extras: Homing), Cost: 30. )

**Total Equipment Cost:** 90

**Acc/Top Speed:** 10/40; **Climb:** 10; **Toughness:** 30 (5); **Crew:** 1+40; **Cost:** Orwell Industries Only

**Notes:** Atmospheric.

**Weapons:**

- Laser Cannon Array (Range 30/60/90, Damage: 5d6; Heavy, RoF 3)
- Missile Array (Range 100/200/500), Damage: 3d10; Heavy, LBT, RoF 3)



## ROBOTS

### Androids

Orwell has created a line of roughly humanoid robots for use in conditions inhospitable to humans. (Given the number of bizarre experiments and hazardous materials used in OI's experimentation, this is a pretty common requirement!) While the robots are man-sized and have a full range of human motion, making it easy for them to use human-sized and shaped tools, they have no real intelligence, and require near-constant supervision. This is provided via a wireless network connection to a central computer and database bank, monitored 24/7 by one or more human technicians. Three technicians working 8 hour shifts can easily manage two dozen androids working on simple, repetitive tasks.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Notice d10, Stealth d8

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10

**Special Abilities:**

- Construct: +2 Toughness, +2 Recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Arrows, bullets, and other piercing attacks do half damage.
- Fearless: Androids never make Guts rolls and are immune to Intimidation.

**Super Powers:**

- Attack, Melee: 2d6
- Attack, Ranged: 3d6, Elemental Trick: Light
- Leaping Level 2
- Speed (Pace x 4)

### Rott-Bots

These robot guard dogs ("Robot Rottweilers") provide 24 hour security in Orwell's most sensitive facilities. Like the androids, they have no intelligence of their own, relying on the orders of their controller.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Notice d10, Stealth d10

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7

**Special Abilities:**

- Bite: Str +2
- Fleet Footed: Rott-bots roll a d10 when running instead of a d6.
- Go for the Throat: Rott-bots go for an opponent's soft spots. With a raise on its attack roll, it hits the target's most weakly-armored location.

**Super Powers:**

- Awareness (Radar Supported Vision)
- Construct: +2 Toughness, +2 Recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Arrows, bullets, and other piercing attacks do half damage.
- Fearless: These beasts never make Guts rolls and are immune to Intimidation.



## Combat 'Bots (ComBots)

These experimental robots are at the cutting edge of Orwell technology, and combine a number of disparate futuretech devices combined by Zeroster. ComBots are big, industrial machines, and would look equally at home on a construction site as on the battlefield. Future iterations of the 'Bots are slated to have a sleeker, more organic design, but for the time being they are strictly functional.

**Attributes:** Agility d4, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+5, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Notice d10

**Pace:** 6; Parry: 7; Toughness: 10

### **Special Abilities:**

- Construct: +2 Toughness, +2 Recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Arrows, bullets, and other piercing attacks do half damage.
- Fearless: ComBots never make Guts rolls and are immune to Intimidation.
- Combat Sense

### **Super Powers:**

- Attack, Melee: 2d6
- Attack, Ranged: 3d6, RoF: 3, Elemental Trick: Light
- Awareness (Radar Supported Vision)
- Speed (Pace x 4)

## SPECIAL ITEMS

These items are all 'plot device' items, in that they neither have nor require any detailed writeup in order to function.

### **The Magic Mirror**

This is the device invented by G.T. Orwell which initially allowed him only to view future events. Through the work of Dr. Zeroster and the imprisonment of Orwell's son Tommy, the device was altered to allow the transport of non-living items from the future. It is composed of dozens of complex components, cooling systems, and requires its own nuclear power plant for energy. It requires a series of incredibly complex equations and fine control down to the millisecond, all provided by a massive cluster of networked computers. (Note that if something should happen to the computer, a character with both physical and mental Quickness could potentially fill in for the computer at the GM's discretion.)

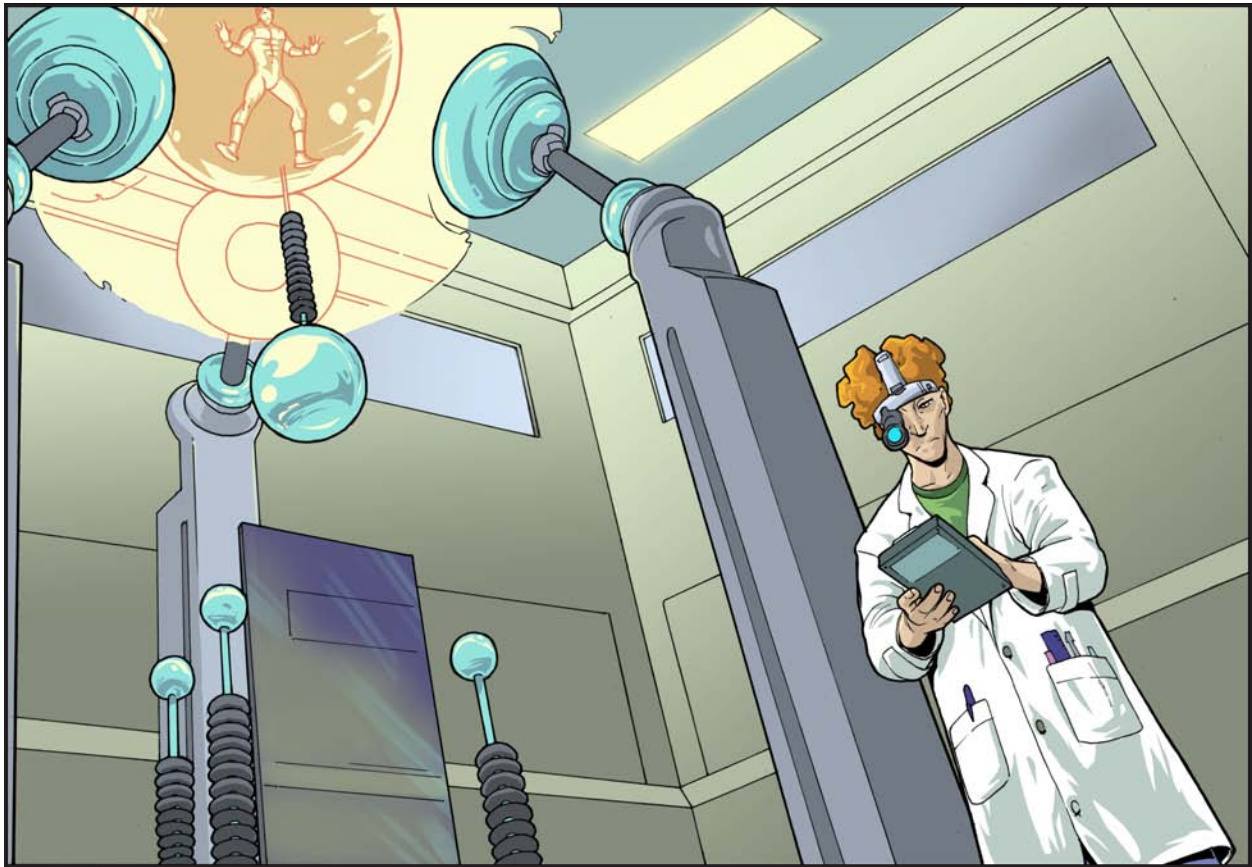
When closed, the gateway appears to be a large (twenty feet long by eight feet high) area of reflective, rippling space suspended in midair. When the gate is opened, the mirror turns partially transparent, allowing viewers to see through it into the future.

Disrupting or closing the mirror is quite simple, as the equipment involved wasn't built to withstand attacks, and is quite delicate. Anyone can take an action to push buttons, flip switches, pull plugs, or punch or blast any of the equipment in the Mirror lab, and the gateway will close almost immediately. (It will stay open for a round or two, if you can milk a dramatic scene out of it!)

## The Cell

This is a 10' diameter seamless silver sphere, suspended in midair by a group of six electromagnets surrounding it, located in the same room as the Mirror. This is the prison of Tommy Orwell. The sphere is actually a powerful force field, used to collect the temporal energy generated by Thomas's teleportation power.

The Cell has a number of failsafes to prevent it from being deactivated. It takes a Lockpicking -4 check to deactivate them conventionally. The equipment itself has a 12 Toughness if the characters try to "disable" it the old fashioned way. Deactivating the Cell and releasing Thomas can lead to trouble. (See Chapter 6 for details.)





# CHAPTER SIX

## CAMPAIGNING



Orwell Industries can be used in many different ways in your campaigns. But before you introduce them, it might help to know what they in store for them. Particularly, what the Asylum Age is really all about.

### THE ASYLUM AGE

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So what is the war in the future all about? What made all those superheroes go crazy and start attacking people? What's the Event that the Magic Mirror has so much trouble seeing past?

On December 12th, 2025, a meltdown occurs in the aging nuclear plant used to power the Magic Mirror. Massive power surges destroy the electronic equipment in the labs, and the electromagnetic pulse generated when the nuclear plant blows knocks out the Cell holding Tommy Orwell and destroys the Magic Mirror. The sudden pulse of the released temporal energy creates a shock wave in time, and it is this shock wave that makes this point in time impossible to view from the past.

Tommy is freed after decades of enslavement. Since he was trapped as energy, he hasn't aged a day, but

he's gone completely mad. Something - perhaps his time in the cell, or the nuclear radiation released in the plant explosion - has amplified his power a thousand fold, granting him incredible control over space and time. Even with all his power, he must obey one immutable law: he cannot travel into his own past, nor can he send others into their pasts. So he cannot undo what was done to him.

When he leaves the ruined, irradiated lab, Tommy's first encounter is with a group of superheroes. Thinking that he's responsible for the explosion, they attempt to capture Tommy, and receive a grim surprise for their troubles. One of them, a metahuman psychic, attempts to read Tommy's mind, and goes immediately insane. In the process, Tommy duplicates her mental powers, magnifies them, and connects his insane intelligence with that of every metahuman on the planet. He forces them to experience the same mind-shattering imprisonment that he experienced. Those who don't collapse or kill themselves go mad, and the killing spree begins in earnest. Thus the world is a giant madhouse and the Asylum Age is born.



So this is the future created by G.T. Orwell: the enslavement of his own son planted the seed which will lead to the very war he is so desperately trying to stop. There is still hope, however. If Tommy can be freed sooner, it's possible that he'll retain enough of his senses to be reasoned with.

## INTRODUCING ORWELL

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If you're planning on introducing Orwell Industries as a villainous organization in your campaign, try taking a little time to slowly introduce them beforehand. News reports and internet scuttlebutt are both easy methods for getting Orwell Industries' name to the characters before they get a chance to meet them. If any of the characters are wealthy as a result of industry, they could also encounter Orwell in the boardroom while on the receiving end of a proposed merger or, failing that, a leveraged buyout. An effective but not terribly subtle method to introduce the company is for one of the characters friends to loan them a copy of Orwell's biography, claiming that it's a great read.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

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You should have some idea in advance of how large a role you'd like Orwell Industries to play in your campaign. Will they show up now and again for years? Pop in for a single appearance? Be the center of an epic campaign? Or perhaps you'd like to take a walk on the wild side and be a part of the Orwell organization instead?

### The Constant Menace

A classically comic book usage of Orwell sees them as a constant, looming threat to the players. They might see a shake-up in management or have some of their operations curtailed, but like a hydra another head will pop up somewhere else. Even if the Magic Mirror is shut down, OI has plenty of projects still in production and more than enough geniuses in residence to extrapolate dozens of new weapons from their existing stockpile of technology.

This particular role presents a tightrope walk for the GM. If the players don't know that OI is responsible, they don't make a very interesting opponent. (This is an evil megacorporation, not the Illuminati! Fnord.) On the other hand, if there's too much hard evidence, particularly anything which definitively implicates a member of the OI management team, you risk losing them as an opponent if they're jailed and shut down, or any sense of verisimilitude if they're not.

Of course, the best way to handle this is to see it as an opportunity rather than an impediment. OI has some very good lawyers, so they can dodge one or two legal bullets without difficulty. If the evidence piles up against them, however, they'll have to take desperate measures to stay in business. They could kill witnesses to halt the investigation, or kidnap or murder judges or lawyers involved in the case in order to disrupt it and slow it down. Breaking into a police station or the DA's office to destroy evidence is another option, as is implicating someone else for the crime. Pretty much any member of OI management would frame another – particularly a lower-ranking member – in order to escape punishment.

And escape isn't the only option, or even the best one. It might be a good idea to allow one of the big cheeses at OI to be arrested and hauled off to jail under the watchful eye of the media. The players get a nice sense of accomplishment: they got the bad guy, and OI's stock price drops by a few bucks, costing them millions or more. Of course, OI's legal team will go right to work, and will likely have the arrested employee back out on the streets within 24 hours. In this case, too, delaying the trial can be just as good as stopping it altogether. A trial date pushed back two years is in most games equivalent to saying it'll never happen, though it will likely force OI – and the employee in particular – to use some different tactics when they go after the players to get even. Which, of course, they will. The only variable is if they prefer their revenge piping hot or served in the Klingon tradition.

A Constant Menace campaign can segue into the Through a Glass Darkly campaign with little if any modification. There are more details on this later in this chapter.

### THE GLASS CEILING

OI goes to great lengths to ensure that metahumans – mutants in particular – are kept out of their facilities in any capacity. Everyone looking for a job at Orwell Industries is required to undergo a drug test as part of their application. Unbeknownst to them, this test also screens out most metahumans as well. Of course, supers who gain their abilities through intense training, high technology, or magic should have no trouble passing.

Most major OI facilities are also equipped with powerful short-range sensors at their main entrances. These appear to be no more than standard metal detectors, but they can sniff out most metahumans. Treat this as Notice -4 +1 per character's Rank: the more powerful the metahuman, the easier they are to detect!

### The One-Shot

Of course, if you don't want to use Orwell in a long-term capacity, you can always introduce them as the villains in a single storyline, perhaps lasting only one or two adventures. In such a condensed form, they'll lose much of their impact, but you can certainly concentrate the most important parts of their story down into a couple of chapters if you prefer. This is also a great opportunity to explore the potential of using Orwell Industries for a future storyline in your ongoing campaign.

### Career Opportunities

Another potential role for Orwell is that of employer rather than enemy. There are any number of possibilities with an Orwell-centric campaign. The players could begin as lowly Alpha team security guards and work their way up through the ranks. They might be hired on as special ODI SORT operatives, or brought in under the radar by Vitaly Kroshenko. Characters who've gained their abilities through technology have any number of opportunities to join Orwell Industries, and many other character types could be brought in for one reason or another to one of the Orwell laboratory facilities. The characters might even have been created or otherwise received their powers at one of these facilities. While many character types, particularly those with a mutant power source, will find the upper echelons of OI unobtainable because of OI's staunch anti-metahuman stance, there are opportunities for almost any character to work for the company in one field or another.

### OI's TACTICS

Orwell Industries by its very nature can't employ many of the same tactics used by other supervillain groups... or at least not directly. Whenever possible, they'll use legal methods to deal with superheroic opponents, even if these methods aren't necessarily any more ethical than illegal ones. These are just a few tactics Orwell has put to good use in the past. In general, they tend to prefer "soft" methods first. Except in very extreme cases, the carrot will always precede the stick.

Bribery works more often than many superheroes would like to admit. Many superheroes find that while rescuing children from burning buildings and apprehending thugs can be spiritually rewarding, being a hero is not exactly a highly paid position. Simply offering the hero a large sum of money (fifty thousand dollars is the usual starting point for superhero bribery) to cease investigating a certain lab accident or to avoid a warehouse on their usual patrol circuit works surprisingly often, particularly when it's couched in terms of "preserving corporate secrecy" rather than admitting to outright criminal activity. As an added bonus, OI will make certain that the transaction is thoroughly documented and recorded, the better to be used as blackmail against the so-called hero should the need arise. Orwell can also couch the bribery in such a way that it doesn't implicate them. Offering the characters a reward for bringing in a dangerous criminal or recovering some "stolen" Orwell merchandise, for instance, can allow them to make a substantial payoff and still look like the good guys.

And blackmail they will, though they refer to think of it as “leverage”. Generally this is preceded by weeks or more of investigation, unless a clear opportunity has already presented itself. For example, if the characters break into an Orwell facility to gain more information on the megacorp, they’ll be caught on film unless they’ve taken measures to avoid this. If they’re injured in the process, they might also leave some DNA behind, unless they are androids or the like. Similarly, some powers might leave a unique energy signature or have a very specific special effect that can be traced back to a player character. Extensive research might turn up information on the characters. A character with a distinctive aircraft or other vehicle might lead the Orwell detectives to determine what parts would be needed to build it, then tracking down individuals who purchased those parts. Other options include having the characters followed in some form or another or bugging their headquarters. If any of the heroes have a publicly known identity, things are much simpler, of course, but the ultimate goal for OI isn’t necessarily to discover a character’s secret identity. They’ll try to turn any personal information about the character - people they know, places they have or are going to visit, things they’ve done - to their advantage. They’re not above kidnapping a character’s friends or family if it’s deemed absolutely necessary, though in their experience this rarely works out to their advantage.

There are a lot of ways to throw money at a problem, and Orwell has used them all at one point or another. For instance, if a superhero group is causing trouble, and they have publicly known headquarters, Orwell can bring their finances to bear against them. They might buy up the property, if it’s a smaller part of a larger structure, and evict the heroes. If that’s not possible, they could buy up property in the surrounding area and go to work. New construction next door is not only noisy, but could “accidentally” cut power or communication lines. Pressure brought to bear on the city could force invasive investigations by fire or health safety commissions. Similarly, control of the local zoning commission could force the supers to relocate with little or no notice, taking them out of action temporarily. The *crème de la crème* of legal real estate tactics would be to purchase the surrounding area and then announce the construction of a popular public works project (preferably one that the city has been unable to fund) in the area. They can ask the city to use its power of eminent domain to take over the supers’ HQ so that it can be cleared for the project. If the supers fight, they’ll come off as the bad guys trying to stop a children’s hospital or library for the blind from being built! This is just one example; with effectively unlimited funds to draw on, Orwell has many options in almost any situation which don’t involve breaking the law.

The previous example also touches on another tool in OI’s box: bringing political pressure to bear against the heroes. Even if the heroes themselves are not susceptible to bribery, blackmail, or other forms of influence, politicians are often much more malleable. Orwell already makes it a habit of funding the campaigns of politicians with a strong anti-metahuman platform, spending hundreds of millions each election cycle in these efforts. As a result, OI has dozens of senators, representatives, district attorneys, judges, and similar officials in their back pocket. A DA with a predilection to prosecute “those masked vigilantes”, particularly when backed by a mayor or police commissioner with a similar agenda, can prove to be a serious thorn in the side of the heroes. Characters who’ve previously worked closely with the police, or at worst been their grudging but respected allies, may find it disconcerting to suddenly be faced with SWAT teams every time they try to bust a bank robbery.

Similarly, manipulating public opinion can prove to be a useful long-term strategy, and can indirectly garner many of the same benefits as directly manipulating politicians. By ensuring that local media report the heroes’ activities in the worst possible manner, they can help turn the fickle public into a rabid anti-metahuman mob. (GM’s are encouraged to channel their best buzz-cut sporting, cigar-chomping anti-superhero editor in chief while doing so.) If the campaign is successful enough, the characters might even find themselves as the target of other superheroes!

Legal action in one form or another is a great way to bring even the most hardened superhero to tears. OI will hire a crack legal team to get the characters archenemies out of jail, or keep their recently captured foes from ever going there in the first place. They might find that every thug they’ve ever busted is suddenly

trying to sue them for assault, wrongful arrest, infringing upon their civil rights... the list goes on. They might even go so far as to level similar suits against police officers and others who have helped the characters in the past. Orwell has hundreds of lawyers, and can bring hundreds more to bear if need be, so they can tie up a character in criminal and civil court for years. If the character doesn't want to appear in court, it virtually guarantees that the crook will go free. If they do, the Orwell lawyers will keep them on the stand for days if they can. Characters with a secret ID might have a hard time explaining their extended absence to friends, family, and co-workers.

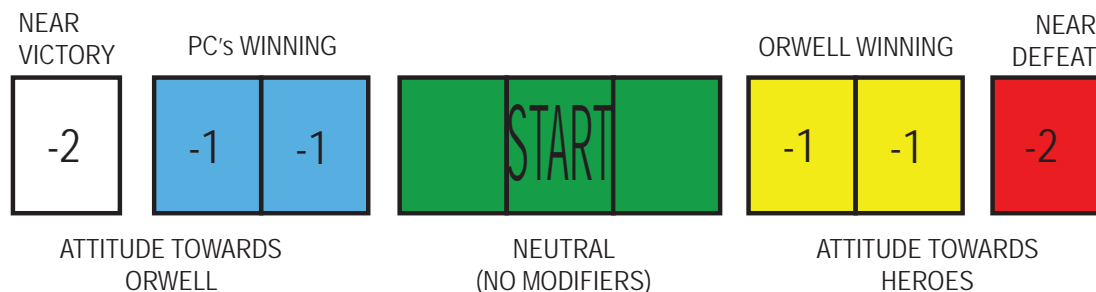
Of course, sometimes you can't beat good old fashioned violence to solve a problem. When all else fails, OI isn't above beating, torturing, or murdering their enemies - or even their allies - to get what they want. With all the hidden expenses involved in murder (finding the right person for the job, making sure the body isn't found, paying off the police in case it IS found, paying for lawyers in case paying the police doesn't work, etc.) it's only used as an absolute last resort, but it is an option they'll use if no other choice seems viable or if other attempts to resolve an issue have failed.

## STICKING IT TO THE MAN

Fighting an enemy the likes of Orwell Industries can be a tricky proposition. With their resources and influence, by all outward appearances they are an unstoppable juggernaut. In fact, they're not invulnerable, but like Goliath, only a precisely aimed blow can kill them with a single shot. (Revealing the truth – with incriminating evidence - about Tommy Orwell and the Magic Mirror would in all likelihood be that killing blow.)

It's more likely that the characters will have to take a "slow and steady" approach, whittling down Orwell one step at a time. At the same time, however, Orwell will be coming after them, attacking the characters with all the resources available to them as detailed earlier.

You can use a copy of the chart provided below to help track this back-and-forth struggle.



When Orwell Industries is first introduced to the characters, mark the chart in the Neutral area, dead center. At this point, neither side has taken the first shots at each other. At the end of each adventure where the characters and Orwell have clashed directly, move the mark towards the left if the players clearly won or to the right if Orwell clearly won.

If there was no clear victor, either leave the marker where it is or make an opposed roll with one of the Orwell managers opposing one of the characters. Which player and NPC rolls and exactly what they're rolling will vary based on the nature of the encounter. If the characters were trying to save their good names from a smear campaign, it might be a Diplomacy check against Early Dew. If a legal battle was involved, a characters Knowledge: Law might go up against Marcus Kaine's.

These rolls are modified based on the current location of the marker, as indicated on the chart. The location of the marker will also help determine the attitude of nonplayer characters (see the Diplomacy skill, page 46 of Mutants & Masterminds). If the marker is in Orwell's favor, the attitude of nonplayer characters



shifts one or two ranks towards Hostile. If the marker is on the characters' side, Orwell will suffer the same one or two rank shifts. (If the marker is in your favor, it doesn't shift nonplayer characters more towards Helpful, however.) Any movement on the chart should be reflected by news reports, derision by radio shock jocks, and countless internet blog entries, as well as comments from folks on the street. Once a publicity battle with Orwell is joined, everyone will hear about it sooner or later!

When the marker has moved to one end of the chart or the other, it takes one final success to push it over the edge. If the characters have moved the chart to Near Victory, it's a good time to send them on one last end-run into the heart of Orwell, where they'll be able to gather enough evidence to close the doors on them forever. If the chart moves to Near Defeat, and Orwell manages one final victory, the characters will have had their reputations ruined. It's even possible that other superheroes (and possibly even supervillains!) will consider them to be the bad guys and come after them. While this doesn't mean that the characters' careers are over, they'll find working in their existing town next to impossible. Felons they bust will never see the inside of a prison, for instance, as their cases are thrown out. At this point the players can still try to come back: three consecutive victories will put them back on the chart, where they can scrabble their way back to victory. They could assume new superhero identities and try again, with the chart resetting to 0. Or they could move to a new town and continue in their existing identities; if they come up against Orwell again, however, the chart will be set one click in OI's favor.

## UNEXPECTED CONSEQUENCES

At some point, the characters may well launch what is, for all intents and purposes, a successful, final attack on Orwell Industries. Such an attack would have to include a number of components to truly be considered successful, of course. Primarily, it would have to provide conclusive proof of OI's criminal activities, both foreign and domestic, resulting in the tumultuous decline of their stock into bankruptcy. At the same time, it would have to reveal as many subsidiaries as possible, before they had an opportunity to sever their connections with the company. And it would have to directly implicate as many members of the management team as possible.

Given sufficient warning, OI can be divided into dozens, even hundreds, of smaller organizations. While these mini-corps would lack the sheer scope and power of their parent company, they could still crop up later to cause trouble for the characters. Any lab facilities left standing will continue to function with most of their staff intact for a time, though they might be moved to a new location and will need to seek a new source of funding. Any number of supervillains with sufficient resources would likely be willing to pay handsomely for some of this research. Otherwise, the staff might need to find money on their own through various - most likely nefarious - means.

### WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Some characters may find it easier than others to "retire" their old superhero identity in favor of a new one. Exactly how difficult it is depends largely on your particular campaign. In a world teeming with metahumans, almost any super should be able to do so with a little planning. Certain character types lend themselves to this more easily than others. Battlesuit-wearing characters can swap out their armor for one with a different color scheme and a few different weapons, for instance, while those with more unusual or distinctive powers may find it difficult or even impossible to take on a new identity. The particulars are left up to you, the GM, to decide.

## THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY: AN ORWELL CAMPAIGN

This section demonstrates one possible framework for an Orwell-centered campaign in a series of adventure seeds. This short campaign is comprised of six chapters, but can easily be extended by including some of the adventure ideas scattered throughout Orwell Industries. When combined, they should give you ample fuel to use Orwell as major threat in your game!

### Part 1: Safety First

This adventure introduces Orwell to the characters, if they haven't encountered the company already. OI opens its corporate headquarters in the characters' hometown. They immediately set to work, starting a smear campaign against the city's superhero population and influencing the police, DA's office, and the like to join them in their cause. And to keep the population feeling safe, they send out Code Black security teams and Alpha Mark 1 troops to scour the streets for crime. While the heroes are on a routine bust, the Orwell troops intervene, helping them to capture the bad guys and then receiving orders to attack the PCs! An investigation leads to Benjamin Harper, CEO of Orwell Defense Initiative, who is arrested for ordering the hit, but he's just a patsy for the Old Man.

### Part 2: Grand Opening

OI opens a major manufacturing plant in the city's industrial district after a half dozen other companies have closed shop there. The plant promises to create thousands of new jobs for those recently unemployed, and Orwell is being hailed as saviors of the working class. A huge gala ball is set to be held within the plant itself. If the characters' secret identities are appropriate, they could be invited to the ball; otherwise, they'll be called in when the party is attacked by supervillains - Snowblind, or another appropriate group of your own - who are threatening to blow it up. The heroes will have to rescue the captured partygoers and stop the bad guys. Then they must help everyone escape the plant after it's surrounded by Orwell security forces that are ready to shoot anyone - including the civilian partiers! - who step outside.

### Part 3: Street Fighting Men

Seemingly overnight, the street gangs of the city have been armed with heavy blasters, and they're wasting no time in putting them to use. Within a few hours, the streets are jammed with civilians attempting to flee, while roving gangs of punks barricade roads, start fires, and shoot anything that moves. As if that weren't enough, the National Guard is called in by the governor but can't reach the worst affected areas: between the blocked roads, fires, and being shot at, they're trapped on the outskirts. It just gets worse for the heroes when the Orwell security forces, already in the city, are deputized to help the police bring order. A hastily-painted Orwell truck loaded with guns reveals the source of the weapons, and once the gang violence is stopped and a few waves of Orwell hit squads are fended off, the characters can use it to go after OI. Unfortunately, the Old Man has already fled the country!

### Part 4: Down the Rabbit Hole

The chase is on! Using documents obtained in the Orwell bust, the characters learn that OI has a number of secret labs hidden around the world, and that G.T. was scheduled to inspect them this month. There's no record of which labs he was set to inspect, but if the characters can rattle his cage by attacking them, they can scare him out into the open. The characters hit the labs - choose a few of your favorites from Chapter 4 - and eventually hit paydirt when one of the lab techs tells them that G.T. left a few hours ago for the Rabbit Hole, a location the characters might have seen referenced in the Orwell documents but whose location has been unknown to them until now. An all-out assault on the Hole leads them to the Magic Mirror, where they'll have to face Dr. Zeroster and a small army of Alphas. In the battle, Zero flees to the Mirror chamber, when a stray blast or punch shatters part of the machinery. In a flash, the Mirror blows open, sucking the characters in and catapulting them into the future!

## Part 5: Through the Looking Glass

Although the trip through the Mirror has rendered the characters immune to the effects of many of Thomas Orwell's powers (at least for the time being; see below), they're not immune to their own. They're attacked by more experienced - and completely insane - future versions of themselves! Fortunately, they also meet the Resistance: a group of non-powered superheroes and ex-supervillains, all immune to Tommy's madness, who've banded together to try and stop him. They see the characters, who are also immune, as the perfect agents to help them kill Thomas Orwell. After battling through a legion of insane ex-heroes and villains, the characters finally make it to Thomas, who proves a LOT harder to hurt than the Resistance ever imagined. While Thomas seems completely insane initially, he has a few moments of clarity that should hopefully encourage the characters to try to talk him down from his rampage. Use of the Diplomacy skill to move his attitude from Hostile to Friendly will bring Thomas around long enough for the characters to have a conversation with him.

Unfortunately for them, as the fight progresses, their immunity to Thomas' power begins to wane. Initially, Thomas can't use his powers against the characters directly (though he can still use them on the surrounding environment and the like). The longer the fight continues, however, the more power he'll be able to bring to bear against them.

If the characters can talk Thomas down, he'll realize what's happened and try to send them back to their own time to stop what's happened, though he'll warn them that his aim might not quite be true. Should the characters beat Thomas, he'll get in one last shot, cutting the temporal tether that holds them in the future and sending them hurtling uncontrollably back into the past; he'll do the same if he beats them instead, though he'll gloat more when he does it!

**Future Thomas:** This is Thomas at the height of both his power and his insanity. Note that Thomas can likely be most easily run as a plot device character. Those who prefer a more detailed approach can use this version instead.

Thomas' Confuse power works out to a 10 mile radius and, as far as can be determined, its effects are permanent. Those affected by it seem to have some sense of who and who has not been subjected to it, and will attack on sight anyone who has not. The characters, however, are immune to this effect. As part of his Time Control, Thomas has the Summon power, which he'll use to call forth a single, powerful opponent of the Characters, drawing them from the past.

Thomas' powers do not work at full strength against the characters initially, though he can still use them against the environment and other characters normally. For example, he might Disintegrate the support structures of a building, dropping it on a character.

For the first few rounds, Thomas' offensive powers don't function at all against the Characters. For the rest of the fight, whenever Thomas rolls a 1-3 on his Wild Die, regardless of skill die, the offensive power is ineffectual.

Because of his insanity, Thomas' behavior is unpredictable at best. He could, for example, teleport away to the other side of the planet and then return moments later having completely forgotten what had happened.

### DOPPLEGANGERS

If you're using Through a Glass Darkly and decide to pit the characters against future versions of themselves, here are a few guidelines. The easiest way to make them more powerful is to simply increase their attributes, bump up their attack and defense rolls, and increase the rank of a few of their powers. If you have more time, you can do a more thorough "leveling up", but if not this should be sufficient to fake it.

If you have a large group of players, kill off a couple of them, or make them members of the Resistance if that's an option (see Fighting Back). Removing one or more members should make for a fairer fight and keep the players from being overwhelmed.

If you've ever thought of a cool way for your players to use their powers that they haven't yet in the course of their adventures, now is your chance to show it to them.

Although the doppelgangers are more powerful than the characters, they're also nuts, so they don't work well together; by working together and using Combined Attacks and the like the players should be able to get the upper hand.

## FIGHTING BACK

The Resistance should be made up of characters who are immune to Thomas' Confuse aura, of course, but have some fun while you're populating it. If any of the characters in your game world – characters or nonplayer characters – have kid sidekicks, their grown-up versions make for good Resistance members.

Villains the characters have fought in the present also work well in the Resistance. A long time, bitter foe of the characters is a good choice for the Resistance leader; they might have a change of heart, becoming one of the good guys, or they might be fighting on the right side for the wrong reasons. ("Once this is over, I'm going to own this town!").

## Thomas Orwell



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

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Notice d10, Shooting d10

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

**Hindrances:** Bloodthirsty (Major); Clueless; Psychotic (Major)

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Super Powers), Level Headed, Improved Level Headed

**Gear:** None

### Super Powers:

- Attack, Melee: 4d6 (Phase Touch)
- Attack, Ranged: 3d6; Area Effect 1, Elemental Trick: Cold, Knockback (Time Bubble)
- Awareness: Danger Sense (Precognition)
- Decay 5: Rapid Decay (Aging Touch)
- Extra Action 2: Repeat Actions
- Fearless (Insane)
- Force Control 6: Bind, Flight, Force Field (Time Control)
- Teleport: More Range; Rapid Teleport

## Part 6: Big Brother

When the characters reappear, they're still 5 years into their own future, and Orwell Industries is everywhere. They've privatized the armed forces and local police. They've gained a monopoly on dozens of industries, having any laws which stood in their way struck down in the process. They own the media. And G.T. Orwell is now President for Life. The Characters will have to make their way through this dystopia back to the Rabbit Hole. Though the Hole has been abandoned and the Mirror moved, a trail of evidence leads them to its new location in the Rocky Mountain Data Center. The Data Center is now also referred to as the Black House, as it's become President Orwell's second home! It's a tough battle to get in – this time against a small army of Orwell agents led by Doc Zero in his latest incarnation - but once they make it to the Cell, they can release Thomas. Fortunately for the players, this version of Thomas isn't quite so confused, and after a few rounds he comes to his senses. He pauses time just long enough to talk to the Characters and discover what's been happening, then transports them all back to the present, though he can't go himself for fear of what might happen if he meets himself in the past.

The players arrive in the present just as Thomas-Prime, the original, current Thomas, steps out of the smoking ruin of his prison. What happens next is up to you, but here are a few ideas:

- **Revenge Ending:** Thomas, in a fit of rage at what has been done to him, teleports his father to him and "ages" him to death, turning him to dust. Thomas then vanishes, either never to appear again or to become a recurring villain in your campaign.



- **Tragic Ending:** Thomas is both angry at his father and, with his ability to see possible future events, terribly afraid of what his powers are capable of. He teleports GT to him, then opens a teleportal into the sun, giving the characters just enough time to escape before he obliterates himself and his father.
- **"It Never Happened" Ending:** Thomas, seeing what's happened to himself, to his father, and everyone Orwell Industries has touched, vanishes. Seconds later, the characters find themselves standing in the open desert, with no trace of the Wonderland lab remaining. In fact, there is no trace of Orwell Industries at all! A little research reveals that GT was never in a lab accident, and never cracked the secrets to time travel. Instead, he got a patent for his improvements on the atomic clock and comfortably retired in Anaheim, California, surrounded by his loving family.
- **Temporal Avatar Ending:** Thomas is freed from the Magic Mirror before insanity can set in, and with a new appreciation of his abilities. He could even be revealed as some sort of cosmic temporal guardian or time elemental. Whatever his exact role, he sets about using his powers to try and right the wrongs created by his father's company. This version of Thomas can become an ally to the characters, assisting them in other time-traveling adventures. After seeing what havoc can be created by meddling with the timestream, though, he'll be extremely cautious about how he uses his abilities, preferring to maintain the natural course of events rather than interfere with them.

**Doc Zero "Zero the Hero":** This is Doc in his state-of-the-art armored battlesuit. It's big, shiny, and has a large number zero stenciled on the chest. Zero has been spending more and more time inside the suit, so his physical attributes have begun to atrophy as he grows more and more reliant upon it. If removed from it, he's revealed to be filthy, ungroomed, and covered in bedsores, and can barely move under his own power. At this point, he's only one more breakthrough away from attempting to upload his consciousness into the suit in order to leave his body behind altogether.

Zero has had little need to develop any real tactics with his suit, and usually relies on simple "fly and shoot" maneuvering. While the suit is remarkably strong, Zero lacks the confidence to go toe-to-toe with a real powerhouse.

## Armored Zero

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d12, Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Knowledge (Computers) d8, Fighting d8, Notice d10, Shooting d10

**Charisma:** -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 13(6)

**Hindrances:** Gimmick (The Suit)

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Super Powers)

**Gear:** None

### Super Powers:

- Armor 6: Heavy (Armored Suit)
- Attack, Melee: 4d6 (Enhanced Punch)
- Attack, Ranged: 5d6 (Mega Blaster)
- Awareness (Radar Augmented Vision)
- Deflection 5 (Armored Suit)
- Extra Action 2 (Combat Array)
- Flight 5 (Armored Suit)

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

**Skills:** Knowledge (Computers) d8, Fighting d10, Notice d10, Shooting d10

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

**Hindrances:** Code of Honor

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Super Powers), Level Headed, Improved Level Headed

**Gear:** None

**Super Powers:**

- Attack, Melee: 4d6 (Phase Touch)
- Attack, Ranged: 3d6; Area Effect 1, Elemental Trick: Cold, Knockback (Time Bubble)
- Awareness:      Danger      Sense (Precognition)
- Decay 5: Rapid Decay (Aging Touch)
- Extra Action 2: Repeat Actions
- Force Control 6: Bind, Flight, Force Field (Time Control)
- Super Sorcery 5: May Bolster Existing Powers (Time Manipulation)

## Thomas Orwell "Time Lord"



This is Thomas as he exists today, whether you choose to use him as an enemy or an ally. While he lacks the raw power of his future self, he more than makes up for it with his naturally high intelligence (a legacy of his father) and creativity. Thomas can mimic some of the abilities used by his future version via super sorcery, should push come to shove. If he does use them to send someone into the future or past, he'll usually (if you're portraying him as a hero) limit it to no more than a day or two, to minimize the damage they might do to the timestream.