

MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS

LOCKDOWN



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SOURCEBOOK

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SOURCEBOOK

A refitted VTOL Carnival Air-freighter lumbers through the air like an overfed bumblebee, sluggish and heavy on the noise. You sit onboard, waiting to land. Not since the Atlanta Boys Convoy of 1934, when the government loaded 52 hardened criminals into a train and shipped them out to “inaugurate” Alcatraz Island, has secrecy and security been this heavy. For Super-Con Air, however, this is business as usual. The Carnival is the workhorse of convict transports; she can normally carry 23 passengers along with 22 tons of cargo, but following the refit, she’s hefting two additional power plants and space for 10 powered felons... eight awake and two asleep.

Awake, you sit in reinforced cage called “The Egg,” because that’s what it looks like. The Egg suppresses active power fields and locks you down in sensory deprivation for the trip. It’s a blackout of your senses, designed to keep you off-balance when they finally transfer you out.

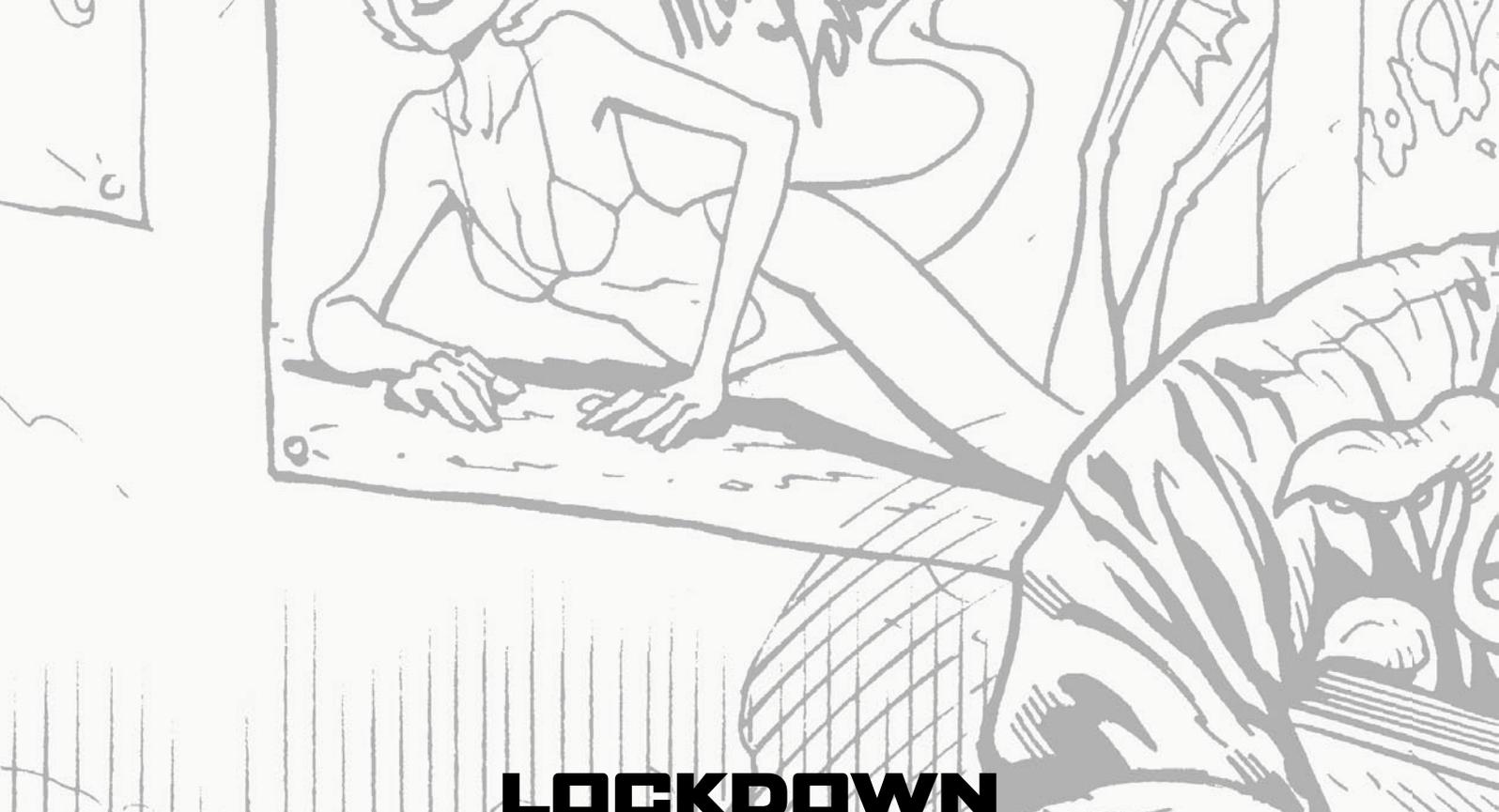


Asleep, the Department of Justice deems you too powerful to risk handling. You’re probably a Type IV or V, and that makes folks nervous enough to crank you out in a hotsleep coffin. You won’t wake up until you’re imbedded 200 meters deep inside “the Mountain.”

You feel like you’ve been in the dark for years before someone nudges your Egg. That’s just the VTOL setting down on the landing pad. A few minutes later, there’s motion again. They’ve disconnected your Egg from its suspension struts aboard the Carnival, and they’re wheeling you down the jet’s back ramp. In a second, they’ll connect new power umbilicals from the prison itself before disconnecting the VTOL’s cords. You won’t see the beautiful blue sky or green trees beyond the triple-stage perimeter security fences. You won’t see the six armed escorts from Special Operations Unit in full riot-gear leading you past forbidding guard towers and down a long tunnel to the vault door recessed into the side of the Mountain. You won’t know anything until you’re inside the vault door, heading deep into the earth.

That’s when someone activates your Egg’s one-way intercom.

“Prisoner III-C-21... welcome to Buckner Ridge Superhuman Penitentiary.
Enjoy your stay at Lockdown.”



LOCKDOWN

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Freedom City's Dr. Simian is not related to the Dr. Simian in the *Supersystem: Superhero Miniature Battles* game by West Wind Productions/Four Color Figures. Each doctor named himself in ignorance of the other – and only Fate knows what would happen if they somehow met.

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The following text is Open Gaming Content: all stat blocks, templates, and the new rules in the Appendix (excepting the power point costs in each entry).



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Lockdown is a prison sourcebook for *Mutants & Masterminds*, but it should be useful for any superhero campaign. This book doesn't contain any specific world information to pigeon-hole the game into the Freedom City or Meta-4 worlds, for example, though it does offer tips for hard-wiring the game into these settings. All the NPCs and non-rules information presented herein are essentially unrelated to any other product, making this the perfect modular setting with ready-to-play villains and fallen heroes, adventures and campaign-styles.

Lockdown is an incarceration facility for super-powered individuals. Unlike most penitentiaries already offered in various supers settings, which are federal in nature, Lockdown is a *private* enterprise. It isn't run by the federal or state government, but by a corporate venture instead.

Private prisons are the entrepreneurial answer to overcrowded jails. A corporation opens a private facility, then offers to house convicts from packed detention centers, charging various states anywhere from \$50 to \$60 a night per bed they fill. Essentially, private jails are convict hotels.

The privatization of prisons is an attractive lure to all parties involved. Big business taps into a market that's valued at more than the porn industry or major league baseball; small towns hosting these prisons benefit from the boost to the local economy and job market, while the government has more beds... usually to house their violent felons. Naturally, rather than present a dry dissertation on the prison system and its current inadequacies, *Lockdown* is all about the adventure, roleplaying potential and flavor available to superhero campaigns. In fact, it operates with several "caveats" that make the setting viable for months of play and interaction.

A NOTE ABOUT SKILLS

The skill bonuses for the characters in this book do not include any synergy bonuses they might receive for their skill ranks. The Gamemaster should apply these as appropriate. See **Skill Synergy** on page 29 of *Mutants & Masterminds* for details about synergy bonuses.

POTENTIAL WORRIES

While the potential for adventure in a setting like Lockdown is rich, there are obvious worries like "Where is it located?" or "How do I involve the characters?" or "Is the hidden plot necessary?"

Relax...

Lockdown is a sourcebook that minimizes your work in the process. You'll find everything you need for placing Lockdown in a convenient location as you'll see in the following section. How does the

prison operate? Well, flip through **Chapter One, Two, and Three**. Want new villains and personalities to insert into your campaign? Turn to **Chapter Four**. You'll have tons of hooks to involve super-heroes, as well as plenty of campaign suggestions in **Chapter Five**. What's happening in the town of Buckner Ridge? Read **Chapter Seven**.

Everything you need to run *Lockdown* right off the page is here. So, let's handle some of the basics to start you off.

HOW DO I IMPORT LOCKDOWN INTO MY CAMPAIGN?

Whether your campaign is just beginning or already in full swing, Lockdown is a new facility that can, literally, appear out of nowhere. Because it's a private enterprise, nobody has to know about the prison's construction until it's operational. No need for preamble or foreshadowing. Regardless if Lockdown has been a well-kept secret to prevent attempted rescue of incarcerated super-villains or it's only been open for the last few months, the prison itself should be relatively new (within the last year or so). Inmate alliances are just forming, and super-felons from across the nation are still being flown in.

Buckner Ridge should be a surprise. In fact, it works best if the characters accidentally stumble upon its existence thanks to an ally or mentor in the know. The sudden appearance of a fully operational private prison should intrigue and worry super-heroes. There's a sense of conspiracy in the air, and characters are right in assuming something's amiss.

WHERE IS BUCKNER RIDGE?

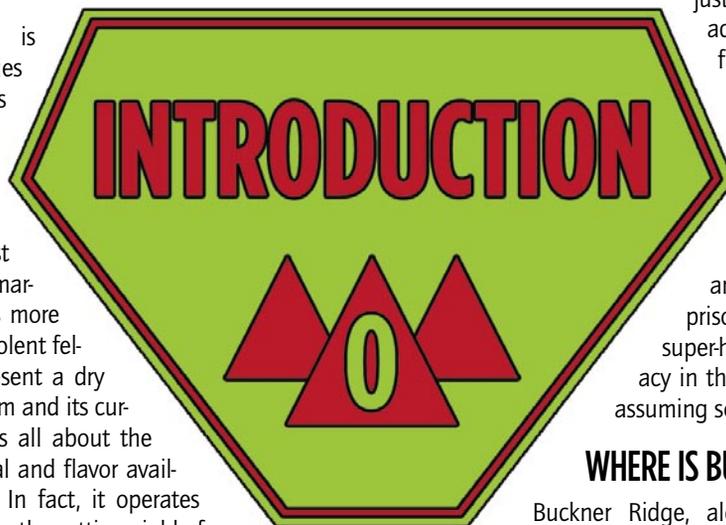
Buckner Ridge, along with its host community, is a fictitious setting in the mainland of the United States, and thus open for placement wherever suitable. The locations listed herein are all U.S.-based since the prison follows American laws. Suggested locales where to set the Mountain include the following places

APPALACHIAN MOUNTAINS

Rising west of the Atlantic Seaboard, the Appalachians run from Alabama, up into Canada. It includes subsidiary ranges as the Allegheny Mountains, Catskills, Blue Ridge Mountains and the Green Mountains. "Neighboring" cities include Atlanta, Washington D.C., Philadelphia, Boston, and New York to the east; to the west lay Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Buffalo. The Appalachians are best situated for campaigns set in the Eastern United States.

COASTAL RANGE

The Coastal Range rises up from the Pacific, and runs the length of the American seaboard from Canada down into Baja California. Straddling it on either side are San Diego, Los Angeles,





Sacramento, San Francisco, Portland, and Seattle. This is, perhaps, the best location for placing *Lockdown* for those West Coast-based campaigns, though the Sierra Nevadas just east of Fresno is equally viable for California/Nevada games.

ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Like a beautiful scar, the Rockies cross three international borders, from Alaska into Canada, back down into the U.S. proper, and into Mexico's Sierra Madre. Subsidiary ranges include New Mexico's Sangre de Cristo, Utah's Wasatch Mountains, and Idaho's Bitterroot Mountains. In the Rocky's shadow is Denver – Colorado, perhaps, being the single best setting for *Lockdown* given its mountain peaks and abundance of surrounding wilderness.

AND ALL THE OTHERS

If you're familiar with smaller, yet equally viable mountain-locations, use them if you choose. Campaigns in Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri, and Arkansas might consider the Ozark Mountains for Buckner Ridge. Those in Oregon, Idaho, and Washington State could use Salmon River Mountains or the Blue Mountains. Unfortunately, games situated in the plains states between the Appalachians and Rockies will have a tougher time locating local peaks high enough to call imposing; you may simply consider situating Buckner Ridge on the closest range or create a fictitious mountain.

HOW DO I USE THIS SOURCEBOOK?

Think of *Lockdown* as a well-padded frame around which you can build whatever you need. Provided is all the information neces-

sary to use this sourcebook on four different levels, from mining *Lockdown* for ideas to playing fully integrated prison campaigns. The four levels of use for this book are as follows:

STAYING HIGH AND DRY

At the very least, this sourcebook offers easily transplanted villains and a new villain organization (the Cartel) without ever having to use the prison setting. All the major persona write-ups in **Chapter Four**, for example, have lives outside the prison. **Chapter Six** on the Cartel also discusses the organization beyond their Americas Security Concerns front. Likewise, the prison's security technology is usable within different bases, providing Gamemasters with new toys to challenge the heroes.

TESTING THE WATERS

With this option, the characters are super-heroes who occasionally drift into *Lockdown*'s orbit. Something about the course of their duties brings them to Buckner Ridge, allowing them to participate in one-shot storylines. The characters may be escorting a dangerous prisoner to *Lockdown* or must testify at a parole hearing at the Mountain. More fleshed out examples are provided in **Chapter Five**. In this instance, the Gamemaster doesn't have to use the Cartel, or he may play the matter out slowly. **Testing the Waters** is also an excellent introduction to shift an existing campaign from the outside world into *Lockdown* itself.

DIPPING ONE FOOT IN

Gamemasters may try running a limited story-arc involving *Lockdown*, whether this involves the Cartel or not. In this case, the

characters are likely super-heroes who must interact with Buckner Ridge over the course of several adventures. The advantage of this story-arc type is the heroes are probably new to the prison system and life behind bars, allowing the learning experience to provide for interesting roleplaying opportunities. Regardless, such story-arcs within a campaign can suit heroes in the outside world who are involved with events at Buckner Ridge, or for characters serving time in the Mountain (in either case, this sourcebook provides for both options).

JUMPING IN WITH BOTH FEET

This final option allows Gamemasters to run entire campaigns behind bars. Reformed villains, undercover heroes, and even supers helping police the prison as powered Corrections Officers are all viable stories. While the Cartel may or may not factor as a story threat, the prison can survive well beyond the Cartel's destruction, should the Gamemaster wish to pursue that angle. Essentially, *Lockdown* is useful for as long as you need it to be.

CAMPAIGN STYLES

Chapter Five contains the specifics of the various campaign-types you can run. Here, however, is an overview of the styles of play Gamemasters may wish to pursue, whether their campaign starts here or *Lockdown* is a new arc in an existing game.

FALLEN HEROES

Did the heroes bite the bullet for the greater good to become felons, or are they victims of changing times and values? Maybe they're incarcerated vigilantes who walked that thin line between the light and the dark, and took vengeance too far. Regardless, the characters are now behind bars, mingling with hardened criminals, some of whom the heroes put in jail themselves. This type of campaign presumes the characters are outsiders among outsiders. Daily life in prison becomes a cat-and-mouse game of survival, but in becoming "villains" themselves, the fallen heroes may discover how many of their peers are villains by circumstance or how many villains by choice.

POWERED COS

A super-incarceration facility needs Correctional Officers able to handle dangerous super-felons. That's where the Special Operations Unit (SOU) and the characters come into play. The SOU is always looking for powered guardians to help police *Lockdown*, and they pay well. Whether the characters are full-time employees of the Mountain or contracted occasionally under special circumstances (allowing them to play super-heroes in the outside world), this campaign style provides for both straight-out slug-fests or for conspiracy-oriented games involving the Cartel.

REDEEMED VILLAINS

Like a thunderbolt from the heavens, the former villains have seen the error of their ways. The staple of many a comic book, the redeemed villain arc deals with former scoundrels turned do-gooder. In this style of game, the characters are serving time and honestly repentant for their actions. Once in the real world, they plan to help others and assume the mantle of champions... if the

world is ready to forgive them, and *if* they survive their last months in *Lockdown*. This campaign style allows characters to commute their sentence and prove their willingness to change by revealing the Cartel's hand in Buckner Ridge.

UNDERCOVER

Undercover games allow the characters to infiltrate the prison using any of the other campaign-styles listed here. In effect, it's a unique opportunity to run two genres in a game, creating more involved roleplaying possibilities like setting the genres at cross-purposes or playing the game on multiple levels. Regardless of why the characters entered the prison undercover (of which there are several possibilities listed in **Chapter Five**), the nature of their deception provides constant tension.

UNWILLING HEROES

So, the characters-as-villains are facing years, if not life, in prison... until the government or Cartel offers them work as a black ops team. If the characters operate as a squad to pursue these often suicidal missions, they can earn early parole or commute their sentences. In this game, the characters are most certainly anti-heroes, working in the darker spectrums of society's grayest scales. There is no good in their actions; there's only the self-serving desire for freedom. By day, the characters fulfill their jail time, but by night, they earn limited freedom by undertaking their overseer's missions.

SUPERHERO GENRES

Call the campaign what you will, but few Gamemasters ever run their worlds as provided, straight from the page. Customization gives each game its flavor, and the characters' actions further slant the campaign in its own unique direction. So, what kind of prison is *Lockdown*? That depends on the flavor of the world itself. Is it filled with Silver Age optimism or the dark and gritty trends of the 80s and 90s? If so, how does either change the prison?

You'll notice there is no listing for "contemporary" heroes, if only because contemporary isn't a genre as much as a period. The spirit of contemporary games, however, runs a wide gamut of styles, from the gritty to episodic Saturday morning costume capers.

DARK HEROES

In these games, the night streets shine with an oily coat of rain. The texture is gritty and the flickering streetlights are set to noir. In this environment, where street-level heroes fight to staunch the flood of urban decay, *Lockdown* is a perfect mirror to society's woes. The Gamemaster can play the Mountain to its fullest effect, touching upon the more notorious aspects of incarceration, be it the overcrowding, the gangs, the drugs, or prison-rape. Here, these elements are more than everyday occurrences... they are ways of life and, in some cases, a necessity of desperate survival.

GOLDEN AGE HEROES

Frankly, this ranks as the worst choice for a *Lockdown* campaign, since prisons were rarely, if ever, subject matter for Golden Age comics. Villains went to jail, certainly, but we almost never saw the

THE SKINNY ON LOCKDOWN: GAMEMASTER EYES ONLY

If you're playing in someone's campaign, do yourself a favor and skip this part. Seriously. It's more fun if you don't know....

Known officially as the Buckner Ridge Superhuman Penitentiary, Lockdown is a private prison located inside a mountain (hence, its second epithet "the Mountain"). Buckner Ridge is also the name of the local town, a once prosperous community that fell on hard times after they tapped the local mines dry. When they discovered that a corporation called Americas Security Concerns (ASC) was looking to build a penitentiary, Buckner Ridge petitioned and won the bid to place the facility in their backyard.

Believe it or not, that was good news as far as the townsfolk were concerned. Newly built penitentiaries saved many a community from bankruptcy and destitution across North America, and the town of Buckner Ridge believed they'd tapped a financial and employment gold mine. They had no idea that Lockdown was exactly that, an incarceration facility for superhumans, and they had no inkling that the ASC was, in fact, a front for a new criminal organization calling itself the Cartel.

The Cartel is using Lockdown to secretly recruit and farm out the services of choice super-villains. As far as 90% of the prison is concerned, Lockdown is a penitentiary, but to the remaining 10% of inmates and staff in the know, Lockdown is, in fact, a cleverly disguised super-villain's base, with an entire town currently being held hostage... whether they realize it or not.

villain *in* jail. More so, the leased-convict system, which allowed for the running of private prisons and outsourcing of convicts as cheap labor, was at its lowest from its height in the 19th and early 20th Centuries. If the Gamemaster, however, wishes to run Buckner Ridge as both a federal institution and as a realistic period piece set between 1938 and 1954, during the Golden Age of comics, then Lockdown might excel with gangster-related storylines and characters from WWI and WWII. At this point in history, Alcatraz Island has recently become a federal prison (opened in 1934) and Sing Sing is already decades deep in infamy. In this period, James V. Bennett (director of the U.S. Bureau of Prisons from 1937 to 1964) is improving the federal prison system, doing

away with the corruption and horrible conditions, but like many poisonous blooms, the roots that made jails of this era infamous run deep.

HORROR HEROES

Lockdown already contains a kernel of the supernatural with prisoner Percy-Herbert Blackcroft (see page 61), but the rest of the setting is easily portable into the horror venue. In this setting you may have to downscale some of the powered-felons or turn them into mystical threats, but the themes and obstacles can remain the same, with the focus shifting toward convicts like Percy-Herbert Blackcroft rather than groups like the Cartel. Still, the atmospheric allure of dark prison corridors, forgotten torture chambers and hidden brick-wall basements is undeniable. We do recommend, in this case, that Buckner Ridge is older than suggested, having been built over the remains of an existing prison from the 19th Century – to heighten the ambiance. This way, the creep of rot and decay is ever-present, from rust on the prison bars to windows covered in grime. In this campaign-style, the daily struggle to survive gang-skirmishes, drugs, and sexual predators is a holiday compared to the horrors slithering past the cells at night or the mysterious fungus growing on anemic-looking prisoners.

SILVER AGE HEROES

Silver Age can entail the heroic values espoused in comic books as well as a particular period of comics history. Campaigns of this style slowly deal with growing social concerns, though the mood remains optimistic and the heroes unrepentantly valiant. They are champions because they never let corruption and cynicism affect them, or because they rose above their private and tragic faults, bettering humankind through a need to better themselves. *Lockdown* fits well into this milieu, allowing Gamemasters to fine tune their games from one story arc to the next. In this case, prison issues like the growing HIV pandemic are punctuation to storylines, and not simply more throwaway horror. Silver Age is never about being blind to the tough issues, but neither are the tough issues a constant pall over people's lives. Such stories are intermittent, balanced out with hope and themes of peace and unity.



John Billington sailed to Plymouth Rock in 1620 aboard the *Mayflower*, but he also committed America's first murder of one European by another, for which the Pilgrims executed him. Since that time, crime and punishment have been forefront concerns in the United States, especially for a society ranked as "leader of the free world."

The following chapter deals with the penal system as a whole, from its tribulations in North America to the cultural underground it shelters in society's shadow; it also deals with the history of Buckner Ridge, introducing the Cartel as a new enemy organization.

This chapter provides the real world background to prisons as a whole. By no means complete, it does offer enough of the basics to breath life into the setting. It also provides flavor, and like any seasoning, varies with each cook. So, take what you will, drop what you dislike and adjust according to what you hope to accomplish.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PRISON SYSTEM

Society's been building prisons since the first "just" civilization discovered the need to incarcerate its criminals, whether to isolate them from people or detain them until authorities could mete out some form of corporal punishment. Prisons and punishment were meant to frighten the average citizen into complying with existing laws, providing a hellish existence to those pursuing a life of crime.

It has succeeded and failed, in that order.

Over time, prisons have only changed in relation to society's views of what jail-time should impart on the inmate. It's traveled the gamut from strict punishment to rehabilitation and back again, often in as little time as a decade.

Why the dynamic flux? Because there is no magic formula to rehabilitating prisoners, and society vacillates between forgiveness and vengeance in its broad strokes. Some reformists offer prisoners model-living conditions, conditions not accessible as basic human rights to many Americans living in abject poverty; some traditionalists, however, swing the other way, locking inmates in holes so deep away from human contact that the process eventually drives them into irredeemable insanity. Unfortunately, the relentless struggle for the proper solution provides the motivating force for change in the way society builds and runs prisons.

CENTURIES OF YORE

There's a thin line between incarceration and slavery, and some pundits believe prisons are, in fact, society's new plantations. Sadly, it's difficult to discount these claims unless one willingly ignores history. In ancient Egypt, for example, pharaohs held

their rivals in prisons and used prisoners as slaves, while in the 18th through 21st Centuries, the various lease-convict programs enjoyed widespread patronage. Regardless, jails have been our oldest structures, perhaps third to temples and brothels. In Athens, the prisons of the Hellenistic era were called the *desmoterion* or "the place of chains." From Imperial Rome, we have the prison known as the *carcer*, the root of the word *incarcerate*.

Prisons of these eras were never for extended stays; they were temporary holding places until the prisoner received their punishment. In Rome, the *carcer* contained a subterranean chamber called the *Tillianum* where prisoners were lowered to be strangled by the guards. Roman justice was one of torture and, often, execution: burning for arsonists, clubbing for acts of defamation, hanging for crop theft, decapitation for any number of serious offenses, etc.

The term *carcer* lingered into the Middle Ages, where the Catholic Church decreed that each monastery contain one. This slowly altered the purpose of prisons from mere transit points between crime and punishment, to the jail term itself becoming the punishment itself. The Catholic Church was the first to imprison people with the hope of altering the inmate's behavior for the better.

Prisons slowly adopted operating models that are nominally familiar to contemporary society; in 12th century England, Henry II sold the right to operate prisons to individuals, allowing them to pocket the difference between maintaining the prison and what monies they received for housing inmates.

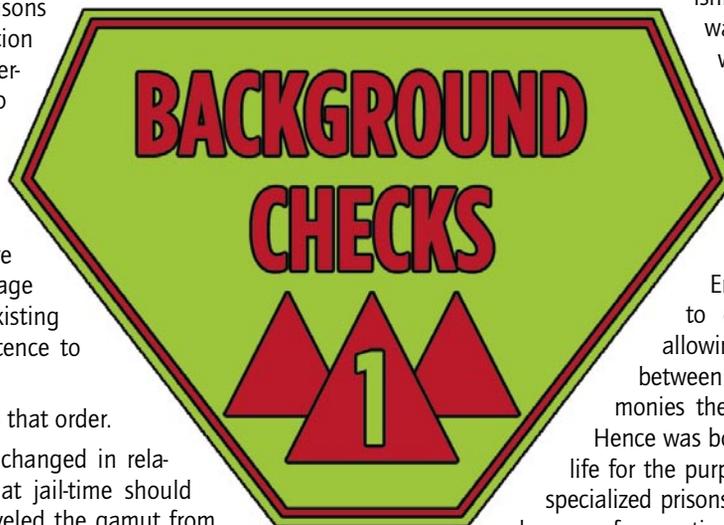
Hence was born the great inequities of prison-life for the purpose of profit. England also built specialized prisons after expanding its penal code: houses of correction for reformation; bridewells to help criminals become industrious citizens; and gaols for those awaiting trial. When these failed, however, England turned to exile under the Transportation Act of 1718.

Britain sent its prisoners to the Americas, exiling 50,000 convicts to be auctioned as slaves.

THE AMERICAS

While Britain leaned heavily on the death penalty to stem criminal activity, the nascent nation of America followed the Quaker model. Fewer crimes, including robbery, merited the death penalty, and by 1820, the various states were nearly unanimous in limiting executions to first degree murder or other serious transgressions.

The Quaker model inspired Eastern State Penitentiary, or Cherry Hill. Opened in 1829 by Pennsylvania's Quakers, Eastern State relied on solitary confinement rather than physical punishment to alter a prisoner's behavior. The Quakers believed reformation



was a matter of the soul, and complete isolation provided inmates the opportunity to read the bible and meditate on their transgressions. Penitent became the root for penitentiary.

That's not to say this era's prisons were by any means enlightened. The Auburn system (named after the Auburn, New York facility) was born in the 1820s. It included prisoners earning their keep through forced labor, and the ever-present threat of floggings and thumbscrew torture. During this era, Sing Sing introduced the stripped prison uniforms and demanded absolute silence among prisoners, which they enforced with such mottos as "whip 'em till they drop." Unfortunately, the Quaker model didn't prove much better. Over 300 prisons across the Western hemisphere copied the Pennsylvania System even though excising human contact drove many inmates insane. By 1860, the penitentiary as a model failed, though the word joined our vernacular.

In 1870, the National Prison Association (later called the American Prisons Association), held its first meeting and drafted its Declaration of Principles. Considered a humanitarian doctrine in its proposed sentencing and treatment of prisoners, the Declaration of Principles was well-meaning and far ahead of its time. Meanwhile, the prison system saw the emergence of the so-called reformatories. Whereas the penitentiary focused on the soul, the newly emerged reformatory treated behavior. The Elmira Reformatory, built in 1876, was first to practice this model under the able helm of Zebulon Brockway. Reformatories further introduced the concepts of "flexible" prison terms and parole. By treating, rather than punishing, convicts, Elmira rewarded good behavior with shorter sentences and parole to encourage inmates to make the right choices. Unfortunately, the prison enforced an ethic of good behavior on those failing to meet their criteria by chaining them in dungeons with bread and water for sustenance, or beating them with rubber hoses. Eventually, the exaggerated success rate of reformatories proved inmates were simply better at operating within the strictures of a system than actually being reformed. By the 1920s, the reformatory movement faded away, leaving behind the principles of flexible jail time and parole (adopted by every state by 1944).

THE 20TH CENTURY

Oddly enough, reformation failed and gave way to its predecessor. Where the Pennsylvania System focused on the soul, however, scientists believed the mind was the key to rehabilitation. Unfortunately, approaches to the problem relied on scientific misconceptions. Many people, for example, believed criminal behavior was the result of syphilis and insanity a symptom of excessive masturbation. The resulting approach to criminal reformation, coined "the medical model," included such varied practices as plastic surgery to correct a prisoner's physical deformities and sterilization to halt self-gratification.

While the "treat the body and you heal the mind" approach failed, emerging trends focused exclusively on the brain. Prisons incorporated psychiatrists and psychologists into the prison staff, and various mental health studies and approaches turned the 1950s into the Era of Treatment. The American Prison Association

changed its name to the American Correctional Association (ACA) in 1954, and encouraged prisons to treat its inmates as patients suffering from disease. California's San Quentin and Chino became frontrunners in the marathon to treat inmates, launching programs like group therapy and bibliotherapy. The latter program espoused reformation through literacy, but empowered prisoners to speak out against the injustices they endured. Throughout the 1960s, the number of prisoners challenging their own convictions jumped tremendously. The prisons fought these advancements by eliminating specific legal books from libraries and by introducing television, society's new opiate. With television readily accessible for the first time, prison literacy dropped once again.

Regardless, reformations continued through the 60's and 70's because the prison situation was becoming untenable. Three waves of prison riots swept the 20th Century, the worst being 1968-73 – Soledad, Tombs, and Holmesburg Prisons in 1970, and San Quentin and Attica in 1971. One pivotal change to prisons, however, came about in 1964. The Black Muslims were already a force of reckoning in 1962, and by 1964, won the landmark case of *Cooper v. Pate*, where the Black Muslims of Stateville Correctional Center outside Chicago won the right to celebrate their faith openly as Christians did. This watershed decision reduced a warden's previously undisputed authority in running his prison, making him answerable to the courts. By 1970, inmates flooded the federal courts with over two-thousand suits concerning the unconstitutional conditions of their incarceration, prompting the federal government to launch sweeping reforms.

Unfortunately, not all reforms were in the inmates' favor. After the Attica riots, the public tired of the concessions being offered to convicts, and truly believed (as one popular study claimed) that "nothing works" in criminal reformation. It marked the beginning of a trend where prisons no longer cared for rehabilitation, and instead, focused on keeping prisoners isolated from the hard-working tax payers. In 1976, California signed new laws discarding parole, followed closely by other states. Whereas jail sentences were once fluid and based on the presiding judge's discretion, more states enacted mandatory-sentencing laws. In a truly Orwellian moment, Congress passed the Sentencing Reform Act of 1984, eliminating parole for all federal crimes committed after November 1, 1987 and forcing criminals to serve a minimum 85% of their sentence.

PRIVATIZATION OF PRISONS

The privatization of prisons would never have gained such popularity had the inmate population not soared to dizzying heights, creating overcrowding in jails nationwide. To find the cause, one need only realize that the federal prison population swelled from 44,000 in 1987 to 140,000 by 2000 – in 1983, prisons throughout the United States (federal, state, and municipal) already incarcerated 419,000 inmates. The reason for this phenomenal increase is that in addition to longer, harsher sentences, 59% of these inmates were targeted by the U.S.'s war on drugs. The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 and the Anti-Drug Abuse Amendments Act of 1988 are perhaps the greatest reason why prisons became

too overburdened to handle the influx of convicts.

Private prisons operate off one simple premise; they claim it is cheaper to house inmates in their facility than it is for the government to run facilities themselves. The concept of private prisons was hardly new. After the Civil War, southern states leased convicts to railroad companies and coal mines to fill their beleaguered coffers. Following the Hospital Corporation of America's success in privatizing hospitals, two West Point graduates by the names of Beasley and Crants imported the private hospital model to prisons, creating the Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) in 1983 and opening the first private state prison in Marion County, Kentucky in 1986.

The CCA's timing couldn't have been more auspicious. In 1984, state prisons released 17,000 inmates because of overcrowding. The CCA stepped in to fill that gap; rather than building the prisons themselves, however, they looked to small towns so desperate for revenue and jobs that they would build the prisons and allow the CCA to manage the facility. The town thus owned the prison while the CCA ran the operations and hired locals as guards. Both parties profited from the venture. Wardens became millionaires and the CCA's shares split four for one and soared 1000%. Suddenly, other companies scrambled to capitalize on this new-found wealth. Corporations like Wackenhut Corrections Corporation and Corrections Corporation of America appeared; they donated to election campaigns to improve their favor and launched all manner of schemes to widen the gap between budget and profitability. The CCA, for example, branched out into prison transport to tap into the estimated \$45 million spent by state departments to transport criminals to hearings, hospitals, etc. Wackenhut opened its own psychiatric hospital in Florida to handle the growing elderly inmate population suffering from mental disorders like Alzheimers. Small towns leapt aboard the prison salvation bandwagon, growing rich off an inmate economy and offering their lands for a single dollar to open one, two, and even three prisons.

Unfortunately, as history crosses that line from yesterday to now, the prison bubble is about to burst. Scandals rocked several penitentiaries recently, mainly because it's a bad idea to form an economy on keeping people incarcerated and not rehabilitating them for life after release; the glut in the prison population is also slowing and even dropping in various states. The CCA realized this painful lesson when their new \$106 million facility in the Mojave was without prisoners. CCA stocks dropped from \$45 in 1997, to \$4.50 in 1999 and \$.19 in 2000.

The silver lining in this recent storm of events, however, is that while state prisons enjoy a reduction in their populations, the same isn't true on the federal level. The government's recent spate of laws to combat illegal-immigrants and drug violators is seeing a surfeit of prisoners. So much so that the U.S. Bureau of Prisons stepped in to save the CCA and offered a guarantee of 95% occupancy for their Mojave facility.

There's talk that the overcrowded federal facilities may outsource their inmates to private prisons more steadily. While this mystifies some, the fact is private prisons allow the federal government to house more convicts without spending the millions necessary to build new facilities. And should the various immigration or drug

laws slacken, and the prison population fall, then the federal government can always walk away from private prisons with little investment lost in the process.

Welcome to Lockdown... a low-risk federal investment.

FINAL CAVEAT

Some folks may wonder why the federal government allows a private corporation to open their own superhuman prison. Well, this works in several ways in addition to the explanation offered in the previous section. First and foremost, private prison corporations are huge financial supporters for many election campaigns. The Cartel's dummy front operating Lockdown — the Americas Security Concerns (ASC) — contributed large sums to ensure the election of sympathetic politicians.

Second, despite the Cartel's involvement in Lockdown, the prison is well-run, well-maintained and as secure as any federal institution. It continues to pass repeated inspections by the Federal Bureau of Prisons, which makes convincing the authorities of Lockdown's illegal activities all the more difficult.

Third, the federal government simply doesn't want to handle some prisoners. The risks are too great, so they'll gladly transfer problem inmates to a second, seemingly competent, party. This way, their paperwork is clean and their record spotless because the major super-villains are actually elsewhere.

Finally, the government sees Lockdown as a safety valve. Prison riots or breakouts in any facility are costly and dangerous, but coupled with superpowers the risks escalate to the levels of natural disasters. Private prisons like Lockdown are actually backup institutions in case a federal super-penitentiary goes "off-line."

REAL PRISON VS. CAMPAIGN PRISON

It's easy to get caught up in the details of prison, trying to recreate penitentiary life in all its fine and gory facets. Remember, however, the campaign is for the players to enjoy themselves, not to be overshadowed by the setting. That said, it's important to understand the schism that sets this book apart from a realistic portrayal of prison life.

STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL AND DIGNITY

Old axioms like "prisons build better criminals" are true because penitentiaries distill inmates down to their most primal and savage natures... the need to survive. One major problem in prisons like Buckner Ridge is external alienation. Most private institutions are built in rural towns, which offer prisons huge rebates, an employee pool and seclusion in exchange for a lucrative prison contract. Suddenly, convicts, many of whom are from the inner cities, find themselves outside their cities and states, where their families can't visit because of finances. Worse yet, the prison guards are mostly locals with little experience in dealing with visible minorities and city folk (and vice versa). A final insult is the growing popularity of so-called Exile Laws, where states send prisoners elsewhere to deliberately seclude them from their families.

Gamemasters may forego the nastier elements of daily survival. This includes the eat-or-be-eaten attitudes within institutions, the

SLANG

Ad Seg: Short for “administrative segregation,” ad seg is the politically palatable way of describing isolation or placing a prisoner “in the hole.”

Correctional Officer (COs): The preferred term to describe prison guards — preferred by the guards themselves.

Deep-Six: Hotsleep or cryogenic freezing. Someone who is *deep-sixed* is under a drug-induced coma, or frozen.

Fish: New convict.

Fish-Cop: A brutal correctional officer who hurts or beats prisoners.

Gen-Pop: General population or the mainstream prisoner segment.

Guard: COs dislike being called “guard” since they believe it demeans their overall role. Convicts use “guard” to describe a CO they feel needlessly harasses them; in this sense, some COs enjoy being called “guard” since it means someone who won’t fall for a prisoner’s tricks.

Hacks: Correctional Officers.

Inmates: While a publicly accepted term, prisoners hate “inmate” because it also applies to patients of a mental ward. COs use this term to insult their prisoners.

Leasing: When the Cartel loans out a prisoner to a third party for his skills. Mostly for illegal activities.

Lockdown: Used during emergencies (riots, escapes, etc.), lockdown keeps inmates in their cells, prohibiting them from contact or communication with one another.

Low-Profilers: Villains with little media exposure or public prominence. The Cartel’s choice agents for leasing.

Snitch: Prisoners who inform on their peers.

Shackled: Prisoners whose powers are locked down through various security means (power-suppression, neuralgic drugs, etc.). **Unshackled,** conversely, means a prisoner is free and able to use powers.

Shunting: Trapping portions of the facility inside the mountain; eliminating key corridors by rendering them out of dimensional synch with the remaining facility.

Super-Cops: In mainstream prison parlance, a Super-Cop is a correctional officer, but in Lockdown, a Super-Cop is a member of the Special Operations Unit.

Trustees: Inmates working for the Cartel. Term is only used by select staff and convicts in the know. The majority of the prison population remains ignorant of this expression.

Weak Sisters: How the Special Operations Unit refers to regular COs.

ones preying on new convicts whether sexually or financially. You may ignore the racial strife stratifying the prison population and heightening tensions between prisoners and guards. You may forego the fact that tougher drug sentencing brings in a high ratio of low-income African-Americans and Hispanics to Caucasians.

IT’S ABOUT THE BENJAMINS

Incarcerating felons these days is about making money. Phone companies offer prisons up to 50% back on each dollar made through inmate phone calls. The reason is the prison chooses the long distance carrier for the entire facility; the individual doesn’t get a choice, and is thus a captive client. AT&T estimates prisoners, isolated from friends and family, make \$1 billion in phone calls every year.

Small towns recognize the opportunity, and often reap the financial rewards of hosting a penitentiary, making money off convicts. One study claims that for every \$1 million spent in interning repeat offenders, the state prevents 61 serious crimes; conversely, every \$1 million spent on graduation incentives for high school programs prevents 258 serious crimes. And of the money these rural prisons make, none of it benefits the inner-city communities that desperately need the cash... the same communities from where the criminals hail.

Buckner Ridge is no different, despite the pedigree of its prisoners. Legitimately, the Cartel charges \$200 per bed per night to house state and federal inmates. They also earn money from major corporations that sell their products exclusively at the prison commissary, where convicts often spend \$40 a week for personal grooming products, health care merchandise and junk food. Don’t forget to factor in meta-felon transport aboard the Carnival, medical bills and even service charges for Lockdown’s geothermal generator, all of which the federal government pays.

The Cartel can also expect to make a tidy profit by marketing technological designs from their battlesuit and gadgeteer-style prisoners and selling the services of low-profilers.

DEATH ROW AND EXECUTIONS

A big question to consider is whether the campaign supports the death penalty. Given the actions pursued by über-powered despots can be construed by the U.S. as Acts of Terrorism, such villains are subject to the death penalty. That said, Gamemasters can discard this practice entirely or rule that Buckner Ridge uses an unusual model in its attempt to comply with the United Nations. Lockdown has enough private political support through bribes and blackmail that it’s currently received federal sanction to incarcerate several of Europe’s supervillains in lieu of adequate European facilities. The only way to convince the U.N. of the same, however, was to follow The International Covenant on Political and Civil Rights, the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and, lastly, the European Convention on Human Rights, the latter being a stand against the death-penalty. As a result, there is no death row in Buckner Ridge, nor a desire to carry out executions.

A secondary argument against the death penalty is certain superhumans are immune to the accepted five methods of execution (electric chair, firing squad, gas chamber, hanging and lethal injection). Devising specific execution methods for each villain can draw protests, demands for study and repeated stays of execution. There’s also a risk in executing a superhuman; what if the condemned gains new or improved powers *instead* of dying? Or what if death causes the powers of the condemned to flare up, explode, or otherwise inflict massive damage on the surrounding area?

GANGS

It’s unlikely enough super-villains will belong to one gang or another to make a difference in Lockdown. Still, it’s possible some street-level villains maintain ties to their old gangs, and

KOGUT LAWS AND JURY-RIGGING

Prisoners are a crafty lot, and this is truer of the criminal masterminds in Lockdown. The Kogut Laws are named after William Kogut, who supposedly escaped execution by committing suicide... with a deck of cards. While pretending to play solitaire, Kogut essentially spent months scrapping the red from the hearts and diamonds in his deck. The red contained cellulose and nitrate that, when mixed with a solvent, created pyroxylin, a heat-activated explosive. Kogut made a small bomb from the scraps, which he then placed on a small heater to serve as catalyst. The bomb killed him instantly, though there is still some dispute whether Kogut's death is an urban legend. In Lockdown, the Kogut Laws are internal guidelines preventing prisoners from owning a wide-array of potentially lethal materials including cleaning solvents and toiletries. In fact, to prevent prisoners from stealing exposed bolts and other materials, everything is set into concrete and sealed with thermal plastics to create seamless fixtures. Even shampoo bottles, toothbrushes and toothpaste containers are made from heatdegradable plastics designed to break down under heat (thus preventing prisoners from melting and hardening the plastic into makeshift weapons).

As it stands, using scavenged items to succeed in a skill check involving Craft, Demolitions, Disable Device, Escape Artist, Open Lock, Repair and Science, increase relevant DCs by +10. The reason is the Cartel's brain-trust removed or neutralized all potentially dangerous materials that they foresaw as being useful to prisoners. The Cartel classifies most common materials in Lockdown as inert for a good reason.

That said, Lockdown's prisoners are resourceful. They've discovered one overlooked and invaluable resource artery... themselves. While the concept disgusts outsiders, the fact remains that many supers are a goldmine of unusual materials, from their blood to their hair to their saliva to their fingernail clippings to their teeth, even. A prisoner with electric-manipulation abilities, for example, may have hair strands that conduct electricity better than any wire. An energy wielding convict may have blood with enough dormant energy to function as a miniature battery. There is no limit to a villain's imagination given their genius far exceeds mere mortals, but bear in mind many of these materials might require an external catalyst to actualize their potential. Additionally, if the prison uses a chemical or magical power-suppression method, the process may render the bio-material completely inert.

Here are some suggestions for organic material properties based on certain powers:

Absorption: Hair or blood serves to convert energy forms (light to sound, heat to light, etc.).

Alternate Form: Blood, fingernail clippings or saliva reverts to alternate property.

Clinging: Skin cells act as powerful adhesive.

Cosmic Power: Hair, blood or saliva contains latent energy reserves or storage capacity.

Energy Blast/Control/Field: Hair or distilled blood as heat, light, electrical, etc. conductor.

Healing/Regeneration: Coagulated blood acts as a sealant.

Mimic: Blood, flesh, or hair mirrors material strengths and properties.

Paralysis: Body material has neurotoxic qualities.

Protection: Unbreakable strands of hair usable as cutting weapons or tools.

Super-Constitution/Strength: Hair can be woven into unbreakable string/rope.

Transmutation: Body material adopts chemical make-up of whatever it touches.

thus, carry that obligation into the pen with them. Gangs are a serious problem in prisons, and some places are so bad that Correctional Officers outright refuse to patrol certain cellblocks. What the prisoners might lack in influence on the inside, they more than make up for it with their ilk on the outside. It isn't uncommon for disliked COs to receive death threats against their families, for example, or for gangs to pipeline drugs into jail from outside sources.

Prison gangs are varied, and may hold more power in one state than in another. For instance, while the rival alliances of People Nation (including Black-P Stone and Latin Kings) and Folk Nation (including Black Gangster Disciples and La Raza) are problems in and around Chicago prisons, the Mexican Mafia has stronger influence down south. Some listed here don't even reflect the gang demographics on the outside, so Gamemasters will find Bloods and Crips missing except as California prison alliances. As it stands, however, the following six gangs top the national prison food chain, earning status as a Security Threat Group.

Similarly, prison population segments like the Black Muslims are not gangs, nor find ranking as a Security Threat Group any more than you'd expect to find Catholics or Baptists listed here.

ARYAN BROTHERHOOD

Infamous for their "Blood In, Blood Out" and "Kill on Sight" edicts, the all-white Aryan Brotherhood (or AB) is merciless and racist. They are also a tight, insular group; inter-group discipline is strong and any one offense against an Aryan Brother draws the ire of the entire gang. The latter policy is called "zero disrespect."

Aryan Brotherhood began in 1967 in San Quentin State Prison, and has since become a major player in the prison drug trade. While their dislike of black prison gangs is infamous, the AB maintains a working relationship with the EME or Mexican Mafia. As result, they are active adversaries of EME's rival, La Nuestra Familia, as well as the Black Guerilla Family, Bloods, Crips, and El Rukns. Many ABs are former bikers, tying them to various biker gangs; they also work with the Dirty White Boys and the Silent Brotherhood. In comic book style settings, they're very likely allied with any existing neo-Nazi groups or organizations, perhaps even former Nazi supervillains (or their heirs).

BLACK GUERRILLA FAMILY

Another byproduct of San Quentin State Prison (1966), the Black Guerilla Family (BGF) was founded by former Black Panther George

L. Jackson. They are the most politically driven group of the six prison gangs, and pursue an anti-government agenda. Their three founding principles are to eradicate racism, to maintain dignity behind bars, and to overthrow the American government.

Like the Aryans, membership in the BGF is a life affair, broken only on pain of death. The BGF recruits heavily from black gangs including the Bloods, Crips, El Rukns, and Black Gangster Disciples, but they also maintain alliances with the Black Liberation Army, Symbionese Liberation Army, and Weather Underground. Conversely, their rivals include the Aryans, the EME, and the Texas Syndicate.

LA NUESTRA FAMILIA

Formed in California's Soledad Prison in the mid sixties, La Nuestra Familia consisted of rural Mexican-Americans/Hispanics banding together to protect themselves against the urban Mexican Mafia. The two groups have remained rivals since, with a "kill on sight" policy toward each other. The rivalry is so severe that prisons keep the two gangs isolated from one another.

La Nuestra Familia maintains a blood in, blood out policy as well, and members wear red rags. Involved in drug trafficking, LNF's rivals include the EME, as well as the Aryan Brotherhood, Texas Syndicate, and Mexikanemi. The NF maintains an uneasy working alliance with the Black Guerilla Family, as well as ties with the Northern Structure, a spin-off gang formed to direct federal attention away from La Nuestra Familia.

MEXICAN MAFIA

Labeled the most active prison gang, the EME traces its roots to an LA street gang, and formed in the late fifties, at the Duel Vocational Academy for youthful offenders. The EME focuses on controlling the drug racket, extortion and pressure rackets, as well as establishing ethnic hegemony under their flag. Murder is common practice among EME members, who not only follow the "blood in, blood out" system, but kill in a gruesome fashion to intimidate and strike fear in rivals.

The EME despises La Nuestra Familia, and maintains rivalries with African-American street gangs and the Black Guerilla Family. While working with the Aryans and the New Mexico Syndicate, the EME also provides protection for imprisoned members of La Costa Nostra (the Mafia). The EME and Mexikanemi are also allies, and bear so much in common that prison officials often confuse the two.

NETA

The Neta is a Puerto Rican-American/Hispanic gang formed in 1970 at the Rio Pedras Prison in Puerto Rico. Neta seeks independence for Puerto Rico from the U.S. In that, they have some political leanings, but Neta also vies for control of the drug and extortion rackets, which it pursues with a violent flare. In fact, Neta has no qualms killing authority figures, whether police or prison staff. Neta also pursues a "zero disrespect" policy, and any offense leveled on one member is leveled against them all.

Strangely, Neta is also secretive and capable of keeping under the radar, allowing other Hispanic groups to draw attention instead. They wear Puerto Rico's colors (red, white and blue, or black instead of blue) in their ensembles, whether as colored beads,

bandannas, etc. Neta's rivals include Los Solidos and the Latin Kings, while they associate themselves with Los Macheteros, a revolutionary Puerto Rican group. Neta members also conduct "hits" for other, non-rival gangs.

TEXAS SYNDICATE

The Texas Syndicate (TS) formed in the early seventies in Folsom Prison in California to protect native Texan inmates from the Mexican Mafia and Aryan Brotherhood. With a membership consisting of Mexican-Americans and Hispanics, TS espouses Latino supremacy and now recruits members from Cuba, Mexico and Columbia. A TS member is called a "carnal," while a group of members are called "carnales."

The Texas Syndicate engages in drug trafficking, thus setting them at odds with the Aryans, La Nuestra Familia, Mexican Mafia, Mexikanemi and Mandingo Warriors. They have developed ties with the Dirty White Boys and Texas Mafia.

HIV

Certain realities don't often mix well with gaming, not unless the GM and players are willing to treat the issue with respect or in an adult fashion. HIV is one such subject matter that, while not taboo, requires a fine touch in its handling. For those willing to run storylines involving HIV-positive heroes and villains, however, the material can serve as a rather poignant exclamation point to drive home points of tolerance, compassion or even the inadequacies of current safe sex/anti-drug initiatives.

The reality of the matter is that HIV infects tens of thousands of prisoners, and that's an overly conservative estimate. In 2001, New York State claimed it had 9,000 HIV-infected felons in its prison system, accounting for over 1% of infected Americans nation-wide.

HIV's spread stems from two principle and obvious sources: Shared needles and unprotected sex. In Europe, Australia and New Zealand, where public health officials aren't naïve in their approach to the problem, the prisons give inmates condoms and either bleach for needles or clean syringes. In the United States, only Mississippi and Vermont provide prisoners with condoms, while jails in New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Washington DC offer the same in city-wide programs. Fewer places supply bleach for needles, while most others don't hand out condoms because "inmates can use condoms to smuggle drugs." Both sides agree, however, that they're facing a medical crisis when states like New York spend \$70 million in a year combating AIDS.

The inclusion of such a distressing subject as HIV remains the purview of the Gamemaster. Still, for campaigns tackling such serious issues, the topic of HIV is best illustrated as its own storyline rather than a throwaway vignette. The scope of human misfortune is too tragic to gloss over easily. Conversely, there's nothing wrong with not including this aspect of prison life in games. Roleplaying is escapism, and some folks may not like the reminder of real life intruding on the brighter, better place they envision in the game. HIV arcs may not match the emotional timbre of the campaign, or the Gamemaster may dictate that AIDS was finally cured to better illustrate the optimistic bent of their super heroic world.

This is the Buckner Ridge Superhuman Penitentiary, better known as Buckner Ridge, the Mountain, or just Lockdown. It's a state-of-the-art facility gunning hard for federal contracts and the right to incarcerate all super-powered criminals. It has no other competitor in the private market, so all by all accounts, it's ahead of the game.

PRISONER CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The Federal Bureau of Prisons created the following cataloging system, categorizing powered convicts and the necessary containment and power suppression protocols to minimize the threat posed by inmates.

TYPE I

Type I prisoners rely on an external energy sources or items for their powers. This includes sophisticated technology (power armor and weaponry), unique skill sets (archery or swordplay) and magical talismans (power amulets, alchemical powders, animal compatriots, etc). Stripped of these gimmicks, the prisoner is human, though potentially capable of up to Olympic-level proficiencies or attributes. Battlesuit and gadgeteer-style archetypes tend to fall into Type I classification, though some ultra-geniuses and peak-trained physical combatants are considered Type II because Lockdown cannot strip them of their ability so readily.

TYPE II

Type II inmates rely on internal proficiencies or augmented attributes, giving them physical or mental aptitudes beyond that of normal people. These prisoners typically possess heightened senses (pre-psionic), increased physical aptitudes, augmented regenerative capabilities, and/or are highly-trained physical combatants. Powerhouse, martial artist, and speedster archetypes typically fit into this classification, necessitating neuralgic agents or neural inhibitors to limit their abilities beyond established thresholds. Some exceedingly bright gadgeteers and battlesuit-wearing characters may also fit this classification.

TYPE III

Type III prisoners possess metamorphic abilities or they can manipulate energy and chemical states. Metamorphic abilities encompass all alteration aptitudes, which allow the prisoner to change their physical state. Most elemental, metamorph, mimic and totem archetypes fall under this category, though this does not include mentalist-based inmates or those capable of controlling "foundation-level" powers (see **Type IV**, immediately following). Power inhibition protocols run a wide gamut from

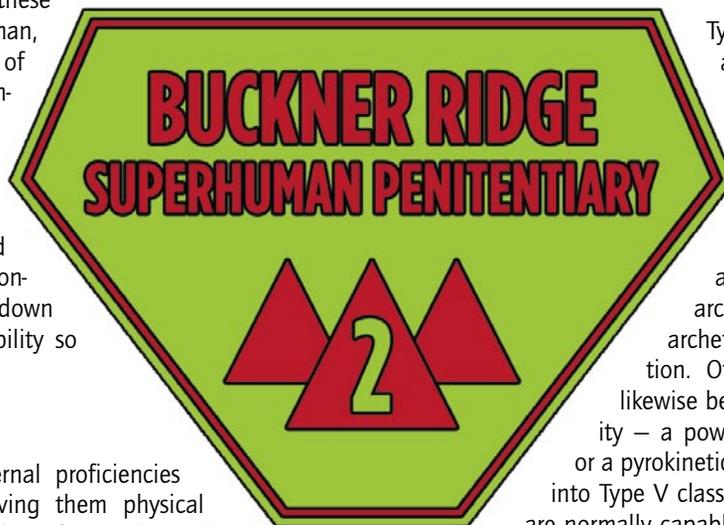
neuralgic agents to energy suppression fields to psychoactive inhibitors.

TYPE IV

Type IV convicts possess abilities too powerful or varied to quantify or control easily. Many such inmates possess foundation-level powers with frightening proficiency, be it manipulating universal cornerstones like space, time, gravity, etc. (this includes teleporters). Others exhibit mastery over a particular energy/physical state, engineering many unexpected effects (speedsters who vibrate through walls; metamorphs capable of assuming gaseous states; powerhouses with unlimited strength potential, etc.). While the original archetype fits into this category most often, upper-tier villains of any archetype can also be Type IV depending on their power levels. Power suppression protocols may include energy suppression fields or neuralgic agents. Occasionally, however, Lockdown may also place hard-to-control prisoners in hotsleep.

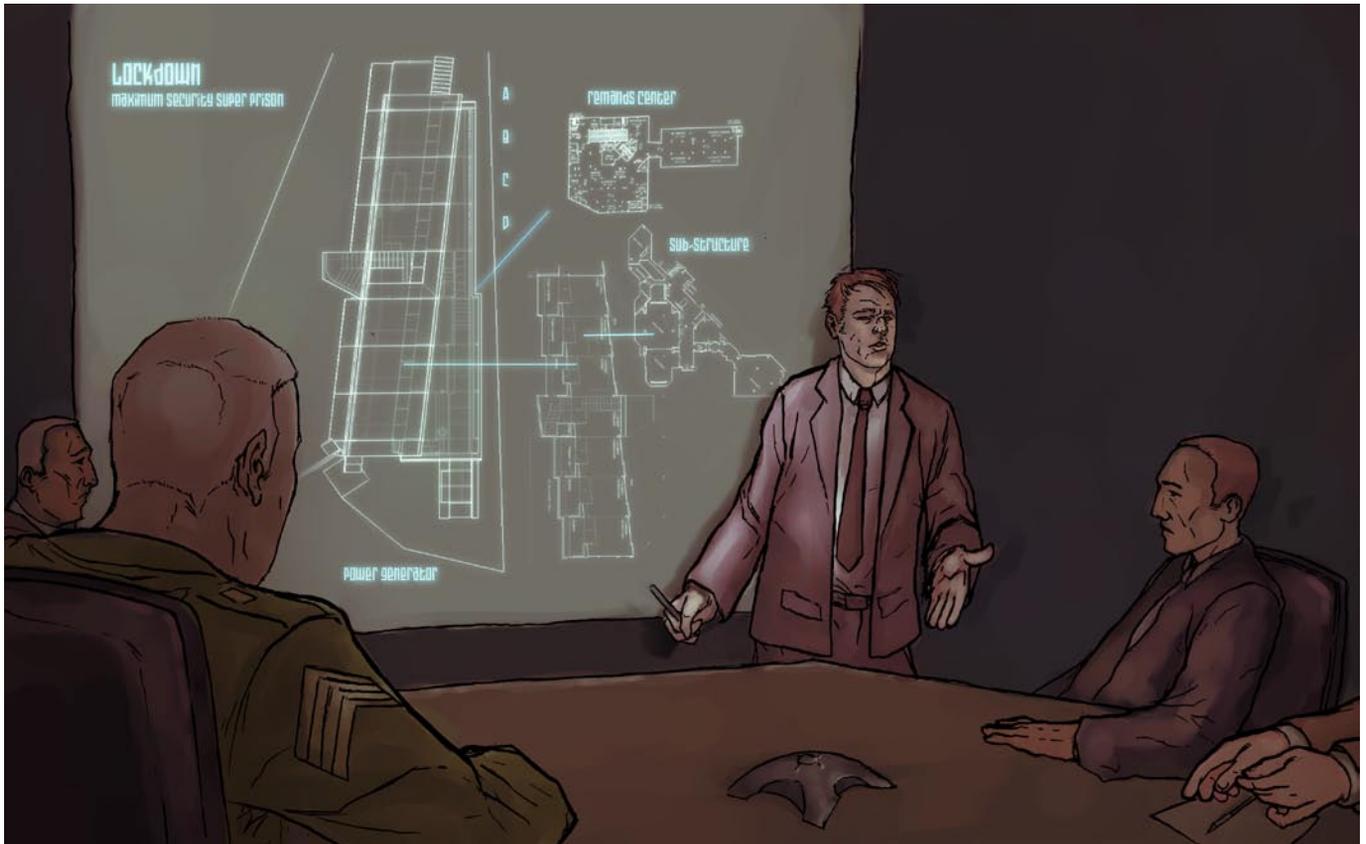
TYPE V

Type V's are convicts whose powers are difficult to quantify, especially ones stemming from magic or psionics. While researchers understand quantum states, fluid molecules, and energy channeling, there is little scientific grounding in detecting and measuring mental powers or arcane crafts. Mystic and psychic archetypes fall into Type V classification. Other archetypes, however, may likewise be the result of magic or psi-activity – a powerhouse with mystical strength, or a pyrokinetic elemental – but they rarely fall into Type V classification. The reason is Type V's are normally capable of high-risk factor effects: The ability to read minds or control someone's decision, the ability to open inter-dimensional doorways or turn opponents into bubbling puddles of goo. In essence, Type IV's and V's possess a wide array of abilities, from the gross to the subtle. While potentially powerful, a Type V is more dangerous when insidious. So, a psychic who controls flames remains a Type III while a psychic who draws forth and induces phobias is a Type V. Similarly, a powerhouse with a strength-giving hammer is a Type I without his hammer or Type IV with his hammer, while mystics who draw forth a variety of weapons would be a Type V. Essentially, unpredictable power... unpredictable outcome. Inhibiting a Type V may include psychoactive inhibitors, psi-jammers, and arcane locks.



LOCKDOWN AND BUCKNER RIDGE

The remote mountain community of Buckner Ridge is typical of other prison towns, from its foundations as a one-industry pony (coal mining) to the economic recession that almost turned it into a ghost town. Like many small communities driven by des-



peration, Buckner Ridge courted the different prison corporations to open a penitentiary in their backyard. Already, tales of small communities across Texas and Colorado reaping the benefits of job security and income from new prisons was well known. For Buckner Ridge, however, that meant too many towns were competing for the same slice of pie, and it simply couldn't offer the incentives of other, more easily accessible locations.

Buckner Ridge seemingly exhausted all hope, when a new prison corporation appeared from nowhere. The Americas Security Concerns (ASC) approached Buckner Ridge and offered them the golden deal for which they'd been searching: A private prison in the mountain with guaranteed jobs for locals and a percentage of the institution's income, on condition Buckner Ridge remain silent about the facility being built. The Americas Security Concerns claimed that the state required the ASC to entertain bids from different communities, but ASC wanted Buckner Ridge. ASC's representatives said that the mines and shafts facilitated the necessary excavations, and that Buckner Ridge's isolation made it the most appealing choice. By opening bids to other towns, however, ASC risked security leaks and corporate sabotage, or so they claimed. They never told the town of Buckner Ridge their facility was to incarcerate supervillains. They also failed to mention their sole backer was an up-and-coming criminal enterprise called the Cartel.

Buckner Ridge bought into the ASC's lie, and remained quiet about the exciting "state-of-the-art" prison being built in the heart of their mountain. This gave the ASC enough time to file

the necessary paperwork at the state and federal levels to open a privately-run superhuman-based incarceration facility. By the time Buckner Ridge itself realized Lockdown's purpose, they had risked too much and were too desperate to complain or make public their grievances.

Following the prison's completion, the ASC invited officials from the Bureau of Prisons and Department of Justice to tour Lockdown. The government was naturally leery of such a venture, but the ASC ran the facility through a gamut of tests to prove its ability to incarcerate supervillains. In fact, with the latest technology gracing Lockdown, it well exceeded the Bureau of Prison's minimum requirements. The ASC landed its first contracts, and the Feds slowly shipped in prisoners over the following months.

BUCKNER RIDGE MOUNTAIN

From the exterior, Buckner Ridge Mountain looks like your typical tree-shrouded mountain with frosting along its highest, granite peaks. A four lane road winds its way up the slope, finally hitting the town of Buckner Ridge along a shallow and forested incline. The road continues up, however, where temperatures dip by a few degrees and a perpetual mist hangs from the high branches. Past the bunkered checkpoints at the three perimeter fences, the road eventually reaches a mile-long ledge sheared into a mountain face. Beyond the landing pads and armed sentry bunkers is a rectangular tunnel-mouth the size of a football field, carved into the cliff side. It's meant to look imposing.

The town of Buckner Ridge receives separate attention in **Chapter Seven**. Otherwise, the mountain earns description in general strokes because the location is not set in any specific locale. It could be in the Sierra Nevada where fault-line activity formed the mountains, or the result of volcanic eruption like Mt. St. Helens. The town could face north, where cold northerly winds splash against its face, or the west where it remains sheltered from the warm ocean breezes. These specific touches remain under Gamemaster control.

NATURAL ENVIRONS

The mountain's height, and warm air trapped on the opposite side of the mountains, keeps temperatures between five to ten degrees colder than at its base. The air has a constant dampness, amplified when the rains hit, and winter weather starts earlier and lasts longer by a couple of months.

The mountain peak is nearly bald with exposed granite. Further down, however, fir, pine, and cedar trees appear in isolated clusters that grow and join the green waterfall that cascades down the mountain's skirt. The tree line begins well above the entrance to Lockdown, quickly covering all but the road, the ledge and scattered sheer cliffs. The evergreen trees and soaring mountain against a cold blue sky are the last snapshots of wilderness beauty before entering the long tunnel (called a sally port) to the facility's vault door.

PERIMETER SECURITY FENCES

Three security fences run six to eight miles each, around the ledge like a bull's eye painted against the mountainside. The prison cut down the forest for 20 yards on either side of the three enclosures, and keeps the area clear of debris; danger signs warn approaching hikers. Each fence represents another layer in escape deterrence, though the real incarceration methods are inside the mountain.

The fences are chain-link, 12 feet high and topped with coils of razor wire. Buried coaxial cables detect vibrations from fence-climbers who exert more than 50 pounds of pressure, immediately alerting prison security at the sally port tunnel (henceforth called external security). Interspaced along the outermost fence are full spectrum cameras facing into the interior and exterior of the prison grounds. The full-spectrum cameras detect energy spikes above established thresholds, picking up visible energy outputs from super-powered individuals. This straightforward deterrent uses non-lethal methods to hinder and dissuade hikers, locals and the curious.

Between each enclosure is Astroturf covering co-axial cables and the Scale-Net Sensor Array (SeNSA), a fancy word for pressure pads. The SeNSA and co-axial cables run under the second fence, which is armed with omni-directional Electromagnetic Sensors instead of cameras. The second fence is also electrified. Between the second and third enclosure are bunkered microwave radar emitters that detect low flyers trying to evade the prison's radar towers. The third and interior-most enclosure has shielded security cameras equipped with autonomous transmitters. Anyone

EXTERIOR SECURITY RULES

This section offers mechanics for the exterior security measures. True, many supers can simply blast their way through or fly over the defenses, but sometimes, it's necessary to bypass security either surreptitiously or without powers. That's where these handy rules come into play.

Bunker, Gun Emplacement, Guard Towers and Plate Shield:

The bunkers, emplacements, and towers use thick concrete reinforced with steel mesh (**Powers:** Hardness +12, Armor +10) and bulletproof glass windows (**Powers:** Hardness +10, Armor +8). The plate shield is a heavy steel plate with teeth (**Powers:** Hardness +15 [Any damage from ramming a vehicle or opponent into the teeth becomes Lethal damage]). Gun Emplacements also have targeting suites and firing protocols (**Powers:** Weapon +10L [*Extras:* Autofire, Darkvision, Telescopic Sight]).

Chain-Link Fence: Chain-link fences use a malleable alloy, providing the links with some give and making it harder to rip them apart (**Powers:** Hardness +15).

Co-Axial Cables: Co-axial cables are insulated and difficult to control remotely. Stripping the insulation and clipping the transmission cable, however, requires some skill not to trip the co-axial's alarm (Disable Device DC 30).

Electric Fence: The fence carries a baseline charge capable of killing most normals. At over 5,000 volts, however, the charge is limited to a 100-yard section of fence, thanks to fuse boxes and relays buried behind the second enclosure (**Powers:** Weapon +10 [*Note:* Damage is variable between +1 to +10]).

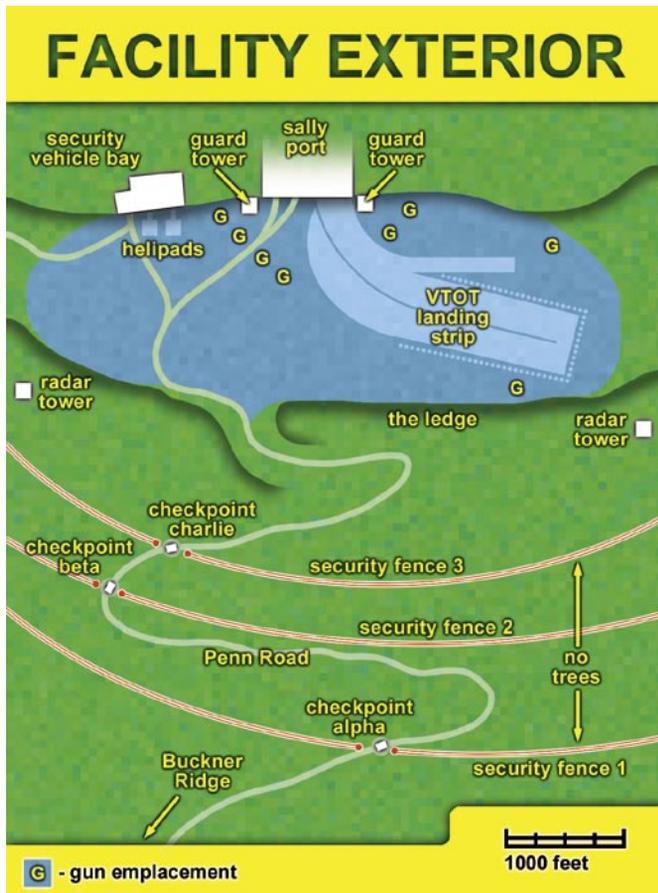
Electromagnetic Sensors: Anybody entering the field excites the already charged particles by simply moving into the area which triggers the alarm. The strength of an intruder's bioelectric field as well as unshielded electronics also register within the field. Security can determine whether they're dealing with non-powered individuals or superhumans (**Super-Feat:** Detect - Power Levels. **Skill:** Spot +5).

Microwave Radar Emitters and Radar Towers: Because the radar towers use different sensors, the only way to remain invisible is with the Invisible Flaw: Only to Machines, or with the ability to render oneself invisible against additional senses like Radar, Infrared, Radiation and Laser. Otherwise, one or more sensors register inbound targets unless the bogie is too small to detect (tiny or smaller). The same applies to the microwave emitters using radiation to detect targets.

Molly Wire Fence: The fence's ability to slice through material is a combination of its own sharpness and the weight exerted against it when someone tries climbing the enclosure (**Powers:** Weapon +2S. **Feats:** Penetrating Attack).

Scale-Net Sensor Array: Scale-Net pressure sensors are scattered at regular intervals along the net, detecting weight shifts through joint stress, and triangulating the exact location of the intruder by determining the pressure ripple's epicenter. The only way to bypass this is to fly over or walk across the pads while Incorporeal.

Wireless Cameras: Each camera covers another camera in its field off vision, meaning intruders must disable at least two cameras, individually, to pass through an area unobserved (Disable Device or Datalink against DC 25 to affect the cameras without alerting security).



tampering with the first two fences is automatically in sight of two cameras. The last fence also uses sharpened molly wire lining along its chain links to cut anyone attempting the climb the enclosure.

CHECKPOINTS

There are three checkpoints along Penn Road, leading up to the prison. The checkpoints are reinforced steel and concrete bunkers to protect the security officers within from heavy attack. The guards remain behind a bulletproof, one-way window (preventing psychics from making visual contact). Each checkpoint controls an electric gate and retractable barrier (a plate shield with its sharp teeth, angled at 45 degrees toward the road) that remains up until the first bunker clears the vehicle through. Inside each bunker are two officers within easy reach of panic buttons, a security camera and monitor, a television set, a bathroom, and one cot for sleeping.

RADAR TOWERS

Four automated radar towers replace guard towers; two are within the perimeter fences; the other two are on Buckner Ridge peak, monitoring inbound bogies on the opposite side of the mountain. The radar towers sweep an area of 50 miles in diameter and are keyed into the local air traffic control network to distinguish between regular traffic and UFOs.

CAMPAIGN OPTION: WHAT THE HELL!

In perhaps the most unusual campaign option of this sourcebook, Lockdown can instantly appear in any game with practically zero prep, from Meta-4, to Freedom City, to whatever homebrew setting the Gamemaster is running. With this option, Lockdown belongs to any number of alternate Earths, except that when the Cartel activated the shunt generators, the network malfunctioned. It translocated the entire mountain to the campaign world, and as suddenly as that, the world has a large number of new villains, fallen heroes looking for redemption, and vigilantes on the loose. With government agencies assuming control of the facility, super-heroes gauging the threat-level of new arrivals, new NPCs trying to hide or assert their place in the world, and a mysterious facility to explore, the Gamemaster should have months of game play. What happens if a new villain replaces his ineffectual counterpart on this world? What happens when a fallen hero asks for asylum after alternate world heroes arrive to recapture him? What if the characters suddenly encounter themselves as villains? The possibilities are endless.

The radar towers are 60-foot tall antenna structures with an array of satellite and sensory dishes. They use passive infrared sensors as well as a microwave radar, millimeter wave radars (highly accurate radar that sees through dust clouds, storms, etc.) tied into low-light, laser-directed motion cameras, and advanced bistatic Doppler sensors (to detect disruptions to air flows from flyers and radar-invisible jets). They pipe all information to the security towers.

GUN EMPLACEMENTS

Lockdown maintains eight gun batteries at strategic positions around the sally port tunnel entrance. Three batteries cover the road and the mountainside in either direction, three gun batteries have clear sweep of the skies while the remaining two cover ground and air if necessary. Essentially, anyone approaching is automatically under the sights of at least three emplacements.

The guns are remote-activated and controlled from the towers through thermal and lowlight cameras. The emplacements also sit atop a buried magazine cabinet that belt-feeds the machine guns. Each can lay down blistering gunfire for up to 20 minutes before depleting its magazine.

SALLY PORT TUNNEL

The sally port tunnel is set into the mountainside. At its mouth stands two guard towers emerging from the rock face that overlook the ledge. The towers are 60 feet high and supervise all incoming traffic as well as acting as air traffic control for the Carnival Air-Freighter. They also handle radar tower and exterior security measure feeds.

Inside the tunnel, the ceiling is 100 feet high and supported by rib-like struts along the walls. Floodlights illuminate the interior, while two sets of long windows on each wall run the tunnel's length, up to each guard tower outside. Those hallways are 50-foot up, and covered by bulletproof windows. The tunnel slopes

downward for 80 yards before ending at the administration entrance, warehousing docks, vault door, and garage bay covering the back hundred-yard wall. The administration entrance is locked and under camera surveillance; only the reception desk can buzz in visitors. The vault door leads to prisoner processing and Lockdown itself. The docks lead into warehousing and supplies, and the garage bay handles the facility's vehicles. All four locations are mentioned in Lockdown's interior write-up later in this book.

Much of the interior tunnel space is reserved for visitor and staff parking, delivery trucks, forklifts and refueling trucks. A wide four-lane avenue runs the tunnel's length, while the sides are for various vehicles and a large trash compactor. In a bad weather pinch, the tunnel can fit the Carnival Air-Freighter. This is done only in emergencies.

SECURITY VEHICLE BAY AND RAILED HELIPORT

Next to the sally port tunnel and adjoining security tower is the vehicle bay where security houses and maintains its humvees. It's a mini-garage, though most of the mechanical work happens in the sally port garage. A heavily armored shuttered garage door (of the same toughness as the security bunkers) protects the bay.

In front of the Security Vehicle Bay are two helicopter landing pads for the facility's two Kiowa Warrior choppers. The landing pads themselves are two large metal flatbeds on detachable chained rails. Recessed tracks leading to the vehicle bay allows security to roll the choppers in or out of the hangar in under two minutes.

INTERIOR LAYOUT OF THE MOUNTAIN

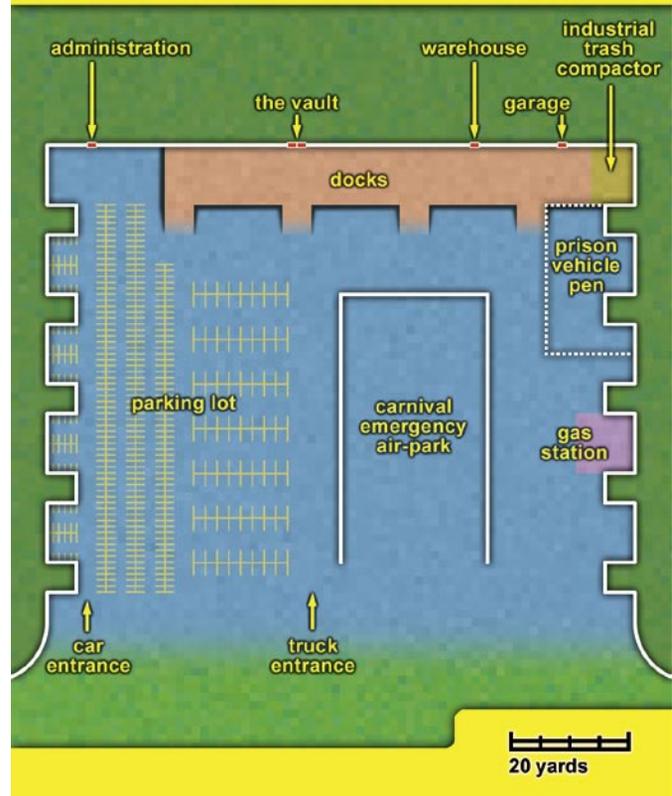
Before touching upon Lockdown's interior, it's important to note its primary security feature, which is called shunting. The prison can literally isolate the entire facility within the mountain by eliminating passages to the outside. Lockdown's elevators and key corridors are armed with shunts. This means security can shift any equipped location by dozens of yards using quantum translocation, replacing the pathways with solid rock. Shunting is the act of switching a section of mountain for a section of corridor. This traps portions of Lockdown within the mountain with no escape except through solid stone.

Intelligent prisoners rightly suspect that Lockdown is surrounded by an even larger tesseract web; Warden Creed can shunt the entire facility out of phase, trapping it in a dimensional pocket. This one shot effect, though, instantly hollows out the mountain, causing it to collapse in upon itself. It's a way of eliminating evidence of the Cartel's involvement in the facility, and creating enough chaos to vanish during the turmoil.

BASIC LAYOUT

Lockdown is, effectively, a spiral staircase, with a bank of elevators constituting the central "pole", and the blunt arrowhead-shaped cell blocks spiraling downward like steps. There are four "floors" to this staircase, one at the very top, another at the bottom and two

SALLY-PORT TUNNEL



interspaced in the middle. Between the floors are the various cell-blocks. All four floors are circular, with primary corridors splitting off from the elevator banks, like spokes, to the exterior rim.

The top floor, One Tier, is the administration wing and includes offices, staff housing, prisoner processing, docking bays, the garage, and warehousing. One Tier is closest to the tunnel and, thus, the only part of the facility that can't be isolated by translocating, or shunting, the corridors. It still lies within the facility's larger tesseract web, however. The second floor, or Two Tier, is the prisoner common area, and includes the cafeteria, gym, basketball court, medical wing, and commissary. Regardless which cellblock most prisoners call home, they can all meet, interact and socialize on Two Tier. Two Tier is twice the height of any other floor, diminishing the facility's sense of claustrophobia.

The third floor or Three Tier is a work wing with a self-enclosed factory floor. Lockdown uses convict-labor to lease out its prisoners; being a new facility, however, the contracts have yet to roll in. While the government slips Lockdown jobs — inmate operators for government help-lines, census-taking, etc. — the current work drought means the prison leaves this floor mostly abandoned and supposedly off-limits. "Supposedly" means some convicts can already bypass this level's security and use the space for themselves. "Supposedly" also means that Warden Creed knows about the situation and uses bugs to spy on prisoners who might otherwise believe they can speak freely.

LOCKDOWN VEHICLES

The sally port tunnel contains many vehicles, from support to defense. Here are the vehicles that are always on hand or available for whatever reason. Special vehicles specific to the prison include:

Carnival: The Carnival is the only air freighter of its kind, retro-fitted to handle super-convict transport. She has six power plants (four for the engines and two for the containment units), rear ramp access and VTOL capabilities. She also holds ten containment units for prisoners as well as seating for five guards behind secured bulkheads. All interior components are double-protected against electronic countermeasures and control (Disable Device or Datalink DC 30 to bypass systems without damaging them).

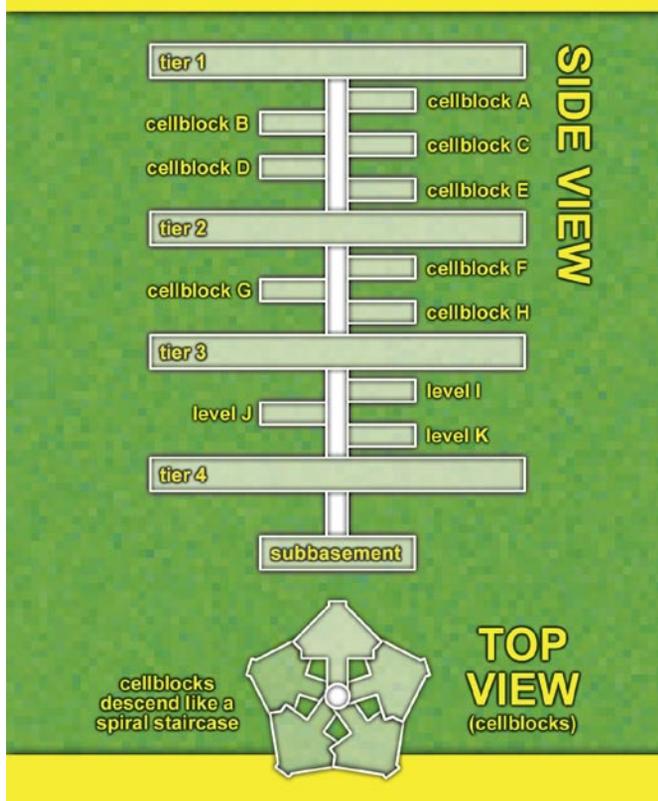
Forklift: Lockdown's forklifts also carry portable generators to help unload and power active containment pods during transit from the Carnival to prisoner processing.

High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (Hummer or Humvee): Lockdown uses two humvee variants for security purposes. The first are armed with heavy caliber machine guns and reinforced to provide heavy ballistic and blast protection. Four such vehicles patrol the perimeter fences or investigate security alarms. The second variant is a two-seater with a flatbed carrying a dedicated power-negating egg-pod and a dedicated generator. There are two in the tunnel, which security uses if a super-powered convict escapes and is recaptured.

Kiowa Warrior: The Kiowa Warrior helicopter bears the advantage of being a rapid-deployment vehicle, taking to the air quickly following minimal preparation. The Kiowa Warrior is meant to handle enemy flyers outside the facility, but it's also useful against ground targets.

Vehicle Type	Size	Movement	Hardness	Armor Bonus	Features
Ground Vehicles					
Forklift	Large	6	10	2	
Humvee	Large	7	15	10	Gun +7 (Autofire)
Refueling Truck	Huge	6	15	6	
Tow Vehicle	Huge	6	12	2	
Air Vehicles					
Carnival Air-Freighter	Gigantic	8	15	10	
Kiowa Warrior	Large	8	12	6	Gun +8 (Autofire)

BUCKNER RIDGE

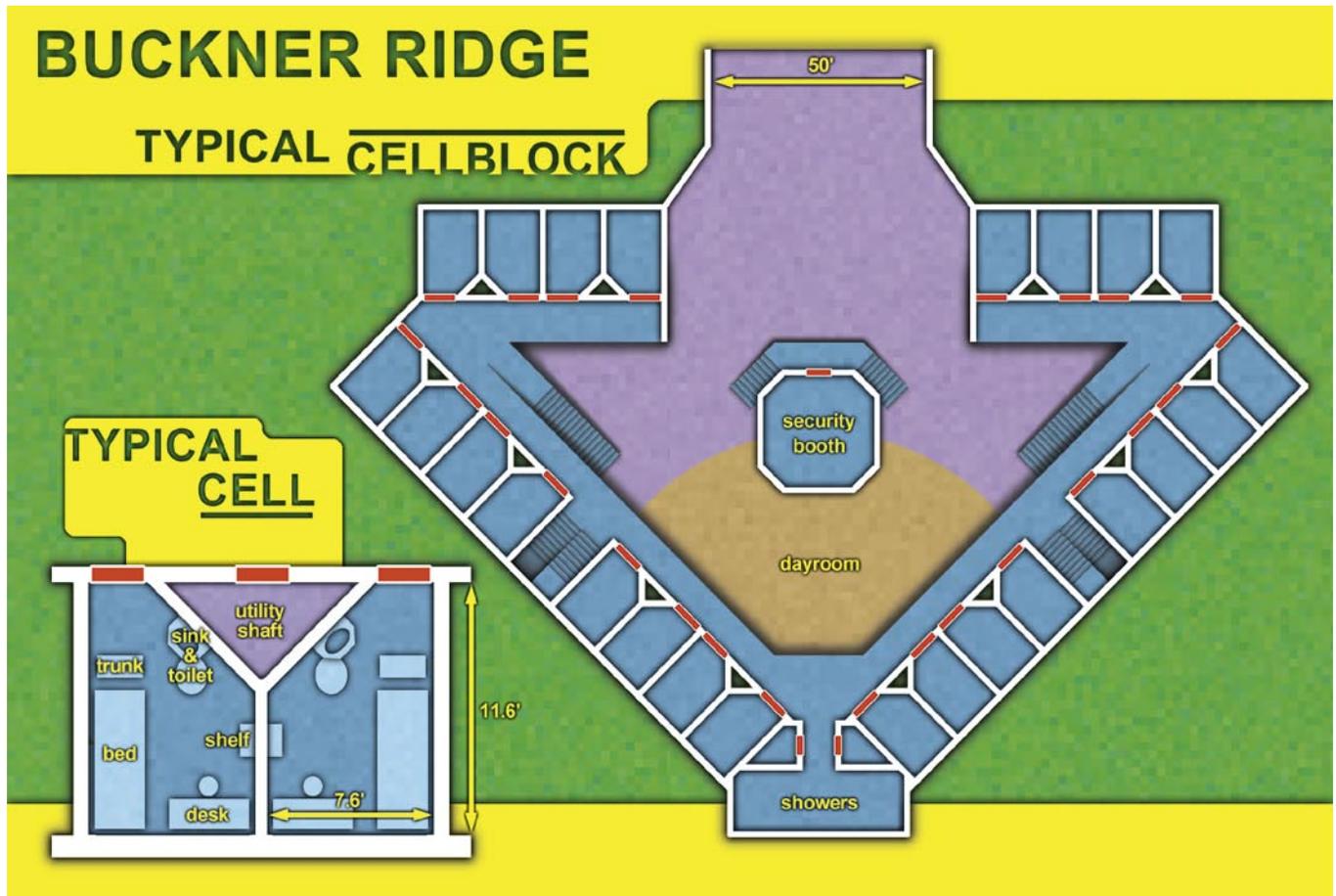


Four Tier is the facility's basement, and off limits to everyone but staff and, secretly, trustees. Officially, Four Tier is facility maintenance, a pipe and concrete jungle containing huge machines from air scrubbers to the facility's massive generators. Hidden beneath this floor, however, is a sub-basement containing the technologies vault, the labs, and the work bays of Advanced Tech Research and Development.

BASIC LAYOUT: THE CELLBLOCKS

Each cellblock (or unit) is shaped like a blunted arrowhead with cells arrayed in two-story stacks around three walls, facing a security monitoring booth and cellblock atrium called the dayroom. A reinforced catwalk lines the second story cells, but the security booth can lower the catwalk's railing to allow forklifts to slide the autonomous cells into wall alcoves. There are some tables and chairs in the atrium, as well as a cellblock television set broadcasting various programs with edited content. Most prisoners, however, prefer to mix it up on the communal floor. Opposite the security booth is the cellblock's showers with an adjoining room for janitorial equipment.

The four-man security booth is protected behind the glass-like, super-tough crystalline alloy called diamond-matrix, and it remains hermitically sealed through double doors. This protects the booth against the tranquilizer gas ports located on the ceiling, though security central could gas the booth as well if prisoners seek refuge within. No prisoner is allowed on the stairs leading up to the booth.



There is one large tunnel leading to each cellblock. It's 50 feet wide and handles prisoners and forklifts. The tunnel is keyed into the translocation shunt, allowing the prison to isolate each cellblock individually. Security, however, prefers closing the blast-doors on either end of the tunnel before they resort to shunting.

There are no empty cells in the various cellblocks. Instead, there's a long and empty wall bay where the prison will eventually slip in a pair of prefabricated cells geared for specific prisoners. It's the mobile-home of prison life with the ground bays going first. Because Lockdown is not operating at full capacity, the rows of cells have intermittent gaps where empty bays lay, waiting to be connected. The prison inserts the cells in two because each pair is connected and shares a common utility shaft. When no cells are present, the ceiling and floor access panels for the shaft are sealed tight using magnetically locked plates, without any visible nuts and bolts to pry loose. As an additional security measure, the cells have no blind spots for anyone peering through the cell door. The walls are angled so prisoners cannot hide against the outside wall.

The cells are prefabricated because they're constructed elsewhere and stored in Lockdown's warehouse. Each cell is hermetically sealed with no visible joints or seams connecting the furniture to the wall or ground, thanks to steel-grade sealants like thermal plastics. The additional benefit of prefabricated cells is that the

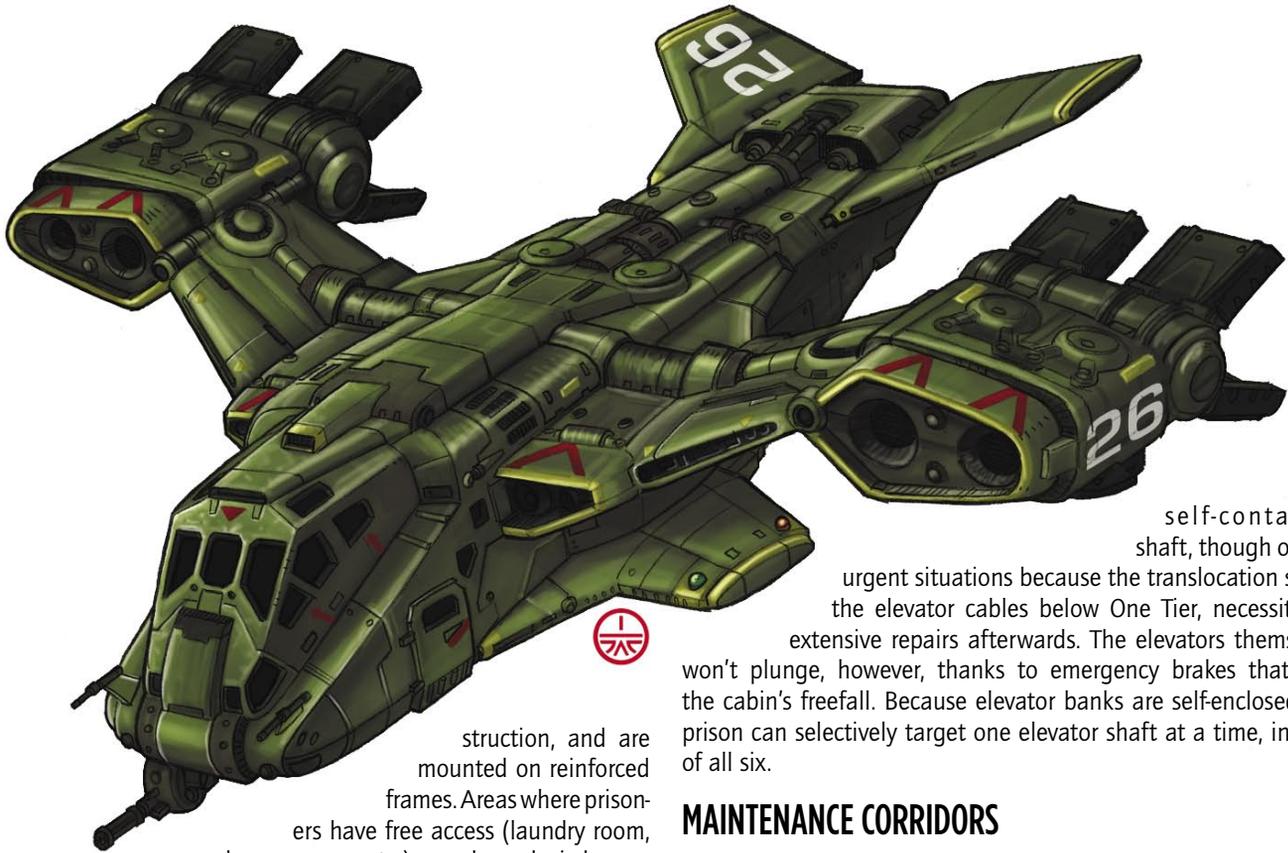
prison can tailor them to specific convicts based on their powers or even size. Cells start at 7'6" by 11'6" feet, up to 11'6" by 30'4" feet for inhumanly large inmates (the two cells serve as one larger cell). The width from the back wall to the front door always remains 10 feet wide so the cells line up inside their alcoves. Length is not as important since there are no intervening walls between cells. Instead, the cells slide together and lock in place with the adjoining unit. If the facility runs out of bays, it can stack and lock cells together in places like the factory floor.

Each cell contains a single bed, desk, toilet, storage trunk and wash basin. The long wall facing out, into the corridor, is clear as glass, but made of diamond-matrix.

BASIC LAYOUT: DOORS AND BLAST-DOORS

Strangling the main tunnels, corridors, and intersections are blast-doors that can isolate prisoners in various sections and, more importantly, contain released gas from the gas jets. The blast-doors are the principle bulwark against problems, the tesseract shunts being a secondary emergency measure. They are thick vault doors designed to endure heavy punishment. In fact, it's almost easier to tear into adjoining walls and pummel one's way through the rock than destroy a blast door.

All other facility doors are as strong as required by the value of what they contain. Most use more durable materials in their con-



struction, and are mounted on reinforced frames. Areas where prisoners have free access (laundry room, showers, gym, etc.) use clear plexi-glass so correctional officers have a clear line of sight into the room. Special chambers requiring privacy and limited access, be they communal bathrooms, interview rooms, classrooms, staff offices, etc. have standard doors with small windows. Locations with sensitive equipment or staff-only access, however, like Four Tier, Prisoner Processing, or Administration, use reinforced metallic doors and frames. Any wall adjoining a reinforced door is likewise toughened with the same material strength.

BASIC LAYOUT: ELEVATOR BANKS

The central axis around which the prison wheel revolves is a bank of elevators. The elevators travel the full height of Lockdown, though prisoners are forbidden to enter One and Four Tiers. Prisoners may use the elevators, though one correctional officer rides shotgun *above* the grated elevator cage. There is no escape hatch from the elevator ceiling into the cage itself. Prisoners may also use the stairwells.

The elevator banks consist of six carriages; four are small freight elevators capable of handling five tons or up to fifteen passengers, and two are cargo elevators with a 20-ton lifting capacity for forklifts with consignment. The two large elevators are only for heavy transport, and remain on the top or bottom tiers when on stand-by. They also stink, given that twice a week, the cargo elevator stops on each floor while prison janitors load the trash container being hefted by a forklift. A guard remains present to ensure no prisoner tries hiding in the trash.

Security can shunt the elevator shafts between tiers, creating a

self-contained shaft, though only in urgent situations because the translocation severs the elevator cables below One Tier, necessitating extensive repairs afterwards. The elevators themselves won't plunge, however, thanks to emergency brakes that stop the cabin's freefall. Because elevator banks are self-enclosed, the prison can selectively target one elevator shaft at a time, instead of all six.

MAINTENANCE CORRIDORS

Off limits to prisoners, the maintenance corridors are a three-dimensional maze running the span and breadth of Lockdown. Accompanying every room or hallway is a maintenance corridor or laddered shaft ten feet beyond it in solid rock. Access to these tunnels is through intermittent removable plates that are magnetically locked, and restricted to specific personnel with the correct passcards.

The maintenance corridors and shafts are five feet wide and seven feet high, give or take a foot due to the exposed pipes and cabling running the tunnel's length. These tunnels allow technicians to access the cables, duct work, and various security measures without exposing vital systems to prisoners or shunting. The corridors also access large chambers containing each tier's or cellblock's hot water tank.

The maintenance corridors are keyed into the tesseract shunt, allowing the prison to translocate tunnel sections. Unfortunately, this severs the area's power cables, air ducts and water pipes from the main grid, necessitating repair when the system returns to normal. Thankfully, this won't interrupt essential services, since Lockdown built the grid with redundant pathways to handle most breaks.

BASIC LAYOUT: STAIRWELLS

As per fire safety codes, stairwells link the different cellblocks together, with one central stairwell connecting two tiers and the cellblocks between them. There are security cameras atop each landing, watching the stairwell above and below it. The stairs are

VILLAINOUS EXAMPLES

We know where Lockdown’s prisoners rank by their listed classification, but what about some of the villains from the Freedom City and Meta-4 settings?

FREEDOM CITY

Type	Appropriate Villains
I	Devil-Ray, The Maestro, The Silencer, Toy Boy, Warden
II	Doc Otaku, Dr. Sin, Granite, Orion the Hunter, Star-Khan, Terra King
III	Gamma the Atom-Smasher, Professor Fathom, Pyre, Sylph, Talos, White Knight, Wildcard
IV	Argo the Ultimate Android (depending on his duplicated powers), Dr. Stratos, The Green Man, Hiroshima Shadow, Magpie, The Mastermind, Omega (Lord of the Terminus)
V	Baron Samedi, Cosmic Mind, The Hellqueen, Lady Lunar, Lady Tarot, Malador the Mystic, Medea

META-4

Type	Appropriate Villains
I	Black Diamond, Dr. Dungeon, Moonquake, Player 2, Redhawk, Wallflower, Wasphawk, Waymaker
II	Behemoth, Beholder, Blitz, Iron Cross, Jawbreaker, Mountain King, Murder Man and Butcher Boy, Rose Monk, Sovereign, Toreador
III	Boy Toy, Burner, Carrion Queen, Chimera, Damocles, Hyena, Manticore, The Other Woman, Pixie, Sister Blister, Tag, Toykiller, Undine, Unifier
IV	The Atomic Brain, Czar, Neutronik, Remlok the Rover, Spasm
V	Choke Chain, The Crush, Gepetto, Johnny Reb, Kalak the Mystic, Miss Martian, Moodswing, The Nihilist, Sulemain, Vagabond

similar to the facility’s hallways in that they’re made of reinforced plating atop concrete. Areas with security measures like gas ports, security cameras and blast-doors contain stronger materials to prevent prisoners from accessing vital systems and cabling.

The stairwells can all be shunted or isolated behind blast doors. Security, however, can only seal off entire sections between two floors; they cannot target specific landings.

VENTILATION SYSTEM

The ventilation system provides recycled and temperature-controlled air to Lockdown. It’s an autonomous air filtration system using micron-screens at junction hubs to prevent shapeshifters and gaseous-form prisoners from using the ducts. The micron screens can detect foreign gases, unusual airborne compositions, as well as ruptures to the micron screen and anything infinitesimal in stature passing through the screen (automati-

MATERIAL STRENGTHS

The following chart is a quick reference to the various material strengths found throughout the facility. The differing values of some entries indicate a location is tougher than others for whatever reason. A corridor with vital cables behind the wall, for example, may have a higher rating than a corridor adjacent to a room.

MATERIAL STRENGTHS

SUBSTANCE	HARDNESS	STANDARD LOCATIONS
Exposed Cables	7	Behind walls
Micron Screens	7	Ventilation
Passcard Readers	7	At secured doors
Mountain Rock	8-10	The elevator shaft and beyond most walls
Corridors	8-12	Everywhere
Air Duct Housing	10	Ventilation
Stairs and Railings	10	Everywhere
Standard Door	10	Floors One through Three Tier and elevators
Translucent Plexi-Glass	10	Everywhere
Elevator Cab	13	Elevator shaft
Security Camera Housing	13	Everywhere
Magnetic Access Panels	15	Everywhere
Reinforced Door	15	Floor Four Tier
Standard Wall	10-15	Everywhere
Elevator Cables	18	Elevator shaft
Air/Water Filtration Tank	18	Ventilation and Water Supply
Blast-Doors	20	Tunnels and Corridors
Cell-Walls	20	Cells
Diamond-Matrix Glass	20	Cells and Security Booths
Titanium-Alloy Cuffs and Leg-Irons	20	N/A
Cell-Vault	20/20*	Cellblock J
Vault Door	20/20/20*	Entrance

* The double and triple-digit indicators mean anyone trying to hammer through one of the vaults must go through either double or triple layers of reinforced material before finally penetrating all the way through.

cally detecting anyone using Gaseous Form that isn’t pure air, Shrinking at +18 or lower, or anyone damaging the filter to bypass it).

Should anything trigger the micron screen alarm, the junction hub contains a powerful fan (equivalent Elemental Control – Air +10) that sucks up any gas or miniscule individuals into a filtration container for holding and examination.

SECURITY SYSTEMS

A prison's principle line-of-defense is the lock, though the form it adopts is another matter. The lock-and-key has grown more sophisticated, be it power suppression fields to lock in one's power, the shunt mechanism to lock the prison inside the mountain or Lockdown's remote location to lock it away from society. When all is said and done, however, it's all still just a lock and key.

As one of its most basic defenses, Lockdown was designed with all of its power conduits sheathed in plastic polymers and behind shielded plates to prevent ready access to them. All electronic devices like televisions and security cameras remain inset into the wall to prevent someone from prying electronic parts from them, while an automated system within security central monitors the phone line and power lines for electronic spikes, key words and other signs of unusual activity. Any attempt to circumvent requires a Disable Device (DC 20) check.

SECURITY CAMERAS

The prison hired a Las Vegas security firm to handle installation and placement of its security cameras. The cameras contain full spectrum capabilities that allow them to see along the visible and invisible spectrum (low-light, infrared, x-ray, etc). While the cameras play all feeds normally, they can detect energy fluctuations that may well indicate an anomalous presence. Once that

occurs, the camera alerts Security Central, who then scan the spectrum to register whatever's causing the fluctuations.

The network of internal cameras number over 2,000 and require sophisticated software to manage everything. The central operating hub is inside the Security Central office, and uses pattern-recognition software to scan the faces of everyone using secure-access doors. This way, security automatically knows when someone is using stolen passcards to breach a location. All images are also recorded on data sticks kept in the security archives.

Cameras track the movement of anyone within their range through motion sensors, automatically piping the image to an active monitor and allowing a security station to screen the area. Most cameras are inset into wall niches and covered by a clear polymer plastic. A few are protected within metallic housings that require a Disable Device (DC 25) check to successfully tamper with them.

PASSCARDS

While more sophisticated scanners are available – genetic-tag, retinal, fingerprint – the prison doesn't want convicts dismembering COs just to steal some vital body part. Additionally, when time is of the essence, relevant personnel may need to access secured doors rapidly. Hence, the prison uses passcards, coupled with quick-response facial recognition software thanks to the security cameras mounted above doors.

Secured doors use magnetic scanners to read the passcard, enabling relevant personnel to access specific areas. The cards are color-coded to designate one's job or position at Lockdown. Opening a door without a passcard requires a Disable Device (DC 40) check.

Gold passcards are unique, with four additional functions related to them. The first is they can trigger a hidden protocol in the camera's facial recognition programs, which taps into the camera's digital studio software to eliminate the card carrier from the picture. The user can render himself electronically invisible.

PASSCARDS

PASSCARD	POSITION	AREA OF OPERATION*
White	Maintenance, Mechanics and Warehouse Workers	One Tier Docks and Garage
Yellow	Administrative Workers	One Tier
Blue	Medical Personnel, Teachers and Councilors	Two Tier and Cellblocks
Orange	Facility Maintenance Technicians	Tiers Only
Red	Security	Full Access except Four Tier Sub-basement
Gold	Cartel Personnel	Full Access

* Area of Operation indicates where personnel can travel unescorted.



NEW POWER: BEFUDDLE

Cost: 3

Action: Full

Range: Touch

Duration: Sustained

Saving Throw: Will

Your touch somehow distracts and alienates the target from his surroundings. Whether he grows mentally sluggish and detached due to an opiate-like effect or can't concentrate through the blinding pain, your touch makes it difficult for him to focus on the task at hand. The target must succeed in his initial saving throw against a DC of (10 + power rank) or lose ranks in any subsequent action equal to Befuddle's power rank, for as long as this power remains active. If the target is trying to concentrate through Befuddle's effects to succeed in one specific task without the penalties incurred by this power, he must make another saving throw for each subsequent action against a DC of (15 + power rank) to focus properly. Once the power is inactive, lost ranks return at a rate of one per round until fully restored. The power distracts through pain, a morphine-like buzz, stimulation of pleasure centers, feverish distraction, hallucinations, etc.

This is written as a new power even though its effect in Lockdown is related to the soporific effects of the psychoactive drugs used against prisoners.

POWER STUNT

- **Extra Effect:** You can control how this power manifests, be it to distract others through pleasure or through pain.
- **Removable:** You can willingly eliminate this power's effect on the target.

EXTRAS

- **Contagious:** While still affected by Befuddle, your target can inadvertently infect other targets through touch using the rules mentioned above. Those vectored by this power become transmitters for as long as Befuddle affects them.
- **Damaging:** The pain this power causes is real, as per Mental Blast, and is equal to your power rank in Befuddle.
- **Hallucinations:** The target suffers from hallucinations as per the power Illusion (sight only). You have no control over the hallucination nor knowledge of what the target sees, but the nature of your effect dictates the nature of the hallucination. If your touch is hypnotic in nature, the hallucinations are generally harmless or even happy. If your touch induces feverish illness, however, then the hallucinations are frightening.
- **Manipulate:** You can manipulate other people's reactions to you, as long as the befuddlement is of a positive nature (distraction by enhancing the pleasure centers, for example) as per Super-Charisma equal to your power rank. The target must be within line of sight of you for you to enjoy its effects.
- **Range:** You can target opponents at normal range by making a ranged attack roll instead of touching your adversary.

FLAW

- **Limited—One Effect:** You can only hinder one attribute and its related skills, whether you Befuddle Dexterity and anything related to it or Charisma and all its pertinent actions. In this manner, you might make someone tongue-tied or distract them enough to lend them two left feet for the power's duration.
- **Limited—One Shot:** You can only distract the character for one round each time you use this power.

Secondly, a gold card can bypass doors affected by lockdown (but not translocation), and Security Central never registers the door as opening or closing. Thirdly, the card deactivates magnetic locks, allowing the holder to move through the less-traveled maintenance corridors. Finally, gold passcards access Four Tier's sub-basement through the cargo elevators (by pressing buttons for Cellblocks: D, A, F, F, I), which will not stop to pick up other passengers. The gold passcards issued to trustees are actually disguised as a medic-alert bracelets, which *should* prevent ignorant COs from confiscating them.

TRANSLOCATION

Mentioned previously, the translocation web is a series of 15 generators scattered around the facility, some 20 yards into the mountainside. Each has a "homing beacon," allowing Cartel technicians to translocate the generators themselves into Four Tier's maintenance bays. Otherwise, each generator can target-isolate specific areas of the facility. The effect is similar to

picking up the affected hallway, stairwell or elevator shaft and physically moving it elsewhere in the mountain. The stone material the translocated corridor "displaces" trades places with the removed section. So, where a corridor or stairwell was previously, there's now solid rock.

Within the trapped section, the lights fail, the ventilation stops and everything goes dead quiet because the section is elsewhere in the mountain, far from the constant hum of generators, ventilation and fluorescent lights. Where the corridor ends is a plug of rock several hundred feet deep – nothing to do but hope whoever put you there brings you back.

One prison urban legend surrounding the shunt involves stories of some helpless con being split in two when a translocation shear catches him. Fact is, organic tissue doesn't "poof" that easily. The atomic bonds and body's bioelectric field prevents a prisoner from being sheared or imbedding him in rock. The victim is simply expelled in one empty location or another... forcibly,

with some molecular disruption (effectively Energy Blast +10 [*Extras*: Ghost Touch, Penetrating Attack; *Flaws*: No Range]).

The shunt generators can work in tandem to create a one-shot, *coup de grace* that transports the entire prison (One Tier on down) out of the mountain along with the generators themselves. This mass translocation is devastating because it traps the prison in a tesseract bubble of liquid shadow. The liquid shadow is a viscous magma that floods the facility slowly, drowning all within and draining all forms of energy (see page 95). Meanwhile, the mountain itself is suddenly hollowed out with little structural support, causing a massive cave-in that collapses the peak and destroys Buckner Ridge. This is the Cartel's way of "covering its tracks," eliminating all evidence of the facility, and creating enough chaos to preoccupy the authorities for months.

One final note on shunting and innovations called breach pods. Security Central has pods that can hold up to ten officers. These pods are effectively detached elevator cages protected with heavy plating. When security needs to get forces to an isolated area they can shunt the pods and the officers within anywhere inside the mountain. This allows them to appear in isolated sections and rescue those trapped within, or suppress pockets of prisoners that are causing problems.

SEISMIC DETECTORS

Scattered throughout the facility's maintenance corridors are seismic detectors, calibrated to register any number of events. The detectors can determine when someone is hammering through the rock or plating with enough force to cause structural damage or when they're displacing lava in the magma chamber far beneath the facility (see **Power** on page 40). The detectors also register tunnelers trying to dig their way into the facility by rock displacement (which generates stress fractures on the surrounding materials due to the crushing weight of the mountain; increase the DC to use Elemental Control (Earth) and Disintegration to tunnel undetected by +10).

SUPPRESSION TECHNOLOGY

Power suppression runs the gamut of technology, from suppression fields to neuro-chemical inhibitors to neuralgic agents. The only commonality they share is they target individuals and not whole groups (like tranquilizing gas or white noise emitters).

SUPPRESSION FIELDS

Often, the easiest way to shackle super-convicts is with a power suppression field, limiting the energy-exchange reaction within their bodies that govern their powers or heightened abilities. They negate all energy-regulation processes above a baseline, human level, keeping powers dampened while keeping the target's faculties intact.

CHEMICAL INHIBITOR

Inmates with neuro-chemical or genetic powers receive an injected chemo-inhibitor that blocks specific biochemical reac-

tions. Other infusion-type agents include neuro-inhibitors to drain the target of strength, or even the will, to activate their power. If these don't work, the remaining option is a neuralgic agent, which causes the convict to suffer blinding pain when activating his ability.

PSI-DAMPENERS

For convicts with mental powers, Lockdown uses psi-dampening shackles, which hamper and slow brainwave activity through bio-electrical means. Unfortunately, this renders the subject mentally "sluggish." Fortunately for spellcasters, the same doesn't apply for their arcane-locks, which use a wide array of counterspells or materials to inhibit magic. Fae-type spell casters may find their shackles made of iron, while a necromancer's shackle may use sanctified magic to prevent spellcraft. If the magician or psionic proves immune to such treatments, the prison uses psychoactive drugs to send the villain into a doped-up stupor that prevents her from thinking straight enough to use her abilities.

And if all else fails, there's always hot sleep.

Lockdown's techs must calibrate each suppression field to handle specific physiologies. All units have anti-tampering devices that send a biofeedback charge into the convict. The suppression unit also alerts security of tampering, deactivation, or required maintenance. With the tracking beacon, security also knows the location of every prisoner when necessary.

The effects of the different types of units are outlined here and may be dropped into campaigns of any power level. If the power level of your game is significantly higher or lower than what's presented here, you may want to alter the power levels appropriately.

BRACER

These devices are silver bracers worn on both wrists.

- **Suppression Field variant:** Feedback – Electric +10 [*Flaws*: Device; *Source*: Super-Science], Drain – Powers +10 [*Extras*: Continuous; *Flaws*: Device; *Source*: Super-Science].
- **Neuralgic variant:** Feedback +10 [*Note*: Will Save (DC 20) to use powers; *Flaw*: Device; *Source*: Super-Science].
- **Psi-Jammer variant:** Drain – Powers +10 [*Extras*: Continuous; *Flaws*: Device; *Source*: Super-Science], Drain – Wisdom +5 [*Extras*: Continuous; *Flaws*: Device; *Source*: Super-Science].
- **Psychoactive variant:** Befuddle +10 [*Extras*: Continuous; *Flaws*: Device; *Source*: Super-Science].

Successfully tampering with a bracer of any kind requires a Disable Device (DC 30) check. All bracers have Hardness +12.

HARNES

This vest-like device is reserved for prisoners with higher-energy output.

- **Suppression Field variant:** Feedback – Electric +13 [*Flaws*: Device; *Source*: Super-Science], Drain – Powers +13 [*Extras*: Continuous; *Flaws*: Device; *Source*: Super-Science].

- **Neuralgic variant:** Feedback +13 [*Note:* Will Save (DC 23) to use powers; *Flaw:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science].
- **Psi-Jammer variant:** Drain – Powers +13 [*Extras:* Continuous; *Flaws:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science], Drain – Wisdom +5 [*Extras:* Continuous; *Flaw:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science].
- **Psychoactive variant:** Befuddle +13 [*Extras:* Continuous; *Flaws:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science].

Successfully tampering with a harness of any kind requires a Disable Device (DC 35) check. All harnesses have Hardness +14.

THE SUIT

An NBC-type hazard suit covering the convict from head to toe with power-draining gauntlets, boots, mask and harness.

- **Suppression Field variant:** Feedback – Electric +16 [*Flaws:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science], Drain – Powers +16 [*Extras:* Continuous; *Flaws:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science].
- **Neuralgic variant:** Feedback +16 [*Note:* Will Save (DC 26) to use powers; *Flaw:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science].
- **Psi-Jammer variant:** Drain – Powers +16 [*Extras:* Continuous; *Flaws:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science], Drain – Wisdom +5 [*Extras:* Continuous; *Flaw:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science].
- **Psychoactive variant:** Befuddle +16 [*Extras:* Continuous; *Flaws:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science].

Successfully tampering with a suit of any kind requires a Disable Device (DC 35) check. All suits have Hardness +16.

ROOM GENERATOR

The prison built several rooms and cells to shackle high-energy output convicts. These rooms cannot be transported, meaning the prisoner is either under hotsleep or shackled in some other way.

- **Suppression Field variant:** Feedback – Electric +20 [*Flaws:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science], Drain – Powers +20 [*Extras:* Continuous; *Flaws:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science].
- **Neuralgic variant:** Feedback +20 [*Note:* Will Save (DC 30) to use powers; *Flaw:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science].
- **Psi-Jammer variant:** Drain – Powers +20 [*Extras:* Continuous; *Flaws:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science], Drain – Wisdom +10 [*Extras:* Continuous; *Flaw:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science].
- **Psychoactive variant:** Befuddle +19 [*Extras:* Continuous; *Flaws:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science].

Successfully tampering with any room's power dampens requires a Disable Device (DC 40) check. All of a room's power-dampening devices have Hardness +20.

FACILITY-WIDE DETERRENTS

Lockdown relies on several stages of power suppression, from the subtle to the overt. Already mentioned was the station-wide tesseract field, which serves to frighten some prisoners into compliance, but there are other "deterrents" to stop prisoners from using their



powers. Most function best when the area in question is isolated by blast-doors, to prevent others from getting hurt.

TRANQUILIZER GAS PORTS

Security can flood any section with knock-out gas, enough to floor elephants, if necessary.

- **Tranquilizer Gas:** Fatigue +15 [*Extras:* Continuous; *Flaws:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science].

ELECTRIC DISRUPTION FIELD

Corridor and room-plating act as conductors for electrical generators located throughout Lockdown, which can pacify prisoners fast.

- **Electric Disruption Field:** Energy Blast – Electrical +10 [*Extras:* Continuous; *Flaws:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science].

SCREAM GENERATORS

The modified intercom system is capable of selectively blasting areas with omni-directional sound waves.

- **Scream Generators:** Energy Control – Sonic +10 [*Flaws:* Device; *Source:* Super-Science].

ONE TIER

The three separate locations comprising One Tier remain virtually autonomous from one another and serve different functions. The first is Administration, handling the prison's day-to-day operations. The second location houses both prisoner processing and the security wing of Lockdown. The third location is for warehousing and vehicle maintenance.

ADMINISTRATION WING

The administration wing contains the prison's civilian staff, and remains off-limits to all prisoners. Most staff members are natives to the town of Buckner Ridge, except for Cartel personnel who live in town but rarely interact with locals. The office block is Lockdown's public façade, meaning it contains little evidence of the Cartel's activities; the number of people working for the Cartel in this section is at a minimum.

The office block has opaque glass walls partitioning the offices, each of which has two or three desks per room. Included are computers for every station, external phone lines, printers, faxes, filing cabinets and assorted homey curios one would expect to find in a white-collar grinder. In fact, the office's mundane nature almost belies its presence at the ultra-modern Lockdown. The office block includes:

- **Reception:** Elderly Adlai Parker sits at her grand desk, answering phones, buzzing in visitors as long as they have appointments, playing solitaire and entertaining the occasional visitor in reception's five-chair waiting lounge.
- **Meeting Room:** A typical meeting room with a large desk to accommodate twelve chairs, as well as a dry-erase board and display monitor that pipes in any image from an office PC. The wall monitor also handles video-conferencing calls.
- **Purchasing:** The offices and adjoining supply room contain three desks for the facility's supply clerk and his assistants, as well as shelving units with an assortment of office provisions, and filing cabinets with shipping orders and invoices.
- **Mainframe Hub:** The office computers operate off the mainframe stored in this room. The room also contains a desk for on-call computer specialist Elisa Hughes, who supervises Lockdown's Computer Services department.
- **Accounting:** The office contains three staff members under the eagle eyes of office comptroller Jacqueline Verro. Although the transactions here are purely legitimate, everyone in accounting is in the Cartel.
- **Human Resources:** Like its accounting counterpart, HR handles the legitimate convict-lease programs at the prison, though its staff doesn't know about the illegal contracting taking place in Four Tier's sub-basement.
- **Legal:** The legal department is perhaps the most harried office, with torts, appeals and innumerable stacks of paperwork on the four desks. The legal procedures involved in keeping the prison operating occupy the legal beagles here late into the night.

- **Compliance Assurance:** Compliance Assurance practically runs the management of the prison, ensuring everyone is working within State and Federal guidelines. As expected, this office is immaculate since it hosts investigators before they visit the prison proper.
- **Warden's Office:** At the head of the corridor is the two-room office of Warden Creed and his personal secretary Benjamin Talbot. Both rooms are rather spacious with heavy dark wood furniture and gleaming chrome decorating the interior space. The chairs are deliberately uncomfortable, however; both Creed and Talbot discourage visitors.
- **Lunch Room:** Administration staff lunch area is a comfy lounge with four lunch tables, two couches and four chairs. A plasma-screen television pipes in satellite broadcasts, while against the wall rest a variety of vending machines that sell candies and soda. Dominating one side of the lunch room is a well-stocked kitchen. Every Friday, Adlai serves a home-cooked meal for her fellow office workers.

WAREHOUSING WING

The warehousing wing deals almost exclusively with the sally port's daily traffic. As such, this wing is accessible from the tunnel itself, and isolated from the prison except through the exterior vault door and prisoner processing beyond.

Warehousing contains the docks to unload trucks, storage for supplies, and the garage for vehicle maintenance. Because the three locations are hewn directly into the mountain rock, without additional plating for added security, they all look like underground bunkers. Filthy with dust, grease and the tread of heavy equipment, and noisy with the echoes of machines and shouting workers, the warehousing wing feels more vibrant than any other place in Lockdown.

GARAGE

The garage bay is a well-stocked work environment, with four areas whose ceiling height measures three stories high. The first and central area is the garage proper, with three large doors against the outside wall, each facing one of three large work pits. Two of the pits can handle rig-sized vehicles including the Carnival's refueling truck, while the last pit is for forklifts and cars. Rather than elevating the vehicles, the pits are concrete trenches where mechanics stand beneath a vehicle's undercarriage. A web of chains and rail-tracks with hydraulic bogies (to move heavy equipment) cover the ceiling, enabling mechanics to lift engine blocks from cars and move them to the workshop or parts room.

Behind the work pit is the second area, a parts bay with shelving units two stories high. It contains nearly every conceivable part for the facility's vehicles as well as extras for the different transport trucks. For a modest fee, Lockdown can repair most engine problems for truckers and staff given the nearest major garage is dozens of miles away in Buckner Ridge (which can't handle big rigs). Unfortunately, this "helping hand" is also a security risk that has yet to be exploited. Prisoners who manage to reach One

Tier in their escape could conceivably hide in a truck that's being repaired, and sneak out of the facility that way. Or even, anyone trying to slip into the facility could hide in a vehicle as it's being brought into the garage. Facility access beyond this point is limited, however.

Left of the work pits, through an open archway, is the workshop where mechanics can operate on engine blocks and smaller pieces. Available here are two large workbenches for heavy equipment, lockers for small tools (ranging from acetylene torches to wrenches) and three doors, two of which lead to the lounge/lunchroom and the other to Chief Mechanic Jasper Brown's office.

The third door is the vault door to fuel storage, which remains protected behind twenty feet of rock and ceramic plating. The chamber's walls are designed to contain a jet fuel explosion, though that remains to be tested. The chamber is airtight and equipped with air pumps that can create a vacuum to kill any blazes, though the first line of defense is fire-suppression foam. This large chamber contains eight tanks for normal fuel, and another eight reinforced tanks for jet fuel. The tanks connect to sally port fuel pumps, though the gas lines have multiple kill switches to prevent an explosion from breaching into the sally port.

WAREHOUSING

The docks lead to a wide corridor lined with six warehouses (three on each side), four stories high apiece. The facility stockpiles two months' worth of supplies in case of emergencies. The corridor is wide enough to handle three eighteen-wheelers shoulder to shoulder, allowing multiple forklifts to operate simultaneously. The warehouses are standard, with heavy shelving units reaching the ceiling, and ample lanes to handle the forklifts with their wide turn arcs. All materials are loaded on wooden pallets. The warehouses contain the following:

- **Office/Lounge:** A simple desk to handle input of supplies and requests sits in the corner, while the room itself has a lounge and kitchenette for the dock workers.
- **Warehouse #1:** Large refrigeration units handle perishable food stocks, as well as shelf space for non-perishables, for the cafeteria and commissary.
- **Warehouse #2:** Toiletry and linens (clothing, socks, and underwear sold through the commissary, as well as blankets, towels, etc.).
- **Warehouse #3:** General supplies for the different departments like spare medical beds and dressings, office furniture and light fixtures, etc.
- **Warehouse #4:** Reinforced replacement materials like alloy plates, doors, diamond-matrix glass, cabling, etc.
- **Warehouse #5:** Replacement parts for facility's mechanical devices and spare equipment like air scrubbers, portable generators, air compression units, etc.
- **Warehouse #6:** Various-sized prison cells, pre-shackled for specific convicts.

BAKERY

While this may catch most visitors by surprise, Lockdown needs its own bakery to handle the constant demand for bread and other baked goods. The bakery has its own kitchen complete with well-stocked pantry, assembly production-line, large oven units and storage freezers.

PRISONER PROCESSING WING

Although some sections are isolated from one another, "prisoner processing" is the catch-all term for One Tier's secured sections. It's also the only top floor section connected to the prison proper and, as such, full security protocols are in effect. This includes translocation, plated corridors and various riot-suppression means.

Two general areas comprise this section: Prisoner Processing and Security Central.

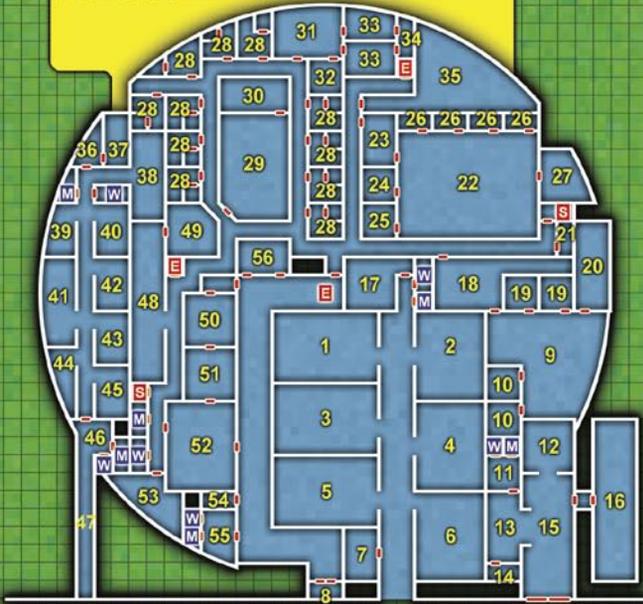
PRISONER PROCESSING

Prisoner processing is essentially the prison's real entrance. Because most prisoners arrive inside a containment unit like an "Egg," the hallways and rooms in prisoner processing are wide enough for a fully burdened forklift to maneuver through with ease. In fact, forklifts carrying supplies or cells must use the Vault and prisoner processing to reach the elevator banks.

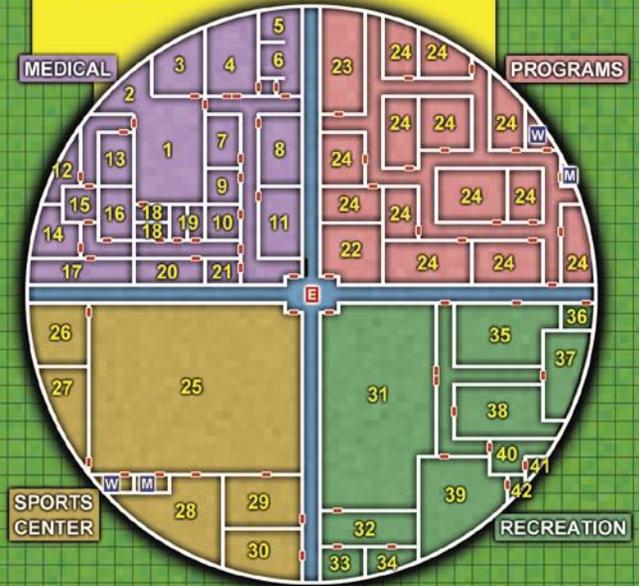
To handle such heavy traffic, the plates in this section are covered in concrete, bearing the scuffs and black tire marks of forklift traffic. In between each section are closed blast doors, which impede traffic, and multiple cameras to monitor everyone in the area.

- **The Vault:** The chrome-plated vault door leading from the sally port tunnel is actually two vault doors that never open simultaneously. Both are two stories high, and thick, with a triple-alloy shielding extending into the rock and down the first corridor.
- **Reception and Waiting:** Lockdown is deliberately remote to discourage family and friends from visiting their loved ones. Still, Lockdown does receive visitors, who must call in advance for an appointment. The second level of deterrent in visiting the prisoner is at so-called reception and waiting, along the first corridor. A secured security booth (mirrored diamond-matrix glass and reinforced paneling) serves as reception, which overlooks the adjoining waiting room. The waiting room is cramped with no ventilation, no television, eight plastic chairs and a table with no magazines. Visitors must surrender all personal possessions including books and electronic devices at the security booth before entering. The process to fill out paperwork requires a half-hour to complete each time, and waiting for security to supposedly prep a convict for the visiting room is another 30 minutes. Even then, only one person at a time is allowed into the visiting room for "security concerns," meaning families must sometimes wait hours for everyone to see their loved one. Needless to say, few people are dedicated enough to undergo the experience more than once, which is what the prison wants.
- **Visiting Room:** The third and final deterrent to visitors comes from the prisoners themselves. Although diamond-matrix glass

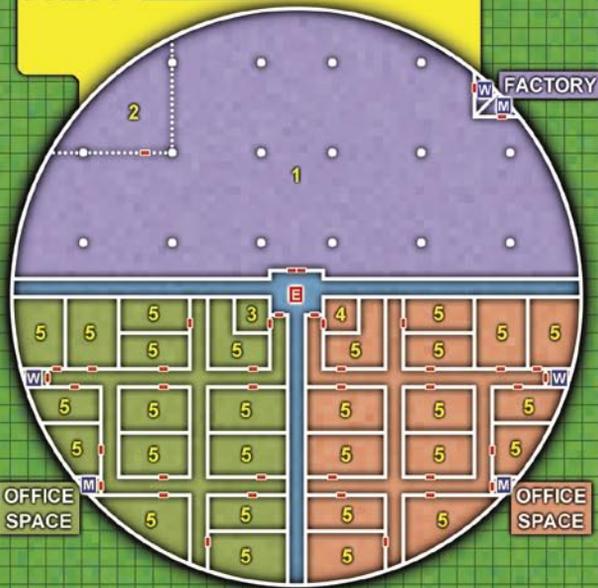
TIER ONE



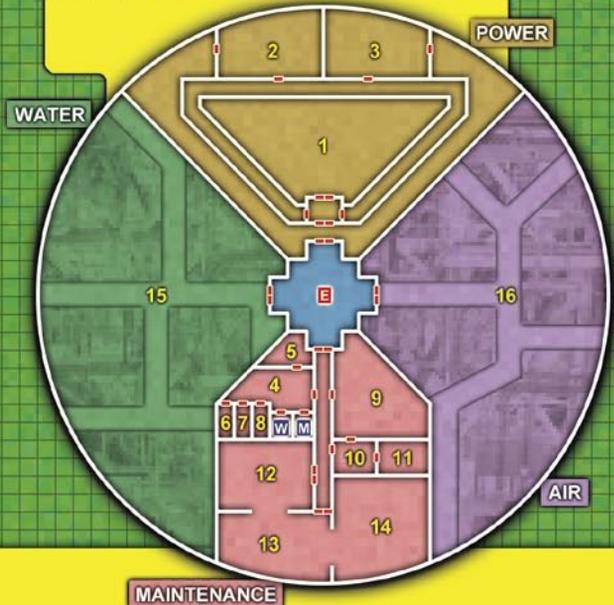
TIER TWO



TIER THREE



TIER FOUR



- E** - elevator **M** - men's restroom
- S** - stairs **W** - women's restroom

BUCKNER RIDGE

TIER MAP KEY

ONE TIER

1. Warehouse #1
2. Warehouse #2
3. Warehouse #3
4. Warehouse #4
5. Warehouse #5
6. Warehouse #6
7. Office Lounge
8. The Vault
9. Training Room
10. Class Room
11. Lunch Room
12. Parts Bay
13. Workshop
14. Brown's Office
15. Workpits
16. Fuel Storage
17. Bakery
18. Personal Possessions
19. Locker Room
20. Shooting Range
21. Supplies
22. Security Central
23. Think Tank
24. Situation Room

25. Daily Archiving
26. Office
27. Security Archives
28. Apartment
29. Cafeteria
30. Kitchen
31. Gym
32. Laundry Room
33. Locker Room
34. Jacuzzi & Steam Rooms
35. Armory
36. Talbot's Office
37. Warden's Office
38. Lunch Room
39. Mainframe Hub
40. Compliance Assurance
41. Purchasing
42. Legal
43. Human Resources
44. Meeting Room
45. Accounting
46. Reception
47. Administration Tunnel
48. Barracks
49. Bathrooms/Shower Stalls
50. Orientation Room

TWO TIER

1. Intensive Care
2. Secure IC
3. Recovery
4. Operating Room
5. Lockers & Showers
6. Prep
7. Dentist Workspace
8. Pharmacy
9. Dentist
10. Examination Room
11. Supply Room
12. Ultra
13. CT Scan
14. CAT Scan
15. Control Room
16. X-Ray
17. Diagnostics

18. Bathroom
19. Crash Rooms
20. Staff Lounge
21. Nurse Station
22. Post Office
23. Chapel
24. Class Room
25. Gymnasium
26. Female Shower Room
27. Male Shower Room
28. Supply Room
29. Weight Room
30. Barber Shop
31. Cafeteria
32. Kitchen
33. Supply Cage
34. Refrigerator/Freezer
35. Commissary
36. Phones
37. Laundry Room
38. Library
39. Game Room
40. Computer Room
41. Mainframe
42. Game Supplies

THREE TIER

1. Factory Floor
2. Warehouse
3. Soddy's Office
4. Office
5. Office

FOUR TIER

1. Power Core
2. Emergency Generator #1
3. Emergency Generator #2
4. Lounge & Lockers
5. Showers
6. Room w/cot
7. Room w/cot
8. Room w/cot
9. Control Room
10. Office
11. Filing Room
12. Repair Bay #1
13. Repair Bay #2
14. Warehouse
15. Water/Plumbing
16. Air/Ventilation

divides the length of this heavily-plated room, security insists that any convicts speaking with their family must be confined to an Egg on the other side of the glass. It's a way of humiliating the prisoner so that they don't want visitors in the first place. Lockdown doesn't derive any specific pleasure from such treatment, however. They just don't want outsiders frequenting the Mountain.

- **Processing 1:** This large, open area is where Lockdown registers its criminals. It looks like an empty warehouse four stories high with three large doors... one leading further into the facility, one behind the shielded security counter that leads to the security wing, and another leading back into the Vault's corridor. Prisoners in processing can expect to spend five hours in their Egg, during which time a counselor instructs the convict on life at Lockdown, as well as the rules and regulations. Afterwards, security processes the prisoner's records, followed by Buckner Ridge technicians confirming the Egg's scanners and calibrating their equipment to ensure all power-suppression methods are tailored to the new arrival. Before dispatching the prisoner to the next step, security also registers and stores the arrival's possessions. All prisoners entering or leaving processing must remain within a containment unit.
- **Processing 2:** Off the central corridor leading to the elevator banks are a series of smaller rooms to process the prisoner through the final phase. The first room is heavily shielded with active power suppression fields calibrated to their current occupant. Here, security opens the egg to release the prisoner under careful watch, and the on-call doctor conducts a cursory examination to ensure the convict's health. At this point, security shackles the prisoner with a portable power-suppression unit and leads him past the reinforced door into an orientation room where he receives his new prison uniform, towels, and basic toiletries. He

also meets the Ward Boss (fellow convict acting as representative for a particular cellblock). After the Ward Boss instructs the prisoner on Lockdown "etiquette," rules and regs, security escorts the convict to the elevator banks and down to his new home.

Processing here also handles the scanning and checking of incoming mail before sending it forward to Two Tier's post office. This includes sending the letters and packages through x-ray, a chemical sniffer, and an electromagnetic-scanner to determine if there are any hidden electronic components.

SECURITY CENTRAL WING

Security Central is the military heart of Lockdown, but it's also a place of sanctuary for the COs. No prisoners and few staff members are allowed here, without exception. This helps bond the COs into a fraternal unit, though there is a definite distinction and friction between regular COs who patrol the facility, the powered members of the Special Operations Unit, and the tech-officers who manage the facility's security technologies. Each group believes his job more important than that of his counterparts.

Security Central wing has the same look and security measures in place as the remaining prison, though the concern here is keeping prisoners out rather than anyone inside.

SECURITY LIVING QUARTERS

Although most of the non-powered correctional officers live in Buckner Ridge itself, shift-work demands some on-call COs to overnight it at the facility. Some SOU members also prefer living "on-base." Security living quarters is the housing section of the Mountain, providing all the amenities of barracks-life.

- **Barrack Dorm:** The Spartan barrack sports 20 sets of bunk beds for COs required to pull double shifts or for those trapped by inclement weather. The bunk beds have two storage lockers, while the barrack itself adjoins the bathroom/showers.
- **Apartments:** In-residence guards, particularly members of SOU, live dorm-style with one room/two-bed apartments. The only exceptions are Lt. Ulysses "Strafe" Layton (see page 53), Javier Carlos Paz (see page 54), and Gail Flinn (see page 32) who each have a room to themselves. Each "apartment" comes equipped with the standard two beds, two desks, two closets, and a bathroom.
- **Lounge:** The CO lounge is a larger version of the staff lunch room with ten lunch tables, six couches and ten chairs. There's a plasma-screen TV with satellite feed, vending machines (for snacks and candy, quick toiletries, and sodas), three video-game cabinets, two pinball machines, two pool tables, and a dart board. There's also a fully-stocked adjoining kitchen for anyone cooking their own meals, and a small library of reading materials.
- **Cafeteria:** A typical cafeteria with six long tables and bench seating, vending machines and a cafeteria-style buffet with hot meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner (two meals on Saturday and Sunday). In-residence guards receive meal cards for seven free meals a week. Adjoining the cafeteria is a narrow kitchen with stoves, dishwasher, supply pantry, large refrigerator, and walk-in freezer.
- **Gym:** Small but well-stocked, the gym comes equipped with a variety of aerobic exercisers and magnetic weights capable of lift resistance of up to two tons. Adjoining the gym are locker rooms, showers, steam rooms, and a Jacuzzi, as well as a laundry room.
- **security head Capt. Chet Cogan, tech-officer head Lt. Freeman Thane and Preemptive Intervention head Javier Carlos Paz.**
- **Security Archives:** At the end of each day, all the information processed through Security Central and compiled in daily archiving onto memory chips is sent to Security Archives for storage. Tech-officers then catalogue the contents for computer cross-reference searches that Security Central can call up at any time. Security Archives is a large storage room with banks of cabinet-sized mainframes to protect thousands of memory chips. Because Lockdown is a relatively new facility, barely one of the fifty storage hubs is in use.
- **Armory:** Although the COs are well-armed, the armory contains heavier weaponry to handle prison riots, all protected behind a blast door, inside a room with reinforced plating of the same caliber as the door. Entry is strictly prohibited to all except red and gold passcard carriers. The room holds a variety of weapons, ammunitions and armors on all four walls. (Most of the weapons are Weapons (ranged) ranging from +5S to +8S, though Gamemasters should feel free to include exotics like one or two disintegrators (Disintegration +8), power disruptors (Neutralize +10), net-guns (Snare +10), etc.; likewise for armor, bulletproof and composite body-armors run the gamut from +5 to +8). The armory also contains 18 SOU Paladin Suits (see page 49) and 6 SOU Paladin-MT Suits (see page 49), as well as an adjoining work bay to repair them.
- **Think Tank:** The think tank is a situation room used by the best tech-officers Lt. Thane has in his ranks. They deal with the daily mechanical problems of the facility, and determine the best course of action to handle it and keep it from happening again. This can include the malfunction of a prisoner's shackles or the unanticipated discharge of the gas jets. The think tank also reviews incoming supply manifests and the specific make of new products to determine whether they can be considered inert or used as weapons. The think tank room is a large boardroom with fold-down computer screens at each seat, and an electronic projection board.
- **Training Room:** This gym area is a large, open space covered with crash mats, climbing ropes and an obstacle course. Four trainers under Chief Trainer Gail Flinn coach the guards in self-defense, keeping them sharp and in shape. Adjoining the training room is a shooting range, two classrooms for courses, and locker rooms with showers.
- **Towers:** Two elevators and six flights of stairs access the windowed tunnels seen inside the sally port. The tunnels lead to two guard towers facing the exterior ledge. Both towers remain protected behind tinted diamond-matrix glass and reinforced plating. Inside, they're like air-traffic control towers with large windows overlooking a sweeping mountain vista and a semi-circle of monitors facing out. Tower One's tech-officers handle all the information feeds from personnel and cameras at the checkpoint bunkers and security fences. Tower Two handles the radar towers and automated gun emplacements (though One can assume control of that function in a pinch), as well as coordinating with local air-traffic controls.

SECURITY OPERATIONS

This section comprises the core of security and surveillance measures at Lockdown, where guards monitor and handle internal and external security 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- **Security Central:** This huge, open room looks like the command deck of a starship with a command platform and catwalks overlooking rows of monitor banks and 40 tech-officers on supervision duty. Every camera and scanner inside the Mountain feeds into this section, with over 500 screens active and sifting through the huge array of data. Thankfully, the mainframe's AI-filters only show what's potentially relevant, with five huge screens displaying the most pertinent information. The computers here are isolated from external access like satellite and phone wire feeds to prevent hackers and electronic entities from gaining control of Security Central. Guards activate the tesseract shunts from here, though there is an emergency activation switch in the facility itself, in a locked room keyed only to gold passcards in Four-Tier's sub-basement (see **Translocation Pad** on page 41).

Adjoining command central are four offices with glass walls the occupants can tint for privacy, as well as a room for daily archiving and another set aside as a Situation Room for meetings. The four offices belong to SOU head Lt. Layton, CO and

- **Personal Possessions:** This small warehouse filled with shelving units topped with boxes contains all the non-powered personal possessions prisoners were wearing or had with them when the authorities captured them. Because the federal government has jurisdiction in these matters, all potentially dangerous pieces of equipment and devices remain in federal – not Lockdown’s or the Cartel’s – custody. This includes powered armor, magical talismans, and weapons of all types. The majority of what remains in this warehouse are costumes or street clothing, wallets, shoes, etc. though who knows what magical trinket or hidden technology escaped the feds’ attention.
- **Supplies:** A small stockroom with a window overlooking the hallway, this room contains all the essential, uniform-related supplies a CO might need. Supply Clerk Owen Sadler hands out new uniforms and shoes, as well as fitting new COs for their workattire.

CELLBLOCKS A-E: TYPE I-V SUPERHUMANS

Cellblocks sandwiched between One and Two Tier are called “gen-pop” or general population units. They handle the bulk of Lockdown’s prisoners. All inmates here are male and incarcerated based on power level. The prison requires that all convict clothing bear the cellblock’s letter on the back for clear and quick identification. No prisoner is allowed in any other cellblock, but his own (except in specific cases as mentioned in **Chapter Three**). While some convicts have traded clothing to sneak into other units, the COs assigned to each cellblock know the convicts by face and name; the COs receive weekly reports on incoming or outgoing prisoners, so they know very quickly if someone is supposed to be there or not.

Supervising Cellblock A is considered the safest gen-pop gig in Lockdown considering most of the incarcerated here are “powerless” without their tools or magic. Naturally, “powerless” is a relative term, but in comparison to the other blocks, it’s adequately accurate. Cellblock A is exactly as described previously (see **Basic Layout: The Cellblocks** on page 20), though most of the bays here contain cells. Type I supers seem most prevalent, or perhaps they’ve simply proven the easiest to catch. Subsequent units, up to E, drop off in terms of inmate population at each level, with more empty gaps between cells.

Because many Type I’s rely on heightened abilities to level the playing field, the use of technology here is extremely limited. No Type I may possess mechanical or electronic devices of any kind including wristwatches and radios, or potentially fine tools like toothpicks, sewing needles, paperclips or hairpins, all of which are contraband. Furthermore, security assigns maintenance to clean the cells as opposed to elsewhere where the inmates handle the cleaning duties. No Cellblock A prisoner may possess any cleaning products outside of screened self-care products (toothbrushes, combs, and brushes are allowed).

Cellblock B follows the same restrictions as Cellblock A, even though the COs consider the prisoners here more dangerous by dint of their physical prowess.

Cellblocks C and D, however, have their own issues thanks to spontaneous and random energy discharges. They occur for no apparent reason, though the think tank claims it’s a by-product of shackling so many prisoners who can normally channel, redirect or alter energy states. The discharges are unusual, but brief, be it a flash of St. Elmo’s fire or an unusual build up of static electricity. Some tech-officers studying the matter believe the various containment methods leak energy on a scale of pica-ergs, which results in the occasional surge. Preemptive Intervention, however, fears the small outbursts are symptomatic of a much larger problem, though they don’t know what that might entail. It could be the shunt generators reacting to a particular energy manipulator, it could be a prisoner using his powers on a microscopic scale, or any number of other theories the Preemptive Intervention staff have.

The most unusual unit is Cellblock E, for Type V prisoners. Often called the “Zombie Ward” by inmates and guards alike, Cellblock E contains some mentally addled psychics who shuffle around in a stupor as well as walls covered by various arcane runes designed against this necromancer or that geomancer. Guards hate this duty second to the Psychiatric Housing Unit (PHU), if only because the prisoners are mentally unstable by drugs or due to their exploration of the dark arts. Cellblock E is also a hodge-podge of different occult materials designed to impede spellcraft, be it iron plating over some cells or sanctified wood.

TWO TIER

Known as the common or communal area, Two Tier is the heart of prisoner social life in Lockdown. It’s where convicts interact with allies from other cellblocks, and feel normal for a few hours in their day.

Two Tier runs two stories high to counteract the potentially claustrophobic nature of the Mountain. Generally, the walls aren’t as reinforced as those found elsewhere in the facility since few areas on this floor are restricted to prisoners. As result, the level is akin to a small maze of office corridors that open into classrooms or larger communal areas. The four corridors branching out from the elevator banks are the most heavily plated. They end at the four compass points against the exterior walls defining Two Tier’s perimeter. Security can thus isolate the different quarters of this level through blast doors and shunts along the main arteries, but not specific areas within each quarter. The four sections cater to the different needs of the inmates.

QUARTER ONE: MEDICAL

The Medical Quarter is a mini-hospital capable of handling most common emergencies bound to arise in Lockdown, as well as some uncommon ones (treating radiation burns, for example). The doctors keep the hospital well-stocked for patient care since transporting prisoners for medical treatment is a logistical nightmare. Medical may also care for any prison staff hurt for whatever reason, but they generally stabilize and transport the badly wounded to nearby Buckner Ridge General Hospital so the patient can recover away from potential danger. Only the critically injured remain here until their condition stabilizes.

While the doctors and nurses are trained to handle the wide-array of physiologies found in Lockdown, it isn't uncommon for them to occasionally rely on the medical or technical expertise of some ultra-intelligent Type I's or II's in a pinch. Naturally SOU guards closely monitor those situations, but so far, some prisoners have proven adept at saving others. Medical contains the following:

- **Nurses Station:** The Nurses Station overlooks the entrance. This large counter contains all the relevant information for the treatment of current patients, emergency monitors for anyone in intensive care and computers with medical records for all staff and prisoners.
- **Supply Rooms:** Reinforced and passcard locked, the main supply room contains all immediate supply needs for the hospital, from the mundane to the specialized (blankets, tongue depressors, additional surgical implements, bandages, sutures, etc.).
- **Pharmacy:** This room contains a cornucopia of drugs. Because of the gamut of physiologies, the drugs cover a wide-array of effects (anti-coagulants to slow down fast-healers, elephant tranquilizers to knockout powerhouses, etc.), though some of the drugs are illegal and not FDA approved.
- **Intensive Care (IC):** When doctors feel patients need overnight care or monitoring they are assigned to IC. Otherwise, they release most prisoners back to their cells. This area is an open hall with ten beds. Two other beds remain protected behind a reinforced grill to care for any minors or any supers from Cellblock F (Protective Custody).
- **Examination Rooms:** Typical examination rooms, each with a bench-like bed covered in disposable paper and filled with an array of relevant supplies. Doctors and nurses never leave convicts in these rooms alone. Another room and adjoining work room serve as a dentist's office and workspace.
- **Diagnostics:** Containing the most sophisticated machinery in the medical quarter, diagnostics boasts an array of scanning equipment in smaller sub-rooms designed to scrutinize the patient's internals – CT scans, X-Rays, CAT scans, ultrasound, etc. The various rooms are all networked to the central control room overlooking each diagnostics unit and correlating their data. Patients aren't allowed into these rooms without an escort due to the amount of equipment they contain.
- **Operating Room (OR):** This small, white room contains state-of-the-art equipment, including an articulated laser arm to penetrate thick hides. Adjoining OR is the surgical prep area with lockers, showers, wash basins and hazmat disposal for bloodied surgical garb.
- **Recovery Area:** Small area set aside for patients to recover from surgery.
- **Staff Lounge:** As per Administration's lunch room (see page 28).
- **Crash Rooms:** Two small rooms for on-call doctors or nurses looking to catch some sleep.

QUARTER TWO: PROGRAMS

Admittedly while some super-villains remain incorrigible scoundrels, there are those hoping to make a better life for themselves upon their release. These souls take advantage of the programs offered. The majority of the supers here are from Cellblock F (Protective Custody) and Cellblock G (Youth Rehabilitation Ward) who, as minors, are required by state law to attend classes for the majority of their day. The rest are from the remaining Cellblocks (except I, J, and K), looking to spend their time constructively or hoping to alleviate boredom.

This quarter is exclusively classrooms, offices and workshops. The only two exceptions are the large, non-denominational chapel where some prisoners receive weekly services or meetings (for "accepted" religious groups like Islam, Hinduism, Christianity and Judaism; not for cult or fringe beliefs) and the Post Office where prisoners process incoming mail. For the chapel, local ministers visit and conduct services, or a leading prisoner steps in to help. For the Post Office, most of the mail received is already scanned by security on One Tier.

Each room has blackboards as well as desks and chairs to handle most prisoners, while others contain work benches or even floor mats. It all depends on the courses or programs being offered. The offices are reserved for teachers and counselors who wish to speak with certain prisoners on an individual basis. In this case, the windows are tinted to protect the prisoner's privacy and to encourage discussion.

This quarter of Two Tier offers counseling services, AA meetings, adult and juvenile education, fine arts programs, mentoring for new arrivals or young convicts, and support for groups like the Women's Collective and Parents Behind Bars.

QUARTER THREE: SPORTS CENTER

Physical activity is a suitable release for frustration, so Lockdown built the gymnasium and weight center that nearly dominates one full quarter of Two Tier.

- **Shower Room:** Adjoining the gymnasium are two shower rooms and bathrooms.
- **Gymnasium:** The gym is large enough to hold two full-length basketball courts side-by-side, though the second court is often reserved for volleyball. A running track frames the exterior of both courts, while bleachers line the two sides for spectators. Once a week, the gym also hosts movie night with a feature film projected on the far wall.
- **Supply Room:** A room with basketballs, volleyballs and a disassembled boxing ring for the occasional prison matches. It also holds folding chairs for movie nights.
- **Weight Room:** The weight room is well-stocked with some aerobic machines, pads for stretching and isometric exercises, and work-out benches with free-weight stands.
- **Barber Shop:** A small shop to handle haircuts with some prisoners managing the operation, though security heavily monitors

the equipment they use. The barber shop is also the place to barter or find organic materials (see **Kogut Laws and Jury-Rigging** sidebar on page 13).

QUARTER FOUR: RECREATION

This quarter contains almost everything a prisoner might need during his incarceration. An idle prisoner is a dangerous prisoner, so boredom is a constant threat.

- **Cafeteria:** The largest space is the prisoner cafeteria, which seats one-hundred fifty prisoners. In the adjoining kitchen, convicts prepare the latest culinary tortures for their peers, or wash dishes, or serve slop at the buffet-line. At the back of the kitchen is the supply cage and refrigerators and freezers.
- **Commissary:** Prisoners spend an average of \$35 a week at the commissary, making it a brisk business venture for the elderly owners, Tammy and Joseph Kendall, two retired small-time supervillains who met and married after both serving time. Tammy “The Tampa Twister” and Joseph “Spindrift” are beloved by the other prisoners, who are always eager to hear about the older couple’s misadventures and zany, Golden Age escapades. The commissary, meanwhile, is as well stocked as any convenience store with a variety of junk food, approved magazines, novels, inert-grade toiletries, etc.
- **Game Room:** This lounge has a television as well as tables with chessboards and backgammon boards printed on the surface. There are also three pool tables and a ping-pong table in constant use. All prisoners using these facilities must sign for equipment at the supply window, and return all equipment before leaving. This way nobody can steal chess pieces and pool balls/cues without the supply officer knowing who was responsible for what. And because getting in trouble here means serving time on Administrative Segregation (see page 39) and losing all access to Two Tier for months, few prisoners want to assume that risk.
- **Laundry Room:** A large bank of 30 washers and dryers handle the constant stream of prisoner laundry, as well as folding benches, and a dispenser selling detergent and softener by the cup.
- **Library:** This is an open room with a single librarian’s desk at one end and three rows of long tables in the center. Books and shelves cover the remaining walls.
- **Phone Banks:** Lockdown makes no bones about the fact that it monitors conversations to ensure there are no unusual energy spikes over the lines. Any phone-line surge for one reason or another immediately activates the energy suppression fields in this room, which negate the use of electrical energy (Neutralize +16 [*Flaws*: Electrical Powers Only]). Otherwise, this is a simple room with bulletproof glass for walls and four phones against the back wall.
- **Computer Room:** The ten “computers” in this room are nothing more than monitors and keyboards connected to a central mainframe via cable bundles. The mainframe monitors web searches and addresses. The room itself contains a simple long table with monitors facing either side. Prisoners cannot have email accounts, and the system prevents access to sites with

email access, pornography, or other questionable content. A reinforced door with an orange passcard reader leads to a small plate-shielded closet protecting the mainframe.

CELLBLOCK F–H: SEGREGATED WARDS

Prisoners call the cellblocks between Two Tier and Three Tier the “segregated wards,” because the prison sorts residing inmates on a demographic or standing rather than individual power levels. Lockdown also calls them wards, to distinguish them from gen-pop. In fact, the prisoners here receive better treatment, if only to encourage their cooperation and instill the fear of transfer to gen-pop or the Special Housing Unit (SHU). Naturally, this doesn’t always work, but the prisoners of the segregated wards are far more likely to cooperate with COs.

The segregated wards are akin to the other cellblocks, with the same considerations in their design. The only difference is that because each ward handles inmates Type I through V, the suppression methods are more widespread, and the prisoners’ powers more varied.

Cellblock F, the Protective Custody Ward, is the first of the segregated wards. It handles an array of supers whose very identities place them in danger. Be they former heroes who incarcerated villains before their own fall from grace, snitches who turned federal evidence against allies, reformed supercrooks serving time to prove their sincerity, or vigilantes who were ruthless in their pursuit of justice, everyone in F Ward has something to lose if transferred to another cellblock. So they cooperate and, frankly, enjoy greater liberties than their gen-pop counterparts. They can curtain their cells for privacy during the day, request books from the library and have food from the cafeteria delivered to them. The COs even bend the rules, allowing the prisoners to watch real television using the staff channels; the COs are generally friendlier because they know that for every rogue prisoner here who might attack a guard, there are three “good-guys” ready to stop their peer. Fact of the matter is the Cartel doesn’t like having these would-be heroes around, so they keep them complacent to help mitigate their sentences for “good behavior;” it’s easy to be good in prison when circumstances are favorable. Cellblock F is the first of the co-ed cellblocks, and sets specific times when men or women can use the showers.

Cellblock G is the Youth Rehabilitation Ward for those underage supers convicted of a federal crime. Rather than lump them into gen-pop, however, Lockdown appears progressive by helping reform these wayward youngsters. One way they accomplish this is through a rewards system for good grades and good conduct. Screw up too often, and Lockdown won’t hesitate to transfer you out to the bigger gen-pop pond with the bigger sharks and their bigger teeth. Do well, however, and the rewards improve. They start with curtaining the cell, an “allowance” to purchase junk food at the commissary, and the right to poster your cell (except on the glass). Because G-Ward is at half-capacity, two empty cells are available for cellblock use. One serves as a music room and the other as a game room. Continue doing well, and they allow you access to the music room

where the kids rotate on song selection and chill on the sofas. Continued meritorious conduct not only allows you access to the game room with its television, video game console, pool table and three computers for scoping the Internet, but you're also allowed one electronic gizmo in your cell (radio, handheld game, etc). Because some parents move to Buckner Ridge to be closer to their kids, Lockdown is more lenient on its visitor policy; the wait is only ten minutes long, and parents can use one of the classrooms on Two Tier to spend a couple of hours per week with their kid. Cellblock G is the second co-ed ward.

Cellblock H is the Women's Ward and probably closest to gen-pop in its Spartan liberties and allowances. The COs are all female, and the only men allowed into this unit belong to SOU (and only to handle emergencies, though SOU also has women). Fact of the matter is, stereotypes pertaining to female prisoners and "naughty vixens behind bars" die real fast in Cellblock H. The female supers here are very protective of one another given they're surrounded by a male population that may have the wrong impression of their abilities; drop a man into prison, and he's a menace to society; put a woman in prison, and she's an erotic movie waiting to happen. The women of Cellblock H are the closest thing to a gang problem the prison faces, and while they do intermingle with male prisoners on Two Tier, insulting a woman at Lockdown will bring the assembled host down upon the offender's head. The only luxury female convicts receive at the Mountain is the right to curtain their cell and keep the curtain shut during the day. The threat here, however, is that betraying that trust could result in the entire ward losing their curtain rights. The female convicts supervise each other to ensure that doesn't happen.

THREE TIER

At one time, clothing lines like Prison Blues were manufactured in prison factories. Likewise, contractors have used prisoners as furniture makers and even international travel agents to handle all the work save for the final transaction (handling credit card numbers). Lockdown, however, is still hunting for clients. Three Tier is dedicated to the get-rich schemes of the lease-convict system. Although Buckner Ridge Penitentiary is certified by the federal program Prison Industry Enhancement (PIE), which essentially gives the prison sanction to sell their products in interstate commerce, their contracts are slim and mostly related to telemarketing work. So, this floor remains relatively abandoned except for a handful of small contracts.

Somewhat like Two Tier, the walls here are not reinforced with plating, except along the three corridors splitting off from the elevator banks, and along the exterior walls. Two corridors split Three Tier in half, while the remaining corridor splits one of the halves into two quarters. Essentially, this floor has three principle sections.

SECTION A: FACTORY FLOOR

This is the largest open space in Lockdown proper with exclusive access to one freight elevator. Dominating half of Three Tier, it extends its full length with only concrete support beams and a large chain-link cage (for warehousing) interrupting the hall. Otherwise, it's empty and dark. Lockdown is hoping to land a manufacturing contract, and has the floor capacity and power

outlets for whatever equipment the contractor brings in. Convicts rarely sneak into this part of Three Tier because it's too easy for patrols to spot them in the open area.

SECTION B AND C: OFFICE SPACE

The two office quarters are much like Two Tier's classrooms: a maze of corridors and empty rooms of varying sizes. Of the two, only B-Quarter sees any traffic, with phone banks in three different offices for census and telemarketing work. C-Quarter is completely dark and unused currently.

A fourth office in B contains the desk, computer and filing cabinet of John Soddy, the floor supervisor; Soddy has a rep among the prisoners for accepting bribes and looking the other way when inmates "borrow" a phone and jack into one of the "unsupervised" lines. Naturally, the entire thing's a ruse. Soddy has prison sanction to do this, even though he doesn't know about the Cartel or how they're using the "unsupervised" lines to gather intelligence on criminals and their enterprises. A locked fifth office contains necessary supplies including more folding chairs, tables, notebooks, pens, telephones and computer monitors and keyboards.

The empty offices are normally austere with nothing but empty tables and folding chairs for the prisoners to use, as well as whatever equipment they might need, be it telephone or computer. The phone-jacks are covered, but it's easy to pop open the plastic cover and replace it afterwards (Open Lock (DC 10)). There's a blackboard or marker board as well, to pen whatever information is crucial to the job.

Both quarters are tapped for sound, with bugs feeding into a special monitoring station at Security Central manned by Cartel tech-officers. The tech-officers eavesdrop on prisoners who sneak into the two quarters to conduct clandestine meetings or make illegal phone calls. The Cartel is rarely interested in the activity of the criminals themselves unless it poses a problem for the prison; instead, they gather information and blackmail material on prisoners, deciding who'd make a good Cartel operative for their ops. Naturally, this could also work to a hero's advantage if he wishes to infiltrate the Cartel by ingratiating himself into their ranks.

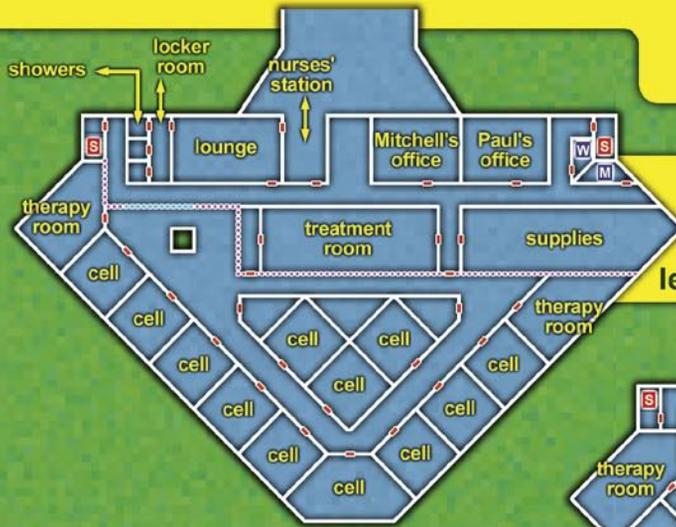
CELLBLOCK I: PHU

Psychiatric Housing Unit (PHU) is the first of the Special Treatment wards between Three Tier and Four Tier. The inmates here all suffer some measure of psychosis or mental health issues that preclude their interaction with inmates from Cellblocks A through H. This unit isn't so much a cellblock as it is an asylum. There are two floors instead of the open atrium design, with half the first floor containing the offices of the facility's psychologists, nurses and CO orderlies. Stairs in this area lead to the second floor and the isolated and currently unused nurse's station overseeing the top level. There are no other stairs connecting this cellblock with the units or tiers above or below it. The offices contain:

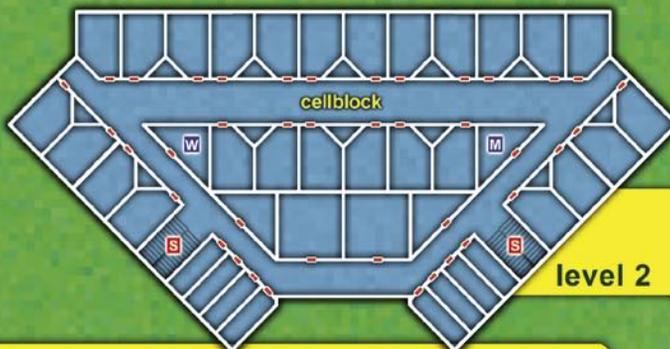
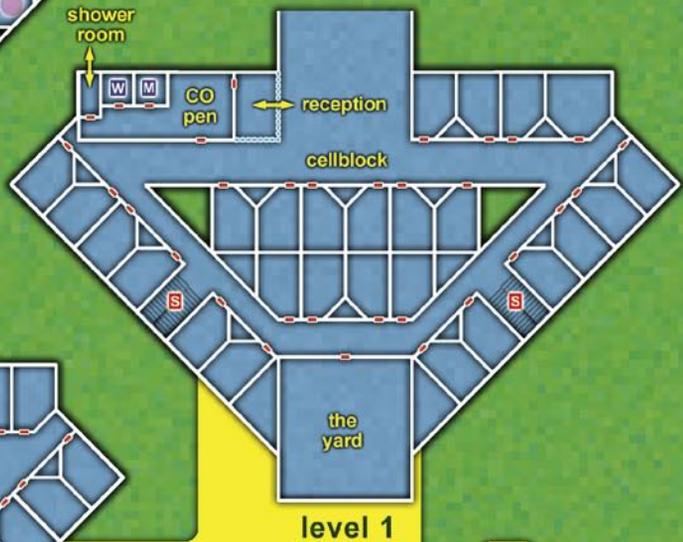
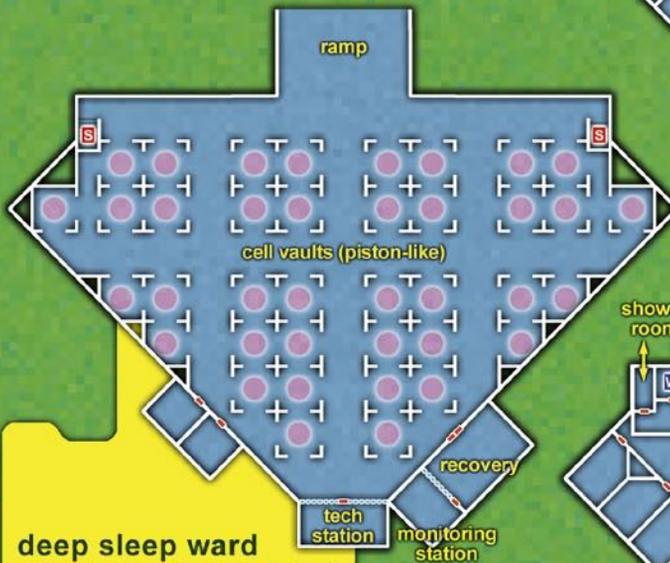
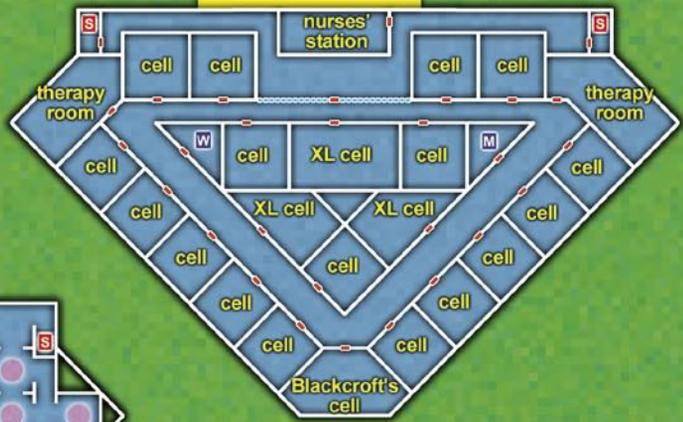
- **Psychologists Offices:** Dr. Lucy Mitchell and Dr. Gavin Paul both run Cellblock I, though inmates never see the interior of either office.

BUCKNER RIDGE

CELLBLOCK I psychiatric housing unit



level 2



- M - men's restroom
- W - women's restroom
- diamond matrix glass
- plated walls
- S - stairs

HOTSLEEP AND CRYOGENICS

So, who is eligible for hotsleep or cryogenics and who isn't? It depends on whether the prison can properly shackle a super or if his abilities somehow preclude suppression. Once the prison decides that a criminal is too dangerous awake thanks to his abilities, powers, or mental state, they can subject him to hotsleep first or, as a last resort, to cryogenic suspension. Strangely, cryogenics isn't a final option because of its effectiveness. Instead, it's a last resort because of the legal ramifications. Cryofreezing as incarceration is currently under review as a humanitarian abuse (cruel and unusual punishment) because it's effectively executing the prisoner. The techs must first flatline the prisoner, meaning they're killing him, which is unacceptable in a society that's done away with the death penalty. Pundits on either side of the issue argue the necessity/evils of the act (and if it constitutes actual murder). The federal government, however, does use the broad powers of the Patriot Act to allow for the "deep-sixing" of truly problem prisoners who might otherwise prove a serious menace to society.

So, how does deep-sixing work?

- **Hotsleep:** Drain - Regeneration and Healing +20 [Extras: Duration - continuous], Fatigue +20 [Extras: Duration - continuous].

Supers with Healing and Regeneration can fight the effects of Hotsleep. In this case, however, the system works in reverse, with the prisoner automatically assumed to be unconscious. If the prisoner successfully makes the three saving throws (DC 20) necessary to go from unconscious to exhausted, exhausted to fatigued and fatigued to normal, the Gamemaster should consider him subsequently immune to hotsleep. Failing any of the saves pushes him back to the previous condition, and once unconscious, the prisoner remains unconscious with no further saves allowed. Fortunately for characters in this predicament, there is a way out. Coma-inducing cocktails cannot provide a continuous feed without hurting the inmate, so the life-support systems use a slow drip to keep the prisoner deep-sixed (otherwise, a continuous feed is treated as a +1 to +5 Lethal attack every ten rounds depending on dosage). If, for any reason, there is a malfunction in the drug-delivery system or a facility wide-power outage that affects the cell-vault's autonomous generators, then the deep-sixed supers can make their checks as normal (DC 30; with DC dropping by -1 every minute afterwards to a minimum of DC 10).

- **Cryogenics:** Energy Control - Cold +20L [Extras: Duration - continuous]; Fortitude save (DC 35).

Cryogenics suspends the prisoner in a liquid medium, then damages the target into unconsciousness with a sudden cold burst that preserves the body while preventing ice crystals from forming in the individual cells. At the point of death, however, the body enters a controlled suspension. The techs can revive the body, but should the temperatures rise because of unregulated thawing, then necrosis will set in an hour later, officially killing the super. Conversely, Gamemasters may allow characters with Healing or Regeneration one last saving throw (DC 35) to self-revive just before necrosis kicks in.

- **Supplies:** A standard storage room for linens and medical supplies. All pharmaceutical needs are on Two Tier.
- **Treatment Room:** For those patients with some control over their condition, the treatment room is a soothing environment where the inmate can talk about his problems face-to-face. This room holds a table for art therapy, watercolor paintings, a comfortable couch and chair, and classical music piped in to provide a calming influence. Inside the vent is a camera to record the session.
- **Lounge:** This lunch-room is typical to all the staff lounges listed previously, though it also serves as the orderlies' and nurses' break room. Adjoining it is a locker room with three shower cubicles.

On both floors, a wall of diamond-matrix glass and heavy-plate separates the offices and nurse's station from the inmates' rooms, which extend along two corridors to the back wall. The cells are already fully integrated into their alcoves and adaptable to conform to any power type or level, but this does require considerable work to prepare. Otherwise the rooms themselves range from the padded variety to the normal cells with the expected amenities. The major difference is these cells don't have transparent walls, which help isolate the inmate and keep him docile. This section of the cellblock contains the following:

- **Bathroom:** Adjoining each bathroom is the shower room where inmates bathe (one at a time).
- **Therapy Rooms:** Each hallway also contains therapy rooms used to treat difficult patients. These rooms have bulletproof, one-way glass dividing them, with a chair on one side and empty space on the other where the orderlies bring in inmates strapped to their gurneys.

Nobody likes working here and it's debatable whether Lockdown will maintain this cellblock once they rid themselves of the unit's chief problem: Percy-Herbert Blackcroft. Although Blackcroft receives a full write-up in **Chapter Four** (see page 61) his case is unique enough to earn mention here. He is the second floor's only inmate and he isn't susceptible to hotsleep. He's a tortured, insane horror writer from the first decades of the 20th Century whose mental phantasms routinely manifest as non-corporeal images. He is also immortal, and the staff isn't above leaving him alone in his cell for weeks at a time, if only because tending to him is a harrowing experience in itself. To spare the other inmates Blackcroft's horrors, they keep him alone on the second floor and pray for his eventual demise... but no one knows when that will be.

CELLBLOCK J: DEEP SIX

The graveyard shift in Lockdown means something entirely different than in most other jobs. CO duty in Deep Sleep, better known as "Deep Six" means waiting for the shift to end while tech-officers monitor and calibrate the suspended-animation equipment that keeps Lockdown's most problematic or dangerous criminals unconscious.

Upon entering Cellblock J, one immediately notices the difference between this and other wards. From the elevator banks, the connecting tunnel slowly ramps up to the second story. While this unit is two stories high, the containment vaults are all on the second level. Grillwork covers the floors, through which one can see the first floor along with all the cabling, suspension generators and tanks feeding into the vaults above.

The ground level has two stairs leading down from the second floor, and contains the mechanical guts of the Deep Sleep Ward. It's a jungle of cables and feed tubes, support struts, and reinforced grillwork, generators and tanks, though the tech-officers have little difficulty in navigating this alloy and steel spider's web. The generators are autonomous for each cell-vault, meaning both the geothermal generators and the cell-vault generator must be interrupted for the coffins to go off-line. In cryogenics, this is fatal because it means the prisoner will die within an hour unless the techs rectify the situation. In hotsleep, this is likewise bad because the system is no longer delivering drugs to the awakening inmate.

The second floor has three long corridors for the forklifts and heavily reinforced cell-vaults on either side. Unlike normal cells, however, the vaults are upright, piston-like coffins surrounded by a thick alloyed sheath and an array of sophisticated monitors that feed information to the tech-station at the rear of the level. The inmates within either endure cryogenic suspension, which essentially freezes them in a coma-like state for later revival, or hotsleep in liquid suspension, which keeps the prisoner floating in a drug-induced coma. Cryogenic freezing is rare, however.

The tech-station runs the length of the back wall, behind heavy plating and a long viewing window comprised of diamond-matrix glass. Inside, five technicians with nurse's training monitor the life-signs of the hotsleep patients while ensuring the cryo-equipment is in top operating condition. Should brainwave activity of any hotsleep patient increase, then the techs can modify the intravenous dosage to put them back under.

Currently, there are five technicians in the booth along with two COs. Patrolling Cellblock J are another four techs checking and maintaining equipment, as well as another four COs who rotate with the booth staff.

RECOVERY

Adjacent to the tech station is Recovery. Large enough to accommodate a forklift, Recovery is a white room where techs can store a disconnected cell-vault while bringing an inmate out of cryogenic suspension or hotsleep slowly. Inset into the floor is a circular generator socket for cells, as well as a crash-cart, metal gurney, and cabinet filled with other emergency medical supplies in case something goes wrong during recovery. The two-man monitoring station here is likewise protected behind plated wall and diamond-matrix glass, though this area is normally empty except when resuscitating inmates. During that time, a doctor remains available to handle all potential emergencies.

CELLBLOCK K: SHU AND AD. SEG.

SHU is where Lockdown incarcerates problem prisoners in 23-hour isolation. Ad. Seg. is a modern day word for "The Hole." Lockdown sends prisoners into the SHU when they prove themselves dangerous to prisoners or staff, thus dictating they serve time, or the remainder of their sentence, in isolation. Ad. Seg. is where prisoners go when they break a zero-tolerance rule at Lockdown, be it fighting, possessing contraband items, etc. Ad. Seg. is always a temporary punishment.

SPECIAL HOUSING UNIT (SHU)

The entire first floor of Cellblock K and part of the second houses the SHU. This portion of the cellblock is similar to the Mental Ward, with its two floors, windowless cells and dual hallways running the length of the cellblock. One difference in layout is that the cells are offset from one another so each cell door faces a wall. So, even when the food tray door or observation window opens, the prisoner sees nothing but another blank wall on the other side. The food tray door is also where the prisoners back up and slip their hands through to be cuffed whenever COs escort them anywhere. Each cell also contains a tiny shower cubicle with ten minutes of hot water each day.

Another difference is the concrete "Exercise Yard," a 30-by-30 foot room at the rear of the cellblock that's two stories high. Otherwise, the prisoners have no television or radio to distract them, and receives only one 15-minute phone call each week. The sole distraction is literature, and even then, the prisoners can only have one book at a time, and no paper or writing implements.

While newcomers expect the SHU to be loud because of the incarcerated and isolated troublemakers, the first rule learned is: *Silence is Golden*. The concrete and steel hallways carry echoes, and any little noise reverberates. This quickly plucks at everyone's nerves, bringing the general noise levels down to whispers. Conversely, some prisoners know how to drain their toilets of water using pressure and perfect seals around the rim (an old prison trick). This allows them to whisper with one another using the toilets as a crude, but surprisingly clear, telephone.

- **CO Pen:** Because the prison considers the inmates of the SHU and Ad. Seg. dangerous, it requires more COs to monitor Cellblock K, along with two on-duty SOU members. The CO Pen is a locker room with a small lounge area, a television and a shower room. Adjoining the Pen is a processing window overlooking the entry tunnel, where a CO can administer to visitors and prisoners.
- **The Yard:** This room is plated and holds nothing but a basketball net and basketball to entertain the prisoner for the one free hour he receives each day to stretch his legs.

ADMINISTRATIVE SEGREGATION (AD. SEG.)

Ad. Seg., more infamously known as the Hole, occupies the back half of the second floor. The point of Ad. Seg. isn't comfort or even human rights. It's a place of punishment for the already castigated. The cells run between 5x7 feet to 15x15 feet depending on the prisoner's size. They are concrete-lined with alloy plates beneath the thick plug of cement. The room is vacant save for a thin concrete slab for a bed, and a sink and a toilet, which are shared units. The only light originates from what slips past the door's seams, and the only warmth are from two flimsy covers and a blanket. The meals are cafeteria leftovers all rolled together into a foul tasting brick called a "joot" ball.

Being stuffed into an Ad. Seg. cell is a punishment that shouldn't last for more than a week, but CO's often "forget" about their wards for longer. Fortunately, the prison's medical staff can override the CO's authority and demand a prisoner's return to his cellblock on the grounds of mental or physical anguish.

FOUR TIER

The shafts for all of the elevators, except the two cargo lifts, terminate at Cellblock K, so they cannot go beyond this level. The two cargo lifts, however, reach Four Tier and the sub-basement beneath it. Four Tier is off limits to all prisoners including trustees, but only because the Cartel knows it would arouse the suspicions of technicians oblivious to the Cartel's influence if there were any convicts allowed onto Four Tier. Otherwise, trustees possess pass-cards allowing them access to the sub-basement and the heart of the Cartel's operations in Buckner Ridge.

Four Tier is the metal innards of Lockdown, a large area three-stories high. It's cluttered with three separate areas containing block after block of solid machine components, cabling, valves, ducts, support struts, pipes, display monitors and anything else one would expect to find in the bowels of a major underground operation. In between these blocks are avenues large enough to handle forklifts, with color-coded striping on the ground indicating the direction of various sections (much like the system used in hospitals). The ceiling, although partially lost to deep shadows, contains thick bundles of cabling, heated pipes and ducts leading into the facility above.

While Four Tier appears a technical mess, it's surprisingly well-organized for the technically savvy. Every section is where it should be in one of three key areas: power, water, and air. The fourth area, maintenance, oversees the three essentials, though it has a small area of its own.



POWER

Power is a self-enclosed section sealed behind triple-plated walls and a secured vault door on par with One Tier's entry. Inside the huge room is the hilt of a string of autonomous geothermal generators tapping into a relatively large magma pocket a couple of miles down. The system offers a relative balance, with the facility venting enough of the reservoir's trapped gas to keep the magma chambers from reaching a critical mass, which would admittedly take months. Power also contains two redundant generators to handle any supply interruptions, allowing the facility to operate at minimum capacity in emergencies (with most power going to air and cell-shackles).

To handle magma backflow from being piped up the geothermal pipeline and into the facility (which won't happen unless a super manipulates the lava flow), the facility equipped several geothermal generators with failsafe explosives. The explosives detonate and not only collapse that portion of shaft, but expose weaker rock strata that enable the lava to flow laterally and not upward. Naturally, repairing something of this nature could take months, requiring the facility's evacuation.

WATER

The water purification system handles the distribution, recycling, storage, and heating of Lockdown's water supply. While water arrives through outside piping, the system recycles non-sewage water via the facility's industrial purifiers. Additionally, much space in this area remains dedicated to the pumps piping the water through the facility as well as to giant emergency storage tanks. Should something interrupt Lockdown's water supply, the storage tanks can provide water for emergency use for a full week. That means no showers, and only rationed drinking water. This section also includes heating tanks, which pump water to each tier's or cellblock's private hot water reservoir. The reservoirs may be accessed through the maintenance corridors.

The sensors also contain gene-samplers to determine if the water contains genetic material or DNA from liquid-form supers trying to sneak in or out of the facility using water pipes. If the sensors register anything akin to congealed liquid or liquid with protein strands, it immediately vents the water into a filtration tank for holding (Elemental Control - Water +15). After that, Lockdown can analyze the material to determine its nature.

AIR

The ventilation system provides recycled air to the entire facility, as well as warms the air to comfortable temperatures. This area contains giant heaters, scrubbers to eliminate carbon dioxide and monoxide from the ventilation system, and fans to pump air throughout the facility. Like water filtration, ventilation is a maze of ducts that follow the maintenance corridors.

Should the ventilation system stop working, it carries enough air to provide a breathable atmosphere for about three days. At the end of each day following the second, however, those trapped will feel more fatigued until oxygen finally runs out (Fortitude

save against Fatigue at DC 10 for day three, DC 20 for day four, DC 30 for day five, DC 40 for day six, etc.).

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance occupies a relatively small section of Four Tier, but is by far the most crucial area. It contains the heart of the facility where everything can stop with the push of a button. As a result, it's protected behind alloy-plate walls and a vault door on par with the cell-vault coffins in terms of durability. Behind its walls are:

- **Control Room:** Computer screens, status monitors and regulatory equipment cover the walls of this room, keeping the 15 technicians hard at work maintaining the facility's essential services within acceptable parameters. From here, saboteurs could cause power, water and air to fail though, admittedly, only power loss is immediately dangerous.
- **Lounge:** The lounge is actually part of the locker room, which adjoins the showers. Three rooms with cots are connected to the lounge in cases where employees must pull double or triple shifts to repair a vital component.
- **Maintenance Offices:** Carl Taube, Four Tier's supervisor, and Alejandra Nunez, general maintenance supervisor, have offices on this level, along with filing rooms for various work orders. Taube's office connects to the Control Room.
- **Repair Bays:** Two repair bays allow techs to bring in large pieces of equipment for repair and maintenance. The repair bays are large workshops with an archway connecting them and their own forklift which almost never leaves Four Tier. One of the bays is always empty so the techs can translocate tesseract generators here for repairs. Adjacent to the repair bay is a warehouse (second to the one located on One Tier) with all emergency components and spare parts to immediately repair or replace any piece of equipment – save for the geothermal generators. The warehouse even contains a spare shunt generator that the techs have been unable to repair. For anyone trapped in a completely translocated Lockdown, the spare generator may prove to be their salvation, if they can somehow repair the unit and power it. Adjoining the repair bays is a small corridor that leads to three smaller workshops, which handle the facility's general repairs (upholstery, carpentry, etc.).

HIDDEN SUB-BASEMENT

Few people realize the sub-basement exists, and almost everyone in the know works for the Cartel. Even most techs remain unaware of the sub-basement, but only because it siphons power from an unaccounted geothermal generator. The hidden sub-basement contains the heart of the Cartel's operations in Lockdown. Exposing its existence is the single protocol that will force the Cartel to shunt the entire facility, collapsing the mountain itself. The sub-basement contains the following:

- **Living Quarters:** This area resembles the Security Living Quarters with its apartments, lounge and gym. The apartments are dorm-room sized, but built for single occupancy. Research scientists on extended projects use these apartments the most, though

the trustees have access to them occasionally (when a trustee is supposedly in Ad. Seg., he's actually here for a few days). The lounge, likewise, has all the amenities of the Administration lounge with its kitchen, television and vending machines (but on a larger scale), while the gym has equipment, lockers, showers and a laundry room.

- **Operations:** Four corner offices and the cubicle farm in the middle of the space constitute the administrative arm of the Cartel's Lockdown initiative. Anything of an illegal nature remains within the confines of these offices. The principle office serves as Warden Creed's real operations center where he oversees daily reports from the different sections, including the research lab's latest updates. Accounting Comptroller Jacqueline Verro also maintains a second office here, though HR's counterpart is Ellis Halsey, who contracts out low-profilers for private enterprises. He occupies the third office, leaving the fourth corner to Warrick "Warboss" Hatchel. Hatchel supervises the trustees, determines who's ripe for indoctrination and, in some cases, who needs eliminating.
- **Research Labs:** Advanced Tech Research and Development heads up this section, which consists of a ring of offices and analysis rooms surrounding four large laboratories. ATR&D studies and develops technology, either by using the prisoners themselves to reveal their tech, or by reverse-engineering whatever they can find. The four labs contain state-of-the-art hardware related to the study and development of exotic mechanics, energies, chemicals, and biotech. Airlock doors and diamond-matrix glass walls enclose the four labs, hermitically sealing them, while the smaller analysis labs remain protected behind walls of cell-strength quality. The various offices belong to the chief researchers, with Dr. Margo Brough overseeing the different research initiatives.
- **Testing Range:** Weapons and equipment need testing, and this football field-sized chamber some seven stories high serves exactly that purpose. The prison built the testing range into the side of the mountain, several hundred feet down a tunnel and as far away from the prison as possible. Surrounding the range are seismic bafflers to minimize, if not eliminate, the vibrations generated by the more explosive experiments. The testing range is part gun range, part paintball village obstacle course and part punching bag (with large blocks of various-strength materials determining the strength of various weapons, explosives, etc.).
- **Translocation Pad:** Sealed and protected behind a cell-strength vault door and alloy plated walls, this control room has its own, autonomous translocation generator, as well as an emergency shunt control panel keyed solely to Warden Creed's passcard. The Translocation Pad is a one-way teleportation device locked into a safe-warehouse in the nearest metropolitan center. This provides Cartel personnel with a back exit. The control panel can translocate the entire prison as well, or delay a countdown already set in motion. More importantly, it is the only part of the facility that doesn't shunt along with the prison. This prevents trapped prisoners from using this escape as well; the collapsing mountain will destroy the chamber – and anyone in it.

Over the course of a week, convicts can expect certain aspects of prison routine to direct their lives. These are the standard day-to-day issues – matters ranging from prison work to the departments likeliest to exert the most influence over an inmate's daily grind.

DAILY ROUTINE

It's 5:30 A.M., and the kitchen staff has 30 minutes to shower and head for the cafeteria to prepare breakfast. At 7:00 A.M., the cell doors unlock and the COs make their head count. It's a rush for the showers after that, though some cons return to their cells for a few extra minutes of rest. By 8:00, the convicts are waiting anywhere from five to 20 minutes for their turn in the cafeteria line. Breakfast is done by 9:00 A.M. and all of Two Tier's facilities are open for use.

At 10:30 A.M., kitchen prepares for noon lunch, which lasts till 1:00 P.M. After that, it's dinner preparation at 4:30 P.M. with dinner served from 6:00 to 7:00 P.M.

Lights out for the evening is at 10:00 P.M. on weekdays and 1:00 A.M. on weekends. After 5:00 P.M., Monday through Friday, and during the weekend, inmates' hours are their own – to work, conspire, politic, fight boredom, and reflect on life in prison.

ZERO-TOLERANCE RULES

Zero-tolerance rules are restrictions that land an inmate in Ad. Seg., no exceptions. They also result in potential job loss for those hard-to-land positions. Commit too many zero-tolerance infractions, and the prison may place you in the SHU. Zero-tolerance rules include: carrying contraband items (from shivs to electronic devices), starting a fight (COs often lock-up both participants unless they know exactly who instigated the fight), striking a CO, tampering with a shackle, threatening or endangering staff members, participating in a riot, using a power, trying to escape, annoying the wrong guard, sneaking into another cellblock, robbing fellow convicts, and shirking work responsibilities.

PRISON JOBS

An idle prisoner is a dangerous prisoner, which is why all states require their prisoners work between 6.5 to 7.4 hours each work-day (8 hours when you factor in all the herding from one location to the next). Unfortunately, with few contracts flowing into Lockdown, only a handful of prisoners find meaningful work (though they earn up to \$7.00 an hour, with 80% of that going to child-support, housing fees and victim compensation funds). The remainder make as little as \$.20 a day, if they're lucky (states

like Texas don't pay their prisoners). It's almost never about the money, however. It's about showing responsibility to earn a crack at early release, and it's about staving off boredom.

Because Lockdown is involved in the Prison Industry Enhancement Program, they must pay prisoners working Three Tier contracts the same as they would a comparable laborer on the outside (again, with the inmate earning 20% of his final paycheck). Trustees maintain the illusion of working Three Tier jobs, but they spend their days in the sub-basement lounge or training on the Testing Range, their powers unfettered.

- **Assistants:** The teachers and activities supervisors on Two Tier often need help with their programs. Some prisoners serve as substitute teachers, teaching assistants, activities coordinators, gym trainers, peer counselors, or any number of supervisory jobs. Only prisoners already at Lockdown for six months, with unblemished records since arriving, may apply for these positions. All Ward Bosses are considered assistants.

- **Contract Work:** This work varies, with 15 to 50 prisoners working whatever contracts are available.

Most jobs involve telemarketing for travel companies, political candidates, product sales, etc. Occasionally, however, floor supervisor John Soddy, or either of his inmate assistants, accept \$20 bribes from convicts looking to shirk their duties and use a room or telephone privately.

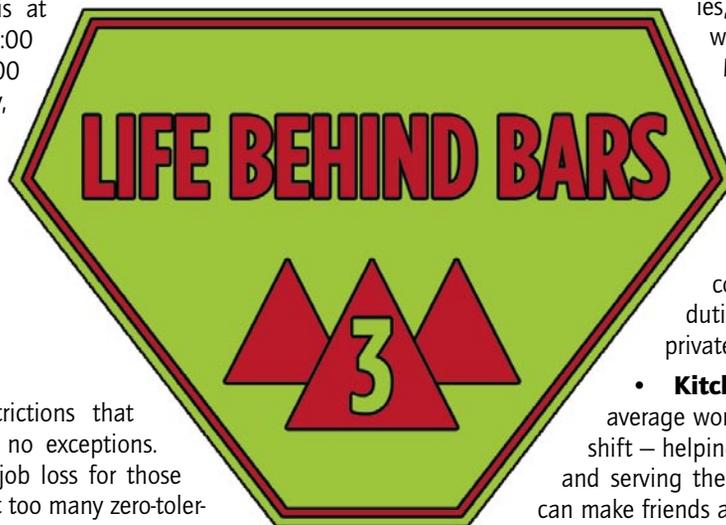
- **Kitchen:** There are 15 prisoners on average working the highly coveted kitchen shift – helping prepare meals, washing dishes and serving the line. The work's hard, but you can make friends and allies by giving specific cons special meals or handing them extra servings.

- **Education:** Prisoners may apply for high-school equivalent classes and education as part of their rehabilitation process. Others, like minors, are required to attend classes. While this offers no financial reward, it's still a viable alternative to work for those accepted into the program.

- **Janitorial Service:** Despised by most felons, janitorial service is the repeated mopping, cleaning, and disposing of trash for the cellblocks, Two Tier's office, Three Tier's offices, and the classrooms.

- **Library:** The librarian uses two prisoners to help supervise the library, and another two to circulate with bookcarts at the hospital, the PHU, SHU (the guards handle book requests), and the Protective Custody unit.

- **Post Office:** Prisoners working the post office X-ray and use chemical sniffers on the mail under the supervision of guards (as a redundant system to One Tier's security measures), and distribute letters and packages to the various cellblocks. Despite





these precautions, the post office is the best way to smuggle materials in and around Lockdown.

SANCTIONED ACTIVITIES

During weekends and after workshifts, the prisoner's time is his own. Inmates can spend hours in the library reading, participate in basketball and volleyball teams, work out at the gym, take night courses for art, relax in the lounge, play chess, pool or backgammon, join a peer counseling or special interest group, etc. Just as easily, dedicated supers can spend their time forming alliances, politicking, or pursuing any of the mysteries surrounding the Buckner Ridge Penitentiary. Activities fall into the following categories:

- **Leisure:** Leisure activities involve an inmate preoccupying himself alone, whether watching television, searching the Internet, or working out in the gym. Strangely enough, Type IVs seem most prone to spending their time alone, an independence factor prison psychologists attribute to a Type IV's ability to rival most hero teams on his own.
- **Mental Disciplines:** An odd mix of Type Is and Vs gravitate to this grouping, which mostly involve activities with a competitive mental facet. Interests of this nature include the Chess Club and Debate Club; intelligent inmates also enjoy hosting a Jeopardy Night on Wednesdays where prisoners try challenging one another's knowledge in sciences, history, philosophy, the arcane, etc.

- **Self-Improvement:** Self-improvement (also called the Alternatives to Violence Program) is any voluntary activity that educates the prisoner, forces inmates to address personal shortcomings, inspires the participant to explore the arts, or requires socialization with others. Night-courses for high school equivalency classes fall into this category, though the most common activities include participation in: the library's book club, the theatre group, clay sculpture or painting classes, improving literacy among inmates, and partaking of support groups like Drugs Abusers Anonymous and Parents Behind Bars. Type Is through IIIs seem the most drawn to these activities.
- **Sports:** The prison organizes several team-oriented sports, with Type I and II inmates participating the most. In fact, the overall physical conditioning and training of these inmates means the teams are near professional-athlete quality. Sponsored sports in Lockdown are basketball, volleyball, badminton, martial arts training, running, and boxing.

UNSANCTIONED ACTIVITIES

Unsanctioned activities are exactly that. They involve inmates training one another to become better criminals, trading information on rival heroes, establishing new allies for capers on the outside, contending with competitors in prison, jockeying for positions of esteem (like Ward Boss), etc. There's even a rumor that one villain is organizing the other cons to form a new villain team on the outside, training them physically and mentally in prison (see The Wight Bishop on page 69).

PRISON LIFE

Chapter One lists the overall issues facing prisoners, but with super-convicts thrown into the mix, a whole new set of problems and issues arise. Again, prison life on its own is a harrowing experience, and very limiting if played to full effect. The following information is offered with a softer hand because, frankly, Lockdown could easily be a highly-restrictive facility. Buckner Ridge could isolate prisoners in their cells for 23 hours a day, impose corporal punishment like breaking rocks or plowing fields, and hamper really ingenious felons by giving them baking powder instead of toothpaste. But where's the fun in that?

VIOLENCE

In the real world, prison violence is so endemic (and convicts so resourceful) that the prisons heavily restrict an inmate's access to the most mundane items. No aluminum cans or plastics lids, which prisoners can melt or hammer into shivs; no aerosols either. The guards squeeze toothpaste and deodorant into paper cups for use, and remove food like candy bars, potato chips, and cookies from their wrappers and containers, serving them in brown paper bags. Now, this may be the case in the SHU and PHU of Buckner Ridge, but it isn't recommended for the remaining cellblocks because the violence level shouldn't be as high.

Prison violence stems from one of several sources including racial strife, gang rivalries and control over the drug trade. Depending on the world's grit level, however, these shouldn't be great issues at Lockdown since the Mountain won't likely have gangs or a major drug problem. In fact, because villains rarely work together for extended periods (unless sharing a common origin, goal, or power), they don't often have enough allies to form a gang. Couple that with the fact that all villains are now on equal footing, thanks to their shackles, and you have very few super-cons willing to risk their own necks. Therefore, the day-to-day brutality and violence extant in penitentiaries is not present to the same level in Lockdown; as a result, the restrictive nature of daily life is equally lessened.

BARTER

It isn't unheard of for one prisoner to transfer money into another prisoner's bank account for services rendered, but it's often far easier to use the prison barter system for whatever's needed. So, what is the value of prison currency? It all depends on what you need versus what you can offer. The system is relatively fluid, with the prices dictated by the two people involved in transaction.

The following are barter-worthy commodity types, scaled from the least to the most powerful kinds:

- **Inconsequential Item:** The inmate has a small item for trade, something of no great consequence. Maybe it's a magazine collection, or new shoes or a carton of smokes. The trade is usually for items of like worth or a small favor with no risk to either party.
- **Job-Related Barter:** Some prisoners use their position as collateral, promising other cons an extra serving of biscuits at breakfast, covering for someone's work shift, sneaking a mes-

sage into a book bound for Ad. Seg., or smuggling small items through the Post Office.

- **Favors:** An oldie, but a goodie, some prisoners use their promises as collateral for barter. In exchange they may agree to a specific favor up front or the promise of fulfilling an undisclosed service in the future. This may include running specific errands for the other person, acting as their strong-arm, threatening a rival, collecting on a reneged debt, stealing something, framing another prisoner, etc. With supervillains, this could have more far-reaching consequences, with undisclosed favors coming into effect following a prisoner's release (say, when they're facing one another in combat). Indeed, where mystical inmates are concerned, a promise for an undisclosed future favor can have far more wide-reaching consequences than the prisoner ever suspected.
- **Important Items:** One prisoner has something pivotal to someone else, usually an item of contraband. It might be electronic tools filched from a negligent or bribable tech-officer. It might be a sample of someone's bio-material with immediate applications (a vial of neurotoxic saliva or a tooth with dormant energy waiting for a catalyst to explode), or a cell-phone someone smuggled into prison.
- **Information:** Information is power, and power is its own currency in Lockdown. Prisoners can barter secrets if they know the other party has use for them. This may run the gamut from a rival's Achilles heel, to information concerning someone's whereabouts, to the missing piece of a mystery, the disclosure of a highly-profitable caper, the schematics of a power suppression unit, etc.
- **Blackmail:** The trade is simple: *Your services for my silence.* In this case, one person knows someone else's secret, and is willing to remain silent in exchange for whatever they need.
- **Rare Item:** A passcard, a weapon, some mystical trinket nobody ever found, or a piece of technology hidden by Siegemaker (see page 73).
- **Allies:** For really important trades and big jobs, prisoners may sometimes work in tandem to accomplish a specific, mutual goal. Many a villain team is born in prison, with pact members promising to share information, resources, and spoils evenly.

MOVING FREELY

Moving freely is a selective term since movement through various cellblocks is prohibited except under job-related circumstances. The exceptions are Deep-Sleep, SHU and PHU units, which prohibit any outside prisoner access.

- **Janitorial Services:** Sometimes a cellblock has too few or too many prisoners to do janitorial work. So, the crowded cellblock sends a few cons to work in an understaffed unit. Unfortunately, coordinating anything through this method is virtually impossible unless one bribes guards to set it up in advance... and that, in itself, is dangerous.
- **Rounds:** The library, post office, and kitchen all use prisoners to ferry books, mail, and food trays, making them the best

smugglers, couriers, and information gatherers in prison. The only danger here is that the COs randomly search carts to halt any abuses of the system.

- **Passcard:** The gold passcard (disguised as a medic-alert bracelet) allows trustees to use the maintenance corridors to travel unnoticed. Still, if the COs catch a trustee where he shouldn't be, they'll throw him in a holding cell (after which, Warrick "Warboss" Hatchel will either keep the trustee in Ad. Seg. as punishment, beat the snot out of him for being so careless or, in rare cases, let him ride out his time in the sub-basement).

WORKING TOWARDS FREEDOM

Many states abolished parole following Congress' enactment of the Sentencing Reform Act of 1984, which rescinded paroles for federal crimes, effective 1987. And guess what? Many super-criminals fall under federal jurisdiction. There's a reason why most super-prisons are government-run.

If parole isn't a campaign option, there are ways to earn early release. Prisoners must serve a minimum of 85% of their sentence before early release, but they must show exemplary conduct and a real desire for change while serving time, to be eligible. Otherwise, a prisoner can try shooting for Rule 35 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, which means he turns informant and provides federal prosecutors with "substantial assistance in the investigation or prosecution of another person." In this case, the federal judge can only authorize a prisoner's early release if a federal prosecutor proves the informant offered vital information in an investigation. And in the world of supers, this is a deadly game, trapping an ex-villain between the heroes and his former allies... essentially, beloved by none.

Another option for early release works well for those fallen heroes and reformed villains looking to re-enter society. It's not unheard of for Presidents to issue clemency for prisoners, or to commute their sentences to time served for various reasons. Prisoners who become vocal and celebrated advocates for positive change sometimes enjoy this favor, though in a supers campaign, something more flashy is probably in order. Rescuing COs from riots will factor into early release, but saving the entire facility or unveiling the Cartel's hand in Lockdown will likely turn characters into instant media darlings, and expedite their near-immediate release. This could happen through the commuting of their sentence to time served, or even a full presidential pardon, which allows the super to regain any seized assets. Conversely, in truly dark and nasty campaigns, unveiling the Cartel's manipulation of the prison system will earn the hero plenty of enemies within the humiliated Bureau of Prisons (which, in turn, may well try to bury the hero deeper inside the prison system).

PRISON DEPARTMENTS AND STAFF

The previous chapter dealt with Lockdown as a facility, from its layout to its security measures. This section deals with the departments within Lockdown as well as their directors. Any powered individual, whether staff or inmate, receives mention in **Chapter Four**.

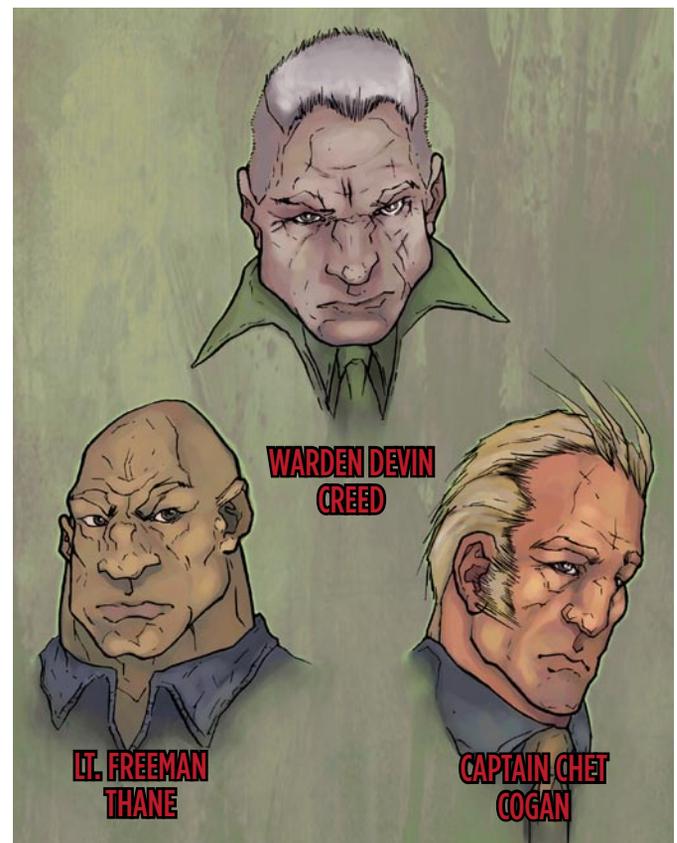
ADMINISTRATION

Administration is the bureaucratic arm of Lockdown, the public face that keeps the prison running in compliance with federal guidelines. Administration rarely holds any records or material linking it to the Cartel, in case the IRS, Department of Justice, or Bureau of Prisons decides on a surprise inspection. This department handles the day-to-day operations of the penitentiary and, unless otherwise noted, is manned by civilians from Buckner Ridge. Most staff-members remain in One Tier's Administration Wing, with little-to-no contact with the inmates.

WARDEN

The warden's office directs and coordinates the various activities undertaken by the different departments in the operation of Lockdown. The warden essentially sets internal policy. He dictates regulations not under federal mandate and sees to the hiring of staff, evaluating of departmental performance, overseeing implementation of proper security measures, developing and implementing procedures for education and treatment programs, and approving the leisure-time activities available to inmates.

At the top of the food chain is Warden Devin Creed, and his personal assistant Benjamin Talbot, both Cartel members in good standing. Everyone in prison knows that unofficially, Talbot is second-in-command, and that his orders are damn near sacrosanct and in line with the warden's wishes. All requests to see Warden



Creed must go through Talbot first, and Talbot runs a very by-the-book operation.

DEVIN CREED

Devin Creed is not super-powered, but that doesn't make him any less intimidating. There's a bearing to his personality few can rival, and fewer still would test, which is strange considering his work record places him as a pen-pusher his entire life. The Cartel, however, ensures Creed's records reveal nothing of his true past.

Born Eben Nemov, Creed was part of organized crime his entire adult life, a fact known to few. As part of the often hidden Israeli Mafia, Creed grew up in Tel Aviv, where he served his compulsory military service. After completing his training, he fell in with organized crime through an old friend. From enforcer to hit-man, Creed finally showed a true aptitude with surreptitious ventures, and came to head up the South African diamond smuggling operations.

Creed was among the first recruits that the Cartel approached based on the recommendation of several members who'd encountered the quiet, but capable Israeli. After spending a year training him to speak English without an accent, act American, learn the ins and outs of running a prison and memorize the facts of his doctored life, Nemov became Creed. The Cartel further cemented his identity by using psychics to program memories of Creed into supposed co-workers at various North American prisons. With forged identity and records in place, Creed became Lockdown's hard-nosed and quiet, but sinister-looking, warden.

DEVIN CREED

PL 5; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 15 (+4 Base, +1 Dex); Spd 30 ft; Atk. +4 melee (+1S/5' reach/crit 20, punch), +4 ranged (+3L/30' range/crit 20, pistol); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, Ref +1, Will+2; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +8, Diplomacy +7, Gather Information +8, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (prison administration) +7, Perform +7, Profession (warden) +7.

Feats: Connected, Dodge, Indomitable Will, Leadership, Minions (Loyalty 11).

Equipment: Gold Passcard, Pistol [Weapon+3L; Cost: 1 pp; Total: 3 pp]

Totals: Abilities 39 + Skills 33 + Feats 10 + Equipment 3 = Total 85 pp.

RECEPTION

Adlai Parker is the sweet and friendly face of Lockdown, though she's well-past retirement. Adlai was the Cartel's attempt to ingratiate itself to the town of Buckner Ridge, by hiring its favorite grandmother. Adlai's position is mostly perfunctory since few visitors come into the Administration Wing.

ACCOUNTING

Accounting manages several vital functions including the facility's financial transactions, expense records, issuing and reviewing financial statements, processing invoices and travel vouchers, dealing with vendors, etc. Although staffed by Cartel-loyal mem-

bers who oversee the prison's legal expenditures and staff payroll, One Tier's accounting office is a redundant system to catch any oversights that slip past the books of the bean-counters in Four Tier's sub-basement.

At the helm of both departments is office comptroller Jacqueline Verro, a short, trim woman with a curt attitude and unforgiving demeanor. She always looks like she's on the verge of exploding, and sometimes... she does.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Office supervisor Davis Halward handles HR and its five subordinates in relation to staffing concerns. This encompasses the areas of employee relations, salary administration, employee performance, payroll data, and labor/management issues. Additionally, Halward has a vested interest in building a body of clients for the convict-lease programs. He earns a percentage off each legitimate contract he brings into Lockdown, but doesn't yet have the workload necessary to justify a separate department.

COMPLIANCE ASSURANCE

Encapsulating a wide field of responsibilities, Victor Lane and his staff ensure Lockdown follows the rules and guidelines set down by the Department of Justice and the Bureau of Prisons. They are, in effect, the liaison office between the federal government and Buckner Ridge.

CORRECTIONAL TREATMENT

Although listed under the purview of administration, Correctional Treatment is part of Two Tier's counseling services, and often mistaken for therapy. Instead Flo Seed and her assistant supervise and integrate the different programs at Lockdown to fulfill a wide variety of needs. They also chart and evaluate each offender's progress, case history and activities, eventually developing release plans for reintegrating the inmate back into society. This department also assigns jobs to inmates, often creating work for the sake of occupying the prisoner.

PURCHASING

Contract specialist Eric Moody and his assistants handle Lockdown's supply requirements. They procure provisions and services as well as evaluating contractors, comparing price estimates, filling out orders, and expediting requests to any number of accounting approved suppliers.

LEGAL

This division handles legal claims associated with the prison or its inmates. They review all court documents, tort claims, and appeals filed for, against, or by prisoners; they ensure Lockdown operates within federal mandates. Under the helm of Kalie Pepper, the four staff members have their hands full from all the tort claims against the prison - many litigation-hungry inmates are trying to take advantage of the prison's new staff and status as the first privately-owned supers penitentiary.

SECURITY

By far, security comprises the bulk of Lockdown's workforce, and it is the most active employer in Buckner Ridge. Work as a Correctional Officer pays well, given the job's inherent dangers, but that doesn't negate its high employee turnover due to work-related stress. Heading the department is Captain Chet Cogan, who's also in charge of reg-force or "mundane" COs. While Lt. Ulysses "Strafe" Layton of Special Operations Unit is subordinate to Capt. Cogan, everyone knows SOU acts with relative impunity under the special protection of Warden Creed. This has done nothing to foster inter-departmental cooperation or curb office politicking between security's three main divisions.

CAPTAIN CHET COGAN

Tall, with sandy-blond hair hemorrhaging to a premature white, the 46-year-old Chet Cogan is three generations deep as a Correctional Officer, and it's a task at which he excels. He's seen service in incarceration facilities his entire life, always moving across the nation to accept job offers with the promise of promotion. He's worked supermaxes like Clinton "Little Siberia" Correctional Facility and at the California State Prison at Corcoran. He worked Pelican Bay before the District of Columbia hired him away as Captain to help clamp down on the rampant crime in the Occoquan facility.

Occoquan was a warzone, with some cellblocks exclusively under convict rule. Capt. Cogan fought the unchecked gang activity with some success, and didn't even buckle after gang members targeted his family. Finally, however, after surviving repeated stabbings, three riots, corrupt COs and a divorce, Capt. Cogan opted for early retirement. That's when Buckner Ridge approached him and offered him the relatively "safe" job of overseeing security at Lockdown.

Capt. Cogan is a fair man, and well-liked by his officers. He's also grown fond of the community of Buckner Ridge and is romantically involved with Mayor Alicia Gray. Cogan could see himself retiring in Buckner Ridge in a few years. Unfortunately, while the job itself pays handsomely, Cogan remains unhappy with his role at the facility. He feels that Warden Creed and Lt. Layton are too cliquish, and suspects there's something amiss about both men. He knows nothing of the Cartel, but he is a potential ally for law-abiding characters if presented with enough information about the facility's real purpose.

CHET COGAN

PL 7; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 16 (+4 Base, +1 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +6 melee (+4S/5' reach/crit 20, tonfa), +5 ranged (+5S/L/50' range/crit 20, blaster); SV Dmg +1 (Armor +3), Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 15.

Skills: Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +7, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (prison regulations) +7, Search +7, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7, Survival +7.

Feats: Assessment, Chokehold, Dodge, Expertise, Inspire, Leadership, Minions (Loyalty 14), Point Blank Shot.

Equipment: Blaster [Weapon+5S/L; *Power Stunts:* Dual Damage; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 7 pp], tonfa [Weapon +2S; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 2 pp], uniform [Armor +3; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 3 pp], red passcard.

Totals: Abilities 41 + Skills 41 + Feats 16 + Equipment 12 = Total 110 pp.

EXTERNAL SECURITY

External security is a joint effort between the correctional officers and tech-officers. The COs man the gates, automated defenses, and patrols while the tech-officers handle monitoring stations and input feeds. To facilitate the continued smooth operations of external security, Chet Cogan placed second-in-command Marina Raska in charge of handling immediate issues. Raska operates out of Tower One and reports to both Cogan and lead tech-officer Lt. Freeman Thane.

REGULAR COS

Also known as reg-force guards, Correctional Officers interact with the prisoners on a daily basis. They are the ever-present cops of the facility and handle a majority of the dirty work. What bothers them isn't their assignment, but the fact that the Special Operations Units and tech-officers are the best equipped security groups, receiving all the praise when a crisis arises. The COs, however, only earn notice when one of them falters - instead of receiving commendations for the dozens of crises they avert every week. Capt. Cogan oversees this department, and tries to equip his men as best as circumstances and budgetary constraints allow.

REG-FORCE GUARD

PL 4; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 15 (+3 Base, +1 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +5 melee (+4S/5' reach/crit 20, tonfa), +3 ranged (+5S/L/50' range/crit 20, blaster); SV Dmg +2 (Armor +3), Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills: Gather Information +3, Intimidate +4, Jump +4, Knowledge (prison life) +3, Search +4, Sense Motive +2, Spot +2.

Feats: Attack Focus (armed), Chokehold, Dodge.

Equipment: Blaster [Weapon+5S/L; *Power Stunts:* Dual Damage; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 7 pp], tonfa [Weapon +2S; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 2 pp], uniform [Armor +3; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 3 pp], red passcard.

Totals: Abilities 28 + Skills 15 + Feats 6 + Equipment 12 = Total 61 pp.

TECH-OFFICERS

Although trained as regular COs, tech-officers are technically skilled to handle issues pertaining to their field (surveillance, communications, radar, power containment, etc.). Tech-officers tend to all electronic security concerns, trouble-shooting problems, and ensuring the facility operates at optimal levels. Without them, the power shackles, containment measures, and emergency protocols would all fail. Without them, the prisoners would run amuck and tear through the remaining guards. Overseeing this department is Lt. Freeman Thane, who'll proudly tell any CO or department head his division is the *real* reason for Lockdown's success.

PALADIN AND AEGIS

Freedom City's Horatio Powers, director of AEGIS, is none too pleased with the Paladin armor, which appears too similar to the MAX armor to be coincidence. In fact, Director Powers is sure the Paladin was designed using stolen AEGIS schematics, and has tried launching an investigation into the matter. Lockdown's political connections with Capitol Hill, however, protect them from the director's scathing eye. Further rubbing salt into the wound, Lockdown has agreed to lend three Paladin suits to Powers' rival, "Bulldog" Maddicks of the FCPD STAR Squad, after Powers himself refused to lend three MAX suits to Maddicks' men. Powers is currently trying to circumvent the red tape surrounding his investigation by approaching Freedom City's heroes for unofficial aid.

TECH-OFFICER

PL 4; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 15 (+3 Base, +1 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +4 melee (+3S/5' reach/crit 20, tonfa), +3 ranged (+5S/L/50' range/crit 20, blaster); SV Dmg +1 (Armor +3), Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Computers +7*, Disable Device +7*, Drive +3, Open Lock +4, Repair +7*, Science +7*. *One of these skills will be +10 if it's the skill chosen for Skill Focus.

Feats: Attack Focus (armed), Dodge, Skill Focus (computers, disable device, repair, or science).

Equipment: Blaster [Weapon +5S/L; *Power Stunts:* Dual Damage; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 7 pp], tonfa [Weapon +2S; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 2 pp], uniform [Armor +3; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 3 pp], red passcard.

Totals: Abilities 31 + Skills 21 + Feats 6 + Equipment 12 = Total 70 pp.

LT. FREEMAN THANE

Freeman Thane was raised in the brutal jungles of Compton where Bloods and Crips vied for streets and neighborhoods. How Thane survived is beyond him, especially given his association with the Bloods. Still, two separate stints in Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall were enough to scare Thane from his intended course. He barely argued when his mother sent him to live with his grandfather in Houston.

Thane managed to right his path and joined the military for the promise of a cheap education. Although technically capable and trained, Thane found few post-military opportunities available. He became a correctional officer at Garza Unit in Beeville, Texas, and eventually rose to the position of lieutenant. His distinguished conduct enabled him to work at federal prisons, where his technical expertise proved invaluable in landing him a job at the federal superhuman penitentiary. It was this experience that prompted Lockdown to offer Thane a more lucrative salary and position in the private sector. Lt. Thane, however, knows little of the Cartel's involvement, though as someone who enjoys keeping his fingers on the prison's electronic pulse, he is becoming suspicious of the "unaccountable" tech to which Lockdown has access.

LT. FREEMAN THANE

PL 8; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 18 (+4 Base, +3 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +6 melee (+3S/5' reach/crit 20, tonfa), +8 ranged (+5S/L/50' range/crit 20, blaster); SV Dmg +2 (Armor +3), Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 13.

Skills: Computers +10, Disable Device +10, Gather Information +6, Intimidate +5, Open Lock +6, Profession (technician) +10, Repair +10 (+13 with Skill Focus), Sense Motive +4, Spot +6.

Feats: Assessment, Attack Finesse, Chokehold, Dodge, Leadership, Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus (repair).

Equipment: Blaster [Weapon +5S/L; *Power Stunts:* Dual Damage; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 7 pp], tonfa [Weapon +2S; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 2 pp], uniform [Armor +3; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 3 pp], red passcard.

Totals: Abilities 54+ Skills 47 + Feats 14 + Equipment 12 = Total 127 pp.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS UNIT

SOU guards operate with relative impunity and – given their military training and mandate to wear powered "Paladin" armor capable of going toe-to-toe with unshackled prisoners – arrogance. Rarer are the handful of SOU members with superpowers of their own. The Cartel pays supers handsomely to join Special Operations, which it then uses as a proving ground to determine the guard's viability for joining the organization.

SOU handles emergency situations and the transport of supers to and from the facility. There are six teams of six guards per unit, with two teams suited and prepped, another two teams on-site and on-call, and the remaining two on leave. This system works roughly to eight hours on shift, eight hours on deck where members train, sleep, etc. (as long as it's on base), and eight hours recreation. The weekend shifts are 12 hours long and 36 hours on call, with two teams rotating each week for a full weekend off.

Lt. Ulysses Layton heads the unit under Capt. Cogan, but given his and Warden Creed's connection to the Cartel, Layton enjoys a measure of independence under Creed's protection.

SOU GUARD

PL 7; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 19 (+6 Base, +2 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +7 melee (+5S/5' reach/crit 20, tonfa), +5 ranged (+5S/L/50' range/crit 20, blaster); SV Dmg +2 (Armor +3), Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb +6, Drive +5, Intimidate +5, Profession (CO) +6, Search +5, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6, Survival +5, Taunt +2.

Feats: All-Out Attack, Assessment, Chokehold, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Power Attack.

Equipment: Blaster [Weapon +5S/L; *Power Stunts:* Dual Damage; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 7 pp], tonfa [Weapon +2S; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 2 pp], uniform [Armor +3; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 3 pp], red passcard.

Totals: Abilities 47 + Skills 34 + Feats 12 + Equipment 12 = Total 105 pp.

PALADIN ARMORS

The Paladins are full-armor body suits designed for use against supers. They're equipped with alloyed ceramics, articulated Kevlar-weave joints, and integrated military technology.

PALADIN SUIT SOU GUARD

PL 9; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 19 (+6 Base, +2 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +7 melee (+10S/5' reach/crit 20, punch), +5 ranged (+7S/L/70' range/crit 20, armor blaster); SV Dmg +2 (Armor +7), Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb +13, Drive +5, Intimidate +5, Profession (CO) +6, Search +5, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6, Survival +5, Taunt +2.

Feats: All-Out Attack, Assessment, Chokehold, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Power Attack.

Equipment: Paladin Armor [Armor + 7; *Extras:* Energy Blast (*Power Stunts:* Dual Damage), Immunities (disease, energy (cold, heat, electricity), poison, pressure, suffocation), Super-Strength; *Power Stunts:* Darkvision, Radio Broadcast, Radio Hearing, Snare; *Source:* Super-Science; *Cost:* 6 pp; *Total:* 52 pp], red passcard.

Totals: Abilities 47 + Skills 34 + Feats 12 + Equipment 52 = Total 145 pp.

While the basic model of Paladin armor is a capable piece of hardware, the Paladin-MT or Mobile Tank is a heavy-combat suit used strictly for hard suppression.

PALADIN-MT SUIT SOU GUARD

PL 12; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 19 (+6 Base, +2 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +7 melee (+15S/5' reach/crit 20, punch), +5 ranged (+12S/L/120' range/crit 20, armor cannon or dazzle); SV Dmg +2 (Armor +12), Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb +18, Drive +5, Intimidate +5, Profession (CO) +6, Search +5, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6, Survival +5, Taunt +2.

Feats: All-Out Attack, Assessment, Chokehold, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Power Attack.

Equipment: Paladin-MT Armor [Armor + 12; *Extras:* Dazzle, Energy Blast (*Power Stunts:* Dual Damage), Immunity (disease, energy (cold, heat, electricity), poison, pressure, suffocation), Super-Strength; *Power Stunts:* Darkvision, Radio Broadcast, Radio Hearing, Slick, Snare; *Source:* Super-Science; *Cost:* 7 pp; *Total:* 96 pp], red passcard.

Totals: Abilities 47 + Skills 34 + Feats 12 + Equipment 96 = Total 189 pp.



PREEMPTIVE INTERVENTION DEPARTMENT

The three psychics in Preemptive Intervention operate off the simple principle that one can stop incidents by preventing them from occurring in the first place. The fact of the matter is, Lockdown is a bomb waiting to explode, and there are plenty of catalysts to accomplish that. PID, however, uses precogs to quietly and subtly alter predicted events from occurring by eliminating a key parameter along the way. Will an inmate brawl result in a cafeteria riot? Then PID informs the COs to delay one prisoner by a few minutes to avert his fated appointment.

Unfortunately, this means PID's success is impossible to measure because nobody can verify what *didn't* happen. More so, the hacks consider psychics in Preemptive Intervention flakey for their bizarre orders like "prevent this prisoner from drinking water for the next hour," or "keep this hallway clear for 30 seconds." Naturally, while some of PID's requests are legitimate, they're also a perfect mask for Cartel-sanctioned activity. The two precogs working for PID

as well as department head Javier Carlos Paz, better known as “Incursion,” are all on the Cartel bankroll. They protect the prison, but they also protect the Cartel from exposure. Their only limitation, however, is that they can’t foresee slow, subtle events from unfolding. They’re too easily distracted by the overt or large, meaning (for example) a clever villain can disguise his eventual escape by manipulating other inmates into rioting.

HEALTH SERVICES

The Health Services Department is responsible for the physical and mental well-being of both inmates and staff. Medical Administrator Latoya Ashby spends her time between One Tier and Two Tier, consulting with administration and handling medical concerns. She’s in charge of coordinating health service operations, overseeing interdepartmental issues and managing departmental budget. Working under Ashby is the facility’s Medical Records Technician, Bernice Melissanidis, who handles the input, analysis, and coding of all medical files.

MEDICAL

The Medical Quarter has three doctors on staff and seven nurses. One doctor serves as general practitioner (GP), while the remaining doctors specialize in surgery, anesthesiology and emergency medicine. Should the need arise, the hospital will airlift in Buckner Ridge General doctors within 20 minutes, expanding the specializations to internal medicine, OB/GYN, rehabilitation medicine, radiology, and physical therapy. Regardless, Lockdown pays local

doctors to visit once a week to handle specific appointments and to consult with the facility’s physicians.

PHARMACY

Pharmacist Matthias Kiehl manages Health Services’ pharmacological needs including those of PHU. Among the few on-staff Cartel members, Kiehl handles a number of illegal drugs and medications, and occasionally samples his own wares. Jessie Brooks, his assistant, knows about his addiction and is using it to her advantage. She sells drugs to a select few inmates, not realizing some are creating drug-cocktails to overwhelm their biochemical suppression shackles. It’s only a matter of time before some succeed and try escaping (or manage to overdose with some unforeseen consequences).

DENTAL

While attached to the medical quarter, the dentist’s office is run as Dr. Ernesto Montoya sees fit. He heads a department of two with his comely dental hygienist and wife, Donna.

PHU

Psychiatric Housing Unit works closely with prisoners by evaluating inmates, diagnosing their problems, and applying treatments. Dr. Lucy Mitchell and Dr. Gavin Paul see a variety of powered-felons, but their primary focus remains the patients of PHU – given they’re actually co-writing a book outlining the unique psychoses of various super-humans.

DRUG TREATMENT

Drug treatment activities take place in both the medical quarters and counseling services of Two Tier. Specialist Ryan Bradley interviews inmates about their problem, heads drug education classes and self-help group meetings, conducts private counseling sessions, and coordinates with medical on the best treatment options. Although Bradley is rated GS-09 with a Master’s Degree, the GS-11 rated doctors often ignore his recommendations because he doesn’t have a Ph.D. This has increasingly isolated him from the prison staff and made him susceptible to prisoner manipulation.

EDUCATION, COUNSELING, AND ACTIVITIES

Centered around Two Tier, the Education, Counseling, and Activities division falls under the masthead of Correctional Treatment with the programs geared toward providing a positive influence on an inmate’s life. Supervisor Bonnie Macintyre oversees the department, acting as liaison with her good friend, Flo Seed, in Correctional Treatment.

CHAPLAIN SERVICES

Chaplain Services tends to the religious and spiritual well-being of prisoners, although only three faiths – Christianity, Judaism, and Islam – are truly represented. The resident chaplain, Father Tyron Coen, holds daily mass and counseling for the prisoners, with a rabbi and imam coming in once a week to hold services.



EDUCATION

Education encompasses many different classes, from the vocational training and high-school equivalency courses for adults to the full-time programs for underage felons. Running the program are Malcolm Mustafa (adult education), Elsie Crawford (underage education and recreational education) and Marty Field (vocational training), all of whom have different ideas on how to educate their students. Malcolm believes the best education is self-empowerment, Elsie prefers to mother her students (to the delight of her attention-starved class), while Marty spends more time relating his old adventures instead of teaching. Under each educator is another teacher, as well as several inmate assistants.

RECREATION

Carlos Benavent heads recreation, which oversees Lockdown's recreations program and helps organize team sports activities. He handles the gym and basketball courts, leaving the less physical activities to Elsie Crawford.

COUNSELING

There's debate, currently, whether Warden Creed will slot Counseling services under the authority of PHU, or keep it where it is. Currently, the fight is political, with Head Counselor Gervase Garfield and PHU's Dr. Lucy Mitchell butting heads. Dr. Mitchell would love nothing better than to assume control over Counseling and boot Garfield out of the Mountain, while Garfield despises Dr. Mitchell for treating inmates like lab rats. Garfield currently enjoys the respect of the inmates, who love him for his candid, no nonsense and fair approach to counseling. He'll listen, but he isn't afraid to set prisoners straight.

TECHNICAL

The Technical Department is a hodgepodge of branches, all dealing with some facet of Buckner Ridge's mechanical innards. Put in another light, the Technical Department handles the non-human elements of prison, and ensures all non-security related technology is within operating standards. Unlike the other departments, however, the different branches under Technical are mostly autonomous. They have no primary supervisor. Each branch is responsible for itself, though the only person with some authority over the entire department is Safety Specialist Joseph Nakayama. Nakayama ensures Lockdown is within federal standards concerning occupational health and safety regulations. As a virtual one-man show, the dynamic Nakayama is practically everywhere at once when he isn't teaching safety classes and seminars for the labor force.

UTILITY SYSTEMS

Power, air, and water remain under the purview of Supervisor Carl Taube, who oversees the technicians responsible for repairing, maintaining, and replacing any piece of technology within the prison's three crucial systems. Next to the COs, this is one of the

hardest jobs at Lockdown, with technicians constantly drilled into understanding every piece of technology within the mechanical maze... and where to find it. Taube also coordinates with the tech-officers, who help repair truly vital systems (like the translocation shunts).

GARAGE MAINTENANCE

Jasper Brown, the chief mechanic, manages a department responsible for maintaining the fuel station as well as tending to all combustion-powered vehicles – including the Carnival and Kiowa Warrior choppers. The mechanics' fields of expertise encompass engines and transmissions, as well as mechanical, hydraulic, and electrical systems. This includes repairing the forklifts on Four Tier.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE

General Maintenance handles any issues expected to arise in the daily grind of operating a prison. These are common problems like repairing leaking water pipes, fixing a broken chair, or any number of other "mundane" problems that crop up. Because of the wide field of skills required, Maintenance Technician Alejandra Nunez only hires personnel with expertise in two or more skill-sets (Carpenter, Electrician, Maintenance Mechanic, Painter, Plumbing, Fabric Worker, Upholsterer, and Sheet Metal Mechanic).

WAREHOUSING

Warehousing signs for and handles reception of all materials, storing them in the proper warehouses and maintaining an up-to-date inventory. Supervisor Donald McKinley handles this section, and has quite the reputation as the local tyrant... enough so that his subordinates possess a healthy dislike, if not hatred, for the man. Warehousing probably sees the highest turnover of employees, which is fortunate since it doesn't require considerable training to replace disgruntled staff members.

COMPUTER SERVICES

All non-security computers and mainframes fall under the purview of this small department. Their responsibility is to install and maintain the facility's hardware and software needs, and ensure that the computer systems run within optimal parameters. They also provide training on newly installed hardware. Computer specialist Elisa Hughes oversees this department from her small office in One Tier.

FOOD SERVICES

Food Services manages the various cafeterias and lounges throughout the prison, whether this means stocking the vending machines, supervising the prison work staff in the cafeteria, or placing fruit baskets in the administration lounge. Heading Food Services is Lynn Anderson, who supervises all relevant employees including cooks, bakers, and food service workers; she also helps in the instruction of the kitchen work force.



This entails using supers for assassinations, theft, sabotage, or any number of lucrative contracts. HR usually pays its agents a percentage of the fee, which Jacqueline Verro then places in a Zurich Family Bank, under an assumed name, until the villain's release.

ADVANCED TECH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Advanced Tech R&D is the true cash cow of Lockdown. The Cartel enters into contracts with convicts to patent their technologies, selling the designs to major companies and organizations or developing the hardware for military contracts. All of this work is done through dummy corporations and front men.

The key phrase for this department is continued returns. ATR&D, under director Dr. Margo Brough, either reverse engineers whatever high-tech they can procure, or convinces convicts to share their knowledge. To this end, blackmail or threats are a last resort. Instead, the Cartel prefers a working arrangement with the inmate that could net the con legitimate millions in return (which could bankroll many a criminal enterprise). The Cartel recognizes that the true worth of a super-genius is his intellect and not his inventions; thus, they'd prefer cultivating an alliance that benefits both parties, instead of stealing the tech itself (which becomes a limited, short-term commodity).

Again, Comptroller Jacqueline Verro handles transfer of funds into secret accounts, though the Cartel is far more willing to give cooperative convicts the option of transferring their money to secret accounts... after confirming the technology does indeed work.

CARTEL OPERATIONS

While Cartel personnel are present throughout the entire prison strata, their base of operation is Four Tier's sub-basement. The Cartel's purpose is to use Lockdown as a cover to make money and corner the market on certain technologies. In this respect, the sub-basement's two principle enterprises address this interest in both the short and long-term.

SPECIAL RESOURCES

The euphemistically-named "Special Resources Department" under Ellis Halsey hires out villains on short-term consignments.

TRUSTEES

The Trustee Department under "Warboss" Hatchel is essentially internal security and discipline to keep the trustees in line, though they do also handle recruitment for the Cartel. Trustees act as spies, informing Hatchel of potential recruits. Hatchel then secretly tests the conscript before revealing anything, determining his worthiness in joining the Cartel as an asset initially (meaning for contract work only), then as operative (as a trustee and salaried member). Hatchel also oversees trustee training on the Testing Range to keep his operatives in top fighting form.



Prisons are made such, not by the cells doors and bars on the windows, but by the prisoners they keep. Lockdown is really about the supervillains, anti-heroes, and fallen crusaders serving time inside its walls. Without these personalities, there would be no stories to tell or story arcs to explore.

Given the number of inmates at Buckner Ridge, it would be impossible and, truthfully, unwise to try and detail all 150 prisoners. Among other things, it would limit the Gamemaster's ability to introduce homebrew personalities or include those from Freedom City or Meta-4.

Please note that many of the following characters possess two new entries called "Classification" and "Sponsor." Classification is their Type ranking, while Sponsor offers information on how to use the villain as a prison-mentor for fish. This allows Gamemasters to tie specific inmates to characters arriving at Lockdown for the first time.

POWERED STAFF

Lockdown employs several super-powered humans, primarily within its Special Operations Unit and Preemptive Intervention Department. The most significant powered staff members head departments or divisions.

STRAFE

"Lock-Down!"

BACKGROUND

Ulysses Layton has known nothing but military and paramilitary service his entire life. Having served as paratrooper with the highly-decorated "Screaming Eagles" (101st Air Assault Division) during Operation: Desert Storm, his enlisted career seemed well-in-hand. Unfortunately, following a raid on a secret Iraqi chemicals facility, Layton suffered under the slow deterioration of "Gulf War Syndrome," a mysterious ailment believed linked to that country's biological-warfare program. In a few short months, Layton was confined to a wheelchair and the military issued him a medical discharge.

It was in the VA Hospital where Layton received visitors from a group he later discovered to be the Cartel. They informed him that his physiological degradation was due to his exposure to a Soviet manufactured bio-mutagen the Iraqis had been testing. The mutagen was unrefined, however, which was why Layton and several other paratroopers in his unit were suffering. The Cartel offered

Layton and his buddies a reprieve. They had a refined strain of the mutagen that they hoped to test, but it required repeated exposure to the gene-altering bacteria, which was in itself hazardous. Given Layton was already exposed to the bio-mutagen and survived the process thus far, the Cartel believed they could reverse the debilitating effects and endow Layton with super powers with renewed treatments. The flipside was that Layton could also die.

Faced with death or living atrophy, Layton and several buddies chose the process in exchange for indenturing themselves to the Cartel. Only Layton and Warrick Hatchel survived the process and emerged with powers. Unfortunately for the Cartel, Hatchel and Layton are the only successful candidates to date, leading the Cartel to believe some odd combination of the Iraqi bio-mutagen and their own physiology is key to creating supers.

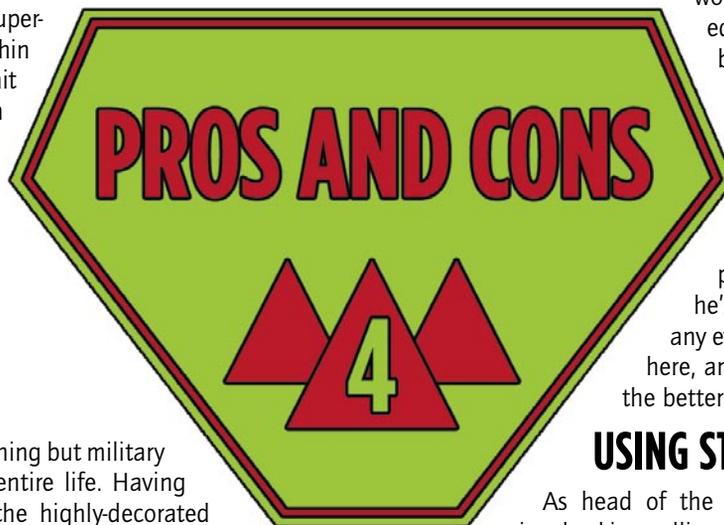
Layton likes working for the Cartel, or any organization where he can bully people. It isn't that Layton is cruel or sadistic. He simply enjoys power, and he's effective at playing the alpha wolf with a controlled, hard-nosed edge. Perhaps it's a result of the bio-mutagen's effects or maybe Layton's drunk on his own abilities. Regardless, he plays the dictator well, even though he'd prefer his subordinates recognize his greatness without any prodding on his part. If he must prod, however, he's more than happy to oblige. In any event, "controlled" is the keyword here, and Layton never lets anyone get the better of his temper.

USING STRAFE

As head of the SOU division, Layton is often involved in quelling supers-related incidents since he loves being on top of the action. The desk job doesn't fit him right, which means he's rarely in his office filing overdue paperwork. Likelier, he's patrolling the halls like a lion surveying his domain, almost daring someone to start trouble. Layton remains loyal to the Cartel and will target anyone who threatens their operation... whether he receives sanction or not.

TACTICS

As Strafe, Layton can unleash rapid pulses of energy fast enough to rival fully automatic assault rifles. Layton calls himself Strafe because he loves filling an area with blistering fire and watching the pandemonium ensue. In fact, opening full throttle is the only time Layton seemingly unleashes and vents



PROFILE: STRAFE

Power Level: 15

Concept: Hard-nosed leader and fighter.

Name: Lt. Layton Ulysses

Other Aliases: None

Base of Operations: Lockdown

Affiliation: Special Operations Unit, The Cartel

Nationality: American

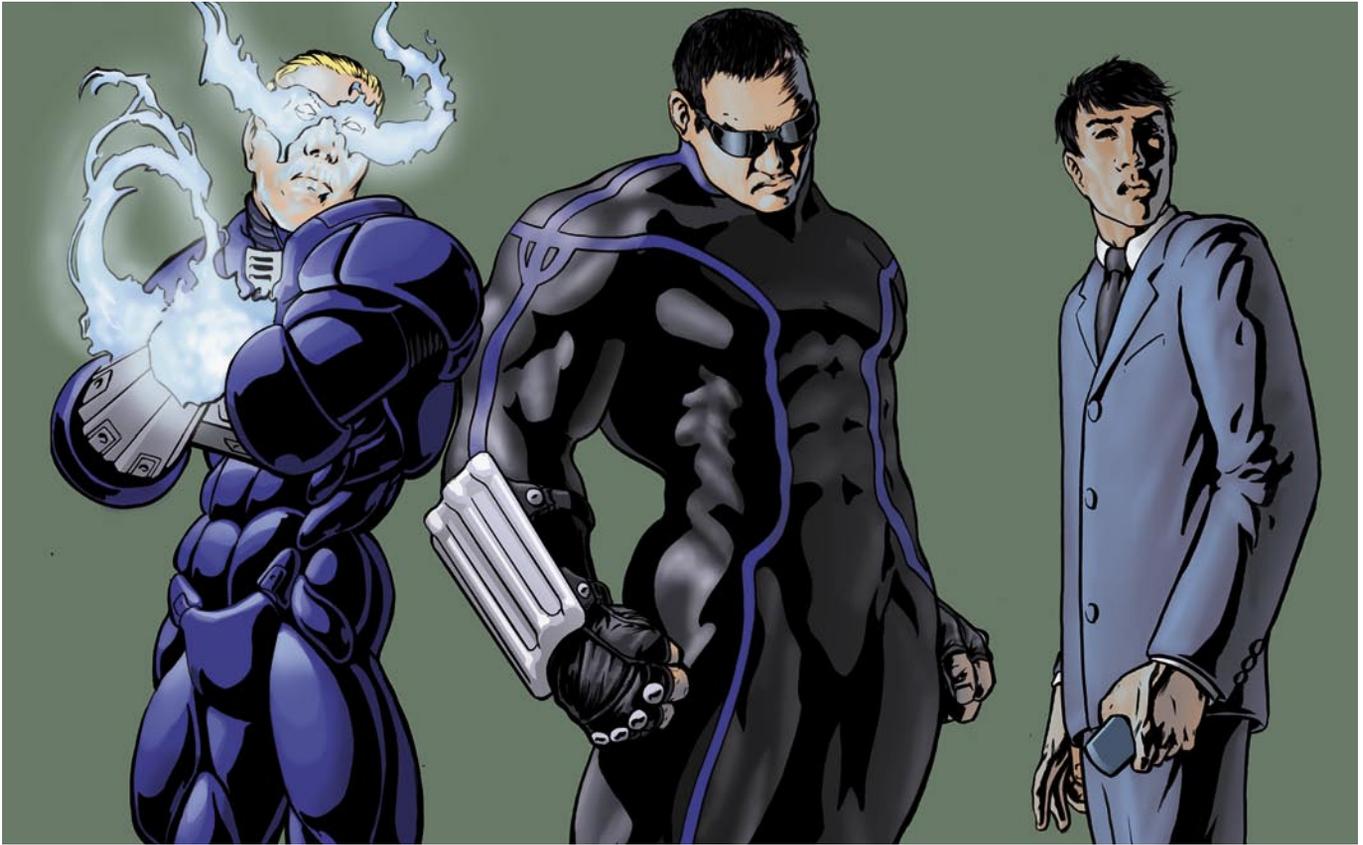
Age: 35

Height: 5'11"

Weight: 173 lbs.

Eyes: Blue

Hair: Blonde-brown



his fury. In this respect, Strafe is heavy fire support, keeping an area suppressed while his men move in.

STRAFE

PL 15; Init +4 (Dex); Defense 20 (+6 Base, +4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +6 melee (+9S/5' reach/crit 20, punch), Ranged +9 (+10S/L/100' range/crit 20, energy blast); SV Dmg +3 (Armor +7), Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Skills: Demolitions +5, Gather Information +7, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (military) +11, Profession (soldier) +11, Sense Motive +5, Spot +7, Survival +6.

Feats: Attack Focus (energy blast), Multishot, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot.

Powers: Energy Blast +10 [*Extras:* Area, Selective, Autofire, Multifire; *Power Stunts:* Dual Damage; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 6 pp; *Total:* 62 pp].

Equipment: Battlesuit [Armor + 7; *Extras:* Immunity (disease, energy (cold, heat, electricity), poison, pressure, suffocation), Snare, Super-Strength; *Power Stunts:* Darkvision, Radio Broadcast, Radio Hearing; *Source:* Super-Science; *Cost:* 6 pp; *Total:* 48 pp], gold passcard.

Totals: Abilities 51 + Skills 56 + Feats 8 + Powers/Equipment 110 = Total 225 pp.

WARBOSS

"Go ahead, hit me, but make damn sure it counts, 'cause if I'm not flat on my ass... you will be."

BACKGROUND

Warrick Hatchel was a paratrooper in the "Screaming Eagles" when, like Layton, he contracted an ailment doctors were quick to coin "Gulf War Syndrome." Unlike Layton, however, Hatchel slowly gained superpowers that seemingly offset his physiological deterioration. It wasn't enough, however, and Hatchel was losing the fight when the Cartel finally approached him with the same offer they made to Layton. In this respect, Hatchel had the upper hand. He convinced the Cartel that while he didn't need their treatments, he would offer his services as an independent contractor. In exchange for undergoing the process, Hatchel would work for the Cartel. The Cartel agreed.

Since then, Hatchel has worked for the Cartel nearly exclusively. As one of the only two survivors of the bio-mutagen process, he knows the Cartel considers him invaluable to their future success in developing supers. Hatchel has managed to skillfully parlay that need

PROFILE: WARBOSS

Power Level: 13

Concept: Thinking man's bruiser.

Name: Warrick Hatchel

Other Aliases: None

Base of Operations: Lockdown

Affiliation: Special Operations Unit,
The Cartel

Nationality: American

Age: 37

Height: 6'2"

Weight: 240 lbs.

Eyes: Black

Hair: Black

into lucrative contracts and a high-ranking position with the organization. He also knows his stint at Lockdown as a recruiter and trainer is the Cartel's way of testing his abilities. Hatchel doesn't plan to fail that test and hopes to be pulling in a seven-figure salary within a couple of years.

Hatchel is a smart man, more than folks give him credit. In fact, one look at his overdeveloped physique, and most people figure him for a bruiser, which he is... just a very intelligent bruiser with the ability to plan for the long term. Everything Hatchel does is for the long-term payoff. His eye is always on what happens right now and how it will effect his goals. That's why Hatchel can be a brutal man or harsh taskmaster. It isn't that he enjoys the power, he simply recognizes that his success today will have a bearing on his future within the Cartel. So if a trustee screws up, Hatchel considers it a personal threat to his success. Any failure on the part of his men is a blemish on his record. Do well under Hatchel, and he'll reward you. Screw up, and you'll pay for it in equal measure.

USING WARBOSS

As either Warrick or Warboss, Hatchel is usually the last person you see in a sequence of events. He'll use trustees to indoctrinate or assassinate his targets, and only intervene when circumstances demand it. The only circumstance that requires Hatchel's continued presence is when he's acting as a trainer on the testing range, in which case, he's as hard as any pro-league coach in training camp.

TACTICS

Warboss can take a hit like no other. In fact, he allows opponents to land the first blow, just so he can demoralize them by shrugging it off. After that, he turns on his reflective field and gives opponents a taste of their own medicine. If they persist, all bets are off and Warboss wades into battle. In any respect, Warboss is dangerous due to both his military training and his abilities. His powers enable him to withstand blows, but rather than acting like just a bruiser, he also uses tactics. He always keeps one opponent between him and someone else, and will throw adversaries into one another to constantly minimize the opposition against him. Only when surrounded or overwhelmed will Warboss rely on area attacks to whittle down foes.

WARBOSS

PL 13; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 15 (+3 Base, +1 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +12 melee (+8S/L/5' reach/crit 20, punch); SV Dmg +9 (+8 Absorption), Fort +13, Ref +1, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 20, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills: Diplomacy +7, Gather Information +7, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (military) +9, Profession (soldier) +10, Sense Motive +7, Spot +5, Survival +7, Taunt +7.

Feats: Dodge, Durability, Immunity (critical hits), Iron Will.

Powers: Absorption – Boosts Energy Field +8

[Extras: Both Types, Energy Field, Super-Constitution +4, Super-Strength +4 (*Power Stunts:* Dual Damage, Lifting); *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 5 pp; *Total:* 68 pp], Amazing Save – Fortitude +4 [*Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 4 pp]

Equipment: Gold passcard

Totals: Abilities 65 + Skills 50 + Feats 8 + Powers 72 = Total 195 pp.

INCURSION

"I know what you're thinking. Who do you think put that thought there?"

BACKGROUND

It began with migraines... brutal, blinding migraines that left Javier Paz crippled with agony and nausea in a dark room for much of his childhood. Paz's father, Carlos, was desperate for help and sought whatever treatments promised his son a cure, from researchers conducting electroshock treatments in Mexico City to village matriarchs in Guadalajara offering to drive away the evil spirits. Nothing worked, forcing Carlos into riskier gambits until he finally assented to heavily invasive and relatively untested surgery to cure Javier. Surprisingly, the treatment worked, but not without a side-effect.

Javier emerged from the procedure with a frightening array of mental powers, from mind control to precognition. He was easily one of the world's foremost psychics, stunning doctors, nurses, and family with his accurate predictions, his potent telekinesis, and crystal clear clairvoyance, among other gifts. Within a few days, the Tijuana Cartel was on Paz's doorstep offering Javier employment on behalf of their drug boss, Benjamin Arellano Felix. Javier agreed, using his mental powers to coerce his father, if only to protect them both. Javier's precognitive abilities revealed that without the Tijuana Cartel's protection, every agency in Mexico would be after Javier. In almost every situation he was able to foresee, one or more Paz family member died for his refusal to participate. So he joined the Tijuana Cartel to forestall those events.

Unfortunately for Javier, his mental powers deteriorated after several successful years. Starting with his failure to predict a few DEA raids on Tijuana drug plantations, Javier then lost his telekinesis and pyrokinesis; his other abilities weakened significantly as well. Javier's career and life with the Tijuana Cartel was in jeopardy, but the young man had one gambit left. He knew several Tijuana members switched allegiances to something called the Cartel, but he kept their secret for emergencies such as this. Javier approached the Cartel through their agents, and they, in turn, helped fake his death to protect his family from the drug lord's wrath. Paz has been working for the Cartel since.

Paz likes to imagine himself as the heroic martyr who sacrificed his own life to save his

PROFILE: INCURSION

Power Level: 14

Concept: Arrogant psychic with fading powers.

Name: Javier Carlos Paz

Other Aliases: None

Base of Operations: Lockdown

Affiliation: Preemptive Intervention Department, The Cartel

Nationality: Mexican

Age: 26

Height: 5'10"

Weight: 153 lbs.

Eyes: Green

Hair: Black

family, but that hasn't been true for a while. Paz grew to enjoy the fortune, self-indulgent arrogance, and lifestyle that came with serving the Tijuana drug czars. The violence was a bit excessive, true, but he eventually became acclimated to it. Now, Paz is a criminal with some humane leanings he finds easy to ignore in favor of personal comfort. In fact, nobody has ever tested Paz to determine if he'll actually sacrifice something of worth for his family. Paz is becoming exceedingly mercenary when it comes to satisfying his desires.

Paz is a clotheshorse, "thrown together," for him, actually means a well-coordinated outfit that's never the same twice – with mention of Rolex, Gucci, Prada, etc. casually peppering his conversations. He never wears a costume, considering the affair too garish for his sensibilities.

TACTICS

Paz rarely fights an opponent directly, instead relying on his precognition to keep him out of harm's way. If Paz foresees an event, he instructs the COs or Warboss' trustees to handle the matter. If he's caught off-guard and in a rolling fight, he mind controls the easiest target and uses them as a shield or distraction. If faced with no other option, Incursion pummels an area with his mind blasts until an opportunity to escape presents itself. In any case, Incursion fights a retreating battle.

USING INCURSION

If played effectively, Paz rarely appears anywhere inside the prison unescorted. He keeps his distance and only uses his *nom de guerre*, Incursion. Instead, the prisoners are likely to feel Incursion's touch from a distance, with COs or trustees operating on his instructions. Prison staff and trustees have a likelier chance of encountering Paz, but he still remains aloof to foster that sense of importance about himself. Among the few times Paz would enter the prison would be to "read" an area for past activity using his postcognition. In this light, he helps the COs solve mysteries within the facility.

INCURSION

PL 14; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 15 (+4 Base, +1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +5 melee (+1S/5' reach/crit 20, punch), +7 ranged (+6S/sight range/crit 20, mental blast); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +3 (Mental Protection +5); Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +6, Concentration +8, Diplomacy +6, Hide +5, Innuendo +7, Knowledge (organized crime) +10, Perform +5, Sense Motive +10, Spot +8.

Feats: Connected, Dodge, Indomitable Will.

Powers: ESP +5 [Source: Psionic; Cost: 2 pp; Total: 10 pp], Mental Blast +6 [Extras: Area; Source: Psionic; Cost: 4 pp; Total: 24 pp], Mental Protection +5 [Source:

Psionic; Cost: 2 pp; Total: 10 pp], Postcognition +5 [Flaw: Limited – Psychometry; Source: Psionic; Cost: 2 pp; Total: 10 pp], Precognition +12 [Source: Psionic; Cost: 3 pp; Total: 36 pp], Telepathy +10 [Extras: Memory Alteration; Source: Psionic; Cost: 3 pp; Total: 30 pp].

Equipment: Gold passcard.

Weakness: Disabled: Paz is losing power, which means he's actually dropping levels, and the effect is accelerating. He's currently losing a power rank in each power per year or so. The only way to boost his powers is with a drug the Cartel provides, that temporarily amplifies his psychic abilities by +5 ranks. Once a power is gone, however, it's gone completely, using the drug or not. Paz doesn't like using the drug often, however, because once the drug wears off, he suffers from crippling migraines for several hours, increasing the DC of any check by +10.

Totals: Abilities 45 + Skills 45 + Feats 8 + Powers 120 – Weaknesses 10 = Total 218 pp.

WARD BOSSES

Ward Bosses are prisoners who've earned enough of Lockdown's trust to act as liaisons between the inmates in their cellblocks and the prison staff. The following are suggested Ward Bosses, however, and can easily be replaced by pre-existing campaign villains. Only the most influential of the Ward Bosses are included here.

HEXORCIST

"Look, I know I tried to eat Mr. Valiant's heart before, but I'm much better now. Seriously!"

BACKGROUND

Deep beneath the soils of Spain, in the caverns of the Black School, magicians practiced the dark arts under the tutelage of a demon claiming to be Old Scratch himself. The price of study was simple. The graduating class would flee for the exit, with the student exiting last losing limb and soul to the rapacious devil.

Emil Graystone was one of its pupils, and with a gimp leg, he was everyone's favorite to lose. He didn't disappoint. With everyone racing for the door, Graystone hobbled as fast as he could, casting spells to trip the others. In the end, though, he lapsed far behind his classmates and fell to the floor.

The demon descended upon Graystone, only to discover he'd been lured into a trap. Graystone was prepared and, through the element of surprise, destroyed the demon and ate his heart to seal his power. Thus began Graystone's (impossible, some would say) quest to ascend into demonic princedom and usurp the very fallen angels that first rebelled against God.

Over the years, Graystone, AKA the Hexorcist, sought the hearts of many supernatural enti-

PROFILE: HEXORCIST

Power Level: 13

Classification: Type V

Concept: Former power-mad mage, now model prisoner.

Name: Emil Graystone

Other Aliases: Cellblock E Ward Boss, Inmate #V-E-011

Base of Operations: Cellblock E, Lockdown

Affiliation: None

Nationality: British

Age: 37

Height: 5'7"

Weight: 140 lbs.

Eyes: Grey

Hair: Brown with white streaks

ties to gain their magic. His quest to ascend to the Demon Thrones and rule over the host of the fallen, however, has been repeatedly thwarted by many different champions. But still he returned, each time with a new scheme in mind, new artifact to recover or new sacrifice to make. Finally, Hexorcist pushed the gambit too far. After acquiring several of Lucifer's feathers and a fragment of the Archangel Michael's sword to empower him further, Hexorcist tried usurping the demon Belial. Belial, however, slapped Hexorcist down... hard. While his body remained intact, the Hexorcist's mind and soul remained trapped in Hell, suffering through an eternity of torture with each passing minute. The Feds took custody of the comatose Graystone, then later transferred him to Lockdown PHU about a year ago.

Graystone awoke eight months ago, claiming to have escaped Hell and utterly willing to better himself to avoid the infernal fate he knows awaits him now. The authorities remain unconvinced, though Graystone has since eschewed his Hexorcist persona and remains heavily active in the prison community. For all intents and purposes, he's a changed man. Now whether this is true or not remains to be seen, but Incursion has brought up one interesting possibility... that it wasn't Graystone who fled Hell and returned, but another escapee now inhabiting the Hexorcist's body.

The old Graystone was power-hungry and completely infatuated with Judeo-Christian mythology, demons, and angelic magic. In his final days as Hexorcist, he was power mad and verging on delusional. The new Graystone is surprisingly sober and well-adjusted, however. He claims Hell put matters in perspective for him, but Hell doesn't change one's speech pattern... does it? Graystone claims he spent several lifetimes in Hell, and believes he's suffered enough for his admittedly heinous conduct. Now he wishes to serve his time in "prison," which he considers an outright delight compared to his previous accommodations. In fact, Graystone is probably the most exuberant, affable prisoner in Lockdown, which is more frightening to some than the eat-your-heart kind of guy he was previously.

USING HEXORCIST

Graystone is heavily involved in prison life, be it as Ward Boss, assisting Father Tyron Coen with daily mass, helping run one

of the peer counseling groups or teaching a religious class. Graystone also acts as the friendly ear, and younger prisoners who remain unaware of his reputation, find it easy discussing their problems with him.

TACTICS

At one time, Hexorcist may have used his magics to entrap and pummel his targets into submission, or derive their true names to exert his mind control. Now, however, Graystone steers clear of using magic at all. He claims it's the source of his downfall, and would rather die again than use it. Still, survival instincts run strong and deep, and it's debatable whether Graystone can fight his own natural impulses.

SPONSOR

As sponsor, Graystone takes a personal interest in his dependent's life, offering friendly advice, showing him the ropes, and involving him in different groups. Graystone is also persistent, and rarely put off by insults or forceful personalities. In fact, because he's reputedly seen Hell, he's not frightened by the prisoners, and willing to stand up to anyone to protect his dependent.

HEXORCIST

PL 13; Init +3 (Dex, Imp. Init.); Defense 12 (+3 Base, -1 Dex); Spd 20 ft.; Atk. +7 melee (+1S/5'reach/crit 20, punch), +10 ranged (+10/100' range/crit 20, energy blast, mind control, snare, or suffocate); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref -1, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +7, Concentration +11, Craft (sorcery) +14, Diplomacy +6, Gather Information +9, Innuendo +6, Knowledge (occult) +14, Language +4, Medicine +7, Search +9, Sense Motive +8, Sleight of Hand +3, Spot +10.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Infamy, Indomitable Will, Iron Will, Psychic Finesse (included in ranged attack value), See Invisibility.

Powers: Sorcery +10 [*Spells:* Animation, Comprehend, Dimensional Travel, Force Field, Invisibility, Mind Control, Snare; *Power Stunts:* Drain, Energy Blast, Suffocate; *Source:* Mystical; *Cost:* 7 pp; *Total:* 76 pp].

Weakness: Disabled (slow). Graystone has a gimp leg, which hobbles his speed to 20 feet, as well as applying a -5 penalty to Acrobatics, Balance, Jump, Move Silently, and Ride checks.

Totals: Abilities 51 + Skills 69 + Feats 12 + Powers 76 - Weaknesses 10 = Total 198 pp.



THE GOLDEN MARVEL

"Gold never tarnishes, son, so stop trying."

BACKGROUND

Leroy Conte, AKA the Golden Marvel, is Lockdown's resident tragic figure. Back in the 60's, the Golden Marvel was the archetypical superhero, representing a dying breed of wholesome All-American values. He was also the first African-American hero to earn media recognition, an honor that brought him shoulderto-shoulder with Martin Luther King and Thurgood Marshall. Unfortunately, being a hero in a society that still denigrated African-Americans was hard, especially when the Golden Marvel espoused many of King's beliefs in the peaceful coexistence between the different communities.

The Golden Marvel grew embittered after the murder of King and the arrest of various African-American community leaders. Aggravating matters was the Golden Marvel's arch-nemesis White Logos, a racist vigilante who only targeted African-Americans and Hispanics. Matters came to a head when activist Angela Davis was cleared on all counts of any involvement in kidnapping and murder of hostages at the Marin County Courthouse (her brother committed the act independently, but the authorities were desperate for Davis' head and manufactured a trial around tenuous connections). White Logos tried attacking Davis as she emerged from court, but the Golden Marvel was waiting. They fought a pitched battle, but when White Logos blasted innocent bystanders to cover his escape, the Golden Marvel lost it. He killed White Logos on national television.

The news only showed the Golden Marvel's actions out of context, and the federal courts were swift to sentence him to life without parole. It was an unjust sentence, but the Golden Marvel submitted because the laws he protected and believed in so dearly would mean nothing if he were exempt from them. Since that time, the Golden Marvel has remained a model prisoner. The campaign for his freedom died down in the eighties and nineties, but is now returning full gale following the successful autobiography *Black & Gold: The Story of Leroy Conte*. There is hope the next President will show the Golden Marvel clemency for his one mistake, but

PROFILE: THE GOLDEN MARVEL

Power Level: 14

Classification: Type IV

Concept: Respectable hero hardened by life and prison.

Name: Leroy Conte

Other Aliases: Cellblock F Ward Boss, Inmate #IV-F-008

Base of Operations: Cellblock F, Lockdown.

Affiliation: None

Nationality: American

Age: 56

Height: 6'2"

Weight: 180 lbs.

Eyes: Black

Hair: Salt-and-pepper

until then, the feds transferred the fallen hero to Lockdown... far from his growing cult of personality.

There was a time when the system almost broke the Golden Marvel, but not anymore. His brutally honest autobiography was a cathartic purging of his demons, and the new Golden Marvel is committed to one day reentering society as one of its champions. The older, grizzled Conte is more reactionary and less trusting of the system that imprisoned him, but he still believes in the humanity of the various communities – that they can coexist as King once preached, once they recognize each other as equals. Until that happens, however, there must be heroes because racism is still rampant.

USING THE GOLDEN MARVEL

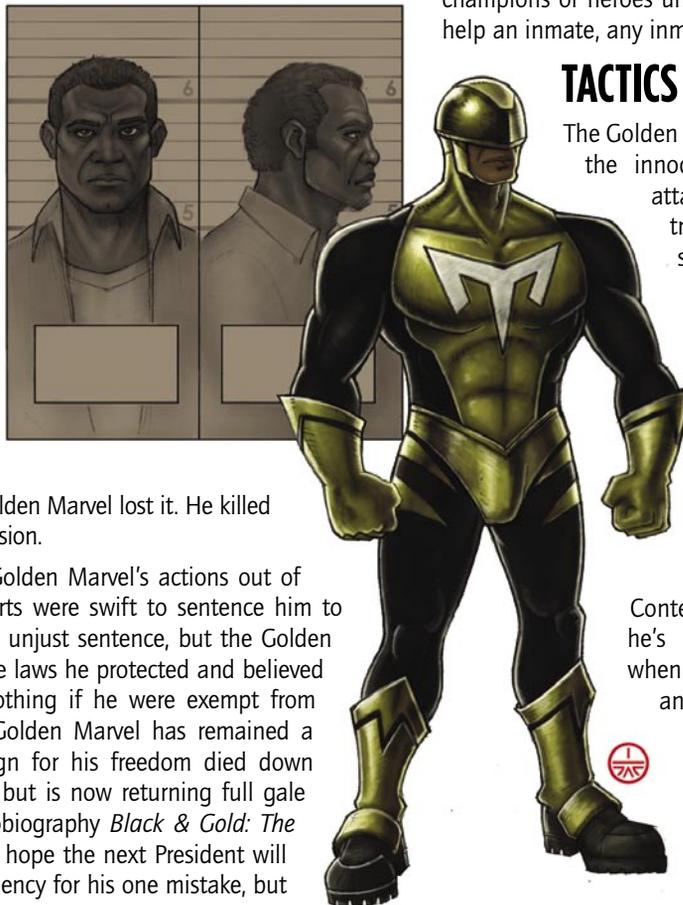
The Golden Marvel is a prison celebrity of sorts, without all the affiliated arrogance. While he doesn't involve himself in every facet of prison life, he isn't afraid to walk among gen-pop convicts, most of whom have little grievance with the former champion. As ward boss for Protective Custody, he's easily available as a sympathetic and discreet ear for any prisoner, especially other fallen champions or heroes under cover. Regardless, he'll step in to help an inmate, any inmate, he believes is in trouble.

TACTICS

The Golden Marvel's principle concerns are always the innocent, especially after White Logos' attack at the courthouse. He will either try to distract an opponent, slowly shifting the battle away from bystanders to protect them, or he'll hit his adversary hard and fast to stop the fight before innocents can be endangered. Regardless, he'll no longer grand stand or make with the heroic speeches unless he believes he can settle the fight peacefully.

SPONSOR

Conte is a non-intrusive sponsor, in that he's available when needed, and gone when not. Still, he's a prideful man, and annoying him about his past is a sure way to drive a wedge in the relationship. Regardless, Conte will always help when he can. It's not in his nature to refuse a plea for assistance, regardless his relationship with the inmate.



THE GOLDEN MARVEL

PL 14; Init +4 (Dex); Defense 17 (+2 Base, +4 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft. (fly 70 ft.); Atk. +12 melee (+8S/5' reach/crit 20, punch), +13 ranged (+14S/140' range/crit 20, energy blast or dazzle); SV Dmg +9 (+18 with Force Field*), Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 18, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16.

*The Golden Marvel's Damage Save with his Force Field doesn't include his bonus from Super-Constitution because it exceeds his power level.

Skills: Acrobatics +12, Diplomacy +7, Intimidate +10, Search +5, Sense Motive +10, Spot +6.

Feats: Aerial Combat, Darkvision, Dodge, Fame, Heroic Surge, Immunity (energy (light)).

Powers: Energy Control - Light +14 [*Effects:* Dazzle; *Extras:* Flight, Force Field; *Power Stunts:* Energy Blast; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 4 pp; *Total:* 58 pp], Super-Constitution +5 [*Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 4; *Total:* 20 pp], Super-Strength +5 [*Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 4 pp; *Total:* 20 pp].

Totals: Abilities 69 + Skills 34 + Feats 12 + Powers 98 = Total 213 pp.

BERLIN BETTY

"I'd watch that tongue of yours, dear, if you plan on keeping it."

BACKGROUND

Elizabeth Stacy Holman was born into an affluent British family in 1920, and raised with all the aristocratic arrogance expected of a lady of her station. Her parents took her traveling throughout the Empire – from China, to India, to Africa – but instead of opening her mind to the beauty of the various cultures, they hammered home a distaste for the British satellites and their "inferior" races. Growing up, Holman never lacked for suitors, but she found that British men were bereft of a certain fire to match her own passions. Instead, she traveled Europe, finding fault with any culture that didn't meet her exacting, racist standards. It was only during a visit to Berlin that she found herself swept up in Nazi ideology and Germany's puritanical fervor. Holman became the darling of Berlin and was soon circulating in the highest echelons of the Nazi party.

Holman, however, didn't want to be another pretty face in a country filled with adoring groupies vying for the attention of notable party members. Instead, she wanted to contribute to the effort, and soon convinced the Gestapo to use her as an intelligence asset. They trained her in espionage, and used her contacts in British society to gain crucial information. Still, Holman wanted to do more and eventually, after serving the Gestapo with surprising cunning, was invited to participate in Amt XIII (Office 13). Amt XIII was a hidden arm of the Reich Main Security Office, dedicated to the creation of supers to fight in the growing war. Holman volunteered, becoming the Reich crusader known as Berlin Betty. The process to make her powered only increased her natural attributes, but she knew how to use them to their fullest.

Berlin Betty survived the fall of Berlin, and even managed to escape to Argentina where ex-Reich members planned the rise of the Fourth Reich. One by one, however, Holman's allies fell to Israeli Nazi hunters, forcing Holman to flee her sanctuary. She remained on the move for several decades, reemerging occasionally to fight alongside old Nazi allies. Eventually, however, her luck ran out, and a team of American heroes captured her. She's remained in custody ever since, a dangerous woman despite her age.

Old aristocracy mixed with a sort of British colonial racism embodies Holman. She remains quiet in her dislikes of other cultures and communities, including other whites, whom she considers inferior by dint of their substandard breeding. Holman won't display her racism openly, but she will encourage it in the small entourage of female convicts who seem drawn to her. Holman is a powerful personality and uses fellow prisoners as her proxies, but she discourages the use of racially-charged epithets, if only because they are crude devices for the unimaginative. Holman is antagonistic, without ever being overtly offensive. "Never give others the excuse," is her motto.

USING BERLIN BETTY

Holman is a tricky bird. As Ward Boss, she's supposedly available to anyone who needs to speak with her, especially other women.



Most often, however, inmates must get past her small entourage before facing Holman's impassive mien. Holman hates "hand-outs," be it advice or help, and instead always demands trade or barter for her services. In the end, the trade invariably nets Holman a little more personal power in prison, whether over someone or over some situation.

TACTICS

In her youth, Berlin Betty was quite the physical combatant, and quite the looker. Her power augmented her physical attributes, including her beauty, to peak conditions. While she's lost much of that, the process also retarded her aging process. She looks to be in her seventies, but is as physically capable as any forty-something super. Unbeknownst to everyone, Holman is still changing slowly as a result of Amt XIII's program. Her augmented charisma is actually a side-effect of her growing mental powers, mental powers nobody knows about yet. Berlin Betty is, in fact, a Type V convict whose powers remain unshackled. To maintain her secret, Holman never uses her abilities overtly, instead choosing to manipulate others to accomplish her task.

SPONSOR

Holman is a horrible sponsor. She ignores her dependent and practically treats her like a slave (sending her on errands, forcing her into menial chores, etc.). The dependent can walk away at any time, but doing so makes her an outcast from most of the other female prisoners. It isn't that everyone likes Holman; they simply can't afford to draw her ire. Pity the dependent who intrigues Holman... the one of refined white bearing and education... the one who becomes Holman's protégé and privy to her most racist thoughts and actions.

BERLIN BETTY

PL 13; Init +0 (Dex); Defense 15 (+5 Base); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +8 melee (+0S/5' reach/crit 20, punch), +8 ranged (+10/sight range, mind control or +7S/sight range/crit 20, psychic sedation); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +6 (Mental Protection +10); Str 11, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 17.

Skills: Acrobatics +5, Balance +4, Bluff +10, Climb +2, Gather Information +7, Innuendo +9, Intimidate +11, Jump +4, Knowledge (history) +11, Perform +8, Sense Motive +12, Taunt +11.

Feats: Assessment, Iron Will, Minions, Rapid Healing.

Powers: Amazing Save - Reflex +3 [Source: Training; Cost: 1 pp; Total: 3 pp], Mind Control +10 [Extras: Mental Blast +7, Mental Protection, Mind Blank, Subtle; Source: Psionic; Cost: 5 pp; Total: 64 pp].

Totals: Abilities 63+ Skills 68 + Feats 8 + Powers 67 = Total 206 pp.

GENERAL PRISON POPULATION

Better known as gen-pop, the convicts of Cellblocks A through E comprise the majority of inmates. They're also generally unrepentant criminals, biding their time until earning their release, or until they escape.

BELLADONNA

"Just a kiss... I promise not to bite."

BACKGROUND

It was a training school hidden deep in the Alaskan wilderness, and the daily survival courses that claimed the life of at least one young girl each week that made Amaryllis what she is today. Amaryllis never knew who ran the camp, or why they were training young kidnapped girls to serve as beautiful assassins, but she knew she had to escape. Escape, however, was a test of sorts, to determine the girls' ingenuity and perseverance. The instructors admitted as much and told their unwilling students the only way out was death or to train as hard as they could to get past the wall of defenses surrounding the remote base. Amaryllis had two advantages to her credit, however. The first was her ability to generate a variety of contact and airborne poisons based around plant life, and the second was her determination. She remained at the school for nearly a decade before she was certain she could escape, and when she did, she killed most of the teaching staff on her way out. Amaryllis was free... or so she thought.

Once Amaryllis made her way to Anchorage, a stranger handed her keys, a cell phone, a safety deposit chit and a simple note: "Congratulations. Now await your assignment." Amaryllis ditched the keys and cell-phone, though she kept the chit, and vanished into the city. Still, she tried living on her own, but without ID, Social Security Number, or a Birth Certificate, and with absolutely no records of her existence and no one to call, she was homeless and a complete cypher. Unwilling to turn to prostitution or theft

just to survive, and skilled only in deception and murder, Amaryllis finally checked the safety deposit box at a local bank. There she found another phone, keys to her new home, and the same note. Amaryllis complied, and began her career as an assassin for her anonymous employer. She had identification now, but suspected that could be wiped all too quickly if she failed to perform. She was in a different type of jail, and needed a few years to learn how to escape it like she did the last.

During that time, Amaryllis received assignments, with a substantial sum of money wired directly into her account, and she lived well... at least until recently. Her last phone call stated: "Go on a crime spree and get yourself arrested. You'll be sent to Buckner Ridge facility. Await further instruction concerning your

PROFILE: BERLIN BETTY

Power Level: 13

Classification: Type I

Concept: Reserved racist and schemer.

Name: Elizabeth Stacy Holman

Other Aliases: Cellblock H Ward Boss, Inmate #I-H-012

Base of Operations: Cellblock H, Lockdown

Affiliation: Amt XIII, Nazi party.

Nationality: British

Age: 85

Height: 6'0"

Weight: 130 lbs.

Eyes: Grey

Hair: White

target there." Soon afterwards, she received a package... containing a gold passcard in the form of a medic alert bracelet.

Amaryllis wants to be free of what her life has become, but that's the catch. She knows no other life than assassination and deception, and she's good at it. She didn't go to the safety deposit box because she had no avenues left; she'd survived worse than life on the streets. She returned because the training program and the assassinations give her meaning. She's been bred to kill. Neither is Amaryllis cold hearted... well, actually she is, but she knows how to fake simple sentiments. Fact is, she acts her way through the subtle emotions because otherwise, they're alien to her.

USING BELLADONNA

While Belladonna looks and acts like the other prisoners, she's actually studying her surroundings, figuring out an escape plan, and trying to determine the nature of her target. She tries not to associate with other prisoners while she awaits her orders, but there's a camaraderie here she hasn't felt since training camp. She may eventually speak with other female convicts, but she'll never initiate contact and will act suspicious of anyone who does. That said, Belladonna's target can be anyone in the facility for a variety of reasons. In fact, she may have multiple targets, which wouldn't be the first time.

TACTICS

Amaryllis rarely engages opponents directly. Assassination is a mental discipline; it's about preparation, which means if she does her job right, then her opponents will never see her coming. Amaryllis is a well-trained physical combatant, and quite good in hand-to-hand combat. While she can't contend against many super-humans power-wise, her flower toxins give her an advantage against the unwary. If fighting in close, she'll blow spores into their face or cut them with her poisoned blade. If the assignment requires stealth, she'll introduce the poison through a medium like in food, or a kiss.

SPONSOR

Forget it. The minute Belladonna is alone with her dependent, she threatens the newbie. She isn't interested in showing anyone the ropes and if the dependent complains to the prison staff, she will come after her.

BELLADONNA

PL 14; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 18 (+4 Base, +3 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +5 melee

PROFILE: BELLADONNA

Power Level: 14

Classification: Type II

Concept: Not-so caged assassin with a mysterious past.

Name: Donna Amaryllis

Other Aliases: Inmate #II-H-009

Base of Operations: Cellblock H, Lockdown

Affiliation: Unknown.

Nationality: Unknown (American)

Age: 23

Height: 5'6"

Weight: 115 lbs.

Eyes: Blue

Hair: Sandy blonde

(+1S, punch), +7 ranged (+5/50' range/crit 20, befuddle or drain); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills: Acrobatics +9, Balance +10, Bluff +9, Climb +7, Disable Device +6, Disguise +7, Escape Artist +8, Forgery +6, Gather Information +6, Hide +7, Move Silently +8, Open Lock +7, Perform +8, Spot +6, Survival +8.

Feats: Assessment, Blind Fight, Dodge, Evasion, Immunity (poison).

Powers: Befuddle +5 [*Extras:* Damaging, Duration (Continuous), Range; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 6 pp; *Total:* 30 pp], Drain +5 [*Extras:* All Attributes - Physical, Duration x3 (Continuous), Range; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 7 pp; *Total:* 35 pp], Fatigue +5 [*Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 2 pp; *Total:* 10 pp].

Equipment: Gold passcard (medic-alert bracelet).

Totals: Abilities 46 + Skills 87 + Feats 10 + Powers 75 = Total 218 pp.

BLACKCROFT

"STOP! Make them STOP! PLEEEAAASE! HELP MEEEEEE!"

BACKGROUND

There is a frightening notion to Blackcroft's work as to which came first, his stories or the mythos of which he wrote. Born in Providence, Rhode Island in August of 1890, Blackcroft was a well-read child who watched both parents spiral in syphilis-induced madness. After relatively normal high school years, Blackcroft discovered he was ill-prepared for the world, having been brought up within an affluent family that squandered its wealth. Fortunately, his early fascination with astronomy, mythology, chemistry, Latin, and a many other subjects proved to be the impetus behind his morbid tales of unique and alien horrors that became part of the popular Nyathuhg Mythos. The income was meager, but between that and his marriage to Sophie, a woman with her own business, his future seemed set as they moved to New York. By 1924, however, Blackcroft's life began its gradual disintegration.

It began with nightmares that afflicted the couple with insomnia, followed by Sophie's nervous breakdown. She spoke of rats in the wall and rainbow-hued gas that emerged from the house vents to choke her. She was institutionalized and eventually committed suicide. Blackcroft moved back to Providence at the behest of his two aunts. Despite the nightmares, Blackcroft felt inspired to write at increasingly fevered pace, and churned

PROFILE: BLACKCROFT

Power Level: 20

Classification: Type V

Concept: Mad storyteller whose stories become frighteningly real.

Name: Percy-Herbert Blackcroft

Other Aliases: P.H. Blackcroft, Inmate #VI-004

Base of Operations: Cellblock I, Lockdown

Affiliation: Nyathuhg Mythos (Or perhaps none, since he's insane)

Nationality: American

Age: 115

Height: 5'9"

Weight: 134 lbs.

Eyes: Black

Hair: Brown

out more stories that gave his mythos a name with the *Beacon of Nyathuhg*. Slowly, however, readers began writing to Blackcroft, claiming they'd visited the fictitious New England towns that Blackcroft had manufactured for his stories... Dartholme and Innscourt. The nightmares only increased after that, setting the writer into pitched screaming fits. The two aunts likewise began hallucinating terrible things, but Blackcroft couldn't stop writing. The madness spread to adjoining houses and soon the two aunts vanished, followed by several neighbors.

The local sheriff eventually raided Blackcroft's home, and found the grisly remains of the missing people in the basement, pulled apart on a cat's cradle of hooks. Blackcroft, maintaining his innocence throughout the proceedings, was found guilty and sentenced to hang. Five times the writer marched to the gallows, and five times he survived the drop, twitching and writhing for hours on the end of the rope before they cut him down. He survived execution attempts before a firing squad, by electrocution, and even a go at the experimental gas chamber out in Nevada. And still, the nightmares and disappearances continued, afflicting those around Blackcroft. All this time Blackcroft continued writing. Finally, one psychologist tried something unorthodox and refused to give the writer any paper or pencil. Sure enough, the nightmares subsided a little, and the vanishings stopped entirely, though Blackcroft still proved immortal.

Blackcroft has remained institutionalized since 1937, never aging, never sleeping, never eating; screaming at the waking nightmares trapped inside his own skull, begging for a pen to release them. Often, the nightmares slip through and manifest to those near him as tricks of shadow or things best left tucked away in a dark corner of the mind. Sometimes, though, the nightmare gains form and somehow claims another victim. Lockdown, however, had no idea what it was in for when it agreed to house Blackcroft. To say they regret the decision is an understatement. So, for now, they leave Blackcroft in his cell, at the back of a deep corridor where lights fail and things shuffle in the shadows. It's only a matter of time before Warden Creed shuts him into a hole in the mountain... and leaves them forever.

Blackcroft is completely deranged and unable to engage in any hint of conversation. It's as though his five senses are elsewhere, experiencing horribly alien things nobody should ever have to suffer through. Even if he's given a pen to bleed away the nightmares, he'll remain completely engrossed in what he's writing. Beware, however, for what he writes has a way of coming true.

USING BLACKCROFT

Blackcroft provides an element of the unfathomable unknown to most situations, but virtually no one deals with him directly. It would be impossible. Instead, staff and inmates must contend with his nightmares, which assume an array of horrible forms and facades when they manifest. On very intermittent occasions, the nightmares escape the corridors themselves and leak into adjoining cellblocks or tiers. For all intents and purposes, Blackcroft is a living ghost story.

TACTICS

Power or curse, Blackcroft has no control over the nightmares that manifest occasionally. He is a conduit for terrible things (and sometimes places), though whether he channels his personal nightmares or some horrible reality that he sees remains unknown.

BLACKCROFT

PL 20*; Init -2 (Dex); Defense 8 (+0 Base, -2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. -2 melee (-2S/5' reach/crit 20, punch), -2 ranged (+20S/100' radius/drit 20, illusions); SV Dmg +25, Fort +25, Ref -2, Will -2; Str 6, Dex 6, Con 20, Int 6, Wis 6, Cha 6.

Skills: Profession (storyteller) +20.

Feats: Immunity (aging, critical hits, disease, exhaustion, poison, starvation, suffocation).

Powers: Amazing Save
- Damage +20 [Extras: Fortitude; Source: Mystical; Cost: 2 pp; Total: 40 pp], Dimensional Travel +20 [Extras: Portal, Subtle; Flaws: Others Only, Restricted (one-way into this universe), Uncontrolled; Source: Mystical; Cost: 1 pp; Total: 20 pp], Illusion +20 [Extras: Area, Damaging; Flaws:

Permanent, Uncontrolled; Source: Mystical; Cost: 2 pp;



Total: 40 pp], Regeneration +20 [*Extras:* Regrowth, Resurrection; *Source:* Mystical; *Cost:* 4 pp; *Total:* 80 pp].

Weaknesses: Quirk - Insane. Blackcroft is completely deranged and incapable of pursuing any deliberate actions save to flee or go into a fetal position when under attack. If he's silenced in some way, whether gagged or unable to write, his "illusions" are only at +10 and rarely damaging.

Totals: Abilities -10 + Skills 22 + Feats 14 + Powers 180 - Weaknesses 10 = Total 196 pp.

*Blackcroft is PL 20 to that he can have his powers at the levels necessary to reflect his abilities, despite the fact that his power point total does not total 300.

THE RED SCARE

"Fear the wrath of Mother Russia!"

BACKGROUND

It was 1950 when Senator Joseph McCarthy attacked President Truman's administration for being soft on Communism. A year later, the campaign to root the Soviet weeds out of the American garden was gaining momentum. Still, the American public needed a stronger push to fuel their fears, and the voracious McCarthy was willing to help them along by providing them with a villain. Enter Oleg Dityatin, a poor Russian émigré whose family was living in a rundown tenement in the Bronx. Dityatin was one of several Russians willing to undergo risky radiation bombardment to create super-humans. In exchange for participating, their families would automatically receive U.S.

citizenship and homes. If Dityatin and the others survived and played the role of public Communist villains, then McCarthy's supporters would see to their family's financial well-being for the rest of their lives.

Dityatin was the only survivor of the process and it turned him into a nuclear dynamo. He became the Red Scare, a villain designed to prey on America's fear of the Soviet machine, and he did his job well. For the next three years, he fought McCarthy's state-sponsored heroines, the Liberty Belles, in highly scripted events that would make the WWE proud. By 1954, however, the Senate censured McCarthy for "conduct unbecoming a Senator," while legitimate supers who didn't know about the act targeted the Red Scare. McCarthy's bankrollers told Dityatin to keep his mouth shut about the affair if he knew what was good for his family, and he complied for their safety. Finally, in 1957, follow-

ing McCarthy's death, authorities caught the Red Scare, and in a whirlwind trial, indicted him. Dityatin remained quiet about everything, despite facing the death penalty, which he escaped thanks to repeated appeals. Finally, President John F. Kennedy commuted Dityatin's sentence from execution to life in prison.

The Red Scare has remained a federal prisoner for all these years, keeping his involvement with McCarthy secret to protect his family. Recently, however, after being transferred to Lockdown, Dityatin received a visit from Incursion and Warden Creed. Incursion read the Red Scare's mind, and Creed did some digging. Dityatin's family was never given citizenship as promised. Instead McCarthy's men had them deported back to Russia, where they vanished. Creed has offered Dityatin the opportunity to work for the Cartel and earn his freedom. In exchange, the Cartel will locate Dityatin's family and reunite them. Dityatin has undertaken a few missions for the Cartel, but he hasn't signed on, as of yet.

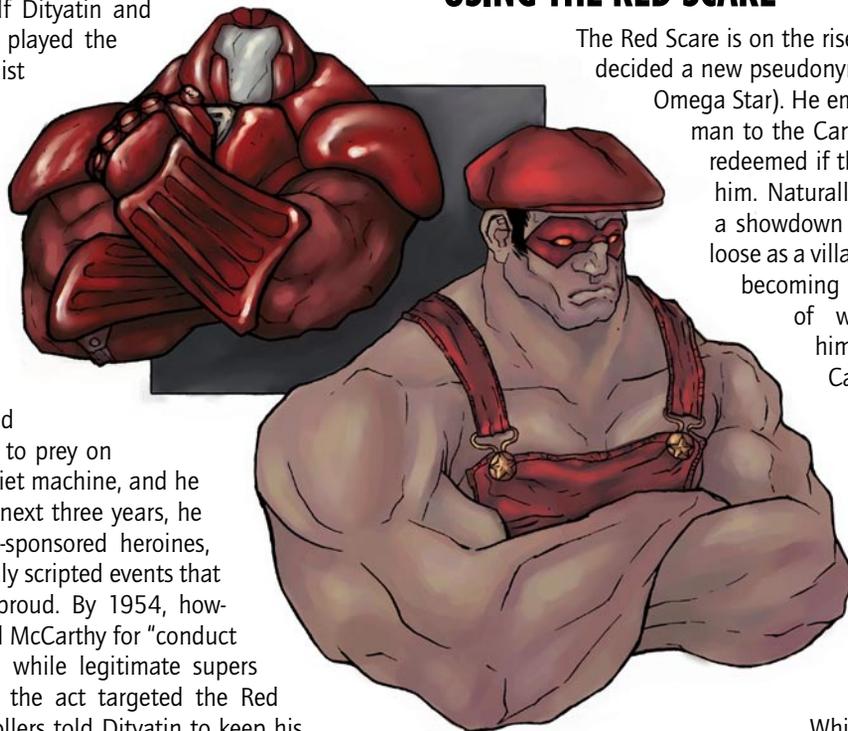
Dityatin is a decent man who remained quiet, almost invisible, for years. The only vestige of good left in him was the sacrifice he made for his family, but with that gone, he's now angry and ready to strike back at the American dream he so eagerly embraced once. He has no reason to be good, anymore. The public saw him as a villain. So be it. He'll be the villain once more, but not the fop people once remembered. He's been training, thanks to Warden Creed, and his nuclear fires rage hotter than ever. With this decision, Dityatin is no longer willing to be spit upon and mocked. This will certainly surprise the first poor sap who mocks Dityatin in front of the other prisoners, believing him the easy target.

USING THE RED SCARE

The Red Scare is on the rise again, though he hasn't decided a new pseudonym yet (maybe Red Fury or Omega Star). He embodies the fall of a good man to the Cartel, someone who can be redeemed if the right person can reach him. Naturally, such dramatics involve a showdown where Dityatin is on the loose as a villain, and one act away from becoming irredeemable. Regardless of whether someone saves him or if he becomes the Cartel's newest acquisition, Dityatin isn't going back to prison. He's spent enough time behind bars, his punishment unfairly disproportionate to his crime, and he wants to find his family.

TACTICS

While rusty, the Red Scare's nuclear powers haven't diminished in the least. With them, he can absorb an area's ambient heat



to plunge temperatures into arctic conditions, then suddenly turn up the heat with an unhealthy dose of radiation that drains opponents. When push comes to shove, however, he can release excess energy into a light flash or power blast, all while flying. In combat, the Red Scare's new MO is to remain aloft and drop the temperature rapidly to freeze opponents. Next comes the nuclear blasts and heat pulses. For anyone who closes the gap to hand-to-hand range, the Red Scare has a special surprise with his brilliant flash.

SPONSOR

Early in his stay, Dityatin would have been a quiet, unassuming sponsor. Now, he has little time to wet-nurse new convicts, and he'll likely say as much to his charge. He isn't a bad man, however, just angry. It is possible a dependent can get him to open up through patience and trust, but the main difficulty is that Warden Creed is watching. Should anyone grow too close to Dityatin, Creed will intervene and isolate the dependent in the SHU.

THE RED SCARE

PL 15; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 14 (+1 Base, +2 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft. (fly 70 ft.); Atk. +8 melee (+12S/5' reach/crit 20, punch), +8 ranged (+15S/140' range/crit 20, energy blast); SV Dmg +3 (Armor +10, Absorption - Radiation +14), Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Skills: Gather Information +8, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (politics) +5, Medicine +2, Perform +11, Repair +4, Sense Motive +3, Spot +6, Survival +4.

Feats: Darkvision, Dodge, Immunity (aging, energy (radiation)), Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot.

Powers: Energy Control - Radiation +14 [*Effect:* Energy Blasts +14; *Extras:* Drain (*Extras:* Ranged), Absorption - Radiation (Healing), Flight; *Power Stunt:* Energy Control - Cold (*Effect:* Slick), Energy Control - Light (*Effect:* Dazzle); *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 6 pp; *Total:* 88 pp].

Equipment: Armored Suit [Armor +10; *Extra:* Super-Strength; *Source:* Super-Science; *Cost:* 4 pp; *Total:* 40 pp].

Totals: Abilities 43 + Skills 44 + Feats 14 + Powers/Equipment 128 = Total 229 pp.

MAGGOT

"Yo, watch me bust this out, y'all."

BACKGROUND

Seventeen-year old Dupree is the unofficial leader of the Youth Ward. Kicked out of his home for being a mutant, Dupree survived on the streets using his illusion-manipulating abilities to commit petty crimes. He later found a temporary home with a teen

PROFILE: THE RED SCARE

Power Level: 15

Classification: Type IV

Concept: Rededicated villain working out a lifetime of betrayal.

Name: Oleg Dityatin

Other Aliases: None

Base of Operations: Cellblock D, Lockdown

Affiliation: The Cartel

Nationality: Russian

Age: 78

Height: 6'1"

Weight: 210 lbs.

Eyes: Green

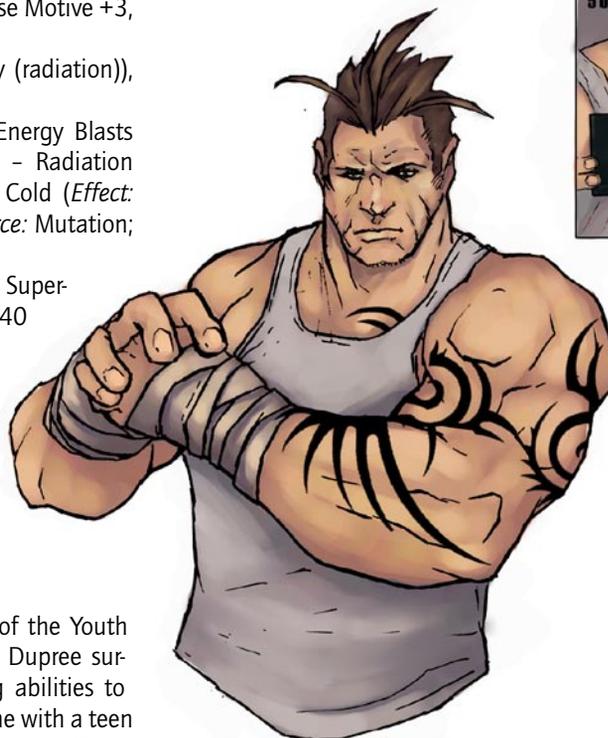
Hair: Black with white streaks

gang of wannabe supervillains called The Outlaw Posse, and earned the name Maggot, as defined as "a fantastic or eccentric idea." The Outlaw Posse collided repeatedly with young local heroes, and Maggot quickly rose through the ranks to eventually strong-arm team leader Erik Abraham, AKA Washout, from his position. The Outlaw Posse turned violent under Maggot's direction, leaving two victims dead and more injured during their crime sprees.

Washout, often the group's conscience, turned to a team of heroes for help, and agreed to lure The Outlaw Posse into an ambush. Of the five captured, Maggot was the only one tried as an adult, though the federal judge eventually agreed incarceration at Lockdown's Youth Ward was the best option. Since then,

Maggot has been in Buckner Ridge, gaining a following among the younger supers who idolize him for actually having street cred. With Maggot's 18th birthday coming soon, however, Warden Creed is eager to resettle him in gen-pop where the older villains should knock him down a few notches.

Maggot likes being top dog, and while he has the right to boast as a young tough, it is hard to determine where the bravado ends and the bluster begins. When Maggot speaks, he holds court; when he walks, he swaggers; when he hangs out, he poses; when



he argues, he insults. Most adults don't buy the act, however, and aren't impressed by the young man, but he's all that and a bag of chips to his peers. Unfortunately, no kid is strong enough to take Maggot in a fight, which further enhances his inflated ego and sense of self-importance. When someone does take him down a notch or two, however, Maggot won't crumble easily. And he'll come back twice as fast and hard.

TACTICS

Maggot's a brawler, which means he likes to come in with his fists swinging and legs kicking. This also means that he lacks finesse with his illusions, and goes for simple tricks. He'll blind opponents with bright lights and loud noises to score a punch, like a boxer feinting with his right before landing a hook with his left. If need be, he uses illusions to cover his escape or enable him to ambush his opponents. He'll make it look like he has a gun or a hostage to give someone pause. Any dirty trick to distract is fair game for him. Maggot only changes his game when someone forces him to, and nobody's caused him to switch tactics yet.

USING MAGGOT

Maggot is young, brash, and arrogant, so he isn't afraid to get in people's faces whether he can walk away from it or not. The important thing to remember is that he believes he can walk away from any situation as the victor. That means he'll intimidate and threaten others, and it's only because Youth Ward stays relatively isolated that he hasn't encountered some of the real hard-cases in gen-pop. Surprisingly, he's protective of the kids in his clique, so if any con harasses or hurts anyone in his "set," he won't hesitate to go after them. Otherwise, Maggot stays where he's king, and that means Cellblock G or the classrooms.

SPONSOR

Maggot makes a good, tough sponsor so long as his dependent is willing to play the sidekick. That means becoming the butt of his jokes and running silly errands. It also means the dependent must prove his worthiness to Maggot by running through an initiation gauntlet (picking a fight, stealing something, insulting a hack, etc.). Maggot may be a bully, but to his credit, he's fiercely loyal to the people he likes. If he doesn't like his dependent, however, Maggot simply ignores him... which means he's suddenly *persona non grata* with most other kids.

MAGGOT

PL11; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 15 (+2 Base, +2 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +7 melee (+4S/5' reach/crit 20, punch), +5 (+10/sight range/drit 20, illusions or dazzle); SV Dmg +3, Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +9, Climb +8, Computers +4,

Drive +7, Hide +7, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (street life) +8, Open Lock +6, Perform +9, Search +4, Sense Motive +5, Taunt +9.

Feats: All-Out Attack, Attack Focus (unarmed), Chokehold, Dodge, Minions (Loyalty 15).

Powers: Illusion +10 [*Extras:* Area, Blending, Dazzle – Hearing (*Extras:* Extra Sense – Sight); *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 6 pp; *Total:* 60 pp].

Totals: Abilities 41 + Skills 61 + Feats 10 + Powers 60 = Total 172 pp.

SKAB

"Time to bring the roof down on yo' punk ass."

BACKGROUND

When Hornell's super-strength and unusual regenerative properties first appeared, the young mutant just hit 13 years of age. The cut on his hand stopped bleeding immediately and formed a steel-hard scab that he couldn't peel off. Afterwards, Hornell discovered that not only could he "will" the scab to fall off, but he could also bleed through his pores to cover himself in scab armor. He quickly became enforcer for his set, The Soulfunk Brothers, propelling them to preeminent position among the Chicago gangs. From there, he graduated into the more lucrative position of mob enforcer and later, super-villain for hire.

Since that time, Hornell's seen action as a flunky for a variety of super-heavies. He rarely operated outside a team, and when he did, it was for petty, unimaginative crimes like armed robbery. In fact, it was during a solo excursion that he blacked out and found himself in lock-up, awaiting his arraignment. A psychic hero – Hornell can't remember her name – knocked him out with a mind blast like he was barely a distraction. Now Hornell sits in prison, fuming over being treated like a nobody and feeling disjointed thanks to bouts of memory loss that he blames on the psychic. He's looking to ally himself with a stronger villain, and he's looking for revenge on any hero he can lay his hands on.

Hornell is a straightforward street tough who likes to believe he's the pack alpha, and among most humans, he is. Hornell, though is a follower who works best under someone's else's direction. In fact, he usually lands in trouble when he's bored or directionless, though he won't admit it. His humiliation over being taken out so easily by the unnamed psychic hero means he'll direct his aggression against any available hero who pops their head out from protective custody. Currently, Hornell is looking to prove himself, whether to nurse his bruised ego or to occupy him during his stay at Buckner Ridge. He isn't a push-over, however. He's just very loyal to whoever accepts his allegiance and respects him in return.

PROFILE: MAGGOT

Power Level: 11

Classification: Type III

Concept: Street-tough illusion caster and gang leader.

Name: Terry Dupree

Other Aliases: Inmate #III-G-017

Base of Operations: Cellblock G, Lockdown

Affiliation: The Outlaw Posse

Nationality: American

Age: 17

Height: 5'10"

Weight: 192 lbs.

Eyes: Hazel

Hair: Brown

USING SKAB

While Hornell instigates little on his own, he'll be involved in whatever's happening around him. He's a good foot soldier, willing to sacrifice himself so his boss succeeds. If a villain needs a distraction, he'll advise Hornell to start a fight... which he will. If Hornell's boss needs someone hurt, then Hornell will do the hurting. Hornell isn't the naïve heavy, though. He's good at keeping his mouth shut and he'll usually be the first opponent heroes face in any altercation in Lockdown.

TACTICS

Skab is a knee-deep-in-bodies, kind of brawler. He'll wade out into the middle of the battlefield so he can unleash on everyone and everything around him. While he can control himself, he simply prefers to swing blindly. This means when fighting with a team, Skab will go off on his own; the team won't approach him unless absolutely necessary, knowing full well he's likely to land several blows against them before realizing who he's punching. Otherwise, Skab is very strong, with the ability to regenerate wounds quickly. He's also covered head-to-toe in a thick, resilient armor of coagulated blood... his scabs, which instantly cover his body and generally ruin his clothing.



PROFILE: SKAB

Power Level: 11

Classification: II

Concept: Unimaginative, angry flunky looking for revenge.

Name: Tyrone Hornell

Other Aliases: Inmate #11-B-010

Base of Operations: Cellblock B, Lockdown

Affiliation: None

Nationality: American

Age: 24

Height: 6'4" (8'0" as Skab)

Weight: 220 lbs.

Eyes: Black

Hair: Black

SPONSOR

Only two types of wards earn Hornell's attention; charismatic supervillains with juice (a reputation), or a fellow African-American, whom Hornell tries to involve in events around him. Otherwise, Hornell doesn't pay the dependent much heed, but neither does he harass him. Anything the dependent wants to learn, he'll probably have to barter for with Hornell. If the charge asks for protection, it'll probably flatter Hornell who then treats his charge as his younger brother... if only because few have ever looked to him as their superior.

SKAB

PL 11; Init +2 (Dex); Defense +16 (+4 Base, +2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +10 melee (+14S/5' reach/crit 20, punch); SV Dmg +4 (Protection +10), Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +5, Drive +5, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (the streets) +9, Sense Motive +3, Spot +5, Taunt +5.

Feats: Attack Focus (unarmed), Durability, Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Rapid Healing.

Powers: Super-Strength +10 [*Extras:* Immovability, Protection, Regeneration; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 7 pp; *Total:* 70 pp].

Weakness: Vulnerable - Psychic Attacks. Hornell doesn't know it, but he has begun undertaking missions for the Cartel. It's easy for Incursion or another Preemptive psychic to wipe the mission clean from his mind, as they've already done with a couple of convicts at the facility. That's why he's suffering from memory loss. Because of this, psychic attacks against Hornell are easier.

Totals: Abilities 50 + Skills 35 + Feats 10 + Powers 70 - Weaknesses 10 = Total 165 pp.

DUKE NEFARIOUS

"An independent Italy is a strong Italy. We shouldn't be responsible for Europe's orphans."

BACKGROUND

There's always been debate whether Italy's self-styled Duke Nefarious (Nefando in Italian) was a crook, terrorist, or revolutionary. Those who choose to romanticize his actions consider him a political rogue. As leader of the revived secret society, Carbonari, he sought his own *il Risorgimento* (The Resurgence, where the various Italian national liberation movements of 1800s banded together to create a united Italy in 1871). In fact he hopes to oust of the Vatican City from Rome and Italy from the E.U. "Italy for Italians," is his motto. Those who call him a crook, however, point to the criminal empire he founded to fund his movement, while the terrorist label is the Vatican's and European Union's, both of which suffered numerous attacks against

THE CARBONARI

The Carbonari are surprisingly well-equipped and trained to handle a variety of situations. Many hail from military backgrounds with Italy's Special Forces units – the NOCS and Col. Moschin. While the EU heroes almost destroyed the Carbonari, the survivors are tough, able and eager to regain their leader. They've proven effective in stopping the Cartel from gaining a foothold in the region.

CARBONARI SOLDIER

PL 6; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 16 (+4 Base, +2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +8 melee (+4L/5' reach/crit 20, dagger), +8 ranged (+5L/50' range/crit 20, submachine gun); SV Dmg +2 (Armor +6), Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Demolitions +5, Gather Information +4, Profession (soldier) +6, Survival +4.

Feats: Connected (Carbonari).

Equipment: Dagger [Weapon +2L; Cost: 1 pp; Total: 2 pp], FN-P90 Submachine Gun [Weapon +5L; Extra: Autofire; Cost: 2 pp; Total: 10 pp], Stun Grenades [Stun +5; Extra: Area (25-ft. radius); Flaws: Device, Uses (8); Cost: 1 pp; Total: 5 pp], Riot Armor [Armor +6; Cost: 1 pp; Total: 6 pp], Headset Radio [Radio Hearing; Flaw: Device; Cost: 1 pp; Total: 1 pp].

Totals: Abilities 51 + Skills 16 + Feats 2 + Equipment 24 = Total 93 pp.

clergy and members of the European Parliament, the Court of Justice, and the Economic and Social Committee.

In a coordinated sweep, Europe's heroes banded together for the first time since WWII, and tore through the Carbonari hierarchy, eventually capturing Duke Nefarious himself.

Unfortunately, Nefarious still had his supporters, several of whom launched aborted attempts to liberate him from prison. Magoni was a martyr in the making, and too dangerous to contain in Europe, so the E.U. finally exiled him to the U.S. to serve out his sentence in Lockdown. What the Court of Justice doesn't realize, however, is that they effectively delivered Duke Nefarious into the lion's den. Magoni's Carbonari and the Cartel had butted heads in Italy, repeatedly and violently. While the Cartel would love to off their adversary, however, they can't for the time being. Gaining trust is more important than settling one vendetta that would jeopardize their current contracts. Still, the Cartel is planning for Magoni's eventual demise.

Despite his reputation, Magoni is a charming gentleman with distinct European charm and aristocratic bearing. In essence, he's a rogue who rarely, if ever takes matters personally. He has no qualms with the Americans or anyone else really. He's merely tired of seeing Italy crushed under the weight of Eastern Europe's refugees who drag down Italy's economy, or the unwelcome hand of the Vatican in Italian politics. Magoni isn't racist; he's a political extremist and an ultra-nationalist. When asked about his criminal empire, Magoni laughs and says: "The mafia is Sicilian, and frankly, I'd prefer to rob my own countrymen than watch outsiders pluck them clean."

USING DUKE NEFARIOUS

Magoni's principle advantage is he knows about the Cartel's presence at Lockdown and he knows they'll try to kill him. Duke

Nefarious is the perfect entry point into revealing the

Cartel's presence in Buckner Ridge, and he's a good ally who's willing to help the people he likes. Make no mistake, however, that if presented with an opportunity to escape, he will. He does have a revolution to fight, after all.

TACTICS

Duke Nefarious controls stone and rock ("the bed-rock of Italy" he calls it), blasting opponents with earth shards, moving through the ground, becoming stone and controlling the very Earth itself to ensnare opponents. He has never been an indiscriminate fighter, preferring instead to challenge the opposing leader or his assailant to single combat. He won't ambush opponents and will surrender after an honorable skirmish. If that isn't an option, then Magoni will engage multiple opponents, hitting them hard and fast through massive tremors and huge rock cascades. In this situation, he will ambush adversaries and exercise his right for a "tactical withdrawal" if he's losing. Surprisingly, Magoni has a romantic view of combat, and will never kill an opponent unnecessarily, nor mistreat his prisoners.



SPONSOR

Magoni makes a good sponsor because he is charming and helpful. He won't go out of his way to help his dependent, but he will help when asked. If the dependent shows Duke Nefarious genuine gratitude for any assistance, or even reciprocates the kindness offered, then that will go a long way in establishing the bonds of trust that will eventually reveal Magoni's knowledge of the Cartel.

DUKE NEFARIOUS

PL 19; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 18 (+6 Base, +1 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +8 melee (+17S/5' reach/crit 20, punch), +8 ranged (+12S/120' range/crit 20, elemental blast, snare, or suffocate); SV Dmg +2 (Protection +12), Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 17, Cha 18.

Skills: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +12, Gather Information +12, Innuendo +11, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (politics) +14, Perform +11, Sense Motive +13, Spot +9.

Feats: Attack Focus (elemental blast), Dodge, Leadership, Minions (Loyalty 26), Power Attack.

Powers: Alternate Form – Solid +15 [*Effects:* Protection, Super-Strength; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 5 pp; *Total:* 75 pp], Elemental Control – Earth +12 [*Effects:* Telekinesis (on earth only); *Extras:* Elemental Movement, Elemental Shield, Shape Element, Shockwave; *Power Stunt:* Elemental Blast, Elemental Snare, Suffocate; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 6 pp; *Total:* 78 pp].

Totals: Abilities 65 + Skills 65 + Feats 10 + Powers 153 = Total 293 pp.

SHADOW BANDIT

"Let's see how good you are at shadow-boxing."

BACKGROUND

Dr. Chase Shirer was heading the Raytheon Sidestep Program – the exploration of existing parallel worlds – when the quantum singularity generator temporarily trapped Shirer in the buffer between this reality and a mysterious shadow realm. While no two objects can exist in the same place at the same time, Shirer discovered he could "trade" his molecules and replace them with cohesive shadow particles. In essence, Shirer became a walking shadow, stretching out his form with no discomfort or ill-effects on his internal organs, bones or muscle. It was as though his body were translocated.

After the accident, Shirer went into business for himself as Shadow Bandit, a more lucra-

PROFILE: DUKE NEFARIOUS

Power Level: 19

Classification: Type III

Concept: Charming Italian ultra-nationalist and crook/terrorist/revolutionary.

Name: Ilario Magoni

Other Aliases: Nefando, Inmate #III-C-005

Base of Operations: Cellblock C, Lockdown.

Affiliation: Carbonari

Nationality: Italian

Age: 44

Height: 6'2"

Weight: 193 lbs.

Eyes: Green

Hair: Black

tive venture than research to be sure. After stealing company secrets from Raytheon, including the singularity generator, Shadow Bandit continued robbing corporations for their research, which he then sold for a tidy profit. Eventually, however, Raytheon hired mercenary super Daybreaker to find Shirer and return the stolen designs. Daybreaker eventually succeeded in capturing Shadow Bandit, though he claimed he never recovered Raytheon's stolen technology. Truth was, Daybreaker kept the designs for himself, while Raytheon used every government connection to send away Shadow Bandit for a long time.

Shirer was arrogant to begin with, whether or not the credit was earned. If a team member offered a solution to a problem, he would claim credit for contributing on merit of his presence alone; if he invented something within a team, he alone was responsible. Now

that he has powers, he's downright insufferable. He believes his scientific acumen makes him unique among the other villains who he views as intellectual Neanderthals. Whether using his powers or exhibiting his "intellectual superiority," Shirer likes to goad, mock, and insult opponents because he believes himself their better.

USING SHADOW BANDIT

The Cartel is keeping Shirer at arm's length, despite his scientific pedigree, for two reasons. The first is they don't trust the glory hound to be able to keep a secret, and the second because they're afraid he may discover their translocation generators are based on Raytheon's singularity generator (Daybreaker sold the designs to the Cartel). In fact, the shadows powering Shirer originate from the same tesseract bubble where the Cartel plans to deposit Lockdown if it ever comes to that. Shirer is a convenient

Gamemaster tool for relaying information about the shunt generators and the shadow realm, should the need arise.

TACTICS

As Shadow Bandit, Shirer possesses a malleable form. He can flatten himself to slip beneath doors or stretch his limbs to hit opponents from a distance. Shirer, however, is often cocky and given to lording his superiority over others, which means he's likelier to pose and strut while deriding his adversaries (often giving them the chance to regroup). In fact, his favorite tactic is to ensnare a foe (a captured audience, so to speak), then prattle on about how the fight was doomed from the start and how his intellect assured him victory before the battle even began.

PROFILE: SHADOW BANDIT

Power Level: 12

Classification: II

Concept: Self-promoting glory hound and corporate espionage specialist.

Name: Dr. Chase Shirer

Other Aliases: Inmate #II-B-014

Base of Operations: Cellblock B, Lockdown.

Affiliation: None

Nationality: American

Age: 38

Height: 5'10"

Weight: 165 lbs.

Eyes: Hazel (wears glasses)

Hair: Shaved bald (normally red)

SPONSOR

Pity the poor dependent who must endure Shirer's endless stream of self-aggrandizing tales of glory and discovery. Not that Shirer can relate much about prison life itself, since most villains avoid him. Still, it's easy to foster a relationship with Shirer by playing the mascot and sycophant. If the dependent proves himself capable or smart, Shirer will feel threatened and distance himself from his charge. This alone may net the character a few friends among those prisoners who can't stand the Shadow Bandit.

SHADOW BANDIT

PL 12; Init +8 (Dex, Imp. Init.); Defense 19 (+4 Base, +4 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +7 melee (+2S/45' reach/crit 20, punch), +7 ranged (+8/80' range, snare); SV Dmg +4 (Evasion, Protection +8), Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 19, Con 16, Int 19, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +5 (+13 with Clinging), Computers +9, Disable Device +11, Escape Artist +11, Hide +8, Medicine +7, Move Silently +7, Repair +11, Science (physics) +13, Taunt +4.

Feats: Ambidexterity, Attack Finesse, Chokehold, Dodge, Evasion, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Improved Pin, Lightning Reflexes.

Powers: Alternate Form – Shadow +8 [*Effects:* Clinging, Invisible in Shadows; *Extras:* Elasticity, Protection, Snare; *Power Stunt:* Bouncing, Darkvision, Extra Limb; *Flaws:* Limited – Always Solid; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 9 pp; *Total:* 78 pp].

Weakness: Shirer hasn't been caught in a lockdown shunt yet, but if he is, he'll become immovable rock. He can be broken and killed in this form, but if he returns to normal (after the shunt is deactivated) Shirer will realize Lockdown is using the Raytheon designs, which was only intended for military contracts. That also means Lockdown procured the stolen designs, which is illegal; Shirer then tries using this to his advantage. If the entire facility translocates to the shadow realm, however, Shirer cannot change into Shadow Bandit... his powers are locked out. This panics him and will likely force him to cooperate with the other villains, especially in fixing the generators.

Totals: Abilities 49 + Skills 52 + Feats 18 + Powers 78 – Weaknesses 10 = Total 187 pp.



THE WIGHT BISHOP

"Swear allegiance to me now and I might spare your worthless life."

BACKGROUND

When bright flashes erupted above Tehran, the residents of the Iranian capital believed themselves under attack by Iraqi artillery. Only Alireza Tavakoli was close enough to see snippets of the extradimensional struggle that spilled into this world. Two wizards in organic-looking armor fought a bloody magical battle, but only one survived; the other crashed into this world like a falling star. Tavakoli went to the aid of the felled being, but upon nudging his body to see if he was alive, the armor's heartstone flew into Tavakoli's chest, fusing with him, while the armor itself vanished from the dead mage and reappeared around Tavakoli.

"I am the Wight Bishop! You serve me now!" the armor proclaimed, to which Tavakoli laughed. The alien mage was obviously weak-willed, enough for the armor to dominate, but Tavakoli possessed a stronger resolve, having fought in the Iraq-Iran conflicts. Tavakoli easily crushed the armor's sentience (or so he thought) and accessed the power within.

Tavakoli liked the name the Wight Bishop, and though fluent in English, never really understood how he managed to distinguish Wight from white. Still, with his newfound powers, he escaped Tehran and made his way to the U.S., where the wealth and opportunities of America beckoned. Over the years, however, Tavakoli's personality has changed from an opportunistic and overpowered bank-robber, to an emerging criminal mastermind intent on ruling over a city... or perhaps country. The armor's residing personality, though weakened, has slowly exerted its pull on Tavakoli, influencing his "change of heart" and instigating his transformation. After a while, where Tavakoli had once robbed banks and armored cars for quick and easy cash, he was suddenly targeting the criminal syndicates in an effort to usurp them and form a criminal army all his own. By the time the Wight Bishop was captured by a cabal of mystical heroes, he'd become a powerful force within the city's drug and prostitution trades.

The old Tavakoli was a petty man, always looking for the quickest road to riches. As the Wight Bishop, however, the armor's sen-

tience has transformed Tavakoli's lust for riches into a lust for power. After all, one is a means to controlling the other. Tavakoli is well-spoken and charismatic in a forceful way, and when he speaks of ruling a city where Democracy isn't a suggestion but a right of the strong, he can't help but attract the various convicts. Tavakoli's personality, influenced by the heartstone still fused in his chest, is that of a smug, self-righteous leader who believes in his own destiny. It is that of a conqueror who dominated several extradimensional planes before his defeat. It is that of a new conqueror rebuilding his empire.

USING THE WIGHT BISHOP

If there's any prisoner planning to escape Lockdown, or who rules through personality alone, it's the Wight Bishop. He'll instigate non-Cartel related events, the ones that might require lockdown, or the ones that start riots, and organize other criminals under his banner. In effect, the Wight Bishop is the king-snake of Lockdown, the antagonist characters will likely face in the course of their incarcerated lives. Currently, Tavakoli's power suppression bracers can no longer inhibit his full power. Tavakoli has access to one power rank of his abilities, which he'll use when necessary.

TACTICS

The Wight Bishop is a dangerous opponent because his powers seem protean. The truth is that the more Tavakoli acts in accordance with the armor's sentience, the more access he gains to the mystical energies within the heartstone. As the old, unimaginative Tavakoli who just wanted a quick buck, the armor was nothing more than just armor. Now, as an emerging despot, the Wight Bishop is capable of a wider array of magical effects. In combat, Tavakoli will let his men fight for him, and only sully his own hands when they prove ineffective. At first, he might lend help through support spells, but, when the Wight Bishop enters the fray as a combatant, he blasts adversaries to the fullest effect as a display of his might. Once Tavakoli and the armor's sentience become fully integrated there's no telling of what the Wight Bishop armor is capable.

PROFILE: THE WIGHT BISHOP

Power Level: 15

Classification: Type V

Concept: Budding mastermind possessed by an otherworldly spirit.

Name: Alireza Tavakoli

Other Aliases: Inmate #V-E-004

Base of Operations: Cellblock E, Lockdown.

Affiliation: None

Nationality: Iranian

Age: 34

Height: 5'11"

Weight: 183 lbs.

Eyes: Black

Hair: Dark Brown

SPONSOR

Tavakoli is a good sponsor for anyone he believes he can indoctrinate to his cause. He'll show the dependent the basics of prison, but once he turns his charge into a confederate, he's the best sponsor for revealing the secret goings on at Lockdown (non-Cartel, of course). Still, the charge must prove himself to be privileged with the Wight Bishop's words.

THE WIGHT BISHOP

PL 15; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 20 (+7 Base, +3 Dex); Spd 30 ft. (fly 55 ft.); Atk. +11 melee (+12L/5' reach/crit 20, claws), +12 ranged (+11S/110' range/ crit 20, energy blast, dazzle, or telekinesis); SV Dmg +13, Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 16, Con

15, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 18.

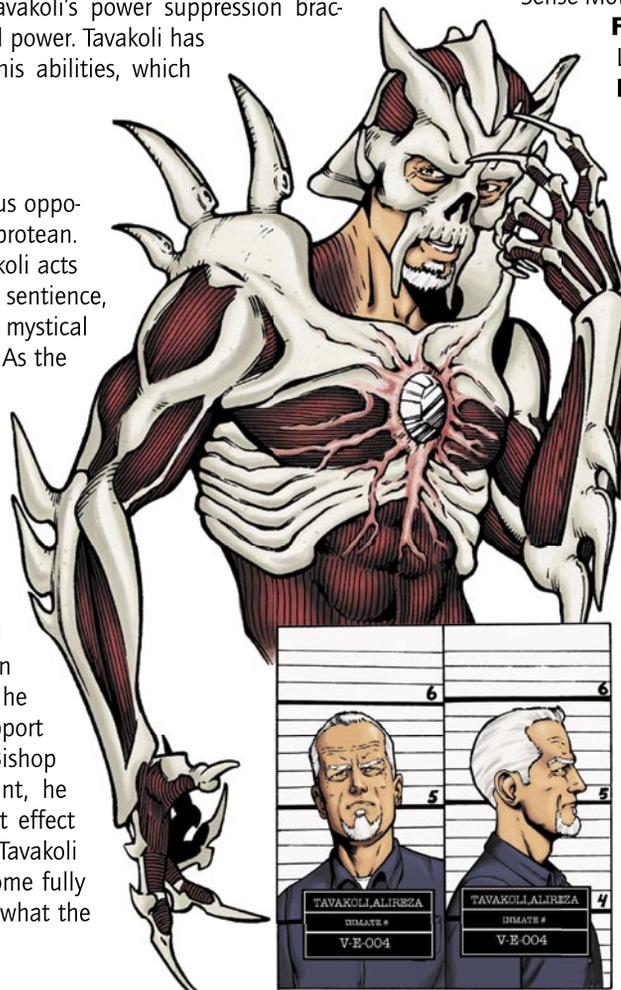
Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +10, Gather Information +10, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (underworld) +12, Language +4, Sense Motive +12, Spot +8.

Feats: Indomitable Will, Iron Will, Leadership.

Powers: Armor +10 [*Extra:* Natural Weapon - Claws; *Source:* Mystical; *Cost:* 2 pp; *Total:* 20 pp], Sorcery +11 [*Spells:* Comprehend, Energy Blast, Flight, Force Field, Incorporeal, Obscure, Telekinesis]; *Power Stunts:* Dazzle, Immunities (aging, suffocation); *Source:* Mystical; *Cost:* 7 pp; *Total:* 83].

Weakness: Weakness. Because Tavakoli's magics stem from the armor, he must have the Armor active to use his Sorcery. Otherwise, his Sorcery is considered affected by the Flaw: Slow x 4, which means it takes him longer to cast spells by an increment of four. Essentially, he must concentrate and perform the correct rituals to activate whatever power ranks are available. While Tavakoli is in prison, the power suppression method is enough to affect the armor and most of his sorcery. Tavakoli can cast spells at one power rank, but only after an elaborate ritual. That's why he waiting for the right moment (see **Riot** on page 88) to do so.

Totals: Abilities 77 + Skills 53 + Feats 6 + Powers 103 - Weaknesses 10 = Total 229 pp.



MOOKS

These characters aren't integral to the storyline nor are they major contributors by any standard, so their backgrounds remain unimportant. They are open character templates for Gamemasters in need of quick NPCs. Their histories are surprisingly similar given they all served as powered henchmen, mercs, and bank robbers. These aren't villains as much as powered criminals incarcerated in Lockdown. All of these characters are Type III unless the Gamemaster decides to change them significantly.

BLOWTORCH

PL 9; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 17 (+4 Base, +3 Dex); Spd 30 ft. (fly 40 ft.); Atk. +6 melee (+2S, punch), +8 ranged (+8S/80' range/crit 20, fire blast); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Intimidate +4, Knowledge (underworld) +4, Sense Motive +5, Spot +4.

Feats: Attack Focus (energy blast), Immunity (energy (fire)).

Powers: Energy Control – Fire +8 [*Extras:* Energy Blast, Energy Fields, Flight; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 5 pp; *Total:* 40 pp], Drain – Heat +8 [*Extras:* All Attributes, Ranged, Slow Recovery; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 5 pp; *Total:* 40 pp].

Note: Blowtorch is male.

Totals: Abilities 39 + Skills 15 + Feats 4 + Powers 80 = Total 138 pp.

ICEKILL

PL 10; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 16 (+3 Base, +2 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft. (slide 40 ft.); Atk. +6 melee (+2S/5' reach/crit 20, punch), +6 ranged (+8/80' range/crit 20, snare or suffocate); SV Dmg +2 (Protection +8), Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Balance +6, Bluff +4, Disable Device +3, Knowledge (underworld) +6, Move Silently +6, Survival +4.

Feats: Dodge, Immunity (energy (cold)).

Powers: Element Control – Ice +8 [*Extras:* Elemental Shield, Slick (*Extras:* Slide); *Power Stunt:* Create Element, Elemental Snare, Suffocate; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 5 pp; *Total:* 46 pp], Drain – Cold +8 [*Extras:* All Attributes, Ranged, Slow Recovery; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 5 pp; *Total:* 40 pp].

Note: Icekill is male.

Totals: Abilities 38 + Skills 22 + Feats 4 + Powers 86 = Total 150 pp.

THE MONGOL HORDE

PL 10; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 17 (+5 Base, +2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +8 melee (+4S/5' reach/crit 20, punch); SV Dmg +5 (Protection +8), Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +15 (with Super-Strength), Intimidate +4, Spot +3, Survival +3, Taunt +3.

Feats: Power Attack, Rapid Takedown, Takedown Attack, Toughness.

Powers: Duplication +8 [*Extras:* Horde x2 (a total of 32 duplicates), Mental Link; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 5 pp; *Total:* 40 pp],

Super-Strength +8 [*Extras:* Protection; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 5 pp; *Total:* 40 pp].

Note: The Mongol Horde is male.

Totals: Abilities 46 + Skills 16 + Feats 8 + Powers 80 = Total 150 pp.

POWERSTAR

PL 10; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 18 (+6 Base, +2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +10 melee (+13S/L/5' reach/crit 20, punch); SV Dmg +3 (Protection +9), Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +5, Innuendo +6, Intimidate +6, Perform +5.

Feats: Immunity (suffocation).

Powers: Super-Strength +9 [*Extras:* Protection, Super-Constitution, Thunderclap; *Power Stunt:* Lethal, Lifting; *Flaw:* Degrades; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 9 pp; *Total:* 85 pp].

Note: Powerstar is female.

Totals: Abilities 56 + Skills 14 + Feats 2 + Powers 85 = Total 157 pp.

SILLY PUTTY

PL 10; Init +5 (Dex); Defense 25 (+0 Base, +5 Dex, +10 Super-Dex); Spd 30 ft. (bounce 50 ft.); Atk. +10 melee (+3S/55' reach/crit 20, punch), +10 ranged (+10/100' range/crit 20, snare); SV Dmg +3 (Protection +10), Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Skills: Acrobatics +19 (with Super-Dexterity), Bluff +5, Escape Artist +23 (with Super-Dexterity), Taunt +5.

Feats: Attack Finesse.

Powers: Elasticity +10 [*Extras:* Protection, Snare, Super-Dexterity; *Power Stunt:* Bouncing, Extra Limbs; *Source:* Alien; *Cost:* 9 pp; *Total:* 94 pp].

Note: Silly Putty is male.

Totals: Abilities 40 + Skills 20 + Powers 94 = Total 154 pp.

TRUSTEES

Whether it's better to serve in heaven or reign in hell is an old question, one the position of trustee answers by its mere existence. The old trustees of prison life throughout the 20th Century were prisoners who'd earned enough responsibility to not only supervise other prisoners, but they were also allowed (by the guards) to carry weapons and murder fellow inmates if they tried to escape. Trustees themselves rarely escaped since they received better food and facilities while incarcerated. Naturally, the trustee rank was rife with corruption and abuse, and has since weakened considerably.

In Lockdown, however, where villains run the facility, the term trustee adopts a new meaning. Here, trustees are those villains who earn the Cartel's trust and pursue missions for them. These people are the privileged, enjoying luxuries the other prisoners scarcely know exist – like fine dining and conjugal visits. Trustees are also allowed on supervised liberty, if they do their jobs well enough, though they remain shackled inside the prison to prevent one hothead from using his powers accidentally in front of staff and convicts.

X-8

"How about I drop you off, like in a volcano or somethin'."

BACKGROUND

Evan Kim discovered his mutant gifts early and used it to circumvent the curfew imposed by his strict parents. Renaming himself X-8 (pronounced Exit), Kim teleported across North America and Europe to attend the famed raves in Miami, Montreal, and Ibiza. Soon, he was club-hopping across the globe with his friends, committing petty crimes for cash and partying damn near every night. A few club organizers discovered X-8's ability, and hired him to "chaperone" international stars to their parties, even though neither the promoters nor X-8 gave the VIPs much choice. Instead, Kim would suddenly appear next to the celebrity and blip out before bodyguards could react. Kim would always return the star, after they'd made an appearance at the party, but kidnapping was still kidnapping.

Between the abductions and providing drug courier services for manageable shipments, X-8 quickly rose on the Feds' most wanted lists. It was only a matter of time before the FBI lured X-8 into a trap and surrounded him in a nullification field before he could escape. Once the Cartel discovered X-8's existence, they pulled strings to have him transferred to Lockdown and immediately indoctrinated the young man. They needed him to ferry convicts to various jobs worldwide, in exchange for a lot of money - enough money to earn his loyalty. In exchange he would become a trustee, and earn "furlough" where he could travel anywhere outside North America for the occasional weekend, as long as he returned on the specified day. X-8 did break curfew once, however, and was immediately stricken by blinding, crippling pain that only ended when he teleported back to Lockdown. How the Cartel managed to accomplish this is beyond X-8, but he's learned his lesson.

Kim isn't a criminal, not like the other guys in Lockdown. As far as he's concerned, his adventures were victimless. He was just having fun, which seems to be key with him. He's the perpetual trickster, never taking anything seriously... just chilling with a persistent grin on his face and spouting the latest slang. Kim bends rules for the sake of bending them. He occasionally sneaks contraband into Lockdown, offering luxury item like weed, beer, or porn for trade (but never anything that might show up on Incursion's radar, Kim knows better). As a result, Kim's developed a small rep as the go-to guy for supplies among select prisoners.



PROFILE: X-8

Power Level: 14

Classification: IV

Concept: Super-powered partier moving into the big leagues.

Name: Evan Kim

Other Aliases: Inmate #IV-D-007

Base of Operations: Cellblock D, Lockdown.

Affiliation: The Cartel.

Nationality: American

Age: 20

Height: 5'6"

Weight: 145 lbs.

Eyes: Black

Hair: Black

TACTICS

Tactics implies Kim is a fighter, which he isn't. He's never tangled with supers before, and is likelier to vanish than stick around for a fight. He's the wheelman of any group, letting the heavies fight it out while he ferries his charges. While X-8 can teleport opponents away, he rarely does so because it entails getting in close. If he does port someone elsewhere, however, he'll do so to inconvenience them, never hurt or kill them. Kim can sprint-teleport up to 372.36 miles (1,966,080 feet) in one shot. He possesses a rudimentary E.S.P. that enables him to scan a destination before he appears there, allowing him to teleport to places he's never been and to know who's already there.

USING X-8

Kim is a security leak waiting to happen, whether because of the contraband he's bringing into Lockdown, or because he may absentmindedly have beer on his breath when talking to someone important, or even have a freshly-inked stamp on his hand from a recent party. There are enough strange occurrences that may lead folks to suspect he's been outside the prison. Conversely, Kim is consummate womanizer who's always being rejected. For the right woman, however, he may try impressing her with gifts from his excursions.

SPONSOR

Kim's a friendly guy, so he acts more like a casual bud than a hardened criminal. He's keyed into the mainstream action at the prison, and doesn't know much about the various prison agendas and plots, even while couriating for the Cartel. Still, he can play tour guide, giving his charge the basics of prison life except for the days where he's "relegated to Ad. Seg." because he's actually on Cartel business (cons never see him land in trouble, but X-8 isn't strong enough to register on most supervillain's radars).

X-8

PL 14; Init +8 (Dex, Imp. Init.); Defense 20 (+5 Base, +4 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft. (teleport 140 ft.); Atk. +5 melee (+1S/5'reach/crit 20, punch); SV Dmg +4 (Evasion), Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +13, Computers +7, Diplomacy +7, Escape Artist +10, Gather Information +10, Knowledge (underworld) +10, Perform +10, Spot +10.

Feats: Connected (The Cartel), Dodge, Evasion, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes.

Powers: Teleportation +14 [*Extras:* ESP +8, Blink, Disorient, Extended Teleport, Passengers; *Power Stunt:* Turnabout; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 6 pp; *Total:* 94 pp].

Equipment: Gold passcard.

Totals: Abilities 48 + Skills 58 + Feats 10 + Powers 94 = Total 210 pp.

SIEGEMAKER

"Very impressive, but, I can improve on that design."

BACKGROUND

Brazilian born Ramiro Puenzo sat on his father's lap while Puenzo, Sr. built his custom-made weapons and battlesuits for many of South America's would-be despots, armored villains, and any one of the 65 mafia heads dotting the socio-economic landscape. Ramiro was raised in a household where villainous superstars sat in his kitchen, eating his mother's cooking and bouncing little Ramiro on their knees while his father tended to their technological needs. Ramiro called them all uncle and aunt, never realizing they weren't actually family, but despots. As Ramiro grew and followed in papa's footsteps, he clashed with his humble father who never planned on using his inventions himself. Ramiro, however, was enamored by the villains he met and wanted to strike out on his own. So he moved to the U.S., and capitalized on the untapped market for gadgets, using his father's patrons for referrals.

After designing and creating his own battle suit, Ramiro Puenzo became Siegemaker, a gadgeteer and villain. Primarily driven by a love for technology, most of Siegemaker's criminal endeavors concerned the acquisition of exotic or illegal hardware to incorporate in his designs. What he excelled at, however, was providing a wide-range of sophisticated weapons and gadgets for criminal enterprises ranging from individuals to whole organizations. Puenzo, however, wasn't a fool. He knew, eventually, he would be apprehended. So, upon discovering the construction of Lockdown through a Cartel ally, Siegemaker infiltrated the prison before it went on-line, and hid a spare suit and a variety of weapons and gadgets throughout the facility... just in case. That way, he'd either sell his inventions to convicts serving time at the Mountain, or use them himself if he was ever incarcerated there.

Puenzo's foresight proved fortuitous following his capture and transfer to Buckner Ridge (the latter of which he arranged through his Cartel ally). Instead of escaping as he expected, however, Siegemaker chose to remain. The Cartel has offered him a significant percentage on the creation of hardware for the Advanced Technologies Research and Development department. Puenzo isn't a full trustee yet, but if his first designs pan out for the Cartel, he will be. Still, if it doesn't work out, Siegemaker has his arsenal hidden and ready.

Puenzo is very self-assured, but that's because he's most comfortable around other, dyed-in-the-wool villains. Actually, Puenzo isn't a des-



potic heavy trying to rule the world or conquer a country; he's a business-minded desperado with an interest in technology and the bottom-line. As such, he's a reasonable individual, especially when there's room for negotiation, but he'll always look to get the best for himself. Puenzo is also comfortable in this environment because he knows freedom is within easy reach. He almost appears cocky, but as a non-powered individual, Puenzo knows his limitations.

TACTICS

As a tinkerer, Puenzo is highly adaptable if he knows the circumstances surrounding a situation. He's a thinker, which means he considers his course of action (and the potential outcomes) before deciding on the necessary hardware for a job. Puenzo relies on a wide-array of gadgets to handle whatever unforeseen event may arise, but most often, he'll use them to distract or impede while he makes his escape.

USING SIEGEMAKER

Puenzo has hidden technology throughout the facility. Discovering this secret and finding his tech are adventures in their own right for the player characters. Still, Puenzo also plays the roll of the ace-up-the-sleeve should the Cartel translocate the entire facility. In this case, gaining access to Puenzo's tech could help repair and power the damaged shunt generator on Four Tier. One of Siegemaker's gadgets could even be an escape teleport device. Imagine a small group of characters escaping and trying to convince other supers (heroes and villains) to help them before everyone in the facility dies in the shadow-pocket.

SPONSOR

Puenzo doesn't have much patience for "wet fish," what he calls new prisoners and young villains. He only does what's necessary by giving them the basic tour and showing them the minimum of what they need to know. If the dependent is a known villain, however, then Puenzo considers him worthy of his attention and shows him the ins and outs of the prison.

SIEGEMAKER

PL 15; Init +3 (Dex); Defense 18 (+5 Base, +3 Dex); Spd 30 ft. (80 ft. in armor); Atk. +6 melee (+2S/5' reach/crit 20, punch). +7 ranged (+10S/100' range/crit 20, energy blast); SV Dmg +7 (Armor +10), Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +15; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 19, Wis 17, Cha 15.

Skills: Computers +20, Craft (weapons) +21, Diplomacy +8, Disable Device +21, Escape Artist +8, Knowledge (supervillains) +20, Open Lock +8, Repair +20, Science (metallurgy) +19, Sense Motive +16.

Feats: Connected (other villains), Move-By Attack, Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus (craft), Talented (disable device and craft).

Powers: Gadgets +12 [*Source:* Super-Science; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 12 pp], Super-Intelligence +12 [*Extras:* Super-Wisdom; *Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 4 pp; *Total:* 48 pp].

Equipment: Battlesuit [Armor +10; *Extras:* Datalink, Energy Blast, Force Field +5, Immunities (disease, energy (cold, electricity, heat, light, radiation, sonic), poison, pressure, suffocation), Running; *Power Stunts:* Radio Broadcast, Radio Hearing; *Source:* Super-Science; *Cost:* 5 pp; *Total:* 59 pp].

Totals: Abilities 58 + Skills 35 + Feats 10 + Powers/Equipment 122 = Total 225 pp.

INCORPORATING META-4 AND FREEDOM CITY

It goes without saying that any villain featured in the Meta-4 or Freedom City settings may find their way here. Blackstone Penitentiary is certainly capable of handling Freedom City's villains, but there may be times when prisoner transfers to Lockdown are necessary to protect snitches or for problem villains with whom the Feds are tired of dealing. The same is also true with those prisoners mentioned here being transferred to Blackstone Penitentiary to serve sentences for serious infractions of Federal Law.

The aquatic-capable Devil-Ray may be better contained within the comparatively "arid" Buckner Ridge as opposed to the island penitentiary of Blackstone. The Feds may keep villains like Gamma, The Atom Smasher and Hiroshima Shadow locked in Buckner Ridge to protect large population centers like Freedom City from radiation-wielding lunatics. Conversely, villains like Hellqueen and Star-Khan (essentially anyone with an external power base

PROFILE: SIEGEMAKER

Power Level: 15

Classification: Type I

Concept: Business-minded gadgeteer who loves the villainous lifestyle.

Name: Ramiro Puenzo

Other Aliases: Inmate #1-A-016

Base of Operations: Cellblock A, Lockdown.

Affiliation: The Cartel

Nationality: Brazilian

Age: 27

Height: 5'11"

Weight: 175 lbs.

Eyes: Green (wears glasses)

Hair: Brown

and minions) might be hidden in Buckner Ridge to prevent their followers from determining their location and breaking them out of prison. Finally, existing technologically-based villains and masterminds like Argo the Ultimate Android or Toy Boy might find homes in Buckner Ridge because the Cartel bribed the proper officials to expedite a transfer. In these instances the Cartel is looking to get their hands on technological advances to further their own greedy plans.

Naturally, this all works in reverse as well. Any number of Lockdown's villains can find themselves in Blackstone for the exact reasons mentioned above. Duke Nefarious, for example, may be too politically charged to be easily remanded to a private prison, while the Red Scare is a potential embarrassment to some politicians to be outside federal jurisdiction.

RUSSIAN DOLLS & MANCHURIAN CANDIDATES

One interesting possibility for including Freedom City and Meta-4 villains in Buckner Ridge is by turning one of the existing inmates mentioned in Lockdown into the disguise or persona of another villain. Say Freedom City's syndicate SHADOW hired Orion the Hunter to dispose of a target in Buckner Ridge. Orion creates a false persona and disguise he calls "Shadow Bandit", gets arrested on a "botched job" and uses his connections to be transferred to Lockdown. This way, Orion approaches his target with the quarry none-the-wiser and nobody wary of being within close proximity of such a pre-eminent assassin. This becomes a particularly nasty episode if the characters befriend the persona, not realizing someone like Orion lies in wait behind the mask until the moment he reveals himself and his mission. Here are some suggestions for Freedom City's and Meta-4's superfoes, as well as the villains they may be playing in Lockdown.

Bear in mind the villain's real identity can be hidden with latex fingerprint-pads, fake contacts, and even hidden jammers that feed false readings to gene-scans. The Gamemaster may also ignore the description of certain villains here to match them more closely to their Freedom City or Meta-4 counterpart.

DOC OTAKU (FREEDOM CITY)

Doc Otaku is intrigued by the technology sustaining the cybernetic-mentalist PSIklops, or maybe the Cartel somehow procured one of the Angel Androids for study after one of Doc Otaku's failed schemes. Regardless, Doc Otaku could use holographic illusions to appear to be Maggot.

FORESHADOW (FREEDOM CITY)

While not a villain, Foreshadow would certainly assume a disguise to infiltrate Buckner Ridge and gain knowledge of whatever investigation concerns him. Perhaps he's gathering intel on the Cartel, trying to investigate another prisoner, or trying to uncover another

Machurian candidate in the mix (in which case, it's a game of cat and mouse with two people using disguises to accomplish their missions). Regardless, Foreshadow's best disguises include Incursion or one of his two subordinates.

MAGPIE (FREEDOM CITY)

Magpie has enough skill to break into Buckner Ridge, but disguising himself has its enjoyable merits as well. Magpie could be wooing the huntress Belladonna to make the Raven jealous – or because he's actually interested in her. Regardless, Magpie's disguise could be Cartel trustee X-8. His sole goal may be as simple as delivering a rose and calling card to Belladonna's cell... at night while she sleeps.

ORION THE HUNTER (FREEDOM CITY)

Orion the Hunter is an assassin who enjoys the game a bit too much for his own good. His targets might include Duke Nefarious and the Red Scare, though the field isn't limited to just them. His best options for disguise, however, include an unpowered Shadow Bandit.

THE SILENCER (FREEDOM CITY)

Incarceration can be a way of escaping true justice, and vigilantes may not like the fact that mobsters like Duke Nefarious are safe behind bars, still wielding some of their criminal assets. So, what's a vigilante to do but break into the prison itself and eliminate his target. Under the disguise of the Wight Bishop, Silencer could infiltrate Buckner Ridge, though his lack of abilities to deceive and act could tip his hand before he's ready to move.

WARDEN (FREEDOM CITY)

Who better to be in Buckner Ridge in disguise than the master jailer himself? While Warden's disguise of Siegemaker may not deceive folks for long, he may not need it to. In fact, what happens when Warden decides to take over Buckner Ridge? Shanghaiing the facility itself through his cunning and turning it into his own private playpen? Then, Lockdown is no longer a prison, but an obstacle course.

BLACK DIAMOND (CROOKS)

Always in pursuit of evidence against his crooked father, Daniel Nash may know about the Cartel's involvement in Lockdown.

In fact, Harrison Nash may be involved with the Cartel, forcing Daniel to go undercover as a young Siegemaker in his pursuit to see his father behind bars.

BLITZ (CROOKS)

While Blitz herself could never infiltrate the prison given the publicity surrounding her, she can send agents into Lockdown to help her mother's former comrade-in-arms, Berlin Betty. This means any prisoner might be a cover for one of Blitz's agents.

JOHNNY REB (CROOKS)

Johnny Reb, having escaped his last host, Bryce Atkins, is now in possession of Berlin Betty, thus accounting for her new psychic abilities. Tempered by Holman's conniving nature, the possessing demon Balshamon is looking to destroy the Golden Marvel for having killed his former ally and Incorruptible Society member, White Logos.

MOODSWING (CROOKS)

Emil Graystone, AKA: The Hexorcist is actually a refuge for Moodswing. Specifically, the original personality of Len Xu-Loh used Mind Control to occupy The Hexorcist's empty body with help from personality Joyce Brendleman and her E.S.P. (which allowed Len to occupy the body from a distance). Now Len has a body of his own and is free of his "hell." The only thing left to do is play the Good Samaritan bit and escape using his mental powers (which is why Graystone claims he won't use magic anymore... Len doesn't know how).

UNIFIER (CROOKS)

The anti-supers shape-shifter can be inside Lockdown, disguised as virtually anyone. In fact, he may even be Warden Creed himself, trying to determine the truth behind Lockdown and using its rent-a-villain program to his benefit. Perhaps he hopes to preoccupy the U.S. when he leaks news of the Buckner Ridge scandal or by releasing all its inmates in a massive prison break. Thus, while the U.S.' attentions are focused on the crisis at hand, Unifier swoops in, claims another country for Unitrol (perhaps Mexico) and strikes a blow against supers everywhere. Otherwise, he may be looking to replace Duke Nefarious and gain access to the Carbonari.



With both location and personalities in place, the most important element of Lockdown has yet to receive mention: what do you as Gamemaster do with all the information presented thus far? And, how can you get as much use as possible from a sourcebook detailing one solitary location? The entire purpose of this sourcebook is to provide you with ideas to render the prison a living and vibrant place so you can use it to run entire campaigns and diverse story arcs involving Buckner Ridge. No extemporary theories on how to play Lockdown here, these are adventure and campaign hooks. Everything you need to know to kick-start Lockdown begins here.

THE THREE LEVELS TO LOCKDOWN

Before launching into selected campaign options and adventure arcs, it's important to understand the three levels of Lockdown. Each level comes with its own set of rules and problems, and each applies directly to the facility's staff and prisoners. The three levels are differentiated by how much each person knows about the prison proper and the Cartel's involvement.

GENERAL POPULATION

Nearly 90% of prisoners and staff remain unaware that the penitentiary is a front for an organization called the Cartel, or that the Cartel even exists. This includes receptionist Adlai Parker, Capt. Chet Cogan, Lt. Freeman Thane, the Wight Bishop, Skab, Maggot, Belladonna, Berlin Betty, The Golden Marvel, most (if not all) of the unnamed inmates, etc. As far as they're concerned, Lockdown is exactly what it appears to be, and they'll likely blame any unusual situations on corrupt guards and the odd random glitch expected in running a prison. In short, there is no wide-spread conspiracy, just individual situations.

Most staff-members of this category – those who aren't in-the-know – live in Buckner Ridge itself, interacting with the townsfolk as native-born sons and daughters themselves, or because they moved to Buckner Ridge for the job. Prisoners at the Mountain, however, are prisoners with little contact to the outside world. They're likeliest to try escaping or launch riots because, frankly, they don't know Lockdown can translocate the entire facility. Sure, there are rumors that it can happen, but nobody knows it for certain.

THE INNER CIRCLE

The Inner Circle consists of those staff members who work for the Cartel, and who lead double lives at the facility, as well as prisoners termed trustees. About 8% of the staff and inmates of Buckner Ridge are directly involved in Cartel activities and are on the organization's payroll. This includes X-8, Strafe, Warboss,

Incursion, Siegemaker, Warden Creed, Jacqueline Verro, Benjamin Talbot, and Ellis Halsey.

Creed and Talbot are first and second-in-command of the Cartel's operations at Lockdown, while Warrick "Warboss" Hatchel responds directly to Creed as chief enforcer. Hatchel is solely responsible for the trustees and ensuring the assignments handed down from Halsey unfold without a hitch.

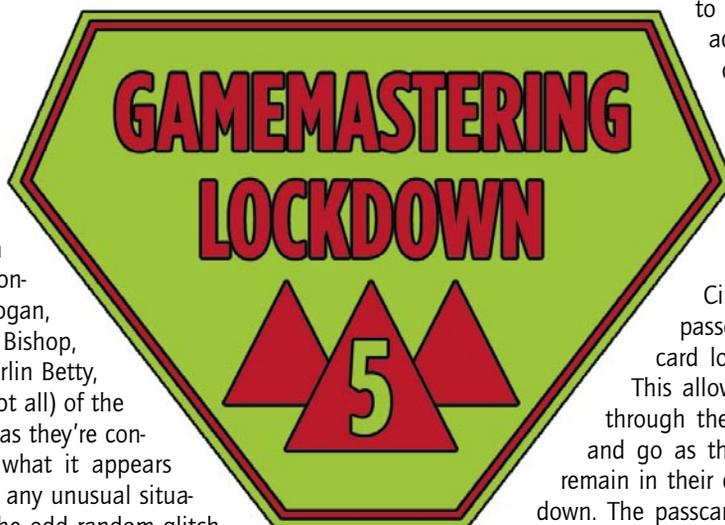
Members of the Inner Circle make a hefty sum working Cartel jobs. Those salaried by the organization earn \$250,000+ a year; trustees earn a flat amount per mission based on 3-7% of the contract fee (depending on their inmate's reliability and ability). Because contracts start at a minimum of \$500,000, and can go as high as several million, trustees make decent scratch, too.

Those trustees hired for their scientific or technological skills earn 10% of the gross for whatever technology the Cartel can market and sell. Trustees never receive the money they earn directly. Instead, the Cartel places it in Swiss bank accounts until the villain leaves jail. It does allow trustees to transfer their money into other accounts, however, since few convicts would actually work on consignment without some control over their assets.

Trustees remain shackled except when training on the testing range or departing for their assignments. All Inner Circle members also carry gold passcards, though a trustee's passcard looks like a medic-alert bracelet. This allows them uninhibited movement through the facility; trustees cannot come and go as they please, however. They must remain in their cells during lights out and lockdown. The passcard is not sanction to break the rules. Instead, when trustees need to vanish for a few days, Warboss arranges for their transfer to Ad. Seg., then smuggles the inmate out for their mission or a stay in Four Tier's sub-basement.

When a trustee works a mission for the Cartel, he cannot wear his old costume, and must complete his mission discreetly. If the trustee endangers the Cartel's operations by revealing his identity, Warrick Hatchel will likely arrange for an "unfortunate accident." Anyone trying to escape during a mission, or who misses their rendezvous, is struck by debilitating pain (Befuddle +10; the Gamemaster can decide on the catalyst, be it a subdermal implant, post-hypnotic suggestion, arcane spell, or some combination) that remains until the trustee returns to prison or the rendezvous point for pick-up.

On a final note: although trustees may have access to the entire facility, their missions and knowledge of the Cartel is on a need-to-know basis. This means they may not understand the Cartel's agendas or the nature of the clients hiring them for missions.





AND EVERYONE ELSE

The remaining 2% of prisoners and staff know about or suspect the Cartel's involvement, but are not part of the Inner Circle. This includes Duke Nefarious and the Red Scare, though Shadow Bandit, Capt. Chet Cogan, and Lt. Freeman Thane are all on the verge of figuring it out. Others, like Skab, have memories of the Cartel buried deep in their brains, but Incursion sees to their memory loss following a mission. Nothing is ever truly lost, though. For those inmates used in this fashion, it isn't that the Cartel is duping them from their contracted fees, it's just that Creed knows he can't trust or rely on them to keep their mouths shut.

Any staff member or prisoner with unsanctioned knowledge of the Cartel is a potential font of information for heroes — or a launching point at the very least. The minute the Cartel discovers these individuals know of the organization's existence, however, they will terminate the target. The only exception is the Red Scare, whom Creed is grooming as a trustee.

CAMPAIGNS AND GAME HOOKS

Lockdown fits into any existing campaign world, hopefully with a minimum of tweaks. As such, it includes entry points and campaign suggestions regardless the style of game the Gamemaster runs.

FOR SUPERS OUTSIDE BUCKNER RIDGE

Perhaps the Gamemaster isn't interested in running heroes through *Lockdown* as much as in running the Mountain as a background element. This, in no way, alters the usefulness of this sourcebook or the myriad of hooks to continue bringing heroes back to the prison for whatever reason. In this instance, Buckner Ridge is a wellspring of story arcs and continued interaction, though potentially not a campaign focus in itself. Like other background elements, events bring the heroes into the prison's orbit for an episode or three, but never enough to occupy their full attentions.

The advantage of making *Lockdown* an element in the world as opposed to a campaign setting is that the Gamemaster can take far more liberties in creating a dark and gritty prison. Are the cells under 23-hour lockdown with prisoners isolated from one another? Are the hallways drab and constantly dreary (a fact that would quickly grate on incarcerated characters)? Are most prisoners zombies thanks to psychotropic drug treatments meant to dull their mind? Is there a Death Row and rampant gang activity? The options are endless should Gamemasters create an environment that would otherwise be unplayable or unpleasant for PCs on a day-in/day-out basis. These are just some possibilities, like the following hooks to involve outside heroes in Buckner Ridge.

BLACKSTONE DOWN!

A variant on the prison transport hook uses *Freedom City's* Blackstone Penitentiary and asks what if Blackstone went “offline?” Maybe a riot damaged too much property or the facility is in need of extensive upgrades; in either case, Blackstone must transfer its inmates to other facilities, with the lion's share bound for Lockdown. The only problems, in this instance, are the logistics of handling the transfer of so many prisoners. The possibility for escape is high, as is the potential for rescue attempts to retrieve specific convicts. In either case, any available hero is crucial in helping ferry inmates to their new homes, whether they provide vehicles and powers as transportation or they serve as convoy guards. The entire matter is hush-hush, but the possibility for information leaks may create situations involving nosy reporters, rescue attempts, and even kidnappings to settle old scores.

Blackstone Down! represents a major story arc that can set the characters smack dab in the action, from their participation in the Blackstone “incident,” to discovering Lockdown's existence, to helping transport the prisoners to Buckner Ridge. At this point, Lockdown may be unoccupied and waiting for staff to arrive when it's overrun with inmates – from empty halls to a fully populated facility with new and old villains rubbing elbows and grating nerves. The SOU may even ask some heroes to help in the supervision of prisoners until their own COs complete training. That should require a couple of weeks of keeping the peace.

Issues the Gamemaster will need to answer ahead of time are: What caused the Blackstone incident? Was it deliberate? Was the Cartel somehow responsible, forcing a reticent Bureau of Prisons to entrust prisoners with them? How long will Blackstone's “guests” remain? Is this the first time the heroes hear about Lockdown? If so, what's the impression you wish to create (prison in shining armor or something more sinister)?

COMMON EVENTS

Common events are those events that don't necessarily entail combat or fighting. For example, the heroes, for whatever reason, must travel to Lockdown as a favor or to fulfill an obligation. In either case, they can make their way to the facility independently, or travel aboard the Carnival jet with a consignment of prisoners – earning them their first taste of the operations involved in maintaining the facility. One thing to remember, however, is the Gamemaster can run each hook as its own adventure, or use it to connect to other scenarios. While the characters are giving depositions at an early release hearing, for example, there could be a prison riot in which they become involved. In quelling the riot, do the characters earn job offers from SOU for their help?

DEATHBED CONFESSIONALS

A super-villain is about to die in prison due to natural causes (old age, cancer, bad accident, radiation poisoning) and asks the heroes be present at his deathbed. He wishes to tell them something, whether to clear his own conscience, to ask forgiveness, or to provide a long withheld clue to a mystery. The characters may know the villain through direct experience, through second-hand accounts, or only through news reports/history lessons. Still, the invitation should be intriguing enough to earn some attention.

Plot points the Gamemaster need to answer for this hook include: Is the villain dying or luring the heroes into a trap? Does he seek forgiveness for past wrongdoings? Does he want to reveal a familial connection to a hero? Does he want to admit his involvement in the death of a hero's loved one? Does he want to disclose his role in a hero's origin? Or does he need to relay some piece of information that reveals some hidden knowledge which in turn sparks an entirely new adventure? Is the villain seeking a new body for his mind or soul? Or looking to pass on his powers to someone else?

EARLY RELEASE

A villain the characters fought with or captured is about to earn early release thanks to his exemplary conduct in prison. He's

likely a non-violent offender and a street-level threat, and may have worked for the Cartel, who doctored his records for his early release. Still, before the hearing board makes their decision, they want to interview the heroes involved in his capture. Essentially, they're looking for testimony concerning the villain's actions and conduct.

Important points the Gamemaster should resolve for this hook include: Does anyone have it out for the villain? Were the characters called in because their testimony was intended to sabotage the inmate's early release? Does someone try affecting the outcome of the hearing by asking the characters to lie? What if they knew the villain would commit a future evil? Does the convict's exemplary conduct in prison belie his true nature?

PRISONER TRANSPORT

The battle was difficult and long, but the characters finally captured a dangerous Type IV or Type V villain. With the trial over, the Bureau of Prisons has specifically asked for the heroes' help in transporting the prisoner to Buckner Ridge. He may be transported while in hotsleep, but he's still a risk for some reason – whether because he's too unpredictable, potentially too strong to contain, or has confederates capable of launching a rescue mid-flight. It may seem like a simple babysitting job, but as most heroes know, “simple” is always invitation for trouble.

Plot points that Gamemasters should determine ahead of time are: What makes the villain so dangerous as to require in-flight escort? Is there a rescue attempt in the air, or does someone kidnap the Carnival whole-hog? Is there a rescue attempt on the ground? Did someone sabotage the plane to crash as revenge for the villain killing a loved one? Or is the prisoner's hotsleep coffin constantly failing and requiring on-the-fly adjustments by tech savvy characters?

RETURNING ESCAPED CONS

Similar to the **Prison Transport** hook mentioned in the last section, the heroes capture an escaped felon and the authorities ask them to return the inmate to Lockdown. How they reach the facil-

ity is dependent on the power level of the game and the powers of the characters. This could be the first time they ever hear about the prison itself, so they may need some guidance on how to get there. The staff will be grateful for the inmate's return and are willing to offer a quick tour of the facility as well as answering some questions. If there are any psychic heroes in the group, Incursion plays host since he can resist mental probes; other members of the Inner Circle, meanwhile, remain out of sight.

Things the Gamemasters should determine ahead of time for this hook include: How did the felon escape? Is he fearful of returning for some reason? What is that reason? Does he suspect something unusual about Lockdown? Did he actually track down the heroes and ask their help? While the characters visit the prison, does someone try slipping them a note? Why *is* their escort's mind unreadable, anyway?

TESTIFY

While at Lockdown, a villain supposedly murdered another inmate. Whether this is true or not remains in the Gamemaster's purview, but the heroes must testify as character witnesses and experts of sorts (having fought the villain on previous occasions). Their testimony could be on behalf of, or against, the defendant. By special provision of the Department of Justice (DOJ), the trial will take place in the prison itself (because the prisoner is "dangerous" or too volatile to be transported outside of Lockdown's suppression fields at this time; or, the DOJ fears other villains may try rescuing the convict once he's outside Lockdown). The jurors are from Buckner Ridge, the trial unfolds in the relatively unused Three Tier and the judge sequesters witnesses like the heroes at a nearby motel or at the facility itself.

Important points Gamemasters will need to answer for this hook include: Did the villain commit the murder? If not, why frame this particular inmate? Was he targeted because of his propensity for violence, because he knew something about the Cartel or because he was at the wrong place at the wrong time? If the villain on trial did commit the murder, were there extenuating circumstances? Was his life in danger? Was the victim about to kill someone else?

Did the victim fake his own death? Heroes can investigate the crime as well as take part in the trial.

UNUSUAL EVENTS

Unusual events are circumstances a little stranger than those given under **Common Events**. They may involve conflict, but, for the most part, they are somehow extraordinary. These hooks can unfold in prison, or as indicated, may bring prison-related events directly into the lives of the heroes wherever they may be.

ARCANE MATTERS

Good help is hard to find, and Lockdown still lacks solid support in several departments, including, and specifically related to, magic. So they contact arcane-skilled heroes, asking for their help in generating a variety of anti-magic wards and mystical barriers. In exchange, they're willing to pay handsomely for the heroes' service. This can occur before the facility opens, or following a riot after someone manages to desecrate the existing charms and spells. While this hook only involves the mystic hero in the group (unless your group is a team of magical heroes), he can certainly insist that his teammates accompany him. The staff of Lockdown initially resists allowing "extraneous" people into the facility, but they have little choice in the matter when it comes right down to it.

Some things to consider when using this hook are: If there is a mystic on Lockdown's payroll, why isn't he handling the matter? Did he lose a fight against someone like the Wight Bishop? Did the Cartel eliminate him for betraying them? Is there a lingering mystical trap left behind by a magic-wielding prisoner? If there isn't a magician on the payroll, would they offer that position to one of the heroes? Will the characters sense the presence of Blackcroft in PHU and is the insane writer somehow responsible for the magical wards failing?

BE OUR GUEST, BE OUR GUEST, PUT THE PRISON TO THE TEST....

Well, how does someone know Lockdown is "escape proof" unless they test it? And who better to call in than the heroes? With

WHAT FUN!

What supervillain wouldn't use the **Be Our Guest** hook to strike at the heroes? Only a select few would turn the test run into a maze for the heroes. Specifically, Player 2 (see *Crooks*), Warden (see *Freedom City*), and Conundrum (see *Foes of Freedom*), fit the bill for the villains likeliest to pull off something of this nature.

In Player 2's case, the prison represents a giant arena where he must contend with multiple opponents in different playing fields, just the sort of challenge he believes he can win. Naturally, Player 2 will have mucked about with the security systems, replacing specific cameras with SLATE and HAG projectors, and using fellow members of the Crime Union like Chokechain, Moonquake, and Redhawk to provide different challenges. While Player 2 represents a relatively light-hearted sort of threat expected of Silver Age villains, Warden certainly does not. He's out to hurt and punish heroes, and he's jealous of Lockdown because it detracts from his chief accomplishment, Blackstone Penitentiary. Thus, Warden turns Lockdown into a giant trap using the translocation generators to ambush characters, replaces gas jet tanks with his own deadly brew, turns doors into electric barriers, etc. Warden won't kill heroes off arbitrarily or immediately, however. What's the point in being a control freak if you can't lord your power over others?

Conundrum takes a similar approach, but his attitude is more like Player 2's: it's all a game, a vast puzzle giving him the opportunity to pit his wits against the heroes (and perhaps everyone else involved with Lockdown). Conversely, if Conundrum is an inmate at Lockdown, he may be one of the first to determine the prison's true purpose. Figuring a way out of the situation created by the Cartel may prove an interesting challenge for the Prince of Puzzles.

this hook, the prison hasn't opened yet, though construction is complete and the staff is undergoing training. So, the Americas Security Concerns (ASC) offers to pay the heroes, or donate money to their favorite charities, if the characters play prisoner for a few days (or a week) and try to escape. It's simply to test the system against human ingenuity, with one cellblock active. Already, some notable heroes (and a couple of has-beens) have agreed to participate in the interest of public safety, making this a potentially unique roleplaying experience filled with interesting personalities and problem-solving dilemmas. It's the *Surreal Life* featuring heroes instead of celebrities.

Some questions to answer for this hook are: Is everything on the up-and-up? Is someone using this as an opportunity to trap the characters? Is the Cartel testing certain participants for induction into the Cartel? If so, who interests them? Does any major security hardware malfunction?

BREAKOUT

An oldie but a goodie; the breakout! This introduction to Lockdown can be made a bit fresher and stranger if the characters don't know the prison exists, though this twist isn't necessary. In this scenario, the heroes don't have to visit Lockdown. Instead, it allows the villains to come to them... nearly all of them in fact, if that's what the Gamemaster wants. A prison breakout results in the escape of several dangerous felons, a few of whom hide in the heroes' neck of the woods. The Department of Justice asks the characters to find and capture the villains, but the Cartel is also scrambling to retrieve specific convicts who may endanger their secrets, like Duke Nefarious. Thus, with this hook, the heroes can meet those villains detailed here, as well as powered staff members Strafe, Incursion, and Warboss.

Questions to answer for this scenario include: What is Lockdown? How did the breakout happen? Who instigated it? Why is Lockdown sending staff members after specific prisoners? Will Incursion, Strafe, and Warboss cooperate with the heroes? Or is this a race to capture inmates? Will the ASC offer the heroes rewards for turning over their captured escapees to them directly? Does the Department of Justice even know about the breakout or is Lockdown trying to handle the matter discreetly? If the Bureau of Prisons knows about the incident, they'll send in investigators to determine how the breakout occurred. Lockdown will then take steps to ensure their mistake isn't repeated.

COVER BLOWN

In this hook, the heroes encounter a low-profile trustee out on assignment, which means his cover's blown. The trustee, however, has a global positioning tracker implanted on him, meaning X-8 can teleport directly to him for pick-up. X-8 provides immediate evac, and unless the characters are expecting his arrival, which they shouldn't be, then his appearance and retreat should catch them by surprise. Regardless, this complicates matters for the Cartel and introduces the idea that something very strange is going on at Lockdown. Especially because as the heroes investigate the villain and his rescuer they discover the two convicts are supposedly incarcerated at Lockdown. While the penitentiary

can confirm the cons in question are still under lock and key, they resist any attempts to investigate directly, unless the characters have strong connections with the Department of Justice or Bureau of Prisons. Still, this hook should establish a kernel of doubt about Lockdown in the PC's minds.

Questions Gamemasters should keep in mind when pursuing this plotline are: How certain should the characters of the trustees' identities? How does this plot lead into other hooks or subsequent investigations? What steps will the Cartel take to silence nosy or troublesome characters? Will they pursue the heroes at all, or do they risk validating the accusations? Will Incursion mind-wipe X-8's and the low-profiler's memories until after the investigation passes? Or will they treat it like a prison break and claim the two inmates escaped, while they actually hide-out in Four Tier's sub-basement?

NOT-SO QUIET RIOT

There's a riot at Lockdown and the prisoners have taken hostages. Some, all, or none of them may have access to their powers, but security managed to shunt the elevator shafts and cellblock corridors, trapping the majority of prisoners and staff in isolated pockets. Unfortunately, before the Inner Circle can handle the matter fully, the Department of Justice issues a public call to various heroes, including the characters, to help retake the prison. They're unwilling to negotiate for the release of hostages, and fear staff members may start dying soon. Now Strafe and Incursion must deal with those who've answered the DOJ's request, appearing to cooperate fully with the unwanted help while steering them away from discovering Four Tier's sub-basement. In this scenario, the COs and heroes can use the translocation breach pods to enter the various pockets, hopefully without being noticed. After that, it's anybody's game.

Questions to consider ahead of time for this plot are: Will Warboss or Strafe kill an NPC hero who accidentally stumbles across Four Tier's sub-basement? Does Shadow Bandit realize the nature of the singularity generators and try bargaining for that information? Does a prisoner like Duke Nefarious ask for help, knowing the Cartel will try to kill him? Do other convicts like the Golden Marvel save staff members from the reprisals of other inmates? Do any two-bit cons mysteriously die during the storming of Lockdown?

RECRUITING GROUNDS

The characters encounter minor villains and enforcers involved in a coordinated crime wave. After catching one villain who's willing to talk, the heroes discover that the criminal mastermind and his flunkies are actually behind bars in Lockdown. In fact, it's a recruiting drive for a new villain team, with the likes of the Wight Bishop and Skab forming the core. In fact, one or two members were recently released from Lockdown, having served their sentences.

Questions to ask here are: Is the Wight Bishop deliberately instructing his henchman to get caught in hopes of increasing his strength within the prison? Did the released inmates jump the gun and start their crime spree before the Wight Bishop escaped? Were the criminals, in fact, stealing the necessary hardware to launch a rescue attempt?

RUSSIAN DOLLS

As suggested in **Russian Dolls and Manchurian Candidates** (see page 74), the characters may discover an existing villain has gone undercover inside Lockdown. His intentions remain unknown, but it's certain he must be found and stopped. Time may be of the essence and the clock is counting down. So, do the characters simply inform the prison or do they offer their help? Lockdown may accept assistance because something about the entire affair is blocking Incursion's mental abilities.

Questions to consider include: Does the Cartel already know about the villain in question? Did they hire him to take care of an internal problem? Or, are they actually trying to distract the heroes while the Cartel pursues other actions? If Incursion really is unable to use his abilities, is it because of targeted jamming or is someone using their power against him?

SUPERS INSIDE BUCKNER RIDGE

As demonstrated, the hooks drawing the characters to Buckner Ridge, and keeping them involved are many and varied. That said, what about campaigns set within the prison? Is it possible to run a campaign inside the penitentiary and keep the players interested? Yes, but the key is variety, and regardless of game style, the Gamemaster will need to run the characters through a variety of situations, whether it's the exhilarating rush of combat or the thought-provoking debates of roleplaying. Fortunately, Lockdown comes equipped with multiple agendas and personal-

ities to provide games with infinite possibilities. Just remember to mix up the action to keep the players entertained on various levels.

ENTER THE HEROES

For whatever reason, the characters are already heroes in the campaign world with multiple sessions under their belt, while Lockdown is a new institution. The Gamemaster then faces the tough task of incorporating existing characters into a Lockdown campaign without saying "okay, I've decided to restart the game." There are few greater annoyances than ending a successful campaign with characters the players have put a lot of time and energy into because it's easier than putting some thought and energy into retooling the campaign. Fortunately, Lockdown provides the tools needed to help you and your players make the transition from your current campaign to one inside Lockdown.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS UNIT

Any of the previous hooks mentioned serve well to introduce the heroes to the powers-that-be at Buckner Ridge. If the heroes prove competent in whatever endeavor brings them to the Cartel's attention, then the Cartel won't hesitate to offer them jobs as powered COs. Even if the characters prove to be a pain-in-the-Cartel's neck, but haven't discovered the facility's true nature, Warden Creed may sanction the job offer to keep his enemies under close scrutiny. Otherwise, this is the Cartel's first step in testing the characters for potential recruitment.



ADVANCE PLANNING

Here's a scenario to blow players' minds with the prospect (or illusion) of having planned this out well in advance. Most campaigns have the staple "reformed villain now championing the forces of good." If not, now's a good time to start. What if, however, the villain never really "reformed" but was a hero in an alternate world before being translocated here (as per the **Reality Tampering** hook). While it doesn't make the so-called reformed villain any less a hero, it does mean his alter-ego is trapped in the prison of a parallel dimension. Both worlds can have a Lockdown, in fact, and the event that switched two people was the simultaneous use of a specific translocation generator. If the characters are ever sent to the parallel dimension as per **Reality Tampering**, however, the big revelation is that the old villain is alive, well, fighting mad, and ready to come home. Further complicating the matter is that the villain is the only one who knows how to bring everyone back home; by bringing him back, however, the characters exile the "reformed villain" in their world back to his own.

Naturally, the major obstacle here is creating a reason why the characters might agree to become part of Special Operations Unit. The answer is in how you present the situation. If the heroes realize there's a mystery afoot within the penitentiary, they may accept the job offer for the opportunity to investigate the prison from the inside. This is the easiest solution. Otherwise, financial incentives are certainly possible for cash-strapped groups, as is the notion of civic duty. In fact, Warden Creed may try spinning the CO job as being equally vital to fighting crime on the streets. He could claim that Incursion has seen the future and there's trouble ahead that the characters can help circumvent. Or perhaps the characters are the only ones who can keep certain prisoners from gaining the upper hand. The **Blackstone Down!** sidebar (see page 78) also provides a reason why heroes may work at the prison, with the training of COs taking longer than anticipated. Regardless, the Gamemaster should use whatever excuse works best for the group.

If the heroes decide to work at Buckner Ridge, then Creed will test their integrity. Do they accept an inmate's bribe to look the other way? Do they split the illegal earnings of one CO on the take? How do they respond to being attacked? Etc. All this is in addition to interacting with the prisoners and staff members, stopping fights or riots, slowly uncovering the Cartel, and Handling Siegemaker's or the Wight Bishop's machinations.

REAL PRISONERS

Maybe the government cracked down on supers, or maybe the characters were framed for a crime. Maybe they're even guilty of some wrongdoing (even if one person commits the crime, the others can be charged with harboring a fugitive, aiding and abetting, or even be caught up in conspiracy charges). Whether they surrendered with the quiet stoicism of the Golden Marvel or other heroes captured them kicking and screaming, the characters are now serving time at Buckner Ridge. Does their daily life become a struggle to survive inside Protective Custody, or are they true criminals, welcomed in the other cellblocks as equals?

This option is admittedly dangerous because it means the characters' real identities are now public. They're also locked into the prison itself, and unless the characters work for the Inner Circle, they remain limited to one location. In this case, the Gamemaster should offer the group their proverbial light-at-the-end-of-the-tunnel. Maybe the sentences aren't that long, or the Cartel is testing them for work as trustees and the PCs know it. Perhaps, even, the characters hope to bust the Cartel's operations wide open to commute their sentences.

Questions the Gamemaster will need to address for this plotline are: Why are the characters in prison? How do their circumstances affect their interaction with other inmates? Are they within Protective Custody, or thrown to the wolves of gen-pop? If the characters were framed, did someone within the prison organize the ruse to draw the heroes within striking distance?

UNDERCOVER BLUES

The heroes are in prison by choice. One of the storylines or hooks you previously ran raised their suspicions, and now they're disguised as new convicts to uncover the truth behind Lockdown. The heroes may be alone in this endeavor, though they'll likely require outside help to create new identities that'll hold up in the system. Maybe someone from Interpol or the DOJ is equally suspicious about Buckner Ridge, and willing to help. Regardless, once the characters become inmates, they can't risk surfacing again without jeopardizing the operation. Still, this style of game is all about the exploits and close shaves inherent in playing double-agents. Paramount to uncovering the real deal behind Lockdown is gaining potential allies on the inside. This might include Lt. Freeman Thane, Captain Chet Cogan, or the Golden Marvel, though the heroes can also play on the greed or suspicions of other prisoners to elicit their help. Shadow Bandit and Duke Nefarious are two immediate examples that Gamemasters can use in that capacity.

Otherwise, this hook plays out much like the **Real Prisoners** hook, with the heroes obligated to following Lockdown's protocols. This means working, obeying the rules, and serving time in Ad. Seg when they've done something wrong.

Questions that will have to be answered for this hook are: Why are the characters pursuing this course of action? What made them suspicious of Lockdown? Who can help them infiltrate the prison? An outside contact or an inside man like Cogan? What are their disguises? Is there a way to mask their powers going in? Do they have an entrance strategy? What about an exit strategy? Might someone in prison recognize the characters? How far will the characters go to protect their identities or to succeed in their mission?

REALITY TAMPERING

One minute you're sitting down to eat a cruller before heading out on patrol, the next you're sitting in a cell. Or maybe, you were facing a criminal mastermind when he nailed your group with his singularity generator. Suddenly, you're *elsewhere*, in a world where everybody's familiar, but not familiar enough to call it home. You're behind bars in the bodies of your parallel universe (and

evil) counterparts. Now the characters are prisoners and nobody believes their story, except perhaps Shadow Bandit. Meanwhile, daily existence becomes a hellish struggle and the characters must somehow use the facility's translocation generators to escape back home before their counterparts wreak too much havoc. It's possible their evil twins have allied themselves with the very villain the heroes were fighting in their world when the switch was made.

Questions Gamemasters should answer here are: In their home world is there a villain base instead of Lockdown in Buckner Ridge Mountain? Will the characters accidentally exchange the villain base for the prison when they try translocating home? Is anyone else in prison a victim of reality tampering? Are the characters' allies or old enemies with the other victim? How different is this reality from the heroes' own?

INTERNAL INVESTIGATION

The **Special Operations Unit** hook provides one part-time foray into Lockdown, while this one provides another. With both hooks, the characters can work at the prison on an intermittent basis while still fighting crime in their respective cities. With internal investigations, the Department of Justice and Bureau of Prisons ask the characters to function as investigators in any matters under review at Lockdown. This might include looking into allegations of brutality and rumors of misconduct, participating on the board of inquiry to investigate murders or riots, etc.

The reason the DOJ asks the characters to become involved is because they fear their normal investigators can be influenced by mental and mystic powers during the inquiry; the characters, however, may prove resistant to mental tampering, physical threats, and mystical meddling. Naturally, the heroes must be of reputable standing, and must have shown a prior willingness to help the U.S. Government and the Department of Justice. Any of the previous hooks mentioned serve well as reasons to investigate the prison for potential misconduct or abuses of power, while still giving heroes the chance to save the world.

STARTING FRESH

Any of the hooks mentioned previously can also launch a new campaign with new characters. The PCs can start as members of SOU or heroes thrown into prison for whatever reason. Still, starting a new campaign centered on Lockdown establishes its own unique set of opportunities. The danger, however, rests in some options that allow the players to assume the personas of anti-heroes and anti-social criminals. Anti-heroes are fine if that's what the Gamemaster wants for the game, but anti-social characters almost always detract from the group. Be careful of what you allow, but be more aware of where matters can lead; if the characters are anti-heroes, they won't blink at the opportunity to screw over each other or their employer, potentially throwing the entire campaign out the window.

REFORMED VILLAINS

A change of heart can occur at any moment, though the strongest are those that happen before the villain is actually caught.

Regardless whether the characters surrendered to the authorities for their crimes, found salvation in prison, or were heroes who switched bodies with their parallel-dimension counterparts, the fact remains they are now good (or at least, trying to be). That change doesn't help their current predicament, but it can increase their likelihood for early release if they can somehow make a positive difference. Saving lives in a riot, unmasking the Cartel, or stopping a villain from escaping are all options, but until those opportunities roll along, there's only survival.

There are several matters to consider when looking at this campaign option, the first being whether or not other inmates know about the player characters' "change of heart." Are the heroes undercover, acting the part of villains because nobody knows about their new direction? Or do the other inmates know their former comrades eschewed their old lives in favor of values criminals despise? This makes a difference whether the ex-villains remain in gen-pop or if the prison deems it necessary to sequester them in the Protective Custody Ward.

The potential for roleplaying in this sort of campaign is powerful, with the characters struggling to take the hard road to redemption. Even the most casual matter is a decision in ethics, with the characters foregoing old habits and allies in favor of the straight-and-narrow. Still, freedom lies within the characters' grasp should the Gamemaster pursue that angle, even though part of the redemption process happens on the outside when inmates now become ex-cons struggling for legitimacy among the heroes they once fought.

DEATHWATCH

The offer catches the Americas Security Concerns by surprise, but who are they to argue when the federal government throws money their way. In this campaign variant, Lockdown is a legitimate enterprise with no ties to the Cartel. The feds lease Four Tier's sub-basement, turning it into operations command and training for their newest idea... Deathwatch. Deathwatch takes lifers and inmates incarcerated for the long haul, and trains them as government operatives in exchange for their eventual release or shortened sentences. The missions are as brutal, deadly, and ugly as real-world politics demand. Assassinate this dictator, eliminate this villain, steal this piece of hardware, level this installation... it's all good, but rarely the stuff of heroic accounts. It's about the anti-heroes being as tough and as bad as they want so long as they operate within governmental guidelines and by sanction of their overseers.

Naturally, Deathwatch never trusts its own operatives, so they shackle the characters with explosive devices. Escape, switch sides, betray your comrades, or cause any trouble while on a mission, and the demolitions collar beeps once before discharging with a very loud, and even messier, *kaboom*.

As for the existing roster of Cartel operatives, they now work for the government. X-8 handles insertion and a more civic-minded Warboss works for the government as chief trainer and Deathwatch handler. Still, like the Cartel scenario, few folks in the prison know about Deathwatch, and the agents/trustees still receive their gold passcards to circumvent security. In fact, the entire penitentiary

could be a federal installation disguised as a private venture to hide the money trail from watchdog groups. It's also a nice way for the government agencies to fund their covert ops instead of relying on dubious arrangements with Columbian drug cartels.

THE INNER CIRCLE

In this variant, the characters begin the game as part of the Inner Circle. The Gamemaster can run sessions where the characters are trustees-in-training, slowly indoctrinated into the world of the Cartel, or they may begin as non-incarcerated members of the organization sent to Lockdown as enforcers, much like Warboss and Strafe.

Working for the Cartel is fraught with its own problems, not the least of which is that the characters are effectively enemies to everyone. Whether as trustees or staff-members, they are caught between lie and responsibility. They can't be friends with prisoners if they're staff – and vice versa – and they can't be friends with their peers who know nothing of the Cartel. Worse, the Cartel is cutthroat in its ambitions, and opportunity is usually at someone else's expense. The characters can only rely on one another, if that. It's not that the organization's members are pirate-level cutthroats, but they are ambitious and engage in backbiting. Personal success within the Cartel is two-fold; first is the success of the operation, while second is personal achievement – as long as it doesn't infringe on, or endanger, assets or necessary personnel. This means assassinations and betraying members to outsiders is prohibited, but blackmail and political wrangling to usurp someone's position is acceptable as long as it's discreet (basically as long as they can get away with it).

Inner Circle games have a lot in common with undercover campaigns, as the characters are effectively behind "enemy lines." The Gamemaster also has a difficult task of keeping the group together lest they scatter through potentially conflicting agendas. Giving them a common goal might help circumvent this problem, as can placing them in the same department/group (SOU or as trustees) or giving them a common enemy. Their supervisor may also provide the glue holding the characters together, with Warboss serving as the best overseer.

ADVENTURES AND SCENARIOS

Here are some Lockdown adventures and story arcs Gamemasters can run players through. These ideas are outlines that Gamemasters will need to flush out fully in order to use them. Use these situations, scenarios, and adventure suggestions to set the action in motion, but mold the resulting action around your players as you see fit.

THREE-TIER OF PLAYING LOCKDOWN

Before diving into specific adventures, Gamemasters should be aware that a Lockdown game exists on three levels, regardless the campaign factors. Understanding these different levels helps maximize the roleplaying experience, diversifies the action, and keeps matters clear in the players' minds. These three levels can also apply to each adventure, with the hook drawing the characters

into the situation, the resultant investigation/roleplaying familiarizing the heroes with the environment itself, and the conflict portion providing the action.

- **Level One:** The first level consists of the hooks; the reasons why heroes visit Lockdown. Do they escort a prisoner? Do they quell a riot or visit an inmate on his deathbed? These are all introductions to the facility, but more importantly, hooks are where the Gamemaster exerts the most influence and direction. It's where the players' characters react to the situation presented to them.
- **Level Two:** The second level, perhaps more important to the campaign, is why do the characters stay at Lockdown, or why do they continue visiting. Level two covers the campaign options placing the characters in the role of prisoner, staff-member, or outsider. The hooks continue serving as potential storylines, but the fact remains that something about Lockdown brings the characters in of their own volition. Their interest is self-sustaining. It's at this point that the Gamemaster can introduce nuances of prison life and its various personalities as detailed in the previous chapters. Here, the characters get to know the villains and staff as real people, as well as gain some insight into the prison itself. This is predominantly roleplaying and interacting, setting boundaries, and making friends. It's usually considered the downtime between adventures, though extremely important to character development. This is where the GM reacts to the actions of the player characters.
- **Level Three:** The third and final level is all about the specific adventures and situations that Gamemasters or players introduce, like shots of adrenaline, during the course of level two. They might be circumstances the Gamemaster develops based on the information presented in this sourcebook, or based on what's happened in-game, or, finally, the ideas may come from the suggestions offered in each plot offered here. Conversely, the adventures could revolve around the players assuming control over matters and pursuing their own agendas, forcing the Gamemaster to keep up. The important thing is that this is a cooperative venture where the various storylines surge forward and the Gamemasters and players are equally responsible for directing and initiating the adventures. It's a give and take, but to reach this point, the Gamemaster must first make the players comfortable enough in their environment to take charge. Conversely, the players can't wait to be spoon-fed, or none of the events have any emotional resonance.

All of the following adventure threads and suggestions comprise the third tier of a campaign, whether or not they factor into the main Cartel plotline.

APPETIZER

Appetizers are food served before the main course, meant to whet the appetite for the promised meal. The following adventure threads are appetizers as well, serving as one-shot scenarios, mini story-arcs, or parallel story lines Gamemasters can run independently or with the **Main Course** adventure mentioned later in this chapter.

BLACKCROFT

Blackcroft's nightmares grow stronger when he can express himself, and recently, he's grown quite adept at verbalizing. He sits in his cell, whispering tales to himself and any inmate unfortunate enough to be within earshot. Sure enough, as his narrative skills grow, so to does his ability to bleed the horrors outside of himself and into the real world. One night, the nightmares assume physical form, and darkness encompasses PHU. Security loses contact with the ward and the nurses on evening shift. Anyone sent to investigate doesn't return, or barely escapes with faculties addled to the point of gibbering madness. Security locks down the ward that night, but by mid-morning, the nightmares manifest throughout the facility. Lights snap off and darkness encompasses Lockdown in its cold grip.

Security is running around, trying to escort prisoners back to their cells, but the facility is large, and the slithering, gurgling noises haunting the darkness are coming from *something*. Pockets of staff and inmates are huddled together, cringing against the tortured death screams of those unfortunate enough to be caught alone. One thing is certain, though... someone must gag Blackcroft. Everyone can hear his whispers throughout the facility, and as long as he's talking, the nightmares exist and the electrical disruptions continue. So, do the heroes sneak into PHU on their own to handle the matter, or does Strafe from SOU need volunteers to stop the problem? If matters are truly grave, Warden Creed may even allow volunteer inmates partial access to their powers to find and gag Blackcroft so the nightmares fade and the electricity returns. Still, the trek through the twisting darkness to reach PHU and Blackcroft is fraught with hair-raising perils, be they the dissected, screaming bodies of prisoners or formless monsters that drag victims into shadows.

BREAKING CONFIDENCE

In expediting the construction of Buckner Ridge, the Americas Security Concerns greased the political wheels through campaign contributions to local politicians. State Representative Courtney Dubois was one such recipient, though Ms. Dubois never reported the cash she pocketed for her support. Now, the Justice Department and Federal Trade Commission are coordinating an investigation into the connection between Ms. Dubois and the ASC.

The investigation isn't public yet, with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and FTC still gathering proof and building their case. With each snippet they unearth, however, the less everything makes sense. As it stands, the ASC has the look and smell of a dummy corporation; an Interpol probe reveals the Americas Security Concerns may be implicated with the Cartel and a tech-distribution ring. The FBI may even know that the Cartel is running Lockdown, outsourcing its villains thanks to an insider (perhaps Freeman Thane, Chet Cogan, the Golden Marvel, or even Duke Nefarious). Any case against the ASC, Ms. Dubois, and Lockdown, however, is a year away given the investigation's glacial pace and frustrating lack of concrete evidence. Instead, the FBI decides to recruit inside talent to expedite matters. They approach the characters for help.

BLACKCROFT'S NIGHTMARES PART I

Blackcroft is a plot device for stories, and the nightmares he creates are generally of a visual or auditory nature. But they are terrible in that the more powerful ones can frighten targets, acting as Drain – Wisdom or Intelligence +10 (DC 20 for saves). Don't be fooled by his Illusion power; what spills forth from him aren't necessarily tricks of his making, but a reflection of horrible things that stain our world with their very presence. Finally, his Dimensional Travel ability is an indication Blackcroft may be a portal through which alien monstrosities manifest in the real world. If Blackcroft himself travels anywhere, he only does so mentally. Silencing him or preventing him from writing stops the nightmares from manifesting.

For suggested stats for Blackcroft's monsters, use the **Blackcroft's Nightmares Part II** sidebar in the adventure **Nyathuhg's Beacon** (see page 89).

The characters can be working within the SOU when the FBI tries recruiting them as moles, or they could be prisoners in good standing who have the Department of Justice's assurances of early release if they ingratiate themselves with the Cartel. For heroes on the outside, the DOJ may ask the characters to infiltrate to gather evidence as "concerned citizens." Regardless, this serves as the perfect vehicle to launch the beginning of the Cartel's end at Lockdown

A CRY IN THE DARK

It's the middle of the night when a character awakens to a cry for help echoing in his head. The voice is gone almost immediately, but over the next few evenings, the character and his teammates hear the frail voice again, just when they're on the cusp of sleep. Slowly, as the link grows stronger, the voice relates more information. He claims he's a prisoner currently sequestered in a secret lab nearby, but he doesn't know where. He calls himself PSIklops, and he's a technological marvel... the first artificial human with mental abilities. The problem is that the techs at ATR&D are dismantling him, and he needs someone to rescue him.

Why PSIklops contacts the characters directly is up to the Gamemaster, but perhaps he sensed the prospect of heroism within them, or maybe one character is more psychically aware, providing a link to her teammates. Regardless, over the subsequent weeks, PSIklops relates more information about himself, about his location, and about his capture. Rescuing him won't be easy, but the two major clues he can provide are:

- He can reveal the facility's research lab that studies the advance tech belonging to prisoners.
- He can eventually divulge the identities of two or three trustees. PSIklops isn't sure how specific inmates have access to various parts of the prison, but they're apparently moving around unhindered.

This adventure provides another entry point into Cartel-related events through the trustees themselves. The one thing astute characters might notice about the trustees is their medic alert

bracelets. Otherwise, characters can try tracking the trustees' movements, though in a couple of instances, a trustee might simply vanish between locations. This alone should spark the characters' interests. Unfortunately, rescuing PSIklops himself is difficult because it entails finding the sub-basement and launching their assault. They'll also need their powers, which means PSIklops' rescue may have to unfold near the end of the Cartel saga. In addition, the player characters will also have to figure out what to do with PSIklops once they've managed to rescue him. Where do you hide a man-sized psychic robot in a prison cell? Or do you try to smuggle him out?

PSIKLOPS

"Hello... can anyone hear me? I need assistance."

BACKGROUND

Moses Ephraim was a modern day cabalist, a binary-code numerologist whose golems were housed in titanium instead of clay and whose innards were hydraulics and motherboards. The real challenge was never constructing an artificial person or even in designing the most human AI. No, the challenge was creating an AI so sophisticated that it possessed mental powers. Thus

PROFILE: PSIKLOPS

Power Level: 14

Classification: Type V

Concept: Psychic robot kidnap victim.

Name: None

Other Aliases: PSKill

Base of Operations: Lockdown, Tier

Four sub-basement

Affiliation: None

Nationality: None

Age: Unknown.

Height: 5'11"

Weight: 250 lbs.

Eyes: White

Hair: None

PSKill was born, the child of Ephraim's own revenge fantasies. Like every child, however, PSKill rebelled, renaming himself PSIklops and fleeing his creator to find meaning other than the one thrust upon him. The Cartel cut PSIklops' quest short. Upon discovering PSIklop's existence, they spared no effort in tracking him down. Upon capturing the first artificial intelligence with psionics, they shut him down and transported him to Lockdown, where the ATR&D team could disassemble him for his secrets.

PSIklops is very much of a naïve child in that he's infinitely curious of the world around him. He used to read minds with little compunction, but after discovering how mortified humans feel about having their thoughts

unearthed, PSIklops stopped. Now, he simply asks questions. He's kind-hearted, but that's not really surprising considering Moses Ephraim inadvertently made him empathic when gave him mental abilities.

USING PSIKLOPS

Although PSIklops needs rescuing, he is a perfect spy, providing information to characters about events around him. He's also a bit of a puppy dog, intensely loyal to those who help him. For the time being, however, he isn't mobile, and putting him back together again will require hours of work for the technically savvy.

TACTICS

PSIklops tries to reason with his opponent first, which can prove frustrating since he doesn't really understand concepts like greed, malice, anger, or arrogance. Instead, he asks, "Why," like a child, until the person provides an answer he comprehends. By that point, however, the fight's usually begun. PSIklops continues asking questions while defending himself, using whatever powers will best end the battle without fatal consequences. Unfortunately, PSIklops has a bad habit of mentioning what he's about to do, as a warning and plea: *Please desist or I'll have to use my telekinesis to grab you.*

PSIKLOPS

PL 14; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 16 (+4 Base, +2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +8 melee (+3S/5' reach/crit 20, punch), +8 ranged (+10S/100' range/crit 20, telekinesis or energy blast); SV Dmg +18, Fort +18, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 13.

Skills: Computers +7, Concentration +11, Disable Device +8, Gather Information +4, Listen +10, Repair +6, Spot +10.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Darkvision, Great Fortitude, Indomitable Will, Iron Will, Mental Link, Psychic Finesse (already included in ranged attack bonus).

Powers: Amazing Save – Fortitude +10 [Source: SuperScience; Cost: 1 pp; Total: 10 pp], Super-Constitution +4 [Source: SuperScience; Cost: 4 pp; Total: 16 pp], Telekinesis +10 [Extras: Energy Blast,



Force Field, Grapple; *Source*: Super-Science; *Cost*: 5 pp; *Total*: 50 pp], Telepathy +12 [*Extras*: ESP; *Source*: Super-Science; *Cost*: 3 pp; *Total*: 36 pp].

Weaknesses: Naïve – PSIklops hasn't been exposed to much of the world outside the lab and doesn't know how to interpret the way people sometimes behave. He may be able to read people's minds, but it doesn't mean he understands why they think what they do.

Totals: Abilities 56 + Skills 40 + Feats 14 + Powers 112 – Weaknesses 10 = Total 212 pp.

FIGHT CLUB

Strafe of SOU, with Warden Creed's sanction, secretly allows SOU members to train by sparring with unshackled inmates. The prisoners in question are currently under consideration by the Cartel as low-profilers, even though they may not know it yet. This is merely one of many tests, one that benefits the SOU in return. Initially, a Special Operations member approaches the prisoner and asks if they're willing to make extra money. The guard only approaches "non-vector powered" and "limited power-arc" felons meaning inmates who can't teleport away, phase shift through walls, or take out everyone in the room with a thought. The SOU chooses Type I, II, and III inmates.

Once the convict agrees to participate, a Special Operations guard covers the low-profiler's head with a cloth bag before X-8 appears and teleports the prisoner to the Testing Range. This way, the character in question knows he's somewhere in the facility, but not where or who brought him there. Afterward, Strafe unshackles the inmate and, with containment fields at the ready and several Paladin-clad officers in place, allows various SOU members to spar with the felon.

This situation can involve the characters as participants or with them hearing rumors of a fight club. SOU only brings in one felon at a time, and if necessary, Incursion mind-wipes the event from the inmate's memory, leaving them bruised and battered with no clue why... a perfect lead-in into a modified version of the **Now... Where Was I** adventure.

FRACTURE

A fistfight erupts in the cafeteria, and suddenly, three prisoners are unshackled and blasting each other with powers. The other inmates scatter to avoid dying and the alarm sounds throughout the entire facility: *Translocation lockdown in 5...4...3...2...1*. The shunts activate and subsequently malfunction thanks to an electrical surge that fries the system during the fight. Suddenly, every corridor and cellblock is isolated and scattered, with prisoners and staff trapped everywhere. Emergency crews use the breach pods to reach critical systems and damaged generators, but are they quick enough to restore power before folks in the smaller air pockets start dying from oxygen deprivation?

The characters' involvement in this scenario depends on their locations, but there are plenty of opportunities to roleplay. Are the heroes' technical skills such that they can assist beleaguered

SOLO GAMES

Games with only one player are always a possibility. The group inadvertently splits up for one reason or another, most of the players can't make it to the regular gaming night, or the session focuses on one character more than the others. Perhaps, for example, one hero decides he's qualified to infiltrate Lockdown as an inmate, another as a guard and the others as external investigators. One option, in this case, is for the Gamemaster to guide the respective players through the crucial scenes only. Assume the daily rigors of prison life unfold without much incident (doing patrols, working in the kitchen, etc.) and skip over those points with a line or two to acknowledge the workday's passage.

The other option is to study the various adventures offered here and pick one per character. One character for the **Unexpected Benefactor** scenario, another to undergo **Now... Where Was I**, a third to become involved in the **Fight Club**, etc. In this case, warn the players in advance you'll be spotlighting a character every few games, and everybody will get their chance. During the other players' nights the other players can play various NPCs (prisoners or guards) on condition that they don't steal the main character's thunder. The Gamemaster provides the other players a sheet of what their NPC knows or can impart without ruining any secrets or game balance.

tech crews? Does this afford them a look at the shunt generators? At least one character should be trapped with Shadow Bandit, who turns to stone after being shunted. Another con, perhaps Skab, wants to smash the arrogant Shadow Bandit to rubble. Can the character talk him out of it? Are the characters trapped with an unshackled villain who's taken hostages? Can they stop the execution of COs or staff members? The best option is to look at the heroes' skills and decide how they can best pass their time. Medical-oriented characters may need to help a prisoner caught by the shredding edge of a tesseract event horizon. Another, who's good with people, may need to calm a prisoner suffering from claustrophobia. Someone else may save guards from brutal villains. Regardless, this is an opportunity for the characters to ingratiate themselves with select NPCs, NPCs like Shadow Bandit or Duke Nefarious who could have some bearing on future events.

NOW... WHERE WAS I?

The following scenario requires that the characters are members of SOU, or prisoners. If the group is tight-knit or operates together, it's possible all of them share this experience. Otherwise, it happens to the one or two PCs likeliest to be recruited for a low-profiler style mission before Incursion wipes their memory clean. The characters wake up one morning feeling exhausted, mysteriously sore, or perhaps even bruised. In fact, they may even be missing a day between going to bed and awakening. If the characters are with SOU, Strafe claims they were dead-dog sick that day, while if they are prisoners, their fellow inmates say the COs escorted the characters to Ad. Seg. for no apparent reason.

The characters don't know it yet, but they're suffering from a memory wipe following a mission for the Cartel. Only, Incursion didn't

BLACKCROFT'S NIGHTMARES PART II

Here are some suggested game stats for the monstrosities that appear from Blackcroft's stories, though Gamemasters are encouraged to create more creatures of their own to prevent players from growing comfortable or familiar with their adversaries.

UTGOTH MINIONS

PL 8; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 16 (+4 Base, +2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +8 melee (+9L/5' reach/crit 20, claws); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +15; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 20, Cha 1.

Skills: Move Silently +10.

Feats: All-Around Sight, Blindsight, Immunities (aging, disease, exhaustion, poison, starvation, suffocation), Iron Will.

Powers: Amazing Save – Willpower +8 [Source: Mystical; Cost: 1 pp; Total: 8 pp], Drain +7 [Extra: All Attributes – Mental, Ranged, Slow Recovery; Source: Mystical; Cost: 5 pp; Total: 35 pp], Natural Weapons – Claws +5 [Source: Mystical; Cost: 2 pp; Total: 10 pp], Obscure +5 [Extra: Area; Source: Mystical; Cost: 3 pp; Total: 15 pp].

Weakness: Once Blackcroft is prevented from using whatever medium brings these creatures into existence, they vanish... until the next time.

Totals: Abilities 38 + Skills 8 + Feats 16 + Powers 68 – Weaknesses 10 = Total 120 pp.

TENTACLES OF THE UNSPOKEN'S REMAINS

PL 12; Init +4 (Dex); Defense 20 (+6 Base, +4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +10 melee (+12L/5' reach/crit 20, punch); SV Dmg +4, Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +17; Str 18, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 20, Cha 1.

Skills: Move Silently +14.

Feats: All-Around Sight, Blindsight, Immunity (aging, disease, exhaustion, poison, starvation, suffocation), Iron Will.

Powers: Amazing Save – Willpower +10 [Source: Mystical; Cost: 1 pp; Total: 10 pp], Drain +9 [Extra: All Attributes – Mental, Ranged, Slow Recovery; Source: Mystical; Cost: 5 pp; Total: 45 pp], Natural Weapons – Tentacles +8 [Extra: Paralysis, Regeneration; Source: Mystical; Cost: 4 pp; Total: 32 pp], Obscure +8 [Extra: Area; Source: Mystical; Cost: 3 pp; Total: 24 pp].

Weakness: Once Blackcroft is prevented from using whatever medium brings these creatures into existence, they vanish... until the next time.

Totals: Abilities 55 + Skills 10 + Feats 18 + Powers 111 – Weaknesses 10 = Total 184 pp.

perform the wipe as well as intended, and the memories are surfacing slowly. This allows the Gamemaster to retrogame the event in small dollops or in one big rush of events – though it's better to allow the players to roleplay through the scenario than be told what they remember. By this point, the characters may know about the Cartel or its activities, but these flashbacks can reveal any number of additional clues like the identities of Cartel members (like Incursion and Strafe) and the general location of the sub-basement (the sounds of heavy machinery above them from Four Tier).

The mission in question was the theft of a mystical talisman called Bennu's Eye from the estate of Egyptologist and occultist Trevor Salzman. The talisman's location was unknown and the characters had to search the mansion while aged Salzman was at a charity dinner. Salzman's arcane defenses and powerful mummy guardians inject necessary action and Salzman's alarms draw him back home. As it turns out, Salzman actually had Bennu's Eye on him, but the talisman is (was?) keeping him alive. It's an artifact that grants immortality that can also raise the dead. Without it, he dies instantly, given his ripe old age of 198.

One of several things could happen when the characters reach this point in the adventure, though be careful because this is a bit of a no-win scenario:

- **Flee:** The characters flee before Salzman returns or spots them, in which case they've failed to complete the mission and failed the Cartel's test to determine their usefulness as trustees.
- **Pity:** If the characters leave Salzman his artifact, the Cartel considers them soft and useless to them.

- **Cruel:** If the characters return with the artifact and allow Salzman to die, the Cartel keeps their dossiers on file for future use.
- **Indecisive:** The characters don't want to make the decision themselves and either force X-8 to bring Salzman back with them so the Cartel can decide, or they hold Salzman hostage while they await the Cartel's instructions. The Cartel dislikes trustees who lack ambition or ruthless intent, so they're most likely out of the running for the position of trustee.

RIOT

The Wight Bishop has figured a way around Incursion's precognitive abilities. The tricks are to move slowly so the triggers leading up to important events aren't obvious, and to create multiple larger problems to distract Preemptive Intervention from the main event. The main event, in this case, is the Wight Bishop's escape and the distraction is a riot.

As mentioned previously, the Wight Bishop's power is growing thanks to the alien entity inside his heartstone. His power has currently outstripped the arcane lock's capacity to suppress him, and while the Wight Bishop only has access to a fraction of his power, he's hoping it's all he'll need to escape unnoticed in the chaos. So how does one start a riot without running the risk of Preemptive stopping it hours before? By using decoys and by manipulating certainties and uncertainties. The decoys, in this case, are Blowtorch, Icekill, and Mongol Horde (see **Mooks** on page 71).

Five months ago, the Wight Bishop instructed Blowtorch to start a fight with anybody in the cafeteria in five months time and

specified when he was supposed to start the fight down to the minute. The Wight Bishop then told Icekill to start the fight if the hacks detained Blowtorch or to join in if fighting broke out, and later Mongol Horde to start the fight if Icekill was detained or if fighting broke out. He told each that this would be the one and only time he'd mention it, to draw as little attention to himself as possible. Being good foot soldiers, all three eagerly awaited the hour, not realizing they're the distractions. Blowtorch is the most immediate threat and thus noticeable as a potential certainty to Preemptive Intervention. Icekill, however, isn't a certainty until Blowtorch is detained, and is thus more invisible to Preemptive Intervention. Mongol Horde is an even greater uncertainty because he only leaps into action if the other two are detained or fighting.

The plan should work, with Incursion detaining Blowtorch and Icekill before the event happens, but not catching Mongol Horde in time. Meanwhile, Skab and a few others are only to fight if fighting breaks out, and to involve everyone in the potential battle royal by moving the skirmish outside of the cafeteria (again Skab is part of a conditional future and thus, potentially invisible). The fighting triggers criminals settling grudges and vendettas against both one another and the guards. Before the hacks can seal the blast doors, the fighting spreads beyond Two Tier and a few criminals use the occasion to free themselves of their power restraints (the system isn't foolproof, and there are some villains with limited access to their powers, just waiting for the right moment).

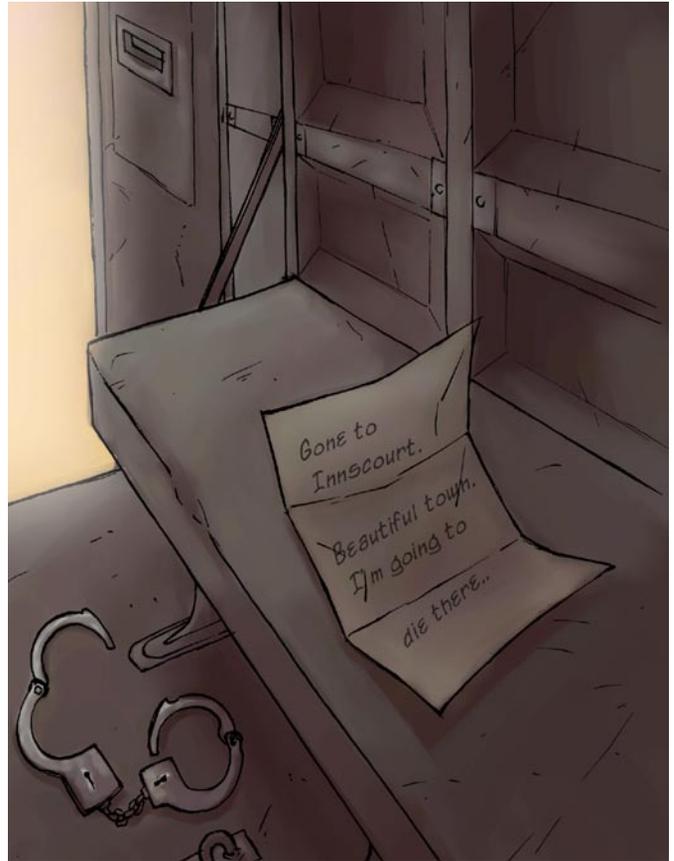
Faced with a full-scale riot, the hacks activate the shunts and isolate pockets of prisoners... which is exactly what the Wight Bishop wants. He'll be in an empty corridor, waiting for the shunts to translocate it. With the corridor shunted, the cameras and gas jets won't work, and Wight Bishop can secretly prepare a ritual to render himself incorporeal. He plans to walk through the mountain and out.

In this scenario, the characters can be anywhere in the facility when the riot unfolds. The Gamemasters can use the suggestions from the adventure thread **Fracture**, or perhaps they wander into the Wight Bishop's corridor when the shunt activates. Otherwise they may have their hands full with the riot for whatever reason, with the Wight Bishop safely escaping. Still, the armored spellcaster will return to rescue his crony Skab and a couple of others, though this a springboard for another adventure.

NYATHUHG'S BEACON

Penn Road, the boulevard between Buckner Ridge and Lockdown, has no turn-offs between the town and the prison. One night, however, a CO is driving in for the night shift when he finds an adjoining road, leading up further into the forest-blanketed mountains. The next morning, a patrol finds the CO's car by the side of uninterrupted Penn Road, with a note on the car seat. It reads: *"Gone to Innscourt. Beautiful town. I'm going to die there."*

Over the next few weeks, the worn and cracked road to Innscourt reappears intermittently. Those who enter vanish, but most folks know better than to enter an unlit road that was never there



before. The prison strongly suspects Blackcroft is somehow the root of the problem, though they can't figure out how. Innscourt is his creation, but it's a fictional place, so it's hard to say Blackcroft is responsible at all.

Like the **Blackcroft** adventure, this is a horror scenario, but for characters capable of leaving the facility. Whether the prison or an individual asks them to investigate, the characters must travel down the road when it reappears. There they'll find the sleepy town of Innscourt, a New England-style community where the locals are friendly and nobody goes out on the fog-chilled nights. In Innscourt, if Blackcroft's novels are to be believed, there's a cult to the alien god Nyathuhg in a temple deep beneath the earth and a barn where locals gather beneath a floating light that looks like an oily rainbow. Oh, and there's no road back out, not unless one is willing to find Innscourt's anchor to this world. Could the anchor be the town's resident author, P.H. Blackcroft, a strange writer who lives with his wife, Sophia, in the house on the hill? Or do the answers lie in one of Innscourt's strange landmarks, where dreaming horrors lie in the mouth of madness?

SIEGEMAKER'S LOCKER

It's a busy Friday for maintenance, and a CO gives a gadgeteer prisoner named Recoil permission to repair the faulty walk-in fridge in the kitchen before the food spoils. Blindly feeling around inside the cooling unit, Recoil's fingers snag something hidden there. He comes away with one of Siegemaker's toys: a mini-

blaster. Recoil pockets the weapon, but then stupidly informs his unreliable crony, Symphysis, of his discovery.

Symphysis and Recoil argue the next day over the mini-blaster, with a couple of prisoners and a character within earshot of the hushed exchange. When Recoil refuses to surrender the blaster, Symphysis attacks Recoil and accidentally kills him. The COs haul Symphysis into Ad. Seg., but now other prisoners know about the mini-blaster, and the race to retrieve it is on. Recoil hid the weapon outside his cell, probably in one of the locations he frequented. Was it under the gymnasium bleachers, back in the kitchen where he was still repairing the cooling unit, in the common showers, inside the laundry room where he did his laundry this morning? The race to find the blaster is a race to retrace Recoil's steps. Word of the weapon, however, circulates to a select few including the Wight Bishop and (possibly) Siegemaker. Giving it to either will earn the gratitude of that NPC. Still, the Wight Bishop and others believe that where there's one weapon to be found, there are others, and they're right. If Siegemaker decides to reclaim his hidden arsenal, he discovers many pieces are already gone. Other prisoners have found them, and are hoarding them, but whom?

UNEXPECTED BENEFACTOR

Duke Nefarious has made many enemies along the way, but none as dangerous as the one he faces now. The Cartel continues butting heads with Nefarious' Carbonari in Italy, and has become impatient. They sanction the execution of Duke Nefarious, but it must look like an accident. For this, the deadly Belladonna receives her first assignment since she's arrived, though it's uncertain whether Belladonna works for the Cartel or if the Cartel hired her through her mysterious employer. Still, it's obvious that this won't be her last assignment here, so she must maintain her cover as helpless prisoner.

Belladonna raids the janitor's closet and comes away with a cocktail of specific powdered solvents. Using her gold passcard and skills, she sneaks into Duke Nefarious' cell during work shift and crams the solvents into the pipe. When Nefarious turns the tap on, the water mixes the now muddy chemicals and creates overpowering fumes that instantly render Nefarious unconscious and (with abrasive fumes filling the cell) dead within a minute. The evidence is then washed down the drain and the Cartel doesn't investigate the mysterious collapse too closely... if everything works as planned. The characters should be the ones who pull Nefarious out in time, but if they don't, allow a heroic CO to save him.

When the assassination fails, the mysterious employer informs Belladonna to bide her time for the next job to alleviate any suspicions. Meanwhile, the characters' actions (if they help) earn Nefarious' gratitude, turning the Duke into a potential source of information. Duke Nefarious now knows someone is gunning for him, and suspects the Cartel's hand in the matter. He'll eventually realize the Cartel's involvement with Lockdown when the Cartel uses low-profilers like Skab and X-8 to target Carbonari cells in Italy, and Nefarious recognizes them from the reports secretly sent to him via email. Meanwhile Belladonna tries killing Nefarious by sabotaging an appliance to explode in his face (say, in the

kitchen) and during a riot when she struggles with a CO for his blaster and tries shooting him "inadvertently" during the struggle. In both cases, allow the characters to save him first.

THE MAIN COURSE

In addition to the scenarios offered herein, the Gamemaster can also draw upon the previous adventure threads to expand the story arc to uncover the Cartel's hand in Lockdown. The **Unexpected Benefactor** scenario is a good way to ingratiate the characters with Duke Nefarious, thus later establishing reasons why he reveals the Cartel's existence and purpose. The **Fracture** scenario brings the characters into contact with Shadow Bandit, who might warn the heroes the translocation generators could, in fact, take out the entire facility. **A Cry in the Dark**, **Breaking Confidence**, and **Now... Where Was I?** may reveal snippets of the prison's true nature, while **Siegemaker's Locker** works well for arming the characters in escaping a translocated facility. The advantage of these adventures is that you can pick and choose which ones suit your campaign, foregoing some and running others.

PEEKING UNDER THE CURTAIN

The town of Buckner Ridge may not realize it's the Cartel's hostage, but some townfolk aren't so ignorant. Clem Weiss was working at Lockdown as a night-shift tech-officer when he noticed some strange events. He'd see SOU personnel escort prisoners to the elevator and down to Four Tier, but they wouldn't appear on any of Four Tier's cameras. He'd notice, on camera, prisoners going down corridors, and never reemerging into the sightlines of the next camera. It didn't take Weiss long to realize that SOU and certain prisoners were in cahoots, and the facility wasn't what it appeared. Not trusting his superiors either, Weiss eventually quit his job, but not before sneaking out with a couple of security tapes showing the strange activity.

Weiss' suspicions have since grown to include some folks in Buckner Ridge. A few newcomers seem awfully protective of the prison, and spend too much time trying to keep Buckner Ridge's citizens from complaining to the media about the presence of super-criminals. As such, Weiss leaves town looking for help. For those heroes with a publicly-known base or help-line, Weiss goes to them directly, outlining his suspicions and showing them the tapes. For those heroes already inside prison, Weiss goes directly to the Department of Justice. Because the DOJ and FTC are investigating State Representative Courtney Dubois, this may provide them with the impetus to approach the characters secretly and ask for their help as moles as per **Breaking Confidence**.

From here, the heroes may need to infiltrate the prison or investigate it more closely, in which case they'll need several sessions to acclimate themselves to Lockdown. **Unexpected Benefactor** works well as a follow-up, giving the characters an ally of sorts.

SNITCH

X-8 is a friendly sort of guy, especially with women, and will easily befriend any new character who is easy-going or female. Still, nothing will ever bring him close to betraying the Cartel's confidence

until the **Blackcroft** scenario. Like everyone else, X-8's powers are shackled, leaving him at the whim of the horrors prowling the darkness. X-8 foolishly decides to seek shelter in the maintenance corridors, which proves a mistake. He barely manages to open a maintenance panel to escape when an Utgoth Minion grabs his leg and tries pulling him back in. Fortunately for X-8, the panel he just opened was in a corridor the characters happen to be in (though it's suggested that only the characters are present, and no NPCs).

If the characters save X-8, he'll be eternally grateful. He'll claim he found the maintenance panels open and sought refuge. Meanwhile, X-8 will repay the characters with occasional gifts from the outside, never really explaining how he got them (saying "I just know who to bribe"). Following the **Cry in the Dark** or **Now... Where was I** scenarios, where the characters discover X-8 is working for the Cartel, they can more easily persuade him to divulge some information. Not everything... just enough to whet their appetites and move the overall plot along.

A FRIEND IN NEED

During the **Fracture**, **Nyathuhg's Beacon**, or **Riot** adventures, if the characters conduct themselves heroically, then the Golden Marvel approaches them with a proposition. He's been helping Capt. Chet Cogan and Lt. Freeman Thane investigate strange occurrences at the prison, but given his history and rep as a "do-gooder," the Golden Marvel hasn't been able to move the investigation along. He needs help, and the characters seem both good-willed and well-connected enough to provide assistance.

Trusting the Golden Marvel and meeting with Cogan and Thane has its advantages. While the three men aren't likely to know as much as the characters could at this point, they can provide help and extra manpower. Specifically, Cogan has a number of COs under his command willing to help him against SOU and anyone else. Thane, meanwhile, also has tech-officers loyal to him who'll help the characters bypass secured doors and move around the facility through the maintenance tunnels. This should facilitate and expedite their investigation. More so, future testimony from Cogan and Thane can help the Golden Marvel and inmate characters earn early release for their part in uncovering the Cartel's involvement with Lockdown.

Somewhere during this adventure, or immediately after, would be a good point to run **Siegemaker's Locker**.

HAZING

Befriending X-8, Siegemaker, or the Red Scare will invariably earn the PCs their new friend's recommendation that the Cartel induct them as trustees. Before that happens, however, Warboss must test the characters with Strafe's and Incursion's help. **Now... Where was I** and **Fight Club** are two ways of testing the characters, though Warboss may use other methods as well (as mentioned in the **Special Operations Unit** section).

If the characters pass Warboss' tests, they become trustees and part of the Inner Circle. What they do next is up to them, but either Cogan or the Justice Department wants direct evidence of the

Cartel's illegal activities. This means procuring data and documents from Four Tier's sub-basement without being noticed. Meanwhile, Warboss sets up a training schedule for the characters, and sends them on missions, some of which may bother the heroes. How far do the PCs push their own ethics to bring down the Cartel? When is enough actually enough? The Gamemaster should be very careful at this point by striking the right balance between testing and pushing the characters. When the characters appear on the verge of breaking and sabotaging their own investigation, that's when **Insurrection** should occur (see the following section).

INSURRECTION

Insurrection is a collision of events following two storylines as they become entangled. It's the catalyst to end the Cartel storyline and potentially destroy Lockdown itself, though the latter decision remains the Gamemaster's. This section also details multiple agendas, allowing the characters to participate regardless of their roles so far in the prison. Be careful, however, not to render the characters secondary to the process. They should be the key source of information, knowing more than most everyone around them, and pivotal to the overall plot. The multiple agendas are also redundant systems of information, in case the characters never discovered a crucial ally or tidbit of information prior to this. All this also assumes the characters are ultimately heroes, though the Gamemaster can play up certain events if they're pure villains. Regardless of how the PCs get involved, the Gamemaster will need to be familiar with the following information and the events it spawns.

The Cartel has lost key battles against the Carbonari in Genoa, Napoli, and Rome, virtually eliminating its foothold in Italy. With the information confiscated from the Cartel's offices and safe houses in Italy, the Carbonari forwards evidence to Interpol linking the Cartel to the Americas Security Concerns and Lockdown. Interpol then shares its data with the F.B.I. Coupled with the potentially invaluable information the characters contributed, the Feds are three weeks away from raiding Lockdown and the ASC's New York offices.

Duke Nefarious knows the Feds will raid Lockdown, but not when. For that, he needs help. Nefarious, a good judge of character, approaches Incursion and offers him a healthy, eight-digit bribe to ignore the coming storm. Incursion, realizing his mental skills (and importance) are continuing to wane, accepts the bribe and sends his two psychic coworkers on a much needed vacation. Incursion then informs Duke Nefarious about the projected date (based on his psychic visions) of the Federal raid and helps Nefarious plan the Carbonari attack against the facility that will damage the Cartel asset and rescue Duke Nefarious and Incursion.

Everything seems on schedule, until the Cartel actually learns about the F.B.I.'s upcoming raid. The Cartel issues the order to evacuate Lockdown, but slowly to avoid suspicion, and Incursion informs Nefarious about the change in plans. He also tells him about the mass-shunting capabilities of the facility... everyone will die when the Cartel pulls the plug. The Carbonari have a limited strike window to attack and secure the facility before the Cartel shuts the entire facility. Events as they stand:

EVENT 1: EARLY WARNING

Nefarious isn't cold-hearted, and has no wish to see inmates die in the shunt. If the characters are friends with Nefarious, he approaches them the day before and explains what's about to happen; in short, the Cartel's involvement at Lockdown, their willingness to pull out and translocate the entire facility, and the death of everyone trapped inside. Essentially, he will pass on any tidbit the characters never discovered or forgot about. Nefarious also speaks with the various prison leaders including Berlin Betty, the Wight Bishop, the Golden Marvel, and any important characters the Gamemaster has introduced. He warns them to be ready when the time comes, because he has a way to disable the shackles. Nefarious doesn't explain how or why, nor does he tell anyone about his escape plan. All he says is it's up to the inmates to escape or to stop the shunt from occurring.

If the characters aren't on good terms with Nefarious, then the information he relates to prison leaders like the Golden Marvel should reach the characters' ears later that evening. If the characters are trustees, then the Cartel will warn them to be ready to move, though they won't say why.

EVENT 2: SEPARATE AGENDAS

Everyone in-the-know is now formulating their own escape plans. These events are listed in the order in which they happen, though some are simultaneous.

- **Cartel:** The Cartel is using the shunt generator in the basement to transport important documents, equipment and personnel from the base, starting with the research labs. PSIklops will be the last to go (if he's still there) because the lab techs are prepping him... a very delicate procedure. The Cartel's also using X-8 to expedite evacuation. The Red Scare is currently in the sub-basement, unshackled and armored, standing guard in case anything unforeseen occurs. Most trustees are still in the prison, with instructions to await orders to evacuate, which will happen within 24 hours.
- **Berlin Betty:** Berlin Betty, due to her unsuppressed mental powers, knows Nefarious' plans. She also knows about the Cartel through the minds' of various trustees like X-8. Betty instructs her most beautiful charges to keep an eye out for X-8. He's their ticket out of the facility. If they can't find him in time, Betty plans on using the translocation generator in the sub-basement to escape with her girls... after they ambush some poor unsuspecting trustee for his passcard.
- **The Golden Marvel:** The Golden Marvel spreads the word through Protective Custody ward and informs Capt. Cogan and Lt. Thane of what's going to happen. Both men gather the COs loyal to them and plan strategies. They decide that come 4:00 A.M., during the prison's dead hour when all the prisoners are still in their cells, the COs will secure the armory and Security Central. They'll lock the entire facility down, and then translocate sections, gassing the entire prison if necessary to prevent anyone from escaping. Meanwhile, the COs and any cooperative heroes will raid the sub-basement and secure the translocation

control room. Unless told, they may not know about Warboss and the Red Scare. Cogan unshackles The Golden Marvel and any other hero he trusts to handle Paladin-powered SOU members and Strafe, but warns them not to exhibit their powers until they're freed from their cells. The COs in Protective Custody ward will open their cells at 3:45 A.M.

- **Siegemaker:** Siegemaker knows about the pull-out, and like Duke Nefarious, doesn't want to see inmates murdered. He grew up around criminals and believes they deserve better. So, he quietly breaks ranks with the Cartel. If he's friendly with the characters, he informs them of what's unfolding. More importantly, he tells them about the equipment he scattered throughout the facility, the gadgets that haven't been found yet, including three electromagnetic scramblers. The EM scramblers can deactivate up to a dozen power suppression units each, including those that deliver biochemical inhibitors, without triggering their emergency alert protocols. Siegemaker informs the characters, the Wight Bishop, and Berlin Betty where to find the devices (only one each, so nobody knows all three locations or that other inmates are being freed as well).
- **Duke Nefarious and Incursion:** Events are spiraling beyond Incursion's ability to foresee, but he knows what Capt. Cogan and Lt. Freeman are planning. Nefarious cannot afford to be gassed or isolated before the Carbonari arrive, so they decide to set their plans in motion before everyone's ready and catch everyone off-guard on the evening before.

EVENT 3: ALL HELL...

The night before, just before everything descends into pandemonium plans are set into motion.

- **Prisoners:** Dinner is finished, and the various inmates are scattered throughout the facility. Some remain ignorant, while others, like Berlin Betty, are retrieving their EM scramblers. Within the hour, they and their lieutenants are unshackled, as is The Golden Marvel and the heroes who stand with him. The Wight Bishop also unshackles his cronies (Skab, Mongol Horde, and Icekill, among others), but cannot destroy the arcane lock on himself without alerting security. So he'll wait until the chaos erupts before having one of his henchman destroy the lock.
- **Trustees:** The Cartel issues the order for the trustees to prepare for their evacuation, which registers as three bursts of static over the intercom. The trustees know the drill: Sneak away with the bare essentials and use the maintenance corridors to reach Four Tier. Warboss will be at the cargo elevator in 30 minutes, waiting to transport everyone down. Strafe will then report the trustees as spending the evening in Ad. Seg., and by tomorrow 10:00 A.M., the facility will vanish. All the trustees remain shackled until they're in the sub-basement. Warden Creed and the others are already in the basement.
- **X-8:** X-8, who hasn't had the opportunity to retrieve the contents of his cell since this all began, returns to his cellblock. Afterwards, he can't help not slipping into Two Tier to say his goodbyes to folks without making it *seem* like he's saying good-

DUET OF DESTRUCTION

Duke Nefarious may have other allies that he's had the Carbonari contact and recruit for this batter, in which case the Carbonari may be operating alongside another villain organization. In Freedom City, the Carbonari could have hired the Power Corps (see *Freedom City*, pages 150–151) to help spring Nefarious, or the Duke may be part of SHADOW (see *Freedom City*, pages 174–175), in which case the Penumbra is financing his escape. For Meta-4 campaigns, The Bestiary (see *Crooks*, pages 38–43) could be helping the Carbonari, with Duke Nefarious aware of the “big secret” and willing to assist the ragtag crew against their mutual threat. Otherwise, the Carbonari may be riding alongside Wasphawk and the *Hivewing* (see *Crooks*, pages 110–111), rescuing Nefarious so Unifier can eventually replace the charismatic leader.

bye. Powerstar, one of Berlin Betty's charges, intercepts X-8 and suggests a quick “tryst” in one of the classrooms. X-8 can't resist and follows Powerstar. She knocks him out and waits while another female prisoner goes to find Berlin Betty with the news... they have X-8, his pascard, and their ticket out.

- **PSIklops:** If any character is friends with PSIklops, they receive an urgent broadcast from him. The Cartel is almost ready to transport him... he'll be gone within an hour to an undisclosed location. If the heroes are going to rescue him, it has to be now.
- **Incursion:** Incursion takes a hit of the drug that boosts his mental abilities before walking into Security Central. He proceeds to mind blast the entire room, rendering the tech-officers unconscious. He then deactivates random shackles including those of Duke Nefarious, and opens the entire facility by unlocking every single door, including the entry vaults. He then destroys the panels controlling the shunt mechanisms, taking them off-line.

EVENT 4: ...BREAKS LOOSE

As soon as Incursion cracks open the facility, the Carbonari launch their attack, storming the exterior with jet gliders and blasters, and trying to make their way into the facility. Meanwhile, Duke Nefarious and the freed prisoners start their battle inside, turning Lockdown into a warzone.

The Gamemaster shouldn't worry about rolling dice for events, and instead play out NPC-only battles cinematically. The important matter is the focus on the characters, with other scenes playing out in the background. To better understand the other events, here's where everybody should be during the big fight (pending character interactions):

- **Security Forces:** As soon as the doors open and the Carbonari appear on security's radar, the entire facility goes on alert. Special Operations Units and COs quickly secure Security Central and One Tier first, before heading down below, but Incursion's worked his damage and vanished. The gas jets, shunt mechanisms, and lockdown protocols are damaged beyond the point that they can be immediately repaired. Only a few systems work, turning some areas into danger zones with intermittent blasts of white noise and electrical pulses. The Gamemaster can turn the prison into a maze this way, sealing off sections and forcing characters around them.
- **Incursion:** Incursion is way out of his league, and trapped. He slowly makes his way to the rendezvous point near the Vault

doors, but spends his time hiding from COs and Carbonari teams.

- **Duke Nefarious:** Nefarious starts fighting his way up, from Two Tier to One Tier, engaging SOU Paladins and Paladin-MTs that quickly contain the choke points. Security, in a few places, actually manages to close some of the blast doors through manual overrides, slowing Nefarious's trek. Nefarious, however, isn't up to full power yet, and cannot tunnel his way out.
- **Carbonari Strike Force:** The 50-man strike force arrives via transport choppers and spends a few minutes engaging the exterior defenses before several teams of five breach the tunnel and make their way through the vault doors into the facility. The firefight between Carbonari and security forces spreads through One Tier, with the Carbonari advancing steadily.
- **The Golden Marvel:** The Golden Marvel and the heroes helping him quickly scatter throughout the facility, trying to save lives and stop various criminals from rampaging needlessly. The Golden Marvel's key concern is reaching the sub-basement and stopping the Cartel from shunting the prison. Several liberated heroes make their way upstairs to prevent convicts from escaping.
- **Berlin Betty:** Berlin Betty and her crew are trying to make their way to Powerstar and X-8, but between security, rioting prisoners, and corridors arcing with electricity or bathed in sonic pulses, they're making slow progress.
- **The Wight Bishop:** The Wight Bishop is on Three Tier when he unlocks his cronies' shackles, but he's still arcane-locked. He needs time to unlock his own shackles, because of this Skab and the others protect the area and run interference.
- **Strafe:** Strafe knows the Cartel needs a little more time to evacuate, so he goes up to intercept anyone heading down.

EVENT 5: MOMENTS OF TRUTH

The characters may be wondering how they stop all the events, but it should become clear that they may not be able to. Being a hero during the riot and handling everything are two different things. The characters may need to focus on the crucial events, with beleaguered security forces giving them updates on the running events, or other prisoners reporting what they've seen. Still, security has sent out a distress call, and various hero teams are inbound over the next half-hour. Until then, the moments of truth are those events that reach fruition for the different parties involved, without the heroes' interventions. That is *not* to say

matters *must* unfold this way; simply that the characters are the only ones who can prevent certain matters from going down the drain.

As such, the following happen when dramatically appropriate or when the characters arrive to participate in the events. If the characters are being overwhelmed by the tidal wave of actions, however, the Gamemaster can throw in outside heroes to help alleviate the pressure. At no point should NPC heroes save the day. Instead, they can provide momentary distractions as they arrive to take care of what they consider the major problems so the player characters can have the real spotlight and tackle the real problems. Let the NPC heroes handle Blowtorch or Powerstar while the characters go after Berlin Betty or the Wight Bishop. Let the Golden Marvel handle various trustees while the heroes tackle Warboss or the Red Scare. These important points are relative, so if the characters need to deactivate the shunt generator countdown, then have the Golden Marvel, or some other newly arrived powerhouse, tackle Warboss and the Red Scare while the characters save the facility itself. Remember that no matter what the NPCs accomplish, the heroes are the ones to go that one step further, and that the heroes can seem central if the arriving NPCs ask them what to do (since they are arriving blind).

- **Security Forces:** Trapped on two fronts, the COs and SOU Paladins form skirmish teams and use the maintenance corridors to pop out and surprise unsuspecting inmates. There are many pockets of violence inside Lockdown when outside supers

arrive, but security seems to be controlling One Tier's exit points.

- **Prisoners:** Certain cellblocks remain locked down, like PHU and Deep Sleep, but other prisoners are trying to make their way to the surface, where they encounter security forces and newly arrived heroes. Some prisoners are unshackled, but the remainder are easy targets for guards. Powered brawls break out in and around the tunnel.
- **Duke Nefarious and The Carbonari Strike Force:** The Carbonari finally hook up with Nefarious, whose powers are returning in full. Duke Nefarious carves a new passage through the rock wall to the surface, bypassing the tunnels and security. He blows open a hole near the security fences, and both he and his agents begin their retreat to the Carbonari transport choppers. Unless stopped, Nefarious will escape, believing he's prevented the Cartel from destroying Lockdown. Neither he nor Incursion suspect there's a second shunt switch located in the sub-basement.
- **Incursion:** Duke Nefarious never had time to find Incursion, not that it really matters. Incursion is crippled by his own headaches while hiding in the Administration Wing and captured by guards. The Security Central tech-officers identify Incursion as the traitor, and the guards keep Incursion knocked out.
- **The Golden Marvel:** The Golden Marvel fights his way past Strafe, and finally reaches Four Tier's sub-basement... only to face the Red Scare and Warboss, who are trying to give their forces more time to evacuate. The Golden Marvel is capable, but the two Cartel supers fight him to a standstill before eventually knocking him out. They leave him for the shunt.
- **Berlin Betty:** Berlin Betty finally reaches Powerstar, and uses her mind powers to control X-8. She unshackles X-8 and makes him teleport her and her entourage away from Lockdown. They vanish, to reappear at a later date.
- **The Wight Bishop:** The Wight Bishop needs time to unlock his powers, leaving him and his henchmen inside the prison when it shuts. Still, this doesn't worry the Wight Bishop, whose spells will enable them to dimension hop... if they survive that long.
- **The Cartel:** The techs finally transport PSIklops away through the sub-basement's shunt. Siegemaker follows after, thankful that no one within the Cartel discovered the fact that he helped some of the prisoners. The remaining personnel follow suit, leaving the Red Scare, Warboss, Strafe, and Warden Creed to go through last, just in case. They activate the facility's teseract web on their way out.

EVENT 6: HELLBOUND

The facility vanishes from inside the mountain. The mountain, now hollow, collapses in upon itself, filling the air with a thunderous rumble heard for miles. Locally, it registers as an earthquake, somewhere in the vicinity of 9.0, the kind that wipes out everything at its epicenter. The collapse crushes the sally port tunnel and triggers landslides that decimate Buckner Ridge. By the



time the dust settles, the mountain's height is lower by several hundred feet, and there are no survivors in the town.

Stranger still, leaking out from between the rocks is a black ichor that looks and feels like tar, but weakens anyone touching it. The presence of this hazardous material slows rescue attempts even further, though when the damage is finally tallied months later, the only conclusion investigators can draw is that the entire facility vanished.

When Lockdown was shunted away, it entered a parallel dimension filled with liquid shadow, trading an equal mass of the liquid with its own (hence the goop in the mountain rubble). The tar-like substance is thick enough to suspend and buoy Lockdown temporarily, but not for long. Not that it matters. Like magma, the shadow pours into the facility, slowly flooding it through the hole Nefarious created and wherever the structural integrity is compromised. Anyone touching the substance feels their energy drain away, like the shadows are robbing the body of vitality and life (Drain - Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Wisdom +1 (*Extras: Continuous*)). The effect lasts for as long as the person remains in contact with the liquid.

The facility also loses power, meaning it's dark except for emergency lights and portables. It also means all the shackles fail, allowing the villains access to their powers, for all the good it will do them. Those caught within the facility will die. It's as simple as that. If the characters are present, however, the inmates may have a fighting chance. Specifically, Shadow Bandit thinks they can escape using a shunt generator if they can find one, while the trapped Tech-officers know there's one being repaired on Four Tier. As for powering the generator, the characters can potentially use several supers as a battery and create enough juice to evacuate the people left behind. In this instance, the Gamemaster should play up the "clock is ticking" factor and force characters to run around hunting for the material they need while the black sludge approaches.

If the characters are outside the facility when it vanishes, the Gamemaster should allow Shadow Bandit to also escape, though he's recaptured by security. In exchange for his freedom (which he'll negotiate down to a reduced sentence), he'll tell the char-

acters where he thinks the prison went and the potential danger facing those trapped - and the PCs if they decide to go. Now it becomes a race to find a surviving singularity generator and rescue the survivors before all is lost.

In either case, the Gamemaster shouldn't forget those prisoners trapped in PHU or Deep Sleep. How exactly does one go about rescuing Blackcroft? Should they even bother? If they exile him here, though, what happens when the liquid darkness becomes the expression of his nightmares, and shadow wielders like Shadow Bandit turn into Blackcroft's portals back to Earth?

AFTERMATH

If the Gamemaster decides to play out the Cartel storyline, but allows the prison to survive, then it can remain a viable location for the campaign. It'll stay closed for a while, with prisoners bound for federal facilities that can handle them. After several months of repairs and refits, however, Lockdown can reopen, this time as a federal institution. The government won't make the same mistake twice by handing things over to a private party. Instead, they'll make all *new* mistakes in discovering what sort of legacy the Cartel left behind.

SAME CHARACTERS... DIFFERENT GAME

One of the main thrusts of this sourcebook concerns how to introduce a new direction to an already existing campaign versus creating new heroes in a new game. Sometimes, however, a Gamemaster may wish to bring old characters into an entirely new game world, and Lockdown is the perfect vehicle. Whether the Gamemaster has a new setting to try out or simply wants a change of venue, nobody says a translocated facility or shunted characters have to end up back in their world. Maybe the entire mountain shifts, along with everyone inside, to the new campaign setting, or perhaps the characters translocate with one or two people. It doesn't matter as long as the Gamemaster prepares the players in advance for the shift. Otherwise, the players will spend their characters' time trying to get back home... regardless of how interesting you made the new world.



In its simplest terms, the Cartel is the European Commonwealth of crime, an empire transcending national borders and engaging in illegal commerce. There are no plans for world domination, religious authority, or the advancement of party credo. This is capitalism in its most pure and unadulterated form. It is the unapologetic struggle for power through wealth, regardless of the cost in human life and suffering.

The Cartel is a geo-politically savvy organization because its members hail from different parts of the world and various crime families or state institutions. It's also young compared to most groups, except, perhaps, for the Russian Mob. It's relatively unknown because it hides its actions within the machinations of the various world syndicates, but people are slowly becoming aware of it. The major criminal empires were the first to discover the Cartel's existence, but knew little of the organization, except for the fact they were getting blamed for Cartel affairs. On their heels, law enforcement groups like Interpol and Scotland Yard grew increasingly aware of something moving in the shadows of various syndicates, but only recently have come across the name of the Cartel.

Still, if every viper has its monogoose, then the Cartel's mortal enemy is the Italian-nationalists called the Carbonari. Headed by Duke Nefarious, the Carbonari know about the Cartel and are currently gaining some ground on them in Italy. It's only natural that the two would come to blows, considering the Carbonari seek to reinforce and strengthen Italy's national boundaries while the Cartel seeks to open them up.

HISTORY

Few folks within the Cartel itself are aware of their own organization's history, thanks to its rampant compartmentalization, but there is a rumor the Cartel was built on the carcass of the Soviet Union. Those in-the-know aren't speaking, but the fact is the Cartel was formed in the halls of the Kremlin, among the highest levels of Soviet society. Known simply as the *nomenklatura*, these Party elite were the rich capitalists leading the supposedly socialist utopia. Nobody gained a position of prominence or power without their approval, and they watched out for one another. They were a sanctioned body of thieves, practicing codes of silence and pursuing criminal agendas rendering them far more akin to the Mafia than to any governmental body.

The *nomenklatura* profited on the USSR's corpse, buying State property and selling it for lucrative profits, auctioning off oil and military hardware. They were Russia's new kingpins, and they had little to do with the anti-Soviet *vorovskoi mir*, the so-called "Thieves' World" or traditional gangsters.

The proto-Cartel would have remained a Russian phenomenon had it not opened its ranks following the Soviet Union's dissolution. The Cartel wasn't interested in borders or nationalism, but it still needed

help gaining inroads into countries where other syndicates were king. So, the Cartel used its wealth to acquire like-minded converts among the various mafias, turning them into double agents. They spread, like a blood infection in the body proper of crime. Their Chechen acquisitions enabled them to tap into the Balkan Routes, using convoys of surplus military vehicles to transport Taliban heroin from Afghanistan into Turkey. Their Turkish connections expanded the Cartel's influence into the Middle East through arms shipments to the Lebanese, Turkish, and Israeli mafias. Turkish gangsters, operating with the Sicilian mafia to distribute heroin through Western cities like Amsterdam, gained the Cartel inroads with European acquisitions. In Asia, the Cartel used Hong Kong to launder money, gaining some converts among the Triads and Yakuza. Also, through Polish agents (which produces 20% of Europe's amphetamines for the Chinese and Columbians), the Cartel scored contacts in Columbia.

The various acquisitions and double agents continue to function in their original organizations, which can be dangerous, but highly lucrative. Still, if the Cartel has had any difficulty, it's been in gain-

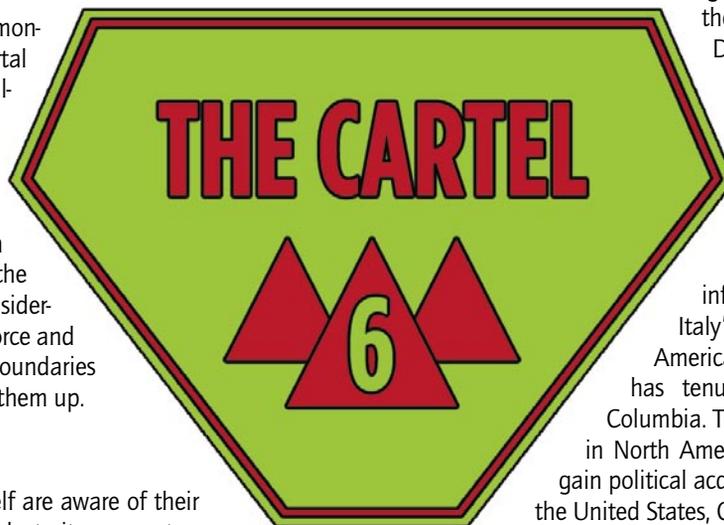
ing a strong foothold in Italy, where the young gangsters are joining Duke Nefarious' Carbonari to break out from under the control of the older Calabrian Ndrangheta, the Neapolitan Camorra, and the Sicilian Mafia (Italy's three principle criminal organizations).

Because Italy remains difficult to infiltrate for the Cartel, so too does Italy's strong connection with South American cartels. As it stands, the Cartel has tenuous connections in Peru and Columbia. Thankfully, because money speaks in North America, the Cartel has managed to gain political acquisitions as well criminal allies in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

In the past few years, despite their setbacks in Italy and South America, the Cartel has grown stronger and richer than some G-8 nations. With their secret slowly eroding, the Cartel's expanding in entirely new directions. The first part of this drive is to absorb the smaller criminal organizations in Eastern Europe and Afghanistan. As it stands, the Cartel is close to locking down Germany's criminal underground and launching a new campaign to dominate Cyprus (which has over 20,000 offshore companies for the purpose of laundering drug money, 10% of which are Russian mafia). Their loss in Italy, however, remains a sore spot.

ORGANIZATION

The Cartel is like a hydra, but worse because few have any idea of its full size, reach, or numbers. Even more problematic for its enemies, the organization is so compartmentalized that cutting off one head doesn't seem to weaken the overall organization significantly. Still, every beast must have its Achilles Heel and this section presents an overview of the Cartel's structure for the Gamemaster to use as desired. Please note, however, the Cartel avoids using



any specific regional terms, to better foster the impression of its global nature. Instead, it acts like a multi-national business, without the macho posturing of its contemporaries. It's for this reason the Cartel sees more women in its ranks than most organizations, and why many acquisitions are women who are tired of being mistreated or overlooked. For all its shortcomings, the Cartel is, at the very least, an equal-opportunity employer.

ACQUISITIONS

Acquisitions or assets are independent agents who maintain ties with their original organizations, be it the Turkish Mafia, the Columbian Cartels, the Russia's vorovskoi mir or the Mexican government. Although listed at the bottom of the totem pole, the Cartel considers them crucial to the organization's survival, and ensures they're well compensated for their loyalty. Acquisitions rarely know anyone beyond their handler to prevent the entire system from being compromised.

An asset's job is to act as the Cartel's pipeline into their rival's camp, feeding the Cartel important data or distributing misinformation to the enemy. The acquisition also acts as a recruiter, determining whether specific personnel fit the Cartel's needs. For this, the asset receives a salary, which the Cartel holds in escrow until the acquisition is ready to leave the enemy camp. Until then, the Cartel doles out an allowance, keeping the asset happy without jeopardizing his cover with a sudden influx of cash.

HANDLER

The handler is an acquisition's liaison with the Cartel, though he rarely manages more than three assets at a time. This is to protect the different acquisitions from being compromised with the capture of one handler. The handler has no current affiliations with other criminal groups, though he's likely known to the different syndicates as a go-to guy, a local mercenary of sorts who secretly works for the Cartel. The handler earns a full salary based on his successful management of his assets, as well as his independent contracts so long as they don't conflict with Cartel interests. He reports to the local fixers.

MAULERS

Maulers are the full-time shock troops of the organization, and may not even know that they're working for the Cartel. They handle the daily operations of local criminal initiatives for the Cartel, including transportation, protection, smuggling, enforcement, guard duty, persuasion, etc. Essentially anything requiring brawn or a sidearm remains the purview of the mauler. They live in Cartel-purchased homes and work exclusively for the organization. The Cartel terminates any mauler they discover is moonlighting for other contractors unless they've been authorized by their fixer to work for a Cartel handler.

SUPPORT STAFF

Just below the position of fixer is a network of people who comprise the Cartel's support system. These contracted individuals supplement the salary of their daily, legitimate jobs with Cartel

ALTERNATE CARTELS

For Freedom City and Meta-4 campaigns, the Cartel may be the subsidiary of an existing organization. Perhaps the Czar (see *Crooks* on pages 60–61), in his contempt for humanity, has decided to poison the world with the drugs and weapons, which, in his opinion it so richly deserves. Perhaps he heads the Cartel as its singular monarch. Or maybe Unifier (see *Crooks* on pages 104–105) has created a new venture in the Cartel to conquer criminal empires the way he conquered nations. Then, when the time demands it, Unitrol steps in and seemingly obliterates the Cartel, thus making Unitrol a global savior in the war against crime.

On the Freedom City side of events, is the Power Corps (see *Freedom City* on pages 150–151) the newest weapon in the Cartel's arsenal, or does SHADOW and the Penumbra (see *Freedom City* on pages 174–175) hold the reins to the Cartel's Central Committee. Of course, the Cartel could be a way to bring the Czar into a Freedom City campaign, or introduce an entirely new villainous group in contention with existing organizations like Unitrol and SHADOW.

Gamemasters with access to the *Foes of Freedom* sourcebook can easily make the Cartel one of the many twisting branches of the Labyrinth, ultimately controlled by Taurus. Lockdown certainly fits in with the Labyrinth's DNAscent research program and history of creating and using super-criminals. Cartel agents like Warboss and Belladonna may be unknowing creations of that process. Exposing the truth about Lockdown and the Cartel may only lead the heroes into the first layer of a *much* deeper mystery.

work. In fact, it's their regular jobs that make them important to the organization's continued operations. They may be accountants and bank executives who launder Cartel money, lawyers to help criminals through their legal dilemmas, truck drivers and transport companies involved in smuggling merchandise or product, bureaucrats who help the organization cut through red tape, and so forth.

Support Staff rarely know anyone beyond their fixer or, potentially, other members of their business (in the case of certain firms and agencies); some may not even realize they're working for the Cartel, believing their employer is another criminal enterprise.

FIXERS

Fixers are the equivalent of mafia lieutenants. They oversee the operations specific to various regions, each handling one aspect of some illegal enterprise in the area. A city may have three fixers, for example, with one managing the local drug-trade, the other the local arms market, and a third handling political corruption. Each fixer has his own maulers and support staff, though they share management of the different handlers (who act as "shared" commodities). Otherwise, the fixers may know of one another and their right-hand men, but the chain of knowledge rarely extends beyond their personal subordinates.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Not all Cartel initiatives are illegal, at least on the surface. The project groups are compartmentalized initiatives, legitimate enterprises that serve as cover for more covert operations. Lockdown,

for example, uses a private prison to raise capitol for the Cartel through the acquisition of super-humans and advanced technologies. So far, it is the costliest venture in motion, but one that is slowly paying off.

Special projects remain under the management of a public mouthpiece and internal director, both of whom carry the responsibility for the endeavor's success. In the case of Lockdown, the public mouthpiece and internal director are one in the same: Warden Devon Creed. Creed, in turn, reports to a man by the name Deacon Hobbs, the special projects overseer for North America and a dangerous super-human in his own right.

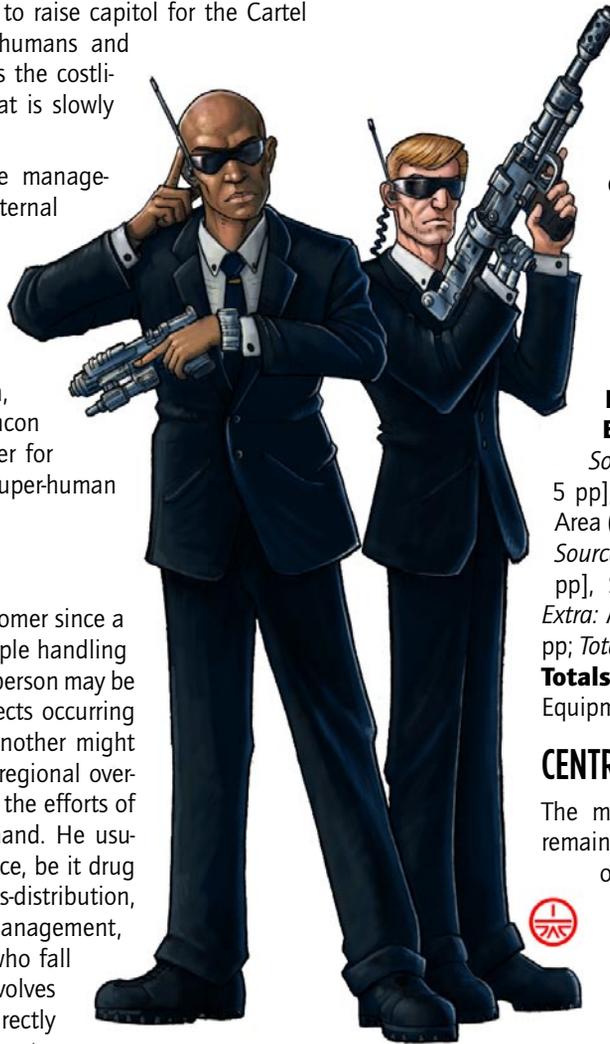
REGIONAL OVERSEER

Regional overseer is a bit of a misnomer since a country may have two or more people handling the Cartel's various initiatives. One person may be responsible for all the special projects occurring in his sphere of influence, while another might manage drug trafficking. Still, the regional overseer is responsible for coordinating the efforts of the various fixers under his command. He usually specializes in a field of influence, be it drug or technologies-trafficking, weapons-distribution, special projects, political asset management, etc, and so too will all the fixers who fall under his purview. He rarely involves himself with criminal activities directly unless it involves multi-national enterprises. In this case, the overseer coordinates matters with his counterparts, ensuring various shipments have a secure pipeline for transit. Regional overseers generally manage entire countries (Germany, Belgium, etc.) or regions (Mid-West U.S. or Atlantic Canada).

THE RAVENS

Imagine auditors with guns, IRS agents with Special Forces training. The Ravens are the Central Committee's chief enforcers, ensuring special projects run smoothly, regional overseers turn in the correct percentage of earnings and fixers don't skim profits. When Ravens appear, Cartel members are expected to cooperate fully; otherwise, the Ravens have the Cartel's sanction to dispose of the problem with prejudice.

The Ravens hail from a variety of military backgrounds, from Germany's GSG-9 to Iran's *Pasdarán Inqilab*, though the chief operatives seem to be ex-Soviet *Spetsnaz*. The Ravens travel in groups of three, one specializing in accounting and business, and their arrival is always a surprise. They never show up without a reason, so their appearance always carries an air of accusation.



RAVEN

PL 7; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 18 (+5 Base, +2 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +9 melee (+3S/5' reach/crit 20, punch), +8 ranged (+5L/50' range/crit 20), Steyr; SV Dmg +3 (Armor +5), Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Demolitions +6, Gather Information +6, Intimidate +6, Profession (soldier) +7, Sense Motive +4, Survival +6.

Feats: Dodge, Iron Will, Leadership.

Equipment: Body Armor [Armor +5;

Source: Super-Science; *Cost:* 1 pp; *Total:* 5 pp], Flash-bang grenades [+5 Stun; *Extra:* Area (25 ft.), Dazzle; *Flaws:* Device, Uses (8); *Source:* Super-Science; *Cost:* 2 pp; *Total:* 10 pp], Steyr-Mannlicher AUG [Weapon +5L; *Extra:* Autofire; *Source:* Super-Science; *Cost:* 2 pp; *Total:* 10 pp].

Totals: Abilities 53 + Skills 29 + Feats 6 + Equipment 25 = Total 113 pp.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

The membership of the central committee remains a mystery, and can be comprised of one person or a council of mob bosses or *ex-nomenklatura* members. The central committee roster may also be a surprise to characters, with its membership including an arch-nemesis or, even, respected allies.

AGENDA

The Cartel is free-enterprise without a shred of morality. Conversely, the Cartel isn't interested in directly contributing to human suffering with such human rights violations as the slave trade or prostitution. They aren't the good guys, that much is certain, but neither are they sadistic butchers. What differentiates the Cartel from similar organizations is each criminal enterprise they undertake is merely a way to raise capital for the next big venture. The important thing is the bottom line and the pay off.

The Cartel's philosophy is attractive to those criminals with stronger ties to the pursuit of wealth than to any nationalist policy. In fact, those who join do so because they're tired of the narrow-minded leadership of their superiors. The Cartel, however, is ambitious and not above pursuing bold endeavors to make more money. In fact, they could be called visionary because they try to provide steady cash flow through "legitimate operations," be it selling technology or creating places like Lockdown to recruit super-humans. Rather than wait for the next big development before capitalizing on it, the Cartel tries to create its own markets. That's what young criminals find attractive: the Cartel rewards the imaginative and forward thinking.

DEACON

"Did that hurt? Maybe I'm not trying hard enough...."

BACKGROUND

Deacon Hobbs was part of the Quebec Hell's Angels, a group notorious for their control over the Montreal drug trade, when the RCMP, Surete Police, and various heroes launched a coordinated raid resulting in the arrest of 200 bikers across the island of Montreal.

Hobbs, following his capture at the hands of the Red Robin, was informed that the Crown was looking to give him a life sentence. Hobbs was therefore surprised when his lawyer told him he could help him escape justice. The lawyer represented a group interested in Hobbs' mutant abilities and his business acumen in laundering the Angels' drug money. Hobbs accepted, and was "abducted" en route to the courthouse.

Since then, Hobbs has changed his style to present a more respectable façade, and risen quickly in the Cartel's ranks thanks to his ambition and shark-like instincts. He currently heads the North American Special Projects division as regional overseer, and is very proud of Lockdown. Anyone endangering the penitentiary's operations will face Hobbs' wrath, and he is by no means a weak or indecisive man. For all intents and purposes, Hobbs is the CEO and president of the Americas Security Concerns.

Hobbs is a smart man. He's well read and understands the intricacies of big business and economics, which often belie his no-nonsense, four-letter-word vocabulary. He carries himself like a brawler, using his size to intimidate others, and he doesn't mind swinging his fists the moment he believes someone is trying to take advantage of his perceived stupidity. He doesn't take ignorance lightly, though, especially when others assume it of him.

USING DEACON

Deacon won't show up during a Lockdown campaign, given he's trying to distance himself from the operation, but he'll appear if the Cartel loses Lockdown or the heroes go after the Cartel. Deacon isn't likely to attack without a plan, not unless he's in control of the situation or has a surprise or two hidden up his sleeve. Deacon is a mid-range threat on the way up the Cartel's ranks.

TACTICS

Deacon loves surprising opponents, so he'll play the straight-forward, obvious brute with his strength. The moment an adversary becomes overconfident in his ability to manage Deacon, he opens up with another level of power, transmuting his body mass into metal. Essentially, every Extra in Deacon's



OPERATION SKUNKWEED

While Lockdown, drug-running, and arms dealing are three typical pursuits for the Cartel, Operation Skunkweed is indicative of their ability to think beyond the standard rote. Currently, the Cartel's biggest competitor in the heroin trade is the Golden Triangle (eastern Myanmar, northern Laos and parts of northern Thailand), which is responsible for 70% of the world's heroin. Unable to establish strong footholds in the isolated regions and their drug fields, the Cartel is taking a different approach to the problem. Instead of trying to horn-in on the Golden Triangle heroin trade, the Cartel is going to ruin the region's opium crops for the next few years.

The initiative uses Cartel members disguised as Red Cross and Red Crescent doctors. While trying to help outlying areas within the Golden Triangle, the Cartel's vehicles release airborne bacteria that transfer from the field workers to their crops. Within a generation, the pesticide-resistant microbes "infect" the poppy flowers and their spores, causing them to spoil during the manufacturing process. As it stands, the Golden Triangle has lost close to 4% of their current crop, and the number is increasing as the microbes spread throughout the region. This, in turn, forces suppliers to turn to the Cartel for their needs.

This presents Gamemasters with a unique opportunity to include and introduce the characters to Pacific Rim heroes. The Skunkweed microbe could have mutated and is now infecting the various crop fields of the Far East. The Pac Rim heroes may have uncovered the Cartel's involvement in the matter, and now seek the help of the heroes (if they've tangled with the Cartel). Conversely, perhaps one of Skunkweed's creators discovers that the virus is in danger of mutating, and in a moment of honesty, contacts the heroes when he discovers the Cartel isn't willing to kill the microbe. In both cases, the adventure could lead to a hidden Cartel base in the Philippines.

arsenal becomes another facet to his powers that appears over the course of the combat at the most inopportune moment for the hero.

DEACON

PL 15; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 18 (+7 Base, +1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +14 melee (+11S/5' reach/crit 20, punch); SV Dmg +10 (+8 Protection), Fort +10, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills: Drive +5, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +9, Profession (accountant) +10, Sense Motive +8, Taunt +6.

Feats: Chokehold, Durability, Power Attack.

Powers: Alternate Form - Metal +8 [Effects: Super-Strength, Protection; Extras: Impervious; Source: Mutation; Cost: 6 pp; Total: 48 pp], Super-Strength +7 [Extras: Shockwave, Super-Constitution, Thunderclap; Source: Mutation; Cost: 9 pp; Total: 63 pp].

Totals: Abilities 72 + Skills 38 + Feats 6 + Powers 111 = Total 227 pp.

PROFILE: DEACON

Power Level: 15

Concept: Ex-biker now turned Cartel Regional Overseer.

Name: Deacon Hobbs

Other Aliases: None

Base of Operations: New York, New York

Affiliation: The Cartel

Nationality: Canadian

Age: 34

Height: 6'5"

Weight: 259 lbs.

Eyes: Green

Hair: Dirty Blonde

It's the kind of community folk leave the cities for to raise their children. Sure, the town's chief employer is a prison, but that means there are guaranteed jobs and the assurance of a prosperous economy. Besides, the scenery is beautiful, the schools top notch, and the community is far safer than its urban counterparts.

Unfortunately, not everything is so rosy in Lockdown, and that means the prosperity and peace of Bruckner Ridge is built on lies. Few people even know about the evil in their midst and the town populace discounts these opinions as the rambling of malcontents. Should anyone investigate the town or its prison too closely, that's when the Cartel's sleeper-agents handle matters quickly and quietly before returning to their lives as Buckner Ridge's upstanding community leaders.

HISTORY OF BUCKNER RIDGE

Before Lockdown and the Cartel, there was the town of Buckner Ridge, and there was coal. Buckner Ridge began as a mining town in 1892, harvesting rich seams of bituminous coal within the mountains. With the Industrial Revolution in full swing, coal was the high-in-demand fuel powering the engines of progress; Buckner Ridge thrived, and grew to accommodate the miners and their families. The townsfolk built a church, school, and homes, and slowly over the next two decades, the mining town became a true community.

Buckner Ridge had its share of difficulties, a few of which threatened to destroy the community. The locals, however, were rightfully proud of their reputation for having a "can do" attitude and tenacity. On May 12th 1923, for example, methane and over 2000 tons of coal dust ignited and blew out one of the mines, suffocating six miners and killing another eight in the resulting cave-in. Although this devastated the community, they pulled through and reclaimed the lost mining shafts. Transporting the coal down the mountainside also proved problematic, so the town convinced the local railways to build a costly extension to their community in exchange for exceptional discounts on their highly prized coal. Worse still was the Depression, when coal consumption dropped steadily in favor of petroleum products. Were it not for WWII and the demand for steel manufacturing, of which coal was integral, Buckner Ridge might have faced extinction.

Still, there was an undeniable sense that Buckner Ridge was headed for harder times. After WWII, people preferred oil for heat, the railways abandoned steam powered engines entirely for diesel fuel engines and hydro-electricity gained rapid popularity. With coal consumption at its lowest throughout the 1960s, Buckner Ridge survived through contract mining for Asian markets like

Japan. Unfortunately, the expense in shipping coal out to coke manufacturing plants before sending it to Japan for their steel-making industry proved exorbitant. Buckner Ridge couldn't keep up with larger competitors, who were able to extract coke much more quickly through open pit mining.

By the 1990s, Buckner Ridge was verging on becoming a ghost town, with less than 700 residents in a community that once claimed 3,000. That's when the town council sought prison contracts as the solution to their problems. That's when the Americas Security Concerns appeared and offered them the Lockdown contract.

Since Lockdown was built, Buckner Ridge's population grown and even surpassed 3,000 with a booming economy to match. Many new arrivals are from towns in the region who came here looking for work. Most new arrivals, however, are from nearby cities and states, hoping the rumors of Buckner Ridge vying for a second prison contract in the area holds true. Time will tell whether Buckner Ridge can survive the prison operating in its backyard.

GEOGRAPHY

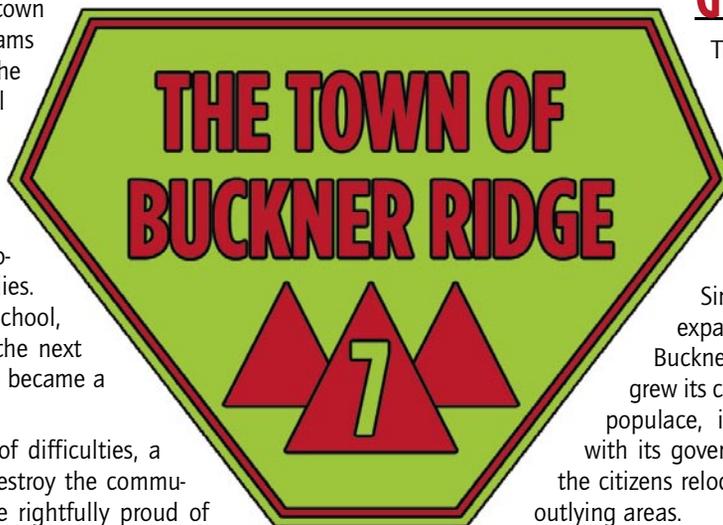
The Main, Buckner Ridge's principle strip, is as old as the town itself. It was the first road in town around which the original saloon, homes, and church were built to handle the fledgling population of miners and, later, their families. Since then, the Main's grown and expanding, becoming the heart of Buckner Ridge. When the Main outgrew its capacity to house the burgeoning populace, it became the downtown core with its government offices and shops, while the citizens relocated to their new homes in the outlying areas.

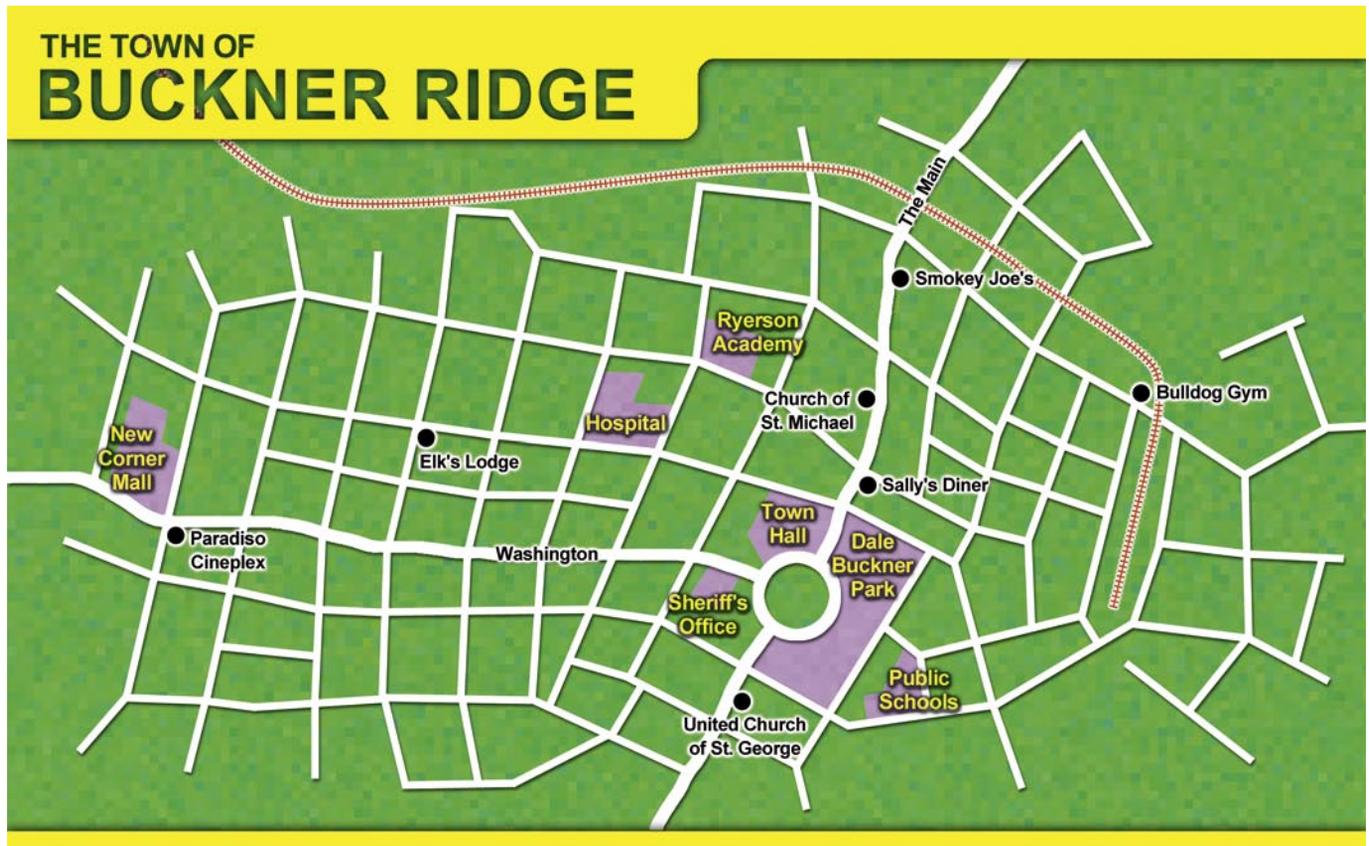
The town of Buckner Ridge slowly shrank due to a failing economy, a situation that only recently reversed itself. Now, with money flowing back into the town's coffers, Buckner Ridge is undergoing a renovation boom to repair the neglected buildings and a construction boom to handle the increasing population.

THE MAIN

The grime, graffiti, and boarded-up windows are gone and the Main has returned to her former glory. The neo-classic designs of her buildings lend the town a sense of history, while the mom-and-pop shops and retro '50s diner speak of a simpler time. While the Main isn't a huge shopping draw, it brings in steady customers looking for home-craft wares and unique knickknacks unavailable at the New Corner Shopping Mall.

The heart of the Main is an old fashioned town square surrounding Dale Buckner Park and the statue of the town's founder, after whom the park and town are named. Surrounding the park are the engines of bureaucracy, the government and important com-





munity buildings. Town Hall is the throne commanding court over Dale Buckner Park, while to its sides are the Sheriff's Office, Fire Station 001, the public library and various offices of government. At lunchtime, the big draws are the four area restaurants, of which Sally's Diner is the most popular.

NEW CORNER

Built on what was once the fringe of old Buckner Ridge, New Corner is the modern heart of the new town. The new construction boom is happening in and around the large parcel of land called the New Corner development, as well as the newly built New Corner Mall. The area itself is predominantly residential, with the intersection of Washington and 8th showcasing the town's new-found prosperity. On one corner rests the 200-store New Corner Shopping Mall; across the street is the new Paradiso Cineplex and upscale booksellers; facing the New Corner are restaurants and a large grocery store, while on the opposite corner to the mall is a gas station and strip mall with a major video chain and smaller restaurants. While New Corner Mall is a little large for the community it supports, Buckner Ridge fully expects to continue growing. It hopes to act as the shopping hub for nearby communities, many of which are within an hour of the town.

SMOKEY JOE'S

It's been relocated several times, under different managements, but for over a century, Buckner Ridge has always had a Smokey

Joe's. From the town's one road days, Smokey Joe's has remained the region's quintessential watering hole. No fancy drinks, just beer. No extravagant menus, just finger foods like nachos and chicken wings. Throw in a juke box, small dance floor, pool tables, and generous helping of smoke, and you have a recipe that hasn't changed in several decades. Still, Smokey Joe's is part of the town's history, and draws its blue collar crowds every Friday and Saturday nights. It's also the official bar for COs working Lockdown, and sees a steady stream of guards throughout the week looking for a place to unwind or talk shop with their friends.

Smokey Joe's current proprietor is Desiree Fontana, the first woman to run the establishment in all its history. Desiree can trace her lineage back to seven generations of coal miners, and the first African-American family to move to predominantly-Caucasian Buckner Ridge. She's a blue-collar gal, though reputedly on the wagon after almost losing the business. The patrons love Desiree, who always runs Smokey Joe's as a "man's bar." That means girlie-biker posters decorate the walls and every two months there's a highly popular wet t-shirt competition.

RELIGION

The spiritual heart of Buckner Ridge revolves around the Church of St. Michael and the United Church of St. George, which cater to the Catholic and Protestant communities. Both churches participate heavily in the local community, supporting events from charity drives to bake sales. The Jewish population is too small to

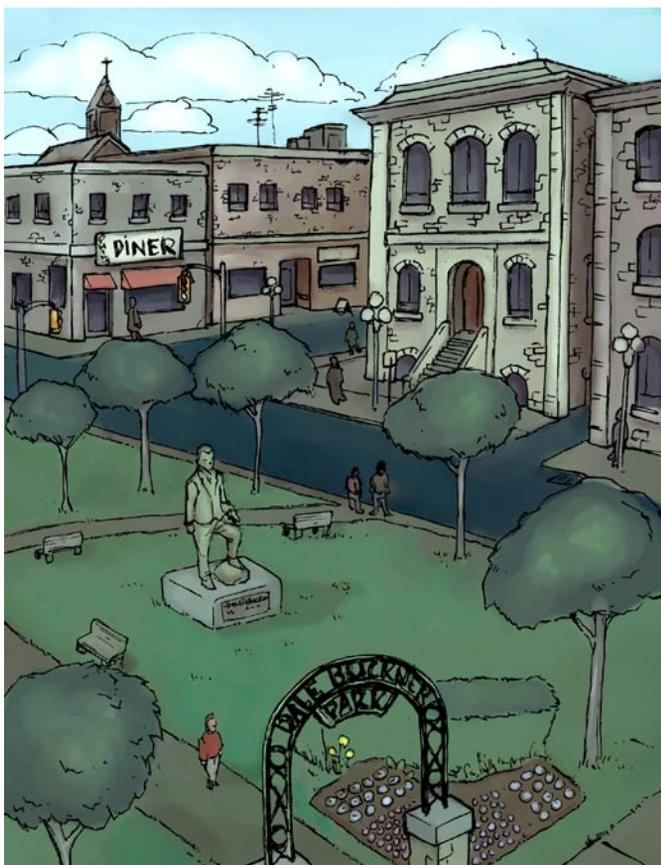
CLUB CARTEL

Lockdown is proving quite lucrative as an endeavor, and the Cartel is looking to increase its holdings in the area. Initially, the Cartel sent agents into the town of Buckner Ridge to keep an eye on matters. If there were any security leaks concerning the prison's real purpose, the first indications would appear in town. The Cartel finessed some of its agents into key positions using blackmail, bribery, incentives through legitimate investments, and even performed quiet assassinations disguised as heart attacks to create their opportunities. Since then, the Cartel has invested more heavily in the area, in hopes of turning the town into a sanctuary for its members. With a larger population, strangers and newcomers can hide more easily in the crowds.

With this goal in mind, the Cartel and its agents are slowly finagling themselves into the lives of the town's citizens and into positions of trust or authority. As it stands now, Alistair Crawford heads the Ryerson Academy, which the Cartel helped fund, Fabian del Toro is the chief Medical Examiner (and controls the undead Grayve (see page 105)), while Sheriff Jasper Moulton is firmly in the Cartel's pocket, bought and paid. There's no telling how many more people work for the Cartel, whether voluntarily or coerced, but it is possible that within the next decade, the criminal organization may be running the town as a private investment and operation.

warrant a synagogue, though that may change over the next few years, while Muslim residents are practically nonexistent.

Father Regis Wade heads the Church of St. Michael, and represents traditional Catholic values without being overbearing about it. An older man who saw action in Vietnam, Wade appeals to the older parishioners in his church who bear definite blue collar tendencies and conservative leanings. Minister Jesse Baker of the United Church, however, is younger than Wade in both age and temperament. Baker is worldly in his sensibilities and beloved by his equally young, upwardly-mobile congregation. While Wade is likelier to extol the virtues of abstinence, for example, Baker may talk about the merits of safe sex.



EDUCATION

Until recently, schooling in Buckner Ridge was limited to the public institutions of Ethel B. Hawthorn Elementary and Junior Schools and Joseph Pierson High School. The town's recent growth, however, has allowed for the construction of Ryerson Academy, a private school catering to Buckner Ridge's more affluent students. While many students hail from newly arrived families with money from outside jobs, pupils originating from Buckner Ridge have one or both parents who work at Lockdown or in local construction.

Alistair Crawford runs Ryerson Academy with a strict, but fair hand. That doesn't endear her to any of her students, though frankly, she doesn't care much for their wellbeing or safety; she merely plays her role well. Crawford is a Cartel plant with a two-part mission. The first is to spy. While parents may be close-mouthed about their secrets and sentiments, teens share that information with peers when away from their home environment. As such, Crawford bugged the academy in all the popular hang-out spots, gleaning pertinent information from her students. She knows who is having affairs with whom, which parent has lucrative business dealings, who remains suspicious of Lockdown, and an assortment of other pieces of dirty laundry. It enables the Cartel to blackmail a select few parents in positions of authority.

Crawford is also using the school as a diversionary tactic and hostage opportunity. When the Academy was built, the Cartel installed explosives in the foundation. Should heroes attack Lockdown, Crawford is to hold the children hostage by threatening to detonate the demolition charges. It's not a negotiation scheme; it's a stalling tactic meant to delay the heroes long enough for Cartel members to evacuate Lockdown. Meanwhile, X-8 is supposed to transport Crawford and other valuable agents to safety.

BUCKNER RIDGE GENERAL HOSPITAL

Buckner Ridge General Hospital is being expanded constantly with the growing demand for space from new patients. A recent fund drive netted enough money to institute major repairs on the ailing building. While the exterior is foreboding and aloof with its gothic touches, the interior has been refurbished to elevate the once-dreary décor to something more upbeat, it's also been

updated with new equipment to replace outdated technology. The hospital works closely with Lockdown, it handles patients that require specialized care and sends doctors and interns for weekly visits to the prison. In exchange, Lockdown is sometimes willing to lend the hospital use of its sophisticated equipment for emergency diagnosis of occasional patients, or lend out pharmaceuticals otherwise difficult to find or out of stock at the hospital.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Sheriff Jasper Moulton is the law in Buckner Ridge, and he swaggers with a sense of authority and importance. The Sheriff's office sits adjacent to Town Hall, and maintains the local jail, but by the way Moulton acts, one would swear he was the only bulwark against the barbarians turning the streets of local cities into warzones. Unfortunately for Buckner Ridge, Sheriff Moulton is part of the invisible problem. While Moulton is a native son, it didn't take the Cartel long to realize the sheriff was eminently bribable thanks to enough gambling habits and markers to please any two-bit gangster. So, in between padding his pockets and the once-a-year paid weekend in Las Vegas, the Cartel keeps Sheriff Moulton happy and on the look-out for anyone bad-mouthing Lockdown. And Moulton is happy to oblige; he's found himself an easy ride, as far as he's concerned, but he has no idea of whom he's really dealing with.

BULLDOG GYM

Forget the New Corner YMCA or ubiquitous chain-gyms, Bulldog is the place to go for the serious body-builders. With a pro-shop, health bar, and 24-hour access, Bulldog is the best-stocked for free weights. It offers COs a discount for membership, becoming the second favorite hang-out for off-duty prison personnel after Smokey Joe's.

ELK'S LODGE

The Elk's Lodge is a thinly disguised boy's club, with the mostly older members gathering together for the heated pool and sauna, or for poker games and drinks at night. The Elk's Club offers significant help with charity drives and the members volunteer at the local children's hospital alongside the Women's Auxiliary, but it's mostly a chance for many retirees to get away from the house.

LOCALS

Although small, Buckner Ridge needs its civil servants, elected officials, community leaders, and unsung heroes to function properly. Like every suburban Eden, however, the town also has its viper, in the form of a Cartel overseer. Not everyone involved in running the town is outlined, but those with important roles are details are included.

- **Mayor Alicia Gray:** Credited with reviving Buckner Ridge from death's door, Mayor Gray is enjoying her second term, and hopes to fulfill one more term as the town's savior.

THE NEW KIDS

Gamemasters interested in a teen heroes campaign crossed with *Lockdown* can set the player characters up as students at Ryerson Academy. Perhaps they acquire powers as part of some Cartel experiment, or an accident involving the prison or the Cartel's activities in Buckner Ridge. The young heroes have to conceal their true identities from the Cartel, discover what's really going on at their school, and trace it back to Lockdown and the Cartel's plans. It's a lot for a group of newbie teen heroes, but they may be Buckner Ridge's only hope.

Alternately, GMs with an existing teen heroes game (such as the *Claremont Academy* from *Freedom City*) could set things up so the heroes go undercover at Ryerson, posing as "transfers" from other schools, newly arrived in Buckner Ridge (which is a fast-growing community). While the Cartel is on the lookout for super-heroes, they may overlook teens, at least at first. Maybe a new superteen at Ryerson contacts the out-of-town heroes for help when things get too deep. If nothing else, Sophie Dean, Samuel Dean's daughter (see page 104), could be old enough to attend Ryerson and begin manifesting powers of her own. Feel free to mix-and-match to suit your game.

- **Public Works Director Ernest O'Toole:** O'Toole is enjoying the town's newfound wealth, but is currently over-budget in his enthusiastic campaign to repair sewage, city streets, and public buildings.
- **Waste Management Director Darius Visconti:** Director Visconti handles Waste Management with no-nonsense efficiency. He will run for mayor once Gray completes her final term (and is no longer competition), though that hasn't stopped him from pandering for early support and votes.
- **Judge Jann Steinitz:** Buckner Ridge doesn't have much crime, leaving a bored Judge Steinitz to handle parking or traffic ticket disputes.
- **Fire Chief Reggie McGinley:** Voted Buckner Ridge's most eligible bachelor, Reggie McGinley epitomizes the "all-American boy" in looks and in his good-natured attitudes. Why he hasn't married yet is beyond folks, though that doesn't stop them from trying to set him up with their daughters or themselves.
- **Medical Examiner Fabian del Toro:** Fabian del Toro is a recent arrival in Buckner Ridge, among the first to join the influx of newcomers. He's also involved with the Cartel, and is in charge of managing an undead creature named Grayve (see page 105). Any locals proving problematic for the Cartel receive a final visit from Grayve.
- **PTA Head Juanita Ortiz:** Although Juanita isn't involved with politics or public office, she still carries enough clout with the community to influence local civil servants and politicians. She's very much the activist/busybody who noses in on other people's business under the pretense of "protecting the children."

In addition to these personalities, the following individuals are important to Buckner Ridge, whether most people realize it or not.

EXPLOSIVE SITUATIONS

Ryerson Academy doesn't have to be the only place lined with explosives, the Gamemaster can designate other spots depending on the situation and relevance to the characters. The locations, however, must be places recently renovated or constructed, in which case the characters can trace the job back to a firm named Harrison & Sons Construction (H&SC) and, from there, try to determine which buildings may be in danger. H&SC is a Cartel front that laced several buildings with demolition charges. It doesn't mean they won't detonate the explosives, only that they'll save them for the right occasion. Their goal is to use the explosives to create a diversion if the prison is ever threatened from outside. The Cartel is willing to detonate all the explosives in the town if it buys them the time they need to get Cartel personnel out of town while everyone else is fleeing for their lives.

CRIMSON JUSTICE

"Hi there, it's a pleasure to meet you. Welcome to Buckner Ridge."

BACKGROUND

A member of the PTA, Samuel Dean is a well-liked personality within the community. Despite the steady trickle of new families, Dean visits them all and welcomes them to Buckner Ridge. It's just his way, and he has a knack for making people feel welcome. As the single father of 11-year old Sophie, Dean is an informal community leader, perhaps more so than Ortiz. Folks would love if he ran against Ortiz in the next election, but Dean always refuses. He prefers to steer clear of politics... or so he claims.

Dean's principle reason for staying below the radar is because his real name is Corey Scott, and seven years ago, his wife died. Actually, she was murdered by an unknown assailant after the mafia uncovered Dean's identity as then crime-fighter Crimson Justice. Since then, Dean has retired and gone underground, hoping to protect his daughter. He fears Sophie may have inherited his mutant abilities and he knows something sinister is afoot at Lockdown. His limited precognitive flashes reveal snippets of Lockdown's future, as well as glimpses into the personalities of Alistair Crawford and Sheriff Moulton. Dean doesn't know exactly what dangers await, but he knows some things are very wrong and that they're all connected somehow. It's one of the reasons Dean is so community minded; he's trying to determine who to trust and who to watch. Fortunately, he's met other people (mostly locals) who distrust Lockdown for one reason or another.

The years and the role of widowed parent have taken their toll on Dean, but not in the expected manner; where once he bridled at the injustices of the world and swung first, he's now adopted a more reasoned and calmer approach to matters. His principle concern is for his daughter, but Dean will not back down from a confrontation. Sure, he's more reasonable in his approach, but if ever backed into a corner, his Crimson Justice temper will surface.

USING CRIMSON JUSTICE

If a hero sees Dean use his powers, he may remember a former crime-fighter named

Crimson Justice who wielded the same distinctive abilities. Still, Dean is the perfect ally in Buckner Ridge. He knows who to trust and how to ask questions without compromising himself. More so, Dean precognitive flashes may reveal the bombs at the school or the impending landslide from Lockdown's translocation shunt. Either one will make him spring into action even at the cost of his cover identity.

TACTICS

Crimson Justice applied "the best defense is a good offense" axiom with an almost fervent delight, while Dean would prefer to understand the situation first, and reach a compromise. His propensity to consider his actions carefully is the result of his wife's death, which he firmly blames on himself and his rash behavior. Still, Crimson Justice was effective because of his dexterity and overwhelming, sudden telekinetic onslaughts which manifested as red plasmic discharges. Anyone who bullies Dean or mistakes his calm, unaffected demeanor for cowardice or weakness is in for a nasty surprise because he will quickly return to his old habits if the situation calls for it. That's not to say Dean will use his powers... merely that his extreme emotions are explosive. During combat, Dean is fast, but he can use his telekinesis to improve his Dexterity, his body becoming an expression of thought and movement.

CRIMSON JUSTICE

PL 13; Init +8 (Dex, Imp. Init.); Defense 19 (+5 Base, +4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +8 melee (+2S/5' reach/crit 20, punch), +10 ranged (+10S/100' range/crit 20, energy blast or telekinesis); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 15.

Skills: Acrobatics +9, Balance +9, Bluff +6, Climb +7, Concentration +5, Gather Information +7, Hide +8, Innuendo +6, Intimidate +6, Jump +5, Knowledge (Buckner Ridge) +6, Move Silently +7, Sense Motive +6, Spot +7.

Feats: Blindsight, Identity Change, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Surprise Strike.

Powers: Precognition +5 [*Flaw:* Uncontrolled; *Source:* Psionic; *Cost:* 2 pp; *Total:* 10 pp], Telekinesis +10 [*Extras:* Boost - Dexterity, Energy Blast (*Extras:* Area +6*), Grapple; *Source:* Psionic; *Cost:* 5 pp; *Total:* 56 pp].

PROFILE: CRIMSON JUSTICE

Power Level: 13

Classification: Type III

Concept: Retired super-hero. Father.

Name: Samuel Dean

Other Aliases: Corey Scott

Base of Operations: Buckner Ridge

Affiliation: None

Nationality: American

Age: Unknown

Height: 6'3"

Weight: 230 lbs.

Eyes: Green

Hair: Black

*Crimson Justice may use his Energy Blast at up to +10 normally, but he can also use the Area extra on an Energy Blast as large as +6.

Totals: Abilities 61 + Skills 58 + Feats 12 + Powers 66 = Total 197 pp.

GRAYVE

Grr... Arrg...

BACKGROUND

Grayve doesn't remember much about life, except he was an inquisitor, perhaps, and that he sent several Massachusetts witches to the gallows. He also remembers when he sentenced a witch to burn – a gypsy – and discovered, when he died, that her curse carried weight. Death was no longer a gentle companion to reward him with peace after a hard life; instead, death became the intermittent, restless sleep between waking periods. Grayve was a ghost trapped in a slowly decaying corpse.

In the intervening centuries, Grayve "dies" and re-awakens every few decades. Sometimes a witch or warlock raises him to complete their bidding, sometimes he simply awakens on his own and explores the terrified communities around him. Recently, however, a group called the Cartel unearthed Grayve, and found a way to bind him into the service of a man named Fabian del Toro. Fabian only awakens Grayve when he needs someone eliminated quietly, but Grayve actually likes Fabian. The medical examiner treats the former inquisitor like he's alive, and though Grayve has no tongue to respond, he enjoys their discourses.

Grayve is frustrated because he's more intelligent than he's capable of expressing. He wants to say hello, but he only growls. He wants to shake hands, but movements make it look like he's taking a swipe at people. He is polite and well-cultured, but his body betrays him at every turn. So, out of frustration, he simply kills, because that's the only time body and mind seem capable of cooperating.

USING GRAYVE

Grayve can be the horror haunting the townsfolk in the night, or the enforcer the heroes inadvertently

PROFILE: GRAYVE

Power Level: 12

Classification: Type V

Concept: Undead enforcer.

Name: Unknown

Other Aliases: None

Base of Operations: Buckner Ridge

Affiliation: The Cartel

Nationality: American

Age: Unknown

Height: 6'2"

Weight: 150 lbs.

Eyes: Glowing yellow

Hair: Gray

face when they try apprehending the Cartel's agents in town. He isn't a source of information or a poor soul to rescue. He's just as likely to attack the heroes because he's commanded to as he is because he finds their revealing costumes offensive.

TACTICS

If Grayve had ever watched horror movies, he'd probably feel embarrassed about how much of a cliché he is. He walks at an even gait regardless of the victim's speed, he appears out of no where to ensnare the helpless victim – thanks to his ability to walk through walls – and he stalks the target briefly before making the kill. He also has a penchant for attacking anyone having sex or drinking, but that's more due to his puritanical views and 17th Century values. Otherwise, Grayve uses his destructive touch, which mimics the effects of various accelerated cancers, to kill victims.

GRAYVE

PL 12; Init -1 (Dex); Defense 14 (+5 Base, -1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +16 melee (+10L/5' reach/crit 20, punch); SV Dmg +10, Fort +10, Ref -1, Will +7; Str 20, Dex 8, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 20, Cha 10.

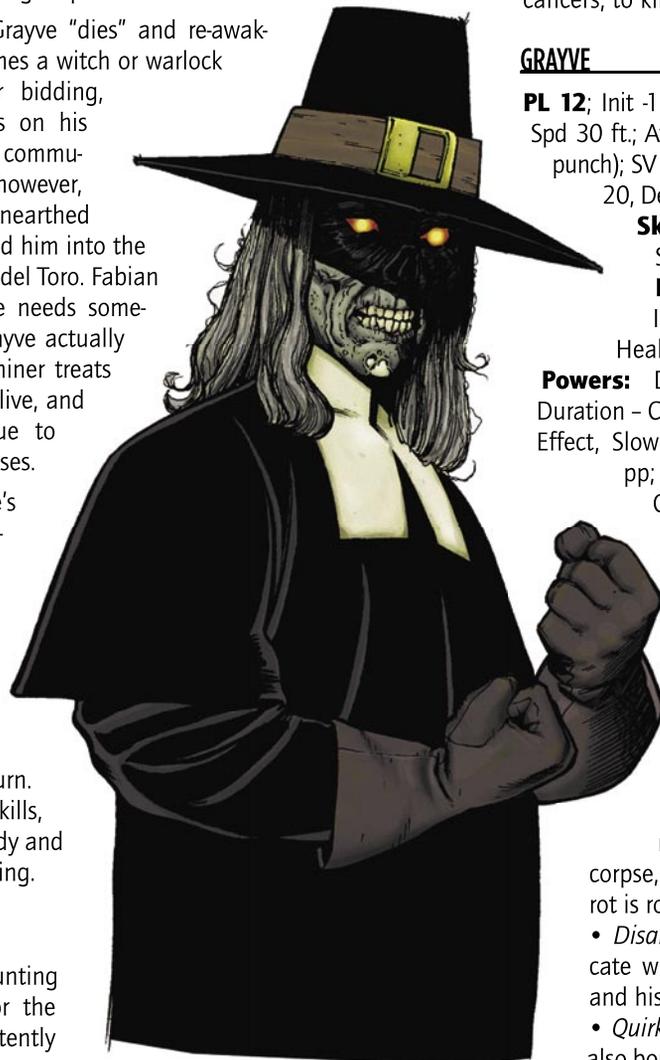
Skills: Hide +9, Intimidate +10, Move Silently +4, Spot +15.

Feats: Blindsight, Durability, Indomitable Will, Iron Will, Rapid Healing, Startle.

Powers: Drain - Constitution +5 [Extras: Duration - Concentration, Ghost Touch, Secondary Effect, Slow Recovery; Source: Mystical; Cost: 6 pp; Total: 30 pp], Incorporeal +7 [Extras: Ghost Touch, Immunities (critical hits, disease, energy (cold), exhaustion, poison starvation, suffocation), Phase Attack; Source: Mystical; Cost: 5 pp; Total: 35 pp], Super-Strength +5 [Extras: Lethal, Super-Constitution; Source: Mystical; Cost: 8 pp; Total: 40 pp].

Weaknesses: *Disturbing.* Grayve is decaying. Admittedly, he looks remarkably good for a five-year old corpse, much less a 300+ year old one, but rot is rot.

- *Disabled - Mute.* Grayve can't communicate with anyone since his tongue is gone and his motor functions are practically shot.
- *Quirk - Under External Control.* Grayve is also bound to whomever controls him. Grayve



is currently bound to Fabian del Toro through a bone necklace the medical examiner wears.

- *Vulnerable – Magic.*

Totals: Abilities 71 + Skills 35 + Feats 12 + Powers 105 – Weaknesses 40 = Total 183 pp.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

With the main action unfolding at the prison, the question becomes: how does one get involved in life or events at Buckner Ridge? The answer depends on the nature of the campaign, but if the heroes are prisoners, then there's no reason to use the town except as a backdrop or events after the fact, with various Cartel personnel left behind and trapped by recent events.

TRUSTING THE OUTSIDERS

If the characters visit the prison on occasion for various reasons, then Samuel Dean may try intercepting them. His suspicions and hunches are growing stronger, and he can no longer deny the truth. He needs help and trusts the characters (if they're perceived as heroes) enough to approach them with his concerns, but not enough to reveal his real identity at first. Once the characters investigate and arouse the Cartel's suspicions, however, it shouldn't take long for Grayve to appear.

BREAKOUT REDUX

As per the **Breakout** hook (see page 80), the characters enter Buckner Ridge to find any convicts stupid enough to seek refuge in town. One villain, however, endangers lives at New Corner Mall, forcing Crimson Justice to reappear and help with the situation. Now the Cartel knows there's a hero hiding somewhere in Buckner Ridge, and asks its operatives to find and handle the matter using Grayve. Meanwhile, Crimson Justice may ask the visiting heroes for help, knowing that the town is still in danger.

INSIDE ALLIANCES

Samuel Dean finds kindred spirits in Capt. Chet Cogan and Lt. Freeman Thane. Now, the trio are working together and trying to determine who to trust before proceeding with their next step. Do they trust those characters in SOU, or any heroes investigating the prison on behalf of the Department of Justice? With this option, the characters should have access to the town, and frequent it for whatever reason. Perhaps Lockdown doesn't have enough room for the characters, and finds them an apartment in Buckner Ridge. Perhaps the COs invite the characters out for beers at Smokey Joe's or training sessions at Bulldog.

NYATHUHG'S BEACON REDUX

Another option in involving characters allows them to encounter Crimson Justice during their mutual investigation of Innscourt (see **Nyathuhg's Beacon** on page 89). Perhaps the CO who

vanished into Innscourt was a friend of Dean's who served as his information pipeline into the prison. Crimson Justice may suspect Lockdown of wrong-doing in this case, though it may take a while for him to admit why to the characters. The adventure, however, allows the heroes and Crimson Justice to bond together through their immediate concern and the strange adversaries they face.

DEATHWATCH REDUX

This option is dangerous, because the characters are anti-heroes in their roles as trustees or Deathwatch operatives. In either case, what happens when the characters must dispense with a local resident named Dean Samuels because he's sticking his nose in places it doesn't belong? Nobody knows Samuels is a mutant, and capable of defending himself, but the real issue here is whether the characters can ignore Crimson Justice's warnings about Lockdown and what the people running it have planned. Maybe he already knows about the explosives in Ryerson Academy or the avalanche that will devastate Buckner Ridge once the prison shuts. Maybe the characters are killers, but Crimson Justice will ask them (even in combat) whether they can participate in the outright massacre of hundreds, if not thousands, of innocents? Is this the turning point where the characters eschew their villainous ways and become heroes? One thing is certain. If the characters hesitate, Grayve shows up to handle the matter – the Cartel *never* operates without a contingency plan in place.

CURTAIN CALL

While the Cartel has several operatives in Buckner Ridge, the two principle threats are Alistair Crawford and Fabian del Toro (given his control over Grayve). Both are capable of inflicting horrible casualties against bystanders, which they will not hesitate to do if backed into a corner.

If Lockdown is under siege, then Crawford issues the ultimatum over the phone about demolishing several buildings including Ryerson. As a show of force, she'll destroy one structure in Buckner Ridge, and demand the authorities withdraw. She isn't naive enough to believe they'll comply, but she is giving Lockdown personnel enough time to translocate out. Fabian del Toro runs interference, using Grayve to ambush heroes at Ryerson. In either case, Crawford and del Toro are equipped with GPS tracking devices, allowing X-8 to reach them instantly.

If the Cartel is evacuating the prison without anyone realizing it, then Crawford and del Toro are already miles away, in a hotel far from the collapsing mountain. They'll have a satellite transmitter to make their threatening calls and to remote activate the bombs. Grayve is left behind to handle anyone trying to dismantle the explosives; the Cartel knows his non-corporeal ability enables him to walk through the avalanche and return to his current master.

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Steve is the author of the award-winning *Mutants & Masterminds Roleplaying Game* and the *Freedom City* campaign setting, as well as a lifetime fan of comic books. Steve has been an RPG author and designer since 1995, having worked on dozens of products. He maintains a website at members.aol.com/talonmail. Steve lives in Merrimack, New Hampshire with his partner, Christopher Penczak.

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Lucien Soulban is a flight of God's fancy. He doesn't exist save as chimera and he certainly isn't speaking to you right now. Ignore him. He doesn't live in Montreal as a self-avowed bachelor and he doesn't love writing with a strange, fevered passion that belies category. At best, Lucien is a rote, grabbing random words from a dictionary and sequencing them in some form of literary eugenics. By reading his story, you merely feed into the popular delusion of his existence: That he has mass and substance. There... now you've done it. Are you happy? He thinks he's real.

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Jeff Carlisle has designed and illustrated for magazines, roleplaying games, collectable card games, video games, and entertainment environments for clients such as Alderac Entertainment Group, COSI Studios, Green Ronin Publishing, Lucasfilm, Ltd., Paizo Publishing, Presto Studios, The Scarefactory, Inc. and Wizards of the Coast. His work has appeared in *Dragon*, *Dungeon/Polyhedron*, and *Star Wars Gamer* magazines as well as the *Warlord CCG*, *Legend of the Five Rings CCG* and the *Star Wars: New Jedi Order*, *Star Wars: Power of the Jedi*, and *Mutants and Masterminds Annual* sourcebooks. He lives in Columbus, Ohio with his wife and cat.

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Ramón K. Pérez was born prematurely (dislikes overstaying his welcome) on June 4th, 1973 to immigrants of the Great White North. Ramón laid about for the first three months of his life un-named (this is why he responds quite well to "hey you!") till his parents agreed upon making him a "jr," Ramón for dad and Krzysztof for mum. Over time little Ramón grew up (somewhat) and learned many things, like what an ottoman is. Though his body has never quite caught up to the size of his head, luckily the size of his face caught up with the size of his nose, allowing him to lead a somewhat normal life.

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Jon edited the book you're holding and he enjoyed every minute of it. He's worked in every tier of the gaming industry, plays a lot of games, and reads a lot of comics. He currently lives in Bellevue, Washington and works at WizKids as the Director of Game Design and the HeroClix Game Designer. He likes to keep busy.

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