

CON SEASON

A MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS FREEDOM CITY ADVENTURE

BY D.T. BUTCHINO

When the fans of Castle Comics convene for the popular CastleCon in Freedom City, they're in store for more than the average guest, as Doc Otaku decides to crash the con! Now it's up to the heroes to stop him and his mad plan, but what exactly is the anime-inspired mastermind up to?

Con Season is an adventure for the *Mutants & Masterminds* roleplaying game. It is intended for a group of four to six power level 10 heroes, although the Gamemaster can scale the adventure to make it suitable for higher or lower level heroes by increasing or decreasing the power levels of the challenges as appropriate.

The adventure is set in Freedom City (described in the second edition of the *Freedom City* campaign sourcebook available from Green Ronin Publishing). Although Freedom City is recommended for running this adventure, it is not required. All the necessary material is included here and in the *Mutants & Masterminds* core rulebook.

Text presented in boxes such as this one is for the Gamemaster to read aloud to the players to introduce a particular scene or element of the adventure. Feel free to paraphrase or modify the introductory text as best suits the game you're running.

Players intending to play in this adventure should read no further. The rest of the text is for the *Gamemaster only!*

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Every year, fans from around the country and the world gather in Freedom City for "CastleCon," one of the most successful comic book, game, and anime conventions. This year, CastleCon has invited the player characters as guests of honor, as well as procuring an original copy of the anime, *Akataiyo*, a rare "cult" film depicting a heroic Crimson Katana.

As the heroes sign autographs and show feats of power, their limelight is dimmed by the appearance of the villainous Doc Otaku and his Angel Androids. Otaku has come to the con to steal the copy of *Akataiyo* and has brought some surprises with him just in case the heroes interfere. Once he's acquired the movie, he intends on fleeing through the con hall, causing as much chaos as he can to cover his escape.

SCENE ONE: CON-VINCING HEROES

Every year, Castle Comics holds "CastleCon", one of the largest pop-culture conventions in the world. Held in Freedom City's Liberty Dome, the con has asked you to be this year's guests of honor.

As you arrive at the convention, you notice several posters with comic-styled drawings of your team, as well as an anime video called *Akataiyo: The Crimson Sun*.

If any of the heroes achieve a result of 15 or greater on a Knowledge (pop culture) check, they know *Akataiyo* is an anime from the early '70s featuring a heroic version of the Crimson Katana. In many circles, this anime is considered valuable and a cult classic because of its rarity and controversial content.

As you walk into the Liberty Dome, you're approached by a slender man in his mid-twenties with dark hair, wearing a Captain Thunder T-shirt. He smiles at you and says, "I'm really glad you could make it. I'm Anthony Capella, the convention coordinator ... we spoke on the phone. If you'll follow me, we'll get you set up." With that, he begins to lead you into the main hall.

The conference room the heroes have been assigned is a large area with a quick-built stage that holds a long table, a projection system and some microphones. Wandering around are a few people with the word "TECH" on their back. Anthony will be happy to answer any questions the heroes may have, especially concerning any tasks they may be responsible for.

Some answers to common questions include:

"So, what should we do here?"

"You know, sign photos, answer questions, attend a seminar or two and maybe show the public some of your abilities."

"What type of people should we expect?"

"Many fans of the superhero set show up, as do comic book fans, game fans and anime fans."

"What if there's trouble?"

"We have a full-alert security team but, in the event of something they can't handle, I'm sure fans would love to see you in action!"

As you look around the room, you hear a chirp come from Anthony. He reaches for a cell-phone and says, "Anthony. Yes ... yup, they're here now. Okay. Okay, I'll take care of it ... thanks." With a snap, he closes the cell and looks in your general direction with a smile. "That was one of the event coordinators," he says, "There seems to be a problem with one of the displays in the game room and I have to tend to it. If you have any further questions or needs, please just ask anyone on-staff and they'll get in touch with me. Thanks again for doing this ... I hope you have as great a time as your fans do." He then turns and walks out towards one of the side hallways.

WHAT IF THE HEROES DON'T GO?

It's possible some or even all the heroes may not want to attend the show. In this case, there are a few ways to get them involved:

Perhaps, in their secret identities, they've been hired to cover the convention in some way. Reporters would have a good reason to be there, as would police officers, hired security or even a public figure (who may have their own panels to attend).

If anyone in the group plays a comic book, gaming, or anime fan, it's possible they're attending in their secret identity. In a similar situation, maybe one of the characters' family members wants to go and they've been chosen to chaperone, an excellent way to set up a complication during the adventure.

SCENE ONE: OPENING ACT

As the convention opens its doors to the public, fans flood the Liberty Dome within a short time. Within an hour, the seminar you're hosting has begun to fill up with a wide variety of folks. Looking around, you see people of all ages, from the kid with a Johnny Rocket action figure to a man in the late prime of his life wearing a Green Ronin T-shirt. The doors eventually shut and an Asian man in his mid-twenties comes onto the stage. He's wearing a white suit and a red tie.

"Hello CastleCon fans!" he screams over a mic. "Are you ready to meet the heroes?" The crowd's applause roars in your general direction.

Akira will go on to introduce every member of the team, offering each a chance to wave or say something quickly if they'd like. Anyone who'd like to show off for the crowd can make a Charisma or Perform check, but otherwise Akira opens the floor for questions. Possible questions (and the people asking them) include:

Gentleman in his early twenties in a homemade Atom Family costume: "How did you form together to fight injustice?"

Older gentleman wearing an outdated Freedom League T-shirt: "In your original roster, did you not have a robot as a member? I distinctly remember a robot ..."

Young girl in a "NoBoro Ninja Donkey" shirt to a random character: "You're my absolute favorite hero... do you need a sidekick?"

Woman in her late-teens/early twenties dressed like an anime Magic Girl: "Who's your toughest villain?"

Give the heroes a chance to respond to a battery of questions, giving them a sense that they've got a real fan-base in Freedom City. As the questions begin to die down, one last gentleman stands up...

As many of the fans begin to tire of all the questions, a gentleman with long, blonde hair and wearing a red suit stands towards the back of the room. "Excuse me," he says with a smile, "I have one last question. How many more minutes do you expect to live?"

With the gauntlet thrown in their direction, the blonde-haired man waits for an answer. Either once he receives it or is attacked, he rips the sleeves off his suit and stands ready to fight. What the players don't know is that both the red-suited man and Akira are examples of Doc Otaku's new FighterBot series of combat drones and the room is locked, trapping the crowd in the room with them. While the heroes are busy with the red-suited bot, Akira bides his time and waits for an opening, ripping his sleeves off and preparing for battle as well.

FighterBots: Use the Medium Robot archetype from the *Mutants & Masterminds*, page 235, but add: Attack Specialization (Melee) 2, Power Attack; Blast 8, Leaping 2, Super-Strength 2 (Groundstrike, Shockwave).

After the FighterBots are defeated, they begin to smolder and sizzle, almost as if they're going to self-destruct. Instead, they melt down to synthetic ooze, erasing any traces. As soon as this happens, the crowd goes wild, much like a movie audience at a summer blockbuster. The heroes are mobbed as rabid fans ask for autographs and photo opportunities. But, as they attempt to gain some coherency amidst the chaos...

Just as you begin to get some order from the crowd, the projection system in the room spring to life. On the screen appears a close-up of a teenage boy with almost cat-like glasses and an anime-looking hairstyle. He smiles and says, "Ah, I see you've managed to defeat poor Akira and Kevin. That's a shame, they were fun to see fight. But, anyhow, they proved to be an excellent distraction." He holds up a film reel with the word "AKATAIYO" written on a piece of tape stuck to it. "See you later, Space Cowboys," he taunts right before the projector clicks off.

Otaku is still in the building, accompanied by his Angel Androids and making a break towards the cosplay section of the con. Unless they have a movement power like Teleport, the heroes will have to open the lock on the door (Disable Device, DC 20) or smash their way out of the room. Once in the main con hall, they may make a Notice check (DC 17) to catch a fleeting glimpse of Otaku as he vanishes into another section of the con.

SCENE THREE: THE OBLIGATORY CHASE SCENE

As you pursue Doc Otaku into the anime section, you stop and notice the entire room is filled with people dressed in various costumes. While most are media characters, there are a few sporting actual hero costumes, as well as several Doc Otaku outfits! It may be a bit difficult to find Otaku among this crowd.

Doc Otaku is purposefully hiding in the crowd, using his appearance and height to his advantage. His strategy is a simple one, while the heroes search for him, he's having Aki, Ako and Aya flank them as they also use the crowd for cover. While the androids keep them busy, he's hoping to find his way out and make his escape.

If the heroes search the hall, they can make Search checks (DC 18) to notice Otaku or his androids. After a round, Aki, Ako and Aya attack the heroes. If the heroes fail a Notice check (DC 15), they are surprised by the attack. During the fight, it's possible someone may catch a glimpse of Otaku fleeing (Notice, DC 20) and attempt to pursue. If they don't notice him, after the battle, they may talk to the crowd (Gather Information, DC 12) and learn that he escaped into a Space Borders LARP in the next room.

You run into the next room and find yourself on a small sound stage. Looking around, you see several people dressed in a variety of uniforms and costumes, wearing official Space Borders nametags and in the midst of a game. A crowd of them dressed as winged gorilla-men look at you and say, "Jah'rek! How dare you break the treatise with our Coalition! This means war, Captain Sork! Bring out the war-mech!" They then turn to a large cutout of some retrofitted robot from the 60s.

One of the "humans" in the LARP runs up to you and whispers, "Guys ... you're kind of breaking the fourth wall here. This is an official sanctioned LARP tourney by Mages in the Mountains... you know... the guys who bought out MSG games a while back."

Give the players a few moments to interact with the LARPer, noting they are upsetting the balance of the game. If asked, the gamers don't know anything of Doc Otaku, though, if any of the heroes have any interesting gadgets, there are a few LARPer who might try and trade with them. As the cardboard mech is moved from its stationary spot, the heroes may notice (Notice, DC 14) Doc Otaku hiding behind it in a mini-mech of his own creation (he's using Growth at rank 6).

As the gamers move the stand-up into position, you see a glint of metal behind the cardboard placeholder. Suddenly, you hear Doc Otaku's voice boom, "*G'Vek!* (In Kazirean that means 'Die Heroes!')" He raises the arm on the mech and motions in your general direction."

Otaku isn't actually aiming for anyone other than the heroes, hoping it may provide him some cover for another escape. If escape is not an option, he'll attack the heroes and attempt to defeat them.

SCENE FOUR: ENDGAME

If the heroes defeat Otaku, read the following:

With the final hit, Doc Otaku falls to the ground, the film can rolling out from under his arm. Around you, several con members begin to gather, cheering your victory over Doc Otaku. Anthony Capella wanders over and grabs the film can, shaking your hands. "Wow ... never would've imagined we'd get a real supervillain here! Thanks for recovering *Akataiyo* for us; it's a major draw this year."

If the heroes investigate Otaku's body, they discover (Medicine, DC 5 or Search, DC 10) that this isn't the real Doc Otaku, but another sophisticated android. The police show up and, after taking any of the heroes' statements, take the evidence away.

If Doc Otaku defeats the heroes, read the following:

You fall to the ground and begin to have problems staying conscious. As your eyes drift between blackness and the light, you see Otaku turn to the wall and blasts a hole in it. "Heroes?" he says, mockingly, "More like Dweebles. Later chumps... I'll think of you when I'm watching *Akataiyo* on my big plasma TV."

You awaken to find several con goers looking at you in a bit of shock. As you shake off the effect of the beating you took, Anthony Capella approaches you and says, "Are you okay? Looks like Doc Otaku made off with *Akataiyo*... um, maybe you'll catch him next time?"

With that said, the medics check the players over, helping them with any injuries and eventually sending them out with a clean bill of health. Will the heroes avenge their defeat and recover the rare film? Only you can decide that..

DOC OTAKU

Doc Otaku is described on page 194 of *Freedom City*. He's a brilliant young inventor, but uses his talents solely to show off and to feed his obsessive geek habits, such as stealing a real *anime* film and beating down any heroes who try to get in his way...

DOC OTAKU

Power Level: 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
-1	+3	+0	+12	+3	+0
8	16	10	34	16	10
TOUGHNESS		FORTITUDE		REFLEX	
+10/+0*		+3		+6	

*Without armor

Skills: Computers 8 (+20), Craft (electronic) 10 (+22), Craft (mechanical) 10 (+22), Disable Device 12 (+20), Drive 6 (+9), Knowledge (physical sciences) 8 (+20), Knowledge (popular culture) 6 (+18), Knowledge (technology) 12 (+24), Language 5 (English, French, Latin, Spanish, Russian), Notice 4 (+7), Pilot 7 (+10), Sense Motive 4 (+7)

Feats: Defensive Attack, Eidetic Memory, Equipment, Inventor, Sidekick 29 (Progression 2, the Angel Androids)

Powers: **Device 23** (MechOtaku battlesuit, hard to lose)

MechOtaku Battlesuit: **Blast 10**, **Communication 7** (radio), **Flight 5** (250 MPH), **Growth 16**, **Immunity 9** (life support), **Protection 10** (Impervious), **Super-Senses 1** (low-light vision)

Combat: Attack +8, Damage -1 (unarmed), +10 (blast), +7 (with Growth), Defense +10, Initiative +3

Abilities 34 + Skills 23 (92 ranks) + Feats 35 + Powers 92 + Combat 36 + Saves 9 = Total 229

THE ANGEL ANDROIDS (AKI, AKO & AYA)

Aki, Ako, and Aya are Doc Otaku's most enduring and most well known creations. They are sophisticated androids that look like teenage girls dressed in Japanese school uniforms. Aki looks Japanese, Ako is a redhead with freckles, and Aya is a blond with big blue eyes.

Other than their cosmetic differences in appearance, all three Angel Androids are identical in size and abilities. They are all superhumanly strong and fast, resistant to most forms of harm, and immune to biological needs like air, food, or rest. All three have giggly, girlish personalities and they all adore Takashi (as they are programmed to do).

The Angel Androids are intelligent and capable of independent thought, although they would never do anything that would harm their beloved Takashi or make him upset. They're relentlessly cheerful and pleasant, even while they're pounding opponents into the pavement, and they always leave a scene with a smile, a wave, and a happy, "Have a nice day! Buh-bye!"

Doc Otaku maintains plans for the Angel Androids and backs-up their memory files on a regular basis, so he can easily re-create any or all of them if they are destroyed. They are his favorite agents, and he often uses them to help carry out his plans. Otherwise the Angels act as his bodyguards and see to his every need.

THE ANGEL ANDROIDS

Power Level: 10

Abilities: Str 30, Dex 34, Con —, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 14

Skills: Acrobatics 4 (+16), Notice 4 (+5), Sense Motive 8 (+9)

Feats: Attractive, Set-up, Teamwork

Powers: Immunity 40 (Fortitude, mental effects), Protection 8

Combat: Attack +10, Damage +10 (unarmed), Defense +12, Initiative +12

Saving Throws: Toughness +8, Fortitude —, Reflex +12, Will +6

Abilities 41 + Skills 4 (16 ranks) + Feats 3 + Powers 38 + Combat 44 + Saves 5 = Total 145

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