

THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM CITY

A MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS FREEDOM CITY ADVENTURE

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The Crime League is ready to make their move for control of Freedom City, and the Freedom League is powerless to stop them! But all is not as it seems and several prominent members of the Crime League are conspicuous in their absence...

INTRODUCTION

The Fight for Freedom City is a convention-style adventure for the *Mutants & Masterminds* Superhero RPG, originally written for the Origins 2007 event in Columbus, Ohio. The players take on the roles of the world's greatest heroes, the Freedom League, in order to stop their arch-nemeses from unleashing their deadliest plot ever.

The adventure is set in Freedom City (described in the *Freedom City* sourcebook available from Green Ronin Publishing) and presumes that the players are the members of the Freedom League. Statistics for the player characters and their opponents are contained therein. If you do not have access to that book, you will need to create game stats for most of the encounters in this adventure.

The Fight for Freedom City uses Dr. Metropolis as a plot device rather than a player character. His inclusion as a player character will not severely disrupt the adventure, but it will eliminate one of the encounters.

A Change In the Roster

"I knew the Freedom League. The Freedom Leaguers were foes of mine. And you are no Freedom League!"

– Dr. Sebastian Stratos

If you want to run this adventure for characters other than the Freedom League but still set in the Freedom City universe, no problem. The simplest solution as to why the Freedom League is out of commission and the characters are called upon to save the day is the League is busy trying to escape from the deathtrap of **Scene 1**. Simply start the action with **Scene 2** *in media res* and let the good times roll!

As a convention module, the adventure is designed to run its course in about four hours. If you are running the adventure as part of an ongoing series, some of the encounters might seem rushed. Tips on expanding several of the encounters are included in the relevant scenes to flesh out your gaming experience when play time is not an issue.

Appendix 1 is a condensed tactical summary of the adventure, designed to make using the module at a convention easier, when preparation time may be short. **Appendix 2** contains the statistics of the optional villains added to the **Scene 2 Wharton State Forest** encounter; all other character statistics are found in the *Freedom City* sourcebook or the *Mutants & Masterminds* rulebook at the specified pages.

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

Dr. Stratos has become increasingly frustrated at the ongoing stalemate in the war between the Crime League and the Freedom League. An obvious solution would be to add more powerful members to the criminals' ranks, but the other villains of Freedom City are almost as much of a nuisance as the heroes. In his search for a way to tip the scales toward injustice, he has spent some time researching the history of both organizations. A "superior" solution has presented itself.

An old foe of Centurion's calling himself Superior had been a constant thorn in the League's side for almost twenty years. Even after the League's disbandment in 1981, the two foes battled regularly until Superior seemingly disappeared. The photographs in the records implied Superior was aging very slowly, if at all. In fact, he bore a remarkable resemblance to the World War II-era Übermensch. Stratos' research eventually revealed the two were one and the same. What had become of this immortal powerhouse?

After several weeks of fruitless research, Stratos turned to fellow Crime Leaguer Medea for some mystical insight. The ancient sorceress performed a seeing ritual, and revealed Superior's defeat by Centurion and subsequent banishment to the Zero Zone.

Thrilled to learn Superior still lived, Stratos teamed with his fellow practitioner of evil Dr. Simian to plot the release and recruitment of the Aryan superman. After several months of planning and preparation, Operation: Jailbreak was ready for implementation.

Orion infiltrated Freedom Hall in the guise of a civilian employee. With the patience of a hunter, he observed the movements and methods of his intended prey for weeks. The Freedom League spent much of its "on duty" time aboard the orbiting Lighthouse, except for Dr. Metropolis. Although the artificial environment was not harmful to the city elemental, he did find the space station a bit claustrophobic. After alerting his fellow Crime Leaguers to an impending team meeting, he uploaded a meticulously crafted virus into the computer network and prepared for action.

Dr. Metropolis' attempt to transport up to the Lighthouse set the Crime League's plans in motion. The teleport signal bounced Metropolis to a containment field in the heart of Wharton State Forest to the west of Freedom City. Under the watchful eyes of the Maestro, the city elemental is rendered helpless in the woodland setting. The computer virus uploads to the Lighthouse, causing problems for the members of the League already aboard, while the intruder control systems of Freedom Hall gas the current residents into unconsciousness. Once in control of Freedom Hall, the Crime League sets the computers to broadcast bogus alerts to keep the FCPD and the Star Squad busy. Devil Ray, Medea and Hiroshima Shadow lead surprise attacks on the other heroes of Freedom City, while Dr. Stratos, Dr. Simian and Blackstar use the Freedom League's teleportal system to gain access to the Centurion's arctic Sanctum.

In **Scene 1**, the Freedom League must regain control of their orbital headquarters. Escape is not enough; the plummeting Lighthouse might slam into a populated area, killing thousands.

Scene 2 brings the heroes to Freedom City. The encounters here can be run in any order as they struggle to defeat the rampaging Crime League and their campaign of terror.

Scene 3 brings the adventure to a close as the heroes confront the intruders at Centurion's Sanctum to halt their interdimensional prison break.

Any Freedom Leaguers not in use by the players should be elsewhere on a mission or captured by the Crime League.

SCENE ONE: FROM WHAT LOFTY HEIGHTS

The mightiest heroes of Earth, the Freedom League, are gathered in the meeting room aboard their orbital headquarters known as the Lighthouse. They await the arrival of Dr. Metropolis, who is unusually late.

Play this opening scene by ear; your players may want to use this time to get into character. If uncomfortable silence ensues, jump right into the action. Any hero sitting at the monitor console instead of the meeting table may notice some unusual activity right before things go south. A notice check (DC 15) reveals an upload from Freedom Hall occur just before disaster strikes.

The station begins to tremble without warning, and the lights flicker ominously. The metallic clang of reinforced doors locking echoes through the Lighthouse. Suddenly, the monitor screen flares to life and the smug visage of Dr. Stratos appears.

"By now, even an assembly of dolts such as yourselves must realize something is wrong. But I thought perhaps I should explain, so in your last moments you might truly appreciate my genius. Not only has your precious Lighthouse gone into lockdown mode, but the security parameters have been reset so the system doesn't recognize you. And for good measure, the reaction control thrusters have nudged your little clubhouse into a decaying orbit; with any luck, you will crash into a heavily populated area, killing hundreds if not thousands of innocent people and staining your legacy forever. Farewell, Freedom League!"

The screen fades to black as the message ends.

The message is a recording received in the same data packet as the virus, so any attempts to discern the current whereabouts of the Crime League via the message will fail. Toss these poor heroes a hero point and have them leap into action!

Freedom, We Have a Problem...

Fight for Freedom City presumes the presence of the entire Freedom League; if not true, this may present a problem in Scene 1, as a high degree of technical expertise is needed to fully resolve the crisis. If Daedalus or Raven are not in play, none of the other Leaguers are likely to be able to reset the security system in time. Here are several "thinking outside the box" solutions (ah, sweet irony).

Situation 1: The heroes have gotten as far as the computer core and now are unable to reset the main computer. If the hero roster is "all bricks, no brains" they might simply disable the main computer with a Computers check (DC 20) or a "Fist of Destruction" attack to the main console. This will not save the Lighthouse, but it will prevent any further entanglements for the heroes. Once disabled, the security systems will not prevent the airlocks from cycling or the escape pods from launching. See

Situation 2 for the falling satellite solution.

A more elegant approach was devised in playtest when the player running Pseudo used his **Communications** (mental) power to contact Daedalus down on Earth in combination with **Mind Reading** and a hero point to substitute Daedalus' ranks for his in Computers.

Situation 2: The heroes decide that "fixing" the Lighthouse is not a priority, whether they have the necessary team members or not. They just want to save the orbital headquarters from a fiery death and then get down to the surface to crack some villain skulls. At Origins 2007, the player running Siren wanted to use **Weather Control** to alter the curvature of the atmosphere and bounce the Lighthouse to a higher orbit. Although this falls outside the parameters of said power, it followed the golden rule of being a cool idea, so with a hero point and a DC 25 power check Siren could nudge the Lighthouse out of danger. Conversely, Captain Thunder, Lady Liberty (both in space suits), Daedalus, Star Knight, and another hero piloting the *Pegasus* might conceivably drag the Lighthouse into a higher orbit to be dealt with later; it takes an effective combined Strength of 110 to accomplish this. Even under security lockdown, the League members' emergency evacuation codes allow them to cycle the airlocks (from the inside only); a storage unit in the airlock contains a dozen emergency space suits.

Although any attempts to interface with the computers in the monitoring room while the station is in lockdown mode prove useless, a glance and Computers check (DC 10) reveals the League has about five minutes before the Lighthouse's earthward plunge becomes irrevocable. They need to gain access to the computer core and manually reset the rampaging security systems. There is a *Pegasus* space plane docked on the other end of the station, but the heroes must prevent the Lighthouse from falling to Earth; for the same reason, even if they could get the teleportal operational again, they cannot simply abandon ship.

Assuming the heroes are in fact the Freedom League, they know what the defenses and general layout of the Lighthouse are; no Knowledge skill checks are required for this information.

The first obstacle the heroes must overcome is getting out of the conference room. The air ducts are too small to admit medium size characters. While **Insubstantial 2-4** allows the hero to slip through the walls, that won't help their companions at all. Bypassing the electronic door locks requires a Disable Device check (DC 35) and takes 5 rounds per attempt. The most obvious way out for a pack of bruisers like the Freedom League is to simply knock down the titanium doors (Toughness 15). The walls are thicker and therefore tougher to knock down, not to mention this is the heroes' own headquarters. Minimizing structural damage to a facility in a vacuum is generally a good idea.

Lighthouse Doors

Toughness 15; Disable Device, DC 35, 5 rounds to override the lock

The next challenge the heroes face in their quest to regain control of the Lighthouse is the intruder control devices located at major junction points, such as airlocks and turbolifts. When beings unrecognized by the security system (which at this point is anyone on board) approach a guarded area, four weapons (two of each type) deploy from the ceiling and attempt to detain the offending party. The automated weapons continue to attack until they are destroyed, the station's internal sensors reveal all threats in that region have been neutralized, or the computer system is reset or disabled.

Intruder Control Systems

Snare Cannon: Attack +10, Defense +2, Toughness +5, **Snare 10**

Stunner: Attack +10, Defense +2, Toughness +5, **Stun 10** (ranged)

The path of least resistance for the heroes would be to peel open the turbolift doors on the conference room level and descend to the computer core in the heart of the station. That limits their fight with the standard automated defenses to two. Please note that while the station is in lockdown, the turbolifts are inoperative, so non-fliers have to descend carefully (Climb check, DC 15). Should the heroes take the scenic route, remind them the clock is ticking.

The turbolift on the level of the computer core opens onto a small antechamber just outside the core. After defeating the standardized defenses, the heroes must batter down the reinforced titanium doors (Toughness 20), guarding the central computer. Once inside, metallic grapples attempt to tie up any would-be hackers. The standard defenses are not installed in the core because errant blasts would be bad for the delicate instrumentation.

Computer Core Defenses

Grappler Arms: Attack +15, Defense +8, Grapple +20, Toughness +12

Once the grapples have been dealt with, the heroes must override the main computer. Although you shouldn't worry too much about tracking the time during the mad dash for the core, at this point the heroes should have about a minute (10 rounds) left to correct the flight path of the Lighthouse. It takes 3 rounds and a Computers check (DC 25) to restore control to the heroes. Award the players a hero point for saving the station and the poor citizens below from a grisly fate.

After the immediate crisis has been averted, the heroes can find out what else is going wrong in the world today. A quick check of the satellite feed reveals a Freedom City in utter chaos. A Notice check (DC 20) picks out that many of the dispatching calls are contradictory. A Computers check (DC 25) reveals most of the signals are being broadcast from Freedom Hall! Freedom City law enforcement is running itself ragged trying to respond to phantom threats. There are several reports of members of the Crime League attacking random points in the city. There is no response from the Atom Family, Next-Gen, or Dr. Metropolis. Any other heroes in Freedom City are as confounded as the police (Foreshadow is in Eastern Europe on a case at the time and out of contact with the League).

Dr. Metropolis cannot be contacted by any technological means; his solid sound prison prevents any commlink signals from getting through. Any attempts to contact him via telepathy reveal he is in pain and growing weaker by the moment. He is unable to communicate clearly his location and situation; at most he can indicate he is in a forest. The heroes can use the Lighthouse sensors to search the area; a Computers check (DC 15) detects an unusual energy signature in Wharton State Forest to the west of Freedom City.

At this point, the heroes should be saddling up and heading off to confront the problems in Freedom City.

SCENE 2: CRY HAVOC!

The encounters with the Crime League in and around Freedom City are designed to keep the Freedom League and any other heroes occupied while the Zero Zone prison break is carried out. The order in which these encounters occur depends greatly on how the League returns to Earth. Using the teleportal obviously brings them to Freedom Hall, but if they should use the space plane, their angle of approach may dictate the order of action. As they approach by air, the things that may grab the heroes' attention with a Notice check (DC 15) are the smoking hole in the Goodman building and the Sentry Statue in Riverside Park moving toward the water.

Maestro, Orion, and Wildcard maintain their positions and do what they can to hinder any heroes trying to sort out the mess. Hiroshima Shadow, Medea, and Devil Ray may answer calls for back-up. All the villains are ready for action; force fields in place, minions summoned, etc; surprise is not likely to be on the heroes' side.

Once the heroes uncover what is truly going on, they are likely to ignore further encounters in Freedom City to stop the ultimate plot by the Crime League. Any rescued heroes can pick up the slack in Freedom City, or the League could deal with them after rounding up the intruders at Centurion's Sanctum. A restored Freedom Hall staff could uncover the plot, or a recovered Cynthia or ALEX might point the heroes in the right direction if they don't figure it out for themselves. Any captured villains attempt to keep the heroes distracted and local, unless they complete all of the other encounters, or you are running out of playing time.

Keeping the Heroes On-Track

Obviously, you don't want the heroes to figure out what the Crime League's leaders are up to while the rank and file is busy defiling. But at some point, if they don't investigate the situation at Freedom Hall, they're going to need a push in the right direction to get to the big finale in **Scene 3**.

If the heroes have been to Freedom Hall and didn't investigate the computer tampering but rescued the staff and/or reactivated Cynthia, someone back at headquarters may, in the process of restoring order, discover the teleportal system has been used while the villains had free run of the building. Upon investigating further, they uncover the partially deleted activity log and Stratos' scheme. Realizing the danger, they are quick to give the heroes a call.

If the heroes have successfully driven off Hiroshima Shadow, once ALEX reboots in the Goodman Building, he might interface with the Freedom Hall systems and discover the activities of Stratos and company.

Should all else fail, despite being on a mission on the other side of the world, Foreshadow may have a premonition of doom and alert the League to the arctic infiltrators. After all, he's not just mysterious, he's *terribly* mysterious!

ENCOUNTER: FREEDOM HALL

Whether they fly in or beam in, the heroes find a seemingly vacant headquarters.

Freedom Hall is dark and still as a tomb. Upon inspection, all systems seem to be operating normally, but most of the equipment is powered down and the lights are off. There is no sign of the support staff one would expect to find in the middle of the day, much less during a crisis, and the robotic receptionist "Cynthia" appears to be disabled.

The intruder control gas has rendered the support staff unconscious, and the Crime League has hidden them in the "Wreck Room" simulator on sub-level two. The ventilation system has cleared the gas from the building, but a Notice check (DC 20) might reveal a lingering scent that will tip off the League. While the gas took care of the flesh and blood staff, a properly masked Orion dealt with

the robotic receptionist via a portable EMP device. It takes a Craft (mechanical) or (electrical) check, DC 25, to get Cynthia operational again.

The Crime League accessed the main computer to discover the teleportal access codes to Centurion's Sanctum (including the command codes for the Centurions), and then tried to cover their tracks. The deletion was only partially successful, and the data can be recovered with a Computers check DC 35 and five minutes. The villains also searched for any information on the Zero Room, but the League has not committed any information regarding it to the databanks; however, their search parameters are in the recovered data. If you are not ready for the heroes to race off to the arctic, don't give them those five minutes to wait for the data recovery; have a call come in relating the devastating attacks the Crime League is currently making elsewhere in Freedom City.

In addition to information, the villains also reprogrammed the internal sensors to not see them; currently, Wildcard and Orion stalk the darkened headquarters invisible to the security monitors. This can be discovered and corrected by two separate Computer checks, DC 30.

Orion carries a PDA linked to the security system, allowing him to view the monitor relays and track the heroes. If any hero wanders off alone, they find themselves ambushed in short order. Orion attacks from cover initially and then takes down any opponents as quickly and efficiently as he can. Wildcard uses his **Luck Control** to hinder any counterattacks or escape attempts. The two attempt to flee if outnumbered in an encounter. If captured, the villains attempt to throw the heroes off-track by pointing out Dr. Metropolis is not among them. If pressed, they indicate he's trapped somewhere in the Wharton State Forest, "If he's still alive, that is."

If the heroes think to check the teleportal operations log, they find Dr. Metropolis' attempt to beam to the Lighthouse was diverted to an alternate receiver in the heart of Wharton State Forest. Should the heroes attempt to use the teleportal to follow Dr. Metropolis, they find the alternate receiver plate is no longer activated (if they attempt a remote override, see **Wharton State Forest**, following). Alternately, a Computers check (DC 15) allows them to use satellite sweeps to uncover the coordinates of an unusual energy signature in the heart of the woodlands. And when all else fails, a high speed recon by Johnny Rocket might discover Metropolis' plight in time to save the day.

WHARTON STATE FOREST

Deep in the heart of the Wharton State Forest, a diabolical machine hums ominously. The rectangular metal construct is featureless save for the teleport disc on its dorsal surface and the thick cables connecting it to a control board in the shape of a conductor's rostrum. Floating above it, the prone form of Dr. Metropolis lies trapped in an invisible barrier of sound, a prisoner of the maniacal Maestro!

Maestro has been monitoring the situation back at Freedom Hall via the control board of the containment unit, so he is likely aware of any inbound heroes. Should the heroes try to override the transceiver plate and beam directly to his location, Maestro stands clear and avoids the fallout of said attempt (if any).

Should the heroes back in Freedom Hall succeed at a Computers check (DC 30) and remotely activate the teleportal, they find they can send but not receive (the containment field blocks the beam). If they beam out to the receiver plate in the forest, the feedback destroys the power unit; anyone coming through the teleportal is subject to +15 damage as the beam terminates prematurely. The equipment and the containment field are destroyed, but any teleporting heroes are likely to be mildly injured, not to mention stunned and flat-footed.

Maestro kicks off his attacks with a Burst Area Mind Control. Unless the Mind Control attempt is largely successful, or the heroes have been mauled by the teleportal, Maestro is not likely to last long against the combined might of the Freedom League. Given the opportunity, he calls on the other Crime Leaguers for back-up, but only Medea can get there in time to help via her magical teleport; whether she answers the summons, and whether she brings additional back-up is up to you, but such an act would jeopardize the Crime League's Freedom City "shell game."

As a convention adventure, this encounter is intentionally short. If you plan to run this as part of an ongoing series, you might consider giving Maestro some aid from henchmen.

- **Maestro**, *Freedom City*, page 150

The Symphony of Destruction

Strings, team leader; she wields a pair of telescoping wrist cables for ranged melee combat

Brass, team tank with a metallic form and a penchant for punching make him popular, at least with his teammates

Percussion, his technical skills don't come into play in the forest, but sonic assault is useful anywhere

Woodwind, this nature lover blows away anybody who harms her tree friends

Animated Trees (10), courtesy of Woodwind, *M&M*, page 233.

See **Appendix 2** for game stats of the Symphony.

Once Maestro is defeated (and assuming the heroes haven't blown it up on arrival), a Disable Device check (DC 20) or a direct attack on the control board (Toughness 5) frees the ailing Dr. Metropolis from his sonic confinement. His health will begin to return once he is restored to the city limits. Metropolis needs some time to recover, but he will be there should the heroes need any back-up in subsequent encounters.

THE GOODMAN BUILDING

As you approach the Goodman Building, home of the Atom Family, a column of smoke billows out of a gaping hole in the upper reaches of the tower. A brilliant glowing form pierces the haze as Hiroshima Shadow drifts slowly skyward.

Hiroshima Shadow has just finished his sneak attack on the Atom Family; all member of the team, including the sentient computer ALEX are currently disabled and unconscious. He is about to spread further chaos in Freedom City when he spies the approaching heroes. Hiroshima Shadow is a tough combatant, even for the Freedom League. If the battle begins to go poorly for the heroes, a revived Atom Family or a rebooted ALEX may be able to lend a hand. If the heroes inflict three bruised or injured conditions or greater damage, Hiroshima Shadow departs the scene. If the heroes drive off or defeat Hiroshima Shadow without outside help, show 'em some love with a hero point.

- **Hiroshima Shadow**, *Freedom City*, page 149

RIVERSIDE PARK

Riverside Park is a vision from hell. Innocent bystanders and beleaguered policemen flee from five cavorting demons. Gazebos and park benches are aflame. The massive memorial statue of Centurion, called the Sentry, is striding into the river. The glistening black form of Devil Ray is blasting boaters as they race to clear the path of the lumbering behemoth. In the heart of the storm, eyes agleam with malice, stands the sorceress Medea; by her side is a small wire pen with five baby goats trapped inside.

Most of the chaos at Riverside Park is courtesy of Medea. The five demons causing havoc have been summoned by her; use the warrior demon stats on page 233 of *Mutants & Masterminds*. Medea is also responsible for animating the Sentry Statue and sending it off to smash the Centery Bridge. The "kids" in the wire pen are the transformed members of Next Gen, who attempted to stop Medea and Devil Ray before the League arrived on scene. Given the amount of opposition, the stakes, and the fact that the Sentry Statue is a little outside Medea's Animate Object point total, you might consider awarding the players an extra hero point going into the fight.

Devil Ray feels a little "out of his league" teamed up with Medea, but he moves quickly to defend her when the heroes arrive. The summoned demons and animated statue are all Sustained effects, and if the heroes can achieve a Stun result or better, Medea has to start all over. The Transform affecting the Next Gen is Sustained (lasting), but you shouldn't worry about making new saves during the combat, unless the players need some reinforcements.

If the players are successful at driving off the villains and rescuing the Next-Gen, award them a hero point. If they manage to capture the Crime Leaguers, too, consider awarding an additional hero point.

- **Devil Ray**, *Freedom City*, page 146
- **Medea**, *Freedom City*, page 151
- **Warrior Demons**, *M&M*, page 233
- **Animated Sentry Statue**, *Freedom City*, page 52

SCENE 3: ONE MORE INTO THE BREACH

By some means, the heroes learn of the true plot behind the Crime League's attack on Freedom City. Knowledge of Stratos' ultimate goal should have them scrambling to the teleportal chamber of Freedom Hall or the *Pegasus* to get to the Sanctum.

The momentary haze of the teleportal fades to reveal the fantastic interior of Centurion's Sanctum. Some elder members of the League actually knew him, while the younger heroes only know the legend. But all are deeply offended the Crime League has violated the halls of this sanctuary.

You move quickly through the Sanctum, determined to reach the Zero Room before the Crime League can activate it. A monument to Terra Roma dominates the chamber, as corridors leading to the alien menagerie, trophy room, captured arsenal and monitor room branch outward from the Great Hall. Suddenly, striding boldly past the capsule that brought him to Earth is Centurion himself!

Any hero making a Notice check (DC 15) detects a slight mechanical twitch to “Centurion’s” movements and realizes it is one of the Centurion robotic caretakers. What they may not realize is the Crime League has pulled their command protocols from the Freedom Hall computers! The robot has orders to attack the Freedom League on sight.

Unless the heroes manage to subdue the robot without making a sound, the noise of the battle brings the remaining members of the Crime League into the fray in two rounds. The villains will attempt to defeat the heroes quickly and return to the task of deciphering the controls to the Zero Room (which the League was wise enough not to maintain records of in their system).

If you want some added tension in this scene, have Dr. Simian start the Zero Room on an automatic countdown to open before intervening in the fight, naturally gloating to the heroes how they can now do nothing to stop it. If the heroes don’t overcome the Crime League in a set amount of time (say 10-15 rounds), the Zero Room opens and Superior escapes, forcing them to deal with him as well (see **Pandora’s Box**, following, for more).

- **Centurion**, *Freedom City*, page 91
- **Blackstar**, *Freedom City*, page 145
- **Dr. Stratos**, *Freedom City*, page 148
- **Dr. Simian**, *Freedom City*, page 147

EPILOGUE: OUR REVELS NOW ARE ENDED

And so we stand, heroes triumphant, villains vanquished, and plots foiled, great feeling to end a one-shot adventure on. But what if this is *not* the end and further adventures await? What if the villains had managed to open the Zero Room before the heroes arrived? Here are a few quick tips for expanding the story beyond the adventure as presented.

PANDORA’S BOX

This adventure can serve as a means to unleash Superior on your series; but why stop there? The Zero Zone is a prison for countless terrors to set loose upon humanity. The League has only used the Zero Room once, to banish the Alpha-Centurion. No doubt he’d like to express his “appreciation.” (See the *Freedom’s Most Wanted* sourcebook for more information on Alpha-Centurion, or just use the Centurion’s stats from *Freedom City*, removing all of the Knowledge skills.) An open door to the Zero Zone could bring any number of new opponents into your series.

The ensuing fight could quickly overwhelm the heroes, assuming the villains manage to work together. Perhaps a grand melee occurs and the newly unleashed villains run free into an unsuspecting world. Or perhaps the villains cooperate, at least long enough to deal with the outgunned heroes. Banishment to the Zero Zone or Tronik are two immediate options for follow-up adventures should the villains triumph. Awakening in the ruins of the Sanctum may be enough to harden the heroes resolve to set things right. The possibilities are endless, so get up and get back in the fight!

APPENDIX 1: TACTICAL SUMMARY

In most circumstances, the villains are expecting trouble and their defensive powers (**Force Field** for instance) are already active when the heroes arrive.

SCENE 1

The heroes have 5 minutes to prevent the Lighthouse from slamming into a major city.

Lighthouse Doors

Toughness +15

Disable Device DC 35, 5 rounds to override the lock

Intruder Control Defenses

Stun Cannons: Attack +10, Defense +2, Toughness +5, **Stun** (ranged) **10**

Snare Cannons: Attack +10, Defense +2, Toughness +5, **Snare 10**

Grappler Arms (computer core only): Attack +15, Defense +8, Grapple +20, Toughness +12

SCENE 2

Heroes battle members of the Crime League in Freedom City. The order of encounters is based on their actions. Some encounters may be avoided or occur "off camera."

Freedom Hall

Orion

Wildcard

Tactics: Orion and Wildcard will evade groups of heroes, but attempt to ambush one or two should they wander alone in the Hall. Orion attempts sneak attack and then take down opponents as quickly as possible. Wildcard uses his Luck Control to foil any heroes' attempted counterattacks or escapes.

Wharton State Forest

Maestro

Tactics: Maestro leads off with a **Mind Control 11** (Burst Area) attack. If successful at co-opting at least three heroes, he makes subsequent attacks using **Blast 11** or **Stun 7**; if surrounded by enemies he opts for **Blast 7** (Burst Area) attacks. Should he take a few bruises, he attempts to escape under cover of **Illusion 11** (auditory). Note all of Maestro's powers are contained in his sonic baton; if disarmed, he is up the creek without a paddle.

Optional Minions (not recommended for convention play if session is not at least five hours in length)

Symphony of Destruction – Strings, Brass, Percussion and Woodwind

Tactics: Strings tries to keep any opponents at a distance via her wrist cable gauntlets. If double-teamed, she may tie one hero up using **Snare 8** and continue to attack; if seriously outnumbered or her teammates are being dropped, she may use her Snared hero as a hostage to escape.

Brass wades into melee like any good brick; his ego sends him after the toughest hero present.

Percussion's **Sonic Control 10** allows him make a radius Dazzle attack, but he uses a combination of his Alternate Powers to **Blast**, **Nauseate** and **Stun** heroes if his teammates are in close proximity.

Woodwind animates ten trees simultaneously with **Animate Object** and orders them to attack; her subsequent attacks are blasting heroes via **Air Control 9** from the relative safety of the skies.

The Goodman Building

Hiroshima Shadow

Tactics: **Insubstantial 3** renders Hiroshima Shadow immune to physical damage and **Impervious Toughness 8** means it takes a high damage energy attack to affect him. Shadow's **Radiation Control 11** provides a devastating ranged Blast attack. Any heroes who might present a threat at range might be targeted by **Drain Constitution 7** (Ranged). Keep in mind Hiroshima Shadow's **Strike 10** is an aura effect, so anyone he hits or who hit him in melee is subject to the Strike damage. Upon taking 3 bruised or injured conditions, or one greater damage condition Shadow will fly away.

Riverside Park

Devil Ray
Medea
Demon minions (5)
Sentry Statue

Tactics: Devil Ray stays airborne and attempts to provide cover for Medea, using his **Blast 9** (electrical). If none of the heroes attack Medea, he targets any random hero on the scene, starting with fliers. Devil Ray is capable in melee combat, but avoids it during this encounter if he can. If Medea is taken out, Devil Ray attempts an underwater escape via the river.

Medea has animated the Centurion statue and summoned her demon minions before the heroes arrived; scoring a Stun or greater damage result against her may temporarily negate those combat advantages. Medea starts off combat by attempting to **Mind Control 7** the most powerful hero on scene (but with the same Achilles heel as her other minions). Aside from her many minions, Medea relies on her **Mental Blast 5** to deal with any foes. Medea can avoid capture by teleporting away; if seriously injured, she departs the scene, leaving Devil Ray to fend for himself.

Both the Sentry Statue and the demon minions attack in melee as Medea directs.

SCENE 3

Heroes deal with the rest of the Crime League in the Centurion's arctic Sanctum.

Centurion's Sanctum

Centurion robot (Crime League has acquired command protocols)

Tactics: Centurion smash puny heroes! Although not expected to stand against the combined might of the Freedom League, unless the heroes can subdue the robot in silence, the noise brings the remaining members of the Crime League in two rounds.

Blackstar
Dr. Simian
Dr. Stratos

Tactics: Blackstar is a straightforward combatant, with a **Blast 12** and Toughness +14. When you can dish out and take damage the way he can, why bother with finesse? If the fight begins to go poorly, he stalls the heroes with a **Create Object 12** barrier so the Crime League can make a hasty retreat.

Dr. Simian is a tough nut to crack as long as he can keep his **Force Field** up on his hover chair. His **Blast 12** can give a powerful hero pause, or the split attack feature allows him to deal with two heroes at a time at lower damage.

Dr. Stratos has a potent **Blast 13** to level at the heroes, and if given the chance will soften up the opposition with **Fatigue 6** (Area Burst and Ranged). He's tough to hit at a distance with his **Deflect 12** (all ranged attacks). Dr. Stratos can also provide cover for escape should the tide of battle turn against the villains with **Weather Control** and **Obscure**, both powers at rank 13.

APPENDIX 2: THE SYMPHONY OF DESTRUCTION

The Maestro has assembled an orchestra-themed group of henchmen to aid him in his musical mayhem. It should be noted that none of the members of the Symphony have a lick of musical talent among them; they are only instruments, after all.

BRASS

Eliot Michaels discovered he had the ability to become a man of metal shortly after puberty. His alternate form enhanced his strength in addition to protecting him from harm. He quickly took to bullying others and was expelled from school at age 16. He drifted from job to job over the next several years, frequently fired over altercations with his co-workers. After a man that Eliot had hospitalized for six weeks jumped him when he was not powered up, he tended to stay in his metallic form all the time. Being part of the Symphony is the first real sense of purpose Eliot has experienced. A fan of action movies, he has always fancied himself a wheelman; in addition to the team tank, Brass also provides service as a driver and pilot. His armored form is a heavily muscled brass-colored metal. Only Maestro has seen him unarmored; his identity is unknown to his fellow Symphony members.

Brass

Power Level 8

Str 24 Dex 12 Con 14 Int 12 Wis 10 Cha 10

Skills: Climb 3 (+8), Drive 3 (+4), Intimidate 7 (+8), Pilot 3 (+4)

Feats: Diehard, Endurance, Fearsome Presence 5, Instant Up, Takedown Attack

Powers: **Solid Form (metal) 4 (Density 2, Immunity [critical hits, suffocation], Impervious Protection 5), Strike 3 (Power Feat: Mighty)**

Combat: Attack +5, Grapple +10, Damage +10 (unarmed), Defense +4, Knockback -7, Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +8 (6 Imp.), Fortitude +6, Reflex +4, Will +3

Abilities 20 + Skills 4 (16 ranks) + Feats 9 + Powers 24 + Combat 18 + Saves 10 = Total 85

PERCUSSION

Ken Gardner grew up in the Fens; he dreamed of one day becoming a drummer in a rock band. Eventually, he settled for running the soundboard at the Dutchman, a waterfront bar in the old neighborhood that occasionally hosted live local bands. One night while stepping out for a cigarette between sets, Ken stumbled across a drug deal in the back alley. As the dealer pulled a gun, a panicked Ken unleashed a sound burst that stunned his would-be attacker and fled. After spending a few weeks testing his newfound powers, Ken decided to become a vigilante hero. He proved to have little talent for crime-fighting; in fact, all he accomplished was collateral damage and a few perps whose ears would ring for days. After a few luckless months, Melissa Blackwell dropped by the Dutchman and offered Ken a job with a little "super group" she was putting together. They'd known each other since junior high, so when she referred to his alter ego as the "fat ninja in headphones," he just shrugged it off; just to bug her he refuses to make improvements to his low budget costume. While he still occasionally works weekends at the Dutchman, Ken Gardner's financial situation has greatly improved since joining the Symphony.

Percussion

Power Level 7

Str 14 Dex 14 Con 16 Int 12 Wis 12 Cha 12

Skills: Computers 3 (+4), Disable Device 5 (+6), Knowledge: Technology 5 (+6), Knowledge: Physical Sciences 3 (+4)

Feats: Eidetic Memory, Improvised Tools, Inventor

Powers: **Sonic Control 10 (Alternate Powers: Blast 10, Nauseate 10 [vertigo], Stun 10)**

Combat: Attack +4, Grapple +6, Damage +2 (unarmed), +10 (blast), Defense +4, Knockback -1, Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +3, Fortitude +7, Reflex +5, Will +4

Abilities 20 + Skills 4 (16 ranks) + Feats 3 + Powers 23 + Combat 16 + Saves 10 = Total 76

STRINGS

Melissa Blackwell learned to steal from her cat-burglar father and to fight on the mean streets of the Fens. Melissa realized by her late teens the real money was in technology theft; rather than pilfering the petty cash boxes of small businesses Ms. Blackwell targeted R&D laboratories. Although she served three years for breaking and entering, the police never recovered the wrist gauntlets with telescoping cables she wields as Strings. Her costume is a black body suit with silver filament tracings and a domino mask. Her shoulder length red hair is usually tied back in a pony tail when she's playing villain.

Strings

Power Level 8

Str 12 Dex 16 Con 12 Int 16 Wis 14 Cha 12

Skills: Acrobatics 8 (+11), Climb 3 (+4), Disguise 5 (+6), Escape Artist 6 (+9), Notice 5 (+7), Search 5 (+8), Sleight of Hand 6 (+9), Stealth 6 (+9)

Feats: Attack Focus: Melee 4, Defensive Roll 4, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Pin, Improved Trip

Powers: **Device 6** (telescoping wrist cables; hard to lose)

Telescoping Wrist Cables. **Strike 8** (Extended Reach 4 [20 ft.], Mighty), **Super-Movement** (swinging), **Snare 8**

Combat: Attack +2, +6 (melee), Grapple +7, Damage +1 (unarmed), +9 (cable) Defense +6, Knockback -2 (-1 flat-footed), Initiative +7

Saving Throws: Toughness +5 (+1 flat-footed), Fortitude +5, Reflex +7, Will +6

Abilities 22 + Skills 11 (44 ranks) + Feats 12 + Powers 24 + Combat 16 + Saves 12 = Total 97

WOODWIND

Kelly Crawford always preferred the seclusion of the forest to the hustle and bustle of civilization. In college, she became an environmental activist. During a protest to prevent a lumber company's intended harvest in upstate New York, she discovered she could awaken her "tree friends" to defend themselves. Unfortunately, she was too shocked to call them off and several loggers were killed. Further shocked by her ability to fly, Kelly streaked off to the south. Desperate to understand her powers, Kelly made her way to Freedom City. She'd heard of a being known as the Green Man; perhaps he could help her. Melissa Blackwell saw her in Riverside Park, animating a bush to chase after two kids who'd thrown their candy wrappers on the ground. Recruiting the frightened young woman into the Symphony was easy; Melissa even helped create her villainous persona. Woodwind wears a loose fitting, hooded garment in shades of forest green.

Woodwind

Power Level 7

Str 12 Dex 14 Con 14 Int 14 Wis 14 Cha 12

Skills: Notice 7 (+9), Profession (botanist) 1 (+3)

Feats: Improved Initiative

Powers: **Air Control 9** (*Alternate Power: Blast 9*), **Animate Object 2** (Horde; Limited to trees; Progression 3 [10 trees]), **Flight 4** (100 mph)

Combat: Attack +4, Grapple +5, Damage +1 (unarmed), +9 (blast), Defense +6, Knockback -1, Initiative +6

Saving Throws: Toughness +2, Fortitude +4, Reflex +5, Will +4

Abilities 20 + Skills 2 (8 ranks) + Feats 1 + Powers 40 + Combat 20 + Saves 7 = Total 90

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