

Beyond Heroes

Companion Rules BH53



The Role Playing Game for all Genres

The Beyond Heroes Roleplaying Game Book LIII: The Book of Third Parties 1

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Contents

Foreword	3
Daily Chronicle	4
House of D'arqueness	4
Lobos Brothers Circus	11
Majestic Shipping	12
Red Alert	13
Restoration Inc	17
Roadbusters	19
Rotterdamned Asylum	20
Searchers Inc	24
Securitech	24

Foreword

The Beyond Heroes Role Playing Game is based on a heavily revised derivative version of the rules system from Advanced Dungeons and Dragons 2nd edition. It also makes extensive use of the optional point buying system as presented in the AD&D Player's Option Skills and Powers book. My primary goal was to make this system usable in any setting, from fantasy to pulp to superhero to science fiction.

This pdf is a guide to neutral groups which are neither good nor evil, and can be used to either aid or hinder your players.



The Daily Chronicle was founded in 1891 and has been published daily ever since in tabloid format. The office complex is six stories tall, and is capped by the Daily Chronicle logo on the roof. There are loading docks in the rear of the building, reached by a back alley. Three floors are devoted to the editorial office of the Bugle and two sub-basement levels to the printing presses, while the rest of the floors are rented.

The newspaper is noted for its exposes of political corruption and organized crime in the city, and also takes a strong stance in favour of mutant rights, which has led to its being targeted by various criminals and hate groups.

Due to declining circulation, the Chronicle has recently created a special feature section of the paper called Amazing Heroes which focuses on superheroes, and Despicable Villains which of course is about supervillains. In addition, the paper also intermittently runs a glossy magazine called Towards Tomorrow Magazine.



The House of D'arqueness is a huge, old, sprawling mansion located simultaneously at various points on the earth. The provisional nature of its locations is due to the fact that this ancient structure houses interdimensional portals between Earth and nearby realms. The House has been known to change locations with apparent randomness, or, at times, to depart the Earthly dimension entirely.

In short, the House appears whenever and wherever it is needed. The origins of the House of D'arqueness are unknown, although it is rumoured to have been around since humanity first appeared. The House is a sentient living being. It is virtually indestructible, and can fix any damages done to it. The House can travel through different realms and in between time and space. The House exist in a Void of Time, with time not passing in the House itself.

It has a housekeeper which was assigned to it in some far distant past time. He is a master storyteller; assisting visitors through their difficulties with an endless

supply of allegorical tales designed to resolve their troubles. When someone first approaches the Houses, he or she is greeted by the keeper and offered a choice of being entrusted with either a mystery or a secret. Mysteries are always dark and impenetrable, but offer their recipients salvation.

Secrets must be forever kept to one's self. After making his or her choice, the visitor is taken inside the house and is shown a lesson that relates to that person's life or situation. It is believed that only those selected by the house are ever able to find and enter it. The Houses itself defies all rational explanation and perception, existing outside the laws of reason and physics.

This ramshackle Victorian mansion appear normal from the outside, but inside they are seemingly unending, with a myriad of twisting passages, secret access ways, hidden tunnels, and ever changing rooms. Each room houses the secrets, relics, beings, or artifacts of different cultures from a variety of different times and interdimensional spaces. Periodically, the housekeeper is required to catalogue this wealth of possessions that overflows his House. Any uninvited visitors that unwittingly goes inside the house is stricken with psychological attacks. They are cursed, and are forced to relieve their worst nightmares.

Type: Mansion

Size: 75 x 75 x 75 metres

Era: Ancient but appears 18th Century

History: Unknown

Intelligence: 30

Wisdom: 30

Ego: 60

Alignment: Chaotic Good

Abilities: Indestructible by conventional means.

Alarm

Alter Doors, Local

Alter Doors, Gateway

Alter Gravity

Alter Light

Alter Physics

Alter Stairs

Alter Temperature

Alter Time

Mobile

No Abilities

No Explosives

No Magic

No Meta

Restructure

Servant, Employee - The Housekeeper

Spellcast - All schools but D'arque is the primary one

Trap, Ethereal

Trap, Mirror

Trap, Restraints

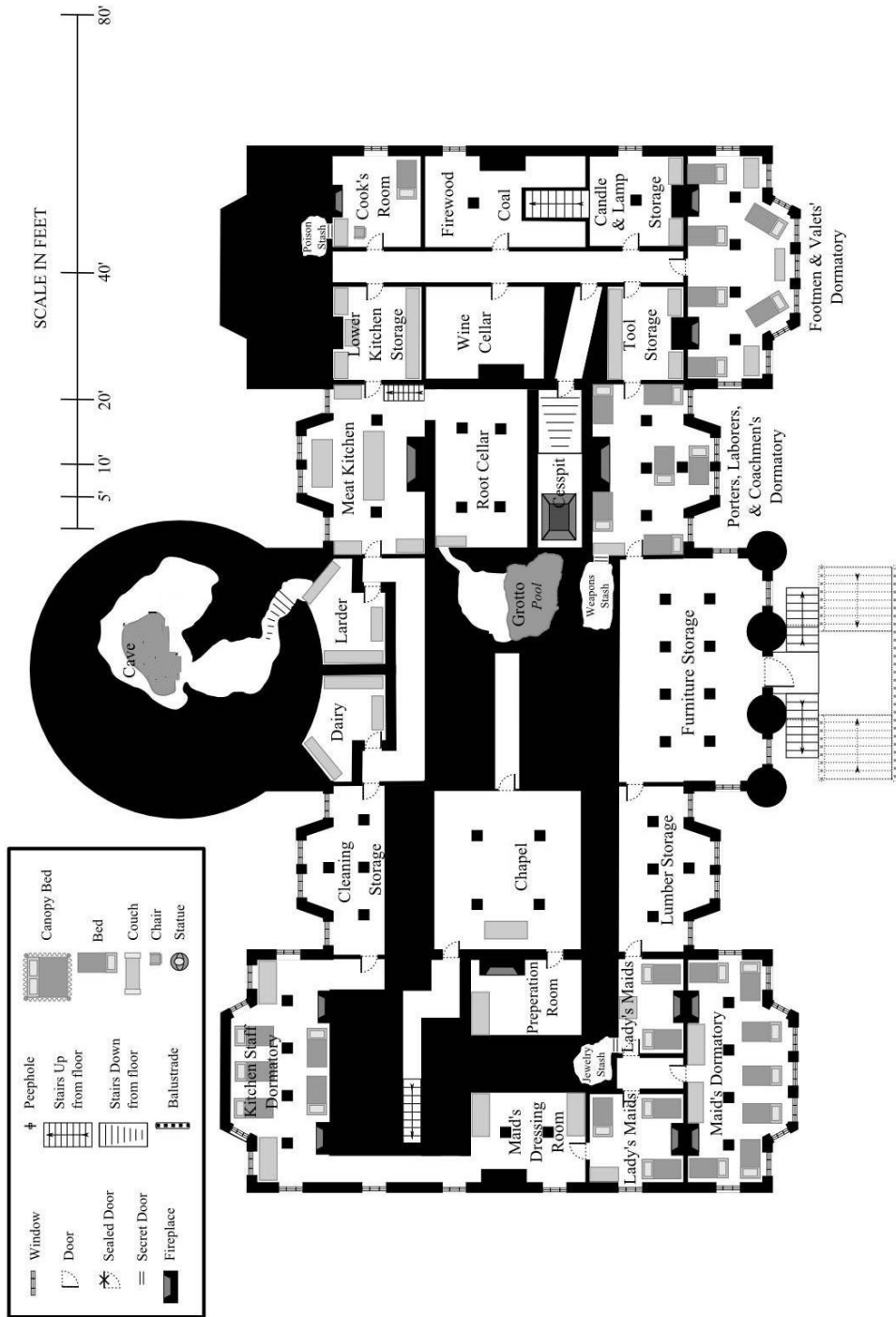
Trap, Teleport

Trap, Time

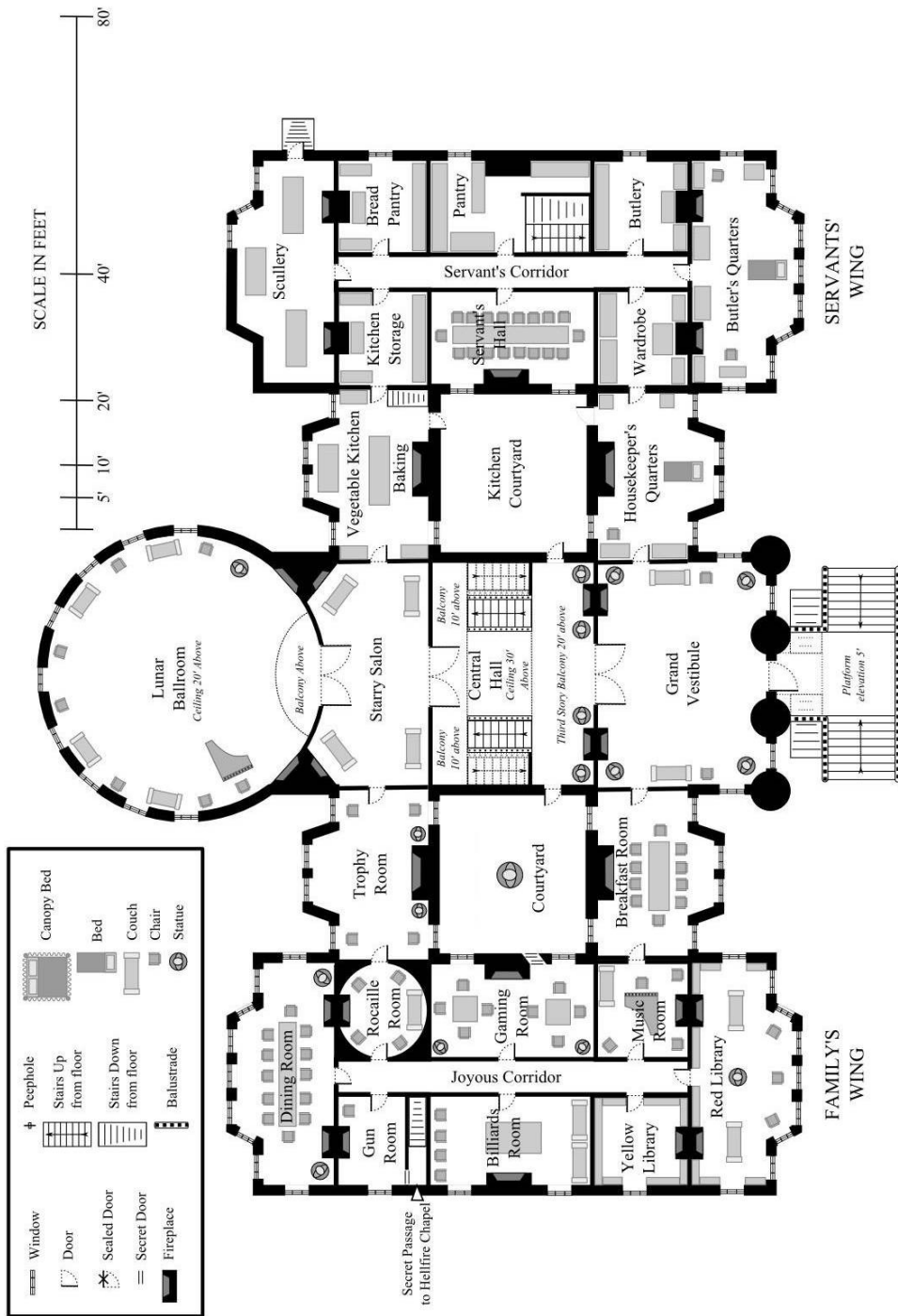
Power Source: Mana. Further the house can act as a living mana source for those within it which it considers allies. Mana can be drawn from it for as long as it allows. The amount it can make available is 3000, and requires 1 hour per 100 points to recharge.

Disadvantages: The house cannot be controlled (though it can be reasoned with).

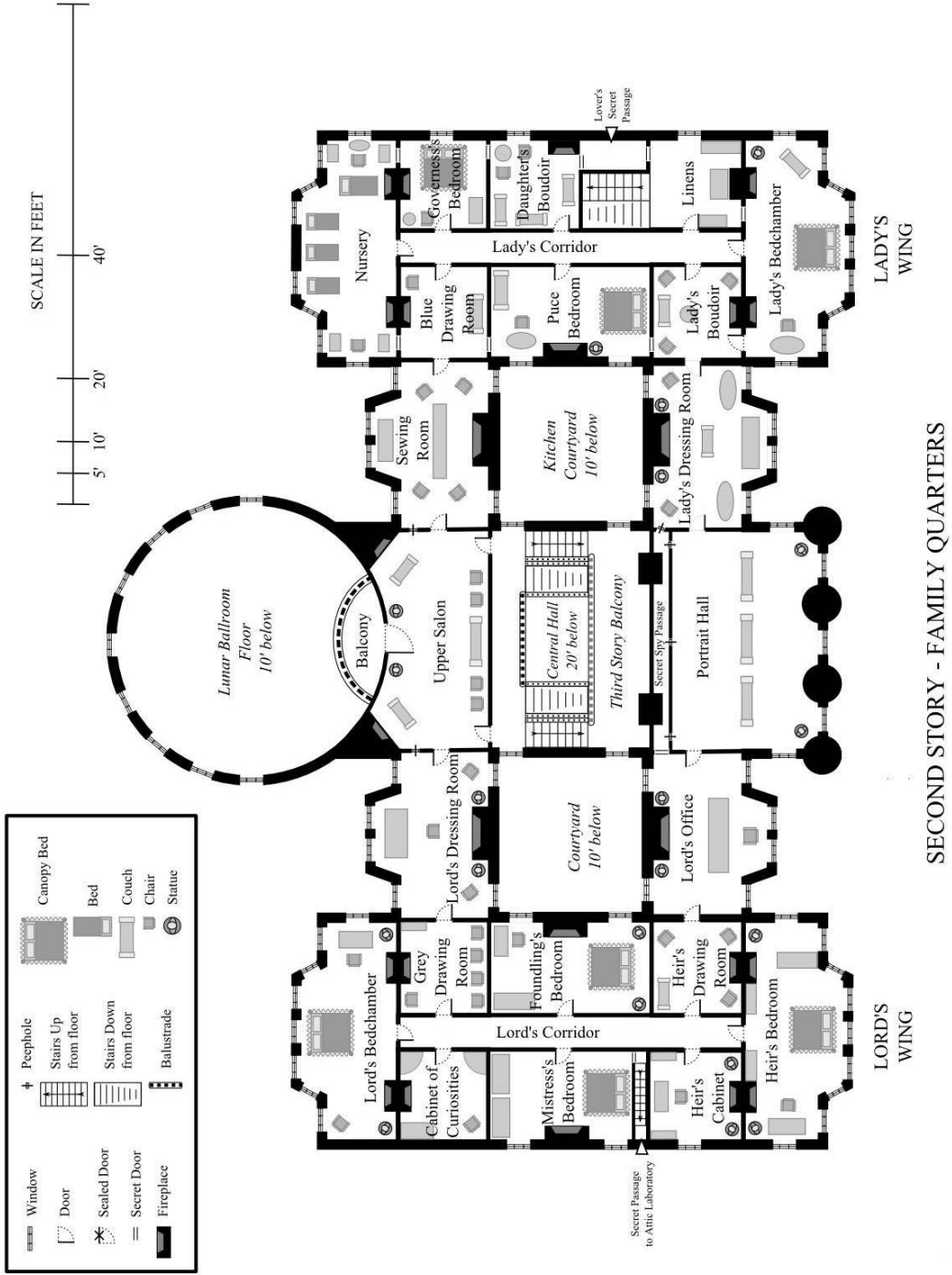
House of Darqueness Maps

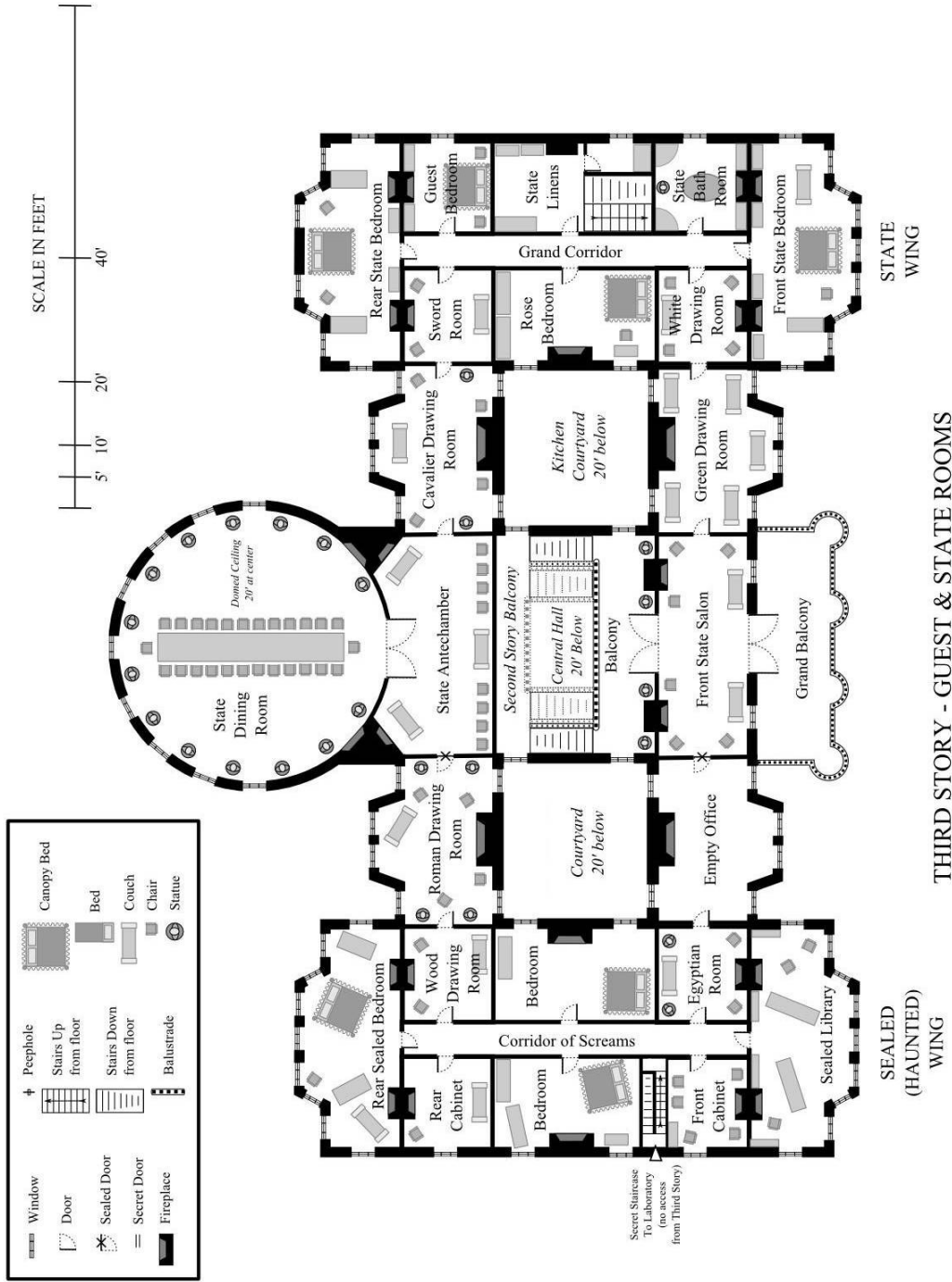


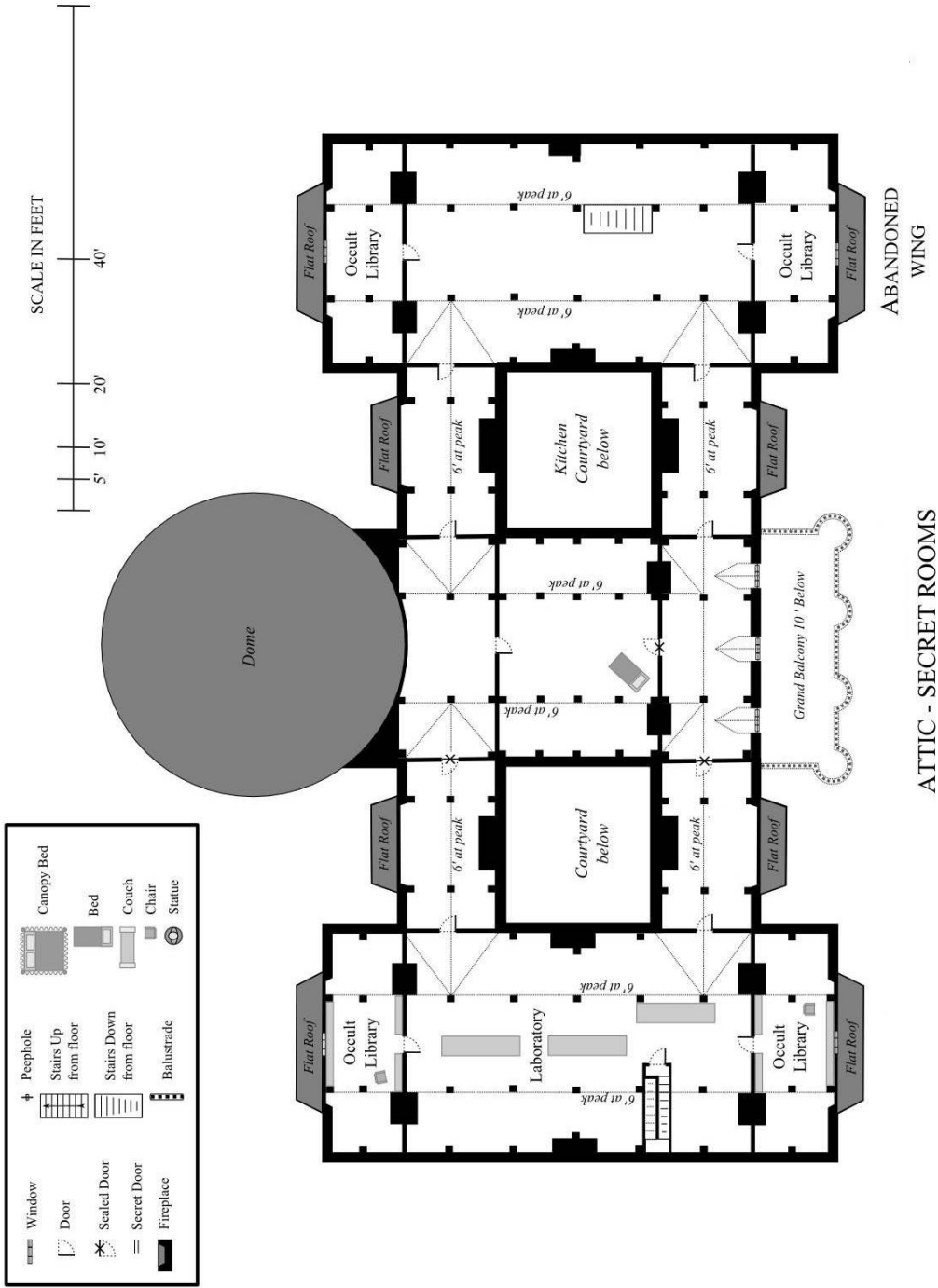
BASEMENT - STORAGE & SERVANT'S ROOMS



GROUND FLOOR - PUBLIC ROOMS









The circus has always captivated crowds. People like the spectacle, the unusual, which temporarily binds the community closer together. For a brief moment daily concerns give way before physical feats and unusual sights. This is what the ancient carnival and modern circus offer, a chance to lose oneself in the astonished crowd. And it's fun —forget your troubles as the ringmaster casts his spell on the audience!

Run by two werewolf brothers the circus offers exhibitions of Vampire, Weres, Ghosts, Goblins, Ghouls, Zombies, Giants, disturbed clowns, freaks on display, haunting ghosts and a Demon circus conductor. However despite first appearances all of these entities are good or at least reformed and seeking redemption. The circus acts as a sanctuary for them from their brethren, from government agencies wanting to dissect them, and from any Infernal entities hunting them.

The circus also contains the traditional acts of acrobatics and gymnastics, tightrope walking, trapeze and cradle, juggling, plate spinning, rolling globes, daredevil stunt acts, sideshow acts, a human cannonball, fire eating, knife throwing, magic shows, sword swallowing and a really strong man. The flea circus in sideshow alley is real.

Amusement rides and performances common to most circuses are found here.

commandos, sabotage teams, doctors, war casualties, drug enforcement officers, and even political VIPs.



Majestic Shipping began as an American passenger and cargo airline covertly owned and operated by the Central Intelligence Agency from 1950 to 1976. It supplied and supported covert operations around the world. In 1976 its funding was terminated and the organization disbanded.

However it was restarted by a group of ex CIA agents and mercenaries as a private company. Contacting the CIA's old clients they reestablished their old smuggling routes with the slogan "Anything, Anywhere, Anytime, Professionally". Although originally only operating around the Asian countries they soon expanded their operations to Africa and Europe. Currently the airline had some two dozen twin-engine transport aircraft, another two dozen short-take off-and-landing aircraft, and 30 helicopters. There are more than 300 pilots, copilots, flight mechanics, and airfreight specialists.

Majestic Shipping will fly cargo, civilians, diplomats, spies, refugees,



While Red Alert began predominantly in the field of emergency medical services, it has since expanded to include general medical insurance, acute care, surgery, and other programs that effectively cover the full range of medical services in some shape or form. If Red Alert doesn't provide certain services itself within a region, it usually has some form of contract with another agency that does. On its face, Red Alert prides itself on helping people with efficient, high quality services.

Naturally, 'people' extends specifically to 'insurance holders in good standing' and otherwise anyone with the money to cover services. The fine line between someone receiving care and someone being left to bleed out on the doorstep is whether that someone can verifiably afford the cost. Red Alert goes to no uncertain lengths to protect its customers (and charge them accordingly). While it may cooperate with law enforcement in appropriate cases, its policy is to aggressively defend customer privacy.

Red Alert doesn't discriminate much and rarely does a background check apart from do they have money. From there,

the customer can access Red Alert's services or receive care appropriate to the level of their insurance. Red Alert will not cross extraterritorial bounds without permission, and will generally consult with law enforcement if performing an extraction in the middle of a firefight.

Where Red Alert is different is the service it provides in extracting their clients from hostile Landing Zones and then evacuating them to an emergency care facility. Red Alert is a bonded and licensed paramedical franchise operating throughout the US, Canada, and parts of Europe. These crack air ambulance units are designed to get to the scene of a fatality within minutes. The teams normally travel in a heavily armed AV-4. Crews include a driver, two paramedics, and two heavily armed security officers. Red Alert teams can be summoned one of three ways.

You can make an emergency phone call, have a card that when broken contacts Red Alert, or get an implant that automatically makes the call if your life signs go critical. When they arrive on the scene, they use the security officers and the autocannons on the AV if necessary to secure the area. Then the medics get the subject onto the AV and off to the hospital. Trauma Team does not have its own medical facilities. Its sole purpose is to keep you away from that light at the end of the tunnel long enough to get you to a hospital.

Red Alert was founded in 2010 in New York to provide premium emergency on-site care by responding to emergencies faster and better than its competitors. It kept ahead of its competition by adding new, innovative, and more

comprehensive medical services, the first of which was the High Threat Response. Using armed and armoured vehicles and adding security personnel to their paramedic teams, the HTR was able to go into dangerous areas that no other paramedic service dared to go. Following that innovation, they introduced a "get medical aid within ten minutes, or your on-site care is free" guarantee. Later, they introduced the idea of "subscription contract service".

For an annual fee, a client can get guaranteed and extended services, along with discounts on health care payments. In 2013, Red Alert expanded from just armoured paramedic service to owning its first small private clinic. This was the first in a long string of Red Alert Acute Care Clinics that popped up all over the country. Through careful selection of franchises and astute business acumen, Red Alert managed to maintain a high standard of quality which quickly outstripped its local competitors.

Although the restrictions on owning a franchise were tight, and the cost was prohibitively expensive, by the end of 2014, Red Alert sold at least one franchise in every major US city. In 2015, Red Alert went international, selling franchises to other corporations within cities across the world. Today, Red Alert is a major megacorporation, a specialist in a business that never sleeps and never stops bringing in the money.

Red Alert offers four levels of service contracts, each with extending benefits for the amount of money spent. A tissue sample is required upon signing of a contract, and each client receives a wrist telephone that dials directly to Red Alert. Higher level contracts also may add the

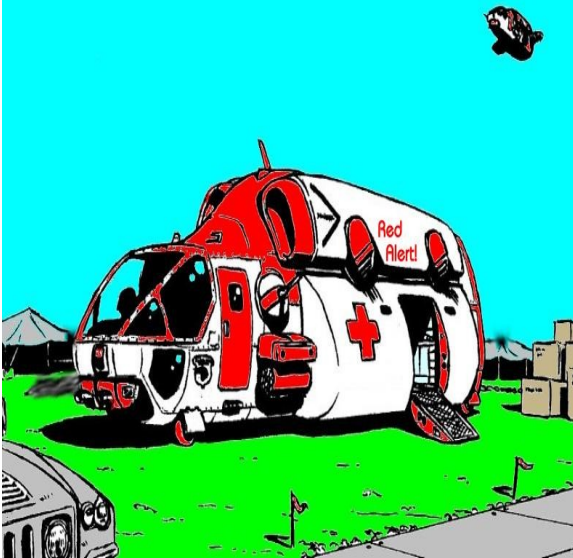
equivalent of a biomonitor, which provides an auto-dial service in case of emergency.

-Basic Service gives the client pay-per-service access to Red Alert services. It costs an annual fee of \$5,000, and fees for Red Alert services can range from \$5,000 for HTR to \$8,000 for on-site resuscitation. Acute care coverage ranges from \$500 to \$1000 per day, depending on the level of care. Note that these costs are significantly less than the average hospital stay and even basic transimplant surgery costs.

-Silver Service gives one free resuscitation per year, plus a 10 percent discount on clinic/hospital stays. Base cost for HTR is halved, although death compensation, expenses, and other costs remain the same. Gold contracts cost \$25,000 per year.

-Gold Service gives free HTR service, four free resuscitations per year, a half discount on clinic/hospital stays and death compensations are only for employees and innocent victims.

-Platinum service costs \$50,000 a year. Platinum Service is top-of-the-line, and costs \$100,000 a year. The benefits are similar to the Gold service, except that the client does not have to cover death benefits, and gets five free resuscitations per year. The Platinum contract also gives the client a life-signs biomonitor. Certain corporate contracts also give the equivalent of Platinum service to its security guards at a reduced group price, paid for by the corporate bankroll.



The air ambulance is a MetaTech model Aerotech Tactical Urban Assault Vehicle with a customized body. It is well armed and armoured and can withstand at least one direct hit from a missile.

Design

The cockpit is separated from the aft compartment by a reinforced bulkhead and has an isolated air filtration system. An intercom system keeps the pilot and co-pilot/gunner in contact with the rest of the crew at all times. The cockpit is accessed via a hatch into the aft compartment, or directly to the exterior via lockable doors to the port and starboard.

The aft compartment, or "med-bay" can also be sealed (if necessary), and is accessed via large sliding doors, port and starboard, in the sides of the fuselage. Both doors are equipped with explosive bolts that can be activated either from the cockpit or from the med-bay.

The pilot and co-pilot/gunner operate in a "glass cockpit", which boasts 5 Multi-Functional Displays and an independent HUD for each crew-member. Flight controls are very similar to that of a

conventional helicopter, and consist of a cyclic "joy stick" and a collective lever (to the left.) Additionally, the Target Acquisition Designation System/Pilots Night Vision System is coupled to the helmets of both the pilot and copilot, with output visible via either neural jack or flip-down visual reticle.

Additionally, the copilot's helmet is equipped with "look down, shoot down" IR position indicators, such that the weapons turret points where the copilot looks. A cross-hair image is provided for the copilot via helmet reticle (+1 to hit.) The system provides both cockpit crew-members with the equivalent of Low Light, Thermograph, and TeleOptic vision, for all views external to the vehicle. The cockpit is equipped with 3 independent 2-way radio systems: 2 FM comms suites (one for city frequencies, the other for county frequencies), and Frequency-Agile, Dual Encryption Security Tactical Communication System.

The latter system is used exclusively for communicating either with the local Red Alert base, or with other Red Alert vehicles. The "med-bay" (aft compartment) is equipped with a Body Weight Med-Line voice/vision/fax/data Transceiver set. This unit is connected directly to the cryo-tank (below), which allows direct transmission of patient vitals to Red Alert Medical Control. It can also accept a wide variety of data disks and chips to facilitate diagnosis.

The ambulance is equipped with a multi-mode, all-weather, Pulse-Doppler "smart" radar. It has an operational range of 150 kms against targets with an radar cross-section similar to the ATUAV. It includes track-while-scan, Non

Cooperative Target Recognition, and a "look down" Synthetic Aperture Radar mode which can produce an almost photographic-quality monochrome image. This is an invaluable feature when approaching a potentially hot LZ. Further, the ambulance is equipped with flare and millimetre chaff dispensers, mounted to the ventral aft fuselage.

Of course, all of the other features of the ATUAV exist solely to support its primary function: the transport of sick and/or injured clients. To this end, the ATUAV is packed with state-of-the-art emergency medical equipment and supplies. The heart of the ambulance is the BodyWeight Last Chance Life Pod (combination bio-bed/cryo-tank.) This marvel of medical technology serves two major functions. The "bio-bed" function provides the EMTs with a "Super Gurney" which warms, cushions, restrains, and generally protects the patient. It also has built-in bio-monitor and "smart" IV controller, as well as a Portable Intern Unit (+2 to the Diagnose skill and +1 to stabilization attempts.)

When damage is too severe, the "cryo-tank" comes into play. Once the patient is placed in the tank, a BodyWeight Vascular Shunt is placed around the patient's neck. The shunt automatically locates the external Carotid arteries and the external Jugular veins, and inserts bypass cannulas which immediately begin circulating oxygenated heme substitute to the brain. Once the shunt is activated, multiple doses of Radicals Binding Agent are injected throughout the body to prevent free radicals from accelerating cellular breakdown. An ET tube is inserted to flush the lungs with moist, oxygenated air and sealing tape is used on the nose and mouth. The cryo-

tank is then closed and flooded with aerated, electrolytically balanced suspension gel, cooled to a temperature of -5° C. The patient is thus stabilized for delivery to the nearest Red Alert facility.

Additional standard equipment consists of:

- 1 Cardio-Vert LifePak Monitor/Defibrillator/Pacer w/ recorder.
- 1 Fingertip Pulse Oximeter
- 2 Sigma Pumps - Accepts regular IV tubings made by all major companies
- 1 Drug Analyzer
- 2 Hewlett-Packard Medscanners

Dimensions

Length: 28 metres

Weight: Fully loaded, the ATUAV weighs 5 tons. This light weight is the result of extensive use of composite materials in both the chassis and the body. Also, thanks to the use of Epoxide laminate Aramides in the outer body, the vehicle is extremely resistant to small arms fire and light anti-vehicle weapons. The interior is divided into two sections: the cockpit (forward compartment) and the "med-bay" (aft compartment).

HPs

Retractable Wings (2):	1000 each
Pilot's Cockpit:	1100
Main Body:	1000

Propulsion Systems

Main power system: 1 MetaTech nuclear fission reactor (heavily shielded)

Air Speed: 600kph

Ceiling: 10 kms

Endurance Limits

The fusion reactors have an as yet unknown lifespan but are estimated to be

30 years. The solar turbines have a 20 year lifespan.

Weapon Systems

The ATUAV is very capable of fighting back, albeit in a limited fashion. In addition to the small arms carried by all of the crew members, the ship itself is armed with the following;

7.62x51mm Support Weapon: 2, 1 per side on a retractable pintle mount for each door gunner. 6D6 per burst. 250 metre range.

Rotating Rail Barrels: 2 forward nosepod, controlled by the co-pilot/gunner. 7D6 per burst. 400 metre range.

Missiles: 6 per wing. 2D6 x10 each. 5kms

Bomb Dispenser: 1 underneath

Crew

The ATUAV is manned by a crew of six specialists: Lead EMT-Paramedic, Assistant EMT-Paramedic, 2 Security Specialists/Door Gunners, Pilot and Co-pilot/Gunner



When the superhuman community throws down in a neighbourhood the damages can be astronomical. However Restoration Inc are here to clean up the mess and rebuild the property to the way it was. Considering the amount of superhuman battles there are and with virtually no competition this is a definite money maker. Restoration is an engineering and construction company that specializes in the cleanup, repair, and restoration of property damaged through the destructive activities of metahuman, paranormal or extraterrestrial beings.

They use state of the art technology so that they can finish repairs and reconstructions in record time. In order to pay for their services individuals and private companies go through their Meta Human Insurance or Paranormal Activity Assurance. However if one isn't covered they can always apply for funds from the Federal Disaster Area Stipend from their local city to pay for Restoration's assistance.

Restoration Inc is a classic example of a superhuman finding ways to use his powers both for personal profit and to provide a valuable service for the community without putting on a costume and fighting crime. Samson Orot was born a mutant. During his adolescence he manifested the power to transmute inorganic matter. He briefly considered becoming a superhero, but the more he thought about it the more painfully obvious it was that his powers really weren't of much use against major supervillains.

So he decided to find a way he could use his powers to help people that (a) didn't involve fighting, and (b) would benefit him personally. It didn't take long for him to realize that construction work was the perfect answer. He started working construction jobs while he was still in high school so he could learn the trade, and after graduating switched to doing it full-time. After a few years of that, when he figured he knew enough to run his own firm, he quit and formed Restoration Inc. It was an immediate hit.

His powers allowed the company to complete jobs in a fraction of the time that an ordinary firm took, with fewer mistakes or complications (and the ones that did occur he could correct easily). He soon had more work than he knew what to do with and had to go on a serious hiring campaign. Some of the company's most valued employees, came aboard during this initial expansion phase. Orot has also been able to recruit some brilliant technicians who have been able to reverse engineer various alien technology they have found in the aftermath of invasions.

Restoration continues to expand, becoming one of the most successful construction firms in the US and one of the most specialized. Rather than take on ordinary jobs, Restoration advertises itself as the fastest builders in America. With Orot's powers to speed things along, Restoration could erect a building in a fraction of the time an ordinary firm could, or make repairs to a damaged building almost overnight. In a country with so much superhuman activity, being able to clean up after and repair the effects of super battles was the ticket to big money, and by the time he was 25 Orot was a millionaire many times over.

Today Restoration Inc is one of the most highly-regarded construction firms in the world, known as much for its cleanup services after super battles as for full construction projects. When a business needs a new building built quickly, or needs rapid repairs so it can go on functioning with minimal interruption, Restoration is usually the firm that gets the call. Despite its prominence in some circles, Trans-City Construction is a pretty basic corporation on paper. Samson Orot is the sole owner; he doesn't even have any business partners, though he maintains a profit-sharing program for his employees.

He spends a lot of his time in the home office taking care of administrative and managerial details but in the final analysis the company's success is due to his transmutation powers, so he has to go out into the field frequently to help with building projects. He prefers to do this in the morning hours, leaving the afternoon for ordinary construction workers to get their jobs done, but it really depends on the nature of a project and the demands of a customer. Mostly the staff works on

preparing bids for future work and coordinating work crews' assignments for current projects. Depending on its current workload, Restoration may have half a dozen or more large "work crews" assigned to specific jobs. Each work crew consists of construction workers employed directly by Restoration, plus specialized subcontractors hired for that job based on submitted bids.

Restoration owns a small fleet of its own construction vehicles — trucks, bulldozers, and the like — which have all been heavily modified with alien tech. One example is a "hover-forklift" that could easily carry heavy loads to any part of a building using gravitic technology, and a similar "hover-dolly" that a single worker could use to carry a very heavy load.



When it absolutely, positively, has to be there, NOW! Urusei Tanaka is your man...if you can afford his rates. Born in Japan, Urusei used his extraordinary driving skills to great (and profitable) use by acting as a courier and driver, for whomever could pay. Eventually after some *issues* with the Japanese police Urusei moved to Millennium city, and opened up shop here. Urusei's primary skills include all driving skills at maximum rating (including race car), offensive driving, is good with a knife and deadly accurate with a pistol.

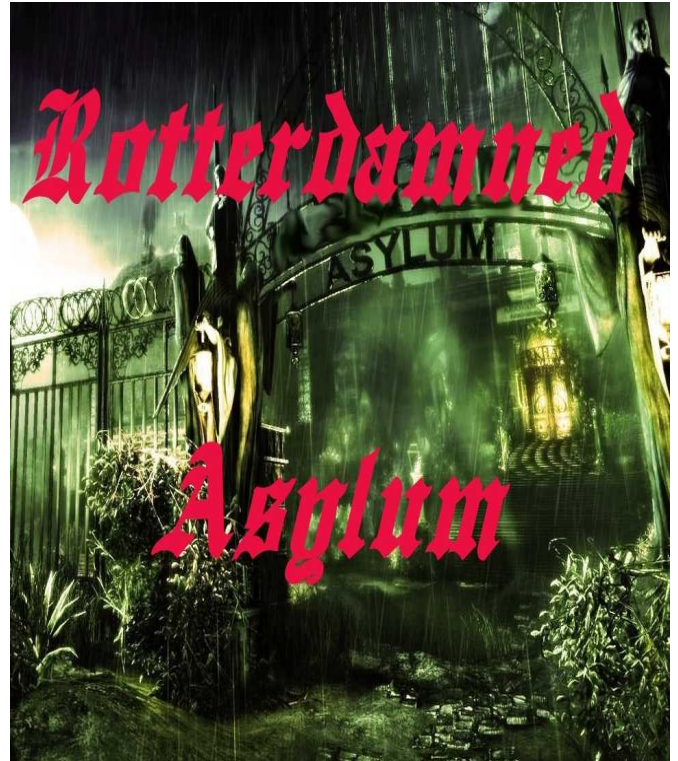
The Roadbuster is a completely customized vehicle, based on a Porsche chassis and a Corvette Stingray '71 engine block. It's only really unique equipment are the retractable wheel spikes. Roadbuster is covered in 5mm battleship steel armour plate, with windows that are composed of bullet-proof glass. It also boasts both four wheel drive and four wheel steering, with a top speed of over 300kph, with engine performance in excess of 730 horsepower. It gets lousy mileage; that, coupled with the fact that the estimated cost to build it was about one million

dollars is one reason Urusei's rates are so high.

Urusei Tanaka



Alignment	Chaotic Good
INT	17
STR	20
WIS	11
DEX	25
CHA	15
CON	25
MR	28
HPs	80
Age	31
Training	Drive any land vehicle, navigation
Height	6'
Weight	190lbs
Disposition	Compassionate, cheery
Category	12th level Thief



The Sofia Rotterdamdamned Asylum for the Criminally Insane, typically called Rotterdamdamned Asylum or simply Rotterdamdamned, is a psychiatric hospital for criminals housing patients who are criminally insane. Rotterdamdamned's high-profile patients are often well known non meta power supervillains.

Rotterdamdamned Asylum has a poor security record and high recidivism rate, at least with regard to the high-profile cases—patients, are frequently shown escaping at will—and those who are considered to no longer be mentally unwell and discharged tend to re-offend. Furthermore, several staff members, including its founder, have become mentally unwell. In addition, prisoners with unusual medical conditions that prevent them from staying in a regular prison are housed in Rotterdamdamned. Rotterdamdamned, with special conditions required for certain patients or inmates being a regularity rather than an exception, is seen by authorities to be an

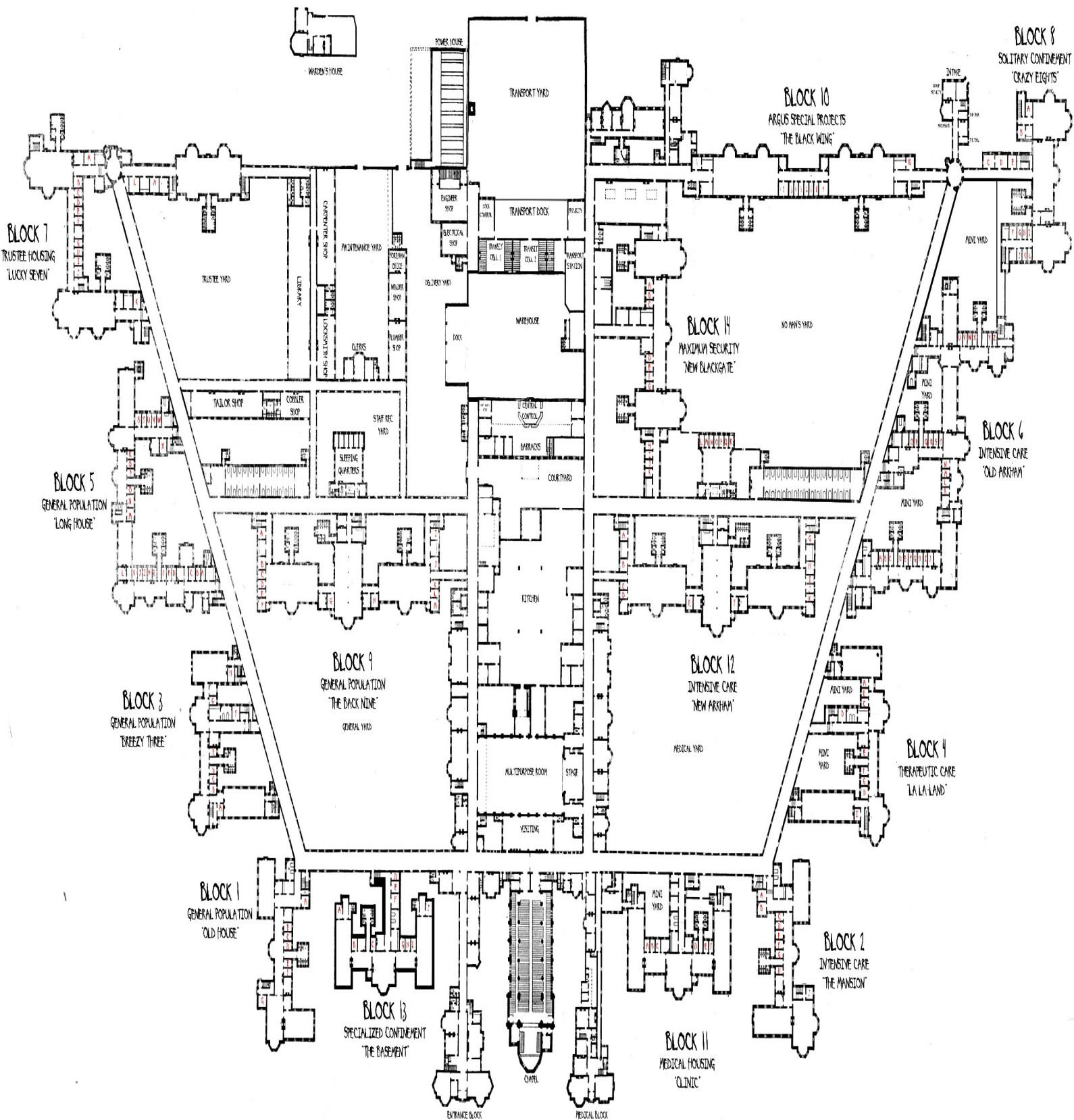
ideal location under certain circumstances. Serving as the city's psychiatric hospital, Rotterdamned Asylum has a long and brutal history, beginning when its own architect became mentally unwell and hacked his workers to death with an axe. He was convicted and sentenced to spend the rest of his life in the same asylum he had been building.

Since the 1920s, Rotterdamned Asylum has been destroyed, usually violently, on multiple occasions and rebuilt or expanded; for those patients with unique security or health considerations, customized facilities have been installed at considerable expense. The asylum has continued to grow larger and more modern in appearance, although as the lion's share of the budget is devoted to security treatment options have inevitably suffered. Despite the installation of advanced technological security measures in the era of metahuman criminals, the inmates have still been able to escape or take control of the facilities from time to time.

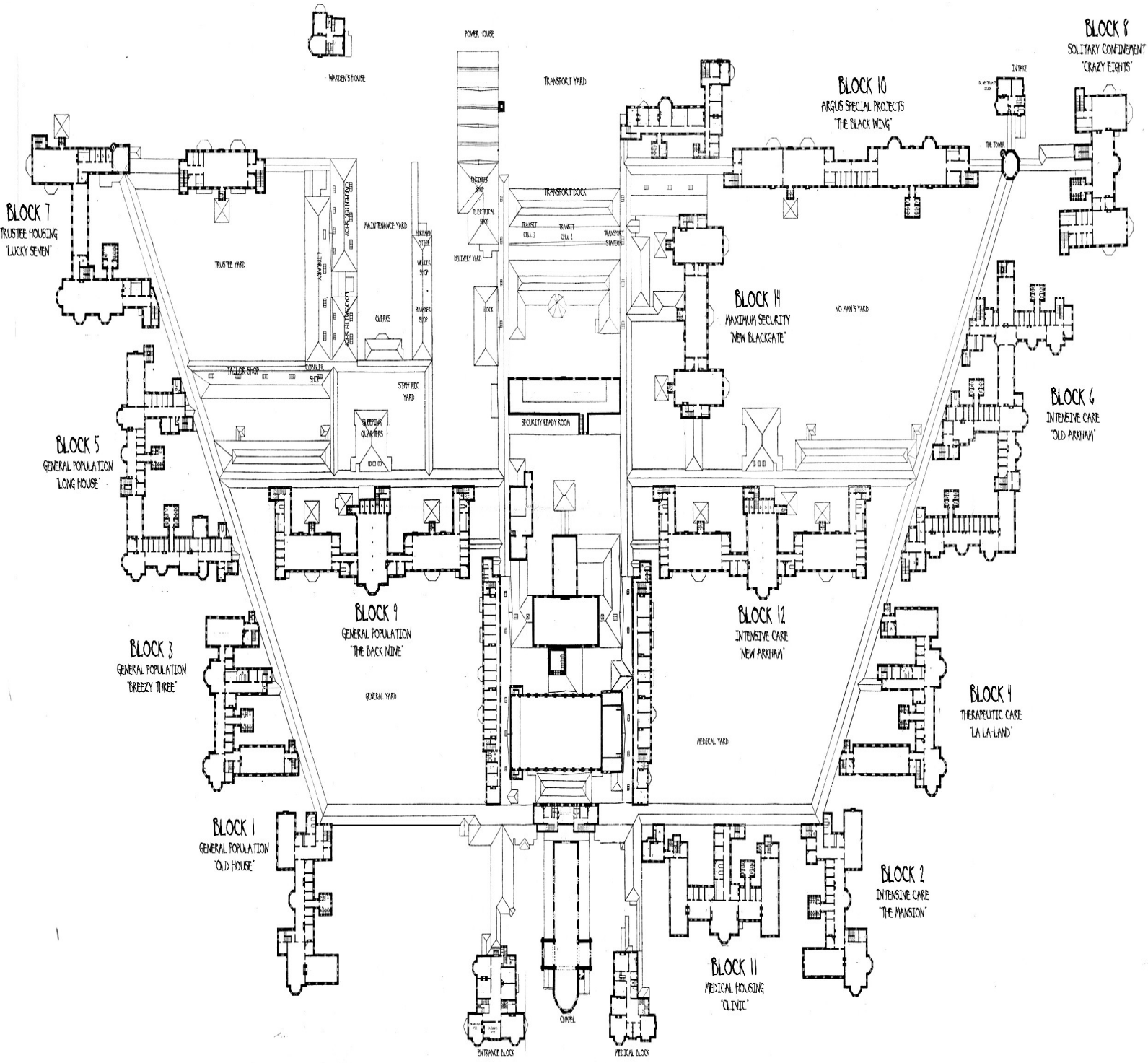
Despite its status as a private hospital Rotterdamned is also granted certain legislative privileges by the city. For example, the city law empowers the asylum to unilaterally detain any person or persons under indefinite psychiatric observation. Said individuals cannot be institutionalized through formal means without the consent of their families or the judicial system, but they can be held for any period at the director's discretion. This loophole has allowed Rotterdamned to incarcerate specific characters, while circumventing the bureaucratic process normally associated with institutionalization. A number of other states and cities have transferred

dangerously insane supervillains to Rotterdamned Asylum despite its rather discouraging reputation, either because they lack facilities of their own to hold them, or find it easier to dump their criminal problem elsewhere.

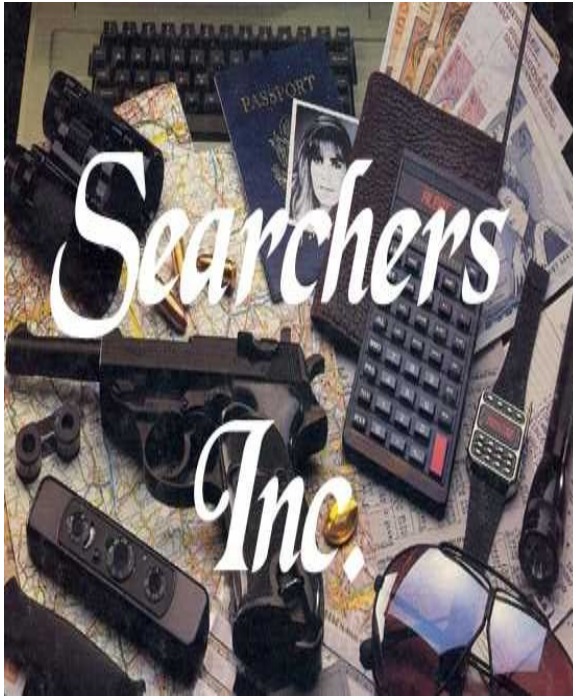
Rotterdamned Asylum on the exterior, is a caricature of an insane asylum: a gigantic, gated Victorian home on a dark and stormy night. The image of the run-down, dreary building contrasts nicely with the individuals caged within. The disorienting and mazelike atmosphere to Rotterdamned's interior is intentional, engineered to confuse the inmates so even if they escaped their cells, they would find it difficult maintaining a sense of direction and leaving the building. CCTV cameras are installed in every room and at periodic intervals in every corridor. Exterior windows are fitted with heat and motion detectors, while magnetic foil insulation in the walls helped jam suspicious signal reception in the cell blocks.



Rotterdamned Ground Floor



Rotterdamned First Floor



Searchers Inc specialise in finding the unfindable, including people, objects and information. By accessing local and national databases, missing and lost persons are quickly located anywhere throughout the world. Thanks to international contacts and qualified agents, they can quickly locate even the hardest to find individuals, with the majority of searches being completed within 72 hours. Their staff have spent many years in foreign countries and have a solid understanding of the various database and records systems, along with other issues.

Searchers Inc can also obtain a wide variety of information for companies and private citizens, alike. Common requests are financial statements, hidden assets, telephone tracing, screen name identification, electricity and utility records.

Costs: \$50 per hour if within the city. Additional expenses if the search is overseas.



In a world where superhumans and supertech exist, many people try to use them (or exploit them) to create businesses and make money. Nowhere is this more apparent than with Securitech, a company whose motto “Protection Beyond the Merely Human” unhesitatingly advertises the fact that its guards are superhumanly strong, fast, and tough. But despite presenting itself as nothing more than a security firm in the United States, Securitech’s other main offices in Nairobi, Kenya and Tashkent, Uzbekistan make it clear what the company really is: a modern-day band of mercenaries, available for hire to anyone who can pay its fees.

Securitech was founded in 1995 by Jefferson Roell, a mutant with powers who briefly fought crime in the New York City area in the early Nineties. A veteran of the US Marines, Roell became a superhero mainly because people who knew he had superpowers persuaded him to. In 1995, Roell finally hit on the idea that

would make his name: running a security service. Who better to protect someone's valuables or place of business than a genuine superhero? Scraping together what money he had, he founded Securitech. Its first few years were lean. Roell worked long hours trying to build up the business, and while it experienced no significant failures it never had any major successes or got any major contracts, either. Until he started hiring other metahumans.

The idea of being protected by guards augmented to superhuman power — even low superhuman power — was extremely appealing to many prospective employers. Besides the fact that the guards were obviously well-trained, advertising that this facility has superhuman protection is enough to scare off most would-be robbers. The year 2003 saw it go international, with London, Paris, and Nairobi offices, and in 2005 it opened its most recent office, in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Despite its unquestionable success, in the past several years Securitech has come under increasing scrutiny from watchdog groups and even Interpol. Ever since it introduced metahuman guards, unsubstantiated rumours have floated around the underworld, and at times leaked into the press, that Securitech recruits its guards with shady promises to make them superhuman without revealing the risks of pain and death that its augmentation process entails.

Securitech unconditionally denies these claims, but it has kept the specifics of its augmentation process totally secret, and so far its lawyers have fought off all attempts to make it reveal that

information. Of greater concern for some authorities are claims that Securitech “guards” abroad, particularly in the Nairobi and Tashkent offices, are not actually guards per se but highlypaid mercenaries who fight in brush wars, serve overlords, and even work for supervillains. While Securitech flatly denies any accusations that it's been involved in assassinations or similar activities, it does admit that some of its international employers seek services beyond basic security. It's supposedly an open secret in some circles that Securitech is a mercenary firm.

Securitech is organized along quasi-military lines — a not-surprising method for a company founded by a military veteran that recruits many military veterans as employees and offers paramilitary services to its clientele. Jefferson Roell is the “commander in chief,” the man who has the final say in all important matters. He rarely leads his men in the field; these days he's almost entirely an office-bound administrator. Roell's “second-in-command” is Leane Velasquez, a tough-as-nails veteran of the Gulf War (and many smaller conflicts during a brief career as a field mercenary). Velasquez travels to Securitech's various offices frequently, bearing word from Roell. Each of Securitech's offices is headed by an employee who holds the rank of Commander.

Although bound to obey orders from the home office (or Roell or Rodriguez individually), each of them has total authority over his men otherwise. All that Roell asks is that they make a profit and draw as little unwanted attention as possible. The latter responsibility is

particularly important; Roell is well aware that Securitech's success will quickly reverse itself if the authorities begin to scrutinize the company's activities too closely.

Securitech's guards — “field agents,” as the company sometimes calls them — use a quasi-military ranking system. From highest to lowest, the ranks are: Major, Captain, Lieutenant, Sergeant, Corporal, Guard. Typically a new field agent starts with the rank of Guard and works his way up the ladder based on merit and experience. All promotions above the rank of Lieutenant require the approval of Roell himself — captains and majors usually command large groups of guards in the field and are in charge of operations for significant clients, so Roell wants to be as sure as he can of their loyalty and competence. Commanders, and of course Rodriguez and ultimately Roell himself, outrank majors.

Securitech's main offices are in New York City: a corporate/administrative office in Manhattan where Roell works and meets with clients; a medical clinic, also in Manhattan, where Dr. Anderson performs his medical examinations and superhuman augmentation procedures; and a warehouse in Brooklyn where much of the company's equipment is stored when not needed. Security on all three facilities, especially the clinic and warehouse, is very tight; the latter two in particular have the latest in supertech security systems and a round-the-clock rotation of a dozen meta guards. A couple hours outside the city, in a very secluded and well-protected area, Securitech Security has its primary training camp, known as Beta Point.

This is where it teaches its Basic and Advanced Security Training courses. It has lesser training camps out west, and also near its Nairobi and Tashkent offices. The other domestic offices tend to be organized a little differently. They all occupy a single facility that serves as office space, medical rooms (if needed) and storage. Thus they tend to be located outside the city centre proper in industrial parks and the like.

Compared to the American facilities, the offices in London and Paris are simple affairs — basically just large, easily accessible offices in those cities where company officials can meet with clients and recruiters can speak to prospective new field agents. On the other hand, the Nairobi and Tashkent “offices” are both large compounds with multiple simple but sturdy buildings. Nearly everyone, including clerical employees, has had at least Basic Security Training, and most carry sidearms (or have them within easy reach). Guards patrol the compounds at all hours of the day to keep them secure.

Unsurprisingly, Securitech has a very “macho” corporate culture. Strength, power, skill, toughness, victory at all costs, and other “male” values are paramount, and competitiveness reigns. The officers and employees are quick to pull together against any outside threat — they have high morale and excellent camaraderie — but among themselves they compete in dozens of ways every day. On the job they struggle to see who can do the best work, work the longest hours, or complete the toughest chores, all the while trash-talking one another. They also get into long, loud debates about nearly everything under the sun. Some of these “discussions” are about work-related topics (such as which

firearms are better for a given task), but many of them are just another way to have fun and establish who's top dog. Sometimes the discussions morph into "quizzes" where a superior officer simultaneously challenges and teaches his men. The oneupsmanship continues into the guards' leisure hours. When they're off-duty they love to compete in sports and games, ranging from darts at the local bar to full-contact football on the rec fields at Beta Point. The company's annual boxing tournament draws employees from all over the world and comes with large cash prizes as well as bragging rights for the winners.

Securitech provides two basic types of services to its clients: straightforward security (guarding things, training guards, installing and monitoring security devices); and mercenary services in foreign venues. The latter services (often euphemistically described as "security problem consultation and direct action solutions") are not openly advertised in the United States or Europe; word about them circulates through the Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World and in the pages of certain obscure trade journals. Securitech's security services cover the gamut from guards, to alarms, to security training.

Securitech broke into the security field as a provider of guards to businesses and transportation services, and this service remains the backbone of the company today. Whether a client is a major celebrity who needs two or three guards to accompany him to a club opening, a bank that wants to protect its shipments of cash and other valuables, or a company that wants an entire facility guarded 24 hours a day, Securitech can meet its needs. The cost of hiring

Securitech guards depends partly on their level of training but mostly on their level of superhuman ability. Non meta guards are the most affordable — a perfect choice for a client with some minor security concerns but no major worries. Although it's not the company's area of greatest expertise, Securitech does have teams of technicians who install, maintain, and monitor electronic security systems for clients.

In the past few years, Securitech has earned a solid reputation as a trainer of other companies' security personnel. It has transformed parts of the Beta Point facility in New York state to accommodate classes of up to 100 people who study security skills, some of Securitech's special security procedures, and similar subjects. Securitech's training is divided into two courses: Basic and Advanced. The Advanced course is open only to personnel who have completed the Basic course. Securitech Basic training is an intensive one month course that covers general security procedures, bodyguarding, weapons use, parachuting, small boats, hand-to-hand combat, and general fitness.

Students live in dormitories at Beta Point and eat at dining facilities there; basically they live and breathe security for four solid weeks. The Advanced security course requires another two months. Its curriculum includes crisis driving, advanced hand-to-hand combat, more parachuting, some military-grade personal weapons use, basic SCUBA training, a thorough introduction to security systems and alarms, shadowing, and general combat training. Additionally, each student chooses one or more areas of "Security

Specialization” for which he receives extensive training from an expert instructor in small classes so there’s a lot of student-teacher interaction. Advanced Security Training is a tough, exhausting course, but those who make it through come out of it as highly-skilled, highly employable security professionals. All Securitech field agents have had at least Basic training; most have Advanced as well.

Securitech tries to paper over the fact with euphemisms and attempts to maintain a low profile, but the truth is that the company does outright mercenary work. Securitech field agents have fought alongside regular troops in various minor conflicts in Africa and Central Asia. In the right circumstances it would expand to other markets, such as Central/South America. Despite some accusations in the press, Securitech has some restrictions on the sort of mercenary work it does. It won’t engage in assassination work, spearhead assaults on targets, or the like.

As a mercenary force it functions as a support organization, helping established militaries or revolutionary groups achieve their objectives. It doesn’t do the work for them, it helps them do it themselves. Besides its highly-trained superhuman personnel, Securitech’s main resource is its equipment. Over the years the company has acquired a large arsenal of gear, ranging from the equipment carried by field agents (see below) to a few old surplus Soviet tanks (for which it has no ammunition).

It has a large fleet of vehicles, including used Humvees for transporting field agents in dangerous zones to about a dozen helicopters. For mercenary work it

usually includes provisions in its contract that the employer must either provide vehicles and other necessary gear, or pay to replace/repair Securitech equipment the company uses.