

MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS

ASTONISHING ADVENTURES



RISE OF THE TYRANT

BY AMBER SCOTT

AN URBAN ADVENTURE
FOR 4-6 HEROES OF PL 10

ASTONISHING ADVENTURES



RISE OF THE TYRANT

SUGGESTED PL: 10

REQUIRED BOOKS: M&M DELUXE HERO'S HANDBOOK, M&M DELUXE GAMEMASTER'S GUIDE

SUGGESTED BOOKS: FREEDOM CITY, THIRD EDITION; THREAT REPORT

The peace of an ordinary afternoon in the big city is shattered when a berserk robot charges into traffic. The resulting chaos is bad enough, but the bizarre incident takes on more sinister tones when responding superheroes track the rogue construct to a robotics factory. A confounding supervillain known as Conundrum overpowered the factory workers before making off with valuable technology and parts. But how does a puzzle-master come by a gang of robots?

Tracking down the supervillain is only one step toward restoring peace to the city. For the further the superheroes investigate, the more apparent it becomes that a larger plan is unfolding. A new and dangerously powerful supervillain lurks in the shadows, and he won't be satisfied until the whole world languishes under his rule. Can the superheroes discover the dastardly plan and bring the villain to justice before the Earth is forever changed?

Rise of the Tyrant is a classic four-color adventure for four to six PL 10 heroes. It introduces rules gradually and is an ideal first step into the world and rules of *Mutants & Masterminds*.

SECRET ORIGINS

In the primordial past, a series of meteor strikes permanently altered the environment and development of one fledgling Earth in the multiverse. The dinosaurs that survived the impact adapted to their new home, eventually evolving into a powerful and intelligent Saurian race. They crushed the burgeoning primate culture that developed alongside them, enslaving the simians to develop their empire.

Millenia later, the Saurians had become a terrifying world power split into constantly warring blocs. A devastating Final War ravaged the Earth and nearly destroyed all sentient life, but one surviving Saurian, the brilliant scientist and inventor Sssethas Ruul, decided that he could not let his people die out forever.

Ruul discovered that other Earths existed in dimensions parallel to his own. He tore through the fabric of reality and crossed into one of these dimensions in search of a new home for the dwindling Saurian people. He found another Earth, but one where simians had become the dominant species: Earth-Prime.

Now going by the name Cerebrus Rex, Ruul plans to scour the Earth of its disgusting primates and turn the planet into a new home for the Saurian empire. His latest plan is to construct an interdimensional por-

tal through which he can march his armies and conquer the world. He has struck a deal with a simian supervillain—a befuddling riddle-master known as Conundrum—to acquire parts for finishing his Saurian Gate. Rex feels no obligation to uphold bargains struck with primates, though, and cuts Conundrum loose the moment the man becomes too much trouble. Then he returns to work on the Saurian Gate, coming ever closer to the day when his plan can be realized.

IN THIS EXCITING ISSUE...

Cerebrus Rex came from a world ruled by intelligent dinosaurs. He finds Earth, with its primate civilization, a gross parody of his glorious home. Rex plans to open a portal from his home world to Earth, bringing through armies of dinosaurs with which he will conquer this world!

To construct the portal, Rex has designed and produced a small force of Saurian robots and agreed to give the plans for these “robosaurs” to another supervillain, the brilliantly twisted Conundrum. In exchange, Conundrum will rob factories and labs for the parts Rex needs to build more complex robosaurs and complete the portal. This way, Conundrum takes the risk and Rex stays safely under the radar.

What Rex didn’t anticipate was a group of talented and dedicated superheroes, who will do what it takes to protect the Earth. After Conundrum’s initial attack on the factory, the superheroes can track the villain to his bizarre funhouse lair. There, they learn that Conundrum was a mere pawn in a larger game. Rex has taken pains to hide his tracks, though, and there seems no way for the heroes to track down Conundrum’s coconspirator.

Fortunately, one of the components Conundrum stole had a secret GPS tracker on it. When one of Rex’s captive scientists activates the beacon, it gives the heroes the lead they need. They rescue the captive scientist and shut down one of Rex’s robosaur facilities by confronting its terrifying Roboverlord. Clues then lead the heroes into the sewers.

Once on the trail, the superheroes fight or bluff their way to Rex’s secret facility in an old subway station. There, they must face the villainous Saurian and his robot minions before he can open his portal and rule the Earth with his dinosaur army!

INVOLVING THE HEROES...

The adventure begins when a damaged and aggressive rogue robot charges onto an overpass and begins attacking vehicles. If the characters are known superheroes in the city, they could receive a call from local authorities asking for help.

If the characters are not yet established as local defenders, there are a number of ways they could learn of the Roguebot’s attack:

- PCs could be on or near the bridge when the Roguebot attacks and witness the destruction for themselves. If in civilian guise, the PCs will have to find a way to don their superhero disguises before engaging Roguebot, or risk exposing their true identities.
- A friend or relative of one PC could be on the bridge during the attack and call for help. The PCs could instead witness coverage of the attack on TV or social media.
- One of the PCs could have ties to the facility under attack by Conundrum. The facility director, Amy Yang, could reach out to the PC for help when Conundrum begins his robbery. On their way to the factory, the PCs spot the incident on the bridge.

PROBLEM POWERS

While not game-breaking, *Rise of the Tyrant* includes many robotic foes and opponents who rely on technology, so heroes who can shut down or control electronics may be at a huge advantage. You can balance this by including more flesh-and-blood opponents, such as adding members of the Fun-Time Gang to Conundrum’s lair and flesh-and-blood dinosaur clones to the final fight with Cerebrus Rex. Also remember that even mindless robotic opponents are allowed a Will check to resist powers to control or deactivate them.

Heroes who can communicate with machines may be able to learn clues much earlier than intended, such as the locations of Conundrum’s and Cerebrus Rex’s lairs. You can decide that Conundrum’s robosaurs have had their memories wiped before being delivered, keeping the adventure’s true mastermind hidden for now, but don’t be afraid to let technologically inclined heroes use the powers they have purchased, even if it simplifies some of the investigations.

Whatever brings the characters to the bridge and the Roguebot’s attack, make it clear that innocent civilian lives are at stake. Vehicles’ occupants are at risk from crushing damage, flying shrapnel, or even falling off the bridge. Panic is also a threat. As people start to get out of their cars and try to run for it, there’s the risk of trampling damage or people getting pushed into the Roguebot’s path.

SCENE 1

CONFLICT SCENE

DISASTER ON THE OVERPASS

To begin the adventure, read or paraphrase the following:

It’s another ordinary afternoon. Commuters do their best to hurry home, but rush hour traffic leads to bumper-to-bumper congestion. On an overpass near the industrial district, citizens wait for the gridlock to clear.

Then a shriek of metal-on-metal splits the air. Brake lights flare off and on as cars try to pull ahead, but there’s no space for anyone to move. The vehicles are stationary targets as a twelve-foot bipedal robot strides through the traffic. The robot grasps the bumper of the nearest car and—with almost casual grace—flips the vehicle upside down. The car’s occupant screams as he dangles from his seatbelt.

This scene occurs on a highway overpass near Hanover. At the nearby Exotech Robotics factory, a supervillain named Conundrum attacked the workers and stole some valuable equipment. During the robbery, Conundrum’s minions accidentally activated a prototype construction robot. The damaged robot went berserk and wandered away from the factory, eventually winding up at the overpass. It mistook the vehicles on the overpass for components that require evaluation, and none of them are passing inspection.

This encounter is a fairly straightforward combat with a single opponent. Encourage new players to experiment with different maneuvers and actions. Use the **Rush Hour Hazards** to help keep the fight from feeling too repetitive and help the heroes earn Hero Points.

KEY POINTS

The overpass sits 30 feet above the main road. A fall over the edge inflicts damage rank 4. This likely won't impede the PCs too much but is a serious fall for any civilians.

The people on the bridge are terrified, and there's a din of honking and screaming once the Roguebot attacks (plus the shrieking metallic noises of the robot tearing vehicles apart). Any hearing Perception checks have a -2 circumstance penalty.

RUSH HOUR HAZARDS

Though most of this scene involves the heroes fighting a robot, other problems can arise to keep the entire group from attacking at once.

Falling Citizens: People or whole cars are pushed off the bridge's sides during the fight, or a panicked individual may jump, thinking they have a better chance of surviving the fall than the thrown cars. Catching a falling person requires a Dexterity check (DC 5). If a PC catches a falling person, they can subtract their Strength rank from the falling damage rank; a fall from this 20-foot overpass is Damage rank 4. Both the hero and the falling person suffer any remaining damage. Catching a midsize car requires a minimum lifting Strength of 7, while a bus requires Strength 10 or higher.

Managing the Crowd: Panicking citizens begin to endanger themselves and others. Ordering a civilian to take actions—such as running away or hiding—requires a Standard action and a successful Persuasion check (DC 10); double the number of people who listen for every Degree of Success beyond the first. If you want a minor challenge, only four citizens need to be guided away, but for a greater challenge increase this number to eight or sixteen.

Collapsing Bridge: If damaged (or exciting), the bridge begins to give way thanks to the strain of the fight and thrown cars, listing and groaning. Supporting the collapsing bridge requires a total lifting Strength of 8 the first round. The required rank increases by +1 each round. Heroes will also need some way to reach the bridge from underneath, like Flight or Growth, or be able to apply their strength at a range with effects like Move Object or Create. You might combine this hazard with **Managing the Crowd**, previously, requiring most of the team to divide their attention, supporting the bridge long enough for teammates to clear out any remaining bystanders.

Award a Hero Point to any heroes who take the time to rescue civilians.

TACTICS

The Roguebot was a prototype construction robot being designed by Exotech Robotics—the Quality Assurance Robot, or QAR. Its job was to inspect and move large metal components. If the Roguebot found a component with flaws, it would break the piece down to be melted down and reformed.

During Conundrum's robbery (see **Scene 2**), the Roguebot was damaged and accidentally activated. It left the factory and wandered onto the overpass, where it mistook the vehicles there for components waiting to be inspected. Unfortunately, none of the vehicles are going to pass Roguebot's examination, and so the robot is busy breaking them down into chunks and throwing the pieces off the side of the overpass. Its normal failsafes aren't responding and many of its emergency safety systems haven't yet been installed.

FREEDOM CITY OR BEYOND?

While the presence of Conundrum and his home base in the Ocean Heights amusement park tentatively mean this adventure takes place in Freedom City, you can easily transport it to Emerald City or any other metropolis with a technology industry and a fun park. Conundrum could either be a local villain to this alternate campaign city or attempting to relocate his criminal enterprises to somewhere a little less infested with do-gooders after his recent parole. You will need to adjust Conundrum's riddle to point toward a local feature in your campaign city if you relocate the adventure.

ROLEPLAYING ROGUEBOT

The Roguebot is a straightforward combatant, ignoring anyone until they stop it from its appointed duty, then attempting to pummel enemies with its enormous fists or hurl cars at them. It has a rudimentary AI and voice control, on par with a smartphone or home assistant, but is currently ignoring all user commands.

Once the Roguebot is incapacitated, the PCs can dismantle it or bring it back to Exotech. Amy Yang is grateful if the Roguebot (or its parts) is returned to the facility, and she gets to work on analyzing what went wrong and building additional failsafes.

ROGUEBOT

PL 11

STR 12 STA — AGL 6 DEX 8 FGT 8 INT — AWE 8 PRE —

Powers: Elongation 1 (30 feet, limited to arms), Growth 4, Immunity 20 (Fortitude Effects), Movement 2 (Sure-footed 2), Senses 3 (Low-light Vision, Microscopic Vision, Radio), Speed 5 (60 MPH)

Advantages: Improved Initiative

Skills: Expertise: Construction 10 (+10), Perception 6 (+14)

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +10

Water Saw	+8	Close, Damage 12
Plasma Cutter	+8	Ranged, Damage 12

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+5	+6	—	—	+12

Totals: Abilities 46 + Powers 51 + Advantages 1 + Skills 8 (16 ranks) + Defenses 9 = 115

WRAP-UP

Once the PCs have ended the Roguebot's threat, the civilians on the overpass cheer and thank them. People snap pictures of the superheroes and a news van arrives. If the PCs are newcomers, reporters ask the PCs who they are, what their powers are, and why they chose to intervene in this incident. The reporters also ask where the Roguebot came from and why it attacked these vehicles.

If the heroes do especially well or have fun responding to interview questions, feel free to award them Hero Points, especially if they didn't manage to earn any saving citizens.

If the PCs were asked to intervene (by a government official or a friend/family member), the same person asks the heroes to find out where the feral construct came from and why it attacked the vehicles. The PCs immediately notice a trail of destruction leading from the over-

pass back into the industrial district, marking the route the Roguebot took. Tracking its trail of destruction is fairly simple and requires no skill check.

The heroes might also choose to investigate the Roguebot's origins on their own. If the PCs examine the robot once it is offline, they can easily find several places that have been stamped with the Exotech Robotics logo, along with the company's local address.

Even if the heroes don't examine the robot itself, a successful Investigation or Expertise (business or technology) check (DC 12) means they recall that Exotech Robotics—a cutting-edge production facility—is the closest manufacturer of advanced robotic systems like this.

If the PCs seem uninterested in following up on Roguebot, **Amy Yang** (see **Scene 2**) manages to get to a computer terminal and activates the Roguebot's remote speakers. "Help!" she says. "If anyone can hear this, please help us! We've been attacked, and we have injured people here." The damaged speaker cuts out before Yang can give directions to the factory.

SCENE 2 INVESTIGATION SCENE

ATTACK, INTERRUPTED

When the heroes investigate the robotics factory, read or paraphrase the following:

A sprawling factory complex, ringed by a wire fence, takes up most of the block. The gate stands open, and bits of debris litter the parking lot. Twisted scraps of metal, some blackened and smoking, make a trail to the door of the main building.

More destruction awaits inside the factory. Holes in the walls show where large pieces of machinery have been ripped away. Storage lockers have been forced open and emptied. Trailing cables indicate that computers have been stolen as well. Four people in lab coats, bound and gagged, lie on the floor.

The Exotech robotics factory is located in Hanover, north of Wading River. It was just robbed by a supervillain and his minions, leaving it in a terrible state. The PCs can investigate and learn more about what happened.

The factory manager, **Amy Yang**, and four technicians were working at the factory when Conundrum attacked. She describes the scene to the PCs: "It was an ordinary day, and then the doors blew open. A masked man with some kind of puzzle pattern on his leotard burst in, along with a bunch of muscleheads and some snappy little robots. There was no way we could fight them. They tied us up and then ransacked the lab. The leader, the guy in the costume, he seemed to know exactly what he was looking for. He stole a bunch of data from the computers and some control modules. But one of his goons damaged the QAR-57, and it went berserk and I think he cut out before he got everything he wanted. They left this, though." She points out an envelope on the table that she and her technicians have refused to touch, for fear it's a trap. See **The Riddle of Conundrum**.

Yang can give a more detailed description of the man who attacked the factory as well: "He was about six feet tall and wore a purple leotard with puzzle pieces on it, like a jigsaw. His face was completely covered with a white mask, and there was a big black question mark

across the front. The guys who were with him wore black clothes with question marks on them, and clown masks. The clown masks were almost scarier than the attack robots—I hate clowns!"

If the PCs ask, Yang can give them a list of the stolen equipment. "This is all very advanced equipment," she adds. "Judging by what happened with the QAR-57, this guy doesn't care if people get hurt. He stole our prototype HyperCortex processor. Only someone with really advanced scientific knowledge could use these components. The crate was tagged with a GPS locator, but it must have been damaged in the robbery, because I haven't been able to get a signal."

EXOTECH ROBOTICS

The factory is called Exotech Robotics and is owned by a private electronics and computer firm with no obvious ties to any criminal activity.

Conundrum left the factory shortly after the QAR-57—the Roguebot—began rampaging, so by the time the superheroes arrive he has been gone for at least an hour.

The disarray inside the factory backs up Amy Yang's story. She confirms that the Roguebot came from the factory; it was a quality assurance robot model 57—nicknamed "Carst" by the technicians—that Conundrum's minions damaged during the heist.

Amy and the technicians are not seriously hurt, but if a PC wants to offer medical treatment or aid you can describe some minor injuries and award a Hero Point for their public service.

With an appropriate DC 20 Expertise check (supervillains, criminals, or popular culture for example), the PCs can identify the man Amy Yang describes as **Conundrum**, a puzzle-obsessed villain who usually limits himself to labyrinthine schemes and kidnappings, not blatant theft. Conundrum is known for leaving riddles and puzzles at the scenes of his crimes. Robbing a robotics factory seems out of character for him.

THE HYPERCORTX PROCESSOR

Developed by ExoTech's computers division, the HyperCortex is a powerful computer board with the processing power of a supercomputer, but it must be maintained at sub-zero temperatures for its superconductor parts to function properly. The company sent a few sample processors to their robotics division to experiment with integrating the processors into their AI projects, but the upgrade is simply too delicate and its cooling requirements too stringent to easily incorporate into robot systems. The HyperCortex is better suited for permanent emplacements, and ideal for handling huge amounts of data like one would need for quantum physics experiments, rather than the pattern recognition and fast reorganization required for AI. Amy Yang is happy to discuss all this with any heroes who ask or show an interest in technology.

CONUNDRUM'S ROBOTS

If the heroes ask about Conundrum's robots, Yang remarks that they were marvelous examples of the discipline—lightweight, responsive, and graceful. She adds that they looked like lizards, but one of her technicians chimes in to say they were clearly giant birds. After this, she spirals off into guessing about their design, materials, and capabilities in technical terms.

The robots were four Robosaurs (see the **Cast** section), provided by Cerebrus Rex as added muscle for Conundrum's robberies.

THE RIDDLE OF CONUNDRUM

In an envelope on a lab table, the PCs find a note. Conundrum cannot resist leaving his signature riddles at the scenes of his crimes. It reads:

a building of steel reaching up to the sky;
a giant who stands well Above everyone;
the slopes of mount Everest, where norgay did Climb;
Or a great redwood tree blotting the sun.
untangle the Ribbon that binds them together,
and you shall arrive at my lair—if you're clever.

The riddle Conundrum has left behind has two components to it. First, the four lines that begin the riddle all reference things with great height. The players may determine this on their own. If they haven't identified the link after a few minutes, the PCs can attempt DC 10 Intellect checks, DC 15 Expertise checks (Codes, Geography, or Puzzles would be suitable specializations), or DC 20 Investigation checks to recognize that the riddle is talking about tall things.

Second, the capital letters in the riddle spell out the word "AECOR." If players don't piece this together after a few minutes, allow their characters to notice that the random capitalization seems important with a DC 10 Intellect check. If they don't recognize the word "aecor," a DC 15 Expertise (science) check or knowing the Latin language recognizes the word as the Latin term for a flat plain or the ocean. A PC can also take a few minutes to look up the definition of aecor on the Internet.

Once the PCs have both clues in hand, they can attempt a team Investigate or Expertise (City, Current Events, or Pop Culture) check (DC 20). On a success, the PCs recall the Ocean Heights amusement park on the edge of the city, which stands on one of the flattest stretches of ground in the city.

If the PCs have trouble with either of the clues, Amy Yang can decipher one clue (but not both) to keep the plot moving forward. Alternatively, the heroes can hit the street and track down Conundrum's lair using investigative and social skills.

If the PCs decipher the riddle on their own, award them each a Hero Point.

WRAP-UP

While Scene 2 doesn't provide any direct conclusions, it tells the PCs that the supervillain Conundrum is concocting a new scheme involving robots. His puzzle even tells the PCs where he's hiding.

If the PCs completely fail to figure out the riddle, they can take a day to research and reflect on the puzzle. After 24 hours, they realize the puzzle is pointing them to Ocean Heights. In the meantime, Conundrum boosts his defenses, adding two of each type of minion (Melee and Ranged) to the Fun-Time Gang in **Scene 3**.

SCENE 3

CONFLICT SCENE

A FUN-TIME AT THE PARK

When the heroes arrive at Ocean Heights amusement park, read or paraphrase the following:

Ocean Heights amusement park stands at the edge of the city overlooking the Century Narrows, its colorful buildings and cheerful atmosphere muted by the stillness of late night. Its rides stand silent. Leering painted faces look down from every sign and booth, while the howling ocean wind pushes everything into gentle, creaking motion.

The adventure assumes the PCs investigate the amusement park after hours, when there are fewer people to distract them or be caught in the middle of a fight. All the current security guards are secretly members of the Fun-Time Gang, keeping an inconspicuous eye out for trouble. If they investigate during business hours, the opposition remains the same, but the heroes must contend with innocent bystanders as well.

The PCs have no difficulty entering. A chain-link fence surrounds Ocean Heights, but teenagers and thugs have made numerous openings in the fence over the years that staff have haphazardly patched. They may instead purchase tickets during the day and hide until the park closes at 9 pm. Most of the staff leave by 10.

Conundrum has made his lair in a secret chamber below the funhouse, and once the PCs arrive in the park, the building lights up and crackling circus music begins to play from the interior.

As the superheroes make their way through the park, they encounter Conundrum's group of hired thugs: The Fun-Time Gang. A speaker crackles to life with a hysterical voice, announcing:

"So, you solved my little riddle. I trust a good time was had by all. Or at least it will. You can visit my house for a few laughs, but first my neighbors want to play a little game. The fun is just beginning."

THE AMUSEMENT PARK

Ocean Heights park is filled with fast rides and shoddily constructed booths, which can make for an exciting combat arena. If a character climbs onto a booth, roll a d20 each round; on a result of 1–5 the structure collapses, inflicting Damage 4 to anyone standing on it from the fall and debris and leaving the character prone. A successful DC 14 Dodge check escapes this damage and the prone condition.

The rides count as unstable terrain, imposing a –2 circumstance penalty on attack checks, skill checks, and active defenses unless the character has the Movement (sure-footed) power. Each round a hero spends on a ride, roll 1d20. On a 1–5, some moving part of the ride collides with the character (or a character on a moving part of the ride slams into a tunnel, overhead sign, or other obstruction). This collision inflicts Damage 8, which a hero can halve with a DC 18 Dodge check. The Fun-Time Gang's Favored Environment Advantage allows them to ignore the circumstance penalty imposed by rides.

The Fun-Time Gang tries to lure heroes into precarious situations.

TACTICS

Conundrum recruited the Fun-Time Gang to help secure his hide-out and assist him on robberies. These carnival- and clown-themed henchpeople specialize in making the most out of the rides and atmosphere of the amusement park. Their Favored Environment Advantage lets them stand on the various rides and booths without suffering a penalty. There are two members of the gang for each PC: one with a melee weapon and one with a ranged weapon.

FUN-TIME GANGSTER

PL 5

Minions. See **Cast** section.

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +1

Carnival-Themed Weapon	+5	Close or Ranged, Damage 5
Pistol	+3	Ranged, Damage 3
Unarmed	+1	Close, Damage 2

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+4	+4	+3	+1	+6/3*

*without armor

Conundrum's speech when the heroes arrive—mentioning a “good time,” “laughs,” and “fun”—is a clue to his lair in the funhouse. Even if the players don't pick up on this, they may correctly assume that any self-respecting villain will lair in a funhouse. The heroes can also shake down a beaten crook to learn the location of Conundrum's lair.

Once the Fun-Time Gang is dispatched, the way is clear for the superheroes to enter the funhouse and confront Conundrum. But first, they must make it past his last line of defense: The Mirror Maze.

SCENE 4

CHALLENGE SCENE

THE MIRROR MAZE

When the heroes enter the funhouse, read or paraphrase the following:

Leering faces adorn the exterior of the funhouse. Inside, the gadgets that delight visitors by day seem sinister in the dark.

Conundrum constructed his lair beneath the mirror maze in the center of the funhouse. To reach it, the heroes must find the secret door in the mirror maze and pass through a gauntlet of deadly traps Conundrum set. Finding their way through the maze requires the PCs to use their skills to the fullest, and failure results in humiliation or injury.

The mirrors are metal rather than glass, with a Toughness of 8.

FUN FOR WHO?

As the PCs move through the mirror maze, they encounter various traps. If Conundrum is alerted by the alarms in his lair, he sends a pack of robosaurs to attack the PCs, making the hazards far more dangerous. See the **Tactics** section for details.

SECRET DOOR

To find the secret door to Conundrum's lair, the PCs must search the mirror maze. This is a DC 18 challenge sequence. Heroes may use the Perception skill or get creative, using Expertise (architecture) to make educated guesses based on the building's layout or Technology to trace the wiring. On a failed skill check, the hero and any characters with them encounter one of the maze's hazards: the taser darts or adhesive foam. If the PCs accumulate two or more Degrees of Failure, they set off an alarm and Conundrum releases minions into the maze.

The heroes must accumulate four or more Degrees of Success to finally locate the secret door to Conundrum's lair.

TASER DARTS

Panels in the walls slide open, revealing six pipes loaded with taser darts. Each superhero can attempt a DC 13 Perception check to notice the moving panels. If at least one superhero succeeds at the Perception check and warns the party, everyone can attempt to dodge the coming attack. There appear to be dozens of darts, thanks to the reflective environment. A hero who scores at least two Degrees of Success on their Perception check (a 23 or higher) can identify the exact location of the launchers and does not suffer a penalty on the Dodge check against them.

Moments after the panels open, the launchers begin firing taser darts across the hall. Heroes may attempt DC 16 Dodge checks, with a –2 circumstance penalty thanks to the numerous reflections obscuring the launchers' exact locations. On a failed check, the hero is struck for Affliction 6 (Resisted and Overcome by Fortitude; Impaired, Disabled, Paralyzed). If heroes succeed at their Dodge checks, the Fortitude DC is only 13, and if they succeed by two or more Degrees, then they dodge all the darts.

TUNNEL OF FOAM

In a long hallway, the panels in the ceiling slide open and drop adhesive foam. All PCs can attempt a DC 20 Perception check to hear the rasp of the panels sliding open overhead. If at least one PC succeeds at the Perception check and warns the party, superheroes targeted by the foam can attempt a DC 18 Dodge check to evade an Area Affliction 8 (Resisted by Dodge, Overcome by Damage; Hindered and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Immobile).

One round after the foam launchers' activation, an electronic eye begins scanning the room. Any character not entangled by foam may attempt to destroy the eye with an attack (DC 18) or disable it with a DC 18 Technology check. If allowed to scan, the eye begins firing a laser at a random target each round (Ranged Damage 8).

The foam is Toughness 8 once it adheres, and can only be escaped by breaking it or with a successful DC 18 Sleight of Hand check; either attempt is a standard action. A superhero can assist a trapped companion by making the check a Teamwork check.

TACTICS

If the PCs set off an alarm by scoring two or more Degrees of Failure or by deliberately challenging him, Conundrum sends robosaurs after them. There is one robot guardian for every PC. Like the Fun-Time Gang, these robosaurs are minions.

Conundrum only releases robosaur guards to attack the PCs once, regardless of how many times they trigger alarms.

DEINONYCHUS ROBOSAUR

PL 6

Minion. See the **Cast** section.

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +8

Bite		+7	Close, Damage 5	
DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+7	+7	—	+3	+5

WRAP-UP

Once the PCs locate the secret door down to Conundrum's true lair, they can move on **Scene 5**.

SCENE 5

CONFLICT SCENE

THE PUZZLE SOLVED... OR IS IT?

Once the heroes enter the lair, read or paraphrase the following:

The winding paths of the underground lair—no doubt some forgotten control center for the park above—lead to its heart: a huge chamber filled with 70s-era equipment from the amusement park above. The walls are painted with wide stripes of alternating colors and disorienting shards of mirror. A jumble of upright roller coaster tracks and cars form a barrier halfway across the room. The only way through the barrier is a slowly rotating tunnel painted with images of prancing devils. Machinery hisses and chugs, powering unseen attractions.



On the other side of the barrier, a wide flight of uneven steps leads to a platform. Banks of tall computers sit against the wall, behind tables covered with bits of electronic equipment. A mural of question marks in different designs decorates the wall.

Mist drifts down from vents in the ceiling, filling the room with a haze that makes it difficult to see anything other than the largest objects in the room.

This is Conundrum's hidden sanctum, where he dreams up devious puzzles. Of late he's been experimenting with the robosaurs Cerebrus Rex provided as payment. Conundrum sees the potential in robot minions that can recite riddles or act as mobile components in puzzles—he can work with their dinosaur forms for the time being but has plans to create robot minions in all different shapes by reverse-engineering the Saurian technology. At least, he will if the PCs don't stop him.

Conundrum sits on a raised platform on the far end of the room, protected by the height and the barrier, which provide him with Total Cover from attacks in the front half of the room. The barrier is mostly metal and can take a fair amount of damage thanks to its modular, flexible construction. It is Toughness 9.

LAIR CONDITIONS

Conundrum has laced his lair with traps. In addition to these traps, you may decide to use the taser dart and adhesive foam traps from Scene 4. This effectively counts as "editing the scene"; award any heroes affected by these additional traps a Hero Point.

MIST

The PCs may be concerned by the mist blowing from the ceiling vents, but the mist is simply a cosmetic effect. The mist grants partial concealment to anything within 10 feet, and full concealment to anything beyond 10 feet.

SPINNING TUNNEL

If a hero enters the spinning tunnel, it speeds up dramatically and spikes spring from the walls. Any PC in the tunnel when it speeds up must succeed at a DC 18 Acrobatics or Dodge check to make it through unscathed; otherwise they must resist Damage 8. A PC has to put weight on the tunnel's surface to deploy the trap; flying or jumping PCs don't trigger the trap unless they touch down.

STAIRS

If a PC puts pressure on the stairs leading up to Conundrum's raised platform (such as by walking on them), the stairs collapse, revealing a pit beneath. Any PC on the stairs must succeed at a DC 15 Dodge check or fall 20 feet into the ball pit below, suffering Damage rank 3 (the balls cushion the landing somewhat). Conundrum laced the balls with a mind-numbing pheromone that acts as Affliction 9 (Resisted and Overcome by Will; Entranced, Stunned, Controlled [stay in the ball pit]).

Conundrum's own experience with his traps means opponents do not gain concealment from him in the mist and he can move through the tunnel and stairs without danger. His robosaurs are not so adept.

ADVERSARIES

The tricky Conundrum makes his final stand in this control room. The PCs' passage through the mirror maze likely alerted the villain to their presence. He's concealed robosaurs—one for each PC—among the amusement park equipment in the forefront of the room, as well as an equal number on his side of the barrier. If he was alerted by the alarms, Conundrum hides behind a false panel on the far side of the room, waiting to strike until the PCs are engaged with the robosaurs.

ROLEPLAYING CONUNDRUM

Conundrum is a clever villain but gets caught up in proving his own intellect. He isn't much of a fighter, and instead relies on trickery, traps, and his new robotic minions. If he thinks there's an opportunity to lure a PC through the tunnel or onto the stairs (using the Trick function of the Deception skill) such as taunting them from atop his platform, he'll do so, but otherwise he uses his Deception skill and Set-Up to feint or demoralize heroes and leave them vulnerable to his robosaurs.

At your discretion, this Conundrum may be a fake—a stand-in, pawn, or robot meant to misdirect the heroes away from the capricious villain, who may return to vex the heroes in the future. Either way, use the same statblock.

ROBOSAURS

Conundrum is accompanied by two robosaurs for each PC—half in front of the barrier separating his control room, and the other half behind the barrier with him. The robosaurs here are his first attempt to modify Cerebrus Rex's designs; each possesses the Interpose Advantage, and can step in to take an attack meant for Conundrum.

If all six robosaurs are destroyed or incapacitated and Conundrum is injured, he attempts to flee down a trapdoor that fills in with more of his adhesive expanding foam in his wake. If he escapes via this plot device, award each character a Hero Point.

CONUNDRUM

PL 9

See the **Cast** section. Conundrum currently benefits from Partial Concealment, imposing a –2 penalty to opponents' attack checks.

COMBAT

INITIATIVE •5

Pistol	+8	Ranged, Damage 3
Unarmed	+8	Close, Damage 0

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+13	+13	+4	+13	+3/1*

*without Defensive Roll

DEINONYCHUS ROBOSAUR

PL 6

Minion. See the **Cast** section. The robosaurs currently benefit from Partial Concealment, imposing a –2 penalty to opponents' attack checks and their own attack checks.

COMBAT

INITIATIVE •8

Bite	+7	Close, Damage 5
------	----	-----------------

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+7	+7	—	+3	+5

WRAP-UP

As the fight ends, read or paraphrase the following:

A booming voice echoes through the chamber, coming from a falcon-size robotic lizard-bird clinging to the ceiling.

"I am disappointed, Conundrum. So few sapiens show the promise you do, I had hoped to keep you as a preferred pet. No matter. I have all I need now. Consider our arrangement... extinct." The mechanical messenger jerks and smokes for a moment, then explodes in a shower of sparks.

The messenger is a robarchaeopteryx (see the **Cast** section), which observed the fight and broadcast the events back to Cerebrus Rex. If Conundrum escaped, the messenger confirms that this straightforward scheme was in fact a job performed for an unseen benefactor.

If Conundrum is subdued, he confesses to having robbed Exotech Robotics. "I admit it! I used my wits and cunning to devise the perfect robbery. The fools in the factory didn't stand a chance! If it wasn't for my bumbling minions, we would have gotten well away. Instead, they damaged that horrible robot and almost ruined everything."

When questioned as to the motivation behind the robbery, Conundrum explains he was hired by another supervillain. "A charming and persuasive fellow offered me these delightful robots in exchange for my help with the robbery. I imagine he needed someone with a quick wit to carry out such an important task. I had such plans for my new metal minions. Alas, they will have to be postponed."

When pressed for details about his silent partner, Conundrum admits he doesn't know who hired him, though he has largely deduced his benefactor's identity and hints at it in his own way. "He used a burner phone that lead in circles; a rather inglorious vanishing. He gave me a detailed taxonomy of everything he wanted stolen and arranged a drop point for the goods to evade any terrible interference. We arrived with the truck full of parts and my new robots were waiting for me. I don't believe he saw us at all. A bit taken aback by their motif; I suppose he needs therapy, but then I'm stretching. But I'm quite content to be free of that tyrant's oversight." Conundrum's longwinded speech is a sly admission of his employer's identity: "taxonomy" meaning the latin classification, beginning with "terrible" (the taxonomic clade "dinosauria" meaning "terrible lizard"), "saw us" ("saurus"), "therapy" ("therapod"), and finally "tyrant" for "tyrannosauridae." If the PCs don't immediately pick out his meaning, that's fine; they'll cross paths with Cerebrus Rex soon enough. If the PCs press for more information, he simply says "Alas, but I've already told you exactly who to look for."

A list of the parts desired can be found on Conundrum's tablet. If a PC wants to review the list of parts, a successful DC 18 Technology check can tell that most of the parts listed—especially a large quantity of meteor rock stolen from the city's natural history museum—would be useless for constructing robots. With three or more Degrees of Success, the hero can realize that the parts could be used to generate an Einstein-Rosen bridge—in theory—using the iridium-rich rock from the museum as a quantum insulator.

As the PCs turn Conundrum over to the authorities, you may wish to reveal this Conundrum to be a robot double—the first duplicate made with the technology copied from the robosaur designs. He may stick in an audio loop, the body may simply come apart, or the police may discover a metal faceplate beneath the mask. Conundrum is a tricky villain, averse to risking his own neck, and such a decoy fits his person-

ality. Some groups may find this trickery disappointing, so use it only if your heroes are feeling a little too confident or you hope to make this master of puzzles a recurring villain later in your campaign. Whether he escapes or is captured, he does not re-appear in this adventure.

The PCs may decide to follow up on the phone number that called Conundrum's private line (a burner phone, since discarded) or the drop site for the stolen goods (an empty warehouse near the industrial zone). Both clues are dead ends. It seems, for the moment, that the PCs' investigations have been stymied.

At this point, the PCs may take hours or days in between this half of the adventure and the next.

SCENE 6

ROLEPLAY SCENE

THE BEACON AWAKENS

The few clues Conundrum provided about the mastermind behind the Exotech robotics factory robbery lead to dead ends, and the trail goes cold. With no further leads at hand, there is little to do but wait. Days pass and the city returns to normal.

Sometime after the fight at the amusement park, Amy Yang reaches out in whatever way she can—directly if the heroes left contact information, but privately by police or scientific agencies if they did not—asking the heroes to meet her at the factory.

When the PCs arrive, Yang whisks them into her office. "Remember I told you the thieves had stolen a prototype processor, the HyperCortex? Its GPS beacon was damaged when it was stolen, but I kept monitoring for it, just in case. The HyperCortex is worth almost as much as everything else they stole combined. Earlier today, the beacon went off! It only stayed on for about a minute, but I got a location and wrote it down for you. If you find the HyperCortex, it would really help me out!"

She provides the PCs with the location of the HyperCortex's GPS beacon: a shop squeezed between the Fens and Midtown called Hudson's Antiques, about a half-hour from the Exotech factory.

Once the heroes reach the shop, read or paraphrase the following:

Behind the glass windows of the shop sit an assortment of dusty antiques. Most seem to be cheap and in relatively poor condition, but there are a few various odds and ends—Civil-War-era spurs, a Victorian sword cane, a set of Elvis records—on display which look to be well-maintained.

Inside the shop, a portly man with a fringe of hair around his shiny head sorts through a bag of tarnished Spanish coins.

The shop's proprietor, **Bob Hudson**, works for Cerebrus Rex. His job is to admit Rex's minions and suppliers when given the password and to maintain the false store front that hides one of Rex's labs. He lacks combat skills but is very loyal (and an expert on Americana folk art). Use the **Bystander** archetype from the *Deluxe Gamemaster's Guide*, with his Expertise ranks in American History and Deception 8 (+8).

The antique shop holds a few items of actual value, but a successful DC 15 Expertise (History or related) check determines that most of the stock is junk. This keeps too many customers from browsing, which adds to the hidden laboratory's security.

PROACTIVE INVESTIGATIONS

The adventure as-written provides a convenient break point in the action between hunting down Conundrum and hunting Cerebrus Rex, and provides the heroes with their next clue via plot contrivance. This can be disappointing to players who like to feel more proactive, so if your players want to track the GPS beacon themselves, allow them by making Scene 6 into an investigation scene. You might introduce a challenge sequence of Investigate, Persuasion, and Technology skill checks to track Rex's suppliers now that the characters have a sample robosaur to study, all leading to Hudson's antique shop. You may also allow tech-savvy heroes to learn more about the GPD locator Amy Yang described and remotely activate it. Heroes with psychic or mystical powers might instead use a broken robosaur as a focus for their powers and track its origin back to Hudson's Antiques.

HUDSON'S ANTIQUES

The antique shop proprietor, Bob Hudson, denies knowing anything about a robbery, robots, or a GPS signal—and he isn't technically lying, as Hudson prefers to remain ignorant about everything going on beneath his store. With an Insight check opposed by Hudson's Deception (+8), a PC can tell that Hudson is untrustworthy and suspicious of the PCs. He does not appear to be mind-controlled, but clearly wants the superheroes (or nosy customers) to leave his shop. The longer they stay, the more nervous he gets.

Interrogating Hudson requires an Intimidation check opposed by Hudson's Will defense (+0). If successful, Hudson confesses that there is a secret door in his shop, but truthfully says he's never been through it. He accepts under-the-table payments to help keep his struggling shop afloat, and lets people through with the proper password. He doesn't know who his employer is but says it's a man with a resonant voice and charming phone presence.

Searching the store takes 20 minutes and, with a successful DC 20 Investigation check, reveals the hidden door leading to the lab. If the PCs try to conduct the search with Hudson present, he presses a panic button to alert the **Roboverlord** (see **Scene 7**). If the PCs attack Hudson or fail an Intimidate check against him, he likewise presses the panic button and starts screaming, both of which alert the Roboverlord.

WRAP-UP

If the PCs make a lot of noise (such as by attacking Hudson) or if Hudson presses the panic button, the Roboverlord orders the robosaurs in the hidden factory to prepare for an attack. The robosaurs hide beneath lab tables, ready to ambush the superheroes as they enter the room. The Roboverlord forces the human workers into a storage closet except for one, **Chatar Singh**, whom he keeps out to use as a shield.

SCENE 7

CONFLICT SCENE

CAPTIVE WORKERS REVOLT!

When the heroes investigate the hidden door, read or paraphrase the following:

A featureless, white-paneled hallway opens up into a long chamber with a high ceiling. The walls are white plaster and fluorescent lights hang above steel tables, making the scene almost painfully bright. Gears and motors, soldering irons, circuit boards, and other assorted equipment cover the tables. Along the walls stand giant machines, some with pincer-like arms, others with hollow centers filled with lasers.

Three human scientists work here, kidnapped by Cerebrus Rex in order to build more and more advanced robosaurs. The scientists are kept in line by a flock of smaller robosaurs as well as their fearsome leader, the **Roboverlord**. This unique robosaur is more intelligent and ruthless than the others, and resembles a ten-foot bipedal stegosaur. At first the superheroes may mistake it for another mindless robot, but such an assumption could be fatal.

Several human henchmen also work in the lab, keeping the kidnapped scientists in line. They assist in fighting off the PCs with their laser rifles.

THE ASSEMBLY CHAMBER

The underground laboratory is filled with equipment the superheroes might try to use to gain an advantage in the battle. There are three machines with pincers that can grab and immobilize a robosaur or human minion by using a Technology check in place of an attack check to make a Grab attack (the arms have Strength 5, and will roll to maintain their grab every round without additional guidance).

There are two other machines with laser cavities inside. These lasers aren't strong enough to kill but are blindingly bright and can disrupt delicate circuitry. A robosaur or minion thrust into a laser field becomes visually Disabled for two rounds (no resistance check). Pushing a target into one of the laser arrays requires an opposed Strength check resisted by the target's Strength or Dodge.

In addition to the stairs up to the antique shop, a hatch and ladder at the far end of the hidden lab lead down to the city sewers (see **Wrap-Up**).

TACTICS

The **Roboverlord** guards Cerebrus Rex's human workforce here with the help of several armed human guards—one for each PC—and several robotic archaeopteryx drones—one for every two PCs.

ROBOVERLORD

The Roboverlord resembles a king-sized toy, but with a transparent sensory dome covering the top half of its head. It possesses a more advanced AI, and is capable of issuing orders and predicting Cerebrus Rex's needs. In addition, it commands a powerful laser cannon built into its tail.

The Roboverlord fights dirty. If alerted to the PCs' arrival (based on their actions in **Scene 6**), it uses human scientist **Chatar Singh** as a shield. This grants the Roboverlord partial cover, imposing a –2 circumstance penalty to attack checks against it. Singh is terrified and follows the Roboverlord's orders, although clever PCs might find a way to get him out of harm's way. A PC who misses the Roboverlord by two or more Degrees hits Singh instead (Toughness +0). If a PC focuses on freeing Singh before attacking the Roboverlord, award them a Hero Point.

The Roboverlord uses its Inspire Advantage early in the combat as a standard action, granting all robosaurs in the room a +2 bonus on all

checks for the first round of combat, but not benefiting the human guards. Because villains don't have Hero Points, the Roboverlord can instead use its Luck Advantage to power this ability rather than gain the usual reroll the Advantage provides.

ROBOSAURS

Several robarchaeopteryx monitor the room for Cerebrus, occasionally delivering parts through the sewer access tunnels or leaving to spy on or arrange meetings with human agents. They are aggressive, but not especially clever opponents.

HIRED GUARDS

Cerebrus Rex keeps several human minions on the payroll to act as relays between his heartless robosaurs and human captives. The guards arrange for meals and bathroom breaks, and run errands in the city when a robot might attract attention. The human minions use the tables for cover while firing on the PCs. If the Roboverlord is destroyed, any remaining minions try to flee. The minions know nothing about Cerebrus Rex or his plans and in fact frequently argue over who their boss might be; one assumes they're working for Toy Boy while another is certain Doc Otaku is back on the scene.

ROBOVERLORD

PL 9

See **Cast** section.

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +10

Tail Blaster	+6	Ranged, Damage 10
Unarmed	+7	Close, Damage 10

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+5	+4	—	+5	+12

ROBARCHAEOPTERYX

PL 4

Minions. See **Cast** section.

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +4

Ultrasonic Cannon	+4	Ranged, Penetrating Damage 4
Unarmed	+3	Close, Damage –2

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+6	+5	—	+6	+2

HIRED GUARDS

PL 3

Minions. See **Cast** section

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +1

Submachine Gun	+1	Ranged, Multiattack, Damage 4
Unarmed	+2	Close, Damage 2

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+2	+2	+4	+0	+3/2*

*without armor

WRAP-UP

Once the PCs defeat the Roboverlord and its minions, Chatar Singh thanks them gratefully. "I've been trapped in this cursed place for a week! Those thugs and their robot allies grabbed me when I was walking home. They brought me here and forced me to work for them." Three other scientists have been locked in the adjoining supply room and have roughly similar stories.

Singh tells the superheroes that he is given daily instructions via USB drive brought by one of the human minions. "The instructions were very clear and quite ingenious. Obviously written by a skilled engineer. I was to use the supplied parts to upgrade these robotic dinosaurs and to make them more dangerous. I never met the person in charge, but the humans who came here always seemed afraid of him. I heard one call him 'the King.'"

Singh is the one who activated the HyperCortex's beacon. "When I saw the processor, I knew it came from a professional laboratory. They discarded the packaging and took the component down below, and I found the damaged GPS beacon while cleaning up. I took a risk and repaired it. I thought perhaps someone would come rescue me. I worried the overlord or whoever is in charge might notice the signal, so I only left it on for a bit. Thank goodness it worked!"

Finally, Singh can tell the PCs what he knows about Rex's operation. "I know the humans who came here often had muddy boots. A robot would have to clean up after they left. They smelled bad too, like bad eggs." He also notes that the robosaurs come and go from the hatch at the room's far end. The PCs should be able to guess that the mastermind's minions are traveling through the sewers. If they don't, an Investigation check (DC 15) can help them put the clues together. If Singh is incapacitated or the PCs are truly stuck, one of the scientists or human henchpeople in the room could have a rough map in his pocket showing the location of the antique shop and a red X denoting a nearby sewer access point.

SCENE 8

INVESTIGATION SCENE

TRACKING THE KING

With the clues gained from Chatar Singh, or from examining the minions in **Scene 7**, the PCs learn that the sewers lead to the lair of the mastermind, whom some of the minions call "Mr. King." They can descend into the sewers through the hatch in the assembly chamber, but from there they must find their own way to Cerebrus Rex's subway lair.

THE SEWERS

This part of the sewer system sees light use at this time of year, and the water on the floor is only ankle-deep. Stealth checks suffer a –2 penalty due to the sound of splashing water (unless a hero can fly or cling to the ceiling). The tunnel is small enough that most heroes won't be able to use the Flight power faster than walking speed, and heroes who depend on wings can't fly at all.

There is no light source in the sewer. The minions that travel this way bring flashlights along. The PCs will have to bring their own light, borrow a flashlight from the workshop, or be able to see in the dark.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

The minions who travel through the sewers have left a number of small traces behind. Scuff marks on the wall, discarded gum wrappers on ledges, the smell of cigarettes, threads caught on rough bricks, and other such signs mark the way to the checkpoint. Tracking the minions is a challenge sequence, requiring the PCs to accumulate six successes before three failures. PCs can use the following skills and DCs, but no one character can succeed at the same skill more than once: Expertise (streetwise) (DC 18, to separate clues from trash), Insight (DC 18, to guess at travelers' behavior), Investigate (DC 15, to spot subtle clues), Perception (DC 20, to find obvious tracks), and Technology (DC 20, to track increased power usage). PCs with the Tracking Advantage gain a +2 bonus on all their skill checks to follow the minions' trail. A hero with the Tracking Advantage or the Senses (Tracking) power automatically earns one success. A DC 20 Tracking check is required to follow the minions, and it takes 30 minutes to find the checkpoint.

Succeeding at six checks leads the PCs to Cerebrus Rex's lair. If the PCs fail three skill checks and can't find their way, a patrol of four robarchaeopteryx discovers them and attacks (see the **Cast** section). The PCs can then follow the trail of exhaust back to the checkpoint, without the need for a skill check.

The PCs might come up with other methods to find the lair, such as waiting for someone to come out of the sewers and ambushing, threatening, or mind-controlling them. A minion from Rex's lab does emerge from the sewers a day after the PCs find the robotics lab, trying to discover why there have been no communications from the Roboverlord.

The gate into the lair is locked, requiring a DC 20 Technology check to open. The gates have Toughness 7.

WRAP-UP

Thanks to the robarchaeopteryx drones in **Scene 7** (and possibly encountered in the tunnels as well), Cerebrus Rex is well aware of approaching visitors and is scrambling his remaining defenders to meet this threat as he completes the Saurian Gate. If the PCs failed in their initial challenge sequence and took extra time to find Cerebrus Rex's hideout, he has time to activate additional defenses.

Heroes familiar with the city can identify their final destination with a successful DC 18 Expertise (streetwise) check: the old central hub for the city's subway, closed decades ago when a larger complex was opened several miles away.

SCENE 9 CHALLENGE & CONFLICT SCENE

THE SAURIAN GATE

When the heroes finally enter Cerebrus Rex's hidden lair, read or paraphrase the following:

An old subway platform, sealed off and long disused, stretches along the edge of an old tunnel. Subway cars with their doors cut open sit against the walls, forming small workstations. Monitors lining the walls show newsfeeds from around the world.

Ranks of car-sized robotic dinosaurs stand motionless and dim in the subway tunnel, filling it with their silent rows.

An arch of black dominates this massive art deco chamber. In sharp contrast to the primitive monolith are shining metal nodes that line the inside of the arch. Cables connect to the electronics and lead back to a large bank of computers. They flicker to reveal images of vast jungles, massive ziggurats, and more recognizable scenes of cities around the globe. An attached screen shows a progress bar slowly ticking toward 100%.

Rex plans to use this interdimensional gate to open a portal back to his home world and bring most Saurian soldiers through. The arch itself is carved from meteorite rock rich in iridium. The metal nodes on the interior of the arch are meant to create the dimensional destabilization field that will open the way to Rex's world.

The Saurian Gate is complete, thanks to the materials Conundrum stole at the Exotech factory and the now-functional HyperCortex. The attached computers are running a final diagnostic of the machine, which will identify a number of issues in its construction. Once those issues are corrected, Rex can open a portal to his world and begin bringing his dinosaur armies through.

When the PCs confront him, Rex laughs at them in his rich voice:

"Foolish sapiens. You are far too late. No mere monkey could match my wit! Conundrum provided me the final materials I needed to complete my dimensional portal, the Saurian Gate. Soon, my armies will march across the face of your Earth. You pathetic primates will live under the rule of the true master of all Earths: Cerebrus Rex!"

The heroes can try to stop the gate by defeating Rex quickly or (more likely) by shutting down the gate. They can also attempt to destroy it, but this creates different problems (see **The Saurian Gate**, below).

KEY POINTS

The subway chamber is massive—one reason the twelve-foot-tall Cerebrus Rex chose it as his lair—and easily accommodates the tyrant and his large mechanical minions. A ten-foot-wide balcony, with 70's-era bodegas and restaurants, lines the outer wall some 20 feet overhead, and agile heroes might use this as cover against Rex and his robosaurs. The old balconies can't support much weight anymore; the floor cracks and strains under the weight of any creature with 4 or more ranks in Growth (such as Rex and his robosaurs), and immediately collapses if damaged.

Rex has excellent night vision and keeps this room quite dim. The room is dark enough to provide partial concealment to anyone who does not possess low-light or darkvision, or some other accurate sense.

The Saurian Gate is made of foot-thick stone and has Toughness 8.

THE SAURIAN GATE

The Saurian Gate's final diagnostic ticks away, and will automatically activate the gate at the end of the third round of combat. Any PC can recognize this with a cursory look at the devices. Delaying the gate's opening requires a successful DC 15 Technology check made as a Standard action; every Degree of Success on this check delays the gate's opening by one round. Actually shutting down the Saurian Gate

requires a total of three successful DC 20 Technology checks. Rex has programmed his computers in his native Saurian language, imposing a –5 circumstance penalty to any Technology checks for anyone who can't read it. A successful DC 15 Intellect check reduces this penalty to a –2. Heroes with the Comprehend (Languages or Machines) effect do not suffer this penalty.

Simply destroying the computer can also stop the gate's activation, but with consequences. Destroying the Saurian Gate (Toughness 8) before it activates discharges the dimensional energy it has been accumulating, creating a burst area Damage 10 effect. Destroying the Saurian Gate after the portal opens instead destabilizes the rift, inflicting the same Damage effect, but also teleporting Cerebrus Rex (and any other dimensional travelers nearby) away to battle the PCs another day.



TACTICS

While Cerebrus Rex has a hundred robosaurs ready to assist his armies, most are not yet active. He can activate a deinonychus robosaur remotely as a move action, or a ceratops robosaur as a standard action. He begins the fight with two ceratops robosaurs already active as guardians. If the PCs failed their challenge sequence to track Rex's hideout in **Scene 8**, he has also activated one deinonychus robosaur for every PC.

ROLEPLAYING CEREBRUS REX

Cerebrus Rex believes he fights for a good cause: conquering a home for what remains of his people... and acquiring a readily available slave force. As one of the foremost minds of his world, he can't imagine simple-minded simians posing any true threat to him, and begins this fight supremely overconfident, bragging of his intellect, of the glories of the Saurian empire, and of the feeble technologies wielded by Earth.

Cerebrus Rex is the mastermind behind all the incidents the PCs have faced so far. He's a cunning and ruthless opponent who uses his dimensional knowledge to give him an edge in battle. Cerebrus Rex has an exosuit that amplifies his natural strength and power, as well as a dimensional controller built into the arm that lets him warp space around his enemies. By activating the dimensional controller, he can stress an enemy's biological systems with a spatial distortion. He activates his Dimensional Cascade attack early in the fight, but otherwise relies on his more precise Spatial Shock as it won't harm any minions.

Should the heroes deactivate or destroy his Saurian Gate, Rex bellows:

"No! The impudence of you pests! But no matter! I can build a hundred gates, after I deal with you meddlesome mammals!"

Rex fights to the best of his ability, determined that the PCs will not defeat him. If Rex is badly wounded, he tries to teleport away.

ROBOSAURS

The deinonychus robosaurs are identical to those the PCs have faced previously, but Rex has added an additional design: the ceratops.

SAURIAN SOLDIERS

If Cerebrus Rex's Saurian Gate opens, two Saurian soldiers walk through on Rex's initiative each turn to join the fight. Unlike the robosaurs, the Saurian soldiers are not minions, and use the rules for normal villains. New Saurians continue to flood through each round until the gate is shut down or destroyed.

CEREBRUS REX

PL 12

See **Cast** section.

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +4

Dimensional Cascade	—	Ranged, Cone Area, Damage 11
Spatial Shock	—	Perception, Affliction 12 (Fort)
Unarmed	+8	Close, Damage 6 or Carnivore Teeth 8

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+10/6*	+10/6*	+11	+13	+12/6*

*without Exo-Suit

DEINONYCHUS ROBOSAUR

PL 6

Minion. See the **Cast** section.

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +8

Bite	+7	Close, Damage 5
------	----	-----------------

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+7	+7	—	+3	+5

CERATOPS ROBOSAUR

PL 8

Minion. See the **Cast** section.

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +0

Unarmed	+6	Close, Damage 10
---------	----	------------------

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+2	+2	—	+0	+14/10*

*vs. attacks from behind or unexpected attacks

SAURIAN SOLDIER

PL 7

See the **Cast** section.

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +1

Blaster Rifle	+4	Ranged, Damage 8
Carnivore Teeth	+5	Close, Damage 8
Unarmed	+5	Close, Damage 6

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+6	+7	+8	+5	+7

WRAP-UP

If Cerebrus Rex escapes, he vows vengeance on the heroes, seeing them as a threat to his future plans for conquering the earth. If the heroes instead defeat Rex, they can turn him over to the authorities. Rex winds up in prison and awaiting trial, where he will no doubt be handed a severe sentence... if he doesn't escape first.

Enterprising players may find other ways of dealing with the doomsday dinosaur, such as forcing him through his own Saurian Gate before destroying it. This may permanently exile Rex from Earth, or may merely be a temporary setback until he builds a new portal on his homeworld. He may also become trapped in the space between worlds (especially if the gate is destroyed), potentially becoming an intangible threat able to advise and manipulate human villains, but frustratingly incapable of interacting with the solid world until freed from his dimensional limbo.

EPILOGUE

The city is safe once more as the heroes drive the extradimensional warlord into hiding or banish him to another reality.

The secrets of Rex's lair are many. The PCs can examine the robosaurs and potentially learn Saurian insights that will help their own inventing. Amy Yang and/or Chatar Sing can help with the robosaur dissection, as both are fascinated by Rex's advanced technology. A reprogrammed robosaur may even make a suitable sidekick for technology-focused heroes.

The Saurian Gate has been destroyed or dismantled, but the superheroes may still be intrigued by it. If the PCs choose, they can try to restore the gate while ensuring no Saurians can emerge from the other side. Yang and Singh are not dimensional experts, but they can add their technological expertise to the project if the PCs wish. If the superheroes get the gate active again, they can conduct exploratory missions to the Saurian-ruled wastelands of the other side, leading to many exciting adventure opportunities.

REWARDS

The heroes earn two power points for the adventure. If they showed plenty of initiative or cleverness in unraveling this strange partnership, award them one additional power point. Their adventure may also leave them with access to strange technology, like leftover robots or even Cerebrus Rex's dimensional portal, paving the way for new and strange adventures (provided they don't disassemble the dangerous device and return its stolen parts). Little of this adventure includes public adulation after the initial battle with the Roguebot in **Scene 1**, but the heroes may also earn themselves contacts such as Amy Yang at Exotech or Chatar Singh. If anything unusual happens in the robotics/inventing industries, Yang or Singh can learn about it and warn the PCs. They could also serve as inventors or gadgeteers to help the PCs with building and repairing equipment.

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

There are several ways to extend this adventure into a longer adventure or story arc:

WHEN IS A BRAIN LIKE HAIR?

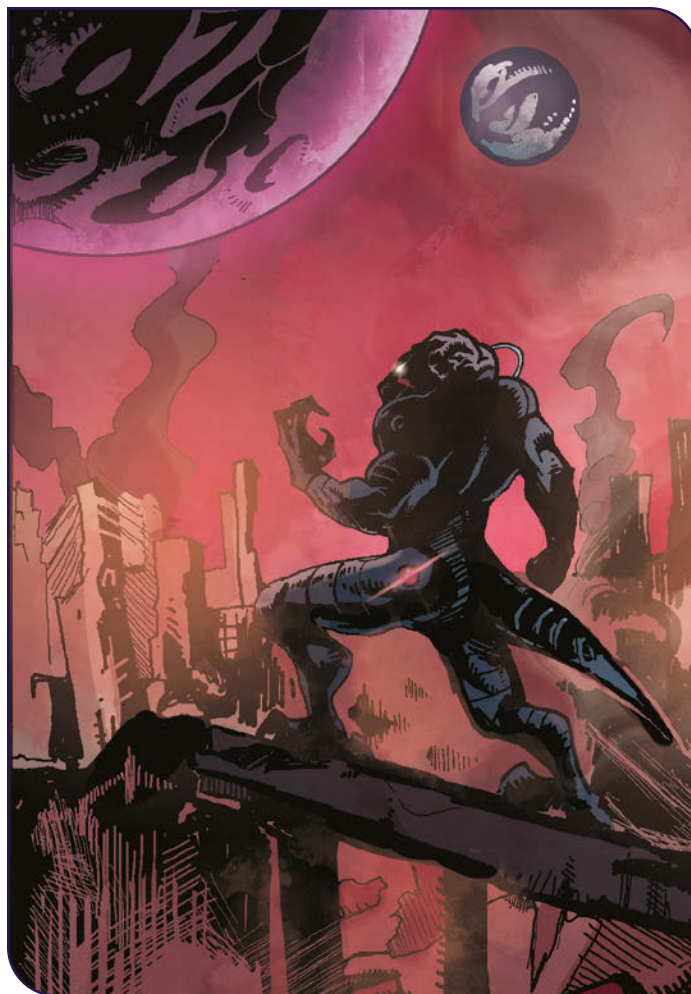
When it's teased. The easiest way to extend this adventure is to play up Conundrum's role more, spreading out the clues to his hideout across multiple heists. He might leave a riddle with a nonsense answer, strangely capitalized to spell out the word "Ocean" in one location and the word "Heights" at another, or leave riddles whose solutions point to common amusement park foods or rides, vague at first but increasingly specific with each new crime. Or you might make the crimes themselves more bizarre, with no obvious means of entry or no apparent thefts. The heroes may even have run-ins with the Fun-Time Gang and less powerful villains at these additional robberies.

AN EMPIRE AT MY FINGERTIPS

You might give Cerebrus Rex more soldiers or other Saurian agents, perhaps brought over as a test of his portal device and now spreading throughout the city to soften it up for invasion through acts of sabotage against infrastructure and the police. In addition to tracking the technological T-rex, the heroes must pause to stop other dinosaurs in the middle of disastrous deeds.

PEEPHOLE TO THE UNIVERSE

While the heroes power down and disassemble the portal itself, the spot where Cerebrus Rex built and tested the device remains a wound in the fabric of reality, one that may let through other Saurian agents or far more dangerous creatures from between dimensions. The he-



ros must stop these new threats while re-gathering all the returned parts to try and seal the breach, perhaps even needing to recruit Cerebrus Rex's genius to help them.

CAST

The following are the major characters encountered in *Rise of the Tyrant*, including their backgrounds and relevant game stats.

CONUNDRUM

One of Freedom City's more frustrating career criminals, Andre Keston is a master of puzzles but has also apparently gone legit after his latest round of therapy in prison. It is up to the Gamemaster to decide if the Conundrum working with Rex is indeed Andre Keston, a copycat stealing his gimmick, or a false front being manipulated by Keston to continue his criminal games from a safe distance (or a robot duplicate, made from his newly acquired Saurian technology).

Conundrum isn't a very skilled combatant and relies heavily on his minions to support him. He uses a combination of the Defend action to frustrate opponents and Set-Up to feint or taunt and leave heroes vulnerable to his minions' attacks.

Addition information on Conundrum can be found in *Freedom City, Third Edition*.

CEREBRUS REX

A genius-level intellect born to a dying world, Cerebrus Rex is a hero to his people and a conquering monster to the people of Earth-Prime. He sees nothing wrong with a strict social hierarchy—one that conveniently places tyrannosauroids like himself at the top and renders human beings as obedient and grateful slaves. In addition to his intellect and dimension-warping technology, he is a towering figure of muscle and teeth, capable of ripping foes limb from limb with his bare hands.

Addition information on Cerebrus Rex can be found in *Threat Report*.

THE FUN-TIME GANG

The Fun-Time Gang are carnival-themed thugs with more training and better equipment than the average goon. They're professional minions, working for supervillains who match their aesthetic, such as Wildcard, Toy Boy, and (depending on the time of year) Doc Holiday. Conundrum hired them when he moved into his funhouse lair to serve as security and general-purpose muscle. They have colorful names and themes, including Muscle Lass, Coaster, Candy Apple, Pitcher, Squirt, and Zipper, but use the same statblock. In addition to ordinary weapons, they wield carnival-themed gear like power mallets, electrified bamboo canes, weighted juggler's clubs, high-pressure squirt guns, and exploding baseballs.

FUN-TIME GANGSTER

PL 5

Minions

STR 2 STA 3 AGL 1 DEX 1 FGT 1 INT 0 AWE 1 PRE 2
Equipment: Light Armor (+3 Toughness), Carnival-Themed Weapon (Strength-Based Damage 4 or Ranged Damage 4), Pistol (Ranged Damage 3)

Advantages: Favored Environment (Carnival Rides), Equipment 4, Teamwork

Skills: Athletics 3 (+5), Close Combat: Carnival Weapon 4 (+5), Deception 4 (+6), Expertise: Games 6 (+6), Intimidation 3 (+5), Ranged Combat: Carnival Weapon 4 (+5), Vehicles 4 (+5)

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +1

Carnival-Themed Weapon	+5	Close or Ranged, Damage 5
Pistol	+3	Ranged, Damage 3
Unarmed	+1	Close, Damage 2

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+4	+4	+3	+1	+6/3*

*without armor

Totals: Abilities 22 + Powers 0 + Advantages 6 + Skills 14 (28 ranks) + Defenses 6 = 48

Complications: **Motivation—Fanatical:** The Fun-Time Gang are incredibly loyal to their employers, even against overwhelming odds. **Carnies:** The Fun-Time Gang are very invested in their bit. They take a -5 circumstance penalty to resist Deception attempts (including Trick or feint) that incorporate carnival themes or traditions.

HIRED GUARDS

Freedom City has no shortage of small-time crooks willing to sign on with more powerful villains, even when they don't know their employer's identity. Cerebrus Rex's human agents are career criminals and familiar with the city's superhero scene.

HIRED GUARDS

PL 3

Minions

STR 2 STA 2 AGL 1 DEX 1 FGT 2 INT 0 AWE 0 PRE -1
Equipment: Leather jacket (+1 Toughness), submachine gun (Ranged Damage 4; Multiattack), cell phone

Advantages: Equipment 3

Skills: Athletics 4 (+6), Expertise: Superheroes 4 (+4), Expertise: Criminal 2 (+2), Expertise: Streetwise 4 (+4), Expertise: Current Events 2 (+2), Intimidation 4 (+3), Stealth 2 (+3), Vehicles 4 (+5)

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +1

Submachine Gun	+1	Ranged, Multiattack, Damage 4
Unarmed	+2	Close, Damage 2

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+2	+2	+4	+0	+3/2*

*without armor

Totals: Abilities 14 + Powers 0 + Advantages 3 + Skills 13 + Defenses 3 = Total 33

ROBOSAURS

Cerebrus Rex distrusts the simple-minded humans of this new world, and relies on his own robotic creations.

DEINONYCHUS ROBOSAURS

The most common and easily produced design of Cerebrus Rex's robosaurs is the deinonychus, a two-legged footsoldier and scout. Designed for speed and mobility, they are relatively fragile, but wield deadly claws on their feet in addition to their formidable strength.

DEINONYCHUS ROBOSAUR

PL 6

Minion

STR 4 STA — AGL 4 DEX 0 FGT 7 INT -4 AWE 3 PRE 0
Powers: **Bite** (Damage 1 (Strength-based)), **Immunity 40** (Fortitude effects, mental effects), **Leaping 1** (15 feet), **Protection**, **Speed 2** (8 MPH), **Senses 4** (Low-Light Vision, Acute Smell, Tracking, Ultra-hearing)

Advantages: Improved Grab, Improved Initiative

Skills: Perception 4 (+7), Stealth 2 (+6)

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +8

Bite	+7	Close, Damage 5

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+7	+7	—	+3	+5

Totals: Abilities 18 + Powers 58 + Advantages 2 + Skills 3 + Defenses 6 = 87

ROBARCHAEOPTERYX

The robarchaeopteryx are spy and combat drones: fast, agile, and out-fitted with sound-based weaponry that can bore through walls. Cerebrus Rex plans to mass-produce them as scouts and communication hubs, but for now has found them excellent guards. They use their flight to stay out of reach and blast foes, broadcasting everything they see and hear back to Rex's command center.

ROBARCHAEOPTERYX

PL 4

STR -2 STA — AGL 4 DEX 1 FGT 3 INT -3 AWE 6 PRE 0

Powers: Flight 5 (60 MPH), **Little Robot Dinosaur** (Immunity 40 (Fortitude effects, mental effects), Shrinking 4 (Permanent, Innate), Senses 6 (Accurate Auditory, Darkvision, Radio, Ultravision)), **Ultrasonic Canon** (Ranged Damage 4 (Penetrating))

Advantages: Evasion, Move-by Action, Ranged Attack 3, Uncanny Dodge

Skills: Acrobatics 2 (+6), Perception 2 (+8), Stealth 0 (+8)

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +4

Ultrasonic Cannon	+4	Ranged, Penetrating Damage 4
Unarmed	+3	Close, Damage -2

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+6	+5	—	+6	+2

Totals: Abilities -10 + Powers 76 + Advantages 6 + Skills 2 (4 ranks) + Defenses 2 = 76

CERATOPS ROBOSAUR

These walking assault tanks serve as mobile cover, and while Cerebus Rex eventually plans to produce a version equipped with a particle beam weapon, for now he is content to use them as walking shields. Each ceratops has the Interpose Advantage, allowing it to take blows meant for Rex. Each is also protected by an armored forward helm, making them almost unstoppable, but this additional armor is effectively an active bonus and cannot be applied to attacks the robosaur is unaware of. It likewise can only apply this additional protection against one opponent at a time if attacked by multiple heroes striking simultaneously from different directions. Like other robosaurs, the ceratops are minions.

CERATOPS ROBOSAUR

PL 8

Minions

STR 10 STA — AGL 0 DEX 0 FGT 0 INT -4 AWE 0 PRE 0

Powers: **Armor Plating** (Protection 6 (Impervious)), **Big Robot Lizard** (Growth 4 (Permanent, Innate), Immunity 40 (Fortitude effects, mental effects)), **Helm** (Protection 4 (Impervious; limited to frontal attacks))

Advantages: Close Attack 6, Improved Smash, Interpose, Move-by Action

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +0

Unarmed	+6	Close, Damage 10
---------	----	------------------

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+2	+2	—	+0	+14/10*

*vs. attacks from behind or unexpected attacks

Totals: Abilities -6 + Powers 63 + Advantages 9 + Skills 0 (0 ranks) + Defenses 8 = 74

ROBOVERLORD

A more advanced AI than Rex usually relies on, the Roboverlord is capable of handling complex tasks like running a manufacturing center (or leading a battalion), though its artificial personality is still extremely young and has yet to develop much. It is direct and plainspoken, and accustomed to others obeying its orders without question. In combat, the Roboverlord uses its Inspire Advantage to coordinate other robosaurs in the area before relying on its Tail Blaster.

ROBOVERLORD

PL 9

STR 10 STA — AGL 6 DEX 1 FGT 6 INT 4 AWE 5 PRE -2

Powers: **Armored** (Protection 8 (Impervious)), **Big Robot Lizard** (Growth 4 (Permanent, Innate), Immunity 40 (Fortitude effects, mental effects), Senses 5 (Low-light Vision, Radio, Radius Vision, Ultravision)), **Tail Blaster** (Ranged Damage 10)

Advantages: Improved Initiative, Inspire 2, Luck

Skills: Close Combat: Unarmed 1 (+7), Expertise: Robotics 10 (+14), Intimidation 8 (+8), Perception 4 (+9), Ranged Combat: Tail Blaster 5 (+6), Technology 8 (+12)

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +10

Tail Blaster	+6	Ranged, Damage 10
Unarmed	+7	Close, Damage 10

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+5	+4	—	+5	+12

Totals: Abilities 42 + Powers 89 + Advantages 4 + Skills 18 (36 ranks) + Defenses 1 = 154

Complications: **Literal:** The Roboverlord accepts what it sees at face value. If intruders obey its commands, it assumes any conflict is done and returns to its normal duties. **Vulnerable (Heat):** The Roboverlord utilizes one of the stolen HyperCortex processors and can overheat easily. If it fails a Toughness check against any attack with a fire or heat descriptor, it is also Dazed for one round.

SAURIAN SOLDIERS

Cerebus Rex's loyal soldiers from his homeworld are an experienced fighting force and wield advanced energy weapons. While not as dangerous as the rampaging dinosaurs from which they descend, they are still far more powerful than most human opponents.

SAURIAN SOLDIER

PL 7

STR 6 STA 7 AGL 1 DEX 2 FGT 5 INT 0 AWE 1 PRE 0

Powers: **Carnivore Teeth** (Strength-based Damage 2), **Saurian Senses** (Senses 3 (Acute Smell, Low-light Vision, Tracking)), **Saurian Size** (Growth 4 (Innate, Permanent))

Equipment: Blaster Rifle (Ranged Damage 8)

Advantages: Equipment 4

Skills: Athletics 2 (+8), Intimidation 6 (+8), Perception 6 (+7), Ranged Combat: Blasters 2 (+4), Technology 4 (+4), Vehicles 4 (+6)

COMBAT

INITIATIVE +1

Blaster Rifle	+4	Ranged, Damage 8
Carnivore Teeth	+5	Close, Damage 8
Unarmed	+5	Close, Damage 6

DODGE	PARRY	FORTITUDE	WILL	TOUGHNESS
+6	+7	+8	+5	+7

Totals: Abilities 28 + Powers 14 + Advantages 4 + Skills 12 (24 ranks) + Defenses 16 = 74

CONUNDRUM

PL9

STR	STA	AGL	DEX	FGT	INT	AWE	PRE
0	1	1	1	2	11	11	6

SKILLS

Close Combat: Unarmed 6 (+8), Deception 10 (+16), Expertise: Behavioral Sciences 4 (+15), Expertise: Tactics 8 (+19), Investigation 8 (+19), Perception 4 (+15), Sleight of Hand 12 (+13), Technology 6 (+17)

ADVANTAGES

Benefit 4 (Multimillionaire), Contacts, Defensive Roll 2, Eidetic Memory, Equipment 10, Evasion, Fascinate (Deception), Improved Defense, Improved Initiative, Inventor, Luck 3, Ranged Attack 7, Seize Initiative, Set-up, Skill Mastery 4 (Deception, Insight, Sleight of Hand, Technology), Taunt, Uncanny Dodge (visual)

OFFENSE*

INITIATIVE +5	
Pistol +8	Ranged, Damage 3
Unarmed +8	Close, Damage 0

DEFENSE

DODGE	13	FORTITUDE	4
PARRY	13	TOUGHNESS	3/1*
WILL	13	*Without Defensive Roll bonus	



POWER POINTS

ABILITIES	66	SKILLS	33
POWERS	0	DEFENSES	28
ADVANTAGES	41	TOTAL	168

COMPLICATIONS

Motivation—Challenge: Conundrum is obsessed with proving his intellectual superiority through his various “games” and puzzles and in avenging any slights.

Obsession: Conundrum cannot resist building complex puzzles and intellectual challenges into his schemes.

NOTES

DAMAGE

DAZED?

☐

One standard action each round

STAGGERED?

☐

One standard action, -1 movement

INCAPACITATED?

☐

Defenseless, Stunned, Unaware

CEREBRUS REX

PL12

STR*	STA*	AGL	DEX	FGT	INT	AWE	PRE
6	6	0	2	4	11	6	4

SKILLS

Carnivore Teeth: Strength-based Damage 2 • 2 points

Dimensional Controller: Array (48 points), Removable (–10 points) • 40 points

- **Spatial Shock:** Perception Ranged Cumulative Affliction 12 (Resisted by Fortitude; Dazed, Stunned, Incapacitated), • 48 points

- **Dimensional Cascade:** Cone Area Ranged Damage 11, Indirect 4, Variable (any environmental effect) • 1 point

- **Teleportals:** Teleport 12 (Extended, Portal, Limited to Extended) • 1 point

Exo-Suit: Enhanced Defenses 8 (deflector field; Dodge 4, Parry 4), Immunity 10 (Life Support), Impervious Protection 6; Removable (–6 points) • 24 points

Neural Implants: Enhanced Advantages 8 (Eidetic Memory, Languages 5, Improved Initiative, Jack-of-all-trades), Quickness 4 (Limited to Mental Tasks) • 10 points

Rex-Sized: Growth 4 (+4 Str, +4 Sta, +2 Intimidation, –4 Stealth, –2 Dodge, –2 Parry, size rank –1, mass rank 6), Permanent, Innate • 9 points

Robosaurs: Summon Robotic Dinosaurs 6 (90-point minions; Active, Continuous Duration, Controlled, Multiple Minions 4: sixteen minions, Variable Type: Dinosaurs) • 84 points

Saurian Senses: Senses 3 (Acute Smell, Low-light Vision, Tracking) • 3 points

SKILLS

Athletics 4 (+10), Close Combat: Unarmed 4 (+8), Deception 4 (+8), Expertise: Science 9 (+20), Insight 6 (+12), Intimidation 4 (+10), Investigation 5 (+16), Perception 4 (+10), Technology 10 (+21), Vehicles 4 (+6)

ADVANTAGES

Eidetic Memory, Equipment 4, *Languages 5*, *Improved Initiative*, Improved Trip (tail attack), *Inventor*, *Jack-of-all-trades*, Move-by Action, Precise Attack (Close; Concealment), Ranged Attack 4, Startle

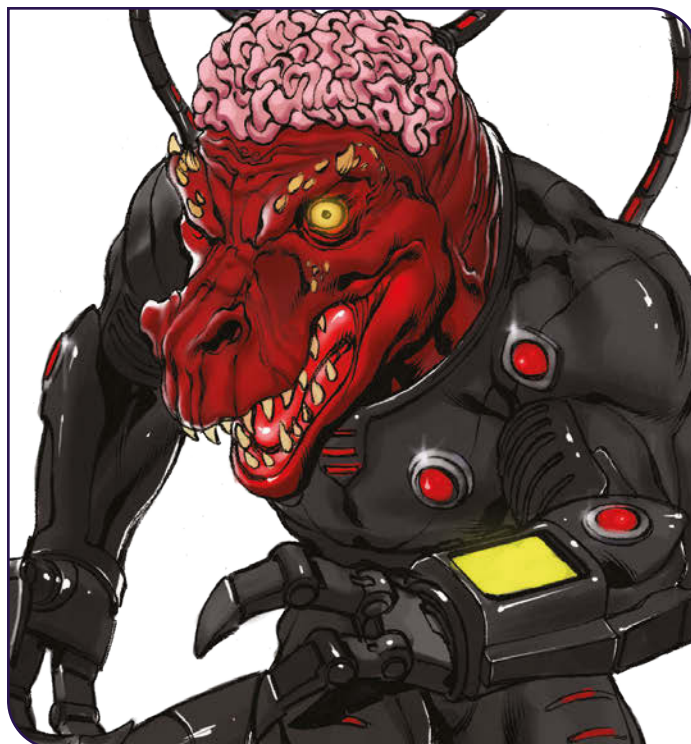
OFFENSE

INITIATIVE +4

Dimensional Cascade — Ranged, Cone Area Damage 11

Spatial Shock — Perception Range, Affliction 12 (Fort)

Unarmed +8 Close, Damage 6 or Carnivore Teeth 8



DEFENSE

DODGE	10/6*	FORTITUDE	11
PARRY	10/6*	TOUGHNESS	12/6*
WILL	13	*Without Exo-Suit	

POWER POINTS

ABILITIES	62	SKILLS	27
POWERS	172	DEFENSES	24
ADVANTAGES	13	TOTAL	298

COMPLICATIONS

Alien: A Saurian from another Earth, Cerebrus Rex is alien in both appearance and outlook. He has difficulty moving unnoticed and is still learning about Earth history, culture, and customs.

Arrogant: Cerebrus Rex considers himself far superior to the “ignorant mammals” of this world, which sometimes leads him to underestimate their capabilities.

Motivation—Survival of the Species: Cerebrus Rex is looking for a new home for his people, and is willing to go to any lengths to secure their survival.

NOTES

DAMAGE

DAZED?

☐

One standard action each round

STAGGERED?

☐

One standard action, –1 movement

INCAPACITATED?

☐

Defenseless, Stunned, Unaware

CREDITS & LICENSE

MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS ASTONISHING ADVENTURES: RISE OF THE TYRANT

Writing: Amber Scott

Design: Crystal Frasier

Editing: Samantha Chapman

Art Direction: Hal Mangold

Graphic Design: Crystal Frasier

Interior Art: MK Ultra Studios, Alberto Foche, and Domenico Nezitti

Publisher: Chris Pramas

Team Ronin: Joseph Carriker, Crystal Frasier, Jaym Gates, Kara Hamilton, Troy Hewitt, Steve Kenson, Ian Lemke, Nicole Lindroos, Hal Mangold, Chris Pramas, Evan Sass, Marc Schmalz, Malcolm Sheppard, Will Sobel, Owen K.C. Stephens, Dylan Templar, Veronica Templar, and Barry Wilson

Mutants & Masterminds Astonishing Adventures: Rise of the Tyrant is ©2020 Green Ronin Publishing, LLC. All rights reserved. References to other copyrighted material in no way constitute a challenge to the

respective copyright holders of that material. Mutants & Masterminds, Super-powered by M&M, Green Ronin, and their associated logos are trademarks of Green Ronin Publishing, LLC.

The following is designated as Product Identity, in accordance with Section 1(e) of the Open Game License, Version 1.0a: hero points, power points. All characters and their associated images, descriptions, backgrounds, and related information are declared Product Identity.

The following text is Open Gaming Content: all game system rules and material not previously declared Product Identity.



Green Ronin Publishing

3815 S. Othello St., Suite 100 #304

Seattle, WA 98118

Email: custserv@greenronin.com

Web Sites: www.greenronin.com
www.mutantsandmasterminds.com

OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product Identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0 Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

System Reference Document, Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc., Authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Modern System Reference Document, Copyright 2002-2004, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Bill Slavicsek, Jeff Grubb, Rich Red-man, Charles Ryan, Eric Cagle, David Noonan, Stan! Christopher Perkins, Rodney Thompson, and JD Wiker, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, Peter Adkison, Bruce R. Cordell, John Tynes, Andy Collins, and JD Wiker.

Mutants & Masterminds, Copyright 2002, Green Ronin Publishing; Author Steve Kenson.

Advanced Player's Manual, Copyright 2005, Green Ronin Publishing, LLC; Author Skip Williams.

Silver Age Sentinels d20, Copyright 2002, Guardians of Order, Inc.; Authors Stephen Kenson, Mark C. Mackinnon, Jeff Mackintosh, Jesse Scoble.

Freedom City, Copyright 2003, Green Ronin Publishing; Author: Steve Kenson

Mutants & Masterminds, Second Edition, Copyright 2005, Green Ronin Publishing, LLC; Author Steve Kenson.

Freedom City, Second Edition, Copyright 2005, Green Ronin Publishing, LLC; Author Steve Kenson.

DC Adventures Hero's Handbook, Copyright 2010, Green Ronin Publishing, LLC; Author Steve Kenson.

Mutants & Masterminds Hero's Handbook, Copyright 2011, Green Ronin Publishing, LLC; Author Steve Kenson.

Mutants & Masterminds Astonishing Adventures: Rise of the Tyrant, Copyright 2019, Green Ronin Publishing, LLC; Author Amber ScottMhmmmm.