



THE SPECTACULAR SPARKS



**ACTION
PACKED
ISSUE!**

A.R.G.H. ALLIANCE OF REALLY GREAT HEROES

IN

HARD KNOCKS PART 2



CARCASS

JAKE CLINTON WAS NOTHING MORE THAN A PETTY THIEF UNTIL HE DECIDED HE NEEDED AN EDGE AGAINST THE HEROES OF PARAGON CITY. UNFORTUNATELY, OR PERHAPS FORTUNATELY, HE DECIDED TO TAKE SUPERADINE BUT IT TURNED TO HAVE BEEN A BAD BATCH OF THE DRUG. IT ALTERED HIS APPEARANCE INTO IT'S CURRENT EMACIATED STATE BUT IT ALSO GAVE HIM IMMENSE PHYSICAL STRENGTH AS WELL AS ALMOST TOTAL INVULNERABILITY. ALL WITHOUT DECREASING HIS MENTAL FACULTIES.



THE GHASTLY GIGGLER

ALMOST NOTHING IS KNOWN ABOUT THE GIGGLER'S PAST BUT SHE HAS HINTED THAT SHE WORKED AS A CLOWN FOR BIRTHDAY PARTIES. HOW SHE CAME ABOUT HER NECROMANTIC POWERS IS ALSO A MYSTERY BUT MANY THEORIZE THAT SHE MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE LACK OF CHILDREN IN PARAGON CITY.



MANSLAUGHTER

ONCE A POPULAR HERO ALEXANDRA BEDARD'S WORLD CRUMBLLED AROUND HER THE DAY HER BEAUTIFUL WAS HORRIBLY SCARED IN A FIGHT. WHEN A WORLD FIXATED ON BEAUTY TURNED ITS BACK ON HER SHE TURNED HER BACK ON IT. FILLED WITH ANGER AND HATE AND TAKING THE NAME MANSLAUGHTER SHE NOW FIGHTS AGAINST EVERYONE SHE HAD PREVIOUSLY BATTLED ALONGSIDE.



INCINERATOR

NOT TRULY HUMAN, INCINERATOR IS THE RESULT OF THE FUSION OF A FIRE WELDING HERO, A HELLION, AND A MYSTICAL ARTIFACT ALL CRAMMED INTO A SUIT OF BATTLE ARMOR. FOR A TIME THE HERO'S PERSONALITY WAS ABLE TO REMAIN DOMINANT OVER THE HELLION'S BUT THERE WAS A THIRD. ONE HIDDEN IN THE ARTIFACT AND NOW IN FULL CONTROL, ONE THAT ONLY WISHED TO SEE THE WORLD BURN.



MANGLER MUTT

MUTT IS THE RESULT OF THE EXPERIMENTS OF A MAD SCIENTIST ATTEMPTING TO SPLICE TOGETHER THE GENES OF A HUMAN WITH THOSE OF A RABID CHIHUAHUA. WHY WOULD THE SCIENTIST DO SUCH A THING? WELL HE WAS A MAD SCIENTIST AFTER ALL.



DARK SPARKY

HE JUST NEEDS A HUG.



SPARKY AND DARK SPARKY.

TWO MEN ALMOST COMPLETELY IDENTICAL IN APPEARANCE AND POWERS BUT UTTERLY DIFFERENT IN EVERYTHING ELSE.

ONE IS RESOURCEFUL, ADAPTABLE, AND POSSESSES A WELLSPRING OF WILL AND POWER THAT HE HAS YET TO FULLY TAP INTO.

THE OTHER THINKS HE'S A HERO.

NOW THEY WAIT, POISED TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE FIRST OPENING THEY DETECT.

BOTH DETERMINED TO WIN, BOTH KNOWING THAT VICTORY WILL NOT COME EASY.



AND SO THEY WAIT.



DAMN, THAT'S HARD
ON THE CORNEAS.

KZZAK!

I HAVE YOU NOW!

WOOF!

IS THAT THE BEST
YOU CAN DO?

KZZAK!

KZZAK!
KZZAK!

HOLY CRAP!



I KNOW, I KNOW, THE CEMENT SHOES THING HAS BEEN DONE TO DEATH BUT I'M A SUCKER FOR THE CLASSICS, AND WHAT BETTER WAY TO KILL AN INVULNERABLE HERO THEN DROWN HIM? LUCKY FOR ME YOU DONT HAVE SUPER STRENGTH. WELL IN YOU GO. NICE KNOWING YOU.




WELL COMMON SENSE TELLS ME NOT TO BUT AS A VILLAIN I MUST LISTEN TO ANY LAST WORDS OR BEGGING. I DON'T KNOW WHY THAT IS BUT I CAN'T GO AGAINST MY NATURE.

WHAT?






SPLASH!



COUGH, COUGH
ONE OF THESE DAYS
MY VILLANOUS WAYS
ARE GOING TO GET ME
IN SERIOUS TROUBLE.



YEAH? WHATRE YOU
LOOKING AT YOU
ENTERCTOPLUS DOYLEIN?
YOU WANT A PIECE OF ME?



WHAACK!

EXCELLENT, YOUR REPORT WILL BE MOST HELPFUL. YOU'VE HAD NO PROBLEM MAINTAINING YOUR COVER AGENT 98X ONE 98X? OR SHOULD I SAY DEPUTY DEADEYE?

ARE YOU KIDDING? ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS PUT ON SOME GOOPY OUTFIT, BUST A FEW PURSE SNATCHERS AND EVERYONE THINKS YOU'RE A HERO AROUND HERE.

CAN WE HURRY THIS UP? IT'S A BIT RISKY MEETING YOU DURING THE DAY LIKE THIS.

NO NEED TO WORRY, I HAVE JENKINS WATCHING FOR HEROES, WE WON'T BE DISTURBED.

THAT'S GOOD TO KNOW. WAIT, DID YOU SAY JENKINS?

KZZAK!

ACK!

HERO BEING CHASED BY EVIL CLONE COMING THROUGH!



KZZAK!

URKI!



STAND AND FIGHT
DAMN YOU!



THIS PLACE IS GREAT! I GOT SOME COOL PHOTOS OF THAT GIANT STATUE A FEW BLOCKS OVER FOR MY SCRAPBOOK. I EVEN GOT ONE OF POSITRON! I NEARLY FEED MY ARMOR WHEN HE SPOTTED ME BUT HE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT ME BEING GREY AND NOT WORTH HIS TIME.



... I'M SO GETTING
FIRED THIS TIME.



CLICK

WUACK!

BAD DOG!

YIPE!



SIT!

PLAY
DEAD!



SPEAK!

WHAT A PIECE OF WORK IS MAN! HOW NOBLE
IN REASON! HOW INFINITE IN FACULTIES! IN
FORM AND MOVING! HOW LIKE A GOD! THE
BEAUTY OF THE WORLD! THE PARAGON OF
ANIMALS! AND YET, TO ME, WHAT IS THIS
QUINTESSENCE OF DUST? MAN DELIGHTS
NOT ME, NO, NOR WOMAN EITHER, THOUGH
BY YOUR SMILING YOU SEEM TO SAY SO.



OOOOOOKAY?





HOW ARE YOU DOING OVER THERE TEZ?
I CAN CALL YOU TEZ CAN'T I? I MEAN
YOU COULDN'T BE THE TEZRIAN AFTER
ALL. THE TEZRIAN THAT ACCORDING TO
THE GOETIC HIERARCHY IS THE DEMON
PRIESTESS OF BATTLE.



LET ME TELL YOU WHEN I FIRST
HEARD I'D GET A CHANCE TO
MEET YOU I WAS GIDDY WITH JOY.



BUT THEN I FOUND OUT YOU WERE
A HERO! NOT ONLY THAT BUT YOU HAD
BEEN IN A CRYSTAL FOR A
THOUSAND YEARS. TALK ABOUT
A MAJOR DISAPPOINTMENT!!



YOU PROBABLY CAN'T EVEN
HANDLE MY ZOMBIE HORDE.
PATHETIC REALLY.





WELL LOOKS LIKE
YOU HAVE SOME
POWER AFTER ALL



NOW LET'S PLAY A GAME TO SEE IF YOU REALLY ARE A HERO. THIS IS PENNY. BE A GOOD GIRL AND SAY HELLO TO THE DEMON PENNY.

DROP DEAD YOU DEMENTED CLOWN

ISNT SHE ADORABLE? AS FAR AS I CAN TELL LITTLE PENNY HERE IS THE ONLY CHILD IN PARAGON CITY.

HERE'S WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN. I'M GOING TO PUT LITTLE PENNY HERE INTO A DEVIOUS DEATH TRAP AND YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO DECIDE TO EITHER RESCUE HER OR FIGHT ME.

THE FUTURE OF PARAGON CITY IS GOING TO BE IN YOUR HANDS. I WANT TO KNOW WHICH IS IN CONTROL, THE DEMON OR THE HE-

CRASH!

YOU TALK TOO DAMN MUCH!

I KNEW IT! YOU'RE A HERO!

I AM NO SUCH THING!

ARE TOO!

I AM NOT!

YES YOU ARE!

BEAT IT KD BEFORE I COME TO MY SENSES AND EAT YOU!

AW, I'M TOO LATE, YOU ALREADY BEAT UP THE EVIL CLOWN.



FLASH!



THAT'S WHAT YOU GET FOR CHANGING INTO GODFURN.

I HAD TO. IF I TRIED TO RUN IN THOSE PANTS AGAIN I WAS EITHER GOING TO SET THEM ON FIRE OR BREAK MY LEGS.

I SEE, AND WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT Hairy ONE?

HIM? HE'S BEEN TAKEN CARE OF.

DON'T YOU WORRY LITTLE GUY, I'M SURE A LOVING FAMILY WILL ADOPT YOU.

RIGHT AFTER YOU GET NEUTERED OF COURSE.



AROO!

LOOK! MORE PEOPLE WE CAN BEAT UP!

BUT THEY'RE LONGBOW AGENTS. HEROES!

AND YOUR POINT IS?

YOU THERE! STAY WHERE YOU ARE!



ARE THE TWO OF YOU RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS MESS?

OH NO, I DID ALL OF IT.



LOOK HERE LADY, I DON'T HAVE TO TAKE THIS FROM -

ACK!

AMAZING WHO THEY'LL ALLOW TO BE A HERO THESE DAYS. WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO CALL IN A BIO-HAZARD TEAM TO CLEAN UP THOSE ZOMBIES NOW. AND THAT CLOWN! MY GOD WHAT DID YOU DO TO HER EYES! SOMEBODY SEE IF SHE'S STILL BREATHING!



YOU MORON! LEARN TO BLOCK WITH SOMETHING OTHER THAN YOUR FACE OR I'LL KILL YOU!

DID YOU JUST THREATEN ME?

YES!





YES, YES, I SEE.
UH-HUH, RIGHT.

POW!

I'M SORRY COULD YOU
REPEAT THAT LAST PART?
THAT SOUND?

OH NOTHING, JUST A SUPER FIGHT
OUTSIDE MY OFFICE. NO, NO, IT
HAPPENS ALL THE TIME ACTUALLY,
YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN HERE
WHEN A BUNCH OF REANIMATED
CORPSES TOOK OVER THE BUILDING.
WE HAD TO COMPLETELY REPLACE
ALL THE CARPETS TO GET RID OF
THE VOMIT SMELL.

PARDON ME SIR, I
NOTICED THAT YOU
HAVE A BARREL IN
YOUR OFFICE.
MIGHT I BORROW
IT FOR A MINUTE?

SURE, GO AHEAD.

THAT? JUST A HERO, MAYBE A
VILLAIN. IT'S SO HARD TO TELL
THE DIFFERENCE THESE DAYS.

PWANSI! PWANSI! PWANSI!

SO ABOUT THE JACOB'S
FILE, HAVE YOU GONE
OVER THE NUMBERS YET?

NOW, THIRTY FLOORS AND I'M STILL STANDING. MAYBE YOU'RE NOT AS TOUGH AS YOU THOUGHT.

WE CAN TAKE A BREAK IF YOU'RE GETTING TIRED.

WHOOP!
OR NOT.

SKRAASHH!

WATCH THE HANDS!

CRASH!


OW...








OOPS.




HEY DID YOU HEAR THAT? I THINK I HEARD SOMEONE SCREAM. MAYBE WE SHOULD GO CHECK IT OUT.



NOPE. THAT'S A JOB FOR A HERO. WE'RE JUST SUPPOSED TO GUARD THE GATE.

OH COME. THAT'S ALL WE DO, DAY AFTER DAY! DON'T YOU WANT TO SEE SOME ACTION?



LOOK KID, YOU'RE NEW HERE BUT TRUST ME, YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE ANY KIND OF ACTION IN THIS CITY.


BUT IT'S JUST SO FREAKING BORING!

YEAH? WELL AT LEAST YOU GET TO HAVE A GUN.



HEY THERE FELLAS. HERE'S MY HERO ID.

LOOKS GOOD, GO RIGHT IN SPARKY.



YOU THERE! LET ME THROUGH!


HEY TAKE IT EASY HERO. JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE POWERS DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN BE SO BOSSY TO US.

AW NO.



THE PAIN

YOU CAN PASS! YOU CAN PASS!



SO, ENOUGH ACTION FOR YOU KID?

HA HA HA. JUST CALL ME AN AMBULANCE.

LET ME GET THIS RIGHT, YOUR LIFE FORCE IS BOUND TO A CHICKEN?

NO, HE'S A MAN HE JUST DRESSES LIKE A CHICKEN.

THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE, THE ELECTRIC POWER SET HASN'T BEEN RELEASED FOR VILLAINS YET.

THE GUARD SAID THE VILAN WAS CHASING A HERD, SOMEONE CALLED SPARKY.

MA'AM! WE JUST GOT A REPORT FROM THE BOOMTOWN GATE. A VILLAIN WITH ELECTRICAL POWERS JUST BROKE THROUGH AND SENT ONE OFFICER TO THE HOSPITAL.

WHAT'S HE DOING THIS TIME?

YOU KNOW THIS SPARKY PERSON?

HE'S OUR SUPER GROUP LEADER.

FOR SOME REASON THAT DOESN'T SURPRISE ME. WELL, WE'LL BE HANDLING THIS MATTER, THE TWO OF YOU WILL REMAIN HERE.

WELL, I HAVE NO WISH TO RISK MY LIFE SAVING THAT SKELETON. HOW ABOUT YOU HYPER? ON MY IT APPEARS SHE HAS RAN OFF WHILE I WAS DISTRACTING YOU. SUCH A SHAME.

WHAT? WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT?

WELL, I AM A DEMON, BUT MOSTLY I JUST DON'T LIKE YOU OR YOUR HAIR.

THEY SAID IT COULDN'T BE DONE BUT I'VE PROVED THEM WRONG. THREE MONTHS OF REBUILDING IN 'BOOMTOWN' AND NOT A SINGLE INCIDENT OF ANY KIND. I'M GOING TO BE RICH. FLTHY, STINKING RICH!

KA-BOOM!


BOOM!!

KA-BOOM!


I HATE THIS CITY.



YOU'RE AWFULLY QUIET
OVER THERE LAKKY.




STOP CALLING ME THAT OR
I SHALL MAKE YOUR DEMISE
INFINITELY MORE PAINFUL




NOW THAT'S MORE LIKE IT
YOU ELECTRIC HEDGEHOG!




HONESTLY, MUST WE RESORT
TO NAME CALLING YOU TWIT?




HOW ABOUT INSULTS THEN? YOUR
MOMMA IS A TRIPLE A BATTERY!




WELL TECHNICALLY THAT
WOULD BE YOUR MOTHER.




WHAT? NOBODY TALKS
ABOUT MY MOM LIKE
THAT! NOBODY!



TIME TO END THIS
ONCE AND FOR ALL!



WHY ARE YOU
SO NEGATIVE!




BECAUSE YOU'RE
SO POSITIVE!


IN HINDSIGHT, A DAY OF WATCHING
TV WOULD HAVE BEEN LESS PAINFUL

THIS IS ALL YOUR
FAULT SPARKY!




A blue-skinned character with a mask and a blue and black suit is crouching on a paved ground. The character has a yellow belt with a circular buckle.


WHOA! WHAT
A KUSH!

A red-skinned character with spiky red hair and a red and black suit is running across a paved area. The character has a black belt with a circular buckle.


YOU SURPRISE ME SPARKY,
I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D BE
ABLE TO SURVIVE THIS LONG.

The blue-skinned character is standing upright, looking towards the red character. The background shows a city street with buildings.


AND HERE'S ANOTHER
SURPRISE FOR YOU!

The red-skinned character is standing upright, looking back at the blue character. The character's hands are glowing with a purple energy.

IT APPEARS YOU HAVE
OVEREXERCISED YOURSELF
AND BEEN LEFT DEFENSELESS
AGAINST MY NEXT ATTACK!

The blue-skinned character is standing upright, looking towards the red character. The character's hands are glowing with a purple energy.


OH NO, ARE YOUR BATTERIES
DEAD TOO? LOOKS LIKE WE'LL
HAVE TO POSTPONE THE FIGHT
UNTIL ANOTHER DAY. I'M FREE
NEXT FRIDAY, HOW'S THAT?

The red-skinned character is running away from the blue character. The character's hands are glowing with a purple energy.

NOT WE FINISH
THIS NOW!

The blue-skinned character is standing upright, looking towards the red character. The character's hands are glowing with a purple energy.

WHOA, A GUN?
THAT'S CHEATING!

The red-skinned character is running away from the blue character. The character's hands are glowing with a purple energy. A large red "BLAM!" sound effect is visible in the background.

I'M A VILLAIN
YOU IDIOT!





HYPER! THAT WAS A SWEET
SAVE, BUT HOW DID YOU
KNOW WHERE I WAS?

OH ME AND TEZ WERE TALKING WITH THIS LONGBOW LADY. THIS
WAS AFTER SOME CRAZY CLOWN AND HER DOG ATTACKED US.
WAS LIKE ALL FREAKED BY THE CLOWN WHO WOULDNT BEY'KNOW AND
THEN THE DOG CAME AFTER ME AND I COULDNT RUN BECAUSE OF MY
BAGGY PANTS BUT THAT DIDNT STOP ME AND I HAPPENED IM A GOOD
ONE THEN WENT TO HELP TEZ AFTER CHANGING BUT SHE ALREADY
BEAT UP THE CLOWN AND THEN THATS WHEN THE LONG BOW PEOPLE-

FWEESSET!

HELLO! EYL CLONE
WITH A GUN HERE!

OH FORGET IT. I WONT
MISS THIS TIME SPARKY!


WHAT THE?

WILL YOU STOP
DOING THAT!

BUT ITS
SO FUN

40INK!

YOU THERE, WE ARE LONGBOW
AGENTS SEARCHING FOR A
WILLIAM. HAVE YOU SEEN ONE?



NO, CAN'T SAY THAT I'VE SEEN
OH MY GOD! SHE
HAS A GUN!

NOWAITICANEXPLAIN!
IT'SNOTMYGUNIT'S
HIS,JUSTTOOKITAWAY
FROMHIM....

RUNAWAY!



AFTER HER! FREEZE
VILLAIN, YOU'RE ONLY
MAKING THIS HARDER
ON YOURSELF!



THAT WAS THE MOST LOATHSOME
AND UNDERHANDED THING I HAVE
EVER WITNESSED, LARRY.

THANK YOU, I DO TRY. AND I TOLD
YOU TO STOP CALLING ME THAT.

WELL YOU'RE GOING DOWN BUDDY,
OH YES, GET READY FOR THE BUTT
KICKING OF YOUR LIFE!

AND YOU'LL DO THIS HOW? WE BOTH
KNOW YOU DON'T HAVE THE STRENGTH.


HOW? BY THINKING OF A
REALLY GOOD IDEA!

OH? YOU'RE GIVING UP THEN?

RUMBLE!




NOT A CHANCE!



WHAT? THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE.
STORM SUMMONING ISN'T EVEN
AVAILABLE FOR BLASTERS!



ZAP!



NO... I... WON'T
LET IT... END...
LIKE THIS...




CRUISE



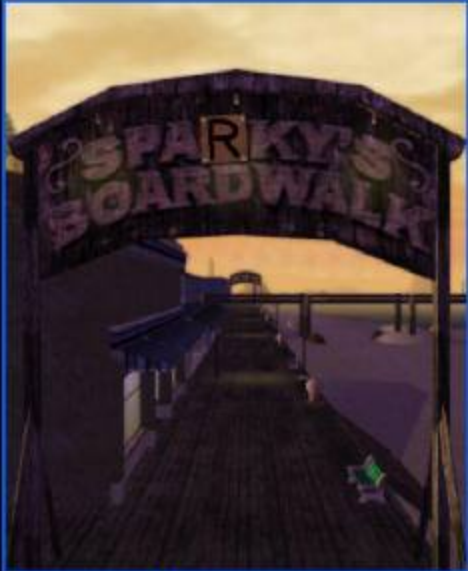
HEY GUYS!

N-MANE BUDDY! LOVE
THE NEW SHOES! WHAT
BRINGS YOU HERE?

I THOUGHT I'D BETTER WARN
EVERYONE ABOUT A CRAZY
MAN ON THE LOOSE. HE
TRIED TO KILL ME BUT I GOT
AWAY. IF YOU FIND HIM,
WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T
ASK HIM FOR DIRECTIONS.



I'LL TRY TO REMEMBER THAT, BUT
RIGHT NOW I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT
WITH THE PAVEMENT AND HIS CLOSE
FRIEND CONCUSSION.





WELL EVERYBODY, I JUST TALKED TO A LONGBOW REPRESENTATIVE AND I HAVE SOME GOOD NEWS AND SOME BAD NEWS. WHICH DO YOU WANT FIRST?

IS THE GOOD NEWS THAT YOU HAVE AN INVOLVERABLE BRAIN TUMOR?

...NO.

BAD THEN.

IT SEEMS BOTH CARCASS AND GHASTLY GIGGLER MANAGED TO ESCAPE THEIR CUSTODY. THEY ALSO TOLD ME MANGLER MUTT LEAD A REVOLT AT THE ANIMAL SHELTER AND STOLE ALL THE DOG FOOD BEFORE ESCAPING AS WELL.

WOOHOO!

DARK SPARKY IS LOCKED UP IN THE ZIG AND THEY DROPPED THE WARRANT THEY HAD OUT FOR HYPER.

SO WHAT'S THE GOOD NEWS?

THEY ALSO NEVER FOUND MANSLAUGHTER'S BODY WHICH IN COMIC BOOK TERMS MEANS SHE'S STILL ALIVE.



FOR SOME REASON I HAVE THIS FEELING I'M FORGETTING SOMETHING.

PROBABLY NOT IMPORTANT ANYWAY.

I THINK WE'RE MISSING THE BIG PICTURE HERE. WE'VE JUST DEFEATED A GROUP OF VILLAINS AND WE EVEN USED SOME TEAMWORK TO DO IT. AND YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS ...





TEAM ACTION POSE!



YOU HAVENT SEEN THE LAST OF ME SPARKY! I'LL GET OUT OF HERE AND WHEN I DO YOU'LL RUE THE DAY YOU EVER CROSSED ME! EHT NO YOU CAN HAVE THE TOP BUNK.

A BIG THANK YOU TO ZLOTH FOR HIS DEMO PLAYER WHICH MADE EVERYTHING IN THIS COMIC POSSIBLE!
SEE YOU AGAIN NEXT ISSUE!