



BATTLE ROCK
COMICS



FOR TEENS

FUTURE'S GUARDIAN



ISSUE 19
2020

GALATEA FUTURE
HAS BEEN ARRESTED!

IS CANDACE
SINCLAIR NEXT?



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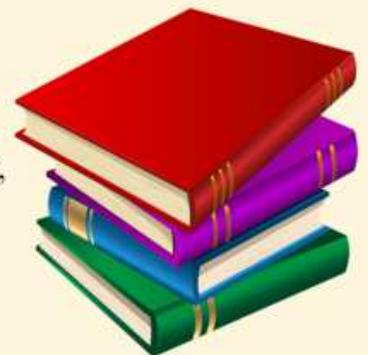
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From another time and from another world, Galatea Future arrived in the world of the Champions to do the one thing she tried so desperately to avoid before... to live.

It's not easy, though, when you're over a thousand years old and suddenly you're given a new life in more ways than one. Life is literally starting over again for her, and yet she is still doing what she does best: serving humanity as...

FUTURE'S GUARDIAN

"SEEING THE LIGHT"

- A CHAMPIONS ONLINE STORY BY DAVID 2

FOR YEARS, GALATEA FUTURE HAS HAD TO HIDE THE FACT THAT SHE IS A REFUGEE FROM TWO DIFFERENT UNIVERSES AND ONE ALTERNATE TIMELINE.

IT WAS A SECRET SHARED ONLY BY A HANDFUL OF PEOPLE, INCLUDING HER BEST FRIEND AND HER SUPERIOR IN PROJECT MYCROFT.

NOW THAT SECRET HAS BEEN DISCOVERED BY CAPTAIN LYNCH, AN AGENT OF PROJECT CITADEL, WELL-KNOWN FOR THEIR BIAS AGAINST THOSE FROM OTHER UNIVERSES.

LYNCH HAS ORDERED GALATEA DETAINED AS HE SEEKS OUT HIS TRUE TARGET; THE MULTIVERSE OPERATIVE AGENT SIDESTEP.

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I WAS EIGHT WHEN IT HAPPENED.

A CHILD LIVING AN ORDINARY LIFE IN AN ORDINARY SUBURBAN TOWN.



CAPTAIN LYNCH
PROJECT CITADEL



A LITERAL GATEWAY FROM HELL OPENED UP RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME.

THE EVENT HORIZON HAD CUT INTO MY HEAD.



I WAS TRAPPED THERE, UNABLE TO MOVE AS LONG AS THAT PORTAL WAS OPEN.

A CHILD OF EIGHT, WATCHING A WHOLE ARMY OF NIGHTMARE CREATURES COME POURING OUT OF THAT MAW THAT WAS CONNECTED TO MY FACE.

SOLDIERS FROM THE QLIPHOTHIC PLANE.

OF COURSE, A CHILD OF EIGHT WOULDN'T KNOW THAT. HE JUST SAW HORRIFIC MONSTERS RUNNING IN FRONT OF HIM.



THE HEROES WOULD EVENTUALLY COME TO STOP THE NIGHTMARE AND TO CLOSE THE GATEWAY.

BUT THE EVENT WOULD FOREVER LEAVE ME...



... SCARRED.



I SPENT SIX MONTHS IN THE HOSPITAL. DOCTORS WERE AFRAID I SUFFERED SOME KIND OF BRAIN DAMAGE.

I HAD A HARD TIME SEEING THROUGH MY RIGHT EYE.

WHEN I COULD SEE THROUGH IT AGAIN, I COULD SEE MORE THAN JUST THE PHYSICAL WORLD.

I COULD SEE REMNANTS OF PORTALS, PLACES WHERE THEY OPENED UP, AND WHAT KIND OF BEINGS CAME OUT.

I COULD ALSO SEE WHO CAME FROM OTHER REALITIES.

QLIPHOTHIC, YETZIRAH, MULTIFARIA, BRIAH, AND ALL THE OTHER PLACES WE HAD NOT NAMED YET.

THAT BRINGS ME... TO YOU.



SEEING YOU STANDING THERE IN THE MIDDLE OF AN U.N.T.I.L. FACILITY, GIVING OFF ALL SORTS OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL ENERGY, IT NEARLY SPLIT MY BRAIN IN HALF.

I KNOW THAT YOU'RE NOT JUST "FROM THE FAR FUTURE", YOU'RE FROM ANOTHER REALITY.

 **GALATEA FUTURE**
OTHERWORLD GUARDIAN



DOCTOR SILVERBACK REPORTED HIS SUSPICIONS OF YOUR ORIGINS BACK IN 2011.*

HE LATER SAID THAT YOU CONFIRMED THOSE SUSPICIONS.

*(*THE LOST ADVENTURES OF GALATEA FUTURE* #2)*



MAJOR CROSS HAS A WHOLE FILE FOLDER OF HIS VARIOUS CONVERSATIONS WITH YOU, WHERE YOU'RE FROM, AND JUST HOW MUCH OF A POTENTIAL THREAT YOU ARE.



I KNOW FROM HIS FILES THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING THAT I CAN DO HERE THAT CAN HURT YOU.

ELECTRICITY, TRUTH SERUMS, EXTREME HEAT OR COLD, EVEN TELEPATHS, THEY ALL DON'T WORK ON SOMEONE LIKE YOU.

RATHER THAN TRY, I'M JUST GOING TO KEEP YOU HERE UNTIL YOU TELL ME WHAT I NEED TO KNOW, AND THEN YOU WILL KEEP TELLING IT TO ME UNTIL I BELIEVE YOU.



IT'S UP TO YOU HOW LONG YOU STAY HERE.

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS TRIBUNAL FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW (U.N.T.I.L.)

THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED, MAJOR. THE MINUTE CAPTAIN LYNCH SAID HE WANTED GALATEA FUTURE DETAINED, SHE RACED UP TO HIS FACE AND SAID "I'M RIGHT HERE."

AND THEN SHE JUST... LET HERSELF GET TAKEN INTO CUSTODY?



CANDACE SINCLAIR
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW

YES, MA'AM. THAT'S PRECISELY WHAT HAPPENED.

THANK YOU, QUARTERMASTER. CARRY ON.



MAJOR XAVIER CROSS
PROJECT MYCROFT

WHY THE HELL WOULD SHE DO SOMETHING AS STUPID AS THAT?

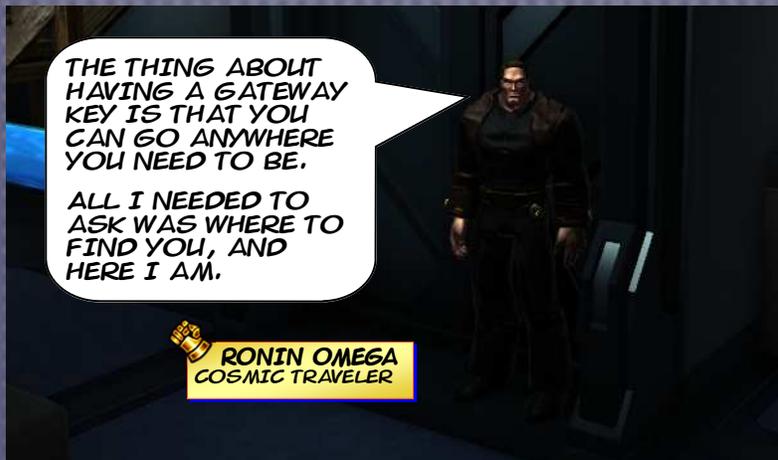
MOST LIKELY BECAUSE SHE KNOWS THAT HE CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO HER.

ASIDE FROM LYNCH'S "AURAL SIGHT", HE REALLY HAS NOTHING THAT CAN HURT HER.

HE CAN'T FORCE HER TO REVEAL SIDESTEP'S WHEREABOUTS, EVEN IF SHE KNEW WHERE HE WAS.

WHAT SHE'S DONE, CANDACE, IS BLY YOU SOME TIME TO USE WHATEVER TOOL YOU GOT FROM YOUR LAW OFFICE TO PUT AN END TO THIS...

... IF YOU CAN.

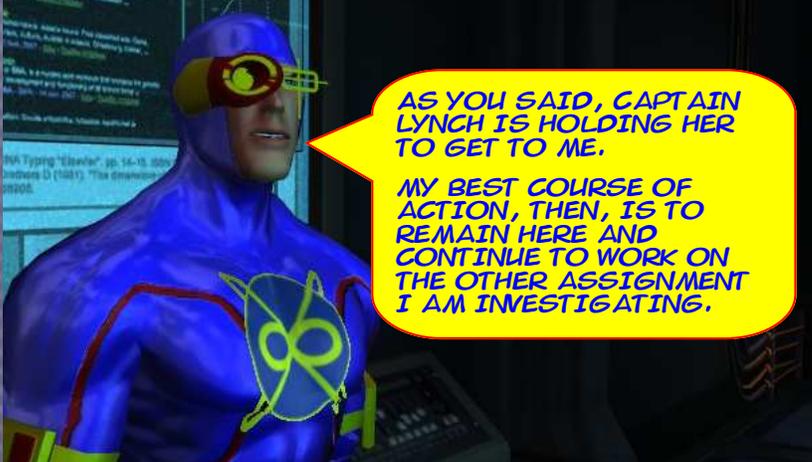




HOW CAN YOU BE SO CASUAL ABOUT THIS?
 YOU'RE BEING HUNTED, AND LYNCH JUST TOOK THE ONE PERSON THAT YOU'RE HERE TO WATCH OVER!



AND YET, HE CANNOT HARM HER. HE CANNOT TORTURE HER.
 AND WE BOTH KNOW THAT SHE CAN PHYSICALLY OUTLAST ALL OF US.



AS YOU SAID, CAPTAIN LYNCH IS HOLDING HER TO GET TO ME.
 MY BEST COURSE OF ACTION, THEN, IS TO REMAIN HERE AND CONTINUE TO WORK ON THE OTHER ASSIGNMENT I AM INVESTIGATING.



THERE HAS BEEN A SLOW AND GRADUAL BLEED FROM YOUR HOME UNIVERSE INTO THIS ONE.*
 COUNTERPARTS THAT SHOULD NOT EXIST AND YET DO.

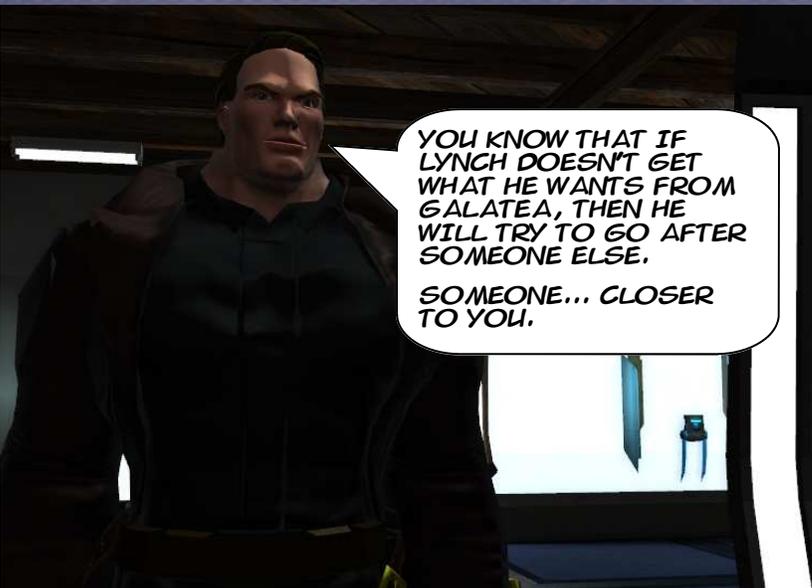
(*BATTLE ROCK COMICS PRESENTS* #2)



AND YOU THINK THAT THIS IS SOMEHOW CONNECTED TO GALATEA BEING HERE?

NOT DIRECTLY. SHE HAS BEEN RULED OUT.
 I WAS... INFORMED... BY ANOTHER CELESTIAL FORCE THAT SOMETHING FAR MORE OMINOUS IS POSSIBLY INVOLVED.*

(* BACK IN ISSUE #14)



YOU KNOW THAT IF LYNCH DOESN'T GET WHAT HE WANTS FROM GALATEA, THEN HE WILL TRY TO GO AFTER SOMEONE ELSE.
 SOMEONE... CLOSER TO YOU.



I ...
 I THINK YOU KNOW THE WAY BACK OUT, RONIN.

AN APARTMENT IN CITY CENTER
BEHIND CLUB CAPRICE...

THE BASEMENT RESIDENCE OF
DEE RISK, A.K.A. DJ RISQUE.

I'M INSIDE.
THERE'S NO
SECURITY.

 **HOMETOWN HERO**
STREET VIGILANTE

JUST D-DON'T
WASTE T-T-TOO
MUCH TIME IN
TH-TH-THERE.

 **VOXPOP 2.0**
FORMERLY VOX POPULII

THE HELL?
THIS DOES NOT LOOK
LIKE SOMEONE'S
APARTMENT.

WHAT... IS IT?
WHAT DO...
YOU SEE?

IT DOESN'T LOOK
LIKE A PLACE
SOMEONE LIKE
DEE RISK WOULD
WANT TO LIVE IN.

IT'S.. ACTUALLY
COOLER THAN
MY OWN PLACE.



**FOCUS,
TELL... ME...
WHAT YOU...
SEE.**

THERE'S A WORKSTATION AND BOOKSHELF IN A CORNER. THE SHELF IS FULL OF AUDIO DISCS. LOOKS LIKE MUSIC SAMPLINGS.

THERE'S A CARD TABLE WITH A LOCKED LAPTOP AND A BIG MAP OF MILLENNIUM CITY WITH WHAT APPEARS TO BE ROUTES DRAWN ON THEM.



SHE HAS AN ARMS COLLECTION. I SEE RED "SEIZED" TAGS ON THEM.

SHE HAS A BED THAT HASN'T BEEN SLEPT IN.



I SEE PARTS FOR SOME KIND OF ELECTRIC-TYPE BLADE WEAPON.

WAIT... I KNOW SOMEONE WHO USES AN ELECTRO-BLADE.



THERE'S SOME PAPERWORK HERE ON HER DESK NEXT TO THE COMPUTER SCREENS.



W-W-W-WHAT'S THE N-N-N-NAME ON THE P-PA-PAPERS?

"STARLETT."



STARLETT...



YOU DO REALIZE THAT YOU'RE TRYING TO PICK A FIGHT WITH SOMEONE THAT COULD BREAK YOU IN TWO JUST BY SNEEZING ON YOU, RIGHT?

STARLETT
Sword-wielding Vigilante

(**ISSUE #3**)



I MEAN, IF YOU'RE SO EAGER TO GET YOUR @SS KICKED, I'LL HAPPILY DO THAT TO YOU IN HER PLACE.



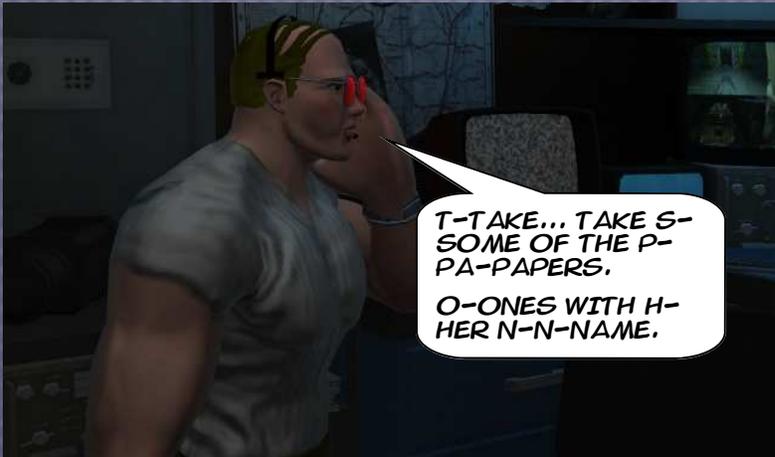
THAT... B-B-B-BEOTCH...
G-G-GALATEA'S FR-FR-FRIEND...
ST-ST-STARLETT...



JOHN BATTLE'S GIRLFRIEND IS A VIGILANTE.
HUH!



VOX? VOX YOU STILL THERE?



T-TAKE... TAKE SOME OF THE P-PAPERS.
O-ONES WITH HER N-N-NAME.



THAT'S STEALING.
SHE'LL KNOW I WAS HERE.



W-W-WE W-W-WANT HER TO KN-N-N-NOW!
WE'RE GOING T-T-T-TO USE THAT T-T-T-TO DO GU-GU-GIVE YOU WHAT Y-Y-YOU W-W-W-WANTED.

YOU-YOU'RE G-GOING TO TAKE JOHN B-B-BATTLE'S PRECIOUS G-GIRL-GIRLFRIEND FROM HIM W-W-WITH IT.

ARE YOU A HERO IN NEED OF LEGAL HELP?

Are you being sued for a “wrongful arrest” or “hero brutality”?

Are your hero credentials being held up by bureaucrats?

Are you being denied the legal benefits owed to you as a hero?

Are you wrongly being sued as a hero for copyright or trademark infringement or because your outfit is deemed “indecent”?

Heroes are entitled to the same legal help as anyone else. I've gone up against powerful interests in court and prevailed.

Call my office and let's see if I can come to your rescue.

Candace Sinclair

Attorney-At-Law

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CAPTAIN
LYNCH!

NOTIFY ME IF ANYONE
ATTEMPTS TO ACCESS
THOSE COORDINATES.



CAPTAIN
LYNCH, MY
NAME IS
CANDACE
SINCLAIR...



... ATTORNEY
FOR GALATEA
FUTURE, WHOM
I BELIEVE YOU
HAVE DETAINED
UNLAWFULLY.



MISS SINCLAIR, I
DON'T HAVE THE
TIME TO CATER TO
YOUR PETTY LITTLE
LAWYER GAMES.



I DON'T PLAY
GAMES, CAPTAIN
LYNCH.
AND THIS IS FAR
FROM "PETTY".



THIS IS A SPECIAL
WRIT ISSUED ON
BEHALF OF MY CLIENT,
GALATEA FUTURE, AND
SIGNED OFF BY THE
SECRETARY MARTIAL OF
U.N.T.I.L.

YOUR HIGHEST BOSS.

THIS WRIT DESIGNATES
GALATEA FUTURE AS A
LEGAL AND LEGITIMATE
RESIDENT OF THIS
UNIVERSE.



MISS SINCLAIR,
THAT PAPER
MEANS
ABSOLUTELY
NOTHING TO ME.



THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE WRONG.
 AS A LEGAL AND LEGITIMATE RESIDENT OF THIS UNIVERSE, SHE CANNOT BE ILLEGALLY DETAINED BY YOU UNDER U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 67A.



NOW, YOU WILL TAKE ME TO MY CLIENT AND YOU WILL SEE TO HER RELEASE, OR MY NEXT CALL WILL BE TO THE SECRETARY MARTIAL.



ARE YOU FINISHED?



I'M NOT HOLDING GALATEA FUTURE BECAUSE SHE'S FROM ANOTHER REALITY.
 I'M HOLDING HER BECAUSE SHE WAS IN CONTACT WITH BEINGS FROM EVEN MORE REALITIES.*

(* AGAIN, SEE RECENT ISSUES OF "THE CRUCIBLE" AT COX COMICS)



AND AT SOME POINT THAT WILL LEAD ME TO THE ONE ROGUE OPERATIVE THAT I'M REALLY LOOKING FOR: AGENT SIDESTEP.



NOW... MAJOR CROSS HAD SOME INTERESTING NOTES REGARDING SIDESTEP AND THE MULTIVERSE ASSASSIN CALLED GRIFF, ALSO KNOWN AS "MISTER BLUE".

APPARENTLY THE ONLY REASON WHY SIDESTEP REACHED OUT TO GALATEA FUTURE WITH THAT INFORMATION WAS BECAUSE, AT THAT TIME, GRIFF WAS LOOKING...

... FOR YOU.*

(* ISSUE #5)



AND THAT IS WELL WITHIN THE SCOPE OF MY AUTHORITY.
SOLDIERS, I WANT HER DETAINED AND SENT TO BLACK SITE TWO-SEVEN FOR...



WHAT?
NO!



I... I DIDN'T...



I KNOW THAT YOU DIDN'T, CANDACE.
SOLDIERS, YOU WILL DISREGARD LYNCH'S DETAINMENT ORDER.

I HAVE A FEELING THE CAPTAIN WILL BE GETTING ALL THE ANSWERS HE WANTED.
JUST NOT IN THE WAY HE WANTED.

A SHORT WHILE LATER...



DEE RISK
AKA: STARLETT



IF I DIDN'T
KNOW ANY
BETTER...



IT FEELS LIKE
SOMEONE--
RING-RING
RING-RING



HELLO?

STARLETT.

DEE RISK...
DJ RISQUÉ...



WHO IS THIS?

WE... KNOW
WHO...
YOU... ARE.



WE WILL... BE...
IN TOUCH.

CLICK



WHATEVER YOU DO TO ME,
PROJECT CITADEL WILL SIMPLY
SEND ANOTHER OPERATIVE TO
TAKE MY PLACE.

I'VE TRAINED MOST OF THE
AGENTS IN THAT DEPARTMENT
MYSELF, SO I KNOW THAT THEY
WILL CARRY ON WHERE I LEFT,
AND DO SO WITH A VENGEANCE.

YOU
MISUNDERSTAND.
YOU ARE NOT
HERE TO BE
ELIMINATED.

YOU ARE HERE TO
BE GIVEN THE VERY
THING THAT
YOU'VE SOUGHT:
KNOWLEDGE.

LOOK THERE.

WHAT... W-
WHAT IS THAT?

"THEY ARE ADVANCED
BEINGS FROM
VARIOUS UNIVERSES,
EVOLVED FAR BEYOND
CORPOREAL FORM."

"SOME MIGHT REFER TO
THEM AS 'GODS'."

"THEY GATHER IN THIS
UNIVERSE, TO AN AREA
OF THEIR CREATION,
TO DEAL WITH THREATS
THAT COULD ENDANGER
ALL REALITIES."

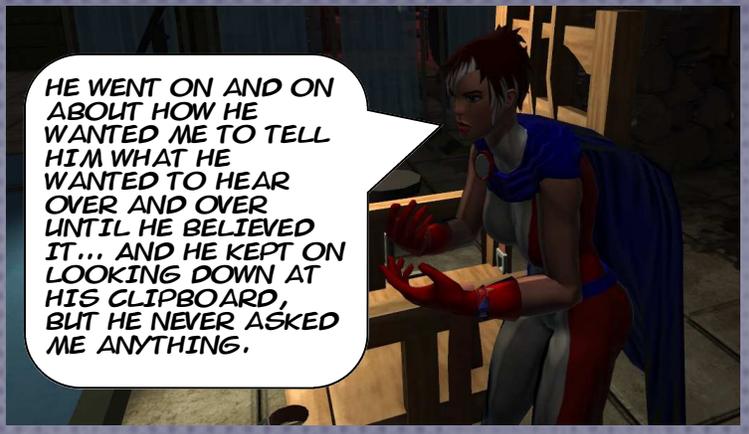
THEY ARE THE
COUNCIL OF
LIGHT.

MY SUPERIORS.

AND YOU WILL
LISTEN TO WHAT
THEY HAVE TO
TELL YOU.



IT'S STRANGE...
HE NEVER ASKED ME
A SINGLE QUESTION
WHILE HE WAS HERE.
NOT ONE.



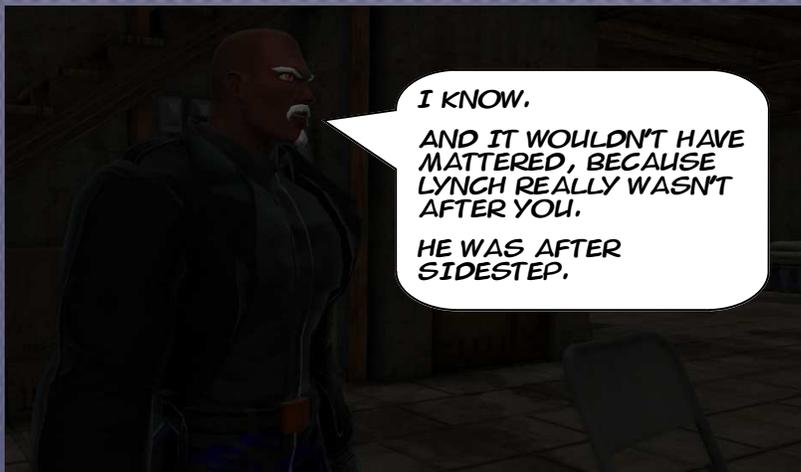
HE WENT ON AND ON
ABOUT HOW HE
WANTED ME TO TELL
HIM WHAT HE
WANTED TO HEAR
OVER AND OVER
UNTIL HE BELIEVED
IT... AND HE KEPT ON
LOOKING DOWN AT
HIS CLIPBOARD,
BUT HE NEVER ASKED
ME ANYTHING.



I WOULD HAVE TOLD HIM
TOO...
THE OTHER REALITIES,
WITT, GRIFF, WATCHER
TWELVE, ALOR, THE
WHOLE THING.
WHATEVER HE NEEDED TO
KNOW, I WOULD HAVE
FREELY TOLD HIM.



I MEAN, THAT WAS
THE WHOLE REASON
WHY CANDACE GOT
THAT SPECIAL WRIT
FOR ME; SO I
WOULDN'T HAVE TO
WORRY ABOUT
PROJECT CITADEL
GOING AFTER ME.



I KNOW.
AND IT WOULDN'T HAVE
MATTERED, BECAUSE
LYNCH REALLY WASN'T
AFTER YOU.
HE WAS AFTER
SIDESTEP.



"BE CAREFUL WHAT
YOU WISH FOR..."
HEH
SOOOO... WHAT
NOW?



NOW WE GET OUT OF HERE.
LADY ESTHER IS SUPPOSED TO
HAVE A VIDEOCONFERENCE WITH
BOTH OF US SOON CONCERNING
YOU AND LYNCH AND THE REST OF
PROJECT CITADEL.
AND... I'M SURE YOU HAVE A
FRIEND TO THANK AND A TRAVEL
CAT TO FEED AND PET.

UNITED NATIONS BUILDING

TWO HOURS LATER...

"THE SECURITY COUNCIL JUST FINISHED THEIR CLOSED-DOOR SESSION, AND THEY WERE SOMEWHAT DISTURBED WITH WHAT THEY WERE TOLD."

SOME OF THE MEMBERS HAD NO IDEA THAT GALATEA WAS FROM ANOTHER REALITY, NEVER MIND TWO.

LADY ESTHER GLACIA
UNITED NATIONS LIAISON

BUT... IN THE END, THEY ACCEPTED THE WORDS OF CAPTAIN LYNCH AND WENT ALONG WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF PROJECT CITADEL CONCERNING GALATEA'S STATUS, AS WELL AS THAT OF AGENT SIDESTEP AND THE COUNCIL OF LIGHT.

GALATEA FUTURE IS RECOGNIZED AS A LEGAL RESIDENT OF THIS UNIVERSE AND THUS OUTSIDE OF THE SCOPE OF PROJECT CITADEL.

THAT'S GREAT NEWS, LADY ESTHER.
THANK YOU!

YOU MAY NOT LIKE WHAT COMES WITH THAT.

PROJECT CITADEL INSISTED, AND THE SECURITY COUNCIL AGREED, THAT YOU, GALATEA, MUST PROVIDE A FULL ACCOUNTING OF YOUR TIME BEFORE YOU ARRIVED HERE IN 2011.*

THAT INCLUDES A DETAILED UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR POWERS BOTH PAST AND PRESENT.

THIS WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL, OF COURSE, LIMITED ONLY TO PROJECTS MYCROFT AND CITADEL.

* "THE LOST ADVENTURES OF GALATEA FUTURE" #1)



DOCTOR SILVERBACK?

HE'S THE ONLY ONE I TRUST FOR THE EXAM.



THAT BRINGS US TO AGENT SIDESTEP AND THE COUNCIL OF LIGHT.



OFFICIALLY, THE SECURITY COUNCIL CANNOT RECOGNIZE A SUPERSEDING AUTHORITY LIKE THE COUNCIL OF LIGHT. HOWEVER, THEY DO ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR EXISTENCE PRIVATELY.



CAPTAIN LYNCH HAS BEEN ASSIGNED AS THE LIAISON BETWEEN U.N.T.I.L. AND THE COUNCIL OF LIGHT. ALL FUTURE CROSS-DIMENSIONAL ACTIVITIES WILL GO THROUGH HIM.



WHAT ABOUT AGENT SIDESTEP? HE'S BEEN THE AGENT ASSIGNED TO THIS WORLD BY THE COUNCIL OF LIGHT.

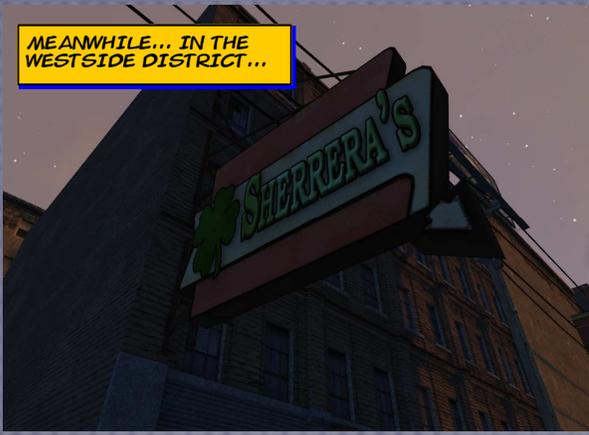
HE'S BEEN HERE FOR ALMOST A DECADE NOW. SURELY HE WOULD BE A BETTER FIT AS LIAISON.



NO DOUBT, MISS FUTURE, HOWEVER, I AM TOLD THAT THIS DECISION WAS MADE BY THE COUNCIL OF LIGHT THEMSELVES. IT WAS THEIR REQUEST THAT CAPTAIN LYNCH SERVE AS LIAISON.

AS FOR AGENT SIDESTEP, HE WILL BE FREE TO CONTINUE HIS CURRENT ASSIGNMENTS HERE. AFTER THAT, WHO KNOWS?

MEANWHILE... IN THE WESTSIDE DISTRICT...



THIS IS CERTAINLY AN UNEXPECTED PLACE TO MEET.



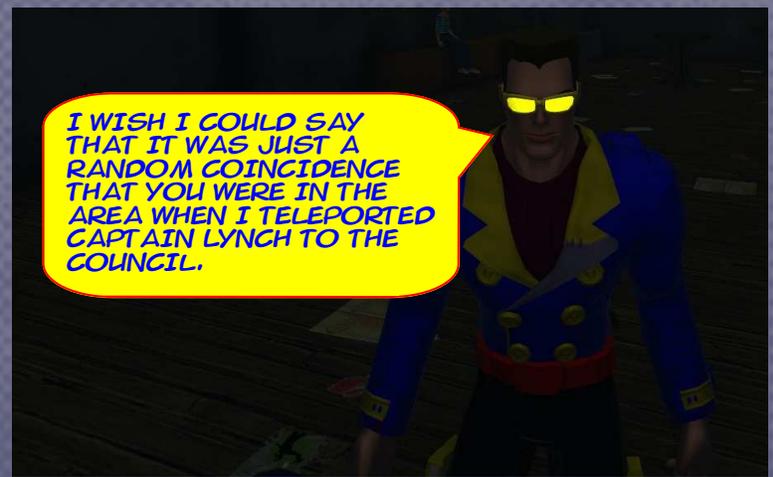
WELL, SOMETIMES I MEET WITH CLIENTS HERE WHEN WE NEED SOMEPLACE WHERE WE'RE NOT GOING TO ATTRACT ATTENTION. I'M SORRY ABOUT THE LACK OF BAR STOOLS.



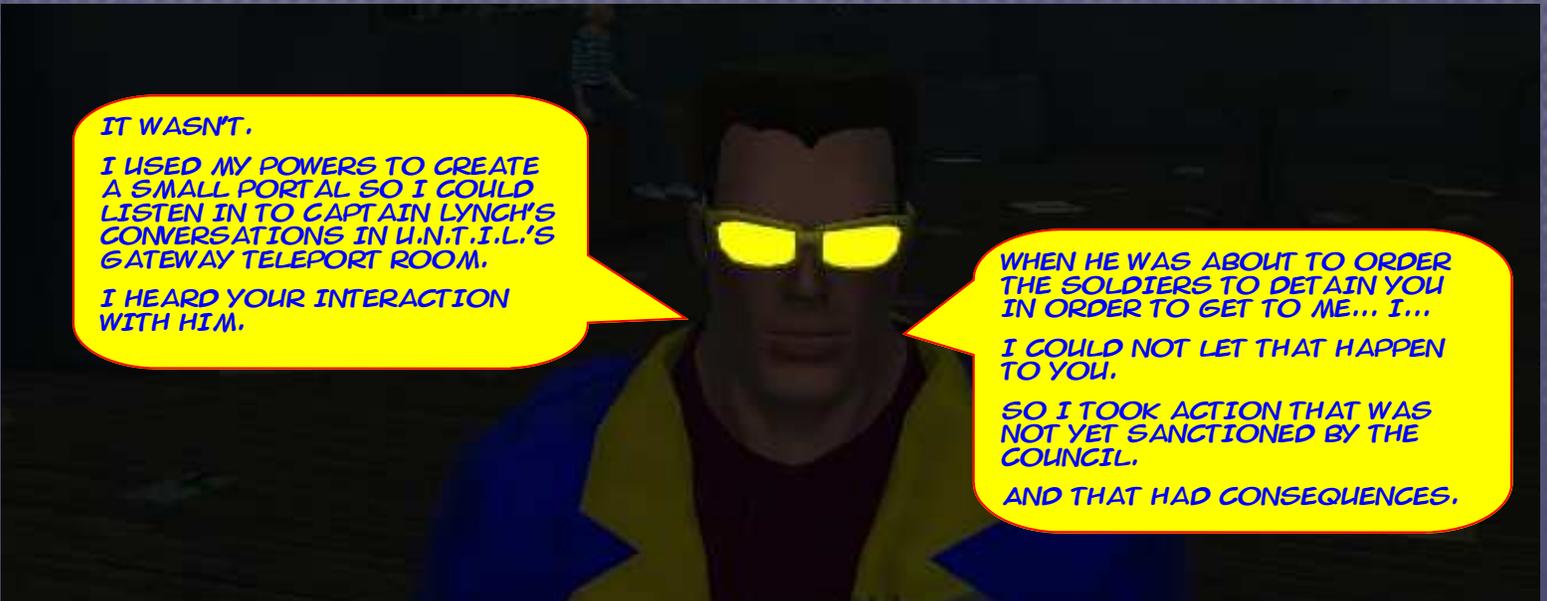
NO... IT IS... FINE. I HAVE NO PROBLEM STANDING.



WHEN CAPTAIN LYNCH WAS TELEPORTED AWAY, I KNEW THAT WAS YOU DOING IT. THANK YOU.



I WISH I COULD SAY THAT IT WAS JUST A RANDOM COINCIDENCE THAT YOU WERE IN THE AREA WHEN I TELEPORTED CAPTAIN LYNCH TO THE COUNCIL.



IT WASN'T.

I USED MY POWERS TO CREATE A SMALL PORTAL SO I COULD LISTEN IN TO CAPTAIN LYNCH'S CONVERSATIONS IN U.N.T.I.L.'S GATEWAY TELEPORT ROOM.

I HEARD YOUR INTERACTION WITH HIM.

WHEN HE WAS ABOUT TO ORDER THE SOLDIERS TO DETAIN YOU IN ORDER TO GET TO ME... I...

I COULD NOT LET THAT HAPPEN TO YOU.

SO I TOOK ACTION THAT WAS NOT YET SANCTIONED BY THE COUNCIL.

AND THAT HAD CONSEQUENCES.



CONSEQUENCES?
WHAT DO YOU...?
OH NO.



YES.
MY ASSIGNMENT
HERE WILL
EVENTUALLY GO
TO CAPTAIN
LYNCH.



MY GOD... WHY?
WHY WOULD YOU
DO THAT?



BECAUSE I
COULD NOT SIT
BACK AND KNOW
THAT YOU WOULD
BE HARMED TO
GET TO ME.



YOU KNOW THAT I AM NOT
HUMAN. MY SPECIES HAS BEEN
CONDITIONED TO BE THE
PERFECT OBSERVERS.
WE PRIDE OURSELVES ON OUR
DISPASSIONATE INTELLIGENCE.
THIS IS WHY THE COUNCIL OF
LIGHT SELECTED ME TO BE ONE
OF THEIR AGENTS.

BUT MY PRIOR ASSIGNMENTS
WERE ALWAYS TEMPORARY.
OBSERVE, REPORT, MOVE ON.
BEING ASSIGNED FOR A LONG
-TERM MISSION LIKE THIS*...
IT AWAKENED FEELINGS THAT
WE NORMALLY ARE ABLE TO
SUPPRESS.

(* THE LOST ADVENTURES OF GALATEA FUTURE #2)



FEELINGS...
... FOR YOU.

YOU DO NOT NEED TO WORRY,
I KNOW THAT YOU DO NOT
FEEL THE SAME WAY AS I DO.
AND IT'S NOT BECAUSE I AM
NOT HUMAN. IT'S JUST... NOT
PART OF YOUR ORIENTATION.

H-HOW DID
YOU...?

I'VE NEVER TOLD
ANYONE THAT!
NOT EVEN GALATEA
KNOWS THAT!

I AM AN OBSERVER.
AFTER THE INCIDENT
WITH MALIZIA*, I
INVESTIGATED WHY
YOU WOULD
ASSAULT ME EVEN
UNDER A DUAL
PERSONALITY.

(* ISSUE #10)

MY INVESTIGATION
WAS PERSONAL... AS
WERE MY ACTIONS
TODAY TO PROTECT
YOU FROM CAPTAIN
LYNCH.
THAT IS WHY THE
COUNCIL WILL REPLACE
ME WITH LYNCH.

WHAT I KNOW ABOUT YOU WILL
REMAIN BETWEEN YOU AND I UNTIL
YOU DECIDE OTHERWISE.

MY SECONDARY ASSIGNMENT FOR THE
COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE.

AFTERWARD... I WILL BE GIVEN A NEW
ASSIGNMENT IN ANOTHER UNIVERSE,
AND AWAY FROM THE FEELINGS THAT I
KNOW CAN NEVER BE RECIPROGATED.

IS... THERE
SUPPOSED TO BE A
WAITRESS TO GET
OUR DRINKS?

OR ARE WE
SUPPOSED TO GET
THEM OURSELVES?

I'LL GO GET THEM.
MY TREAT.

A FEW HOURS LATER...
ON THE DOWNTOWN ROOFTOPS...

HELLO?
ARE YOU THERE?

I REALLY HOPE
THAT YOU ARE
HERE. HATE TO
THINK I'M TALKING
TO THE WIND.

 **STARLETT**
STREET VIGILANTE

MAJOR CROSS
REFERRED ME TO
YOU. HE SAID THAT
YOU WOULDN'T SAY
ANYTHING UNLESS
YOU WERE WILLING
TO HELP ME, SO
HERE GOES...

I'VE PICKED UP A
STALKER.
NO SURPRISE GIVEN OUR
LINE OF WORK, RIGHT?
ONLY THIS ONE... NOW
KNOWS WHO I AM. AND
I THINK HE IS TRYING TO
BLACKMAIL ME.

I KNOW... I HAVE FRIENDS
WHO COULD HELP.

THE PROBLEM IS... IF I
BRING THEM IN, THEN MY
BOYFRIEND WILL GET
INVOLVED. AND IF I'M
RIGHT ABOUT WHO MY
STALKER IS, THEN I FEAR
WHAT HE WILL DO.

AND THIS IS SOMETHING
THAT I REALLY WANT TO
RESOLVE BY MYSELF.

I JUST NEED YOUR HELP
TO CONFIRM WHO HE IS.
I HOPE YOU CAN HELP ME.

OR... I'M
STILL JUST
TALKING TO
THE WIND...

START AT THE TOP,
TELL ME EVERYTHING
YOU KNOW.

 **RED SINNER**
HOODED VIGILANTE

**FAR FROM
OVER!**

GUARDIAN WORDS

Words of wisdom from writer and creator David 2.

SECRETS and REVELATIONS

This issue has been full of secrets and revelations, from the guy persecuting people from other universes, to Starlett's secret identity being discovered by all the wrong people, to Agent Sidestep's ulterior motives for some of his actions...

... and to Candace Sinclair's vaguely-referenced "orientation".

This is perhaps the most controversial of the secrets and revelations of the whole issue.

When it comes to comics, and especially those involving MMO superhero games, the subject of LGBTQ characters is something that has been handled lightly. The target audience of this series, as well as the Champions Online MMO itself, is for teens. So it's hard to really deal with matter that is more designed for adults than for teens. This is especially true when it comes to MMORPGs, as corporate-owned games try to avoid such controversial matters completely.

And yet the world of comics have been able to address the issue, not necessarily with explicit imagery, but with simple statement of facts.

DC Comics has Maggie Sawyer, a secondary character in the post-Crisis "Superman" comics who served as a no-nonsense police detective for Metropolis. It was also coyly hinted by Lex Luthor that she was a lesbian as an attempt to blackmail her. She didn't bow or break or deny it. That was in the late 1980's, back when LGBTQ issues weren't really stuff that could be discussed in mainstream media.

Maggie would appear in the Cartoon Network's "Superman: The Animated Series", where her relationship is again hinted, but not blatantly made since the audience was for a younger age group.

Maggie would later appear in the live-action "Supergirl" TV series as a newly-transferred detective for National City and as a love interest for Supergirl's adopted sister Alex Danvers, and helping to break the barriers that kept same-sex couples matters of jokes instead being accepted.

There have been plenty of other LGBTQ characters in different comics over the years. Wildstorm's "The Authority" have had a same-sex couple in the form of Apollo and Midnighter, variants of Superman and Batman. In a recent reboot of DC's Earth-2, Alan Scott, aka Green Lantern, was revealed to be gay. Marvel has had a few LGBTQ characters as well, starting with Northstar, and, most recently, Hulking and Wiccan.

Perhaps the most obvious LGBTQ superhero is DC's Batwoman, who is the first openly gay superhero on live action mainstream TV. First played by Ruby Rose as Kate Kane, the role of Batwoman will soon go to Ryan Wielder, played by Javicia Leslie.

Let's not forget the character of Sara Lance, aka "White Canary", on the CW's "Legends of Tomorrow" and previously on "Arrow". As the leader of the "Legends", Sara has explored her bisexuality on numerous occasions and in numerous time eras.

In the world of MMO superhero games, though, the subject is not as readily handled. The MMO game Overwatch has several characters that are confirmed gay, including fan-favorite Tracer. But their orientation is not made blatant in the game. Rather these were revealed in backstories.

In short, the subject of LGBTQ characters is not a matter of "mature audiences", but simply a statement of fact in a society that is not as "binary" as we once believed.

Continues on next page...

That brings us to "Future's Guardian".

When we developed some of the characters in the series, especially the primary and secondary characters, we explored various personality traits, including possible relationships. How they interact with other people, and what kind of romantic relationships they could have. That was certainly the case when it came to John Battle and Starlett, whose relationship was shown here in previous issues.

When it came to Candace, though, we found a character that was a consummate workaholic, seemingly spending every waking day on cases, so much so that she would even turn to stimulants like Wake-Ez to keep up (*and we all know how that turned out in the "Psilence of Conscience" storyline*). Someone who would rather spend her time with her super-powered female friend and client, and be interested in certain female figures like Starlett's alter-ego, DJ Risqué.

But why spend so much time on her clients? Wouldn't she have a life? Someone in her life outside of work?

Unless she really couldn't. Unless she lacked the means to find that certain someone, even in a community designed for the future where super-science and super-sorcery and super-powers work hand-in-hand.

Unless she was gay.

That is what Candace Sinclair is.

This is not something we are going to spend too much time with. We have no plans on making it a cause-of-the-day or trying to ram this down everyone's throats on a continual basis. It's simply who she is, just like millions of others in the real world. Just like Kate and Ryan and Maggie and Tracer and Apollo and Midnighter and Wiccan and Hulking and Northstar and Sara and Alex and Alan.

Candace Sinclair is gay.

'Nuff said.

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NEXT ISSUE...

**CHAMPIONS
ONLINE**



"THE SCIENCE OF GALATEA."

WHAT MAKES OUR GUARDIAN HERO TICK?

AND IS THERE A SECRET ABOUT HER THAT SHE'S STILL KEEPING FROM EVERYONE?

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THE CRUCIBLE #38
JANUARY 2021

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AND BLACK HARLEQUIN EXCLAIMS "OH MY WHAT A
PITY!"*

*"THE HEROES ARE GOOD, THE VILLAINS ARE BAD,
AND THERE'S STILL MORE CHAOS FOR THERE TO BE HAD!"*

*"I'LL MUST GIVE THEM ALL A SHINY NEW REASON,
WHY THEY SHOULD FEAR THIS COLD WINTER SEASON!"*

*"SOME FRIENDS I'LL BRING UP FROM MY TRUSTY TOY
SHOP,
THAT WILL BRING THE CITY TO SUPER-FAST STOP!"*

*"AND JUST WHEN THEY THINK THEY'VE SEEN THE WORST
FROM THIS LOUSE,
I'LL SEND CLARENCE IN TO BRING DOWN THE HOUSE!"*



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UNLOCK HOLIDAY GIFTS!
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