

# GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN



ISSUE 27  
2011



SPOTLIGHT ON... **Whyspera**

THAT'S **NOT**  
WHAT I MEANT  
WHEN I SAID  
"SHOW ME  
WHAT YOU  
GOT!"



*PARAGON CITY: THE CITY OF HEROES! THE ONLY PLACE IN THE WORLD WHERE THE HERO-TO-PROBLEM RATIO IS ALMOST ONE-TO-ONE. IF YOU NEED A HERO IN THIS CITY, YOU JUST HAVE TO LOOK AROUND THE CORNER.*

*BUT NOT ALL HEROES ARE THE SAME. SOME ARE MORE MERCENARY THAN THE OTHERS. BUT THERE ARE SOME WHO SEE THE CALLING AS A SIGN OF BRIGHTER DAYS AHEAD FOR ALL MANKIND. THESE ARE THE HEROES WHO FIGHT FOR SOMETHING BETTER. THEY ARE THE...*

# GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN



**NAME:**  
**WHYSPERA**

**REAL NAME:**  
**WENDY SPYRE**

**STATUS:**  
**REGISTERED SUPERHERO**

**ARCHETYPE:**  
**DEFENDER**

**PRIMARY POWER:**  
**SONIC RESONANCE**

**SECONDARY POWER:** **SONIC ATTACK**

AFTER THE EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW MONTHS, THE GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN FIND THEMSELVES SHORT SEVERAL MEMBERS.

MIDNIGHT X AND DAYBRIGHT ARE AWAY ON DIFFERENT ASSIGNMENTS. MIDNIGHT ARACHNIA IS ON A NEEDED VACATION. ICON POWERS IS ONCE AGAIN "RETIRED". CAPTAIN PARAGONNA IS STILL OFFICIALLY ON LEAVE FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT, AND THE LIBERTARIAN AVENGER JUST ANNOUNCED HIS CANDIDACY TO BECOME THE NEXT DISTRICT ATTORNEY.

THIS IS CAUSING SOME OF THE REMAINING ACTIVE MEMBERS TO SUGGEST THAT THE GUARDIANS NEED TO BOLSTER THEIR RANKS...

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PARAGON CITY, RHODE ISLAND

ATLAS PARK - ATLAS PLAZA

"YOU PICKED A REALLY BAD TIME TO DO THIS..."

"I DIDN'T HAVE MUCH OF A CHOICE, MAXIMUS. SOMEONE NEEDED TO STEP UP TO TAKE ON EDWARD VANCE AND KEEP HIM OUT OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S CHAIR."

"RIGHT. THAT'S WHY THERE ARE OTHER PEOPLE IN THE RUNNING FOR THE POSITION. YOU COULD HAVE BACKED THEM."

"WE DID THE RESEARCH ON THEM AFTER THEY MADE THEIR ANNOUNCEMENTS... ALICE BANKS IS BEING SPONSORED BY A PRO-FAMILY GROUP THAT WANTS TO OUTLAW SIDEKICKS."

"NOBLE SON HAS BEEN A HERO AND A RESIDENT OF THIS CITY FOR LESS THAN A YEAR, HE'S ESSENTIALLY WHAT THEY CALL A CARPETBAGGER. VANCE'S PEOPLE WILL MAKE SHORT WORK OF HIM IN THE ADS!"

(\* SEE ISSUE #26 FOR DETAILS)

THERE'S EVEN WORD THAT FORMER CHIEF BOCHCO IS GOING TO ANNOUNCE HIS RUN SOON.

GIVEN HOW HE ALLOWED THE POLICE TO OPERATE AND HOW HE WAS FORCED TO LEAVE, I DOUBT HE WOULD STAND A CHANCE.

ARE YOU KIDDING? EVEN TODAY HE STILL HAS SOME POLITICAL SUPPORT.

THEN YOU FIND ANOTHER CANDIDATE.

SOMEONE WHO ISN'T TRYING TO ALSO HIDE HIS REAL IDENTITY.

 **MAXIMUS REX**

YOU THINK I DIDN'T CONSIDER THAT?

I'M NOT HAPPY HAVING TO PUT MY REAL NAME BACK OUT IN THE LIMELIGHT, BUT I'M ALSO THE ONLY ONE THAT HAS NAME RECOGNITION.

 **LIBERTARIAN AVENGER**

WE BOTH KNOW THAT VANCE HAS THE POLITICAL INFLUENCE AND THE PUBLIC APPEAL TO WIN THE ELECTION. YOU CAN'T COUNTER THAT WITH A RELATIVE UNKNOWN.

I'VE WORKED IT OUT WITH OMEGA SHIFT. SHE HELPED ME CLEAR UP THE PROBLEM WITH THE CONSIGNMENT STORE, WHEN THEY GOT WIND OF MY REAL IDENTITY.\* SHE'LL POSE AS ME BRIEFLY TO KEEP UP APPEARANCES, AND THEN GRADUALLY BACK THEM DOWN TO AVOID SUSPICION.

(\* ISSUE #16)



I DON'T LIKE THIS ANY MORE THAN YOU DO, MAXIMUS, BUT IT HAS TO BE DONE.  
SOMEONE NEEDS TO STOP VANCE FROM BEING ELECTED D.A. AND RIGHT NOW THAT PERSON IS ALEX WENTWORTH.

IT DOESN'T MAKE IT ANY EASIER FOR ME...  
WE'RE ALREADY SHORT-HANDED AS IT IS. WITH YOU GONE, WE DON'T HAVE ANY INVESTIGATORS HERE UNLESS I CAN TALK LADY TEMPLAR TO COME OUT FROM THE SHADOWS.



YEAH, GOOD LUCK WITH THAT. SHE SUPPOSEDLY WON'T COME BACK TO US UNTIL SHE'S WEARING HER "CAPTAIN" UNIFORM.\*  
YOU KNOW, YOU MIGHT HAVE TO...

(\* SEE ISSUE #26)



DON'T... EVEN... THINK IT!  
IT'S BAD ENOUGH PYROGURL IS COMING UP WITH A WISH LIST... I HAD TO KEEP HER FROM PUTTING IT OUT ON CAPEBOOK.



I WAS ACTUALLY GOING TO SUGGEST CALLING UP OUR "HONORARY" MEMBERS LIKE JOHN COLE.

I HAD THOUGHT OF THAT AS WELL. I CAN'T GET IN TOUCH WITH HIM.  
I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S BECAUSE OF LIBRA OR BECAUSE OF THE ROGUE ISLES, BUT EITHER WAY, WE CAN'T COUNT ON HIS HELP RIGHT NOW.



SORRY, MAXIMUS...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT...  
YOU JUST WIN THAT ELECTION. I'LL HANDLE THE REST.



SOMEHOW...

SIX HOURS LATER...

# "AUDITIONS"

- A CITY OF HEROES STORY BY DAVID 2



DID YOU EVER HAVE A SONG IN YOUR HEAD THAT YOU CAN'T GET RID OF?

THAT'S ME WITH THIS PARTICULAR PROBLEM...

HOW DO WE GET MORE MEMBERS?



REALLY? AND IT WORKED FOR YOUR GROUP?

 **WHYSPERA**



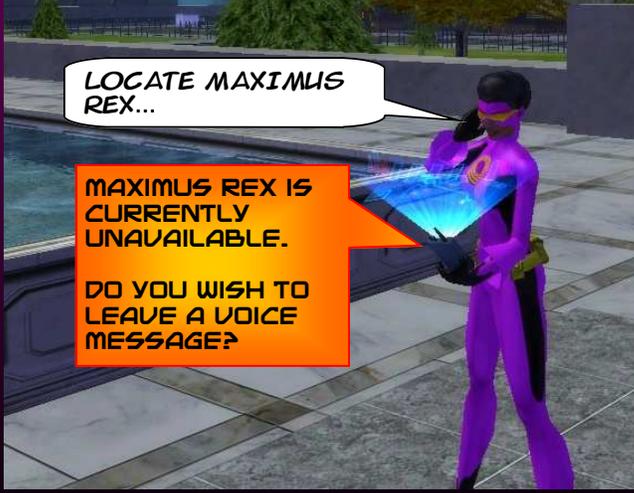
OH ABSOLUTELY!  
SURE OUR GROUP'S LEADER WAS A LITTLE NERVOUS ABOUT THE IDEA, BUT WE FOUND A LOT OF GOOD MEMBERS AND WE EVEN GOT SOME GREAT TIPS ON FUTURE MISSIONS!



OF COURSE MY GROUP GOT TAKEN OVER A YEAR AGO, BUT THE PRACTICE STILL GOES ON, AND IT'S ALMOST AS FUN AS COSTUME CONTESTS.



GREAT! THEN I'LL BE SURE TO MENTION THAT TO MAXIMUS WHEN I TELL HIM!  
THANKS GREEN GAMMA!



LOCATE MAXIMUS REX...

MAXIMUS REX IS CURRENTLY UNAVAILABLE.  
DO YOU WISH TO LEAVE A VOICE MESSAGE?



YES. BEGIN RECORDING...  
MAXIMUS, THIS IS WHYSPERA... I THINK I HAVE A WAY TO HELP US GET NEW MEMBERS, AND I WANT TO RUN IT BY YOU. I'LL MEET YOU AT THE BASE FOR THE DETAILS.

GUARDIANS BASE - TALOS ISLAND

I LOVE THIS GROUP! I REALLY DO!

THEY GAVE ME A SHOT WHEN NOBODY ELSE WOULD.

OKAY, SO I DO HAVE THIS HABIT OF RUSHING IN WHEN I SHOULDN'T...

NOT TO MENTION SINGING WHEN I'M NERVOUS... WHICH TRIGGERS MY POWERS AND IT GETS KIND OF EXPENSIVE FOR ME...

BUT THE GUARDIANS, THEY UNDERSTAND. THEY EVEN TRY TO HELP ME WORK WITH THIS POWER I HAVE.

SO NOW THAT WE'RE DOWN A FEW MEMBERS, I CAN'T HELP BUT WANT TO PITCH IN AND GET THINGS GOING AGAIN.

I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE I CAN RESUME MY SINGING CAREER...

STUDIOS DON'T LIKE HAVING THEIR SOUND BOOTHS DESTROYED, EVEN BY ACCIDENT.

LET'S SEE HOW THIS LOOKS...

GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN

NOW HOSTING AUDITIONS FOR NEW MEMBERS!

YOU'VE SEEN THEM ON PNN, AND NOW YOU CAN WORK SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH THEM AS THEY TAKE ON ALL THREATS BOTH LOCAL AND COSMIC.

APPLICANTS MUST BE REGISTERED HEROES, OR ROGUES/VIGILANTES COMMITTED TO ACHIEVING HEROIC STATUS. BE PREPARED TO SHOW OFF YOUR ABILITIES.

AUDITIONS TO BE HELD UNDERNEATH THE ATLAS STATUE.

PERFECT! JUST LIKE GREEN GAMMA SUGGESTED.

NOW ALL I NEED TO DO IS GET MAXIMUS TO SIGN OFF ON IT, AND I CAN HAVE THIS POSTED ON THE INFO-TERMINALS ALL OVER THE CITY.

IF I CAN GET HIM TO AGREE TO IT...

MINUTES LATER...

WELL?

YOU MUST BE JOKING!

THE LAST THING THIS GROUP NEEDS IS AN AUDITION FOR NEW MEMBERS!

THE GUARDIANS ARE NEITHER A CIRCUS NOR A BUSINESS.

THEN WHAT ARE WE, MAXIMUS?

WE'RE NOT A FAMILY, WE'RE NOT AN ARMY, WE'RE A GROUP, AND WE'RE A GROUP WITH MISSING MEMBERS!

YOU'VE BEEN IN CHARGE FOR A YEAR NOW, SINCE THEN THE ONLY PEOPLE YOU'VE BROUGHT IN WERE PYROGURL AND STREET JUSTICE, AND PYROGURL IS STILL JUST AN APPRENTICE.

MEANWHILE OUR RANKS ARE GETTING SMALLER AND SMALLER.

WE NEED NEW BLOOD!

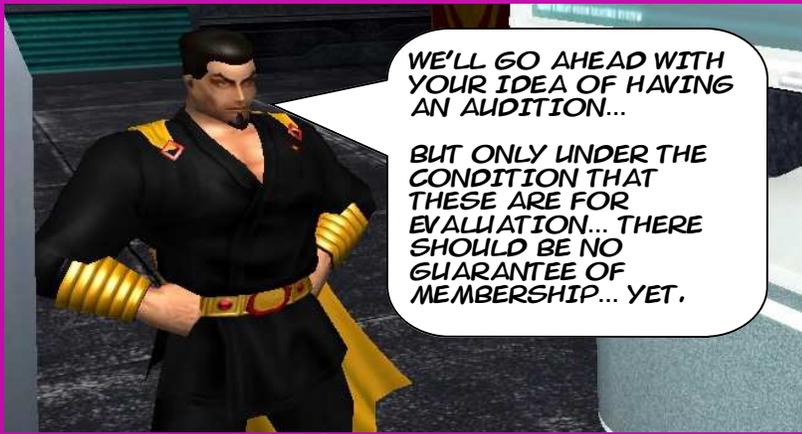
I KNOW YOU LIKE TO THINK THAT WE'RE SOMEHOW DIFFERENT THAN THE OTHER GROUPS. THAT WE DON'T HAVE HUGE COMPLEX BASES OR HOST OUR OWN LEAGUE EVENTS OR DO COSTUME CONTESTS.

BUT THOSE GROUPS GOT THAT BIG BECAUSE THEY ACTIVELY SOUGHT OUT NEW MEMBERS. THEY WERE LOOKING FOR NEW TALENT. I JUST THINK...

NNH! NO OFFENSE, MAXIMUS, BUT I REALLY THINK THAT SOMETIMES YOU'RE JUST NOT LOOKING THAT HARD FOR NEW TALENT TO MAKE US A BETTER GROUP.



YOU'VE REALLY PUT SOME THOUGHT INTO THIS, HAVEN'T YOU?  
VERY WELL...



WE'LL GO AHEAD WITH YOUR IDEA OF HAVING AN AUDITION...  
BUT ONLY UNDER THE CONDITION THAT THESE ARE FOR EVALUATION... THERE SHOULD BE NO GUARANTEE OF MEMBERSHIP... YET.



AND SINCE THIS IS YOUR IDEA...  
YOU'RE THE ONE THAT HANDLES THE WHOLE THING. PROMOTION, EVALUATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.



ME? ALONE?  
UM... CAN I AT LEAST HAVE SOME HELP?  
MAYBE ONE OF THE POWERS OR MAYBE TASHATIGER? MAYBE EVEN PYROGURL?



YOU NEED TO TAKE OWNERSHIP OF THIS YOURSELF, WHYSPERA.  
I'LL FOLLOW THROUGH WITH WHATEVER APPLICANT THAT YOU RECOMMEND.



WOW... OKAY... THANKS MAXIMUS...

OKAY... SO I GUESS I SHOULD HAVE BEEN PREPARED FOR THAT.

ATLAS PARK - CITY HALL



I ALSO SHOULD HAVE BEEN PREPARED FOR ALL OF THE BUREAUCRACY INVOLVED...

THE SQUARE UNDER THE ATLAS STATUE MAY BE A PUBLIC PLACE, BUT YOU STILL HAVE TO RESERVE IT FOR SPECIAL EVENTS.

APPARENTLY THREE SUPERGROUPS HAD THE AREA BOOKED FOR COSTUME CONTESTS, SO I HAD TO CHANGE THE DATE OF THE AUDITION TWICE BEFORE A SPACE FINALLY OPENED UP.

ROCINANTE GROUP

PEREZ PARK

IN ALL HONESTY, I'M SURPRISED THAT YOUR OFFICE EVEN EXISTS... MISS... FELLOWS, IS IT?



SHADOWBORN LORD

YES, GRACE FELLOWS...

YOU CAN CHECK WITH MS. MOREIRA AT CITY HALL IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS.

MY OFFICE IS A LITTLE SHORT-STAFFED, BUT WE DO EVENTUALLY GET TO EVERY ORGANIZATION.

I SEE... AND YOU'RE LOOKING FOR... WHAT, PRECISELY?

INCONSISTENCIES.

FOR INSTANCE, YOU SEEM TO SPEND A LOT OF RESOURCES FOR AN ORGANIZATION THAT IS DEDICATED TO BEING PRIMARILY AN INFORMATION-AND-SECURITY THINK-TANK.

WELL AS YOU CAN IMAGINE, MS. FELLOWS, OUR ORGANIZATION UTILIZES A LOT OF ENERGY RESOURCES BECAUSE OF THE EXTENSIVE MAINFRAMES WE HAVE ON THE LOWER LEVELS.

HOWEVER, I'M SURE YOU'D LIKE TO MOVE ON TO MORE IMPORTANT ORGANIZATIONS, SO I'LL MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH MY SECURITY STAFF TO GIVE YOU A TOUR OF OUR FACILITY SO THAT YOU WILL KNOW WE HAVE NOTHING AT ALL TO HIDE.

click

THAT WOULD REALLY BE APPRECIATED, LORD GEDDY. IT WOULD MAKE MY WORK A LOT EASIER.

NAME: GRACE FELLOWS  
 SPECIES: HUMAN  
 GENDER: FEMALE  
 OCCUPATION: FBI INVESTIGATOR  
 ABILITIES:  
 NO PARANORMAL ABILITIES  
 NO METAGENETIC ABILITIES  
 NO TECHNOLOGICAL/SCIENTIFIC ENHANCEMENTS  
 FREEDOM CORPS SELF-DEFENSE  
 ADDRESS:  
 MANCO COURT  
 IN CITY, RI

THREE DAYS LATER...

THANK YOU EVERYONE WHO SHOWED UP FOR THIS FIRST-EVER OPEN AUDITION FOR THE GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN!

MY NAME IS WHYSPERA, AND I'M GOING TO BE HANDLING THE INTERVIEWS FOR EACH OF THE APPLICANTS ON BEHALF OF OUR GROUP'S LEADER, MAXIMUS REX.

NOW, BEFORE WE GET STARTED, DOES ANYONE HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?

I THOUGHT THIS WAS A COSTUME CONTEST!

WHO'S DOING A TASK FORCE AROUND HERE?

WHERE'S GALATEA POWERS?

IT'S GOING TO BE A LONG DAY...

OKAY... THE FIRST ONE ON THE LIST IS... FALLOFF?

THAT'S ME... FALLOFF!

I'M A MELEE FIGHTER WITH A TWIST. I CAN USE MY BODY AS A WEAPON!

ACTUALLY THERE ARE PLENTY OF PEOPLE THAT CAN DO THAT...

NO, I MEAN I CAN TEAR OFF MY ARM AND USE IT AS A WEAPON...

WATCH!

**GERRAATAAGH!!!**

UM... I THINK YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO TEAR OFF THE CYBORG ARM...

HOLD ON, I THINK I HAVE AN EMERGENCY MEDICAL TELEPORT PATCH FOR YOU.



HAIL TO THE  
NUKE, BABY!

IT'S TIME FOR  
THE A-TEAM TO  
SHOW UP AND  
CHEW SOME  
GUM AND KICK  
SOME @\$\$



YOUR NAME IS...

WAIT... ARE YOU  
SERIOUS?

NUKE DUKUM?



THAT'S MY NAME,  
SWEETNESS,  
DON'T WEAR IT  
OUT.

I'VE GOT A WHOLE  
ARSENAL AND A  
SIX-PACK OF  
BEER FOR YOU.



SORRY, BUT I'M  
SURPRISED YOU'RE  
EVEN ALLOWED TO  
HAVE THAT NAME.

HASNT ANYONE  
SAID ANYTHING  
ABOUT COPYRIGHT  
LAWS?



IT'S BEEN OVER TEN  
YEARS, HONEY...

I SERIOUSLY DOUBT  
ANYONE WILL EVEN  
REMEMBER WHO  
THAT OTHER GUY IS.



SORRY, BUT NO.

WE CAN'T GO  
THROUGH THAT KIND  
OF MESS... AGAIN.

NEXT?



HELLO, I'M  
WONDROUS  
WOMAN...

AND YOU'RE A  
WARRIOR PRINCESS  
FOR PEACE?

YES! HOW DID  
YOU KNOW I'M  
A PRINCESS?

THE TIARA GAVE  
IT AWAY.

NEXT?



I'M PERRY  
HOTTER, AND  
I'M A WIZARD  
APPRENTICE.

I'M HIZONEY,  
AND I'M HIS  
GIRLFRIEND...

CAPTAIN RUM  
BIRDY... AT  
YOUR SERVICE.

CAPTAIN  
JACK-AND-  
SODA HERE...



LLO...

HOW DO YOU SAY YOUR NAME?

WYTTYQLYSC



YOU'RE A LEVEL 11, AND YOU LIST... GOLD FARMING AS YOUR TALENT?

MUTANT LEGS, CYBORG ARM, AND IS THAT AN ARACHNOS CAPE?



YES, AND I CAN HELP YOU AND YOUR GROUP EACH GET TO SECURITY LEVEL FIFTY IN TWO WEEKS.



YOU KNOW THAT KIND OF BUSINESS IS ILLEGAL HERE. SORRY, BUT NO.

RTM SPAMMER... MYSTERY SOLVED.



YOU'RE MISSING OUT ON A SWEET DEAL...

SORRY, MA'AM...

I'M A DUDE... BEOTCH!

YOU'RE A TOOL, THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE...



HIYA HONEY... NAME'S LYE FIELD.

LYE FIELD? WHY DOEST THAT NAME SOUND FAMILIAR?



OKAY... WELL AFTER ALL OF THOSE COPYRIGHT CLONES, THIS IS A LITTLE DIFFERENT...

LH... NO PUN INTENDED.

HE'S NO BIGGER THAN TASHATIGER...

NONE TAKEN DARLING...

WAS A BIG PLAYER IN THE 90'S AND I'M GLAD TO BE BACK IN THE GAME.

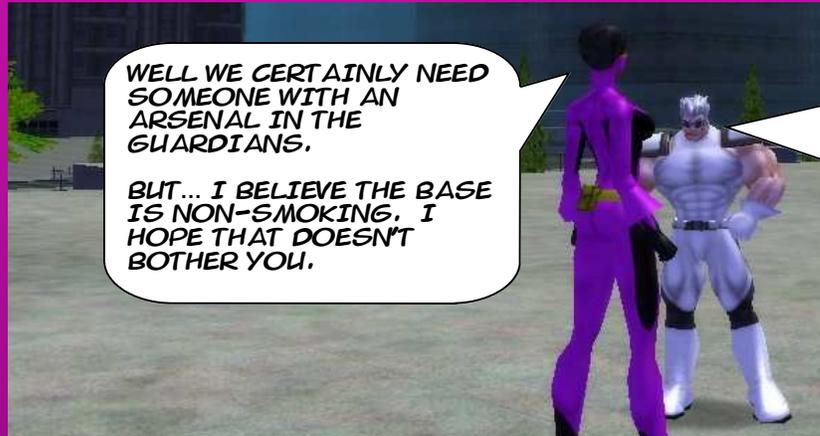
WHAT ARE HIS SHOULDER PADS CONNECTED TO? HIS BARE SKIN?



OKAY, SO YOU'RE A BLASTER CATEGORY WITH A CUSTOM ARSENAL?

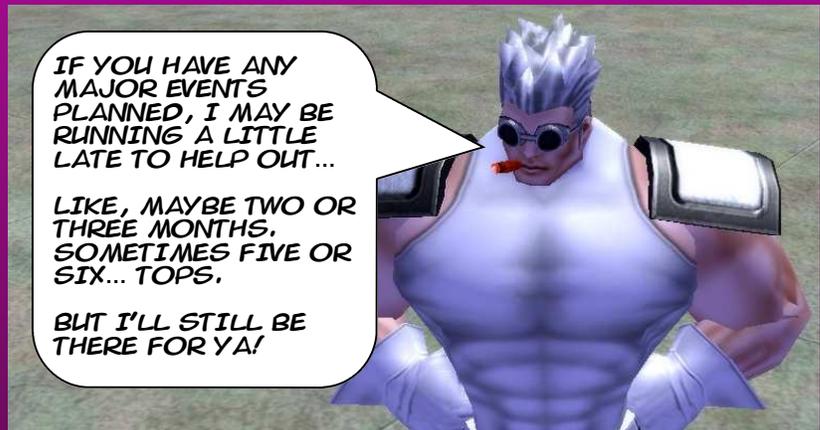


IT'S CALLED A B-F-G, LADY.  
BIG-FLIPPING-GUN! GUN BIGGER THAN MY BODY, AND IT BLOWS THINGS UP IN A BLOODY MESS!



WELL WE CERTAINLY NEED SOMEONE WITH AN ARSENAL IN THE GUARDIANS.  
BUT... I BELIEVE THE BASE IS NON-SMOKING. I HOPE THAT DOESN'T BOTHER YOU.

ARE YOU KIDDING? THIS THING IS JUST FOR EFFECT TO SHOW JUST HOW MUCH OF A BAD-\$\$\$ I AM!  
I HAVEN'T SMOKED AN HONEST CIGAR IN A DECADE.  
THERE'S JUST ONE THING THAT I HAVE TO MENTION...



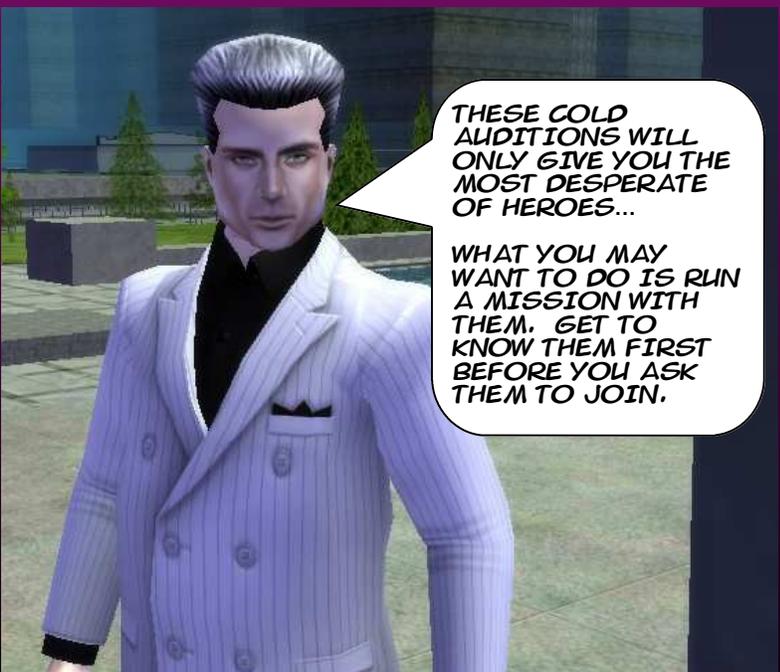
IF YOU HAVE ANY MAJOR EVENTS PLANNED, I MAY BE RUNNING A LITTLE LATE TO HELP OUT...  
LIKE, MAYBE TWO OR THREE MONTHS, SOMETIMES FIVE OR SIX... TOPS.  
BUT I'LL STILL BE THERE FOR YA!



OKAY... WELL, I'LL BE SURE TO PUT THAT DOWN FOR YOU...  
THANK YOU.  
I NEED A BREAK!



HI...  
DON'T MIND ME; I'M JUST WATCHING.  
I'M SOMETHING OF AN OLD PRO AT THESE THINGS SO I HOPE I CAN GIVE YOU SOME ADVICE.



THESE COLD AUDITIONS WILL ONLY GIVE YOU THE MOST DESPERATE OF HEROES...  
WHAT YOU MAY WANT TO DO IS RUN A MISSION WITH THEM. GET TO KNOW THEM FIRST BEFORE YOU ASK THEM TO JOIN.



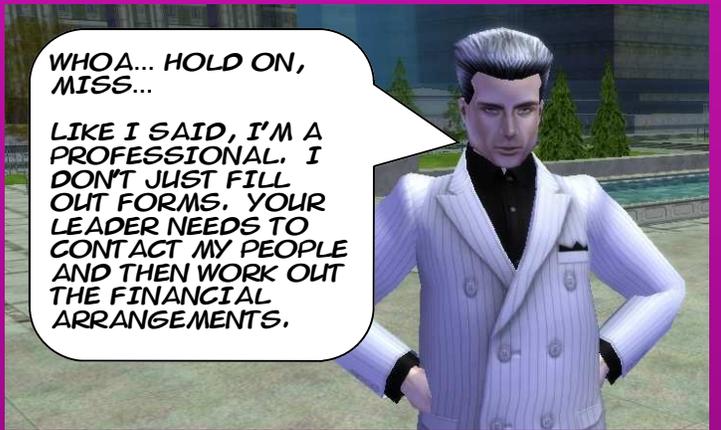
REALLY? WELL, I DON'T HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO RECRUIT ANYONE. I'M JUST GETTING THE DETAILS FOR MY BOSS.



WE'LL DON'T LET THEM KNOW THAT! YOU'LL CHASE THEM AWAY PRETTY FAST.  
LISTEN, I'M BETWEEN GROUPS RIGHT NOW, SO I'D BE MORE THAN WILLING TO HELP YOU GUYS OUT ON A CONTRACT BASIS.



REALLY? THAT WILL BE GREAT! LET ME GET SOME BASIC INFORMATION...



WHOA... HOLD ON, MISS...  
LIKE I SAID, I'M A PROFESSIONAL. I DON'T JUST FILL OUT FORMS. YOUR LEADER NEEDS TO CONTACT MY PEOPLE AND THEN WORK OUT THE FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS.



OKAY, SO MY BOSS NEEDS TO CONTACT YOUR PEOPLE TO WORK OUT A CONTRACT, BUT I CAN'T TELL HIM WHO YOU ARE SO I CAN'T LET HIM KNOW WHO TO EXPECT, RIGHT?



JUST TELL MISTER REX TO EXPECT A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE PEOPLE AT LIBRA CONSULTING...

OOKAY... GOT IT...

NEED...

ASPIRIN...

NOW!!!

ONE LUNCH (AND ASPIRIN) BREAK LATER...



OKAY, THANK YOU EVERYONE FOR BEARING WITH ME SO FAR... IT'S BEEN A PRETTY LONG MORNING.

I JUST WANT TO REITERATE THAT THIS IS NOT A COSTUME CONTEST, OR A CALL FOR TASK FORCE MEMBERS.  
WE ARE LOOKING FOR HONEST MEMBERS TO JOIN THE GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN.  
SO WILL THE NEXT APPLICANT PLEASE...



GOOD AFTERNOON.

COME...  
... FORWARD?



YOU'RE...  
THE UNBEARABLE  
PLUMP



THE ONE AND ONLY.  
IS THERE A PROBLEM  
WITH MY NAME?

NO, IT'S JUST  
THAT... YOU  
LOOK A LOT  
LIKE SOMEONE  
ELSE...



LET ME GUESS... GREEN?  
PURPLE PANTS? FULL OF  
RAGE AND TALKS LIKE A  
THIRD-GRADE DROPOUT?  
I HEAR THAT ALL THE TIME.

I DIDN'T ASK TO GET THIS  
WAY. SOMEONE GAVE ME A  
PIECE OF RADIOACTIVE FRUIT  
AND I ENDED UP LOOKING  
LIKE THIS AND SMELLING LIKE  
GRAPE JUICE.  
AND DO YOU KNOW HARD IT IS  
TO FIND PANTS IN MY SIZE?

WELL YOU KNOW HOW THE  
"POWERS THAT BE" ARE WHEN  
IT COMES TO LOOK-A-LIKES  
AND SOUND-A-LIKES...



SO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER QUESTIONS YOU WANT TO ASK?



U/M... WHY ARE YOU CALLED "UNBEARABLE"?



WAIT FOR IT...



WHAT ARE YOU...?  
OH GOD!  
THAT IS NASTY!  
WHAT IS THAT?



NOW YOU KNOW WHY I'M CALLED "UNBEARABLE".  
I DON'T HAVE TOO MUCH CONTROL OVER IT. EVERY SO OFTEN IT HAPPENS.  
MOST OF THE TIME, GRAPE JUICE. THEN... EVERY SO OFTEN... THAT.

LOOK, I CAN SEE YOU'RE ALREADY PREPARED TO SAY "NEXT", SO I'LL JUST SAY THANK YOU FOR AT LEAST GIVING ME THIS MUCH OF A CHANCE.



THE REST OF THE DAY WENT PRETTY MUCH LIKE THAT...

I WISHED IT WOULD JUST END.

I'M JUST IN THIS TO FARM... YOU GUYS DO AE-ONLY MISSIONS?

NAME'S SOOPER-DOOPER, I'M THE LAST SON OF A DYING PLANET...

CHIEF HALO, I'M A SUPER-SPECIAL SPACE MARINE...

YOU GUYS DO CATHEDRAL OF PAIN? I WON'T JOIN UNLESS YOU'RE SET UP FOR THAT.

WOLFIE-MARINE, I'M THE BEST AT EVERYTHING I DO WITH BLADES.

THOUGHT THIS WAS A COSTUME CONTEST. SORRY.

I AM JUSTICE... I AM THE RIGHT... I AM BATTYGLY!

BEWARE MY POWER, GREEN PICKLE-MAN'S ENERGY LIGHT!



HELLO... AM I TOO LATE TO AUDITION?

AND THEN... NEAR THE END OF THE DAY... HE SHOWED UP.



EVERYONE IS GONE... I AM LATE AGAIN!



NO... YOU'RE NOT LATE...

IN FACT YOU JUST GOT HERE IN TIME. EVERYONE ELSE HAS ALREADY LEFT SO YOU'RE NEXT.

WHY DON'T YOU GO AHEAD AND TELL ME WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOUR POWER IS?



MY NAME IS ROCKY...

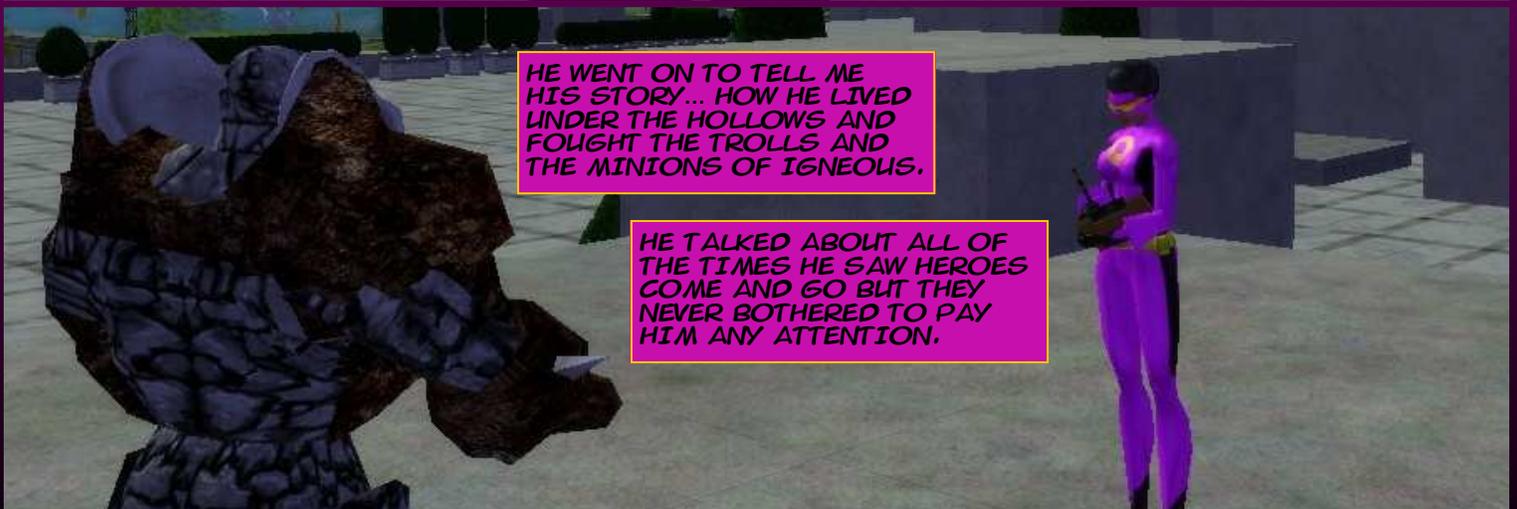
ROCKY ROCKROCKER...

AS YOU CAN TELL, I'M ALL STONE. BEEN LIKE THIS SINCE I WAS A CHILD LIVING IN THE HOLLOW.

I CONTROL STONE... THE EARTH... THE GROUND... EVERYTHING. I CAN'T MAKE ROCKS FLY, BUT I CAN TELL THEM TO SHIFT FOR ME. I CAN PULL THEM INTO ME FOR PROTECTION, AND FOOD.

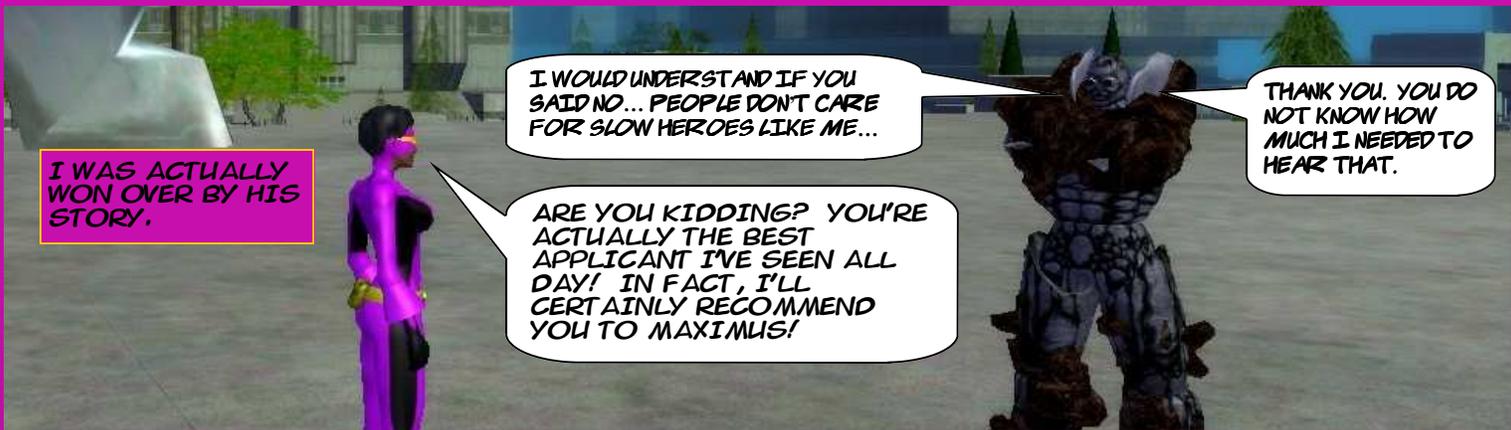
UNFORTUNATELY IT ALSO MAKES ME VERY SLOW. AND HEAVY. I CAN'T FLY OR JUMP VERY HIGH. TRAVEL POWERS DON'T WORK ON ME, EXCEPT FOR TELEPORT.

IT TOOK ME TWO DAYS TO MAKE IT OVER FROM THE HOLLOW, SO I AM GRATEFUL I STILL MADE IT IN TIME.



HE WENT ON TO TELL ME HIS STORY... HOW HE LIVED UNDER THE HOLLOW AND FOUGHT THE TROLLS AND THE MINIONS OF IGNEOUS.

HE TALKED ABOUT ALL OF THE TIMES HE SAW HEROES COME AND GO BUT THEY NEVER BOTHERED TO PAY HIM ANY ATTENTION.



I WAS ACTUALLY WON OVER BY HIS STORY.

I WOULD UNDERSTAND IF YOU SAID NO... PEOPLE DON'T CARE FOR SLOW HEROES LIKE ME...

THANK YOU. YOU DO NOT KNOW HOW MUCH I NEEDED TO HEAR THAT.

ARE YOU KIDDING? YOU'RE ACTUALLY THE BEST APPLICANT I'VE SEEN ALL DAY! IN FACT, I'LL CERTAINLY RECOMMEND YOU TO MAXIMUS!

FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER...



OKAY, THE AUDITIONS ARE OVER WITH... THANK YOU AGAIN FOR RESERVING THE SQUARE FOR ME.  
SOMEONE SAID YOU ALSO HAD A MESSAGE?

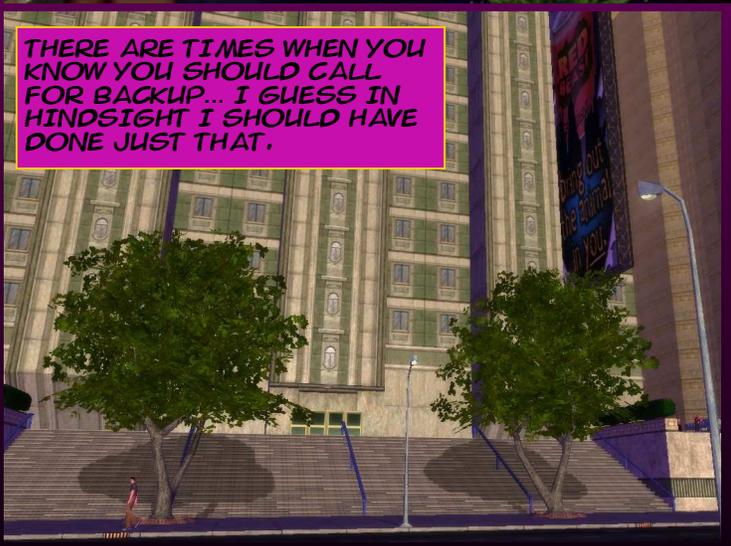
YES, A GENTLEMAN THAT SAID YOU TALKED WITH EARLIER WANTED YOU TO KNOW THERE WAS ANOTHER APPLICANT THAT HE WANTED YOU TO CONSIDER.



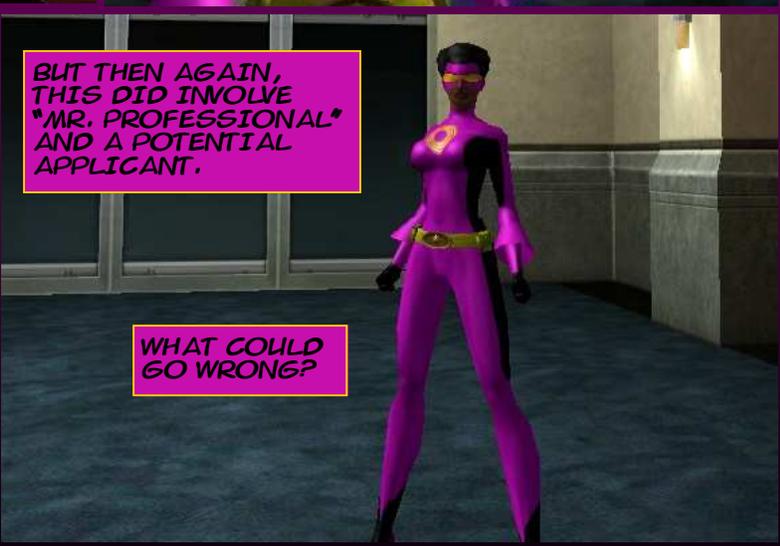
HE WOULDN'T GIVE TOO MANY DETAILS, BUT HE SAID THAT YOU COULD FIND HIM AT THE HUNTINGTON BUILDING ACROSS FROM ARCHITECT ENTERTAINMENT.



THANK YOU. I GUESS I'LL FOLLOW UP ON THAT ONE.



THERE ARE TIMES WHEN YOU KNOW YOU SHOULD CALL FOR BACKUP... I GUESS IN HINDSIGHT I SHOULD HAVE DONE JUST THAT.



BUT THEN AGAIN, THIS DID INVOLVE "MR. PROFESSIONAL" AND A POTENTIAL APPLICANT.

WHAT COULD GO WRONG?





YOU OKAY?

OF ALL OF THE STUPID, UNGRATEFUL LITTLE...



TURNUED OUT THE CLIENT THAT I WAS LOOKING TO BRING TO YOU WAS AN ARACHNOS AGENT!

SHE SAID THAT SHE HAD SOME SORT OF PLAN FOR YOU.



I HOPE YOU DONT MIND IVE CALLED FOR SOME OF MY OWN FREELANCERS TO HELP.

NOT AT ALL, GIVES ME A CHANCE TO SEE HOW YOU WORK IN A TEAM.



HOLD UP... ROCKY ROCKROCKER IS HERE AS WELL.

DONT WORRY... WE GOT THIS.



GAPE!

OOFF!

**\*BANG!\***

TAKE THEM DOWN, BOYS.

WHAT THE HELL?



SORRY MA'AM, MY BOYS ARE A LITTLE EAGER...

YEAH, WELL NEXT TIME A LITTLE WARNING, OKAY?



YOU OKAY ROCKY?

YES. SORRY. I SAW THE ARACHNOS AND I JUST WANTED TO HELP YOU FIGHT THEM.



MA'AM, IN MY EXPERIENCE, ROCK-BASED HEROES ARE NOTHING BUT A HINDRANCE. I STRONGLY SUGGEST WE LEAVE HIM HERE.



I UNDERSTAND... I JUST THOUGHT I COULD HELP YOU. I'LL WAIT OUTSIDE FOR YOUR REAL BACKUP WHEN THEY ARRIVE.



NO... THE REAL BACKUP IS RIGHT IN FRONT OF US.

ROCKY, YOU'RE ON THE TEAM... LET'S GO.



MY BOYS WILL CLEAR THIS UP.



THERE... THERE SHE IS!

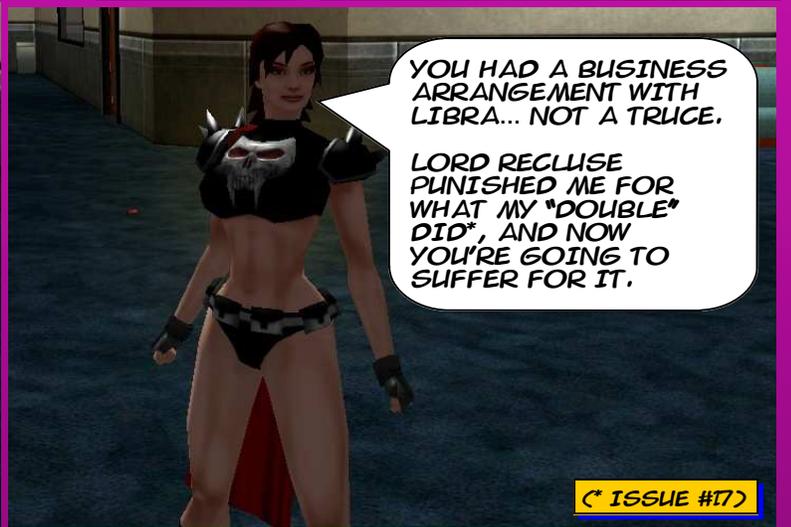
WHO?



WELL, WELL, WELL... LOOKS LIKE I'LL HAVE MY EXCLUSIVE AUDITION AFTER ALL.

WHAT THE HELL? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WE HAVE A TRUCE WITH YOUR BOSS, LIBRA.

**MISTY MYSERY**



YOU HAD A BUSINESS ARRANGEMENT WITH LIBRA... NOT A TRUCE.

LORD RECLUSE PUNISHED ME FOR WHAT MY "DOUBLE" DID\*, AND NOW YOU'RE GOING TO SUFFER FOR IT.

**(\* ISSUE #17)**

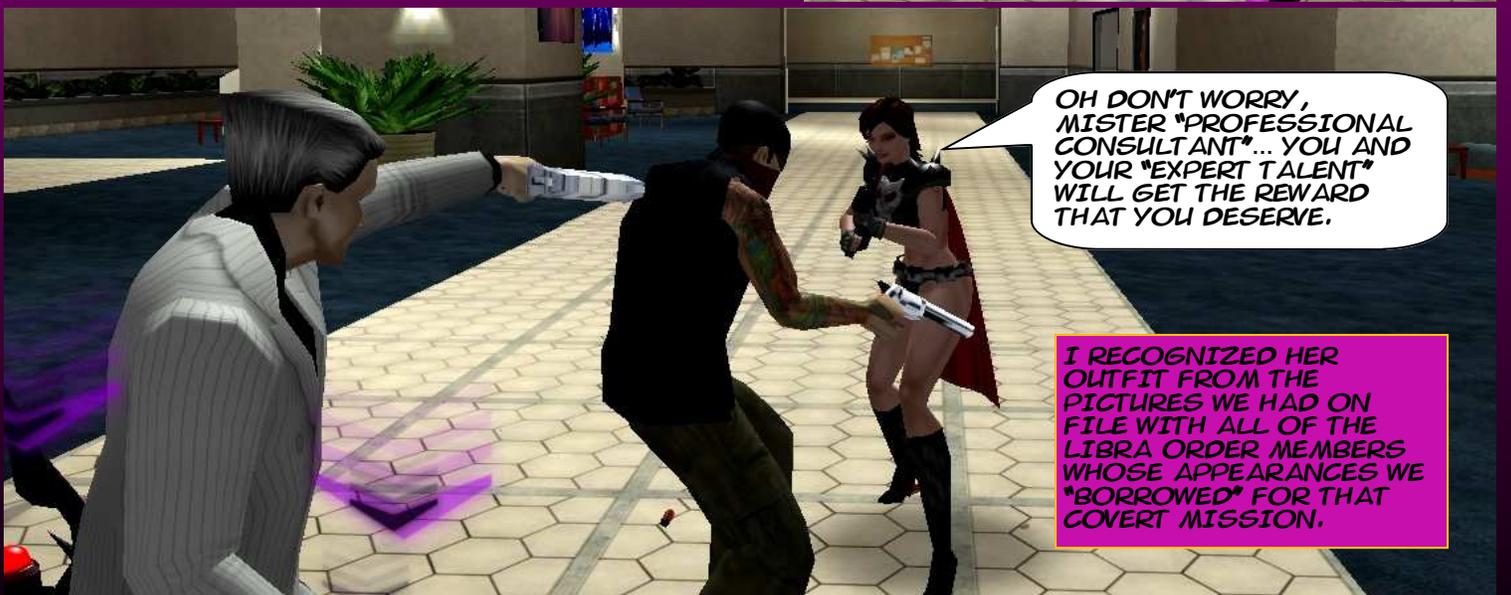


NOT BEFORE I GET MY POUND OF FLESH FIRST, LADY!

YOU IDIOT!



You're just a poison... And you just don't get it...



OH DON'T WORRY, MISTER "PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT"... YOU AND YOUR "EXPERT TALENT" WILL GET THE REWARD THAT YOU DESERVE.

I RECOGNIZED HER OUTFIT FROM THE PICTURES WE HAD ON FILE WITH ALL OF THE LIBRA ORDER MEMBERS WHOSE APPEARANCES WE "BORROWED" FOR THAT COVERT MISSION.



It's between HER and MEEEEEEEEEE...

TAKE CARE OF THE OTHER TROOPS! GO!

DESPITE HER NON-ARACHNOS APPEARANCE, MISTY WAS A TRAINED SOLDIER.



I COULDN'T FOCUS ON SINGING ANYMORE.

I JUST LET LOOSE WITH HIGH NOTES.



I HAD TO KEEP HER OFF-BALANCE SO SHE COULDN'T SHOOT STRAIGHT.

I COULD ONLY HOPE THEY WERE HOLDING THEIR OWN AS I HAD TO FOCUS ALL OF MY ATTENTION ON MISTY.

I COULD HEAR FROM THE GUNFIRE AND THE VIBRATIONS FROM THE FLOOR THAT THE OTHERS WERE DEALING WITH THE OTHER ARACHNOS TROOPERS.

MY OUTFIT WASN'T HEAVILY-PROTECTED. HER BULLETS WOULD EASILY KILL ME IF MY FOCUS WENT OFF HER FOR A SECOND.



N-N... NO... YOU... CAN'T... BEAT ME... LIBRA PROMISED... REVENGE...



YEAH, WELL GUESS WHAT? THAT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.



NO!!! JUST NOT AT THIS TIME!!!

OWWWW!! AND I THOUGHT I WAS LOUD!



GONE... EITHER THROUGH A TELEPORTER OR THROUGH LIBRA.

EITHER WAY, SHE'S OUT OF THE PICTURE...



OH NO...

BUT THEN I ROUNDED THE CORNER TO CHECK ON THE REST OF MY TEAM...



I COULD NOT STOP HIM IN TIME...



HE KEPT ON SAYING SOMETHING ABOUT MISSING HIS 'PAYOFF'.

HIS PEOPLE DID NOT KNOW WHAT THAT MEANT. AS YOU CAN SEE, THEY DIDN'T WANT TO STICK AROUND AFTER OR TRY TO HELP HIM.

WHYSPERA... I DO NOT THINK THAT HE IS A REGISTERED HERO.

WOULDN'T THE TELEPORT SIGNAL IN HIS HERO ID HAVE KICKED IN BY NOW?

YEAH, HOLD ON, I THINK I HAVE A SPARE EMERGENCY TELEPORT PATCH...

GUARDIAN BASE - TWO HOURS LATER...



SO THE PATCH TELEPORTS HIM TO CHIRON HOSPITAL AND WE FIND OUT THAT HE'S NOT EVEN A REGISTERED HERO!

\*MISTER PROFESSIONAL\* WAS A MASTERMIND WITH A FORGED ID TO FOOL THE SECURITY DRONES!

ICON TAILOR STORE - STEEL CANYON



I DIDN'T EVEN THINK THAT WAS POSSIBLE...

BUT THEN AGAIN, WE ARE TALKING ABOUT LIBRA. I WOULDN'T PUT ANYTHING PAST HIM... OR... IT... OR...

STREET JUSTICE



MM-HMM... THAT'S WHAT I WAS THINKING TOO...

WELL, I WRAPPED THINGS UP, FILED MY REPORT, AND I TOLD MAXIMUS THAT I THINK HE SHOULD LOOK INTO ROCKY AND THE UNBEARABLE PLUM FOR MEMBERSHIP.

WHAT? AFTER WHAT YOU TOLD ME ABOUT HIM? WHY?

WELL OF ALL OF THE PEOPLE WHO WERE COPYCATS AND KNOCK-OFFS, THOSE TWO WERE THE ONES WITH REAL POTENTIAL.

PLUS I WANT MAXIMUS TO GET A WHIFF OF WHAT I WENT THROUGH WITH THE PLUM.



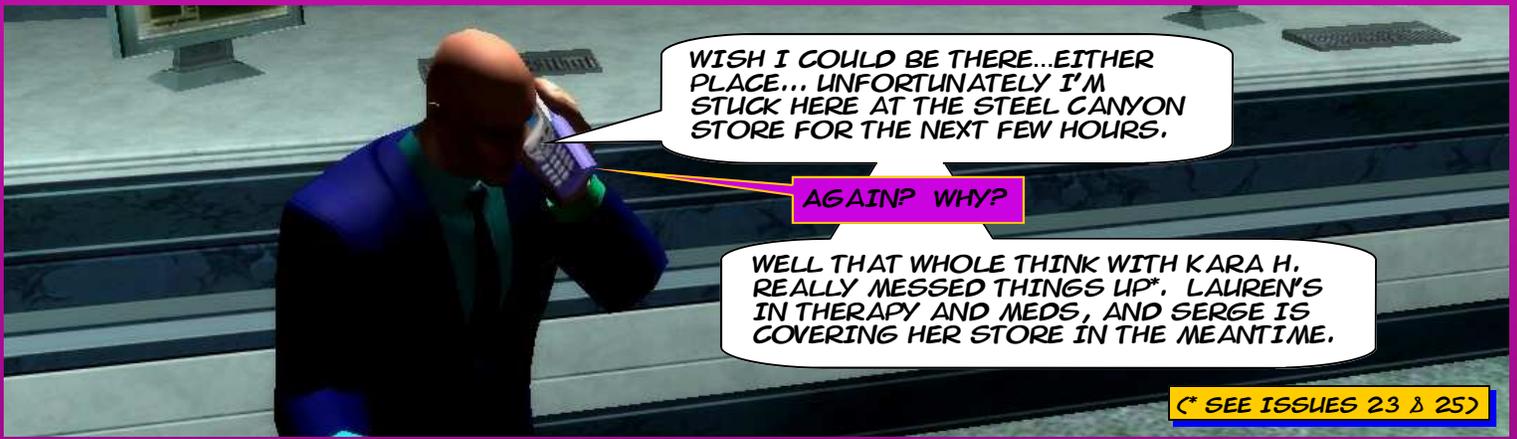
OOOH... THAT'S PRETTY NASTY, WENDY.

SO NOW WHAT'S NEXT?



WELL, I WAS THINKING THERE'S THAT FUNDRAISER FOR ALEX'S CAMPAIGN THAT WE COULD GO TO.

IT BEATS GOING TO KARAOKE NIGHT AND SEEING IF I CAN GET A SONG OUT WITHOUT BREAKING ANYTHING.



WISH I COULD BE THERE...EITHER PLACE... UNFORTUNATELY I'M STUCK HERE AT THE STEEL CANYON STORE FOR THE NEXT FEW HOURS.

AGAIN? WHY?

WELL THAT WHOLE THINK WITH KARA H. REALLY MESSED THINGS UP\*. LAUREN'S IN THERAPY AND MEDS, AND SERGE IS COVERING HER STORE IN THE MEANTIME.

(\* SEE ISSUES 23 & 25)



I HAVEN'T EVEN PICKED UP MY SHIELD IN A WEEK, THINGS HAVE BEEN THAT BUSY 'ROUND HERE.



BUT, HEY, DON'T WORRY... THIS'LL BLOW OVER SOON, THEN I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT I DO FOR FUN IN THIS CITY.

MM-HMM... I'M GONNA HOLD YOU TO THAT, MARTIN.



YEAH... THE GLAMOROUS LIFE OF A SINGER-TURNED-HERO.

INCOMING FLASH MESSAGE:

WHYSPERA... THIS IS MAXIMUS REX...

I JUST MET WITH THE UNBEARABLE PLUM AS YOU RECOMMENDED.

WE NEED TO TALK.

WELCOME TO MY DAY, BOSS.

PEREZ PARK - NEAR ATLAS PARK GATE

RELAY PORT  
OPEN.  
LEAVE YOUR  
MESSAGE.

ALL IS GOING AS  
PLANNED. HE'S GONE  
OVER MY PROFILE AS  
YOU EXPECTED.

MOVING FORWARD  
WITH THE NEXT PHASE.

"LIMBO"

YOUR  
"PROFESSIONAL"  
FAILED TO DO HIS  
JOB. HE DEPRIVED  
ME OF MY REVENGE.  
I JUST NEED  
ANOTHER CHANCE...

YOU KNEW THIS WAS  
A ONE-TIME ONLY  
SITUATION, MISTY.

THE ONLY REASON WHY YOU WERE  
EVEN ALLOWED THIS  
OPPORTUNITY IS BECAUSE JOHN  
COLE DEFIED LIBRA'S ORDERS.\*

NOW THAT YOU ACTED, THE  
BALANCE HAS BEEN RESTORED.  
YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO  
TRY AGAIN AT THIS TIME.

AND WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY  
PRESENTS ITSELF, YOU WILL  
HAVE ANOTHER CHANCE TO  
GET YOUR REVENGE.

BUT NOT IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

FOR NOW BE THANKFUL THAT  
LIBRA WAS ABLE TO PULL YOU  
OUT OF PARAGON CITY.

BUT THERE ISN'T  
BALANCE! LORD RECLUSE  
PUNISHED ME FOR WHAT  
THE GUARDIANS DID! I  
STILL DESERVE REVENGE!

TAINTED EVE

ISSUE #25

YOU ARE NOT THE ONLY  
MEMBER OF THE ORDER  
THAT IS LOOKING FOR  
SATISFACTION.

THE OTHER MEMBERS  
ARE JUST AS BITTER  
AND JUST AS EAGER TO  
GET THEIR POUND OF  
FLESH FROM THE  
GUARDIANS.

BUT THE  
BALANCE MUST  
BE MAINTAINED.

YOUR REVENGE  
WILL COME  
AGAIN IN TIME.

IT BETTER...

THE END...  
FOR NOW



## The Audition An Homage to Comic Comedy

There are plenty of ways to get some cheap laughs in a comic book series. You can introduce a wisecracking character who loves to run his mouth. You can pit an incredibly annoying character against a no-nonsense one. You can come up with a team of complete imbeciles. (*Think “Something-Something Antarctica”.*)

Or you can do a search for “new members”.

You can call it “auditions”, “try-outs”, a “membership drive”, or a “recruitment”, but they pretty much serve as the same thing. It is a means by which you can have a group try to bolster their ranks by either going out to recruit other members, or to have some place where a whole bunch of other characters try (*and fail*) to prove their worth.

The idea of having “tryouts” goes back to DC Comic’s “Legion of Super-Heroes” series, as an intergalactic team of teenaged superheroes in the 30th Century would always be on the search for new members. Often these consisted of applicants that had otherwise useless abilities (*i.e. changing the color spectrum or blowing soap bubbles out their ears*), or abilities that duplicated current members. (*Their rules supposedly prohibited having two members with the same ability, although they would make an exception for two “Super” members.*) Most of the hopefuls that showed up would be dismissed. Some would end up in a splinter group for “Substitute” members. Other applicants would become villains (*or be “spies” for villains*) and try to teach the Legion a “lesson”. The rest, though, would simply go away and never be seen again.

The idea eventually was incorporated into other DC supergroup titles, including the “Justice League of America”. Rather than have auditions, though, these groups would go on “recruitment drives” to find other heroes. Unfortunately many of these came at a time when the “Justice League” wasn’t interested in being about “The World’s Greatest Super-Hero Team”, and instead went for cheap laughs. (*Again... “Something-Something Antarctica”.*) So the characters that they would eventually bring in would be less-than great, while the rest (*the “truly great”*) would be flattered to be asked but would quickly, and understandably, say no.

Recruitment drives and tryouts would be used in other comic titles as well. DC's "Birds of Prey" and "Teen Titans" would look for new members. Marvel would have open invitations for their "Avengers", assigning many of them to "reserve" status. Image Comics would have auditions for "Youngblood".

The advantage of doing this kind of story, though, is that it can be done for laughs even while the rest of the series can be serious. You can bring in virtual nobodies, relative newcomers, and even seasoned characters in the same story and have them interact with series regulars. The other advantage is that even though you have auditions/recruitment/tryouts, you're not obligated to actually bring in new members. So, as a comic creator, if you do a story like this and you get some positive feedback about a certain character's appearance, you can bring them in later. Otherwise you can leave them as they are.

By the way, some of the characters seen in the tryouts are in homage to some characters you may recognize. "Falloff" is in homage to "Arm-Fall-Off-Boy" from one of those "Legion of Super-Heroes" tryouts.. You can guess about the "Unbearable Plumb", and of course Nuke Dukum is a parody of legendary first-person-shooter character Duke Nukem.

For more about the background of Lye Field, though, be sure to check out the official Guardian website at...

<http://GuardiansOfTheDawn.wordpress.com>

***NEXT ISSUE...***



***MidKnight X in Prague...  
Who is Shodden Freud?  
And what does he know  
that can bring down  
Simon Barrister?***



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WHY NOT LOOK SUPER

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