

T+ FOR TEENS PLUS

GALATEA

AND THE GUARDIANS



Issue 16
2016



NO!
YOU CAN'T BE
HERE!
IT'S JUST NOT
POSSIBLE!



Do You Want To Be Just A Hero? Or Do You Want To Be More Than That?

Once upon a time, being a hero was simple.

But, as with every other profession, with time comes maturation and specialization. And in Paragon City, the “City of Heroes”, it is no longer enough to simply have a costume and a hero name and a willingness to do good.

Today’s heroes need to know how to properly make an arrest, how to handle paperwork, utilize various technical and mystical devices, make a credible presence in court, and comprehend complicated jurisdictional boundaries that cross countries and even whole dimensions.

Most heroes will simply “muddle” through these things and hope for the best. It’s just that they don’t have to.

Paragon City University is there for the hero that is looking to be more than “just a hero”. We offer courses that give heroes the needed tools to make their crusades for justice stand up in court and the means to take their heroic causes to the next level without becoming the next Tyrant. And we offer financial services that will fit into any hero’s meager budget; because we know that not everyone is a genius billionaire philanthropist.

You can choose to be “just a hero”.

Or you can choose to be something more.



Paragon City University

Steel Canyon Founders Falls
Croatoa



www.ParagonCityUniversity.para

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Born in an alternate world where heroes ruled and humanity was endangered, Faith Powers was the last surviving member of the legendary Powers family. Brought up in the watchful eyes of the Praetors, she became Furia Powers, champion of the weak.

But then she became aware that all was not right in the supposed "Utopian Society". Forced to choose between the Praetors and a chance at a new family, she choose family and left for the Primal Universe.

Now Furia Powers is a member of the Guardians of the Dawn, a superhero team dedicated to helping humanity to that bright future that is always just beyond the horizon. It is a team that is on the brink of becoming legend. They are...

FURIA



AND THE GUARDIANS

With Furia Powers still healing after the vicious attack by the corrupt cops in the Paragon City Police Department, her sister and roommate Galatea has re-taken her role as the city's "True Guardian"; trying hard to balance hero life and her civilian role as the manager of the government department known as Scientific Experimentation Research and Application to Paranormal Humans (*S.E.R.A.P.H.*).

And, on top of that, she's trying to incorporate having a boyfriend in her life.

Meanwhile, Jason Knight is investigating the murder of Rose Vesta, an earlier victim of the corrupt police, and a Vanguard operative named Carlton Sage has made his presence known to the Guardians of the Dawn hero group.

"HOW THINGS ESCALATE"

- A CITY OF HEROES STORY BY DAVID 2

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ZIGURSKY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY... AKA "THE ZIG"

BRICKSTOWN - PARAGON CITY, RHODE ISLAND, USA





HEY MAN... I GOT RIGHTS... YOU CAN'T QUESTION ME WITHOUT MY LAWYER!

JAILHOUSE LAW... TELLTALE SIGN OF A CAREER CONVICT.



IN-AND-OUT OF JUVIE SINCE YOU WERE OUT OF DIAPERS.

FIRST ADULT CONVICTION AT SIXTEEN. YOU'VE SPENT MORE TIME INSIDE THAN OUT.

I'M NOT QUESTIONING YOU, DUPRIS.

I'M STATING OBVIOUS FACTS.

YOU COULDN'T HAVE KILLED ROSE VESTA.



YOU DON'T GET TO TELL ME WHAT I DID OR DIDN'T DO!

IF I SAY I KILLED THE BITCH, THEN I KILLED THAT BITCH!

THAT'S WHAT I TOLD THE COPS!



THEN HOW DID YOU DO IT?

HOW DID YOU KILL HER?



I-I... I DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER THAT.

I SAW THE BITCH AND I KILLED HER. THAT'S ALL THAT ANYONE CARES.

I'M NOT "ANYONE".

YOU'RE CLAIMING TO HAVE KILLED HER, BUT YOU'RE NOT TELLING ME HOW.

A REAL KILLER WOULD BRAG ABOUT HOW THEY DID IT. BUT YOU KNOW THAT, DON'T YOU?



DON'T MATTER HOW I DID IT.
I TOLD THE COPS I KILLED THE BITCH.
THAT'S ALL THEY CARE ABOUT.



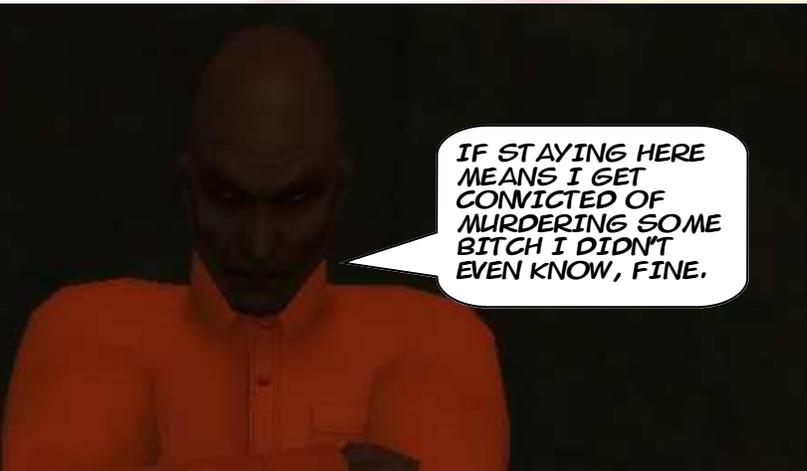
EXCEPT WITNESSES SAY THAT SHE WAS ATTACKED BY A LARGE HAIRY BIKER WEARING SKULLS COLORS. YOU'RE NOT HIM.



GANGS ARE FOR PUNKS WITH A PLAN FOR LIFE OUTSIDE OF HERE.
THAT'S NOT YOU. YOU'RE SHOOTING FOR LIFE IN HERE.



THREE MEALS A DAY. A BUNK, TOILET, RUNNING WATER, FREE CLOTHES AND HEALTHCARE... WHAT'S THERE TO COMPLAIN ABOUT?



IF STAYING HERE MEANS I GET CONVICTED OF MURDERING SOME BITCH I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW, FINE.



THIS IS POINTLESS.



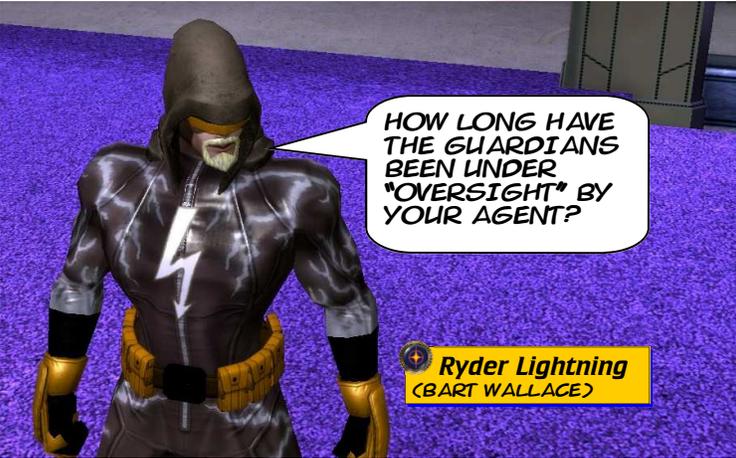
HE DIDN'T KILL ROSE VESTA... BUT HE'S NOT GOING TO HELP ME FIND THE REAL KILLER EITHER.

I FIND THE REAL KILLER AND HE GETS SET FREE, AND HE DOESN'T WANT THAT.

I SHUDDER TO THINK WHAT SORT OF CRIME HE WOULD REALLY COMMIT IN ORDER TO GET HIS LIFETIME STAY ON THE TAXPAYERS' DIME.

"I IMAGINE YOU ARE A BIT UPSET AT THE TURN OF EVENTS."

"WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, LADY GREY, I'M WELL PAST 'UPSET' RIGHT NOW."



HOW LONG HAVE THE GUARDIANS BEEN UNDER "OVERSIGHT" BY YOUR AGENT?

Ryder Lightning
(BART WALLACE)



EVER SINCE WE TALKED CAPTAIN PARAGONNA INTO RECRUITING GALATEA POWERS AND JASON KNIGHT AND YOURSELF.*

The Lady Grey
VANGUARD DIRECTOR

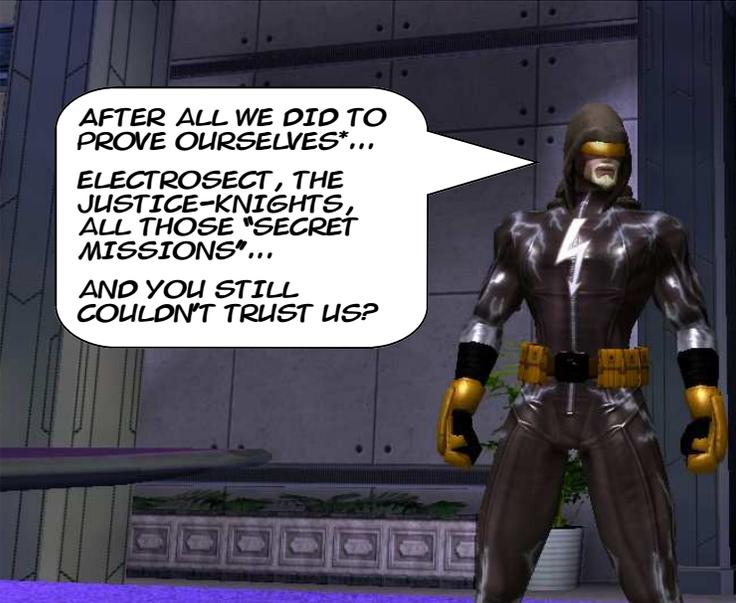
* "GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN SPOTLIGHT" #12



...
YOU'VE BEEN WATCHING US FROM DAY ONE?



IT WAS THE ONLY WAY TO KEEP AN EYE ON THE THREE OF YOU.
REMEMBER, THERE WAS STILL PLENTY OF SUSPICION ABOUT PEOPLE FROM OTHER DIMENSIONS.



AFTER ALL WE DID TO PROVE OURSELVES*...
ELECTROSECT, THE JUSTICE-KNIGHTS, ALL THOSE "SECRET MISSIONS"...
AND YOU STILL COULDN'T TRUST US?



BUT IT WASN'T "JUST" THE THREE OF YOU, WAS IT?

YOU HAD MAXIMUS REX, A FORMER WORLD RULER.
THERE WAS ICON POWERS, GALATEA'S COUSIN-SLASH-BROTHER-SLASH-HALF-FATHER...
LET'S NOT FORGET A CERTAIN EXILED TIME MANIPULATOR.

* SEE "THE CITY'S FINEST" #2 AS WELL AS FUTURE ISSUES OF "JUSTICE-KNIGHTS" FOR MORE ABOUT THEIR EARLY ADVENTURES.)



THAT'S SIX PEOPLE FROM OTHER UNIVERSES.
AND LET'S NOT FORGET THAT ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE GROUP WAS A REFUGEE FROM THE ROGUE ISLES WHO WAS TRAINED BY ARACHNOS WHILE SECRETLY WORKING FOR LEGACY CHAIN.*



AND THAT'S EVEN BEFORE YOU RECRUITED AN UNDERAGE GIRL INTO YOUR RANKS.**
HOW AM I DOING SO FAR, MISTER LIGHTNING?

< *GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN SPOTLIGHT* #7-8 >

< ** SPOTLIGHT* #15 >



SO WHY DIDN'T YOU PULL THE PLUG ON US IF YOU THOUGHT WE WERE A THREAT?



WE ALMOST DID A FEW TIMES.



TWO PEOPLE CONVINCED US OTHERWISE.



THE FIRST ONE WAS STATESMAN. THE LATE MARCUS COLE SAW SOMETHING IN YOUR GROUP THAT HE DIDN'T EVEN SEE WITH HIS OWN FREEDOM PHALANX.



AND THE SECOND PERSON?



THE SECOND PERSON THAT STOOD UP FOR YOUR GROUP, AND STILL DOES, IS CARLTON SAGE.



HE'S BEEN WATCHING YOU THIS WHOLE TIME, EVEN DURING YOUR SO-CALLED "GHOST GROUP" PHASE.*



SO I SUGGEST YOU GIVE MISTER SAGE THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT FOR NOW.



BECAUSE WHETHER YOU KNOW IT OR NOT, HE'S THE BEST FRIEND THAT THE GUARDIANS COULD HAVE.



AND, GIVEN RECENT EVENTS, YOU COULD USE ALL THE FRIENDS YOU CAN GET.

< AKA *THE GUARDIAN POWERS* SERIES >

KINGS ROW

"THIS IS P-N-N RADIO REPEATING TODAY'S BREAKING NEWS..."

"THE MEHAW BUILDING IN KINGS ROW IS UNDER SIEGE AS THE MIDDLE FLOORS ARE ENGLUFED IN FLAMES."

"WITNESSES SAY THAT THE FLOOR, WHICH IS RENTED OUT TO A REFUGEE RELIEF ORGANIZATION, WAS SET DELIBERATELY BY UNKNOWN ASSAILANTS."

TALOS ISLAND

HEADQUARTERS OF THE GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN SUPERHERO GROUP

GALATEA, WHAT IS YOUR STATUS?

TRYING TO FIGHT THE FIRE FROM THE OUTSIDE.

Galatea Powers
(FAITH KARL)

I PUT IT OUT, AND IT FLARES UP AGAIN ON THE INSIDE.

WE NEED FIREFIGHTERS HITTING IT FROM THE OTHER END.



UNDERSTOOD, GALATEA.
CARDINAL SYN IS TRYING TO LEAD THE FIREFIGHTERS UP TO THAT LEVEL.

Koldfront
(GEOFF MCDANIELS)



JUST REMIND HER THIS IS A MISSION, NOT A DATING SERVICE.



I THINK SHE WAS KIDDING...

SHE WAS, AMANDA.



SO WHY AREN'T YOU OUT THERE HELPING? THEY NEED HELP FIGHTING THAT FIRE AND YOU'RE AN ICE-BASED HERO.

Carlton Sage
VANGUARD OVERSEER



I'M AN AEROMANCER; AN AIR-BASED MYSTIC.
MY POWER IS MORE THAN JUST 'ICE'.



AND, AS MUCH AS I WOULD WANT TO BE OUT THERE TO HELP THEM, I CANNOT LEAVE HERE UNLESS I AM RELIEVED BY ANOTHER HERO.
I AM THE ASSIGNED HERO ON MONITOR DUTY, WHICH MEANS THAT I HAVE TO BE HERE TO COORDINATE EFFORTS BETWEEN THE HEROES AND THE OTHER AGENCIES AND GROUPS.



BASE, THIS IS
CARDINAL SYN.
THE LAST OF THE
CIVILIANS HAVE
BEEN EVACUATED...

Cardinal Syn
(CASSANDRA DARE)

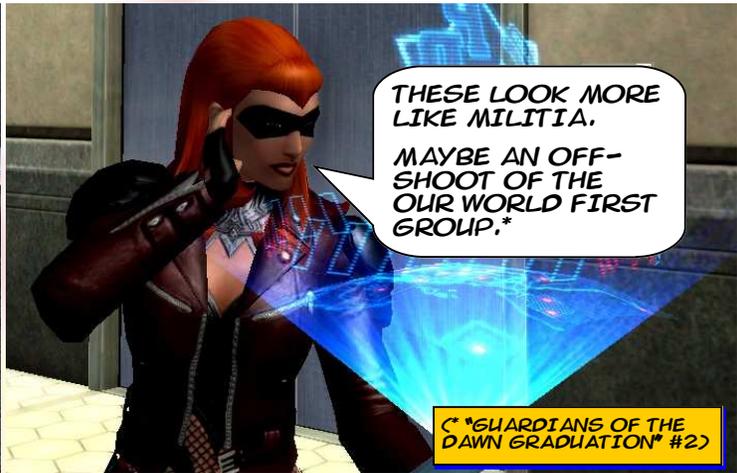


AND I JUST
CAUGHT SIGHT OF
THE ONES THAT
ARE SETTING THE
FIRES.



ARE THEY GANG
MEMBERS?

*THEY'RE NOT
EVEN PRETENDING
TO BE GANG
MEMBERS.*



THESE LOOK MORE
LIKE MILITIA.
MAYBE AN OFF-
SHOOT OF THE
OUR WORLD FIRST
GROUP.*

(*GUARDIANS OF THE
DAWN GRADUATION* #2)



IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE
WAITING FOR SOMEONE
TO SHOW... OH NO!

THEY'RE FOCUSED ON THE
SIDE STAIRWELL, AND
THE FIREFIGHTERS ARE
USING THAT TO GET TO
THE FLOOR ABOVE US TO
FIGHT THE FIRE.



HOLD ON. I'M
SENDING
REINFORCE--

*THERE'S NO
TIME, BASE.
I HAVE TO
GET THEIR
ATTENTION.*



"CARDINAL SYN?"



"CARDINAL SYN? COME IN!"

*WHAD!
*WHAD!
*WHAD!
WHAD!



"CARDINAL SYN, THIS IS GUARDIAN BASE..."



GALATEA, WE'VE LOST CONTACT WITH CARDINAL SYN.



TELL THE FIREFIGHTERS BELOW TO BACK AWAY FROM THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING!

"WHAT?!? WHY?"



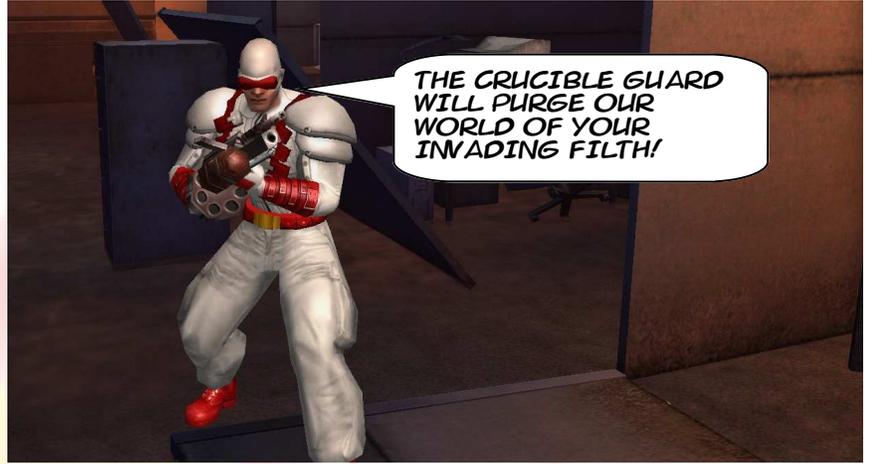
SO THEY WON'T GET HIT BY THE FALLING DEBRIS CAUSED BY MY SHOCKWAVE.



"OF COURSE... HER SHOCKWAVE WOULD BLOW OUT THE FIRE, BUT ALSO CAUSE DAMAGE TO THE OTHER WINDOWS ON THAT SIDE OF THE BUILDING."

"SHE KNOWS THAT HER POWERS HAVE CONSEQUENCES."

"TOO BAD SOME OF HER ASSOCIATES DON'T KNOW THAT."





THE FIRE AND THE SMOKE AND THE NOISE ARE MAKING IT HARD FOR MY HYPER-SENSES TO FIND SYN.



BUT I SHOULD--

FWOOOOOSH!



NO...



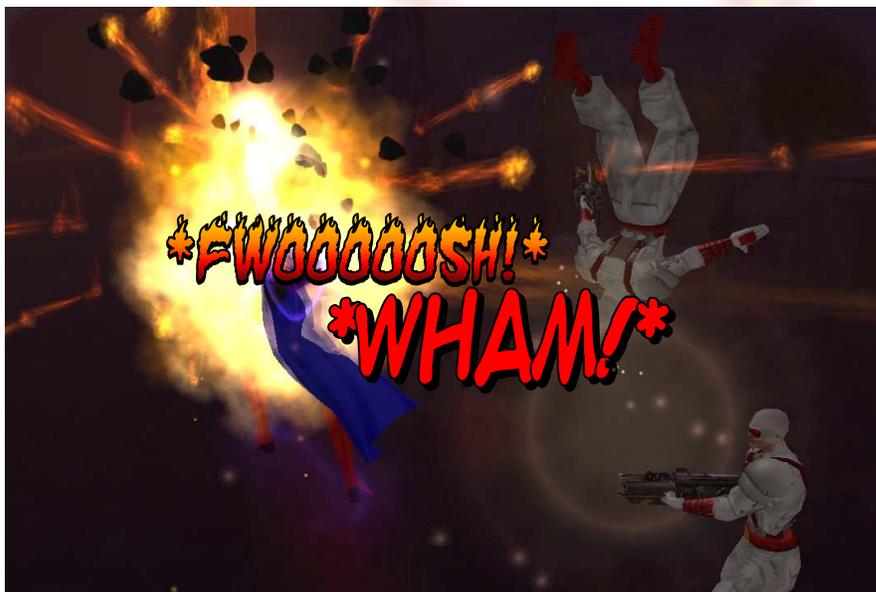
YOU'RE LEADING THESE NUTCASES?



HOW CAN YOU EVEN BE HERE?!?



PURGE THAT ALIEN FILTH, MY GUARDSMEN!
GOD BLESS AMERICA!



FWOOOOOSH!
WHAM!



FWOOOOOSH!





DON'T WORRY... IT'LL BE OVER SOON.



WHAM!



YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN!
THAT IS... IF YOU WERE STILL CONSCIOUS.

WHAM!



YOU OKAY?

YEAH...



BUT I'M PISSED THAT YOU HAD TO RESCUE ME AND LET THE BAD GUY GET AWAY.



HEY, SAVING LIVES IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN CATCHING THE BAD GUYS.
NOW LET'S SEE ABOUT HELPING THE FIREFIGHTERS PUT THIS INFERNO OUT.
I HAVE A FEELING WE'LL BE SEEING THE "ULTRA-NATIONALIST" AGAIN SOON.

I HOPE SO.





SHE'S NOT IN BED...

SHE'S...



COUGH *COUGH*
RRRRREEECH!/



I'LL HAVE TO BE QUICK ABOUT THIS...

EVER SINCE I FIRST STARTED SLEEPING WITH TAYA, I'VE NOTICED THIS ARMOIRE IN HER ROOM.

IT USED TO BE THE OLD "HEAVEN AND HELL" ACCESS DOOR BEFORE THEY REMODELED THE BUILDING.



BUT THEY NEVER GOT RID OF IT.

WHICH MADE ME WONDER WHY IT'S STILL AROUND.



UNLESS IT'S BECAUSE SHE'S STILL USING IT FOR SOMETHING ELSE.

CLICK



I COULDN'T SWORN I HEARD SOMEONE COME IN.

BUT RIGHT NOW I'M SO DAMNED DIZZY THAT I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING EVEN IF I WANTED TO.

I HURT, AND I JUST WANT THIS OVER WITH!

THIS REALLY SUCKS!



OH MY GOD...
WHAT HAS SHE
BEEN DOING?

IT'S SOME KIND
OF DATACENTER.

SHE TURNED AN
OLD ACCESS
ROOM INTO HER
OWN PERSONAL
MAINFRAME.

THIS IS TECHNOLOGY
YOU'D NORMALLY SEE IN
BIG TECH COMPANIES
LIKE GREY OR CYCORP.



THE INFORMATION
ON THE SCREENS...
SOME OF THEM
ARE IN A BINARY
LANGUAGE.

OTHERS ARE IN A
LANGUAGE THAT
I DON'T EVEN
RECOGNIZE.

BUT THERE'S ONE
REFERENCE THAT
KEEPS POPPING
UP ON SOME OF
THESE SCREENS
THAT I DO
RECOGNIZE.



"BOOK".

THERE'S SOME SORT
OF BOOK THAT IS
CONNECTED TO ALL
OF THIS.

THERE'S NO WAY SOMEONE
LIKE GALATEA SHOULD BE
ABLE TO COME UP WITH
SOMETHING LIKE THIS ON
HER OWN.

THIS PRETTY MUCH
CONFIRMS EVERY
FEAR WE HAVE
ABOUT HER.

***KNIGHT'S LAIR* - KINGS ROW**

WHERE THE HELL WERE YOU, JASON?

MILITIA GROUP ATTACKS ANOTHER REFUGEE OFFICE IN "YOUR DOMAIN", AND "THE KNIGHT" IS NOWHERE TO BE SEEN!

I WAS INTERVIEWING THE MAN THAT CLAIMED TO HAVE KILLED ROSE VESTA. HE DIDN'T DO IT.

BESIDES, I KNEW GALATEA WAS HELPING YOU, SO YOU WERE IN CAPABLE HANDS.

"CAPABLE HANDS" MY ASS!

DID IT EVER OCCUR TO YOU THAT YOUR CLAIM OF BEING "THE KNIGHT OF KINGS ROW" COULD ACTUALLY MEAN MAKING AN APPEARANCE WHEN THERE IS A PROBLEM?

IT WAS A SET-UP. THEY WEREN'T LOOKING TO CAUSE REAL DAMAGE.

EXCUSE ME? YOU WANT TO TRY THAT AGAIN?

THEY TORCHED A WHOLE BUILDING FLOOR!

AN OFFICE FLOOR BEING REMODELED.

ALL OF THAT FIRE AND FIREPOWER AND NOT ONE CIVILIAN WAS HARMED BY THE MILITANTS.



LETTING THE CIVILIANS EVACUATE, LAYING IN WAIT FOR THE FIREFIGHTERS...

THEY WERE REALLY WAITING FOR YOU SO THEY COULD CAPTURE YOU.

WOW... I GUESS YOU WERE PAYING ATTENTION TO WHAT WAS GOING ON HERE.

IT WAS ALL A SET-UP FOR GALATEA.

SHE WAS THEIR REAL TARGET.



ENF!

WHAT I DON'T GET IS...



... WHY TARGET GALATEA THIS WAY?

I MEAN, THAT'S LIKE THROWING PEBBLES AGAINST A TANK!



SOMETHING I'LL NEED TO FIGURE OUT LATER.

RIGHT NOW "DRAKE GREY" NEEDS TO MAKE AN APPEARANCE UPSTAIRS.

AND THE PARAGON CITY POLICE HAVE SEVERED ALL ELECTRONIC TIES WITH THE HERO NETWORKS.

WHAT?!?

WHY WOULD THEY DO THAT?!?



BECAUSE THEY EITHER HAVE SOMETHING TO HIDE OR SOMETHING THEY NEED TO DELETE.

LET THE GUARDIANS KNOW ABOUT THIS, BUT DON'T TELL THEM YET THAT I'M WORKING ON A WAY AROUND IT.

THE LAST THING WE NEED IS FOR THE GROUP'S "OVERSEER" TO KNOW WHAT I'M ABOUT TO DO.



FURIA?
FI?



I'M IN THE
KITCHEN...



SORRY... BEEN
PUKING MY GUTS
OUT ALL MORNING
AND I NEEDED
SOMETHING TO
DRINK TO GET THE
BAD TASTE OUT
OF MY MOUTH.



OKAY, BUT DON'T
PUSH IT TOO
MUCH... THE DOGS
SAY YOU STILL
HAVE A LOT OF
HEALING TO DO.

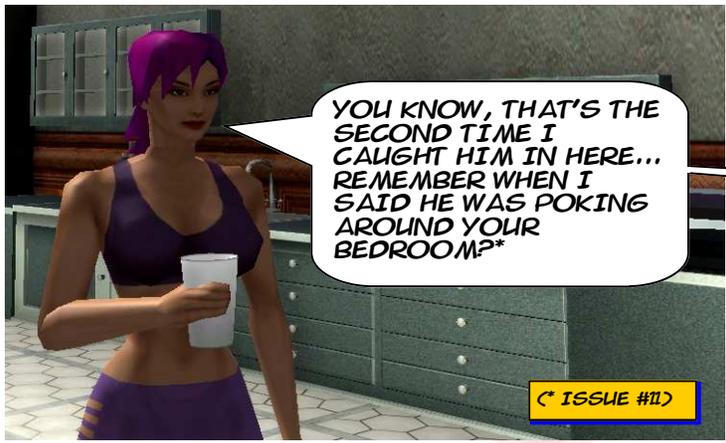


HEY, I COULDN'T
SWORN I HEARD
JOHN SHOW UP
EARLIER.



JOHN? ARE
YOU SURE
ABOUT THAT?

YEAH, IT WAS WEIRD
BECAUSE HE NEVER
SAID ANYTHING, AND I
THINK HE WAS IN HIS
VANGUARD ARMOR.



KINGS ROW - HOURS LATER...

SO... YOU DO EXIST. WHAT DO YOU WANT?

Lt. William McCade
PARAGON CITY POLICE

JUSTICE. AND EITHER YOUR RESIGNATION... OR YOUR CORPSE.

JUSTICE? FOR WHOM?

FOR SOME SLUT WHO COULDN'T PUT SOME CLOTHES ON WHEN THE POLICE KNOCKED ON HER DOOR?

THAT CASE IS CLOSED. WE HAVE A CONFESSION AND WE HAVE THE KILLER BEHIND BARS FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE.

WE BOTH KNOW THAT'S NOT THE TRUTH. YOU HAVE A CAREER CONVICT TAKING THE RAP FOR YOUR MEN.

TRUTH? THE TRUTH DON'T MEAN SHIT IN THIS CITY! THE TRUTH IS WHATEVER WE SAY IT IS. MY BADGE MAKES IT TRUE!

I DON'T KNOW WHY MY MEN ARE AFRAID OF YOU. YOUR BUDDY JASON KNIGHT THOUGHT HE COULD INTIMIDATE ME TOO, AND GUESS WHAT? MY MEN BEAT THE SHIT OUT OF HIM AND LET HIM GO HOME CRYING TO HIS MOMMY!*

YOU HAVE AN EVEN BETTER CHANCE THAN HE DID. I DON'T HAVE MY MEN TO WATCH OVER ME RIGHT NOW. IT'S JUST YOU AND ME. YOU WANT *JUSTICE*? YOU BETTER KILL ME RIGHT HERE AND RIGHT NOW.

(* ISSUE #9)



I DON'T NEED TO KILL YOU
RIGHT HERE AND NOW.
I'M JUST HERE TO PUT YOU
ON NOTICE.
WHEN I'M DONE, YOU'LL
WISH JASON KNIGHT GOT
TO YOU FIRST.



THAT SURE AS
HELL SOUNDS
LIKE A THREAT
TO ME!

NOT A THREAT,
IT'S A
GUARANTEE.



HMPH...
CHICKEN-SHIT
COWARD.

THAT'S WHY
THE COP
ALWAYS WINS
IN THIS CITY.

ALWAYS.

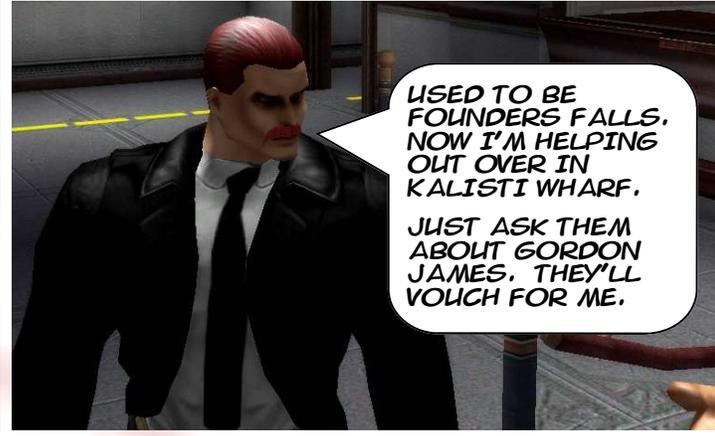
PARAGON POLICE STATION

INDEPENDENCE PORT

YEAH, YOU CAN SEE IF YOU CAN GET THE DAMN THING TO WORK. WHICH STATION ARE YOU WITH?



USED TO BE FOUNDERS FALLS, NOW I'M HELPING OUT OVER IN KALISTI WHARF. JUST ASK THEM ABOUT GORDON JAMES, THEY'LL VOUCH FOR ME.



THAT SHOULD BUY ME TIME TO DO WHAT I NEED TO DO.

WHEN THEY CALL UP THE KALISTI WHARF STATION, THEY'LL GET AN ANSWERING SERVICE, SINCE THAT AREA ISN'T EVEN OPENED YET.

THERE REALLY IS A DETECTIVE GORDON JAMES IN THE CITY.

BUT HE'S SPENDING THE LAST YEAR OR TWO ON DESK DUTY UNTIL HE CAN RETIRE AND CASH IN HIS PENSION.



TWO YEARS AGO, A HACKER FOUND A WAY TO PLANT A LITTLE 'GIFT' IN THE TERMINALS IN THIS STATION HOUSE.

TYPE IN THE RIGHT COMBINATION OF SEARCH WORDS AND THE WORKSTATION LOCKS UP.

I CAUGHT THE HACKER, BUT NEVER TOLD THE POLICE ABOUT WHAT HE PUT INTO THEIR COMPUTERS.



ALL IT TOOK WAS ONE ANONYMOUS CALL TO CONVINCE THEM TO TRIGGER THE MALWARE.

SO NOW I CAN COME IN AND UNLOCK THE TERMINAL AND THEN INSTALL MY OWN BACK DOOR ACCESS TO THEIR NETWORK WITHOUT ANYONE NOTICING.

THE DETECTIVE WILL GET THE CREDIT, AND I'LL FIND OUT WHAT THE COPS ARE DESPERATE TO HIDE FROM ME.



THE NEXT MORNING...



GOT YOUR CALL,
WHAT'S UP?



WE NEED
TO TALK.
COME
WITH ME.



WHERE THE
HELL ARE WE
GOING?



SOMEPLACE
WHERE WE CAN
TALK PRIVATELY.



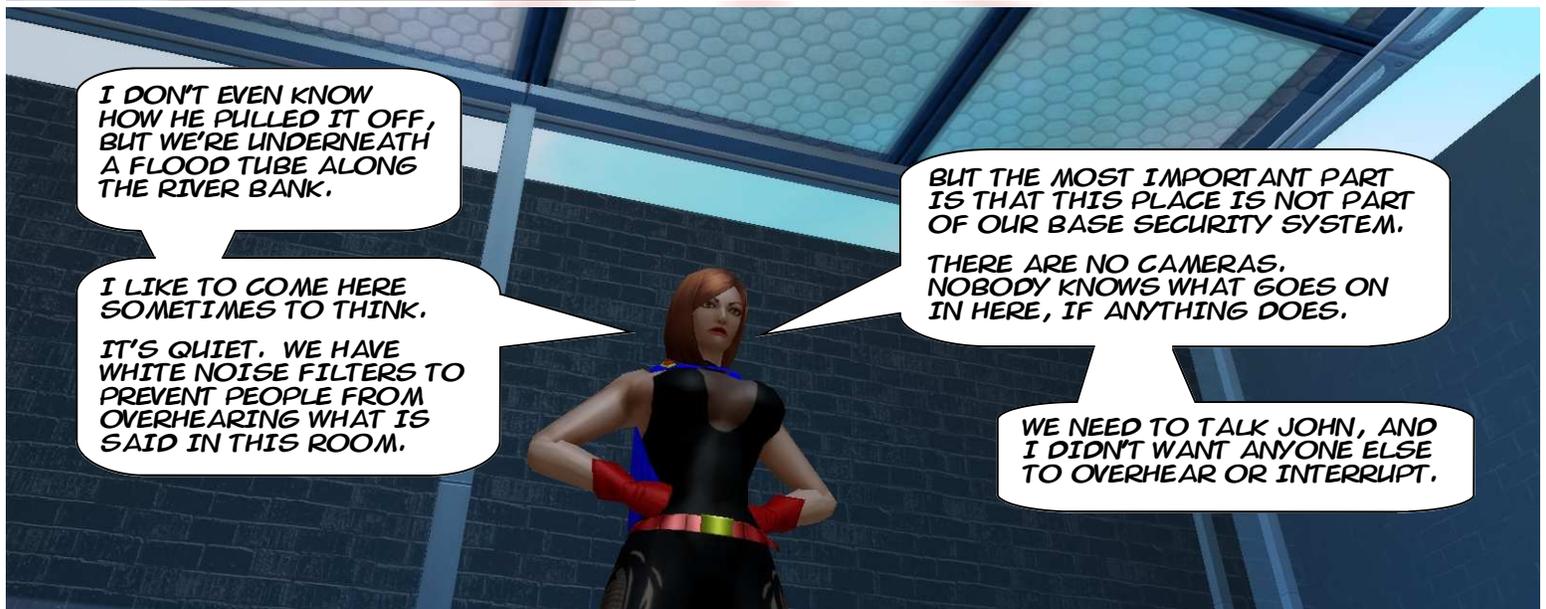


WOW! I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW THIS WAS HERE!



MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW IT EXISTS.
WHEN KENT* HELPED REDESIGN THE BASE, HE DISCOVERED THIS LITTLE SPOT AND TURNED IT INTO A PRIVATE AREA FOR US.

(* KENT*, AKA ICON POWERS)



I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW HE PULLED IT OFF, BUT WE'RE UNDERNEATH A FLOOD TUBE ALONG THE RIVER BANK.

I LIKE TO COME HERE SOMETIMES TO THINK.
IT'S QUIET. WE HAVE WHITE NOISE FILTERS TO PREVENT PEOPLE FROM OVERHEARING WHAT IS SAID IN THIS ROOM.

BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT PART IS THAT THIS PLACE IS NOT PART OF OUR BASE SECURITY SYSTEM.

THERE ARE NO CAMERAS. NOBODY KNOWS WHAT GOES ON IN HERE, IF ANYTHING DOES.

WE NEED TO TALK JOHN, AND I DIDN'T WANT ANYONE ELSE TO OVERHEAR OR INTERRUPT.



OKAY... I GUESS. WHAT ABOUT?



WHEN WE TALKED ON THE PHONE THE OTHER NIGHT, YOU SAID "LOVE YOU".* DID YOU MEAN IT?

(* LAST ISSUE)



I GUESS... YEAH.
I MEAN, WE'RE PRETTY INTIMATE ALREADY.
AND I DO CARE ABOUT YOU, TAYA. SO...
YEAH. I GUESS I DO.

THEN I WANT YOU TO ANSWER MY NEXT QUESTION HONESTLY, OKAY?

WHY WERE YOU SNOOPING IN MY BEDROOM YESTERDAY?



HOW DO YOU KNOW I WAS IN YOUR APARTMENT THE OTHER DAY?

FURIA TOLD ME SHE HEARD WHAT SHE THOUGHT WAS YOU COMING IN AND LATER LEAVING.
AND SHE REMINDED ME THAT YOU WERE SNOOPING AROUND MY BEDROOM LAST DECEMBER TOO.



RIGHT... I HAD THOUGHT I LEFT MY JACKET THEN, AND YESTERDAY I LEFT MY LOCKBOX KEYS IN YOUR PLACE.



YOU'RE LYING.
VANGUARD LOCKBOXES DON'T HAVE KEYS.
YOU WERE THERE TO FIND WHAT I HAD IN THE APARTMENT.



OKAY! OKAY...
YES, I WAS CURIOUS WHY YOU STILL HAD THE OLD "HEAVEN AND HELL" ACCESSWAY. I JUST... I JUST DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD A SUPER-ADVANCED DATABASE UP-AND-RUNNING.

SO WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST ASK ME ABOUT IT?



WOULD YOU HAVE TOLD ME IT WAS THERE?
WOULD YOU HAVE SHOWN IT TO ME AND SAID WHAT IT WAS FOR?

I...
I DON'T KNOW...
MAYBE AT SOME POINT...



LOOK, TAYA, THERE ARE PEOPLE THAT ARE CONCERNED ABOUT YOU.

THEY'RE WONDERING IF YOU'RE... IF YOU'RE DEVELOPING HYPER-INTELLIGENCE.

THEY'RE AFRAID THAT YOU'RE TURNING INTO YOUR TWIN SISTER, LEONA.*

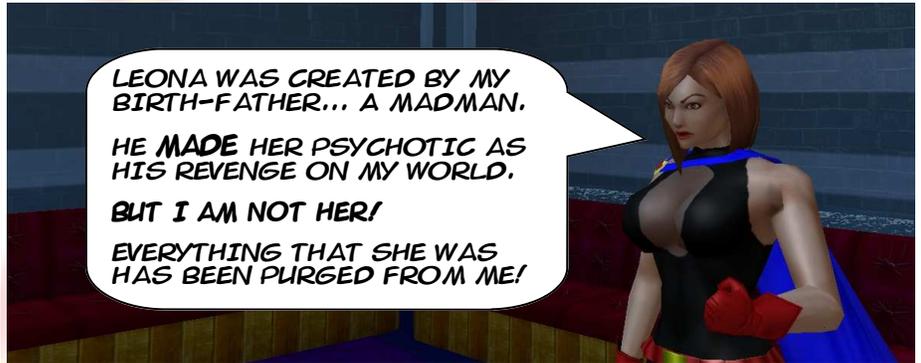
YOU KNOW, ALL-POWERFUL AND PSYCHOTIC.

** SEE THE THREE-PART "GALATEA DAWNING" STORYLINE IN "GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN SPOTLIGHT" #23-25 FOR THE WHOLE STORY.**



WHAT?!

THAT'S... THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! I'M NOT LEONA!



LEONA WAS CREATED BY MY BIRTH-FATHER... A MADMAN.

HE MADE HER PSYCHOTIC AS HIS REVENGE ON MY WORLD.

BUT I AM NOT HER!

EVERYTHING THAT SHE WAS HAS BEEN PURGED FROM ME!



BUT YOU CAN UNDERSTAND WHY PEOPLE ARE CONCERNED!

WHY? BECAUSE IN ADDITION TO POTENTIALLY BEING ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL WOMAN IN THE WORLD, I COULD CONTINUE TO IMPROVE MYSELF?



WHAT ABOUT YOUR CIVILIAN GUISE?

FAITH KARL STARTED OUT AS A MEDIOCRE OFFICE MANAGER, AND NOW SHE'S RUNNING THE STEEL CANYON BRANCH OF THE CITY'S LEADING SCIENTIFIC AUTHORITY!

THAT'S NOT AN "IMPROVEMENT"... THAT'S ALMOST A COMIC BOOK RETCON!

NO, THAT'S NOT THE CASE WITH HER!



MY WORK WITH CITY HALL AS THE LIAISON FOR HEROES IN THE JUDICIAL CENTER HAD HIT AN IMPASSE.

AT THE SAME TIME, THERE WAS AN OPENING THAT REQUIRED MORE ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS THAN SCIENTIFIC ABILITY.

THAT DOESN'T EXPLAIN HOW YOU DEVELOPED A TRANSLATION DEVICE FOR CAPTAIN PARAGONNA.*

← ISSUE #1)



THAT WAS ACTUALLY "MY" PROJECT, AS GALATEA, NOT AS FAITH.

I KNOW THIS IS A LITTLE CONFUSING, AND I KNOW I GOT MY TWO "SELVES" A BIT MIXED UP DURING THAT TIME.

LOOK, I KNOW I KEPT THIS FROM YOU, BUT IF YOU REALLY DO LOVE ME, I HOPE THAT YOU'D UNDERSTAND AND BE SUPPORTIVE OF THESE KINDS OF CHANGES.

BECAUSE... SOME THIS STUFF SCARES THE CRAP OUT OF ME TOO.



OF COURSE I'LL BE HERE FOR YOU. I'LL ALWAYS BE HERE FOR YOU.

A FEW MINUTES LATER...





<WHAT DO YOU SEEK?>*

<TELL ME ALL YOU KNOW ABOUT THE NATIONALIST.>

(* TRANSLATED FROM FIRST-SPEAK, THE FIRST LANGUAGE OF THE UNIVERSE.)



I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO UNDERSTAND HOW A RIGHTEOUS MAN THINKS.

YOUR SERPENT TONGUE WILL BE THE FIRST TO BURN!

GO AHEAD! LET THE WHOLE WORLD SEE THE REAL GALATEA FUTURE!

I DON'T ANSWER TO YOU OR TO ANYONE OTHER THAN GOD!

GOD BLESS AMERICA!

(* DIALOGUE COMES FROM THE PAGES OF "FUTURE'S GUARDIAN", WHICH YOU CAN ACCESS THROUGH THE BATTLEROCK COMICS WEBSITE.)

KINGS ROW...

I GOT YOUR MESSAGE.
WHAT DID YOU WANT ME TO SEE?

Alex Wentworth
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

IT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE.

Deputy Chief Thomas Wield
PARAGON CITY POLICE

JUSTICE!

JUSTICE!

THE STIFF USED TO BE A CONFIDENTIAL INFORMANT. WE FOUND AN ARROW STICKING INTO HIM... THE KIND THAT THE LIBERTARIAN AVENGER USED.

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU PUT CAPES OVER COPS, WENTWORTH. NOW YOUR "HERO" THE AVENGER IS A KILLER.

YOU LET YOUR HERO FRIENDS KNOW... WE'RE GOING AFTER THE LIBERTARIAN AVENGER. AND IF I FIND OUT THAT ANY OF HIS GUARDIAN FRIENDS ARE HELPING HIM, THEN I'LL HAVE THAT WHOLE GROUP ARRESTED FOR AIDING AND ABETTING!

Next Issue:
And it can only get worse from here!

FURIOUS SCRIBBLINGS

Words of wisdom from writer and creator David 2.



Longbow Intelligence Unit

Assessment/Profile Division

A subsidiary of Freedom Corps, Inc.



Subject: The Threat of Primalism

In the late 1980's Doctor Brian Webb, a key supporter of the Freedom Phalanx, resigned from his role with Freedom Corps when it was discovered that many of his inventions involved the use of the illegal substance Superadine. Rather than be disgraced, though, Webb sold some of his inventions for the money needed to fund the creation of his greatest venture, Portal Corporation.

In 1988, Webb made a startling breakthrough when he created a stable interdimensional portal and then used it to teleport himself to another universe, proving that the multiverse exists.

Unfortunately not long after that, Webb and his team of multiverse explorers found themselves captured by the inhabitants of the dimension catalogued as Delta Zeta 24-10. This was otherwise known as the "Axis America" universe, where the greatest hero of their Earth served Nazi Germany, and not only single-handedly won World War II, but also became its new Fuhrer. Webb and his team were tortured by this world's champion and then were killed.

Their Fuhrer, Reichsman, then invaded our world.

The Freedom Phalanx and dozens of heroes managed to eventually defeat Reichsman's forces and imprison their leader, but the battle was difficult and costly.

Following the Reichsman invasion, a groundswell of protests began concerning the continued use of multidimensional travel and of encountering people from other universes. Taking their lead from the designation made by the late Dr. Webb of our universe as the "Primal Universe", these protesters began calling themselves "Primalists". Their message was simple: they believed that our "Primal" world is already messed up as it is, and that we should focus all our efforts on the problems of this world and leave the other worlds to themselves.

Their efforts were largely ignored, though, because Portal Corporation was rebuilt and was allowed to resume their work with private investors. Plus, following the Reichsman invasion, many defense hawks in government wanted Portal to continue Webb's work to find any potential threats to our world so they could prepare a proper defense for them.

Then the Rikti invaded in 2002.

The full effect of an interdimensional invasion, with free-forming dimensional portals opening around the world instead of through portal devices, had a devastating effect not only on the populace, but also on the sentiment surrounding those from other realities. People from other dimensions could come through at any time, from anywhere, and in

Continues on next page...

large enough numbers to overwhelm any defenses we may have.

This fear was further bolstered with the brief invasion of creatures from the Shadow Shard dimension in 2004. Much like the Reichsman invasion, this incursion was brief, and the heroes were able to send them back. But the fact that it could once again happen at any time was enough to reinforce that greater fear.

In addition the United Nations global defense group known as the Vanguard has continued their propaganda against anyone from other realities. While Vanguard propagandist Incandescent has said repeatedly that these messages were specifically targeted against Rikti support, many in Paragon City feel that the "Earth is for Humans" message applies specifically to those of the "Primal Universe".

Since 2004, membership in so-called "Primalist" groups have risen exponentially. While many of these groups are grass-roots political organizations, there are some militant factions that support a more aggressive role against those from other realities.

The largest and most vocal of these groups is the "Our World First" movement. While they claim their efforts are non-violent in nature, there have been several incidents of violence linked to the group.

Their campaigns have become more vocal after it was discovered that Paragon City and the Vanguard have been quietly taking in refugees from the Praetorian Universe, most notably from First Ward, especially after the numerous attempts from Tyrant and his Praetorian Guard to invade our universe. Likewise, their choice of targets have often been refugee centers and places where such Praetorian refugees gather.

Their bigotry extends beyond race, creed, gender, religion, or sexual orientation, but they do have one disadvantage, and that is their inability to immediately differentiate between people from other universes. As long as refugees do not identify themselves from their origin universe, they are relatively safe from persecution.

<http://BattlerockComics.wordpress.com>

NEXT ISSUE...



THINGS ARE GETTING ROUGH FOR OUR HEROES. BUT IS THE "LIBERTARIAN AVENGER" REALLY A KILLER?

PLUS, WHAT IS GOING ON WITH THE ULTRA-NATIONALIST AND WHAT IS HIS CONNECTION TO GALATEA?

FIND OUT HERE.



'THE CRUCIBLE'

featuring

Spellbinder



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THE GAME IS GONE...



...BUT THE STORIES GO ON!
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