

T+ FOR TEENS PLUS

GALATEA

AND THE GUARDIANS



Issue 17
2016



... ARE NOW
OBSOLETE!

HERE IS THE
NEW FACE OF
HEROISM FOR
PARAGON
CITY!



“My name is Molly Rhone, and this is my story...”

On September 31st, 2013, I was accosted by a trio of gang members in Steel Canyon and chased into an alley. I didn't resist when they asked for my purse, but then they said they wanted more.

I tried to fight back, but there were three of them.

I screamed. I called for help, but it only made them bolder.

During this ordeal, several heroes passed the alleyway.

I screamed and I shouted at them for help, but they ignored me.

What was worse was that some of them stopped and saw what was happening.

One hero said the attackers were “lowbies” and “not worth her time” and then flew away.

Another hero who watched started to step in, but then his friend said they were late to “Raid the Rikti”.

My attackers took their turns with me, savagely beating me and violating me for what seemed like an eternity.

Then they left me in the alleyway. One of them even said “thanks”, as if it was a service.

It was a member of the Paragon City Police Department, a patrol officer, who found me in that alleyway. He called for an ambulance to take me to the hospital. He called for a trauma counselor to visit me, and for an investigator to get my statement and get a description of the gang members.

This officer would later tell me in the hospital that they had found the gang members that raped me and that they wouldn't ever be preying on someone like me ever again.

I never heard from any of those heroes again, but that officer still check in with me regularly to see that I'm okay.

The doctors say that if he didn't stepped in to help when he did, I probably would have bled to death.

We always hear about the great things that heroes do for Paragon City, but what good are those heroes when they can't even take the time to help someone like me?

COPS NOT CAPES

A message from the Paragon City Police Union and Concerned Citizens of Paragon City.

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...

GALATEA



AND THE GUARDIANS

Tensions between the Paragon City Police Department and the superhero community reached a boiling point recently, and, as a result, Furia Powers was badly injured.

While she is recovering, her adopted sister, Galatea Powers, has been resuming her role as the city's "True Guardian", keeping the city safe from criminal threats while also balancing her civilian responsibilities. However, she also been keeping a secret of her own that was just made known to a special overseer assigned to the Guardians of the Dawn superhero group by the United Nations security department known as Vanguard. Even worse, it was secret that was discovered by her teammate and lover, John Cole, aka Guardian Star.

Meanwhile, Jason Knight, the once and future street vigilante MidKnight, strives to retake the Kings Row district from the corrupt elements of the Paragon City Police Department. But without the dark forces that he once relied upon to help him, it will be a difficult task.

"PRELUDE TO CALAMITY"

- A CITY OF HEROES STORY BY DAVID 2

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I HAD ALMOST FORGOTTEN WHAT IT FELT LIKE TO WEAR THIS OUTFIT.

IT WELCOMES ME LIKE AN OLD LOVER.

I'VE ALWAYS FELT INVULNERABLE IN THIS OUTFIT, LIKE A TRUE KNIGHT IN HIS ARMOR.



AND EVERY KNIGHT HAS A KINGDOM TO DEFEND.

HEH
LET'S DO THIS.

SO LET'S SEE HOW MANY DRAGONS I CAN SLAY.

MidKnight X
(JASON KNIGHT)



THE COUNCIL AND THE MOB. FORMIDABLE ENEMIES IN AND OF THEMSELVES.



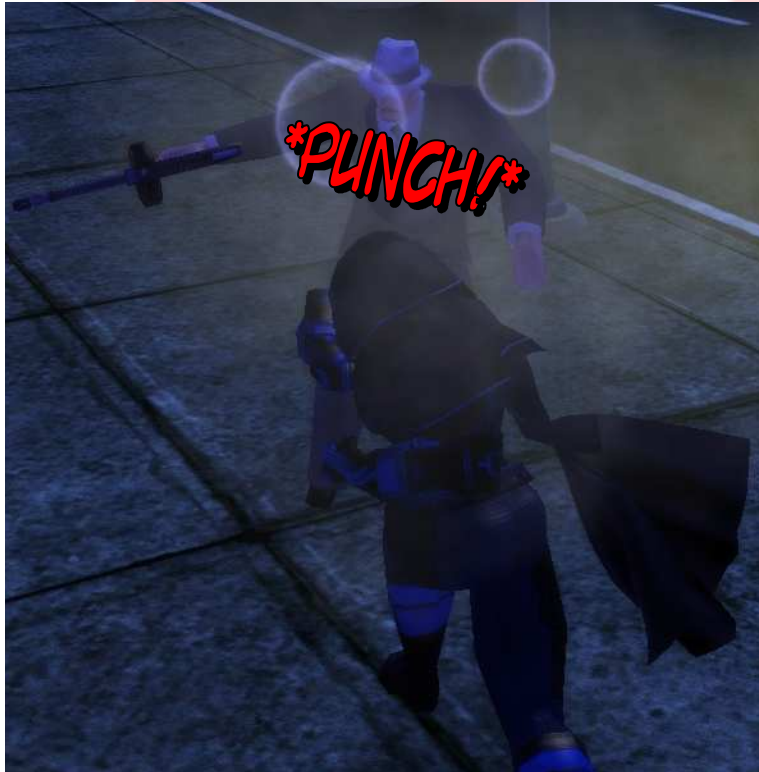
FWOOOSH!

BOTH ARE HEAVILY ARMED AND RELY ON BRUTE FORCE.



WHAP-WHAP!

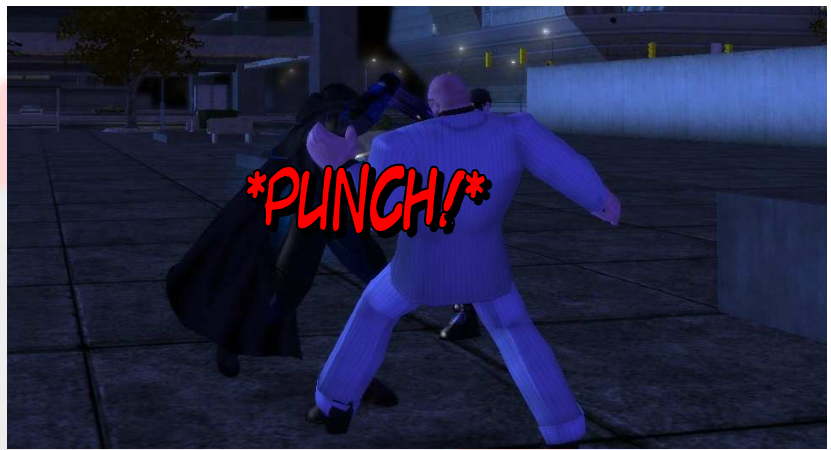
BUT THEY'RE STILL MEN. STILL FLESH-AND-BLOOD.



PUNCH!

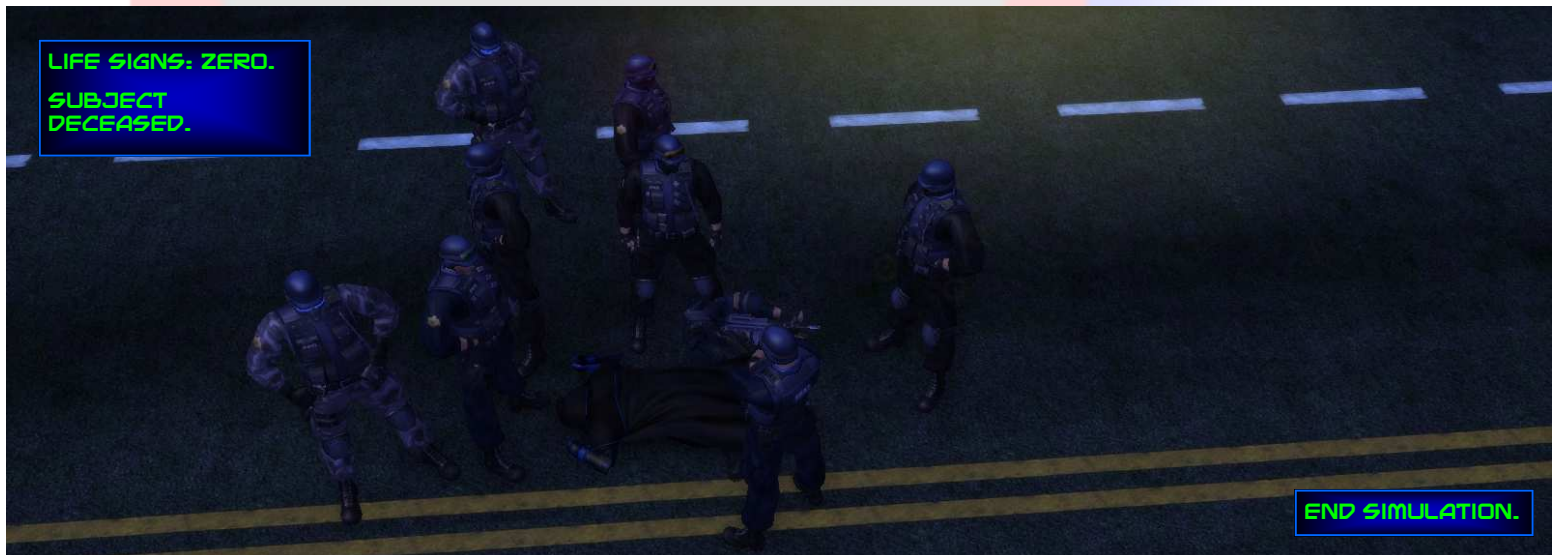
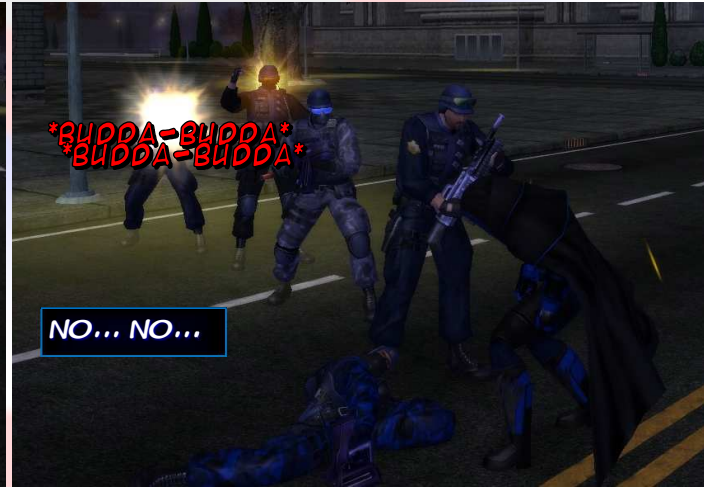


PUNCH!





AND AN ABUSIVE COP IS WORSE THAN ANY CRIMINAL THUG.



THERE IS A REASON WHY I CHOSE MY NEW LAIR TO BE INSIDE AN ARCHITECT ENTERTAINMENT BUILDING.

IT GIVES ME THE MEANS TO TRAIN AND TEST MY SKILLS BEFORE TAKING THEM TO THE STREETS.

OF COURSE I HAD TO PUT IN SOME SAFEGUARDS THAT ARE NOT IN THE NORMAL EQUIPMENT.

I CAN'T EXACTLY EXPLAIN TO MY ASSOCIATES HOW THE OPERATIONS MANAGER SHOWS UP IN THE INFIRMARY OR HOW I'M EVEN USING THE FACILITIES AS A MEANS TO BECOME A STREET HERO.

SENTRY, WHAT HAPPENED?

BUT EVEN THOUGH IT'S A SIMULATION, IT STILL HURTS LIKE THE REAL THING.

THE FAILSAFE PROTOCOL WAS TRIGGERED WHEN YOUR LIFE SIGNS SHOWED EMINENT DEATH.


THE POLICE OVERWHELMED YOUR ARMOR IN THEIR QUEST TO KILL YOU INSTEAD OF TRYING TO ARREST YOU.

THEIR TACTICS WERE MORE BRUTAL THAN EXPECTED.

THE LAST TIME I FACED MCCADE'S COPS, THEY WEREN'T TRYING TO KILL ME OUTRIGHT.*


"AFTER THE ATTEMPT ON TASHATIGER'S LIFE AND THE ALL-OUT ASSAULT ON FURIA POWERS, IT SHOULD BE REASONABLE TO EXPECT THEM TO ESCALATE."

THOSE WERE YOUR WORDS.




THE REFORMULATED ARMOR HELD ITS OWN AGAINST COUNCIL AND FAMILY WEAPONS, SO WHY DIDN'T IT HOLD UP AGAINST PPD AMMO? I DIDN'T EVEN GO UP AGAINST THEIR HEAVY ARMOR UNITS YET!

THE COUNCIL HAVE NOT UPGRADED THEIR AMMUNITION SINCE THE 1990'S. THEY HAVE INSTEAD RELIED ON GENETICS AND KHELDIAN TECHNOLOGY. THE POLICE, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE BEEN UPGRADING THEIR WEAPONS CONSTANTLY SINCE THE 2002 RIKTI INVASION.




ANOTHER REASON WHY YOU NEED TO HAVE ACCESS TO THE POLICE COMPUTER NETWORKS AGAIN. WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THAT?



THANKS TO YOUR BACKDOOR ACCESS I WAS ABLE TO CONNECT TO THEIR SYSTEMS AGAIN.* BUT THEN THEY PUT UP A NEW LAYER OF ENCRYPTION.


(* LAST ISSUE)



THEY'RE DESPERATE TO KEEP THEIR SECRETS TO THEMSELVES. I CAN ALMOST RESPECT THEIR UNWILLINGNESS TO SHARE. EXCEPT FOR THE FACT THAT THEY'VE GOT A GANG OF THUGS IN THEIR RANKS.

IN THE MEANTIME, WE HAVE TO FIND A WAY TO COUNTER THE POLICE WHEN WE MAKE OUR MOVE AGAINST THE BLUE DOGS.

THEIR GREATEST STRENGTH IS THAT THEY ATTACK IN NUMBERS WHEN THEY FEEL THREATENED.



YOU'RE RIGHT. I FORGET THE POLICE SEE THEMSELVES AS AN ARMY, NOT AS A GANG. MAYBE THE KEY TO BEATING MCCAIDE AND HIS THUGS REQUIRES MORE THAN JUST ONE KNIGHT IN PLAY.

ADD IN A NEW SET OF FACTORS. INCLUDE A TASK FORCE. BUILD A LIST OF POTENTIALS FROM THE FULL HERO DATABASE, NOT JUST THE MEMBERS LIST OF THE GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN.

UNITED NATIONS VANGUARD OFFICE

ATLAS PARK - PARAGON CITY, RI, USA

"THIS IS A SECURED VANGUARD INTERVIEW. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME FOR THE RECORD."

"GALATEA POWERS."

JUST TO REMIND YOU, THIS IS A SECURED INTERVIEW WITH AN OMEGA-A-LEVEL CLEARANCE, SO YOU ARE CLEAR TO SHARE ANY INFORMATION WITH ME THAT PERTAINS TO YOUR WORK WITH VANGUARD OR WITH THE GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN.

I UNDERSTAND.

 Galatea Powers
(FAITH KARL)

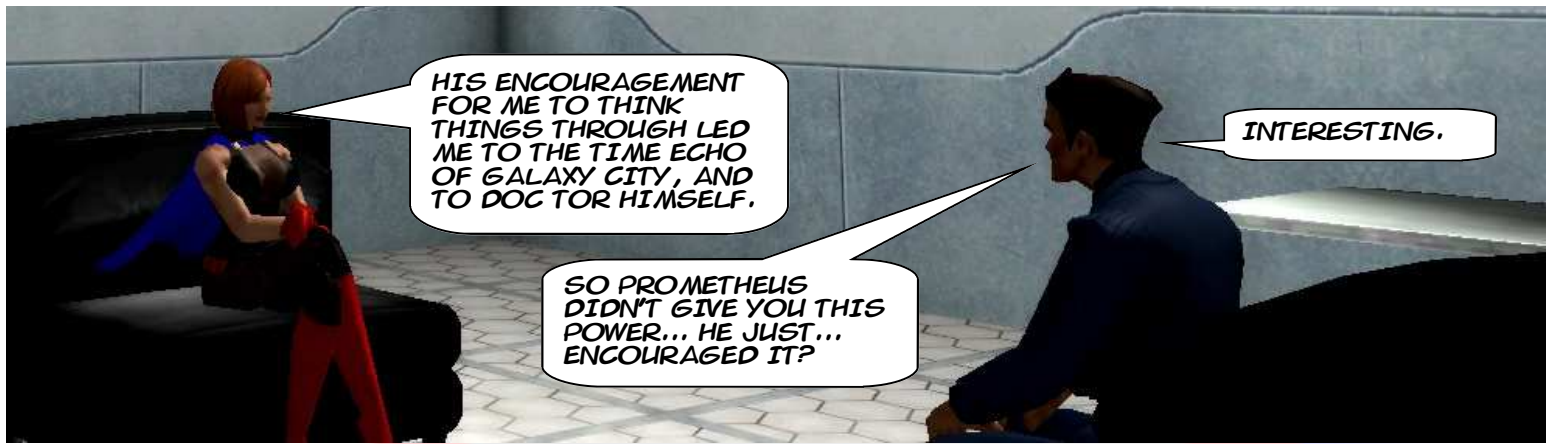
IT'S COME TO OUR ATTENTION THAT YOU'VE DEVELOPED A SENSE OF ENHANCED KNOWLEDGE, WHAT YOU CALL "HYPER-INTELLIGENCE". CAN YOU TELL ME WHEN YOU FIRST RECOGNIZED THIS NEW ABILITY.

IT WAS 2012... I WAS INVESTIGATING DOCTOR'S ROLE IN WHAT HAPPENED TO GALAXY CITY AND THAT LED ME TO THE GREEK TITAN PROMETHEUS.

USE YOUR GREATEST OF GIFTS AND YOU WILL KNOW.

YES... THAT GIFT!

(FROM "THE GUARDIAN POWERS" #14)



HIS ENCOURAGEMENT FOR ME TO THINK THINGS THROUGH LED ME TO THE TIME ECHO OF GALAXY CITY, AND TO DOC TOR HIMSELF.

INTERESTING.

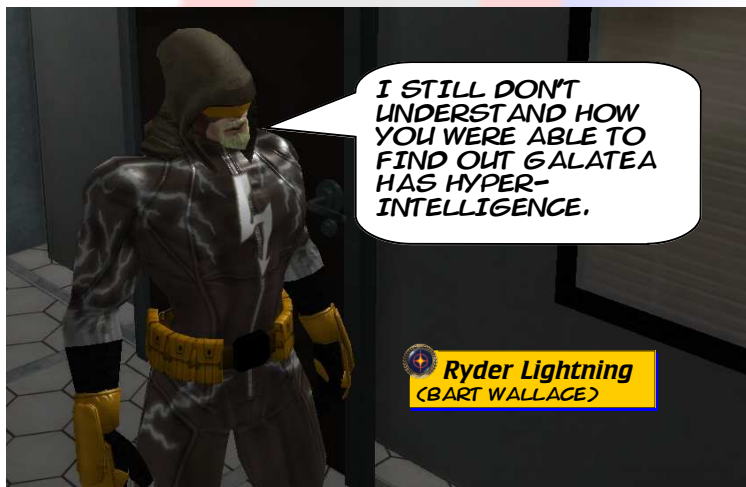
SO PROMETHEUS DIDN'T GIVE YOU THIS POWER... HE JUST... ENCOURAGED IT?



I DON'T KNOW IF HE REALLY GAVE ME THIS ABILITY OR IF I ALWAYS HAD IT. ALL I KNOW IS THAT I HAD IT WHEN I NEEDED IT.

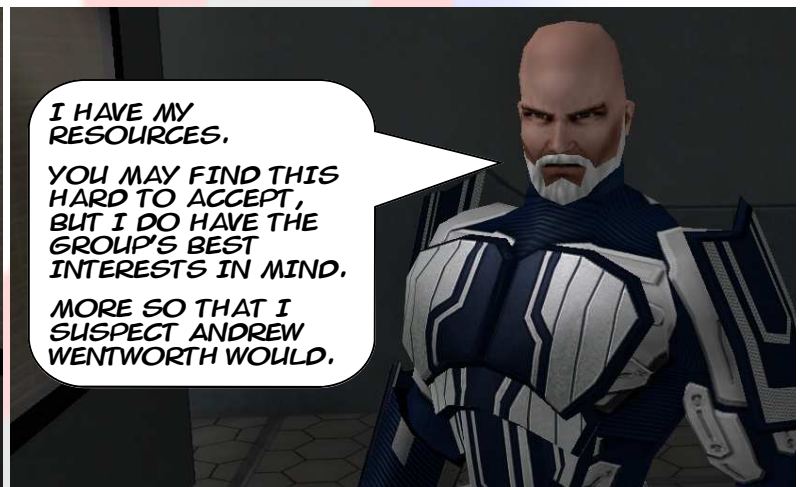
IT WOULD'VE BEEN BETTER IF SHE SAID PROMETHEUS GAVE HER THAT ABILITY. THEN AT LEAST WE WOULDN'T BLAME HER FOR KEEPING IT A SECRET.

Carlton Sage
VANGUARD OVERSEER



I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW YOU WERE ABLE TO FIND OUT GALATEA HAS HYPER-INTELLIGENCE.

Ryder Lightning
(BART WALLACE)



I HAVE MY RESOURCES. YOU MAY FIND THIS HARD TO ACCEPT, BUT I DO HAVE THE GROUP'S BEST INTERESTS IN MIND. MORE SO THAT I SUSPECT ANDREW WENTWORTH WOULD.



I KNOW WHO WENTWORTH IS AND WHAT HE DID IN THE PAST. I KNOW ALMOST NOTHING ABOUT YOU, EVEN THOUGH YOU'VE BEEN WATCHING US ALL THIS TIME!

AND IF I DIDN'T MAKE MY PRESENCE KNOWN, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE KNOWN I WAS EVER HERE.*
A GOOD OVERSEER STAYS OUT OF SIGHT... UNLESS SOMETHING COMES TO FORCE THEM TO STEP UP.

(* ISSUE #15)



WHAT DO YOU MEAN THE GREENBERG CASE WAS DISMISSED?
THE ARRESTING OFFICER DIDN'T APPEAR?
THIS IS THE FIFTH CASE TODAY THAT HAS HAPPENED!

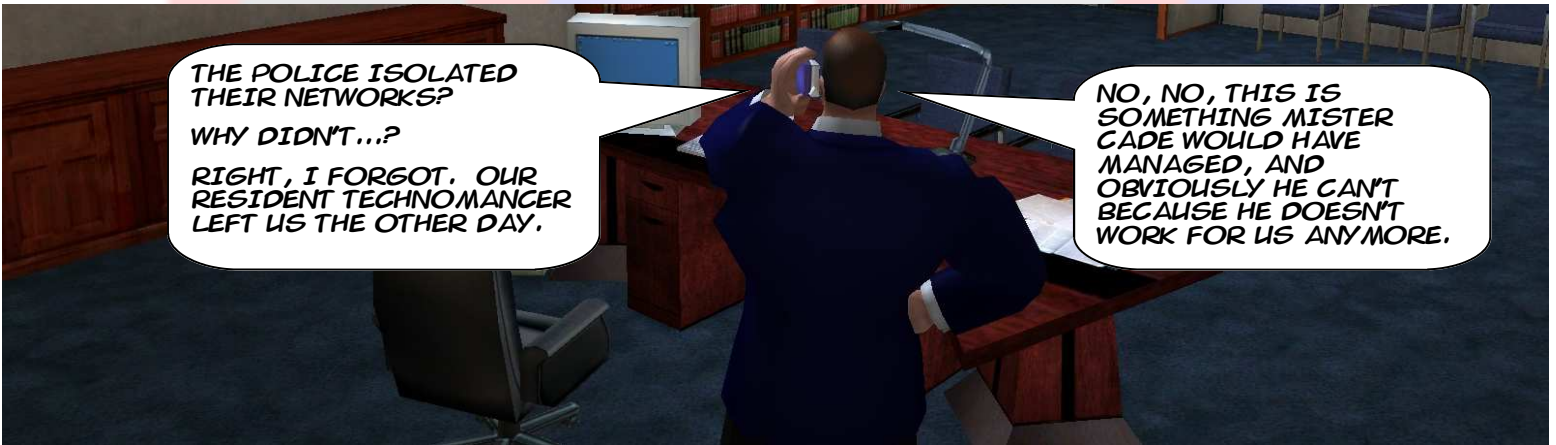
Alex Wentworth
DISTRICT ATTORNEY



NO, I WANT YOU TO HEAD OVER TO POLICE HEADQUARTERS IN KINGS ROW, AND YOU FIND OUT WHY THE OFFICERS ARE NOT APPEARING TO TESTIFY AS SUMMONED BY THE COURT.

WAIT... WHAT?
YOU SAID THE OFFICER DIDN'T GET THE ELECTRONIC NOTIFICATION?

THAT CANT BE. THEIR NETWORKS ARE TIED INTO OURS. ALL OF THE CITY NETWORKS ARE INTERCONNECTED.



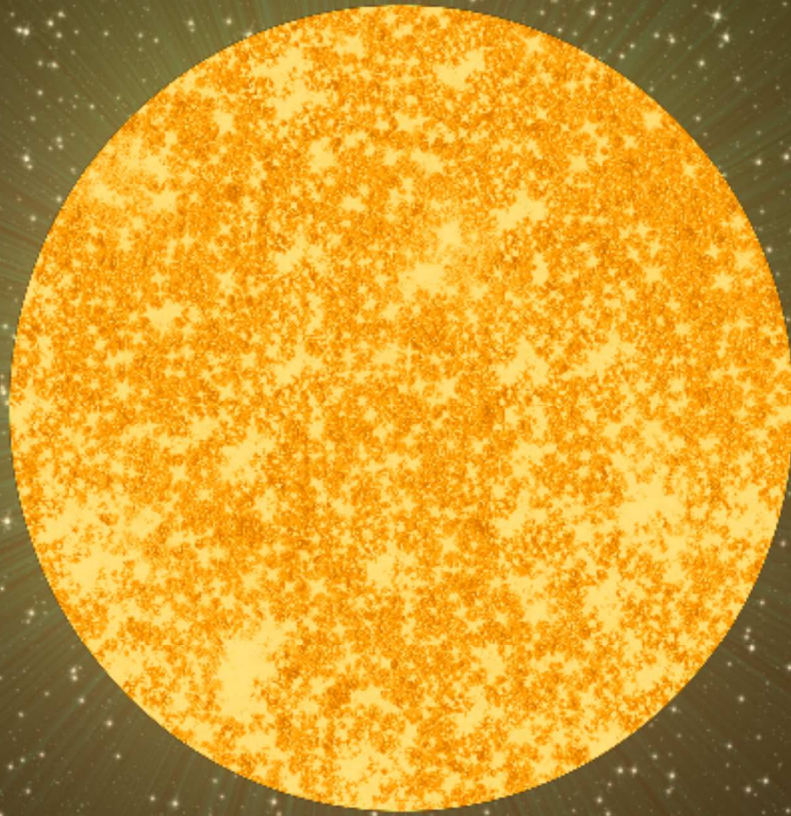
THE POLICE ISOLATED THEIR NETWORKS?
WHY DIDN'T...?
RIGHT, I FORGOT. OUR RESIDENT TECHNOMANCER LEFT US THE OTHER DAY.

NO, NO, THIS IS SOMETHING MISTER CADE WOULD HAVE MANAGED, AND OBVIOUSLY HE CANT BECAUSE HE DOESN'T WORK FOR US ANYMORE.

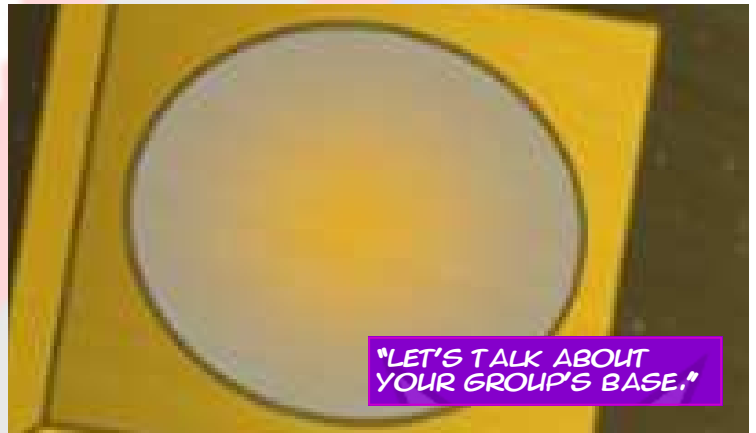
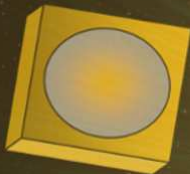


I NEED TO GET IN TOUCH WITH CHIEF CLAYTON ABOUT THIS, BUT FOR RIGHT NOW, I NEED YOU TO GRAB THE COURT DOCKET FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW, AND YOU GET OUT TO POLICE HEADQUARTERS, AND YOU WORK WITH THE COPS THERE AND YOU MAKE SURE EVERY OFFICER WHO IS SCHEDULE TO TESTIFY TODAY AND TOMORROW ARE NOTIFIED AND THAT THEY WILL APPEAR!

SOL - CENTER OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM



ICARUS SOLAR SATELLITE #32




"LET'S TALK ABOUT YOUR GROUP'S BASE."



NOW I KNOW THAT ICON POWERS, YOUR COUSIN-SLASH-ADOPTED FATHER, WAS CHIEFLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RESURRECTION OF YOUR GROUP'S BASE AFTER IT WAS SHUT DOWN WHEN THEY DISBANDED BRIEFLY IN 2011.*

BUT I'M TOLD THAT YOU HAD A ROLE TO PLAY IN SOME OF THE ADDITIONS MADE TO THE BASE AFTER THE GROUP WAS RESTORED TO ACTIVE SERVICE.

(THIS HAPPENED PRETTY MUCH BEHIND-THE-SCENES DURING MOST OF "THE GUARDIAN POWERS" SERIES.)



"FOR INSTANCE, I'M TOLD YOUR BASE HAS A MYSTICAL REACTOR SYSTEM THAT USES THREE SHADOW SHARD SPHERES AS A POWER SOURCE."

"VANGUARD EXPERTS SAY THAT THE DIMENSIONAL ENERGY THAT POWERS THE BASE DEFENSES CANNOT EVEN BEGIN TO BE MEASURED."

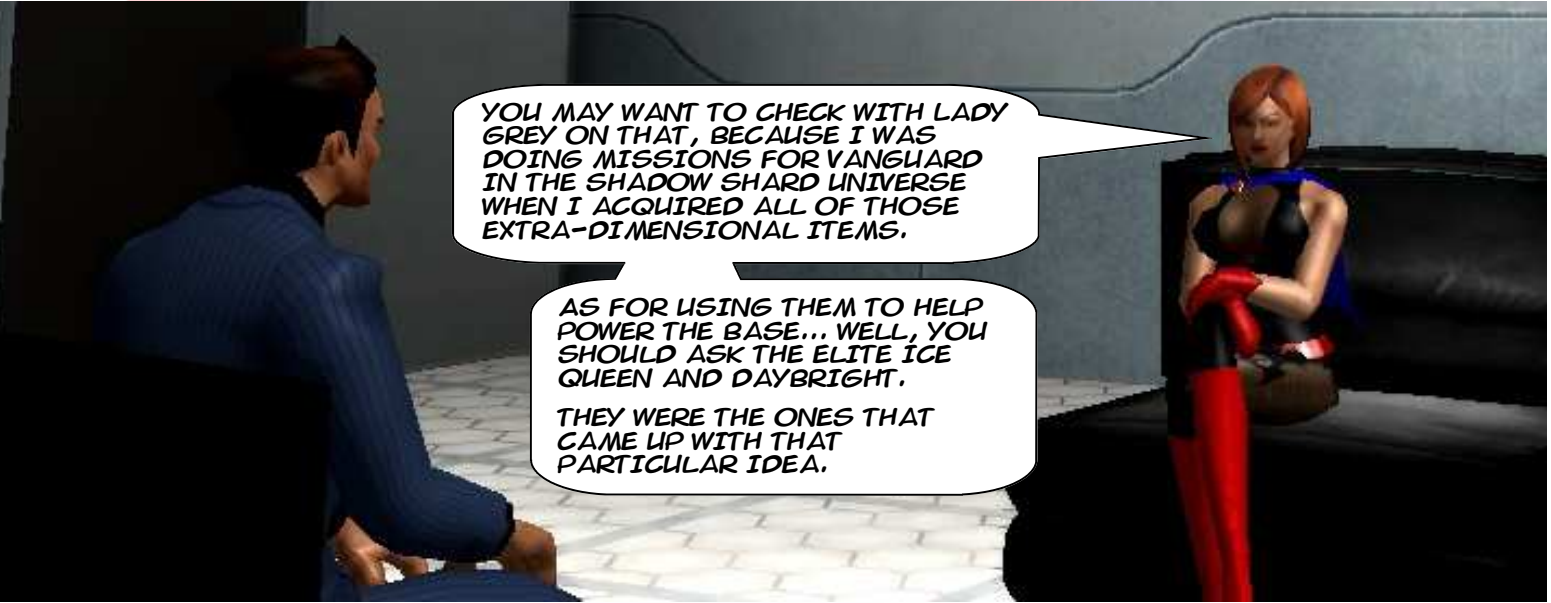


"AND YOUR GROUP EVEN HAS A MAKER'S FURNACE SOMEWHERE IN STORAGE."



ALL THESE THINGS, I'M TOLD, CAME FROM YOU.

SO... HOW DID YOU COME ACROSS ALL OF THESE ITEMS?



YOU MAY WANT TO CHECK WITH LADY GREY ON THAT, BECAUSE I WAS DOING MISSIONS FOR VANGUARD IN THE SHADOW SHARD UNIVERSE WHEN I ACQUIRED ALL OF THOSE EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL ITEMS.

AS FOR USING THEM TO HELP POWER THE BASE... WELL, YOU SHOULD ASK THE ELITE ICE QUEEN AND DAYBRIGHT.

THEY WERE THE ONES THAT CAME UP WITH THAT PARTICULAR IDEA.

PARAGON CITY POLICE HEADQUARTERS

KINGS ROW

WHEN I TOOK OVER THE ROLE OF DEPUTY CHIEF FROM THE LATE GLEN MCMILLAN, I INHERITED A RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP THE ROLE OF THE POLICE OFFICER RELEVANT IN A SO-CALLED "CITY OF HEROES."

Blue Steel
PARAGON CITY POLICE

Deputy Chief Thomas Wield
PARAGON CITY POLICE

UNLIKE OTHER MAJOR CITIES SUCH AS NEW YORK, LOS ANGELES, OR CHICAGO, PARAGON CITY HAS A HISTORY OF HAVING HEROES WORK SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH MEMBERS OF THE POLICE FORCE. SOMETIMES THIS COOPERATION IS BENEFICIAL, AS HAS BEEN PROVEN BY BLUE STEEL AND HIS YEARS OF SERVICE AS BOTH A HERO AND AS AN OFFICER.

UNFORTUNATELY, MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, OUR COOPERATION BETWEEN HERO AND COP HAS BEEN MORE ADVERSARIAL.

SELF-APPOINTED "KNIGHTS" AND "AVENGERS" HAVE TAKE IT UPON THEMSELVES TO SERVE AS JUDGE, JURY, AND EXECUTIONER NOT ONLY FOR THE CRIMINAL ELEMENT, BUT THEY HAVE EVEN TURNED AGAINST THE HARD-WORKING PATROLMEN.

IT'S HIGH TIME THAT WE PUT THE POLICE OFFICER ON EQUAL FOOTING WITH THE SUPERHERO. SO WHEN PEOPLE LOOK UP IN THE SKIES OVER PARAGON CITY, THEY WILL NO LONGER JUST SEE SOME COSTUMED VIGILANTE...

WOOSHI!



... THEY WILL ALSO SEE
THE

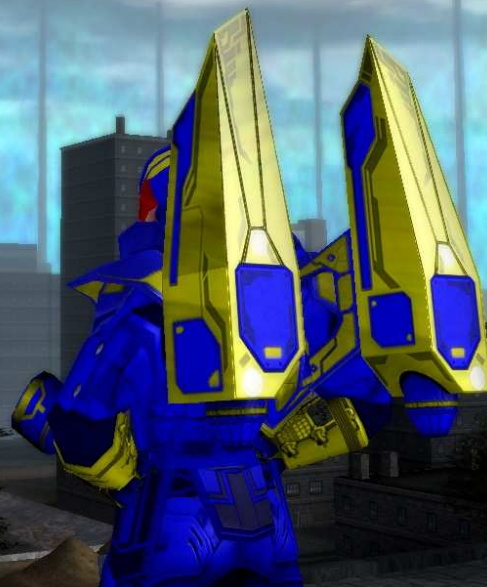
LAWHAWK

THIS IS THE FIRST OF
AN ELITE SQUAD OF
AIRBORNE POLICE
OFFICERS THAT WILL
BE PATROLLING THE
SKIES OVER PARAGON
CITY, STARTING RIGHT
HERE IN KINGS ROW.

UNLIKE PAST AIRBORNE
POLICE UNITS, WHOSE
PURPOSE WAS MOSTLY FOR
OBSERVATION, THE
LAWHAWK CAN BOTH
OBSERVE AND EFFECT
ARRESTS ON-THE-SPOT.

"EACH LAWHAWK WEARS AN
ADVANCED FLIGHT SUIT DESIGNED
BY CYCORP ALONG WITH ONE OF
THE MOST POWERFUL JET
PROPULSION UNITS DEVELOPED
FOR PERSONAL USE."

"IN ADDITION, EACH LAWHAWK
CARRIES TWO MATCH
COMPENSATOR PISTOLS THAT ARE
DEVELOPED BY GREY INDUSTRIES
AND ARE STORED IN SPECIAL
HOLSTERS WHEN NOT IN USE."



PARAGON POLICE DEPARTMENT

"BUT OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE TO THE EQUIPMENT IS THE MAN WEARING IT."

"THE MAN YOU SEE BEFORE YOU IS LIEUTENANT DUSTIN CODY, FORMERLY A LIEUTENANT-COLONEL IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE, AN EXPERIENCED PILOT WITH DOZENS OF SUCCESSFUL AIR MISSIONS UNDER HIS BELT."



LIEUTENANT CODY WILL BE THE FIRST LAWHAWK, AND HE WILL ALSO TRAIN THE LAWHAWKS THAT FOLLOW HIM INTO THE SKIES OVER OUR CITY.

THEY WILL MAKE LIFE MISERABLE FOR THE CRIMINAL ELEMENT IN PARAGON CITY.

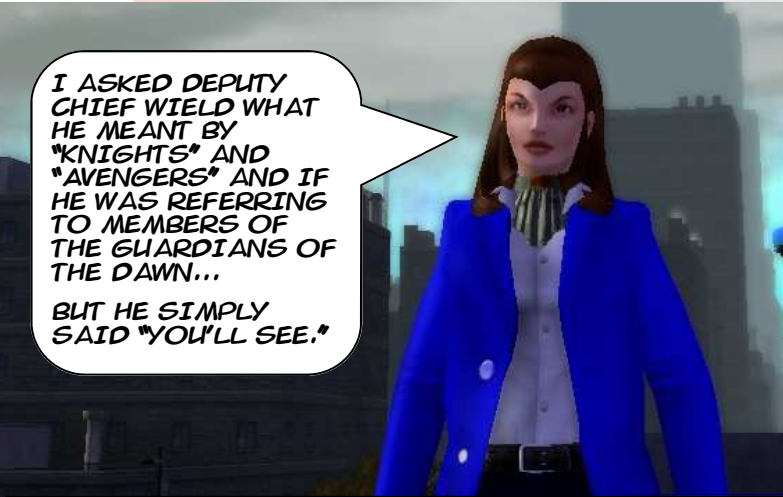


AND SOON THE MESSAGE WILL GO OUT TO THE SO-CALLED "KNIGHTS" AND THE SELF-APPOINTED "AVENGERS" THAT THEY WILL NO LONGER BE WELCOMED IN OUR BELOVED CITY!



I ASKED DEPUTY CHIEF WIELD WHAT HE MEANT BY "KNIGHTS" AND "AVENGERS" AND IF HE WAS REFERRING TO MEMBERS OF THE GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN... BUT HE SIMPLY SAID "YOU'LL SEE."

REPORTING LIVE FROM POLICE HEADQUARTERS IN KINGS ROW... I'M APRIL RAMIREZ.





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Spellbinder



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WATCHING THE COSMOS FOR THREATS AND WONDERS.

I'M NOT GOING TO TELL YOU WHAT I WORE ON MY VACATION!


WHY? ARE YOU AFRAID I MIGHT FANTASIZE ABOUT IT?

IT'S NOT LIKE I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU NAKED.
I STILL REMEMBER THAT TIME--

YOU FINISH THAT STATEMENT AND I SWEAR I'LL GO TO H.R. FOR REAL!
I CAN'T BELIEVE I EVEN LET YOU SLEEP WITH ME!

ICARUS ALERT!

TWICE. WE DID IT TWICE.
BESIDES, THIS IS THE MOST BORING JOB IN THE WORLD.
IT'S NOT LIKE ANYTHING WILL EVER HAPPEN.




I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND, BUT I'M GOING TO GET A GLASS OF WATER.


OH. NO, BY ALL MEANS.
AND I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND IF WE CONTINUE OUR DISCUSSION.



SPECIFICALLY, I'D LIKE TO TALK ABOUT HOW YOU DEVELOPED A PERSONAL TRANSLATION DEVICE.




REALLY?
GEE... I WONDER WHO TOLD YOU ABOUT THAT?



THERE'S REALLY NOTHING THAT YOU SHOULD BE DEFENSIVE ABOUT, MISS POWERS.
IT'S A REMARKABLE DEVICE.

BUT IT'S NOT LIKE WE HAVEN'T HAD TRANSLATION DEVICES BEFORE.
SO IT SURPRISES ME THAT YOU WOULD KEEP THE NEWS OF SOMETHING LIKE THIS QUIET.



MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT TO SPEND MY TIME IN A ROOM LIKE THIS EXPLAINING HOW I WAS ABLE TO COME UP WITH IT.

SIGH
OKAY, IT WAS ON ONE OF THOSE SECRET VANGUARD MISSIONS IN THE SHADOW SHARD UNIVERSE...

"SINCE YOU HAVE OMEGA-LEVEL CLEARANCE, YOU PROBABLY KNOW ABOUT THE STRANGE CONDITIONS IN THE SHADOW SHARD UNIVERSE."



"HOW SPACE IS BREATHABLE, AND HOW THE NORMAL RULES OF GRAVITY DON'T APPLY."

"ONCE YOU'RE OUT THERE, YOU UNDERSTAND WHY VANGUARD WOULD NEED SUPER-POWERED BEINGS FOR THESE MISSIONS."



"YOU NEED TO BE ABLE TO FLY TO MAKE IT ACROSS THE VARIOUS FLOATING ISLANDS OF ROCK."

"THEN MY HYPER-SENSSES PICKED UP SOMETHING ON ONE OF THE LARGER ISLANDS."



"IT WAS MACHINERY... BUT THE KIND MADE BY THE BEINGS OF THAT UNIVERSE."

"AND ALSO SOME SOUNDS OF A STRUGGLE."

"MY MISSION WITH VANGUARD WAS TO FIND SIGNS OF A NEMESIS BASE."



"IT WAS NO SECRET THAT THE OLD ENEMY OF THE FREEDOM PHALANX HAD BUILT OUTPOSTS IN THE SHADOW SHARD."

"BUT WHAT I DID SEE ON ONE OF THOSE BASES SURPRISED ME."

"THREE SERVANTS OF THE MAD GOD RULARUU READY TO EXECUTE A FOURTH."



"I DECIDED TO INTERVENE."

"I FIGURED THAT IF RULARUU WANTED THIS SERVANT DEAD, HE MUST KNOW SOMETHING IMPORTANT."





"I DEFEATED THEM RATHER QUICKLY."



"THEN I HAD TO FIGURE OUT WHAT MY NEW FRIEND HAD TO SAY."



<MY NAME IS GALATEA POWERS. I AM FROM THE SAME UNIVERSE AS NEMESIS.>

<YOUR ABILITY TO MASTER OUR NATIVE LANGUAGE SO QUICKLY SURPRISES ME, GALATEA POWERS.>

"HIS WORDS WERE COMPLETELY ALIEN."

"I HAD NO IDEA WHAT HE WAS TELLING ME."



"I WOULD LATER DISCOVER THAT HIS NAME WAS KIVONTEM, AND THAT HE WAS ACTUALLY A PRIEST FOR A GOOD ASPECT OF RULARUU CALLED FAATHIM THE KIND."

"APPARENTLY RULARUU HAD FRAGMENTED HIS GODHOOD INTO SEVERAL ASPECTS, WITH ONE OF THEM ON THE SIDE OF LIFE."



<WITH YOUR APPROVAL, I WILL RECORD OUR TALK. I WILL NEED TO TRANSLATE SOME OF THIS FOR MY SUPERIORS.>

"I DECIDED TO RECORD WHAT HE HAD TO SAY AND THEN TRY TO FIGURE IT OUT LATER."

I TRANSLATED WHAT HE HAD TO TELL ME LATER AND I FOUND OUT THAT HE WAS WARNING ME ABOUT A CIVIL WAR BREWING BETWEEN THE FOLLOWERS OF THE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF RULARUU.

KIVONTEM'S FACTION WAS USING THE OLD NEMESIS BASES AS SANCTUARY, SINCE THE OTHER FACTIONS DECLARED ANYTHING NEMESIS BROUGHT TO THEIR UNIVERSE TO BE HERETICAL.

THAT'S... RATHER INTERESTING.

BUT THAT STILL DOESN'T EXPLAIN HOW YOU WERE ABLE TO USE THAT EXPERIENCE TO INVENT A PERSONAL TRANSLATION DEVICE.

WELL I STILL HAD TO TRANSLATE WHAT HE SAID TO ME.

I MEAN, YEAH, I KNOW THAT VANGUARD HAS TRANSLATORS IN THE SHADOW SHARD, BUT I ALSO WANTED TO KEEP TRACK OF WHATEVER HE WAS TELLING ME SO THAT PERHAPS IT COULD HELP MY SUPERGROUP.

UTILITY ROOM IN HELIOS TOWERS

TALOS ISLAND

"ICON WAS STILL OVERSEEING THE UPGRADES TO THE BASE'S COMPUTER SYSTEM AT THE TIME, SO I COULDN'T USE IT TO HELP ME."

"SO I CALLED IN A FEW FAVORS AND I TURNED AN ABANDONED UTILITY ROOM IN MY CONDO INTO A DATA CENTER."



HMM... REASONABLE EXPLANATION OF WHY SHE BUILD HER OWN DATA CENTER, BUT I STILL DON'T BUY IT. I SUPPOSE YOU NEVER KNEW ABOUT ANY OF THIS, DID YOU, RYDER?



YOU KNOW I DIDN'T!
I HAD NO IDEA ANY OF THIS STUFF WAS GOING ON AT THE TIME.
I WAS RETIRED, REMEMBER? NO SPEED, NO LIGHTNING, NO ACCESS TO THE VORTEX.

IN FACT, I'M SURPRISED THAT YOU WOULD EVEN KNOW ABOUT GALATEA'S DATA CENTER, NEVER MIND QUESTION HOW... IT...



OH MY GOD...
YOU'RE USING JOHN COLE TO SPY ON GALATEA!
YOU'RE USING HER BOYFRIEND!

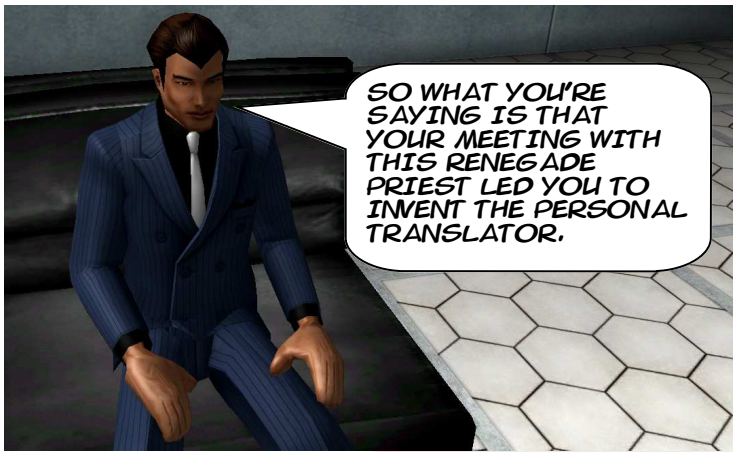


TOOK YOU LONG ENOUGH TO FIGURE THAT OUT, PROFESSOR.



DO YOU REALIZE THE KIND OF FIRE THAT YOU'RE PLAYING WITH, SAGE?
IF GALATEA FINDS OUT HER BOYFRIEND IS YOUR MOLE, SHE COULD QUITE WELL PUNCH YOU BOTH INTO THE CENTER OF THE PLANET!

THEN FOR YOUR GROUP'S SAKE, RYDER, YOU BETTER HOPE THAT GALATEA'S NEWFOUND HYPER-INTELLIGENCE ALSO TRANSLATES INTO AN EQUAL SENSE OF HYPER-GRACE.



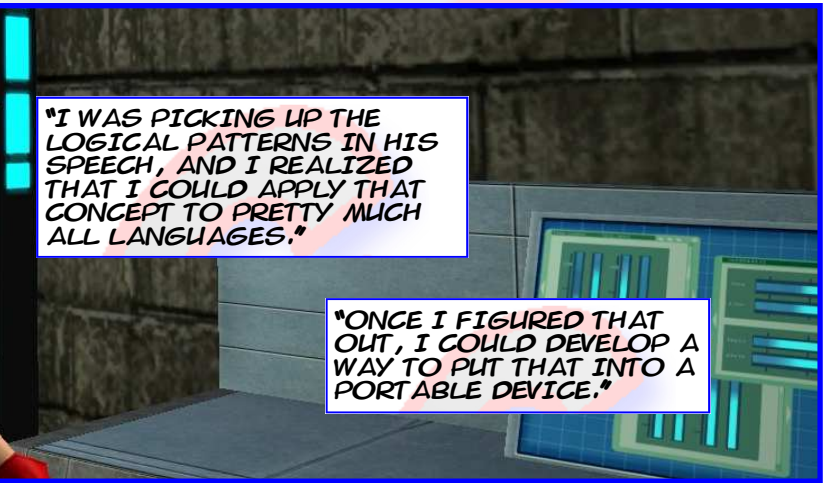
SO WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS THAT YOUR MEETING WITH THIS RENEGADE PRIEST LED YOU TO INVENT THE PERSONAL TRANSLATOR.



MORE OR LESS. YEAH. IT ACTUALLY HAPPENED WHEN I WAS TRANSLATING WHAT HE WAS TELLING ME.



"IT HAS TO DO WITH HOW MY HYPER-INTELLIGENCE WORKS."



"I WAS PICKING UP THE LOGICAL PATTERNS IN HIS SPEECH, AND I REALIZED THAT I COULD APPLY THAT CONCEPT TO PRETTY MUCH ALL LANGUAGES."

"ONCE I FIGURED THAT OUT, I COULD DEVELOP A WAY TO PUT THAT INTO A PORTABLE DEVICE."




THAT'S... INCREDIBLE. BUT GOING BACK THAT WHOLE DISCUSSION ABOUT A LOOMING CIVIL WAR... WAS THAT ALL THAT THE PRIEST WANTED TO WARN YOU ABOUT?


WAS THERE ANYTHING ELSE THAT HE WANTED TO IMPART TO YOU? ANY KIND OF REQUEST FOR SUPPORT OR FOR POLITICAL AMNESTY?




ANYTHING AT ALL, MISS POWERS?



<IT WAS NO COINCIDENCE THAT YOU FOUND ME.>

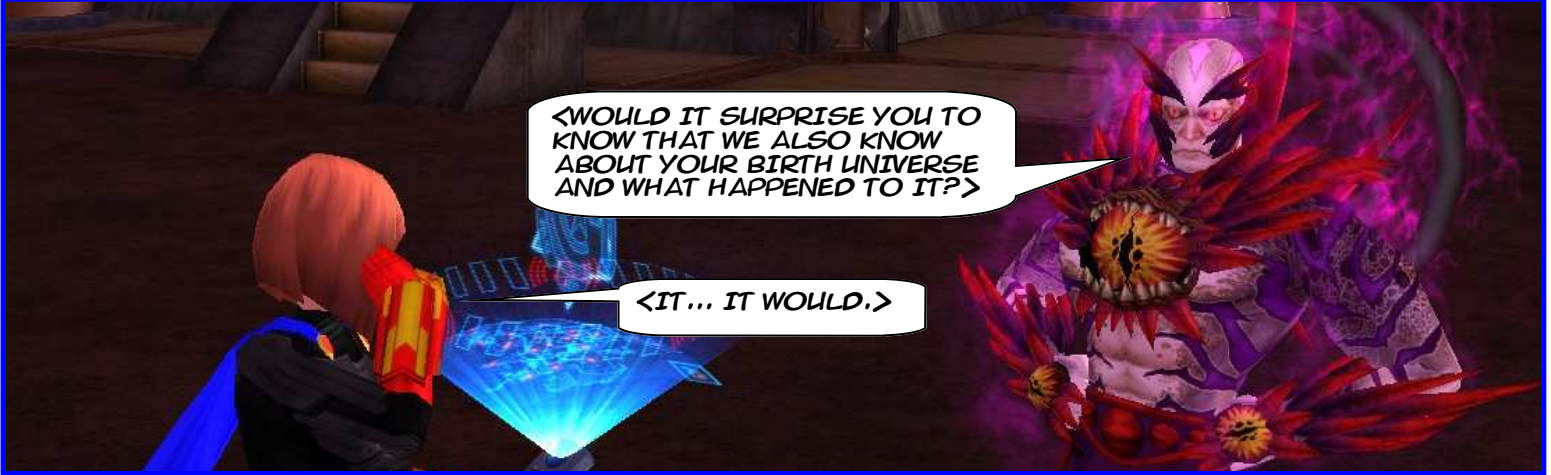


<I KNEW THE THREAT TO MY LIFE WOULD BRING YOU HERE... BECAUSE WE WERE DESTINED TO MEET.>



<I HOPE YOU CAN... UNDERSTAND... THAT I BE A LITTLE... SKEPTICAL OF DESTINY. I CAME FROM A WORLD THAT WAS DESTINED FOR GREATNESS... AND THEN IT WAS DESTROYED.>*

* *GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN SPOTLIGHT* #0-3)



<WOULD IT SURPRISE YOU TO KNOW THAT WE ALSO KNOW ABOUT YOUR BIRTH UNIVERSE AND WHAT HAPPENED TO IT?>

<IT... IT WOULD.>



<ONCE, OUR GOD RULARUU WAS AN ALL-KNOWING, ALL-POWERFUL BEING. A TRUE GOD.>

<NEITHER GOOD NOR EVIL, RULARUU WAS SIMPLY ALL.>

<THEN HE SOUGHT THE ULTIMATE KNOWLEDGE, AND THE ANSWER WAS SO POWERFUL THAT IT SPLIT HIM INTO THE VARIOUS ASPECTS. EACH LESSER, BUT EACH STILL RULARUU.>



<SOME BECAME HIS HEART, SOME BECAME HIS RAGE, SOME BECAME HIS DREAMS.>



<THE ONE I SERVE IS HIS HEART... FAATHIM THE KIND, BRINGER OF LIFE, AND KEEPER OF LIFE.>



<HE KNOWS WHO YOU ARE... AND HE KNOWS WHAT YOU COULD BECOME.>



UMMM... <DO NOT TAKE THIS THE WRONG WAY... BUT WHAT I "COULD" BECOME? DOESN'T "DESTINY" DEAL IN ABSOLUTE CERT AINTY?>



<YOU WILL FIND THAT "DESTINY" IS NOT ABSOLUTE.>
<BUT WHAT I HAVE TO SHOW YOU IS, IF YOU ARE WILLING TO SEE WITH AN OPEN MIND.>



NO...
THAT WAS ALL HE WANTED TO TELL ME.

HELIOS TOWERS - HERO-FRIENDLY CONDOS

TALOS ISLAND



HOME OF FAITH KARL AND FIONA PODERES

(AKA GALATEA POWERS AND FURIA POWERS)

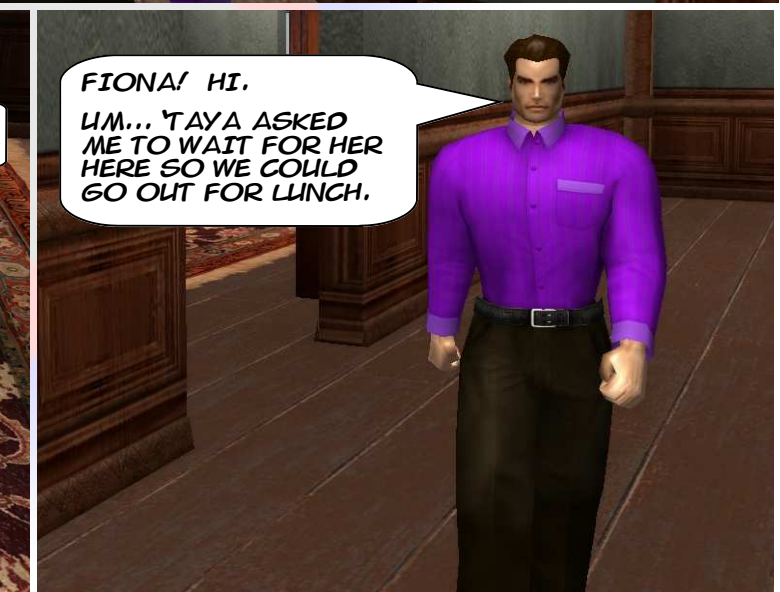


John Cole
AKA GUARDIAN STAR



WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, JOHN?

Fiona Poderes
AKA FURIA POWERS



FIONA! HI.
UM... TAYA ASKED ME TO WAIT FOR HER HERE SO WE COULD GO OUT FOR LUNCH.



WE BOTH KNOW SHE'S TIED UP WITH VANGUARD INTERVIEWS FOR THE WHOLE DAY. YOU WANT TO TRY THAT AGAIN?

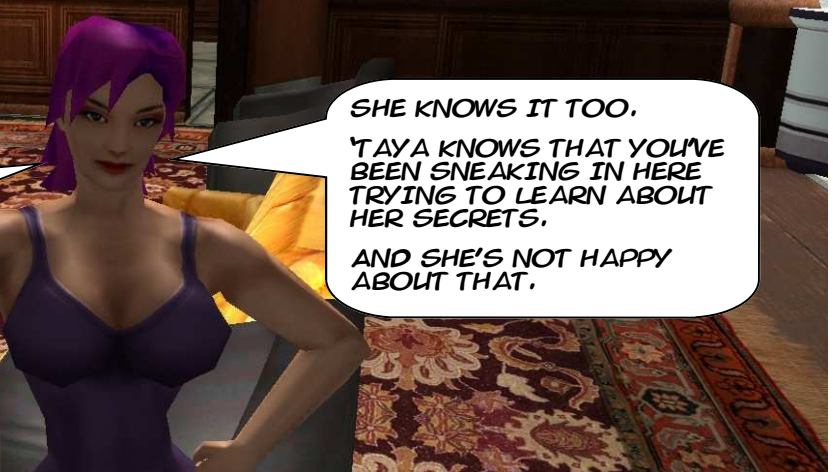


OKAY... I FIGURED I'D CHECK UP WITH YOU AND SEE HOW YOU'RE DOING.



I'M GETTING BETTER. I'M NOT NAUSEOUS LIKE I WAS THE LAST TIME YOU SNUCK IN HERE.* AND, YES, I KNOW THAT WAS YOU.

◀ LAST ISSUE



SHE KNOWS IT TOO. TAYA KNOWS THAT YOU'VE BEEN SNEAKING IN HERE TRYING TO LEARN ABOUT HER SECRETS. AND SHE'S NOT HAPPY ABOUT THAT.



LOOK, I CARE ABOUT YOUR SISTER. SO DO A LOT OF OTHER PEOPLE. THEY JUST--



--I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT. RIGHT NOW, I WANT YOU TO LEAVE... AND NOT COME BACK UNLESS TAYA SAYS OTHERWISE.



FIONA... I...



I'M ASKING YOU THIS AS A FRIEND, AND FROM ONE GUARDIAN TO ANOTHER. IF I HAVE TO TELL YOU AGAIN, THOSE THINGS WILL CHANGE. GO.

AND USE THE FRONT DOOR THIS TIME.



WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TWO DOING?!

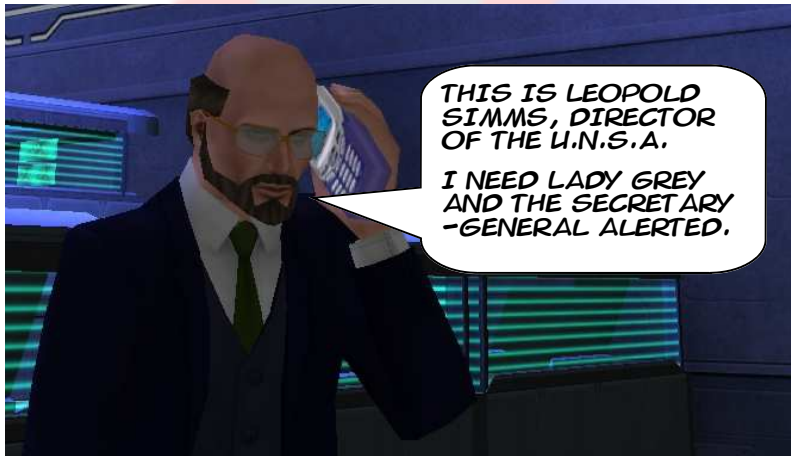


WE HAVE AN EXTINCTION-LEVEL EVENT ABOUT TO HAPPEN AND YOU TWO ARE TOO BUSY PLAYING GRAB ASS TO NOTICE?!



WE WEREN'T PLAYING GRAB--

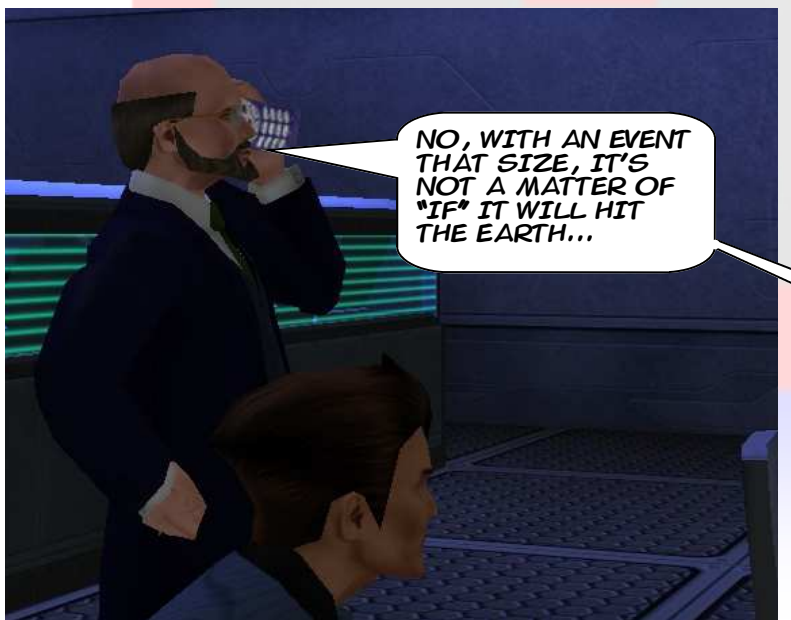
--RIGHT NOW, SAVE IT. I NEED BOTH OF YOU TO GET THE REST OF THE STATIONS READY BECAUSE WE'RE ABOUT TO HAVE THIS PLACE BUSIER THAN IT'S EVER BEEN.



THIS IS LEOPOLD SIMMS, DIRECTOR OF THE U.N.S.A. I NEED LADY GREY AND THE SECRETARY -GENERAL ALERTED.



WE HAVE A LEVEL-12 ICARUS ALERT. THAT'S RIGHT, I SAID LEVEL TWELVE. IT'S ABOUT THREE TIMES THE SIZE OF JUPITER AND WE HAVE AT MOST A FOUR-HOUR WINDOW BEFORE MASS EJECTION.



NO, WITH AN EVENT THAT SIZE, IT'S NOT A MATTER OF "IF" IT WILL HIT THE EARTH...



... IT'S JUST A MATTER OF "WHEN".

Next Issue: Icarus



FURIOUS SCRIBBLINGS

Words of wisdom from writer and creator David 2.

FROM THE ARCHIVED FILES OF...

Kent Poderes Technical Consultant

The "God" Powerset:

Ever since the dawn of humanity, there were fears of god-like beings ruling over us.

We were both terrified and comforted with the idea of some superior force being able to watch over us and guide us and even sometimes protect us. Comforted in the idea that some higher power would protect and nurture us, and yet terrified of doing anything to displease that same power. Ancient civilizations around the world are full of legends of god and demigods that hold a particular favor for one group of humans or another, rewarding the faithful and punishing those that did wrong.

Some of these legends, we would later discover, are real. The legends of the Greek Pantheon, for instance, would later be verified by modern-day heroes like Statesman. Other legends are really stories of advanced races from other worlds visiting our own and using the local populace for their own ends. And in some instances, as in the case in Ancient Egypt, a little bit of both are true.

With the dawn of the modern-day superheroes, though, came both the hope and the fear that these heroes were a new generation of gods. Beings that could fly, that could read minds, that could manipulate the elements, that could traverse the points between space in a blink of an eye, or even to visit new realms. We were in awe of what they could do, and wondered what else they could accomplish.

But even though beings like Statesman and Lord Recluse were touched by the gods and had powers that could even rival those of gods, they weren't gods themselves. Their powers were tempered by the realization that they are not all-knowing, all-seeing, and all-doing. They can heal fast, be invulnerable, and even live to be hundreds if not thousands of years, but they're not immortal. They can die.

While the super-powered community have a vast diversity of powers and origins, those abilities are still limited. Powerful telepaths are not physically powerful. Powerful manipulators are not good in hand-to-hand combat. And while recent heroes have shown the capacity to adapt, to evolve to even higher levels of their abilities, those abilities still have inherent limitations.

So what would happen if there was someone without limitations?

On my original universe, there was such a person who could potentially be all-powerful.

My father was John Powers, whom the world knew as Steelman. He had hyper-strength and was invulnerable to most of mankind's weapons. But while he was powerful physically, he still had an average intelligence. His brother, my uncle, was Lionel Powers, who had hyper-intelligence. He was several levels of genius ahead of even Albert Einstein, but he was still physically limited.

When I was born, I inherited my father's abilities and incorporated a few new

Continues on next page...

ones as well. I could fly. I had hyper-senses. But even though I had an exceptionally high Intelligence Quotient, I was still far from being anywhere near my uncle's level of hyper-intelligence.

That led my uncle to wonder what would happen if someone possessed the best of both sides of the Powers family.

Thanks to some illegal genetic manipulation with material he unscrupulously acquired from both my parents mixed in with his own, Lionel created his "daughter", Leona Powers. A young girl with the potential to possess both physical hyper-powers as well as hyper-intelligence. A young girl who could potentially become a goddess.

But then Lionel put in his own limitations. Blinded by rage over a society that he felt "scorned him", he tainted Leona with programmed biases and delusions. A psychological time bomb that went off when she reached puberty, just as her powers were beginning to manifest.

Terrible sacrifices were made to try to save the young girl from becoming the monster that her birth-father intended. "Leona" had to die to save the girl. But the girl would grow up, and she would become the hero that you know today as Galatea Powers.

Even though "Leona" managed to physically return as a genetic twin sister, neither she nor Galatea would possess the same potential for both physical and intellectual hyper-powers.

And, in this author's personal opinion, this is good.

I've seen what happens when mortals are given the power of an all-powerful deity. My own home universe was destroyed by one such being who called himself Alor. On this world, the Hamidon started out as a man who thought he could evolve himself into being a god. But in the Praetorian Universe, we are discovering that the Hamidon there became something even more terrifying for humanity.

Instances such as these remind me of Lord Acton's warning about absolute power and how it corrupts absolutely. I would sincerely hope that we never have a chance to prove that warning true.

<http://BattlerockComics.wordpress.com>

NEXT ISSUE...



**"THIS IS AN EMERGENCY
ACTON ALERT..."**

**"STAND BY FOR AN
IMPORTANT MESSAGE
FROM THE PRESIDENT
OF THE UNITED
STATES..."**



PANDORA'S BOX



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Pandora's Box is a business that only exists in the City of Heroes MMO. Not a real-world business franchise... Any similarities to a real-world business is coincidental, and really should be suspect.

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Skin 2

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**EVERY DAY IS A DAY WE TAKE FOR GRANTED THAT THE COSMIC
DICE WILL NOT ROLL SNAKE-EYES...**

... UNTIL IT DOES.



FURIA 
**AND
THE GUARDIANS**

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