



BATTLEROCK
COMICS



T FOR TEENS

FUTURE'S GUARDIAN



ISSUE 15
2019



**CHAMPIONS
ONLINE**

PERFECT
WORLD

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

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

FUTURE'S GUARDIAN

"LEAP"

- A CHAMPIONS ONLINE STORY BY DAVID 2

**"STRENGTH OF THE MOUNTAIN.
FORCE OF THE STORM.
SIGHT OF THE EAGLE.
HEARING OF THE BAT.
BLOOD OF THE WARRIOR."**

FOR DOZENS OF GENERATIONS, JOHN BATTLE'S FAMILY PROTECTED THE WEAK AND DEFENDED THE INNOCENT. THEIR SELFLESS ACTS OF HEROISM IN THE WEST WERE THE INSPIRATION FOR THE LEGENDARY WESTER HEROES OF TV AND MOVIES.

BUT NOW THE LATEST "LEGACY WARRIOR" IS IN MILLENNIUM CITY, AND IT IS HIS FAMILY'S LEGACY THAT IS ABOUT TO BE CHALLENGED.

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MILLENNIUM CITY, MI., USA

YEAR: 2019

AFTER DETROIT WAS DESTROYED, CITY LEADERS PROMISED TO REBUILD IT BIGGER AND BETTER THAN IT EVER WAS BEFORE.

BUT THEY WANTED THE TOWERS OF THE RENAISSANCE CENTER TO BE THE TALLEST OF THEM ALL, STANDING OUT OVER THE REST OF THE CITY AS BEACONS OF THEIR RESOLVE.

AND HERE THEY DID NOT DISAPPOINT...



WHICH BRINGS ME TO MY REGULAR EXERCISE.



JOHN BATTLE
LEGACY WARRIOR



THIS IS THE TALLEST TOWER IN THE CITY.
THE TALLEST IN THE CENTRAL U.S.

ONLY HEROES CAN MAKE IT UP TO THE ROOFTOP.

NO HELIPAD,
NO STAIRWAY ENTRANCE, NO ELEVATOR.



WARNING LIGHTS AND THIS AUTOMATED BEACON WARN OFF CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT.

SO... A COUPLE OF YEARS BACK THERE WAS THIS MOVIE ABOUT A SO-CALLED "SUPERHERO".

JUMP OFF THE TOP OF SOME HIGH BUILDING AND LAND LIKE A "SUPERHERO".

I THINK THE STAR'S NAME WAS "RYAN" SOMETHING...

THE CATCH IS THAT YOU HAVE TO HAVE THE RIGHT KIND OF POWERS TO PULL IT OFF.

AND HE MAKES A BIG PRODUCTION ABOUT HOW SOME VILLAIN MAKES A "SUPERHERO LANDING" TO SHOW OFF THEIR POWERS.

FIFTEEN PEOPLE BROKE THEIR LEGS, SHATTERED THEIR KNEECAPS, SPLINTERED THEIR FEET, AND TWO PEOPLE DIED BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO DO IT OR THEY DIDN'T HAVE THE RIGHT POWERS.

SO THAT LEAD TO THE "HERO-LANDING CHALLENGE" IN SOCIAL MEDIA.



THEY WERE IDIOTS.

THE THING IS... MY FATHER TRAINED ME TO DO THIS IN ARIZONA WHEN MY POWERS FIRST MANIFESTED IN MY EARLY TEENS.

HE'D HAVE ME CLIMB UP MESAS AND BUTTES AND THEN JUMP OFF THEM TO TOUGHEN ME UP.

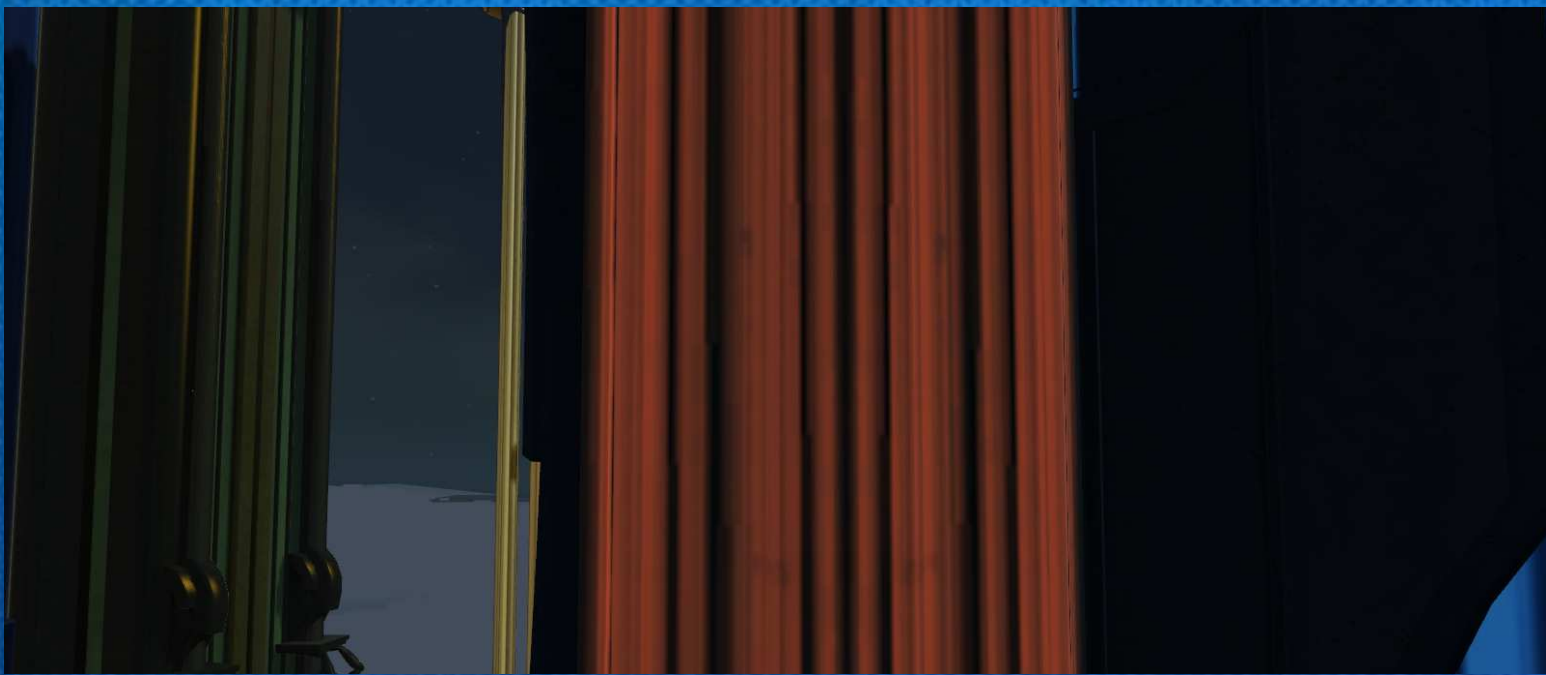
HELL, HOW DID YOU THINK I MADE IT UP HERE WITHOUT MY SKYBIKE?



HELL OF A VIEW.

I CAN SEE THE WHOLE STATE FROM HERE THANKS TO MY EAGLE SIGHT.





A FEW HOURS LATER...



GOOD MORNING
MILLENNIUM CITY!
IT'S 9AM AND I'M
VICTORIA
CROWNSTONE.

 **VICTORIA CROWNSTONE**
WCOC ANCHORWOMAN



COMING UP, WE
HAVE AN INTERVIEW
WITH SINGING
SUPERHERO
SAPPHIRE ON HER
LATEST CAMPAIGN
TO ADOPT FERAL
KITTIES.

BUT FIRST WE HAVE
MERCEDES REALE
WITH THE NEWS.



THANK YOU VICTORIA.
GOOD MORNING
MILLENNIUM CITY.

 **MERCEDES REALE**
WCOC REPORTER



LONGTIME MAYOR CALVIN
BISELLE HELD ONE OF HIS
MANY CITY RALLIES
YESTERDAY, WHERE HE THANKED
THE HERO COMMUNITY FOR
STOPPING WHAT HE DESCRIBED
AS "THE GREATEST THREAT TO
DEMOCRACY" IN THE CITY'S
HISTORY.



MAYOR BISELLE FACED
A STRONG CAMPAIGN
CHALLENGE FROM
WEALTHY BUSINESSMAN
RONALD BETTERS LAST
YEAR, WHICH WAS THE
FIRST FOR THE
LONGTIME MAYOR IN
OVER TWENTY YEARS.

IT HAD APPEARED THAT BETTERS
WON THE ELECTION LAST
NOVEMBER, BUT AN
INVESTIGATION BY FBI AGENT
ANNA WEDNESDAY REVEALED THAT
BETTERS AND HIS SECURITY
CONSULTANT HAD INTERFERED
WITH THE ELECTION PROCESS,
SUBSTITUTING HUNDREDS OF
ABSENTEE BALLOTS WITH FORGED
BALLOTS FOR BETTERS.





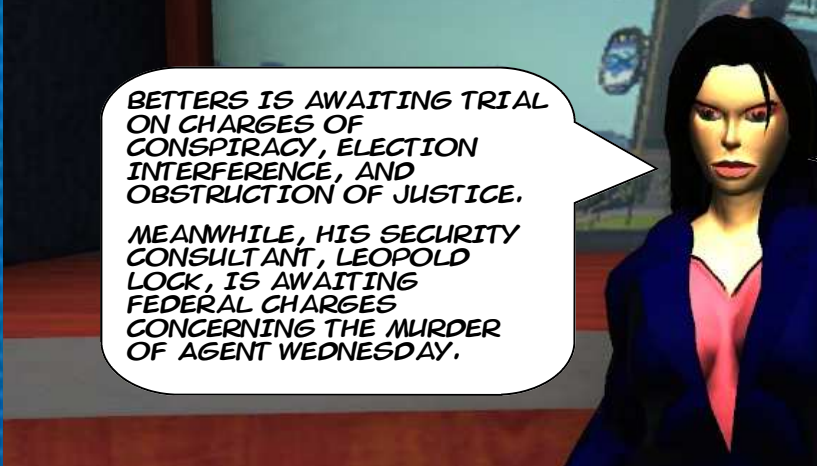
NOTHING IS MORE SACRED TO THIS CITY THAN OUR DEMOCRACY.

I SALUTE THE FBI AND THE BRAVE HEROES WHO MOVED QUICKLY TO STOP THIS ACT OF TYRANNY.

MAYOR CALVIN BISELLE - YESTERDAY

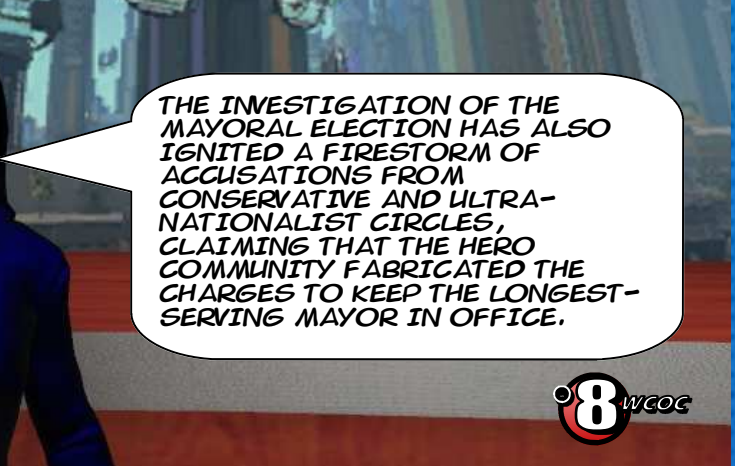


MAYOR BISELLE ALSO PRAISED AGENT WEDNESDAY, WHO WAS TRAGICALLY KILLED WHILE ATTEMPTING TO ARREST BETTERS.



BETTERS IS AWAITING TRIAL ON CHARGES OF CONSPIRACY, ELECTION INTERFERENCE, AND OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE.

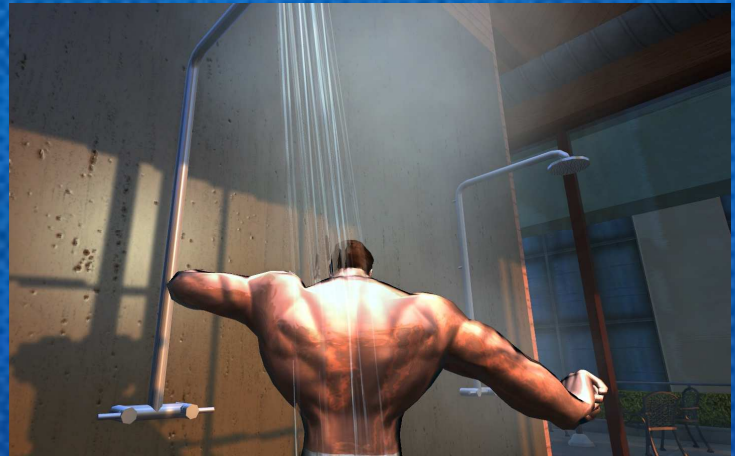
MEANWHILE, HIS SECURITY CONSULTANT, LEOPOLD LOCK, IS AWAITING FEDERAL CHARGES CONCERNING THE MURDER OF AGENT WEDNESDAY.

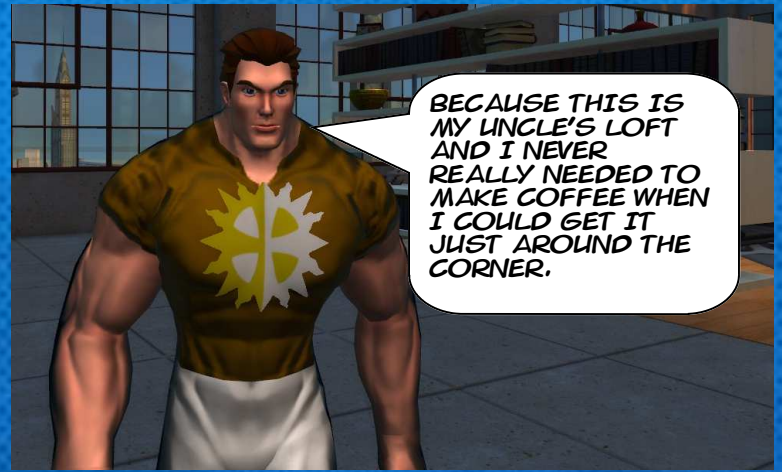



THE INVESTIGATION OF THE MAYORAL ELECTION HAS ALSO IGNITED A FIRESTORM OF ACCUSATIONS FROM CONSERVATIVE AND ULTRA-NATIONALIST CIRCLES, CLAIMING THAT THE HERO COMMUNITY FABRICATED THE CHARGES TO KEEP THE LONGEST-SERVING MAYOR IN OFFICE.



JOHN BATTLE'S APARTMENT

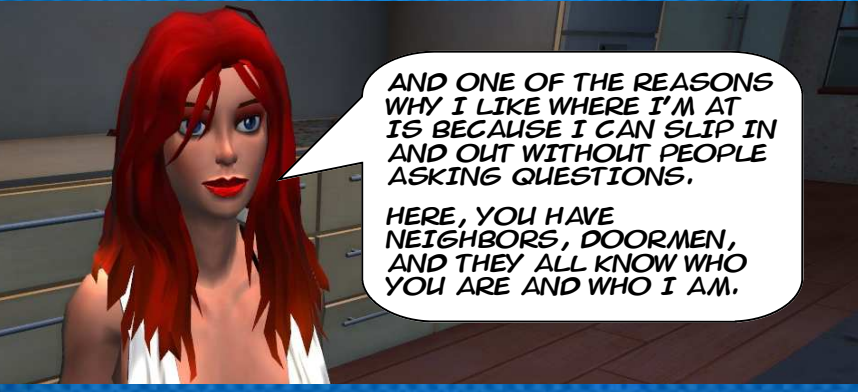




A man with a yellow star on his chest and a woman with red hair are in a modern apartment. The man is looking at the woman.


WHY DON'T YOU KEEP ONE OF YOUR WORK OUTFITS HERE?
YOU ALREADY HAVE SOME OF YOUR OTHER CLOTHES HERE, AND IT'S NOT LIKE I DON'T HAVE THE ROOM.

THERE'S MORE THAN JUST PUTTING ON AN OUTFIT, JOHN. I HAVE NOTES, EQUIPMENT, MY JET-PACK...


A close-up of the woman with red hair.

AND ONE OF THE REASONS WHY I LIKE WHERE I'M AT IS BECAUSE I CAN SLIP IN AND OUT WITHOUT PEOPLE ASKING QUESTIONS.

HERE, YOU HAVE NEIGHBORS, DOORMEN, AND THEY ALL KNOW WHO YOU ARE AND WHO I AM.

A close-up of the man with the yellow star.

AND YOU STILL WEAR A MASK WHEN YOU'RE AT WORK. I KEEP FORGETTING ABOUT THAT.
HOW ABOUT DINNER TONIGHT?

The woman is standing in the apartment, looking towards the man.

MAYBE... IF I CAN FINISH MY TESTIMONY BEFORE I NEED TO GO TO CLUB CAPRICE.

John is looking at the woman from behind.

AND AS LONG AS IT'S NOT IN LITTLE ITALY!

YOU REALLY DON'T WANT TO KNOW WHAT THEY PUT IN THAT SAUCE.

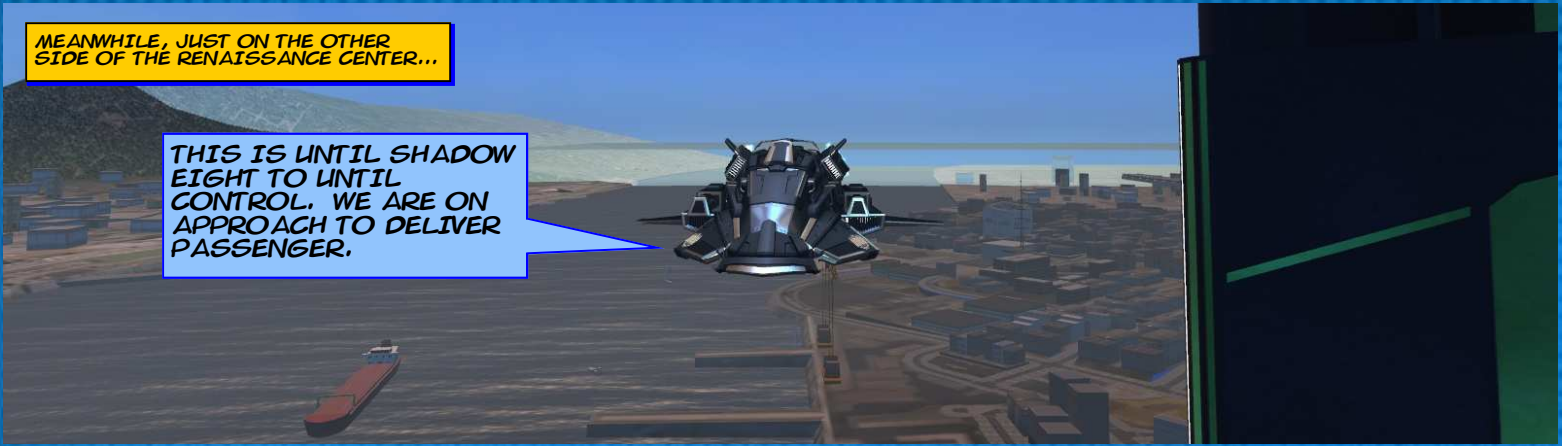
John is looking at the woman who is walking up a set of stairs in the background.

YOU'RE NOT OGLING ME, ARE YOU?

JUST ENJOYING THE VIEW OF THE CITY.
I CAN SEE WHY MY UNCLE LOVES THIS PLACE.

MEANWHILE, JUST ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RENAISSANCE CENTER...

THIS IS UNTIL SHADOW EIGHT TO UNTIL CONTROL. WE ARE ON APPROACH TO DELIVER PASSENGER.



UNTIL SHADOW EIGHT, YOU ARE CLEARED TO DELIVER PASSENGER TO THE FRONT ENTRANCEWAY.



UNITED NATIONS TRIBUNAL FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW (UNTIL) - MILLENNIUM CITY HEADQUARTERS

COPY, UNTIL CONTROL. DESCENDING FOR DELIVERY.



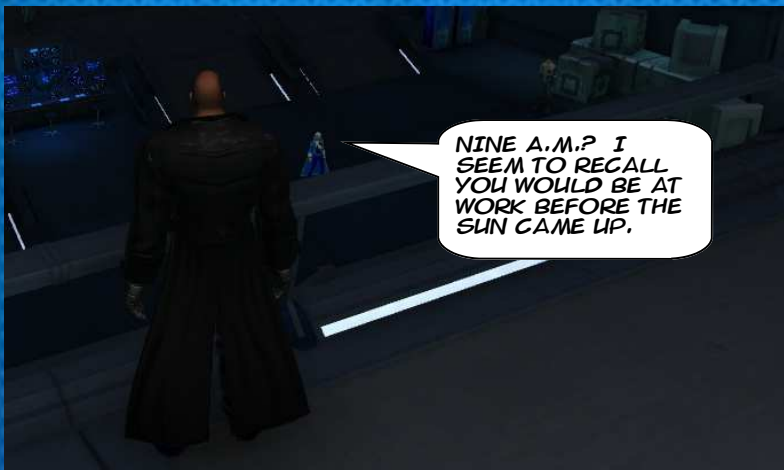
THIS IS SECURITY POINT ALPHA. YOU ARE CLEARED FOR DELIVERY.





PASSENGER DELIVERED.

MAJOR XAVIER CROSS
PROJECT MYCROFT



NINE A.M.? I
SEEM TO RECALL
YOU WOULD BE AT
WORK BEFORE THE
SUN CAME UP.



OR HAS YOUR
RANK MADE
YOU SOFT?



LADY ESTHER!
WHAT BRINGS YOU
AWAY FROM THE
BIG APPLE?



YOU, AND YOUR
LITTLE HERO
GROUP.

LADY ESTHER GLACIA
UNITED NATIONS LIAISON



THE SECRETARY-
MARSHALL THOUGHT IT
BEST IF HE SENT YOUR
FORMER MENTOR TO
TALK WITH YOU ABOUT
SOME OF THE RECENT
ACTIVITIES OF
PROJECT MYCROFT.

I PRESUME YOU KNOW
SOMEPLACE WHERE WE
CAN TALK PRIVATELY.

MEANWHILE...



I DON'T BELIEVE YOU VIPER CLOWNS!



I CAN'T EVEN GET A CUP OF COFFEE WITHOUT A FIGHT!



HUH... HUH...

DING-DING
DING-DING
DING-DING



HEY... YOU MADE IT IN? GREAT!



NO, WE CAN MEET. IT SHOULD BE SAFE RIGHT NOW.



THERE'S A PARK JUST A FEW BLOCKS AWAY FROM YOU THAT SHOULD BE PERFECT.

NO, NO OUTFITS. WE DON'T WANT TO ADVERTISE IT THIS EARLY.

OKAY, SEE YOU SOON.



THE SUB-SUB
BASEMENT...

I SEE YOU'VE
MADE THIS
PLACE YOUR
HOME.

THANKS.

BUT I DON'T THINK
YOU CAME ALL
THIS WAY TO SEE
MY WORKSPACE.

THEN I'LL GET RIGHT
TO THE POINT.

THE U. N. SECURITY
COUNCIL HAS BEEN
GETTING SOME
COMPLAINTS ABOUT
PROJECT MYCROFT
AND HOW THEY'VE
BEEN OPERATING.

AT FIRST WE'VE
BEEN ABLE TO SAY
IT'S BECAUSE
YOU'RE A NEW
GROUP AND
YOU'RE GETTING
YOUR BEARINGS.

BUT IN RECENT
YEARS... YOU'VE
BEEN OPERATING
MORE LIKE A
ROGUE AGENCY.

THAT WHOLE MESS WITH
MALIZIA AND THE WAKE-EZ
PILLS...*

PROJECT MIND-GAME IS
STILL COMPLAINING
ABOUT BEING SHUT OUT OF
THAT WHEN IT WAS CLEARLY
WITHIN THEIR SCOPE.

THAT WAS
CONNECTED TO AN
INVESTIGATION
WE WERE ALREADY
INVOLVED WITH.

(SEE ISSUES 7-12 FOR DETAILS)

AND THAT SEEMS TO BE A
COMMON EXPLANATION FOR
YOUR ACTIVITIES.

PROJECT CITADEL SAYS YOU
GAVE THEM CHERRY-PICKED
INFORMATION ABOUT AN
EXTRADIMENSIONAL THREAT
NAMED GRIFF, WHILE
CONVENIENTLY OMITTING THE
PRESENCE OF SOMEONE NAMED
"AGENT SIDESTEP".*


THEN THERE'S YOUR
INVESTIGATION OF PROJECT
GREENSKIN, A JOINT
OPERATION WITH OUR U.S.
GOVERNMENT COUNTERPARTS.**

I'M SURE YOU'RE AWARE THAT
DIRECTOR KAUFMAN STILL
PLAYS GOLF WITH THE
PRESIDENT ONCE A MONTH.

AND THIS PRESIDENT IS NOT
HAPPY WHEN HIS "LONGTIME
FRIEND" IS NOT HAPPY.

(ISSUE #6)

(** ISSUES #13 AND 14)



YOU KNOW WHO I'M
UP AGAINST.
YOU KNOW HOW WELL
THEY'RE CONNECTED.

AND HERE WE GO...
I WAS WONDERING
HOW LONG IT WOULD
TAKE BEFORE YOUR
GREAT CONSPIRACY
WOULD COME UP.

VARTECH IS REAL!

I'VE BEEN TRACING
THEIR ACTIVITIES
FOR YEARS NOW.

EVERY TIME THEY MAKE A
MOVE ON ONE OF MY
PEOPLE, THEY EXPOSE A
LITTLE MORE OF THEIR
OPERATION.



DO YOU EVEN HEAR YOURSELF, XAVIER?

A SHADOW CABINET OF POWER-BROKERS
AND INDUSTRIALISTS WHO HAVE BEEN
QUIETLY MANIPULATING EVENTS SINCE,
WHAT, WORLD WAR II? AND THEY HAVE
THEIR HANDS IN EVERYTHING, INCLUDING
THE DESTRUCTION OF DETROIT AND THE
BUILDING OF MILLENNIUM CITY?



YOU WERE WITH ME DURING THE INCIDENT
WITH ABLE DANGER.

YOU HEARD WHAT BLACK TALON SIX SAID
BEFORE HE DIED. HE SAID "DESTROYER
DID NOT TARGET DETROIT. HE WANTED
WASHINGTON TO BURN! THEY WANTED
DETROIT." "THEY"!

THE DESTRUCTION OF DETROIT.
THE ACCIDENT THAT TRIGGERED MY
POWERS AND SAVED MY LIFE WHEN
THE OTHERS DIED. ABLE DANGER.
THE NATIONALIST. THE QULARR.

AGAIN, LISTEN TO YOURSELF.
YOU'RE TAKING A WHOLE BUNCH OF SEPARATE EVENTS AND SAYING THEY'RE ALL CONNECTED WHEN THEY ARE NOT.



AND HOW ABOUT THE MAYOR'S ELECTION LAST YEAR?
WAS THAT PART OF YOUR "GRAND CONSPIRACY" AS WELL?



THAT WAS DIFFERENT.
MY PEOPLE WERE HELPING OUT AGENT WEDNESDAY AS A FAVOR FOR HER HELP WITH THE MALIZIA SITUATION.*
THAT WAS AN FBI OPERATION, NOT AN U.N.T.I.L. ONE.



THEN YOU SHOULD HAVE TURNED IT OVER TO PRIMUS.*
THAT IS THEIR JURISDICTION, XAVIER!



(* ISSUES #12 AND 13)

(* PRIMUS IS THE OFFICIAL HERO AGENCY FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.)

U.N.T.I.L. IS NOT SOME CATCH-ALL SUPER-IMPOSING GOVERNING BODY.
WE HAVE TO AVOID STEPPING ON THE SOVEREIGNTY OF OTHER NATIONS, ESPECIALLY WITH THE UNITED STATES!
THAT'S WHY WE HAVE ALL THESE VARIOUS DIVISIONS AND DEPARTMENTS TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC INSTANCES INSTEAD OF BEING A SUPER-AGENCY.



THE FACT THAT MEMBERS OF A UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION TOOK PART IN THE INVESTIGATION OF A LOCAL ELECTION GAVE THE IMPRESSION OF THE U.N. HAVING A PARTISAN BIAS IN THAT ELECTION!



SINCE WHEN DID JUSTICE BECOME PARTISAN?



WCOC STUDIO



OKAY... CAN YOU TIGHTEN IT UP..?
PERFECT! THAT'LL LOOK GREAT FOR THE NOON SHOW.

BRRRRING



MERCEDES REALE..
NO, ERNIE, I DON'T HAVE TIME TO TALK.



ERNIE, THE LAST LEAD YOU SENT ME WAS A PERDIDA DE TIEMPO!
YOU BETTER--

WHAT DO YOU MEAN THIS IS DIFFERENT?

(*WASTE OF TIME*)



THIS BETTER BE LEGIT, ERNIE.
I SWEAR IF YOU SEND ME TO A RUSSIAN SKIN SITE AGAIN...
OKAY... OKAY...



JULIE, OPEN A BROWSER TO REAL-TRUTH-DOT-MILL.



THAT'S IT.



HOLA...

Insert Inside Cover Ad here

Insert Inside Cover Ad here

NOONTIME, JUST OUTSIDE
CITY HALL...

FIRST THEY WANT ME
TO TESTIFY... THEN
THEY DON'T...
THEN THEY WANT A
CONTINUANCE.

STARLETT
STREET VIGILANTE

SO MUCH FOR MY
BUSY DAY IN COURT.

I DON'T GET IT.
IT WAS A CLEAN BUST.

WHY ARE THE
PROSECUTORS
MAKING THINGS
SO COMPLICATED?

ANNA WOULD KNOW.
SHE'D BE ABLE TO
TELL ME.

I MISS...

WAIT.

IS THAT...
JOHN?



AND THEN HE SAYS... IN A HUSHED VOICE...

"YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO CATCH ME, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO LET ME GET AWAY."


HAAAAH!
SERIOUSLY? THAT IS SO STRAIGHT OUT OF A SATURDAY MORNING CARTOON!



THAT'S FOXBAT FOR YOU.
BUT SOMEHOW THE CITY LOVES HIM.



WHO IS SHE?
THEY TALK LIKE THEY'RE OLD FRIENDS... BUT JOHN NEVER SAID ANYONE WAS COMING TO VISIT HIM.



I'M A LITTLE NERVOUS ABOUT ALL THIS, JOHN.
WHAT IF SOMEONE...?

LET ME WORRY ABOUT THAT, OKAY?
I'VE GOT YOUR BACK ON THIS.



MAYBE I SHOULD...?

NO... I'M STILL IN MY HERO OUTFIT.

IT MIGHT BE HARD FOR HIM TO EXPLAIN IT TO HER IF SHE'S NOT A HERO.



I'LL ASK HIM ABOUT IT LATER TONIGHT.

HAVE SOME PIZZA.. SOME BEER...
AND THEN ASK ABOUT HIS NEW FRIEND.

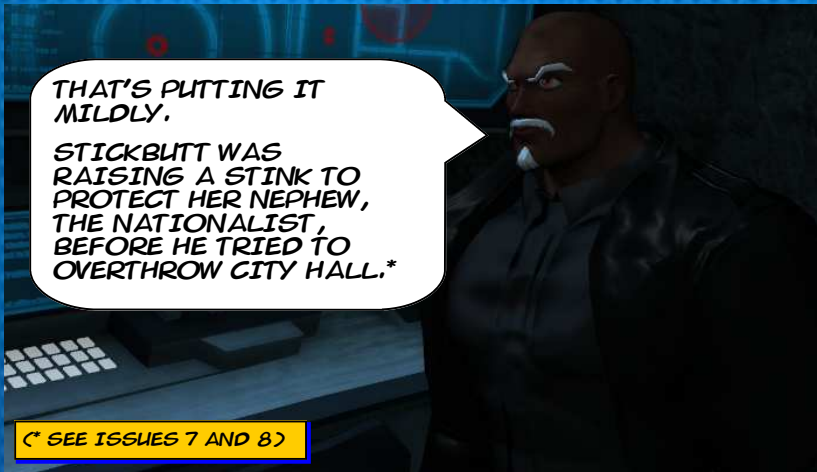
MAYBE IT'S JUST WHAT IT LOOKED LIKE.
TWO OLD FRIENDS CHATTING.
RIGHT...



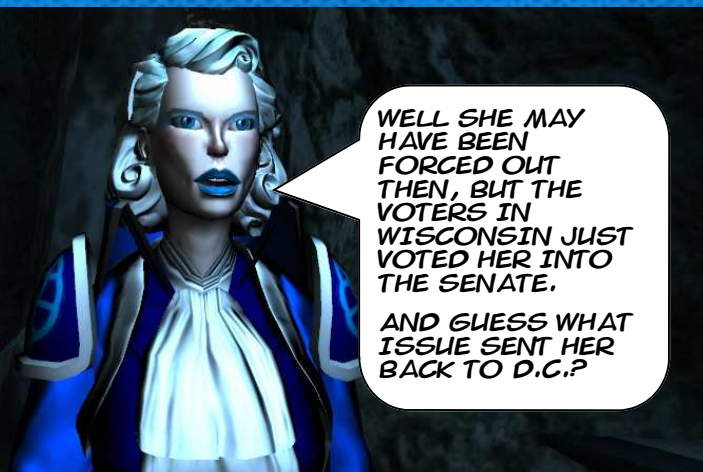
I WANT TO BE ON YOUR SIDE, XAVIER. BUT... THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE THAT ARE MAKING NOISE ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES.



REMEMBER U.S. CONGRESSWOMAN SHELLY STICKBUTT? SHE'S NOW A U.S. SENATOR. I SEEM TO RECALL SHE WAS PRETTY VOCAL ABOUT THIS CITY IN THE PAST.



THAT'S PUTTING IT MILDLY. STICKBUTT WAS RAISING A STINK TO PROTECT HER NEPHEW, THE NATIONALIST, BEFORE HE TRIED TO OVERTHROW CITY HALL.*



WELL SHE MAY HAVE BEEN FORCED OUT THEN, BUT THE VOTERS IN WISCONSIN JUST VOTED HER INTO THE SENATE. AND GUESS WHAT ISSUE SENT HER BACK TO D.C.?

(* SEE ISSUES 7 AND 8)



SHE'S ALREADY STARTED AN INVESTIGATION WITH THE SENATE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE SCOPE OF OUR ABILITIES IN THE UNITED NATIONS.

PICKING UP WHERE SHE LEFT OFF IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. IT ONLY SERVES TO VALIDATE WHAT I'VE BEEN SAYING. HOW CAN A FRESHMAN SENATOR GET SO MUCH INFLUENCE SO FAST?



THIS IS WHY PROJECT MYCROFT WAS SET UP AS AN INTELLIGENCE-GATHERING GROUP. WE NEED TO GET INFORMATION ABOUT VARTECH BEFORE WE CAN MOVE FORWARD AND TAKE ACTION. WE NEED TO SEE THE SCOPE OF THEIR ACTIVITIES, WHO TO TRUST. HOW MUCH INFLUENCE VARTECH HAS OVER THE SYSTEM.

VARTECH USED MARKMAN GOLD TO TRY TO BREAK GALATEA FUTURE WHEN HER CAREER IN THIS CITY WAS JUST STARTING.* WHY HER? WHY FOCUS THEIR EFFORTS ON HER? WE FIND THE REASON FOR THAT AND WE FIND OUT WHO VARTECH REALLY ARE.

(* THE LOST ADVENTURES OF GALATEA FUTURE #4 AND *FUTURE'S GUARDIAN* #1)

WELL FOR AN INTELLIGENCE GROUP, YOU HAVE STRAY--

NEWS FEED ALERT!
NEWS FEED ALERT!

LIFF DA!*

IT'S AN ALERT FROM MY MEDIA SEARCH ALGORITHM.

(* NORWEGIAN EXCLAMATION)

IT'S PROGRAMMED TO ALERT ME IF THE MEDIA IS SAYING ANYTHING CONNECTED TO ANY OF THE PROJECT'S AGENTS OR THOSE UNDER OUR OBSERVATION.



"FAMED REAL TRUTH REPORTER PEDRO DUARTE REVEALS IN AN IN-DEPTH ARTICLE THAT LEGACY HERO JOHN BATTLE HAS FABRICATED HIS FAMILY'S HISTORY AND HERITAGE AS A CHAMPION OF THE NATIVE AMERICANS.

"DUARTE FURTHER ACCUSES BATTLE OF SELLING OUT TRIBAL LANDS TO CORPORATE DEVELOPERS."

JOHN BATTLE IS ONE OF YOUR AGENTS, ISN'T HE?

HIS UNCLE WAS A LEGEND ON THE EAST COAST.

IF WHAT THIS REPORT SAYS IS TRUE--

--IT'S NOT TRUE!

I PERSONALLY VETTED THE WHOLE BATTLE FAMILY BEFORE BRINGING JOHN IN.

THIS IS VARTECH LAUNCHING A NEW ATTACK ON OUR CREDIBILITY.

MAYBE.

BUT IN LIGHT OF THIS AND THE OTHER EVENTS, I HAVE NO CHOICE NOW BUT TO PUT PROJECT MYCROFT UNDER MY INQUIRY AND SUPERVISION.

I'M SORRY, XAVIER...

BUT YOU AND YOUR TEAM NOW REPORT TO ME.

ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, JOHN BATTLE WAS INVOLVED WITH THE SALE OF NATIVE AMERICAN LAND TO A SHADY DEVELOPING COMPANY THAT THEN USED THE LAND FOR OIL SHALE FRACKING.



8 WCOC NEW STORY: JOHN BATTLE - TURNCOAT?

OH WHAT A LOAD OF CRAP!



IS IT TRUE?
IS WHAT SHE IS SAYING THE TRUTH?

C DEFENDER THE CHAMPIONS



I'M GOING TO BIKE OVER THERE AND DROP A MOUNTAIN ON THAT REPORTER AND HER PACK OF LIES!



JOHN BATTLE!
IS SHE TELLING THE TRUTH?

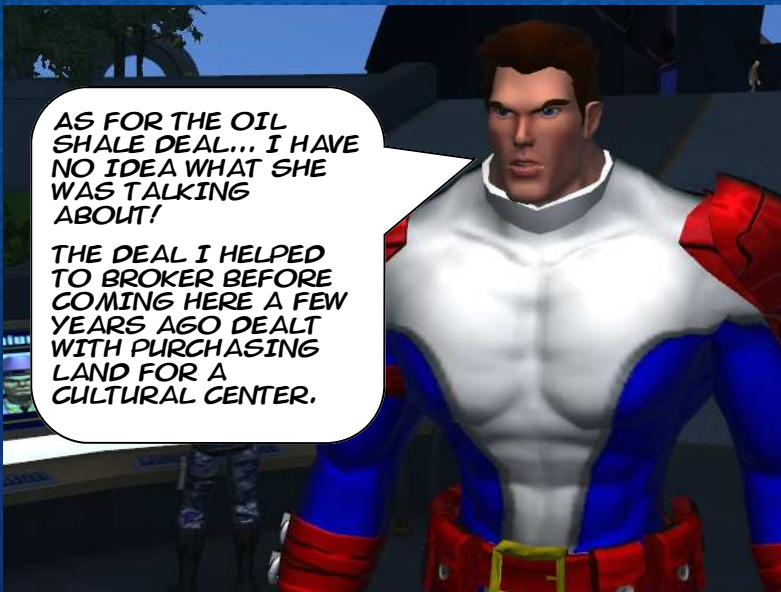


ABOUT WHAT THEY SAID CONCERNING MY FAMILY?
ABSOLUTELY NOT!
I KNOW MY FAMILY'S HISTORY.



AS FOR THE OIL SHALE DEAL... I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT SHE WAS TALKING ABOUT!

THE DEAL I HELPED TO BROKER BEFORE COMING HERE A FEW YEARS AGO DEALT WITH PURCHASING LAND FOR A CULTURAL CENTER.



THERE WAS NO POSSIBLE WAY THAT DEAL COULD BE USED FOR ANYTHING OTHER THAN FOR THE CULTURAL APPRECIATION OF THE YAVAPAI PEOPLE.





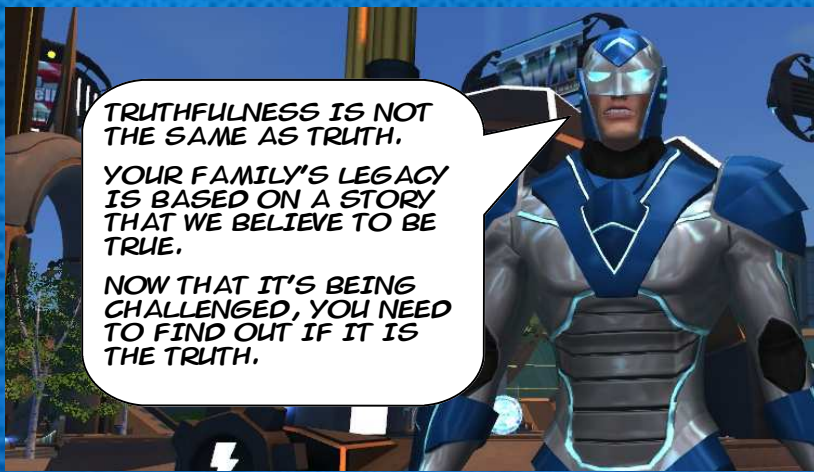
THEN SOMETHING
HAPPENED TO
CHANGE THAT DEAL.
AND FOR SOME
REASON, YOU'RE
BEING BLAMED FOR
IT AFTER-**THE-FACT.**



I SHOULDN'T HAVE TO
TELL YOU HOW
IMPORTANT A
SUPERHERO'S
REPUTATION IS.
YOUR TRUTHFULNESS
IS CURRENCY WITH
THE PUBLIC.



SAYS THE
HERO WEARING
A MASK.



TRUTHFULNESS IS NOT
THE SAME AS TRUTH.
YOUR FAMILY'S LEGACY
IS BASED ON A STORY
THAT WE BELIEVE TO BE
TRUE.
NOW THAT IT'S BEING
CHALLENGED, YOU NEED
TO FIND OUT IF IT IS
THE TRUTH.



I DON'T NEED TO
KNOW IF IT'S TRUE.
I KNOW IT IS.



THEN DEFEND IT,
JOHN BATTLE.
JUST REMEMBER WHO
YOU ARE AND WHY
YOUR FAMILY IS SO
IMPORTANT.
NOT JUST AS A
WARRIOR.
BUT AS A HERO.






WCOG

"FIRST OFF... GREAT WORK REPORTING THAT STORY, MERCEDES."

"THANK YOU."



BUT... YOU ALSO STEPPED ON QUITE A FEW TOES GETTING IT OUT THERE FOR THE NOONTIME NEWS.




I MADE SURE EVERYTHING WAS VETTED WITH THE NEWS DEPARTMENT BEFORE I TOOK TO THE AIR.

WHICH DIDN'T INCLUDE THE SENIOR NEWS ANCHOR, WHO WASN'T IN AT THE TIME.



BECAUSE THEN IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A ROB MAHOGANY STORY!

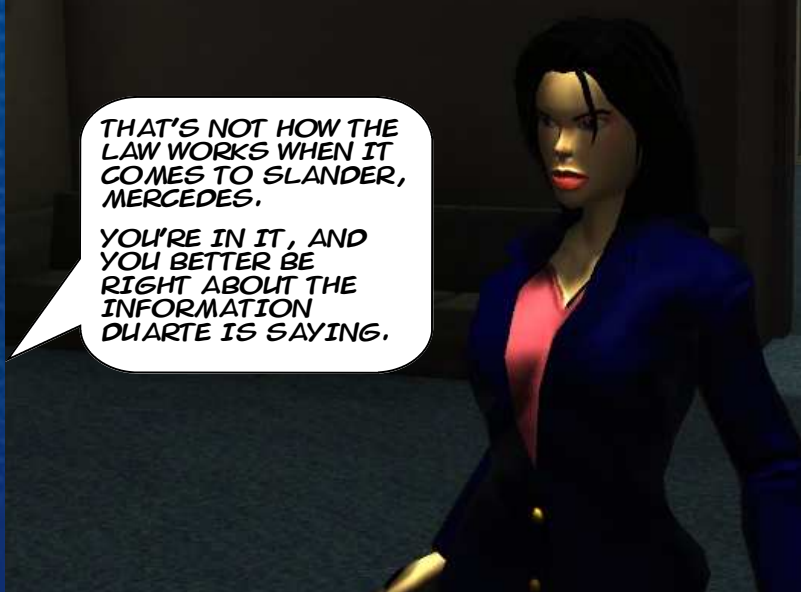
THIS WAS MY LEAD, MY STORY, NOT HIS.



WELL... ROB'S THROWING A FIT. AND I IMAGINE VICTORIA'S NOT HAPPY THAT YOU DIDN'T WAIT UNTIL THE MORNING TO BREAK IT ON HER SHOW.

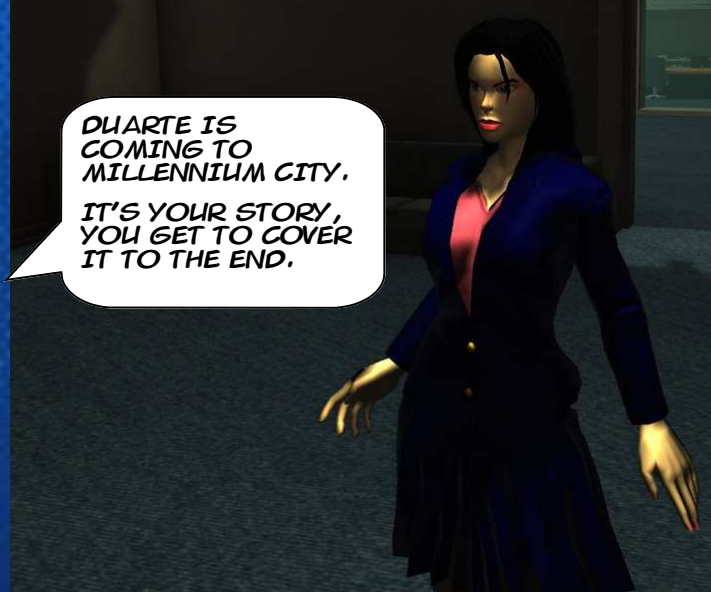
AND I GOT A CALL FROM AN ATTORNEY WHO IS READY TO FILE A SLANDER SUIT AGAINST US.

ALL I DID WAS REPORT WHAT PEDRO DUARTE REVEALED. IF HE SLANDERED JOHN BATTLE, THEN IT'S ON HIM, NOT US.



THAT'S NOT HOW THE LAW WORKS WHEN IT COMES TO SLANDER, MERCEDES.

YOU'RE IN IT, AND YOU BETTER BE RIGHT ABOUT THE INFORMATION DUARTE IS SAYING.



DUARTE IS COMING TO MILLENNIUM CITY. IT'S YOUR STORY, YOU GET TO COVER IT TO THE END.

"NO, I UNDERSTAND."

"THANKS CANDACE. YES, I'LL TELL HER."

CANDACE SINCLAIR IS ON THE CASE. SHE SAYS I MAY HAVE A PRETTY STRONG CASE FOR SLANDER.

SHE SAID I NEED TO KEEP LOW FOR THE TIME BEING.

NO HEROICS UNLESS IT'S THE END-OF-THE-WORLD SORT OF STUFF.

SHOULDN'T BE TOO BAD, RIGHT? I MEAN, EVEN WITH GALATEA OFF DOING WHATEVER SHE'S BEEN DOING.

DID YOU ORDER THE PIZZA?

TRIPLE PEPPERONI AND DOUBLE-CHEESE, JUST LIKE YOU ASKED.

JOHN, I...

I SAW YOU EARLIER TODAY AROUND NOONTIME JUST OUTSIDE MILLENNIUM MIKE'S.

REALLY? WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SOMETHING?

DO ONE OF THOSE "HELLO GOOD CITIZEN" THINGS?

YOU WERE WITH SOMEONE. A YOUNG WOMAN WITH BROWN HAIR.


YOU LOOKED PRETTY FRIENDLY WITH HER, LIKE YOU KNEW HER FROM SOMEWHERE.




WELL A WOMAN DID ASK ME IF I WAS A HERO.

COULDN'T EXACTLY SAY "NO".

SO I STARTED TALKING ABOUT WHAT IT'S LIKE.

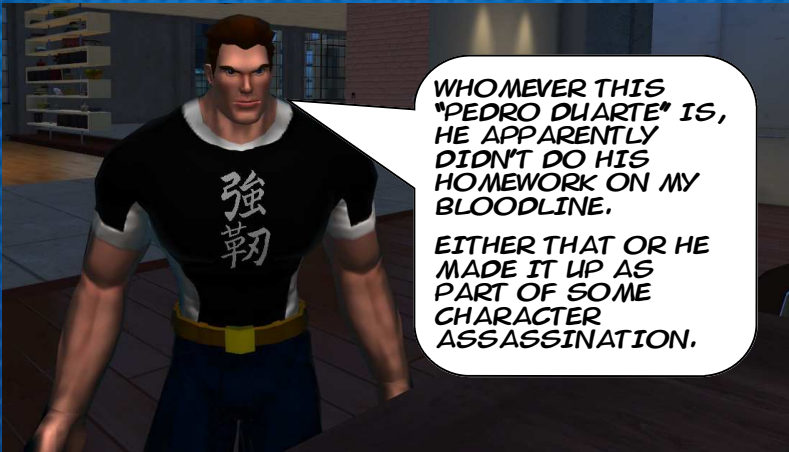


THAT'S ONE OF THE DOWNSIDES OF NOT HAVING A SECRET IDENTITY. EVERYONE KNOWS WHO I AM 24-7.



OH... OKAY... SO... THE STORY. IS IT TRUE? IS ANY OF IT TRUE?

ABOUT MY FAMILY? DEE, I'M HALF-APACHE. MY FATHER'S FAMILY HAS MORE TRIBAL BLOOD THAN EUROPEAN. THE BATTLE FAMILY IS CONNECTED TO A FEW DOZEN TRIBAL NATIONS.



WHO MEVER THIS "PEDRO DUARTE" IS, HE APPARENTLY DIDN'T DO HIS HOMEWORK ON MY BLOODLINE.

EITHER THAT OR HE MADE IT UP AS PART OF SOME CHARACTER ASSASSINATION.



I GUESS THIS SORT OF WHAT GALATEA WENT THROUGH WHEN MARKMAN GOLD TRIED TO OWN HER.*

(* THE LOST ADVENTURES OF GALATEA FUTURE* #4)



AND THE OTHER PART OF IT? THE LAND DEAL?



FOR A CULTURAL CENTER, NOT AN OIL FRACKING OPERATION. EVERYTHING ABOUT THAT DEAL WAS ABOVE-THE-BOARD AND AS LEGIT AS YOUR RED HAIR.



MY HAIR IS DYED.
I WASN'T BORN WITH THIS BRIGHT RED COLOR.



EVERY FEW MONTHS I PAY A SALON OWNER FIFTY BUCKS TO KEEP IT THIS BRIGHT.
SO WHAT'S TO SAY THAT THE PEOPLE BEHIND THAT DEAL WEREN'T HONEST ABOUT THEIR INTENTIONS?

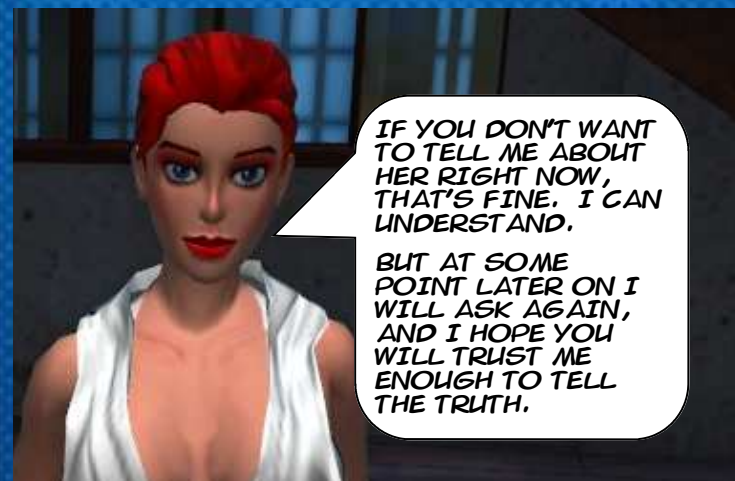


DEE... I NEED YOU TO BE ON MY SIDE. TO TRUST ME.

AND I AM... AND I WANT TO.



BUT YOU NEED TO BE HONEST WITH ME AS WELL.
THAT GIRL EARLIER TODAY? SHE DIDN'T LOOK LIKE A NATIVE CITIZEN.



IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TELL ME ABOUT HER RIGHT NOW, THAT'S FINE. I CAN UNDERSTAND.
BUT AT SOME POINT LATER ON I WILL ASK AGAIN, AND I HOPE YOU WILL TRUST ME ENOUGH TO TELL THE TRUTH.



DEE... I...

DING-DONGGG

THAT'S... PROBABLY THE PIZZA.



AND... ABOUT THAT THING... LATER ON... YES.

I TRUST ALL WENT ACCORDING TO PLAN.

**PERFECTLY, M-MISTER VAN CLEEF.
N-NOBODY QUESTIONED THE ARTICLE'S VERACITY.
NEITHER D-DID THE REPORTER.**

**GOOD.
VARTech INVESTED HEAVILY IN YOUR CAREER AND IN YOUR RESURRECTION.
WE TRUST YOU WILL NOT SQUANDER THAT INVESTMENT.**

**OH I-I WILL PR-PROVE YOU RIGHT, MISTER V-VAN CLEEF.
THEY L-LAUGHED AT ME BEFORE... MADE F-F-FUN OF ME... CALLED ME A J-JOKE.
BUT I W-WILL SHOW THEM.**

I HAVE NO DOUBT YOU WILL.

**P-PRETTY-BOY HEROES AND THEIR CAPED SK-SK@NKS.
I'LL B-BRING THEM ALL DOWN,**

NEXT... MEET PEDRO

GUARDIAN WORDS

Words of wisdom from writer and creator David 2.

“Title Here”

Whatever you want to discuss

Continues on next page...

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NEXT ISSUE...

**CHAMPIONS
ONLINE**



JOHN BATTLE MUST DEFEND HIS FAMILY'S NAME AND HIS OWN AS PEDRO DUARTE ARRIVES TO BACK UP HIS CLAIMS.

**AND WHO IS THE STRANGE WOMAN THAT JOHN MET WITH?
FIND OUT!**



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