



BATTLE ROCK
COMICS

Member of
City of
Comic



T FOR TEENS

FUTURE'S GUARDIAN



ISSUE 21
2021



**CHAMPIONS
ONLINE**

PERFECT
WORLD

“We thought it would be fun...”

My friends and I found out that our high school janitor had a secret. He would disappear at weird times and come back later in the day worn and sometimes a little roughed-up.

We found out he was really a superhero, with a costume and hero name and everything.

We thought maybe we could have some fun with that. Use him to take care of a few problem teachers and maybe a few students, maybe even change some grades for us. So we threatened to reveal his secret identity if he didn't help us out.

He refused, so we put it out on social media.

We thought we were doing it anonymously. Turns out a villain group was able to trace it back to us.

We were tortured for information until one of us would talk. Then they killed us. They killed my friends. But they left me alive so I could bear the punishment.

But what they did to us was nothing compared to what they did to the hero and his family.

When the police found me, I was charged with being an accomplice to the murders. All the murders. I was also charged with violating a federal law that makes revealing the identity of a superhero working with federal or international agencies a felony.

So now I'm here, behind bars for twenty years. I can't even think about being able to pay the huge fine I face when I do get out.

There is a reason why some heroes wear masks and have secret identities. Capeing heroes is not fun and it is not a game.

Revealing a registered hero's identity is a crime in many cities and states. And if you reveal the identity of a registered hero working with a federal or international agency, that is a federal felony, punishable with a sentence from 10-25 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000.



Jeffrey Bozar
Former student
Convicted criminal

CAPEING IS NOT A GAME! IT IS A CRIME!

This public service message is brought to you by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Department of Justice, The Paranormal Research and Investigation Mission of the United States (PRIMUS), The United Nations Tribunal on International Law (UNTIL), Harmon Industries, The Champions, the International Superhero Union, Ravenswood Academy, Greer & Harlick, and the many superheroes and superhero organizations around the world. Not a real ad.

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

"DUET NO MORE" **- A CHAMPIONS ONLINE STORY BY DAVID 2**

THE UNTHINKABLE HAS HAPPENED TO STARLETT.

THE FORMER STUNTWOMAN-TURNED-VIGILANTE HAD BEEN CAREFUL ABOUT KEEPING HER HERO LIFE AND HER PERSONAL LIFE AS A CLUB DJ SEPARATE.

BUT THEN TWO PEOPLE DISCOVERED HER PERSONAL IDENTITY. PEOPLE WITH A GRUDGE AGAINST HER AND AGAINST HER BOYFRIEND AND TEAMMATE, JOHN BATTLE.

EVEN THOUGH SHE'S REACHED OUT TO ANOTHER VIGILANTE FOR HELP, SHE'S AFRAID OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN SHOULD HER PERSONAL LIFE BE EXPOSED, AND WHAT SHE MAY HAVE TO DO IN ORDER TO SATISFY HER BLACKMAILERS.

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CRYPTIC

CASSIE, IT'S SAM.
I JUST LEFT THE ADVISORY MEETING.

I GAVE MY BEST ARGUMENTS, BUT THEY'RE STILL INSISTENT ON THE CHANGES.
THEY DON'T WANT YOU LOOKING TOO MUCH LIKE THAT TV CHARACTER.



SAMUEL DE RAVEN
CEO MILLENNIUM INSURANCE

THAT'S OKAY. I TOOK THE TIME THIS MORNING TO MAKE SOME ADJUSTMENTS ANYWAY.

DIDN'T HAVE TOO MUCH OF A CHOICE. THOSE RED BANNER CULTISTS DID A NUMBER ON MY OUTFIT LAST NIGHT.

AS LONG AS THE KEVLAR DID ITS JOB AND KEPT YOU FROM BEING SHREDDED.

HOW MUCH OF A CHANGE ARE YOU MAKING TO YOUR OUTFIT?

ACTUALLY... I MADE TWO. NEW COSTUMES, THAT IS.

I WAS MAKING CHANGES ON THE NORMAL OUTFIT AND I CAME UP WITH THE SECOND FOR SPECIAL SITUATIONS.

I CAN SEE WHY SOME HEROES LOVE DOING THIS.

YEAH, WELL, REMEMBER THAT YOU'RE NOT A BILLIONAIRE PLAYBOY WITH SECRET OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS TO FUND ALL THOSE DIFFERENT OUTFITS.
WE'LL GO OVER THE DAMAGE LATER ON IN THE LAIR.

SIGH

I SHOULD HAVE TRAINED HER TO BE A FORENSIC ACCOUNTANT INSTEAD OF AN INVESTIGATOR.

CITY CENTER...

MESSAGE
PLAYBACK.
JOHN BATTLE.

THE BASEMENT HOME OF
DEE RISK, AKA STARLETT

BEEP

DEE... IT'S
JOHN.
CALL ME.

I KNOW YOU SAID
YOU NEEDED SOME
TIME, BUT... I
REALLY MISS YOU
AND I JUST...
CALL ME, WHEN YOU
CAN. I LOVE YOU.

CLICK

INCOMING CALL.
BLOCKED ID.

ON SPEAKER
AND RECORD.

DEE RISK
AKA: STARLETT

DEE RISK... DJ RISQUÉ...
STARLETT...
DO WE HAVE... YOUR
FULL... ATTENTION?

YOU DO.

UNDERSTAND... THAT WE
KNOW... WHO YOU ARE.
AS LONG AS... YOU DO
WHAT... WE ASK, THIS...
DOES NOT BECOME...
PUBLIC.

REFUSE AND... THIS...
GOES OUT TO THE MEDIA
AND THE... DARK... WEB.

A-AT NOONTIME, GO T
-TO THE RENAISSANCE
C-CEN-CENTER.
L-LOOK FOR A WH-
WHITE CAT SITTING ON
A PATIO T-TABLE.
OUR AS-SSOCIATE
WILL TELL YOU W-WHAT
TO D-D-DO NEXT.

VOXPOP 2.0
FORMERLY VOX POPULII

DO YOU...
UNDERSTAND?

YES.

WE WILL... SEE...
YOU THEN.

CLICK

MILLENNIUM CITY POLICE HQ

P
O
L
I
C
E

"SPIRALCROSS?"

I'M AGENT PIPER WITH THE FBI.
I'M TOLD YOU'VE WAIVED YOUR RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT AND TO HAVE A LAWYER PRESENT.



AGENT PERI PIPER
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

AM I UNDER ARREST, AGENT PIPER?

THAT'S NOT MY CALL TO MAKE.
I'M JUST HERE TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT.*

YOU CAN, OF COURSE, EXERCISE YOUR RIGHTS AT ANY TIME OF THIS INTERVIEW AND THIS STOPS.

SPIRALCROSS
HERO SPY

(* LAST ISSUE)

I HAVE NOTHING TO HIDE.
THIS IS ALL JUST A MISUNDERSTANDING.

YOU WERE SEEN ACCESSING A RESTRICTED ACCOUNT ON A CAMBRIDGE BIOCHEM TERMINAL LOOKING FOR CONFIDENTIAL DATA.

OH-NO-NO-NO... THAT TERMINAL WAS LEFT OPEN WHEN I GOT THERE!

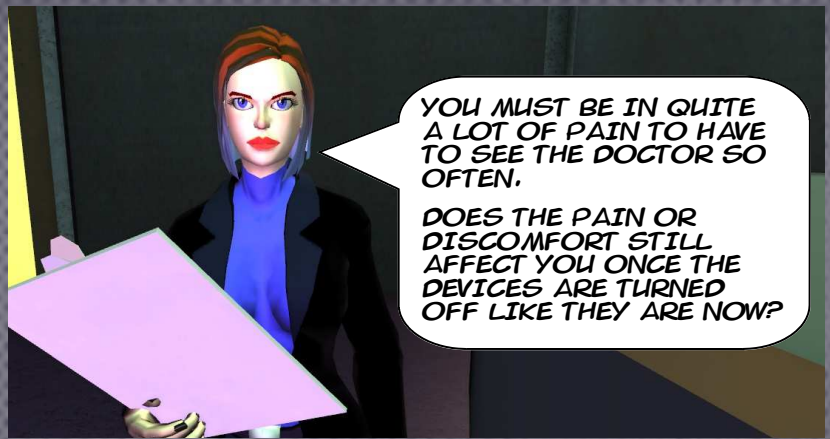
I WAS JUST TRYING TO ACCESS DOCTOR SILVERBACK'S APPOINTMENT SCHEDULE SO I COULD SET AN APPOINTMENT FOR HIM TO CHECK MY IMPLANTS.

CHECK WITH THE DOCTOR. HE'LL CONFIRM I HAVE FREQUENT PROBLEMS WITH THEM.



YES... ACCORDING TO P.R.I.M.U.S.* RECORDS YOU HAVE A TOTAL OF TWENTY-THREE IMPLANTS.

(* PRIMUS: AMERICA'S HIGHEST SUPERHERO AUTHORITY.)



YOU MUST BE IN QUITE A LOT OF PAIN TO HAVE TO SEE THE DOCTOR SO OFTEN.

DOES THE PAIN OR DISCOMFORT STILL AFFECT YOU ONCE THE DEVICES ARE TURNED OFF LIKE THEY ARE NOW?



YES. YES THEY STILL CAUSE DISCOMFORT AND PAIN, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY'RE TURNED OFF.

THAT'S WHY I NEEDED TO SEE DOCTOR SILVERBACK LAST NIGHT. THAT'S THE ONLY REASON WHY I WAS THERE.



OF COURSE. THANK YOU.



?!? THAT'S IT?



THE ONLY THING SHE DIDN'T LIE TO ME ABOUT WAS HER NAME.

PERI PIPER
FBI/PROJECT MYCROFT



I EXPECTED AS MUCH. OKAY, TURN HER OVER TO P.R.I.M.U.S. LET THEM DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF A LOCAL HACKER.

MAJOR XAVIER CROSS
PROJECT MYCROFT

LATER... AT THE RENAISSANCE CENTER...



YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING.

STARLETT
STREET VIGILANTE



SMALL WORLD, HUH?
THE NAME'S THE HOMETOWN HERO, IN CASE YOU DIDN'T GET IT THE LAST TIME WE MET.

HOMETOWN HERO
STREET VIGILANTE



HOW ARE THE HANDS?




crack
crack
crack

crack
crack




THEY'RE FINE... NO THANKS TO YOUR BOYFRIEND.*
AT SOME POINT I'LL HAVE TO RETURN THE FAVOR TO HIM.
BUT WE'RE HERE TO TALK ABOUT YOU.


(* ISSUE #16)



CELLPHONE SITTING NEXT TO THE CAT IS FOR YOU.
IT'S AN EXCLUSIVE PHONE BETWEEN YOU AND MY PARTNERS.
IT HAS ONLY ONE NUMBER STORED ON IT.




IT RINGS, YOU ANSWER IT. ANY TIME OF THE DAY OR NIGHT.
YOU GET THREE GRACE PERIODS IF YOU MISS IT THE FIRST TIME.



YOU MISS ANSWERING AFTER THOSE THREE TIMES, THE GAME'S OVER.
YOU FAIL TO DO WHAT WE ASK, THE GAME'S OVER.
AND BY THAT, OF COURSE, WE MEAN EVERYONE GETS TO KNOW WHO YOU ARE.



I GET IT.



I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO WORKING...
... MORE CLOSELY...
... WITH YOU.



DON'T THROW UP.



DO NOT THROW UP!

"THE FBI WAS NOT TOO HAPPY ABOUT YOUR REQUEST..."

UNTIL

... BUT THEY STILL APPROVED THE TRANSFER.

I HAD A FEELING THEY WOULD. PROBABLY OUT OF CURIOSITY.

TO SEE WHETHER OR NOT THIS AGENT WOULD BE KILLED JUST LIKE ANA WEDNESDAY?

LADY ESTHER GLACIA
UNITED NATIONS LIAISON

WHAT HAPPENED TO AGENT WEDNESDAY WAS BECAUSE OF RONALD BETTERS AND LUNK.

AND THAT WAS HER INVESTIGATION, NOT OURS.

MAJOR XAVIER CROSS
PROJECT MYCROFT

THAT'S NOT HOW THE BUREAU HIERARCHY SEES IT. I'M TOLD THEIR DIRECTOR ALMOST HAD A STROKE WHEN THE TRANSFER WAS BROUGHT UP.

THEY HAD NO PROBLEMS LOANING HER OUT TO PROJECT CITADEL, SO THEY ALREADY OPENED THE DOOR TO THIS.

BESIDES, I READ HER FILE. SHE WAS PRETTY MUCH AN UNUTILIZED ASSET THERE AND WITH CITADEL.

AND HOW MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE WILL SHE BE WITH US?

WE HAVE PSIONIC-DAMPENERS ALL OVER THE BUILDING!

HER LIE-DETECTION POWER IS USELESS HERE.

THAT'S WHY SHE'LL BE SPENDING MOST OF HER TIME OUT THERE DOING INTERVIEWS.

AND SHE'S UNDER ORDERS TO NOT REVEAL HER POWER TO ANYONE OUTSIDE OF OUR GROUP OR THE BUREAU.

"YOU'RE TAKING A HUGE RISK WITH HER, XAVIER."

"YOU REALLY DON'T WANT ME TO BE THE ONE TO SAY I TOLD YOU SO."



STEP OUT WHERE I CAN SEE YOU...
RIGHT NOW!



YOUR SECURITY IS REALLY LACKING.



NOT ALL OF US CAN AFFORD A BILLION-DOLLAR SECURITY SYSTEM.
OR MONEY FOR A NEW MAKEOVER.



NECESSITY FORCED ME TO MAKE A FEW CHANGES.
THAT AND A CERTAIN TV PROGRAM.



SMART MOVE RECORDING YOUR CALLS.
I PRESUME THE BLACKMAILERS GAVE YOU A CELLPHONE DURING YOUR IN-PERSON MEET.
I'LL NEED TO BORROW IT.




RED SINNER
HOODED VIGILANTE




I TAKE IT YOU PLAN ON CLONING THE PHONE SO YOU CAN TRACE IT TO THE SOURCE.

IF THEY'RE SMART IT WON'T BE THAT SIMPLE.




EXTORTION GROUPS USE VARIOUS SHELL PROXIES TO HIDE THEIR LOCATION. IT TAKES TIME TO FILTER THEM THROUGH, SO IT'S GOING TO REQUIRE MULTIPLE CALLS. WERE YOU ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE PERSON YOU MET?

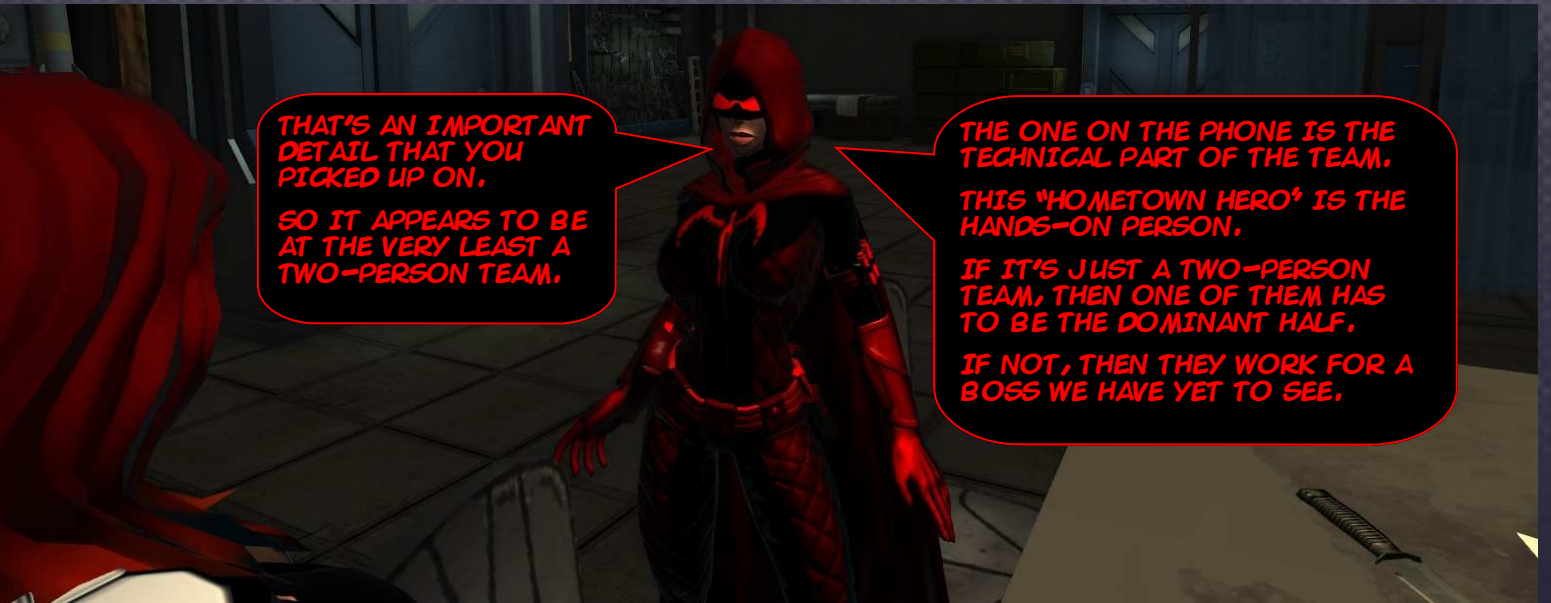
HE CALLS HIMSELF THE "HOMETOWN HERO". HE TRIED TO ARREST JOHN BATTLE NOT TOO LONG AGO DURING THAT "REAL TRUTH" GARBAGE.



I TAKE IT FROM YOUR TONE THAT YOU DON'T THINK THAT HE'S THE ONE BEHIND THE EXTORTION.

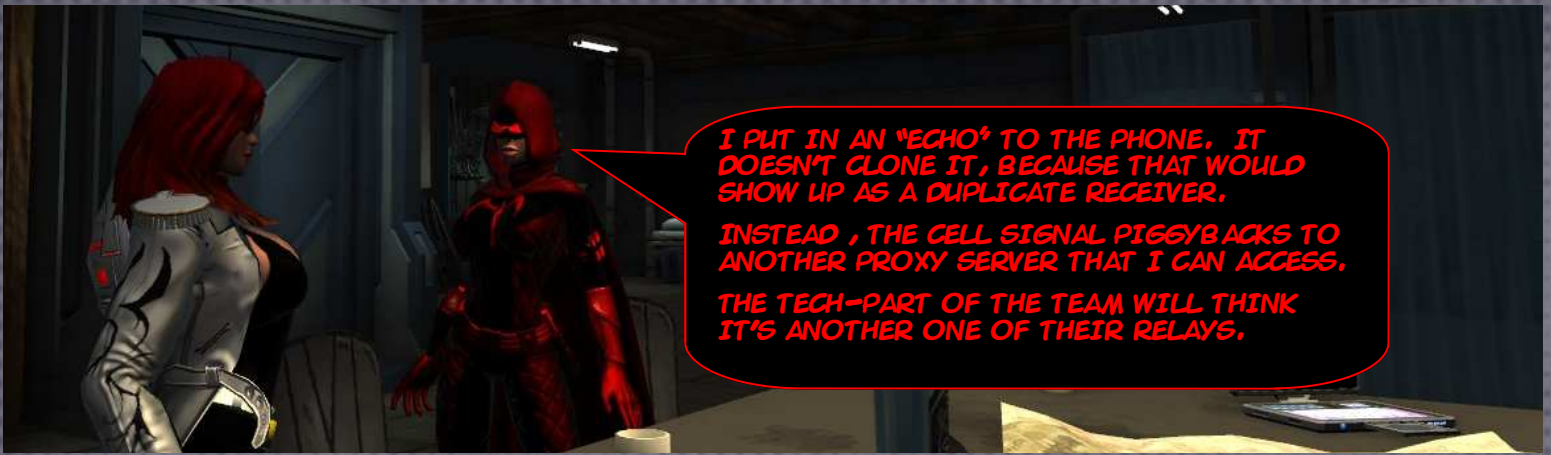


THE ONE ON THE PHONE TALKS DIFFERENTLY. HE... PAUSES. LIKE HE HAS DIFFICULTY TALKING.



THAT'S AN IMPORTANT DETAIL THAT YOU PICKED UP ON. SO IT APPEARS TO BE AT THE VERY LEAST A TWO-PERSON TEAM.

THE ONE ON THE PHONE IS THE TECHNICAL PART OF THE TEAM. THIS "HOMETOWN HERO" IS THE HANDS-ON PERSON. IF IT'S JUST A TWO-PERSON TEAM, THEN ONE OF THEM HAS TO BE THE DOMINANT HALF. IF NOT, THEN THEY WORK FOR A BOSS WE HAVE YET TO SEE.



I PUT IN AN "ECHO" TO THE PHONE. IT DOESN'T CLONE IT, BECAUSE THAT WOULD SHOW UP AS A DUPLICATE RECEIVER. INSTEAD, THE CELL SIGNAL PIGGYBACKS TO ANOTHER PROXY SERVER THAT I CAN ACCESS. THE TECH-PART OF THE TEAM WILL THINK IT'S ANOTHER ONE OF THEIR RELAYS.



SO... WHAT? I JUST GO ALONG WITH WHATEVER THEY DEMAND?

FOR NOW, YES. EVERY CALL THEY MAKE, I'LL BE ABLE TO TRACK IT AND BREAK DOWN THEIR SHELL SERVERS AND FIND OUT WHO ELSE IS INVOLVED.



I'M WORRIED ABOUT THAT. I'M NO STRANGER TO BLACKMAIL. IN FACT, THE VERY REASON WHY I BECAME A VIGILANTE WAS BECAUSE A STUDIO EXEC WAS BLACKMAILING ACTRESSES INTO DOING ADULT MOVIES.

THIS ISN'T EVEN THE FIRST TIME I'VE BEEN BLACKMAILED AS A HERO. BUT I'M REALLY AFRAID OF WHAT THESE BASTARDS WILL ASK ME TO DO TO KEEP MY PERSONAL IDENTITY SECRET.



YOU'VE BEEN BLACKMAILED BEFORE?



TELL ME MORE. WHO WAS IT?

DOWNTOWN



ONE MORE CONTRACT...

MISTER MESSENGER!

MIKE MESSENGER
X-TEND SERVICES



SPIRALCROSS... I'M GLAD TO SEE THAT YOU WERE RELEASED.

U.N.T.I.L. TRIED TO PIN SOME HACKER CHARGE ON ME, BUT THE FOLKS IN P.R.I.M.U.S. JUST DROPPED IT WITH A WARNING.



NOW THAT MY DEVICES HAVE BEEN REACTIVATED, I'LL BE ABLE TO GET THAT DATA FOR YOU.

THAT CONTRACT IS NOW CLOSED. ANOTHER OPERATIVE MANAGED TO GET THE DATA FOR US.



ARE YOU KIDDING ME?

ARE YOU... KIDDING ME?

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW LONG I HAD TO WORK UP A RAPPORT WITH THAT OVERGROWN MONKEY FOR THE MISSION? HOW LONG I HAD TO PRETEND THAT MY IMPLANTS WERE HURTING ME?





I UNDERSTAND HOW FRUSTRATED YOU MAY FEEL OVER THIS--

--FRUSTRATED?
NO, FRUSTRATED WAS WHEN I HACKED THOSE HARMON TECH SERVERS FOR THE LATEST PHONE SYSTEM ONLY TO FIND IT WAS AN OLD APRIL FOOL'S DAY JOKE.



THIS CONTRACT WAS CUSTOM-MADE FOR SOMEONE WITH MY SOCIAL AND TECH SKILLS, AND YOU JUST LET SOMEONE ELSE TAKE IT FROM ME BECAUSE I HIT A LITTLE OBSTACLE.



YOU WERE SLOPPY AND YOU GOT CAUGHT. THAT SIMPLE.

ANOTHER OPERATIVE HAD A BETTER OPPORTUNITY, SO WE LET THEM TAKE IT. THAT'S JUST HOW IT IS SOMETIMES.

A screenshot of the SpireVision interface. It shows a dossier on Michael with various fields and a decription section.

MESSENGER, MICHAEL

EXEC V.P.: X-TEND SERVICES

MARITAL STATUS: SINGLE

WE'LL BE IN TOUCH WITH YOUR NEXT OPPORTUNITY.

CELLPHONE LOCATED.

ACQUIRING MOST RECENT CALLS

DECRPTION

SpireVision



YEAH, YOU DO THAT, MICHAEL. YOU JUST DO THAT.

Pickles? **Got it!** Tomatoes? **Got them!** Mayo? **Sure!** Mustard? **Why not?** Toasted? **We can do it!** Extra meat? **On it!** Want it hot and fast? **Only way we know how!**

The only thing we can't do is give it to you right off the page!

Millennium Mike's



7 Days a week! 10am to Midnight

313-555-MIKE

Millennium Mike's is a fiction business in the world of Champions Online. Not a real business.

**Tired of getting annoying calls?
Wish you could hire your own receptionist?
Screen your own calls with Call Screen 2.0 from Harmon Tech.**

- Call Screen 2.0 is compatible with all VoIP systems, as well as most major home assistance programs.
- Customize a personal message for callers or use one of several downloadable generic messages.
- Voice-active commands allow you to pick up the call in the middle of the screening, call the person back afterward, or order the system to hang up the caller.
- Harmon Tech's proprietary Block-It software checks all known "blacklisted" numbers and can block all listed numbers from connecting and will automatically report all blocked numbers to the Federal Communications Commission.
- Call Screen 2.0 can also "whitelist" numbers that you do want to answer, such as calls from a family member or friend or business associate.



**Harmon
Tech**
A Subsidiary of Harmon Industries

**Available in all electronics stores
and online at HarmonTech.htbiz**

Harmon Tech is a fictional business in the world of Champions Online. Not a real product. Not a real ad.

Millennium City is more than just a bunch of buildings.
It is about businesses.
It is about homes.
It is about families.
It is about people.
It is about hopes and dreams that could not be destroyed by evil.

My father knew this, and so did my brother.

Together, they founded Millennium Insurance; to be there for people and families and homes and businesses when all the other insurance companies abandoned them after Detroit fell.

Today I am humbled and honored to serve as CEO of Millennium Insurance, continuing the promise that my father and my brother made to the people of Millennium City; to be there for them in both good times and bad.

Be it a new life, a new car, a new home, or a new business, Millennium Insurance will always be there for you.

Because Millennium City is about all of us.

Millennium Insurance

Millennium Insurance is a fictional business in the world of Champions Online. Not a real person. Not a real ad.



Samuel de Raven - CEO

FOOD SO GOOD... IT SHOULD COME WITH A CAPE!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A SUPERHERO TO BE SUPER-HUNGRY.

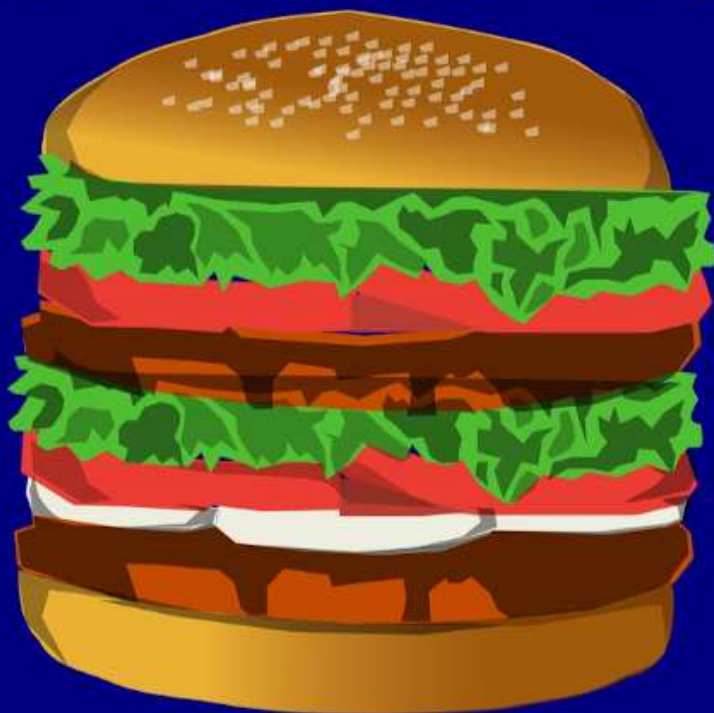
THANKFULLY, WE HAVE THE SOLUTION TO THAT KIND OF CRISIS!

TRY OUR EXCLUSIVE ACE-HIGH CHEESEBURGER WITH TWO ALL-BEEF PATTIES WITH THREE KINDS OF CHEESE ON A GLUTEN-FREE BUN. A FULL HOUSE THAT WILL MAKE A FULL STOMACH!

AND REMEMBER, ALL ACE BURGERS ARE COOKED THE MINUTE YOU ORDER THEM. IT MAY TAKE A LITTLE LONGER, BUT IT'S ALWAYS WORTH IT.

Ace Burger

City Center, Millennium City



Ace Burger is a fictional restaurant in the world of Champions Online MMO. Not a real burger. Not a real ad.

SOMETIME LATER IN A CERTAIN BACHELOR'S SWINGING PAD...

DIIING

HMM... SHE'S EARLY.

MARKMAN GOLD
AGENT TO THE SUPER-LEGENDS

DIIING

YOU DON'T NEED TO KEEP RINGING THE BELL, MY DEAR... THE DOOR WILL SOON...

...OPENNN...

WHAT THE HELL...? DID THIS ONE BAIL TOO?

THE AGENCY IS CERTAINLY GOING TO HEAR FROM ME!
I EVEN PAID DOUBLE THE DEPOSIT THIS TIME!

TONIGHT'S GIRLFRIEND HAS DECIDED TO CANCEL.

I HAD TO SWITCH TO TACTICAL MODE TO DEAL WITH HIM. I HEARD TOO MANY BAD THINGS ABOUT MARKMAN GOLD.

***SLAM!**



WHAT IS THIS?
WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?



I'M ASKING THE QUESTIONS. YOU JUST WORRY ABOUT WHETHER YOU GET TO KEEP BODY PARTS. WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT STARLETT?



WHO? I DON'T KNOW ANY STARL--

THUMP
AAAARGH!
MY RIB!

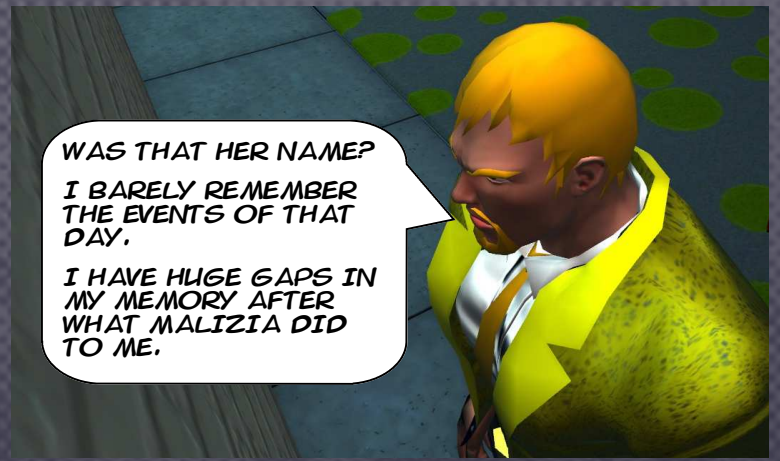
LIE TO ME AGAIN AND I'LL BREAK THAT RIB.

AND I'LL STILL HAVE 23 LEFT.



STARLETT; RED HAIR, BLACK BODYSUIT, WHITE JACKET, CARRIES AN ELECTRO-SWORD AND A JETPACK. SHE SAVED YOUR LIFE ONCE.*

(* ISSUE #12)



WAS THAT HER NAME? I BARELY REMEMBER THE EVENTS OF THAT DAY.

I HAVE HUGE GAPS IN MY MEMORY AFTER WHAT MALIZIA DID TO ME.



YOU HAVE A HISTORY OF EXTORTING FEMALE HEROES TO DO YOUR BIDDING. INCLUDING YOUR 'DINNER DATE' FOR TONIGHT.



IF I HAD SOMETHING ON THAT REDHEAD, I'D BE USING IT EVERY SINGLE DAY.

I WOULDN'T NEED ANY OTHER WOMAN TO BE MY DATE.



***THUNK!**

AAAAA

YOU'RE GARBAGE, GOLD.

**PREDATORY SCUM WHO PREYS ON PEOPLE,
IF I HAVE TO COME BACK HERE,
I'LL GIVE YOU SOMETHING
MORE THAN JUST A BRUISED
EGO AND A CANCELLED DATE.**



**Y-YOU CAN'T
THREATEN ME!
I'M MARKMAN GOLD,
AGENT OF THE SUPER
LEGENDS!**



I...



**STARLETT WAS RIGHT;
HIS MIND WAS WIPED
OF WHO SHE WAS.***

**THAT MEANS HE
CAN'T BE BEHIND
THIS BLACKMAIL
OPERATION.**

**SO MUCH FOR
MY THEORY.**

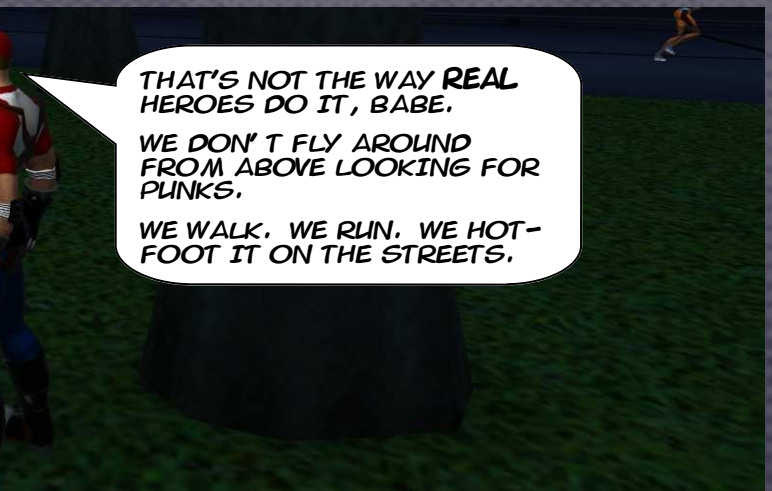
**(* THANKS TO AGENT WEDNESDAY
BACK IN ISSUE #13)**



**IT JUST MEANS I
HAVE TO WORK
HARDER ON FINDING
THE OTHER PARTNER.**

**I DON'T EVEN
KNOW IF THAT
WAS A MAN
OR A WOMAN!**

**AND DO SO BEFORE
THEY FORCE
THEY FORCE
STARLETT INTO
DOING SOMETHING
THAT SHE CAN'T
WALK BACK FROM.**





THIS ISN'T ABOUT CATCHING THE MOST BAD GUYS.
THIS IS ABOUT US BEEN SEEN TOGETHER IN PUBLIC.



THIS WHOLE CITY IS GOING TO KNOW THAT STARLETT AND THE HOMETOWN HERO ARE THE NEW CRIME-FIGHTING DUO.



YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT?

I...
I GUESS NOT.



LEAD THE WAY, BABE.



I'M ALREADY HATING THIS.



HE'S GOING TO PARADE ME AROUND LIKE A PET.



I REALLY HOPE THAT RED SINNER HAS SOMETHING MORE ABOUT THIS JERK'S PARTNER REAL SOON SO WE CAN PUT AN END TO THIS.

LET'S START OVER BY THE HOSPITAL. SAY "HI" TO THE DOGS AND NURSES.

I SWEAR IF HE KEEPS CALLING ME "BABE", I'M GOING TO LOSE IT.

MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE THE ARCANA STORE*...



(* EDITOR'S NOTE: THE GREEN HUE IS FROM A MYSTICAL FIELD THAT DETERS NON-MYSTICS FROM ENTRY. *)

TCH

KEIRA FYRE
ELEMENTAL ARCHER



WHOOOOOSH
WHOOOOOSH



WHOOOOOSH
WHOOOOOSH



SOMETHING I CAN HELP YOU WITH?

YOU STOLE MY MISSION.
DON'T BOTHER DENYING IT.



I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.

PLEASE! I PULLED YOUR CALLS FROM MESSENGER'S CELLPHONE.

IT'S NO BIG SECRET AMONG US THAT YOU'RE THE MOLE IN U.N.T.I.L.

ALL I WANT IS THE DATA THAT YOU STOLE FROM MY MISSION.

THE MISSION THAT I SPENT MONTHS PREPARING FOR!



EVEN IF I DID TAKE IT...
... AND I DIDN'T...
... WHY THE HELL WOULD YOU WANT THE DATA NOW?



BECAUSE I WANT TO KNOW WHAT IT IS!
I WANT TO KNOW WHY I'M CONTRACTED FOR A MISSION. WHY I'M SPENDING TIME AND ENERGY AND EFFORT TO GET THAT DATA!



GET IT FROM THE CLIENT YOURSELF.

YOU KNOW THAT'S NOT HOW IT WORKS.

MESSENGER'S PHONE DIDN'T INCLUDE ANY CALLS TO THE CLIENT, AND THERE WERE NO FILE ATTACHMENTS, SO IT WAS PUT ON A DATA CARD AND HE PERSONALLY DELIVERED IT TO THE CLIENT.



NOT MY PROBLEM.



LIKE HELL IT'S NOT!



* BZZZZT *



YOU'RE DONE.



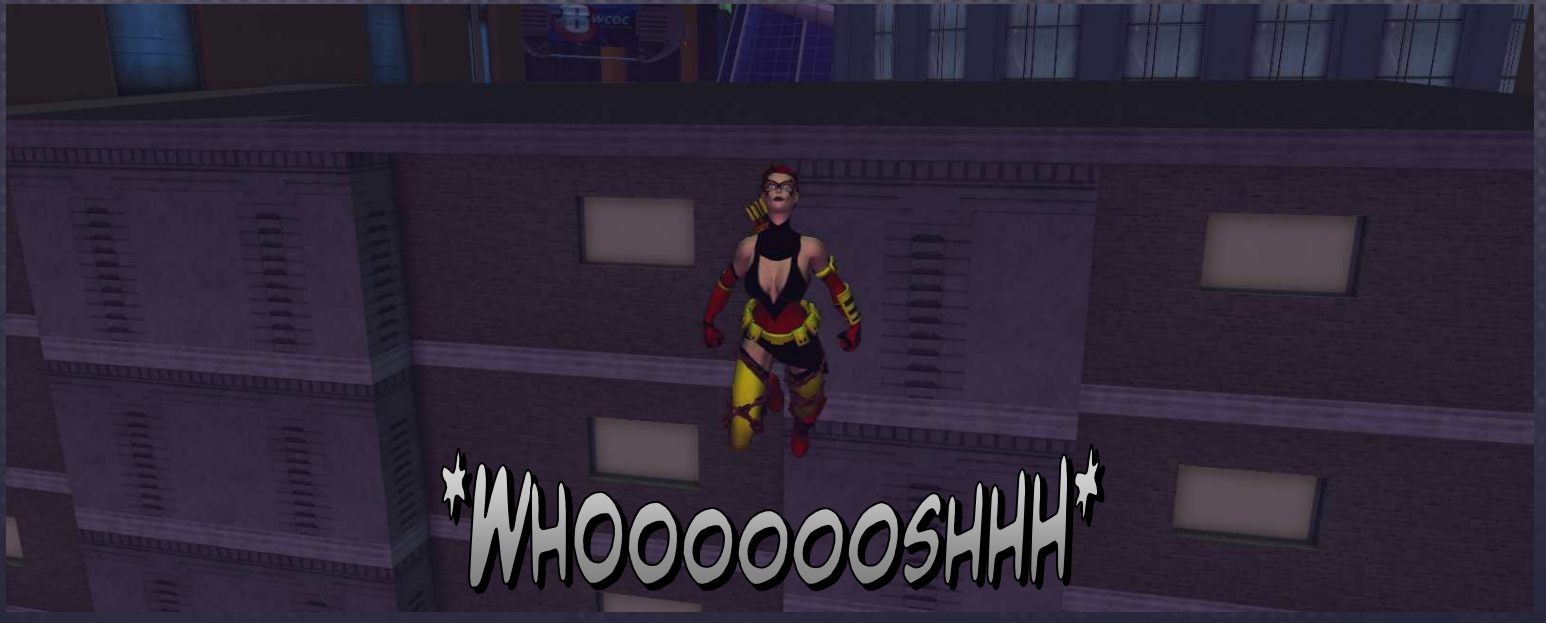
SKREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE



YOU'RE GOING TO GIVE ME THAT DATA, WHETHER YOU WANT TO OR NOT...

EVEN IF I HAVE TO PERSONALLY HACK IT FROM YOUR BRAIN!

BZZZZT
BZZZZT
BZZZZT



SOME TIME LATER...

WELL, THAT'S IT FOR ME.

NOT TOO BAD FOR OUR FIRST PATROL TOGETHER.

I THINK WE NEED TO END THE NIGHT WITH A LITTLE CELEBRATION.

WHAT?

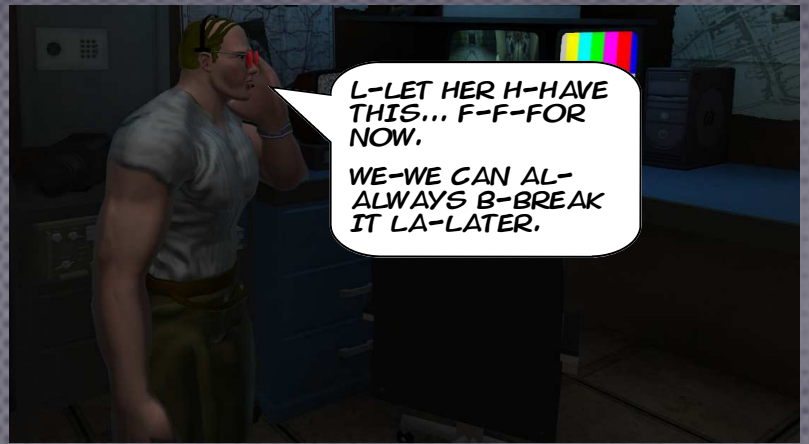
A DRINK. JUST ONE DRINK TOGETHER.
CLUB CAPRICE IS JUST RIGHT THERE.

NUH-UH! NO!
ABSOLUTELY NOT!
NOT THERE!

WHY? IT'S A PLACE FOR HEROES.
AND IT'S FOR JUST ONE DRINK.

THAT'S THE ONE PLACE THAT I CANNOT BE SEEN IN AS STARLETT.
IT'S THE ONLY WAY I CAN KEEP BOTH MY HERO LIFE AND MY PERSONAL LIFE SEPARATE.

THAT'S MY ONE CONDITION.
AND IT'S NON-NEGOTIABLE.



L-LET HER H-HAVE THIS... F-F-FOR NOW.
WE-WE CAN AL- ALWAYS B-BREAK IT LA-LATER.



FINE. YOU TELL ME WHERE WE SHOULD GO, THEN.
WHERE DO YOU AND YOUR BOYFRIEND GO TO CELEBRATE?



ACE BURGER... IN NORTHWEST CITY CENTER.



WELL, LET'S GO BEFORE THEY CLOSE.
MY TREAT... THIS TIME.

IF I HEARD HER RIGHT WITH MY AUGMENTED HEARING, SHE JUST LIED TO HIM.

GOOD. KEEP IT UP.

THIS "HOMETOWN HERO" IS TRYING TO DESTROY HER RELATIONSHIP WITH HER BOYFRIEND BY DOING EVERYTHING THEY NORMALLY DO.

THAT LIE WILL BUY HER SOME TIME, BUT SHE CAN'T DO THIS INDEFINITELY.



JOHN BATTLE'S APARTMENT

I AM SCREENING MY CALLS.
LEAVE A MESSAGE.

BEEP



JOHN BATTLE
LEGACY WARRIOR



JOHN BATTLE? THIS IS CHIP REID OF "CHAMPIONS SOCIAL". WE'RE A HERO SOCIETY PUBLICATION.



HARMON TECH CALL SCREEN

CALL NUMBER

999-555-6230

CALL ID

CHIP REID - CHAMPIONS SOCIAL

CALL SCREENING: ON

WE'RE HOPING YOU CAN GIVE US A STATEMENT OR TWO ABOUT THE REPORTS OF YOUR TEAMMATE, ST ARLETT, BEING SEEN OUT ON PATROL WITH A NEW HERO.



JUST GIVE US A CALL BACK AT 999-555-6230, WE WOULD REALLY APPRECIATE IT.

CLICK



I GUESS IT'S HAPPENED.

CALL SCREEN:
SEND TEXT MESSAGE TO DEE.
MESSAGE...
I NEED TO SEE YOU.

A HALF-HOUR LATER, OUTSIDE CHAMPIONS HEADQUARTERS...



HI.

HI.



IS... EVERYTHING OKAY? IS SOMETHING...?

I'VE MISSED YOU. I KNOW YOU ASKED FOR SPACE BUT... ARE YOU OKAY?



I WISH I COULD SAY "YES" TO THAT. I REALLY... REALLY WISH I COULD...

I HAVE TO GO. THE NAVAJO NATION IS UNDER ATTACK, POSSIBLY BY THE MILITIAS.



IS IT THE MARSH FOUNDATION? I THOUGHT THEY DIDN'T RESORT TO VIOLENCE ANYMORE.*

THE FOUNDATION ITSELF DOESN'T. BUT THEY FUND SEVERAL MILITIA GROUPS IN THE SOUTHWESTERN AREA. ONE OF THEM IS ACTIVE IN BURNING SANDS.



(* ISSUE #17)



DO... DO YOU NEED AN EXTRA HAND?
I COULD COME WITH YOU.



IT'S NOT...

IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE.



THE INDIAN NATIONS STILL HAVE A HARD TIME ACCEPTING WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THE "REAL TRUTH" MESS.
SOME OF THEM STILL WRONGLY SEE ME AS A FRAUD AND A PRIVATEER.

I NEED TO BE THERE... NOT AS JOHN BATTLE, SUPERHERO, WITH HIS GIRLFRIEND IN TOW...
BUT AS THE LEGACY WARRIOR OF LEGEND; DEFENDER OF THE INDIAN NATIONS.



WH-WHEN DO YOU HAVE TO LEAVE?



SHUTTLE IS LEAVING IN TWENTY MINUTES.
DEE...



DON'T!
DON'T SAY WHAT I THINK YOU'RE ABOUT TO SAY.

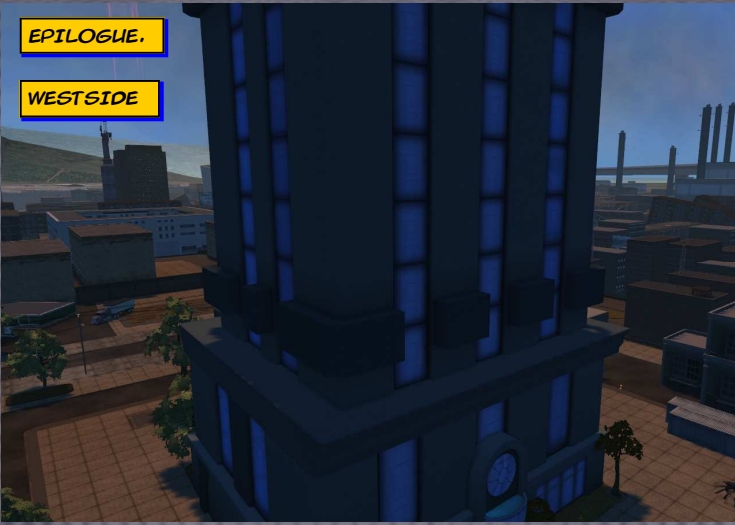
WE BOTH KNEW IT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN AT SOME POINT.
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR THOSE WORDS.

JUST SAY "I'LL SEE YOU SOON", OKAY?
JUST SAY THAT.

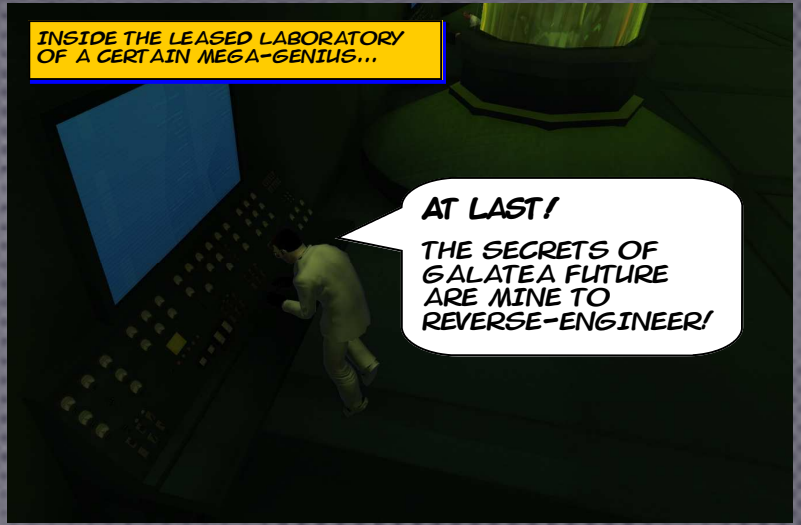


EPILOGUE.

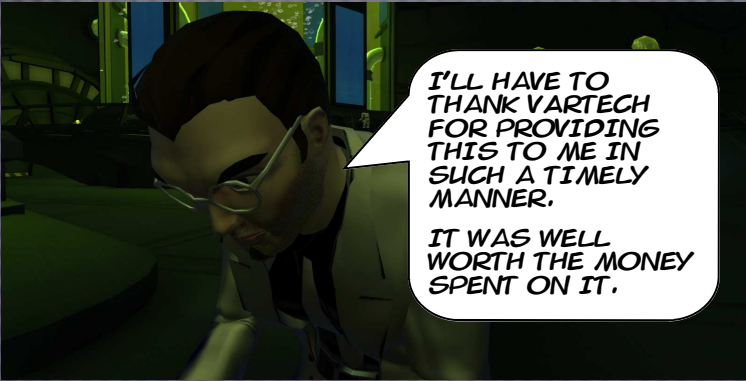
WESTSIDE



INSIDE THE LEASED LABORATORY
OF A CERTAIN MEGA-GENIUS...



AT LAST!
THE SECRETS OF
GALATEA FUTURE
ARE MINE TO
REVERSE-ENGINEER!



I'LL HAVE TO
THANK VARTECH
FOR PROVIDING
THIS TO ME IN
SUCH A TIMELY
MANNER.
IT WAS WELL
WORTH THE MONEY
SPENT ON IT.



WHAT THE...?!?
DARK ENERGY?!?
HER POWERS
COME FROM DARK
ENERGY?



I DESIGNED PROJECT:
PANDORA ON THE BELIEF
THAT HER POWERS WERE
SOLAR-BASED LIKE EVERY
OTHER SUPERHERO OF HER
ARCHETYPE.

EVEN COSMIC ENERGY
WOULD WORK.
BUT DARK ENERGY?
NOT DARK MATTER,
BUT DARK ENERGY?!?
THAT CHANGES
EVERYTHING!



I'LL HAVE TO INVENT
A BRAND NEW
METHOD TO FUEL MY
PROJECT'S POWERS.


SOMETHING THAT WILL
ALLOW MY PROJECT TO BE
ON HER LEVEL, AND YET
TOTALLY DEPENDENT ON ME.
SO SHE WILL NEVER LEAVE
ME LIKE SO MANY OTHERS
HAVE IN THE PAST.



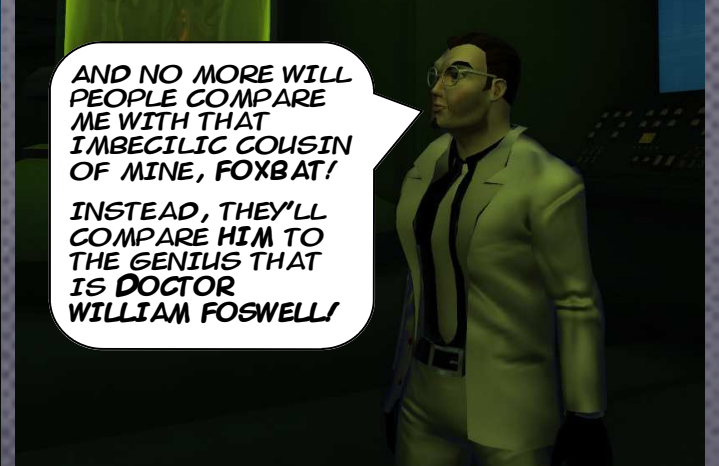
I AM THIS CLOSE
TO HAVING MY
HEART'S DESIRE!
AND WITH IT, THE
RESPECT I HAVE
ALWAYS LACKED!




WITH YOU, PEOPLE
WILL NO LONGER
MOCK ME AND CALL
ME "BILLY BRAIN"!



NO MORE WILL I
NEED JET-SHOES TO
MEET PEOPLE AT EYE-
LEVEL OR TO EVEN
WORK A COMPUTER.
EVERYTHING WILL BE
BROUGHT DOWN TO
MY SIZE!



AND NO MORE WILL
PEOPLE COMPARE
ME WITH THAT
IMBECILIC COUSIN
OF MINE, FOXBAT!
INSTEAD, THEY'LL
COMPARE HIM TO
THE GENIUS THAT
IS DOCTOR
WILLIAM FOSWELL!



AND IT WILL ALL BE
BECAUSE OF YOU,
MY DEAR.
BECAUSE OF
PROJECT: PANDORA.



I WILL HAVE
MY OWN
GALATEA!

ANOTHER GALATEA?
FIND OUT MORE IN
THE NEXT ISSUE!

GUARDIAN WORDS

Words of wisdom from writer and creator David 2.



UNITED NATIONS TRIBUNAL ON INTERNATIONAL LAW
Project Mycroft - Major Xavier Cross, U.N.T.I.L. Commander



CLASSIFIED INFORMATION - EYES ONLY

Operative: SpiralCross

Real Name: Hillary Spytech
Other Aliases: Hilly Spytech, Sally Spiral, Crissy Cross
Birthplace: Arlington, Va
Hometown: Millennium City, Mi
Occupation: Information Collector
Hair Color: Blond (dyed purple with cybernetic enhancements)
Skills: social networking
Equipment: cybernetic implants



Hillary “Hilly” Spytech is the daughter of two retired federal intelligence agents. Her father worked in support and logistics, and her mother was a field agent. The two had met when she investigated him for possible corruption. He was eventually cleared and they dated and got married.

From what we understand about Hilly’s childhood, it was one of deception and training. As her parents were still active in the intelligence community, she was taught early on about keeping secrets and digging for information and being mindful of her environment. Eventually her mother retired from active duty, with her father continuing to work in support and logistics.

After high school, Hilly went to college to study computers. She was fascinated by the cutting-edge technology employed by Harmon Industries, and specifically focused on cybernetics and how she could apply them.

At the same time, she also was something of a social gadfly. She was known among several groups on campus and tried to attend as many parties as possible. But she did so for a reason. She was conducting her own form of social intelligence by being friendly with as many people as she could and learning all that she could about them. She then took that information and marketed it to certain companies, thus paying for her college.

Apparently she did this so well that college administrators did not know this was happening until after she graduated with a double degree in cybernetics and in social engineering.

Eventually she caught the attention of certain people who realized that she could serve as a different kind of intelligence operative. She could be a spy pretending to be a hero.

Hilly adopted the name “SpiralCross” based on two aliases that she used in college to collect information: “Sally Spiral” and “Crissy Cross”. She also put herself in for numerous cybernetic implants designed to collect information and store it. Some of these implants were of her own creation.

As SpiralCross, Hilly performed just the right amount of “hero tasks” to earn her recognition, and then prominently stuck around hero gatherings, where she used her cybernetics and her social skills to collect information on other heroes. This information would then be available for those who need it and would pay a good price for it. Perhaps it is for PRIMUS or UNTIL, maybe for the Department of Justice, or perhaps to a law firm looking to bring a case against an abusive hero, or to discredit a hero in a court case.

SpiralCross maintains that the information she collects is legal and is only

Continues on next page...

used for legal purposes. However, the same cannot be said of those that pay her for that information.

It is believed she currently works for the mercenary group X-Tend Services as either a freelance operative or is on retainer with them.

Powers and Abilities

SpiralCross's primary skill is in information collecting. To say she is a social gadfly is an understatement. She loves to spend her time with people, talking to them, and getting to know everything she can about them. She will do this often to the sacrifice of heroic activities.

But this information collection is done with a purpose other than friendship or camaraderie. Just like social media services, SpiralCross collects that information so she can sell it to others.

Aiding her in this is her numerous cybernetic implants. According to PRIMUS, she has a total of twenty-three implants in her body, some of which are custom-made by her, that aid her in electronic data collection and transmission. The most significant of these are her cybernetic contact lenses, which gives her heads-up displays as well as record any data she sees, which provides her literal photographic memory. She also has a cyber-weave in her hair which serves as a broadband wireless transmitter and receiver. She can intercept and reroute data transmissions almost instantaneously. Other devices inside her body are data storage devices, enhanced sensory devices in her fingertips, and anti-gravity emitters that allow her to fly. The latter serves as part of her "disguise" as a hero since it gives a sparkly rainbow appearance. The sensory devices in her fingertips can also be used to transmit electrical jolts that mimics a telepathic attack but without the psi-particles.

Observation

SpiralCross is a dangerous operative. The fact that she's willing to collect data on heroes and sell it to whomever would want it makes her a security risk. Both PRIMUS and UNTIL informed their operatives that she is not to be trusted and to be mindful of what they convey to her, even in a casual environment.

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NEXT ISSUE...

**CHAMPIONS
ONLINE**



STARLETT'S TRIBULATIONS CONTINUE AS SHE AND RED SINNER TRY TO FIND OUT WHO ELSE IS BLACKMAILING HER AND HOW TO STOP THEM.

PLUS... MORE ON DOCTOR FOSWELL'S MAD IDEA. CAN HE REALLY CREATE ANOTHER GALATEA?

FIND OUT!



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