

GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN



ISSUE 18
2010



SPOTLIGHT ON... **Galatea Future**
THE LAST GUARDIAN



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

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

GUARDIANS OF THE DAWN



NAME:
GALATEA FUTURE

REAL NAME: **KARA
HAMILTON/KAREN
POWERS/GALATEA
POWERS**

STATUS:
OUROBOROS AGENT

ARCHETYPE: **TANKER**

PRIMARY POWER:
INVULNERABLE

SECONDARY POWER:
SUPER STRENGTH

THE GUARDIANS HAVE SAVED THEIR SECRETS FROM BEING SOLD IN THE ROGUE ISLES. BUT SOON AFTER, TRAGEDY BEFALLS ONE OF THEIR OWN, AND THE MOST POWERFUL OF THEIR MEMBERS, GALATEA POWERS, IS SUDDENLY MISSING.

MEANWHILE, A MORE MATURE VERSION OF GALATEA STANDS AT THE OUTSKIRTS OF OUROBOROS, WATCHING THE EVENTS AS THEY TRANSPIRE, KNOWING OF THE ULTIMATE TRAGEDY THAT WILL SOON AFFECT THEM ALL, AND SEEMINGLY HELPLESS TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT.

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TIME.

MOST PEOPLE SEE IT AS ONE DIMENSIONAL... LINEAR.

YOU HAVE EVENT ONE, THE BIG BANG... THE START OF EVERYTHING...

AND THEN YOU HAVE EVENT TERMINAL...

WHEN ALL OF THE MATTER IN THE UNIVERSE ...

... COLLAPSES IN ON ITSELF INTO TOTAL NOTHINGNESS.

ULTIMATE ENTROPY.

BUT TIME IS NOT ONE DIMENSIONAL.

TIME IS THE FOURTH DIMENSION, INCORPORATING ALL OF THE OTHER THREE DIMENSIONS.

IT HAS LENGTH, WIDTH... AND DEPTH.

TAKE TIME AND FOLD IT IN ON ITSELF AND YOU CREATE A PARADOX.

FOLD IT AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN AND YOU DO THE IMPOSSIBLE.

YOU CAN STOP FINAL ENTROPY. YOU CAN STOP EVENT TERMINAL.

THIS IS THE SECRET OF OUROBOROS.

"Time and Changes" Phase 1 "THE LAST GUARDIAN" - A CITY OF HEROES STORY BY DAVID 2

NEAR THE END OF TIME ITSELF, JUST MOMENTS BEFORE EVENT TERMINAL, IS ONE SUCH PARADOX.



PILLAR OF ICE AND FLAME

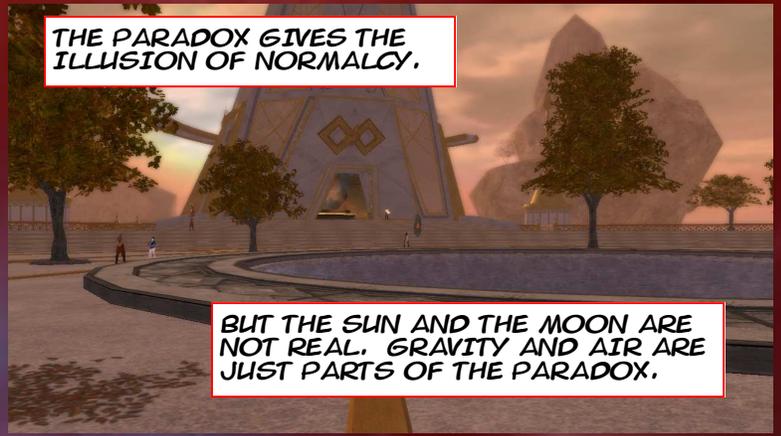
THE PILLAR OF ICE AND FLAME, A PARADOX THAT HOLDS THIS MOMENT IN TIME OVER AND OVER AND OVER AGAIN AD INFINITUM.

THE PILLAR SURROUNDS
OUROBOROS LIKE A
BUBBLE, KEEPING IT SAFE.



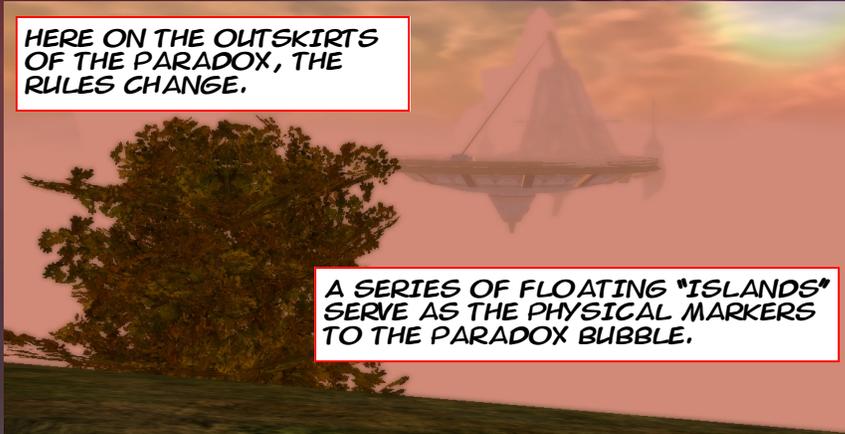
KEEPING IT FROM ENTROPY.

THE PARADOX GIVES THE
ILLUSION OF NORMALCY.



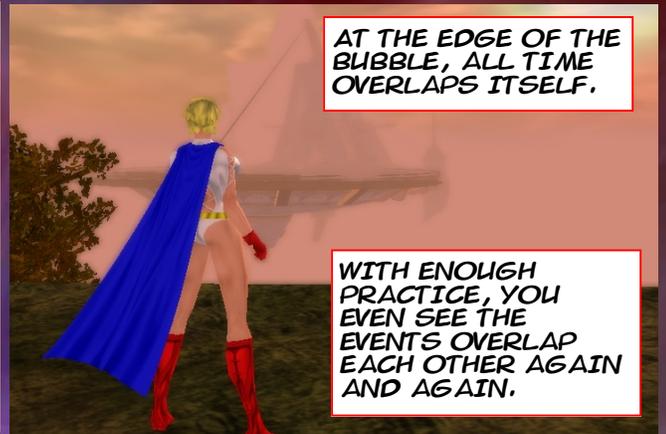
BUT THE SUN AND THE MOON ARE
NOT REAL. GRAVITY AND AIR ARE
JUST PARTS OF THE PARADOX.

HERE ON THE OUTSKIRTS
OF THE PARADOX, THE
RULES CHANGE.



A SERIES OF FLOATING "ISLANDS"
SERVE AS THE PHYSICAL MARKERS
TO THE PARADOX BUBBLE.

AT THE EDGE OF THE
BUBBLE, ALL TIME
OVERLAPS ITSELF.



WITH ENOUGH
PRACTICE, YOU
EVEN SEE THE
EVENTS OVERLAP
EACH OTHER AGAIN
AND AGAIN.

I AM GALATEA.

ONCE UPON A TIME I
CALLED MYSELF
"GALATEA POWERS".

BACK WHEN THERE WAS
A WORLD THAT CARED
FOR SUCH THINGS.

BACK WHEN THERE WAS
A WORLD, PERIOD.

I HAD OTHER NAMES
AS WELL...

IN ANOTHER UNIVERSE
I WAS KAREN POWERS.

WHEN I CAME TO THIS
UNIVERSE I HAD A
CIVILIAN IDENTITY OF
KARA HAMILTON.

BUT EVENTUALLY ALL
THOSE WERE FORGOTTEN
AND I WAS JUST GALATEA.



GALATEA FUTURE

I AM "ALLOWED" TO
STAY HERE IN THE
PARADOX THAT IS
OUROBOROS.

PARTIALLY, I
THINK, OUT OF
NOSTALGIA.

AND PARTIALLY
BECAUSE I'M
HERE TO FIX A
CATASTROPHIC
PROBLEM IN THE
TIMELINE.



YOU SEE, I AM THE
LAST SURVIVING
INHABITANT OF
PLANET EARTH.

AND, ACCORDING
TO THE MENDERS,
THAT'S NOT HOW IT
IS SUPPOSED TO BE.



IT DIDN'T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT.

BUT IT DID HAPPEN.

AND IT'S MY JOB TO NOT ONLY FIND OUT WHY, BUT TO FIX IT SO THAT HISTORY IS RESTORED.

THE THING IS... I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO DESTROY THE EARTH.

I WAS THERE WHEN IT HAPPENED.

OPEN.

THE PROBLEM IS TRYING TO PREVENT IT AND FIX HISTORY.

OH, AND TECHNICALLY I'M NOT "SUPPOSED" TO DO THIS...

HMMM

I'M NOT "SUPPOSED" TO CARVE OUT MY OWN LIVING QUARTERS IN THE ROCKS SURROUNDING THE PARADOX BUBBLE.

I'M SUPPOSED TO "PRESERVE THE NATURAL HARMONY" OF THE SURROUNDING AREA.

WELL, ONE, I'M USING TESSERACT TECHNOLOGY, SO THE CHANGES ARE LITERALLY MICROSCOPIC AND CAN BE REMOVED AT MY COMMAND.

TWO, HOW THE HECK AM I SUPPOSED TO FIX THINGS WITHOUT A PLACE FOR THE TOOLS I NEED TO FIX THEM?

AND THREE... BITE ME.

THE MENDERS AND THEIR ACOLYTES CAN AT LEAST GO BACK TO THEIR OWN TIMELINES FOR FOOD AND SLEEP.

MY WORLD IS DEAD. I HAVE NOTHING TO RETURN TO.

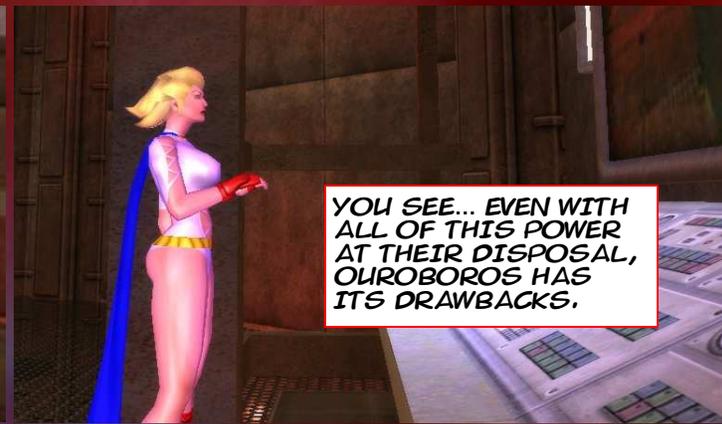
MY LITTLE INTERSPACE BUNKER HAS MORE THAN ENOUGH PROVISIONS FOR ME TO SURVIVE FOR A LONG TIME...

WITH ITEMS THAT WERE ACQUIRED OVER THE COUNTLESS YEARS...

LEGITIMATELY, OF COURSE.



FROM HERE I'M ABLE TO WATCH PREVIOUS EVENTS SAFELY...
WHEN THEY ARE AVAILABLE.

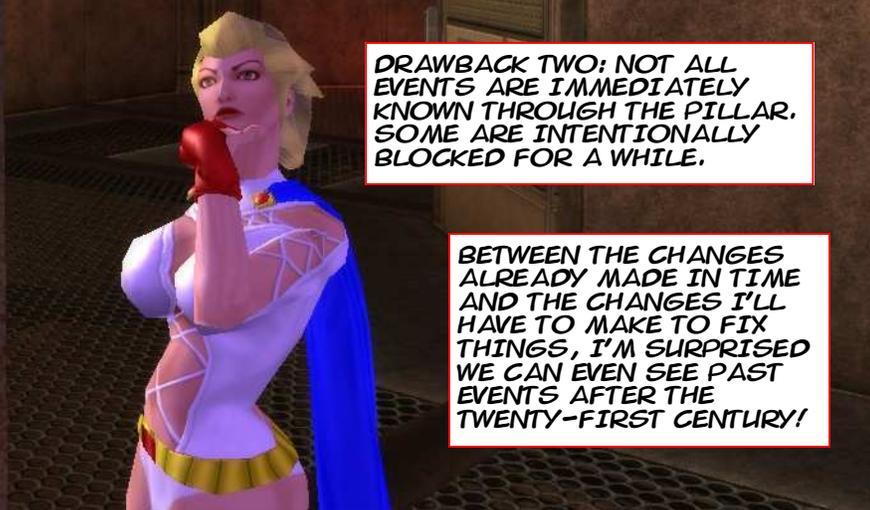


YOU SEE... EVEN WITH ALL OF THIS POWER AT THEIR DISPOSAL, OUROBOROS HAS ITS DRAWBACKS.

DRAWBACK ONE: WITH THE PILLAR CONSTANTLY FOLDING TIME IN ON ITSELF, YOU RUN THE RISK OF RUNNING INTO YOUR PAST OR FUTURE SELF ALREADY THERE.

"SAME MATTER CANNOT OCCUPY THE SAME SPACE"... A.K.A. THE NOVIKOV RULE. AND I ONCE THOUGHT THAT WAS JUST A MOVIE CLICHÉ..

ALTHOUGH THE PILLAR PREVENTS MUCH OF IT FROM HAPPENING ON OUROBOROS ITSELF, THE RISK IS FAR GREATER ON THE FLOATING ISLANDS.



DRAWBACK TWO: NOT ALL EVENTS ARE IMMEDIATELY KNOWN THROUGH THE PILLAR. SOME ARE INTENTIONALLY BLOCKED FOR A WHILE.

BETWEEN THE CHANGES ALREADY MADE IN TIME AND THE CHANGES I'LL HAVE TO MAKE TO FIX THINGS, I'M SURPRISED WE CAN EVEN SEE PAST EVENTS AFTER THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY!



MY PROBLEMS BEGAN WHEN I WAS SUMMONED HERE IN 2010.*

I KNOW I DIDN'T TRIGGER THE OUROBOROS PORTAL!

(* ISSUE #17)



BUT WHEN I TRIED TO LEAVE, ALL OF MY DEVICES WOULDN'T WORK.

EVEN THE MAIN TELEPORT DEVICE REFUSED TO LET ME LEAVE HERE.

KEEPING ME AWAY FROM THE EVENTS THAT FOLLOWED...



VANGUARD HEADQUARTERS

YEAR: 2010

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT SORT OF INTERNATIONAL MESS YOU CREATED WITH YOUR LITTLE "INVASION" OF THE ROGUE ISLES?

 THE LADY GREY



MY PEOPLE TOOK ACTION TO KEEP CONFIDENTIAL DATA FROM BEING SOLD ON THE BLACK MARKET.

THESE WERE MORE THAN JUST PERSONAL SECRETS... THEY ALSO INVOLVED FREEDOM CORPS AND VANGUARD ACCESS CODES AND FILES.

 MAXIMUS REX

THE SECURITY OF MY ORGANIZATION WAS COMPROMISED. IN FACT IT IS STILL AT RISK.

WE HAVE CONFIRMED THERE IS A SPY IN OUR ORGANIZATION, SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN FEEDING DATA TO OUTSIDE FORCES. WE NEEDED TO STOP THE LEAK AND...

AND HAD YOU COME TO ME FIRST WE WOULD HAVE FOUND A WAY TO RETRIEVE THIS INFORMATION DIPLOMATICALLY.

INSTEAD YOU SEND A COVERT TEAM, AND THEN SEND GALATEA POWERS TO CONFRONT ARACHNOS DIRECTLY! THAT'S LIKE FIRING A NUCLEAR MISSILE AT RECLUSE!

THE COVERT TEAM WAS AT LEAST EXPLAINABLE. BUT SENDING YOUR MOST POWERFUL MEMBER AND THREATENING TO LITERALLY GO TO WAR AGAINST THEM WAS FAR FROM EXCUSABLE. YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO PREVENT THESE KINDS OF FIASCOS.

YOU ASKED ME TO LEAD THIS GROUP.* YOU CAME TO ME AND SAID IT COULD USE MY EXPERIENCE.

I'M FIXING THE PROBLEMS THAT WERE LEFT OVER FROM CAPTAIN PARAG-...

(* ISSUE #14)

Priority Alert!

THIS IS MAXIMUS REX RESPONDING TO PAGE.

This is the automated CPCU system. A catastrophic emergency has occurred with the teleportation system. Guardian member *Daybright* has been caught in multiple teleportation systems.*

Protocol Three now in effect.

(* ISSUE #17)

FLASH MESSAGE TO DOC TOR, ICON POWERS, AND RYDER LIGHTNING.

RESCUE DAYBRIGHT AT ALL COSTS.

DO NOT USE TELEPORTERS. PROTOCOL THREE IS IN EFFECT.

PROCEED TO TALOS BASE IN PERSON.

END OF LINE.

Flash message transmitted..

PROBLEMS?

THERE'S BEEN A TELEPORTATION ACCIDENT. DAYBRIGHT WAS CAUGHT UP IN MULTIPLE TELEPORTATION BEAMS.

THE SYSTEM ACTIVATED PROTOCOL THREE, WHICH LOCKS OUT ALL GUARDIANS FROM THE ENTIRE TELEPORTATION SYSTEM, INCLUDING MEDICAL AND TRANSIT TELEPORTERS.

IT ALSO MEANS I'M STUCK HERE, HELPLESS TO DO ANYTHING UNTIL PROTOCOL THREE IS RESCINDED.

I FELT SORRY FOR HIM WHEN I HEARD ABOUT THAT...

MAXIMUS IS A MAN OF ACTION... AND TO HAVE HIM STAY THERE TRAPPED AT VANGUARD BASE, KNOWING WHAT WAS HAPPENING... THAT WAS PRETTY ROUGH.

I FIRST THOUGHT THAT THIS WAS THE REASON WHY I WAS STRANDED IN OUROBOROS THAT DAY.

BUT THEN I REALIZED THAT EVEN IF IT WERE SO, PROTOCOL THREE WOULDN'T HAVE TRIGGERED THE O-PORTAL DEVICE IN THE FIRST PLACE.

SOMETHING, OR SOMEONE, PULLED ME HERE TO OUROBOROS BEFORE THAT EVENT HAPPENED.

AND IT WAS FOR REASONS THAT WERE MORE THAN JUST KEEPING ME FROM RESCUING DAYBRIGHT.

AS IF I COULD EVEN DO ANYTHING TO HELP.

GUARDIAN BASE

NO, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO!

I'M NOT LETTING YOU GO... DO YOU HEAR ME? I'M NOT!

I JUST NEED A FEW SECONDS... CONFIGURE THIS RELAY CIRCUIT.

 DOC TOR

IF I CAN JUST PULL THE SIGNAL FROM THE VARIOUS BUFFER SYSTEMS, I SHOULD FORCE A RESTORATION... BUT I NEED MORE POWER TO DO IT.

THE SYSTEM RESOURCES ARE AT ONE-HUNDRED-AND-TWENTY PERCENT.

THEY'RE ON THE VERGE OF CRASHING AND TAKING EVERYTHING DOWN WITH IT.

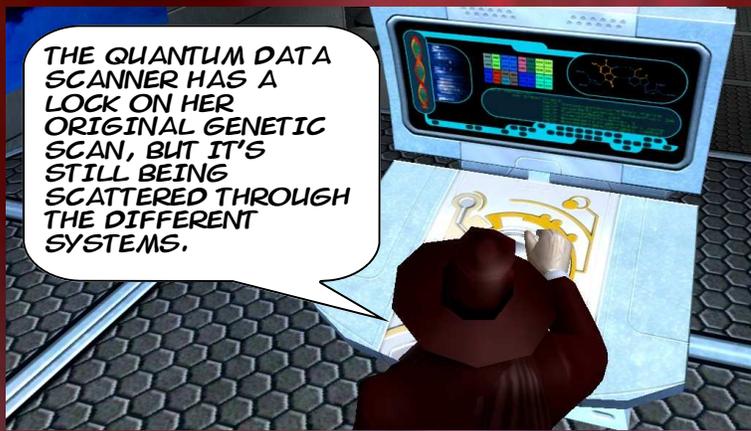
AND IT DOESN'T HELP THAT WE'RE FIGHTING THE OTHER TELEPORT SYSTEMS THAT SHE HAS ACCESS TO THAT WERE ENGAGED.

THE FREEDOM CORPS INFIRMARY DEVICES, POCKET D'S VIP TELEPORTER, WENTWORTH'S MARKET TELEPORTER... THEY ALL WENT ACTIVE AT THE SAME TIME, AND THEY SHOULDN'T HAVE.

THIS WAS DELIBERATE. SOMEONE IS TRYING TO KILL HER... AND THEY COULD SUCCEED IF WE DON'T ACT SOON TO RETRIEVE HER.

TAP
TARTAP
TARTAP
TAP

 ICON POWERS



THE QUANTUM DATA SCANNER HAS A LOCK ON HER ORIGINAL GENETIC SCAN, BUT IT'S STILL BEING SCATTERED THROUGH THE DIFFERENT SYSTEMS.

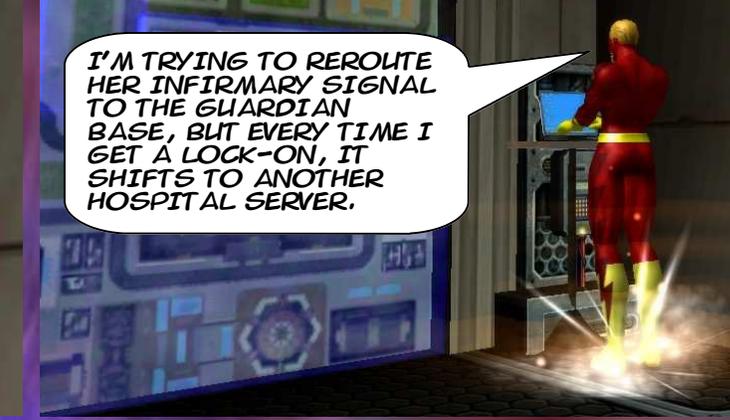


I NEED TO FORCE IT TO ONE PLACE... ONE LOCATION...
RYDER LIGHTING, HAVE YOU SHUT DOWN THE OTHER TELEPORT SYSTEMS?

D.A.T.A. OFFICE, ATLAS PARK



WENTWORTH'S AND POCKET D ARE ON EMERGENCY SHUTDOWN, BUT THE INFIRMARY TELEPORTS ARE IMPOSSIBLE TO SHUT DOWN. THEIR FAILSAFE SYSTEM PREVENTS IT.



I'M TRYING TO REROUTE HER INFIRMARY SIGNAL TO THE GUARDIAN BASE, BUT EVERY TIME I GET A LOCK-ON, IT SHIFTS TO ANOTHER HOSPITAL SERVER.

TAP TABABAP TABABATAP TABATATAP TAP TAP

RYDER LIGHTNING



I CAN MOVE AT THE SPEED OF THOUGHT, BUT I'M FIGHTING A FAILSAFE SYSTEM THAT WAS DESIGNED BY THE BEST PROGRAMMERS IN THE WORLD, AND IT WON'T LET ME OVERRIDE IT!



THE SIGNAL HAS JUMPED TO TALOS... NO, WAIT... BRICKSTOWN... NOW FOUNDERS FALLS... NOW... OUTBREAK? WHO SENDS STUFF TO... NOW IT'S IN GALAXY CITY...



THERE ARE JUST TOO MANY HOSPITALS ON THE GRID TO GET DAYBRIGHT'S SIGNAL TO STAY IN ONE LOCATION. IT'S ALMOST AS THOUGH SOMEONE ELSE IS FORCING THE SIGNAL TO KEEP JUMPING AROUND.

THAT'S OKAY, IT GAVE ME AN IDEA.
I'M GOING TO RECONFIGURE OUR INFIRMARY SYSTEM TO PRETEND TO BE A PART OF THE MEDICAL GRID.
IF DONE RIGHT, THE INFIRMARY SYSTEM WILL RECOGNIZE "GUARDIAN" AS ANOTHER HOSPITAL AND WILL SEND DAYBRIGHT'S SIGNAL HERE, WHERE WE CAN FORCE A RESTORATION WITH THE SIGNAL WE ALREADY HAVE IN THE BUFFER.



NEW HOSPITAL IN THE SYSTEM...

"GUARDIAN HOSPITAL" ON TALOS ISLAND.



COME ON COME ON... TAKE THE BAIT... TAKE THE BAIT...

SIGNAL ROUTING TO ASTORIA, PEREGRINE, OUTBREAK... **GUARDIAN!**



Emergency Restoration commencing...



YES! THAT'S IT! COME BACK TO US, DAYBRIGHT... COME BACK...

NO!

Danger! Resources exceeded. Beginning shutdown of all services...



Danger! Signal cohesion at eighty percent... seventy...



DON'T YOU DARE FIGHT ME! DO YOU HEAR ME?

DON'T YOU DARE FIGHT ME!

PULL POWER FROM ANYTHING ELSE... ANYTHING! JUST KEEP HER ALIVE!

Sixty-five percent... fifty-five... cohesion at minimal levels...



I'M ALMOST THERE! JUST GIVE ME TEN MORE SECONDS...

Unable to sustain signal cohesion. Infirmary unit shutting down.



NOOOO!

Guardian member Daybright... deceased.



THERE WAS A MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR DAYBRIGHT.

THERE WAS NO BODY TO BURY, BUT SUNSTORM, DAYBRIGHT'S KHELDIAN CONTACT, SAID THAT IT WAS BEST THAT SHE WENT OUT THIS WAY... AS ENERGY.

AN OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE INCIDENT BY POSITRON OF THE FREEDOM PHALANX SAID THAT THE TRIGGERING OF ALL THE TELEPORT DEVICES WAS A DELIBERATE ACT OF MURDER.

LIKE THEY DIDN'T KNOW THAT ALREADY...

THEY JUST DIDN'T KNOW WHO DID IT. THAT LITTLE BIT DAYBRIGHT TOOK WITH HER TO OBLIVION.

DAYBRIGHT WAS ONLY THE FIRST OF THE GUARDIANS TO LEAVE.



NOT LONG AFTER THAT, PYROGURL'S PARENTS PULLED HER OUT OF OUR APPRENTICE PROGRAM.

IT WAS A RATHER SMART DECISION IN THE LONG-RUN.

PYROGURL

STEEL CANYON

YEAR: 2011



THE NEXT ONE TO LEAVE US WASN'T BY CHOICE.

LIBERTARIAN AVENGER

THE RETURN OF CHIEF CONRAD BOCHCO* ALSO BROUGHT BACK THE WORST OF THE PARAGON POLICE.

TELEPORTER BLOCKED... HE'S STAYING DEAD.

THE POLICE NEVER LIKED ALEX. BUT THEY NEEDED HIM TO EXPOSE THE SCUM IN THEIR OWN RANKS.

THE SO-CALLED "BLIND UNIT"... AS IN "NOBODY SAW ANYTHING".

THEIR FIRST TARGET WAS THE LIBERTARIAN AVENGER.

BOCHCO'S "BLIND UNIT" MADE SURE THAT EVERYONE KNEW THAT THE PPD DIDN'T NEED HIS SERVICES ANYMORE.

NOT LONG AFTER WE BURIED ALEX, THE GUARDIANS WERE DISBANDED... FOREVER.

(* CHIEF MORTON CLAYTON WAS CRITICALLY WOUNDED IN ISSUE #15)



MIND YOU, I HAD TO LEARN ALL OF THIS SECOND-HAND.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN I CAN'T GO BACK TO 2010?
THIS IS A PLACE FOR TIME-TRAVEL, RIGHT?



THE PILLAR SAYS THAT YOU ARE NO LONGER OF THE TIME THAT YOU CAME FROM.

IT IS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO EXPLAIN THIS...

MENDER SILOS



WELL THEN YOU BETTER START DOING JUST THAT, SILOS.
I HAVE FRIENDS, FAMILY... I HAVE A WHOLE LIFE THAT IS STILL THERE WAITING FOR ME TO GO BACK TO. THERE IS NO WAY THAT I'M GOING TO JUST STAY HERE AND...



AND IF THE PILLAR SAYS NO, THEN IT IS NO.

I DO NOT EXPECT YOU TO FULLY UNDERSTAND ALL THAT IT KNOWS...



... AT LEAST NOT YET.
WE KNOW OF YOUR HISTORY, GALATEA POWERS. WE KNOW YOU CAME FROM ANOTHER UNIVERSE* AND FOR REASONS YOU HAVE YET TO COMPREHEND, YOU WERE FORCED TO COME TO THIS UNIVERSE.

IN FACT YOUR LIFE HAS BEEN FULL OF THINGS THAT WERE OUTSIDE OF YOUR CONTROL. DECISIONS FORCED ON YOU THAT YOU HAD NO SAY IN. THIS, SADLY, IS ONE OF THEM.

BUT I INVITE YOU TO GAIN FROM IT. STUDY WITH US WHILE YOU ARE HERE. LEARN THE SECRETS OF THE PILLAR SO YOU CAN BETTER UNDERSTAND WHY IT DOES WHAT IT DOES.

(* AS RECOUNTED IN ISSUES #0-3)

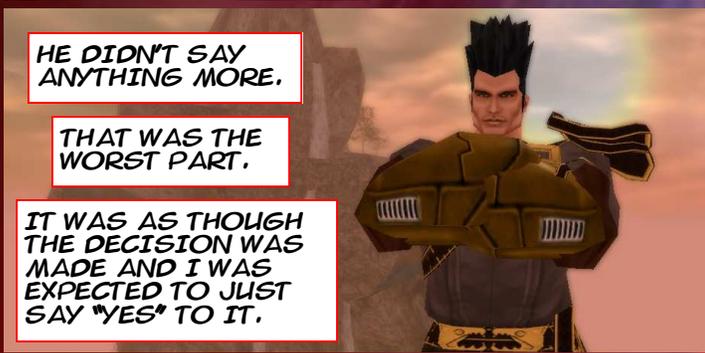


MENDER SILOS...

I APPRECIATE THE OFFER... AND UNDER ANY OTHER CIRCUMSTANCE, I'D BE HONORED...
BUT I CAN'T... NOT RIGHT NOW...



EVERYTHING INSIDE OF ME SCREAMS THAT I HAVE TO GO HOME... AS IN PARAGON CITY. MAYBE... MAYBE AFTER I CHECK IN WITH THEM...



HE DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING MORE.

THAT WAS THE WORST PART.

IT WAS AS THOUGH THE DECISION WAS MADE AND I WAS EXPECTED TO JUST SAY "YES" TO IT.



IT WAS AWKWARD JUST STANDING THERE, EXPECTING HIM TO SAY ANYTHING ELSE.

I HAD NO IDEA HOW MUCH REAL-TIME WAS PASSING WHILE I WAS HERE. THAT SOUNDS STRANGE FOR A PLACE LIKE OUROBOROS, BUT THAT'S DRAWBACK NUMBER THREE HERE.

I FIRST THOUGHT THIS WAS MENDER TESSERACT'S HANDIWORK.

IT WOULDN'T BE THE FIRST TIME THAT SHE MEDDLED IN OUR AFFAIRS.*

(* ISSUE 12)



BUT AS ARROGANT AS SHE IS, SHE WOULDN'T STOOP TO THIS TACTIC.

STILL, RIGHT ABOUT THEN I WISHED DOC TOR HAD TOLD ME THOSE FOUR WORDS THAT HE SAID WOULD DESTROY HER*...



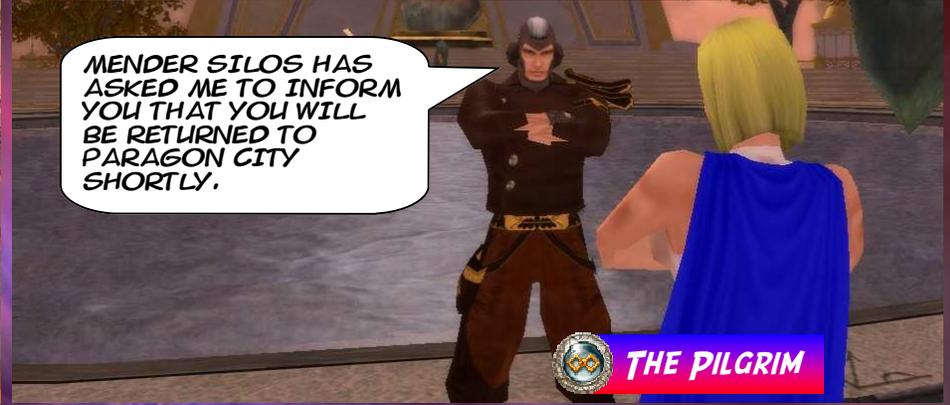
MENDER TESSERACT

(* ISSUE 14)



GALATEA...
A WORD PLEASE...

MENDER SILOS HAS ASKED ME TO INFORM YOU THAT YOU WILL BE RETURNED TO PARAGON CITY SHORTLY.



THE PILGRIM



THAT'S GREAT!

BUT... WHY DO I HAVE A FEELING THERE'S A "BUT" ATTACHED TO IT?

BECAUSE THERE MUST BE ONE.

SILOS SAYS THAT WHILE YOU ARE HERE, THREE YEARS HAVE PASSED IN YOUR TIME.

THERE ARE A LOT OF CHANGES TO THE WORLD YOU ONCE KNEW. PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THEM.



STEEL CANYON

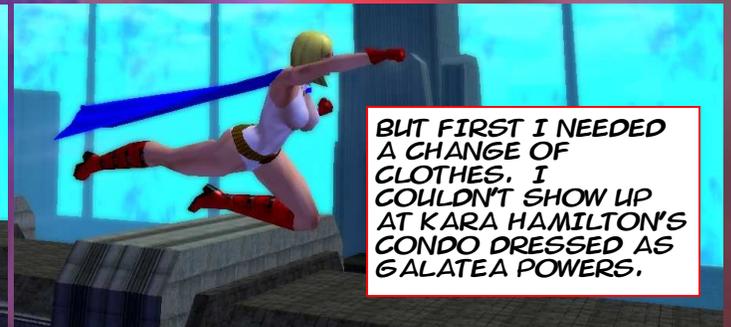
YEAR: 2013

AT THE TIME, I DIDN'T CARE.

I JUST WANTED TO GO TO MY APARTMENT, TAKE A SHOWER, CURL UP WITH FLASHER, AND TELL KENT I'M OKAY.



BUT FIRST I NEEDED A CHANGE OF CLOTHES. I COULDN'T SHOW UP AT KARA HAMILTON'S CONDO DRESSED AS GALATEA POWERS.



WHAT THE HELL???

I DIDN'T EXPECT TO SEE THIS...



COUNTESS GREY BOUGHT ICON???



FORTUNATELY I HAD A SPARE BUSINESS SUIT HIDDEN IN A VENT SHAFT ON THE ROOF NEXT DOOR.



IT'S AMAZING WHAT PEOPLE CAN LEAVE UP HERE FOR SO LONG...

I NEEDED TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.



WELCOME TO C-WEAR, YOUR ONE-STOP PLACE FOR HERO OUTFITS. I'M MARTIN... HOW CAN I HELP...

MISS HAMILTON? IS THAT YOU?



MARTIN! THANK GOD YOU RECOGNIZED ME!

WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED HERE? WHEN DID GREY TAKE OVER THE STORE? WHAT HAPPENED TO SERGE AND THE OTHERS? I MEAN, I KNOW I WAS AWAY FOR A BIT BUT... NOT THIS LONG!

IT'S BEEN HARD THESE PAST FEW YEARS.

POLICE GOT ROUGH AFTER THEY KILLED THE LIBERTARIAN AVENGER.

SOME OF THEM STARTED UP THE OLD PROTECTION RACKETS.

BUSINESS SANK... SO WHEN THE COUNTESS MADE HER BID, THE OWNERS TOOK IT.



WAIT... YOU SAID THE POLICE... **KILLED**... THE AVENGER?

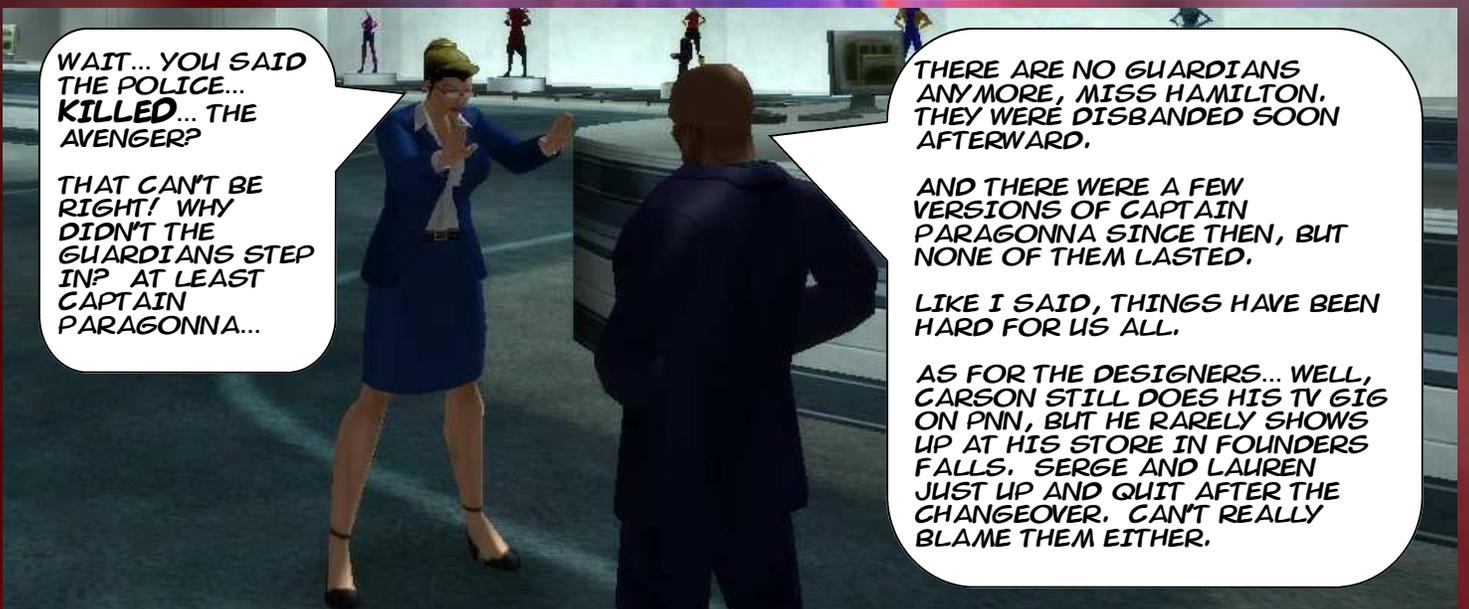
THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT! WHY DIDN'T THE GUARDIANS STEP IN? AT LEAST CAPTAIN PARAGONNA...

THERE ARE NO GUARDIANS ANYMORE, MISS HAMILTON. THEY WERE DISBANDED SOON AFTERWARD.

AND THERE WERE A FEW VERSIONS OF CAPTAIN PARAGONNA SINCE THEN, BUT NONE OF THEM LASTED.

LIKE I SAID, THINGS HAVE BEEN HARD FOR US ALL.

AS FOR THE DESIGNERS... WELL, CARSON STILL DOES HIS TV GIG ON PNN, BUT HE RARELY SHOWS UP AT HIS STORE IN FOUNDERS FALLS. SERGE AND LAUREN JUST UP AND QUIT AFTER THE CHANGEOVER. CAN'T REALLY BLAME THEM EITHER.



I'LL SPARE YOU THE REST OF THE DETAILS... THEY AREN'T PLEASANT. GREY TOOK OVER AND FIRED ALL OF THE MANAGERS, INCLUDING DEAR, SWEET MISSUS CARLISLE.

AND IT JUST GOT WORSE AND WORSE FOR MY PERSONAL LIFE.

IT SEEMS DURING THE THREE YEARS I WAS IN OUBOROBOS, "KARA HAMILTON" WAS LEGALLY DECLARED DEAD.

AS A RESULT, I LOST THE LEASE TO MY CONDO. ALL OF MY NON-HERO ITEMS WERE AUCTIONED OFF.

THANKFULLY KATIE, LYON POWERS, QUIETLY TOOK MY HERO STUFF AND MY CAT FLASHER WITH HER BACK TO WALES BEFORE THEN.

INDEPENDENCE PORT

YEAR: 2015

WITH THE GUARDIANS DISBANDED AND MY CIVILIAN IDENTITY GONE, I NEEDED A NEW HOME.

I WORKED WITH THE MIDNIGHT SQUAD, WITH VANGUARD, AND I WAS EVEN A MEMBER OF THE FREEDOM PHALANX FOR A BRIEF WHILE...

BUT IT JUST DIDN'T SEEM RIGHT. NONE OF THEM DID.

 STATESMAN

IN FACT, THE LONGER I STAYED IN THE "PRESENT", THE MORE OUT-OF-PLACE I FELT.

I EVENTUALLY REALIZED WHAT SILOS MEANT WHEN HE SAID THAT I WAS NO LONGER "OF" THE TIME I CAME FROM.

BUT I STILL DIDN'T WANT TO GIVE HIM THE SATISFACTION OF BEING PROVEN RIGHT.

NEW SOUTHGATE

YEAR: 2018

AND THEN IT HAPPENED.

THE MOMENT THAT PEOPLE FEARED AND I WOULD NEVER FORGET FOR THE REST OF MY PROLONGED LIFE...

THE SKIES TURNED RED. THE EARTH SHUDDERED AND ERUPTED. THE MAGNETIC POLES REVERSED OVER HIS ARRIVAL...

RULARUU THE RAVAGER!

THE BATTLE WAS HARD. HIS PRESENCE LITERALLY DECIMATED THE WHOLE PLANET WORSE THAN THE RIKTI EVER COULD.

WE LOST A LOT OF LIVES THAT DAY. EVEN LORD RECLUSE CAME TO OUR SIDE TO HELP DEFEAT RULARUU.



RULARUU THE RAVAGER

UNFORTUNATELY RECLUSE ONLY SERVED TO HELP HIMSELF AFTER THE BATTLE..

RECLUSE PARK (FORMERLY ATLAS PARK)

YEAR: 2030

MOST OF THE HEROES WERE KILLED IN THE BATTLE WITH RULARUU.

RECLUSE MADE QUICK WORK OF THE ONES THAT SURVIVED.

HE MINIONS PLACED POWER NULLIFIERS ALL AROUND PARAGON CITY.

WITH ONLY HIS FORCES BEING ALLOWED TO USE POWERS, ARACHNOS EASILY TOOK OVER.

HE QUICKLY REBUILT AND REMADE THE CITY IN HIS IMAGE.



IT TOOK A WHILE FOR MY BODY TO OVERCOME THE NULLIFIERS...

AND JUST IN THE PROVERBIAL NICK OF TIME.



STATESMAN WAS KILLED IN THE BATTLE WITH RULARUU.

DO YOU HAVE ANY LAST WORDS BEFORE YOUR EXECUTION?



HIS SON, JOHN COLE, TRIED TO CARRY ON IN HIS PLACE...

JUST THIS: GO GET 'EM, GALATEA!

★ STATESMAN II



ARACHNOS HAD NO IDEA THAT I WOULD BECOME MORE POWERFUL THAN THE NULLIFIERS.

THAT GAVE ME THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE TO POWER MY WAY IN AND STOP THE EXECUTION.



THANKS. SO WHAT'S NEXT ON THE TO-DO LIST?

NEXT, WE HAVE AN EMPEROR TO DEPOSE.

IT ALL SEEMED SO SIMPLE BACK THEN.

BUT WE WERE ALL JUST KEEPING BUSY. WE DIDN'T WANT TO RECOGNIZE THAT THE DAMAGE WAS ALREADY DONE AND IT WAS ALREADY TOO LATE FOR EARTH.

THE SIGHT OF WHAT RECLUSE DID TO CITY HALL SICKENED ME JUST AS MUCH AS IT SICKENED JOHN.

THE FLAGS WERE MADE FROM MANTICORE'S COSTUME. THE LIGHTS USED CITADEL'S CIRCUITS.

I DON'T EVEN WHAT TO THINK OF WHAT THEY DID WITH SISTER PSYCHE'S REMAINS.



RECLUSE!
LET'S FINISH THIS!



WHAT?
IMPOSSIBLE!
YOU SHOULDN'T EVEN BE FLYING!
HOW?

EMPEROR RECLUSE



ONE WORD, RECLUSE... THE ONE YOU FEARED ME LITTERING...
"INCARNATE".



NO! THAT CANNOT BE!



BUT IT WAS TRUE. BY THEN I HAD BECOME AN INCARNATE BEING, EQUAL TO RECLUSE.



AND SOON THE PROOF OF THAT STATEMENT WAS LAID FLAT OUT BY OUR FEET.



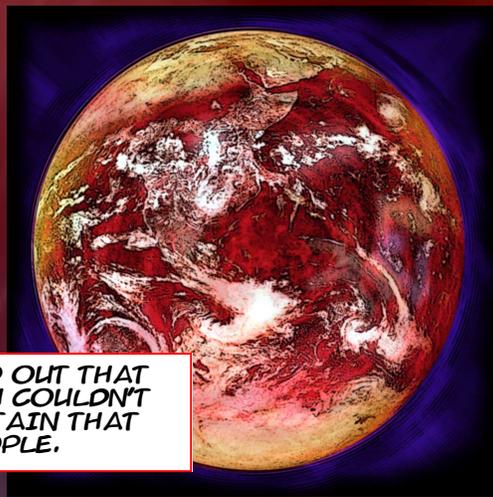
WE HAD WON. PARAGON CITY WAS FREE AGAIN.

WE DID IT, GALATEA. WE LIBERATED THE CITY.

AND YET IT WAS ALL ANTI-CLIMACTIC.

RULARU's ARRIVAL CAUSED FAR MORE DAMAGE TO THE PLANET THAN IT WAS ORIGINALLY ESTIMATED TO BE.

IT WAS BAD ENOUGH THAT THERE WERE MAYBE A FEW THOUSAND HUMAN BEINGS LEFT...



IT TURNED OUT THAT THE EARTH COULDN'T EVEN SUSTAIN THAT MANY PEOPLE.

Galatea...

The Pillar Calls

HMMM... NOW THAT'S STRANGE.



NORMALLY THE PILLAR DOESN'T SAY ANYTHING TO ME. IT ONLY TALKS TO THE MENDERS.

BUT THIS WOULDN'T BE THE FIRST TIME THAT I WAS SUMMONED BY IT.



YEAR: 2019*

THE PILLAR HAS SUMMONED YOU TO PREPARE YOU FOR THE NEXT STEP IN YOUR PERSONAL EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS.

THE LAST TIME WAS RIGHT AFTER RULARU.

(*AS MEASURED ON EARTH)



YOU WILL NEED THIS STEP IN ORDER TO FACE LORD RECLUSE AND DEFEAT HIM IN THE COMING FINAL BATTLE.

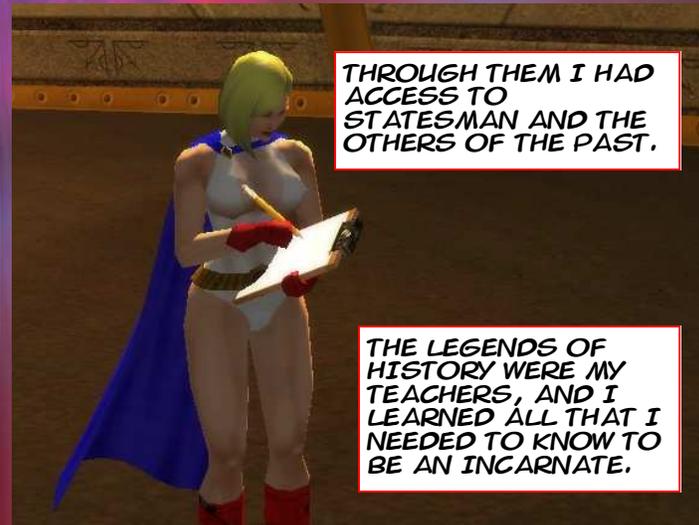
THAT'S HOW I BECAME AN INCARNATE...



I USED ALL THE AVAILABLE HISTORY THROUGH THE PILLAR AND ITS ASPECTS.

THROUGH THEM I HAD ACCESS TO STATESMAN AND THE OTHERS OF THE PAST.

THE LEGENDS OF HISTORY WERE MY TEACHERS, AND I LEARNED ALL THAT I NEEDED TO KNOW TO BE AN INCARNATE.



YEAR: 2042

WE WERE LOSING MORE AND MORE PEOPLE AS THE EARTH CONTINUED TO WITHER.

JOHN COLE WASN'T AN INCARNATE, HE ONLY HAD A FRACTION OF HIS FATHER'S POWER.

I TRIED TO HELP HIM, BUT IT JUST WASN'T ENOUGH.

HE DESERVED A HERO'S FUNERAL...

THIS WAS THE BEST THAT WE COULD DO.

IN THE YEAR 2053, THERE WAS ONLY ONE PERSON LEFT... ME.

THE LAST LIVING RESIDENT OF THE PLANET EARTH.

EVEN THE NORMALLY IMMORTAL LADY GREY WAS LOSING HER POWER AS THERE WERE FEWER OF US LEFT.

THERE WAS ONLY ONE PLACE LEFT FOR ME TO GO AFTERWARD.

WELCOME BACK.

MENDER SILOS ASKED THAT I ASSIST YOU IN SETTLING IN HERE AT OUROBOROS.

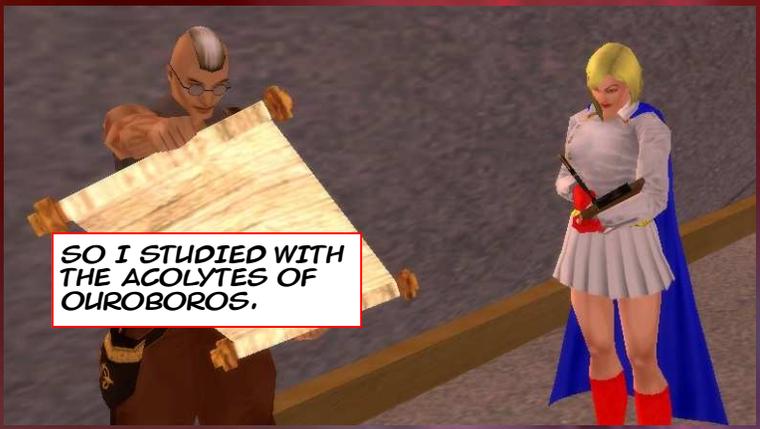
HE HAS ALSO REQUESTED THAT FOR THE TIME BEING YOU LIMIT YOUR CONTACT ONLY TO THE ACOLYTES AND NOT WITH THE MENDERS THEMSELVES.

DID HE AT LEAST TELL YOU WHY, SO I DON'T DISOBEY HIS REQUEST AND ASK HIM DIRECTLY?

HEE ACTUALLY HE KNEW YOU WOULD ASK THAT.

MENDER SILOS SAID THAT THEY ARE RESEARCHING A FATAL FLAW IN EARTH'S HISTORY THAT WAS CONNECTED TO AN EARLIER VERGENCE, AND THAT IT PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN THE DEVASTATION YOU JUST LEFT.

I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING MORE, BUT I'M SURE THEY WILL TELL YOU WHEN THEY KNOW THEMSELVES.



SO I STUDIED WITH THE ACOLYTES OF OUIROBOROS.



I LEARNED THE ANCIENT LANGUAGE OF THE FIRST ONES.

WHAT THE ACOLYTES CALL "FIRST-SPEAK".



WHAT THE...? THIS CAN'T BE RIGHT...

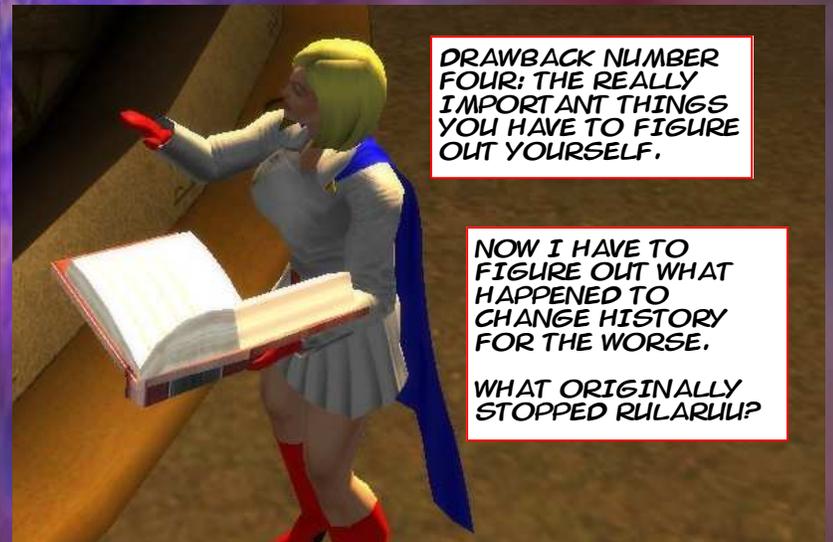
ONCE I DID, I FOUND OUT WHAT THE MENDERS HAD NOT YET TOLD ME.



ACCORDING TO THIS... RULARUU WAS NEVER SUPPOSED TO COME TO EARTH, EITHER IN 2018... OR MAYBE EVEN NOT AT ALL!



THAT'S THE BIG SECRET... I AM THE LAST SURVIVOR OF A PLANET THAT WAS NOT SUPPOSED TO BE EXTERMINATED BY RULARUU.



DRAWBACK NUMBER FOUR: THE REALLY IMPORTANT THINGS YOU HAVE TO FIGURE OUT YOURSELF.

NOW I HAVE TO FIGURE OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO CHANGE HISTORY FOR THE WORSE.

WHAT ORIGINALLY STOPPED RULARUU?

OUTSIDE ALPHA CENTAURI A/B SYSTEM

YEAR: 2217



EARTH WAS GONE, BUT IT WASN'T FORGOTTEN.

THE KHELDIANS TRIED TO SAVE AS MANY HUMANS AS THEY COULD BY PUTTING THEM ON ION-POWERED SPACE ARKS.



I THINK AFTER I SELL THE HUMANS, I'LL HOLD ON TO YOUR BODY AS MY PERSONAL TROPHY.

I ALWAYS ENJOY "PLAYING" WITH MY OWN COLLECTIONS, LIVING OR NOT.



HUH?

Swish!

TOO SLOW...



ARGH!

KaPOW!



YOU DARE STRIKE ME!

Zzzzzzap!



FOR THE SAKE OF HUMANITY, YOU BET I DARE!

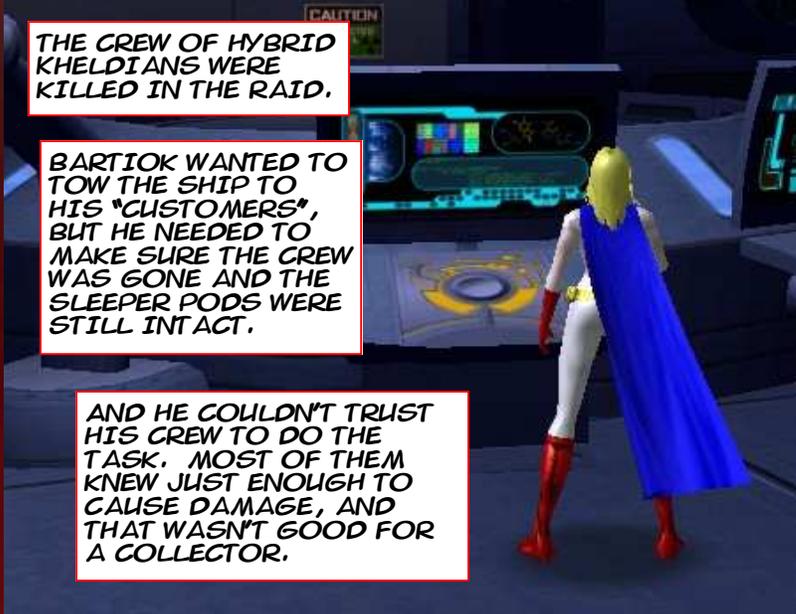
KaBAM!



HIS MINIONS HAVE RUN OFF.

I CAN ALWAYS GET THEM LATER.

BARTIOK WAS THE IMPORTANT ONE TO DEFEAT.



THE CREW OF HYBRID KHELDIANS WERE KILLED IN THE RAID.

BARTIOK WANTED TO TOW THE SHIP TO HIS "CUSTOMERS", BUT HE NEEDED TO MAKE SURE THE CREW WAS GONE AND THE SLEEPER PODS WERE STILL INTACT.

AND HE COULDN'T TRUST HIS CREW TO DO THE TASK. MOST OF THEM KNEW JUST ENOUGH TO CAUSE DAMAGE, AND THAT WASN'T GOOD FOR A COLLECTOR.



THE KHELDIANS WILL SEND OVER A REPLACEMENT CREW AND TAKE BARTIOK INTO CUSTODY.

AND HUMANITY WILL CONTINUE, EVEN IF IT IS NOT ON EARTH.

THOSE WERE THE CENTURIES...

<I'M HERE... AS YOU SUMMONED ME.>*

(*TRANSLATED FROM FIRST-SPEAK)

<GALATEA... YOU HAVE SERVED THE MENDERS WELL... BUT YOU ARE STILL UNFINISHED IN YOUR MISSION.>

<THE RIPPLES OF TIME WILL SOON TAKE AFFECT HERE UNLESS YOU COMPLETE YOUR TASK.>

<THAT IS WHAT I HAVE BEEN TRYING TO DO.

I HAVE BEEN TRACING AND RE-TRACING THE STEPS, WATCHING THE EVENTS OVER AND OVER AGAIN WHEN THEY ARE AVAILABLE. I DO NOT KNOW WHERE THE VERGENCE WAS THAT STOPPED RULARUU.>

<GALATEA... YOU THINK TOO SMALL, THE VERGENCE WASN'T AN EVENT. THE VERGENCE WAS A BEING.>

<OKAY, SO WHO COULD BE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO...

WAIT A MINUTE...>

<ALL THIS TIME THE MENDERS AND THE ACOLYTES WERE TALKING ABOUT A "VERGENCE" AS THOUGH IT WAS A KEY EVENT THAT HAPPENED THAT CHANGED HISTORY.

BUT NOW THAT YOU SAID THAT IT WAS A BEING, I REALIZE THAT THERE WAS ONLY ONE PERSON THAT WAS REFERRED TO AS A "VERGENCE"... DAYBRIGHT!>

<SHE ONCE SAID THAT THE KHELDIANS HAD DISPATCHED TALMYIA TO EARTH A YEAR EARLY BECAUSE THEY DETECTED ITS CONNECTION TO A VERGENCE IN THE TIMESTREAM, AND THEN WHEN IT MERGED WITH THE BODY OF SALLY BRIGHT, IT ACTUALLY BECAME THAT VERY VERGENCE!*>

<YOU ARE CORRECT...>

(*ISSUES 12 AND 13)

<BE WARNED, GALATEA... EVENTS IN TIME ARE NOT ALWAYS CLEAR OR DIRECT. A BUTTERFLY CAN STILL CHANGE TIME AS MUCH AS A GOD. THE EVENTS OF YOUR PAST PLAY A ROLE IN THE HISTORY THAT MUST BE FIXED.>

DRAWBACK NUMBER FIVE: YOU WILL ALWAYS BE TOLD JUST WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW AT THAT TIME; NOTHING MORE AND NOTHING LESS.

SO... I JUST NEED TO GO BACK IN TIME, SAVE DAYBRIGHT, FIND OUT WHAT THE EVENT WAS THAT SHE PLAYED A ROLE IN THAT STOPPED RULARUU, MAKE SURE SHE DOES IT, AND THEN HISTORY WOULD BE FIXED AND EVERYTHING WOULD BE OKAY.

YEAH... PIECE OF CAKE.

WHY DIDN'T THE PILLAR TAP DOC TOR INSTEAD?

ELSEWHERE

I HATE LIMBO.

THE PLACE, OF COURSE, NOT THE DANCE.

 **TAINED EVE**

HELLO...

OF COURSE I CAN'T DO THAT SO WELL EITHER WITH THESE WINGS ON MY BACK.

AM... AM I DEAD? IS THIS THE AFTERLIFE?

"OFFICIALLY" YOU ARE, BUT NO, THIS ISN'T IT.

WHO ARE YOU? AND WHERE IS THIS PLACE?

THIS ONE HAS BEEN DEAD BEFORE...

I CAN ALMOST SMELL IT ON HER.

 **DAYBRIGHT**

"THIS PLACE" IS KNOWN BY MANY NAMES... MOST COMMONLY AS "LIMBO".

MY NAME IS TAINED EVE. I AM THE LEADER OF THE GROUP KNOWN IN THE ROGUE ISLES AS THE LIBRA ORDER.

YOU'RE HERE BECAUSE MY EMPLOYER, A BEING BY THE NAME OF LIBRA, STRUCK A DEAL WITH YOUR PEOPLE THAT PLACED YOU AT MY EMPLOYER'S DISPOSAL.*

YOU SHOULD BE THANKFUL THAT HE DID THAT, BECAUSE IF NOT, THEN YOU REALLY WOULD BE DEAD.

YOU ARE HERE BECAUSE YOU PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN EARTH'S FUTURE.

YOU'RE HERE, PEACEBRINGER REDEEMER, TO HELP KILL A GOD.

(*ISSUE 17)

TO BE CONTINUED



Words of wisdom from writer and creator David 2.

“TIME, TIME, TIME, SEE WHAT’S BECOME OF ME...”
- from the song “Hazy Shade of Winter” written by Paul Simon

In going over the various discussions of time and paradoxes, I couldn’t help but think of a little line from the movie “Timecop”.

“Same matter cannot occupy the same space at the same time.”

The theory was never given a name, but it played an important role in allowing one to travel in time. The rule was this: you were allowed to go back in time, and even make some alterations to past events. But you could not make contact with yourself, or else you create a paradox that could potentially wipe out all existence.

Thus in “Timecop”, people from the future could travel back in time to meet with and even discuss things with their past selves. Any changes they make during that time would have a ripple effect to their future (as was seen when the bad guy is cut in the present and a scar appears on his future self), just as long as they never came in contact with each other.

Of course nobody knows what happens if the rule is broken... so people presume the worst possible thing happening, the end of all existence.

“The Novikov Rule” referenced in this issue is actually based on the Novikov Self-Consistency Principle by Russian theorist Igor Novikov. Novikov theorized that time travel into the past was only allowed as long as past events could not be altered or the possibility of creating a paradox to occur, such as meeting yourself. Since you have no memory of meeting yourself, you could not travel back in time to meet yourself. Likewise, you could not go back in time to do anything that would alter your own past.

Novikov believed that all past time was fixed, and that any alterations to past events would not be allowed. For instance, you couldn’t stop the atomic bomb from being dropped on Hiroshima in 1945. However, you could save some of the people that were supposed to be obliterated in the blast, provided you take them to some point in the future after time travel is possible, and as long as you substitute equal matter (i.e. corpses) in their place. The tragic event still occurs, but the

Continues on next page...

actual loss of life is reduced without anyone in the past knowing the difference, because all proof of their existence is obliterated.

It sounds morbid, but it is precisely this idea that was the premise of the 1989 time-travel movie “Millennium”, where future civilization tried to save itself by substituting their dead with people already expected to die in past tragedies.

In the City of Heroes MMO universe, time is considered fluid. Thus when the Menders of Ouroboros revealed themselves in 2007, heroes and villains are given possible alterations to time, such as Manticore becoming evil, Arachnos never taking control of the Rogue Isles, and of the breakouts of Ziggursky Prison (a key event in City of Villains game-play) never happening.

In fact, the very reason why Mender Silos makes the existence of Ouroboros known to the heroes and villains in the first place is because Silos supposedly needs them to prevent a destructive future from happening. This future tragedy is never mentioned, unlike this issue, but it is referred to as the “Coming Storm”, and some suspect that it does have to do with Rularuu. Whether or not this “Coming Storm” even exists is another matter entirely.

But, hey, once time-bending crisis at a time, okay?

<http://GuardiansOfTheDawn.wordpress.com>

NEXT ISSUE...



What sort of plan involves Daybright, Galatea Future, Tainted Eve... and the death of a god?

And how will all of this save the future?

Find out as “Time and Changes” continues...



"We are the law. You have no rights here.
Anything we say **WILL** be used against you!"



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