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LOG/FREEDOM-PHALANX/
MANTICORE/PRIVATE/06 JUN 05

WELCOME TO
PARAGON CITY.

AMERICA'S LARGEST--AND
GREATEST--BOOM TOWN.

WHERE
HEROES
LIVE...

...AND, SADLY,
VILLAINS.

I WISH ALL THE BAD GUYS WERE
MORE LIKE THE CLOCKWORK KING,
WHO NEVER SEEMS TO GIVE US
MORE THAN A HALF-DAY'S WORK.

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HIS LATEST SCHEME: BUILD GIANT ROBOTS, FORGE A TENTATIVE ALLIANCE WITH A STREET GANG CALLED THE OUTCASTS, BREAK THINGS, GET BEATEN AGAIN...

...BY A TIDAL WAVE OF HEROES SO THICK THAT I DIDN'T KNOW HALF THEIR NAMES.

I WONDER IF THE SHAME-SPIRAL OF DEFEAT HASN'T LEFT A SAD MARK ON THE CLOCKWORK KING.

AND IF THAT SOUNDS SNOBBISH...

...THEN YOU'RE
ON TARGET.

I'M ALLOWED, THOUGH,
NOT EVERYONE COULD PLY
A SKILL AT ARCHERY INTO
MEMBERSHIP IN THE ELITE
FREEDOM PHALANX...

...AND HOLD
HIS OWN...

...WHEN
NECESSARY...

...WHICH ISN'T OFTEN
ENOUGH, FRANKLY,
WITH A POWERHOUSE
LIKE STATESMAN
LEADING THE TEAM.

LET ME
WORRY ABOUT
THE HEAVY
HITTERS,
MANTICORE!

HOW
MANY TIMES
DO I HAVE TO
TELL YOU?

OKAY, I GET IT.
THE WORK IS
DANGEROUS...

POSITRON,
HELP! I'M
ALMOST

DGHAA=

...BUT IN PARAGON CITY,
THE HEROES HAVE A VERY
SPECIAL TYPE OF "LIFE
INSURANCE."

GET HURT, AND THE
EMERGENCY TELEPORT
NETWORK AUTOMATICALLY
TELEPORTS YOU TO THE
NEAREST HOSPITAL,
HEALING YOU INSTANTLY.

BIGGEST WORRY:
YOU WANT BACK IN
WHILE THE ACTION'S
STILL GOING...



...BECAUSE YOU'D
HATE TO MISS A
SIGHT LIKE THIS:

OUTCASTS TRYING TO
SNEAK UP ON SYNAPSE
AND SISTER PSYCHE.
THAT'S RIGHT--USING
STEALTH AGAINST A
SPEEDSTER AND A
MENTALIST.



AND IF I'M MAKING OUR JOB
SOUND UN-HEROICALLY EASY--



--THAT'S BECAUSE
WE'D BEGUN TO
THINK IT WAS.

BEGIN.

WE DIDN'T KNOW THAT
LORD RECLUSE WAS
ABOUT TO UNVEIL A MAGIC
BOMBSHELL USING HIS
NEW ARACHNOS MYSTICS...

...OR THAT THIS WOULD BE
THE LAST DAY THE CITY OF
HEROES FELT LIKE HOME...

...AND SURVIVAL
FELT LIKE LIVING.

GA

AS



WE'D TAKEN OUR INVINCIBILITY
FOR GRANTED AND NEVER SAW
UNTIL TOO LATE THE...

...WELL...

...THE WRITING
ON THE WALL.

THE WORDS LOOKED
LIKE GIBBERISH, BUT
THEIR MEANING WAS
UNMISTAKABLE:



"YOUR INSURANCE
IS CANCELLED..."



MANDINGO
IS... IS HE DEAD?
WHY DIDN'T HE
MEDIPORT? TRY A
RESURRECTION
SPELL!

I HAVE!
NOTHING'S
WORKING!

NOBODY'S
POWERS ARE
WORKING!

"YOUR POWERS ARE
DISCONNECTED..."

WHAT THE
HELL--? THE
CLOCKWORK
ARE FAILING,
TOO!



TAKE
COVER!

"EVERYTHING
IS NOW OURS."

FOR THE NEXT FEW CRUCIAL SECONDS, WHETHER YOU LIVED OR DIED DEPENDED ON TIMING, HUMAN REFLEXES AND SHEER COINCIDENCE.

"WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE POWERS WENT OUT?"

MOVE!

GET AWAY!

I CAN'T HOLD IT--!

OUR LEADER WAS, AS USUAL, A TANK, THINKING ONLY OF OTHERS...

...EVEN WHILE, LIKE EVERYONE ELSE, HIS POWER LEVELS WERE DWINDLING FAST.

IN A BLINK, SOMEONE SOMEWHERE HAD CHANGED CHANNELS FROM THE INCREDIBLES--



--TO SAVING
PRIVATE RYAN.

FORGET ABOUT
BEATING THE BAD
GUYS FOR NOW.



GETTING OUT
ALIVE WOULD BE
VICTORY ENOUGH.

EVERYONE
FALL BACK!

MOVE!
GO GO
GO!



HE'S RIGHT!
RETREAT!

HAUWK



WHAT'S HUH-
HAPPENING?
I D-DON'T
UNDERSTAND...!

NEITHER
DID I.

I STILL
DON'T.

WE ALL BELIEVED
WE HAD LIFE,
THE UNIVERSE
AND THE CITY
OF HEROES
FIGURED OUT.

GOOD GUYS
ALWAYS WIN
IN THE END.

DISCONNECTING IN 5

ENDINGS
ARE HAPPY.

STATESMAN?
WAKE UP, PAL.
C'MON. YOUR FAT
EGO MUST'VE
TAKEN MOST OF
THE BLAST...

MANTICORE!

DISCONNECTING IN 4

WE ALWAYS
LIVE TO FIGHT
AGAIN.

MANTICORE!
THIS WAY!
WE'LL COME
BACK FOR
HIM!

YOU GO
ON! WE'LL BE
RIGHT BEHIND
YOU!

DISCONNECTING IN 3

UNNNHH~

COME ON!
COME ON!

DISCONNECTING IN 2

HOW
MUCH CAN
YOU POSSIBLY
WEIGH--?

DISCONNECTING IN 1

SIX WEEKS LATER...



SORRY I'M...
WHAT'S YOUR
NAME, AGAIN,
SWEETIE?

CHLOE.

SORRY
I'M SO BAD
AT THIS, CHLOE.
JUST BE PATIENT
A LITTLE WHILE
LONGER,
OKAY?

IF THIS
DOESN'T GET
FIXED, YOUR
FATHER WILL
HAVE A FIT!



?

DO YOU
KNOW MY
DADDY--?

NO, BUT I
CAN TELL FROM
READING YOUR
THOUGHTS
AND FEELINGS.
I USED TO
BE--

SHUT UP,
Aurora. It's
none of her
BUSINESS!

:GASP:

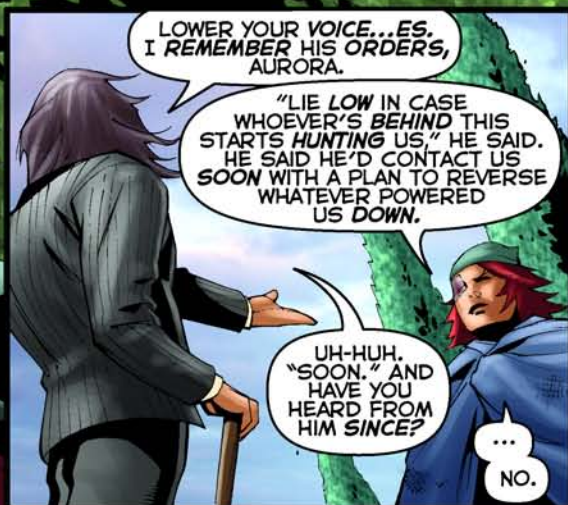


CHLOE! COME
BACK! SHALICE
DIDN'T MEAN
ANYTHING!

Yeah, kid!
I'M sorry! Come
get your BIKE
fixed!

DON'T
TOUCH ME, YOU
WEIRDO!

WEIRDO!





Justin...
PLEASE
don't think I'm
just some crazy
STREET PERSON
who TALKS to
herself.

Remember
when I burned
my PSYCHIC
POWERS out
fighting the RIKTI
INVASION--


But I
was able to
MIND-MERGE
with that
kid?

I HAVE
A NAME,
SHALICE!

I'M talking
now, Aurora.
Anyway, she TOOK
OVER for me while
I healed. It took a
LOT of POWER to
UNITE with her...

...but even
MORE to SEPARATE.
There's always gonna
be a PART of her
personality in my BRAIN...an
ECHO. A VOICE stuffed in the
back of my HEAD...that the
CRASH woke UP again,
and now it's louder
than EVER.

So we're
STUCK together.
Two personalities in
one BODY, without
a BREAK from one
another.



I'M SORRY,
BUT YOU MUST
HAVE A LIFE OUTSIDE
OF BEING A HERO. WHY
ARE YOU SLEEPING
OUTSIDE? DON'T
YOU HAVE A PLACE
TO LIVE? ANYWHERE
TO GO?

YES.

No.



THAT'S WHAT I'M SAYING. WE CAN'T EVEN STOP FIGHTING OVER WHICH PRIVATE LIFE TO RETURN TO.

Only time we've agreed on ANYTHING since the Crash is when we realized how much we both hate livin' on the STREET...

...SO THAT'S WHAT WE DO. AT LEAST THIS WAY, WE AGREE ON SOMETHING.



I'M CONFUSED. IF THE SECOND SISTER PSYCHE DOESN'T LIKE OCCUPYING YOU...

DON'T TALK ABOUT ME LIKE I'M NOT HERE!



I'M NOT "OCCUPYING" ANYONE! WITH THE BARRIER BETWEEN US GONE, I'M AS TRAPPED AS SHE IS!

Look, I know YOU didn't have any powers to LOSE, but to those of us who DID, it's a BIG DEAL.

SORRY SORRY SORRY...



I DON'T WANT TO START ANY ARGUMENTS.

I JUST CAME TO ASK IF YOU... LADIES WOULD ACCOMPANY ME.

WHERE?



TO FIND OUR "FRIEND." FORCE SOME ANSWERS.

OUR "FRIEND?" YOU MEAN STATESMAN?




IN QUOTATION MARKS, YES.

That's HARSH.

SHALICE? CAN WE GO WITH HIM? PLEASE?

Fine. Sure. I don't care.



City's looking
CLEANER. MUCH.
Hell, it's barely
RECOGNIZABLE
in places.

THOSE NEW
ARACHNOS-DRONES REPAIRED
AND RESTORED NEARLY ALL OF
OUR STANDING BATTLE-SITES
PRACTICALLY OVERNIGHT.
IT'S LIKE THEY WANTED
ORDINARY PEOPLE TO FORGET
ABOUT US AS QUICKLY
AS POSSIBLE.

AFTER ALL
THE TIMES WE SAVED
THIS TOWN, YOU'D THINK
THEY'D BE EMBARRASSED
TO SHOW HOW RELIEVED
THEY ARE WE'RE
GONE.



I'M AFRAID MOST
OF THE HEROES
AND VILLAINS HAVE
MOVED TO HAPPIER
CLIMES...

...WHERE SUPER-
POWERS, MAGIC AND
PREPOSTEROUSLY
ADVANCED GADGETS ARE
STILL OPERATIONAL
INSTEAD OF
DAMPENED.

A FEW OF US,
THOUGH...

THE ARENAS ARE

- From 1-on-1 grudge matches to massive Super Group Battles, every player has a chance to enter the arenas!
- Tournaments and Rankings available for all characters!



**CITY
OF
HEROES**

"MMORPG of the Year"

- Computer Gaming World

WWW.CITYOFHEROES.COM

READY - ARE YOU?

- All-new Animé-inspired costume selections are found in the expanded costume creation system!
- Body and face scaling options allow an incredible amount of detailing for your custom hero designs!



A new era of game play excellence has arrived in City of Heroes – head-to-head competition in Issue #4: COLOSSEUM. Now you can pit your skills and teamwork against the most fearsome and relentless foes massively multiplayer online gaming has to offer – each other!

THE ARENAS ARE OPEN!



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"...A FEW OF US
HAVE JUST SHUT
THEMSELVES
OFF FROM THE
WORLD."

OPEN UP,
STEVEN. IT'S
JUSTIN.

GO
AWAY!



NO.
SOMEONE HERE
WANTS TO SEE YOU
AGAIN, STEVEN. I'VE
BROUGHT SHALICE...
I MEAN, AURORA...
I MEAN...

...LET'S
JUST SAY I'VE
BROUGHT
COMPANY.

LEAVE ME
ALONE OR
I'LL--!

NO
NEED FOR
THREATS,
STEVEN.



I MEAN, IF YOU
WON'T LET US IN,
THERE'S CLEARLY
NOTHING WE CAN
DO ABOUT IT...

I'M
CALLING THE
POLICE!



THAT IS
DISGRACEFUL,
SYNAPSE...THOUGH
NOT AS DISGRACEFUL
AS YOUR MAID
SERVICE...

WHAT
COSTUMED
HERO HAS EVER
CALLED THE
POLICE?

GET
OUT.

NO, SERIOUSLY.
STATESMAN CLEARLY
ISN'T COMING FOR
US. WE ALL NEED TO
PUT OUR HEADS
TOGETHER.

WE'D HAVE
PULLED TOGETHER
A MEETING AT
HEADQUARTERS, BUT
SOMEONE CHANGED
THE ACCESS
CODES.



WELL,
YOU AREN'T
PARTYING HERE,
RICH BOY.



AND I WAS SO LOOKING FORWARD TO WALLOWING IN SQUALOR.

REALLY KEPT IT TOGETHER. HAVEN'T YOU?

SHUT UP.



THAT'S IT, THEN? YOU'RE JUST ROLLING OVER? I ASSUMED YOU WERE A FIGHTER--

YOU DON'T KNOW ME!

YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT FIGHTING, YOU PRAT?

"BECOMING SYNAPSE MEANT FIGHTING NOT TO DIE!"

"I NEEDED CASH TO GET MY CAR OUT OF THE SHOP, AND I HEARD CREY INDUSTRIES WAS PAYING FOR TEST SUBJECTS. SO I WENT DOWN, SIGNED UP FOR A FEW EXPERIMENTS..."

"...AND THEY WOULDN'T LET ME LEAVE. THEY PUT ME IN RESTRAINTS, SHOCKED ME WITH ELECTRICITY... IT WENT ON FOR DAYS, UNTIL I PRAYED FOR DEATH."

"ONCE I GOT FREE, I COULD USE THE SUPER-SPEED AND THE ELECTRICAL POWERS TO RUN AWAY FROM THE MEMORY."



WITH THE POWERS, I COULD PUT THE WHOLE, SICK ORDEAL BEHIND ME! BUT NOW? NOW I'M JUST A TORTURE VICTIM AND THAT'S ALL.



STEVEN, WE DIDN'T KNOW.

YEAH. WHATEVER.



Nice
work, Dr.
Phil.

WHICH
EVER ONE OF
YOU SAID THAT,
I LIKE THE OTHER
A LOT BETT--

DR. KEYES?
PICK UP! IT'S
JUSTIN!

JUSTIN?
YOU'RE NEVER
TO CALL ME!
STATESMAN
SAID--

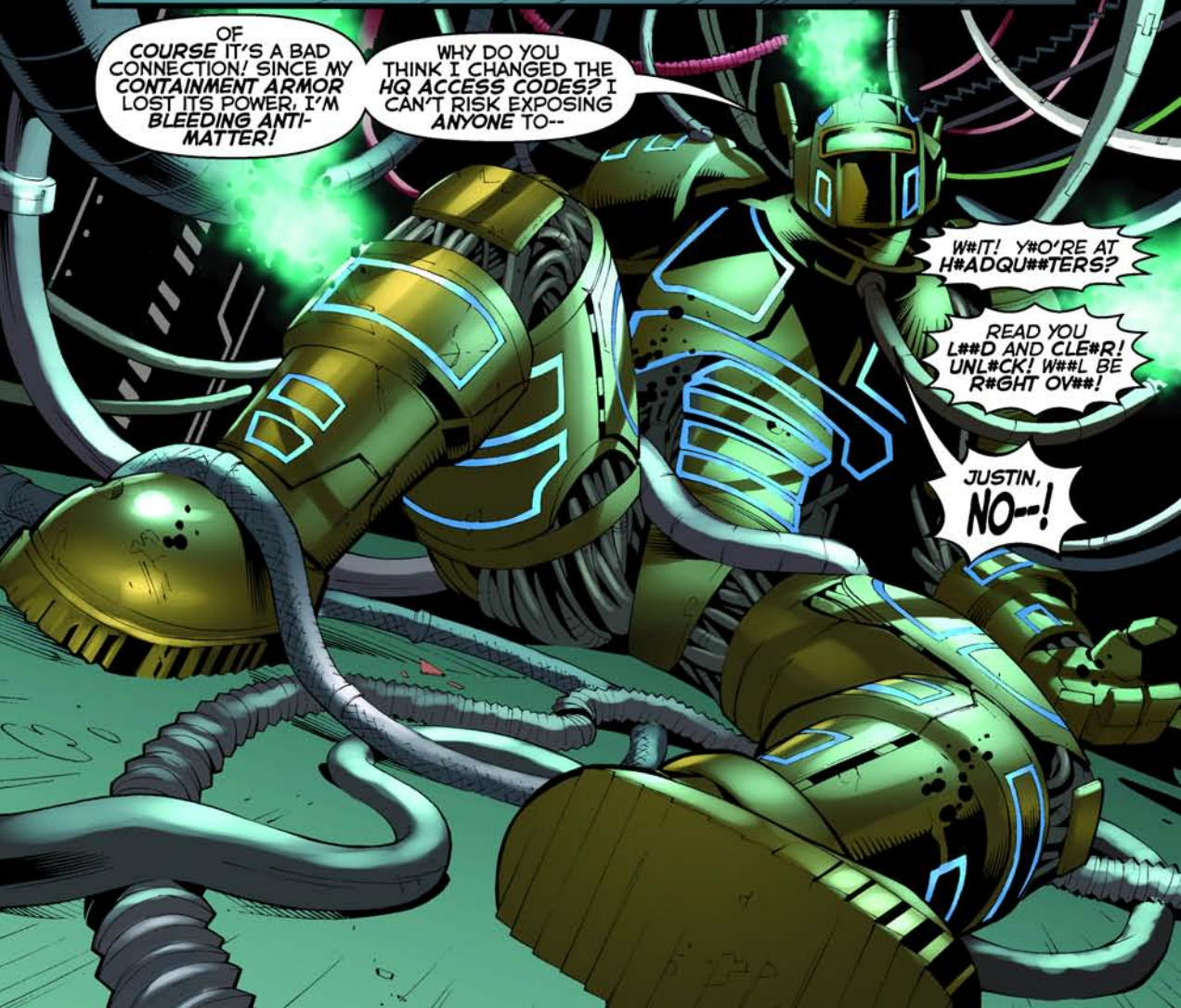


"STATESMAN SAID."
"STATESMAN SAID."
"SCREW STATESMAN."
I'M IN CHARGE NOW,
AND--AND--

--AND WHAT
IS THAT NOISE?
ARE YOU IN A
BLENDER OR
SOMETHING?

ST#Y A##Y
IF Y## VAL#E
Y## LIVES!

VERY BAD
CONNECTION.
WHERE ARE
YOU?



OF
COURSE IT'S A BAD
CONNECTION! SINCE MY
CONTAINMENT ARMOR
LOST ITS POWER, I'M
BLEEDING ANTI-
MATTER!

WHY DO YOU
THINK I CHANGED THE
HQ ACCESS CODES? I
CAN'T RISK EXPOSING
ANYONE TO--

WHIT! Y#O'RE AT
H#ADQU#TERS?

READ YOU
L##D AND CLE#R!
UNL#CK! W##L BE
R#GHT OV##!

JUSTIN,
NO--!





I THOUGHT
YOUR SPEED
WAS GONE.

IT IS,
THAT WAS A
CATCH MADE
OUT OF
DESPERATION,
NOT SKILL.

KEYES
CALLED ME IN
A PANIC AFTER
YOU HUNG
UP.

YOU'RE NOT
THE ONLY ONE WHO'S
WONDERING IF HE MADE THE
WRONG CALL BY TRUSTING
STATESMAN TO RESCUE US.
BESIDES, SINCE YOU ALWAYS
DO WHATEVER THE HELL
YOU WANT TO DO
ANYWAY...



...WE
DECIDED WE
NEEDED TO KEEP
AN EYE ON YOU SO
YOU DON'T SIMPLY
GET US KILLED BY
PUTTING US BACK
ON THE ENEMY'S
RADAR.



POS!
POSITRON!

STAY...STAY
BACK...

YOU'VE
BEEN TRAPPED
IN HERE? ALL
THIS TIME?

IT'S
BEEN ROUGH
ON ALL OF
US!

Except for
MOST of the people
in PARAGON!
ORDINARY folks seem
to be getting along
just FINE! Why don't
we leave well enough
ALONE?

THEN GOD HELP THE
PEOPLE IN THAT BETTER
PLACE. WE NEEDED HIM,
TOO, REMEMBER? AND HE
RAN OUT ON US. LEFT US
TO ROT AND FORGET
WE'RE A TEAM.

SO I SAY WE GET THIS
DUMP UP AND **RUNNING**.
POWERS OR NO POWERS,
WE'RE GOING TO TRACK
THAT COWARD DOWN SO
I CAN GIVE HIM A PIECE
OF MY--

AND QUIT WITHOUT EVER KNOWING
WHAT HAPPENED TO STATESMAN?
WHAT IF HE'S HURT--?

I DON'T KNOW WHY
YOU'RE ARGUING WITH
YOURSELF, SHALICE, BUT
I'M ON YOUR SIDE.

HE'S TOO SMART TO
LEAVE HIMSELF VULNERABLE.
HE'S JUST FOUND A BETTER
PLACE. SOMEWHERE HE'S
NEEDED. UNLIKE US.

GET
OUT OF
HERE!



NOTHING CAN
BE DONE! IT'S
TOO LATE!

IF YOU'VE
RE-POWERED THE
HEADQUARTERS AGAINST
MY ORDERS, YOU'VE
AUTOMATICALLY ACTIVATED
THIS RECORDING--

--MEANING I'VE
BEEN ABSENT
LONG ENOUGH TO
HAVE FAILED YOU--
MISERABLY!

I PLANNED
TO HELP YOU--I
WANTED TO--BUT IF
YOU'RE HEARING THIS
MESSAGE, I CAN'T
POSSIBLY--

--BECAUSE
I'M ALREADY
DEAD.



TO BE
CONTINUED...



Expansion Issue #4: **COLOSSEUM** The Arena COMING SOON!

In Paragon City, a hero's skill often means the difference between life and death – not just for him, but for the citizens he protects. To hone those skills, the Paragon City Building Commission proudly brings you a forum months in the making: the arena. Here, heroes will face the skill and savvy of their fellow city defenders. Pit your abilities against those of your allies, and see who comes out on top!

- The arena's many events are designed to test the mettle of even the toughest heroes. Simple One-on-One combat takes place alongside Team Battles and Free-For-Alls. Battle Royals let several teams duke it out, while epic Super Group Battles put up to 150 heroes to the test.

- Event coordinators put the power in your hands, by offering a variety of different Ground Rules for your match. No Travel Powers, No Temporary Powers, Time Limits, and Multiple Lives are just a few of the options that make arena combat flexible enough to challenge any hero.

See ARENA page 3

Hero Spotlight: **Positron** page 2



Heroic Visions: Fan Art

Fantastic fan art from the City of Heroes Community.

Page 6

HELP WANTED!

The Paragon Times need you!
see page 8

www.cityofheroes.com

The Hero Chronicles: Fan Fiction The Sentimental Sort

By Veronica Rose

"Remind me again why she lives in Kings Row," asked Reiki between mouthfuls of a roast beef sandwich. He and Rufus—Scimitar and the Sanguine Horror to the rest of Paragon City—had met for lunch to discuss new leads on the Circle of Thorns, but the conversation had steered towards the topic of their newest teammate and her current housing situation.

Rufus gave his lunch partner a shrug as he devoured the rest of his jalapeno chicken wrap.

"Iunno," he mumbled before swallowing. "She's stubborn, you know that. I offered to let her stay with me, but..."

"But what?" Reiki leaned back in his chair. "She's the old-fashioned type?"

The burly programmer-turned-hero shook his head. "It's not that, it's...sentimental. Sort of."

"She's sentimental about the Row?" Reiki choked ungracefully into his sweet tea. "Are you kidding me?"

continued page 4

The Paragon Funny Pages Featuring the art of Tim Buckley



Page 7

Hero Spotlight: Positron

1. Can you tell us about your background?

I started as a Professor of nuclear physics at Stanford, but after budget cutbacks my access to the linear accelerator there was severely limited. I then took a job in the corporate sector, and that's where I came to realize that not all companies are working toward the greater good. Some companies are downright evil. Suffice it to say that an "industrial accident" gave me the ability to generate anti-matter, and my background in nuclear physics helped me realize the potential that this ability had.

2. How did you get started as a hero?

After the accident, I utilized some crude armor pieces that I had constructed to help store and focus the anti-matter I was generating. These gave me the power to project energy blasts and fly (poorly at first). One of my earliest "adventures" was against a Devouring Earth base. These crazy eco-terrorists had just attacked an amusement park and killed dozens of innocents, so I tracked them down and closed their operation... permanently. When the media got wind of this, they asked what my "hero name" was. I hadn't given any thought to it up until that point, but seeing as my powers were anti-matter based, I called myself "Positron." Well, the name just stuck. Until the Rikti War I kept a secret identity, keeping the armor pieces nearby in case Positron was needed.

3. What are your powers?

I generate anti-matter. Anti-matter is exactly like regular matter, except the polarities are reversed. Instead of positively charged protons, you have negatively charged anti-protons, and instead of negatively charged electrons, you have positrons. When matter and anti-matter mix, you wind up with a powerful explosion. I use this fact to project radiation-based energy blasts and powered flight.

Up until the Rikti War, I had control over exactly when and how much anti-matter I would create... but ever since the injuries I incurred in the final battle, my power has been uncontrollable. This is why I live inside my battle armor. I have to make sure that Paragon City is safe from my uncontrolled condition as I search for a cure.

4. What's the best part about being such an important hero in Paragon City?

The best part has to be all the up-and-coming Super Groups I get to see on a daily basis. With Par-



agon City at ground zero during the Rikti War, it's nice to see that heroes have flocked from all over the world to help defend us should any future incursion occur. A lot of these teams have even asked for me to leave the Freedom Phalanx and join their rosters, but I just can't do that. I have too much invested in the Phalanx for that to happen.

5. What's the worst part?

The fact that the Devouring Earth are still going strong. Try as I might, they just never stay defeated forever. Couple that with the fact that they seem to be able to sustain their leader Hamidon, no matter how many times our best heroes defeat him, worries me. A lot of heroes find great strength by enhancing their powers after Hamidon is defeated, but I caution them... for we don't know exactly what the Devouring Earth's ultimate plan really is.

6. Have you seen the new Arena? What do you think about it?

I think it's a great place for fledgling heroes to try out their powers and get some much needed practice in, as well as a great place for the high Security Level heroes to finally answer the question of just who the "best" really is. I had a hand in some of the tech they use for the holographic fight-environments, as well as helping design the Battle Terminals. I wanted to make sure that the Arena was something that heroes of all Security Levels could use and enjoy.

7. Is there a particular neighborhood you hang out in? If so, why?

I usually hang out with Valkyrie in Blyde Square in Steel Canyon. It's a perfect place for us to encounter groups of new heroes to help (and for them to help us when the situation calls for it). Plus there's a convenient Cooke's Electronics outlet in Blyde Square... I can't be too far from a steady supply of circuits and capacitors. The guys in that Cooke's even have a little room in back where I can whip up a needed technological device if need be.

8. So, what's Statesman REALLY like?

States can be uptight most of the time, but Synapse and I try to bring him back down to earth. We joke and kid with him a lot, but in the end he really makes us better heroes in the truest sense of the word. One example would have been right after the Rikti War ended. Most of us were still in shell-shock mode, and Synapse had this crazy idea to break the mood. He took Statesman's tattered cape and fashioned a crude American flag out of it and presented it to the mayor as a replacement for the one on top of City Hall. We thought it was just a nice gesture, but Statesman took it farther. He thought it was a fitting tribute to Hero One for ALL heroes to shed their capes in

honor of the man who led the one-way mission to close the Rikti portal. What started as a desperate attempt to cheer people up turned into one of the most moving moments I have ever witnessed. That is the true Statesman right there.

9. Is there a particular group of bad guys in Paragon City that you go after more than others?

I'll take on the Devouring Earth any chance I get. The way they go about achieving their stated goal of protecting the Earth is wrong in every sense of the word. I have seen a lot of innocent bystanders die due to their eco-terrorism. They think I'm an abomination simply because I am draped in technology, so I guess our hatred for one another is mutual.

10. What advice could you give to new heroes in Paragon City?

Find someone to show you the ropes. You can usually find a higher Security Level hero who will Exemplar to you to help you out in the beginning. Also, don't be shy, group up. A group of heroes is greater than the sum of its parts, so group up whenever you can. You will find yourself gaining experience faster than just going at it alone.

ARENA

Continued from page 1

- In the interest of promoting the arena, the Paragon City Council has reluctantly agreed to permit the wagering of Influence in some tournaments. Small entry fees could turn into big payoffs for heroes who can fight their way to the top.
- The arena's chess-style rating system encourages healthy competition among heroes. By playing in rated events, heroes can increase their rating, earning bragging rights throughout the city.
- Arena visitors and defeated combatants can view the arena floor through the use of remote controlled cameras. Some heroes may be tempted to use such devices as surveillance equipment, which is why the cameras are cheap, disposable, and easily destroyed. Cameras are provided free of charge by arena management.
- To provide an invigorating challenge to all combatants, arena officials have ruled that certain powers must use different guidelines in the arena than they do on the streets.

o Stealth and Invisibility make heroes truly invisible to their enemies -- though environmental effects, like water splashes, can still give away their position.

These powers also allow heroes to evade their opponents' targeting reticles by putting distance between themselves and their foe.

o Brawl has a small chance of knocking off opposing heroes' toggle powers.

o After a hero is Held, Terrorized, or otherwise controlled, he gains immunity to that effect for a short period. To compensate for this, Controllers do extra damage to targets that are under such effects.

o A percentage of Blaster damage is not resistible. Defenders debuffs cannot be resisted. Scrapper Critical Hits cannot be resisted.

o Many Tanker and Scrapper powers now offer new abilities and resistances, such as the ability to see Stealthed characters at a greater distance than normal.

o Many other Power Sets have also been seeded with new abilities designed to give heroes an extra edge in the arena.

o When hit by a power that causes confusion, a hero's attacks may execute on someone other than his target -- including his teammates

For more information about Arena and Issue #4, please visit the Official City of Heroes web site at www.cityofheroes.com

The Sentimental Sort

By Veronica Rose

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Rufus shook his head. "Nope. Says she won't leave the place, but she doesn't mind if I stay." This admission drew a chuckle from across the table.

"Guess that's not too bad, then."

Light out and curtains drawn, Miranda shook out the end of a match with a smart flick of her wrist. With the last candle lit, the soft shuffle of cards filled the meager apartment. Moments passed before one hand reached out to smooth the tablecloth, the motion fluid and practiced. The well-loved deck was placed in the center of the table, but Miranda made no move to cut the cards.

The deck had been her mother's, years ago when the first floor of the building had been a coffee shop that catered to hardworking day laborers in the Row. Maya Garren had served up black coffee and a bit of guidance in the form of tarot readings and palmistry for some of the more regular customers, while Ciro Garren had ruled the kitchen with an iron fist and a smile.

She missed them. The front glass of the abandoned shop was still scarred with carbon from the fire five years ago. An insistence for one of Maya's readings had turned ugly, and a favor called in to the local gangs had left Miranda alone in Paragon City.

The cards had survived, though, tucked away beneath the counter so that they carried only the smell of smoke and nothing more. Innate ability blossomed through practice, and Miranda had resolutely set out to make a name for herself as one of the many heroes that the city so desperately needed. Regardless of success, she'd made the promise to never leave the Row. Despite everything else, it was home.

A deep breath and the first few cards were laid on the table. Outside, she could hear the sound of something being slammed into the side of a dumpster. A series of gunshots rang out over a terrified shriek, and the rest of the deck remained on the table as Miranda poked her head out the window that led to the fire escape.

Gunshots didn't bother her anymore, not after so many years living in the Row. It was the scream that demanded further investigation.

A whispered handful of words allowed her to move about unnoticed in the alley. Sure-footed, she edged out on a neighbor's windowsill, trying to get a better glimpse. Forearms bandaged from an earlier trip to Founders' Falls that week, Miranda clung to the iron bars with one still-injured hand. Down below, a group of ragged gang members sporting



white facepaint has gathered around a pair of teenage girls. Miranda pressed herself to the brick as one raised his semiautomatic into the air, squeezing off a series of rounds towards the rooftops.

"What did we say yesterday about you girlies snooping around this part of town?" A burly man with red and white facepaint shoved his way to the front of the group, leering at the teenagers. She bit back the urge to scream into the alley, even when the skull-faced man grabbed a fistful of her pretty blonde hair. Focusing on a pile of crates behind the small mob, Miranda took a deep breath and let go of the iron bars.

A barely-audible hum preceded Miranda's appearance atop the crates. Close enough to kick one of the Skulls in the head; Miranda entertained the thought for a brief second. Gently, she brought up both hands and focused her attention on the furthest guy, a shrimpy thing with a pair of brass knuckles.

C'mon baby boy, they're not your friends. Look, that one there just took your last cig...

Miranda kept up the sultry smooth mind-whisper, the voice in the man's head sweet and cajoling. A brief moment passed as his eyes glazed over, and suddenly the littlest Skull was a flurry of fists and feet as he lunged at one of the group's lieutenants.

"Gimme back my cigs! You got 'em, I know it!" Other accusations were lost as he landed a punch to the surprised man's jaw. An impromptu fight broke out, complicated by the sweet voice of Moriyaku echoing with some of the most ridiculous and outrageous lies she could fashion.

He's just waiting for you to drop your guard so he can cut your throat...

They're just using you to get to your sister...

He still owes you thirty bucks, and he's never gonna pay you back...

Pete thinks your momma's fat...

The last little thought didn't hold up so well, as the targeted Skull frowned and looked up. "But my momma is fat... hey!" For the first time, he noticed Miranda standing on the crates. "What the... SPANDEX!"

This time, Miranda's impulse won over her reason and one white sneaker executed a snap kick, catching the man in the mouth and smearing facepaint all over the canvas of her shoe. One hand shot out towards the now-bloody-mouthed Skull, the subsequent mesmerizing spell leaving him standing and drooling. As a few others came to their senses, Miranda could see the glint of mental in hulking fists. Knives, brass knuckles, broken bottles, anything could work in an alley.

"Aww, gonna pick on li'l ol' Moriyaku?" She leapt atop the dumpster, grinning. "Buncha big tough boys...hey!" The space between the Controller's eyes glowed violet as one of the gang members pressed a knife to the throat of one of the girls. "Down. Drop it. NOW."

The Skull's face contorted grotesquely as the psionic attack hit him. The knife clattered to the ground as he gripped his temples, eyes screwed shut. Dropping down in front of the girls, Miranda flashed a brief smile in reassurance before turning

her attention back to the gang. "You wanna piece of me? Huh? Wanna be all tough on another girl?" Bravado kicked in as her saucy mezzo voice rang through the alley. "Boy, you better take your clown paint and run, 'cause I'll open up a can of—"

Miranda's challenge ended abruptly as she dove to the side, pulling both girls down as bullets whistled past her

"Scared now, Spandex?" He gripped her hair tighter, shaking her hard enough to make her teeth rattle. "Not so brave now, huh?"



Her gaze flickered to the gun for a second before lavender tendrils erupted from her forehead. Her eyes met the face of her captor, and Miranda's smile grew eerily wide. To the nearby Skulls, the soft chuckle in her throat became a chorus of shrieks as her face contorted, replete with fangs, horns, and a forked tongue. Those who could move, including her startled captor, took off down the street, yelling about demons in the alley. Those Skulls too terrified to move curled up on the ground, cowering as Miranda deftly bound each of them hand and foot with plastic security ties she pulled from her pocket.

"Ma'am?" One of the girls stretched a shaking hand toward a rivulet of blood that trickled down Miranda's shoulder. "You should see a doctor for that."

So the bullet had grazed her arm... and boy, did it sting once the adrenaline wore off. Miranda forced a smile to her face as she turned to the girls. "Yeah, I got a buddy who can fix me up. You're okay?" She waited for two shaky nods. "Good. Stick to the Plaza if you're not from around here. Things get messy if you're not careful." With a wink, she swung herself back up to the fire escape.

"But, your arm..."

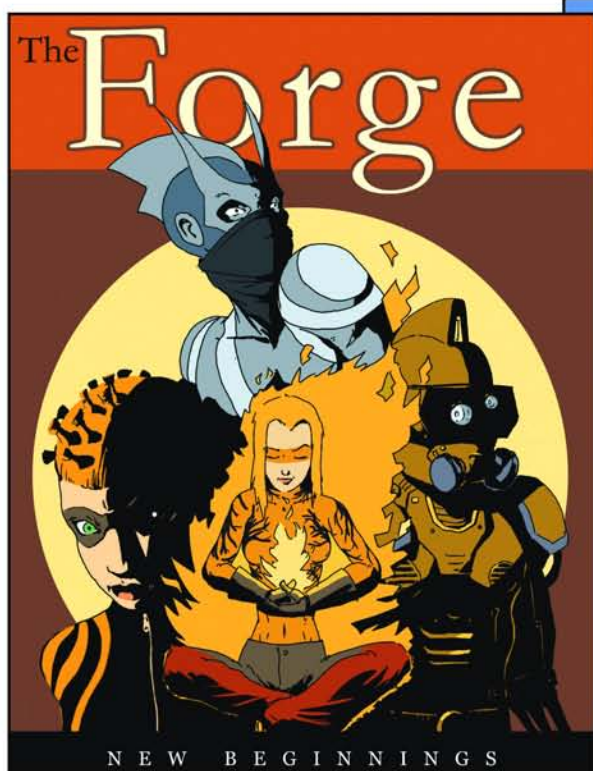
"Doll, I live here. I'll be fine." This time, the smile Miranda gave was genuine. "Go on, before it gets too dark and their friends come back to play with me some more." She waited for them to run off before heading back to her apartment.

Of course she'd be fine. She was home.



ear. A rough hand hauled her up by the hair, cool metal pressed to her cheek. Swallowing hard, the young Controller looked sideways at the bloodied painted face.

Heroic Visions: Fan Art



Forge
by Mobius Scape



NightLash
by Chris Haley and Steve Bowcutt



Hothouse by Michael Bennett



Mahogany Dodd
by Omar Noory

UNDERWEAR ON THE OUTSIDE

BY TIM BUCKLEY

WHY HEROES IN PARAGON CITY DON'T BOTHER WITH SECRET IDENTITIES:



The Paragon Times Needs You!

Fan Art & Fiction Submission Guidelines

The Paragon Times Submission News Article Guidelines

News items should be short, no more than 200-250 words in length, with appropriate screenshots (no more than 3) if available (highly recommended though). Interviews, features and general articles should be no longer than 500 words. NPC interviews or op-eds should be between 100 and 150 words. Photo-essays should include no more than 4 screenshots in jpg or tiff formats with appropriate captions. The deadline for any specific issue is the 15th of each month.

Selected work may appear under your real name or an appropriate "journalistic" pseudonym. Written submissions will be accepted only in .doc/.txt formats. All submissions, questions and queries should be emailed to cohsubmissions@plaync.com. Please put "Community News Article" in the subject line.

Good luck! We're looking forward to seeing your contributions!

Heroic Scribes Wanted!

Time to dust off your trusty word processor and spin a heroic tale of fan fiction for possible posting or publication in a future community project (including web and comic book). What we want to see is a story that chronicles your hero's or team's (in-game or original characters) villain-busting adventures. Be as creative as you want, but keep it at least PG-rated. Doc or .txt format preferred. 1500 words max, please! Sending screenshots and/or original art for your fiction is recommended. Please send all submissions to cohsubmissions@plaync.com with the subject heading "Fan Fiction Submission." The by-line can be your real name or a character name (or both).

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If you have any questions regarding these submissions, please drop a note to cohsubmissions@plaync.com. We are looking forward to seeing your stories and art!

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