

MadGremlin

Sting had been watching the workmen stand around and saw that Officer Brian had trouble getting inside as well. Eventually he, and the workmen were let in and Sting figured he should probably let them know he was still around. The last thing he needed was Mystic calling him in as AWOL and having the police on his butt.

Dan43

"Ill-need-a-scanner-at-each-entrance-and-but-just-for-the-retinal-I-can-build-the-EKG-into-the-field-itself-and.....It's an Anti-Gravity device boss.....of-course-Sting-won't-be-able-to-use-the-or-could-you-build-a-compound-eye-retinal-scanner-" Ion responded to Mystic's question as if they were in the same room. There was no need to key a mike or do anything except mention the name of the person you wished to speak to and begin talking. The AI that controlled the earbugs alone had brought Ion a medium size fortune from a company who wanted to use it to run its customer service call center. The station lights dimmed just for an instant under the load of Ion's computer booting up.

Averick

Mystic took his radio out and punched Sting's name into it and hit the personal call button. At the other end, a single tone and a slight vibration hummed out from Sting's com. "Oh... I hope he wasn't hiding someplace..."

MadGremlin

Sting's radio came to life, showing Mystic was calling. "Morning boss. So do I get to come in now or you gonna put up another force field?" Sting chuckled. "I'm just across the street so I will be there in a sec. I have a little information about the Bad Harley and our friend Mr. Rome. Not much but its something."

Mithril_Zeta

"D'oh," Newton said stopping just inside the door. He wandered back to Mystic and Ion, and waited for the young man to finish babbling. Newton lost him right after he said that Newton was a genius.

He watched the lights dim. "I wonder if we need to put in a secondary generator, between the forcefield, and the two big casket thingees, and the computers..." Newton wondered. "Not to mention the refrigerator, the big screen tv, the microwave..."

MadGremlin

Sting made a point of landing, spines deployed, in the middle of the workmen to scare them. He then walked in through the front door. "I'm baaaack!"

Mithril_Zeta

"Now where have you been, young man," Newton said in his best concerned parent voice. "You were out all night, and your evil step-mother and I were sooo worried." He broke into a grin.

MadGremlin

Even Sting, who was again looking to 'straighten someone out' (i.e. be a jerk) about the force field issue couldn't help but grin at Newton.

"So I take it genius boy was the one who put up the force field? Or did we get invaded and I missed it? Good thing you had doughnuts and soda to sustain you, eh, Newton?"

Mithril_Zeta

“Absolutely. I would have perished without them. Care for a donut. I’m feeling generous and thought I’d share.”

MadGremlin

Sting saw a box on the table with his name on it. He opened it up and pulled the earpiece out. “Now what the f—k am I supposed to do with this? Clip it on an antennae?” Then he pulled the mesh belt out, unsure of what it was supposed to be or do. “Where is the party hat and noisemaker?”

Mithril_Zeta

“I think it doubles as both,” Newton said brightly. “If you whip it around your head really fast, wind goes through the mesh and makes a whistling sound. It can be a hat, a broach, a pterodactyl...” He quickly demonstrated the multiple uses of the mesh belt. “It probably even makes julian fries.” The green-haired mutant stopped. “Hmmm. Fries.”

Dan43

Neither Newt nor Sting saw Ion emerge from the basement nor did they realize that he had heard the exchange concerning the comm unit and belt.

"You don't have to do anything with either of them Sting. I was just trying to help out. If you don't want my help then all you have to do is say the word and I will pack up and be gone. You can keep all the stuff being installed today."

With that Ion turned and headed back to the basement with his head low and a decided slump to his armored shoulders.

Mithril_Zeta

Newton rolled his eyes. “Oh, for crying out loud.” He called after the younger man. “Ion, we’re not asking you to leave. We’re just joking around. Given time, you’ll come to understand my sense of humor. Sting and I have a pattern going. He raves, and I rant. It gets us past the uncomfortable. You’ll hear us both do this all the time. Rant and rave, though not necessarily in that order.

I mean, look at me. I’m a fat, green-haired mutant with a quick wit. I don’t take myself too seriously, and I poke fun at everyone else, too.

You’ve been here less than 24 hours, and you’re going to give up already? Give us – and yourself – a chance.”

MadGremlin

Sting actually felt a little bad, so he softened up a little.

“Well you know I do have ears, they just don’t stick out like ‘normal’ people. If you could fix something up that would stick to my chitin it might work.” Then Sting added; “And don’t listen to Newton, I’m pretty much just a bitter, unpleasant, bug who doesn’t like much of anyone or anything. Get used to it.”

Dan43

Recruit

Ion stopped and stood motionless for several seconds and then turned slowly back to the other two men.

"I think I understand. You did not mean harm, you were simply employing a form of social interaction?"

Ion moved back towards the desk, at the same time his shoulders rose and he looked squarely at Sting and Newt.

"Forgive me for my thin skin and overreaction. I have vast knowledge about many subjects but much of my knowledge is entirely theoretical, human interaction and social mores being on of the subjects that I know only in theory. For all practical purposes my social skills are at child's level."

Reaching out he took the comm unit from Sting.

"I will modify this so that you can utilize it Sting. Maybe a circular unit that you could clip around one of your antenna. The belt is a meta mesh material that is somewhat pliable. It should be wearable by anybody currently on the team. It is a portable anti-gravity device. While it provides very little propulsion so horizontal movement is fairly slow, it has enough vertical capability to clear the tallest structures in Paragon. I thought it might come in handy."

Mithril_Zeta

"I wouldn't listen to me, either," Newton agreed good-naturedly. "And he is a bitter, unpleasant bug who doesn't like much of anyone. He doesn't even like me that much, and I'm utterly charming."

MadGremlin

Sting couldn't help but grin a little bit at Newton. As much as he hated to admit it, he was kinda starting to get used to Newton.

The_Ninjin

Outside you could hear a one-sided conversation that seemed to be getting pretty heated.

"No... well you tell him to take it all and shove it up his.... WHAT... no, you know what? I do for you and that a-hole any and everyday. This is what I want to do... so I think I'm going to do it. I'm living life MY WAY!"

Brian walked back into the precinct to find the lot staring at him. He looked around as if he had been caught doing a crime, looking for a way out as he put his phone back onto its clip.

"So yea..." he said, smiling nervously and breaking the silence, "I'm staying."

MadGremlin

"Really? I was just beginning to think you'd gotten hit by a truck or something fun." Sting grinned. "So someone on the other end of that phone need some acupuncture? If so I'm your man." Sting said, extending a long spine from his forearm.

Mithril_Zeta

"And if that doesn't work, he could experience severe weight gain to help him understand the gravity of the situation." Newton made a face. "For that statement, I definitely apologize. Oye. Got to remember not to use that pun again."

Mad Grmelin

"I was just tellin' these guys about the Bad Harley bar. Place is a dump, but lots of gangers hang out there. Our friend Mr. Rome seems to be a regular – every Tuesday and Thursday night and usually on the weekends. He also seems to be fond of the ladies; usually one on each arm. Oh

and he has a small posse' of regular bodyguards. Steroid and Superdyne enhanced more than likely. We were all just considering bringing the whole place down and thought it would be fun to do."

Mithril Zeta

"Yeah, I suppose that we should make sure that he is inside before we bring the whole place down, though." Newton's face had a thoughtful look on it. "I've lost track. What day is this?"

The_Ninjin

"Nah, nothing to worry about. Just some projects folks back at the head office feel they need me for. Honestly they don't. Plenty of people qualified. I realized I moved on from that. I mean, structurally this is a step down, but this is what I want. I made detective to get back in the streets, but noooooooooo. Turns out that here it's another term for paper pusher. Screw that."

MadGremlin

Sting pulled a small piece of paper out of his belt. "Boss, here is the serial number of a motorcycle that was probably stolen. It is now in a dumpster about a block from the Bad Harley bar. The front wheel is trashed but it is otherwise in ok shape. Just through we might want to report it."

Mithril Zeta

"Anything interesting we should know about the bar?" Newton asked, nabbing another donut.

MadGremlin

"Yeah, the place is a hole. I have lived in burned out buildings in Boomtown and the sewers that were better off than this place. If you ever order a drink there, make sure you get something in a bottle or a can...and don't let them open in for you."

Mithril_Zeta

"Thanks for the recommendation. Actually, you don't have to worry about that; I don't drink alcohol. It does funny things to my balance, and you don't want someone who controls gravity that badly off balance."

MadGremlin

"The place is definitely a gang hangout. Based on the different groups in and out of the place – both Skulls and Outcasts, and probably some others – it is either neutral ground or a certain alliance of folks frequent the place. I didn't get that information from the thug I beat up. Our Mr. Rome seems to be a regular though."

The Ninjin

Brian let out a heavy sigh, "Yea, I know of him. He practically lives there. Lots of background on him. Most of the girls he's with end up either [censored] or dead... but he's a good track coverer. Great in fact."

Mithril Zeta

"Ooo, if we take down that place, we'll get both gangs mad at us?" Newton grinned broadly and turned to Mystic Inferno. "Can we please destroy it? Pretty please? With chocolate syrup on top?" He reached into one of the drawers and brought out an unopened jar of Hershey's chocolate syrup.

MadGremlin

"Hmmm, I like that idea; total destruction of the place. I could take a lot of frustration out on the place. And yeah, I have to be careful when I drink too. I learned the hard way that a little too much and the insect instincts take over. Not pretty."

Dan43

"Cool. I have been wanting a chance to field test my Molecular Bond Field Disruption Unit. I never though I'd get to use it on a whole building. This is going to be great."

Mithril_Zeta

Newton grinned at Ion. 'He may be alright after all,' he thought, turning to see Mystic's reaction.

The Ninjin

He looked around for some of his uncle's tea, but unable to find any, so he continued, "Yea, best time to get him is in the morning. We detain him, but always have to let him go after a day or two. But in the morning after, him and his buddies are usually all hangin over and easy to deal with. Never fails. They'll be a few that stayed sober to be DF's or... designated fighters, but I've knocked em sound without an issue. Biggest issue will be the impending assault on this precinct after we take him down... infuriated mob will not be the word."

Mithril_Zeta

"Gee. For a mob, we'll have to get more arrest tabs," Newton said with purposefully naïve look on his face.

MadGremlin

"Ooooh, big mob not good. So I take it Mr. Rome is a popular figure in the row. Well connected sort, above the law kind of guy. Sounds like he needs to be eliminated permanently."

Dan43

"I fail to see the problem. We hit them early tomorrow morning, or this morning as far as that goes. Then we beat feet back here and turn on the force field generator. After that we sit back drinking your uncles tea while we watch them bloody their fists against my field."

The_Ninjin

"Ah, you fail to see the problem because the problem...is...un...seen," Brian furrowed his eyebrows and shook his head, "Whatever, anyway, there is a way in here. I promise you. I don't know if this field blocks teleportation or how deep into the ground it goes, but I'll say this... sewers run in and out of every part of this city. With the right resources and amount of power... you can get anywhere."

Dan43

"This is War Wall tech Brian. Anything that can get through this field can get through the War Walls. And if they can do that we have much bigger problems than them getting into the 2-6. I guess they could go under. The field does only reach to ground level, they could tunnel in. But do you really think the HELLIONS and SKULLS have enough brainpower to figure that out? And if they do tunnel they are going to be coming through a very small opening. They should be fairly easy to bottleneck and contain at that point. Just have Newt make the first one in line to heavy to move. I don't think the repercussions are as serious as you think as far as an invasion of the 2-6 goes."

Mithril_Zeta

“Don’t underestimate the Hellions and Skulls,” Newton said, dropping his joking manner. “They look like dumb scrubs, but they can be deadly. And we’re going to be dealing with Outcasts and possibly Trolls as well. One strong Ogre or Caliban could essentially walk through my gravity trick; I’ve seen it done before. How much pressure can those mini-War Walls take? The big War Walls have the entire city’s power to draw on; how long can our little generator keep going?”

Newton turned to the others. “Sewer system. I haven’t spent a lot of time in the basement. Does the Two-Six have a sewer entrance down there?”

MadGremlin

“Hmmm, I have to agree. The gangs of this town may not be all that dangerous in small groups, but with a half decent leader they can get pretty tough. Heck the Tsoo would still be an origami club if it weren’t for Tub Ci. And even if the force field protects us, do we just sit in here the rest of our lives?”

Sting looked around. “Mystic had the plans for this place around here somewhere, but those workmen might have it now. Anyway, I have spent time in the sewers, and know a little about them. Since this place is a police station it had the potential to house some odd materials as evidence, they will have a rather large dilution tank that is connected directly to the sewer – definitely big enough to serve as an entrance. There’ll be a manhole cover in the basement somewhere.”

Sting looked at the somewhat confused expressions. “I used to work in hazardous waste disposal – its what caused the cancer in the first place. So I know a little about the regulations and the EPA is pretty predictable on this stuff.”

The_Ninjin

"Yea... the bond between the Outcasts and Trolls are getting stronger. Especially with Rome as negotiator."

Mad Gremlin

“So Officer Brian, if we can’t strike against this Mr. Rome directly, how do we handle it?”

The Ninjin

Brian took a moment to ponder his answer. He didn't expect to be looked upon for advice in the actual action of it all. It made him feel like he may be a pretty good asset here afterall.

Mad Gremlin

I know some ‘bleeding heart’ type heroes who tried to ‘help’ me in the past. Maybe we could trick them into taking him in. Let them take the heat?”

The Ninjin

"Hmmm, interesting idea, but I think with proper planning, we can do this ourselves. We have the resources. Things just need to be in place."

Mad Gremlin

Sting thought for a moment. “You know, if this Rome is that influential in the row, taking him out might not be such a good idea. The gang war that would erupt due to a power vacuum could be more than we could handle.”

The Ninjin

“You know, if this Rome is that influential in the row, taking him out might not be such a good idea. The gang war that would erupt due to a power vacuum could be more than we could handle.”

MadGremlin

Sting looked at Brian. “Is that the kind of power this guy wields around here?”

The Ninjin

"Well not around here. At least not yet. He actually started his reign in Steel. Most of it was strong-arm, but once he marked his territory there, he felt the need to mve on to other cities. I guess he wants to work from the bottom up... starting here in the Row."

MadGremlin

“Well I hate to say it but we need to find a way to take this guy out.” Then Sting realized he was sounding like he cared. “Um, because we have to make sure we are the bosses around here!”

“Anyway, so what do we do to get this guy out of here without bringing the wrath of every thug in the row down on us? Anybody got any bright ideas?”

Mithril_Zeta

“Can we discredit him somehow?” Newton asked. “Trolls –for the most part – aren’t too bright. We might be able to flim-flam them into believing that he is working for us...”

Dan43

"How about this? We use my MBDF unit on the building. Then in the confusion while everybody is running around naked Newt snatches Rome through one of his singularities and nobody even knows we are the ones who took him. With any luck all the gangs will blame each other and that is the end of them working together."

Averick

Mystic disappeared after listening to Sting’s report. He had to finish working with the work crew, liaison with the police, and check out a couple of his contacts before the meeting. At around 4 in the afternoon, he arrived, in costume, to find people chatting in the Two Six.

“Gentlemen, and Sting, I hope I’m not interrupting. I thought we might go over our plan for this evening. Though, I couldn’t help but overhear some business about a troll. Do we have new information?”

MadGremlin

“Well based on what Officer Brian here knows, a simple ‘smash and grab’ might not be the best way to go. Could bring a whole lot of angry gang members knockin at our door. And even with the force field we would have to go out for tea eventually now wouldn’t we.” Sting made a drinking motion, keeping his little finger pointed out.

“So we are trying to think of a distraction or way to discredit Mr. Rome. I kinda like the MBDF idea... whatever that is. Of course I am not sure that testing an experimental compound is a great idea. Never know how it will react with ‘dyne-enhanced metabolism. Last thing we need is to create super villains out of normal thugs. But I am sure that you have some kind of elegant master plan to put us all to shame. Right boss?”

Dan43

"It's not a compound Sting. It's a device. The correct term is 'Molecular Bond Dispersal Field'. It is a variation on my Force Field generator. You can define the volume of space that it contains just like my field generator. The difference is that the molecular bond of all inorganic material within that field will be dispersed. This will cause all inorganic material to break down into its component atoms. For example, if you applied the field to a body of distilled water you would wind up with mass of free oxygen and hydrogen atoms. Apply it to a building full of Hellions, Skulls and Trolls you get a bunch of naked and weaponless Hellions, Skulls and Trolls standing on a vacant lot. I would think that this would be a pretty good distraction. If Rome disappeared into one of Newton's singularities right then I don't think anybody would notice."

Averick

Mystic rolled his eyes at Sting's antics and listened to Ion.

Finally, Mystic spoke on the subject while placing his fingertips together. "What you're proposing is the cessation of all sound, and the removal of all cover and then having a person completely disappear. If I'm not mistaken, Newton would have to be relatively close to this person, at least in eye contact, and since all cover would be removed... With the cessation of all sound, and the removal of all things physical, people will stop, dead in their tracks and look around at each other. This would be, if I judge correctly, the worst time. Better to simply do it right out of the bar in full swing. Additionally, what do we do when the owner of the bar comes looking for compensation for his structure and stock that you've disintegrated? Explain to him that all the atoms are essentially still there? I suggest perhaps another course of action. One that involves less property damage."

Mithril_Zeta

Ah, you're no fun, Mystic," Newton said, pouting a little. "You're right, of course, but still no fun."

The_Ninjin

A lightning bolt to the brain sent Brian out of his contemplative trance, "Of course, duh... completely forgot."

Brian grabbed his cell phone and dialed a number. He looked at the rest of the crew and held a finger up motioning for a few minutes.

"Hey... you get that thing I sentcha... oh really... well look, no small talk, need a favor... I know, I know... it's about the guy who frequents your bar... Rome... yea sounds like him... I'm gonna need to bring him in for some questioning.... yea you're right... give me his most vulnerable and get back to me... yep, bye."

Brian hung up the phone and ran a thoughtful hand across his lips. Turning back to the group, he explained his actions, "So yea, I know the guy that owns the bar. He doesn't run it, but owns it along with a few others here. I saved his girl-at-the-time from some clocks and he was forever grateful. She was the best thing to happen to him if ya know what I mean so I've always had the inside on a lot of activity that went on here. Worst part is that when that happened, I got moved to the big time and didn't have too much need for him anymore. Talked to him every once in a while, but nothing of importance. Just enough to keep the connect Name's Arty. "

Brian walked toward the entrance of the precinct and took a long deep breath, "I guess now there's a little bit of the waiting game to see what Arty comes up with."

Mithril Zeta

"I hate waiting." Newton said. "Are you sure we can't destroy the bar?"

MadGremlin

"Ok, we wait for this Arty, and hope he doesn't sell us out. Hopefully he will give us good info and we can take this guy down."

Mithril Zeta

"Seriously, though, are we always going to be living in fear that we're going to tick off someone and they're going to storm the Two-Six. I have the feeling that's going to be something that we're going to facing for as long as we are here. After all, that's how they drove the police out of here in the first place, isn't it. Even the mentally deficient gangs are going to remember that." Newton shook his head. "I don't think it's a matter of 'if' they are going to come after us. It's going to be more a matter of 'when.'

MadGremlin

"Good point Newton. At least with Ion's force field we will have a little surprise for them."

"Soooo, since we have to wait anyway, anyone up for a little romp around the row to see what trouble we can get into? I heard the clock's been ripping up generators a lot recently. We might be able to mess with them a little bit."

Dan43

Although a little dejected by Mystics rejection of his MBDF unit - He reallt had been looking forward to a field test.) Ion visibly perked up at this suggestion. "Now that is the best idea I have heard all day. I have been wanting to obtain some clockwork units to examine. I mean it really is amazing the way-they are-made-of simple-clock-work-gear-but-they-seem-to-be-increidably-versitile-and-capable-I-mean-how-can- you-build-any-kind-of-AI-without-electronic-circuits-is-a mechanical-AI-even-really-possible..."

Mithril_Zeta

"Sounds good to me, Sting. Count me in," Newton said as he wandered over to the refrigerator and pulled out another Mountain Dew. "Should we wait for Coolant to get up, or leave a message?"

Averick

Mystic held his finger up. "Actually, funny thing. Coolant left some explicit instructions as to when he should be awakened. Seems he's slept over and I'm to contact a representative from B.I.T. to see what is a matter. So I'm afraid I'm going to have to leave the fun to you youngsters. He's due any moment. However, if you require backup, don't forget to call, I can be there in a flash."

Mystic hovered over toward the stairs. "Be careful lads, it's an important day and I'd hate to be short someone."

MadGremlin

"Ok dad, I'll be sure to have Newton home before bed time." Sting shook his head at Mystic's fatherly behavior.

Mithril_Zeta

Newton was taking a big swallow of Mountain Dew when he burst into laughter. Dew splattered out in front of him, and he swore. "Oooo, Mountain Dew in the nose," he lamented as he grabbed a nearby paper towel.

MadGremlin

"Should we try the Garment Works first? Always something going on over there." Sting headed toward the door.

The_Ninjin

"Garment Works works... yea. I'm all over it. Keep the tea warm Mystic," Brian said, looking back at his uncle and heading out on Sting's lead.

Mithril Zeta

"Be right there," Newton said as he finished wiping up the spilled Dew and ran to the bathroom to wash the sticky liquid out of his mustache and off his hands and face. A few moments later, he ran out of the Two-Six.

Dan43

"Hey, I know where that is. Does everybody have a com unit? How about an AG belt? Do we need to discuss tactics? Who-is going to-be-in charge at a tactical level? Are-we-going-to-concentrate-on-clock-or-take-any-target-of-opportunity?-Have-I-explained-how-I-use-my-radiation-to-weaken-the-bad-guys-If-you-see-somebody-glowing-green-leave-them-for-last.-Ia-musing-them-as-an-anchor-for-my-powers....."

As usual Ions excitement was overcoming his vocal abilities. Nevertheless he hurried to follow Sting from the station.

MadGremlin

Sting tried to listen to Ion's string of ideas but it quickly blurred into one incoherent string. He did note the comment about tactics. He considered taking a moment to talk about it but since he really didn't know much about group tactics he figured they would manage – it was only thugs and toys after all.

He felt a bit odd as he leapt out of the Two-Six toward the West side of the Row. He had never had people follow him or listen to his ideas. He just wanted to go beat up someone or something; he didn't want to be the leader. This group stuff was weird and it would take some time to get used to it – if he ever would.

For a moment he flashed back to his youth, when he and his friends would play: Call out targets of opportunity as you see them. Give location by compass direction and nearby landmarks. Do not engage prematurely – wait for backup and proceed with caution.

The thought was soon gone and he brought the com unit up to his mouth (since he had to hold it as he had no ear to clip it on and Ion hadn't had time for modifications). "Yell if ya see something that needs a butt whuppin'. And try not to do anything stupid because I ain't haulin anybody's carcass back to the Two-Six!"

Mithril_Zeta

"Roger that," Newton said into the microphone. "I see a green-haired fat man, a tall insect man, and a walking microwave oven approaching the station...oh, wait. Err, cancel that..." Newton grinned as he hovered a little above them.

MadGremlin

As he leapt toward the Garment district, Sting noticed a handful of Clockwork robots picking apart an electrical substation. “Yo, looks like we have our first targets.” Sting said into the com unit. “Toys to the southwest ripping up a generator. I’m going in!”

Sting avoided the trench filled with foul water that ran through this part of the row and landed in the middle of the gang of Clocks. He bent over a bit and pushed; spines flew out from every direction hitting the Clocks, the generator and pretty much everything nearby. Five small robots turned toward Sting.

Dan43

Ion saw Sting drop into the midst of the Clocks and dove after him with his mind a mad jumble of thoughts ranging from 'God, please don't let me screw this up.' all the way to 'Hot damn. Action at last.'

Targeting what seemed to be the largest and most powerful Clockwork Ion unleashed the radiation in his body infecting the Clock. This would cause that clock and all the others near him to move slower, be less accurate and do less damage if they did manage to hit Ion or his teammates. Landing next to Sting he modulated the wavelength of his radiation and used it to speed up his own as well as Stings metabolism, it might help Brian and Newt as well if they were close enough but he was too busy to check. The effect would only last a couple of minutes but for those minutes they would move faster than normal and be able to use their own powers more rapidly than normal. Next order of business was a little rock and roll. Choosing his target carefully Ion focused his energy and released a torrent of x-rays from his eyes. So concentrated was the barrage that it appeared as if he was firing a laser beam from his eyes.

As the battle was joined Ion's fears faded, he gave himself over to the combat and behind his armored mask the young man smiled.

Mithril_Zeta

Newton hovered above his teammates, picking up just enough of the modulated radiation to speed up his metabolism as well. “Not bad,” he murmured as Ion shot the slowed down clockwork.

His first order of business was to throw up his gravity bubbles around each of his companions, and then he wanted to contain enemies. As spines and radiation blasts smacked the hapless clockwork around, Newton bubble wrapped each of the other three heroes.

One of the oscillating clockwork attempted to fly away, but Newton brought the full weight of his gravity on the flying robot. With a loud clang, it fell to the ground, and stayed there in a mechanical rage and helplessness.

MadGremlin

Sting noticed the green glow slowing the Clocks as they fired bolts of electricity at him. Ion's radiation must have done something as most of the bolts missed him and the couple that hit caused only minor pain. Then Sting felt the acceleration affect and saw the bubble of force appear around him.

He threw his arm forward, propelling spines into one of the clocks. Though the spines did only moderate damage, the poison further slowed the clock as it fizzed and burned internal workings.

Another swipe of his spines caused broken bits of metal to scatter as that clockwork's days came to an end.

The_Ninjin

Brian had been behind Sting when he first entered the battle scene, but strayed somewhat behind to see what the toxic crusader could do. Not that he didn't believe in his abilities, but he always was curious about the powers of others.

After watching his initial attack on the clocks, he couldn't help but be like a little kid at a performance exhibit and just think, cool.

The clocks were coming around to what was going on and turned their attention in all direction, especially Stings. One of them made a strafe move toward Brian, but seeing it coming he rolled to his right to come face to face with the mechanical menace. Still on the ground and using the momentum from the roll he brought his right foot from under him and kicked the clock where the sun wouldn't shine if it had a place...to...not shine... The clock takes into the air blasting it's electrical currents wildly. While disoriented, the clock didn't see Brian jump up next to him in the air. Almost as if on purpose, the clock could see every movement Brian made; including the wink and smile he gave before he spun in his jump to end out in a flying roundhouse to the robots gut. The clockwork was sent flying into a nearby wall, motionless.

Brian landed, back to Sting, and scoped his next target.

Mithril_Zeta

Newton was carefully gauging his energy levels this time. He didn't feel quite the need to show off as he had the day before. He eyed another of the mechanical villains and pulled an ugly old sofa from the other end of the singularity. The sofa exploded when it connected with the bronze robot, and its 70s flower design material fluttered around them in many pieces. The robot attempted to rise again, and Newton brought it up from the ground and then slammed it to the ground.

It looked almost like a piece of modern art – pieces of a twisted bronze robot, seventies slip cover, pieces of foam and springs, and a few spines dripping with green venom.

MadGremlin

Three down, two to go; these were definitely not the elite of the clockwork forces. Just as Sting thought that he took a bolt of electricity directly in the chest leaving him shaking momentarily. He looked down at his belt; the standard issue radio that Mystic had given them was still there, but was now a sparking, half-melted piece of garbage. Fortunately Ion must have done something special with his com unit as it seemed to have survived the hefty jolt of electricity.

Sting jumped at the clock that had zapped him – the one that was the center of the green radioactive cloud – and tore at him with a flurry of rapid slashes with his spines. Once again it seemed that the metal clocks could resist the sharp points of the spines to some extent but the poison seemed to do nasty things to their inner workings.

Shalmdi

Back at the precinct, Coolant sat in his chamber, and stared at the door that he couldn't seem to will open. He had been meditating for some time, and his patience had almost come to an end.

His day had started well enough. He always considered it a good sign when he woke up the day after he had gone to sleep. However, his good morning had been completely spoiled when his

chamber informed him that his nightly uplink to the main computer at BIT had been blocked, and he was now locked in for safety measures.

Coolant had spent the first hour trying to imagine what could have possibly interrupted his wireless connection. He may not have been a genius like IonFlux, but the people that made his toys were. They were usually very good about the details, so a lock-down like this was rare.

At this point, the isolated hero could only wait and pray that Mystic had punched in his emergency code. He knew first hand how busy things could get at home, and he could be in for a long wait even with the code.

"I need a real hobby," Coolant spoke to the empty room as he stood up to practice his martial arts again, "Maybe I should take up ice sculpting."

Averick

The BIT representative was polite and respectful. He didn't say too much, but he gave enough reassuring glances and had a way of saying "well, that's well in hand", that kept Mystic from worrying.

The representative looked over the box for quite a while before attaching something to the exterior port. He depressed a button then spoke into the hexagonal device. "I'm sorry for your inconvenience. It appears that the time lock has been activated somehow. You should be able to override it from your end, but because of a malfunction, I'm afraid we can only try to break the code from the outside. This might take some time, so make yourself comfortable."

Mystic shook his head then hovered back up to the second floor, where he made a couple of phonecalls. It wasn't long before the phone rang. "Yeah, is there a Poisonous Sting there?"

Mystic cocked an eyebrow. "Poison Sting, yes, but he's on patrol. Can I help you?"

The voice sounded nervous, "yeah, uh, whatever. Just tell him that the Rome guy is going to be at the Pinnacle apartments, number twelve nineteen in an hour. He's going to only have one guy with him. He's coming in and leaving through the back too. You tell him Jimmy got this information for him. And you tell him Jimmy's going straight, got a job at an autobody and everything. You tell him!"

"Yes, of course. I'll include every detail." Mystic heard the click of the phone, then picked up his radio. "Gentlemen, we have a lead we must act on at once. Are we done with our patrol?"

MadGremlin

"&#*% @, just when it was getting fun. Ok boys, lets wrap this last one up and get home!"

Mithril_Zeta

"In a moment, boss," Newton said as he slammed the one of the clockwork, making it skip like rock across the water towards the waiting Sting. "We're mopping up here." 'I jarred that one hard enough for an opening for Sting's spines,' the green-haired mutant thought. He shifted his attention towards the final clockwork which was shooting electrical blasts at Brian.

MadGremlin

“Newton passes to Sting, who shoots...and SCORES!!!” Sting swatted the incoming clockwork robot into a chain link fence, destroying both in the process, then held his arms in the air in victory.

Dan43

Seeing the last Clockwork firing some type of electrical blast at Brian, Ion unleashed one final x-ray laser which destroyed said Clockwork.

"I think that's the last of them. Do you think you guys could help me haul some of the remains back to the 2-6? I would like to have 3 or 4 of the larger pieces at least. I really, really want a chance to examine these things a little closer. And a head, I need a head. It is fascinating how sophisticated these things are." Holding up a ruptured torso Ion peered into the inner workings. "Look how intricate the workings are. This is master machine work here. Do any of you see anything that looks like a power source? Or ANYTHING electronic or any electrical wiring?"

MadGremlin

“Well that takes care of that.” Sting said as he picked up a clock head and stuck it on the end of a forearm spine. “We ought to hang a few of these around the outside of the two-six; it might help scare off unwanted guests.”

“I guess we should get back, the boss actually sounded a bit urgent.” Sting leapt toward the two-six and brought the com unit to his mouth. “Awww c’mon dad, can’t we play for a little while longer? We’re on our way back, eta about two minutes.”

Averick

"Great, stay wary, we'll be leaving straight away."

Mystic bid farewell to the BIT representative and flew down to the big doors at the entrance. He set them to lock after he made sure he had the key. He hovered there, waiting for the rest of the Two-Six to return.

Mithril_Zeta

Newton focused for a moment on the clockwork remains, made them float, and then forced both himself and the robot pieces through his friendly singularity.

After several jumps, he appeared in front of the Two-Six. He glanced up at Mystic. "What's up, boss?" With a flick of his wrist, he made sent the robot pieces down the alleyway for Ion to go through later.

Dan43

As Newt and the pieces of clockwork disappeared into one of his singularities Ion took to the sky headed back to the 2-6. Flying was fun but his belt was fairly slow compared to Newt's method of travel, or even to Stings giant leaps. He smiled at the readouts on his HUD as Newt's wormhole closed however. The sensors in his armor had gotten a good clear reading at last. He was fairly certain that with these readings and a little work he could devise an artificial means of generating Newt's wormholes. Whether he could build it small enough to fit in his armor was another matter entirely. Powering it with the limited resources of his armor was a third. After all the cities med-porters had line current to power them. Still as he began to lay out circuit patterns in his head Ions confidence began to grow, and it was a happy hero who finally dropped to earth at the entrance to the 2-6.

Averick

As each member arrived, Mystic filled them in. They were going to be given a narrow window in which to scout the area, plan an ambush and carry it out, while Mr. Rome was not under either the watchful eye of the immediate world, or his usual full contingent of protectorates.

“Sadly, Coolant is out of action for a bit. Hrm... A BIT. Yes, quite amusing. You all don’t get it. You see his... nevermind that. He’s indisposed at the moment, so we had better come up with a plan that doesn’t require a large force at the center of it. Can we all be quiet? Brian, can you ensure the cooperation of the local police? Sting, can you quickly whisk Mr Rome away? Newton, can you lock down the dangerous players while Ion and I handle the odds and ends?” Mystic hovered there, realizing he hadn’t left a whole lot of room for reactions.

Mithril_Zeta

“Should be able too,” Newton said. “As long as they are not too strong, I should be able to hold them in place.” Newton grinned. “Although I really want to hear what happened to Coolant.”

Averick

“Terribly sorry. If someone has something to add, now would be a splendid time to do so. Any other plans or problems you see with this one?”

MadGremlin

“Ready to wisk, boss! That is assuming he isn’t going to be blasting me with energy or smacking me with a big axe or something – he is a normal, right? And I am making the wild assumption that you want him alive, not a pincushion.” Sting looked around. “Yeah, I’d feel a little better with Coolant around to take the brunt of any resistance, but we should be ok.”

Averick

“Nothing serious, just a slight equipment malfunction. They’re working on it as we speak.” Meanwhile, outside Coolant’s door, a tech from BIT was busy playing Doom 3D, and waiting for the cracker to run on his specialized interface machine. “I’m sure they’ll have him out in a jiffy.”

“If we’re all prepared.” Mystic took flight. It was only a couple minutes before he was at the apartment complex. Indeed there was a limousine parked in the alley, and one large man standing near it. A large man with slightly green skin. Mystic wondered if there was some troll lineage going on.

Up to an open window on the twelfth floor, and inside to two startled guys watching football and drinking beer on the couch. “Ho! Waz goin on?! Dere ain’t no crime in here! Get OUTTA HERE!”

“Yes, yes, terribly sorry, it’s just that my compatriots and I need to use your access to the hallway. There’s a man we’re trying to capture on this floor who...” Mystic held both hands up as he hovered there.

“Hold on Al! Dis may be good. Youz gonna rough him up some?” Mystic looked back at the other members who’d followed him in.

Mithril_Zeta

“Sure are,” Newton said cheerfully from behind Sting and Mystic. “We’re planning to rough him up lots. You guys can watch, if you like. It should be truly entertaining. I’ve been trying to

decide what I should rough him up with – the burnt out hulk of an old Chevy, or a pool table from a deserted bar in the Hollows.”

MadGremlin

"How about we thrash you guys first, and set an example for him?" Sting put on an evil grin. "Just kiddin boys, you can relax.

"Wait a minute...Newton, you have a pool table? Why isn't it in the two-six?"

Sting hated this flying stuff so landed himself in the apartment.

Mithril_Zeta

“Well, that decided that. Burnt out Chevy it is. The pool table is going to the Two-Six,” Newton said as he grinned at the insect-man. “We will, of course, have to re-felt the table.” He turned to Ion. “I don’t suppose you have a miracle machine that does that?”

Dan43

"I am afraid I don't. I could put a forcefield over the playing surface though. It would be absolutely level and flat but it would be a frictionless surface so you would not be able to put any English on the ball. Is English the right term. I have read about pool but I have never actually played before. It seems to be a fairly simple game really. It is all about the angle and applied force. If you think about it you should be able to reduce any shot to a mathematical formula. Maybe a forcefield would actually be a better surface for the game, it would remove several variables that are encountered when moving from table to table. And since-the-play surface can-actually-change- with-the-weather-time-of-year-and-humidity-the-more-I-think-about-this-the-more-I-see-a-whole-new-application-for-my-FF-generator-and-of-course-since-you-gave-me-the-idea-I-would-cut-you-in-on-the-deal-I-wonder-if-we-should-license-the-tech-or-go-into-the-manufacture-of-the-....." And as usual when a new idea first comes to him Ion was of on a tangent thinking 900mph with his brain on fire.

Averick

"Yes, that will be all, Ion. I think we all get the point." Mystic flew over to the door. What happened next kind of caught everyone by surprise.

Mystic opened the door and entered the hallway. He was face to face with Mr. Rome. There was a scantily clad women in the hall behind him shouting something at him. There was a large man running up behind Mystic, there were three young men in the hall between Rome and the girl, one of which was shouting "yeah you'd better run, freak!" All this, plus the elevator was opening and several large, bruiser types were getting out of it far behind Mystic's point of view.

Mystic got about as far as, "Enlrorem- DUNK!" as his head snapped forward from the large man behind him slamming him with his fist. The mage's body collapsed on Mr Rome, who went down as well. The big man didn't have time to help his boss up before the other members sprung into action.

MadGremlin

"Ah CRAP!" Sting shouted as he leapt into the hallway. He didn't know who was who at this point so figured it was just time to just open up on anything that moved.

After he got into the hallway he took a step to the right and let the spine burst go. The one thing the spine burst had going for it was that all of the spines went out horizontally from his body -

Mystic and Rome, being prone on the floor, were pretty safe. Anyone else in range was going to get a bunch of little spines in them. Of course it was going to be a little hard on the hallway wallpaper as well, but he had stepped out of the door so that the rest of the team would not get stabbed.

Mithril_Zeta

Spines flew by him and embedded in the door next to him. "Good grief!" Newton said, his eyes wide. He leaned out into the hall and pointed at the man who had clocked Mystic. The bruiser flew back towards the elevator and slammed into his companions. "I've got this end," Newton said, not looking behind him. "As I said, the Chevy it is!"

A large blue wreck of a car appeared out of the wormhole and flew through the air at the bruisers. Scrambling back into the elevator, the bruisers avoided the majority of the impact of the auto.

As they stood and turned back towards Newton, they saw him raise both hands in their direction. They felt their weight increase, and then heard the snap of elevator cables. Newton had a wide grin on his face, and he waved once. "Y'all come back, y'hear?"

With a tearing metal sound, the elevator fell. "Actually, don't come back, y'hear."

Dan43

Ion's brain snapped from designing pool tables back the here and now so fast he was surprised nobody heard it. Still deep in the room and with no visible target other than Rome, Ion transferred some of his radiation to Rome. The rad infection should make it fairly easy for Mystic to keep control of him as well as allow Sting to more easily deal with any other muscle in the hallway.

Averick

Mystic became groggily aware of his surroundings. There was fighting over him, he was on top of Mr. Rome, who had ceased trying to get up and was now staring up at something, probably scary from the look on his face. There was a shout from down the hall, and some of the toughs who were jeering at Rome a moment ago, were now headed down the hall toward Mystic.

"Buttons!" Mystic grabbed Rome and incanted, raising a single finger to the sprinkler system. The flame that shot from his finger set off the fire alarm, and water poured down into the hallway.

"Newton... get us out of here!" Mystic's voice was haggard, but he clung to Rome as if he were a flotation device in the middle of the ocean.

MadGremlin

Sting paused for a moment as Mystic yelled for evac over the sound of the pouring water.

Mithril_Zeta

Newton whirled and ran at Mystic. A couple of gunshots were fired, and Newton cried out and fell heavily to the floor. His red sweatpants were had a growing spot of darker red on the right calf.

Mad Gremlin

“Oh man, that one is gonna cost you.” Sting growled at the pistol-wielding thug. He leapt at him, spines bristling. His leap was somewhat off target due to a hollow-point slug slamming into his shoulder but he still hit him hard enough to cause a pile on the floor.

All sense of tactics gone, Sting just started stabbing the prone body. The steam obscured much and Sting didn't really care - he didn't notice the blood or the screams, or the other thugs approaching him.

Mithril Zeta

Newton reach out for his friendly singularity he had left at the Two-Six, and yanked himself through it. Several startled workers were lounging by the big heavy desk stood rapidly and uttered oaths.

Newton reached frantically back towards the building, but he his senses were jumbled. He couldn't tell who was who on the other side of the wormhole, so he prayed, grabbed two figures, and pulled them through.

Averick

Mystic and Rome were hauled up by the shirts and slammed against the wall by two of the approaching thugs. The third barrelled toward Sting, gun still in hand.

One thug was trying to choke Mystic. The mage managed the phrase, "don't make me..." But was immediately interrupted with "WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO, HERO?"

Then Rome and the thug on him vanished. Mystic didn't have time to contemplate what that meant. He lit the man in front of him on fire. Steam filled the hallway, and he could no longer see Sting or Ion, but the thug let go and screamed.

"Rome and the thug disappeared, I can't see anything. Pull out and regroup at the Two Six, grab Rome if you can!" Mystic shouted into the radio over the sounds of steam hissing and the sprinkler. He could see light from the window at the end of the hall and headed directly for it, flying inches above the ground.

Mithril_Zeta

Rome and a huge thug appeared in front of Newton. “That really wasn't what I had in mind,” Newton said, his eyes widening. With a burst of energy, Newton leapt behind the solid desk as both Rome and the thug drew guns.

“A moment ago, they were beating up on each other, now they both come after me. That's just not fair,” Newton said as bullets struck the desk and walls around them. The workers fled screaming.

Newton shut his eyes and created a generalized gravity field around him. Wrappers sank, sandwiches flattened, and the donut box became a pancake envelope. Newton peeked up over the desk to see how the gravity was affecting the two men.

Rome was flat on his back puffing, but the thug was still on his feet. He attempted to raise the gun, but the bullet struck the floor.

Newton glared at the thug. "Hold that pose," he wheezed. With a sharp motion, he slammed the thug up through the ceiling. He didn't come down. All that could be seen were the combat boots of the now-unconscious thug hanging out of the tiles.

Newton looked down at the puddle of blood that had formed under him. "Oh, drat," the green-haired mutant said as his eyes rolled back in his head and darkness over came him.

SquirrelWizard

Rome staggered to his feet and collected his gun off the floor. Drops of sweat had lined his forehead, as his ragged breathing was coming to a more normal pace. Wiping his forehead with the back of his arm, Rome made his way to dispatch the hero hunkered behind the desk.

He was about to round the desk when he heard the soft click that only a military-style-fully-automatic-I-mean-farking-business weapon could have made, "I think you've had enough fun for one night." came a soft, almost a purr, from behind him. "Turn around slowly and drop toy on the ground." Rome turned and faced whoever was behind him.

There was a lithe feminine figure in what looked like some weird futuristic battle armor. He didn't see much else, as his main attention was drawn to the weapon that the woman was holding. It looked like some weird offspring of a rifle, machine gun, shotgun, gernade launcher, and flame thrower. Just looking at it said overkill, but Rome was kinda on the wrong side of it complain. This time he broke out into a cold sweat, and wasn't sure if he was going to need a freash pair of pants.

"Drop the gun." This time the voice was slightly irritated. Rome dropped the gun, and would have happily enlisted the aid of that stupid hero behind the desk to make the gun fall faster. But, somehow he didn't think that would go over with rambo over there. The figure smiled, "Good, now you see that chair?" she motioned with her weapon to something behind him, Rome merely nodded, "good now you are going to sit down in it and we are going to wait till the rest of the group gets here. Understand?" He nodded, but his eyes were firmly glued on the muzzel of "monstergun," "Good, now move." Rome quickly did as the gun, um, woman said and went over and sat down, rather heavily in the chair. The woman walked over and looked down at the guy lying, unconcious, on the floor. She had moved into better light, and the man saw her facial features coupled with the tail that swished silently behind her, "Fuggin arrested by a cat." He snarled under his breath.

At that moment two things happened the woman appeared right next to him, and there was a sickening crunch as she laid the ubergun's butt into the side of his face. The attack lifted Rome out of his seat and sent him crashing to the floor. The woman trained the gun at him and said, in a harsh tone, "Sit down, and shut up, Terran."

Rome spat out some blood, but didn't say a thing.

Dan43

Ion heard Mystic call for a retreat and dove back through the window while activating his anti-grav belt. Shooting upwards he hovered just above the building roof line and waited anxiously for Mystic and Sting to follow him out.

The_Ninjin

Following the fight with the clockwork, Brian got a phone call from his source. After learning the information, he saw that he was alone. It happened from time to time that he got caught up in his conversations.

He made his way to the 2-6 and hadn't found anyone there. He didn't want to waste more time than was necessary so he went to the apartment. On his way, he kicked himself for not taking a comm unit with him, but he would just have to kick himself later.

When Brian reached the apartment complex, he saw a limo screech off in the distance and he wondered if maybe he had missed the festivities.

Ion heard Mystic call for a retreat and dove back through the window while activating his anti-grav belt. Shooting upwards he hovered just above the building roof line and waited anxiously for Mystic and Sting to follow him out.

Brian looked up to see Ion glide above him, "Maybe I didn't miss everything," he said as he rushed upstairs.

The floor was a mess of water, blood, and screams. Brian couldn't make out too far down the hallway. Using the sprinkles and the steam and smoke, he noticed the two men coming up on Stings back. Immediately, Brian made two moves into one. He took his left hand and slapped it against the side of the right man's head, slamming it hard into the wall while taking his left foot and jacking it into the back of the left man's calf, bringing him to the ground. He then crossed over and gave him a quick right jab and crossed over once more to put the right man's face back into the wall. It almost looked like he was giving their faces alternating hi-fives.

Once on the ground, he stepped over them and took ahold of Sting's arms, "Man, anymore rearranging and his mother won't recognize him. Let's just get out of here."

Mithril_Zeta

Newton continues bleeding unconsciously.

Averick

Mystic flew straight at the hall window, preparing to blow through it with a blast of flame. What he wasn't prepared for was the eight foot tall, ex-freakshow body guard to step in his way.

The flame erupted all around the body guard, blew out the window. The flame spouting from a window of the building set all the people gathered around because of the fire alarm into panic mode. The word was rapidly spreading toward the front of the building that this was a real fire that had already engulfed one floor and blown out a window.

Mystic crashed into the large man, carrying him out the window with his momentum. The body guard grabbed the mage by his left shoulder with a powerful mechanical hand. The magic keeping Mystic in the air, wasn't enough to hold them both up, so they began slowly falling.

Most of his mechanical flash had been removed. He still had goggles built into his head and studs in a line from his eyebrow to the back of his bald head, which was now visible because his hoodie was flying every which way from the wind. He still had a robotic right arm, and left hand, and more machinery everywhere, but he had lost the bright colors, replacing them with died black army surplus and a mohair coat. He kept the jackboots though, just got them polished.

“I’m Nerdy,” the big man said to Mystic as the mage was desperately trying to pull free.

“Pleasure to mee-“ POW! If they hadn’t been falling, where Nerdy didn’t have leverage, and or it had been his right hand, Mystic would have been out. As it was, it hurt, badly. The world spun even more than it usually did when one was falling from a building in slow motion. Mystic was sure his nose was bleeding. The second punch confirmed it, as Nerdy pulled back with blood on his metal hand.

“They say I’m a tank, but I like to think of myself as scrapper material. I hit real hard.” Nerdy seemed nonplussed at the fall, or the crowd below, the building flying past or being grappled with a superhero.

“No argument here.” Mystic stalled as he summoned up the strength to do what came next. “It’s survival.” He thought. “I have to do it.” He thought. “Not a jury would convict me.”

Every spell he knew in rapid succession exploded around him. Spells designed for intimidation, small flames that usually burn gun hands or heat handles erupted along Nerdy’s face. The closer spells he kept for really tough bad guys burned through Nerdy’s jacket and seared his flesh. Mystic summoned a sword of pure flame and plunged it into the big man’s throat. Of course, the flames didn’t penetrate, just washed over him.

Every spell dropped Nerdy’s defenses a little more, until he used so much energy he couldn’t punch any harder than an adolescent. Then, the strain became obvious. They were a slow moving meteor, a burning ball trailing black smoke headed for the rapidly parting crowd. And then, just before they hit, Nerdy let go.

Mystic swooped away, over the heads of the crowd, and headed back toward the Two Six. It only took him three tries to get his bearings. When he arrived, he alighted on the front door steps and pulled open the large, heavy doors. He was singed, bleeding, bruised and exhausted.

But when he saw Mr. Rome, he stood straight up. “Well DONE.”

SquirrelWizard

Elisa regarded the man casually, "I take it you are Mystic?" She looked coldly at Mr. Rome, who was massaging a blackish blue bruise on his cheek, "I'm Elisa S'thani, I was just assigned here." She pointed behind the desk, "you have an injured man you need to deal with, I've got this guy covered."

The_Ninjin

Mystic flew straight at the hall window, preparing to blow through it with a blast of flame. What he wasn’t prepared for was the eight foot tall, ex-freakshow body guard to step in his way.

Brian had to duck to miss his uncle's robes as he flew past him and Sting, I guess it's time to leave, he thought.

MadGremlin

Sting was finally snapped out of his rage, noticing that the thug was not moving and that two others were doing their best to beat on him.

The Ninjin

"So whenever your surgery is done, meet us back at the 2-6," he jokes, looking to Sting.

He got up and went to the opposite end of the hallway and dove through the 12th story window. He hit the building adjacent to the apartment complex and like a ball, threw his body off the wall and back to the apartment. He made the same move back to the adjacent building. He did this until he reached the ground. Once he had reached the front, he could see the Mystic going back in the direction of the 2-6 and made pursuit.

Mad Gremlin

"Huh? Oh yeah." Sting noted that the steam was starting to clear and that he would soon be the lone target in the hallway. "Time to go!"

A leap and he was at the window. Another leap and he was clear as bullets followed him out the window. He made it to about the second roof before he collapsed – the wear and tear of the fight finally catching up to him.

Dan43

A leap and he was at the window. Another leap and he was clear as bullets followed him out the window. He made it to about the second roof before he collapsed – the wear and tear of the fight finally catching up to him.

Ion saw Sting leap from the window, since this meant that everyone was clear he followed as fast as his AG-belt would take him. Sting was so much faster that he nearly missed seeing him collapse on the roof after his second leap. Landing beside him he bathed Sting in radiation on the wavelength that he had found that caused very rapid healing. He followed this up by using a little more to speed up his metabolism so that his own body processes would help him recover as quickly as possible.

"Come on Sting! Get up! We have got to move!"

Ion thought briefly of calling the others back, just as quickly he discarded the idea. They had looked like they had their hands full and Ion thought he might be the only one who had sustained no injuries and was still combat ready. Hearing somebody headed up the fire escape on the side of the building Ion gave Sting another shot of radiation to try and further speed the healing of his injuries.

MadGremlin

Though exhausted, Ion's healing had helped and Sting slowly rose, shaking his head.

"Ok, let's get out of here. Which way is the Two-Six?" Sting didn't wait for an answer and found a convenient rooftop across the street to land his leap.

Dan43

Waiting only long enough to be sure that Sting was not going to collapse again Ion took to the sky. First order of business was altitude. With that in mind Ion leapt straight up and his AG belt used that leap to carry him almost as high as the War Walls. Then Ion began the long but fairly safe (At this altitude at least) flight back to the 2-6. As he made his trip he allowed his mind to wander force field pool tables, Coolants chamber malfunction, War Walls for the 2-6, singularities, a smaller power source for his armor....

Suddenly Ions body stiffened and his mind siezed on a tantalizing thought. Could i? Could I have? As badly as he hated to admit it to himself he thought he knew what had caused Coolants chamber malfunction. With his face burning red under his helmet he continued towards the 2-6 wondering how he was going to tell the others what he suspected.

The Ninjin

Back at the 2-6, he made note of Newton's unconscious body.

"I'm Elisa S'thani, I was just assigned here." She pointed behind the desk, "you have an injured man you need to deal with, I've got this guy covered."

"Yea, all over it."

Brian ran over to Newton to carry him over to a nearby table, "For a guy of your stature, you're amazingly light... ha must be the gravity powers," he said as he lifted him up onto the table. He took one of the couch pillows and placed it under his head.

Making a quick glance around the room, he saw Rome lyin on the ground, "Looks like you finally found that one girl who wouldn't take your crap, huh," he gave a quick, sharp laugh and glanced up at the newcomer.

Rome, unable to decide who he wanted to direct his anger at just gave a cold look Brian. Brian never made a move and his smile faded as Rome looked on to notice the green emerald necklace that Brian was wearing. His frozen stare became even colder as he snarled his lip at Brian.

"I'm sorry do you know me? Cuz you seem to hate me like you know me?"

"I don't know you," he replied with a deep angry tone, "but a few of my boys know emerald cop all too well."

"Oooh, is that what they're calling me? Emerald Cop? Hmm, " he said, smiling again, "Has a nice lil ring to it, but it proly won't be the name I choose. Thanks though."

The oddest thing about the whole situation is that he hadn't noticed his uncle standing behind him. He whirled around to see a battle weary man with a couple robe tears. He knew his Uncle couldn't have been to happy about that. He remembered back to when he was 12 and tore a hole in one of his school shirts Mystic had bought for him. It was not a pretty sight to witness. He ran over to the dear family member and placed an arm around him for support.

"Uncle Al, you gotta stop wrestlin in the street in your good clothes... you know that's not good for you," he said with a wink, "C'mon let me get you over to this couch. I'll put the tea on," he said, resting his unclce and running to the kitchen.

Averick

Mystic pushed Brian away, "you can stop coddling me lieutenant, or detective or whatever your rank, you overgrown boyscout. I'm not that old or infirm just yet." He straightened up his singed clothing as Brian eyed him on his way to the kitchen. He stood again and walked over to Rome, sitting in a chair nearby. He radioed Sting and Ion, informing them that they would have to return under their own power, since Newton was out of action.

“Well, Elisa S'thani, we have a holding cell upstairs you can place him in.” Mystic handed her the keys. “Then we can hear all about how you came to join us.”

When Brian returned with the tea, Mystic poured for both of them. “Is Newton going to require medical attention? Should I ring for the ambulance?”

Mithril_Zeta

“I never like hearing ‘Newton’ and ‘hospital’ in the same sentence,” Newton said as he opened an eye. “But since we don’t really have a healer on staff, it might not be a bad idea.”

He looked over at Mystic. “I think I’m having a bad streak here. First I get hit on the head, then I get shot. I wonder what’s next? Allergic reaction to the powder burn? Heart attack? Or maybe I’ll get clawed to death for flirting with the cat-lady.” He grinned, and then grimaced as Brian tightened a bandage.

“Where’s Sting?” he asked, looking around for the insect-man.

MadGremlin

Sting made his way back to the Two-Six and entered looking around to see if everyone made it back.

Mithril_Zeta

“Ah, there you are, Sting,” Newton said as he stretched his arms. “I’ve been shot. How are you?” He pointed to his leg that was being bandaged. “Have you seen Ion? I sure could use a dose of his radioactive healing.” He smiled cheerfully. “Or we could do your lettuce-spit stuff. Although I still think that’s still pretty gross.” He reached behind him into the desk he was sitting on and grabbed a Mountain Dew, opened it, and took a deep swallow. “Ah, ambrosia of the gods,” Newton intoned. He frowned slightly, looking a little concerned suddenly. “Hm. I can’t help but wonder of that means that the mega-corps then are the American equivalent of the ancient Greek gods, which makes Pepsico a god...” Newton shook his head. “I think I might be in shock,” the green-haired man said.

MadGremlin

“Yeah, sorry I let you get shot. Next time be a little more careful. Genius-boy will be here in a minute; he just doesn’t fly that fast. Sit your butt down and elevate your leg. And no I don’t think my spit thing will work for you. And lastly, whomever gave us that info on Rome had better watch it because I am going to find them!”

Sting sat down. He had scrapes and cracks in multiple locations on his carapace, but nothing very serious and most of it had been healed by Ion already.

“I hate to say it, but we need to work on our tactics – especially when Coolant isn’t around to take heat for us. I’m not the one to figure it out, but I am sure someone can.”

Mithril_Zeta

“We did get our man, but only because of the woman,” Newton said as he lay back and elevated the leg. It was a fairly comical visual: a fat man lying back on a desk with one leg up in the air. “The cat-woman. I’m sorry. I’ve forgotten her name already.”

“And you’re most certainly right about the tactics. Our plan was sound, but when something unexpected came up...”

“Although I did like my trick with the elevator.” Newton turned his head and grinned at his teammates.

MadGremlin

"Yeah, that was pretty neat. And good point, who is the pu...er, cat person?" Sting waved a hand at the new arrival.

"And from what I have seen in our few missions together; the unexpected is pretty much the norm. We should get used to it."

SquirrelWizard

Elisa was walking back from the holding cells where Mr. Rome was being very quiet. She had slung her gun over her back, and was walking with a casual gait. She nodded in acknowledgement to the insectoid, but quickly walked past the rest of the group towards the entrance, she rummaged through a small dufflebag, and produced a small folder. She turned around, and handed it to Mystic. "I am Elisa S'thani, Ex-Mercenary of the Iron Claw, Pheonix devision."

Standing about 5' 6", Elisa S'thani looked like an average "catgirl." That is, she had the ears and tail of a feline. What was different, was she had a fine furr that covered her visible skin, and unbeknown to the others, she had a set of claws that could be razor sharp. In the current light, the others could see that her hair was a rather odd shade of purple, and was rather long. She had emerald hued eyes, that would give you the impression that you were being mentally taken apart in her mind. She was wearing a slick silver grey suit of armor that obviously looked alien, as the metal plates would bend in some areas as she walked. Finally another thing that would catch many people's attention, would have to be the large weapon she had trained on Mr. Rome.

The_Ninjin

Brian had stayed next to Newton in the event that he had experienced any more pain. He didn't care what his uncle said. Besides, he hated the boy scouts. So it didn't matter anyway. One day his Uncle will stop trying to prove better of his age.

SquirrelWizard

She shrugged, and walked over to a nearby chair, her armored tail swishing lazily about, and sat down, "They said my tactics were a little harsh so they sent me here," and ended it with a very evil looking fang framed grin.

Mithril_Zeta

“Oh, you’ll fit in just fine around here, then. We’re all a bunch of loose cannons. Except for maybe Inferno, and beneath that British reserve, I see a certain amount of ‘loose cannonishness’ in him as well.” He smiled cheerfully. “A couple of weeks with us, and we’ll corrupt you quite nicely.” Newton smacked his head. “Oops. Sorry. I gave away the secret plan.”

Dan43

"Who are we going to be corrupting?" Ion asked as he walked in the front door.

Mithril_Zeta

"We'll start with Mystic, and then we'll go from there," Newton said with a grin. Inferno was getting a little prickly, and so it was even more fun poking at the traditional British reserve.

Dan43

"Sorry I took so long. How's the leg Newt?" Without waiting for a reply Ion walked over and held his hand near Newt's leg and let his radiation wash over the wound. As every one watched the leg began to knit and heal. Within 30 seconds all that was left was a small puckered scar.

Mithril Zeta

"Thank you, my boy," Newton said, flexing the leg a bit. "That feels much, much better." The fat man grinned as he gingerly got off the desk. "I've decided I don't like being shot."

Averick

Mystic stood to give his rebuttal. "Loose cannonish is it? Should I remind you that I endeavor to always set a good example for our team? Am I not always the one reminding everyone to be careful? You don't see me dodging bullets or taking on overwhelming odds, do you?" Behind him the television played on mute, the news showing footage of Mystic and Nerdy battling it out in the sky above King's Row. "Don't count me amongst you young thrill seekers, my days of dangerous antics are behind me."

Directly behind him, the television showed the image of the death dive, flame and smoke trailing, until at the last second he pulled up, and then flew over the camera man. The disturbing part was that Nerdy got up.

The Ninjin

Brian had seen a few of these girls before. One of them he knew that lived in the infamous Whitmoore apartments, "Well whatever those tactics may be, just don't kill yourself," he said, motioning to the piece of artillery she carried, "Don't see too many of those around," he finished, walking toward the entrance of the 2-6.

As he did, screeching tires could be heard from a distance. At first it was nothing that he paid attention to. When he heard it a second time from the other direction, he perked an ear and raised an eyebrow. He jogged a few steps into the afternoon sun and looked to his left and then to his right seeing two identical black vans speeding down the street.

Mithril Zeta

He smiled cheerfully as the cat-lady introduced her self, and shivered involuntarily as she showed her sharp fangs.

When Brian leapt up, Newton frowned and glanced over at Inferno and Sting, and found his friendly little singularity that was hanging out in his room upstairs.

The Ninjin

"Uhhhh," he said loudly, backing into the 2-6, "we might have a problem."

Mithril Zeta

"I don't suppose it is the pizza delivery guys with the wrong order?" Newton asked hopefully.

MadGremlin

"I heard the A-Team was in town, maybe it is them coming to help us out." Sting said as he moved to a position above the front door.

"We might as well get ready and set up an ambush for them, just in case they are unwanted guests."

Mithril_Zeta

“And I’ve always wanted to meet Mr. T,” Newton said as he floated to the ceiling above the door. “I wanted him to call me a ‘fool.’”

Dan43

Moving towards the door along with the others, Ion unleashed his radiation. Suddenly time seemed to slow down. Everybody was moving slower. Ion knew this was just a symptom of the sudden rise in his metabolic rate and that the others were feeling the same thing. Facing the door in plain view Ion made himself something of a decoy. He would be the first thing the newcomers saw. If they had hostile intentions they should attack him first, which would hopefully give the others an extra second of surprise to well and truly get the drop on them.

MadGremlin

Sting couldn’t believe what Ion was doing – making himself a target may have been brave, but it was clearly not his place on the team.

“Ion, get some cover you loon! You don’t know what kind of threat this is!”

Dan43

Ion neither moved nor looked at Sting.

"I am afraid I can't do that. I have yet to really take part in a battle. I've hung around on the edges, I've used my gadgets, I've patched you guys up. Time for me to be in the thick of things for a change. I need to find out if I really have what it takes to be a hero, or am I just playing at being one because I can't be normal."

With those words Ion's hands began to glow as he prepared for the coming conflict.

Averick

Out of the van poured a virtual army of... technicians. Each of them wearing the BIT logo. Some twenty technicians, armed with all sorts of gadgets and boxes were now headed directly for the Two Six, with nothing in their way but the heroes in the archway.

“Oh, I’ll take this. I think they’re here about Coolant.” Mystic flew toward the fiasco, too tired to walk.

“Indeed, you are correct, Mystic.” The representative had emerged from Coolant’s area. “Right this way gentlemen!” He called out to the techs, then turned back to Mystic. “You see, we’ve hit a bit of a snag, in the unit.”

Mystic held his hand up, “I’m sorry, what was your name again? Charles? Yes, I see. Look, Charles, are you going to be able to get him out of there, because if you can’t we’d be happy to...”

“No no no no no! That won’t be necessary. Or rather, that will be a last resort. The device itself is quite valuable and... well, if we need you, we’ll call you.” Charles tried to be reassuring.

Mystic didn’t look him in the eye, he let him get all excited about the concept of burning the box open and rendering it useless while staring out at the two vans with mild interest. Then he let him fidget with his tie for a moment, and finally waited until he was just out of earshot. “One more

thing, Charles. We just took on a high profile prisoner, making this station and everyone in it a target. The faster you work, the faster you can leave the center of this huge, bloody bulls eye.” Charles didn’t answer, but Mystic could hear a low clearing of the throat indicate that his point wasn’t missed.

Mithril_Zeta

Newton floated down from above the door. He was frankly relieved. He wanted to get used to the idea of being shot at again.

Seeing the technicians busy at Coolant’s tank, and the others talking quietly amongst themselves, he floated upstairs towards his room. He left his little singular spy behind in the main room so he could keep track of what was going on around him.

He took a peak in at Rome, and saw that he was still in the holding area with a very sullen look on his face.

Averick

“Lord Recluse.” Mr Rome said. He folded his hands and stared at Mystic. The refurbished interrogation room still looked sparse. The walls were painted a burnt orange color, that was really quite unpleasant. Mystic had room one painted white and room two painted green, so that he could move people around in order to give them different feels for what was going to happen to them. The table was black, finished, with long legs, and the chair was metal and strong, very strong. Actually, deceptively strong, as it had a cushion that made you think of it as an office chair. Mystic specified that it had to be able to hold a semi truck to a bridge.

“I see. Lord Recluse.” Mystic wrote the name down on his pad of paper. A number of other details were already jotted down neatly. Mystic sat leaning over his pad opposite Rome. Rome had been interrogated before, and could tell that Mystic was an amateur. Despite that, he had reasons to cooperate fully. Once he’s captured he’s a liability. Liabilities that know something get silenced. He was held for MORE than enough time to talk before he was questioned. So now it was a matter of witness protection. Though he was pretty sure that there wasn’t anyplace he would be safe, he figured he’d give it a shot.

“Well, thank you very much. I’ll just pop out and make sure the information you’ve given us is accurate, and then we’ll get to sending you someplace safe.” Mystic smiled from behind his mask. Mr. Rome smiled back. He didn’t have anything to say to Mystic, he was screwed and he knew it. Warning Mystic wasn’t going to do anything. He looked around at the walls.

He leaned back in the chair and was suddenly aware of it. He felt along the leg of the incredibly sturdy chair. “Nice chair though. If I’m going to die, I might as well die in a nice chair.”

“Brian, could you dig up everything we need to know about someone calling themselves Lord Recluse?” Mystic passed the note to Brian in front of the rest of the Two Six.

The_Ninjin

"Hmm, heard the name before. He's high up on classification though. I'll see what strings I can pull, " Brian replied, taking the note and placing it in his pocket.

Brian walked past Rome patted his head, "Don't do anything I wouldn't do," he said and ran out to the train station.

Mithril_Zeta

“Sting, come on up here,” Newton yelled down the stairs. As the insect-man bounded up the stairs, Newton had a wicked grin on his face. “Mr. Rome is holding back a bit. No, he’s holding back a lot, and he thinks he’s already a dead man. The vague threats Mystic gave were very ineffective. He gave a name: Lord Recluse. Do you think we should ask a few more heavy or perhaps pointed questions?”

MadGremlin

"Bout time you guys gave me something to do that I am good at. Does he have to live through it? And can I leave marks like last time?"

Mithril_Zeta

“Well, I’m not sure if it’s ‘you guys,’” Newton said, continuing to grin. “It’s more like ‘it seems like a good idea right now, but I’ll regret it later’ sort of thing.” Newton’s eyes brightened. “Alive, but definitely marks. You still game?”

MadGremlin

“Sure!” Sting said almost cheerily as he made his way to the interrogation room. He looked in on Rome, who still had a somewhat smug look on his face. “How can this guy be so cocky?” He whispered to Newton.

Mithril_Zeta

“Well, he’s believes he’s a dead man, and we’re all dead men, too, for finding out about him and his boss – what was the name Mystic mentioned...oh, yes, Lord Recluse.” Newton said eyeing the smug man. “He seems to think that there’s nothing we can do to him or for him.”

“Let’s start this. Mr. Rome, just so you know, I’m the good cop, and Poison Sting here is the bad cop, and we want to know everything you know. I have the odd sense that there is a great big target on my chest. I don’t like it. So, what else is there we should know about Lord Recluse?” Newton smiled grimly. “I’ve already heard what you told Mystic.” The green-haired man stopped smiling. The normally carefree voice turned surprisingly cold and harsh. “You’re now going to tell us what you are keeping hidden from us.”

MadGremlin

Without pretending, lying, or acting Sting turned to Newton and asked, "Wait, can I beat him up a little before we start? Why does the good cop always get to go first?"

Sting paced, waiting for his turn. Beating this guy was going to help remove some anger and frustration.

Averick

"Yes, why? Are you unfamiliar with the name?" Rome looked at Newton's Apple. "I wasn't certain how popular he was here, but allow me to assure that there's every likelihood we'll all be dead before the sun sets tomorrow. What precisely did you want to know?"

SquirrelWizard

Elisa had gone up to her room (mainly by just choosing an empty one and claiming it), and had taken off her combat armor. The armor consisted of two separate layers. First there was the obvious top layer that resembled a hard metallic/ceramic mix that was equally flexible yet just very tough. The second layer was a very thin, yet tough bodysuit that was there for thermal/biological protection.

Now clad in a white t-shirt and cargo pants, Elisa was sitting in front of a jury rigged work bench and was messing around with her armor's internal systems. Being brought through the portal at Crey Technologies had some rather ill effects on the armor. Many of the internal systems had malfunctioned due to the high voltage electricity, and the armor's regrowth feature didn't repair these. This meant that the repairs had to be done by hand. On all of Earth, Elisa was probably the only trained professional who could fix it. She looked at the tangle of wires and sighed, she was going to need a few supplies before she could get the stealth system operational again. Closing up her armor and activating the safety field she started to head down the stairwell to see if they had any of the materials they needed on hand.

She had just reached the landing when Mystic gave Brian the information he had gotten from Mr. Rome. Elisa's ears perked at the sound of "Lord Recluse," and as Brian left she approached Mystic, "did you just say Lord Recluse?"

Averick

"Yes, why? Are you familiar with the name?" Mystic turned to her with interest.

SquirrelWizard

Elisa shrugged, "I don't know much, I caught some of those Terrans who call themselves Hellions. They in some lab or something, definitely not their thing, after a bit of... creative interrogation... they gave me his name. I'm figuring he must be some sort of coordinator, and he seems to be 'in' with a lot of things that happen around here."

Mithril_Zeta

"Well, let's see. Sting, what do we want to know? How about, what exactly you do for him? Where is he? What is he 'lord' of? Do you really think he knows we've got you, and how? Will he kill us all quickly or slowly? And what is the average flight speed of a common African swallow."

Shalmdi

After only a short time, Charles and the BIT crew sat back with smug looks on their faces as the front door to Coolant's chamber hissed open. Those smug looks vanished from the more experienced members of the repair team when a frigid amount of cold air poured out through the normally secure chamber. Charles in particular knew that this meant the person inside was more than a little upset.

The first thing a normal inhabitant of the Two-six would have noticed was the fact that Coolant's armor was completely different from normal. It was much smaller, and the man in it was no taller than 5'8" even with the suit on. While the colors were the same, the suit seemed more fluid, and the head covering was a nearly invisible shield that seemed to flicker in the light. Without the hood, glasses, and mask, the face inside the armor appeared to be a light blue boy in his early teens. No hair or crease could be found on his face, giving him the illusion of being cut from solid ice.

"What in the coldest circle of hell took you guys so @\$&ing long?!" Coolant nearly screamed as he quickly dashed out and assumed a prone, gasping posture on the floor in front of his chamber.

"Sorry Nik, we couldn't get here any quicker, and we still can't figure out what caused the malfunction. It's like your chamber vanished from the grid for hours," Charles tried to ease his

friend's nerves, and the best thing to do was usually get him thinking about something else. "Besides, what would the Doc's think if they heard you using that language? You know Corie hates it when you say that "Coldest circle..." thing."

The mention of his surrogate parents quickly made Nikolas forget about his prolonged captivity, "You – uh – aren't planning on telling them about that are you, Chuck?"

After a brief conversation about the repairs and how things were going at his new place, Charles and his crew were on their way out, and a slightly calmer Nikolas was looking around trying to figure out what he had missed and trying to regain his Coolant System mentality.

Mithril_Zeta

Newton waited for another moment, looking at the stalling Mr. Rome. He shrugged. "Okay, Sting, go ahead, but leave his mouth more or less intact so he can continue talking. It would be a shame to poison him and then not understand what he was saying due to a broken mouth."

Averick

Mr Rome looked on patiently as Newton rambled off questions. Then he inhaled deeply.

"Nothing directly though I do work for people who work for people, lather rinse repeat, who work for him. On an Island in the Bermudas. I don't recommend you go there. An Island in the Bermudas. He has spies everywhere. Slowly, unless he likes or respects you. Laden or unladen?" He waited for Newton to connect all the answers to all the questions.

Mithril_Zeta

Newton nodded. "Good start," he said, waving Sting back. "Who's your direct employer? Which island? What did the goons who came after you want? Who is another contact or spy – you know, one of those who are every where? Any particular method I can hope he won't use on me? Who should we be watching out for – any lieutenant in general? Unladen."

Averick

Mr. Rome smiled. This was as good a way to pass the time as any. "I'm not certain, our method of communication is by letter, delivered by US postal service with no return address. I can show it to you on a map, but I really don't recommend going there. Contacts I don't know, spies I never knew, that wouldn't make much sense, would it? Spiders. As I told Mystic, he'll probably not directly hear about it. He'll send the knives of Artemis or Malta or some such. There's a Carl Grosser, he's a law abiding citizen that passes orders to Outcasts in his area of town, but that will be difficult to prove. I gave Mystic his address. Really, it isn't all this that you should be worrying about. You should be busy preparing for the worst."

Mr. Rome looked at his watch.

MadGremlin

Sting, who had been only partially listening to what this rotund, self-righteous windbag had been spewing stopped pacing. If Lord Recluse could bring the Malta Group or the Knives to bear, then the Two-Six was about to be emptied again – and this time the blood of heroes was likely to mix with the blood of the police who had once been stationed here.

Finally a key point that had eluded him up to this point percolated to the surface of his consciousness. He grabbed Rome by the throat and shoved him – chair and all – hard against the

back wall. Then he got really close to Rome's somewhat surprised face.

"Listen you fat f-king bag of dog sh!t! Why here, why the Two-Six? Why is this worthless little piece of turf important enough that a big-dog like Recluse to even care to piss on it?"

Sting's face was mere inches from Rome's, his unblinking compound eyes showed miniature reflections of Rome in each facet.

"And don't tell me you don't know, because if we are going to die anyway like you say, then I am going to cause you so much pain between now and then that you will beg for the release that death will provide. And don't think one of these weak goody-two-shoes are going to stop me either."

Sting stood there, waiting for Rome to answer, half hoping that he would try to be defiant again.

Mithril_Zeta

"Oh, no, Sting.. Stop," Newton said in a dead-pan, monotone voice. His voice returned to normal. "Well, I tried. Let me know when you open him up. Oops, I mean when HE opens up." Newton turned on his heel and walked out of the room.

Averick

"He didn't ask." Rome held his hands up to either side of Sting's face. "He simply didn't ask is all. Look, I know you're scary. You have me, I'm scared. That's why I talked to Mystic Inferno. I don't want Lord Recluse to send someone to kill me. Obviously, I also don't want YOU to kill me. So why would I hold anything back?"

Rome paused to take a breath. He was obviously nervous, but had been around enough to keep relatively cool. "They want to clear out the area so no one will report the reptiles. Breeding stock for Crey. Reptilian soldiers. Real, 'Land of the lost' kind of things. Hideous. Crey pays, Recluse uses HIS muscle. Recluse probably signed off on this one, due to the high profile nature and the possible uses of reptile/human hybrids as soldiers. The Two Six was just in the wrong neighborhood. I don't know anything about Crey's plan. Wait... no, I know it's called Midgard. That's it. If you ask more questions I MIGHT recall some small detail, but really it just behooves me not to know."

Rome raised his eyebrows. "Will you calm down now?"

MadGremlin

Sting backed off from Rome. "Reptile men? You expect me to believe that crap? I am sure they are working on killer tomatoes too, but maybe they just aren't ready yet! If you are going to come up with a load of bull at least make it somewhat believable."

Sting shook his head. "But lets just say I play along. We know Crey has hidden facilities all over, so no biggie. So maybe there is one nearby here? Maybe underground off of the sewers beneath us? Please feel free to fill in the details as we go here Rome. Why not just use Crey's Folly as their staging ground?"

Sting thought for a moment. "Great now not only are we targets for Malta and the Knives, we have to deal with Crey's soldiers and worst of all their lawyers. Wait a minute...if Crey is involved in this, then that makes a little more sense. They made sure that the people assigned to this place were as incompatible as possible and tried to make it fail before it even got started.

Still Crey should have some data on this project somewhere in their system so we could try to confirm your story.”

Averick

Mr Rome looked at sting with genuine sorrow. "I don't get information like that. The job was to clear the twenty sixth precinct. It's only by chance that I know what it's for. Or rather, I know what I think it's for. I'm kind of putting two and two together here. I just really don't much care why they want the police station cleared. I'm a bad guy, why would I care? Caring is your job."

Mithril_Zeta

Newton leaned against the wall just outside of the door. ‘Isn’t that interesting.’ Newton thought. ‘C’mon, Sting, get him to spill more.’

Shalmdi

Not seeing anyone in the immediate vicinity of his chamber, Coolant decided to go looking for some of his teammates to fill him in on the activities of the day so far. Things in the Two-six seemed to happen fast.

He considered changing back into his full armor, but he really wasn't in the mood to feel contained. Coolant could still hold his own in a fight, and he trusted Mystic, Newton, and Sting enough to show a small bit of vulnerability. They would just have to deal with his normal appearance.

His scanners still functioned, so he switched over to thermals to assess the situation. The things that stood out most were the two unidentified heat signatures and the fact that the basement had become one big hot zone over night, obviously thanks to Ion. Coolant walked towards Mystic's signature to find out their current status.

“Good afternoon, Mystic,” he said cheerfully while mentally cursing what appeared to be another newcomer, “It seems we have gained a few more tenants since last night; might I ask who this lady is? What have I missed?”

Averick

Mystic turned to Coolant and squinted. "Is that you?"

"Oh dear god, where are my manners. Have a seat. Some tea? You must be terribly bored. Allow me to catch you up." Mystic set about introducing the feline looking woman to Coolant and giving him the rundown on what he'd missed.

The_Ninjin

Brian arrived at the train station just in time to watch the last car for Steel Canyon leave. He walked over to the schedule kiosk and his face fell. The next train for Steel wouldn't leave for another 15 minutes. Apparently Talos Island was backed up due to construction and it caused everyone else to be late as well.

He decided to take the little bit of extra time he had to make a few phone calls to cash in on some favors to obtain information on Lord Recluse. He walked down the ramp of the station and decided to park at a nearby bench. He fished his phone out of his pocket and flipped it open to start dialing. A man approached the ramp and walked past Brian He bumped into the cop and caused him to drop his cellular device.

“Watch yourself,” Brain retorted as he stopped to pick it up. He turned around angry at the incident, but his expression changed when he saw a rather blue-skinned individual who continued his walk up the ramp.

“Hey what are you doing here,” he asked, and where are the police drones he thought as he looked around.

Brian wiped off his phone and followed the man that went into the train station. As he did, an electric shock sent his phone flying out of his hand and into a nearby trash can. Immediately after, laughter was heard behind him.

“Oh that’s real cute,” Brain said and turned toward the trash can, “What other tricks do you have up your sleeve?”

The electrical powered outcast, joined by a fire powered comrade and the icy blaster that had bumped into him earlier surrounded him at a triangular point. Each of them exhibited their powers through various hand motions. Fire. Ice. Electricity.

With his head down slightly, Brian averted his eyes left and right continuously to watch for any advancements made by the Outcasts. He shifted his right foot back and to the side and readied himself for the inevitable. His fists clenched at his sides and the emerald pendant that hung around his neck glowed a fluorescent green. Brian never moved from his position and continued to watch his opponents, a smile slowly appeared across his face which had eyes fitted to express a serious reflection.

“So fellas,” he started, “this wouldn’t have anything to do with your boy Rome would it?”

Electric and Fire looked at each other and smiled, “Of course it would. Why do you ask,” replied Fire.

“Just curious.”

Ice lost his patience was the first to make a move. Brian could hear the ice chilling so much over his hands that he almost felt the cold temperatures that emitted from it. He wondered for a second what it was like when they shook hands.

“No more questions,” Ice yelled as he raised his hands.

Here we go.

The_Ninjin

The last thing Brian wanted to was a fight on his hands. On one hand, there were three of them, all with different elemental power and they were ready to stop at nothing to take him out. On the other hand, he wished he wouldn’t have forgot his comm unit was provided back at the 2-6.

Ice produced a small blizzard in between his hands. Little snowflakes fell onto his face as he looked at Brian with a incomprehensible rage. The villain’s eyes were that of blue lightning sparks and there was a noticeable wind change around him Chills were rising up Brian’s spine and as the frozen aura around Ice got larger and larger. Brian faced the icy annoyance with his back to Fire. He strafed left a few steps right before the blizzard came full blast toward him. As

the ice, hail, and snow came closer, Brian bent his knees slightly and readied himself as if he were about to pounce on the weather phenomenon. When it was within about a foot of him, Brian leapt backwards into the air and did a double barrel back flip. He landed a few feet behind Fire, turned to his side and did a roundhouse kick in the small of Fire's back. The kick sent the flaming menace head on into the blizzard. It wrapped Fire in its icy grip and froze him in place with its winds until he fell unconscious onto the ground from the below freezing temperatures.

In the same instance, Elec reached over to grab Brian's shoulder after he kicked and spun him around to face him. Brian used the momentum of the grab and swung his foot around to catch Elec in the chest. However, Elec saw it coming and grabbed Brian's foot before it would have connected. The smug look in the man's face was all Brian needed to react. He jumped, did a small side spin which allowed him to bring his other foot to Elec's face. The smile left so quick it was as if it were wiped off with a rag. The weight of his foot was so heavy that when he head hit the ground, a soft crack was heard that let Brian know that he wasn't getting back up. The two had the ground with a harsh thud, but Brian quickly reacted and popped himself up and readied for the next attack.

This time the iceman took to the sky and hovered several feet above Brian. His blue hands froze over with swirls of white as he brought one hand back and lunged it forward to send large shards of jagged ice flying toward the nimble cop. He did the same thing with his other hand as well. In the warm evening sun, it started to rain ice. Brian cleared the first set of attacks as he dodged left and right, side-stepping to avoid any pain. As fast as they were, he had been able to evade each icicle until he had gotten to close to Fire, who was still on the ground. Brian tripped on the unconscious man's arm and lost some of his balance. He tried to gain it back as he noticed a set of ice blasts that were hurled at his face. Unable to regain his footing, Brian decided that the best course was to fall back onto Fire. Most of the cold onslaught that was aimed for him missed, but the rest of it grazed his shoulder and exploded on the cement sending miniature ice pieces into his face and left arm. He yelled out in pain as the ice seemed to meld with his skin and turned it a shade of blue for a moment before his face and arm began feeling completely stiff. He could still move his arm, but it was so inflexible, he felt like hadn't used it in his whole life.

That can't be good, Brian contemplated as he rubbed his arm to heat it up.

The_Ninjin

There wasn't much time for healing as another wave of ice attacks flew toward him. Brian's eyes went wild as he rolled to his left side. He winced in pain because of his arms unyielding stance when he rolled, but he knew things could have been worse. After his third side roll, Brian tumbled back and came to his feet. The Iced Outcast stopped his series of attacks as Brian stood before as if impressed by Brian's ability to elude him. Brian's arm and face were still frozen and seemed to be getting worse by the minute. He started rubbing his arm again and tried to get some blood flow back into it. He knew that he wouldn't last another attack like last time.

Ice crossed his arms, still hovered in the air and circled Brian. Ice knew he had the upper hand. He had full motor skills plus he had the ability to make snow on a hot summer's day. Brian circled opposite of Ice to keep them face to face.

I've got to get him out of the air

"No matter what you do, it won't do you any good," Ice spoke, confidently.

Brian remained silent. He was thinking. Contemplating. Racking his brain. His eyes were trained on the crossed arms. Fire was regaining consciousness with movements of his hands.

“You might as well surrender,” Ice continued with an insulting smile.

Brian stayed silent. He looked down for a split-second to see Fire open his eyes. They had closed again after Brian slapped him across the face with the back of his foot.

“Nothing to say?”

Ice became infuriated at Brian’s silence and stopped circling. The blue sparks in his eyes increased in size and was almost all you could see of his face. His entire body paled from its dark bluish pigment to a sky blue. His hands, uncrossed, were now a bright white, covered in snow and wrapped with small ice chunks. A funnel cloud formed at his feet and surrounded his entire being. The wind seemed to fuse itself with the lightning from his eyes and caused the wind to illuminate like some sort of light show. He again raised his hands in the air to materialize the same blizzard from before. This time it was twice the size of the first and appeared to be colder, stronger, and more fierce.

Brian rubbed his arm fervently and felt the heat come through in his body. It sent a comfortable sensation all over his body as if the rubbing raised his entire body temperature.

I’ve got one shot, Brian thought and sprinted towards Ice.

“GIVE UP NOOOOOOOOOOW,” Ice exclaimed as he released the massive snowstorm at Brian.

In the same moment Brian performed a front handspring and used his arms to throw himself into the air, directly at the storm. The wind chills connected with Brian and wrapped him like a blanket. His body grew awesomely pale and ice fragments stuck onto him like daggers and melted into his body. His joints had become rigid as he flew through the air and there wasn’t any part of his being that he could move. A wave of emotions came over Ice as he watched Brian dive into the attack. He was satisfied that he hit Brian, but he was confused as to why he jumped into it all. Then wide-eyed surprise hit him as the revelation of Brian’s counter-attack came full force. Brian had used the cold winds and ice to freeze his body as he dove toward Ice to make him into a human dart launched at its target. There was not enough time for Ice to react enough to where he would not be hit so he shielded his chest and watched as Brian came feet first into his stomach.

The kick sent both of them flying into a light pole a few feet behind ice. When they hit the ground, Ice was already knocked out cold and his limp body toppled over the nearby trash can. However, with the effects of the icy strike and the fall, Brian wasn’t too far from it himself. He laid there, unable to move for quite some time before he tried to roll over onto his stomach. When he finally did, he barely was able to look up enough to see that his phone was inches in front of him. With very slow progress, Brian began wiggling his fingers. Next he opened and closed his hands and made fist motions. Lastly, he painfully bent his arm and brought his hand level with his shoulders. His bones ached like an unfit old man. They were still stiff and every movement felt like hell. He slid his arm to his phone and flipped it open. He dialed the 2-6 and waited for someone to answer.

“T-t-t-t-tr-train... st-st-s-s-station... B-b-brian,” Brian stuttered and whispered once he had heard someone pick up.

Averick

“...he must have been eight foot, steps INTO my bloody path and we go tumbling out the...” Mystic picked up the phone next to him. “Hold on a tick while I grab the phone.”

Mystic heard Brian on the other end, then said, “Hold on.” He hung up and picked up his radio, switching it to broadcast to all members of the Two Six. “Stay here, and prepare for a breakout attempt. Do NOT follow me.”

He leaped to his feet and sternly addressed everyone else in the room. “Brian is in trouble near the train station. This is probably just an attempt to break Rome out using Brian as a diversion. I’m going to go investigate at once, you all hold up here. Be on your guard. The Two Six isn’t safe tonight.” With that, he flew out and toward the train.

Mithril Zeta

“Dammit!” Newton said as he clicked his radio. “Boss, let me pull him here. I can yank him through the wormhole. Don’t fly into an ambush.”

He stuck his head back in the interrogation room. “Sting, no time for subtlety. Get him to talk now.”

With a lightness on his feet not usually expected from a man his build, he leapt down the stairs and landed lightly. “Coolant, get your heavy armor on,” he said as he glanced at the cool hero. “Ion, as soon as Mystic and Brian get back, put those force fields back up.” Newton turned and looked at the cat-woman. “Armor up, Elisa, and get ready to cover the door. This desk,” he said as he patted the heavy desk, “seems to be bullet proof and will give the best shielding we have here.” He then spoke into the radio again. “And, boss, get back here soon. I suck at this planning stuff. I’m supposed to be the comic relief.”

MadGremlin

“One moment please...” Sting said to Rome as he stepped out, locking the door behind him. He ran down to the main room and turned to Newton. “Don’t ever let a hero who says ‘don’t follow me’ not be followed. Newton, stay on the boss but out of sight – don’t let that overconfident yahoo get himself killed. I hate to admit it, but we need him. Keep your radio on at all times – I want us here to know exactly what is going on. And be ready to get your butt back here as fast as possible if we do get hit.”

“And I agree with Newton, let’s get ready for an assault. Oh, and hi Coolant – nice to see you again.”

Dan43

Ion was still adjusting to Coolant’s new look when Mystic flew out yelling instructions. Then Sting came in with a different set.

“Hold it! Wrong plan Sting. Newt is not going to be the best help if Mystic is ambushed. You follow the boss. Newt, Kitty, Cool and myself can hold this place once I get the field up. Now get out so I can put it up! Take your comm unit. Give me 10 seconds heads up and a heading when you return. I can drop a single wall to let you in.” These instructions were shouted even as

Ion headed for the stairs to the basement. "Go Sting! NOW. The field goes up in 20 seconds. Don't be inside when it goes up!"

Damn. If I had only gotten the filter set up I could raise it and the others could walk right through.

Hitting the basement Ion sprinted to his field generator and trusting Sting to be out of the building he hit the switch. Instantly a slight glow surrounded the 2-6. (OOC:Gonna take a slight liberty here Cool. I think this is what Mystic was hinting at. Hope you don't mind.) At the same instant on the ground floor the door to Coolants chamber closed and sealed.

SquirrelWizard

Elisa was scrounging around in some back corner for any technical gear when Mystic made his announcement. She went up to her room, and started to suit up. She had just put on her gloves and was slightly adjusting them, when her ears perked up. Off in the distance was a loud vehicular sound off in the distance, and it was coming closer. She grabbed her gun, and made ran down the stairs, asking out loud, "Do we have a vehicle?" Because if we dont, then we've got company coming, and they're bringing party favors."

Mithril_Zeta

"I'm not going out there!" Newton yelled. "I can teleport them both back here, but not if the shield is up! Don't..." The shield came on, and Coolant's tank slammed shut. Newton looked at the ceiling. "Why me?" he asked.

Shalmdi

Coolant turned around to get his regular armor only to watch the door to his chamber slam right in front of his face, and initiate emergency shutdown.

His first reaction was anger at the new knowledge that Ion had been the one to cause his morning lockup, but he quickly let that emotion pass to focus on the matter at hand. Reaching a metal fist straight through the control panel beside his door, Coolant used his light suit's interface to hack his own system and force the chamber to allow him in.

One clanking, hissing change later, Coolant System emerged from his damaged quarters pulling his hood up and readying for action. "I may be a little slow on what's going on, but I like the idea of Sting following Mystic's trail."

After locating IonFlux, Coolant activated a seldom used button that raised his visor and allowed his audience to see his cold, unblinking eyes. "Get that wall down, Flux. Get it down NOW."

Averick

Mystic hovered high above the Tram. "Brian?" He called into the com. "Newton, if you can get a fix on Brian, pull him out."

The_Ninjin

Brian heard his uncle's voice and raised his hand with a little more ease than last time and called out to him, "Mystic," his voice was firmer this time, but still weak.

He looked to his left and right and saw the Outcasts still there. He wondered what people were thinking as they walked onto the train ramp when they saw four men lying on the ground semi to fully unconscious.

His attempt to sit up was only refuted by the cracking of his back and then the fear of paralysis so he laid back down again and waited for his Uncle to see him a few feet from the rain entrance.

Averick

Mystic flew down to the noise. "Bollucks!" He flew over to Brian and looked around the scene. Quickly pulling out his com he called to Newton again.

"Are you hurt? Don't move!" Mystic keyed the com. "Newton, pull him, then me. Someplace flat and hard, I think he may be seriously injured. And call for Ion." Mystic quickly activated tossed tags on the downed thugs. He prepped a spell, just in case things turned ugly. He'd really make the first guy in the ambush to show his face pay for it.

MadGremlin

"Geez the boss is out of contact for a few seconds and everyone gets delusions of grandeur!"

Sting was out of the door and following Mystic from a distance, because someone had to look after him. Sting landed on a fire escape and could see Mystic crouching down over a handful of bodies.

Mad Gremlin

Sting keyed the radio. "Sorry boss, force field is up and Newton is on the inside. Plus kitty said something about hearing incoming. If he is hurt bad might want to activate his medical transponder."

Sting was high enough that he could see both the Tram and the Two-Six, but he cursed his lack of good distance vision. "Why couldn't I have been bitten by a radioactive hawk or something? Two-Six, the boss is at Brian's location but he appears to be out of action at least temporarily. But I don't see anything approaching the Two-Six itself...but don't quote me on that one. Let us know if you get action there."

Sting thought for a moment and then added. "See now if Newton were out here, he could pull the two of them right to the front door. But don't listen to ol' Sting, that wouldn't be wise..."

Dan43

Topping the stairs Ion headed towards Newt. While calling Mystic over the comm unit.

"Wait! Give me 60 seconds!"

Grabbing Newt by the arm he used a scapel to take a rough skin scapping leaving a raw red spot on Newt's arm. Turning he headed back down the stairs to the basement. Placing the sample on the scanner attached to the generator he rapidly began making adjustments to the generator. At the same time he used the cybernetic link to download the readings he had taken of Newt's singularity to the unit.

"NOW! Port them now Newt." Ion shouted over his comm unit. "The field will recognize you and your power. You can pull them through with it up!"

SquirrelWizard

Elisa slung her gun over her shoulder, and walked over to the front door of the 2-6. She pulled a small amount of putty from a box on her belt. She formed it into a small ball and started to smear it on the door. She had a large square about the size of a person's head of the grey stuff, when she pulled out a small aerosol can and spray some what looked like blue paint on the square. The

square started to throb with a red glow. She carefully walked over to Newton, "give me that," she pointed to the headset.

Taking the headset from Newton, she looked over at the patch on the door with a smile that an arch-villan would envy, "Mystic, your going to have to let Newton port you back, I've set the doorbell to kill." She tossed the headset back to Newton, and looked around at the rest of the people, "Dont stand infront of that door, and be very carefull, that stuff is volatile."

Shalmdi

"Ignore that, Newton!" Coolant yelled before addressing Ion again. "You're a good scientist Ion, but you need to learn to work in the field. You don't fully understand Newton's power, and even if you're figures are right, you haven't tested this yet. It may work or it may cause Brian to slam into your wall at the speed of light!"

Coolant walked to the front door and positioned himself close enough that the blast from Elisa's explosive would just barely hit him. He switched on all his defenses and watched the chilled aura surround his form. Turning slightly to the armed feline behind him he calmly added, "Don't worry about me, Ma'am, I can handle the blast."

"You depend too much on your own toys, genius. Put some faith on my shoulders," Coolant spoke loudly to make sure Ion could hear him and lowered his visor for battle, "Please take that shield down before I have to do it by force."

Mithril_Zeta

"Boy, everyone's giving me orders now," Newton murmured. "We need a test for the field." Newton shut his eyes and mentally searched for his target. "Well, as long as Sting wanted a ping pong table here, I might as well bring a good one in," The now-familiar buzz of his wormhole echoed in the hall. A shower of streaking debris bounced off the shield, and a dull boom echoed through the Two-Six.

"Dang it!" Newton ran down to Ion's lab. "Forget my concerns about the DNA stuff. Take my DNA, run it through the machine, and let me call our yahoos home!"

QueenEtheria

Kegen had noticed what was happening at the train station. She was finishing up one of her assigned patrols and saw the Outcaste hurling ice from the air. Her extremely sensitive ears had picked up the sound of the fight. The crystalization in the air, the static crackle of electricity, the subtle roar of flame, and the soft smack of hand to hand combat. She zoomed her way towards the station but found she was to late. Four men laid on the ground. She hovered for a moment as she focused her hearing, picking up the conciscous breathing of Brian. She was about to descend when a man in blue robes appeared next to the boy.

She studied the robed man with curiosity, listening breifly to the conversation. Feeling that she would be safe if she intervened, Kegen flew down to stand on the other side of the boy. She flipped her very long, redwood colored hair over her shoulder to reveal flashing hazel eyes.

She knealt before the man, light reflecting off of her unusal black and neon green metallic battle suit. She tilted her face towards the mage, blinking at him from under her winged headpeice.

"I think I maybe of assistance. If you'll allow me to scan him," she replied, her voice calm and sincere.

She waved a metallic hand over Brian's body, her caramel colored face set in concentration. Her internal scanner relayed all of his injuries to her earpiece.

"I will heal him," she replied, glancing at Mystic as her hand moved to rest over Brian's forehead.

Her deep hazel green eyes fluttered closed for a moment as she called upon the ability that allowed her to heal people supernaturally. She felt the warm energy course through the boy's body, running through him touching every cell in his body and repairing all the damage that was done, internally and externally.

She removed her hand and sat back on her heels, smiling down at Brian, showing the small set of dimples and the light sprinkle of freckles.

"That was quite an impressive battle, at least from what I heard. You are lucky I was heading this way," she replied softly to the boy as her gloved hand moved across his forehead and then down his body reassuring that he was fully healed.

She glanced back at Mystic. "He should be right as rain, now."

Averick

"Thank you, miss, for your assistance." Mystic looked down at Brian, "better lad?"

Mystic suddenly snapped back to the situation, momentarily distracted by the pretty girl. "Miss, you'd best be on your guard. We may not be exactly popular about these parts. We've reclaimed the Two Six for the city, and it appears that it isn't all ribbons and sunshine. I fear for your safety. If Brian is up, and Newton doesn't port him away any second, I should offer you an escort to wherever it is you're going."

Mystic incanted a rooting spell in his head, that he uses to prevent himself from being teleported about. The mage hovered there, blue robes moving slightly with the magic that held him aloft as if he were in the breeze. His eyes glowed red with his power, his skin slightly blue under the hood. Red glyphs were emblazoned on his sleeves and robes as well as his cape.

QueenEtheria

Kegen stood and stared up at Mystic with a quirked eyebrow. "No need for thanks. I was glad to help. Two Six? I've heard about that project. Actually overheard from one of the members of GIFT."

She placed her black and neon green robotic gloved hands on her hips, resting against the matching green belt with a large red gem. She shifted on her heeled boots and smiled up at Mystic from her 5' 7" height.

"No need to worry for my safety. I can take care of myself, anyways I really have no where to go. I keep getting moved around this city, living in safehouses and hotel rooms provided by GIFT and Freedom Corps," she shrugged her green circled shoulders of the battle suit.

"You know if you guys need help, I would be more than happy to offer my services. I'm just the errand child right now for FC and I'd like to be able to interact more with other heroes," she replied, blinking up into his glowing eyes.

She flipped up a plate on her glove and pulled out a card and handed it to Mystic.

"My name is Etherburn. That's my private line. Call if you need help, seriously. I wouldn't mind the extra work load. Need to keep myself busy," she replied, smiling her dazzling smile that flashed her dimples.

She glanced at the Train Platform. "Well at least I'm at the station. It's just a quick ride to Galaxy, so I think I'll be ok, uummm...Mr. Blue Robes," she smiled again back up at him.

The_Ninjin

"That was quite an impressive battle, at least from what I heard. You are lucky I was heading this way," she replied softly to the boy as her gloved hand moved across his forehead and then down his body reassuring that he was fully healed.

If it wasn't for the fact that Brian had been frozen from the last attack to his body, he would have been twitching all over from the tingling sensation he was getting from the healer's methods. He felt the pain from the few bruises that he had from the falls he took reduce significantly. However, there was still one matter of his condition.

He was still cold.

"Thank you, miss, for your assistance." Mystic looked down at Brian, "better lad?"

"Yea, I'm good," Brian replied as he rubbed his chest, "just freezing. Man... that was crazy. It was pretty nice though. I did good. I just look worse than my actual performance. Tell ya bout it later."

She glanced at the Train Platform. "Well at least I'm at the station. It's just a quick ride to Galaxy, so I think I'll be ok, uummm...Mr. Blue Robes," she smiled again back up at him.

Brian stared at the woman with a shaking body and realized that he would find an alternate means of knocking out his opponents in the future. He turned to his uncle and got a sudden chill run down his spine.

"MAN, I cannot take this anymore. I need to fall into a fire or something. Ok, well thanks for your help Etherburn. Appreciate it," Brian said to the red-haired healer.

Brian then turned to his Uncle and like a child looking up to his father, tugged on the hovering mages robes and asked, "So what's the plan then?"

QueenEtheria

Kegen turned her hazel eyes to Brian. " You don't need to thank me, but I may have something for your chills. I forgot that sometimes the chiller's powers leave a lingering effect."

She placed a hand against her belt and flipped open a secret pocket. She pulled out a small, flat, celifane sheet the size of a credit card. She handed it to Brian.

"It's a thermo-patch. Just place it on your chest and then it will dissolve into your blood stream and help raise your internal core tempature with in seconds. It's completely harmless, I promise. I use them all the time," she replied softly, her hand still extended towards him.

She glanced from the sheet to Brian's confused look. She smiled sheepishly. Right. They don't have thermo-patches yet. I keep forgetting I'm trapped in the past. It's amazing to see how much has advanced in that time.

The_Ninjin

"Hmm, well had it not been for your ability to make actual pain go away, I might have to not trust anything else dissolving into my body. I got enough of that from the ice," Brian said skeptically, "But if you say it does what it does..." he let his voice trail off as he took the Thermo-patch from Etherburn.

He placed the patch underneath his shirt and didn't feel anything at first. He was about to protest using it when the patch slowly gained heat. He held it there for a few more seconds before the patch held itself on his chest and then quickly disappeared into his body.

Brian stood there and felt the temperature rise in his body. The patch was like a point-to-point system that started at his chest and then raced through every part of his body. It was so much heat that Brian's forehead began to perspire slightly.

"Well... it works," he said with a short chuckle and wiped his brow.

"You should come back with us. Especially if you have nothing to do. We have acquired ourselves a certain Outcast who might be a key player in ending some of this 2-6 haterism."

He laughed at the word and was amazed at the influence of other people in his life. Reminded himself that he needed to make a phone call later.

MadGremlin

Sting listened to the conflicting orders coming over the radio. If he could have rolled his eyes he would have. He saw another figure approach Mystic and readied himself to get to the tram if he was needed. This other figure seemed to actually be helping though and Sting relaxed a little bit.

Just as he relaxed he detected some movement behind him. He turned quickly, in the past he would have had a spine in the target immediately, but he was slowly learning and he just grabbed.

The kitten on the window sill meowed in fear as Sting grasped it. From inside the apartment a frightened little girl looked out at Sting.

Slowly he released his grip on the kitten, petting it gently before he let it go. It immediately ran back into the apartment and to the little girl. "I'm sorry honey, I didn't want that lovely kitten falling out the window." He pulled the window closed, wondering why he gave a damn what some snot-nosed kid thought of him, but at the same time feeling a little better that he didn't impale her kitten.

"C'mon guys." Sting said into the radio. "Let's act a little like we know what we are doing here. Newton, I am assuming you have one of your thingies up in the room with Rome? If not please do. Force field or not, we don't need them sneaking out with him as we run around like keystone cops in our own house."

Mithril_Zeta

“Of course I have a singularity in the room with him.” Newton sounded just a little offended. “He’s humming to himself...” Newton froze. “Oh, that can’t be a good thing, can it? Please call me a moron later.” Newton threw himself through the singularity and appeared directly above Mr. Rome.

Dan43

Inside Ion cringed as he saw the debris rebound from his shield. He had been so SURE it would work. And he had nearly killed two people. Turning he rushed down the stairs and killed the field. Despite Coolants threat he knew that Cool could not take down the field by force. SGT. Paine, Ebony Flames, OC Chopper, Rouge Flame, and Igniatus had all tested that field. It had stood up to everything they could deal out as a group for over an hour. Even then the field had not failed the others had just gotten tired of trying. And as strong as Cool was Ion did not think he was in the same league as his friends who had tested the field for him. Of course neither was he. That was one reason he was at the 2-6. He was not yet ready to stand beside his friends in the Guard as an equal.

Staring at the generator and thinking of the horrible mistake he had nearly made he wondered if he ever would be ready. Could he really fit in and be a part of the outside world? Or in his arrogance was he only fit to spend the rest of his life as a theorist inside a bubble in some lab?

Shalmdi

Coolant waited for the door to the precinct to blow open, but the explosion never came. Switching over to thermals, his scanners spotted what appeared to be a car engine cooling down right outside, but no warm bodies surrounded it. Where are these guys? Could they know about Ion’s shield? Are they just trying to catch us by surprise? Why did they leave their car out in the open?

He only had a moment to wonder about these things before he felt the ground shake slightly. As he looked at his layout photos of the surrounding area, Coolant found the answer to several of his questions. There was a manhole cover right behind where the car engine was located, and he suspected the former occupants of that car were directly beneath his feet.

As he began his sprint back to the basement stairs, he switched his radio on and turned off his scanners. Thermal vision wouldn’t do him any good in Ion’s hot zone. “For those on the radio, I believe we have rats coming in from the sewers. Pest control would be appreciated.”

Dan43

Ion heard something behind him, kind of a grating metal sound. Turning he saw the drain cover set in the floor moving slightly. Even as his mind tried to understand what he was seeing he heard Coolants call. Stepping forward he looked down through the grate and saw a figure dressed like some kind of Ninja out of a bad B-movie trying to lift the grating.

"You know what? I am having a really bad day. "

Ion's hands started to glow brighter than they ever had before.

"I just nearly killed two people who I would like to call friends."

Raising his hands he pointed them at the figure under the nearly opened grate.

"And I really need to take out some frustration on something."

Ion unleashed a torrent of radiation from his right hand at the figure who was emerging from the now open hole in the floor. The figure staggered as the radiation washed over him. A second stream of radiation flowed from his left hand and the figure actually sank to his knees. "I thank you for being so kind as to provide me with a target for that frustration." With these words Ion drew back and put everything he had into a hard right cross, his armored fist crushed the bone of the intruders jaw and he fell prone at Ions feet.

So intent was Ion that he failed to notice a second figure rising from the floor. A tall well muscled oreintal, wearing some type of split toe sandle and baggy yellow pants his upper body bare except for the tattos covering it rose gracefully from the hole.

Mithril_Zeta

Rome was sitting, humming to himself. Newton breathed a sigh of relief. He had thought the scummy little man had been casting a spell or something along that line.

The call for help for the basement came up, and Newton flicked his radio call. "This is an all call, guys. I'm going to start yanking you back here post haste. Sting, get ready for TP!"

He reached through his wormhole and pulled the insect-man back. "Basement quickly," he called out as he mentally reached back and tried to grasp Mystic, but he couldn't find the robed hero.

MadGremlin

Sting was a bit surprised at where he ended up, but quickly went to the door, only to slam into finding it locked.

"Um Newton, you just brought me into a locked, reinforced room. Don't suppose you brought your key or can teleport me out of this room?" Sting asked, trying to be nice but a bit of annoyance creeping into his voice.

Mithril Zeta

"D'oh!" Newton said. "Sorry. Here!" Newton found another his singularities that was in the front room. A moment of pressure, and Sting found himself standing on the desk downstairs.

MadGremlin

"Thanks buddy!" Sting shouted as he leapt down the stairs into the basement.

"Ok, who's [censored] needs kicking down...here...? Ion look out!" Sting saw the man floating out of the hole about to do unpleasant things to Ion.

He turned to Coolant who was seeing the same scene. "You think you can plug that hole big guy?"

Shalmdi

"I'm on it."

Coolant ran over to the hole looking around frantically for something sturdy to block it with. At the same time, another masked enemy was climbing up that hole only to be greeted by over 300 pounds of steel and ice. The ninja soon found himself flying face first into one of the sturdier looking walls.

With no other option readily available, Coolant ripped a large metal chunk directly from Ion's containment unit and slammed it down over the hole. If the shielding in these walls could contain a radiation hazard like Ion, they should be able to provide at least temporary resistance to the intruders below.

Coolant grabbed some heavy looking scrap and began to make a barricade. It wasn't high tech, but it worked. With any future threats detained, Coolant turned to see if Sting needed any help and to make sure these ninja's stayed down.

MadGremlin

As Coolant smashed one ninja – likely a member of the Tsoo – and then made 'repairs' to the sewer entrance, Sting dealt with the strange man who had already floated out of the hole and was threatening Ion.

He tossed a handful of spines that struck, but the glowing tattoos seemed to deflect most of the blow. The Tsoo responded with his own handful, this time of throwing stars that struck Sting's carapace – a couple actually hitting solidly enough to stick.

Sting figured a new tactic was necessary and jumped at the enemy, striking him with a two-fisted blow that knocked him down into the hole, just as Coolant was sealing it closed.

"Man, Ion is gonna be pissed at you." He grinned at Coolant's use of shielding from Ion's chamber and glanced to see what Ion's reaction was.

"Now what the hell were the Tsoo doing in the Row? Talos is their hangout. Does this recluse guy own everyone? Since it seems our force field is down, is anyone watching the front door?"

Mithril_Zeta

"Mystic, Brian, who wants a teleport back here. I can't seem to grab ahold of you." Newton said, clicking the radio again. He floated so he was above the door against the wall. He motioned again, and Rome started to float towards the ceiling. "I'm keeping the latin package as safe as I can." Newton grinned.

Dan43

Ion turned at Stings shout just in time to see the Oriental and Sting start to rumble. Too late to stop him he watched Coolant tear one of the wall of his chamber off to plug the whole. Slowly a cold fire began to burn in Ion. He had had enough. Deliberately he walked across the basement and up the stairs and onward to the second floor room where Rome was located. Entering he snatched Rome from the air and slammed him into the floor while planting one knee with most of his weight on the center of Rome's chest. Ion felt several of Rome's ribs break from the impact. Roughly he reached down and grabbed the villain's hair and bounced his head off the floor, while pouring radiation into his other hand till it fairly glowed with power.

"Alright you little pissant! I have had enough! Newt has been shot! I nearly killed two people! We've got ninjas from a b-movie coming out of the basement! And now I don't have anyplace to SLEEP TONIGHT! You are going to tell me everything you know about this crap, you gonna tell me right now and no beating around the bush! Cause if you don't or if I think your lying I swear to God, I WILL MICROWAVE YOU RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW!"

As he spoke Ion's whole form began to glow, and both Rome and Newt began to feel like their skin was getting a bad sunburn.

Averick

"Get off..." Rome gasped. "I've told... you... everything... what... do... you... want?" Rome was on the verge of lapsing into unconsciousness from the beating and the strain of being terrorized by Poison Sting earlier.

SquirrelWizard

When combat started, Elisa seemed to phase out of existence. Actually, her suits stealth generator kicked in and she was moving over to the hole where the masked Terran came out of.

She looked down, and saw another Two Terrans were making their way up a ladder, in fact one just rose out of the hole. Throwing caution to the winds, Elisa kicked the mans face with an armored boot, and jumped on him. This had two effects. The inital kick made the man loose his grip, the weight of a armored woman landing ontop of him sent both him and his attacker hurtling to the bottom of the ladder.

The poor guy at the bottom should have just stayed in bed this morning...

Elisa disengaged from the Terran as his body smashed into the man at the bottom of the ladder, and hovered over to the side, and landed neatly on the ground. There were sounds foot falls in water that informed her that people were coming. And judging from the ruckus that they were making, they were coming in force.

A small block disengaged from her armor, and hovered near her head, making no noise. She pulled a set of goggles out and put them on. Three Tsoo (she had seen these Terrans before) rounded the bend in the sewer. One Tsoo was very observant, he looked at the red dot on his friends chest. Before he could say anything, a small spurt of blood erupted from the guy, and he just toppled into the water. He threw the other guy against the wall, and they started to hug it. The man said something that Elisa hadn't heard before, but probably figured that it was something along the lines of "[censored]! They've got a sniper!"

Shalmdi

"I'll make amends later, right now I would like to secure this area." Coolant looked up at Sting after shaping the borrowed metal to the floor with just his hands.

"Did you happen to see the armored feline... Elisa I think's the name." Coolant turned on his thermals and began to sweep the ground floor above them. "She was right with us when everything started to get rough, but then she just vanished. Don't go near the front door by the way."

Coolant had just finished sweeping the first floor when a bright heat signature appeared up on the second floor, dangerously close to Newton. "I can't spot her form anywhe - what the hell?"

"Something hot up there with Newton! I think we need to move!"

MadGremlin

Sting looked at the makeshift sewer cap. "Looks like it will hold for a bit, let's go get Newton!" Sting noticed a few extra radios on a table and switched one on as they moved past. "At least we can monitor the noise to see when they break through."

Then he turned to his own radio. "Newton, what is going on up there?!? And where the hell is the cat-thing and where did Ion get off to? People check in, this is supposed to be a team!" Sting clicked off the radio. "Damn, I can't believe I said that.

Sting followed Coolant up toward the interrogation room at a full run – the big man could move pretty fast when he needed to. "Don't die on me now Newton." Sting said to himself.

Back over the radio Sting called; "Boss, we have about as much chaos as we can handle here so if you and Brian are done socializing over tea and crumpets we could use your help."

QueenEtheria

Kegen looked at Mystic as his com crackled. She shifted her weight nervously and stared up at him.

"Looks like you're having an infestation problem. If you have any room for a tagalong, I'll be more than happy to lend a hand or cosmic bolt," she smiled playfully.

Averick

Mystic looked at the young woman as she was indicating the Tram. "Mystic Inferno, blast my manners." His accent was slight, but still noticeable. Mystic busied himself with a warmth aura around Brian to take his mind off of young cute girls with dimples.

"Damn you, you have students older than her. You should be used to this! You need to think about something else." Then the call came over the radio. Mystic dropped his rooting spell.

Mithril_Zeta

Newton had made the door heavier, had shifted the chair in front of the door, made that heavier, and could see the door handle itself start to glow a cherry red. "This is going to be unpleasant," he said, looking over at Mr. Rome, who was floating in the corner opposite him.

Averick

"Three of us Newton, starting with me, then the young lady and ending with Brian." Mystic powered on his fire spells and prepared for a conflict. "It may well get much warmer yet, lad."

Mithril_Zeta

"About bloody time, boss," Newton said, staring through the wormhole. It was like he could suddenly sense Mystic again. A quick yank brought Mystic through.

Reaching back through, Newton found the curvy form of the young woman, and pulled her through, and then the muscular Brian.

"Welcome back to the party," Newton said, tossing gravity bubbles around each of them.

QueenEtheria

Kegen gasped as she was ripped through the portal. Her flesh crawled underneath her skin tight metallic suit as she moved through the dimensional gate. She shuttered and blinked at her new surrounds. She felt the movement of air and heard the faint crackle of energy enveloping her. She glanced up at Newton and Mr. Rome and quirked a confused eyebrow.

She heard the commotion at the door and leapt into the air calling upon her ability to fly. Her hands began to glow with a faint, green heat that casted a pale light in the room.

She stared at the door, focusing her acute hearing on the heartbeat of the man behind it. "I take it, he's not a friendly," she replied outloud, keeping her attention on the door.

SquirrelWizard

Elisa surveyed her handywork. She had pushed her way forward, and had come to a stop once she saw a junction up ahead. All this time she had been plying her sniper rifle, coupled with a decent amount of automatic fire. Bodies of many Tsoo warriors lay crumpled on the edge of the sewerway, or floating in the water. They didn't go down with a fight. Elisa had a few arrows sticking out of her armor. While the armor itself protected her from most of the force of impact, there was a small trickle of blood coming from them. The Tsoo had gathered in the junction and were about to charge in for one last time, the gernade right into the center mass did wonders, and it was their idea to fight in a cramped sewerway. They had retreated, and they didn't seem like they were going to return.

Elisa radioed in, "I think I fixed our rat problem, I'll leave a few presents just in..." there was a loud crunch followed by a splash and static.

Where the spirit came from, Elisa didn't know, but she recognized its faint outline just moments before it punched her. She was lifted up off the ground, and flung down the sewer tunnel, and she landed hard on the ground.

It was pure luck that she didn't land in the water. She stumbled to her feet, just in time to see the whole group of Tsoo warriors charging her. Elisa flicked a switch on her gun, and a slight hiss came from a cannister on the side of the weapon. She spat some blood on the wall beside her, and brought the gun up to her shoulder.

The only thing audible from the hole the Tsoo had tried to enter from was the faint sound of gas escaping, and the dull roar of fire, which just barely muffled the screams.

Averick

Mystic looked at Coolant. "By the numbers. Open it up, you first, me second, Sting third to watch our back. Newton, you and Kegen watch the top and make a rukkus if something changes back here. We're going to get our cat girl."

Mithril_Zeta

"Aye, aye, captain," Newton saluted. "I'll be watching the front door." He looked at the metal suited woman speculatively. "What are your powers?" he asked as they headed downstairs. "I want to know what to expect. Mine are all gravity based. We can probably hide most effectively behind the desk."

QueenEtheria

Kegen turned her hazel eyes to the rotund man and smiled warmly, flashing her dimples.

"Well, I heal supernaturally at a thought and I am able to fire volleys of a chemical-based cosmic radiation. I also fly," she replied, following him.

"The name is Etherburn by the way," she replied, flipping her dark auburn hair over her shoulder and extended a hand to him.

Mithril_Zeta

“You also have the power to make a man’s heart go pitter-pat,” Newton said with a grin. He accepted the hand and shook it. “How did you end up in this mess?” He asked as he took position behind the invulnerable desk. He watched the front door. “I inherited – and possibly caused – some of this.” Any moment, the Tsoo – and whoever else was out there – would figure out that Ion’s field was down, and the front door was open, and they would storm the place with a fat green mutant and a healer as the primary guards. He was not necessarily thrilled with this plan.

QueenEtheria

She blushed at his compliment, causing the sprinkle of freckles to stand out across her cheeks. She focused her gaze on the door as she crouched behind the desk, her hands still wreathed with her energy.

"I was a good sameritan," she chuckled softly, "I heard the fight between the Outcastes and the young man, Brian I believe. When I flew over to see if I could lend a hand he had already taken them out but he was injured. So I swooped down and healed him up and met Mystic Inferno. Then you guys called for him and I offered to help. What can I say, I'm a sucker for the mysterious robed types," she replied playfully, her voice lilting with amusement.

Averick

Mystic hovered, waiting for Coolant to extract the lid.

The_Ninjin

Brian rolled his eyes at Sting's exclamation and shook his head, "I hate crumpets. Let's go!"

The Ninjin

"Tsoo..." Brian retorted. He nearly spat the words out as he said them. Tiger Cub had killed his partner during a Parlor Raid one night. He had never stopped fighting them since. Except when the occasional Outcast came around.

Mystic looked at Coolant. "By the numbers. Open it up, you first, me second, Sting third to watch our back. Newton, you and Kegen watch the top and make a rukkus if something changes back here. We're going to get our cat girl."

"Watch your back, "Brian yelled to Mystic. He then was taken aback at his voice. His father's accent had returned to his vocals. He had officially been around his Uncle too much.

Brian took to the stairs and into the interrogation room where Rome was being held. He entered the room and fell back from the extreme amount of radiation that was emitted from IonFlux, "Man, what the hell?"

Brian stood outside the door, his back to the wall and spoke inside, "Look we have bigger fish to fry right now," Brian said, still amazed at the prodigal accentuations, "And there are a lot of bad people down there for you to put the green on so how bout it Ion?"

Brian ran back downstairs and noticed the Tsoo coming at him. Without losing stride, the agile Brian jumped with a few steps to go and spun around raising his foot with his spin to meet the Tsoo ninja's face in the air. It sent the man flying into a table that he crashed under his weight.

Brian thought it was the weirdest color of blood he had ever seen before he realized that it was tea that was flowing under him, "Oh man...Hmmm, I'll blame it on him later."

Shalmdi

People were appearing all over the place, Coolant was having a hard time telling up from down at this point, and in all honesty, he was extremely confused. Mystic had just appeared in front of him, and had given him an order. Despite the haze, he understood what he needed to do, and he headed to the basement to follow the Tsoo.

With a simple lifting motion, he had pried the metal plate back off the floor and tossed it to the side. His ice armor still on, Coolant jumped down the hole only to be nearly overcome by the smell of sewer water and burnt flesh; thank the Doc's for a sense of smell that could be turned off. The sewer floor was littered with bodies, and he could only hope that they weren't as bad off as they looked.

“I know we are supposed to be rescuing Elisa,” Coolant said while dashing to the nearest fallen Tsoo, “but it looks like these karate men are the one's that need our help.”

MadGremlin

Sting, equally confused by people showing up – both friend and foe – and the chaotic flow of the attack, followed Coolant down. Even though Mystic had ordered that he be second and Sting be third, at this point it didn't make much difference unless someone tripped over a floating dead Tsoo body.

“Holy sh-t! I don't even make this much of a mess!” Sting looked at the bullet-ridden bodies of the Tsoo.

“There is some motion up ahead.” Sting pointed into the dark sewer. “Can you spare a sec to check down the tunnel Cool? Not much you can do for these guys. If we are lucky and Ion gets down here maybe he can do a little healing.”

Sting moved cautiously down the sewer tunnel using his motion sensing antennae as his primary sense. “We could use a couple flashlights down here too.”

SquirrelWizard

A loud sloshing sound came from ahead of the group, the kind of sloshing sound of somebody dragging some bodies through some water.

Elisa dragged the Tsoo Sorcerer and a man with yellow tattoos all over his body. These men were almost wholly cocooned in some white sticky substance that resembled spider silk. "Don't worry, I got most of them," she stumbled abit, and her gait was alittle drunken.

Her armor sported more arrows, and scars blades on her armor. She gave a faint smile (one of her cheeks looked puffy) and continued to drag the two prisoners towards the group.

Shalmdi

Down in the sewers, Coolant was on the edge of his control. He could feel the anger swelling up, and he felt the ice around his shoulders crack to vent the excess energy. It was just like last time; he was losing his cool. The difference was that now, he had more than enough rest, and plenty of energy to burn.

The cold energy swirled around him and the water near his feet began to freeze. Coolant surveyed the bodies while switching his radio on, “Ion, please come down in the sewers or send

somebody with arrest tags. We have a lot of hurt people down here, and it would really make my day if they don't die.”

Switching the radio off he added for Sting, “Well, that is assuming they aren't already dead.”

Coolant switched over to a half heat, half normal mode that would allow him to see at least to some extent in the dark. “It looks like there are still a couple of bodies standing a bit further down,” Coolant said with the anger apparent in his voice. “I hope the person responsible for this is still alive; I would like to have a chat with her if possible.”

Coolant began to sprint towards the humanoid forms with uncommon speed and yelled back for Sting, “Don't worry, I won't do anything you wouldn't do!”

MadGremlin

“Yeah, that's what I'm worried about.” Sting had a couple arrest tags and put them on a few of the Tsos and sent them to the hospital.

Sting spoke into his radio. “Ion, we could really use a hand down here before Coolant gets so pissed off he freezes the entire sewer network. And grab a handful of arrest tags on your way. Newton, you still alive up there? Any action?”

Dan43

"WRONG ANSWER! WHY ARE THERE NINJAS COMING OUT OF THE SEWERS IN KINGS ROW?"

Romes eyelids began to flutter and Ion shifted wavelengths and poured healing radiation into Rome, as he came around Ion began talking, very calm and very cold.

"Sting and Newt were trying to play good cop bad cop with you. And I don't think Sting would cry if you wound up dead while that was happening. But they are not your problem right now. You need to understand something. I am a walking nuclear reactor. A microwave with legs. I relax my control and you cook. Just like a piece of sausage on a grill. Ever smell human flesh cooking before? Then I heal you and do it again. I can keep this up all day. So now I am gonna ask you one more time and this will be the last time I ask. What can you tell me about what is going on? And I mean everything."

As he spoke Ions radiation had shifted back to the microwave bands and Romes skin was starting to burn again. Already blisters were forming on his face and his insides felt like they were on fire.

Ion heard the calls from downstairs for healing but since none of the goodguys seemed to be in need he chose to ignore them.

Averick

Mr. Rome's face was overcome with panic and confusion. "I... told you... he'd try.... to kill... me." With that, Rome lost consciousness from pain and stress.

Etherburn

She turned to smile at Newton again as her ears picked up a cacophany of sound. She concentrated, hearing the faint voices in the basement. She always wondered where her hyperacute hearing came from.

"I think they may need assistance, of my special brand," she chuckled softly, "Unless you have another healer on premise?"

Mithril_Zeta

"I think they may need assistance, of my special brand," she chuckled softly, "Unless you have another healer on premise?"

SquirrelWizard

Elisa heard something about teleport tags off in the distance. It was then she realised that there was one small thing she forgot to do. "Sit here and don't do anything," she half drug the two Terrans out of the sewer, and reapplied the webbing on them.

The two men didn't say a thing, but there they almost groaned at the same time. They didn't seem to have any bullet holes or scorch marks, it was just that they looked like they had had a run in with an ugly stick, on multiple occasions.

Elisa pulled out a small handgun, and a few extra clips of ammunition. She sighed and shook her head, disheveling her hair even more. She shot the nearest unwebbed Tsoo body with the handgun, and it disappeared.

The Telegun M1 was a prototype device that was given to her by a Techie from DATA. The gun's purpose was to allow a hero to quickly set multiple people to teleport to the hospital as fast as possible. This was especially helpful in the Elisa's case, because she, and many other people who used weapons to combat their foes, had to be able to efficiently port those who were wounded out of battle.

So, Elisa just stood over the two captives and ported bodies, completely unaware of Coolant's approach from behind her.

Shalmdi

Coolant stopped dead in his tracks as he watched several heat signatures disappear from his view while one rather unique form stood above them. His confusion temporarily overcame his anger, and he allowed himself a moment to calm. Most of the Tsoo bodies had already vanished, and the others were incapacitated but healthy. It appeared the cat girl was cleaning up her mess.

"An arrest tag gun, huh?" he said in a voice much calmer than he felt. "Neat toy, but I recommend you hurry before it's too late for some of the men back there."

MadGremlin

"Ok, while Coolant gives the 'everyone gets a second chance' lecture to the cat lady, I am going upstairs to find out where everyone else is and make sure Newton hasn't gone and gotten himself shot again."

Sting jumped back up the hole and walked up to the main room. He saw Newton cowering behind the desk next to another newcomer. They seemed to be chitchatting more than anything.

Mithril_Zeta

“We do, but he’s upstairs guarding our prisoner,” Newton said, glancing upstairs. He was hearing what was going on, but he didn’t want to leave the front door unguarded.

Sting hopped up out of the basement. He had a look of irritation on his face.

Mad Gremlin

“Great, I get to go down in the much and smell of the sewers and you get to sit up here with the hot chick. Any idea where Ion is? We got a load of pretty badly injured Tsoo in the sewer and I think Coolant is getting a bit bent out of shape about it.”

Mithril Zeta

“Yep, carefully chose this job,” Newton chuckled. He motioned to the pretty woman next to him. “Ether here is a healer, too. I’ll continue watching the front door.” He put his elbows on the desk, set his chin on his hands, and stared at the entry way. “Oh, Ion is upstairs...questioning Mr. Rome.” He flicked his eyes upstairs. “I don’t think Rome will be hiding any more info at all.”

QueenEtheria

She glanced at Sting, seeming unphased by his insectoid appearance.

"Do you need me to go down there and help out the Tsoo? Are they that seriously injured?"

Averick

Mystic hovered above the bodies and the "water".

"I would suggest against it, let us gather two to interrogate, and send the rest to Zigg. Then let's get the bloody hell out of here." Mystic tagged a few Tsoo and then flew up through the sewer. He exited the door opposite the booby trap and pulled up a manhole cover, bringing it back with the intention of welding it down once everyone was up.

MadGremlin

“I think we sent most of them to the hospital, but Mystic said something about interrogating a couple – we might need those healed. That cat lady shot them up pretty good, even I was impressed with the carnage down there. Oh and before I came up here that same cat lady looked like something...well that she dragged in herself!”

Averick

"We should get Ion to raise the shields, secure Rome, tend to our wounded and begin working on a defense strategy." He looked about at the others. "If you want my opinion, that is."

Shalmdi

Coolant stared at Elisa through his visors as he listened to Mystic's "suggestions" and decided to choose a better place for the words he wanted to say. With no visible effort, he picked up the two Tsoo warriors that Elisa had wrapped up earlier. "I'll take these two in for the interrogation. You can make it by yourself I assume?"

Without waiting for an actual answer, the metal man trudged back to the opening under the precinct and carefully placed two bound and cold Tsoo on the basement floor before deactivating his armor and entering himself.

Dan43

"Oh, no you don't!" As Rome's eyes closed Ion shifted again and began healing him. The blistered skin that had begun to blacken in places slowly turned raw and then began to close back up. The man's core temp began to drop back towards survivable temperatures. At last Rome's eyes fluttered and opened only to be greeted by Ion's armored mask. "There are worse things than death Mr. Rome. I don't think you are being honest with me. So, let's try this again. Tell me everything you know about, well, about everything." With those words the glow about Ion changed from the cool green to a deadly yellow-orange. For the third time that day Rome felt as if he had been placed inside a microwave oven and left to cook in his own juices.

Mad Gremlin

"I still haven't figured out where Ion ran off to when things got busy down in the basement. And yeah, defense strategy that might be nice."

Then Sting turned and sniffed at the air. "Man, what is that smell? Smells like burnt flesh..."

Shalmdi

"I can take these two up to the interrogation rooms, Mystic." Coolant replied over his radio while regaining his calm. "While I'm up there, I'll try to find out what caused all that heat I saw earlier."

Averick

"Andrew Jackson was the seventh president. There's a flaw in our physics model of the universe. Outcasts are never going to run the city. Oprah will never be truly thin. AUUUGG!" Rome winced under Ion's administration of influence.

"I see, you want something more personally relevant. You don't know what you want to know, so you're just hurting me for information hoping I'll say something useful. Well, I see you've crossed that grey area to my side rather quickly. Alright, I'll start over. Lord Recluse is my employer, though I don't directly get my orders from him. I get them through the mail. I can give you his address. He lives on an island in the Bermuda area. [soon to be known as the city of villains] I suggest you go there and arrest him, he knows everything."

MadGremlin

Sting started following the scent of burnt flesh up toward the interrogation room. When he arrived there and opened the door it was like opening a nuclear reactor. Sting shouted in pain and covered his eyes. He quickly backed out into the hall and away from direct exposure, flipping on his radio.

"#\$%*&!!! I think Ion has gone critical up here! Either that or he is trying to mate with Rome and getting carried away!"

Sting heard Rome start to restate his previous story as the painful radiation subsided. Sting returned to the room. "Geez, we are going to need a hazmat team to decon this room! Ion, you psychopath, the guy already spilled! Torture may be fun but only to a point - you are enjoying this a little too much. Don't you think the smell of burnt flesh is a little much?"

Sting shook his head. "I'd say I was sorry Mr. Rome, but, well I would be lying. I didn't think that Ion had it in him."

Dan43

Sting's presence brought Ion back for a place he had never been before. He had never known such rage. And he had NEVER given off that much radiation before. Slowly the output from his body dropped. Then Rome said one thing that was new. 'I thought you of all people would be on Recluses side kid.' with those words Rome slipped into darkness.

Shalmdi

Coolant ran up to the second floor when he heard Sting's yell over the radio, thinking himself probably the least susceptible to radiation. By the time he reached the door, however, it looked like Ion was having a meltdown of a different nature.

Dan43

Extending his hand Ion bathed Rome in the soft green rays that healed rather than harmed. Slowly like watching a time lapse movie the burns silently healed.

Turning to Sting "I don't know what happened. I...I..just lost it. I was down in the basement and everything was going crazy. And..and...Rome he..he..he knew something. He knew why this was all happening. I thought if I could ju...jus...just get him to talk everything would be ok. This isn't like being in the lab or a classroom Sting. People get hurt. People can die. I nearly killed Mystic and Brian because I was SO SURE of myself. What happens the next time I'm wrong Sting. Do I get you killed? Or Cool? Or some guy off the street?"

Ion looked up at Sting hoping the older hero had answers.

MadGremlin

"Dang, I thought I had the corner on freaking out around here." Sting moved to pick up the unconscious Rome. "Dude, dying happens all of the time in the business. The key is to not have only one option. Decisions and actions under stress go wrong more than right so don't blow all your chances in one shot."

Sting shook his head. "Listen to me...like I'm a freaking philosopher or something. Here try this Ion, get up, stop feeling sorry for yourself, and get to work." Sting shrugged and carried Rome down toward the holding cells.

"Talk to Coolant – he is king of keeping...well 'cool'. He might be better suited to help you than a freak like me."

Shalmdi

"Sting, maybe you should take our guest out of here; the radiation levels in the room may still be in hazardous levels for humans." Coolant said with his usual calm returned. When he was mad, it was best to get him thinking about something else. Hopefully, the same thing would work for Ion. "Hey Flux, I think Mystic wants your shield back up now. Could you walk me through the activation process, so you don't have to drop what you're doing every time?"

Mithril_Zeta

Newton sat at the front desk, listening to what had been going on upstairs through his little spy singularity. He leaned back and frowned, a fairly unusual expression for the fat man's face. He had been so sure that Rome had been hiding something, but the torture Ion had put him through made him doubt his own instincts. Maybe Rome was telling the truth; that he had told everything he had known.

Newton's expression pulled further down. He didn't really believe that. It didn't add up right to him. And he knew that it would continue to nag at him until Rome was out of their hands.

Newton leaned back in the chair, pulled his half-finished Mountain Dew out of the drawer where he had put it for safe keeping, and took a swig. "Why the Two-Six," Newton murmured. "What's the connection? And what are we missing?" He rolled his eyes. "And why am I talking to myself?"

QueenEtheria

Kegen cleared her throat gently as she hopped on the desk, dangling her neon green boots. She glanced at Newton over her shoulder. "You sure know how to make a woman feel special, since apparently I'm a nobody."

Mithril_Zeta

Newton jerked himself out of his reverie. "Where are my manners. I'm sorry. Just thrown for a loop."

QueenEtheria

She chuckled softly and drummed her fingers against the edge of the desk. "I umm..don't know where the sewer entrance is, let alone where anything is here..."

Mithril_Zeta

"Well, you did more than I did. All I did was run around like an scared antelope. Let me take you down there. " Newton floated up over the desk. He landed lightly on the other side of the desk. "I've actually only been downstairs twice now, but if once we're there, we should have no problem finding the sewer entrance." He led her down the stairs.

She gave Newton a little half smile and then glanced upwards towards the ceiling. "It seems to have quieted down. I guess I was of no assistance other than invisiable company."

The_Ninjin

With the sudden rush of people going upstairs and under the building, Brian was left to fight off whatever might have been left. The cop in him wanted to play investigator. The rest of him just wanted to be back at home, eating pizza and watching a movie.

He scanned the area for any traces of movement and after he found none, he went outside to where the van that brought some of the nuisance was. The doors was still ajar, but he would have no problem trying to get by other means.

Inside the back of the van were paper strewn everywhere. In the frenzied action, they must have gotten knocked over somehow. Brian began to pick through the paperwork and analyzed what he could make out. There were flight plans, schematics, lists of names from almost every villain set in the city and one other thing that struck him as odd.

Blueprints of the 2-6, complete with sewer layouts.

It didn't take him any time to gather as much as he could and head back into Mystic's office and place the paperwork in a desk of his. Then he went back to see if he could salvage anything else from what had been brought there.

When he got back inside the van, he heard a small crackling noise underneath the passenger seat. He reached his hand underneath to produce a small walkie-talkie with a 3 inch screen. Brian turned up the volume and tuned the frequency until he heard a clear voice.

"Ch... are.... pic.... Ch.... Chiller...."

Brian stopped tuning and placed his ear to the device to hear better, "Chiller... you there... it's Buster."

These are odd names for ninjas. Is this an Outcast on the other line? Why are Tsoo here?

"Uhhh... yea," Brian said as he deepened his tone and gruffed it up a little.

"Chiller? What the hell... whats the matter with you?"

Brian poked his head outside the van's door and looked around for any one suspicious. A cat crept down the driveway. He gave an annoyed look at the feline and closed the door.

Brian hated cats.

He responded back to the man on the other side of the comm, "Yea... uhhh, we got a few surprises... lotta smoke and stuff. Don't worry though. This ain't him though. Chill's inside."

Silence ensued for what seemed like minutes.

"Turn on your screen."

"Can't... it's busted. We had an explosion meet us at the door. Had a lot taken out," Brian replied as he looked at the screen to see that it really was cracked.

"Aight well... did you get the package?"

"Umm, not sure yet. They're still in there. I got stuck with outside detail."

The man growled on the other side and had gotten upset, "Look, just tell them to hurry it up. We don't have time for all this b.s. Grab the package and meet us at the drop."

"Package, drop, got it....WAIT... where's the drop?"

"Chill will know."

"What if Chill doesn't make it?"

"He always does."

"I know... I'm saying though... what if he doesn't..."

More silence.

"Who is this?"

Brian thought for a second as to what kind of name an outcast would have, "Umm Blazer."

"I didn't know we sent any fire types."

"Someone thought it might be necessary I guess."

Silence.

"Look... drop is... boom...first crater to the right."

What the hell does that mean

"Got it."

"Alright hurry it up and watch out for Tsoo See you at the drop.!"

The comm clicked off and left Brian with a bewildered look on his face. He opened the door and saw a Sorcerer's hat roll in the wind. It was stopped by the van's front tire and laid motionless like it's owner.

Brian ran back inside and jumped into the sewer system and caught up to his Uncle, "Mystic... we... need to.... talk about....," he was out of breath from the dash he made into to the underground, "the Tsoo and....," he said and stopped and placed a hand on his Mystic's shoulder and brought himself to an upright standing position.

"That's not their van."

Dan43

Ion turned to stare at Cool for a long moment before speaking. "Sure. Let's go." Ion lead the way down to the basement. Walking over to the field generator he gave it a quick check for damage and to be sure the settings were correct. "It's simple really. I already have the dimensions of the building in memory already. You turn on the power and when this gauge shows 100% on the capacitor charge then you flip this switch and you have your force field. Give me a few minutes to make some adjustments and I will plug that hole in the floor as well. I really need to set it up so everybody can get in and out also." Ion started making adjustments while still talking to Cool. "You know that this thing only needs 12volts of power to generate a field the size we need? The power requirements are geometric based on the size of the field. That's why the ones for the city need a nuclear reactor and I can run this one off a car battery, for a couple of hours anyway."

Ion was silent for a moment and the looked at Cool again.

"Why do you think Rome thought I would be on Recluses side in all of this Cool?"

Shalmdi

Plan A: Get his mind on something else – Failed beautifully.

Plan B: Ad lib and try not to say something stupid

“Hey, I’m still pretty far out of the loop, my friend.” Coolant said while making a recording of the shield’s processes. “I still don’t even know who Recluse is or what Rome told you guys.”

Mithril Zeta

“Because you don’t believe his story, and he’s trying to press doubt amongst us.” Newton said as he entered the area. “Ether, the sewer is here. Guys, once you get the shield up, could you help guard our pretty young woman as she heals the guys down there?” He put a gravity field around Ether, and then floated down into the sewer tunnel.

Shalmdi

“That sounds about as good as anything I could come up with.” Coolant said with a small smile. “I guess we will have to hold up on the shield over the hole until everyone comes back up.”

“We can talk more later, but until then why don’t you start fixing your containment room. Sorry about that by the way” With that, Coolant jumped down the hole after Newton.

MadGremlin

Sting locked Rome into one of the holding cells and then had an idea. After he locked the door he ran down to the basement to find Ion.

“Hey Ion, I’m a paranoid sucker, so just humor me. Can you scan our friend Rome for any bugs, tracking devices, or stuff like that?”

The_Ninjin

Brian started to explain, but then thought about something else.

Was the man he fought back at the train station the one they called Chiller? If that be the case, Brian thought, then the Outcasts must have been outdone before they got to me at the train station. But why come after me?

Brian looked at his Uncle with the look of light bulb that just went off in his head, "Be right back!"

Back in on the surface of the 2-6, Brian picked two comm units from off the front desk and went over to Etherburn and handed her one.

"I'm headed to the jail here. I'm not sure what I'll meet up with on the way there... mind tagging along," Brian flashed a cool and collected smile now that he was breathing normally again. He had still been amazed at the volume of his accent.

Mad Gremlin

Then he turned to Brian. “You going to the Zig? Why don’t we clean up around here first. Heck, can’t you just call them up and have whomever you want to talk to shipped over here? Ain’t that what cops do?”

The_Ninjin

Brian gave Sting a blank look with his head tilted to the side. He furrowed his eyebrows and thought carefully about what he wanted to say. He knew that it wouldn’t probably come out right so with a confused look on his face he responded to Sting.

"What cops have you been dealing with that give you these... ideas about what and how we do what we do," Brian said while he used grand hand gestures as if he was trying to drive his point across.

"No you cannot just ship any guy here and as simple as you might want it to be, it's not. Besides, this is bigger than you or any of us put together. "

Brian shook his head at Sting and walked to the door. He stopped and looked over his shoulder, "Look, you let me do what I do when I do how I do and you...just watch. I'll be back."

MadGremlin

"Lighten up, Francis." Sting shook his head, he was used to getting chewed out – especially by cops – but it was usually for a better reason.

"Heck they used to ship me all over the damn place when I was in the clink." He complained to himself. "What the &#\$%^, I was supposed to be the [censored]-hole around here. Now everyone is getting in on the fun."

The Ninjin

Brian knew it wouldn't have come out right. He convinced himself it was a justified anger for the attitude Sting had given almost since he got there. never was it in his normal nature to say what he said, but like he knew... it wasn't going to come out right. It was something he was used to, but not from someone he worked with. Usually because those he worked with were cops or other heroes who understood. Not formally convicted felons given a second chance. He jogged to the nearest police station and had himself transported to the Ziggurat.

Mad Gremlin

Sting looked at the cat lady, who seemed in need of a bit of medical attention herself. "Have a seat, um, whatever your real name is. Ion or Ether should have some time for you soon."

Sting muttered to himself as he turned to walk back up to the ground floor. "There I go again, acting all nice like I give a damn. What the hell is happening to me?"

Dan43

"Actually, unless it is mystic in nature I am pretty sure that anything he does have on him does not work anymore. I even burnt out my own comm unit and half the systems on my armor and those are BUILT to take my radiation. If he has one and it IS mystic in nature then the boss would be better at finding it."

MadGremlin

"Ah, good point. But that box of chicken nuggets I left in the room were nicely done and I bet you could use that trick to warm up the Boss's tea. Not that fire-head needs much help."

Dan43

Walking over to the injured warrior he let the cooling green of his healing radiation wash over her. "I will patch up our newest member, you go give the others a hand."

Walking away from the feline female he approach his containment unit and began to try and repair the damage done when Cool ripped the end wall off.

Mad Gremlin

“Aye-aye, Cap’n.” Sting replied, mockingly.

Next muther-#%*\$&er that gives me an order better have good health insurance. Sting thought to himself.

Shalmdi

The Tsoo had been cleaned up, and Mystic was getting ready to close the hole up, so Coolant decided to abandon the sewer for more pleasant surroundings. Once he was back in the building, he went upstairs for his tools, before going back to the basement lab.

“So, Flux,” Coolant said as he joined Ion near his chamber, “I have video footage of your chamber before the – uh – incident, and I’m pretty decent with machines and metal work. Mind if I help?”

Predicting the anxiousness that he would have if someone started messing with his little home, Coolant quickly added, “Come on, the least you can let me do is some grunt work or welding. Besides, it’ll give us tin-cans some time to talk.”

Dan43

"Sure Cool. You really did a number on it, but it is far simpler than your chamber. I can adjust the temperature inside but it really is not a life support unit. It is just a place to contain my radiation while I get out of my armor to eat and sleep and stuff. The door can only be locked from the inside and it opens inward so that I can't be blocked in. Ionizing radiation does not turn corners so it does not have to be air tight. If we can get the sheet metal fairly straight and weld the panel back in place I can handle it from there. I have a repair kit that I can reseal the liner with. I am gonna have to get evrybody out of the basement for at least a few hours fairly soon though. I need to do something about all the circuits I burned out on my armor and the chamber is to small to work in."

Mithril_Zeta

Newton followed Coolant up out of the sewer, and invited Ether back into the building as well.

“I do hope you plan to stay,” he told the pretty healer. “Your healing could really help save us, and your dimples sure help counter-balance the fat man, the insect, and the two tin-cans,” he said, nodding over at Coolant and Ion as they worked on Ion’s containment unit. “At least consider it, although I guess any real invitation should come from Mystic Inferno. He’s the boss.”

Shalmdi

Coolant followed enough of what Ion said to get a handle on what repairs would entail. “Alright, I recommend everyone that isn’t radiation friendly leave the basement until Flux says it’s clean. That is unless you guys want to glow in the dark for a while.”

“Newton, a moment please,” he said to the shorter man before he had a chance to leave. “I recall you saying you could listen in on others through your wormholes, and I saw that in action when you monitored Rome from a floor away. A useful trick.”

Coolant lowered his voice to a whisper and got close enough to make sure the others couldn’t make out what he said, “Will you promise me you won’t use that on me without my knowledge? I’m a private and paranoid person, but I would trust your word.”

Mithril_Zeta

“You know that paranoid part you have; me, too,” Newton whispered back. “It’s one of those survival tricks you learn when you’re a squishy mutant.” Newton thought a moment, and then nodded a little. “I’ll give my word not in your own room or in your containment unit, but elsewhere...I can try not to, but old survival instincts are hard to ignore.”

Shalmdi

“Trust me; I understand how hard it can be to let your guard down.” Coolant replied back. “You do what feels right. I promise to keep my scanners out of your business, but I won’t say the same for the other people here. I feel like some of our teammates still need monitoring, but I also feel that I can trust you.”

Averick

Mystic finished his weld job, then watched the interplay between the other members of the Two Six. "A bit brisk with each other, but it seems we can salvage this."

Mystic set about getting "the book" out, quietly in his quarters, slipping away in the hustle and the healing and the hollering. Getting the book out was a complicated spell. It took a great deal of concentration and a bit of time.

Mystic sat in his office, in the dark, concentrating. He sat at his desk, which was entirely empty except for a phone off in the corner. There was only a single point of light, a tiny amber gem hovering in front of him at first. Then, as the spell progressed, the light grew and multiplied, until there were thousands of small amber lights floating about in front of him. Then each piece of magic began to fit into place, until the glowing tome hovered over his desk, filling the room with light.

Mystic turned its golden pages, looking for a way to protect the Two Six. He sat in a room only lit by the book he read, running his fingers over the ancient pages and turning the runes about in his mind.

Abrahms

A soldier, by dress and manner. Walked, almost marching down the street to the old 2 6. He had Military issue flack jacket BDU's and his well shined Black Tankers boots. A broad shouldered man. More accurate to say broad man from the square jaw. Running a close second to the Rifle Man's. Down to his EEE boots. He looked to be in his mid twenties, with the exception of the grey white hair.

"What is that doing over the station house?" He stops and concentrates for a moment. Suddenly a sheen, covers his entire body. With a single bound he leaps to the front of the energy field that seems to be engulfing his newest soon to be home. "IS EVREYTHING OK IN THERE" he shrugs the military duffle in to the center of his back, just in case. "HEY I AM HERE ABOUT THE DESK SGT. JOB. IF IT'S STILL OPEN?" He says holding up his orders pack. Interesting semiretirement this should be

QueenEtheria

Kegen brushed a wayward strand of her deep auburn hair from her eyes and bit nervously at her lower lip as Newton and Coolant spoke.

She shifted her weight anxiously, feeling lost. She glanced between the two men and shrugged dejectedly. She spun on her heels and began to walk around the first floor, checking it out. She walked slowly, her eyes taking in every detail as she thought about being in a house surrounded by men. She smiled softly to herself. It wouldn't be the first time.

She stopped to stand by one of the desks and cocked her head, letting her hair spill over her shoulder, as she focused her hearing. She heard the clipped, no-nonsense voice of a military-trained man coming from outside.

She blinked and turned back to Coolant and Newton, leaning back against the desk as she swept her long hair away from her face.

"You've got a visitor. He's outside of the forcefield. He says he's applying for a job?!" she replied, a playfully lilt in her voice as she smiled at the men.

MadGremlin

Sting also noticed the shouting from the front of the 2-6.

"Boss, we have company." Sting shouted for Mystic. "Should I tell him to go away or just ignore him?" Sting said, being his normal 'friendly' self.

Sting moved over to the front door. "Who are ya and what do ya want?"

Quote:

"You've got a visitor. He's outside of the forcefield. He says he's applying for a job?!" she replied, a playfully lilt in her voice as she smiled at the men.

Shalmdi

"Looks like we have more company, and I think your new friend feels a little ignored." he said before returning to his normal, neutral voice. "Well, I guess we all have work to do, so I'll leave to your own devices. As always, my friend, you were a huge asset in this skirmish, and I think you even have a little bit of leader's instinct in you."

Coolant went back to work, but he made a mental note of talking to Mystic about a second in command. Newton may not particularly want the job, but he would probably be good at it.

Mithril_Zeta

"Leadership? Me?!" Newton laughed. "I'm the comic relief, and quite cheerful about that." He flicked his radio. "Ion, can you turn the force field off for a moment. We have a guest applying for a desk sergeant job. Did you copy that, Mystic?"

He glanced at Coolant for a moment. "I just did a leadership thingee, didn't I? I've got to stop that."

SquirrelWizard

A dull boom resounded throughout the 2-6. The whole front lobby was filled with smoke, as Elisa came walking out of the cloud, with a sarcastic grin plastered on her face. She walked over to Newton and the new lady, and tossed a small rock up in the air and caught it, "No need to worry, I just disarmed the front door."

Abrahms

"THE NAME IS ABRAHMS, CITY SERVICES SENT ME. THEY SAID YOU COULD PROBABLY USE MORE HELP DOWN HERE". As the doors explode in a cloud of smoke, and debris. He lift a hand defensively. Then pushes against the field trying to go to there aid.

MadGremlin

Sting coughed as the smoke filled the room.

"Ugh, whatever happened to 'defusing'?"

SquirrelWizard

Elisa flashed the insect-man a mischevious grin, "That was disfusing. In my line of work you dont want your bombs to be disarmed by some stupid flunky. When I set a bomb, I really set a bomb."

Mithril_Zeta

"Remind me to stand way back the next time you defuse a bomb," Newton said, brushing the plaster flakes that had fallen from the ceiling off of his red sweatshirt.

MadGremlin

He looked through the hole where the door once was and saw what seemed to be an old soldier pushing on the force field.

"It won't help, the thing is practically indestructible. We'll have it turned off in a sec. Oh and don't mind the explosion, we do this kinda thing every day."

Abrahms

Straitening up he looks toward the author of the message. "Understood," he quickly grabs the file, and the sheets that escaped in the wind. "I'll wate here."

Shalmdi

Coolant would normally have dropped his work and ran after Ion when he heard the explosion, but based on the thermals above, he could imagine what happened. If the gun toting cat girl didn't learn some restraint, someone was going to end up hurt. Maybe I should talk to her too. Man, I have too many issues to try and play moral compass for this group of psychos

As it was, he just continued to weld the armor of Ion's chamber back in to place and did his best to remain as calm as possible despite the conflicting emotions trying to surface.

Dan43

Ion came running from the basement, his hands already glowing as he searched for a target. "What now? Who is it this time? Can-we get just-a-minute here? I still-don't-have-a-place-to-sleep-tonight-an-we're-already-under-attack-again!"

MadGremlin

"Ion, we need the shield down so we can let this army dude in."

Dan43

"That's-it? Explosions-right-after-an-attack-just-to-ask-me-to-let-the-shields-down?" Ion headed down to the basement to turn off the shield.

QueenEtheria

Kegen grimaced and clamped her hands to her ears as the explosion continued to echo in her mind, sending spikes of pain through her brain. She was really going to have to get earplugs or something.

She coughed at the smoke and shook the flakes of debris from her hair, hands still protectively shielding her ears.

"This is normal for you people?!" she shouted, her hearing still recovering, " If this keeps up I'm going to be bleeding from my ears for the rest of my life," she replied rather loudly, but thinking she had whispered it.

She hopped back on the desk, watching the door, waiting for the newcomer as Ion began to talk rapidly. She blinked at him as she tried to decipher what he had said. She just shook her head and began to pick lingering pieces of plaster from her hair.

"Mystic said it would be safer if I came with him, but now, I'm thinking I should've just taken my chances on the streets," she grumbled to herself.

Mithril_Zeta

"Mystic told you that?" Newton said incredulously. He burst into laughter.

MadGremlin

"Ether, yes pretty much everything is considered 'normal' around this place. I mean look at the bunch we have here! Do we look like a well adjusted group? We're lucky that we aren't going at each other most of the time."

Mithril_Zeta

He turned to Ion, wiping the tears from his eyes. "Ion, could you please shut down the field for a moment to let him in," Newton asked, pointing at the older man outside the non-existent doors.

MadGremlin

Sting had to grin and Newton's honest laughter. "Yeah, this is safe compared to a picnic in Boomtown maybe."

When the force field finally came down Sting looked over the man at the front door. "An elderly GI Joe? Old folks home is a couple blocks away gramps. We're a...well I guess we are supposed to be a police station. Though I'm sure Newton has some doughnuts lying around we really aren't the police. Ah hell, come on in. Not like we're worried about someone 'fitting in' here."

"I'm Poison Sting, you can just call me Sting." Sting walked in assuming the man would follow him. "Everybody this is...who the hell are you anyway?"

Abrahms

A bemused smile crosses the face of the seemingly young man. As he stands in front of the 26th precinct house. He never really thought of going back into service, not in this manner anyway. Going up the step and through the doors. Stopping at the desk. He drops his bag, and waits for acknowledgement. He stands almost at parade rest. "Hello, I am Ben Kafka a.k.a. Abrahms. I was told you folks might need some help down here. So if you don't mind a retired Career Gunny Sgt. I would happily take the cot and 3 squares, and the pittance the

City folks will pay me. Just to do what come natural. Here is my records Sting.” He hands the file Sting to containing.

Benjamin Kafka, Ben, Old Man, Sherman

MadGremlin

Sting chuckled, handing the papers back to Abrahms.

"Are you kidding? Do I looke like someone that would give a snot about papers? The boss is over there." Sting said, pointing toward Mystic.

"That’s Newton, Ion, and Ether. Coolant must still be in the basement and [censored] is off galavanting around to the Zig. Welcome to the nuthouse, if you need food, ask Newton, Ion has the radio com units and other tech gear, and Mystic tells us what to do. I just act mean and surly, and piss everyone off."

Sting started to walk away. "Any questions, ask someone who gives a crap."

Shalmdi

Coolant came up stairs and took a look at the newest entry before subtly readying himself for battle. "Unless I am mistaken, we were just under attack, yet you feel secure enough to let down the shields to invite someone in for dinner?"

Taking a moment to calm both his temper and his paranoia, he continued speaking without letting any actual emotion into his voice. “Forgive me for being suspicious, but in my opinion, it may have been a poor decision to let a person of unknown power into our base, and I believe it's safe to assume that we have not scanned the surrounding area to make sure he is alone, correct?"

Can we please put the shields back up now? If you don't mind soldier, I would like to see your ID.”

Abrahms

"Not a problem, here is my file. Along with the orders from. One Alfred Wincott, he said Mystic might need help. Since i was looking for a gig to help pay the bills. You know retirement pay just isn't that much anymore." The man could easily be mistaken for mid twenties. The hair makes a differance.

"Can you get those to Mystic. Where should i stow my gear, upper deck?"

QueenEtheria

Ether turned to wave a lazy hand at Abrams in greeting. She began to swing her feet slowly from the desk, making little circles.

"So what do you guys do when you're not getting swamped byTsoo and new recruits?" she asked outloud, glancing around at the men with a lightly smile.

MadGremlin

“Mostly we spend our time doing our hair and nails.” Sting sarcastically replied. “Actually usually we are fighting with each other. I know that might come as a surprise but we are usually less pleasant to each other than this.”

Shalmdi

Coolant looked at the papers and back at Abrahms, ignoring the others in the process. "Not good enough, soldier," he said in his cold tone. "You have hard copies that could have been forged on a cheap laptop and a government seal I could duplicate on our napkins if I was so inclined."

Looking at the uniformed man again, he readied his second level defenses with a crack of his metal knuckles, and began analyzing possible weak spots before continuing.

"You haven't given me a name I recognize yet other than Wincott, and that could have been found out with relative ease." Coolant maneuvered himself away from the rest of the group. "This station was under attack and one of our teammates was ambushed not an hour ago. After we thwart both attempts, you conveniently show up. Give me a reason to trust you or leave before the shields reactivate. Your choice."

Mithril_Zeta

"Actually, the whole bunch of us need to have our backgrounds checked by Mystic and Brian," Newton said. "Ion, turn the field back on. For now, let's take Sarge here at face value, but let's keep an eye on each other. Everyone in at least pairs, for now." He glanced at the armored Coolant. "Cool, stick close to Ion and help him with his machine downstairs. Sting, could you help Sarge get settled. Ether, would you lend Mystic your hero ID so he can run a check on you – standard procedure, you understand, I hope. And I'll help our cat-lady find that weapons locker we moved yesterday to whichever room she chooses." He glanced over at Mystic. "Here's my ID, too, to run a check on me. Everyone care to follow suit?" The green-haired mutant made eye contact with the multi-faceted eyes of Sting and hoped the insect-man could read the quiet plea.

MadGremlin

It took Sting a moment of trying to figure out why Newton was eyeing him and nodding his head toward Mystic, but finally it sunk in and Sting produced his hero ID. Of course it had been suspended due to his over zealous treatment of criminals but it still held his hero information.

QueenEtheria

Kegen had fumbled to get her ID card out. She wasn't use to using the mundane object. All her original information was encrypted in the microchip in her right palm and also the microcomputer in her watch. She handed it to Mystic with a shy smile.

Averick

Mystic returned to Brian. "According to the information you've provided me about the van, it appears we're going to need some protection spells." He hovered into the common area with Brian and looked around. "My god, I just bought that door. I mean just today."

After Brian snapped him back to reality, Mystic introduced himself to the new member. "Oh, pleasure to meet you. I used to live in a building with a chap in the military, though I never did catch his name. Desk sergeant you say? Well, we don't have a beaurocracy as such, but I'm sure we could definately use the help. And I certainly could use someone to help with our tactics. "

Mystic looked at the ID's being handed to him. "Yes, well, I'll just pop up to my office for a tick and have a look at these. In the meantime, maybe we should really look at what we're going to do when they get inside." Mystic floated back toward his office, ID's in hand.

Abrahms

While nodding to all the new faces he just met.

"The desk sergeant bizz, was kind of a joke. Wincott said i could find it by the broken door. He wasn't kidding." Abrahms nods towards the door.

As he reaches into his cargo pocket to produce, his hero reg card. Holding it between middle and index fingers, like you would to flick it. He passes it to Coolant. "Give it to the Mystic once your done,...please. A security conscious man is always good. Once i stow my gear, I'll be happy to play door. I am tought to move when i put my mind to it." The last being said with a wink, and a nod. Then follows Sting wherever.

Shalmdi

After looking it over carefully, Coolant handed Abrahms back his ID and nodded approvingly; a hero ID was much harder to forge than simple paperwork.

MadGremlin

Sting turned to Abrahms. "Ok sarge, let's find you a spot to crash. Oh and don't mind Coolant, he's almost as unpleasant as I am." Sting lead Abrahms up to the second floor and found a room for him. "See Ion for a comm. unit and a hover belt if you want it. And seriously, we are a little dysfunctional. So don't be surprised when fights break out."

Sting wandered back down to the main room and saw Brian head into Mystic's office and close the door.

Shalmdi

Coolant headed back down stairs without a word, and quietly began working on Ion's living quarters. The others would probably think he was just being antisocial again. He would rather them think of him as rude than an emotional kid, but inside his mind he was fighting off a familiar depression.

He didn't mean to be so emotionally cold; he was just trying to control his powers. He didn't mean to be paranoid, but it was his job to protect himself and more importantly his teammates. They would be better off with a robot. At least then they wouldn't have to deal with my temper, and a robot would follow orders better.

Coolant sat on the floor next to the broken plating and started to feel guilty about that too. Had he been paying attention, he would have realized his suit was venting because of his emotional state.

The_Ninjin

"Thats not all though," Brian said as he followed his uncle to his office.

The door had closed behind them and he sat down in the chair oppotise Mystic's desk and he told him the account of his conversation with Buster.

"And then he said that the drop point would be boom... first crater to the right."

Brian leaned back and allowed his uncle to take in all the info. He looked to the corner of the desk and saw a small teapot picked it up. He shook it and frowned, disappointed that it was empty. He could really go for some tea right about now.

"Anyway, " Brian continued, "I figure the crater he's talking about is one of the buildings with the tops blown out. I had heard about meetings being held there by Outcasts and Trolls. They're able to withstand all the heat and smoke thanks to their abilites. And Trolls... well they don't feel

much with all the Supernadine switched out for all the blood in their system. Only thing is... he didn't give me a time, but I know it was suppose to be tonight after they hit us."

Brian's cell phone vibrated at his side. It was a social call. One he wanted to take, but ignored it. This was a slight bit more important.

"Oh, also when I was at the Zigg, I found out that Chiller, the guy who was suppose to be here was the guy at the train station that I ran into. Seems Tsoo came along before hand and while they waited for pick-up, decided to have a little fun. Once he was transported to the city jail, he was offed by a Spirit. "

Brian ran a hand through his short wavy hair and let the hand stop short at the back of his head, "This is spiraling... if we don't get this under control, we'll be shut down. City's eyes and ears are everywhere."

Averick

Brian ran a hand through his short wavy hair and let the hand stop short at the back of his head, "This is spiraling... if we don't get this under control, we'll be shut down. City's eyes and ears are everywhere."

Mystic felt magic flow over the entire building in a wave that he hasn't felt since the Winter Lord came to town. The lights went out. He tried the phone, dead. He used the special cell phone they gave him. No signal. He looked across at Brian, "Can the city see us now?"

Mystic moved to a window and looked outside. There was nothing but darkness. "I strongly suggest we have a quick chat with Ion to make sure our shields are up. I am not certain exactly what this is, but I AM certain it looks bad."

Abrahms

"What the, heck happened to the lights. Cutting of power is the first step in an assault. Ring the alarm or what ever it is Sting." With those words, the sheen and faintly glowing field returns around Abrahms, along with eyes now glowing with a warm dusky rose color. Reaching into his duffle," what comm channel you guys using." He has a helmet in his hand obviously having a com set in it.

MadGremlin

"Sorry Sarge, you have to ask Ion what channel we are on, he handles the tech stuff."

Sting followed the military man down when the lights went out. If he'd had hair it would be standing on end. There was a bad feeling about this darkness, something crushing, almost strangling.

Abrahms

"Lets get to the door" As he hops over the railing and drops to the ground floor at a run to the entrance. He steps to one side of the doorway. Scanning the street to the right for signs of threat.

Averick

Mystic led Brian out of his office with a small flame spell. "An argument for lanterns."

Some of the emergency lighting kicked in a few seconds later. Obviously, not all of the lights had been maintained. When Mystic hit the first floor he saw Abrahms looking out the door. He

handed the ID's back to those who had given them to him. "Everyone checked out before the power went out. But we have a more serious problem. Kegen, are your powers magical in nature? Are anyone's but mine? Can ANYONE feel the bloody awful feeling I'm experiencing?"

QueenEtheria

Slipping it back into one of her hidden belt pockets, she shook her head at the man. "No, I'm not magical. I'm mutant at best guess," she replied to his question.

Averick

Mystic floated out toward the open door and looked out as darkness swallowed up the street toward them, like an advancing curtain. "We really need to set our minds to the defense of this doorway. Brian, be a good lad and make sure the other door is locked." Mystic jerked his thumb toward the double doors on the other side of the lobby.

The_Ninjin

Brian, be a good lad and make sure the other door is locked." Mystic jerked his thumb toward the double doors on the other side of the lobby.

Brian traipsed over to the opposite lobby doors to check the locks.

Abrahms

"Aye Aye sir," says as he steps into the middle of the doorway. As he step into the center, assuming a fighting. As his feet settle in to place, there is a slight hum and the sheen becomes a very faint but tangible glow in Mystic's light. "Ok I am ready. Remember everyone, use all available cover. Ill contain them here. You nail them with what ever you got grenades included, my shield is up. COME ON YOU MAMMBYS, SHOW YOURSELVES." He yell into the approaching darkness with as much scorn and contempt as possible.

The Ninjin

With his hands on the locks, Brian turned around wide-eyed at Abrahms, "Are you serious," Brian said in a forceful whisper, "This isn't a cheesy horror slash action flick. Got to be more careful about these things."

Abrahms

"Ok, son I'll take it under advisement." The comment thrown over the shoulder, as fist met the palm of his other hand, with a heavy smacking sound. His fists blossom with a glow the same color as his eyes. The palm palms of pain as some of his old trainess took to calling them. Come on old man, got to remeber your not in charge, the kid might know things.

The Ninjin

He nodded toward his Uncle, "Good to go."

Brian felt a chill spread up then back down his spine. It tore through his body like a vine before he regained his composure. He patted himself down, shocked at the odd feeling he had just gotten.

First his accent, and now this. It was like nothing he had ever felt before.

Dan43

Ion re-emerged from the basement.

"What's the status? I just lost power in the basement. Shields are up but they are on battery power. That gives us 4 hours tops before shield failure. They will hold until the batteries drop below 8 volts, then they are gonna go all at once."

Averick

Mystic watched the exchange between the veteran and the police officer, then walked out into the street a few feet. He watched the lamp posts being swallowed up by the darkness in all directions, as if the city were slowly being consumed, and they were in the exact middle of it.

"No, no I'm sure that's not it. Everyone remain calm and stay inside." Mystic hovered indoors. "I doubt we're under attack. It looks more like a spell. A powerful spell. Perhaps even an illusion, but I doubt it. Though there are elements of illusion in it."

SquirrelWizard

Elisa's night-vision kicked in, so she wasn't completely blinded by the dark, merely inconvenienced. She came back from her quarters, sans armor, "What happened to the power?" She snapped a small tube and it began to emit a dull purple glow, that barely illuminated the room and the occupants inside it.

QueenEtheria

She watched as they all prepared for another attack, waiting in the darkness. The emergency lights flickered into being but they provided minimal light. The cat woman activated a light stick to help. Kegen curled up onto one of desks near the door, crossing her legs underneath her. She rested her hands on her knees as a soft green glow began to emanate from them, providing more light. The green light flickered different shades of green and yellow, almost twinkling like a star would.

She closed her eyes briefly as she focused on her acute hearing, listening for anything strange. She glanced around at the others calmly, waiting.

"Is it too much to ask for less dramatics? Seriously, the we come for you in the dark is overdone," she whispered softly, chuckling to herself as she remembered her first encounter with The Harbingers of Allatu, the sworn enemies of The Children of Legacy, her affiliation group.

She smiled softly. KC, should be here at this time. I know I shouldn't look for her but I wonder what she was like when she was younger. She thought quietly to herself.

Abrahms

"I have to admit. I have always hated this part." Abrahms rolled his shoulders once, then loosened his neck. "Kowing their out there, waiting for the defences to go down." He takes a step forward, so his left foot in at the jagged door sill. "Has anyone seen anything like this outside of Dark Astoria?" He stills a shudder, that tried to start down his spine.

"I am waiting for one of you to say "I see dead people" any second now."

Mad Gremlin

"The only thing dead is gonna be whomever put this dark crap on our crib." Sting growled." He could still make is way through darkness thanks to his motion sensing antennae, but he was blind past the shield.

“If somebody out there wants to play, let’s give them a go. Sarge, I got your back. If you get pressed let a few through to me.” Sting took a position behind and to the side of Abrahms.

“I got a bad feeling about this...”

Abrahms

"Very well Sting. Nice to know your there. Just out of curiosity, is there any other enterances to the building?" As he spoke, he never stopped scanning the line of blackness trying to swallow the old Precint house.

Shalmdi

Coolant popped back out of the basement with a swiftness that he saved for emergencies. His personal problems forgotten, he switched to his trusty thermals to make out the surrounding area, but the sight from his scanners caused his control to slip all over again.

"Don't you guys feel cold?" Coolant said with actual fear in his voice. "I can't feel it, but can you feel it?"

The metal hero calmed himself when he realized that, with the exception of Mystic, everyone seemed to feel fine, “Mystic, the thermals around here don't look right. Everything looks... well it looks like someone turned the heat down, but you guys don't seem to feel it. I can't even see heat through walls or the shield. I think someone should check on Rome."

Abrahms

"Who's Rome, and is this the whole team? We may want all hands on deck, for this one. I think Sting might have the correct feel on this, Mystic." The soldiers slips the lenses of his helmet down over his eyes.

"Nice catch on the thermal issue Coolant."

MadGremlin

"Cold? I feel like I am suffocating in this damn darkness!" Sting didn't usually feel fear but for some reason this darkness had him feeling weak in the knees. He stood at the ready, feeling fatalistic.

Mithril_Zeta

Newton sitting in his room, eating a couple Ho-hos when the power went off. He sighed, wondering what drew the power off this time. He stood up, stumbled, swore, and looked for a flashlight. He shuddered; it felt as if the air conditioning had finally come on with a vengeance.

He through a quick listen at his singularities, and found that most of the crew was downstairs in the lobby, but the interrogation room was hauntingly quiet. ‘Don’t over react,’ Newton thought to himself. ‘Done that already once today.’ He walked to his door and peeked out of it.

‘How do I always end up by myself when these things start,’ he thought to himself as he stuffed the last ho-ho into his mouth.

Dan43

"My armor doesn't have the sensor capability that Cools does. I just never thought to install IR sensors. However I think I can do a little something about the dark."

With those words Ion let the radiation in his body loose. Slowly his armor began to glow green and after a minute of so most of the room was bathed in a green light.

"That's it guys. To get anymore I would have to shift over to some wavelengths you really don't want me to use."

Ion glanced up at the second floor where Rome was located.

"It might be a good idea to check on Rome but I don't think I should be the one that goes."

Visibly shaking himself back to the present he looks to Mystic.

"So what's the call Bossman. Do we wait till the shield goes down, call for help, or go on the offensive?"

Averick

Mystic looked at Ion. "Well, I thought you said the shield was going to stay up indefinitely. Is that not the case?"

Dan43

"I said it would stay up as long as it had power. It's power requirements are size based, that means it needs less power than the War Walls, it does not mean it needs no power. Right now it is running on a 12v lithium battery. Once that drops below 8v the shield goes down. Between my armor and Cool I can probably extend that, but then we might find ourselves short of power."

Averick

"As far as calling for help, if you can, please do. My experience is that it's like the outside world isn't there anymore. No phone, electricity or even light is getting in anymore. And I see nothing to go on the offensive against. Though I strongly feel compelled to bar that open door."

Mystic set a couple of burning balls of flame in the air around the lobby. "That should warm us a bit, and keep the darkness out."

Dan43

As far as calling for help goes your right. I can't pick up any comm traffic outside of this building. Speaking of comms, here you go Ahbrams."

Ion tosses Ahbrams one of the earbug comms he had given everybody else.

"I designed these. They frequency hop. Cools armor synced up, I don't know if yours is will or not. Use this for right now and after things calm down I will help you integrate your system."

Abrahms

"OK, any idea what or who is causing this? Mystic I heard you mention magic, thoughts on that?" Abrahms seems to relax a bit straightening up, from the fighting crouch. Should we move up one lvl. use the gat to slow things down." Looking around for anything to plug the breach.

"Sorry to rush this, quick intro. I am Abrahms as in the tank. Military humor. I am near invulnerable, highly resistant to elements, energies, physical trauma. And i heal fast bordering on the miraculos." With a shrug, to end his statement he turns to Mystic. "How do you want to use me, we seem to have a moment or three if we are lucky. Ion, is it? What freeq you guys using?" He asks touching the small bump and antenna on the left side of his helmet.

Averick

"Previous military experience and invulnerability may serve you well leftenant. As to who or what, for a spell this size and this complex, I would say two or three chantries of Circle, but with that much energy it would be easier to flatten the building. It would be much easier... No. There

is a very specific purpose to this." Mystic slid a bench across the entrance. "Once we get this barricaded, I suggest we go about finding ways not to let the darkness get to us until we can figure this out."

Abrahms

"That would be sergeant, I turned down 3 battle field promotions. Never liked command of more than a Platoon. But to answer your question. No, seen it fought it even talked to people about it. But never understood it." Abrahms grabs the nearest desk and starts sliding it in to place. "All right Mystic, will do" Standing it on end to cover as much as possible

Averick

Mystic hovered up toward the ceiling. "So, am I to understand that I am the ONLY one who is accustomed to magic at all?"

The_Ninjin

"NO, I felt it too," Brian interrupted, almost spoken before the man finished his sentence, "At least I think I did. Pretty sure I did. Got this surge of something inside me and it hasn't stopped since the light went out."

SquirrelWizard

Elisa shrugged, "Sorry, strictly a gun type myself. And to say I dabble in explosives would be," she glanced over to where the front door used to be, "It would be an understatement."

Shalmdi

"Sorry, my knowledge of magic extends to defense against it and how to break a mage's concentration." Coolant managed to focus long enough to acknowledge Mystic. "I can't see a mage, and I certainly can't defend against something that isn't actually attacking."

Coolant took another look around while diverting more power to his scanners than would normally be necessary, but he still couldn't pick up anything outside the room. By this time, he already had his defenses readied and was watching for anything.

"If they can bring the house down why don't they? Why are they just happy with blinding us?"

Mithril_Zeta

With the familiar hum of the singularity, Newton appeared before them. His normally cheerful demeanor was strained, and his rosy cheeks were almost white. He had Mr. Rome under his arm; the informant – who had already been terrified by Sting and Ion – was actually gibbering now.

"Hi. Is there something I need to be told?" Newton asked as calmly as he could. There was a definite tremor in his voice. "Something like 'Newton, get your round butt down here or you might get possessed by the creeping darkness'?"

The Ninjin

Brian stepped lightly over to the front door frame and checked the locks, "I don't think this is really an attack more than possibly just someone trying to poke fun. I really don't know. This is kind of new to me."

He passed a window on his way to look for anything to barricade the door with. What he saw made him stop and backtrack and look again.

Well more like what he didn't see. He stretched his neck out and strained his eyes to scan outside. When he got close enough to the window, he noticed it wasn't any better. Outside was the tone of midnight. Dark and darker. He couldn't make out any signs, light poles, cars; anything.

"Someone else look out a window please. Am I just not seeing things or are we not in Kansas anymore?"

Dan43

Ion walked over to the window and looked out at the nothing beyond.

"I hate this. I don't understand magic. Makes me feel like I am out of my element. A little helpless if you know what I mean."

Averick

"I assure you, Brian, whomsoever perpetrated this upon us, is deadly serious. There is a reason this particular spell was chosen. Now if I could just determine what spell that... oh no." Mystic turned from the window. "Someone, please turn on a faucet and tell me if anything comes out. Most particularly water. If not, water, what then."

Mystic fretted as he stared out the window, watching the sidewalk in front of the Two Six slowly fade into darkness. "We have some bottled water, maybe some in the hot water heater. We have coolant, I'm pretty certain we can extract it from the air should it come to that. Though, if my suspicions are correct, likely we won't have long enough for this to be a problem." Mystic was mumbling, nervously to himself.

The_Ninjin

Brian looked back at his Uncle and hopped off the wide window ledge he had propped himself on, "On it. And when I said playing a joke," he started and walked to the nearest sink, "I meant so sincere."

Brian turned the knob to the kitchen sink and gaped at what he saw, "Ummm," he said and poked his head out of the doorway, "You might want to come see this."

His head disappeared as he went back to the sink.

The_Ninjin

This is the weirdest thing I ever saw, Brian thought, amazed at what flowed out of the sink.

The black sand poured out of the faucet like gushing waterfall. He put his hand under the nozzle and let some of it run through his fingers. It felt just like sand, but it appeared to be just black. Like something from the Caribbean. Bermuda even. One of those black sand beaches.

Averick

Mystic hovered into the kitchen and looked into the sink. There was an odd black sand pouring from the faucet. He watched it stack up in the sink and looked at Brian. "Get some rest if you can. We'll need all our strength later."

Mystic took a small amount of sand into a cup and carried it away.

The Ninjin

Brian replied with a weak nod. After he wiped the sand off his hands, Brian went back into the lobby where some of the other heroes were and looked back out the window again. Still nothing.

He started walking upstairs and halfway up he got the same odd tingling inside of him. This time it swirled in his head and made his neck throb. He grabbed it like he was choking himself and adjusted his neck until he felt a little more comfortable. He opened and closed his mouth and stretched his jaw. He didn't know why he did it, but he didn't know too much anything about what was going on.

The feeling subsided and the matter of his insides were no longer germane to the current situation. He finished going up the rest of the stairs and went to living quarters. He found the bed to be warmer and more inviting than he imagined and within moments, an unexpected sleep fell over him.

MadGremlin

“Now wait a minute here! I thought this was just darkness! Are you telling me there is nothing out there?” Sting had dealt with magical enemies before, but he had always been able to use his rather mundane approach of smashing and stabbing to solve any issues. Not having something tangible to make a target was unsettling him.

Sting paced nervously while Mystic calmly considered the defenses.

“C'mon boss, find something in that damn book, light this \$#%& up, and let's find the bad guys!”

Averick

For the next two hours there was no attack. Mystic busied himself looking at the book in his office and drawing glyphs on the windows. He prepped his spells and took note of possible breaches. Occasionally he checked the barricade, inquiring about mines, high tech devices or good old muscle power that might be used to secure it.

Shalmdi

After helping to barricade the door, Coolant did what he always did in times like these; he meditated. For the next few hours, he could be found right in the middle of the main lobby sitting cross legged and only stirred to answer questions. He was chanting a calming mantra his sensei taught him, but without his speaker on, the others could only see him moving his mouth in a soundless rhythm.

He determined it was for the best to keep quiet as some of the others seemed more on edge than he was. If he started mumbling to himself for an hour, Sting probably would have skewered him just to relieve the tension. Above all, Coolant fought the urge to turn on his scanners; he could handle things fine as long as he tried not to think about how bad things really were.

MadGremlin

Sting couldn't understand how Coolant could just sit there, or Mystic calmly read his magic book. Every minute it felt like the darkness was closing in farther, sapping his strength, cutting off the air.

Sting found Ion in the basement, checking on the field generator. "Turn the shield off, I am going out there." He said, the tension in his voice notable. "I can't sit here like this and let them just suck the life out of me. I am going to go out there and find something! And when I do, I'm going to kill it."

Sting noticed little rivulets of dark sand seeping in from around the welded on sewer cap.

Dan43

"I don't think you want to do that Sting. I have been trying to verify what my instruments are telling me.....but....this is magic man. I don't know if what they say is accurate or not. Look at this" Ion pointed to a gauge on the generator "pressure reading. The only way I know to put that much pressure on the shield would be if we were sitting at the bottom of the Marianis Trench under 20 miles of water. I am inclined to believe that gauge is not correct. Either due to a malfunction or an inability to decipher the input due to it's being magical in nature. But IF it is correct taking down the shield would cause this old building to implode like a sub that went too deep. To make matters worse we only have about an hour left before the voltage drops and the shields go down anyway. I have a suggestion as to how we could test my theory.....I just don't think I should be the one to bring it up after what happened earlier. I think we should have Newt use a singularity to send Rome outside. Just for an instant. Then he pulls him right back and we can see how he fairs."

MadGremlin

"Wow, cooking flesh and now you want to use him to verify that we will die if we go out. Somehow I doubt the others will go for that idea."

Mithril_Zeta

Rookie

"Um, one problem with that idea," Newton said from the steps. He sat on them heavily. "I can't sense any of the singularities I left outside. The one connecting me to my storage lockers and the junkyard are gone." The green-haired man shook his head. "I'm feeling a bit blind here. This darkstuff is not really registering on the gravimetric senses, but it should; it has mass and consistency."

His eyes flickered towards the leaking sewer cover. "That can't be good," he said, pointing to it. "Any ideas on how to stop that?"

MadGremlin

Sting moved back up the stairs. "No clue, but if I don't get out of here soon I am going to lose it. And then a little bit of black sand isn't going to mean jack squat. You guys might want to consider putting me in the lock-up pretty soon."

As he entered the main room Sting looked at Rome's unconscious form. "Maybe we should ask him." Sting prodded Rome with his foot. "Wake up you piece of crap."

Averick

Rome coughed himself awake at Sting's prodding. He looked about, wiped the drool off of his mouth and tried to stand up. "What now, bug man?" The tone of his voice was less than fearful or respectful. There was an edge to it that bespoke a man who had reached the point of fear where the human mind isn't meant to go, and then was pushed further. The kind of snap that was often seen in Vietnam vets, or people trapped in foxholes during intense shelling.

Rome had always been a calm man, interested in his own preservation over greed or ambition. He was happily tending a middle management job in a large crime organization without fear of assassination from his betters because he made it clear he wasn't looking for their jobs. Meanwhile he fortified his position with a series of unique relationships that would be difficult if not impossible to do the job without.

Now he found himself being tortured, endlessly beaten and questioned by the "good guys" that he'd hoped would keep him safe. He was no longer out of his element. As far as he was concerned, he was right back in with the filth and the slime that he'd tried so hard to insulate himself from, and these types could not be reasoned with or bargained with.

Rome stared up at Sting with contempt, waiting for a response.

MadGremlin

Sting clenched his fists, fighting back the urge to just gut the man and be done with it. "I just want to know if you have any experience with our current predicament. I was hoping you had seen this done to others. Yeah, you can feel it now, can't you? Look outside – there isn't anything there, nothing."

Sting walked Rome over to a window, still fighting the urge to cause him harm.

"Tell me you know something about this, because if you don't, we don't really have any need for you anymore."

QueenEtheria

Kegen remained seated, cross-legged on the desk. She closed her eyes in meditation as she thought about their situation. She tried to recall everything she read about magic, every book and tome her mother had stored away. She remembered finding the lockbox when her grandfather died and she was left with his effects. They were books on mythology and anything magic that her mother personally studied but it was not arcane.

Her glowing hand brushed fingers across her belt, tracing the circular red gem set within the belt. An image of her mother flashed through her mind, a memory lost. The necklace.

~' Mommy...why do you have two heartbeats?'~ a seven year old Kegen asked, lifting her head from her mother's chest as they laid together in her parent's bed, waiting each night for Daddy to come home, though he never did.

I'm special, just like you, my gift from the stars. There is magic in my necklace and it beats with power that matches my heart. It tells me that there is someone always watching, her mother replied, brushing the wild locks of hair from Kegen's young face.

~' Is it Daddy? Does he watch over you?'~

No, but wherever your father is, he is watching over us. He loves us very much, she smiled sadly, pain in her ice blue eyes.

~' Mommy, don't cry. Daddy will come home soon. They can't make him work forever,'~ she replied in her child-like innocence.

No, they can't. But it is a powerful being who gives life to this jewel and one day it will become yours. I have lost a lot to protect this power and one day you will be in the care of it. It is a lifeline to a goddess of ancient power and maybe she will talk to you as she does me.

~'Are you going away to work too Mommy? Is that why you're telling me this?'~

I pray not. Every night I pray that your father will come home and that we will be a family forever. I would have to die before I would leave you willingly you, my little moon.

Kegen sighed sadly. Does that mean you're dead, Mother? She opened her eyes back into the soft darkness of the Two-six. She groaned leaping off of the desk and stretched her body out. She noticed that Sting was growling at some man that was under watch like a prisoner. She quirked an interested eyebrow but decided to find Mystic.

She knocked lightly on his door before pushing it open, finding him absorbed in a book.

"Don't mean to interrupt but I...umm...came to see if you figured anything out yet," she replied softly, smiling lightly.

"I kinda had an idea, but I may need your help," she replied, standing shyly in the doorway.

"If the darkness is like a void, is it a transdimensional void or just a spacial kinda void, like a casted spell right? So wouldn't the two-six still be tied to the material plane though encased it whatever this darkness is? There must still be some kinda link if we are in some kinda pocket. Whoever is doing this isn't here with us so they must have a mystical link or thread or something to make sure it's working. Magic can't exist and work within an absence of energy right?" she rambled, letting her thoughts stream out.

She blushed, causing her freckles to stand out more. "I guess I'm offering my services to investigate the darkness. I..I can survive without air. I can travel through the vacuums of space without a problem so I would be best suited to go out there if it's a type of void. It's just a thought," she replied, flustered and still blushing.

Abrahms

After taking the ear piece, with thanks to Ion. Abrahms moved off for materials to secure the front. Next was a through and through perimeter check. Patching up possible weak areas.

Returning to hear Sting's conversation with Rome.

"Sting do you actually think this guy would have any info? We need to find out what is going on. I tried my compass earlier. It kept pointing to Coolant's big metal room. As if we are in a non magnetic zone or cut off from the magnosphere. The shield could do that possibly. I hadn't looked at it till recently." He brushes his hair back, looking somewhat annoyed. "So who has any ideas, even absurd sounding ones." He stands in to parade rest, one eyebrow raised. But seems quite comfortable there, like when sting is relaxed against a wall.

Mithril_Zeta

"We could all sing 'Always look on the bright side of life' from the Life of Brian, but I don't think that will help," Newton said as he rummaged through one of the drawers and brought out a chocolate chip cookie.

"I'm going to over this building with a fine tooth comb," Newton added, frowning again. "If I was someone who wanted to steal a building, I'd place some sort of marker in or around the building to make it easier to pinpoint..." He looked sharply over at Sting. "We just brought in those two CoT prisoners, didn't we. I want to see if they have any sort of mystical signal coming off of them."

Averick

"I thought they were Tsoo." Mystic said with a confused look.

Mithril_Zeta

"Tsoo...Council of Thorns...bad magic dudes ..." Newton sighed. "Sorry, had more bad experiences with CoT. Primacy."

Averick

Meanwhile, Rome rose to his full height, for what that was worth.

"Did they give you instincts? The ones that turned on the insect DNA, does that come with the ability to feel the boot of extinction poised overhead? I hope so, bug man, because without me, you're extinct. You want to skewer me? Go ahead. And while you're watching the life drain out of my eyes, consider it a preview to what's about to happen to you. Just another middle management schlep dies in some stinking hellhole that Recluse has dropped us into, and takes out, four, five, oooh eight or so heroes. Yeah, that's smart. You all should put the bug in charge." Rome looked around at everyone near. "When the time comes for grovelling, my dead body will be your death warrant. So kill me, because I'm done talking to you, bug. I've dealt with your kind before. All my life really, and I'm done dealing with you."

MadGremlin

The condescending taunt worked, and Sting grabbed Rome by the throat, about to end his life when Mystic spoke up.

"Nice try, you almost got me to kill you. Instead I think I'll just let Ion have a few more rounds cooking your flesh."

Averick

Mystic floated over to the scene. "Yes, well, quite dramatic. I think I have an answer, but I don't think anyone is going to like it. I think the Two Six is being transported to the land of the dead. The living dead rule there, zombies on a level that Dr. Vahz could only dream of. From what I understand we should be there shortly. Once we're there, we must find both the bind they placed in the land of the dead, and the catalyst they hid in here."

Mystic looked over the faces. Their grim expressions were enough to tell him that he'd conveyed his information correctly. "And before you ask, it isn't Rome. I checked him. Nor is it anything he's carrying. Not that I don't trust you, Mr. Rome, you were just the logical choice."

Mad Gremlin

Sting dropped Rome and turned to Mystic. "So all we have to do is defeat and army of zombies and find two things that we don't have any idea what they are or what they look like? Pfffft, I thought this was gonna be tough."

Sting turned back to Rome. "I eat zombies for breakfast. No, really I do, I'm not kidding."

Shalmdi

Coolant started to get up when he realized Sting really was going to kill Rome, but there was no way he could have stopped him in time. Fortunately, Mystic's intervention kept the beaten man alive for at least the moment; how long that moment would be was unknown though. Based on what he had seen and heard, he determined it was probably better if he didn't know what they had done to this prisoner.

"Ok boss, how do we work this? Big group, teams, pairs?"

Abrahms

"Good to have an objective. So what are we looking for? Anything particular, big small. With mystic runes in it. That type of thing. I do not know what is normaly in this place so, I can partner up with some one if need be." He looks around at everyone settling his gaze on Mystic. Talk about being thrown in the deep end. I really hate Dark Astoria. With a visible shudder. "Gah, I suppose it is a huge jump up from DA. I hate it there always chilly." Another shudder passes through him, almost a shiver.

Shalmdi

"I have video footage of the building layout for the last few days," Coolant said while standing from his meditative pose, "but if this catalyst device was here before we showed up, it won't really do us any good. What would it look like?"

Averick

Of course, the first question would be "what does it look like." That's why he couldn't tell them. Mystic looked thoughtful, his way of stalling and letting them know he had to think about it. "The spell would be active, so now we'll have a much better chance of finding it. It could have been inert the entire time it were here. Now, the power of the magic flows through it, causing the magical runes on it to glow slightly. There also could be a slight hum that comes and goes. This works to our advantage, but the bloody thing could be anywhere, and we JUST had a construction crew all through here with no complaints of funny runes. So, unless one of them did it, it's probably well hidden."

Mithril Zeta

"Oh, good. We get to wander around a dark, spooky building with zombies possibly attacking at any time," Newton said. He frowned. "Maybe let's start on the top floor. We haven't even started trying to clean that out yet. With all that clutter, it would be easy to hide something there."

Shalmdi

Coolant took this to mean Mystic had no clue what to expect. "So basically it could be anywhere and it could look like anything. Is there any reason this thing couldn't even be inside one of the walls?"

Averick

"No, coolant, no reason whatever."

Shalmdi

I volunteer to take on the zombies." Coolant turned towards the door and continued. "Fighting I can handle, but scavenger hunts were never my thing."

SquirrelWizard

Elisa faded into the room with her armor (that was now slightly repaired), and holding what looked like a large military style case.

"I can deal with any zombies that come into this room." she set the case on the ground. "When I first arrived, I had this sent to me from storage. Its called an Auto Cannon. Basically a gun turret in a box. I found it in a Council Base," she gave the rest of team a devilish grin, "And by find, I mean I liberated it from them. Now, their weapons technology is pretty primitive, but I was able to enhance it's firing rate." She crouched down by the box and pressed a few numbers on the side. There was a loud his as the pressure seal deactivated, and the lid was flipped open.

Elisa reached in and brought out a handful of red patches, "Here your gonna want these. They make it so the gun recognizes you as a friendly."

QueenEtheria

Kegen stood looking at the patch in her hand and laughed lightly. So this is what the Council used before they moderated the weapon and up graded to the microchip ID's. No wonder Heroes were getting past their defenses. she thought as she slapped the patch against her chest.

"So, Mystic, what do you want me to do? Should I stay here and play Medic if the zombs get in or do you want me to help look for the runes?"

Averick

"No, coolant, no reason whatever." Mystic looked at the large metal case and took the IFF transponder. Then he looked at Kegen. "Brilliant. We should have a search team and a defense team. Sting, Ion, and I will search, while you all discuss how best to assist each other should it come to that. Where's Brian?"

Abrahms

"I think he went upstairs, a bit ago. Thanks Elisa, is it? Defense it is boss, I would like to grab my battle armor thought. Insulated Titanium plates, every bit I am thinking. Be back in Five."

Averick

Mystic floated out toward the stairs. "I'll start looking up, sting you take the middle two floors, and Ion the basement. Ion and I will go slowly and methodically, being careful not to be ambushed or fall into a trap. Sting will be his usual self except he won't damage anything because everything in here is ours." Mystic gave a questioning look to Sting, waiting for a response that he heard and understood his suggestion.

Abrahms

"Just a though, it seems to be affecting a radius. Maybe one of you searchers satrt in the center of the affected area." He takes a step towards the stairs, the single step proppeling him to the landing. "Don't start without me." Another bounding step and he is gone upstairs. The sound of his landing and movement tells all he is hurrying. Not worried about noise at all. He returns to the lobby, in five minutes flat. The armor is standard military battle green, heavy looking coated plates. Strapping the last buckle helmet loose. But in that 5 minutes.

"Hmm, i am out of practice. I'll need to drill. if I get the chance later that is." A thumbs up "Ready " as the helmet buckle snaps closed.

MadGremlin

Sting took an IFF indicator and then turned to Mystic. "Ok boss, I am on it – looking for glowing runes and a slight humming. Someone throw this moron back in the clink." Sting indicated Rome.

Mithril_Zeta

Newton sighed. "I guess I'm someone," he said. "Wait here, Mr. Rome." Newton lackadaisically floated upstairs to Rome's holding cell. A quick yank, and Rome was unceremoniously dropped back into his cell. "Sorry about the roughness of the ride, Mr. Rome," Newton said. "Something about this is just not adding up to me, and you are at the center of the mystery. When something doesn't make sense, it makes me a bit irritable. So, sorry." Newton left the room.

Mad Gremlin

He bound up the stairs and immediately started looking through the second floor living quarters, sure that someone in the group was either a spy or had brought the item in inadvertently.

Mithril Zeta

Newton keyed his radio. "Mystic, did you search the two Council...I mean Tsoo...the two magic dudes we picked up. I was thinking maybe one of them had the trigger for the latent beacon." He shook his head and turned off the radio. "We're sure working off a lot of assumptions right now, aren't we," he murmured to himself as he floated back down the stairway.

Shalmdi

Coolant took the red patch and placed it in a small compartment on his belt. Normally, he would have opposed the use of such a deadly weapon, but the good thing about fighting zombies was not having to worry about lethal force. Although he would never admit it, he actually enjoyed fighting non-living opponents as it allowed him to use his full strength.

Anticipating the coming battle, the metal hero began forming his ice armor and smoothing it into a formidable barrier. "So, Flux, how much time do we have before the shield goes down and we get to play with the undead?"

Dan43

"29 minutes by my calculations. Unless we want to use the juice from our armor to extend that. When we get back remind me to pick up a hand crank generator for the next time this happens."

Ion turned to go start his search of the basement, then he stopped and after hesitating for a moment headed up to the holding cells. Stopping outside Rome's cell he stared at the man for just a moment before speaking.

"Mr. Rome I want to apologize to you. What I did was wrong. I was a little out of control and not in my right frame of mind. That does not excuse what I did, I just wanted you to know that I realize how wrong my actions were and that I will try to keep a better check on myself in the future."

With those words Ion turned away from the cell and started back down to the basement to start his part of the search.

Abrahms

"Well which of you does what. I guess it really doesn't matter. As I said I stay up front and try to hold the bad guys together. So you AOE peeps, can hit a nice bunch of them." Abrahms looks around the group, trying to determine individual character. Wishing he had been with them through at least one battle.

"A good thing I found when dealing with, undead. You do not have to worry about holding back. Unload on them, if they are destroyed, great." His face set into a straight line. "Hope we have an opportunity, to get to know each other after this. Good luck stay on your toes and call me if you need help. I'll try to get to you."

MadGremlin

Sting's search of the second floor was unproductive. Nothing glowed and nothing hummed, no item with runes or odd magical knick-knacks.

The main floor search was equally fruitless, but Sting kept searching to keep his mind off of the crushing darkness.

Finally he joined Ion in the basement. "Hey, Mystic said there was a motor pool area down here somewhere. That's gotta be a pretty big area. Must be back...here."

Sting opened the door into a small underground parking area. It had obviously not been spared the abuse that the rest of the two-six endured. Though most things had been stolen, there were two smashed and burned cruisers sitting in parking stalls. Garbage and damaged parts littered the area.

"Might as well clean up as I search..."

The_Ninjin

Unaware of what was going downstairs, Brian slept uncomfortably in his room. Nightmares crowded his mind.

The black sands from earlier became the ground he walked on. There was no 2-6. There was no Uncle Alfred. No Coolant. No Sting. No one. He spun around in the darkness yeling out names and got no response. It started to rain. It wasn't normal rain. This rain was coarse and stuck to your skin. It was the sand. It was raining sand. It picked up speed and filled the area quickly. Brian tried to run but it only made things worse. The sand began to soften and soon Brian was slipping underneath. His body sunk beneath the sands until all that was left to see was his head. Fearfully, he looked about for a way out. He knew he wouldn't find any. There was no answer. No hope.

Brian stared into the sky and screamed. He screamed at the top of his lungs. A scream he never knew existed in him. It alone was a terror to hear. It pierced the darkness with roaring sound. And out of his mouth came a consuming fire that lit up the sky with its magnificent orange light. He breathed smoke out of his nostrils.

Brian awoke startled and in a sweat. His breathing felt like he had just emerged from being underwater for a long time. He looked around the room and his hands clung on to the sheets for assurance that he was awake again. He fell back into his pillow and closed his eyes. Immediately visions of the dream ran through his mind. He shot his eyes open again and got out of bed.

He walked to the doorway and mumbled to himself, "No more tea before bedtime," he said as he rubbed his forehead.

His ears couldn't pick up much. There was a ringing in that he couldn't seem to shake free of. He wanted to tell his Uncle of the dream and hope that he had an answer. He knocked on the door turned the knob slowly. Mystic wasn't there. He closed the door and started to walk away. He

was stopped in his tracks by a faint whispering sound. He raised an eyebrow and turned his ear to the sound to realize it was coming from Mystic's office.

He opened the door again slowly and looked about the room. The office wasn't that big and hiding was not really an option; but the whispering continued and only got louder. He stepped completely into the room and closed the door. He searched for where the vocals could be coming from but came up with nothing. The closer he got to the desk, the louder it all got.

And there it was. The ancient book found in the lost City of Atlantis. His uncle had talked about his expeditions often whenever he came home. He claims that he was the only one to find and everyone else was a liar. It almost made him laugh to think of it. He never mentioned that it whispered though.

Brian placed his ear closely to the book and the whispering slowly transitioned into small signs of battle. He could hear the clanging of swords and screaming bodies. Horses galloped across a field and men yelled battle cries. This continued for some time before Brian's curiosity got the best of him.

I shouldn't do this, but... after what we have seen as of late... maybe something in here my Uncle missed could help us.

Brian's fingertips touched the edge of the book. It was warm. Abnormally warm. Like it had been underneath a heating lamp. He let go of the book and wiggled his fingers. He took a deep breath and readied himself again. He closed his eyes and laid hand on the book again. He grabbed a few of the pages and opened it up halfway through the book. As he did the battle scene heightened in volume and could be heard all around him. The mysterious runes and ancient transcript was hard to read considering he didn't know how to read it. But one thing was clear. It definitely came with surround sound.

Afraid to come in contact with the pages he hovered his hands over the pages. Each rune he passed over lit up and glowed an odd red or green light. He brought his hands to his face, dumbfounded at what to do. The battle scene sounded louder and louder and suddenly Brian was aware that it might be heard downstairs. He didn't want his Uncle to know he had been up here looking at the book. He figured he'd ask him about it later anyway.

Brian grabbed the edge of the book and began to close it. The dust that flew in the room finally caught up in his nose and he let out a furious sneeze that sent his hands flying down into the center of the pages. Wide-eyed and paranoid, Brian watched as the entire book blazed underneath his hands. He tried to take his hands off the pages but couldn't. They were stuck in all the flames. The red and green runes picked up off the pages and surrounded him. They floated circles around him and the fire spread up his arm. Fortunately the fire was not painful, but it didn't take away from one fact.

Uncle Al is gonna kill me...

Then one by one, each rune attached to different parts of his body. His arms, face, neck, legs, no part of him was without a rune. Finally the pages released his hands and he stood back until he reached the window. He looked at his arms that flamed in the office and tried to shake them out. He was glowing and was on fire. How was he going to explain this?

Then as if in answer to his thoughts, the fire consumed the rest of his body sending him into a paralyzed shock. His eyes rolled back and his head shot straight up. The same tingling feeling he had gotten earlier on the stair returned. The whispers returned and he could audibly hear each and every one of them. He heard one last thing before he was knocked unconscious.

....the bloodline....

Brian walked downstairs smiling like had been refreshed from a good night's sleep. He could hear voices planning something. His uncle's voice perked his ears.

We should have a search team and a defense team. Sting, Ion, and I will search, while you all discuss how best to assist each other should it come to that. Where's Brian?"

"I think he went upstairs, a bit ago. Thanks Elisa, is it? Defense it is boss, I would like to grab my battle armor thought. Insulated Titanium plates, every bit I am thinking. Be back in Five."

Brian reached the edge of the steps and smiled, "Nope Brian's right here."

He got the group and listened to their plans. He nodded intently as Mystic explained the plans. Brian took one of the red patches and slapped it on his arm, "I'll take a look into the basement," he said and walked in that direction.

Averick

Mystic floated through the upper level, looking, opening things, moving things aside. He reached out with his magical senses, and could feel it nearby, but no matter where he looked, he couldn't find it. The feeling was far stronger on the third floor than on any other floor, so he was certain SOMETHING of intense magical power was nearby.

He stood there, frustrated, angry and a bit worried about the situation, in the middle of the room. He held up a box, shifting it toward the blue light coming through the windows, trying to get a read for what might be inside. The date of delivery was months ago, and he felt nothing inside through his mystical senses. He set the box back down and stared around the room. Something was different. Something had changed, but he couldn't place his finger on it.

Then he looked at his fingers. In this light, the black gloves shone with almost a cobalt gloss. "Blue light?" He looked toward the windows. It was as if the Two six were submerged in water and covered by sand, with the sun showing through clear blue water, and the sand was melting away, revealing the wavering sun. That wasn't what was happening though. What WAS happening, was the spell washing off of the building as they arrived in the land of the dead.

Mystic flew downstairs with all haste. "Everyone to the ground level," he spoke clearly into the radio. His suggestions had started to sound more and more like orders, and it was causing a nagging feeling in his stomach. But the more he saw of what was happening to the Two Six, the more he felt that if he didn't try to hold it together, it would fall apart.

SquirrelWizard

Elisa looked at the undead figures milling outside of the shield, "Well, if it is of any consolation, we dont have to hold back as much."

Then it dawned on her, she looked over at Mystic, "Does magic give off a specific energy type? Because if it does, we can probably make a scanner. To find what sent us here, and get ourselves back in Kings."

MadGremlin

Sting was back up to the main floor in moments.

"Oh, I am sooo ready to beat on somethin'. I hate zombies - they stink and they are bad eating, but right now any target will do. I am going all out here...you might not want to stand real close to me once we get deep into this \$%#& - there will be poisonous spines flying everywhere."

He looked at Mystic. "Is there a plan for all of this beyond 'destroy zombies'?"

Averick

As people began gathering, the light began coming in all the windows. Even before the doorway was totally revealed, hands could be seen beating on the shield. Spirits floated outside the windows, occasionally pushing some of the way into the field, then pulling out.

"I think this may be our first glimmer of what is in store for us." Mystic looked over at Brian. "You didn't touch the book, did you?"

Mithril_Zeta

"I assure you I didn't touch the book," Newton said, looking out the window with his eyes wide. "Can I mention right now how much I miss the Family. They are bad news, but they don't send whole buildings out of the dimension."

Abrahms

"Book what book, are we not supposed to touch?" Abrahms turning to look at Mystic. "what book? Did you check this book for the cause of our dilemma?" Visions of "The Army of Darkness" leap to mind. "Good, Bad I have the shot gun" mumbled under his breath.

The_Ninjin

Brian looked about nervously after his Uncle's question back on the first floor, "The book? I mean....," he replied with a chuckle, "What makes you say that?"

Mithril_Zeta

"Maybe because both of your eyes are black," Newton said, peering at the police detective. The green-haired man looked over at Sting. "He touched the book. I don't know exactly what that means, but if it is anything like reading from the Book of the Dead or the Necronomicon, mummies or zombies should be appearing at any time and eating our brains."

Shalmdi

"Books and black eyes. Like we don't have enough magical problems," Coolant said in a shaky voice. "Look, if we have to find this bind thing you talked about, why don't you just turn down the shields for a moment and let me out."

Coolant was used to anger and depression, but he hadn't felt fear since the day he gained his power. It's been seven years since I feared my own death; no reason to start now.

"What happens if we find it? Do we destroy it or do we bring it to you?" Coolant walked over to one of the windows and stared at the apparition beating on the shield. "My armor can keep them at bay for a while, let me take the risk."

The_Ninjin

Brian's forehead wrinkled and he looked around the room at everyone else to see if they had seen what Newton had seen. The agreeable nods from everyone sent him running into the bathroom. He slowly walked out with his head hung low and ran a hand through his hair. Once he approached the group, he shrugged.

"Ok... umm... yea see... like what had happened was... ok... I woke up and went to look for Mystic. He wasn't there. I saw the book. Wasn't gonna touch it, but uhh... i sneezed and...i mean it was a pretty furious sneeze... and by golly if my hands didn't touch it when i sneezed..." he stopped to gauge everyone reaction that was listening.

"You know what screw it. You don't have to believe me. I know what happened. And this, "he said and pointed at the window, "is not my fault. Book or not, this started beforehand."

Averick

Mystic covered his eyes as Brian began to explain WHY he touched the book. "Well, regardless, I can't put it back until we get back to our world, so nobody else touch the book, please, or the consequences may be beyond my control."

The Ninjin

He went back to Mystic and pulled out a spherical glowing stone about the size of a tennis ball. It had signs of deterioration on it and engraved on it were ancient writings that lit up every few seconds as if something inside was going around passing through the letters and illuminating them.

"Found this in the basement. I heard a humming, but it didn't get any louder or softer when I got near it. Just one continual monotonous hum," he finished and handed it to the Mage.

Averick

When Brian pulled the catalyst out of his pocket, Mystic's eyes widened. "Yes, yes, that might very well be it. Now we need to find the corresponding device left here, that ties us to the plane, and then simply touch them together. That should reverse the spell. But this means leaving. Very well, Ion, lower the shield, we're going to have to go outside."

Mystic prepared resevoir's of energy in the air around him to hold a build up of his magic, so that his first few barrages would be both accurate and more deadly.

Abrahms

His eyes narrow at the orb. "Is that it? What do we do with it? If we need time, I'll join Coolant. My energy sheilds can stop an awfull lot of punishment as well. We can buy you the time you need." He looks to the young man and nods.

SquirrelWizard

Elisa looked at the orb with a mild sense of curiosity, but interjected as Abrahms spoke about making a stand.

"I'll head out too. Right now I'm geared up for killing things, not pondering the exact uses of an artifact."

Abrahms

"I'll take the left side" Abrahms says as he clenches his fists in momentary concentration. The slight sheen again becomes a almost glow. His fist produce his palm palms of power. "Ready" he says eyes once again taking on a glow to match the fists.