

Table of Contents

New Warriors #7 by Daniel Ingram	2
New Warriors #8 by Daniel Ingram	20
New Warriors #9 by Daniel Ingram	32
New Warriors #10 by Daniel Ingram	41
New Warriors #12 by Daniel Ingram & Brent Lambert	52
New Warriors #13 by Daniel Ingram & Brent Lambert	61

All they want to do is change the world.

They are a band of young heroes drawn together by a knowledge of what's right, and a willingness to take on the battles their adult counterparts won't.

Welcome to the battlefield...



#7

“Power Play”

Written by Daniel Ingram

The Business Offices of Power Brokers' Inc

Charles Fox shifted the papers sitting in front of him slightly as he prepared to address the four other members of the board. He looked at the papers one last time, and then glanced at Jacob Greyson, the senior partner. The man had a medium build, with dark black hair with a light streak running through the middle. Greyson caught his eye, and nodded, "Please give your report. I trust you're ready?"

"Err...yes," he stuttered despite himself. Even after all this time, Greyson could put the fear of God into him.

"Then get on with it, we haven't all day," a brown haired woman stated. She was Mrs. Fiona Rivera Grayson, Greyson's wife and likely the only person who wasn't scared of him.

"Well, there's not really much to tell. Everything is set to go for our little test. Our little 'Fantastic Four' are in place, along with some backup from our regular enforcers."

"Wait a freakin' minute," Carl Hollister said. He was a large, blond haired muscle bound man who was only a member of the board due to a combination of luck and ruthlessness, "How do we even know these New Warrior punks will even show up? New York's crawling with superfreaks, and the U.N's even got it's own heroes, don't it?"

"We've taken that into consideration, Carl," Mr. Fox said. "We've also been very diligent on keeping tabs on very nearly every superhuman team out there. X-Force is busy elsewhere today, as are Force Works and the Fantastic Four. As for the rest, thanks to a device we recovered from a deceased monarch, combined with the firm's own resources and a little ingenuity, we've all the tools we need to test the Warriors, and only the Warriors."*

* (See the respective titles to see what's happening - David)

"Then, what are we waiting for?" The final board member, Dr. D. Saad asked, "The day isn't

getting any younger. It's time to take the plunge."

"Are we all agreed then?" Mr. Greyson asked. The board nodded in agreement. Smiling, Greyson telekinetically lifted his cell phone out of his right breast pocket and dialed an untraceable number, "Let slip the dogs of war," was all he said. He then put his cell phone back in his pocket and looked at the board, "So, what's next on the agenda?"

In a West Virginia coal mine; men and women go about their work, never noticing a box of explosives sitting next to an important support beam. That's because it's disguised as a lunch box. They did notice, however, when the box exploded and collapsed the main tunnel, trapping well over three dozen men and women underground with little air and even less hope.

In Pakistan, the members of a secret Thugee sect begin attacking a military base rumored to hold nuclear weapons. Normally, the Pakistan army would be able to easily repulse such an attack due to the fact that there are only ten Thugee members attacking. But the Thugee members have superpowers and fight with a fury that only the deranged or drugged know.

In Alberta Canada, a natural gas factory suddenly explodes, causing toxic fumes to escape into the air. If not dealt with quickly and correctly, many lives will be lost and the environment will be permanently damaged.

In Australia, the robot monstrosity known as the Tri-Sentinel suddenly appeared ten miles off the coast. It's programming to destroy a nuclear plant in Long Island is submerged. Rather, it's programming now tells it to head inland, and kill everything it sees. It goes without saying that it obeys.

In San Francisco, California, nine Asian men and women suddenly find themselves transported to the Golden Gate Bridge. They are known to the world as Ancestor, Butterfly, Deluge, Turmoil, Sickle, Q'Wake, Old Women, Warfist and Lich. They are known as the Avatars of the Mandarin. They laid waste to Hong Cong before being stopped by the first Force Works, and were eventually killed when the Mandarin's bid for world domination failed. But they don't know that they will be dead soon. Rather, they simply have an overwhelming desire to see the streets run red with the blood of westerners. And they are very poor at impulse control.

The United Nations Building

"And down there is the General Assembly blah blah blah blah..."

The words of the tour guide started to melt into one in the mind of Cristal Lemieux. She had come the U.N building and taken the tour at the suggestion of her father. She had agreed not because she had always wanted to see the U.N building, but because she literally had nothing else to do other than homework. All her friends were far, far away and the enormity of New

York somewhat frightened her. But this tour was simply boring her to death. Her eyes drifted to the back of the group, where no one was looking and what she saw surprised her. Men dressed in black, carrying automatic weapons and darting down an adjacent hall, to where the tour would soon lead. Cristal almost considered raising an alarm before she saw four large wrap around the edge of the wall. They were large, silver fingers and combined were bigger than the size of her head. She certainly didn't want to run into the person it belonged too. The group started to move again, but Cristal cautiously moved to the back, and careful to make sure no one was watching, ducked into an empty office room. If she had to defend herself, she could do it now without revealing that she was a mutant.

New York, The Crash Pad

Dwayne Taylor, otherwise known as the superhero Night Thrasher made the final adjust to the controls before looking down from the control booth to the members of his team.

"I think they're ready, Dwayne," Mickey" Muashi, also known as Turbo, stated.

"I know. I'm just making some final adjustment. And it's Night Thrasher here," He replied, "Okay boys and girls, the point of this exercise is to see how well you work together as a team. All you have to do is make it to the other side of the room. Remember, you're supposed to get there as a team."

"How come Turbo doesn't have to jump thru hoops?" Ricochet asked.

"Because I said so," Night Thrasher said. "Also, because I already know what to expect from her." He then started the simulation, and dozens of robots of all shapes and sizes came out from panels in the wall. As the team reacted to this, Night Thrasher kept his eyes on Bolt.

"Okay guys, let's do it!" Ricochet yelled to his teammates, "Hornet, you, Spider-Girl and Ultra Girl go airborne and keep all that flying stuff off our backs."

"That's Spider-Woman!" Mattie Franklin scowled as she flew into the air along with Ultra Girl and Hornet. She unleashed a barrage of venom bolts at the robots that could fly while Hornet used his wrist laser to destroy the ones that Mattie missed. Finally Suzy Sherman, otherwise known as Ultra Girl, used her superstrength to smash any robots that Hornet or Spider-Woman missed.

"This isn't so hard!" Mattie boasted.

Below them Bolt and Ricochet were making progress as well. Ricochet used his agility to advantage, moving like greased lightning and hitting the robots just hard enough to slow them down so Bolt could hit them with his electrical bursts.

"We're kickin' decepticon ass!" Ricochet joked.

Night Thrasher heard this from above, and smiled. He then pressed a button on the control panel, executing a special program.

"Don't get cocky, Ricochet," Bolt warned as he blasted robot after robot. He heard a noise behind him, and he whirled around. Placed right behind him was a tennis ball server that he had seen at places like the Y and country clubs. Confronted with such a strange foe, Bolt hesitated for a split second. The 'tennis ball server' didn't. It shot out a powerful stream of water, knocking Bolt several feet back and stunning him. Ricochet saw this and bounded towards his friend.

"Hang on Chris, the Calvary oh shit..." Ricochet realized his mistake at the last second. Bolt had been only stunned, not unconscious. As such, he still had his electrical powers on. Ricochet flailed his arms and legs wildly as he tried not to land in the puddle of water surrounding Bolt. He failed of course, and was knocked unconscious when he struck the pool surrounding Bolt.

"Looks like the others are in trouble," Mattie said, "be right back." She swooped down towards them.

"Wait! We need to stick together!" Hornet warned, but she ignored him. Hornet saw yet another flying missile coming towards them. He tried to hit it with his wrist lasers, and it deftly avoided both him and his laser, and made a beeline towards Ultra Girl. Hornet suddenly realized why.

"Suzy, look out!" Hornet warned.

"I got it, Eddie," she replied casually as she cocked her fist back

"No, you don't understand...!"

Suzy smashed the missile with her fist, but rather than fall to the ground as scrap metal, the missile erupted in a ball of blue mist. Suzy gasped in surprise, the worst thing she could have done considering the situation, and passed out. Hornet moved to catch her, and left himself open. Before he could even move to catch Suzy, another flying pod released several cables at him and ensnared him tightly.

"Don't worry Eddie, I got her," Mattie said as she caught the barely conscious Ultra Girl. "Little Miss Hollywood's fine."

"But you're not," Night Thrasher stated over the intercom. Mattie quickly saw what he meant. Everyone else was restrained in some way, while she was stuck carrying Ultra Girl and surrounded on all sides.

"Crap."

"Be thankful, Mattie. If this were the real world, you'd be dead. And so would everyone who depended on you," Night Thrasher explained over the intercom, as he turned the program off. He

then shut off the com. link, and leaned back in his chair. He rapped his fingers on the consul thoughtfully for a few seconds before Turbo broke the silence.

"They didn't do that bad. I mean, it's not like the first Warriors..."

"The first team of Warriors were all experienced fighters who had some training and or experience in using their powers. They knew how to fight as individuals, and only needed a little coaxing as a team," Night Thrasher said as he stood up and watched towards the door leading to the training room, "Still, I knew these guys weren't the old team when I agreed to lead them."

Night Thrasher activated his boot gets and slowly lowered himself into the room, followed by Turbo.

"So...uh how'd we do?" Ricochet asked.

"Poorly. You seem to have utterly forgotten the point of the exercise. You fought to disable your foes, not to get past them. Ricochet, you should have looked before you leaped," Night Thrasher turned towards Hornet and Ultra Girl. "And Hornet, you shouldn't have dropped your guard like that."

"Are you saying I should have just let Suzy fall?"

"Yes, she would have been fine," he said nonchalantly.

"Gee, thanks," Suzy muttered as she tried to clear her head.

"I think what Thrash is saying is that you guys are just a little rough around the edges. You'll get better," Turbo volunteered.

"Oh good, because all I heard was pure malice," Ricochet quipped.

"At any rate, it's not important right now," Night Thrasher explained. "I'd like you to meet the final member to the pit crew." Night Thrasher activated his comm. unit. "Come on it, Carlton."

A door to the room opened, revealed a short brown haired freckled face teenager wearing a red and yellow costume. He was carrying a box under his left arm.

"Who the heck is this guy?" Bolt asked.

"I'm Carlton LeForye. Pleasure to meet you," he said as he extended his hand. "Thrash said you guys needed someone to keep this place in order."

"Uhh, nice to meet you, too," Hornet said as he shook Carlton's hand. "Are you an old member?"

"Kinda. I basically did all the crap that's beneath the real heroes."

"Well, someone's gotta do it," Ricochet said as introduced himself, "Maybe you can give us some pointers on how to deal with Darth Vader here."

"Night Thrasher? Ahh, he's not so bad. I mean old D..."

"Carlton!" Night Thrasher shouted, cutting him off.

"Wait a minute, hold up," Mattie said, pointing an accusing finger at Carlton. "He knows! He knows your I.D and you won't tell the rest of us! What the hell!"

"You know what you need to know," Night Thrasher said sternly. "You can leave at any time if you have a problem with that."

The room was unnaturally quite for a few seconds, before Carlton spoke up. "Anyways, I come bearing gifts." He opened the box that had been under his arm to reveal what looked like W shaped key-chains. "The old team used these for communication. Thought you could use them."

"Not exactly the most fashionable thing, is it?" Suzy said under her breath as she took a badge.

"Umm, I won't short this thing out, will I?" Bolt asked.

"Nope, it's made of unstable molecules. It'll be fine."

"Cool. We almost look like a real team," Ricochet said as he affixed the badge to his jacket.

"And like a real team, you're going to do some more training," Night Thrasher said. A collective groan went thru the air. Night Thrasher just scowled, "Look, being a hero isn't easy..."

Just then, the alarms started blaring.

-Danger! Danger, Will Robinson!-

The team rushed out of the room and towards the monitor room (which doubled as the meeting room).

"I see you've gotten to the alarm systems," Turbo said. "Dork."

"What can I say? I love the classics," Carlton replied. The Warriors quickly reached the main computer and Carlton brought up what had set off the alarm. "I wonder why the alarms went off? It's not the perimeter alarm and...ah."

"What is it?" Thrasher asked.

"I'll bring it up on the main monitor."

The team waited patiently as Carlton brought up the news report that set off the alarm. On the

monitor a middle-aged man could be seen standing in front of the U.N building. He looked distressed, and behind him were over turned cop cars, some on fire while others were nothing but molten slag.

"...Terrorists took the U.N building only minutes ago. The men were disguised as construction workers who were supposed to be repairing the damage caused when Dr. Doom stormed the U.N. They are supported by the villains known as the U-Foes, and have demanded a million dollars ransom each for everyone trapped in the building within two hours or they will kill everyone. Police have been pushed back, and have placed a barricade around the U.N building. The situation looks grim, and so far no other heroes have been reached..."

"I thought the U-Foes were all in a coma," Mattie said under her breath.

"Come on, let's saddle up!" Ricochet yelled as he started to break towards the War Copter. Night Thrasher grabbed him by the arm before he got two feet.

"We're not going."

Everyone, including Turbo, was taken back by that statement.

"What?"

"You're kidding, right?"

"What do you mean?" Suzy demanded. "Someone's got to do something!"

"The report said that the U-Foes were there backing up the terrorists. The same U-Foes who have taken on the Hulk and Avengers. They're are simply out of our league," Night Thrasher explained, "we'll have to let someone else deal with it."

"Umm, Thrash?" Carlton said weakly. "There...there is no one else."

"Excuse me?"

Carlton typed in a few commands, and brought up several other reports, "Just what I said, there is no one else. The Avengers are dealing with a coal mine that collapsed in West Virginia, Excalibur is dealing with a flare up in Pakistan, Alpha Flight is dealing with a natural gas factory that exploded earlier this morning and the West Coast Avengers are dealing with a terrorist attack at the Golden Gate bridge. The FF are out of touch, and so are Force Works. They're both likely out on missions."

"Cripes, it's like all hell broke loose today," Bolt commented.

"And it looks like we'll have to do what we can to reign it in," Night Thrasher said grimly. "Let's roll."

"Road trip!" Ricochet shouted as he leaped in the War Chopper. Night Thrasher and Hornet took their place in the pilot's seat.

"Umm, Night Thrasher? About the U-Foes, did you mean what you said about them being out of our league?" Hornet asked.

"Yes."

"Umm, okay."

"Don't worry, Hornet, we'll find a way to win," Bolt said confidently.

"Who, me worry?" Hornet replied nervously.

United Nations Building

"God damn it, where the hell are those spandex yahoos when ya need 'em?" Sergeant Tork remarked behind an overturned police car. Guarding the entrance to the building were three heavily armed men, using A.I.M designed laser pistols to keep the police back.

"Don't look now, Tork, but I think you just got your wish," a uniform officer said. They could hear the distinctive whup-whup-whup of a helicopter. The three armed men preventing the police from entering heard it as well, and started looking for the source. But before they could find it, the men were struck with a venom bolt.

"All clear!" Mattie said into her Warrior's badge. Night Thrasher set the War Chopper down directly in front of the U.N building, and the Warriors disembarked.

"What's the plan, man?" Ricochet asked

"In order for them to secure the building, the terrorists likely had to split their forces between watching the hostages and patrolling the building. So we split up. Hornet, you're with Turbo. Ultra Girl, you're with Spider-Woman. Ricochet, you're with Bolt. Watch your back. All of you." Turbo caught that veiled statement, if Bolt didn't. "Any questions?"

"Yeah, what are you going to be doing?" Ricochet asked.

"The terrorists are holding their hostages in the General Assembly room. I'm going to secure it."

"And you know this all how?" Mattie asked

"Because it's what I would do."

"And if we see the U-Foes?" Suzy asked

"We'll wing it," Bolt said as he started to run towards the building. "Come on, lives are in danger!"

Bolt and Ricochet

"Here, terrorists, terrorists, terrorists, come out where Uncle Rico can beat you downwwwn," Ricochet said softly as he stalked the halls of the U.N building. Suddenly, his danger sense activated. Ricochet looked around, trying to find the source.

"What's *cough*wrong?" Bolt asked, his voice suddenly very raspy.

"Something's wrong. I ken feel it in me bones!" Ricochet replied, doing his best Scotty impersonation.

"You don't know the half of it," Bolt said. Or rather, someone inside his mouth did. Bolt started coughing and hacking, like he was about to lose a lung as a white mist started to come out of his mouth and took the shape of a brown haired woman in a green jump suit.

"I'm Vapor, punk. And you're Ricochet," the woman said, "I don't know why they're interested in you. Any last requests?"

"Actually, I just have a question," Ricochet said, thinking fast. "You can turn your body to mist, right?"

"Right," Vapor replied with a cocked eyebrow.

"Then why don't you make your boobs look bigger? Cause I mean you're...you're kinda flat," Ricochet said conversationally. Vapor was taken back by that statement, and involuntarily looked down.

"Yoink!" Ricochet dashed forward, grabbed Bolt, threw him over his shoulder and did his best impersonation of the French Army during every major world conflict.

"Aaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhhhhhhhh!"

"You just made your last mistake punk!" Vapor snarled as she flew after him.

"Wouldn't be the first time!" Ricochet yelled as he dashed thru the halls.

"Rico...stop..." Bolt said weakly

"Sorry, Bolt my man. I believe in stand in fight as much as the next white haired, silver tongued yellow belly mutant, but not when you can't touch what you're supposed to be standing and

fighting. Gotta find the others, maybe Turbo can..." Ricochet explained as he turned down another hall.

Into a dead end.

"But then again, there is something nobly heroic about lost causes and certain death..." Ricochet said as he set Bolt down. He unclipped two of his throwing disks and held them at the ready, though he knew they wouldn't do him any good.

"Ready to die, you pig!" Vapor yelled as she turned the hall.

"I don't supposed you'll forgive me if I tell you you have a wonderful personality?" Ricochet asked.

"I think I'll melt your lungs slowly, maybe use mustard gas and watch you go blind as you die."

"So...that's a no?"

"That's not going to happen," Bolt as softly as he pointed his fist towards Vapor, cackling with power. "Please surrender."

"Or what? You can't hurt me, I'm pure gas!"

Of all the times to be without a one liner! Ricochet thought

"I know," Bolt said releasing an electrical blast at her. Vapor's smug demeanor disappeared and she screamed in pain. She passed out only seconds later and simply floated in the air, limp.

"Whoa, what'd you do?" Ricochet asked as he helped Bolt up.

"She may have been pure gas, but she needed some kind of energy to hold her together, I could sense it. Electro magnetic, I think. I just disrupted that," Bolt explained. "That's one down and umm... how many U-Foes are there anyways?"

"You know, we really should have thought to ask that before we started."

Spider-Woman and Ultra Girl

"Okay, Miss Hollywood, I think I hear something up ahead," Spider-Woman whispered to Ultra Girl. They were both hovering in the air, backs almost touching to ceiling.

"Then let's go, and stop calling me Hollywood," Suzy replied. They flew quietly over a nest of terrorists who were searching for any stragglers. The two young women descended quickly, and

disabled the men.

"Well, that wasn't so hard," Mattie said. Before she could take another step, the wall behind her exploded with a large metal giant on par with the Hulk the epicenter. The iron behemoth, fitly known as Iron Clad, picked up Ultra Girl by her collar like a rag doll and smashed her into the floor. With incredible ease, he then threw her away, sending her careening thru four steel enforced wall before she came to a stop.

"Eat venom bolt, tin man!" Mattie shouted as she unleashed her most powerful blast at Iron Clad. He barely noticed it as he turned back towards Mattie.

"Needs salt," he smiled as he advanced on her. Mattie changed tactics and unleashed her psychic webbing at Iron Clad, turning him into a nine-foot mummy. Iron Clad flexed his muscles and ripped thru the webs without breaking stride.

"Anymore tricks?" he asked as he reached for her. But before he could make another move, his head became engulfed in flames.

"Huh?" Mattie stared for a moment. Being the superhero groupie that she was, she knew all about the U-Foes including Iron Clad. And as far as she knew, Iron Clad had no flame abilities. Iron Clad looked just as confused as Mattie. He turned around to see a young blacked woman projecting flame towards his head.

"You can't breathe flame, no?" she said, with a slight trace of a French accent. Iron Clad didn't reply. He turned around and started to advance on the young woman, who stopped projecting flame at him. She instead pointed to his feet and froze the floor below his feet. Iron Clad's feet flew out from under him, and he landed hard on his back. Then, to the surprise of all, he laughed.

"Cute trick, girlie, but does the ice mean you can't do both at the same time?"

"Like it matters," Mattie declared as she jumped on Iron Clad's chest. Before he could react, she stuck her hand in his mouth and unleashed her most powerful venom blast. Iron Clad's eye's rolled back, and his head slumped to the ground.

"That was soooo gross," Mattie said as she took her out of Iron Clad's mouth and shook it off. "Who the heck are you?" Mattie asked as she turned towards Cristal.

Cristal didn't reply at first. While Spider-Woman didn't recognize her, Cristal most certainly recognized her. She knew that Mattie was a member of the New Warriors, heroes whom her father in part used to help destroy Armor Oil's reputation. But she also recognized them as something else, Spider-Woman in particular.

"Well," she said with a raised eyebrow and a smile, "that depends..."

Turbo and Hornet

"Looks like we got lucky," Hornet whispered to Turbo as they peered around the corner and saw the U-Foes known as X-Ray patrolling with a small group of terrorists. "What's the plan?"

"I'm not sure," Turbo answered, "I think..."

"Psst! Turbo! How many U-Foes are there?" Ricochet asked via the Warrior's badge. Despite the fact that he whispered, the badge broadcasted his voice loud and clear. So loud and clear in fact, that the terrorists down the hall heard them.

"Nuts," Turbo said flatly. "Come on, Hornet!" She activated the turbines on her feet and flew forward, smashing into the men and bowling them over. X-Ray calmly floated to the side, observing as Hornet unleashed his sedative stingers at the men and as Turbo's winds disabled the few men that remained. In moments, only X-Ray, Hornet and Turbo were left standing.

"Impressive," X-Ray commented as he unleashed a 360 degrees blast, knocking Hornet and Turbo into the far wall. "I see why they want you alive."

"Who wants us alive?" Hornet asked as he stood up.

"None of your damn business," X-Ray answered. Hornet pressed a button on his gauntlet, activating a new weapon he'd designed. From the laser ports on his wrist gauntlets, two yellow beams one and a half feet emerged. They were Hornet's latest weapons, his 'stingers'.

"It takes more than special effects to impress me," X-Ray smirked. Hornet didn't reply. He simply lashed out with his stingers. Unfortunately, they simply passed thru X-Ray without doing the slightest bit of harm. After a few seconds of simply standing there while Hornet futilely tried to harm him with his stingers, the weapons fizzled out, "What's the matter, can't keep it up?" X-Ray asked as he blasted Hornet away.

"Stay down, I've got your back, Hornet!" Turbo shouted as she jumped in front of Eddie and activated her turbines. A column of wind shot forth at X-Ray. X-Ray, for his part, simply ignored it and walked forward.

"I'm made of energy, baby, wind isn't goin' to do nothin' to me," X-Ray laughed.

"You mean you're made of radiation," Turbo corrected.

"Whatever."

"Too bad for you my suit disperses radiation, isn't it?" Turbo smiled. Before X-Ray could realize the implications of this, Turbo flew at him. Hornet saw this happening, and covered his eyes as the two were consumed in a bright red flash. When he opened his eyes again, all he saw was

Turbo on her hands and knees, shaking her head in an attempt to clear the fog.

"Mickey, are you okay?"

"I'm fine," She said as she stood up. "That was one gamble I didn't think would work. Do you think I killed him?"

"Probably not. He's pure energy, so he'll likely reform."

"Good. Think Ricochet's head'll reform when I rip it off his shoulders?"

Vector

Simon Utrecht, known to the world at large as Vector, paced back in forth inside the General Assembly room. He hadn't heard from his team in ten minutes, and it worried him.

"Something amiss?" the secretary general asked, in a calm and collected tone that still somehow managed to convey seething hatred. Vector shuddered despite himself, recognizing something the man's gaze that he had only seen in another man, despite Vector's experience with evil with both the Master of the World and the Leader. It was a malevolence, all knowing stare that he had seen first in Jacob Greyson, and now the secretary general.

My ears are burning A voice said telepathically to Vector

"Mr..."Vector said, but was cut off in mid sentence. He realized that Mr. Greyson had telepathically turned off his vocal cords

Now, now Vector, we mustn't reveal everything to these fine men and women. I'm here because your mission is finished. Mr. Greyson explained telepathically The Warriors have defeated your friends and the thugs we sent to assist them. Night Thrasher has disabled all of the men you have posted outside of this very room, and the Warriors are preparing to storm the assembly room as we 'speak'.

Then what are your orders?

Surrender to them peacefully, and you will have repaid me.

Understood. Vector replied, and was then returned to his own mind. He looked at the secretary general whom he thought he heard mutter 'finally' for a moment and turned to the main entrance to the assembly. His men had already lowered their weapons and placed them on the ground.

"Move it Warriors!" Night Thrasher shouted as he burst thru the door, followed by the rest of his team. Hornet and Turbo flew to the right of Vector while Ultra Girl and Spider-Woman flew to

the left. "Get to them before they can take any hostages!"

"No need. We surrender," Vector said as he raised his hands above his head.

"Just like that?" Night Thrasher asked suspiciously.

"Yes," Vector said calmly as he turned around and placed his arms behind his back. His men followed suit. "Just like that. Is that a problem?"

The Warriors looked at Night Thrasher, who just shrugged. "No. But try anything funny..."

"Yes, yes, you'll make me regret it. Hurry up and get the boys in blue in here, I haven't eaten lunch and I'm hungry."

"...scene as the young heroes known as the New Warriors defeated the villains known as the U-Foes, who had taken the United Nations building hostage. When asked for a comment, all Night Thrasher, the leader of these young heroes had to say was 'The New Warriors are back in business' before leaving without further comment. In other news..."

-Clik-

"Aw, they were getting to the best part!" Ricochet complained as Night Thrasher turned the T.V off.

"You guys did good today, I have to admit," Night thrasher stated.

"Good, we kicked ass!" Ricochet interrupted as he leaned back in his chair with his feet on the table. A powerful gust of wind nailed him on the chest, knocking him on his back, "Oof! But we mustn't forget that we can always do better."

"I just want to go home and take a shower," Suzy said. She was still sore from the beating Iron Clad had given her, despite the fact that he hadn't laid a direct hand on her.

"There'll be time for that later. I think we need to run a few more practice exercises..."

Again, there was a collective groan. Night Thrasher opened his mouth to speak, but was interrupted

Fire in the sky! Fire in the sky! The alarms shouted

"Carlton, what the hell's going on?" Night Thrasher yelled above the alarm

"An unknown superhuman of unknown intent is bussing the Crash Pad," he explained

"How do you know that?"

"Because if it was something else, a different alarm would sound."

"Don't worry, I got this," Spider-Woman said as she flew out of her chair and to the sky light controls, followed by her teammates. She shut off the alarm and opened the skylight. After she had done that, a female form of fire descended from the sky and touched down. The flames were extinguished to reveal a short, petite raven-haired young woman.

"Umm, 'ello," Cristal said softly.

"Spider-Woman, care to explain?" Night Thrasher demanded.

"Everyone, this is Cristal Lemieux. She's a mutant with control over ice and flame," Mattie explained. "She helped me out against Iron Clad."

"I'd like to be a hero!" Cristal said unconvincingly. Before Night Thrasher could respond, Ricochet spoke up.

"Hey, I recognize you! You were that chick who helped us out at Cairo!"

"And saved my life," Bolt said as he stepped forward to shake her hand. "Thanks, by the way."

"So, can she join?" Spider-Woman asked. Night Thrasher was about to respond when he felt a hand on his shoulder. It belonged to Turbo, and her face had a don't be a stuck up ass look on it. It was something every New Warrior had seemed to perfect around him. Night Thrasher sighed, and decide for once just to go with it. After all, he already knew the young woman's name, and more importantly recognized who her father was. Night Thrasher knew Mr. Lemieux as Dwayne Taylor, and knew the man was more cowardly than evil. What's more, she was French and didn't run away from two threats, that had to count for something.

"Alright, she can join, but she's the last one," Night Thrasher said. The team let out a collective cheer, most likely originating from 'beating Thrasher'.

"Looks like you're in!" Spider-Woman said. "You got a name in mind for what you want to call yourself?"

"Yes, I think I'll call myself Crux, I like how it sounds."

"Well, we'll have to get you a costume," Suzy said, "I think I have some ideas."

Night Thrasher watched at the team greeted to new arrival, and decided that the meeting was adjourned. Unnoticed to all, Night Thrasher quietly left the meeting via the side door, activated his boot jets and flew to the roof of a nearby building (empty thanks to Dwayne Taylor). He had a hunch he needed to play out, and using his computer's internet connection, he could run a back

ground check Ms. Lemieux at the same time. And so he waited.

The Business Offices of Power Brokers' Inc

"All in all, Greyson, everything went according to plan," Mr. Fox explained to the board. "Our distractions were successful, and all the 'free lance' help we recruited can't be traced back to us. The scanners that were secretly placed on our men gave us all the information we could ever want on the Warriors."

"Then phase one of our plan was successful?" Greyson asked

"Yes sir, and the Warriors don't even know it."

Greyson clasped his hands together and smiled. "They will in time, trust me on that."

New York, Central Park

Chris walked thru the park, looking around but careful not to raise any suspicions. He didn't want to look like a mugger, after all. All he wanted was a small, out of the way area to go to spend the night. A small collection of bushes caught his eye, and looking around to make sure no one was around and went over to examine it. It was out of the way, where no one would see him and a pile of dead leaves had collected in the area, softening it up.

"Looks good enough," he mused aloud. Suddenly, he heard a snap behind him. He spun and activated his electrical powers, which illuminated a familiar red and black armor.

"Night Thrasher! What are you doing here?"

"Please forgive the intrusion, Bolt," he said calmly, "I would have knocked, but there's no door."

"Umm, well it's a funny story..."

Night Thrasher ignored that statement and continued. "You've been living on the streets for a while, haven't you?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, that stops today. You're going to be living in the Crash Pad as long as you're living in New York and a member of the New Warriors," Night Thrasher said in a tone that left no room for argument.

"Umm, okay."

"There are quarters in the subbasement. Go to the third one on the right, and under the mattress is fourteen hundred dollars. Tomorrow, you're going shopping for some decent cloths. I'll also be by tomorrow with some documents as well. As I understand it, you haven't finished high school, have you Chris?"

"No, sir," Bolt said softly. He didn't think to ask how Night Thrasher knew that

"Well, you're going to."

"Thank you, sir, but why are you going thru all this trouble?"

"Because I don't want to have to worry about where the hell my teammates are," Night Thrasher replied as he activated his boot jets. "Now get going, Bolt. You'll have a long day ahead of you tomorrow."

THE BEGINNING

Next Issue: Come back as the Warriors get settled in and Mattie makes a mistake that could affect her for the rest of her life. Be here next issue as part one of Hyde and Seek begins.

Notes

The U.N Building was damaged by Dr. Doom in Fantastic Four 35

The U-Foes were placed in a coma by the Master of the World in Heroes for Hire 4. This is their first M2K appearance

Cristal helped the Warriors out in issue 5

War Declaration

Hey, this is David Ingram(duh). Most of you out there likely know about me from my work on Force Works, another series at M2K that has more than a few old Warriors. As fate would have it, what is now Force Works was actually going to be a New Warriors series. But it got shelved for a long time, and gradually evolved into something else. When I finally pitched what is now Force Works at M2K, it had moved so far from what the first Warriors represented that it really didn't make any sense to call them the New Warriors. It helped that Russ and Mike already had a

new team too ;)

At first, I wasn't interested in the M2K New Warriors, to tell the truth. But, several plots seemed to infect my mind, and I just couldn't get them out. They were/are good plots, and I thought only the Warriors could carry them out. So I researched Russ' Warriors, and as time went on, I came to love them. More and more plots came to me, more and more ideas did as well. So I gave a proposal to David and crossed my fingers, and here I am.

So what does the future hold for the Warriors? More Power Brokers, Inc, and more the mysterious Greyson and his interest in the Warriors, drugs, unexpected romances, an updated villain or two, one of the most brutal battles in M2K and a camp where American citizens are held without due process(not what you think), and that's just the tip of the ice berg. So sit back and enjoy as I try my best to do justice to Russ' Warriors while making them mine.

-Daniel Ingram

All they want to do is change the world.

They are a band of young heroes drawn together by a knowledge of what's right, and a willingness to take on the battles their adult counterparts won't.

Welcome to the battlefield...



#8

“HYDE AND SEEK”

Part 1: The Setup

Written by Daniel Ingram

Hell's Kitchen, Yesterday Night

Franklin Brown looked over his shoulder for what had to be the millionth time, making sure there were no police in sight or that any unsavory types were following him. Being raised old money, it almost went without saying that he did not feel comfortable here. But as far as he was concerned, he really didn't have a choice. The supplier offered the best product around at the cheapest price, and so he met him in Hell's Kitchen. Why? Because the supplier said he loved the atmosphere. Checking over his shoulder one final time, Brown reached his car, unlocked the door and got behind the wheel.

Damn supplier needs to find a better place to meet. I keep expecting to get my ass busted by Daredevil He thought as he started the ignition. He reached into his jacket and patted the blue pellets inside; Still, Mr. H certainly does supply some quality material. Ain't been caught yet!

Thomas Jefferson Private School today

"You'll have a lot of catching up to do, but I'm confident that you'll be able to keep pace with the rest of the class, Mr. Bradley." Dr. Ward, fit blond haired woman of forty years, stated as she walked down the hall.

"I'll do my best, Dr. Ward. " Chris replied. He was trying his best to pay attention, but he was still a little taken back by the last couple of days. When Night Thrasher said that he was going to finish High School, Chris never expected for that to mean that Night Thrasher would pay for him to go to one of the best private schools in New York! It was made even cooler when his teammates Crux and Spiderwoman, were attending Thomas Jefferson as well.

"I would expect no less, Mr. Bradley. " Ms Ward said as she led him to his second period.

"Please meet me after seventh period. There are still some matters that need to be addressed. Be thankful that you transferred into Thomas Jefferson so early during the semester."

"Understood ma'am."

Down the hall, Cristal Lemieux stood uncomfortably in front of her English class while her teacher, an elderly woman named Mrs. Dawson, who felt that every new student needed to stand up in front of the class and be introduced like they were the contestant on a game show. Cristal felt the entire class was inspecting her in every unflattering sense possible.

"...And please class have patience with Ms. Lemieux. I sure it's hard to get acclimated to a new language."

"Actually, umm...I speak English fluently. " Cristal corrected quickly.

"Well, isn't that good for you. " Mrs. Dawson said dryly. She did not like being corrected, regardless of the subject matter. "You may take your seat, Ms. Lemieux."

Cristal breathed a sigh of relief and walked towards her desk at the back of the room. She barely made it two feet before she tripped over her own feet. Cristal barely stumbled, thanks to her excellent conditioning, but she could still hear a slight murmur of laughter from her classmates. She reached her seat, sat down, and prayed for the earth to swallow her up before the day ended

New York, The Broiler

"Why do you think he wanted to meet us here, Vance?" Angelica Jones asked as she looked around the run down restaurant. It was early in the morning, and so the place was almost deserted. There were only three other customers in there, and the employees behind the counter were preparing for the lunchtime rush. It was hardly the place one would expect to find the two former Avengers known as Firestar and Justice.

"Who can tell with him?" Vance answered as he read his paper. Neither of them noticed a white, blond haired male enter the Broiler. They really didn't notice when he walked up the counter and picked up an egg sandwich he had ordered from his cell phone. But they did notice when he sat down in their booth.

"Vance, Angel, good to see you two again. " the man said before he took a bite out of his sandwich. Both Vance and Angelica were taken back by this man's odd behavior.

"Excuse me, do we know you?" Vance asked. The man ran a finger over his right cheek as he took another bite of his sandwich.

"Dwayne?" Angelica said softly.

"Yep. Sorry about the disguise, but I didn't think it would be prudent for Dwayne Taylor to be

seen in the presence of a publicly known mutant Avenger. " Dwayne explained. "So, why did you two want to meet about? Because I can assure you, the New Warriors are in good hands."

"It's not that. " Angelica said as she nervously rubbed her hands together. "To be honest, our concern with the Warriors is the past now."

"Then what's this meeting about?" Dwayne asked

"You. " Vance said. "To be honest, we're a little worried about you, as well as confused. The last time we really sat down and talked, you were toning down your activities as Night Thrasher. We lost touch after you started your internship at Stark-Fujikawa, which I have to say confuses me as well. You're the CEO of the Taylor Foundation, which is and was doing very well. But that's besides the point..."

"What is the point?" Dwayne interrupted.

"We've talked to Mickey, and to be honest, you've been acting weird. The new armor, the internship, your attitude, you just haven't seemed like yourself lately. " Angelica said.

"We just want the truth. " Vance said. "You seemed like you were getting out of the business for a while now, what's changed?"

"The truth. " Dwayne stated. "Okay, the truth. I'll start at the beginning. My parents were murdered by their best friend, Andrew Chord, at the behest of Tai, a powerful mystic. They adopted me, and manipulated me into believing that my parents were killed by criminals, pushing me into becoming a superhero and encouraged me to form my own team, the New Warriors. Tai intended to sacrifice my team in a play for ultimate power, but she failed when I killed her."

"Dwayne, why are you telling us this? We know that already." Vance stated.

"Because an explanation needs a context. Yes, I was manipulated. Yes, my life has been a lie. But you know what? What I felt, what I lived thru, wasn't. The pain was real, even if I wasn't right about what caused it. I can't turn my back on that, no matter how hard I try and believe me, I tried. I don't want any other child to suffer thru what I did, and that's why I've rededicated myself to being Night Thrasher."

"So how do you explain the internship?" Angelica asked. "And the new armor?"

"Stark-Fujikawa was attempting to recreate information that was lost when Stark's records were purged when Stark Enterprises merged with Fujikawa, but they needed help on the sly. Due to past illicit deals the Taylor Foundation was involved in, they thought that the Foundation could help them in recovering the lost information. I pretended to agree, and secretly sabotaged their efforts. That 'internship' was set up between Stark-Fujikawa and myself to prevent anyone from suspecting what we were up to."

"And the armor?" Vance asked, suddenly very worried for his friend. If Dwayne was using Stark tech without permission, there could be hell to pay.

"I couldn't have touched Stark's information if I wanted to. It was like there was something alive in the Stark-Fujikawa computers, deleting any information on Stark tech," Dwayne answered.

"But then, Stark isn't the only builder of armors out there."

"Do I want to know?" Vance asked.

"Probably not."

"You know, Dwayne, when people experiment, they usually do it with drugs or their sexuality, not pieces of super weaponry."

"Why even use the armor?" Angelica asked. "You never needed one as advanced as your current armor in the past."

"I'm worth close to four billion dollars, Angel. I may as well use some of that money on my war on crime. I mean, look how successful Iron Man is. Maybe if I brought some of that power to the fights the Warriors fought, the Poison Memories wouldn't have happened," Dwayne replied. There was a beat of silence as the three friends remembered how the Poison Memories had changed the Warriors forever. "So, any more questions?"

"No, I think we covered everything," Vance said uncomfortably. "Is there anything here you recommend?"

Ballston Commons Mall

Suzy Sherman checked her watch for the millionth time, and looked around, not knowing what exactly she was looking for. Turbo had asked her if she wanted to have lunch with her, do some shopping, and maybe see a movie afterwards. Suzy agreed because she had a day off from taping 'Secret Hospital'. Everything was planned perfectly for a day of relaxing and getting to know one another better. Except one little thing.

Suzy had no idea what Turbo's face looked like.

That's one hell of a thing to forget to ask Suzy thought as she debated what to do. Should she get her lunch and wait a little longer? Head back home and forget about it, what? The matter was made more annoying by the fact not five feet away, some Asian girl was yelling at her mother into her cell phone.

"I don't care if he's good looking, I'm not going out with him, Mother! I have more important things to worry about right now than a boyfriend! Like college, maybe!" She shouted, seemingly not caring if half the mall heard her. And half the mall likely could hear her, the way she was

shouting. It was especially unpleasant for Suzy, who was only sitting only three feet away from the girl. Suzy took a sip from her diet Pepsi and tried to ignore her. Thankfully, the girl hung up a second later, and curiously, sat down across from Suzy.

"Sorry about that Suzy, my mother just tried to set me up with yet another Japanese boy who she wants me to marry and have many, many kids with," she sighed.

"Excuse me, do I know you?"

"I should hope so, we're on the same team." Mickey smiled

"Turbo? You're...Asian," Suzy stated, caught somewhat off guard.

"That's what they tell me. Surprised?"

"No, sorry, I just didn't know what to expect. So, I take it you're having fun with family expectations?" Suzy asked as she stood up. "Ready for some shopping?"

"Oh yes. I need something to get my mind of my parents. See, my parent's expectations for me are kinda simple. Grow up, get married, and get knocked up, in that order. They think my goal of being a reporter is stupid and unlady like," Mickey explained as they made their way to the escalator.

"I can relate. My family totally expected me to do what they wanted, not what I wanted."

"Doesn't it get old after a while?" Mickey asked as they stepped off the escalator and made their way towards a J.C Pennies'.

"Oh yeah. They raise us and teach us to think for ourselves, and when we actually do, they complain!"

"I know, it's like it's only okay to think for ourselves so long as we think what they want us to think!" Mickey stated.

"You know, they'd probably flip out if they knew what we really do now," Suzy said. "I still haven't told my parents about you know what."

"Me neither. They'd probably find a way to ground me for life if they knew what I was doing, even though I'm in college," Mickey sighed. "Well, enough about the 'rents. How are you liking New York?"

"It's great once you get past the air pollution, muggings and rude drivers..."

"It's still pretty annoying," Mickey finished.

"Oh, yeah."

"Everyone put your hands up!" a loud voice shouted. Suzy and Mickey out of the store and to the railing. Standing in the food court was a man wearing a skin tight silver body armor standing fifteen feet tall armed with laser pistols. "I, the powerful Stilt-Man, am here with my gang to rob you!"

"Like we couldn't figure that out ourselves?" Suzy asked as she rolled her eyes. Mickey looked around quickly, and smiled when she saw the hallway leading to the bathrooms.

"Come on!" Mickey said as she pulled Suzy away and sprinted towards the bathroom. "We need to take a powder!"

"Everyone stop panicking!" Stilt-Man yelled. When he declared his presence and intent, the crowd starting running every which way, trying to get away from Stilt-Man and his 'gang', which consisted mainly of three other men with small arms. Said gang was lousy for riot control as well, so people were stampeding to get the hell out of there and pretty much ignoring the person who had started the situation in the first place. "I'm not a terrorist damn it, I just want to rob you!"

"Oh, that makes it so much better," a voice said moments before a black armored fist smashed into Stilt-Man's face. He stumbled back, his skill with his stilts the only thing preventing him from falling over. When his vision cleared, he saw a young woman in a silver and black armor hovering in front of him with turbines roaring.

"Why don't you just come down off your high horse and surrender? My partner's already dealt with your friends, and I doubt you'll be much more trouble," Turbo said.

"I've taken on Spiderman, Captain America and U.S Agent!" Stilt-Man shouted as he aimed his laser weapons on Turbo. "No manga reject is going to...partner?"

A well-manicured hand reached up from under his hands and grabbed his laser guns, turning them into high tech balls of scrap metal.

"Partner," Ultra Girl said as she cocked her fist back. "By the way, did you ever actually beat Spidey, Cap or that Agent guy?"

-Wham!-

The blow knocked Stilt-Man off his elongated feet and he landed hard in the middle of the food court. Both Warriors hovered above him for a few seconds, waiting for Stilt-Man to get up and attack. After a minute, they realized that he wasn't going to be getting back up.

"That's it?" Ultra Girl asked as she descended to the ground next to Stilt-Man. She nudged him

with her foot in the ribs a little, but he didn't move. "That's it! What a jip!"

"Congrats Ultra Girl, you've just taken down your first third rate villain."

"*Pfft*, I didn't think it'd be so disappointing," Suzy sighed

Thomas Jefferson Private School

After seventh period was dismissed, Chris quickly made his way to the counselor's office, like he'd been told. Chris was actually glad to be here because he was a little anxious about his classes. It had been a while since he was last in school, after all, though he was a good student. He sat outside Mr. Ward's office patiently. After several minutes, she emerged from her office.

"Mr. Bradley, I'm glad to see you remembered to come by," Ms. Ward stated. "It speaks highly of you."

"Thank you, Ms. War," Chris said as he stood up.

"As we discussed earlier, I'm somewhat concerned about the time you've missed," Ms. Ward explained. "As such, I'm arranged for one of our brightest students to help tutor you. Her name's Gina Stockbridge."

The image of a fat, pimply girl with thick heavy glasses and bucktooth teeth flashed thru Chris' mind before he caught himself. He was a mutant, for God's sake, why was he stereotyping someone he'd never seen before he asked himself as he entered Ms. Ward's office. When he saw the figure sitting in the chair, he thanked God for all the time he had missed. For the first time in a long time, all his trials, discovering he was a mutant, learning that he had contracted the Legacy Virus, being forced to become a Dark Rider, everything just seemed to evaporate from his mind.

And that was because of Gina Stockbridge.

As far as Chris was concerned, goddess didn't come close to describing the red haired beauty who had been asked to mentor him. She was about five foot seven, with a slim waste and as far as Chris could tell, didn't have an ounce of fat on her. Her lightweight blue jeans completed her legs, and Chris didn't what her floral blouse did for her other assets. Chris, for the first time felt something stirring within himself. His body felt tingly all over. The 'God, I want to know this girl' tingly, not the horny tingly. Not lust, but honest to God love at first sight.

"Hello, Chris, I'm Gina," she said as she stood up and shook his hand. Chris felt like a pervert just shaking her hand, as though the mere touch was an act of defilement. Chris almost smacked himself. Where the hell did that come from?

"Chris Bradley, nice to meet you," he choked out. With an incredible amount of will power, he

resolved not to embarrass himself. That wouldn't do with the future mother of his children, after all.

Elsewhere

As he lay dying, Calvin Rankin otherwise known as the Mimic couldn't help but think this was what he deserved for going back to the Brotherhood. When he originally joined the Brotherhood, it was because he needed protection from the forces of Bastion's Zero Tolerance and then the sentient Cerebro. He hadn't really gotten along with the other members of the Brotherhood and after those threats were dealt with, Calvin left the Brotherhood in disgust, hoping to start a normal life.

That, however, was easier said than done. Calvin had long since permanently absorbed the powers of the original X-Men. Among those powers were large, angel like wings, clearly marking him as a mutant. Needless to say, he couldn't find a job if his life depended on it. Rejection after rejection embittered him, and in a fit of depression Calvin had decided to rejoin the terrorists known as the Brotherhood of Mutants.

His timing couldn't have been worse. Within a week of rejoining, techno-enhanced birds, of all things, attacked the Brotherhood. The battle had been fierce, short, and ugly. Within minutes, Calvin was left broken and bleeding on the floor in a pool of his own blood, fading in and out of consciousness. An X-Men team, which one Calvin couldn't have known in his state, had come and gone, taking the Toad and leaving behind the scent of burned flesh. They had overlooked Mimic, so close to death he may as well be dead.

Calvin felt a chill go down his spine and slowly spread across his body, and thought so, this is what death feels like.

As Calvin lost consciousness for what he expected to be the final time, oddly enough his thoughts were of others. He only wished he could prevent others from making the same mistakes he had made.

"There he is, friend Frank. Caliban senses mutant not mutant Mimic is still alive."

"...Alive? He's an ice sculpture, Cal," Calvin heard a harsh voice state. Joy swept thru his body when he realized that he wasn't dead. He was alive! He tried to take advantage of that fact by standing up and double-checking, but found that he couldn't move, his entire body was numb, like he was covered in ice.

"Caliban sees that, but Caliban senses he is alive. Caliban's senses have never lied to Caliban before," a voice said. It sounded like that of a small child, wavering despite the fact that it should be certain. Caliban knew the voice as well, had X-Force come to save him?

"Well, Cal, let's crack this nut and see if there's something inside," the harsh voice said. Calvin

felt powerful hands grab his chest and started to shake him like a rattle. Calvin's vision swam and he saw ice fall off of his body. The powerful hands stopped and stood him up. Calvin tried to stand, but almost immediately started to tip back as blood rushed to his head and his eyes attempted to adjust to the light. A clawed hand grabbed him by the shoulder and held him up.

"Mr. Rankin, you're a hard man to track down," the harsh voice said. Calvin's vision cleared, and he finally saw the man to whom the voice belonged. The man talking to him was easily in his sixties, but still had a powerful build and was wearing combat fatigues. The oddest thing about him was that both his arms were cybernetic. The man helping him stand Calvin recognized as the morlock Caliban. "Name's Frank Bohannan."

"What happened to me, and what does X-Force want with me?" Calvin asked as his mind swam. Calvin was having trouble making sense of anything at the moment, other than the fact that he wasn't dead.

Frank stifled a laugh. "You're a little behind the times, son. Caliban isn't a member of X-Force and hasn't been for a while. As for what happened, I'm not sure. When me and Cal got here, you were just an ice statue."

"I mimicked Wolverine's healing factor a long while back, and from what you've told me and what I've seen, I'd guess his healing factor must have merged with the powers of Iceman to save me," Calvin explained, having finally gathered his wits. "Makes sense, water is a source of life."

"If you say so, son. You fit to travel? I've got a transport and we need to scam before SHIELD gets here to clean up the brotherhood," Frank explained.

Calvin stretched his entire body, working the kinks out of his neck while expanded his wings to their full length of sixteen feet. "With this new lease on life, I feel like I can do anything!"

"Good to hear, son. Now follow me." Frank said as he led Mimic out of the Brotherhood's hideout. "Because America's facing a problem that I need your help with."

Crash Pad, New York

"Eddie, you just gotta do it!" Johnny Galo, better known as Ricochet, said to his best friend Eddie McDonough, otherwise known as Hornet. Eddie was busy typing away on one of the huge computers that dotted the Warrior's Crash Pad.

"I can't!" Eddie replied. "I'm busy!"

"Eddie, it's a party at the Alpha Omega fraternity house! Half the students of Empire State University are going to be there!"

"Then no one will miss me," Eddie replied.

"What could possibly be so important that you couldn't come?"

"Gee, I don't know Johnny, homework maybe?" answered Eddie.

"Cripes, you sound like you're in high school! Come on, live a little!"

"And barely pass any class like you? No thanks, Rico."

"What's Johnny bugging you about now, Eddie?" Mattie asked as she entered the room.

"He wants me you come to some frat party, though God only knows why," Eddie answered.

"Because, you have to be with someone to get in, and my girl Kathy's out of town for the weekend," Johnny explained.

"Then take me!" Mattie said. "I don't have any plans for tonight, and it sounds like fun!"

Eddie and Johnny gave each other a concerned look. "Umm, I'm not sure that's such a good idea. I mean, you're a high schooler and this is a college party..."

"So you don't like me, is that it, Johnny?" Mattie snapped. "I'm good enough to watch your back, but not good enough to take to a party, is that it?"

"It's not that!"

"Then what is it? We're teammates, don't you trust me to handle myself?"

"..."

"Well?"

"Okay, fine. You can come," Johnny said, throwing up his hands in frustration. "The party starts at nine. I can't promise you'll get in though. The Frat boys might not like the idea of a high school chick at the party." I hope, he thought to himself

Alpha Omega Fraternity House

Much to Johnny's displeasure, the fraternity member watching the door had no problem whatsoever letting a high schooler attend the party. With a lecherous smile, to Johnny's mind anyways, the guy at the door let them pass

"Okay, Mattie. We're here to have a good time, but some words of advise, trust no one," Johnny

stated. "I go to this school, and I don't trust anyone. Read me?" Johnny looked towards where Mattie had been standing only moments before, to see that she was gone. "Crap." Johnny resisted the urge to search her out, and turned his attention towards the party. He was here to have fun, after all, and Mattie was a big girl. She could look after herself, right?

"...and then I said 'at least I can drive!'" Franklin Brown said with a wicked smile, his arm around Mattie's waste. Franklin, or Frank as he liked to be called, had introduced himself to Mattie and volunteered to show her around. Mattie, enamored with the atmosphere, didn't know how to say no. It was just as well, because Frank seemed nice enough and had already introduced her to a dozen of his friends. Mattie took a sip of her coke as she took a moment to enjoy at least being close to the center of attention for once.

"Can you guys point me to the bathroom?" Mattie asked, excusing herself.

"Sure, it's down the hall, third door to the left," Frank said.

"Thanks, can you hold my coke?" Mattie said.

Frank had to resist smiling. "Sure thing," he said as she handed it to him.

As Mattie made her way towards the bathroom, she noted that there wasn't a single boy here she was interested in. That always seemed to be the case, she sighed.

"Man, can you believe that piece of tail?" One of Frank's friends asked. "Barely anything in between her ears!"

Frank reached into his pocket and grinned. "Gift horse, my man. You know what they say about that."

Johnny made his way thru the crowd, oblivious to the appreciative stares of the many well-endowed young women. Something just didn't feel right. What he couldn't tell, but he didn't care either. He searched the crowd, looking for his friend. He felt like an idiot, but that was a small price to pay to make sure everything was all right.

"I feel like crap," Mattie muttered as Frank led her upstairs towards an infrequently used room in the frat house. Mattie's world was swimming, doubling over as she tried to complete the simplest thought, as well trouble standing, let alone thinking about where Frank was leading her. She vaguely remembered her light-headedness starting after she came back and finished her drink, but she couldn't be certain. In fact, her mind was so foggy she couldn't even be certain of her own name, let alone anything else. Frank and Mattie moved unobstructed into a room at the end of the hall. Frank opened the door and led the wobbly Mattie in, and closed it. The slight **-click-** of the doorknob somehow almost brought her back to her senses.

"Nooo..." Mattie protested feebly as Frank laid her down on the bed. Somewhere in the back of

her drugged mind, she realized Frank's intentions now. "Stop..."

Frank chuckled, and started to unbuckle the belt to Mattie's pants. "Stop? Baby, I haven't even started. But gimme a sec..."

Next: Hyde and Seek, Part 2

All they want to do is change the world.

They are a band of young heroes drawn together by a knowledge of what's right, and a willingness to take on the battles their adult counterparts won't.

Welcome to the battlefield...



#9

“HYDE AND SEEK”

Part 2

Written by Daniel Ingram

Alpha Omega Fraternity House

"Here spider, spider, spider..." Johnny Gallo, sometimes known as the mutant hero Ricochet, whispered to himself as he rushed thru the halls of the Alpha Omega Fraternity House at a frantic pace. He was searching for his friend Mattie Franklin, a high schooler whom he, like an idiot, had brought to a college party, and wasn't meeting with any success. It wasn't like searching for a needle in a haystack. It was like searching for one specific needle in a pile of other needles.

"Okay, I'm only going to find her one way, and it's a long shot," Johnny thought to himself. He pressed his back up against a wall where he was out of the way of the many partygoers, closed his eyes and concentrated, reaching inwards. Ever since he was fourteen years old, Johnny had possessed a danger sense that had saved his neck more times than Johnny could count. It was like having a direct line to a guardian angel, twenty-four seven. If Johnny needed to be warned of any danger, he was, easy as that. But now, Johnny didn't need it to warn him about danger, he needed his danger sense to find someone for him, and he wouldn't take no for an answer. Johnny opened his eyes, and started walking on instinct. His instincts quickly led him upstairs and towards the end the hall to a locked door.

"Sonofabitch," Johnny snarled at himself as he kicked the door in. He saw Mattie lying prone on a bed with her eyes glazed over and her belt unbuckled with some boy's hands at the side of her pants, trying to pull them down.

"What the..." Franklin Brown didn't get a chance to complete his sentence before Johnny's fist smashed into his face and sent him careening into the wall.

"You better stay the hell down, you sick bastard," Johnny snapped, "'cause I really want to smack your ass down again! I don't know what the hell is going on here, but I know it ain't legal." Johnny turned towards Mattie. "You okay, kid?"

"Johnny?" Mattie rasped, flickering in and out of consciousness, "I...can't move."

"I knew this was a freakin' mistake," Johnny muttered. He buckled Mattie's belt as gentlemanly

as he could, pulled her up and propped her up against himself. He then wheeled around to leave.

"Hey, come on, man!" Frank Brown said as he stood up and scrambled to get between the door and Johnny, "We were..."

"Thanks," Johnny spat. Johnny's foot flew up and struck the crotch of Brown's pants. Brown squeaked out an 'oh' as he collapsed to the floor. Johnny, propping Mattie up and ignoring the odd looks he got from his fellow party goers as he left, after all, he was all of carrying an obviously impaired young woman out of the party. Thankfully, though perhaps saying something about the social conscious of college students, no one made any attempt to stop him. Johnny with Mattie put about two blocks between him and the Frat party before he ducked into an alley.

"Come on, Eddie, be there, be there," he mumbled as he pulled his Warrior's communicator out of his pocket.

Warriors Crash Pad

Chris Bradley trashed about in his bed, desperate to get to sleep. Why he wanted to get to sleep, he didn't know sometimes. After all, the majority of his dreams were filled with nightmares about his time as a Dark Rider. But sleep was the answer to his tired body right now, and he was being kept from it. By people who were supposed to be his friends. Chris suspected that Hornet and Carlton were playing video games on the Warrior's main computer, or as Ricochet called it, 'the X box on crack'. Dreadfully tired, Chris pulled himself out of his bed, and wearing his boxers and a plain white T-shirt, hauled himself upstairs where his teammates Hornet and Ricochet were arguing, with Hindsight off to the side.

"Guys, what's going on? Some of us are trying to sleep, ya know," Chris mumbled, half asleep, and more than ready for the other half.

"Rico let Mattie get drugged at a frat party!" Hornet exclaimed while pointing a finger at the silver haired mutant.

"What! How did you let that happen?" Chris demanded, now fully awake.

"I didn't let her get drugged," Johnny said defensively, "and can we bust my balls later? What are we gonna do about Mattie?"

"The medi lab down stairs is fully equipped, and says she's in no danger, but I think that we should take her to the hospital," Carlton suggested.

"But what if while they're running their blood tests, they find out about Mattie's powers?" Johnny asked, "then what?"

"And what if the med scanners are wrong, and something happens to her?" Hornet replied.

"What do we do then?"

"If the scanners say that Mattie is fine, then she is fine," a cold voice stated, cutting thru the argument like a knife. The four young men turned to see Night Thrasher standing behind them with his arms crossed and though his face was hidden behind a helmet, everyone present could tell his eyes were narrowed and his face was contorted in anger. "Those scanners are some of the best money can buy, and were designed for laymen use."

"Hooboy." Ricochet muttered.

"If you're wondering, I know everything, Johnny. I gave standing orders to Carlton to contact me in an emergency, and this certainly qualifies," Night Thrasher spat. He looked towards Hornet and Carlton, "Leave, now." Night Thrasher then looked towards Bolt. "Chris, go back to bed. I'll try to keep the noise down."

The three hesitated for the briefest of moments, before giving Ricochet sympathetic looks and leaving. Night Thrasher pointed yet another accusing finger (in Johnny's opinion, anyways) at him and snarled. "Go wait for me in the meeting room, or else."

Night Thrasher turned his back to Ricochet, and stalked towards the medi lab.

Mattie Franklin carefully sat up from the medical bed Hornet had placed her on and rubbed her temple. Whatever that guy had slipped her was beginning to wear off, thankfully.

"Feeling better?" A voice asked in the most sincere voice possible that still made Mattie's blood run cold. She knew that voice.

"I'm...okay, Thrash," she answered sheepishly

"Then maybe you could explain to me what the hell you were thinking?" Night Thrasher spat, making no attempt to hide his anger.

"I... I thought I was just going to a party!" Mattie said defensively, "It's not like I wanted this to happen!"

"Then how did it happen? How did you allow yourself to ingest a sedative designed for the express purpose of rape!" Night Thrasher demanded.

"I...asked a guy to hold my drink," Mattie muttered. She realized in retrospect her (incredibly huge) mistake, but at the time it didn't seem to matter. The guys were really nice and very friendly, after all. Only now did she realize why they were being so nice, "it was a stupid mistake, I just didn't consider it at the time."

"And have you even considered what might have happened to your teammates? What if while

you were drugged, you happened to let slip the fact that you're Spiderwoman? You could have revealed the secret identities of the entire team and we would never have known it until it was too late!" Night Thrasher spat. "Did you even consider that!"

Mattie was in tears now, and all she could manage to say, in a slight whisper was, "I'm sorry."

"So am I. Make a mistake like this again, and you're out of here," Night Thrasher said as he left the medi lab.

Ricochet fiddled with his hands nervously as he waited for Night Thrasher. It wasn't the inevitable chewing out that he was expecting, rather he was concerned out Mattie. What if the drug had some reaction to her powers?

"She's fine," Night Thrasher deadpanned as he entered the meeting room, answering Ricochet's unasked question. "And I have only one question for you Johnny."

Ricochet gulped, "Only one?"

"Yes, did she offer sex?"

The question completely floored Johnny. Of the things he expected Night Thrasher to ask, that wasn't even on the list. "Excuse me?"

"Did Mattie offer sex in return for you taking her to that party?" Night Thrasher

Johnny, still somewhat floored by the question managed to stammer out, "What? No way, man! What the hell makes you think that?"

"Because that's the only reason I can think of for you being so stupid," Night Thrasher explained. "Just what the hell were you thinking! I thought you were smarter than this!"

Ricochet rubbed his temples as Night Thrasher continued to relentlessly berate him, until Ricochet finally said, "Shut up."

"Excuse me?" Night Thrasher snarled

"Shut up. I nearly got a friend raped; you think you can possibly make me feel worse about this situation than I already do? You're wrong. So whatever punishment you have in mind, just spit it out. I'm more than willing to take it."

Night Thrasher snorted, "No punishment, this time. But if you're this stupid again..."

"I'm off the team," Ricochet finished.

"If you're lucky," Night Thrasher stated coldly. "Be ready to explain what happened tomorrow. According to the medical scanners, the roofie your friends slipped Mattie is a new and improved version. We're going to find the source, and shut them down. Hard."

Interlude - Virginia

Danny Hunter collapsed to his knees as his body demanded rest and his lungs burned for air. He was exhausted to say the least, and the grueling day had barely begun. The negator collar strapped to his leg kept his mutant powers dormant, thus making him helpless against his captors.

"Get up, you worthless punk," a voice stated. Danny felt a huge hand grab him by the shoulder and heft him up to his feet, "we still got a few miles left. You and your girl friend won't be allowed to slack off for a single step, either."

Danny looked up a little farther ahead where his girl friend, Lorna Kangston, a beautiful brunette of fourteen years of age, was standing. Lorna was being screamed at by a female staff member Lucia Callasantos for being lazy, but Danny knew the truth. Lorna had fallen behind to stay close to him. Even so, poor Lorna was in tears because of Ms. Callasantos.

As Danny picked himself up, he steeled himself. One way or another, he and Lorna were getting the hell out of this place. And so, he prayed no one noticed the small, jagged rock he had hidden in his shoe.

Warriors Crashpad

To say the Warriors usual meeting was emotional would be an understatement. After learning what had happened to Mattie, the team was thirsty for blood, Crux in particular.

"We need to burn these bastards!" Crux declared. Her costume was a full body suit with fire emblems on one side and fire on another. At the moment, her body was literally smoking in rage. The other Warriors had to back away from her to avoid her heat, "How dare they do something like this to her, I mean to women!"

"I have to agree with the spirit of that statement," Hornet stated. "I mean, isn't this what the Warriors are about? Fighting the fights no one else will?"

"That's exactly what we're about," Night Thrasher stated, "and that's what we're going to do today. Hornet, you and Ultra Girl will squeeze the frat boy who drugged Mattie. The rest of us will be stirring up trouble for pushers today, see if we can turn anything up. According to the medical scanners, the roofie Mattie was slipped had to have been made by a professional."

As the team filed out, Mattie took a second to pull Johnny aside. Swallowing the lump in her throat and began, "Look, about last night..." and then she ran out of words.

Johnny rubbed the back of his head as he attempted to say something. "Yeah, I wanted you to know..."

They looked each other in the eyes for a long moment before Mattie finally said, "Let's just say both of us screwed up big, it'll never happen again and we're still friends," Mattie suggested.

"Works for me."

Empire University

Franklin Brown limped along the sidewalk that led to his dorm room from the library. The shot from last night still hurt, though not as much as his pride. He was angry that that silver haired bastard had interrupted him.

"Excuse me, could I have a word with you?" a feminine voice stated from above Brown. He looked up to see a stunning blond woman in a body-hugging suit. Suzy set down in front of the drooling college student.

"Sure babe, about what?" he stammered out. Franklin wished someone, anyone was around to see him talking to this drop dead gorgeous woman who had just stepped down from the sky.

Suzy smiled and grabbed the boy's crotch, "This." Then, with about as much effort it took an average person to flip a quarter, Suzy catapulted Brown high into the air. He screamed for all he was worth. The would be rapist was only air borne for a few seconds before Hornet caught him and set him down on the roofs of a nearby dorm.

"You guys are freakin' crazy, I ought to call the cops!" he shouted.

"We're not making a mistake," Hornet said flatly as he stood five feet away from Brown. Brown was frozen in place while Hornet slowly began circled him, like a shark gauging its prey.

"Mistake?" Brown asked. Hornet replied with a sharp right cross that sent Brown sprawling.

"Mistake," he repeated. "See, when we were told that you were using roofies on unsuspecting women, we decided to go with the classic good cop bad cop routine. Ultra Girl drew good cop," Hornet activated his wrist laser and aimed it at the ground near Brown's foot. "Want to see my bad cop?"

"You're crazy, man!" Brown screamed as he backpedaled away from the burning laser. Try as he might, he didn't get far. Hornet kept it within two feet, and closing slowly, of Brown's manhood.

"No, but I am curious as to how someone who never passed a chemistry class had such high quality drugs in his possession. Do you happen to have an answer?"

Several answers and a few vague threats about future repercussions later, Hornet and Ultra Girl were heading back to the Crash Pad via their flight abilities.

"Man, Eddie, that was some cool acting!" Suzy smiled as they flew thru the air. "I got that idea from a movie I was an extra in, I didn't think that would actually work! You could teach me a thing about acting!"

"I...I'm just really ticked about what happened," Hornet said bashfully, "I'm not really that mean to people."

"Don't sweat it, Eddie. I wanted to tear that guy apart myself," Suzy answered as she swooped under Eddie, looking him in the face, smiling and flashing her pearly white teeth. "Still, that was some pretty good acting. Maybe you could give me some lessons sometime."

Reaching for a collar that didn't exist, Eddie managed to stammer out a 'sure thing'.

Hells Kitchen, later

Standing on top of a roof with his team, Night Thrasher surveyed the building across the street from their position. According to the information they had gathered, across from them was the birthplace of the sedative that was slipped to Mattie and, according to some sources, the birthplace certain other designer drugs as well. But there was still a big problem.

That, was all the New Warriors knew. They had no idea who was running this lab. They had no idea who was funding it. All they really knew for sure was one particular drug was being manufactured there.

"So, what's the plan, boss man?" Ricochet asked.

Night Thrasher already knew the plan, at least the usual Warriors plan. One of the more stealthy members, (i.e. Night Thrasher) would infiltrate the building, recon what threats there were and report back. But that wasn't possible with Night Thrasher's current armor, and there weren't any members on the team that Thrasher thought were experienced enough to undertake the mission alone. Which didn't leave a lot of options.

"We'll take the direct route. Frontal assault," Night Thrasher declared.

"Are you sure that's a wise choice?" Bolt asked.

"Only choice," Thrasher answered.

"Enough talk!" Crux declared as she activated her flame powers and floated into the air, "These men has been free long enough. It's past time we dealt with them!"

"Alright then, lets do this by the numbers then," Night Thrasher stated as he activated his boot jets. "Turbo, carry Bolt and Ricochet. Ultra Girl, take point with me. The rest of you follow behind."

Within moments, the young heroes exploded thru the walls of the drug factory, greatly startling the chemists within.

"No body move!" Night Thrasher ordered. The Warriors spread out, securing the chemists quickly. The chemists had fear written all over their face, though the Warriors didn't seem to be the source.

"Who are you people working for?" Night Thrasher shouted, half expecting no answer.

"What's this?" a voice that sounded like stones grinding together boomed. "The New Warriors? I was so hoping to see my old friend, the man without fear."

The Warriors' eyes darted around, searching for the source of the voice. They found nothing, and the chemists grew more fearful. The Warriors would later realize the reason why they couldn't find the source of the voice was because it was in their minds.

"Who's there?" Bolt asked

"Who? Why, simply a lowly scientist who was interested in the dark side of his own mind," as the voice continued, Ultra Girl, Hornet and Turbo carefully flew about the room, searching for the source of the voice. "But now, now I've been paid to explore the darkness of others. Kindly observe the demonstration."

The New Warriors screamed as one as their most secret nightmares came to life before their very eyes. Bolt was attacked by his victims from his time as a Dark Rider, Spiderwoman was besieged by horrific images of the future, Turbo was confronted by the decaying body of her best friend, Michael Jeffries and on it went, as all the Warriors were brought face to face with their darkest fears.

Hornet squeezed his eyes shut, "This..."

Suzy looked at her blue skin and said "...isn't..."

"...real!" Ricochet shouted as he forced the images out of his mind. Ultra Girl, Crux, Night Thrasher, Hornet, and Turbo followed suit, driving the invading force out of their minds. Whoever their foe was, he was by no means an experienced, or even powerful, telepath.

"That was ugly," Suzy muttered as she rubbed her head to clear the images.

"Uh guys? Bolt and Spiderwoman aren't doing so well," Hornet stated. The team looked towards their friends, who were writhing on the floor in terror. Bolt's horror manifested in an electrical storm that kept the others at bay. Thankfully, he was a safe distance from his friends.

"What is wrong with them?" Crux asked.

"Spider girl told me once she could catch glimpses of the future, maybe something went haywire during our Freddy attack," Ricochet suggested.

"And Bolt?" Ultra Girl asked.

"Don't know." Ricochet replied, but Turbo did. She didn't have to be a genius to realize that Bolt was being tortured with the images of his time as a Dark Rider

"Is that your best shot?" Night Thrasher demanded aloud, ignoring Spiderwoman and Bolt's plight until he knew what they were dealing with, "show yourself before we tear this building down!"

In response to Night Thrasher's threat, the ceiling above him cracked exploded downwards. Night Thrasher, used to depended on his own senses (which were dampened while wearing this particular armor) and not the sensors in his current armor didn't realize what was happening until a large, green figure landed on top of his, smashing Night Thrasher into the cement floor and cracking his high tech armor.

"Oh good God..." Hornet gasped as he saw the figure that had defeated their leader. The figure was hunched over and his face looked like it was two sizes too small for the body it was attached to. His teeth were crooked and disordered, and he had an incredible sneer on his face. Though he was wearing a sweat-covered tee shirt and baggy brown pants, everyone recognized him instantly. He was a man beast who'd fought legends, a man who'd stymied Thor himself.

"You're not Daredevil, no," Mr. Hyde stated, "but you'll do. My thirst for violence being what it is, well, you'll just have to do."

Next: Remember when I promised the most brutal battle in M2K? Well, that's next issue. It's the New Warriors against a foe who's held his own against some of the mightiest Marvels around. It won't be pretty

All they want to do is change the world.

They are a band of young heroes drawn together by a knowledge of what's right, and a willingness to take on the battles their adult counterparts won't.

Welcome to the battlefield...



#10

“HYDE AND SEEK”

Part 3: The Brawl of it All

Written by Daniel Ingram

Hells Kitchen

"You're not Daredevil no," Mr. Hyde sneered, "but you'll do. My thirst for violence being what it is, well, you'll just have to do."

The man beast know as Mr. Hyde leaped forward at the young heroes, intent on barreling them over and thus making them easy prey. Thankfully for the Warriors, Ultra Girl possessed more courage than even she knew. Without a second thought for her own safety, the Kree Hybrid shot forward like a bullet and smashed into Hyde. Hyde easily possessed greater strength, but he had foolishly deprived himself of any possible leverage. Suzy knocked the behemoth out of the make shift drug lab and out into the street.

"Rico, Hornet, come on! Ultra Girl's gonna need help!" Turbo snapped. With Night Thrasher down, command instinctively fell upon her shoulders, "Crux, stay here and see if you can snap Spiderwoman and Bolt out of their nightmares!"

"But you need me with you!" Crux protested.

"Do as I say!" Turbo barked before she flew off. The order was more to protect Crux, the least experienced Warrior, than to help either Bolt or Spiderwoman, and both ladies knew it.

Turbo, Ricochet and Hornet rushed out the hole Ultra Girl created when she smashed Hyde out of his hideout. Suzy was busy dodging debris turned projectiles by Mr. Hyde. Thankfully, Hyde's great size meant that Suzy could see everything he threw at her coming a mile away.

"I hope you guys got an idea about how to stop this hygiene nightmare," Suzy said as she dodged a trashcan Hyde threw at her.

"Just one, hit him with everything we have!" Turbo exclaimed. The air powered heroine blasted Hyde with two hundred mile per hour winds. Hornet peppered the villain's right side with laser fire while Ricochet nailed the left with his stun discs. Hyde, for his part, spread his arms out

wide, taking the assault in stride, and laughed a deep glutinous laugh. It was laughter that could only come from the mind of the truly depraved.

"We have so got to start coming up with better plans," Ricochet muttered

"Please tell me this isn't you at your finest, Warriors," the sick scientist said sincerely. Hyde, while still under fire, walked over to an SUV that he, like most of America, had purchased for one depraved purpose. As easily as some men push their hands thru water, Hyde plunged his hand into the hood and grabbed the engine block.

"Guys! We need to st..." Was as far as Hornet got before Hyde spun around, and using the SUV as a boxing glove slash baseball bat, swatted the young hero away like the insect he took his name from.

"Hornet!" The three Warriors screamed in unison as their friend was thrown thru the air and out of sight. Their concern for their friends plight distracted them from stopping Mr. Hyde from grabbing another SUV and repeating the same process.

"Your friend was the lucky one," Hyde snorted as he lightly tapped the SUV attached to his fists together. With a bestial roar, Hyde charged the three Warriors. The three back peddled as quickly as possible while still dodging Hyde's blows. Hyde swung his weapons like a mad man (for indeed, that's what he was). Whereas Turbo and Ultra Girl managed to get out range, but Ricochet wasn't quite so lucky.

"I'm dead, I'm dead, I'm dead."

That thought echoed thru Ricochet's mind while two of the world's most popular automobiles tried to decapitate him. Ricochet ducked under a strike that would have broken every bone in his body, and leaped over another swing that would have turned him into a red smear. Fear was racing thru Ricochet's mind, but surprisingly it didn't hinder his performance one bit. He was beyond that now. Ricochet ducked under another swing and then dove between Hyde's legs, trying to buy himself some time.

"Mickey, we gotta do something!" Ultra Girl declared as she and Turbo watched Hyde and Ricochet clash. Both women had been all but forgotten in this super hero remake of David and Goliath.

"I know. Suzy, use that move Thrash taught you on Hyde. I'll grab Rico," Turbo ordered.

"Yeah, take the easy job why don't you?" Suzy muttered. The two women swooped down with Ultra Girl in the lead. She landed on Hyde's shoulder and smashed her hands over his ears. The hulking scientist screamed in pain, and dropped to one knee. Suzy flew straight up, and Turbo quickly air lifted Ricochet out of the way.

"Thanks ladies, but I think you just pissed him off," Ricochet stated. The Warriors were about twenty feet away from Hyde, trying to think what to do next. Even at that distance though, the young heroes could almost feel his breath on their face.

"Like he liked us to begin with." Ultra Girl waved a hand dismissively, "Hello! He's trying to kill us!"

Almost on cue, Hyde stood up, shook his head and looked at the Warriors.

"Looks like it's time for round two," Ricochet muttered as Hyde again charged. This time though, a laser appeared from seemingly nowhere and struck Hyde near his left eye, causing him to stumble back.

"Ed...Hornet! You're okay!" Suzy exclaimed. The other armored Warrior descended, looking in far better shape than his friends had hoped. True, parts of his armor were dented and misshapen and he had a bleeding lip, but he was alive, and that's what mattered.

"We need to focus on his soft parts. If we try to match him muscle for muscle, we'll lose," Hornet snapped

"Understood robo cop," Ricochet said with a raised eyebrow. Eddie was beginning to act different while in the Hornet armor, and it concerned Johnny. However, this was hardly the place to fret about slight personality changes.

"I don't think you'll want to get close to me," Hyde spat. A moment later, he unleashed another telepathic assault, again forcing the Warriors to fear their worst nightmares. This attack was no more powerful than the first, and the Warriors could have fought it off in time.

Mr. Hyde, however, had no intention of giving them that time. He stalked slightly forward, and threw his arms out wide with the SUV's still attached. And then, laughing wildly, Mr. Hyde smashed the two vehicles, and their completely full gas tanks, together.

The subsequent explosion rocked every building in a three-block radius and sent shrapnel flying about like leaves in a hurricane.

Crux heard the explosion, and she went to work trying to bring Spiderwoman back to her senses with an even greater sense of urgency than before. Her new (and pretty much only) friends could be dying right now, and Crux would be damned if she let that happen, even if she had to fight Mr. Hyde by herself.

Sadly though, it was looking more and more like that would be the case. Bolt was generating too much energy to even approach, so that left Spiderwoman, who was blabbering something about 'days of future past', Warsaw and something about a man named Kang.

"Spiderwoman, wake up! We need you!" Crux said desperately as she shook Mattie.

"No need, no difference...no hope," Mattie said, her eyes glazed over. Crux guessed that Mattie was slowly coming back to reality, but in a daze. That was barely a marginal improvement. Crux could only think of one thing to do.

Crux turned off her temperature powers, and pressed her lips to Mattie's passionately. Mattie's eyes flew open, and after a brief pause, she pushed Crux away.

"What...was that?" Mattie demanded.

"Never mind, we have a job to do," a voice wracked with pain stated. The two looked to see Night Thrasher fighting to get to his feet. His armor was cracked all over, the glass visor that protected his eyes shattered and what little flesh the two young women could see was covered in blood. But it was what they saw in his eyes that made them instantly fall into line. Night Thrasher was pissed, and there would hell to pay for anyone that stood against him.

Ricochet groaned as the world started to shift back into focus. The explosion knocked the wind out of him, but luckily no shrapnel impacted him. His jacket and parts of his costume had some black marks and his entire body hurt like a sonofabitch, but he was otherwise fine. Ricochet picked himself up and almost immediately, Ricochet brought his hands up to cover eyes from the huge bonfire that was roaring where Hyde once stood.

"Hey, are you okay kid?" a rough voice asked. Ricochet turned to see an older man in a police uniform approaching with a much younger partner. "What happened here."

"Mr. Hyde happened," Ricochet coughed. "You guys didn't happen to bring the Avengers with you?"

"Dispatch says they're out on a mission, same with..."

"The Fantastic Four," Ricochet finished. "Why do the big guns always choose to save the world when we need them?"

"Got me kid," the officer replied. "Is the area safe yet? You kids put Hyde down?"

"Ricochet looked towards the bonfire grimly, "Probably not. Why don't you guys close this area off? We'll call when we're sure it's okay."

"Understood," the older policeman said.

"Chris, are you sure about this, just letting some punk kid stay here while we stand around with our thumb up our ass?" the younger officer asked as they turned to leave.

"Cory, have you even read the repeat supercriminal offender list? Our dead bodies wouldn't even slow Hyde down," the older officer answered, "If these Warriors think they can stop him, then it's their funeral. We'll be back with bigger guns when Code Blue gets here."

"Wow, guess they actually respect us. Scary," Ricochet muttered as he watched the two police officers leave.

"Ricochet? I could use a hand," a voice weakly called out. Ricochet turned to see Suzy Sherman sitting down, her back propped up against an old abandoned car. Johnny might have been relieved to see his friend were it not for one important detail. In her right calf, a jagged piece of metal was sticking out. Suzy was breathing heavily and sweating like a pig, meaning actually looked better than was, and that was saying something.

"Suzy! Shit! Hold still, I'll get you to the hospital, you'll be okay!" Ricochet exclaimed as he rushed to his friend's side.

"I don't... need a hospital. Just for you to hold down the leg," Suzy gasped in a low tone as Ricochet knelt down beside her, "I'll pull it out myself."

"Are you crazy? We need a doctor to fix this, not someone who plays one on T.V!"

Suzy grabbed Ricochet by the collar and brought him to eye level, "Let me explain something. I heal...really... fast. Bullets bounce off my skin. I won't make it to a doctor before this thing becomes a permanent part of me. So please, hold. Down. The. Leg."

Ricochet looked at the wound, and could already see it sealing. Nodding, Ricochet put his hands on Suzy's leg and pushed down. Suzy gripped the metal, and after saying a prayer to gods she barely knew, pulled with all her strength.

Suzy let out a silent scream as the metal became dislodged from her flesh and bone. The wound spurting blood for a moment before dying down and sealing closed. Suzy slumped back against the car she was using to prop herself up against, fighting unconsciousness.

"Ricochet, are you alright?" Hornet asked as he and Turbo returned. "We were blown away by the explosion."

"And it looks like we missed all the fun," Crux stated as she, Spiderwoman and a heavily damaged Night Thrasher descended. Spiderwoman was towards the back of the group, looking away. Before anything else could be said, laughter filled the air.

"Over? Over! Hyde hasn't even started," a voice boomed. The team looked towards the raging fire Hyde had created, and saw the demented scientist standing at the edge of the raging fire with a flaming club hung over his shoulder, "Are you kiddies ready for round two?"

"I've got a plan guys, but I need Ricochet and Night Thrasher to hold off Hyde while I explain it," Hornet whispered, "I don't think Hyde will just let us stand here and confer."

"They'll need my help," Suzy said as she forced herself up. Ricochet was about to protest, but Hyde let out another roar that left no room for debate. Night Thrasher's eyes met with Ultra Girl, and a plan of action was instantly agreed upon.

Night Thrasher activated his boot jets, and he and Ultra Girl streaked towards Hyde at a furious speed. Hyde pulled his club back to do his best impersonation of Sammy Sosa, but he was far too slow. The two human missiles collided into him and sent him flying backwards. Suzy broke off the charge after several seconds, but Night Thrasher kept pushing his armor, determined to make Hyde pay for humbling him like he did. If he were in his regular armor, Night Thrasher would have had a plethora of passive aggressive weapons, like gasses and sonics, among others, to deal with Hyde. But there was no room for that in this armor. A more powerful armor ironically seemed to make him less powerful, less effective...

So caught up in cursing his decision to upgrade, Night Thrasher didn't see the tell tale signs of Hyde preparing a powerful haymaker until it was too late. Hyde's meaty fist smashed into Night Thrasher's armored chest sending the urban hero smashing into a nearby building. Thrasher struck the front wall and slumped to the ground. He didn't get up.

"You Warriors are pathetic!" Hyde sneer as he waved his club in the air, "Why, I bet mutant turtles could give me more of a challenge!"

"Go to hell, you twisted bastard," Ricochet spat as he leaped at Hyde. As far as he was concerned, any possible humor had left the situation. The man who almost got a friend raped was cutting a swath thru all his other friends, possibly maiming them with barely a care. And no matter what it took, that ended here.

"Twisted? I hope you're not just now realizing that," Hyde laughed as he swung his club at Ricochet. Johnny fluidly ducked under the weapon and struck Hyde in the crotch with all his strength. Hyde only laughed as he brought his club up, and then smashing down to where Ricochet had been only moments before.

"No, not really. I bet the only reason you made those roofies was because you're a sick freak," Ricochet stated as he nailed Hyde with a roundhouse kick to the center of his chest.

"Ah, an educated gambler," Hyde sighed with a stained toothy smile as he lashed out at Ricochet. Like always, Hyde was too slow by a large margin, "the little money that venture brought in paled in comparison to the joy it brought me knowing that I had helped so many young women... loosen up a bit," Hyde explained conversationally.

Ricochet fought an incredible battle for self control for a split second. He knew getting enraged would be his death, and that his role in Hyde's defeat was only to be a distraction. Ricochet leaped back, tucked his legs into his chest, and let fly two stun discs in opposite directions. The two discs ricocheted off nearby buildings and struck Hyde in his eyes at over two hundred miles per hour. Hyde screamed in pain and dropped his club, and clutched his face like a wounded child.

"You'll pay for that, you little bastard!" Hyde shouted. After several long seconds, Hyde uncovered his face, his vision restored. The first thing he saw amused him greatly.

Standing not ten feet away from him was Turbo, her arms straight out and her atomic powered fans pointing directly at him.

"Surrender Hyde. We won't ask again," Turbo stated. Hyde only laughed.

"Okay, you asked for it," She said, "I hope like hell this works," Turbo thought to herself. She activated her fans full force at Hyde. Hyde again began laughing (the idea that these rookies thought they could take him down to begin with was incredibly amusing to Hyde), but quickly stopped when he realized he couldn't breath. Turbo's winds were blowing the air by too fast

"Spiderwoman! Now!" Hornet shouted. Spiderwoman, standing next to Turbo, unleashed a barrage of psi webbing at Hyde's face. Within moments, Hyde's head was encased in the sticky psychic substance.

"Crux! ..."

"I know what to do!" the elemental mutant shouted as she froze Hyde's head. Hyde was swooning back in forth in the street, the lack of oxygen making it extremely difficult to bring his incredible strength to bear. But everyone present knew he only needed a fraction of that strength to start this mad drama all over again.

"Spiderwoman? He's all yours," Hornet smiled.

"With pleasure," Mattie landed one Hyde's shoulders and unleashed the most powerful venom bolt she ever created. Gritting her teeth, she pored it on, drowning Hyde's head in the emerald energy. Mattie didn't stop firing for a good two minutes before she finally let Hyde kneel over. The man brute collapsed like a sack of bricks on the street. The Warriors tensed, half suspecting Hyde was merely lulling them into a false sense of security. However, after a few minutes, the Warriors realized that their sense of security was indeed very real.

"Okay, spill Bill Nigh. What did we just do to Hyde?" Mattie asked.

"I suspected that Hyde's new found telepathy increased his vulnerability to electricity due to his increased use of his gray matter," Hornet explained. "Using Spiderwoman's both psi webs as a medium and the water of Crux's ice combined with oxygen deprivation, your venom bolts managed to pierce Hyde's thick...umm...hide and stun his brain."

As Hornet finished explaining, a hoard of police cars swarmed the area, along with a several guardsmen.

"Don't know about you guys, but I'm too tired right now to play twenty questions," Ricochet said. "So how about we make like Zorro and scam?"

"Sounds good to me," Turbo stated. "Thrasher's already slipped away to lick his wounds, and we should do the same. Just one question, though."

"What's that?" Crux asked

"Where's Bolt?"

The team quickly did an extensive search for their electrical teammate, but said search turned up empty.

Later that night

Chris Bradley stumbled down the empty street, his face red with tears and a meager, discarded trench coat hiding his Bolt costume. The images kept playing thru his mind. Men, women and children, their bodies quaking as electricity pored thru their body, the smell as their bowels released during death and stench of burned flesh. The images, the memories kept playing thru his mind like a broken record, and there was nothing he could do to stop it. And no so deep down, he wondered if he should stop it. Maybe he deserved to suffer, deserved to be tortured...

"Chris!"

Bolt turned to see the last person he wanted to see. The person, ironically, he was head over heels for. Gina Stockbridge, his high school mentor.

"Go away Gina!" Chris shouted. He tried to run, or even jog away but the tears in his eyes made him unable to do anything other than walk just a little quicker. Gina closed the distance between her and Bolt in seconds.

"Chris, what's wrong?" Gina asked, making no attempt to hide her concern as she saw Chris' face. She gingerly put her hand under Chris' chin, but the electrical mutant roughly pulled away.

"Get away from me Gina, you don't know what I've done!" Chris shouted as he started to back away.

"You mean Seattle?"

Chris felt the air rush out of his body, shock written all over his face. Gina was standing several feet away, but to Bolt, she was right in his face.

"I was there, Chris, and I saw you and the others," Gina took a step towards Chris, "I was visiting my aunt at the time." Another step. "I saw the Dark Riders kill hundreds. I saw an electrical monster kill children." Another step. "I saw everything," Another step, "I know the truth." Another step, and now Gina was face to face with Bolt. Chris, for his was waiting for the other shoe to drop. Gina gently took the dumbstruck mutant's hand and pressed it to her cheek.

"What truth is that?" Bolt stammered out

"That you were forced to do what you did. I don't see that monster I saw that day in Seattle today. I didn't see that monster yesterday, or the day before. I can see it in your eyes, Chris; you're a good man who was forced to do horrible things. Nothing more."

"You're..."

"Wrong? Then kill me, Chris," Gina said, still holding Chris' hand to her face. Chris only then realized that all he would need to do was manifest his powers slightly to strike her down, "if you're so sure you're a monster, then prove it."

Chris whipped his hand away, "I killed innocent people! I..."

"And you're every bit as much a victim as those people, Chris! Don't torture yourself!"

"What else can I do?" Chris said weakly

"Heal, move on. I'll help you every step of the way, Chris, but don't let the monster who forced you to become a monster claim another victim."

"I...I don't know if I'm that strong," Chris said, his eyes cast to the ground. Gina took his hands into hers,

"Maybe, maybe not. But we are."

Dwayne Taylor put away the directional mike he had been using to spy on Chris for half the night. He was convinced now that Bolt, for all his troubles, didn't represent a threat of betraying the team, and was a genuine victim of brainwashing. The guilt Chris carried obviously had to be dealt with, and from what Thrash could tell, it would be. If Chris wanted more help, then all he would have to do is ask. But at the moment, there were more pressing concerns. Night Thrasher pulled out a small, disposable camera that he had tucked away on his person for emergencies. Before heading back to the Crash Pad to dump off his damaged armor and track down Bolt, he'd gone back to Hyde's lab to gather evidence. Hyde obviously had a backer, and Thrash was going to run them to ground.

Several days later, The Business Offices of Power Brokers, Inc

"...And due to a terrorist attack on the E.U, our expansion into Europe have slowed somewhat, but are expected to pick back up." Jacob Greyson informed the other four members of the board of Power Brokers, Inc. Greyson paused for a moment, as though he were privy to a sudden burst

of information only he could perceive. "On a note closer to home, our long expected guests have finally arrive."

No sooner had Greyson said that than the oak doors of the boardroom flew open, revealing the New Warriors with Night Thrasher, his armor fully repaired, at the lead.

"We'd like to have a word with you about Robert Louis Stevenson," Night Thrasher snarled.

"I'm told he's a wonderful writer," Greyson smirked. The rest of the board chuckled, "in fact, I did a report about him in college. The cliff notes don't do him justice."

"That's the name Calvin Zabo used when applying for a research grant from your company," Night Thrasher continued, ignoring the smart remark, "thing is, he still used his real social security number and provide no other references."

Greyson shrugged dismissively. He glanced at his wife, Fiona Greyson before looking back at Night Thrasher. "Like I told the police, our back ground check failed to turn up anything. We've fired the company that provided the check, of course. Is that the only reason why you're here? Hyde?"

"Is there another reason to be here?" Turbo demanded

"Well, we did provide a biological weapon and a considerable arsenal to the Sons of the Serpent, and sold teleporters to the terrorist organization known as Ultimatum, and The Church of Humanity," Greyson said matter of factly. The Warriors looked at each other in confusion, stunned that Greyson would confess so readily.

"Greyson! Have you lost your mind!" Charles Fox demanded. Fox, a stocky man who looked more like a professional football player than a business man, stood up in outrage, "Do you realize what you've done! You..."

"Sit," Greyson said calmly, waving down with his hand and Fox obeyed. He fidgeted, like some invisible force was holding him in place.

"You've just made the mistake of a life time." Night Thrasher hissed.

"Oh have I? If you'll check your armor, you'll find that all recording devices have been shut off," Greyson grinned. He wasn't the least bit afraid of the collection of heroes standing not twenty feet away. And why should he be? He was easily more powerful than all of them combined. "If you have no more heroic declarations, I'll thank you to leave, post haste."

"This isn't over, Greyson. We'll stop you. I'll drag you down myself!" Night Thrasher warned, before leading his team out. Greyson leaned back in his plush leather chair and chuckled. No, it wasn't over yet by any means. In fact, it had just begun.

Interlude

Danny Hunter and Lorna Kangston waited at the Metro Station anxiously. Their escape had been a very near thing indeed. After damaging his negator collar so that it no longer functioned, Danny managed to surprise and overpower the staff member on guard during the night. This allowed him and Lorna to flee, and maybe find help. As the bus marked New York pulled up, Danny let out a sigh of relief. He was one step closer to success.

Notes

Well, in my defense, all I can say is that I tried. When I started out as the writer for Warriors, I had great plans. But as time went on, I came to realize that I was more concerned about the ideas, like establishing Power Brokers, Inc and the concept that shows up in the next arc, than the characters. That's okay for some series, but not for New Warriors. Never for New Warriors. Every issue was a struggle. So, after much soul searching, I decided to burden someone else :P I'll still be here for one last arc, but it'll be scripted by the should be or possibly already is famous Nate Charles. Thanks for reading, and you'll be able to find me on Force Works and an upcoming Muse mini series.

-Daniel Ingram

All they want to do is change the world.

They are a band of young heroes drawn together by a knowledge of what's right, and a willingness to take on the battles their adult counterparts won't.

Welcome to the battlefield...



#12

“LAND OF THE FREE”

Part 2

Written by Daniel Ingram & Brent Lambert

The New Warriors stood up against the mutants who ran X-Camp. Cowering behind the New Warriors were Donny and Lorna. Ultra Girl had a feeling it would come down to this and she had made it just in time before the fight broke out.

“Give the kids up and we won’t have to hurt anybody!” Archer exclaimed his body turning into pure energy as a threat. The New Warriors didn’t want to mess with him.

“And let you torture them again? Please,” Ultra Girl mocked getting in the stance to attack one of the X-Campers head on. This was going to be a fight the New Warriors wouldn’t soon forget. The Kree girl was sure of it. They were about to fight a bunch of mutants. When they group together they tended to do some ass kicking.

“It’s obvious you have all allowed yourselves to be influenced by these delinquents. We’re taking them back with whether you like it or not,” Mimic proclaimed as he fired off an optic blast at Hindsight hitting him square in the chest and sending flying back into a wall.

“Attack!” Night Thrasher yelled as he leaped into the air and kicked Caliban in the head. The former Morlock went skidding across the ground and before he could respond Night Thrasher was on top of him.

“Get off me!” Caliban yelled as slammed his knees into Night Thrasher’s midsection and sent him flying backwards into a wall. The former Horsemen jumped up to his feet and charged at Night Thrasher. He rammed his shoulder into Night Thrasher’s chest and the leader of the New Warriors could feel his armor crack.

“You’re out of your league here!” Night Thrasher yelled as he activated his armor and sent electricity flowing throughout the whole of his armor. 50,000 volts went straight into Caliban and with a sizzling cackle he went flying right into the back of Hornet. The mutant’s body was still conductive when he hit Hornet from behind. The electricity took them both out.

Cursing under his breath Night Thrasher moved forward into the fray of battle. He didn't want to take Hornet out, but he had to get Caliban off of him. If only he had more control over this armor maybe things would be a lot easier right now. He was supposed to be the leader of this team, but he was having a harder time controlling himself than his teammates.

"Don't ever turn your back from me!" Mimic exclaimed proudly as he covered Night Thrasher in a thick block of ice in no time flat.

Bolt sent the electricity from his hands and hoped it would reach its intended target. Kylun was too fast though and easily dodged the electrical attack. Moving gracefully amongst the medical equipment the New Warriors had laid out Kylun made his way up to Bolt. Getting right in Chris's face the beast man growled and kicked Bolt where the sun didn't shine too often.

Falling to the ground Chris managed to wheeze out, "Bastard."

Kylun jumped up slightly and kicked Bolt in the head sending him into the land of unconsciousness.

"You should not have stood in our way child."

"And you shouldn't go for low blows," Ultra Girl said as she came up behind the former Excalibur member and kicked him dead between the legs. Kylun let out a ghastly howl and fell to the ground struggling for breath.

"Man I really can't stand punks," the Kree girl said dusting off her hands when a blue optic blast struck her square in the chest. It didn't affect her in the slightest though. Standing before her was the former X-Forcer, Syphon.

"Kylun is the furthest thing from a punk you'll ever meet," Syphon exclaimed as she flew forward and hit Ultra Girl square in the jaw. The woman went flying into a nearby cabinet and held her jaw slightly. With a punch like that Ultra Girl could have sworn...

"Oh shit. She copied my powers," the Kree woman said with a surprising realization.

"Yea trick. I got your powers and I intend to use them," Syphon said charging forward like a raging bull and slamming her shoulder into Ultra Girl's chest. Grabbing hair Syphon flung her opponent over her back and slammed her into the ground. The whole Crashpad shook under the massive force. Ultra Girl was out cold.

Ricochet dodged the claws of Thornn gracefully and kicked her in the side of the head. The feral woman went rolling out of the way and Ricochet planted his feet in her back. Thornn cried out in pain as she turned and slashed Ricochet across the chest with her claws.

"Ouch! Damn didn't Mommy ever take you to the veterinarian?"

“No, but she did show me around a slaughterhouse,” Thornn growled perching down in a cat-like position. She was poised to attack.

Ricochet wasn't going to let her get the jump on him though. Leaping into the air just as Thornn pounced he sent down a rain of electrically charged disks. All of them landed on Thornn's back and sent enough voltage through her to take her out for the moment.

“You won't get away with that kid,” Mimic exclaimed as he blasted the young Warrior from the sky. When Ricochet hit the ground Calvin charged at him and using Jean Grey's TK sent Ricochet bouncing off the walls like a ping-pong ball until he was unconscious.

Standing over the defeated Ricochet's body Mimic laughed at the sight, “Poor kid. He really did try hard.”

“These guys are really kinda sad in a way,” Syphon said holding the bodies of Crux and Spiderwoman in her arms. The young girl threw them beside Ricochet. Not enough to hurt them, but hard enough so Syphon looked like she didn't care how knocked up they were.

“Lets just go. I already got Donny and Lorna. No need to cause anymore trouble,” Archer implored.

“Alright fine. Lets just go. We got what we came here for,” Mimic replied.

A few Hours Later

“Basically we just got our lungs and then some handed to us,” Night Thrasher said as he stood in front of his whole team. As the leader of the New Warriors he felt an obligation to state the obvious, but he was just as embarrassed as the rest of his team. He was no different from Mattie or Hornet.

“So what do we do now? We just lost Donny and Lorna. Who knows what they're going through at this very moment!” Ricochet exclaimed. He had barely known Donny and Lorna, but it was obvious that this X-Camp they were at was hardly a model facility. He didn't want them there anymore than he wanted those other kids stuck at that place.

“I say we go in and take down X-Camp!” Ultra Girl exploded still angered at her own powers being used against her. Syphon had used her own powers against her. Nothing at the moment infuriated the Kree girl more. Her race was hardly known for their peaceful temperaments and this Syphon had just insulted her in such a way. Ultra Girl was finding it hard to even concentrate at the moment.

“We saw what happened when we had a direct confrontation with X-Camp. That's definitely not the way to go though I do understand your frustration Ultra Girl. Ultimately, though we can't let our anger get the better of us,” Night Thrasher advised. Dwayne had to admit to himself that the

anger that was engraved on Ultra Girl's face was also in his heart. The way he had made a fool of himself in that fight was enough to drive him wild. This new armor was beginning to prove more a hindrance than a help.

"Then what should we do? Drink tea and reminisce?" Crux asked annoyed. She trusted in Night Thrasher's leadership, but Ultra Girl's way felt like the right one. Sure, X-Camp caught them off-guard once, but it wouldn't happen again. The next time they would be ready. Cristelle didn't want to say it, but she felt that Night Thrasher was afraid. She had seen how bad he got beaten.

"No, that's not what we're going to do Crux. We need information if we plan on getting the best of X-Camp. I can promise you that. What we we're going to do is go undercover," Night Thrasher said. He could tell from the expressions on the Warriors that they weren't too taken with his idea, "Look if you don't like the idea I could honestly care less. I'm the leader here and it's what we're going to do."

"So who's going on this little undercover expedition?" Ricochet asked jokingly pointing a finger at Hornet.

"Glad you asked. You and Bolt will be," Night Thrasher replied. Ricochet nearly fell out of the seat he was leaning in.

"Why us?" Bolt asked.

"Don't ask. Just follow orders on this one. I'll set up everything and while I'm doing that I want the two of you to pack," Dwayne ordered sternly.

"And what are the rest of us suppose to do? Sit on our asses?" Crux asked once again annoyed with Night Thrasher's strategy against X-Camp.

"No. You're going to be running drills till you puke," Night Thrasher said quite seriously. There wasn't any indication that he was joking and that was enough to make Hornet want to vomit right there. He could just see the endurance drills running in his head.

"Guess I'll get packing. Hope you guys have fun," Ricochet grinned pretending to wave like a Miss America would.

"Think idiot. You're going to a mutant boot camp," Spider-Woman said wanting to lift up Ricochet's foot and throwing it into his mouth for him.

A few days later

"This is just peachy," Ricochet said jabbing Bolt in the side as he pointed at the meager facilities that made up X-Camp. They were riding a bus on the way to X-Camp with other mutant delinquents. The whole ride had been rickety and full of bumpy roads in need of desperate

patchwork. Bolt had remained silent almost the entire time because one of the boys seated a few rows down from him had looked like a victim of the many he had slain in Seattle. Looking at that boy brought back a flood of memories of the terror he had created alongside Wild Child, Magik, X-Man, and Blizzard. He often wondered if they suffered the way he suffered.

That's why Chris was thankful for Gina. He couldn't say he was in love with her, but he did have strong feelings for her. For so long Chris felt like he was dead inside and he had been waiting for someone to bring him back to life. Gina was able to see that hurting in him and she had pulled him free of the darkest that he had been slipping into. Bolt's soul had felt barren and he was becoming undone, but Gina had saved him from the nothing he felt he was becoming. If for no other reason he had to care about her for that. She had thrown him a lifesaver when no one else could, not even Maverick.

"Hey man you there?" Ricochet asked waving in front of Bolt's face trying to snap him out of his daze. While Ricochet liked to try and not worry about anything he did often worry about Chris. He always looked like he was carrying a weight on his shoulders that he alone would have to bear. Getting brave Ricochet had once asked Chris what was wrong. Bolt told him there were just some wounds that time cannot heal. That had been enough to make Ricochet back off.

"Yeah I'm fine Ricochet. Just get ready. This will more than likely be intense," Bolt said as the bus came to a screeching stop.

"Pssh. I can handle anything," Ricochet said boldly.

Crashpad

Hindsight looked over various documents covering a few topics that he had a feeling had to do with Lorna. Spider-Woman was behind him and she asked, "Just what are you doing man? I know Night Thrasher gave you an assignment, but articles on twitches doesn't seem like New Warriors business to me."

"Actually I'm researching Lorna's strange behavior. She exhibited twitches, excessive bathing, and she seemed to have an extreme fear of being touched by males. Right now I'm cross referencing materials that might link all these behaviors together and give me a clue into Lorna's possible mental state," Hindsight said not once taking the time to even turn and look at Mattie.

Sighing Mattie said, "I guess I'll leave you to your work then. I'm sure you'll have some fun with it."

Hindsight laughed at the sarcastic comment, "I'm sure I will."

Mattie walked out of the room and closed the door only to find Cristelle outside waiting for her with a smile on her face.

“Looking for some company?” she asked.

Mattie shrugged, “Sure. Why not?”

“Why so down?” Crux asked trying to lean in a little closer to Spider-Woman. She could smell Mattie’s perfume and it turned her on so much that she had to fight the urge to lean over and kiss the girl. Cristelle knew why she kept persisting in trying to get close with Mattie even though the girl wasn’t even confident about her sexuality. Crux wanted a challenge and Spider-Woman was proving a worthy one.

“I’m a little worried about Chris and Ricochet,” Spider-Woman said not wanting to sound weak.

“Don’t be hun. They’re big boys. I’m sure they’ll be fine. Lets talk about more pressing issues. Like me and you,” Crux smiled.

“I haven’t the slightest clue what you’re talking about,” Mattie said playing dumb.

“Lets not get into childish games here. I know you got a thing for me,” Crux replied.

“Can’t you just drop it Cristelle? I mean is sex the only thing you think about? You’re worse than the boys I go to school with,” Mattie exclaimed becoming a bit angered at Crux’s constant pursuit of her. Folding her arms across her chest and eyeing the French girl she was hoping the point had got across.

“I like when they play hard to get,” Crux laughed as she walked away from Mattie who was shaking her head in utter disbelief.

X-Camp

Ricochet fell out on the bed next to Bolt and yelled, “ I can’t believe these bastards! Who would send their kids here?”

“I don’t know. I kinda like the strict regime. At least my abs are starting to look better,” Bolt said trying to joke, but he knew why he enjoyed this place. It was punishment and maybe subconsciously Chris felt like he needed to be punished.

“Well, when you have to carry a badge with your ass let me know how much you like it then!” Ricochet replied. All he did was call Archer a jerk and he ended up having to carry a pointy ass badge between his butt cheeks. If someone knew how to deal out punishment it was that damn Archer.

Unknown to the two Warriors, Caliban and Thornn stood outside of their room listening to the conversation.

“I know they’re from that team we fought before. Should we turn them in?” Caliban whispered.

“I smelled them too, but no. Let them stay and learn that X-Camp is no harm to anyone. Then maybe the whole misunderstanding between us earlier will be resolved,” Thornn replied.

“Agreed,” Caliban said.

As the two X-Camp supervisors walked away from the room, Bolt opened the door and stepped out of it.

“Where are you going?” Ricochet asked not wanting to be alone in the room knowing that his other two roommates would soon return. They were the epitome of the word assholes and it ached Ricochet knowing he could break their arms at a moment’s notice. He hated the fact he to restrain himself on the two jerks.

“You’ll be alright. I’ve got to go meet Kylun in his office. He wants to talk with me about something,” Bolt lied. In fact he had set up the meeting with Kylun. He needed someone to talk to. His guilt was just beginning to become too great and now images began to plague him even in his nightmares. Sometimes he just wished his whole life had been one big dream and someone was going to wake him up any moment now.

“Okay man. Just try and get back quick or you might find Zack and Jim in pieces,” Ricochet joked.

Almost the moment Bolt walks out of the building that houses his room another mutant makes their way to Ricochet. Banging on the door rapidly he isn’t quick to get a response. Ricochet figured it was his two roommates planning to pull a joke, but the thing with them that their jokes were just annoying and lacked the main element of being funny.

“If you guys think you’re giving me a weggie again...Donny?” Ricochet asked.

“Yea man. It’s me. We’ve got to talk. The X-Camp guys are planning something major,” Donny said handing Ricochet a piece of paper that had a design of some sort on it.

“Man this is insane. It looks like something a telepath would have to use.”

“Exactly,” Donny agreed, “It’s a brainwashing device. They’re going to use it to make all the kids here into their personal army. We’ve gotta stop them.”

“And we will man. Believe that.”

Kylun’s Office

“Glad to see you showed up Christopher. You said there’s something you needed to talk to me about,” Kylun said seated atop his desk. That had caught Chris off guard a bit as he expected a supervisor to be professional and seated behind his desk.

“Yes there was something I needed to talk to you about,” Chris said taking a seat.

“Well, go ahead. I’m listening,” Kylun said trying to cover up a feral snarl at the end of his sentence.

“A while ago some other people and myself did something really bad. We caused a lot of people to get hurt and I just can’t seem to forgive myself for it. I lashed out with my mutant powers in ways I would have never thought possible and I’m paying for it. My life is haunted every moment by what I did. I don’t know what to do with myself. Redemption doesn’t seem to be the answer and neither does trying to move on. It just won’t leave me alone,” Bolt said getting out as much as he wanted to say in one breath.

“Sometimes we allow ourselves to fall into the trap of peer pressure. Were these others your friends?” Kylun asked leaning forward a little bit.

“No. I didn’t even know them. We were forced into doing what we did, but still the sin bears down on me like a rock. Nothing has seemed to help,” Bolt replied.

Kylun quickly pulled out his sword and slashed Chris across the chest with it, “My sword can’t cut those who are worthy. You were controlled and what you did wasn’t your fault. You’re just as much a victim as those people that you hurt. Make sure you remember that before you go beating up yourself again.”

A voice suddenly came over the intercom. It was of the head of X-Camp, the former Commando, “We need you here quick Kylun! Those New Warriors have made their way into the camp and are herding students out even as we speak!”

“We’ll talk more later!” Kylun exclaimed as he quickly leapt through a nearby open window. Bolt cursed under his breath and knew he was going to have to meet up with his teammates.

X-Camp Grounds

Night Thrasher kicked Mimic in the stomach and sent Calvin doubling over. Quickly throwing a punch Mimic asked, “What happened to your big clunky armor?”

“Figured I’d go a bit more traditional,” Night Thrasher replied as he leapt past an ice blast from Mimic and flipped himself over the mutant’s head. Dwayne slammed two titanium nightsticks into the mutant’s face in mid-flip. Calvin went flying back into the ground blood flowing freely from his nose and mouth. Dwayne knew he didn’t have much room to maneuver since they were fighting in a mine. It was the place he had hoped to hide the X-Camp kids, but obviously the

staff caught wind of his plan. Now he was trying to fight Mimic without bringing down this old mine around their heads.

“That hurt like hell,” Mimic moaned as he rose up from the ground. He fired off a volley of red optic blasts Dwayne’s way. With skill that would make most gymnasts weep he dodged every blast except for one that hit him in the right shoulder. Night Thrasher fell back into the ground and quickly found Mimic on him pummeling him with blows.

Dwayne reached into his back pocket and produced a syringe. Stabbing it into Mimic’s exposed thigh he laughed, “That’s enough sedative to make an elephant look like he’s having a hangover.”

Mimic only managed to take two steps back before he fell unconscious.

“Maybe I should have stuck with you all along,” Night Thrasher said patting his old uniform with pride.

Trying to rise up Dwayne found himself unable to move at all. He was stuck without being able to make the slightest move. All the other New Warriors, X-Camp staff and students found that they couldn’t move either. Except for Donny and Lorna.

“It’s time to make way for the new,” Donny said cracking his knuckles as Lorna moved to stand next to him.

“I’m going to lead the X-Camp kids with Lorna here to newfound glory. We’re going to make our mark on the world of mutants and it won’t ever be erased. Now show the ‘heroes’ what you’re all about Lorna,” Donny ordered with a malicious smile.

“My pleasure,” Lorna said as she rose into the air purple energy billowing off of her.

Author’s Notes

Sorry this one took so long folks! It’s just been a very busy few months. Lets just put it that way. Anyway we’re one issue away from the conclusion of this story and I must say things are beginning to heat up. It’s been fun working off of Ingram’s plots so far and a few of the New Warriors have begun to grow on me a bit (Crux and Bolt in particular). Anyway stick around for the finale to this story and I promise to try and get it to ya faster than I did this issue.

-Brent Lambert

All they want to do is change the world.

They are a band of young heroes drawn together by a knowledge of what's right, and a willingness to take on the battles their adult counterparts won't.

Welcome to the battlefield...



#13

“LAND OF THE FREE”

Part 3

Written by Daniel Ingram & Brent Lambert

Night Thrasher and Mimic, the respective members of the New Warriors and X-Camp knew that they were in some deep shit. Here they were with both of their teams trapped in a forsaken old mine filled with children, one of which was a girl who could bring the whole damn thing down on their heads. And it wasn't like they could go toe to toe with the girl either because they could end up causing just as much damage. For both of them their main priority was the children's safety and getting them out of this cave alive.

“So,” Mimic said looking in the direction of Dwayne.

“So,” Night Thrasher replied with a look just as stern.

“You got a plan hero?” Calvin asked as he looked up at Lorna with the purple telekinetic energy billowing wildly from her body.

“We gotta get these kids out of here first off,” Night Thrasher said looking back to see all the children stampeding out like a herd of buffalo and Donny was at the lead of them. All of Mimic's worst fears came to life at that sight. X-Camp was suppose to be the place where these young children were turned around and not made to be the next Magneto or Shadow King.

“Looks like even if we beat Lorna now we're going to have a bigger problem on our hands,” Calvin said throwing an accusatory look at Night Thrasher. Him and his group of interlopers had just made life a lot harder for him.

Night Thrasher maintained his fiery glare and simply said, “We'll worry about it later.”

“You won't have time to worry about anything little man!” Lorna yelled as the dirt and stone all around the cave began to shape itself into animated stone men. Her telekinesis was the only thing holding them together and they were quickly moving towards the New Warriors and X-Camp staffers.

Looking at the creatures he was about to face Mimic made this comment, “Lorna really put some detail into these creatures. They all look very human like. In fact I would say they're all

identical.”

“I could care less how detailed they are! Just take them down!” Night Thrasher exclaimed as he flipped into the air his feet planting themselves in the middle of one of the stone men’s faces. The creature flew back into the ground and fell to pieces. With Dwayne making the first move the battle with Lorna had been joined.

Bolt and Archer bombarded a group of the stone men with a combination of light and electricity. The creatures fell apart as easy as paper was torn, but they still weren’t making any kind of progress. Soon as they knocked one stone man down another two rose up. They would have to take out Lorna and do it fast.

Ultra Girl made her way to Lorna punching through the stone men and throwing them around like bowling pins. Gritting her teeth she threw her shoulder forward and charged her way through the stone men until she was only a few yards from Lorna. It was then that she got a call in her communicator.

“Hindsight this better be good,” Ultra Girl said tapping her ear to activate the communication device.

“It is Suzy. I know why Lorna was so on edge. In all my research her behavior coincides with abuse by a male figure in her life. My assumption would be her father,” Hindsight explained.

Ultra Girl felt like smacking herself in the head at that very moment. It was all so obvious now. Why she freaked out whenever a guy touched her and why she nearly bled herself to death while taking a shower. And looking at these stone men it was even more obvious. They were all molded to look like her father!

“Lorna stop this! I know your father hurt you, but it doesn’t have to be like this,” Ultra Girl yelled over everything else that was going on. Suddenly, the stone men stopped fighting and simply became statues.

“How? Who...” Lorna asked confused. She hadn’t told anyone but Donny and he wouldn’t betray her. He couldn’t of!

Suzy moved closer to Lorna and said, “Donny is only using you. I know you’re with him because he believes you, but trust me he’s only exploiting you for his own good.”

“Liar!” Lorna yelled as she lifted up a rock and flung it at Ultra Girl so fast that it cut a chunk out of her shoulder. The pain was needless to say less than pleasant.

Suzy’s heart pounded and her vision was doing twists and turns, but she couldn’t give up. Suzy clamped her hand over the wound and looked towards Lorna. Despite what the girl had just done, the look wasn’t one of hatred or anger, but of concern, “I’m actually glad you did that,” Suzy gasped, “See, you hurt me, and I bled as a result.” Suzy extended the hand that she had been using to cover the wound. The hand had so much blood on it, one would swear it was straight

from a Slasher flick, “the human body’s funny like that. It reacts in certain ways no matter what you want. Doesn’t mean it’s your fault, and it doesn’t mean you’re a bad person because of it.”

For Lorna Stockbridge, that was the two by four that broke the camel’s back. Her powers faltered as she began weeping hysterically. She might have fallen to her death were it not for Ultra Girl, who swiftly caught the young woman and lowered her to the ground, “It’s okay now Lorna, we know. And I promise you, you’ll get the help you deserve.”

Night Thrasher and Mimic came out of the cave prepared to fight the children who were now more than likely following Donny’s lead much like Lorna had. Instead the scene they found made them both look at each other and smile.

At the center of a circle of cadets was Donny and two other cadets tied up and gagged shut. Calvin walked up to one of the cadets and asked, “What the hell happened here?”

“None of us wanted to follow Donny. We were just trying to get the crap out of that cave. He did manage to turn two kids though,” the blonde haired, blue-eyed boy replied.

Ricochet almost had laughed hysterically at the sight of the two that Donny had managed to turn. It was his two jerkwad roommates, Zack and Jim. The day couldn’t get any more perfect for Ricochet at that moment.

“Life does have a bit of justice after all,” Ricochet said to himself with a grin. Looking Zack and Jim’s way he flicked them both off and walked away laughing.

“So who’s the guy in charge around here?” Night Thrasher asked Mimic figuring that the mutant was indeed the head of X-Camp.

“That would be me. The name’s Frank Bohannon,” the older man said extending a hand out to Dwayne.

“I’m Night Thrasher. We need to talk about X-Camp,” Dwayne said taking the hand and shaking it.

The Crashpad (The Next Day)

“Frank agreed to do better screening of the children and take a softer approach. All in all I would have to say we did good work. Though there were some instances when we almost slipped up and we’re going to work on improving those areas ASAP,” Dwayne reported as he stood at a podium in front of his whole New Warriors team.

“You’re going to have to do it without me Dwayne. I finally got some things off my chest and I need to take a breather,” Chris Bradley said rising from his seat and heading towards the door.

Night Thrasher didn’t even attempt to stop him and just looked on as Chris left.

“Aren’t you going to say something?” Crux demanded.

“If he’s found some peace I’m not going to try and interfere with that. I could tell Bolt had something on his mind since joining this team. It’s about time he got over it. He knows when to come back. I trust him,” Night Thrasher replied.

“Can you believe that he just left like that?” Ricochet asked Hornet as he flipped through one of his friend’s engineering magazines.

“It was quite the shock, but stuff happens like that. He’s gotta take his own path though the way he decided to take it is a little questionable,” Hornet replied when the phone rang. With lightning speed Hornet grabbed the phone and put it to his ear.

“Hello? What? Of course. We’ll be there as soon as we can,” Hornet said as he hung up the phone. All the color was drained from his face.

“What’s wrong Hornet. You looked like you just talked to Hannibal Lecter.”

“That was Prodigy on the phone. He needs us. Just us and he says it’s important.”

Ricochet suddenly turned very serious, “All right. Then lets go and see what the big yellow guy wants.”

Bolt walked along the road making his way to the railroad station and he felt each step was a little lighter. Everything around him looked a little brighter and every child’s innocent smile he saw felt a little brighter. It was as if a great burden had just been uplifted off his shoulders and thrown out the window crashing to whatever fate awaited it.

I think I need to see David. The last time we talked I don’t think we ended on good terms.

Just then a green light blinded Chris and he fell backwards hitting the pavement. The light kept growing stronger and everyone that was looking on saw Chris Bradley disappear into thin air.

Author's Notes

This is my last New Warriors and I can say that it has been a fun ride. I'll be happy to work with Ingram again in a scripter/plotter relationship again sometime in the future. Anyway look for Hornet and Ricochet in the new Slingers series and Bolt will appearing over in Pathetix. Look out for those two. And check out next issue which will be the beginning of Eric Faynberg and David Ingram's run on this title. It should be something explosive. *-Brent Lambert*