

Home-Made Heroes
Issue #1
We Can Be Heroes

The sun was shining brightly and there was not a cloud in the sky above the sprawling metropolis, the sky itself was the richest of blues.

Down below the streets themselves were filled with the hustle and bustle of the everyday lives of its citizens, all of them oblivious to what was happening above them. All far too busy caught up in their own little worlds, trying to get to that all important meeting, trying to get the kids to school on time, trying not to be late for that first day at work, so not one of them noticed the black figure which streaked across the sky at great speed leaving a black speed line trail behind it.

At street level a small group of uniformed schoolgirls all dressed smartly and clean, showing that they come from families with money were lead by their teacher into the Burger2go fast food restaurant.

Inside the very full restaurant the children queued with their teacher along side the other people, all apart from one young girl who stood out on her own, looking up at the ceiling. Her facial expression full of concentration and uncertainty, hanging around her neck on a fine gold chain is a small gold pendant in the shape of a lightning bolt.

Suddenly the ceiling of the restaurant caved in, brick and metal started raining down onto the panic stricken diners who jumped and fall out of the way, cries of help and confusion rung out for a few moments there world was thrown in to chaos but as suddenly as it all started, it all became calm and started to go quiet, as the diners noticed through the clearing dust clouds the sight of an all pitch black figure with burning red eyes.

The figure turned and started to move towards the counter of the fast food establishment, the crowd watching motionless as the featureless body walked up to the sheltering staff who cowered behind the counter and leaned forward it's facial features containing just an impression of a nose, a mouth.

“Food”

It demanded its voice like grating marble.

“DARKHALF STOP!”

Came a commanding second voice full of strength.

The black figure called Darkhalf turned around to find himself facing a tall muscular man with an appearance of about 30. Blonde hair, wearing a black eye mask, a single piece costume coloured green and black, with green fin shaped gloves and green knee high highway man style boots.

“Cody!” Pronounced Darkhalf

“Darkhalf stop this, come back to us”

“NO”

Replied Darkhalf as jets of black mass shot out from him, hitting Cody in the chest knocking him backwards.

Meanwhile, as all hell broke out in the restaurant, the young pendant-wearing schoolgirl used the commotion caused by the two battling super foes to fight way from the rest of the schoolgirl group and into the ladies bathroom.

“I know it’d been awhile but I think Captain Cody could really do with my help”

She mumbled to herself.

Once inside and alone she took hold of her lighting pendant and uttered the following words.

“Black skies roll, black skies thunder, black skies light”

A flash of brilliant white lightning struck at the spot where the young girl stood and as the smoke cleared the form of the normal everyday looking girl had been transformed, she was still a young girl but now she stood there clothed in a one piece gold and red trimmed dress with double L initials pinned to her chest which holds a short red cape draped down her back.

With super speed she returned to the main dinner. On her return she was greeted by the sight of Captain Cody and Darkhalf locked in battle, Darkhalf forming objects of black mass directly from within his body, Captain Cody using his speed and strength to repel the attacks whilst also trying to protect the crowds of people huddled away, Suddenly one giant burst of black mass thrown out by Darhalf knocks Cody flying through the brick wall of the restaurant and out into the street embedding Cody into a parked car.

Cody forced himself out of the car and dropped to the ground leaving an impression of himself within the bodywork. Darkhalf levitated a few inches off the floor and glided out into the street following Captain Cody.

Darkhalf drew himself up to where Cody was bent down on his knees trying to get himself together before the next attack.

“This ends now”

Calls Darkhalf the flames of this eyes burning fiercely.

Suddenly a brilliant flash of light erupted from behind Darkhalf and a force strong enough to propel him across the street hit him, sending him crashing into a store window. People panicked and fled, Captain Cody looked up shocked to find a face from his past staring back at him.

“Kathy?”

Questioned the shocked hero, as standing before him is the figure of the young girl.

“It’s ok Cody Lightning Lass is back and will save your butt.”

Replied the junior superhero.

“Kathy no! Leave NOW”

Calls Cody picking himself up off the ground.

Meanwhile, as the two old friends became reacquainted, Darkhalf had already picked himself up and prepared to strike back at Lightning Lass, Cody looked across the street just as Darhhalf forms another black mass and aimed it across at her Cody looked back at Lightning Lass and called out to her.

Lighting Lass reacted quickly and flew up into the sky above as the mass of blackness hit the restaurant smashing into the brickwork causing more damage.

Cody flew up into the sky to join Lightning Lass.

“My God Kathy...how?”

Questions her friend.

“I don’t think NOW’s the time or place for explanations James”

Suddenly Cody was hit from behind, the force knocking him to the ground. On impact asphalt was sent flying up in all directions, high above him a large black hand was formed by Darkhalf encasing Lightning Lass.

Cody flew back up towards them at speed, knocking into Darkhalf, sending him spinning.

Darkhalf’s loss of concentration caused him to release his grip on Lightning Lass.

Cody drew himself up next to Kathy, both hovering in mid air for a second until suddenly and without warning Kathy herself is struck by lightning, she cries out in pain but manages to keep her place in the sky.

“Kathy after all these years your power is still unstable?”

Cried out Cody

“I’m all right, I’ll be fine”

“No you’re not, your powers are beginning to become unstable again, the electrical discharge you resonate is becoming uncontrollable!”

“Will have to discuss this later, his coming back”

She replied pointing behind Cody who turned to see a black figure moving back towards them at great speed.

Both Captain Cody and Lightning Lass started to fly away both Parallel to each other hoping to lead Darkhalf away from any populated areas. Cody turned his head to look behind them and saw Darkhalf gaining on them.

“His gaining? Isn't he?”

Asked Lightning Lass as Cody's attention returns to looking ahead.

“Yes”

Replied Cody looking across to her “He will, my speed is no match for my brothers, as his strength is no match for mine”

Darkhalf continued to gain on them as all three super powered beings covered miles of distance within seconds of time.

It was then, as Darkhalf got ever closer, that Lightning Lass come up with a plan.

“Cody I have an idea”

She called out, her voice projected by her super powered body so that she is heard even over the force of the speed at which they are travelling.

“At the point of the next electrical discharge hurl me back at Darkhalf, if his strength isn't as strong as yours the surge of power may knock him out, or at least slow him down.”

“No way, what about you?”

Replied a concerned Cody

“I'll be ok, hopefully I'll be able to channel the energy”

“It's to risky Kathy!”

“We've got to do something he's getting mighty close”

Replied Kathy looking back over her shoulder witnessing the pursuing Darkhalf getting closer by the second.

“Come on Cody, it's our only chance! Look the sky's getting black, there's going to be a lighting strike any time soon.”

Cody looked up towards the blackened clouds as the rumblings of thunder began to build.

“Ok”

He agreed sounding uneasy, but it went unnoticed by Lightning Lass.

Behind them the black figure of Darkhalf paid witness to seeing his prey come to a sudden stop in mid air. Kathy folded her self into a ball as Cody took hold of her by the collar and swung her backwards at first, then drew her around himself and launched her at Darkhalf.

He had no time to move as the figure of Lightning Lass crashed into him, at the same moment the heavens opened and a bolt of lightning struck both of them.

A terrible cry went out, an amalgamation of the pair of them screaming out in pain, which filled the air. The black, lifeless, body of Darkhalf rocketed to the ground, impacting like a meteorite and shaking the earth as he crashed into an empty field.

Cody speed his way over to his friend who, luckily, managed to stay afloat in the air. Still holding onto herself tightly as if in pain, hovering with her eyes closed, head down.

“Kathy?”

Questioned Cody his concern for his friend going unanswered.

“Kathy are you ok?”

He questioned again.

Slowly she opened her eyes and lets go of herself, straightening up and replied after gasping.

“I’m ok, just a little hot under the collar is all!”

She gave him a forced smile and Cody returned her gesture.

Both flew down to check on the unconscious Darkhalf, whose smoking body was lying on it’s back embedded into the ground in a small crater.

Cody looked down to his wristwatch, which had a built in radio transmitter and pressed a sequence of buttons before speaking into a tiny microphone.

“Capture complete, Darkhalf awaiting pick up”

“Nice gadget” asks Kathy

“Comes with the job”

Cody replies.

For a moment there is an uneasy silence between them before Cody finally speaks his mind

“How long has it been since you were last on the scene? Where have you been all this time Kathy?”

“It’s been about ten years” She replied

“What happen to you? Where have you been?”

“It’s a long story James and it’s one I don’t want to go into for now, but one thing for sure you haven’t aged a bit, you look the same as when I saw you last. You never did get the hang of that aging thing like the rest of them”

“The same could be said about you too Kathy, you haven’t aged a day”

“Not physically anyway”

“What do you mean?” Asks Cody.

“Doesn’t matter James...How’s Janice?”

“She’s Fine”

Again the pair found themselves at an uneasy point, which luckily was broken by the sound of a plane in the distance.

‘Looks like Darkhalf’s lift is here’

Kathy looked off into the distance and spotted a small dot on the horizon.

“How can you tell that’s them?”

“I can see it is”

“Sorry, forgot about the super vision thing!”

“Kathy come with me the scientist’s at Project Seven could help you, you could learn to control your power better, find out who you are.”

“You asked me that before James and the answer is still the same, no way am I letting a bunch of white coats poke and prod me about. You can be their test bunny, not me.”

“Ok Lightning Lass”

She smiled.

“What’s up?”

“It’s only now! That I can hear how dated that sounds”

“Would you like to come back to the house? I’m sure Janice would like to see you again after all these years”

“Are you sure?”

“Of course”

The streets are clean and tidy, a green tree filled suburban dream, all the houses had immaculate lawns and painted fences. Everyone says hello to each other in this neighbourhood, there is no litter, no graffiti and no crime. This is the small American town that is the home to America’s favourite hero, Captain James Cody.

In the cloudless blue sky above the small town the two figures of Cody and Lightning Lass hover above one of the perfectly kept houses. They gracefully land on the front lawn.

“Wait here” Cody, asked Kathy

As he turned away from her and walked towards the house.

“Janice? Janice we’ve got a visitor”

A weaker, older voice from inside the house called back.

“Who is it James?”

“An old friend”

Cody turned back around and waved Kathy over.

Both Cody and Kathy went inside the house, which is a brilliantly well kept home, no dust, no dirt everywhere cleaned and polished.

A figure moved in the kitchen and the pair of heroes made their way through the living room towards it.

“Janice look who’s here”

The figure turned around, she an elderly lady, aged in her early seventies, she looked at James and smiled.

“So who’s our guest?”

Cody moved to one side and Janice’s eyes are met by the figure of Kathy.

“Hello Janice, it’s been awhile”

Kathy said gently.

The face of Janice Cody stopped smiling.

“GET OUT” She cried.

Cody stepped over to Janice and put his hands on her shoulders.

“Janice what’s wrong?”

“Get out Kathy, GET OUT” She screamed

James turned round only to see that Lightning Lass had already gone. He walked over to the living room windows and looked up in the sky above, a faint speed line could be seen braking through the clouds and a small dot in the distance preceding it.

He looked back over to Janice who moved into the living room also and has picked up a picture frame and is looking at the photo contained within.

The photo is of a wedding. Standing in the photo is Captain James Cody the same age in the photo as he is now standing in that very room. Next to him is a young beautiful woman in a wedding dress, they are holding onto each other and smiling. Surrounding them is a group of wedding guests, one of which is Lightning Lass. The young woman in the wedding dress is Janice.

“Do you still remember our wedding day?” She asked James quietly.

“Of course I do”

Janice smiled and repeated his last two words “I do”

“Janice, tell me what’s wrong?”

He crossed over to her and put his arms around her. Instinctively she returns the gesture holding onto him as tight as she can with her aged arms.

“Did you see her?”

“What are you talking about?”

“How young she looks”

“Janice I love you”

She looked up at him.

“I love you too James, which is why I’m leaving you”

“What...Why?”

“Look at us”

“What?”

“You don’t see it”

James looked down at her with questioning eyes.

“I don’t want you to see me die James”

“You won’t”

“I will, but you.... You’re...special”

She held her hand up to his face and stroked his smooth skin as a tear ran down her own.

The two held onto each other, the hero and his wife.

But the moment was spoilt as the radio transmitter on Cody’s wrist started to bleep

He stepped back from her and looked down at his wrist, the watch contains a small television screen on which the figure of an army general appeared.

“Captain Cody you’re to report to headquarters immediately for debriefing”

The picture fades out as Cody looks up to Janice.

“I’ve got to go Janice, but we will talk later”

He took hold of her and kissed her onto top of her head.

“I love you”

And then at speed he was gone and Janice stood alone.

“I’m sorry James, but I not going to be here”

She held on tight to the picture frame that she was holding all the time, watching as her husband flew off.

“I love you too”

The interior of the headquarters for Project Seven was like some underground bunker, computer sealed doors leading to top-secret research and development projects, scientists in white coats filled the gleaming spotless hallways.

In one sealed off room the figure of Captain Cody stood in front of a large Plexiglas window, next to him was the army general who called Cody on his wrist Transmitter,

a group of scientists stood huddled around them as other white coated assistants moved around the room.

Two senior scientists stood off to one side, watching everybody's moves.

"So here he is, who's going to be the one to tell him?"

Questioned the first white coat to the other one.

"I will, I've worked the longest on the Project Seven operation, no one knows Cody better than I do"

The two white-coated scientists walk over to Captain Cody and the general.

Cody's attention was drawn to the two scientists as they reached him.

"Dr King, Dr Nicholson what's wrong?"

"Cody, General, we've got some news about Darkhalf" replied Dr King

"About time you two got some results with this"

Barked the General to the pair of scientists.

"It seems that Darkhalf's powers are diminishing...that he is...depowering"

"What you talking about Doctor?" Asked Cody

"He's becoming human again"

"You mean becoming a normal again?" Questioned the General

"That's great news Doctor it's what we've been trying to achieve for a long time now"

"Yes it would be great, but there is one problem James"

"What is it Doctor?"

"You see, I'm afraid your brother's dying"

Cody turned and looked through the Plexiglas window that separated the two halves of the room. Staring at the figure of Darkhalf strapped down on what looked like an operating table surrounded by medical machines and computers, which were plugged into him at various parts of his body. White coated lab assistants filled the room watching and looking at the readouts and, for a second, Darkhalf's eyes opened and he looked at Cody but this time they no longer burnt red with flame, but were clear and normal before reclosing.

END OF ISSUE ONE.

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