The Golden Protector, a character in a blue and gold suit with a glowing blue visor, is running through a city street at night. He is holding a glowing golden staff. The background shows city buildings, a full moon, and a street lamp. A trash can with a broken bottle is on the sidewalk.

IN HIS MANY YEARS OF ADVENTURING, THE GOLDEN PROTECTOR HAS TRAVELLED THE WORLD, FOLLOWING A GOD-GIVEN CALL TO FIGHT FOR JUSTICE AND SAVE ALL THOSE IN NEED OF RESCUE.

TONIGHT, THAT RESCUE WILL COME AT A PRICE.

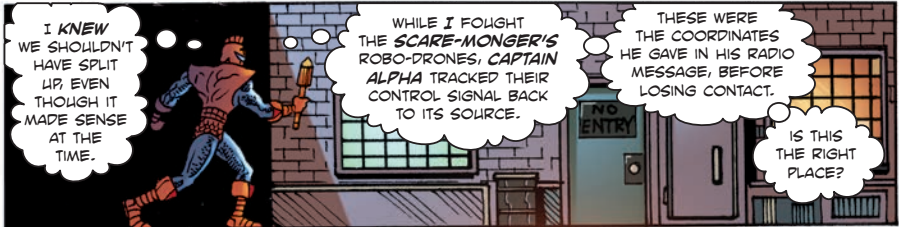
I PRAY I'M NOT TOO LATE! LIVES ARE AT STAKE!

THE GOLDEN PROTECTOR IN...

"IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO"

STORY BY RALPH MILEY, KEVIN YONG, AND ERIC JANSEN
LAYOUTS BY ERIC JANSEN, FINISHING BY STEVEN BUTLER
COLORS BY MICHAEL SUMMERS, LETTERING BY KEVIN YONG

In memory of Donald D. Ensign (1948-2014)
creator of the Golden Protector



I KNEW WE SHOULDN'T HAVE SPLIT UP, EVEN THOUGH IT MADE SENSE AT THE TIME.

WHILE I FOUGHT THE SCARE-MONGER'S ROBO-DRONES, CAPTAIN ALPHA TRACKED THEIR CONTROL SIGNAL BACK TO ITS SOURCE.

THESE WERE THE COORDINATES HE GAVE IN HIS RADIO MESSAGE, BEFORE LOSING CONTACT.

IS THIS THE RIGHT PLACE?



AH! IT IS!

THE SAME TECHNOLOGY AS THE DRONES...

KRASHH



BUT NO SIGN OF CAPTAIN ALPHA!

WHOOOP
WHOOOP
WHOOOP
WHOOOP
WHOOOP



ALARMS! SCARE-MONGER MUST KNOW I'M HERE BY NOW.

POW

NO TIME FOR SUBTLETY.



READY OR NOT, HERE I COME!

RRRIP



CAPTAIN ALPHA!

ANOTHER MEDDLING HERO? KEEP BACK! THIS IS BETWEEN ME AND MY ARCH-NEMESIS!

GIVE UP WHILE YOU CAN, SCARE-MONGER! YOU'RE NO MATCH FOR THE BOTH OF US!



WHY NOT? I WAS MORE THAN ENOUGH FOR YOU!

THE MIGHTY CAPTAIN ALPHA, REDUCED TO BEING A MERE **BATTERY**. THE MORE YOU STRUGGLE, THE MORE YOU CHARGE MY QUANTUM-DYNAMO!

WITH THE POWER I'LL HARNESS, I CAN HOLD THE ENTIRE CITY HOSTAGE!



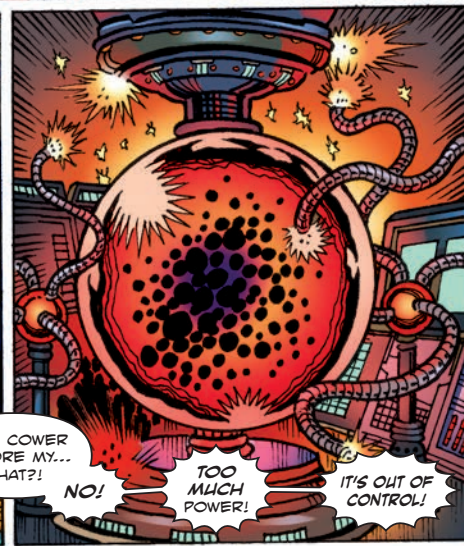
WHEN I PLAY A GAME, I PLAY TO WIN!




YOUR TURN TO LOSE, HEROES!

BEEP








NOTHING! THERE'S NOTHING ANY OF US CAN DO! MY GREATEST INVENTION... HAS DOOMED US ALL!

I TRANSFORMED CAPTAIN ALPHA'S POWER INTO A NEW FORM OF ENERGY... AND UNKNOWINGLY STARTED AN UNSTOPPABLE CHAIN REACTION!



WHEN IT EXPLODES, THE BLAST WILL BE BIG ENOUGH DISINTEGRATE THIS ENTIRE BLOCK -- AND WITH A RADIATION PULSE DEADLY ENOUGH TO POISON THE WHOLE CITY!

I... I NEVER MEANT FOR THIS TO HAPPEN!

I WANTED POWER! WEALTH! INFAMY! TO BE REMEMBERED AS THE VILLAIN WHO DEFEATED THE BELOVED CAPTAIN ALPHA!

NOT AS THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR KILLING MILLIONS!



LOOK OUT! THOSE ENERGY BOLTS ARE GETTING STRONGER!

LEAVE THIS TO ME, GOLDEN PROTECTOR. YOUR SUPER-STRENGTH CAN'T HELP AGAINST THIS ENERGY STORM.

SCARE-MONGER, HOW CAN I STOP IT?

WEREN'T YOU LISTENING? IT CAN'T BE STOPPED!

YOU SAID THIS DYNAMO WAS CHARGED BY MY OWN ALPHA-ENERGIES. WHAT IF I CONTAIN IT IN ONE OF MY FORCE FIELDS AND THEN RE-ABSORB IT BACK INTO MYSELF?

IMPOSSIBLE! THE DYNAMO CONVERTED YOUR ENERGY INTO SOMETHING NEW-- DEADLY! IT WOULD DESTROY YOU!

I DIDN'T ASK IF I COULD SURVIVE IT. I ASKED IF I COULD CONTAIN IT.

WHAT?! YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!



THIS MAY KILL ME -- BUT IT WILL BE WORTH IT IF I CAN SAVE THE CITY... SAVE MY FRIEND...

IT WOULD BE WORTH IT *EVEN* IF IT WAS JUST TO SAVE YOU, SCARE-MONGER.

GOLDEN PROTECTOR! GET HIM OUT OF HERE!

LIVE OR DIE, I KNOW WHAT AWAITS ME.

CAN YOU SAY THE SAME?



EVEN IF HE CONTAINS THE RADIATION, IT WILL STILL DISINTEGRATE EVERYTHING WITHIN THE BLAST ZONE!

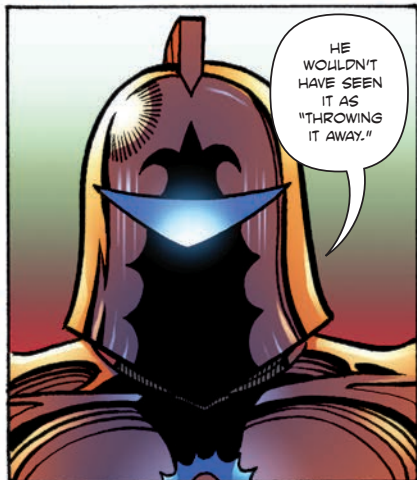
HE CAN'T POSSIBLY SURVIVE THAT!

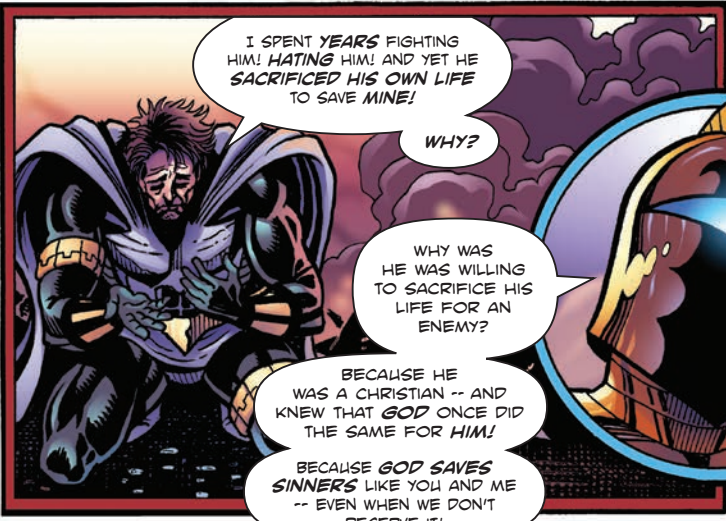
HE KNOWS.



GOT TO GIVE THEM TIME TO GET CLEAR!

LORD JESUS, GIVE ME STRENGTH...





I SPENT **YEARS** FIGHTING HIM! **HATING** HIM! AND YET HE **SACRIFICED HIS OWN LIFE** TO SAVE **MINE!**

WHY?

WHY WAS HE WAS WILLING TO SACRIFICE HIS LIFE FOR AN ENEMY?

BECAUSE HE WAS A CHRISTIAN -- AND KNEW THAT **GOD** ONCE DID THE SAME FOR HIM!

BECAUSE **GOD SAVES SINNERS** LIKE YOU AND ME -- EVEN WHEN WE DON'T DESERVE IT!

IT'S TRUE! AS THE BIBLE SAYS, "ONE WILL SCARCELY DIE FOR A RIGHTEOUS PERSON -- **THOUGH PERHAPS FOR A GOOD PERSON ONE WOULD DARE EVEN TO DIE -- BUT GOD SHOWS HIS LOVE FOR US IN THAT WHILE WE WERE STILL SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US.**" (ROMANS 5:7-8)

WHETHER THE WORLD CALLS US A HERO OR A VILLAIN, THE BIBLE SAYS THAT **ALL OF US** ARE SINNERS, BECAUSE OUR HEARTS ARE SELFISH AND BROKEN: "FOR ALL HAVE SINNED, AND FALLEN SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD" (ROMANS 3:23)

NO MATTER HOW HARD WE TRY TO HIDE OUR SINS, EVENTUALLY THE CONSEQUENCES WILL COME DUE, AND WILL BE FAR MORE THAN WE EVER INTENDED: "AFTER DESIRE HAS CONCEIVED, IT GIVES BIRTH TO SIN; AND SIN, WHEN IT IS FULL-GROWN, GIVES BIRTH TO DEATH." (JAMES 1:15)

BECAUSE **WE** CAN'T SAVE OURSELVES, THE ONLY WAY TO ESCAPE THIS DEATH TRAP WE'VE LAID FOR OURSELVES IS IF **SOMEONE ELSE** RESCUES US. AND THAT'S WHY GOD SENT HIS SON JESUS TO DIE FOR OUR SINS -- TO PAY THE PRICE WE COULDN'T PAY OURSELVES! "FOR THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH; BUT THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD." (ROMANS 6:23)

IF WE **REPENT** AND **TURN TO JESUS**, WE CAN EXCHANGE OUR SINFUL HEART FOR GOD'S LOVE... OUR GUILT FOR GOD'S FORGIVENESS... AND OUR FEAR OF DEATH FOR ETERNAL LIFE WITH HIM!

THE FIRST STEP IS TO REPENT AND BELIEVE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER LIKE THIS: "HEAVENLY FATHER, I CONFESS THAT I AM A SINNER, AND I BELIEVE THAT YOU SENT YOUR ONLY SON JESUS CHRIST TO LIVE, DIE AND RISE AGAIN TO SAVE ME FROM MY SINS. PLEASE FORGIVE ME, HELP ME TO TRUST IN YOU, AND TO LIVE A NEW LIFE WITH YOUR HOLY SPIRIT."

WE'RE NOT MEANT TO LIVE THIS NEW LIFE ALONE. FIND A GOOD CHURCH TO BE A PART OF, AND READ THE BIBLE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO FOLLOW JESUS. YOU CAN START IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, BEGINNING WITH THE BOOK OF MATTHEW.