MASSACRE AT PRECINCT 15

by Andrew Holden

DARIAN - Today the citizens of Darian mourn the victims of yesterday's horrible and baffling attack. A gruesome and malicious assault took place yesterday morning within Darian Police Precinct 15 in the Valentine district. Nine Police officers were murdered in ghastly circumstances, which may not be explained for some time to come.

The only information we have been able to verify at this time is that the officers actually killed each other. Forensic evidence confirms that the officers did in fact murder one another, however, there does not appear to be any motives. In fact, it's believed that several of the officers were good friends.

What follows is based on interviews and reports currently coming from the Police department. As more investigation occurs, some of this information may prove incomplete or false. Due to the severity of this situation, we at the Daily Darian feel it's our duty to report what information we have.

The Police investigation team currently believes that everything was business as usual at Precinct 15 yesterday morning, that is until approximately 7:30am. At that time, Officer Billy Nash, who had been reading his e-mail, drew out his baton and began viciously beating his partner upon the head. Nash's partner, Officer Jacob Daniels, was unconscious almost immediately after the savage beating began. Nash continued to bludgeon Daniels, splitting his skull and devastating his brain tissue. According to eyewitnesses, Nash shouted "Whack-a-mole" repeatedly while clubbing his partner. After thoroughly destroying the majority of Daniels skull, Nash looked up sincerely with blood splattered on his face and asked no one in particular, "Did I win the Cupiedoll?"

While there are several witnesses to this attack, there were astonishingly eight other officers that were completely unaware of this going on within 10 feet of them. These eight individuals began their own attacks almost immediately after Nash's was underway. Each attack was equally brutal and uniquely demented. Once Officer Warden had shot Detective Bruella six times in the chest, Warden proceeded to violently knock out Bruella's teeth with an office stapler. After he had successfully dislodged several teeth and collected them, Warden was heard calmly saying, "Thanks, I'll get these back to you as soon as possible." These random and inexplicable acts of violence continued for some time amongst the ten officers involved.

After the remaining attackers had turned on each other, only one was left alive. Officer Randall Hawk had been stabbed in the throat with a letter opener, but had survived. As he was taken to the hospital under police escort, he was heard screaming, "Don't take the light away! It's too dark! Don't take the light away!" Officer Hawk was admitted to Darian General Hospital and placed under security observation. After a few hours, Hawk managed to evade his security guard and escaped into the hospital. He was found an hour later in an unoccupied room by the janitorial staff. Officer Hawk had somehow managed to get hold of a surgical scalpel and apparently used the blade to slice off his own eyelids. The janitorial staff said Hawk seemed peaceful as his eye sockets bled profusely and he was saying to himself, "Now they can't take the light away. Now I'll be able to see."

These attacks were as mystifying as they were brutal. It seems that these officers somehow lost their minds simultaneously, as if they each perceived a reality different from our own. Whether this was a case of mass-hysteria or manipulation by outside forces, we may never know. Melee, leader of the Metahuman super-team The Pack, stated in an interview yesterday, "We can't begin to understand what happened at Precinct 15. We'll never know the pain and sorrow those officer's families are feeling right now. But I swear that The Pack will not rest until we've done everything possible to prevent something like this from happening again."

Police investigators are currently seeking an escaped prisoner for questioning. The prisoner had been picked up during a routine drug bust and was processed at the Police station six hours prior to the attacks. The prisoner disappeared sometime during the attack and hasn't been seen since. The police were unable to verify his true identity, but were able to uncover an alias of "Slash".

Today: Sunny – High 74 – Low 49 ----- Tomorrow: Sunny – High 74 – Low 49
PIRATE CRIMINAL CAPTURED

by James Dalemore

DARIAN - Black Betty, long time nemesis of the super-team the Challengers, was transported to Gotham City’s Arkham Asylum earlier this week. Black Betty, who was revealed to actually be Darian University Professor Elizabeth Drake, was recently captured and arrested by the Challengers after an elaborate revenge scheme of hers was foiled.

Black Betty first appeared in Darian several months ago. She and her gang of robotic pirates were executing a series of bank robberies using highly advanced technology. It’s now been revealed that Black Betty would project a holographic giant-flying pirate ship in the vicinity of her next target. This would provide enough distraction for her to utilize her teleportation technology to gain entrance to even the most secure of locations. The Challengers successfully stopped this series of bank robberies, however, Black Betty escaped. Drake resurfaced in the guise of Black Betty again a few months later to stage an attack directly upon the Challengers headquarters. Again, she managed to escape once her and the robotic pirates were defeated.

Two weeks ago, Drake returned utilizing highly sophisticated holographic technology in an attempt to defeat the Challengers once and for all. It was evidently clear during this situation that Drake was suffering from severe mental and emotional illnesses. Gone were the grandiose and pulp-style gestures and actions she was so well known for. Drake had been reduced to a dangerous and deadly individual who had lost her sanity. Several Challengers were injured during the exchange, including one member whose injuries have left them permanently handicapped.

The Challengers were able to defeat Drake, however, many questions remain as to how she funded this attack and where some of the more advanced technology came from.

Professor Elizabeth Drake was well known amongst Darian University staff as an expert in holography and a leading mind in the theoretical applications of teleportation technology. Friends and colleagues say she seemed to lead a normal well-adjusted life until about two months ago. She stopped showing up to teach classes and became reclusive. Some speculated she had entered a relationship with a shady character. She was heard on several occasions discussing a man in her life with a captivating smile.

Drake’s transfer to Gotham City’s Arkham Asylum occurred without incident.

NEWS BRIEFS

• The President of the United States of America, Lex Luthor, is schedule to make an appearance in Darian within the next few weeks. For national security reasons the exact date and location are currently classified, but will most likely be announced soon.

Luthor is expected to speak on his current tax reform and Metahuman regulation plans. Darian Mayor Thomas Wilson has announced the city is currently planning a festival to surround President Luthor’s visit.

• Darian Daily staff would like to formally welcome our cities newest Metahuman protector, the Steelgrave Centurion. Not only a superhero, Centurion is also the spokesperson for Steelgrave Industries.

Be watching upcoming issues of the Daily Darian, which will feature an in-depth study of this new local hero.
HERO “SW” SOUGHT IN INVESTIGATION

by James Dalemore

DARIAN - Officials are reopening an investigation that has remained closed for over fifteen years. British Petroleum, owners of the BP chain of gasoline stations, has asked the FBI to reexamine the evidence relating to the disappearance of the ocean-going oil tanker, the Aquarius. British Petroleum would like to pursue compensation from the superhero known as “SW” for the loss of the Aquarius.

The Aquarius vanished with all hands aboard in November of 1985. Two hours after leaving it’s port in Darian, the Aquarius abruptly changed course at an accelerated rate to a heading of due north. Soon after, the ship disappeared from all tracking equipment.

British Petroleum has asked the case be reexamined based upon their claims that the super team calling themselves the Challengers were present at the time the Aquarius vanished. In the fall of 1985, this group of neophyte champions became the second incarnation of the heroic legacy. The team was composed of an international potpourri of characters: the magnetism-powered field commander and former Kenyan citizen, Lodestone; the flying British pop-music sensation, Bluebird; the radioactive Soviet powerhouse, Nuclear Winter; the Cajun half-man/half-reptile, The Gator; the mysterious Japanese ghost girl, Youkai; and psychodelic California valley girl, Paisley.

British Petroleum lost millions of dollars when the Aquarius was lost. They insist that it’s no coincidence they lost their tanker while the Challengers were allegedly on board. British Petroleum’s hope in reopening the investigation is to gain some reparations for the lost assets. However, since the Challengers of 1985 haven’t been seen since the loss of the tanker Aquarius, it’s very difficult to determine who should be accountable.

British Petroleum is seeking the former superhero known only as “SW” in the investigation. It’s well documented that SW was a founding member of the original Challengers in 1965, as well as the financial backer and orchestrater behind the Challengers of 1985. SW’s involvement with the original Challengers was purely on an advice and consultation basis. While SW was considered a full-fledged member of the team, even serving as chairman for one term, he only communicated via telephone and walkie-talkie. According to North Carolina Senator Rodney Phillips, formerly Lieutenant Law - teenage sidekick to the original Challengers, no one on the team ever met SW face-to-face. Regardless of his physical absence, SW proved his heroic dedication and loyalty time after time with these stalwart heroes.

In the mid-1970’s, the original Challengers disbanded. In early 1985, SW resurfaced and announced his intentions to sponsor a new Challengers team. Not only would he provide the financial backing, he would also remain in constant contact with the team via radio headsets. This would allow him to advise and give instructions to his agents in the field. A media blitz ensued in the anticipation of this next generation of heroes. After rigorous months of training, the new Challengers appeared in Darian to foil a heinous plot by the Masters of Disaster. A few weeks later, the Challengers reportedly boarded the Aquarius for unknown reasons. That was the last anyone heard from this promising young team. SW testified via conference call during inquires on the loss of the Aquarius, but in the end the disappearance remained a mystery.

The last public “appearance” of SW was at the funeral of Carlton Caruthers, also known as Dr. Binary. Dr. Binary was the field leader of the original Challengers and considered to be one of CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE
Darian’s most brilliant scientific minds. Survived by a son, Caruthers and his wife were brutally murdered in the spring of 1990 by his old arch-nemesis Professor Blight. SW gave a moving eulogy and then vowed to disappear from the public eye forever.

British Petroleum plans to demonstrate that the Aquarius would have survived without the involvement of the **Challengers**. In doing so, they hope to collect several million dollars from SW once his whereabouts are determined.

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**GREAT LAKES CHALLENGERS ANNOUNCED**

(From L to R) Assault, Battery, Marla Kendron, Outback, Damascus Steele, and Fafnir

by Jackie Century

CHICAGO - **Electrolyte**, Metahuman and current **Challengers** Franchise Recruitment Director, announced this week that the Great Lakes **Challengers** are officially open for business. **Electrolyte** has been working with a preexisting Chicago-based Metahuman team for several weeks now trying to iron out the details that would allow them to join the **Challengers** “family” of teams.

This is the third franchise for the **Challengers**, the others being located in Darian and San Francisco.

**Electrolyte** was previously a member of the **Challengers by the Bay** in San Francisco. She and **Danger Man** (a.k.a. Jack Steelgrave) left the San Francisco-based team to explore further opportunities for this franchise. **Electrolyte** has been handling all of the franchise development responsibilities since **Danger Man** has been consumed with his war on crime in Darian.

Meanwhile in San Francisco, **Johnny Law** has stepped into the leadership role recruiting **Kittyhawk** and **Electron** (Electrolyte’s brother) to fill the vacant spots on the team. **Electrolyte** said that after taking a short break in Darian, she plans to move on to Texas to investigate further franchise opportunities there. Watch upcoming issues of the Daily Darian and our website [www.matthewsland.com/challengers](http://www.matthewsland.com/challengers) for more information on the Great Lakes **Challengers**.