

SENTINEL
COMICS
#801

FREEDOM FIVE

ISSUE #1

ITSY BITSY SPIDER BOTS



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GAME MODERATOR ONLY

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FIRST THINGS FIRST

STOP! ARE YOU THE GM?

Are you the person running the game for the other players, who are playing the heroes? If not, stop reading this now and hand it to the GM! The interior of these issues is for *GM eyes only*!

If you are the GM, then you're in the right place! Before digging too deeply into these six issues, you should familiarize yourself with the *Gameplay Guide*. It has information you need as the GM, and your players will likely have questions about how things work; it's helpful if you can at least point them to the right section of the *Gameplay Guide*, if not answer their questions outright.

ISSUES OVERVIEW

These six issues each tell a story that connects to the others in a fun way. Each issue should take about one 90ish minute game session, but that's not a hard and fast rule. Some groups will go through more quickly, and others will take their time over multiple sessions—that's all up to you and your players. We're just here to give you the tools you need to play.

This is Issue #1, and it's the perfect place to start! If you're running all six issues for your group, they will play through this issue first, and then follow up with *Freedom Five #802*, which is labeled Issue #2. However, things get a little strange after that! The order of Issues #3, #4, and #5 are up to you and your group of heroes! At the end of Issue #2, they have 3 options of how to continue the story. They will eventually cover all three possible adventures, but the order they do it in is up to them! That's why those issues are all labeled "3/4/5". Then, you'll take them through the big final issue, coming back to Issue #6, *Freedom Five #803*, for the grand finale!

STORY SUMMARY

What we're about to talk about in this segment is full of spoilers, so don't let the cat out of the bag for your players! This is just so you, the GM, know what you're getting into here.

★ISSUE #1

The *Freedom Five* and their former intern *Unity* are hanging out in *Megalopolis*—the city where their headquarters was located before that building and most

of the *Megalopolis* skyline were destroyed by the cosmic entity known as *OblivAeon*. (For those of you familiar with the ***Sentinels of the Multiverse*** card game, this story takes place a few months after the end of that final Multiverse event.) The heroes are working together with engineers, architects, building crews, local officials, and pretty much everyone in the city to put *Megalopolis* back together. Oh, and a HUGE tree—referred to as *Akash'Flora*—has grown in downtown *Megalopolis*. It's visible everywhere in the city.

A bunch of robot spiders show up and start attacking the people working on the rebuilding project, and also the tree itself. The heroes have to work together to stop the spiders, to save the citizens and the tree, and also to save their heroic ally *Argent Adept* who has showed up to protect the tree.

Hopefully, they succeed! Then, *Visionary* reaches out to *Argent Adept* for help, but he's in no shape to do so. He asks the heroes to go to his psychic friend, as she would be a great ally in dealing with this tree situation.

★ISSUE #2

There are two people in this reality named *Vanessa Long*—one from an alternate reality who is known as the hero *Visionary*, and one from this reality: the former unintentional villain *The Dreamer*, who is in the process of growing up to be a hero in her own right. Called by *Visionary* at the end of the first issue, the heroes go to the childhood home of this reality's *Vanessa Long*, where *Visionary* is dealing with psychic backlash from *The Dreamer* event, even though that conflict happened quite a while ago.

The heroes help *Visionary* fight off psychic projections, but that's just the tip of the iceberg. The rest of the psychic iceberg is actually located within the *Void*—an extradimensional plane that is tied to the powers of both *Visionary* and *Argent Adept*, as well as many other things in *Sentinel Comics*. *Visionary* acts as a psychic anchor here in the real world while the heroes go into the *Void* to figure out what's going on. There, they fight twisted *Void* versions of themselves, a *Void* entity, and a strange crystalline thing.

When they return to their home plane, *Visionary* tells them that they've solved the problem... sort of. There's still more going on. They're going to need some help. She gives them three locations to check out. Then, she's off to *Megalopolis* to help *Argent Adept*, and the heroes choose how to proceed.

Since the next three issues can be played in any order, we're going to refer to them by their book title, rather than their adventure issue numbering.

★ PRIME WARDENS #67

The heroes travel to the dinosaur-inhabited island in the Arctic Circle that's heated by an active volcano: Insula Primalis. They're there to talk to Tempest in an attempt to get the hero team known as the Prime Wardens back together. Tempest and Argent Adept were both members of that team, and Visionary thinks that team is just what's needed to deal with the strange Void things that are happening.

On that island, the heroes face a wide variety of events. They first have to deal with automated defense cannons and even a massive cyborg allosaurus that was apparently a failed Baron Blade experiment to get to Tempest. What are those doing here? Tempest is trying to figure out what's going on with the island—the dinosaurs are abnormally agitated, and some of the trees are even becoming animated and attacking things! In a moment between fighting, the heroes talk to Tempest about the Prime Wardens, but Tempest is not interested. The team is a thing of the past. No one has heard from Fanatic since OblivAeon, and Haka is gone—trapped in another dimension with no way to return to this one. Besides, Tempest has a different job now as an alien ambassador. The U.N. is putting a galactic peacekeeping team of heroes together called G.L.O.B.A.L., and Tempest is heading it up.

This conversation is interrupted by Haka! But it's not the Haka that Tempest and the other heroes were just talking about. This Haka is from another reality, and she's not here to make friends. She's here to fight villains! In her timeline, Tempest was a villain who Haka fought on multiple occasions, and she isn't willing to let the villainous Tempest take over this island in this reality as well! The heroes have to deal with the situation, and hopefully resolve it without too much hero-on-hero violence.

As the tensions between heroes begin to lessen, those animated trees that were mentioned earlier attack! The player heroes fight a variety of tree spirits, hopefully aided by Haka and Tempest, depending on how well they handled those conversations.

In the course of the fight, an item the heroes took from the Void in Issue #2 becomes relevant. Using it, the heroes are able to halt the attack of the spirits, and help the island of Insula Primalis become something more...

Ultimately, Tempest leaves to report back to the U.N., and Haka can be convinced to join with this new incarnation of the Prime Wardens that is forming. Notably, she's interested in talking to this reality's Argent Adept about what she's seen here, as it reminds her a lot of a similar thing that happened in her own reality...

★ JUSTICE COMICS #740

The heroes travel to an abandoned nuclear reactor in the extreme north of Russia. There, the villain known as Proletariat is all over the place. He is able to make copies of himself, but has never before made quite this many. There are hundreds of them visible on the approach to the location, practically coating the cooling hyperboloid tower of the reactor, all acting like mindless zombies, walking into the ice-coated concrete walls over and over.

The heroes find a way past the Proletariats and into the base. There, they discover the two reasons for all the Proletariats. One: there's a highly unstable source of power that has recently been installed in the reactor, and Proletariat clearly took it on himself to shut it down before it did irreversible damage to his homeland. Second, Fanatic is in the building, fighting infinite waves of Proletariats and really just making things worse.

The heroes have to deal with malfunctioning equipment, intense radiation, tons of stupid but determined Proletariats, and an enraged Fanatic, all before the shard of power at the heart of the reactor destabilizes.

In this adventure, if the heroes are able to recombine enough Proletariats to get a thinking, talking Proletariat, they can find out that this new power source is actually the shard of power that was originally used to give Proletariat powers, but that he doesn't know who installed it in this reactor. The heroes will have to destroy the shard to prevent a terrible explosion, and Proletariat is more than happy to help them do that.

It's no small feat to talk Fanatic down from punching infinite Proletariats, as it's just making even more Proletariats. However, if the heroes can get through to her, she is willing to join the Prime Wardens and will be a great asset in the final issue.



★TOME OF THE BIZARRE #86

Visionary detected a rift in reality that leads from the old, abandoned Cleopatra Casino in Las Vegas to the Tomb of Anubis, which has stood empty since Anubis (and all of the other Egyptian diety-based characters) was killed by OblivAeon. She directs the heroes to find out what's going on with this rift, but none of them know that it's not actually the real Tomb of Anubis! It's a warehouse in Rook City that the villainous Miss Information has rigged up to look and feel like the actual Tomb of Anubis using her reality-twisting powers. It's enough to fool even Visionary! Miss Information hopes that she can catch some heroes in her trap, and she's been successful before the Freedom Five even get there.

In the "Tomb of Anubis", the heroes have to contend with deadly traps, shifting hallways, and even the undead! The first hint that something's not right will likely be when they destroy a mummy or skeleton and learn it's made of springs, gears, and wires.

The heroes fight through a series of milestone chambers within the "tomb", working their way towards whatever is at the heart of this environment. Finally, they will find the Hall of Mysteries... or they'll run out of time and be trapped by falling stone blocks until they can find another way out! However, they are likely to make it through and find a figure they've never met before—a young archaeologist grad student named Martin Adams, the former protégé of Dr. Blake Washington, Jr. (AKA, the hero known as Ra). He is investigating the tomb for the same reasons the heroes are, but he got thoroughly trapped and is in need of rescuing. Also, he carries the actual Rod of Anubis, and has powers of his own!

The heroes and the new Anubis make their escape from the tomb, out onto the streets of Rook City. If they haven't figured out yet that something was very off, this should be a major clue. They will not face Miss Information in the flesh, but there are enough hints of her around.

Having learned troubling things about the twist in reality, Anubis asks the heroes if they know who he should talk to about things related to the Void. Naturally, they know a few people, and point Anubis towards Megalopolis, where he can meet up with Argent Adept, Visionary, and whoever else has been recruited at this point, based on what issues have been played so far.

★ISSUE #6

The heroes return to Megalopolis. It's under attack by more robots than before, but the Prime Wardens are doing a good/OK/bad job of holding them back, based on how well the players handled the previous issues. Putting together all the pieces from the issues up to this point, the heroes can hopefully figure out that the villain behind this entire thing is none other than their old foe, the dastardly Baron Blade!

While the new Prime Wardens fight the robots, the Freedom Five attack Baron Blade's off-shore underwater base. If they haven't yet figured out that Baron Blade is behind this entire plot, they can still locate the base as the source of the robot spiders attacking Megalopolis, but they will be at a disadvantage and Baron Blade will have the drop on them.

In the underwater base, there are various challenges they face, many of which can be easily overcome by referencing successes in previous issues. Either way, there is a major climatic battle, and the heroes save the day!

AND NOW, ISSUE #1: FREEDOM FIVE #801!



ISSUE BACKGROUND

After the catastrophic events brought about by the recently defeated OblivAeon, the Freedom Five have spent considerable effort and resources to help rebuild their home city of Megalopolis. They're also laying the groundwork for their new headquarters: the Freedom Plaza, though the engineers working on the project are concerned that the new headquarters will draw more power than the grid can provide.

The city is in terrible shape. Whole neighborhoods have been wiped out, infrastructure is heavily damaged, and many families have been relocated to temporary shelters in the greater metropolitan area. Most of the cities' power plants have been damaged and are offline, so brownouts are common. Citizens are getting restless to return to normal life.

The presence of the glowing, towering Akash'Flora tree in the middle of downtown Megalopolis is a troublesome sight for many. No one has figured out what to do about it. Unbeknownst to anyone, strange spider-shaped robots are traveling the sewers of the city. Many are heading to its center where the mystical tree grows, while others are heading to the Freedom Five's temporary HQ.

UNITY

This section is only important if Unity is one of the heroes being played in these issues.

In order to help the heroes in their herculean task, RevoCorp has sent their newest star-employee, Unity, to act as liaison with the company's own efforts to rebuild the city. Unity left the employ of Dr. Meredith Stinson (aka the hero Tachyon) and joined RevoCorp as part of the company's campaign to distance themselves from their shady history. They're under new ownership and are now dedicated to being a source of positive change and progress in the world. As a result, the heroes Unity and Benchmark are heading up a team called The Paradigms and helping the world rebuild. Benchmark is helping out in Rook City right now, and Unity is excited to be working with her old friends in Megalopolis.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

This issue presents an introductory adventure for the **Sentinel Comics Roleplaying Game** and is also the first installment of a six part story arc. Scene 1 is a simple action scene to teach players the basics of combat when strange robots attack the heroes. Once victorious, they will have to face several challenges created by the robots' actions near the Akash'Flora tree in Scene 2. Finally, in the Epilogue, they'll try to make sense of these events just as they receive a cry for help from an old ally.

Before you start playing, make sure you've run the players through the core mechanics of the game: assembling and rolling dice pools, using the five types of actions, and determining results. Let players get familiar with their hero booklets and answer any questions they may have. Once everyone is ready, dive right in.



THE SITUATION

Megalopolis, once the shining jewel of urban America, now lies broken and devastated. Describe some of the things the heroes see in the wreckage—think of images you’ve seen of urban sites wracked by war and disaster that have suffered extensive damage.

SETTING EXAMPLES

- A pile of concrete and steel that used to be a bridge
- Partially collapsed buildings
- A fire crew battling flames fed by broken gas lines
- A stray dog nosing around a pile of debris that used to be its home
- A tired work crew using multiple backhoes to load rubble into a dump truck
- A government science team taking readings of residual cosmic radiation (“This block is clean, let’s move on to the next one!”)
- Neighborhood do-gooders in a food truck serving hot meals to rescue crews & homeless citizens

You shouldn’t require Overcome actions for any type of basic information gathering as there aren’t any stakes in play. Heroes should be free to move around. At first glance, everything looks as expected.

Ask each hero what they are doing right before the story starts, possibly letting them each perform a heroic action to help the rebuilding efforts of the city. By default, we assume the heroes are near the site of the future Freedom Plaza, but allow players to explore what they can achieve by granting them one moment each. Any action whose outcome is uncertain or dangerous will likely need an Overcome action to resolve. Describe the situation accordingly.

HEROIC ACTION EXAMPLES

- Rescue civilians buried in a collapsed building
- Reunite lost schoolchildren with their parents
- Perform emergency repairs on a historic building to keep it from collapsing
- Put out a fire threatening to spread to a warehouse containing dangerous chemicals
- Without harming the victim, disarm or defeat a violent mugger
- Save bystanders from a collapsing crane
- Scout the city’s extensive sewers and subway system for potential threats
- Remove a heavy object from the top floor of a damaged building without causing a collapse

This is also a great opportunity to encourage players to use heroic principles so they can use their Max die when performing Overcome actions.

WHAT'S GOING WRONG

Suddenly, strange spider robots crawl up from the sewers and zero in on the heroes! Describe the robotic spiders (see the following description of the harvester spider bots and the image on the next page) scuttling toward the heroes, deploying their mandibles and scanning the area with their laser-equipped eyes. When they see one of the heroes, their eyes glow red and the fight is on!

HARVESTER SPIDER BOTS

6 MINIONS (3 PER HERO)

DESCRIPTION

These are mailbox-sized robotic spiders equipped with retractable diamond mandibles that can slice through steel, eyes that project military-grade lasers, and high-strength tensile polymer “webs”.

The bots scatter in groups of three to confront each hero as a squad. Bots who can’t get to their assigned heroes (either because they are flying or have good reasons to not have been detected yet) will make their way to other heroes, taking the place of destroyed bots.

ABILITY

Spider Webs: +1 to Hinder when making webs.

TACTICS

Each bot squad adopts these tactics when they act:

- One bot Boosts another bot with cover fire
- One bot Hinders their target with webs
- One bot Attacks their target

When a bot is destroyed, they are replaced by any bots without a valid target. If none are available, bots taking Boost or Hinder actions switch to Attack.

Don't forget: when these bots Hinder, they add +1 to the result, as per their Spider Webs ability.

MINIONS!

These spider bots are minions. Each of these minions is represented by a single die—a six-sided die, to start—and they use that die for everything. When they Attack, Boost, or Hinder, roll that die to determine the result. When they are attacked, roll that die to see if they survive. They're each their own die, but they act as a group. Check out the specifics of how all that works on page 17 of the Gameplay Guide.

As the GM, it's important not to overwhelm the heroes with the spider bots. Sure, you could have all of the bots in this scene focus on a single hero, but that's not what the scene calls for, and doing so won't be much fun for anyone. The GM's job is not to defeat the heroes, but to create interesting scenes in which the heroes act.

During combat, if any twists are called for and players have a hard time coming up with them, take inspiration from the heavily damaged city around them.

TWIST EXAMPLES

MINOR TWISTS

Looking for Food: A group of spider bots knock over a power line! Hinder all heroes with the Min die. That penalty persists until a hero succeeds on an Overcome action to remove it.

Unstable City: A wall collapses, dropping rubble on the hero! Inflict the Min die in damage.

MAJOR TWISTS

The Risks of Rescue Work: A gas line explodes! Either inflict the Max die in damage to the active hero, or the Min die on all targets in the area.

Swarming the Citizens: Spider bots threaten a van of people trying to escape the city! Someone needs to Overcome this threat before the start of the active hero's next turn, or innocent people will be hurt.

These are simply examples: use your imagination to invent your own! See page 11 of the Gameplay Guide for some guidelines for coming up with your own twists.

CONCLUSION

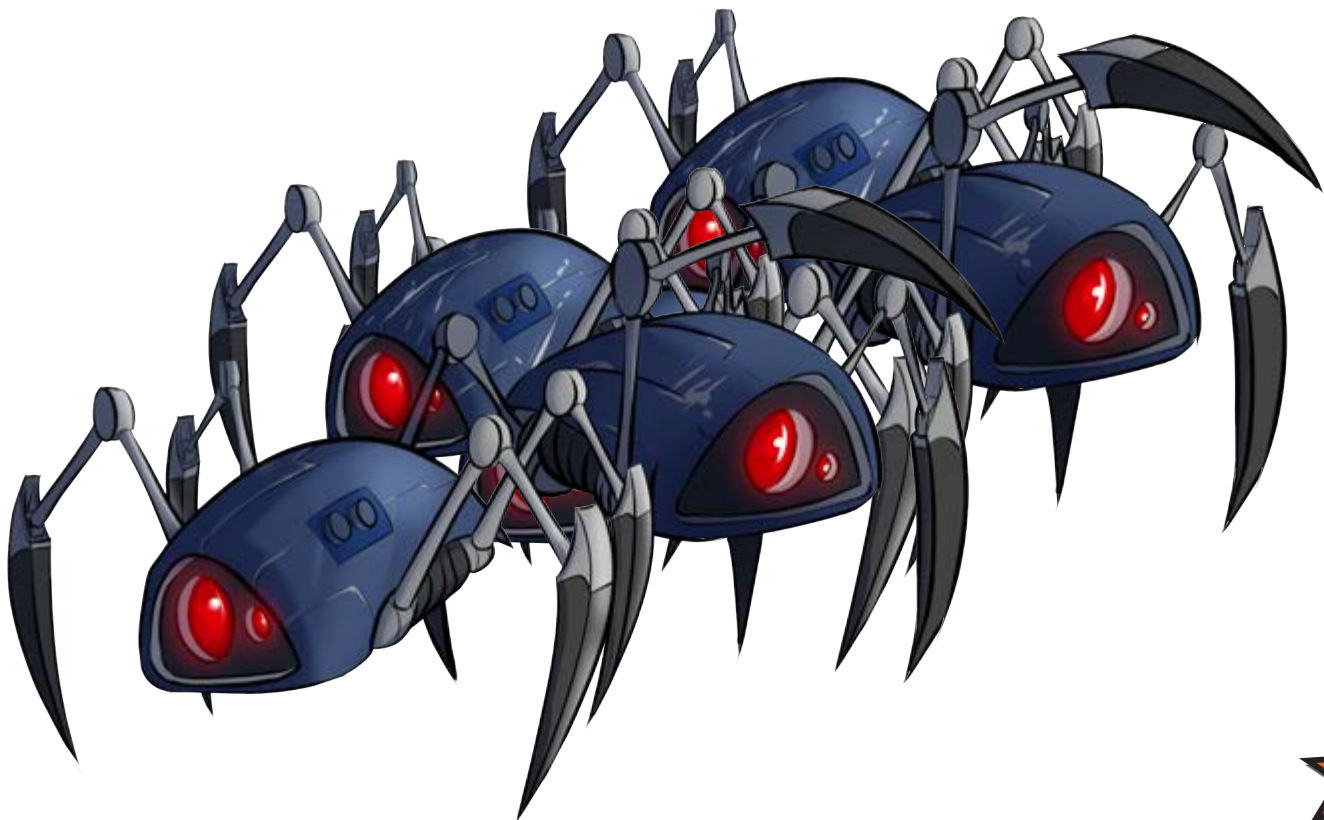
Once all robots have been destroyed, go directly to Scene 2. Any twists that haven't been resolved yet carry on to the next scene.

If any heroes investigate the pieces of these spider bots (or any other robots in this issue), they find strange and contradictory information in their construction. As they might expect, they find some Omnitron technology in the robots, but they also find tech that seems to come from many other sources, such as Unity, Baron Blade, Tachyon, RevoCorp, and even pieces of former Bunker suits! As a result, they're not able to figure out just who is behind these robots... yet!

RUNNING THE SCENE: WHO GOES FIRST?

Sentinel Comics RPG rules state that the GM decides who acts first. Often, it's best to just let whichever character initiated the action go first. Sometimes, though, if another player has already said that their hero is being vigilant, watching for trouble, scouting around, etc. it's great to reward them by letting that player choose who goes first instead—they notice the danger and sound the alarm.

In this case, heroes who were performing any type of scouting or reconnaissance actions in the surrounding area, or who were in the city's sewer system or subway, spot the bots' arrival and can warn their teammates. In such a case, they get to choose who acts first in the scene. Otherwise, the robots attack first.



SCENE TRACKER

USING THE SCENE TRACKER

This scene makes use of a scene tracker, which tracks the overall danger and urgency of the events unfolding around the heroes. In this case, it marks the damage the Akash'Flora tree takes from the spider bots "harvesting" it, cutting through its thick bark and digging into its trunk.

During the action order, the scene gets its own turn, in which you mark the leftmost empty space. When it hits Yellow or Red, it unlocks all abilities of that color for all characters in the scene. If the scene has a turn and all Red spaces are already marked, the scene ends with the tree severely damaged and Argent Adept in critical condition.

START

END



THE SITUATION

As soon as the spider bots are defeated, the heroes are contacted (via encrypted satellite radio earpieces, which all the heroes have) by their ally, Argent Adept. (More info on him can be found on page 9.)

Argent Adept tells the Freedom Five that he's at the Akash'Flora tree and that a seemingly infinite number of robots are swarming up out of the sewers... but then he screams in pain and the call is cut short!

If players are concerned about the state of their Health, let them know that RevoCorp has set up a nearby field hospital they can visit. Doing this forfeits their first turn in the next scene but allows a hero to Recover to full Health before they dive into danger again. Players are welcome to charge into the next scene unrecovered, but it's risky if they get swarmed by too many robots.

WHAT'S GOING WRONG

While the heroes were fighting spider bots, a gigantic spider robot mothership (see **Spider Mothership**) climbed out of the river, right into Legacy Park, and made its way to the Akash'Flora tree. It began "laying" metallic eggs that transform into even more spider bots! These newly hatched bots scrambled to various locations:

- Most traveled to the Akash'Flora tree to harvest pieces from it (see **Horde of Harvesters**)
- Some webbed up citizens to make human shields to distract the heroes (see **Webbed Human Shields**).
- Some took sniper positions and created web armored cocoons to protect themselves (see **Armored Spider Bot Snipers**)
- The remaining bots are patrolling the park, ready to attack the heroes (see **Roaming Spider Bots**)

WHAT TO DO WITH ALL THESE PARTS

As the GM, you decide which enemies and challenges are important to the scene you're guiding the heroes through. In general, the mothership, the electro-neural link, and the harvester bots are the main threats, while other bots and Argent Adept in peril are secondary elements. Use them however you like, depending on how the heroes are handling the scene.

Based on where the heroes are in the scene and what they're doing, choose one to go first in the action order to begin play.

SPIDER MOTHERSHIP

1 10 **LIEUTENANT**

DESCRIPTION

The spider mothership is a 16 foot tall bot carrier and cargo submersible ship that lays metal bot-eggs.

As a lieutenant, it doesn't react to damage like a minion. Instead, its die steps down to the next lowest (10 to 8 to 6 to 4) whenever it fails to match or roll above the damage it takes. If its save matches or surpasses the damage, it is unharmed. It is destroyed when it fails a save while a 4.

ABILITY

On the spider mothership's turn, it adds a number of combat-ready roaming spider bots to the scene equal to half of its current die rating. So, at 10, it creates 5, at 8 it creates 4, etc. These bots join those attacking the heroes.

TACTICS

During its turn, the mothership does not attack. It spends its turn laying more spider bots. As long as it is active, the heroes can't overcome the "**Horde of Harvesters**" challenge, as it sends more bots to replace those the heroes displace or destroy.

THE ELECTRO-NEURAL LINK

DESCRIPTION

All spider bots in the scene have an electro-neural link to the mothership. Heroes have a chance to detect this in a few different ways:

- Any technology-related Overcome action that results in "success beyond expectations" (12+) related to the spider bots or the mothership reveals the link.
- The first time a hero uses a Green ability granted by a technology-related principle that "completely succeeds" (8+), they detect the link.
- If the scene reaches the Red status or ends, reveal the link by telling any hero with a technology or science related power or quality about the electro-neural link. It's the only possible explanation for some of the behavior they saw.

Even when the heroes destroy the spider mothership, the electro-neural link continues sending commands to the remaining bots. It must be found and disabled!

RESOLUTION

Finding it and stopping it is a multipart challenge:

- Pinpoint signal's transmitter inside the spider mothership: See above
- Destroy the transmitter: Overcome

OUTCOME

Once the link is severed, all spider bots cease to function immediately, entirely resolving the **Horde of Harvesters**, **Armored Spider Bot Snipers**, and **Roaming Spider Bots** threats.

HORDE OF HARVESTERS

DESCRIPTION

Scores of spider bots swarm all over the Akash'Flora tree, cutting into it. Clearing them is a overwhelming task, especially while bots keep coming in droves from the mothership. Their concerted harvesting damages the tree at a rapid pace.

ACTION

Spider bots harvesting the tree **do not attack heroes**.

Whenever the horde of harvesters takes a turn, **mark a space on the scene tracker**.

RESOLUTION

There are too many to deal with individual drones in single combat. Heroes have to come up with heroic feats to clear them. Some techniques might be:

- Spray them with coolant liquid, freezing them
- A flurry of precisely aimed throwing knives
- A sonic boom from breaking the sound barrier

Even if the heroes succeed at these actions, they quickly realize that they're not gaining any ground. Tell them that for every dozen they sweep from the tree, another dozen arrive to replace them. They need to shut down the spider mothership before they can hope to sweep away the harvester bots.

- Defeat the spider mothership
- Clear the remaining bots off the tree: Overcome

The heroes can attempt to control the horde of spider robots, but can only accomplish the second part of the challenge once they have dealt with the mothership.

OUTCOME

Any extra successes rolled while dealing with this threat allow heroes to unmark the highest marked box on the scene tracker that does not change the zone. Dealing with the hordes of bots can significantly slow down their harvesting efforts.



WEBBED HUMAN SHIELDS

DESCRIPTION

Some spider bots have trapped nearby civilians in webs and strung them up as human shields all around the tree and throughout its branches. The webbed citizens are unconscious but otherwise unharmed.

ACTION

During the scene, a persistent -2 shield penalty applies to all rolls against the **Horde of Harvester Bots**.

Accidentally bonking a civilian on the head would make for a good twist, should you need one.

RESOLUTION

Heroes can free the civilians to remove the above penalty by succeeding on two Overcome actions:

- Save one group of civilians: Overcome, penalty reduced to -1
- Save the rest of the civilians: Overcome, penalty entirely eliminated

ARMORED SPIDER BOT SNIPERS

6 MINIONS (1 PER HERO)

DESCRIPTION

Some bots sought out high ground in and all around the park (building facade, park walls, on statues, etc.). They then created thick, protective web cocoons, reconfiguring themselves into fixed laser batteries.

ABILITY

Cover: Armored spider bot snipers have +2 to their save roll due to their superior positions.

TACTICS

During the scene they focus on making Attacks against large or well-defended heroes.

Taking them out requires either an Overcome action to dislodge them en masse from their positions or Attacking them.

ROAMING SPIDER BOTS

6 MINIONS (1 PER HERO)

DESCRIPTION

Patrolling bots that attack the heroes as they try to save Argent Adept and the tree.

ABILITY

Spider Webs: +1 to Hinder when making webs.

TACTICS

These bots balance Attack actions and Hinder actions to web up heroes. Avoid overwhelming heroes with too much damage. They should feel like a big scary horde without outright killing the heroes.

LOCATING AND SAVING ARGENT ADEPT

DESCRIPTION

Argent Adept is hidden somewhere near the Akash'Flora tree. The heroes must find him before his injuries worsen. He is completely unconscious, buried under a toppled stone wall near the tree. He is seriously injured with multiple fractures and internal bleeding, and he is surrounded by bots attacking the tree.

RESOLUTION

Finding and freeing him requires 2 successful Overcome actions:

- Locate Argent Adept: Overcome
- Save him without further injuries: Overcome
- (Optional) Stabilize him: Overcome

Let the heroes know after the first two Overcomes that Argent Adept has been saved, but they now have an optional chance to stabilize him. Doing so would allow him to aid them in their fight.

OUTCOME

If he is stabilized during the conflict, Argent Adept bravely taps into his musical powers to provide a +3 magical musical Boost to one hero's next action, once a turn, whenever you advance the scene tracker.

ARGENT ADEPT

Anthony Drake is the magic hero known as Argent Adept: the latest Virtuoso of the Void in a long line of Virtuosos of the Void that goes back beyond recorded history. He is a magical musician, or perhaps a musical magician. Either way, he uses his mastery of both music and magic to keep reality from falling into the Void, and to keep the Void from creeping into our reality.



CONCLUSION

The scene ends when Argent Adept has been saved, the mothership disabled, and the horde of harvester bots on the tree have cleared. It is safe to assume that any bots still active at that point eventually get dealt with and pose no significant threat to anyone.

If the last space of the scene tracker gets marked before the above occurs, things are grim. While the mothership and the bots are eventually dealt with, the tree has suffered extensive damage and will require constant care, vigilance, and significant resources to allow it to recover over time. This will affect the events of the final issue. If Argent Adept wasn't stabilized by the end of the scene, his injuries degrade to critical, requiring immediate and extended hospitalization. This will also affect the events of the final issue.

Heroes will likely wish to examine destroyed or captured bots. A cursory examination by someone with the Technology quality or an appropriate principle will reveal that the bots are amphibious and extremely well-crafted, and that pains were taken to mask their design origins. A successful Overcome action will reveal blended designs from numerous different robots the heroes have faced throughout their adventures, but all made from compounds found or synthesized in this solar system. An overwhelming success reveals that at the most basic level, the most common concepts seem to come from Omnitron and Baron Blade designs.

Any investigations to retrace their provenance point toward the river and then into the sea... where no trace of where they came from can be found.

EPILOGUE

Heroes discussing the situation with a recovering Argent Adept learn that he was surveying the tree for unique, exceedingly powerful energy surges within it. He was ambushed by the spider bots while he was trying to figure out where the surges came from. The Prime Wardens have fallen apart since the loss of the hero Haka during the OblivAeon event (he ended up stranded in another reality with no way to return to this reality), and neither Fanatic nor Captain Cosmic have been seen since. But Argent Adept knows that he can't handle whatever is going on here on his own—he needs help.

Whenever Argent Adept recovers, he vividly recalls that, while he was unconscious, the hero known as Visionary called out to him across the Void. She desperately needs help, but Argent Adept is now in no shape to go help her.

Visionary is at the former home of this reality's Vanessa Long, and there is a breach between this world and the Void there. She's doing everything she can to keep it closed, but it's not looking good. Argent Adept asks the heroes to go to her location and help her close the Void breach and protect the world from the dangerous energy threatening to break into the physical plane. If they agree to do so, proceed on to the next issue.

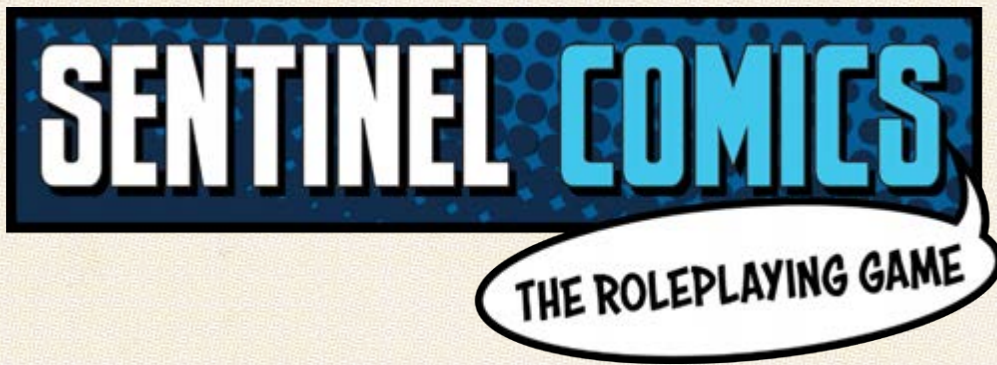
Heroes can fully recover before the next issue.

VISIONARY

Visionary is the Vanessa Long from another reality in which the future was terrible. She used her powers to tear a hole in the fabric of timespace to try to go back in time and fix her world, but instead, she ended up in this reality. However, she was able to save this world's Vanessa Long from her fate. Or so she thought. The Vanessa Long from this reality also manifested powers as a young child, and the intensity of them put her in a nightmare-filled psychic coma, with her psychic projections wreaking havoc in the real world as she slept. But that was many years ago. Now, Visionary fights to protect this world from dangerous foes, and this reality's Vanessa Long is growing up with hopes to be a hero in her own right.



OUR HEROES' ADVENTURE CONTINUES IN FREEDOM FIVE #802 (ISSUE #2)



ITSY BITSY SPIDER BOTS

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