BRAVE SERVE NORID WORLD

8003



BY MATT FORBECK





DEFIANTS

BY MATT FORBECK





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Dedicated to: My brother Mark, who knows about defiance better than most.

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WELCOME BACK!

And congratulations. If you've gotten this far into the website, there are three possibilities.

One, you're a hacker. I always hate having to cover this one, but hey, you idiots are out there, and you're apparently going to keep barging into "secure" websites no matter how many firewalls and the like I put up in your way. Feel free to poke around as much as you like. There's really not much here that's going to interest you if you're not a delta.

Just do me one favor please? Leave everything the way you found it. Trust me, I've got the entire site backed up in multiple places, but it's a real pain in the ass to have to deal with cleaning up after your mess.

Two, you managed to cajole, trick, or beat the password to this part of the site out of someone who has it. Congratulations to you too. Hey, if you're that determined to know what it is we're hiding here, come on in. A lot of the stuff we cover here is only secret to the general public, the "ignorant masses" as the Primers like to call them. If you took the trouble to work your way in here, I suspect you don't really fall into that category.

Three, I gave you the password. If so, welcome. You're who I built this part of the site for in the first place.

By now, you should have had a chance to read a bit about the Defiance, that introductory stuff you can get at by just knowing the site's name. You've probably also been on your first mission as a Defiant and had a chance to prove yourself.

Take it from me, kid. You had no idea what you were getting yourself into.

THE REAL TRUTH

Let me clue you in on something. (The Sherlocks among you have probably already figured this out.) Despite my name (it's "Truth") and my powers (I can tell when people are lying), I'm not always the most honest and straightforward reporter.

Sure, when it comes to the general public, I stand up and tell everyone that *Delta Times* is the last bastion of truly free and honest journalism in the country, and to a great extent that's true. But these are troubled times we live in, and sometimes you've got to make a few concessions.

THE PROBLEM

As you've probably realized from reading the first few paragraphs on this page, *Delta Times* isn't really as private of a club as I'd like it to be. Because of that, I can't really feel free to let it all hang out around here, even in the parts of the site with the tightest protection. Doing that might give Kennedy and his clowns the kind of information they need to nail some good people to the proverbial wall.

If I can prevent that at all, I'm not going to let that happen.

THE SOLUTION

So what do I do? I lie.

Don't look so shocked. If you're like most Defiants, you lie every day of your life. I mean, you haven't gone and told Uncle Sam all about your new powers now, have you? In fact, you probably haven't told many people, even those closest to you.

You're living a lie.

That's just the way it is in Kennedy's America.



THE UPSHOT

Hey, don't let it get to you. It's not your fault after all. If it wasn't for the Delta Registration Act and the state of martial law we've been living under for the past 35-plus years, you'd be free to tell people who you are and what you can do.

Hell, I'd be free to tell you who I am. (That should have been your first clue as to how I handle things, smart guy. The mask is a lie too.)

I've wandered away from myself here. I started to tell you that despite the fact I hold myself up as a teller of truths, in fact I lie like a politician. I tell you what I want you to hear, and I tell myself that I'm doing it for your own good.

You're going to have to trust me on this one. You don't really have a choice. If this was all just a fiction that you were reading in some book—some kind of twisted fantasy you were somehow entertaining yourself with while you lay back in your Lay-Z-Boy in a world a lot kinder and gentler than our own—I'd be what my Literary Criticism prof used to call "an untrustworthy narrator."

That's a mouthful that means "someone you can't trust."

I'm trying to be as up front with you about this as I can. There are going to be a lot of people out there who are going to tell you all sorts of different things. Most, if not all, are going to lie to you from time to time or at the very least spin things to cast themselves in the best light.

You've got to expect that. You've got to be conscious enough of it that you can weed the good from the bad.





QUESTION AUTHORITY

Hey, that's really what the Defiance is all about, right? At least from my point of view. As you click around this site, you're going to find some people who disagree with me—sometimes violently.

The point I'm trying to make here is that you shouldn't just let the Defiance replace the Feds in your life. Don't go from blind trust in one authority to another. Don't trust any of us.

Take the time to listen to what people are telling you. Do your best to figure out what their motives are for saying what they're saying. Then—and now here's the real challenge—make up your own mind.

That's a lot easier said than done, and honestly it's more of a process than a goal. After all, if you make up your mind once and for all, you're then closing it off to any possibility for change in the future.

Sure, I've got my own ideas and my own case to plead—which, of course, I think is the right way to go—but my main role here is that of a teacher. I'm not talking about one of those old farts that stands up at the head of a classroom, reads to you straight out of a book, and expects you to regurgitate everything on your final exam. I'm talking about the good kind of teacher, the ones that present you with the varying facts and opinions and provides you with a little guidance but lets you make up your own mind.

Actually, there will be a test on what you learn here, but it's not the sort that you need a number-2 pencil for. As a delta, you're going to be tested on your beliefs every day of your life. This is no longer theory for you. It's reality, and you'd better have your own answers or be prepared to fail—lethally.

ABOUT THIS SITE

In the interest of letting you make up your own mind, I'm going to let a lot of different people toss a lot of information at you. You're going to hear from all sorts of factions from both inside and outside the Defiance.

First off, the Yellow Journalist himself is going to give you some of the history of the Defiance. As the saying goes, you can't really know where you're going until you know where you've been. Old YJ's been there, folks, and he's seen it all.

Then I take the word processor for a spin again and give you the lowdown on the modern-day Defiance and where it stands—at least from my admittedly biased point of view.

Then it's Enrique "Ricky" Salvador's turn to try to convince you to join him in his separatist (and some say elitist or even racist) movement. There's this island off the coast of Costa Rica, see, and, well, Ricky can fill you in on the rest.

After that, I turn the site over to one of the most notorious "Defiants" of all time. In the old days, he was known only as "the Killer," a name the papers gave him in honor of his means of dealing with the Delta Primers who tried to bring him in. These days, the world knows him by his real name— Malachai Winter—although those on Mal's bad side (Does he have a good one? Maybe it's his worse side.) often get a personal lesson in just where his nickname came from.

To cap it off, the Reverend Darien Lange pleads with you to give peaceful resistance a shot (so to speak).

Like I said, there are a lot of opinions out there about what to do. Choose your own path. Make your own way.





WELCOME TO MY PARLOR

Actually, welcome to my jail cell, but that's another story entirely.

Before I start rambling on like the doddering old jailbird I am, I'd like to extend my undying thanks to Truth. First, for managing to get my missives to today's Defiants out under the collective noses of my jailors. How she does this, I don't really know.

Heck, for all I know I'm actually writing all of this stuff for the edification of Jack Kennedy rather than my intended audience. After all, people can be captured, and passwords can be stolen. At my current address—Cell 868, Block B, New Alcatraz Federal Penitentiary, for those of you who may want to write—I can't be really sure what's going on in the outside world anymore.

There's one thing I do know about though, and that's the past. That's the one thing these bastards can't take away from me—so far, at least. But I'll get to that in a minute.

Second, I want to put it on record how much I appreciate what Truth's done for both *Delta Times* in particular and the Defiance in general. A lot of you would have had Primer nannies wiping your noses if it wasn't for the efforts of Truth and those like her.

Of course, you're just a bunch of punks, so you're probably not going to appreciate all your elders have done for you. That's fine. When I was your age, I didn't give a damn about what my elders had done for me either—at least until a man most people knew as the Yankee set me straight.

The Yankee sat me down and took the time to educate me. That's what I'm doing here for you.

Maybe someday you'll appreciate it.

THE YELLOW JOURNALIST

So why should you listen to me? That's a good question, kid. You're not as dumb as you look, running around in that silly spandex and lycra. Hey, in my day, all a delta ever needed was a mask, a codename, and attitude. You punks have attitude—I'll give you that—but your sense of "style" eludes me.

Be that as it may, let me tell you about me.

The name's Yoshihama Ishimori, but since that's a mouthful, I've been "Yoshi" since I was a young boy. My parents immigrated to the US from Japan back in 1920. I was born in Los Angeles in 1935.

I was six years old when the Japanese government bombed Pearl Harbor. It wasn't long after that before my family was rounded up and herded into one of the camps that were ostensibly for Japanese nationals living in the United States.

This was my first exposure to injustice on the part of the US government. Sure, I understand that a war was on and such things call for drastic measures. But I was a naturalborn US citizen, as were my younger sisters. My parents had sworn their allegiance to the US when they officially became citizens over five years prior to our interment.

The fact is it was a racist act, something Kennedy's all but admitted in the past. We were rounded up because we looked different, and that scared the white men in power in America. They saw their excuse to abuse us, and they took it.

After all, how many Germans or Italians living in the USA got put away for the length of the war?



DELTAHOOD

I was living in the camp when I awakened. I was almost 10 years old, but I was small for my age. For years, I'd been getting in fights with some of the older kids who'd actually been born in Japan. They didn't much care for me because—despite everything that had happened so far—I was proud to be an American.

It was over 50 years ago, but I remember it like it was yesterday. The Japanese kids were led by a big bully named Juni Tanaka. If they'd had Sumo wrestling for women back then, that would have been this woman's clearest career path. She was big, mean, and ready to kick my skinny, little butt up and down the compound.

I was walking back home from school one day when Juni and her toadies decided to give me my regular, weekly beating. I'd had enough of it. Unfortunately, I was just too small too stand up to Juni alone, much less her two younger compatriots in bullyhood.

So I ran.

Juni and her gang chased me all over the compound. I tried every trick I knew. I jumped into every bolthole I could find. It was no use. No matter where I went, they were only a few steps behind.

A lot of the adults who saw us just laughed. "Look at how the kids play," they said as I dashed by. "See, life goes on no matter where you are."

That hopeful statement was dashed into the pavement—along with me soon after I darted out into traffic. I never even saw the Jeep that hit me. Or if I did, I sure don't remember it to this day.

I woke up in the compound's hospital, a ramshackle building slapped together out of shoddy materials. My father was there, and my mother was thanking every kind of god she could think of. The doctor told them it was a miracle I survived.

These days, if something like that happened, Delta Primers would be swarming over the compound in a matter of hours. The '40s were a more innocent time though, and not everyone knew how the awakening into deltahood happened. Besides which, the Japanese doctor in the compound wasn't about to turn over a scared child to the authorities who had treated his people so rottenly in the first place.

GETTING TO KNOW MYSELF

That's what they called it back then—at least among the few deltas I knew: "getting to know yourself." After all, there's really no way to predict how your delta powers are going to manifest themselves, and sometimes it takes a new delta a while to figure out just how to get things going powerwise.

Not me though. I got the hang of it all pretty darn quickly, and I liked it—a lot.

Suddenly I was much more persuasive than I'd ever been before. When I asked for something, I usually got it with few questions asked.

My parents hadn't done much to spoil me before the accident, but afterward they waited on me hand and foot. At first I thought all the lavish attention was because my parents were so happy I wasn't dead, but when it didn't let up, I grew suspicious.

I had it confirmed for me one evening not long after, when I ran into Juni in a secluded part of the compound. She was mad as hell. She'd gotten into big trouble for chasing me





into traffic, and she'd been biding her time ever since, waiting for the right moment to exact her revenge.

That moment had come.

As Juni stomped toward me, I stepped forward confidently and said, "Come now, Juni. Surely we can be reasonable about this."

She stopped dead in her tracks and gave me a hard look, but now there was a hint of uncertainty in her stance. "Really, Juni, it wasn't your fault I got hurt, and I'll be happy to make sure everyone knows that."

As the words left my mouth, the big girl's stony facade began to crack.

"Heck, if anything, I owe you. The food in the doctor's tent is much better than what I get at home." With that, the bully who'd terrorized me for the past four years burst out laughing.

I knew everything would be all right.

THE EARLY YEARS

To this day, Juni's one of my closest friends. Once we started talking to each other, it turned out we had a lot more in common than either one of us would have guessed. That's honestly not an effect of my powers. I'm just good at talking people into things. Turning that into a deep friendship is something else entirely.

Of course, my powers sure come in handy when breaking the ice.

Once the war was over, we all went back home, and my family ended up in our old place in LA. With my new powers, I got through school a lot more easily than I had any right to expect. Teachers were always willing to cut me a lot more slack than just about anyone else, for instance.

Awkward years? Not really.





THE LAUNCH OF DELTA TIMES

Honestly, *Delta Times* started out as a joke. I was living in Hollywood at the time, working as an agent for the stars. It seemed the place to be for a person with talents like mine. Either that or in Washington, and even Hollywood agents rank higher than politicians, although not by much.

I repped a lot of different people back then, a bunch of names you'd probably recognize. My most notable client was Clint Eastwood.

Now there's an actor. And he's a reg too, getting by on sheer talent. Amazing. Things like that almost made me feel guilty for surviving being run over by a truck and being gifted with marvelous powers. Almost.

Anyhow, it was '59, and I was talking with Jimmy White—you probably knew him better as the White Knight, and there was never a better actor, delta, or friend. Jimmy was griping about how the only way he ever knew what was going on with the other deltas in the world was when he read about their exploits in the headlines of the *LA Times*.

I said, "Hey, wouldn't it be cool if all the deltas out there had some kind of newspaper?" It was a good minute before I realized Jimmy wasn't laughing along with me.

I've come to regret those fateful words of mine many times over the past 40 years. Jimmy loved the idea and immediately started telling all his delta friends about it. I shushed him up as soon as I found out how loudly he was yapping on about this "brand-new paper that would finally give deltas the sense of community they're missing," I'd already decided to do it, but I didn't want anyone to know.



The first issue of *Delta Times* hit the stands—so to speak, it was actually available by subscription only—on September 14, 1959.

It was a blockbuster hit.

I started out publishing the paper on a monthly schedule, figuring that's all I could really handle with all my agenting duties, but the demand spiked, and I soon found myself wrangling with a weekly journal.

I set up a holding company to accept subscriptions, complete with an anonymous P.O. box and a phantom address. (Our offices were officially located above Mann's Chinese Theatre, although I don't think Mr. Mann knew anything about it.) And I came up with my first pseudonym: the Yellow Journalist.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Sure, as a Japanese-American, the name "Yellow Journalist" might be seen by some as a slur, but I loved it. For one, I intended in engaging in lots of yellow journalism, as the term's generally understood, and besides which, no one knew my parents were Japanese.

In fact, no one knew who I was at all, and that's the way I liked it.

I had my reasons behind the paper's name too. For those of you who snoozed through your classical education (Do they still teach the classics in school anymore?), "delta" is the Greek letter for change. Therefore, "Delta Times" means "change times," which is what we as a society—even a planet—are firmly in. Things change a lot more quickly today than they ever did before, and I wanted *Delta Times* to be a delta's compass through the whole mad affair. Did I succeed? I'll let history judge that.

<u>THE GOLDEN DAYS</u>

The early '60s were wonderful years for *Delta Times*. In fact, they were great for deltas in general.

There were more deltas all the time, and most of them were doing a lot of good for the world around them, especially those powerful alphas. Sure, there were a few bad apples, those superpowered idiots who either took the law into their own hands or simply thumbed their noses at it, but most people seemed to think the good far outweighed the bad.

Of course, there was the Soviet threat always hanging over all of us. I'm not ashamed to tell you that the whole Bay of Pigs incident scared the snot out of me. The thought that a bunch of Russian alphas were going to be permanently stationed only 90 miles from Miami put shivers down more than one spine. Luckily, Kennedy got us out of that one, a true testament to his skills in brinksmanship.

I was the toast of the delta community, and I was riding high. As much as I'd laughed about it at the time, Jimmy's instincts had been right on target. I'd actually managed to give deltas across the country—well, the world—the means to communicate with each other, even bond.

I even set up a delta convention in '62. We held it on the Strip in Las Vegas, and just about anybody who was any kind of a delta in the free world showed up. It was an absolute blast and a roaring success. I made more delta friends in that week than I had in my entire life. I even had Hearst asking about doing a full-color, glossy color magazine for deltas.

Of course, it all went to hell in November of '63.



THE DISASTER

When that motorcade got blown to pieces in Dallas, I instantly knew it was over. Despite my personal popularity and that of *Delta Times*, anti-delta sentiment was riding high, even before the disaster. This wasn't just the final nail in the coffin. It was the whole damn grave.

I got on the horn with Superior soon after it happened. He was always a government boy, and it wasn't too hard for a man with my talents and contacts to track him down.

The man was beside himself with grief. He'd known the First Lady personally, and he took her death at least as hard as the President.

While I was talking with him, Superior told me, "Yoshi, there is going to have to be a change. It has gotten entirely out of control. I—we—can't let it go on like this. We have to do something."

I asked him what he was talking about. He told me, "I have some ideas. You'll hear about them soon enough."

The next thing I know, Kennedy's ramming the Delta Registration Act down the throats of the American people, and they're swallowing it down like ice-cold lemonade on a sweltering summer day. Sure, he didn't really give anyone much of a choice, but it was disappointing to see how many people threw their support behind him without much pressure at all.

Let's just say that Old Jack didn't have to twist too many arms, and those he did, he didn't have to twist too hard. Congress just rolled over for him like a kicked dog.





REGISTRATION AND RESISTANCE

To me, this was the ultimate betrayal of the people by the politicians we'd elected. There were at least three deltas in the House, not to mention Senator Campbell in the Capitol's other wing. Plus, there were others who hadn't revealed themselves at the time. Once the DRA was signed into law, Representative Biessman—a.k.a. the Raven—stepped forward and registered.

Then there was Bill Walsh, a democrat from Georgia. He'd been running around under the name Bulldog for years, and he thought he'd done a good job of keeping his link to his alter ego under wraps. Believing he was safe, he opted to keep his John Hancock to himself.

From what I hear, it was Superior himself who ratted Bill out. He'd discovered the congressman's secret some time ago, and when Bill neglected to drop the charade, Superior brought him in.

When I say "Superior brought him in," that's something of an understatement. Apparently the man in red, white, and blue wanted to make a point. He stormed into the House while Walsh was making a speech denouncing the way in which the DRA was being implemented, and he revealed Bill's secret identity to the assembled representatives.

Bill lost his temper and actually resisted arrest. Alpha versus delta fights aren't particularly pretty in the first place, and Superior already had the drop on Bill. Superior wiped the Capitol's floor to a shiny finish with the backside of the Bulldog's blue suit.

The message was clear: Register now!

THE RUN BEGINS

Of course, even though that kind of move got everyone's attention, not all of us were willing to listen.

From the outset, it was clear to me what my choices were. I could either give up all my rights and go to work for the government for the rest of my life, I could fight, or I could run.

I'd never been much of a joiner, and I'd seen what Superior had done to my buddy Bill. I tucked my tail between my legs and ran.

Hey, having the power to change people's minds doesn't do you a whole lot of good when you've got a horde of angry alphas ready to beat you within an inch of your life—or a foot past that—and toss you in jail.

I'd done a good job of keeping my identity secret from the general public, but I hadn't been so careful among my delta friends. Back then it had been a "show me yours, and I'll show you mine" kind of thing. You figured if you 'had someone else's secret, they'd never reveal yours.

Unfortunately, a few of those people decided to comply with the DRA. From that point on, there was no reason for them to keep their mouths shut. In fact, if they had and Delta Prime had found out about it, they could have gone to jail too.

So my name got on the list.

I figured this out quickly enough to pack up my things and get the heck out of town. I knew I'd miss the life I'd built for myself in LA, but that had come to a crashing end the day the DRA went into effect, and holding on to it would only have dragged me down with it.

So I went on the run, and I took *Delta Times* with me.

And it was a good run.



MARTIAL LAW

I'd been underground for a month or so when the Devastator took out that entire chunk of Manhattan. Now, I'm of a suspicious mind—which you might have been able to figure out by now and all I have to say is that it was just the excuse Kennedy was looking for.

No matter what the mainstream media might tell you these days, the country wasn't entirely behind the DRA. A lot of people recognized the law for what it was: a tool to bring every delta in the county under the government's heel.

More than that, the way the law permitted the feds to trample all over a delta's civil rights sent a shiver through those of us who were paying attention to it. Sure, deltas are an extremely small portion of the population and—some might argue—a terribly dangerous one, but the US government was based upon the idea that the majority cannot infringe upon the rights of a minority. That's why we have things like the Bill of Rights.

As the saying goes, if you don't speak up when they come for someone else, who's going to speak up when they come for you?

A lot of Jews who'd survived the Nazi death camps recognized what was happening right away. As a former resident of a holding camp, I was pretty sensitive to it myself. And we weren't alone.

The main argument the feds and their supporters used to prop up the DRA was the incredible, delta-inspired chaos the country had been tossed into, launched by Jackie Kennedy's death. The Devastator's desperate gambit and escape threw all the rest of the smaller incidents into sharp focus, and the public outrage was real. The next day, King Jack asked Congress to declare martial law.

He got it.

These days, the story you hear most of the time is that the motion for martial law passed unanimously. That's not entirely true. There were a few notable dissenters, but they were shouted down before they could even make a speech against the proposal.

THE DEFIANCE IS BORN

It wasn't long after that I started the Defiance.

That's not an entirely true statement, but my claim as the founding father of the rebellious delta movement has just as much merit as anyone else's, and often a whole lot more. After all, what would the Defiance be without *Delta Times*?

A whole lot of nothing.

As it is, the Defiance today is only slightly more organized than it was back when it began. It started out as a loose collection of deltas who refused to sign the Delta Registration Act, and the only thing holding us all together was *Delta Times*.

That's just as true today as it was back then, although with the advent of the worldwide web, getting access to a copy of the latest *Delta Times* is a whole lot easier.

It used to be I had to find some sort of sympathetic printer who either didn't have a clue about what I was doing or wasn't going to turn me in. I went through quite a few of those before I found one I could really trust. And no, I'm not going to tell you who it was. He's still out there, and since I'm stuck in here for the rest of my miserable life, I'd like to make sure I don't end up with him as a neighbor. www.deltatimes.com/dle.govus.com

Once I found a printer, I still had to get the thing written and laid out, which I did almost entirely on my own. Sometimes I got information and even the occasional story or announcement from deltas around the country, but more often than not, the entire rag was written by me. I used to pepper the paper with all sorts of pseudonyms so it would look just a bit less like some long rant from a single, deeply disturbed delta.

Instead it looked like a series of shorter rants from a cadre of similarly deeply disturbed deltas. But what can you do?

I kept my original mailing list and set up an anonymous mail drop at a P.O. box in San Diego. When I sent out the first issue after martial law had begun, I mailed it to everyone on the list, whether they'd registered or not. That was both the smartest and dumbest thing I could have done.

First, it was smart because it got my message about resisting the government's actions out to as many deltas as possible. I still hear from people to this day who said that reading *Delta Times* convinced them to take a stand against the government's abrogation of their civil rights.

I can't think of higher praise than that. I've spent a lot of time in this cell already, and it looks like I've still got a long way to go. It's all worth it, though, when I hear statements like that.

Still, it was a really dumb thing to do too. I sent it out to *every* delta on my list. That included people like Superior and even Patriot, who signed on the dotted line like a lot of those Delta Squadron people who joined Delta Prime.







That meant I put Delta Prime on my tail right away. My first printer was busted within the month. I barely got out of town with my files.

Delta Times Today

Those were the bad, old days. Things are a lot easier today. Truth has the whole worldwide web to hide in. Her files might physically be on a server in Costa Rica or even Japan, but she can literally be anywhere she wants. That's the beauty of the internet.

Rumor has it Truth is running the whole thing from Canada, but I don't believe that for a minute. I don't think I'd be blowing her cover by telling you she's an American born and bred, and she's not about to abandon the country to live like some kind of foreign correspondent. No, Truth is here to stay—or at least until the government chases her out of the country.

The best thing about the whole arrangement is that Truth doesn't have to live on the run like I did. I'm sure she's still constantly looking over her shoulder, but at least she gets to do it from the comfort of her own home, wherever that might be.

And no, I don't know either. I made it a policy to never ask.

Of course, the Primers have made a lot of efforts to shut *Delta Times* down, but it's nearly impossible to do, short of bringing down the entire internet. That's pretty much impossible to do, seeing how important it's become not only to businesses around the world but the US military itself, which got the whole internet rolling in the first place after all.



UNITED WE STAND

When we first started the Defiance (a name I first coined in the pages of *Delta Times*, of course), those of us deltas who had refused to sign the Delta Registration Act had thought we were making a strong statement against a crime the government was committing against its people.

We also thought it would blow over in a few weeks once everyone came to their collective senses. It just goes to show how wrong some of the smartest and most powerful people in the world can be.

A lot of the early Defiants were just a little too openly so. Do any of you remember a man named Norman Robertson? Norm was one of the first members of the Defiance, and he wore his membership like a flag wrapped around his chest.

He was also one of the first of us to be brought in.

I've talked to Norm about it since. He's actually down at the end of my cell block, one level up. He's been here for over 35 years, and he's still as hardheaded as ever.

He tells me, "Yosh, I never believed they'd actually do it. And even if they did, I figured I'd be a test case for the new law. I thought it would likely work its way up eventually to the Supreme Court, which would strike the whole law down.

"Of course, these days, the Supreme Court might just as well have been disbanded. Their opinions haven't mattered since 1964. Kennedy can't live forever, though, Yosh. Someday there will be a court again. Someday people will realize that what Kennedy has done to us—to *all* of us—is wrong.

"Someday I'll be free."

You know, I think he honestly believes that.

Norm wasn't the only one arrested that week who's still rotting away in a jail cell either here in New Alcatraz or the Fortress. Even so, they were luckier than some, those poor fools who were killed while resisting arrest.

That's the real tragedy of the Delta Registration Act. The people who really suffer are the law-abiding deltas, the ones who either just want to be left alone or honestly want to help. The real criminals—the ones the DRA was purportedly designed to let the government go after—are still out there.

Sure, some of them were caught over the years, but just as many are still wandering around, wreaking havoc and raising hell. The Devastator, for instance, the worst of them all, never did a day of time. He just took out Chicago instead. The only good that ever came out of that horrific disaster is the fact the Devastator finally met his end too.

Good riddance. Not even the bastard's mother—if he had one missed him, I'm sure.

Anyhow, despite the initial headiness we all had from standing up against Jack and Patriot and the rest of the US government, it couldn't last. When you stand against something, you grab attention, and from Delta Prime's point of view, mocking their power would just not do.

It wasn't long before the rest of us took the hint and went underground. I stayed out in the cold myself for almost 25 years. I was outside San Francisco when the bombs fell, but, well, I'm getting ahead of myself again.

Let me tell you all about what happened next instead.



DIVIDED WE FALL

For a bright, shining moment or two there, it seemed like the Defiance might actually be able to mount a concerted effort against Delta Prime and the Delta Registration Act. After all, there were a lot of deltas out there who didn't want to sign up. We even estimated that, of those deltas who did register, over 50% of them sympathized with the Defiant cause.

Unfortunately, sympathizing with someone and being willing to stand next to him are two entirely different things. Few of those who signed up with the government broke ranks when news of the Defiance's existence got out.

By that time, the feds had already gotten their hooks into them and worse yet—knew where they and their loved ones lived. Deserting at that point was tantamount to making everyone you ever knew miserable for the rest of their lives.

Besides which, these so-called "reluctant registrants" had already shown a total lack of spine by signing up in the first place. Telling them about a resistance movement wasn't going to get a lot of them to suddenly show some backbone.

FACTIONALIZATION

It was bad enough we couldn't get support from anyone outside of the Defiance. Most registered deltas wouldn't touch us with a 10 foot pole unless they were Primers who were using the pole to beat us half to death. Regs were pretty much the same way.

The betrayals of friends and family always hurt the worst. You never really expect your own mother to turn you in, after all. Then there were the Defiants themselves.

There was one thing we could all agree on: None of us were going to register with the government.

That's where it ended.

Some of us wanted a resistance movement. Others just wanted to disappear.

Of those who wanted to resist, some wanted to do so peaceably, while others insisted on taking the fight directly to the Primers—even to the White House itself.

Why do you think the White House has its own power-dampening field surrounding it? Those things are horribly expensive and a true pain to maintain, but Kennedy's no dummy. Without it, the White House would be a warzone. As it is, the place is locked up tighter than Fort Knox.

The point is, few of us could agree on anything at first. Eventually, whether by fate or luck or the grace of God, it all broke down into four major camps, all of which took the name of the Defiance at one time or another.

In some ways this worked to our advantage. After all, it's hard for your foes to take you down once and for all if they don't even know who to attack. We're almost like a hydra, that mythical multi-headed beast. You cut off one of the heads, and two more spring up to take its place.

The trick with a hydra is to go for the heart. The only problem is no one really knows what that is. Personally, I'd like to think *Delta Times* qualifies, but I'm pretty sure the Defiance would go on without us, although perhaps in a meaner way. We tend to be a calming influence on some of the more active factions in the Defiance, which probably explains our longevity in a couple of ways.



CONFUSION REIGNS

All in all, keeping track of what's going on in the Defiance is enough to confuse Stephen Hawking. Most people can't tell one side of the Defiance from the other, but if you're going to be one of us, it's in your best interest to figure it all out. It's been said that you can't tell the players in this deadly game without a scorecard.

Well, sunshine, this is as close as you're ever going to get to an official game program, so keep reading. And please pay attention. I hate repeating myself.

A CAVEAT

I'm going to do my best here, but you've got to remember I've been locked up in a jail cell for more than 10 years now. I know how things used to be. As for how they are now, you're going to have to rely on Truth for that kind of information.

I can tell you how each of the major factions was founded, who the personalities behind them are—or were—and what their driving philosophies are, but beyond that, I'm not going to be much help.

Still, maybe that's enough. At the very least, it's a good place to start.

DIVISIONS

The four major factions—there are dozens of smaller ones—break down along philosophical lines. There's the group that advocates quiet resistance endorsed by *Delta Times*. Then there are those that want to set up a separate but equal delta nation. A small but worthy group pleads for peaceful but open resistance, while the last demands change with threats of violence.





THE DEFIANCE PROPER

Let's start out with the group I know best: the Defiance proper. To me—and to most deltas—this is the true Defiance, the people who you turn to first after you've decided to avoid the government. These are the people with the right answers.

Of course, there are those out there who disagree with me, but I'll get to them in a minute.

The Defiance I know and love is filled with all sorts of people who recognize the tyranny of our current system of government as implemented by President Kennedy by decree. We're interested in defending ourselves from any acts of aggression (like Delta Primers bashing down our doors in the middle of the night), but we don't advocate actually taking violent action directly against the government or its agents.

Of course, there are exceptions to every rule, and we have few ways to actually police our own policies. Any actions taken by an individual member of our group are that member's own responsibility, and she should be prepared to suffer the consequences for her actions on her own.

We are basically a loosely wired network of people with a mutual problem (a government that wants us to either serve it or rot in jail) and a set of mutual goals.

In the short term, our main objective is to avoid capture by Delta Prime—or any other government agency, for that matter—and to help keep others out of jail too. To that end, we've set up *Delta Times* as a central hub for information exchange, supplying untraceable, anonymous e-mail addresses and websites for any members who ask. Our long-term goal is to restore democracy to the United States of America. We have sister organizations in other countries which are concerned with improving human and civil rights within their own homelands, but the Defiance is a particularly American invention, and we're most concerned with our own backyard.

THE LENGTHS TO WHICH WE'LL GO

The thing that separates my part of the Defiance from some of the other factions is that we consider ourselves to be the good guys. We know that Delta Prime is filled with ruthless thugs who wouldn't hesitate to destroy a city block to flush out a single Defiant, but we strive to refuse to bring ourselves down to their level.

If we don't hold ourselves to a higher standard than those we're fighting against, we risk becoming just like them. Terrorism is no way to bring about a democracy.

There's something to be said for fighting fire with fire, and when the need arises, you'll find the Defiance can respond to any direct threats with all the power necessary. Just because we don't want to fight doesn't mean we're not capable of defending ourselves.

That's really what the Defiance is about: defending ourselves from a government that would strip us of our rights. We're careful, however, not to confuse the American government with the American people. If we're ever to prevail against Kennedy and his cronies, we're going to need to garner the popular support of the people. Scaring them doesn't help our cause. In fact, by demonstrating that they have good reason to fear us, we're actually doing our cause a great deal of serious harm.





OUR PROBLEMS

The fact is that the leadership of the Defiance is nebulous at best, which is one of the reasons it's hard to get us all to agree on more than what I've just stated. And not all of us are even willing to do that.

Truth is currently the closest thing to a de facto leader we have. I understand Patriot (who was a Primer when I was walking around free) might have had the potential to gather many of the Defiants together under one banner at one time, but his execution seems to have put that idea to a swift end.

That said, Patriot's death seems to be acting as a catalyst of a kind, his execution at the hands of the feds having elevated his status from that of a capable Defiant leader to that of a full-blown martyr. Of course, there doesn't seem to be a St. Peter available to pick up that fallen star-spangled mask and continue on. I can only hope that such a thing happens soon, or the Defiance may simply float adrift, a ship without a captain or even a rudder.

Still, that's always been our problem. Every time it looks like we might finally have found a charismatic leader that we can all get behind, someone who can take the battle for freedom to the next level, he gets killed or captured by Delta Prime or—worse yet—one of our own.

Most of us are gentle souls in a hard world. We understand why regs fear deltas. We were all once regs ourselves. The only way we're ever going to put an end to this is to educate the regs, not abandon them or frighten them. In the end, we're all human after all.



ISLA DELTA

As John Donne once wrote, "No man is an island, entire unto himself." The point he was trying to make is that as a human being, you're part of a society that it's impossible to divorce yourself from.

Well, not everyone agrees with Mr. Donne. Case in point: the Isla Delta movement.

The whole idea behind Isla Delta is that if the regs are determined to treat deltas as if they're outsiders, then we should be outsiders. It borrows liberally from Marcus Garvey's "Back to Africa" movement that once got no small amount of attention from certain people in the African-American community.

For those of you who haven't heard, the basic idea is separationism.

That's a big word for a pretty simple concept. It means: Let's pick ourselves a spot in the middle of nowhere, somewhere nobody else really wants, and live there.

Of course, it doesn't end there. This is a complex world we live in. You can't just wander down to an island off the coast of Costa Rica and declare yourself to be a new nation. For one, the country that currently lays claim to that piece of sod is not likely to agree with you.

Even if you somehow manage to get a sovereign nation to agree to give up some of its territory to you, you've got to get the rest of the world to recognize your new home's status as a country. If that happens, then you've got to go through the whole exchange of embassies business and the rest of the rigmarole that goes with founding a new nation.



Favorites

www.deltatimes.com/dle.gov/us.com

Angel Oliveri Gandarillas was the man who founded the Isla Delta movement back in '65, soon after the Defiance finally found its feet. Angel was a Spanish expatriate who ran around under the name El Cid, after a legendary Spanish hero.

😚 History 🛛 🜑 Stop 🛛 🖁 Home

Angel fought against Franco during the Spanish Civil War, which meant he was on the losing side. He'd been in America since fleeing Spain in '39, most often living in the Cuban community in and around Miami.

Angel knew all about fascists, and when Kennedy laid down martial law, he instantly realized what was happening. He was an old man at that point. He used to tell me, "Yoshi, my friend, I have already fought my war, and I have lost. I am not going to fight another."

A WAY OUT

Instead, Angel decided the best option was for every Defiant in America to leave. To his mind, why would he want to stick around in a country and help out a people who obviously wanted nothing to do with him?

At first, most of us thought of Angel as a crackpot. Even though we were close friends, I had to count myself in that group. After all, America was our country, and we weren't just going to leave without a fight. Remember, we were all sure it was going to blow over soon enough and would just be a particularly dark chapter in American history.

We had no way of knowing how wrong we were.

Angel, though, he had a vision. He made his way down through Central and South America, gaining audiences with the leaders of the various countries—those who would talk to him rather than toss him in jail or extradite him back to the US. After three years of searching and talking, he found a friend in Costa Rica.

I'm not talking about just one person. I mean the government in general.

Costa Rica actually agreed to set up a delta sanctuary under Angel's guidance, on a tiny island just off the nation's coast. The only caveat was that the new nation-to-be—which Angel instantly dubbed Isla Delta—had to pledge to come to Costa Rica's aid whenever it was called. Also, there had to be a population of at least 1,000 deltas on the island before the Costa Rican government would allow the land to form a national government.

Angel told me that when they put the agreement in front of him to sign, he was so eager, he almost broke his pen.

RECRUITING DRIVE

The real problem Angel had then was getting enough people to listen to his ideas, abandon their families and friends, and move down to Isla Delta. He managed to get dozens of people down at first, and a few hundred more over the decades, but he's never quite managed to hit that critical number to push Isla Delta over the top into sovereignty.

Angel disappeared on the day of the Bicentennial Battle, even though he was in Isla Delta that day. These days, one of his proteges—a passionate Puerto Rican by the name of Enrique Salvador—carries on his mission with all the fervor Angel ever put into it.

Someday Ricky might even be able to realize the dream. I can only wish him luck.



DELTA WARRIORS

My mother used to tell me, "It takes all kinds." Actually, she said it in Japanese, and it comes across a bit differently in that language, but that's the gist of it.

Case in point: the Delta Warriors. This is a ragtag group of self-declared revolutionaries that have decided to stop living life on the run and take the battle directly to Delta Prime and even JFK himself.

The Delta Warriors were founded by Marcus Manley in 1965. He was a sergeant in Delta Squadron who, when he finished his last tour of duty, refused to sign up with Delta Prime.

He used to say, "I didn't spend the last eight years of my life fighting for freedom, liberty, and justice all over the world just to come back to find the greatest nation on the face of the earth living under a fascist dictator!"

Of course, Manley had a point that most of us Defiants agreed with. The situation was intolerable, and we all wanted to work to restore democracy to our homeland. The means Manley was willing to use to get to his proclaimed ends, however, were a bit more violent than most of us were willing to get behind.

Okay, they were a lot more violent.

THE MAN WITH THE PLAN

At first, Manley worked closely with the Defiance. He wrote lots of letters and editorials for *Delta Times*, and even if I didn't always agree with his opinions, they were always good for sparking a debate.

What I didn't realize is that Manley was using *Delta Times* as his main recruiting tool. Every time I published one of his long diatribes about the evil JFK was perpetrating on our country, he got a half-dozen letters from angry deltas asking what they could do. Manley had an answer: fight.

A STRONG, CLEAR MESSAGE

To that end, Manley formed the Delta Warriors, a group of deltas—and some regs too—that believe that the only way to restore democracy to the United States is by the judicious application of force.

Of course, there's just no way that Manley and his ragtag band of deltas could actually stand toe to toe with Delta Prime or even the focused force of the US military. There just aren't enough of them with the right kinds of powers. They'd be slaughtered.

Manley knew this, of course, so he turned to what he felt was the only option open to him: terrorism.

When you've got people under your command that are capable of actually exploding their entire bodies, scaring the hell out of people isn't really all that difficult.

The Delta Warriors started out slowly at first. They bombed a few unstaffed government buildings, and nobody got hurt. Delta Prime swarmed all over the places, hunting for clues, and a few Warriors were captured and tossed in jail. The papers declared the problem solved, a few rebellious Defiants put squarely in their place by the superior efforts (so to speak) of Delta Prime.

They didn't realize that the capture of those few individuals was like putting a Band-Aid over a gaping chest wound.

Manley was infuriated by his group's treatment in the press, so he decided to crank his operations up a notch. He embarked on a series of deftly planned assassinations which targeted both Delta Primers ("Delta traitors!" as Manley put it) and top government regs alike.

Of course, the Secret Service simply stepped up its security measures, and a couple of the top Warrior killers were brought in and executed—or killed while resisting arrest. The level of assassinations dropped off radically, although I understand they're still happening to unwary officials, even to this day.

Then the real terrorist attacks began. Federal buildings full of people were leveled. Government limousines went up in gouts of flame. Innocent people died by the dozen. And Marcus Manley became the most reviled person in the entire country. Some polls even showed him to be more hated than any Soviet leader. He loved it.

GUILT BY ASSOCIATION

The real problem here was that the press quickly made sure that the general public would equate Manley's Delta Warriors with the general Defiance. Over the years, Manley's done more to hurt the good name of our cause than even Kennedy himself. More young deltas have joined Delta Prime out of fear of the Warriors than anything else.

I used to regularly argue this point with Manley in the pages of *Delta Times*, giving him space to air his ideas so I could shoot them down. I don't know if that did more harm than good. I always felt Manley would get to his followers one way or another. At least this way I was able to offer a dissenting opinion and hopefully convince some potential Defiants to side with right.





PAX DELTA

Thankfully, there are many Defiants who don't agree with Marcus Manley's methods. Most of us are just normal people—okay, maybe a bit more than normal—who want to live our lives in peace. Sure, we all want to bring democracy back to the US, but most of us aren't willing to hunt down the foes of freedom to do that. Most of us just aren't killers—unless we're pressed into that role, and even then we're reluctant.

The Delta Warriors are on one side of that spectrum of violence. Most of us fall somewhere in the middle. Then there are those who take it to the other extreme.

Enter the Pax Delta. "Pax" is Latin for peace, and by now you'd better know where the "Delta" comes from. The Pax, as it's often called, preaches a message of pacifism and nonviolent resistance.

The Pax takes a lot of its ideals from the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, the great Indian leader who brought his country together and led his people to independence from the British by nonviolent means. Of course, he was assassinated in 1948, but his ideas about how to peacefully deal with an unjust situation live on.

ENTER DOCTOR KING

As you might guess, many members of the Schism—that contingent of religious deltas who broke away from the Catholic Church's Covenant—also consider themselves part of the Pax Delta. After all, many religions preach nonviolent resistance. Remember "Thou shalt not kill"? That's a commandment, not a suggestion, you know, and people take it seriously. The primary link between the Pax and the Schism, of course, is Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. King was one of the founding members of the Pax, and it was his groundbreaking work with the Pax that led to his appointment as one of the triumvirate actually in charge of the Schism.

King's stance has always been one of nonviolent protest. He was one of the first reg leaders to reach out to the Defiance back in the mid-'60s. He recognized that the problems the African-American people were having weren't all that different from those of deltas everywhere.

It's difficult to compare the two directly, of course, since many deltas can hide their status by simply not using their powers—at least as long as there aren't any Delta Prime hounds nearby. People of color, of course, can't so easily hide their race.

Still, many of the same issues were arising for each group, mostly civilrights related. After talking with myself and many other Defiant leaders, King decided that it would be in the best interests of all of the oppressed groups to unify in their stance against a government that seemed increasingly uncaring about—even hostile to—the rights of its people.

As a reg, King could actually lead marches from the front, confident that at least he wasn't breaking the Delta Registration Act. Still, with the country under martial law, such niceties were only observed out of respect for the great numbers of people who listened to King. The feds didn't need to make a martyr out of the man by putting him in prison or—worse yet—killing him.

Eventually King's voice was raised a little too loudly or annoyed the wrong people. The game he played with the government changed in 1968.





THE KING IS DEAD, LONG LIVE THE KING

On April 4, 1968, King was gunned down in Memphis, Tennessee. A man named James Earl Ray was captured a few months later and convicted for attempted murder. He confessed at first but later recanted, saying he was coerced into admitting to a crime he hadn't committed. Knowing how the feds work these days, it's hard to say who's telling the truth, and it doesn't really matter that much.

King survived the attack, but just barely. In fact, it was this event that triggered his awakening. He kept this little tidbit a secret for many years, but I knew about it almost from the start. You see, he'd been writing to me as a leader of the Defiance for years, and when he realized he had powers of his own, I was the first one he came to. All right, maybe I was the second, after his wife Coretta.

I coached him on keeping his abilities to himself and how to avoid anyone learning his secret. It was easy enough for me to do. His powers were just like mine.

It's kind of ironic, since it's not like King needed to be any more persuasive than he already was. The man was already one of the most compelling personalities I'd ever met.

He actually kept everything secret for many years, but his powers were made public in 1978, when a Primer hound sniffed him out at a civil rights rally. King managed to get away, but as famous as he was, life as he knew it was over. Since then, he's rededicated himself to fighting the good fight for civil rights for all men and women, but only by peaceful means.



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THE YEARS HAVE <u>Not Been Kind</u>

Back when we started the Defiance, it was a kind of a lark. I mean, we thought we'd set up a few protests, exchange a few letters via our "underground" newsletter, and thumb our collective nose at Uncle Sam.

Then time wore on, and things didn't change. It gradually became painfully apparent that nothing was going to get better on its own. We had to do something about it ourselves.

That's when things really started breaking down. It's hard enough to get a handful of regs to agree to something. Once you give each of those people some kind of superhuman ability, they all think they're God's gift to whatever endeavor they put their minds to.

As you may have already found out by now, this leads to more bickering than ever.

The divisions I was talking about before are rough enough. At the organizational level, those kinds of splits that factionalize a organization that needs unity can spell doom. The real problem, though, seems to be at the individual level.

By that, I don't mean that deltas are arguing with themselves constantly about which path to take—although many of us certainly wrestle with those questions. I'm talking about the way in which few of us can seem to get together about anything.

There's just no way we'll ever be able to take on the feds if we never manage to figure out what we're all about, and it just seemed like that was never going to happen.

That is until just recently. Until the death of Patriot.



ILL MET IN FRISCO

I'll be the first to admit I didn't like Patriot much when I first met him. That probably had something to do with the fact he had his knee in my back as he was smacking a pair of cuffs around my wrists. He'd been in charge of the Primer squad that finally tracked me down and brought me in.

I'd been living in Oakland when the bombs fell on San Francisco back in '88, and I'd gone into the city soon after the "clean" neutron bursts had killed everyone within miles of the city center. The group I was with was hoping we'd find someone—anyone we could help. After all, anyone who'd managed to survive the blast had probably become a delta, and we figured it was the least we could do.

The government had apparently had the same idea, so they sent a bunch of Primers in, led by a pack of delta hounds. Patriot was among them, part of the capture crew—not a hound but a hunter.

The streets of San Francisco were littered with the newly dead. Corpses lay everywhere. Pedestrians had literally been stopped in their tracks. The worst part was how the cars that had been on the steeply angled streets had all rolled down toward the piers. Some of them managed to smash through into the water, and the surf frothed with corpses. The bulk of them, though, had snarled up at the bottom of the hills in tremendous mounds of shattered steel and rotting flesh.

Even so, we had to try. We had to look for survivors and do our best to haul them from the wreckage, deltas or not. It was the human thing to do.

Delta Prime apparently doesn't have any humans in it.

CAPTURED!

The Primers were swarming over the place, looking for new deltas. When they found them, they hauled them out of the city in manacles and shipped them directly off to the Prime HQ in Chicago.

Patriot's squad found us while we were getting a young lady out of the room she'd been hiding in at the top of the Transamerica Building. They stormed in and made quick work of us. Of the four of us—not counting the girl—two of us were killed in the battle. As a new delta with undeclared loyalties, the girl was spared.

Unfortunately, it didn't seem that my friend Wilma Waring and I were going to be so lucky.

Patriot's second-in-command was a burly man with an appropriate codename: Hothead. Despite his handle, he was a coldhearted beast, and he was sure that Wilma and I were holding out on him, protecting other groups of Defiants that were running about the city on the same mission as us. He was ready to torture the information out of us.

While there certainly were other Defiants looking for survivors in the city, we didn't know where they were. We'd kept it that way on purpose.

That was always one of the Defiance's strengths. Purposefully, none of us ever knew much about what the rest of us were doing at any given time. While this could be frustrating at times, it sure came in handy when someone was inevitably captured. There were only a handful of people who knew enough different Defiants to cause some serious damage to the Defiance should they be caught.

I, of course, was one of that important handful of people.



REBELLION IN THE RANKS

Hothead started in on Wilma pretty hard. She denied knowing anything, but he didn't believe her. He beat her mercilessly as I was held down by two other Primers, helpless to do anything but watch.

And I knew that once Wilma gave up the ghost, I was next.

Just when I thought Wilma couldn't possibly take anymore, Patriot started yelling for Hothead to stop. The madman was too involved in his beating to pay any attention to his commander. He kept swinging at my friend tirelessly, hurling his hands harder and harder with each punch.

Patriot stepped forward and grabbed Hothead by the shoulder. "Don't," was all he said.

I could see the rage flare in Hothead's face, his normally pale skin flushing bright red under his shortcropped, blond hair. He turned and laid Patriot flat out with one mighty blow.

Everyone in the room froze for one long moment as Patriot slowly got back to his feet. He rubbed his jaw with his left hand as his right hand started to crackle with energy.

"Back down, Patriot!" shouted Hothead. "The Psych boys warned the colonel you might try something like this. That you might turn on us. They said you were going soft!" He sneered at that last word, as if it left a foul taste in his mouth.

Both of Patriot's hands were crackling now. He waited a long moment, glaring over at Hothead and at the two stunned Primers still holding me down. Then he spoke calmly and deliberately, but with much emotion. His voice was filled with just as much energy as his fists. "I'm not getting soft, Eric. I'm shocked by how hardened I've gotten to all of this. You were about to kill an innocent woman whose only crime was coming into a city of death to see if she could offer anyone a hand.

"It was a selfless act, and you beat her senseless for it. It's bad enough we killed her friends—at least that was in the heat of battle. It's bad enough she was going to jail for life.

"But you just had to beat the hell out of her.

"You think standing up against that is 'going soft'?"

With that, Patriot brought up his hands and let loose with a blast from his fists that shook the walls. It caught Hothead squarely in the chest and knocked him back through the plateglass window. We heard the man screaming as he fell the dozens of stories to the ground.

With Hothead's cry still ringing in our ears, Patriot turned back to the two men holding me down.

"You two want to see how soft I've gotten?" They each looked at his crackling hands and then back up into his angry eyes. They glanced at each other quickly, then each slowly shook their head no.

"Then step away from that man, toss your weapons over there, and get the hell out of here. There's been enough killing today."

Amazingly, they did as he asked. As the two Primers left, Patriot walked over to Wilma and examined her wounds. Then he looked up at me with a grim face. "She'll live," he said, "but barely."

I looked out through the shattered window. "Did you really kill that man?" I asked.

"Not if he remembers he can fly," he said flatly.



REMEMBERING PATRIOT

Patriot went underground soon after that, and I heard he ended up working for a Mafia family for a while before joining the ranks of the Defiance. I was captured only two days after he let me go. I had gone back into the city to look for survivors once again, and this time I hadn't been so fortunate in my choice of captors.

I never really got to know the man personally, but I followed his exploits the best I could. There's a lot you can learn in censored rags like the Crescent City Times if you just know how to read between the lines.

Over time, Patriot became one of the greatest leaders the Defiance ever had, all the more so because he never craved the power that went with leadership. It had been thrust upon him instead.

I wish more of us could have followed his lead in that way as well as others.

I actually had the chance to chat with Patriot once in the exercise yard here before he was entirely isolated. I don't think he recognized me at first, but I made sure to remind him of when we'd first met, and to thank him.

"For what?" he asked, "Almost killing you?"

"No," I told him, "for proving to me that our cause isn't lost. If a man like vou-a man who had dedicated himself to Delta Prime-can come around and even become a leader of the Defiance, well, then there's hope for us all."

He smiled at that and touched my hand between the chainlink fence that separated us. He was a good man.

He will be missed.







TODAY'S DEFIANCE

Now that the Yellow Journalist has given you his rambling version of a history lesson, let's talk about current events. (YJ, if you're reading this, I'm kidding! You know I love you.)

The American political landscape such as it is—has changed drastically over the past few months, especially from a Defiant's point of view. As late as early this year, the ongoing dispute between Delta Prime and the Defiance seemed to have reached a kind of status quo. The Primers chased us all over the country, and we did our best to avoid them.

That's all changed now, and it's all due to one spectacular event: the execution of John Cruise, the man we all knew as Patriot.

For those of you who've been living under a rock for the past few months something many Defiants do for reasons of survival, so I'm really not giving you a hard time here—Patriot was convicted of the murder of a mob boss known as Don Paolo Gabriel and sentenced to death. The sentence was carried out on August 4, 1999.

Of course, Patriot was falsely convicted. These were trumped-up charges designed to rub the incredible reputation of the Defiance's greatest spokesperson into a mire of mediainspired filth.

The really amazing part about all of this is that there was a jury trial at all. These days, juries are kind of like dodos. Everyone's heard of them, but no one's seen one in years.

If you want the whole story straight from the keyboard of Patriot himself— click on this <u>link</u>. [For more on this, be sure to pick up *Ravaged Planet*.]

THE DEFIANCE RIOTS

That's what the governmentcontrolled media has taken to calling the vast public outcry against the execution of Patriot: the Defiance Riots. The TV and papers talk as if every underground delta in the United States suddenly took to the streets and started smashing and looting.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Okay, a few deltas—even a few Defiants—did take advantage of the chaos of the situation to settle a few scores and stuff their pockets with illgotten gains, but these were the exception, not the rule. Most of the rioters were actually regs. Of those, there were two groups.

The first and largest group was composed of downtrodden people who saw their own plight mirrored in Patriot's conviction and execution on drummed-up charges. These were angry people who took to the streets to let their voices be heard.

Some of these "rioters" were peaceful protesters, while others decided to smash down the windows and doors of every federal building they could find.

Let me be bluntly clear: The Defiance does not now nor ever has condoned such behavior. We often struggle with the law and sometime take part in technically illegal activities, but we do not terrorize innocent people.

Well, okay, most of us don't. The Delta Warriors do that all the time, but again, they're an exceptionally bad pack of idiots. (And I say that with all due love and respect for you, Killer.)

The rioters that made up the second group were people that didn't really give a damn about Patriot, the




Defiance, or anything else vaguely political. These people simply saw the chance to cash in on the misfortune of others, and they took it.

That said, the Defiants were still the ones who took the blame. In one sense, I can hardly find fault with this. After all, you can have a mob of people rioting in the streets in front of you, but when you see a delta toss a squad car through the front of a Wal-Mart, that really leaves an impression—and not just on the front of the store.

On the other hand, it really bugs me. Over 75% of the Defiants out there were actually trying to help people out by quelling the violence. But you're never going to hear about that in the mainstream media. Even if the reporters for those papers and stations wanted to tell the truth, they couldn't. The government just won't let them. Still, the riots got people mobilized about the whole delta issue again. It seemed like the country had gotten jaded to the idea of Defiants—and that included a lot of Defiants too. Sure, we were still fighting tooth and nail against the Primers whenever we bumped into them or they managed to track us down, but most days the thought of the Primers finding you and hauling you in were like the threat of the Soviets launching off a nuclear Armageddon. Intellectually, you knew it could happen at any time, but in your heart, you didn't really believe it.

The riots were a wakeup call for the entire country. They happened in just about every major city across the country, and they drove one point home. Whether the underground deltas out there were hurting or helping, the Defiance was again front-page news.



PATRIOT SIGHTINGS

If you've been in a supermarket in the past couple months, you've seen the tabloids blaring all sorts of headlines like "Patriot Spotted in Graceland!", "Patriot's Grave Is Empty!", and even "Patriot's Ghost Fathered My Baby!"

Obviously you've got to take some of these with a bag of rock salt, but there have been lots of sightings confirmed by reliable witnesses. How do you explain this?

The easy explanation is that Patriot's not really dead. He somehow managed to escape his execution at the last second, and now he's traveling the country, working underground to further the ends of the Defiance.

But that's ludicrous. No one's ever broken out of New Alcatraz. Ever. And a lot of people have tried.

Besides which, don't you think Delta Prime would be conducting a nationwide manhunt for Patriot if he'd actually gotten out of prison alive? Kennedy himself has called Patriot "the most dangerous threat to the stability of this great nation of ours since the cowardly Soviet attack in '88."

I can only say that Patriot would have considered that pretty high praise.

The fact is that Patriot's dead and buried. A lot of people saw him get shot to death—although I hear it actually took three volleys before they finally brought that proud soldier down—and even more attended his funeral.

Believe me. Patriot was a dear friend of mine. No one mourned his passing—his *murder* by the state—more than I did. I really wish he was alive, but just wishing for something doesn't make it so.

BUT IT LOOKED JUST LIKE HIM

All that said, a lot of people are spotting Patriot popping up all over the country, so what's up with that?

Sure, there could be some kind of mass hysteria going on. Think of how it works with Elvis, for instance. People want to see their idols—or maybe even their nightmares, as old Siggy Freud might point out—and so they do whenever they get the chance. But that doesn't explain it all.

Hell, some people have even gotten photographs and home video footage. There was even one station in Seattle that recorded Patriot bursting out of a burning building with an innocent child he'd rescued in his arms. That's hard evidence right there. Pictures don't lie.

Well, that's not true. In a world in which any idiot with a copy of Photoshop can fake up a decent photo and Industrial Light and Magic is using computers to generate virtual actors for Hollywood movies, we can't exactly trust visual media any more either. Pictures lie all the time. What, you thought the dinosaurs in *Jurassic Park* were real?

RAISING THE FALLEN BANNER

Time for me to tell the truth myself. I've seen Patriot myself, right here in Crescent City. He was dancing around drunk in little more than his mask, right there in front of the Delta Academy. The cops showed up about five minutes after I spotted him and hauled him away.

Follow me here, folks. It wasn't really Patriot. It was just some drunken frat boy in a mask. I hear he's doing time for threatening a federal building. Some hazing prank, eh?

http://the_defiance_today/page37



www.deltatimes.com/dle.gov/us.com

Since Patriot's death, it seems like every fool with a silkscreen machine and a few spare yards of cloth has been churning out Patriot masks. I understand they're a shoo-in to be the most popular item this Halloween. Back in the old days, it was the Destroyer, but he's been gone over 20 years, so he's passe—unless you're going for that '70s retro thing.

It's not just kids wearing these things. The masks come in all sizes, for kids of all ages. I was at a costume party last month, and there had to be at least five Patriots there.

The fact is that not everyone who buys a Patriot mask will wear it trickor-treating. I've heard of everyone from street vigilantes to stickup artists wearing the damn things.

This annoys me more than I can say—at least in a polite rag like *Delta Times*. In private, I can go on about it with a mouth like an angry sailor. The man died for our cause, and people wear his mask so they can rob others at gunpoint? Sometimes the irony of modern life is just too much.

THE PATRIOT CORPS

There are those, however, who feel more the way I do, that Patriot's mask has become a symbol of our struggle against the government that's betrayed its citizens. These people have decided to wear the mask to show their support of the Defiance.

The fact is that if the cops catch you showing support for the Defiance, you're in for a long night down at the station. This is where the fact that lots of idiots are wearing the mask for no good reason whatsoever actually works in our favor. It's impossible to tell the jokesters from the real supporters, so God bless them in the end. There are even a few Defiants who have taken Patriot's mask—or a variant thereof—and decided to wear it whenever they're on the job. In fact, I've even got reports through *Delta Times* of no less than five people who have taken up not only the mask of Patriot but his name as well.

Before you go off on how disrespectful this is, you should remember that this is exactly how Patriot started out himself. In fact, John Cruise was actually the third man to use the identity of Patriot on an ongoing basis—and there may even have been more we don't know about. That's the beauty of the mask after all.

Of course, having half a dozen or so Patriots running around the country can be confusing. Two of them are even claiming to actually *be* John Cruise under their masks. As the saying goes, "I knew Patriot. Patriot was a good friend of mine. You're no Patriot."

Then there's the one who can tell you with a straight face that Cruise's spirit has inhabited her body, and I'm not talking metaphorically here. I've had the chance to talk with her, and I can tell you she believes her story down to the core of her being.

That still doesn't make it true though. My power to tell when people are lying to me doesn't do well with the mentally unbalanced. After all, they don't know they're lying. To them, it's the God's-honest truth.

There is a small subsection of the Defiance that actually calls itself the Patriot Corps these days. Some of these diehard Defiants don the man's mask when they hit the streets, while others simply content themselves with wearing a black armband with an icon of Patriot's mask emblazoned across it.

It's safe to say that while Patriot is dead, he's far from forgotten.



ISLA DELTA OR BUST

Patriot's death sent shockwaves through the entire Defiant community. Nowhere was this more true than with Ricky Salvador, the current leader of the delta separationist movement. Ricky was down in Costa Rica, visiting the Isla Delta development, when Patriot was executed. He watched the Defiance Riots on TV, and as he did, I'm sure he smiled to himself.

From his point of view, the whole incident just made everything just that much more clear. America didn't want unregistered deltas running around the country, and the deltas didn't really want to be there either. People who are content with the situation they're living under don't generally go out of their way to rip cities apart, no matter what the reason. Immediately afterward, Ricky launched a new Isla Delta recruitment campaign. In just the past month since the riots, he's gotten almost another 100 deltas to sign on with him, renounce their citizenship, and pledge their allegiance to Isla Delta instead.

This puts Ricky dangerously close to that magic number of 1,000 deltas. If he can actually get there—and the Costa Rican government honors its promises to him—he can finally realize the dream that Angel Oliveri Gandarillas began so many years ago. There will be a homeland for disenchanted deltas from any corner of the globe.

Anyhow, I've given Ricky some space on the website to pitch you his plans, so I'll let him do that in his own words. I don't disagree with a lot of his logic, but there's no way you're ever going to get me to give up on the USA.



http://the_defiance_today/page39



ON THE WARPATH

While Ricky Salvador and most of the world watched the riots on TV, there were actually some of us were down in the trenches, taking part in them. The most notorious was Malachai Winter, the current leader of the Delta Warriors. Mal led a pack of his Warriors through the streets of Crescent City, leaving fire, death, and grief in their wake.

In the heat of the moment, Mal actually took the battle straight to the very steps of Prime Headquarters. While most of the local Primers were out on the streets, struggling to control the violence—and beating a lot of people bloody in the process—the HQ itself was only thinly defended. After all, who would be ballsy enough to actually attack the Midwestern home of Delta Prime?

Apparently the Delta Warriors fit that bill.

When word got out that the Warriors were storming Prime HQ, a number of Primers were called back to help with the building's defense. Of course, this left other parts of Crescent City entirely unprotected. In my opinion, this was a good thing, since a lot of the "protection" involved shooting the rioters until they stopped rioting—or breathing, for that matter.

The battle raged on for what seemed like forever until a Warrior finally managed to burst in through the building's front doors and into the main lobby. The main waited until he was surrounded by Primers and then lit himself off.

The resulting explosion killed 12 Primers and four support staff who'd not been fast or smart enough to make to one of the security bunkers in the basement. It also demolished the entire room and brought down a good chunk of the ceiling, shaking the reinforced building to its very foundations.

Weeks later, the bloodstains have been scrubbed away, and supports have been wedged into place. Scaffolding covers a good portion of the building's cracked facade. And suddenly Delta Prime doesn't look nearly as invulnerable as it once did.

The explosion put an end to the fight with a big exclamation point. The Primers went in to help prop up the building and start damage control. The Warriors made good their escape in all the confusion.

The bomber—a Warrior fanatic named Ted Kaczinksy—was captured as soon as he managed to reconstitute himself. Of course, he resisted arrest, and someone blasted his head off his shoulders with a lightning bolt before he could get himself together enough to try another big bang.

When word got out about that man's death, no one rioted. Hell, no one shed a tear.

Even so, the Warriors' standing in the eyes of Defiants everywhere got cranked up past 11. If you didn't like them much before, you hated them now. But if you agreed with their methods, you cheered them on for finally taking their aggressive stance to its logical conclusion.

Personally, these guys turn my stomach, but they're a large enough faction in the Defiance that I give them some space in *Delta Times*. For one, some of the Defiants out there rely on active members like the Warriors to haul their bacon out of the fire. For two, I figure if I just give these guys enough of the media rope, they might just do us all a favor and publicly hang themselves.

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GIVE PEACE & CHANCE

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I think John Lennon said it best: "All we are saying is give peace a chance."

That sentiment is well spoken these days by Reverend Darien Lange. Lange is a young Baptist preacher from Birmingham, Alabama, who led his mostly African-American church from the pulpit for three short years before his awakening. He was sleeping in the back of his church one night when some Klan members set the place on fire.

Lange survived the fire, but just barely. With his new powers, he managed to track down the bigots who'd torched his church. He singlehandedly brought them to justice, then went underground to avoid recruitment by Delta Prime.

Since then, Lange's been a prominent member of both the Defiance and the Pax Delta. With Reverend King busy with his duties within the Schism, Lange—his charismatic second-incommand—has taken over the daily operations of the Pax Delta.

During the riots, Lange led his followers into the streets of the cities, pleading with the people to get a hold of themselves, to halt their orgy of hate and destruction. Despite the height at which tempers were running, Lange had some success, and he and his people managed to save many churches from damage. A whole lot of people owe their lives to the Pax's efforts that day.

I find Lange's policy of total nonviolence to be a bit naive, but I admire the man and his methods. I only wish that the rest of us had his faith in humanity to eventually come to its senses and see what we're doing to ourselves. It would be a wonderful world.







<u>¡BIENVENIDOS!</u>

Welcome, compadres, to this little section of *Delta Times* that mi amiga Truth has allowed me to occupy. Before we get started, I'd like to say gracias to the bonita for all her hard work with the Defiance and for giving us all a way to stay together as a community, even though we are separated by many, many miles.

Better yet, it gives me a means by which I might be able to formally extend an invitation to you. So, again, my friend Truth, many thanks.

THE INVITATION

All Defiants are cordially invited to join me down here in Isla Delta. Please come, stay as long as you like. Visit with us for a while or extend your vacation permanently. It is all up to you, but we are down here with open arms.

AN INTRODUCTION

I know sometimes that I sound like some kind of television commercial for a fancy cruise ship or something paid for by a local tourism board down here in the Caribbean. That is not really the case.

Permit me to introduce myself. I am Enrique Salvador, the current leader of the Congress of Isla Delta. I was once a Defiant like many of you who are hopefully reading this essay of mine. I grew up in Puerto Rico, and when I awakened with my powers, Delta Prime came to take me away. It did not seem to matter to them that Puerto Rico is not actually one of the United States. It is a commonwealth, a protectorate under the wing of Uncle Sam, but it is still its own country.

OUR HISTORY

Isla Delta is located on a small island off the coast of mainland Costa Rica. That's "rich coast" for you Spanishimpaired Anglos out there. The Ticos (as the people of Costa Rica are known) are a warm and friendly people, known far and wide for their hospitality. They have welcomed the all-delta population of Isla Delta into their lands with a gentle smile and open arms.

Isla Delta was founded by a great man named Don Angel Oliveri Gandarillas. The people of Spain knew Don Oliveri as El Cid, the greatest hero in Spain's history returned to her in her greatest hour of need. Unfortunately, not even a legend can always stand against fascist guns, and so Don Oliveri left his homeland after it fell to Franco, to seek elsewhere for his destiny.

It was during his wanderings that Don Oliveri came upon the beautiful country of Costa Rica. He spent many months here over his years of wandering, but in 1965, he finally realized what he had known in his heart since he had first set foot in the country: Costa Rica was where he wanted to stay.

But being the great man that he is, Don Oliveri was not content to merely stay. A plan had sprung forth in his mind like a little seedling, and he was prepared to labor long and hard for it to flourish into a mighty oak.

To that end, Don Oliveri began to talk with the government of Costa Rica, explaining to them his plan. He knew that as a disaffected delta he was not alone. Many superpowered people were wandering about the world, only a step or two ahead of those who would exploit them for their fantastic abilities—or hurl them into a jail cell.



THE PLAN

After their latest revolution in 1948, the Costa Ricans had disbanded their military forces. They had seen too many of their neighbors fall prey to power-mad generals who decided to seize the reins of control for themselves when they saw that things might not be going in their way.

As a peaceful people, this decision suited them fine. Many times their neighbors were too involved with their own internal bickering to even turn their attention toward the mostly undefended Costa Rican borders. Still, there was the risk that such a time would come.

Costa Rica had its own deltas, of course, just like any other country, perhaps more than its share. When the government eradicated the military, it also threw open the doors to delta immigration, welcoming in any superpowered person with few questions asked. The only catch was that the deltas needed to agree to defend their hosts if push came to shove. Almost all the delta visitors agreed without reservations.

Don Oliveri wanted to take this fine plan one step further. His most amazing plan was to found a homeland for deltas everywhere, a place where they could all live in peace and harmony with each other and perhaps even deal with other nations on a footing more equal than any individual person could demand.

Don Oliveri had even picked out an island on which his plan could grow to completion. It was a tiny island just off the coast of Costa Rica. In fact, you can actually see the lush, green island jutting up out of the horizon as you lie on the Costa Rican beach.

He called the place Isla Delta.

THE DEAL

On December 20, 1965, the government of Costa Rica agreed to Don Oliveri's plan. But there were a few conditions.

First, Isla Delta would be a commonwealth of Costa Rica until it officially declared independence and was recognized by at least one nation.

Second, the ties between Isla Delta and Costa Rica are to be stronger than between most other countries. In exchange for the land, the people of Isla Delta agreed to a 100-year service contract in which the Isla Deltas agreed to serve as the Costa Rican defense forces whenever requested.

Third, and most importantly, Isla Delta cannot declare independence from Costa Rica until it has a population of at least 1,000 proven deltas. At this point, once Isla Delta petitions for independence, it will be granted and Costa Rica will be proud to be the first country to recognize Isla Delta as a sovereign state and to welcome it into the family of nations.

Don Oliveri agreed to this without hesitation, and he began implementing his plan right away. He first tapped upon the large contingent of delta expatriates already living in Costa Rica, explaining to them the magnificence of his master plan. They hung on his every word and unanimously elected him their president by acclaim.

THE REAL WORK BEGINS

As Isla Delta was deserted when Don Oliveri and his original citizens first arrived on its sandy shores, there was a lot of work to be done. Don Oliveri put most of his team to work constructing houses and a modern infrastructure for their new home.





While he oversaw the massive construction projects, Don Oliveri formed an elite team of recruiters for his cause. These had to be people who were both powerful and persuasive, brave men and women who weren't afraid to sneak their way into a country and contact other deltas who might be sympathetic to their cause. Then, if the other deltas were convinced to join the rest of the Isla Deltas, it was the recruitment team's job to find them a safe way out of the country and to their new home.

The brave group of men and women were known as Team Freedom, and those who carry on their mission are still at work today. Theirs is a dangerous life full of clandestine meetings and deadly intrigue. They spend most of their days under deep cover, never knowing when the whole endeavor might come to a crashing halt. All it takes is one mistake to expose them as an infiltrator who's trying to help deltas defect from their country to Isla Delta. The penalty for this is death.

Most countries take the threat of Team Freedom very seriously. After all, there are few resources more valuable than a nation's deltas. They tell their deltas that the people of Isla Delta are brainwashing terrorists who will convince them to volunteer for suicide missions to further their stated cause of delta superiority.

Nothing could be further from the truth, but it's hard to fight against such vicious propaganda. That's one reason I'm so grateful to Truth for granting me the space in which to tell you what Isla Delta is really all about. I think you might be surprised.



TEAM FREEDOM

The world first came to know the name Team Freedom back in 1974 when a team member known as Libertad was exposed in New York City. The villain called El Diablo was working out of Spanish Harlem in those days, and he held the city in his strong grip of terror. Despite his orders from Don Oliveri to keep a low profile, Libertad felt morally obligated to interfere with the plans of this devil. And so he did.

El Diablo was famous for opening gas mains in the belly of the city and then igniting them with his sulfurous body—which some say is actually composed of the burning remnants of the man's damned soul. This was the equivalent of throwing a stick of dynamite into the middle of a fiesta, and many hundred of people were hurt in these cowardly attacks. They continued on for weeks before Libertad was finally able to intervene.

The worst thing about El Diablo is that after each attack he would contact the papers and spout some kind of revolutionary rhetoric that made him sound like he thought of himself as the leader of a new Defiance movement that was going to topple the government through acts of terrorism, starting with New York City.

EL DIABLO, IN HIS OWN WORDS

Here is one of his diatribes: "Fellow citizens of the world, I call myself El Diablo, for I am the man who will deliver the ultimate punishment to the so-called leaders who have oppressed this country for the past 10





years. Until my demands are met, I will continue to destroy one building in Manhattan each week at precisely five minutes before midnight on each Saturday night. I do not wish to commit such acts of terror, but my hand has been forced by the terrors inflicted on the American people by its own government each and every day.

"First, the state of martial law must be rescinded immediately. Second, a new government must be elected as soon as possible. Third, the political prisoners for my cause must be released. That includes each and every person whose only real crime against the state is being who they are: a delta.

"Once any of these three demands are met, I will cease my attacks for one week so that we might negotiate the timing of the rest. Until that happens, you can expect the streets of New York City to run thick with the blood of our oppressors."

THE REALITY

Many deltas rallied behind El Diablo's words, believing in the sentiments behind them. The fact was that El Diablo was little more than a common thief with a horrible power. His motives were more based on profit than concern for "his pueblo," as he liked to call the Defiance.

Libertad carefully studied the pattern of El Diablo's attacks. He soon realized that each and every one of the high-rise buildings that the villain had destroyed had not only contained the home of some high-placed government official, but also an institute of some great worth: a bank, a jewelry store, an art gallery, and the like.

It was then that Libertad realized what was going on. El Diablo was robbing the buildings of their precious treasures, then blowing them up to cover up his crimes. By doing this, he got the Primers and the police to concentrate on trying to protect the leaders of the city's government, ignoring secondary targets who conveniently lived near to this thief's targets.

The law spent most of its time and effort protecting the mayor's home and office and the offices of the United Nations. They ignored people like the head of the city's garbage commission, not realizing that El Diablo was actually after the bank on the first floor of that poor man's apartment building.

ENTER PILAR

To complicate matters, El Diablo's attacks had actually created a few deltas themselves, people who had miraculously survived the demolition of their buildings. One of these people had been a security guard in a jewelry store El Diablo had cleaned out before destroying the building it was in.

The guard in question was Pilar Gomez, a pretty, young, Puerto Rican woman who had recently moved to New York to escape what she saw as the tedium of her life in her island home. With El Diablo's help, her life was about to get much more interesting.

Pilar actually happened upon El Diablo as he was cleaning out the store's display cases, stuffing the illgotten gains of his soon-to-take-place, cowardly attack into a sack. She came up behind him, her gun trained on her, and surprised him. When he saw him, he just laughed like the devil himself, the sound escaping his ever-burning lips like some horrible call to arms for every demon ever housed in hell. It chilled Pilar to the bone.



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Frightened, the young guard emptied her pistol into El Diablo, sending him flying backward into the display cases. If she'd called for help then, everything might have turned out differently. As it was, she crept forward to see if the man she'd shot was still alive.

El Diablo lay there, his fire almost entirely gone out, but the stench of brimstone still powerful about his body. As Pilar cautiously moved forward, she looked fully upon the man's face and recognized him for who he was. The realization stopped her cold in her tracks.

As Pilar leaned over the smoldering body of El Diablo, the man's right arm shot out and smacked her aside with a single, mighty blow. Knocked nearly senseless, Pilar reeled in the corner where she landed and listened to the man rant on about how she'd come the closest of anyone to catching her, but now she was going to have to die.

It was right then that she smelled the gas.

LIBERTAD O MUERTO

When Pilar awoke, she was in a hospital in Spanish Harlem. After the building had come down around her ears, rescue workers had labored through the night, hoping to find survivors. There had been three lucky souls out of the nearly 500 that had been in the high-rise at the time.

When the news of the miraculous rescue hit the papers, both Libertad and El Diablo read the stories with great interest. To the common person, there was little there that might interest her beyond the fantastic story itself, but to those who could read between the lines, there was an entirely different tale told.

Libertad had managed to crossreference just about every petty government official's home against a list of prime robbery targets, and he had come up with a list of at least five more potential targets for El Diablo's mad spree of horrible destruction. Unfortunately, he could only be in one place at a time, and he couldn't call on his compadres in Team Freedom for help. They were under strict orders to find and recruit deltas, especially new ones that the Primers hadn't gotten to yet. Libertad chose to interpret those orders liberally-who was to say, for instance, that El Diablo might not make a fine recruit if he could be locatedbut he knew that the others would not agree.

Home

Libertad considered calling in the Primers and telling them of his discovery, but he didn't trust any of them further than he could throw them—and, in fact, not even that far. He feared that any contact might expose himself to the Primers. That was something he was willing to do to save lives, but he doubted the Primers would actually try to catch the man-El Diablo was doing a fine job of making everyone scared of the Defiance, after all-and he wasn't about to throw away his life and his only chance to stop the terror.

It was up to him to do the job himself.

DUTY FIRST

It would be another week before El Diablo struck. In the meantime. Libertad decided to do what he'd been sent to New York for in the first place: find and recruit deltas.

Back in those days, Delta Prime wasn't quite as on top of their own recruitment matters as they could have

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been. Today, for instance, you can almost always be sure that a Primer will eventually be assigned to check in on anyone who "miraculously" survives any kind of incident. After all, this is how deltas come into being in the first place.

History

Libertad had realized this fact himself, and he often spent his nights haunting the city's hospitals, hunting for freshly awakened deltas. To that end, he had actually gotten himself a job on the janitorial staff at one of the city's hospitals. He then used his uniform and ID badge to get into places that would have been restricted to the general public.

Libertad got away with quite a lot when he was in his work clothes. After all, few people—especially arrogant Primers—pay any attention to a man pushing a broom. On that fateful night, Libertad pushed his broom right past a police guard and into Pilar's room. Once inside the room, Libertad was alone with Pilar, and they could talk.

Stop Home

At first, Pilar was terrified. She almost screamed for the guard, but Libertad clamped a hand over her mouth. Before either of them knew what was happening, the young lady suddenly disappeared.

Libertad was astonished, but he soon realized what had happened. He looked under the hospital bed and saw Pilar cowering there. Much to her own surprise, she'd somehow managed to slip right through the bed like some kind of ghost. She came to the rough realization that she was a delta and that her life, as she knew it, was over.

In fact, if El Diablo had his way, it was about to be over, period.







THE DEVIL YOU KNOW

Libertad helped Pilar out from under her bed and then explained to her who he was and what his mission was all about. She was a frightened young woman who suddenly didn't know who to trust at all. She'd heard tales of the Defiance and even of Isla Delta, but they had always seemed so far away that she'd almost thought of them like ghost stories told to frighten wicked children.

Now they didn't seem all that far away after all.

Pilar was a level-headed woman though, and she knew she was in trouble. She didn't want to be a delta, but now that she was—dropping straight through a bed she'd been lying in had convinced her—she had to make the most of the situation. She knew that once the government found out, they'd haul her away to start prodding her with questions and needles. At least if she went with this Libertad, she'd have a chance to clear her head and ponder her next move.

Pilar had just agreed to leave with Libertad when disaster struck. "I'm so confused," she said to Libertad as he reached out and held her hand, "but somehow I feel like I can trust you."

"You can," the Defiant responded. "I swear to you I'll keep you safe whether you join us on Isla Delta or not."

It was then that the door opened and a rough voice intervened. The two sitting on the bed now looked up to see El Diablo's burning face and the crumpled form of the guard lying on the floor behind him. "Hey," he said, "you should not make promises you cannot keep."



A great battle followed, the kind that only two alphas could have. It raged for what seemed like hours but could only have been minutes. Walls fell, holes were burned between floors, and soon the entire place was filled with smoke—from the fires El Diablo left wherever he went—and steam—from the building's sprinkler system dousing many of the fires.

Among all of the action, Pilar was doing her best to escape, but El Diablo pursued her doggedly, determined to make her his prey. He knew that the woman had seen his true face, the one that he usually kept hidden behind a mask of flame, and he was going to make sure she carried that secret with her to a very early grave.

At one terrible moment, El Diablo had Libertad on the ropes, beaten and battered. The only thing keeping the Defiant from giving up even then was his unbreakable spirit. He simply refused to surrender.

"I'm going to enjoy this," El Diablo cackled as he towered over Libertad, who was almost hanging over the edge of a hole that had been blown into a lobby wall, the cold Manhattan darkness beckoning behind him. Sirens sounded off in the cold distance below him, but Libertad knew they'd never reach him in time. Relishing the moment before he delivered the fatal blow, El Diablo gloated, "And once I'm done with you, I'm going enjoy that girl before I burn her to death in my fiery embrace."

Before El Diablo could make good on his threat, six other deltas—the other members of Libertad's cell in Team Freedom—rocketed in through the gaping maw in the side of the building and took the battle to the monster once again. Apparently Libertad's extracurricular activities had not gone unnoticed by his fellows. They'd assigned a rotating watch to keep track of the hotblooded young delta, and their diligence had paid off.

Working together, Team Freedom made quick work of El Diablo. Once he lay unconscious at their feet, they were able to finally learn the secret Pilar already knew. El Diablo was none other than Rodney Davis, the Chief of Police of the Manhattan borough himself.

SECRETS REVEALED

Not only was Davis not the Hispanic El Diablo portrayed himself to be, he was a part of the very establishment that his alter ego claimed he was trying to bring down.

It turned out that Libertad had only guessed part of the truth. Yes, Davis was using the attacks to cover the fact he was lining his pockets with stolen valuables and cash, but his choice of targets wasn't nearly so random as it might have appeared. Anyone who crossed Davis in his professional life as police chief was placed on his enemies list. Once you were unfortunate enough to work your way to the top of that list, you could count on having your building brought down by El Diablo himself.

Davis had been able to avoid conflict with the authorities so handily because he'd actually been diverting his officers and detectives away from his intended targets. He forced them to follow up on red herrings he tossed them as El Diablo, knowing full well they would never pan out.

That was one hell of a shock to the populace of the city, but it was overshadowed by the news of the existence of a group like Team Freedom. In the course of capturing Davis, the team members had revealed



the nature of their mission in the US to the monster. Once he was safely tucked away in an interrogation cell in New York City's Primer HQ, Davis sang like a canary, trading his information for a chance to avoid the electric chair.

SPIN CITY

The government gave the whole story a spin designed to cast the Defiance—and especially the Isla Deltas—in the worst possible light. If you go back and read the news stories at the time, you will see that the slant the papers took was that New York City—and possibly the entire nation had been infiltrated by foreign spies bent on stealing the country's most valuable resource: its deltas.

According to the reports, Davis was a member of Team Freedom, the most highly placed spy in our ranks. His demand that the US government release all delta prisoners was transparently done so that his Isla Delta friends could then make off with these disgruntled deltas to their secret island base.

The papers went on to say that a team of Delta Primers had learned all of this when they faced off against the entirety of Team Freedom. All the rest of the foreign insurgents had gotten away, but El Diablo had been captured, and he had told everything to avoid the penalty of death. At least that last part was true.

The rest of it was a pack of lies, more lies, and damn lies. Of course, you only have my word for that, the word of one Isla Delta who's actually wanted by Delta Prime himself. On the other hand, if you're in a position to be reading this essay, you may already have learned firsthand that the government is not trustworthy. As mi amiga Truth always says, "It's up to you to make up your own mind—unless you want someone else to make it up for you."

AN APOLOGY

I am sorry for taking up so much of your time with this story, but it played an important part in the history of Isla Delta and Team Freedom in particular. I think it is a very good story in any case, and I never tire of telling it.

Of course, I have another reason for loving this tale so much. Once Libertad and Pilar made it back to Isla Delta, they each confessed that they had fallen in love with the other. Soon after, they were married.

I'd like to say they lived happily ever after, but that's not entirely true. Libertad was one of the alpha Defiants who answered the Devastator's challenge to try to stop his doomsday device in the Bicentennial Battle. He vanished on that day along with all the rest.

Soon after Libertad was gone, Pilar realized she was to bear his child. A son was born to her, and he grew up happy and strong, despite the fact his mother missed his father so.

If you haven't realized it by now, that child was none other than me. In later years, when the Primers came after my mother in her parent's home in Puerto Rico, my own powers awakened, and I joined the proud and tragic ranks of the deltas myself.

I never knew my father, but I have heard many stories about him, of which this is one of the most meaningful. Because of this, I have dedicated my life to carrying on the battle to make the dream of Isla Delta a reality. With your help, maybe we can make that happen. Web Sailor Pro 4.20 Beta

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LIFE ON ISLA DELTA

The island of Isla Delta is a sparkling jewel of the Caribbean, just off the eastern coast of Costa Rica. It is formed in the shape of a giant crescent that's only four miles across from top edge to bottom. The crescent itself is only a mile thick at its widest point, tapering at either end to a sandy tip.

The main settlement on Isla Delta is a little town of about 1,200 people right in the center of the crescent. The town is focused around the harbor on the inner edge of the crescent, although it stretches all the way across the island to the opposite shore.

Isla Delta has little in the way of natural resources except its phenomenal beauty. The island is protected from the ravages of the ocean by a barrier reef nestled under the waves on the place's eastward side. The reef has been declared a national park, free from fisherman and full of exotic sealife of all kinds. There are few better places for snorkeling or SCUBA diving on the planet.

If you swim low beneath the waves, you can make out the figure of an ancient galleon, sunk here long ago when it ran up against the reef. Isla Delta, originally Isla Verde, was a longtime harbor for pirates and buccaneers of all kinds, and it has a long history of housing rogues of all stripes.

The sandy beaches lined with tall coconut trees are ideal for sunning, swimming, and surfing. Tourists from around the world flock here to hit the brilliant beaches during the day and the dazzling clubs late at night, hoping to rub shoulders with the more prominent deltas who call this place home.





POPULATION AND IMMIGRATION

There are currently nearly 1,200 residents on Isla Delta, with around 800 of those actually being deltas. Only deltas are eligible for full citizenship, but residents are accorded many of the same rights and privileges of their delta friends.

The main differences are that nondeltas cannot own real estate or vote. This is because, according to the commonwealth's charter and its proposed constitution, Isla Delta is a land meant exclusively for deltas. Other people can visit, but they are just that: visitors.

Some outsiders have accused the Isla Deltas of engaging in institutionalized bigotry against nondeltas. This is not our intent at all. The fact is that until deltas have a homeland we will not be taken seriously as a people by the family of nations. When that finally happens, our struggle will only be starting in earnest, but at least we'll have taken that first, hardest step.

To that end, only deltas can be recognized citizens of Isla Delta. Until we actually achieve our long-soughtafter statehood, all citizens of Isla Deltas are granted citizenship by the government of our sponsor country: Costa Rica.

In exchange for this benefit, the people of Isla Delta have agreed to come to the aid of the Costa Ricans in their hour of need. This agreement has rarely had to have been invoked, as the world is acutely aware of the relationship between Costa Rica and the Isla Deltas, and few have been foolhardy enough to test the strength of that friendship. Despite regular, democratically elected changes in the Costa Rican leadership, the country's relations with Isla Delta are great.

DEFENSE

The threat of having an entire island of angry deltas come roaring into your capitol, ready to kill your leaders or simply raze the place to the ground, has put a real damper on any thoughts of direct attacks against Isla Delta.

That's not to say that Isla Delta is entirely protected from outside intervention. There are lots of ways besides to interfere with the Isla Delta government without forcing a toe-totoe battle. The place is rife with spies and infiltrators from just about every major power in the world.

The Isla Delta government is aware of the presence of spies throughout the entire country, and it vigorously attempts to root them out. Sometimes it even succeeds, but many of the spies are deltas themselves, people with the power to reinforce their deceptions.

GOVERNMENT

These days, the people of Isla Delta are a bit more law-abiding than the pirates who used the place as a hideaway in days past. The laws of the place are modeled tightly upon the American Constitution, complete with a Congress (a House of Representatives only), a President, and a Supreme Court.

You may have heard Truth refer to me as the leader of Isla Delta. That's not entirely true. In fact, I'm the Speaker of the House, making me third in line for the top office, behind the President and Vice-President. However, as the leader of our legislative body, I do have a great deal of influence over the direction of Isla Delta policies.

Our current president is Yu Oliveri, the widow of Don Oliveri himself. Dona Oliveri, a Chinese expatriate, is



the grande dame of Isla Delta politics. She rules gently over a people who have not seen fit to remove her from office since she first won election as President back in 1984.

Dona Oliveri's Vice-President is a man named Henrik Strandberg. A tall and handsome Swede, Strandberg left his country voluntarily many years back, attracted by the lure of the blue Caribbean Sea. His position is mostly ceremonial, and he has little ambition to actually become President, as that would likely only happen upon the death of Dona Oliveri, one of his dearest friends.

In addition to my duties as Speaker, I am in charge of overseeing the nowpublic Team Freedom. It is for this reason that many outsiders see me as the leader of the Isla Deltas. In fact, I am only a humble servant. With the island as small as it is, there is no secondary layer of city, county, or state government. What you see is what you get. In fact, ours is really a commonwealth government, and our President is actually the governor of the territory, but we honor her with the title anyhow in anticipation of the day when we'll be able to proudly chart the destiny of our new homeland ourselves.

With our lack of professional sports leagues and the like, many Isla Deltas have taken up the discussion of politics as a hobby. When you likely know just about everyone in your government, you'd be surprised how much more incentive there is for you to get involved, and when you can speak to your representatives on the street, people often find they have a lot more to talk about.





LAW ENFORCEMENT

An almost all-delta police force maintains law enforcement on the island, and for this reason there are few rulebreakers. Most deltas came to Isla Delta to get away from trouble in other countries, after all, which means they're not so eager to get in trouble in this island haven. No one wants to be asked to leave.

Every now and then, some new delta will get a bit full of himself and decide to knock over the Bank of Isla Delta, but that's a lot easier said than done when the guards—and most of the tellers—are deltas themselves. These idiots are then faced with the ultimate punishment in the Isla Delta legal system: They are stripped of their powers and banished from the island forever. No one seems to know for sure how the court manages to strip a delta of her powers, or if they do, they are not parting with that knowledge willingly. It is the most tightly kept secret on the entire island.

Many of our most respected citizens here are considered vile villains elsewhere in the globe. Of course, with the persecution of deltas going on around the world, we always take such reputations with a shaker of salt. Until the delta does something wrong here or has wronged one of our citizens elsewhere—we pretty much let her be. It's truly amazing how grateful people can be when you tell them you're simply not going to hunt them down for mistakes made in their past.

When they step out of line, though, we slap them down hard enough to make their eyes spin in their heads.



FOREIGN POLICY

As a commonwealth of Costa Rica, Isla Delta has no official foreign policy. Since no government has recognized the island as its own, independent nation, we have little control over such things. However, we do have a representative (although nonvoting) seat in the Costa Rican legislature.

That position is currently held by Günter Doil, a man of considerable influence in both Isla Delta and Costa Rica. Günter always makes it quite clear where the people of Isla Delta stand on any issue of import to us, and the legislature is often quite accommodating to him.

INDUSTRY

Isla Delta has little in the way of natural resources except its phenomenal beauty. Most citizens and residents work in the tourism industry, and it's not unusual to see a flyer giving rides out over the ocean (in exchange for a fee, of course) for some truly phenomenal views.

The rest of us apply our talents (whether they come from our powers or not) wherever they might be useful. This is not a utopian state, and people are expected to work—or, if they come to the island well-funded, to at least pay for themselves.

The one thing we do export to the rest of the world is web pages. We have a number of delta-powered webmasters residing here, and they manage to pull off phenomenal work for people around the globe. It's the beauty of the internet and the slow but inevitable globalization of our economy.

Of course, some deltas just live here and work elsewhere. It's up to you.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Isla Delta is serviced by one main road that runs along the center of the crescent. Just about every other road in town runs perpendicular to Main Street, with the exception of a few that run parallel in the city proper, which is centered on the widest part of the island.

We don't have enough land for a proper airport, although sea planes land in and take off from our harbor on a regular basis. We have a fast connection to the internet, which is carried into most of our homes. Our worst problems come during hurricane season when we all hunker down against the storms.

AN INVITATION

Let me play Lady Liberty in New York's harbor for a minute. I know I'm taking a few liberties—so to speak with the original, but I think the sentiment remains the same.

Give us your tired, your poor, your huddled deltas Yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore, Send these, the homeless,

tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

If you are a delta and you need a place to call your home, if you are tired of the persecution you face from your government and your neighbors, if you would like to live among those who understand what it is like to be you, then please come to Isla Delta. We await you here with open arms.





WELCOME TO HELL

So, you're a delta, eh? And you've had the misfortune or luck to fall down on the wrong side of Delta Prime, to fall in with the well-known group of "superpowered terrorists" known as the Defiance.

Well, son, welcome to hell.

As you probably know by now, your life is no longer your own. Even if you didn't sign up with Delta Prime—and may whatever God you pretend to worship save your worthless soul if you did—you're now on the run from those heartless bastards for the rest of your life.

GOTCHA!

Ain't it funny how the universe works? You're going along, minding your own damn business, when suddenly Fate decides you've had enough time on this planet. The next thing you know, you're lying there in a pool of your own blood, listening to a distant ringing sound in your ears that kind of sounds like the strumming of a badly tuned harp, and you're doing your pathetic best to make a lastminute peace with your uncaring maker.

Then suddenly you're up and walking around again—something you were sure was never going to happen for you in this lifetime. You feel great. In fact, you feel better than ever. In fact, you *are* better than ever. You're a delta now, son, and by definition that means you're better than the slob on the street you were yourself just a few hours before.

Of course, as much as you might have improved from a power standpoint, your problems have just gotten that much worse.

THE PRICE YOU PAY

My daddy once told me that nothing in this life ever comes for free. He was talking about having to work hard to make something out of yourself—not about the price you pay for becoming a delta—but the principals are the same in the end.

Now that you're a delta, you've got two choices. Join up with a corrupt and oppressive government and become part of the problem. Or join the Defiance and become part of the solution.

I'm not talking about that nambypamby organization that Truth runs. Sure, she's a fine woman, and I'm grateful for her giving me this space to talk to you, but that's not the real Defiance. That's just a bunch of people with their head stuck so far up their rear ends that they can talk to you through their belly buttons.

No, I'm talking about the Delta Warriors. The real Defiance.

THIS IS WAR!

This is not a drill. This is not a debate. This is not some series of letters you read on the editorial pages of the *Crescent City Times* or a bunch of flaming posts ranting back and forth against each other on Usenet.

No, this is real. This is life. This is war.

I mean this with all the seriousness I can muster. If we don't do something to stop the federal government from trampling all over our rights, no one else will. It's up to us to restore democracy to the United States—by any means necessary.

And if you're not with us, you're against us. Or at the very least, you're standing smack dab in the way.

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WE ARE THE SOLUTION

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We are the Delta Warriors, and if you're smart, you'll join our ranks. In the end, it's the only real choice.

In case you don't know who I am, I'm Malachai Winter, the current leader of the Delta Warriors. I'm the seventh in a long line of the organization's leaders going back to Marcus Manley, who started the whole thing back in 1965.

I've been in charge of the Warriors for over 10 years now, which is by far the longest of any Warrior leader. Even Manley only made it through eight years himself before he was murdered by Delta Prime.

The official report states that Manley was killed while resisting arrest. It fails to mention that this was during a massive raid on our compound just outside of Missoula, Montana. Over 50 members of the Warriors lost their lives on that day, simply for defending their private property and the lives of themselves and their loved ones from an aggressive assault by Delta Prime operatives working under the purview of the ATF.

THE SIEGE

The Siege of Pilot Mountain—as the papers later called it—had been going on for 40 days when the Attorney General finally sent the Primers on in.

The Primers were against doing it from day one. First of all, we had a number of sympathizers in the Primers in those days, people who knew that they could just have easily been on our side as that of the feds. Hell some of the Warriors holed up in that compound atop Pilot Mountain were ex-Primers themselves, former friends of the people that had them surrounded. Second, the Primers knew that the Warriors in that compound were not only strongly powered, they also had a ton of ordnance. We even had a couple alphas on our side, Manley included. The prize deltas were a pair of alphalevel snuffers—Al Wilson and Angela Larson—who could've even turned Superior back into the whimpering sidekick he'd started out as.

Third, there were a number of innocent people in the compound with the 53 Warriors. Over 200 friends, family, and supporters were holed up in that concrete-encrusted pit, and the only thing they'd done wrong was live with us.

Of course, that was a crime. It just wasn't punishable by death. Or at least it wasn't supposed to be.

THE MASSACRE

Word is that Superior didn't want to get his hands dirty with the whole bit. I figure he just didn't want his ass handed to him by a bunch of righteous outlaws with a real mad on.

The bastards dropped a nuke on the compound. At least that's what it seemed like at the time. This was long before they were carrying things like this live on TV—and the feds aren't exactly willing to be interviewed about it—so it's hard to tell.

The few eyewitnesses I've talked to say that every Primer was ordered to evacuate the area, to move at least 100 miles out and await orders. Then an Air Force jet flew in overhead and dropped the bomb. It landed smack dab in the heart of the compound, and everything disappeared in a flash of white light. Nothing was left, not even a pair of smoking boots.

It was almost the end of the Warriors.

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WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Obviously I wasn't there, so I don't know for sure, but I've talked to some ex-Primers/now-Warriors who were on the scene. They say it was just like what happened to Chicago in 1976, only smaller.

Of course, this happened in '73, so at the time, no one had anything to compare it to. The official story was that it was a neutron bomb, a special kind of nuke that didn't leave much in the way of radioactive fallout. This jibed with what had happened, since the Geiger counters were silent in the area, even the next day. Still, it didn't seem much like a nuke, even then.

I've got a theory about what happened. Sure, it's only a theory, but I'd bet my life on it, for what that's worth. Obviously, whatever the feds used at Pilot Mountain was a prototype of the device that took out Chicago. That's not so amazing in and of itself, but think about it for a minute. That means that the government had the tech behind the Devastator's bomb at least three years before the Bicentennial Battle.

And what happened during the Bicentennial Battle? All the alphas went away.

You can see why the government might have wanted for that to happen. After all, only deltas really have the power to knock Kennedy off his throne. Even those that were working for the feds had to be considered a potential threat. Maybe even Superior himself. Loyalties change all the time, you know, and maybe this was Kennedy's way of protecting himself.



Of course, I've got absolutely no way of proving any of this. That's why it's called a theory, son. Still, it fits with all the available facts, and it doesn't seem all that implausible to me.

Let's just say that the government had the tech to pull off the massacre at Pilot Mountain.

THE DEVASTATOR CONNECTION

How the hell do you suppose that same tech fell into the hands of the Devastator? You think Evil Unlimited has easy access to that kind of tech? Forget about it, sunshine!

Sure, I can hear you apologists already lining up with stories about rogue government operatives and tales of the Devastator's amazingly effective spy network, but I've got an easier solution to that whole problem. I say the government gave it to him, knowing full well what he'd use it for. Of course, they may not have intended for all of Chicago to disappear along with nearly every alpha in the world, but that's what happens to eggs when you're making omelettes. Or so I'm told.

Why do I buy that story over all the others? Because the government's filled with bunches of incompetent idiots, that's why. Sure, they're dangerous idiots, but they're idiots all the same.

These are just the kind of people who would figure that it would be better to keep the Devastator close instead of wasting him. How the hell did he survive all those encounters with Superior, a murderous bastard by anyone's standards? Could it be because the supersoldier was under orders to let the man live? You bet.





THINGS GOT NASTY

Anyhow, the Pilot Mountain Massacre was when things really turned nasty. The people in the Delta Warriors had been put on notice that our lives weren't worth spit in the government's eyes, even if we were just minding our own business.

Up until that point, the Warriors had limited themselves to a few bombings of empty buildings. Mostly they were just out to make some noise and hopefully a point. Getting the people's attention was the main goal.

After that dark day back in '73 though, son, we decided that enough was enough. We were no longer playing around.

We were at war.

TERROR BEGINS AT HOME

When we decided to go for it, we didn't screw around. We went right for the government's throat. They'd murdered our leaders. We were happy to do the same for them.

Since the massacre, Kennedy had been put on notice by Delta Prime that he could expect direct reprisals. From that point on, the White House was locked up tighter than For Knox. There was no getting in.

That didn't matter to us. There were plenty of other targets. The federal government's a pretty damn big group of people, after all.

Some of us argued for going after the Capitol building. I lobbied against it. Our Congress had been something of a laughingstock long before Kennedy had taken over. Since then, they'd become a symbol of the rampant brown-nosing going on the government. No I wanted to strike against a site that stood for justice.

JUSTICE ISN'T BLIND, IT'S DEAD

My main argument against taking out Congress was that these were the people we were trying to scare, the once-elected representatives of the people who voted them each into office back home. If they were dead, they weren't going to be much scared.

However, there was a structure just across the street that would make a perfect target: the Supreme Court Building.

The bomb went off on October 8, 1974, exactly one year to the day after the Pilot Mountain Massacre. This time, the Warriors didn't attack in the middle of the night. We didn't wait until everyone was out of the building.

No, the bomb went off right in the middle of the Supreme Court's latest session. Over 100 people died, including all nine justices.

This was the bomb heard 'round the world.

AFTERSHOCKS

The Supreme Court had only been a puppet up until that point anyhow. Kennedy let them remain there, poking away at Constitutional law, but he was always careful to remind them—and anyone else around—that they had no real power.

The country went into shock at the horror of this calculated act of terrorism. Never before had an entire branch of the federal government been wiped out in a single blow. The outrage was amazing.

This was exactly what the Warriors wanted. The event drew a line in the sand. It told people that you were either for us or against us—and if you were against us, you were going to lose badly.



UNEXPECTED REPERCUSSIONS

Of course, with the justices all dead, Kennedy was free to replace each of them with his handpicked yes-men. There would be no more dissent from the Supreme Court—for all the good it ever did in the past. From now on, the highest court in the land was reading from the same sheet of music as the executive branch, and I'll give you one guess who was conducting the whole damn orchestra.

That really didn't do us any more harm than before. For all practical purposes, the court was the same as ever. Only the names had changed and the venue, of course. Thereafter, the Supreme Court met in its original offices in the Capitol Building, and son, you can bet they kept that place locked up tighter than Fort Knox.

Then there was the public backlash. The leaders of the Warriors were hoping that the bombing of the Supreme Court would prove a rallying point for oppressed people—both deltas and regs—throughout the country. They couldn't have been more wrong.

Predictably, the regs reviled us in their papers and on the evening news. The media was in Kennedy's pockets, of course, so this was expected. Worse, though, was the fact that the people on the street seemed to hate us too. And they didn't just stop with the Warriors. Most people lumped the whole of the Defiance in with us as well.

This was at least partially by design. With the increased anger against deltas that we'd caused, we were hoping that the Defiants that hadn't joined the Warriors would be compelled to do so.

Unfortunately, that didn't happen either. The Yellow Journalist—a great man in many ways, but a traitor to his people in this instance—took a strong stand against the Delta Warriors in his editorials in *Delta Times*. Most of the Defiance followed his lead in condemning the Delta Warriors in general and the bombing of the Supreme Court in particular.

This was a terribly frustrating moment for the Warriors. We had hoped that our brothers would heed our call to arms and join us in finally taking the battle directly to the government. We were ready to step from the shadows and stand toe to toe with Delta Prime and the people they would protect from our righteous wrath.

But it never happened. Without the general support of the Defiance, we were simply outnumbered. Even the most valorous warrior knows better than to throw his life away for no good reason.

INNOCENTS CONDEMNED

The worst part was that a cell of Defiants got raided in Chicago within a week of the bombing. Six deltas—good people from all accounts—were hunted down for the Warriors' act. Four of them were killed while resisting arrest. The other two were captured while trying to escape.

Once the two captives were out of the intensive care unit and well enough to stand trial, the federal government held one of its infrequent show trials to convict the two surviving Defiants of a crime they hadn't committed.

The FBI paraded witness after expert witness through the court, each of which related damning evidence condemning the captives up and down. Of course, every bit of that so-called "evidence" was manufactured so poorly it should have had "Made in

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Japan" stamped on the side of it. (This was back when that phrase was less a matter of pride than shame. See how things change?)

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The defense counsel was pretty much left gagged and hog-tied naked on the courtroom floor for all the good they were able to do. They did their best. They called in character witnesses. One of the suspects even had a solid alibi. He'd been in his grade school class at the time.

To anyone who really watched the trial, it was obvious that these two people—along with those four who'd been killed either during or soon after the raid—were entirely innocent. But if you had two brain cells to rub together, you knew from the start that none of this mattered. "Sound and fury, signifying nothing." That about sums it up. These people were dead the moment they were captured. It was only a matter of time.

THE FACE OF INNOCENCE

The first captive was Martha Jackson, a black woman blaster who lived in the Cabrini Green projects in Chicago. Have you heard of this place, son? Back in the '60s, some eggheaded shrinks did some experiments on rats, packing them into holes in the same ratio of the poverty-stricken people living in the projects.

The rats ate each other.

Martha had one hell of a rotten life. She'd been born poor, black, and female into a society in which any one of those things was a strike against you. Then she became a delta too.

Despite this, Martha was a Godfearing woman who never hurt a fly. This was despite the fact she'd been given the ability to hurt or kill people with blasts of energy from her hands.





That was the truly ironic part. Martha never asked for her powers, and she didn't want them. She was a single mother of two children, each by a different father, and they were all she cared about in the world. The powers, when she got them, weren't a blessing.

They were a curse.

What good does being able to fire energy blasts do a woman who just wants to be able to raise her children in peace? At first, Martha considered turning herself in to the Primers, but she knew that her two sons would probably end up in foster care or worse. She'd likely never see them again. That wasn't something she could permit to happen.

To Martha, the Defiance was her savior, especially the Pax Delta. She'd been a great admirer of Dr. King's teachings. Even before he was exposed as a delta, he'd been a driving force behind those pansies. She knew that such a righteous man would always stand on the side of justice.

Martha contacted the Pax as soon as she could figure out how. The Pax leaders put her in touch with likeminded deltas in her area, and she began to meet with them in secret, hoping against hope that they could somehow come up with a nonviolent way to effect change in this country or at least their own little, savage corner of it.

That was what Martha was doing when Delta Prime came a-knocking: meeting with her fellow peaceniks, discussing what they could do to convince the regs that not all Defiants were like the Delta Warriors who had bombed the Supreme Court.

Pretty funny, huh, son?

Martha was a good woman, but she never had a chance, and now she's never going to see her boys again.

THE OTHER VICTIM

If you thought Martha's story was a sad one, wait until you hear about Lamar Howard. Lamar was a good kid, even though he'd had a hard life. He grew up in Chicago's southside projects. You know, the ones you used to across the interstate from Cominsky Park when you went to see the White Sox play—if you're old enough to remember that.

Life in the southside projects wasn't any better than in Cabrini Green. The place was full of drug dealers and warring gangs blowing the hell out of each other in petty turf wars that kept the local morticians busy. I understand they specialized in closed-coffin funerals.

Lamar was only 11 when he and his mother (a single woman like Martha) and his older sister and her baby were caught in a crossfire between two rival gangs. They were all killed, except for Lamar, who awakened with armorlike skin. This was the only thing that saved him then, and it was likely what kept the Primers from killing him on the spot when they hauled him in for the Supreme Court bombing.

How the government thought that a band of impoverished Paxes from the wrong sides of Chicago could have made it to DC—much less pulled off a bombing—is beyond me. There's a lot I don't understand about the world these days, and the workings of the minds of the people in charge of the federal government is at the top of my list.

I suspect that the fact that Lamar and Martha's Pax cell had a bomber by the name of Walter Crowley might have been the reason it was targeted. Poor Walter never used his powers against anyone in his life. As a pacifist, it was against his deeply held principles.



It's funny how Fate seemingly hands out these powers to us without any rhyme or reason—at least none that I can see. That a man like Walter would end up with the means to make his body explode is more than ironic. It's downright dark.

Anyhow, poor Lamar was living on the streets when he met Martha through the Pax, and she offered to take him in. She couldn't afford it, of course, but the poor kid had nowhere else to go. She was happy to share what little she had.

When the Primers bust in on the Pax cell, Lamar managed to escape. He ran back to his old stomping grounds on the southside, hoping to find someone—anyone—who could help him. Instead, he found his face plastered on the front page of the paper and the entire city hunting him down. In the end, Lamar was hauled in by the very same gang members who'd killed his family earlier that year. It didn't matter that their bullets couldn't break his skin. They just piled onto the boy until he couldn't move. Then they trussed him up and dragged him into the nearest police station, demanding the outstanding reward on this "armed and extremely dangerous" Defiant.

Can you imagine the rage the kid must have felt as he lay there in his cell, stuck there by the very people who'd murdered his mother, sister, and nephew? The kid hadn't a hair on his chest, but they still tried him as an adult. Both he and Martha got the death penalty, of course.

Lamar was a good kid right up to the end, though. When asked for his last words, he said: "To you people who have killed me, I forgive you."





THE CAUSE

That's exactly the kind of thing the Warriors are fighting against. I respect that blessed kid more than anyone I've ever known except the people I fight beside in the Warriors. He stood there and let them kill him, and he actually *forgave* them for it.

I hear they had to use HEAP (highexplosive armor-piercing) rounds to get through Lamar's tough skin. Can you imagine those things ripping through that boy's body and bursting him open like overripe fruit?

I understand it took three separate volleys to finally bring him down.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR

Like I said, I respect that kid more than I can say, but I can't agree with him. Someone's got to stand up against a government that would allow something like that to happen, that would massacre the 278 people hunkered down on Pilot Mountain.

That's where the Delta Warriors come in. We're the footsoldiers on the frontline of the battle between good and evil—and if you don't know which side we're on by now, son, I can't help you.

Wherever there are people who can't defend themselves against the government, we'll be there. Wherever there are people hiding their brilliant lights under the darkest bushels, keeping their amazing powers secret instead of sharing them with the world, we'll be there. Wherever there are people striving to oppress the rest of us, to bend us to their malicious will, we'll be there.

Right now, our numbers are small at least when compared to the vast resources our foe can bring to bearbut our cause is just. And we have certain other advantages to help out our side.

The thing that supports us the most, which lets me know that we will not fail in our righteous task, is our dedication to our cause. We are determined not to fail. Each and every Warrior has pledged his life to his fellows and to the idea of restoring freedom to the country of our birth, the very birthplace of Democracy itself: the United States of America!

For every one of us that the Primers kill or capture, another rises to take his place. There are more deltas in America these days than ever before, and more are awakening all the time. As the fear of the government increases, more and more of those new deltas flock to the Warriors' banner, ready to commit themselves to do what our forefathers did over 200 years ago: take up arms against an oppressive government that demands everything from us and offers us nothing—nothing but shackles.

The people—even the regs—are sick to death of what this county has become: a hollow shell of its former self, a mere shadow, a bad joke. But they hide their heads in the sand, telling themselves it's not really their problem, that someday soon the troubles will all go away.

It makes me sick to think what our forebears would think of today's socalled Americans: lily-livered wusses who are too afraid to even whine about their treatment for fear they'll be smacked down like the pathetic dogs they are. But I believe there is hope. There are people who would be willing to join us in the struggle against our common oppressor. All they need is a wakeup call.

Son, the Delta Warriors are that wakeup call.

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THE MEANS

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This is not a war that can be fought on a field. There are no borders to battle over, no entrenchments to be overrun, no lands to be invaded. This war is being fought by America against itself.

That means that we can't just form up an army and march on Washington. Well, someday we might very well do exactly that, but today such an action would meet with crushing resistance. Open conflict—as satisfying as it might seem in the short term—is not an option right now.

Bluntly put, they've got lots more guns and deltas than we do, son. They'd kick our asses to Costa Rica and back.

As it is, we're a wasp attacking that fabled 800-pound gorilla. We don't have a chance in hell in an armwrestling match, but that doesn't mean we can't get our point across in other ways.

Here's the keyword, son: small, surgical strikes.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF TERROR

Sure, I'd love to be able to step out onto the front lawn of the White House and call Kennedy out for a cage match to settle things once and for all. I'd bust his bony ass into more pieces than a jigsaw puzzle.

But it's just not going to happen that way. Other people have actually tried. Every now and then, some Defiant cracks under all the stress and launches himself at the Oval Office. He gets as far as the concrete barriers before the power-dampening field kicks in. After that, it's only a matter of time before the Secret Service hands him his head—sometimes literally.





The fact is that going head-on at the federal government is a losing proposition. Delta Prime alone has the power to crush not only the Delta Warriors but the entire Defiance flatter than week-old soda. That's not even considering the FBI, CIA, ATF, or any other acronym you want to toss in there. Besides all that, there's the military, fronted by Delta Squadron.

When you look at it that way, we don't have a snowball's chance in the hot parts of hell.

But there's another option. We don't have to fight this war on the government's terms. To do that would be suicide, plain and simple. So, if you can't win the game by playing by the rules, then you've just got to change the rules.

That's exactly what the Delta Warriors did.

The Supreme Court bombing wasn't the first volley in the war, and we weren't the ones who escalated the conflict to that level. That happened when Pilot Mountain was obliterated. All we did was retaliate in kind.

Of course, it didn't end there. Right now, the federal government and the Delta Warriors are locked in a deadly dance in which it isn't always all that easy to tell who's the hunter and who's the prey.

Delta Prime launches another crackdown on Defiants in Crescent City, and we destroy a federal building in Manhattan. They capture one of the Warriors, and we take down a member of Delta Prime. At this point, it's impossible to keep track of it all anymore, and it hardly matters who's ahead in this deadly game.

All that matter is we're going to win.





JOIN US!

The Delta Warriors are a proud organization, but like any outfit of hard-bitten soldiers on the frontlines of a guerilla war, we have a high rate of overturn. Roughly translated, that means we take casualties, son.

Some of us are lost to injury and death, while others are captured and either forced to turn against us or thrown in jail for life. I'm proud to say that not a single captured member of the Delta Warriors has played turncoat against us under my leadership. As a group, we don't tolerate that kind of thing.

Those deltas who sign on with us know up front that they're in for a hard life, one in which they never know where they'll be sleeping from one day to the next. They have to constantly be looking over their shoulders for the long arm of Delta Prime. They can trust no one outside of their own circle, for anyone could decide to turn them all in.

This is a kind of life I wouldn't wish on anyone, but on the other hand, I wouldn't trade it for the world. Sure, it's a hard life, but it beats living on your knees all hollow. At least with the Delta Warriors, you've got a chance to stand up for your rights, a chance to make a real difference, a chance to let yourself be heard.

To me, that's worth it.

I don't know about you. Maybe you'd prefer to be a Delta Prime puppet. Maybe you like hauling in innocent people—just like you once were—for doing nothing more than being themselves, for being survivors. Maybe you think an 11-year-old boy deserved to be executed for a crime he didn't commit. If so, stay the hell out.

LIFE ON THE RUN

The Warriors may be a small group—relative to the federal government, that is—but we're also well-hidden and nimble. We have sympathizers everywhere, at every level of both business and government, even in Delta Prime. Often by the time the Primers manage to locate one of our cells, we've already evacuated it and left them far behind.

Or—better yet—we've made preparations for a boobytrap or a counterattack. That usually makes those particular Primers think twice the next time they get orders to break down someone's door—assuming they survive the experience, of course.

The point is that even though we're outnumbered and everyone in the world publicly claims to despise us, we've got some support, and a lot more than you might think. As reviled as we are these days, few people are going to stand up for us in public. Just doing that could get you tossed into jail on trumped-up conspiracy charges.

Still, there are plenty of people out there who are willing to lend a hand, if they can manage to do so quietly. I'm not just talking about deltas here, although we do get a lot of help from other Defiants who like to say they don't like us a whole lot.

No, the regs are there for us too. The fact is that even though they get the fact that the Defiance is full of evil bastards shoved down their throat by the federally controlled media every day of their lives, some folks just aren't that stupid. They can figure out what's going on around them, even if they don't see it on the evening news. This country's gone to a hell of the President's making.

Only together can we make it right.


HOW WE WORK

We're not arranged like the Defiance, a bunch of ill-formed teams running around out there, none of which know what any of the others are doing. No, it's a pretty straight hierarchy, and I'm at the top.

Below me, there are three lieutenants, top soldiers who I trust with my life. The names change from time to time as we lose people and gain others, but the three are currently Bill Maxwell, Freddie James, and Beatriz Caldero. Each member of the trio has several cells underneath them which report directly to them, and they relay any pertinent information on to me.

We have cells of Warriors scattered all over the country, and even some abroad. They report in on at least a weekly basis to submit status reports and receive new orders. Most cells are left to their own devices the vast majority of the time, but that can change in an instant. In any case, no cell is permitted to make a premeditated attack on any target without prior approval from its lieutenant, and they get their approval directly from me.

HOW TO REACH US

The best way to get a hold of us is by e-mail. We can pick that up in just about any city that we happen to be in, and we don't have to wait for it to be forwarded to us. Also, it's a lot harder for the feds to trace.

The smart ones out there are probably wondering by now if this is all some kind of elaborate Delta Prime trap. Sure, you e-mail us and eventually we have to demand your location and identity. Well, son, you're not as dumb as you look. The fact is that eventually you're going to have to trust somebody. Otherwise, you're out there in the cold by yourself forever—or at least until the Primers figure out who you are, break down your front door, and haul your ass off to the nearest maximumsecurity, delta-certified prison.

I know this is a hard thing to do, but you've got to start somewhere. If you can't join us, I do understand, and I wish you luck. If you change your mind later, we'll always be here.

TRAINING

The cold, hard fact is that most of the deltas who finally reach us aren't qualified to become a Delta Warrior. Sure, there's the occasional Primer who decides he's had enough of kicking the rest of us around and wants to take up on our side of the cause instead. But most of us start out as your average civilian, clueless in the art of guerilla warfare.

Once you sign on with us, we get you out to a training facility as quickly as we can. We have several of these located in secret places around the country, all outfitted with the best Warrior instructors, ready to turn you into a lean, mean fighting machine for our cause.

Not everyone is cut out to be a soldier. Those who don't make it through boot camp can't become fullfledged Warriors, but we do add them to our support staff. There's a lot more to fighting a modern guerilla war than knowing how to lay an ambush after all.

I can't say this is the toughest job you'll ever love. If you've got a shred of humanity in you, you'll hate it from time to time. But it's a still a job that needs doing.

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<u>A FINAL PLEA</u>

This old soldier has rambled on for long enough, I'd say, but I want to leave you with a parting thought.

Think about what it was like when this country was whole, when we weren't constantly battling with each other and doing our best to instill the fear of God into those around us. If you're under 40, you probably have no real idea what that was like.

Democracy is a kind of magic, a mass hallucination experienced by an entire people at once, a delusion that we as a people should be able to chart our own destiny, overcome our own challenges, and reap our own rewards for that.

Thomas Jefferson wrote that we all have "certain unalienable rights, and that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." That's something we've lost in this country today, as we face the dawning of a new millennium.

The fact is that those rights don't come for free. You've got to respect them. If someone takes them away from you, you've got to fight for them. In fact, you've got to be willing to die for them.

This isn't a new concept. The soldiers who fought in the American Revolutionary War knew it well. Living under a tyrant is insufferable, but even more so is refusing to do anything about it. To live under such conditions is to suffer a fate worse than death.

So join us or make your own way. It doesn't really matter, as long as you realize that it all comes down to each one of us—including you—crying foul and standing up for us all.

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HELLO

I've got a lot of things to say to you today, my friend, but first things first. My name is Reverend Darien Lange. I was the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Homewood, Alabama, a small town on the outskirts of the fair city of Birmingham.

I say "was" because the church was burned to the ground by white supremacists a few years back. This was part of that rash of burnings of black churches that swept through the south and other parts of the country at that time. I don't think my church was singled out for any other reason than that my flock and myself happened to have dark skin and our persecutors' hearts were filled with terrible hate.

I nearly died in that horrible fire. I was sleeping in the temporary rectory in the rear of the church when I was awakened by a blaze as hot as the fires of hell itself. I managed to escape the conflagration, but not before my clothes were set on fire.

The fact is, I would have died at that moment, but the good Lord looked down upon me that night and smiled. In His benevolence, he reached down and touched my soul, and though the flames incinerated my church, I was left unscathed.

As I lay there in front of my church—hacking the smoke out of my lungs and watching the Lord's house become a raging bonfire—I realized that I had just been on the receiving end of an honest-to-goodness miracle. I had called out to the Lord in my moment of need, and He had answered me.

Of course, with my blessing came also my damnation—at least in the eyes of the federal government.

MIRACLES CHANGE OUR LIVES

That miracle changed my life in many ways, just as it changed the lives of every person I've touched after that. For one, I wasn't dead, which meant I'd be able to continue following my calling to preach the Gospel in the name of the Almighty. More than that, it meant I would be around to track down the sinners who had burnt the house of God to the ground and make sure that they were brought to justice.

Now, I'm not a violent man. I wasn't then, and I'm not now. I found those hateful men that committed that terrible crime, and when I did, I called the police. They were arrested within the hour and soon after convicted not only for burning my church but several others.

Sure, I could have taken the law into my own hands that night I tracked those bigots down. I could have shot them dead in my righteous fury. I could have answered their violence with violence of my own.

But I didn't. Left unchecked, violence is an escalating cycle of destruction that only ends with the demise of one of the participants. Acts of violence hurt those who commit them almost as much as the people they commit them against.

The harm done to the aggressors isn't always obvious to the naked eye. It's not something that always happens to the attacker's body. But it always happens to his soul.

With that thought in mind, I stayed on the true and righteous path. Tempted as I was, I refused to lower myself to the level of those who had acted against me. I forgave them their trespasses. I judged not, lest I be judged.

And so I was able to move on.



FINDING PEACE

As a pastor without a church, I was a shepherd without a field for my flock. Worse yet, many of my flock had deserted me.

The firefighters who had come to put out the blaze had seen my flaming form come dashing from the burning house of God, and when I came through with barely a blister, they suspected the form that the Lord's miracle had taken in me.

I was a delta, and that meant I was on the side of wrong.

As a black man growing up in Alabama, I knew about prejudice. I had experienced it firsthand. I knew what this delta scare was all about. You can slice it any way you like it, but it still tastes the same. It's bigotry, pure and simple.

I had often spoken from my pulpit about the need to embrace all peoples, black and white—and red and yellow or whatever—rich and poor, men and women, straight or gay, even reg and delta. The worshippers in my church were good people, and they knew in their hearts that my words were true. In their heads, though, they were scared, and fear makes a person do funny things.

Many of my flock left me, although my most stalwart supporters stayed by my side. Unfortunately, I knew that their association with me could only bring them trouble. I needed to do something about this, but I didn't know what.

That's when I discovered the Defiance and, through them, the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., and his Pax Delta. These were deltas people like you or me, really—who spoke not of war but of peace.

LISTENING TO THE WORD

Most new deltas are only familiar with Dr. King as a civil rights leader, but after he survived an assassination attempt in 1968, he was touched by God as well. Dr. King's gift wasn't as obvious as those of most deltas. His already persuasive tongue was made even more mighty, a subtle effect for most, but Dr. King already had a mighty large audience. After his awakening, it only grew.

As Dr. King's influence among the people grew, so did the attention he garnered. And some of it came from dangerous quarters. Eventually, someone in Delta Prime grew suspicious that even a man with Dr. King's incredible skill at public speaking could hold such sway over so many people at once.

They sent a delta hound his way.

Dr. King was prepared for this. His inner circle didn't know of his awakening into deltahood, but they held a firm conviction that no matter who might have been caught and imprisoned for the attempt on Dr. King's life, it was really the government that had been behind the attempt. With that in mind, Dr. King was able to persuade his friends to protect him from any government operatives, and that fortunately included any members of Delta Prime.

As you know, Dr. King's luck eventually ran out, and he was exposed as a delta at a civil rights rally in 1978. Needless to say, the general populace was not amused. They turned against Dr. King in an angry frenzy, rushing the stage and calling for his head.

But Dr. King managed to escape his persecutors to preach another day. Although his audiences are smaller these days, his words carry as much





weight as in the glory days of his crusade, if not more. He's been instrumental in bringing his doctrine of nonviolent resistance to the Defiance in general and to the Schism and the Pax Delta in particular.

BLESSED ARE THE MEEK

The core of Dr. King's teachings is that it is wrong to take up arms against your oppressors. He believes that change can be effected by peaceful means, primarily rallies, sit-ins, and marches—basically any means of showing your support for your cause, short of actually threatening or assaulting anyone.

There are those, of course, who would argue that a rally or march is a threat in and of itself, a shot across the bow at the status quo, the current order. And Dr. King would say that they are exactly right. But these are the gentle kinds of threats that end not with a battle but with a promise to never submit quietly to injustice.

Dr. King teaches us that to remain silent on any particular issue is to give it your tacit assent, your quiet stamp of approval. Only by voicing your views in a calm yet courageous manner can you bring together like-minded people to effect real change.

This view is only controversial because the darker side of our nature tells us that we should stand up and defend ourselves, that we should permit ourselves to be dragged down to the level of our oppressors. To do so would be to permit ourselves to be found as low and mean as those we struggle against, which is something we cannot allow to happen.



THE WAR OF PEACE

This is a war, all right, but it's fought not with bullets but words, and the prize is the hearts and souls of our families and neighbors. Like in any other war, we can't rely on our general to win the war all by himself. He needs the help of each and every one of us to make our collective dream come true.

It the responsibility of each and every citizen—reg or otherwise—to speak out against the injustices that rage around us ever day. Our government is not a single entity, a mass hive mind that we can defeat with a single blow. It's made up of people, people much like ourselves, people with thoughts and dreams and families just like ours. People who can be reasoned with if you only take the time to reach out to them. That's how we're going to win this war. Not by busting into the White House and staging some kind of coup. That would only replace one kind of tyrant with another.

No, we have to instead dedicate ourselves to making people change their minds about deltas once and for all. The best way to do that is to talk to them, to show them that you're not some mysterious menace from beyond. You're a person, just like them. That's where we all started, even if it's not where we might be now.

The next best thing to do is live as an example to those around you. Be a good person, the best you can. Be a point of shining pride for the rest of the delta community, and shame those who would persecute us by how you respond to them and their aggression. Be better than your foes.



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JOINING OUR ARMY

Although many members of the Pax are strongly rooted in their faith, the Pax is not itself a religion. It's an ecumenical organization that accepts all who accept our creed.

Becoming a part of the Pax Delta is simple. All you have to do is decide to follow our teachings. You don't have to show up to meetings, and you don't have to attend Sunday services.

You only have to renounce violence as a means of attempting to resolve the problems that pester us every day. When you're part of the Pax, you'll know it in your heart, and it will show in the way you deport yourself, the way you speak to others, the words you use. It will be obvious in everything you do.

SPREADING THE WORD

Being a member of the Pax doesn't mean you lock yourself in a cell on a mountaintop and meditate upon our nation's plight. It's just the opposite, in fact.

It's up to you to go out and spread the word, to encourage others to subscribe to the renunciation of violence in the active resistance of those who would continue to oppress us. You've got to join rallies to show your support. You've got to attend meetings to speak your mind. You've got to write letters and publish pamphlets.

In short, you've got to communicate with those around you. Violence is the ultimate breakdown of communication, the last resort of people who have decided that they have nothing to say to each other. It's up to us to continue the dialog, even if it sometimes seems like a monolog against the darkness.

SOLUTIONS, NOT PROBLEMS

I realize that handing yourself over to nonviolence as a way of life can be a frightening endeavor. Not everyone is capable of doing this all at once, but rest easy in the knowledge that there is a peaceful place in our hearts that we can all eventually arrive at given diligence and time.

More people wash out of the Pax after making a single slip than anything else. What they don't realize is that nonviolence isn't an end, it's a means—a process, not a goal. As much as we try to prevent it, we can sometimes slip from that path, but that doesn't mean we can't climb right back on it again.

God forgives all sins.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

Consider your fellow members of the Pax as your support network. If you need someone to talk with to help reconcile violent feelings with your commitment to peace, please contact us. We're available around the clock, and we really do want to help.

TRY IT

I know some of you out there on the run—running for your lives—might find the idea of renouncing violence a bit much to handle. The longest journey starts with a single step. Just try it out. Commit to nonviolence for a day. Then try a week. Those weeks will become months and eventually years as you awaken to the possibilities that nonviolent resistance opens up for you. Someday soon you'll realize that no matter how the struggle seems to be going, if your soul is at peace, you're not losing. You're winning.



CHAPTER ONE: NEW POWER PACKAGES

WE'VE GOT THE POWERS

One of the best parts of any new Brave New World sourcebook is this chapter, the one in which we provide several new power packages for you to create your heroes with. Now that we're actually into detailing some of the different factions in Brave New World, you can expect that the packages are going to concentrate on powers that might be particularly useful for certain types of heroes—those affiliated with whatever group the book focuses on.

We're putting new power packages into every new sourcebook we do, but if you still can't find the kind of hero you're looking for—and you can't stand to wait—then please feel free to make up your own. See *Brave New World* for some guidelines on this. The only thing you really need to know is if your Guide approves of your design. If she does, then you're all set.

After all, it's your game, and as long as you're having fun, you're doing it right.

THE POWER PACKAGES

Every power package has at least one entry: powers. Under this, we list what powers a hero gets if you choose this package for her. Remember, a hero only ever gets to use one package, so choose wisely.

Many packages also come with another entry: quirks. When you pick this package, the hero gets these quirks along with the powers.

Last, every package comes with its own tricks. Heroes don't get these automatically. They can pick them as part of their three free tricks (during character creation) or they can pick them up later.

Heroes with other power packages can't use these power-package tricks (except in special circumstances), no matter how many successes they might get on a roll. A hero can only ever use power-package tricks from her own power package.

Enough of all that. Let's get on with the packages!





BOMBER

What's the last thing you hear before shaking hands with an angry bomber? BOOOMMM!!!

A bomber is a curious kind of delta who can actually cause different parts of her body to explode like a stick of dynamite. On the surface of it, this is one hell of a power. All the hero has to do is stand in the middle of a room, set herself off, and—boom! Instant mayhem. It's not quite that simple, of course. Nothing in life ever is.

Sure, the bomber can make a big, blazing mess out of anyone's day, but then she's also got to deal with the fact that she's lost that part of herself that she's caused to explode. This can be, as you might guess, more than a little inconvenient.

It wouldn't be much of a power, of course, if that was the end of it. Imagine a hero who could only blow up once and then was either maimed or gone forever. Bombers can actually reassemble their missing molecules, although this takes time. They can even blow themselves up entirely and then reconstitute themselves from scratch, right in the very same spot they exploded.

Bombers are hard to capture, much less kill. To catch a bomber, an attacker often needs to knock her out without actually pulping her.

To kill a bomber, the attacker needs to resort to a nonphysical attack, something like poison or electric shock. Needless to say, this can be tricky, since most bombers are extremely wary of anything that might actually be able to do them in. The attacker's best bet is to knock the bomber out or stun her and then administer the death-dealing attack at his leisure.

POWERS

Explosive Body: The hero can cause any of her own body parts to explode. For simplicity's sake, we divide the body parts into the same sections we use on the Hit Location Table. This gives us six sections: head, torso, right arm, left arm, right leg, and left leg. Each location does a certain amount of damage, as listed on the Bomber Damage Table below.

Once a body part has exploded, the hero no longer has use of that part of her body—at least until it's been regenerated. A body part cannot be removed and then made to explode. It has to be a part of the hero at the time it goes off.

The hero doesn't actually have to make an attack roll to set the power off. All she has to is declare that she's detonating a body part. It goes off right where she's standing, with a Blast Radius of 3, doing massive damage to anyone affected.

A bomber can normally only set off one of her body parts at a time. To do so requires a full action.

If the hero's head or torso explodes—which would kill most people, but not a bomber—the rest of her body follows suit in a kind of chain reaction. Roll 1d6, open-ended. In that many rounds, the hero's body explodes. The Guide should make this roll and not tell the heroes the result until the rest of the body actually goes off.

BOMBER DAMAGE

Body Part Limb Head Torso Damage (2d6+2) x hero's *Size* (2d6+2) x hero's *Size* (2d6+4) x hero's *Size*





Immunity: The hero's body cannot be damaged by her own body's explosions. Any other explosions can harm her normally, as can any other kind of damage, like shrapnel from an explosion, or fallout from a collapsing building.

Regeneration: The hero can regenerate missing body parts, although this takes time. It takes an hour to regenerate a limb, two hours for a head, and four hours for a torso. Missing parts can all be regenerated at the same time, so the longest it ever takes to regenerate even a whole body is four hours.

QUIRKS

Unstable Parts: If any part of the hero's body is ever pulped by direct physical damage of any kind, it automatically detonates. This happens even if the hero is unconscious at the time. The hero has no control over this and cannot stop it from happening, even if she wants to.

TRICKS

Big Bang: Before exploding, the hero has the option of trying to make a Challenging (10) *Spirit* roll. With an extra success on this roll, the hero can detonate all remaining body parts at once. This results in one large explosion in which the damage bonuses (the numbers-only part) for each attack are added together. The hero still only rolls 2d6 x her *Size* for the random part of the damage.

Shaped Charge: With a little bit of concentration—which causes the body part that's to explode to crackle with energy—the hero can focus the blast so that it only affects a single person or thing but does a lot more damage to the chosen target. To do this, the hero has to get an extra success on a close combat attack against the target. If the hero manages to trigger off the trick, she can then add 1d6+1 to the base damage, before it's multiplied by her *Size*. If the hero misses with the attack, her body part doesn't detonate.





CHANGELING

One reason most Defiants wear a mask is that they don't want anyone to know that they've got delta powers. Some people simply toss on a baseball cap and some mirrorshades and go to work, hoping that no one gets a good enough look at them to be able to guess who they really are. Other deltas design and wear an elaborate costume, creating an entire alter ego for themselves, an alternate personality they immerse themselves in when they're on the job.

There's one kind of delta who doesn't need a mask of any kind because their face is a mask of its own: the changeling. These shapeshifting heroes can take on the shape, demeanor, color, texture—whatever of anyone else. In fact, they do this so easily that any new face they take on just might as well have been the mug they were born with for all the difference that it makes. A changeling is the ultimate infiltrator or impersonator. They do better than just looking like another person. They almost become that person—at least in appearance.

To use most of the changeling's powers, look up the rules on the *disguise* and *mimic* skills in *Brave New World*. That covers most of it right there.

Of course, the best benefit that a changeling has over someone who's just wearing a disguise is that he doesn't have a mask or makeup or whatever to remove. Even if someone spots the fact that the changeling is a fake, she may be hard pressed to prove it, given the incredible accuracy of the changeling's impersonation.

Changelings can duplicate the appearance of any regular human. They cannot mimic another delta's powers, but they can probably manage to look a lot like them—without the powers, of course. A changeling's powers only go so far, after all.



POWERS

Shapeshifter: The hero can change his appearance to match that of anyone he's ever met or studied before. He can also mimic the person better than Rich Little. Add +5 to the hero's *disguise* and *mimic* skills.

Meeting someone to be impersonated involves more than simply standing next to them for a moment or just spotting them from across the room. It requires being in the person's presence for at least five minutes and having the person acknowledge your presence. The classic example is to have someone look you in the eye as he shakes your hand.

A person can't be impersonated by simply studying the person, although it can cut down on the time needed for the meeting. If the hero actually has video or film of a person in action—at least five minutes worth—he can study that instead of spending time with the person. To really get a feel for the person, however, the changeling still has to meet the person.

After taking the proper amount of time to study the film—about three times as long as the length of the film, so at least 15 minutes—the hero only needs to get the person to look him in the eye and acknowledge his presence. This can be as simple as getting the person to give the hero a curt nod from across a room. All that matters is that there's some kind of personal interaction, no matter how small.

Impersonating someone like this requires a great deal of concentration. If the hero is stunned, the disguise drops completely, and the hero's appearance reverts back to normal. Similarly, if the hero falls asleep or under the influence of a mind-altering drug, the facade shatters.

The one real difficulty with a changeling's powers is that the hero's clothing and belongings are unaffected by this power. It's up to the hero to find appropriate clothes for whoever he's impersonating. This can prove interesting—or even embarrassing—if the hero suddenly decides to impersonate someone of a different gender or *Size*.

It also means that the hero can't simply turn around the corner and morph into someone else entirely. The clothes remain the same. Of course, many changelings have amassed huge wardrobes of different kinds and sizes of clothes to help themselves in their impersonations. If the changeling is found in the wrong kind of clothes, this draws suspicion to him, which is grounds for an opposing *scrutinize* roll.

TRICKS

Comfortable Deception: If the hero ever gets a *disguise* or *mimic* roll with three extra successes (over the base Target Number of 5), the hero has that part of the impersonation down pat. He can add +5 to his *disguise* or *mimic* rolls—whichever is appropriate whenever trying to impersonate this same person again. This bonus is not cumulative, so it can only be applied once to each kind of roll for each impersonation.

Convincing Act: If the hero's initial *disguise* or *mimic* roll (whichever is appropriate—or both if need be) is ever three successes higher than an opposing *scrutinize* roll, the person who made the *scrutinize* roll is absolutely positive that the hero is who he claims to be. Only when presented with incontrovertible proof does the fooled person finally relent. Even then, the fool shakes her head in disbelief.





CHARMER

Have you ever had someone convince you to do something and then afterward you had to ask yourself, "What the heck was I thinking?" Well, the charmers are the kind of people who make that sort of thing happen. Through the force of their own personality, they can convince you to believe things that aren't true or to even do things you wouldn't normally do.

This isn't quite as smooth as some kind of Jedi mind trick. The hero can't just wave her hands and have the people in front of her instantly start believing whatever she tells them. And it doesn't turn the rest of the world into the charmer's robotic minions.

For the power to work, the hero has to actually have a conversation with the person—or people—she intends to bring over to her way of thinking. This is rarely if ever something that can be accomplished in the middle of a fight. While fists and bullets are flying everywhere, people often have more important things—like staying alive grabbing just about all of their attention.

The charmer works best in a friendly and calm atmosphere, a place in which her targets can feel at peace. People who have their guard down are always easier to convince of something.

Even if that's not possible, the hero still has a chance to convince people of something, no matter how hostile to her they might be. Even so, there's only so far a delta's power goes.

A charmer cannot get someone to do something that's totally against his nature. A priest isn't going to suddenly take up serial killing because someone asks him to, no matter how nicely. On the other hand, the priest might very well take a request from the charmer as if it came from the Pope himself—or at least a bishop.

The point is that people don't simply change their basic nature on a whim. This isn't mind control. It's more like mind nudging.

A guard, for instance, isn't going to abandon his post because a charmer asks him to. However, if the charmer can come up with a plausible story, the guard might believe that there's a more important situation to be dealt with elsewhere, giving him a good reason to leave his post wide open.

ROLEPLAY IT

Persuasion: charm isn't the sort of skill that a hero just whips out like a kind of personality gun. It's an interpersonal skill, and it takes time and effort to get it to work.

Guides, don't let your heroes get lazy with this. If the charmer just walks up to a target and says, "I try to *charm* him," tell the player it just isn't going to work. This is a *roleplaying* game, after all, and how often do you run into a situation like this which just screams out for roleplaying?

If the player really doesn't want to bother, that's fine. He's playing a game after all. You should add a good, strong bonus to the target's resistance roll though. The intended victim can just tell that the hero's heart isn't really into the whole conversation that they're not having, and it's going to affect the hero's chances.

On the other hand, if the hero makes an inspired speech to the target or simply does one heck of a good job manipulating the target's needs and emotions, give the hero a bonus to her roll. You've got to reward the good as





much as you punish the bad, after all. That kind of reinforcement can go a long way toward getting the player more into her hero and so make the game a lot more fun for everyone. Be sure to let the player in on what's going on, to make sure she understands how her actions affect the action.

POWERS

Sheer Charm: The hero could sell deluxe refrigerators—complete with icemakers—to Eskimos. Just about everyone seems to like her for no apparent reason at all, other than the fact that she strikes them as the kind of person they'd like to be friends with. Add +10 to her *persuasion: charm* skill.

TRICKS

Momentary Lapse of Reason: If the hero tops out the target's resistance roll by three or more successes, she can get the target to do something entirely out of character for one round. This can't be directly against the target's nature no one's going to kill himself or a friend because of this—but it could tread near that line.

It's the Guide's call as to how far any individual might be willing to go. If the charmer pushes the target too far, the target immediately comes to his senses. Most people don't like it when they realize someone's been messing with their head, and they may react violently, so charmers should be careful with this.

Trust Me: If the hero gets three or more successes over the target's resistance roll, she can actually charm the hero at any time—even in the middle of a combat. Making this roll requires a bit of a speech and an entire action. Combined with *momentary lapse of reason*, it could even be used to get a target to attack a victim of the charmer's choosing, but that requires a total of six successes over the target's resistance roll. Good luck with those dice.







HACKER

We live in a world connected by more than just roads, rivers, and highways. There's a whole, different world out there, lying beside the one we know. This virtual reality is composed of fiber-optic cables and high-speed routers, top-end servers reached by slowpoke modems. It's the internet, and it's changed our world in more ways than we could ever have imagined.

The same is true in Brave New World. Despite the oppressive effects of Kennedy's almost 40 years in power, the advances of delta gadgeteers and scientists have managed to keep technological advances nearly in line with our own. The most incredible breakthroughs the deltas make in science can't be replicated by normal means, but every now and then a brilliant researcher—or, more often these days, a group of researchers comes up with something that anyone can use, whether he's got powers or not.

The internet is one of those things.

Cyberspace, as some people call it, is nothing like the colorful virtual world that William Gibson envisioned in *Neuromancer*. Sure, it might have the potential to someday become that, but the fact is that the way most people interact with the internet is pretty mundane. They retrieve e-mail, read posts on forums, and meander about looking for things they find on search engines.



HACK THIS!

Hackers are better than that. They know where to look for the kind of data that people want to hide, and when they find it, they know how to get at it.

Of course, wandering all around the internet, doing research, and waiting for your latest bit of brilliant code to crack a website's password system can be dead dull in the middle of a roleplaying game. The Guide can make it as real as he wants it to be, depending on how much he knows about hacking. We've got a different suggestion, one that's a lot easier.

This section of the book's not meant to be a treatise on the fundamentals of hacking. Instead, we're just going to give you an easy-to-use system that should handle most situations.

THE HUNT

If the hacker knows exactly what he's looking for, but he doesn't know exactly where to find it, that's a hunt. It's up to him to search through the wide, virtual world of the internet until he finds what he's looking for, and even then he's got to be able to recognize it for what it is.

First, the hero poses the Guide a question, something like, "What is the schedule for doctors on call at Crescent City Mercy Hospital this evening?" The Guide then gives the answer for that question a Target Number. If the hero succeeds, he gets the answer. If he fails, he can't try again until the next day.

This system works fine for information that's not terribly sensitive, something that the owners aren't likely to go to a lot of trouble to keep from the public. It's the Guide's job to determine where any piece of information falls.

THE CRACK

Then there's the situation in which the hacker knows where to find what he's looking for, but when he gets there, he finds the gateway locked and barred. Most commonly, cracking a file or site is a matter of either figuring out a password or finding a backdoor through the software's protection. Neither of these things are easy to do, but hey, the hero's a delta after all.

With a crack, the Guide sets the defenses a Target Number, usually Incredible (25) or better. If the hero beats that, he gains full access to the site or file.

POWERS

Hacking: Add +10 to the hero's *computing* skill.

TRICKS

Crack and Hack: If the hero gets three extra successes on a *computing* roll for a crack, he can actually change the password for the site or file to something that only he knows. This means the proper owners are locked out of their own file or site until they manage to crack back into it. Of course, smart systems operators have backups of their data and can simply nuke the altered files and replace them with good ones, but they're usually reluctant to do that for fear of losing the most recent data.

Ghost Hack: With three extra successes on a *computing* roll while on a hunt, the hero manages to cover his tracks so that no one can figure out that he's even been there. There's no way for anyone to track the person asking for the information to his current location, much less figure out it was him behind the keyboard.





PHASER

With this power, the hero can actually walk through walls and other things as if they weren't even there.

Phasing requires a tremendous amount of concentration. The hero can only perform simple tasks—things like walking and talking—while phasing. If the hero does anything else, she immediately stops phasing.

If the hero stops phasing while she's actually sharing the same space as anything solid, she takes 5d6+10 points of damage to each and every hit location involved. Only one roll is made and then applied to all the affected hit locations. If the phaser's whole body is affected, this is the same as taking massive damage.

While phasing, the hero is immune to physical attack, but that doesn't make her immune to everything. She can still feel temperatures, so fire can still burn her, and she can still get frostbite. Similarly, she can still see, so a flash of light that would blind a regular person would affect her too.

A phaser can only phase through physical things. Energy affects her normally. This has one result that most first-time phasers don't often think about. They can't move through a wall (or anything else) containing electric wires—at least not without giving themselves the shock of their lives.

Of course, it's hard to predict exactly when and where a wire is in a wall that the phaser's trying to walk through. Some people, knowing about phasers, actually have live wires run through just about every wall in their house. It's harder to wire a door—although not impossible—so many phasers simply walk through doorways all the time, whether they're closed or not.

HITTING & LIVE WIRE

If a phasing hero happens to run into a live wire, it does 3d6+3 damage to her. In and of itself, this isn't too dangerous. However, if the hero takes a wound, she'd better make sure to make her stun check. Otherwise, she's like to materialize inside of whatever it is she's walking through, and that's going to hurt.

PHASE VERSUS PHASE

The only thing that can physically touch a phased hero is another phased character. To each other, they're as solid as anything.

POWER

Phasing: The hero's body and clothing becomes insubstantial. The power does not extend to anything large and solid on the hero's person, like weapons or armor. The hero is still affected by energy, including live wires, force fields, and the like.

TRICKS

Phase Friend: Phasing requires a great deal of concentration. If the hero wishes, she can extend her phasing power to someone she's touching. For each extra success on an Easy (5) *spirit* roll, the hero can phase a willing participant who is directly touching her.

Phase Foe: The hero can phase someone that she touches, whether they like it or not. This requires a hit in combat, plus winning a contested *spirit* roll against the target. As soon as the hero lets go, the target rematerializes. If this happens while the target is in something solid, it can be pretty darn painful.



SNUFFER

This rare delta doesn't have a power in the positive sense of the word. Instead, he has the ability to negate another delta's powers—at least temporarily. He can reach out with his mind and snuff out a delta's powers like putting out the light of a candle. That's why these people are called snuffers.

Most deltas regard snuffers the same way most regs regard rogue deltas. They're dangerous people who are not to be trusted. After all, as a delta, your amazing powers are often the only edge you have on a world out to hunt you down and cause you harm. Someone who can take that away by just looking at you is a threat you're not likely going to tolerate with a smile.

Of course, in the Defiance, having a snuffer on your side can come in handy. When you've got a Delta Primer bearing down on you, turning him into a reg can sure be handy. Of course, Delta Prime has its share of snuffers too, but they seem to be more common on the Defiant side of the fence. Perhaps it's because its pretty difficult to spot a snuffer in a crowd, especially if he doesn't want to be seen. Their power is only useful when facing off against another delta, and even then it's not particularly flashy. For these reasons, most snuffers don't feel the need to reveal themselves as deltas unless it's absolutely necessary.

It was the snuffers' power that inspired a gadgeteer named Terry Tanaka, a distinguished engineer at the University of Hawaii, to create the delta power-dampening field—often abbreviated as DPDF—back in 1968. Maintaining such a field over a broad area, like that of a prison or the White House, requires a tremendous amount of energy, enough for the machinery to require its own set of industrialstrength transformers. In certain cases though, the benefits far outweighed the costs.





POWER

Power Snuff: The hero can negate the powers of any delta in sight. To do this, the hero simply looks at his target and concentrates for a full action. Then the hero makes a contested *Spirit* roll against his target. The snuffer adds +5 to this *Spirit* roll.

If the snuffer wins the *Spirit* roll, the target's powers immediately cease to work. If the target isn't actually using her powers at the time, she may not even notice the lack, but when she tries to activate her powers, she automatically fails.

A delta with snuffed powers reverts entirely to normal for the duration of the snuffing. All outward appearances of the power vanish too, so a goliath would suddenly shrink back to her original size, for instance.

Actually snuffing a power is a short task, requiring a full action. Once the snuffing is in effect, however, maintaining the snuff is only a simple task. This means the snuffer can walk, talk, and even attack the target delta or other people while keeping the target's powers subdued.

Once the snuffing power is in effect, the snuffer no longer has to keep an eye on the target. Against targets no longer in the snuffer's sight, though, the range of his power is limited to 50 yards.

The snuffer can drop his power's effects at any time. If he becomes stunned, his power fails automatically, and his target's powers return.

In the rare case that a snuffer might encounter an alpha, he's going to find himself in for a real challenge. Alphas add +25 to their *Spirit* rolls when resisting a delta snuffer. There were some alpha snuffers out there at one point too, but there are no records of any such people left. The snuffer can normally only affect one delta at a time. Of course, he can drop his power against one target to try it against another at any time.

If the target is willing, the snuffer doesn't have to make a *Spirit* roll at all. The target's powers are automatically snuffed.

QUIRK

Bad Vibes: Other deltas seem to be able to sense that the snuffer is bad news for them, even if they have no idea who he is or that he has the power to bring them low. All other deltas add +5 to their rolls when resisting a friendly *persuasion* roll against a snuffer.

Of course, this general creepiness can be made to work in the snuffer's favor. Snuffers add +5 to their unfriendly *persuasion* rolls when working against another delta—even another snuffer.

TRICK

Super Snuff: With three extra successes on an attempt to snuff out a delta's powers—three successes over the target's on the opposed *Spirit* roll the snuffer knocks the target's powers out for a full hour. The snuffer doesn't have to concentrate on the target delta at all once this trick is in effect. Against a willing target, the hero still has to make the roll, but against a Target Number of 10.

Pre-Snuff: With an extra success on the contested *Spirit* roll, the snuffer can hold off on snuffing the target's powers until whenever he wants to—as long as he keeps the target in sight. This is useful when the snuffer wants to time the snuffing exactly or use it as a threat, and he can't afford to waste an action on actually doing it later.





ARCHIETYPES BOMBER

PROFILE

Smarts: 2d6

Area knowledge: Crescent City 2, demolition 2, language: English 2, language: Spanish 2, tactics 2

Speed: 3d6

Dodging 2, driving: personal vehicle 2,

shooting 3, stealth 2 Spirit: 4d6 Bravery 3, perception 3,

> persuasion: bluff 2, persuasion: charm 2, scrutinize 1, search 1, streetwise 2

Strength: 3d6 Climbing 1, fighting: barehanded 3, swimming 2, throwing 1

Size: 5

Pace: 8

Delta Points: 4 Quirks: Arrogant –3, delta ±0, duty –3: family, impulsive –3, iron jaw +3, lucky +3, secret identity ±0, self-

confident +2, skeptical –1, tough +2, unregistered ±0, unstable body parts ±0 Powers:

Explosive Body: The hero can cause her body parts to explode.

- Immunity: The hero cannot be hurt by her own explosions.
- **Regeneration:** The hero can regenerate missing body parts.

Tricks: Big bang, first move, knockback Gear: A Colt Agent with 20 rounds of AP 10 ammo, a leather jacket, a beat-up, avocado green 1976 Buick Electra, and \$20.

PERSONALITY

Hey, señor, get outta my way. I got places to go and people to take care of, if you know what I mean. Back when I was a niña in the barrio, people used to mess with me a lot, but that don't happen

no more. Not since they heard what I did to Hector Gris. Somebody told

me he got out of the hospital a while back, but he ain't never gonna get his hearing back. So when I tell you to jump, don't take no time to ask me how high, baby. Just get your butt outta my way. Just stay away from me and mi familia, okay? Course, you don't know who I am or who my family is, do you? So you'd better leave us all alone, gringo, "cause you never know.

Quote: Boom, baby, boom!





CHANGELING

PROFILE

Smarts: 4d6 Area knowledge: Crescent City 2, disguise 5, etiquette 2, forgery 3, language: English 2, security 2 Speed: 2d6 Dodging 1, driving: personal vehicle 1, shooting 2, stealth 2 Spirit: 4d6 Bravery 1, mimic 5, perception 3, persuasion: bluff 2, persuasion: charm 1, scrutinize 1, search 1 Strength: 2d6 Climbing 1, fighting: barehanded 3, running 1, swimming 1, throwing 1 Size: 5 Pace: 7 **Delta Points: 3 Ouirks**: Ambidextrous +5, cheap -2, code of honor 3, delta ± 0 , double-jointed +1, heroic -5, secret identity ± 0 , sense of time +1, sharp ears +1, sharp eyes +1, unregistered ± 0 , voice +1**Powers:** Shapeshifter: The hero can make himself look like just about anyone else. Add +5 to his mimic and disguise skills. Tricks: Convincing act, grapple, new friend Gear: A Colt Agent with 20 rounds of AP 10 ammo, several different changes of clothes, and \$100.

PERSONALITY

Hi there. How are you? Do you recognize me? Of course you do. Or at least you think you do.

I'm not exactly who you think I am, but that's by design. You can hardly be faulted for being taken in by a pretty darn good trick.

I'm literally a man of 1,000 faces, and only one of them's my own. I

can be anyone at any time. You can't ever know who I am or where I'm going to turn up next.

Does that scare you? Then you're not as dumb as you look.

But then again, neither am

T

Quote: Pleased to see you again—I mean, meet you.





CHARMER

PROFILE

Smarts: 3d6

Academia: history 1, area knowledge: Crescent City 2, bureaucratics 2, etiquette 2, language: English 2, language: French 1, security 1, tactics 2

Speed: 2d6

Dodging 1, driving: personal vehicle 1, shooting 3, stealth

Spirit: 5d6

Bravery 1, leadership 3, perception 3, persuasion: bluff 2, persuasion: charm 5, scrutinize 1, search 1, streetwise 1

Climbing 1, fighting: barehanded 2, running 1, swimming 1, throwing 2

Size: 5

Pace: 7

Delta Points: 3

Quirks: Beautiful +1, cautious –3, coward –3, delta ±0, famous +2, loyal –3, rich +3, secret identity ±0, self-confident, softhearted –1, unregistered ±0, voice +1, wise +3

Powers:

Sheer Charm: Add +10 to the hero's *persuasion: charm* skill.

Tricks: Momentary lapse of reason, new friend, on a roll

Gear: A Colt 2000 with three clips of AP 10 ammo, a set of good

false ID papers, a 1999 Porsche Carrera (financed), digital cell phone with internet access, laptop computer with cellular modem, and \$2,000.

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PERSONALITY

Hi. I think I know just what you're thinking. You're thinking I don't belong here, that this is someplace I shouldn't be. I know it's your job to keep out people who

don't belong here, but if you give me a moment, I think I can convince you that this is exactly where I belong.

This isn't the kind of thing I normally get involved in. My modeling contracts and political endorsements keep me fairly busy. Besides which, I usually like to work behind the scenes. Still, I'd be grateful if you could manage to see things my way. You can? Thanks. I knew you would.

Quote: Just let me say one thing.



PERSONALITY

HACKER

PROFILE

Smarts: 5d6 You want to know something? Then Area knowledge: Crescent City 2, you've come to the right place. bureaucratics 2, computing 5, I'm just the girl to find it out for you, no language: English 2, profession: matter what it is. I can crack the code on systems analyst 3, science: any disk, snake my way into any website, mathematics 2, security 3 and waltz around the web like a modern-Speed: 3d6 day Mozart on cybernetic speed. There's Dodging 2, driving: personal vehicle 2, not been a firewall built that can keep me lockpicking: electronic 3, shooting 3, out. stealth 1, trade: electrician 1 Secure connection? That's a laugh. There Spirit: 2d6 ain't no such thing when I'm around. Bravery 1, perception 3, persuasion: So what do you need? Fake credit card taunt 1, scrutinize 1, search 1, numbers? The duty roster from the 12th streetwise 1 Precinct? The airspeed velocity of an Strength: 2d6 African swallow? Climbing 1, fighting: All you've got to do barehanded 2, is ask. running 1, swimming 2, Quote: It's only got throwing 128-bit encryption? 1 Give me a tough one! Size: 5 Pace: 8 **Delta Points: 3** Quirks: Alert +3, curious -3, delta ± 0 , favor owed +1: high-level hacker, glass jaw -3, impulsive -3, light sleeper +1, photographic memory +5, secret identity ± 0 , unregistered ± 0 , 10 young -1 **Powers:** Hacking: Add +10 to the hero's computing skill. Tricks: Brilliant idea, crack and hack, fast learner Gear: A computer cobbled together out of parts from dozen different machines (includes a cable-modem connection), a small knife, and \$50.

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ARCHETYPES PHASER

PROFILE

Smarts: 3d6 Area knowledge: Crescent City 2, criminology 4, language: English 2, profession: police officer 2, security 3 Speed: 2d6 Dodging 2, driving: personal vehicle 1, shadowing 2, stealth 1 Spirit: 5d6 Bravery 3, perception 4, persuasion: interrogation 3, scrutinize 4, search 3, streetwise 2 Strength: 2d6 Climbing 2, fighting: barehanded 3, running 1, swimming 1 Size: 5 Pace: 7 **Delta Points: 3** Quirks: Alert +3, authority +2, delta ± 0 , dependent -2: family, destined for greatness +5, heroic -5, obligation -3: **Crescent City Police** Department, secret identity ± 0 , unregistered ±0 **Powers:** Phasing: The hero can turn himself insubstantial. Tricks: Bull's eye, know the streets, phase friend Gear: A Colt 2000 with two clips of AP 5 ammo, a cell phone, and \$200.

PERSONALITY

I believe it was Einstein who first figured out that energy was matter, and vice versa, just all in a different state. Of course, he never got to apply this discovery of his so directly as I have.

> I don't know for sure that I can transmute my body's matter to energy and vice versa, but it sure seems like it. All I have to do is think about it and suddenly I can slip my molecules through anything anything but energy, that is.

> > Still, it's pretty amazing, and I'm doing my best to take advantage of this phenomenal gift. I'm in law enforcement in my day job—and no, I'm not going to say where but you wouldn't believe how handy it is to be able to walk through walls or let bullets pass right through you.

I used to hunt deltas down as criminals. They were lawbreakers just by being who they were. I had qualms about that even then. Now that I'm on the other side of the fence, it's all become a lot clearer to me now.

The problem is our government. The Defiance is the only answer.

Quote: Go ahead, punk. Take your best shot.





SNUFFER

PROFILE

Smarts: 2d6 Area knowledge: Crescent City 2, computing 1, bureaucratics 1, disguise 1, language: English 2, navigation 1, security 1, tactics 1 Speed: 3d6 Dodging 2, driving: personal vehicle 1, martial arts: barehanded 2, shadowing 1, shooting 2, stealth 1 Spirit: 5d6 Bravery 2, leadership 2, perception 3, persuasion: intimidation 2, scrutinize 2, search 2, streetwise 2 Strength: 2d6 Climbing 2, running 2, swimming 1, throwing 2 Size: 5 Pace: 8 **Delta Points:** 4 Quirks: Bad vibes ±0, cautious -3, code of honor -3, delta ±0, lucky +3, secret identity ± 0 , self-confident +2, stubborn -2, temper -2, unregistered ±0, tough +2, wise +3 **Powers: Power Snuff:** The hero can cancel other deltas' powers with an opposed Spirit roll. Add +5 to this Spirit roll. Tricks: First move, make an impression, super snuff Gear: A Colt Agent with 20 rounds of AP 5 ammo, a cell phone, a 1983 Harley-

Davidson (financed) and \$100.

PERSONALITY

The world might be afraid of deltas, but I'm not. I don't care if you're Defiance or Delta Prime, I got your number right here. To most people, deltas are some of the

scariest people around. After all, they can lift cars and blow holes through you with their hands. Not something you really want to screw around with.

Me, though, I know how to put a stop to all of that. When I'm on the scene, a delta's just another joe, and my gun's the great equalizer. I first found out about my powers soon after a Primer did. The man tried to blackmail me into working for him exclusively, being his patsy in the Defiance. I dropped his invulnerability just long enough to put three bullets in his head. That took that damn grin off his face.

Quote: Try it now, smart guy.









CHAPTER TWO: THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER

Hey, if you didn't see the big graphic on the page before this one, this part of the book is for Guides only. If you're a player, put the book down and slowly back away. Or turn toward the front of the book and start reading the stuff that's meant for your eyes instead. Either way, keep your yourself away from anything past this page.

WELCOME BACK

If you're a Guide, then you're supposed to be here, so pull up and chair and pay attention. There's a lot of information packed into this part of the book, and you don't want to blink for fear of missing something.

There's a lot of cool stuff going on in *Brave New World*, but the players don't need to know about it all. That's part of the fun of the game, after all: figuring out what's going on behind the scenes.

You, on the other hand, you're the one handing out the clues and pushing and prodding the heroes to do the right things. You've got to be in the loop.

Of course, that's only true up to a point. We're keeping a few of the secrets to ourselves still. We do this for the same reason you don't tell your players everything. *Brave New World* isn't just a game, it's a journey of discovery, of picking at the hints and clues and trying to figure out what's really going on, what makes the whole thing tick.

If we told you everything now, that would spoil the surprise. Rest assured, we do our best to tell you everything you need to know to do your job as Guide. You're our representative out there on the front lines of your games, after all. We wouldn't let you down. Trust us.

USING THIS PART OF THE BOOK

It's pretty simple. We go through the stuff we told the players and let you in on any secrets you need to know about. After that, there's an adversaries section with full descriptions and profiles of all sorts of different foes for your heroes to confront.





THE BIG SECRET

Okay, it's *a* big secret, but it's not the only thing we've got up our collective sleeve. For more about this, turn to page 114 and read on.

We put that section of the book in the website format we use in the front of the book for the players' material, and we did that for a reason. There may come a point in time when you're going to want to let the heroes in on the secret. When that happens, all you have to do is give them permission to read pages 114–121, and let them go.

Be sure to tell them not to let on to the other players what's going on until you give them permission to—or at the very least they should only do it in character during the game. Play it however you like it, but have fun watching your players' expressions.

THE WHOLE TRUTH

Truth comes clean with the reader in this book, but not entirely. When you use her in your games, be sure to make her cagey with the information she has to give to the heroes. This has two purposes.

One, it makes it more challenging for the heroes. How much fun is it going to be if Truth just tells them what's going on straight out? Most of the time, she's not going to know for sure anyhow. Her guesses are sure to be better than the heroes', but she doesn't see the need to color their judgment with her own theories.

Two, it can come in pretty handy if you keep the heroes a bit in the dark. No matter how well we may try to prepare you, some hero somewhere is going to come up with an angle and a question we couldn't have possibly anticipated, and he's probably in your team. If you're always cagey with information, then you can cover well when you're caught short.

YELLOW JOURNALISM

Most of what the Yellow Journalist tells the heroes is true. Hey, he's been in jail for the past 20 years. He doesn't have a whole lot of reasons to lie. In fact, he even believes Patriot's dead.

Truth hasn't told Yoshi otherwise because she believes in handing out information on a need-to-know basis only, and these days Yoshi doesn't qualify for that kind of status very often.

Actually, the YJ's got a pretty good idea about what happened to Chicago too, but he's not telling. Still that doesn't mean he wouldn't be willing to tease the heroes about it.





A FRACTURED REBELLION

The most interesting omission in Yoshi's essay is his lack of coverage of all the smaller factions. There are, as he writes, dozens of these, but he doesn't want to get into all of them because it would overwhelm the newly advanced Defiant—the supposed audience for this piece—with how fractured the Defiance really is.

Yoshi also doesn't bother going into the various resources at the disposal of the Defiance. That's something we can do here though.

SHADOWS BEHIND THE SCENES

Truth is, in fact, the current leader of the Defiance—at least as far as 90% of the membership knows. In actuality, the organization is run by a triumvirate of people: Truth, the Yellow Journalist—who sends in his opinions from jail when he can, running what he can of the operation by remote like a modern-day Capone—and Patriot.

Most days, though, it's just Truth at the helm. A lot of the time, Yoshi's unreachable due to his current address. And Patriot—besides having been in prison for a few months—is now so far underground that the only way Truth can regularly reach him is by e-mail, and he doesn't check in often enough to be involved in every decision.

Still, Truth relies on both Yoshi and Patriot to help her with making the biggest decisions she's presented with. Each of the three has their own people that they deal with on a more-or-less exclusive basis, and most of their regular communication involves making sure that the various parts of the Defiance that they have influence over don't step squarely on each other's toes.

PATRIOT FEVER

The best thing Truth has done to help Patriot stay hidden is encourage other people to wear his mask. In fact, she's actually provided people with the pattern on the *Delta Times* website.

This has done a lot to confuse Delta Prime, since the Primers can't ever tell for sure when there's a real Patriot sighting or not. In fact, over 95% of the time when a report of someone in a Patriot mask comes in, it's just someone parading around in a counterfeit mask.

It's that other 5% of the time that's so maddening.

Delta Prime is considering prosecuting those who wear Patriot's mask for conspiring against the federal government. They rarely pull out this tool, though, as the Primers' leaders now realize that the mask has become a martyr's icon. Persecuting people for wearing it only compounds the issue.

Even regs have taken to wearing the mask—at least to costume parties and the like. There were even reports this October of a gang of bank robbers in LA all wearing Patriot masks every time they pulled a job. Of course, their crime spree slammed to a halt when they ran into a man in a Patriot mask who seemed like the real thing. (It was, and he was not amused.)

THE PATRIOT CORPS

The Patriot Corps is actually governed by Patriot, although no one but Truth knows this for sure. The members of the Patriot Corps know their leader as Jeremy Singer. As Singer, Cruise—like all of the Patriot Corps wears the Patriot mask, but he runs around under the codename True American.





Obviously the members of the corps who claim to actually be Patriot are either lying or nuts. Cruise/Singer does his best to keep them apart from each other—often on other ends of the country—for fear of what might happen if they were to confront each other. Eventually this is going to happen, and it's not going to be pretty.

The Patriot Corps is run like a supersecret faction that's split off from the main Defiance because it's not aggressive enough. That's not true, of course, but the members of the corps don't know that. In fact, the Defiance uses the corps as a group of elite operatives which it can employ with total deniability.

ISLA DELTA OR BUST!

Kennedy and the leaders of Delta Prime don't put much stock in the idea of Isla Delta as a threat. For one, this little commune of deltas has been working for independence for over 30 years now, apparently without achieving the critical mass it needs.

Secondly, most of the people who run off to Isla Delta seem content to simply get away from their oppressors in the US and elsewhere around the globe. Getting involved in international politics or even mounting a civil war doesn't seem to be on their agenda.

What the US doesn't realize is that Ricky Salvador has already recruited the required number of deltas to catapult Isla Delta from its commonwealth status to full sovereignty. Yu Oliveri is simply waiting for the right moment to make the announcement. She hesitates to do so in a period of such great instability for fear of how superpowers like the US might react. Still, it's going to happen sooner or later, and Salvador is pushing for sooner. Once it does, the Isla Deltas are expecting a mass exodus of deltas to their newly founded homeland. In their opinion, the reason it's taken so long to meet Costa Rica's requirements has been fear that the Costa Rican government wouldn't be able to stand up to an aggressive stance from the US. Dona Oliveri plans on standing up to Kennedy at every opportunity, giving deltas the confidence they need to rally behind her banner.

There are Primer spies on Isla Delta of course, but some of them have quietly defected from the US and are feeding their bosses back home only the information that Salvador wants them to hear. Still, there are a few who have remained faithful to their homeland and have yet to be discovered, and there's no telling what they'll do once the declaration of statehood is made.

DEFENSE

Isla Delta is not a nuclear power, but few countries can top it in terms of available deltas. The skies are patrolled by rocket-launcher-wielding flyers, and there's a sizeable Aquarian population living in the waters around the island.

The biggest ace the Isla Deltas have up their sleeve is Morgan Delaurentis, the lady who administers the ultimate penalty in the Isla Delta justice system: stripping deltas of their powers. Delaurentis is actually an alpha version of a snuffer, and one of her tricks permits her to permanently remove a delta's powers. If Delta Prime were to someday invade Isla Delta, the Primers are going to be in for a big surprise when they run into Morgan's terrible powers.





OFFENSE

The biggest error Kennedy has made in regard to the Isla Deltas is underestimating their support in the States. Patriot has been to Isla Delta many times over the years. In fact, he recuperated there for three weeks directly after his escape.

Salvador and Cruise are good friends, and a good portion of the brand-new Patriot Corps is composed of Isla Delta sympathizers. They act as Isla Delta's intelligence network in the United States, the country both Salvador and Dona Oliveri see as the biggest threat to the chances of Isla Delta maintaining its sovereignty. At the moment, the US government is unaware of the extent of this problem.

THE POPULATION

Costa Rica—and Isla Delta, by extension—has no extradition treaty with the United States. This means that people who are wanted by the law in the US can hide in Costa Rica without fear that the Costa Rican government will arrest them and send them back home. Of course, that doesn't stop Delta Prime from sending covert operatives down for illegal snatch-andrun captures, but it does provide some small amount of comfort.

Of course, just being an unregistered delta is cause enough to be an outlaw, but several people living on Isla Delta have more on their records than simple noncompliance with the DRA. For the most part, these people are on their best behavior while on the island, for fear they'll be kicked off, but the wild side of some crooks runs deep, and they find it hard to reform themselves, even when they're "off the job."

In fact, there are even a couple of alphas who make Isla Delta their home. These were people who were imprisoned under a delta powerdampening field during the Bicentennial Battle and so managed to avoid the Vanishing.





In the time after the Vanishing, the US government—desperate to reassert itself as the delta superpower—granted amnesty to a select number of alphas in return for their pledged loyalty to the United States. Some of these people went rogue over the years, and a few of them wound up living "la vida delta," as it's come to be known.

The existence of these alphas is a tightly held state secret. They report directly to Salvador, and only he, Dona Oliveri, and Henrik Strandberg know who they are—at least until they're truly needed to defend their new home.

GUERILLA DELTAS

If the main arm of the Defiance is Sinn Fein, then the Delta Warriors are the IRA. In fact, that's a good way to think of them in the game. They're a



group of people who have dedicated themselves to respectable idea freedom for their people—but employ despicable methods. There's a decent argument to be made that terrorism is the only viable means for people to respond against a powerful government, but it still involves the killing of decent people—innocents really—whose only crime is complicity with the status quo.

The federal government's stance on the Delta Warriors has been that they are the heart of the Defiance. Their wanton use of violence only goes to show why Delta Prime needs to bring these mad dogs to justice as quickly as possible.

In fact, the Delta Warriors do more to propagate the general ill will against deltas than anyone since the Devastator himself. It's hard to sympathize with a group of people who might pop out of the woodwork and murder you at any moment.

The Yellow Journalist tried to talk Marcus Manley out of his crusade early on, but it ultimately proved fruitless. Truth and Patriot have carried on with ongoing conversations with Malachai Winter, but these have been equally frustrating.

Actually, Winter is a much more reasonable man than any of his predecessors as leaders of the Delta Warriors, a fact that may well explain his longevity in the position. Still, he finds himself unable to bend in the means the Warriors use to pursue their ends. To do so would be perceived as weakness by those under him, and he would quickly find his authority challenged.

Still, Winter has done what he can to at least slow down the Warriors' campaign of terror. Unfortunately, it's not been nearly enough.

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THE PILOT MOUNTAIN MASSACRE

Winter's correct in his suspicions about the bomb that took out Pilot Mountain. It was a much smaller version of the device that knocked Chicago from the face of the earth. The fact that the US government had it three years before the Devastator used it during the Bicentennial Battle should be a clue to who was really behind the Chicago disaster: President Kennedy himself.

The Pilot Mountain massacre was basically a test run for the bomb's technology. It worked famously, encouraging the Facade to set up the whole Bicentennial Battle. The rest like the city of Chicago—is history.

INFILTRATORS

Of course, Delta Prime is constantly trying to get its own operatives to be accepted as members of the Delta Warriors. Winter's painfully aware of this. Part of the basic training every Warrior has to go through involves breaking down his individuality until his loyalty to the Warriors is unquestionable.

Still, one woman had managed to survive the training with her loyalty to the US intact. Her name is Tonya Canasta, and she's currently sharing the bed of Freddie James, one of Winter's top lieutenants. Tonya isn't always able to alert Delta Prime of the Warriors' plans. She's afraid to blow her cover over the loss of a few lives, but the guilt over the deaths of even those few innocents bothers her deeply. The Warriors are planning a new offensive for right around the end of the year, and when she knows exactly what's up, she plans on blowing the whistle, the consequences be damned.

PAX IN OUR TIME

Reverend Lange speaks wisely and well about the virtues of peaceful resistance versus armed aggression, but it's a long, hard row he's chosen to hoe. The best thing Lange's got going for him is that he's not bothered to tell anyone exactly what his delta power is. Some guess that he's a charmer, what with his incredible charisma and his wonderful way with words, but that's all just natural talent.

In fact, Lange is a phaser, which means that no jail can hold him. Well, a properly constructed jail could, but those are fairly rare.

KING OF PEACE

Lange is in regular contact with Dr. King, the nominal leader of the Pax Delta. King's duties with the Schism keep him fairly busy though, so he leaves most of the Pax's daily business to Lange, who's more than capable. A secondary benefit is that as the Pax's man on the front lines of the struggle for freedom from oppression Lange makes himself more of a target than King. Since Lange's powers are more helpful against assassins or other attacks than King's—being a charmer isn't much good against bullets—this makes good sense.

GETTING THE WORD OUT

Lange holds regular secret meetings and public rallies around the country to bring his message of peace to the people. The law usually leaves him alone, but the police are sent in to shove him down any time he draws too much attention to his cause. Of course, he always escapes, much to Delta Prime's consternation.




DELTA WARRIORS

The Delta Warriors are a band of Defiants with an aggressive bent. They believe that the only way the President is ever going to leave office is feet first, and they're willing to do

everything they can to make that happen as soon as possible. After all, the man's been in office for almost 40 years now. He doesn't look like he's going to leave on his own.

Of course, Kennedy is pretty well protected in his reinforced White House. It would probably take a tactical nuke to blast him out, and even that might not work if he manages to make it in time to the rumored bunker built far beneath the White House rose garden. And there's the little matter of that delta power dampening field he's got thrown up around the place.

Until they finally get their shot at the big man, the Warriors are content to do what they can to hassle Delta Prime and any other government operations in the most violent manner possible. This has culminated in a campaign of threats backed up by robberies, bombings, and assassinations. The theory is that if the Warriors can

make it so that people are

truly afraid to stand up for their government, then they won't be getting in the way when the current administration's final days arrive. So far, it doesn't seem to be working. Delta Prime counters the Warriors as best they can, but even so, some attacks do get through. This actually plays into Kennedy's hands, since he wants the people as scared as they can be so they don't question a government

that claims to protect them.

Malachai Winter, the Warriors' leader, rules over his soldiers with an iron fist. He demands 110% from his people every day, and he brooks no insolence. He's been known to shoot people for looking at him cross-eyed on a bad day.

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ADVERSARIES

The heroes might encounter the Delta Warriors in one of two ways. First, they might find themselves wrapped up in some kind of terrorist attack. Either they learn about it ahead of time and have to figure out how to foil it, or they discover it while it's in progress and must take direct action to bring the Warriors down.

Alternatively, heroes that make a name for themselves as hard-nosed, take-no-prisoners Defiants may find themselves being recruited by the Warriors. It's up to the heroes to figure out what they want to do about that. Those that refuse to join are left alone by the Warriors, but they can count on being looked down upon as a coward anytime they encounter the Warriors in the future.

If a hero actually joins the Warriors, it's up to you as the Guide to force her to face up to the kinds of atrocities the Warriors commit on a regular basis. This isn't some happy society of heroic fellows fighting for some noble ideal. These are grim men and women who have decided that they're willing to kill innocents along with the guilty to make a point.

Heroes that can stomach this work are few and far between. You need to be careful here, because this is a complex issue. Present it wisely and encourage the heroes to wrestle with the issues in the game, and hope that they make a decision that they can live with.

PROFILE (MALACHAI WINTER)

Smarts: 3d6

Area knowledge: Crescent City 3, artillery 4, demolition 4, disguise 3, language: English 2, language: Spanish 1, medicine 1, navigation 3, profession: soldier 5, security 3, survival: city 3, survival desert 3, survival: forest 2, survival: mountain 2, tactics 5, weaponsmith 1

Speed: 4d6

Acrobatics 2, dodging 4, driving: escaping 2, lockpicking: mechanical 2, personal vehicle 5, piloting: airplane 3, piloting: helicopter 1, quick draw 3, shooting 7, speed-load 4, stealth 3 Spirit: 5d6

Bravery 8, leadership 6, perception 5, persuasion: bluff 3, persuasion: interrogation 3, persuasion: intimidation 5, scrounging 2, scrutinize 4, search 4, shadowing 3, streetwise 3

Strength: 5d6

Climbing 4, fighting: barehanded 5, fighting: blade 4, fighting: blade 4, swimming 3, throwing 3

Size: 6

Pace: 9

Delta Points: 4

Quirks: Authority +5, arrogant -3, bloodthirsty -2, brave +1, brawny +3, delta ±0, destined for greatness +5, duty -5: the Delta Warriors, enemy +5: the US government, famous +2, iron jaw, +3,
light sleeper +1, loyal -3, lucky +3, mean -2, public identity ±0, self-confident +2, self-righteous -2, skeptical -1, tough +2, unregistered ±0, vengeful -2, voice: hard +1, wanted +5

Powers:

Armor: 20/-.

Fast Healer: Winter can make a healing roll every eight hours.

Tricks: Bull's eye, catch attack, extra damage, first move, make an impression, no fear, pumped up

Gear: Twin Colt 2000s with four clips of AP 10 ammo, a Colt M16A2 with three magazines of AP 10 ammo, a set of brass knuckles, a hunting knife, nightvision goggles, binoculars, five hand grenades, and really whatever kind of weaponry he needs, as long as he's got some time to prepare. He's normally chauffeured about in a black Lincoln Town Car, but when on R&R, he prefers to tool around in his vintage Harley-Davidson.





PAX DELTA

The Pax Delta is a branch of the Defiance that is devoted to resolving the issues facing America in general, and deltas in particular, through nonviolent resistance. "Pax" is Latin for "peace," while "delta" is a Greek letter that doubles as the scientific symbol for "change." According to Reverend Darien Lange, this means that the name "Pax Delta" stands for peaceful change, and it's to that end that he's dedicated his life and the resources of the organization he leads.

The Pax is one of the more vocal parts of the Defiance, and there's usually least one Pax rally somewhere in America each month. These are most often held in conjunction with larger rallies led by secular and religious leaders in their respective communities. Working as a smaller part of a larger crowd, the

members of the Pax are more difficult to pick out than they would be if they were demonstrating alone. The official government response to these kinds of rallies is to ignore them. The general feeling is that if the rallies were to generate an official response,

> they'd get more attention for themselves than the government would like.

Unfortunately, not all Pax/ antigovernment rallies are peaceful affairs. The well-

behaved marchers are often met by a mob of counterprotesters. This unruly pack of government boosters hurls curses, taunts, and sometimes more substantial things like rocks at the protesters, calling them both cowards and traitors.

The Pax marchers take all of this in stride, sometimes quietly using their powers to protect innocents. Their creed of nonviolence prevents them from actually responding to the threats and assaults, but every now and then someone crosses a line, and even the good people

of the Pax can snap. When this happens, minor skirmishes can suddenly erupt into major battles.





ADVERSARIES

Police officers in riot gear often show up to these rallies, supposedly to keep the peace by getting between the marchers and countermarchers. However, once the rocks and bottles and energy blasts start flying, the cops usually side with the counterprotesting "patriots," and a lot of protesters end up either bruised, in jail, or both.

On some rare occasions, the fights get ugly and someone gets seriously hurt or killed. Sometimes the National Guard is even called in, but since these soldiers are trained to kill, not quell, these encounters almost always end with fatalities among the scattering protesters.

The Delta Warriors use these incidents as excuses to launch reprisals against the communities in which they occur, which only causes the Pax more grief. In turn, this usually brings the attention of Delta Prime to the area. After that, tensions quickly escalate, and the entire place soon looks like a warzone.

Reverend Lange has considered suspending the rallies from time to time, but he refuses to crack under the pressure to do so. He hates the violence that sometimes erupts around his supposedly peaceful marches, but he realizes that if he and his people simply remain silent, nothing is ever going to change. If some members of the Pax have to martyr themselves for the cause, that's a price they're aware of and one that they're seemingly willing to pay.

The heroes may join with the Pax individually or as a group, but they must take a pledge of nonviolence to do so. When they do, they take on the *pacifist* –5 quirk, but they get no points for it unless they happen to join the Pax during hero creation. And they must stick to the pledge or leave the Pax. Heroes who aren't part of the Pax might run into Pax representatives from time to time. Most Pax deltas aren't terribly evangelical in their deeply held beliefs. They'd rather lead by example than try to cram their doctrine down someone else's throat. There are always exceptions to each rule, of course, and it's these people that give the Pax its occasional reputation for being composed of a bunch of zealots.

PROFILE (REVEREND LANGE)

Smarts: 5d6

Area knowledge: Alabama 4, academia: history 4, bureaucratics 4, etiquette 3, language: English 4, language: Spanish 2, profession: clergy 6, tactics

Speed: 2d6

Dodging 2, driving: personal vehicle 2, escaping 3, stealth 3

Spirit: 5d6

Arts: writing 4, bravery 7, faith 8, leadership 5, perception 4, performing: public speaking 6, persuasion: charm 5, scrutinize 3, search 2, streetwise 2

Strength: 2d6

Climbing 2, running 2, sport: baseball 2, swimming 2

Size: 5

- Pace: 7
- **Delta Points:** 4

Quirks: Authority +4, cautious –3, code of honor –3, contact +5: Dr. King, delta ±0, duty –5: Pax Delta, honest –3, loyal –3, lucky +3, ordained +1, pacifist –5, photographic memory +5, secret identity ±0, self-confident +2, stubborn –2, unregistered ±0, voice: soft +1, wise +3

Powers:

- **Phasing:** Reverend Lange can make his body insubstantial.
- Tricks: Brilliant idea, know the streets, new friend, phase friend
- Gear: A Bible, a black Cadillac de Ville, and \$500.





TEAM FREEDOM

Team Freedom started out as Isla Delta's rescue and recruit team for endangered deltas, but over the years it's grown into a fullfledged intelligence and counterintelligence agency based on the tiny Costa Rican island. Few countries in the world can claim to have such a powerful organization at their disposal. The only exceptions that leap to mind are the Soviet Union, China, Israel, and the United States.

Team Freedom's primary mission is still recruiting deltas to defect to Isla Delta, and they've been pretty effective at this. However, more and more of their resources are now spent infiltrating governments across the globe, especially that of the United States. As a nascent nation, it needs to know as much about any potential enemies and allies as it can or suffer the potential disastrous consequences.

To this end, Salvador has split Team Freedom up into two distinct divisions. Team Freedom White is the public arm of the team, the one that people see splashed across the

front pages of papers like the *Crescent City Times.* These heroes each wear

stylish clothing and appear maskless, proud of their delta status. They're the

poster kids of Isla Delta. Of course, this makes it harder for them to hide if they're working in a country other than Costa Rica, but they figure the public relations bonus of having deltas who look and dress like successful,

normal people is well worth any risks it might involve. Salvador, of course, is the highly visible head of the White team and its most popular spokesperson.

Then there's Team Freedom Black, the covert operatives who handle all the undercover or "black" operations for Isla Delta. Even the existence of this team is a tightly held secret. It's one of those "I'd tell you, but then I'd have to kill you" kind of things. Only Salvador himself is permitted to make exceptions to this rule, and these are few and far between.

Members of the Black team wear all-black uniforms when on the job, and they all wear masks or disguises of some kind or another to keep their identities a complete secret. They take great care to make sure that

while they're on the job they have nothing on their persons that could





ADVERSARIES

possibly link them to their real lives. The work the Black team does isn't always pretty, and they want to make sure that responsibility for it doesn't get traced back to Isla Delta for fear of starting an international incident.

The phrase Salvador hammers into his teammates is "plausible deniability." To that end, Team Freedom Black has actually come up with an alternate identity of its own: Ninja Force. They were dubbed this by a reporter who stumbled across their path during an operation in Crescent City. Apparently the team's all-black outfits made an impression on her. Team Freedom Black enjoys the misnomer, since it throws people even further off their trail if the people associate the team with the Japanese rather than the Isla Deltas.

Because a death or capture means risking exposing the link between the two teams, no member of the White team can ever work for the Black team. People have made the leap the other way though. Salvador himself began his career with Team Freedom as a member of the Black team. He quickly rose to lead that force before taking up a career in politics, which forced him to change over to the White team. He's currently the nominal leader of both teams, but his involvement with the Black team is usually only as a consultant.

The current leader of the Black team is a hard-nosed woman named Sandra Jannsen. Sandra was born in the US, but she fled the country soon after gaining her delta powers in a train accident. She's a tough boss, unwilling to accept failure from any member of her team. It's an attitude that has done well for her and made Team Freedom Black one of the best covert ops teams in the world.

PROFILE (RICKY SALVADOR)

Smarts: 5d6

Area knowledge: Costa Rica 3, area knowledge: Isla Delta 5, bureaucratics 4, computing 2, criminology 3, demolition 3, disguise 4, etiquette 3, gambling 4, language: English 3, language: Spanish 4, navigation 5, profession: politics, security 3, tactics 5

Speed: 3d6

Boating: speedboat 3, dodging 5, driving: personal vehicle 4, piloting: helicopter 3, quick draw 3, sleight of hand 4, shooting 5, speed-load 2, stealth 5

Spirit: 5d6

Arts: music composition 2, bravery 5, leadership 7, perception 5, performing: public speaking 4, performing: singing 2, performing: storytelling 2, persuasion: bluff 4, persuasion: charm 6, persuasion: seduction 4, scrutinize 5, search 3, streetwise 3

Strength: 3d6

Climbing 4, fighting: barehanded 5, running 2, swimming 5, throwing 2

Size: 5

Pace: 8

Delta Points: 4

- Quirks: Alert +3, authority +4, beautiful +1, brave +1, code of honor –3, delta ±0, destined for greatness +5, duty –5: Isla Delta, famous +2: in real identity, heroic –5, light sleeper +1, lucky +3, lusty –1, secret identity ±0, self-confident +2, sense of time +1, skeptical –1, tough +2, unregistered ±0, wanted –5
- **Powers:**
 - **Teleportation:** For each success on an Easy (5) *navigation* roll, Salvador can teleport up to 10 inches away.
- **Tricks:** Brilliant idea, bull's eye, fast learner, first move, make an impression, new friend, teleport friend, teleport foe
- **Gear:** A Colt 2000 with three clips of AP 10 ammo, a Kevlar vest, a cell phone, good false ID papers, and \$1,000.







WELCOME

If you've been given the link and password to this secret section of the *Delta Times* website, then you're a trusted friend of the Defiance.

If you're not—if you're a member of Delta Prime, for instance, or just some rogue hacker—you're in for the surprise of your life.

Either way, let me state that what you're about to learn is the kind of secret you should be so lucky as to carry with you to your grave. And if you go about revealing it to others without authorization, you're likely to find yourself heading off to that final reward a lot earlier than you were probably planning to.

YOUR LIPS ARE SEALED

In case you're too dense to know any better, that's a threat, sunshine. Please don't make me execute it—or you, for that matter.

That's no idle threat, and to be fair, I won't even have to be the one carrying it out. No, the Defiance has a very unusual partner in this case, a group that has a strong, vested interest in making sure that no one outside of a small group of people ever learns what I'm about to reveal to you.

I'm talking about the federal government.

That's right, pal: the feds. And I'm not just talking about those punks in the FBI, CIA, ATF, etc. I'm talking Delta Prime all the way.

Believe me, this is one can of worms you really, painfully don't want to open.

Now that I've made that clear, let's move on to the big announcement. Hold onto your hat, friend. This one's a doozy.

THE SECRET REVEALED

There's no better way to say this than to just come out with it and spill it:

Patriot's not dead.

Yeah, I know, I know. Of course, he's dead. All the papers said he was dead. There was footage of his funeral on TV. Heck, there was even a picture of a man in Patriot's mask being shot that was splashed everywhere you looked.

Even the *Delta Times*—well, me actually—told you he was dead. So, he's dead, right? Not on your life.

LIES, MORE LIES, AND DAMNED LIES

Haven't you been paying attention to anything I've said? Everyone's got their own agenda in this world, and a lot of people—including the federal government, heck *especially* the federal government—are willing to kill for it.

Did you honestly think they wouldn't lie to you as well?

The fact is that Patriot managed to escape New Alcatraz on the night of his execution. If news of this were to get out, it would prove a major embarrassment to the feds. Heads would roll.

Now, the Defiance is all for bringing open shame to the government, but we thought about it for a minute. Patriot's more effective now as a martyr than he ever was in life—and that's saying something. So we've decided to go along with the deception for now.

Let people think Patriot's dead. Let them rally around his grave. Let them wear his mask. We can always embarrass the government later.

Anyhow, I'll let the man himself tell you all about it in his own words, a voice from beyond the grave.

http://patriot_forever/page115



IT'S GOOD TO BE ALIVE

Reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated.

Man, have I always wanted to say that.

Yes, it's really me. John Cruise. Patriot. I'm back.

Actually, I never went away. Well, I was locked up for a while, but that's hardly the same as shuffling straight off this mortal coil and back.

Hey, let me tell you a story.

IT'S REALLY ME

First, I suppose I need to reassure you that it's really me writing this. After all, if the fact that everyone who could know better has been lying about my death hasn't made you a bit more skeptical about who you listen to, I don't know what will.

On the other hand, there's really no way for me to prove that it's actually Patriot writing this little note from the underground. I can only point out that there's little reason for me to lie about it, and even less reason for Truth to post it on *Delta Times*. As she pointed out, the image of Patriot as a martyr has been much more effective than that of Patriot the hero, the prisoner, or even the man behind the mask.

Also, if I was just some idiot posing as Patriot, chances are I'd be risking my neck just to have the Primers come down on me for spreading lies. As it is, I'm not too worried about that. They're hunting for me like mad anyhow, and writing an message like this isn't going to make them look any harder than they already are.

At the end of the day, though, you're just going to have to trust me. I know that's a lot to ask given the circumstances, but where's the harm?

WHAT HAPPENED

I'm not going to rehash my capture and my trial and the waiting for my execution. I've written about that at length before, and Truth should still have it posted around here somewhere if you haven't read it yet. [See *Ravaged Planet* for all the details.]

Actually, none of the stuff I wrote about there is true. I mean, I obviously couldn't write about my own execution, right?

That was Truth's job, so in the end, I haven't lied to you once. It's been Truth the whole time. Believe it or not, it's her duty to do the best she can to help the Defiance, and at times like that, journalistic principles go right out the window.

I can hardly blame her. I'd have done the same thing myself in a heartbeat, except I was busy running from the law.

Actually, most of what Truth wrote was the God's-honest truth. Right up until the end anyhow.

Let me frame this for you. There I am standing against a wall in the execution yard there in New Alcatraz. It's night, but the floodlights make the whole procedure seem like some kind of stage performance, a twisted Broadway play in which the star is to pay the ultimate price.

There's a select group of people assembled in the yard to watch me die. Most of them are sitting in a few hastily assembled rows of chairs off to one side.

I recognize many of them. They're people in the government and big business who I've ticked off over the years. It's a small sampling of a long list. Some of them have traveled pretty far to witness what they think will be my final act of defiance.





Some of my former associates in Delta Prime are even in the audience, fidgeting self-consciously under the effects of the power-dampening field. On this island, they're as normal as anyone else, and it makes them more than a little nervous. Still, their hatred for me has brought them out here so they can witness this event, so they can see me die with their own eyes.

I'm not thinking I'll be disappointing them.

The warden glances anxiously at his watch. It's time.

The two guards who have escorted me from my death-row cell line me up against the wall and then take their places several paces away. They inspect their guns once more, nervous about this themselves.

After all, it's not every day you have to kill an enemy of the state.

The warden clears his throat before giving a rehearsed speech about my crimes, asking me if I'd like to unburden my soul with any lastminute confessions. I decline. He offers me a chance to say some final words, and I accept.

When I'm done, I realize that I'm not exactly preaching to the choir. The observers stare at me with ice-cold hatred in their hearts. At this point, my only hope is that someone manages to get my words to the outside world where they might do some good.

At my request, a guard steps forward to tie my mask on me. Then, under the warden's instructions, he rejoins the guard holding the guns, and they level their weapons at me.

The warden shouts out, "Ready. Aim. Fire!"

That's when all hell breaks loose.



THE GREAT ESCAPE

I'll admit it. I closed my eyes. Hell, it was all I could do to not fall to my knees at that point. This was it. The end was finally here.

But that shoe never dropped.

It seemed like I stood there forever, waiting for the bullets to slam into me. Finally, I heard the warden shouting, "Aren't you men listening? I said, *fire*!"

I opened my eyes to see the guards weren't pointing their guns at me anymore. One was covering the crowd, while the other had his rifle leveled directly at the warden's head. "Are you sure you want me to do that?" he said coldly.

The warden's jaw dropped like a brick. "What's the meaning of this?" he demanded. He didn't care much for the answer.

The guard who'd been covering the crowd ran over to me while his friend swept his gun wide, daring anyone to make a move. "It's about the fight for freedom everywhere," he said as he undid my shackles. "It's about the Defiance, mister, and don't you forget it!"

Once I was free, I looked up and grinned at the crowd under my mask. I was heady with relief, and I couldn't resist making one parting crack. "Just like I always told you, warden. Ever Defiant."

With that, we dashed off out of the floodlights at top speed, heading straight for the yard's wall. Three ropes suddenly snaked down out of the darkness, and we grabbed them. Something on the other end started hauling, and we were dragged right to the top of the wall.



http://patriot_forever/page118

www.deltatimes.com/dle.gov/us.com

As we topped the wall and started our descent down the other side, the shock that had apparently paralyzed the crowd was shattered by the realization that we were leaving—that I might actually be escaping from the tightest prison in the world.

"Guards! Guards!" the warden shouted. "After them!" Then I heard him screaming at the crowd. "All of you, you saw nothing, you hear me? *Nothing!* Patriot is dead! You hear me? *Dead!*"

It was about then that the guards in the towers opened fire, apparently finally having been notified that the "guards" by my side were imposters and therefore eligible targets. Automatic fire stitched the ground at our heels as we raced across the open ground toward the dark waters of Chicago Bay.

When we reached the shore, my rescuers didn't miss a beat. They dove straight into the black waters and were gone. I hesitated for a moment and found myself caught in a spotlight like a deer in the headlights of an oncoming car.

The rattle of gunfire and bullets whizzing by me shocked me out of my confusion. I looked out at the distant skyline of Crescent City beckoning me from across the waves, and I knew I couldn't possibly swim all the way to that shore. Still, it seemed like a better choice than standing up to a barrage of bullets, so I grabbed a deep breath and jumped in.

The waters of the bay are always icy, even in the dead of summer, and that August night was no exception. The cold hit me like a wall, nearly forcing the air from my lungs.

I dove deep, struggling to get farther and farther from the bullets that were lancing through the now-spotlit waters

around me. I glanced around, hoping to find some sign of the rescuers who had apparently abandoned me at the shore in some cruel prank. Even with the bright light filtering down behind me, the waters were too murky for me to see more an a few feet beyond my face.

Then a woman swam up to me from the distant depths, and in her arms, she carried a SCUBA rig. My lungs burning, I grabbed for the mouthpiece as she handed it to me and dragged me further down toward the bottom of the bay. I stuffed it into my mouth and savored the bottled air filling my lungs as I followed her away from the light and into the safety of the dark waters of the bay.

I swam on behind the woman for a minute before she became frustrated with how slow I was swimming. Now, I'm in good shape and an excellent swimmer by anyone's standards, but she was literally swimming rings around me. With a shake of her head, she suddenly whirled around behind me, grabbed me under my shoulders, and began hauling me along at an inhuman pace.

What could I do? I relaxed and enjoyed the ride.

We stopped twice for the woman to rest. As we floated there beneath the waves—it was too dark for me to see beyond the mask I realized was still on my face—the reality of what had happened finally struck home.

For months, I had known I was a dead man. Once Delta Prime had captured me, it was only a matter of time. Hell, I was surprised I hadn't been killed while resisting arrest.

But now I was free. Sure, I was freezing my butt off in the bay, but I was alive and free, and I promised myself I'd make the most of it.





HOME, SWEET HOME

When we finally reached the shore, my two rescuers were there waiting for me, along with a few friends. As I hauled myself up out of the waters and onto a deserted pier in the heart of the city's waterfront district, I looked up at the people I owed my life to.

The two "guards" stood there grinning like Cheshire cats, as proud of themselves as any Defiant had ever been. They'd struck a real blow against the government, one that was going to sting for a long time. I reached out to shake their hands, but it seemed so inadequate that I gathered them both in a bear hug. We all laughed until tears streamed down our cheeks.

Then I turned to thank the woman who'd hauled me along so far though those dark waters. When I finally saw her in the light, I realized she was beautiful, but in an exotic, almost unattainable way. Her long, blond hair dripped down her ivory shoulders, framing her heart-shaped face, in which two all-ebony eyes were set.

For a moment, I thought it was a trick of the light, but when I took the lady's hand, I knew. Her fingers were long and webbed. Surprised, I glanced down her swimsuited form and saw that her bare feet were webbed too.

I turned to shoot an amazed glance at my other rescuers, and I saw the two "guards" standing with two other people, a man and another woman. Their eyes were entirely dark too, like those of a shark. You might think that those kind of eyes would look cold and distant, but set into those grinning faces, they were as warm as a roaring fire.



I turned back to the woman who had saved my life, and I saw a gleam of fear in her perfectly black eyes. Would I turn away in fear or disgust as so many people had probably done to her before?

Hardly.

I swept her up in my arms, and as she tilted her head back to bask in the look in my eyes, I planted a tender kiss fully on her lips. Then I held her close for a moment and gently put her down.

"Thank you," I said hoarsely. My voice raw with emotion.

"Anytime," she laughed, and it was like the happy ringing of a ship's brass bell as it returns to its home port. Her companions called to her as she smiled up at me. "It's time to go," they said. "The Primers are sure to be looking for us all."

She turned to leave, and she watched as her friends dove back into the waters of the bay. Before she could follow them, I called after her. "What's your name?" I asked as she looked back at me over her shoulder.

"Lorelei," she said with a tone that told me I'd someday see her again. With that, she blew me a soft kiss, then turned and dove beneath the waves.

While I was still watching after her, my two executioners/rescuers came up behind me and tapped me on the shoulder.

"We've got to get out of here," said the taller one. "They're right. If we don't go to ground right away, we're doomed."

"Besides," said the other one, "we've got someone who's been waiting to see you again for a long time."

That brought a smile to my lips. "And who might that be?" I asked, already knowing the answer. "Never mind," I said. "I'm looking forward to seeing Truth too."

FREE AT LAST

Right away, Truth knew just how she wanted to handle the news of my escape. "We're going to bury it," she told me.

At first, I wasn't sure why. I was looking forward to publicly tweaking Kennedy's nose with the fact I was still alive, but Truth was adamant about it.

"You're worth more to us dead than alive," she said.

"Then why'd you bother saving me?" I asked, a little insulted.

"You know me, John," she said. "I'm the kind of woman who likes to have her cake and eat it too."

SO WHY AM I TELLING YOU THIS?

Actually, I'm not. Truth's the one who controls access to this document, not me. If she's decided to let you see it, then I presume she's got reasons of her own.

Maybe you've got a specific need to know what really happened for a mission Truth's sending you on. Or maybe you've become important enough to the Defiance for her to want to make sure you've got all the details you need to make the kinds of decisions you have to make. Or maybe she's just got reasons of her own.

In any case, I hope my story can prove an inspiration to you. It just goes to show that the Defiance is not as powerless against the government as the President would like you to think. If we can break someone out of the most famous prison of all time, then there's really nothing we can't do.

That's what the government doesn't want you to know. That there is hope. That we can win. That someday we will prevail.

Ever Defiant.

http://patriot_forever/page121





THE AUTHOR'S Afterword

Hey, it's great to see you back again. Defiants is the first real supplement to Brave New World—Ravaged Planet and Power Shield are essential enough to the game that they don't count in that sense—so this is when we really start digging into the meat of the matter at hand. No more books that are mostly rules. Nope, this is all about figuring out what's happening in Brave New World and how your hero fits in.

By this point, the idly curious readers are gone, and we should be left with some serious players. It's good to have you along for the ride.

ERRATA

That's the one-word label for saying, "I screwed up." Hey, we all make mistakes, and at least I'm owning up to mine. Actually, I caught some of these mistakes before they went to press, but they mysteriously managed to get into print uncorrected anyhow.

Anyhow, here are the corrections to those errors.

THANKS

First, I'd like to thank Allan Seyberth for maintaining the accumulated rulings listing for *Brave New World* on the web. It's an invaluable resource to help me recall all the different rulings I make on the listserv. You should be able to find this gem of a document at http://www.sonic.net/~dkjedi/ deadlands/.

THE BRAVE NEW WEB

We also do our best to put our accumulated errata up on our website for free. See the front of the book for the address, and be sure to stop on by regularly. Besides the solutions to our mistakes, you'll find free information about different things to add to your game. There's even an electronic version of the *Brave New World* hero sheet for you to download and print out if you've got a computer and want something a bit crisper than the photocopier is going to be able to provide you.





THE YANKEE'S MANY LIVES

Well, not exactly. On page 21 of *Brave New World*, it tells how everyone involved in that revolt in the Nazi death camp was killed—everyone but Sparky/Superior, that is. But in *Ravaged Planet*, Patriot talks about how the Yankee disappeared along with Chicago in '76. There was obviously a glitch here.

The fact is that the Yankee and two other (as yet unnamed) deltas also survived the counterattack by Kapitan Krieg. When Sparky transformed into Superior, he rescued the others before they could be incinerated alive in the Nazi ovens.

THE MANY FACES OF PATRIOT

On page 23 of *Brave New World*, we learn that Patriot testified before the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1953. Yet in *Ravaged Planet*, we find that Patriot didn't get his powers until 1962. This means he'd have testified in front of HUAC at age 9, long before he got his powers.

The fact is the Patriot we know and love isn't the first to have carried the name. The one who testified before HUAC was the original Patriot, John Cruise's predecessor and inspiration. How he managed to get the name and the mask for himself is a story to be told later.

A GRAVE ERROR

The illustration of Patriot's grave on page 48 of *Brave New World* lists his year of birth as 1945. The tombstone's engraver screwed up. It's actually '44. But since Patriot's not really in the grave, I think we can be forgiven on that one.

RUN, GUNNER, RUN

The gunner archetype on page 71 somehow got shorted a skill point under his *Strength*. (Actually I know how it happened. I miscalculated. Four terms of calculus, and I still can't add single digits all the time. Sheesh.) Give the man *running* 1 to make up for it.

TRICKY TRICKS

On page 82 of *Brave New World*, it says you can use a general trick (the ones in Chapter Seven) that you don't know if you get three extra successes instead of the normal single success you'd need if you knew the trick. Then on page 167, it says you can't use a trick you don't know. Page 82 is right.

Some tricks require multiple successes to use. If you don't know one of these tricks, then it takes two extra successes to pull it off.

THOSE TRICKY VETS

On page 134 of *Brave New World*, it says a *veteran* can use the extra 5 points from the quirk to buy a trick. Obviously this is wrong, since tricks cost 10 points and can't be purchased during hero creation.

SIZE DOES MATTER

On page 145 of *Brave New World*, I wrote about how *Size* affects an attacker's chance to hit. That's true, but I got the modifiers backward. The paragraph should read like this:

It's a lot easier to hit a bigger target than a smaller one. Take –1 from the Target Number for every point of *Size* the target has over 5. Or add +1 to the Target Number for every point of *Size* the target has under 5.





IT'S ONLY A FLESH WOUND

On page 164 of *Brave New World*, it states that each success a hero gets on a Challenging (10) *Strength* roll heals one wound in every hit location at once. This makes it easy to heal wounds quickly, which means it's wrong.

Instead, if the hero gets a success on the Challenging (10) *Strength* roll, he heals a single wound in each hit location at once. Any extra successes are lost.

PUMP YOU UP!

On page 169 of *Brave New World*, the *pumped up* trick allows a hero to carry extra weight. You don't normally have to roll to carry something—unless it's over your normal maximum. If it is, make an Easy (5) *Strength* roll and apply any extra successes toward using this trick. This means you have to get at least a 10 on your roll to use the trick. The first 5 points you roll counts as the first success. It's not until you reach 10 points that you've got yourself an extra success.

NO NUKES

On page 21 of *Ravaged Planet*, Patriot talks about the destruction in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Since Superior ended the war early, these cities were spared the bomb. Something else happened to them, but that's a story for another time.

HOUSTON, WE HAVE A PROBLEM

On page 24 of *Ravaged Planet*, it says that "rescue workers were swarming around San Francisco, Houston, and Atlanta." Houston actually escaped the nuclear holocaust unscathed.







<u>A COMPLAINT ANSWERED</u>

So far, about 90% of the feedback I've gotten on *Brave New World* has been positive. The biggest complaint so far has been from experienced roleplayers who don't like the way powers are handled in the game. They find the power packages too limiting for their tastes.

The idea behind the power packages was to make hero creation quick and easy. In other superhero games, balancing out hero powers has often led to character creation systems in which you need several hours and a calculator to build yourself a hero.

With the power packages, even a novice player can come up with a hero in under a half hour. An experienced player can do so in about five minutes.

Power packages also fit the world background better than any homemade hero ever could. Left to their own, many people might never have come up with packages like those for the Bargainers or the Covenant, but they're both integral parts of the setting.

But if you still want more flexibility, I say go for it. My first choice for a system that lets you create any hero you like is *Champions*. Please, check the game out, use it to build your *Brave New World* heroes, and then meet the rest of us back here so we can get down to some good, old, roleplaying fun.

Or use the system of your choice. Try GURPS, DC Universe, Providence, Fuzion, Heroes Unlimited, Blood of Heroes, Aberrant, whatever. Just keep in mind all of those guidelines on coming up with your own packages as described in Brave New World. As always, your Guide has the final word on what gets into her game. Do your best to come up with a good fit, and you'll do fine.

MORE INSPIRATIONS

At Gen Con, I had a couple of people ask my about my inspirations, and they brought up two other comic books I neglected to mention in *Ravaged Planet*.

American Flagg! by Howard Chaykin. First Comics. Marshal Law by Pat Mills and Kevin

O'Neil. Epic Comics.

Several people also mentioned the Wild Cards series of braided fiction anthologies edited by George R.R. Martin (Ace). I've heard good things about these, but I've never read them. You can bet they're on my reading list.

MANY THANKS

First, credit where it's due. I left Joshua Hoopes' name off the art credits for *Ravaged Planet*, and he belongs firmly there. Thanks, Joshua.

I'd like to thank all the people who have bought and played *Brave New World* so far—and all those to come. Extra thanks to all of those who helped us at Origins and Gen Con this summer, those diehard souls who attended the listserv dinners, and especially to the crew that helped stage the "Execution of Patriot" at Gen Con. Honestly, folks, we can't do any of this without you.

THE CAST

C. David Ross as Patriot. Jason Nichols as the Warden. Chris McGlothlin as the Priest. John Goff as Guard #1. Hawk McMahon as Guard #2. And Sandor Silverman as Distraught Man in the Crowd.



CHANGES BIG AND SMALL

Some of you may have noticed that there's been a change with this book. In some ways, it's a big change, but in others it's not much of a change at all.

Brave New World—having been born at the offices of Pinnacle Entertainment Group—has moved on and has joined the excellent family of games at Alderac Entertainment Group.

In a lot of ways, this is a big change. After all, the game has switched publishers, right? That's got to affect things.

But not as much as you might think.

While *Brave New World* has moved over to AEG, so has the person writing most or all of the *Brave New World* material: me. This means that as a fan of the game, the biggest change you're going to see is the Pinnacle logo on the books disappearing and the AEG logo taking its place. So—at least from a player's point of view—it's not that big a change after all.

The changes for me are a lot bigger, of course. I'm going to miss being with Pinnacle, a company I helped build, but this move is the best for everyone involved. Believe me, I wish Shane and the rest of the crew at Pinnacle the absolute best of luck in the future. In fact, you might even see my name on another Pinnacle product in the nottoo-distant future. Hey, they can't get rid of me that easily.

On the other hand, I'm looking forward to my new arrangement with my longtime friends at AEG. I couldn't ask for a better group of people to work with. Together, I believe we can do a lot of good for *Brave New World* and whatever else we put our minds to.

So hold on to your hats, folks. This roller coaster ride ain't over yet. In fact, it's just beginning.

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HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, TRAITOR!



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Had enough of hanging around with those whining losers on the wrong side of the law? Tune in for the next *Brave New World* installment: *Delta Prime*.

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Patriot, the legendary leader of the Defiance, is dead, executed by the fascist government he was working to bring down. People both deltas and regs—riot in the streets, and anarchy reigns across this battered country. Renegades on the run everywhere look to the one organization that started this all, the one group of people that might be able to bring it all to an end, the one last hope for restoring democracy to the United States of America: the Defiance!

But the Defiance isn't all it's cracked up to be, hardly the unified front it desperately needs to be to have a prayer to be able to stand up against the government. One faction argues for stubborn resistance, another for all-out war. A third insists on taking the high road of peace, while the last calls for a mass delta exodus to a newly founded homeland far from America's troubled shores.

If Patriot was still here, he might have been able to bring all these divisive groups together, to rally them under a single banner. But Patriot is dead and gone. Is the dream gone too?



Defiants—the latest sourcebook for Brave New World—comes packed with details on the Defiance and its various factions and their leaders, all struggling to bring their unique vision to the fore. It features six brand-new power packages to create new kinds of heroes with, plus details on the final fate of Patriot, the greatest martyr for the Defiance.

Make a stand for what's right. Ever Defiant!



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