



Shazam! #10

Krystaledragon and Mischief

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Shazam!

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Written by KrystaleDragon & Mischief

Cover by Mischief

Edited by Mark Bowers

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FAWCETT CITY MUSEUM

A few moments ago, Captain Marvel had arrived at the Fawcett City Museum followed shortly thereafter by a SWAT team, to find Black Adam standing in the center of a war zone. Before he was able to act, Black Adam, Caesar and a woman that, with the knowledge of Solomon, he figured out to be the new incarnation of the Goddess Isis, had disappeared in a cloud of red smoke. All that was left in their wake was a bunch of unconscious men wearing masks and a guy wrapped up in some plant-like growth.

Suddenly, Longshadow managed to free himself from the large plant. Captain Marvel leapt into action and flew towards Longshadow. Longshadow decreased his size and mass to avoid the Big Red Cheese's thunderous blow. Members of Fawcett City's SWAT team attempted to subdue Longshadow with tasers and shock sticks with no effect. Longshadow grabbed one SWAT member and pushed him into another. Captain Marvel quickly recovered from his missed shot at Longshadow's jaw and flew at him again. This time, the World's Mightiest Mortal connected with Longshadow's jaw with a loud crackling boom. The impact of Captain Marvel's blow sent Longshadow crashing through a wall behind the information desk.

Captain Marvel looked back at the downed SWAT members and asked, "Are you guys okay?"

"They're alright, just dazed," their captain reassured him.

The other SWAT members rushed over to where Longshadow had crashed through the wall, only to be greeted by a flash of light. The flash caught Captain Marvel's attention; he quickly flew over to where

Longshadow should be. Captain Marvel moved past the SWAT members and lifted some of the debris under which the long-haired would-be kidnapper should have been. He looked back at the SWAT members and shrugged his shoulders. "He's not here."

Moments later

Captain Marvel was speaking with Major Sheppard. "...Well at least we got a few of them in custody; the ones that Black Adam didn't kill. We got all of the surveillance footage from the museum's security and we're getting statements from the tied-up security guards." Sheppard shook his head. "Tomorrow I was going to bring my kids here after they got out of school and now I'll have to wait till the museum raises the funds to fix things up."

Captain Marvel placed his hand on Sheppard's shoulder. "Worry not, the fine citizens of Fawcett City will rally together and get this place back in order before you know it." Major Sheppard looked at Captain Marvel, who just smiled and gave him a thumbs up gesture which caused him to smile a bit and lifted his spirit. "I will be in touch with you, Major Sheppard, and I hope your night goes better."

Captain Marvel flew through the hole in the broken glass skylight as members of the Fawcett City police force watched in awe.

Fawcett City High School

It was third period at Fawcett City High School, and Billy Batson was sitting there trying to focus on Algebra and Mr. Mark Krieger, who was giving his lecture on quadratic functions and how to solve them. Billy had also noticed that Mr. Krieger kept staring at him.

"Psst, Freddy," Billy tried to get his friend's attention.

Freddy looked up from his algebra book and over at Billy. "Yeah, Billy, what's wrong?" he asked.

"Does it seem to you that Mr. Krieger keeps staring at us or, more

importantly, me?" Billy asked.

"What? I hadn't really noticed that he was. I was trying to learn what he's teaching since it is on the exam next week or did you forget that?" Freddy asked Billy.

"Mr. Freeman is there a problem that we should know about?" Mr. Krieger asked Freddy.

"Not really, sir. Billy was just asking about something he didn't understand," Freddy said and glanced at Billy.

"Well, Mr. Batson, instead of asking Mr. Freeman, why don't you try asking me since I am the teacher after all," Mr. Krieger said and the rest of the class laughed.

"Well, Mr. Krieger, I was wondering, when we are solving the quadratic formulas, if it's best to work them out first using the positive b and then a second time using a negative b ?" Billy asked.

"Very good question, Mr. Batson, I was just getting to that as a matter of fact. So to answer Mr. Batson's question, the best way to solve the quadratic equations is once you perform the completing the square and get your variables for a , b , and c then you solve the equation as a positive b and then as a negative b and that will give you your two answers for your two points," Mr. Krieger said and smiled at Billy.

Billy looked over at Freddy and sighed. "That was close," he said.

The bell rang for the period to end and all the students picked up their notebooks and books and started to leave the room. "Mr. Batson, please remain I wish to speak to you for a minute, and no, Mr. Freeman, you don't need to wait in the classroom for him either," Mr. Krieger said and nodded at one of the female students who smiled at him as she passed by his desk.

"Dude, you are so busted," Freddy said as he left the room with the rest of the class.

Billy looked up at Mr. Krieger. "Sir, is something the matter?" he asked.

“Yes, there are a few things actually. First off how did you know that we needed to solve the quadratic equation with two separate equations?” Mr. Krieger asked.

“Well, sir, my uncle told me. He told me that he hated doing them in school and he hoped that I don’t have to do too many of them,” Billy replied.

“Hmm, yes, well then what happened to you last Friday in class?” he asked. “You just got up and left the room without saying a word?”

“Oh, yes, sorry about that, sir. I really wasn’t feeling too good; I had a major head ache and felt that perhaps some fresh air would do me some good, and it did,” Billy responded.

“Alright. I will take that as an excuse since another teacher saw you and Mr. Freeman walking out of the school during class,” Mr. Krieger said. “Well, you can go, but, Mr. Batson, don’t make a habit of walking out of one of my classes again or it will be detention for you,” he said.

“Yes, sir, I will remember. Thank you, sir.” Billy said as he left the class and spotted Freddy talking with Mary and Jeremy. “Hey, guys, wait up,” he called as he ran after his friends.

Mr. Krieger stood in the doorway and watched Billy and the others for a minute and nodded his head as he made a decision.

The William Parker Memorial Field

It was the fourth quarter, and Fawcett City High’s varsity team was leading the football game 31 to the junior varsity team’s 28. The crowd was filled with students and teachers of Fawcett City High School. A lot of residents of the city always came to see this game. It was a chance for players of the junior varsity to really step up their game and show that they deserved to be on the main team: the varsity team. For the varsity players, it was a chance to show the coaches that they were still hungry enough to keep their spots.

One of the game's two biggest players was Freddy Freeman; he was playing both offense and defense for the junior varsity team as a running back and corner back. Freddy had already rushed for over 150 yards on 12 carries, averaging 12.5 yards per carry. On the defensive side, he had yet to stop the other stand-out player of the game. That player was the varsity's team star wide receiver: Senior Classman Boris Mihajlovic. Boris was having a good night with 178 yards on 10 catches, averaging about 17.8 yards per catch. His last touchdown was for 56 yards and Freddy couldn't catch him.

The game's clock had stopped due to the varsity team calling its last timeout of the game, while the junior varsity team had two timeouts left. The time clock reads 1 minute and 30 seconds. The students and adults in the stands were cheering both teams on. The varsity had possession of the ball with forty yards between them and another touchdown. Both teams lined up on the ball, with Boris and Freddy once again facing each other. Boris yelled over to Freddy, "DON'T WORRY, FRESHMEAT. ALL YOU'LL SEE IS THE BACK OF MY JERSEY."

"NOT THIS TIME," was all that Freddy said to Boris as his pupils flashed red with anger.

Boris looked over to his quarterback waiting intently for the ball to be snapped. With the snap of the ball to the quarterback's waiting hands, the dance began anew. The offensive and defensive line collided with brute force. The quarterback took a three step drop and started to quickly scan the field. Wide receivers raced off in various directions. Freddy took some back steps as Boris ran towards him. About five yards up the field, Boris cut diagonally across the field. Freddy kept up with the varsity's star wide receiver. Freddy stayed ahead of Boris and he saw the quarterback pump fakes to the tight end that was only a few yards away, before he launched the football towards Boris. The perfectly spiraled ball sailed through the sky. Boris turned as he leaped with his arms extended and reached out for the pigskin. As soon as his hands touched the ball, he felt pain in his lower back, as Freddy tackled Boris with a tremendous force that prevented him from truly having complete control of the ball. Boris's upper body was about to roll off Freddy's back as he dropped the ball, when suddenly his momentum was stopped. Freddy grabbed a hold of Boris's jersey and slammed him furiously onto the field with a loud thud. Freddy quickly got back to his feet and stood

over his rival. Freddy taunted Boris saying, "WELL YOU WERE RIGHT, BORIS...ALL I SAW WAS THE BACK OF YOUR JERSEY...ALL YOU GOT WAS THE TURF SMASHED INTO YOUR FACE!!!"

Freddy slapped Boris's helmet a few times before one referee tried to pull Freddy off of Boris. Another referee tossed a yellow penalty flag onto the field. "...Unsportsman-like conduct, number twenty. Half the distance to the goal...first down."

Freddy flipped out as his junior varsity teammates tried to get him off the field. Freddy was still yelling at the referee from the sidelines. As Freddy sat down on the bench, he quick saw the varsity team run a half-back sweep for a touchdown with the clock running down to zero. Their kicker kicked the extra point. Freddy lowered his head as he glanced at the scoreboard and saw the final score of 38-28. *What's happening to me?*

Freddy heard a disembodied voice speak to him and only him, *"You are finally letting go of your inhibitions, letting go of the things that are holding you back. And one person that is standing in your way to being on the varsity team is that Boris Mihajlovic. If he wasn't around..."*

Freddy finished, "I would be the super...star player."

The disembodied voice let out a sinister laugh that only the Wizard Shazam could hear as he watched Freddy through a mist of smoke floating in front of him.

Billy, Mary and Jeremy were standing in the bleachers puzzled and amazed over Freddy's action on the field. They could see on the field that both teams were shaking hands after the game. The three of them started to leave the bleachers and make their way to the field. Out of the corner of Jeremy's eyes, he saw Boris holding his ribs with his left hand. He offered his right hand to Freddy. As the three of them got closer to Freddy, he shook Boris's hand and without warning sucker punched Boris in the face. Jeremy and Freddy rushed towards Freddy. Players from the varsity team saw what Freddy did and ran frantically towards Freddy. Jeremy and the coaches tried to stop the other players from pouncing on Freddy. Billy got to Freddy and held him back from hitting Boris again. Billy yelled to Freddy, "FREDDY, WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING?"

The coach of the junior varsity team turned to Freddy. "GET HIM OFF THE FIELD. YOU, MR. FREEMAN, ARE OFF THIS TEAM. THERE IS NO PLACE FOR THAT TYPE OF CONDUCT ON THIS FIELD!!!"

Jeremy helped Boris up to his feet. "Easy there, big guy, calm down. If you want to get kicked off the team too and get your butt whipped just say the word and I'll let go of you."

Freddy tried to break loose of Billy's hold, at one point actually lifting his best friend Billy off the ground with ease. Then suddenly his eyes caught a glimpse of Mary and his eyes focused solely on her fearful and concerned face. Freddy was washed over with a calming feeling as his hold on Billy loosened. Billy was able to move Freddy towards the locker room.

Jeremy walked away from the jocks with a couple more little shoves. He walked toward Mary, who he saw was visibly shaken at seeing Freddy conduct off the field. "It's okay, Mary, I think that the game got away from Freddy, that's all."

"It looked as though he was possessed or something."

"What the heck is going on with you, Freddy?" Billy said as he was walking with Freddy towards the locker room.

"What? I got caught up in the game, I guess."

"So that is why you slugged Boris like you're Ted Grant in a championship match."

"I don't know, okay, Billy...I just don't know at this moment, so leave me ALONE."

Freddy entered the locker room as Billy's head slumped low, a look of hurt on his face. Billy turned away with watery eyes.

Later that same day

Freddy was on his way towards Wormwood when he saw across the street a little girl sitting down on a milk crate, crying. Freddy ducked between two houses and called out his magic words "Captain Marvel". The lightning bolt came down and struck him, changing him to Kid Marvel.

He launched into the air and over the house to land on the other side of the road next to the little girl. He knelt down next to the girl. "It's alright, little miss. What is the problem?" he asked.

"My kitty. She's stuck in the tree and I can't get her down," the girl said as she pointed up into the tree, and there, near one of the highest branches, was a large cat, mostly white with black and orange spots. It was meowing rather pitifully.

"Don't worry, dear, I will get your kitty for you. What's its name?" Kid Marvel asked.

"It's Digger, sir," the girl said as Kid Marvel nodded his head and floated up to where the cat was, as slowly and as non-threateningly as he possibly could.

"It's alright, Digger, I'm here to help you. Don't worry, little one," Kid Marvel said as he put one hand on the cat's back and the other under its belly and he pulled the cat to him. "See, Digger, that wasn't so bad now, was it?" he said to the cat as he slowly floated back down to where the girl had her hands outstretched to him, eagerly waiting for her cat.

"Here you are, little girl. Now try not to let her go up into any more trees, alright?" Kid Marvel said as the girl nodded her head.

"Yes, sir. Thank you, Captain Marvel," the girl said as she ran off with Digger in her arms.

"My name's Kid Marvel," he called after the girl who was too far away now to hear him. He shook his head and took off to land in the park down the street from the group home. Once there, he called out his magic words and was transformed back into Freddy Freeman. He looked

down at his watch. "DARN IT! If I'm late again she is going to kill me," e said as he ran down the street from the park to Wormwood where Anna Roseberry was standing on the porch waiting for him.

"You, Mr. Freeman, are grounded. No going anywhere for a week. It is school then straight back here and no friends over and no going over to any friends' houses. Do you hear me?" Ms. Roseberry said to Freddy.

"Yes, Ms. Roseberry, school and straight back here, no friends either," Freddy said as he ran up the stairs to his 'room'.

Freddy's room was a small room more like a large closet or a jail cell minus the bars. It was only big enough for a small twin-sized bed with a few drawers underneath the box-spring for his clothing. There was a small desk and chair for him to do his homework. On the desk was a drawing of Taz from Looney Tunes. On the grey colored wall above the desk were a few newspaper clippings of Captain Marvel and Kid Marvel, when they defeated Black Adam. Also on the wall was a group picture of Billy, Mary, Jeremy and himself, laughing and smiling together. He also had pictures of swimsuit models and one of Spanish pop singer Sandra Lopez. The one small window in the room was rather cloudy from being so dirty on the outside that one could barely see the black wrought iron bars over the outside of the window. They were there to keep the children from escaping at night.

Freddy set his books and notebooks down on the desk and then dropped down onto his bed. "God, I hate it here. I can't wait till I turn eighteen, then I can leave and the state can't stop me," he said as he pulled his pillow over his head and lay there.

The Barrows, Fawcett City

In one of the boarded up buildings another body was found mutilated. The cops were confused over this last death as this victim was not a homeless person but the varsity star wide receiver of the Fawcett City High School's football team. And the wounds on him weren't the same. The wide receiver had multiple stab wounds to his body with the murder weapon still lodged in his chest, a dagger with a golden dragon on the handle. The initial idea by Major Sheppard was that this killing

might not be connected to the homeless murders. "Someone had a serious grudge with this kid," Major Sheppard stated to his officers as he took a sip of his coffee from a Styrofoam cup.

He waited for the CSU personnel to take all the pictures of the scene that they needed before he put on his gloves and removed the dagger from the boy's chest. Once he pulled out the dagger, he looked at the handle and hilt of the weapon. It had an intricate design; the dragon was quite well defined and each individual scale was carved out of the gold. Every detail of the dragon looked exact even down to the minute lines on the wings where the smaller wing bones should be. The eyes of the dragon looked to have real emeralds. A detective opened an evidence bag for the major as he placed the dagger into the bag and said, "This dagger isn't your run-of-the-mill murder weapon and I guess that it might cost a small fortune, so I guess tracking down its owner shouldn't be too hard." He looked at the detective, "...Then we can ask the sicko why he killed this kid?"

The next day, Fawcett City High

In the early morning during homeroom, Mary Bromfield's voice came over the speaker system throughout the school. Her voice was heavy, not even a hint of her usual cheerful enthusiasm could be heard on this day.

"Well, good morning to all Fawcett City High students. This morning it was reported and confirmed that one of our very own is no longer with us. I know that we will all miss Boris 'The Riz' Mihajlovic a great deal. He was a good person and a fine football player. His dream was to go on to play for the Metropolis Meteors, but now he will never get the chance to. He was just seventeen years old and his birthday was on June 6th and now he won't even get to see his eighteenth birthday. Let's all celebrate his passing with a moment of silence and the bell will then toll once for each of his years." Mary finished as tears started flowing from her eyes down her cheeks.

Billy looked at Freddy who shrugged his shoulders and everyone in the school stopped what they were doing as the silence fell over the mourning Fawcett City High School. After the three minute pause of silence, a bell tolled seventeen times to honor Boris Mihajlovic.

After that, the rest of the morning announcements really were just a combination of the same old same old; that students weren't allowed to smoke on school grounds and that the afternoon sports meets had been cancelled for the rest of the week. The announcement came over about the wake and funeral for Boris Mihajlovic and where they were being held. All were encouraged to attend. There was also an announcement that councilors would be available for anyone personally affected by the tragedy.

After the last announcement, the bell rang to start first period. Billy and Freddy had their first period class in their homeroom, English, so the two headed for the bathroom to talk for a quick minute about the death. And since it would be what everyone would be talking about no one would find it strange for the two of them to be talking about it.

"Did you know about this?" Billy asked Freddy.

"No, I didn't know anything about this," Freddy snapped at Billy.

Billy quickly put his hands in the air and backed away from Freddy a bit. "Calm down, Freddy. I was just asking because I hadn't heard anything about it, and I thought you might have done."

"Well, Billy, I...haven't! I went to the Barrows last night to see if I could catch those monsters in the act. I ended up getting back to Wormwood late last night, so I am not allowed to go anywhere other than school and back to the home. I'm not allowed to go even to your place for the week nor are you allowed to come to Wormwood. I feel like I'm under house arrest. 'Mother' was so ticked off. I only got to Wormwood ten minutes late yesterday," Freddy said with a hint of anger in his voice.

"I'm sorry to hear that you're 'grounded'. I'll see what I can find out for Major Sheppard," Billy said.

The two boys headed back towards their class and sat down to learn.

About halfway through second period, the phone on the wall of the classroom rang. Freddy turned to Mary and smiled. "I wonder what is going on with all of these murders lately," he said.

"And they're no longer contained to the homeless either," Jeremy said from behind Mary.

"Yeah, now someone we know was murdered. I was tutoring him in Trig and a few other classes. He was a wonderful guy, I'll miss him a great deal. He was funny and liked to joke around a lot," Mary said as Jeremy noticed that Freddy's eyes narrowed with a look of jealousy.

"You are right, he was a wonderful guy. I think I will miss him most of all," Susan added and then she stood up and ran out of the classroom crying.

"Dang, what's wrong with her?" Freddy asked.

"Dang, you are dense aren't you, Freddy? Susan was The Riz's girl. The two of them had been together for, what, three years would you say, Jeremy?" Mary asked.

"Yes, the beginning of their sophomore year. But then again, Mary, look at who we are talking to. Freddy is so blind you could dangle a piece of meat in his face and he still wouldn't realize it was there," Jeremy said and looked at Mary who playfully slapped Jeremy on the arm.

"Stop, Jeremy, that isn't nice," Mary said as she smiled weakly at Freddy, hoping that Jeremy didn't give anything away.

Freddy looked at Jeremy and then at Mary and then back to Jeremy. "Hey, I may be dense but I can see just fine," he said. "And how did our conversation go from what happened to Boris to me being blind?" Freddy asked.

"Mr. Freeman, you are wanted in the principal's office now. Take your things, you may be there a while. It seems the police wish to talk to you," Mrs. Danvers said to Freddy and she watched him as he stood up and looked down at Mary and shrugged.

Billy was shocked at how calm Freddy was as he picked up his stuff and headed out of the class. Once there, he was told to have a seat and that the principal would call him in when they were ready.

Ten minutes later, the principal appeared at the door to his office as he held the door open for the varsity running back John Daniels. Daniels walked up to Freddy and all but growled at him. "You're dead, Freeman," he said as he bumped into Freddy and headed out into the hall. Freddy stared at Daniels menacingly as he walked out of his sight.

Freddy looked back to the principal's office. "Now would be nice, Mr. Freeman. The police are very eager to speak to you," he said.

Freddy nodded and entered the office and stopped dead as he saw Major Sheppard and two uniformed men standing there with their hands over their holstered pistols.

"Please, Mr. Freeman, sit. We wish to speak to you," Major Sheppard said and he got an odd feeling that he knew Freddy Freeman but he wasn't sure from where. "Alright, Mr. Freeman, we understand that you had a fight last Friday with Boris Mihajlovic?" Sheppard asked.

"Yeah, we got into a little thing during the game that day. It's the normal varsity and junior varsity thing. We got caught up in the game," Freddy said.

"So why did you strike Boris Mihajlovic after the game on the sideline...Did he taunt you about ruining the chance the junior varsity team had to beat the varsity team? Did he gloat that the varsity team beat you, the junior varsity team?"

"What? I told you already, sir, that we got caught up in the game." Freddy hesitated for a moment and flashed the major a mean look. "And that is **it**."

"So you are saying that fight between you two was...an 'on the field' fueled thing?"

Freddy was becoming increasingly agitated at the major's questioning. "That is **what** I'm saying."

"So then where were you last night then?"

"I was at Wormwood, sir. I..." Freddy was trying to figure what to tell the major, as he couldn't tell him that as Kid Marvel he was at the Barrow looking for more of those monsters. "...I left practice yesterday and walked most of the way with Billy Batson, my best friend. Then we parted and I went to Wormwood where I live. I got there ten minutes late and as such 'Mother' grounded me. She told me that I can come to school and then straight 'home' - no going to see any of my friends and no friends over either."

"So if I go speak with your coach and to this 'Mother', she will confirm that you were at Wormwood all night long then?"

"Yes, sir. Part of my grounding is that I have to help cook, set and clean up dinner. We were doing the dishes till 9 pm last night, then I went to the dining room and sat down with the others in Wormwood and we studied till around 10 pm, then I went to my room and fell asleep," Freddy said.

"Is there any way that you could have snuck out of Wormwood, say around 10:30 pm or so?"

"No, sir. 'Mother' locks the outside doors and alarms them and only she knows the codes, and there were metal bars over the entire house's windows to prevent any of us from sneaking out or having others snuck in."

"You may return to your classes, Mr. Freeman, and don't worry, we'll be speaking with your coach and to 'Mother' at Wormwood to verify your story," Major Sheppard said as he looked up at the principal and nodded.

The principal escorted Freddy to the door and, once at the door way, he saw Billy sitting there waiting to speak to the officers.

"Billy?" Freddy said.

"No talking, Mr. Freeman. Get to your class," the principal said and Freddy looked at Billy and he headed out of the office.

The rest of the day, Freddy avoided everyone and anyone. Rumors quickly spread around that Freddy was being investigated for Boris's

death.

When the last period bell rang to let everyone out for the day, Freddy ran behind the school and called out his magic words and transformed into Kid Marvel. He quickly flew off heading for Wormwood. Freddy didn't want to run into anyone. Nor did he want to face any of Boris's grieving teammates. And he certainly couldn't face Billy or even Mary.

SECRET LABORATORY

The dark laboratory was dimly lit by the instrument panels. In the center was an empty glass tank with steel ladders on either side of it. On top of the glass tank was a digital panel that was currently blank. Suddenly, the laboratory came alive with all of the panels lighting up, along with the overhead lights. The thick steel reinforced doors that were the only access to the lab opened up. Two women with dark-colored hair entered the lab wearing lab coats and safety glasses. They were leading two heavily-armored guards who were carrying a somewhat-large muscular man. The doors closed behind them after they were completely inside the laboratory. The large muscular man's long black hair hid his bruised face. His tan costume was slightly torn from his encounter with Isis and Black Adam. One of the women climbed the ladder on the right side of the glass tank and started entering a sequence of numbers in the digital panel that was atop the tank. The other woman was working at one of the instrument panels. The top of the tank opened up as two large hooks descended from the ceiling. The armored guards attached the man that they were carrying to the hooks. As he was lifted into the glass tank, the woman on the ladder attached a breathing apparatus to the man's bruised face. The tank was filled with an unknown translucent fluid, then the top of the tank was sealed by a contraption that had wires attached to it. Each wire connected itself to the man's body.

The large doors opened again as the woman at the instrument panels handed the small man a clipboard with a data report on the man's conditions. The small man nodded his head as he thumbed through the data and looked at the man in the tank.

"Don't worry, Longshadow, we'll fix you right up...just like when you were first created...Oh curses..." The small man looked at his expensive

watch, "...I'm going to be late for my board meeting."

That night in another of the vacant buildings in the Barrow, another body was found; this one was another homeless person. There was a kitchen knife on the floor of the house covered in blood and the homeless man's hand had been cut off at the wrist and, near the knife, was what appeared to be a claw of some kind.

It appeared that someone had been attacked and another person had the knife with them and had cut off the creature's hand. As Major Sheppard and his team arrived on site, they did a sweep of the building and found a trail of blood leading out of the house and to an alley a few buildings down. There they found a man bleeding. He was babbling about a devil attacking him and that he cut its claw off before it could kill him.

Major Sheppard called for a bus to take the man to the hospital and get him fixed up. He sent one of his officers with the man to make sure that he didn't lose this man. So far he was the only lead in the investigation into all of the homeless killings.

FAWCETT CITY TOWER HEADQUARTERS OF ENVIROSYSTEMS

Some time ago, Fawcett City's sole scientific research facility, EnviroSystems, had been bought out. A new conglomerate known as S.I. Holdings had quietly acquired the company. Since that time, the facility had undergone several management and staffing changes. And today, the board of directors of the former EnviroSystems would meet for their new C.E.O. and Chairperson.

Inside the newly refurbished boardroom on the top floor of the Fawcett City Tower sat the board of directors. Many of the directors were men in their late sixties and seventies; they were all dressed in expensive tailor-made suits. All of them were having casual conversations with one another. The long oval table that they were sitting at had the logo of S.I. on it. To one side of the room was a spectacular view of Fawcett City. On the opposite side was a mahogany wood-colored wall with pictures of

the Sphinx from Egypt, Fawcett City Stadium and a portrait of Albert Einstein.

Suddenly the large doors of the boardroom swung open. Everyone was quickly silenced as a short bald man wearing gold circular-rimmed glasses and a black suit with a black tie slowly entered the room. Behind him were two young female assistants, each holding folders in their arms. Walking behind them was a tall Asian man with short spiky hair and black sunglasses. He was wearing a white oriental suit with a red Chinese dragon carefully stitched onto the suit jacket.

Some of the board members looked at their new CEO/Chairman with knowing eyes. He sat at the head of the table with a big grin as he snapped his fingers. The two young assistants started handing out the folders that they were holding. The tall Asian stood to the right and behind the seated bald man.

“These lovely ladies are handing out my restructuring agenda and scheduling for the company formerly known as EnviroSystems. Most of the restructuring to the staff and management has already been done. For the final part, before going public, the official name change of the company, I need to speak with my board.”

“Well, some may not know who you are, but most of us still remember the nefarious mad scientist **DOCTOR THADDEUS BODOG SIVANA!!!**”

“Good to be remembered and not forgotten,” the diminutive scientist said with a smile. “And thank you for introducing me to the few that were too young to know who I was...but who I am now is so much more important. See, most of you don’t really fit into my whole plan of restructuring this company. So, in the folders in front of you is a generously buyout of your stocks...” Sivana snapped his fingers as he looked at the man who had stood up and spoke to the other board members. “What is your name???”

“My name is Franklin Kenna.”

“Well, Mr. Kenna, what do you think of your buyout?”

“To be perfectly honest with you...”

“Heh, heh, heh, careful with those honest words, Mr. Kenna, they may end up hurting those lovely grandchildren of yours.”

One of Sivana’s assistants placed three pictures in front of Mr. Kenna. Mr. Kenna stared at the pictures with fear in his eyes. “What the hell is this?” Mr. Kenna said to the assistant.

“Well, Frankie, it’s very simple. The buyout is not optional and it’s the extent of my generosity. So those who have the buyout...sign it and get the hell out of my building. The rest of you, I’ll see at our labs later this afternoon. Heh, heh, heh.”

Rock of Eternity

The wizard was watching everything that was going on in Fawcett City. He wanted to do something to help his champions but he didn’t dare. He knew these were their trials and they must overcome them.

“Why are you doing this?” the wizard asked.

“Why should I not do it, old man? It is fun watching the mortals running around like chickens with their heads cut off. Besides they are only mortals after all,” a voice rang out.

“This is madness.”

“Oh, come now, old man, I am only as mad as I am sane.”

“These games that you play will come to an end. My champions will stop you.”

“Oh, come now, they don’t even have a clue. They run around that silly little town without a single idea as to who or what is going on. The second one is so dim-witted I could stand in his face and wave my hand and say, ‘It’s me doing all of it,’ and he still wouldn’t know what I was talking about. Face it, old man, your champions aren’t that bright. This time you picked some real winners,” the voice said in a very taunting

way.

“My champions may surprise you. And I warn you, leave Adam and Isis alone this time. They don’t need you messing with them.” The wizard finished his sentence as the image in the pool changed to that of Khandaq. Black Adam and Isis were floating inches off the desert ground outside the tomb of Khem Adam. With them was the young mage named Julio Caesar Rodriguez, also known as Caesar. The wizard didn’t need to listen to what was being said; he already knew. He knew what they planned to do and knew that they would accomplish their goals. Isis crouched down, holding out one of her hands to the ground. Her hand glowed like a burst of sunshine and moments later a few flowers started to rapidly grow out of the ground. Black Adam looked at the flowers that were growing and smiled. Slowly walking towards them were the people of Khandaq who were in awe of what Isis had done. Hope had finally returned to this region in the Middle East.

The wizard smiled as he watched the power of Isis already working on the devastated Khandaq. The nation that had been ravaged by war, famine, and plague, ever since the day that Black Adam was first trapped within the scarab.

“I am telling you that it will not last. She will fail and he WILL return to his old ways. Ways that he knows so well, and he will again be the most hated man in history.”

“You are wrong. He will grow and learn to control his feelings and they will make it and survive together and the peace that they bring will last long after they are gone,” the wizard said.

“No, wizard, it is you who is wrong. This matching will be rife with pain and frustration; they will know no peace this time around. The forces are already building to bring them down. You just can’t see them since you have taken a narrow view in your old age,” the voice said and started to laugh.

The seven sins also started to laugh as the voice laughed.

To Be Continued...

If you enjoyed this story, you can find more tales of your favorite DC heroes at DC2 Universe.

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From the same author on Feedbooks

Shazam! #11 (2008)

Shazam!: The Evil Within, Part 2.

The Evil Within continues in this issue. Guest appearances gallore and the return of another Fawcett City staple. Captain Marvel attends a fund raiser. Kid Marvel battles evil in the Barrows. And find out what trouble Mary and Jeremy can get themselves into.

Rogues Gallery #8 (2008)

Rogues Gallery: Black Adam, Part 1 (of 2).

Wondering where Black Adam has been??? Find out a bit more about Teth-Adam in this tie-in to the Goddess Found story currently running in Shazam!

Shazam! #7 (2008)

Shazam!: Goddess Found, Part 1: Unearthed.

A new chapter begins here and now for the champions of the Wizard Shazam. A new danger is coming to Fawcett City and something will be unearthed on the other side of the world. Join us for part one of Goddess Found.

Rogues Gallery #9 (2008)

Rogues Gallery: The Final Goodbye - Featuring Black Adam.

The second Goddess Found Tie-In. The past of the man named Teth-Adam is revealed here. More about the man that would become Black Adam. Plus some more of Adrianna and Caesar in the Tomb of Hatshepsut.

Shazam! #8 (2008)

Shazam!: Goddess Found, Part 2: Unleashed.

Captain Marvel...Black Adam...The Rematch...'Nuff Said!!! More about what Adrianna and Caesar are searching for.

Shazam! #9 (2008)

Shazam!: Goddess Found, Part 3: I... AM.

Someone in the shadows is making a move and that can't be good for Caesar and Adrianna. More is revealed about the bizarre killings of the homeless in Fawcett City. Black Adam makes

another stunning guest appearance in this final chapter of Goddess Found entitled 'I AM...'

Shazam! #12 (2008)

Shazam!: The Evil Within, Part 3.

Captain Marvel finds out more about the murders of the homeless and seeks out help. But will he be denied help or not? Freddy goes off on his own and could that be a good or a bad thing? And someone pays the man in the green robe a visit.

Shazam! #13 (2008)

Shazam!: The Evil Within, Part 4.

The Evil Within is finally revealed here. All of the pain and confusion that Freddy Freeman has been experiencing comes to a head. A transformation takes place and a secret is revealed to someone close to the Marvel family. All this and appearances by Ibis the Invincible, Black Adam, Caesar(Yes he's back) and the DC2 introduction of a young hero.

Shazam! #14 (2008)

Shazam!: The Evil Within, Part 5 (of 5).

This is it. The finale to the Evil Within. The main event is between Freddy Freeman and a group of heroes led by Captain Marvel. Do they stand a chance against the combined powers of heaven and hell? They are the last line of defense between Freddy Freeman and an innocent that he must kill.

At the same time, something is happening in the Barrows, and it doesn't look good.

Shazam! Annual #1 (2009)

Shazam! Annual: Unpredictable.

The Epilogue to the Evil Within is here finally. Several months since the last issue was published. Adrianna Thomas starts her journey to regain her powers. The future of Caesar will be revealed. Freddy Freeman's life hangs in the balance. Someone from Jim Barr's past pays him a visit as he is recovering. Connections to DC2 Nemesis are here and the beginning to the next storyline simply title Truth. The status quo will never be the same ever again.



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