

ISSUE #114 "RESSURECT MEMORY" May 19-20 stars: LVWR, REF

Late one night at the J.C. Penny dispatch for UNTIL we find the dynamic duo of REF and LVWR taking care of some voluminous paperwork when in comes tramping some representatives from WIDEAWAKE; needless to say, they don't look as if they're there to chat sociably. In fact, it becomes apparent pretty fast that they seem to be desirous of nabbing REF. The first of the many big surprises associated with this evening comes in the form of a stasis gun, but not one being toted by UNTIL agents - on the contrary, it is being used by the WIDEAWAKE personnel! AAAAAAH!!!

And to make matters worse, REF is hit by it in the fray! But what's this? One of the WIDEAWAKE thrashers is actually Surprise, Surprise!!! And she's pulling for the heroes' side! Now for all of you out there in Reader's Land that know next to nothing about LVWR's background, here's a summary of what Marple once meant to him: she was an old flame and she was presumed dead. Now, here's the twist: she's still alive (duh!) and she used to work for the secret service under multiple identities - the most recent of which involved her going undercover to gather facts about the WIDEAWAKE operation. Prepared for another shock?

Well - strap yourselves in - here it goes. (Bear in mind, this is all learned after the main fray has been resolved by our heroes.)

First off: Marple has learned that Bryan Thomas (fiancé of REF's secret identity) was betrayed by one of the department heads (Langford) along with Christine Bryce (REF's secret identity) in order to access the formula to Christine's new neural enhancer and then test it on a human guinea pig. Furthermore, she has accumulated several bits of evidence that point to Langford's strong affiliation with WIDEAWAKE - you want embezzlements, you got embezzlements; you want murders, you got murders; you want epic-scaled corruption . . . well, you get the picture.

But now, the best surprise of them all! Why was LVWR ever saved in the first place? Why did the government sink so much money into him (at Langford's order of course)? What were they after? Was the deal really with `no-strings-attached'? These are questions that have haunted LVWR for many a month and well they should have. For the biggest surprise of the night happens to be that LVWR has been (since his hospitalization) unknowingly serving as a probe for WIDEAWAKE - how so? Easy: a skull implant linked through synaptic cyber-transmitters to an audio/visual monitoring system.

That night, LVWR sees to it that the implant is surgically removed and REF also stumbles across one last terrifying surprise: WIDEAWAKE is now using her formula as a tool for their agents in combat - it was found on those involved in the raid this evening. REF is pissed off to put it mildly.

Marple requests the aid of our two heroes in putting Langford behind bars; she makes it very clear that this may involve quite the confrontation. Both agree although REF has her reservations especially after only just barely shaking off the effects of the stasis weapon with her regenerative abilities.

ISSUE #115 "THE HIGH MAN FALLS" May 20 on centerstage: LVWR
REF

Zooming off to Great Britain with Iron Man and one of the infamous quinjets, our team o' crimebusters proceeds to the private residence of Security director Langford to bring him to justice (Marple being quite confident that the evidence she possesses justifies a break-in and an immediate arrest). It seems that Langford is also pretty certain that Marple possesses adequate information for such a maneuver seeing as he is quite willing to pit the likes of a sentinel, a few agents, and two supervillains against the team in an effort to escape. In the long run, however, his actions are in vain for he is ultimately detained by the do-gooders (the supervillains, DIRK and SHKWV do manage to get away though).

ISSUE #116 "FATHER WINSTON ISN'T SAVING SOULS - HE'S TAKING THEM"
June 4-16 includes: MAL, LVWR, PRXL, REF

The trials involving Langford and his underhanded dealings begin. Marple is one of the key eyewitnesses and testifiers - soon it becomes apparent that her life is in grave danger because of this. There are plenty of people who would love to see her silenced and Langford released.

Meanwhile, back in the States, several tangential occurrences are in the works: Blake Biltmore is attempting to sell his business and move himself into more of a minor manager-like position; UNTIL has strung a series of bizarre deaths together related to the occult in California - all of them within resthomes and all of them similar in nature to what was seen years ago at the Cherian Lodge. It is with this last item of business that this adventure is most concerned.

MAL realizes that this can mean only one thing: the presence of MALEFACTOR in California and, as a result, plenty of danger.

Well, to make a long story even longer, after much deliberation and anxiety over the options to pursue - all of them seeming a bit too overwhelming for the characters involved ("this guy could kill you - I mean KILL you!")- our heroes dive into investigation mode and discover a common denominator between all of the deaths and the resthomes: one Father Winston who visits the patients out of the goodness of his heart. (Sure --- more like out of a hunger to feed on the spiritual desperation of the weak) With the help of HAVOK, our heroes choose to confront this Father and find out in the process that he is in all actuality the villain of the day: MALEFACTOR. What follows is a real edge-of-the-seat battle in which there are plenty of mind controlled puppets, bloody casualties, and disturbing images of violence. Taking the main force of it all is PRXL (5 months in recovery after a sword wound from MAL) and HAVOK (1 1/2 months). As a sidenote, REF seems somewhat attracted to the latter and, in fact, makes a point of

looking after his wounds in the middle of the melee. As a final note, MAL scores the "GOOD-PLANNING-AHEAD-AWARD-OF-THE-DAY" by taking MALEFACTOR's body to the new Dr. Strange and asking him to dispose of it or at least contain it . . . for a long, long time.

ISSUE #117 "PROTECTION" June 18 stars: LVWR, ARGUS, ATM SMR
and introducing the
origin of Col.Seta

Just by chance (so what else is new huh?), we find our 4 heroes stumbling upon one another in the Tandem UNTIL base with all sorts of different small errands in mind. ATM SMR is there to discuss what he views as the crumbling integrity of the K.O.J. and its relationship with UNTIL (plus possible funding for his new additions to the base); ARGUS is busy dropping off some reports on hero-groups he's been observing; and as for SETA and LVWR - well where else would you expect them to be!?! (For those not in the know, SETA is one of the major bits of muscle working for UNTIL - has been since its genesis in fact).

With all of these great minds together in the same neck of the woods one might think that a resolution may soon be in the making with regard to the K.O.J./UNTIL ambiguous relationship problems, but NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Not all of the team members from the K.O.J. are present and since no one person is a spokesman for the others.....

So, onto the meat of the issue. Over in England, there's a very important trial under way and a very important witness being harassed and threatened. Who more qualified to protect her than the do-gooders discussed above? Thus, less than 24 hours later, after several decoy plans have been implemented to throw inside spies off the track and insure Marple's safe transportation to the courtroom, our heroes are fighting anyway and against rather formidable odds: a task force from none other than WIDEAWAKE consisting of two sentinels, a handful of agents and the supervillains, TANTRUM and DIRK. The side of all that is holy and just (O.K. so I exaggerate....) ultimately holds their own, but not by much judging by the gigantic hack marks left in SETA's chest from TANTRUM's halberd and the last minute rush-job of ARGUS in flying the rattled Leslie Marple off to the courthouse.

All of the major characters associated with the opposition get away.

ISSUE #118 "DESPERATE MOVES" June 20-23 cast: SETA, KNGBE, LVWR, MAL

Clarence Singleton, one of the first supervillains ever to be imprisoned in Stronghold is released after earning a few points with the system for good behavior and a cooperative attitude (he was in for 10 yrs.)

WIDEAWAKE does something ridiculous - ridiculous in a deadly and desperate fashion. They capture a session of parliament and begin holding it hostage in an attempt to have Langford returned

to them. It's the usual terms - return the guy or the bureaucrats die. UNTIL, of course, is all over this and, in turn, so is SETA and LVWR. Knowing that the K.O.J. would be a powerful asset to any sort of rescue mission, they request their aid. MAL is quite antsy about this and doesn't feel too good about working under the command of a new UNTIL representative he doesn't even know (as if he'd feel good about working under one he did as well....)

Before going along with the whole scheme (with reservations) MAL makes a point of calling Col. Nick Fury and asking his opinion in the matter. Fury says he doesn't really prefer the character, but he is a good soldier (Reader's Digest version).

So it's off to London and off to rescue the hostages along with plenty of UNTIL back-up and plenty of tactical knowledge on how to get into the parliament building with at least a momentary touch of surprise. What's the outcome? Well, in stark contrast to the last conflict, there's less bloodshed and more teamwork; however, MAL does end up taking the worst part of an attack delivered by the likes of CROSSFIRE (a "3" roll on a NND atk) so all is not easy sailing in this encounter. MAL will be in recovery for 4 months with some form of permanent damage.

On a positive note, both SHKWV and DIRK are finally captured and each member of parliament is rescued relatively unharmed. Those instrumental in the operation are decorated by the King and Queen.

DOUBLE-SIZED ISSUE #119 "CATCH WIDEAWAKE FAST ASLEEP" July 20
cast: ARGUS, SETA, LVWR

At long last, the trials revolving about Langford are at an end and despite the multiple fiascoes associated with them the meanie is now behind bars and Marple is still alive and kicking. LVWR brings up the question as to whether Marple will ever want to join UNTIL; it goes unanswered as Marple goes for a long rest.

Meanwhile, off in the land of criminology, Langford's prosecution has led to the implication of several other accomplices and an equal number of leads pointing to possible locations for main WIDEAWAKE bases. None of them seem to be enough to really pinpoint one spot, though. An alternative source of info pops up in a jailed traitor who is very desirous of plea bargaining for a way out. (That traitor being Edward Thompson, ex-UNTIL agent turned cocaine smuggler for VIPER). SETA and LVWR spent some time tracking that guy and his trail of crime down a week ago - so, naturally the Col. is a bit unwilling to do business with this unbelievable and untrustworthy character.

Still, the thought of nabbing WIDEAWAKE.....

So what does Thompson have to say anyway? He says that a large WIDEAWAKE operation is presently located underneath, of all things, a military base in California - Caidren Missile Deployment Center. Sounds sorta outlandish; but still, if one was to be launching sentinels on and off

So the next logical step is to investigate and this our adventurers do posing as an inspection party to the base in

question - a very routine maneuver (with plenty of non-routine UNTIL special agents in disguise, of course). Well, they get in safe enough and begin poking about, searching for irregularities and inconsistencies and, sure enough, they find a few and come upon a definite stockade of

WIDEAWAKE equipment and personnel. Among the participants and, luckily the 'catches` as well, in the ensuing combat are CROSSFIRE and TANTRUM (plus a bunch of agents). A good question is raised by all this: were the "real" officials of this U.S. military base aware of all this?

The somewhat disconcerting reply is, "Yes" - for some of them (mostly higher-ups with deeply ingrained mutant prejudices/fears). They are hauled out along with the rest of the baddies to meet the wheels of justice.

ISSUE #120 "TOO MANY - TOO MANY" Aug. 3-6 starring: CREAT,
ARGUS, ATM SMR,
LVWR, KNGBE, and
Lenny Smails

This adventure starts out in the heart of chaos as an epic- proportioned meeting occurs in the K.O.J. base to settle many items; among them are the team's relationship with UNTIL, the probationary status of a new potential member recommended by Mr. Barrons, and who should be allowed in the base in the first place. As usual, there's plenty of argument and turmoil and, in addition, complete dismay and anger on the parts of PRXL and MAL at the presence of all these new and strange "GREENHORNS" running around the base ("greenhorns" in this case = LVWR, LENNY, ARGUS, KNGBE) Is anything actually decided here? Kind of. It is finally decided that the K.O.J. will only be "friends" with UNTIL. This basically means that the two groups will cooperate with each other whenever convenient, but won't have any major ties or obligations to worry about beyond routine and minimal information sharing. For all intensive purposes, funding from UNTIL is now cut off and, although this means no further maintenance or add-on costs will be picked up by UNTIL, the K.O.J. still has the right to use the base indefinitely (thanks to all the UNTIL related work they've put in so far and thanks to the fact that many parts of it were co-constructed by Barrons and Stark Int.). It is fitting to note here that most of the higher functions in Fineous were created by UNTIL.

In the middle of this whole mega-meeting, our defenders of the common good receive a call from their long-last pal CREAT who has been cavorting about the lands of Africa for the past few months. Unfortunately, this is no social call - it's a signal for help. Apparently, CREAT has just stumbled onto a plot to sabotage a chemical plant in S. Africa which would result in a bio-chemical disaster slaughtering millions of innocents (humans and animals alike). Those responsible: the Human Surplus League. As far as CREAT can figure, the fireworks begin tonite - with no one to pilot PRXL's ship (MAL & PRXL are both bedridden thanks to very recent and very painful wounds), that gives our band of do- gooders just enough time to make it out there by way of supersonic transport (provided by UNTIL).

The inevitable confrontation ultimately occurs at the plant that evening as the heroes tangle with the likes of ARSENAL, TREMOR, LARROQUE, and EVVINA LYNCH (one of MAL's sisters). In the end, our heroes are victorious, winding up with LARR and EVV LYN in their hands and one bio-chemical disaster averted. One interesting detail: during this encounter, EVV LYN seemed to be using an energy sword similar to that possessed by MAL (for the reader in the know, flip to issue #71 for more info on how this may have come about).

Meanwhile, just for the sake of updates, REFLEX in her alter ego, Christine Thomas, has been conducting research in California under a cooperative grant with UCLA. She has plenty of ulterior motives involved in this summer session away from home (it began in July); among them are a desire to know HAVOK a whole hell of a lot better, to get away from the same old New York scene, and to be in a place which would offer a great environment for meditation and training with Miko.

ISSUE #121 "DEADFLIGHT" Oct. 7-11 cast: PRXL, ARGUS, SETA,
ATM SMR

The US space shuttle Monitor is the focus of this episode's shenanigans - specifically, the alien creature that has just boarded it and is busy consuming its crew.

The poor lads back at NASA, however, don't know that; all they are sure of is that they've lost contact with the flight after a suspicious last message implying some sort of super- powered

involvement. So, naturally, that leads us back to UNTIL and two heroes now on assignment to investigate what in tarnation has happened up there. Those two are SETA and ARGUS and their next stop the KOJ base (in order to enlist the aid of PRXL and his ship in this mission). After a discussion of the immediate problem at hand, PRXL agrees to help out along with ATM SMR. Off they go in the solar skimmer.

Once docked with the shuttle, it doesn't take them long to figure out that something else is aboard her. That something else turns out to be a Velation - a rather nasty reptilian predator not indigenous to this system and not too scared of space travel.

Though PRXL is able to discern (from the remnants of a restraining unit) that this thing is the property of a Tribian free trader calling himself Dekar, he is unable along with the rest of the heroes to K.O. it in a face to face battle. Thus, our band of merry power-pigs makes its first priority the rescue of the Monitor's crew and the successful get-away from the doomed shuttle. They run into a few surprises, however, when they discover that the Velation can desolidify and is perfectly content re-entering the earth's atmosphere on its own.

The heroes take chase in the PRXL-mobile and, thanks to a mid-air torpedo maneuver on the part of ARGUS and ATM SMR, stun the beast into oblivion before its impact with the surface of the South Pacific. From there on in, it's just a matter of picking up the debris (unfortunately, the debris is all in one piece and still alive though unconscious for the moment).

In a surprising move by NASA which seems sort of spontaneous, our heroes are asked to salvage what they can from the Monitor and then destroy it regardless of the military payload. Hmmmmmmmmm.....

Of course, PRXL is very willing to comply with this request. The Velation is transported back to the N.Y. UNTIL central base and Dr. Strange II is called upon for some help in the matter of safely disposing of this thing.

ISSUE #122 "NIGHTSCARE" Oct. 15-17, crew: SETA, LVWR

Pat Carin, a former UNTIL agent who was institutionalized after a trauma involving the massacre of his family, returns to the organization. He appears healthy and the treatment effective. He will resume his duties in the areas of demolitions and field strategy in a period of days.

The UNTIL Tandem facility, anticipating the arrival of ANATOMI and ARC from Stronghold for questioning by European authorities in New York, goes on alert status and prepares to keep a maximum guard on these jokers. As fate has it, though, it seems some other outside force also has plans for those villainous jokers - none of them very good.

The night before the hearings with ANAT and ARC, SPELLBINDER (one of the other heroines associated with UNTIL) goes berserk and releases ANAT and ARC as though being controlled by some mysterious being or beings. The fray that occurs as a result involves plenty of blood-spilling and also the ambiguous "escape" of ANAT who, thanks to a focus-shattering maneuver by LVWR, disappears in a less than normal way, leaving one to wonder if he ever made it to his final destination intact or otherwise.

In the aftermath of this mess, a message is found printed on one of the computer screens in the detention center. It reads, "Nightscare sees you; Nightscare controls you; Nightscare will insure you don't rest."

SPELLBINDER appears to break out of whatever was holding her and is quite disturbed about what happened. Quite disturbed. Investigating taped records of the event, SETA discovers she was taking her sleep shift when she became "controlled".

ISSUE #123 "HIDE AND GO SEEK PARADIGM" Oct. 22, crew: THRSOLD,
ATM SMR, SETA, LVWR, ARGUS

After near 10 months free from the dimensional menace known as PARADIGM, ATM SMR is once again confronted by his presence in the form of a hologram when the creature sees fit call up the K.O.J. base and make his presence known. He says he has Alan Martin and, unless ATM

SMR cares to join him in a subterranean locale underneath some of the sewer systems in New York, Alan's life will be put to a swift end. He tells ATM SMR to come alone.

Naturally, that is the one thing ATM SMR chooses not to do. Enlisting the aid of SETA, LVWR, ARGUS, and the recently returned THRSILD (now there's a blast from the past - see ISSUE #57 for more interesting details on this lad), ATM SMR plans to meet PARADIGM on his own turf and prepare for the worst; behind this crew of mega-do-gooders is a team of UNTIL agents to boot. As things work out, our heroes end up finally coming face to face with this monster while leaving the agent team behind above-ground. They find that PARADM is in need of the original energy that powered Darrow's "TIME" machine in order to return to his world; that energy, of course, is only to be found in the radioactive fields generated by ATM SMR. Although almost ready at first to give the beast what he wants just to get him off the earth (provided that Martin is released unharmed), our heroes soon change their tune when they realize that PARAD is planning to take back with him over 30 human "specimens" (mostly consisting of street people or derelicts) for genetic experimentation and study. As he explains it, he is desperately trying to solve a problem that has been haunting his world for years: the lack of individuality in his species due to absolute genetic conformity and the absence of privacy due to a communal mind telepathic link.

The heroes refuse to accept his terms because of the aforementioned "specimen" clause and so engage in battle. However, their melee is plagued by the elaborate use of mental illusions on PARAD's part and thus, on many occasions, what you see is not what you get. The results of this trickery are far-reaching - heroes attack each other by mistake, fuel up PARAD's generator while believing it to be him, go berserk for no apparent reason, etc. It's a big mess.

Ultimately, the battle comes down to frantic, last minute attempt by SETA and THRSILD to stop PARAD from engaging his modified version of Darrow's machine and returning to his own reality. They do succeed in disabling the machine (evoking quite the furious reaction in PARAD), but fail in keeping PARAD at bay as he escapes with plenty of this files and the unconscious body of ATM SMR as he desolidifies through the room's floor. One hope is left, however: prior to entering the complex, ATM SMR was outfitted with a radio transmitter beacon - if one could only tune into it and get a fix on the hero's coordinates...

ISSUE #124 "ALASKA'S ONLY INTERSTELLAR FREE TRADER" Oct. 30,
membership: LVWR, PRXL, SETA

While the futile search for ATM SMR continues, an item of interest surfaces in Alaska: that of a downed ship of some kind halfway buried underneath a snowdrift. Its existence is first hypothesized by SID by running trajectory programs derived from the data accumulated on board the Monitor during its most recent and most final flight (see issue #121 for additional info.); its existence is then confirmed when our heroic trio embark on an exhaustive search and actually find it. PRXL immediately recognizes it as a starship of Trib design and SETA immediately notices that by its side is a pile of stolen government equipment from a nearby air force base. They figure its a good bet that someone on board is making repairs.

Soon after, that "someone" is revealed to be Dekar, a Tribian free-trader who collects and deals in alien lifeforms (naturally, that doesn't exclude humans). In communicating with Dekar in his natural tongue and his droid-interpreter in English, PRXL attempts to cover-up the fact that his human companions are equals and not just servants (as Tribian cultural egocentrism would automatically dictate) - he also attempts to play it cool and befriend Dekar to avoid friction and hostilities. It becomes increasingly apparent, however, that this strategy may not work since Dekar seems to embody all of those values and standards that encouraged PRXL to revolt against the status quo of Tor in the first place and ultimately facilitated his unplanned stay here on earth. As if that wasn't enough, it also becomes obvious that Dekar has chosen to sample a few humans (Eskimos) for his collection and is reluctant to give them up. This is clearly unacceptable to our heroes. Fortunately, though, they do have a bargaining chip at their disposal: that of the captured Velation that Dekar wants back very badly.

They finally hit upon a deal: the return of the Velation in exchange for the Eskimos being left alone on earth. So UNTIL hauls out their friendly captured alien wee-beastie and arranges a meeting point in New York. Using his onboard translocation device, Dekar states that he will

teleport the creature back on to the ship and then drop the Eskimos off. His words, however, are far removed from his actual actions as he betrays our heroes and translocates the Velation while simultaneously translocating them as well - into holding cells!

What follows is a very tense struggle for very life and limb as our heroes attempt to escape their captivity before Dekar succeeds in his ultimate goal of translocating them into deep space. In this chaos, LVWR and SETA just barely break out of their cell before its contents are beamed away - at the same moment, Dekar finally bests PRXL in a melee on the bridge and teleports him to a cell of his own. Complication after complication arises and, during the chaos, Dekar detaches the front portion of the ship from the main structure as he begins to grasp the might of the fellows he is tangling with. The main structure is set for self-destruct.

Despite all of this, our totally-terrific-trio still make it out of the adventure alive and victorious. How? Good question. Basically it involves SETA being in the front portion of the ship when Dekar pulls his "detach" maneuver and then showing him in physical language how disappointed he is with the alien's behavior.

From there, the only thing left to do is to translocate both PRXL and LVWR off the main structure before it blows. Not an easy task when one is being guided by radio at a console with a completely foreign control system and an equally foreign language to describe it.

After many a lucky die roll, our crusaders of clay carrots (that would be the heroes) return to the Alaskan air force base with one unconscious Trib and the rather battle-scarred front portion of his ship.

ISSUE #125 "THE ONE VILLAIN IN THE WORLD JOHN GANGE HAS JUST BEEN DYING TO MEET" Oct. 30, cast: LVWR, PRXL, MIN, SETA

Although the title here might imply that we're talking about the villain our heroes ran up against last episode, it doesn't. The villain (or vigilante depending on one's point of view) of the day is none other than DR. DOOM. He just pops on into the air force base intent upon snagging both the new-found alien and his ship. No social visits here. Not much of a fight either considering the heroes' weakened condition and the rather bizarre neutralization of PRXL early on in the confrontation.

Ultimately, what appears to occur at the end of this fiasco is the quick and airborne getaway of DOOM with a plethora of prizes for the folks back home: Dekar's ship, Dekar in that same ship, Prxl (also within that ship and apparently helpless to do anything about its new heading), and the super-duper "solar skimmer" belonging to Prxl. DOOM is not found by radar or tracked successfully after his departure.

ISSUE #126 "A TIME TO RETURN" Oct. 31-Nov. 2, cast: SETA, MIN, LVWR

Upon returning to the UNTIL base in New York, our heroes find that all is not well. In their absence, the nightmare entity (whatever it may be - he, she, they....) has been up to more of its tricks - causing injuries, all-too-real nightmares, and general mental chaos. CAMPHOR has been working on pinning down the culprit(s) and also conducting research into the Canadian project going by the same name (nightmare). An interesting pattern is beginning to emerge: with few exceptions, only women are being telepathically by the entity.

Meanwhile, some agents in the field have discovered what they believe to be the signals emanating from ATM SMR's radio beacon; the source of the transmissions: the upper levels of the Baxter Building. Sorta weird considering that the notorious PARADIGM was supposed to be the last one in "possession" of ATM SMR's carcass.

So it's over to the Baxter abode with our amazing adventurers where they have a nice chat with Mr. Fantastic and the Thing. Both seem somewhat concerned over a phenomena that Reed has just uncovered - one that stems from the use of Darrow's dimension-skipping device and has haunted Reed for quite a while as a possible threat to this world. Now, according to him, that possibility seems to be a reality. Reed fears that a dimensional clustering effect could occur in

which fissures might begin opening up between this plane and others passed through by the machine. He proposes a solution involving the opening of a dimensional gate through which a patching job of gamma-ray inhibitor bombardment could be administered. During the past week he has feverishly been working on a means of implementing this solution via his negative zone portal - he is now nearing a completion point.

Our heroes smell a rat. Fully aware of how well PARADIGM can create illusions and alter perceived reality, they suggest that he might be the one behind all of this dimensional grit. Reed is reluctant at first to accept this hypothesis (based upon his confidence in his own observations and calculations), but begins to agree when a computer aided security check turns up one cargo droid to many on the premises or at least the semblance of a cargo droid.....

So, there you have it: what seems to be one hell of an elaborate plot enabling PARADIGM to get a free ride home through Reed's negative zone portal. "But how?" one might ask. Wouldn't the sensors within the building have picked up this dastardly villain's intrusion and nefarious deeds? In theory, they should have

Meanwhile, of course, our heroes don't have much time to intellectualize over the situation as they are being confronted by a cargo droid transforming itself into the one and only PARADIGM who seems ready to trash some supers and depart from this world. In the ensuing fiesta of violence, plenty of things happen: ATM SMR is found by MIN hidden in the pathology lab; PARA attempts to get away through the portal and fails, yet does succeed in decoying the heroes long enough to transport a collection of files and samples through it (MIN being courageous enough to stop the transport of canisters containing blueprints and parts from Darrow's machine); and, last but certainly not least, the MONSTER re-enters this dimension as the portal is about to close down (this time around too, he appears to have acquired the ability to speak English and phase through solid objects.....) So where does that leave us? Well, one unconscious PARADIGM is gained from the day's activities and one great mystery as to how this plot was pulled off. It is known that PARA was using a mechanical enhancer to boost his mental powers and that the Baxter Building's computer system had been hacked into by another system - a system that inserted a superimposition program in the monitors, creating the animated effect that PARA actually was a cargo droid as far as the sensors were concerned. It's interesting to note that the other "system" would've had have been particularly adept at hacking to accomplish such a feat.

ISSUE #127 "Nighttime" Nov. 3-6 cast:LVWR,ATM SMR,SETA

CAMPHOR informs our heroes that she finally has a lead in this whole Nightscare matter; it's about time too seeing as how the frequency of incidents at the UNTIL base have been rising steadily. CAMPHOR remains vague on the issue of how exactly she acquired the info regarding the location of the Nightscare installation in Canada. SETA notices that CAMPHOR hasn't bothered to tell anyone else within the organization of her findings nor her plans to travel to the installation to dig up some more clues. SETA decides that someone should know about their journey: he tells S.I.D. what's up.

One helicopter lift later, the team is marching around the installation grounds - an area that has been marked as off-limits and quarantined due to a radiation leak. CAMPHOR doesn't seem too concerned about this. ATM SMR, after a quick analysis of the area, comes to the conclusion that there is no radiation leak - only the somewhat clever placement of a compound that mimics radioactive effects on detection instruments such as Geiger counters.

Upon entering the complex (it seems that CAMPHOR knows plenty of the security access codes), the do-gooders are met with a scene of violence that seems to have been lying undisturbed for at least a year's time. Within this research facility (that would appear to have been involved in sleep research and the study of physiology) are littered six bodies - all dead from very unnatural and suicidal causes. Although ATM SMR, SETA, and LVWR are intrigued by the place and don't mind searching through it carefully step by step, CAMPHOR rushes about, confining her movements to but a few rooms and retrieving specific data. It becomes apparent that this base was made to house 8 individuals; CAMPHOR implied earlier on that NIGHTSCARE (the entity causing UNTIL such distress) was the only surviving member of this establishment. Right. While poking around some of the crew's quarters, LVWR stumbles upon an ID (along with some other

personal articles) that would appear to have once belonged to a person bearing some resemblance to CAMPHOR.

CAMPHOR meanwhile finds what she has been looking for (brain scans and cognitive portraits of one member by the name of Kelley Grant) and is very determined to leave in a hurry. Her intense anxiety is not easily hidden; SETA picks up on it and before agreeing to leave confronts CAMPHOR alone, demanding a few more answers. CAMPHOR is still reluctant to tell all, but indicates through what she does choose to say that 1) she was one of the members of this project 2) she is actually the one NIGHTSCARE is after 3) there are government forces at work here that would consider their entry into this base as tantamount to a death sentence 4) this whole situation wreaks of "cover-up". CAMPHOR also indicates that now, more than ever before, she needs SETA's trust.

When airborne once more, our heroes' chopper is attacked by two unmarked F-16s. Thanks to the quick reaction of ATM SMR, both volleys of missiles never reach their intended target. The fighters escape, however, and do reach their second target without complication: the Nightscare installation.

ISSUE #128 "Dreamtime" Nov. 3-6, cast:ATM SMR, LVWR, SETA

Using what she can from the records acquired at the Nightscare installation, CAMPHOR attempts to reconstruct an accurate picture of what Kelley Grant's cognitive structure looks like in 'mindscanning terms'. CAMPHOR wants to find NIGHTSCARE before the latter finds her.

NIGHTSCARE is finally located on the top floor of the New York Ambassador Hotel (a restaurant) - she's just waiting there.....surrounded by hundreds of innocents. The heroes don't find themselves in much of a position to pick and choose considering that NIGHTSCARE is still busy picking people off at UNTIL and is almost beckoning CAMPHOR to come into one-on-one combat. So thus we end up with a battle breaking out in the restaurant but not before some minor precautions are taken to evacuate the innocents via a phony gas leak warning. NIGHTSCARE turns out not to be alone - she is being aided by another villainous type, PANDEMONIUM. Damage is done and people get hurt - fortunately, it isn't in vain as NIGHTSCARE is ultimately captured. PANDEMONIUM abandons his comrade making mention of her "coming close, but failing the entrance test."

CAMPHOR, who has spent the better part of this week awake without break, finally sleeps.

ISSUE #129 "RAMPAGE" Nov. 29 starring:SETA,PRXL,LVWR,ATM AMR,
and THRESH

Just what everyone needs after the Thanksgiving holiday: the Hulk going berserk in the streets of San Francisco! So where are his leash-keepers, the Avengers? Oh, you'll find them embedded in the pavement near the street and stuck on a few bent girders jutting out of what use to be the side of a skyscraper. So it's our daring defenders of the globe to the rescue. But this doesn't just mean putting the Hulk down for the count, it also means saving plenty of innocents who just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The outcome? Well, after a considerable amount of gratuitous violence the Hulk begins to calm down (his attitude change also being helped out through the intervention of an ATM SMR/PRXL telekinetic-flying-feat. Once in a stable state, the real cause behind all this becomes apparent: a bio-electric pellet that was fired into the Hulk by a sniper now long-gone. What isn't gone, though, is a nifty piece of evidence: the specially-designed rifle from which that pellet was fired. Pretty convenient how these clues just happened to be available.....

Later in the day the first of many mutilations characteristic of the MONSTER is reported - the unlucky victim torn apart in Seattle.

ISSUE #130 "FOLLOW-UP" Dec. 1-5 involved:SETA,LVWR,THRESH and
introducing SCUTTLEBUTT

A very strange thing occurs at the L.A. UNTIL base: a small creature with no real memory of its past teleports onto the premises; does this sound suspicious or what? Naturally, officials at the base are shocked out of their gourds with this seemingly random event; moreover, they are very determined to keep this wee-beastie under their surveillance and scrutiny until such time as they get more answers. BRIT, on leave from his normal duties in England volunteers to take charge of the case.

ATM SMR begins work on a form of ego defense for use in FINEOUS' system. MINOTAUR and Derek Covell head out towards the Seattle area to help in dealing with the MONSTER menace; already at work there is HAVOK.

Styx informs UNTIL that they have reason to believe that one of the superheroes in their midst - THRESHOLD - is a felon wanted by the Egyptian government. They ask for the organization's cooperation in finding that hero and holding him for questioning.

SETA approaches THRESH with this news and attempts to dispose with his usual strict demeanor in favor of a more flexible one - this temporary change of attitude only arising because of the trust SETA has acquired for this lad after seeing him perform so level-headedly in so many battle situations (in stark contrast to other members or associates of the K.O.J.). THRESH says the Egyptian government has got its story wrong and asks for a grace period of two days to get lost and attend to personal matters - in addition he also tinkers a bit with SETA's mind in the telepathy and memory erasure departments. SETA is unaware of this development. So much for trust, eh?

Following up on the leads provided by last issue's debacle in the Bay Area, SETA visits the S.F. UNTIL base and sets to work on finding the manufacturers of the rifle left behind by the mystery sniper. Incidentally, the original creator of FINEOUS and S.I.D. is there as well installing his new brain child: ALEX. The man is Austin James and, within hours, he's narrowed the field of choices for a possible rifle-manufacturer down to a handful. All are part of the Brown Institute of Technologies - the most likely candidate being a plant located in Georgia.

ISSUE #130 "GOOSECHASE" Dec. 1-5 cast:SCUTT,ATM SMR,SETA,LVWR

After clearing up some legal aspects of the operation, our heroes decide to infiltrate the premises at the Georgia plant under the cover of the night and get some answers. Soon enough they stumble upon something pretty big - about 3 stories big to be precise: sentinels! That's right - welcome to your standard WIDEAWAKE operation hiding under the guise of a company. What follows is your standard good guy vs. bad guy scuffle, but the outcome isn't so standard. Instead of a definite victory by either side, the entire complex goes up in a series of explosions and, at that same moment, some rather large airborne craft lifts off from the other side of the base. This raises some interesting questions considering that 1) no one from UNTIL planted the explosives 2) WIDEAWAKE didn't seem to be responsible either since plenty of their own personnel and equipment perished in the blast 3) earlier in the evening a helicopter with the insignia of the Hellfire Club was seen to fly over the complex 4) the formation of the running lights on the airborne vehicle lifting off during the explosions were very, very familiar.

Five hours later, a major breakout from Stronghold is reported. Those escaping: OVERDRIVE, MATRIX, FOXBAT, SURGE, EBONY ANGEL, BLOWTORCH, EVVINA LYNCH, CHAMELEON, and BRAINSTORM. What is unique about this breakout is that an incoming Stronghold vehicle is involved in the whole process - both carrying in new villains to make the escape possible and then functioning as their transportation back out again. The security cameras record one of the intruders as being a cloaked female with obvious super-powers. Left in the wake of this mess is a tarot card used by that female, but one of a rather unusual nature.

ISSUE #131 "HELLFIRE AT THE OTHER END" Dec 9-12,
supers:LVWR,THRSH,SETA,SCUT

The slayings continue in Seattle and HAVOK is added to the casualty list. REFLEX journeys to the West Coast to do what she can for her injured comrade (or should we say `lover'?)

Meanwhile, tensions begin to escalate between UNTIL and WIDEAWAKE as firefights and encounters between the two forces become more common - almost as if being arranged. It would

seem that WIDEAWAKE believes UNTIL was behind the destruction of the Georgia facility; as we know from last issue, that doesn't seem to be the case.

The San Francisco UNTIL base is bombed. Around 70 agents and operatives die in the assault which takes on the form of a toxic gas planted in the ventilation units. Assuming this is a move sponsored by WIDEAWAKE, UNTIL vows to invest all available resources into a new, more intense campaign to wipe out this menace. WIDEAWAKE denies involvement in the S.F. debacle and threatens that any further persecution from pseudo-government forces will be met with drastic measures.

A fragment of a tarot card is found near the ventilation units at the S.F. UNTIL base. Hmmmm.

Our heroes become interested in the Hellfire Club. Even though this organization appears to legally be on the up-and-up and merely function as a social hangout and resort for the rich upper-class and elite (industrial giants, congressmen, executives, Hollywood big-wigs, etc.), our enforcers of all that is just don't buy into that image all the way. The helicopter appearing in Virginia is just too fishy a sign. So off they go to meet with the Club's officers: Sebastian Shaw, Harry Leland, Emma Frost, and Selene. Their visit is a civil, but tense one. Chatting about the purposes of the club and amusing themselves with diversions such as video and card games (tarot at that...), both sides seem to size up the other and our heroes leave with even more suspicions than they originally had upon entering. THRESHOLD is especially wary and is willing to lay odds that at least a few of the presiding club officers are supers in disguise.

But the problem is there's no real proof that the Hellfire Club has done anything wrong. Yet the situation reeks of corruption, secrets, and wrongdoing.....what is a law-abiding hero to do?

ISSUE #132 "BIG BASH" Dec. 15-24 cast:SCUT,SETA,LVWR,THRESH

WIDEAWAKE embarks on a series of explosive raids: injuring employees and destroying property associated with businesses and government agencies that support the mutie-cause through funding

or more discrete measures. Cashing with them naturally are the forces of UNTIL. Violence rises. The nation's attention is once again being turned to the issue of mutant rights/mutant menace.

Amidst this growing pattern of carnage, the Hellfire Club is planning its annual Christmas Eve Bash. Guess which law-abiding heroes are planning to "sort of" attend. That's right - our fearless foursome choose to stake out the party from the cover of the foliage lurking around the Club's premises. They don't choose to inform UNTIL of their actions - this is more of a personal mission. Only SID is taken into SETA's confidence on this matter.

Although most of the night is uneventful (that is if you call wild partying, elaborate costumes, and a power-packed guest list uneventful...), something of interest does occur after the midnight hour when SELENE and SHAW convene in his office - partly visible to the stakeout crew outside. The "something interesting" is the appearance of PANDEMONIUM in that same office speaking on rather friendly terms with the couple. Also showing up is a party guest who seems to be able to change his features and form at will. Overheard are words about some sort of initiation process involving the humiliation and kidnapping of certain X-MEN and the failure of someone PANDEMONIUM was monitoring to pass the test to make it into the "inner circle". Huh.

Well that's enough for our formidable foursome - talk of premeditated crime and the sight of at least one known supervillain equals in their heads a call to confrontation. And so this is done. In a most blatant way. They bust in the window of the office. Bash. As our adventurous group discovers very quickly, all of the previous suspicions they were harboring about this club and its members certainly weren't without good reason. SHAW and the rest of his cohorts turn out to be quite the super- powered and resourceful fighters. So resourceful, in fact, that they manage to defeat the courageous do-gooders after a limited melee. Bash again. But that isn't the worst of it not by a long shot.....

ISSUE #133 "PICTURE THIS FRAME" Dec.25-28 starring:REFLEX,CREAT
and introducing: LIBERTY
captive audience:SETA & LVWR

The next thing SETA and LVWR know, they are being thrown into a Stronghold vehicle under restraint and being lectured by a very disappointed Joanna Walsh from UNTIL. It's early morning and the Club premises are in a shambles as a crowd of guests and passers-by have gathered. The injured are being escorted away by police and emergency crews and it truly looks as though something tremendously dangerous and near-unstoppable hit this place. As many are only too happy to tell LVWR and SETA, it would seem that these two heroes went on a rampage through this place just over an hour ago, hunting after SHAW and paying little heed to the safety of innocents in their wake (as well as the structural integrity of the Club itself...) If it wasn't for the efforts of a hero named THRESHOLD who just happened to be on the scene at the time of the berserker run neither of the two heroes-turned- ruffian would've been stopped or held back from SERIOUSLY hurting people. As is, Sebastian Shaw is in critical condition at St. Vincent's hospital, suffering from massive trauma inflicted on his body at the hands of SETA.

Can you believe this? Well neither can SETA and LVWR. Yet, just as true, they also can't remember what really happened a few hours ago - it's as though the entire previous night has been blanked out. Walsh is also having a hard time believing this - especially where two of her best operatives are concerned; but there are plenty of eyewitnesses and one could say that SETA and LVWR have both been under a lot of stress lately and but going berserk? C'mon now.....

CAMPHOR does not dig this situation at all. First off, she has more than an inkling that the Hellfire club has its hands in a lot of dirty dealings (they've been tangled up in her past more than once before) and smells a king-size rat in this whole set-up. Secondly, she owes SETA one after what happened in the NIGHTSCARE affair and she isn't about to let LVWR get put in the slammer without a fight. After talking with both LVWR and SETA and probing their minds a little, she is convinced that they have been the victims of a memory erasure; this and a rather hefty mental illusion may also have accounted for the supposed "eyewitness accounts" that support the case against them. So CAMPHOR assembles a plan and a team to carry it out. Knowing full well that evidence gained through telepathy is admissible in court only through the most limited of conditions, CAMPHOR does her homework and finds a clause in the books known as situational verification - basically, it's a legal safeguard to insure that one proves a context existed in which the use of mental powers was not only possible, but also likely before one starts building a case around it - it's a clause that holds the "boys who would cry wolf" at bay. In keeping with this, CAMPHOR is determined to prove that SHAW is not just another rich industrialist, but a super and a corrupt, perjurious super at that.

Fearing that there may be a spy or bug within UNTIL (based upon how many of our heroes' "top secret" moves have been mysteriously anticipated of late by opposing forces) CAMPHOR takes no chances and contacts supers outside of the system or at least not intimately tied to it; she recruits CREAT, REFLEX, and a new hero on the block who specializes in rescues: LIBERTY.

The plan is to stage a bomb threat at the hospital SHAW is hold up in and then, during the confusion, project a mental illusion of SETA strolling into the villain's room, prompting him to battle. Hopefully the shock value of this will be enough to rouse SHAW into discarding his cover as a mere normal who's been "critically injured".

Well, the plan is a success....up to a point. Sure enough SHAW blows his cover, but he also resists the efforts of our courageous crusaders to knock him out and gets away before he can be bagged. But, hey, at least this sheds new light on the defense for SETA and LVWR - it looks as though those two will NOT become permanent fixtures at Stronghold.

By the way, have I mentioned yet that the MONSTER slayings are continuing in Washington and it isn't a happy-go-lucky deal?

ISSUE #134 "ALL YOU NEED DO TO WIN IS SURVIVE" Dec.28

cast: SCUTT,THRSH

No doubt by now you're ablaze with curiosity about the fate of our favorite Egyptian runaway mentalist and his newest sidekick, that stocky red fellow. Of course, I speak of none other than THRESHOLD and SCUTTLEBUTT - both of which are now in the nasty clutches of ARCADE (you don't have to possess much of an imagination to figure out how they wound up there...)

As is typical with this twisted character of pranks and dishonor, ARCADE wastes no time and lands both of the heroes in his deadly amusement park: Murderworld. There, they face all manner

of obstacles and threats - speeding cars, cliff walls, simulated storms and landslides, mazes with descending ceilings, chessboards with life-size pieces and bad tempers, and an abundance of time limits. Even so, our two heroes manage to pull together as a team and beat the odds.....just barely. BARELY.

ARCADE is none too pleased with this, but, never too much of a spoiled sport, he keeps to his end of the bargain reluctantly and lets our heroes go free in a manner of speaking. They are jettisoned away in two one-way capsules and ceremoniously given souvenir T-shirts that read, "I SURVIVED MURDERWORLD".

THRESH and SCUTT set down in the Potomac a while later and rejoin civilization. Now, you tell me - was the THRESH that claimed to have stopped LVWR and SETA during their berserker run through the Hellfire Club the same one who just made it through murderworld alive?

ISSUE #135 "IN SHADOWS" Dec.29 starring:CREAT,LVWR,MINO,REFLEX

SETA and LVWR are released from Stronghold under a flurry of controversy and public uproar. The Hellfire Club claims no responsibility for Shaw's obviously deceitful and criminal actions and disavows knowledge of his being a super. The Club offers its services to the authorities in tracking down the outlaw and drops charges against SETA and LVWR. Yeah. Sure. Can you believe these guys? Give me a break.

In the meantime, REFLEX recruits the talents of LVWR and CREAT in helping her and the growing Washington team to find and trap the MONSTER. All the tell-tale signs and heresy point to this being a difficult and life-threatening endeavor. The HUMAN TORCH also joins in the efforts.

Once in Washington, the team links up with Lance Scofield (a lieutenant in the Seattle Special Forces Division), MINO, and a now-conscious HAVOK. HAVOK and MINO inform the others that they have established a pattern to MONSTER's violence. Apparently the thing is attracted to targets in a disturbed or frightened state of mind - an emotional feeder of sorts. HAVOC provided support for this theory when he used a variant of PCP to induce a paranoid, frenzied state in himself and found that it did indeed attract the likes of the MONSTER - trouble was he couldn't make use of his counteractive dose fast enough in order to defend himself very well. So: great theory, but not entirely useful in actually locating the MONSTER or his abode.

Fortunately (or unfortunately depending on your point of view) the location of the MONSTER doesn't remain a mystery for too much longer as another victim is found torn apart in his house. This time, (in contrast to previous attempts) the kill is fresh enough so that MINO can pick up a scent and begin to track it. The team is led to an abandoned house in the backwoods of the area surrounding Bellevue and it is there they encounter not only the MONSTER, but what would appear to be one of its offspring taking root in a victim. YUCK - SICKKKKOOOOH!

Well, despite all the hoopla, no one dies in the attempt to bag the beast and ultimately the MONSTER is brought down - and then brought to DR STRANGE II for disposal.

ISSUE #136 "WHICH GOVERNMENT ARE YOU GONNA TRUST?" Jan.9,1990
cast:CREAT,SETA,MINO