

When the universe rests, all is still and at rest. But all things come to an end, and many oft end far sooner than those involved would rather. But such is the fate of those who have caught their Attention, of those whom the Fates themselves are drawn.

Mere mortals were not meant to bear vast power. That is wisdom known from ages past, when mortals still had gods roaming among them to which they can be compared and found wanting. Likewise, that philosophy has a twin; Mere mortals were not meant to bear the interests gods.

To those granted powers beyond common mortal ken; heed the warning. Responsibility is not the only burden power brings. Like oft attracts like. Power attract powers. Coincidence becomes no more, predestination aligns with probably and forces destiny, one may find the life no longer fully under your control, and those surrounding you, their faces bear new meanings and mysteries.

For where marks the line of friend and foe? Chosen and placed? Opportunity and Necessity? Found and Guided? Earned and Bestowed? For beyond mortal reach, it that of those we would consider gods... For what worth is a man? For what exactly is providence?

::Right to Business::

The promised day had arrived. No, not the day that Father would open the gates of the world and consume god, but the day of the job interview with Allied Trust. Several metas who had, though some course of action or another attracted attention and distinction, recieved the notice in the mail. In a way, it was like the fabled ticket to the chocolate factory, but in most, it was nothing like it. In the end, it was a personal decision whether to take up their invitation or not. There were benefits; it spoke of employment, of opportunities to learn more, not just of ones self but of others and the changing world around them, and a chance to help guide the change.

It also spoke of risks and dangers. The Red Sun was just one of the radicals, and for as much as there were those who recieved the notice due to moral uprightness, their were those who's actions were the opposite, actions that in part gave need for the same invitations that would not grace their mailboxes. But still; it was a choice.

Trevor made his. He flippantly commented that he needed a new job anyway, and that law enforcement had been one option he'd been told to consider anyway. Truthfully; the present fear of his own skills drove him. It was a place that helped before, and it was a place that might help again. The lessons the day before with Henry had been good, but still limited to one part of something he didn't fully understand (seriously... invisible boxes...). So the promised day of a job interview found him in the building Allied Trust called home.

[Those with invitations: Henry, Trevor, Jez Trevor, Jezelle.]

The letter in the mail hadn't been a particularly nice addition to Jezelle's week, as she was already a little rough and grumpy over the whole superhero thing, and as for the superpowers themselves she was nearing the end of her rope.

A bed-flipping tantrum later, she'd decided learning more about superpowers was a damn fine idea, and couldn't give two craps about what they wanted of her.

As such, she rocked up to the address in her very casual tanktop and loose leggings, looking and feeling rather rebellious as she moved in to wait.

Flight school ended with Trevor making some good progress and the duo formally meeting the pack. Henry figured that the only reason that they talked to him was because of Trevor. The last meeting he had with them was very cold. But things change. He got home, showered and put his clothes in the wash in hopes to get rid of any sap that got on them. This whole meta thing had taken a toll on him in many areas but none so much as in his wardrobe. Hazard of the lifestyle.

Henry stuck to what Davis had told him the days before by keeping a lower profile. He spent the first part of the evening updating his wall with the information he got on the Pack. More metas now and the kidnappers had gone after them. He would need to keep the parks and forest areas under his patrol now since that is where the Pack was working out of. At about eleven he made his way to the local twenty-four hour super store. He made his way right to the electronics department and went for the TVs. He changed them from their normal channel that they were all tuned into and put them two of them on the news stations. This was a better option then waiting for the next day.

Once he was updated he did three rounds of the city and forest area keep a look out for anything that might pop up. The crazy quota must have been filled days earlier because he really didn't have to do anything. He managed to help a motorist change out a tire but the night was quiet. It was a nice change. He headed home around two in the morning and then spent the rest of the night hours taking his information from the wall and note book and copying it down in a new note book.

The morning was the normal routine of washing eating and shaving. He grabbed his backpack and stuff in a change of clothes, his wallet, and the notebook that he worked on until an hour ago. He took the letter Davis handed him off his fridge and set off. He locked the door to his apartment and set off on foot for a number of blocks. Once he got to the bridge he was used to he put on the mask and took off and headed to the Allied building. He landed in a ally a few blocks away and made his way to the door. He didn't know what to expect in this meeting. Was this more of a job interview or was this going to a gathering of metas where they told them to stay out of the way. Perhaps this was going to be some kind of round up to see who was the most dangerous. Allied had done right by him many times even if he was a little startled by the tech they had to stop metas. If he was in their shoes he would have done it as well but it was still a little scary when people have studied you and have ways of taking you out. Made Henry think of what they had to stop him. He was pretty sure that the cells wouldn't hold him. The sonic devices might slow him down but he had sounds of his own. A round of applause had taken out his share of the swarm. Then again if he could do that what could the others do? He was amazed at the things his own friends could do. It seemed each time they ran into a problem that something new popped up that they could do. So many thought and so little time. He needed to get his head in the game. He put his hand on the handle and opened the door. It was show time.

Allied was a rather thorough organization. Not only did they have some of the coolest toys in the backs of their rather stylish vehicles, and an impressive information gathering network, and good connections with the pushers and movers of the town, they also had superb staff manning the main desks. So polite and helpful and sweet it would give the sensitive type diabetes or some sort of allergic reaction. They probably had epipens behind the desk just in case.

Each visitor was directed down some corridors, even given a cheerful and polite escort if they needed it. For whatever reason Allied Trust had a respectable sized auditorium in their building. It wasn't where they were going though, it was just part of the tour. They were meeting in a much smaller room, perhaps enough to seat a few dozen people comfortably. At the moment, it was set up for only a dozen or so; chairs positioned around a table (and a few backless stools against the wall), disposable cups and jugs of water sitting beside little bowls of sweets and things to fiddle with if you were the tactile type.

Aside from Trevor (who had tried playing with the playdough and realized fur wasn't the best for it so was currently trying to pick bits and piece of it out) and Jez (who actually showed up, surprisingly), there were a few faces Henry would recognize. Davis (the electric one) was scribbling or doodling on some paper. Richard was channeling his inner nervousness and tapping his leg rapidly. Tabitha was casually reading a book.

There were some none of them would know. An albino woman smiled at Henry, one eye blue, the other red. A young man shifted self consciously on one of the stools, large blue and black wings folded behind him, feathers mixed in with the normal hair. A short elder woman had her hand resting on her cane and looked with interest at the others in the room, a younger girl beside her making faces, literally, from playdough; the putty twisting and morphing far more than it should from just her prodding it with her finger.

So far though, there didn't seem to be anyone actually in charge represented yet. "We'll be starting in a few minutes," the guide of impeccable service said brightly.

Considering Jezelle's currently rebellious attitude, all this cheery-cheeriness was rubbing her the wrong way, only hardening her scowl and her arms-folded stance of defiance. She was all set to buckle in and wait, contrary to her impatient disposition.

Henry liked getting to have the formal tour of the building and the people were so nice here. He could get used to this. He was in a building full of trained soldiers and metas and he wasn't actively getting attacked. Henry was rather surprised when they showed him the auditorium. At first he thought they were stopping there. The second thought of 'just how many metas are coming?' ran past. But before he could dwell on it too much he was ushered to a smaller room. He actually knew of the people already there. Davis was there with his weird backpack thingy. And Richard. . . Richard. Why in the world was his old sparring partner there? He knew that Richard was the one that knocked out Erin at the con. Perhaps this was why? But wasn't this a meeting of metas. Henry put two and two together and figured that his old partner was holding something back just like he was.

Henry took a seat in one of the chairs and gave a little wave to the lady with two different colored eyes. He saw Jez and Trevor but held back a greeting for now. Henry had his business face on (behind the mask). He needed a job so he needed to focus here. Rent was involved.

"So...." Richard said after the silence stretched on. "Nice weather today, isn't it?"

There was a even more silence at, but a few chuckles broke it.

"Really? That's your line?" Tabitha laughed, setting he book aside.

"It was... I was on the spot," Richard said with a slightly nervous grin. "I choked."

"But it at least broke the ice," the elderly lady crackled. It was slightly disconcerting, that laugh. Almost witch like. "I suppose we should get the introductions done. Agatha Hinde. Pleasure to meet you. This is my granddaughter Rebecca."

Rebecca gave them a brilliant smile and small wave.

"Nice to meet you," the albino lady said. "My name is Valarie Harris."

The guy with the wings blinked when he realized they somehow started going in order and he was next. "Wallace Moore," he said, shifting self consciously.

"Tabitha," she said simply.

Henry was next in line.

Henry nodded as each person made their introduction. He knew what was expected but he would disappoint once more. A room full of people he didn't know he would keep the secret going. He could feel the eye rolling coming from Trevor.

"It is nice to meet you all. It will be a pleasure getting to work along side with you all." Henry said honestly. "I go by Force."

Across the table, Trevor looked like he was having a minor fit as he tried to contain the eye roll and the laughter that tried to slip out. At least that fit lasted only a second before he swallowed it and become the image of stoicness. Inside, he was still rolling his eyes and laughing though. Then he wrinkled his forehead and looked thoughtful.

ἀπάθεια rolled a die with 20 sides. The die showed: 19

"Hi, I'm Davis Nelson," Henry's first success story said. "Glad to be.... here?" His finish was a bit rough, but whatever.

"Lo, I'm Trevor," he said cheerfully. "I know that guy, and if he gets a name, I get one too. You can call me... Frostbite. Yeah, let's go with Frostbite."

Henry thought about it for a second and realized that it fit. He had flash frozen a number of bugs in the sewer fight. He gave a smirk under the mask.

"Nice. Seems like I am going to start a trend at this rate. Well met Frostbite." Henry said looking tot he next person. Wondering if Jez was going to come up with one next.

Jezelle was the only one left to introduce herself.

"Jezelle. 'Sup." Jezelle said rather flatly, her mood still hadn't quite lost its edge yet but she did look a bit more tired than before.

"Tell us how you really feel," Trevor muttered at Jez's oh so enthusiastic response.

Henry laughed at Jez's responce. Seemed that she did not want to pick out a name. Almost seemed like she didn't want to be there at all.

"So... everyone got a letter in the mail?" Trevor asked before it could fall back into awkward silence.

A few people nodded. Agatha hemmed and hawed. "They called and asked if my and my granddaughter would be able to move here. Something about possibly needing our skills."

"Agent Davis handed me mine. They seem like pretty nice people. Always willing to help out when needed." Henry replied.

Jezelle just sighed and remained silent, not feeling particularly talkative right now.

"I work with a politician. He and Allied's management relate. I'm here to take part in this project," Tabitha said. "Though I don't know all the details."

"In the mail for me," the other Davis said.

"Same," Richard added. Then he went on. "But I got a visit too."

"That good old Isaac Berkins? How is his campaign going these days?" Henry asked hearing a potential link between him and the woman.

"Getting support, lots of it, actually," Tabitha sighed. Support meant more work for her. "It's a good thing though. He's been putting a lot of work into stuff for metas."

Trevor hadn't found the time to pay attention to politics lately (nor ever, really... it was politics...). A few of the others in the room looked interesting.

"I..." Wallace started, hesitating before pressing on, "I heard they were talking about setting in place regulation for flying metas in the city."

"Well that is good for him. I heard he was running but I haven't really got to see what he is going for." Henry said and then turned to the winged. "Wonder how they are going to do that. Going to be hell enforcing that one."

"Maybe they're here to hire metas who can be their flying police," Jezelle snarked, not overly concerned with the conversation but getting a little restless as the seconds passed by agonizingly slow for her.

Trevor was going to dismiss that little tidbit, but then remember that he did qualify as a flying meta and groaned. "I don't think it's that bad of an idea. Imaging what the skies would be like if a bunch of people start flying around and crossing each other's paths."

"I doubt there would be that many people who could fly in town..." Davis commented.

"Really?" Valerie said. "We can find out. How many people here can fly? Show of hands."

Wallace, obviously raised his hand. So did Agatha. Trevor said and joined them.

Henry raised his hand. "It is easier to avoid getting hit then you might think. In a car you can turn left or right. Flying you can turn or go over or under them. More ways to avoid a crash. Plus think of how many cars are out there compaired to the rest of us. We could ask how many people here own a car." Henry explained. "I think there could be a much better use of all of our time then policing the skies."

"Eh, they probably just wanna keep fliers under wraps; bit hard to control a situation when you gotta look up as well," Jezelle shrugged, "The ground speed laws will be more annoying -though almost amusing as trying to enforce a flying regulation."

"Imagine tripping at 60," Richard said with a grimace. That wouldn't be pretty.

"Then you have the mind reading, and lord knows what else people can do. Before places had to worry about a gun being pulled on someone. Know they have to worry about what all we can do. I had to stop some men from robbing a gas station liquor store. Guy tried to burn the building down. How do you defend your business from a flame thrower?" Henry said shaking his head.

"People like us really complicate things, don't we?" Trevor sighed.

"In large numbers," Agatha commented. "Small counts slip under the radar, but not in this case..."

She would have said more but the dor opened at that moment and two others entered. One was Davis, Ben Davis, the other was a woman in a suit.

"Sorry for the wait," Davis apologized. "There was a last minute issue I have to take care of myself before I could get here."

"Life happens." Henry said in a manner meaning 'no problem'.

"If only life was the only thing I had to worry about..." Jezelle muttered idly in a wistful manner, trailing off and sighing quietly.

"You've all had a chance to introduce yourself and talk a bit?" Davis asked as he and his companion took two of the remaining seats. He half smiled at the few nods he had. "Excellent. That simplifies matters. I am Ben Davis. Former the head of Allied's local analysis and support team, currently in charge of most things related to the local meta actions and activities in the town.

"This is Susan Riker. Legal department representative." She nodded at Mr. Davis' introduction. Davis set his case on the table and opened it. "I'm going to skip the run around. In light of the recent terrorist strike by the group calling themselves Red Sunset, the increase in petty and minor criminal acts by metas, and the simple count of metas hurting themselves and others because they don't know how to control their abilities..."

He paused, losing his train of thought for a moment. "Simply put, with the support of a few people in the city we want to enact a few countermeasures. One of them being means for new metas to learn and practice their skills, another taking after the emergence relief volunteers; having groups of metas trained and willing to provide aid in times of need.in times of need."

He forestalled response with a raised hand. "Most of you here today was called because you already stepped up in a time of need. Be it at the convention attack, or some other incident around town. This pretty much boils down to 'would you be willing to step up again'. Even if it's a no, we could still use your opinions on the other changes and services we want to set in place."

Henry looked around at the others. They had been doing this for a few weeks now. Or, it was better to say that they have been stumbling into this. They had a pretty good track record if you could call it that.

Henry had a flash back of the hospital and the human remains in the webs. Then a second one of the caved in convention center. Metas had caused those. Metas were also the reason they were not worst. He had been getting his feet wet so far. Now it was time to dive in.

"I would be willing. Will be nice knowing what is going on and not having to react blindly most of the time." Henry said looking both at Davis and Susan.

Trevor thought about it. Aside from needing income, and needing help in case he had another incidence (or episode... he hadn't settled on a name yet), he did find that he liked the pseudohero thing. And he had legitimate superpowers on top of it too. "I'm willing to help out too."

"I don't know..." Davis, the other Davis, admitted. "I'd love the support but I'm not sure if I'm cut out for being the civil servant type."

"Eugh... I'd have conditions," Jezelle said begrudgingly, not altogether enthused about the ambiguous nature of 'willing to step up again'. The last few times she 'stepped up' weren't exactly pretty nor fun.

"But considering these 'gifts' have crushed my dreams I might as well try it out," Jezelle said a little blandly.

"That's another issue we want to deal with," Susan commented. "There are more than a few metahumans who have found themselves surrounded by the ruins of a life they had carefully managed and worked towards up to that point. Some can be easily repaired with the proper assistance, others... may be beyond salvagable."

"These wings certainly make things difficult for me," Warren mumbled. "But I think I'd help too. I was aiming for the police force anyway."

"Do you want my help with the response or the training?" Richard asked after a moment.

"Both," Davis admitted.

"So do you all have a place that we can practice our skills? Some people don't have very house friendly skills." Henry said sheepishly.

"It's an ongoing project," Davis said. "A lot of new metas are more potent than the ones that existed before this current bloom. We are working on getting a building and the funds to make a place secure enough for it. At the moment, We have a usable hall we test our weapons in."

"Nice! Should be interesting to see what people can do once they have a safe place to test their limits." Henry said excitedly.

"How do you plan on testin' your limit?" Jezelle said to Henry with a smirk, "You want Allied to drag a freight train in here for you to throw around?"

"Would like to find out just how much I can pick up. Plus there are many others who might want to know what limits they have. Some try to keep it under wraps out of fear. better to find out what you can do so that people can work on how to control or prevent it." Henry replied.

"Drag a freight train?" Valorie asked. "Just how strong are you?"

"There is the old steel mills we might be able to get access to in the mean while," Susan commented. She glanced in Tabitha's direction. "With the proper backing."

"Mr Berkins is likely to support anything that's for the betterment of meta lifestyles," Tabitha said, her response sounding very... politically correct.

"Jeez, how much pull has Berkins got?" Jezelle remarked, a little surprised but more about trying to fix her mental picture of that politician. She hadn't particularly thought much about him at the time, so the idea of him throwing weight around and calling favors sent her for a spin.

"I didn't think city council members had that kind of pull." Henry commented then turned to Valorie. "I don't know how much I can lift. I picked up a van full of people once."

Valorie's eyes widened and her mouth made a cute little o. She clapped softly. "Wow!"

"See? Superman lite," Trevor muttered softly. "He just dresses like batman."

"Not on his own, no. But with his support on the council he can push to get us a permit, and possibly open the way for us to actually purchase the location," Davis said. "It's abandoned and taking up tax payer money for no reason. It is as strong building with secure foundations, considering what it was for. It might actually be an idea place to help new metas practice."

"I don't dress like batman. The body armor was just for protection. Doesn't help against the things that can actually hurt me now though. Will need to find a replacement or just not worry about it." Henry said looking back at Trevor. He seriously didn't know why he minded his outfit that much. Even Jez took a page out of his book and got protection.

Henry turned his attention back to Davis. Seeing as the training grounds would take time to get he didn't know what they were to do now. "So. . . what do we do in the mean time? Visit the weapons range? Or is there something else you had in mind?"

Jezelle hummed thoughtfully, as the 'step up again' idea was safely simmering in the back of her mind, she was somewhat interested in a practicing ground.

It was pretty obvious she'd never get to compete in mundane olympics any more, but she still had the fire for the activity: she really did enjoy testing her physical limits and feeling the adrenaline pumping. As much as the school's sports oval offered a modicum of support in allowing her to try things, she really didn't want to have to deal with people staring at her, or weaving between the timetable for sports.

"No, those are just some of the larger more physical plans," Ben Davis said. "The large scale plans. There are other issues we have to address as the city adjusts the metahuman revelations. To be honest, Kent is on the headline of every news station in the world, and how we deal with issues could have so many ramifications we have had pretty much triple the size of our regional analysis team."

"How have the courts been handling these things? I haven't really been keeping up on that aspect of it. Are they planning laws or they having to revamp all the current laws?" Henry asked. He didn't know how laws really worked but he figured that there was a lawyer out there that was going to make their name in one of these cases.

"Rather than rewrite laws, they have been considering amending them, adding new sections were absolutely necessary," Susan responded in place of Davis. It was her area afterall. "At the moment, the most pressing concern is whether or not to consider some meta's as armed, which has dove tailed into the question of how to categorize the abilities of metas, once again bringing up the issue of registrations, arguments of how a fist, properly trained, can kill as well so that

would lead to anyone with some combat training being registered. It's a complicated connundrum."

"Must have a hell of a job," Jezelle cracked a small smile, " 'It is against the law to walk through walls and steal stuff.' Or: 'You need a license to carry over two tonnes'."

"Considering walking through walls counts as trespassing, and theft is already criminal, one would think they would already know those are illegal," Susan sighed. "Apparently it's not in some people's natures to realize limits still apply to them. Most thing just because you can get into somewhere without breaking a window or do they should."

"Really? People think like that?" Trevor commented.

"It leads to all sorts of complications," Davis sighed. "It was pointed out that Force here was doing pretty much vigilante work, so instead of trying to take him to court on it, we decided to deputize him, more or less."

"Vigilanty work that saved many lives nonetheless. When you see a group of people torching a liquor store, or a swarm of bugs attacking an apartment complex or hospital you step up. Who knows how many more people would be dead if those choices were not made. I know that I have made mistakes in the past. But I think I made up for putting that car on the roof. I got it down to the next day." Henry replied.

"Maybe for a flying brick like you, stepping up doesn't seem so bad," Jezelle remarked a little dryly, "Simply having these meta-power things royally fucks my perception of the world. I dunno about anyone else, but you can't exactly redefine what you know overnight -I spontaneously became claustrophobic for what seemed the stupidest reasons because my head has been so screwed up. Sure I have the power to do some pretty crazy stuff, but my brain's still tuned in to Mundane Station; getting involved in robberies and stuff is the fastest way to get hurt."

"Did it get worse recently?" Trevor asked her. "You seemed like you had gotten the hang of it a few weeks ago then this week you kinda stopped by LaLa Land again." Not that he could blame her. He pretty much has a bus pass to Lala land these days.

"Lala Land?" Rebecca asked.

"The nation were you can find Crazyville. It's nice there this time of year," Trevor quipped.

"...You could say that..." Jezelle mostly whispered, growing quiet and folding her arms.

"I am not a flying brick. I get hurt like anyone else. I just get over it quickly. You went up against the terrorist lady and her minions and wiped the floor with them. Some punk knocking over a gas station should be no problem. Just pop behind them and POW!" Henry said punctuating the statement by punching his hand.

"Ignoring the fact I nearly *erased my existence* that time," Jezelle grumbled, tightening her arms-folded stance, "I'm not going to go jumping people just because I can."

Trevor tried not to snicker at Jez's selective morals. He seemed to recall her popping into his car just because she could. Maybe it was a Prime thing?

"That's where the training comes in," Davis said. "You never know what parts of your powers might be harmful to yourself. Even if you volunteer, we would not allow you to go on any active duties until both we and yourself are confident in your abilities and limits."

"True, true," Agatha said. "Rebecca and I suffer impressive backlash if we overstrain."

"You really think you're gonna be able to figure out suitable training for everyone?" Jezelle queried Davis a little confrontingly, "And you're not worried you might discover someone has a power you're uncomfortable with?"

"I could find a man with a gun uncomfortable. Or a kid who figured out how to make a bomb or poison from household chemicals. It's not the skills that concern me, it's the morals and responsibility of the one with them that I worry about."

"Hmm..." Jezelle didn't seem overly convinced, but she apparently had food for thought and went into some silent contemplation.

"The first part of the question still stands," Trevor pointed out. Okay, time to lay some stuff out. "I recently found out another aspect of my powers, and I'm not the best at controlling it yet. Not to mention that the backlash that I think is either related to it or woke it up put me in the hospital," well, that and other things. Speaking of, he never did send that email to Marina. "And... the other issue you helped me with last time."

"It wouldn't just be one location," Susan said. "Rather, a series of training points that will hopefully cover enough ground to provide for the diverse meta population."

"On that note, those who do agree to become a part of the unit will be receiving paid training and such. Much like the military does it." Davis added.

"Don't need to worry about big kitty. If that happens again I will be there to stop it. Or they have enough drugs to put it to sleep again." Henry said to Trevor. Trevor did mention that he turned into the large cat again when he did his training in the woods. Made it seem that it was not something that the kidnappers did. Or maybe they jump started it. He would need to find out more.

"This a fulltime deal like the military or is this like the one weekend a month deal?" Henry asked Davis.

"For the moment, it is as the latter," Susan said. "After the initial training, we would only call for your active duty for a few hours per month, but it will be something of an on-call task. Outside

your scheduled active duty we might have need to request aid, depending on how pressing a risk is."

"So what is your plan with this? You already got a file on everyone and an idea where you're gonna use them?" Jezelle queried.

"You haven't been keeping a file on everything that has been going on?!" Henry asked. He thought everyone would be keeping documents on this stuff.

"Um... no?" Trevor admitted.

"I've been reading the papers," Richard shrugged.

Agatha chuckled. "I like this one. Thinking ahead."

"I ain't keepin' track of this stuff, I got enough on my plate," Jezelle said firmly.

"Someone's fussy," Trevor muttered, just loudly enough for Jez, sitting beside him, to hear.

"You mean I have kept all of this and no one else was? Holy crap! It has finally happened. I am that guy in class." Henry said more shocked than anyone else.

A few chuckles came up like a sitcom. Susan gave it a moment before responding to Jezelle's question. "This isn't about stationing people across the city or setting up some form of secret metahuman ability files. It's simply about using the new talents and skills that this situation has caused to ensure the safety of as many people as possible."

"Well yeah, but I mean, obviously you'll have Mr. Flying Brick over there going around beating people up like he's been doing, but what's your idea for the rest of us?" Jezelle questioned.

"That will be partially up to what skills you have, and how committed you want to be," Davis said. There were a few confused faces before he continued. "We want to set up a group trained to use their skills in emergency situations, just as paramedics, fire fighters, even soldiers and other first responders are. If you want to be a full time Allied Agent, that's also up to you, if you meet the qualifications. Right now, 'Force' is the most notable one, true, but would rather he didn't hapazardly go around beating people up, as you put it."

Davis looked over at 'Force' before he could go into another one of his mini protests/rants. "Not my words, the words of some who don't approve of vigilantism and citizens taking it upon themselves to be law enforcement."

Jezelle looked thoughtful again, her concerns assuaged she proceeded to return to silence.

"I have been fighting bugs and terrorists mostly. Don't know if that really fits the whole 'beating people up' description. Been trying to figure out what has been going on. Been harder than you might think. people coming together to commit crime or the odd attack on a public building. But

I am up for what ever. Would be nice to know what I am going into rather than just reacting to the situation." Henry pointed out.

Davis started passing thick manila envelopes around the table. "Each of these has a summary of Allied Trust's history, a brief review of the role we've played in the events of the last week, a shorter one of what metas who have helped out have done, a typed up job description and an employment contract.

"For now, the paperwork presents it as an interim employment period for tempory positions. In practice, it will be a cross of training and internships. You will be paid for the entire training period, and have the option to either pull out, sign on for varied limited availibility or come on as a full worker." Davis paused his explanations. "Right now, we want all of you, and what you've already done has been more than enough for a resume and we can teach you what you lack."

Henry took the manila envelope and started to look through it. Seemed like a good enough gig. Sounded like he didn't even need to interview for the job. And a job is just what he needed. His last place blew up and now was shut down for the investigation. No chash flow made it a bad situation. He had savings sure but it wasn't enough to allow him to live like this for long. He needed the job and it sounded right up his ally. But first, it was time to read the contract.

Jezelle picked up the paraphenalia somewhat gingerly and skimmed them with a critical eye -or a blazingly fast one, at least, attempting to find any concerning/ambiguous phrases and what Allied has managed to do in regards to meta support.

She was more interested in what knowledge they'd gathered about this whole meta power situation, considering they'd have to both help and detain metas with some of the most dizzying powers. Part of her didn't even want to know what they were doing for teleporters -they presented far too high a security risk so it was inevitable, but the specifics had the potential to unnerve her. Like a collar for a dog, or a pen perhaps, except it's not like they'd know precisely what their improvised 'pen' might do to whoever ran into it, so-to-speak.

Having experienced an unstable existence had left a few scars on Jezelle; she didn't want to find out other ways her powers could go wrong.

The booklet went over the train and requirements. The reserve option was just 36 hours per month, in three hours blocks that could be relatively freely scheduled after the initial training was passed, something around three thousand dollars a month as compensation, with full health benefits. The training itself was more 12 hours weeks for the start, but that was only for six weeks. And it looked like the first week was a mix of self training and routine determination. Davis said as much. It was two way learning.

Full time was closer to a regular work week, and had additional training, but a much thicker pay check, though proportionally less, since not all of it counted as hazard pay.

The training wasn't going to be a problem. Well the physical part wouldn't be he didn't know what the other stuff would be but he hoped that there wouldn't be a test involved. It didn't really matter. This was something that he could do. Henry pulled out his pen and signed. Standing up he walked it over to Davis.

"Here you go." Henry said handing the paper over.

Jezelle twiddled a pen between her fingers for awhile in thought, looking a little grumpy while the pen tapped upon the table like a machine gun.

But she eventually decided her brain wasn't getting anywhere thinking about this and decided on a 'fly by the seat of your pants' approach.

"Fuck it," Jezelle said bluntly, signing away, figuring the reserve option was relatively convenient, all things considered.

They had Trevor at 'money'. Call him a capitalist, but you needed money to live. Also, he needed the training anyway. Henry, Force, was a big help, but he could keep taking up the mans time and he didn't have any means of repaying him. Maybe he could follow him on his patrols? But then again, he needed sleep.

Back to the money. Pay was good. Getting paid to learn the skills he wanted to was better. Getting paid for getting tangled up in the stuff he was already getting tangled up in was the best. Well, getting paid for nothing would be the best. So Best minus one. Trevor signed his time away.

After that, the meeting, it pretty much turned into light conversation and setting up the first on call/training meeting. Typical requests to get a banking sheet filled out for payroll reasons and all those other legal employment related complications

//so did they release us or are we still there talking to people about payroll?

//wonder if we should poast filler material until Grey's wellspring comes to life again

//filler of what though. I can post a lot about what ever but if we are supposed to leave and what not or stay and have idle chatter.

//well, grey hasn't shunted us anywhere, so either he's ridiculously lazy about starting the new stream or he's suffering a block, for the latter I'm assuming we can do whatever.

//Grey's an idiot.

//Got it. Sorta. Not really, but it's a start.

//we just wanted to know if there was going to be something else or is this was one of those free times.

<http://stream1.gifsoup.com/view6/3024754/batman-scene-transition-o.gif>

[Felicia]

Arrogance. Arrogance is the bane of all who consider themselves the best. Arrogance is the double edges sword that might allow one to cut down titans, but may strike down yourself as well. So what greater mark and source of arrogance is there than ones own abode. And what reaction is born when that sanctuary is violated by the stranger smirking to himself as he studies a drink form your small wine cabinet?

Felicia yawned when she woke up. Hair in disarray instead of the usual style she wore it in. Her stomach growled and she knew she needed caffeine. Along with food. Food first. She shifted some tiger ears and a lioness tail onto her body and donned a silken robe. She stretched and headed downstairs and was about to get breakfast ready for herself and her cat when she caught the scent of alcohol. Her wine. Eyes widening, she retracted her feline features and followed the smell, taking her phone in her hand. Peering into her living room, she gasped suddenly. "Who are you? How'd you get in here?"

"Why the door, of course," The man responded. He pulled two bottles from the cabinet, holding both in one hand by their necks. "Quite the selection, you have. I would have rathered a more aged vintage, but wine is wine. White or red?"

"Get out of my house or I'll call the police." Felicia said firmly. She held the phone to her ear, ready to dial 911.

"Will you really?" He said, smiling slowly. "You do know they might need to do a thorough search of your premise." He had a smug expression as he headed over to the rack/cupboard her wine glasses hung from/sat. "You wouldn't want them to stumble across a few misplaced belongings. That would be most unfortunate."

"How do you know about that?" Felicia asked, still staying where she was, but letting her true self shine through. That of a sleepy thief that needed breakfast. And caffeine. And maybe a good brushing for her slightly frazzled hair.

"Really? Not even a token resistance to the claim?"

"I just got up. I haven't even had my coffee yet. It's early." She yawned.

"And if I pulled out a badge, revealing myself to be an undercover police officer with a warrant to search your premises?" he asked, reaching for the breast pocket of his jacket, for he was in a suit.

"Well, there are some things you don't know about me." Felicia replied. "But I'll play along. How would one know about such a thing and then pin it to me? My wealth came from perfectly legitimate and clever uses of investments, stock options, and mutual funds. Though if you have a warrant, then I suppose you're welcome to the place. Would you like a cup of coffee?"

"After all the trouble of picking a wine? You aren't one of those that believe wine is only for the later portions of the day, are you?"

"I suppose so." Felicia said, running her hand through her hair to smooth it out a little. "I take it my ferocious guard cat didn't scare you off?" She asked, seeing her feline friend meow and walk into the room. Felicia sat down and left the cat to perch on her lap.

"I've seen far more terrifying," he man smirked. "In a way, that's part of what I'm here to talk to you about."

"Go on," Felicia said, taking a glass of her own and pouring some of the wine for herself.

He didn't respond until he poured the wine, insisting on serving Felicia's portion, going very slowly and clearly. He took a seat on her sofa, swirling his wine in his glass. "Simply put, you are in a most precarious position at the moment. While I suppose you have been doing well for yourself, you've also garnered the ire of a few select parties, who are quite torn on what to do about you."

"In my buisness, you make enemies," Felicia replied cryptically. "And your biggest enemy is always waiting for you to slip. The slightest one will do." She took a sip of it. "Any specific ones you can mention?" She asked, already thinking of some parties that might want her harmed. The meta hating groups, the people she stole from, some pissed off clients, the law in general, just to name a few.

"The wealthy tend also to be the powerful," was his response. "The powerful tend to remove those that irritate them. Or hire people like myself to deal with it."

"Well, whatever floats your boat," Felicia replied. "But considering you got the drop on me, I'm in no position to critisize." She took a sip of her wine and swirled it around in her glass. "Though I am curious. How did you know who I am? Or rather, how did your client know who I am?"

"Because you aren't as good as you think you are," was the simple response.

"Hmmm." Felicia replied equally simply. "Well there is always room for improvement. Still, what did your client say to do to me?" her cat made a noise and poked her thigh, the claws sinking through it to poke her. "Huh... 'Scuse me for a second. I have something I need to attend to." She picked her cat up, set him down on the sofa next to where she was sitting and went to fix his breakfast. "Can I get you anything while I'm up?"

"No, I am quite fine with the wine," the man said. "As for what was said. It's simply two options. Either your accept their 'request', or they 'solve' the issue."

"All right. What would this request be?" Felicia called from the kitchen, the sound of small, hard things hitting a porciline bowl could be heard and she came back. She set the bowl full of cat food down and the feline purred, rubbing against Felicia's leg before ignoring her and began his feast. Felicia sat down once more.

"Simple. An infiltration of a group. Certainly you can manage that."

"Which group? And define 'infiltration'." Felicia said.

"The city authorities are starting to crack down on the metahuman crimes, and rumour has it that they are attempting to form a metahuman response force."

"And I'm to join this, not just sneak into meetings under cover of stealth." Felicia said. "All right. Anything in particular you want me to get from them?"

"Come now, you're a smart girl. Can't you come up with some ideas of why?" he smirked.

"Fair enough. How do I pass this information on to you? Or will you 'be in touch'?" Felicia asked smiling.

He pulled lower end model smart phone from his pocket and set it on the table. "There is a number in the contacts. Weekly updates."

Felicia took it and set it aside. "Thank you. Do we know when and where this group meets?"

"I'm more surprised you don't, considering your choice of career," the man commented. "Give you another week or two and you would have probably gotten rid of yourself."

Felicia said nothing, though her lip twinged slightly. "I'm merely asking for the news from the horse's mouth. Covering all my bases."

"I trust you are aware of who Allied Trust is?"

"I've heard of it," She replied.

"Then you know who you will be infiltrating."

"I suppose I'll need to make it seem like I'm taking an impromptu vacation." Felicia mused.

"Well, that's all the questions I have for now. I'll make my first report in a week as promised."

[Tasha]

Tasha knew she had to leave the house today. The costume she had begun wouldn't win any halloween prizes but the shopping trip the previous day had given her a breath of fresh air. So after breakfast and hygiene, she left the apartment to go stroll in the local park. It was a relatively pleasant time of day. And today the grass felt even better beneath her feet. The sunlight felt invigorating.

The stroll was invigorating, even pleasant. Letting her feet guide her, she found herself drawn to towards the more tree dense portion of the park.

Tasha considered where she was going, but just let her feelings guide her as she did her morning stroll. She even chose to skip and jump at some parts. But she remained on the grass. By this point she had taken off her sandals, she could swear she could taste the soil.

Notice Check: **mew77** rolled a die with 20 sides. The die showed: $20 + 1 = 21$ Notice

Whispers drifted around her. Soft whispers, on the very edges of her awareness. They would have been lost in the typical bustle and hustle of a more trafficked area, but here, where it was still and quiet, it was noticeable. She couldn't make out words, or even the sounds, really, for that matter, but she, her mind, interpreted it as whispers. A lot of whispers, like a lot of people whispering all at once.

She couldn't make out what was being said but the whispers were distracting...but also haunting. Tasha listened more.

Notice: **mew77** rolled a die with 20 sides. The die showed: $11 + 1 = 12$

The whispers were still there, if that was what they were. But he couldn't make them out as well as she was before. Still mysterious though.

Tasha moved on, that was enough strangeness to last her for a while. Though she did walk slower. She continued through the park heading for the outdoor cafe they had.

There were people at the cafe. Doing cafe things. Like wallowing in the wifi.

Tasha didn't really feel like getting a drink just yet, but did sit on the patio and bought herself a newspaper. It seemed right to at least figure out what was up these days. She also figured she should try and see that doctor Jezelle mentioned. Though the real issue was the talking grove...alas

The newspaper had mostly the typical. Stories of pop singers and stars. Political movements, the latest action from the local councillor Isaac Berkins was on the third page. There was also something from the ACR about a hive containment and cleansing from a few nights before. Only a eight deaths were confirmed. A few news on metarelated crimes, MAMA's actions and such. And the typical local fluff pieces.

Tasha wondered how many of these incidences had anything to do with the group that Jezelle mentioned. She wasn't certain but the tea she drank didn't feel as fresh today. And the wierd whispers in the woods. Alas, wierdness seemed to be the norm since the second Big Bang as the paper called it. She really wasn't sure how much of this she wanted to buy into...She however did admire Heidi's willingness to accept everything so easily and even thrive. And Jez, then again Jezelle had much more time to develop her...powers. Maybe that was it...she needed to embrace the difference rather than fear it as she did the whispers in the woods. For the last three days she felt like she was going crazy, but yesterday just shopping with friends, and...no one even gave her viney hair a second glance...even when she forgot the headscarf. She called up Heidi on her cell phone. She needed to know how Heidi coped so easily.

The phone rang a few times before Heidi answered. "Mushi mushi Ta-chan!"

"Ohaiyo godaimasu sodesga?", Tasha replied, "And I think that's the extent of my japanese, and I dunno what I just said...hey what's up? I'm just getting some fresh air...and the strangest thing happened in the park this morning."

"Just manning the store at the moment. Not many people in, surprisingly," Heidi said. "What happened to you? What is fun?"

"I was just strolling through the park today...when all of a sudden I heard these whispers in the woods...but there was no one around...it was creepy...I'm currently at that new outdoor cafe that opened up...seems the world really has gone crazy since the emergence of metas...I was wondering...how do you cope so well with all the strangeness?", Tasha asked her friend.

"By not treating it as strange," Heidi said. "Hold on a moment!" There was a clatter, as if she set the phone down and Tasha could hear the voices in the distance. About half a minute later Heidi's voice got back. "Okay, back. Like I was saying; it's not strange anymore, it's just the way it is."

"I suppose so...in that case I think I need your help in getting used to all this...I was thinking of spending some time developing my new...um...abilities...I thought it would be good to get someone experienced to help me out.", Tasha said to Heidi.

"All I can do is change my make up around," Heidi giggled. "Not sure if I'd be much help."

"Still that's way more than I've ever done, and that thing you did with your nails was pretty interesting too...if anything I need a mentor or something at this stage.", Tasha said.

"I did a bit of reading, actually," Heidi said. "Some of the guys in the META lovers club are in the sciences are love nothing more than coming up with theories."

"I need practice more than I need theories I think.", Tasha said, "But maybe you can get me in touch with them."

"You've never done a science course have you?" Heidi said cheerful as ever. "I haven't really either, but apparently you need a theory before you can practice. Makes sense. You can't make hair dye if you don't know what thinks make a blonde go blue. Have a good day! Come again!" the last part sounded like it was towards someone else. "And haven't you seen the flyers? We put them up all over the campus."

"Eh fair enough...sorry...well, in that case it'd be important I get in touch with the META lovers club...I'll check out the flyers sometime...in any case...I'm at that cafe in the park if you wanna hang out.", Tasha said to Heidi.

"I'd love to!" Heidi said happily. Then her voice dropped. "But I can't. I'm at work. You know what you can do? Go walk around and pretend I'm there with you!"

"Works for me.", Tasha said, "And hey, I'll see ya around sometime yeah?"

"Later Tash!" And she hung up.

Tasha finished her tea then returned to her leisurely stroll in the park.

[Alex]

Alex woke up in a mildly apathetic mood; got especially angsty after he had taken note of the environment. In hospital again, and this time not only he was hurt, but also the equipment he had at home, which sucked so hard that only his wounds probably prevented himself from going on a rampage of cutting through the blankets in frustration. Another broken device, goddamnit. After he finally got one... And he got his leg broken...

He just tugged on a blanket a little and curled up. More sleep. Away from that. Besides, the lady promised to pay for damage and he had a backup of his computer files in the internet. So it was much better than he imagined himself. He reasoned his mild sadness away for a while (not that if it won't come back really soon, just give it a reason) and thus he could probably do something actually useful now.

Alex spent a while more in the bed, under the blankets, in half dreamy state before actually deciding to get out. Took off the blanket and took on the clothing. Stared down the wheelchair he was given - it hit his heart as well. Great. He's now a cripple, too. It's not like he was leaving his actual chair a lot anyway, but that was like salting the wound... No, actually, salt is kinda cool... Uh, insult to injury? Whatever. He was in the chair now, and rolled himself over to canteen to consume some food, which he got over with swiftly.

His mysterious healing was noticed by him a while later. His leg felt oddly better since the food, but he just noticed it. He decided to ask one of the doctors about it; or rather, about his current health state.

Irbynx rolled a die with 20 sides. The die showed: 12 5:25 PM

Irbynx rolled a die with 20 sides. The die showed: 16

//roll your recovering checks to see how far along you are.

The doctors were unsettled. They might have torn their hair a bit, broken a clipboard or two, maybe even muttered about needing a drink, but there was no denying it. The kid was recovering. Two broken legs, but simple fractures at the moment. Most of the bruising (as far as they could tell with all that fur) cleared up. In the end, they went with Diagnosis 8B: Because Meta.

So a day after ending up in the hospital, he was being discharged. In a wheelchair still, but discharged. They told him not to use it as an excuse to stop by often. Still... discharged. Some body was hitting the bar that night.

And so the weirdness on wheels left the hospital, confused a little, but more happy than he usually was. He decided to roll over to somewhere; not his home, for now, because his computer was a goner, so he had nothing to do there. He might probably go for a walk (ride?) in a nearby park, scaring the hell out of people there, or go for an internet cafe (he decided against that; he still didn't trust himself enough for that). He still needed to talk to people... Say that he's good at least. Although they could probably call his home if they care and his dad could explain it.

So, park it is. And not a dark, secluded area of it. But first, he decided to roll himself over to buy himself a book to read and a notepad with mechanical pencil to write some of his ideas upon; he had some cash his father left him. He made sure he told about that to his father (he asked for a phone call before heading off) and then he went over, got the stuff he needed and rolled over to bus stop to catch a bus for a park; and then, in silence (and misery), he rolled himself over to it, not going too deep in; with how much he was in danger within few months, he wanted to have that false sense of security when there were a lot of people nearby. He wasn't even concerned that his looks may be problematic; he didn't even think of meta-haters, too. He just rolled himself over to somewhere and pulled out the book, starting to read, wondering about his next actions.

//roll me a few dex checks. First time in a wheelchair.

//Few being?

Alex rolled a die for a dex check with 20 sides. The die showed: 1 + 3

Alex rolled a die for a dex check with 20 sides. The die showed: 18 + 3

Alex rolled a die for a dex check with 20 sides. The die showed: 13 + 3

Alex rolled a die for a dex check with 20 sides. The die showed: 10 + 3

It took him a bit of time and practice to adjust to the wheelchair, managing to almost take a nasty spill the first tricky maneuver he tried, but he managed to tip the chair back on it's wheels before he spilled out and hit the ground. He just got out of the hospital. After a few false starts as to what to spend his day doing, he finally settled on heading to the park with his book. To some, that was archaic and rustic. To others that was a lovely day. Albie fell closer to the rustic end of the scale.

[same park as Tasha?]

[I suppose so, he doesn't have much choice in that one.]

[So now what do you do as you sit in a park on your wheelchair]

[Well, he does read. What else could he do? Maybe look around from time to time, but not really move around a lot]

[Then we wait on mew]

Tasha's stroll was interrupted by another most curious sight. An anthro cat in a wheelchair exploring the park. Normally she'd look the other way and keep going but after the whispering in the woods, and finding out about Heidi and Jez's powers, she really had to know...She approached the anthro cat. "Um...hello there, what brings you here?", she asked. Her viney hair was still hard to keep under control.

Alex was mildly startled by the sudden voice, and he looked up at Tasha, blinking, one of his ears close to his head. "Me?" he asked. He already assumed that he's totally going to get into some trouble now. For sure. Like, a hospital visit grade one, because that's the only stuff that started to happen to him as of late.

"Yeah, it's not every day you see an anthro cat in a wheelchair...the world's gotten crazier these days....by the way, I'm Tasha...you?", Tasha said.

"That is quite a random even if you look out for oddities..." Alex said, getting his book into a half-closed state, "...Alex. You just wanted to talk about my weird weirdness, yeah?"

"Eh wierdness is in everyone these days...", Tasha said holding a strand of her viney hair, it was already covered in tiny leaves and flowers.

"Yeah..." Alex muttered, "You've got leaves in your hair, by the way."

"It's a little more than that...ever since my skin turned green I've never been the same...", Tasha said.

Alex blinked and tilted his head to side, "Wait, so these are... Oh... Huh..." he said and looked at Tasha from up and down, figuring out something, "So you are turning into a plant?"

"Or something yeah...and you turned into a cat boy I guess...", Tasha said to him.

Alex decided not to speak of his other powers yet, so he just nodded in reply. "Yeah. And then became a bad luck magnet..."

"Oh that's unfortunate....my bad day started after the big bang at the con that day...", Tasha said, "You? I can understand if you'd rather not talk about it."

"Earlier," Alex said, "It's not really a bad day, it's just that the others everywhere seem to have gotten just enough powers to break everything in my body every once in a while..."

"It's gotten that bad? I mean the stuff on the news, the giant fish, the bad people...all of it huh...", Tasha asked.

"It really did," Alex muttered, "The bad people, the people that can't control their powers, the people that set me on fire, the giant bugs, the friends that make waterslides of death..."

//that was an accident and you know it.

//Still :P

"You have a friend that made waterslides of death? And fire? Wow...giant bugs...just what is happening to this city?", Tasha said with some concern.

"I have no idea myself," Alex said and sighed, "At least the bugs were stopped, kinda. ACR or something handles them," he added, deciding not to mention his direct involvement with several anti-bug operations himself, "It's true, I think they were even shown in the news. These things even attacked the city several times..."

"Ah those broadcasts...it was freaky to say the least...so whatcha up to out and about?", Tasha wondered aloud.

"Nothing..." Alex said sadly, "I got out of the hospital from my recent trauma just a while ago, trying to relax. My computer's broken, so I took a book. Meh."