#144 / THE BEST DOUBLE-SIZED FINAL ISSUE OF ALL TIME

INVINCIBLE™

THE END OF ALL THINGS

PART TWELVE OF TWELVE

image

SKYBOUND

INVINCIBLE

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MARKY, I KNOW YOU'VE NOTICED BY NOW YOU'RE NOT LIKE NORMAL KIDS. YOUR MOTHER CHOSE TO AVOID THE SUBJECT, BUT NOW THAT SHE'S GONE AND YOU'VE GOTTEN YOUR POWERS... IT'S TIME YOU KNEW THE TRUTH.
YOU'RE OLD ENOUGH FOR ME TO TELL YOU WHERE YOU REALLY COME FROM.

MILLIONS OF MILES FROM HERE, OUT IN DEEP SPACE, THERE WAS A PLANET CALLED *VILTRUM*.
YOUR GRANDFATHER WAS BORN ON THIS PLANET.

VILTRUMITES WERE A VIOLENT RACE WHO VALUED *STRENGTH* ABOVE ALL ELSE.
TO RID THEMSELVES OF ANY WEAKNESS, THEY SLAUGHTERED EACH OTHER UNTIL THEY WERE BRED INTO THE VILTRUMITES OF TODAY.

EVENTUALLY, THE VILTRUMITES UNITED AND TURNED THEIR ATTENTION OUTWARD, ESTABLISHING THE *VILTRUM EMPIRE*.

AN EMPIRE THAT CONTINUED TO EXPAND AT AN ASTOUNDING RATE FOR NEARLY *ONE THOUSAND* YEARS.

UNTIL THEIR ENEMIES MADE A WEAPON CAPABLE OF HURTING THEM.
THEY MADE THE *SCOURGE* VIRUS.

FOR DECADES, THIS VIRUS RAVAGED THE VILTRUMITES.

EACH YEAR, IT WOULD TAKE COUNTLESS LIVES, EITHER BY SUCCUMBING TO THE VIRUS ITSELF, OR BEING MURDERED IN THE WEAKENED STATE CAUSED BY SURVIVING THE VIRUS.

THE DEATH TOLL GREW SO HIGH, THEIR BODIES FORMED A RING AROUND THE PLANET VILTRUM, MAKING IT A MONUMENT TO THE FALLEN.
IN THE END, THEY LOST NINETY-NINE-POINT-NINE PERCENT OF THE POPULATION. THE VILTRUMITES WERE LEFT ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION.

A PERIOD OF UNREST FOLLOWED.
THE VILTRUM LEADER, ARGALL, WAS KILLED. MORE ON HIM LATER.

EVENTUALLY, A NEW LEADER EMERGED.
GRAND REGENT THRAGG WAS MADE RULER UNTIL ARGALL'S HEIR COULD BE LOCATED. DO YOU SEE WHERE THIS IS GOING?

THAT'S WHEN A NEW PLAN EMERGED TO REBUILD THE VILTRUM EMPIRE.
AGENTS WOULD BE SENT OUT, ALONE, TO LIVE AMONG THE PEOPLE OF ALIEN WORLDS, TO SEE IF THEY WERE... COMPATIBLE WITH VILTRUMITE DNA.

IT'S THIS MISSION THAT BROUGHT YOUR GRANDFATHER TO EARTH.

AND LED TO ME BEING BORN.

I WAS JUST LIKE YOU. I HAD NO IDEA THAT I WAS A VILTRUMITE. UNTIL ONE DAY WHEN MY FATHER SAT ME DOWN, LIKE I AM WITH YOU NOW, AND EXPLAINED EVERYTHING TO ME.
AND TOLD ME I'D GET POWERS.
THANKFULLY, HE WAS ABLE TO DO THIS BEFORE MY POWERS KICKED IN... I GUESS I WAS KIND OF A LATE BLOOMER.

ONCE I GOT MY POWERS, I HAD MANY ADVENTURES AND DID LOTS OF GOOD AS INVINCIBLE.
YOU CAN PROBABLY READ ALL KINDS OF THINGS ABOUT ME ON THE INTERNET.

YOUR GRANDFATHER AND I DIDN'T AGREE AT FIRST. HE WANTED TO CONQUER THIS PLANET FOR THE VILTRUM EMPIRE, BUT EVENTUALLY HE SAW MY SIDE OF THINGS.

TOGETHER, WITH THE HELP OF OTHERS, WE DEFEATED THRAGG AND DISCOVERED YOUR GRANDFATHER WAS THE RIGHTFUL HEIR OF ARGALL, AND THE TRUE LEADER OF THE VILTRUM EMPIRE.

HIS RULE WAS LARGELY A TIME OF PEACE. HE PRESIDED OVER THE VILTRUMITES AS THEY LIVED ON EARTH IN SECRET, CHARGED WITH GROWING THE EMPIRE.
IN A ROUNDABOUT WAY... THIS LED TO YOU BEING BORN.

AS A SHOW OF COMPASSION, YOUR GRANDFATHER ALLOWED THRAGG TO LIVE, BUT THAT EVENTUALLY LED TO HIS DEATH.
ALTHOUGH I WAS ABLE TO AVENGE HIM.

NOW, I'M THE LEADER OF THE VILTRUM EMPIRE, AND I HAVE CHOSEN TO LEAD BY MY FATHER'S EXAMPLE. TO SHOW THE POTENTIAL IN US AS A PEOPLE.
TO PROVE THAT WE CAN BE A FORCE FOR GOOD IN THE UNIVERSE--AND NOT SIMPLY THE VIOLENT CONQUERING RACE THAT NEARLY LED TO OUR DEMISE.
I PLAN ON MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE... FOR EVERY LIVING BEING.

I'M SORRY I WASN'T THERE FOR YOU, MARKY. MY RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR MOTHER WAS VERY COMPLICATED. I'M SORRY THAT YOU BARELY EVEN KNOW ME.
THIS IS VERY... DIFFICULT FOR ME.

SCOTT HAS TOLD ME THAT YOU'RE ALL STAYING BEHIND, YOU'RE NOT GOING WITH US WHEN WE LEAVE THE PLANET.
I'M GOING TO RESPECT HIS WISHES, BECAUSE I THINK IF YOU HAVE A LIFE LIKE MINE, HERE, IT WILL BE GOOD FOR YOU.
THERE IS SO MUCH YOU WILL EXPERIENCE, THERE'S SO MUCH TO LEARN.
I'M SORRY I WON'T BE HERE FOR THAT.
BUT I KNOW YOU'LL BE IN GOOD HANDS.
WHEN THE TIME COMES, YOU'RE GOING TO DO A LOT OF GOOD HERE.

BUT THIS ISN'T GOODBYE. I'LL BE COMING BACK TO EARTH FROM TIME TO TIME.
I WILL CHECK IN ON YOU.
...
MARKY, DO YOU UNDERSTAND ALL THIS?

...

WOW.
I'M ACTUALLY A SPACE ALIEN?

THE REBELS SURRENDERED, THE KINGDOM SECURED... BUT YOU... YOU COULDN'T STOP. IT MUST BE TRUE, YOUR FATHER'S CURSE... IT FLOWS THROUGH YOUR VEINS NOW THAT HE IS NOT ALIVE TO CONTAIN IT.
I AM SORRY FOR WHAT I HAVE DONE HERE. I LOST CONTROL. THE RAGE WITHIN CANNOT BE CONTAINED. I, TOO, MUST NOW SEEK OUT WORTHY OPPONENTS UNTIL I MEET MY END.
THEY SAY IT WAS A VILTRUMITE WHO WAS FINALLY ABLE TO BEST YOUR BELOVED FATHER IN BATTLE.
VILTRUMITE?
THEN I KNOW WHO HAS BROUGHT THIS CURSE UPON ME. IT IS DECIDED. I WILL NOT REST UNTIL EVERY VILTRUMITE IN THE UNIVERSE IS DEAD...
...OR I AM.

I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN DO THIS.
WHAT?

I'VE GOT A SPACESHIP FILLED WITH SUPERPOWERED ALIENS... WAITING IN ORBIT FOR ME TO JOIN THEM SO I CAN START THIS... GRAND MISSION.
BUT I SEE THIS BOY HERE AND I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK... DOES HE NEED ME?

A WHOLE LOT OF PEOPLE NEED YOU, MARK. INCLUDING EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD ON THIS PLANET.
BUT THEY NEED YOU TO DO THE RIGHT THING FOR THEM, NOT THE THING THAT MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD.

I DON'T THINK THE VILTRUMITE EMPIRE BELONGS ON EARTH... AND YOU'VE... YOU'VE MADE YOUR CHOICE.
DON'T MAKE THIS HARDER, MOM. I DIDN'T CHOOSE ONE OR THE OTHER. I CHOSE WHAT WAS BEST FOR BOTH... AND I WANTED TO TAKE SCOTT AND MARKY AND HIS SISTER WITH ME.
I CAN'T TAKE THEM PRISONER, I CAN'T FORCE THEM TO COME WITH US.

GO. SAVE THE UNIVERSE. DO YOUR THING. HE'S GOT THE ONLY FATHER HE'S EVER KNOWN, AND NOW HE'S GOT ME. HE'S IN GOOD HANDS.
AND IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'RE NEVER COMING BACK. TERRA'S GOING TO NEED TO VISIT HER GRANDMA.
AND WHO KNOWS... MAYBE IN FIFTEEN YEARS MARKY WILL BE REMINDING YOU WHAT IT IS TO BE HUMAN...
OH, GOD... DON'T SAY THAT.

OKAY, THANKS FOR GIVING ME SOME TIME WITH HIM BEFORE I LEFT. IF YOU NEED ANYTHING WHILE I'M GONE, CONTACT THE IMMORTAL. HE'LL BE WATCHING OUT FOR YOU.
THANKS FOR EVERYTHING, MARK. THANKS FOR UNDERSTANDING. I KNOW THIS HASN'T BEEN EASY.
I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF LEAVING YOU BEHIND, BUT MAYBE EARTH COULD USE A COUPLE VILTRUMITES.

YOU TAKE CARE OF YOUR DAD AND YOUR SISTER, OKAY?
AND WORK ON YOUR POWERS. WHEN I COME BACK, I WANT TO SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO.
OKAY.

I, UM...
IT'S OKAY.
WE'RE GOING TO BE OKAY.
IT'S... YOU CAN GO...

THANKS FOR SETTING ME STRAIGHT. YOU WERE ALWAYS GOOD FOR THAT.
THIS UNIFORM LOOKS RIDICULOUS. I'LL NEVER GET USED TO YOU WEARING STUFF LIKE THIS IN OUR BACKYARD... IT'S WEIRD.
YOU COME BACK SOON, OKAY?

I WILL. I MEAN, EARTH HAS THE BEST COMICS.
I LOVE YOU, MOM. YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO COME WITH US?

EARTH IS MY HOME. ALIEN PLANETS ARE FUN... BUT NOT WITHOUT YOUR FATHER.
I BELONG HERE.

WELL, IT'S GOOD TO KNOW YOU'LL BE KEEPING AN EYE ON THEM.
OKAY, THEN... WELL...
MARK, PLEASE. THIS ISN'T GOODBYE FOREVER... YOU CAN GO.

WELL... HE'S GONE. IT'S JUST US NOW, KIDS.
I'M CONFUSED. ARE YOU STILL MY DAD, OR IS HE?

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN YOUR DAD. I'LL ALWAYS BE YOUR DAD. NOTHING IS CHANGING THERE.
YOU'VE JUST GOT AN EXTRA DAD NOW. IN SPACE.

SPACE DAD...

REAL DAD.
C'MON... WE SHOULD GIVE YOUR NEW GRANDMA SOME PEACE AND QUIET. LET'S GO HOME.

P.D.'s COMICS
TAILOR

I DIDN'T MEAN TO BREAK HER TABLET. I SAID I WAS SORRY, SHE WAS JUST SO MEAN. I'M GLAD THEY LEFT.
CUT TERRA SOME SLACK, MARKUS. SHE'S NOT USED TO HAVING SIBLINGS AROUND. WE SHOULD SEND MOLLY BACK WITH HER FOR A FEW MONTHS, SEE HOW SHE LIKES IT!
OH... SHE'D HATE THAT!

WHAT IS THIS PLACE? YOU PROMISED ME A SURPRISE, GRANDMA! IS THIS GOING TO BE A CLOTHES SURPRISE? BECAUSE, YUCK.
YOU'RE GOING TO LIKE THIS-- QUIET.
EXCUSE ME, BUT WE'RE LOOKING FOR ART ROSENBAUM. IS HE IN TODAY?

ART STILL OWNS THE PLACE, BUT HE DOESN'T REALLY COME IN ANYMORE.
I ASSURE YOU, I CAN HELP YOU WITH WHATEVER YOU MAY NEED.

CAN YOU CALL HIM? THIS ONE IS SPECIAL, I THINK.
ART WOULD... HE'D WANT TO DO THIS ONE HIMSELF. TRUST ME.

I DON'T KNOW... HE'S PROBABLY NOT GOING TO--

CALL HIM.
TRUST ME.
WE'LL WAIT.

OH... MY... WORD...
SO THIS IS... YOUR GRANDSON?
ART, IT IS MY PLEASURE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO MARKUS MURPHY, MY BELOVED GRANDSON.
IT'S AN HONOR TO MEET YOU, MARKUS. I KNEW YOUR GRANDFATHER... AND I KNEW YOUR FATHER.
HOW'D YOU KNOW THEM?
IF YOU CAN KEEP A SECRET BETWEEN THE TWO OF US...
...I'M THE GUY WHO MADE THEIR COSTUMES.
OH MY GOD!
THANK YOU, GRANDMA!
THANK YOU!
I FIGURED YOU WERE OLD ENOUGH. I'M PROUD OF YOU FOR WAITING THIS LONG. YOUR UNCLE OLIVER WAS SIGNIFICANTLY YOUNGER THAN YOU ARE NOW WHEN HE STARTED.
I'M GOING TO HAVE FUN WITH THIS ONE...
I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT TO DO WITH YOU.

WAHOO!

OH, MAN!
FIRST FIGHT!
FIRST FIGHT!

THUOOM!
WE'VE GOT THIS, KID! IF YOU WANT TO WATCH--JUST STAY OUT OF THE WAY.
I'M TOUGH--YOU'LL SEE!
I CAN HELP!
KROOM!!

WRAMM!

SPAK! SPAK! SPAK!
THIS KID HAS SPIRIT!
CLAWS ARE TRIMMED, YOUNG ONE!

WRAMM!
THANKS, GUN GUY!

WRATH?! A LITTLE HELP?! GET YOUR BROTHER IN LINE!

VENGEANCE, PLEASE! YOU'VE LOST YOUR WAY! WE USE THE DARKNESS TO GIVE US POWER! YOU CAN'T ALLOW IT TO CONTROL YOU!
BREAK YOUR LINK--RELEASE THE POWER BEFORE IT CONSUMES YOU!

I CAN SEE INTO THE VOID AND THE VOID STARES BACK INTO ME! I FEEL MY BODY SURGING WITH POWER!
POWER!
POWER!
POWER!

GRAAAAAAGHH!!!
AAAAAAAAHHH!!!

WRAMM!
HOME? IS THIS HOME?!
EARTH?!
I'M ALIVE? I'M--

DARKWING?
DARKWING--!

WHO IS THAT GUY?
IS HE A GUY YOU GUYS KNOW?
WAS HE INSIDE THAT BIG SCARY GUY?
DARKWING HAS BEEN MISSING SINCE THE INVINCIBLE WAR. WE THOUGHT HE WAS DEAD.

I READ ABOUT THE INVINCIBLE WAR.
THAT WAS WHEN A BUNCH OF EVIL VERSIONS OF MY DAD ATTACKED THE PLANET.

YOU'RE INVINCIBLE'S SON?
I GUESS THAT EXPLAINS THE COSTUME. YOU GO BY INVINCIBLE?

MAYBE EVENTUALLY... KID INVINCIBLE FOR NOW? I GUESS?
I HADN'T REALLY THOUGHT ABOUT IT MUCH.

WE HAVE TO GET VENGEANCE CONTAINED BEFORE HE WAKES UP... AND GET DARKWING TO A DOCTOR. THANKS FOR YOUR HELP, KID INVINCIBLE.
YOU DID GOOD.

SCREEK!
SCREEK!
NO, CHAINSAW. DAD'S NOT GOING TO BE HERE, EITHER. HE'S BEEN ERASED FROM THE MULTIVERSE.
THERE'S JUST... THERE'S NONE OF HIM LEFT.
THIS IS THE DIMENSION OF HIS GREATEST ENEMY... MARK GRAYSON.

UNITED STATES
PENTAGON
Parking in Rear

VENGEANCE IS LOCKED AWAY. HIS CONNECTION TO THE SHADOW REALM SEEMS TO BE BROKEN.
WHO KNEW HE AND HIS SISTER WERE DRAWING THEIR POWERS FROM THE SAME PLACE DARKWING WAS STRANDED ALL THOSE YEARS?
CRAZY.
I KNOW I QUESTIONED YOU BRINGING WRATH ONTO THE TEAM, BUT SHE'S BEEN A WELCOME ADDITION TO THE GUARDIANS. GOOD JOB THERE.
NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME...

THANKS. I'LL--

AMANDA, WAIT. IF WE COULD TALK, BEFORE YOU GO. JUST FOR A LITTLE WHILE. I'M...
I'M EXTREMELY LONELY.

YOU LIKE TO TELL YOURSELF YOU MADE A SACRIFICE TO SAVE THE WORLD, THAT THIS HAD TO BE DONE... AND YOU ENDED UP LIVING IN A TUBE AGAIN... ALONE, LIKE SOME KIND OF MARTYR.
THE TRUTH IS, THIS IS THE WORLD YOU WANTED. DEAL WITH IT.

I WILL.

HOMEWORK'S ALL DONE? DISHES? ROOM CLEAN?
YEP, YEP AND YEP!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOTTEN YOU IN SUCH A GOOD MOOD TODAY, BUT I LIKE IT.

SO CAN I?
YEAH... GO FOR YOUR NIGHTLY "WALK".

JUST DON'T FLY TOO FAR, SON.

AW, MAN... WHEN AM I GONNA GET POWERS?

HEY, GRANDPA.
TODAY WAS COOL. I FOUGHT A BIG SUPERVILLAIN FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER.

I GOT A COSTUME. IT'S AWESOME. A LOT LIKE THE ONE DAD USED TO WEAR.
YOU'D LIKE IT... I MEAN, IF YOU LIKED DAD'S COSTUME... I DON'T KNOW.
NOLAN
GRAYSON

I WISH I GOT TO MEET YOU. I KNOW YOU DID BAD STUFF SOMETIMES... BUT DAD TALKS ABOUT YOU LIKE YOU WERE JUST THE COOLEST.
MY REAL DAD ISN'T THE BIGGEST FAN...

ANYWAY... I'M KIND OF THE NEW INVINCIBLE NOW. WHICH IS PRETTY COOL.

FEELS FUNNY, THAT NAME... ESPECIALLY BECAUSE IT'S SOMETHING I KNOW I'M NOT.

MY DAD'S OUT THERE... FIXING THE UNIVERSE. I THINK ABOUT THAT EVERY TIME I LOOK UP AT THE STARS...
...BECAUSE EACH LITTLE DOT OF LIGHT IN THE SKY IS A PLACE HE'S MADE BETTER. I LOOK UP... AND I SEE ALL HE'S DONE.

HE CHOSE INVINCIBLE BECAUSE IT WAS SOMETHING HE FELT LIKE HE WAS.
I CHOSE IT BECAUSE IT'S WHAT I'LL HAVE TO BE IF I'M EVER TO LIVE UP TO HIS LEGACY...
...BECAUSE HE TURNED OUT TO BE SO MUCH MORE THAN THAT.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

EVERYWHERE.

IT'S NOT FAIR!
I CAN TAKE CARE OF IT-- I CAN FEED IT-- I'M RESPONSIBLE NOW! I'M EIGHT YEARS OLD! WHY CAN'T I KEEP ONE?!
WE'VE ALREADY GONE OVER THIS! IT WILL DESTROY YOUR ROOM-- IT LITERALLY POOPS LAVA!

I ALREADY KNOW HOW TO FIGHT!
AND GENERAL KREGG WILL TEACH YOU TO FIGHT BETTER.
I CAN'T MOVE IN THIS UNIFORM! THIS SUCKS!

HE BROKE IT! MARKUS IS A JERK!
I HATE COMING BACK TO EARTH. EVERYTHING HERE IS STUPID!
Terra
CUT YOUR BROTHER SOME SLACK-- HE DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO WORK IT.
HE'S NOT MY BROTHER!

WE'RE OUT HERE HELPING PEOPLE! THAT'S WHAT WE'RE SUPPOSED TO DO, RIGHT? I DON'T CARE WHAT THEY DID--THEY WERE HUNGRY--THEY WERE SCARED--THEY WERE DYING!
THEY DESERVE ANOTHER CHANCE!
OKAY, OKAY--CALM DOWN, AND WE'LL WORK IT OUT.

YOU ARE MY DAUGHTER! I'M THE EMPEROR OF OUR PEOPLE! YOU HAVE TO SET A BETTER EXAMPLE, TERRA!
THAT BOY WAS BENEATH YOU.
AND BESIDE ME AND ON TOP OF ME AND BEHIND ME!
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT!

I DIDN'T... I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW YOU'D APPLIED TO THE CONSERVATION ORDER.
I SENT IN MY APPLICATION UNDER A FAKE NAME. I DIDN'T WANT ANY FAVORITISM BECAUSE OF WHO MY FATHER IS.
I'M SO EXCITED! ONCE I'VE COMPLETED THE PROGRAM, I'LL BE TRAVELING FROM PLANET TO PLANET, MAKING SURE WHATEVER SOLAR COLLECTORS OR OCEAN TURBINES OR FOOD SYNTHESIZERS WE'VE INSTALLED ARE WORKING PROPERLY AND IMPROVING LIVES.
AND I CAN WEAR WHATEVER I WANT!

MANY ASK ME WHY I HAVE BROKEN WITH TRADITION AND NOT WORN A CEREMONIAL VILTRUMITE MUSTACHE.

TO ME, IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN A SIGN OF OUR HOME WORLD, OF THE PLANET *VILTRUM.*
I AM NOT FROM VILTRUM. I AM FROM EARTH.
AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, OUR HOME PLANET WAS DESTROYED BY MYSELF, MY FATHER, AND THAEDUS. SOME OF YOU WERE *THERE.*
WE WERE NOT ON THE SAME SIDE THAT DAY. MANY THINGS HAVE CHANGED SINCE THAT DAY.
I HOPE THINGS WILL *CONTINUE* TO CHANGE.

TO THAT END, I LIKE TO THINK THE OLD WAYS DIED WITH VILTRUM. WE DON'T HAVE TO KEEP DOING THINGS AS THEY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN DONE.
I SHAVE MY FACE IN HONOR OF *THAT.* IN HONOR OF OUR NEW WAY... A WAY OF *PEACE.*

WE GO BACK A LONG WAY, DON'T WE?
WE DO.
I REMEMBER WHEN WE FIRST MET--HOW YOU STOPPED OUR FIGHT... HOW YOU TALKED TO ME. HOW WE RESOLVED OUR CONFLICT... PEACEFULLY.

YOU COULD ALMOST SAY THAT MOMENT... ALL THE WAY BACK THEN... WAS A PRECURSOR TO WHAT YOU'RE DOING NOW, WITH YOUR PEOPLE.
IT'S REMARKABLE, IT TRULY IS.

I DON'T THINK YOU ASKED ME HERE FOR COMPLIMENTS, ALLEN.
STOP WASTING OUR TIME.

YOUR ACTIONS ARE BECOMING A PROBLEM. YOU'RE ELIMINATING THREATS, SHUTTING DOWN HOSTILE RACES... BRINGING PEACE TO QUADRANTS OF THE GALAXY THAT HAVE BEEN AT WAR FOR EONS. IT'S AMAZING...
BUT IT'S LED TO A LOT OF PLANETS WANTING TO LEAVE THE COALITION. THEY DON'T FEEL LIKE THEY NEED US FOR SAFETY... THEY DON'T FEEL LIKE THE COALITION NEEDS TO EXIST AT ALL.

MAYBE IT DOESN'T.
OH, GOD...
I WAS AFRAID YOU WERE GOING TO SAY THAT.

OH, GOD...
YOU'RE REALLY JUST...
...YOU'RE GOING TO CHANGE EVERYTHING, AREN'T YOU?
IF IT MAKES THE WORLD BETTER?
YES, I AM.
DAMN.
MAYBE WE ARE BETTER OFF WITHOUT A COALITION OF PLANETS.
WHEN THAT COALITION DRAINS RESOURCES FROM THE POORER WORLDS AND MOVES THEM TO BLOATED, OVERPOPULATED WORLDS LIKE TALESCRIA TO KEEP THEM AFLOAT... YEAH.
THIS COULD HAVE BEEN SO MUCH EASIER IF YOU'D JUST TALKED TO ME.

THANKS FOR AGREEING TO MEET WITH ME, URSAAL.
THE WAR IS OVER. I'VE GOT ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD.
AND I'VE BEEN WANTING TO SPEND TIME ON THIS WORLD FOR YEARS. I HEAR THE SUNSETS ARE BEAUTIFUL.

YOU'RE WELCOME TO STAY AT MY HOUSE. I HAVE ROOM. HOW IS MY FATHER DOING?
YOU SHOULD SPEAK TO HIM YOURSELF, TERRA. HE DOESN'T BLAME YOU FOR SITTING OUT THE WAR.
THAT'S NOT WHO HE IS.

THAT'S MY POINT. A WAR WITH THE COALITION GOES AGAINST EVERYTHING I THOUGHT HE STOOD FOR. CHAMPIONS OF PEACE DO NOT START WARS.
THE CONSERVATION ORDER HAS BEEN TALKING ABOUT BREAKING AWAY FROM THE EMPIRE OVER THIS...
...AND I THINK I'M GOING TO SUPPORT THEM.

WHAT THE COALITION WAS DOING WAS WRONG. THEY STARTED THIS WAR, NOT YOUR FATHER. YOU HAVE TO SPEAK TO HIM BEFORE THIS GETS OUT OF HAND. THE ORDER RESPECTS YOU... YOU CAN STOP THIS. YOU HAVE TO.
YOU CAN'T ALLOW THE EMPIRE TO FRACTURE OVER THIS.

MY FATHER NEEDS TO KNOW--
BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!

WHAT IS IT?
IT'S MY MOTHER...

DAD, I'M--
NONE OF THAT MATTERS NOW. YOUR MOTHER... SHE DOESN'T HAVE MUCH LONGER... HER TIME IS NEAR.

T-T-TERRA--
DON'T STRAIN YOURSELF, MOM. I'M HERE...
HER HEART RATE IS SPIKING.

SO... PROUD OF...
...YOU...

MOM!

WOW.
I GUESS I'M ESSENTIALLY IMMORTAL.

RAD.

THINGS WILL GROW HERE NOW.
BEFORE THE PROVISIONS WE'RE LEAVING RUN OUT--YOU'LL HAVE MORE FOOD THAN YOU CAN EAT. NOW YOUR PEOPLE HAVE NO REASON TO FIGHT.
WHEN WE RETURN, WE EXPECT TO RETURN TO A WORLD AT PEACE.
WE WERE ONE HUNDRED YEARS TOO LATE. THE TRANSMISSIONS WE DETECTED WERE OLDER THAN WE THOUGHT.
THEY WERE GOOD PEOPLE, THEY JUST LOST THEIR WAY. THEY FOCUSED ON GREED. THE MASSES DEIFIED THE FEW WHO SUCCEEDED IN AMASSING THE MOST MATERIAL WEALTH AT THE EXPENSE OF THEIR ECO-SYSTEM, IN THE HOPES THEY COULD EVENTUALLY DO THE SAME.
SURELY, THEY SAW WHAT WAS HAPPENING... SURELY THEY KNEW...
THESE THERMAL GOGGLES ALLOW US TO SEE THEM, BUT THEY CAN'T SEE US. SO BE CAREFUL, TERRA, WE DON'T WANT TO ALARM THESE PEOPLE.
THIS IS SO WEIRD, DAD.
THE CHEMICAL MAKEUP OF THE POLLUTION IN THEIR ATMOSPHERE IS FILTERING THEIR STARLIGHT INTO AN INVISIBLE SPECTRUM.
ONCE WE FIX THIS... THESE PEOPLE WILL SEE EACH OTHER FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A GENERATION. I DON'T KNOW HOW THEY'VE MANAGED TO SURVIVE LIKE THIS. IT'S REMARKABLE.
THE DAYS ARE APPROXIMATELY TWO HOURS LONGER, BUT THE TEMPERATURES ARE THE SAME. THE SEASONS WILL TAKE SOME GETTING USED TO... BUT IT'S A NEAR COMPLETE MATCH TO YOUR HOME PLANET.
THE MAIN DIFFERENCE IS THE STAR IT ORBITS IS COMPLETELY HEALTHY.
YOUR PEOPLE WILL THRIVE HERE.

I'M SORRY--I CAME AS FAST AS I COULD.
WHAT-- IS THAT MARKUS?!

IT'S OVER NOW. STAY OUT OF IT OR YOU'LL JUST MAKE THINGS WORSE.

I WORSHIPPED YOU.
I PUSHED MYSELF, FOUGHT AS HARD AS I COULD, BECAUSE I WANTED TO LIVE UP TO... YOUR LEGACY.
I'M SORRY I PUT THAT KIND OF PRESSURE ON YOU. THAT WASN'T FAIR. I DIDN'T KNOW...

YOU LEFT ME ON EARTH.
YOU JUST LEFT.
THE MORE I MISSED YOU, THE MORE IMPORTANT WHAT YOU WERE DOING BECAME... YOU WERE SAVING THE UNIVERSE.

I WORSHIPPED YOU UNTIL THE WORSHIP GREW INTO HATRED.

I THOUGHT YOU HATED ME BECAUSE OF HOW I WAS MADE.
YOU ALWAYS LOVED TERRA MORE... SHE... SHE GOT TO LIVE WITH YOU.

I HATED MYSELF... BECAUSE I WASN'T GOOD ENOUGH. I USED TO THINK... YOU MADE TERRA WITH LOVE... BUT I WAS MADE WITH HATE.
MY MOTHER... SHE... SHE DOOMED ME TO BE THIS... TO BE LESS... TO BE... BAD.

YOU'RE NOT BAD. I'M SORRY I LEFT YOU. I THINK, DEEP DOWN, I JUST WANTED YOU TO LIVE THE SAME LIFE I DID, ON EARTH. MARKUS, YOU'VE... YOU'VE DONE SO MUCH GOOD FOR THE EARTH SYSTEM OF PLANETS. YOU'VE SURPASSED ME IN SO MANY WAYS.
I'M PROUD OF YOU.
THIS WAS JUST A MISUNDERSTANDING.

I WAS SO ANGRY... I LOST MYSELF... I LOST CONTROL.
DAD... I...
I COULD HAVE KILLED YOU.
HOW DO WE COME BACK FROM THAT?

WITH SOMETHING WE HAVE A NEAR UNLIMITED SUPPLY OF, SON.
TIME.

OUR MASTERS BELIEVE A FIGHT BETWEEN US WILL BRING PEACE BETWEEN OUR PEOPLE.
IT'S A PITY YOU HAVE TO DIE FOR THEIR FOOLISHNESS.
SHUT UP AND HIT ME ALREADY.
GRAWH!
THOOM!

THUNGGH!
WRAMM!
WHUDD!

NO, NO!
THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE!
YOUR CHAMPION IS SO SMALL...

YOU MUST END HIS SHAME AND TAKE HIS LIFE. THAT IS REQUIRED.

NO.

WHAT?! SHE ALLOWS HIM TO LIVE IN SHAME?!
THIS IS AN OUTRAGE!
IF YOU WANT PEACE BETWEEN OUR PEOPLE, YOU WILL FOLLOW OUR WAYS AND COMMAND YOUR CHAMPION TO KILL HIM AT ONCE!

IF YOU WANT THE PROTECTION AND GUIDANCE OF THE VILTRUM EMPIRE, YOU WILL HAVE TO ADAPT TO OUR WAYS.
ALL LIFE IS SACRED. WE FIGHT TO BRING PEACE AND PROSPERITY TO ALL PEOPLE IN ALL REACHES OF THE UNIVERSE.

PEACE?!
THIS IS WHAT WE THINK OF PEACE!

SKRASSH!!

YOU... YOU'RE AS STRONG AS YOUR CHAMPION?

WE ALL ARE.

ALL?
ALL OF YOU HAVE THIS STRENGTH? HOW CAN THAT BE? WITH SUCH POWER, YOU COULD CONQUER THE KNOWN UNIVERSE WITH EASE.
YOU COULD RULE ALL THAT LIVE... AND YET... NOT ONLY HAVE YOU NOT DONE THIS, BUT YOU HAVE TREATED US AS EQUALS WHEN YOU COULD HAVE SIMPLY CONQUERED US AND COMMANDED US TO DO AS YOU WISH.

I'M SORRY FOR THE DISRESPECT I HAVE SHOWN YOU. PLEASE... PLEASE DO NOT KILL MY FAMILY, SPARE THEM...
...KILL ONLY ME.
YOUR MAJESTY, PLEASE. STAND. THIS IS UNNECESSARY. I AM NOT GOING TO KILL YOU.

AGES AGO, MY PEOPLE WERE CONQUERORS. OUR RAGE AND FURY DROVE US TO ENSLAVE PLANET AFTER PLANET AS WE BUILT AN EMPIRE OF FEAR AND MISERY.
BUT WE GOT BETTER. WE TURNED AWAY FROM OUR RAGE AND SET OUT TO USE OUR STRENGTH FOR THE GOOD OF ALL.
WE ONLY WISH TO WORK TOGETHER WITH YOU TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF YOU AND YOUR PEOPLE.

I HAVE ATTACKED YOU... I WISHED TO END YOUR LIFE. I DISRESPECTED YOU... AND SPAT IN THE FACE OF YOUR GOOD WILL... AND YET YOU DO NOT RETALIATE?
STILL YOU OFFER PEACE? STILL YOU SPEAK AS MY FRIEND?
YOU HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO STRIKE ME DOWN, AND YET YOU SPARE ME THE WAY YOUR DAUGHTER HAS SPARED MY CHAMPION...

YES.
THAT IS THE VILTRUMITE WAY.

YOU DID IT.
WHAT?

YOU DID EVERYTHING YOUR FATHER ASKED.
YOU CHANGED THE VILTRUMITES, YOU TURNED THEM INTO A FORCE FOR GOOD, CELEBRATED ACROSS THE UNIVERSE.

I'VE BEEN THINKING A LOT ABOUT THE PAST LATELY, AND... ONE THING KEEPS COMING BACK UP. THERE'S JUST... THERE'S SO MANY THINGS THAT REMIND ME OF SOMETHING MY FATHER ONCE SAID TO ME.

IT WAS DURING OUR BIG FIGHT... HE LOOKED DOWN AT ME AND HE SAID...
"WHAT WILL YOU HAVE AFTER FIVE HUNDRED YEARS?"

=HEH.=

PENMINI PARS

And there you have it, the end of INVINCIBLE. I hope it was everything everyone wanted. I know I'm satisfied with where we ended up.

When we started this series FIFTEEN years ago, I had high hopes that it would last a good, long time and be a memorable series, but I never could have imagined a fifteen-year, one hundred and forty-four issue run! You may not know this, but there was a time I was pretty sure issue #13 was going to be the last issue. Then, miraculously, sales on issue #12 spiked up a teeny tiny bit, and sales continued to spike until the book was healthy, and we were able to go as long as we wanted... which is, sadly, until now.

This series is everything I've ever loved about superhero comics crammed into one series. I think it's fulfilled that promise, and while there's certainly other things I love about superhero comics, I think our story is told. Mark Grayson radically changed his alien race from a warring scourge of the galaxy to the saviors of the galaxy. His story is told. His mission, that he didn't even fully realize he was on, has been completed... and he got to live happily ever after.

I wonder how many of you thought this series would end with everyone dying a horrible death?

It's been such a gift to be able to write this series for this long, to be allowed to explore this world fully, dig into these characters, and, y'know... torture them for as long as we have. I thank you for the YEARS of support you've given us. We could never have done this without you. This series is a dream come true for me, and I will never be able to thank you properly for allowing me to do it.

I want to thank Ryan and Cory for joining me on this journey. Cory, even though he didn't draw all the issues, was a continued presence, helping to guide things by designing new characters here and there, and griping at me when he didn't like where the story was going or whatever dumb thing I'd told him I was planning. Ryan has been the heart and soul of this book since issue #8. While I've spent the better part of a week out of every month writing scripts for this series... Ryan has been chained to a table slaving away non-stop for that entire time! He still managed to squeeze in some Haunt, *a DC annual,* Space Grub, Grizzly Shark, *a bunch of covers, and a few odds and ends in that time. It's been remarkable seeing him grow into one of the best artists in comics in that time. This book would never have survived without Ryan pulling all of our weight.*

I want to thank Cliff Rathburn for pitching in on inks for more than half of Ryan's issues. Cliff has long been my secret weapon, working on all kinds of Skybound books. Is it okay to reveal that Cliff will be working with Ryan on the project he has lined up for after this? I'm excited about it! It's going to be amazing! Also, big thanks to Mark Morales and Dexter Vines for helping out during this final run.

I want to thank the elite team of colorists who brought us here. Bill Crabtree, FCO Plascencia, Nikos Koutis, John Rauch, Jean-Francois Beaulieu and Nathan Fairbairn! Each one brought their own style and take to these characters, and kept the book looking fresh and new as we marched through the years.

Rus Wooton! He's lettered this book since I threw in the towel after issue #13. (Lettering is hard, people.) It's a thankless job that doesn't get a lot of attention in comics, but it's oh-so essential, and Rus has become one of the best of the best in his field. You see his name in almost every great comic being published today. Thanks for lending your talents to this book for so long, Rus!

I'd like to thank Aubrey Sitterson, Sina Grace and, of course, the esteemed Mr. Sean Mackiewicz for stepping into the editor role when I got too big and important to keep track of all the behind the scenes stuff, and keeping the trains running on time. We definitely would have never made it this far without them.

Huge thanks to Eric Stephenson, Jim Valentino and Erik Larsen for helping this book land at Image Comics, giving it the platform it's had, and also for a ton of help and advice along the way. Jim Valentino, when I told him Omni-Man was going to kill the Guardians of the Globe in issue #25 and reveal that he's a bad guy, responded, "Move that up or there's not going to be an issue #25!" And when I told him I might be able to push it to issue #12, said, "Can you get it in issue #5?" And that got me to put it in issue #7. The series DEFINITELY wouldn't have made it to issue #25 if he hadn't done that. Thanks, Jim!

Erik Larsen deserves to be called out separately, as my love for Savage Dragon *could be pointed to as my main source of inspiration for this comic. So, if you're reading this and haven't read that series, fix that! Erik also helped out with cover designs in the early days and talked me off a ledge or two more than once. He's been a great mentor, and if you're struggling to break into comics, he's a good friend to have.*

Eric Stephenson remains, to this day, the best advocate for new ideas in comics. He championed this book from day one, and was also instrumental in helping a little-known zombie series find its audience. It's no wonder he's risen through the ranks to become the best publisher Image Comics has ever had.

Lastly, I'll thank David Alpert, my Skybound partner. He's been there since damn near day one, always pushing me to not suck. Without him, you wouldn't have all the cool upcoming INVINCIBLE non-comics stuff... like the movie we're currently developing at Universal with Seth Rogen and Evan Goldberg... or all the other

stuff we haven't announced yet. This comic is most certainly NOT the end.

Also, a huge thank you to all the other people who got us here, but didn't leave enough of an impression (heh!) to get a thank you here in this letters column! I still love you. It was just an oversight. If it makes you feel better, you're one of the only people actually reading this.

*If for any reason you ARE still reading this... let's dive right into the FINAL letters column... EVER... (*sob!*)*

I've been reading Invincible since issue #1 and it's been an amazing trip. I wanted to say thanks to everyone who worked on the book. Like a lot of people the US Pentagon "Parking in Rear" gag has always made me laugh. It made me laugh even more when I got a job in the building and realized how terrible parking there actually is! A copy of the "Parking" panel hung in my cube for 6 years and got laughs and grins from a lot of folks.

Thanks for the memories.
Philip Shade

It's taken one hundred and fourty-four issues to receive a letter about the Pentagon parking situation, and I couldn't be happier. (Actually, more than one hundred and fourty-four; Robert reminded me that the Pentagon first started showing up in BRIT. So, check out BRIT for more Pentagon shenanigans.)

Please check out BRIT! Volumes 1-3 are all in print and totally orderable. In fact, now that this series has ended, there're tons of other superhero comics that take place in the Invincible Universe that you can try. CAPES, BRIT, GUARDING THE GLOBE, INVINCIBLE UNIVERSE, TECH JACKET and THE ASTOUNDING WOLF-MAN are all worth a look. You loved them when they appeared in this series--now read their actual books!

Dear Robert and Invincible,

So, I guess I've been reading Invincible for over a decade now? I think Bill Crabtree gave me copies of the first two Ultimate Invincible books at San Diego Comic Con in 2006. I didn't know the guy, and had never heard of the book, but he just walked up to my table and was like "I color this book and I want you to have it" and then ran off. This covered the first big storyline of Invincible being betrayed by his dad and stuff. Anyhow, I didn't really expect that much (sorry!) but I was totally blown away. I've bought the monthly issues at my local comics shop ever since, and I've really really enjoyed following all the characters through all the wild twists and turns of their adventures across the universe and multiple dimensions. And the action and art, wow.

I really don't think there's any other contemporary comic book that even compares. In every interview I've done for the past decade, the interviewer invariably asks what other comics I read, and my go-to-answer has always been INVINCIBLE. Now what am I going to say? Some other book that's not as good as Invincible? And I can't even leaf through back issues and reminisce because I've given all of them away over the years in my attempts to turn people on to your awesome book.

Also, thanks for being cool to me when I was late to the Eisners and missed the part where I won. Thanks for bringing me up on the stage even though it was past my turn, and letting me make a speech, even though I was obviously a total ass for being late.

Anyhow, what else is there to say? Thank you so much for creating Invincible. Reading it has been an amazing experience, and I'll never forget it.

best wishes,
James Kochalka

P.S. Here's a Johnny Boo & Invincible mash-up/fan art.

Holy crap, James! Thanks so much for writing in, and that art is AWESOME! I've been a fan of yours for years. I know Ryan and I have often talked about how cool Super F*ckers *is! (It's a great comic you should check out!) Also, look out for* Mechaboys, *James's newest book coming out in March!*

I love *Super F*ckers*. Jack Krak is the motherf*cker.

Hey guys,

Lucas from Australia here. Love the comic, it's a shame it's coming to an end already. I just wanted to ask two things.

1) Were any story threads you had planned, but either dropped, or decided to go in a different direction, or just forgot about? With all the backstory stuff about Bulletproof a little while back, it really felt like you were going to do more with this character.

I'll tease one idea we almost repurposed for INVINCIBLE UNIVERSE: Why haven't we ever seen anyone with telepathic abilities?

Heh... yeah, that was a weird oversight. I was planning on doing something with the janitor that saw Mark and Eve changing into their costumes... but when I set that up, I'd forgotten I was going to have them leaving high school in a few issues!

2) What's the plan after all this is over? A new Kirkman series? Are you ever going to come back to this universe, after a few years? (After issue 142, I had a thought of a future were Terra and Marky fight over who deserves to be Viltrumite emperor).

While we should be celebrating INVINCIBLE, this would be as good a time as any to remind you that Robert's new comic, OBLIVION SONG, with artist Lorenzo De Felici, hits stores in three weeks—March 7th!

The sales pitch: If you've read this much of INVINCIBLE, you're going to like it. Trust us.

Thanks for all the fun times I've had with this series! Can't wait to see what you do next!

PS - I'm an Australian! Hi from Australia!

Lucas Dew

Thanks for writing, Lucas. After this, we're all doing new stuff. Ryan's new project hasn't been announced yet, but it's going to be spectacular. I've got OBLIVION SONG like Sean mentioned. Cory is working on a secret project that won't be out for a while, so forget I said anything. There's going to be plenty of new stuff from Team Invincible that you can enjoy!

Robert and Co.,

It's been a while since I've wrote in. I have to admit, I've been a bit miffed at this book of late but I've come to realize/accept that a lot of my negative feelings toward "Invincible" the past year or so is because I knew, deep down, that the series was nearing it's end... and I hated y'all for it.

I saw the writing on the wall before the news broke - and yeah, I was pissed. I was DISAPPOINTED that my favorite superhero epic was coming to, what I felt, was a premature conclusion. I started to blame the success of "The Walking Dead" for "distracting" you, Robert. I convinced myself that you chose the money train over loyalty to your BEST WORK (my opinion) and that you simply wanted to tidy shit up and be done with it. I know I had no basis for this - this is YOUR story, of course you will do whatever you want with it - and I know you not at all. Even still - I felt that there was too much left undone. I keep waiting and waiting for the adventures of issue #54 to come back around again SOMEHOW (anyone else out there remember THAT gem?) and after so much time had passed without so much as a casual reference I figured it was forgotten. You were done with this universe. Time to move on.

ROBOT WAR! Part One of One (nice, by the way) is the first issue in a LONG TIME that I truly LOVED. Loose ends were tied up, long time conflicts and alliances came back to the forefront and all at once the "Invincible" I first experienced in the Fall of 2006 was once again in my hands blowing me away... and now, there are only two left.

This book grabbed me right away back when I first read the trades. It reminded me so much of "Savage Dragon" with the self contained universe and seemingly endless array of ancillary yet INTERESTING characters that I grew to look forward to "Invincible" more than any other Image book every month. History will likely paint "The Walking Dead" as your Magnum Opus - and perhaps it is - but for me "Invincible" was ALWAYS better. I will miss it when it is gone.

This last run has been pretty good all in all (so far) and I applaud you for it. The A Game has been brought for The Endgame and y'all are definitely going out guns a BLAZIN. Thanks for the YEARS of great stories, I look forward to how it all wraps up... but we already know, don't we?

Issue #54. You knew all along, didn't you Robert?

Well played.

See you on the Flip Side,
Cam Stylez

Nice to hear from you again, Cam. Issue #54 definitely should be re-read to take the full impact of The Robot War into account. Poor Immortal...

And yeah... I really struggled with tying into issue #54 MORE in the latter half of this issue. Have Mark mention Immortal was going to be losing his mind soon, something like that... But in the end, I thought it would just clutter things up, and we were doing so many little time jumps, you can just assume it was taken care of in some fashion. FUN FACT: To keep from changing the events in issue #54 as we saw them, my thinking is that Mark believed that having Robot's brain HELPING Immortal meant that Immortal would NOT lose his mind. Because Robot's presence wasn't known to him at the time, he didn't think he was there. BUT HE WAS there and Immortal was driven crazy BY Robot in an attempt to take over (yes, Robot's brain is preserved and lives for a good long time as well), so everything would happen as we saw it, and Old Mark would return to Earth eventually to find that Robot's brain had taken over... or something.

Dear Invincible Team,

First I just want to say thank you again for putting out the best superhero comic in the universe! I've been searching for a comic to replace you guys when the run is over, but so far nothing is catching me as well as you guys did. I'm holding out that the final issue you guys announce some sort of spin-off.

Nope. Not a hoax! By the time you're reading this, we're having our release day taco party, eating waaaay better tacos than that place in San Antonio that's been ripping off INVINCIBLE art for years. Suck it, Tacos El Regio!

Second, Mark has not learned a single thing! Does he not remember what he had to do to the Immortal in the future?? I have a feeling Robot's brain was the real source of the Immortal's tyranny.

(Heh... see above. Nicely done.)

Third, there's an episode of Sesame Street where someone is dressed up as Invincible in the background. Season 45 episode 4. You guys made it to PBS!

When they did a WALKING DEAD parody, I was stunned… but this… this revelation has me reeling. Why is Mike Chan the first to tell us?! This episode is like four years old. In that time, I've had a child that's old enough to request Elmo's Greatest Hits nonstop, and now I have a favorite song (or three).

I demand someone find a screenshot of this!!!!

And last but not least, thank you all again for this comic. I am grateful beyond words for what this comic has brought in to my life. I'm not sure if this will make it in the last issue, but on behalf of all my friends that I nagged to read this, and when they did, fell in love with this book, we thank you guys for this wonderful world you gave us.

Sincerely,
Mike Chan

Thanks for spreading the word, Mike! We never could have gotten here without you!

Robert the Kirk,

I have some questions! Will you miss Invincible, doing the series? I suppose that was Mark Grayson/ Invincible on the cover hugging Atom Eve; I thought at first from the hair it might have been a rare appearance by the African-American Invincible from some years ago! It has been years, hasn't it?

Bulletproof showed up in #142, getting the snot knocked out of him by Eve! What, he needs a costume to be recognizable?

15 years of Invincible-ing!! Do you really think that the series and it's characters will really just Go Away after all that? I suppose, worst case scenario, Invincible might turn evil--he is Emperor now, after all--and the way between him and his followers and the rest of the Invincible Universe of characters may well destroy the Earth and everything on it...in fact, that might happen anyway; only one issue left, right? But you've probably already completed it, so I guess I'm just guessing here. I'm not making much sense, am I?

Even compared to most of your letters… no. Have you considered hanging it up at the same time as INVINCIBLE? That would be a perfectly perplexing way to go out, man. Very in-character.

I think you'll find it harder to walk away than you think; Fables has had 2 or 3 series since the OG series ended, although none now; and Mike Mignola was supposed to end BPRD, but that came back (at least for a while). Why did Marky have a shark T-shirt on the cover...and not in the issue? The cover is more important? Maybe just another of your Lying covers, huh? Usually final issue finales are kind of, well... really underwhelming (even BPRD Hell on Earth); but what you've said, "Nothing can prepare you", is quite exciting! Don't forget to bring it. I'll be reading.

Cheers,
Andrew J. Shaw

PS The main thing I liked about the series over the years? It's just easy to read!! And fun.

Thanks, Andrew, for being along for the ride almost the whole time. I love you as much as you annoy Sean. Connected? Maybe. As to whether or not we'll miss it, I think we all will. Speaking for myself, I finished my work on issue #144 in early November... and it's been weird the last couple months not having to write a script. The ideas certainly haven't stopped. While there are currently NO PLANS to return to this series in comic form... it's not impossible that we might see an issue #145 for the 20th anniversary. WHO KNOWS?!

Dear Penvincipals,

Oh crapcicles! I'm too late, aren't I? I just read the penultimate issue and realized that I have "two" unanswered questions that probably won't be answered in the comic itself. So I'mma send you this letter as quickly as possible with the faintest hope that it reaches you before you publish the final issue!

Question #1: Why'd you have to rush everything?! Seriously, Mark's inauguration ceremony was a single splash, and then bang -- we've moved on to the next plot point at Nolan's grave. We didn't even hear him say anything. It all happened off panel! And it feels like that's what's been going on more and more these last few issues. Robot War was just ONE issue, but it EASILY could have been two or more without any dragging moments. It just seems like we're being short-changed the full story for the sake of ending it by #144 and fitting it into three tidy compendiums. I mean, I get it, but I don't like it. Too much breadth; not enough depth.

I guess the same could be said for this issue, which was designed to jump around for the most important pieces of time wrapping up this series. COULD we have expanded Robot War into two, six, or even twelve issues? Sure... but would it have been a retread of other big stories? Kind of. I just showed you the interesting part. As for Mark's coronation as emperor... you saw what was interesting. What would we have gotten from a speech where he just repeated his intent as inspired by Nolan that he'd already voiced to Eve? After one hundred and fourty-four issues... give me a little trust. If it's important... you saw it. Except for all the cool stuff Angstrom Jr. and Chainsaw are going to do. That stuff just lives in my head!

Question #2: Okay, here's the more important question. What has prompted the changes in the taglines over the course of the series? What do they all mean!? When we started, you guys had that "Girls, acne, etc." tag. Then you wised up and changed it to "Probably the best superhero comic in the universe." Then you knock off the "Probably" at Issue 70.5, but after that it just got weird. First you change it to the "Only Superhero Comic You Will Ever Need," then change back it to "The Best Superhero Comic In the Universe," then cross off the "Superhero," and then add it back on again. It's all so confusing. WHAT AM I ACTUALLY READING? I just don't know anymore.

It first changed after he left high school, and that tagline didn't seem to apply. THEN we dropped the "probably" because I thought it would be funny, like suddenly we

were definitively the best. The "Only Superhero Comic You Need" was Eric Stephenson's suggestion, and was meant to target Marvel and DC readers who were fed up with those books, but still loved superheroes. We brought back the original tagline and crossed out "superhero" during the time Invincible was in space with Eve, not being a superhero. It came back when he started wearing the costume again! It's all pretty self-explanatory!

Question #4: When is Universa returning?

This issue—hope you didn't miss her!

I swear I really didn't intend for her to show up when I made the comments in the letters columns about her showing up. Cory always wanted to draw her in the comics because he designed her, but has never drawn her in the book. So I thought it'd be cool to throw her on that splash page and say she was working with the Coalition of Planets.

Question #5: What happened to question number three?

Who cares?

All right, I'mma take my letter hacking back over to The Walking Dead now (what's up with those Stormtroopers, anyway?)

Cheers & Tears,
Wesley Rice

They look nothing like Stormtroopers!

Hey Robert and crew!

Congratulations on a long and exciting run with Invincible... With one issue left before we leave the Invincible universe, I wanted to ask you... What ever happened to Wolf-Man? Is he still off fighting crime with WolfCorps? To this day he continues to be my favorite superhero, and I hope that one day we can see him go on another adventure...

Dakota Boles

He may someday come back. But for now... he's off fighting crime with the WolfCorps. We saw him a little in issue... #130. (I'm just guessing; he was in a panel around then.)

Hello Robert and Sean,

So Invincible is ending, and with it my minor claim to comic book fame. Back in the early 2000s I hung around the Savage Dragon message board, where one poster kept pimping his Battle Pope comic. When word came out this guy would be doing a Super Patriot comic with Cory Walker, I decided it was time to check out his work.

Shortly after that, the duo came out with their own original comic, Invincible. I answered the call for a letters page name and because I assume I was the only person to submit, my idea, Penvincipals, was chosen. For more than a decade, I've gotten a little thrill every month, seeing my "work" in a professionally published comic.

Also, thanks for the Captain America head sketch as my prize at Wizard World 2004. I've still got it around here somewhere.

So congratulations, Mr. Kirkman, from a fellow fin-addict. I'll be sad not to get that Penvincipals rush every month, but I'll see if I can come up with a good name for any of your future comics.

Your Penvincipal,

Joe Lawler

This just feels like the right letter to go out on, doesn't it?

DEFINITELY! Thanks for the awesome suggestion, Joe! Most of the other suggestions (there were a bunch actually) were along the lines of "INVINCIMAIL", and yours was weird and funny, so I thought it was the way to go. AND IT'S BEEN USED FOR FIFTEEN YEARS! How cool is that?

Man, this is the best letters column ever. James Kolchalka, Pentagon guy, Andrew J. Shaw, Joe Lawler coming back out of nowhere! This is awesome!

I can see it in your eyes: what are you supposed to do NOW? Well, the final Ultimate Collection hardcover comes out in May, and then the final compendium will be out in July... so if you absolutely have to spend your money on us, those are two fine options. In March, you'll have a companion to go with your Invincible action figure—and we'll be filling out their ranks later this year, for sure. So while the comic is over, we are far from done living in the Invincible Universe.

Thank you for writing, Penvincipals. Thank you, Robert, Ryan and Cory for allowing me to be part of The Best Superhero Comic in the Universe. This was my 50th issue of INVINCIBLE to have worked on. I'll miss it.

-Sean Mackiewicz

Holy crap, really?! That's amazing, Sean. I had no idea!

Anyway, there's nothing really to add that I haven't said already... keep an eye out for more Invincible in some very cool forms... and I find myself... typing words... just so this... doesn't have to end... but that can't last... forever... so...

I'll miss you all.

-Robert Kirkman

You can still write us at
INVINCIBLE@SKYBOUND.COM,
we just won't print it...
or personally respond, unless it's really, really good.

WHY CAN'T SHE BE ENOUGH?

Nathan never would have found Heather if it weren't for the Transference. When he was brought in by the government to help figure out what had happened, she was his direct contact. They spent hours together, strategizing on how to convince her bosses to provide more time and funding for his research. After many months without a breakthrough, there were times when his work was nearly shut down. But together they persevered, so when Nathan's belt technology showed he could pass safely between dimensions, and rescue teams were being formed, it was a win for both of them.

Ironically, it was Heather who was able to talk her bosses into allowing Nathan to lead the rescue teams. He'd already spent so much time in Oblivion testing the technology. He knew more about the area than almost anyone. It wasn't until his first day of leave, in the middle of boot camp, that they first became intimate. They were both taken off-guard by the fact that neither of them saw it coming.

Their relationship began at the worst possible time. Nathan was part of the rescue mission, dropping into Oblivion, tracking down those lost there, bringing them home. It was more than a full-time job, that left no room for anything else. As time went on, they found fewer and fewer people. Eventually, after a dry spell of more than three months where no one was rescued, the program was permanently shut down.

A chapter in Nathan's life was closed, or rather, it should have been. He'd done all he could, they'd rescued... most... of the people lost in Oblivion... but most wasn't enough. Not when Nathan's own brother, Edward Cole, was counted among the lost. Despite Nathan's love for Heather, Oblivion and those lost there are a shadow he can't get out from under.

Instead of settling down, putting all this behind him and marrying the woman he loved, Nathan became a fugitive, using his technology to illegally go into Oblivion and continue looking for those lost there. Now, every day, he leaves her, to risk his life traveling alone to Oblivion, searching for any sign of life, any hope he might save someone who knows something about his lost brother. Despite his love for Heather, he can't resist the siren call of the

ROBERT KIRKMAN LORENZO DE FELICI

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RATED **T+** / TEEN PLUS

ZONE