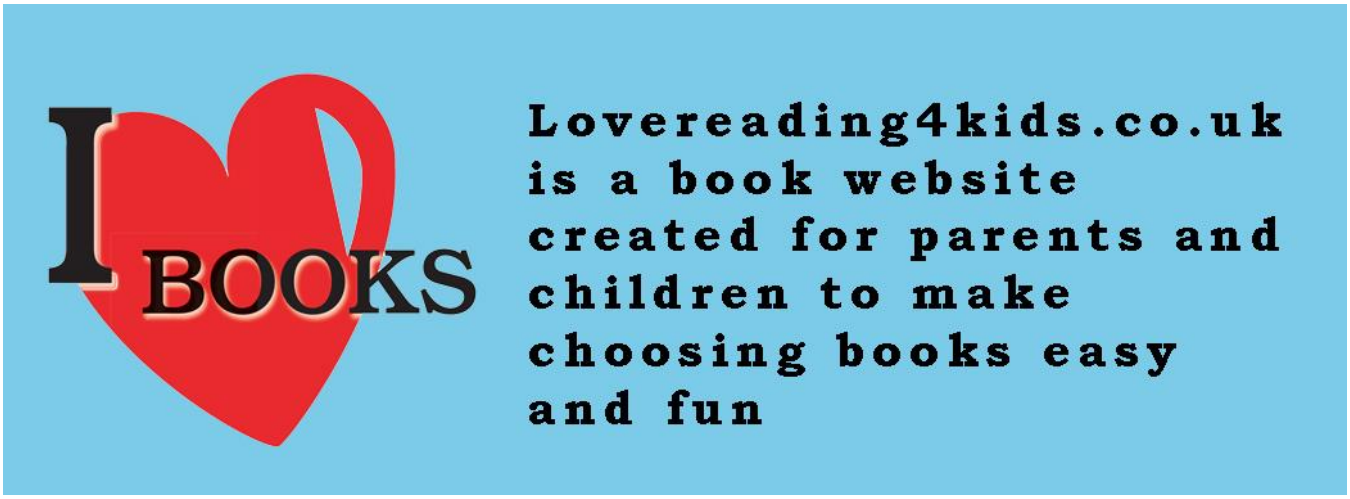


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Adam Blade

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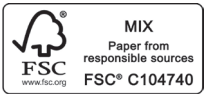
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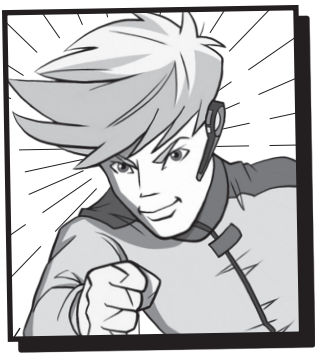


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MEET TEAM HERO ...



JACK

POWER: Super-strength
LIKES: Ventura City FC
DISLIKES: Bullies

RUBY



POWER: Fire vision
LIKES: Comic books
DISLIKES: Small spaces



DANNY

POWER: Super-hearing
LIKES: Pizza
DISLIKES: Thunder

... And Their Greatest Enemy



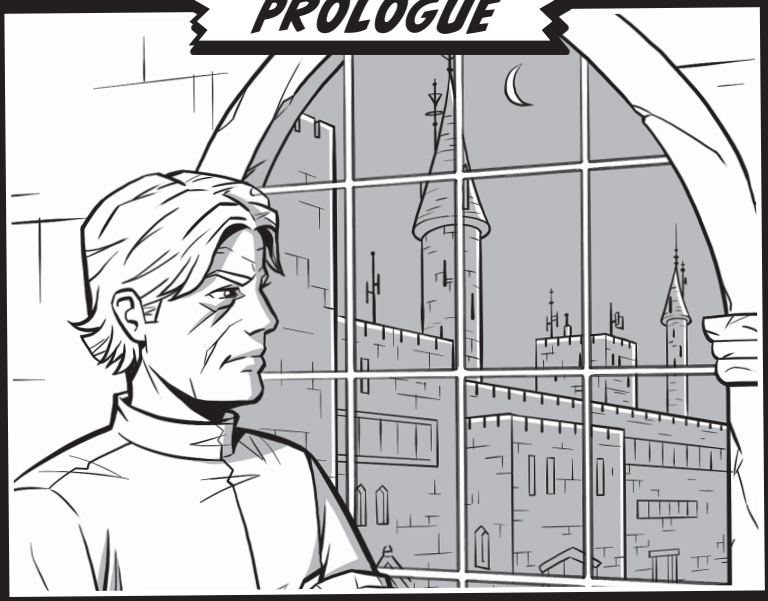
General Gore

Power: Brilliant warrior

Likes: Carnage

Dislikes: Unfaithful minions

PROLOGUE



CHANCELLOR REX gazed out of the arched window of his chambers. Under the moonlight glowed the towers and battlements of Hero Academy. In the dormitories, all the students were sleeping, exhausted by the recent battles. But sleep wouldn't come to Chancellor Rex.

Not while a traitor lurked in their midst.

Every time he shut his eyes, the words flashed up in his mind. *GENERAL GORE IS COMING FOR YOU, CHOSEN ONE.*

They'd found the message scrawled on the door of the North Wing dormitory. The Chosen One was Jack, the newest student to come to the academy. He was the answer to an ancient prophecy.

Darkness will rise and conquer light, unless the Chosen One joins the fight ...

But whoever had written the message was a servant of the underground

realm of Noxx, and its leader General Gore. He would stop at nothing to invade the human world with his evil creatures. How could Rex even think of sleeping until they had rooted out the culprit?

Perhaps his powers could help ...

The Chancellor raised his hands. As a young man he'd been able to conjure visions of the future quite easily, but now he was nearing sixty years old, it was much harder. The visions weren't as clear, and faded almost as soon as they appeared.

The air between his palms blurred. An image began to form.

Smoke and fire. The ruins of factories. Chains, heaps of scrap and broken-down machinery. The ground was a black wasteland, broken up by rivers of lava.

"The land of Noxx," Rex muttered.

He felt a bead of sweat trickle down his temple, but kept his hands raised.

The smoke cleared. Through the shimmering heat he saw a gigantic cloaked figure clad from head to foot in black armour. The Chancellor recognised him at once.

General Gore. The enemy of all humans, who loves only power and cruelty.

In the vision, Gore raised a hand and beckoned through the shreds of smoke.

But what's this?

A small figure, wearing the bodysuit of a Hero Academy student, strode



towards Gore. Rex squinted, but the boy was cast in shadow. He paused before General Gore, then dropped to one knee.

"You are chosen," Gore said triumphantly. "Chosen by me."

"Jack?" the Chancellor mumbled.

The image vanished. With a groan of despair Rex dropped his hands, slumping into a chair.

What he had seen made no sense. Why would the Chosen One side with their deadliest enemy?

A siren shook the Chancellor from his thoughts.

"The armoury, sir," said a voice in

his ear. It was Eagle, the name of the Oral Response and Combat Learning Escort device hooked over his ear.

"Security breach."

Rex stood shakily, grabbed the shimmering glove from his desk and slipped it over his hand. This plasma gauntlet was the only weapon Rex ever carried. He ran for the door, taking a lift down six storeys to the armoury.

As he emerged in the underground corridor, someone appeared from thin air. His heart skipped a beat until he saw it was only Ms Steel, using her teleportation power. The purple-

haired teacher was carrying her laser lance, a two-metre-long staff with a pointed tip that glowed and hummed in the gloom. Worry lines etched her dark features as she looked to the closed armoury door.

"Ready?" she said.

Rex nodded. He raised his gauntlet, ready to fire. He placed his other hand to the scanner by the door, and it slid open.

Ms Steel burst through, lance raised, then stopped.

"There's no one here," she said.

Rex swept his eyes over the weapons stores. Energy cannons,

electro-shields, crossbows, plasma blades … All seemed undisturbed.

Then he noticed that one cabinet door was slightly ajar. His heart plummeted.

"The shadow vials," he said, rushing forward.

Opening the door fully, he saw a shelf holding five vials made of thick green glass.

There should be six.

"No!" cried Ms Steel.

Chancellor Rex nodded. "I'm afraid so. The Noxxian spy has stolen the shadow."

When Noxx had last invaded, a



thousand years before, the forces of good had managed to collect some of the shadow of their realm. They'd wanted to test it to discover its properties — but it was far too dangerous. Anyone who came into contact with the shadow was taken

over by evil.

The enemy in their midst had a terrible weapon indeed.

Ms Steel looked horrified. “The spy could use the shadow to create more servants of Noxx!”

The Chancellor thought of all the innocent students sleeping above. They each had their own powers, which made them a formidable army. But until the culprit was caught, Hero Academy was just too dangerous — especially for Jack.

“I fear there is only one solution,” Rex said. “We must leave Intrepid Island.”