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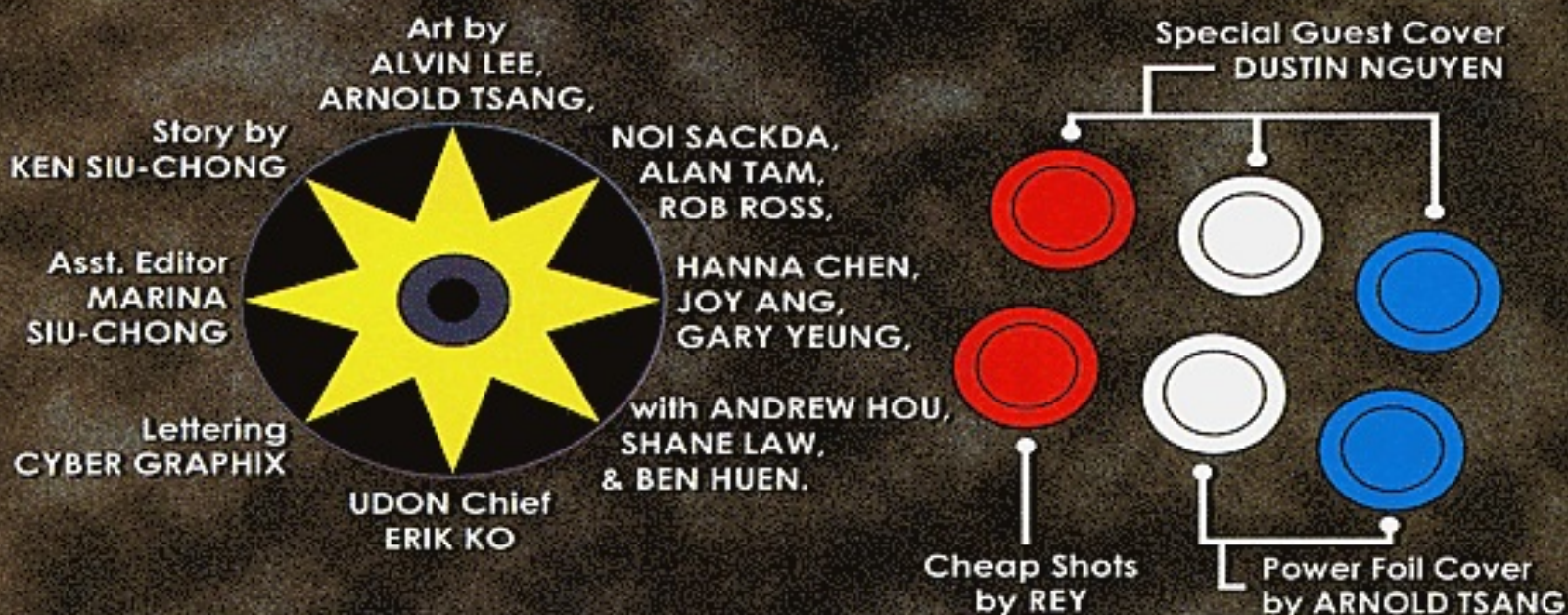
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Twelve
years ago.



WELL DONE, RYU.
YOU'VE COME SUCH
A LONG WAY IN
SUCH A SHORT
A TIME.

THANK
YOU, MASTER.
I'M ONLY TRYING
MY BEST TO
LEARN WHAT
YOU'VE TAUGHT
ME.

TEACHING
IS SIMPLE WHEN
ONE HAS A STUDENT AS
DEDICATED TO OUR
ARTS AS YOU, RYU.
I'M PROUD OF
YOU.

I HOPE
TO SEE YOU
FULFILL THE VAST
POTENTIAL I SEE IN YOU,
AND THE DAY THAT
YOU SURPASS
ME.

I
HOPE TO SEE
THAT DAY,
RYU...






AKUMA!!!

IT HAS BEEN MANY YEARS, RYU. YOU WERE A MERE PUP WHEN LAST I SAW YOU.



HAAH?!



MASTER GOULKEN'S BEADS!



YOU MURDERED MY MASTER... YOUR OWN BROTHER!



I DID NOT MURDER HIM, RATHER, I DEFEATED AN OPPONENT WHO WAS WELL BENEATH ME.

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THAT HE ONCE SPARED YOUR LIFE?*

HE COULD NOT FINISH ME OUT OF HIS OWN WEAKNESS! HE WAS A FOOL TO LET MERCY, LOYALTY OR FAMILY GET IN THE WAY OF VICTORY.



GOUKEN WAS UNFIT TO TEACH UMBLE TO DEVOTE HIMSELF COMPLETELY TO THE PURSUIT OF FIGHTING PERFECTION.

YOU SHOULD THANK ME FOR BRINGING AN END TO GOUKEN'S POLY AND HIS FALSE PRINCIPLES.

DAMNIT! THAT'S ENOUGH! THIS JACKASS AN'T NOTHING BUT TALK, RYU!



LET'S SHOW HIM WHAT MASTER GOUKEN'S STUDENTS ARE REALLY MADE OF!



FOR MASTER GOUKEN!









KE-

BOOM!

?!

ARGGGHHH!!!

HMPH!

LOOK AT THE FEAR IN YOUR EYES...

YOU ARE HINDERED BY TOO MANY EARTHLY ATTACHMENTS TO EVER BE A COMPLETE FIGHTER.

IS IT A CHILD...? A WOMAN...?

KOPPE DUDE, DO YOU EVER SHUT UP...?

UNTIL YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE, YOU WILL NEVER FIGHT WITHOUT HESITATION.

KRBLINK!

KEN!!!

YES..







MASTER RYU,
PLEASE TEACH ME
HOW TO FIGHT! I'LL DO
ANYTHING TO SHOW YOU
THAT I'M A WORTHY
STUDENT! I'LL...



I'LL
EVEN FIGHT
THIS MAN IF
YOU'D ACCEPT
ME!

NO!



SAKURA!!!



SWAAP!



ARE
YOU
OKAY?!

~LET
ME TRY
AGAIN...



UHMM!!!

FWAM!



I-I
NEED TO
PROVE
MYSELFFFE..

I
THINK YOU'VE
ALREADY PROVEN
THAT YOU'RE A
FIGHTER.



NOW JUST
KEEP FIGHTING
WHILE I TAKE
CARE OF SOME
BUSINESS.

HOW
COULD YOU
DO THAT, AKUMA?!
SHE'S ONLY
A KID!

YET
SHE ATTACKED
ME WITH COMPLETE
ABANDON... PERHAPS
YOU COULD LEARN
SOMETHING FROM
HER, RYU.

MAYBE
I ALREADY
HAVE!

SHINKUU-

TATSUMAKI-

FAP!

KR
PL
N

SEMPUKYAKU!

FINALLY!



LET
ME SHOW
YOU THE FULL
POWER OF OUR
ARTS...

THE
DARK
HADOW!!!





I THOUGHT YOU WERE GREATER THAN THIS-THAT PERHAPS YOU WOULD BE A WORTHY ADVERSARY.

ARRGGHH!

I WAS MISTAKEN.

IF YOU WERE THE BEST GOUKEN'S DOJO PRODUCED...

HE WAS MORE INCOMPETENT THAN I EVER IMAGINED.







HUFF...
HUFF... HUFF...

YES, THE
DARK HADOU...
YOU HAVE TASTED ITS
POWER AS I ALWAYS
SUSPECTED. PERHAPS
ONE DAY YOU WILL
BE WORTHY TO
FACE ME.

IF YOU
WISH TO AVENGE
GOUKEN, SEEK
ME OUT AT THE NEXT
STREET FIGHTER
TOURNAMENT.



UGH!

EMBRACE
YOUR
POWER...



AND
PROVE TO
ME THAT I HAVE
NOT SPARED
YOUR LIFE
IN VAIN.



FWAN!!!



KRONK!



RYU!



STOP!



STAND DOWN, RYU!



RETSU, ARE YOU HURT?

I'M FINE, GOUKEN.



YOUR STUDENT IS MUCH STRONGER THAN HE APPEARS.



MASTER, I DON'T KNOW WHAT CAME OVER ME. I JUST DIDN'T WANT TO DISAPPOINT YOU.



YOU HAVE NOT, RYU.

I HAVE ALWAYS KNOWN THAT YOU POSSESS THE DESIRE TO BETTER YOURSELF THAT ALL TRUE MARTIAL ARTISTS DO.

THAT ASPIRATION IS WHAT PROPELS US TO OUR GREATEST HEIGHTS, BUT THAT SAME LONGING FOR PERFECTION CAN ALSO DESTROY US.

I HOPED THAT YOU WOULD NEVER EXPERIENCE IT, BUT THAT IS THE POWER THAT YOU JUST FELT...



THE SAME POWER THAT DROVE MY BROTHER MAD.

WHAT CAN I DO?



ONLY THIS—NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU DESIRE VICTORY, NO MATTER HOW MUCH THAT DARKNESS INSIDE YOU HUNGERS FOR IT, NEVER FORSAKE YOUR HUMANITY FOR IT. CAN YOU PROMISE ME THIS?

YES, MASTER. I PROMISE.



THAT'S A PRETTY NASTY BUMP THERE, LITTLE LADY. BETTER GET THAT LOOKED AT-HEY, RYU!

UH...



WHAT HAPPENED? WHEN I CAME TO, AKUMA WAS GONE, I FOUND THAT UNCONSCIOUS GIRL OVER THERE AND YOU WERE IN NEVER-NEVER-LAND!

HE TOLD ME TO FIND HIM AT THE NEXT STREET FIGHTER TOURNAMENT... WHEN I'M WORTHY OF HIM.

ARROGANT SON OF A BITCH. IF HE HADN'T SURPRISED US-



NO KEN, NEITHER OF US WAS A MATCH FOR AKUMA.

I HAVE A LOT TO LEARN, AND THAT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN JUST SITTING AND WAITING FOR THE TOURNAMENT.

FIND ANSWERS... NO MATTER WHERE I HAVE TO LOOK, I'LL SEARCH THE ENTIRE WORLD IF THAT'S WHAT IT TAKES TO DISCOVER HOW TO BEAT AKUMA.

WHATEVER BISON OR THOSE INTERPOL PEOPLE WANTED, I DON'T HAVE TIME TO GET TIED DOWN BY ANY OF IT.*

WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO DO?

I HAVE MY OWN PATH THAT I HAVE TO TRAVEL.

WELL, WHEREVER YOU GO, YOU CAN COUNT ON ME TO BE RIGHT THERE WITH YOU.

*SEE ISSUES #4 & #5.

Later, Central Hospital.



ELIZA!



KEN!

WHOA, TAKE IT EASY! THOSE ARE SOME BRUISED RIBS YOU'RE LATCHED ONTO!

OH MY GOD, I'M SORRY! WHAT HAPPENED?

IT'S A LONG STORY, BUT I'M FINE AND RYU'S OKAY, TOO. THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THOUGH...



I HAVE TO GO AWAY ON A TRAINING MISSION WITH RYU... MAYBE FOR A COUPLE MONTHS.



I DON'T THINK IT'D BE A GOOD IDEA FOR YOU TO COME WITH M- ELIZA?



KEN, I PROMISED MYSELF I WOULD NEVER SAY THIS, BUT... PLEASE DON'T GO.

BUT...

KEN...



THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO TELL YOU...

Ten minutes later.
Rooftop.



KEN,
YOU'RE BACK.
DID YOU TALK
TO HER?

YEAH.

AND...?

I'M
SORRY, BUT
I CAN'T GO
WITH YOU,
RYU.

I
UNDERSTAND.
THIS IS SOMETHING
I'D NEVER ASK
YOU TO
DO.

DUDE,
I WOULD IF
I COULD,
BUT...

ELIZA'S
PREGNANT.

ER... UH...
C-CONGRATULATIONS!
I CAN'T BELIEVE
IT!

WE'VE BEEN
ENGAGED FOR, LIKE,
FOREVER, BUT THIS
IS A WHOLE NEW
BALLGAME.

HOPE
HER DAD
DOESN'T WHIP
OUT THE SHOTGUN
WHEN I GET
BACK...

MAYBE
AKUMA WAS RIGHT
ABOUT ME,
TOO...

HUH?

MY LAST
THOUGHT BEFORE
CRASHING THROUGH THAT
WALL WAS IF I'D EVER SEE
ELIZA AGAIN... MAYBE I
DO HAVE TOO MUCH TO
LOSE TO BE A GREAT
FIGHTER.

WHAT IF THE OPPOSITE IS TRUE? MAYBE YOU'RE MORE COMPLETE BECAUSE YOU HAVE SOMEONE TO FIGHT FOR.

I'M JUST SORRY I'M FORCING YOU TO TAKE THIS JOURNEY ALONE...



???

WHO SAYS MASTER RYU'LL BE ALONE?!



YOU CAN COUNT ON ME - YOUR NUMBER ONE FAN AND PUPIL - TO ALWAYS BE AT YOUR SIDE, MASTER RYU!



MASTER RYU?

SAKURA, I'M FLATTERED, BUT I'M NO MASTER. I'M JUST A STUDENT IN TRAINING.

TEACHING IS THE BEST KIND OF TRAINING! WE'D BE HELPING EACH OTHER OUT!

I'M SORRY, BUT I CAN'T.



OH YES YOU CAN - YOU SAVED MY LIFE BACK THERE, SO NOW YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR IT!



I'M NOT TAKING NO FOR AN ANSWER.

GUESS YOU GOT A LOT MORE THAN YOU BARGAINED FOR. EH, MASTER RYU?





THAT LIFE YOU LED WAS BUT AN ILLUSION, AND THOUGH IT HAS DIED, THIS IS NOT A TIME FOR MOURNING.



YOUR SOUL AND FATE ARE NOW YOUR OWN. DO NOT ALLOW THE GHOSTS OF YOUR PAST TO GOVERN YOUR DAYS OR CLAW YOU AWAY FROM THE FREEDOM I HAVE GRANTED YOU.

LET THE DEAD BURY THE DEAD, FOR THIS LIFE IS FOR THE LIVING.



THIS IS AN UNCHARTED ROAD I'VE SET YOU UPON - A FRIGHTENING EXPANSE OF ENDLESS AND UNCERTAIN POSSIBILITIES.

THE ONLY CERTAINTY IS THAT THE THREAD OF KILLER BEE'S LIFE HAS REACHED ITS END. DO NOT DESPAIR, HOWEVER, FOR EVERY ENDING IS A BEGINNING...



EVERY NIGHT USHERS FORTH A DAWN...



AND WHENEVER A JOURNEY ENDS, ANOTHER BEGINS ANEW.

GOOD-BYE, MASTER. I'LL RETURN AFTER I'VE PROVEN MYSELF TO BE A MARTIAL ARTIST THAT WOULD MAKE YOU PROUD.



AND DON'T BE CONCERNED... I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN MY PROMISE.



HEY! WAIT UP!

YOU WEREN'T TRYING TO DITCH ME, WERE YOU?

OF COURSE NOT.

THOUGH I DO KEEP ASKING MYSELF HOW YOU MANAGED TO CONVINCE ME TO TEACH YOU...



I WON'T DISAPPOINT YOU, MASTER!



PLEASE STOP CALLING ME THAT...

THE JOURNEY BEGINS...

CHEAP SHOTS!

YOU STARTED OUT AS THE
TOKEN BURLY WRESTLER GUY
THAT EVERY FIGHTING GAME
NEEDS...



WE WERE SHOCKED & APPALLED WHEN
YOU RESURFACED AS ONE OF THE "NEW
CHARACTERS" IN STREET FIGHTER
ALPHA TWO...

WITH YOUR REBIRTH ALSO CAME
YOUR SIGNATURE SUPER COMBO
THE FINAL ATOMIC BUSTER...



THE MOST HORRIFYING AND
GLORIOUS OF ALL SUPER
COMBOS...

...AND JUST WHEN WE THOUGHT YOU
COULDN'T GET ANY BIGGER, THERE
YOU WERE ON THE COVER OF
ALPHA THREE...



SOLIDIFYING YOUR STREET FIGHTER
CELEBRITY STATUS.

THE RED CYCLONE, YOUR
PATH TO ACCEPTANCE HAS
BEEN A LONG, WINDING &
TORRID ONE... BUT NOW WE
CAN ALL AGREE YOU ARE
A CRUCIAL ELEMENT TO
THE STREET FIGHTER
FAMILY...



ZANGIEF,
WE SALUTE
YOU!

DAH
!

JUST QUIT BITING PEOPLE,
THAT CAN'T BE HEALTHY.

END!

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