

Felix West Stories

A Public City story

Are You Jerome Beck?

Felix West trudged alone up the steps to the front door of the grunge house. With a grumpy look on his face, he flicked his half-sucked cigarette into the ragged bushes and thumped on the door.

Waiting for a response gave Felix time to inspect the property for a moment. This tragic place was the most stereotypical drug den you could think of – paint peeling off the walls, weatherboards peeling and black with rot, lawn un-mown probably for centuries, chain-link fence half fallen to pieces. The cop shook his thick head, signature grimace appearing on his grizzled, stubbly face.

Soon, he heard trudging on the other side – someone coming. Then, a mean-looking bald man swung open the door a crack. Illegible tattoos covered much of his skin, his white tank-top was stained with ... something.

“What the fuck do you want?” he barked, pants half undone. Felix had interrupted him.

But the cop stared him down. “Are you Jerome Beck?”

“What if I am? Who the fuck are you?”

Without missing a beat, Felix swung his huge arm as hard as he could and pummeled the man straight in the face. The force knocked him clean off his feet and sent him reeling back into his house with a loud thud.

“You’re under arrest,” he grumbled, grabbing the bleeding man by the foot and dragging him back out the door.

Felix’s first rule of arresting super-powered criminals: Don’t fuck about. They might be able to kill you with their mind.

Hold My Cigarette

Felix West approached the cowering police officer slowly, a staunch grimace on his rain-drenched face. He'd popped the collar of his long trench-coat up around his neck, shoulders hunched, with a gently-smoldering cigarette hanging loosely from his large mouth. It was a wonder the rain hadn't put the blasted thing out.

The police officer in question, a pale-looking man somewhere in his early twenties, had taken cover behind an overturned patrol car that partially blocked the junction. His hands trembled, clutching his gun close to his breast. The fear in his eyes and the white on his knuckles suggested to Felix that this might be this officer's first Lower City street war.

"Seen worse," Felix thought to himself.

From the look of the twisted metal, the car had been hit by some kind of large explosive. On the other side was a scene straight out of a war movie: scorch marks and rubble littered the block as a torrent of bullets raged back and forth between combatants, who had holed up in various apartments and shops. Felix could hear people yelling but couldn't quite make out what they were saying. As he watched, a brilliant ball of light screamed across the battlefield, crashing into the other side with a loud explosion that sent a gout of smoke billowing back in the other direction.

That's why Felix was here.

A monster of a man, Felix marched past the young officer, barely taking a second to glance at him. He plucked the cigarette out of his mouth and forced it into the officer's, who remained motionless and bewildered throughout the whole thing.

"Hold this for a minute," he grumbled.

The officer watched Felix West disappear around the upturned car, frozen with shock, the cigarette still hanging from his mouth. Everything that happened next was just sound.

First, the gunfire stopped.

Then, a woman's voice yelled, **"OH SHIT, IT'S WEST! TAKE HIM DOWN, TAKE HIM DOWN!"**

The gunfire recommenced, more aggressively this time, followed by another of the screaming explosions.

More gunshots.

A slam.

A voice, Felix's? "Get back here you little shit!"

Seconds later the street was silent save for a series of footsteps beating a hasty retreat from the scene.

The officer, finding within himself whatever vestige of courage remained, leaned forwards and crawled to the edge of the patrol car where he could see around. The rain pelted him constantly, but his uniform had already soaked through. He wouldn't notice for some time.

There, in the gloom, he saw the figure of Felix West returning back towards the car, this time dragging a woman's unconscious body behind him. The man was covered in burns and bullet holes, his large coat completely scorched. Something was on his skin. Was ... was that metal? Yeah, small plates of metal were forming over the wounds - millions of tiny machines working in unison to dress Felix's injuries and then knit their host back together at lightning speed. Felix's face had not changed since he left the car, and with that same signature grimace he marched back towards the officer, unconscious prisoner in tow.

He stopped only to pluck the cigarette back out of the young officer's mouth, paying him no real attention. "Thanks," he grumbled, placing it back in his own mouth.

And with that Felix was gone again, walking back into the shadows from whence he came, dragging the woman behind him.

"What the hell...?" the officer stuttered under his breath. He shook his head. Perhaps it was better he didn't know.

It was a first day he would never forget.

Uncooperative Suspect

Felix trudged slowly through the hustle and noise of the Masked Crime Unit's headquarters, skin lathered in blood, sweat, and burns. His long trench coat hung in charred stripes from his body, burnt to a cinder, and his shirt and pants hadn't fared much better. His tie was long gone. Millions of microscopic machines worked tirelessly around his body, forming metal plates over the burns as they knitted his flesh

back together. As a result, the large man was currently about seventy-percent metal.

Two retrieval agents - those MCU officers responsible for answering calls and bringing down super-powered criminals - watched him with cruel grins on their faces. It was Ken Takahashi, a short, smartly-dressed Japanese man known for his mastery of electricity, and Ethan Barkman, a hulking half man/half tree monster.

“Jesus, Felix,” Ken called out, “what the hell happened to you?!”

“Suspect was uncooperative,” Felix grumbled in response, taking no notice of the pair as he marched past.

“Wait ... weren’t you going after a kid or something?” Ethan laughed. “Yeah, some hoodie wasn’t it?”

“She possessed a surprising mastery of her abilities.”

Ken sniggered to himself, though there was a line of slight worry on his face. “Oh man, is she still alive?”

Felix glanced at the two with his signature grimace, pausing only for a moment. “...Technically.”

And then he left the room.

Ken and Ethan met each other’s eyes. These strange moments happened frequently in the Masked Crime Unit – moments where you desperately want to laugh, but knew it wouldn’t be appropriate. Something about the image of a teenager being punched in the face by a huge, metal monster will do that to you.

They decided to laugh anyway.

It was always better to just laugh.