

<1>“Eden” (Hazard/Trial Zone)

Woodvale used to be a pleasant neighborhood, where children romped through its parks, trees, and playgrounds. Even the Rikti left Woodvale alone. After the war, the area fell prey to the Devouring Earth, who worked to revert Woodvale to its "natural" state. Now, transformed into a primal world, the area is nicknamed "Eden." It's no paradise for heroes, though. Not while Crey strives to secure the Utopia Complex, while Nemesis schemes against them, and beyond them the Devouring Earth continues to mutate Eden with the unwilling aid of the Woodsman.

<2>History

<3>A Green and Pleasant Land — Woodvale’s Genesis

A crowning achievement of Paragon City’s conservancy efforts in the early 20th century, Woodvale was the brainchild of Jason Isley, a contemporary of the famous Olmstead brothers responsible for the greenswards of Boston and Seattle. Isley envisioned a virtual paradise amidst the squalor of the post Industrial Revolution world, a place where man and Nature could commune and coexist. Given funding and support by the Paragon City Council, Isley began his work in 1936, and completed the initial landscaping in 1941, just in time for his dream world to be transformed into an agricultural outpost for the coming war effort.

Throughout the Second World War, Woodvale provided the citizens of Paragon City and the soldiers overseas a cornucopia of fresh foods. Undaunted by the abrupt redirection of his efforts, Jason Isley turned what could have been disaster into fortune. Woodvale was a model for sustainable agriculture until well after the close of the war. Lauded by the burgeoning environmental movement, Isley continued his efforts to make Woodvale a green and pleasant land, mingling the residential neighborhood of Arcadia with a vast nature conservancy. His work was carried on after his death in 1974. Paragon City offered tax breaks to environmentally-friendly companies, similar to the incentives offered on a trial basis to manufacturers in Venice. While never as successful as the Venice, Woodvale did attract some light industry – particularly, the headquarters of Dr. Brian Webb’s Portal Corporation in the 1990s, and Crey Industries’ Utopia Complex at the dawn of the 21st century.

<3>A Haven for Troubled Times — The Rikti War

During the Rikti War, the aliens, for reasons entirely their own, spared Woodvale from the havoc wrought on the rest of Paragon City. Some venture that the aliens’ culture holds an almost religious respect for such environments, and the invaders were loathe to break such a taboo. Woodvale again, as it had in World War Two, provided food and, occasionally, R&R for those fighting the never-ending battle against the invaders.

<3>Paradise Lost — The rise of Hamidon and the Devouring Earth

In the wake of the war, Woodvale's situation dramatically changed. Following a disturbance at a satellite branch of Winthrop University, the area was devastated in the first known appearance of the monstrous Devouring Earth. An eruption of rock (dubbed the 'Hand of Hamidon') nearly destroyed Crey's Utopia Complex, and the Portal corporation lost their second major installation in the city when the Hive swallowed it whole. Within weeks, the resurgence of plant and animal life unseen since the Jurassic combined with hive-like eruptions of stone to render Woodvale uninhabitable. Though its citizens had been spared the horrors of the war, many could not escape the clutches of the Devouring Earth. . . and were forced to join its ranks, reborn in the bowels of the Hive.

<2>Neighborhoods

<3>Arcadia

A grim testament to the hypocrisy of the Devouring Earth, the once-pristine neighborhood of Arcadia now resembles a warzone. If Crey's Folly is a vision of Earth after some terrible apocalypse, then Arcadia is that vision extended far into the future. In its streets, villains battle for supremacy or territory, and the only safe place is the sky. But as many heroes can attest, the stony hives responsible for so much destruction often house the deadly Swarm, mutated insects of the Devouring Earth.

<3>The Pit

Pleasanton was once home to a variety of crafts and light industries. In 2002, this was still a pleasant neighborhood where families picnicked with their children and Synapse liked to jog. When the Rikti invaders struck, Synapse's first act was to use his super speed to carry as many people out of the area as possible, saving 87 lives before the Rikti plasma weapons tore Woodvale's apartment buildings and businesses apart. Now, the depredations of the Devouring Earth are manifest — a hellish crater yawns, hungry for heroes, the source of the neighborhood's new name.

<3>The Utopia Complex

At the dawn of the 21st century, Crey Industries found itself locked in a public relations battle with Portal Corporation. In an effort to win PR "points," Countess Crey sanctioned the creation of the Utopia Complex to "continue Jason Isley's dreams of a greener tomorrow." No one is sure what research the Crey Complex pursues, but it is now a primary target for the Devouring Earth. In the center of the Utopia Complex is the Hand of Hamidon, a rock formation stretching its 'fingers' hundreds of feet into the air.

<3>Aveda Towers

The Aveda Towers were built in 1992 by a consortium of Japanese and American businessmen. Intended to be an ecologically-friendly arcology — a complete living space with shops, factories and homes integrated into a single set of buildings — the Aveda Towers housed one of New England's first full-blown cosmetology laboratories.

Ironically, the Devouring Earth specifically targeted the Towers during their initial assault on Woodvale, perhaps intending to "liberate" any animal test subjects inside. Since the consortium did not engage in animal testing, the Devouring Earth turned its monstrous fury on those living and working within. Few escaped to tell of the attack.

<3>The Serpentine

Much like Perez Park, this primeval jungle is a lethal maze of plants, animals and monsters waiting to waylay unwary heroes. Despised by those who must venture into its hedgerows, the Serpentine is the site of Galaxy Girl's last stand. Galaxy Girl met her end in a hail of Rikti plasma fire, using the last of her power to heal her teammate Ms. Liberty, rather than saving herself.

<3>The Cascades

Beautiful waterfalls matched only by those of the Blackstone Hills conceal a deadly peril — the area teems with the monsters of the Devouring Earth, along with deep-striking Crey teams and hardened Nemesis troops.

<3>The Hive

The infected heart of Eden, the Hive conceals the spawning pools of the Devouring Earth. Surrounded by a virtual barricade of stone, the Hive is only safely accessible to heroes possessing travel powers of one sort or another. Whether they fly, teleport, run or leap, those venturing to the Hive can expect stiff resistance to their efforts to reach the Woodsman. Bound here by the power of the Hamidon, the Woodsman's superhuman powers are shackled to the service of the Devouring Earth. . . though his will is great enough that he has been known to advise other heroes, warning them of the dangers of this spoiled Eden. It is rumored that the Woodsman is privy to the secrets of the Hamidon itself, and may share them with heroes of sufficient power and the proper Security Level.

<2>Adventure seeds

<3>Trial By Fire

The Woodsman contacts the heroes during one of their forays into Eden, and offers them the opportunity to best the Hamidon and beat back the Devouring Earth. . . and they must, for several heroes have fallen into Hamidon's grasp and must be rescued before they become the next generation of The Devoured!

<3>And the Earth Abides

Hamidon and the Devouring Earth have grown strangely quiescent in recent weeks. The monsters loosed in places like Founders Falls and the Cutlass Isles have become rooted in the ground, inactive. Deep beneath the Hive, the Hamidon extends its tendrils outwards into the ocean and the sewer network. In so doing, it has devoured several Paragon

Protectors. The Hamidon has become aware of Crey's Revenant Heroes program, a potentially unlimited source of power! Can the heroes thwart the Hamidon's plans before it invades the central Crey facility elsewhere in the city or, worse still, reactivates some of the abandoned Portal technology and spreads to another world?

<3>Who Mourns the Hamidon?

Tanya Tyler, a member of the radical Earth Liberation Front cell that helped Hamidon's rise to power, has now been targeted by the Hamidon itself for a very special purpose — transformation into a Matriarch, a Devouring Earth creature capable of breeding! Can the heroes save Tanya from Hamidon's attentions. . . and after exposure to the mind-altering chemicals of the Devouring Earth, does she <i>want<i> to be saved?