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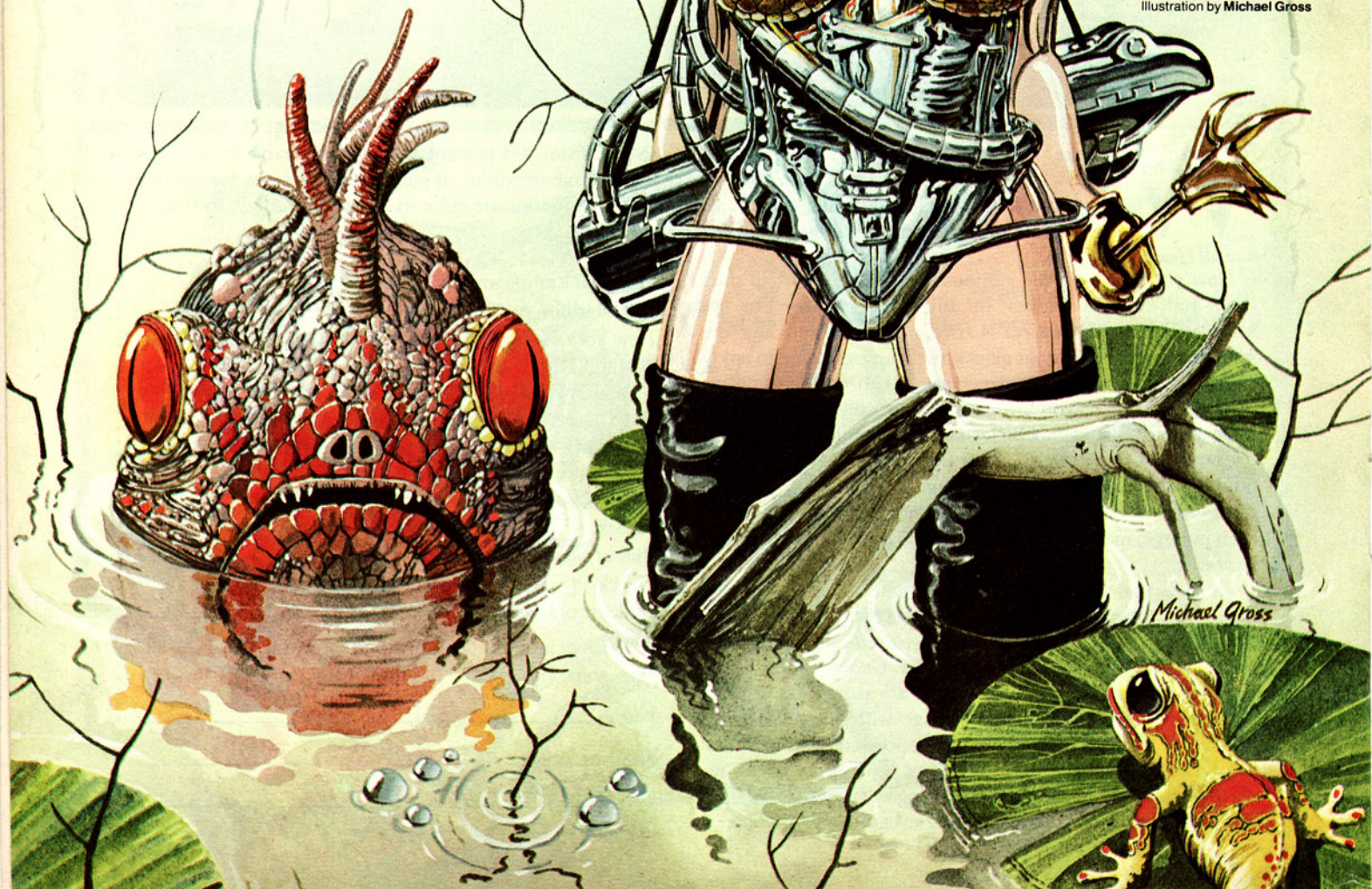
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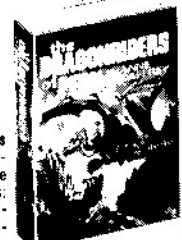
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...TWENTY-SIX...

Had hoped to bring you stunning conclusion to "So Beautiful and So Dangerous" in this issue, the sooner to release complete series in book form to McKie fans delirious with anticipation; but Britain on strike, acting out Anthony Burgess's scenario six years early, thus no pages from Angus. Last chapter even now in mid-Atlantic aboard refurbished u-boat, to appear in June edition unless hopelessly lost Canadian Air Force sub chasers still

on '45 mission and damn low on petrol sight and sink same.

Open pages provide long awaited opportunity to present "Entropies," native American masterpiece we're all terribly keen on at *HM*. Damn thing's been booting around the offices in one form or another for two years now.

Also herein, the opening episode of "Alien: The Illustrated Story," high falutin' title of the comic based on the movie *Alien*. You ought also start saving up your spare change for the book of the same name, soon to be ticking

away on your grocer's shelf or wherever.

The Corben-Strnad "Arabian Nights" will certainly be released as its own book when it finishes as a serial in the magazine, and will also, as far as we know, appear animated in the upcoming *Heavy Metal* feature film. It's this kind of creative recycling of material that has earned us eco praise from eco nuts everywhere, a chorus of gratitude far louder than the murmurs of "rip off" from a disgruntled few.

Stay tuned for a complete and unabridged fifty-page space opera entitled *Captain Future*, complete in the June issue.



You know, the last time *Heavy Metal* made a mistake on a Byron Preiss extravaganza, I promised it would never happen again. Really. And I meant it.

But there's a sucker born every minute, and

I had the kid believing me—up until our March issue that is. Our printers took it upon themselves to drop the red plate off a spread in "The Stars My Destination" excerpt. Oooops. Sorry.

When confronted with an irate Mr. Preiss who steamed, "What are you planning to do

about this?," I agreed to run the cover of "Stars."... And you know, it's pretty nice.

Here ya go readers, the first Chaykin oil painting ever to be seen by human eyes.

—JS

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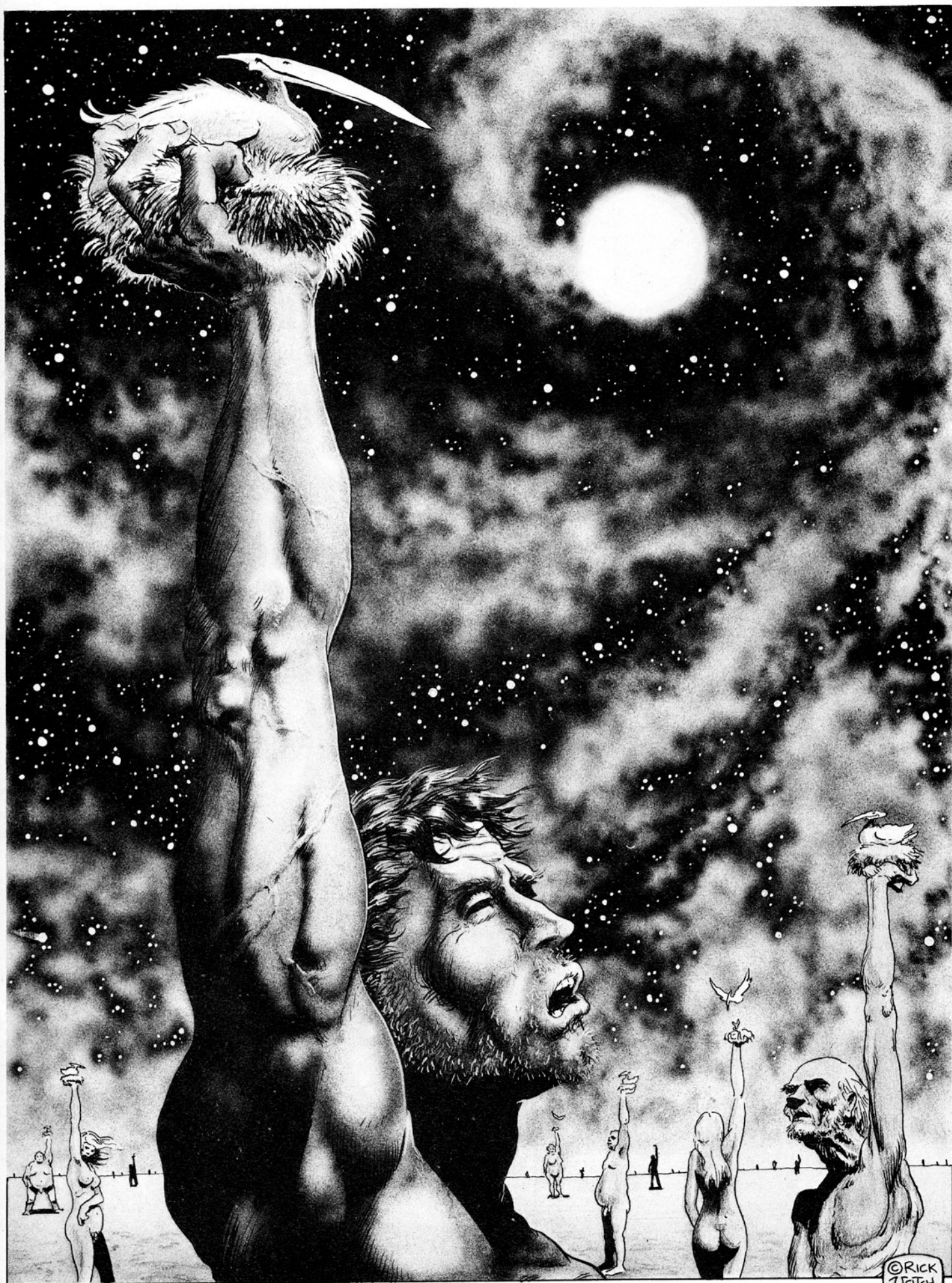
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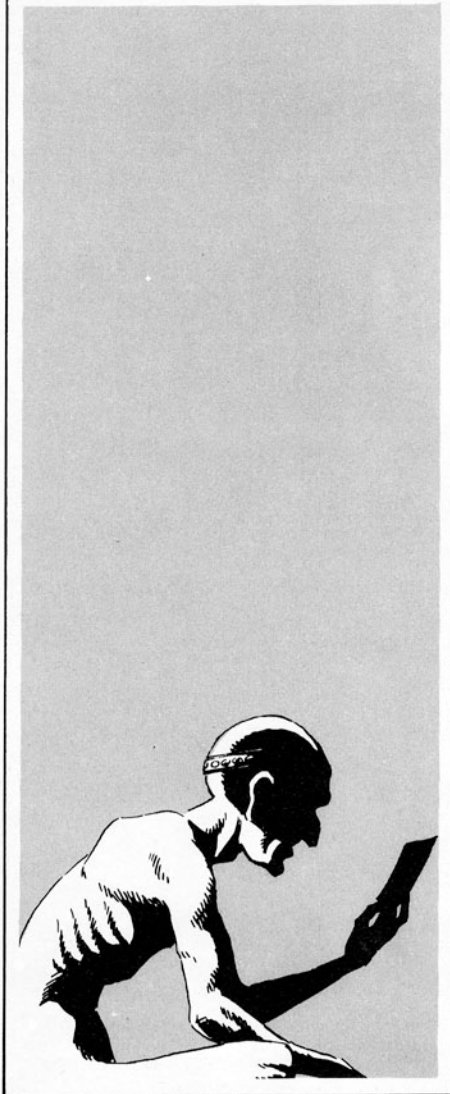
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BORN AGAIN

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VEITCH

Chain Mail



Dear Editors:

You're crazy if you don't bring out McKie's "So Beautiful and So Dangerous" as a *Heavy Metal* book. I would hereby like to order the

first copy.

Thomas R. Dupree
Jackson, Miss.

Dear T.R.: Send money. Book is due out this summer. —Eds.

Metalites:

I'll renew my subscription 'til one of us is no more! P.S.—I wonder if you could get someone to do some H.P. Lovecraft for your glorious pages?

J. Lucifer Cthulu Chtonian
El Cerrito, Calif.

Dear J.L.C.C.: Our complete Lovecraft issue will appear in October. —Eds.

Dear HM:

I'm sorry to say that your magazine is deteriorating with alarming speed.

Sam Taub
N.Y.C., N.Y.

Dear Sam: If you took alarming speed, you'd deteriorate, too. —Eds.

Dear HM:

I am distressed at your withdrawal of Karl Kofoed's "Galactica Geographic." Also, I would like to see more Bob Aull, whose work never ceases to astound me. One more thing—is Moebius really gay?

Eric Sadoyama
Pearl City, Hawaii

Dear Eric: As you can see, Karl's back. Bob is finishing a cover for us. Moebius is a celibate Zen monk, who fucks only God. —Eds.

Heavy Metal Eds.:

I have the good fortune to have read every single issue of *HM*. Tell those readers who are constantly moaning about certain features that this is science fiction and fantasy, folks, not the news or a soap opera. If they want a comic book, they can go buy a comic book.

Kevin Kelly
Denver, Colo.

Dear Editors:

I was really taken aback by those criticisms of "Off-Season." I considered the artwork to be truly brilliant. Some people just can't appreciate an abstract story line.

Andy Biggerstaff
Seattle, Wash.

Dear Sirs:

"Lulea" in your February issue was the most incredible science fiction story I have ever read! Each panel looked like an oil painting that belonged in a museum. . . .

Natalie Tyson
N.Y.C., N.Y.

Dear Natalie: Maybe the stuff in museums belongs in *Heavy Metal*—Eds.

Dear HM:

Ten minutes ago I picked up *HM* and thought it was quite humorous. But then I saw "Orion." How disgusting! All those 90% naked floozies running around! And all the hot young honeys fully clothed. *Unfair!* Don't you think I like to stare at a nice bod every now and then? Don't tell my old man—he's got green eyes.

Peg Stah
Newark, Del.

Dear Peg: Now he knows—Eds.

Dear HM:

...I have only one request of you and that is don't ever let *Heavy Metal* fall to duller content levels by replacing the highly appreciated excellence with excessive advertisement. Don't ever let that filth overrun *HM*, and your magazine will become an everlasting symbol of what people want. . . .

C. Paul Roth
Wauconda, Ill.

Dear C. Paul: Try as we might, we can't seem to sell out to advertisers. Too many ad bucks would be a nice problem to have. . . . Eds.

BLAST BARTLEBY, ALONG WITH HIS FRIEND AND COMPANION JUPITA LALANE, HAS ESCAPED FROM THE CITY OF THE MAGICIANS. HOWEVER, BLAST HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A FUNNY ANIMAL...



"THIS IS CRAZY," SNIFFS BLAST. "THIS MORNING I WAS A SIX-FOOT, FOUR-INCH MAN, A HUMAN BEING! NOW I'M A TWELVE INCH...A...UH...ER...WHAT AM I, ANYWAY?"
"YOU'RE A SHEEP," SMILES THE SULTRY JUPITA, "A CUTE, WOOLY LITTLE SHEEP."



"WELL WHATEVER I AM, I'M HUNGRY," INSISTS BLAST. "I'VE BEEN FIGHTING CRAZED MAGICIANS ALL DAY! I WANT SOME REAL SHEEP FOOD! I WANT...I WANT A CHEESE SANDWICH ON WHITE BREAD WITH MAYONNAISE!"



THE TWO COMPATRIOTS DISCUSS THE POSSIBILITY OF EATING SOME STUFFED PEPPERS, UNAWARE THAT THEIR EVERY MOVE IS BEING WATCHED BY THE CRUEL AND EVIL DONGO OF MARS.

NOT NECESSARILY TO BE CONTINUED...

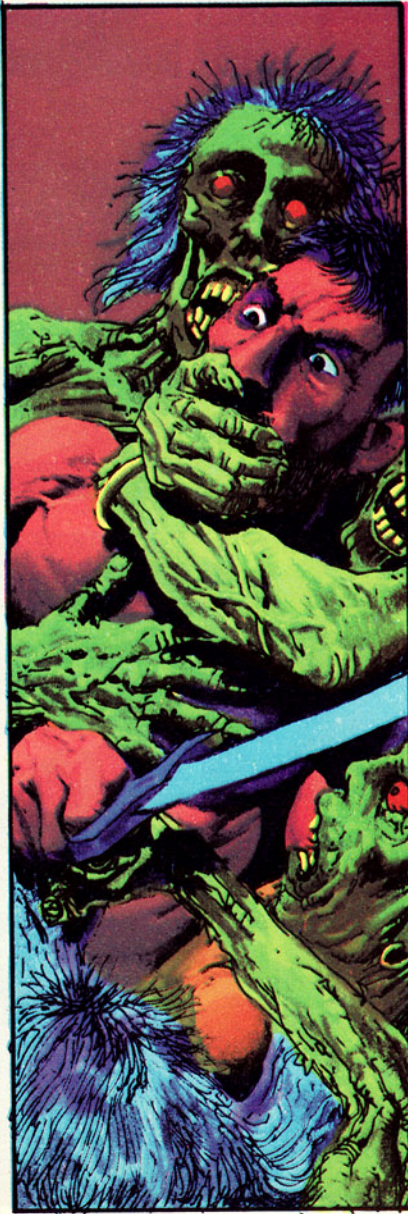


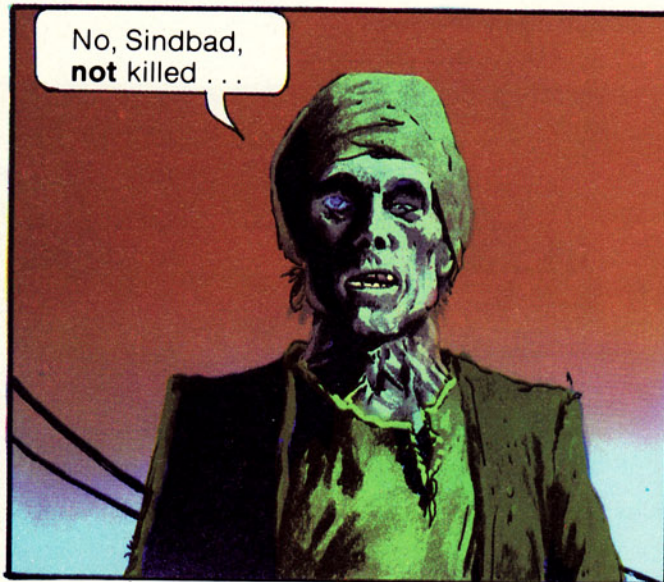
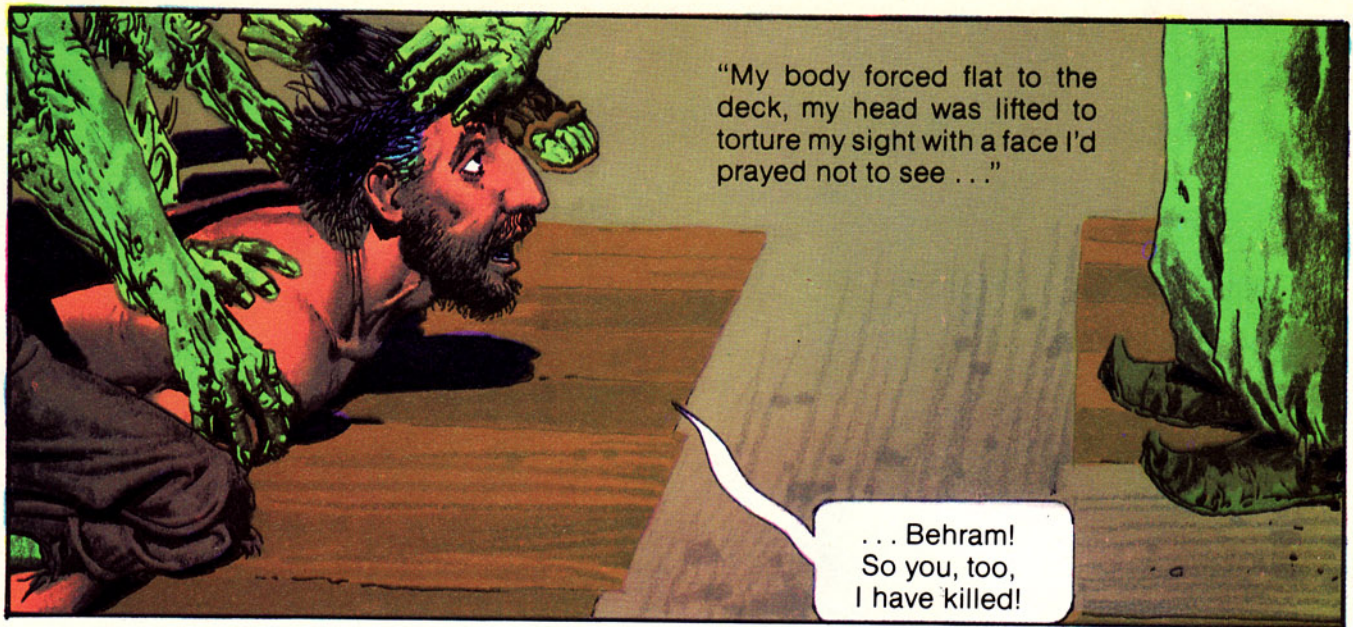
*Sindbad
in The
Land of the Jinn*



"Even as Judar's deathless body jerked on the plankings beneath my feet, I was set upon by more of the foul creatures, many of them familiar to me as members of my ill-fated party."

© 1978 Richard Corben and Jan Strnad





You're a rabbit before the lions, Sindbad! Allah hears not your prayers! Your eternal damnation is at hand!



You pathetic wriggling worm! You do well to hide your eyes!



Within this globe lies the legacy of Solomon himself ... the power of the Jinn, stolen from them as he sealed the rebellious in bottles of lead and buried them in the deepest seas! Within is power to bring even **Zu'l Janahayn** beneath my dominion!

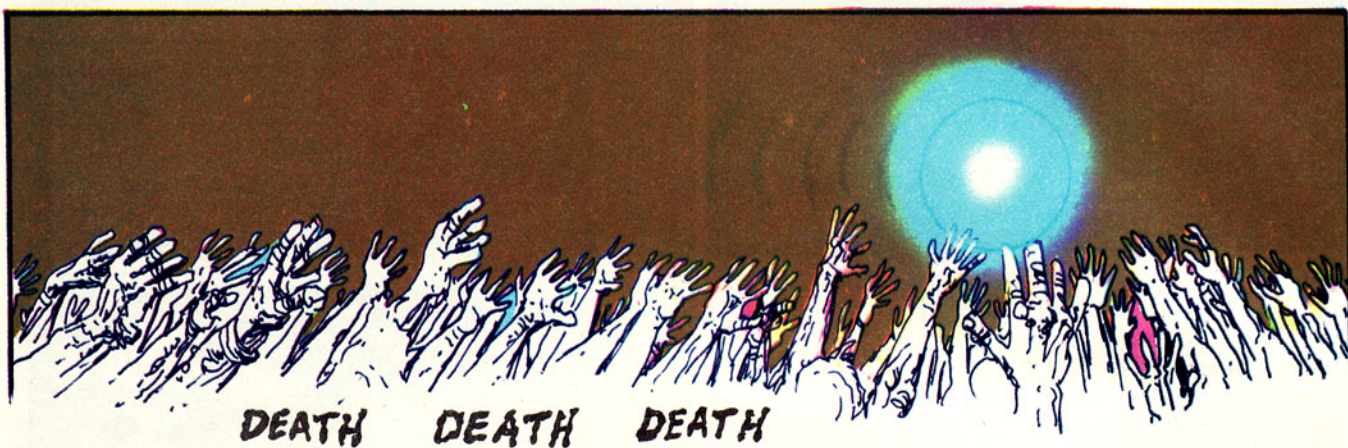


The torch ...!



Huh?





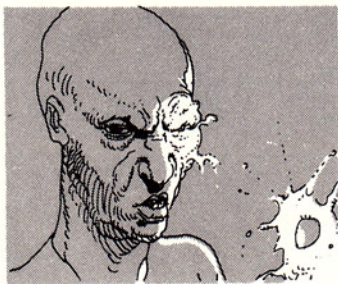
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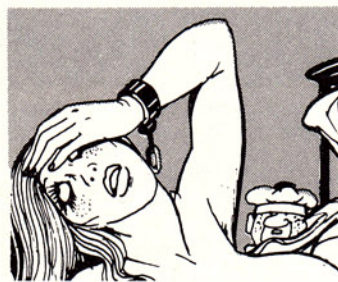
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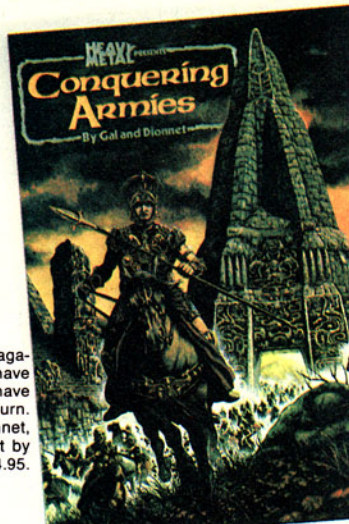
ARZACH: All four of the brilliant, full-color adventures of Moebius's pterodactyl-riding hero, acclaimed as works of genius when they appeared in the first issues of *Heavy Metal* magazine. Plus the amazing, animated story of the man who cracked the Cosmic Egg. Sixty-four pages including thirty-two of perhaps the most astounding color you will ever see on paper. \$6.95. HM4011



CANDICE AT SEA: A new comic heroine, in the great tradition of Barbarella, Phoebe Zeitgeist, and Modesty Blaise, Candice, who can't seem to find a thing to wear, is shanghaied, plundered, keelhailed, and otherwise entertained for sixty-four pages of nautical insanity in perhaps the sexiest black and white ever drawn. Heavy chrome coat cover. 9" by 11". \$3.95. HM4012



CONQUERING ARMIES: From *Heavy Metal* magazine, the dream epic of fierce horsemen who have never lost a battle and never won a war: who have always come and gone and who will always return. Script by *Metal Hurlant* editor Jean-Pierre Dionnet, with magnificently detailed black and white art by the mysterious Gal. Large size 9 3/4" x 13 1/4". \$4.95. HM4013



ULYSSES, PART I: Art and text by Lob and Pichard (who brought you *Candice at Sea*), based on the story by Homer (who brought you the *Iliad*). The brave Ulysses pits his strength and wit against gods with the morals of movie producers and goddesses with the morals of movie starlets as he makes his way home across the universe. Certain to have been a classic. Full color. 9" x 11". \$6.95. HM4014



IS MAN GOOD?: From *Heavy Metal*'s first year, the collected full color Moebius, including the sixteen-page space-spy saga, "The Long Tomorrow," the beautiful "Ballade," the eerie "Small Universe," and the utterly grotesque title story. This fifty-six page book includes all the covers, one-pagers, jokes, nightmares, and endpapers done so far by Moebius; *Heavy Metal*'s most acclaimed author-artist. Full-color illustrations throughout. 9" x 11". \$5.95. HM4015



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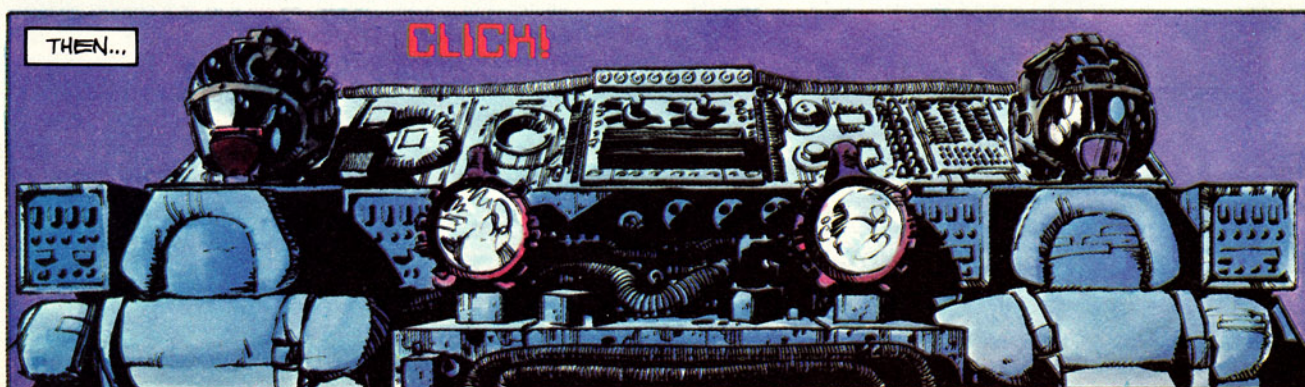
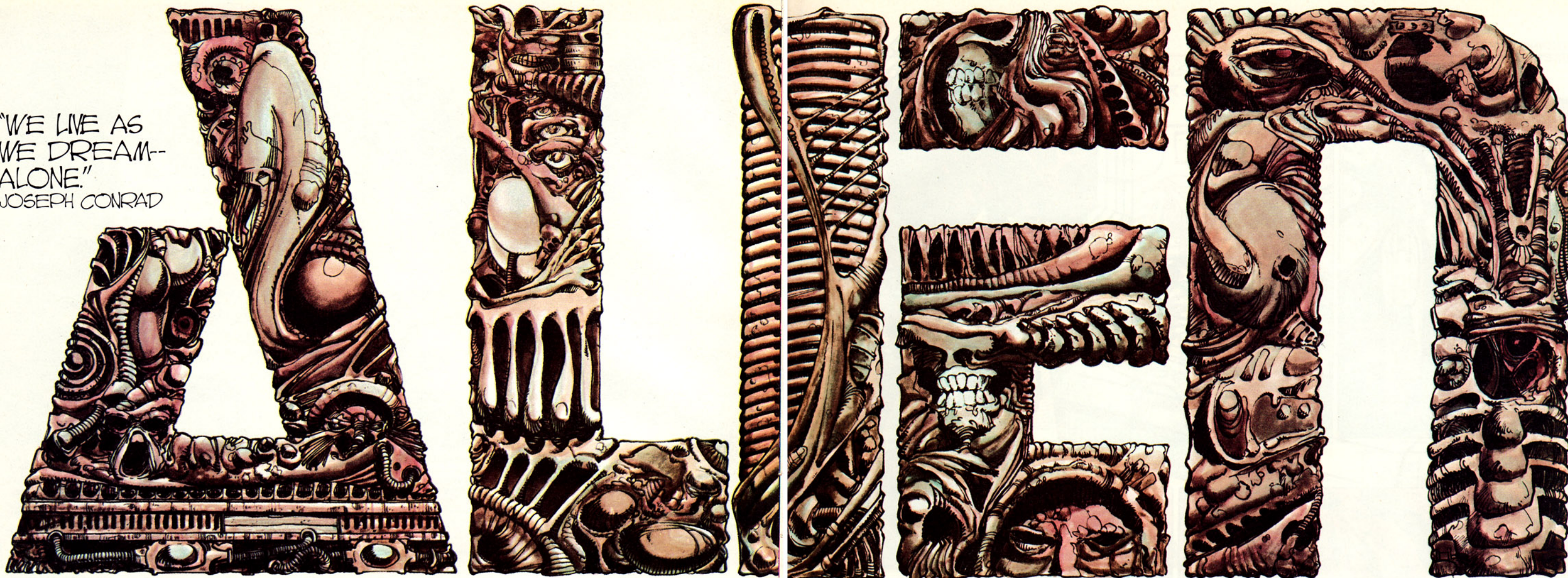
☐ HM4010 ☐ HM4011 ☐ HM4012
☐ HM4013 ☐ HM4014 ☐ HM4015

Name.....
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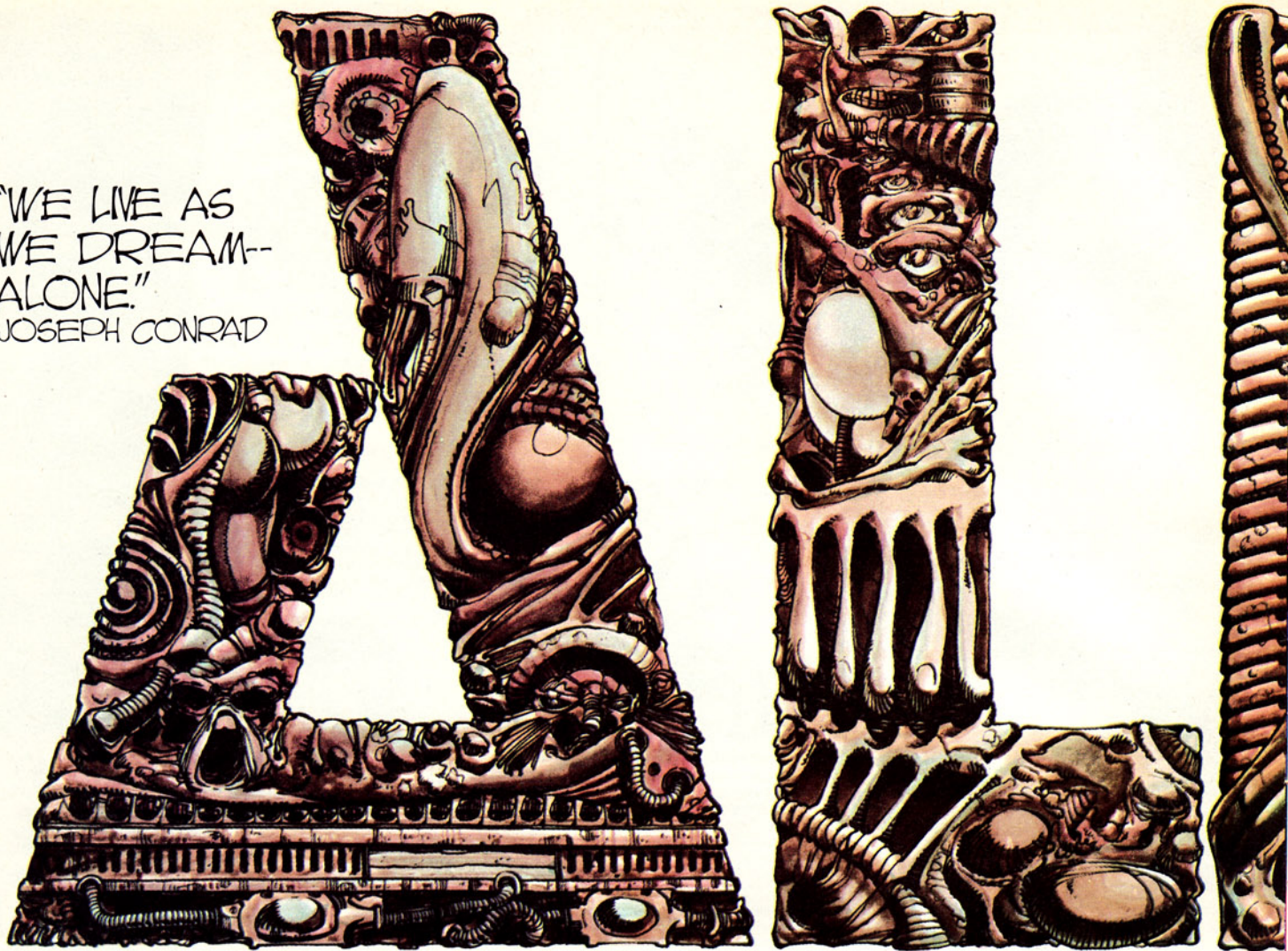
Address.....

City.....State.....Zip.....

"WE LIVE AS
WE DREAM--
ALONE."
JOSEPH CONRAD



"WE LIVE AS
WE DREAM--
ALONE."
JOSEPH CONRAD



IT STARTS
WITH THE
SHIP...

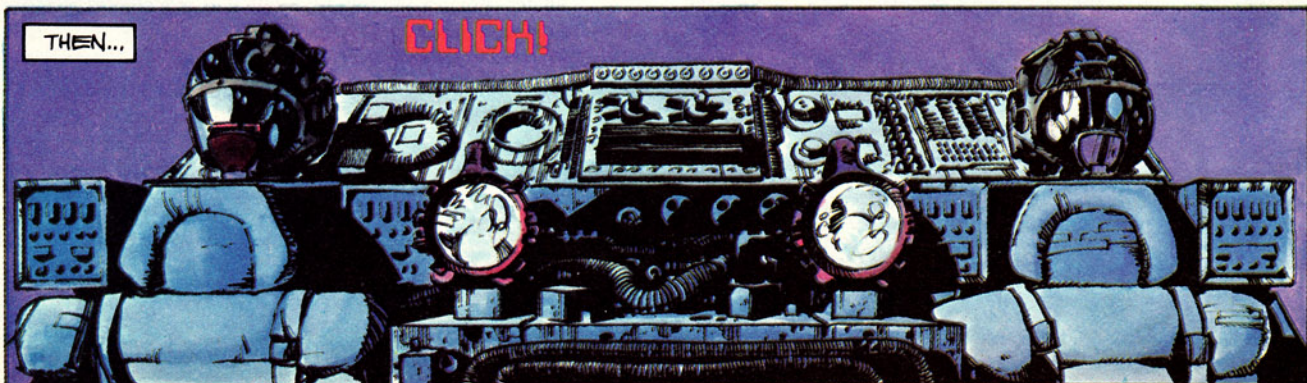


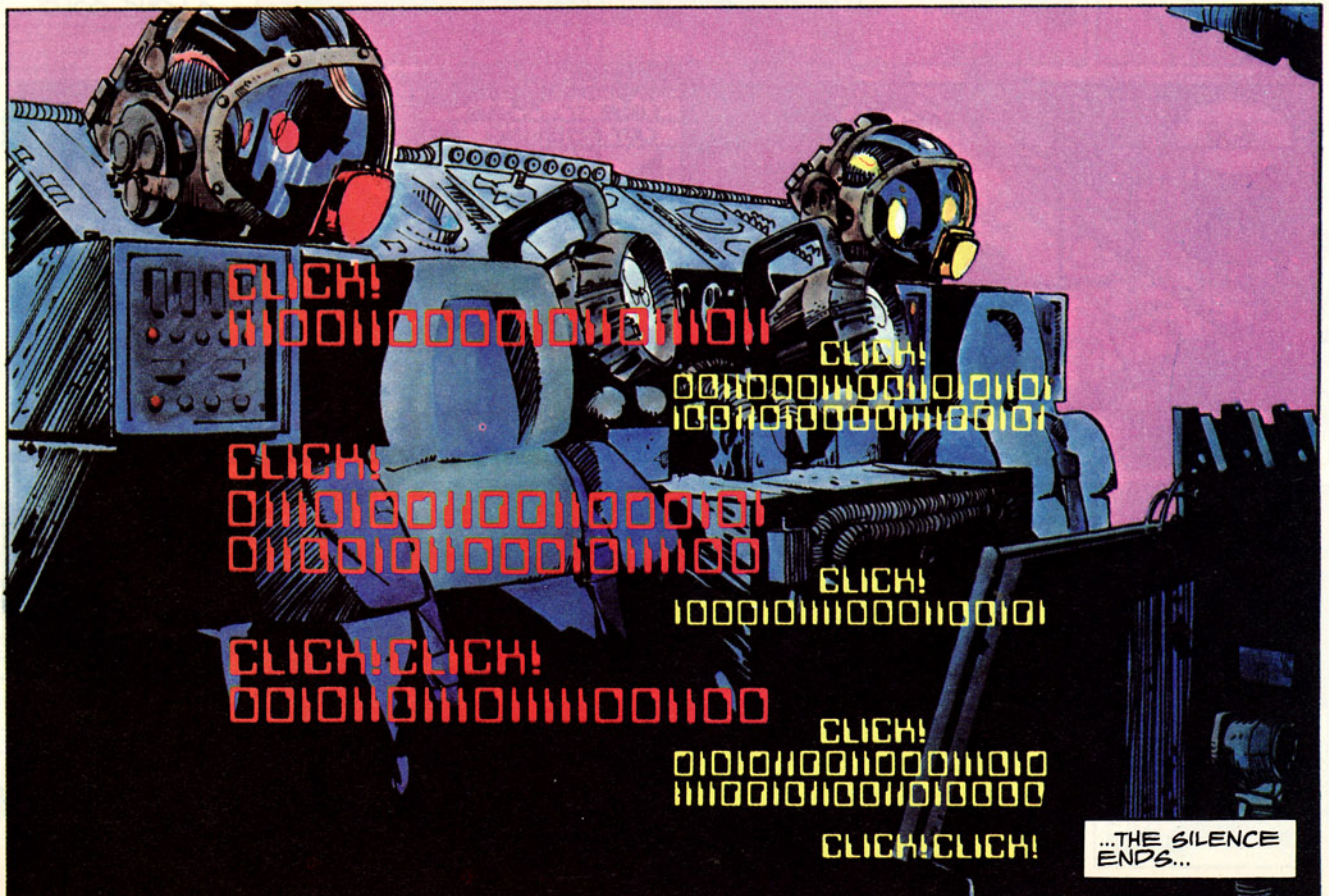
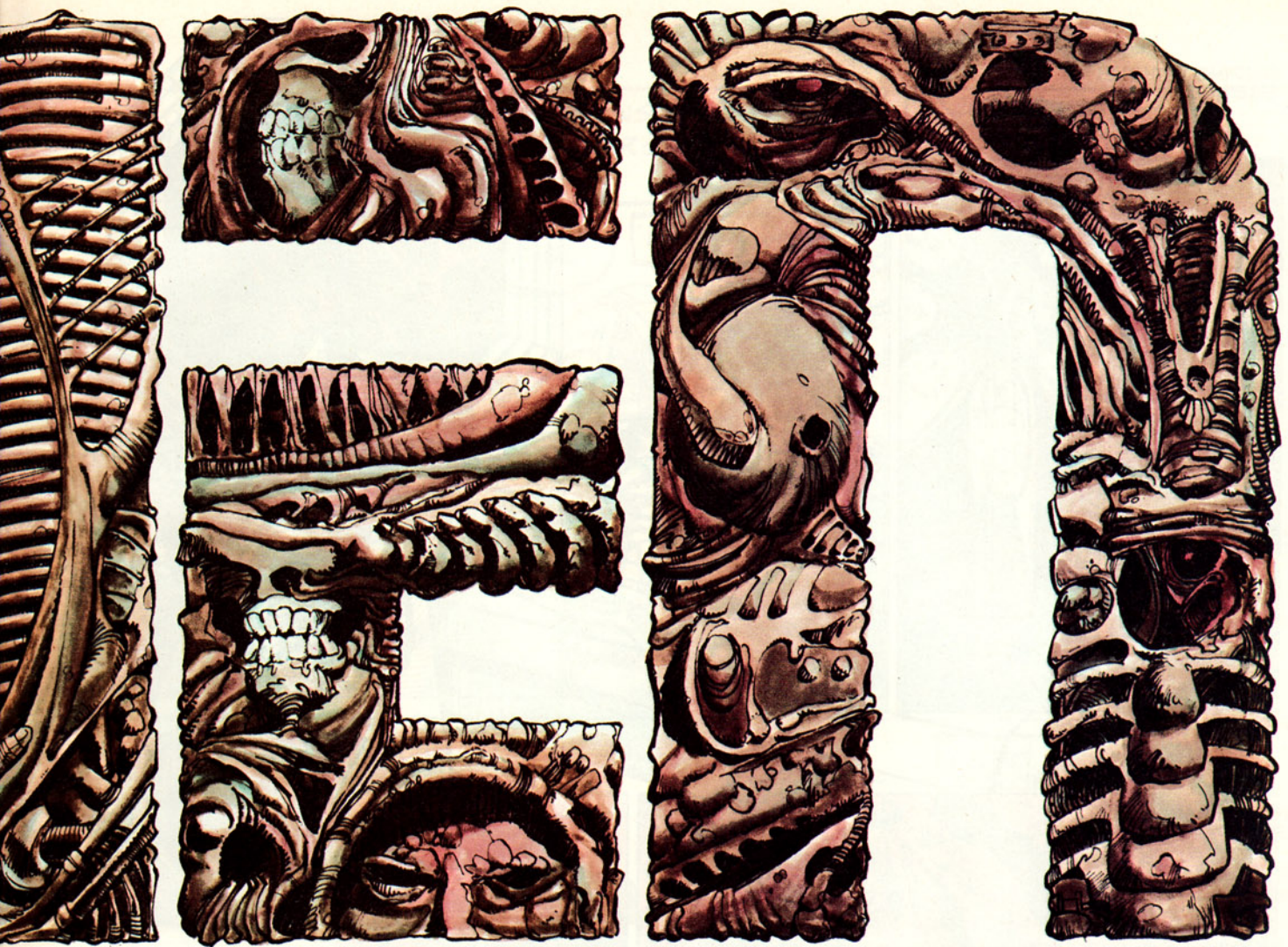
THE SHIP...
AND THE
SILENCE...



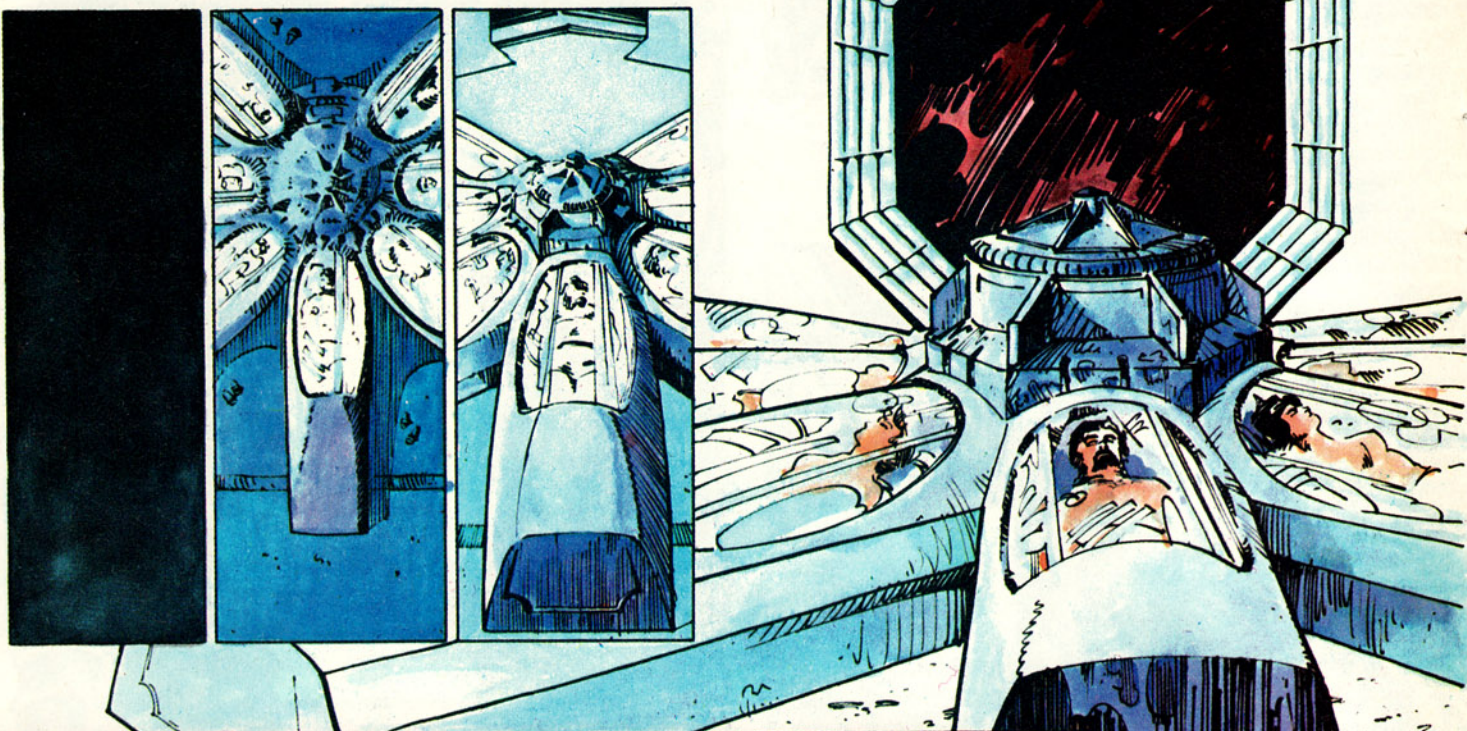
THEN...

CLICK!

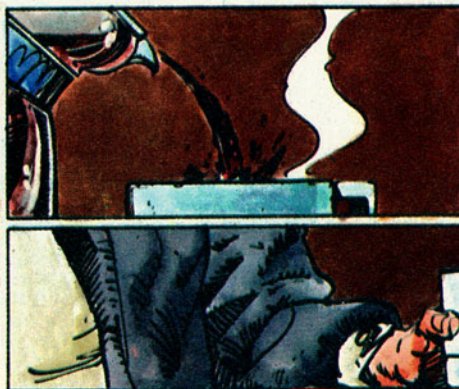
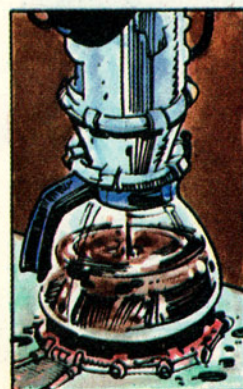
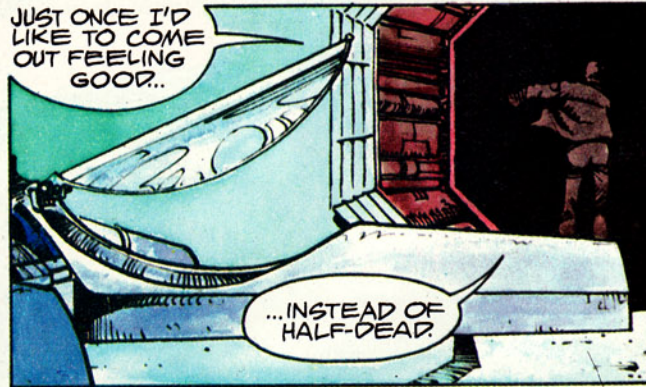




ENDING WITH THE
SILENCE...



...A LONG, COLD
SLEEP...



STIFFLY, SULLENLY, THEY ENTER, IGNORING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER, KANE, FOR THE COFFEE HE'S BREWER

SHIP'S NAVIGATOR...

...LAMBERT.

SEVEN BEINGS. TWO FEMALE. FIVE MALE. GRADUALLY BEGINNING TO FEEL HUMAN AGAIN.

IT'S CAPTAIN...
DALLAS.

WARRANT OFFICER...
RIPLEY.

SCIENCE
OFFICER...
ASH.

ENGINEER...
PARKER.

AND HIS
TECHNICIAN...
BRETT.

'FORE WE
DOCK, MAYBE
WE'D BETTER GO
OVER THE BONUS
SITUATION.

RIGHT.

BRETT AND
I THINK WE DE-
SERVE A FULL
SHARE.

YOU TWO
WILL GET WHAT
YOU CONTRACTED
FOR, PARKER.
LIKE EVERYONE
ELSE.

EXCEPT MAYBE
FOR JONES, THE
DAMN CAT...

...EVERYONE
ELSE GETS
MORE THAN
US.

RIGHT.

EVERYONE ELSE
DESERVES MORE
THAN YOU.

DALLAS...

...GOT A
YELLOW
LIGHT. MOTHER
WANTS TO
TALK TO
YOU.

I SAW
IT, ASH.

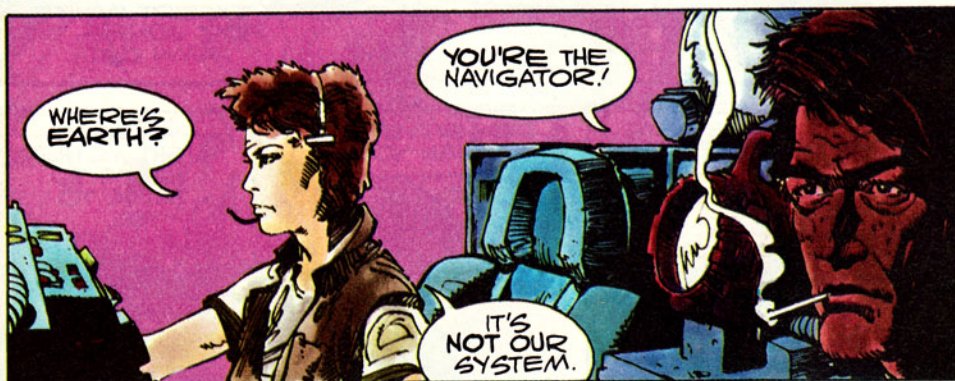
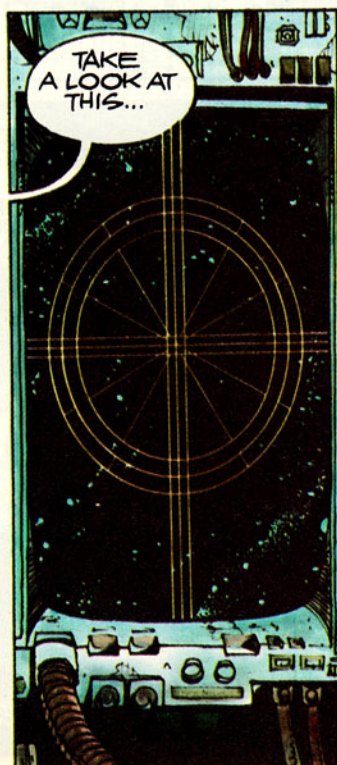
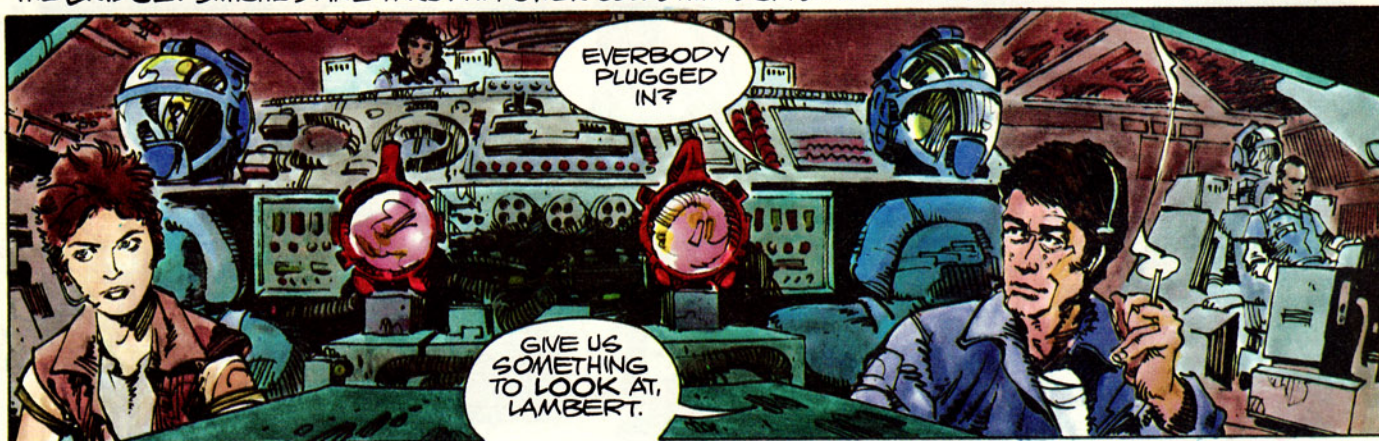
THE REST OF
YOU HIT YOUR
STATIONS.

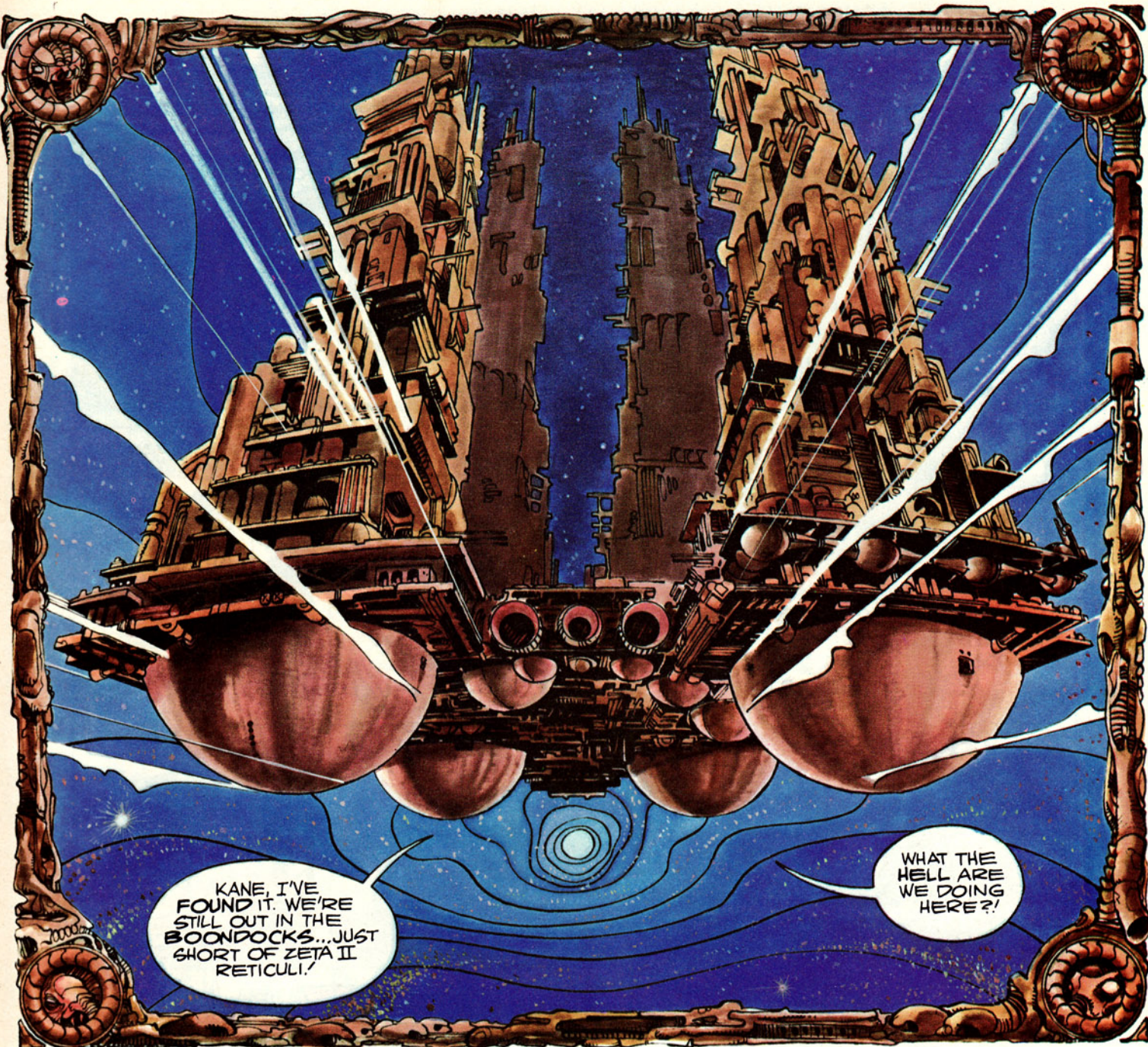
YELLOW LIGHT...

...CAPTAIN'S EYES ONLY...



THE BRIDGE. SWITCHES ARE THROWN. POWER CELLS HUM. LIGHTS FLICKER. A STARSHIP COMES FULLY TO LIFE.





KANE, I'VE
FOUND IT. WE'RE
STILL OUT IN THE
BOONDOCKS...JUST
SHORT OF ZETA II
RETICULI!

WHAT THE
HELL ARE
WE DOING
HERE?!



THERE GOES THE BEEPER!
CHRIST. WHAT IS IT NOW?

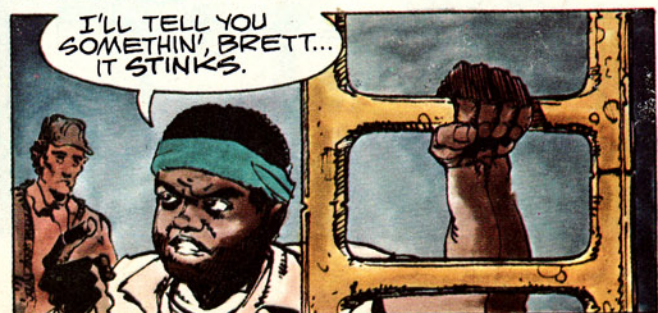
WHY DON'T THEY
EVER COME DOWN
HERE? THIS IS WHERE
THE WORK IS.

RIGHT.
OUR TIME IS
THEIR TIME.
THAT'S THE
WAY THEY
SEE IT.

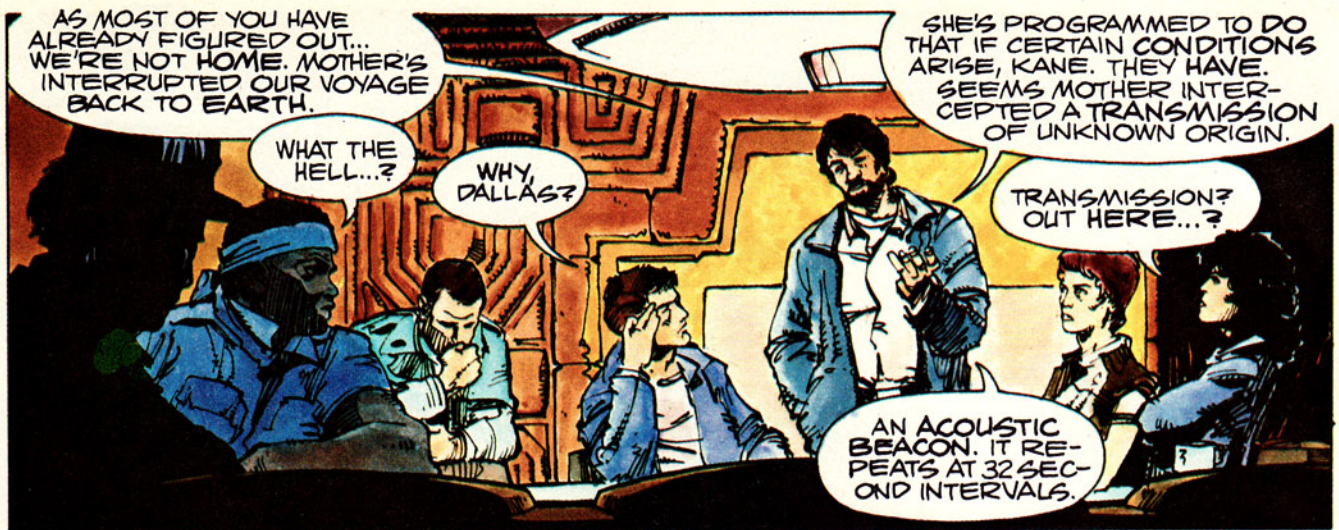


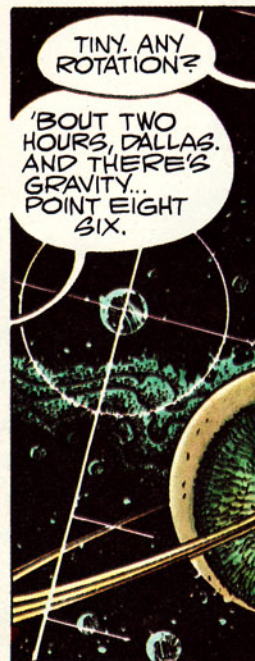
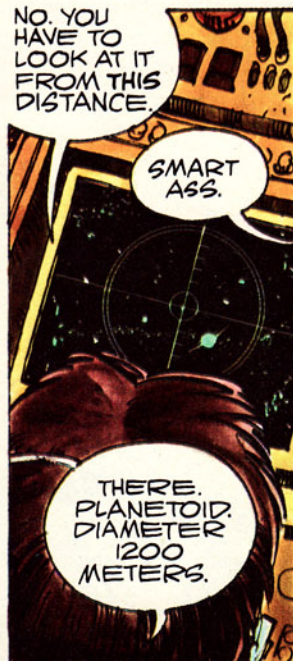
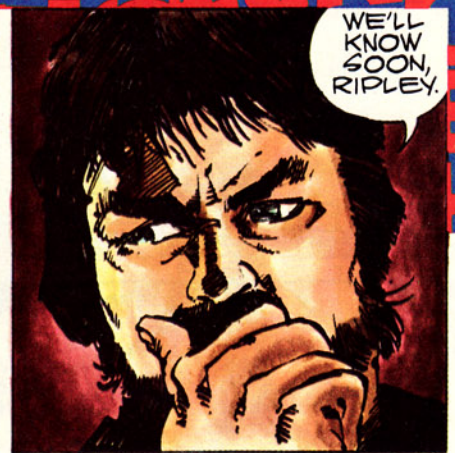
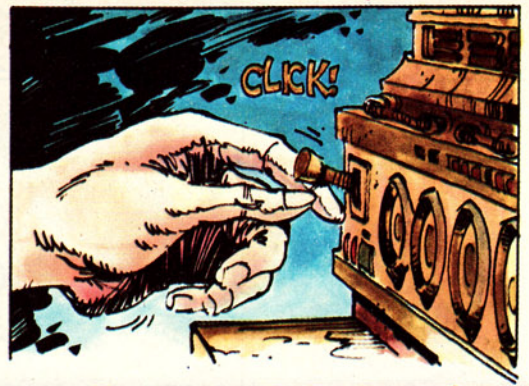
IT'S WHY WE
ONLY GET HALF A
SHARE TO THEIR--

PARKER,
THIS IS RIPLEY.
CAN'T YOU TWO HEAR
THE BEEPER? RE-
PORT TO THE
MESS.



I'LL TELL YOU
SOMETHIN', BRETT...
IT STINKS.





A STRIP BY MOEBIUS*

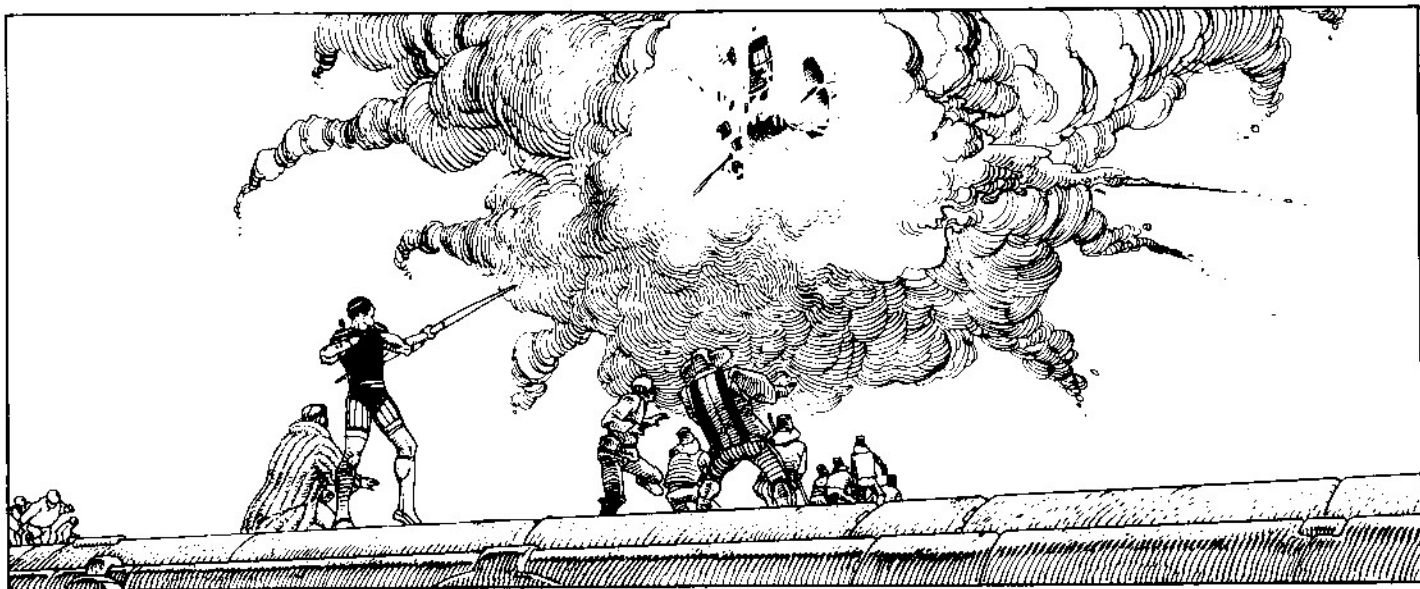
STORY SO FAR

LARC IS LOST ON AN
ALEATORY LAND, FAR
FROM NORMANDY...WE
WILL NEVER SET FOOT
ABOARD THE
CIGURI AGAIN...BUT
HE WILL FIND LOVE,
AND HE WILL DIE
GLORIOUSLY...

STORY

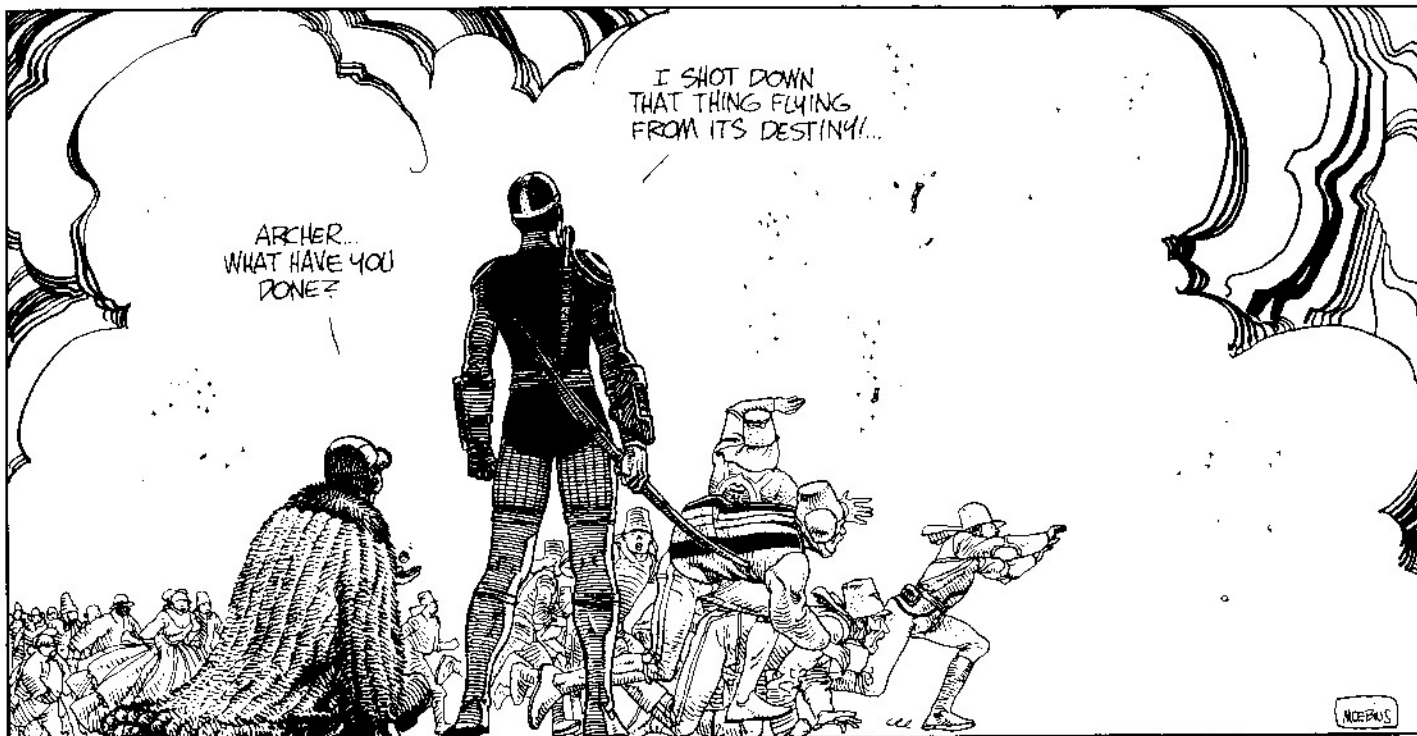


THE AIRTIGHT GARAGE OF JERRY CORNELIUS

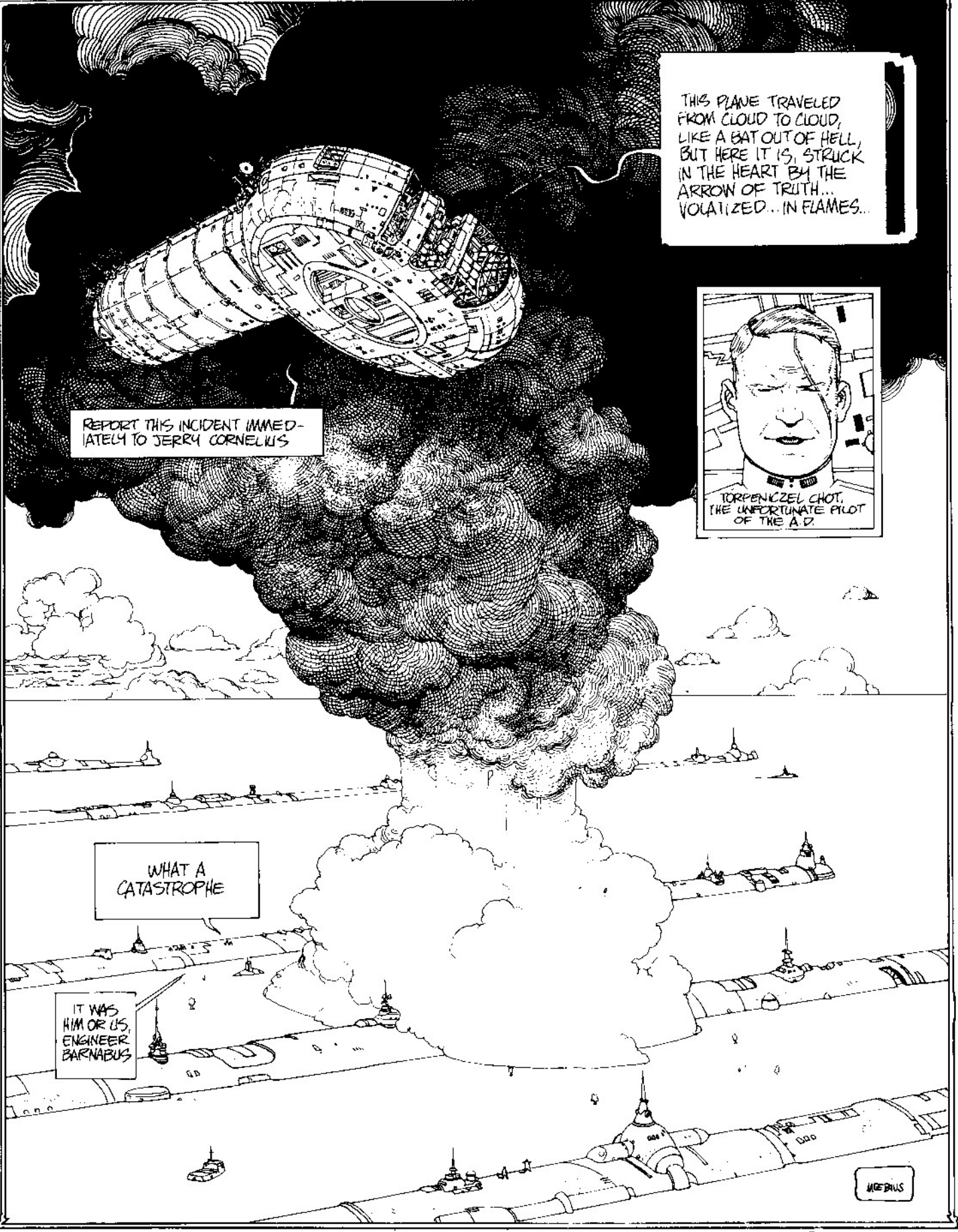


I SHOT DOWN
THAT THING FLYING
FROM ITS DESTINY!

ARCHER...
WHAT HAVE YOU
DONE?

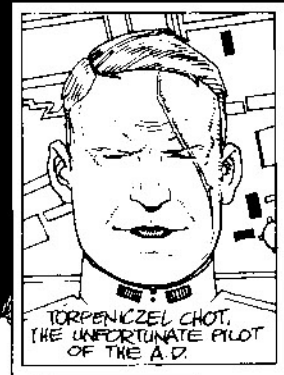


*OR: HOW TO TURN AND FACE ONE'S SELF SO THAT THE TWO FACES BECOME ONE.



THIS PLANE TRAVELED
FROM CLOUD TO CLOUD,
LIKE A BAT OUT OF HELL,
BUT HERE IT IS, STRUCK
IN THE HEART BY THE
ARROW OF TRUTH...
VOLATIZED...IN FLAMES...

REPORT THIS INCIDENT IMMEDIATELY TO JERRY CORNELIUS



WHAT A
CATASTROPHE

IT WAS
HIM OR US,
ENGINEER
BARNABUS

MOEBIUS

TO BE CONTINUED...

STARBROW

Part IV

BY JOHN POCSIK

PEW's vocal indicator lit up. Praetorius' calm voice broke the silence. "I know how you're feeling, Flan. Family ties are a troublesome responsibility, especially when they're bound up in robes of royalty and tradition. But then, one's freedom often collides head-on with the quest for one's destiny."

"I know, uncle PEW. What did you do? How did you handle it?"

The warbot hummed as if processing a complex equation; it tilted toward Flan as the speedster swept round a curve between crumbling sea walls.

"Like yourself, I tried to avoid the problem – the petty intrigues, the back-stabbing, the lies, the compromises – by opting for the mercenary service, sanctioned by the Sunhearts, but never really approved of. Sort of a skeleton-in-the-closet public servant if you like. But I was at least my own man in those days, and causes were plainer, results more direct, easier to understand. We were fighting for our lives against the 'moths. But you know – LOOK OUT!"

Flashing up over a curving rise, the screamcar was directly in the path of a gigantic war wheel, pinned in its beams. The juggernaut's knobby grippers banged thunderously against the highroad's metal plating. Flan arced the wheel, gunning it, and they were speeding down a column of the weapons, nearly deafened by their engine roar. He stopped counting the machines after thirty.

♦ **their guns are tracking us** ♦

Flan spun the wheel hard left. The car left

the road in a cloud of dust and flying pebbles. He punched for maximum power; the screamcar sheered up the side of the embankment, nose rising from horizontal to near vertical. Hanging there suspended, Flan hoped that his crash web would not snap from the strain.

Well, PEW, we might still register on their visuals, but at this pitch and rate of speed they're going to have one hell of a time finding a target of opportunity.

The screamcar slipped up over the embankment's crest, bounced down hard, yawing dangerously, slamming Flan against his door. *But he still had control!* He touched the wheel again. The car angled further into the dark, away from the roadway.

And now the virtual image reader revealed something else: almost as great a concentration of military activity out there in the hidden flats as there was on the road to Ilium – formations of men and machine creeping through the dark parallel to the wheels, armored Burrowers erecting paralapse bunkers along the dead shoreline, LAT drones. . .

"PEW?" Flan asked as his eyes made a swift circuit of the instrument panel: engine temperature was going up – due, no doubt, to dust sucked into the intakes. He scanned the roadway again, watching transparent rock outcroppings and hummocks sweep past like the rise and fall of an irregular heart-beat track.

The roaring in his ears was making his head ache; he tore the plugs out. Nothing to

Hurting through the heated, velvet dark, Prince Flan Sunheart finds that a wild screamcar ride cannot cure his depression. Again he hears his father's plea that he remain on Ilium Prime; again he hears himself decline Emperor Alidin Sunheart's wish.

Now, hastening to be off-planet and free of the intrigues which are destroying his royal family, the youth finds himself weighted with a burden of guilt and sadness. As he booms along beneath the icy glare of Ilium's moon, eager for the starry highroads, he knows with certainty that he will not easily be rid of the burden this time.

hear but static-jamming anyway.

Maneuvers – on a vaster, grander scale than ever before! But for what purpose, to what end? It went beyond strange; it was very –

"Menacing is the word, I believe," PEW voiced.

Then they were solitary in the night once more, racing down one of the abandoned access roads, scant inches above the buckled and melted permaplast.

He slowed to a stop at the edge of a bluff overlooking the spaceport's northeastern quadrant. Anti-personnel lasers were operative all along the perimeter, green and yellow beams moving in regulated sweeps. A flickering drew his eyes toward an auxilliary gate where a low-energy plasma shield appeared to be malfunctioning. The field itself was black with Armada troopers milling about the big-bellied carriers and gunships.

Far out on the field – needle in the night – stood the *Omega Wing*, poised for flight – and apparently unguarded.

Disembodied shouts came to him – too distant for clear understanding, but military and forbidding in their tone and import.

◆ **command is calling for full field integrity : : : tech are going to try to patch that gate's shield power unit into the laser systems : : : port remains sealed to all except military : : : armada maneuvers appear to be continuing : : however observe that those flyers are equipped with oriflamme bombs** ◆

The youth frowned. "Corona must be mad

to do that; those are strictly wartime weapons! We've got to call the Palace and alert father."

◆ **call would never pass through the jammers : : : an alternate suggestion : : wait until we are off-planet and link in** ◆

"Well, we've a choice. It's either back to Ilium, with a departure delay no doubt – or we test Corona's security forces now, see how well he's been training the boys." Sunheart studied the area below them, determining approach path, obstacles, time required for acceleration. Satisfied at last, he eased back onto the seat, checked his impact webbing, raised the cockpit dome, switched on the screamcar's defense screen.

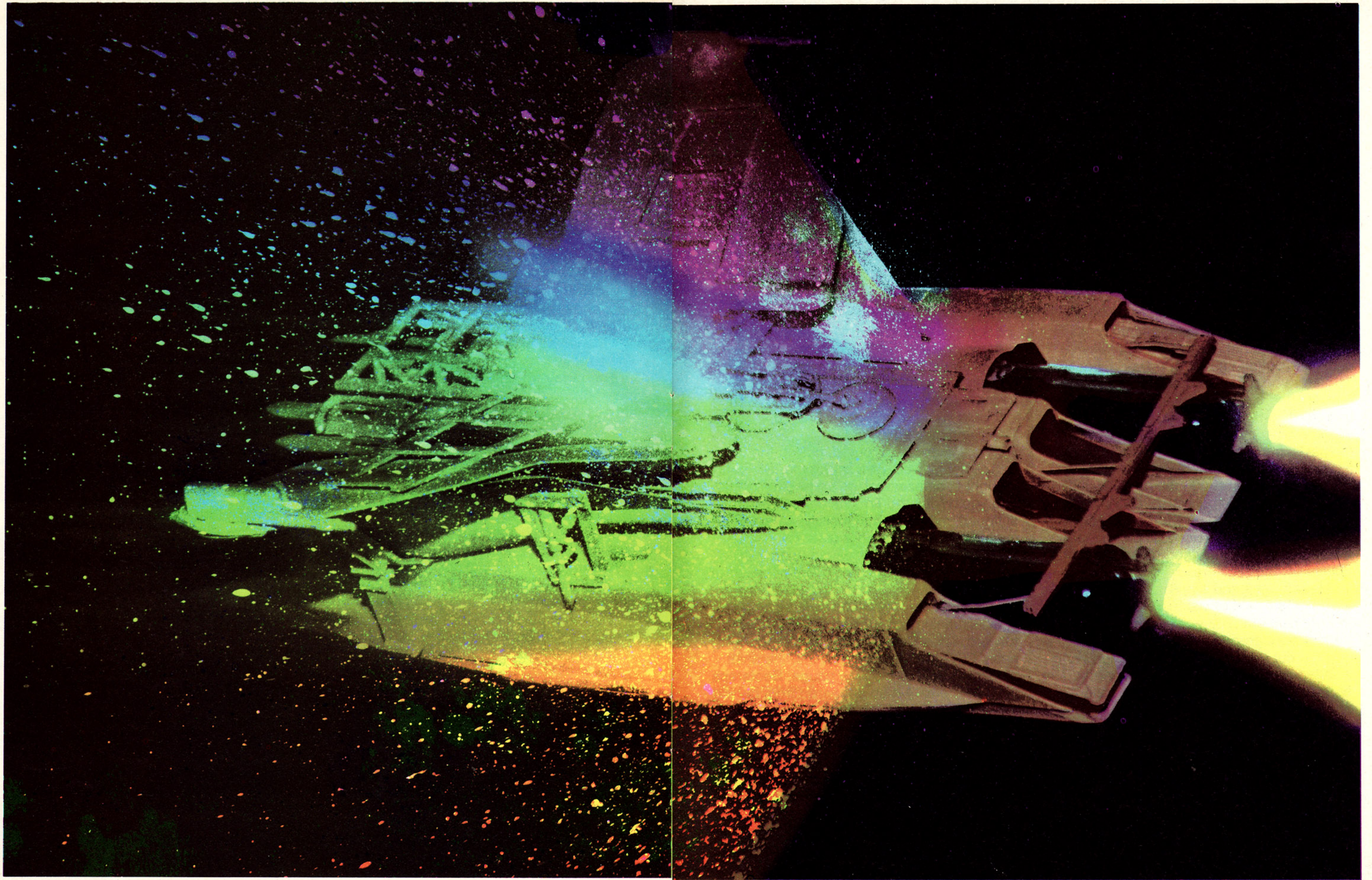
"You do not think they will fire on us?" PEW queried, sounding almost worried.

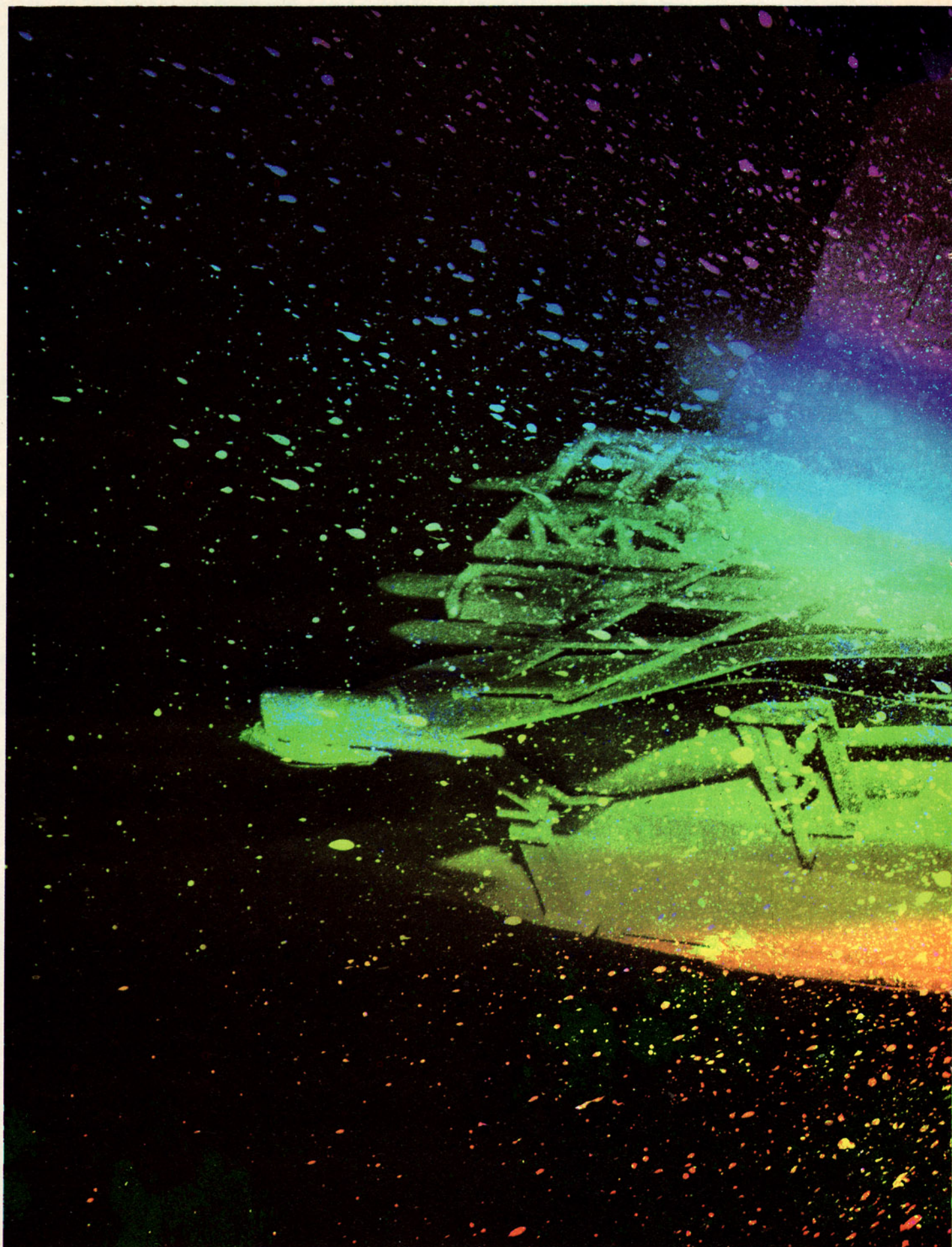
"With the Sunheart crest in full display? Would you? No, PEW, this is just a military exercise, and we're going to exercise the military, have some fun." He grinned as he pressed the starter.

"I would hate to be with you when you were really enjoying yourself," the machine grumbled, withdrawing its prime lenses.

The vehicle eased slowly down the incline into the bleak glare of the auxilliary gate's illumination. The small knot of troopers and technicians laboring over the power unit looked up in puzzled confusion as they recognized the royal seal. Several snapped to attention until an officer yelled at them. No one had as yet unslung his weapon.

Glancing at the chronodisc, Flan timed







the intervals between energy pulses in the defective shield.

Here we go, PEW; hang on.

The glowing speed marker lept across the dial toward scarlet. The screamcar slewed under the sudden surge of power, Flan fighting to hold the nose down. They bore down on the figures by the gate. Hands were beginning to reach for guns, but by then it was too late, and the soldiers had to throw themselves out of the way. White, strained faces flashed past.

The car shot through the gateway just as the plasma curtain pulsed feebly on. Sparks showered, bouncing off the dome. The vehicle shuddered – sides smoking – and then they were careering across the metal plain past the cruisers.

Heat beams and stun-bolts zipped across their field of vision, criss-crossing in front of them. The entire military contingent appeared to be opening up.

Flan cut the power as the *Omega Wing* swelled before him, coasting in silently. The speed indicator fell back into emerald acceptability.

"Get ready, PEW! Activate preliminary and main ignition sequences. I'll stay with the car until you're on board." Flan kicked the door open, drew his blastmaster, fed a charge-magazine into the butt. The firing behind them had stopped, but several armoreds were heading their way, glowlamps bobbing crazily.

The warbot was already rolling toward the lowering rampway. Warm welcome light

streamed through the port.

That was when a squad of Armada men came running around the tail of the ship.

Don't stop PEW! Get on board! This isn't a game or a maneuver anymore.

♦ **concur** ♦

One of the troopers raised his weapon, aimed it at the machine.

"Hold your fire!" Sunheart yelled. "This is Flan Sunheart, Prince of –"

"Hell!" the man shouted, pulling the trigger. Metal glowed. *He's raying me*, Sunheart thought in amazement; *he's trying to kill me!* The youth returned fire. Instantly the soldier stiffened and hit the grid noisily. A heat beam melted a hole in the door glass by Flan's shoulder. He ducked down as energy bolts began to rip into the car. Shouts sounded all around him; far off, across the field, a siren was wailing. He loosed three quick shots at figures running toward him. They pitched forward, rifles skittering into the the darkness. PEW had disappeared into the ship.

Flan looked at his time gauge. Bootsteps rang on metal. A man appeared from behind the car, firing rapidly, but too high. Sunheart's face felt as if it were aflame. The youth's return shot flipped the soldier over the back end.

The vehicle's single tire exploded from the heat. The frame banged down hard upon the grid.

Above all the yelling, Sunheart caught the rising moan of the ion engines. He crouched, firing randomly into the night.

Grid plates erupted nearby. The con-

cussion knocked him down. *They've brought in a sono-cannon*, he realized; *and the next shot –*

The screamcar blew up in a thunderous ball of flame. Chunks of chromalloy shrieked past him as the burning hulk flew high into the air, twisting and turning – just missing the *Wing!* – to land on a gun group.

◆ **come on :: flan :: they are all around us** ◆

Groggily, the youth got to his feet. Stray bolts hummed through the billowing smoke. He ran toward the spacecraft.

A figure loomed before him.

"Goodbye, Sunheart," Captain Spar laughed as he lifted the sensodim.

Without breaking stride, the youth kicked the man in the groin. Spar coughed in agony, dropping the gun. He raised his hands to protect himself, but Sunheart was faster. The long barrel of Flan's blastmaster impacted against the officer's metal jaw. Even before the man hit the ground, Flan was racing up the ramp.

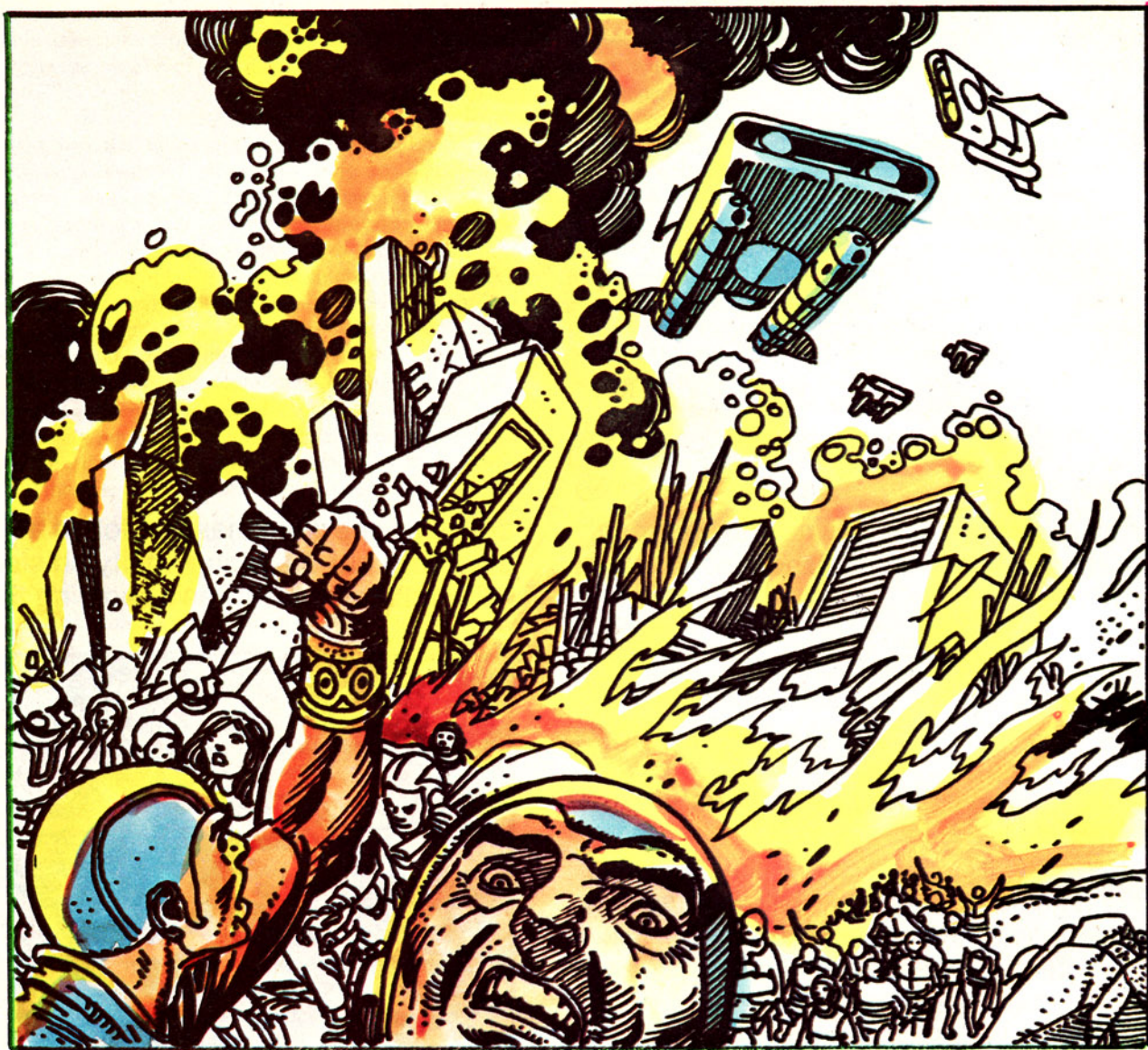
Close the hatch, PEW! Close the hatch!

A cascade of bright blue sparks almost blinded him, as a force-bolt deflected off one of the hatch sections, and then he was diving through, his bootheels barely clearing as the wedges clanged shut.

Sunheart clawed his way forward to the control cabin, barely noticing PEW already plugged into the console. All systems glowed green-positive. Through the viewport, the horizon was lit by stark splashes of light in the direction of Ilium. Nearer, Corona's

shock troops were massing for an assault on the *Wing*; but the high-density shield which PEW had turned on was absorbing their fire.





Overhead, he saw the faint silvery glow trails of a drone formation.

Flan hit the exterior probe lights, freezing the milling troopers. Without hesitation, he sounded the takeoff alarm as he throttled up to full power. The black shapes outside scattered in all directions.

The *Omega Wing* began to move forward slowly, disengaging from the power-core lines. A moment more, and then they were climbing steeply into the velvet night, pressed back into their seats.

Thrust, attitude: good. Readouts: positive. LAT systems: normal. Atmosphere intakes, vents: clean. Cabin: pressurized.

Flan checked his biomed unit, found both his pulse and cardiac strained and rapid. The familiar howl of static-jamming brayed from the com.

Backed down on power, level and trim-

med, the ship rocketed toward those fiery bursts of light rising from the City.

For the first time, he noticed that his hands were trembling; he was finding it difficult to breathe, and there was a terrible buzzing in his head. He could not concentrate on *anything* except that ominous glow on the horizon.

He clutched at his chest, his heart about to burst: he knew what was happening.

But it could not be!

He worked the manual override controls, slowing the ship's speed to the LAT minimum, taking them back down toward Ilium's night-bound surface. The *Wing* bumped along, riding the rising heat waves.

◆ rear screen ◆

Eight yellow blips in a W-formation had suddenly appeared on the rear viewer, traveling at tremendous velocity and gaining



on them even as he watched. Flan fired an energy decoy. The blips turned to follow it. His burning eyes returned to the fearful vision which was rushing closer and closer.

Beams of light came streaking up at them from the invisible desert floor as the ground-based batteries tried to bracket them. The *Wing* sailed on.

♦ **we are too low : : : there is a step-laser bank down there** ♦

Ignoring PEW's warning, Flan adjusted the magnification, fixing on the City.

His agonized cry shattered the cockpit's silence; his hands rose to blot out the horrific sight.

But it remained, coming nearer, the fiery panorama in clear detail, burning itself forever into his heart and into his soul.

Ringed round by the war wheels and the other awesome machines of destruction, the

Place Royale was dying. Tremendous explosions sent entire sections of the structure high into the air. Forceglass and steel flowed together in molten rivers which spilled into the streets far below. Those graceful, needlelike towers were toppling, blowing outward in millions of glittering fragments, each one mirroring the flames that devoured them. Crimson-lit murk obscured most of the holocaust – but in that timeless instant Flan Oros Sunheart knew what was dying inside him.

The House of Sunheart was falling before his very eyes. . .

His mother's tears –

"NO! NO! NO! NO!" he kept shaking his head in denial. "No! They can't all be gone!"

PEW took the controls from the helpless youth. The horror disappeared beneath them. They soared out over the western basin.

To be continued . . .

COLLECTOR'S ITEMS



1



2



3



4



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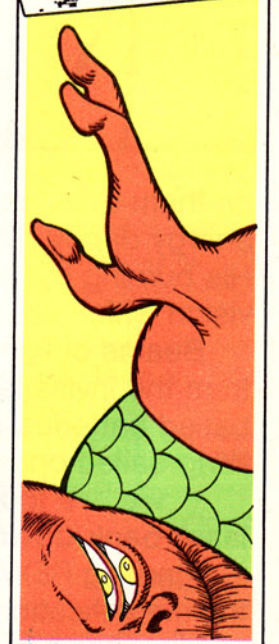
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25



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27



28

BEAUTIFUL VINYL BINDERS, white with black lettering and art with metal separators to hold and protect your magazines. Each holds twelve issues of Heavy Metal. (\$5.50). Or buy one binder with the twelve 1978 issues. (\$25.00)



HM #1/APRIL, 1977: With Space Punks, the first chapters of Corben's Den and Boone's Sunspot, an excerpt from the best-selling fantasy novel *The Sword of Shemara*. Harzak, and more (\$5.00)

HM #2/MAY, 1977: Introducing Roger, the paranoid puppet, Virgo, the cosmic maiden, Russian astronaut, Conquering Armies, the ultimate rock festival while Harzak, Sunspot, and Den continue (\$4.00)

HM #3/JUNE, 1977: Features *Night Images*, poetry by Corben's creator, Robert E. Howard, with illustrations by Corben, Macdonald's Rockabilly, the highly praised Shells, the first chapter of Davis's World Apart, more Den, Sunspot, and Harzak (\$3.00)

HM #4/JULY, 1977: Is a must for Moebius fans, with 12 pages of Harzak and his spy saga, The Long Tomorrow, also the end of Sunspot, further adventures of Den, the psychic Nep Sino, and the horrible Gold Queen (\$3.00)

HM #5/AUGUST, 1977: In which the saga of Polonus begins, The Long Tomorrow concludes, World Apart and Den continue, all amidst talking plants, samurai, puppets, sex, and violence (\$3.00)

HM #6/SEPTEMBER, 1977: Galactic Aztecs, cosmic cowboys, hysterical snubbery, chemically-induced sanity, a Moebius space opera, more World Apart, Den, and Polonus, plus a Roger Zelazny short story (\$3.00)

HM #7/OCTOBER, 1977: Packed with knights, ladies, jet pilots, insanity, reincarnation, and other harmless pastimes, 10 pages of color Moebius, the *Angry Garage*, Den, and Polonus redux, and fiction by Theodore Sturgeon (\$3.00)

HM #8/NOVEMBER, 1977: With nine color pages by Moebius and Rimbaud, the conclusions of both Polonus and World Apart, ex-pugs, intellectual molasses, birth and death stars, and a great new Harlan Ellison story—the *Heaviest Heavy Metal* yet! (\$3.00)

HM #9/DECEMBER, 1977: This time, went up to 104 pages to bring you the complete saga of Duillet's anti-hero, Vuzz, a chapter from *Cross Encounters of the Third Kind*, and Fortune's Foot by Chaykin and Wein, in addition to full-color contributions from regulars Corben, Macdonald, Clavious, and Moebius (\$3.00)

HM #10/JANUARY, 1978: We got Morrow to illustrate Zelazny, we got Lob and Richard to update Unysets, we got Mehan to do a *Heavy Metal* calendar, we got Conquering Armies, and continued Den. Of course, you knew about the Incas, log lights, and the time warp (\$3.00)

HM #11/FEBRUARY, 1978: Wherein begin the new adventures of Barbarella, naked to her enemies and nude to her friends, and of Urm the Foot in the quest for revenge. Wraparound cover, and center spread by Niro. A trip to Venus, the Crusader, and the Witch and Moebius down the rabbit hole. With the usual unusual, like Den (\$3.00)

HM #12/MARCH, 1978: In which we learn the evils of witch hunts and the perils of witchcraft, the problems of mass transit, and the dangers of hitchhiking, plus, the first swashbuckling episode of Orion More Barbarella. More Urm. And still more Den. (\$3.00)

HM #13/APRIL, 1978: Big deal first anniversary issue, with 30-page insert from Paradise 9 by Al concerned. Also, amidst the king must die, death's duel, and the undead, Barbarella gives birth Oh, and the sexual acrobatic epilogue to Den. (\$3.00)

HM #14/MAY, 1978: Does in Urm the Mad, locates El Dorado, goes to pieces on a bicycle, buys a carnival clock, time-travels, and cerebrally lap-dances with Niro. Not to mention Orion and Barbarella. (\$3.00)

HM #15/JUNE, 1978: This time, we go too far. For instance, the erotic new Corben Shahrzad the neotonic. Evolution, the ecstatic. More Than Human, the erotic Barbarella, and the erratic Them Changes. And an excerpt from Sabre, and the origins of Hellman. (\$3.00)

HM #16/JULY, 1978: A happy ending to Barbarella, a sad ending to 1986, the resumption of Duillet's Gail, the further adventures of Hellman and Orion. More Than Human cont'd, and another piece of the Arabian Nights tale from Corben. (\$3.00)

HM #17/AUGUST, 1978: Looks like more of the same, with Orion, Corben's Arabian Nights, Hellman, and the last More Than Human. Except Duillet's Gail gets going again, the Off-Season starts, cannibal robots get involved, and somebody finally touches the right button. (\$3.00)

HM #18/SEPTEMBER, 1978: Starring Sindbad the Sailor, Esorel Queen of the Bubble Women, the Major's fiancée two off-season detectives, Arcane the Warrior Hellman, Orion, and Lone Sloane on Gail. Harlan Ellison's sewer full of babies. Plus miscellaneous gags and wheezes (\$3.00)

HM #19/OCTOBER, 1978: All Hallow's breaks loose with an excerpt from *Dawn of the Dead*, the puberty rites of dragons, a zombie android called Exterminator, Ellison's Gnome, a illustrated and the onset of McKie's *So Beautiful* and *So Dangerous* More erotic exploits of Harlowe, Sindbad Gail, and Orion. (\$3.00)

HM #20/NOVEMBER, 1978: A full 20-page excerpt from the Chaykin *Deany Empire*, while Sindbad's dragon explodes, the Exterminator escapes, Sloane makes war, the Sad Man disappears, Grubert arrives too late, and Hellman is reborn for the final time. *So Beautiful* and *So*

Dangerous, part two, and more Diabolical Planet. (\$3.00)

HM #21/DECEMBER, 1978: Putting the Easter bunny back into Xmas, and wrapping up Orion and Off-Season with sinister Tardis greeting cards, wreaths and waifs, czechs, crashes, and a prizezy for you—a 12-page Moebius murder yarn. (\$2.00)

HM #22/JANUARY, 1979: This one's full of elephants, for some reason. Plus our first Trina, and a drup, and Gail's shoot-em-up finale. Some decapitation, a space siren, and the android takes over the ship. More McKie and Corben. What's a war? (\$2.00)

HM #23/FEBRUARY, 1979: Our February fantasies feature the onset of the tale of the Star-

crown. We continue with Sindbad and McKie's *So Beautiful* and *So Dangerous*. More Moebius and Bilal, Macdonald brings us chapter four of life in Metropolis 5, and by popular demand, Galactic Geographic. There's the story of a star nosed mole and much, much more (\$2.00)

HM #24/MARCH, 1979: Twenty pages of Chaykin's illustrated *Stars My Destination* for open-ers. A punk rumble, android in, titanic me, Star Crown II, and Ellison's late show. Also hardware and superstition (\$2.00)

HM #25/APRIL, 1979: Second birthday bash, with Chaykin's great new *Gideon Faust* tale, an Alien portfolio, Val Mayen's *Time Out*, the first chapter of *Pycon*, fiction by Arthur Cover, ghost ships, robotic miscegenation, and other goodies for you (\$2.00)

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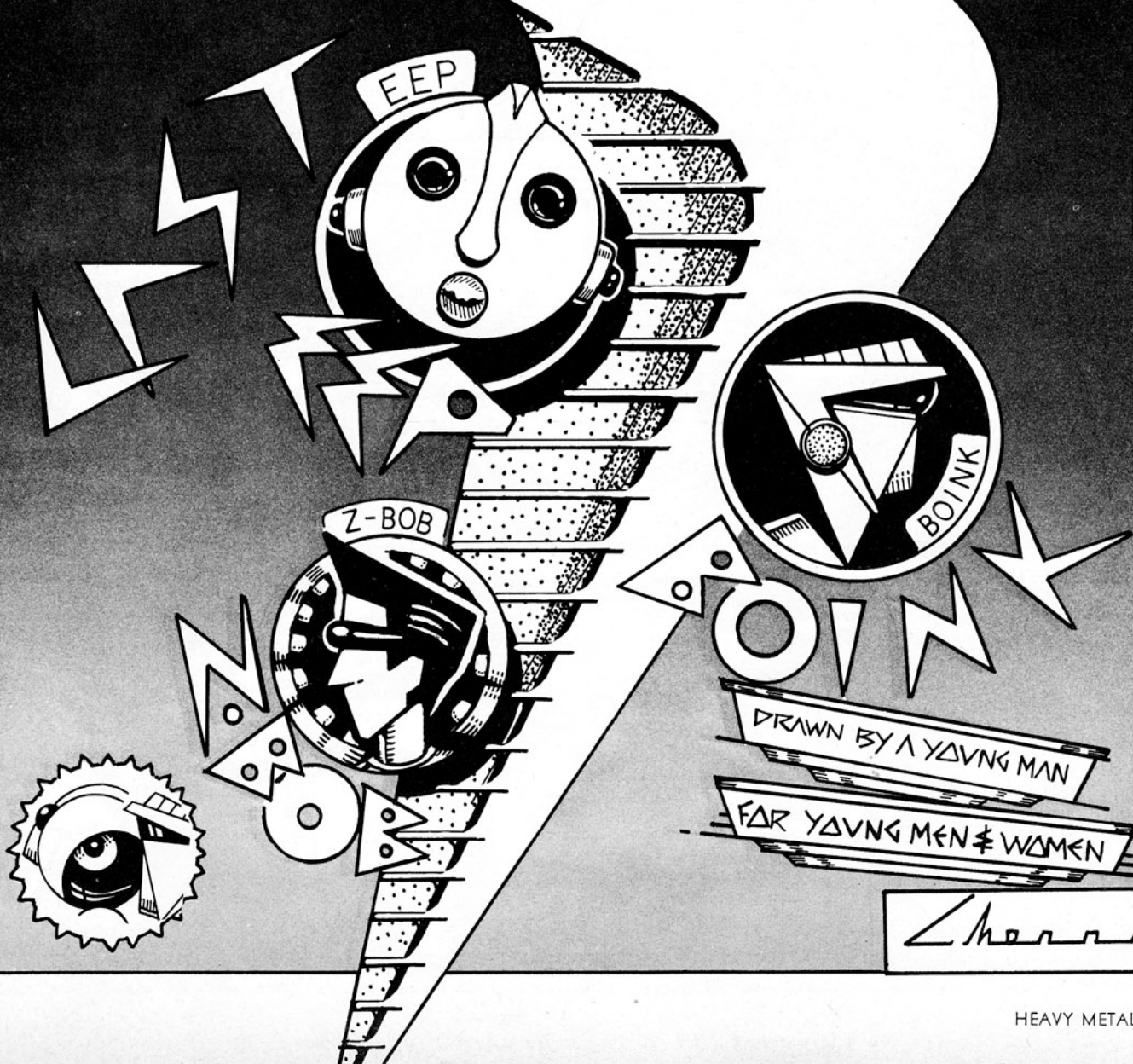
ALL NEW AND DIFFERENT

FLYKADOTA

WORDS & PICTURES BY JIM CHERRY

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DRAWN BY A YOUNG MAN

FOR YOUNG MEN & WOMEN

Cherry

©1979 J. CHERRY

WHERE TOMORROW COMES FIRST

PLUTO KADOTA

OUR STORY OPENS IN A SEEDY TAXIBAR ON A FORGOTTEN BACK STREET TUCKED AWAY IN THE DARKNESS THAT IS: THE DAMED CITY OF PLUTO KADOTA

By Tim Cherry

By um
Cherry

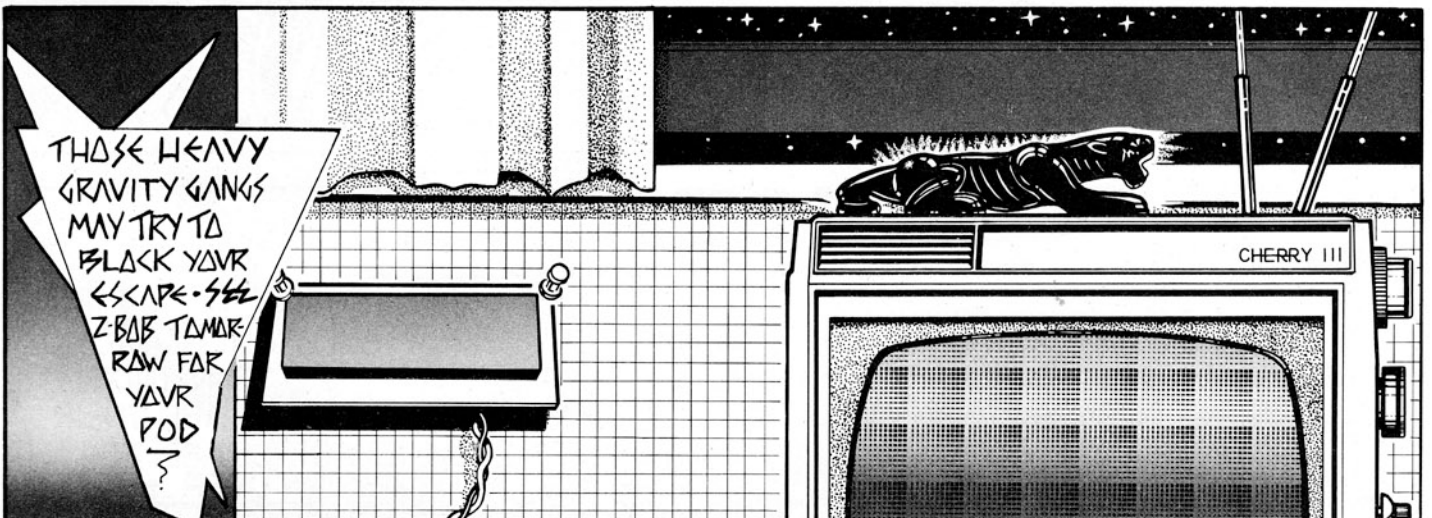
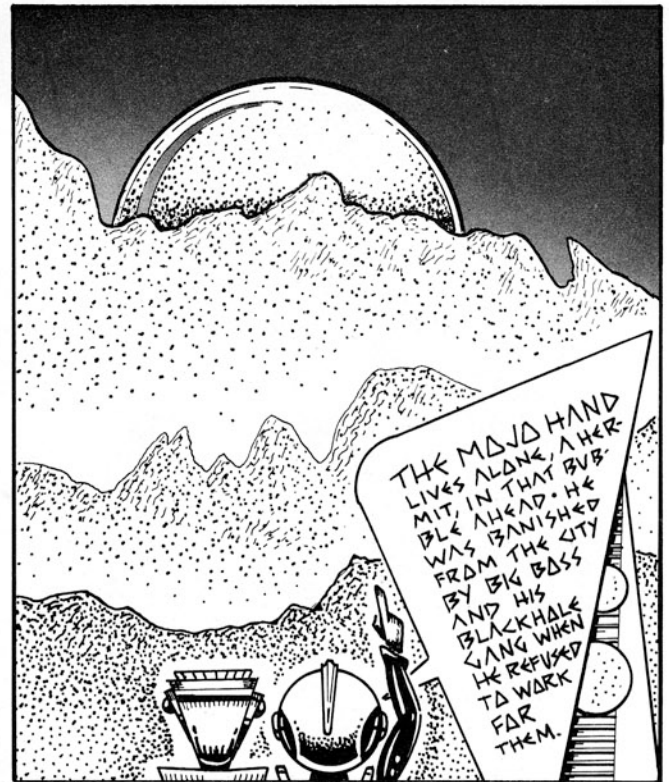
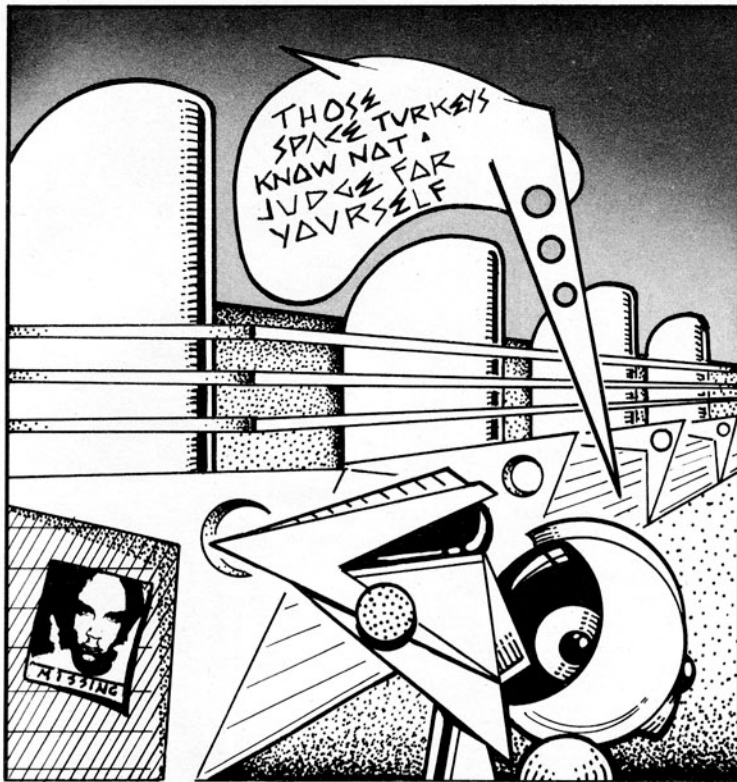
THOSE TWO AINT NEVER GONNA MAKE IT

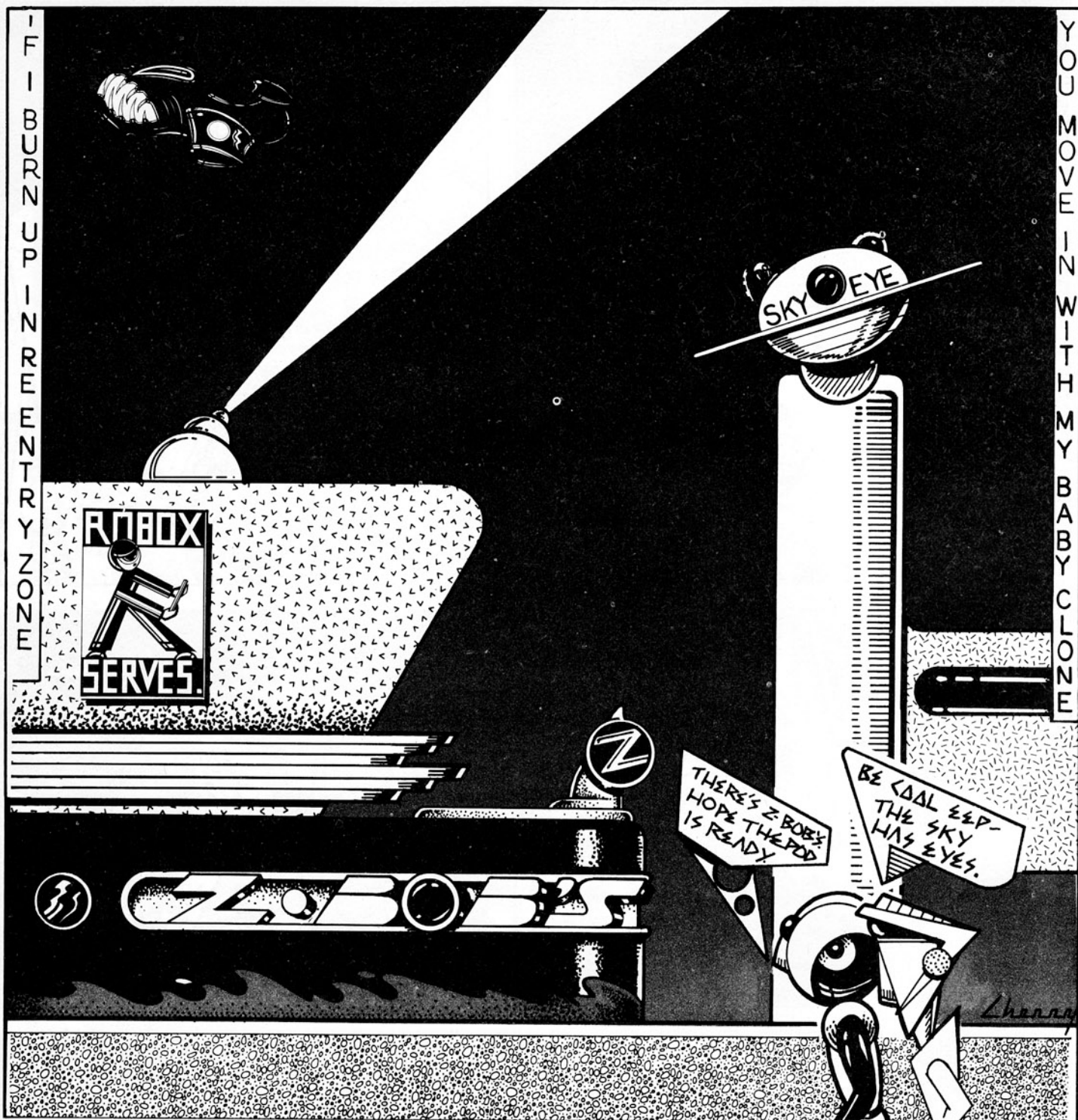
THAT CHISEL-HEAD IS KINDA CUTE!

AINT NOBODY LEAVES PLUTO WITHOUT THE BOSS SAYS OK!

HAS ANYONE EVER TOLD YAV HOW MUCH YAV RESEMBLE AN OUTBOARD MOTOR?

WHY, NO BUT THANKS



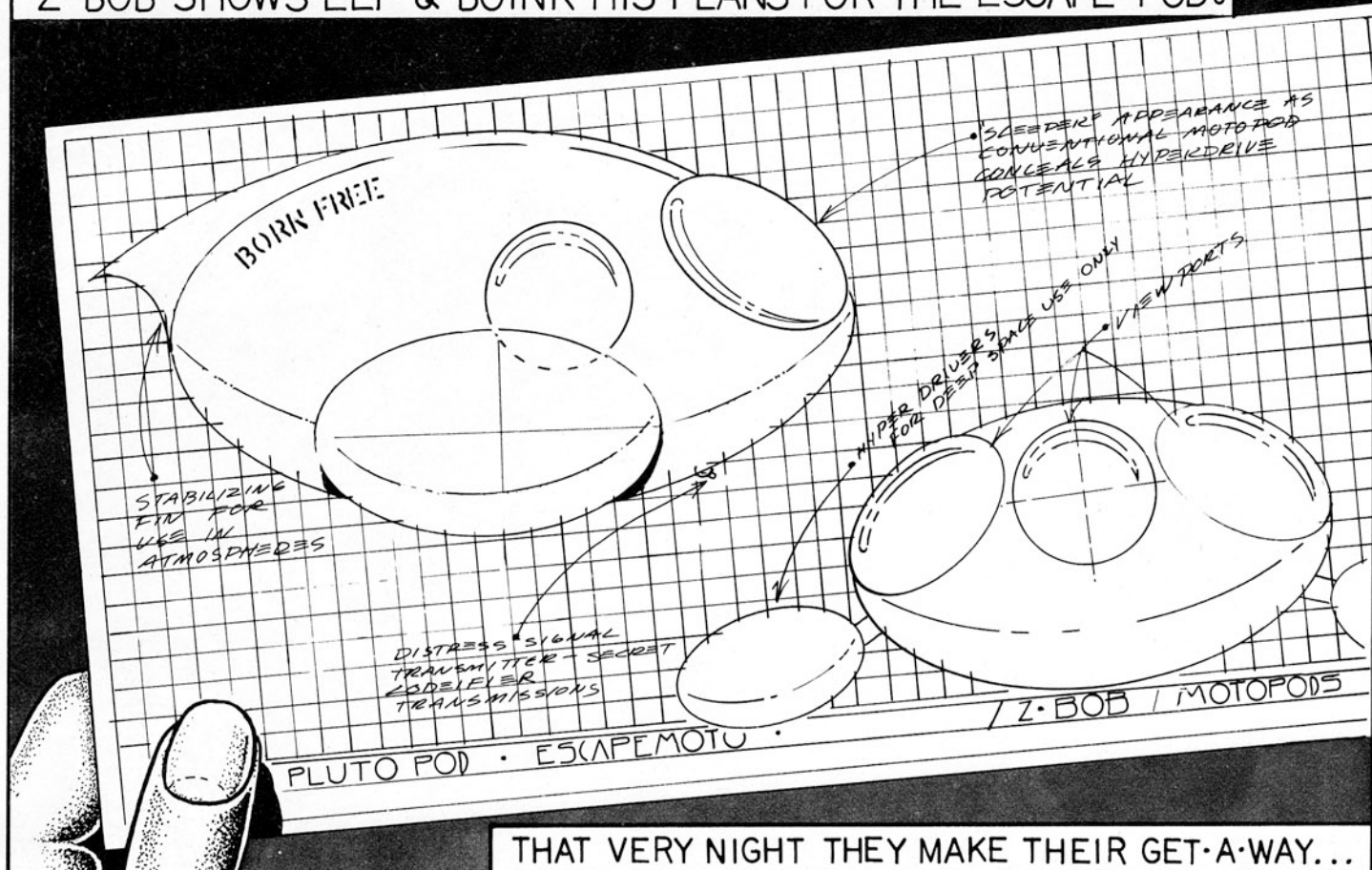


SUBJECT:
BLACKHOLES

DATA BANK:

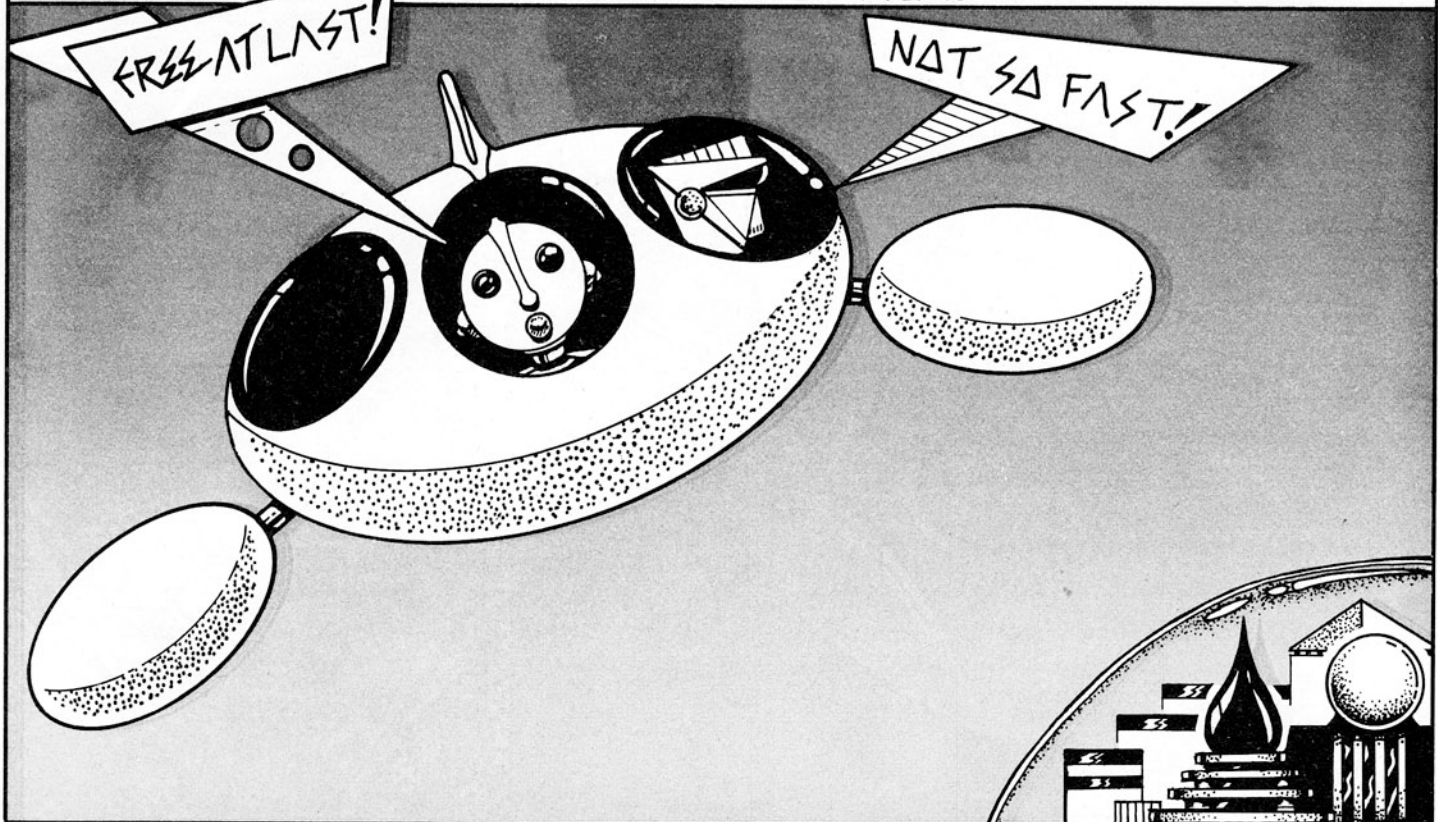
THE TERM WAS COINED IN 1969 BY JOHN WHEELER OF PRINCETON. BLACK HOLES MAY BE THE REMAINS OF COLLAPSED STARS COMPRISED OF INFINITELY DENSE MATTER, HAVING GRAVITY SO GREAT THAT NO LIGHT CAN ESCAPE THEIR SURFACES. ACCORDING TO EINSTEIN'S THEORY, TIME AND SPACE CEASE TO EXIST IN A BLACK HOLE'S CENTER...:DATA BANK TRANSMISSION OVER...:..

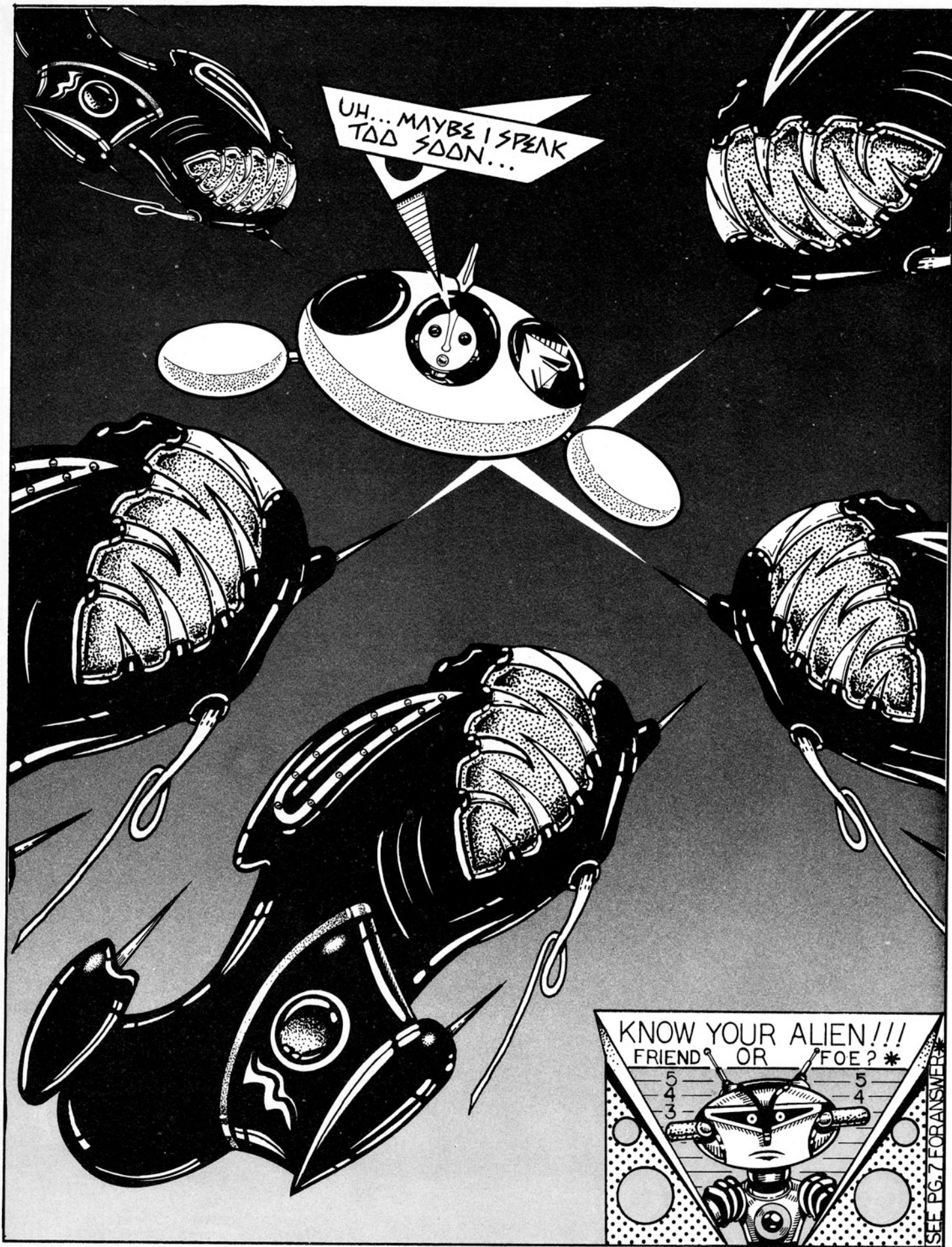
Z•BOB SHOWS EEP & BOINK HIS PLANS FOR THE ESCAPE POD:



THAT VERY NIGHT THEY MAKE THEIR GET-A-WAY...

OUT OF SIGHT OF THE BLACKHOLE GANG'S PATROL SHIPS (THEY THINK), EEP & BOINK PREPARE TO KICK IN THEIR HYPER DRIVERS





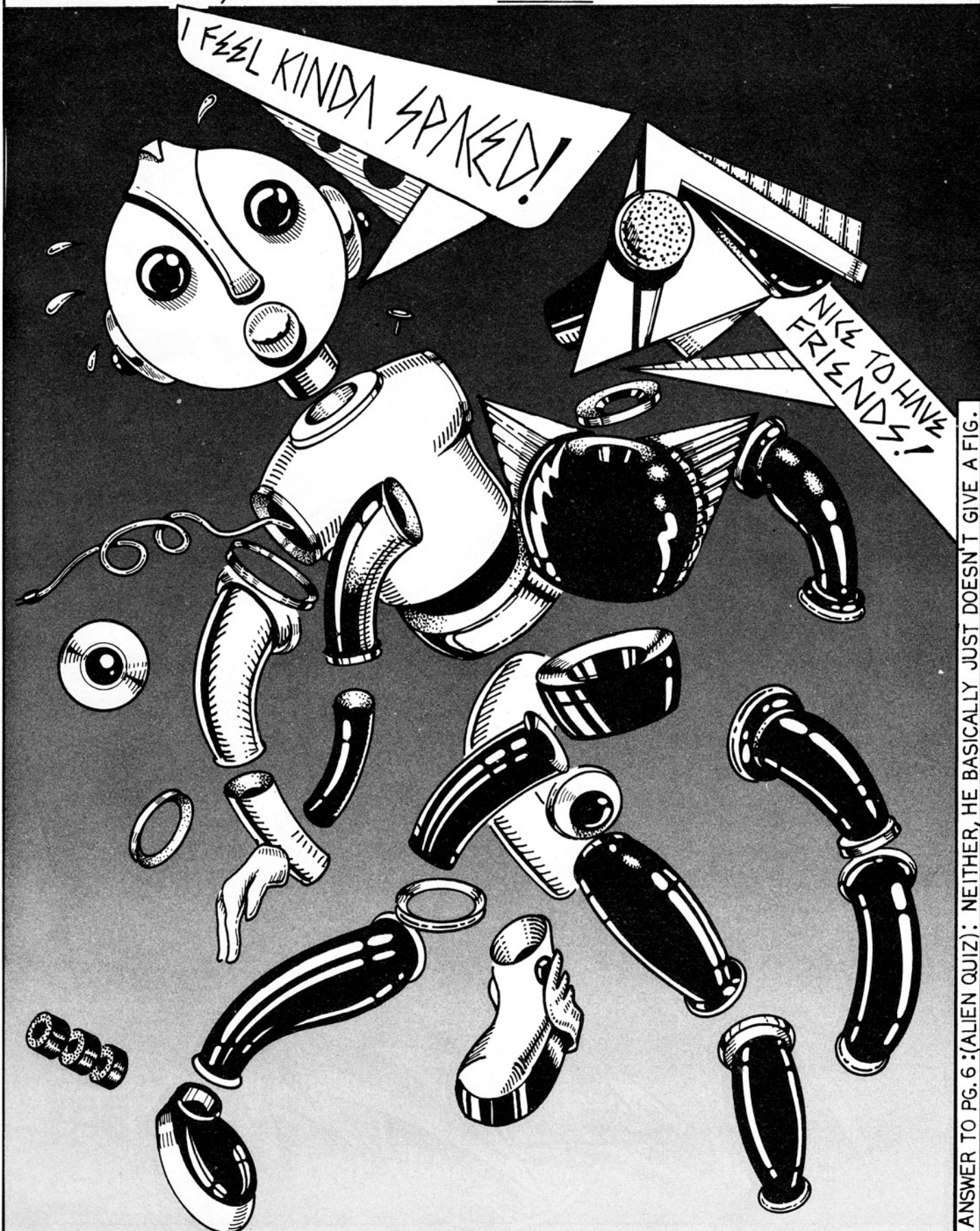
UH... MAYBE I SPEAK
TOO SOON...

KNOW YOUR ALIEN!!!
FRIEND OR FOE? *

5	5
4	4
3	3

SEE PG. 7 FOR ANSWER

HIT BY THE DISLOCATOR BEAMS FROM THE BLACK HOLE GANG
PATROL SHIPS, EEP & BOINK GET REALLY LOOSE

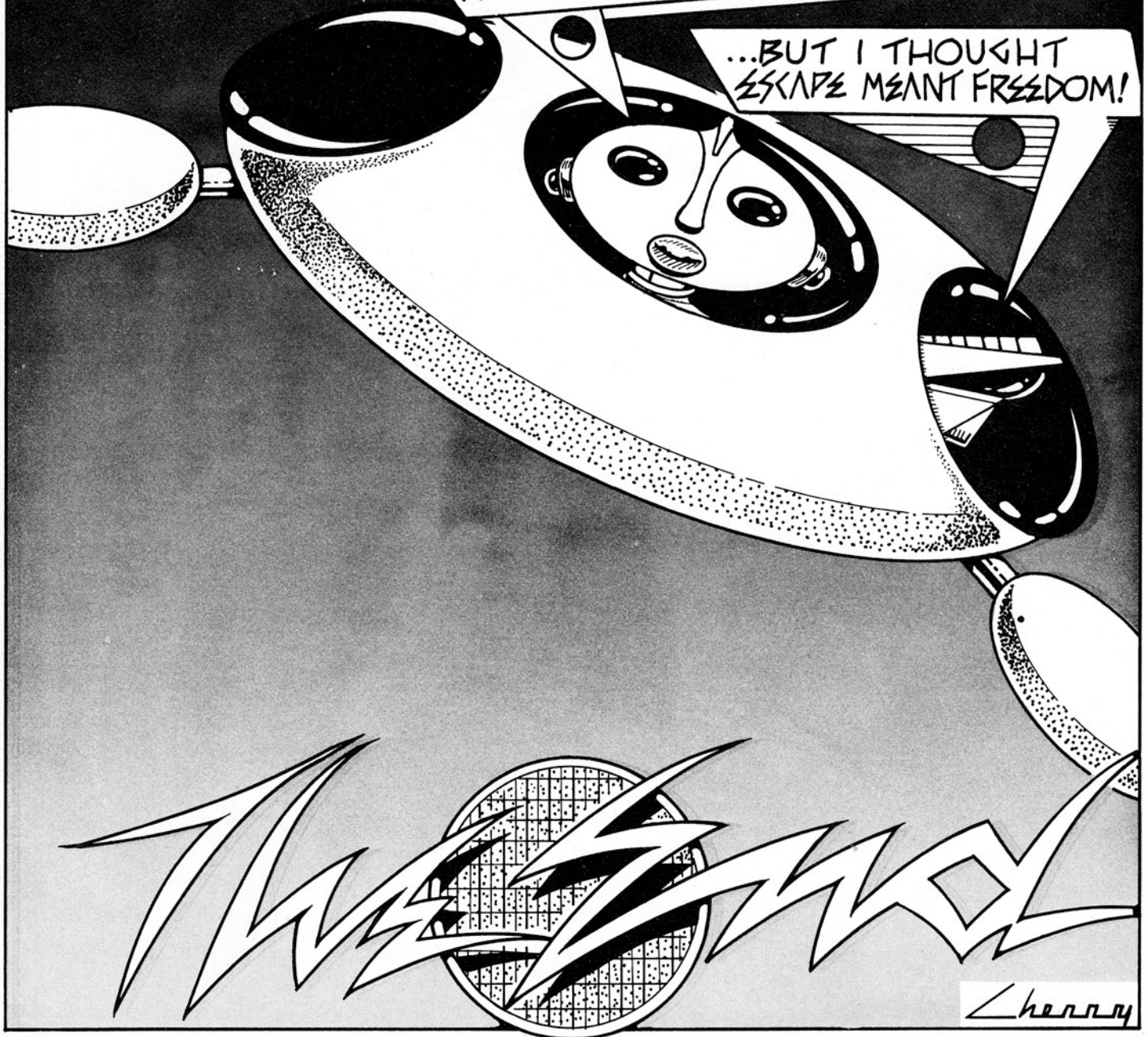



ANSWER TO PG. 6:(ALIEN QUIZ): NEITHER, HE BASICALLY JUST DOESN'T GIVE A FIG.

AS THE COSMOS WOULD HAVE IT, EEP & BOINK DRIFT, IN THEIR
SEPARATED COMPONENT STATE, INTO A STASIS ZONE
BETWEEN TWO BLACK HOLES WHERE THEY
DO THE TIGHTEN-UP INTO THEIR
TOGETHER SELVES ☆☆

SHAKE MY TUNER, BOINK!
STUCK HERE INSIDE A STASIS
WITH THE BLACK HOLE BLUES AGAIN!

...BUT I THOUGHT
ESCAPE MEANT FREEDOM!





TRYLLA FLITS ABOVE THE SWELTERING JUNGLE, RECORDING.

BELOW, MUD-HUNKERS HUMP
TURF, MINDLESS; HEEDING THE
UNYIELDING LAW OF LIFE.

THEIR POUNDING
AGITATES A
BASKING GROVE
OF CANNABIX REX.

BATTLE IS JOINED,
AS IF FATED.

TRYLLA! COME BACK
TO STRUT'S CONTROL -
WE'VE INCREDIBLE NEWS!

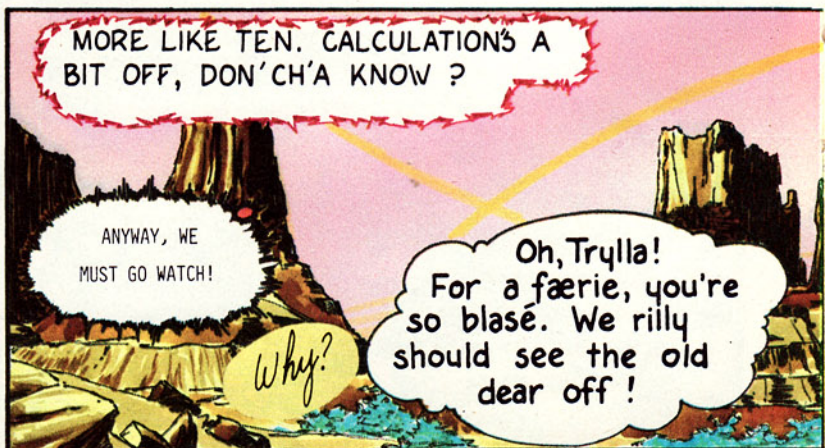
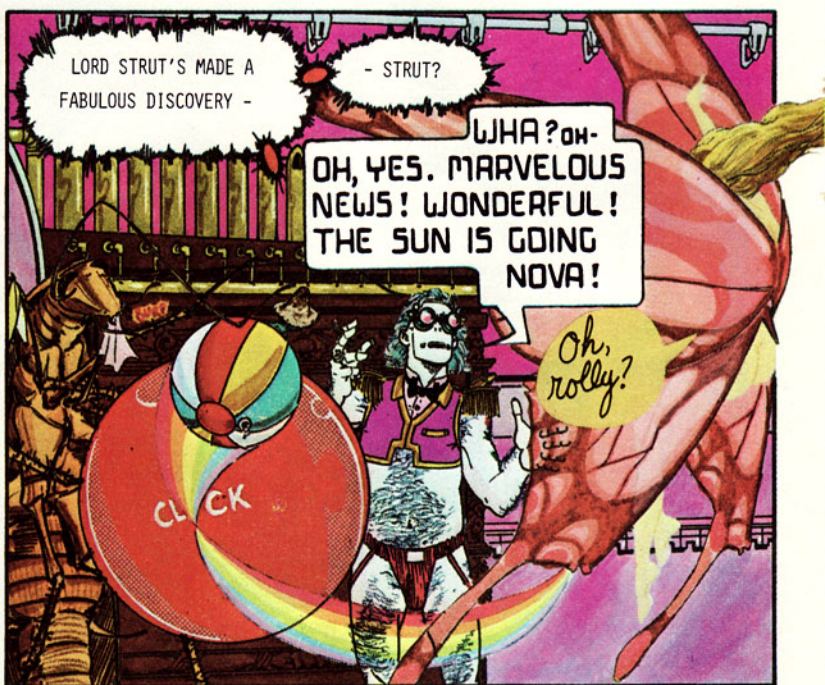
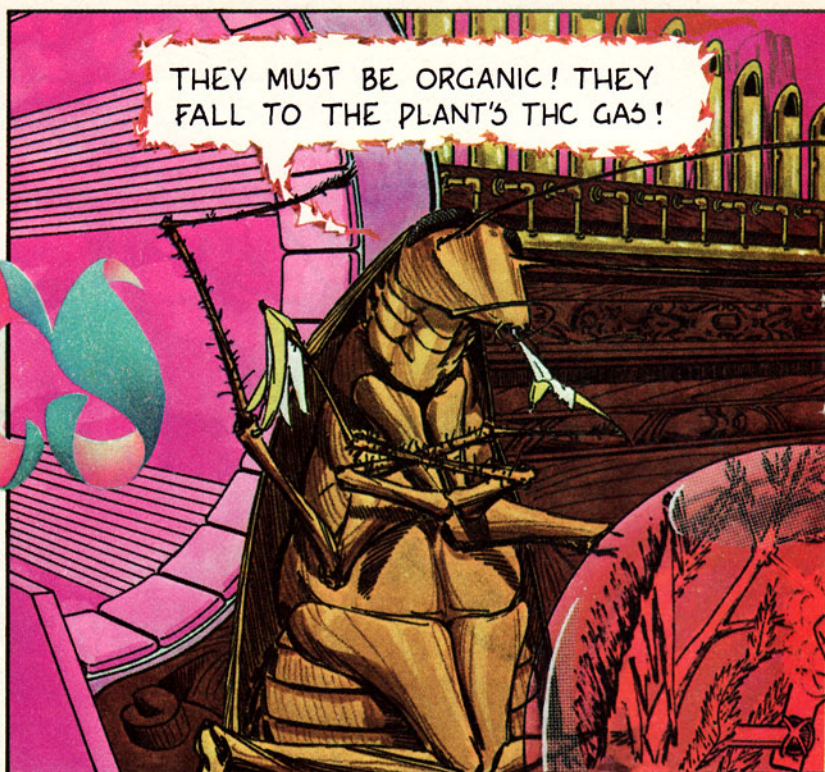
FLEEING THE ENRAGED BEHEMOTHS,
LITTLE BUGGERS SCUTTLE FOR ELUSIVE SHELTER.
FAR IN THE DISTANCE
A FRIGHTENED HERD OF MARXISTS HOWL.

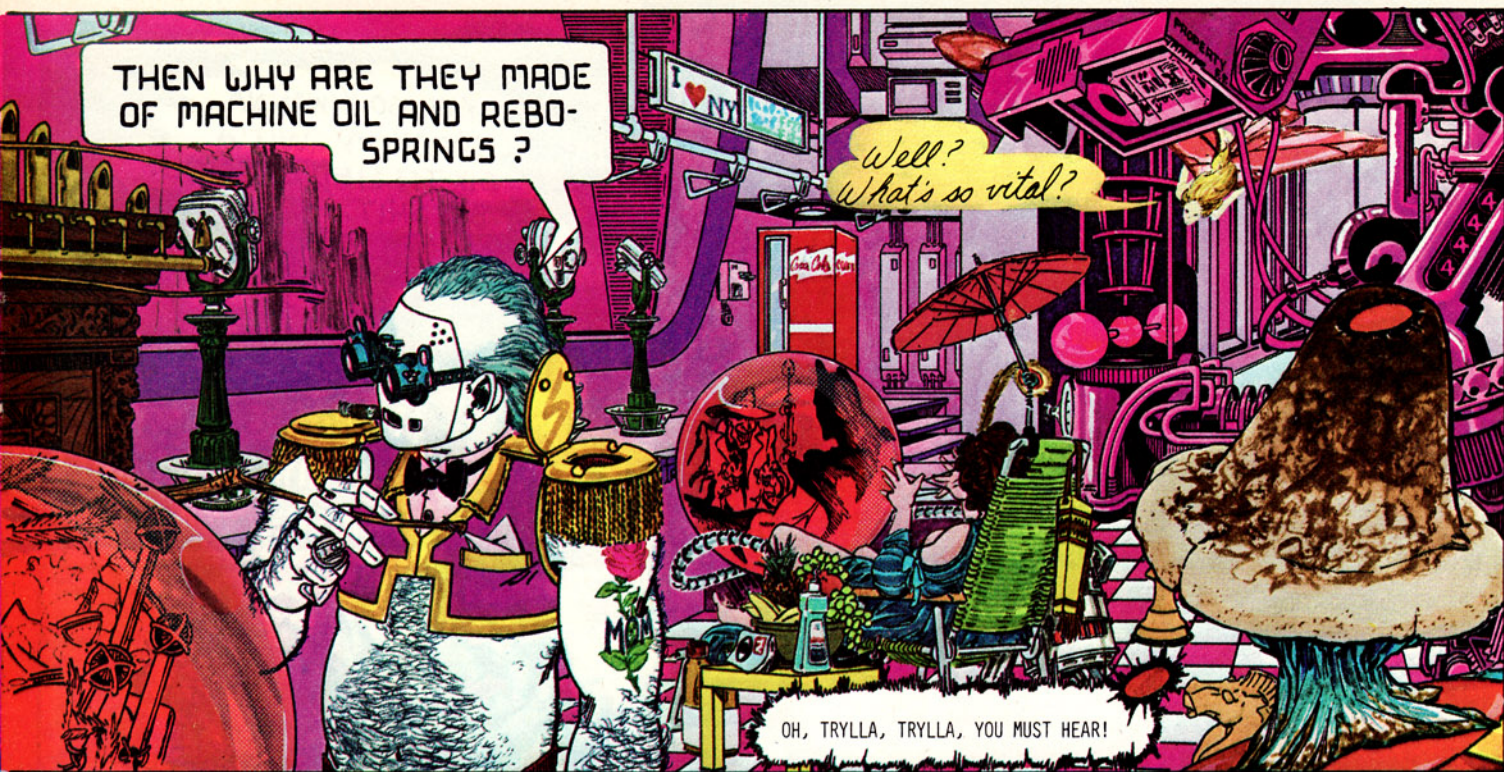
entropies

CREATED & WRITTEN
© 1979 by MARK ARNOLD



VISUAL CONCEPTS
© 1979 by W^M MARSHALL ROGERS





THEN WHY ARE THEY MADE
OF MACHINE OIL AND REBO-
SPRINGS ?

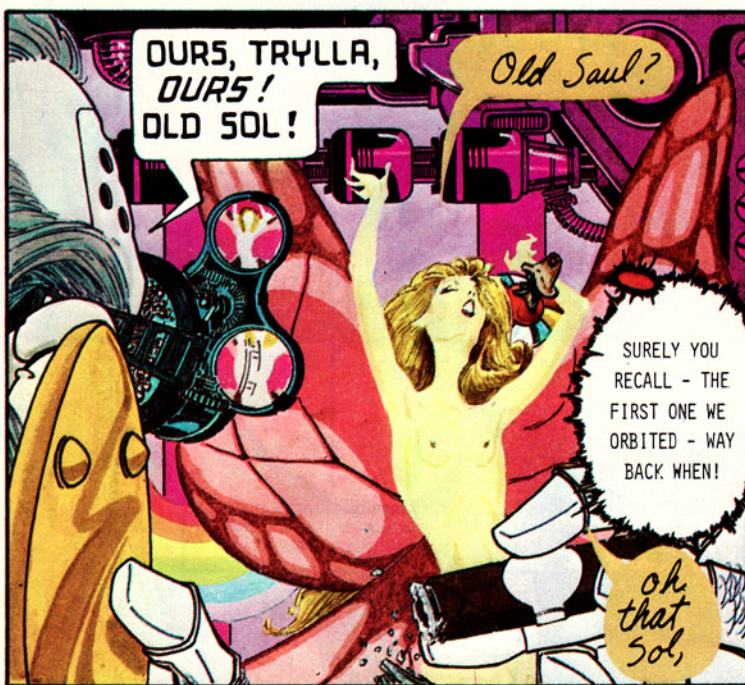
Well?
What's so vital?

OH, TRYLLA, TRYLLA, YOU MUST HEAR!



AREN'T
YOU
THRILLED?

-but,
which
sun?



OURS, TRYLLA,
OURS!
OLD SOL!

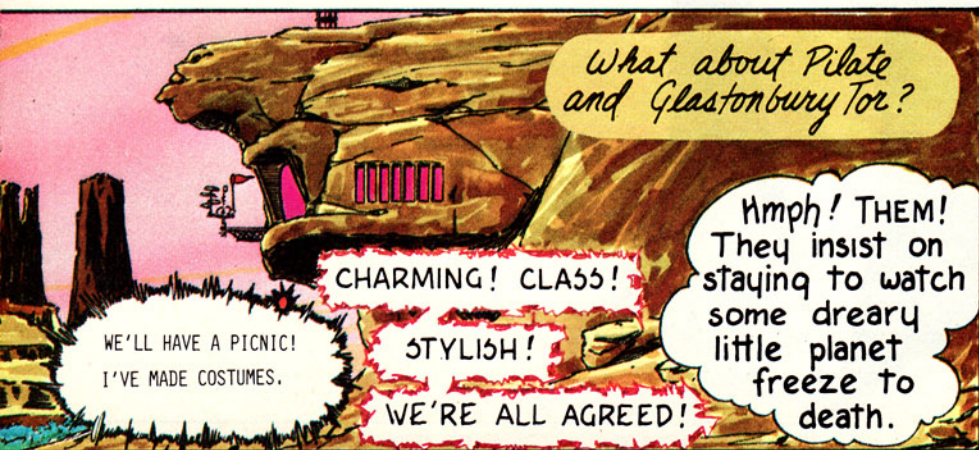
Old Saul?

SURELY YOU
RECALL - THE
FIRST ONE WE
ORBITED - WAY
BACK WHEN!

oh
that
Sol,



Has it been
5,000,000,000
years already?



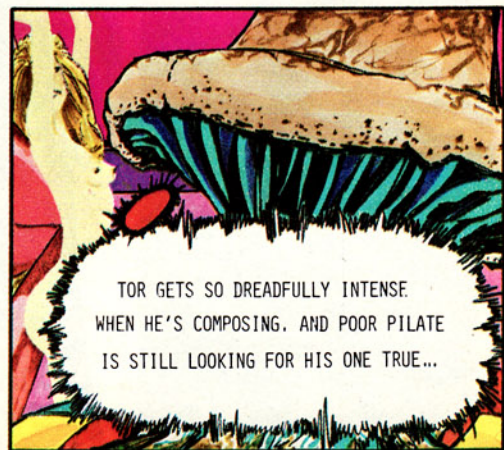
What about Pilate
and Glastonbury Tor?

CHARMING! CLASS!

STYLISH!

WE'RE ALL AGREED!

Hmph! THEM!
They insist on
staying to watch
some dreary
little planet
freeze to
death.



TOR GETS SO DREADFULLY INTENSE
WHEN HE'S COMPOSING. AND POOR PILATE
IS STILL LOOKING FOR HIS ONE TRUE...

-Love. That Love Aeternal, Tor,
that didn't Elude me; which
Lack in
Longing;--
tor-
men-
-ted
my Soul;
is ended!

I Have
Now foun'
Her--

--She is
my Onlie!

Our Passion kindles
e'en the Dying stars!

YAH, SO Y'WANNA
SHACK UP WIT'A
SIX-TITTIED CATGIRL.
BIG SHIT.

Zounds
I'd wot Thee anon
an artist and a friend!
Thart Passing Shallow!

ARE WE READ-EE-E ?

BIEN TÔT!

THEN CHARGE
UP THE WEB,
NOBLE STRUT!

LEAVE US BE OFF !!
ONWARD AND OUTBOARD !!

STRANGENESS KNITS THE QUARKNET CHARM IN A BLACK SPHINCTER THAT
SUCKS ⊕ IN BEHIND IT; ONLY TO SPEW IT OUT, A UNIVERSE AWAY.



POPS OFF TO ORBITAL NOSTALGIA: THE PRODIGAL CHILD IS HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS.

"Shallow," MY UNCLE'S
HAIRY ASSHOLE!
LISTEN YOU TWIT, YOU'RE
TOO BRAINLESS TO SENSE
THE TRAGIC BEAUTY
OF THIS WORLD.

LOOK! LOOK- THAT'S
NO ICE CUBE ---IT'S A
SHROUD, MADE OF AIR!

THAT PINNACLE--
THE TIP OF A PYRAMID
FIFTY MILES HIGH!

GOD, ONCE THIS WAS A
CULTURE SO GRAND THAT
THEY COULD EXIST ON
PURE COSMIC FORCE!

A PEOPLE THAT
MIGHT HAVE
RIVALED US IN
IMMORTALITY!
TO BE BOUNCED
FROM ORBIT BY
THEIR LIFELESS,
UNGRATEFUL MOONS,
FINALLY BETRAYED BY
THE SAME SWEET AIR
THAT GAVE THEM LIFE.

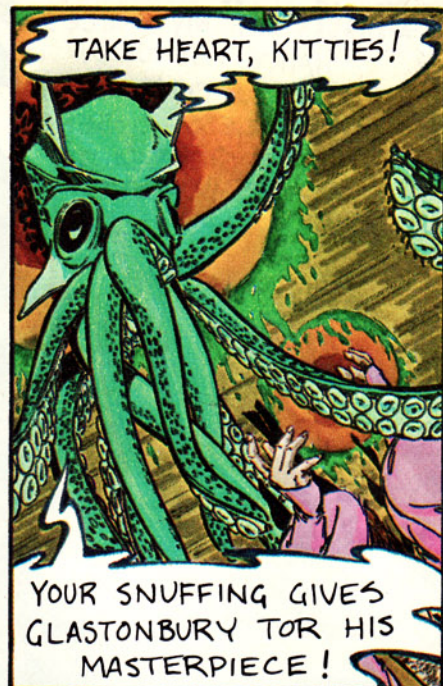
AND WHAT ARE THEY NOW?
A PITTANCE OF PERISHING
PUSSYCATS, ENTOMBED IN
THEIR GOLDEN CITIES, AN
ENTIRE SPECIES INTERRED
ALIVE, WATCHING THEIR
ATMOSPHERE FREEZE AND
FREEZE AND BURY THEM.



OH, CATS, CATS -
IF NONE OTHER
IN CREATION, I
UNDERSTAND YOU!



YES! I SWEAR THE POIGNANCE OF
YOUR FINAL DAYS WILL BE FOREVER
EMBEDDED IN THE NERVES OF MY
LISTENERS! I SWEAR IT!!



TAKE HEART, KITTIES!

YOUR SNUFFING GIVES
GLASTONBURY TOR HIS
MASTERPIECE!



GENTLE BEINGS, YOU
RETURN, TO SOLACE
OUR FINAL DAYS.

MORE, GOOD
SIRE. I OFFER
MEAGER HOPE.

What?

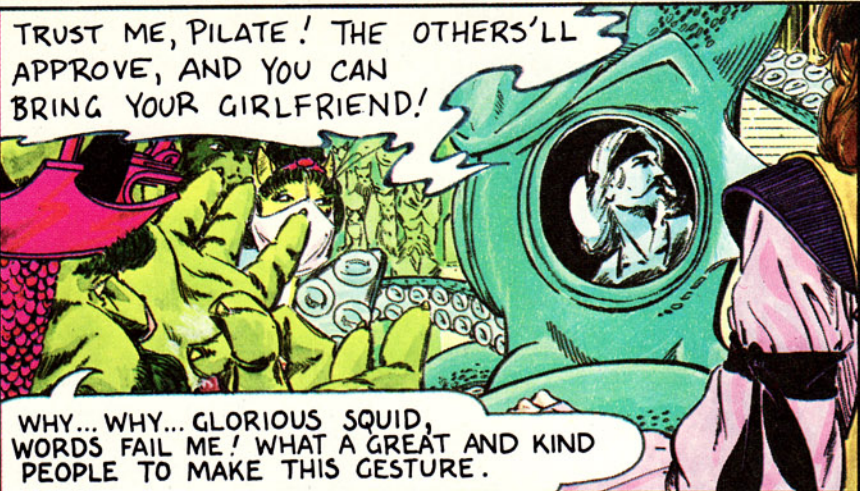


PLEASE SIR, WE NEED NO FALSE COMFORT. WELL DO WE SEE THE END-- AS THE AIR CONGEALS OVER OUR REDOUBT, THE COSMIC ENERGY WILL STOP, THE WORLD HEART FAIL, AND WITH IT, FORFEIT OUR LIVES.

SIRE, YOUR PEOPLE SHALL OUTLIVE YOUR WORLD. WE CAN TAKE A YOUNG COUPLE BACK WITH US TO @. THEY CAN RELOCATE, AND KEEP YOUR RACE ALIVE!

But, Tor,
Tor--

--Thou hast not
Asked the Others!



TRUST ME, PILATE! THE OTHERS'LL APPROVE, AND YOU CAN BRING YOUR GIRLFRIEND!

WHY... WHY... GLORIOUS SQUID, WORDS FAIL ME! WHAT A GREAT AND KIND PEOPLE TO MAKE THIS GESTURE.

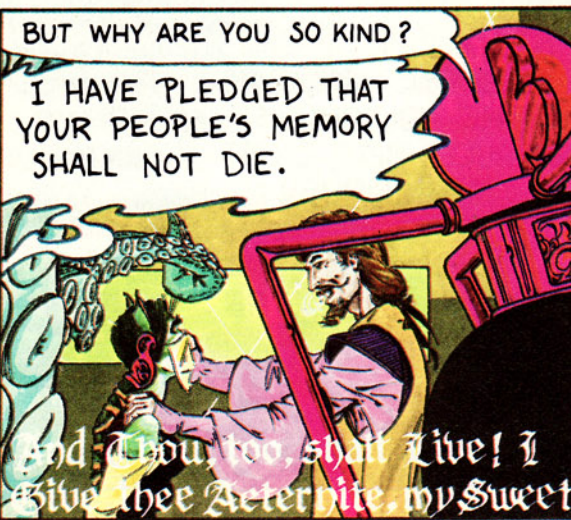


TRUE. CHOOSE A COUPLE. YOUR LOVELY DAUGHTER, PERHAPS, AND HER BETROTHED. THE FINEST OF YOUR RACE.

OH, SOUL! SOUL!
YOU LIGHTEN
OUR DARKNESS!

AND YOUR LEGACY-
YOUR HISTORY, ART,
TREASURES. WE'LL
TAKE THOSE, TOO.

PILATE AND I WILL STAY
WITH YOU TILL THE END.



BUT WHY ARE YOU SO KIND?

I HAVE PLEDGED THAT
YOUR PEOPLE'S MEMORY
SHALL NOT DIE.

And Thou, too, shalt Live! I
Give thee Aeternite, my Sweet



BUT WHY?

Because I
Love Thee!



You've outdone yourself, Amplitude. It's too perfect!

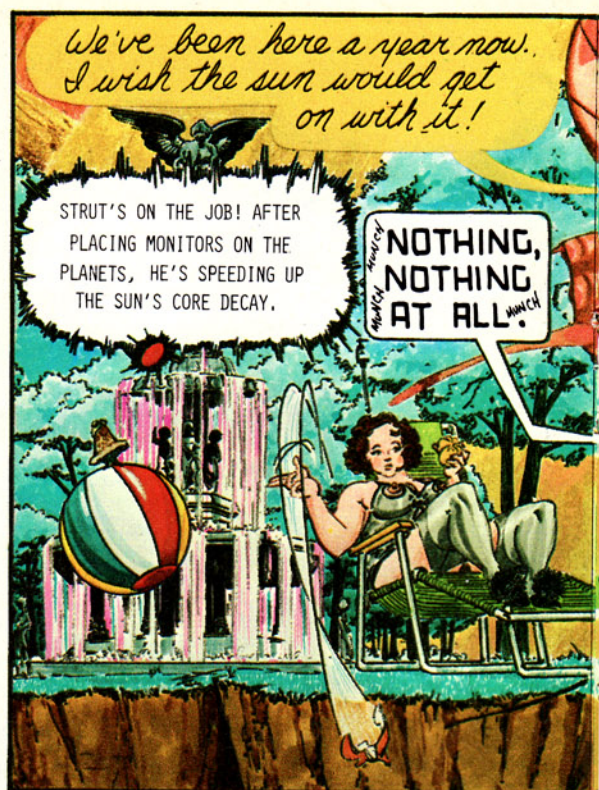
VERY TRADITIONAL FARE.

I RESEARCHED PICNICS: HOT DOGS, COTTON CANDY, GHERKINS, STERNO, PUPPY CHOW, POOLS, PINK LEMONADE WITH SPRIGS OF MINT-

PASS THE ANTS, PLEASE.

THE HOLLANDAISE SAUCE, AMP, C'EST MAGNIFIQUE !

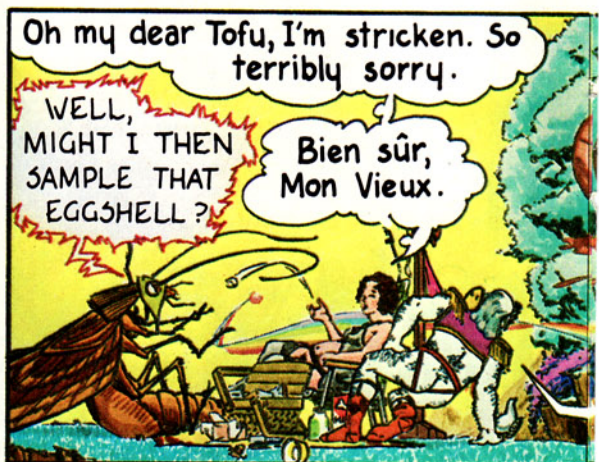
DE RIQUER, DE RIQUER!



We've been here a year now. I wish the sun would get on with it!

STRUT'S ON THE JOB! AFTER PLACING MONITORS ON THE PLANETS, HE'S SPEEDING UP THE SUN'S CORE DECAY.

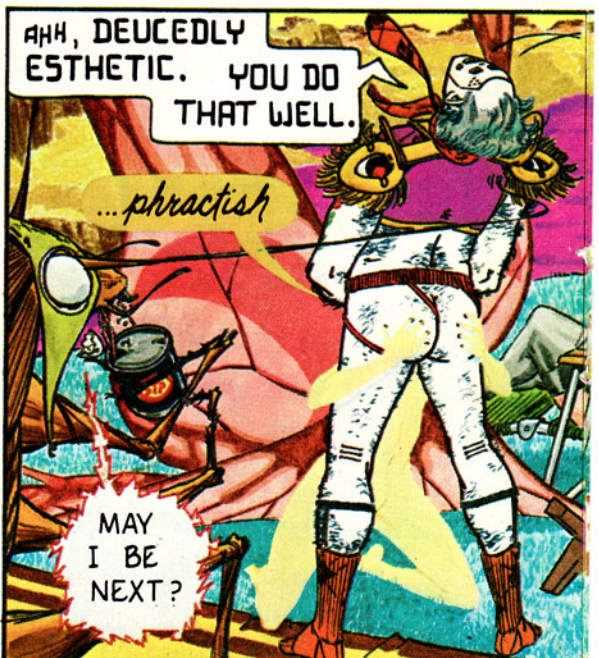
NOTHING, NOTHING AT ALL.



Oh my dear Tofu, I'm stricken. So terribly sorry.

WELL, MIGHT I THEN SAMPLE THAT EGGSHELL?

Bien sûr, Mon Vieux.



AHH, DEUCEDELY ESTHETIC. YOU DO THAT WELL.

...phractish

MAY I BE NEXT?



OH MY, I WAS
GOING TO ASK FOR
THAT ORANGE PEEL.



*Anyone for fellatio? I'd
think this a fine setting for
a nice primal trust.*

I WOULDN'T KNOW.
I SPORE.

WELL, I'M
GAME.



--WAIT! LOOK UP! THE END HAS...



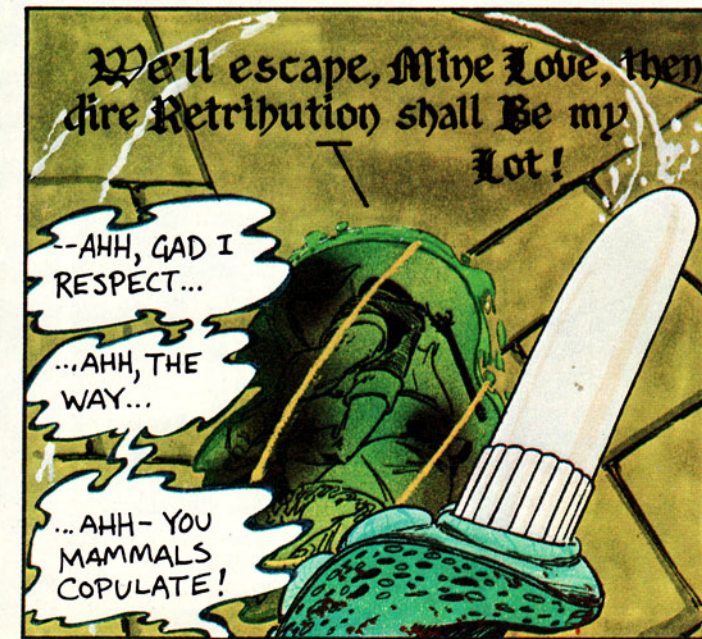
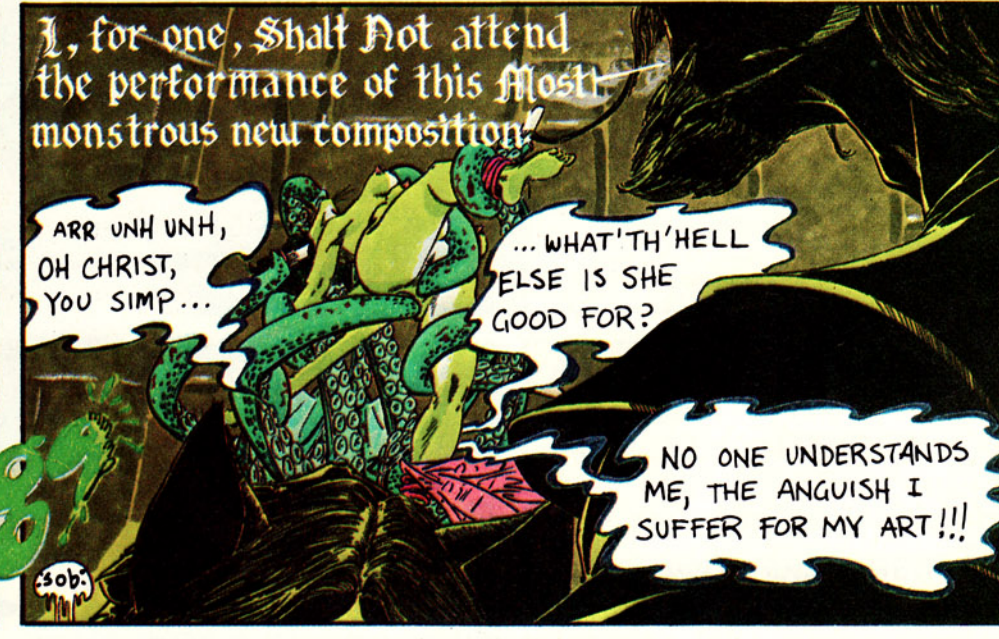
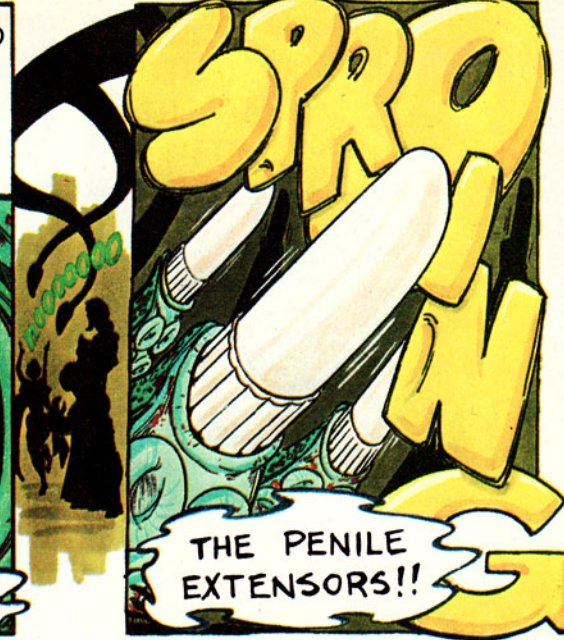
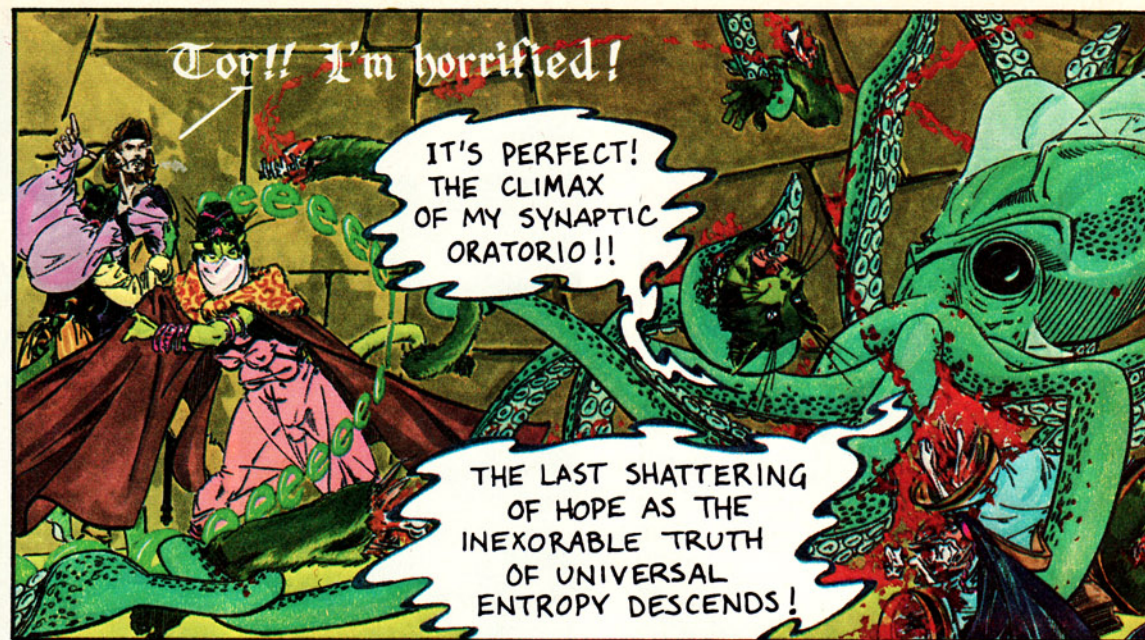
COME. I'LL ESCORT
YOUNG LOCHINVAR TO
THE TIP. PILATE, YOU
CHAPERON OUR
EVE AND LILITH.

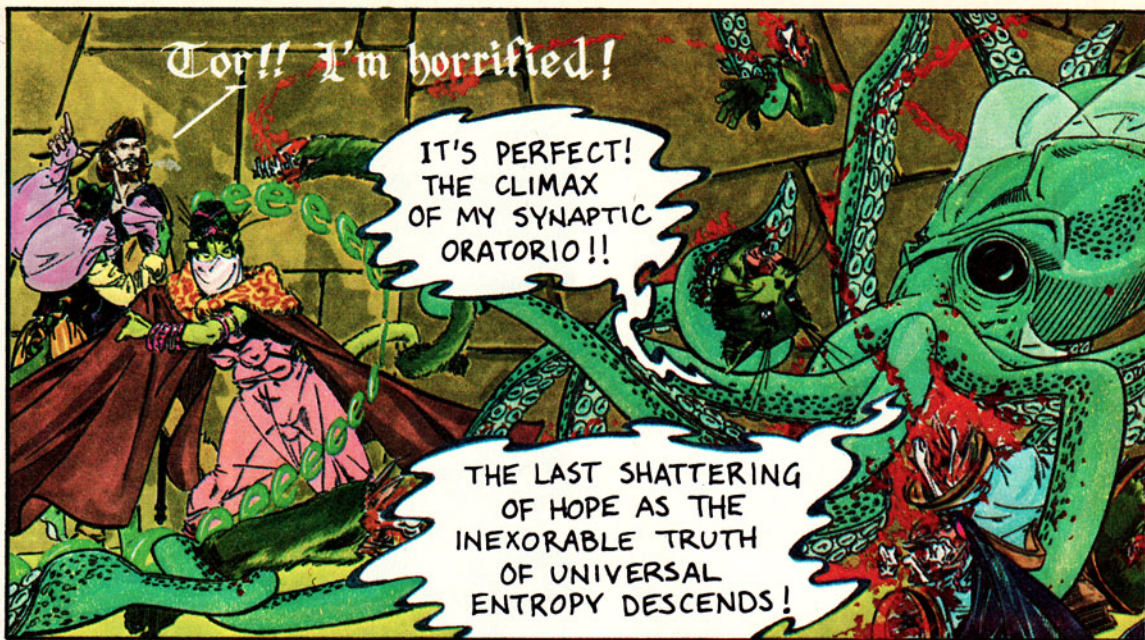
GREAT BEINGS, WITH
OUR PRAYERS, WE
BID YOU ADIEU.

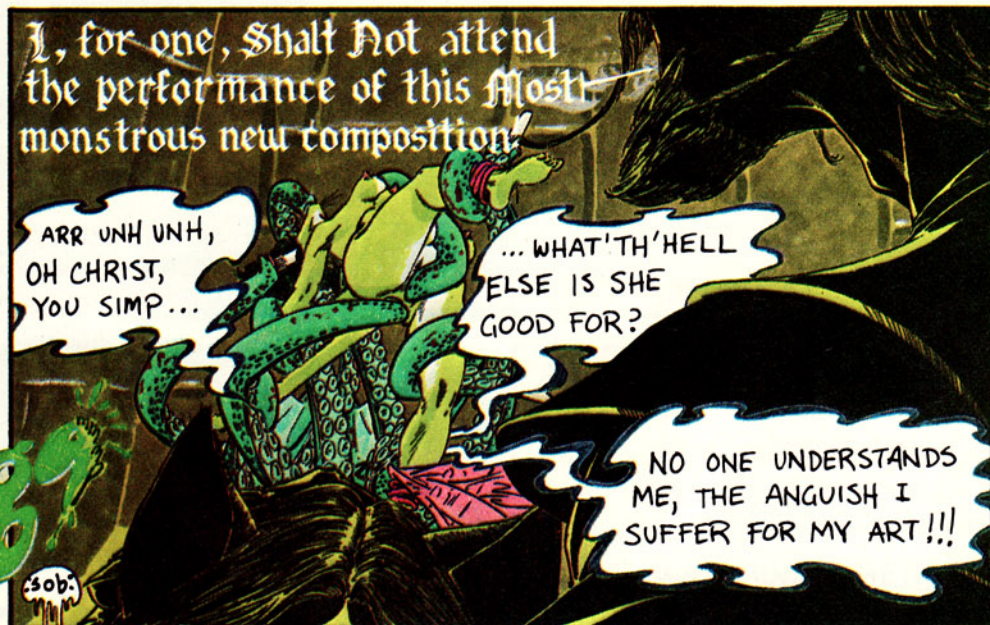


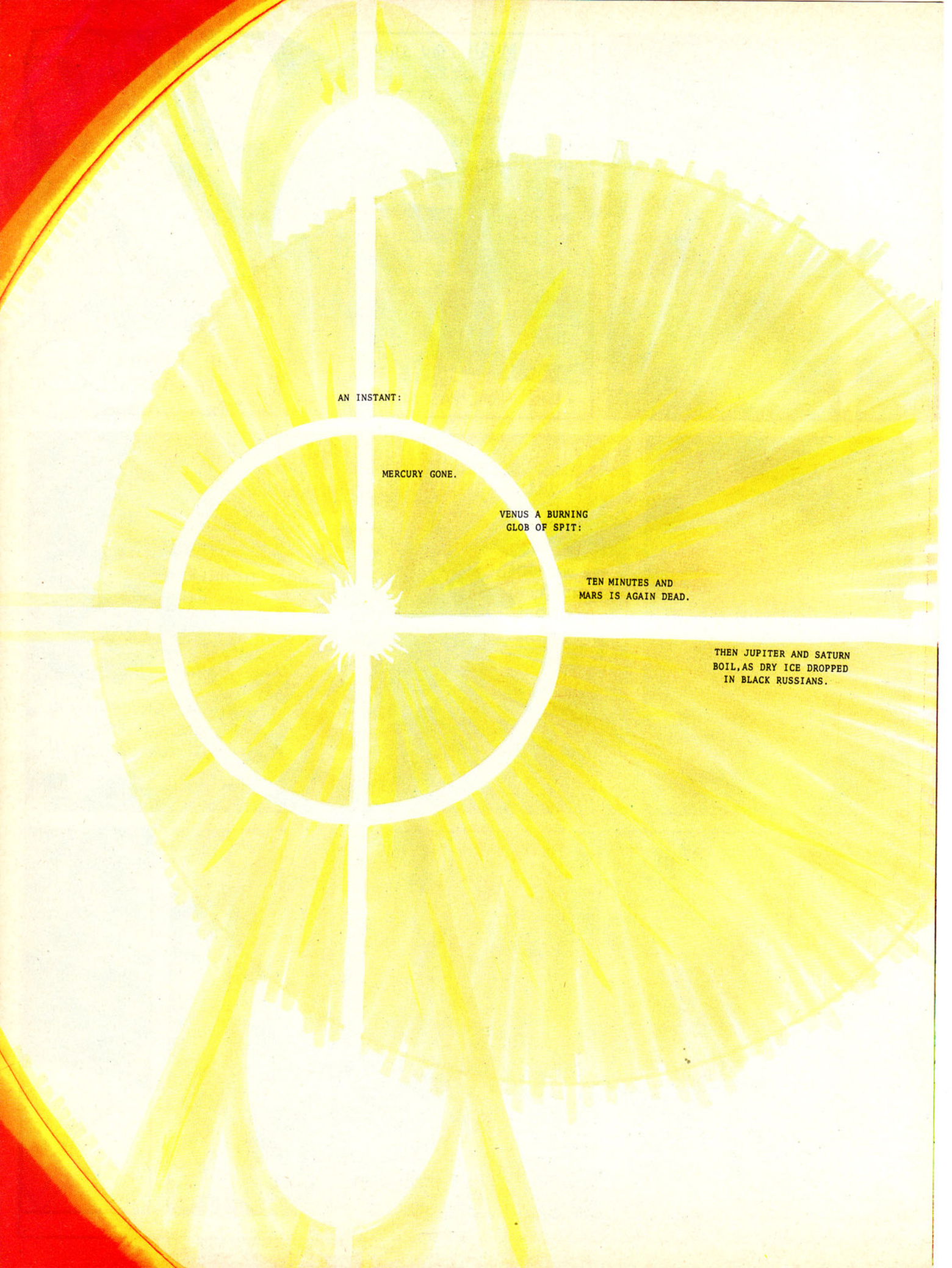
THE HONOR IS
OURS. GOODBYE.
MAY YOUR
UNENDING REST
BE QUENCHED BY
SWEET DREAMS.

Come, Good
Ladies. Weep
Not -- but
Seek For
the Bright
Tomorrows.









AN INSTANT:

MERCURY GONE.

VENUS A BURNING
GLOB OF SPIT:

TEN MINUTES AND
MARS IS AGAIN DEAD.

THEN JUPITER AND SATURN
BOIL, AS DRY ICE DROPPED
IN BLACK RUSSIANS.

FIFTEEN BILLION YEARS OF STRUGGLE, GONE
IN THAT HELLISH, HELLISH SPASM.



I've seen better.

But, my dear, the sweet sentimental value of it. A minor work of art, surely.

ENCORE
ENCORE

CLCK
CLCK

CLCK
CLCK

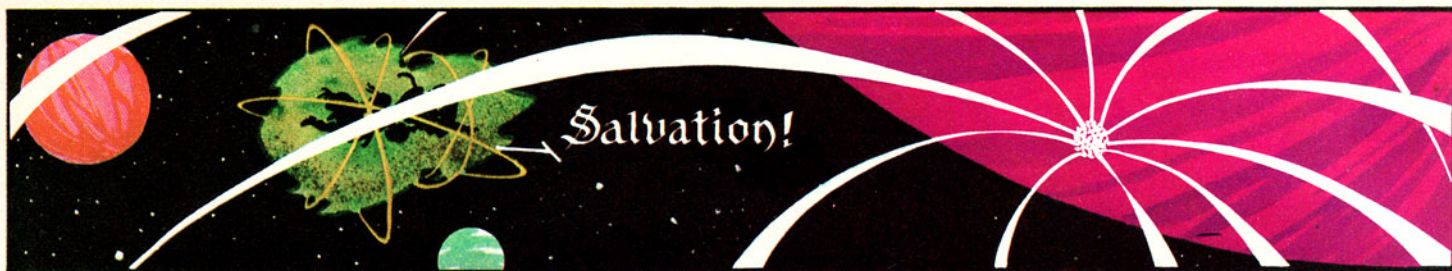
IT HAS BEEN FUN.

THUP
CLNK

oh...
excuse me...
it's the
drano.

THE POETRY OF IT. THE DYING SUN,
ENERGIZING OUR QUARKNET -
LIKE SMOKING
CREMATION ASHES.

ALL IN ALL, A MOST SPLENDID OUTING.



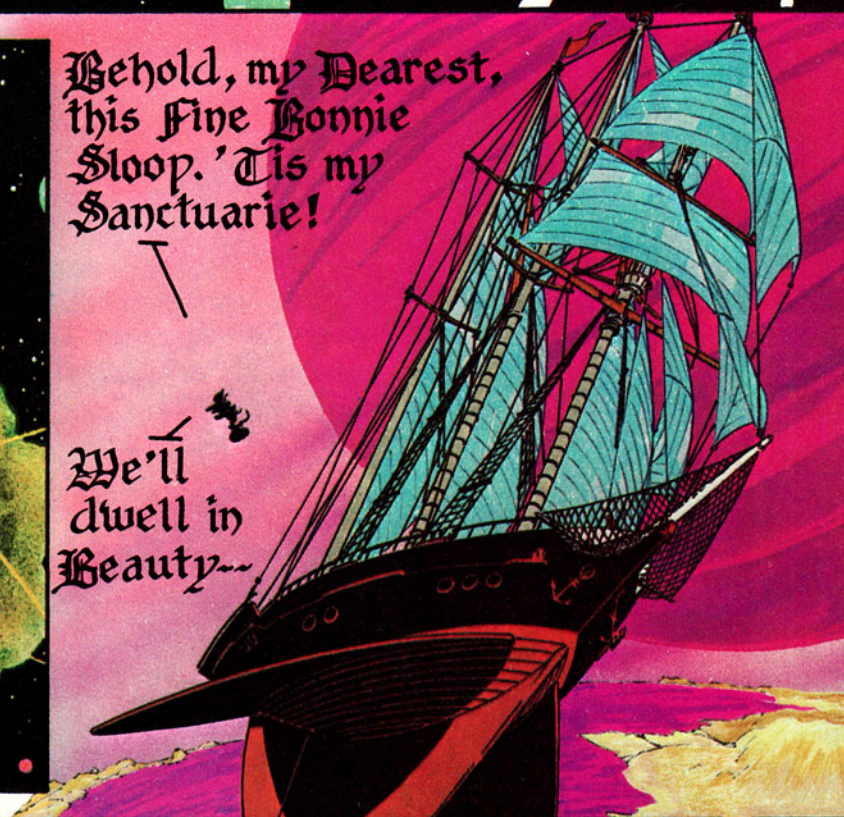
Salvation!



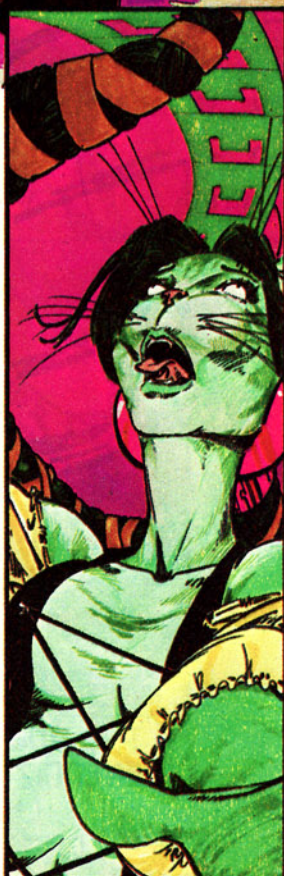
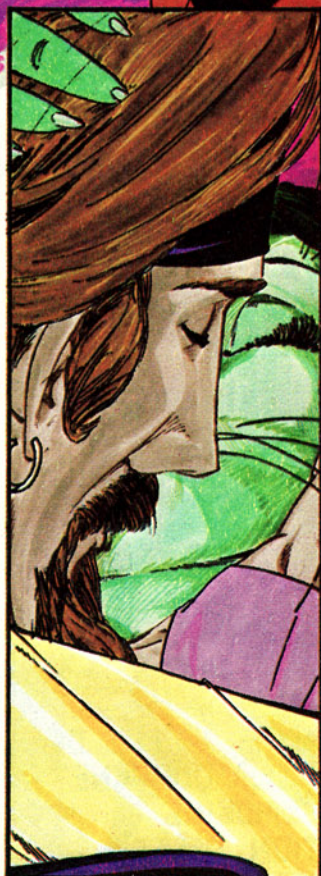
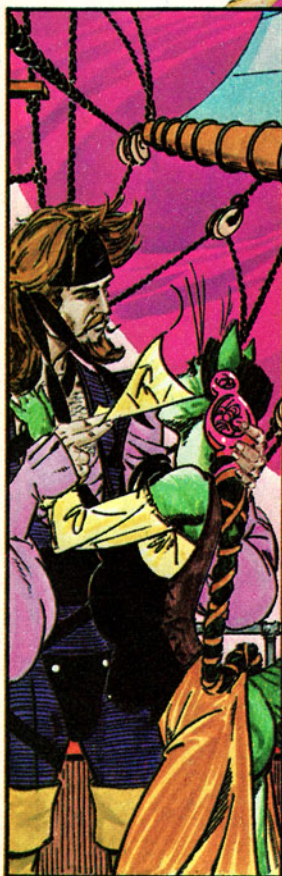
'Tis
O!

Behold, my Dearest,
this Fine Bonnie
Sloop. 'Tis my
Sanctuarie!

We'll
dwell in
Beauty...



Forsaking
the past...

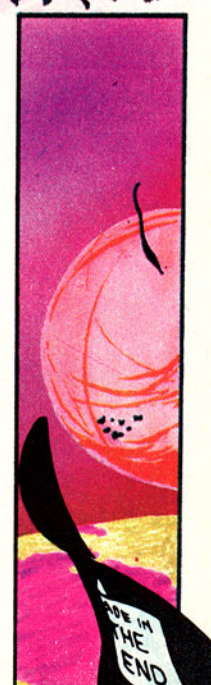
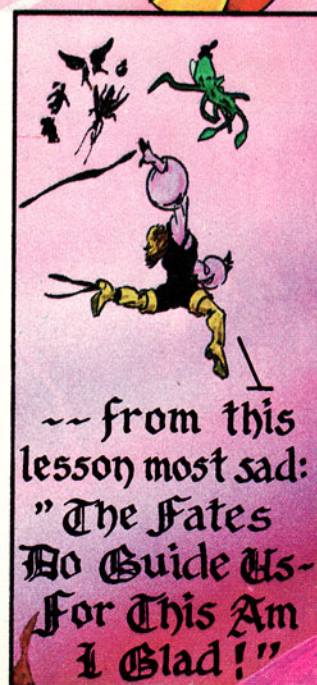
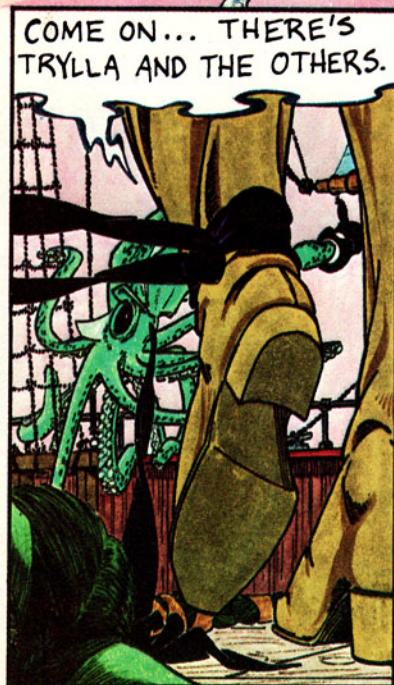
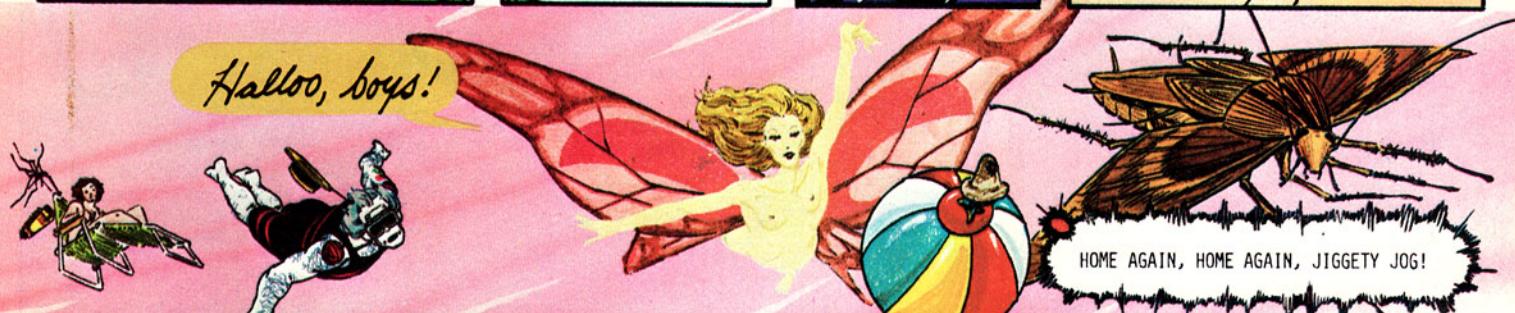
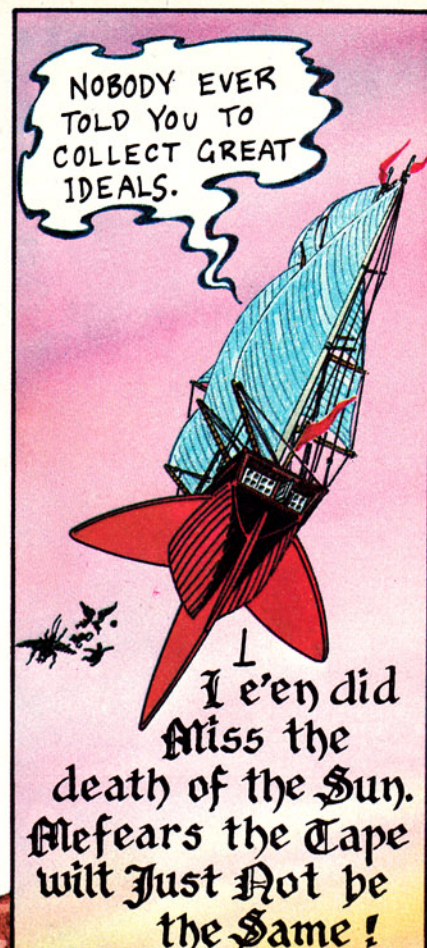
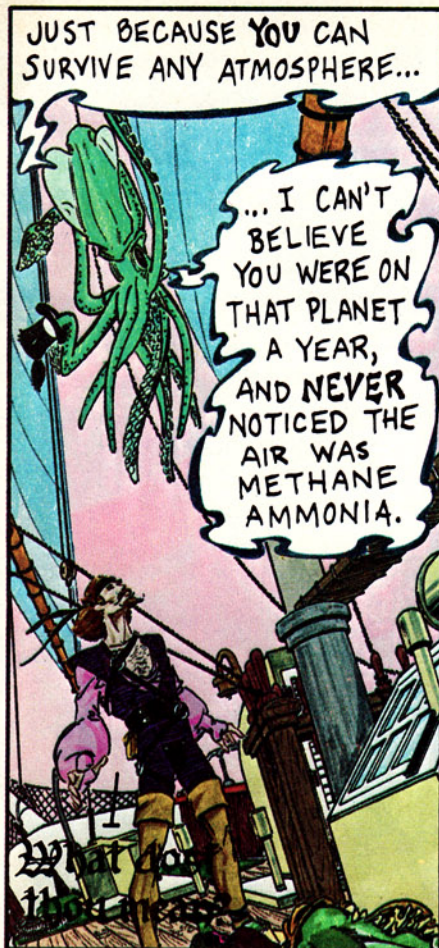


My Love!!
What
ails Thee?



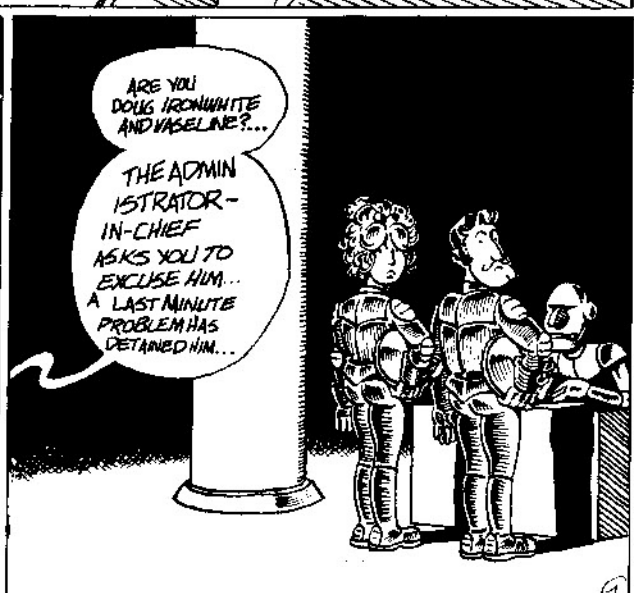
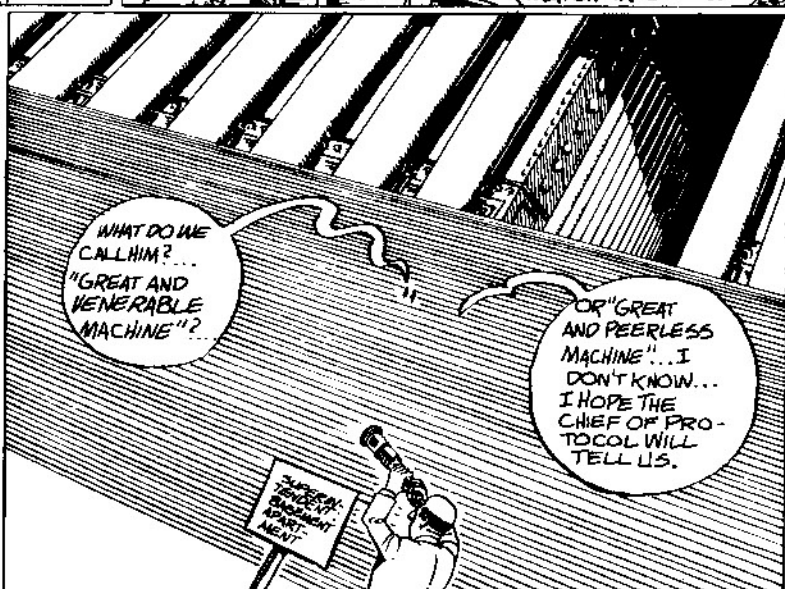
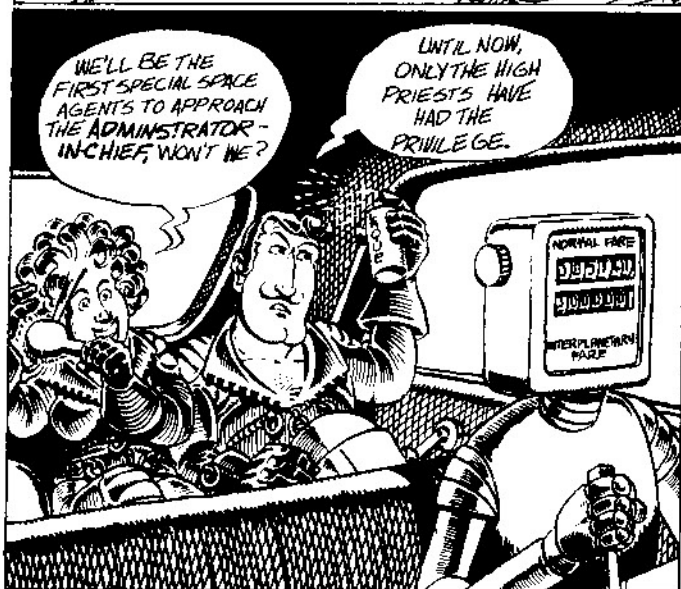
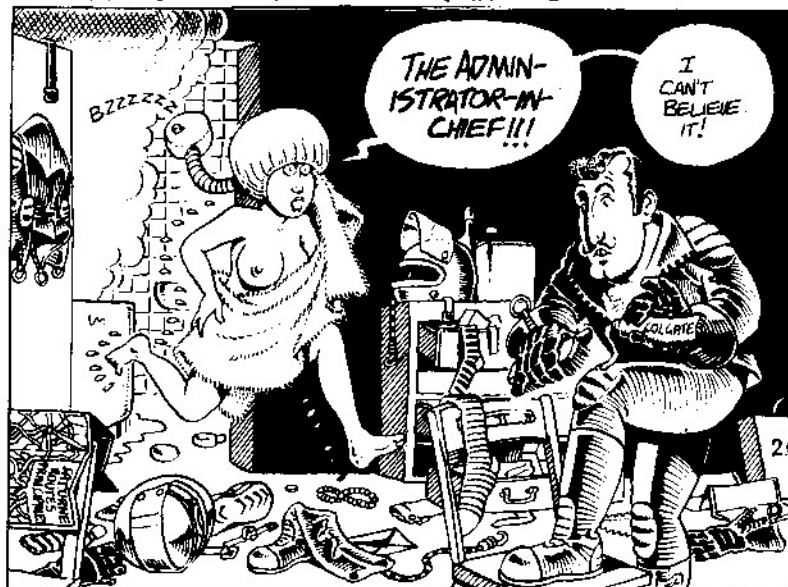
YOU
ASS.

Tor?



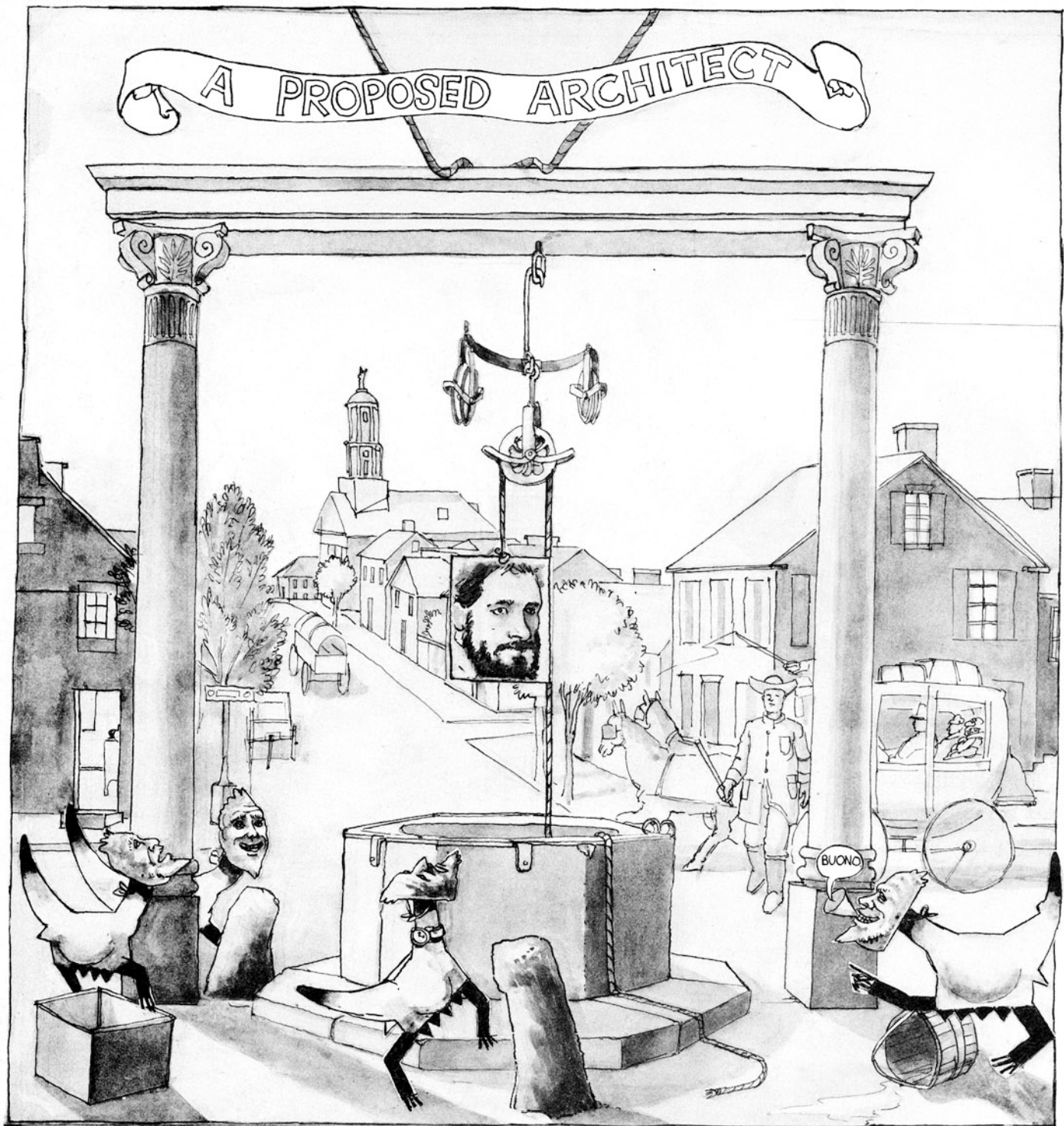
SPIES ON PLUTO!

IT IS THE YEAR 2880, DOUG IRONWHITE, SPECIAL SPACE AGENT, AND VASELINE, HIS ASSISTANT-AND-NOTORIOUS-PARAMOUR, HAVE BEEN SUMMONED TO THE ADMINISTRATOR-IN-CHIEF...



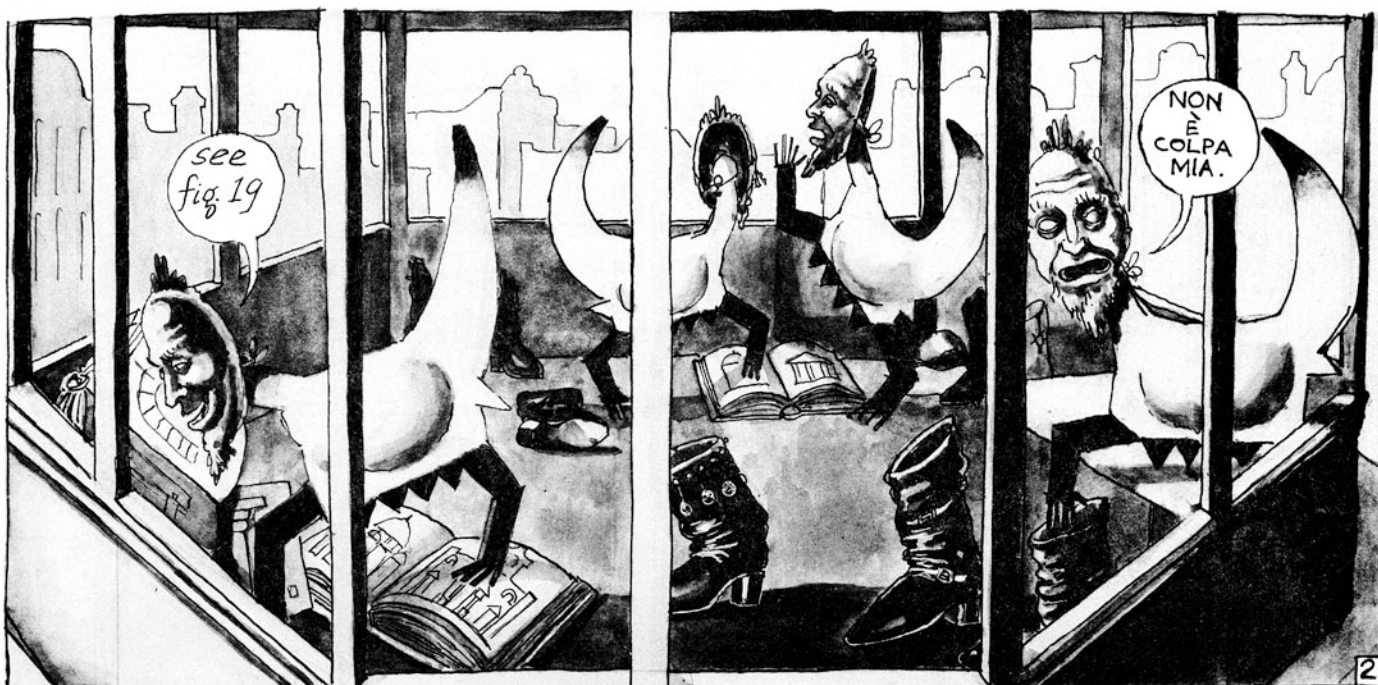








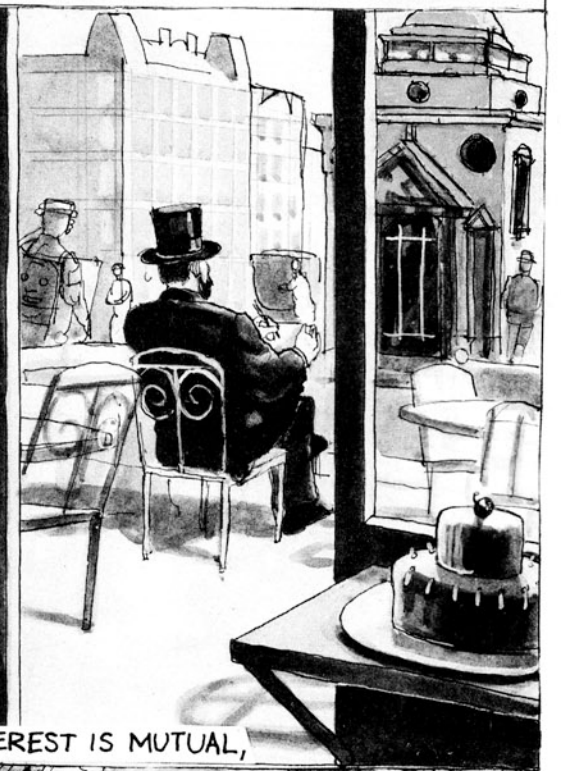
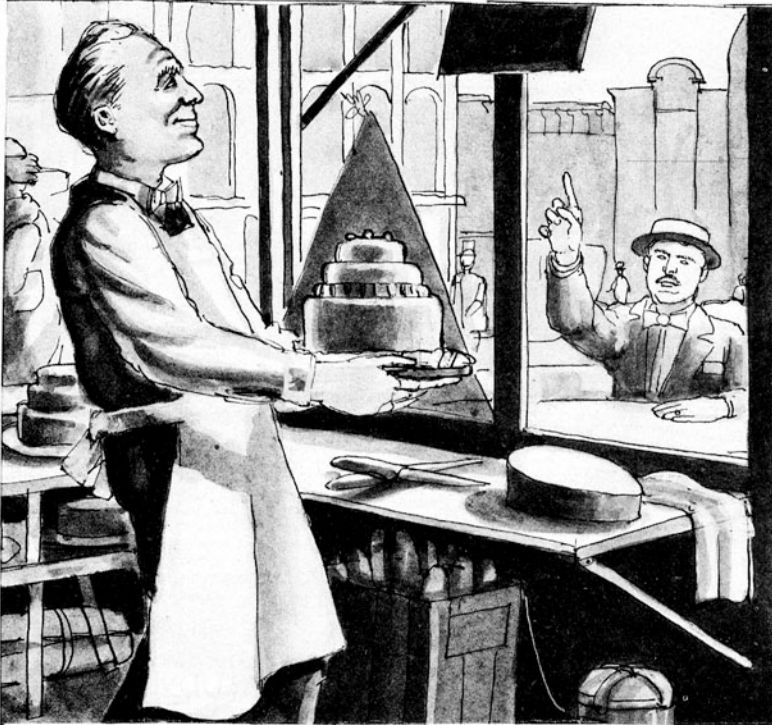
THE EXTERIOR STREET MEN'S CLUB SPENDS ITS SPARE TIME STUDYING 17th CENTURY ITALIAN ARCHITECTURE AND TRYING TO PUT ON FANCY BOOTS.



ITS MAIN BUSINESS IS TO ATTRACT A NEW MEMBER.
A WELL PROPORTIONED BUILDING SITUATED ACROSS THE STREET FROM A REASONABLY PRICED CAFÉ IS THE MEANS OF SEDUCTION.



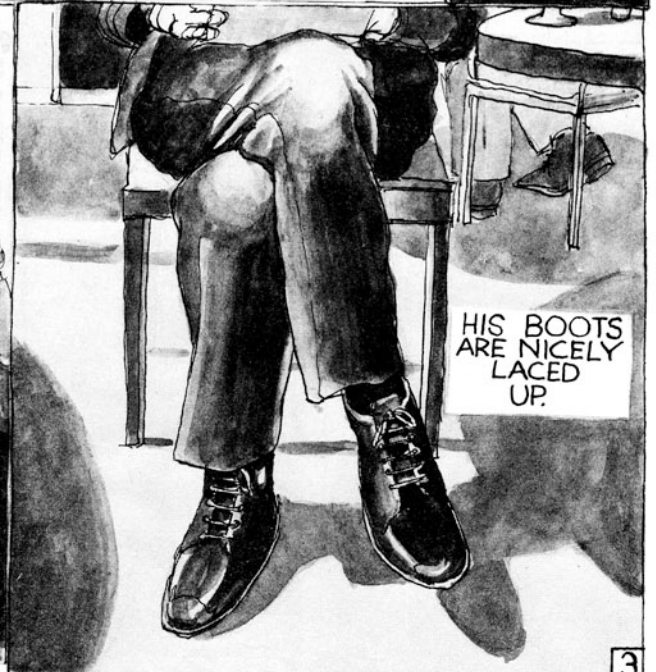
THESE THEY HAVE THERE ON SOLD



ORDER A CAKE AS A SIGNAL TO THEM THAT THE INTEREST IS MUTUAL,



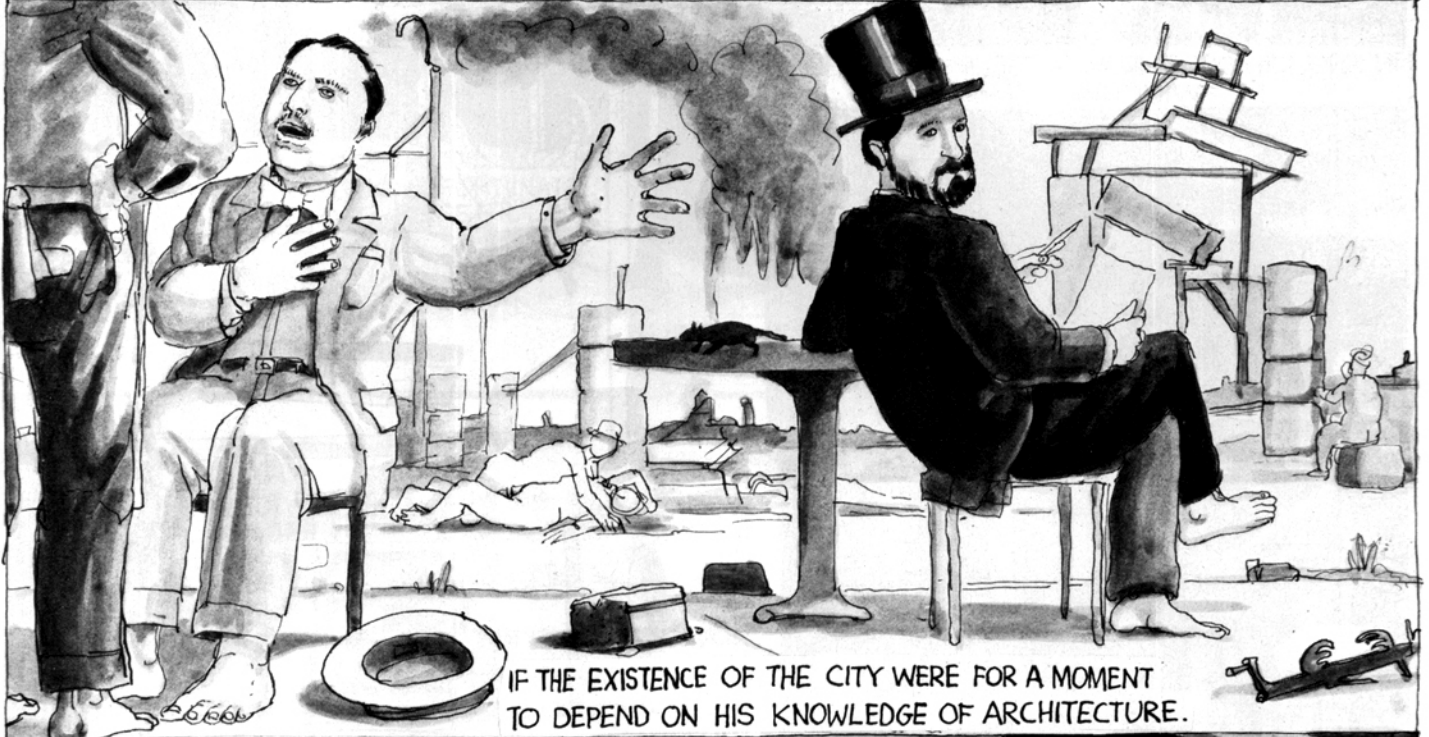
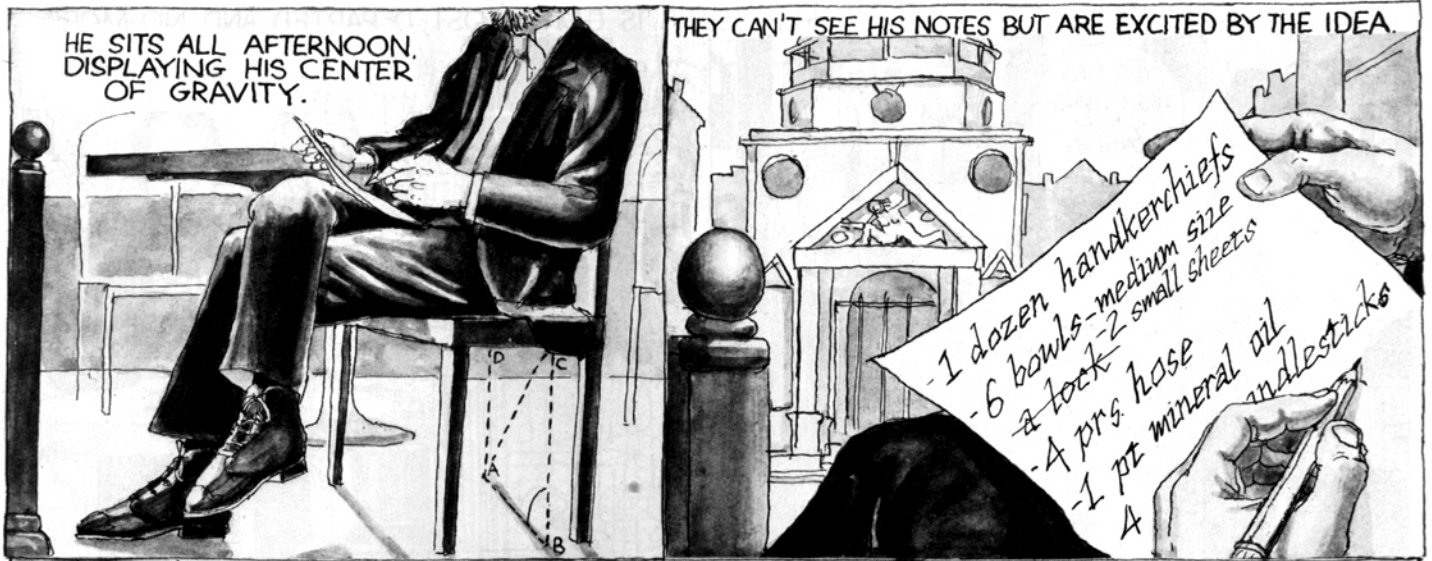
—OR A CUP OF COFFEE.



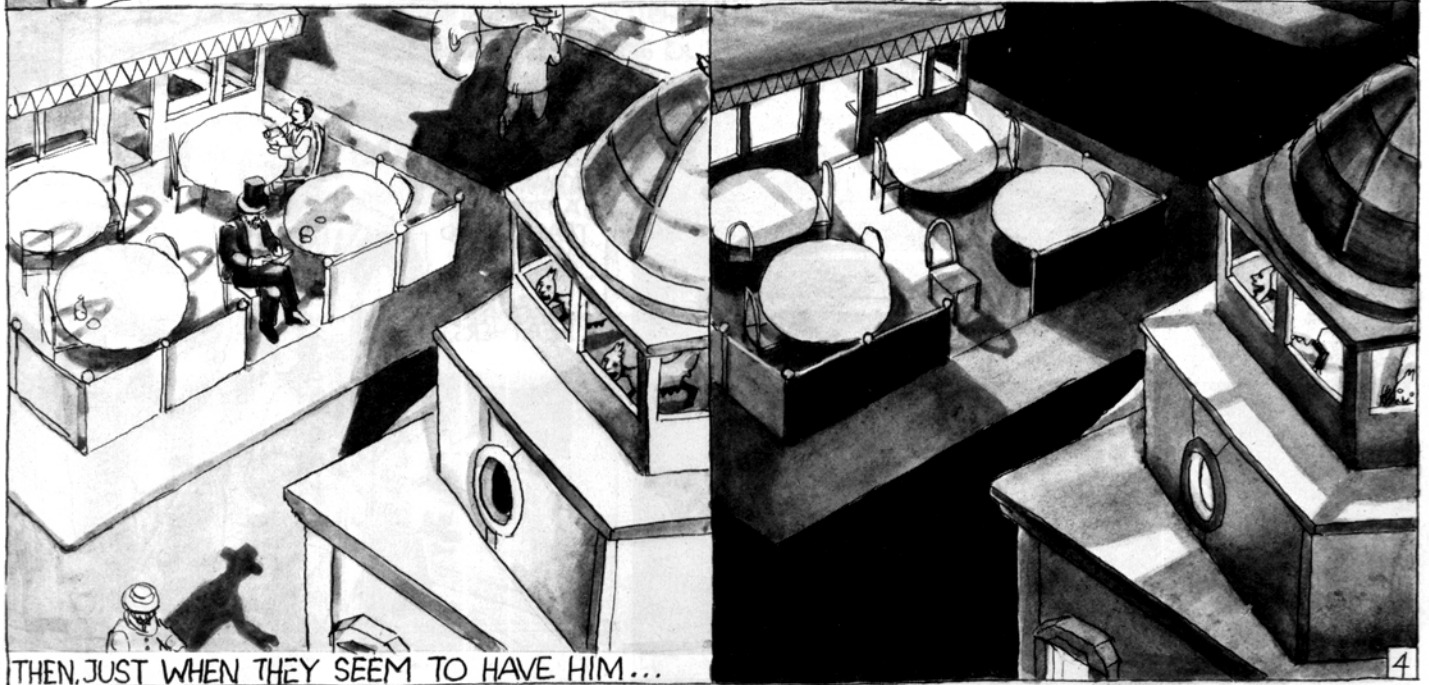
HIS BOOTS ARE NICELY LACED UP.

HE SITS ALL AFTERNOON,
DISPLAYING HIS CENTER
OF GRAVITY.

THEY CAN'T SEE HIS NOTES BUT ARE EXCITED BY THE IDEA.



IF THE EXISTENCE OF THE CITY WERE FOR A MOMENT
TO DEPEND ON HIS KNOWLEDGE OF ARCHITECTURE.

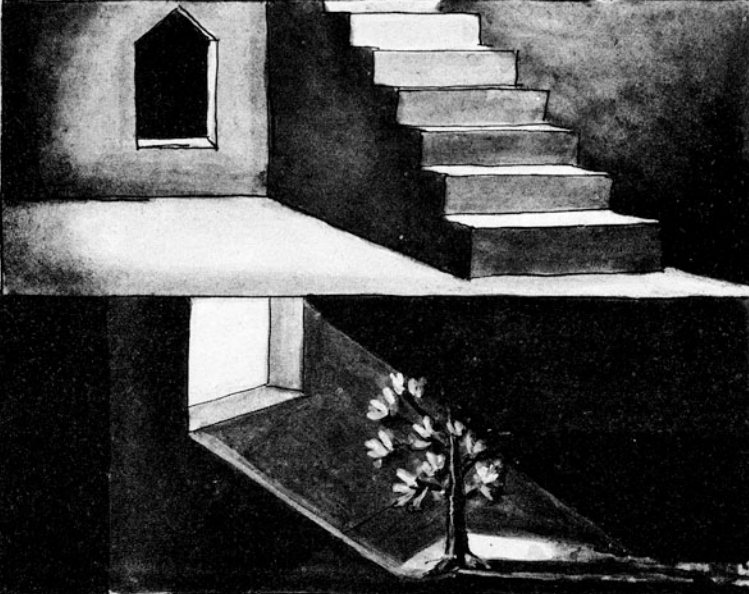
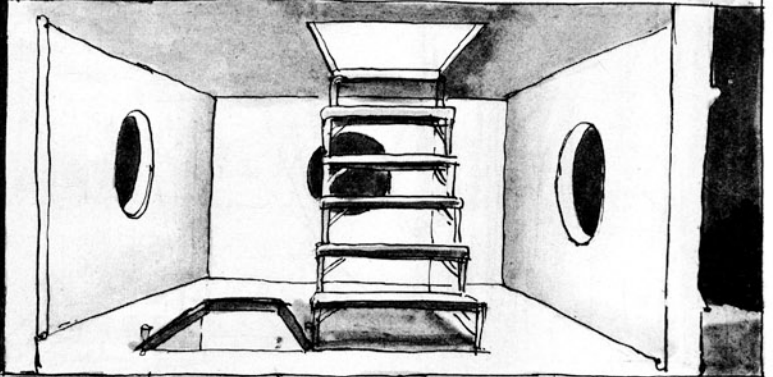
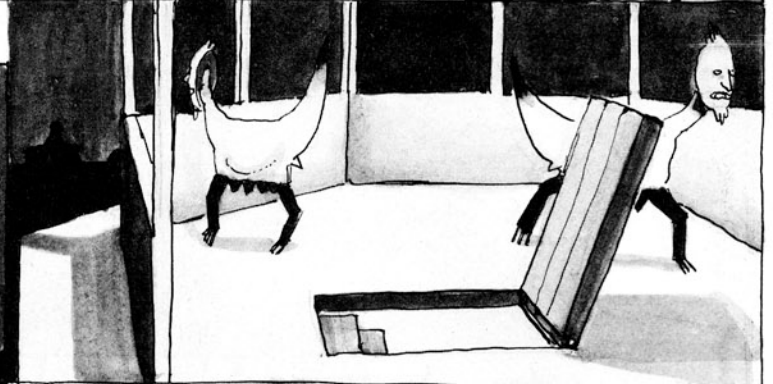


THEN, JUST WHEN THEY SEEM TO HAVE HIM...

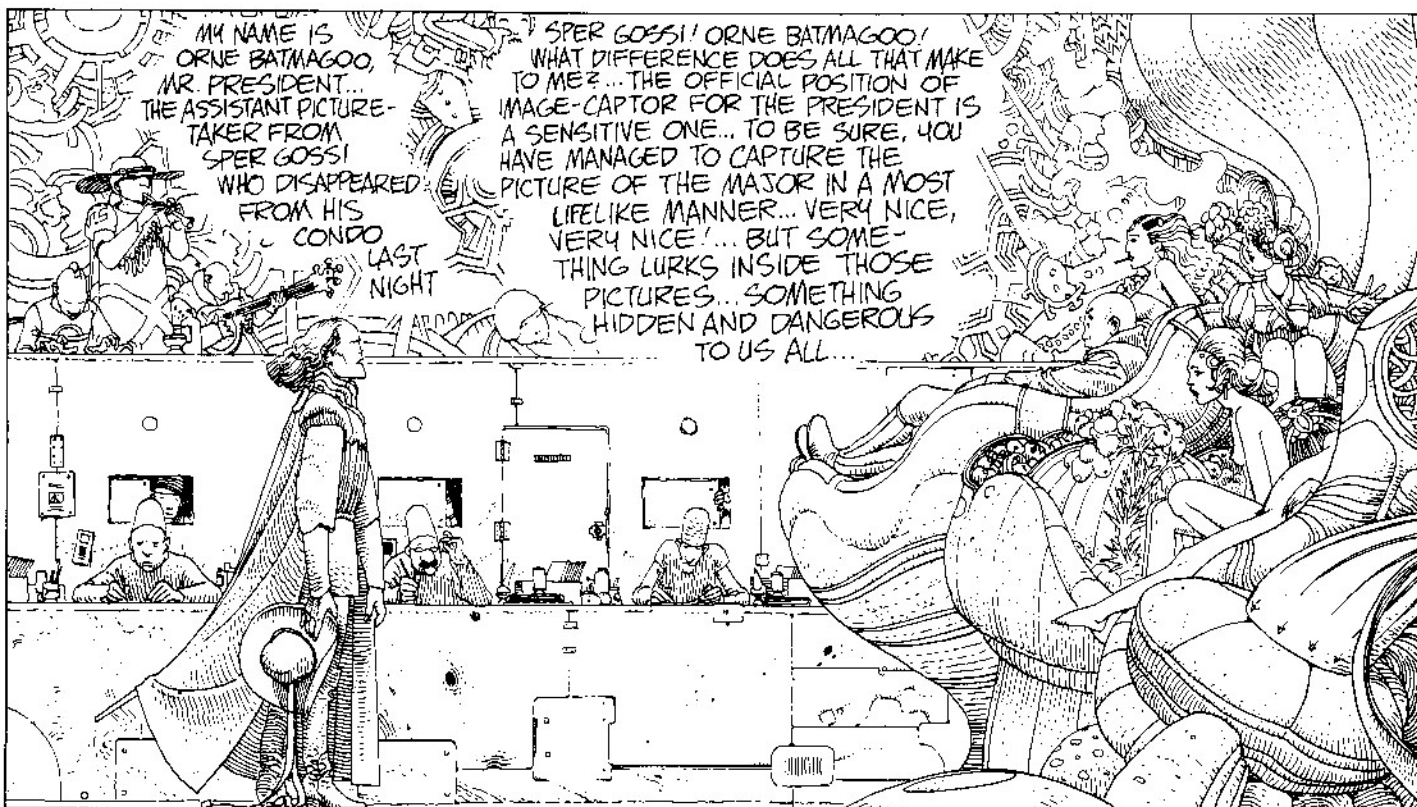
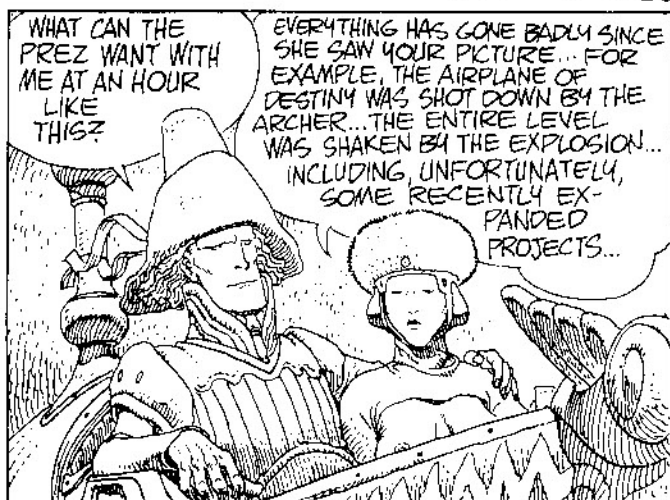
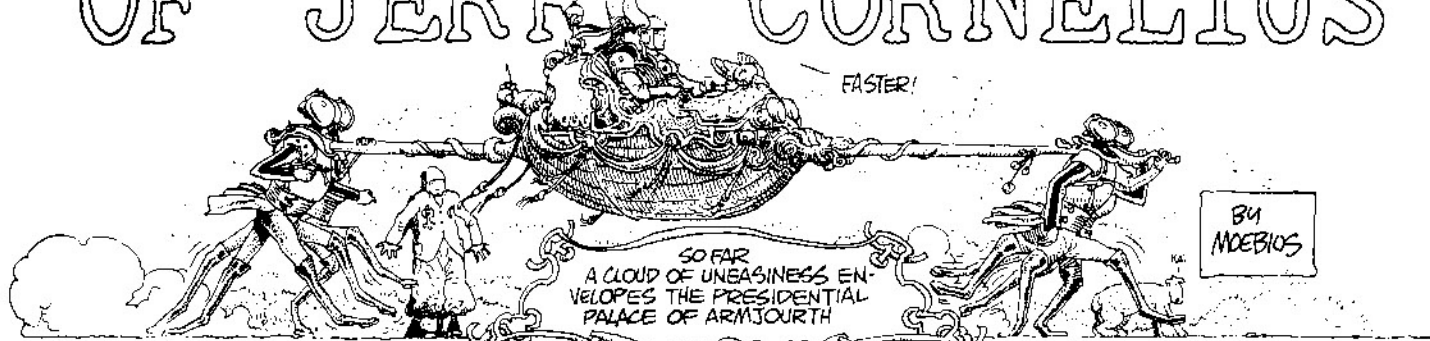
HE IS OVERWHELMED BY A WAVE OF DARKNESS. HE IS GONE, LOST, DEPARTED, AND NO MORE.



IN ANGUISH, ONE THROWS ITSELF OUT THE WINDOW.



THE AIRTIGHT GARAGE OF JERRY CORNELIUS



STOË
ORKEO!

CAN'T SEE A
THING IN
THERE!

MOEBIUS

TO BE CONTINUED...

Roger in the Womb

by Al Sarrantonio

When Mrs. J's pregnancy came to term and nothing happened, the doctors told her not to worry. Mr. J was instructed to keep a firm eye on her, and to rush her to the hospital as soon as labor pains began. Assurances were given that this was not an uncommon thing.

When, after a further month passed and the baby, by all accounts still healthy and active in the womb, refused to be born, Mrs. J truly began to believe something was not right. The doctors, however—more of them, now—still held the opinion that there was no reason to be alarmed, and after a complete examination Mrs. J was returned home to her bed and Mr. J given instructions to keep an even firmer eye on her and to call the moment any sort of labor pains, no matter how tentative, began. This time, there seemed to be a bit of worry and clinical interest mixed in with the reassurances.

Illustration by Roger Garland



At the twelfth month of pregnancy, when the possibility of Mrs. J's body being poisoned by the continued presence of the fetus became acute, she was installed in the hospital and artificial inducement of labor was attempted, but to no avail. One doctor made the wry observation that the baby had "set up shop in there." Another doctor, not at all wryly, remarked that the baby did indeed seem to be resisting with unnatural vigor, and that preparations for Cesarean section should be made. The fetus was still judged to be in perfect health.

Cesarean section was attempted, but the doctors attending were startled to find the abdominal area completely resistant to incision. After two scalpels were broken, radical measures were instituted; but the area surrounding the womb was impervious to violation. After five hours of continued frustrated effort the doctors retired to consultation, and a completely exhausted Mrs. J was awakened and given assurances. Mr. J was sent home, his box of cigars yet unopened.

Repeated attempts were made during the next eight days to enter the womb and remove the baby. Numerous specialists were flown in from all points on the globe, various exotic and revolutionary methods employed—all to no avail. The baby continued to thrive, however, and Mrs. J, despite the mental fatigue resulting from constant questioning by the doctors and nurses, remained in good health.

On the ninth day after forced birth had been attempted, an orderly interrupted a volatile meeting of all personnel on the case to announce that some sort of communication had been established with the fetus. The meeting immediately adjourned to Mrs. J's room. On arriving, the staff was informed by the nurse on duty that, while making a routine medical check on Mrs. J, she had detected a series of tapings with her stethoscope that seemed to emanate from the womb. They appeared, she reported, to form some sort of pattern, although she had no idea what that pattern might be. The chief surgeon, on examining the womb area with his own stethoscope, quickly substantiated the nurse's claims by announcing that he, too, could hear what sounded like a series of measured tapings. A discussion ensued over what this could mean; the discussion quickly grew into a heated argument. Physical violence had nearly erupted when a young intern suddenly thrust his way to Mrs. J's bed and, after a few moments of concentrated listening with his own stethoscope, let it be known that the tapings were nothing more than a message communicated in Morse code. The message, he said, was simply, "I am staying in the womb."

A furor broke out. Within the hour, representatives from all the media were present at the hospital. Mr. J, not having been notified in the confusion, learned of the situation on the evening news.

After this breakthrough an attempt was made to contact the fetus as the chief surgeon proceeded to ask, in Morse code translated by the young intern, a series of complicated questions, to which there was no reply. After failed attempts by other highly-placed doctors and officials, the young intern was put in charge. He immediately asked the fetus whether it was comfortable, and received the answer yes. The fetus then declared it needed time for thought and would answer no more questions at the present time.

Despite constant attempts by the young intern to regain rapport, the fetus was entirely uncommunicative for the next several months. There was constant monitoring, and any potentially communicative sounds that were recorded outside the occasional sounds the fetus produced when it stretched or shifted to make itself more comfortable, were scrupulously studied for a Morse code pattern, or even for the emergence of a new code. A four day period of frantic activity, during which the monitoring team was sure they had recorded a message in a

new code, turned out to be nothing more than the sounds made by the fetus suffering through a particularly noisy intestinal disorder.

During these months of silence the doctoral and professorial committees, which had naturally formed, grappled furiously with new theories and ways to handle the various dilemmas that had arisen. There were uncountable social and religious implications in the event, as well as scientific and medical questions to be answered. There was continued debate on how to handle the problem medically. Papers and theses abounded.

Meanwhile, the fetus continued to develop. Remarkably, Mrs. J sustained no discomfort during this period of fetus growth; though her midsection swelled to elephantine size she retained good humor and exhibited no signs of stress. She now inhabited a spacious suite in a little-used wing of the hospital, complete with a fluid-mattressed bed that was acoustically attuned to counteract the least ache and pain. Having been accustomed to little more than housework before her sudden notoriety, she found her present quarters comfortable and even preferable to home life. Constant entertainment was provided by a large-screen television over her head. Any food or beverage she required was instantly prepared. Mr. J, now fully cognizant of the situation, offered no resistance or complaint; he found his time taken up with various endorsements, which had resulted from his family's celebrity. He also found himself burdened with the management of an income of considerable amount.

Finally, two days before the deadline that had been imposed on the young intern by the chief surgeon, contact was re-established with the fetus. In a short message the fetus stated that it wished to be called Roger, and that there would be a statement the following Monday at 1:00 P.M. It—or rather, Roger—refused to elaborate, and repeated questioning was met with silence.

The following Monday the hospital was jammed to capacity with the media and spectators. Hospital security forces were totally inadequate and by 12:30 P.M. Mrs. J's private room and the hallways leading to it were completely filled with people.

At 1:00 P.M. there was an expectant hush; the fetus' statement began, and the young intern translated the tapings through Mrs. J's abdominal wall. The statement ran:

"I want to thank all of you for your constant diligence and continued goodwill, and most especially for providing me with the necessary accoutrements for my continued development. My hat is tipped to you all.

"No doubt you wonder what I am doing in here, and most especially why I have refused to come out. These are valid points to raise and I intend to answer them.

"Though you may have trouble believing me, and may scoff at my reasoning, or call me coward, the simple reason why I have not left the womb—and one that should have been immediately obvious to you—is that I do not want to leave. Life is safer and more secure here.

"Now these are well-known facts about life in the womb. All of you went through the experience I continue to go through, and all of you were thrust from that security after nine months and made to stand on your own against the cruel environment—physical and psychical—of the outside world. You thought there was no choice. You didn't know better.

"Soon after gestation I discovered that outside impressions experienced by my mother, Mrs. J, were filtering down to me in an understandable form. It may be that I was specially suited to receive these impressions but I think not; rather, I suspect that all embryos and fetuses take in, to some degree, the sights, sounds, and even smells experienced by their carriers. I

suspect that due to some quirk of development or abnormally high intellectual sophistication for my age, I was able to better interpret the deluge of sensory data flooding into my form. Thus I learned of the world.

"During the first few weeks of pregnancy my mother, Mrs. J, began to read romantic novels and watch violent television programs. Little of value was learned. For a period of time—from the fourteenth week through the twentieth—she embarked on a reading program covering all areas of birth and child care, a few popular medical and scientific works, and one psychology text of questionable merit. In the course of reading one of the popular medical texts she (and I) came upon the case of one Roger deCouvernaire, who resisted birth so successfully that he was not born until ten weeks after labor began. When birth finally ensued, his mother—the Countess deCouvernaire—succumbed, but Roger entered the world in perfect health and lived to the ripe age of ninety. As a sidelight, it is interesting to note that his life's work was in the architectural design and building of railway tunnels.

"It is from Roger deCouvernaire that I take my name, at best a symbolic gesture since I have resisted birth far more successfully than he was able to. The fact is that the bleak medical views espoused in the literature read by Mrs. J coupled with the world view presented by the romantic novels, television programs, and newscasts she assimilated, strengthened my resolve to prevent, if at all possible, my expulsion into the outer world. By yoking the knowledge gleaned from those few books with a few reasonable chemical and biological deductions, I was able to successfully prevent my release.

"I will continue to do so.

"I think you will agree with me that I have chosen the safer course. Since I may be considered a scientific and medical curiosity, it would be to your greater interest to continue to treat Mrs. J with the utmost deference and to provide her with every comfort. I intend to devote myself to the study of my environment—the womb—and to the processes that surround the conception and gestation of the human fetus.

"I do have one request. At the completion of my nine-month term, my access to Mrs. J's information and sensory systems was severed—a natural occurrence, no doubt, since at that time the fetus would normally be thrust into the outside world and begin to use its own sensory systems. Though this may be a natural and predictable event, it leaves me, as it were, in the dark. I would ask that at the time in my physical development when I am able to accommodate certain aids for my continued study, these items be provided; I will make ample provision for their passage to me. I thank you in advance.

"There will be periodic communications from me; I will work out some sort of schedule with the young intern who has formed such an accommodating relationship with me—I'd like his superiors, if they are here, to take note of his achievements and to grant him the courtesy and advancement he deserves.

"According to the neurologist Freud, whom I'm afraid I consider to be something of a buffoon, most if not all of you suffer from a repressed wish to return to the womb; if there are any truths in this belief, I find it significant to note that I should therefore be able to avoid most, if not all, traumas of human existence since I have not left the womb in the first place.

"That's all for the moment, if you'll excuse me. I'm tired."

There was a moment of stunned silence, and then a sudden collective cheer went up from all those present. They were so delighted by the fantastic, carnival-like spectacle that they had witnessed that it took all of the security people aided by a good number of hospital staff to keep the crowd from lifting Mrs. J up over their heads, fetal burden and all, and parading her

around the room and out into the street. The media representatives were especially happy about the episode, given the bountiful reportage possibilities it presented.

The young intern was, of course, immediately promoted and given a staff of his own. Things proceeded smoothly for Roger in the womb, and every four weeks thereafter, he gave a short report and new observations. Mrs. J, who was now completely content with watching the television that was over her head, was providing more than enough materials than Roger needed to maintain his health and foster his growth; she was maintaining a huge protein and fat-rich diet that Roger had developed, and had assumed balloon-like proportions.

Despite constant and growing pressures from religious, cultural, political, medical, scientific, and media groups, Roger's privacy was strictly maintained by the young intern. Every two months a statement based on Roger's periodic reports was released to the press. The first few of Roger's statements were relatively pedestrian, dealing with such matters as the format for future pronouncements and the correct procedures involved. Then there followed a number of statements dealing with the womb itself, its structure and characteristics. An occasional message dealt with a physical characteristic of Roger: at the age of one he discussed the impossibility of crawling in the womb; at the age of two-and-one-half the frustrations caused by the urge to walk counteracted the inhibiting characteristics of the placenta.

At the age of three Roger made his first request for materials, asking that a small reading lamp along with a copy of Spinoza's *Ethics* be passed in to him. Roger made room in the womb for these items that had been waterproofed to resist the effects of amniotic fluid, and made provisions for them to be passed in; he did not, however, allow the young intern (now, young doctor) a view, even brief, of the womb. Other texts, among them works by Blake and a novel by Henry James (which was immediately passed out again) were soon requested; before long a constant supply of books flowed in and out of the womb. Roger went so far as to solicit a small pillow to prop his head up in order to make reading for long periods easier. It was discovered that Roger was a bit farsighted and reading glasses were designed through a long and complicated process, though the glasses, in the end, worked perfectly.

By the age of nine Roger found himself completely absorbed by the problems of conception, gestation, and birth; and he provided his young doctor-companion with long philosophical tracts on the nurturing, as well as the expulsion from the womb, of the human fetus. He also provided detailed drawings, rendered in a somewhat cramped style, of the interior of the womb. He began to keep a notebook of his studies (waterproofed, of course), and spoke glowingly of his progress.

Due to the secrecy surrounding Roger, as well as to his meditative way of life, the phenomenon of Roger in the womb had the status of a cultural event of ever-expanding and ever-distorted proportions. The Cult of the Womb, a rapidly spreading movement, which had formed shortly after Roger's first message was released, held Roger in near-deistic esteem; its members lived most of their lives in artificial, self-supportive womb structures, unhindered by thoughts of or contact with the outside world. Another cult, the Rogerists, a purely religious sect, declared Roger the unborn second son of God, and devoted their lives to a truly Byzantine set of devotions. Political, medical, and publishing groups were putting ever-increasing pressure on him for time and attention.

A growing anti-Roger group was in evidence at this time, also. This company encompassed a wide spectrum of types. The general consensus among them was that Roger was either

the devil (in a supra-fetal form) or at least an unworthy leftist coward unable to face the world as it is. An attempt on Mrs. J's life was even made by one of the more bizarre sectors of this assemblage.

During all this time the young doctor had successfully kept Roger shielded from the media and other groups, and had even resisted quite large sums of money in doing so. The press found themselves unable to meet a rabid demand for news and comment concerning Roger, and were resorting to ever more imaginative and devious means to attempt to feed the public craving for information. One television celebrity even made his way into Mrs. J's room and attempted to deceive Roger by telling him in Morse code that he was the young doctor and that there were several matters that had to be dealt with immediately, among them the imparting of such information as Roger's views on a recent election and his favorite color.

Roger's monthly reports became increasingly esoteric. Suddenly he announced that there would be no more monthly communications, that he had embarked on a new and radical course in his studies involving the womb, and was searching for a synthesis of mystical and metaphysical concepts. The flow of books stopped, and the pillow and reading lamp were passed out of the womb. Roger kept only his notebook and a pencil, citing that whatever few notes remained to be made could be made in the dark. He was very excited about the "new direction" in which he was heading. The young doctor, despite frantic attempts, was unable to regain communication; he was particularly interested in making Roger understand that there had been increasing funding problems for the project and if the public was not fed with more accessible information there was a danger of the project being discontinued. But only silence ensued.

The doctor continued to inform Roger of the mounting pressures against him for the next few weeks, but was met only with silence. At the cessation of the monthly reports and bimonthly press releases the public outcry was well in evidence: stock in Roger-related merchandise markedly dropped, and some hospital officials began to murmur about the good uses that the wing Mrs. J was occupying could be put to. The young doctor developed an ulcer.

The media, who had been casting around frantically in search of a way to force Roger to make himself public, suddenly found their outlet when a woman in Delaware brought suit against Roger (and Mrs. J as his legal guardian), claiming that her unborn son had communicated with her through a series of kicks, telling her that he would not be born, and that Roger had somehow influenced him in making his decision. Though the full weight of Roger's fortune was thrown into resisting his appearance in court, a subpoena to testify was upheld and Mrs. J was forced to part with her overhead television console for the first time in a decade. Needless to say, the courtroom was filled to capacity.

The woman from Delaware quickly lost her case when her baby was born in the courtroom on the opening day of the trial. Though Roger's intention not to speak remained untested in court, his privacy had been violated and the dam which had been cracked now burst.

Roger refused to speak after the trial, and the anti-Roger movement quickly gained support. More questions were raised about the use of public hospital facilities and funds to house and protect Mrs. J, and to support the project that the young doctor still maintained. Mr. J, now close to bankruptcy due to bad business investments and decreasing stock value, sought to gain complete control over Mrs. J, Roger, and the investments that had been made in their names by the young doctor. The young doctor, seeing things begin to crumble and concerned

about his own health, embarked on an extensive and lucrative lecture tour, leaving the project to younger and inexperienced aides who shortly began to allow anyone with a working knowledge of Morse code to badger Roger.

A few weeks after the young doctor's departure the budget for the project was suddenly terminated and Mrs. J's television console went blank, giving her time to think about how nice it would be to be thin and able to walk, go to the market, and possibly even make love again. She reached the conclusion that she wished Roger would be born. She communicated this to the doctors at the hospital, getting quite hysterical in the process. Due to her dangerous condition a firm decision was made to try once more to forcibly remove Roger from the womb. This intention was passed on to Roger in code. The doctors were afraid that Mrs. J's hysteria, coupled with his continued presence in the womb, might endanger the health of one or both of them. The young doctor returned from his lecture tour to supervise.

A massive effort was mounted to enter the womb employing every new technological technique of the past decade, but the entire, vast surface area of the womb was still found impenetrable. The young doctor was close to a tearful breakdown and communicated his frustration to Roger in strong language. He was being led from the operating room when a short series of taps were heard from Roger. The young doctor quickly translated them as saying, "I am leaving the womb."

An immense sigh of relief was heard in the operating room, and the young doctor immediately answered, "We'll be right in to get you." Preparations for birth were resumed. However, there was no movement from within the womb, no labor pains began, and the appointed operating areas were still found impervious to penetration. It was deduced that Roger would give some sort of indication when he was ready to come out. Mr. J, who had undergone a tearful reunion with his estranged wife, resolving to reform a happy family unit when Roger was expelled from the womb at last, was sent home to wait. His same box of cigars, unopened all these years, remained in that condition.

The doctors waited all that night and into the following day, but still there was no indication from Roger that he was prepared to emerge. The media, which had been alerted to the impending event, stood constant vigil in and out of the operating room. Another full day went by with no change.

On the morning of the third day a flurry of activity was heard in the womb, and the doctors immediately came to attention. The young doctor could plainly hear Roger moving about, but his repeated queries of "Are you ready now?" went unanswered. Then suddenly, just before noon, the movement stopped.

There was a sudden intake of air, and Mrs. J's womb slowly began to deflate, like a punctured hot air balloon. The doctors were horrified. The young doctor desperately tried to signal Roger through the rapidly shrinking abdominal wall, but could not obtain any answer. Mrs. J was apparently suffering no ill effects other than a pronounced tickling sensation.

The deflation continued for almost forty-five minutes, until Mrs. J's midriff had returned to preconception size. Once a stable condition had been reached, the doctors found that the womb area was now able to be violated. They operated immediately, and lost no time entering the womb to see if anything at all could be done for Roger.

The womb was empty. A thorough search was made, and the media was even allowed to examine the womb area to substantiate the doctors' observations. All that was found to indicate that Roger had been there was a severed placenta and a note, scribbled in a childish scrawl and torn from a page of Roger's notebook, which read, "Do not follow me." •

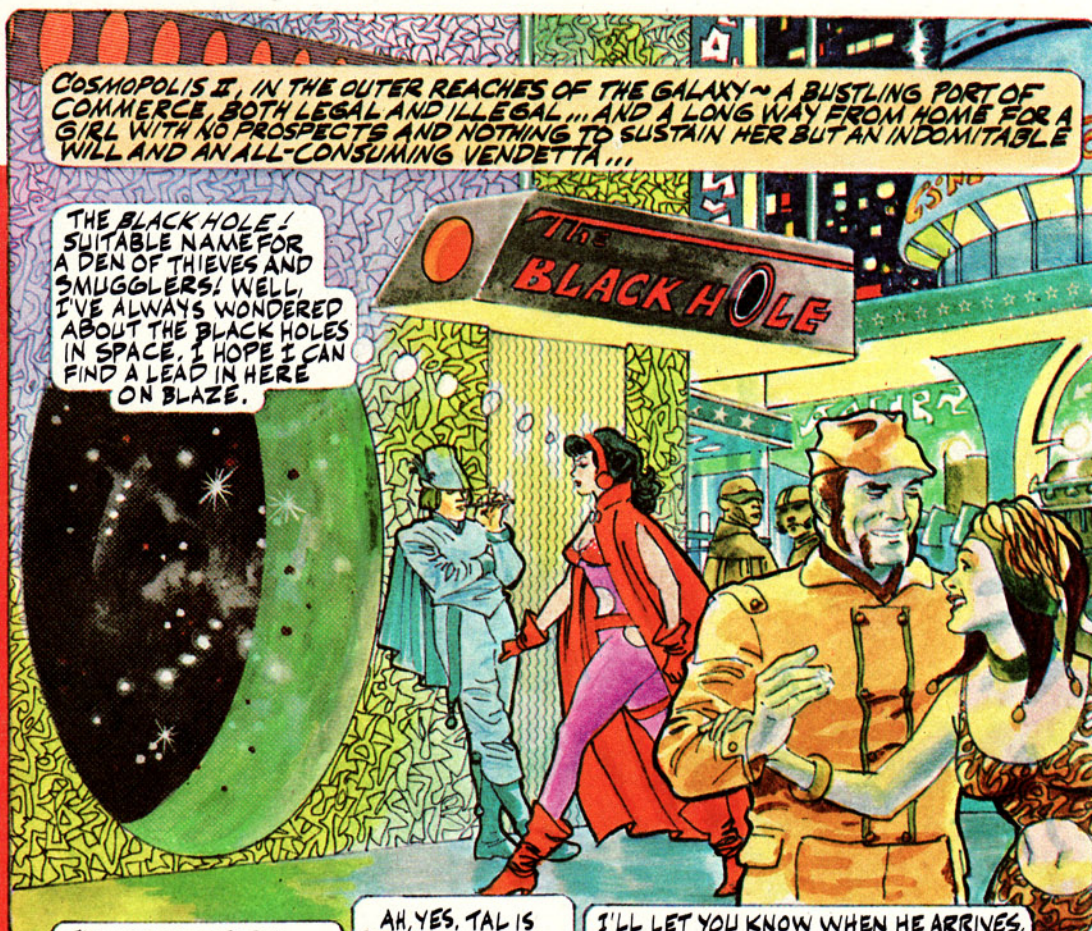
THE CHRONICLES OF ALL WORLDS' HISTORIES AND FUTURES CONCERN THEMSELVES WITH THE SAGAS OF STRONG, DETERMINED MEN WHO'VE BEEN THE ARCHITECTS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE AGES' DESTINIES. BUT, AS OFTEN AS NOT, EQUALLY INDIVIDUALISTIC WOMEN HAVE BEEN UNWILLING TO PLAY A PASSIVE ROLE AND BECAME THE PRIME MOVERS AND SHAPERS OF IMPORTANT EVENTS. THE FOLLOWING PAGES THEN, ARE DEVOTED TO SOME OF THESE HEROIC LADIES~ AND TO SOME PERHAPS NOT SO HEROIC, BUT JUST AS STRONG-WILLED. THEIR STORIES ARE RECOUNTED HEREIN UNDER THE TITLE OF~

8 B E L L E S

OUR FIRST TALE CONCERNS ITSELF WITH A LOVELY LADY WHO'S FOUND IT NECESSARY FROM TIME TO TIME TO ASSUME A VARIETY OF NAMES, BUT CURRENTLY IS REFERRED TO AS~

COSMOPOLIS II, IN THE OUTER REACHES OF THE GALAXY~ A BUSTLING PORT OF COMMERCE, BOTH LEGAL AND ILLEGAL... AND A LONG WAY FROM HOME FOR A GIRL WITH NO PROSPECTS AND NOTHING TO SUSTAIN HER BUT AN INDOMITABLE WILL AND AN ALL-CONSUMING VENDETTA...

THE BLACK HOLE! SUITABLE NAME FOR A DEN OF THIEVES AND SMUGGLERS! WELL, I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED ABOUT THE BLACK HOLES IN SPACE. I HOPE I CAN FIND A LEAD IN HERE ON BLAZE.



I'M LOOKING FOR A PROFESSIONAL INFORMER, SUPPOSEDLY REPUTABLE, WHO MAKES HIS HEADQUARTERS HERE, TAL THRANOLIF BY NAME.

AH, YES. TAL IS PROPERLY LICENSED AND HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. HIS INFORMATION IS ALWAYS OF THE VERY BEST QUALITY.

I'LL LET YOU KNOW WHEN HE ARRIVES. I CAN'T SAY EXACTLY WHEN THAT MIGHT BE, DUE TO THE DANGEROUS NATURE OF HIS CALLING. I MUST, OF COURSE, ASK YOU TO CHECK YOUR WEAPON, AS THIS IS A NEUTRAL ZONE. ONLY THE PATROL CAN COME ARMED INTO THIS ESTABLISHMENT.



AMORA

CARE TO ORDER? THE HOLOGRAPH WILL GIVE YOU A COMPLETE LIST OF OUR DEPRESSANTS AND STIMULANTS, AND THE CUBICLES UPSTAIRS OFFER THIS CORNER OF THE GALAXY'S FINEST EROTIC RECREATION, INCLUDING THE CREATURES AND GENDER OF YOUR CHOICE. ALSO, OUR SENSATIONALLY SALACIOUS FLOOR SHOW BEGINS IN JUST FORTY-FIVE MINUTES.

JUST BRING ME SOME ARELIAN WINE.

DID YOU PICK UP THAT GIRL'S CONVERSATION ON YOUR RECEPTOR, SIR? SHE MUST BE CRAZY TO COME IN HERE! ONE OF BLAZE'S SLAVERS HAS PROBABLY BRIBED THE WAITER TO DRUG HER DRINK, AND SHE'LL WIND UP ON THE AUCTION BLOCK AND THEN IN SOME FAT DENEBIAN'S SERAGLIO BY TOMORROW.

YOU'RE TOO DAMN MUCH THE ROMANTICIST FOR UNDERCOVER WORK, HARLEY. THE PATROL IS INTERESTED IN NAILING BLAZE, NOT IN RESCUING DAMSELS IN DISTRESS. NOW, LET'S JUST SIT TIGHT AND OBSERVE--NOT RISK BLOWING OUR COVER!

AHH! THINGS ARE GETTING INTERESTING! THERE'S THRANDOLIF.

GOOD OF YOU TO WAIT, MY DEAR. HOW CAN I BE OF SERVICE TO YOU?

BY GIVING ME THE PRESENT WHEREABOUTS OF THE PIRATE WHO CALLS HIMSELF BLAZE!

HMMN, EXPENSIVE, LITTLE BIRD, VERY EXPENSIVE! HE PAYS ME A REGULAR FEE NOT TO DIVULGE THAT LITTLE SECRET, YOU'D HAVE TO BETTER IT... THEN THE CHARGE FOR HYPNO-TREATMENTS TO ERASE FROM YOUR MEMORY THE SOURCE, MY CONSULTATION FEE, AND THEN THERE'S...

NEVER MIND THE BUILDUP! HOW MUCH?!

GETTING THIS, SIR?

STOP FOOLING WITH YOUR EAR AND DRAWING ATTENTION TO THE EQUIPMENT SECURED THEREIN, IDIOT! MINE, AS IS YOURS, IS FUNCTIONING PERFECTLY!

SUDDENLY, THE HOLOGRAPH COMES MENACINGLY TO LIFE!

THE DIMINUTIVE ASSASSIN SIGNALS A CONFEDERATE.

YOUR INFORMING DAYS ARE OVER, TAL!

NOW WAIT! CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN INFORMER AND CLIENT ARE SACROSANCT! YOU CAN'T--

RADICALLY UNETHICAL, SIR... (COUGH!) AAAA...

SHE WANTS TO MEET BLAZE, CONGER. THINK YOU CAN--UH, ACCOMMODATE?

YOU BET!

HANDS OFF, APE!

RELAX, DOLL. I'M WEARING A SONIC DISRUPTOR WHICH'LL CURTAIN OFF ANY A' YOUR SCREAMS'N' IF I SQUEEZE A LITTLE HARDER, I CAN SNAP YOUR SPINE!

SO YOU'ND I'RE GONNA DANCE 'ROSS THE FLOOR 'ND OUT THE BACK WAY BEFORE THE CROWD STARTS TO WONDER WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR BLABBERMOUTH FRIEND!

DAMNIT, HARLEY! LOOKS LIKE WE'RE GOING TO BE HEROES, LIKE IT OR NOT! TAKE CHARGE HERE, I'LL GET THE GIRL!

CHECK, COLONEL! ALL RIGHT, EVERYBODY FREEZE! PATROL BUSINESS!

OUTSIDE IN THE ALLEY, AMORA ACTIVATES A HIDDEN MECHANISM IN HER HALTER TOP, AND...

I DON'T LIKE THE WAY YOU LEAD, CREEP!

JUST SUFFICIENTLY TRANQUILIZED TO DANCE TO MY TUNE! NOW JUST KEEP WALTZING US TO CAPTAIN BLAZE!

AGHHH! I'M POISONED!

STOP! YOU'RE BOTH UNDER ARREST OF THE FEDERATION'S INTERGALACTIC PATROL!

LATER AT PATROL HQ'S, COLONEL LANCE LANYARD INTERROGATES AMORA.

IF YOU WANT BLAZE TOO, WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST FOLLOW US?

HE HAS TOO MANY SAFEGUARDS AND SCREENING DEVICES TO GET CLOSE USING ORDINARY METHODS.

NOW WE HAVE CONGER, BUT THE SECRET OF BLAZE'S PRESENT WHEREABOUTS IS LOCKED IN HIS MIND COVERED BY LAYERS OF HYPNO-CONDITIONING, AND COUNTER-CONDITIONING ATTEMPTS WOULD CAUSE HIM TO LITERALLY SELF-DESTRUCT!

I'M NOT GOING TO HOLD YOU. YOU CAN TELL ME YOUR STORY ON THE WAY TO YOUR PLACE.

NOW, YOUR STORY.

SIMPLE. RETRIBUTION. MY DAD AND I RAN AN INTERPLANET FREIGHT LINE IN THE RIM WORLD'S SECTOR. WE WERE JUST MAKING ENDS MEET WHEN DAD GOT A CONTRACT FOR ORE HAULAGE THAT WOULD'VE MORE THAN KEPT THE WOLF FROM THE DOOR. BLAZE AND HIS PIRATES HIJACKED THE ORE, INSURANCE AND SELLING EVERYTHING WE OWNED JUST ABOUT COVERED THE LOSS~ AND KILLED DAD. I WANT BLAZE MADE TO PAY BY THE SWEAT OF HIS BROW IF HE HAS TO BE RECLONED 1000 TIMES TO DO IT!!

AND I'LL HELP YOU.

WHAT?

SURPRISED? WHY NOT? YOU'VE ALREADY SHOWN YOURSELF TO BE PRETTY SELF-SUFFICIENT, EVEN TO THE USE OF THE BOOBY-TRAPPED BOOBY-TR. MMN-ER, WHAT I'M SAYING IS, YOU'VE GOT THE JOB IF YOU WISH.

WAIT, I GET IT, AN ORDINARY CIVILIAN HAS NO LINK WITH THE PATROL, NO POSSIBLE POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS.

ASTUTE, BLAZE, AS YOU KNOW, HAS THE SUPPORT OF SEVERAL POWERFUL COMMERCIAL AND GOVERNMENTAL CONCERNS, UNOFFICIALLY, OF COURSE. AND HE HAS ONE OTHER THING THEY'RE ALL VYING FOR AND HOPE SOME DAY TO PRY LOOSE FROM HIM.

YOU MEAN YOU'RE RECRUITING ME AS A SPY?

YOU LOOK MUCH MORE OFFICIAL IN YOUR PATROL UNIFORM THAN AS A CIVILIAN, BY THE WAY.

CIVILIAN GUISE IS MORE UNOBTUSIVE IN UNDERCOVER WORK THAN DRESSING LIKE A WEDDING CAKE! SOME DAMN FOOL ROMANTIC MUST'VE DESIGNED THEM.

THE ONE THING THAT MAKES HIM SO ELUSIVE AND STYMIES US IS ~ THE WARP DRIVE. HE CAN WINK IN AND OUT OF INTERDIMENSIONAL SPACE AT WILL... AND MUCH FASTER THAN WE CAN WITH OUR LESS SOPHISTICATED SYSTEMS. NOW, WE KNOW HE HAS A HOME BASE SOMEWHERE AND YOU CAN LEAD US TO IT.

ARE YOU TRYING TO GET ME TO WORK UNDER THE COVERS, COLONEL? I THOUGHT YOU WEREN'T GOING TO HOLD ME REMEMBER?

WHAT IF I REFUSE?

DEPORTATION, AT THE VERY LEAST. CARRYING... AH, CONCEALED WEAPONS, KEY WITNESS TO A MURDER INVESTIGATION~~

ALL RIGHT!

I ACCEPT. BUT WHAT BECOMES OF THE WARP DRIVE IF I SUCCEED?

THE FEDERATION GETS TO SOLVE THAT KNOTTY PROBLEM. IT COULD REVOLUTIONIZE CURRENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS, AID IN POLICE WORK SUCH AS THE PATROL'S. IT COULD ALSO REVIVE THE LOST ART OF WAR! THE FEDERATION IS NEARLY INCORRUPTIBLE, BUT-- IF THE DRIVE FELL INTO THE WRONG HANDS~~ DON'T YOU SEE HOW IMPORTANT IT IS? IF BLAZE HAD A FLEET OF SHIPS THUS EQUIPPED INSTEAD OF JUST HIS ONE....

WHY DOESN'T HE?

HE'S AN EGOMANIAC. THINKS HE'S TODAY'S ROBIN HOOD. DOTES ON THE FACT HIS EXPLOITS ARE THE SUBJECT OF DOZENS OF POPULAR VID-SCREEN TAPE MELODRAMAS. IN SHORT--FOR THE FUN OF THE GAME.

YOUR SUCCESS WILL MEAN THE OPENING, ONCE MORE, OF THE SPACE LANES TO FREE TRADE

HOW?

AS A DECOY, AND WITH THE AID OF THIS TINY DEVICE.

I DON'T SEE ANY-THING.

YOU CAN WITH THIS LOUPE WHAT YOU WILL SEE IS A SCIENTIFIC TRIUMPH OF MINIATURIZATION! THE SMALLEST HOMING DEVICE EVER INVENTED.

I BEGIN TO SEE A GREAT DEAL. YOU WISH ME TO ALLOW MYSELF TO BE CAPTURED WITH THIS CONCEALED SOMEWHERE ON MY BODY, AND SO LEAD YOU DIRECTLY TO THEIR HIDEOUT. YES?

IN ESSENCE, THAT'S IT. UP TO NOW, WHEN PURSUED THEY SIMPLY WARPOUT OF THIS PLANE OF EXISTENCE--AND REAPPEAR IN ANOTHER. BEYOND THE RANGE AND CAPABILITIES OF OUR DETECTORS TO LOCATE, WITH THIS, WE CAN PINPOINT THEM.

I DO HOPE YOU ARRIVE IN TIME TO SAVE ME FROM WALKING THE PLANK, BEING KEELHAULED, OR WHATEVER IT IS. PIRATES DO TO THEIR PRISONERS THESE DAYS.

DON'T WORRY. WE'LL BE ABLE TO FIND YOU BY TRACING THIS DEVICE'S SIGNALS IN ANY CORNER OF THE UNIVERSE.

JUST TRY TO GET THERE, COLONEL, BEFORE I'M CORNERED.

AND IF YOU DON'T--I'LL HANDLE IT, MYSELF!

WHY, LANCE, YOU NEARLY SOUND LIKE SOME DAMN FOOL ROMANTIC!

UH,--CALL ME, LANCE.

THE NEXT DAY...

LANCE, DEAR HEART, I NEVER WOULD'VE GUESSED WHERE YOU WERE GOING TO CONCEAL THE HOMING DEVICE ON MY BODY!

AHEM! I JUST HOPE THE PIRATES DON'T EITHER.

SHUT UP, HARLEY!

... TAKE-OFF!

I WASN'T GOING TO SAY ANYTHING, SIR, EXCEPT THAT FLIGHT CONTROL REPORTS AMORA'S VESSEL CHECKED AND CLEARED FOR...



AMORA CRUISES THE SECTOR WHERE THE SPACE BUCCANEERS HAVE BEEN MOST ACTIVE...

WHAT A WAY TO MAKE A PICKUP! I WONDER IF I SHOULD SWING MY PURSE?

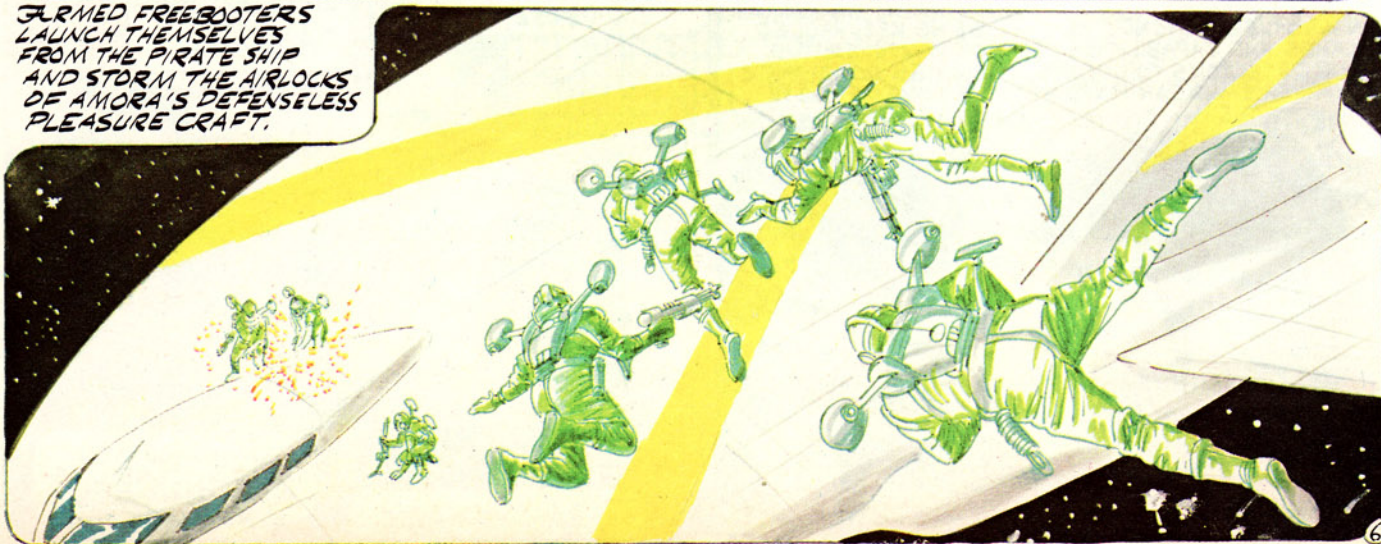


HMMN--A HELPLESS PRIVATE YACHT OUGHT TO BE IRRESISTIBLE TO BRIGANDS--BUT THEY HAVEN'T TAKEN THE BAIT YET... WHOOPS!

FROM OUT OF NOWHERE A STRANGE CRAFT MATERIALIZES AND FIRES A SHOT ACROSS THE YACHT'S BOW...



ARMED FREEBOOTERS LAUNCH THEMSELVES FROM THE PIRATE SHIP AND STORM THE AIRLOCKS OF AMORA'S DEFENSELESS PLEASURE CRAFT.



CAPTAIN BLAZE SPEAKING! STAND BY AND PREPARE TO BE BOARDED! ANY RESISTANCE WILL BE DEALT WITH HARSHLY!

CAPTAIN, I WOULDN'T DREAM OF RESISTING YOU!

I WONDER IF HE MEANS JUST BOARDED ~ OR BEDDED AND BOARDED ~

NO BOOTY TO SPEAK OF, CAP'N. JUST THIS WENCH.

HMMN... A FAIR PRIZE FOR SO LITTLE EFFORT, MATE. HER SHIP ALONE IS WORTH A FAIR PRICE... AND SHE SHOULD BRING FIVE TIMES AS MUCH ON THE ARCTURIAN SLAVE MARKET.

MOMENTS LATER...

YOU JUST GOT ME AND NOW YOU WANT TO GET RID OF ME?

I DON'T LIKE IT, CAP'N! I SMELLS A TRAP! HER SHIP, OR THE GIRL HERSELF, COULD BE RIGGED TO TIPOFF THE PATROL!

POSSIBLY. GO OVER THE SHIP FROM TOP TO BOTTOM! I'LL DO LIKEWISE WITH THE GIRL! WHAT'S YOUR NAME, LITTLE DOVE?

THIS DETECTOR WILL DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO CONCEAL.

BUT, CAPTAIN, YOU CAN SEE I'M NOT CONCEALING ANYTHING, RIGHT? HOWEVER, YOU COULD MAKE SURE IN A MUCH LESS CLINICAL, MUCH MORE INTERESTING WAY... YES?

OOOPS!

CAN'T DEPEND ON MEN! WELL, I SAID I MIGHT HAVE TO HANDLE IT MYSELF!

DAMN IT, LANCE. WHERE ARE YOU? OH WELL. ALL IN THE LINE OF DUTY, I GUESS. OR IS IT DOODY?

MUST BE ONE OF MY FANS.

THE CREW SATISFIES THEMSELVES THAT AMORA'S SHIP CONCEALS NO HOMING DEVICE, AND THE CAPTAIN'S OWN NON-SCIENTIFIC SCRUTINY OF AMORA HERSELF ALLEVIATES HIS CONCERN. THE BRIGANDS RETIRE TO THEIR LAIR--AN ASTEROID IN ANOTHER TIMESTREAM, FEELING SECURE FROM DISCOVERY.

CLANG!
CLANG!
CLANG!

...YOU WILL SURRENDER IMMEDIATELY IN THE NAME OF THE FEDERATION! ANY RESISTANCE IS USELESS! THROW DOWN YOUR ARMS! I REPEAT... THROW DOWN YOUR ARMS...

THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF THE PATROL ARMADA SURROUNDING THEM AND BLOCKING ANY RETREAT FORCES THEM TO REVISE THAT OPINION. HOPELESSLY OUTNUMBERED, THEY CAN ONLY SURRENDER.



A NICE BIT OF WORK, AMORA. THANKS TO THE HOMING DEVICE, WE KNEW WHERE YOU WERE AT ALL TIMES.

AT ALL TIMES, LANCE?

BUT I...UM, EXAMINED YOU--THOROUGHLY! HOW COULD I HAVE MISSED IT?

LET'S JUST SAY YOU CAME WITHIN AN EYELASH OF FINDING IT, MMMN?

SHORTLY THEREAFTER...

GOOD LORD, SIR! THE GIRL HAS ABDONDED WITH THE PIRATE SHIP--AND THE WARP DRIVE!

DAMN IT/HELL! WHY WASN'T IT PROPERLY SECURED?! HOW DID SHE GET BY THE GUARD? NEVER MIND. WIGGLED BY, I IMAGINE!

WELL, WHAT CAN WE EXPECT NOW? PERHAPS A LADY PIRATE AS BAD--OR WORSE THAN BLAZE?

AS IT HAPPENED, AMORA WENT BACK TO THE SPACE FREIGHT BUSINESS WITH A HEAVY EDGE OVER HER COMPETITORS TO ENSURE COVERING HER TRIAL EXPENSES FOR PUBLISHING GALAXY-WIDE THROUGH ALL THE MEDIA A YEAR LATER, THE SECRETS OF THE WARP DRIVE, THUS ENSURING FREE ENTERPRISE. THERE WAS A SHORT HEARING AND A FAST ACQUITTAL FOR THE HEROINE OF THE SPACEWAYS--AND THE NEW STAR OF THE VID-SCREEN.

IT IS SAID THAT COLONEL LANYARD MARRIED THE LADY JUST TO KEEP HER FROM HOPPING ABOUT THE UNIVERSE WITHOUT HIM. FROM THAT DAY FORWARD HE MADE CERTAIN SHE NEVER CONCEALED ANYTHING FROM HIM, AND THAT HE KNEW ALWAYS WHERE SHE WAS AT ALL TIMES. AND WHAT OF CAPTAIN BLAZE? WELL...



BLAZE
TRANSPORT SYSTEMS
REVOLUTIONIZED!
AMORA
ACQUITT

AMORA
GALAXY'S
WEST
STAR

AMORA
ECLIPSE
BLAZE

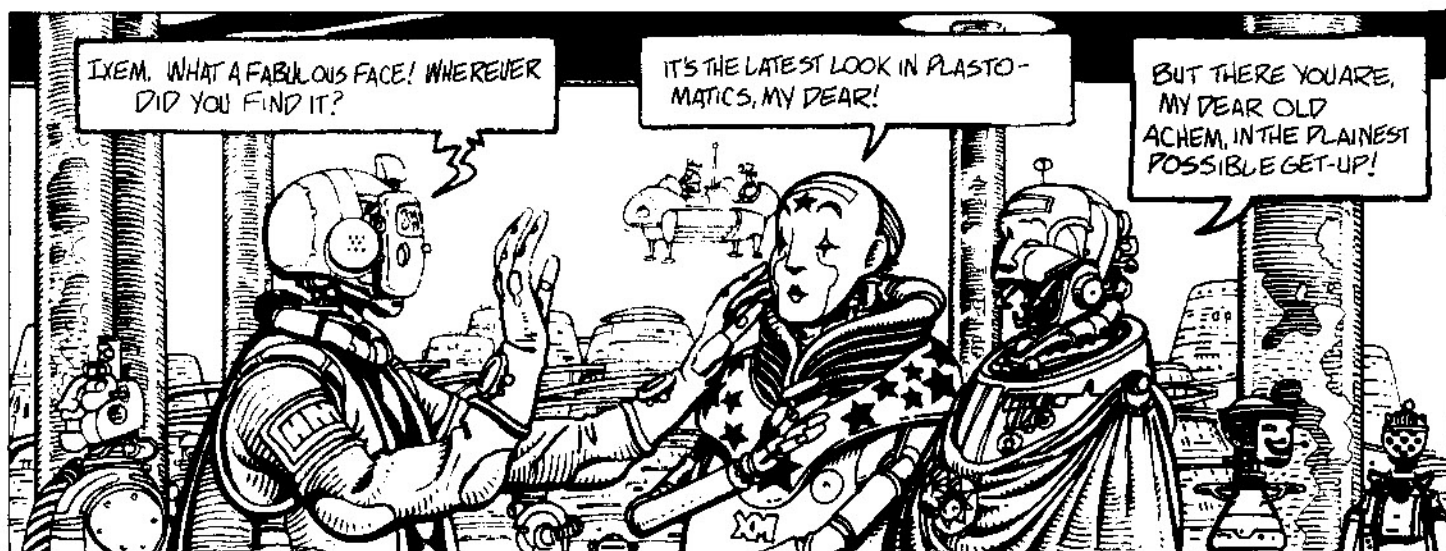


HEY, BLAZE! WARDEN SAYS WE GET TO WATCH THE VID-TAPES BASED ON THE NEW ADVENTURES OF AMORA TONIGHT! PASS THE WORD!

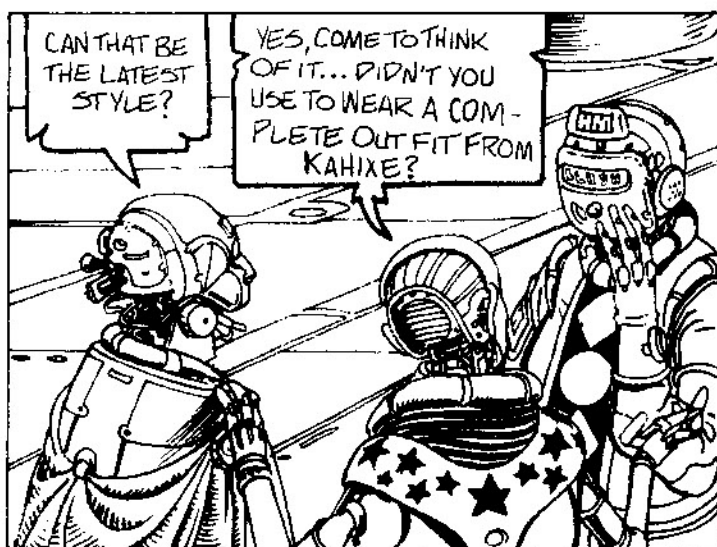
AH, FLEETING FAME! HOW QUICKLY THEY FORGET...

...AT LEAST, HE HAD HIS MEMORIES....

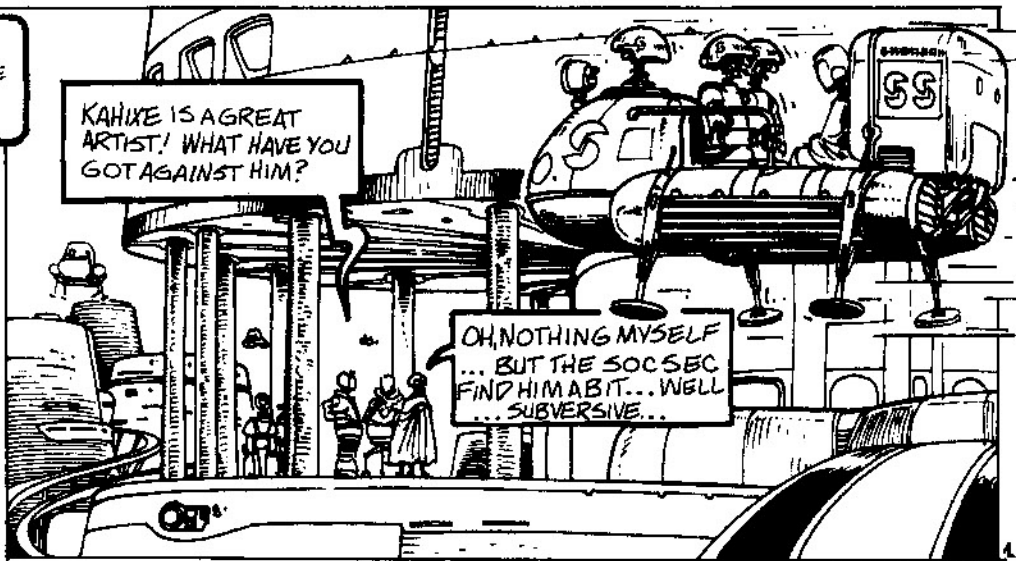
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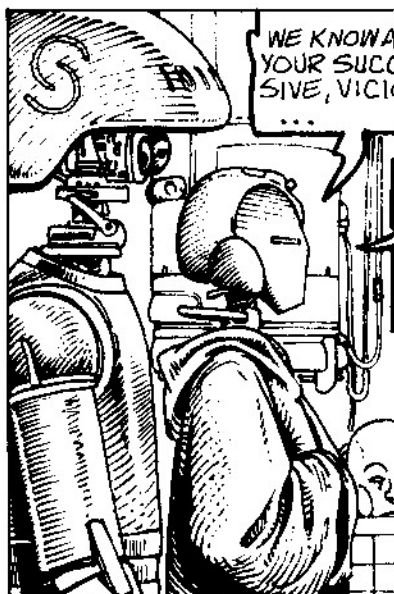
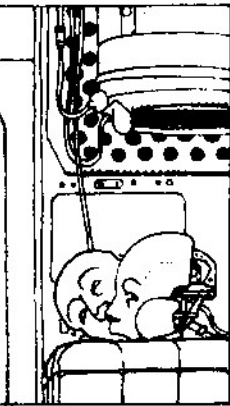
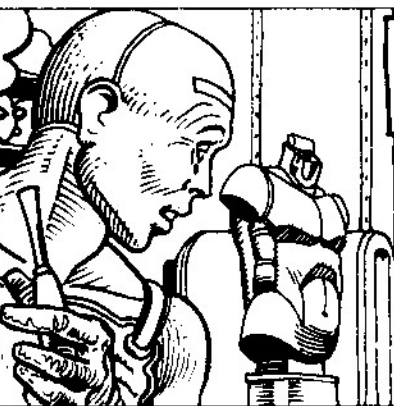
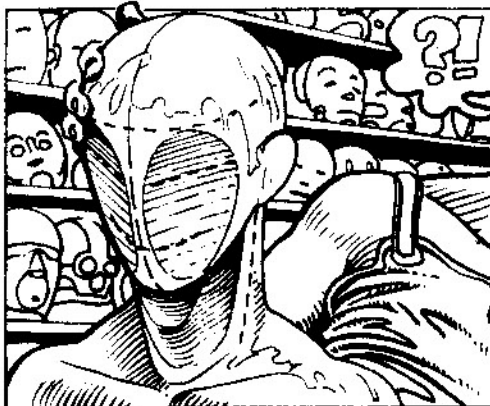
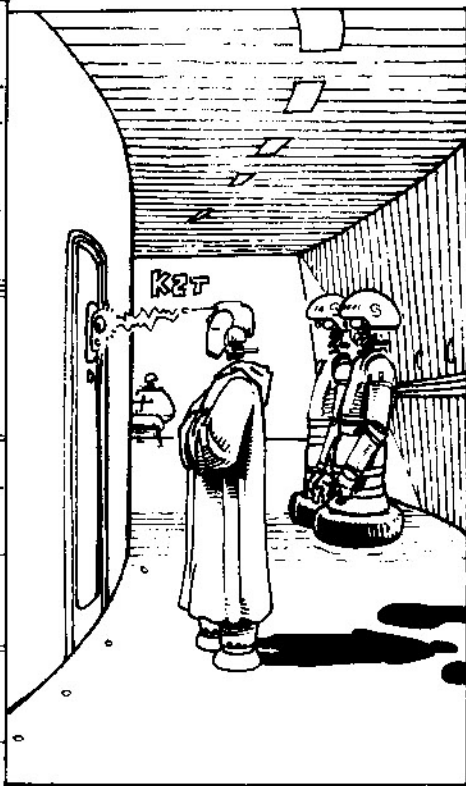
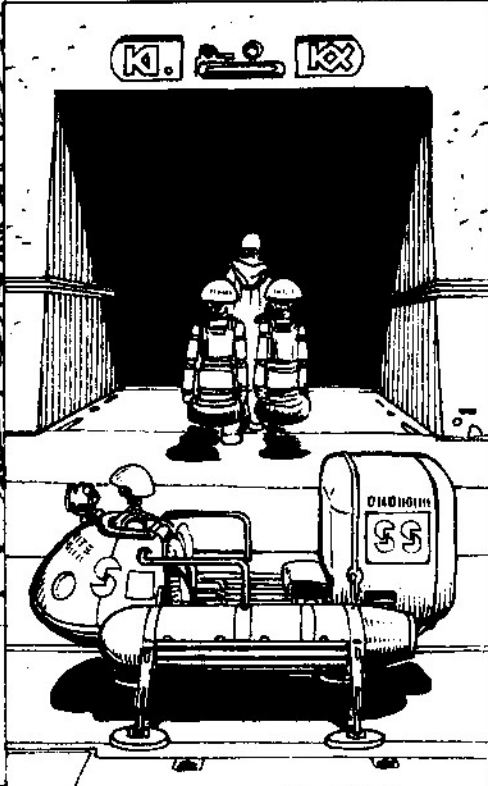
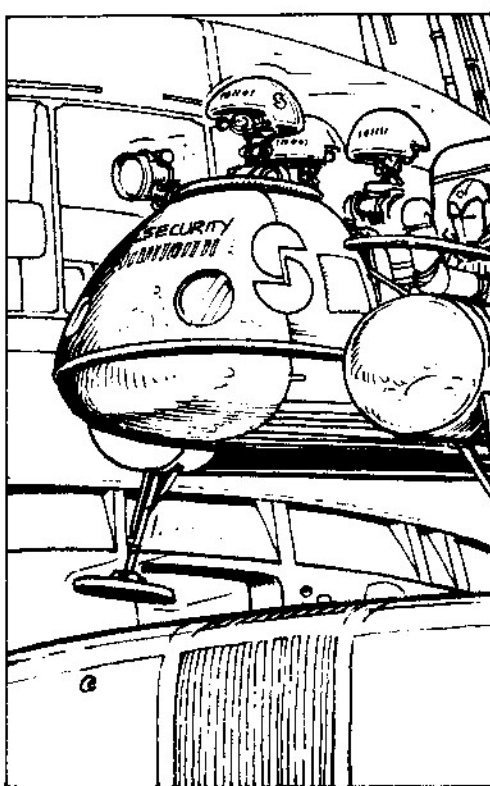


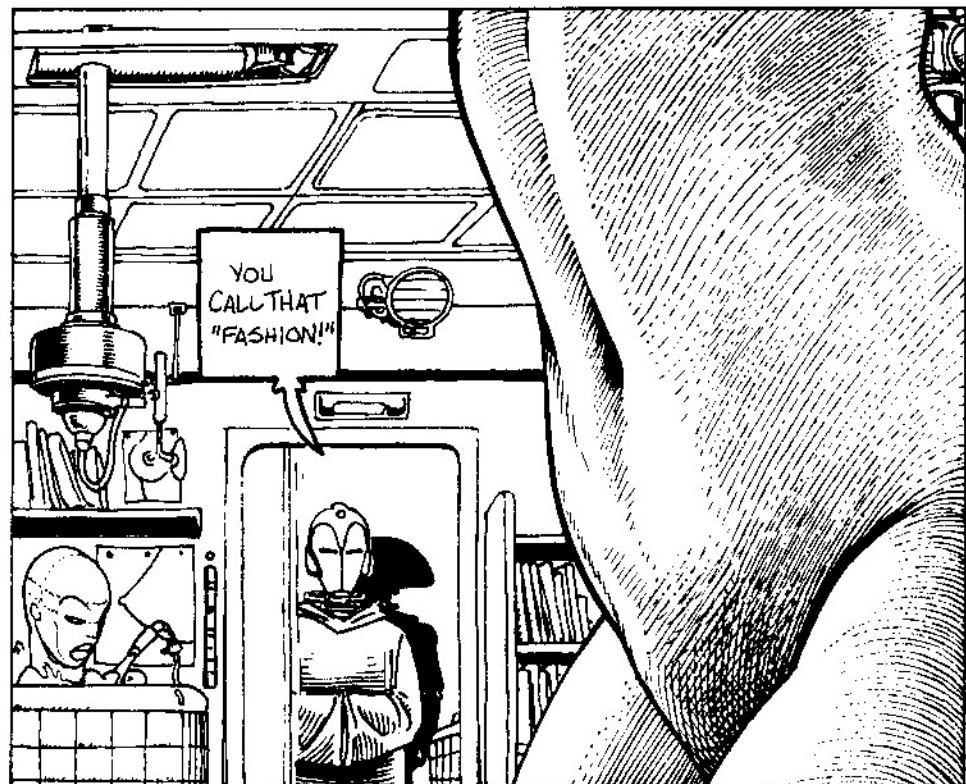
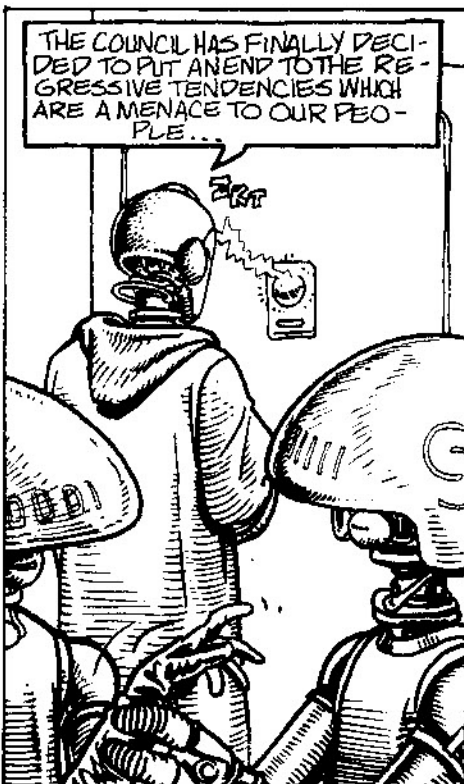
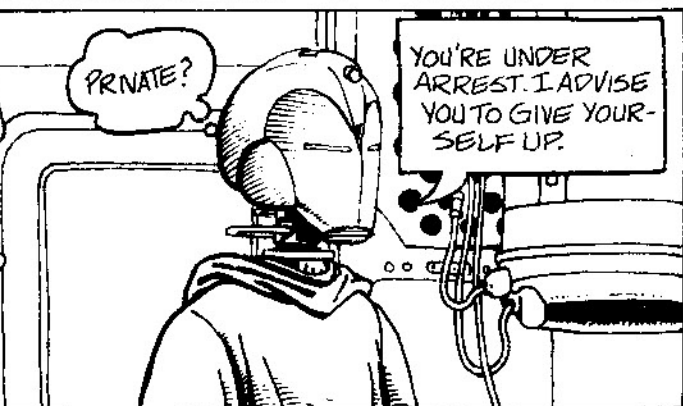
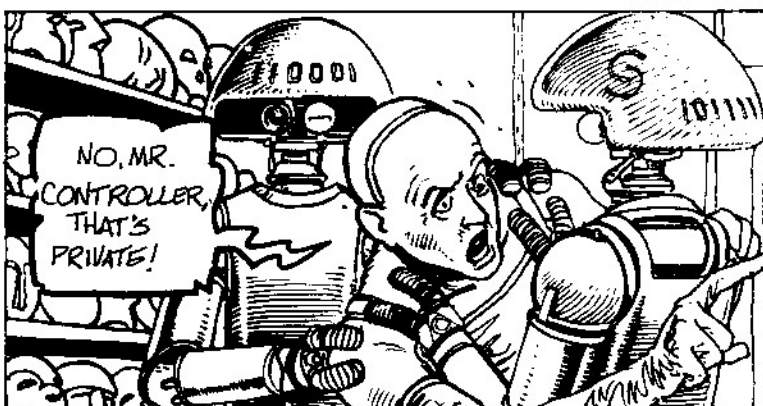
ONLY CONNECT: LIFESTYLES

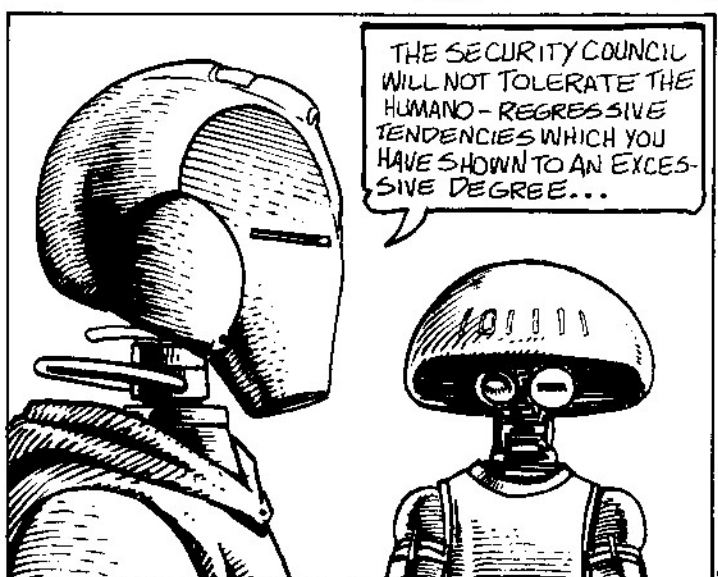
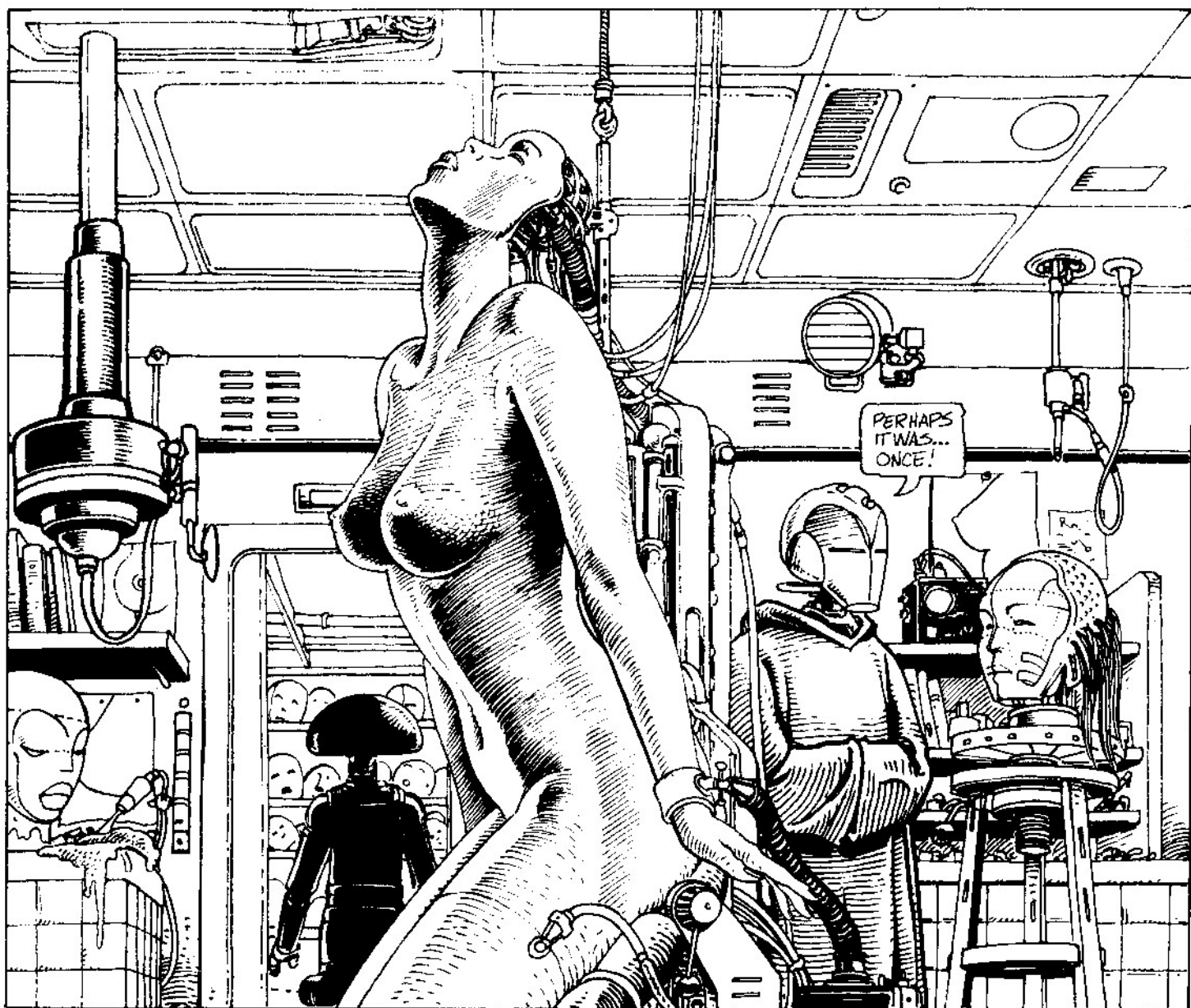


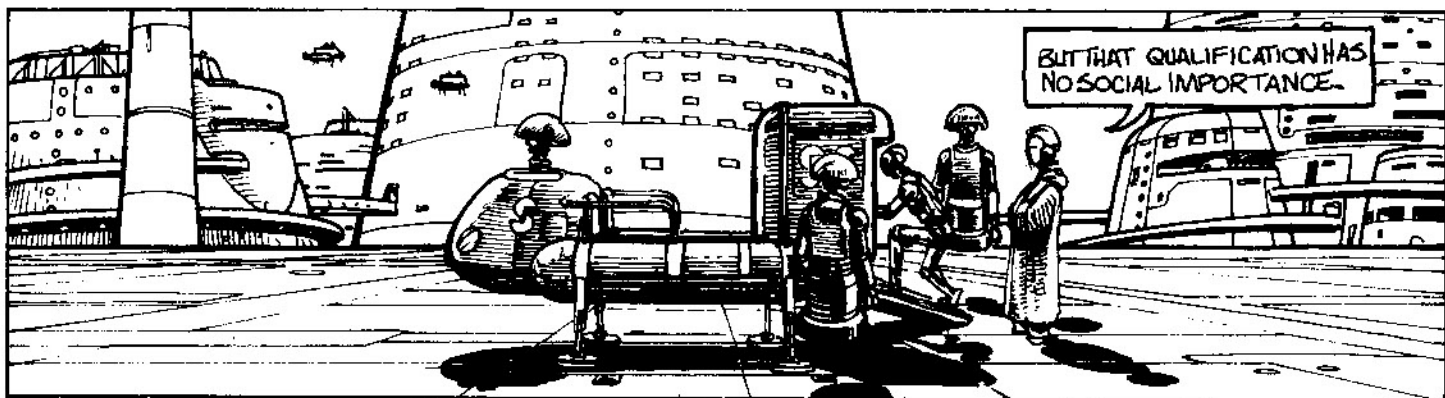
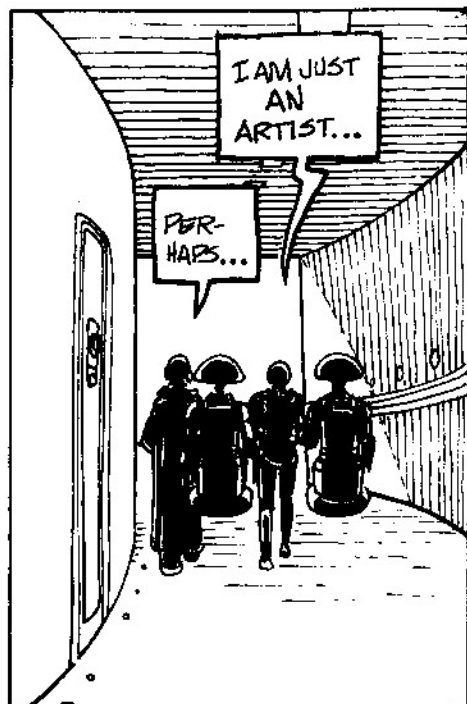
WHAT A SPLENDID OUTFIT IT WAS: EACH PIECE INDIVIDUALLY PROPORTIONED! UNFORTUNATELY I WAS RATHER LED ASTRAY BY THE AEROSOLS AT BETACU'S LITTLE PARTY, AND MY KAHIXE OUTFIT DISSOLVED PLATE BY PLATE...





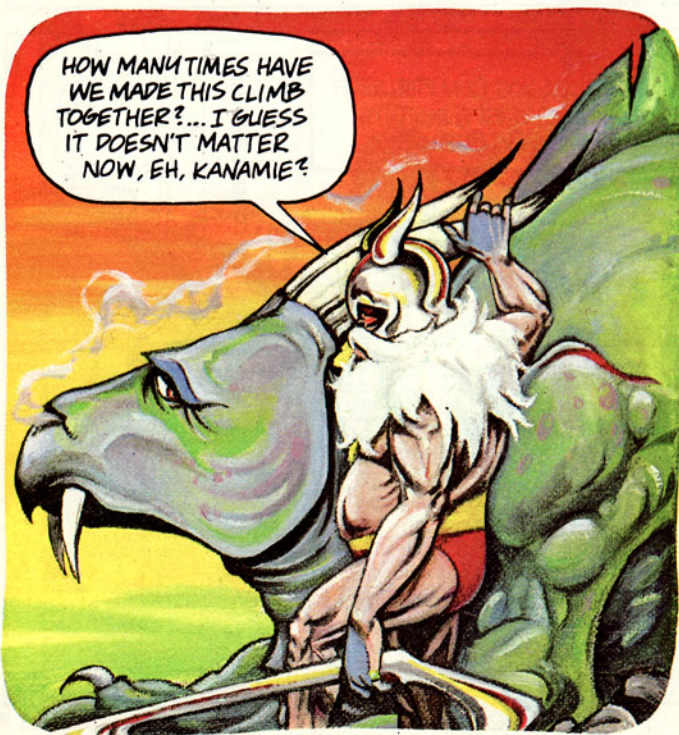
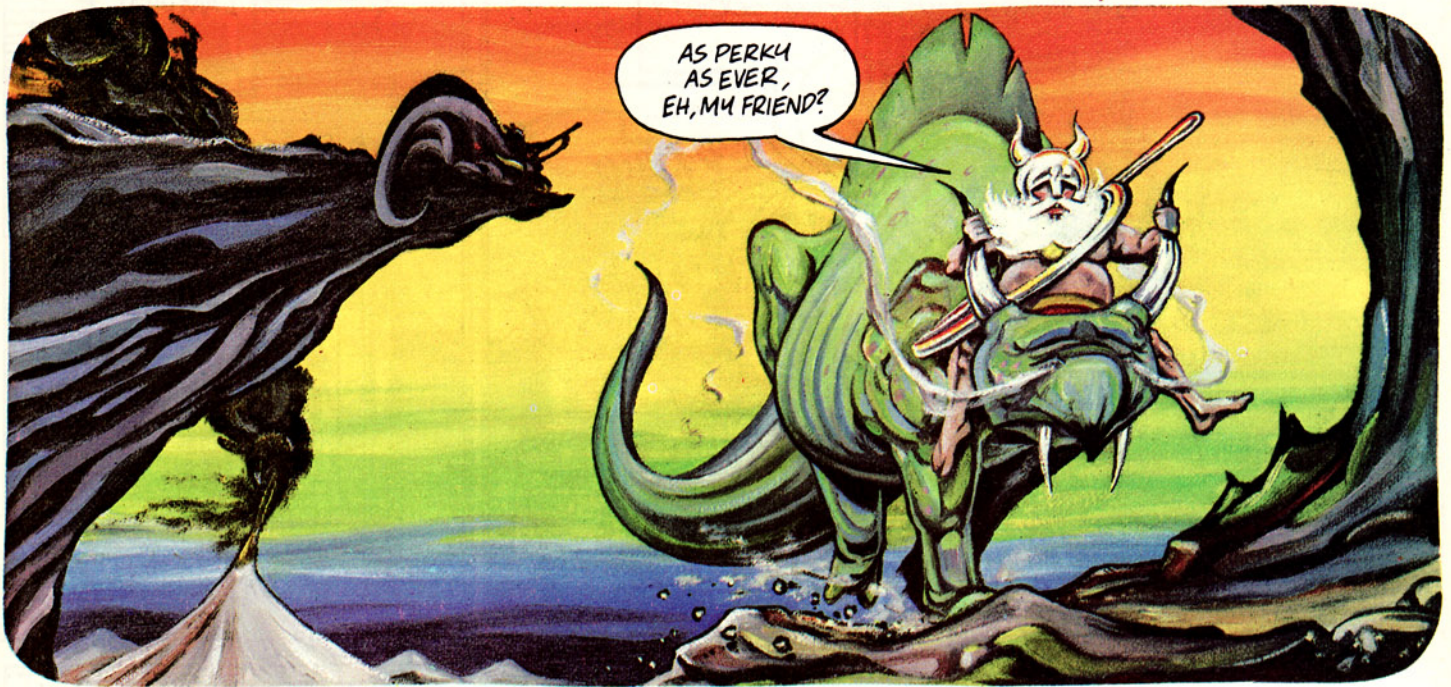







LAST DAY...

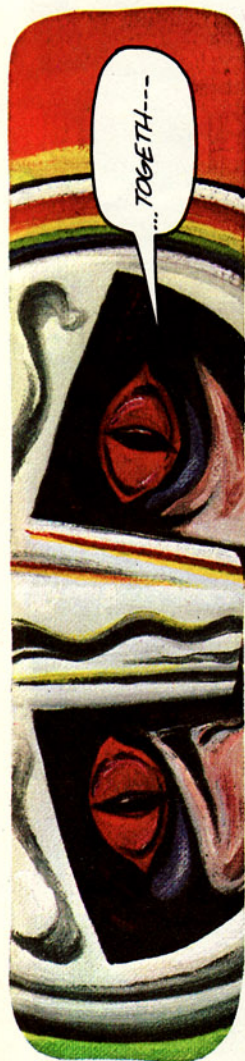
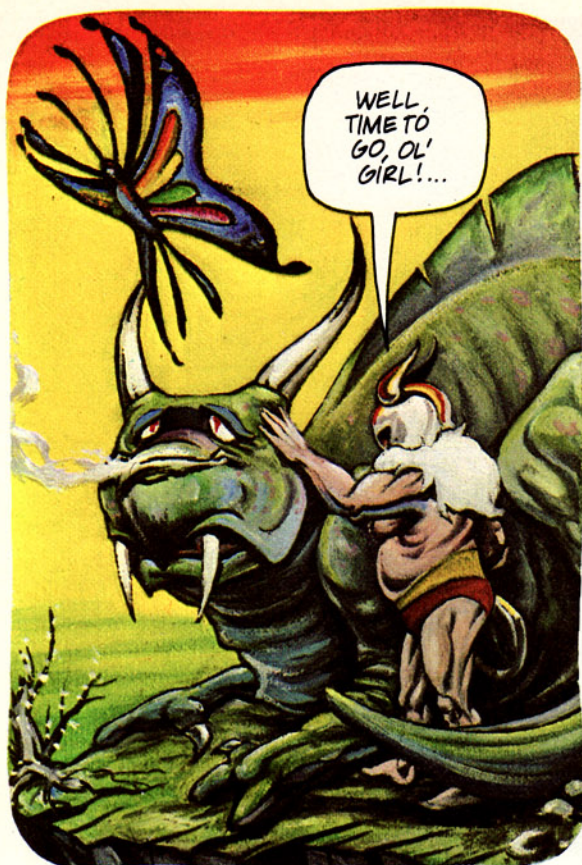
by MANAK





THE WHOLE OF OUR
LIVES SPENT HERE, ON
THE DESOLATE FOURTH
SPHERE OF PRISMA... ON
WATCH FOR THE LEEN
INVADERS -- BUT NOW
OUR SERVICE IS FINISHED,
AND WE MUST...
MUST... PART!

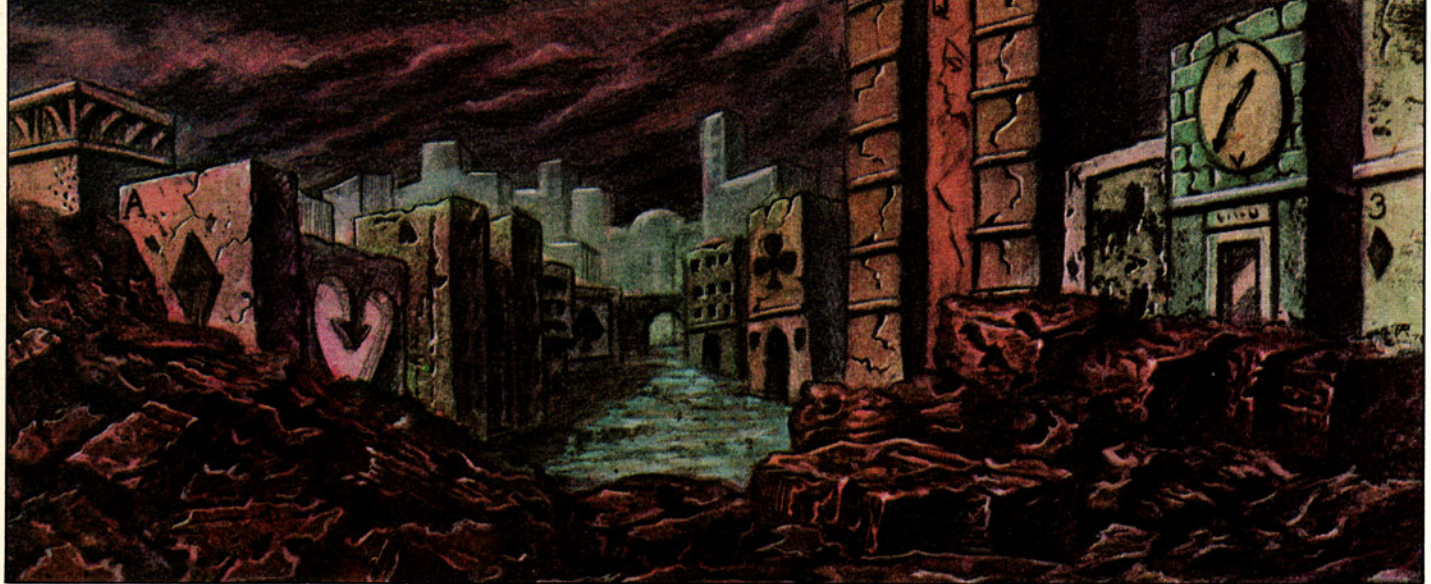
YEERK!...



NIGHT ANGEL

A STORY BY PAUL ABRAMS

LURID, LETHARGIC, UNCHARTED CITY...
CARNIVAL OF UNENDING TIME.



HOOKERS, JUNKIES,
AND OTHER DE-
PRAVED FORMS
ARE THE NORMS
OF THE STREET.

AND THE CITY'S SALVATION SEEMS AL-
WAYS DISTANT AND DIMINISHING.

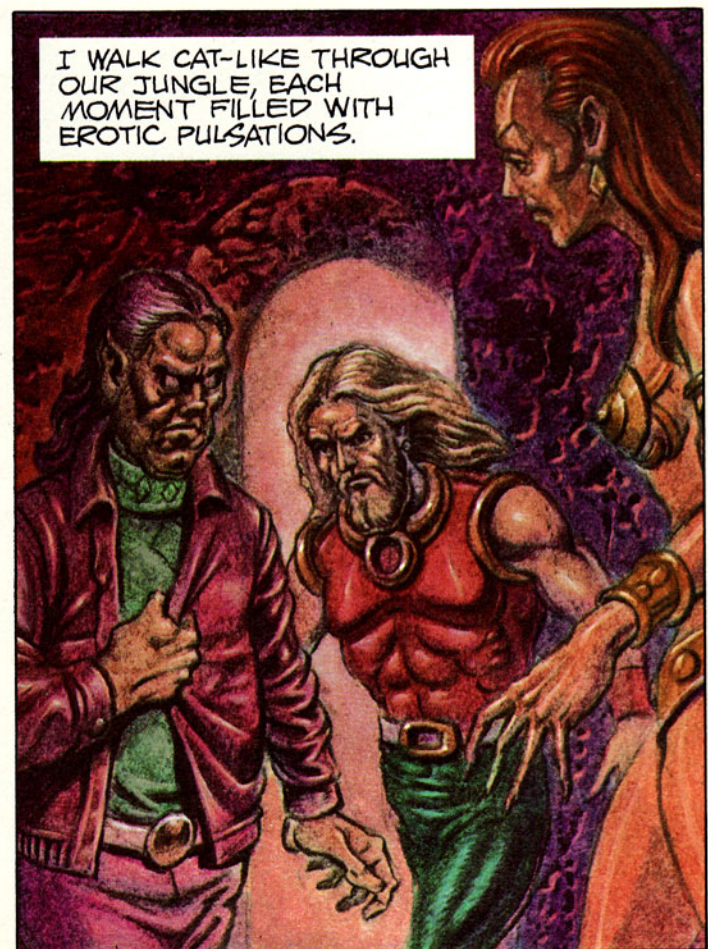




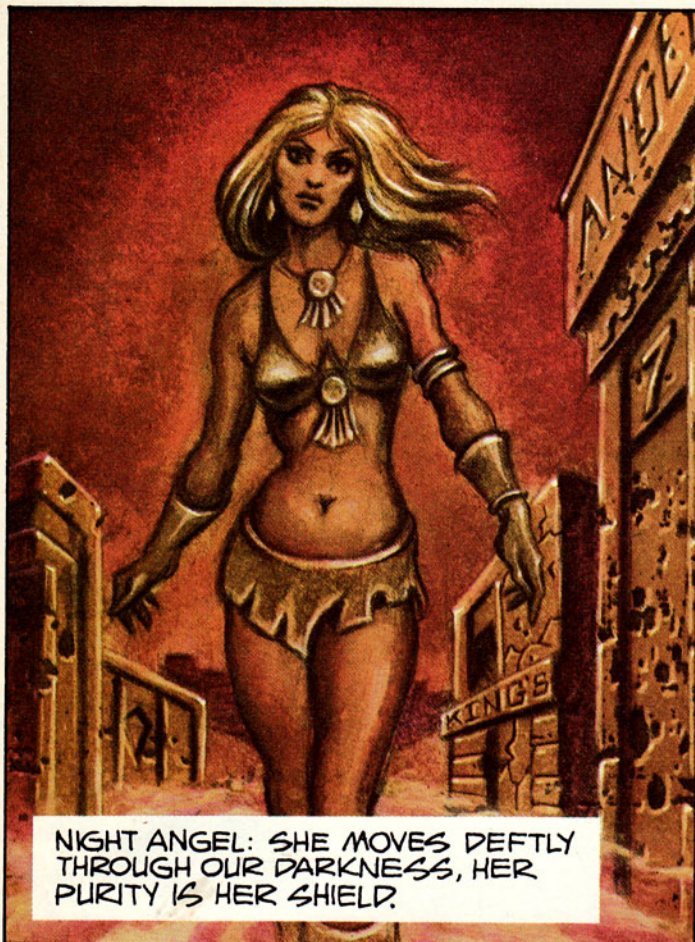
SOMEWHERE A GODDESS IS WATCHING,
AWAITING THE DIVINE SECOND TO
DESCEND UPON OUR FOUL LAND.



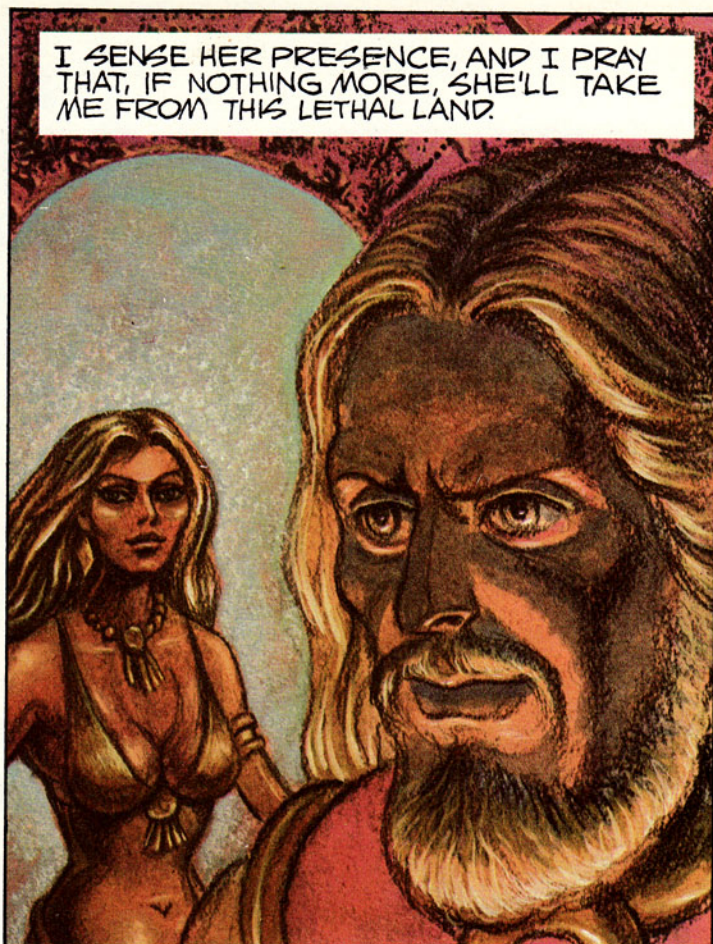
SHE IS SORCERESS, ENCHANTRESS,
FEMALE PROPHET. YET WHAT CAN SHE
BRING US THAT WILL LEAD TO OUR
REDEMPTION?



I WALK CAT-LIKE THROUGH
OUR JUNGLE, EACH
MOMENT FILLED WITH
EROTIC PULSATIONS.



NIGHT ANGEL: SHE MOVES DEFTLY THROUGH OUR DARKNESS, HER PURITY IS HER SHIELD.



I SENSE HER PRESENCE, AND I PRAY THAT, IF NOTHING MORE, SHE'LL TAKE ME FROM THIS LETHAL LAND.

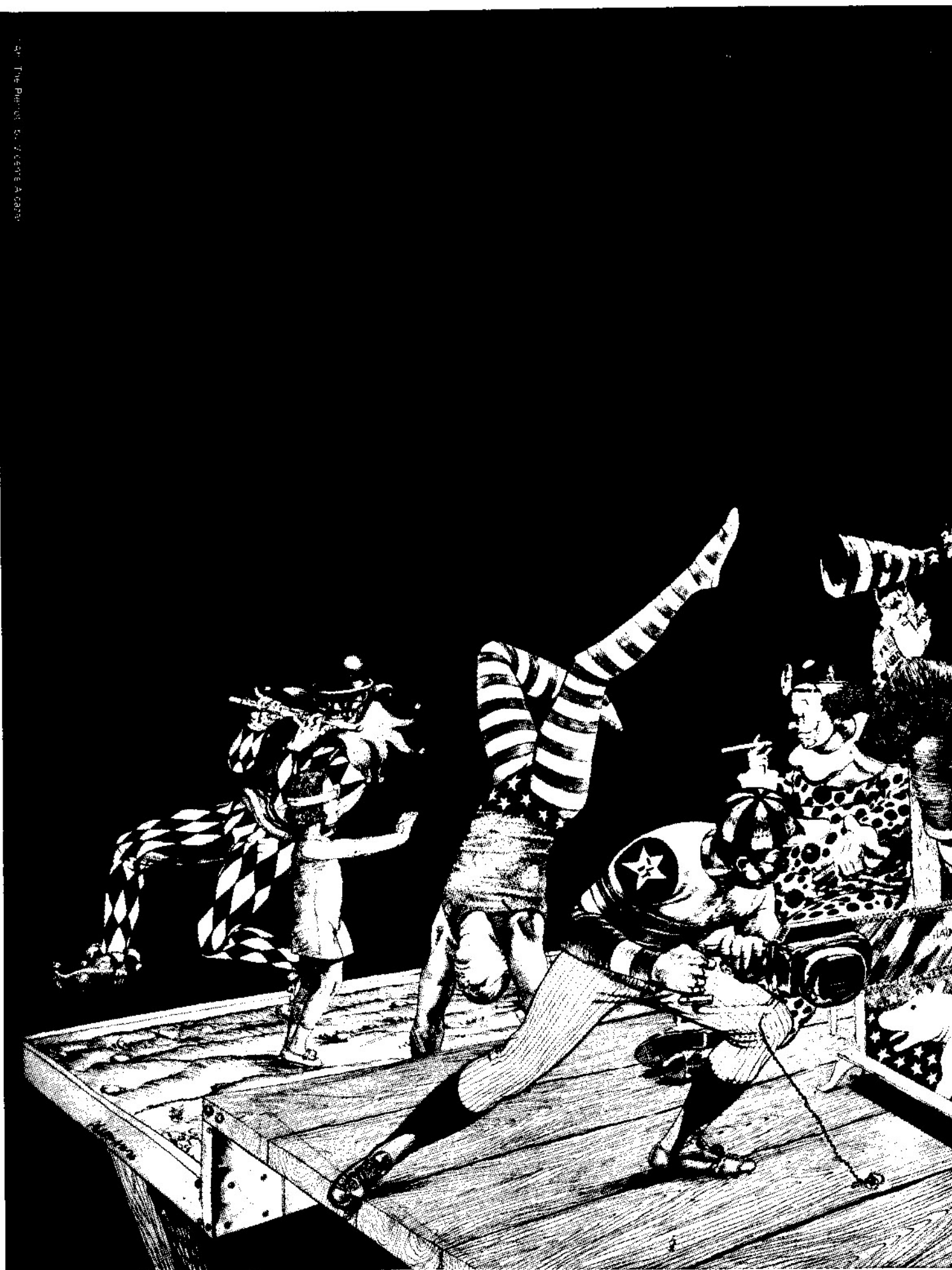


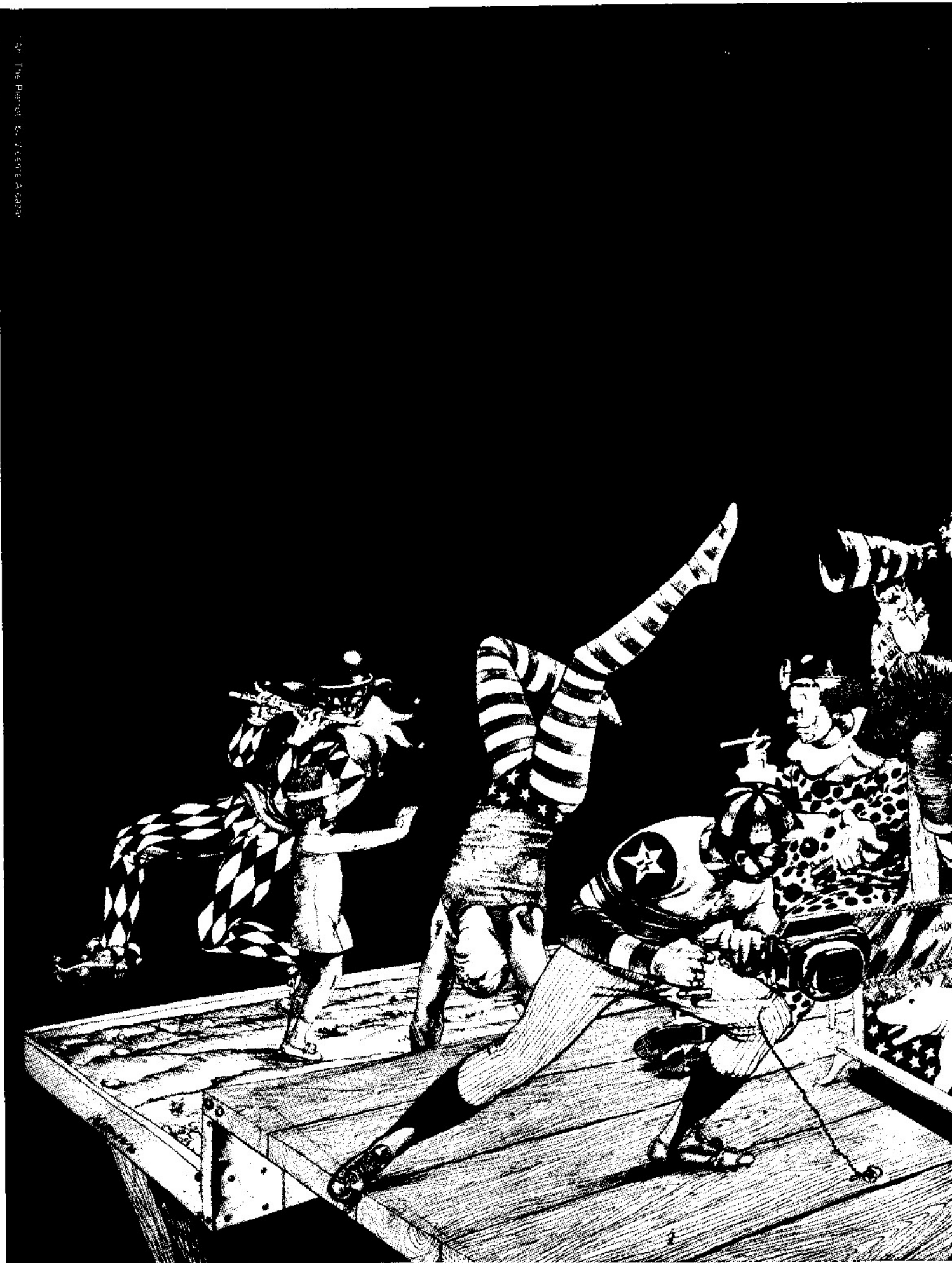
BUT HER INEXPERIENCE IS HER DOWNFALL—HER FATAL FLAW. THE FIRST SIGN OF IT IS EVIDENT....



THERE IS NO MORE INNOCENCE ONCE YOU'VE BEEN TAINTED.

THE
END









IT'S DROZZY INTENSE...
SO AWAY THEY GO...

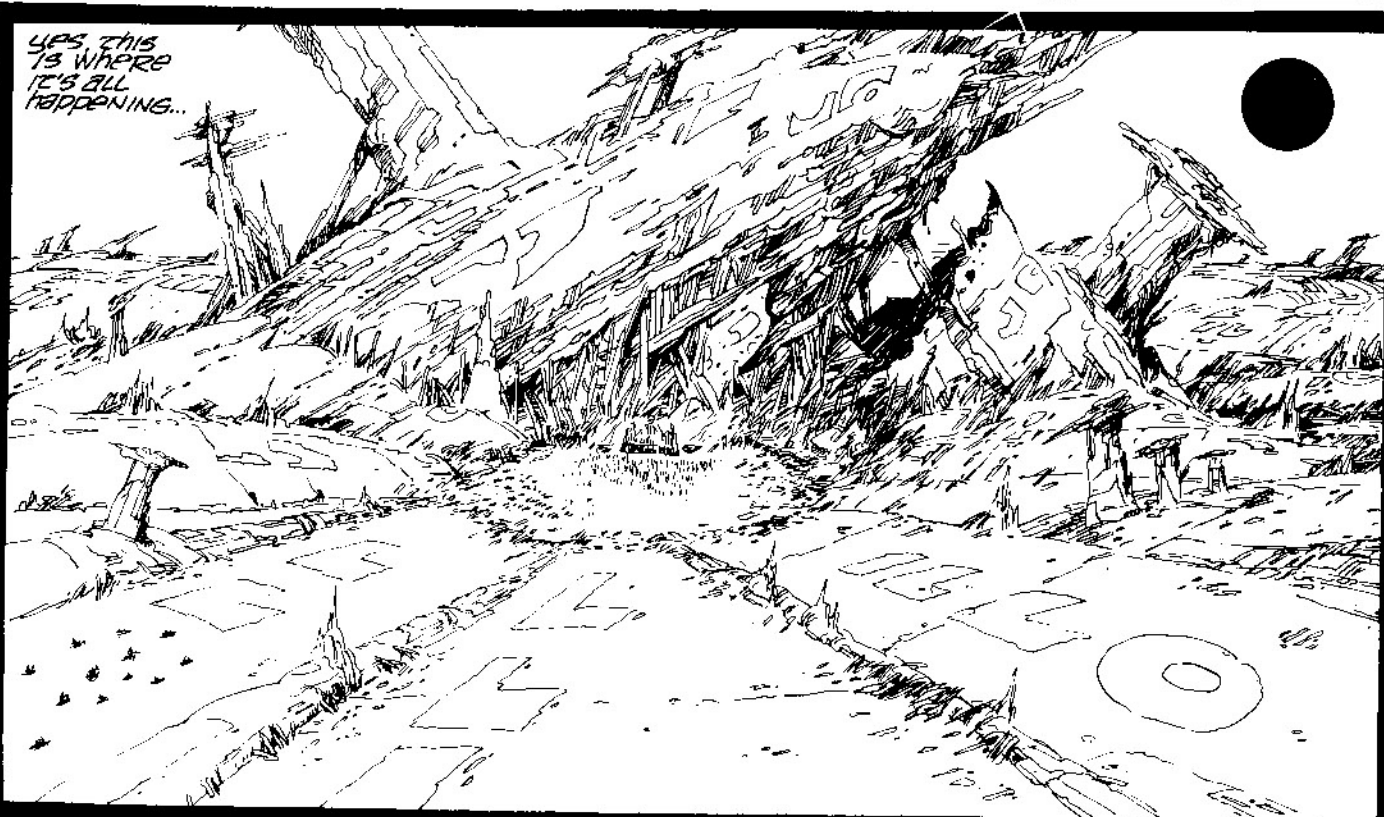


OWOW!!

TONIGHT IT'S ALL
HAPPENING IN
THE GREAT
CARGO
VALLEY...



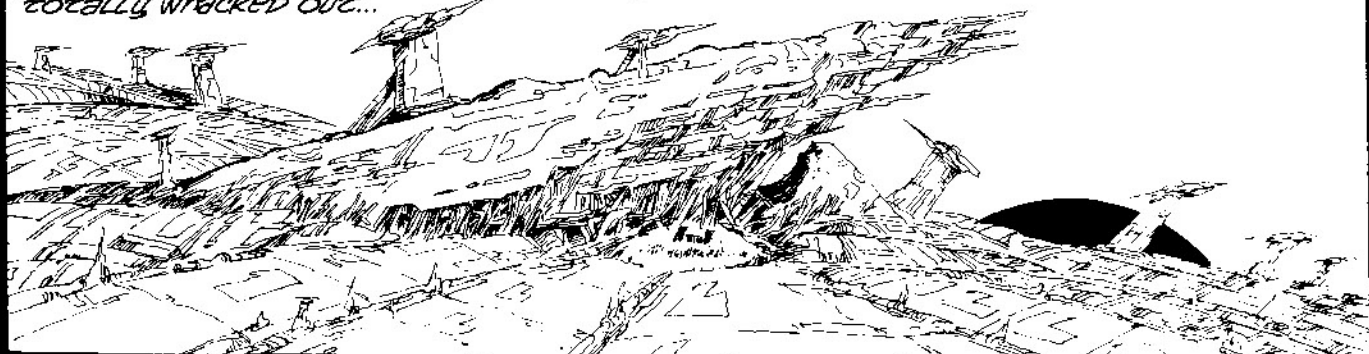
YEP, THIS
IS WHERE
IT'S ALL
HAPPENING...







DOWN BREAK'S OVER THE SCENE OF OUR LITTLE
PARTY. THE DRUMS ARE SILENT NOW... EVERYONE'S
TOTALLY WHACKED OUT...



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