

MARCH 2000
U.S. \$4.95
CAN \$5.95

WPS 36587

HEAVY

THE MATURE ILLUSTRATED
FANTASY MAGAZINE



RETAILER: DISPLAY UNTIL FEBRUARY 20, 2000

03 >



TIM & GREG
HILDEBRANDT

THE BEASTIE BY CAZA

ONE DAY, WHILE
DIGGING A WELL,
THE MAN WHO LIVED
ON THE MOUNTAIN
ACCIDENTALLY AWAK-
ENED THE BEASTIE...

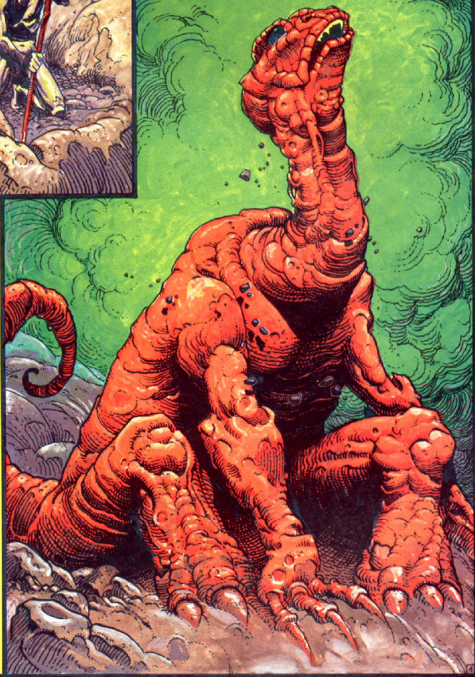
...THAT HAD
BEEN SLEEPING
FOR CENTURIES
IN THE CENTER
OF THE EARTH.

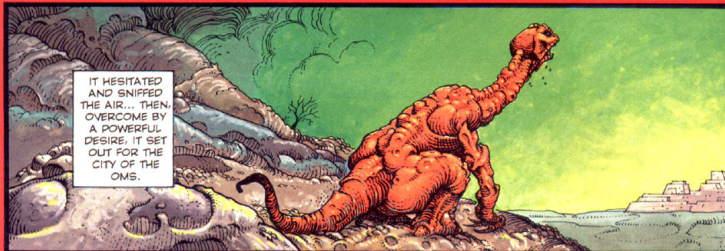
...AND SUDDEN-
LY THE BEASTIE
WAS...

...FREED!



BLINDED BY THE BRILLIANCE OF THE LIGHT ON
THE EARTH'S SURFACE, THE BEASTIE BEGAN
WAILING LIKE A BABY, AS IT SOUGHT FOR A
HALF-FORGOTTEN CRY WITHIN ITS OWN THROAT...





IT HESITATED
AND SNIFFED
THE AIR... THEN,
OVERCOME BY
A POWERFUL
DESIRE, IT SET
OUT FOR THE
CITY OF THE
OMS.

WHEN IT FOUND THE OMS, THE BEASTIE REDISCOVERED ITS PRIMAL SCREAM. IT HOWLED AND CRIED, AND THEN WAS AT PEACE.

AS IT ENTERED THE CITY OF THE OMS,
THE BEASTIE CRIED OUT WITH DESIRE.

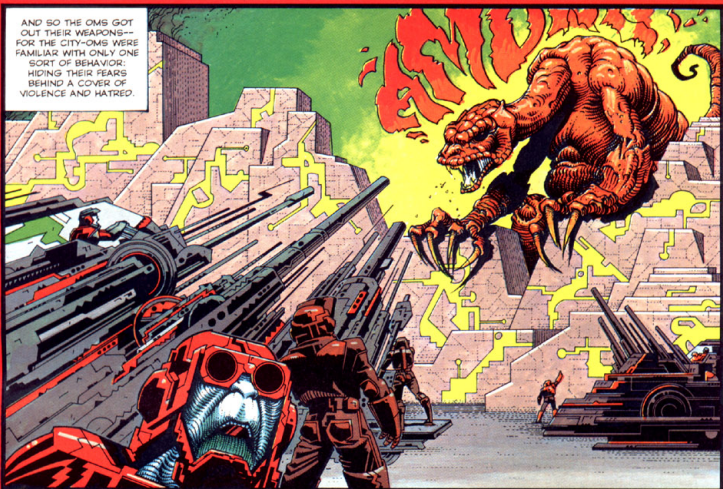
ITS CRY WAS
ONE WORD:
"AMOUR!"

BUT THE
BEASTIE'S CRIES
WERE TOO
LOUD AND ITS
DEMANDS WERE
TOO VAST, AND
THE OMS
COULD NOT
UNDERSTAND
THEM. ALL THEY
COULD HEAR
WAS A LOUD
ROAR, FOR ALL
THEY COULD
UNDERSTAND
WAS FEAR.

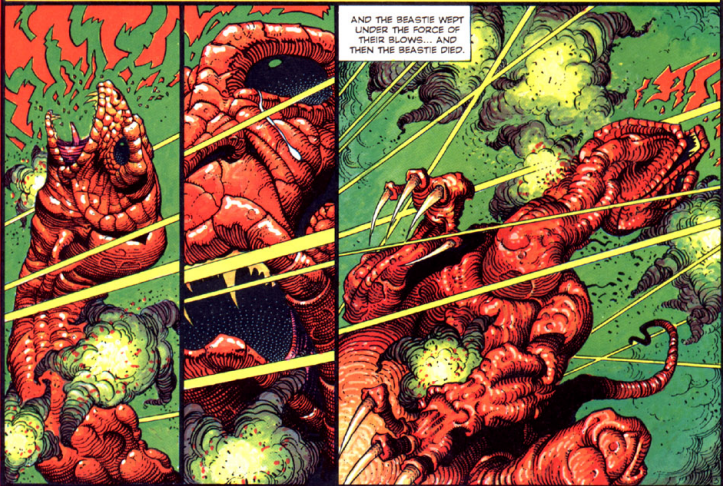
"WHEN MONSTERS SEE
A CREATURE THAT IS
UNLIKE THEMSELVES,
THEY FEEL THAT THEY'VE
SEEN A MONSTER!"

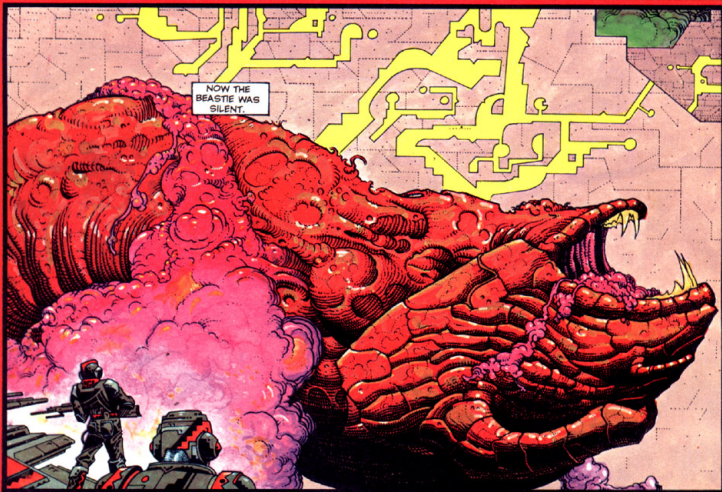


AND SO THE OMS GOT
OUT THEIR WEAPONS--
FOR THE CITY-OMS WERE
FAMILIAR WITH ONLY ONE
SORT OF BEHAVIOR:
HIDING THEIR FEARS
BEHIND A COVER OF
VIOLENCE AND HATRED.



AND THE BEASTIE WEPT
UNDER THE FORCE OF
THEIR BLOWS... AND
THEN THE BEASTIE DIED.

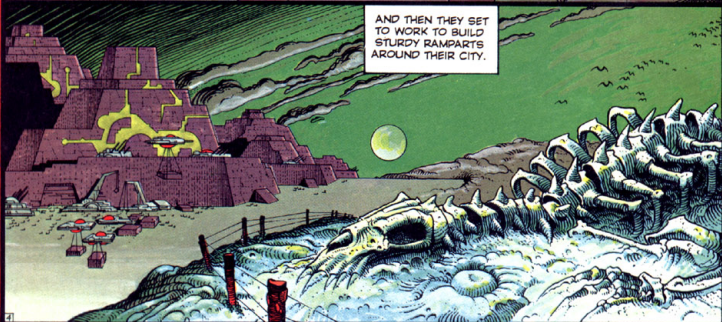





NOW THE
BEASTIE WAS
SILENT.



FREED OF THEIR FEARS, THE
VICTORIOUS OMS LAUGHED AND
CONGRATULATED THEMSELVES.



AND THEN THEY SET
TO WORK TO BUILD
STURDY RAMPARTS
AROUND THEIR CITY.



FAR AWAY, IN THE MOUNTAIN WHERE THE MAN HAD DUG A WELL, IN THE VERY SPOT WHERE THE BEASTIE HAD SLEPT, A WOMAN WAS HERDING HER FLOCK. BECAUSE HER GOATS WERE THIRSTY, SHE PICKED UP THE SPADE AND BEGAN TO DIG DEEPER.



AND THERE, IN THE HEART OF THE EARTH, SHE FOUND THE AMOUR-EGG.

THE AMOUR-EGG OF THE BEASTIE WHO HAD SLEPT FOR SO LONG IN THE EARTH'S HEART... THE BEAST WHO CRIED "AMOUR."



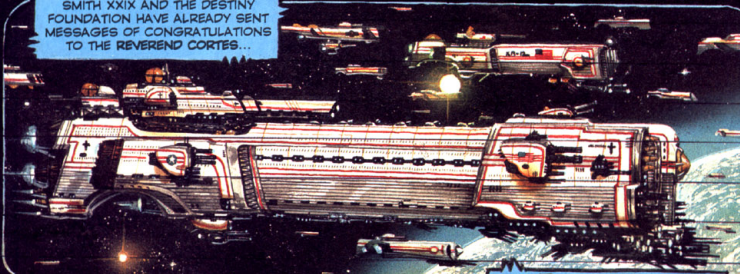
EVER SINCE THAT DAY, SHE'S BEEN BROODING.

STAR QUEST

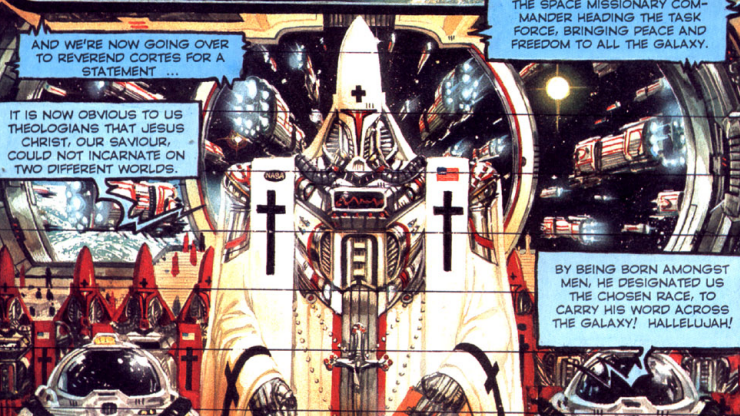
A detailed illustration of a vast fleet of futuristic exploration ships. The central focus is a large, ornate ship with a prominent American flag and the words 'WE MEETIN' and 'NASA' on its front. It is surrounded by hundreds of smaller, similar ships, all flying in formation over a view of Earth from space. The ships have a complex, mechanical design with many protrusions and lights.

THIS IS THE STAR QUEST, LIVE! AFTER A SERIES OF QUANTUM JUMPS, THE EXPLORATION FLEET HAS REACHED AND PLANTED THE FLAG OF EARTH ON A PLANET INHABITED BY ANOTHER INTELLIGENT SPECIES...!

YES... ON THIS MOMENTOUS DAY, WE HAVE CONQUERED THE ULTIMATE FRONTIER AND CAN SAY AT LAST: "WE ARE NOT ALONE!" WE HAVE MADE...
FIRST CONTACT!



THE NEW U.S. PRESIDENT, JOHN SMITH XXIX AND THE DESTINY FOUNDATION HAVE ALREADY SENT MESSAGES OF CONGRATULATIONS TO THE REVEREND CORTES...

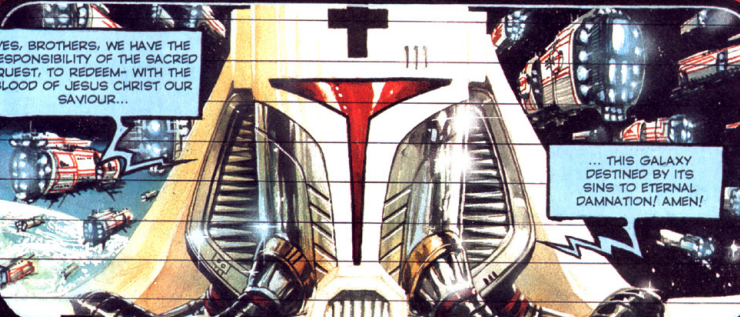


AND WE'RE NOW GOING OVER TO REVEREND CORTES FOR A STATEMENT ...

IT IS NOW OBVIOUS TO US THEOLOGIANS THAT JESUS CHRIST, OUR SAVIOUR, COULD NOT INCARNATE ON TWO DIFFERENT WORLDS.

THE SPACE MISSIONARY COMMANDER HEADING THE TASK FORCE, BRINGING PEACE AND FREEDOM TO ALL THE GALAXY.

BY BEING BORN AMONGST MEN, HE DESIGNATED US THE CHOSEN RACE, TO CARRY HIS WORD ACROSS THE GALAXY! HALLELUJAH!



YES, BROTHERS, WE HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SACRED QUEST, TO REDEEM- WITH THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR...

... THIS GALAXY DESTINED BY ITS SINS TO ETERNAL DAMNATION! AMEN!

ON THE SURFACE, THE FREEDOM
FORCES ARE ALREADY
DISTRIBUTING HOPE...

AND HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT
YOUR PART IN THIS QUEST,
SOLDIER?

I'M JUST HAPPY TO BRING
CIVILIZATION TO THESE
CREATURES... CAN YOU
BELIEVE THEY'VE NEVER
HEARD OF CHEWING GUM
OR TELEVISION?

HOPEFULLY, WE CAN
SHOW THEM A BETTER
WAY OF LIFE...

A HOPE I'M SURE
WE ALL SHARE...
AS WE RETURN YOU
NOW TO THE NEW
EDEN STUDIOS, EARTH.


THANK
YOU,
BUD...

HOME NEWS... AND
WE'VE JUST HEARD THAT
MAX DUFRENE, HEAD OF
THE FOOD CONGLOMER-
ATE HAS BEEN ASSASSI-
NATED....

"BIG MAX" IS THE SECOND
MEMBER OF THE DESTINY
FOUNDATION TO BE
MURDERED IN TWENTY
FOUR HOURS. AS YET, NO
TERRORIST GROUP HAS
CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY.

AND NOW... I THINK
WE CAN GO BACK...
TO TONIGHT'S BIG
GAME... YES?
YES, WE CAN...

THE DWARF BALL FINAL
BETWEEN THE YANKEE
ANGELS FROM
NEW EDEN AND THE
NEUROMANCERS FROM
OTTAWA... THE SCORE:
TIED AT TWO.



WOW! WHAT A BRILLIANT
INTERCEPTION! THE CROWD
IS DELIRIOUS, HERE AT
YANKEE STADIUM!

JUST LISTEN TO THE ANGEL
SUPPORTERS CHANTING, "KILL!
KILL!"... AND THEIR RIVALS
ROARING BACK, "BASTARDS!"

YES! THE ANGELS ARE GIVING
US A FIRST CLASS SHOW
TONIGHT... THE CANADIANS ARE
GONNA GET BLOWN!

CHAPTER 3 BLOOD AND GAMES

LOOK AT THAT, GREY! ALL HIS
TEETH ARE KNOCKED OUT...
HIS MOUTH IS OPENING AND
CLOSING LIKE A FISH... AND
THERE'S SO MUCH GRAVY!

PARDON...?

YOU KNOW- BLOOD!
IT'S POURING OUT
OF HIM!

I'M JUST DRINKING IT ALL IN!
AND HE'S THE NEUROMANCER'S
CAPTAIN AS WELL! EXCELLENT!

I FIND YOUR ENJOYMENT OF
DWARFBALL DISTASTEFUL, OFFALFE.
I SHOULD REMIND YOU THE GAME'S
FUNCTION IS TO KEEP THE MASSES
ENTERTAINED...

NOT TO INDULGE IN
ANIMAL PASSIONS
OURSELVES.

COME OFF IT,
REVEREND...

YOU GET AN EQUAL KICK OUT
OF WATCHING YOUR SINNERS
FRY IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR ON
PRIME TIME TELEVISION!

THANK
YOU.

I CAN ASSURE YOU
I TAKE NO PERSONAL
PLEASURE IN MY WORK...

... JUST A QUIET SATISFACTION
THAT THOSE WHO SURRENDERED
TO THEIR BEAST-LIKE URGES
HAVE BEEN "CLEANSED"...

THE SAME SATISFACTION I
FEEL NOW THAT WE HAVE
COMMENCED CLEANSING
OTHER PLANETS.

WHATEVER GETS YOU
THROUGH THE NIGHT, GREY.
THIS IS WHAT HITS THE SPOT
FOR ME...

LOOK AT THAT
LITTLE FELLA GO!

AND THE CANADIAN
COUNTER-ATTACK HAS
BROKEN ON THE YANKEE
DEFENSE!

THEY'VE LOST THE
DWARFBALL!

THE DWARFBALL HAS LIT
HIS RETROJETS...



PERHAPS, OFFALLE, IF YOU
SPENT MORE TIME ATTENDING
TO YOUR DUTIES, OUR
COLLEAGUES WOULD NOT
HAVE DIED...

HE'S TRYING TO MAKE IT TO
THE NEUTRAL ZONE!



AT THE HANDS OF AN
ENTITY FROM ANOTHER
DIMENSION...

BUT HERE COMES CARLSON,
THE CENTRAL SMASHER...
HE'S SPEEDING TOWARDS HIM!



... WHO THEN ELUDED
CAPTURE OR EXECUTION BY
YOUR POLICE OFFICERS.

HE'S GONNA SHOOT...
YES...?



I TRUST YOU WILL
HAVE MORE SUCCESS
PROTECTING OUR
PRESIDENT WHEN HE BEGINS
HIS OFFICIAL VISIT
TOMORROW...?

GOAL! MAGNIFICENT
ACTION FROM NEW EDEN'S
TOP GLADIATOR!
WHAT A NIGHT!



DON'T CONCERN YOURSELF
ON THAT ACCOUNT...
JOHN SMITH XXIX WILL BE
WEARING AN AMOUR SUIT,
AT ALL TIMES...

THE REFEREE JUST
SIGNALLED FOR A TIME-OUT:
A NEW DWARFBALL IS
NEEDED!



I'M RELIEVED TO HEAR IT...
AFTER ALL, HE IS ONLY
THE 29TH CLONE OF THE
ORIGINAL PRESIDENT...

THE PREVIOUS 28 HAVING MET
VIOLENT DEATHS YOU WERE ALSO
UNABLE TO PREVENT.

THEY'RE ALL PUPPETS.
EXPENDABLE.

WE'RE THE ONLY
ONES THAT MATTER.

WHICH BRINGS US TO
THE SUBJECT OF THIS
MEETING,
GENTLEMEN...

IF YOU WILL TAKE
YOUR PLACES...

WE... SHALL...
BEGIN...

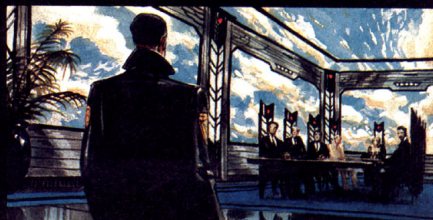
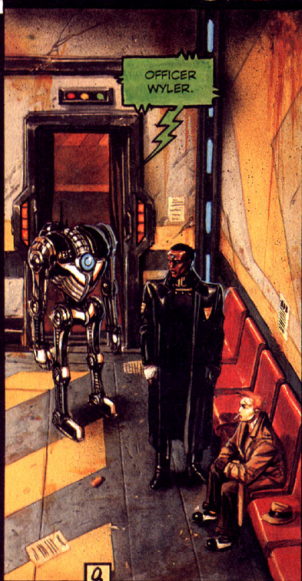
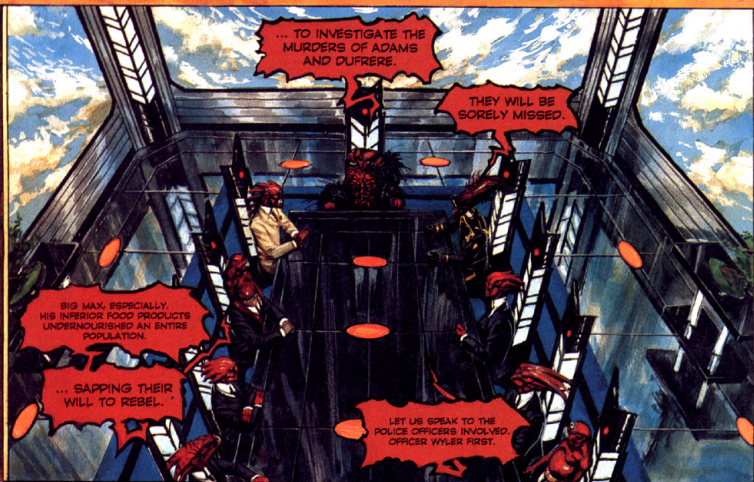
MADAME
MESSONNE...
ARE YOU ALL
RIGHT...?

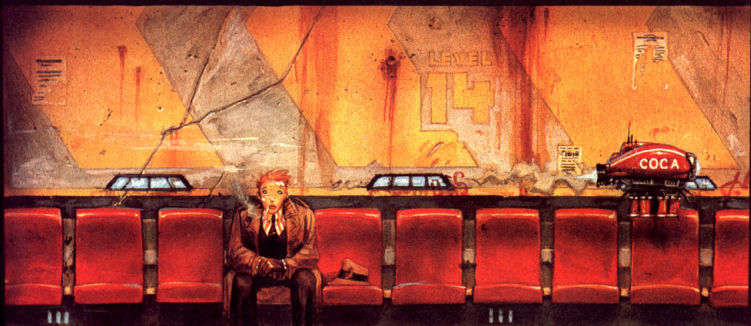
A... A WOMEN'S HEALTH
PROBLEM, REVEREND.
THE PRICE I MUST PAY FOR
INCARNATING IN THIS
OFFENSIVE FEMALE BODY...

BUT IT IS A NECESSARY
DISGUISE...

... IN ORDER TO CARRY
OUT OUR WORK.

AND NOW... TO
BUSINESS, GENTLEMEN...





IF A SPIRIT FROM THE PAST
MAKES CONTACT, THEIR MESSAGE
IS OFTEN FRAGMENTARY...
CONFUSING... OR REPETITIVE...

MOMMY... DADDY... BABY...
MOMMY... DADDY... BABY...
MOMMY... DADDY... BABY...

FOR IT IS THE
EMOTIONS...
THE PAIN...
THAT CROSSES TIME...

I DON'T
UNDERSTAND...

BUT SOMETIMES, IF THE
HURT IS SO BAD, THEN
EVEN TIME IS NO
LONGER A BARRIER...

WHEN THEY BURN A WITCH,
DUFFY... THEY BURN HER
FAMILY AS WELL...

MY MOTHER...
MY FATHER...

MY BABY...

IT... IT WAS TOO SMALL
TO BE TIED TO THE
STAKE... THE BASTARDS
THREW IT ON THE FLAMES

OH, MY
GOD.

BUT WHAT DOES THIS
HAVE TO DO WITH ME...?

WHO ARE
YOU?

WHO ARE...

DUFFY...
DUFFY...

THEY'RE
READY FOR
YOU NOW.

ENTER.

WE HAVE LISTENED
TO YOUR ACCOUNT,
INSPECTOR DUFFY...
AND OFFICER WYLER'S...
WHICH CONFIRMS YOURS
IN EVERY DETAIL...

NEVERTHELESS, DESPITE
BEING ARMED WITH ALL
THE RESOURCES OF THE
N.E.P.D., YOU ALLOWED THIS
ENTITY... THIS UNCLEAN
HELL-HAG TO ESCAPE.

I'M AFRAID OUR
WEAPONS HAD NO
EFFECT ON IT, SIR.

I RECOMMEND THAT SHE IS
RELIEVED OF HER DUTIES
FORTHWITH... PENDING
FURTHER INVESTIGATION
AND POSSIBLE CRIMINAL
PROCEEDINGS...

DECISIONS REGARD-
ING MY OFFICERS
ARE A MATTER FOR
ME ALONE, GREY.

NOT WHEN IT
IMPERILS THE
LIVES OF THE REST
OF US.

YOU ARE OVERLOOKING
HER IMPRESSIVE
RECORD. SHE IS
ONE OF MY BEST
DETECTIVES.



SHE COULDN'T SAVE
BIG MAX, DESPITE HIS
ARMORED CAR.

AND MADAME
MESSONNE IS MORE
EXPOSED AT THE
OPERA.

THAT IS A CHANCE
I'M PREPARED TO
TAKE, REVEREND
GREY...

I FEEL WE
SHOULD SHOW
LENIENCY.

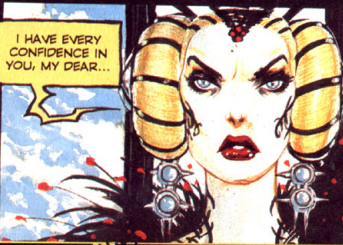
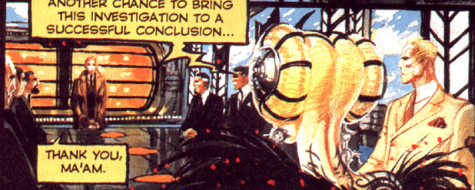
LIEUTENANT DUFFY... HAVING
CONSIDERED THE EVIDENCE, WE
ARE PREPARED TO GIVE YOU
ANOTHER CHANCE TO BRING
THIS INVESTIGATION TO A
SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION...


THANK YOU,
MA'AM.

I HAVE EVERY
CONFIDENCE IN
YOU, MY DEAR...

AND I TRUST YOU
WILL REMEMBER
THAT...

YES,
MA'AM.





DUFFY AND WYLER
REQUISITION AN OLD,
UNMARKED TANK...

AND MAKE THEIR WAY
TOWARDS VENISE B. IN
THE DOWNTOWN AREA...

SO WE'RE OFF
THE HOOK.

FOR
NOW...

... BUT WE MUST
GET TO THE BOTTOM
OF THESE WEIRD
VISIONS.

COME ON UP
TO MY APART-
MENT.

SORRY ABOUT
THE NEIGH-
BORHOOD.

DON'T BE.
MINE'S WORSE.

HERE THE KIDS
JUST IMITATE THE
DWARFBALL
STARS... GOBBLE
ACID... AND STEAL
ROBOTS...

IN MINE, THEY'VE
MOVED ON FROM
CHAINSAWS TO
SUB-MACHINE
GUNS!

I'VE NEVER DONE ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE... I'VE ALWAYS BLOCKED OUT ANY WEIRD FEELINGS...

IT'S EASIER THAN YOU THINK...

YOU SIMPLY BREATHE INTO WHATEVER YOU'RE FEELING... TO MAKE A CONNECTION...

I'M FEELING PRETTY IRRITABLE RIGHT NOW. MY PERIOD'S COMING... OH NO

I LEFT THE WINDOW OPEN...

LET ME JUST GET RID OF IT.

TWO PROGRAMS NOT TO BE MISSED... SATURDAY NIGHT'S REDEMPTION SHOW... FEATURING THE RECENTLY ARRESTED DEVOTEES OF SULFURA, THE QUEEN OF CYBER-PORN...

GET OUT...!
GO ON-
GET OUT!

AS THE SEARCH FOR THE ARCH SINNER CONTINUES, HER EVIL DISCIPLES WILL FACE THE JUSTICE OF YOU, THE AUDIENCE BACK HOME.

AND, TOMORROW NIGHT, MADAM MESSONNE GIVES A LIVE PERFORMANCE OF "SERAPHIM" BEFORE PRESIDENT JOHN SMITH XXIX...

DAMN PARASITES!
SORRY ABOUT THAT.

SHOO!
SCAT!

OKAY... NOW JUST LIE DOWN... AND BREATHE FROM YOUR STOMACH... FOCUS ON THE IRRITATION. SO IT ACTS AS A LINK...



ANY-
THING...?

NOTH-
ING...



WAIT A
MINUTE...
SOMETHING'S
HAPPENING...!

OH, GOD!
SO MUCH
RAGE...! SO
MUCH PAIN...!



A SPEC-
TRE!?

WHO ARE
YOU?

I AM LARA... A WITCH...
THEY CUT OFF MY
BREASTS... BURNT
ME... AND MY FAMILY...



I DIED
CURSING
THOSE
RESPON-
SIBLE...
THE
DUKE...
THE
MONK...

AND
DOMINIQUE-
MY BEST
FRIEND
WHO
BETRAYED
ME.



THAT BITCH!
BITCH!
BITCH!

SHE IS GOING
TO SUFFER
THE MOST!



HEY-
YOU OKAY?

ER... YEAH...
I THINK SO...


WOW! THAT WAS
HEAVY...



SHE POS-
SESSED YOU
THERE,
FOR A MOMENT.

YEAH... BUT WHAT'S
IT MEAN?

WHATEVER HAPPENED
TO THAT POOR GIRL,
IT WAS CENTURIES
AGO!




YOUR IDEA OF TIME
IS RIDICULOUS.
THERE IS NO PAST
OR PRESENT.

WE LIVE JUST
ONE LIFE.




YOU?

LARA REACHED OUT
ACROSS TIME TO
SPEAK TO YOU.
DON'T DENY HER
NOW.



LET'S TAKE HER!




YOUR EFFORTS
ARE POINTLESS...

I AM SHA- THE
SHADOW ONE...

SHIT!

YOU'VE BEEN A DOR-
MOUSE, CURLED UP
YOUR NEST, SAFE FROM
THE REAL WORLD.

NOW IT'S TIME TO
WAKE UP, MY DEAR,
AND FACE ETERNITY.



I WAS SUMMONED
BY LARA TO AVENGE
HER DEATH...

AND NO MORTAL
MAY STOP ME...

I HAVE THREE
LIVES TO TAKE...
FOR LARA'S MOTH-
ER... FATHER...
AND BABY...

SO THREE CIRCLES
MAY BECOME PART
OF THE GREAT
CIRCLE AGAIN...

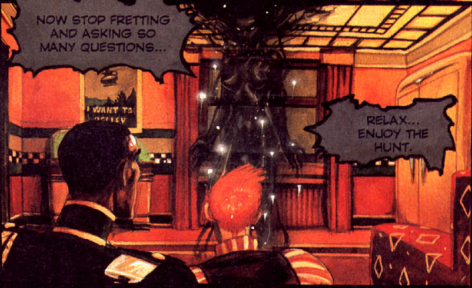
THREE LIVES...
ADAMS... DUFRERE...
AND ANOTHER MEMBER
OF THE DESTINY
FOUNDATION...P



AND THEN IT'S
OVER...P
FINISHED...P




NO.



NOW STOP FRETTER
AND ASKING SO
MANY QUESTIONS...

RELAX...
ENJOY THE
HUNT.



LAUGH AT THE POETRY
OF REVENGE.
LAUGH AT THEIR
TERROR AND FEAR
OF PAIN. LAUGH AT
THE JOKE OF IT ALL.
THE JOY OF LIFE.
THE JAWS OF DEATH.

UNTIL THAT COLD
MOMENT WHEN THE
LAUGHTER HAS TO STOP.

NEW EDEN'S HIGH SOCIETY
HURRIED TO THE NEPTUNUNS
BUILDING. NOBODY WOULD HAVE
MISSED MADAM MESSONNE IN
HER MOST FAMOUS OPERA,
SERAPHIM.

THE GUEST OF HONOR WAS
NONE OTHER THAN PRESIDENT
JOHN SMITH XXIX. THE FIRE
28 JOHN SMITHS HAVING
VARIOUS FORMS OF VIOLEN
DEATH, THE NEPD HAD
DISPATCHED ITS ELITE UNITS

GOOD. TAKE FIVE
MEN AND COVER
THE NORTH
ENTRANCE.

OKAY... ALL UNITS
ARE IN POSITION...

IF THIS... SHE MAKES
A MOVE ON MADAM
MESSONNE, WE'VE
GOT HER.

WHAT ABOUT
THE PRESI-
DENT?

I DON'T THINK ANY-
THING WILL GET NEAR
THE PRESIDENT!

DESPITE THE BOMB
THREAT FROM
SULFURA... THE USUAL
STUFF...

DEMANDING WE RELEASE
THE PRISONERS BEFORE THE
REDEMPTION SHOW?

NATURALLY... OUR SNIFFER
ROBOTS HAVEN'T TURNED UP
ANYTHING. THE OPERA HOUSE
IS CLEAN...

BUT WE'D BETTER HAVE
ONE MORE LOOK
AROUND INSIDE...

MAYBE...

AND WHAT'S THAT
SUPPOSED TO MEAN,
WYLER?

STOP TRYING TO
CONTROL EVERYTHING,
DUFFY...

YOU HEARD WHAT SHA
SAID... SOMEHOW WE'RE
INVOLVED IN A GAME OF
FATE THAT'S BEYOND
OUR CONTROL.

SOMETIMES...
ALL YOU CAN DO IS
LET GO... LET EVENTS
TAKE THEIR COURSE.

THE WORLD'S A
STAGE AND WE'RE
JUST ACTORS ON
IT...

OKAY... OKAY...
I KNOW I'M A
CONTROL FREAK...

DON'T TAKE IT ALL TOO
SERIOUSLY... REMEMBER
SHAKESPEARE'S ADVICE...

AND I'VE GOT
TO ADMIT... THE
SCENERY IS CREAK-
ING RIGHT NOW...

BUT IT'S STILL MY
STAGE. MY ROLE.
MY JOB.

THIS JOB IS ALL
I'VE GOT.

MAYBE IT'S ALL
I AM.

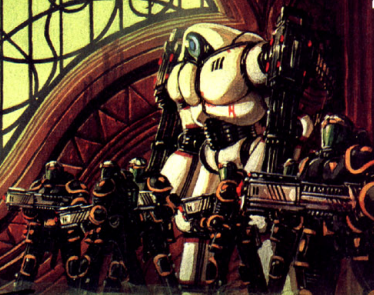
AND IF I LET GO
OF IT...

THERE'S NOTHING
LEFT FOR ME...

... BUT SCREAM-
ING MADNESS.



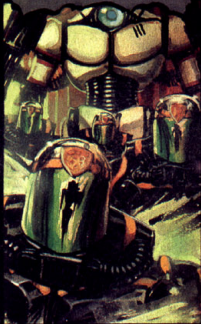
MEANWHILE, AT THE
NORTH ENTRANCE...



I COULD PASS
UNSEEN AMONGST
THEM...



A SIMPLE SPELL WOULD
SUFFICE... A MIST OF
INVINCIBILITY...




BUT I WANT HER TO
KNOW I'M COMING
FOR HER...



SO SHE CAN FEEL
THE ANTICIPATION OF
PAIN... THE TERROR
THAT SHE ONCE
INFLECTED...



...SO BALANCE
MAY BE
RESTORED.



AND... I PREFER
THIS WAY...

IT'S TOTALLY
UNNECESSARY...

PURE
INDULGENCE...

COMPLETELY
GRATUITOUS...


AND IT FEELS...

STAGE
ENTRANCE

... SO
GOOD

WHEN WE ARE BORN, WE CRY THAT WE COME
TO THIS GREAT STAGE OF FOOLS.

SHAKESPEARE, KING LEAR



LET US WELCOME THE
FIRST AND THE LAST. THE
HONORED ONE AND THE
SCORNFUL ONE.

CHAPTER 4 INFERNO

THE WHORE AND THE HOLY
ONE. THE WIFE AND THE
VIRGIN. THE FRUITFUL AND
THE BARREN ONE.

THE MOTHER OF MY FATHER,
THE SISTER OF MY
HUSBAND.

THE IDEA WHOSE
REMEMBRANCE IS FREQUENT,
THE WORD WHOSE
APPEARANCE IS MULTIPLE.

SHE IS KNOWLEDGE, SHE IS
IGNORANCE, SHE IS SHAME,
SHE IS BOLDNESS.

MADAME
MESSONNE...

I'M AFRAID
NOT.

WHY?

WHAT IS IT, LIEU-
TENANT?
I'M ABOUT TO GO ON.


WE HAVE A...
SECURITY
PROBLEM.

FOUR OF MY MEN ARE DEAD...
WE BELIEVE THE ASSASSIN IS IN
THE OPERA HOUSE.



NO!

A close-up of Madame Messonne, a woman with large, ornate, owl-like ears and a feathered headdress. She has a shocked expression with wide eyes and an open mouth. She is wearing a dark, corset-like dress with intricate patterns.




SO YOU UNDERSTAND
WE MUST CANCEL THIS
PERFORMANCE... FOR
YOUR OWN SAFETY...

A man in a dark suit and hat is speaking to Madame Messonne. She is sitting on a large, ornate chair, looking away from him with a defiant expression. The room has red curtains and a large, ornate fireplace.


NO!
GET AWAY
FROM ME...!

SHE IS SHAMELESS...
AND ASHAMED...



MADAME MESSONNE...
IF YOU GO OUT THERE,
YOU COULD BE KILLED!


The man in the hat is standing and speaking to Madame Messonne, who is sitting on the ornate chair. He has a concerned expression. The background shows the same room with red curtains and a fireplace.



SHE IS STRENGTH...
SHE IS FEAR...


Madame Messonne is standing, looking towards the viewer. She is wearing the same dark, corset-like dress and feathered headdress. The background shows the same room with red curtains and a fireplace.

DO YOU FIND THIS
AMUSING? HAVEN'T YOU
DONE ENOUGH...? HOW
MUCH LONGER ARE YOU
GOING TO TORTURE ME?




SHE IS...
DIVINE PERFECTION!

A large crowd of people, many wearing elaborate costumes and masks, are gathered in a grand hall. The hall has high ceilings, large columns, and a large, ornate chandelier. The crowd is looking towards the center of the hall, where a large, ornate structure is visible.




GIVE HEED TO ME!
I AM THE ONE WHO IS
DISGRACED AND THE
GREAT ONE!

I AM SHE WHO DOES
NOT KEEP FESTIVAL,
AND I AM SHE WHOSE
FESTIVALS ARE MANY!



I AM THE WISDOM OF THE
GREEKS, AND THE KNOW-
LEDGE OF THE BARBARIANS!




WHAT WAS ALL THAT
ABOUT? WHY WAS
SHE AFRAID OF ME?


AS IF SHE'D
SEEN A
GHOST...



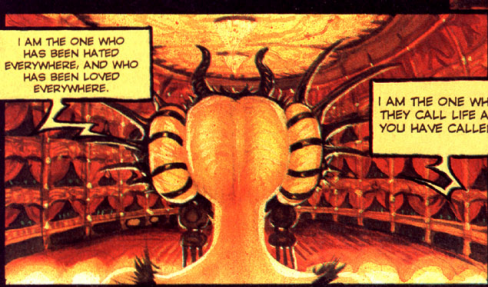
I AM THE ONE WHOSE
IMAGE IS GREAT IN
EGYPT...



AND THE ONE WHO
HAS NO IMAGE
AMONG THE
BARBARIANS.



YOU SING OF THE GODDESS,
MADAM, BUT IT'S A MOCK-
ERY... AS YOU MOCKED HER
WHEN YOU BETRAYED LARA.



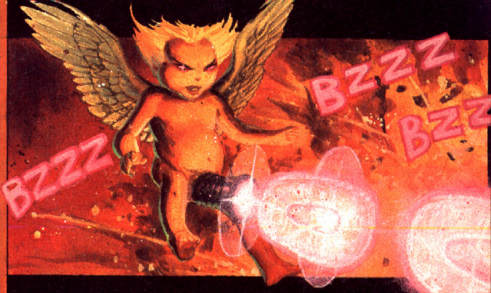
I AM THE ONE WHO
HAS BEEN HATED
EVERYWHERE, AND WHO
HAS BEEN LOVED
EVERYWHERE.

I AM THE ONE WHOM
THEY CALL LIFE AND
YOU HAVE CALLED...

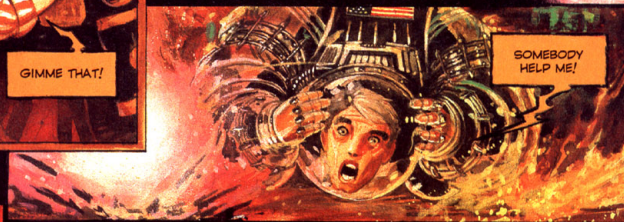


WHERE THE
HELL ARE HIS
CYBERGUARDS?

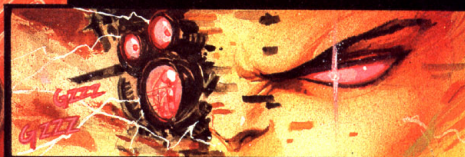
GIMME THAT!



SOMEBODY
HELP ME!



STAY DOWN,
MR. PRESIDENT!



IT'S FLYING
AWAY!

ATTENTION
DUFFY!

WE COULDN'T
RISK A HIGH
EXPLOSION IN
THERE...

BUT
NOW...!

KAL-TOW



OH, SHIT!

WHAT IS IT?

PROPERTY OF THE
NEPO... TYPICAL!
BLOODY TYPICAL...!

OUR OWN SIDE SENT IN A
ROBOT TO KILL THE PRES-
IDENT... SO THEY CAN BLAME
IT ON SULFURA OR ONE OF
THE OTHER TERRORIST
GROUPS... AND JUSTIFY
MARTIAL LAW...

WHY DID WE
TAKE THIS JOB,
DUFFY?



I DON'T KNOW...
BUT LET'S FINISH
IT...

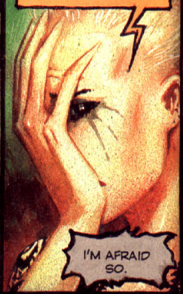
...LET'S FIND
SHA.



DID YOU
COME TO KILL
ME?



THAT WOULD BE
DOING ME A FAVOR,
WOULDN'T IT?



I'M AFRAID
SO.



THE HOSPITAL
CONFIRMED IT... A
DOUBLE MASTECTOMY.
I HAVE TO GO IN
TOMORROW... AND
EVEN THEN... THE
CHANCES AREN'T
GOOD...

I'M
SORRY.



I'M SCARED...
SO SCARED...



SO WAS SHE...
WHEN THEY CUT OFF
HER BREASTS...

SHE WAS ONLY
SIXTEEN...



SHE DOESN'T KNOW
YET THAT I WAS
DOMINIQUE...P



I COULD SEE IT
IN HER FACE...

SHE HAS NO IDEA
WHAT'S REALLY
GOING ON...

BUT SHE'S START-
ING TO REALIZE...
I'M BREAKING IT TO
HER AS GENTLY AS
I CAN.



I HOPED THAT,
BY SAVING HER FROM
DISMISSAL... OR
WORSE... BY AN ACT
OF MERCY...

SHE MIGHT FOR-
GIVE ME...P SHE
MIGHT LIFT HER
CURSE...P



I'M SORRY...
WITCHES NEVER
FORGIVE.

WE ALWAYS MEAN
WHAT WE SAY.

BUT WITCHES
ARE ALSO
MEANT TO
BETRAY!



BUT NEVER THEIR BEST
FRIENDS. NEVER
WITHIN THE CIRCLE.

THAT'S WHY THE
WORST PUNISHMENT
WAS RESERVED
FOR YOU...



MUTILATION.

REFLECT ON IT, AS YOU
FACE A SLOW... LINGER-
ING... PAINFUL DEATH...





A DEATH FROM WHICH SHE
CANNOT ESCAPE... THE
DEMON WITHIN HER IS
TRAPPED IN THE FLESH...



YET I FEEL PITY
FOR HER AS A
WOMAN...

BUT HOW LITTLE
SHE UNDERSTANDS
THE BODY SHE
INHABITS...



NO WOMAN TRULY
FORGIVES...



WE STORE OUR PAIN
AWAY, DEEP IN OUR
MEMORY... IN OUR
HEARTS...



UNTIL THE
OPPORTUNITY
ARISES FOR
VENGEANCE...



WE WANT BLOOD FROM
THOSE WE HAVE LOVED
BUT WHO HURT US.

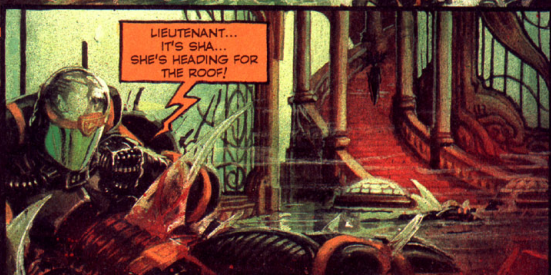


WE HAVE A HIDDEN
DESIRE TO INFLICT
PAIN...

THAT COMES
FROM THE GREAT
MOTHER HERSELF

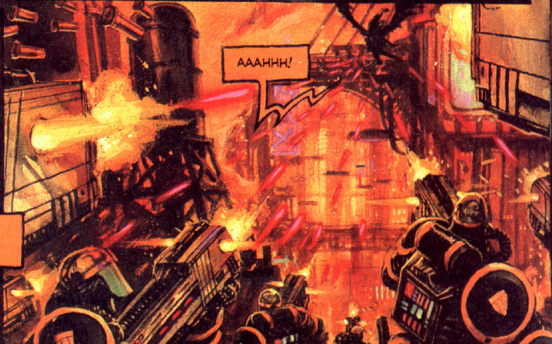


IT IS OUR SECRET AND
MOST HOLY RITE...

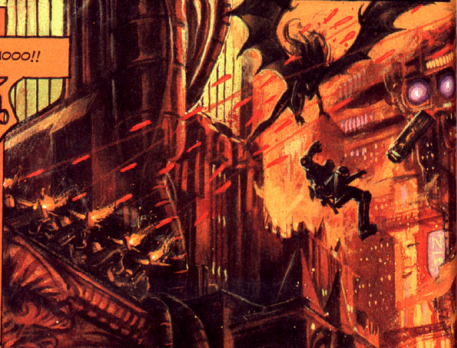
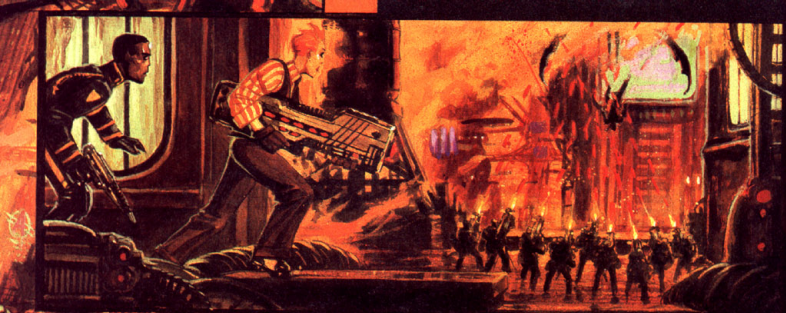


LIEUTENANT...
IT'S SHA...
SHE'S HEADING FOR
THE ROOF!

SHE IS ON THE
ROOF. DON'T LET
HER ESCAPE.
SHOOT TO KILL.

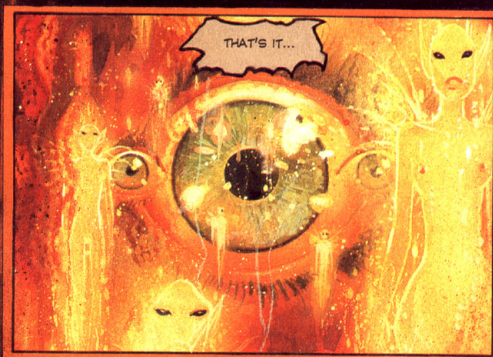


NOOO!
HAVE
MERCY!





NOW, DUFFY... AS YOUR WEAPONS
LIGHT THE SKY... THINK BACK TO THE
LAST TIME YOU SAW SUCH LIGHTS...



THAT'S IT...

AS THE GUARDS
ESCORT YOU ALONG
THE RIVER BANK... YOUR
ELEMENTAL FRIENDS SOAR
OVERHEAD...


YOU TALK TO THEM
EVERY DAY... THEY'VE
COME TO ESCORT YOU
INTO THE OTHER WORLD.



THEN... AS YOU
PASS A BEND IN
THE RIVER...
YOU SEE IT...



THE STAKE!




NO! IT'S TOO HORRIBLE!
IT'S TOO HORRIBLE!




IT'S WHAT
HAPPENED.

WHY ARE YOU
DOING THIS TO ME?
IT'S NOT REAL!
IT'S A DELUSION!



IT'S WHY YOU CHOSE
TO COME BACK AS A
LAW OFFICER...
BECAUSE OF
SUFFERING SUCH
INJUSTICE.



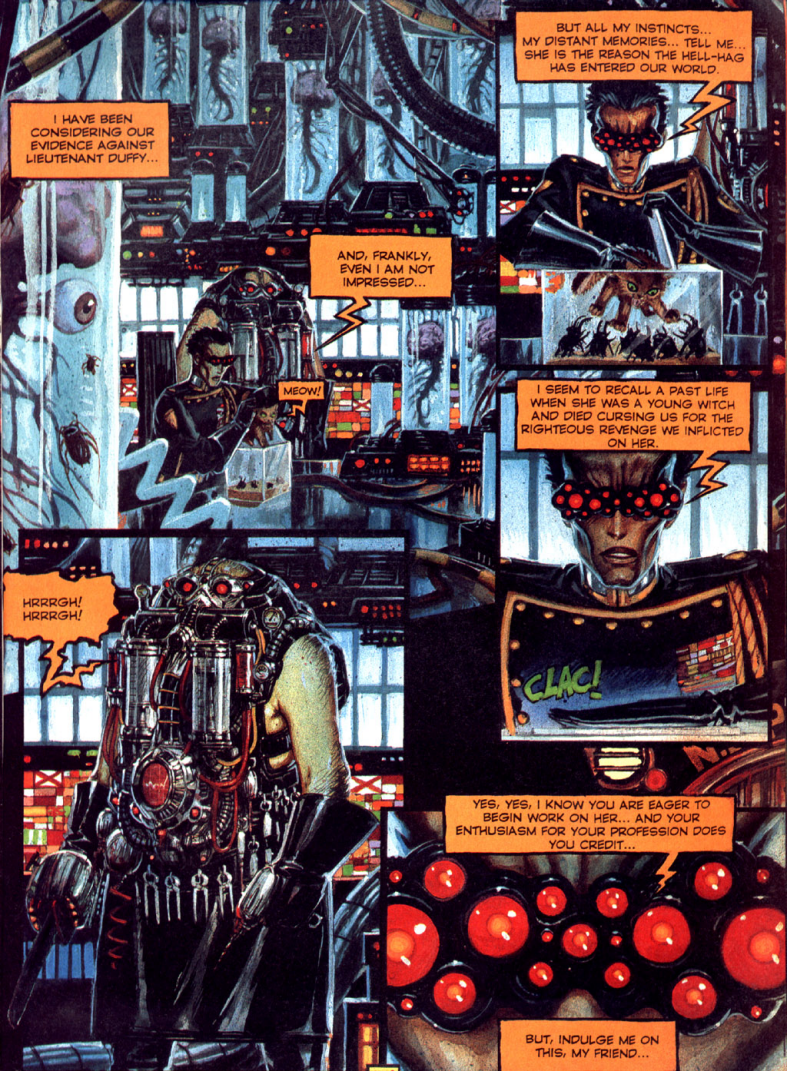
WE ONLY HAVE ONE
LIFE, DUFFY...
WHICH FLOWS LIKE
A RIVER THROUGH
ETERNITY...

LARA:

EACH NEW BODY
WE TAKE IS SIMPLY
A NEW DIRECTION
FOR US...

THAT WASN'T MY
LIFE! SHE'S NOT ME!
SHE'S NOT ME!

ANOTHER BEND
IN THE RIVER...



I HAVE BEEN
CONSIDERING OUR
EVIDENCE AGAINST
LIEUTENANT DUFFY...

AND, FRANKLY,
EVEN I AM NOT
IMPRESSED...

MEOW!

HRRRGH!
HRRRGH!

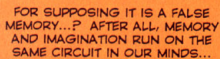
BUT ALL MY INSTINCTS...
MY DISTANT MEMORIES... TELL ME...
SHE IS THE REASON THE HELL-HAG
HAS ENTERED OUR WORLD.

I SEEM TO RECALL A PAST LIFE
WHEN SHE WAS A YOUNG WITCH
AND DIED CURSING US FOR THE
RIGHTEOUS REVENGE WE INFLICTED
ON HER.

CLAC!

YES, YES, I KNOW YOU ARE EAGER TO
BEGIN WORK ON HER... AND YOUR
ENTHUSIASM FOR YOUR PROFESSION DOES
YOU CREDIT...

BUT, INDULGE ME ON
THIS, MY FRIEND...



FOR SUPPOSED IT IS A FALSE
MEMORY...? AFTER ALL, MEMORY
AND IMAGINATION RUN ON THE
SAME CIRCUIT IN OUR MINDS...

SUPPOSING I AM
UNFAIRLY ACCUS-
ING ONE OF MY
BRIGHTEST YOUNG
OFFICERS...?

HOW COULD I LIVE WITH THE
GUILT? KNOWING I HAD
SUBJECTED A BEAUTIFUL
WOMAN TO THE MOST
DISGUSTING... THE MOST
DEGRADING TORTURES...

WHEN, ALL THE
TIME... SHE WAS...
INNOCENT?

IT WOULD BE
TERRIBLE...
A TRAGEDY...

HRRRGH?

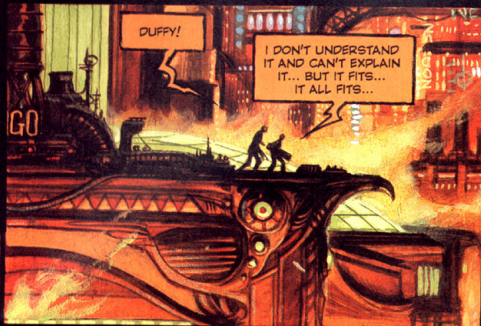
I... I COULD
NEVER FORGIVE
MYSELF.

HAAA! HAAA!
HAAA!

HRRRGH!
HRRRGH!
HRRRGH!

THIS IS POLICE CHIEF
OFFALLE TO SPECIAL
STRIKE SQUAD...

ARREST
LIEUTENANT DUFFY!



DUFFY!

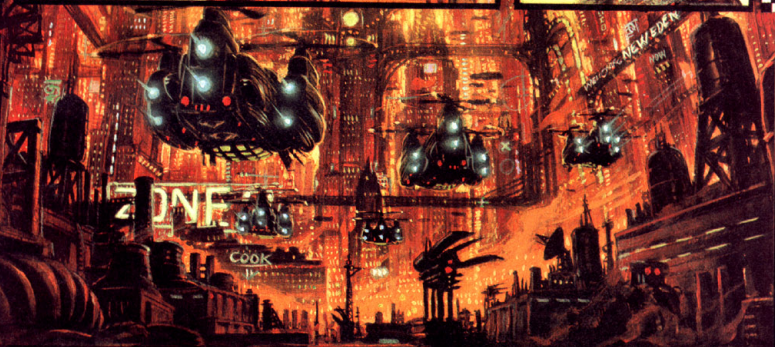
I DON'T UNDERSTAND
IT AND CAN'T EXPLAIN
IT... BUT IT FITS...
IT ALL FITS...



AT LEAST YOU
KNOW NOW...

YOU
KNEW?

I GUESSED...



IT'S TRIGGERING LOTS OF STUFF
FROM THE PAST... I NEED TO
SORT IT OUT... I'M SIXTEEN...
AND THEY BURNT ME...
AFTER THEY... AFTER THEY...

OH, GOD...



BASTARDS!



BASTARDS...!
BASTARDS...

IT'S OKAY... IT'S
OKAY, DUFFY...
IT'S OVER...

YOU'RE SAFE
NOW... YOU'RE
SAFE NOW...

YOU AGAIN...

WHY...?
WHY ARE YOU
DOING THIS?

... LIKE THE WAY THEY
SLOW ROASTED US.

DO YOU LIKE THE WAY
I'M SLOW ROASTING
MESSONNE, DUFFY...?
LETTING HER DIE JUST
A LITTLE BIT AT A
TIME...

THE BITCH IS DYING
OF CANCER, YOU
KNOW? THEY'RE GOING
TO CUT HER UP, JUST
LIKE THEY CUT US UP.

I DON'T WANT ANY
PART OF YOUR SICK
VENGEANCE... WHAT
YOU'RE DOING TO
MESSONNE IS JUST
AS BAD.

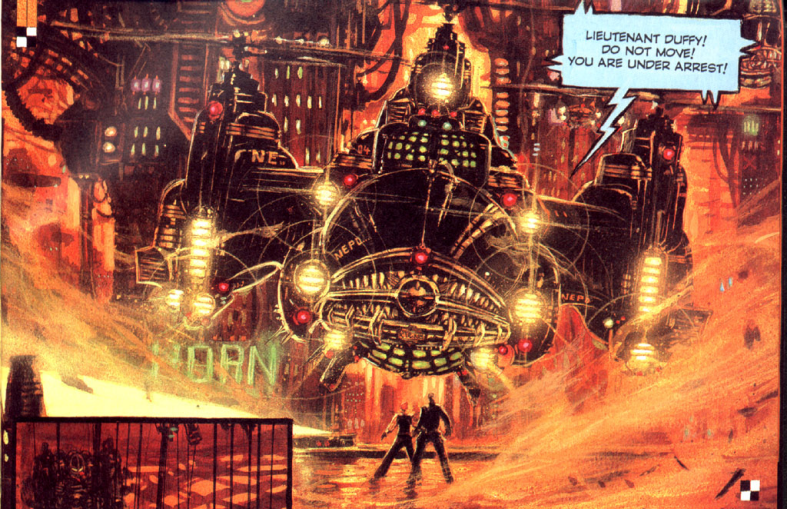
I CERTAINLY
HOPE SO! STOP
SHOWING ANY PITY
FOR THE FAT COW.
SHE DESERVES HER
PAIN.

NO- NOT A COW.
THE COW IS A
SYMBOL OF THE
GODDESS I LOVE.

SHE'S STILL A
WOMAN... FAC-
ING CRUEL
SURGERY.

YES! HA, HA, HA!
OH, DUFFY, YOU
DON'T KNOW
HOW MUCH I
ENJOYED
SAVORING HER
MISERY BEHIND
YOUR COMPAS-
SIONATE MASK!

GET OUT OF
MY HEAD!
GET OUT!
YOU'RE EVIL!



LIEUTENANT DUFFY!
DO NOT MOVE!
YOU ARE UNDER ARREST!



I NEVER BACKED
DOWN... EVEN AS THEY
BURNT ME. I SPAT ON
THEM... AND THEIR
SYMBOL OF POWER...



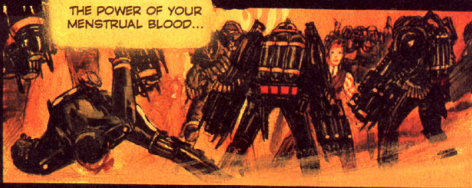
HSSSSS!
NO. DUFFY...
DON'T RUN...
FIGHT BACK!



YOU HAVE THE POWER OF A
WITCH WITHIN YOUR BODY...
USE IT TO FIGHT!



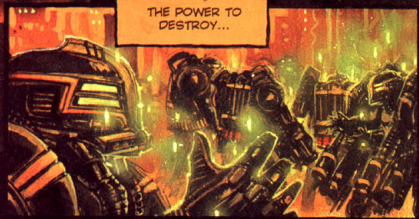
THE POWER OF YOUR
MENSTRUAL BLOOD...



HSSSSSS!
I HAVE THE
POWER!



THE POWER TO
DESTROY...



THE POWER OF THE
EVIL EYE...



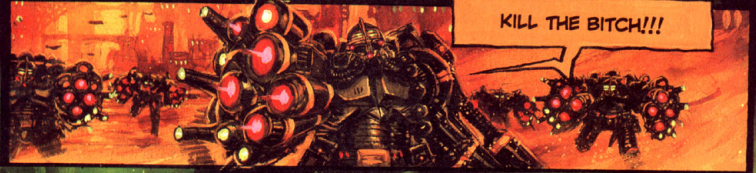
DUFFY...?

THE POWER TO KILL
WITH A LOOK...



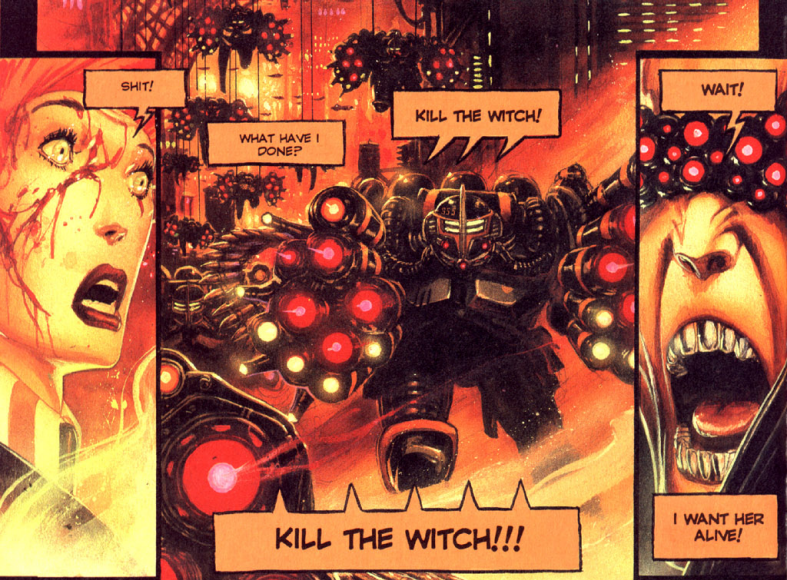


YOU FUCKING
WEIRDO!



KILL THE BITCH!!!





SHIT!

WHAT HAVE I
DONE?

KILL THE WITCH!

WAIT!

KILL THE WITCH!!!

I WANT HER
ALIVE!

AT EASE, MEN...
AT EASE...

... YOU HAVE
BEEN BUSY!

WELL, WELL,
WELL... WHAT A
LOT OF GRAVY...!

SO... LARA... IT
MUST BE... FIVE
HUNDRED YEARS
SINCE WE LAST
MET....P



WHY DON'T WE PICK
UP WHERE WE LEFT
OFF?

46.

MY PRESENT PERSONALITY IS THE RESULT
OF MY LOST PERSONALITIES. WE WOULD
UNDERSTAND MANY THINGS IF WE KNEW
OUR REAL GENEALOGY.

GUSTAVE FLAUBERT

I WAS FEELING GOOD FOR THE FIRST TIME
SINCE THE DISASTER SURROUNDING
CLARA'S VIDEO-GAME DISK...

LET'S PLAY
"LABERINTO" AGAIN!

OKAY!

...IT WAS PROBABLY BECAUSE I WAS HAPPY TO BE
SHARING THE BIZARRE EXPERIENCE OF ENTERING THE
WORLD OF THE REAL GAME WITH RAF.

WAIT WHILE I ENTER OUR NAMES...
LET'S PLAY A TEAM MATCH!

READY!

MONDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1:30 P.M.

CHOOSE YOUR GAME

THIS TIME AROUND, RAF KNEW
WHAT TO EXPECT... I FELT LIKE AN
OLD HAND... BUT I WAS STILL
SCARED SHITLESS!

FOR SOME INEX-
PLICABLE REASON,
LORENZO WASN'T
IN THE GAME!

THEN A BLINDING LIGHT FLOODED THE ROOM,
AND THE MUSIC BECAME MORE THREATENING.

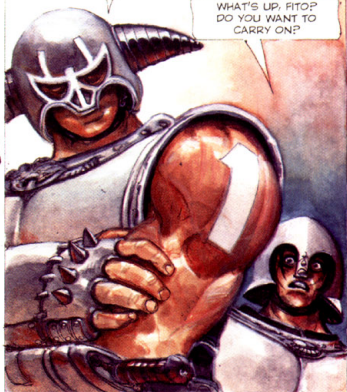


THE FAMILIAR OPENING SCREEN OF "LABERINTO" APPEARED... WHILE OUR MUSCULAR ALTER EGOS DODGED THE FIRST TRAP.



WE COULD PUMP IRON FOR YEARS AND WE STILL WOULDN'T GET MUSCLES LIKE THESE!

WHAT'S UP, FITO? DO YOU WANT TO CARRY ON?



I WAS JUST ADMIRING THE CHANGES PRODUCED IN OUR BODIES WHEN WE ENTERED THE GAME.

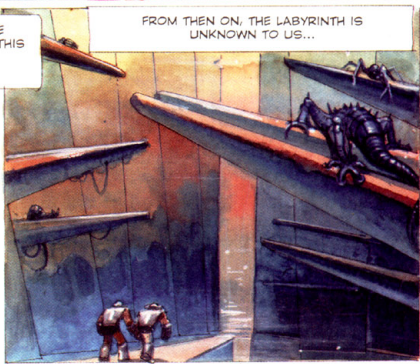
YEAH, EACH PLAYER IS ASSIMILATED INTO THE GAME WITH THE APPROPRIATE CHARACTERISTICS OF EACH PSEUDO-UNIVERSE.



LET'S KEEP GOING... I'M DYING TO SEE WHAT'S UP AHEAD!

BUT WE MUST BE CAREFUL! BEHIND THIS DOOR LIES A DEATHTRAP!

FROM THEN ON, THE LABYRINTH IS UNKNOWN TO US...






STAY CLOSE TO THE WALL. IT SEEMS SAFER!

I'LL FOLLOW YOU.

CHOOSING A SAFE PASSAGE WASN'T EASY.



BE CAREFUL! WATCH OUT BEHIND YOU!


AND LOOK WHAT'S BEHIND YOU!!



THANKS TO RAF'S QUICK REFLEXES HE SAVED HIS DIGITAL LIFE.



FIGHTING THE MONSTERS WASN'T EASY...



BUT MY BRAND-NEW ATHLETIC BODY GAVE ME SELF-CONFIDENCE...

LET ME GIVE YOU A HAND, RAF!

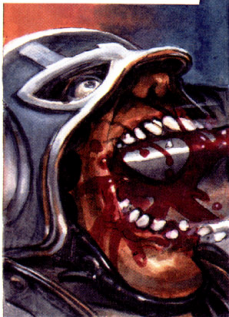
TOO MUCH SELF-CONFIDENCE...



THE CLAW HIT ME HEAD ON. I DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TIME TO CRY OUT...



...THERE WASN'T EVEN ANY TIME TO BE SCARED, ALTHOUGH IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I DIED... AND IT WOULDN'T BE THE LAST.



MY VIRTUAL-GAME BODY DISINTEGRATED...



...AND THEN QUICKLY REGENERATED INTO THE SECOND OF THE THREE LIVES THAT THE GAME ALLOWED ME. I RE-EMERGED INSIDE A COCOON-LIKE BUBBLE.



LET'S SEE... IT MUST BE THIS BUTTON... YEAH... I'VE GOT TWO LIVES LEFT... LET'S GO!!



FILO!! DAMN IT! I WON'T BE ABLE TO HOLD OUT FOR MUCH LONGER!

I ENTERED THE GAME AGAIN AT THE SPOT WHERE
I HAD BEEN KILLED EARLIER.



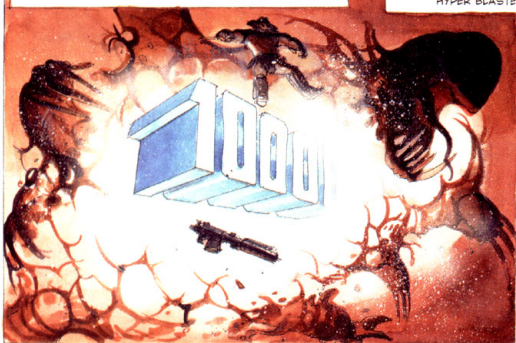
MY DAGGER GLINTED AS I PULLED IT
OUT OF ITS SCABBARD. THE MONSTERS
IGNORED ME... THEY WERE TOO BUSY
WITH RAF...



I JUMPED ONTO ONE OF THE MONSTERS' SHOULDERS AND PLUNGED
MY LUDICROUSLY SMALL DAGGER INTO ITS ONE FATAL SPOT...



THE MONSTER DISINTEGRATED, GIVING ME TEN THOU-
SAND POINTS AND A NEW MORE POWERFUL WEAPON...



...A GREAT TRIPLE-ACTION
HYPER BLASTER.



REALIZING IT WAS IN DANGER,
THE MONSTER SPUN AROUND...

RAF'S PIERCING CRY SAVED MY LIFE,
BUT HE LOST HIS RIGHT ARM.

HAAA!!!

WATCH
OUT, FITO!
FIRE!

I SCORED TEN THOUSAND POINTS... AND RAF DROPPED DEAD...



...BUT HIS SECOND REINCARNATION SOON
EMERGED INSIDE A COCOON-LIKE BUBBLE.

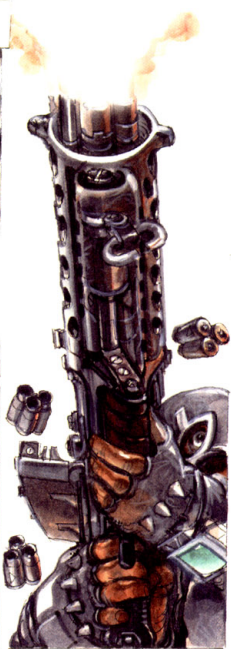


MY ARM! I'VE GOT
A NEW ARM!!

I'VE HAD ENOUGH FOR
TODAY, FITO! I'M GETTING
OUT OF THE GAME.



WAIT A MINUTE!



LET ME GET INSIDE THE BUBBLE FIRST. I DON'T WANT TO BUMP INTO ANOTHER MONSTER BEFORE WE QUIT THE GAME.

LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THE LOG OF PREVIOUS SCORES.

YOU'RE RIGHT.

IF YOUR FRIEND CLARA PLAYED THIS GAME, SHE MAY HAVE ENTERED HER NAME NEXT TO HER SCORE. THAT'S PROBABLY THE BEST CLUE WE'VE GOT.

THE SCORES SHOULD BE HERE IN THE ESCAPE-CLOCK'S MEMORY...

IF CLARA WENT INTO A COMA AFTER LOSING ALL OF HER LIVES IN A GAME...

...WE HAVE TO FIND OUT WHAT GAME SHE WAS PLAYING IN ORDER TO HELP HER...

SO YOU AGREE WITH THE THEORY THAT HER COMATOSE STATE IS SOMEHOW RELATED TO A BIZARRE PHENOMENON IN THIS AMAZING VIRTUAL-REALITY GAME?

AFTER WHAT I'VE JUST BEEN THROUGH, I'M ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN! HEY! LOOK! HERE'S CLARA'S SCORE!

THESE PROGRAMS IMITATE BIOLOGICAL REALITY SO WELL THAT IT'S CONCEIVABLE THAT A PLAYER COULD SIMULATE HIS OR HER GAME-DEATH BY ENTERING A COMA.

WOW! SHE GOT AS FAR AS THE SIXTEENTH LEVEL. WHEN SHE SAVED HER GAME SHE STILL HAD TWO LIVES LEFT!

NOW THAT WE HAVE SOMETHING TO GO ON, WE HAVE TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO BRING HER BACK TO LIFE.

IT'S INCREDIBLE! TAKE A
LOOK AT MY ARM!



AND IT'S NOT JUST MY ARM. ONLY A
MINUTE AGO I WAS BLEEDING TO
DEATH... AND SO WERE YOU... YOU WERE
BEING CLAWED TO PIECES... AND HERE
WE ARE, COMPLETELY REGENERATED AND
IN PERFECT SHAPE!



IT SHOULD BE
POSSIBLE TO SEARCH
IN THE SOFTWARE FOR
A WAY OF EDITING OUT
THE GAME-DEATH.



...IN OTHER WORDS, WE SHOULD
BE ABLE TO HACK INTO THE
PROGRAM AND ADD THE OPTION
OF INFINITE LIVES, RIGHT?

THAT'S RIGHT.

BUT FIRST WE HAVE TO KNOW
FOR SURE IN WHICH GAME SHE
LOST HER THIRD GAME-LIFE.

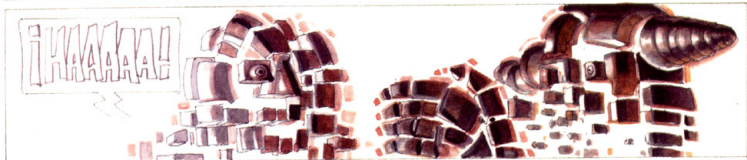
AT LEAST WE KNOW THAT IT
WASN'T WHILE SHE PLAYED
"LABERINTO."

WE'LL HAVE TO GO INTO ALL THE
GAMES AND PLAY THEM FOR A BIT,
WITHOUT TAKING TOO MANY CHANCES,
UNTIL WE HIT ON THE RIGHT ONE.

LET'S GET OUT NOW.

OKAY.





WHY ARE YOU
SCREAMING? IS
SOMETHING WRONG?

YOU'RE ASKING IF SOMETHING'S
WRONG?! YOU GOT USED TO VIRTUAL
REALITY VERY QUICKLY! I'M ABOUT TO
HAVE A HEART ATTACK BECAUSE OF ALL
THIS AND YOU'RE WONDERING IF
SOMETHING'S WRONG!

WE'VE COME OUT OF ANOTHER
DIMENSION WHERE WE DIED AND
WERE RESUSCITATED, WE'VE
JUST BEEN FIGHTING WITH
HORRENDOUS MONSTERS AND
YOU HAVE THE GALL TO ASK ME IF
SOMETHING'S WRONG!! THAT'S
WHY I'M SCREAMING! DON'T YOU
THINK THAT'S ENOUGH?!



I'M ALSO SCREAMING MY LUNGS OUT
BECAUSE I'VE GOT TO TRY OUT ALL
THESE HORRIBLE GAMES IN ORDER TO
WRITE REVIEWS FOR THE MAGAZINE!!



CRACK!

OKAY, OKAY,
I GET IT!



AND I DON'T FEEL LIKE IT!
AFTER EVERYTHING WE'VE
EXPERIENCED TODAY, HOW
CAN I STILL HAVE THE
PATIENCE TO VIEW BORING
GAMES WITH REPETITIVE
SCREENS!! IT WILL BE HELL!

IF YOU LIKE, I CAN
GIVE YOU A HAND,
TO TRY AND MAKE
UP FOR THE TIME
I'VE MADE YOU
WASTE.



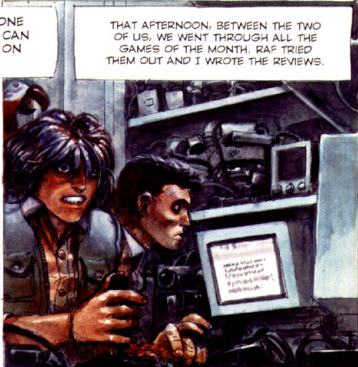


YOU'D DO THAT?

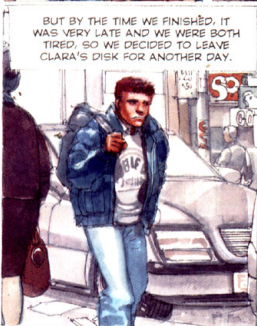
SURE!
WHY NOT?
I HAVE TO GO
NOW... BUT I
CAN COME
BACK THIS
AFTERNOON.



OKAY. ONCE WE'RE DONE
WITH THE REVIEWS WE CAN
CONCENTRATE FULLY ON
CLARA'S DISK.



THAT AFTERNOON, BETWEEN THE TWO
OF US, WE WENT THROUGH ALL THE
GAMES OF THE MONTH. RAF TRIED
THEM OUT AND I WROTE THE REVIEWS.




BUT BY THE TIME WE FINISHED,
IT WAS VERY LATE AND WE WERE BOTH
TIRED, SO WE DECIDED TO LEAVE
CLARA'S DISK FOR ANOTHER DAY.

I WAS SO TIRED THAT I
DIDN'T EVEN STUDY FOR MY
HISTORY TEST OR ANYTHING
ELSE.

DON'T YOU WANT
ANY DINNER?

I'LL GRAB A BITE.



ALTHOUGH MY MOTHER DIDN'T
STOP ME FROM SWITCHING ON
THE COMPUTER, I DIDN'T EVEN
PLAY A GAME OF TETRIS.

I WENT TO BED ASKING MYSELF WHO HAD TRANSFORMED THE NORMAL, ORDINARY
LOOKING OPTICAL DISK INTO SUCH A HORRENDOUS MONSTROSITY.



I HAD NIGHTMARES OF A LABYRINTH
AND OF RAF'S MISSING ARM.

JOMENEZZO

Diary of a Young Girl, Revisited

Story and Art by Philip Xavier
Written by Kevin Tucker
Lettered by Vincent Sneed

13 Tenmonth, Landing Year 9

Finally, it's my birthday!

I was so excited that I ran downstairs without even noticing Kesha wasn't in her bed.

Mama had made my favorite breakfast! She asked me what it felt like to be the newest teenager on the whole planet.

Daddy said it would be tough to have two, since they couldn't even keep track of the first one.

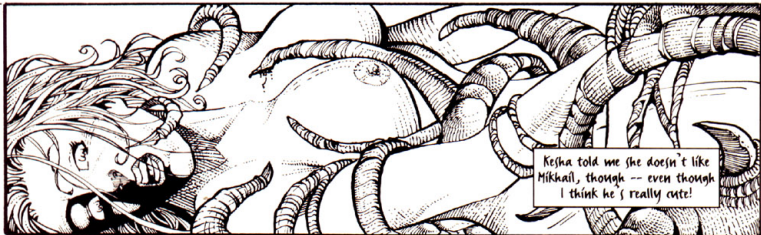
He's always saying stuff like that.

That was when I realized Kesha was gone, so I asked where she was.

Daddy said "who knows!"
in that tone he uses.



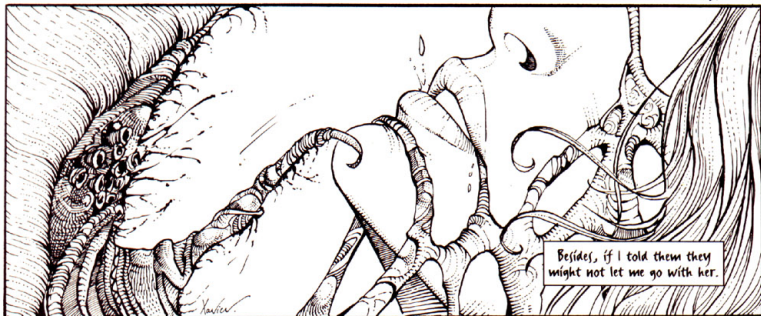
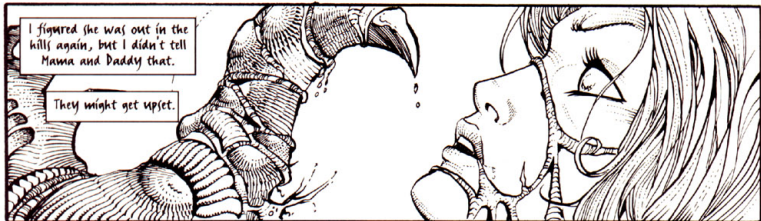
Mama thought she might
have gone out with Mikhail.



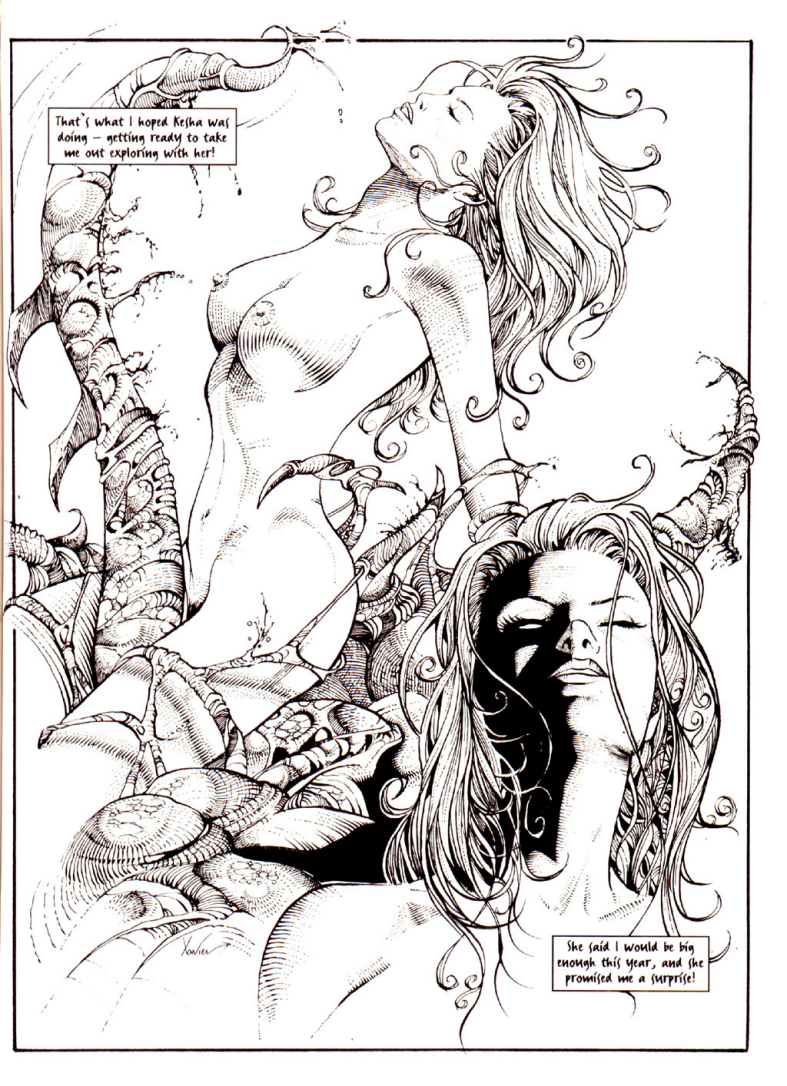
Kesha told me she doesn't like
Mikhail, though -- even though
I think he's really cute!

I figured she was out in the
hills again, but I didn't tell
Mama and Daddy that.

They might get upset.

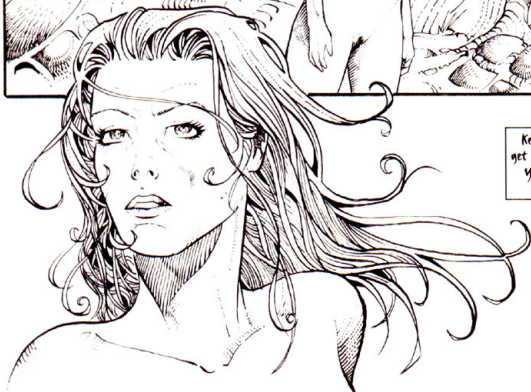


Besides, if I told them they
might not let me go with her.



That's what I hoped Kesha was doing — getting ready to take me out exploring with her!

She said I would be big enough this year, and she promised me a surprise!



Kesha told me that when you get out of sight of the Settlement you feel like you're the only person in the whole world.

That sounds kind of scary to me, but she says it's not.

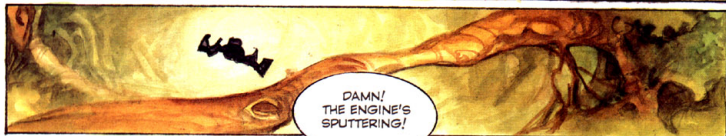
She better be on her way back now, or else she'll miss my party.

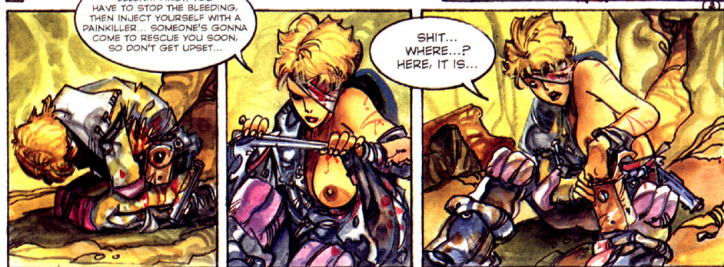
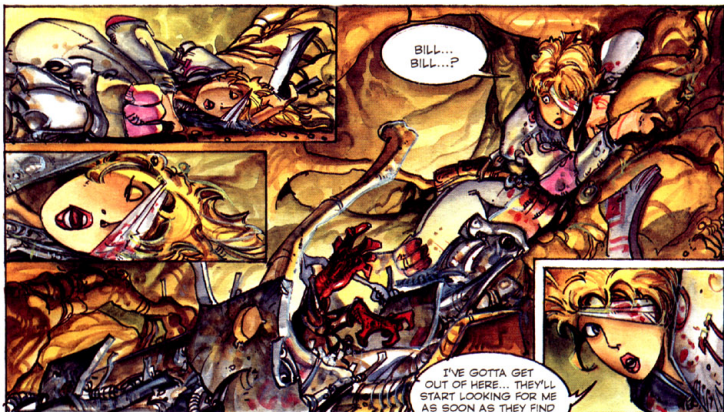
I can already almost taste the cake!

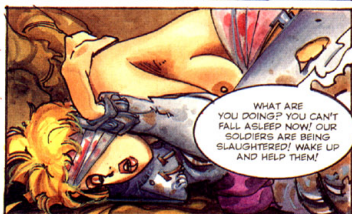
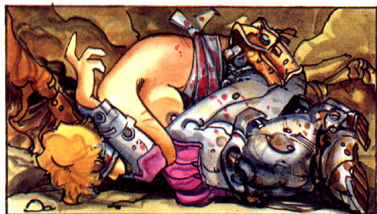
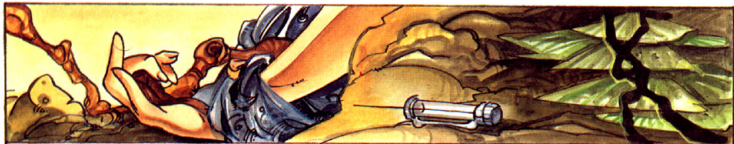
I'm sure Kesha will make it. She's never let me down.

I can't wait!

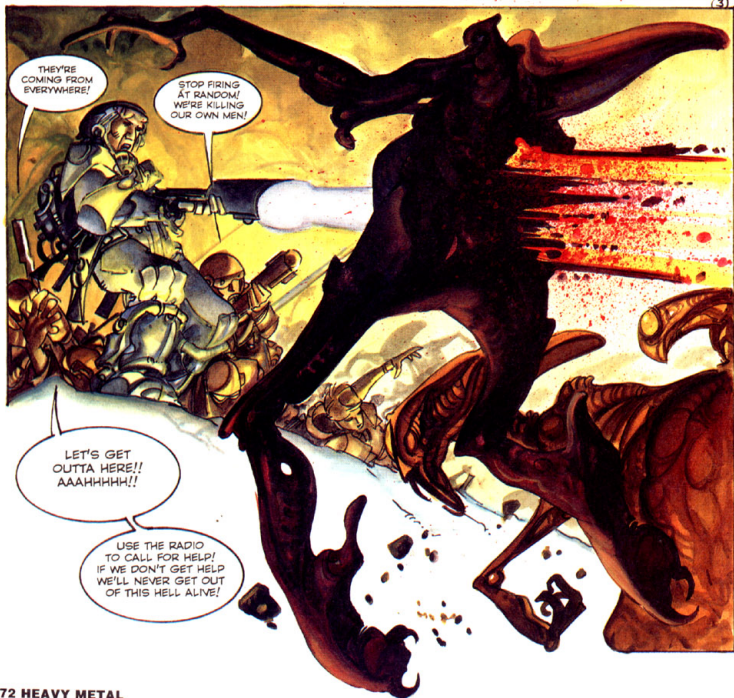
end







WHAT ARE YOU DOING? YOU CAN'T FALL ASLEEP NOW! OUR SOLDIERS ARE BEING SLAUGHTERED! WAKE UP AND HELP THEM!

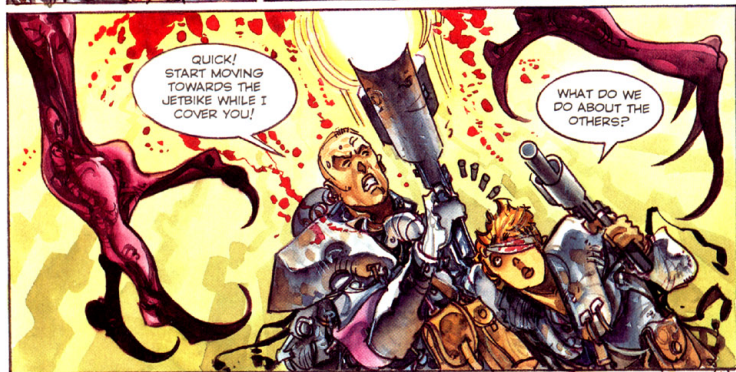
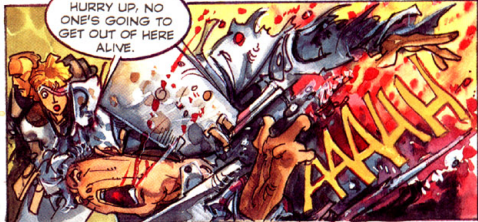
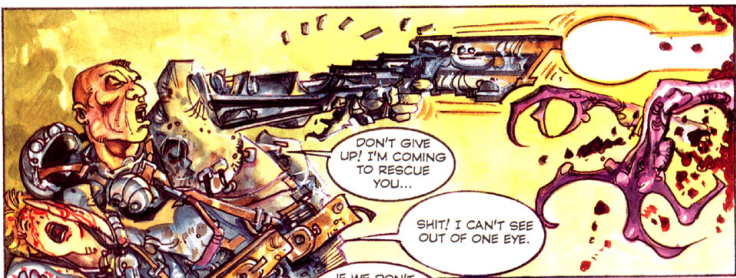


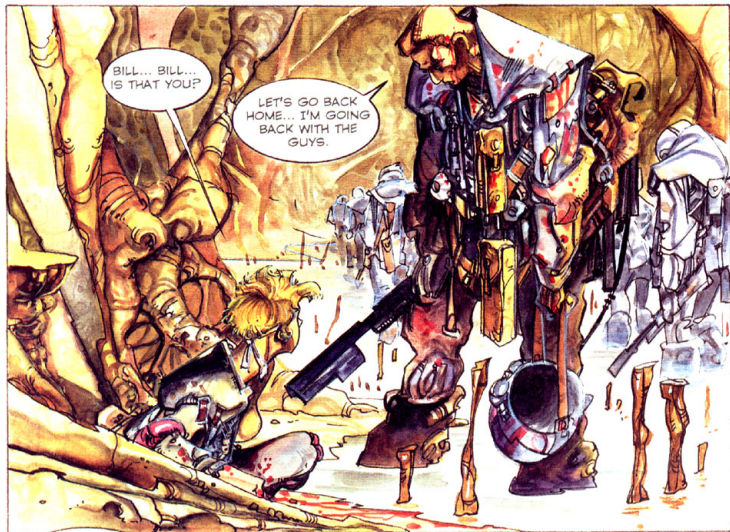
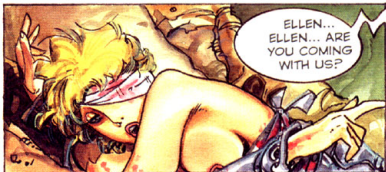
THEY'RE COMING FROM EVERYWHERE!

STOP FIRING AT RANDOM! WE'RE KILLING OUR OWN MEN!

LET'S GET OUTTA HERE!!
AAAAHHHHH!!

USE THE RADIO TO CALL FOR HELP!
IF WE DON'T GET HELP WE'LL NEVER GET OUT OF THIS HELL ALIVE!







WHY ARE YOU
SCREAMING?

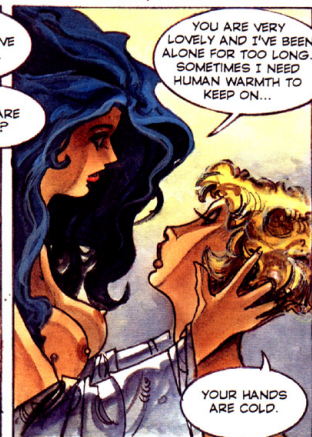
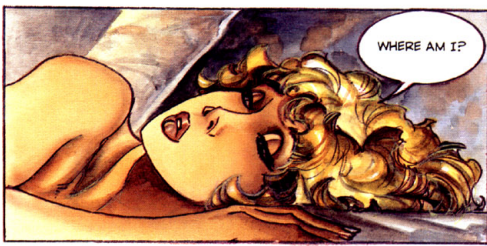
I'M REAL.

YOU'RE A
HALLUCINATION!
GO AWAY AND LEAVE
ME ALONE!

I WAS DRAWN HERE
BY THE PIN OF BATTLE
AND I FOUND YOU.
I CAN HEAL YOUR WOUNDS
AND RELIEVE PAIN AND
DESPAIR.

LEAVE ME...
AAHH... THE PAIN
HAS COME BACK.

I'LL HELP YOU.



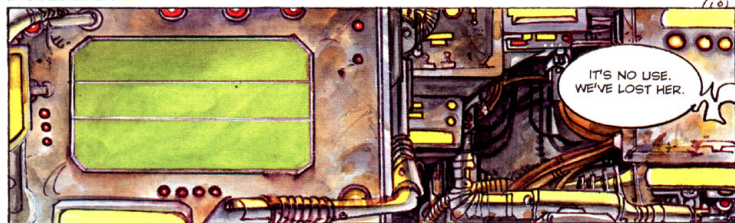


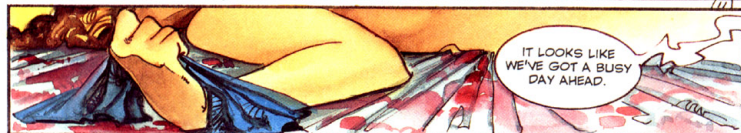
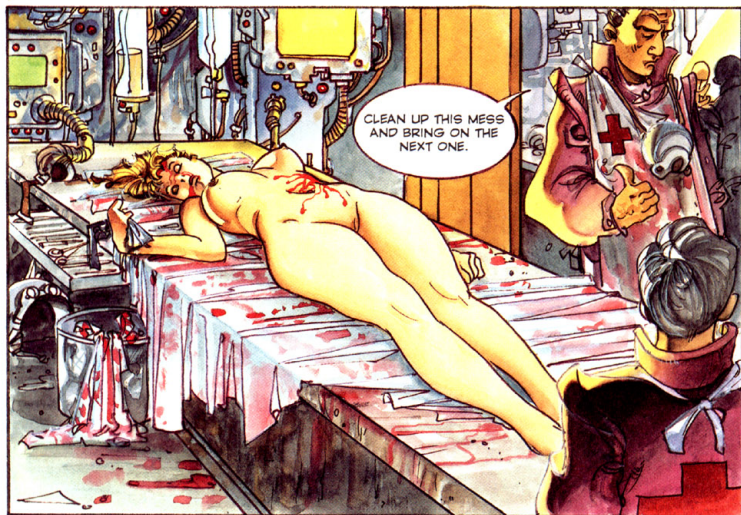
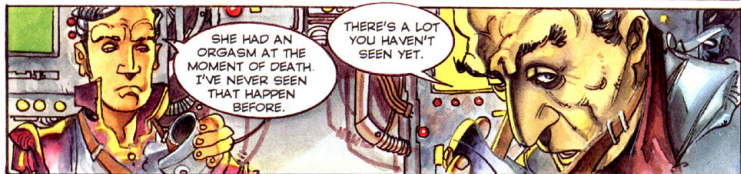
STOP TREMBLING.
YOU SHOULDN'T
BE AFRAID OF ME.

I'M NOT AFRAID.
I FEEL PROTECTED
WHEN YOU HOLD ME
IN YOUR ARMS.

I KNOW.





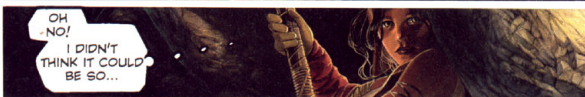


THE LAST DRAGON



IT MUST
BE AROUND
HERE...

WHA...P!



OH
-NO!
I DIDN'T
THINK IT COULD
BE SO...



THIS
MUST
BE...

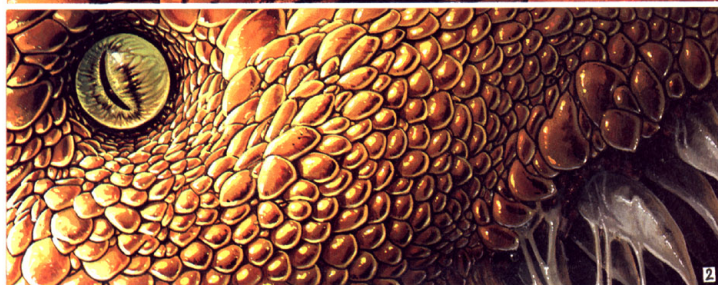
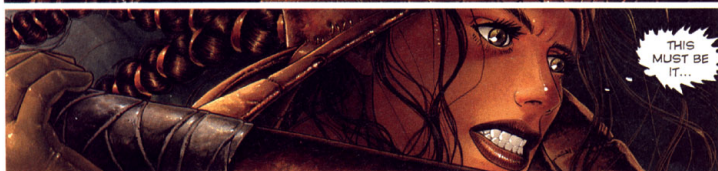
... THE
RIGHT
PLACE.

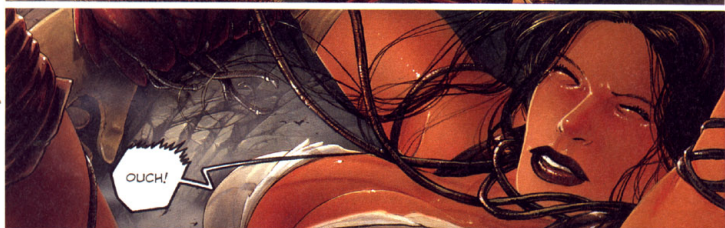


...
HUGE!



I'LL
HAVE TO
BE...
... VERY
CAREFUL!















THE CRETACEOUS





WE HAVE CARRIED OUT ALL SORTS OF ANALYSIS, SAMPLING VARIOUS SPECIMENS OF EACH SPECIES, BUT THE RESULT IS ALWAYS THE SAME. NOT ONLY WILL THEY NEVER EVOLVE INTO AN INTELLIGENT BREED, BUT THE MAJORITY OF THEM ARE ALSO DESTINED TO BE EXTINCT.

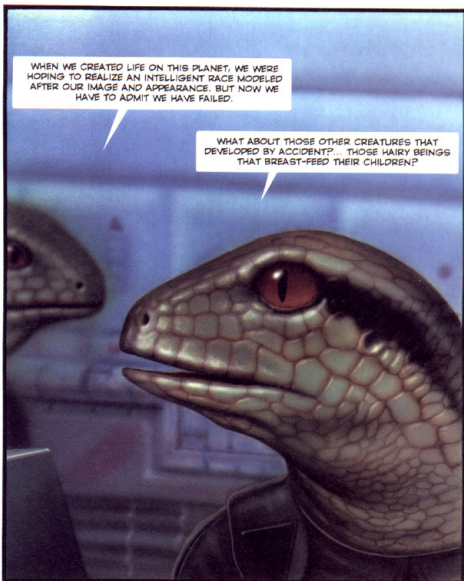


A MINOR ERROR IN PROGRAMMING ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS...

YES, AND SO MANY OF THEM GREW ENORMOUS.



BUT EVEN THOSE OF OUR SIZE HAVE NO CHANCE... DUE TO THE LOW MOLECULAR DENSITY OF THEIR BRAINS.



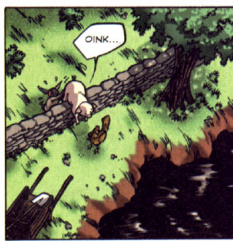
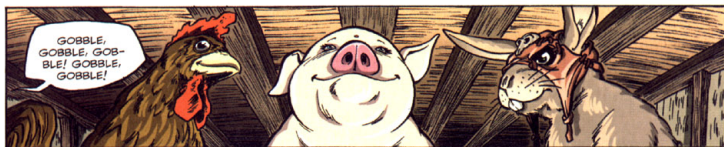
WHEN WE CREATED LIFE ON THIS PLANET, WE WERE HOPING TO REALIZE AN INTELLIGENT RACE MODELED AFTER OUR IMAGE AND APPEARANCE. BUT NOW WE HAVE TO ADMIT WE HAVE FAILED.

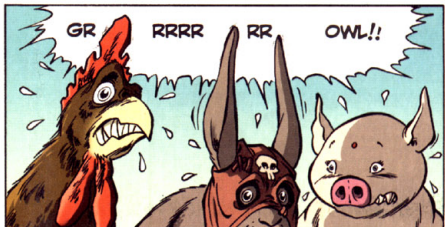
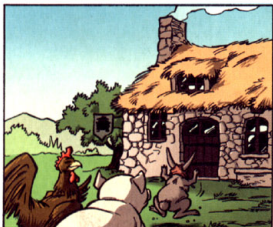
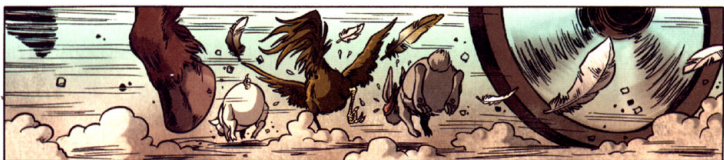
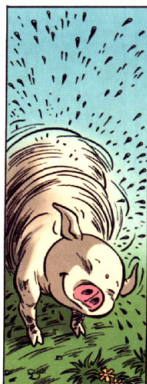
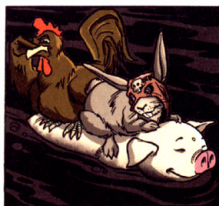
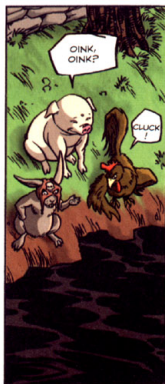
WHAT ABOUT THOSE OTHER CREATURES THAT DEVELOPED BY ACCIDENT?... THOSE HAIRY BEINGS THAT BREAST-FEED THEIR CHILDREN?

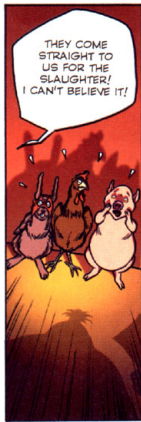
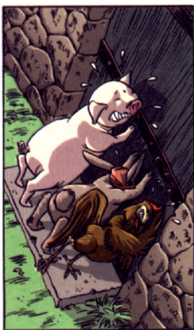


THOSE ARE JUST BIOLOGICAL ANOMALIES DEVOID OF EVOLUTIONARY POTENTIAL... THEY'LL DIE OUT SOON...

WE DON'T NEED ANIMAL HEROES!









IN THE QUIET, BLACK WAVE
WHERE THE STARS DREAM,
WHITE OPHELIA FLOATS LIKE A
GREAT LILAC.


DECADENCE

• J. COROMINAS •

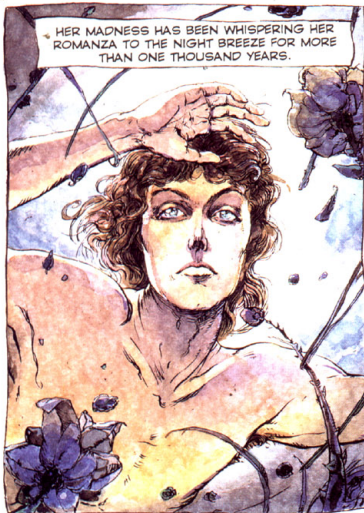
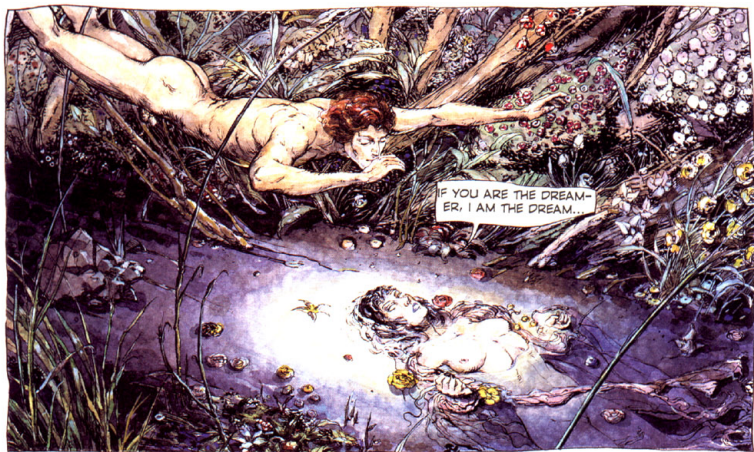
• JAVIER •

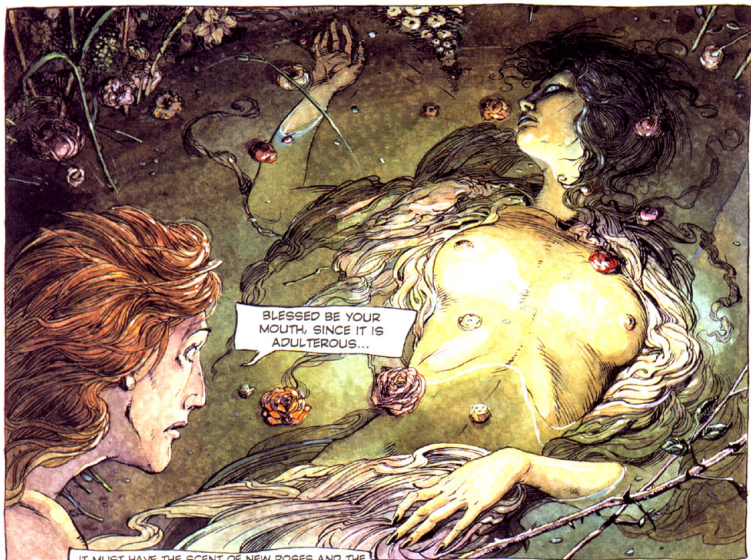


SHE FLOWS SLOWLY, LYING ON
HER WIDE SAIL... FAR AWAY,
IN THE REMOTE WOODS,
HORNS CAN BE HEARD.



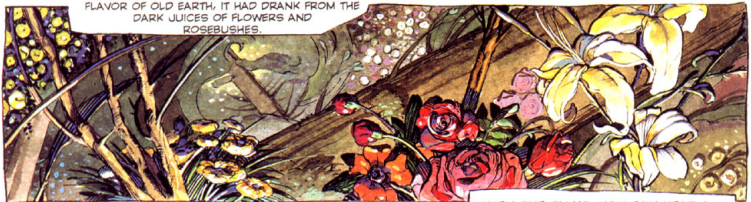
SAD OPHELIA HAS BEEN FLOAT-
ING FOR A WHOLE MILLENNIUM,
PASSING BY THE LONG, BLACK
RIVER LIKE A WHITE GHOST.



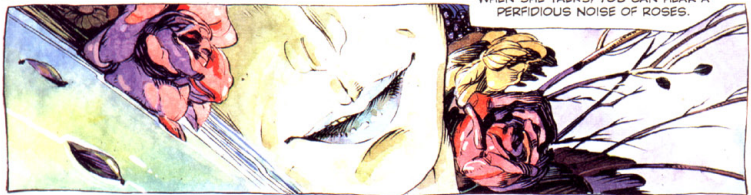


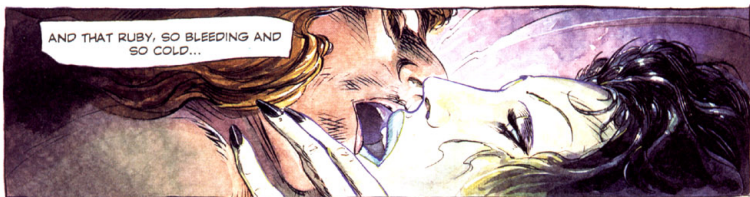
BLESSED BE YOUR MOUTH, SINCE IT IS ADULTEROUS...

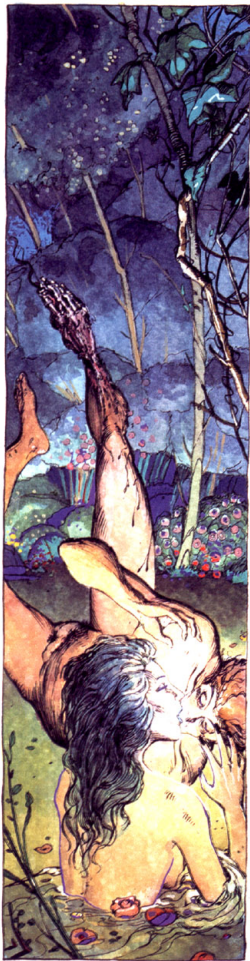
IT MUST HAVE THE SCENT OF NEW ROSES AND THE FLAVOR OF OLD EARTH, IT HAD DRANK FROM THE DARK JUICES OF FLOWERS AND ROSEBUSHES.



WHEN SHE TALKS, YOU CAN HEAR A PERFIDIOUS NOISE OF ROSES.









WE WILL HAVE BEDS FILLED
WITH SOFT PERFUMES.

WE WILL HAVE DEEP DIVANS
AS TOMBS, AND THE RACKS
WILL BE FILLED WITH
STRANGE FLOWERS.

BLOSSOMING FOR US
IN THE MOST BEAUTIFUL
SKIES.

