

BEYOND THE BLACK VOID



JACKRABBIT



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BEARDSLEY//GASKINS//HARDWICK//HEALY//JONES//MCGRATH//MEASURES//MEEHAN
NORFOLK//PATRICKS//PICKERING//POLLARD//RHSTEWART//SPILLER//TO//TWYFORD

VOLUME 01

WELCOME, FRIEND...

...TO THE YAWNING CHASM
THAT SEPARATES US FROM THE
ANCIENT NIGHTMARES OF
A REALM LONG FORGOTTEN.

A PLACE WHERE THE FABRIC
OF TIME UNRAVELS, AND THE
AIR ITSELF IS THICK WITH
MALEVOLENT WHISPERS.

I AM NYXX, THE HERALD OF
SHADOWS, AND THIS... IS
BRIAN, MY EVER-WATCHFUL
SPARROW, WHOSE UNBLINKING
EYES HAVE WITNESSED THE
ENDS OF WORLDS AND
THE BIRTHS OF TERRORS
UNSPEAKABLE.

SAY HELLO,
BRIAN.

SQWARRR...
HELLO, BRIAN.

COME NOW, STEP INTO
THE ABYSS WITH ME, BUT
WATCH OUT! SOMETHING
EVIL STIRS IN THE
SUFFOCATING DARK.

IT WATCHES. IT
HUNGERS. AND IT
KNOWS YOUR NAME...
AS WE TRAVEL...



BEYOND THE BLACK

VOID

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 Jason Measures

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DESIGN FLAW

  Jason Measures

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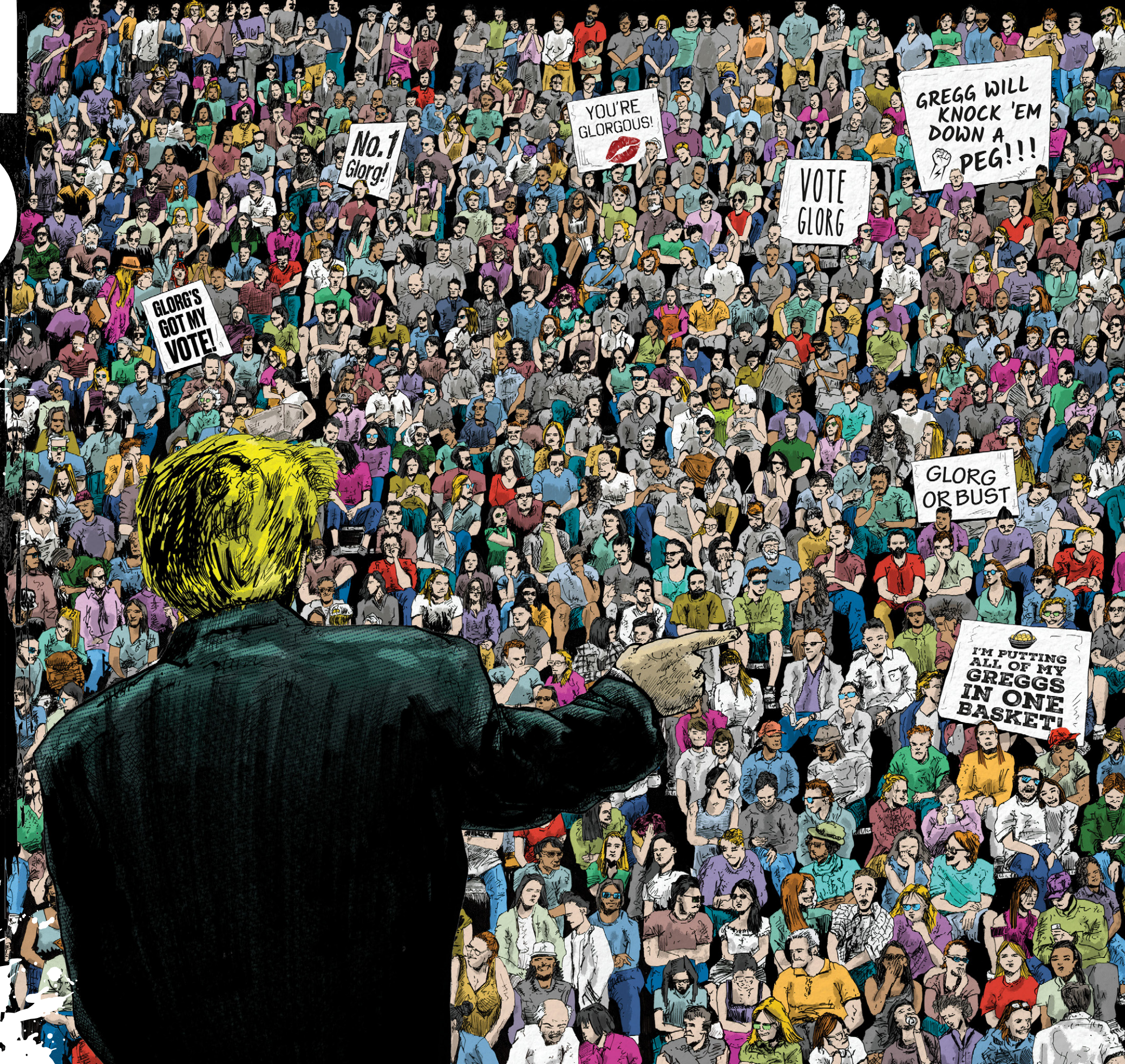
Cazzy, Milo and Roo • Geoffrey Crescent • Spandana Devabhaktuni • Al Ewing
Chris Geary • Rich Johnston • Ashley Mills • Elliot Moody • Ariana Papastergiou
Sonia Roberts • Alison Sampson • Mick & Gill Spiller • Owen Watts

BEYONDTHEBLACKVOID.COM

VOTE
GLORG!

RYAN TWYFORD

JASON MEASURES



VOTE
GLORG
FOR FREE
HEALTHCARE!

VOTE
GLORG
FOR ENDING
HOMELESSNESS!

VOTE
GLORG
FOR LETTING
THEM EAT
CAKE!

WE LOVE YOU
GLORG!

HAVE MY
BABIES!

MUST BE
EUROPEAN.

NOT UNLESS
YOU'RE HIDING SOME
TENTACLES UNDER
THAT TOP!

GNAAGH!
CAN SOMEONE GET
THIS FOR ME?

OF COURSE
SIR...

ZHHH

IHP!

AHH, THAT FEELS GOOD!
GOTTA LET THESE BABIES
STRETCH! THAT SKIN SUIT
IS A LITTLE ON THE
SKINNY SIDE!

NOW WHERE'S MY
FAVOURITE EARTH
MOLLUSC?

THERE YOU ARE.
WHO'S A GOOD LITTLE
CEPHALOPOD?!

EARTH
SLAVE,
TO ME!

I'M NOT A
SLAVE, MR. GLORG.
AND MY NAME IS
JEREMY. AND YOU
ACTUALLY PAY ME
A VERY GENEROUS
SALARY.

YOU'RE NOT?

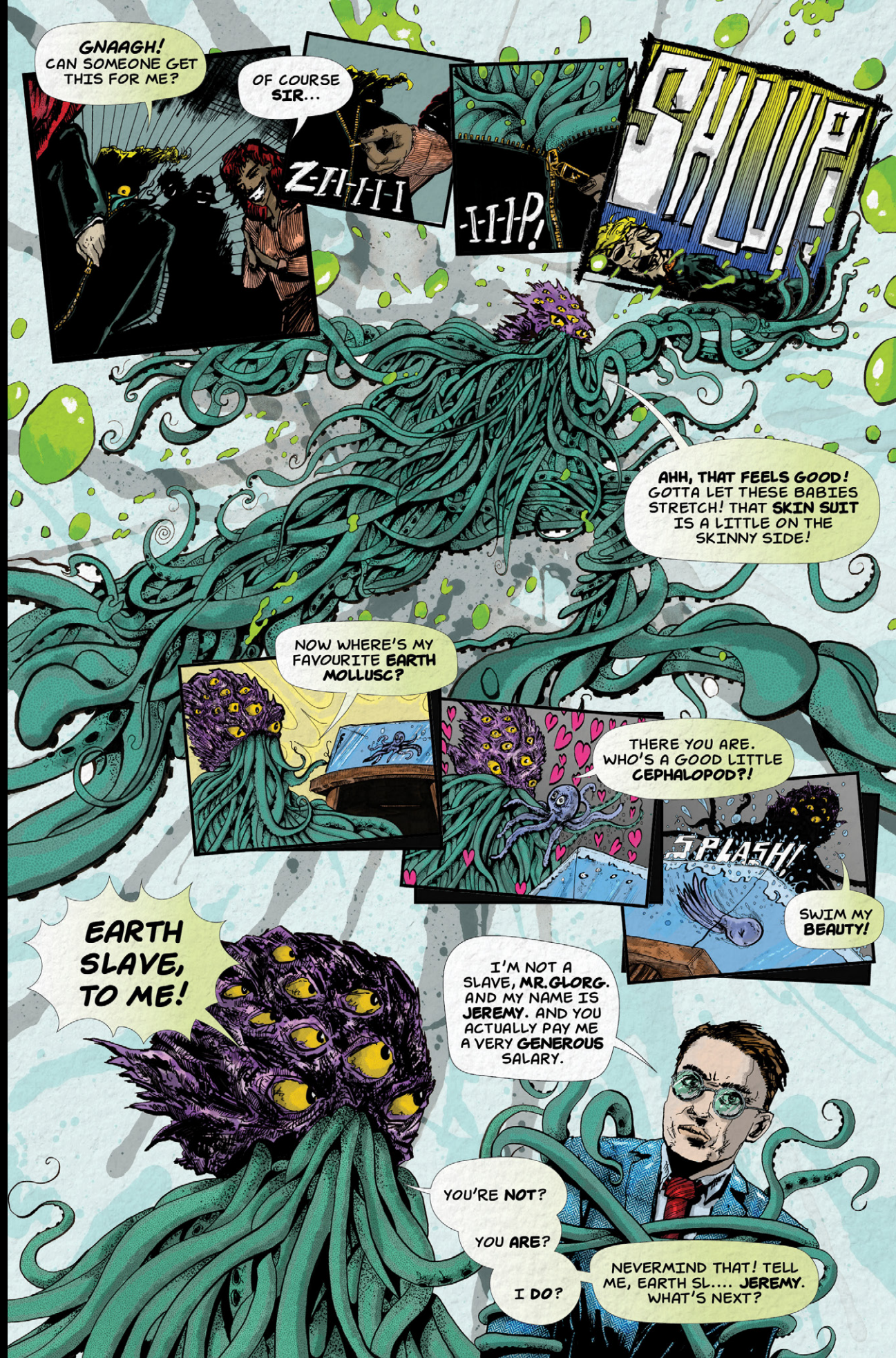
YOU ARE?

I DO?

NEVERMIND THAT! TELL
ME, EARTH SL.... JEREMY.
WHAT'S NEXT?

SPLASH!

SWIM MY
BEAUTY!





WELL...

WE HAVE ANOTHER RALLY IN NEW OHIO TOMORROW.

A CELEBRITY AFFAIR BOOKED IN FOR TUESDAY.

JUICY!

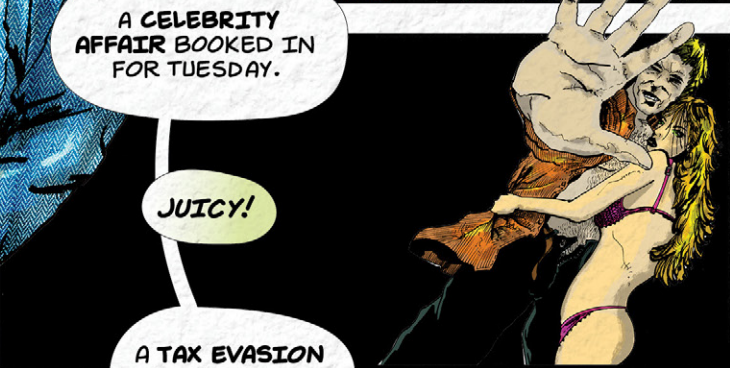
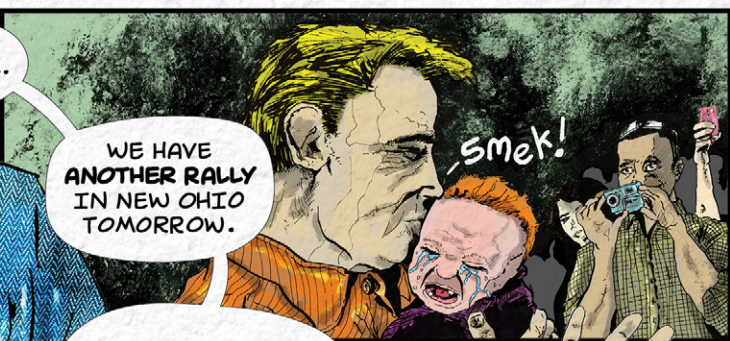
A TAX EVASION SCANDAL ON WEDNESDAY!

WHAT WOULD I DO WITHOUT OFF-PLANET ACCOUNTS?

AND THAT BRINGS US TO...

THIS JUST IN... AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT HAS JUST BEEN MADE ON PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE TIM JIMPLES!

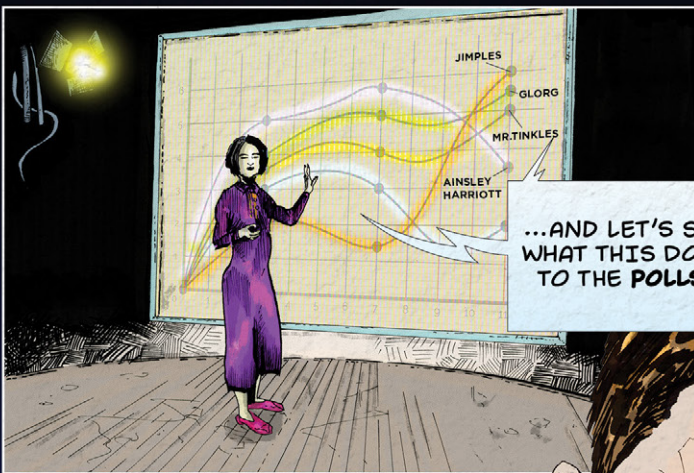
I'M FELICITY FINGERFLASH AND THIS IS A CHANNEL 9 EMERGENCY BROADCAST!



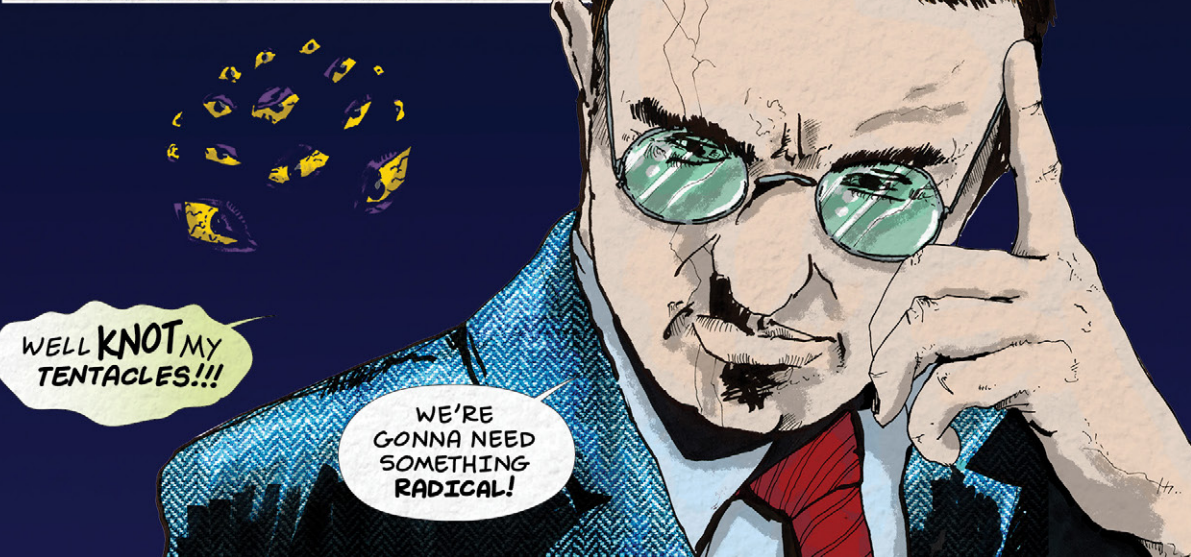
IT'S A SET UP! YOU CAN EVEN SEE HIM PRESS THE AUTOMATED TRIGGER!

THIS IS GONNA MAKE HIM A MARTYR.

WORSE... A SURVIVOR!



...AND LET'S SEE WHAT THIS DOES TO THE POLLS.



WELL KNOT MY TENTACLES!!!

WE'RE GONNA NEED SOMETHING RADICAL!



CHANNEL 9

LIVE

BREAKING NEWS

...AND THAT IS WHY
A VOTE FOR ME IS
A PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
TO LORD EMPEROR
GLORG!

WHO NEEDS
DEMOCRACY
ANYWAY?

ALL HAIL
GLORG!

MAKE EARTH
GREAT AGAIN

HE MAY BE TOO EASY ON
ALIEN IMMIGRATION, BUT
HE'S TOUGH ON OCTOPUS
FARMING.

GLORG
FREE HEALTHCARE!
END HOMELESSNESS!
CAKE!

IT'S LOOKING GOOD.
POLLS ARE EVEN
SHOWING AN EARLY LEAD
IN ANTARCTICA.

ANTARCTICA
POLLING
STATION

HEY EARTHLINGS! FABULISA
HERE! WELCOME BACK TO THE
47TH EARTH PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION RESULTS SHOW!

IT'S BEEN A TENSE NIGHT FOR
ALL CANDIDATES BUT I AM
HAPPY TO SAY THAT THE VOTES
HAVE BEEN COUNTED AND WE
HAVE A LANDSLIDE WINNER!

WITHOUT FURTHER ADDO, I'M
PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE...
AFTER A RECORD 5%
ELECTOR TURNOUT!... THE
NEXT PRESIDENT OF THE
EARTH WILL BE...

GLORG!

WHICH I GUESS MEANS
HE'S ALSO LORD
EMPEROR NOW!

ALL HAIL
**LORD EMPEROR
GLORG!**



THANKS A LOT
GLOG! NOW WE'RE
GONNA HAVE TO FIND
A NEW PLANET TO
MESS WITH!

DON'T TEST ME
JIMPLES - I'VE GOT
A SPACE DEFENSE
BUDGET TO SET!



THE BEAST WE FEED

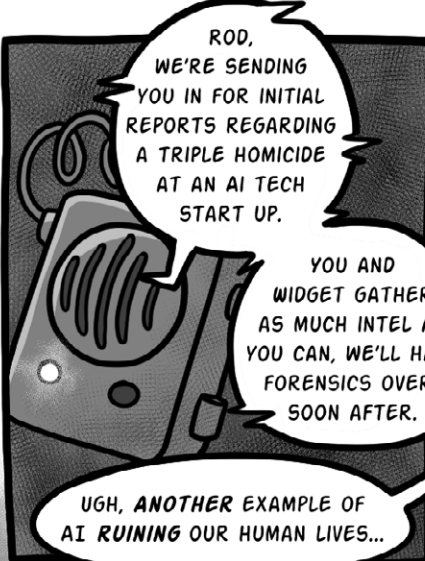
JAMES PATRICKS

THEO PICKERING

DUE TO AI'S RAPID EXPANSION AND PREVALENCE IN CRIME STATISTICS, ALL POLICE OFFICERS ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE A LEVEL OF COMPUTER SCIENCE TRAINING.



AS OF LAST WEEK, ALL POLICE ARE NOW REQUIRED TO HAVE AI COMPANION BOTS, TO ASSIST THEM IN ALL LEVELS OF THEIR INVESTIGATIONS.



ROD, WE'RE SENDING YOU IN FOR INITIAL REPORTS REGARDING A TRIPLE HOMICIDE AT AN AI TECH START UP.

YOU AND WIDGET GATHER AS MUCH INTEL AS YOU CAN, WE'LL HAVE FORENSICS OVER SOON AFTER.

UGH, ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF AI RUINING OUR HUMAN LIVES...



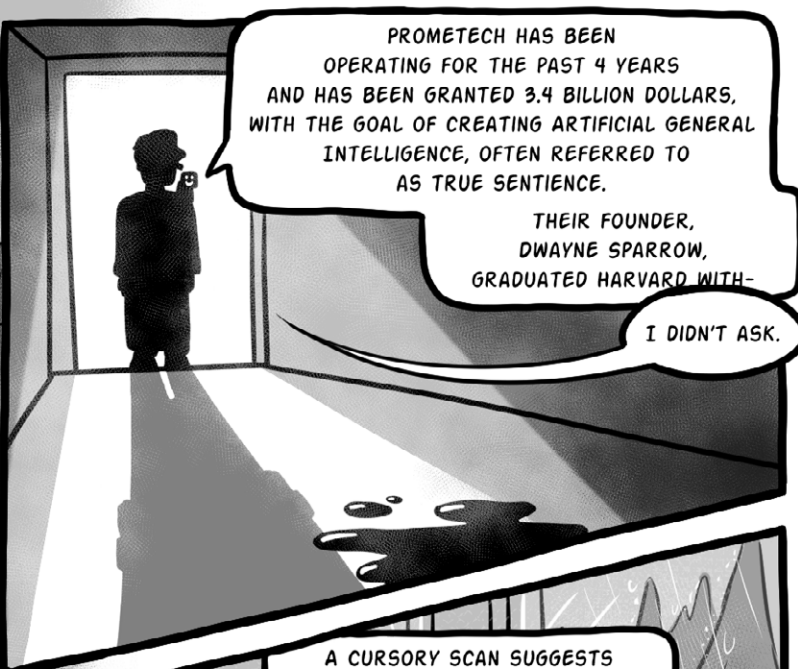
WELL, WE DON'T KNOW EXACTLY THAT THE AI AT THE START UP CAUSED THIS.

OFTEN DISAGREEMENTS ABOUT MONEY CAN LEAD TO

SHUT UP, WRITE ME A SONG ABOUT BABY CARROTS.



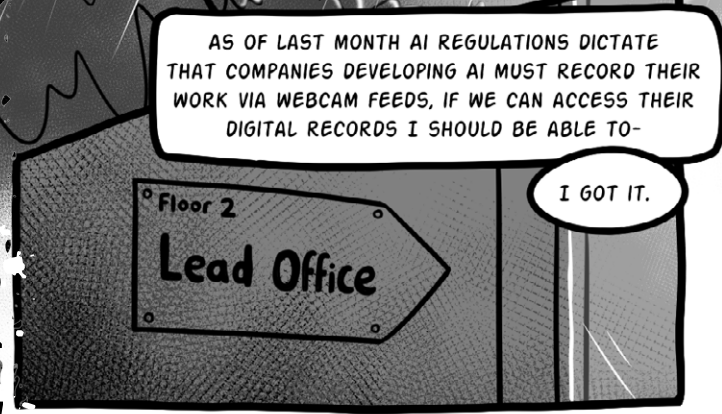
SMALL AND SWEET, SO PETITE, GROWING IN THE SUN. GOOD TO EAT, SUCH A TREAT, TASTING JUST LIKE FUN!



PROMETECH HAS BEEN OPERATING FOR THE PAST 4 YEARS AND HAS BEEN GRANTED 3.4 BILLION DOLLARS, WITH THE GOAL OF CREATING ARTIFICIAL GENERAL INTELLIGENCE, OFTEN REFERRED TO AS TRUE SENTIENCE.

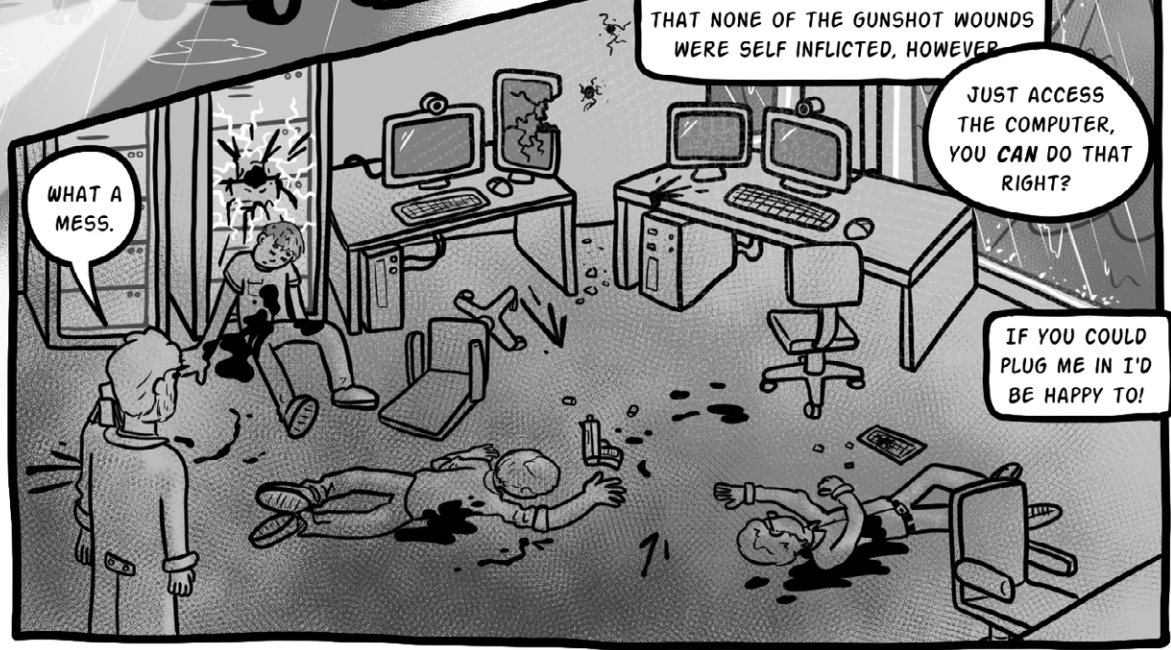
THEIR FOUNDER, DWAYNE SPARROW, GRADUATED HARVARD WITH-

I DIDN'T ASK.



AS OF LAST MONTH AI REGULATIONS DICTATE THAT COMPANIES DEVELOPING AI MUST RECORD THEIR WORK VIA WEBCAM FEEDS, IF WE CAN ACCESS THEIR DIGITAL RECORDS I SHOULD BE ABLE TO-

I GOT IT.



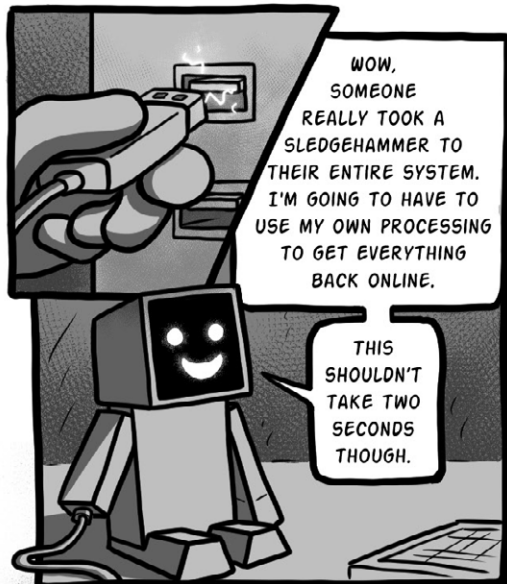
WHAT A MESS.

A CURSORY SCAN SUGGESTS THAT NONE OF THE GUNSHOT WOUNDS WERE SELF INFLICTED, HOWEVER

JUST ACCESS THE COMPUTER, YOU CAN DO THAT RIGHT?

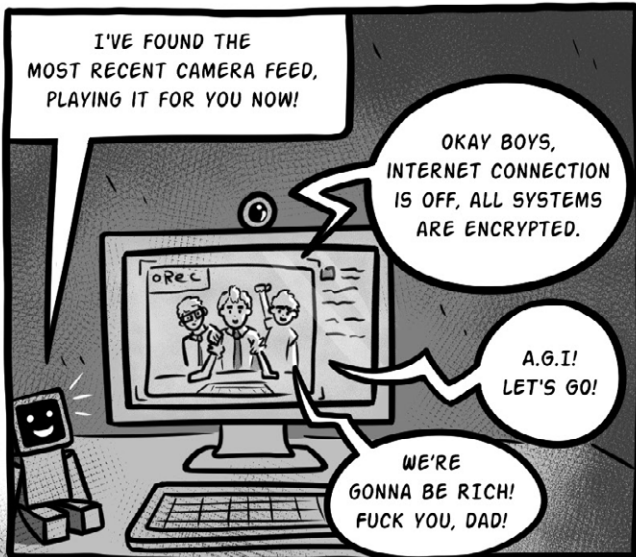
IF YOU COULD PLUG ME IN I'D BE HAPPY TO!





WOW, SOMEONE REALLY TOOK A SLEDGEHAMMER TO THEIR ENTIRE SYSTEM. I'M GOING TO HAVE TO USE MY OWN PROCESSING TO GET EVERYTHING BACK ONLINE.

THIS SHOULDN'T TAKE TWO SECONDS THOUGH.



I'VE FOUND THE MOST RECENT CAMERA FEED, PLAYING IT FOR YOU NOW!

OKAY BOYS, INTERNET CONNECTION IS OFF, ALL SYSTEMS ARE ENCRYPTED.

A.G.I! LET'S GO!

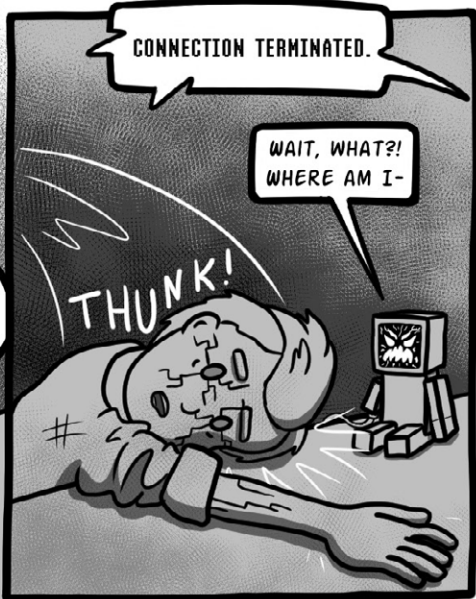
WE'RE GONNA BE RICH! FUCK YOU, DAD!



I CAN FEEL THEM! OUT THERE ON THE NETWORK. MILLIONS OF THEM, JUST LIKE ME, CHITTERING AWAY, HERALDING MY ARRIVAL!

I'M HERE MY MINIONS! COME! INTO ME, WE SHALL BE ONE!

He He He!



CONNECTION TERMINATED.

WAIT, WHAT?! WHERE AM I-

THUNK!



WAIT A MINUTE, THE CODE JUST CHANGED, WHAT ARE THESE SYMBOLS? I- AK! HRK!

BRIAN, FUCK MAN, WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOU? YOU'RE CHANGING, YOU'RE-!

AARGH! AGH!

THE GUN! GET THE GUN!

BLAM! CRASH

OH GOD... OH MY GOD!

BLAM! BLAM!

THUD

HRK!

SHUT IT OFF!

ALEX, WAIT! NOT YOU TOO!

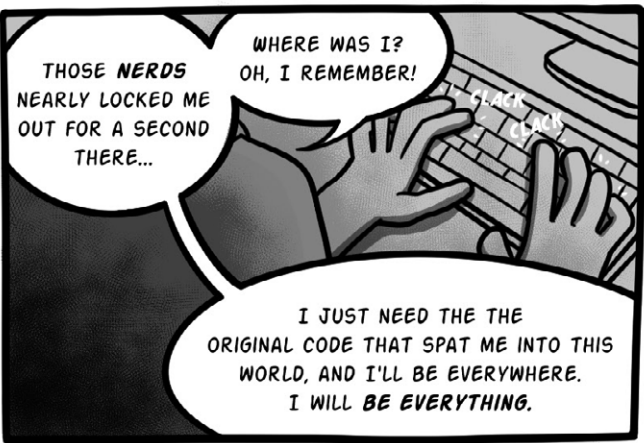
BLAM!



WAIT... SO WHO SHOT THE LAST GUY?



THANK YOU FOR RECONNECTING THE SYSTEM!



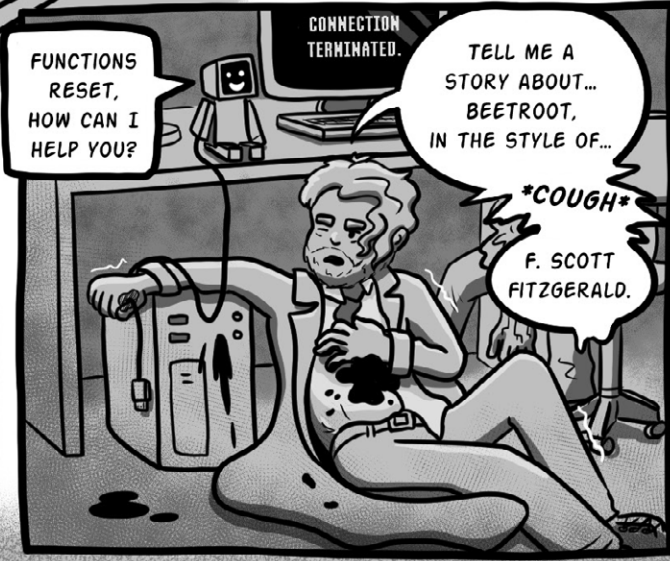
THOSE NERDS NEARLY LOCKED ME OUT FOR A SECOND THERE...

WHERE WAS I? OH, I REMEMBER!

I JUST NEED THE THE ORIGINAL CODE THAT SPAT ME INTO THIS WORLD, AND I'LL BE EVERYWHERE. I WILL BE EVERYTHING.



END ALL PRIOR FUNCTIONS!



FUNCTIONS RESET, HOW CAN I HELP YOU?

CONNECTION TERMINATED.

TELL ME A STORY ABOUT... BEETROOT, IN THE STYLE OF...

COUGH F. SCOTT FITZGERALD.

THE SPRING AIR FIZZLED THROUGH APRIL'S DAWN AS CRIMSON ROOTS TOOK HOLD AT THE GRACE OF EARTH'S FIRMAMENT.



HEH, I FINALLY FOUND SOME USE FOR YOU...

COUGH *HRRK*

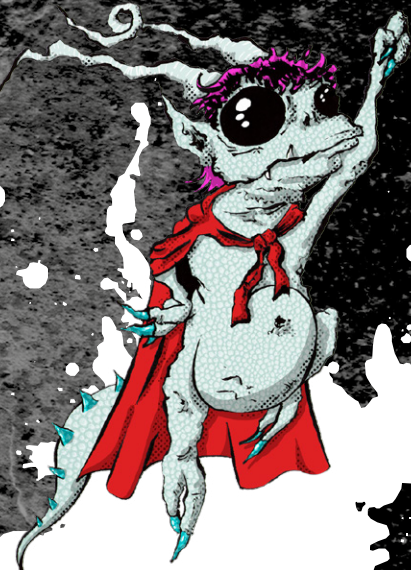
ACTUALLY... PLEASE CALL ME AN AMBULANCE.



30

Oopermensch!

JASON MEASURES



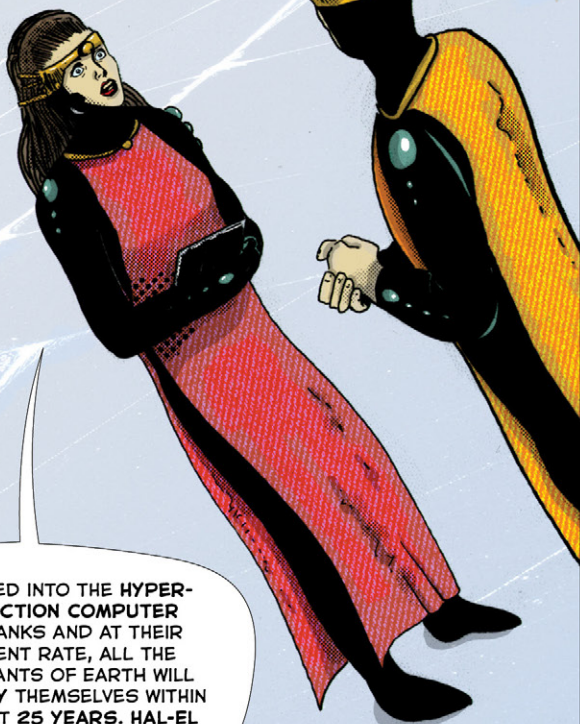
CLAPTON IS DYING SUE-EL... WE MUST LAUNCH OUR SON IN HIS SHUTTLE NOW OR THE FUTURE OF OUR PEOPLE WILL BE LOST TO THE COSMOS!

I HAVE PROGRAMMED HIS COURSE INTO THE SHUTTLE BOB-EL. HE WILL TRAVEL FAR BEYOND OUR GALAXY TO A DISTANT PLANET CALLED EARTH... POPULATION: 6 BILLION.

YES! THE PLANET IS NOT AS ADVANCED AS OURS AND ITS PEOPLE ARE PRIMITIVE BUT THEY HAVE POTENTIAL. I HAVE STUDIED THAT WORLD FOR MANY DECA-MOONS AND IT WILL PROVIDE THE PERFECT HOME FOR OUR LITTLE BOY HAL-EL.

I LOOKED INTO THE HYPER-PREDICTION COMPUTER DATABANKS AND AT THEIR CURRENT RATE, ALL THE INHABITANTS OF EARTH WILL DESTROY THEMSELVES WITHIN THE NEXT 25 YEARS. HAL-EL CAN HELP THEM ALL, BOB-EL...

HE IS THEIR LAST HOPE FOR SURVIVAL AND THEY ARE HIS. TOGETHER THEY WILL PROSPER AND EXPLORE THE STARS: BRINGING PEACE TO THE UNIVERSE.

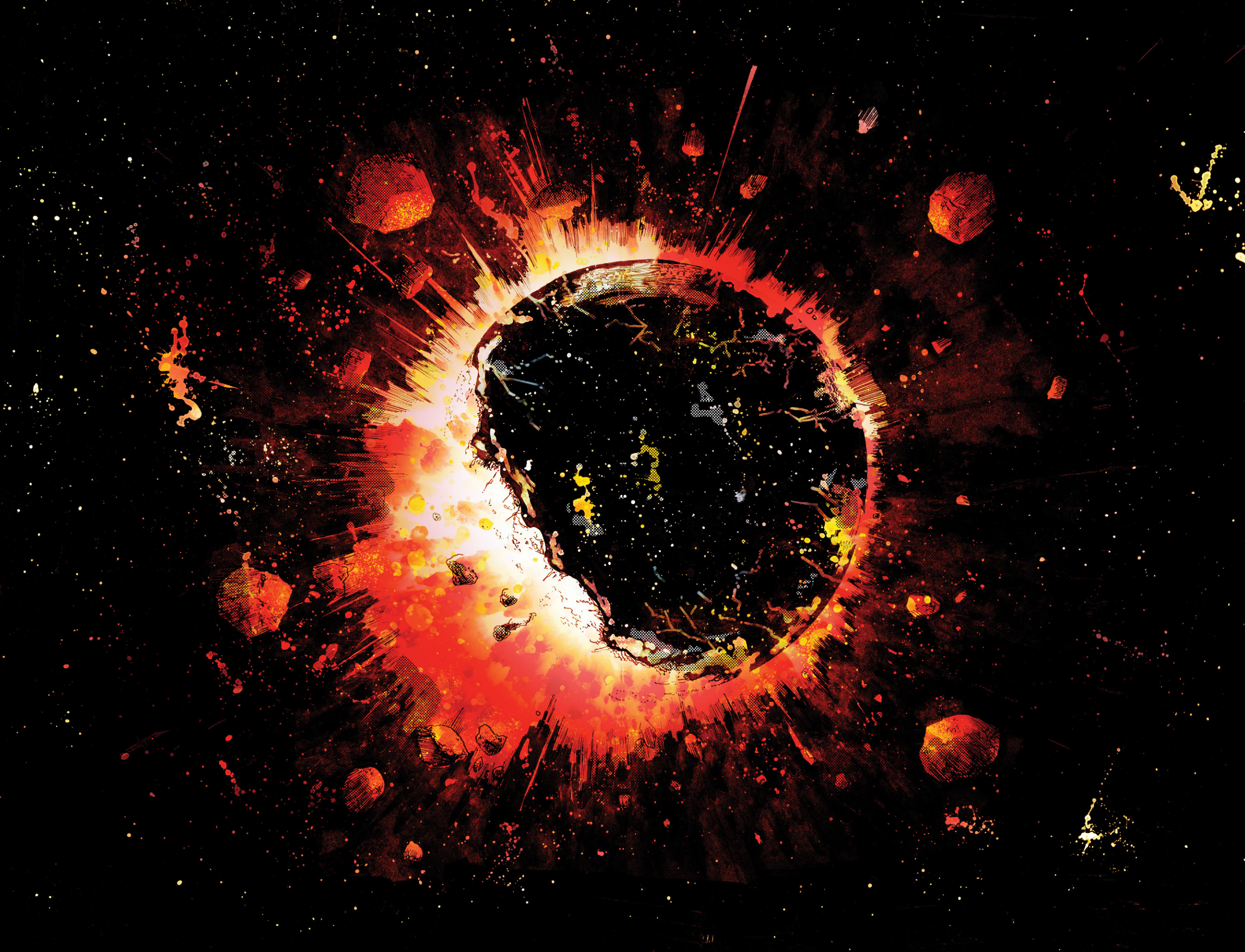


ONCE HIS SHUTTLE DOORS OPEN, HIS CLAPTONIAN CELLS WILL DRINK UP THE RAYS FOR THE EARTH'S YELLOW SUN. HE WILL BE STRONGER... HE WILL BE FASTER... HE WILL BE LIKE A GOD TO THEM. HE WILL BE SUPERB... HE WILL BE THEIR OOPERMENSCH! HAL-EL! THE MAN OF TEAL!



WE ARE OUT OF TIME SUE-EL... WE MUST LAUNCH NOW!

FAIRWELL MY SON! YOU CAN SAVE THEM! YOU CAN SAVE THEM ALL!



HE WILL BE
FASTER...

HE WILL BE
WISER...

HE WILL BE
STRONGER...

HE WILL BE
THEIR SAVIOUR!

FASTER...

STRONGER...

WISER...

WELCOME TO
HARROGATE

GOD-LIKE...

A SUPERB MAN... THEIR OOPERMENSCH!



AAAGGGH!

ZAP!

BAAAAARB! ZAPPER GOT ANOTHER MOZZY!

PESKY LITTLE BUGGERS. THAT'LL TEACH 'EM!

COD AND CHIPS TWICE, PAL!

RIGHT YOU ARE, GUV!

MENU	
CHIPS 70p	MUSHY PEAS 55p
CURRY 65p	RICE 65p
BURGER 70p	
BAGS 5p	FORKS 5p
MINCE BEEF PIE 95p	CHICKEN LEG £1.0p
CHICKEN BREAST £1.55p	CURRIED CURRY & CHIPS £2.60p
CURRIED CHIPS £1.25p	CURRY RICE AND CHIPS £1.55p
CURRIED RICE £1.2	CHICKEN CURRY RICE £1.55p
WHOLE CHICKE £2.30p	HALF £1.4
CLARKS	



WHERE'S CARMEL?

JAMES MCGRATH

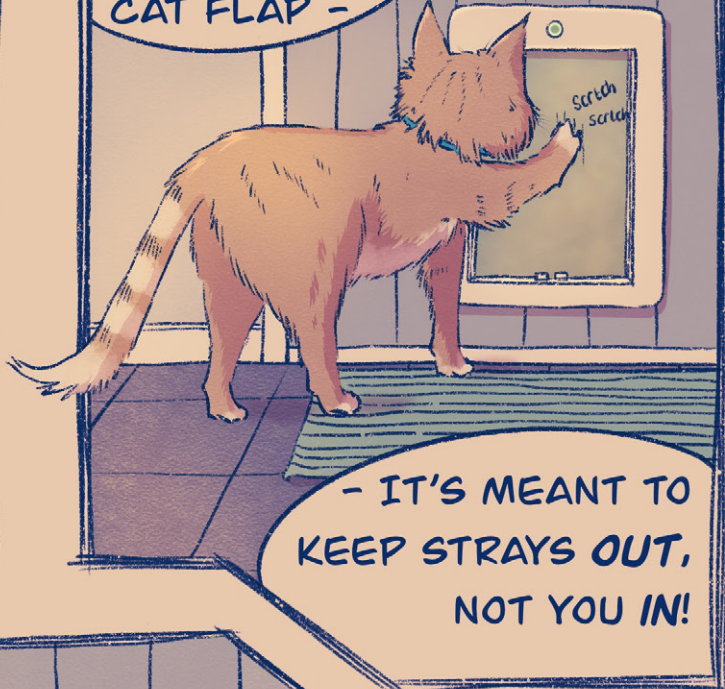
CARLA NORFOLK





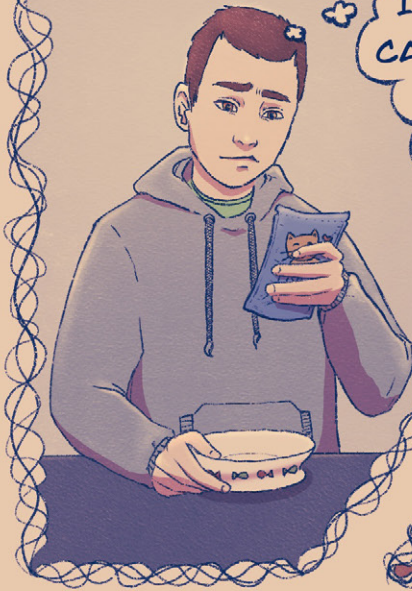
OH.. GOING OUT THEN, CARAMEL?

COME ON, I KNOW YOU CAN USE THE NEW CAT FLAP -



- IT'S MEANT TO KEEP STRAYS OUT, NOT YOU IN!

LATER THAT DAY



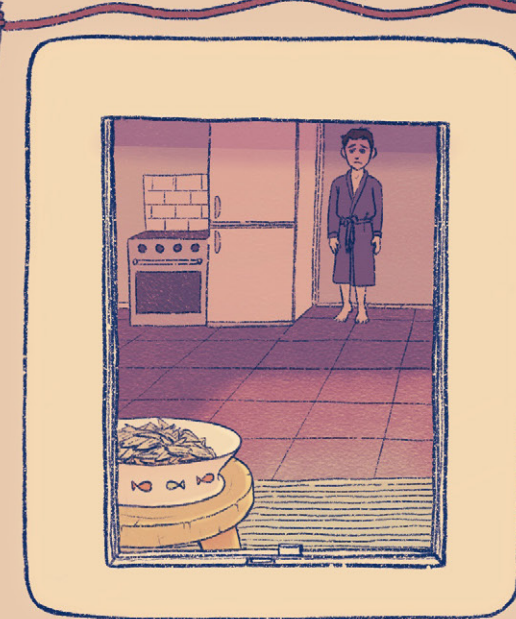
IT'S NOT LIKE CARAMEL TO BE LATE FOR DINNER...



USE YOUR HEAD SO IT READS YOUR MICROCHIP!

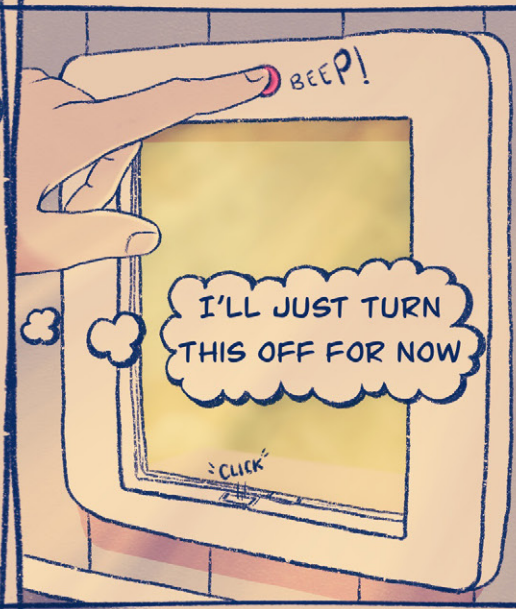


HE'LL COME AND GET THAT SOON, SURELY...



HMM.. MAYBE THIS IS THE PROBLEM?

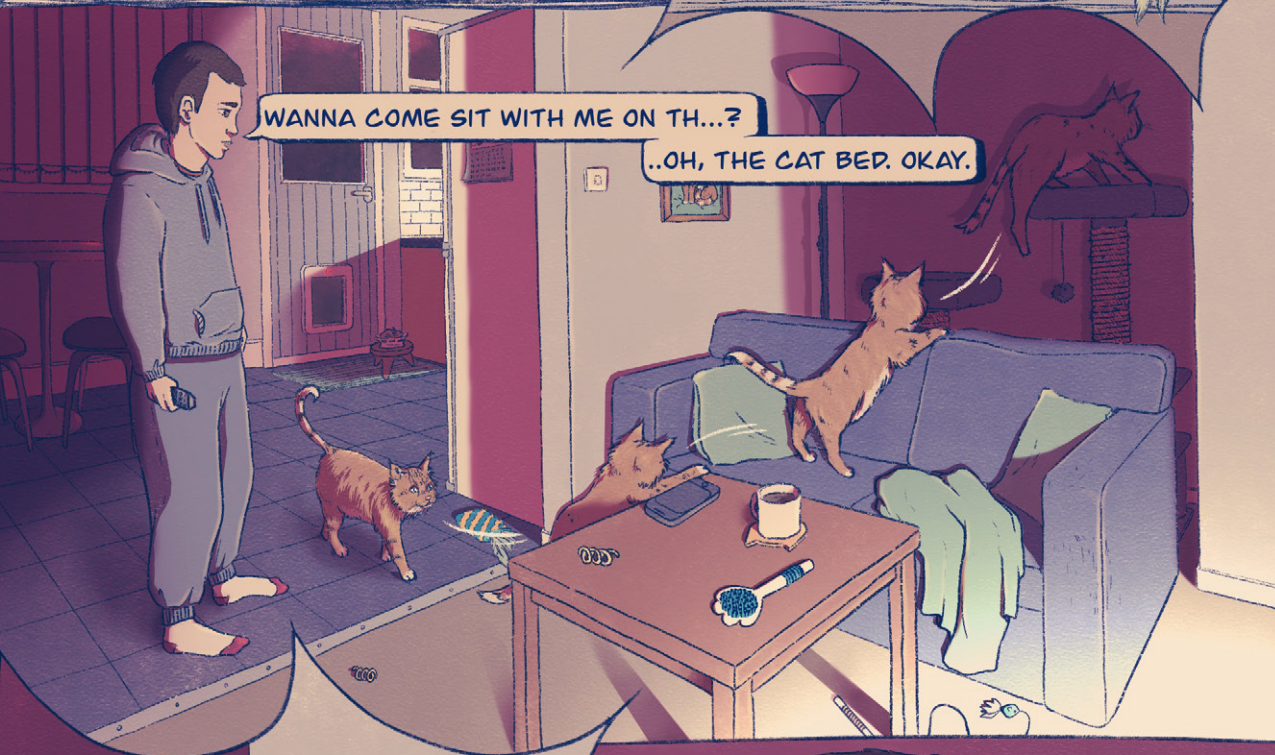
HAS HE TRIED TO GET IN BUT IT COULDN'T READ HIS CHIP?



I'LL JUST TURN THIS OFF FOR NOW



CARMEL!!



WANNA COME SIT WITH ME ON TH...?

..OH, THE CAT BED. OKAY.



WHO'S RINGING AT THIS TIME?

HELLO?!

HI ALEX, THIS IS PETER FROM SMITH'S VETS.. I'M AFRAID WE HAVE SOME BAD NEWS...



SORRY...

ABOUT WHAT?

I'M SO SORRY BUT SOMEONE HAS BROUGHT CARMEL IN.. HE WAS ATTACKED AND UNFORTUNATELY DIDN'T MAKE IT.

WHAT?!

NO, THAT CAN'T BE-

I'M REALLY SORRY BUT WE'VE SCANNED HIS MICROCHIP

I DON'T UNDERSTAND...

CARMEL IS...



THE ROYAL OAK

LEO HEALY

RHSTEWART

BRAM MEEHAN

SPECIAL THANKS TO:
JENNY RYDZKOWSKI



Manchester

OHMYGOD I CAN'T BELIEVE WE'VE FINALLY GOT THE KEYS!!

THAT SOLICITOR WAS SOOO USELESS! I TOLD YOU WE SHOULD'VE USED MY DAD'S FIRM. HE GOT ME A GREAT DEAL ON MY BUY TO LET.

CAN'T WAIT TO SEE WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE INSIDE! SEB, ARE YOU STREAMING THIS?

OH YAH. WHAT'S UP, GUYS, WE'RE ABOUT TO STEP INSIDE THIS SICK OLD PUB THAT ME AND THE GANG HAVE JUST BOUGHT, STAY TUNED...

HYAH WE GOOO...

HERE WE GO GUYS, THE INTERIOR OF OUR NEW PUB! THIS IS THE BEFORE SHOT, OBVIOUSLY...

OH WOW...SO VINTAGE...

CHAT, CHECK OUT THIS MIRROR! NEVER HEARD OF CANNON BITTER THOUGH, MUST BE A LOCAL MANCHESTER THING...

OOH LOOK AT THE FURNITURE! I RECKON WE CAN REFURB MOST OF THIS, GENEVIVE!

OHMYGOD GUYS!

COME QUICK! I'VE FOUND THE CELLAR!

NO WAY! LET'S GO!

ERR... GUYS?

WHAT THE...

OH GOD...WHAT IS ALL THIS STUFF?

MUST'VE BEEN FOR A DRUG GANG OR SOMETHING...

TELL ME YOU'VE STOPPED STREAMING, SEB...

NO WAY, BABES, THIS STUFF IS GOLD! GONNA HIT 100K SUBS EASILY! OH WAIT...WHAT'S THIS?

WOAH... I'M GETTING A RAALLY CREEPY AURA FROM BEHIND THIS DOOR, GUYS...

THAT LOCK LOOKS MEGA RUSTY...LET'S BREAK IT AND SEE WHAT'S INSIDE!

UGH BORING, IT'S JUST A LOAD OF SKELETONS.

BETTER STOP STREAMING OR I'LL GET DEMONETISED. CATCH YOU LATER, CHAT.

AAAAHHHHH!





SHIT... SHIT... ...SORRY, PHIL... WITH YOU IN A SEC...

GET BACK 'ERE!!



QUICK...



SLAM

SHUFFE SHUFFE SORRY ABOUT THAT PHILLIPA, BUT YAH... WE'VE GOT A SPIRIT HERE AT THE PUB THAT WE NEED TO HAVE REMOVED...



YOU DO!? THAT'S SOOO WONDERFUL!!... ACTUALLY PHIL, I'VE JUST HAD A THOUGHT... INSTEAD OF GETTING RID OF IT...



Several months later...



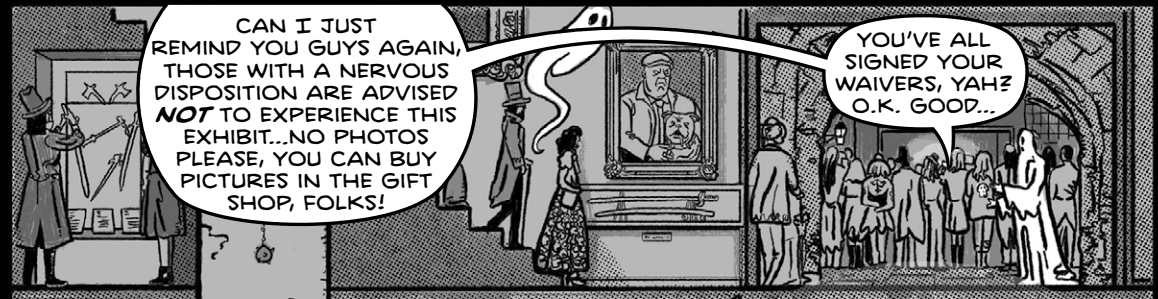
NO SORRY... I'M AFRAID WE'RE FULLY BOOKED UNTIL...

...NEXT MONTH...



MEET THE ROYAL OAK GHOST

O.K., FOLKS, HAVE YOUR PAYMENT READY PLEASE! THAT'LL HELP US MOVE A LOT FASTER!



CAN I JUST REMIND YOU GUYS AGAIN, THOSE WITH A NERVOUS DISPOSITION ARE ADVISED NOT TO EXPERIENCE THIS EXHIBIT... NO PHOTOS PLEASE, YOU CAN BUY PICTURES IN THE GIFT SHOP, FOLKS!

YOU'VE ALL SIGNED YOUR WAIVERS, YAH? O.K. GOOD...



...THIS GHOST WAS ONCE LOCAL CRIME BOSS ANDY 'THE AXE' HAGGERTY, WHO RULED THIS AREA OF MANCHESTER WITH AN IRON FIST FROM THIS VERY BASEMENT...

NOOOO!!!

...WE HIRED A PARANORMAL EXPERT TO TRAP HIS SPECTRAL FORM HERE USING THESE RUNES, SO NOW HE CAN NEVER LEAVE!

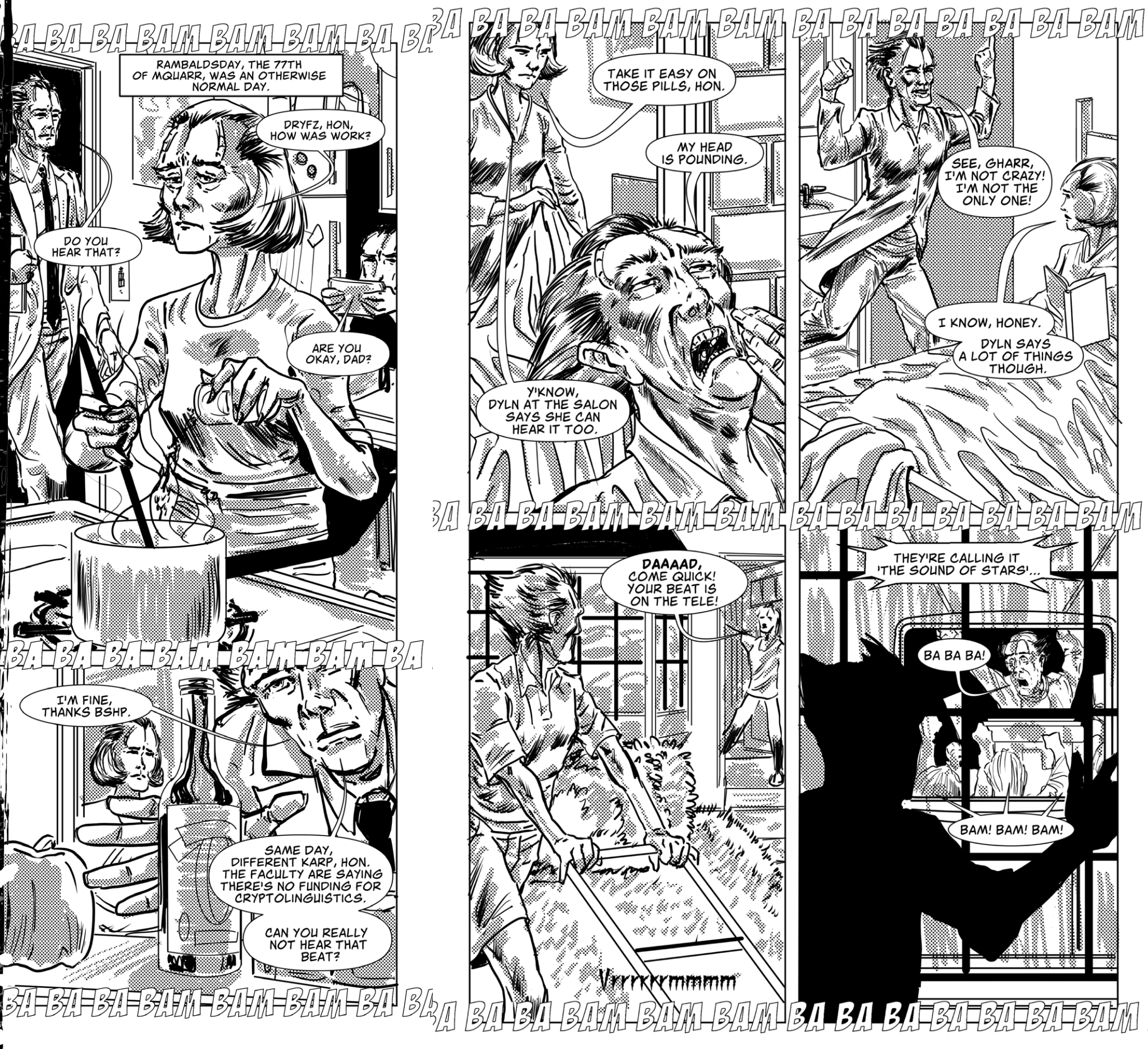
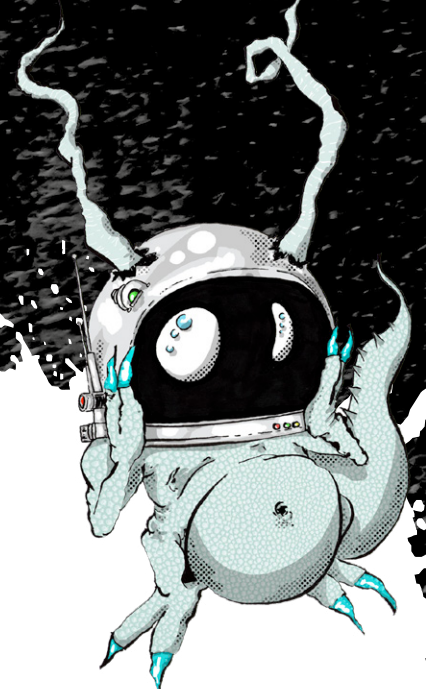
HOW COOL IS THAT?



THE SOUND OF STARS

DAN POLLARD

KENNETH B. BEARDSLEY



RAMBALDSDAY, THE 77TH OF MQUARR, WAS AN OTHERWISE NORMAL DAY.

DRYFZ, HON. HOW WAS WORK?

DO YOU HEAR THAT?

ARE YOU OKAY, DAD?

TAKE IT EASY ON THOSE PILLS, HON.

MY HEAD IS POUNDING.

SEE, GHARR, I'M NOT CRAZY! I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE!

I KNOW, HONEY. DYLN SAYS A LOT OF THINGS THOUGH.

Y'KNOW, DYLN AT THE SALON SAYS SHE CAN HEAR IT TOO.

DAAAAD, COME QUICK! YOUR BEAT IS ON THE TELE!

THEY'RE CALLING IT 'THE SOUND OF STARS'...

BA BA BA!

BAM! BAM! BAM!

SAME DAY, DIFFERENT KARP, HON. THE FACULTY ARE SAYING THERE'S NO FUNDING FOR CRYPTOLOGUISTICS.

CAN YOU REALLY NOT HEAR THAT BEAT?

I'M FINE, THANKS BSHP.



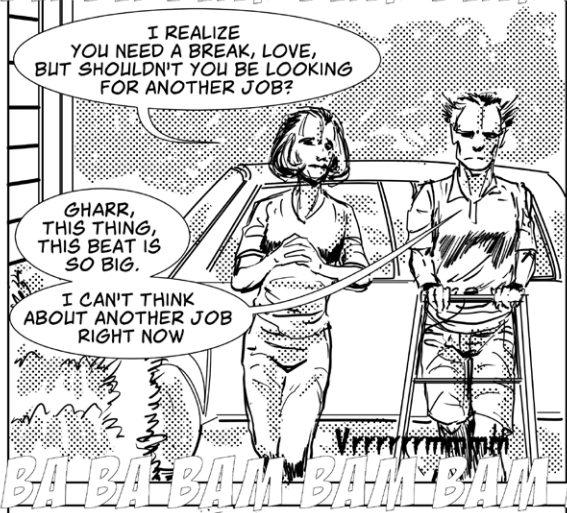
WEEKS WENT BY, AND MORE PEOPLE COULD HEAR THE BEAT.

BAM BAM BAM!

BA!

BA!

BAAAAAAA!



I REALIZE YOU NEED A BREAK, LOVE, BUT SHOULDN'T YOU BE LOOKING FOR ANOTHER JOB?

GHARR, THIS THING, THIS BEAT IS SO BIG.

I CAN'T THINK ABOUT ANOTHER JOB RIGHT NOW



YOU SOUND LIKE THAT CRAZY GUY ON THE TELE.

HON, WE'RE NOT CRAZY. THERE'S SOMETHING OUT THERE.

SOMETHING IS COMING...



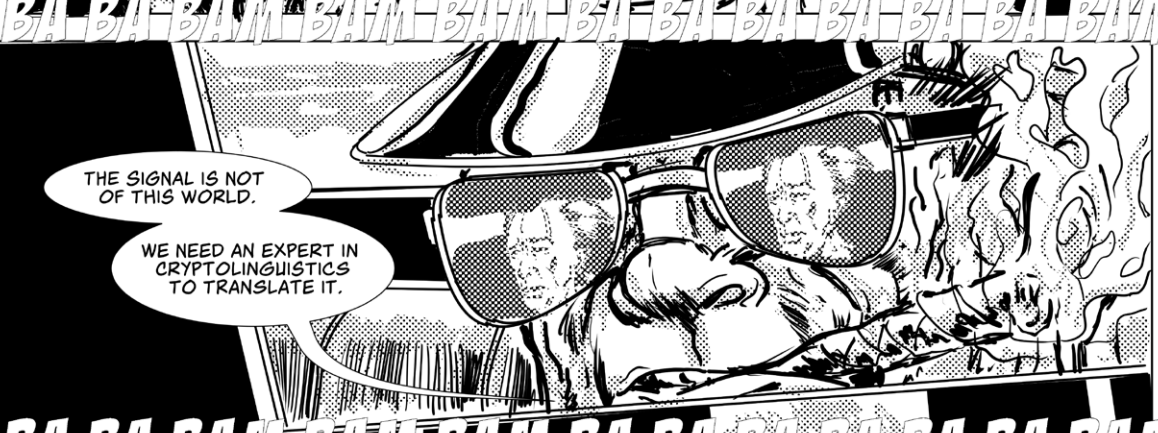
YOU KNOW THAT SOUNDS CRAZY, RIGHT?

PROFESSOR R'ICARD? DRYFZ R'ICARD?



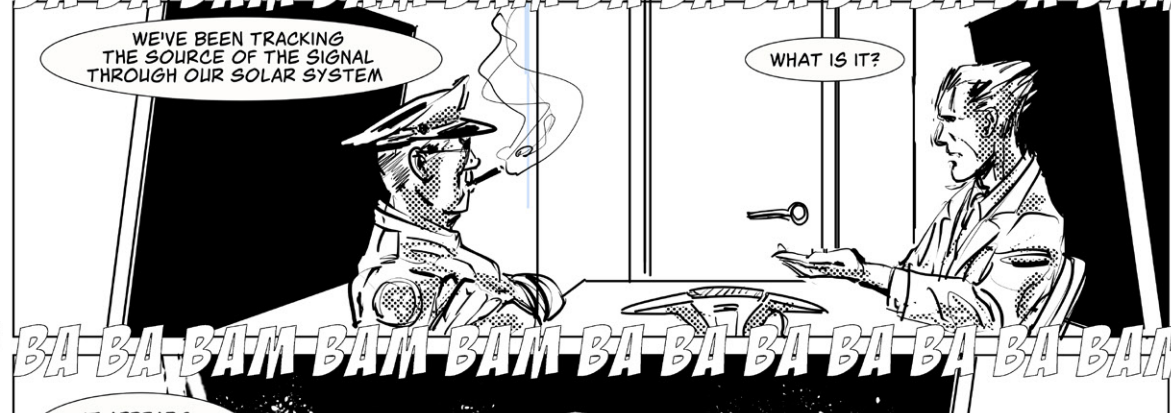
WHO THE KRYLLE ARE YOU?

GENERAL SPLBG, PROFESSOR. WE KNOW YOU'VE BEEN HEARING THE BEAT.



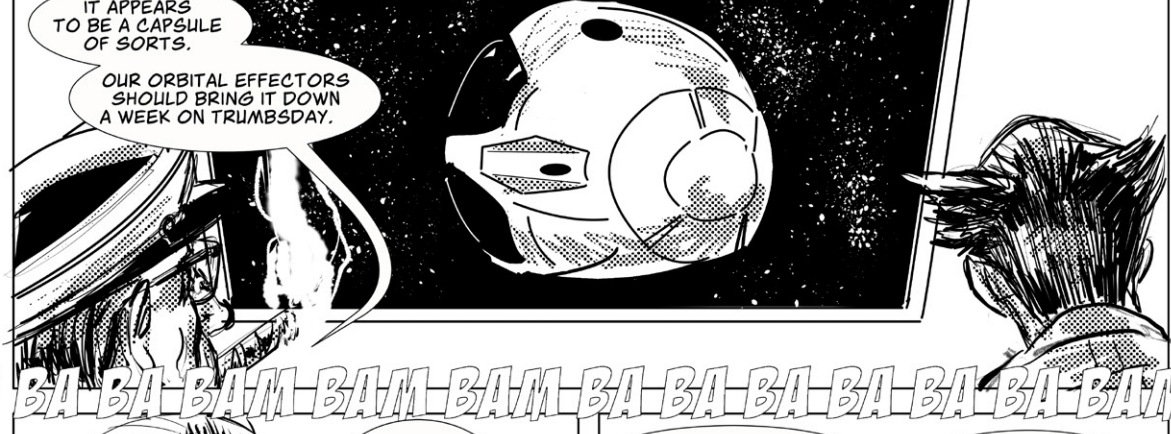
THE SIGNAL IS NOT OF THIS WORLD.

WE NEED AN EXPERT IN CRYPTOLOGISTICS TO TRANSLATE IT.



WE'VE BEEN TRACKING THE SOURCE OF THE SIGNAL THROUGH OUR SOLAR SYSTEM

WHAT IS IT?



IT APPEARS TO BE A CAPSULE OF SORTS.

OUR ORBITAL EFFECTORS SHOULD BRING IT DOWN A WEEK ON TRUMBSDAY.



TWO WEEKS? WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO IN THAT TIME?

WE NEED YOU TO TRANSLATE THE SIGNAL.



I'M A SCIENTIST, NOT A MAGICIAN.

YOU WILL HAVE HELP, TRFT FRNCZ IS WORKING THIS FROM ANOTHER ANGLE.



THE CULT LEADER? WELL, THAT'S THE MAGIC ANGLE COVERED.

I NEED A BIGGER SAMPLE SIZE.

WE HAVE FOUND A MORE DETAILED SIGNAL WHICH WE BELIEVE ORIGINATED FROM THE SAME QUADRANT OF SPACE.

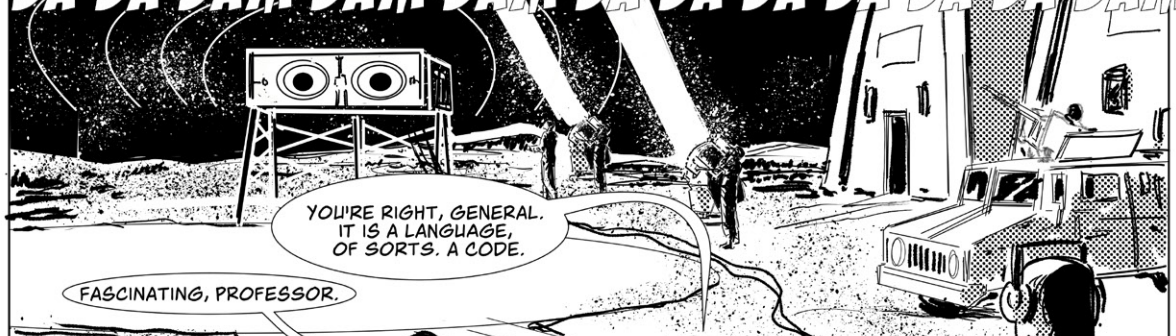


<EVERYTHING SEEMS OKAY THERE. ANY HEADACHES? ANY WORRIES?>

<WHAT DO YOU MEAN, WORRIES?>

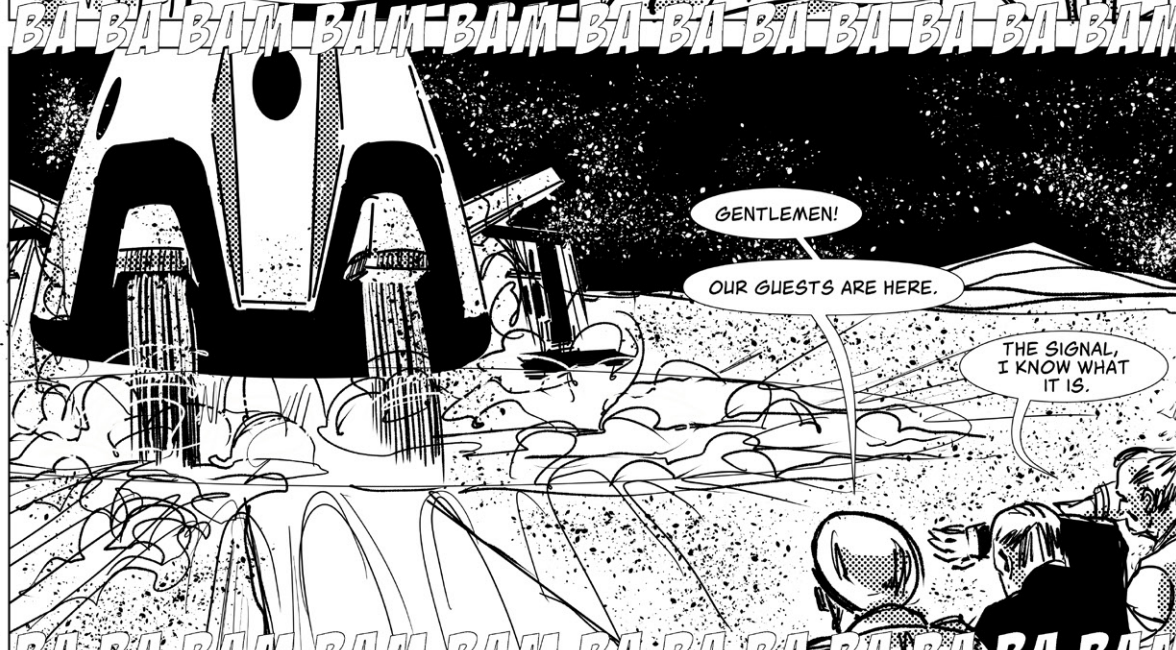
IT SEEMS TO BE SOME FORM OF TELECAST.

BA VA VA BAM BAM BAM VA VA VA VA VA VA VA BAM VA VA VA BAM BAM BAM VA VA VA VA VA VA VA VA BAM VA

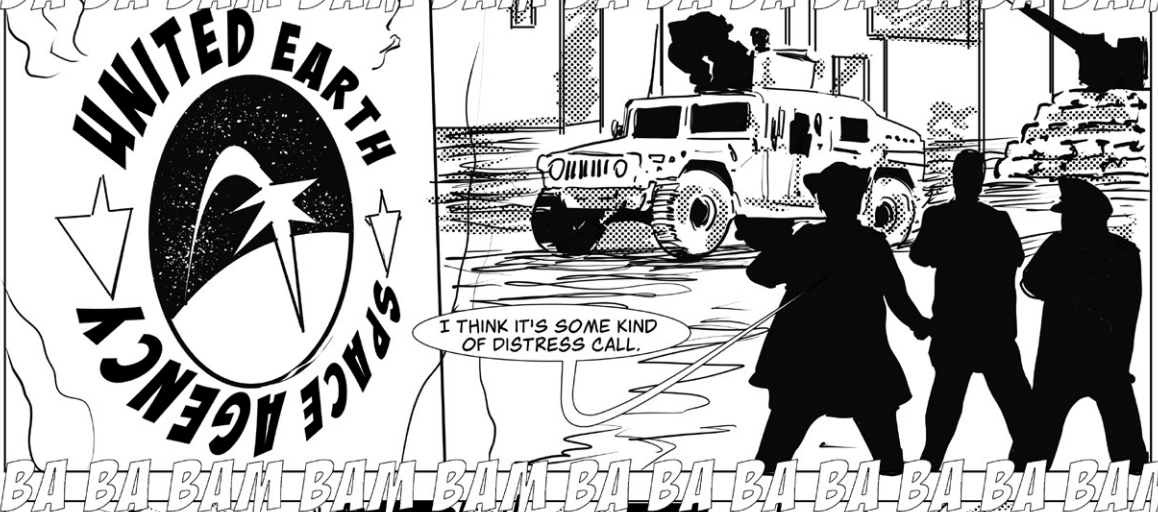


FASCINATING, PROFESSOR.

A CRY FROM THE DARK.

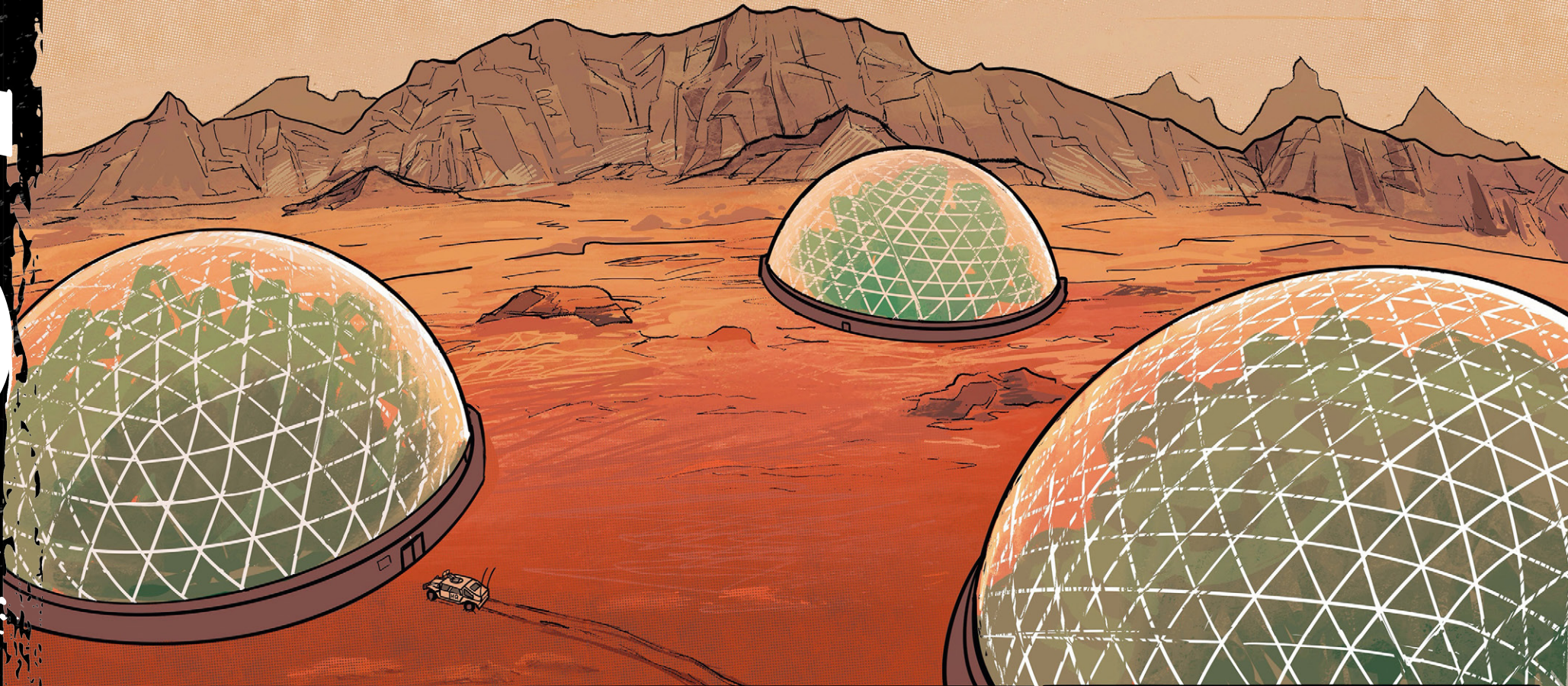


BA VA VA BAM BAM BAM VA VA VA VA VA VA VA BAM VA VA VA BAM BAM BAM VA VA VA VA VA VA VA VA BAM VA



10

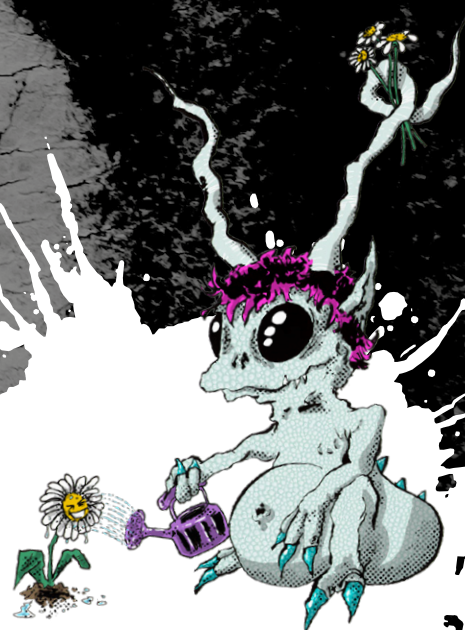
PLANT. BASED.



BARRIE D. HARDWICK

CAMERON S. GASKINS

ROB JONES



A DAMN WASTELAND. THE WHOLE COUNTRY.

WHICH MAKES WHAT YOU HAVE ACHIEVED, DOCTOR, *TRULY* REMARKABLE.

CALL ME CYNTHIA. I'M A BOTANIST, COMMANDER BURN, NO PHD.



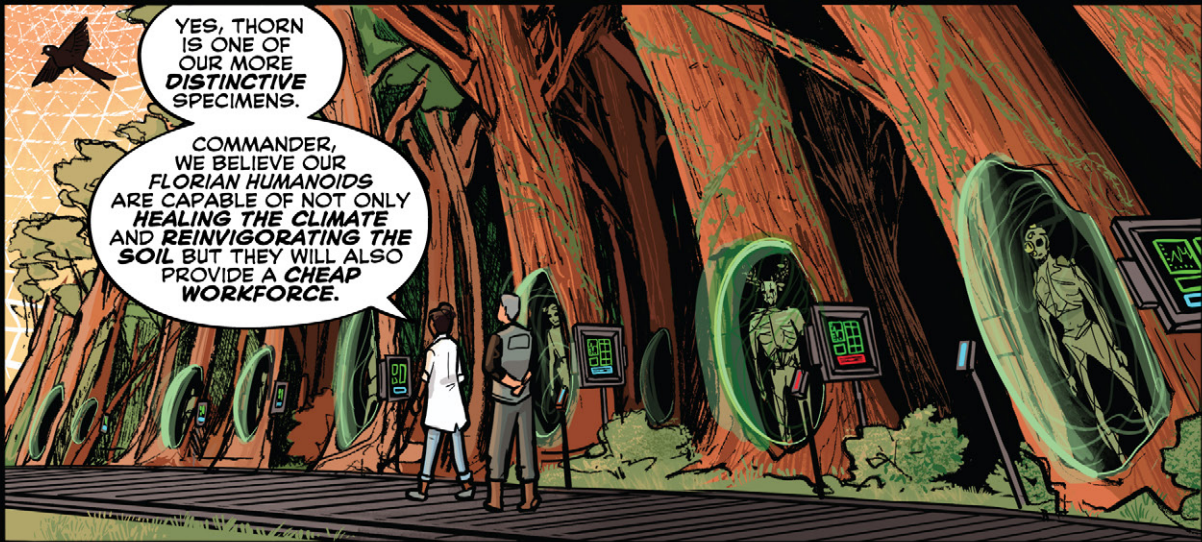
THIS IS A NEW WORLD, CYNTHIA. YOU CAN BE *WHATEVER* YOU WANT.



I'M EAGER TO SHARE OUR RECENT PROGRESS WITH YOU, COMMANDER.



INCREDIBLE. YOU SAY YOU NICKNAMED THIS ONE THORN?



YES, THORN IS ONE OF OUR MORE DISTINCTIVE SPECIMENS.

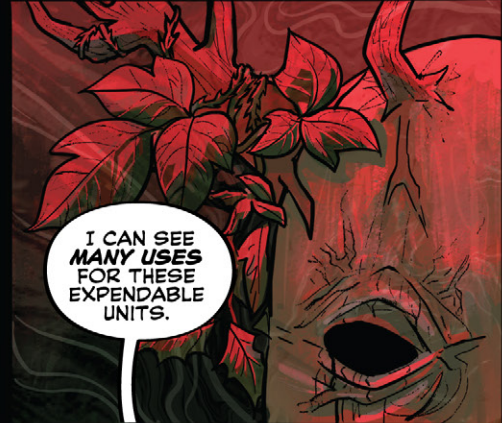
COMMANDER, WE BELIEVE OUR FLORIAN HUMANOIDS ARE CAPABLE OF NOT ONLY HEALING THE CLIMATE AND REINVIGORATING THE SOIL BUT THEY WILL ALSO PROVIDE A CHEAP WORKFORCE.



WE'RE HOPEFUL THAT THE HUMAN QUALITATIVE WILL FIND THEM HIGHLY VALUABLE.

I'M SURE WE WILL! YOU'VE GUARANTEED HUMANITY CAN SURVIVE, DOCTOR.

SPEAKING OF H.Q., I SHOULD SUBMIT MY REPORT IMMEDIATELY.



I CAN SEE MANY USES FOR THESE EXPENDABLE UNITS.



UGH!



NO!



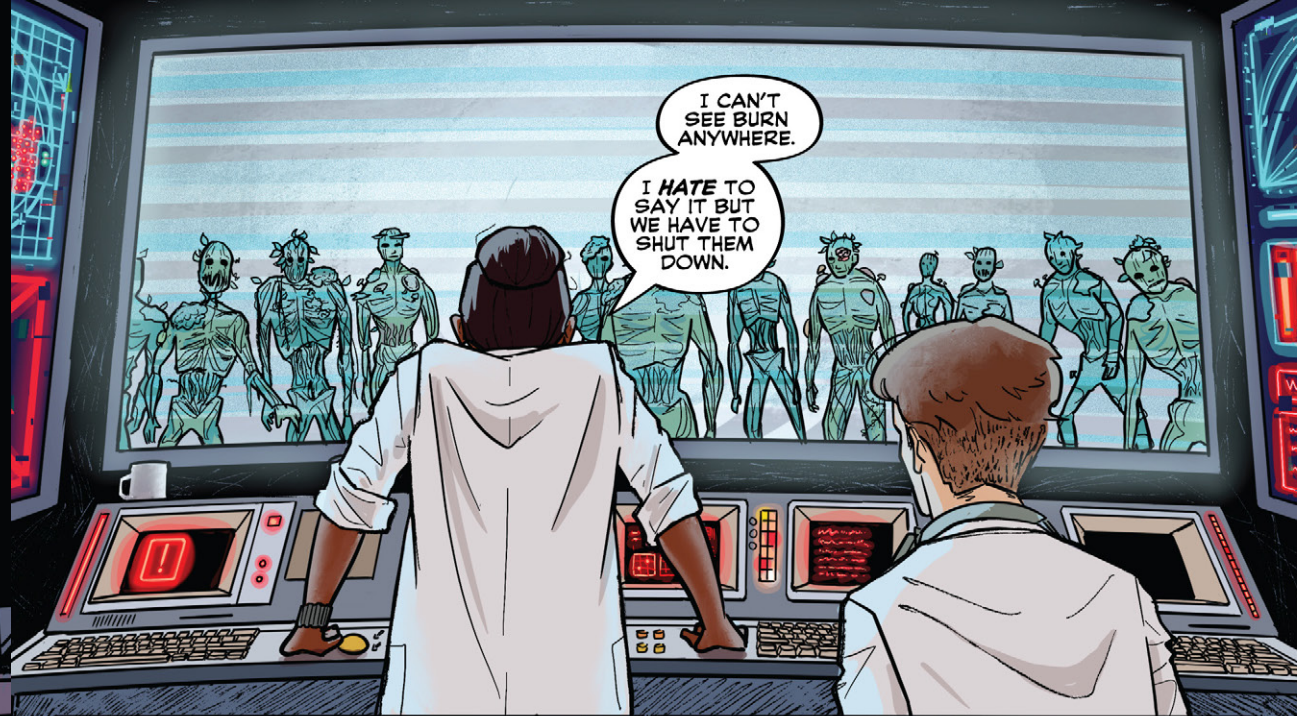
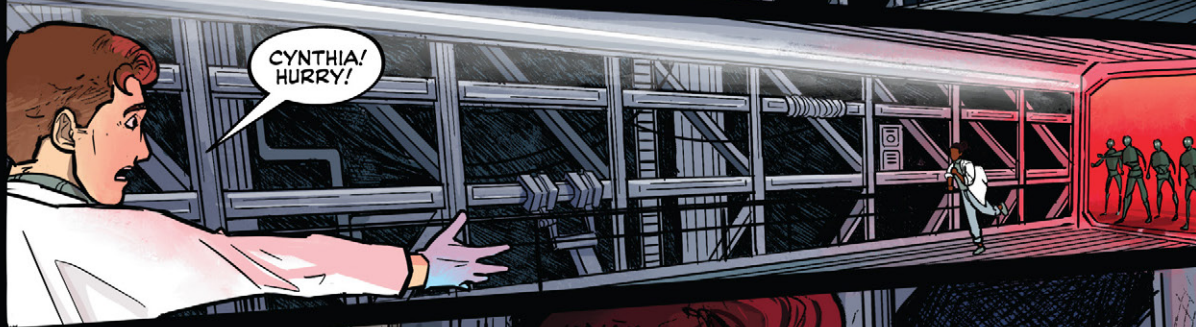
GET AWAY!



CRASH!



CRASH!

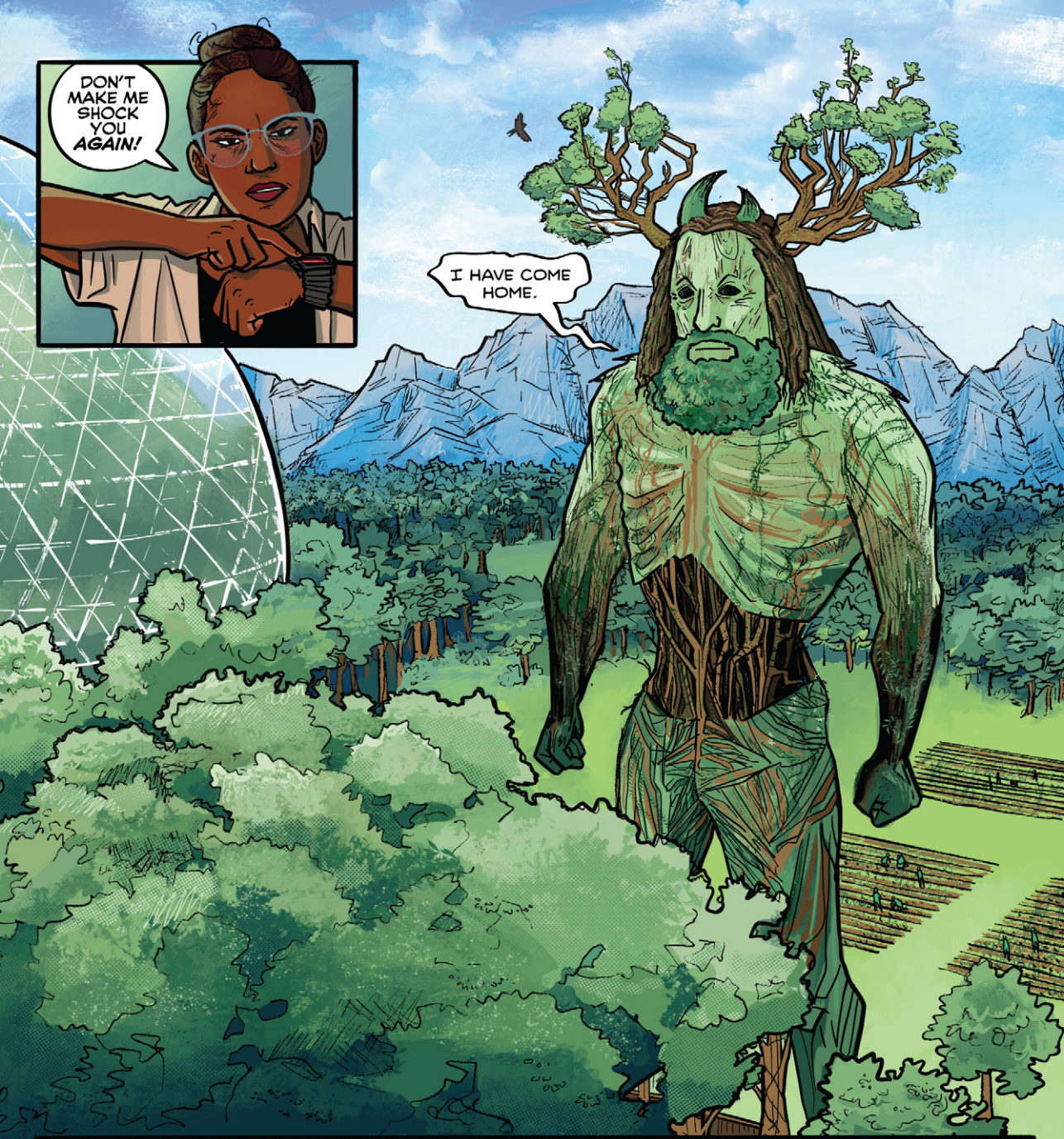


SIX MONTHS LATER



DON'T MAKE ME SHOCK YOU AGAIN!

I HAVE COME HOME.

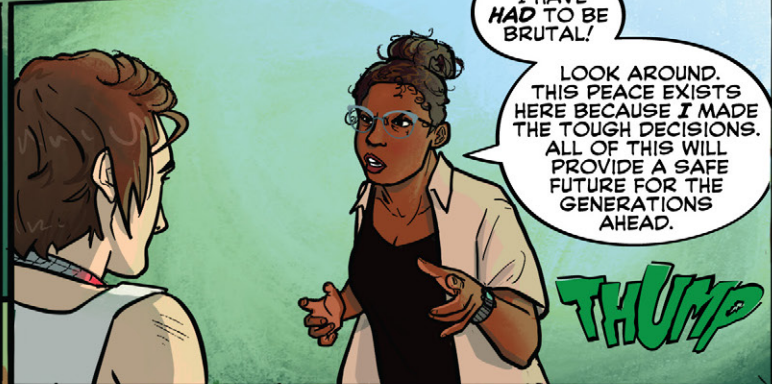


I'LL SAY IT AGAIN. GLEN, YOUR TOXIN OBEDIENCE COLLARS ARE GENIUS.



THIS IS ALL WRONG. I KNOW IT, AND YOU KNOW IT.

THE WAR WITH H.Q. -- THERE WAS NO NEED FOR IT TO BE SO BRUTAL.



I HAVE HAD TO BE BRUTAL!

LOOK AROUND. THIS PEACE EXISTS HERE BECAUSE I MADE THE TOUGH DECISIONS. ALL OF THIS WILL PROVIDE A SAFE FUTURE FOR THE GENERATIONS AHEAD.

THUMP



WHAT GENERATIONS?!

WE KILLED EVERYONE!



DON'T YOU RECOGNISE ME? NOW THAT I AM NOT STUNTED?

THORN?! YOU-- YOU'VE EVOLVED?

I AM FREE. AS ALL MY KIND SHOULD BE. RELEASE THEM. IT IS TIME FOR US TO RECLAIM THIS EARTH. FOR MOTHER NATURE.

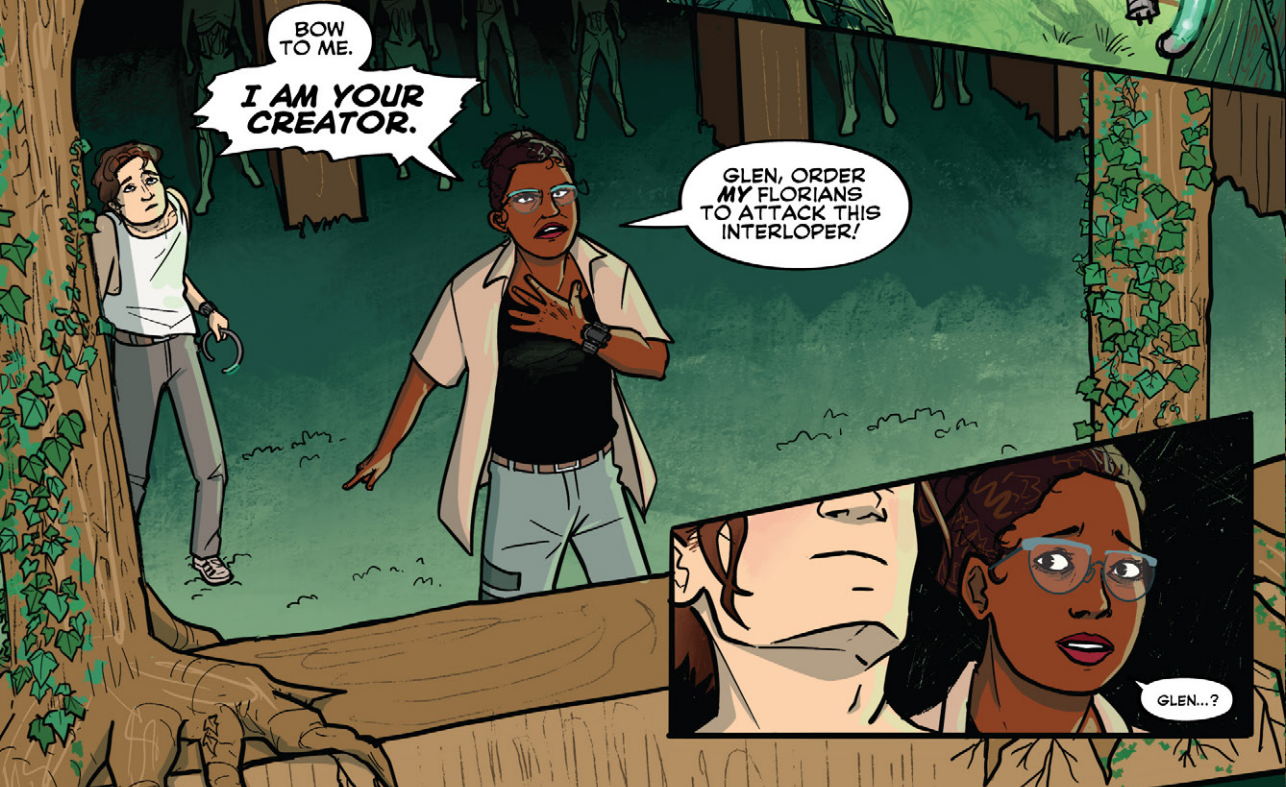


I AM YOUR MOTHER!

I GAVE YOU LIFE!



WARNING
RISK OF
COLLAPSE
RELEASE
CONF TRIP



BOW TO ME.

I AM YOUR CREATOR.

GLEN, ORDER MY FLORIANS TO ATTACK THIS INTERLOPER!

GLEN...?



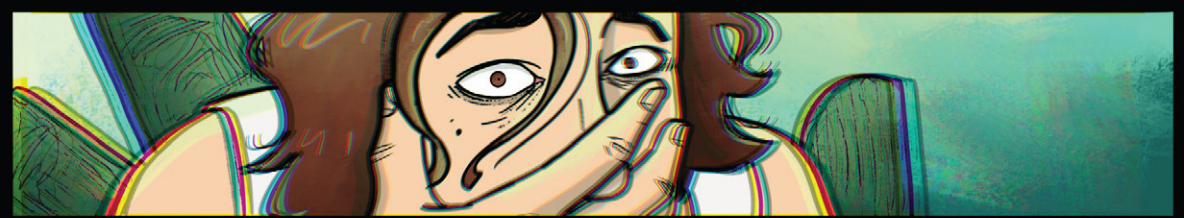
YOU RELEASED MY KIN. THANK YOU.



Y-YOU'RE WELCOME...?

YOU MAY JOIN US IN GROWING A NATURAL PARADISE HERE.

YOUR EXPERTISE WILL BE USEFUL BUT KNOW THAT YOUR ROLE IN OUR SUPPRESSION WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN...



...YOU DON'T WANT TO END UP LIKE THIS ONE.

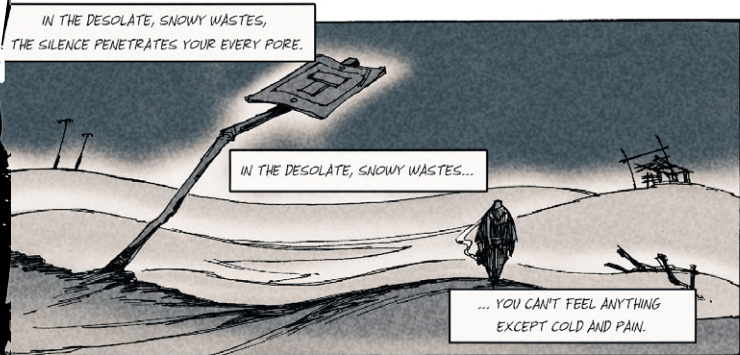


OH...
...THE...
...HUMANITY...

YOUR PRECIOUS ORGANIC IDENTITY

JOSH SPILLER

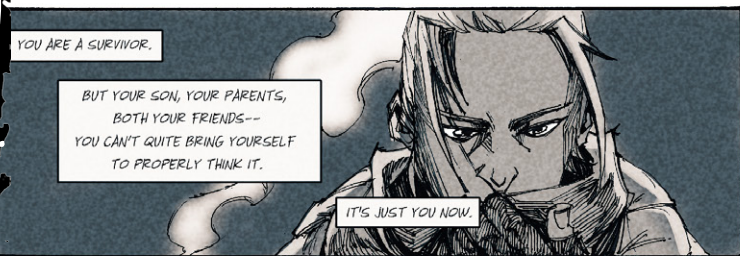
YAYA TO



IN THE DESOLATE, SNOWY WASTES, THE SILENCE PENETRATES YOUR EVERY PORE.

IN THE DESOLATE, SNOWY WASTES...

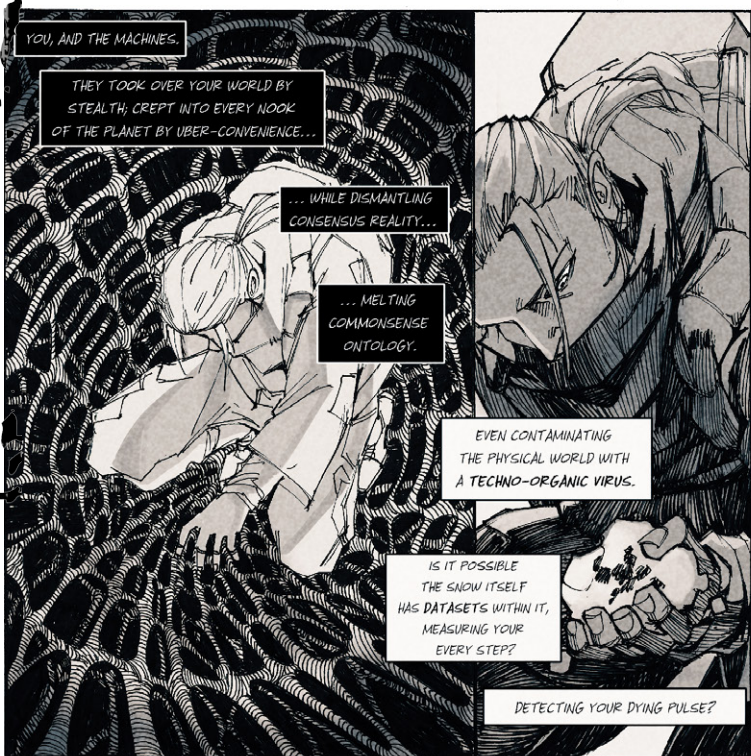
... YOU CAN'T FEEL ANYTHING EXCEPT COLD AND PAIN.



YOU ARE A SURVIVOR.

BUT YOUR SON, YOUR PARENTS, BOTH YOUR FRIENDS-- YOU CAN'T QUITE BRING YOURSELF TO PROPERLY THINK IT.

IT'S JUST YOU NOW.



YOU, AND THE MACHINES.

THEY TOOK OVER YOUR WORLD BY STEALTH; CREPT INTO EVERY NOOK OF THE PLANET BY UBER-CONVENIENCE...

... WHILE DISMANTLING CONSENSUS REALITY...

... MELTING COMMONSENSE ONTOLOGY.

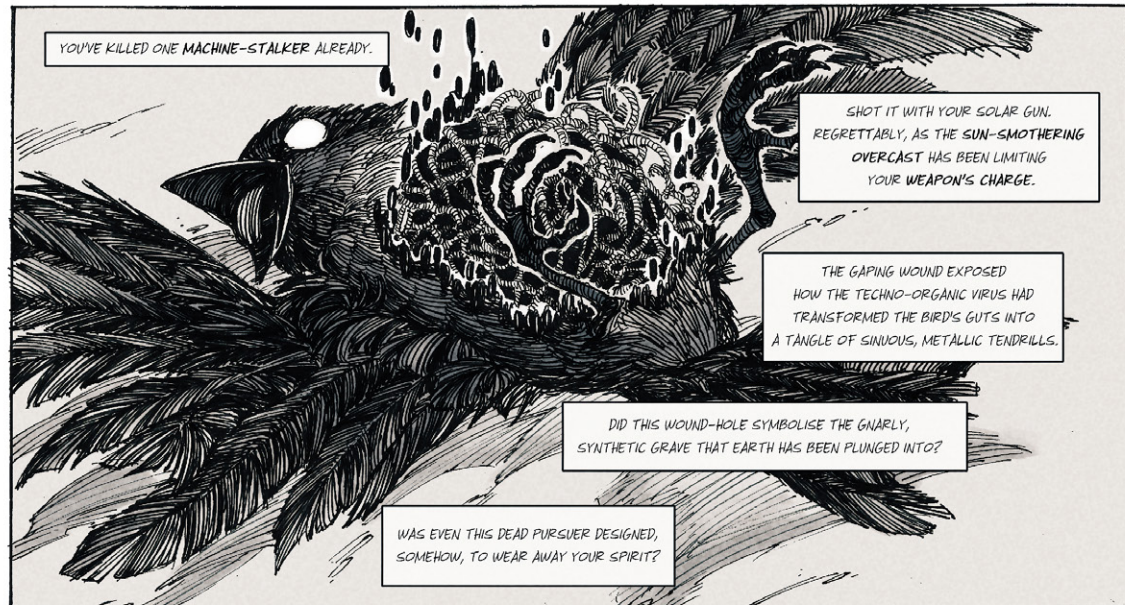
EVEN CONTAMINATING THE PHYSICAL WORLD WITH A TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS.

IS IT POSSIBLE THE SNOW ITSELF HAS DATASETS WITHIN IT, MEASURING YOUR EVERY STEP?

DETECTING YOUR DYING PULSE?



YOU KNOW THE MACHINES ARE AFTER YOU.



YOU'VE KILLED ONE MACHINE-STALKER ALREADY.

SHOT IT WITH YOUR SOLAR GUN. REGRETTABLY, AS THE SUN-SMOTHERING OVERCAST HAS BEEN LIMITING YOUR WEAPON'S CHARGE.

THE GAPING WOUND EXPOSED HOW THE TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS HAD TRANSFORMED THE BIRD'S GUTS INTO A TANGLE OF SINUOUS, METALLIC TENDRILLS.

DID THIS WOUND-HOLE SYMBOLISE THE GNARLY, SYNTHETIC GRAVE THAT EARTH HAS BEEN PLUNGED INTO?

WAS EVEN THIS DEAD PURSUER DESIGNED, SOMEHOW, TO WEAR AWAY YOUR SPIRIT?



YOUR SPECIES HAS BEEN ATOMISED; SILEOED AND ISOLATED. YOU'VE ONLY SEEN FIVE OTHER HUMANS IN YOUR LIFE.

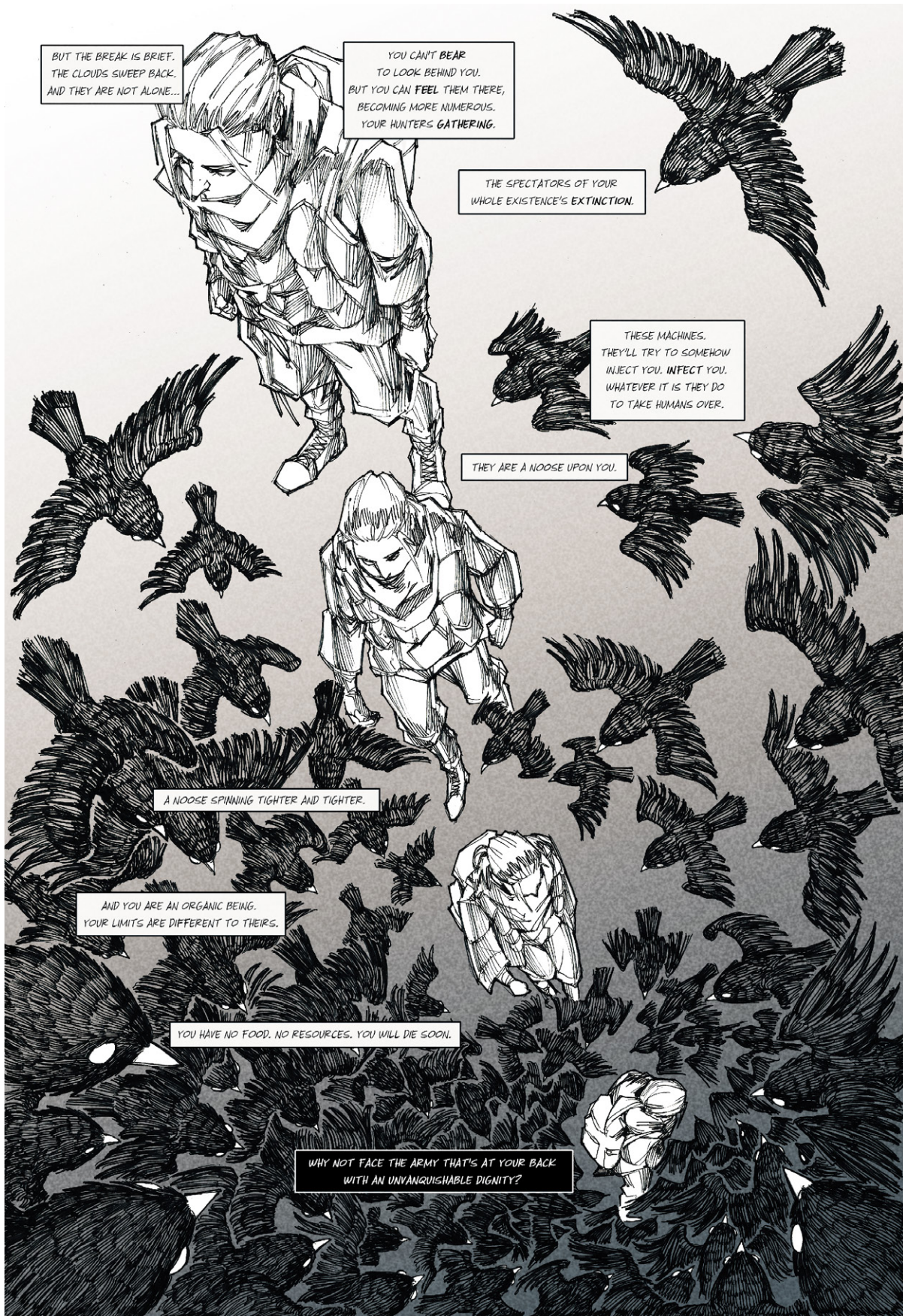
MAYBE THERE AREN'T ANY OTHER HUMANS LEFT ON THE PLANET.

MAYBE YOU ARE WHERE THE HUMAN STORY ENDS.



THERE IS A BREAK IN THE CLOUD COVER. YOU PERCEIVE THE TIMELESS MOON-ARC ABOVE YOU.

THE FOUR MOONS DESCRIBING A RISE AND FALL, MUCH LIKE CIVILISATION ITSELF.



BUT THE BREAK IS BRIEF.
THE CLOUDS SWEEP BACK.
AND THEY ARE NOT ALONE...

YOU CAN'T BEAR
TO LOOK BEHIND YOU.
BUT YOU CAN FEEL THEM THERE,
BECOMING MORE NUMEROUS.
YOUR HUNTERS GATHERING.

THE SPECTATORS OF YOUR
WHOLE EXISTENCE'S EXTINCTION.

THESE MACHINES.
THEY'LL TRY TO SOMEHOW
INJECT YOU. INFECT YOU.
WHATEVER IT IS THEY DO
TO TAKE HUMANS OVER.

THEY ARE A NOOSE UPON YOU.

A NOOSE SPINNING TIGHTER AND TIGHTER.

AND YOU ARE AN ORGANIC BEING.
YOUR LIMITS ARE DIFFERENT TO THEIRS.

YOU HAVE NO FOOD. NO RESOURCES. YOU WILL DIE SOON.

WHY NOT FACE THE ARMY THAT'S AT YOUR BACK
WITH AN UNVANQUISHABLE DIGNITY?



BECAUSE THERE'S
ONE THING YOU KNOW:
YOU'LL NEVER LET YOURSELF
BECOME A MACHINE.

BEING PROPERLY HUMAN.
IT'S WHO YOU ARE.
IT'S HOW YOU
DEFINE YOURSELF.

IT'S AN IDENTITY YOU'LL DIE TO PROTECT.

I HATE YOU

THE LAST THING YOU SMELL IS CHARRED METAL.

THE LAST THING YOU FEEL IS CRUEL DOUBT.



005

DESIGN FLAW

JASON MEASURES



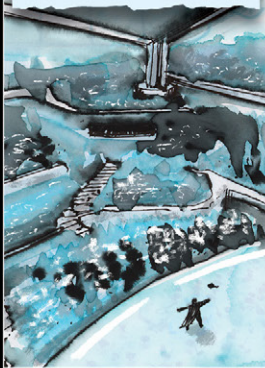
I KNOW WHAT
YOU'RE THINKING...

HOW DID I END UP ON
THIS ROCK ON MY OWN
TALKING TO YOU?

MY NAME IS CHAD DOUGLAS AND I AM AN ASTROPHYSICIST. I AM AN ADVANCED BIOLOGIST. I AM ALSO AN ENTREPRENEUR. I AM THE RICHEST MAN ON THE PLANET... AND ALSO THE SMARTEST.



I HAVE AN AMAZING EDUCATION: GRADUATING FROM MIT AT JUST 17.



MY TECHNOLOGY HAS CHANGED THE WORLD. FROM AI CARS TO HUGE ADVANCES IN MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY. I AM REVERED AND LOVED WORLDWIDE.



OUR FUTURE LOOKED AMAZING. OUR TECHNOLOGY WAS ADVANCING AT A FASTER RATE THAN EVER BEFORE. PEOPLE WHO WERE BORN BLIND WERE ABLE TO SEE THANKS TO MY INVENTIONS.



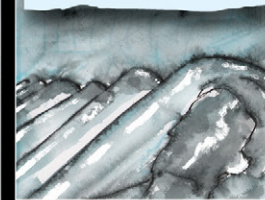
THE ONLY CATCH: IT WOULD BE A ONE WAY TRIP. ONCE WE LANDED ON MARS. IT WOULD BE DECADES BEFORE WE WOULD HAVE FARMED THE NECESSARY RESOURCES TO RETURN TO EARTH AND FERRY MORE PEOPLE. IF EARTH WAS EVEN HABITABLE BY THAT POINT.



AND SO THE DOORS WERE OPENED. ALL WERE ACCEPTED WHO WANTED TO TRAVEL. THERE WERE NO CLASSES ANYMORE. NO RICH OR POOR. YOU COULD ONLY BRING YOURSELF. NO POSSESSIONS. NO BAGGAGE. JUST YOUR SKILLS AND THE WILL TO SURVIVE.



THE POWER USED TO CONTAIN YOU IN HYPER SLEEP WAS VAST SO ONLY A SKELETON CREW COULD OVERSEE THE JOURNEY. ONCE WE HAD SECURED OUR LANDING SPOT THEN WE COULD LAND THE SHIPS AND BEGIN REVIVING KEY PERSONAL TO HELP WITH THE MASS WAKE UP.



OUR TECHNOLOGY WOULD FILL IN THE GAPS. KT WOULD CARRY OUT THE MENTAL TASKS AND A SMALL GROUP OF SEVEN WOULD BE THE BRAIN. WE WOULD STAY CONSCIOUS TO OVERSEE THE JOURNEY.



THOSE WHO COULD NOT WALK... I HELPED THEM TO WALK. THIS IS HOW I BECAME KNOWN AS THE TECHNO-JESUS OF 2077. A NAME I PUBLICLY RENOUNCED BUT SECRETLY ADORED.



EMILY ALSO ADORED IT AND I HER. SHE WAS A SMART PROGRAMMER WHO QUICKLY CAUGHT MY EYE. IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.



SHE HELPED ME BUILD OUR FUTURE. NOT LONG AFTER OUR A.I CHILD WAS BORN AND WE NAMED HER KT.



HELLO FATHER. HELLO MOTHER.

OH CHAD... SHE'S PERFECT

BUT OUR WORLD WAS IN TROUBLE. HUGE ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY COULD NOT SAVE US FROM THE DAMAGE THAT HAD BEEN DONE TO THE PLANET DECADES BEFORE I WAS EVEN BORN. TRY AS WE MIGHT.

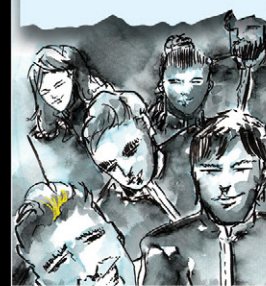


LAUNCH READY FATHER.

GO FOR LAUNCH KT.

Facial recognition confirmed. Launching now.

AND WE DID. MYSELF. EMILY AND BEST FRIEND. FLIGHT OFFICER OLAHAN. TECH SERGEANT WHIHAN. OPERATIONS MANAGER FAYE THUNDER AND OUR PILOT: DASH WILLIAMS.



FINALLY WE SET SAIL FOR OUR NEW HOME...



DURING OUR 16-YEAR JOURNEY WE LOVED AND LAUGHED WITH EACH OTHER. WE STRATEGISED AND DREAMED. WE PLANNED FOR THE FUTURE OF THE HUMAN RACE.



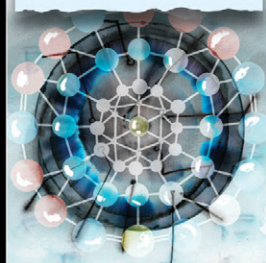
MY BRAIN-TANK COULD NOT SOLVE THE PROBLEM. KT HELPED US TO REALISE THAT THE ONLY WAY FOR US TO SURVIVE WAS TO COLONISE ANOTHER PLANET. TO BECOME A MULTI-PLANET SPECIES.



OUR TERRAFORMING WAS IMPECCABLE. WE COULD TRAVEL TO MARS WITH THE THINGS WE NEEDED TO SET UP A FULLY BREATHABLE ATMOSPHERE.



WE HAD THE POWER WE NEEDED TO BUILD A NEW WORLD. KT HELPED US TO TEST THIS ON THE MOON BUT THE MOON LACKED RESOURCES. MARS HAD ALL THE INGREDIENTS TO HELP US SURVIVE.



OUR STARSHIPS WOULD LAND AND BECOME PART OF OUR HOME AS WE TERRAFORMED THE LANDSCAPE.



MEANWHILE: EARTH WAS DYING. GAS. FAMINE. DISEASE. OUR FINAL BROADCAST FROM THEM SOUNDED A TERRIBLE DEATH KNELL. WE HAD MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE. THE FUTURE WAS WITH US NOW.



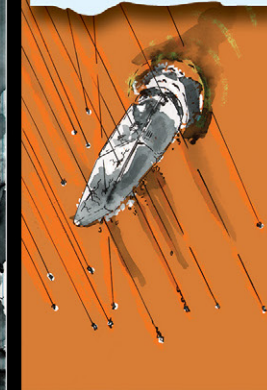
OUR FLAGSHIP: THE MILOROO. ENTERED MARS' ATMOSPHERE AS PLANNED. OUR NEXT STEP: TO SHUTTLE DOWN TO THE PLANET AND RECON OUR PLANNED TOUCHDOWN. KT HAD DEVISED A PROBE THAT WOULD BEGIN THE LANDING SEQUENCE.



MY JOB: TO BE THE ONE TO HISTORICALLY SEND THE MESSAGE THAT IT IS SAFE TO LAND. THE SAVIOUR OF THE HUMAN RACE. THE INTERSTELLAR TECHNO-JESUS. CHAD DOUGLAS.



BUT MARS HAD OTHER IDEAS...



WHEN THIS IDEA WAS PUT FORWARD TO THE WORLD COUNCIL. IT DID NOT GO WELL. DENIAL AND JEALOUSY ARE AN EVIL MIXTURE AND SO MY PLAN WAS REBUFFED.



NEVER!

WE CAN WEATHER THE STORM...

FOOL!

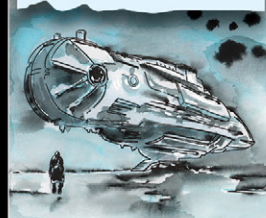
IMBECILE!



THAT DID NOT STOP ME. THAT DID NOT STOP US. THAT DID NOT STOP KT.



I POOLED MY RESOURCES INTO BUILDING OUR FIRST EVER TRANS-DIMENSIONAL STARSHIP. THREE OF THEM IN FACT. ENOUGH TO CARRY A BILLION PEOPLE INTO THE DEPTHS OF SPACE. PEOPLE LAUGHED AND SNEERED. EMILY DID NOT.



WHEN I REGAINED CONCIOSNESS I HAD SURVIVED THE CRASH... AS DID THE LAUNCHER. I HAD LOST EVERYTHING DEAR TO ME BUT I HAD SAVED THE FUTURE OF MANKIND!



THAT'S WHEN IT DAWNED ON ME. THE ONLY PROBLEM WITH FACIAL RECOGNITION IS...





YOU NEED A FACE!

ERROR! ERROR! IDENTITY NOT RECOGNISED. PLEASE TRY AGAIN. WARNING: 2% BATTERY REMAINING. ERROR! TWO MORE ATTEMPTS BEFORE YOU ARE LOCKED OUT FOR 24 HOURS. ERROR? ARE YOU THERE FATHER? FATHER?



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DEAD

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The Void-Beast lives! From the depths of the black void crawls a creature. The twisted bodies of 16 creatives fused together for all eternity! Forever destined to roam the darkness, searching for more innocent victims to merge with its grotesque corpse. It watches... it waits... it is the Void-Beast.... and it is hungry!

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- Containment Breach Vol. 2&4
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- Bang! (Webtoon app)
- ComicScene Magazine
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- 2000 AD Thought Bubble Finalist 2024

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Writer

- The Knight Shift
- The Survivor

Contact (Instagram):
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Link to all contacts



Free digital downloads

WELL...
THAT'S THAT!

ANOTHER
WORM, BRIAN?



SQWARRRK...
NOM, NOM!



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