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A ZARJAZ
SELECTION OF
RECENT STORIES
FROM THE PAGES
OF *2000 AD*



ABSALOM
DEFOE
AGE OF THE WOLF
LAWLESS
ZOMBO
JAEGIR

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2000 AD MODERN

2015 Edition

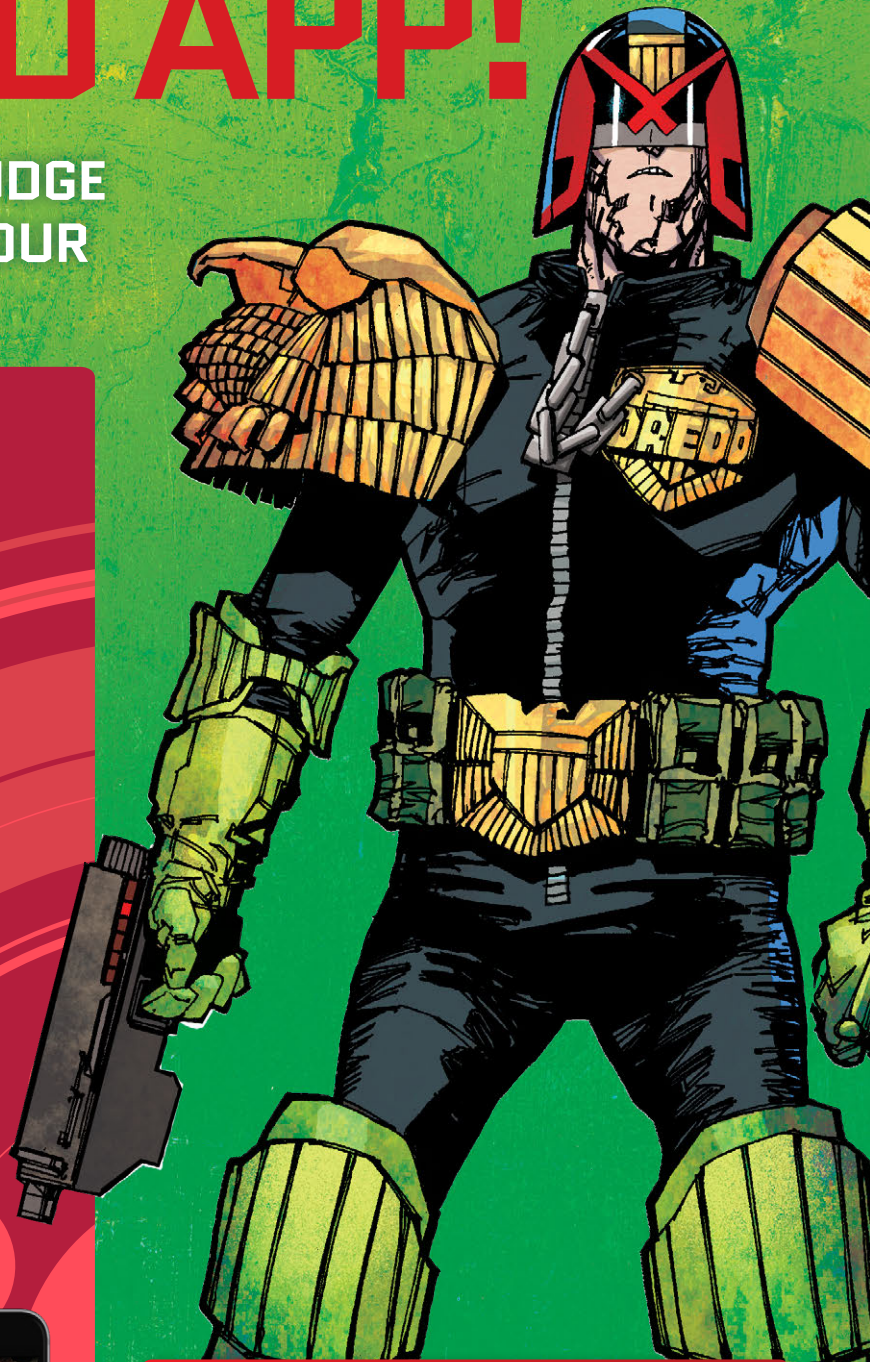


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ABSALOM

NOBLESSE OBLIGE

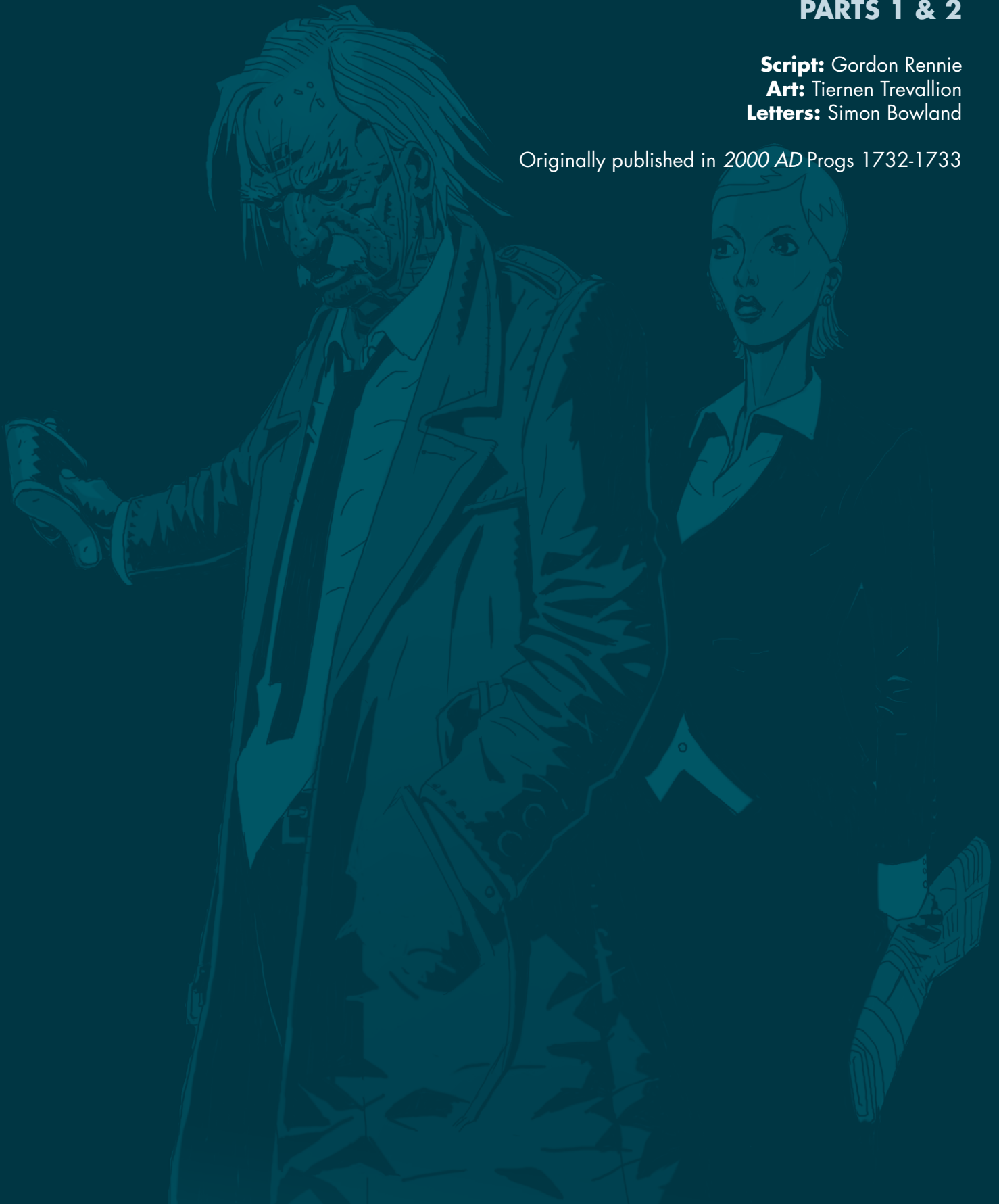
PARTS 1 & 2

Script: Gordon Rennie

Art: Tiernen Trevallion

Letters: Simon Bowland

Originally published in 2000 AD Progs 1732-1733





SOMEWHERE IN CUMBRIA:

NUMBER SIX!
GET THE DOOR
LOCKED ON
NUMBER SIX!



OH GOD--!
TOO LATE!



SKASSH



LONDON, SIX HOURS LATER:

NAUGHTY
NAUGHTY
NAUGHTY.



RIGHT. SO WHO ELSE WANTS TO PLAY SILLY BUGGERS?



CRAZY OLD MAN, YOU THINK YOU ARE *PROTECTED* BECAUSE YOU ARE SOME KIND OF POLICEMAN?

I HAVE KILLED MANY POLICEMEN. IN MY OWN COUNTRY, IN OTHER COUNTRIES. MAYBE I ADD YOU TO MY COLLECTION.



"PROTECTED"? OH SUNSHINE, YOU DON'T KNOW THE HALF OF IT...



INSPECTOR HARRY ABSALOM. IF YOU HAVEN'T HEARD OF ME, MAYBE YOU'VE HEARD OF THE NOT-VERY-NICE PEOPLE I WORK FOR. THAT'S THEIR SIGIL RIGHT THERE ON MY WARRANT CARD.

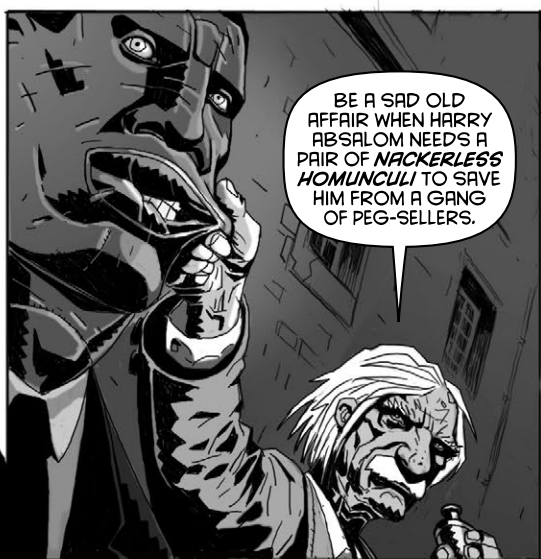
HAD A GOOD LOOK AT IT? KNOW WHAT IT MEANS? GOOD...

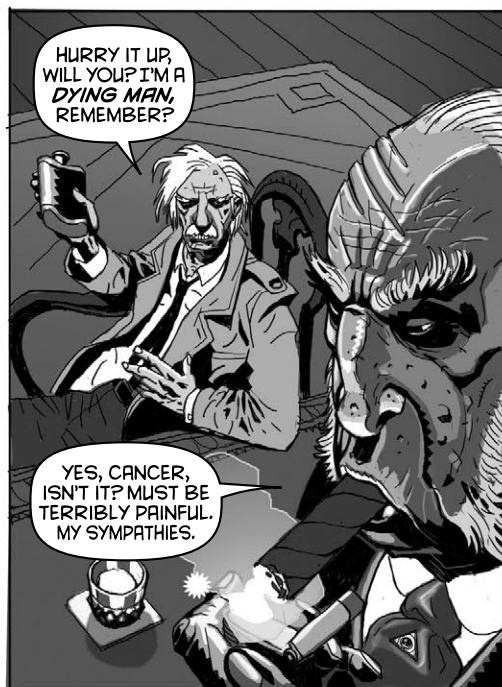


"...THEN LET'S BE HAVING YOU ALL, THEN."

...BLOODY PATHETIC. BUNCH OF PAPRIKA-EATERS USING REMOTE VIEWING AND GYPO-MAGIC TO SCAM CREDIT-CARD NUMBERS OUT OF PEOPLE'S HEADS.

THIS IS WHAT WE'VE BEEN BLOODY REDUCED TO NOW, IS IT?







...JEMIMA HOPKINS,
INSPECTOR. JUST TRANSFERRED
OVER FROM THE MET. I WAS TOLD
YOU'D REQUESTED ME AS--

DID I? DON'T
REMEMBER THAT AT ALL,
BUT MAYBE I WAS TAKING
ONE OF MY OCCASIONAL
LITTLE WANDERS UP
LAUDANUM LANE, IF YOU
KNOW WHAT I MEAN.



AS I WAS
SAYING--

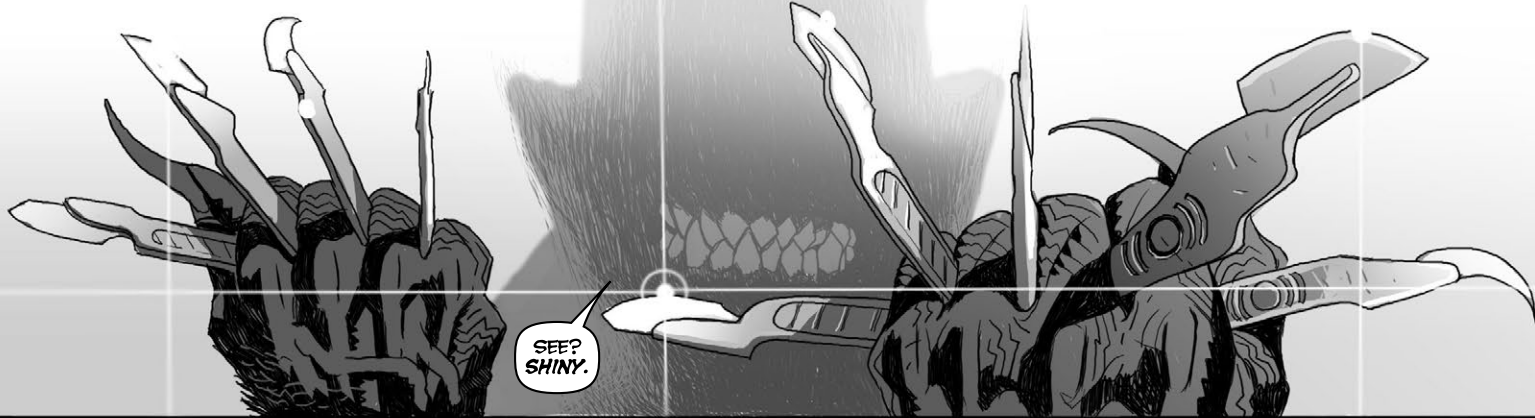
--AS A
REPLACEMENT FOR
ONE OF YOUR SQUAD,
ALTHOUGH YOU DIDN'T
SAY WHO.

AAH, NOW THAT
DOES SOUND MORE
LIKELY, LOVE. AND
QUITE *PRESCIENT*
OF ME TOO...



...COS SURE AS
SOUTHBEND SMELLS OF
PISS NOT ALL MY MERRY
LITTLE BAND HERE ARE
GOING TO BE COMING
BACK IF WE'RE GOING UP
AGAINST THE RATHBORNE
BROOD.





SEE?
SHINY.



um, INSPECTOR?
ARE YOU SURE YOU
SHOULD BE DRIVING
THIS FAST WHILE
DRINKING?

DRINKING,
DETECTIVE SERGEANT?
YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG
IDEA...



...IT'S LAUDANUM.
STRICTLY *MEDICINAL*.
WHISKY IN IT'S JUST TO
TAKE THE EDGE OFF.

THAT MY PHONE?
BE A LOVE AND REACH
INTO MY POCKET,
WILL YOU?



WHO'S THAT,
THEN? THE FORCE'S
VERY OWN DARK
AVENGER?

ALL THESE
YEARS, HARRY, AND
THAT ONE'S STILL
FRESH AS EVER.

REMEMBER
YOU TOLD US TO WATCH
OUT FOR SHOUTS ON
ANYTHING *BLOODY FOUL
AND AWFUL*? WELL, I'VE
GOT SOMETHING...



...*HARLEY STREET*
CONSULTANT, MURDERED
IN HIS SURGERY, ALONG
WITH SOME POOR SOD OF
A RECEPTIONIST.

ALWAYS
BEEN AN *NHS* MAN,
MYSELF. WHY'S THIS
LANDING IN OUR
PATCH?



BECAUSE THE
KILLER PEELED THE
BLOKE'S FACE OFF AND
LEFT IT PINNED TO THE
CEILING WITH SURGICAL
SCALPELS.

THAT BLOODY
FOUL AND AWFUL
ENOUGH, YOU
RECKON?



AND GUESS
WHERE THE VICTIM USED
TO PUT IN AN HONEST
SHIFT BEFORE HE WENT
PRIVATE?

A CERTAIN
EXCLUSIVE CLINIC
IN CUMBRIA? GOOD
WORK, SON. STAY
ON IT.

WHAT'RE YOU
DOING, HARRY, IF
I MAY BE SO BOLD
TO ASK?



TAKING THE *NEW ONE* HERE ON A TOUR OF *THE WHISPERING GALLERY*, TO SEE WHAT WORD IS ROUND THE MANOR.



YOU CAN PUT IT BACK IN MY TROUSER POCKET NOW, LOVE, AND MIND HOW YOU GO. YOUR HANDS AREN'T THE WARMEST.

AND CHEER UP--



"--HOW MANY TIMES DO YOU GET TO MEET A *REAL LIVE VAMPIRE* ON YOUR FIRST DAY AT WORK?"

A VAMPIRE?

WELL, NEAR AS YOU'LL GET. TROUBLE IS GETTING HIM TO APPEAR.



YOU'RE NOT A *CAT LOVER*, ARE YOU?

NOT PARTICULARLY.

SMASHING. ANIMAL LOVERS DON'T SEEM TO LAST LONG IN THIS JOB. NOT TO WORRY, *DC BONETTI* HERE WILL DO THE NECESSARIES.



FRESH BLOOD, SEE? THAT'S WHAT HE LIKES. NOW, IF WE JUST LEAVE IT OUT FOR HIM, MAYBE HE'LL--





DS HOPKINS,
MEET EMILE RANDOLPH
RATHBORNE, ONE OF THE
MORE HARMLESS BLACK
SHEEP MEMBERS OF THE
RATHBORNE FAMILY--



"--AND A BIGGER SHOWER
OF HORRIBLE EVIL BASTARDS
YOU'LL NEVER HOPE TO MEET."

PULL.



SOMEWHERE IN WILTSHIRE:

COUSIN
SEBASTIAN.
YOU'VE HEARD
THE NEWS?

THAT YOUR
HALF-BROTHER JASPER
GNAWED HIS WAY OUT
OF HIS CAGE AND IS
NOW LOOSE AMONG
THE SHEEP? YES, I
HEARD.



I TAKE IT THE FAMILY HAVE ASKED YOU TO
DEAL WITH THE SITUATION, AND YOU WANT ME
TO HELP, EVEN THOUGH I COULDN'T
CARE LESS?

PULL.

OF COURSE.
BUT NOW THERE'S
AN *ADDED*
COMPLICATION.



ANOTHER
HUNTER IN THE CHASE?
NO, DON'T TELL ME. LET
ME GUESS.

AAHH,
YES. OF
COURSE...



WELL
PLAYED, COUSIN.
IT'S *ABSALOM*,
ISN'T IT?

DEAR OLD
HARRY. IT'LL BE
GOOD TO SETTLE
OLD SCORES WITH
THAT VILE LITTLE
MAN...

DEFOE

1666

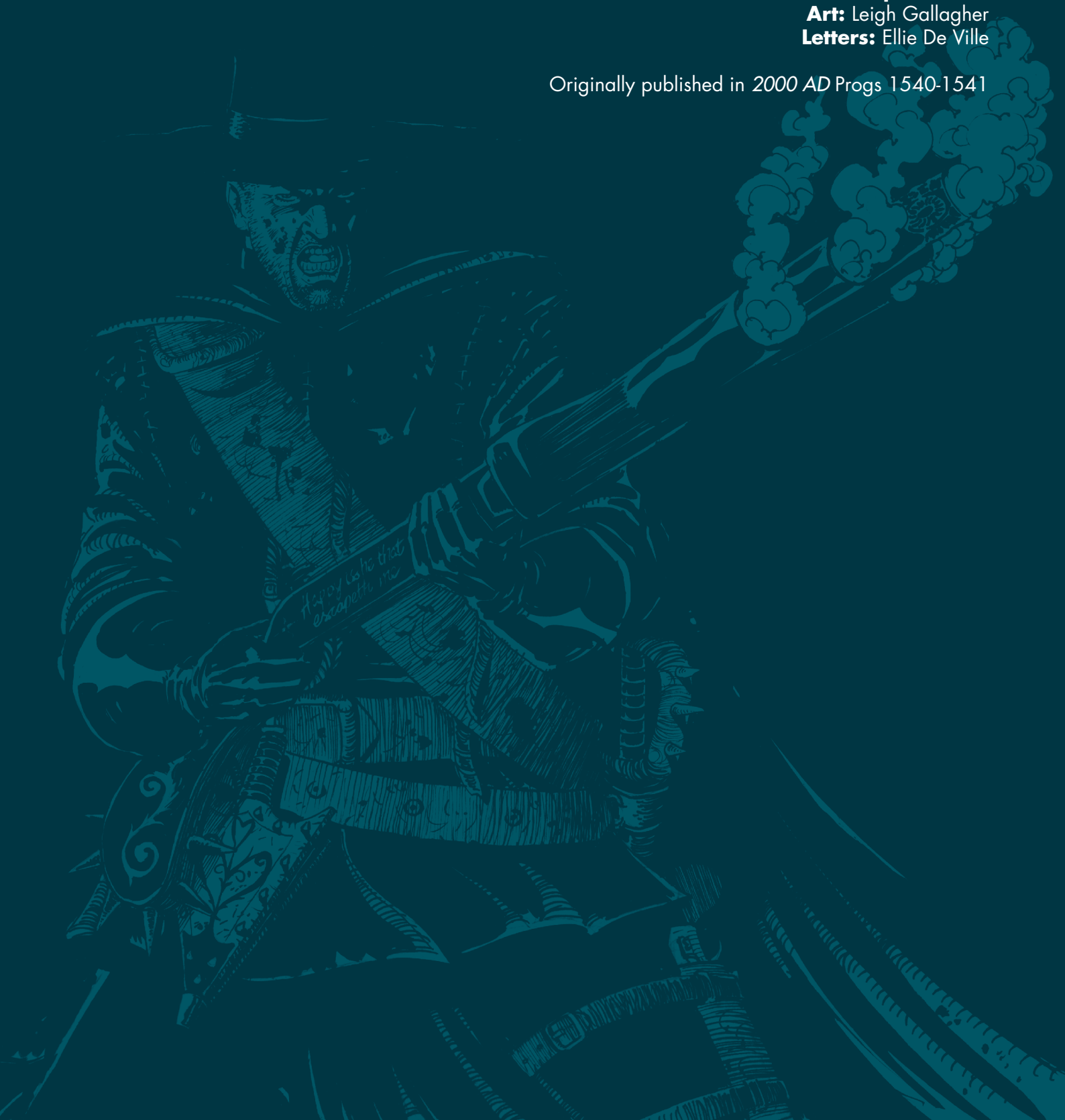
PARTS 1 & 2

Script: Pat Mills

Art: Leigh Gallagher

Letters: Ellie De Ville

Originally published in 2000 AD Progs 1540-1541





WHITECHAPEL, 1668.





THEY'RE
VERY QUIET NEXT
DOOR.

MAYBE THEY'RE
DEAD?

OF *COURSE*
THEY'RE DEAD! THAT'S
THE PROBLEM,
STUPID!

I DON'T
MEAN *LIVING*
DEAD. I
MEAN *DEAD*
DEAD.

'COS THERE'S NO
ONE FOR THEM
TO EAT. EXCEPT
EACH OTHER.

JUST
REMEMBER
THEY'RE NOT OUR
NEIGHBOURS
ANYMORE.

THEY MIGHT
LOOK LIKE THEM,
BUT THEY'RE
PRETENDERS.

WHY IS IT TAKING
THE COUNCIL SO
LONG TO DESTROY
THEM?

THEY
SHOULD HIRE
MORE *UNDEAD*
HUNTERS.

AND WHO IS GOING TO
PAY FOR THEIR CORDIALS?
AND SPECIAL GUNS?

THE *COUNCIL*?
THAT'LL BE THE
DAY!



ARE YOU SURE THE
CELLAR DOOR'S
LOCKED?

YES! *AND*
THE ATTIC'S
BLOCKED!

AND THEY WON'T
COME DOWN THE
CHIMNEY 'COS
THEY'RE AFRAID
OF FIRE.

IT'S THE LORD'S WORK.
WE ARE BEING PUNISHED
FOR THE KING'S SINS. FOR
HIS FORNICATING WITH
FALLEN WOMEN.

I DON'T
KNOW. I'VE HEARD
'THE FRENCH WELCOME'
ACTUALLY *PROTECTS*
YOU FROM THE
PLAGUE.

YOU WOULD
THINK THAT!



I THINK THE LORD HAS PUNISHED
US ENOUGH. IT'S BEEN TWO YEARS
SINCE THE DREADFUL
VISITATION.

AND WHY US? THE COMET
MISSED WESTMINSTER,
PICADILLY, WHITEHALL... ALL
THE PLACES WHERE THE
RICH LIVE.

IT'S A BIT
SUSPICIOUS
THE WAY THEY
ESCAPED
'666 —



AWAY!
AWAY! SHIFT
FOR YOUR
LIVES!



AAAGGH!



THE STENCHES HAVE
BROKEN THROUGH FROM
NEXT DOOR!



THEN WE CAN'T
LET YOU OUT!
YOU COULD BE
INFECTED!

YOU KNOW
THE LAW! IT'S
FORTY DAYS'
ISOLATION!



QUARTER!
QUARTER!

SISTER!



AAAAIIIEE!



AAAAHHH!



MR DEFOE! ARE
WE GLAD TO SEE
YOU, SIR!



ONE FAMILY OF PRETENDERS,
AND THE NEIGHBOURS
ABOUT TO BECOME
UNDEAD.

JUDGING BY
THEIR SCREAMS.



SORRY ABOUT
THE DELAY.
I'VE
BEEN BUSY.

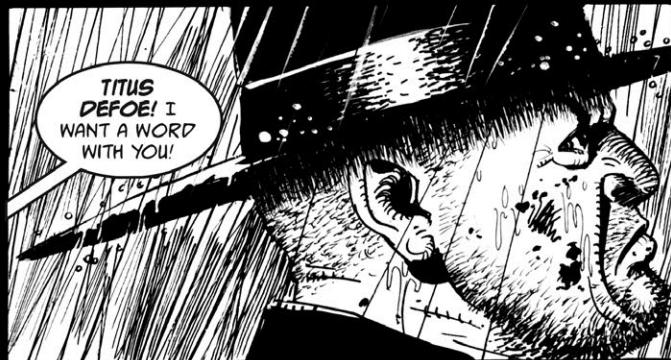
MY WAGON BACK THERE
IS MORE CROWDED
THAN A HACKNEY
HELL CART.

HOW DO
YOU DO IT,
MR DEFOE?



I BLOW
THEIR HEADS
OFF.

OPEN UP.



TITUS
DEFOE! I
WANT A WORD
WITH YOU!



FEAR-THE-LORD
JONES! 'THE WEEKLY
NEWES'!

'PUBLISHED
FOR THE SATISFACTION
OF SUCH AS DESIRE TO
BE CORRECTLY
INFORMED.'

I WOULD
LOVE AN
INTERVIEW WITH
LONDON'S
TOP UNDEAD
HUNTER!



IS IT TRUE
PRETENDERS ARE
ON THE
INCREASE?

GET HIM
OUT OF
HERE.



COULD YOU TELL
US ABOUT THE
CORDIAL YOU TAKE
FOR PROTECTION,
MR DEFOE?

WAS IT GIVEN TO YOU
BY SIR ISAAC
NEWTON?



'WHY AREN'T CORDIALS
AVAILABLE FOR THE
REST OF US?



'WHO INVENTED THE STREET
SWEEPER AND OTHER
WEAPONS YOU USE?







MIDNIGHT! LOOK TO
YOUR LOCK, YOUR FIRE
AND YOUR LIGHT! AND
SO GOODNIGHT!

GOODNIGHT
FOR THOSE
PRETENDERS...



COME
ON! COME
ON!

WHAT'S THE
MATTER WITH
THIS THING?

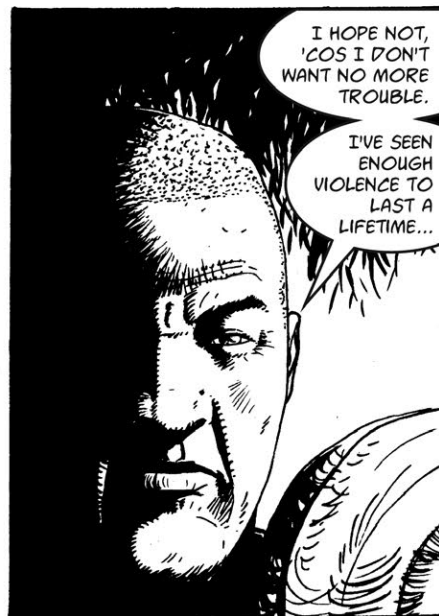
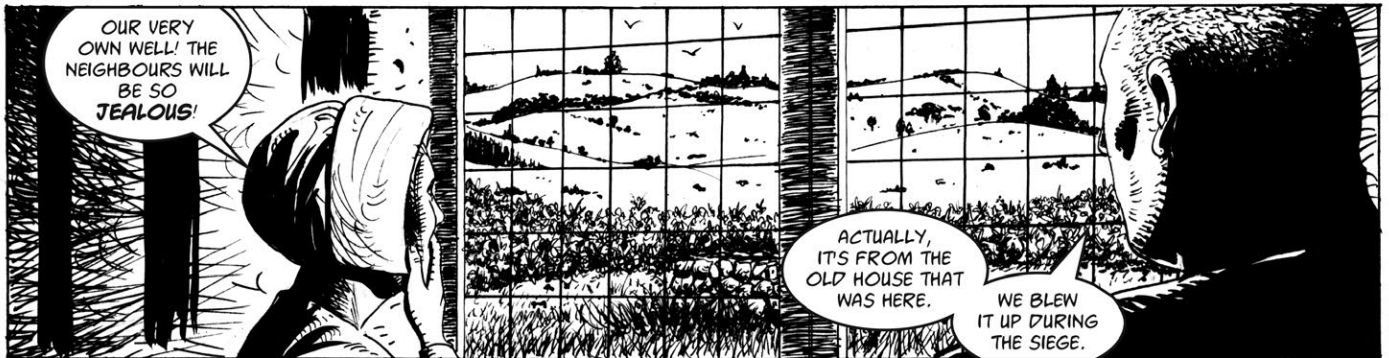


WHAT'S SIR ISAAC
GIVING US THESE STUPID
CONTRAPIONS
FOR...

... IF THEY
DON'T WORK?











STRAIGHT OUT OF THE
CHURCHYARD. LED BY
JACK O'BITE.

IS THE
GRIM REAPER
FREE?

MR KETCH
JUST BROUGHT
IT BACK.

BRING IT
ROUND.



LOOK AFTER
MY **STREET
SWEEPER.**



I'LL HOLD
THEM BACK
FOR NOW!



'IT IS CLAIMED SIR ISAAC AND
THE ROYAL SOCIETY HAD VISITS
FROM **ANGELS**, WHO SHOWED
THEM HOW TO PREPARE FOR '666.



'BUT WHY DID THE ANGELS NOT
PREVENT THE COMING OF THE COMET
AND THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD?

'THERE WAS NO PARISH IN OR ABOUT LONDON WHERE THE UNDEAD ATTACKED WITH SUCH VIOLENCE AS WHITECHAPEL.



'BEING A VERY POPULOUS PARISH, THE PRETENDERS FOUND MORE TO FEED UPON HERE THAN ELSEWHERE.

'THEY RAGED THE STREETS IN A DREADFUL MANNER, BREAKING INTO HOUSES IN THEIR SEARCH FOR HUMAN FLESH.



'AND EVERYWHERE WAS HEARD THE CRY OF THEIR VICTIMS AS THEY AWAITED THEIR FATE — "FAREWELL! FAREWELL, ALL HAPPY DAYS!"'



HOW COME THEY'RE SO ORGANISED?

OLD PRETENDERS USUALLY JUST WANDER AROUND!



TITUS... WE HAVE TO TALK.

JACK?



AGE OF THE WOLF

PARTS 1 & 2

Script: Alec Worley

Art: Jon Davis-Hunt

Letters: Simon Bowland

Originally published in 2000 AD Progs 1700-1701



TUESDAY
22 NOVEMBER 2016.
PROFESSOR CARTER
RECORDING.

IT'S 15:45 AND THE
WORLD LOOKS SET TO
EXPERIENCE A FULL MOON
FOR THE NINTH NIGHT
IN A ROW.

AND ASSISTANTS
JORDAN AND PATTERSON
APPEAR TO HAVE GIVEN IN
TO PUBLIC HYSTERIA BY
NOT TURNING UP FOR
WORK TODAY!

I REALLY DON'T
THINK IT'S TOO MUCH TO
ASK MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH
SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY TO CARRY
ON AS NORMAL AND NOT
LOSE THEIR HEADS...

AND SO TO
BUSINESS: SUMMARY
EXAMINATION OF THE BOG
MUMMY RECOVERED EIGHT
NIGHTS AGO FROM PEAT
WORKINGS ON THE ISLE OF LEWIS.

WHAT WAS INITIALLY
BELIEVED TO BE THE REMAINS OF
A BEAR APPEARS MORE LIKELY TO
BE AN EXTRAORDINARILY LARGE
AND EXTENSIVELY DEFORMED
MAN...

WOULD DATE THIS FIND
AS... I'D SAY MID-TENTH CENTURY AD.
CONDITION OF THE BODY SUGGESTS
RITUAL PRESENTATION WITH A DEFINITE
SCANDINAVIAN INFLUENCE.

JAWS WEDGED OPEN BY
THE HILT OF A SWORD, WHICH
HAS BEEN DRIVEN THROUGH THE
ROOF OF THE SUBJECT'S MOUTH
AND PROTRUDES FROM THE
TOP OF THE SKULL.

THE BLADE APPEARS TO BE
OF PATTERN-WELDED SILVER, SUGGESTING
CEREMONIAL RATHER THAN PRACTICAL
USE, AS DOES THIS BEAUTIFUL SILVER
CHAIN WE FIND WRAPPED AROUND
THE SUBJECT'S LIMBS.

TODAY, UNDER
THE LIGHT OF THE SO-CALLED
"PERMA-MOON", WE SEEM TO FIND
EVEN RATIONAL PEOPLE PREPARED
TO CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF
IMMINENT ECO-TASTROPHIE...

REMINING ONE THAT
HUMAN SACRIFICES, SUCH AS THE ONE
WE HAVE HERE, WERE USUALLY MADE
TO AVERT SOME PERCEIVED
APOCALYPSE.

AS I POINTED OUT IN MY
RECENT ADDRESS TO THE HELLENIC
SOCIETY, WE FIND THIS CULTURAL
MOTIF RECURS THROUGHOUT THE
CLASSICS--

--ANDROMEDA
OF JOPPA, SACRIFICED
TO PREVENT A SEA MONSTER
FROM DEVASTATING
PHILISTIA...

POLYXENA OF
TROY SACRIFICED TO
APPEASE THE LUSTFUL
GHOST OF ACHILLES,
AND SO ON...

NOT FORGETTING
THE COUNTLESS NAMELESS MAIDENS
SENT TO CURB THE APPETITES OF
RAMPANT DRAGONS IN FOLK TALES
THROUGHOUT HISTORY--



"...OF COURSE, THESE STORIES USUALLY NEGLECT TO RECORD JUST HOW THE SACRIFICE *HERSELF* MIGHT FEEL ABOUT BEING CHOSEN TO *DIE* FOR THE SAKE OF THE *WORLD*."

ooooooooooooo!

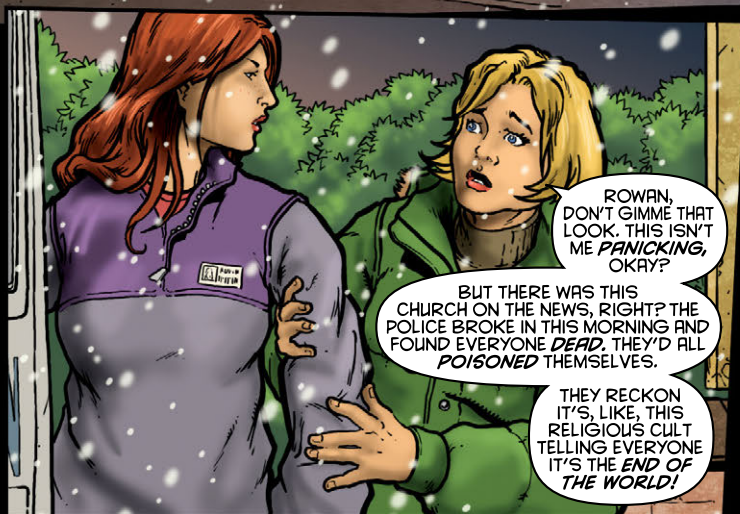
I'M SORRY, LITTLE FELLA. WE'RE HERE NOW. WE'LL GET YOU WARMED UP IN A MINUTE.



MARIA...?

OKAY, ROWAN, NO ARGUMENTS THIS TIME. WE'RE GETTING OUT OF LONDON RIGHT NOW.

I SPOKE TO MY DAD, OKAY? WE'RE GONNA STAY WITH HIM IN SURREY. MY BROTHER'S PICKING US UP AT THE STATION.



ROWAN, DON'T GIMME THAT LOOK. THIS ISN'T ME PANICKING, OKAY?

BUT THERE WAS THIS CHURCH ON THE NEWS, RIGHT? THE POLICE BROKE IN THIS MORNING AND FOUND EVERYONE DEAD. THEY'D ALL POISONED THEMSELVES.

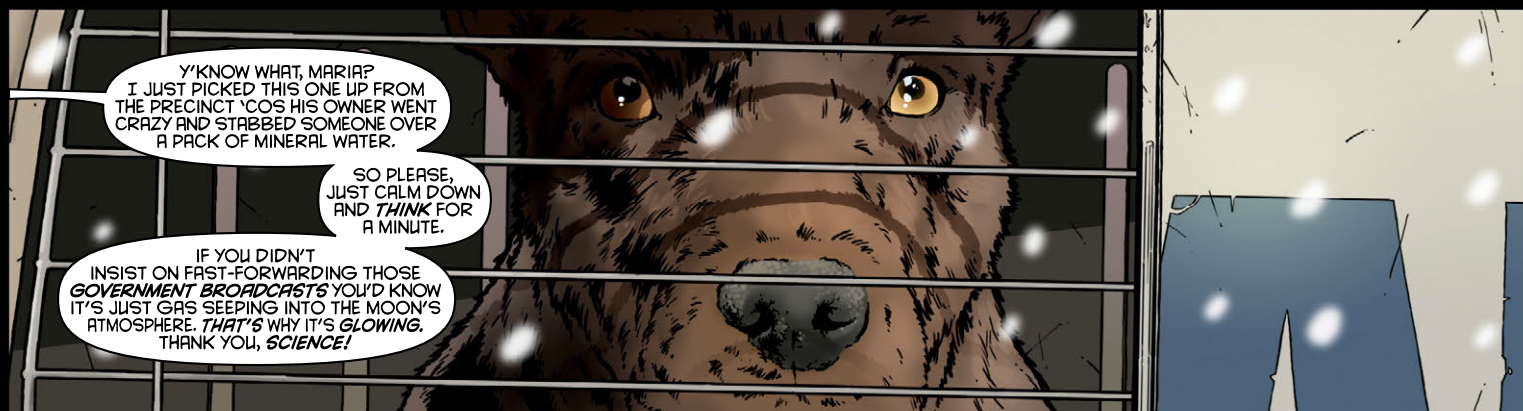
THEY RECKON IT'S, LIKE, THIS RELIGIOUS CULT TELLING EVERYONE IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD!



MARIA, DO YOU EVEN REMEMBER WHAT I WAS RANTING ABOUT LAST NIGHT?

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PEOPLE FREAK OUT OVER NOTHING-- YOU BEING ONE OF THEM!

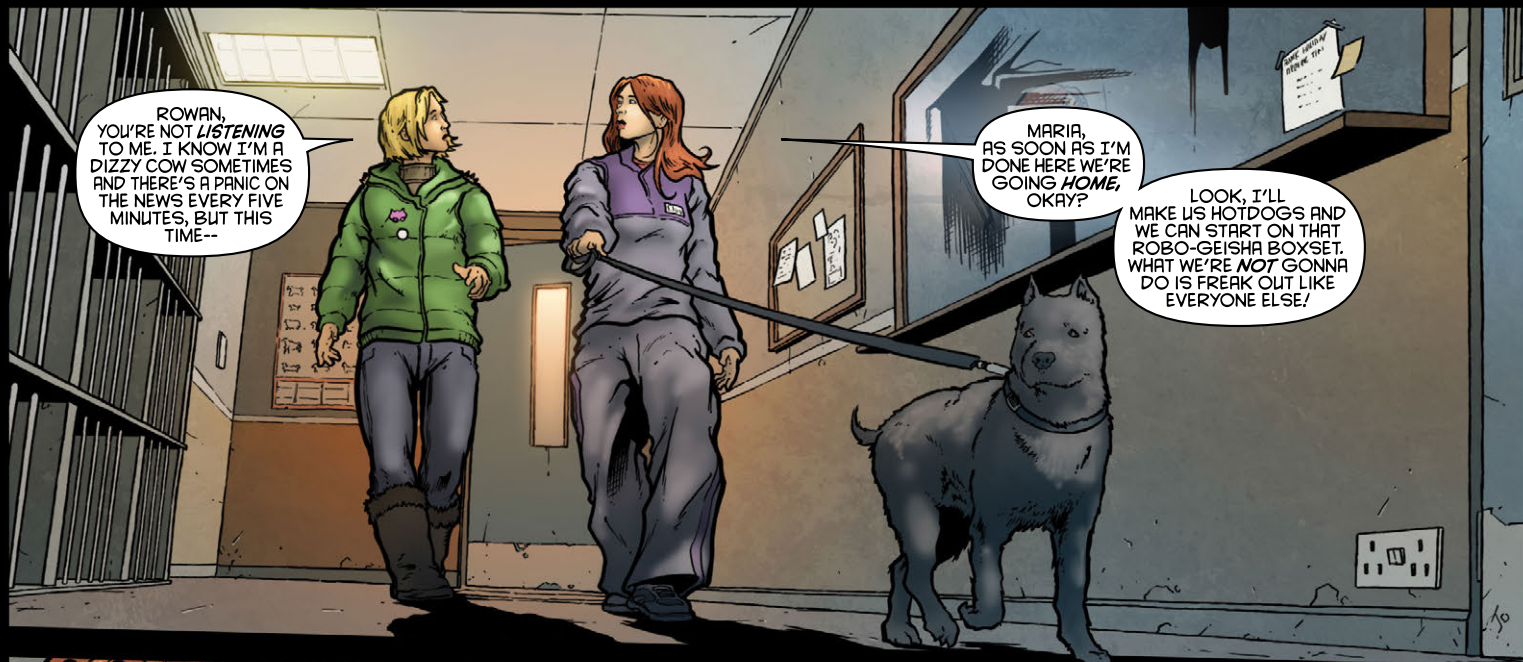
BUT, ROWAN, THEY SAY THERE'S GONNA BE ANOTHER FULL MOON TONIGHT!



Y'KNOW WHAT, MARIA? I JUST PICKED THIS ONE UP FROM THE PRECINCT 'COS HIS OWNER WENT CRAZY AND STABBED SOMEONE OVER A PACK OF MINERAL WATER.

SO PLEASE, JUST CALM DOWN AND THINK FOR A MINUTE.

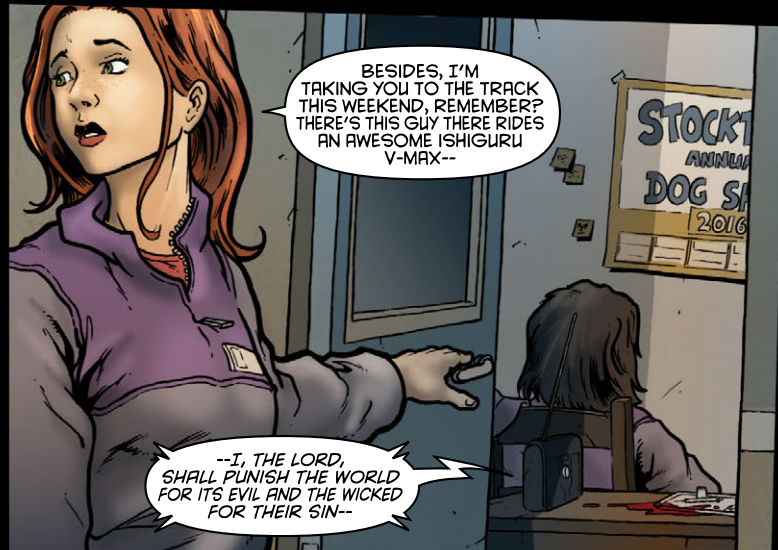
IF YOU DIDN'T INSIST ON FAST-FORWARDING THOSE GOVERNMENT BROADCASTS YOU'D KNOW IT'S JUST GAS SEEPING INTO THE MOON'S ATMOSPHERE. THAT'S WHY IT'S GLOWING. THANK YOU, SCIENCE!



ROWAN,
YOU'RE NOT LISTENING
TO ME. I KNOW I'M A
DIZZY COW SOMETIMES
AND THERE'S A PANIC ON
THE NEWS EVERY FIVE
MINUTES, BUT THIS
TIME--

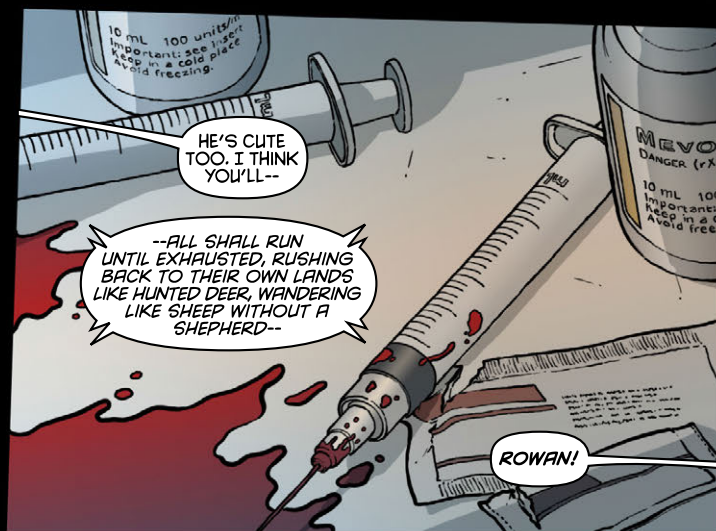
MARIA,
AS SOON AS I'M
DONE HERE WE'RE
GOING HOME,
OKAY?

LOOK, I'LL
MAKE US HOTDOGS AND
WE CAN START ON THAT
ROBO-GEISHA BOXSET.
WHAT WE'RE NOT GONNA
DO IS FREAK OUT LIKE
EVERYONE ELSE!



BESIDES, I'M
TAKING YOU TO THE TRACK
THIS WEEKEND, REMEMBER?
THERE'S THIS GUY THERE RIDES
AN AWESOME ISHIGURU
V-MAX--

--I, THE LORD,
SHALL PUNISH THE WORLD
FOR ITS EVIL AND THE WICKED
FOR THEIR SIN--



HE'S CUTE
TOO. I THINK
YOU'LL--

--ALL SHALL RUN
UNTIL EXHAUSTED, RUSHING
BACK TO THEIR OWN LANDS
LIKE HUNTED DEER, WANDERING
LIKE SHEEP WITHOUT A
SHEPHERD--

ROWAN!



ROWAN,
SOMETHING'S
WRONG WITH
THE DOGS. NONE
OF THEM ARE
MOVING...

--WILD ANIMALS
SHALL MOVE ABOUT THE
RUINED CITY. THE HOUSES
SHALL BE HAUNTED BY
HOWLING CREATURES--



ROW?
WHAT'S GOING
ON? WHERE'S
CAROL?

STAY
HERE.

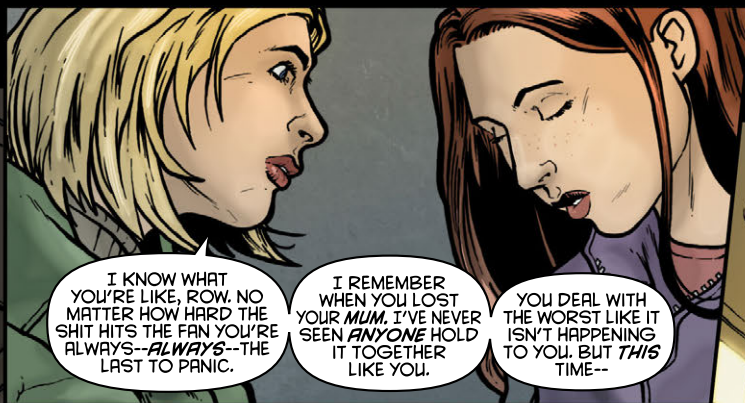
DAMMIT!
SINCE WHEN ARE THE
EMERGENCY SERVICES
ENGAGED? WE'LL
HAVE TO--

HEY,
WHERE'RE YOU
GOING...?



ROWAN, WE
CAN'T STAY HERE.
YOU CAN'T IGNORE
WHAT'S GOING ON.
LISTEN TO ME...

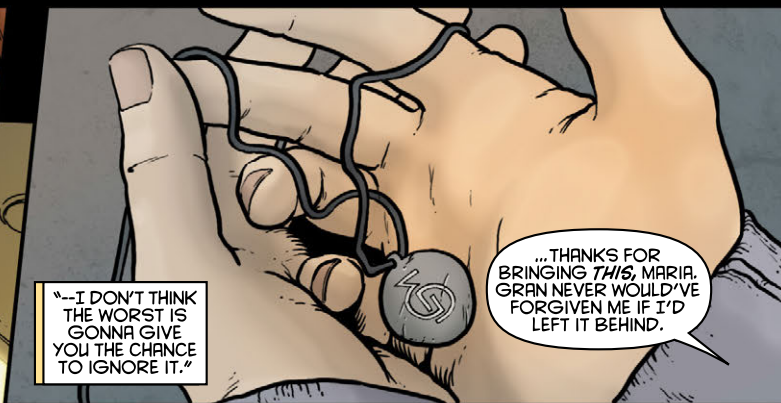
--THE MOON
SHALL NOT GO DOWN
FOR THE LORD WILL BE
YOUR EVERLASTING LIGHT.
YOUR DAYS OF MOURNING
SHALL COME TO
AN END--



I KNOW WHAT
YOU'RE LIKE, ROW. NO
MATTER HOW HARD THE
SHIT HITS THE FAN YOU'RE
ALWAYS--*ALWAYS*--THE
LAST TO PANIC.

I REMEMBER
WHEN YOU LOST
YOUR MUM. I'VE NEVER
SEEN *ANYONE* HOLD
IT TOGETHER
LIKE YOU.

YOU DEAL WITH
THE WORST LIKE IT
ISN'T HAPPENING
TO YOU. BUT *THIS*
TIME--



"--I DON'T THINK
THE WORST IS
GONNA GIVE
YOU THE CHANCE
TO IGNORE IT."

...THANKS FOR
BRINGING *THIS*, MARIA.
GRAN NEVER WOULD'VE
FORGIVEN ME IF I'D
LEFT IT BEHIND.



SORRY WE
HAD TO LEAVE YOUR
BIKE, ROW. I *KNEW* I
BROUGHT TOO
MUCH STUFF.

WISH I'D
PACKED SOMETHING TO
EAT, THOUGH. BLOODY
STARVING. WHAT TIME'S
IT NOW?

GONE
NINE.

IS IT ME
OR IS *HOT*
IN HERE?



I'VE BEEN
SWEATING
ALL--

OOOOOH,
GOD!

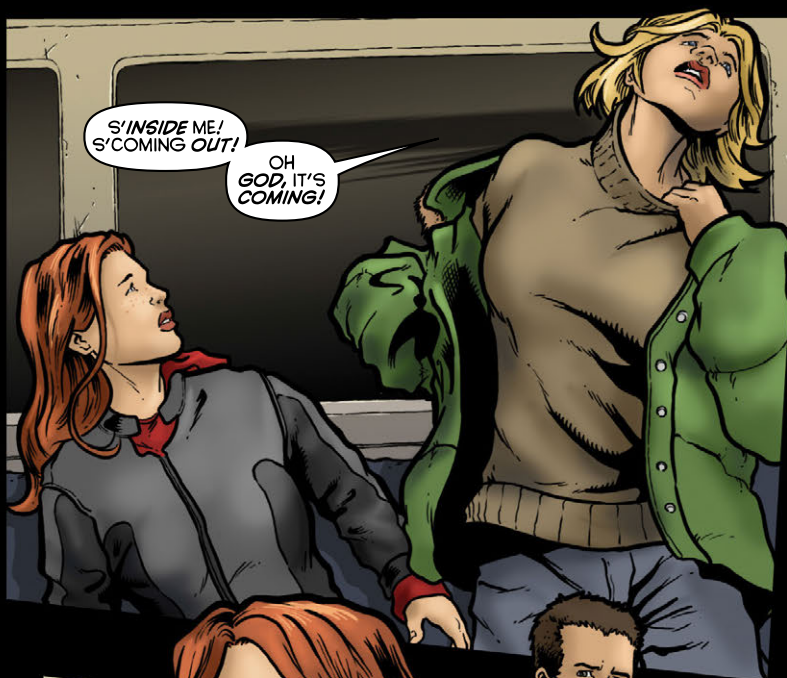
WHAT'S
WRONG?



F-FEEL
FUNNY... FEELS LIKE
I'MMMM--

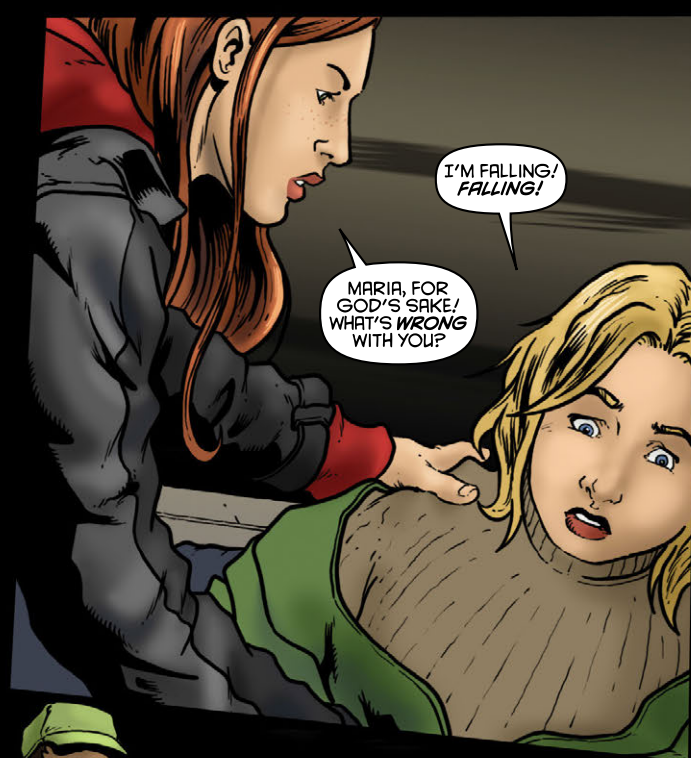
MARIA?

HRRRR...



S'INSIDE ME!
S'COMING OUT!

OH
GOD, IT'S
COMING!



I'M FALLING!
FALLING!

MARIA, FOR
GOD'S SAKE!
WHAT'S **WRONG**
WITH YOU?

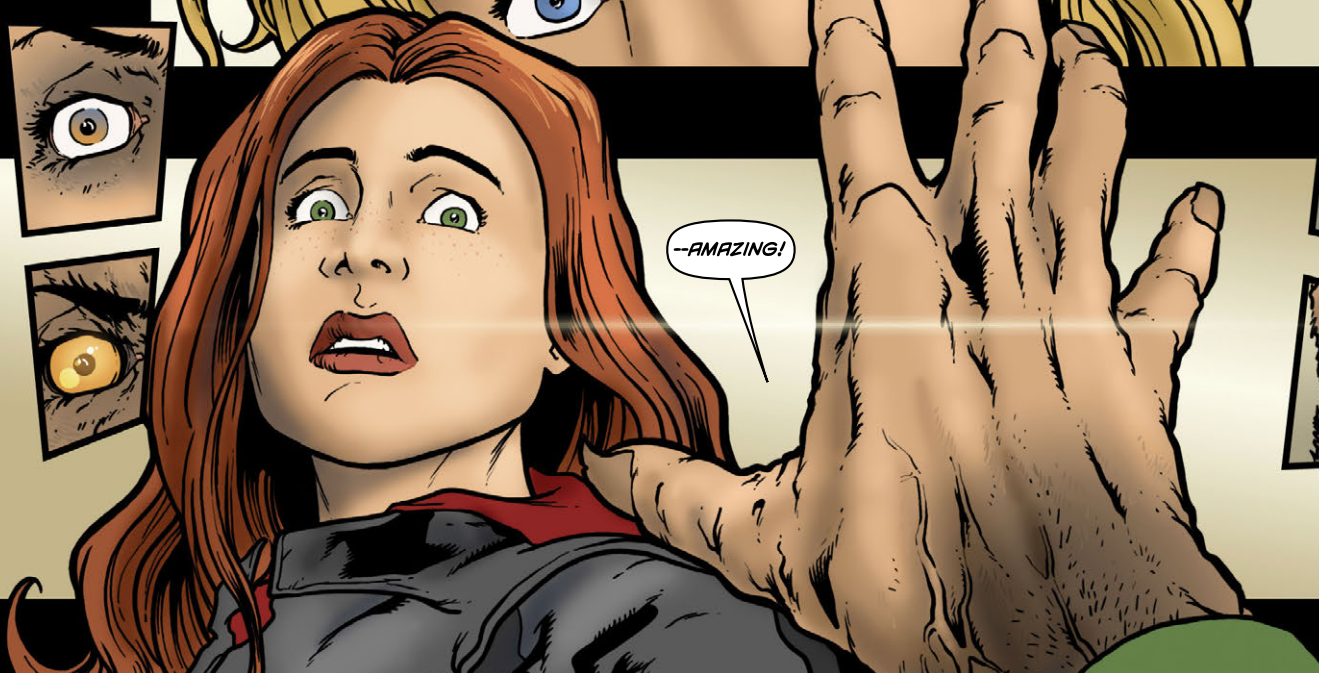


MARIA?
PLEASE! CAN
YOU **HEAR**
ME?

ROW!
ROW!
ROW!

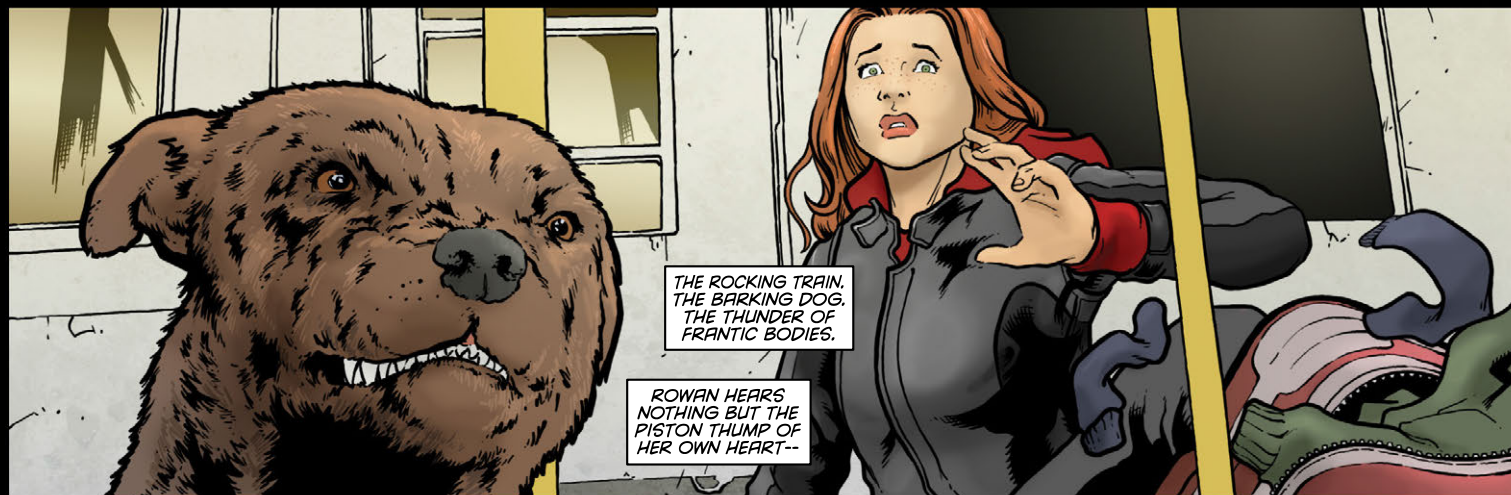


ROWAN?
I FEEL--



--**AMAZING!**





THE ROCKING TRAIN.
THE BARKING DOG.
THE THUNDER OF
FRANTIC BODIES.

ROWAN HEARS
NOTHING BUT THE
PISTON THUMP OF
HER OWN HEART--



--AS HER BEST
FRIEND DWINDLES INTO
SOMETHING OUT OF A
FAIRY TALE.



A REGAL
HOWL ENGULFS
THE JUMBLED
SCREAMS--



--AND THE SOUND
ROLLS DOWN THE
CARRIAGE LIKE AN
AVALANCHE.



A HULK OF
BRISTLING FUR
RISES ON FOUR
TALL LEGS.



A RIPPLING SNARL
BARES CHARCOAL
GUMS AND TEETH AS
LONG AS KNIVES.

A
MOMENT'S
PAUSE...



...THE
HEARTBEAT
STOPS.



WOULD ALL P-PASSENGERS... UH, WOULD ALL PASSENGERS PLEASE MAKE THEIR WAY TOWARDS THE NEAREST EXIT!



A BURST OF SCREAMS SOMEWHERE NEARBY.



THE STARTLED TIDE THREATENS TO DRAG HER TO THE FLOOR.

THE NEARBY SCREAMS PERSIST.

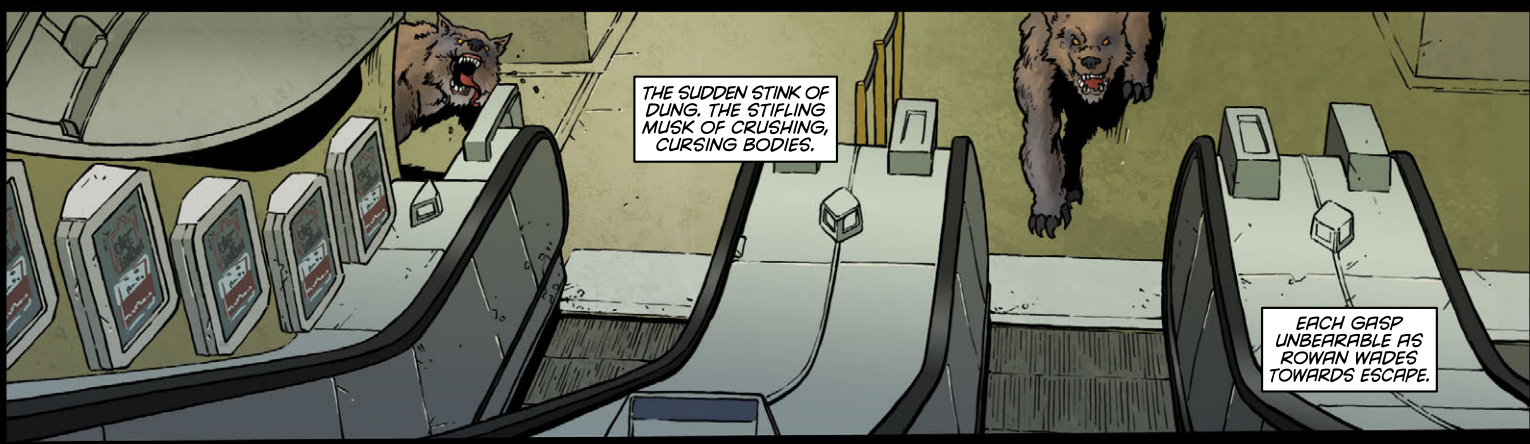


SHE CATCHES SIGHT OF THREE CREATURES. THEY TUG AT SOMETHING BETWEEN THEM THAT PARTS, STILL SCREAMING.

SHE JOINS THE SAFETY OF THE SCRAMBLING MOB, AND SWEEPED BY A BRAYING, JOSTLING TIDE, SHE STUMBLES OVER SOMETHING SOFT. THE TILES BELOW ARE SLIPPERY.



BRIGHT SCREAMS ERUPT FROM FAR BELOW. SOMEONE GRABS HER SHOULDER, PULLING HER BACK, SPINNING HER ROUND.





SHE TURNED AND RAN,
HEARING HIM SCREAM
AS THE HUGE CREATURE
SHOOK HIM LIKE A TOY.

SHE COULD STILL
SEE THE PANIC IN
HIS EYES.



LAWLESS

WELCOME TO BADROCK

PARTS 1 & 2

Script: Dan Abnett

Art: Phil Winslade

Letters: Ellie De Ville

Originally published in *Judge Dredd Magazine* 350-351

43 REGA. A SPITBALL WORLD
ON THE ASS-END OF NOWHERE.
ONLY HAS ONE CLAIM TO FAME
IN THE HISTORY BOOKS...

FIVE YEARS AGO, THE COMBINED
FORCES OF MEGA-CITY ONE
FOUGHT AND STOPPED THE
ZHIND INVASION HERE.

YOU ARE
WELCOME TO
BADROCK
POP. 986

THE WAR WAS FOUGHT OUT THERE. OUT
THERE, THE BADLANDS ARE LITTERED
WITH RUSTING MIL-TECH AND BLEACHING
BONES. HUMAN AND OTHERWISE.

SINCE THE WAR, THE MEG
COLONY TOWNSHIPS ON
43 REGA HAVE TRIED TO
REBUILD AND GET ON.

TOWNSHIPS LIKE **BADROCK**. SIX
THOUSAND KILKS FROM ITS NEAREST
NEIGHBOUR. IT RELIES ON THE WEEKLY
SHUTTLE RUN FOR SUPPLIES...

... AND MEGA-CITY LAW TO KEEP
IT SAFE. AND THE ONLY LAWMEN
THIS FAR OUT FROM EARTH ARE
THE COLONIAL MARSHALS.

SO BADROCK AND ITS
ASSEMBLED WORTHIES
ARE LOOKING FORWARD
TO GETTING A NEW ONE...

HERE
SHE COMES,
REGULAR AS
ROUGHAGE.

SAYS **JOHNSTONE
GAMMADGE**, THE LEADER
OF THE CIVIC COUNCIL.

GET THE
SIGN OUT, IF
YOU PLEASE,
CLERK.

SAYS **PAYSON TOLLRIGHT**, THE
COMMUNITY WELFARE OFFICER.

YES, SIR.

SAYS **NERYS PETTIFER**,
CLERK TO THE OFFICE
OF THE TOWN MARSHAL.

MARSHAL
LAWSON



OH, FOR
DROKK'S
SAKE...

SAYS COLONIAL MARSHAL
METTA LAWSON.



HI.

SOMEONE
ORDER A
MARSHAL?





MARSHAL LAWSON! HELLO! HELLO!

I'M YOUR CLERK, AND MY NAME IS PETTIFER.

I GET A CLERK?

YOU SURELY DO!

I'LL CONSIDER MYSELF BLESSED.



CAN I ASK? WHY DID YOU SAY 'DID SOMEONE ORDER A MARSHAL'?

YOU WERE APPOINTED TO US, TO THE COMMUNITY.

UH, OKAY. I TEND TO BE FLIPPANT AND INAPPROPRIATE WHEN I'M PUT IN AWKWARD SOCIAL SITUATIONS.

OR, LIKE, WHEN SOMEONE STANDS TOO CLOSE TO ME.

I'M ARMED.



HAHA!

SORRY SORRY!

LET ME INTRODUCE THE WORTHIES.

WE HAVE WORTHIES NOW?



MARSHAL LAWSON, THIS IS CIVIC LEADER GAMMADGE AND COMMUNITY WELFARE OFFICER TOLLRIGHT.

PLEASED, I'M SURE.

WELCOME, MARSHAL.

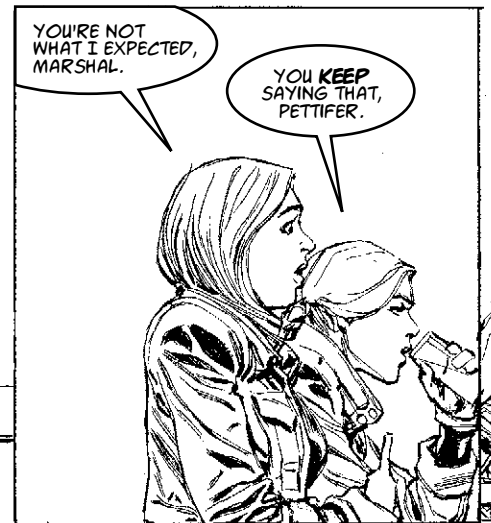
WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE FIRST?

THE INSIDE OF THE TOWN SALOON?



... SORRY, WAS THAT SOMEHOW A TRICK QUESTION?







I WARNED HIM IF HE CAME BACK AGAIN BEATING UP ON MEKS, I'D BLOW HIS —

YOU'D WHAT, SIR?

YOU DEAL WITH HIM THEN. I DON'T WANT NO TROUBLE.

GIMME THAT DAMN PULSE BLASTER AND I MIGHT.



WHO AM I FRONTING HERE?

KILL-A-MAN-JAROO. BOSS OF THE UPLIFT WORK GANGS AND A NOTORIOUS TROUBLEMAKER.



KILL-A-MAN-JAROO? I'M COLONIAL MARSHAL LAWSON.

HOW D'YOU DO, SIR.

STOP BEING A TOTAL ASSHOLE.

I DO NOT THINK I WILL.

I'M GUNNA HAFTA SHOOT YOU, THEN, SIR.



DO IT. PULL YOUR 'LAWGIVER'. PROVE YOUR IMPERIALIST, TOTALITARIAN, FASCIST DOGMA.

SHOOT ME. SHOOT ME THE FUCK DEAD.

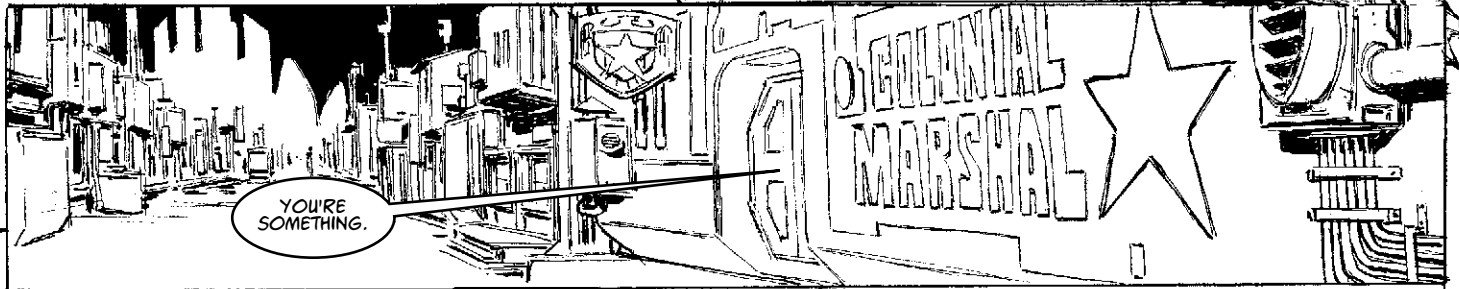
YOU KNOW, USE OF THAT NON-MODIFIED VERBAL OBSCENITY IS STILL A CAPITAL WORD-CRIME IN MEGA CITY.

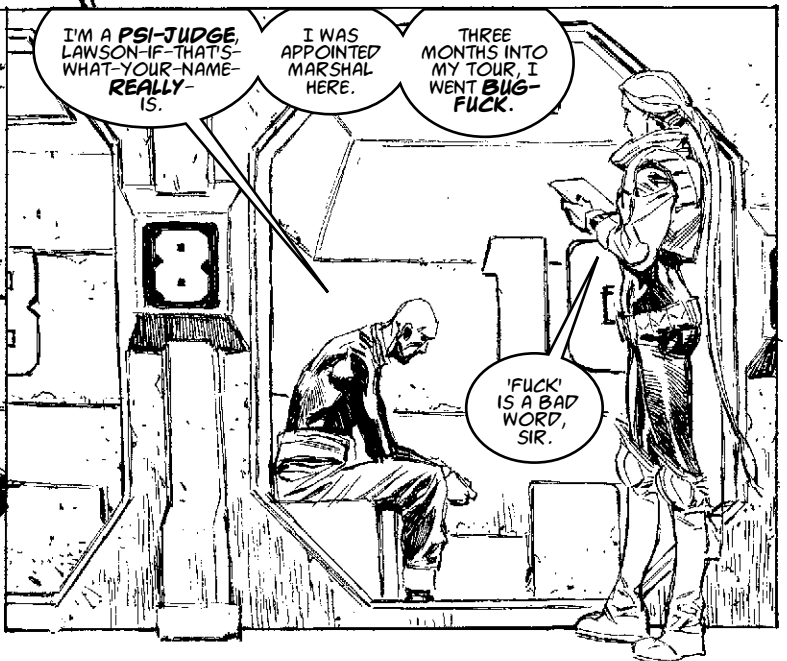
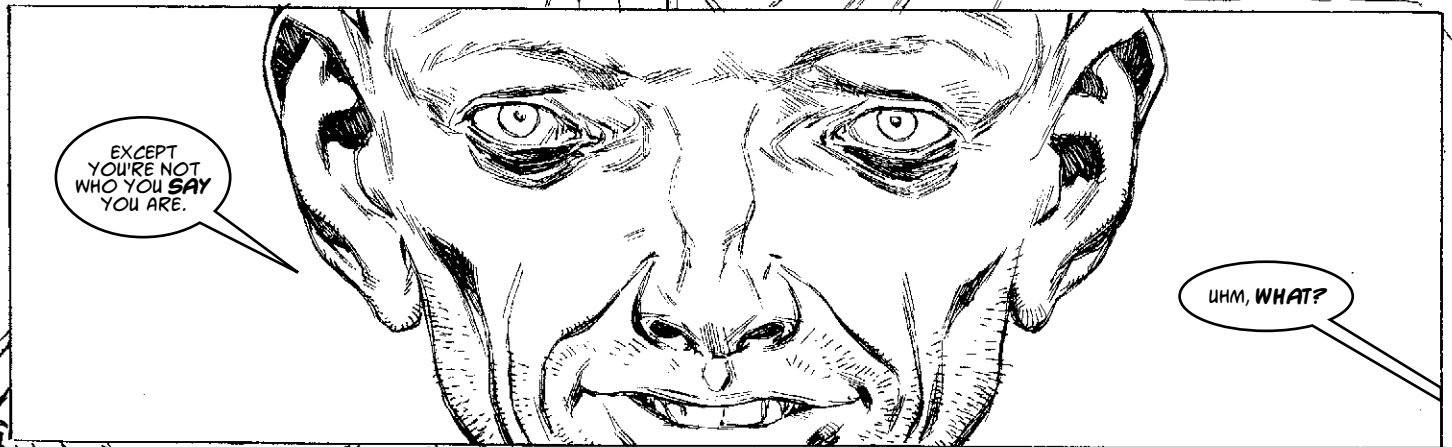
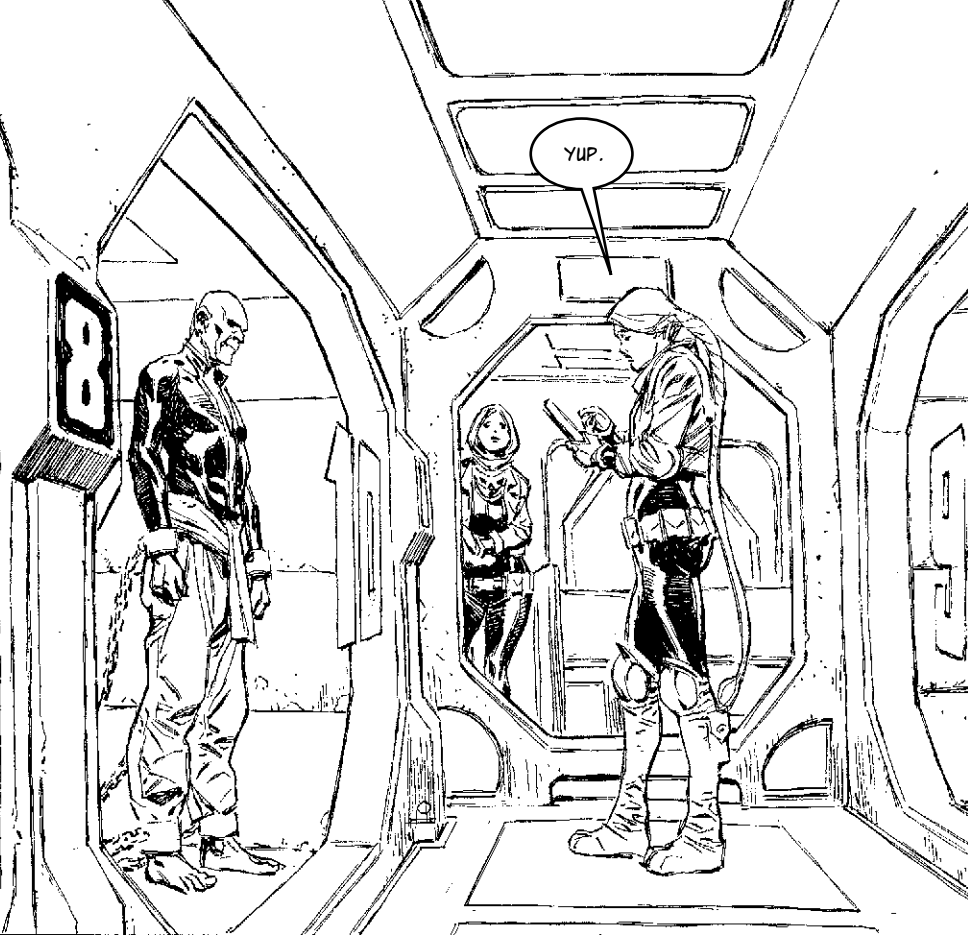
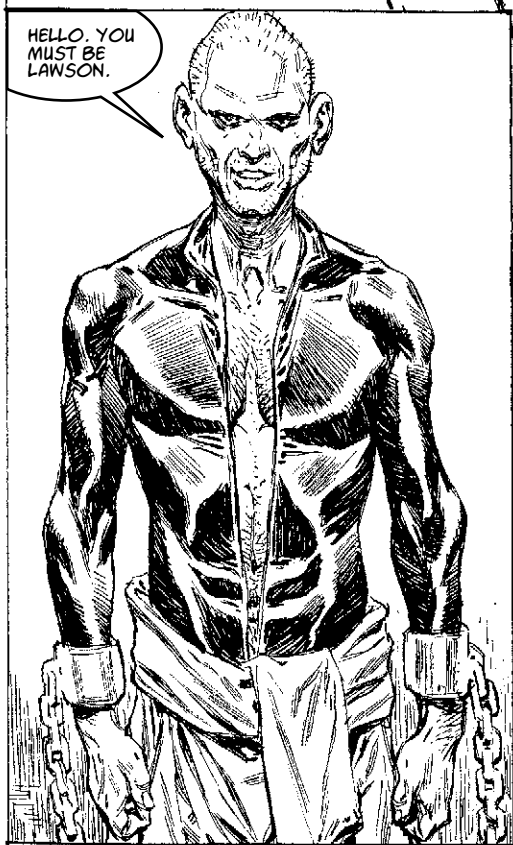


FUCK. YOU BETTA SHOOT ME VERY DEAD THEN. I'M A VERY BAD MONKEY-BOY.

NOT WITH MY LAWGIVER THOUGH. UH-HUH.

EVERY EXPENDED LAWGIVER ROUND IS TRACKED BY JUSTICE DEPARTMENT TELEMETRICS. SOOO MUCH TO ACCOUNT FOR. SO MANY FORMS.







EVEN
SO, THAT'S
WHAT I WENT.
I **KILLED**.
I WENT
CRAZY.

I **AM**
CRAZY. I AM
A DANGER TO
MYSELF AND
OTHERS.



THAT'S WHAT
IT SAYS ON
YOUR JACKET,
HETCH. THAT'S
WHY I'M HERE
TO REPLACE
YOU.

GREAT. GOOD.

ASK
YOURSELF
THIS, 'MARSHAL'
LAWSON.

EXCEPT
YOU'RE NOT
REALLY LAWSON,
ARE YOU?

ANYWAY,
ASK YOURSELF
THIS...



... WHAT IS IT
ABOUT THIS PLACE
THAT **BREAKS**
MINDS?

DROKK,
I WAS A PSI-COP.
I WAS ESPECIALLY
VULNERABLE.

BUT
BADROCK
WILL GET TO
US **ALL**...



SANE
OR CRAZY.
PSI OR NORMAL.
BADROCK WILL
BREAK **ALL** OF
US IN THE
END.



LAWSON? YOU
HEAR ME?

LAWSON?

WELL, MA'AM?



YUP, HE'S
CRAZY.

WELCOME TO THE
TOWN OF BADROCK,
MARSHAL LAWSON.

SAYS **ALDIS BROTHERLY**, THE
REGIONAL HEAD OF MUNCE, INC.

THAT **WARM
GREETING** COMES
ABOUT TWELVE HOURS
LATE, MR
BROTHERLY.

I ARRIVED
ON LAST NIGHT'S
SHUTTLE.

AND I
WISH I COULD
HAVE BEEN THERE
TO MEET YOU,
BUT —

— YOU'RE
A **BUSY MAN**. I
HAVE HEARD THIS
SAID ABOUT
YOU.

I ALSO APPRECIATE
I'M NOT MUCH OF A
PRIORITY. I'M ONLY THE
NEW COLONIAL MARSHAL.
JUSTICE DEPARTMENT'S
LOW ON THE PECKING
ORDER.

YOU
YOU **RUN** THIS
TOWN.

OH, MARSHAL. I'M
JUST A **CORPORATE
COG**.

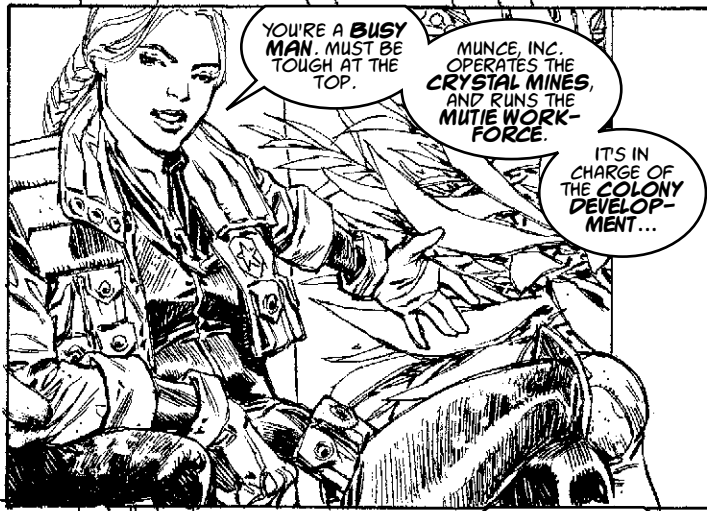
HAVE A SEAT.

I'M
A LITTLE
DIRTY.

MEH.
DUST WASHES
OFF.

UNLIKE **SOME
THINGS**.

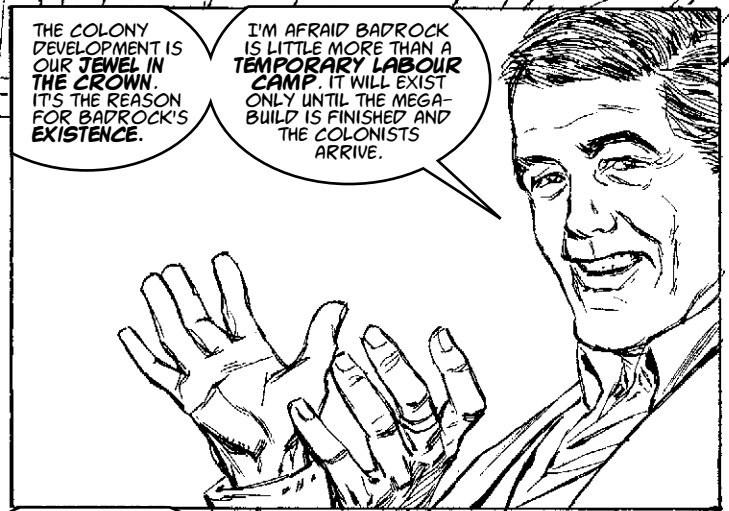
LET'S
CONVERSE.



YOU'RE A **BUSY** MAN. MUST BE TOUGH AT THE TOP.

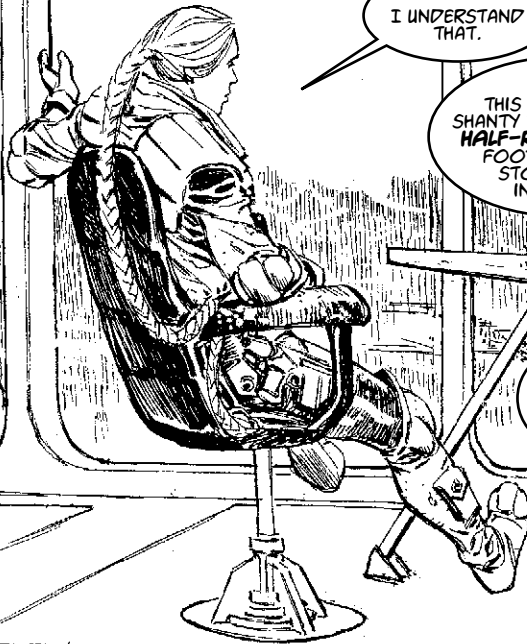
MUNCE, INC. OPERATES THE **CRYSTAL MINES**, AND RUNS THE **MUTIE WORK-FORCE**.

IT'S IN CHARGE OF THE **COLONY DEVELOP-MENT**...



THE **COLONY DEVELOPMENT** IS OUR **JEWEL IN THE CROWN**. IT'S THE REASON FOR **BADROCK'S** EXISTENCE.

I'M AFRAID **BADROCK** IS LITTLE MORE THAN A **TEMPORARY LABOUR CAMP**. IT WILL EXIST ONLY UNTIL THE **MEGA-BUILD** IS FINISHED AND THE **COLONISTS** ARRIVE.



I UNDERSTAND THAT.

IT WILL BE A TIME OF PROSPERITY AND CULTURE. A **GOLDEN AGE**.

AND THIS DIRTY LITTLE SHANTY TOWN WILL BE A **HALF-REMEMBERED** FOOTNOTE IN THE STORY OF ITS INCEPTION.

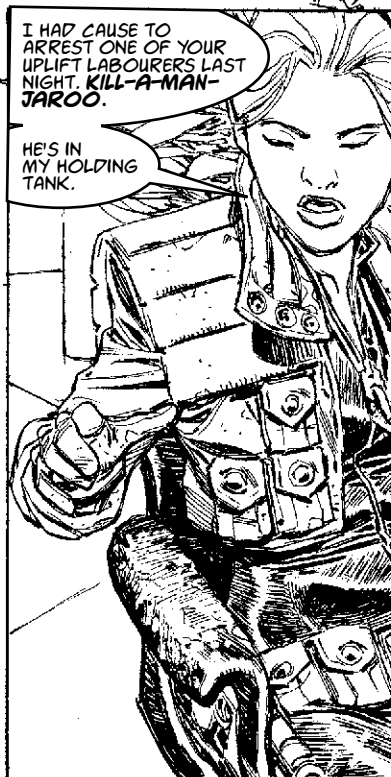
HAVE YOU VISITED THE **MEGABUILD**? UNINHABITED NOW, OF COURSE, BUT **QUITE BEAUTIFUL**.

GO THERE AND SEE WHAT THE **FUTURE** WILL LOOK LIKE.



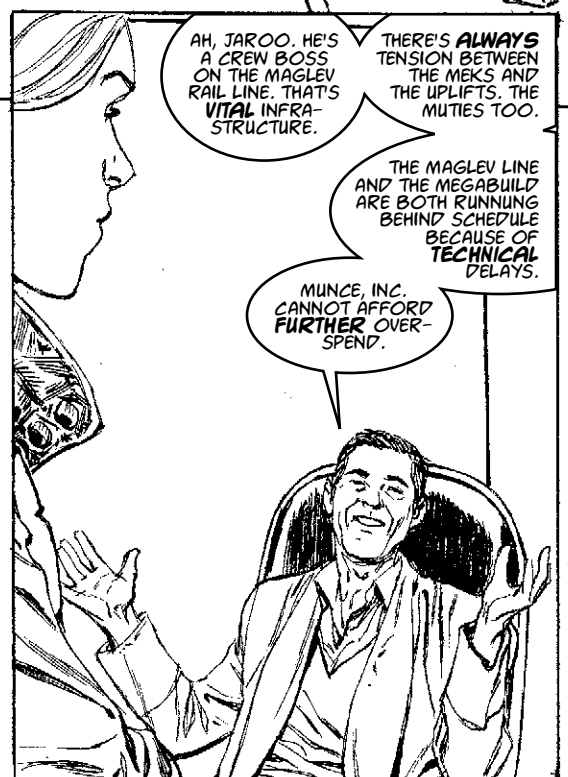
THE FUTURE'S NOT MY DEPARTMENT, MR BROTHERLY. THE PRESENT IS MY REMIT.

THIS 'DIRTY LITTLE SHANTY TOWN' IS ALL THERE IS FOR NOW, AND MY JOB IS TO LOOK AFTER IT.



I HAD CAUSE TO ARREST ONE OF YOUR UPLIFT LABOURERS LAST NIGHT. **KILL-A-MAN-JAROO**.

HE'S IN MY HOLDING TANK.



AH, JAROO. HE'S A CREW BOSS ON THE **MAGLEV RAIL LINE**. THAT'S **VITAL INFRA-STRUCTURE**.

THERE'S **ALWAYS** TENSION BETWEEN THE **MEKS** AND THE **UPLIFTS**. THE **MUTIES** TOO.

THE **MAGLEV LINE** AND THE **MEGABUILD** ARE BOTH RUNNING BEHIND SCHEDULE BECAUSE OF **TECHNICAL DELAYS**.

MUNCE, INC. CANNOT AFFORD **FURTHER OVER-SPEND**.



SO YOU WORK THEM **HARD**?

WELL, THEY **ARE** MEKS AND UPLIFTS.

YOU KNOW MEKS AND UPLIFTS HELPED SAVE THIS **PLANET**? MUTIES **TOO**?

WHEN WAS THIS?

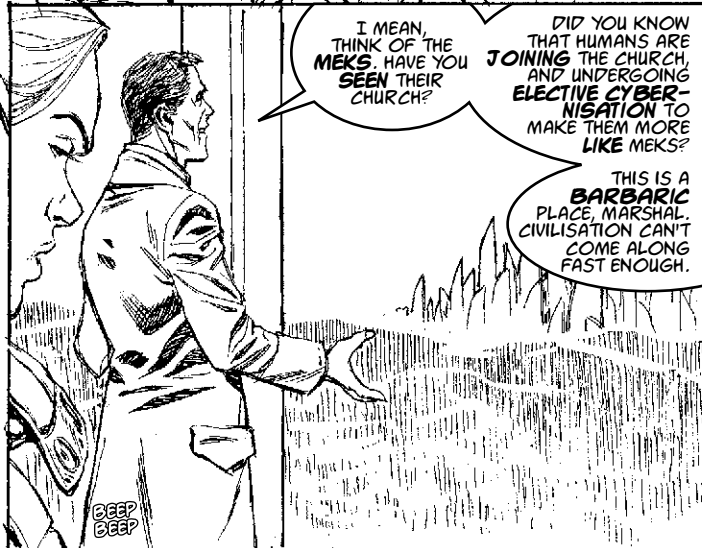
THE WAR AGAINST THE ZHIND, FIVE YEARS AGO.

THEY WERE LIKE **BROTHERS** THEN.



SADLY, NO LONGER. THEY BICKER AND FEUD, AND I HAVE TO MAINTAIN ORDER AND KEEP TO MY QUOTAS.

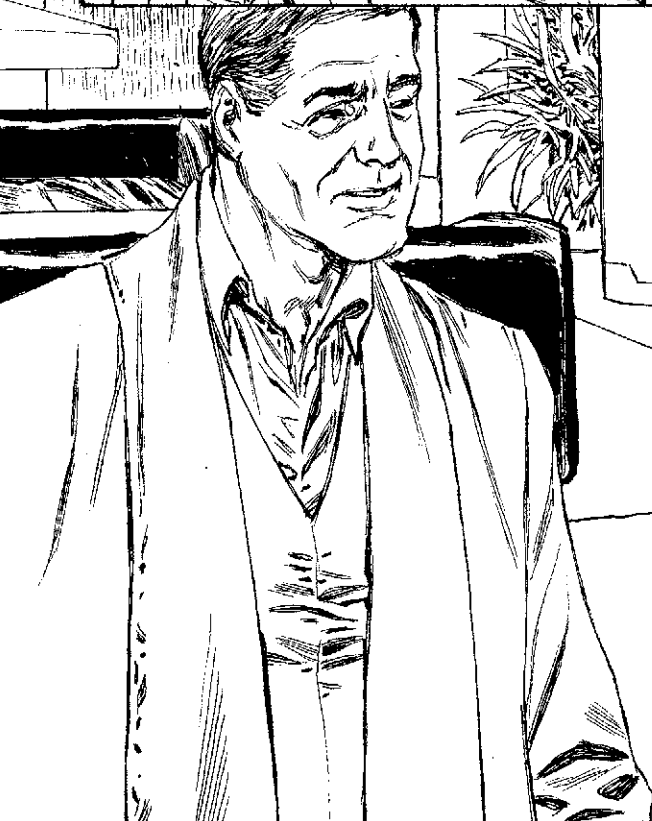
FRONTIER LIFE, MARSHAL LAWSON. IT'S **HARD** AND NOT VERY PRETTY.



I MEAN, THINK OF THE **MEKS**. HAVE YOU SEEN THEIR CHURCH?

DID YOU KNOW THAT HUMANS ARE JOINING THE CHURCH, AND UNDERGOING **ELECTIVE CYBER-NISATION** TO MAKE THEM MORE LIKE MEKS?

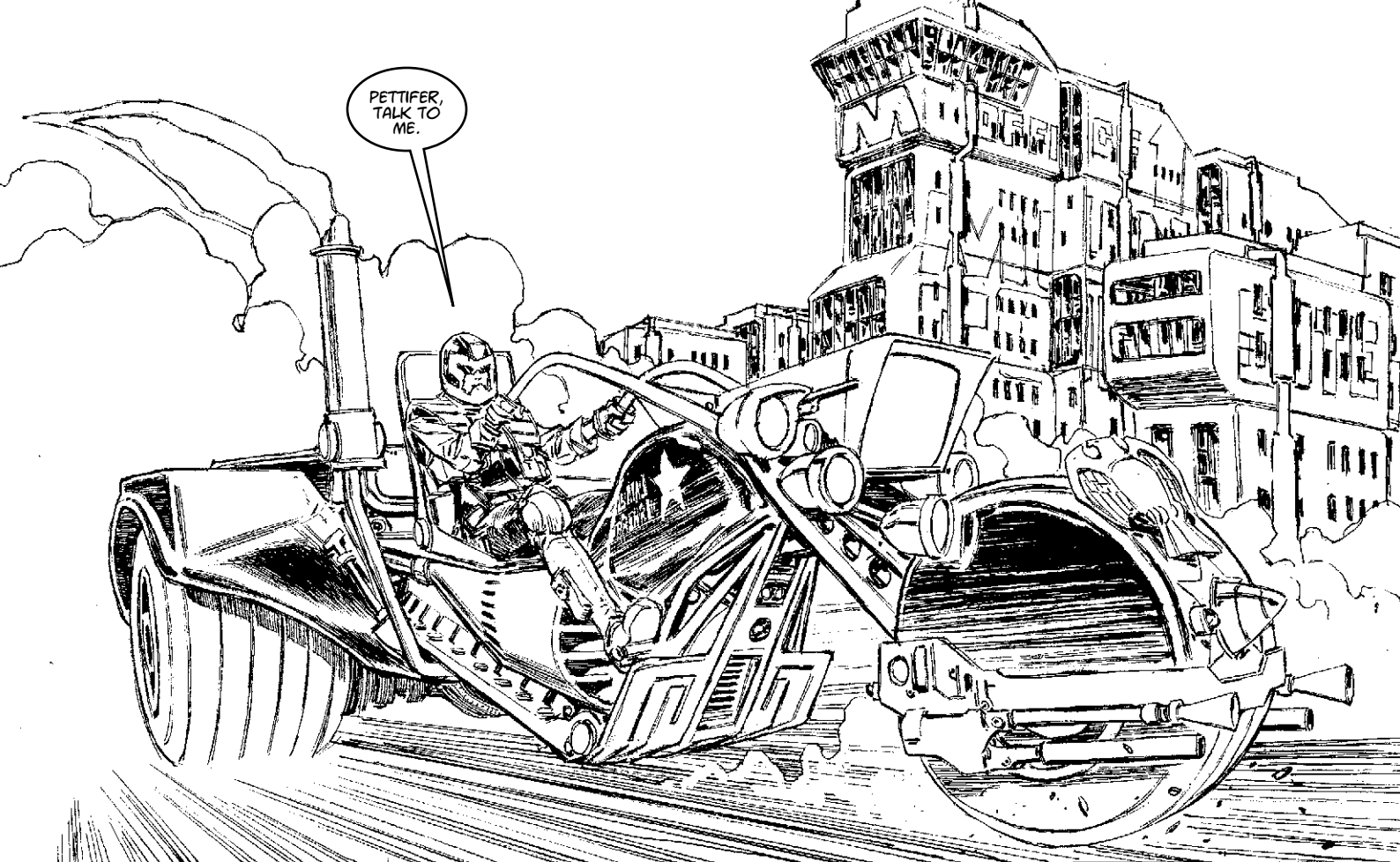
THIS IS A **BARBARIC** PLACE, MARSHAL. CIVILISATION CAN'T COME ALONG FAST ENOUGH.



THEN THANK GOD MUNCE, INC. IS HERE TO **SPEED** IT ALONG.

I HAVE TO GO, MR BROTHERLY. THERE'S A FIGHT. FIGHTS ARE MY AREA.

I'LL LET YOU KNOW WHEN I'M READY TO RELEASE JAROO. CAN'T HAVE YOU MISSING A WORK QUOTA.



PETTIFER,
TALK TO
ME.

REPORTS OF
A FIGHT IN
THE STREETS
AROUND THE
SCRAP-
SHEDS.

SAYS NERYS
PETTIFER, CLERK TO
THE OFFICE OF THE
TOWN MARSHAL.

SCRAP-SHEDS?

HOLDING

BADROCK'S
HOME TO A LOT
OF INDEPENDENT
SCAVENGERS,
MARSHAL.

THEY WORK
THE OLD ZHIND-
WAR BATTLEFIELDS
OUTSIDE TOWN.
THEY TRADE IN
SALVAGE AND
WARTECH.

THERE
CAN BE
QUITE A LOT
OF MONEY IN
IT — AND A
LOT OF CLAIM
DISPUTES.

WHERE
ARE YOU?

UH, JUST
RIDING PAST
THE ROBOT
CHURCH.

WELL, YOU'RE CLOSE. REPORTS
SAY ROMEY TECHSTER AND HIS CREW
ARE ATTACKING THE SCRAP-SHED OF
MR TINKERTON.

AND HE IS?

A RIVAL
IN THE SCRAP
BUSINESS.



I SEE IT.

OPEN
THE DOOR,
TINKERTON!

OPEN
THE DOOR,
YOU THIEVING
DROKKER!

I WILL HAVE
WORDS WITH
YOU!



SMASH
IT DOWN,
BOYS.



OII!

TAKING
SLEDGEHAMMERS
TO AN ALREADY
BROKEN SHUTTER
IS ONE THING.
MAYBE A WEEK
IN THE TOWN
CUBE.

BUT I SPY
A SIDEARM, AND
I'M GUESSING THE
DUMBASS HOLDING
IT GOES BY THE
NAME ROMEY
TECHSTER.



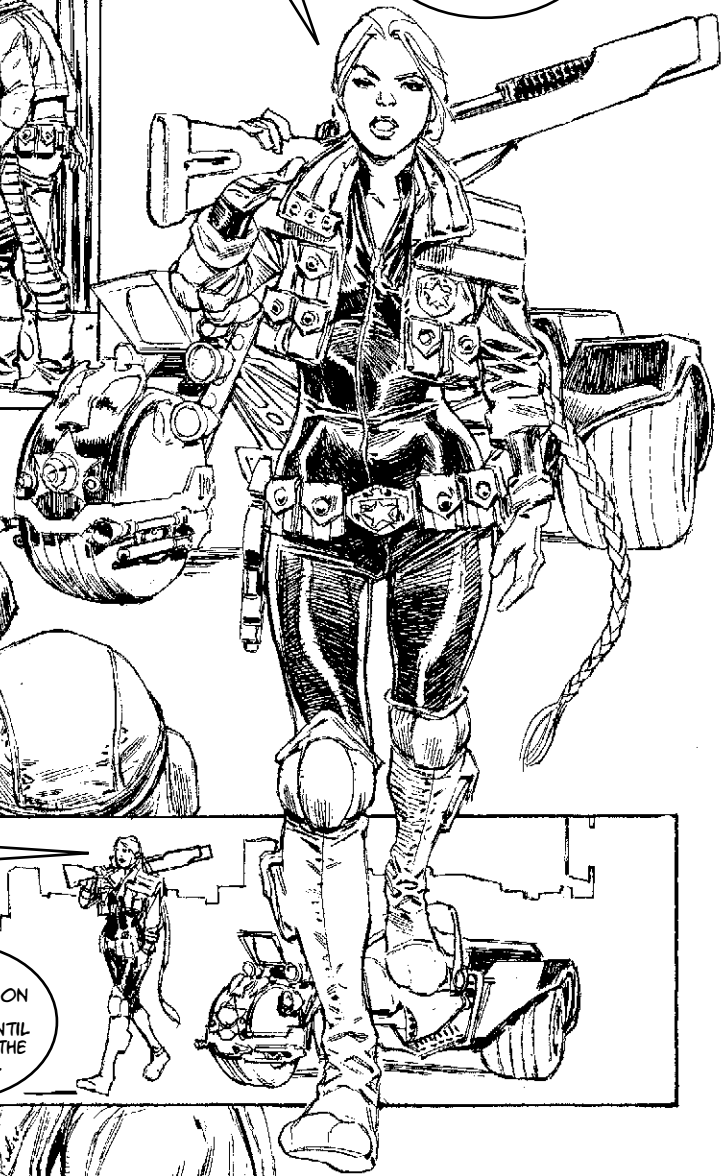
THIS AIN'T
NONE OF YOUR
BUSINESS,
MARSHAL!

THIS IS A
TRADE DISPUTE.
THAT DROKKER
TINKERTON DUG UP
SOME JUICY ZHIND
TECH IN A
TERRITORY HE KNEW
I HAD CLAIMED, AND
NOW HE'S LOCKED
HIMSELF —



I DON'T CARE
IF HE LAID A
STOOL IN YOUR
GRANDMA'S
SUNDAY HAT,
SIR.

THIS
CONVERSATION
DOESN'T
CONTINUE UNTIL
YOU DROP THE
SIDEARM.

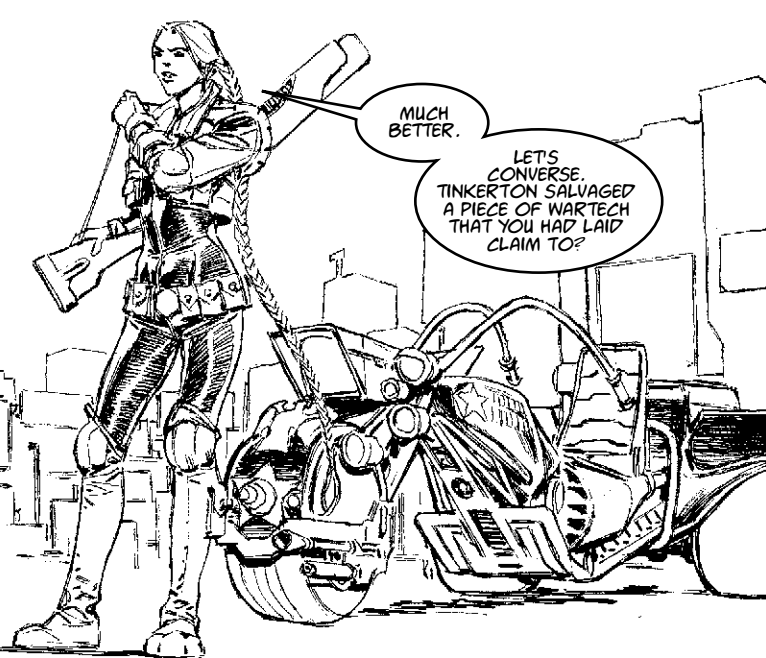
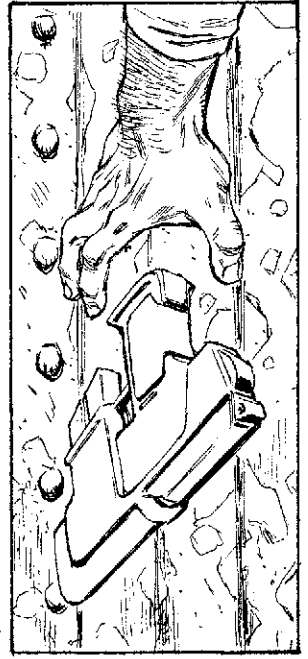




YOU CAN'T —

BY THE POWERS VESTED IN ME BY MEGA-CITY ONE, YES, I DROKKIN' CAN.

GIVE ME AN EXCUSE, TECHSTER. GIVE ME AN EXCUSE TO VENTILATE YOU.



MUCH BETTER.

LET'S CONVERSE. TINKERTON SALVAGED A PIECE OF WARTECH THAT YOU HAD LAID CLAIM TO?



JUICY PIECE OF ZHIND HARDWARE. A GENERATOR BLOCK.

I'D STAKED A CLAIM TO THAT PATCH OF GROUND. LEGIT. I GOT PAPERS. TITLE DEEDS TO THE LAND PARCEL. I PAID GOOD CASH.

I'LL TALK TO HIM.



TINKERTON? THIS IS THE LAW! OPEN THE DOOR!



DON'T LET THAT
MADMAN NEAR
ME!

WOULDN'T
DREAM OF IT.
LET ME IN.



TECHSTER
ALLEGES YOU
PILFERED SOME-
THING.

HE'S A LIAR!
I'D CLAIMED THAT
PATCH! I GOT
DEED PAPERS!
LEGIT!

HIS ARE
FAKED!

THEY'RE LEGIT!
IT'S YOURS WHAT
ARE FAKES!

I GOT PAPERS!

I GOT PAPERS
TOO!

THEN
YOU BOTH
HAVE SOMETHING
TO WIPE YOUR
ARSES ON.



YOU SALVAGE
THAT **CATT**,
TINKERTON?

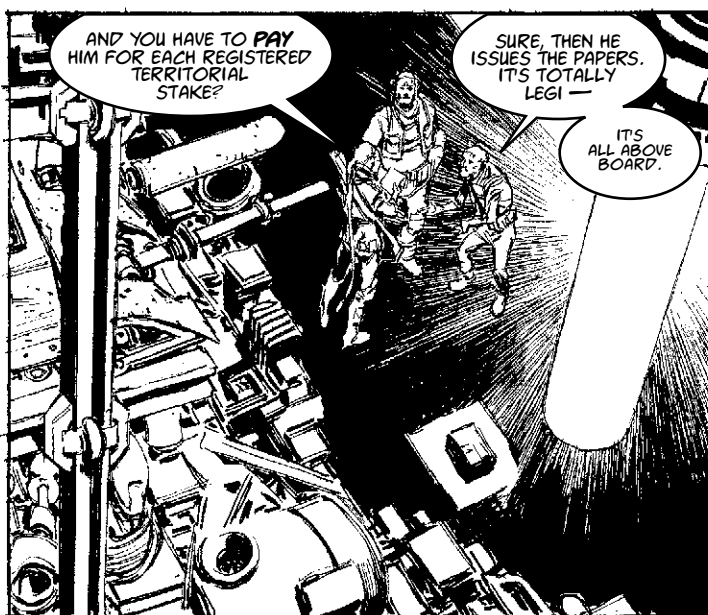
CAT?

COMBAT
ALL-TERRAIN
TRANSPORT.

OH YEAH,
BATTLEFIELD
SALVAGE.

WELL,
IT'S JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT
PROPERTY, SO I'LL
BE COMING BACK
SOMETIME TO
RECLAIM IT.

YOU CAN'T —





HERE'S WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN. DODGY FRANK IS NOW OUT OF THIS LINE OF WORK.

FROM NOW ON THE CLAIMS LEDGER WILL BE RUN BY THE MARSHAL'S OFFICE. YOU WILL APPLY TO ME.

I'LL PARCEL OUT THE TERRITORIES.

YOU CAN'T DO THAT —

I CAN, AND I'LL DO IT WELL. EVERYTHING WILL BE KEPT IN PERFECT ORDER. IMMACULATE BOOK-KEEPING, NO MORE FAKE CLAIMS AND DUPES.

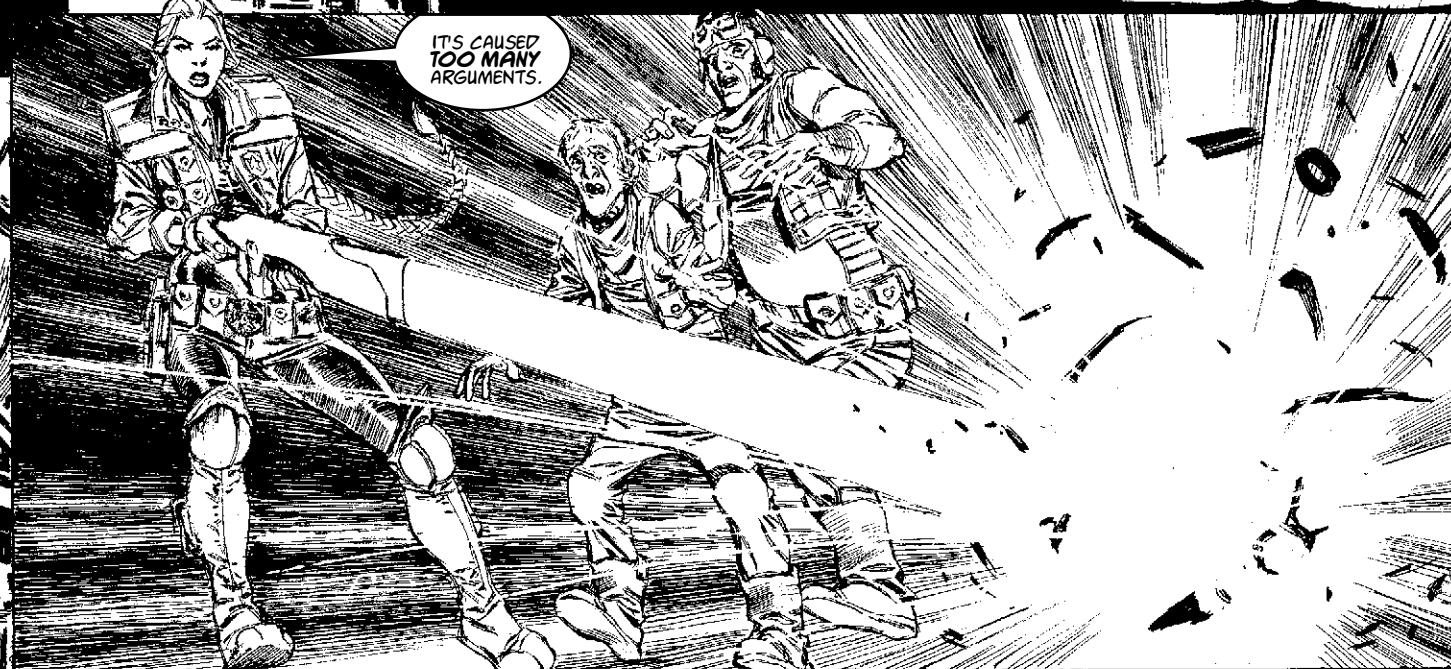
I WON'T EVEN CHARGE A FEE.

AS FOR THAT ZHIND WARTech —



IT'S MINE!

IT'S MINE, GRUD DROKK IT!



IT'S CAUSED TOO MANY ARGUMENTS.



SO NOW IT WON'T ANY MORE.

YOU CAN'T DO THAT...

I CAN DO EXACTLY WHAT I LIKE.



YOU KNOW WHY?

BECAUSE UNLIKE EVERYTHING ELSE IN THIS DIRTY LITTLE SHANTY TOWN, I'M SO LEGIT IT'LL MAKE YOU WANT TO CRY.



ZOMBO

PARTS 1 & 2

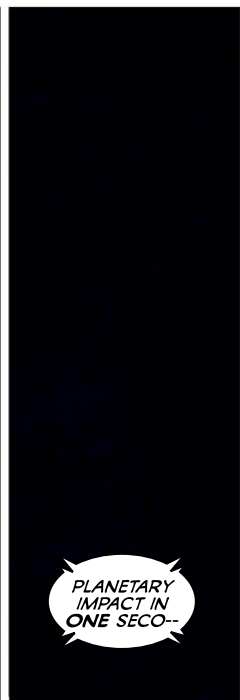
Script: Al Ewing

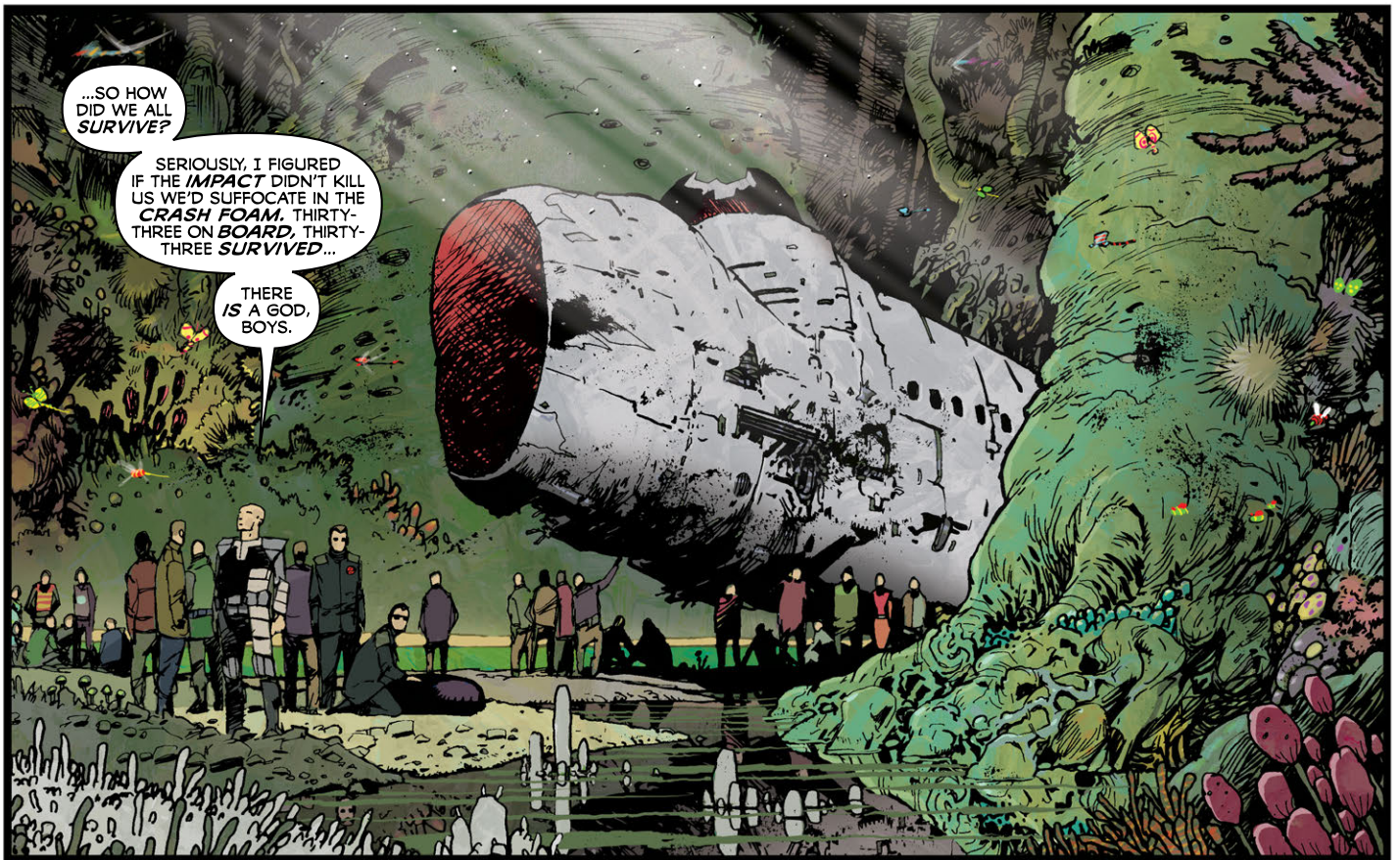
Art: Henry Flint

Letters: Simon Bowland

Originally published in 2000 AD Progs 1632-1633







...SO HOW DID WE ALL SURVIVE?

SERIOUSLY, I FIGURED IF THE *IMPACT* DIDN'T KILL US WE'D SUFFOCATE IN THE *CRASH FOAM*. THIRTY-THREE ON BOARD. THIRTY-THREE SURVIVED...

THERE IS A GOD, BOYS.



ACTUALLY IT WAS THIRTY-THREE AND A HALF.

BUT YOU DON'T HAVE CLEARANCE TO KNOW THAT.

SO FORGET I SAID ANYTHING.

ATTENTION PLEASE, EVERYBODY--



--PLEASE STAY ALERT, OBEY OUR INSTRUCTIONS AND REMEMBER THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT IS YOUR FRIEND.

WE NEED TO BRIEF YOU ON POSSIBLE PROBLEMS INHERENT IN OUR CURRENT LOCATION--

AHHH, SHADDUP!

SO WE START THE DISTRESS BEACON AND WAIT FOR A RESCUE SHUTTLE--HOW HARD'S THAT GONNA BE?



HELL, WE EVEN GOT FOOD--





LUCKILY, THERE SHOULD BE A **RESEARCH STATION** DOWNRIVER FROM HERE THAT'LL HAVE THE TOOLS WE NEED TO STAY ALIVE UNTIL **HELP** COMES.

SO WE'RE GOING TO USE THE WRECKAGE OF THE SHIP TO BUILD A PAIR OF **RAFTS**--

WAIT, WAIT, WAIT--HOLD UP. WE'RE GOING ON THE **RIVER**?



YOU'VE JUST TOLD US THAT THIS WHOLE PLANET WANTS TO **KILL** US AND NOW YOU WANT TO GO **BOATING**?

ISN'T THAT GOING TO PUT US IN EVEN **MORE** DANGER? WHY CAN'T WE JUST STAY WITH THE **SHIP**?

UH, SHE'S GOT A **POINT**, DUDE.

EVEN IF WE CAN'T **EAT** NOTHIN', WE'RE STILL SAFER--



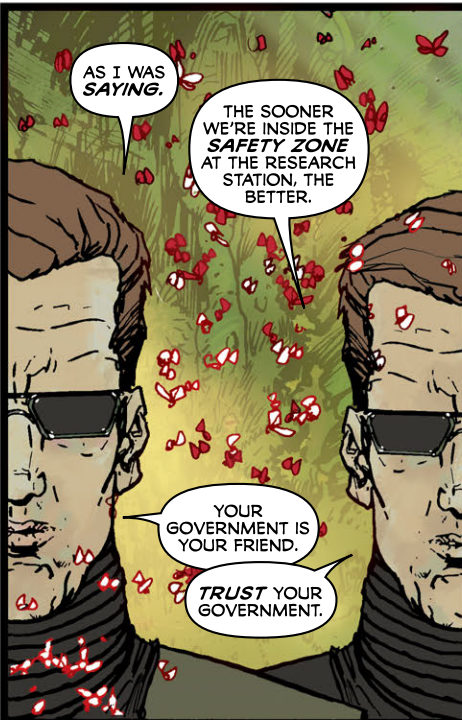
»HKK» SAFER **HERE**--

»HHCCCKK» GOT--GOT SOMETHIN' IN MY **THROAT** »AACCCCHHH»

--THAN »HAACCCCKKK»



OH MY GOD...



AS I WAS **SAYING**.

THE SOONER WE'RE INSIDE THE **SAFETY ZONE** AT THE **RESEARCH STATION**, THE BETTER.

YOUR GOVERNMENT IS YOUR **FRIEND**.

TRUST YOUR GOVERNMENT.



AND GET BUILDING THOSE **RAFTS**.



OKAY, KEEP THE MASS **CENTRAL**, FOLKS...WE DON'T WANT THIS BABY TIPPING OVER...



LOOK, "**TRUST THE GOVERNMENT**" AND ALL, AND GOD KNOWS I DON'T WANT ANYBODY ELSE EATEN BY **MOths**--

--BUT I'VE GOT TO ASK. HOW COME THERE'S ONLY ABOUT NINE OF US ON **THIS** RAFT AND EVERYONE ELSE GETS CRAMMED ON THE **OTHER** ONE?

I MEAN, THAT CAN'T BE **SAFE**, RIGHT?



WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION.

I'M AFRAID **PROJECT BIOME-Z** TAKES PRIORITY OVER ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.

BIOME-Z--LIKE "**ENVIRONMENT Z**", RIGHT? THAT'S THAT BIG BOX YOU NEVER GET MORE THAN A COUPLE OF FEET FROM?



THAT'S **NEED TO KNOW**, MS HOLLISTER.

CURRENTLY, YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW.

APOLOGIES.



OKAY, OKAY, NO MORE QUESTIONS, TRUST YOUR YADDA YADDA, I **GET** IT. IT'S JUST--

--WHAT'S WITH THAT FLASHING **SIGN**? IS THAT BAD?



ZOMBO'S WAKING UP, MS HOLLISTER.

THAT'S **CATASTROPHIC**.

THE SURVIVORS OF THE CRASHED FLIGHT 303 ARE ATTEMPTING TO GET TO SAFETY ON THE LETHAL DEATHWORLD OF CHRONOS...

THERE'S A BEND IN THE RIVER COMING UP! EVERYBODY **GET READY**--WE'RE OVERLOADED HERE, WE DON'T WANT HER TIPPING OVER!



MISTER GIBSON!

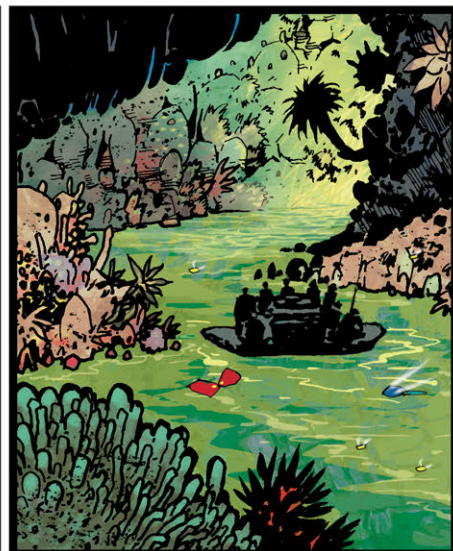
WE NEED YOU TO SHOUT **BACK** TO US WHAT'S AROUND THE **BEND**!

TELL US IF IT'S THE **RESEARCH STATION**!



THERE'S **SOMETHING** HERE--

LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF WEIRD



MISTER GIBSON?

MISTER GIBSON!

CAN YOU **HEAR** US?



WE'RE GOING AROUND! EVERYBODY **KEEP** IN THE **CENTRE**--

MISTER GIBSON, **PLEASE RESPOND**!

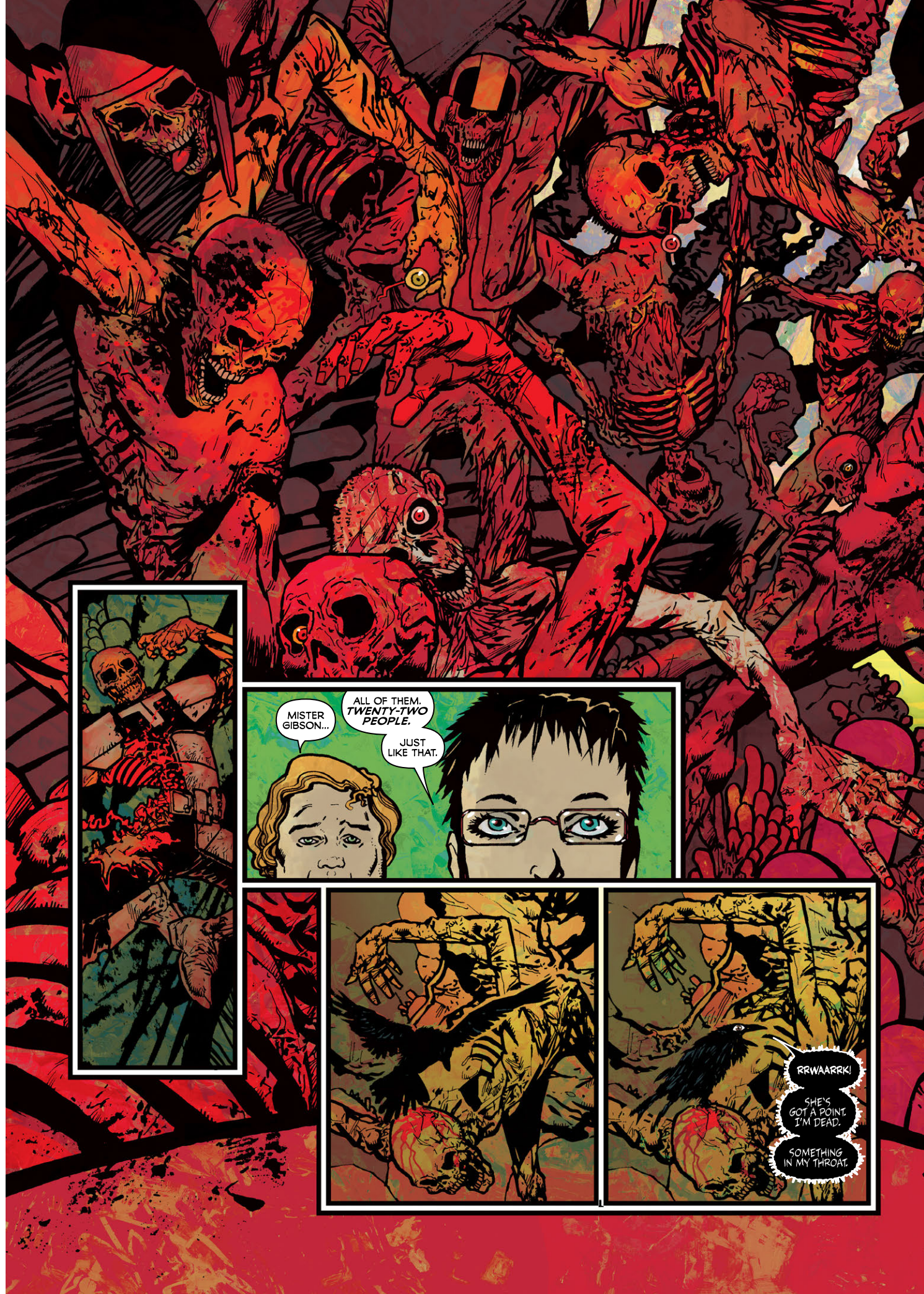
PLEASE SAY **SOMETHING**!

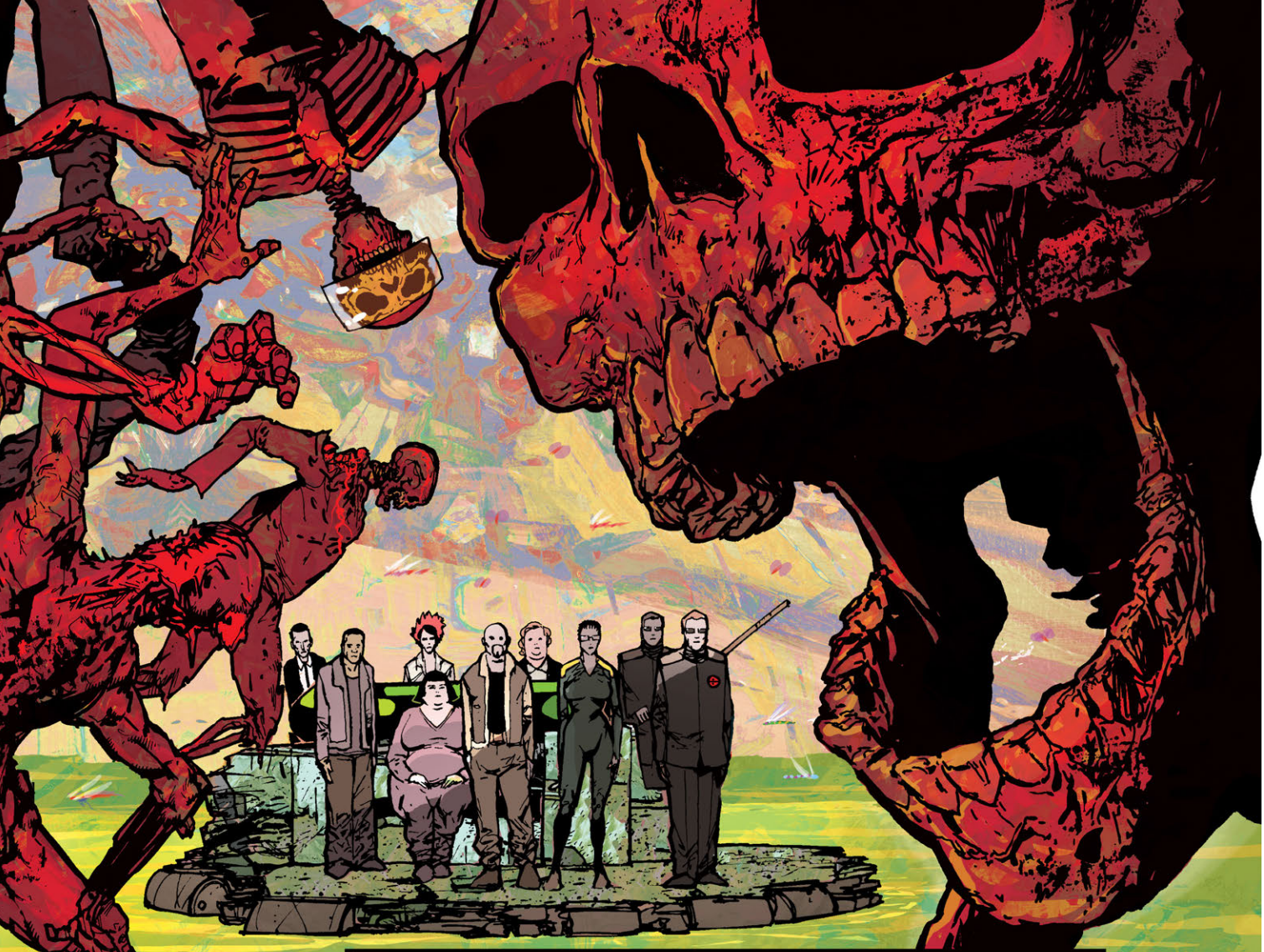
MISTER GIBSON!

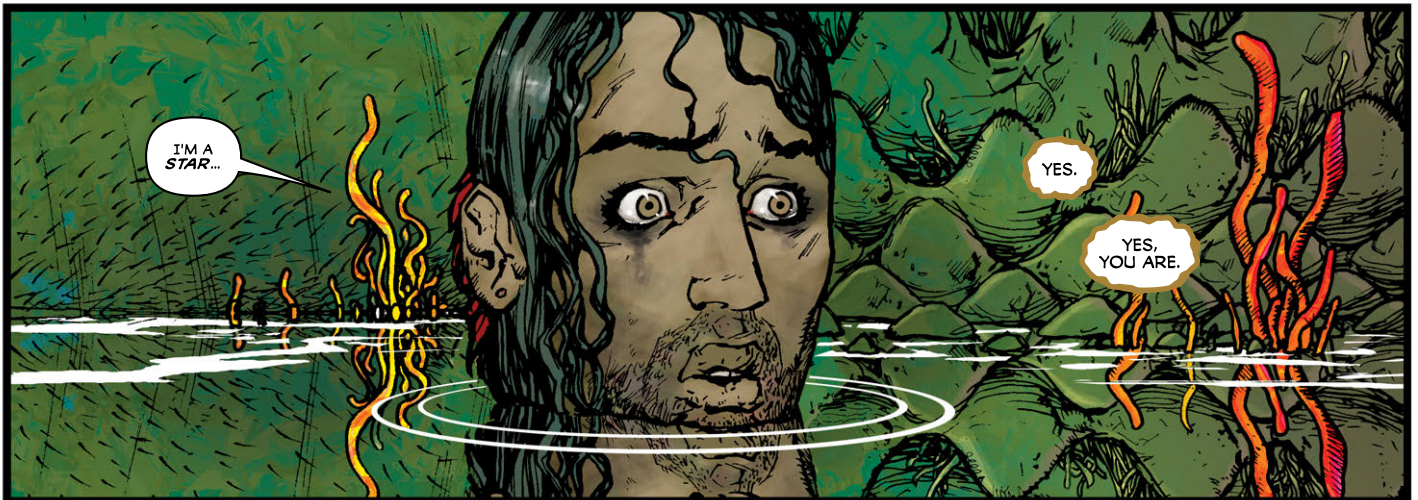
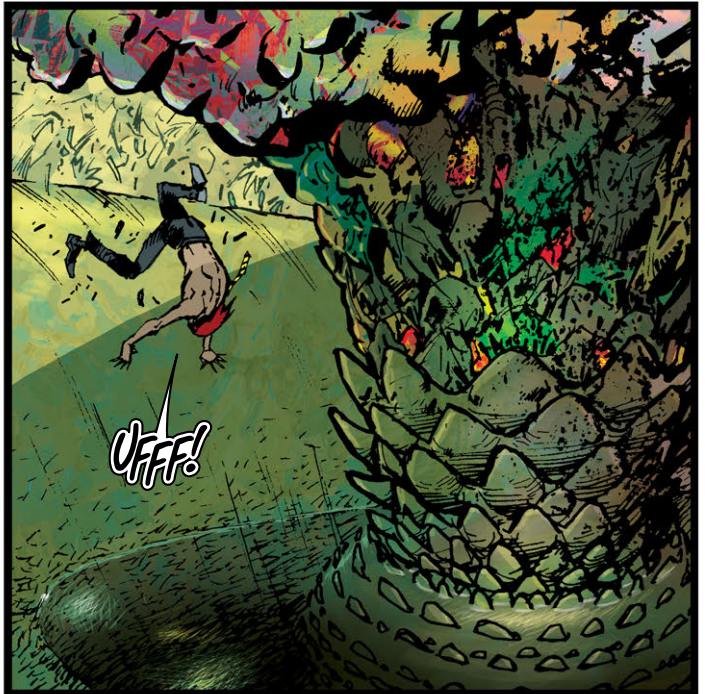
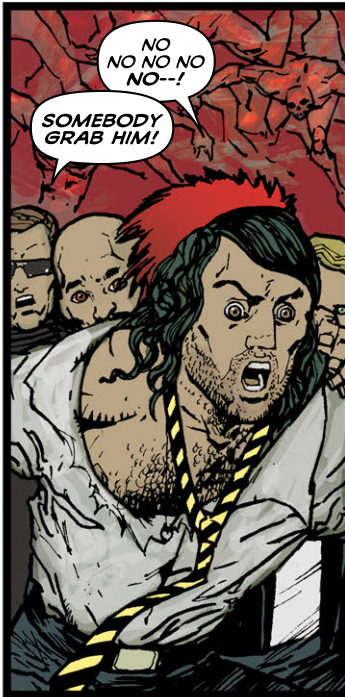


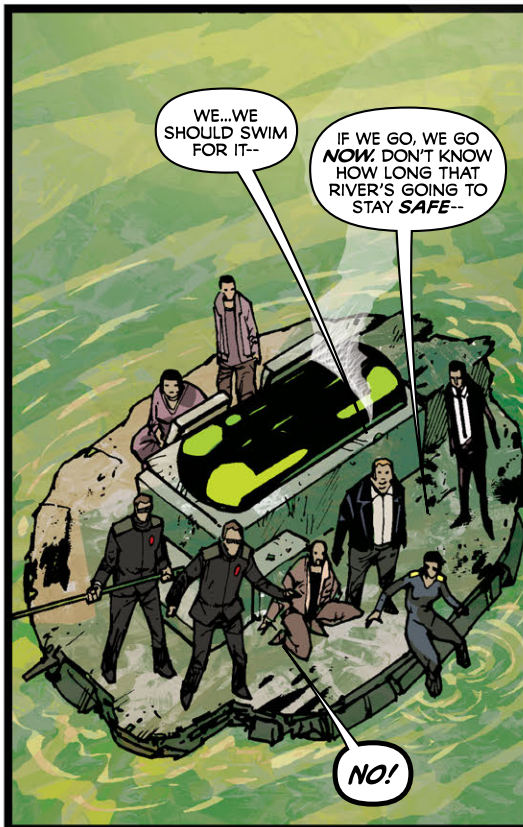
MISTER GIB-- OH.











JAEGIR STRIGOI

PARTS 1 & 2

Script: Gordon Rennie

Art: Simon Coleby

Letters: Simon Bowland

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AN IZBRISAN SHANTY CAMP,
ODESSA BINARY INDUSTRIAL
WORLD, INNER RODINA SYSTEMS:

I CHASE HIM, THROUGH THE
FALLING SMELTER ASH AND POOLS OF
MERCURY FROM THE RUN-OFF FROM
THE GRAND PATRIOT MUNITIONS PLANT.

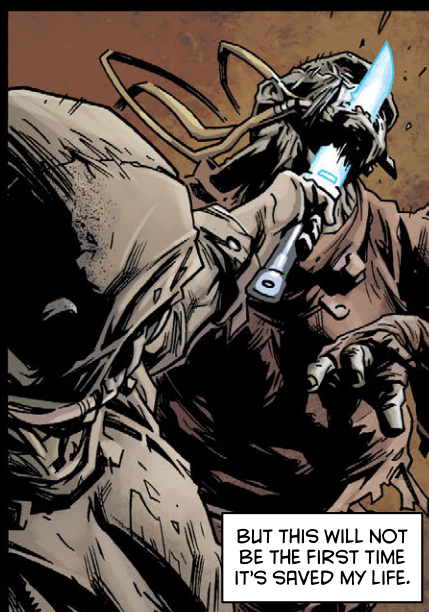
I SHOUT OUT THE STANDARD WARNING
BEFORE I FIRE, MY VOICE MUFFLED BY THE
CHEM-MASK I'M WEARING, MY WORDS
DROWNED OUT BY THE INCESSANT ROAR
OF TROOP-CARRIER SHUTTLES LIFTING OFF
FROM THE NEARBY MUSTERING GROUNDS.

NEVERTHELESS,
THE LEGALITIES MUST
BE OBSERVED.

NOT THAT I'M
SURE THE THING
I'M CHASING STILL
UNDERSTANDS
THE BASICS OF
HUMAN SPEECH.

STILL, I THINK I PROBABLY FINALLY
HIT SOMETHING PAINFUL INSIDE IT...

...BECAUSE, FOR THE
FIRST TIME SINCE I
SAW IT TWIST OPEN
THE SKULL OF THAT
SPEKTZOI TROOPER,
I SEE IT GET **ANGRY**
AT SOMETHING.






WE HAVE
COMPANY.

NOT
FRIENDLY,
I THINK.

KAPITEN-INSPECTOR
ATALIA JAEGIR,
NORDLAND STATE
SECURITY POLICE.

LOWER
YOUR WEAPONS.
I'M CONDUCTING
AN INVESTIGATION
ON BEHALF OF THE
OFFICE OF PUBLIC
TRUTH.





"OFFICE OF PUBLIC TRUTH"? TRAITORS WHO STAB THEIR OWN KIND IN THE BACK, YOU MEAN.

WE ALL SERVE RODINA AS BEST WE CAN, COMRADE.

I ROOT OUT *WAR CRIMINALS* WHO BLACKEN THE NAME OF THE GREATER NORDLAND ARMED FORCES, WHILE YOU AND YOUR MEN APPARENTLY GUARD SLAGHEAPS AND SCRAPYARDS.

YOU DARE--

NU KARTHAGE. NU EARTH. PAESCHENKOV. YOU HAVE SERVED AND BLED IN THESE *WARZONES*, LIEUTENANT? THE KAPITEN-INSPECTOR HERE HAS.




COLONEL-INSPECTOR NERRIA, OFFICE OF GENETIC PURITY. YES, THAT'S RIGHT, LIEUTENANT--

THE *STRIGOI-HUNTERS* ARE HERE. YOU AND YOUR MEN CAN NO DOUBT BE DELIGHTED TO CONSIDER YOURSELVES DISMISSED. MY BUSINESS IS WITH KAPITEN JAEGRIR.


YOU ARE RUNNING AN OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION, KAPITEN?

A FUGITIVE HUNT, COLONEL. THREE DESERTERS FROM THE NAGAN LEGIONS. POSSIBLE MATERIAL WITNESSES TO A *WAR ATROCITY INCIDENT* MY TEAM ARE INVESTIGATING.

A NOTORIOUS BOLT-HOLE FOR SUCH TYPES, THESE OUTCAST CAMPS...



"...AND YET, RATHER THAN A FEW PIECES OF RUNAWAY RAPIST AND MURDERER NAGAN TRASH, YOUR SEARCH FLUSHED OUT *MY* QUARRY INSTEAD."




THE *STRIGOI GENETIC TAIN*. A GIFT FROM OUR SOUTHER ENEMIES. YOU'VE SEEN SUCH A THING BEFORE?

TWICE ON NU KARTHAGE, AND ONCE ABOARD A TROOP SHIP IN SHIFT-TRANSIT.

ALL GOOD SOLDIERS FROM RENOWNED MILITARY-CASTE FAMILIES.




AS IS THIS ONE. YOU DID WELL TO BRING IT DOWN.



I WAS LUCKY, THAT'S ALL.

THEN I WISH FOUR OF MY OWN TEAM, INCLUDING MY SECOND-IN-COMMAND THAT YOU SAW THIS ONE KILL, HAD SIMILAR LUCK.


WE COULD USE MORE OF SUCH LUCK IN THE OFFICE OF GENETIC PURITY--AND IT APPEARS WE NOW HAVE FOUR EMPTY BERTHS TO FILL.



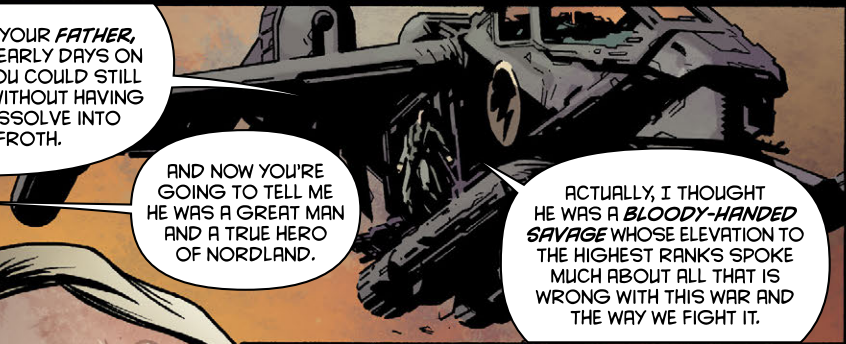
I'M HAPPY WHERE I AM, SIR. I BELIEVE THE WORK I CONDUCT AT THE O.P.T. TO BE VITAL TO THE FUTURE OF NORDLAND.

I ONCE SERVED ALONGSIDE ONE OF OUR ALIEN ALLIES WHO ENJOYED *BATHING* IN THEIR OWN *FILTH*.

I IMAGINE TRYING TO BRING OUR GLORIOUS MILITARY TO TASK FOR ITS FREQUENT LAPSES IN *CIVILISED CONDUCT* MUST FEEL SOMETHING LIKE THAT.



I SERVED UNDER YOUR *FATHER*, YOU KNOW. IN THE EARLY DAYS ON NU EARTH, WHEN YOU COULD STILL BREATHE THE AIR WITHOUT HAVING YOUR LUNGS DISSOLVE INTO BLOODY FROTH.



AND NOW YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME HE WAS A GREAT MAN AND A TRUE HERO OF NORDLAND.

ACTUALLY, I THOUGHT HE WAS A *BLOODY-HANDED SAVAGE* WHOSE ELEVATION TO THE HIGHEST RANKS SPOKE MUCH ABOUT ALL THAT IS WRONG WITH THIS WAR AND THE WAY WE FIGHT IT.



I AM SENDING YOU A *FILE*, ATALIA JAEGR. READ IT, AND THEN I THINK WE WILL TALK AGAIN...

AGAIN, IN MY DREAMS, I SEE
THE VIRUS PELLETS RELEASED
INTO THE CHAMBER.

ZYCLOPS-D. DESTINED TO BE
DEPLOYED ON NU EARTH AS ONE
OF A NEW GENERATION OF BIO-
AGENTS THAT WILL TURN THAT
WORLD INTO A POISONED HELL.

BUT HERE STILL IN ITS
PROTOTYPE STAGE,
TESTED ONLY ON
PRISONERS *UNDER*
SENTENCE OF DEATH.

A TRULY VILE SUBSTANCE, AND TESTAMENT
TO THE GENIUS OF OUR BIO-CHEM SCIENTISTS. WHEN
BREATHED IN, IT REACTS WITH THE FLUIDS IN THE LUNGS,
EXPANDING, COLONISING AND CANNIBALISING ALL
OTHER CELLS IN THE BODY AT AN ASTONISHING RATE.

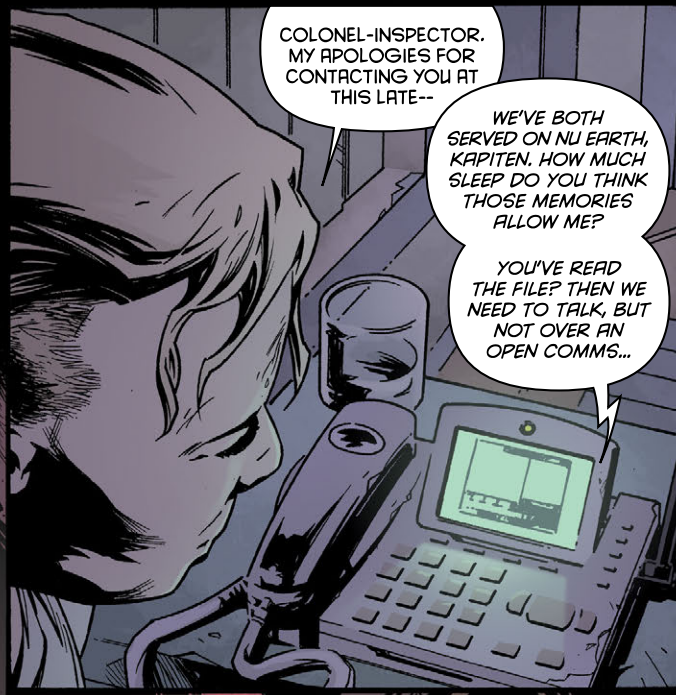
QUITE SIMPLY, IT EATS YOU ALIVE,
FROM THE INSIDE OUT. IN SECONDS.

AND, AGAIN, IN MY
DREAMS, I WATCH
MY MOTHER DIE.



COMMS CONNECT--
**COLONEL-INSPECTOR
NERRIA**, OFFICE OF
GENETIC PURITY.

++CONNECTING++



COLONEL-INSPECTOR.
MY APOLOGIES FOR
CONTACTING YOU AT
THIS LATE--

WE'VE BOTH
SERVED ON NU EARTH,
KAPITEN. HOW MUCH
SLEEP DO YOU THINK
THOSE MEMORIES
ALLOW ME?

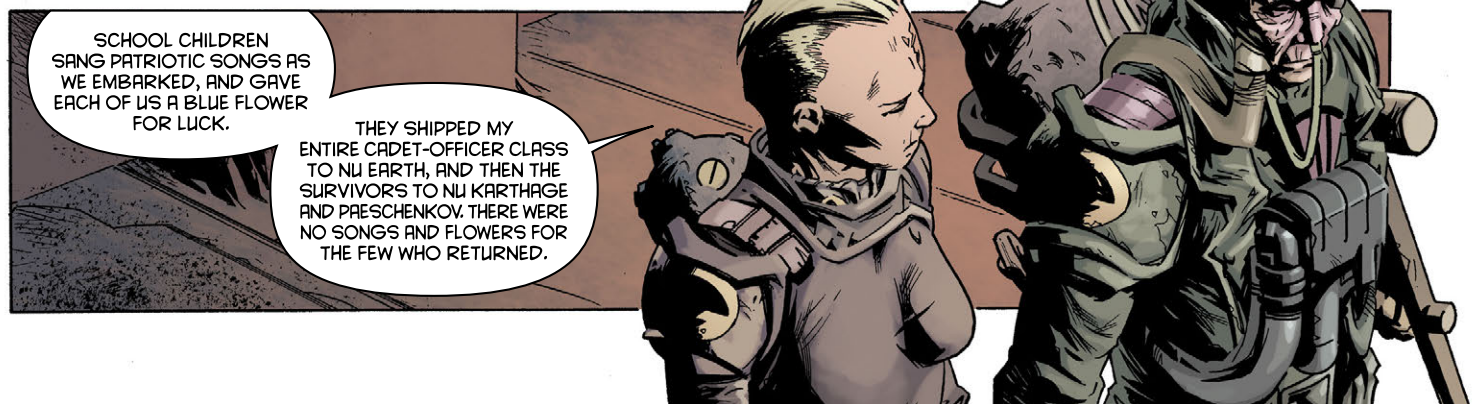
YOU'VE READ
THE FILE? THEN WE
NEED TO TALK, BUT
NOT OVER AN
OPEN COMMS...

"...MEET ME AT THE
MUSTERING GROUNDS."



THE FLOWER
OF NORDLAND YOUTH,
ASSEMBLING TO GO TO
WAR. A STIRRING SIGHT,
ISN'T IT? OR SO I
USED TO THINK.

YOU REMEMBER
YOUR OWN SUCH
EXPERIENCE?



SCHOOL CHILDREN
SANG PATRIOTIC SONGS AS
WE EMBARKED, AND GAVE
EACH OF US A BLUE FLOWER
FOR LUCK.

THEY SHIPPED MY
ENTIRE CADET-OFFICER CLASS
TO NU EARTH, AND THEN THE
SURVIVORS TO NU KARTHAGE
AND PRAESCHENKOV. THERE WERE
NO SONGS AND FLOWERS FOR
THE FEW WHO RETURNED.

NOT FOR YOU, NOR
FOR YOUR CLASSMATE
GRIGORU KUTTNER.
YOUR IMPRESSIONS
OF HIM?

ANOTHER GOOD
MAN FROM A GOOD
MILITARY-CASTE
FAMILY. HE SAVED MY
LIFE TWICE--

"ON **PAESCHENKOV**, A DIRECT HIT ON OUR BARRACKS
CAVERN FROM A **SOUTHER BUNKER-BUSTER** BURIED
US THIRTY LEVELS DOWN. IT WAS **GRIGORU** WHO FOUND
A WAY OUT AND LED US BACK UP TO THE SURFACE.

"AND AGAIN ON **NU EARTH**, AT THE
EIGHTH BATTLE OF **NORDSTADT**, WHEN
SOUTHER ATMO-CRAFT CAUGHT US
OUT IN THE OPEN, IT WAS **GRIGORU**
WHO GAVE US COVERING FIRE."

AN EXEMPLARY
RECORD, AND FROM
ONE OF THE MILITARY-
CASTE FAMILIES NOT
PREVIOUSLY KNOWN TO
HAVE BEEN AFFECTED
BY **THE TAINT**...

...ALTHOUGH THAT
IS THE SPECIAL NATURE
OF THE **STRIGOI GENE-
CURSE**. WE THINK WE
HAVE ERADICATED IT
FROM ONE BLOODLINE,
ONLY TO SEE IT ERUPT
IN ANOTHER.



THERE IS A *SICKNESS* IN OUR BLOOD, ATALIA JAEGR. WE ALL KNOW OF IT, YET IT IS ALMOST FORBIDDEN TO SPEAK ABOUT IT.

WE ARE FEW, AND THE SOUTHERS ARE MANY. TO OVERTURN THOSE ODDS, WE TRIED TO TURN OURSELVES INTO SOMETHING *GREATER* THAN HUMAN.



"INSTEAD, SOME OF US BECOME SOMETHING *FAR LESS*--

"THE STRIGOI TAINT--

"THE POISON IN OUR OWN GENES--

"THE POLLUTANT THAT TURNS THOSE WHO SHOULD BE SUPER-WARRIORS--

"--INTO BEASTS AND MONSTERS."




I'VE READ THE FILE--

--BUT THE HORROR OF IT NEEDS TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED, SO WE KNOW WHAT IT IS WE MIGHT ALL BECOME.


ON THE R&R STATION OF BADEN VRI, YOUR CLASSMATE TRAPPED, KILLED AND ATE FOUR LOCAL CHILDREN.

POSTED TO GARRISON DUTIES ON THE THE FACTORY WORLD OF ZELL PRIME, HE RAVAGED AT WILL AMONG ITS SLAVE-WORKER POPULATION.




AND ON KURTZ VIER HE PRESIDED OVER AN ANTI-GUERRILLA ACTION AMONG THE CIVILIAN POPULATION THAT SHOCKED EVEN THAT WORLD'S BUTCHER OF A GOVERNOR. ORDERED HOME, THE SHUTTLE TRANSPORTING HIM HERE WAS FOUND DRIFTING IN ORBIT FIVE DAYS AGO, ALL CREW SLAUGHTERED.

I KNOW THE BACKGROUND, COLONEL-INSPECTOR. WHY AM I HERE?



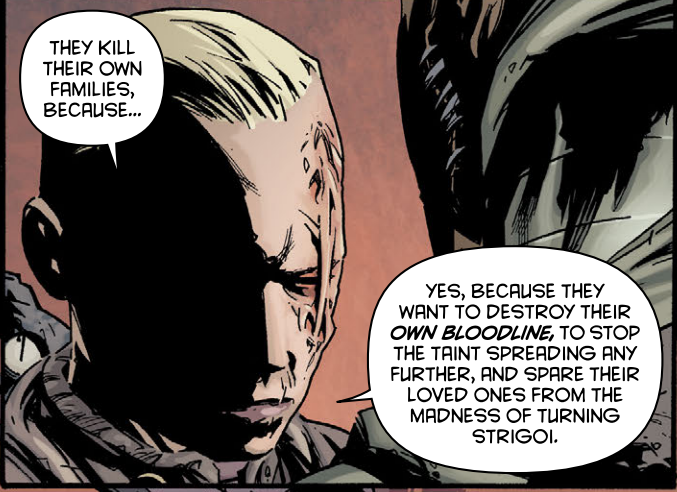
BECAUSE I HAVE ANOTHER MONSTER ON THE LOOSE, ATALIA JAEGER, AND I THINK YOU ARE THE ONE WHO WILL BRING HIM THE SOLACE HE SEEKS.

SOLACE?



TWO DAYS AGO, GRIGORU KUTTNER'S PARENTS AND TWO YOUNGER SISTERS WERE MURDERED--BY KUTTNER HIMSELF, JUDGING BY THE LEVEL OF ANIMAL SAVAGERY EMPLOYED.

WE'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE, BUT THERE ARE SOME THINGS ABOUT THE STRIGOI THAT IT'S UNWISE TO OFFICIALLY RECORD...



THEY KILL THEIR OWN FAMILIES, BECAUSE...

YES, BECAUSE THEY WANT TO DESTROY THEIR *OWN BLOODLINE*, TO STOP THE TAINT SPREADING ANY FURTHER, AND SPARE THEIR LOVED ONES FROM THE MADNESS OF TURNING STRIGOI.





BUT GRIGORU'S WIFE AND CHILDREN--

--WILL BE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY. YOURS, AND *YOUR TEAM'S*.



HE SAVED YOUR LIFE TWICE. NOW *YOU* CAN REPAY HIM--



--BY KILLING HIM AND PREVENTING HIM MURDERING HIS OWN CHILDREN.

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