

# THE MIDAS FLESH™

#FOUR  
OF EIGHT

NORTH / PAROLINE / LAMB



BOOM! BOX



# THE MIDAS FLESH™

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YEAH, WE'RE  
DEFINITELY IN  
TROUBLE.



FSM TITANIC.  
LONG-RANGE  
MED/SCIENCE  
HEAVY CRUISER.

THAT'S A  
MEDICAL  
VESSEL?!

AMONG OTHER THINGS. OLYMPIC-CLASS CRUISERS  
WERE DESIGNED TO ACCOMPANY MAJOR MISSIONS  
AND AID WOUNDED, RESEARCH AND ASSIMILATE NEW  
TECHNOLOGIES, AND PROVIDE COMBAT SUPPORT  
IN ANY TACTICAL SCENARIO. NORMAL COMPLIMENT  
IS ABOUT ONE THOUSAND SCIENTISTS, DOCTORS,  
OFFICERS, THEIR FAMILIES...

...WITH ARMAMENTS  
AND DEFENSES  
GREATLY OUTCLASSING  
ANYTHING YOU'VE  
GOT HERE.

I'D NEVER  
SEEN ONE IN  
REAL LIFE  
BEFORE.



YOU JERK, YOU  
SIGNALLED THEM!  
YOU SENT THE  
FEDERATION  
HERE!

I DIDN'T!  
HOW WOULD I  
HAVE DONE IT?  
WHEN?!

WAIT! IT DOESN'T MAKE  
SENSE, JOEY! HOW WOULD  
THEY HAVE GOTTEN HERE SO  
QUICKLY?!

HE'S RIGHT, THIS SHIP  
MUST'VE ALREADY BEEN ON  
THE WAY! THE FEDERATION  
SENT EARLY SCOUTS, THEN  
SENT HER BEHIND US FOR  
SUPPORT. THE TITANIC HAS  
THE CREW AND EQUIPMENT  
NEEDED TO PROPERLY TEST  
AND RESEARCH WHATEVER  
WE FOUND ON  
THE PLANET!







...A CLEAN-UP CREW, TO MAKE SURE NOBODY WHO KNOWS ABOUT THE FLESH GETS AWAY. THAT **DOES** MATCH HOW THE FEDERATION OPERATES. TRUST NO ONE, NOT EVEN YOUR OWN GUYS.

NO, IT'S NOT THAT. THEY'RE NOT HERE TO KILL US. IT'S A MEDICAL AND RESEARCH VESSEL.

RIGHT. ARMED-TO-THE-TEETH MEDICINE AND RESEARCH. CUTE.



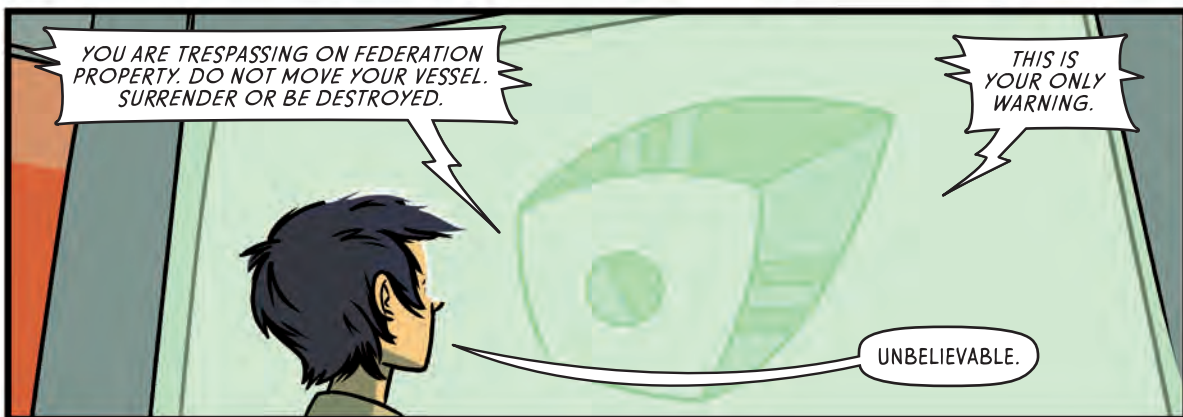
AND US WITH A DOOMSDAY WEAPON THAT WE CAN'T EVEN FIRE.

FRIIIIIIIIIIING THIS.



THEY'RE SIGNALLING US, JOEY.

WHAT CAN WE DO? PUT IT THROUGH.



YOU ARE TRESPASSING ON FEDERATION PROPERTY. DO NOT MOVE YOUR VESSEL. SURRENDER OR BE DESTROYED.

THIS IS YOUR ONLY WARNING.

UNBELIEVABLE.



THIS IS CAPTAIN JOEY OF THE PROSPECT. WE ARE IN RECEIPT OF YOUR MESSAGE.



...AND WE SURRENDER.





...AND YOU TWO ARE CRAZY.



COME ON JOEY, WE'RE SERIOUS. SIT DOWN, LET US SHOW YOU.

A PLANET INEXPLICABLY TRANSFORMED INTO GOLD IN THE DISTANT PAST. AND IT'S GONNA ALLOW WE THREE--JUST US--TO END THIS WHOLE WAR ONCE AND FOR ALL. WE'LL EACH FREE OUR PLANETS FROM FEDERATION DOMINATION, REVENGE OUR FRIENDS AND FAMILIES, AND STOP THEM FROM TAKING OVER ANYWHERE ELSE EVER AGAIN.

I KNOW, I KNOW. BUT THESE DOCUMENTS ARE HUNDREDS OF YEARS OLD, AND NEAR AS WE COULD TELL THEY HADN'T BEEN TOUCHED FOR ALMOST AS LONG. ALL BY A SINGLE AUTHOR. ALL CONSISTENT.



SO SOMEONE MADE IT UP IN HISTORY TIMES. WHERE'D YOU FIND THEM?

IT DOESN'T MATTER.

...A SECRET ROOM IN SOME GUY'S HOUSE.

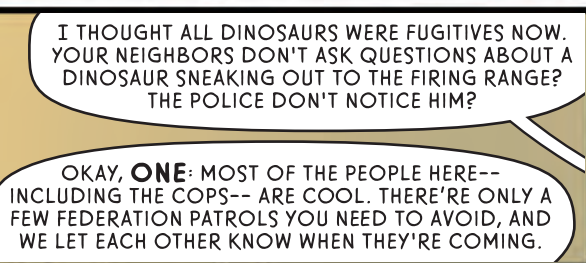
LOOK, I WAS THROWN THROUGH A WALL WHEN THE FEDS CAME.



THE ROOM WAS BEING KNOCKED DOWN AROUND ME BY ARTILLERY HITS, AND I HID THERE UNTIL THE FIGHTING STOPPED. TOOK ALMOST A YEAR TO GET MYSELF SMUGGLED OFF THE PLANET AFTERWARDS. AND FATIMA WAS THE CLOSEST PERSON I COULD THINK OF.



COOPER'S BEEN HIDING OUT HERE WITH ME SINCE THEN! AND WE'VE BEEN LEARNING HOW TO SHOOT, JUST IN CASE!



I THOUGHT ALL DINOSAURS WERE FUGITIVES NOW. YOUR NEIGHBORS DON'T ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT A DINOSAUR SNEAKING OUT TO THE FIRING RANGE? THE POLICE DON'T NOTICE HIM?

OKAY, **ONE**: MOST OF THE PEOPLE HERE--INCLUDING THE COPS--ARE COOL. THERE'RE ONLY A FEW FEDERATION PATROLS YOU NEED TO AVOID, AND WE LET EACH OTHER KNOW WHEN THEY'RE COMING.



"AND **TWO**: I DISGUISE HIM WHEN WE LEAVE THE HOUSE. I BIND HIS TAIL, THE WORKS.

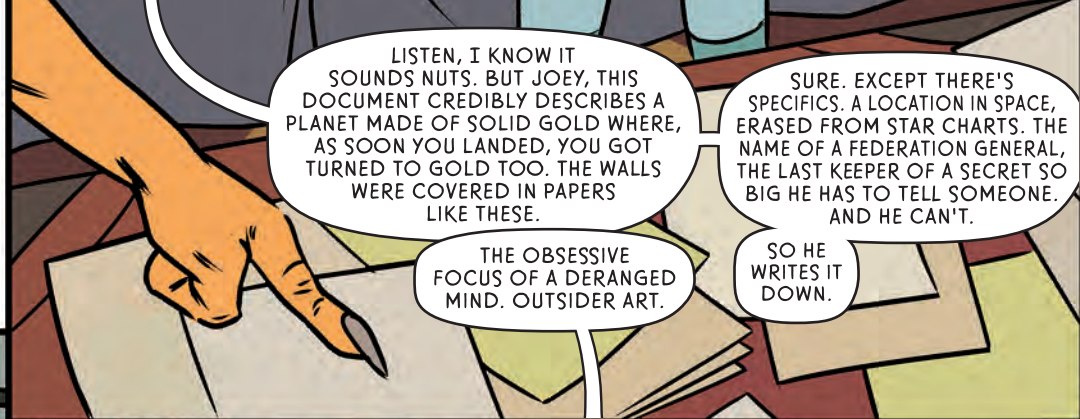
"I'M REAL GOOD AT IT TOO."



WELL.

I'VE BEEN GETTING REAL BETTER AT IT TOO.





LISTEN, I KNOW IT SOUNDS NUTS. BUT JOEY, THIS DOCUMENT CREDIBLY DESCRIBES A PLANET MADE OF SOLID GOLD WHERE, AS SOON YOU LANDED, YOU GOT TURNED TO GOLD TOO. THE WALLS WERE COVERED IN PAPERS LIKE THESE.

SURE. EXCEPT THERE'S SPECIFICS. A LOCATION IN SPACE, ERASED FROM STAR CHARTS. THE NAME OF A FEDERATION GENERAL, THE LAST KEEPER OF A SECRET SO BIG HE HAS TO TELL SOMEONE. AND HE CAN'T.

THE OBSESSIVE FOCUS OF A DERANGED MIND. OUTSIDER ART.

SO HE WRITES IT DOWN.

RIGHT. HE PASTES HIS DEEPEST DARKEST SECRET ALL OVER A ROOM AND THEN WALLPAPERS OVER THE DOOR SO IT CAN CHILL UNDISTURBED FOR A COUPLE CENTURIES. NO BIG DEAL. ADULTS DO THAT ALL THE TIME.

NO, THE HOUSE WASN'T OLD ENOUGH. I THINK SOMEONE **ELSE** FOUND THE PAPERS, TRIED TO MAKE SENSE OF THEM. THEN THEY DISAPPEARED TOO.

THE CONSPIRACY DEEPENS??

DUDE, I HONESTLY THINK THEY JUST GOT HIT BY A BUS OR SOMETHING. SOME ACCIDENT THAT PREVENTED A DEATHBED CONFESSION OF, YOU KNOW...

...THEIR SECRET INSANITY ROOM??

HEY, IT EXPLAINS HOW THIS GOT LOST UNTIL I GOT THROWN THROUGH A WALL.

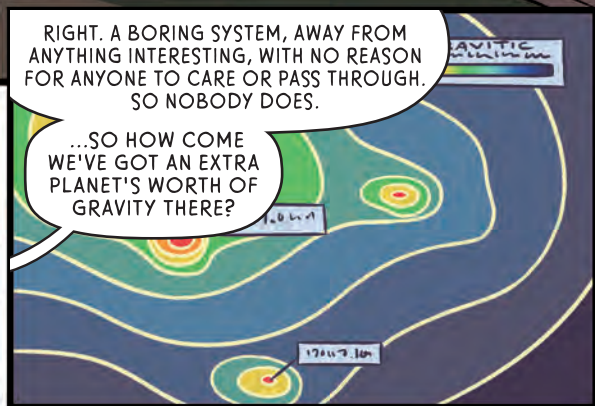
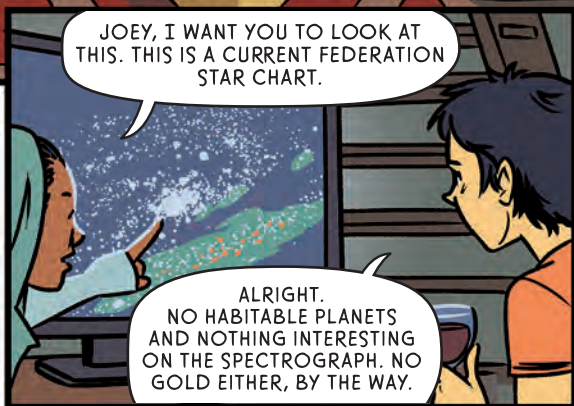


JOEY, I WANT YOU TO LOOK AT THIS. THIS IS A CURRENT FEDERATION STAR CHART.

ALRIGHT. NO HABITABLE PLANETS AND NOTHING INTERESTING ON THE SPECTROGRAPH. NO GOLD EITHER, BY THE WAY.

RIGHT. A BORING SYSTEM, AWAY FROM ANYTHING INTERESTING, WITH NO REASON FOR ANYONE TO CARE OR PASS THROUGH. SO NOBODY DOES.

...SO HOW COME WE'VE GOT AN EXTRA PLANET'S WORTH OF GRAVITY THERE?



...THERE'S SOMETHING THERE.

SOMETHING HIDDEN. SOMETHING THAT'S **BEEN** HIDDEN FOR CENTURIES.

AND THE LAST TIME ANYONE CHECKED, WHATEVER TURNED THIS PLANET WAS STILL THERE. AND IT STILL WORKED, JOEY.





WE WOULDN'T BRING YOU HERE IF WE HADN'T ALREADY VERIFIED EVERYTHING WE CAN. I BELIEVE THAT ON THIS PLANET THERE'S A WEAPON THAT CAN DESTROY THE FEDERATION. QUICKLY, CLEANLY, PRECISELY. IT'S OUR EVERY WISH COME TRUE.

WE COULD ACTUALLY BEAT THEM, JOEY. WE COULD FREE EVERYONE, NOT JUST THE DINOSAURS. **EVERYONE.**

EVEN IF THIS WEAPON STILL WORKS--AND I'M NOT CONVINCED IT WOULD--WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM ME?

YOU'RE ONE OF THE FEW WHO HAS MANAGED TO KEEP THEIR MONEY FROM THE FEDERATION. WE NEED YOUR FUNDING.

AND YOUR CONNECTIONS. YOU KNOW PEOPLE IN TECH WHO KNOW PEOPLE. WE'VE HEARD RUMORS OF SOMETHING THE FEDERATION IS WORKING ON.

AN ENERGY HARNESS THAT CAN MOVE MATTER WITHOUT PHYSICAL CONTACT.

STASIS FIELD EMISSION.

RIGHT. WITH IT, WE COULD MANIPULATE THINGS ON THE SURFACE, CAPTURE THE WEAPON. IT'S ALL WE NEED. WELL, THAT AND A STARSHIP TOUGH ENOUGH TO GET PAST THE BEST DEFENSES THE FEDERATION OF TWO-HUNDRED YEARS AGO COULD MUSTER.

...WHICH MY RESEARCH INDICATES ARE ACTUALLY QUITE A LOT.

JOEY, WE COULD DO THIS. WE COULD ACTUALLY END THIS WAR.

WE'D **FINALLY** HAVE SOMETHING THEY CAN'T DEFEAT, CAN'T BULLDOZE OVER LIKE IT'S NOT EVEN THERE. WE COULD END THE ENSLAVEMENT, THE DEATH CAMPS. WE COULD TAKE OUT WHOLE BATTALIONS WITHOUT THEM EVEN **KNOWING.**

THIS IS CRAZY. YOU KNOW THIS IS CRAZY, RIGHT?

BUT YOU KNOW WHAT?

SCREW IT AND SCREW THEM. LET'S DO IT. LET'S SAVE EVERYONE.

LET'S WIN THIS WAR.





WE DO NOT ADMIT TO ANY CULPABILITY, AND REQUEST A HEARING OF THE TERMS OF OUR SURRENDER WITH YOUR CAPTAIN.



THIS IS **GENERAL RUSS**. YOU ARE IN POSSESSION OF FEDERATION PROPERTY, ILLEGALLY STOLEN FROM A PRIVILEGED FEDERATION POSSESSION. THE LAW IS CLEAR IN THIS MATTER.

NO TERMS.



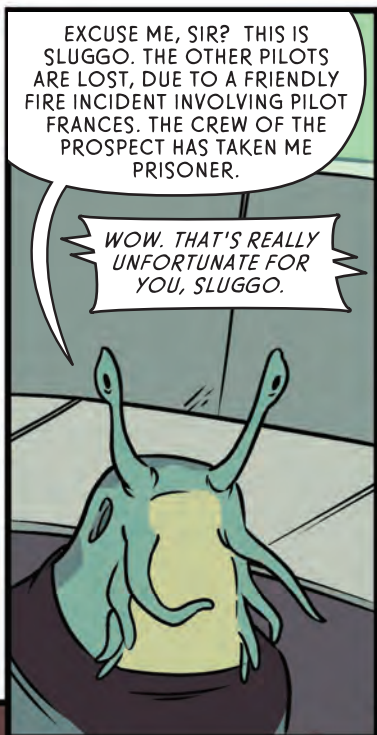
I AM REQUESTED AND REQUIRED TO RECOVER WHATEVER'S BEEN TAKEN FROM THE PLANET, AND I AM TO DESTROY ANY SHIP THAT EMERGES FROM THE SURFACE.



NOT NECESSARILY IN THAT ORDER.







EXCUSE ME, SIR? THIS IS SLUGGO. THE OTHER PILOTS ARE LOST, DUE TO A FRIENDLY FIRE INCIDENT INVOLVING PILOT FRANCES. THE CREW OF THE PROSPECT HAS TAKEN ME PRISONER.

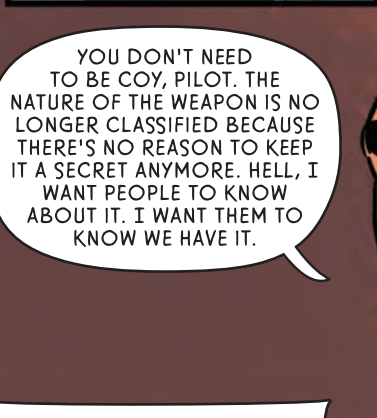
WOW. THAT'S REALLY UNFORTUNATE FOR YOU, SLUGGO.



...YES. WELL--THEY HAVE THE, UM, ITEM. THEY ARE WILLING TO NEGOTIATE SAFE PASSAGE IN RETURN FOR DELIVERING IT TO FEDERATION SCIENTISTS.

NO WE DON'T. NO WE AREN'T.

YES, THEY ARE. THE ITEM IS IN STORAGE, STABLE, AND AWAITING ANALYSIS.



YOU DON'T NEED TO BE COY, PILOT. THE NATURE OF THE WEAPON IS NO LONGER CLASSIFIED BECAUSE THERE'S NO REASON TO KEEP IT A SECRET ANYMORE. HELL, I WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW ABOUT IT. I WANT THEM TO KNOW WE HAVE IT.



TITANIC'S GOT SOME SMART COOKIES ON BOARD, AND I'D HOPED WHEN I COMMANDEERED HER THEY'D BE ABLE TELL ME HOW THIS WEAPON WORKS. BUT YOUR NEW FRIENDS JUST SHOWED US EXACTLY WHERE THE FLESH IS, HOW IT BEHAVES, AND HOW TO HARVEST IT. THANKS, BY THE WAY.

REAL TIME-SAVER THERE.

SO HERE'S WHAT WE'RE GONNA DO, PIRATE CREW OF THE **TERRORIST PROSPECT**. **OPTION ONE:** YOU'RE GONNA GIVE ME THE FLESH, AND I'M GONNA TEST IT OUT ON YOU. **OPTION TWO:** I BLOW YOU UP AND EXTRACT THE FLESH MYSELF FROM THE DEBRIS.



HMM... HONESTLY CAN'T SAY I PREFER EITHER OF THEM ONE WAY OR THE OTHER.

SIR, REQUESTING TRANSFER TO THE TITANIC.

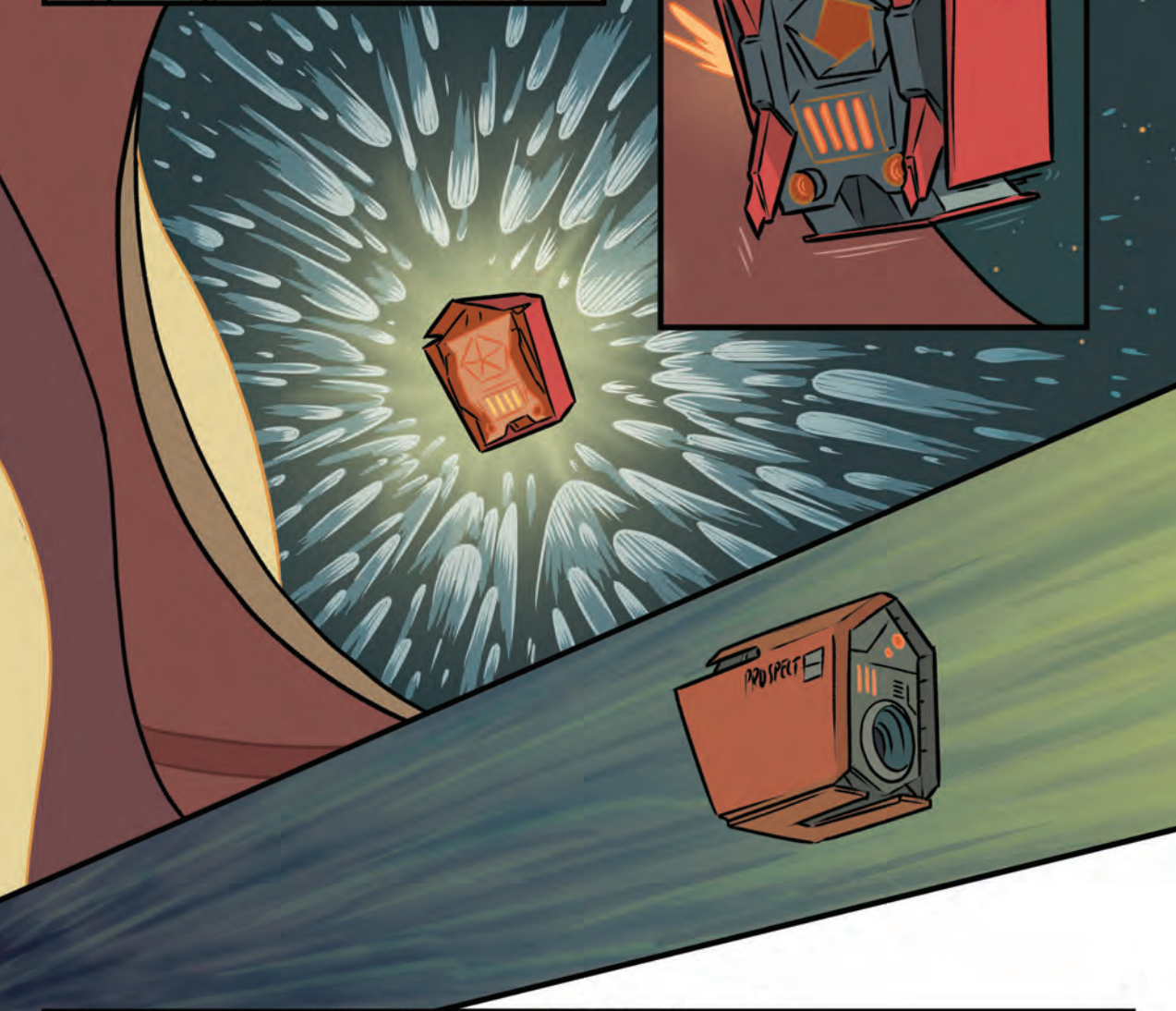
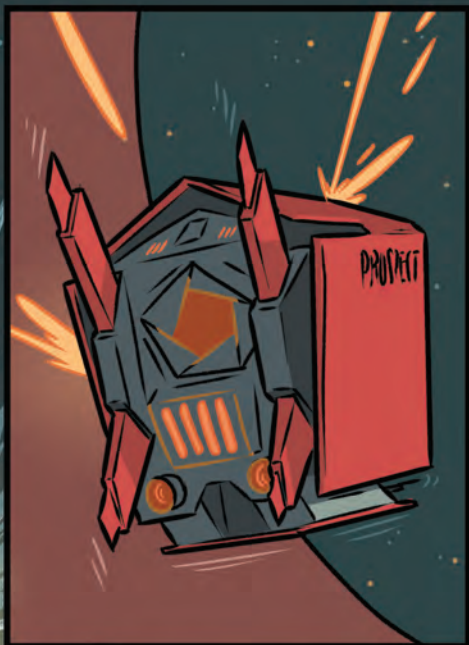
DENIED, PILOT. TOO RISKY, TOO MANY THINGS THAT CAN GO WRONG. I'M AFRAID YOU'RE GOING DOWN WITH THE SHIP. YOUR SERVICE TO THE FEDERATION IS NOTED.

ALRIGHT. WE'RE DONE HERE. AND YOU KNOW WHAT, I THINK I LIKE OPTION TWO. GIVES US SOME DATA ON HOW IT BEHAVES IN AN EXPLOSION.

WEAPONS OFFICER: FIRE.







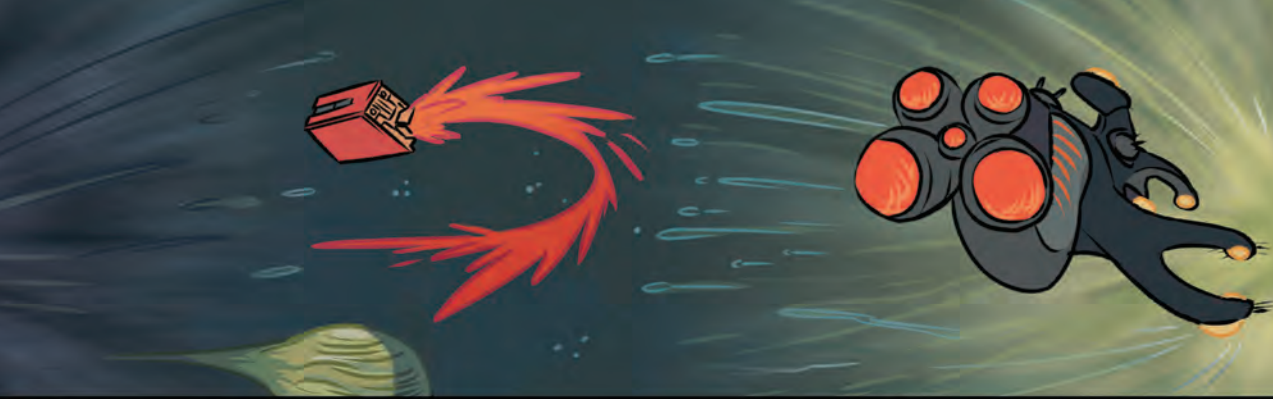












180  
COMPLETE.

COOPER, GET US AS  
FAR AWAY AS POSSIBLE WHILE  
THEY SLOW DOWN AND CIRCLE  
BACK. FATTY, GO BELOW DECKS  
AND GET THE FINGER READY  
FOR EJECTION.

...WAIT.  
WHAT?



FATIMA, LISTEN TO ME.  
WE'RE GOING TO DROP  
OUT OF WARP SOON AND I  
NEED YOU TO SUIT UP, GO  
OUTSIDE, AND DROP THE  
FINGER. IT'LL FREEZE, AND  
YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS  
THEN? IT'S A MINE. IT'S  
**OUR** MINE. IT'S THE  
GALAXY'S MOST  
EFFECTIVE WEAPON,  
LYING IN WAIT.

AND IT'LL  
DESTROY THE  
TITANIC.



NO. NO  
WAY.

JOEY, CAN WE TALK  
ABOUT THIS? THEY'RE  
FEDERATION, BUT I MEAN...  
THEY **ARE** A MEDICAL SHIP,  
RIGHT? INNOCENT PEOPLE  
ARE ON BOARD. THERE'S  
GOT TO BE--

IT'S A **FEDERATION** MEDICAL  
SHIP, COOPER. MILITARIZED. AND  
EVEN IF THEY WEREN'T, HERE'S THE  
TRUTH: WE DO NOT GET OUT  
OF THIS WITHOUT USING  
THE FINGER.

SO IT'S THEIR  
LIVES FOR OURS.  
NO BIG DEAL, RIGHT?  
A FEW THOUSAND  
INNOCENT PEOPLE  
DIE SO WE  
CAN LIVE?



LOOK, I WANT YOU TO ALL LISTEN  
TO ME: IF WE DON'T DESTROY THAT  
SHIP, IT'S NOT JUST US WHO DIE. OUR  
FAMILIES DIE, OUR FRIENDS DIE, AND  
EVERYONE WE LEFT BEHIND **DIES**,  
BECAUSE THANKS TO US THE  
FEDERATION KNOWS ABOUT MIDAS  
NOW. THEY'RE NOT GOING TO  
STOP WHEN WE'RE STATUES. YOU  
REALIZE THAT, RIGHT?

THEY'RE GOING TO GO  
BACK TO THAT PLANET  
AND THEY'RE GOING TO  
CARVE MIDAS UP UNTIL  
EVERY SHIP IN THE FLEET  
HAS THEIR OWN BLOODY  
POUND OF FLESH.

AND  
THEN THEY'LL  
DESTROY  
EVERYONE.





...WE LET THE GENIE OUT OF THE BOTTLE.

WE CAN CONTROL IT, COOPER. AS LONG AS WE CONTROL THE FLESH, WE CONTROL THE GENIE.

I WON'T DO IT.



THERE'RE CIVILIANS ON THAT SHIP! INNOCENT PEOPLE IN THE HOSPITAL! **BABIES, MAYBE. KITTENS. KITTENS WITH LITTLE BROKEN ARMS, JOEY.**

I DON'T WANT TO WATCH THEM DIE BECAUSE OF A DECISION I MADE.

DUDE, WHAT DID YOU THINK WE CAME OUT HERE FOR?! WE SET OUT HOPING TO FIND A SUPER-WEAPON WE COULD USE TO DESTROY THE FEDERATION. WELL GUESS WHAT?

**WE FOUND IT.**



AND IT'S SITTING IN OUR LAB, AND IF WE DON'T USE IT--RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW--THEN WE'VE KILLED EVERYONE. **EVERYONE.**

YOU DON'T SEE KINDA AN IMPORTANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A TARGETED WEAPON USED AGAINST MILITARY TARGETS AND A DOOMSDAY DEVICE THAT KILLS **LITERALLY EVERYTHING IT TOUCHES?**

NOT ANYMORE. THIS IS WHAT WE WANTED, GUYS. THIS IS WHY WE'RE HERE. THIS IS OUR CHANCE TO END THE WAR.



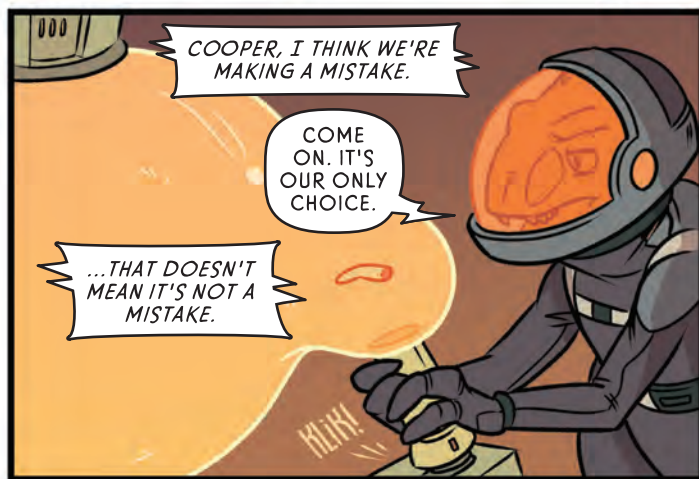
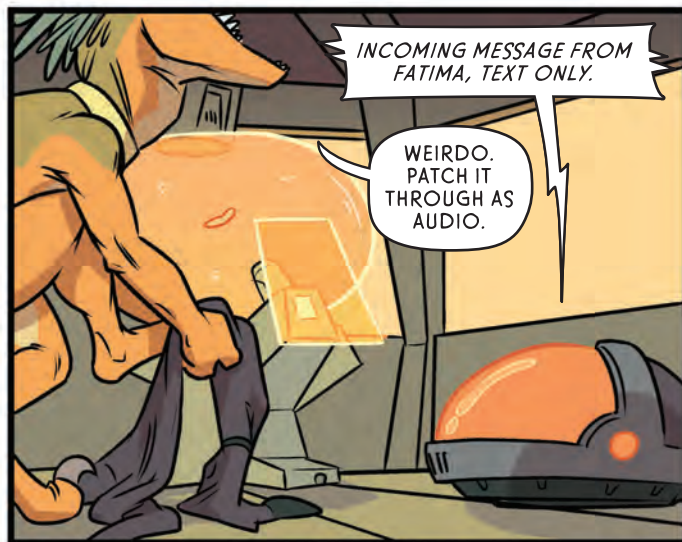
AND YOU KNOW WHAT? THAT'S WHAT WE'RE GONNA DO. COOPER, GO BELOW DECK AND SUIT UP. FATIMA, TIE UP SLUGGO THEN GET BACK TO NAVIGATION.

I'M SORRY, FATTY. BUT I'VE MADE MY CHOICE.

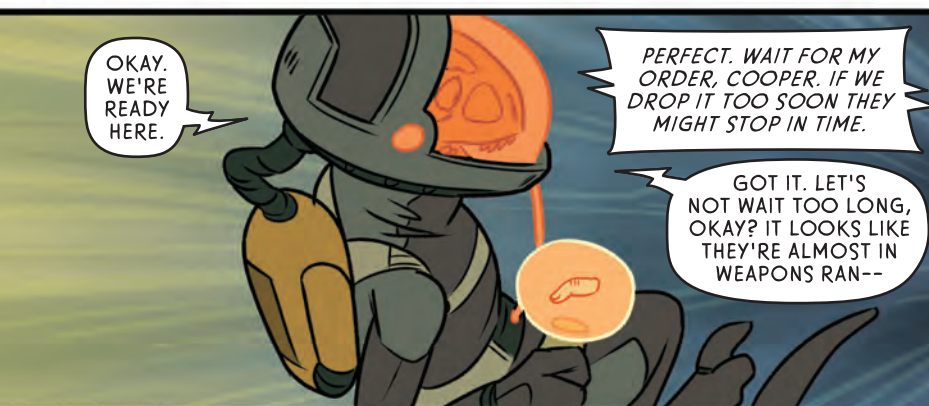
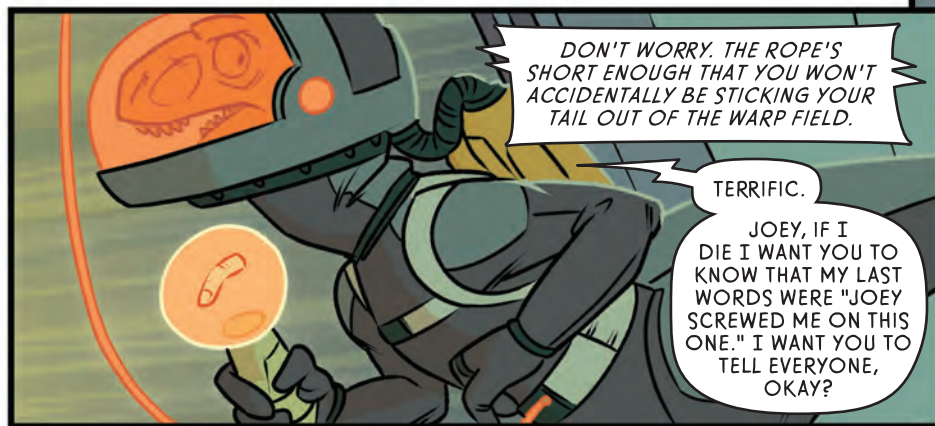


ALSO I'M PRETTY SURE THERE'S NO KITTENS ON BOARD STARSHIPS ANYWAY SO I REFUSE TO FEEL BAD ABOUT THAT.

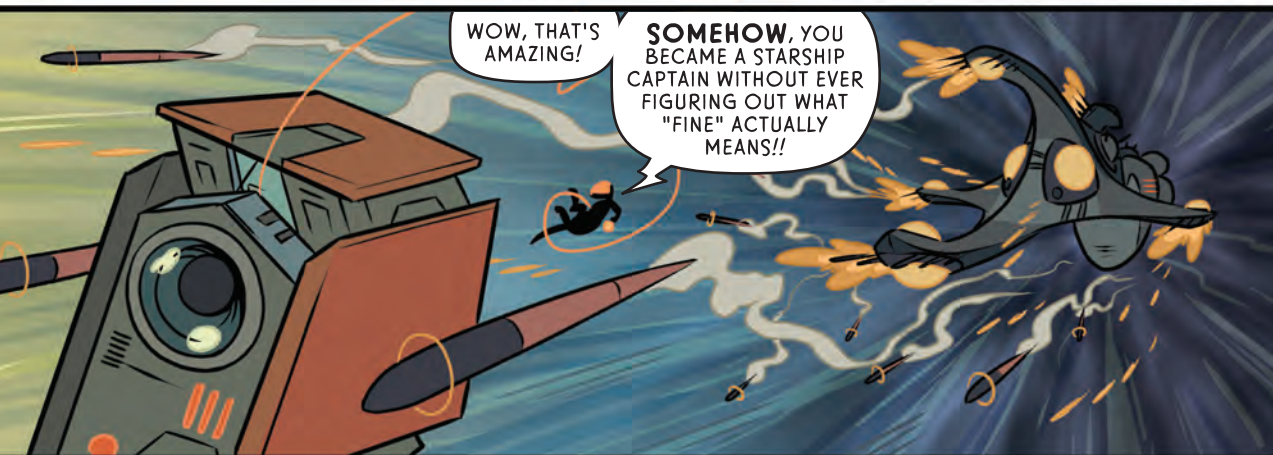














FATIMA'S COMING  
BACK ON NAV,  
COOPER. YOU READY?

AHHH, GIVE ME A  
SECOND!

YOU DON'T HAVE  
A SECOND!

NOW,  
COOPER!

DONE.

FATTY, JUST  
KEEP US IN A  
STRAIGHT LINE.  
I WANT--

BEEP  
BOOP

--HUH?

THIS IS SLUGGO ON PROSPECT, THE WEAPON  
HAS BEEN JETTISONED DIRECTLY BEHIND THIS  
SHIP! ANY CONTACT WILL TURN TITANIC TO  
GOLD! TAKE EVASIVE ACTION, SIR! IT'LL--

KAPOW

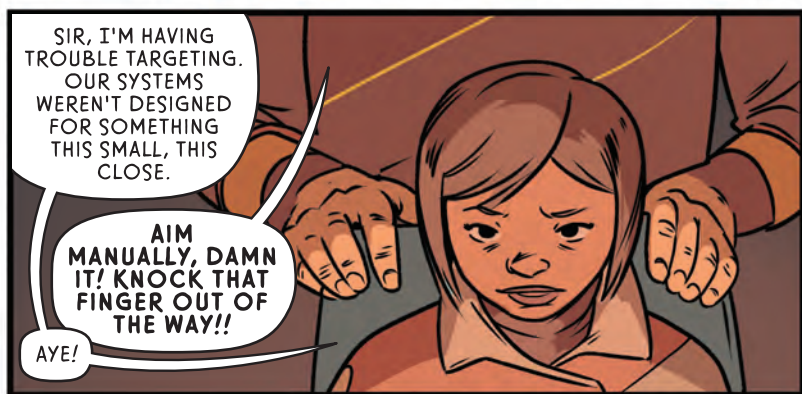
...THAT WENT  
OUT ON FULL  
POWER. ALL  
FREQUENCIES,  
JOEY.

THERE'S  
NO WAY THEY  
COULD'VE  
MISSED IT.

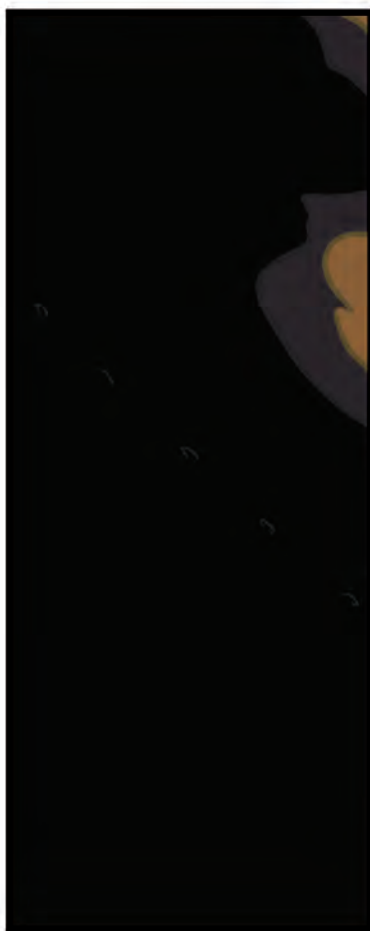
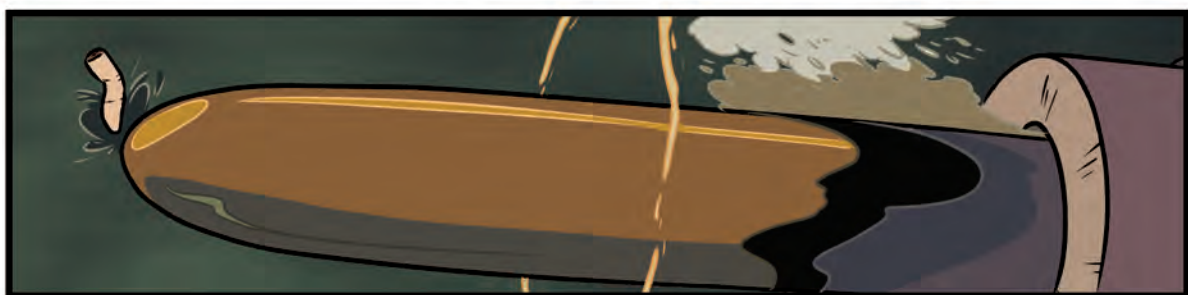
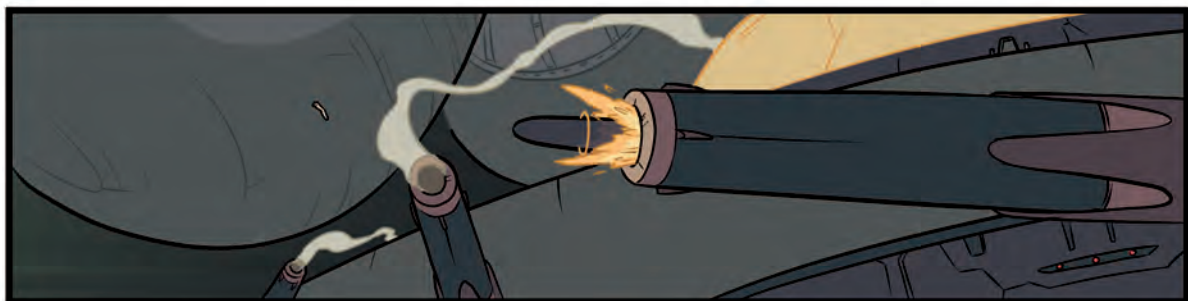








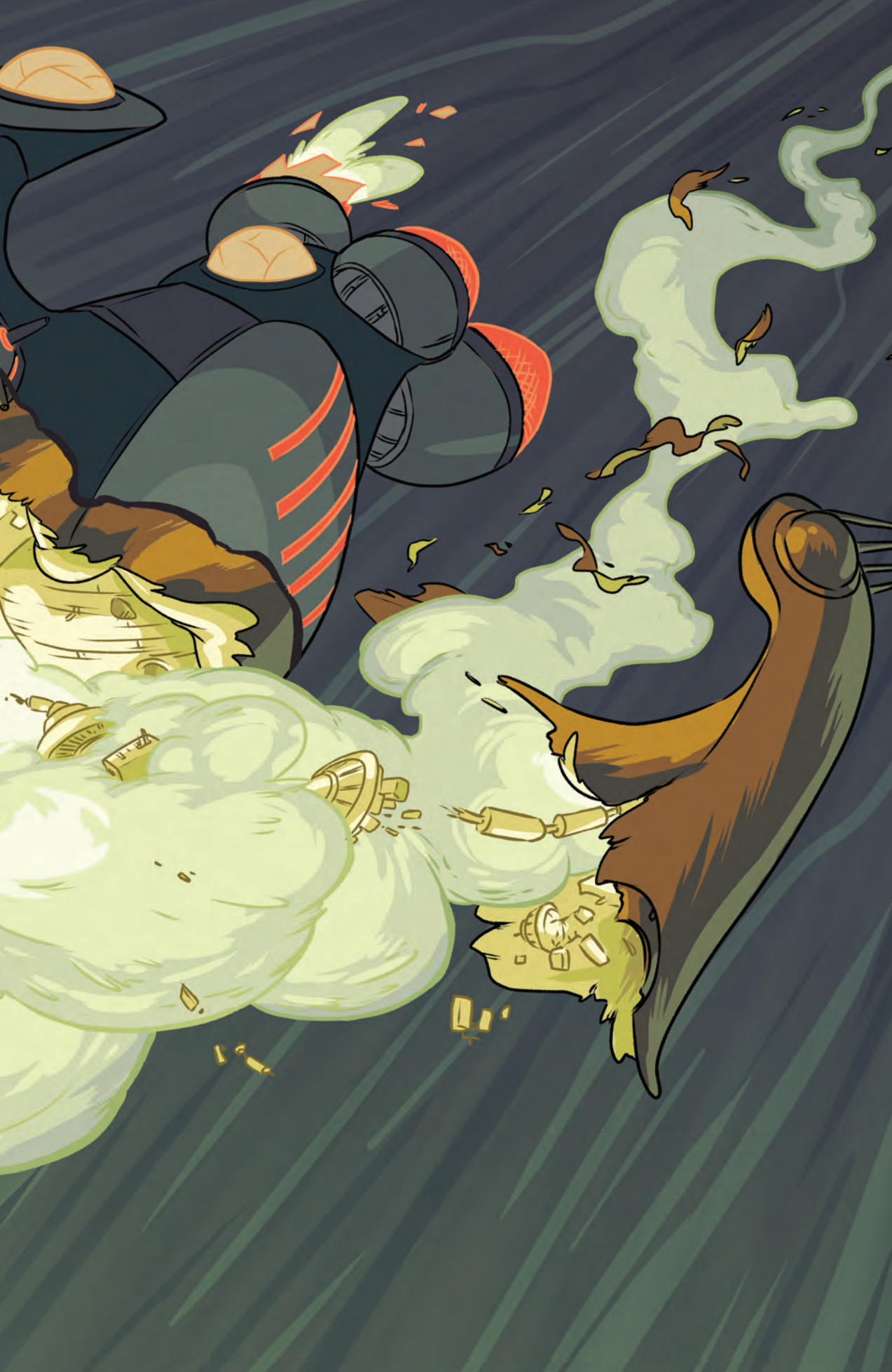




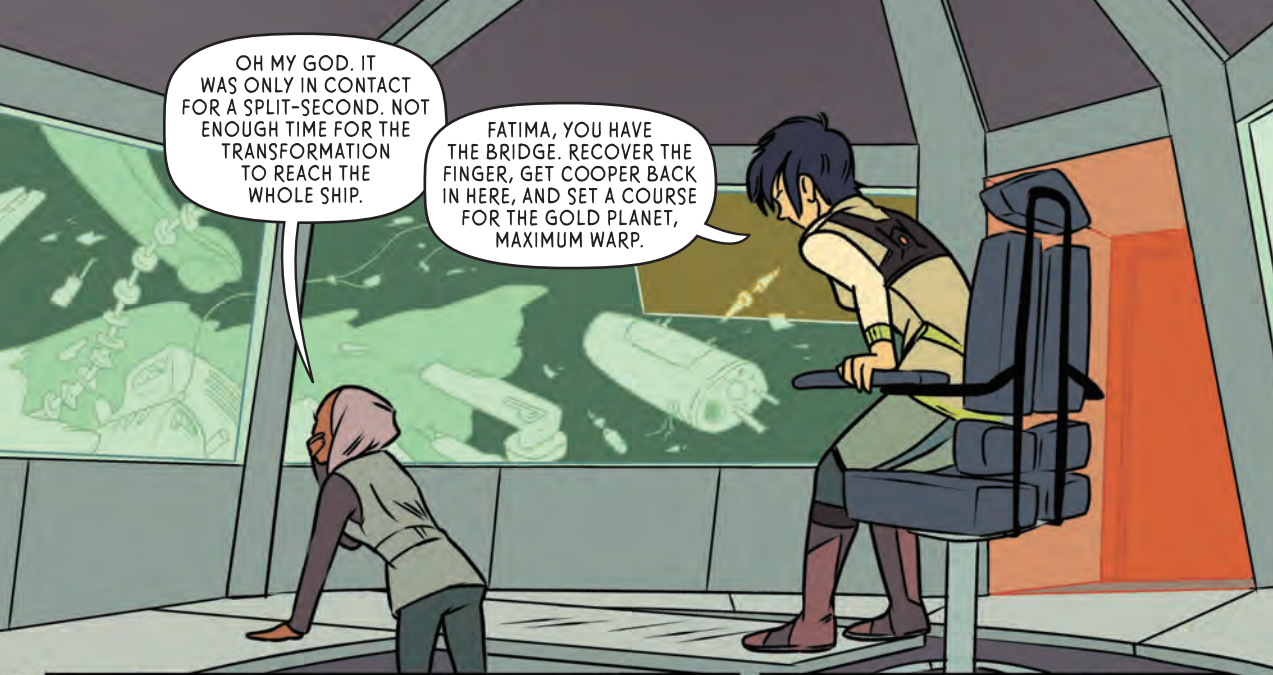












OH MY GOD. IT WAS ONLY IN CONTACT FOR A SPLIT-SECOND. NOT ENOUGH TIME FOR THE TRANSFORMATION TO REACH THE WHOLE SHIP.

FATIMA, YOU HAVE THE BRIDGE. RECOVER THE FINGER, GET COOPER BACK IN HERE, AND SET A COURSE FOR THE GOLD PLANET, MAXIMUM WARP.



AND DON'T YOU **DARE** HELP HIM UP. SIT DOWN AND FLY THE DAMN SHIP.



DAAAAAAAAAAANG.

**CONTINUED  
NEXT MONTH!**