



3

ATARI FORCE



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CONSIDER THEM *CLOCKWISE*, THESE BRAVEST OF A FUTURE EARTH'S SONS AND DAUGHTERS:
MARTIN CHAMPION--MISSION COMMANDER.
MOHANDAS SINGH--FLIGHT ENGINEER.
LUCAS ORION--MEDICAL OFFICER
LI SAN O'ROURKE--SECURITY OFFICER.
LYDIA PEREZ--PILOT, EXECUTIVE OFFICER.

ATARI FORCE

I--I GUESS I OUGHT
TO BELIEVE IT-- BUT
SOMEHOW, I CAN'T!

AND YET THE EVIDENCE
IS THERE, DR. ORION--
FOR THE DISCERNING
EYE TO SEE!

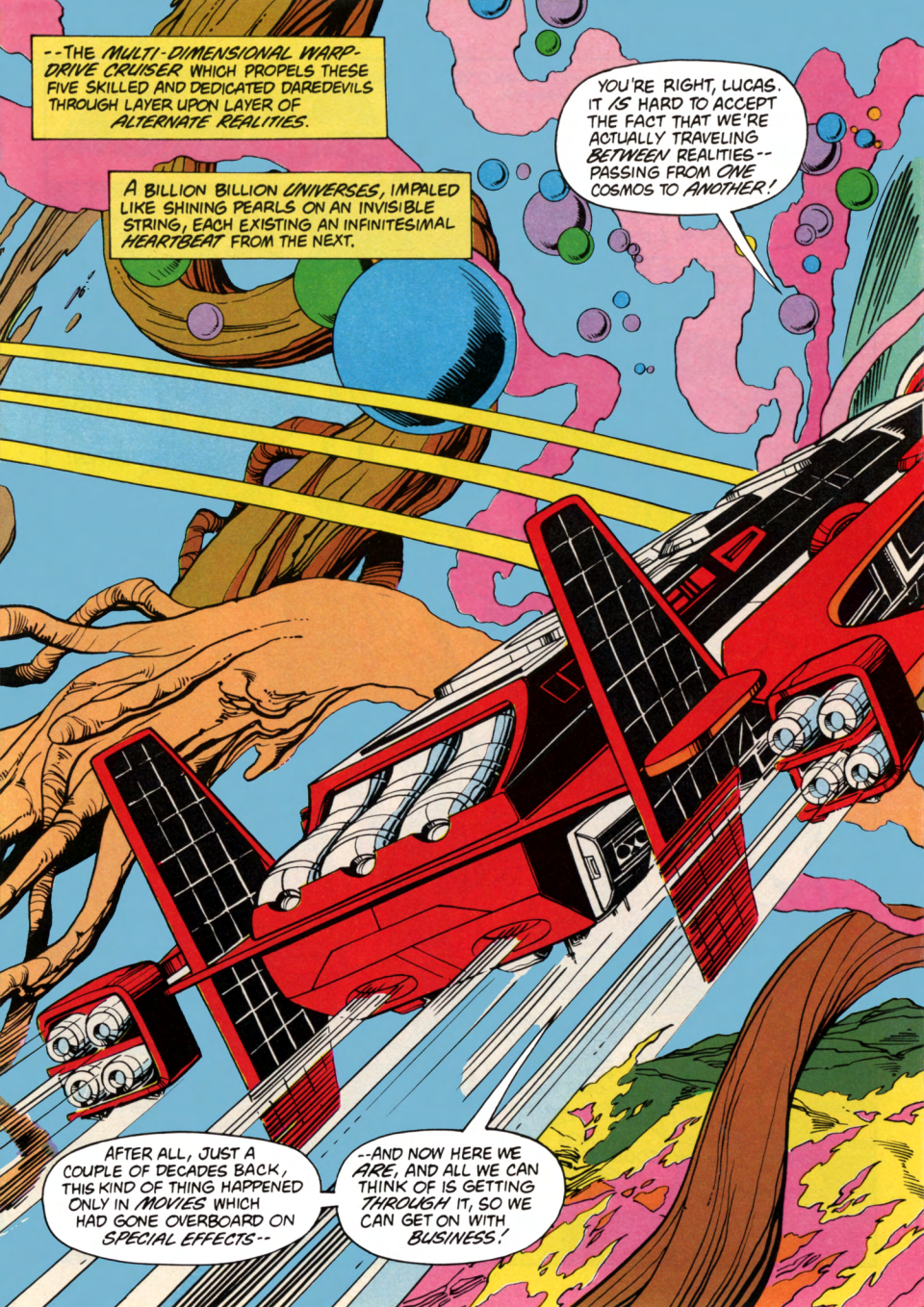
SURE AND IT'S PINK
ELEPHANTS WE'LL BE
SPYING NEXT, TO MY
WAY OF THINKING!

IN THIS
LEAGUE,
O'ROURKE,
ANYTHING
CAN
HAPPEN!

STOW THE
SCUTTLEBUTT,
CREW! IF WE
DON'T KEEP ON
OUR TOES--

--THINGS
COULD GET
SLIGHTLY
DEADLY!

THE YEAR IS 2005 A.D.--IF,
INDEED, TIME ITSELF HAS ANY
MEANING ON BOARD THE SHIP
CALLED *SCANNER ONE*--



--THE MULTI-DIMENSIONAL WARP-
DRIVE CRUISER WHICH PROPELS THESE
FIVE SKILLED AND DEDICATED DAREDEVILS
THROUGH LAYER UPON LAYER OF
ALTERNATE REALITIES.

A BILLION BILLION UNIVERSES, IMPAIRED
LIKE SHINING PEARLS ON AN INVISIBLE
STRING, EACH EXISTING AN INFINITESIMAL
HEARTBEAT FROM THE NEXT.

YOU'RE RIGHT, LUCAS.
IT *IS* HARD TO ACCEPT
THE FACT THAT WE'RE
ACTUALLY TRAVELING
BETWEEN REALITIES--
PASSING FROM ONE
COSMOS TO ANOTHER!

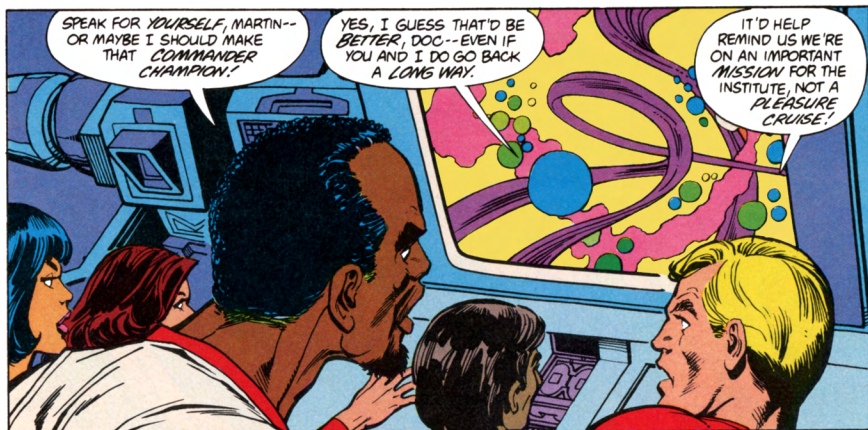
AFTER ALL, JUST A
COUPLE OF DECADES BACK,
THIS KIND OF THING HAPPENED
ONLY IN MOVIES WHICH
HAD GONE OVERBOARD ON
SPECIAL EFFECTS--

--AND NOW HERE WE
ARE, AND ALL WE CAN
THINK OF IS GETTING
THROUGH IT, SO WE
CAN GET ON WITH
BUSINESS!

CHAPTER ONE:

ENTER--THE DARK DESTROYER!





SPEAK FOR YOURSELF, MARTIN--
OR MAYBE I SHOULD MAKE
THAT **COMMANDER**
CHAMPION!

YES, I GUESS THAT'D BE
BETTER, DOC--EVEN IF
YOU AND I DO GO BACK
A LONG WAY.

IT'D HELP
REMINDE US WE'RE
ON AN IMPORTANT
MISSION FOR THE
INSTITUTE, NOT A
PLEASURE
CRUISE!



FINE BY **ME--** BUT ALL THIS
STILL GIVES ME THE **WEIRDEST**
FEELING I'VE HAD SINCE I WAS
A BOY BACK IN **DETROIT.**

I DON'T KNOW--IT'S
ALMOST **RELIGIOUS,**
SOMEHOW--

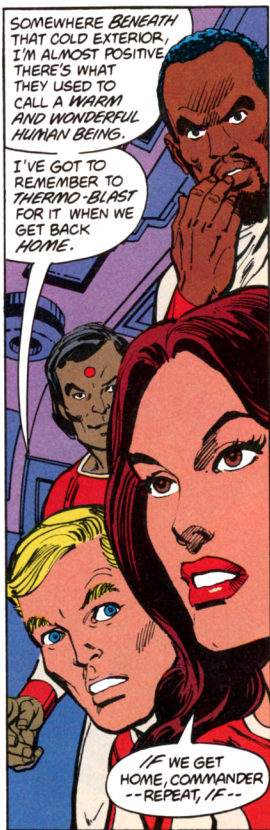
--LIKE SEEING THE
HAND OF GOD,
WITH THE STARS
SLIPPING THROUGH
HIS FINGERS LIKE
SO MUCH **DUST.**



FUNNY! I LOOK OUT
THERE, AND ALL I THINK
OF IS **FUNDAMENTAL**
QUANTUM PHYSICS.

WE'VE ENTERED THE
THEORETICAL **TACHYON**
STREAM, WHERE NOTHING
CAN MOVE **SLOWER** THAN
LIGHT--THAT'S ALL!

YOU KNOW,
YOU **INTEREST**
ME, PEREZ...



SOMEWHERE **BENEATH**
THAT COLD EXTERIOR,
I'M ALMOST POSITIVE
THERE'S WHAT
THEY USED TO
CALL A **WARM**
AND **WONDERFUL**
HUMAN BEING.

I'VE GOT TO
REMEMBER TO
THERMO-BLAST
FOR IT. WHEN WE
GET BACK
HOME.

IF WE GET
HOME, COMMANDER
--REPEAT, **IF--**



--AND RIGHT NOW,
WITH ALL THE *STRESS*
FACTORS OUR SHIP
IS UNDERGOING IN
OUR LITTLE *HYPER-*
SPACE HOP--

--I'D SAY THAT
WAS SHAPING UP
AS A MIGHTY
SIZABLE
CONJUNCTION!

PERHAPS, MS. PEREZ!
STILL, MY OBSERVATIONS
CONVINCE ME THE SHIP'S
STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING
IS QUITE *SOUND*.

ELSE, WE WOULD HARDLY
HAVE BEEN SENT UPON
THIS QUEST FOR *PARALLEL*
WORLDS WITH NATURAL
RESOURCES TO AUGMENT
OUR OWN.

THAT'S QUITE A
MOUTHFUL,
LADDIE...

...THOUGH I NOTICED
THAT *YOU* WERE AFTER
DOING A BIT OF STARING,
AS WELL!

I WAS MUSING ON HOW THIS
SUPPORTS MY *VEDIC PHILOSOPHY*...OF A SUCCESSION OF
WORLDS AND COUNTLESS
REINCARNATIONS.



MAYBE WE'LL FIND *MORE* ON THIS
JAUNT THAN THE ANSWER TO A FEW
SHORTAGES BACK HOME.

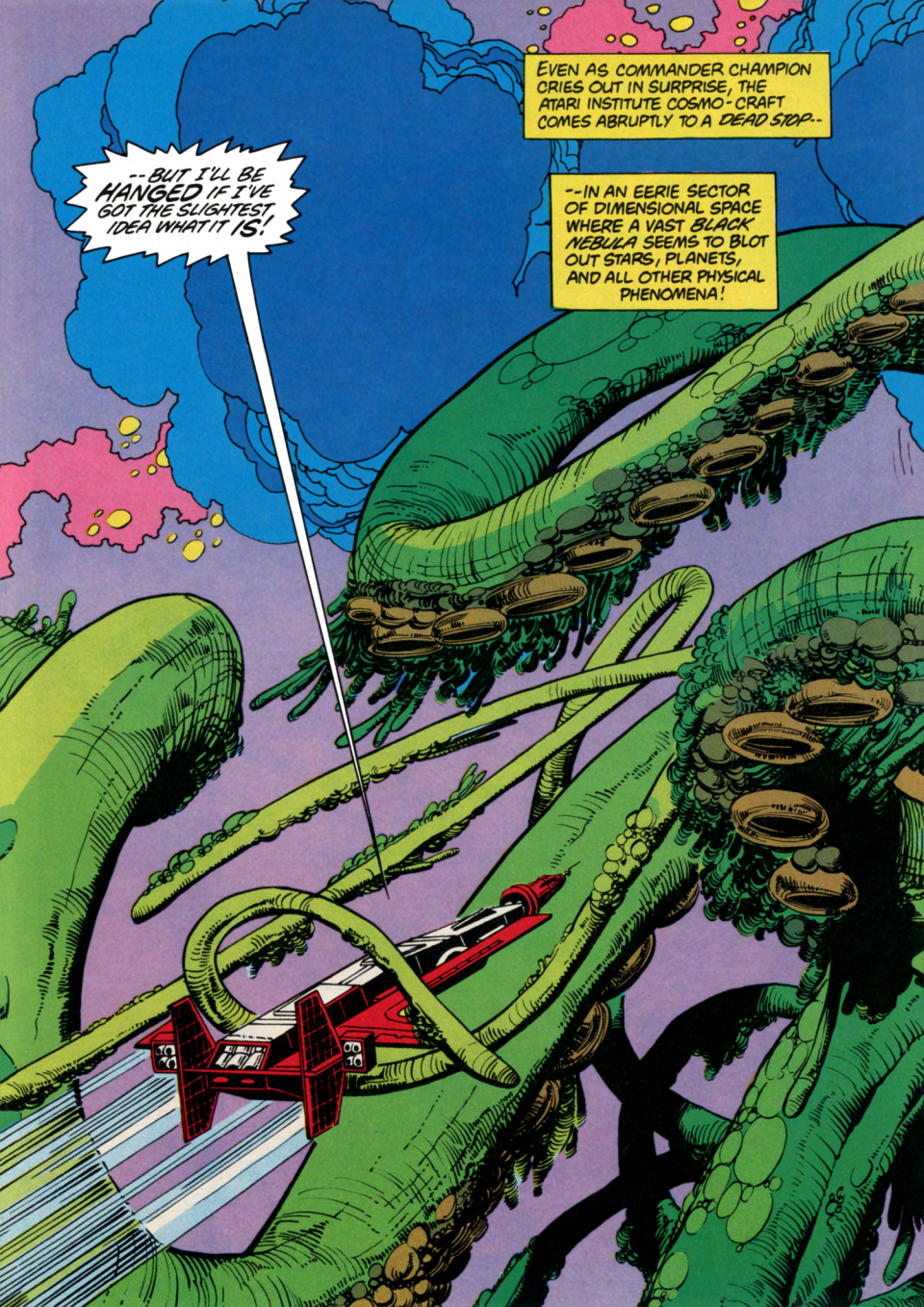


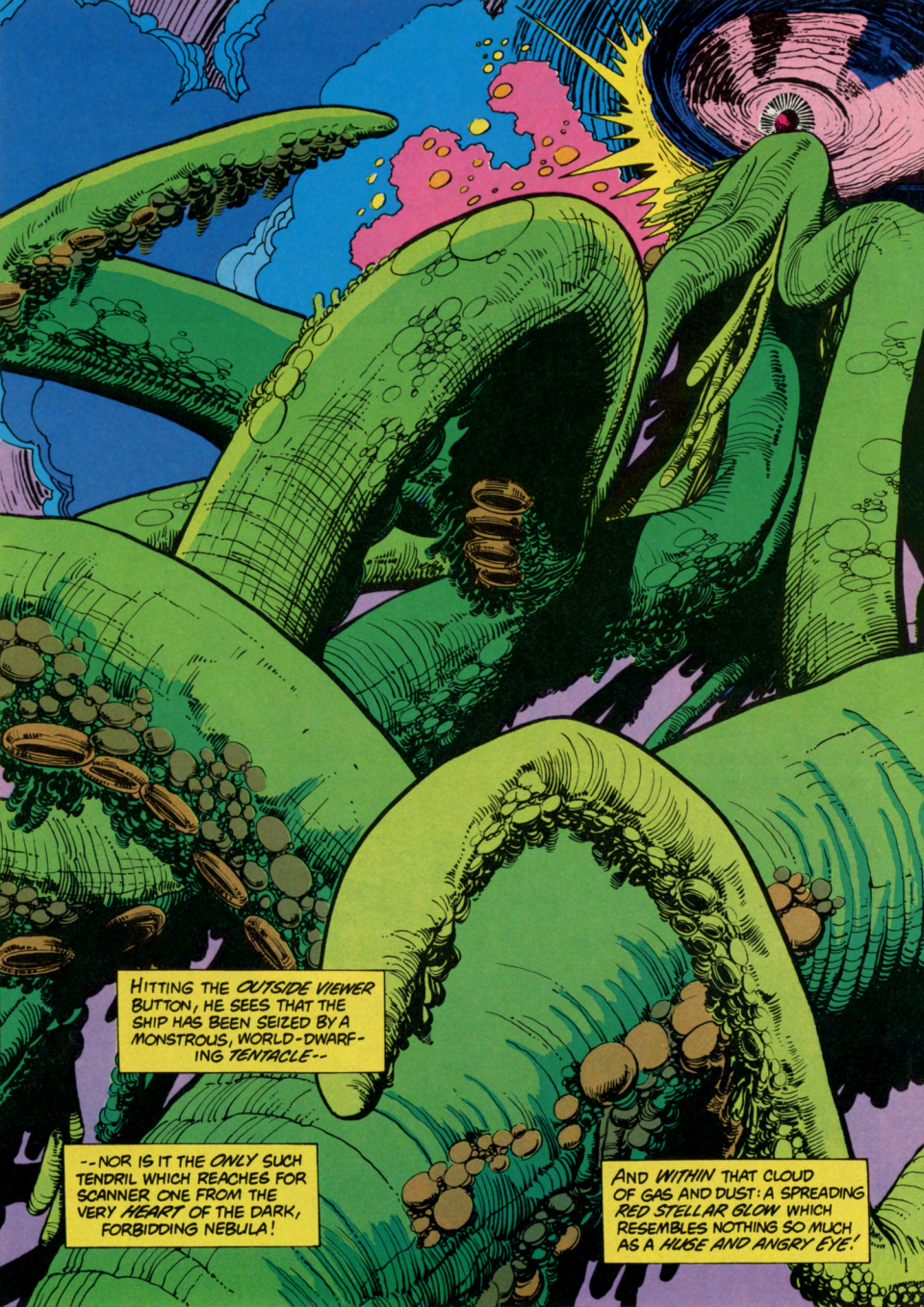


EVEN AS COMMANDER CHAMPION
CRIES OUT IN SURPRISE, THE
ATARI INSTITUTE COSMO-CRAFT
COMES ABRUPTLY TO A DEAD STOP--

--BUT I'LL BE
HANGED IF I'VE
GOT THE SLIGHTEST
IDEA WHAT IT IS!

--IN AN EERIE SECTOR
OF DIMENSIONAL SPACE
WHERE A VAST *BLACK*
NEBULA SEEMS TO BLOT
OUT STARS, PLANETS,
AND ALL OTHER PHYSICAL
PHENOMENA!

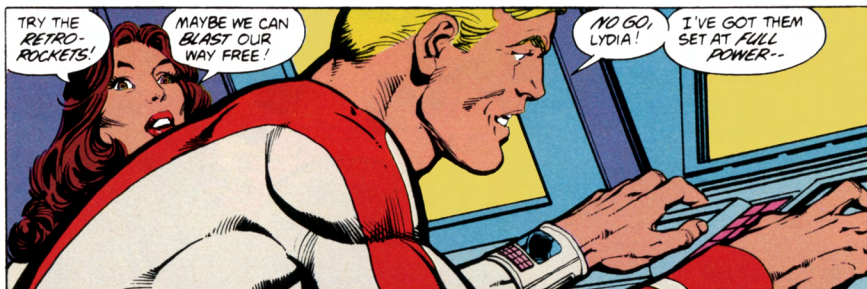


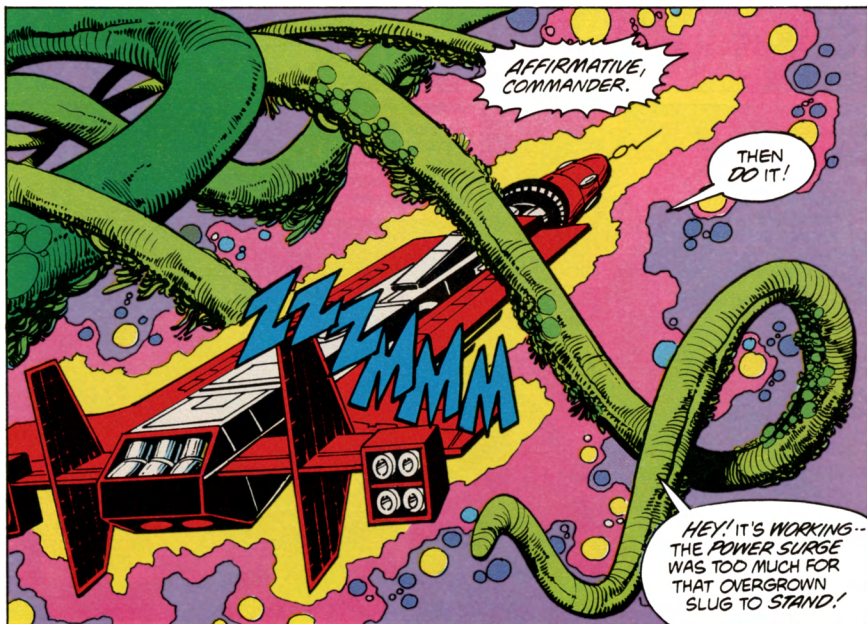
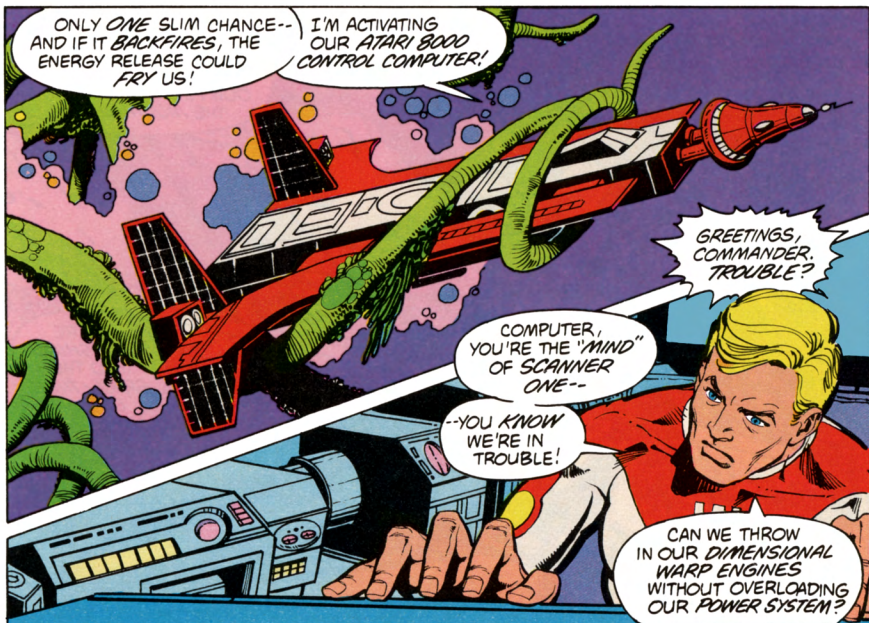


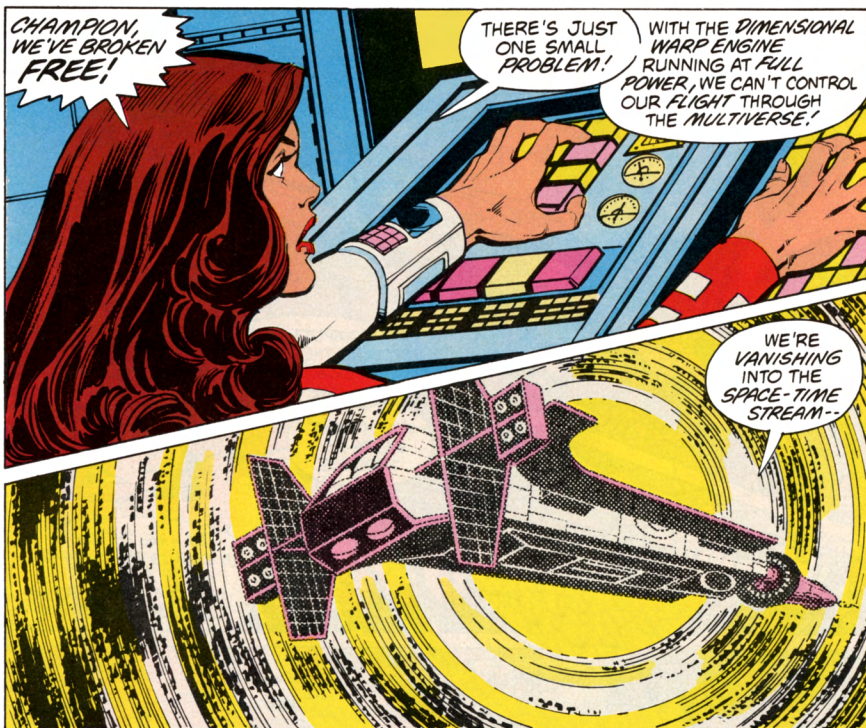
HITTING THE *OUTSIDE VIEWER*
BUTTON, HE SEES THAT THE
SHIP HAS BEEN SEIZED BY A
MONSTROUS, WORLD-DWARF-
ING TENTACLE--

--NOR IS IT THE *ONLY* SUCH
TENDRIL WHICH REACHES FOR
SCANNER ONE FROM THE
VERY *HEART* OF THE DARK,
FORBIDDING NEBULA!

AND *WITHIN* THAT CLOUD
OF GAS AND DUST: A SPREADING
RED STELLAR GLOW WHICH
RESEMBLES NOTHING SO MUCH
AS A *HUGE AND ANGRY EYE!*





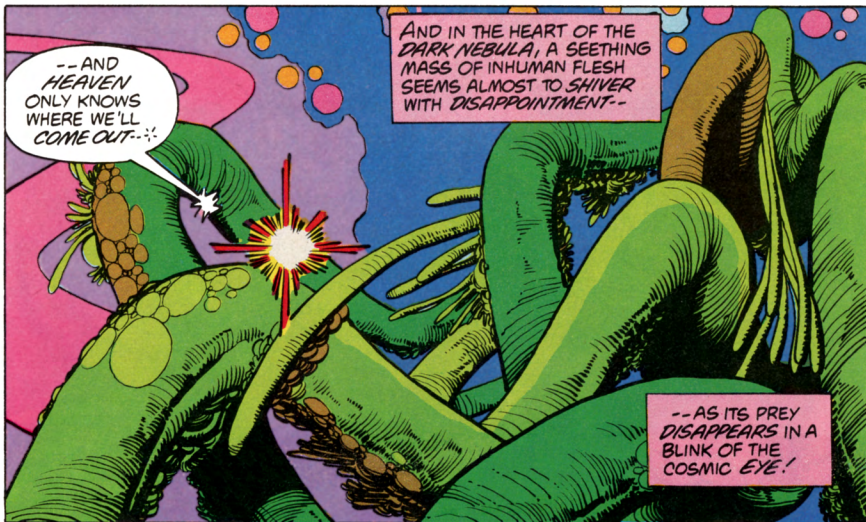


CHAMPION,
WE'VE BROKEN
FREE!

THERE'S JUST
ONE SMALL
PROBLEM!

WITH THE *DIMENSIONAL
WARP ENGINE*
RUNNING AT *FULL
POWER*, WE CAN'T CONTROL
OUR FLIGHT THROUGH
THE *MULTIVERSE*!

WE'RE
VANISHING
INTO THE
SPACE-TIME
STREAM--



--AND
HEAVEN
ONLY KNOWS
WHERE WE'LL
COME OUT--

AND IN THE HEART OF THE
DARK NEBULA, A SEETHING
MASS OF INHUMAN FLESH
SEEMS ALMOST TO SHIVER
WITH *DISAPPOINTMENT*--

--AS ITS PREY
DISAPPEARS IN A
BLINK OF THE
COSMIC EYE!

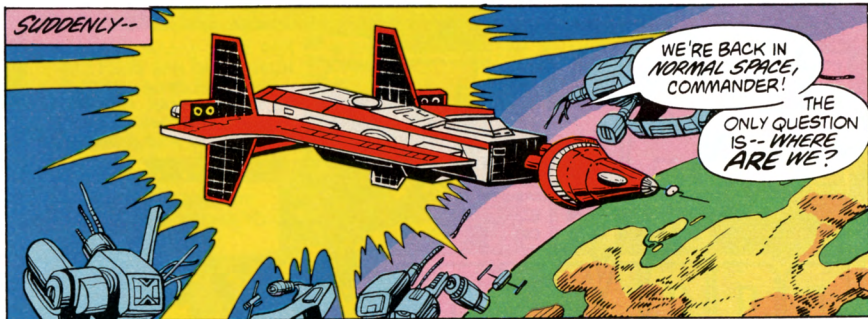
CHAPTER TWO!

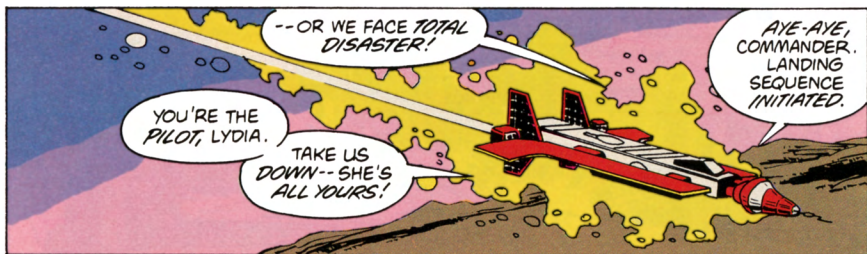
PLANET OF THE DOOMED!

FOR MORE CENTURIES THAN HUMANKIND HAS BEEN CIVILIZED, THIS ONCE-FERTILE WORLD IN A STAR-SYSTEM NOT UNLIKE OUR OWN HAS LAIN FALLOW AND BARREN...

...ITS SKIES A JUNKYARD OF ANCIENT, CRUMBLING SATELLITES...

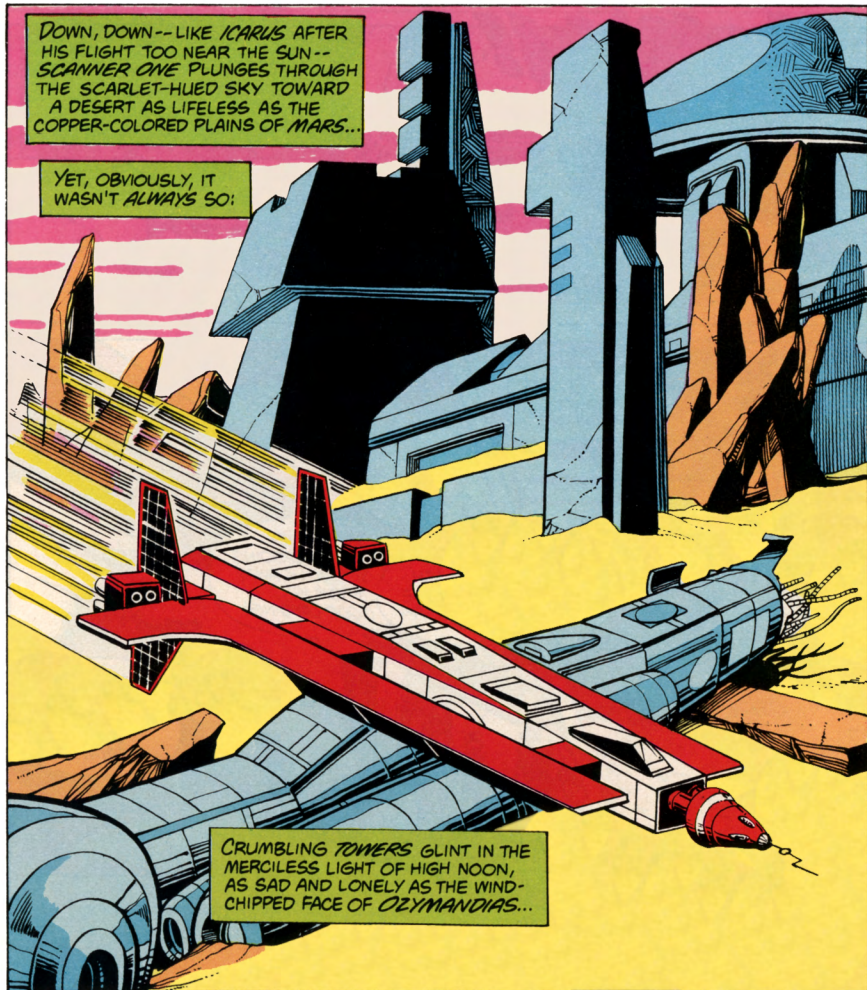
...A SARGASSO SEA OF BROKEN DREAMS!



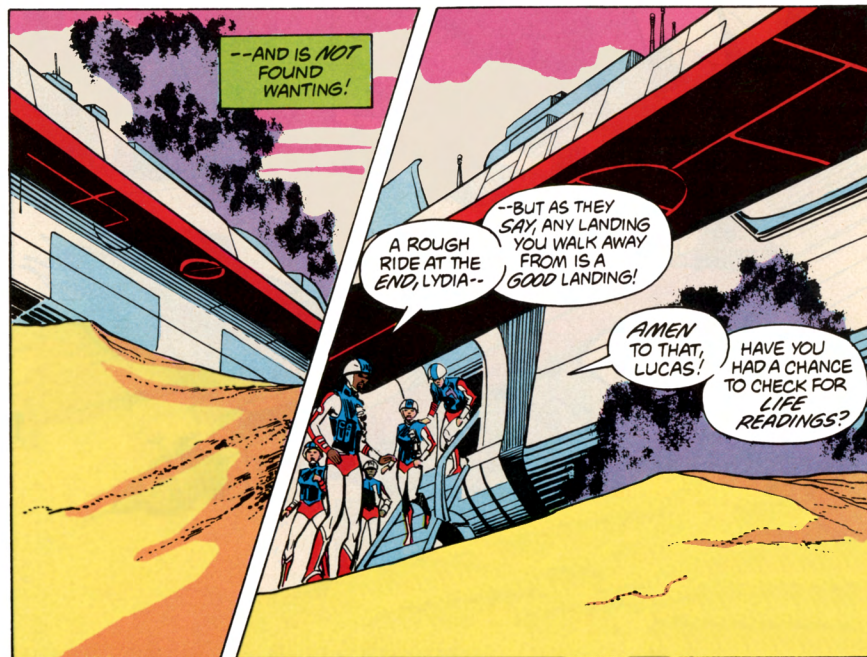
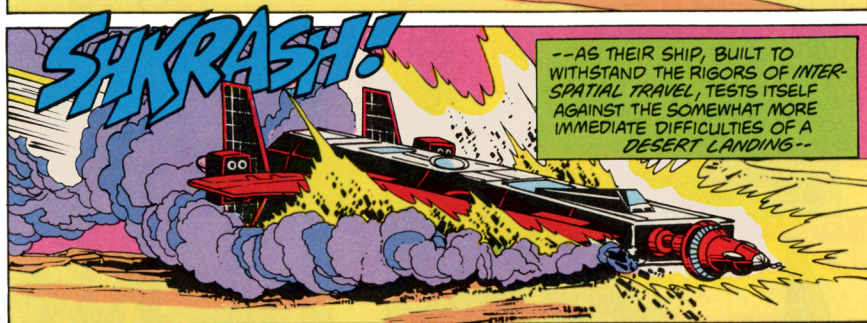


DOWN, DOWN--LIKE ICARUS AFTER HIS FLIGHT TOO NEAR THE SUN--
SCANNER ONE PLUNGES THROUGH THE SCARLET-HUED SKY TOWARD A DESERT AS LIFELESS AS THE COPPER-COLORED PLAINS OF MARS...

YET, OBVIOUSLY, IT WASN'T ALWAYS SO:

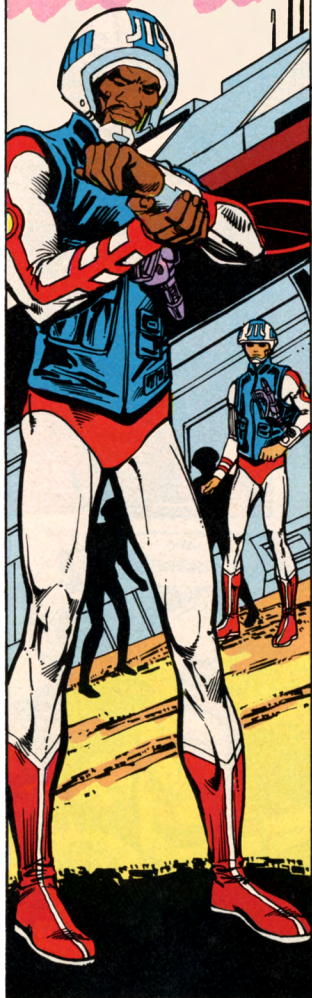


CRUMBLING TOWERS GLINT IN THE MERCILESS LIGHT OF HIGH NOON, AS SAD AND LONELY AS THE WIND-CHIPPED FACE OF OZYMANDIAS...



I'VE DONE NOTHING BUT
CHECK SINCE WE ARRIVED,
MARTIN.

USING THE WRIST-COMP
COMMUNICATIONS LINK TO
OUR ATARI 8000 COMPUTER
BACK ON BOARD SCANNER
ONE, I'VE ORDERED OUR
MAIN SENSORS TO SWEEP
THIS ENTIRE HEMISPHERE--



--BUT I'M AFRAID
THESE RUINS
ALREADY TELL THE
TALE:

THERE'S ABSOLUTELY
NO SIGN OF LIFE
ON THE SURFACE
OF THIS WORLD!



WHAT A
TRAGEDY--TO
COME SO FAR,
ACROSS SO
MANY
DIMENSIONS--

--ONLY TO FIND
A GRAVEYARD
AT OUR FIRST--

EH?

YOU SAID
THERE WAS
NO LIFE
ON THE
SURFACE,
LUCAS!

BUT WHAT
ABOUT UNDER-
GROUND?



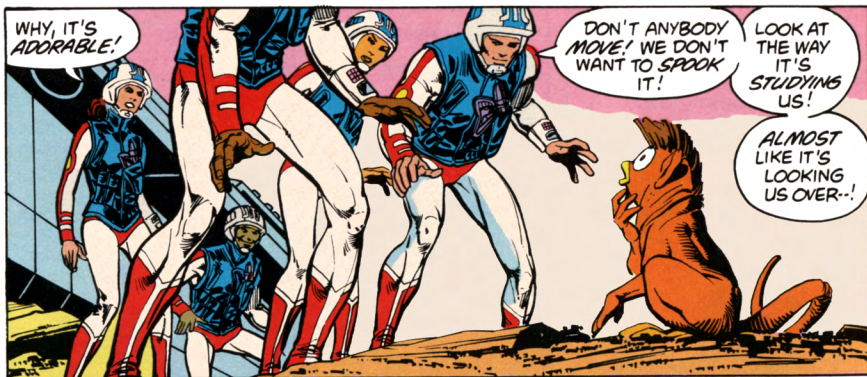
GOOD
LORD!
WHAT'S
THAT?

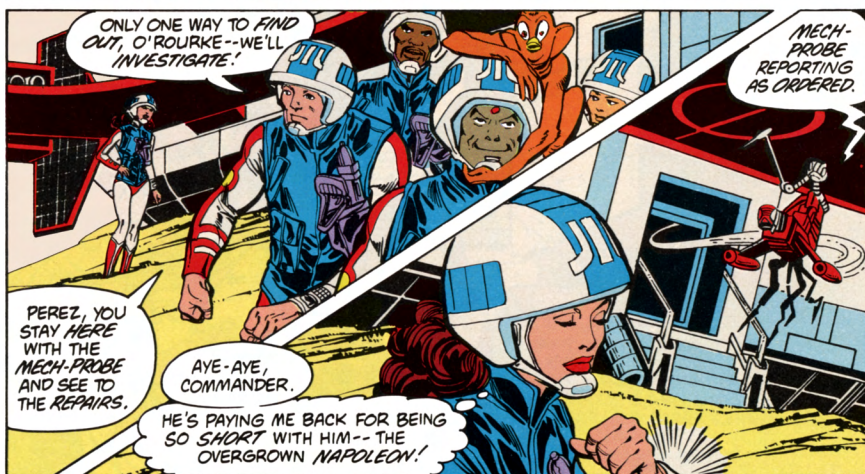
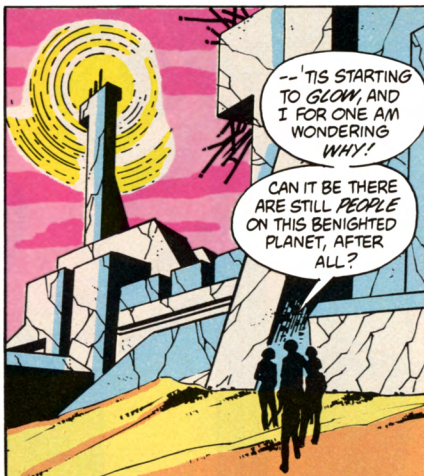
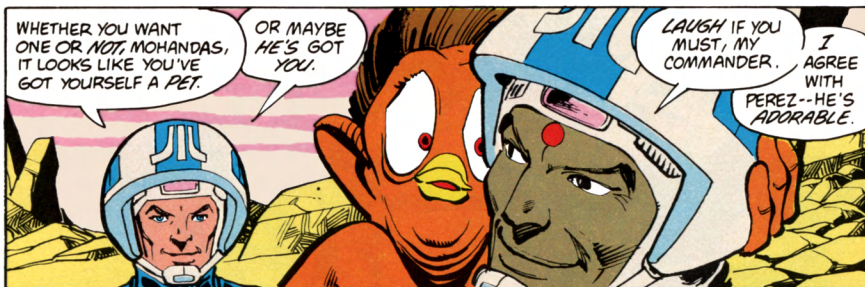


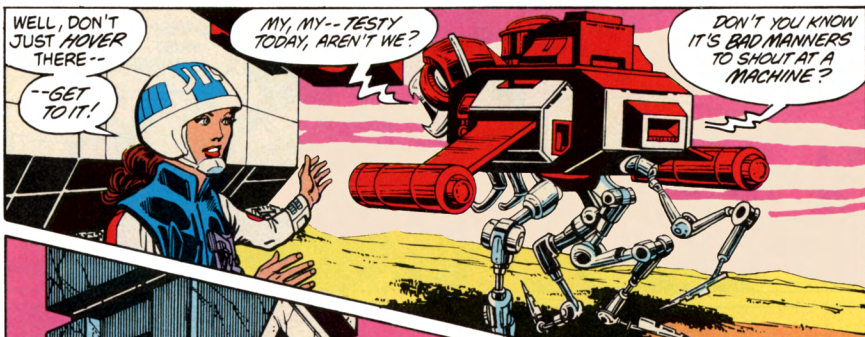
HUKKA?

HUKKA-
HUKKA?







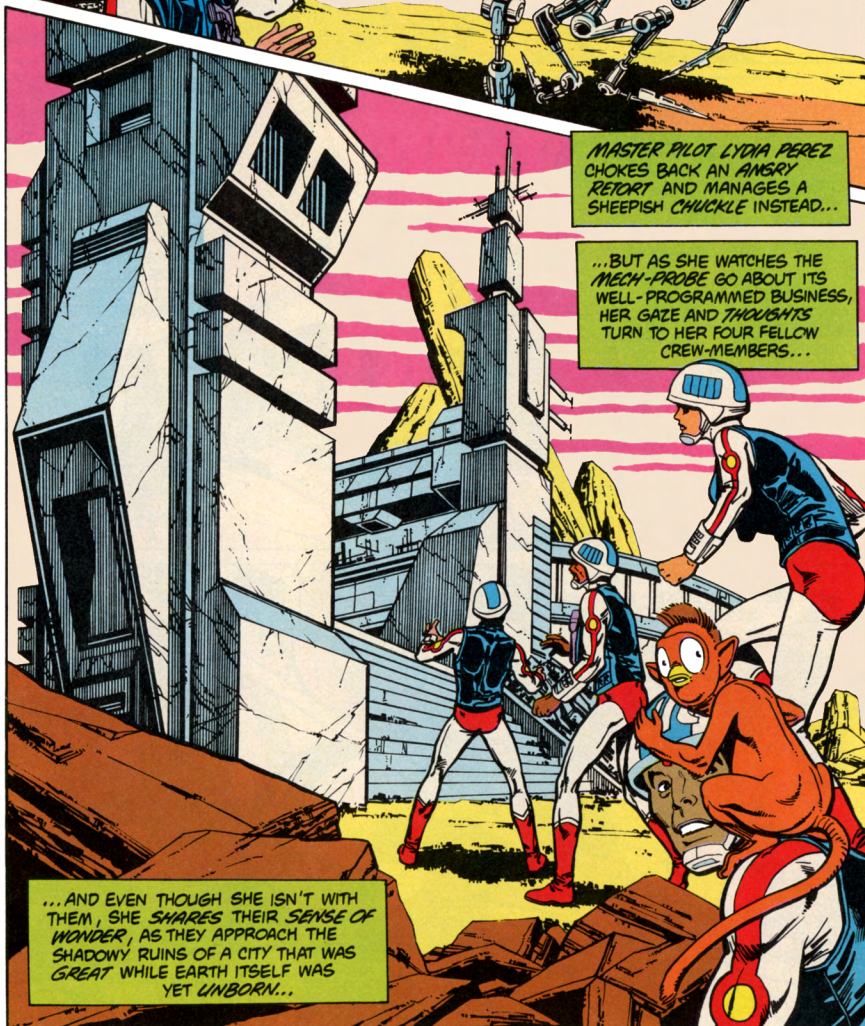


WELL, DON'T
JUST HOVER
THERE--

--GET
TO IT!

MY, MY-- TESTY
TODAY, AREN'T WE?

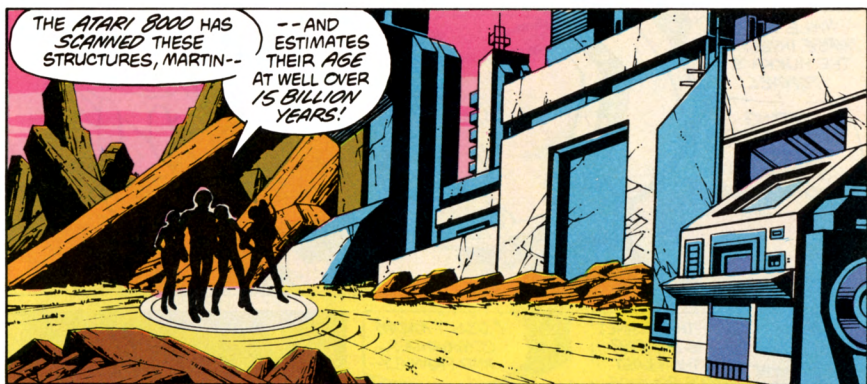
DON'T YOU KNOW
IT'S BAD MANNERS
TO SHOUT AT A
MACHINE?

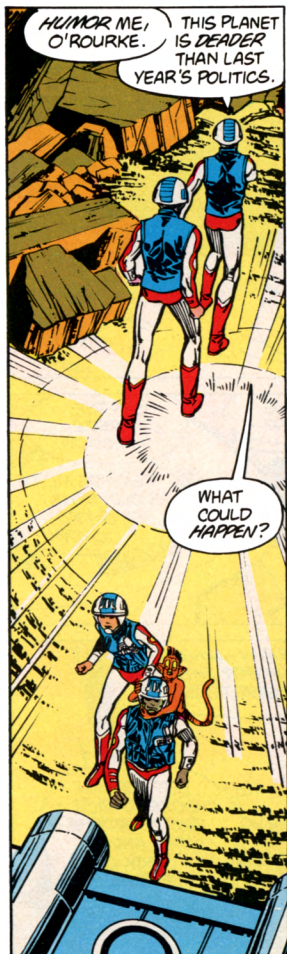
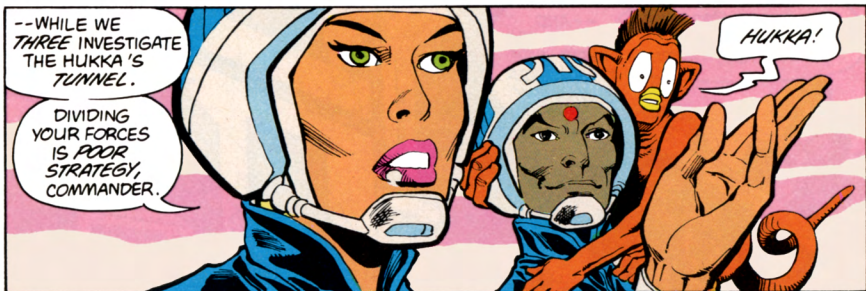


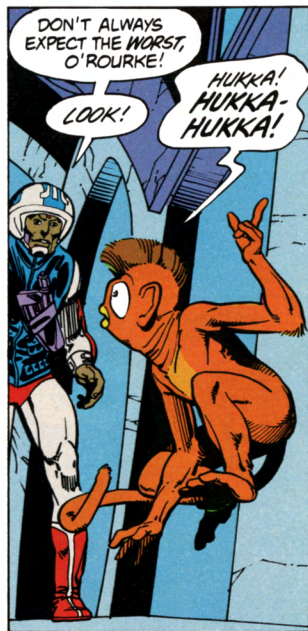
MASTER PILOT LYDIA PEREZ
CHOKES BACK AN ANGRY
RETOUR AND MANAGES A
SHEEPISH CHUCKLE INSTEAD...

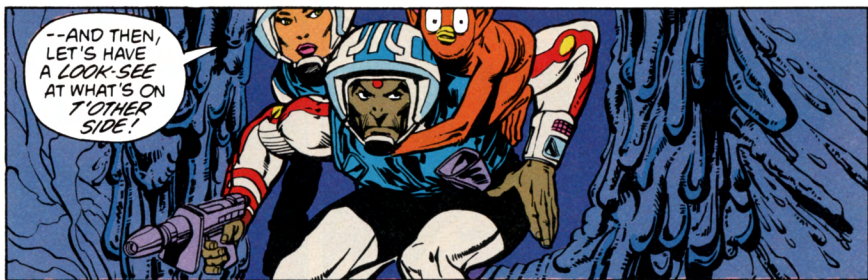
...BUT AS SHE WATCHES THE
MECH-PROBE GO ABOUT ITS
WELL-PROGRAMMED BUSINESS,
HER GAZE AND THOUGHTS
TURN TO HER FOUR FELLOW
CREW-MEMBERS...

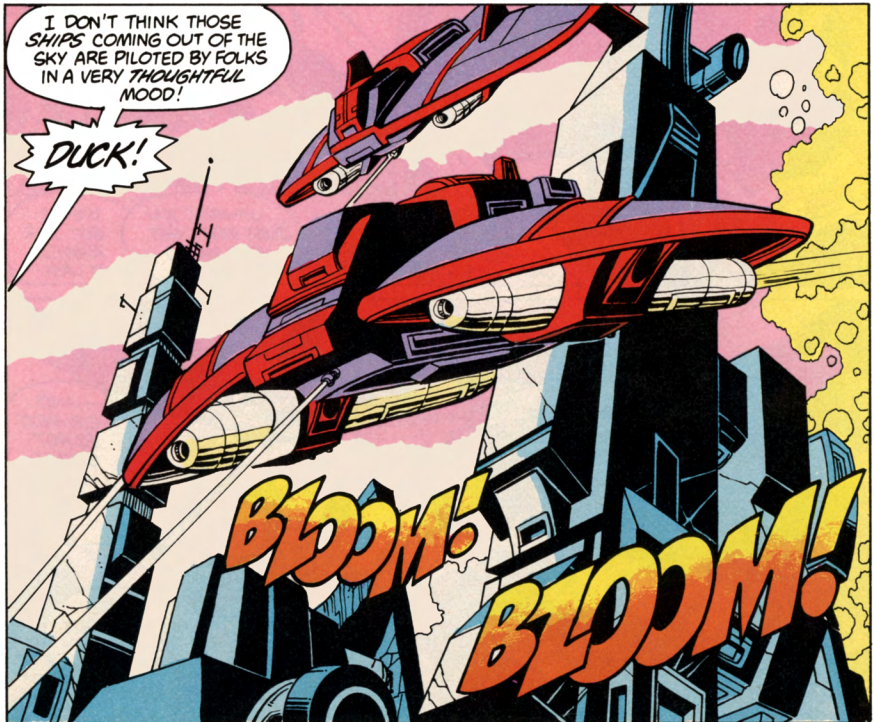
...AND EVEN THOUGH SHE ISN'T WITH
THEM, SHE SHARES THEIR SENSE OF
WONDER, AS THEY APPROACH THE
SHADOWY RUINS OF A CITY THAT WAS
GREAT WHILE EARTH ITSELF WAS
YET UNBORN...

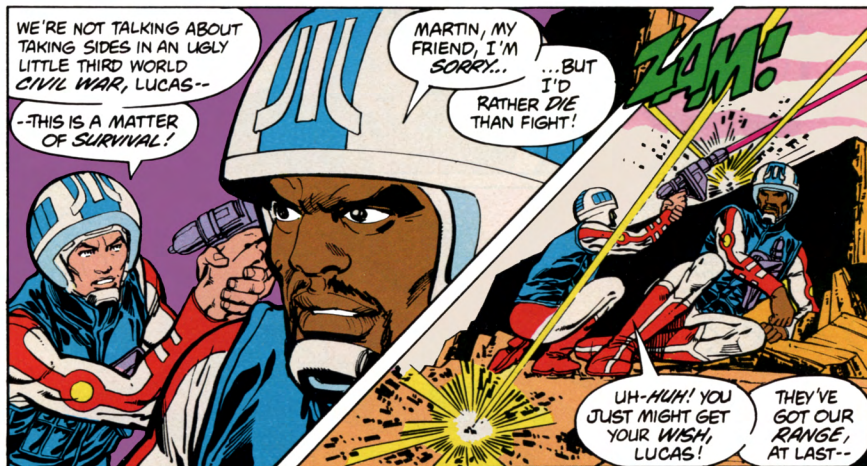








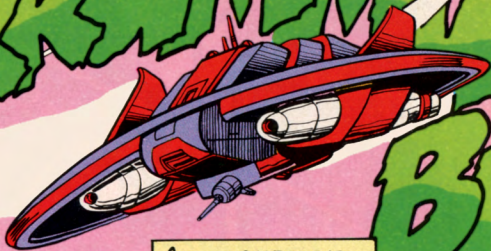




FOR ONE SPLIT SECOND
HIS *HEART* STANDS STILL,
AND MARTIN CHAMPION
IS STRUCK *SPEECHLESS*.

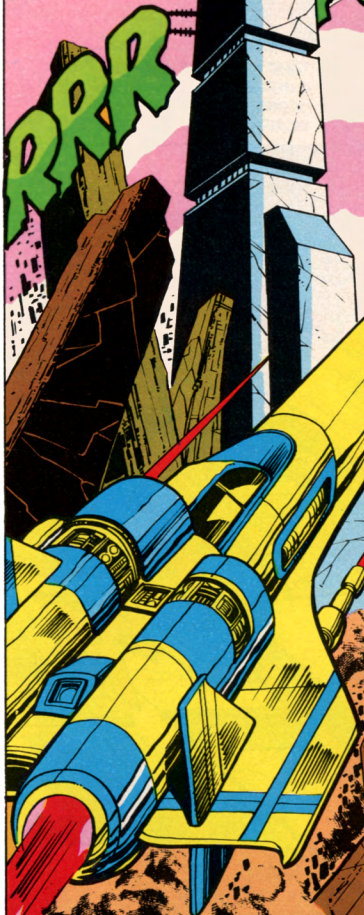
THEN HE *FEELS*
IT, EVEN AS HIS
EYES REGISTER
THE SCENE BEFORE
HIM:

RRRUM



AND HE SHARES THE
TERROR OF THE UN-
SEEN *PILOTS* IN THE
ATTACKING STARSHIPS,
AS A VOICE CRIES OUT,
A VOICE THAT HE KNOWS
IS HIS OWN:

BLE!



THERE'S
SOMETHING
COMING UP
OUT OF THE
GROUND!

DEAR LORD,
IT'S A
SPACESHIP!

AND WHAT A
SPACESHIP:

MARTIN CHAMPION
HAS SPENT MOST OF
HIS ADULT LIFE
AROUND THE SPACE-
CRAFT OF HIS HOME
WORLD, EARTH,
AND IN ALL THOSE
YEARS, HE NEVER
SAW ANYTHING LIKE
THIS!

THIS IS A STAR FIGHTER--
A WEAPON OF SUCH SHEER
DESTRUCTIVE POWER THAT
WORDS CANNOT DESCRIBE IT.

BLAAM!

KLAM





KOOOM!

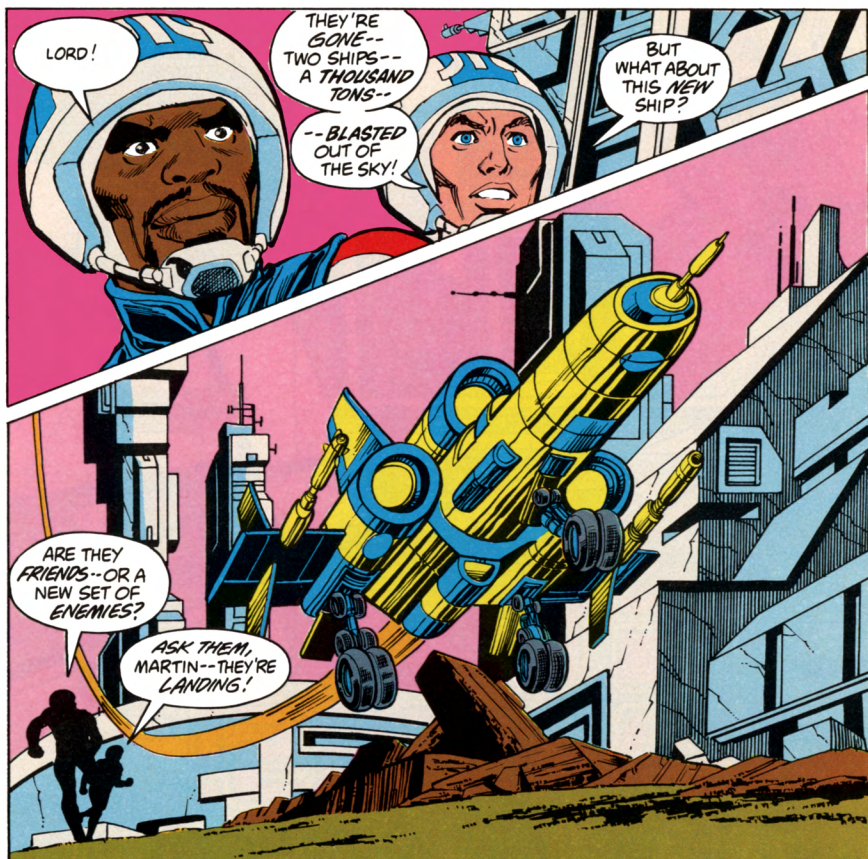
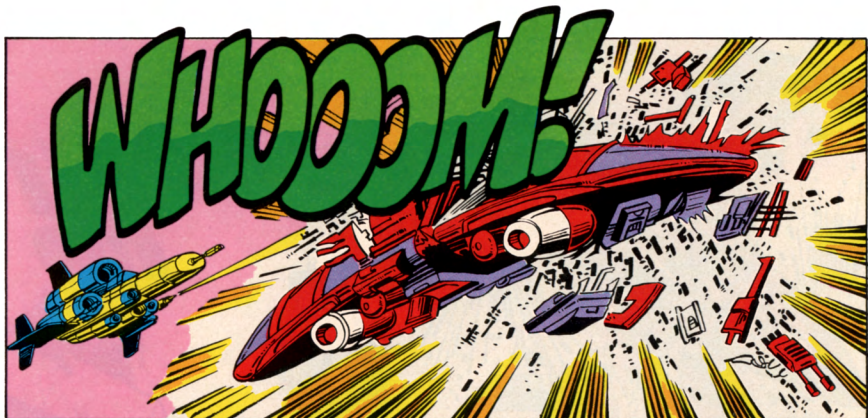
LIKE SOME ENORMOUS EAGLE TAKING FLIGHT AGAINST ITS PREY, THE STAR FIGHTER SHOOT'S SKYWARD FROM THE SHATTERED DESERT FLOOR.

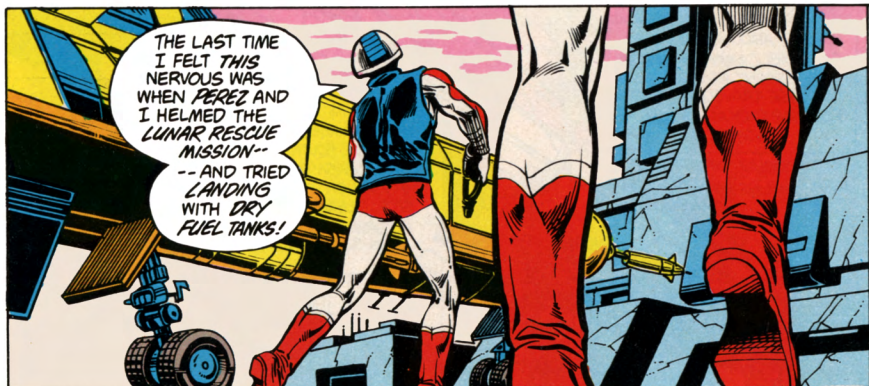
CHAMPION ALMOST FEELS SORRY FOR HIS ENEMIES.

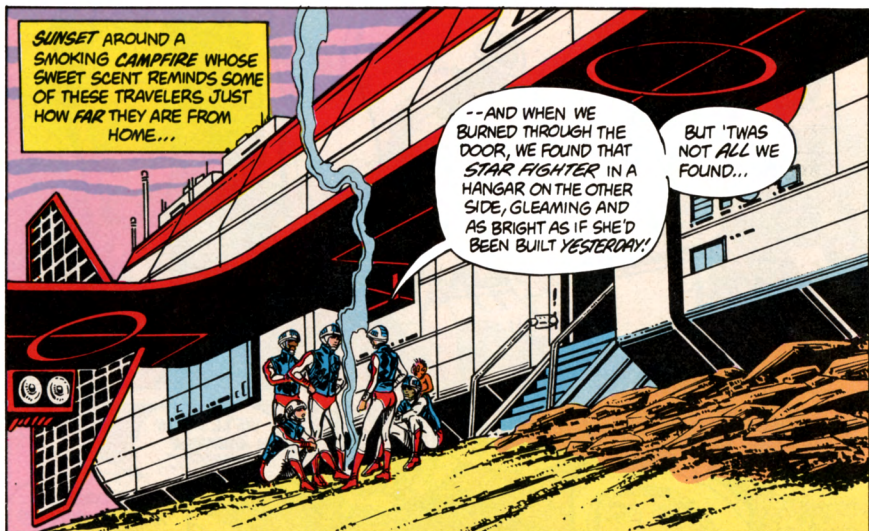
ALMOST.

CHAPTER THREE:

STAR RAIDERS!







SUNSET AROUND A SMOKING CAMPFIRE WHOSE SWEET SCENT REMINDS SOME OF THESE TRAVELERS JUST HOW FAR THEY ARE FROM HOME...

--AND WHEN WE BURNED THROUGH THE DOOR, WE FOUND THAT *STAR FIGHTER* IN A HANGAR ON THE OTHER SIDE, GLEAMING AND AS BRIGHT AS IF SHE'D BEEN BUILT YESTERDAY!!

BUT 'T WAS NOT ALL WE FOUND...



...AND IN TRUTH, IT'S *THIS* LITTLE GEM WHICH IS THE MORE IMPORTANT FIND OF THE TWO, I'M THINKING.

THE *HUKKA* LED SINGH TO IT, AS SOON AS WE BREACHED THE DOOR.



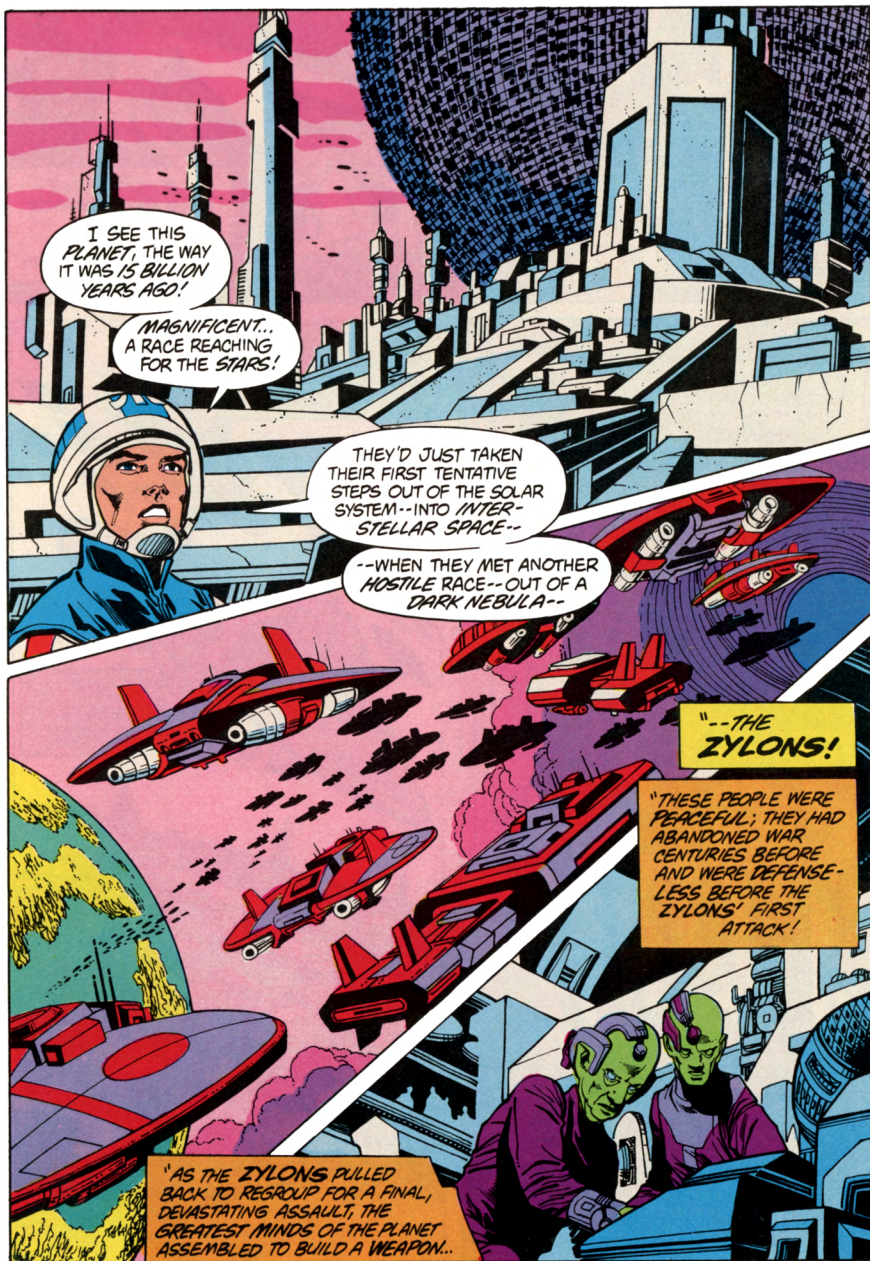
A JEWEL?

WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT ABOUT--

TOUCH IT TO YOUR BROW, COMMANDER--

VISIONS...

-- AND YOU'LL SEE WHAT I SAW WHEN I PUT IT TO MINE!



I SEE THIS
PLANET, THE WAY
IT WAS 15 BILLION
YEARS AGO!

MAGNIFICENT...
A RACE REACHING
FOR THE STARS!

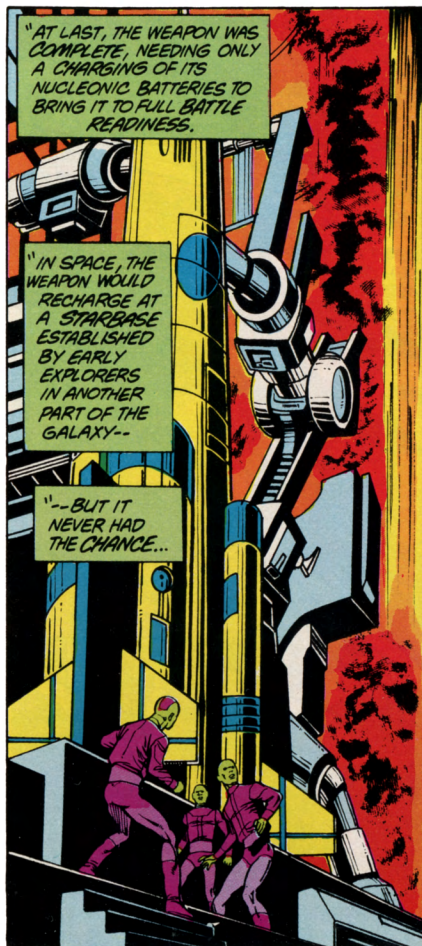
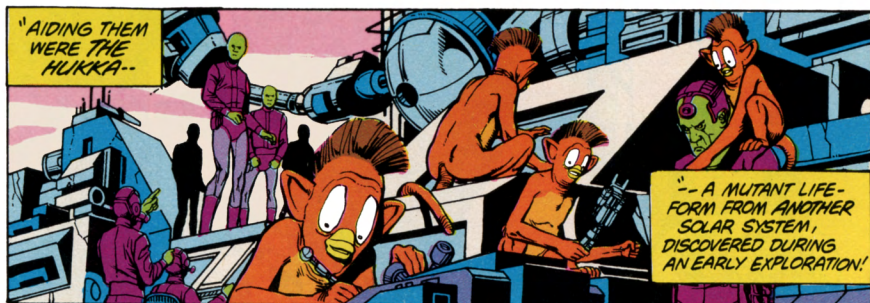
THEY'D JUST TAKEN
THEIR FIRST TENTATIVE
STEPS OUT OF THE SOLAR
SYSTEM--INTO INTER-
STELLAR SPACE--

--WHEN THEY MET ANOTHER
HOSTILE RACE--OUT OF A
DARK NEBULA--

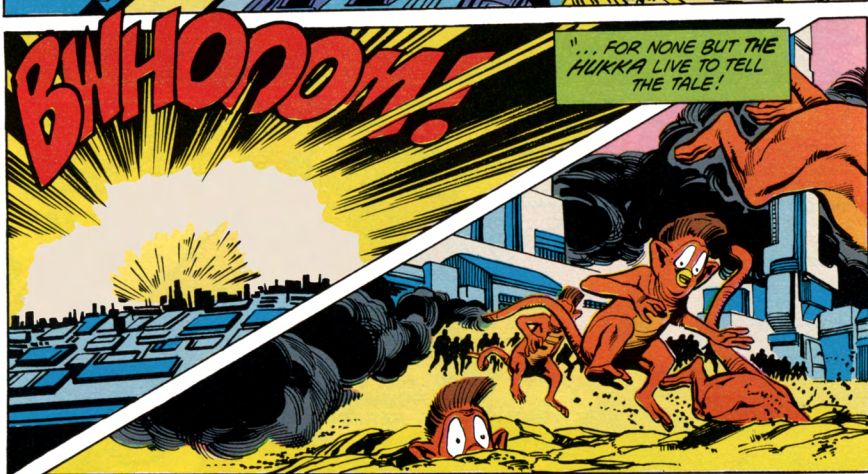
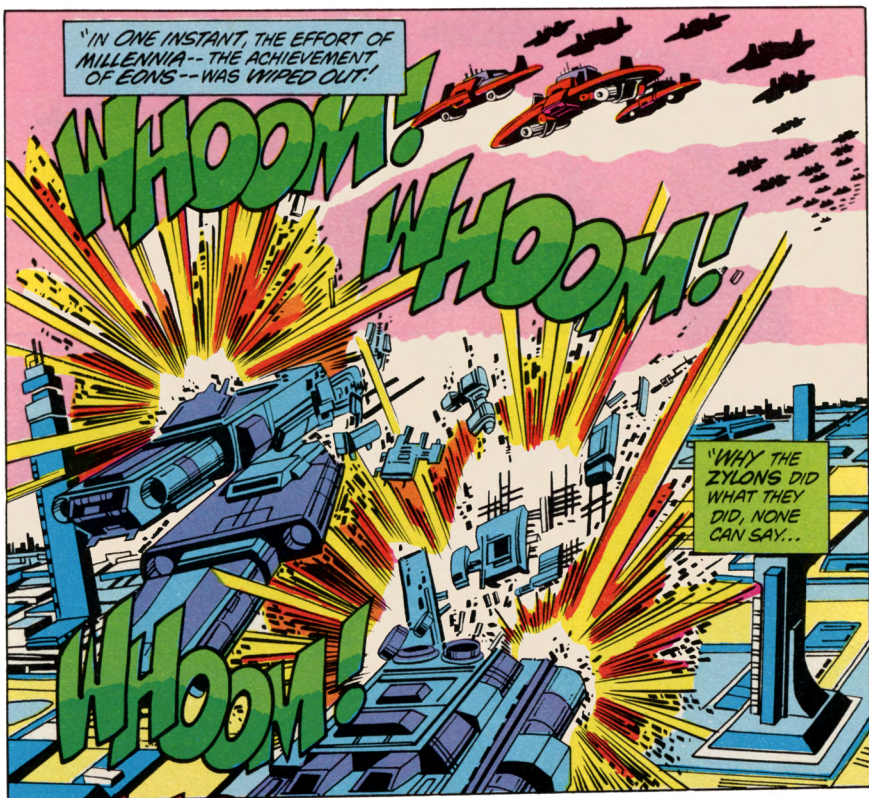
--THE
ZYLONS!

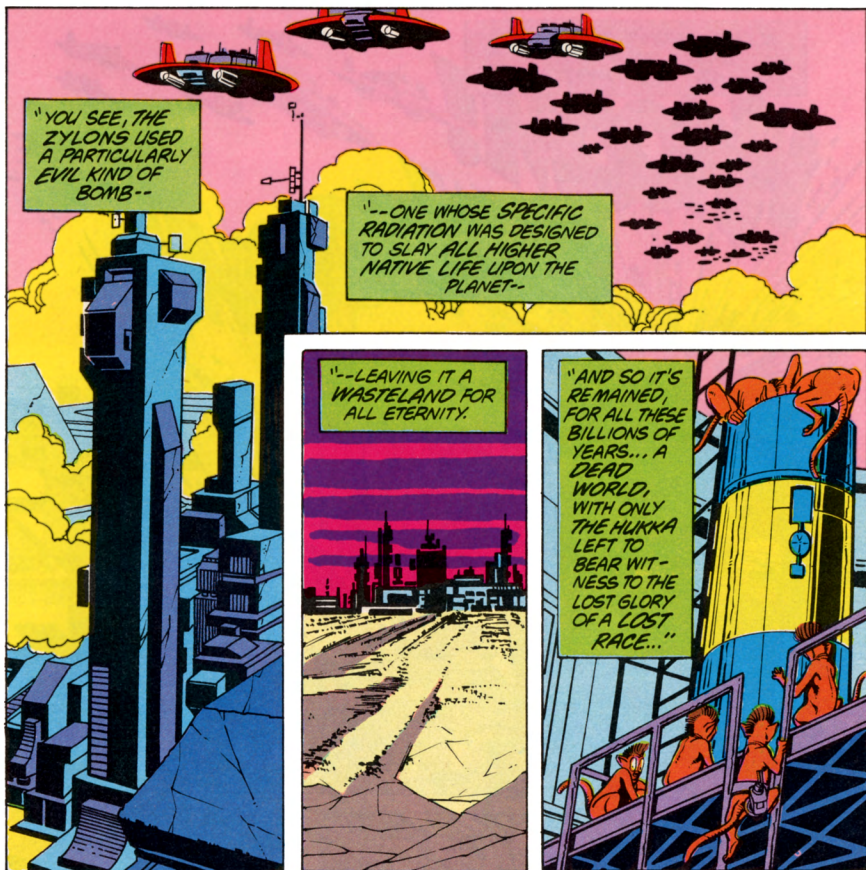
"THESE PEOPLE WERE
PEACEFUL; THEY HAD
ABANDONED WAR
CENTURIES BEFORE
AND WERE DEFENSE-
LESS BEFORE THE
ZYLONS' FIRST
ATTACK!

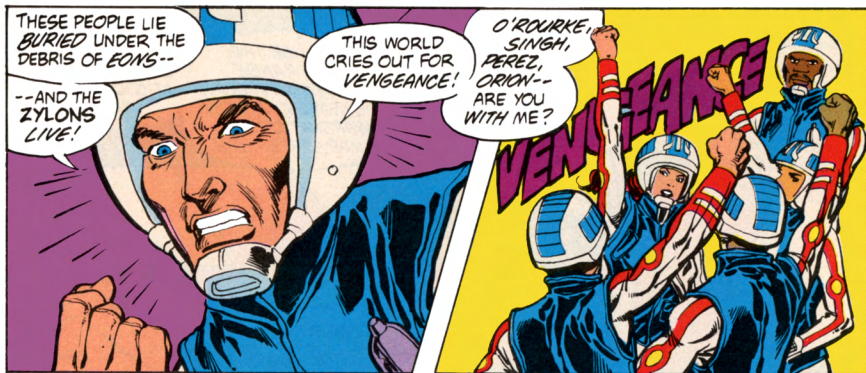
"AS THE ZYLONS PULLED
BACK TO REGROUP FOR A FINAL,
DEVASTATING ASSAULT, THE
GREATEST MINDS OF THE PLANET
ASSEMBLED TO BUILD A WEAPON...

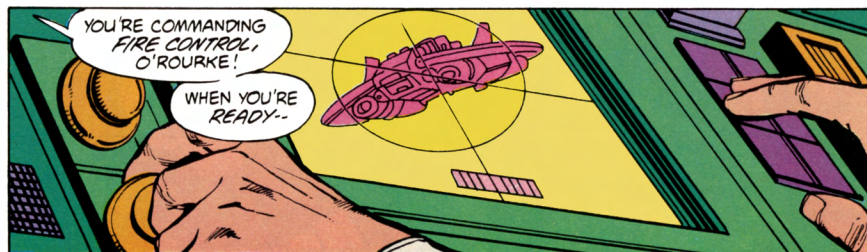
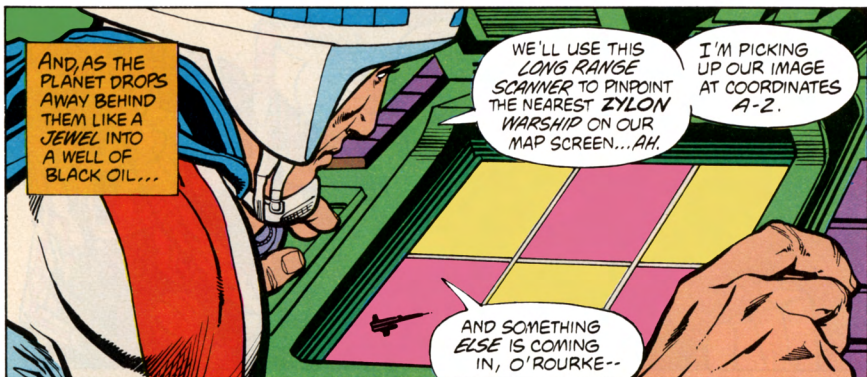


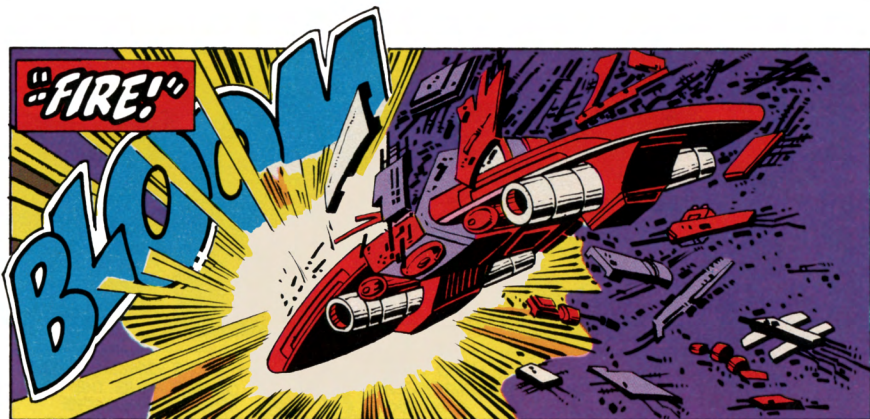
"IN ONE INSTANT, THE EFFORT OF
MILLENNIA-- THE ACHIEVEMENT
OF EONS-- WAS WIRED OUT!

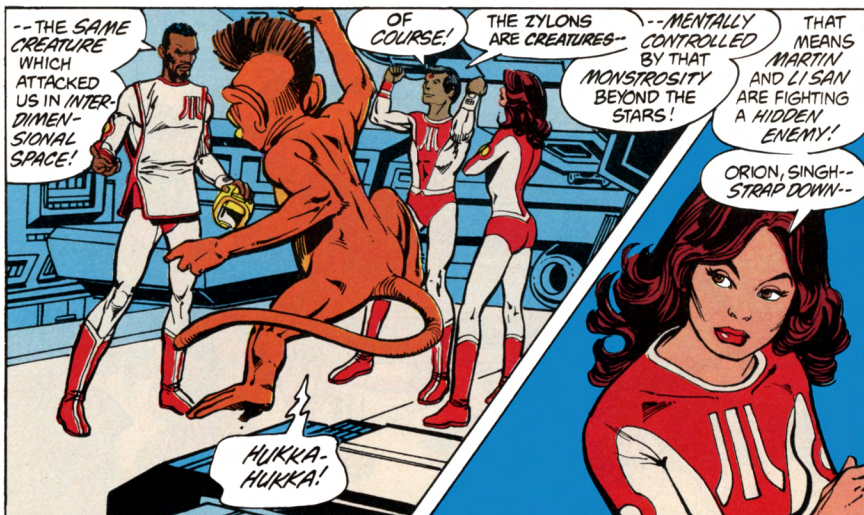
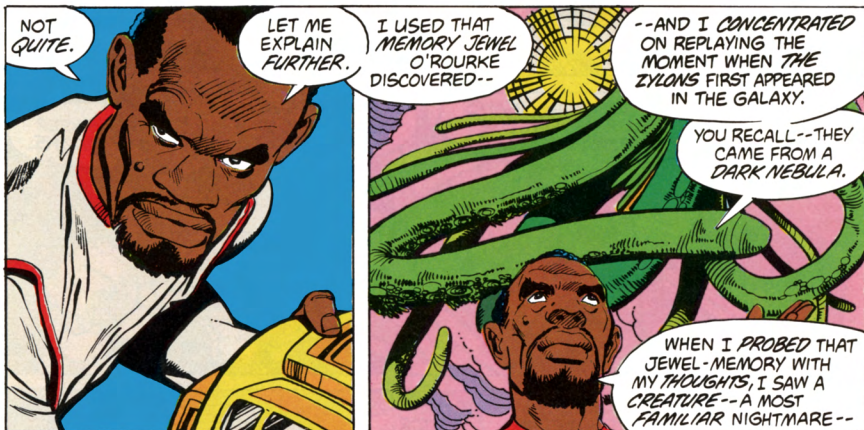
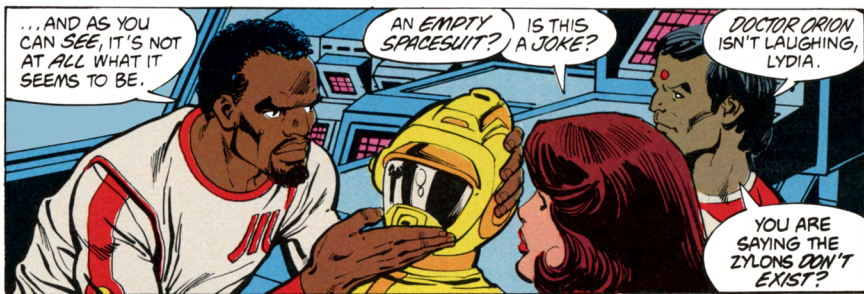


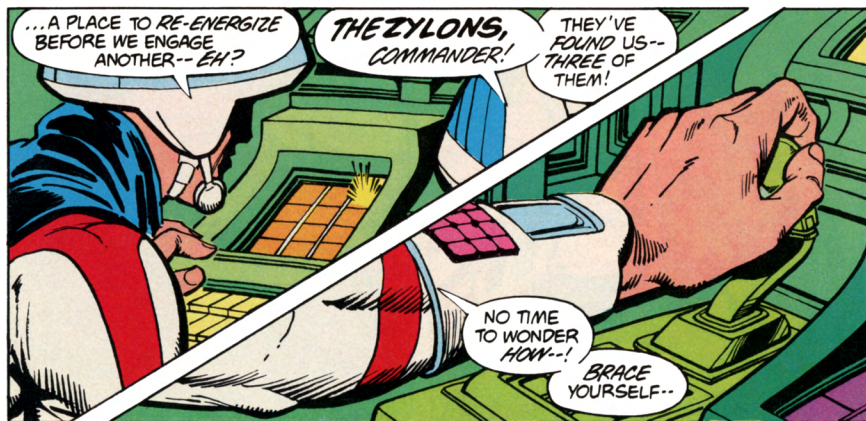
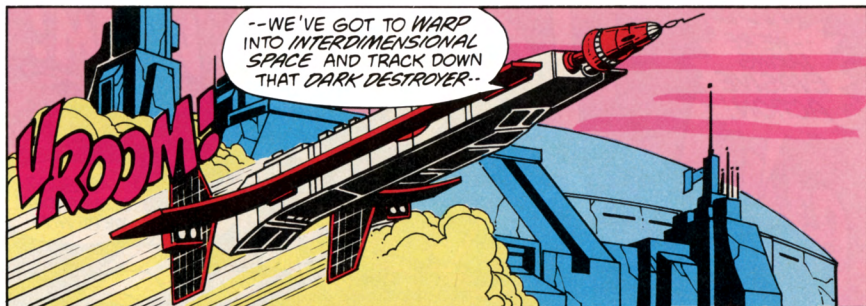


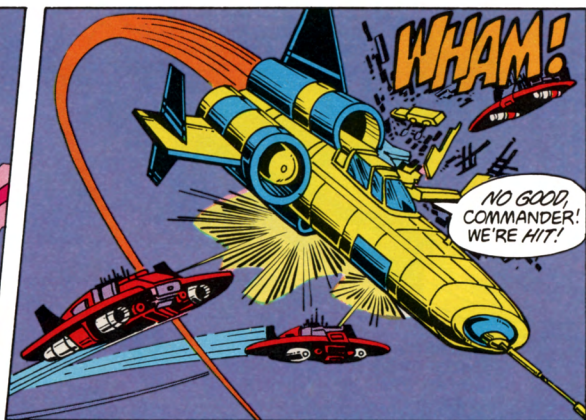
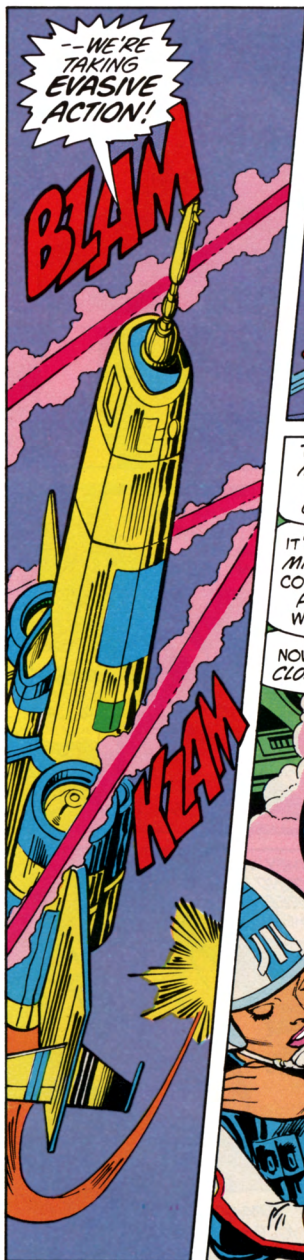








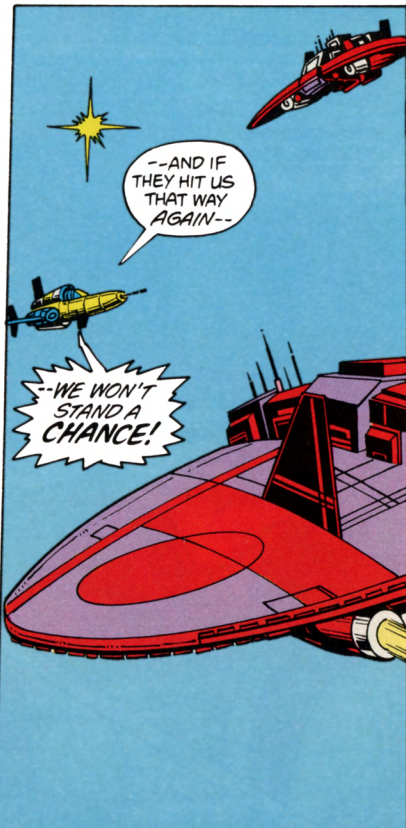




THE WAY THEY MANEUVERED--
IN TOTAL COORDINATION!

IT'S AS IF ONE MIND WERE CONTROLLING ALL THREE WARSHIPS!

NOW THEY'RE CLOSING IN--



SPACE OUTSIDE
SPACE, TIME
OUTSIDE TIME:

THIS IS THE INTERDIMENSIONAL LIMBO KNOWN
AS THE *MULTIVERSE* AND THROUGH THIS *UN-*
REALITY *SCANNER ONE* PLUNGES LIKE A DOLPHIN
THROUGH TROUBLED WATERS...



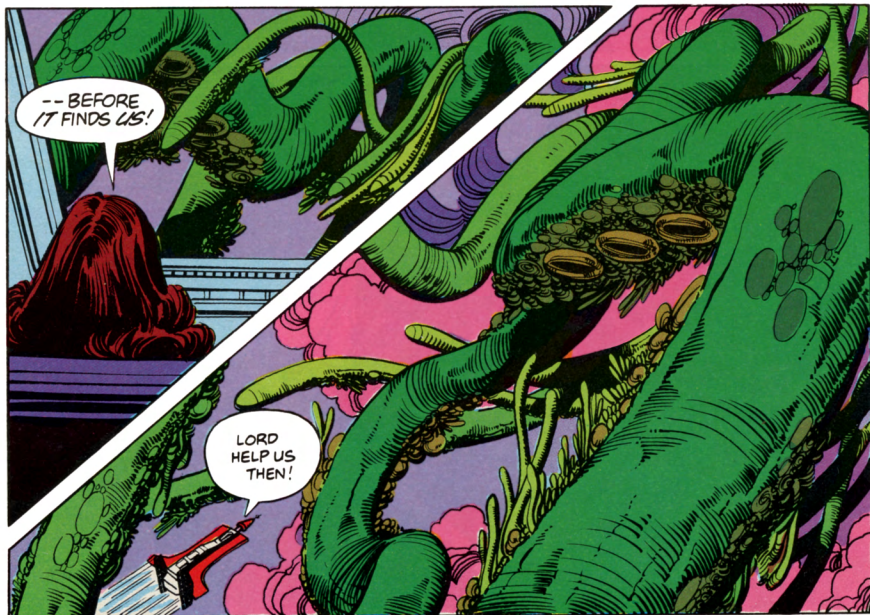
I'VE RECHECKED THE PLAN
TWICE WITH OUR *ATARI 8000* COMPUTER, SINGH.

YOU HEARD
THE DOCTOR,
MOHANDAS.

HURRY.

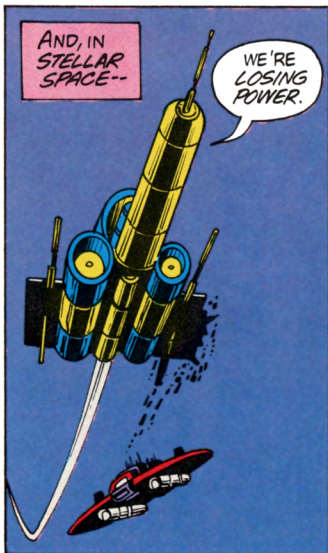
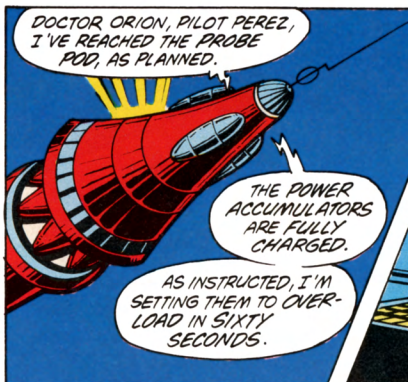
IT'S OUR
ONLY
HOPE.

WE'VE FOUND THE
DARK DESTROYER,
AND IT'S ONLY A
MATTER OF TIME--

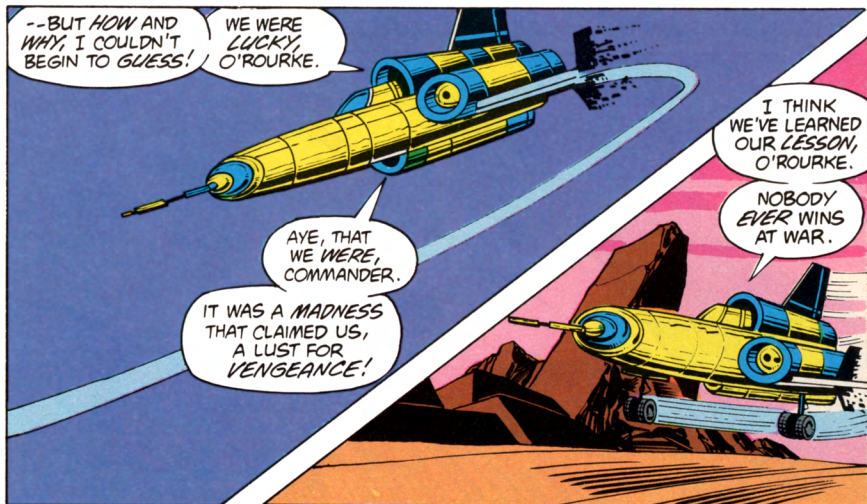
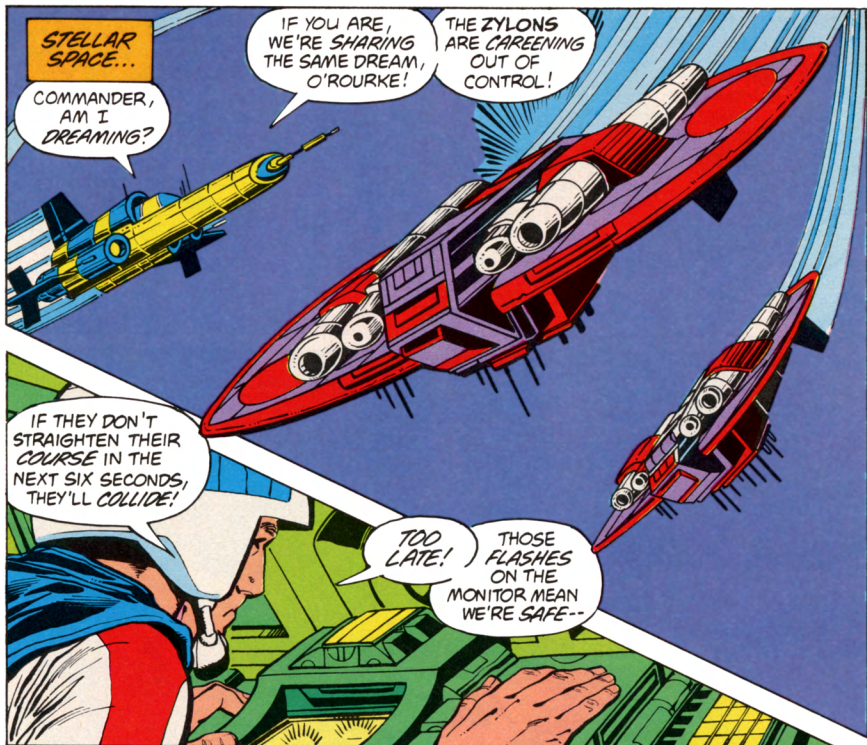


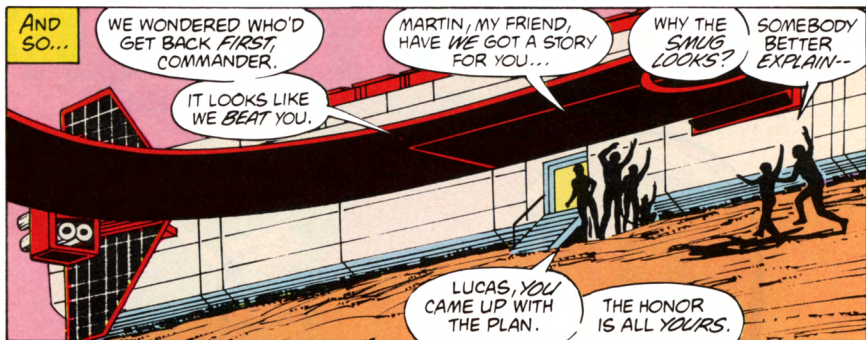
-- BEFORE
IT FINDS US!

LORD
HELP US
THEN!



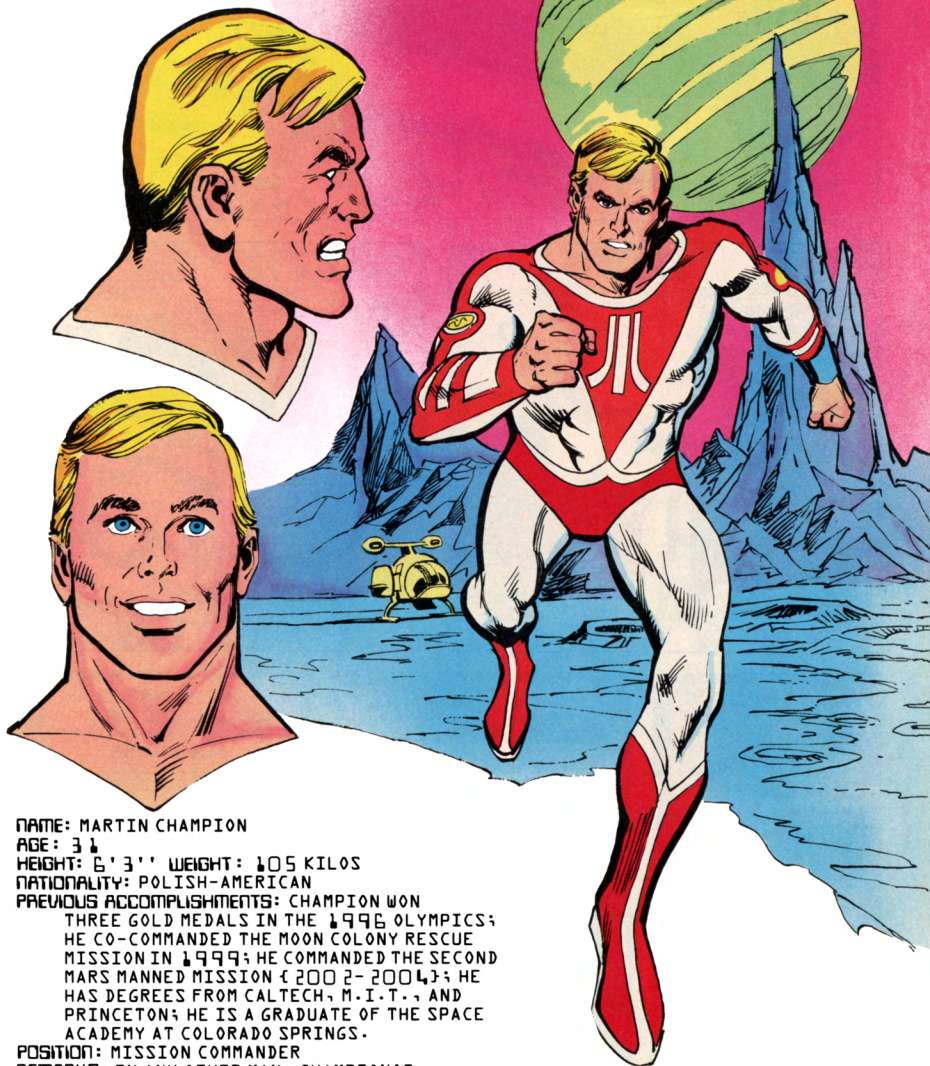






ATARI FORCE **FACT FILE:**

#1 COMMANDER MARTIN CHAMPION



NAME: MARTIN CHAMPION

AGE: 31

HEIGHT: 6'3" **WEIGHT:** 105 KILOS

NATIONALITY: POLISH-AMERICAN

PREVIOUS ACCOMPLISHMENTS: CHAMPION WON

THREE GOLD MEDALS IN THE 1996 OLYMPICS; HE CO-COMMANDED THE MOON COLONY RESCUE MISSION IN 1999; HE COMMANDED THE SECOND MARS MANNED MISSION (2002-2004); HE HAS DEGREES FROM CALTECH, M.I.T., AND PRINCETON; HE IS A GRADUATE OF THE SPACE ACADEMY AT COLORADO SPRINGS.

POSITION: MISSION COMMANDER

REMARKS: IN ANY OTHER MAN, CHAMPION'S

ACCOMPLISHMENTS MIGHT HAVE RESULTED IN THE CREATION OF AN OVERBEARING EGO; CHAMPION REMAINS REMARKABLY UNAFFECTED, AND AT TIMES SEEMS ALMOST BOYISH; YET HIS COOL, CONFIDENT MANNER MAKES HIM A PERFECT LEADER, AND INSPIRES THE LOYALTY OF HIS FELLOW EXPLORERS . . .

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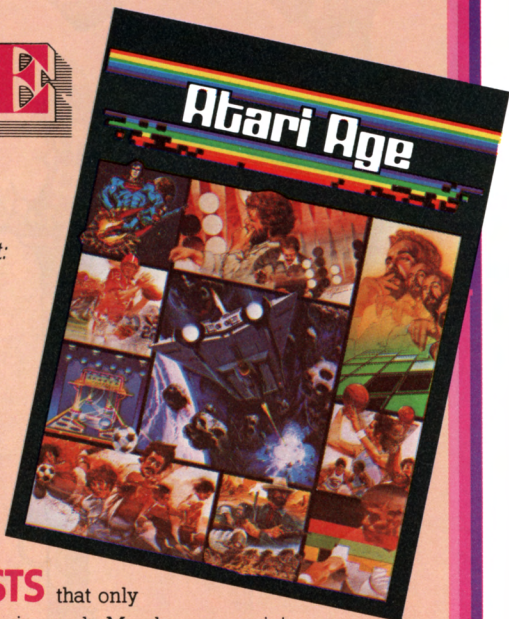
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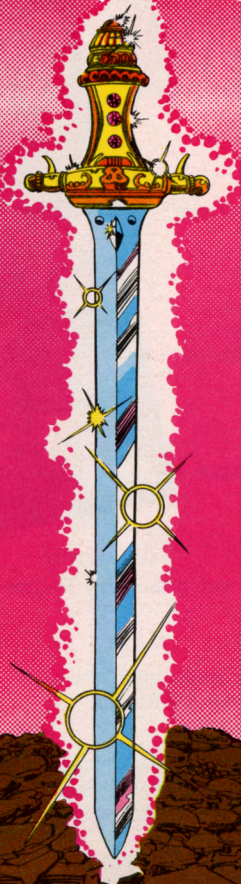
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