

SOME PEOPLE TALK ABOUT HELL. ALPHA SEVEN TO ALPHA LEADER PICKING UP BNEMY TRANS-MISSIONS! THERE'S NOTHING ON-SCREEN, ALPHA SEVEN. STAY IN FORMATION! I'VE BEEN THERE. MOLD THE LINE. NO ONE GETS THROUGH, NO MATTER WHAT! THE BATTLE OF THE LINE. EARTH'S FINAL STAND AGAINST THE MINBARI. WE COULDN'T EVEN TOUCH THEM. ALPHA LEADER. I'M HIT!! THE SKY WAS FULL OF STARS. EVERY STAR AN EXPLODING SHIP. AND EACH SHIP ... ONE OF OURS.







WARNING: AFT STRBILIZERS HIT. WEAP-DNS SYSTEMS AT ZERO. DEFENSIVE GRID AT ZERO...















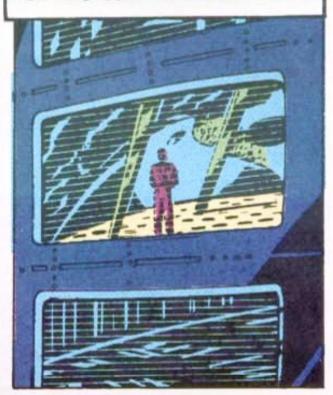
MY NAME IS JEFFREY DAVID SINCLAIR. RANK: COMMANDER. EARTHFORCE.

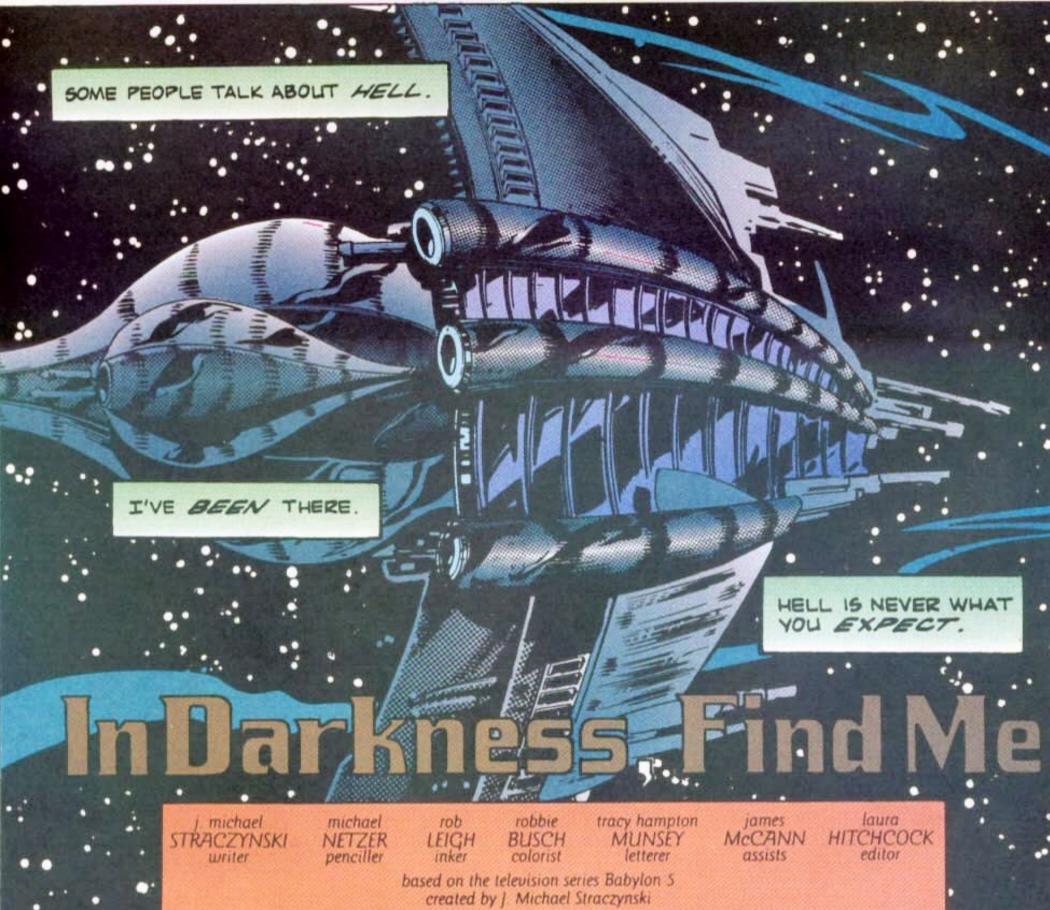


ONE OF TWO HUNDRED SURVIVORS OF THE BATTLE OF THE LINE. TWELVE YEARS AGO.



TWO HUNDRED SURVIVORS.
OUT OF TWENTY THOUSAND SHIPS. TWENTY
THOUSAND PILOTS. TWENTY
THOUSAND VOICES...
CRYING OUT IN THE NIGHT.





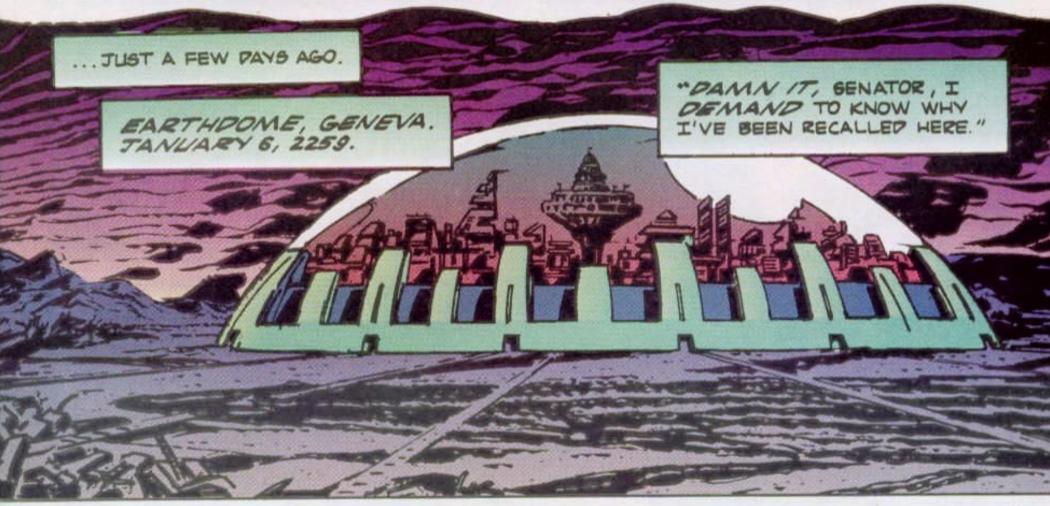
BABYLON 5.1. January, 1995. Published monthly by DC Comics, 1325 Avenue of the Americas. New York, NY 10019. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to BABYLON 5. DC Comics Subscriptions, PO. Box 0528, Baldwin, NY 11510. Annual subscription rate \$23.40. Canadian subscribers must add \$8.00 for postage and GST. GST # is R125921072. All foreign countries must add \$8.00 for postage. U.S. funds only. BABYLON 5. story, art and text material Copyright. 1995. Warner Bros. All Rights Reserved. All other material Copyright. 1995. DC Comics. All Rights Reserved. BABYLON 5 is a trademark of Warner Bros. DC Comics. Authorized User. The stones, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. For advertising space contact. Tom Ballou, (212) 636-5520. Printed on recyclable paper.

Printed in Canada.

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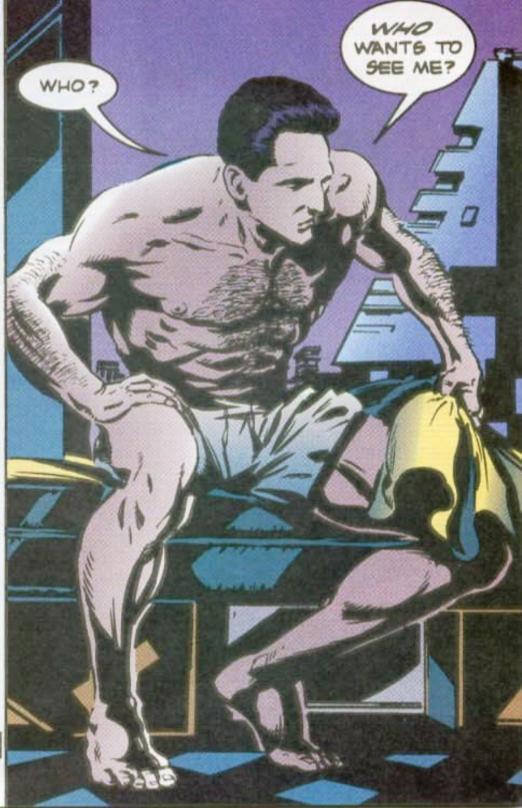
MY











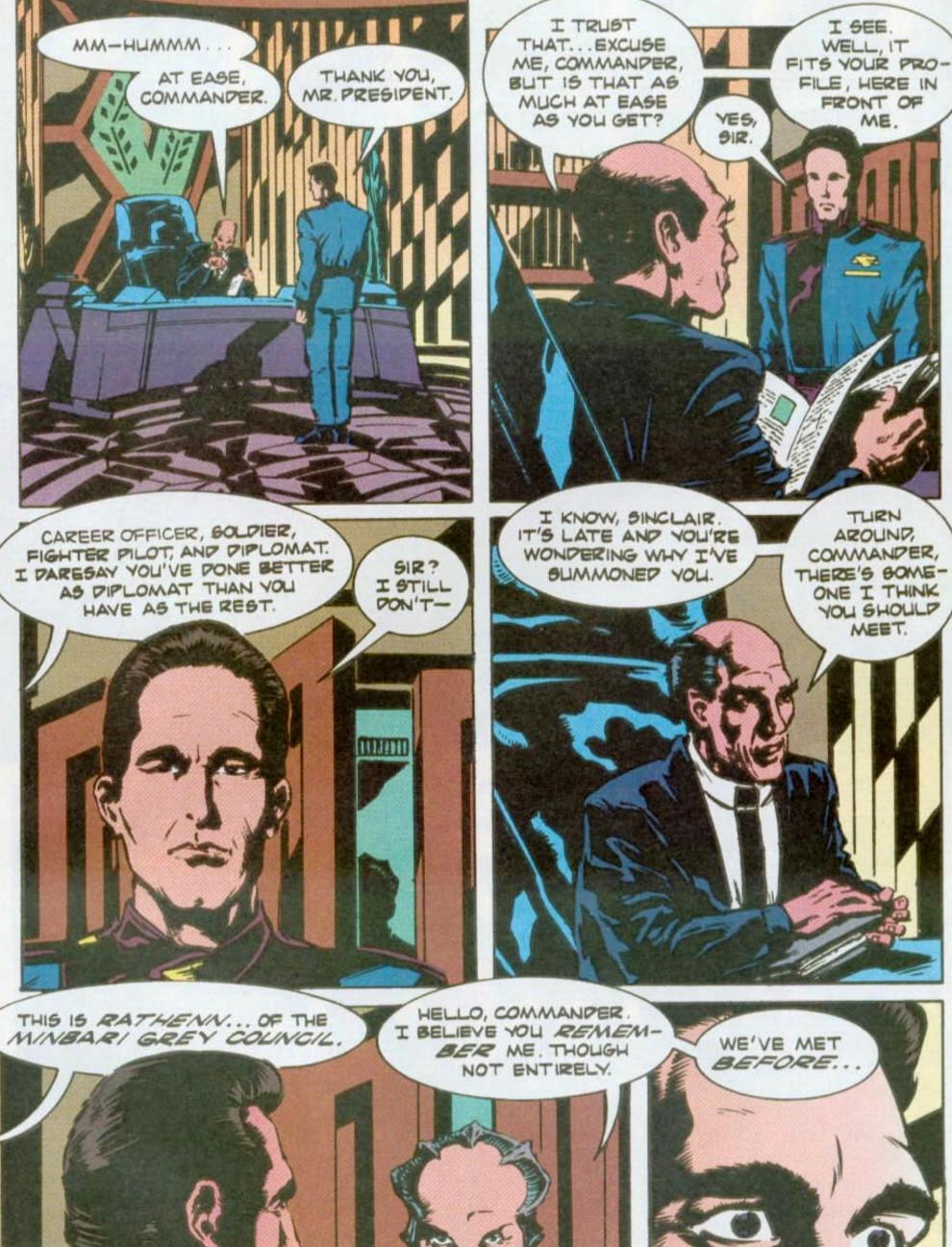






































WE EXAMINED THE
OTHER FIGHTER PILOTS WE
CAPTURED AND INTERROGATED,
COMMANDER. THEY WERE THE
SAME. BOME TO A LESSER
PEGREE. BOME WITH MORE.
BUT ALL HAD MINBARI SOLLS,
OR PARTS OF
MINBARI
BOLLS.

IN EACH GÉNERATION, THE BOLLS OF
OUR PEOPLE ARE REBORN.
REMOVE THOSE SOLLS,
AND THE WHOLE BLIFFERS,
WE ARE DIMINISHED.
GRAPHALLY, OVER NEARLY
SIX THOLISAND YEARS, THE
SOLIL-WELL GREW SMALLER.
OUR PEOPLE WERE BORN
IN EYER SMALLER.
NUMBERS.

THERE SIMPLY WEREN'T ENOUGH SOULS TO GO AROUND FOR ALL OUR RACE.

WE'P THOUGHT THE

BOLL HUNTERS RE
SPONSIBLE, BUT THEIR THEFTS

FROM DYING MINBARI ACCOUNT
ED FOR ONLY A SMALL NUMBER

OF MISSING SOULS. WE NEVER

KNEW WHY OUR PEOPLE WERE

PIMINISHED, WHY WE

SUFFERED...







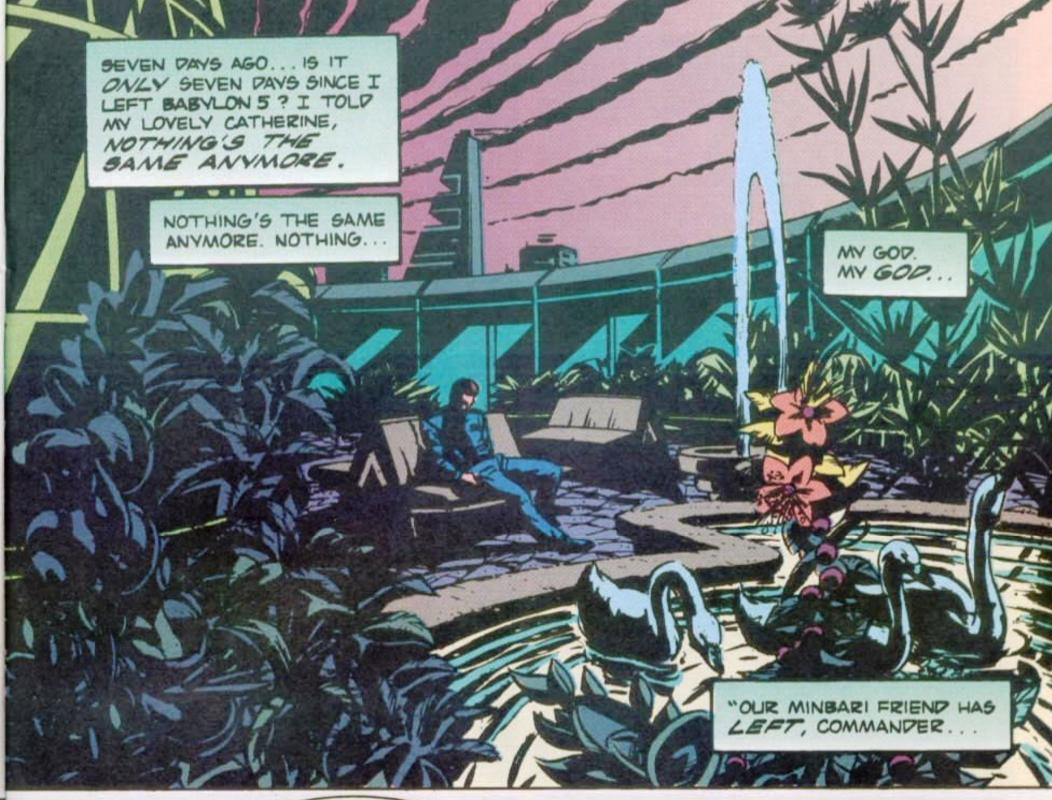






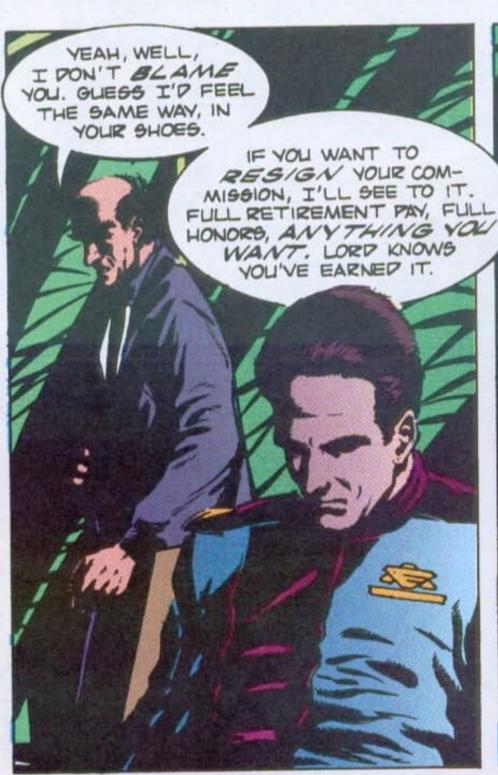


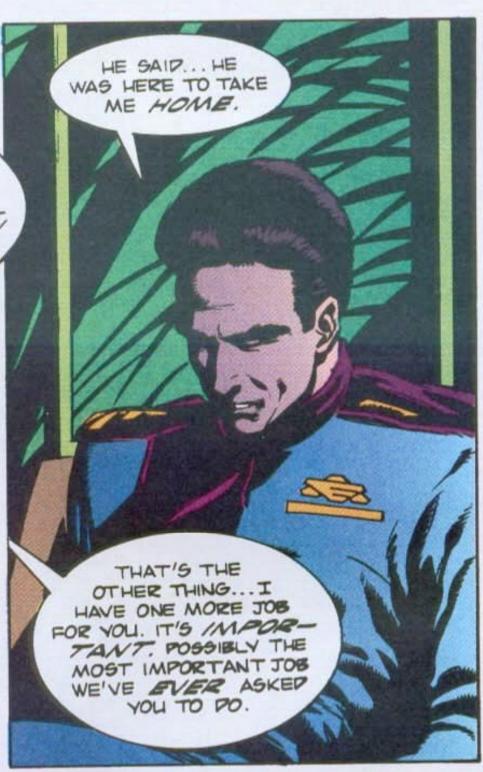


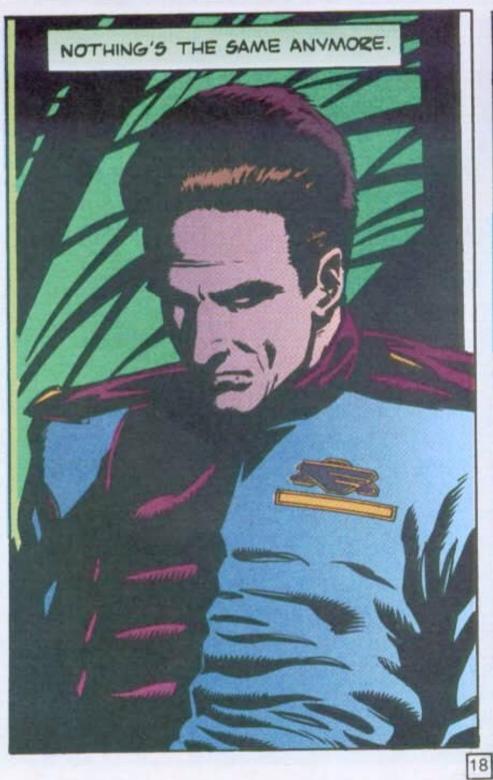


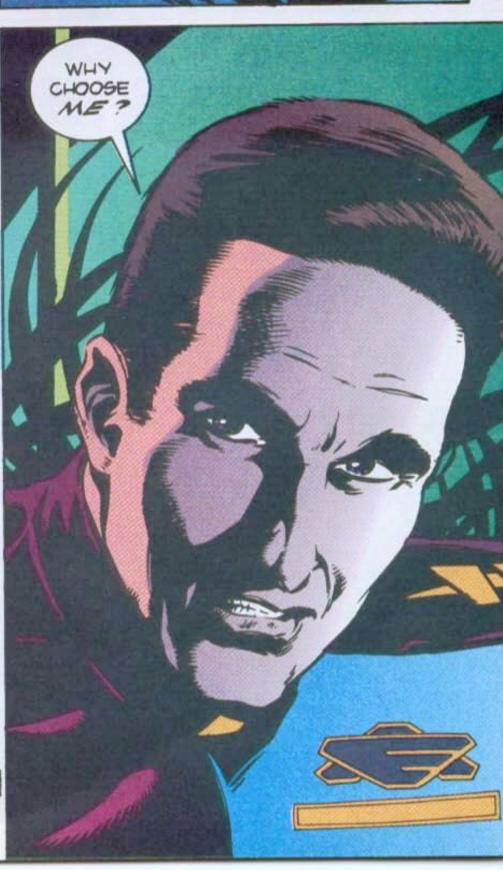


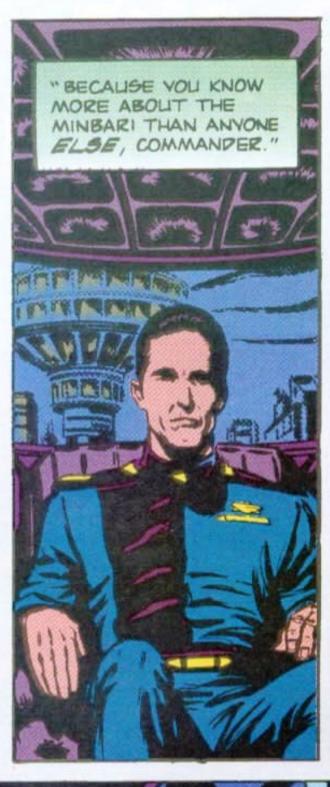








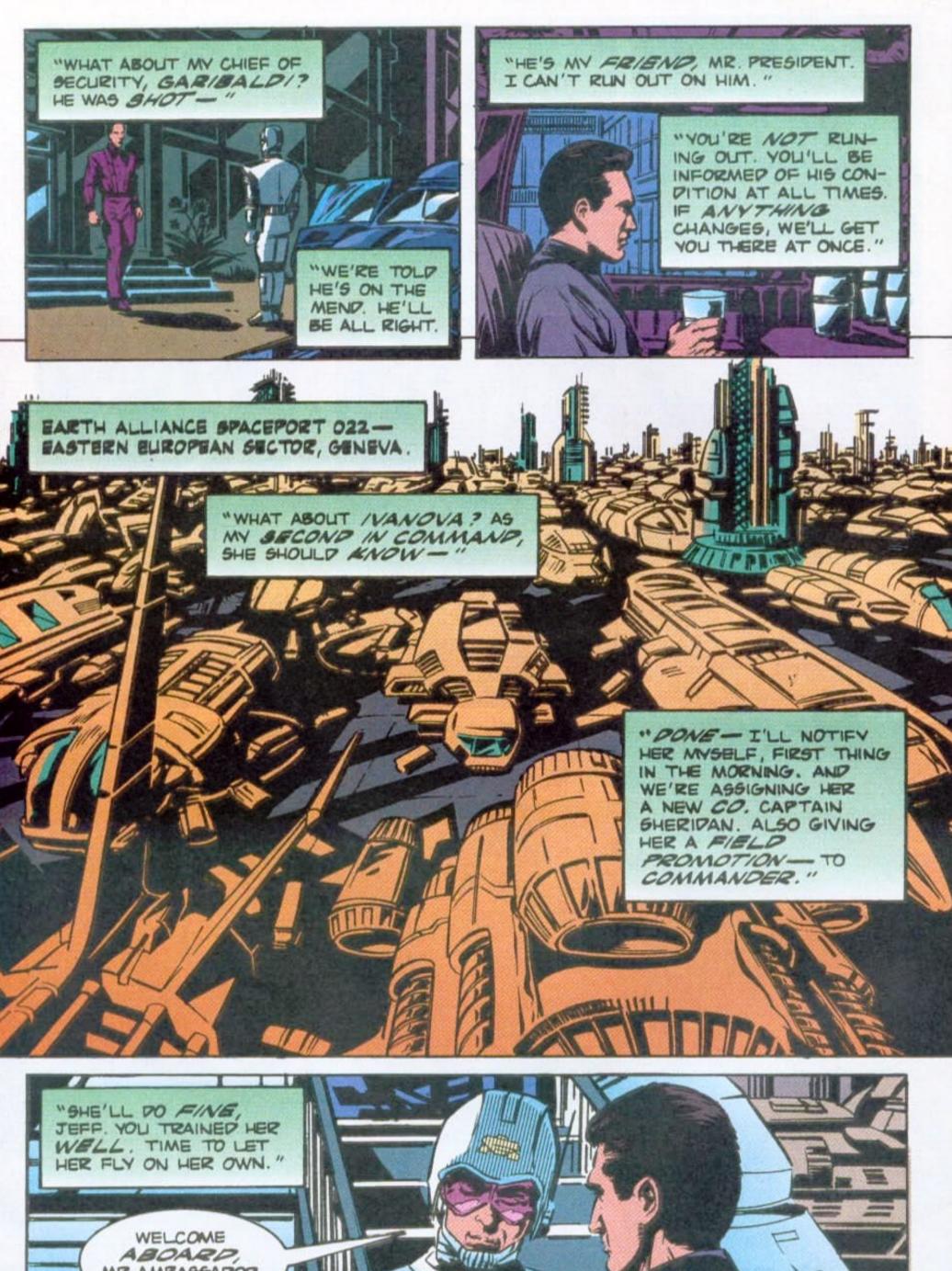




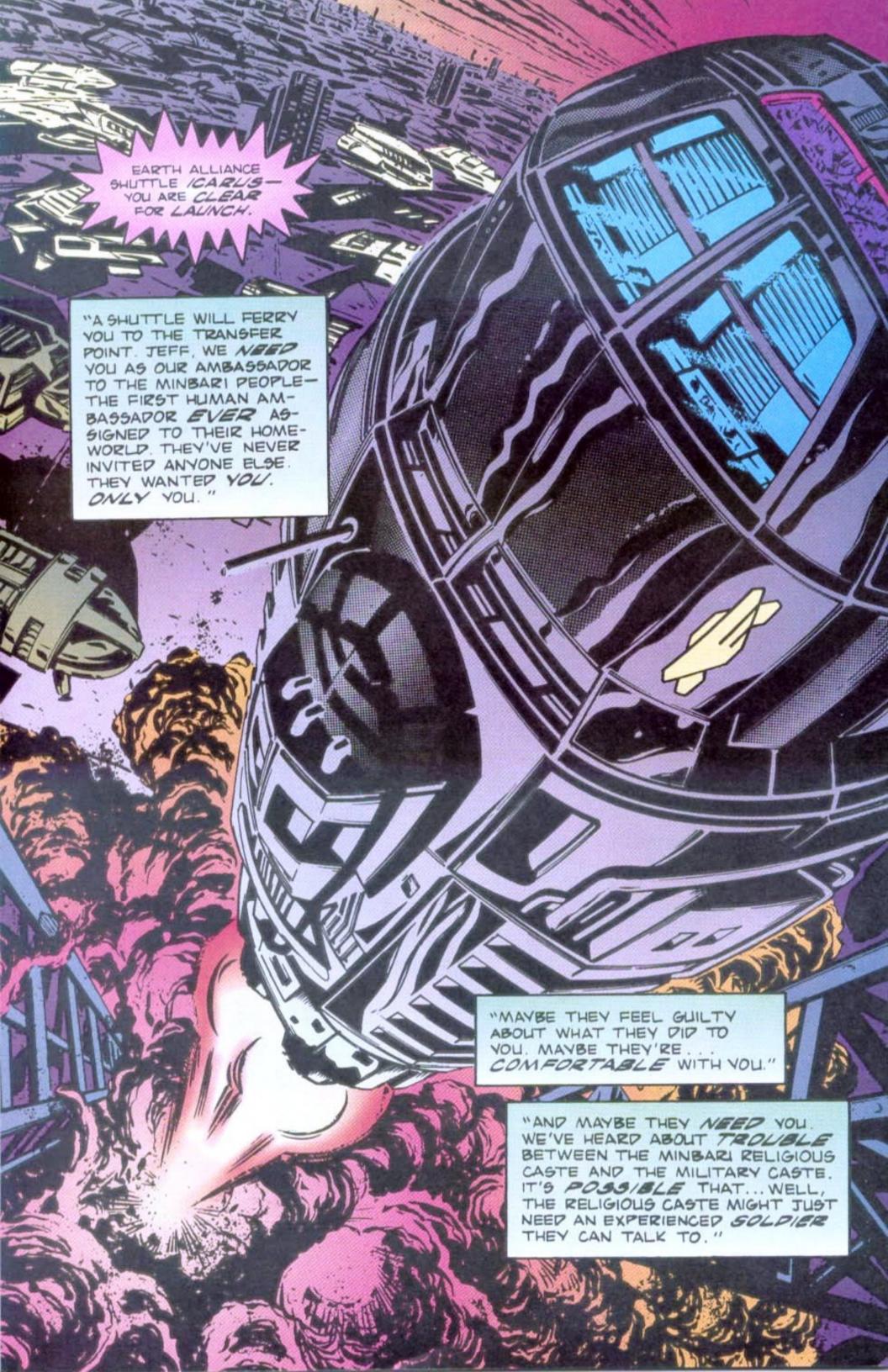




















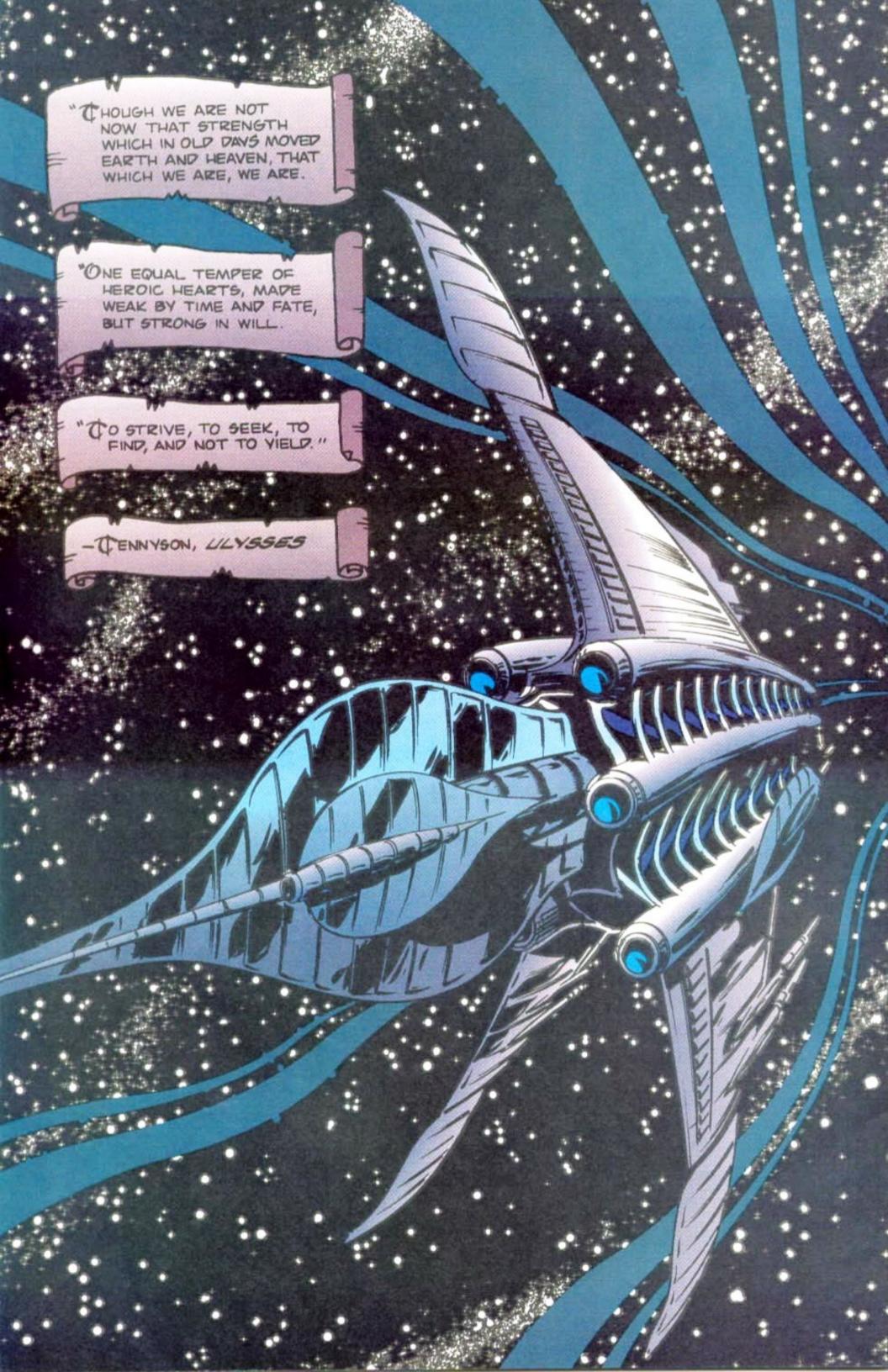












"It was the dawn of the third age of mankind... ten years after the Earth-Minbari war. The Babylon Project was a dream given form. Its goal: to prevent another war, by creating a place where humans and aliens could work out their differences peacefully. It's a port of call, home away from home, for diplomats, hustlers, entrepreneurs, and wanderers. Humans and aliens, wrapped in two million, five hundred thousand tons of spinning metal... all alone in the night. It can be a dangerous place, but it's our last, best hope for peace. This is the story of the last of the Babylon stations. The year is 2259. The name of the place is... **B A B Y L O N 5**."

FIRST SEASON LOG

Spinning slowly on the edge of known space, the Babylon 5 space station is a huge, carefully balanced machine, supporting delicate threads of life. Although species from all over the galaxy pass through it, the station was conceived and built by Humans, with support from four alien races: Centauri, Narn, Minbari, and Vorlon. These five are the diplomatic core of the Babylon project... neutral ground for the entire galaxy.

Aside from the laws of the station, however, little is clear on Babylon 5, and little has been easy during the station's first year. Even choosing a commander was troublesome — Earth Alliance proposed many candidates, but the Minbari refused to approve of any... until finally, the name of Jeffrey David Sinclair surfaced. Even with spotty leadership experience, he was the only commander the Minbari would accept.

Why? Reasons are unclear, although Sinclair does share a history with the Minbari — one he understands only imperfectly. Sinclair was one of few Earth Alliance members to survive the Battle of the Line, the final battle of the last major intergalactic war, pitting humans against the Minbari. Shortly after they captured Sinclair in battle, however, the Minbari abruptly surrendered — even as they were scant moments from total victory.

Now Sinclair and his successor, Captain John Sheridan, must patch up relationships between interplanetary governments. The Narn and the Centauri have a long-standing feud, even more bitter now that the Narn have overthrown Centauri dominance — and begun their own aggressive expansion. The Grey Council, the mysterious ruling body of the Minbari, seems to encourage peace... but has trouble quelling dissent among the castes of its own people. Already, Ambassador Kosh of the Vorlon Empire has survived an assassination attempt, poisoned by a rogue Minbari killer who impersonated Sinclair. And the Vorlons are an enigma — few outsiders have ever seen one without its strange full-"body" environment suit. Other wild cards include members of Earth Alliance's telepathic Psi-Corps, and the mysterious Shadowmen...

Even the space station itself holds mysteries. Before Babylon 5, four previous stations were created — and lost. Three were mysteriously sabotaged and destroyed, and the fourth disappeared without a trace... only to reappear through a rift in time four years later, briefly, then wink out of existence again.

Now, there is only Babylon 5, one last station. One final chance for peace.

J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI

It's a whole new universe out there... if Joe Straczynski has anything to say about it.

For seven years, Straczynski has worked to bring a new vision of science-fiction stories to television. He traveled to science-fiction conventions around the country, talking about the state of current science-fiction, asking fans for opinions. And at every stop, he honed his concept of a new outer space environment, one that would appeal to people who truly loved science fiction — including himself.

The idea was immensely attractive to creative people, as well as fans. Harlan Ellison signed on as Conceptual Consultant. Ron Thornton and Steve Burg, special effects experts, agreed to design revolutionary new computer imagery for the show [see next page]. As executive producer and creator, Straczynski also brought plenty of experience aboard: he's written several SF novels, plus over 120 television episodes for many animated and live-action television series, including Captain Power, Murder She Wrote and The New Twilight Zone.

End result? Babylon 5, the saga of a space station, where petty grievances and epic stories play out against a lush cultural background of aliens and humans.

According to Straczynski, the television series will follow a pre-planned five-year saga, building to a definitive end. So for Babylon 5, the future is known, although for the rest of us... surprises are waiting.

NEXT UP: TREASON!

Jeffrey Sinclair arrives on Minbar, just in time to see a new Minbari leader sworn in... and a conspiracy plot unfold! Mark Moretti takes over as writer, basing his story on a premise by J. Michael Straczynski. Michael Netzer and Rob Leigh continue on art.

BEHIND THE SCENES

THE STARFURY AN OVERVIEW BY MOJO AND RON THORNTON

Although Babylon 5 is primarily a fixture of peace, it must be prepared to handle violence at many levels. Having a high-profile position on the political map often makes it a target for terrorists and even entire races who sometimes reject its decisions. As a result, this galactic

white dove has sharp teeth to help it enforce diplomatic policy and defend against enemies.

In addition to a comprehensive defensive grid of energy weapons and missile interceptors, the station often uses the STARFURY. This high performance space combat/reconnaissance fighter is state of the art Earth technology and is a formidable opponent to all but the most advanced races.

It was designed by Ron Thornton and Steve
Burg (who together conceptualized hardware for
films such as The Abyss and Terminator 2) as a real
zero-gravity combat vehicle. It features four
vectoring thrust nozzles/propulsion units on the tip of
each wing. This places the thrust line far from the
center of mass, allowing maximum maneuverability
with a minimum of power (similar to engines on the
McDonnell-Douglas AV-8 Harrier, as seen in True
Lies). These units are modular and easily removable,
facilitating maintenance and keeping STARFURY
downtime to a minimum.

Space-suited pilots stand in their cockpits to help them withstand the high g-forces associated with the breakneck maneuvering possible in a zero-gravity environment. By remaining perpendicular to the direction of acceleration, blood will not rush from the pilot's brain as fast, helping to prevent blackout in a sudden high-g turn. This principle is employed today when astronauts lie down during a launch.

The STARFURY is armed with Copeland-JC466/A pulse discharge cannons, located directly below the cockpit on either side. Secondary cannons rest in the same position above the cockpit. They pack a wallop and rarely miss when combined with the on-board Duffy-1018MJS smart targeting computer.

In an emergency, the entire cockpit can eject from the fighter and serve as a temporary lifeboat. Similar to the General Dynamics F1-11, the cockpit separates with an explosive discharge to carry the pilot quickly away from highly volatile fuel and armaments stores.

Fuel is stored in the wings of the STARFURY and, although plentiful, burns up quickly under the

constant thrust required to engage in combat. Since many alien craft do not suffer this limitation, STARFURY pilots have no choice but to be the best, eliminating their targets swiftly and efficiently.

The STARFURY isn't the prettiest ship in the Babylon 5 universe, but what it lacks in beauty it makes up for with brawn. The Earth Alliance pilots put it best with their motto: Ugly But Well Hung.

HOW TO MAKE A STARFURY

BARYLON 5 has made visual effects history as the first TV program to produce its effects entirely

by computer. The process begins by creating a digital 'model' of a ship. such as a Starfury. Like a high-tech version of connect-the-dots, lines are connected by vectors in 3-dimensional space to create polygons, simple geometric shapes that are the building blocks of 3D animation.

By assembling thousands of polygons in the shape of a Starfury. the artist provides the computer with a mathematical description of the model. This allows it to figure out what a Starfury would look like from every angle.

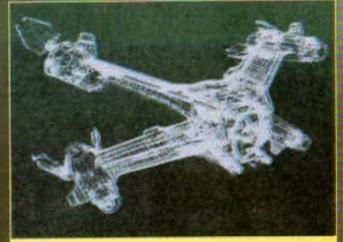
In a paint program, colors, dirt, insignias and other small details are painted in the shape of the model. These images, called Texture Maps, are saved and applied to the computer models.

Once the model is finished, it is brought into the computer's virtual soundstage where it must be placed in front of digital cameras and lights. Using a mouse, the animator moves the model, camera and lights to show the computer what is desired.

The computer now figures out and 'renders' the sequence frame by frame. In a complex scene, one frame can take over an hour. There are 30 frames per second, so each second of special effects takes the computer more than 30 hours to generate!

Foundation Imaging currently employs a room full of Commodore Amiga computers with the NewTek

Video Toaster to get the effects finished on time every week. As computers get faster, rendering will become less of a problem and you may yet see even more exciting special effects in future episodes of BABYLON 5!



This is the model's geometry as seen by the computer. Each little square is a flat segment called a polygon. Combined, these polygons create smooth surfaces.



An initial rendering of the finished STARFURY looks like an unpainted plastic model kit. The shape is perfect, yet it is still only half complete.



The finished, painted version. Texture maps created in a computer paint program provide important finishing touches, turning it into a realistic space fighter.

RON THORNTON is the Visual Effects Director at Foundation Imaging, which creates the computer-generated special effects for Babylon 5.

is a Visual Effects Artist/Technical Director at Foundation Imaging and sometimes writes about Babylon 5 for no apparent reason.