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BABYLON

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SHADOWS PAST AND PRESENT: PART II

AGAINST THE ODDS

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BABYLON 5 CREATED BY J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI



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IT
AIN'T EARTH
ATMOSPHERE, BUT
AT LEAST I CAN
BREATHE IT.



C'MON, HOT SHOT
PILOT, WE MADE IT. NICE BIT
OF FLYING YOU DID, THERE.

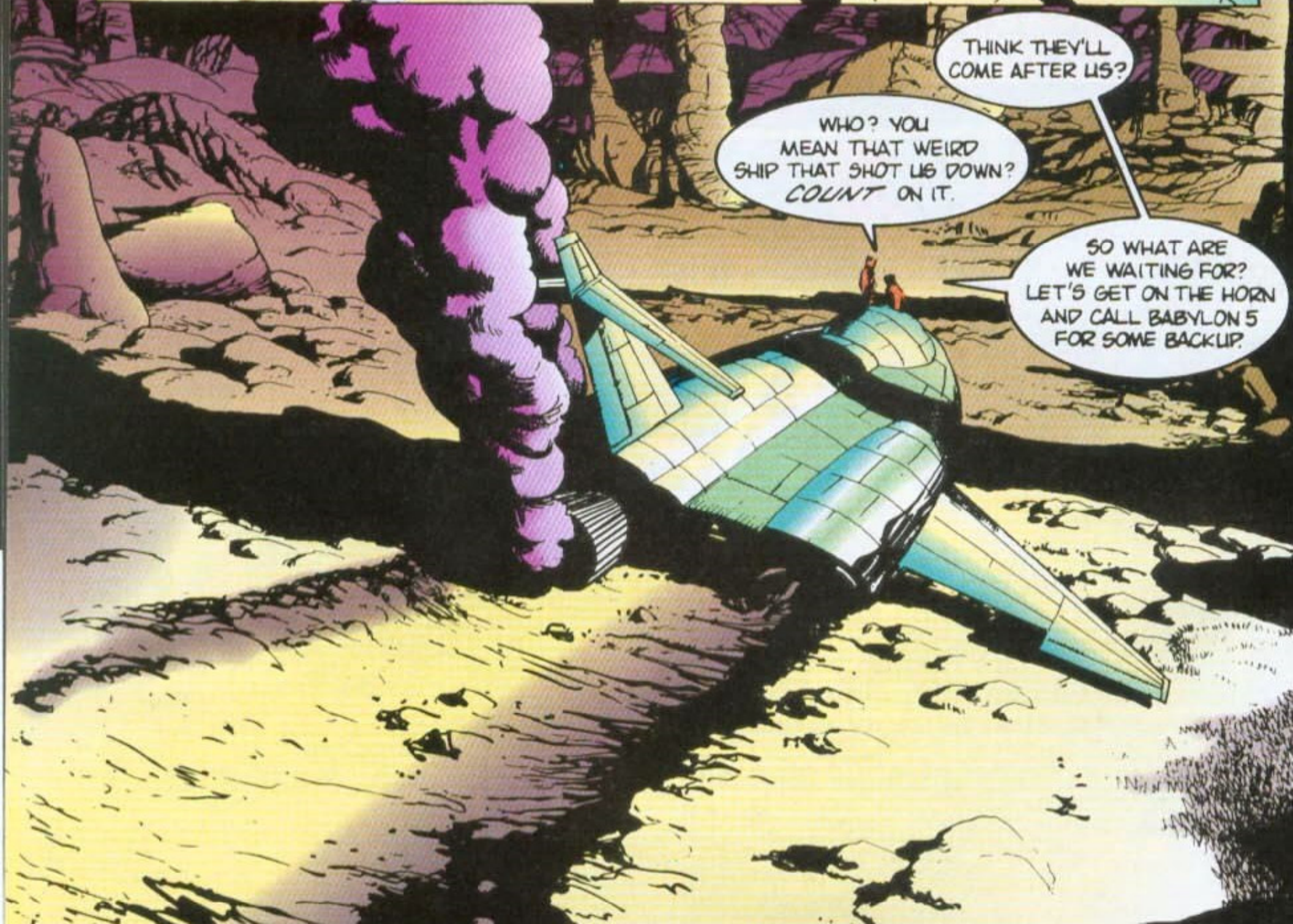
SHAK!
I HATE
FOAM-PROTECT!
IT'LL TAKE WEEKS
TO GET IT OUT OF
THESE DUDDS.

OWW!
TAKE IT EASY,
GARIBALDI.



YOU OKAY,
KEFFER?

FEEL LIKE I WAS
BLINDSIDED BY A VORLON
CRUISER. I'M BRUISED,
BUT I'LL LIVE.



THINK THEY'LL
COME AFTER US?

WHO? YOU
MEAN THAT WEIRD
SHIP THAT SHOT US DOWN?
COUNT ON IT.

SO WHAT ARE
WE WAITING FOR?
LET'S GET ON THE HORN
AND CALL BABYLON 5
FOR SOME BACKUP.



NO CAN DO. TRANSMITTER'S BROKEN. WE'LL HAVE TO GO FOR HELP... IF THERE *IS* ANY HELP AROUND HERE.

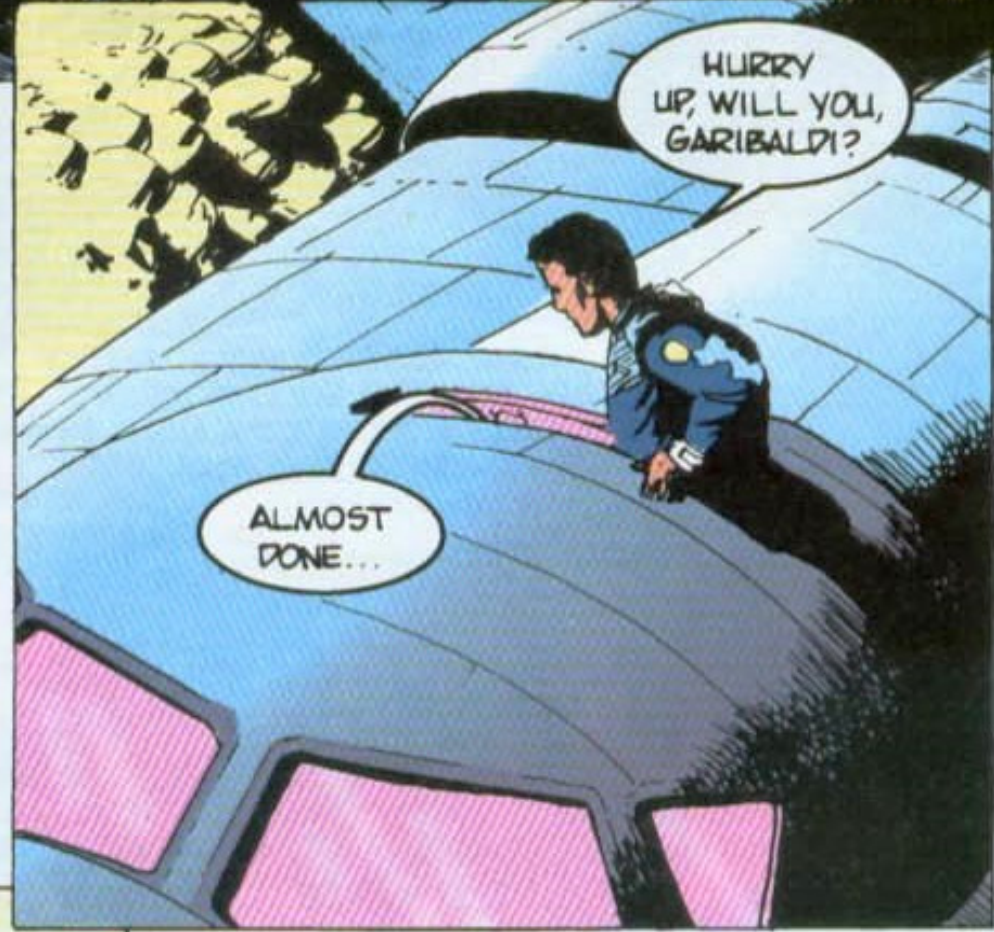
IF?
IF???

GEEZ, GARIBALDI— JUST GO GET THE GEAR AND HAND IT OUT. THAT FOAM-PROTECT MAKES ME CLAUSTROPHOBIC.



YOU GET THE GEAR.

I'VE GOT SOMETHING ELSE TO TAKE CARE OF.



HURRY UP, WILL YOU, GARIBALDI?

ALMOST DONE...



WEIRD, HOW I WAS JUST TELLING KEFFER ABOUT MARS...

FEELS LIKE THE SAME THING'S HAPPENING ALL OVER AGAIN.

AUTO-DESTRUCT



NO WAY I'M GONNA SCREW UP THIS MISSION.

AUTO-DESTR

0 1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 A B C D
E F G H I J K
L M N O P Q R S
T U V W X Y Z
VATED

THE COMPUTER CHARTS SAID THIS PLANET WAS CLAIMED BY THE *CENTAURI*. SO THERE'S GOTTA BE A SETTLEMENT AROUND HERE *SOMEWHERE*. LET'S GET TO THAT MOUNTAIN AND RECONNOITER.

Y'KNOW...

LONDO IS THE *CENTAURI* AMBASSADOR TO BABYLON 5. HE WAS THE ONE WE WERE TRYING TO FOLLOW. YOU THINK MAYBE... HE WAS BEHIND THAT ATTACK ON OUR SHIP?

MAYBE. RIGHT NOW, KEFFER, EVERYONE'S THE ENEMY. *EVERYONE*.

SPOKEN LIKE A TRUE CHIEF OF SECURITY.

WE TRAVEL AT NIGHT. REST DURING THE DAY. USE YOUR INFRARED SIGHTS TO SEE. FLASHLIGHTS'LL GIVE US AWAY.

GIVE US AWAY TO WHO?

THINK ABOUT IT. IF I HATED SOMEONE ENOUGH TO SHOOT THEM DOWN, I'D MAKE DAMNED SURE THEY STAYED DOWN.

KABOOOM!

SO... I GUESS YOU'VE SEEN THOSE SHIPS BEFORE?

"YEAH. REMEMBER I WAS TELLING YOU HOW I FIRST MET COMMANDER SINCLAIR, BACK ON MARS, YEARS AGO?"

HOW CAN WE DO RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS WHEN WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR? SOUNDS LIKE TWO WEEKS OF BUSY WORK, TO ME. AND WHY USE A CIVILIAN TRANSPORT?

EARTHFORCE ALWAYS HAS A REASON, FOSTER.

SHOWS HOW MUCH YOU KNOW, SANCHEZ. WHEN YOU'VE BEEN AROUND AS LONG AS I HAVE—

LISTEN TO YOU! GUY GETS HIS COMMISSION SIX MONTHS AHEAD OF ME—

—NOW HE THINKS HE'S A FREAKIN' COLONEL!

OH, YEAH—?

ANY SIGN OF OUR PILOT?

NO, LIEUTENANT COMMANDER SINCLAIR. WE'VE BEEN HERE ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES. NO SIGN OF GARIBALDI!

I EXPECTED AS MUCH.

SHOULD WE ORGANIZE A SEARCH TEAM?

GIVEN WHAT WE'VE SEEN OF HIM SO FAR, I'D SUGGEST STARTING AT THE LOCAL DRINKING HOLES.

NO... WAIT HERE.





LISTEN TO ME, YOU PATHETIC LITTLE MAN. I DON'T CARE WHO YOU ARE OR WHAT YOUR STORY IS. EARTHFORCE MAY HAVE GIVEN ME THIS MAKE-WORK MISSION TO KEEP ME OUT OF THE WAY, BUT BY GOD, I WILL ACCOMPLISH IT.



I'VE GOT TWO GOOD SOLDIERS OUT THERE WHO ARE MY RESPONSIBILITY, AND I WILL NOT LET YOU ENDANGER THEIR LIVES.

I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU DO OFF DUTY. BUT AS LONG AS YOU'RE GUIDING MY MISSION, YOU'LL GO COLD TURKEY...



...OR, SO HELP ME, I'LL MAKE THAT THE LEAST OF YOUR PROBLEMS.



FOSTER!
SANCHEZ!



FOSTER, TAKE MR. GARIBALDI AND GET HIM SOBERED UP. SANCHEZ, HELP ME LOAD OUR GEAR IN THE SHUTTLE.

AYE, SIR.

AYE, SIR



"SINCLAIR SURE WAS TICKED OFF. THE CHIP ON HIS SHOULDER WAS SO BIG THERE WAS NO SHOULDER LEFT."



"I'D HEARD ABOUT HIM BEING THE BIG WAR HERO AT THE BATTLE OF THE LINE. AND THEN HE SHOWS HERE, IN THE SCUMBUCKET CAPITAL OF MARS. DIDN'T MAKE SENSE."



"MEANWHILE, I GOT MYSELF SOBERED UP."



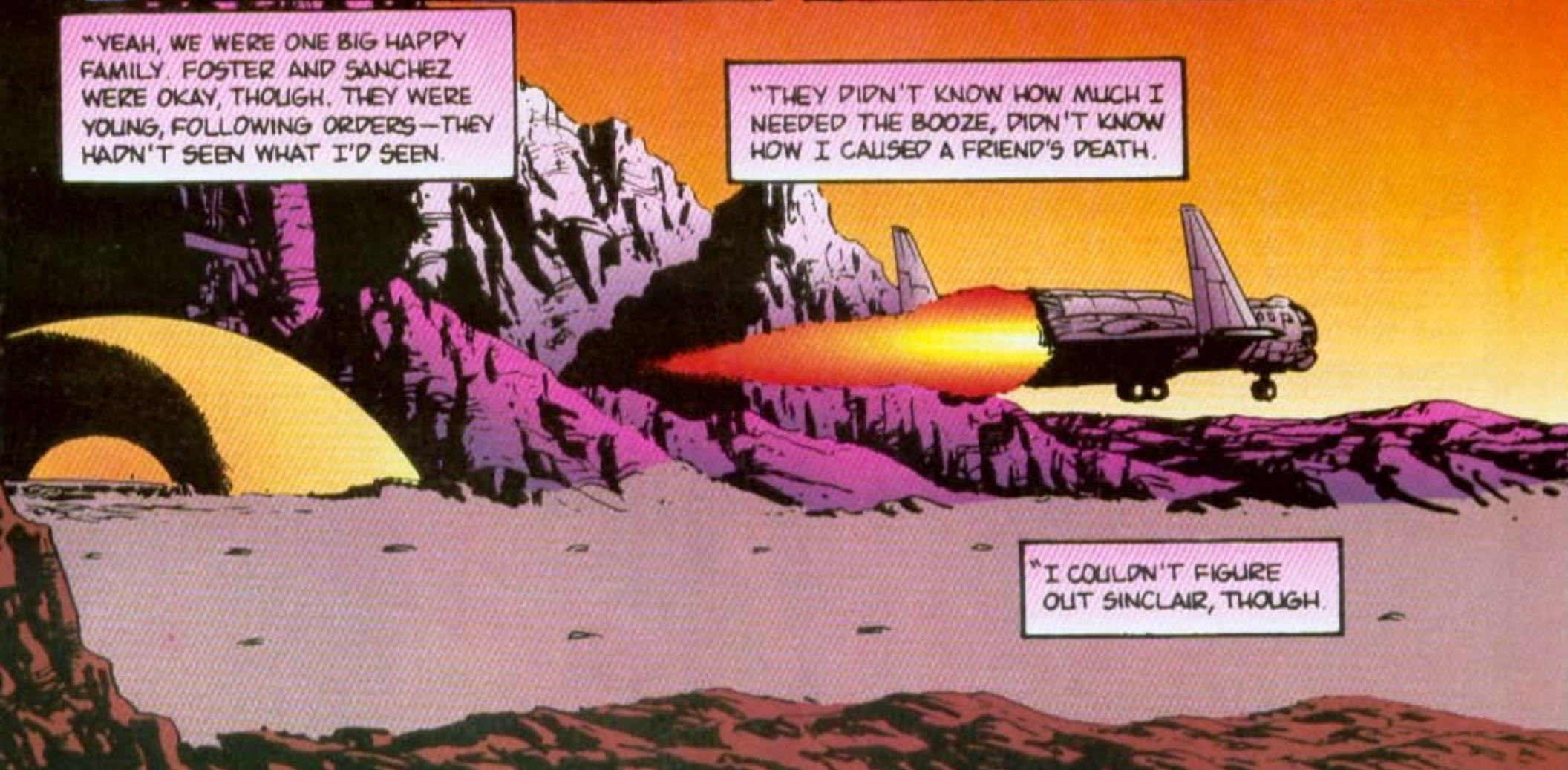
"MAYBE THEY SHOULD HAVE KNOWN IT WOULDN'T LAST."



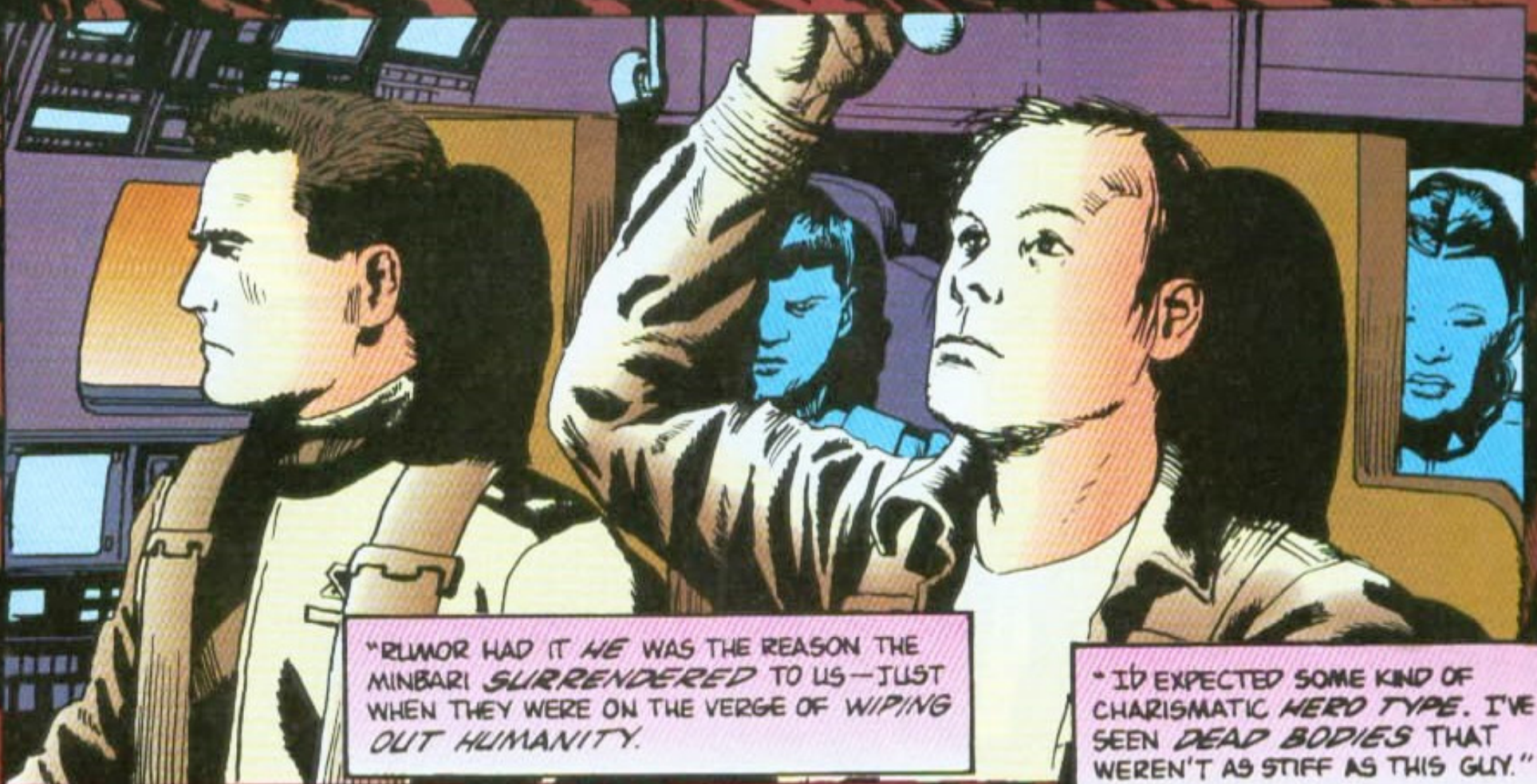


"YEAH, WE WERE ONE BIG HAPPY FAMILY. FOSTER AND SANCHEZ WERE OKAY, THOUGH. THEY WERE YOUNG, FOLLOWING ORDERS—THEY HADN'T SEEN WHAT I'D SEEN.

"THEY DIDN'T KNOW HOW MUCH I NEEDED THE BOOZE, DIDN'T KNOW HOW I CAUSED A FRIEND'S DEATH.



"I COULDN'T FIGURE OUT SINCLAIR, THOUGH.

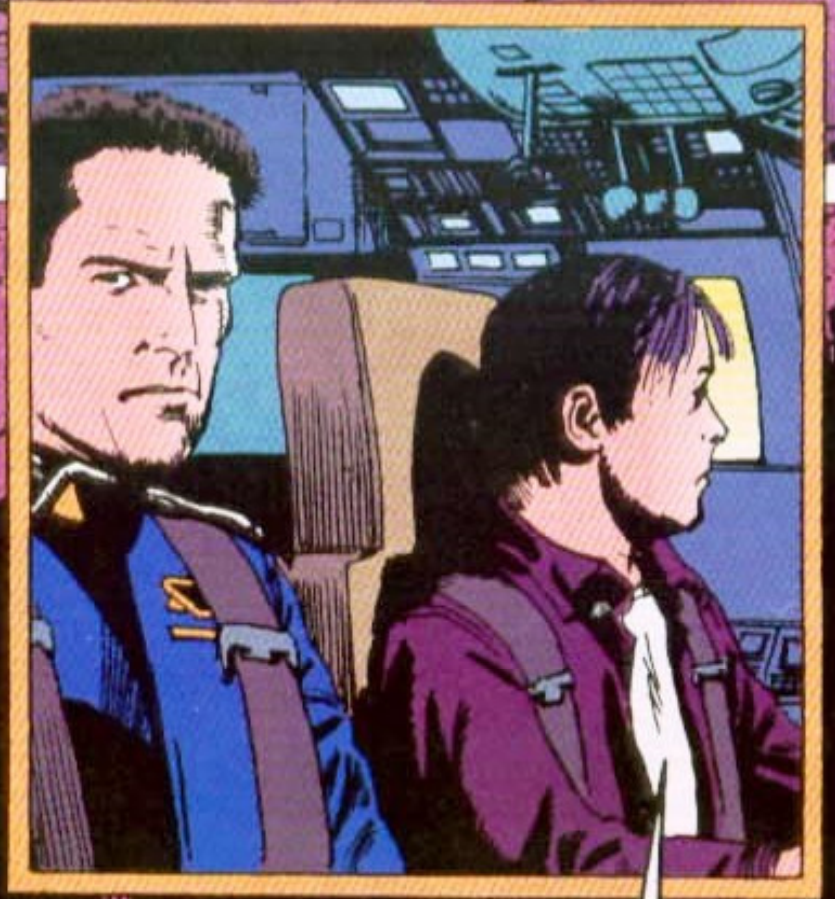


"RUMOR HAD IT *HE* WAS THE REASON THE MINBARI *SURRENDERED* TO US—JUST WHEN THEY WERE ON THE VERGE OF WIPING OUT HUMANITY.

"I'D EXPECTED SOME KIND OF CHARISMATIC HERO TYPE. I'VE SEEN *DEAD BODIES* THAT WEREN'T AS STIFF AS THIS GUY."



"EVERY DAY WAS THE SAME: GET UP, LOAD THE SHUTTLE, FILE A FLIGHT PLAN. THEN, AFTER WE'D CRUISED FOR AN HOUR, SINCLAIR WOULD GIVE ME A NEW HEADING, AND WE'D HEAD OFF IN ANOTHER DIRECTION."



COULD YOU BE A LITTLE MORE SPECIFIC?

"AFTER A FEW DAYS, I STARTED GETTING CURIOUS. ASKED SINCLAIR WHAT WE WERE LOOKING FOR. THE ONLY THING HE'D SAY WAS, 'ANYTHING THAT SHOULDN'T BE THERE.'"



OH, THANKS, THAT HELPS A LOT. I'LL KEEP THAT IN MIND.

JERK.

"THEN, ON THE FIFTH DAY..."

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER,
NAVIGATIONAL SYSTEMS ARE
MALFUNCTIONING.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM,
LIEUTENANT?

NAVIGATIONAL
SYSTEMS DON'T
RESPOND, AND I CAN'T
RECALIBRATE
THEM.

CONFIRMED,
SIR.

DON'T LOOK
AT ME. SYSTEMS
WERE FINE WHEN
I CHECKED 'EM THIS
MORNING, LIEUTENANT
COMMANDER. I—
WHAT THE—?

INERTIAL DAMPERS
OFF-LINE! ATTEMPTING A
MANUAL LANDING! BRACE
FOR IMPACT!

THIS IS
GONNA BE
ROUGH.

"I HELD THE CONTROLS AS LONG AS I COULD, BUT IT FELT LIKE A GIANT HAND WAS RIPPING THEM AWAY FROM ME."



EVERYBODY STILL HERE?

SANCHEZ!

STILL IN ONE PIECE, I—
AAAAHHH!

MY LEG'S BROKEN. PRETTY BAD, TOO.





"I FIXED EVERYONE UP BEST I COULD. WE NEEDED HELP *REAL* BAD, BUT THE RADIO WAS KNOCKED OUT IN THE CRASH. NO ONE KNEW WHERE TO LOOK FOR US BECAUSE SINCLAIR HAD ME FILE A FALSE FLIGHT PLAN.

"NOT TO MENTION THE *MINIMAL* ATMOSPHERE AND *SUB-FREEZING* TEMPERATURES OUTSIDE.

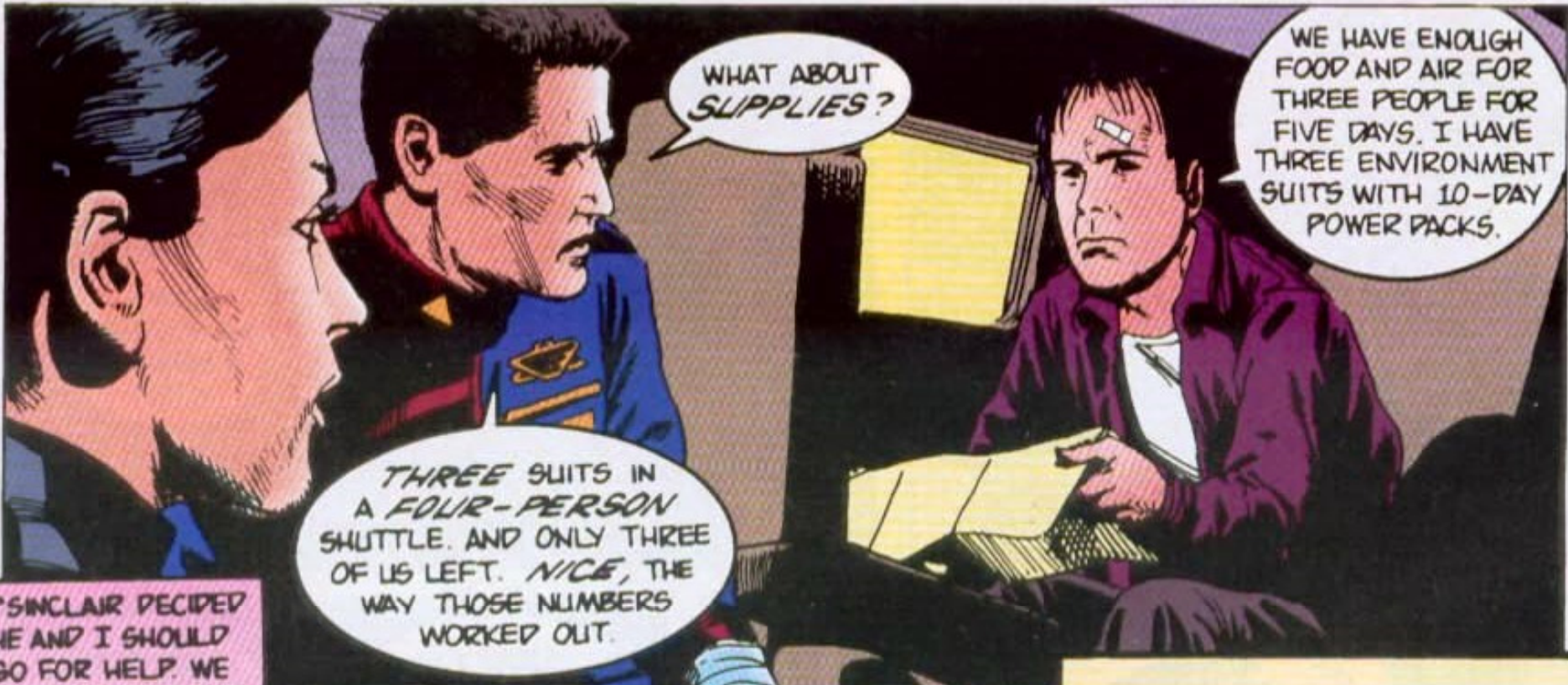
"IT DIDN'T LOOK GOOD."



I'D SAY ABOUT FIFTY MILES.

WELL, WE CAN *WAIT* HERE AND HOPE SOMEONE SEES US, OR WE CAN GO FOR *HELP*.

HOW FAR IS THAT?



WHAT ABOUT *SUPPLIES*?

WE HAVE ENOUGH FOOD AND AIR FOR THREE PEOPLE FOR FIVE DAYS. I HAVE THREE ENVIRONMENT SUITS WITH 10-DAY POWER PACKS.

THREE SUITS IN A *FOUR-PERSON* SHUTTLE. AND ONLY THREE OF US LEFT. *NICE*, THE WAY THOSE NUMBERS WORKED OUT.

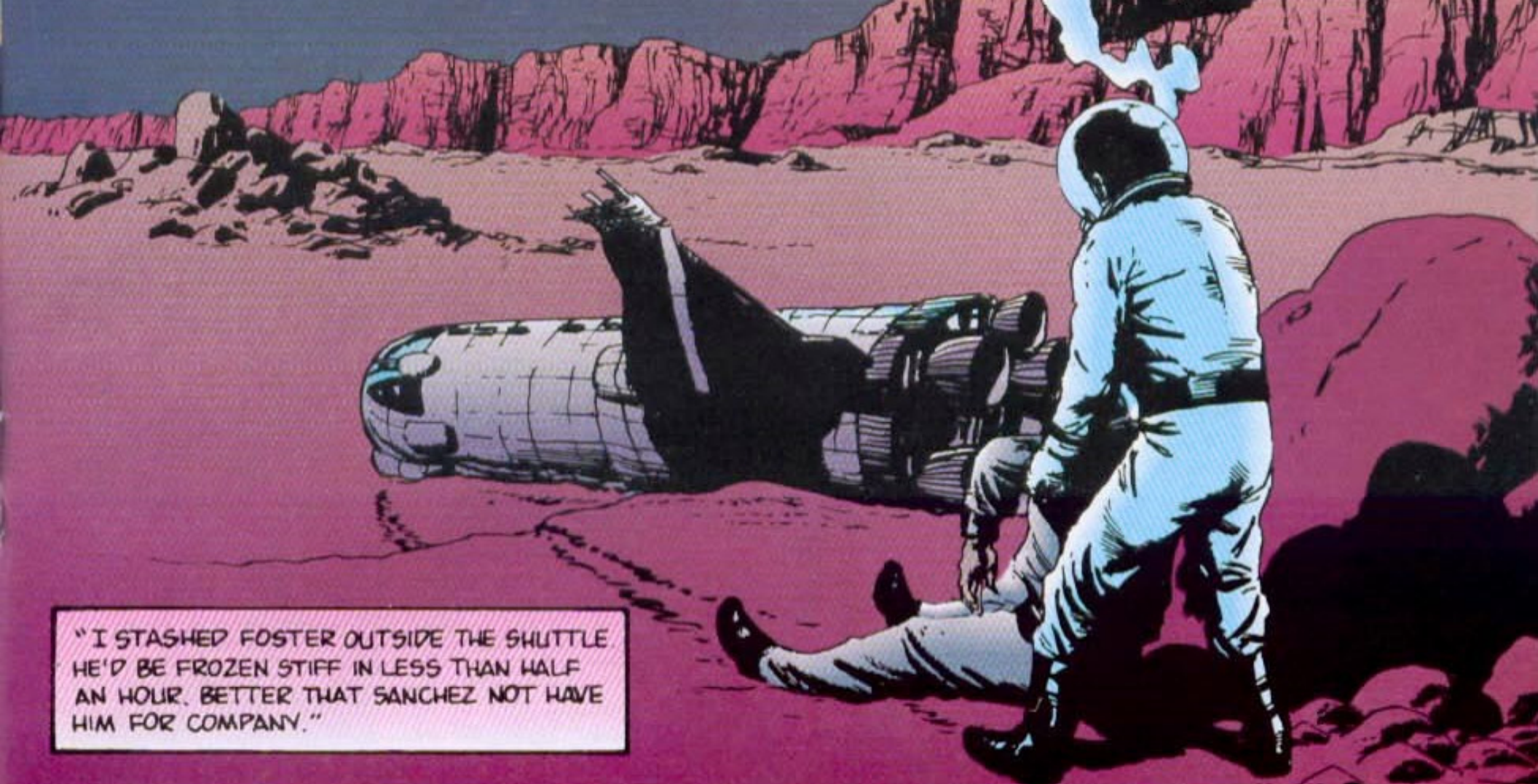
"SINCLAIR DECIDED HE AND I SHOULD GO FOR HELP. WE GAVE SANCHEZ ONE ENVIRONMENT SUIT AND FIVE DAYS OF AIR, TO USE IN CASE THE SHUTTLE'S SYSTEMS FAILED.

"WE PACKED EVERYTHING WE NEEDED TO SURVIVE..."



"...NOT THAT I BELIEVED WE WOULD."





"I STASHED FOSTER OUTSIDE THE SHUTTLE HE'D BE FROZEN STIFF IN LESS THAN HALF AN HOUR. BETTER THAT SANCHEZ NOT HAVE HIM FOR COMPANY."



SECURE THE PERIMETER, LIEUTENANT. NO ONE GETS IN HERE WITHOUT IDENTIFYING HIM OR HERSELF.

A YE, SIR. YOU CAN COUNT ON ME. AND, SIR?

YES?



KEEP AN EYE ON GARIBALDI, SIR. I DON'T THINK HE'S BAD PEOPLE, BUT I WOULDN'T PUT MY LIFE IN HIS HANDS IF I COULD HELP IT.

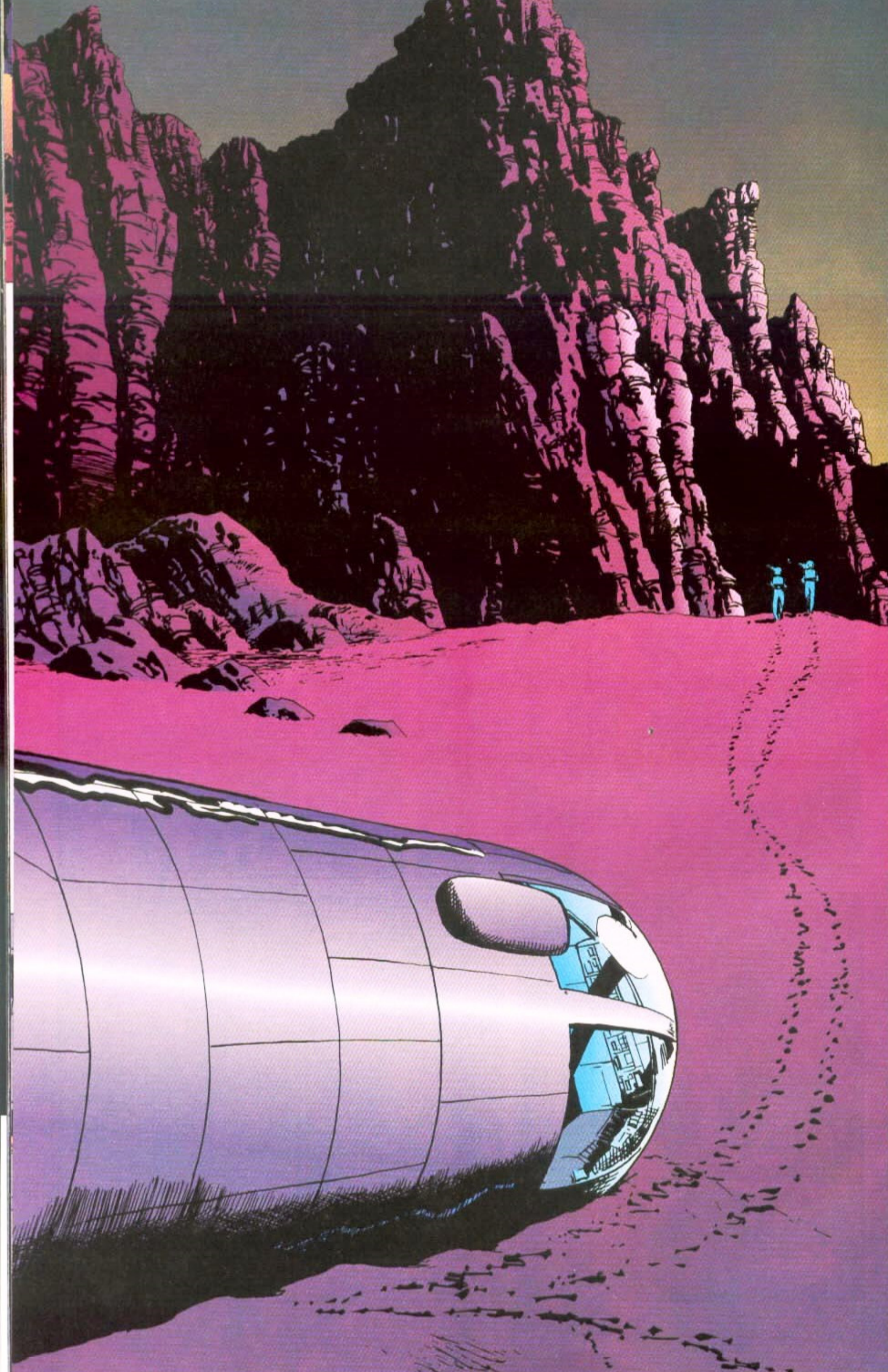
UNDERSTOOD, LIEUTENANT. WE'LL KEEP THE COM-LINK OPEN UNTIL WE'RE OUT OF SIGNAL RANGE.



WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE, SINCLAIR. LET'S GET IT OVER WITH.



DON'T BE LONG, SIR.





SINCE WE'RE NOT GOING TO MAKE IT ANYWAY, JUST WHAT WAS IT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR?

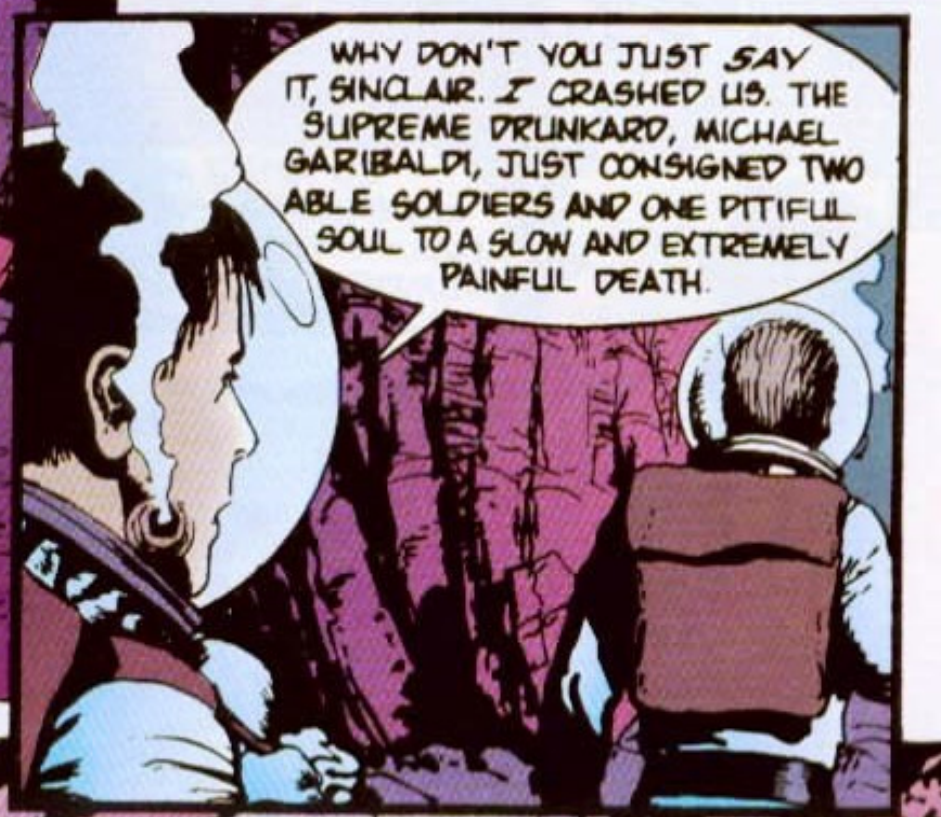
SORRY, GARIBALDI, THAT'S CLASSIFIED.



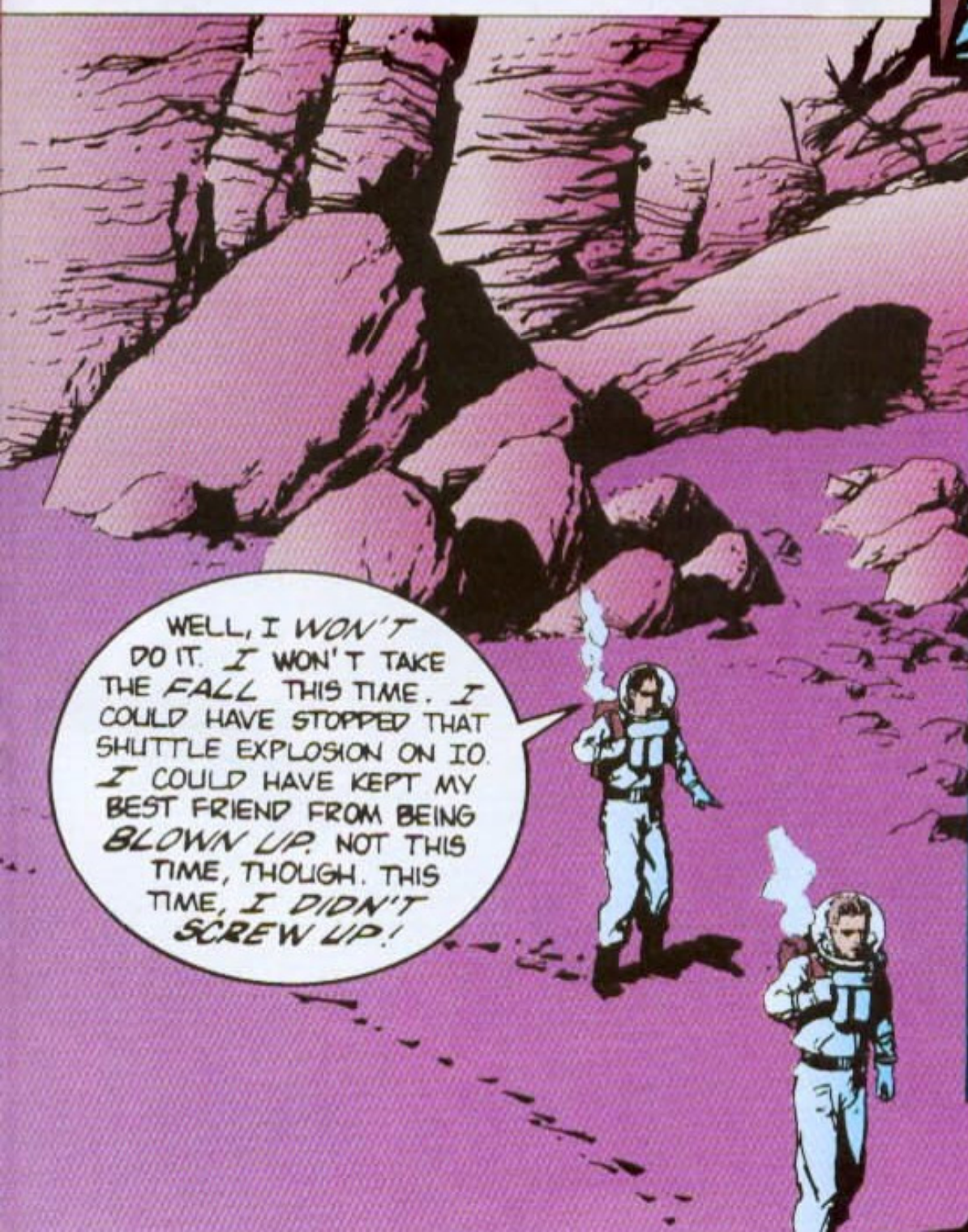
RIGHT. I'LL JUST SAVE THAT QUESTION FOR MY FROZEN CARCASS TO ASK YOUR FROZEN CARCASS.

YOU WANT TO DIE, GARIBALDI? HERE'S AS GOOD A PLACE AS ANY.

OH, YOU'D LIKE THAT, WOULDN'T YOU?



WHY DON'T YOU JUST SAY IT, SINCLAIR. I CRASHED US. THE SUPREME DRUNKARD, MICHAEL GARIBALDI, JUST CONSIDERED TWO ABLE SOLDIERS AND ONE PITIFUL SOUL TO A SLOW AND EXTREMELY PAINFUL DEATH.



WELL, I WON'T DO IT. I WON'T TAKE THE FALL THIS TIME. I COULD HAVE STOPPED THAT SHUTTLE EXPLOSION ON IO. I COULD HAVE KEPT MY BEST FRIEND FROM BEING BLOWN UP. NOT THIS TIME, THOUGH. THIS TIME, I DIDN'T SCREW UP!



ALL RIGHT, YOU DIDN'T SCREW UP. STOP WASTING YOUR PRECIOUS BREATH AND MOVE IT!



THAT'S MORE LIKE IT. APOLOGY ACCEPTED.

SANCHEZ TO LIEUTENANT COMMANDER SINCLAIR.

WE HEAR YOU, SANCHEZ. GO AHEAD.



SIR, I DID A RECHECK OF ALL THE MAIN SYSTEMS INCLUDING NAVIGATION. THEY'RE ALL FUNCTIONING NORMALLY.

SAY AGAIN, LIEUTENANT?



YOU HEARD ME, SIR. NAVIGATIONAL SYSTEMS ARE FULLY OPERATIONAL, INERTIAL DAMPERS ARE BACK ON-LINE—ALL SYSTEMS *NORMAL*.



STILL THINK I CAUSED THE CRASH?

THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE...

UH, SIR...?



NOW, WHAT?

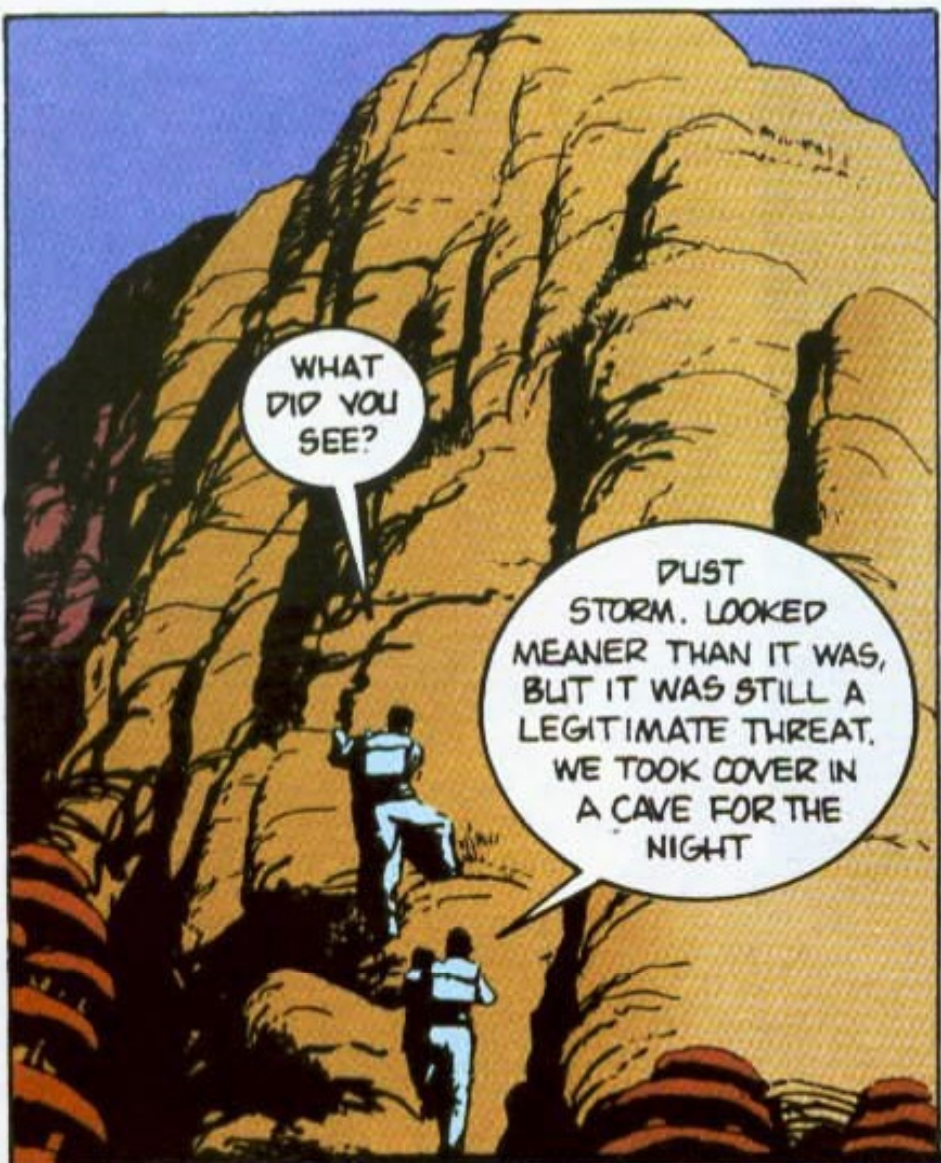
SIR, YOU'D BETTER LOOK BEHIND YOU...



...NOW!



GET
TO COVER!
NOW!



WHAT DID YOU SEE?

DUST STORM. LOOKED MEANER THAN IT WAS, BUT IT WAS STILL A LEGITIMATE THREAT. WE TOOK COVER IN A CAVE FOR THE NIGHT



LOOK UP, GARIBALDI. I THINK I SEE THE SUMMIT.

STRAIGHT AHEAD IS THE ONLY WAY I'M LOOKING.



COME ON, SLOWPOKE. WE'RE HERE.



WELL, WE MADE IT *THIS* FAR.

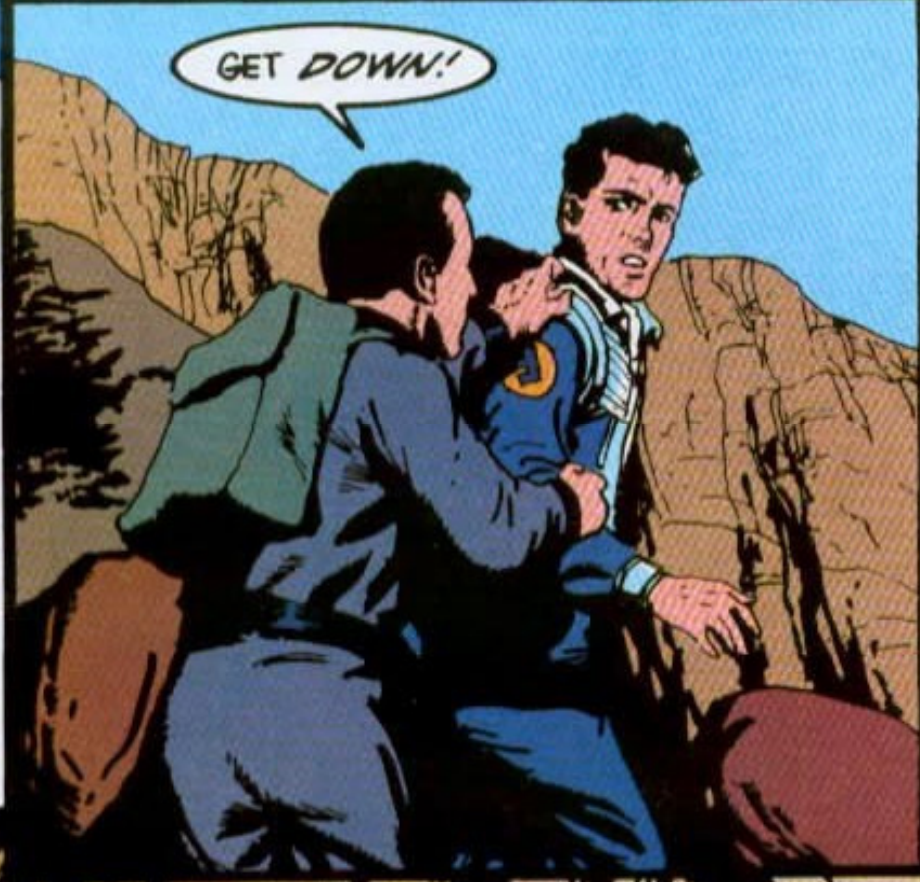


TAKE A LOOK, GARIBALDI.

I'M BETTING THAT'S CIVILIZATION.



OKAY, SO IT'S CENTAURI CIVILIZATION. WE CAN WORRY ABOUT ALIEN PROBLEMS ONCE WE GET THERE.



GET DOWN!



KEEP OUTTA SIGHT AND DON'T MAKE A SOUND.

WE GOT COMPANY.



I DON'T LIKE THIS A LOT. I DON'T LIKE THIS A WHOLE LOT.

THAT'S THE SHIP THAT...



...SHOT US DOWN? YEAH, THAT'S IT ALL RIGHT. RIGHT NEXT TO OUR SHIP.

DID YOU SEE SOMETHING LIKE THAT ON MARS?

THAT AND MORE.



OH, MAN, THIS IS VERY BAD.

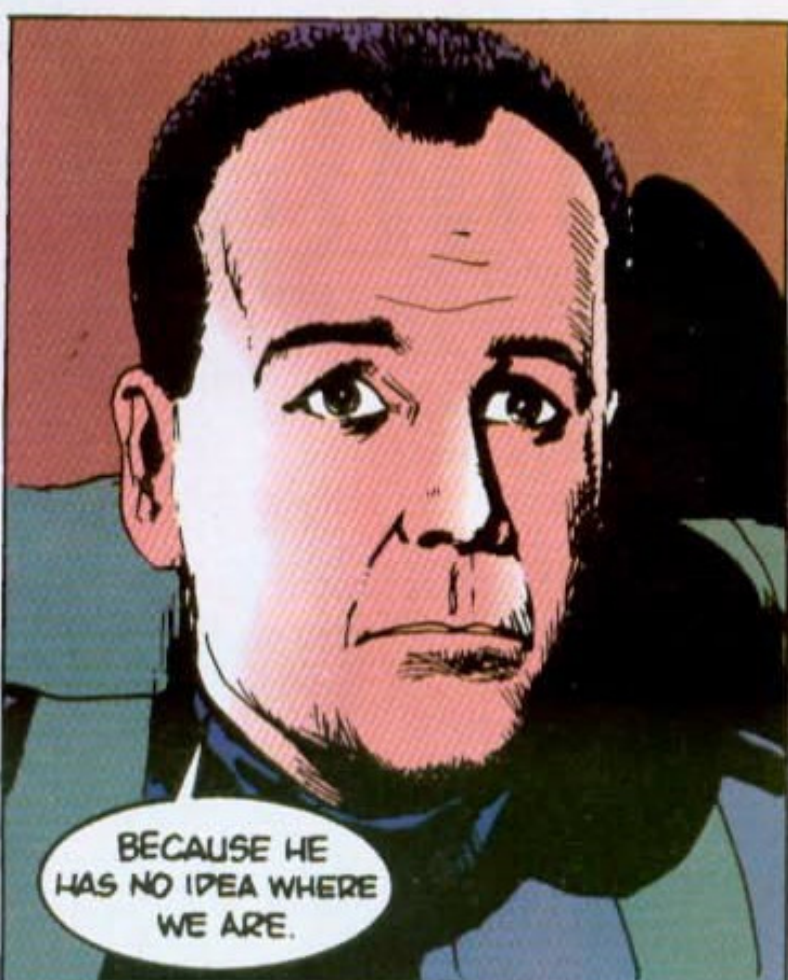
SNAP OUT OF IT, GARIBALDI. WE'RE GETTING OUT OF HERE ALIVE.



CAPTAIN SHERIDAN WILL REALIZE WE'RE MISSING AND SEND HELP.

NO, HE WON'T.

WHY NOT?



BECAUSE HE HAS NO IDEA WHERE WE ARE.



DIDN'T YOU TELL ANYONE WHERE WE WERE GOING?

WASN'T TIME. I WANTED TO BEAT LONDO TO THE RENDEZVOUS POINT.



GREAT, JUST GREAT. NO WONDER YOU SOUNDED OPTIMISTIC. YOU ARE THE MOST PARANOID PERSON I HAVE EVER MET.



SO, NOW WHAT?

GET YOUR SIGHTS OUT. THERE'S SOMETHING GOING ON BACK THERE.



LOOK FOR IT.

HOLY... IT'S GONE!

"THE IMPACT DITCH IS GONE. IT'S LIKE IT WAS NEVER THERE. HOW DID THEY DO THAT?"



WHO ARE THOSE GLYS?



THEY'RE GETTING RID OF THE EVIDENCE.

EVIDENCE?

OF THE CRASH, IDIOT. THEY DON'T WANT ANYONE TO KNOW THEY WERE HERE.

THEN THAT MEANS... WE'RE EVIDENCE, TOO.

"RIGHT. SO LET'S GET OUR EVIDENCES *OUT* OF HERE. THAT CENTAURI SETTLEMENT OVER THERE..."

... CAN'T BE MORE THAN FIFTEEN MILES AWAY. WE CAN BE THERE IN THREE HOURS IF WE *HURRY*.

OUR ONLY CHANCE IS IF THEY THINK WE BLEW UP WITH THE SHIP.



THEY DON'T THINK WE BLEW UP WITH THE SHIP.

LET'S GET THE HELL *OUT* OF HERE!

TO BE CONTINUED...

B A B Y L O N

"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... **BABYLON 5.**"

Dear BABYLON 5:

Just wanted to say: "great work!" BABYLON 5, the comics adaptation, has really helped clear up some of the more obscure plot points of the television series, mainly the disappearance of Sinclair. Nice to see him again, even if things aren't going exactly smoothly for him now ["The Price of Peace" — issues #2-4].

It is also very exciting to see such a promising, intelligent science fiction story being adapted into a medium where there are no real boundaries. What will we see next? Aliens that don't have to abide by our bipedal structure? Or events taking place within these pages that no TV series' special effects budget could afford...? I mean, this is a great chance to get really weird.

Looking forward to what's in store,

LENNY MANCUSO
BROOKLYN, NY

Lucky for you, weirdness is definitely in the future—at least, in this sector of the universe. And you're right about the special effects: for comic books, the sky—and the stars—are the only limit. So, yes, interesting times are ahead.

Dear Laura Hitchcock,

BABYLON 5 #3 ["In Harm's Way"] was another great issue. There is only one problem with this comic — it's not long enough!! It only took me around fifteen minutes to read the issue and now I have to wait another month to see what happens next. Since you plan on using

different writer/artist teams every few issues, perhaps you could change to a double-sized format — or even better, ship it biweekly!! I hope you consider this, because at this rate the comic will never catch up to the episodes.

The writing and art were great in this issue, but I do have one complaint: Sinclair was drawn very badly. He looked like an old man in this issue, and on the last page he looked like a 70-year-old weakling. This is my favorite character, so please make him look more heroic. Other than that, Carlos Garzon did a great job.

I'm about to buy a computer and was wondering if you could make a list of all the B5 internet talk groups and how to reach them. I (and other readers) would really appreciate it.

Until next time.

THOMAS F. WOODS
701 W. STAR ST.
DENISON, TX 75020

There's definitely lots of talk about B5 buzzing around the computer networks. Sources tell us there are B5 groups on all the major networks, and we know for certain there are several just on America Online. Log into one group, and folks will surely direct you to others. And if you have your own info to share, we'd like to know.

Regarding the art... we believe that using different teams on different story arcs gives each artist tremendous freedom to show his or her own vision of the B5 world. Can't guarantee you'll like every artist's

interpretation, but it is quite fascinating, you'll agree.

Greetings, Crew Members!

Nice work on B5 so far. I have to say that I find Garzon's pencils much more accessible (and the character likenesses more character-like) than those of Netzer (who tends toward the murky). There something very "classic S.F." about Garzon's style. I can easily picture him doing a graphic novel of one of Asimov's or Bradbury's works, and the coloring is a nice complement to this.

My only concern for you is that perhaps B5 is too intelligent for comics... I almost feel that the current story arc ["The Price of Peace"] would translate well into novel form (but then, what's the point, I guess).

You are doing an excellent job of taking off from the television series and, so far, it's been a fun ride!

LOUISE MILLER
PORTLAND, OR

Hi, Laura,

Just got done reading B5 #3. Good color, good body, and a pretty exciting finish! The flashback sequence in the mind of Dexter Hall, eerily piecing together the violent past, was enough to remind me of the movie *Murder on the Orient Express*. Writer Mark Moretti certainly left Sinclair in a bad spot on the last page! Can't wait till issue four.

I can't say, though, that I prefer Carlos Garzon's art over Michael Netzer's. Garzon's shots can be a

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lot more dynamic in places, but Netzer's style, his moodiness, is much more appropriate for B5.

I would like to note that it's refreshing to see a science fiction series that recognizes politics as a moving force wherever sentient beings interact. Seeing so many series where a war between the Blue aliens from planet Tidebowl and the Green aliens from planet Lestoil is stopped in its tracks by a ridiculously simplistic human trick has become exceedingly tiresome to me. I don't think we, as a species, will ever be wise enough to go around solving age-old problems of alien races at the drop of a hat. After thousands of years, we're still not doing that well with our own.

That a series like Babylon 5 would recognize alien races will have a legitimacy of their own, that we don't hold all the answers, and that our port of call all alone in the night would be a hotbed of subtle politics between alien species, strikes me as a much more realistic projection of the future.

BILL WILLIAMS
TAMPA, FL

Thanks for the encouraging word, Bill. We hope to do more of the same in future issues.

Laura and Jim:

I've been having a great time reading your BABYLON 5 series. It's not really an adaptation, it's more like a companion for the TV series.

My favorite B5 characters are Garibaldi and Londo. I'd love to see a story with just the two of them. Garibaldi's wry sense of humor and Londo's double-talking would make them a great team.

One of the really cool features in your book is the Babcoms, which give a behind-the-scenes look at the show. I hope to see more of them in the future.

Your book is a dream given form...

BOBBY GILL
CINCINNATI, OH

Though these pages are currently dedicated (obviously) to letters from readers,

we're willing to do more articles about the TV show, if fans so demand. Let us know.

Dear Ms. Hitchcock:

I have to be honest with you: I didn't really expect much from the BABYLON 5 comic book, going in. The show itself doesn't interest me all that much; my first impression of it was that it was watered-down Star Trek, and being something of a purist, a watered-down version of anything usually doesn't appeal to me.

Most people with an attitude like that... or who had simply tried the show and decided it wasn't their cup of tea for any reason... would probably never have bothered with DC's comics version of the show. I, however, am not most people. I consider myself to be a comics connoisseur, and I don't judge any book until I've read an issue first. And your BABYLON 5, I reasoned, wouldn't be the first time that a TV show I didn't like spawned a comic that I found worth collecting; a recent example of this phenomenon was Innovation's Quantum Leap. I found the show repetitive and dull, but the comic I thoroughly enjoyed. So I resolved that I'd give DC's BABYLON 5 a shot before I wrote it off completely.

Having done so, I am pleased to report that once again, a TV show I'm not wild about has generated a comic that I'm impressed with enough to keep buying it every month.

It strikes me as being rather weird, in this case, since both the TV show and the comic are from the mind of J. Michael Straczynski, as noted in the text pages. If Straczynski is a talented enough writer to grab me in the comic, why am I not equally charmed by the show itself? I have no explanation; perhaps for some of us, some concepts work better in comics rather than as filmed projects. Or, maybe I have a screw loose somewhere. God knows I've heard that before...

One thing that worried me going in was that I wouldn't be able to follow everything that was going on, not being an avid watcher of the show.

Some of the stuff in the Star Trek comics, I think I understand solely because I'm a longtime fan of the shows and I know all the characters involved... so, if a given story's writer doesn't provide any expositional material on the series, I can still follow along because I know everything I need to know already. I was worried that the same might be true here, that you folks would assume everyone who picks up an issue of BABYLON 5 is already a fan of the show, and I'd be feeling left out because I'm not.

Those fears proved to be groundless, because writer Straczynski made sure he filled us all in on exactly what's been going on... enabling even Johnny-come-latelies like me to sail right along with the show's diehard fans. I appreciate that... in fact, it's one of the strongest reasons I'm impressed enough with the book to continue following it.

However, while the comic does impress me and while I do expect to continue reading it for the foreseeable future, I should point out that Straczynski still has some ways to go before that first negative impression of mine (that of "watered-down Star Trek") goes away completely. I hope he will continue to work on that as this book picks up steam.

In the meantime, though, thanks for producing a book that DC can be proud of and that proves I'm still capable of being surprised; a book that proves my decision to try a book before judging it is still justified.

DAVID PEATTIE
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Interesting thoughts, David — even more so because you're not a built-in B5 fan. Of course we're pleased you enjoy the comic book... but, seriously, you may want to try giving the TV show another chance. This season's twists and turns have transported the story to new, unexplored places, some of which fold into the comic book series. And not a drop of dampness in sight.

NEXT UP: SURVIVAL THE HARD WAY

Garibaldi and Keffer find that surviving in an alien environment takes more than quick thinking... especially when the aliens are eavesdropping. Writer Tim DeHaas and artist John Ridgway continue, with part 3 of Shadows Past and Present.

COVER ART FOR THIS ISSUE BY JOHN RIDGWAY.