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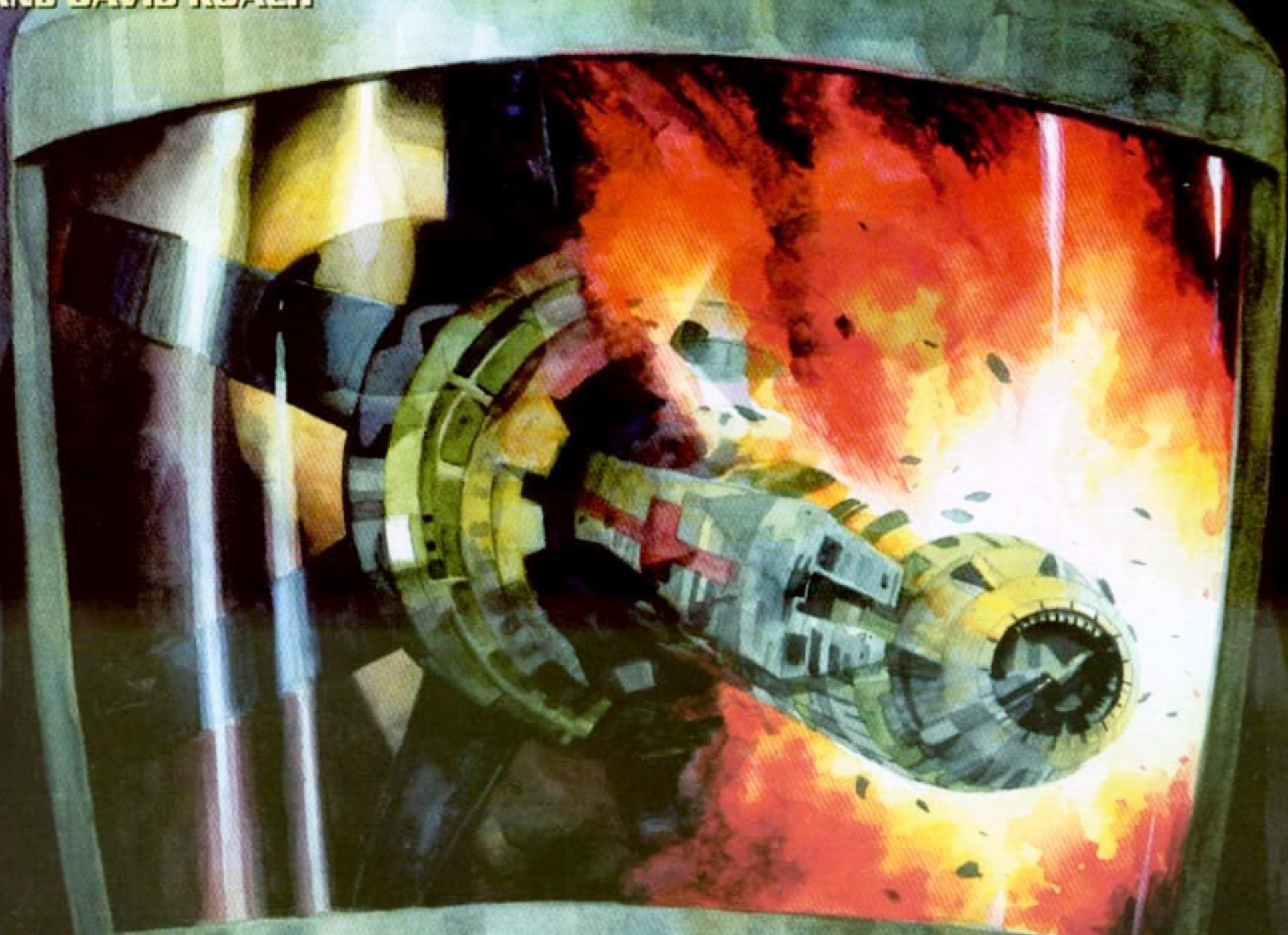


BABYLON

IN VALEN'S NAME

PART THREE OF THREE

**BY J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI,
PETER DAVID, MICHAEL COLLINS
AND DAVID ROACH**



DIRECT SALES



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BASED ON THE WARNER BROS. TELEVISION SERIES **BABYLON** CREATED BY J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI



AND WE PRAY, Z'ONDAR, THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO PROVE OURSELVES WORTHY OF YOU ONCE MORE. THAT YOU WILL WELCOME US TO YOUR WAY... 5



5

AUTO TRANSLATION OF TAK'CHA ENGAGED

...FOR WE FELL FROM YOUR GRACE CENTURIES AGO. WE, YOUR LOYAL DISCIPLES, THE EXILES, THE WANDERERS. AND NOW WE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO RETURN TO YOUR GREATNESS...



...AND WE WILL NOT FAIL.

RAMDELA COZON.



YES, RAMDE.

OUR SHIPS ARE IN PLACE?

YES, RAMDE.



HAVE THEM HOLD POSITION. I WILL PERSONALLY LEAD THEM IN TO THE ENDE X'TON. I SHOULD HAVE DONE THAT IN THE FIRST PLACE.



THAT WILL BE MOST DANGEROUS, RAMDE HAXTUR.

THE Z'ONDAR WOULD HAVE WANTED NOTHING LESS.

WHAT WE DO NOW... WE DO IN HIS NAME.



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IN VALEN'S NAME **BOOK THREE**

J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI STORY ARC PETER DAVID WRITER MICHAEL COLLINS PENCILLER DAVID ROACH INKER COMICRAFT LETTERS PRISMACOLOR COLORS ROBERT GRAFF EDITOR

BABCOM IVANOVA

EVERY SO OFTEN, WHEN I -- SUSAN IVANOVA -- FIND MYSELF IN A DIFFICULT SITUATION, SUCH AS... OH, I DON'T KNOW...

...BEING IN A PLUMMETING SPACE STATION THAT'S GOING TO BURN UP IN A PLANET'S ATMOSPHERE, UNLESS I'M KILLED FIRST BY UNKNOWN ALIEN RAIDERS...

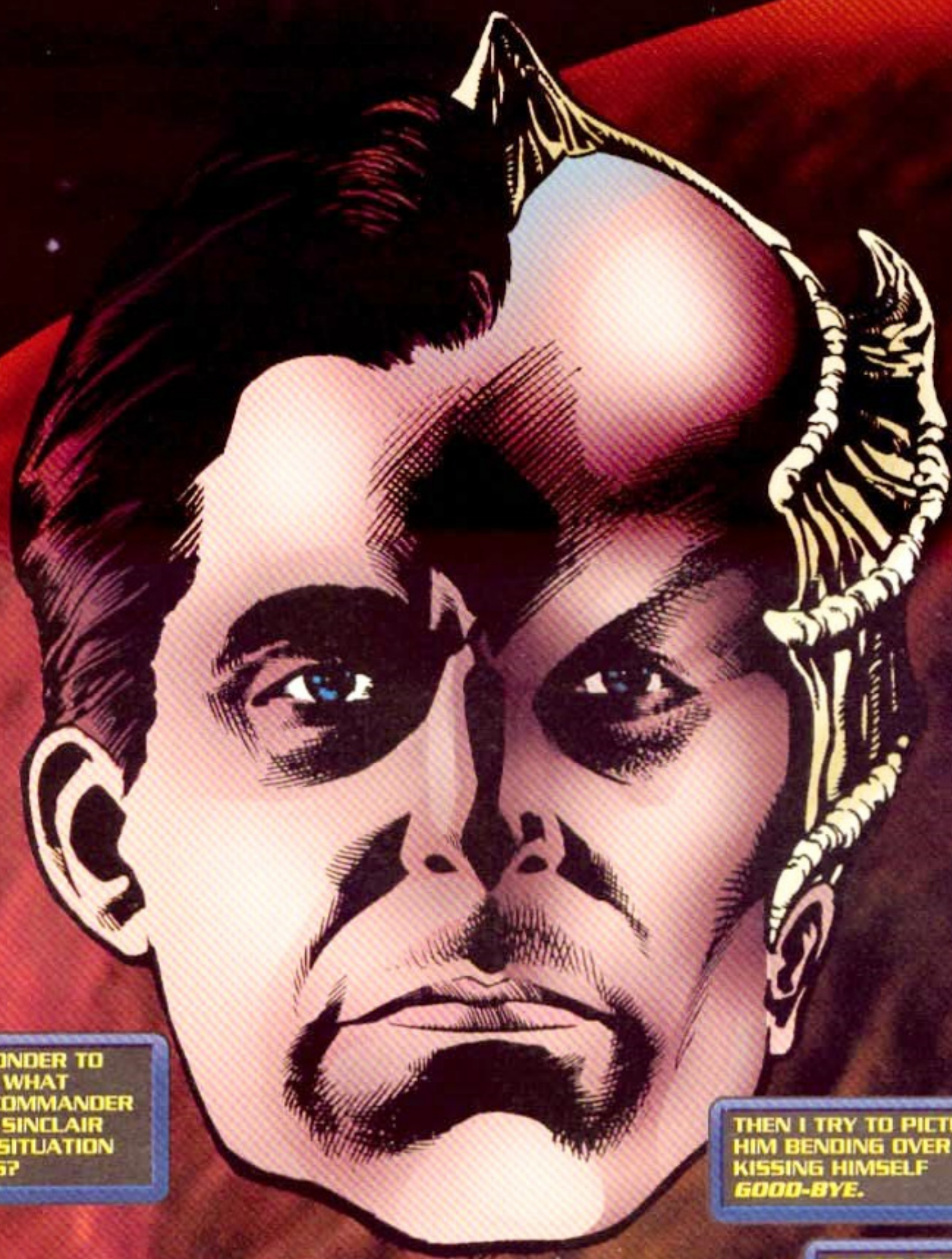
...I FIND MYSELF THINKING OF **JEFFREY SINCLAIR**, FIRST COMMANDER OF BABYLON 5... WHO WOUND UP GOING BACK IN TIME A THOUSAND YEARS WITH THIS VERY STATION, BABYLON 4, AND BECOMING THE LEGENDARY MINBARI LEADER VALEN.

BASED ON THE WARNER BROS. TELEVISION SERIES **BABYLON 5** CREATED BY J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI



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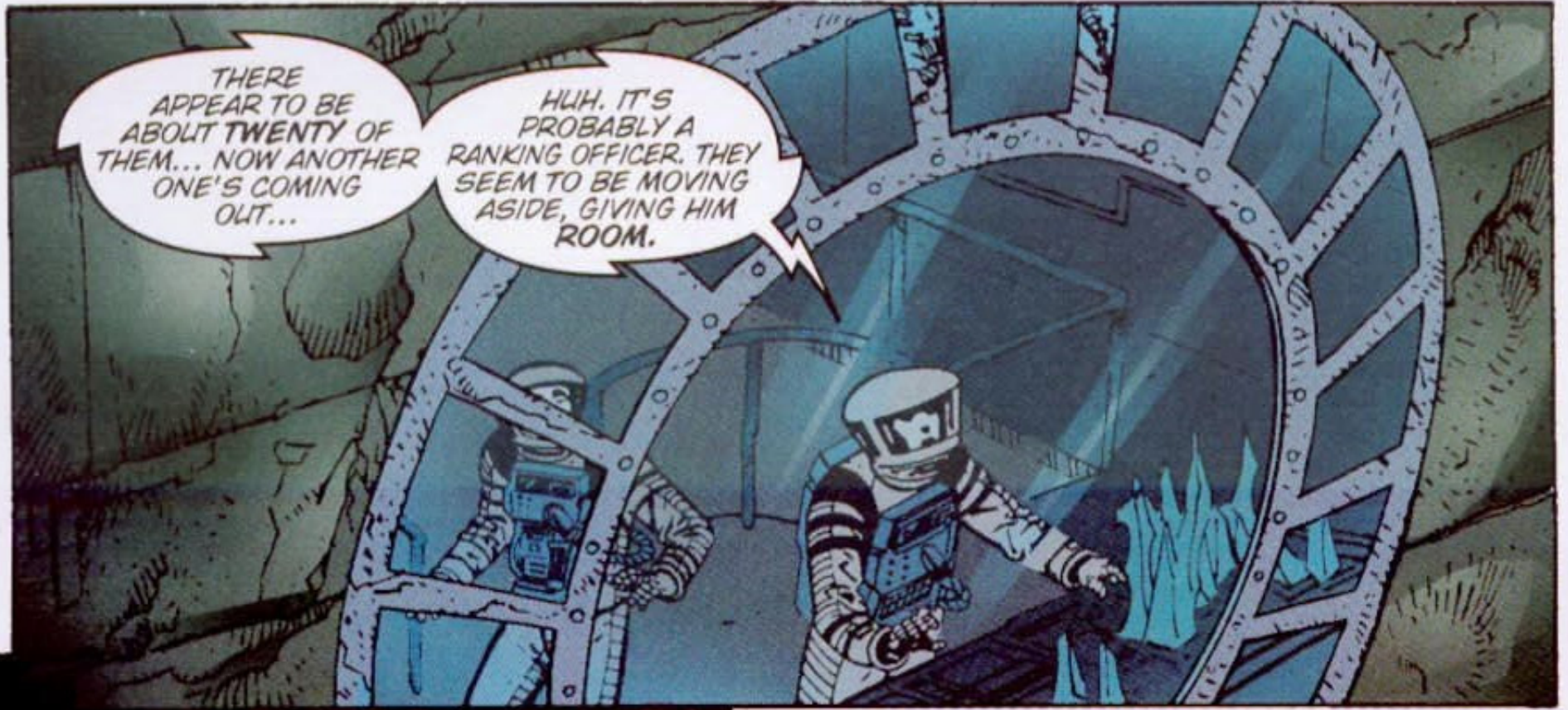
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AND I WONDER TO MYSELF, WHAT WOULD COMMANDER JEFFREY SINCLAIR DO IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS?

THEN I TRY TO PICTURE HIM BENDING OVER AND KISSING HIMSELF GOOD-BYE.

THAT'S USUALLY ABOUT WHERE THE SPECULATION ENDS.



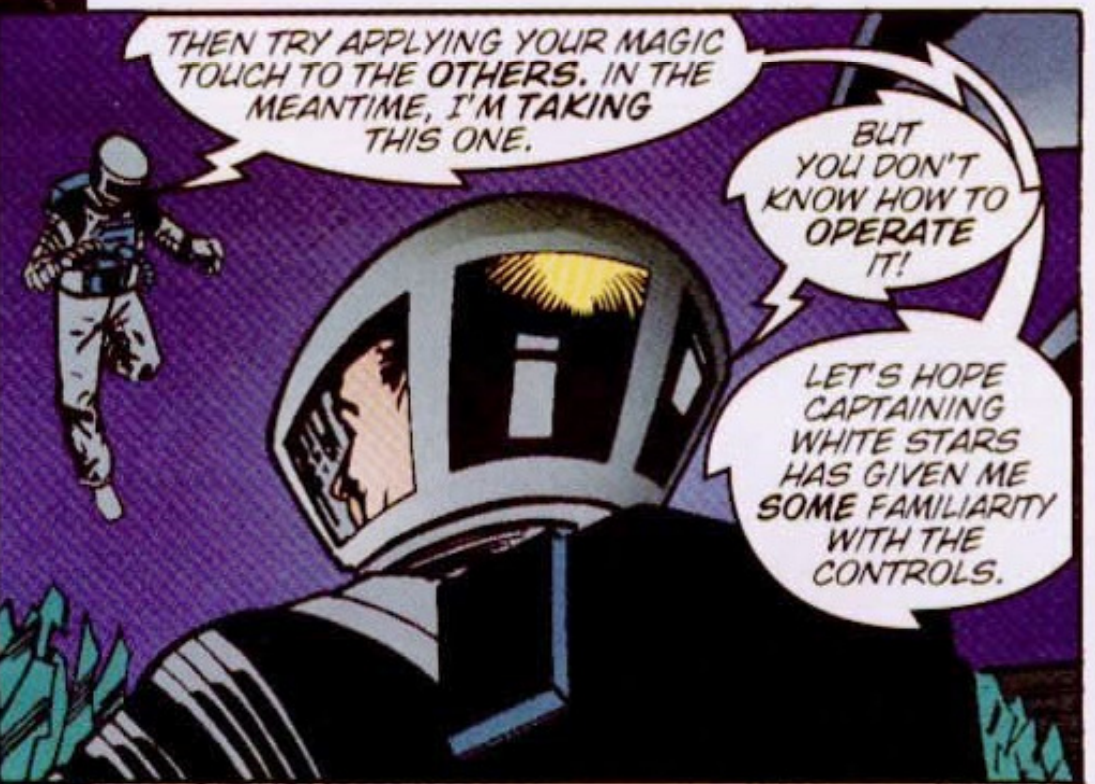
THERE APPEAR TO BE ABOUT TWENTY OF THEM... NOW ANOTHER ONE'S COMING OUT...

HUH. IT'S PROBABLY A RANKING OFFICER. THEY SEEM TO BE MOVING ASIDE, GIVING HIM ROOM.



WE NEED TO BUY ENOUGH TIME FOR MICHAEL TO GET MORE OF THESE FIGHTERS WORKING, SO WE CAN GET OFF THE STATION BEFORE IT BURNS UP.

WHOA, WAIT A MINUTE. IT WAS LUCK THAT I GOT THIS ONE WORKING. ALL I DID WAS HIT THE DAMNED THING.



THEN TRY APPLYING YOUR MAGIC TOUCH TO THE OTHERS. IN THE MEANTIME, I'M TAKING THIS ONE.

BUT YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO OPERATE IT!

LET'S HOPE CAPTAINING WHITE STARS HAS GIVEN ME SOME FAMILIARITY WITH THE CONTROLS.



CAPTAIN, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ONCE YOU GET OUT THERE?

EVER SEE A CAT WHEN IT'S OVERMATCHED, COMMANDER?

HUH? I DON'T --?



I'M GOING TO ARCH MY BACK AND MAKE MYSELF LOOK SCARIER THAN I AM.



I AM
RAMDE ZARWIN
OF THE TAK'CHA...
AND I SERVED
VALEN LIKE NO
OTHER.



MY PEOPLE WERE
DEDICATED TO
VALEN. WE CAME
TO HIM WHEN HE
CALLED, JOINED HIM
IN HIS WAR AGAINST
THE SHADOWS.

WE WERE
DIRECTIONLESS,
AND HE SHOWED
US THE WAY.
HE GAVE US
PURPOSE.



AND WE BUILT
UPON HIS
TEACHINGS...

... AND WERE
REJECTED.

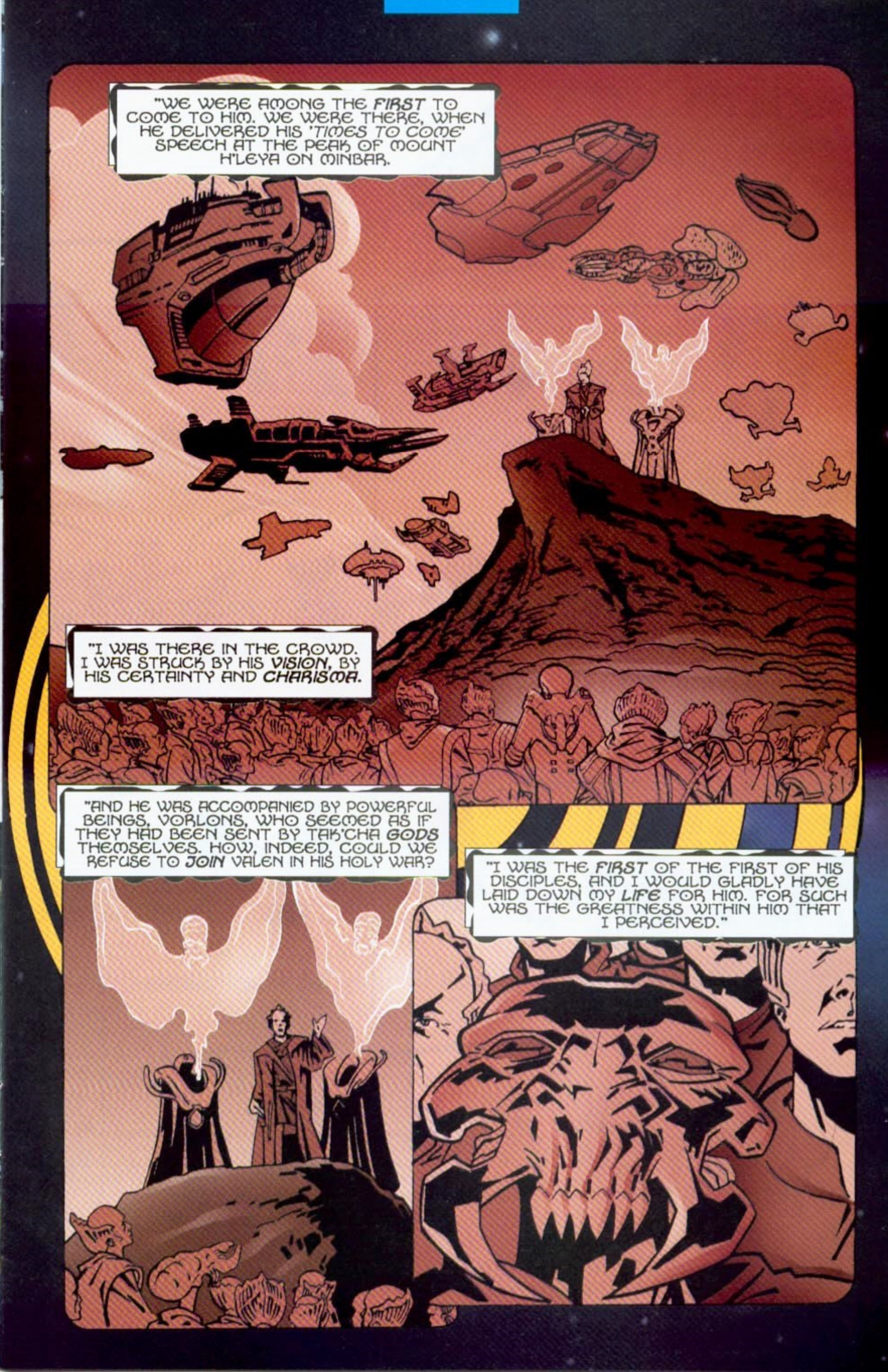


FOR WE SAW
THE LOGICAL
EXTENSION OF WHAT
HE TAUGHT US... AND
ALTHOUGH WE
FOLLOWED HIM INTO
FIRE, INTO
DARKNESS, INTO
DEATH...

HE
WOULD NOT
FOLLOW
US.



NOW
WHAT SORT
OF LEADER IS
THAT?



"WE WERE AMONG THE *FIRST* TO COME TO HIM. WE WERE THERE, WHEN HE DELIVERED HIS '*TIMES TO COME*' SPEECH AT THE PEAK OF MOUNT H'LEYA ON MINBAR.

"I WAS THERE IN THE CROWD. I WAS STRUCK BY HIS *VISION*, BY HIS CERTAINTY AND *CHARISMA*.

"AND HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY POWERFUL BEINGS, VORLONS, WHO SEEMED AS IF THEY HAD BEEN SENT BY TAK'CHA GODS THEMSELVES. HOW, INDEED, COULD WE REFUSE TO *JOIN* VALEN IN HIS HOLY WAR?

"I WAS THE *FIRST* OF THE FIRST OF HIS DISCIPLES, AND I WOULD GLADLY HAVE LAID DOWN MY *LIFE* FOR HIM. FOR SUCH WAS THE GREATNESS WITHIN HIM THAT I PERCEIVED."

"VALEN EVEN BASED THE MAIN WEAPON OF THE ANLA'SHOK UPON A TAK'CHA WEAPON CALLED A *BARRKEN*. I GAVE HIM HIS FIRST *GROUNDINGS* IN IT..."

"ALTHOUGH I READILY ADMIT THAT THE PUPIL QUICKLY *OUTSTRIPPED* THE TEACHER."



MY APOLOGIES, ZARWIN. I HOPE I DIDN'T HURT YOU. I WAS... *DISTRACTED*.

DISTRACTED? YOU DISPATCH ME SO *EASILY*... AND YOU WERE *DISTRACTED*? HUMILIATE ME A BIT *MORE*, VALEN, IF YOU WISH.

WHAT *TROUBLES* YOU, GREAT ONE?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO, ZARWIN, IF YOU KNEW OF A GREAT WAR TO COME... ONE THAT WOULD BE CAUSED BY *MISUNDERSTANDING*... AND YOU HAD IT WITHIN YOUR POWER TO *PREVENT* THE WAR...

BUT *DARED* NOT.

I... DO NOT *UNDERSTAND*, VALEN. WHY WOULD YOU DESIRE TO DO *THAT*?

DO WHAT?

PREVENT A WAR.

WHAT?



GLORY IS FOUND IN WAR. THERE IS NO GREATER DEATH THAN ONE FOUND IN BATTLE ON BEHALF OF A GREATER CAUSE.

WHY WOULD YOU WISH TO DENY ANYONE THAT WONDROUS MEANS OF DEPARTING THIS SPHERE?

ZARWIN... WHERE DID YOU COME UP WITH THAT BELIEF?

WHY... FROM YOUR TEACHINGS, GREAT ONE.



GREAT ONE... HAVE I ANGERED YOU IN SOME WAY?



NO. NO, I SIMPLY FIND IT INTERESTING WHAT DIFFERENT PEOPLE TAKE AWAY FROM MY TEACHINGS. SPACE MAY EXIST IN A VACUUM...

...BUT THE THINGS I SAY OBVIOUSLY DO NOT.

SUSAN,
GET DELENN
ON.

I'M HERE,
JOHN.

DELENN,
THERE'S AN ARRAY
OF CONTROLS TO MY
RIGHT AND LEFT,
TRIANGULAR, RED AND
GREEN RESPECTIVELY.
ANY IDEA WHAT
THEY ARE?

I'M NOT CERTAIN.
THEY COULD BE OFFENSIVE
AND DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS,
BUT THERE'S NO WAY
TO BE SURE.

WELL, WITH ANY LUCK, I WON'T
NEED THEM. STAY IN CLOSE
TOUCH WITH MICHAEL, FIND OUT
HOW HE'S COMING WITH
ESCAPE VESSELS.

I'M GOING
TO DO WHAT I
CAN OUT
HERE.

3ABC0M IVANOVA

I'VE SEEN JOHN SHERIDAN FLY WITH MORE CONFIDENCE THAN ANY OTHER PILOT I'VE EVER KNOWN. HIS SKITTISHNESS ABOUT THE CONTROLS IS EVIDENT TO ME.

I JUST HOPE TO GOD IT'S NOT OBVIOUS TO OUR FRIENDS OUT THERE, BECAUSE I THINK I KNOW WHAT HE'S PLANNING TO DO.

5



RAMDE, WHAT IS THE APPROACHING VESSEL DOING?

I AM... NOT SURE. IT DOES NOT SEEM TO BE THREATENING IN ANY WAY.



DO NOT LET IT GET TOO CLOSE, RAMDE! DO NOT PUT YOURSELF AT RISK!

STOP BEING AN OLD WOMAN, COZON.



IF I AM NEVER AT RISK... WHAT EXCITEMENT IS THERE TO LIFE?



WHAT IN THE NAME OF Z'ONDAR...? THEY'RE JUST TURNING... IN PLACE.



AW CRAP! CAPTAIN,
WHAT --?

WHO'S THE
DESIGN GENIUS
WHO PUT A WEAPONS
SYSTEM WHERE THE
THRUSTERS
SHOULD
BE?!

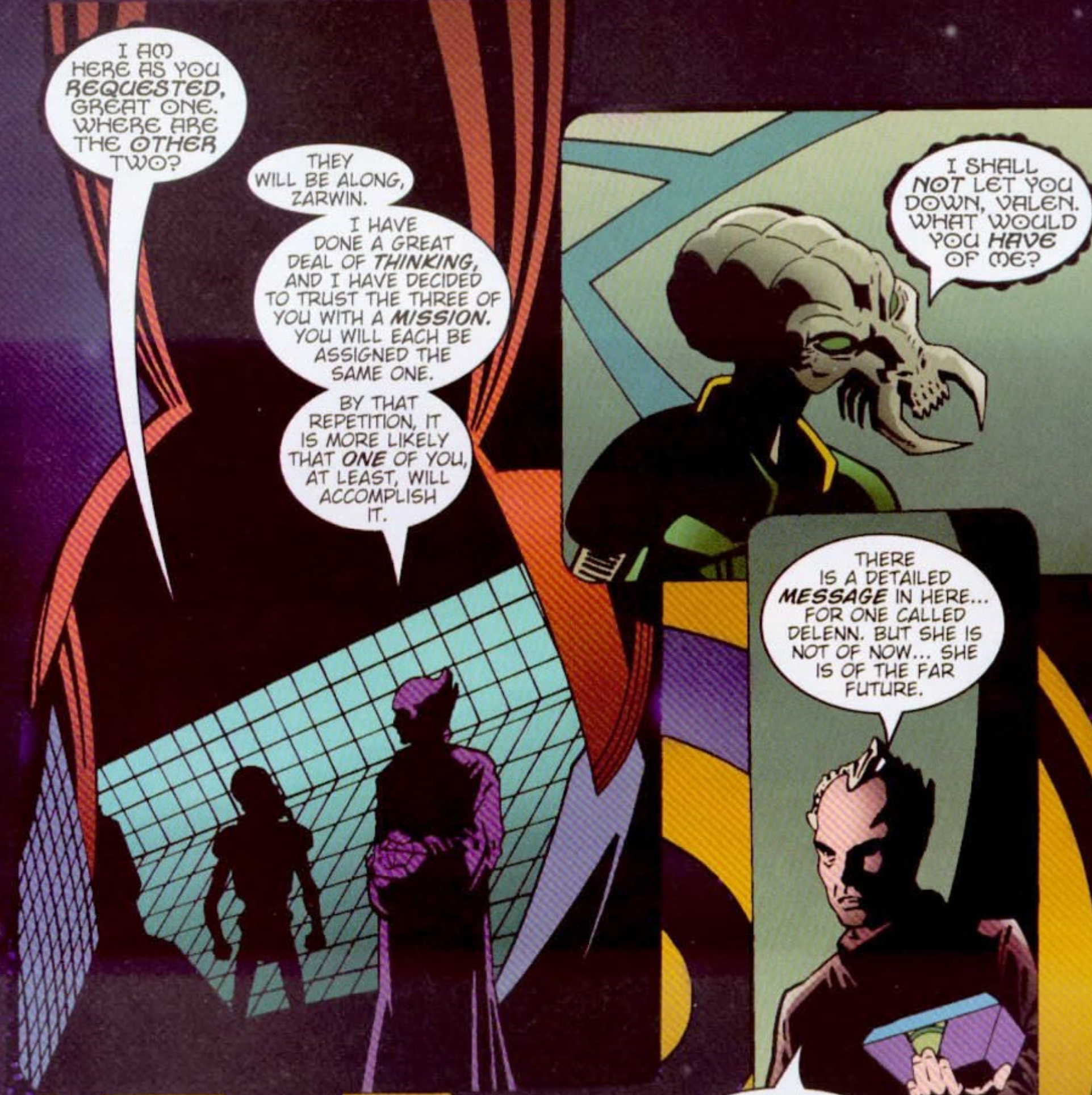
GET OUT
OF THERE,
JOHN!
HURRY!

WE ALLOWED THEM TO
APPROACH, AND THIS
IS THE RESPONSE
WE GET!

ALL WINGS,
FOLLOW ME,
BUT STAY
BACK! THIS
KILL IS
MINE!

GREAT.
JUST GREAT. WITH
MY LUCK, THIS IS THE
SELF-DESTRUCT
COMMAND INSTEAD
OF --

"ONE DAY, VALEN SAID TO
MYSELF AND TWO OTHER
CLOSE ALLIES, NUBENN
AND BASHOK, COME TO ME
FOR THERE ARE IMPORTANT
THINGS I MUST DISCUSS
WITH YOU. I WAS BROUGHT
TO HIM FIRST..."




I AM
HERE AS YOU
REQUESTED,
GREAT ONE.
WHERE ARE
THE OTHER
TWO?


THEY
WILL BE ALONG,
ZARWIN.

I HAVE
DONE A GREAT
DEAL OF *THINKING*,
AND I HAVE DECIDED
TO TRUST THE THREE OF
YOU WITH A *MISSION*.
YOU WILL EACH BE
ASSIGNED THE
SAME ONE.


BY THAT
REPETITION, IT
IS MORE LIKELY
THAT *ONE* OF YOU,
AT LEAST, WILL
ACCOMPLISH
IT.



I SHALL
NOT LET YOU
DOWN, VALEN.
WHAT WOULD
YOU HAVE
OF ME?




THERE
IS A DETAILED
MESSAGE IN HERE...
FOR ONE CALLED
DELENN. BUT SHE IS
NOT OF NOW... SHE
IS OF THE FAR
FUTURE.



YOUR PEOPLE
ARE TO HOLD IT FOR
HER, AND GIVE IT
TO HER --

-- SO THAT A GREAT
MISUNDERSTANDING
CAN BE AVOIDED --



"THERE SEEMED TO BE A SORT
OF *ELECTRICITY* IN THE AIR. THE
VORLON SAID *NOTHING*, BUT
MERELY *HOVERED* NEAR VALEN.
NOR DID VALEN SPEAK.

"AND YET...
SOMEHOW... IT
SEEMED AS IF
THEY WERE..."

"...ARGUING..."

YES. YOU
ARE RIGHT, OF
COURSE.

I KNEW
ALL THAT... AND
YET SOMEHOW I
FELT THAT... IF I
MERELY ALLOWED
SO MANY TO
DIE...

THERE IS,
BUT ONLY
ONE.

...HOWEVER...
THERE IS NO
CHOICE, IS THERE.

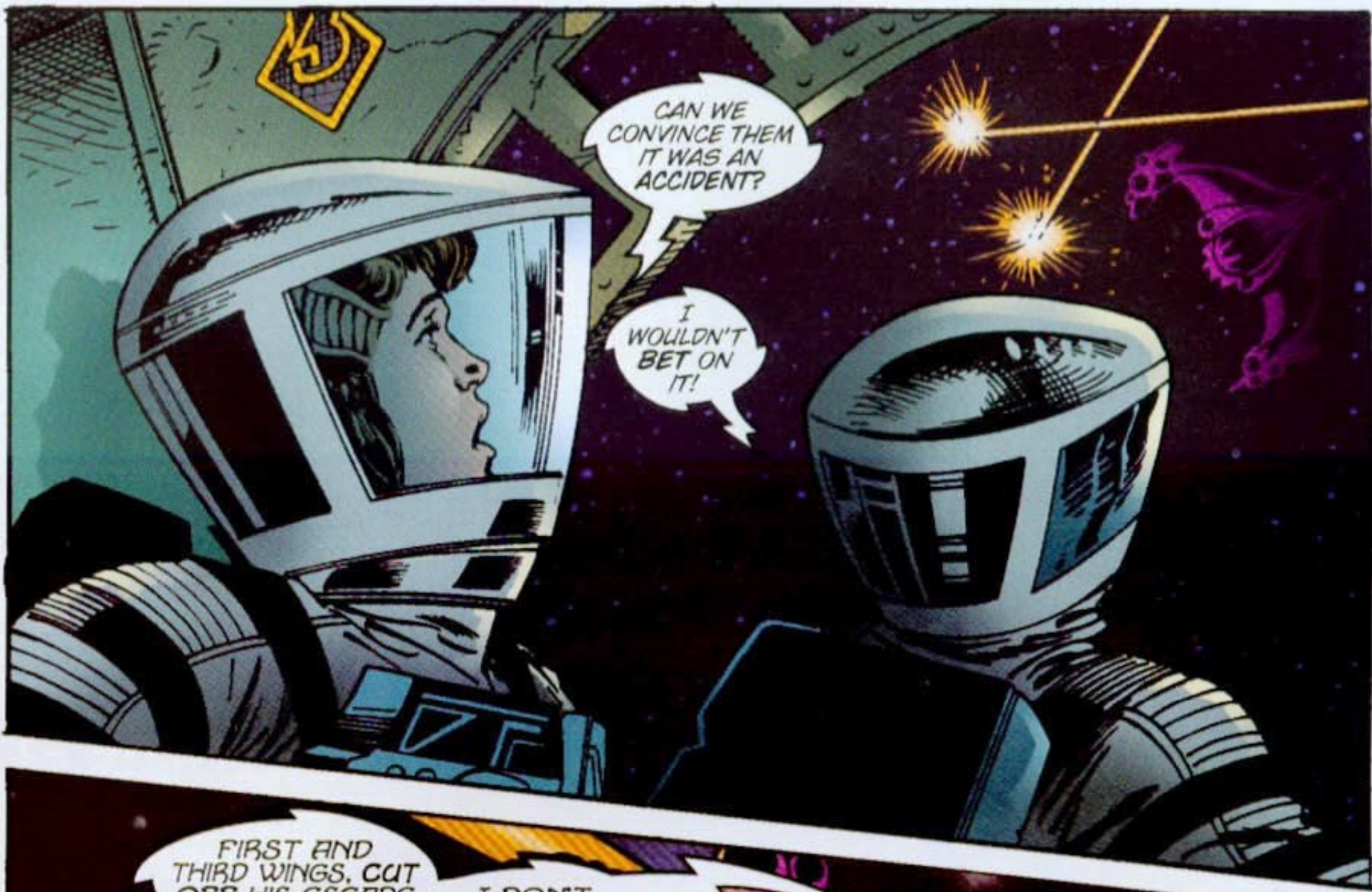
I... APOLOGIZE FOR
WASTING YOUR TIME,
RAMDE ZARWIN...

IT IS
YOURS
TO WASTE,
GREAT
ONE.

ZARWIN...? WHAT JUST...
HAPPENED HERE?
WHERE IS VALEN
GOING?

I... AM
NOT
SURE.

IT HAD
SOMETHING
TO DO WITH...
A MISUNDER-
STANDING.



CAN WE CONVINCE THEM IT WAS AN ACCIDENT?

I WOULDN'T BET ON IT!



FIRST AND THIRD WINGS, CUT OFF HIS ESCAPE ROUTE!

I DON'T WANT HIM GOING ANYWHERE!



DAMN! THIS THING MANEUVERS LIKE A DEAD PIG!



HAHI



PITY THERE'S NO OXYGEN IN SPACE. OTHERWISE THAT FIREBALL MIGHT KEEP THEM OFF OUR TAIL FOR A FEW MINUTES INSTEAD OF BEING SNUFFED RIGHT OUT.

WHAT HAPPENED OUT THERE ANYWAY?

AN ACCIDENT. UNFORTUNATELY THE LAST ACCIDENT TO OCCUR INVOLVING A MINBARI VESSEL RESULTED IN A TWO-YEAR WAR.

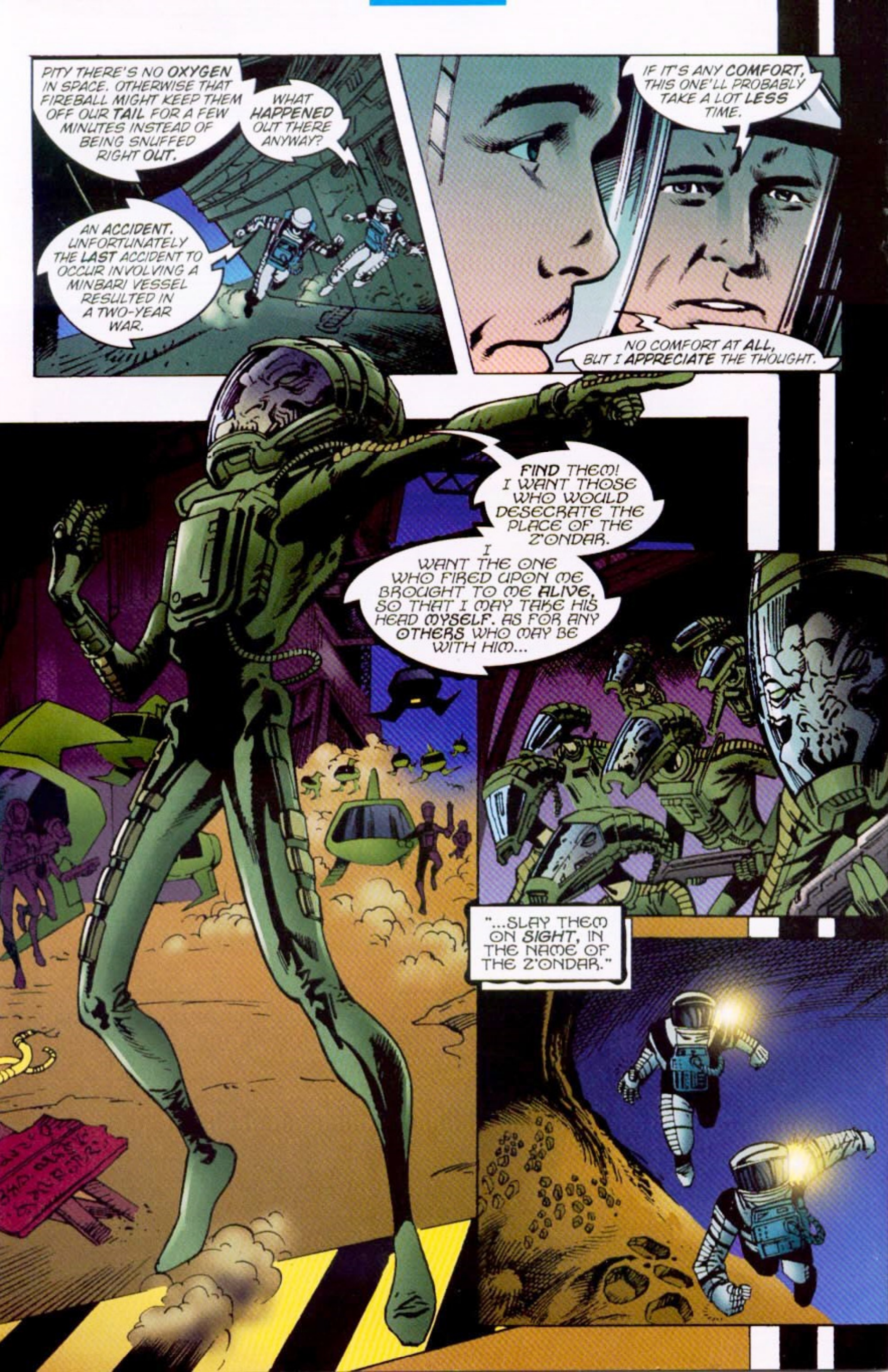
IF IT'S ANY COMFORT, THIS ONE'LL PROBABLY TAKE A LOT LESS TIME.

NO COMFORT AT ALL, BUT I APPRECIATE THE THOUGHT.

FIND THEM! I WANT THOSE WHO WOULD DESECRATE THE PLACE OF THE Z'ONDAR.

I WANT THE ONE WHO FIRED UPON ME BROUGHT TO ME ALIVE, SO THAT I MAY TAKE HIS HEAD MYSELF. AS FOR ANY OTHERS WHO MAY BE WITH HIM...

"...SLAY THEM ON SIGHT, IN THE NAME OF THE Z'ONDAR."






ZARWIN!


GREAT ONE!
I HAVE JUST FINISHED
THIS **TRIBUTE** TO YOU!
IT IS OUR WORD FOR YOU...
"**Z'ONDAR**," WHICH MEANS
"**GREAT ONE**" IN OUR
LANGUAGE TRANSLITERATED
INTO WHAT WE'VE
LEARNED OF YOUR
TONGUE.

THIS AREA
IS LARGELY
UNFREQUENTED,
SO I TOOK
THE LIBERTY
OF ---



IS WHAT I AM TOLD **TRUE**? THAT YOUR
PEOPLE HAVE ONCE AGAIN **ATTACKED**
A **HELPLESS** RACE?

HELPLESS,
GREAT ONE?
I **HUMBLY**
DISAGREE.




THE **YOLU**, WHILE NOT THE
MOST **POWERFUL** RACE THAT
COULD ALLY WITH US, COULD
CERTAINLY BE OF **AID** IN
OUR WAR AGAINST
THE **SHADOWS**.

BUT
WHEN THEY
WERE APPROACHED
ABOUT JOINING, THEY
TURNED A **DEAF EAR**.
SAID THEY DID NOT
WISH TO BECOME
INVOLVED.

IT WAS
AN **INSULT** TO
YOU. WE COULD
NOT TOLERATE SUCH
ARROGANCE. AND
SO, IN YOUR NAME,
WE PUNISHED
THEM.

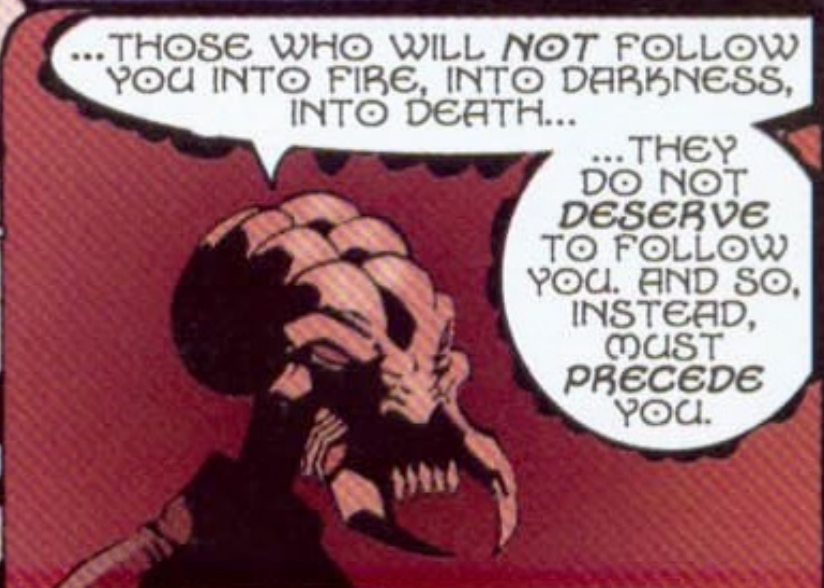
IT WAS
ONLY YOUR
TEACHINGS,
GREAT ONE,
THAT..






MY TEACHINGS? HOW DID YOU COME TO THAT CONCLUSION?

OBVIOUSLY, GREAT ONE...



...THOSE WHO WILL NOT FOLLOW YOU INTO FIRE, INTO DARKNESS, INTO DEATH...

...THEY DO NOT DESERVE TO FOLLOW YOU. AND SO, INSTEAD, MUST PRECEDE YOU.



HOW... COULD YOU? HAVE YOU NO COMPASSION? HAVE YOU NO CARE FOR THE HELPLESS?


WE MUST BE TRUE TO OURSELVES, ABOVE ALL ELSE. AND AS WE SEE FIT, WE WILL ---

GET OUT. I WILL NOT HAVE INNOCENT BEINGS SLAUGHTERED IN MY NAME. I WILL NOT.

WE CARE ONLY IN GLORIFYING YOUR NAME, VALEN ---

BUT.. YOU NEED US AS ALLIES..


WE'LL MANAGE WITHOUT YOU. NOW LEAVE.



"AND SO... WE WERE BANISHED FROM THE PRESENCE OF VALEN.

"OUR FLEET GATHERED ITSELF... AND DEPARTED THE FLOATING HOME OF VALEN.

"WE WENT BACK TO OUR HOMEWORLD.



"AND FROM THERE KEPT TRACK OF THE WAR AGAINST THE SHADOWS."



WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHERE WE HAVE FAILED THE Z'ONDAR. WE ACTED IN WHAT WE BELIEVED TO BE HIS BEST INTERESTS. BUT WE MUST ACCEPT HIS WORDS, EVEN IF WE DON'T COMPREHEND THEM...

...AND WE WILL HOPE THAT SOMEDAY... WE WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE AMENDS FOR THE SIN WHICH WE DON'T UNDERSTAND.



AND THAT, IN SOME WAY... WE WILL BE ABLE TO SERVE HIM AGAIN.



CAPTAIN! YOU'RE JUST GOING TO LOVE THIS. OUR RATE OF DESCENT HAS INCREASED. FROM STRAY SHOTS OR THE EXPLOSION, I DON'T KNOW HOW.

AT OUR PRESENT SPEED, WE'VE GOT MAYBE THREE, FOUR HOURS BEFORE --

-- JOHN!



WERE THOSE... SHOTS BEING FIRED?

CAPTAIN, I DIDN'T COPY, SAY AGAIN?



WE'RE PINNED DOWN IN MEDLAB! THEY CAME FROM BOTH SIDES! HAD NO CHOICE --!

ON MY WAY!

NO, WAIT!



DELENN, YOU STAY H --

-- DELENN? DELENN!

ALL RIGHT...
PREPARE TO ROLL
AN EXPLOSIVE IN
THERE. THAT SHOULD
FLUSH THEM OUT...
OR BLOW THEM TO
PIECES. EITHER
WAY IS
WORKABLE.

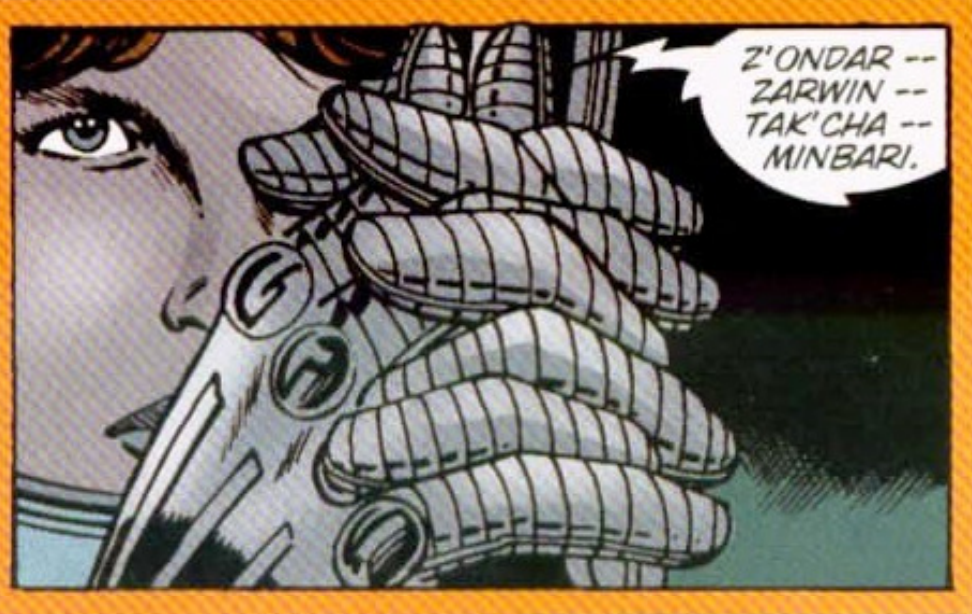
RAMDEI
WE FOUND ONE,
COMING TO TRY
TO HELP THE
OTHERS!

GOOD
WORK.
BRING IT
HERE.

WAIT!
LISTEN TO
ME! I --

JOHN --!

DELENN!



MAKE NO MISTAKE -- THE TAK'CHA, AS THEY ARE APPARENTLY CALLED, ARE NOT EXACTLY A CUDDLY RACE.

THEY CONTINUE TO REGARD THE CAPTAIN, GARIBALDI AND ME WITH A DEGREE OF SUSPICION. BUT THEY WORSHIP DELENN, SO WE'RE SAFE ENOUGH AS THEY PREPARE TO BRING US OVER TO THEIR SHIP, TO TRANSPORT US BACK TO BABYLON 5.

APPARENTLY DELENN'S NAME APPEARED IN SACRED TEXTS OF THEIRS, WHEN A NOTED LEADER OF THEIRS, ZARWIN, RECOUNTED A MEETING BETWEEN HIMSELF AND VALEN. SHE WAS SOMETHING OF A MYSTERY TO THEM. ONE MYSTERY DOWN. TEN ZILLION TO GO.

DELENN... WE HAVE TO GO. OUR SHIP'S WAITING.

IN THEIR OWN WAY, THEY WORSHIPPED VALEN AS MUCH AS WE MINBARI EVER DID, JOHN. AND WE EACH REGARDED THIS STATION AS A LINK TO THE PAST... SAW EACH OTHER AS THREATS.

VALEN WOULD HAVE APPRECIATED THE IRONY OF THAT, I THINK... AND THE IRONY OF A RACE WHICH STILL REMAINS WARLIKE NONETHELESS PROVING A SALVATION.

I ONLY WISH I COULD...



I LED THEM INTO FIRE... INTO DARKNESS... INTO DEATH... AND THEY FOLLOWED ME WITHOUT HESITATION.

THEY ACCLAIM MY VICTORIES AND HAIL ME AS A GREAT LEADER.

THEY SPEAK OF MY SUCCESSES AS IF THEY ARE AS INFINITE AS THE STARS.

AND YET... FOR ALL THAT I'VE ACCOMPLISHED... I LIE AWAKE, LISTENING TO THE SCREAMS OF THE DEAD AND DYING.

THOSE WHO ARE ALREADY GONE, AND THOSE WHO ARE YET TO BE BORN. A FEW WORDS FROM ME COULD AVERT THE EARTH-MINBARI CONFLICT. A WARNING TO DELENN OR DUKHAT...

BUT WITHOUT THE WAR THERE WOULD BE NO BABYLON 4 AND NO BABYLON 5. THERE WOULD BE NO RALLYING POINT AGAINST THE DARKNESS... AND THE SHADOWS WOULD WIN, NOW AND A THOUSAND YEARS FROM NOW. I CANNOT DEVIATE FROM THE CIRCLE OF WHICH I AM A PART. I AM THE BEGINNING OF THE STORY, AS ZATHRAS SAID...




MY NAME IS VALEN...

AND I HAVE SERVED MY PEOPLE LIKE NO OTHER.




AND, A PRISONER OF IT... I DARE NOT CHANGE THE END.

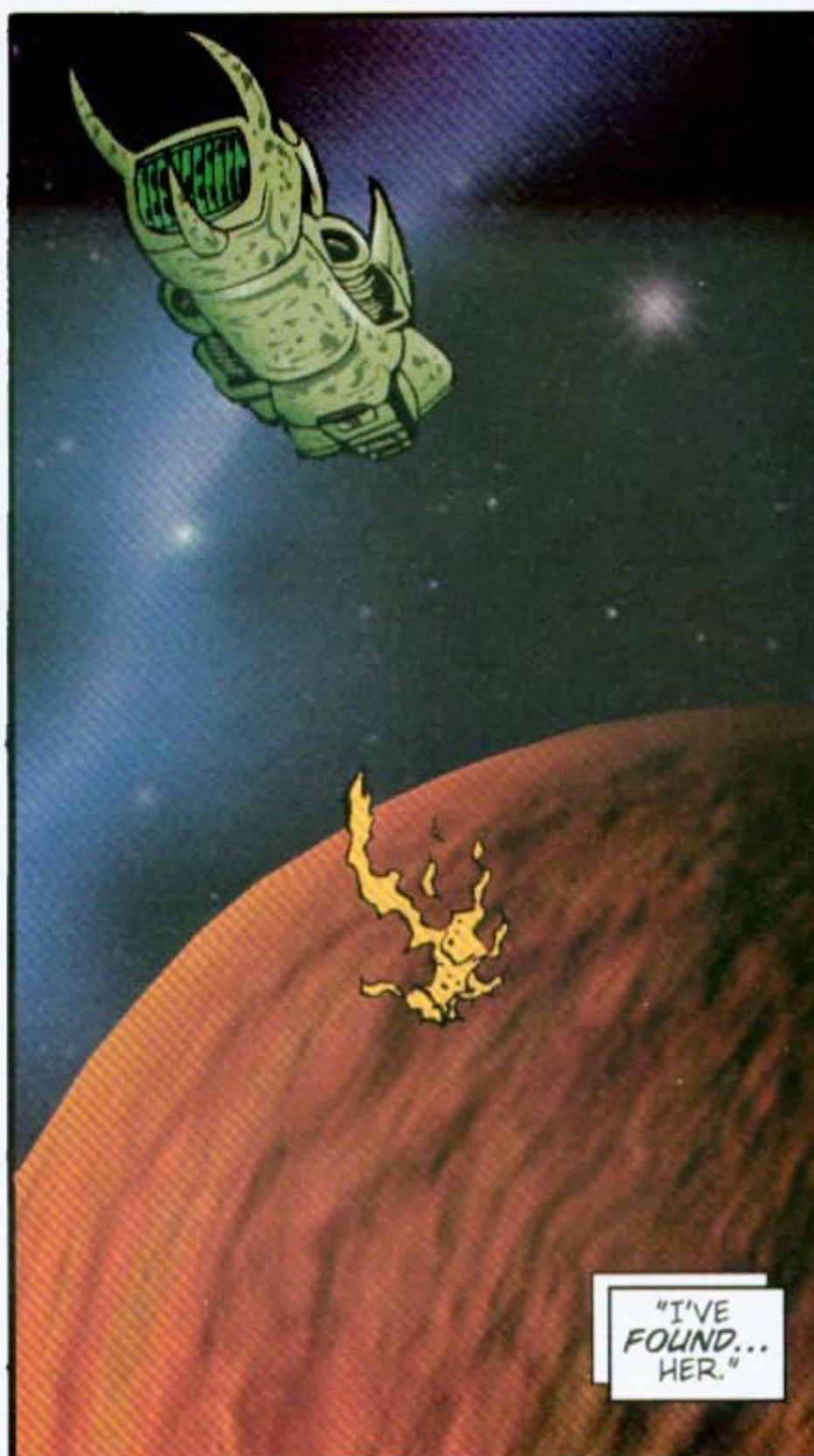


"STILL... IT'S BEEN A GOOD LIFE... *LIVES*... OVER ALL. DELENN, CATHERINE, SUSAN, MICHAEL... IF ANY OF YOU *SEE* THIS SOMEHOW...


"DON'T CRY FOR ME.



"FOR, IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN TOO *HARD* ON MYSELF. I'LL BE CONTENT TO LET HISTORY JUDGE ME, AND *ALL* THAT HAS BEEN DONE IN VALEN'S NAME.



"AND AS FOR *ME*... I'VE RECEIVED MY *OWN* REWARD...



"...BECAUSE I'VE *FOUND* HER. AT LONG LAST...

"I'VE *FOUND*... HER."