

5 BABYLON

DEDICATED TO
THE LOVING MEMORY
OF RICHARD BIGGS AND
ANDREAS KATSULAS

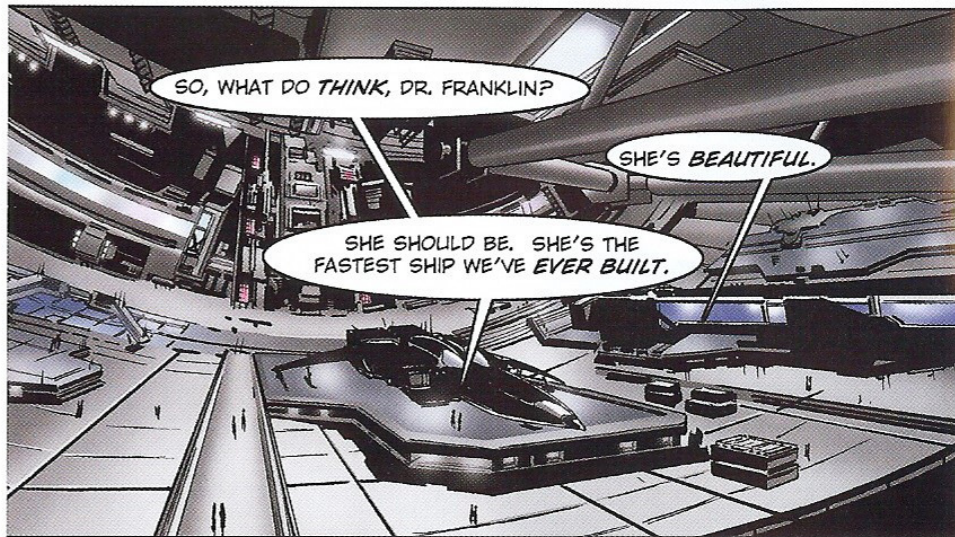
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SO, WHAT DO *THINK*, DR. FRANKLIN?

SHE'S BEAUTIFUL.

SHE SHOULD BE. SHE'S THE FASTEST SHIP WE'VE EVER BUILT.



SPEED ISN'T THE MOST IMPORTANT THING. RANGE IS WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR.

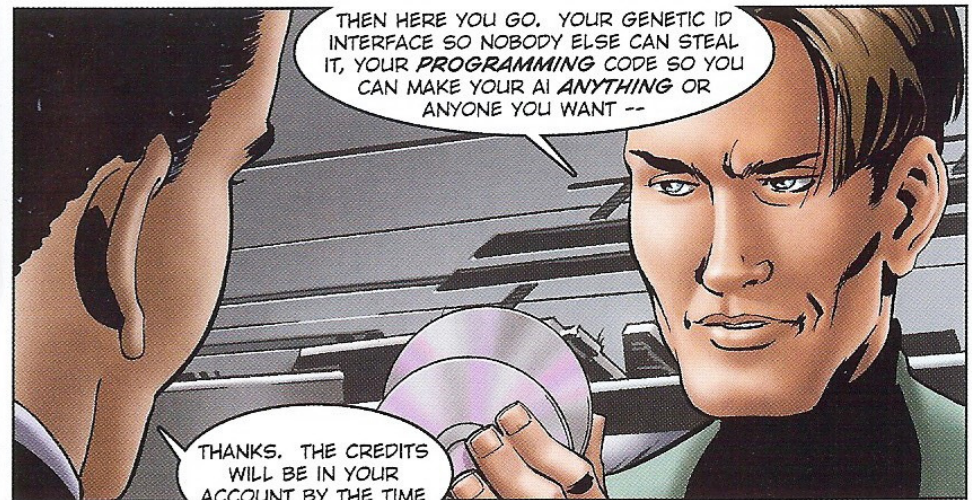
WELL, SHE CAN GO ON JUST HER FUEL CELLS FOR *TWO YEARS*. WITH THE RECYCLING SYSTEMS FOR FOOD, WATER AND AIR...

SHE'S TOTALLY SELF-SUFFICIENT. YOU CAN GO WITHOUT DOCKING FOR SIX, *EIGHT MONTHS* AT A TIME.



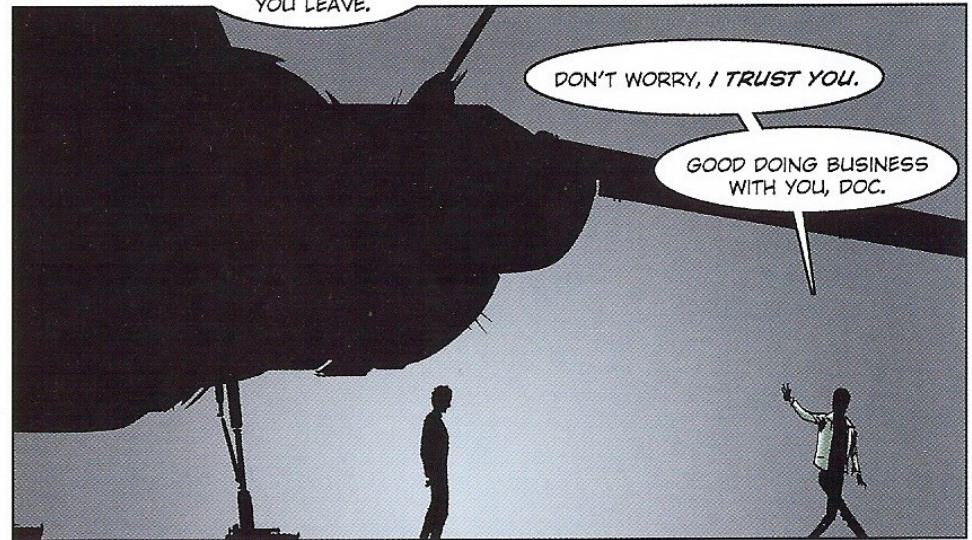
THIS'LL PUT ME BACK MY WHOLE LIFE'S SAVINGS, BUT...

YEAH, I'LL TAKE HER.



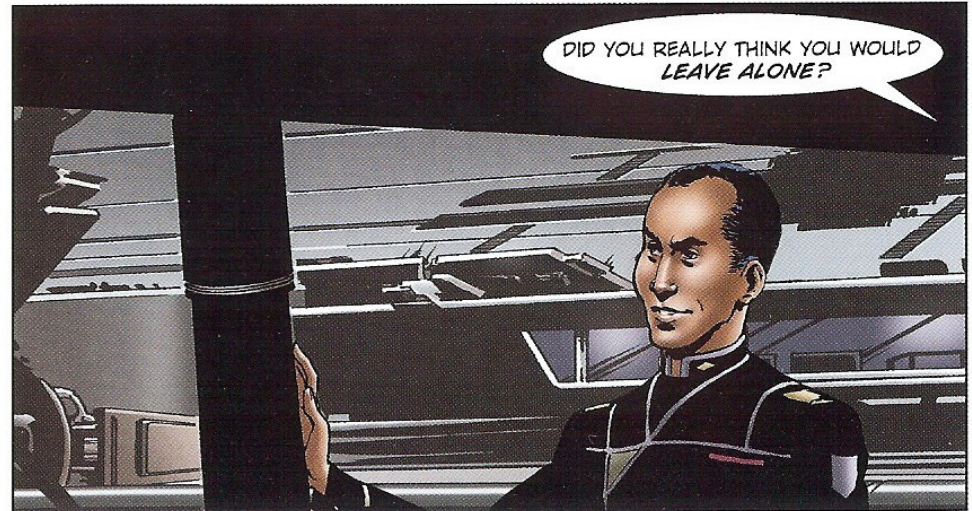
THEN HERE YOU GO. YOUR GENETIC ID INTERFACE SO NOBODY ELSE CAN STEAL IT, YOUR *PROGRAMMING CODE* SO YOU CAN MAKE YOUR AI *ANYTHING* OR ANYONE YOU WANT --

THANKS. THE CREDITS WILL BE IN YOUR ACCOUNT BY THE TIME YOU LEAVE.



DON'T WORRY, I TRUST YOU.

GOOD DOING BUSINESS WITH YOU, DOC.



DID YOU REALLY THINK YOU WOULD LEAVE ALONE?

EACH PLANET, EACH WORLD, EACH RACE HAS IT'S LEGENDS OF HEROES WHO CAME FROM THE LINKNOWN AND RETURNED TO THE LINKNOWABLE...

WHO CHANGED LIVES, SAVED PLANETS, BROUGHT LIGHT INTO THE DARK PLACES AND HOPE INTO CORNERS OF DESPAIR THAT HAD NEVER BEFORE KNOWN THAT EMOTION.



EXPLORERS WHO LATER REACHED THE EDGE OF THE GALACTIC RIM, THE BORDER BETWEEN WHAT'S KNOWN, AND WHAT'S NOT, FOUND THAT OVER A DOZEN DIFFERENT WORLDS, EACH WITH THEIR OWN HISTORIES AND LANGUAGES, SHARED TWO WORDS IN COMMON.

FRANKLIN... AND G'KAR.

G'KAR? WHAT ARE YOU --

I HEARD YOU WERE GOING AWAY, AND BEING A CURIOUS SORT OF FELLOW, I ASKED, WHERE IN THE UNIVERSE WOULD STEPHEN FRANKLIN BE GOING?

AND I REALIZED THAT YOU, BEING YOU, WOULD ONLY WANT TO GO SOMEPLACE WHERE YOU COULD SEE SOMETHING YOU'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE. AND THERE'S ONLY ONE PLACE YOU CAN DO THAT.

BEYOND THE RIM.

AND YOU WANT TO TALK ME OUT OF IT BECAUSE IT'S TOO DANGEROUS.

STEPHEN --

I'VE GIVEN IT A LOT OF THOUGHT, I'M PREPARED, I --

-- I'M NOT HERE TO TALK YOU OUT OF IT.

I'M COMING WITH YOU.

IF YOU'RE FEELING OBLIGED TO LOOK AFTER ME--

IT IS *NOT* AN OBLIGATION. TO SEE WHAT IS *BEYOND* ALL KNOWLEDGE IN YOUR COMPANY WOULD NOT BE A BURDEN.

IT WOULD BE A JOY.

HOW COULD I DECLINE BOTH THE UNKNOWN, AND A CHANCE FOR JOY? TO KNOW THAT I HAVE LIVED MY LIFE FULL MEASURE, AND HAD SUCH FRIENDS, SUCH ADVENTURES, SUCH --

-- HAPPINESS.

SO... WHEN DO WE LEAVE?

AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, I'M ALREADY THERE. WE CAN GO AS SOON AS YOU'RE READY.

THEN I'M READY.