



BY
GERRY CONWAY AND
JOSE LUIS GARCIA LOPEZ

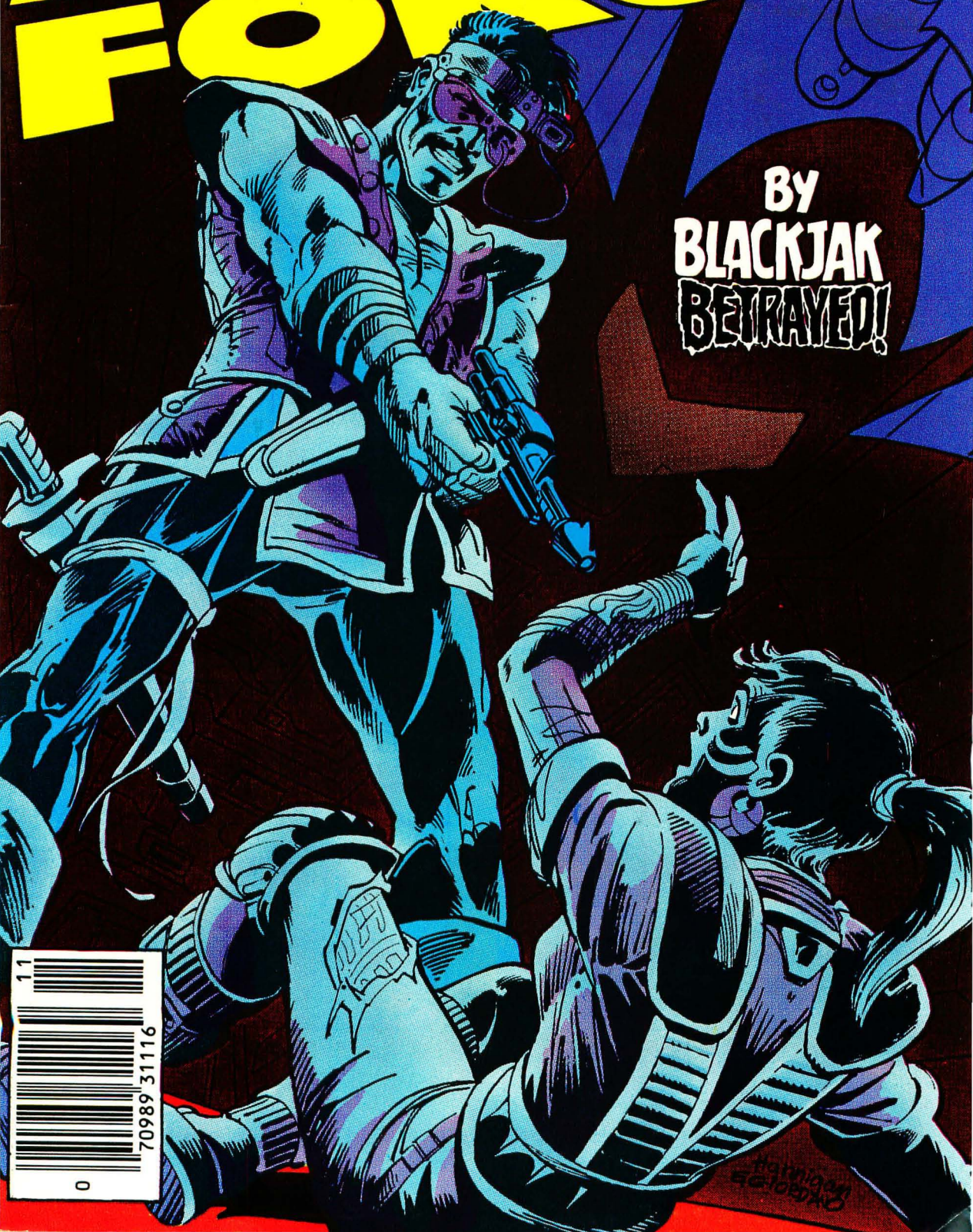
75¢
11

NOV. 84

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

ATARI FORCE

BY
BLACKJAK
BETRAYED!



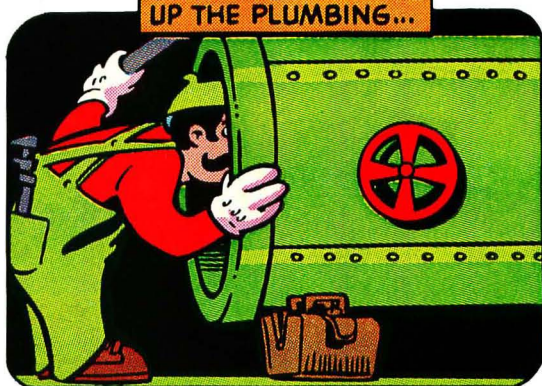
ATARI® PRESENTS MARIO BROS.™

* Another smash arcade hit brought home only by Atari for use with the ATARI® 2600™ Game, Sears Video Arcade† systems and versions exclusively for the ATARI 5200™ Super System.

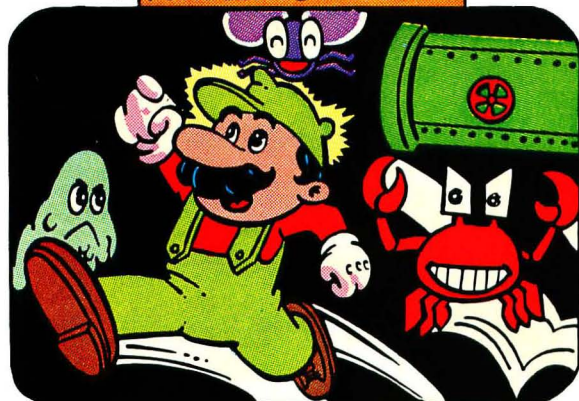
EXCITING 2
PLAYER ACTION!



SOMETHING'S GUMMING
UP THE PLUMBING...



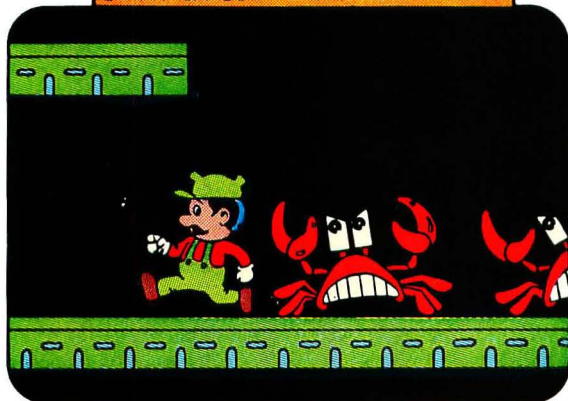
POOR LUIGI'S IN A BIND...



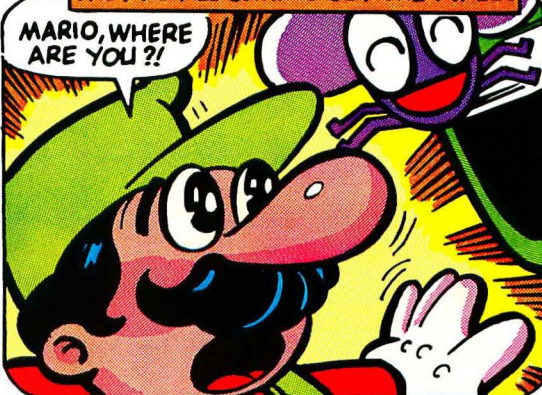
KILLER TURTLES OUT TO GET HIM...



GIANT CRABS ARE RIGHT BEHIND...



FIGHTER FLIES, HOLY CRIPES!
THEY'RE ALL COMING OUT THE PIPES!



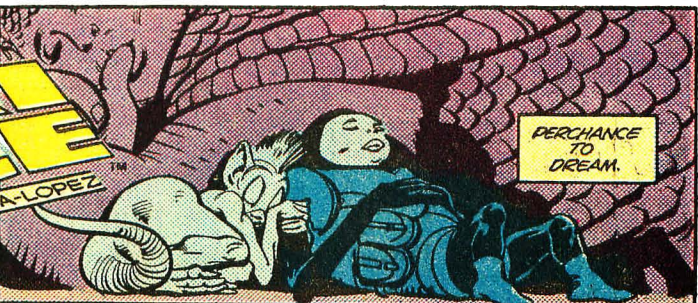
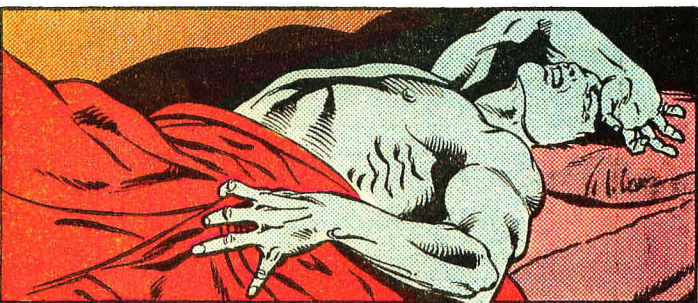
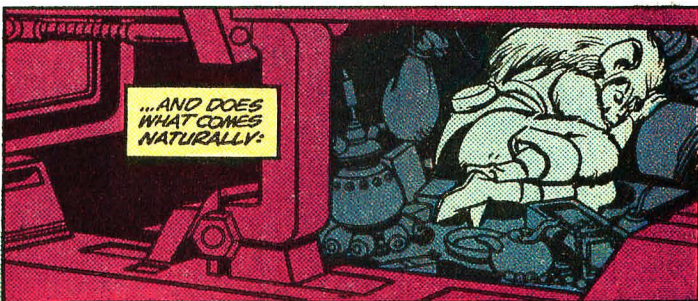
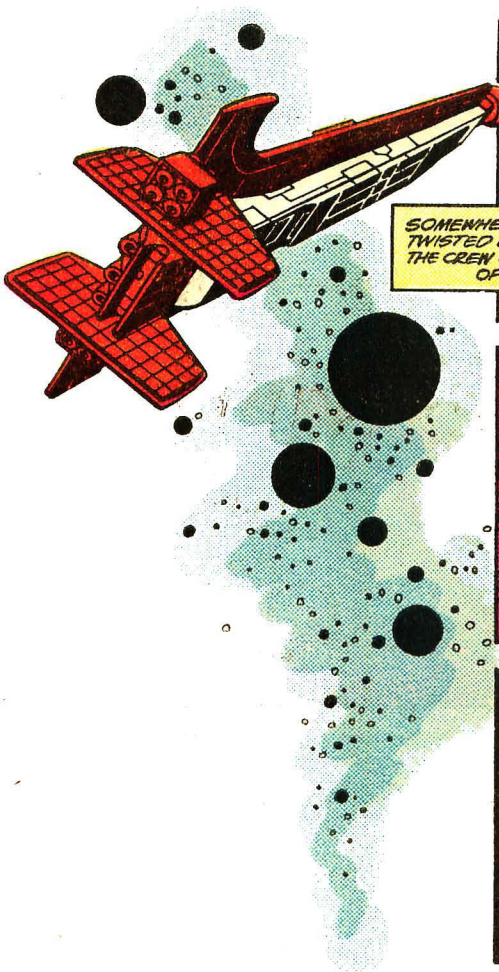
MARIO BROS.™*

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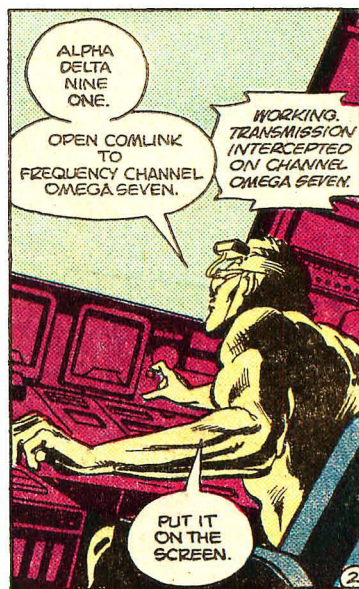
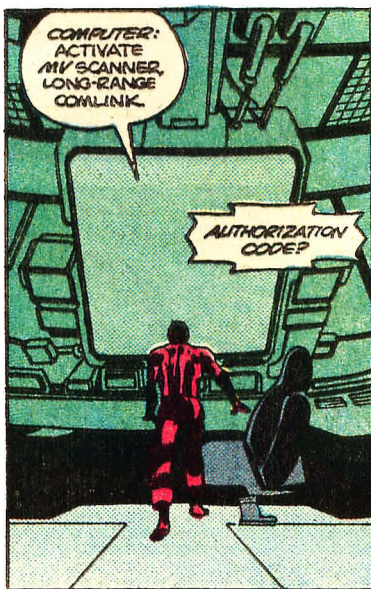
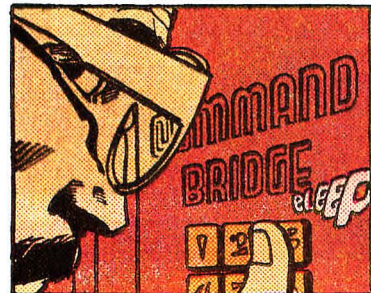
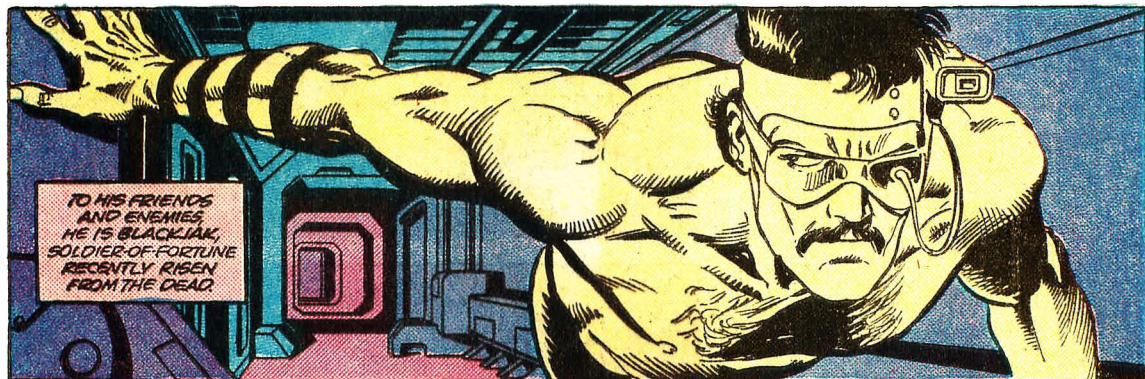
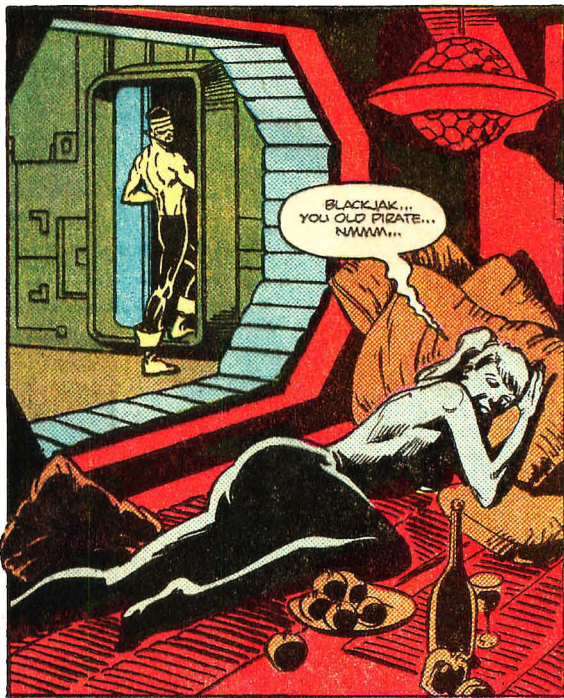
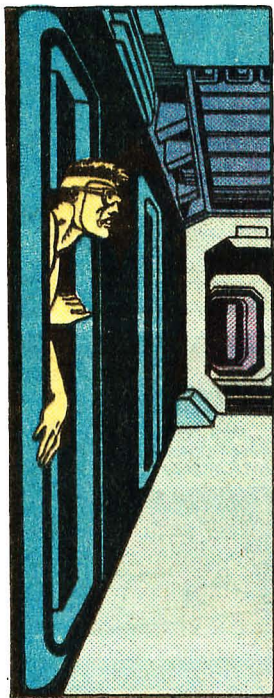
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ATARI FORCE

CREATED BY CONWAY • THOMAS • GARCIA-LOPEZ

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PROGRAM EXECUTED.
TRANSMISSION INTERCEPT
ROUTED TO MAIN DISPLAY
SCREEN.

CLICK

WELL DONE,
BLACKJACK.

HOW ARE MY FRIENDS
IN THE ATARI FORCE?
COMMANDER CHAMPION
AND HIS SON ARE IN
GOOD HEALTH, I TRUST?

I WOULDN'T
WANT ANYTHING
TO HAPPEN TO
THEM. YET.

THEY'RE FINE, MASTER.
CHAMPION SUSPECTS ME, BUT
HE HAS NO PROOF. THE INSECT
MORPHEA HAS CONFIRMED
MY IDENTITY. DART
SUSPECTS NOTHING.

WHAT
ARE YOUR
ORDERS?

BETRAYAL

GERRY CONWAY JOSÉ GARCÍA LOPEZ

WRITER

ARTIST

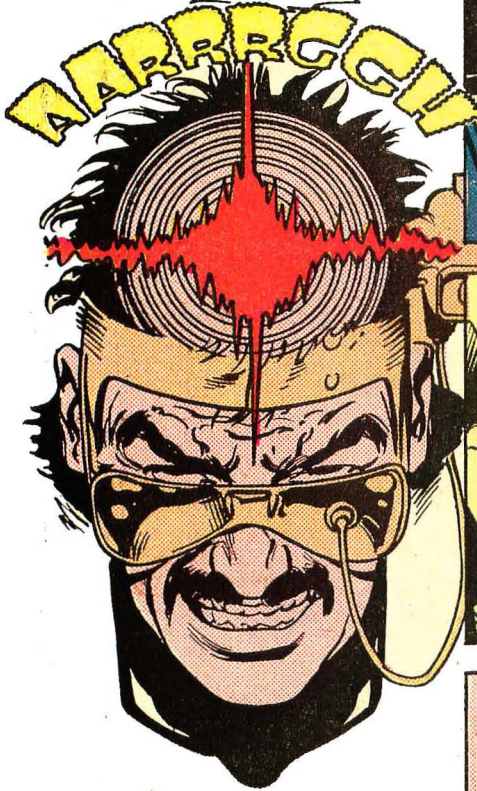
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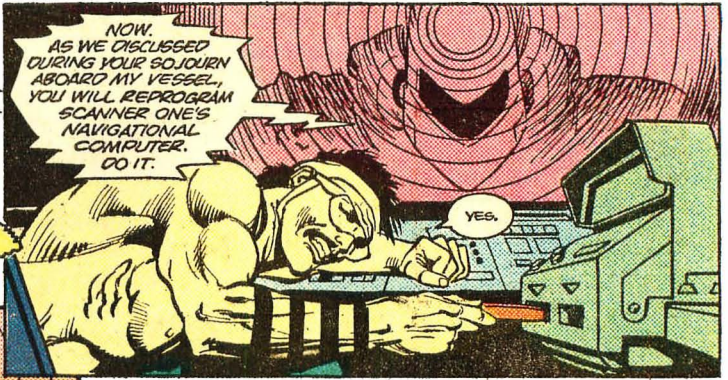
FIRST, A
REMINDER.

YOU ARE MINE, BLACKJAK,
YOU EXIST AT MY WHIM. YOU
SURVIVE BECAUSE I WILL IT. YOU
HAVE NO THOUGHT BUT TO OBEY
ME. AND IF YOU SHOULD THINK
TO DISOBEY...



NOW,
AS WE DISCUSSED
DURING YOUR SOJOURN
ABOARD MY VESSEL,
YOU WILL REPROGRAM
SCANNER ONE'S
NAVIGATIONAL
COMPUTER.
DO IT.

YES.



BEEP
CLICK

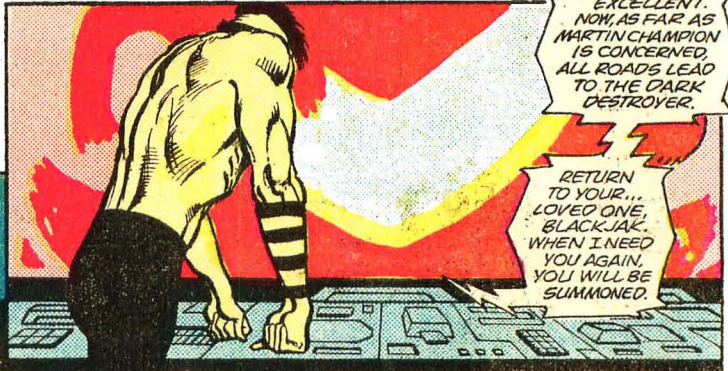
ULTRA 1A
PRIORITY OVERRIDE
COMMAND

BEEP
BEEP



EXCELLENT.
NOW, AS FAR AS
MARTIN CHAMPION
IS CONCERNED,
ALL ROADS LEAD
TO THE DARK
DESTROYER.

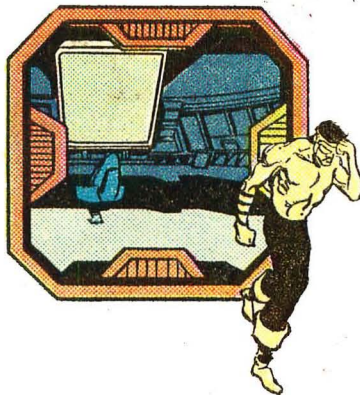
RETURN
TO YOUR...
LOVED ONE,
BLACKJAK.
WHEN I NEED
YOU AGAIN,
YOU WILL BE
SUMMONED.



S-SURE.

COMPUTER,
SEAL AND DESTROY
THIS RECORD.

RECORD
SEALED
AND
DESTROYED.



IF ONLY
HIS MEMORIES
WERE SO EASILY
ERASED...

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ELSEWHERE
IN THE
MULTIVERSE!

ABOARD THE
GRIM SHIP OF
THE BEING KNOWN AS
THE DARK DESTROYER...

YOU SEE
HOW EASY IT IS,
KARGG? CHAMPION
SUSPECTS, BUT HE
CANNOT ACT--
BECAUSE OF HIS
PATHETIC HUMAN
MORALITY.

IF IT WERE I,
BLACKJAK WOULD
HAVE BEEN
PUSHED FROM
AN AIRLOCK
LONG AGO.

SAD
TO FIND MARTIN
SO PREDICTABLE.
NOTHING HE DOES CAN
SURPRISE ME, WHICH,
IN ITSELF, IS HARDLY
SURPRISING.

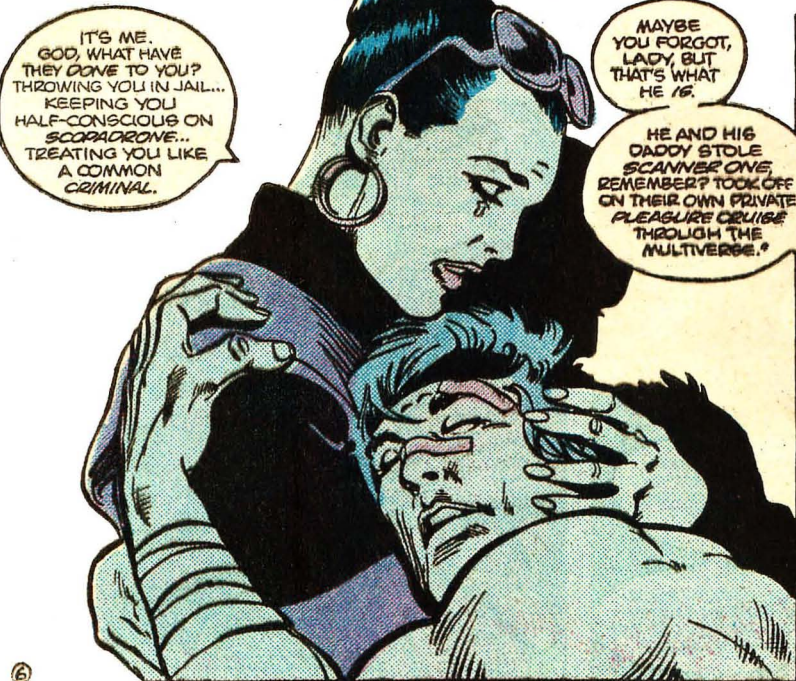
IN SIX HOURS
MARTIN AND HIS
PEOPLE WILL
ARRIVE HERE...
HELPLESS
WITNESSES TO
MY ULTIMATE ACT
OF VENGEANCE
AGAINST CHAMPION
AND HIS "HUMAN"
RACE.



ATARI STATION, IN ORBIT AROUND
NEW EARTH, IN ANOTHER PART OF
THE MULTIVERSE!

TO THE SCIENTISTS OF THE
ATARI INSTITUTE, HIS CODE
NAME IS TEMPLAR, A NAME
GIVEN TO HIM TO REFLECT
HIS UNCANNY ABILITY TO
PHASE BETWEEN DIMENSIONS.

HE WAS BORN CHRISTOPHER
CHAMPION, SON OF MARTIN
CHAMPION AND LYDIA PEREZ,
ORIGINAL LEADERS OF THE
ATARI FORCE.





HUNTER!
YOU LOUSY COP...
DRUGGED ME...
OUGHTA...

SAVE YOURSELF THE
DISAPPOINTMENT,
KID.

YOU'RE
TOO WEAK
TO HURT
ME.



AND I'VE GOT
TOO MUCH
SELF-RESPECT
TO
WASTE ENERGY
BEATING UP A
SCOPE-HEAD.



LUCIA...LUCIA...TELL
THEM...WARN THEM...
DARK DESTROYER IS
REAL...HE'S BACK...

TELL ORION.
HE'LL KNOW...

LET THE
KID SLEEP,
PROFESSOR.
HE'LL NEED
IT FOR THE
PRE-TRIAL
HEARING
TOMORROW.



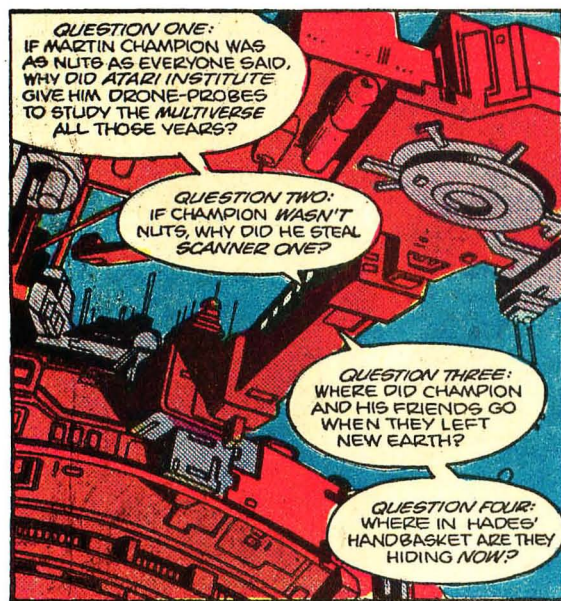
HUNTER,
YOU'RE
A FOOL.



DID IT EVER ENTER
YOUR POLICEMAN'S
MIND TO WONDER
WHY TEMPEST
RISKED ARREST
BY COMING
BACK TO
NEW EARTH?

WHAT DID HE MEAN
JUST NOW, WARNING
US ABOUT SOMEONE
CALLED THE DARK
DESTROYER?

LADY,
ALL I'VE GOT
ARE QUESTIONS.



QUESTION ONE:
IF MARTIN CHAMPION WAS
AS NUTS AS EVERYONE SAID,
WHY DID ATARI INSTITUTE
GIVE HIM DRONE-PROBES
TO STUDY THE MULTIVERSE
ALL THOSE YEARS?

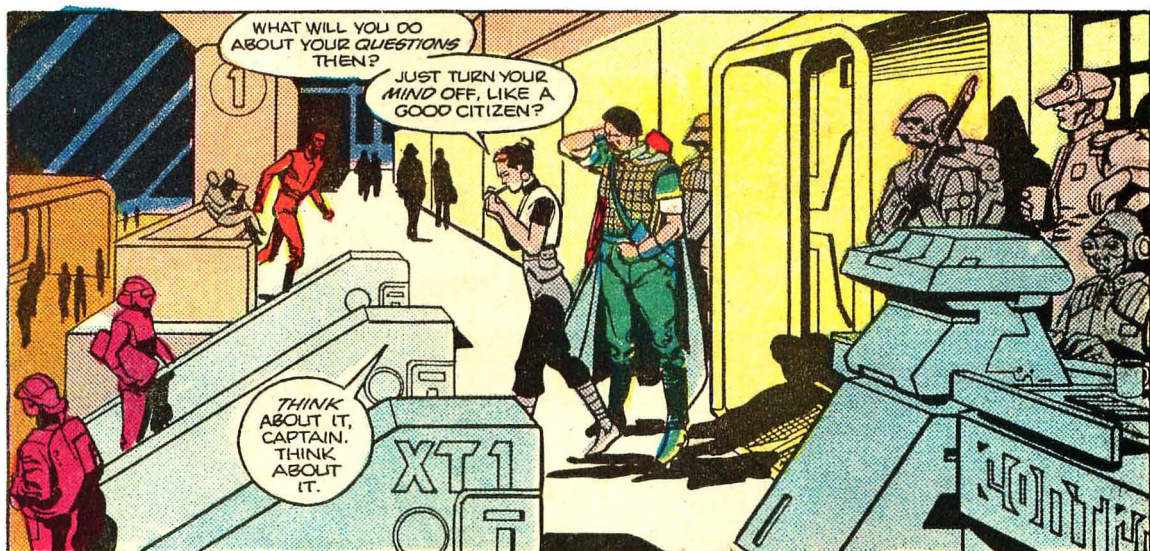
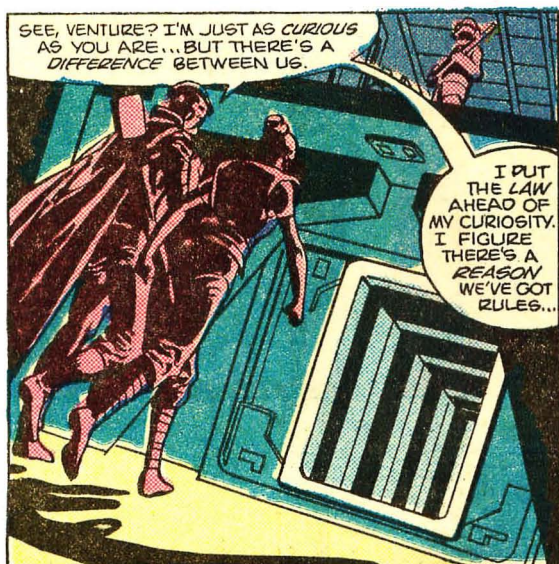
QUESTION TWO:
IF CHAMPION WASN'T
NUTS, WHY DID HE STEAL
SCANNER ONE?

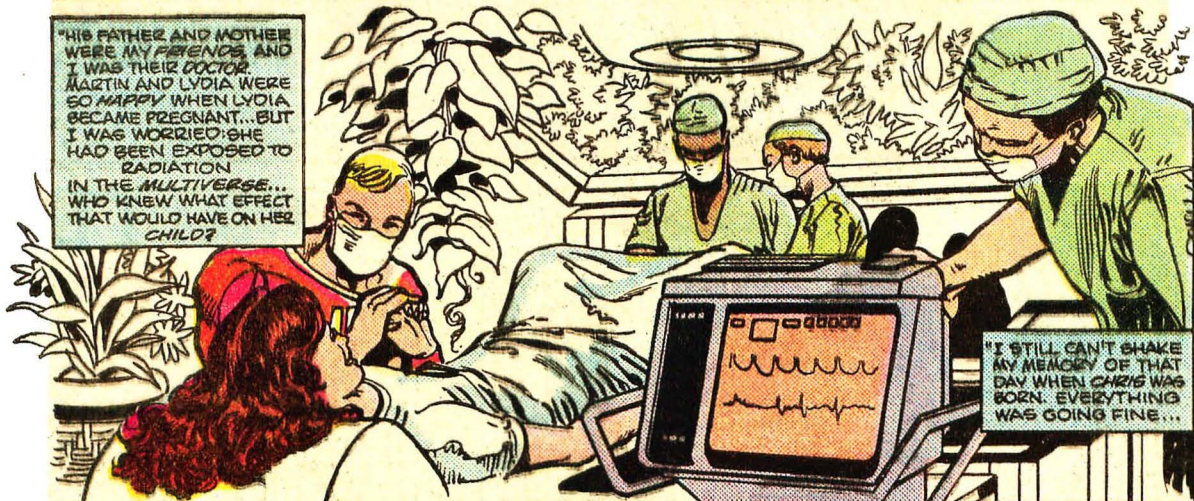
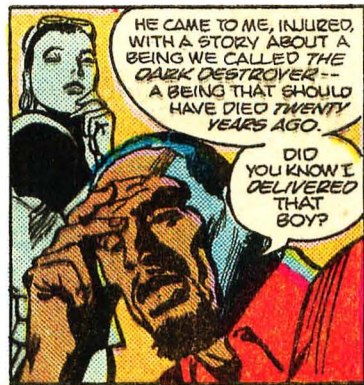
QUESTION THREE:
WHERE DID CHAMPION
AND HIS FRIENDS GO
WHEN THEY LEFT
NEW EARTH?

QUESTION FOUR:
WHERE IN HADES'
HARBOR ARE THEY
HIDING NOW?



AND LAST-- QUESTION FIVE:
I'M SUPPOSED TO HAVE AN AGENT
NAMED RIDENT OUT THERE
FOLLOWING THEM--WHERE THE
HELL IS HE?

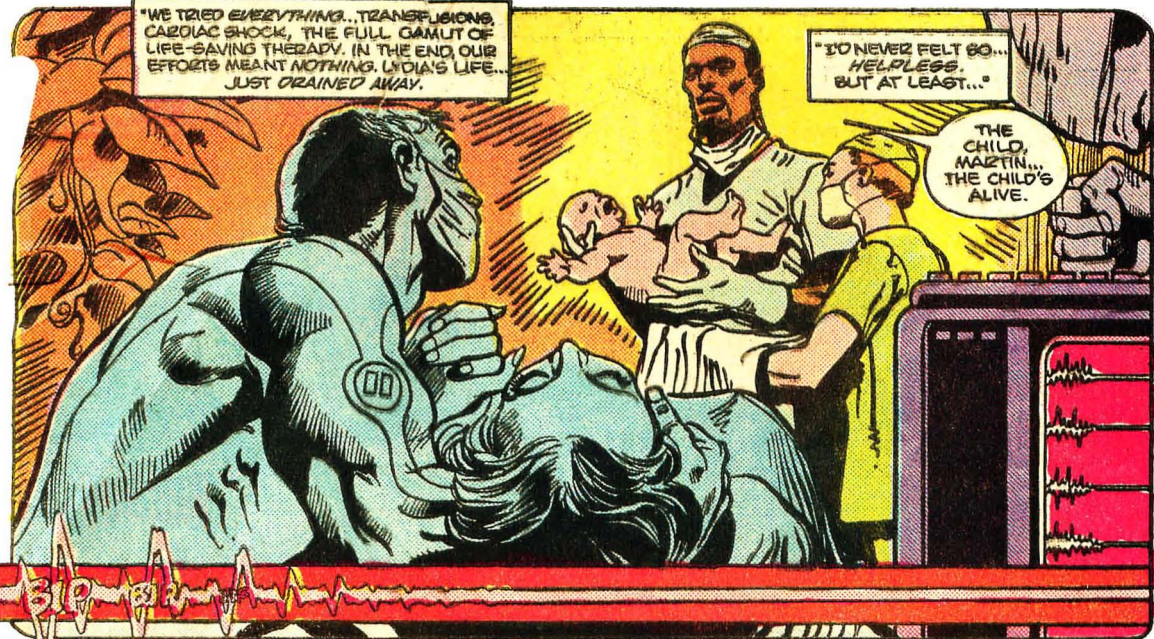




"WE TRIED EVERYTHING... TRANSFUSIONS, CARDIAC SHOCK, THE FULL GAMUT OF LIFE-SAVING THERAPY. IN THE END, OUR EFFORTS MEANT NOTHING. LYDIA'S LIFE... JUST DRAINED AWAY."

"I'D NEVER FELT SO... HELPLESS. BUT AT LEAST..."

THE CHILD, MARTIN... THE CHILD'S ALIVE.



DON'T BRING IT NEAR ME. IF I SAW IT... GOD HELP ME, I THINK I'D KILL IT NOW.

DIDN'T YOU HEAR WHAT SHE SAID? HE KILLED HER.

I CAN NEVER FORGIVE THAT.



NEVER.

DEAR GOD, ALL THESE YEARS I'VE HATED MARTIN CHAMPION'S GUTS FOR THE WAY HE TREATED THAT BOY.

BUT NOW... DID SHE REALLY SAY THAT, LUCAS? THAT HER OWN CHILD WAS KILLING HER?

THAT'S WHAT WE THOUGHT. OF COURSE, I TOLD MYSELF, IN HER CONDITION, SHE WAS HALLUCINATING... SHE WASN'T RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT SHE SAID.

IT WASN'T UNTIL CHRIS TOLD ME THAT THE DARK DESTROYER WAS STILL ALIVE THAT I REALIZED--



CONTINUED ON 2 PAGE FOLLOWING.

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MIKOLA



MACHISTE

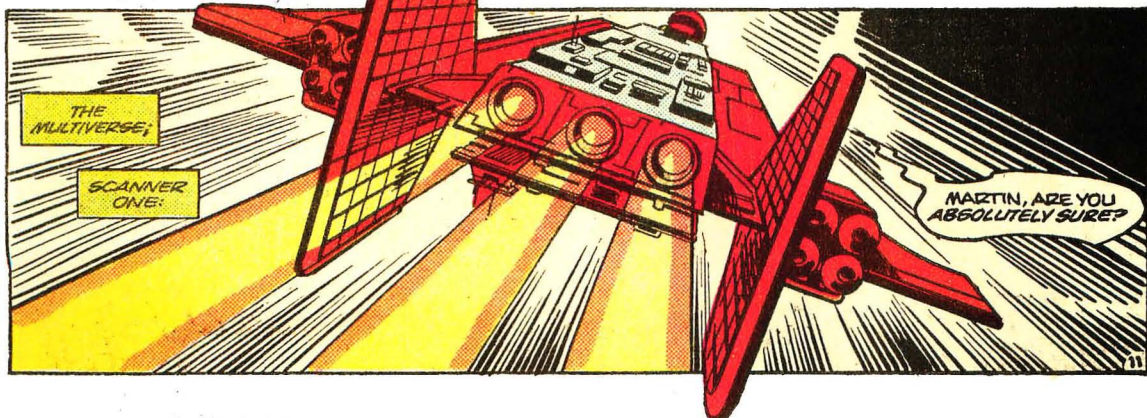
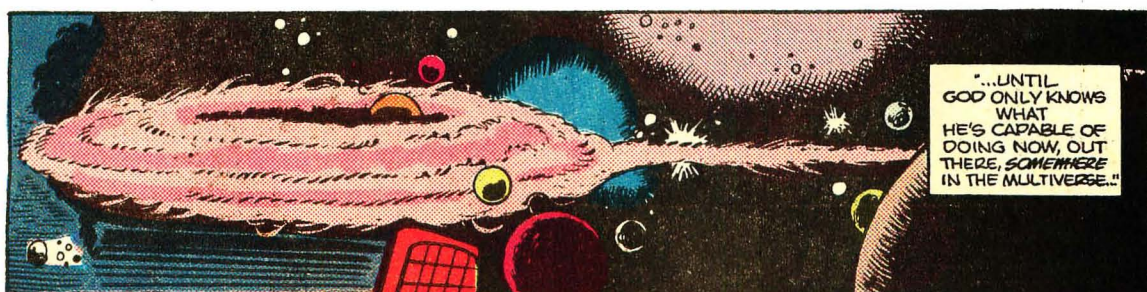
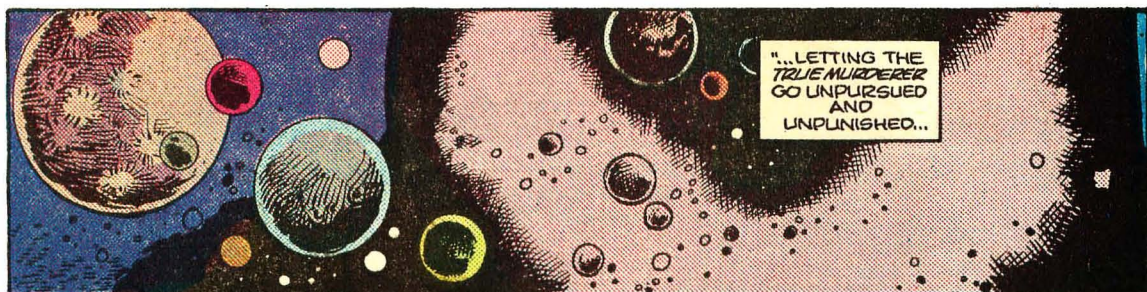
COLLECT THEM ALL!

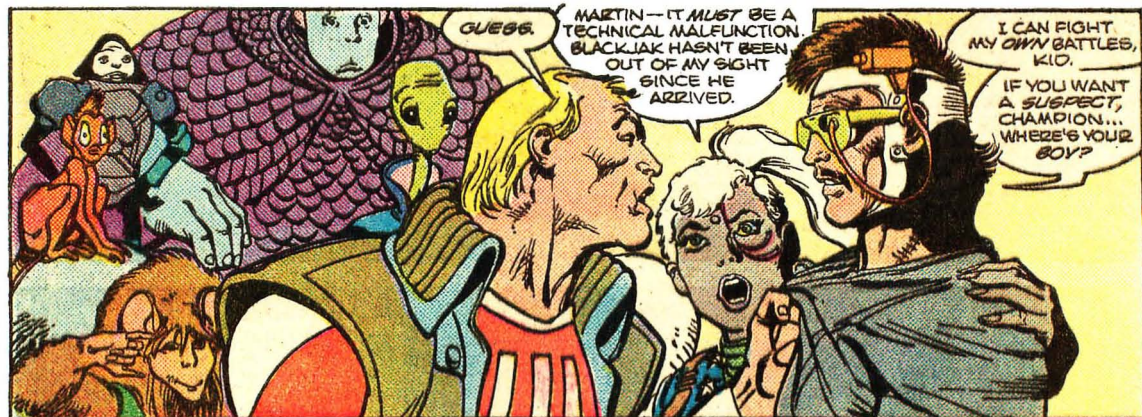
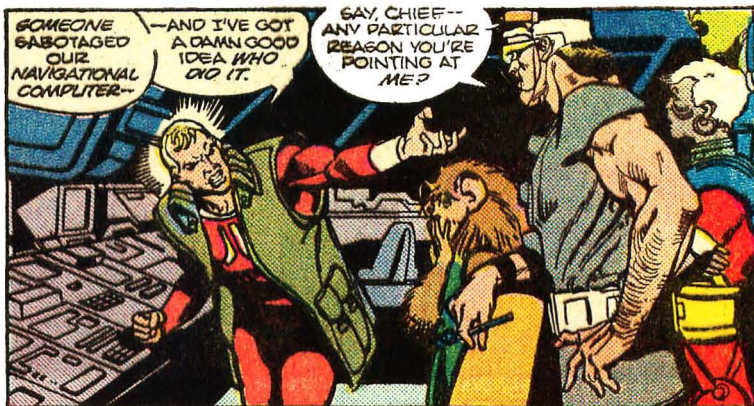
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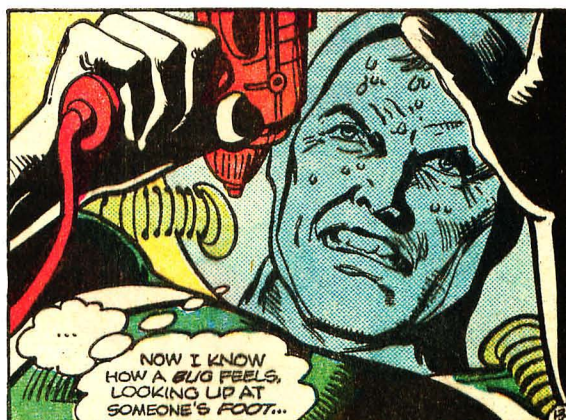
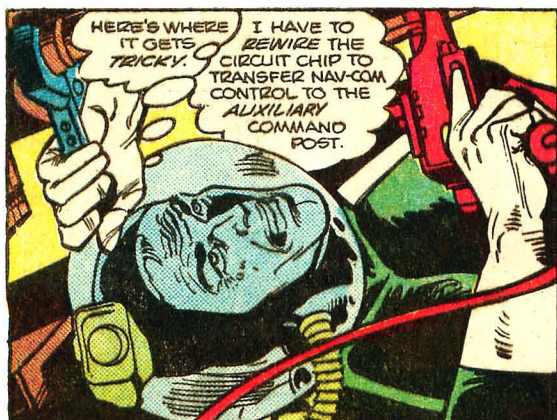
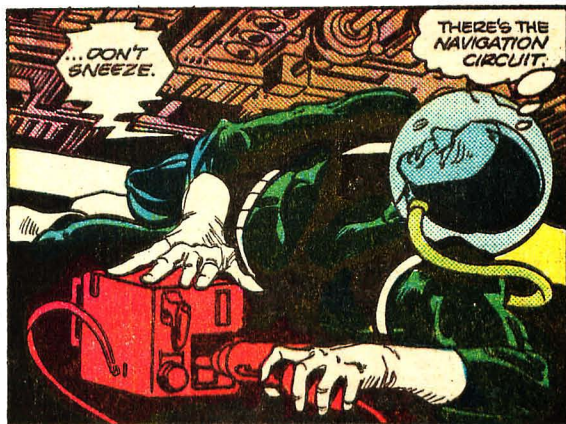
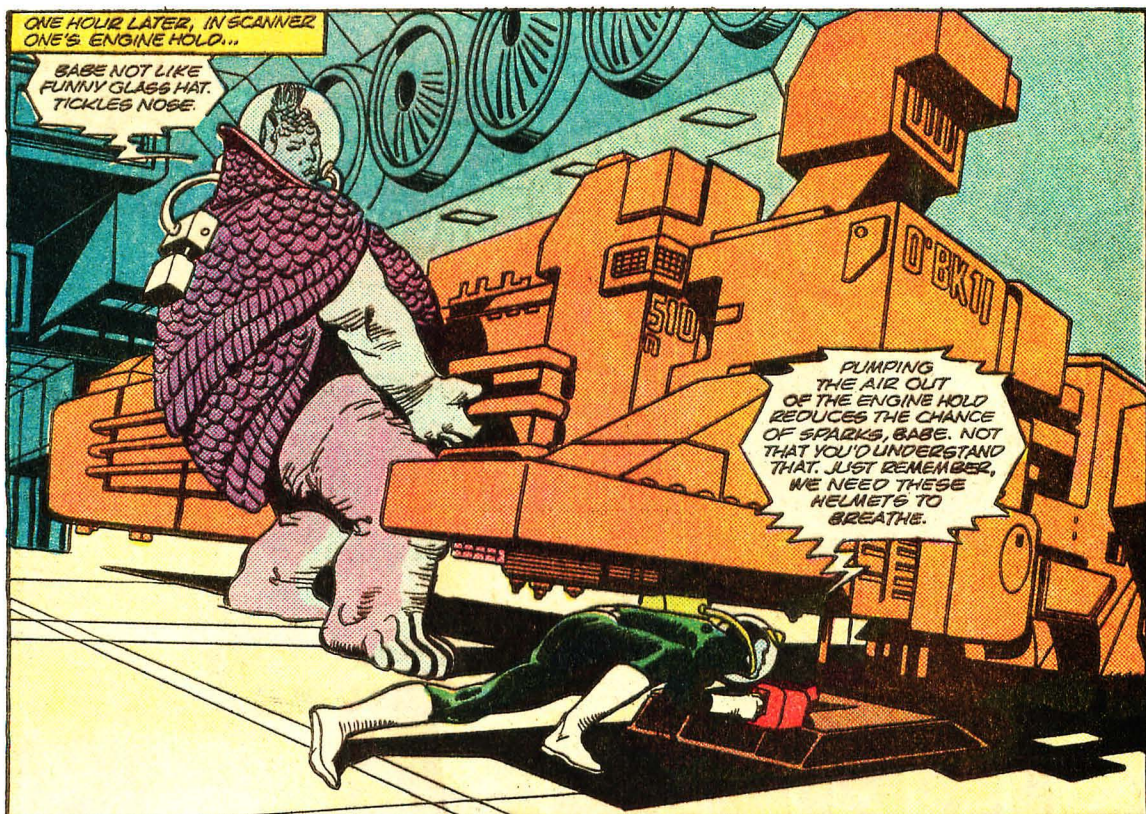
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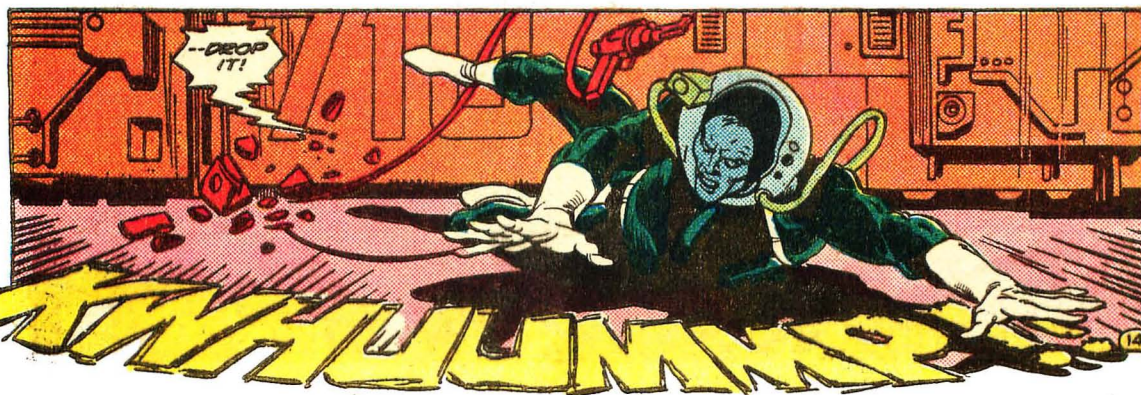
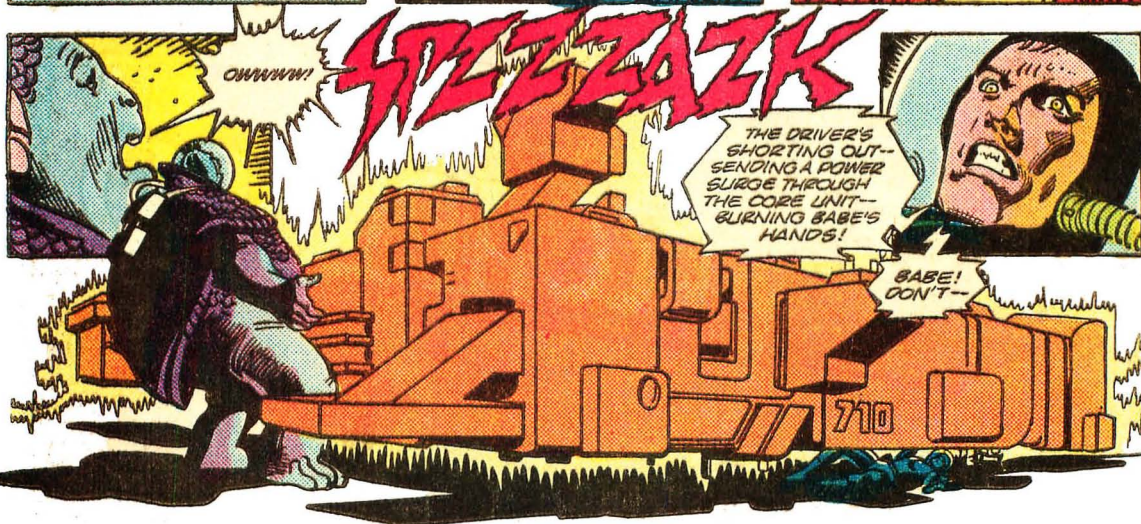
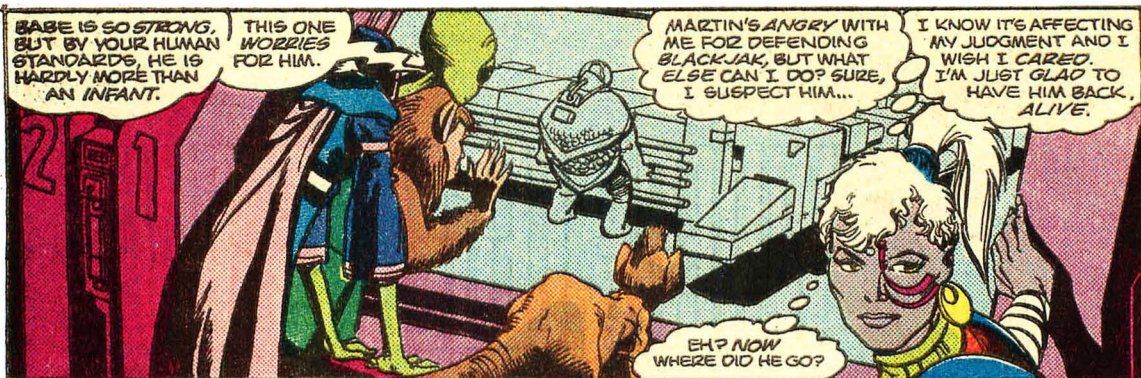
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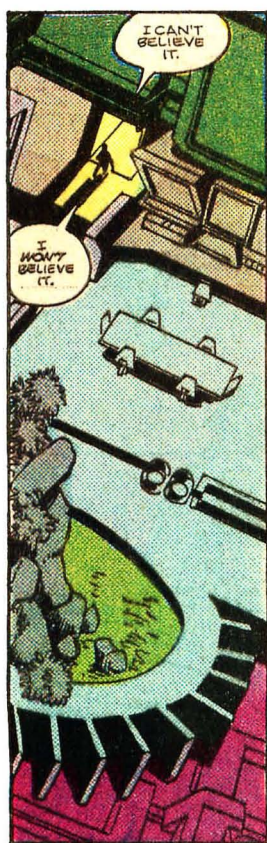
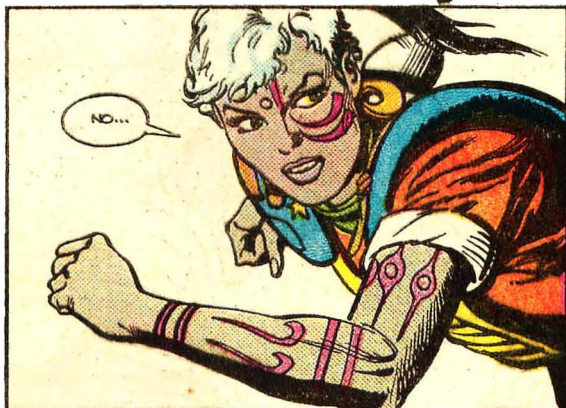
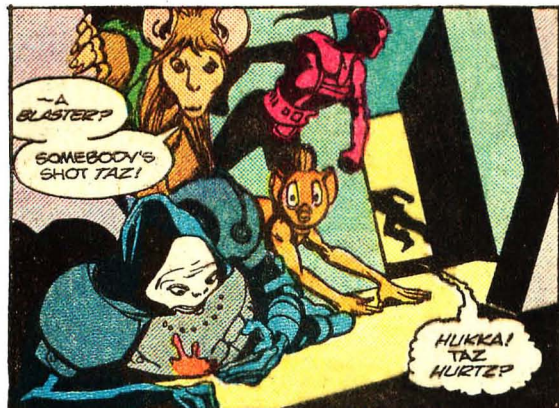
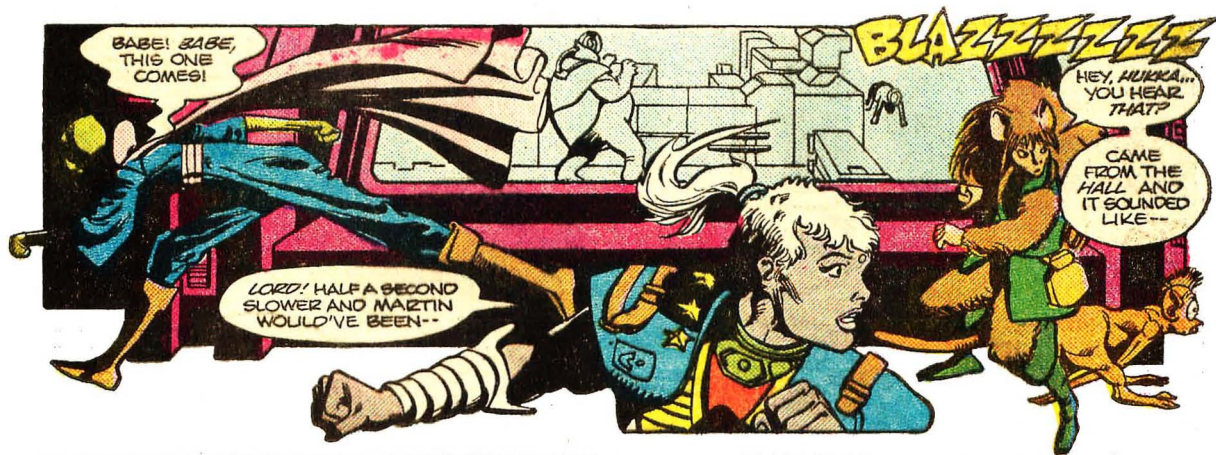


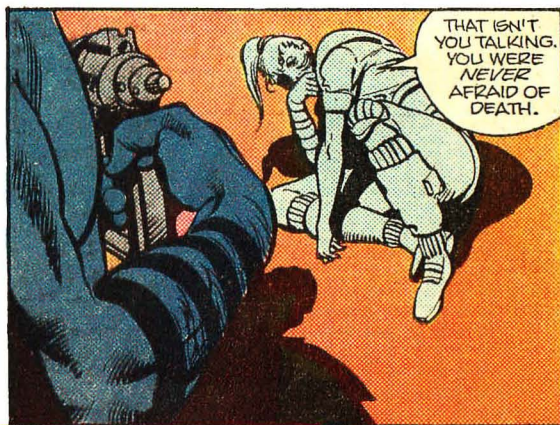
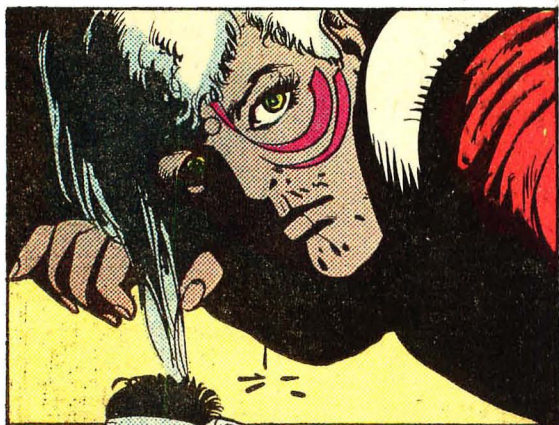
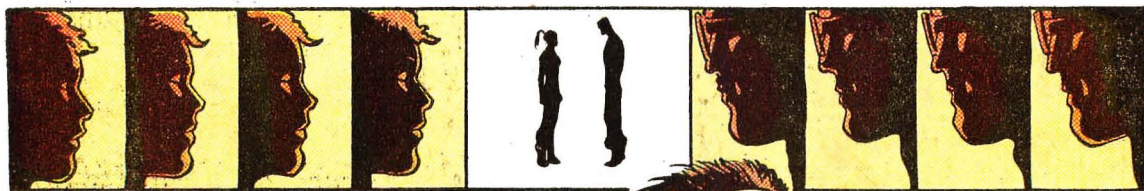


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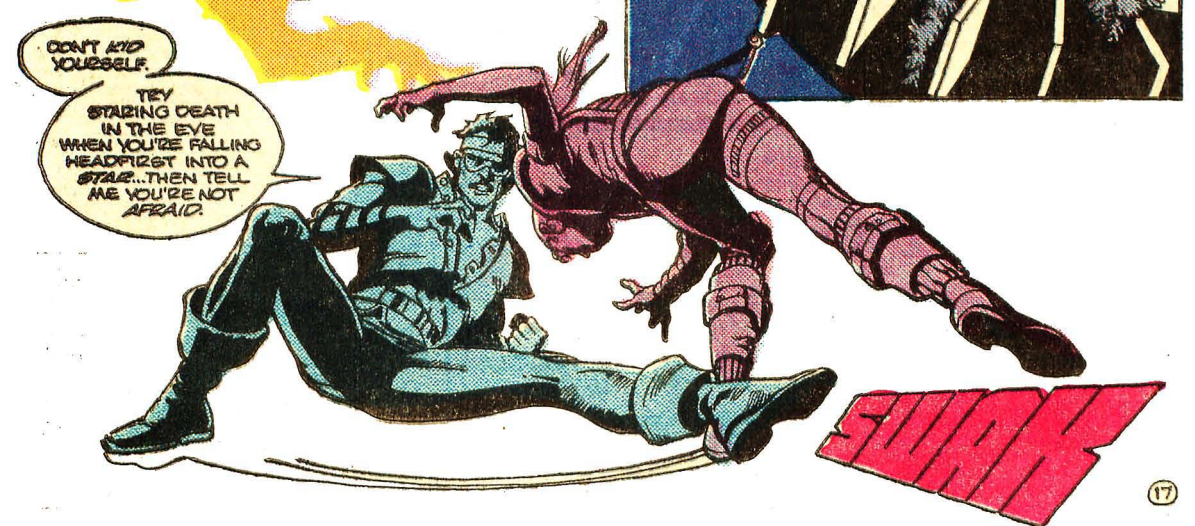
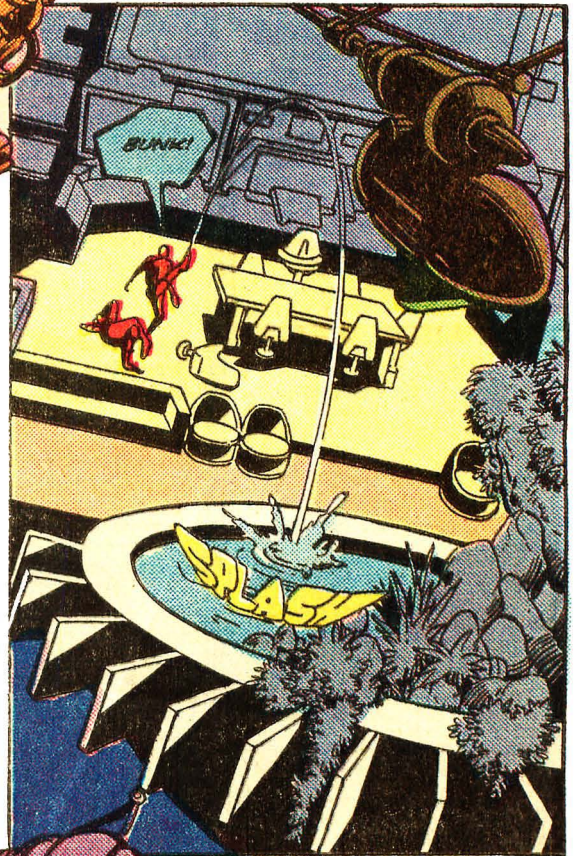
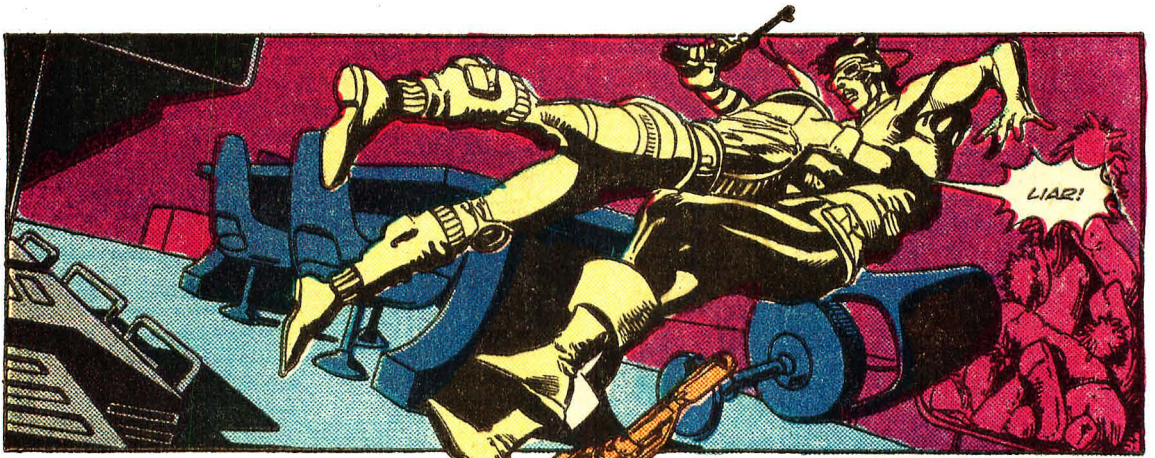
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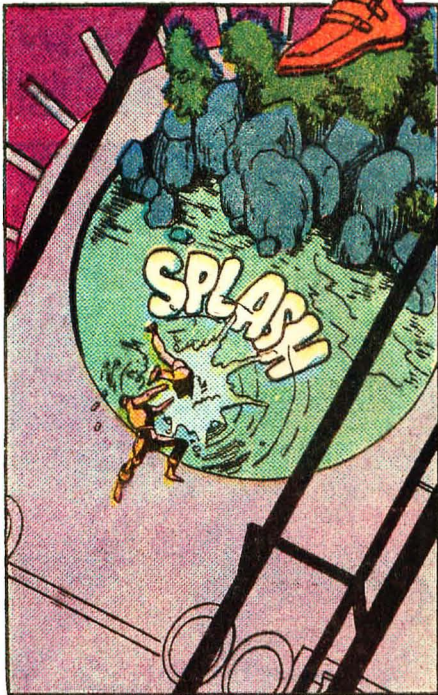
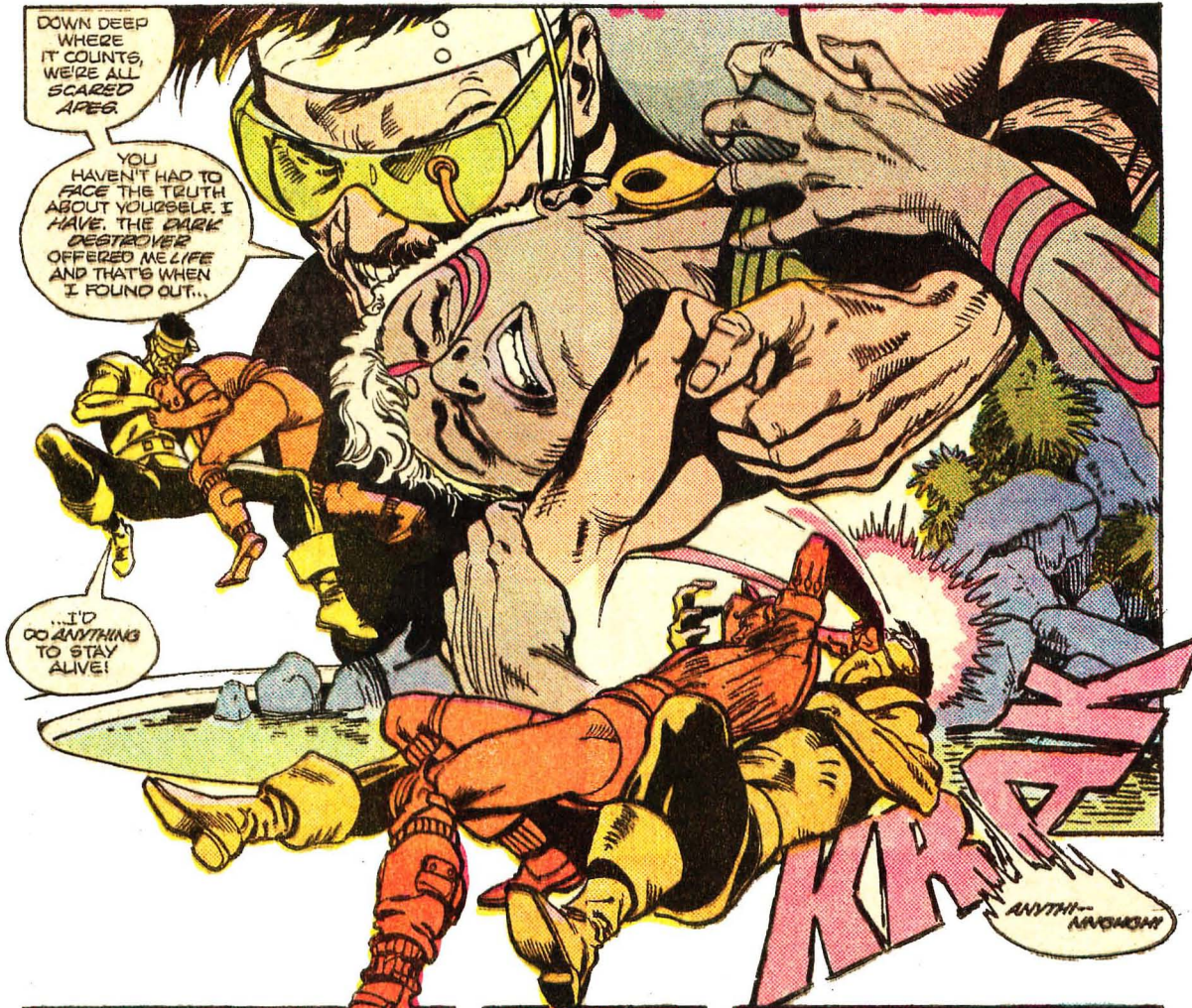


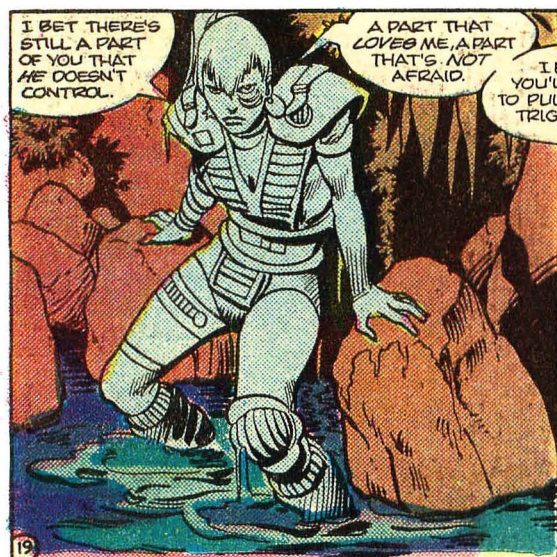
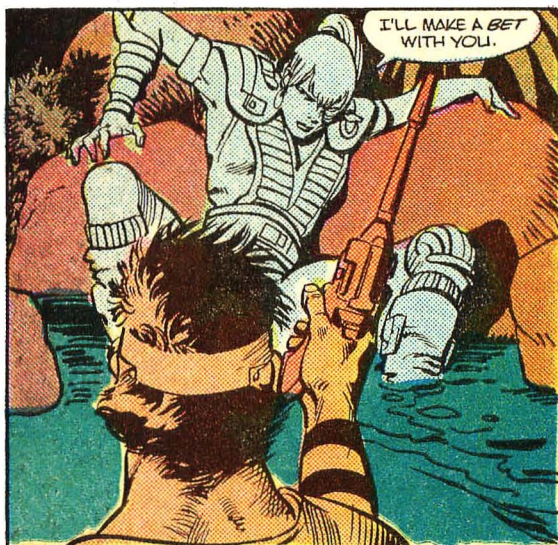
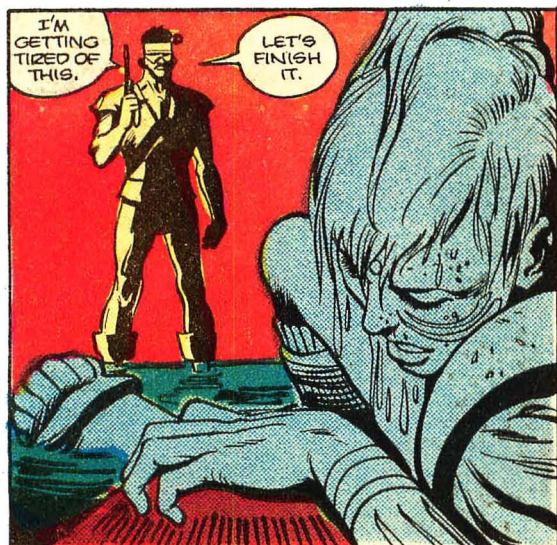
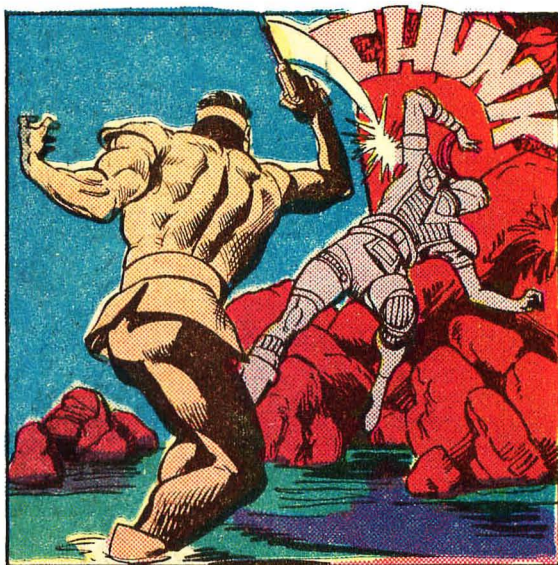
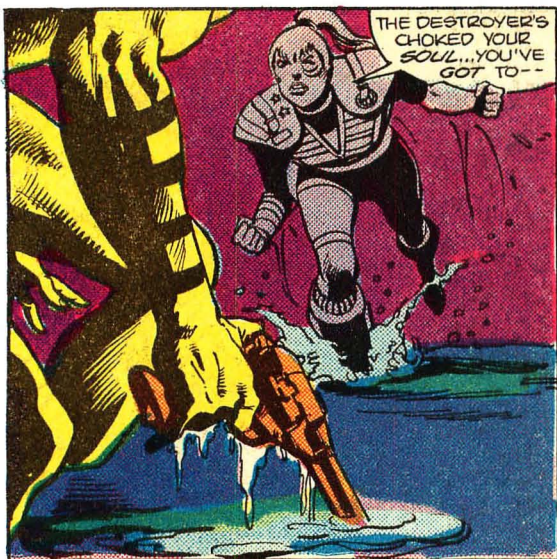
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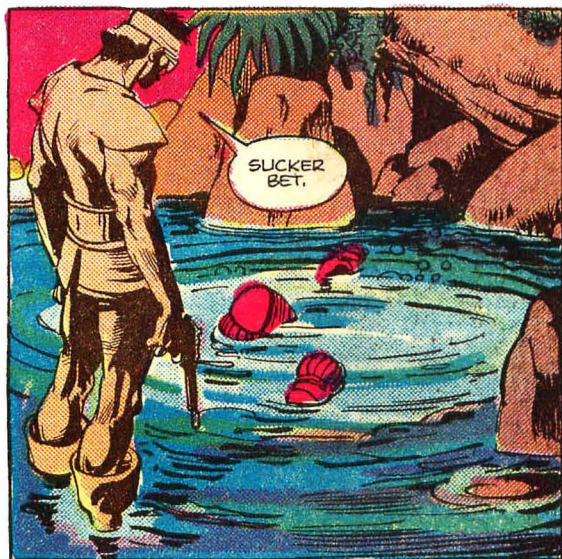
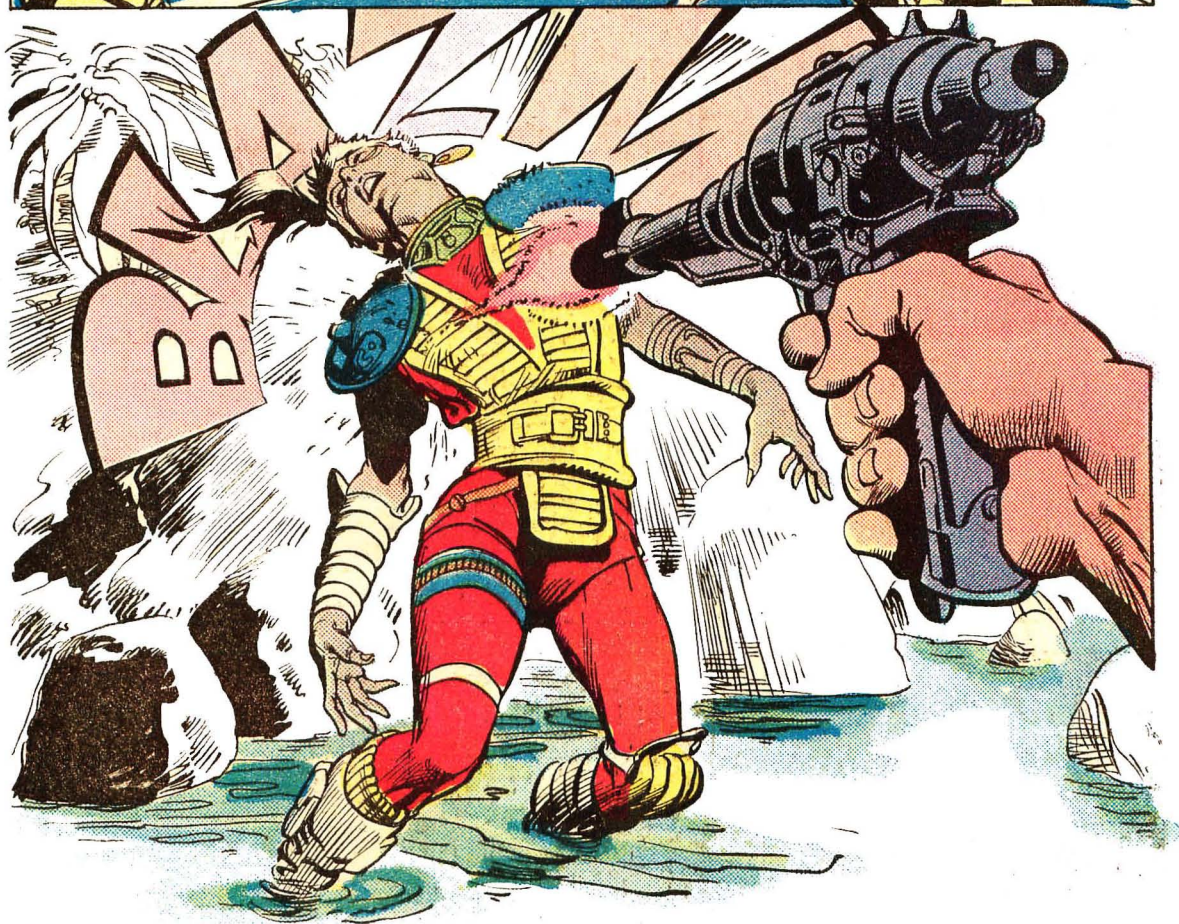
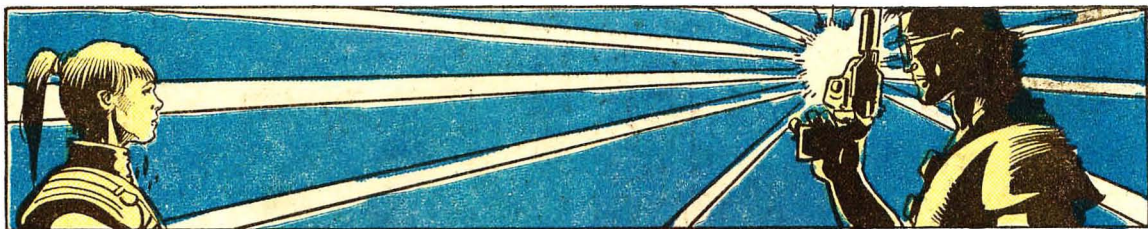
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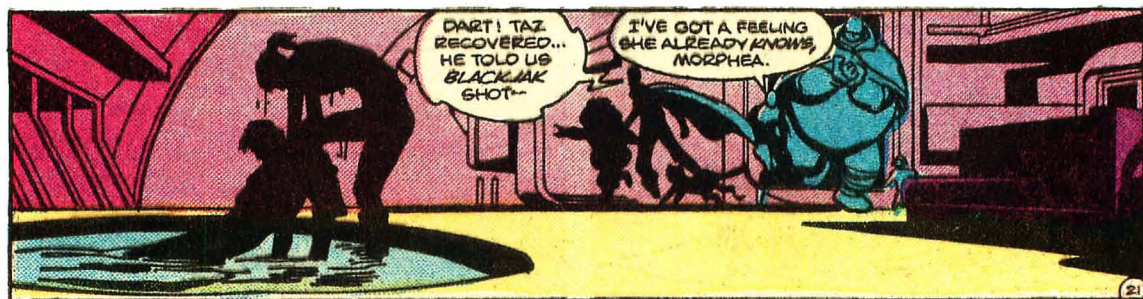
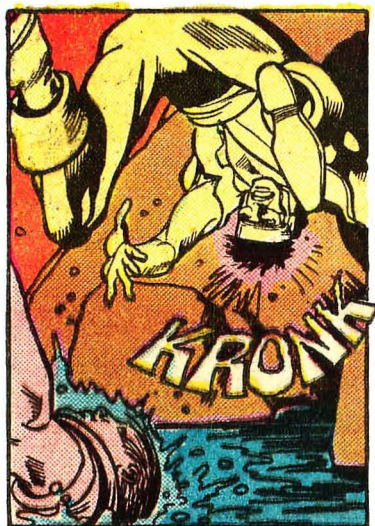
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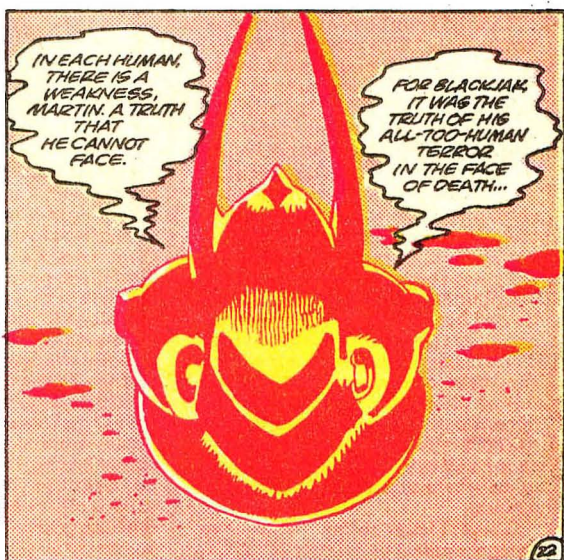
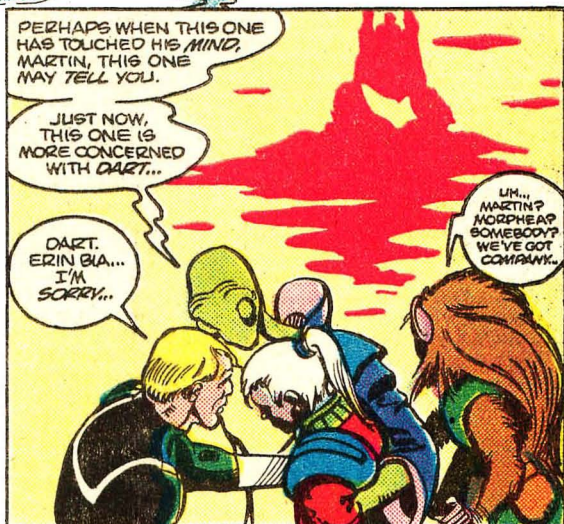
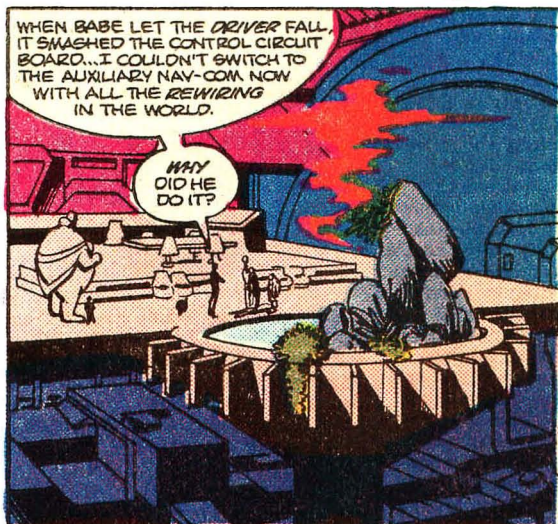
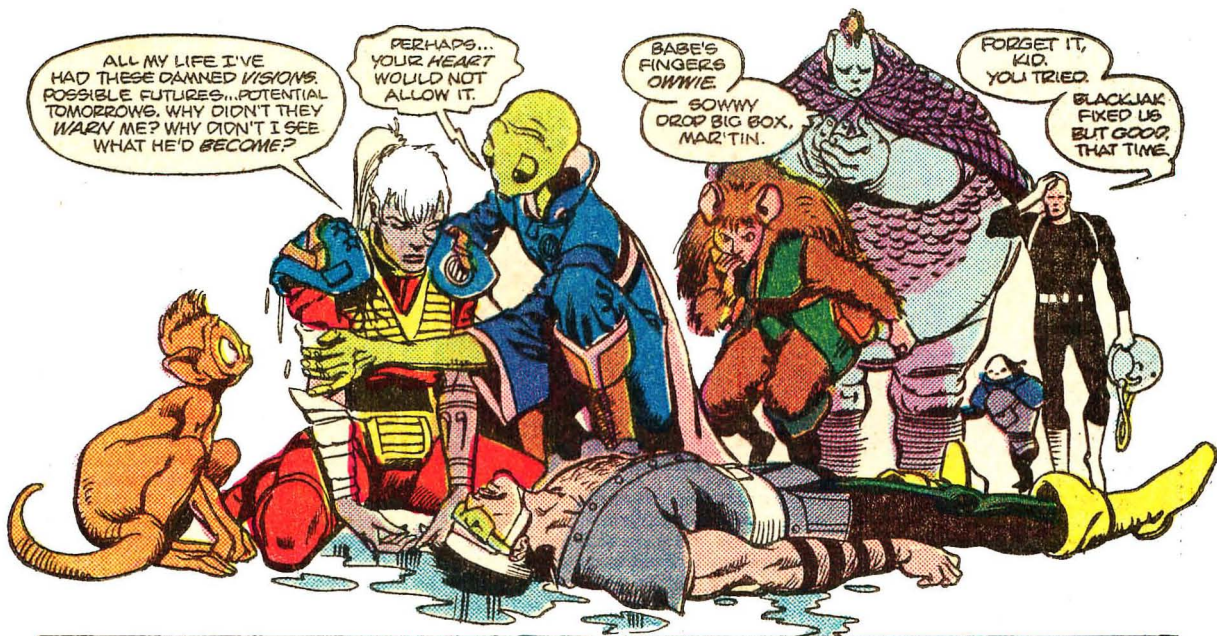












MEANWHILE.

THIS 'N' THAT

Welcome, Klaus Janson! Klaus Janson has just signed an exclusive contract with DC Comics, and I'd like to publicly welcome him and tell you how pleased I am to have him with us. Klaus is a real professional, both in attitude and skills, and he will be doing some pencil art and coloring for us as well as inking. He is currently the regular inker on **JEMM, SON OF SATURN** as well as having the opportunity to color as many of the books in that maxi-series as time allows. Future projects are still tentative, but watch this space for announcements as we firm up his schedule. In the meantime, pick up a copy of **JEMM**—it's Colan and Janson at their best! (Not to mention co-creator Greg Potter, who has written a sensitive but action-packed tale.) Welcome, Klaus Janson!



"...Help! I don't live anywhere near a comic shop." This plaintive plea reaches my desk often and though I can't solve all the problems of those who plead for help, I'd like to do what I can to clear up some misunderstandings and provide some help.

Large geographic sections of our country are not serviced by comic specialty shops and readers in those areas must buy their comics at newsstands. Let me point out that those areas aren't covered by the direct sales distribution network simply because no one has chosen to open a comic specialty retail outlet in these areas. There is no prohibition against such a shop opening and we'd be tickled pink if more did. Anyway, some readers feel left out because a portion of our titles are sold only thru those specialty shops and are unattainable in those areas where no shops have been opened.

A recent letter asked, "What have you got against us country folks?" The

writer went on to opine that we sell some of our titles only in specialty shops "because of greed." He evidently lived in a rural area that wasn't "within a hundred miles of the nearest shop" and was frustrated at not being able to purchase some DC titles. Greed isn't a factor. We cannot publish comics in our deluxe format for newsstand distribution. The economics of the package and the distribution system simply wouldn't allow it. That format is, however, workable in the specialty shops, but I hasten to point out that it is not necessarily more profitable than books distributed at newsstands. Some do well, some do not. It's a case of different strokes for different folks. On the other hand, you can subscribe to any of the deluxe format ongoing series from us or from one of the several independent subscription services that advertise in fanzines. These services can even sell you one-shots and limited series (maxi- and mini-) thru the mail. I know it's more difficult that way, but it is not necessarily more costly and the books are available to all who want them. Sorry I can't offer more now. Mebbe one day...



Our editors never retreat! Well, hardly ever, anyway. A few weeks ago all of our in-house editors and I went on a retreat to the **Tarrytown Executive Conference Center** in beautiful Westchester county. The center consists of several turn-of-the-century mansions interspersed with some more modern hotel-like units. It is high on a hill overlooking the Hudson River and the **Tappan Zee Bridge**. It is a nearly perfect, almost idyllic setting to retreat to. Lotsa trees, flowers, and grass—winding walkways—statues—tennis courts, etc. No telephones and no deadlines. Just twelve of us talking to each other about the work we do—in the library at one of the mansions—out on the patio—at the dinner table in the

dining room in the main building—as we walked those winding paths—and during most, if not all, of the "free time" we spent together. ("Free time" being when no formal meetings were taking place.) For those of you who need to know, "we" was: Julie Schwartz, Len Wein, Marv Wolfman, Alan Gold, Karen Berger, Andy Helfer, Janice Race, Mike Barr, Cary Bates, Nick Cuti, Bob Greenberger, and yours truly. Hi-lites: A discussion of the emerging role of today's comic book editor, and how we as DC editors can improve our books, instill a greater sense of continuity between titles, create a greater sense of a consistent DC Universe by working more closely together and improving communications between us; firmed-up plans for special books and series that will be published in 1988 when we celebrate our 50th anniversary—more details in a future column; Janice Race displayed her prowess as a trivia freak by whipping the rest of us in a hot game of **Trivial Pursuit**; Janice again taking top prize in a special drawing of business cards from a bowl at the conclusion of the retreat. Ms. Race gets a nifty custom-made DC jacket for that one. We accomplished a great deal, we had some fun, we'll do it again!



Welcome to yet another new kid on the block. Peggy May joins us at DC as Publicity and Special Events Manager. That makes Peggy the gal who handles conventions for DC and our new special guest appearance program. Previously she has toiled in the publicity departments of **Dell Publishing** company and **New American Library**. Somehow, Peggy finally saw the light and realized that the future is in comics—DC Comics. It's still too soon to tell, but there is mounting evidence that Peggy will fit in well with our resident loonies.

Welcome, Peggy—
And Thank you and Good Afternoon.

Dick

THIS WAS HIS
WEAKNESS--THAT
HE COULD NOT ACCEPT
HIS OWN HUMANITY.
I MADE GOOD USE
OF THIS FRAILTY,
AS OTHERS
AMONG YOUR RACE
HAVE DONE
BEFORE ME.

THAT WHICH HUMANS
FEAR IN THEMSELVES
WILL ALWAYS BE
THE SOURCE OF THEIR
DESTRUCTION.

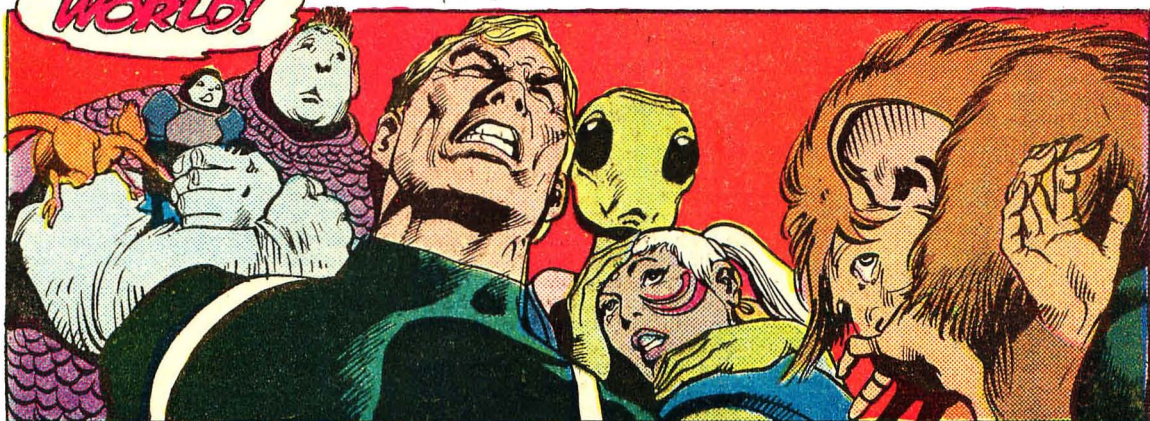
AND,
SPEAKING
OF
DESTRUCTION...

IN SIX HOURS,
YOU WILL ARRIVE
AT YOUR DESTINATION...
A WORLD
OF MY CHOOSING,
IN A UNIVERSE
YOU KNOW
ALL TOO WELL.

THERE, YOU WILL
BE MY GUESTS
AT A DISPLAY
OF DESTRUCTION
THE LIKE OF WHICH
HAS NOT BEEN SEEN
SINCE THE HOUR
OF CREATION.

FOR YOUR
EDIFICATION
AND AMUSEMENT,
I WILL PRESENT--

**THE END
OF THE
WORLD!**



NEXT
ISSUE! **REVELATIONS--AND RELATIONS!**

FORCE FEEDBACK

L-1759

Last issue we mentioned that issue number twelve would feature the climax of our first multi-issue saga. Well, that's not EXACTLY true anymore. Y'see, deadline pressures on Gerry, José, and practically everyone else involved in the monthly creation of ATARI FORCE have necessitated that our climax be broken into TWO issues. So next issue you'll be seeing the FIRST part of a two-part conclusion! In addition, we've decided to move up the premiere of our ATARI FORCE solo stories, so next issue will see the first of that series too! We're getting used to making apologies in this column, but we promise you won't be disappointed—either with the AF stories to come, or with the new solo stories. And if you take a look at the "next issue" space at the tail end of this column, we're sure you'll understand why!

Dear Gerry, José, and Andy:

I am writing to congratulate you on your seventh superb issue of ATARI FORCE. With the release of this issue, Conway/Garcia Lopez are now ranked with teams like Wolfman/Pérez and Claremont/Romita.

For the few lines Dart had, she stood out as a very important member. Pakrat is by far the most interesting Force member, which was demonstrated when he and Dart began talking with Champion and the Dark Destroyer.

Speaking of Champion and D.D., they seemed to be bitter enemies here, but in the original run of ATARI FORCE (packed with the game cartridges) they didn't even know each other. Did Champion meet this New Earth nemesis between then and now? I hope we find out. By the way, let's see more of Kargg. He's neat.

Tempest seems to be able to do a multitude of things with his phasing abilities. I hope he and his dad patch things up soon, but not instantly.

Babe and Hukka are an unusual pair, like Abbott and Costello. I can't wait to see Babe's feature adventure next issue. I wonder what Morpheia will do about Babe's disappearance? After this issue, I expect her to be strongly independent, especially in the field of motherhood. (By the way, Morpheia's mother was so ugly, I almost barfed!)

Well, this is a loyal fan signing off—but not for the last time!

ATARI FORCE Forever,
Keith McIlwain

(Well, Keith, you've already dis-

covered the nature of Babe's solo adventure, but the answers to your questions regarding the old Dark Destroyer will have to wait till next issue, when all will be revealed—in glorious four-color, no less!)

Dear Atari Force,

I am writing to tell you that ATARI FORCE is my favorite comic. I've read all of them so far, and I collect two issues of each every month. I hope you continue the series for a long time. Issue #7 was great. The art was also great.

Ricky LeGassey
59 Manila Street
Oakville, CT 06779

(Now, there's a wise investor!)

Dear Gerry and José,

I had to write again (I only commented last issue) this month, because I'm genuinely enthusiastic about ATARI FORCE. Issue #7, "Counter Attack," has set me thinking and wondering and marveling ... just like the best science fiction will do!

"Counter Attack" seemed an inappropriate title for an issue I have been anxiously awaiting since #1. Looking ahead to issue #8, it seems far more likely that this issue should have been called "Morphea's Story." Ever since the first issue (with its hints that Morpheia and Martin Champion may become great friends—or even more), I have watched Morpheia, and these glimpses into her past were fascinating for me. And part of the fascination is in the unanswered questions:

- 1) What are the extents of Morpheia's abilities?
- 2) Are her abilities normal for her race?
- 3) Why is it unthinkable for her to use the pronoun "I" when her mother uses its objective counterpart, "me"? Is it a privilege to be earned with age, or was the whole scene so warped through nightmare that it must be taken as allegorical?

Psychlops strongly resembled Morpheia—similar abilities, same general speech patterns, same amphibian appearance, a terrifying variation of a kind of emotional vampirism Morpheia could be capable of ... Was the resemblance intentional?

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New York, NY 10103

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When will we learn more?

Personally, I'm ready for another Morpheia spotlight! Don't get me wrong—I think the whole cast is interesting in various ways. This issue took a sarcastic-sounding approach to Martin Champion's supposed delusions ... This leaves the readers (myself included) wondering if he is reliable or not. Clearly, Champion is not insane ... just obsessed, if even that. He could generate half a dozen "spotlight" tales all by himself! The intensity with which he is portrayed fascinates me; it reminds me strongly of several science fiction characters, even a little bit of Paul Atrides.

As for Dart, I must compliment José for his portrayal of a female who could easily look far more bizarre than Morpheia if she were done sloppily or inconsistently. Aside from her visual appearance, the development of her character has taken a refreshingly mature turn, and I look forward to more of the same.

Pakrat I take as pure comic relief ... but a queasy feeling in my pancreas tells me I shouldn't stop there.

But Babe ... Babe I have reservations about. I wonder what can possibly be done with a character who will be a mountain long before we get any deep thoughts. As talented as you may be, Gerry, I seriously doubt you can make a mountain a vital, working member of the Force.

But whatever you two do, I'm interested! I'll be watching, and I just know I'll be enjoying every minute of it!

Steve T. Donoghue
Iowa City, IA 52242

(While we haven't the space to answer all your questions, Steve, your comments on Psychlops do bring up an interesting point. The character was actually created by Ernie Colón (of ARAK, AMETHYST, and the soon-to-be released MEDUSA CHAIN graphic novel fame) as a villain to be used against the original Atari Force. When we decided to update the group, Psychlops and a host of other baddies were stuffed in the back of a desk drawer—until Gerry Conway had the good sense to clean up his office and rediscover them!

The first thing Gerry noticed was the potential the character had to be the negative side of Morpheia—since visually they were similar, and their powers were likewise, the linkup was a natural! Undoubtedly, we'll be seeing more of these Colón-inspired villains as time

goes on—and we'll let you all know about it!)

Dear Andy, et al.:

I just realized why I enjoy reading ATARI FORCE so much: Each issue has something that is so...different that it's interesting. It therefore makes each issue fun to read. And that's what counts!

Yours truly,

Kevin T. Brown
7846F W. Lawrence Ave.
Norridge, IL 60656

P.S. Any chance of Terry Austin inking an issue of AF? I'm just curious as to how it would look, but don't ever get rid of the Garcia Lopez/Villagran team.

(Glad you noticed, Kevin. We try to do something new in every issue of ATARI FORCE. Whether it's an added character development, a variation on a power, or simply a nice little revelation, not an issue passes without something different or unexpected happening. As for Mr. Austin—we're trying, but we suspect our chances will improve once he finishes embellishing the climax to DC's CAMELOT 3000 maxi-series.)

Dear Mr. Helfer,

ATARI FORCE is great! I just love Chris and Dart! I have just finished issue #8, and I really enjoyed it, seeing Babe and Hukka together (it was so cute!). Let's have another one just like this real soon, okay? I am looking forward to seeing the end of the Dark Destroyer. Best of luck always.

Sincerely,

Ed Riordan
2910 Zulette Ave.
Bronx, NY 10461

Dear Andy,

Bravo on turning out a wonderful script for ATARI FORCE #8. But that's no real surprise, since your concern as ATARI FORCE editor was sure to come through. And, boy, did it ever! I especially liked that marvelous scene where Tempest thanks Morpheus for saving his life. Beautiful! Gut emotions that are so warmly sincere!

Don't get me wrong. Gerry Conway is one of my favorite writers (PLUG: The new SUN DEVILS maxi-series is dynamite!), but it's comforting to know there's another capable author standing nearby.

I wish I could find one hundred new ways to praise Garcia Lopez's art. More and more I'm being told by friends that they've just discovered ATARI FORCE and are excited (very excited) about the gorgeous artwork.

As for the actual storyline, I can see some real fun-feuds between Pakrat and the new "Shorty Man." Should prove highly volatile indeed!

Lastly, Steven Feldman's letter was right on target. ATARI FORCE obviously

owes much of its existence to team books and an ample dash of science fiction films. When I first discovered ATARI FORCE, I was reminded of the joys of intergalactic travel a la Luke Skywalker and company. Oddly enough, the comics company that produces that comic offshoot never has been able to catch the excitement and zest of the original. ATARI FORCE provides this kind of cinematic excitement every issue, which is a credit to you all.

Let the saga continue.

Ron Fortier
P.O. Box 265
Somersworth, NH 03878

(Gee, Ron, we don't know what to say about all your comments, except thanks. It's usually easy accepting compliments for Gerry or José, but when they're directed at the writer of this letter column, it's a bit harder. Y'know, modesty and all that. Anyway, thanks again.)

Dear ATARI FORCE crew,

You have got yourselves a great mag on your hands!

"Babe's Story" was, although in a lighter, more humorous vein than the previous issues, a real treat. And I think Andy's dialogue was a high point of the issue. I laughed aloud a few times because of Babe's limited vocabulary.

I wasn't surprised when Blackjak bit the dust a while back. His absence from the cover of issue #1 indicated that he wasn't to be a part of the Force, and I figured, "Hey, something's going to happen to him!"

However, I was sorry to see him go.

And now maybe I was wrong. Maybe he's not really dead; maybe he's destined to be a part of the Force. Although, since Dart sees only possible futures and not the future, maybe Gerry's just being a rat and giving us false hopes. Hey, Gerry, you wouldn't do that...would ya?

Till next month, keep up the superior work!

Bill Behrens
5233 North Long
Chicago, IL 60630

Hi, Guys,

I was truly impressed with your efforts on ATARI FORCE #8. Whoever "Shorty Man" is, I like him! I know I'm alone in this, but don't bring back Blackjak. I find returning characters from the dead always stretches credibility, and it's not worth it, considering how many other truly interesting people you have to deal with.

You've got a real winner in the Dark Destroyer, but don't get caught in the trap Marvel did with Baron Karza of the Micronauts (see how continuous resurrection can ruin a character?).

Good Luck!!

John Migliore
Silver Snail Comics
235 King Street East
Hamilton, Ontario Canada, L8N-1B6
(Now you tell us!!!)

Dear AF Team,

With #8 we finally find the spotlight on my provisional team-favorite: Babe. Now, in some ways this was a nice story, but in others it was just too nice. What I mean by the latter is that things just worked out too well for Babe. He plopped himself down on an alien world, chose up with the "right" side in a global conflict, carried out the battle perfectly against the "wrong" side, and then helped rescue the sole remaining good guy. To me, the real crunch for Babe will come when some not-so-good guy takes advantage of Babe's trusting nature to lead him astray and have him serve the wrong cause. Babe would be defenseless against such an approach, and I had hoped to see it here. Maybe next time.

Anyway, this relatively "light" issue was a welcome break from the recent grim goings-on.

One thing, though: We just can't leave the new team member with a name like "Shorty-Man"—it's too demeaning. How about Napoleon? Cyrano? Munchkin? Tinkerbell? Hmmm, maybe I'll have to work on that one a bit.

Yours truly,
"T.M. Maple"

(Sensible as your comments are, T.M., we think you may have missed the point of "Babe's Story," that is, that for a true innocent—especially an extremely powerful one—things have a way of working themselves out. We've had plenty of predators abusing Babe's abilities—issues 1-4, for example—and wanted to do one where, by virtue of his innocence and basic responses, Babe makes all the right decisions. Actually, in a world where comics are filled with examples of corruption and manipulations on all levels, we thought this story offered a refreshing change of attitude!

That's all the room we have for now, except to once again—are we repeating ourselves?—tell you about: NEXT ISSUE: What—or who—is the DARK DESTROYER? You'll find out in a mere thirty days—and we guarantee that you're in for the shock of your life! PLUS: A rather offbeat (if we do say so ourselves) HUKKA solo story, affectionately written and illustrated by Mr. Keith Giffen! Naturally, Gerry Conway and José Luis Garcia Lopez will be on hand to do the creative chores on our main feature, so for 75¢, who could ask for anything more!! Be there, or be ...

—ANDY HELFER



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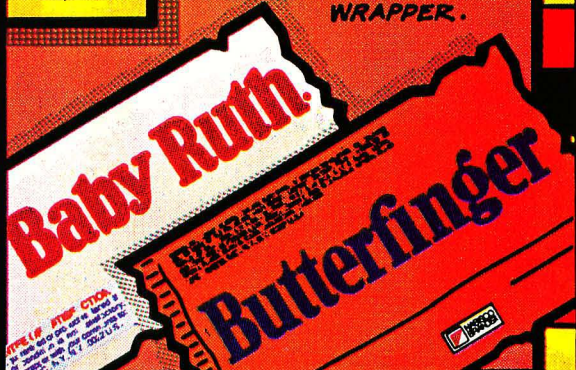
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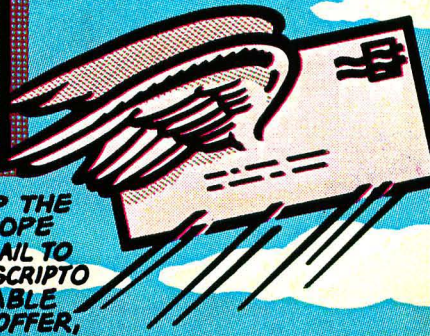
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