



BY
GERRY CONWAY AND
JOSE LUIS GARCIA LOPEZ

75¢

7

JULY 84



ATARI FORCE



C-725



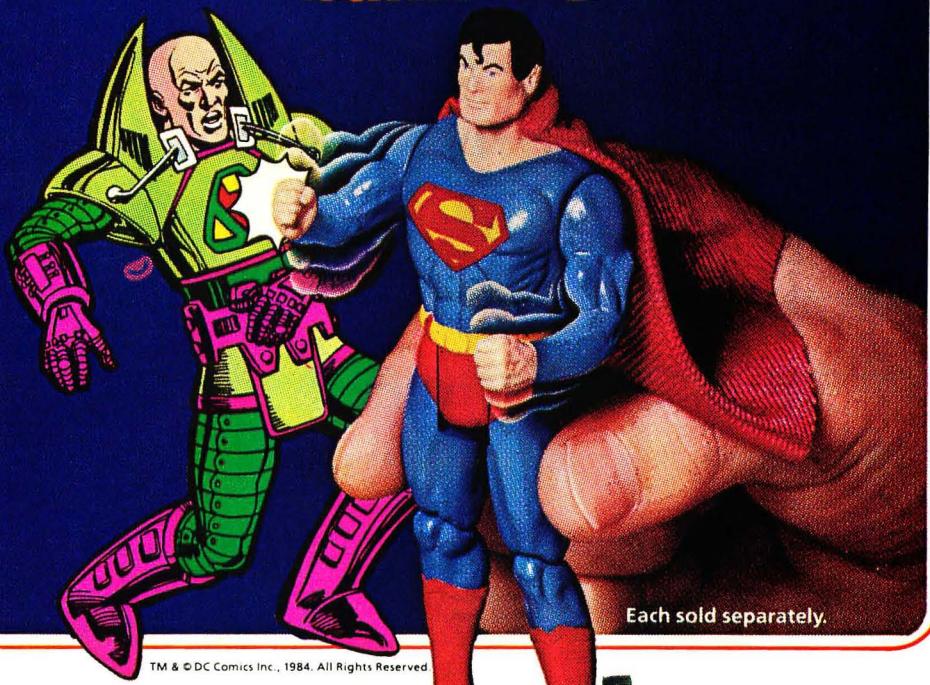
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TEMPEST SCREAMS!

HE TRIES NOT TO--
LORD, HOW HE TRIES.

BUT THE PAIN--

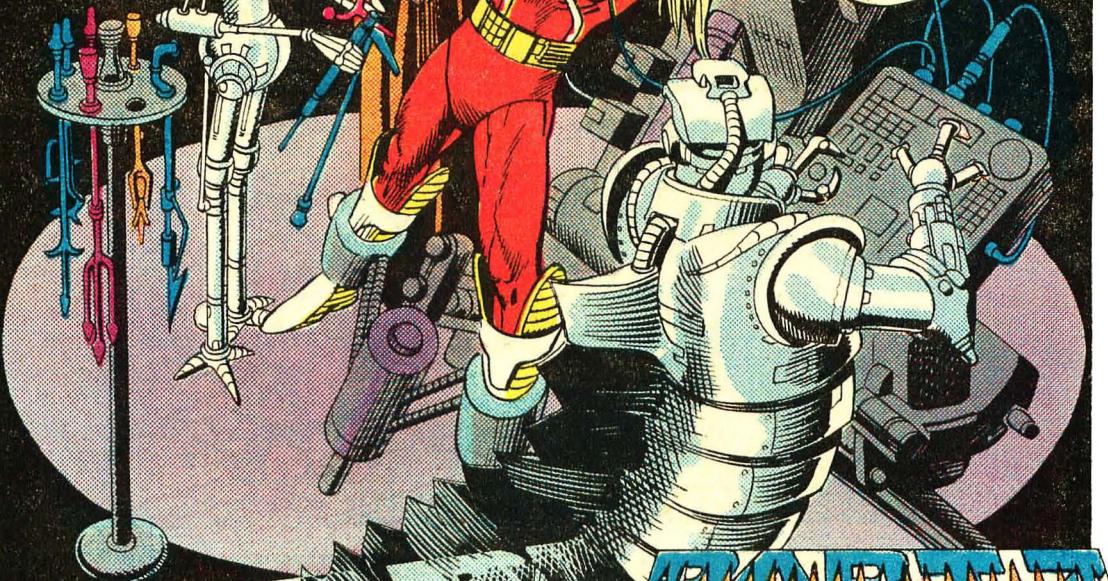
-OVERWELMS HIM.

AAAARRRRRRGGGG

THERE, NOW:
DOESN'T THAT FEEL
MUCH BETTER?

HRALKAR,
TURN UP THE
POWER-- JUST
A LITTLE.

DAMN YOU,
PSYKLOPS.
WHAT DO YOU
WANT?



ATARI FORCE

ATTACK

CREATED BY GERRY CONWAY, ROY THOMAS AND JOSE GARCIA LOPEZ

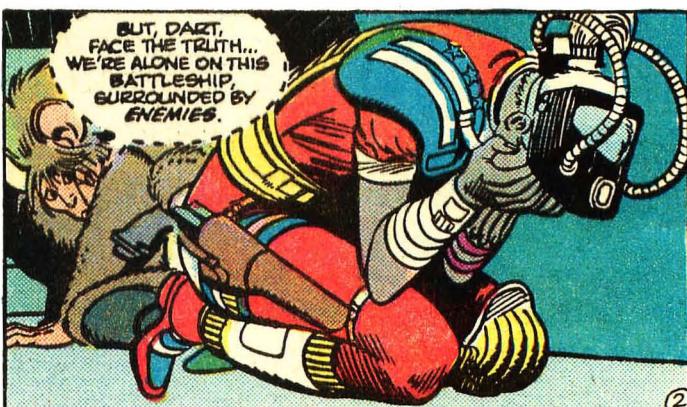
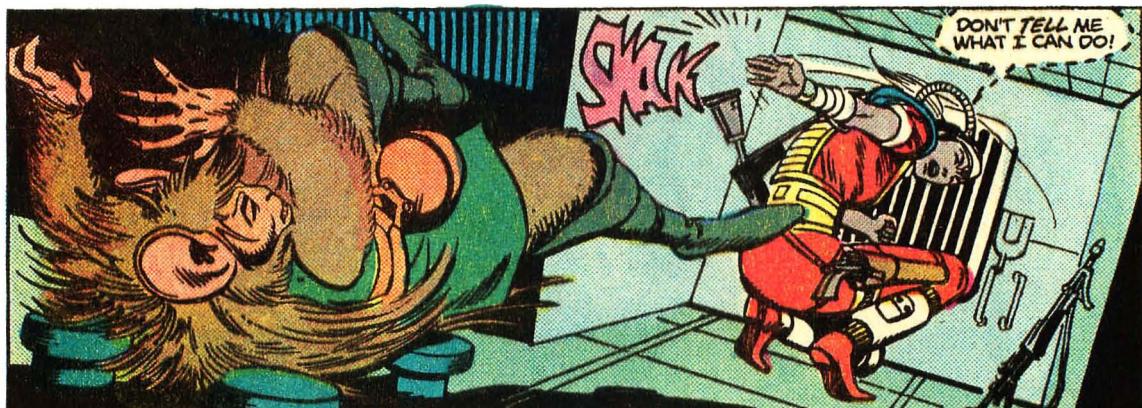
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LETTERER

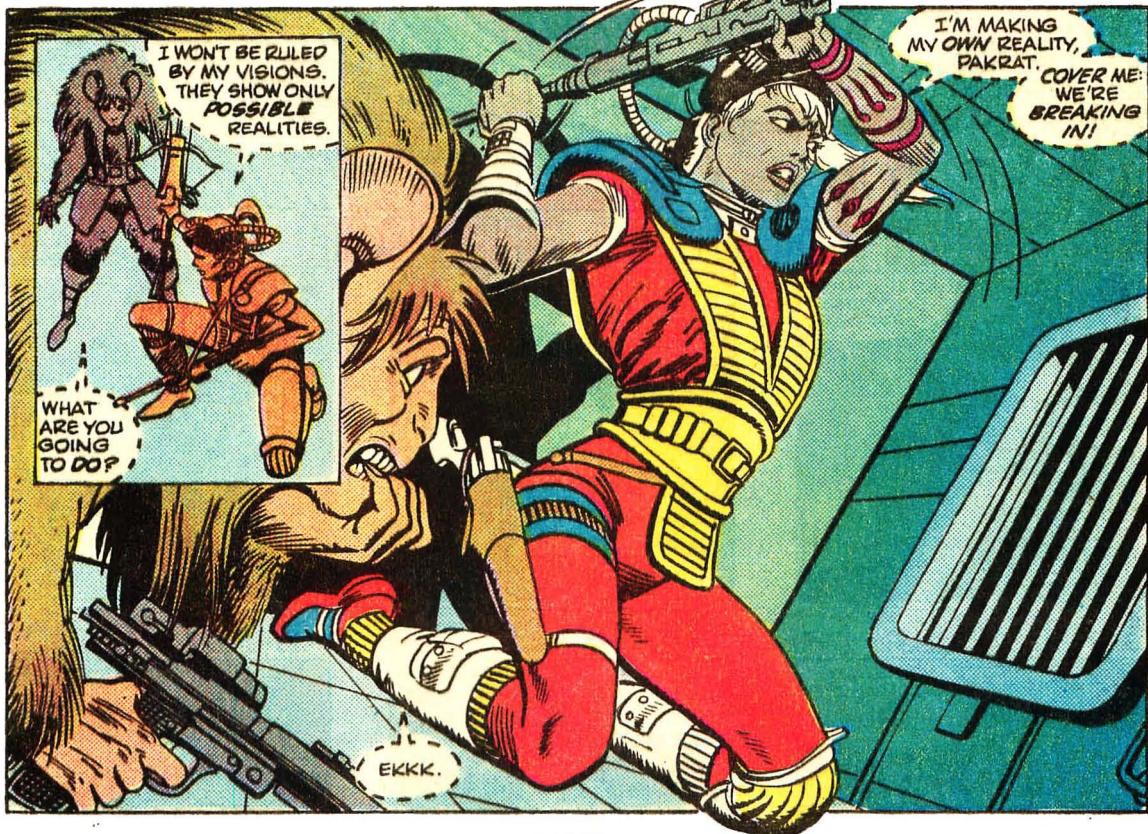
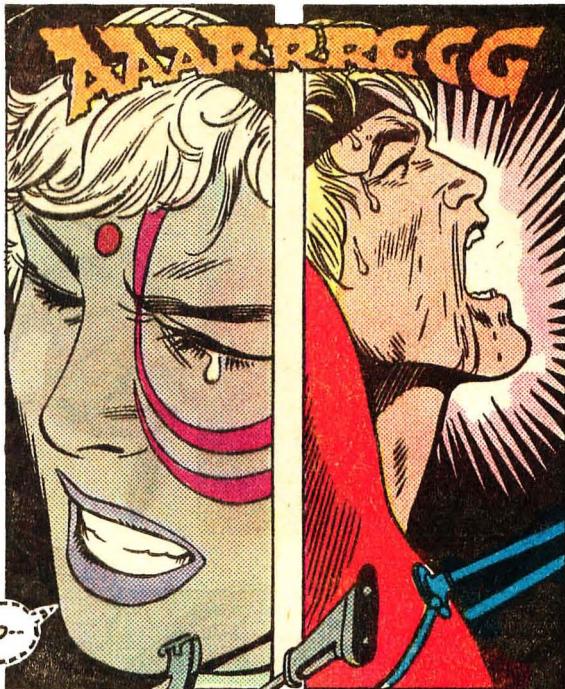
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ARTIST
TOM ZIUKO
COLORIST

RICARDO VILLAGRAN
INKER
ANDY HELFER
EDITOR

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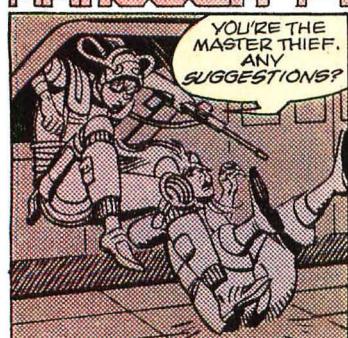
AAROOCA

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AROOOO



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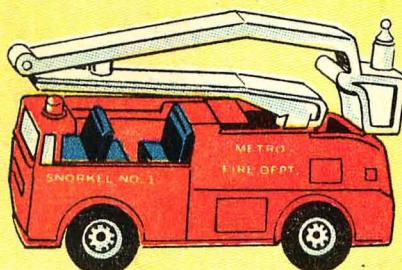
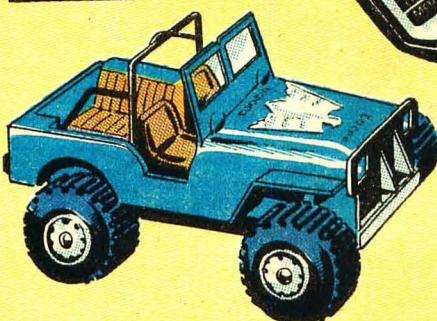
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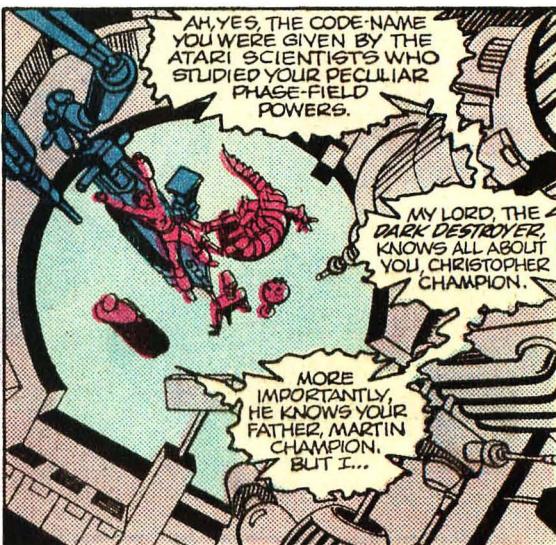
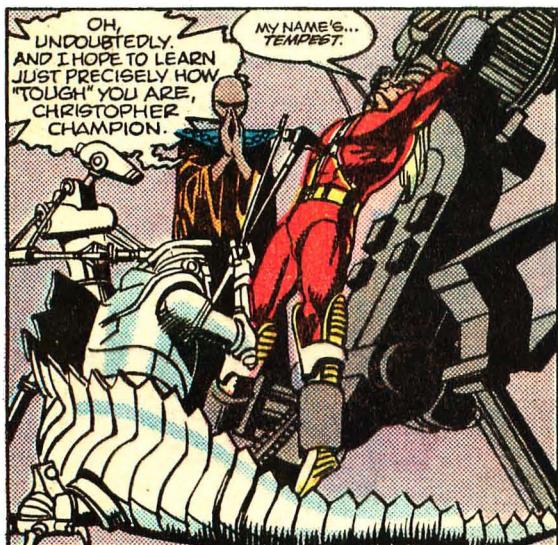
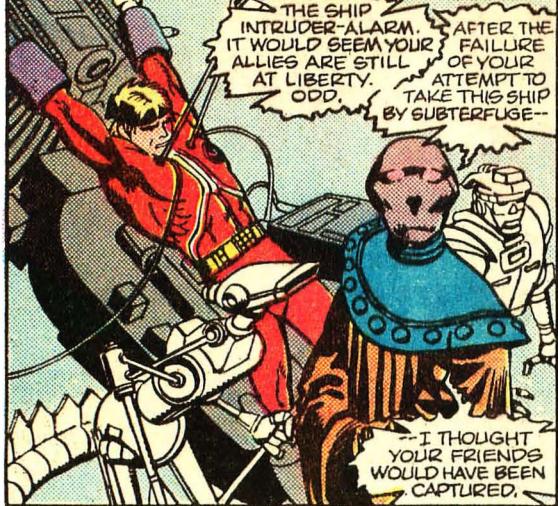
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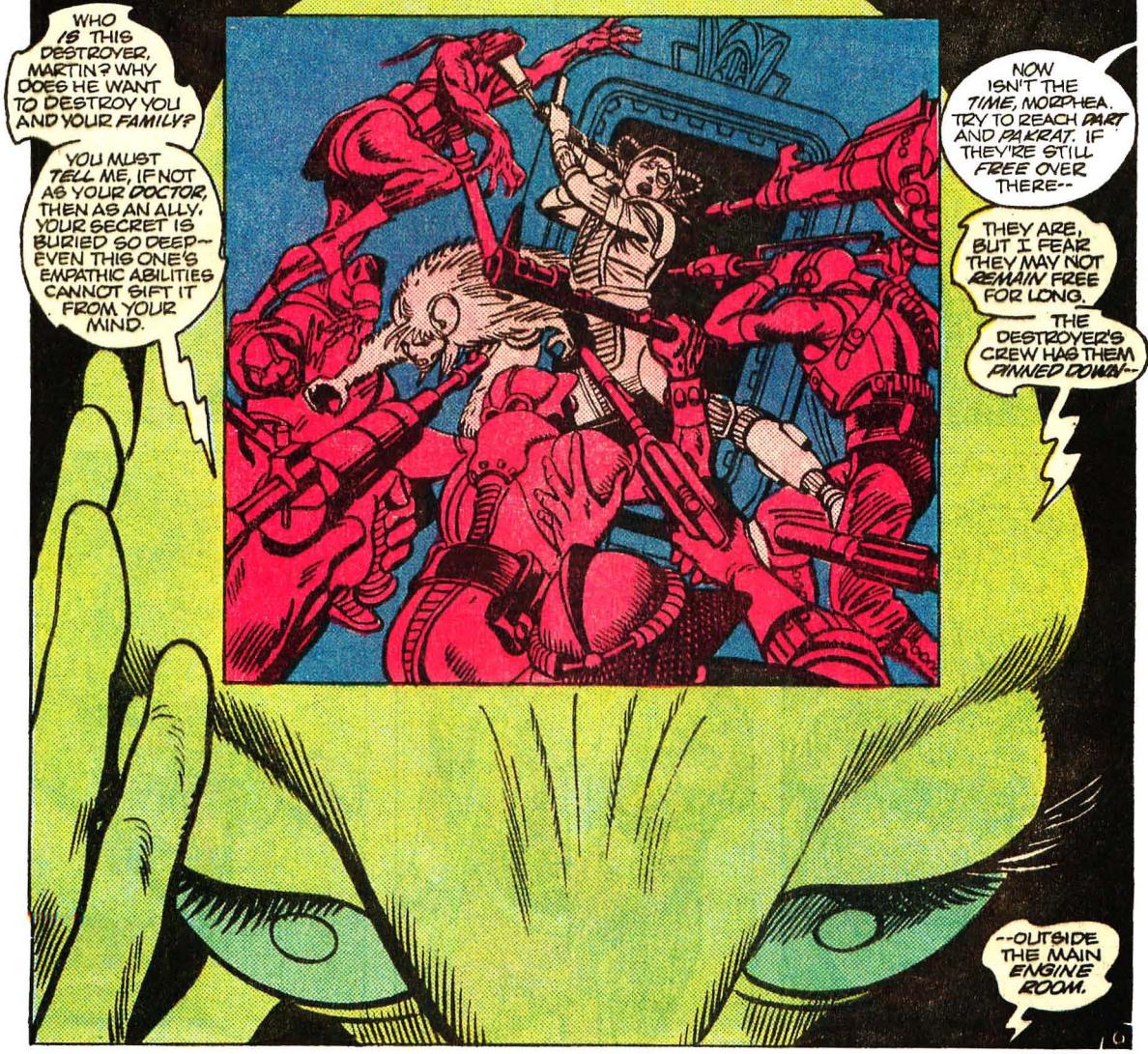
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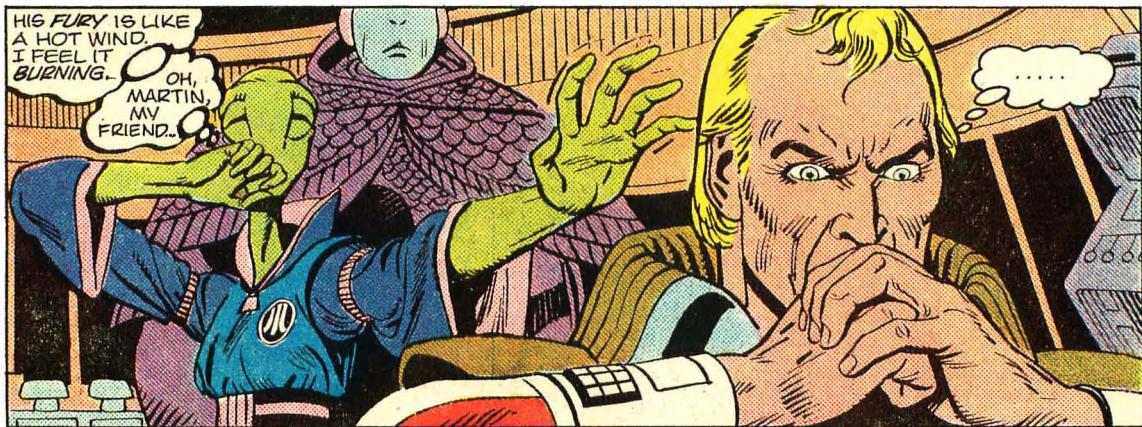
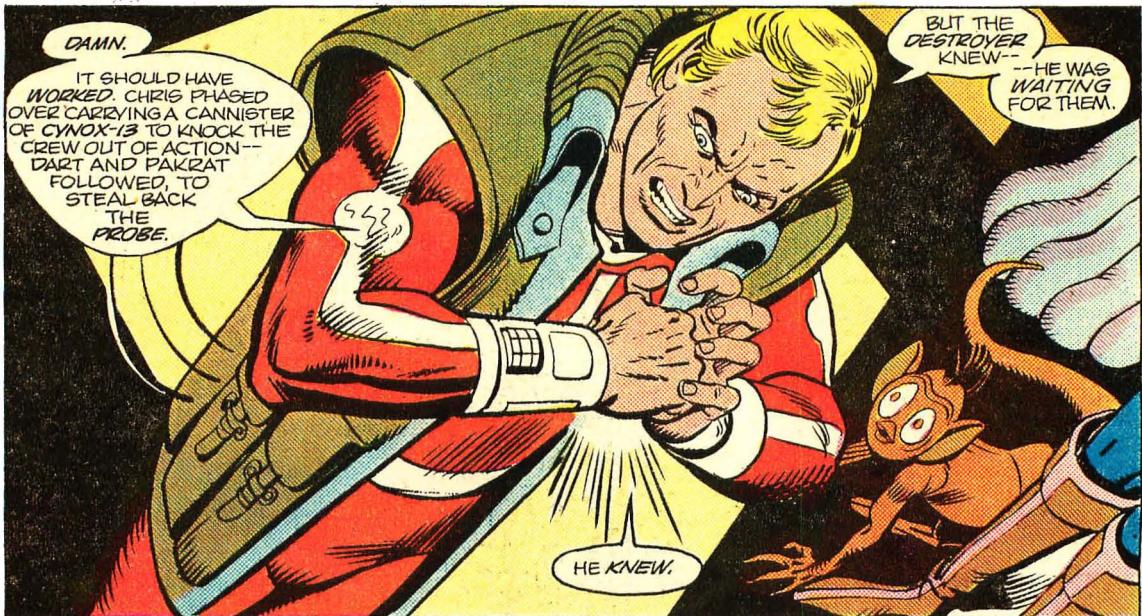
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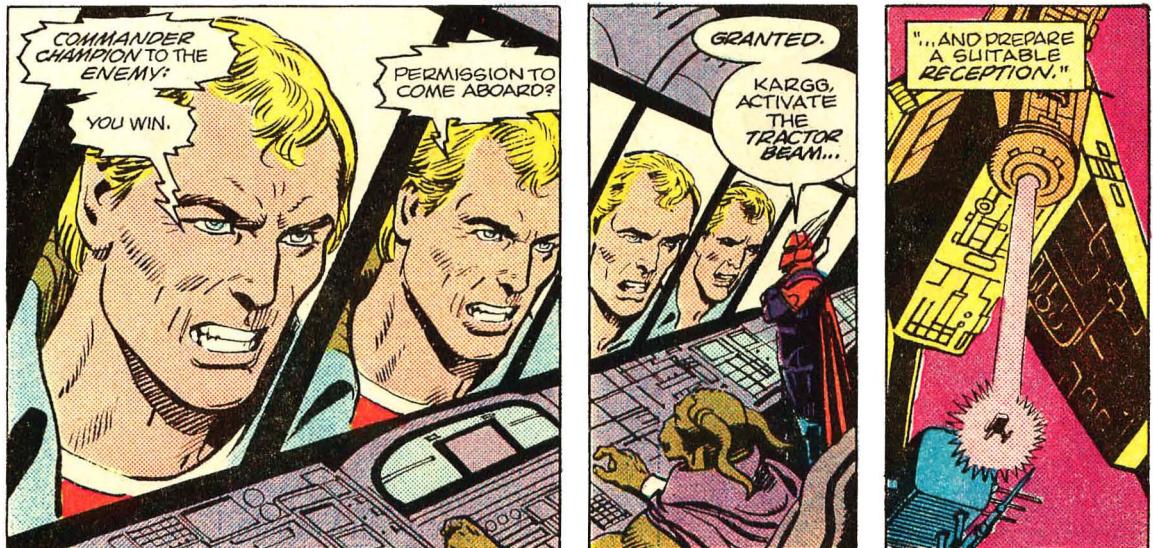
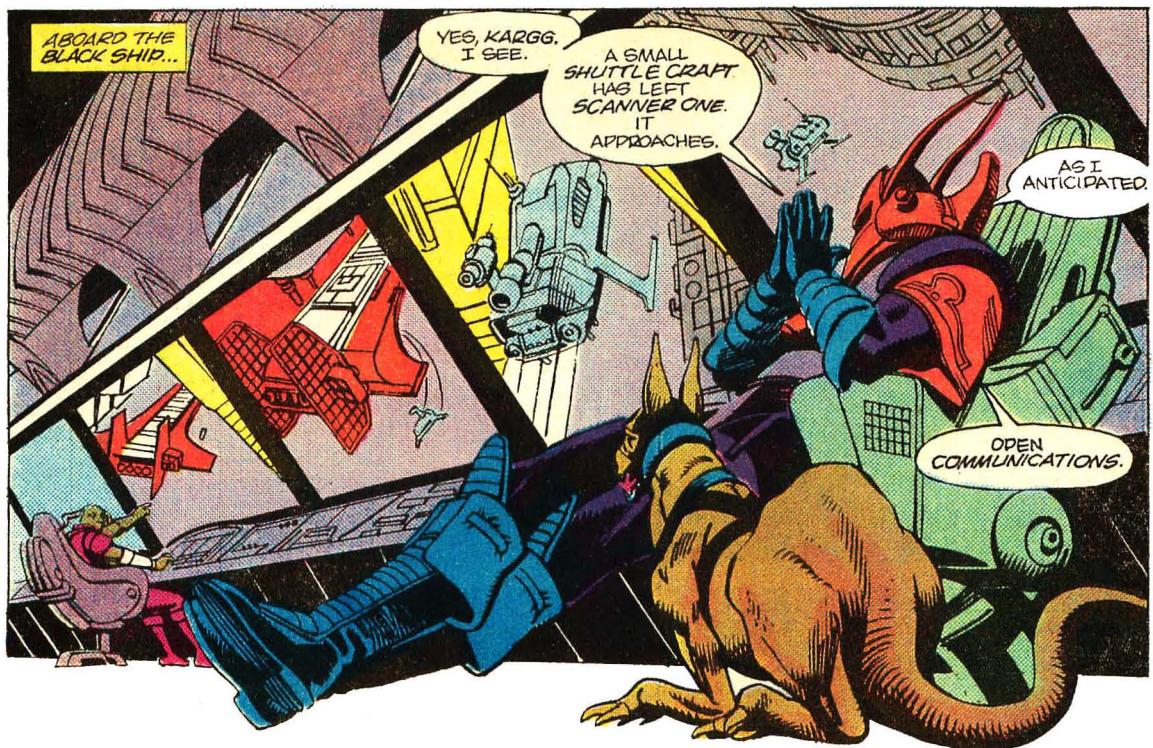
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PARDOOGA-AAROOOGA!









MARTIN CHAMPION WAS RAISED ON EARTH IN THE LAST QUARTER OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. HE WAS TRAINED AS A SOLDIER, A MARINE, AND SAW COMBAT AT AN EARLY AGE.

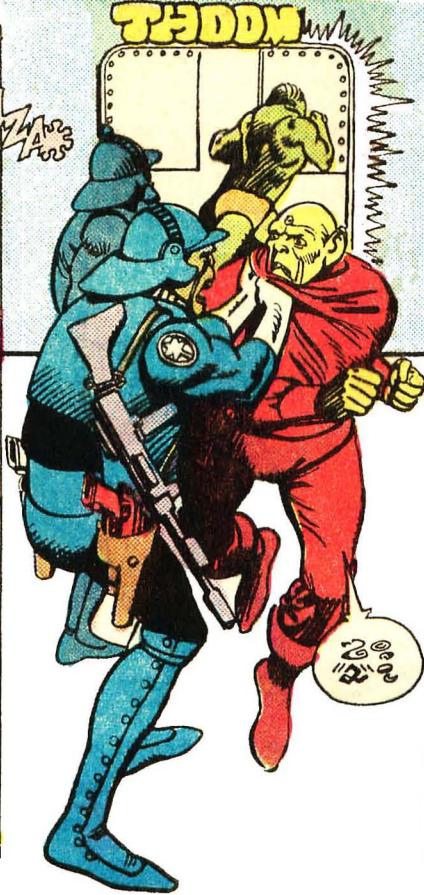
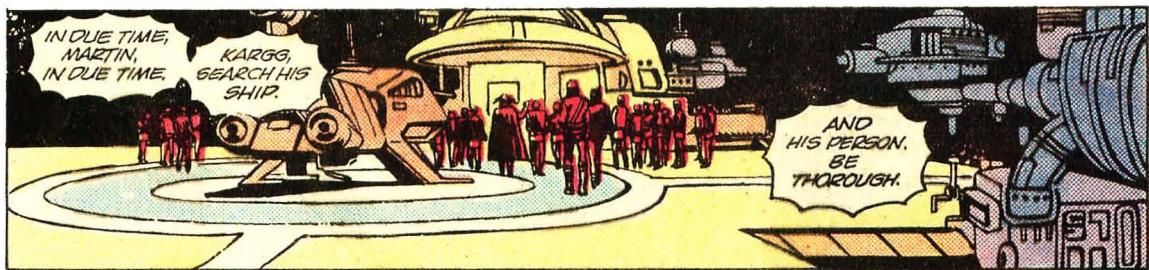
HE IS A MAN OF FEW ILLUSIONS, OR SO HE HAS ALWAYS THOUGHT.

HE'S BEEN LYING TO HIMSELF.

ONE OF MARTIN CHAMPION'S MOST PERSISTENT DELUSIONS CONCERNED HIS OWN TOTAL FEARLESSNESS.

BY ALL RIGHTS, AS HE CONFRONTS THE WARRIOR OF HIS ENEMY, MARTIN CHAMPION SHOULD BE TERRIFIED.

BUT HE'S JUST TOO DELUSIVE TO REALIZE IT.



CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

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ARAK



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INSIDE--

D-DART...
WHAT DID WE
DO?

WE WON.

WE DID?

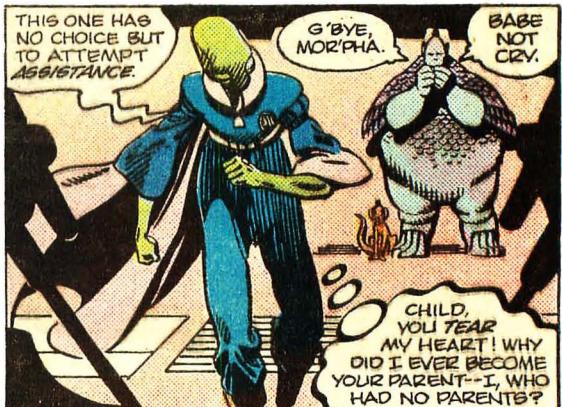
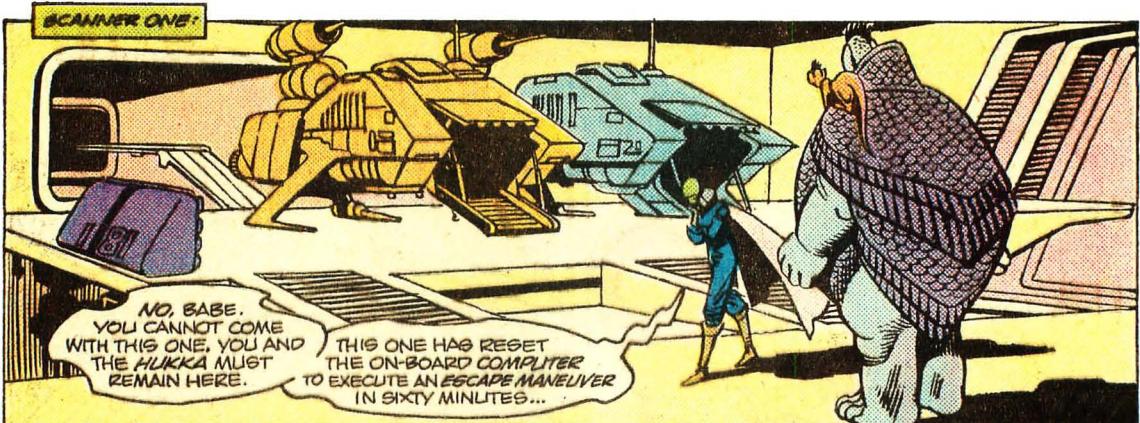
YEP.

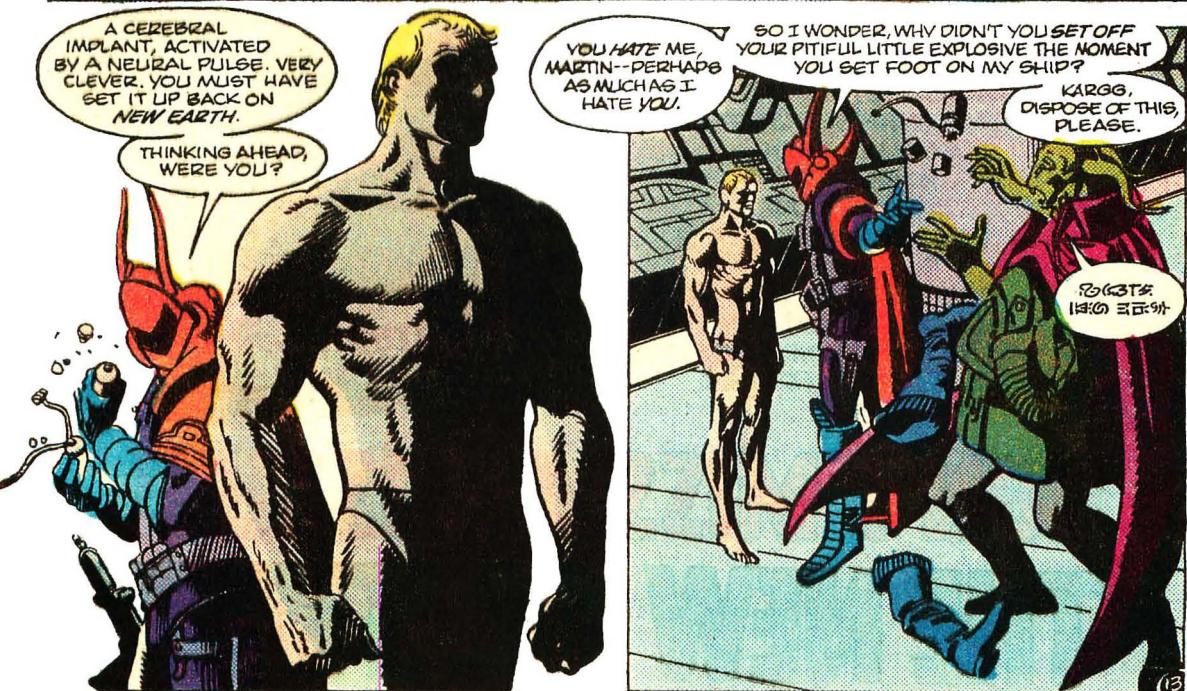
SO HERE
WE ARE, LOCKED IN
WITH THE
MAIN DRIVERS.

FROM ONE
POINT OF VIEW,
WE'RE TRAPPED.
BUT, AS MY OLD FRIEND
BLACKJAK USED TO SAY--
"ONE YO-YO'S POINT OF
VIEW IS ANOTHER
YO-YO'S GUNSLIGHT."

WE WON.

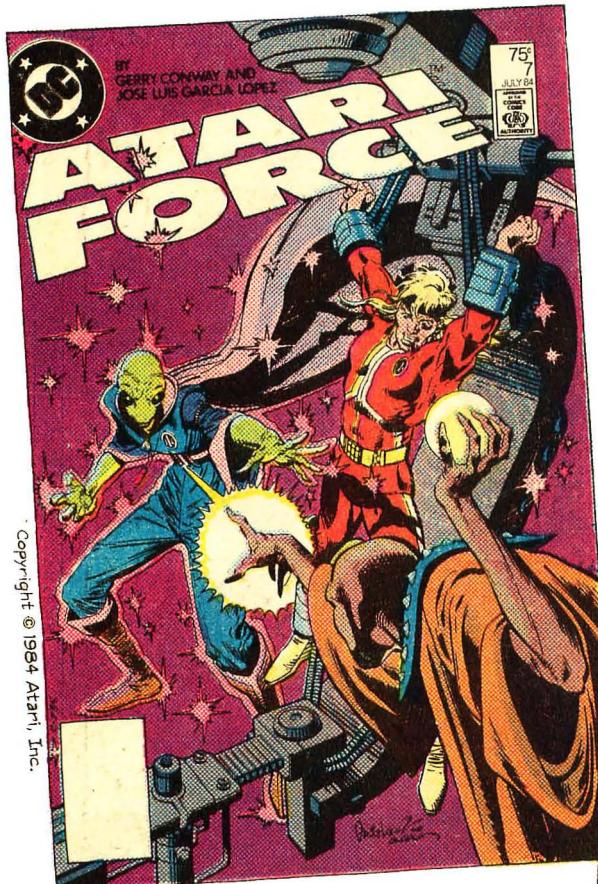
I FEEL SICK.





[CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING.]

GET 'EM AT YOUR COMIC STO



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IT'S NOT WHAT YOU EXPECT!
BY GERRY CONWAY,
JOSE LUIS GARCIA LOPEZ &
RICARDO VILLAGRAN
THE ATARI FORCE SEARCHES
FOR A WAY TO FREE THE
CAPTIVE TEMPEST, HELD BY
THE PSYCHIC SADIST PSYKLOP.



VIGILANTE! THE LIVING
INSTRUMENT OF JUSTICE!
BY MARV WOLFMAN,
ROSS ANDRU &
MIKE DE CARLO
THE ELECTROCUTIONER IS
ON THE TRAIL OF A
COMPUTER CHIP THIEF--AND
VIGILANTE MUST STOP THE
ELECTROCUTIONER--AT ANY
COST! DELUX FORMAT.

DON'T MISS AN ISSUE! THE NEW DC. THERE'S

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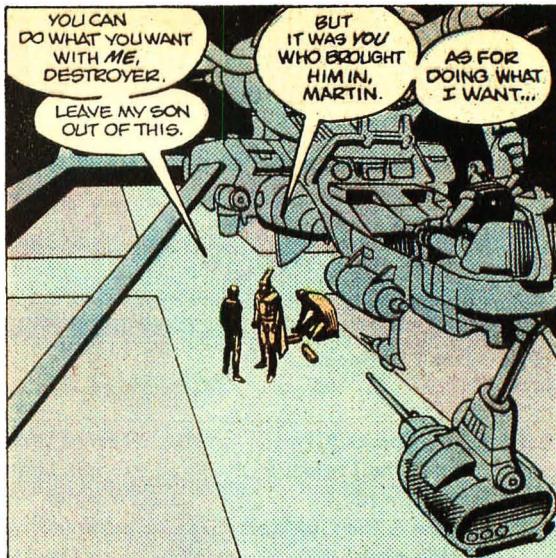
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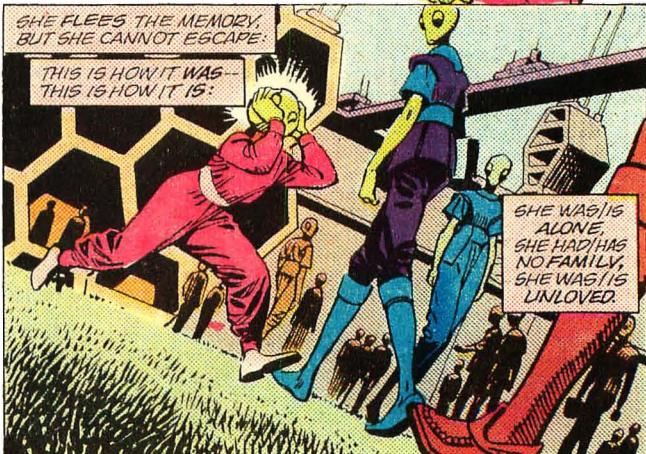
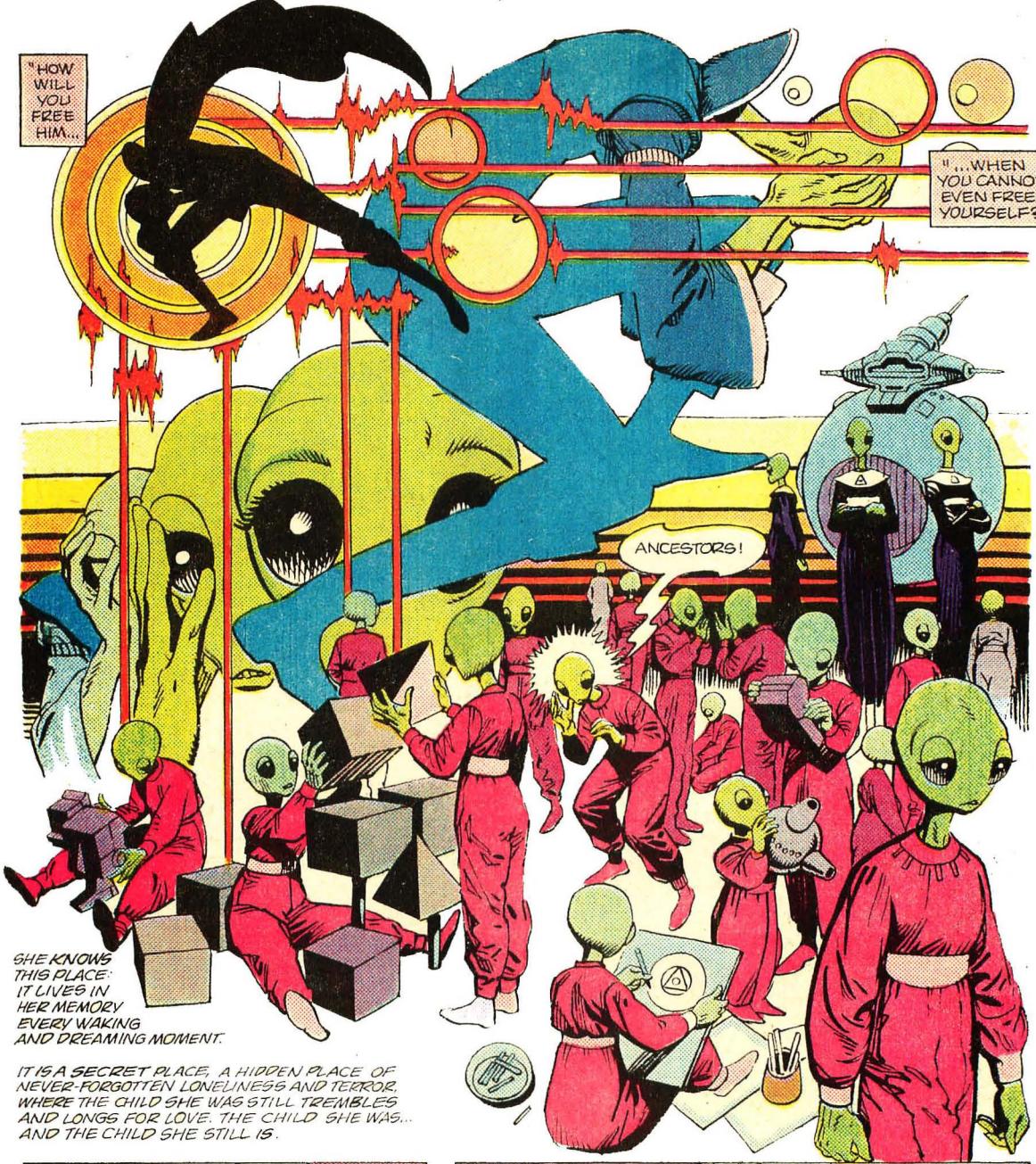
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A MUCK-ENCRUSTED **ECHO**
OF A MAN.
THAT'S ALL HE EVER WAS.
THAT'S ALL HE'LL **EVER BE.**

IT STARTED WITH
"THE ANATOMY LESSON"
THE SENSATIONAL TALE WHERE
HE LEARNED THE **TRUTH**
ABOUT HIMSELF.

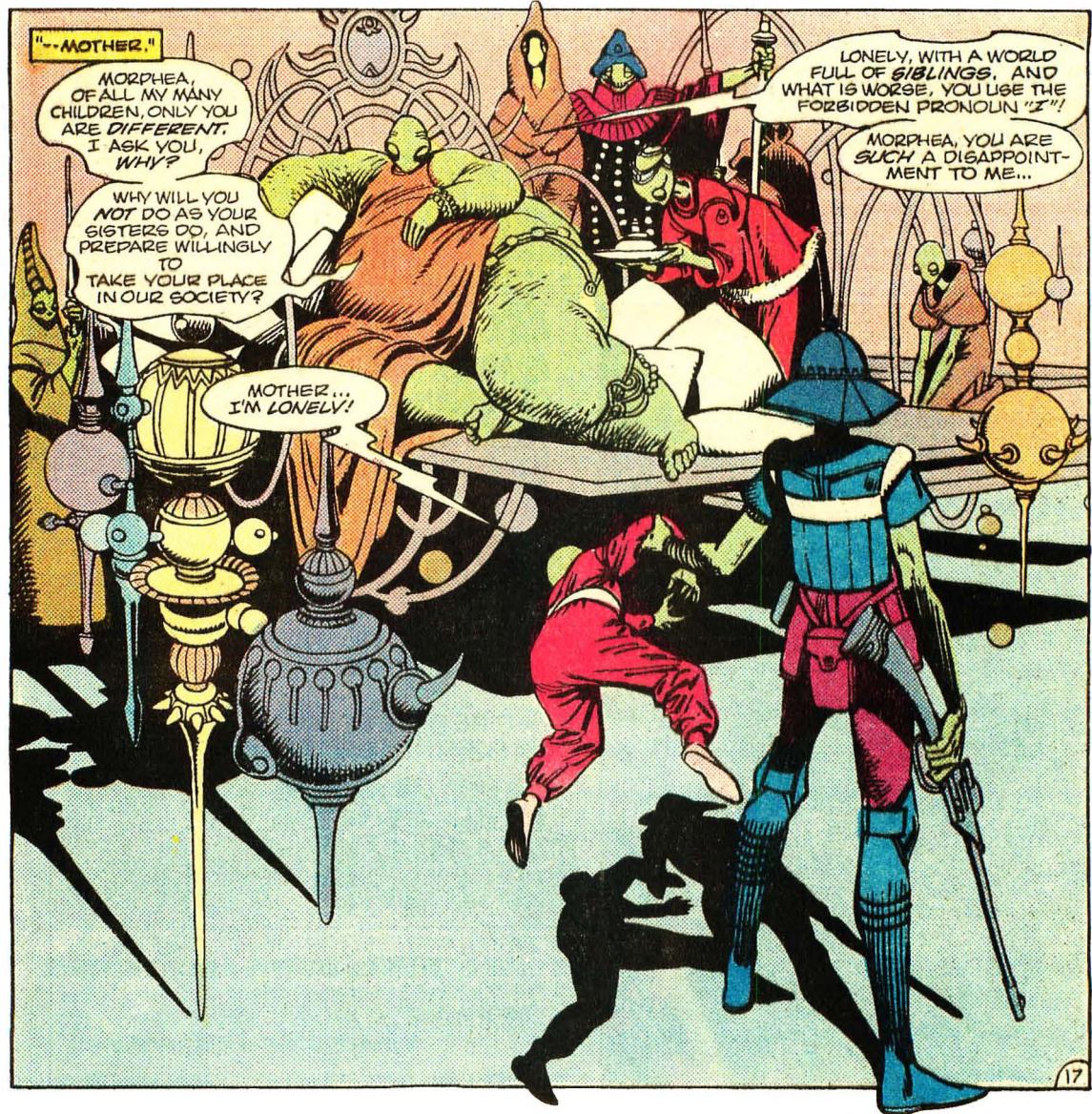
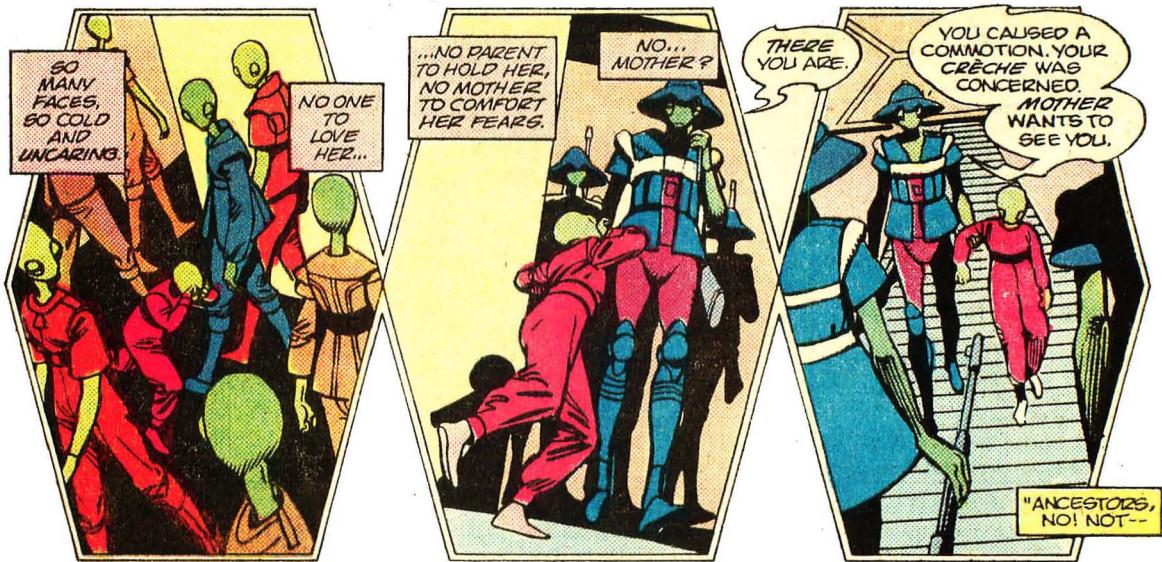
AND HE DOESN'T LIKE IT.
HE DOESN'T LIKE IT AT ALL.

THE SAGA OF THE SWAMP THING

BY EAGLE AWARD-WINNING WRITER **ALAN MOORE**
AND ARTISTS **STEPHEN BISSETTE & JOHN TOTLEBEN**

EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT IT--
MAKE SURE YOU ARE TOO!!

THE NEW DC. THERE'S NO STOPPING US NOW!



...YOU MUST BE PUNISHED.

THE TROUBLE IS,
YOU HAVE AN
IDENTITY.
WE'LL SOON DISPOSE
OF THAT.

SHE REELS—HER
THOUGHTS, HER
MIND, HER
SENSE OF
SELF ARE
BEING
STRIPPED
AWAY.

EEEEEEEEE!

SHE IS
FRAGMENTING,
DISSOLVING.

SHE IS
BEING
DESTROYED.

NO.

THIS ONE MATTERS.

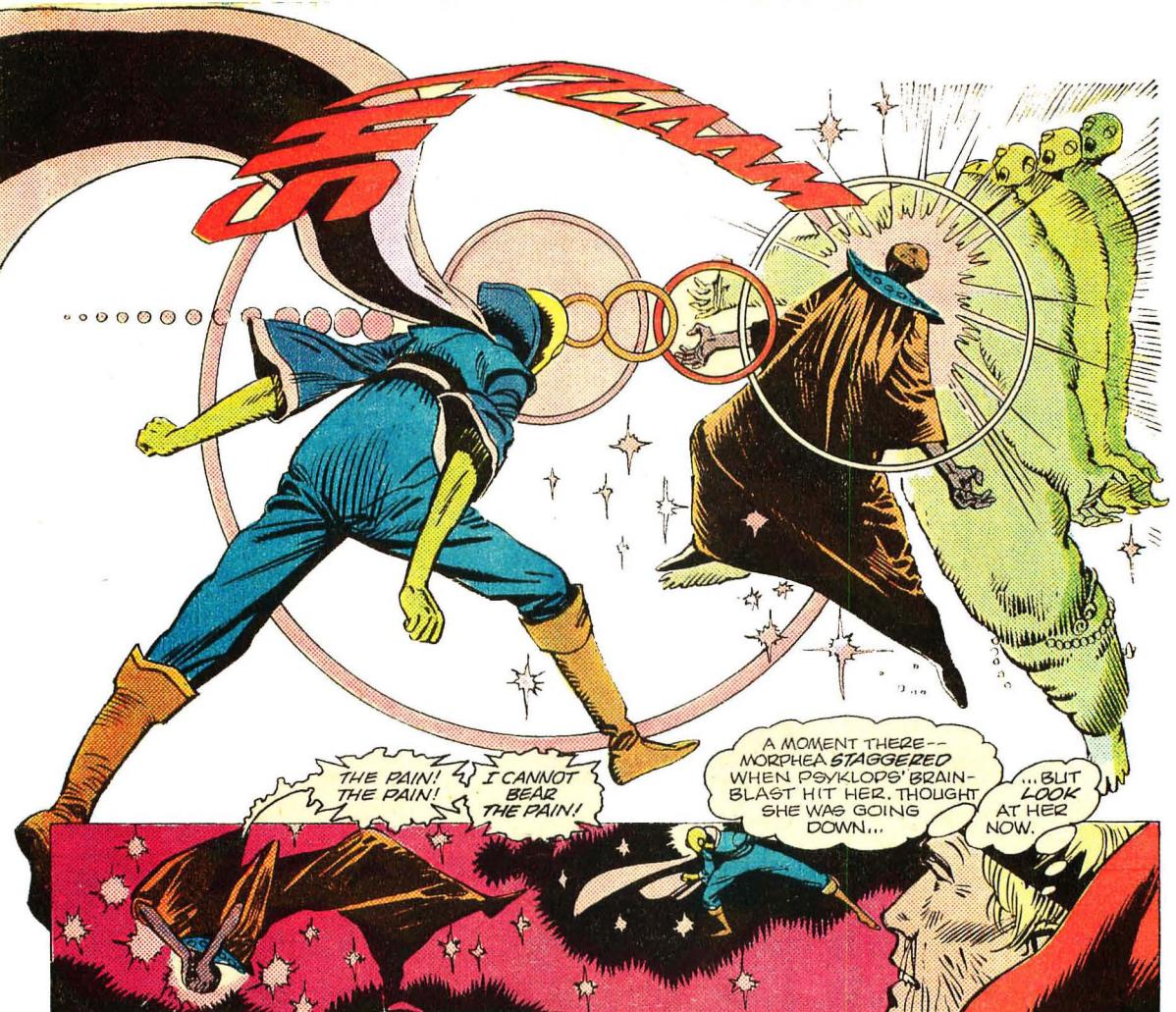
THIS ONE WILL NOT BE DESTROYED!

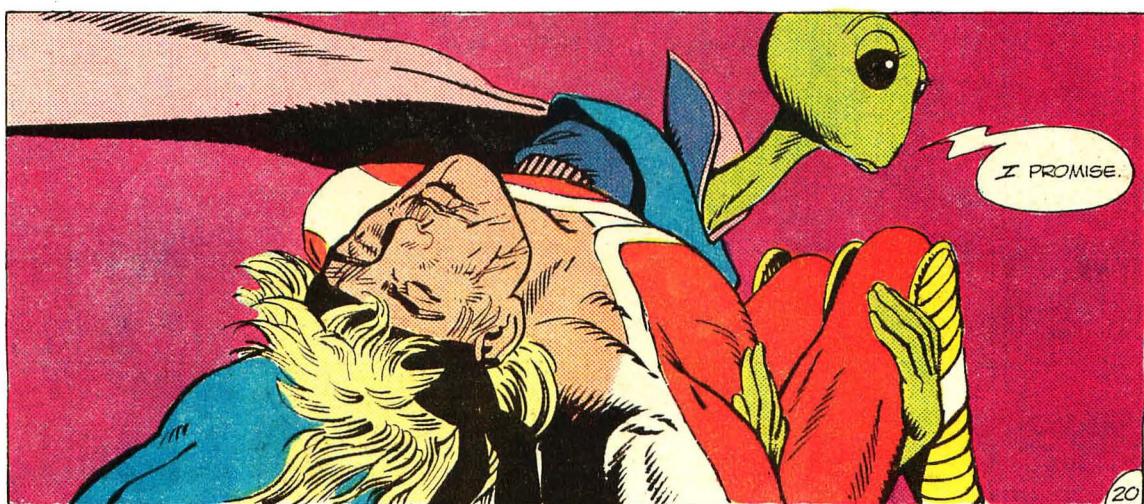
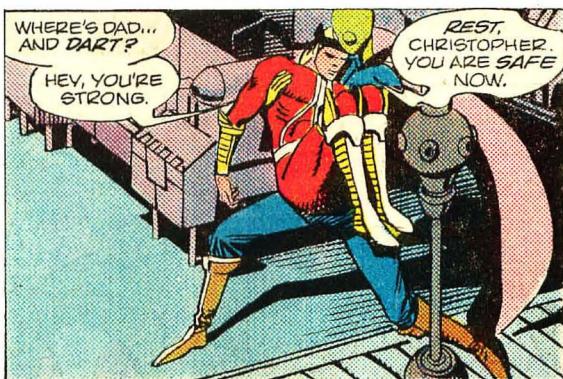
I... MATTER!

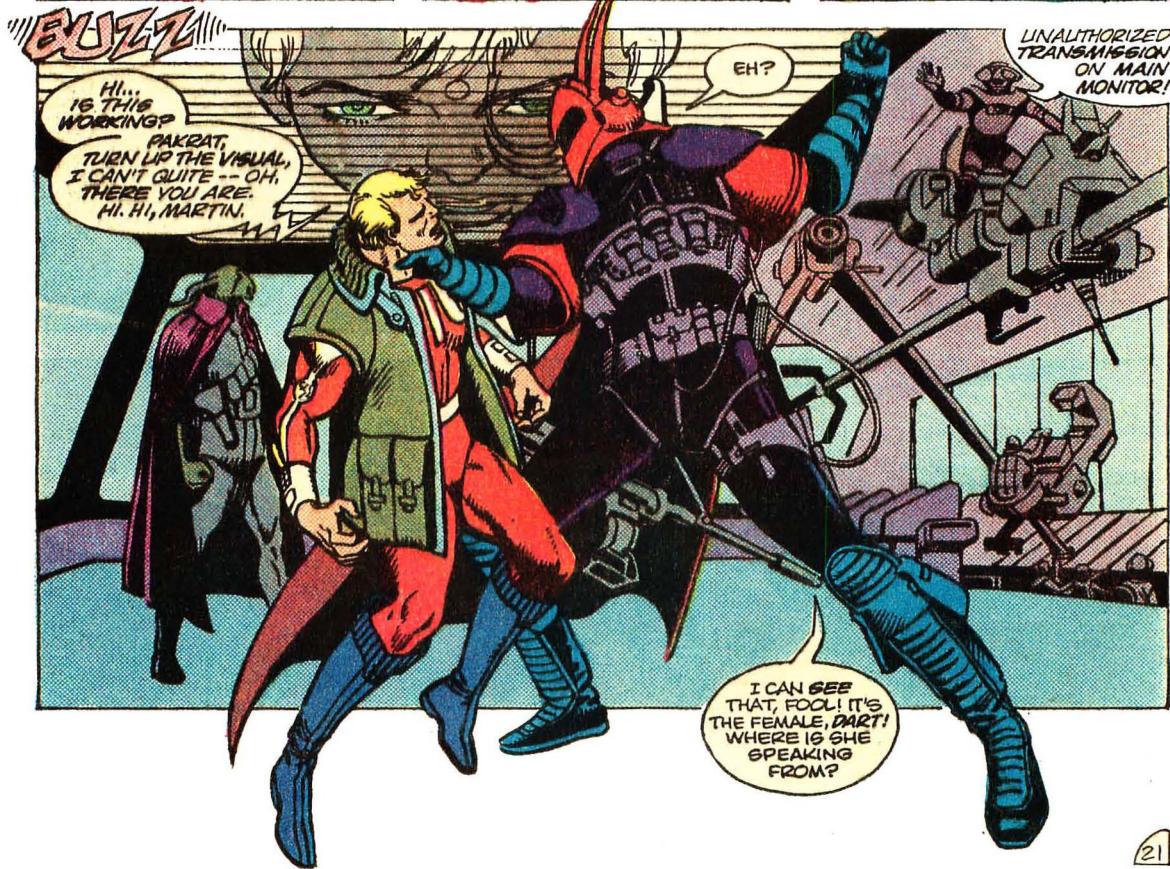
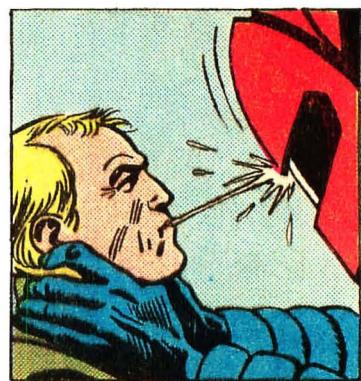
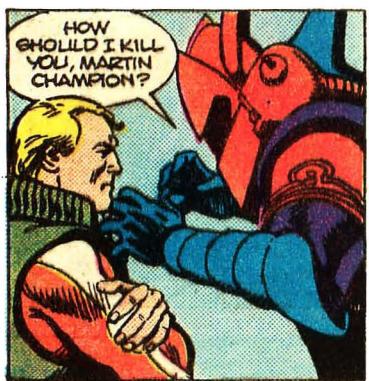
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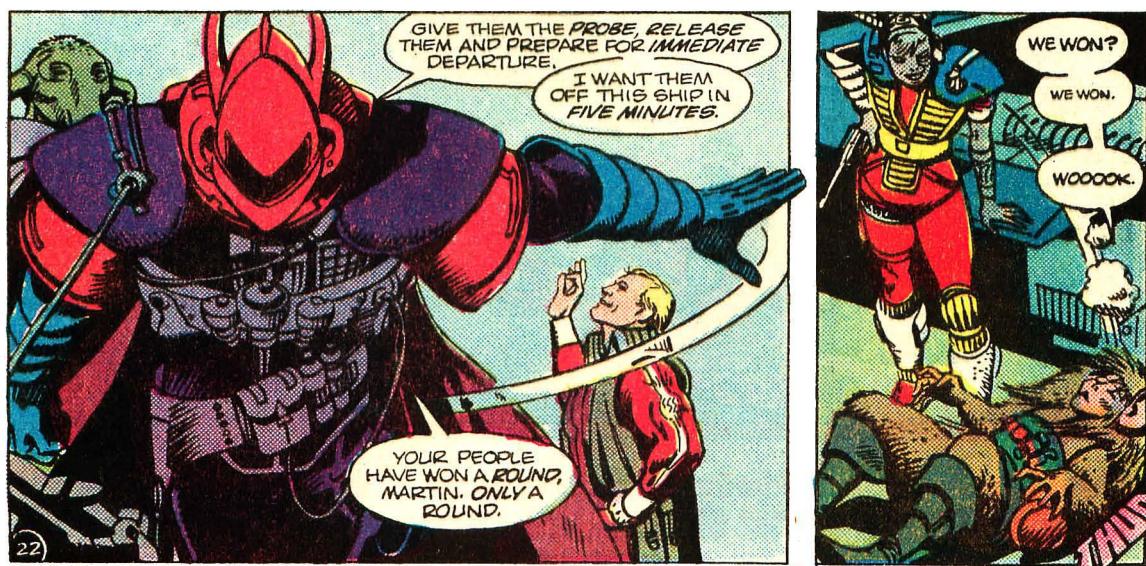
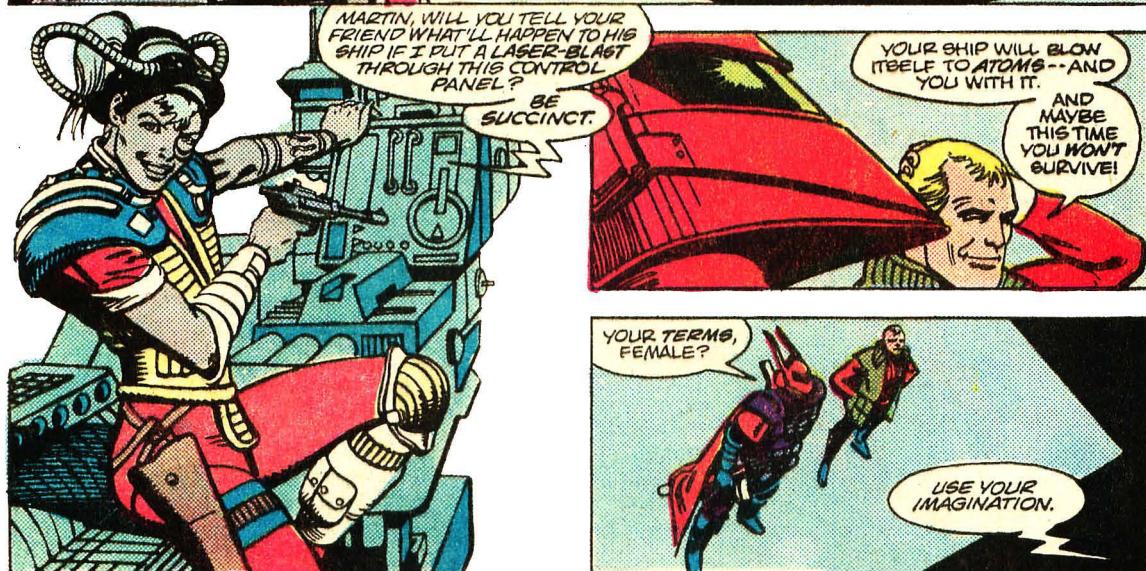
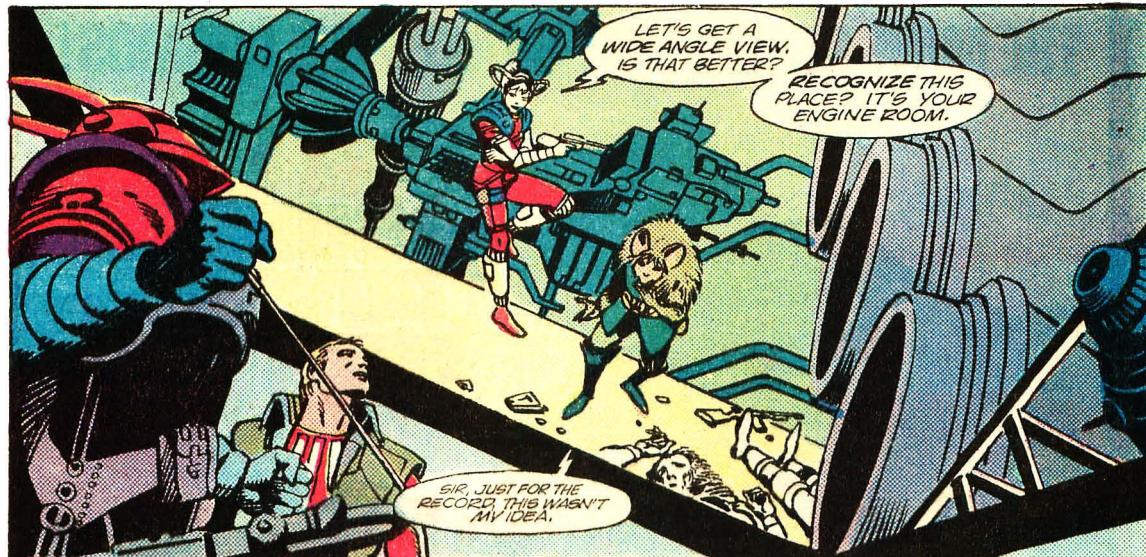
I WILL
NOT BE
DESTROYED!

I WON'T
LET YOU.

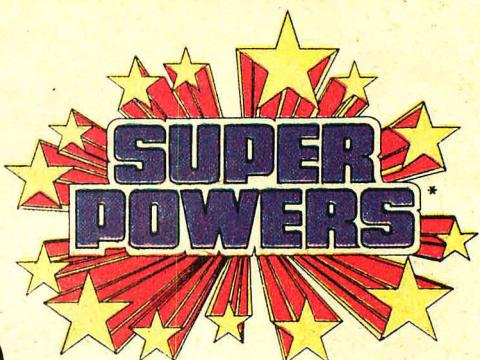








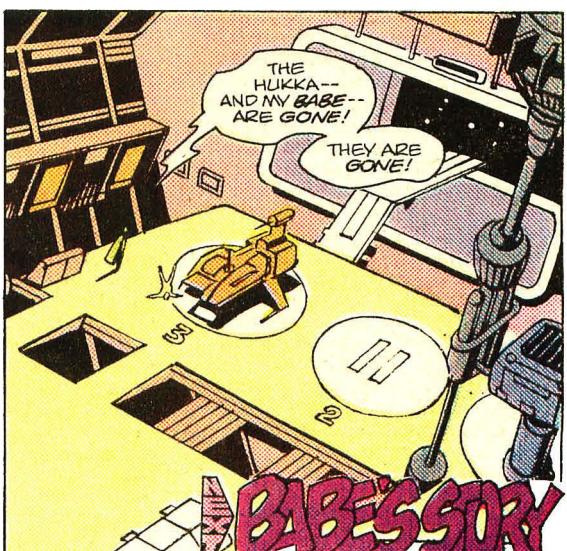
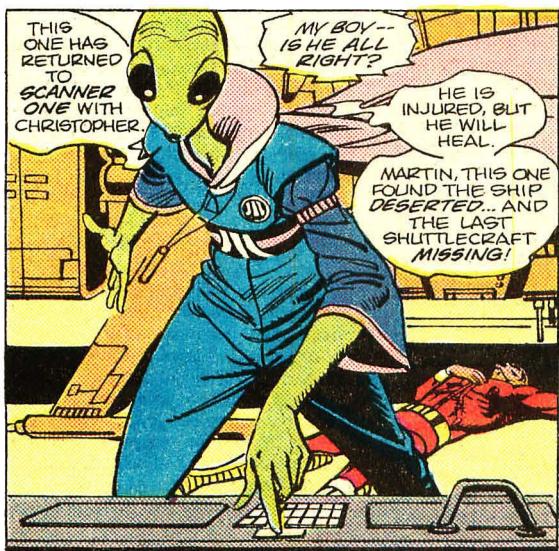
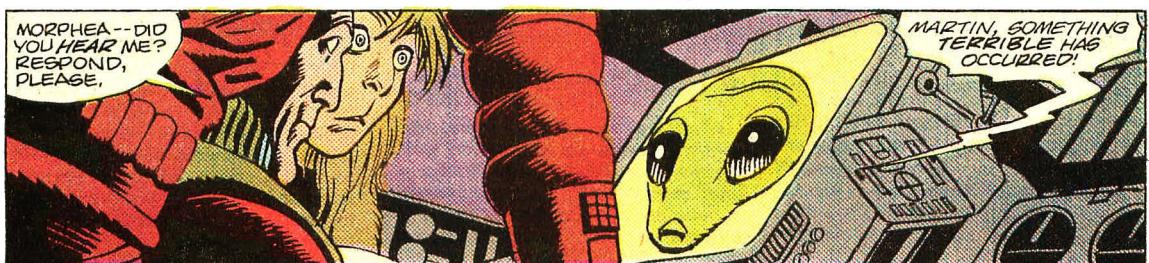
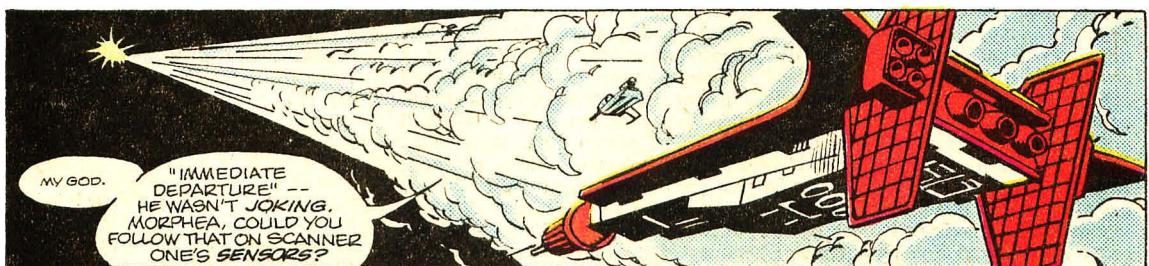
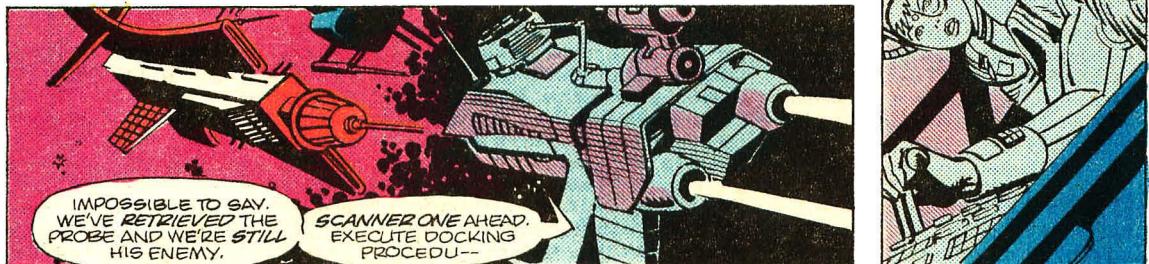
THE MINI-SERIES THAT SHAKES THE COSMOS!



**By Jack Kirby, Joey Cavalieri, Adrian Gonzales and Pablo Marcos!
THE NEW DC. THERE'S NO STOPPING US NOW!**

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FORCE FEEDBACK

L-1846

(Instead of the usual pre-letters snappy patter, we're going to dive right into the Feedback mailsacks this month and see what weird and wonderful missives lend themselves to publication here. To wit:)

Dear Atari Gang,

Issue #4 was terrific! Years ago, in the back of LOIS LANE was this little lost gem of a strip I adored. It was *The Rose and The Thorn*, drawn by the master of action art, Ross Andru. I've been a devoted fan ever since. Thus, it was heartwarming to see his beautiful work on this issue.

Storywise, it's nice to see the various plot-paths converging. Seeing the "old" ATARI FORCE makes me add my voice to those other fans requesting that you reprint those earlier game books. Not being blessed with a video-computer yet, I do feel like part of your saga is incomplete. Please try to remedy this.

Again, the adventure is superb.

Your fan,
Ron Fortier
P.O. Box 265

Somerworth, NH 03878

(Ron, your thoughts echo those of many other readers, both in your praise of Ross Andru's distinctively dynamic artwork and in your desire to see the original ATARI FORCE mini-comics reprinted.)

As for Ross, he's just taken over penciling THE VIGILANTE, so you can see his latest masterpiece every month there. But regarding the ATARI FORCE mini-comic reprints, we'll just have to wait and see. We're looking at a number of different formats for reprinting them, but ultimately the quantity and intensity of reader response will decide whether or not they ever see (re)print. And higher sales on the ATARI FORCE monthly comic wouldn't hurt either!

In the meantime, however, we're being deluged with requests for the ATARI FORCE mini-comics, as well as for the SWORDQUEST mini-comics. We're afraid that we can't honor these requests—even WE don't have that many to spare. So, as of now, you'll just HAVE to buy the specially marked cartridges to get the comics. Please—no more requests, threats, or offers—we CANNOT be bribed!

Dear Mr. Helfer,

I loved AF #4, "Families." The art was

beautiful; the story was great. Is Hukka a pet or a sentient companion? Li San O'Rourke looks like her Chinese mother and sounds like her Irish father. Both of Dart's parents look so young and handsome; I expected them to have a few more gray hairs.

I especially liked the scenes of Morpheus probing Martin's memories and dealing with the captain and Babe. What's all this feldercarp about Morpheus not having a family? Just because her crèche-parents and crèche-siblings weren't blood relatives doesn't mean they're not her family.

Are the immigrants on New Earth and their descendants the only humans in this galaxy of the Multiverse? As I suspected, Martin isn't as crazy as everyone thought. A little paranoid, maybe, but not totally far out. There is...someone out there. Maybe the Dark Destroyer, maybe not. You said DD was tentacled, but Dart's enemy is biped with only two arms. I wonder how Tukla Oly will fit into the Atari Force.

Sincerely yours,
Susan M. Murrie
3753 Mount Ashmun Place
San Diego, CA 92111

*(While we're sure that some pets ARE sentient creatures, to answer your question, the Hukka is quite intelligent and sensitive. If you're especially curious about the origins of the cute little orange critter, you might try to get a copy of ATARI FORCE mini-comic #3, where the Hukka was first introduced. There, it was explained that the Hukkas were a race of creatures that could perform routine tasks with remarkable ease and conscientiousness, and were lovable companions to their Zylon masters besides. And even though the Zylons were destroyed years ago, there are still zillions of Hukkas on a planet somewhere in the Multiverse. The Hukkas can also be seen popping up in the pages of the STAR*RAIDERS graphic novel—if you can still find it at comic specialty shops.)*

As for Morpheus, she DOES indeed have a family. But if you've already read this issue, you'll see that it's by no means like a traditional human family.

Although the major concentration of humans are located on New Earth, we'll be meeting humans who've settled on other planets as the series progresses. And as for the Dark Destroyer...well, I'd better clam up, or Gerry will kill me for blowing a major plot twist!—Have I said too much, Gerry?)

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Dear Conway, Andru, and Lopez,

ATARI FORCE has come a long way from #1 and it shows. The characters are developing well and the art and dialogue are as good as ever. Now that everyone is on New Earth, I'm wondering why the Dark Destroyer is so bent on killing Dart and her family. I hope these questions are answered soon in upcoming issues.

Paul Bushey

5 Murray Lane
Winslow, ME 04901

(Sorry, Paul, but Gerry won't allow me to answer your very legitimate question. You'll just have to keep reading like the rest of us.)

Dear DC,

I think that a terrible mistake is being made and I hope I can sway your decision before it's too late. I'm talking about ATARI FORCE. The book is a very enjoyable one, with fun characters (I like Dart and Tempest the most, by the way), good writing, and good artwork. The thing I am getting at is the artwork. José Luis Garcia Lopez has long been a favorite artist of mine and I awaited this book eagerly. This was to be his first regular assignment and I was glad. After so many great, great Superman stories and numerous fill-ins, I was ready for a regular Garcia Lopez vehicle. Now, after less than a handful of issues, he is pushed down to inker and shortly, if sources are correct, will be leaving the book entirely.

Now, Ross Andru is a great artist, I like him a lot, but Garcia Lopez is something else entirely. He is one of ATARI FORCE's strong points, a super-dynamic artist. Don't let Garcia Lopez slip away or I fear that ATARI FORCE could be in rough waters. DON'T LET JOSÉ GO!!

Mark Waldman
9639 Amigo Ave.
Northridge, CA 91324

(Whoa, Mark—calm down! José isn't going anywhere! We totally agree that José's presence makes ATARI FORCE a joy to read, and José has no plans to leave. Inking Ross Andru was one of José's professional ambitions, one we were more than overjoyed to help him realize. Now that issues 4 & 5 are finished, José has settled back into his much demanded role of regular penciller. So next time you write, get your sources straight, okay?)

Dear Mr. Helfer,

In AF #3, "Pakrat goes WILD!" So what else is new? Plenty, among them Rident Oly. Or is it Tukla Rident? I think Tukla Rident has a better ring. The point may be moot, since Rident called his brother "Tukla" at least three times. Perhaps Rident was using the surname contemptuously, to underline the family's shame. (By the way, is it "Tukla," or "Took-la"? I like "Took-la.") Pakrat mentioned brothers. No sisters? Well, it's possible. And I hope those things he trashed were androids.

Dr. Morpheus is becoming more interesting also. How nice that she came to New Earth on my 69th birthday. Something to look forward to. I think she's being too hard on herself, though. I don't think she really understands emotions. Emotions can create and strengthen identity. On the other hand, who am I to judge another entire culture?

I'm curious about the meaning, purpose, and origin of the elaborate tattoos on the left side of Dart's body. ("Elaborate"! Gad! You could use full frontal nudity and no one would even notice.) I suppose you'll let us all know in time.

As for reprinting the original AF books, go for it! Not caring for video games, I got the first three issues by hook or crook (two from Atari, one from a store with a faulty game cartridge), and I have the feeling, since AF is a hot title, that the whole bunch of them are going to be harder to get than DC COMICS PRESENTS #26. \$!

Signed,

John Henry Sain
2251 Kings Highway
Medford, OR 97501

(Y'know, John, we were going to answer some of your questions, but it looks like you answered them all for us! As for the value of ATARI FORCE back issues, all we can say is that we've got a couple hundred locked away in our safe deposit boxes—hopefully, one day they'll pay for the kid's college education!)

Dear Gerry, Ross, and José,

Congratulations on an awesome comic. Yes, I'm talking about AF #4.

The story was great, albeit a little lacking in action. It was terrific to see Dart and Chris together. The scene they were in was good, too. I've only read the first issue of the mini-comic, so I've never seen Mohandas, Li San, or Hukka before, but I think they're great characters and should be given bigger parts.

Question time: How come, on page 7, you show the "Kylos" taking off, but on page 12, panel 4, it's still connected to the gantry? Other than that, though, the Martin/Morpheus scene was great. The flashback to Martin and Lydia's conversation with Lucas brings up another, simpler question. Where is Lucas nowadays? Is he still with ATARI, or what? Please explain this soon.

Now for the art. I have a little less to say about this, and here it is: STUNNING! BEAUTIFUL! AWESOME! How's

that? Ross' pencils were great, as were Jose's inks. Puh-leeeeese get these two to do a few more issues.

Old business: Is Prof. Venture's first name Caitlin (Chris' fact file, ish #2) or Lucia (pg. 7, ish #3)? Please clear this up.

D.C. forever,

Rich Bowen

11612 So. Sheridan
Tacoma, WA 98444

(The "Kylos" took off for a couple of panels to restock their Kug supply at the local "Kug shop"—there are hundreds of them all over the galaxy—and returned so the captain could "kug-a-lug" before meeting up with Morpheus again. For more information on Kug—the national drink of New Earth—see Andrew Logan's letter below.)

You've already seen a bit more of Lucas Orion, and he'll be popping up now and then as the series continues. And the Caitlin/Lucia Venture controversy has reached its conclusion: As of issue #5—page 2, to be precise—the name of Chris Champion's sometime mentor is Lucia Caitlin Venture. Got that, Morpheus?

Well, the clock on the wall says it's time to check out a few missives from our younger readers, so here goes:)

Dear "Advanced Technology and Research Institute":

I love your comic. I was looking through comic racks and ATARI FORCE caught my eye. I thought—Hey! Maybe this is the same as the ATARI FORCE I got with my Defender cartridge I bought it, read it, and found I was wrong. But I loved it! I showed my friend (Joe Eudy) and got him hooked. He got his friend (Aaron Black) hooked, and we all love it! I even got my sister liking it. She says it's "sharp."

In issue #3 I was sorry to see what happened to Blackjak. He and Dart are my favorite characters. My compliments to Garcia Lopez and his art.

I just started collecting comic books and I'm glad I did in time for ATARI FORCE. It is my favorite comic. Thanks for a great comic crew.

Rick Edwards

1206 Roberta Ann
Sherwood, AR 72116

(Glad to have you and your buddies aboard, Rick. Keep on showing ATARI FORCE to your other friends—the more the merrier! We're sorry that you were sorry to see Blackjak's untimely death, but this next letter makes US wonder if we did the right thing!)

Dear ATARI FORCE Creators:

Aha, you fools fell into my trap, this letter will eat you up! After reading ATARI FORCE #3 I got so mad my Mood Ring exploded! You had to kill off the best character, didn't you? Yes, I mean Blackjak, who did you think I meant, that idiot the captain? In ATARI FORCE #1 the captain said, "We're running out of Kug," but in issue #2 he got drunk on

Kug. Where did he get more Kug? The local Kug shop? Now listen here. You put Blackjak back or I'll get angry. I have written many letters to comic book editors, but this is the first time I had to get angry!

Sincerely,
Andrew Logan

(Take it easy, Andrew! It's only a comic book! In answer to your question about the captain, it's really quite simple—you're right!)

Dear José Luis Garcia Lopez,

I just started reading ATARI FORCE. It's great, you do a great job at drawing! I like drawing, it's like a hobby. By the way, my name is James Patrick McKane IV. My hobbies are Dungeons and Dragons, and drawing space guns and ships. But when I draw ships I can't get the details right. I'm also into video-games and computers. I've got the last two issues (2 & 3). I'd like to ask if you could send me some sketches or drawings or steps to drawing ships and guns and drawings for Blackjak and Dart. You don't have to send them. You might have work to do. Bye.

Sincerely,
James

P.S.: If you do send the drawings, could you start sending them monthly, of new guns and ships and Christopher Champion and Pakrat? That's all. Bye.

(Sorry, James—and all the other readers who wrote asking for original sketches—but José is much too busy drawing each monthly issue of ATARI FORCE to send personal sketches. Much as he'd love to be able to, José's drawing hand is all tied up at the moment, and from the look of reader response to his dazzling artwork, it will be for a long time to come.)

(That's all the room we have this issue. Before we go, however, we'd like to remind you of a couple of things: First, please sign your name and address to your letter, not just the envelope. Second, if you're under 12 years of age, include your age in your letter. Third, don't send us any money, either for back issues or subscriptions. Fourth, be nice to old people, and fifth, don't play in traffic.

—Andy Helfer

Next issue: Boy o boy o boy! Have we got an issue for you! Babe is lost in space, and when he finally reaches terra firma, he lands right in the middle of—what? Meanwhile, aboard Scanner One, the ATARI FORCE try to figure out what happened to Babe as Dart has some more rather disturbing visions. All this and the introduction of what might be the weirdest new character yet! What else can we say but—be there, or don't!

MEANWHILE

HELP!

I'm writing a *Meanwhile...* column that will attempt to introduce all you new kids on the block to our readers and give them some idea of who you are, where you come from, and what you do. To do this the info must come from you. So...

1-Who are you? (A soviet spy; a zucchini lover; a box-seat holder at the Met, etc.)

2-What do you do? (Your job; your un-job)

3-Where do you come from? (Professional experience; hometown; relative education)

4-Comments: (I wish I were a bricklayer... etc.)

Give me the facts... and a touch of humor. Our readers relate badly to stuffed shirts.

**From the Desk of Janice Race,
Associate Editor/Editor**

I could lie and say I'm a Russian princess, but I promised to give you the facts, so here goes.

I grew up in the Bronx, in the shadow of Yankee Stadium, which probably accounts for my being an avid fan of the Bronx Bombers. My favorite cookies are Fig Newtons, and I love my looney bird, Lester. (Hey, nobody's perfect!)

Before coming to DC, I earned my keep as a textbook editor for a publishing company that has since headed for the Sunshine State. Prior to that, I was a copy editor on medical and legal books.

Here, at DC, I am the New York contact for most of the books written and edited by Roy Thomas and Gerry Conway. I also lend a helping hand on **TALES OF THE NEW TEEN TITANS**. In addition to those tasks, I edit **BLACKHAWK**, **WORLD'S FINEST**, and an upcoming maxi-series that is as yet untitled. (Phew, for a person who never read a super-hero comic book in her life before coming to DC, I sure am busy!)

I will admit that I've considered wallpaper hanging as a life's work, and it is still in the back of my mind. In the meantime, the people at DC are so terrific, I think I'll stick around for a while.

Glad to hear that, Janice. Now I can stop shackling you to your desk. Besides, I like people who can get the job done without raising the dust and who smile a lot.

Janice forgot to mention that she gets some off-premises training from her husband, Gary, who knows a bit about comics and who remarked to me at DC's smashing Christmas party, "This is the best job we ever had!"

DG

Nicola Cuti's Biography (Sung to the tune of "Climb Every Mountain")

When people ask me: "Nick, what do you do for a living?" I tell them I am an artist/writer, because if I tell them I am an associate editor, then I have to explain what an associate editor does and I hate to explain things. Of course, there are drawbacks to admitting one is an artist—people immediately ask you to draw something. I am not a sketcher. I admit, freely, that I work exclusively from photographs, which is why I am a magazine illustrator and not a comic book illustrator. If I were a proctologist, I'm certain no one would ask me to demonstrate my craft in the middle of a cocktail party, but it was my brother who went into the medical profession, not me.

My experience in the field comes from various editorial positions at Charlton Comics and Warren Publications and I have been writing stories for comics since 1969—everything from POPEYE to E-MAN, including war, romance, horror, and science fiction. As a writer I guess I'm a jack-of-all-trades, master of none.

For those of you who have wondered about my name—it is masculine, as am I, and my ethnic background is Brooklynese. I was born in Gravesend.

My fondest wish is to continue to work in comics and free-lance as a writer/artist. If I had to choose a second profession it would be to work for the Mystic Seaport Aquarium as a feeder in their shark tank.

Somehow I get the feeling that you may have gotten some training at DC that prepares you for your chosen "second profession." Some of the duties

of an associate editor bear a striking resemblance to feeding sharks.

A few years back, I convinced Joe Orlando to hire Nick, who was, and is, an old friend. When an opening came in my department, I managed to steal Nick back and gave him semi-honest work. Right, Nick?

DG

Brenda Pope, Good Person

My name is Brenda Pope (no relation). I'm one of the new additions to the DC editorial crew. I'm the proofreader. I make sure all the words are spelled right. I check the back of Superman's cape for the "S" symbol. I make sure the women are well-clothed, the men don't fight too much, and the kids don't use foul language. It's a dirty job, but somebody's gotta do it.

Once, I was a free-lance copy editor. I worked for Harlequin Romance, Warner Books, and Dell Publishing. I had it all. But I left it behind for DC. What a place. At first, I wasn't quite sure about it. I mean, comic books? Is that any way to earn a living? Back home in England, we NEVER read comics. Later, when my family moved to South Africa, the only comics I ever managed to sneak a peek at were rumpled old copies of RICHIE RICH. I wasn't prepared for this. But I learned quickly.

I have E. Nelson Bridwell to thank for teaching me the proofreading ropes. And now, six months later, I'm into it. Or, judging from the pile of unproofread original art stacked on top of my "IN" box, make that under it.

Brenda proofreads all our comics (average: around forty a month) all the covers, all the letter pages, and this column. As a matter of fact, if she's on the job, she just corrected "proofreads" above to one word. My original copy had it as two words.

DG

The rest of the folk to whom my memo was addressed will get their moment in the spotlight in the *Meanwhile* Column. Look for it in the next few weeks... no, no, Brenda, don't change that! I meant week not month. That's right... from now on, I plan to do four (count 'em, four) *Meanwhile*'s a month with the help of others on occasion and often including a new "spotlight on..." feature.

(Why do I do these things? I have trouble writing one of these a month! Now four? It's not as though I get paid extra or anything... either I'm a glutton for punishment or I really like writing.) Anyway, I'll try... God knows, I'll try.

Thank you and Good Afternoon.

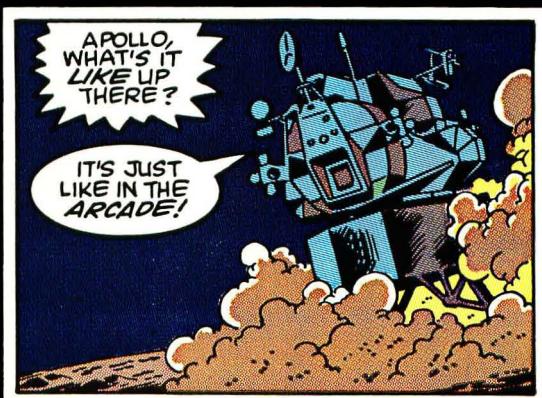
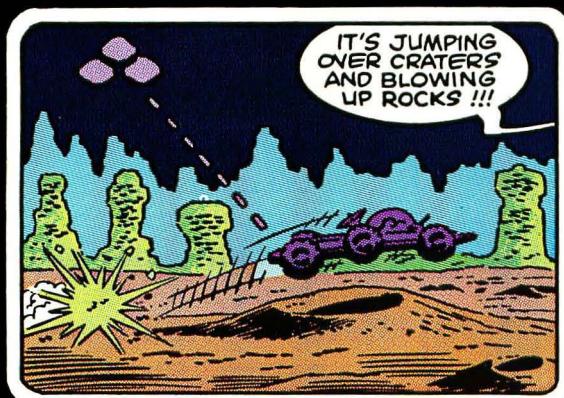
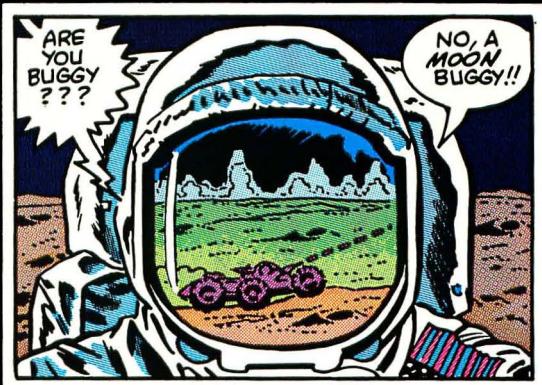
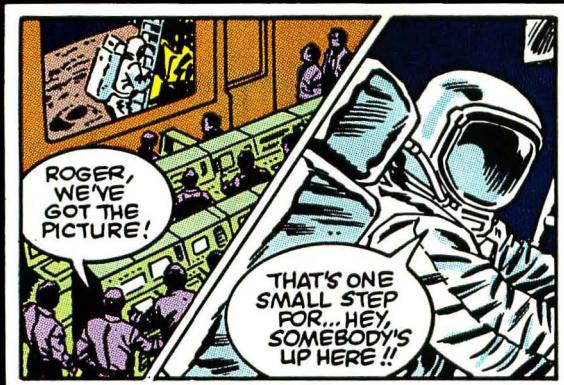
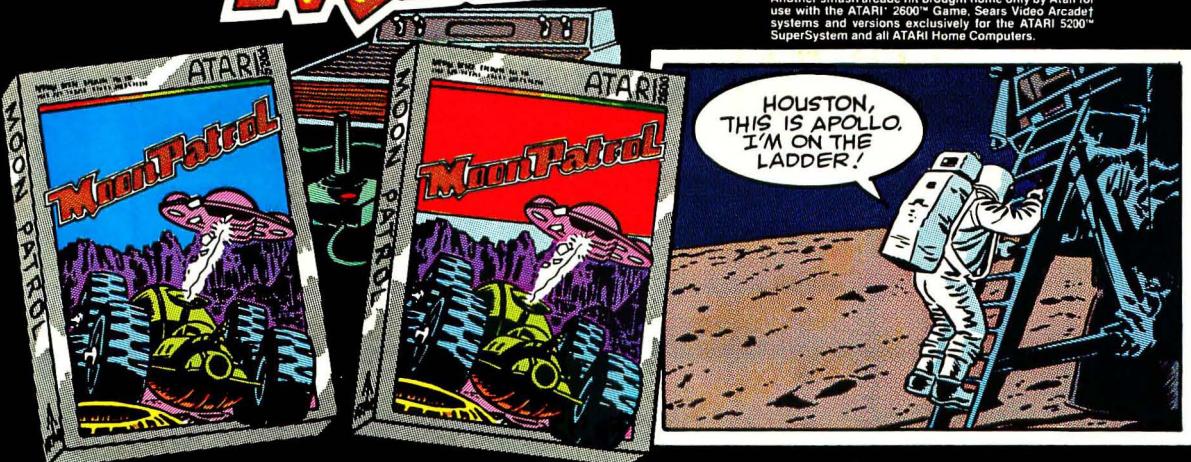
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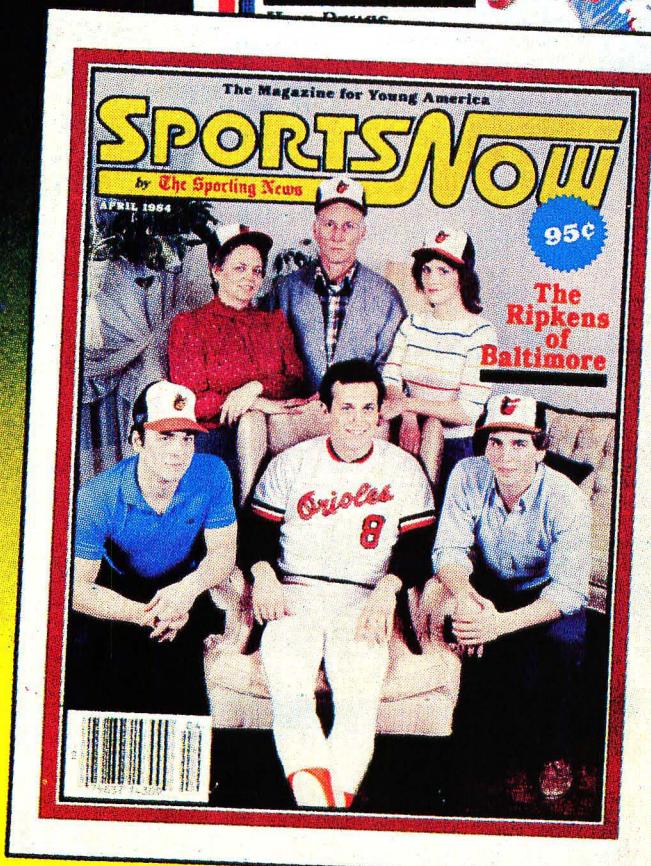
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