



1

TM

ATARI FORCE



ATARI FORCE



CREATED AND WRITTEN BY:
GERRY CONWAY & ROY THOMAS
VISUAL CONCEPTS AND ART:

ROSS ANDRU
DICK GIORDANO
MIKE DECARLO

DESIGN:

NEAL POZNER
LETTERING:

JOHN COSTANZA
COLORING:

ADRIENNE ROY
SPECIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC EFFECTS:

JACK RYNIAC
GEORGE KERRIGAN
EDITOR:

DICK GIORDANO

ATARI FORCE, Vol. 1, No. 1, published by DC Comics Inc., 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, New York 10019. Copyright © 1982 Atari, Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. No actual persons, living or dead, are intended or should be inferred. ATARI and the ATARI logo are registered trademarks of Atari, Inc. ATARI FORCE and the characters herein are trademarks of Atari, Inc. The DC logo is a registered trademark of DC Comics Inc. Printed in USA.

A Warner Communications Company

Jenette Kahn, President and Publisher
Joe Orlando, Vice President, Editorial Director
Karen Berger, Editorial Coordinator
Bob Rozakis, Production Manager
Paul Levitz, Vice President, Operations
Arthur Gutowitz, Treasurer



THE YEAR:
2005 AD.

THE PLACE: THE *NORTCAL*
HEADQUARTERS OF THE *ATARI*
TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE,
IN THAT PART OF THE NORTH AMERICAN
CONTINENT THAT USED TO BE KNOWN AS
CALIFORNIA BEFORE THE "BREAK-UP".

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRUDER ALERT!

THE SITUATION:
A WORLD IN CRISIS...

SURE, AND THIS
LITTLE BUGGY'S
RADAR SHIELD
HAS DONE ITS
JOB WELL!

IT'S WITHIN
SHOUTING DISTANCE
OF YON FINE BUILDING
THAT I AM, BUT NOT A PEEP
HAVE I HEARD FROM
THEIR SECURITY SCREENS!

I'LL BE
TAKING THEM
UNAWARES,
I THINK--

-- AND AFTER
ALL, WASN'T THAT
THE PLAN?

ITS ENGINES MUFFLED BY HIDDEN BAFFLES, THE DARK-PAINTED HOVERCRAFT SETTLES SILENTLY INTO THE SHADOWS OF A MOON-LIT GROTTO...

THE LADS AT ATARI SECURITY HAVE GROWN A MITE COCKY WITH THEIR PRETTY WEAPONS AND CLEVER SENSORS...



... AND TONIGHT, I'M THINKING, IT'S GOING TO COST THEM DEAR.

AHH, BUT IT'S A SAD THING THAT THEY'VE SO SOON FORGOTTEN THE LESSONS OF THE FIVE DAY WAR!



ALMOST, IT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE MY HEART BLEED.



SURE, IT'S A RUDE AWAKENING THAT AWAITS THEM.

I THINK I'LL LET THEM SLEEP A WHILE LONGER.

AND THERE THEY BE, LIKE DREAMING BABES.

WITH THE IMAGE INTENSIFIER BUILT INTO MY GOGGLES, I'M SEEING THEM CLEAR AS A BRIGHT SUMMER MORN IN COUNTY KERRY...



"... AND THE POOR DARLINGS DON'T EVEN KNOW THEY'RE BEING WATCHED."

DON'T THINK I'LL EVER GET USED TO THE SOUND OF THAT FORCE FIELD.

BLASTED THING MAKES MY TEETH ACHE.

ULTRA-FREQUENCY SONICS... THEY'RE A KILLER, ALL RIGHT.

YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN THE GUARD-DOGS, THE NIGHT WE FIRST TURNED IT ON.

THE DOGS COULDN'T STAND IT-- THEY STARTED HOWLING AS SOON AS THE FIELD WENT UP, AND DIDN'T STOP TILL WE SHUT IT DOWN NEXT MORNING.

NOW WE WALK PATROL WITHOUT THE DOGS... AND I MISS 'EM.

CHECKPOINT DELTA REPORTING TO BASE SECURITY...

...ALL CLEAR
AT THE
PERIMETER.

IT'S A NICE NIGHT. TOO
BAD YOU FOLKS DOWN
IN THE PIT CAN'T JOIN US.

LET'S LEAVE THE
SLANG BACK IN THE
DORMS, DELTA
CHECKPOINT.

WE DON'T CALL IT
"THE PIT"-- PROPER
TERMINOLOGY IS SECURITY
BASE STATION, SUB-
LEVEL SEVEN!

BUT THANKS
FOR THE
THOUGHT.

ROGER,
BASE SECURITY,
CHECKPOINT DELTA,
SIGNING OUT.

IT IS A
BEAUTIFUL
NIGHT UP
THERE,
CAPTAIN.

I ALMOST
WISH...


SO DO
WE ALL,
SON.

BUT THE WAR
LEFT THINGS PRETTY
UNSETTLED,
OUTSIDE.

WE HAVE
TO BE ON
GUARD
CONSTANTLY.

LET'S
HOPE THOSE
MEN
REMEMBER
THAT...





IT'S ASLEEP
THEY'LL BE, FOR
AN HOUR AT
LEAST--MAYBE
MORE.

THAT'S
ALL THE TIME
I'LL NEED.

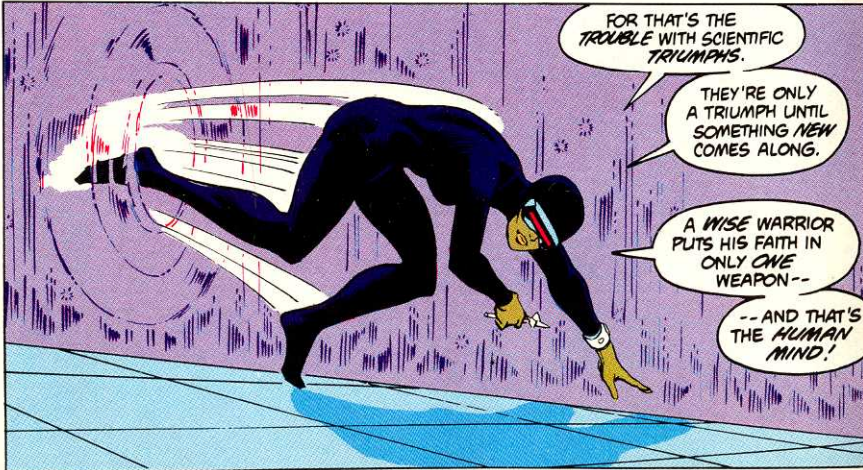
--BY USING THIS
SPECIALLY-DESIGNED
TUNING FORK,
I CAN DISRUPT THE
SONIC FIELD FOR
HALF A SECOND, IN
ONE SMALL SPOT.

ATARI
SPENT MILLIONS
TO PERFECT THIS
FORCE FIELD,
AND A WONDERFUL
TRIUMPH OF
SCIENCE IT IS,
TOO.

IT'LL STOP
BOMBS--LASERS
--EVEN A
PARTICLE
BEAM.



BUT--
AND THERE'S
ALWAYS
A "BUT"--



FOR THAT'S THE
TROUBLE WITH SCIENTIFIC
TRIUMPHS.

THEY'RE ONLY
A TRIUMPH UNTIL
SOMETHING NEW
COMES ALONG.

A WISE WARRIOR
PUTS HIS FAITH IN
ONLY ONE
WEAPON--

--AND THAT'S
THE HUMAN
MIND!

IN "THE PIT" (OR, IF YOU PREFER,
SECURITY BASE STATION, SUB-
LEVEL SEVEN)...

BEEP BEEP

CAPTAIN--
WE'VE GOT A
FIELD BREAK
AT CHECKPOINT
DELTA!

NO...NO, THAT'S
FUNNY...

PROBABLY JUST A
MOMENTARY POWER
SURGE.

SENSORS SHOW
THE BREAK
CLOSED BY
ITSELF.

KEEP AN EYE OPEN
TO SEE IF IT
REPEATS.

NO ALARMS...
NO EXTRA GUARDS
ON THE PROWL...!

I'D CALL IT THE
LUCK OF THE IRISH--
BUT I'M NOT A
WOMAN TO BELIEVE
IN LUCK!

NOW IT'S TIME
TO BE TAKING THE
NEXT STEP.

FOR WEEKS, THERE'VE
BEEN RUMORS OF A
TOP SECRET OPERATION
CALLED PROJECT: MULTIVERSE
A'WORKING DOWN IN
SUB-LEVEL SEVENTEEN.

THAT'S
WHERE I'LL
BE HEADING...

...AND PITY
ANYONE WHO TRIES
TO STOP ME!

AND, AS THE MYSTERIOUS BLACK-GARBED FIGURE WITH THE LILTING GAELIC ACCENT MAKES HER WAY FURTHER INTO THE ATARI HEADQUARTERS COMPOUND, WE MUST TURN OUR ATTENTION TO A NEW SCENE, 40,000 KILOMETERS STRAIGHT UP...

THE PLACE: ATARI SOLAR SATELLITE STATION ONE, DESIGNED TO BRING THE SUN'S ENERGY TO A FUEL-STARVED WORLD.

EASY WITH THAT ELECTRIC TORCH, LANSKY.

WE'RE TRYING TO WELD THESE PANELS TOGETHER--NOT MELT THEM TO SLAG!

THE MAN: MARTIN CHAMPION, COMMANDER OF STATION ONE AND CHIEF TROUBLESHOOTER FOR ATARI INSTITUTE...

SURE THING, COMMANDER.

GUESS I'M STILL NOT USED TO WEIGHTLESS CONSTRUCTION WORK.

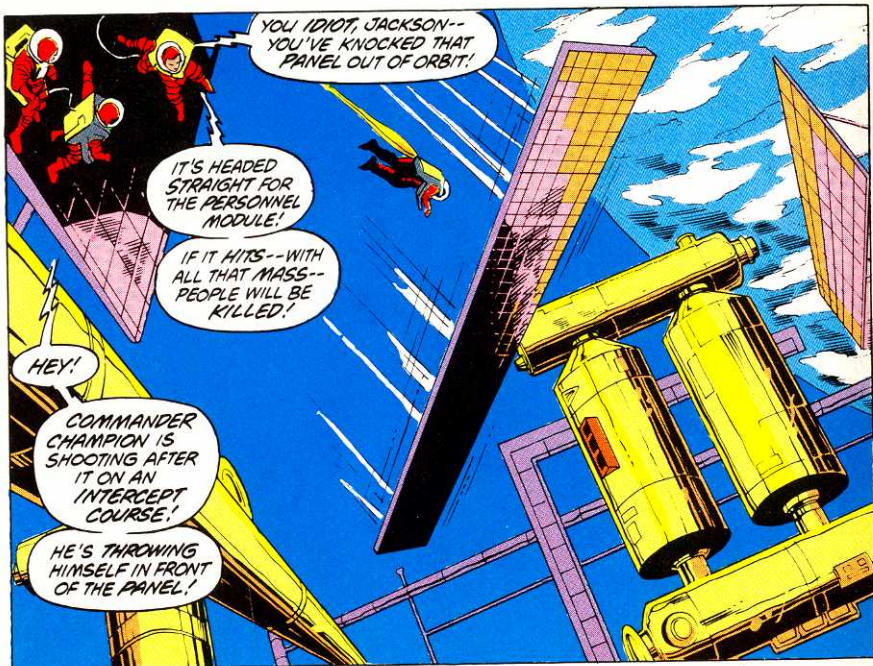
REBUILDING THE GOLDEN GATE WAS A WHOLE LOT SIMPLER THAN THIS!



HUM?
JACKSON,
LOOK OUT!

MY JET-
PACK--
MISFIRED!

CAN'T
CONTROL MY--
LINNNH!



YOU IDIOT, JACKSON--
YOU'VE KNOCKED THAT
PANEL OUT OF ORBIT!

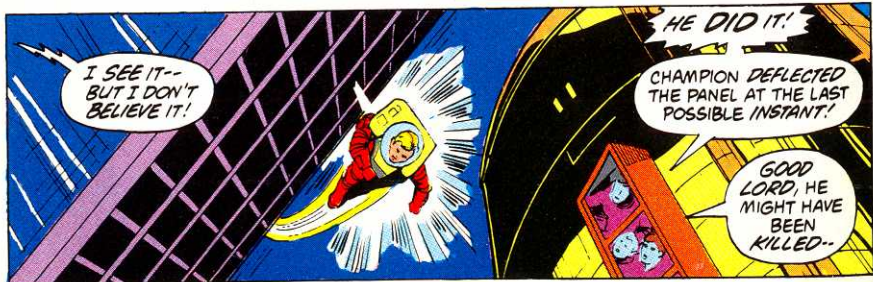
IT'S HEADED
STRAIGHT
FOR THE PERSONNEL
MODULE!

IF IT HITS--WITH
ALL THAT MASS--
PEOPLE WILL BE
KILLED!

HEY!

COMMANDER
CHAMPION IS
SHOOTING AFTER
IT ON AN
INTERCEPT
COURSE!

HE'S THROWING
HIMSELF IN FRONT
OF THE PANEL!



I SEE IT--
BUT I DON'T
BELIEVE IT!

HE DID IT!

CHAMPION DEFLECTED
THE PANEL AT THE LAST
POSSIBLE INSTANT!

GOOD
LORD, HE
MIGHT HAVE
BEEN
KILLED--



--AND IT WAS ONLY BULL-HEADED DUMB LUCK THAT YOU WEREN'T, MARTIN, MY FRIEND.

NOW THAT I'VE GOT YOU HERE IN SICK BAY, I'VE HALF A MIND TO KEEP YOU HERE--AND OUT OF TROUBLE.

LUCAS, LIKE ALL MEDICOS--

--YOU'RE A WORRY-WART.

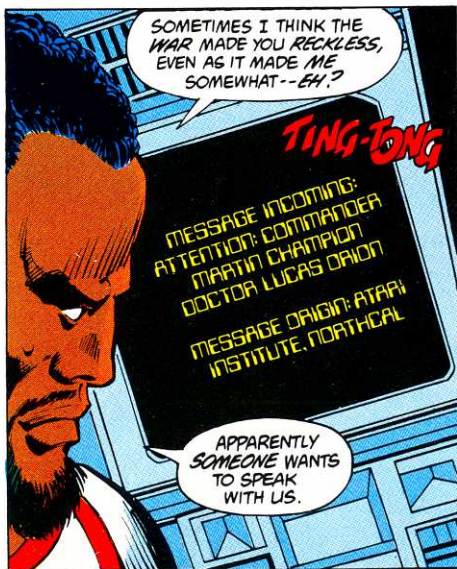
I SURVIVED, DIDN'T I?



BESIDES, I KNEW WHAT I WAS DOING.

I USED THAT SAME TACKLE A DOZEN TIMES OR MORE BACK ON THE GRIDIRON AT ANNAPOLIS.

SPACE CONSTRUCTION ISN'T A GAME OF FOOTBALL, MARTIN, AS YOU KNOW VERY WELL...!



SOMETIMES I THINK THE WAR MADE YOU RECKLESS, EVEN AS IT MADE ME SOMEWHAT--EH?

TING-TONG

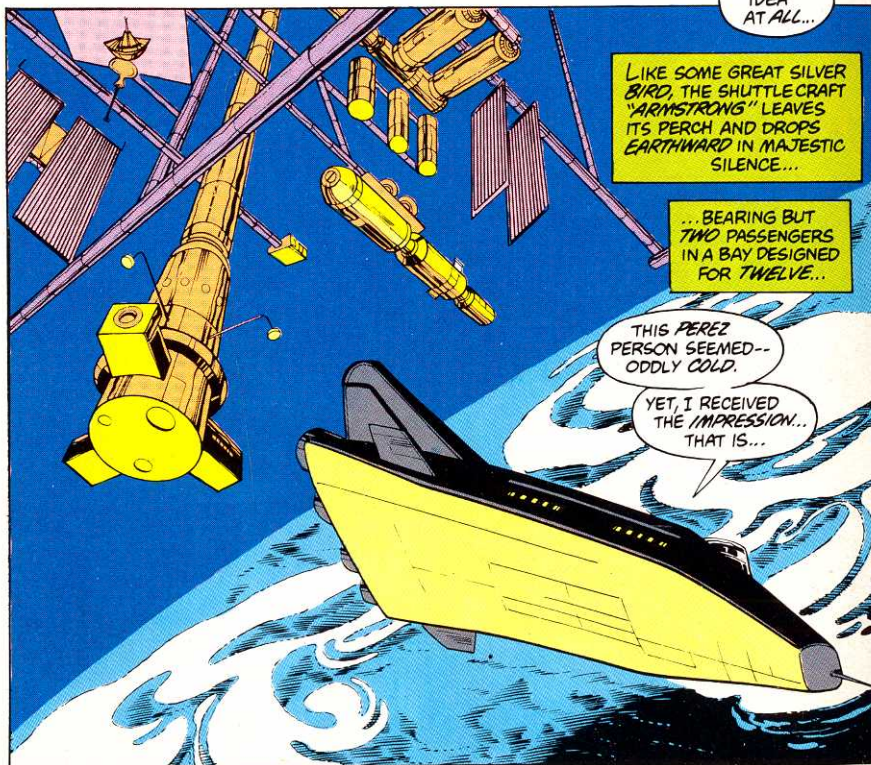
MESSAGE INCOMING:
ATTENTION: COMMANDER
MARTIN LUCAS ORION
MESSAGE ORIGIN: ATARI
INSTITUTE, NORTHCAL

APPARENTLY SOMEONE WANTS TO SPEAK WITH US.



COMMANDER CHAMPION, DOCTOR ORION, THIS IS ASSISTANT DIRECTOR PEREZ FROM ATARI INSTITUTE, EARTH-SIDE.

YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUIRED IMMEDIATELY FOR A CRASH PRIORITY MEETING OF THE PROJECT: MULTIVERSE TEAM.





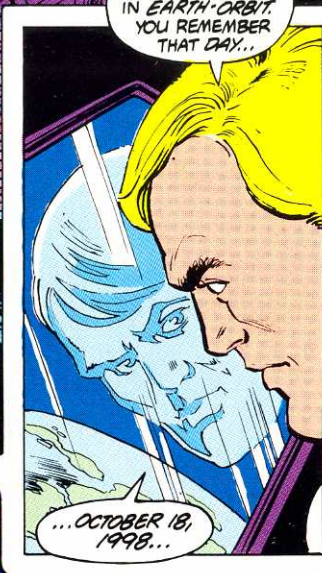
...IT SEEMED AS IF THE TWO OF YOU KNEW EACH OTHER.

IS SHE A FRIEND OF YOURS, MARTIN?

I ALWAYS THOUGHT SO, LUCAS... BUT NOW, I'M NOT SO SURE.

IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE I SAW HER.

WE MET SEVEN YEARS AGO, HERE IN EARTH-ORBIT. YOU REMEMBER THAT DAY...



...OCTOBER 18, 1998...



"... THE DAY ALL HELL BROKE LOOSE ON THE MOON!"

"NASA--REMEMBER NASA?--HAD ESTABLISHED THE FIRST LUNAR COLONY SIX MONTHS BEFORE, AND USING A MASS ACCELERATOR, THE COLONY WAS JUST STARTING TO EXPORT BUILDING MATERIALS TO NEAR-EARTH ORBIT..."

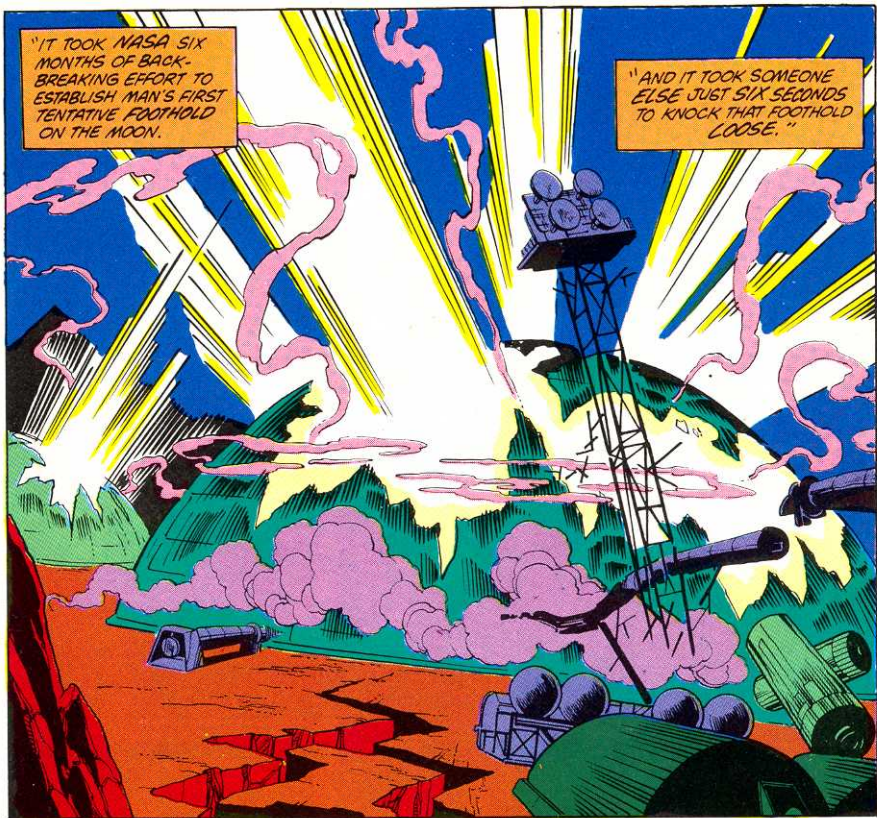
"IT WAS A PRIMITIVE LITTLE COLONY, NO MORE THAN TWO DOZEN PERSONNEL ON SITE... BUT IT WAS THRIVING..."

"... AND SOMEONE AMONG
OUR ENEMIES DECIDED IT
WAS THRIVING TOO WELL..."

CHAPTER TWO:

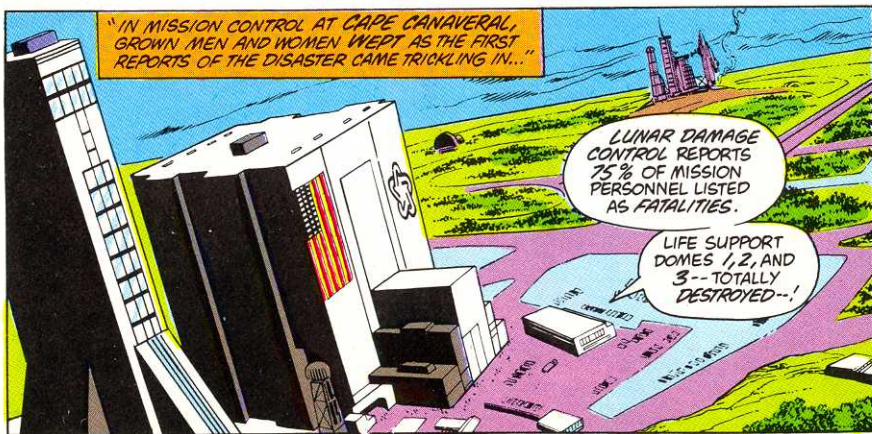
DEADLY ORBIT





"IT TOOK NASA SIX MONTHS OF BACK-BREAKING EFFORT TO ESTABLISH MAN'S FIRST TENTATIVE FOOTHOLD ON THE MOON.

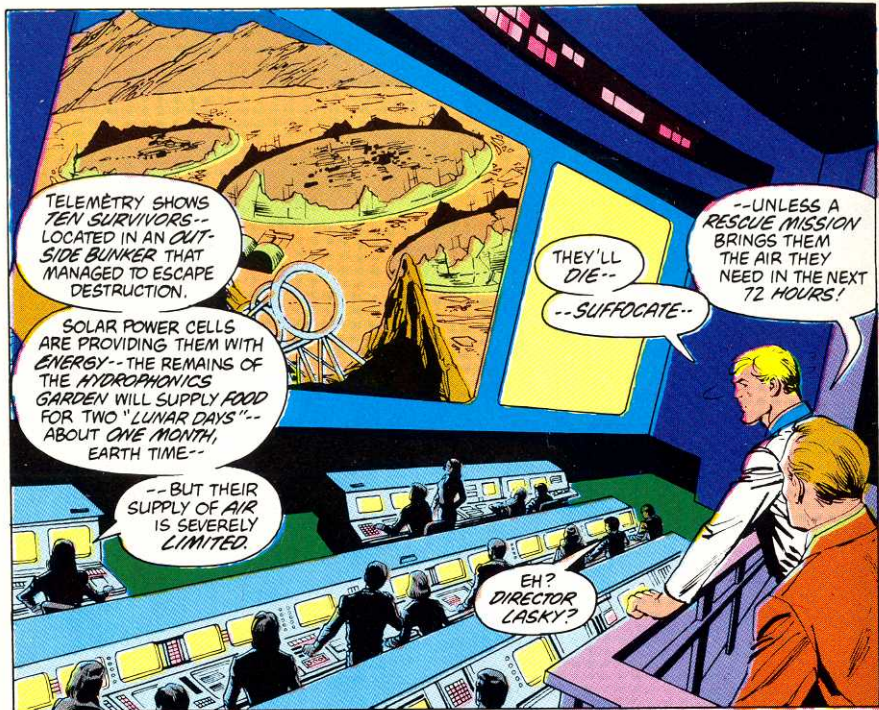
"AND IT TOOK SOMEONE ELSE JUST SIX SECONDS TO KNOCK THAT FOOTHOLD LOOSE."



"IN MISSION CONTROL AT CAPE CANAVERAL, GROWN MEN AND WOMEN WEPT AS THE FIRST REPORTS OF THE DISASTER CAME TRICKLING IN..."

LUNAR DAMAGE CONTROL REPORTS 75% OF MISSION PERSONNEL LISTED AS FATALITIES.

LIFE SUPPORT DOMES 1, 2, AND 3--TOTALLY DESTROYED--!



TELEMÉTRY SHOWS TEN SURVIVORS-- LOCATED IN AN OUT-SIDE BUNKER THAT MANAGED TO ESCAPE DESTRUCTION.

SOLAR POWER CELLS ARE PROVIDING THEM WITH ENERGY-- THE REMAINS OF THE HYDROPHONICS GARDEN WILL SUPPLY FOOD FOR TWO "LUNAR DAYS"-- ABOUT ONE MONTH, EARTH TIME--

-- BUT THEIR SUPPLY OF AIR IS SEVERELY LIMITED.

THEY'LL DIE--

--SUFFOCATE--

--UNLESS A RESCUE MISSION BRINGS THEM THE AIR THEY NEED IN THE NEXT 72 HOURS!

EH? DIRECTOR LASKY?

COMMANDER CHAMPION, YOU KNOW THE SITUATION ON THE MOON AS WELL AS ANY OF US.

THOSE PEOPLE ARE 500,000 KILOMETERS FROM THE CLOSEST BREATH OF FRESH AIR.

NASA

SOMEONE HAS TO BRING THEM THE AIR THEY NEED TO SURVIVE.

SPACE STATION ONE HAS THE NECESSARY SUPPLIES... I'VE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE CREW CHIEF THERE, DOCTOR PEREZ...

THEY'RE READINGY A MAKESHIFT SUPPLY SHIP.

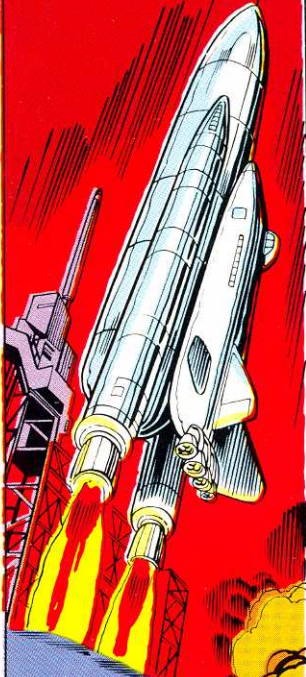
WHAT THEY NEED IS AN EXPERIENCED PILOT--

WHICH IS ME.

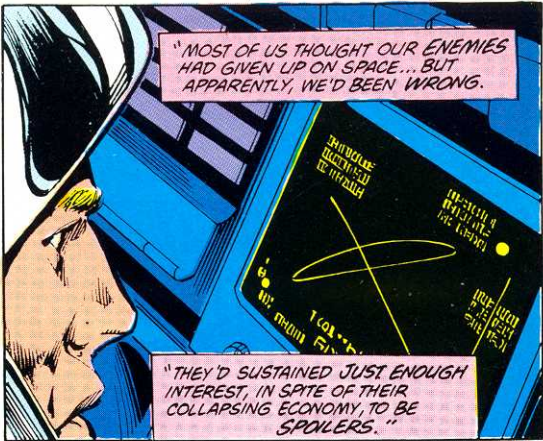
TELL THEM I'M ON MY WAY!

"'EXPERIENCE' IS RELATIVE. I'D BEEN TO THE MOON FOUR TIMES SINCE THE U.S. SPACE PROGRAM STARTED UP AGAIN, FULL BORE, IN THE MIDDLE 1990S...

"... BUT NOBODY ELSE HAD COMMANDED A LUNAR MISSION MORE THAN TWICE."

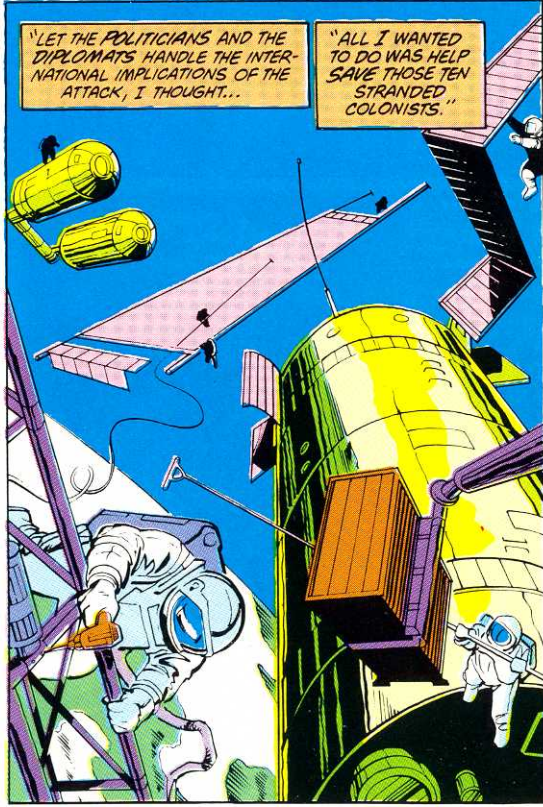


FWHOOM



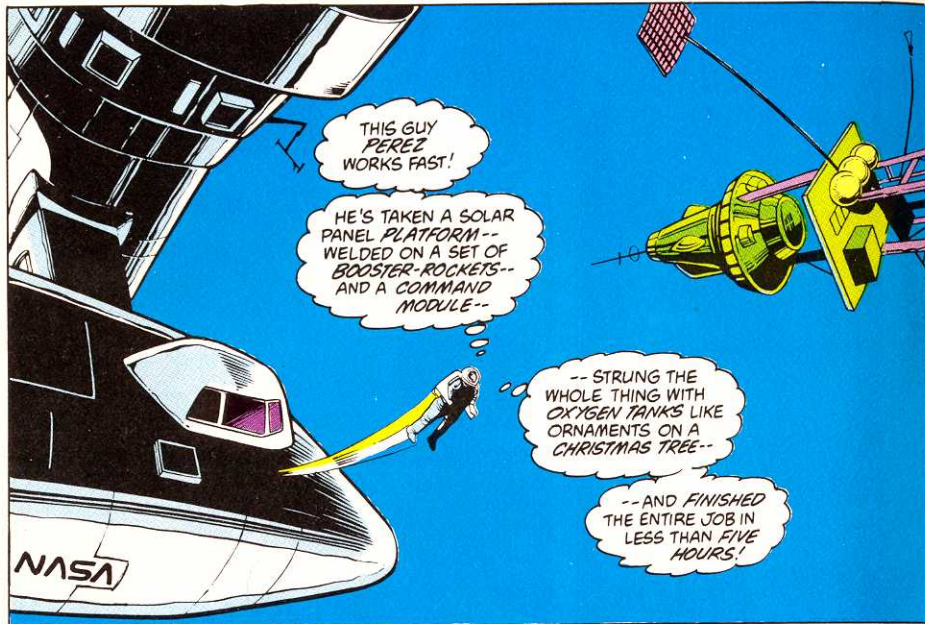
"MOST OF US THOUGHT OUR ENEMIES HAD GIVEN UP ON SPACE... BUT APPARENTLY, WE'D BEEN WRONG."

"THEY'D SUSTAINED JUST ENOUGH INTEREST, IN SPITE OF THEIR COLLAPSING ECONOMY, TO BE SPOILERS."



"LET THE POLITICIANS AND THE DIPLOMATS HANDLE THE INTERNATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE ATTACK, I THOUGHT..."

"ALL I WANTED TO DO WAS HELP SAVE THOSE TEN STRANDED COLONISTS."

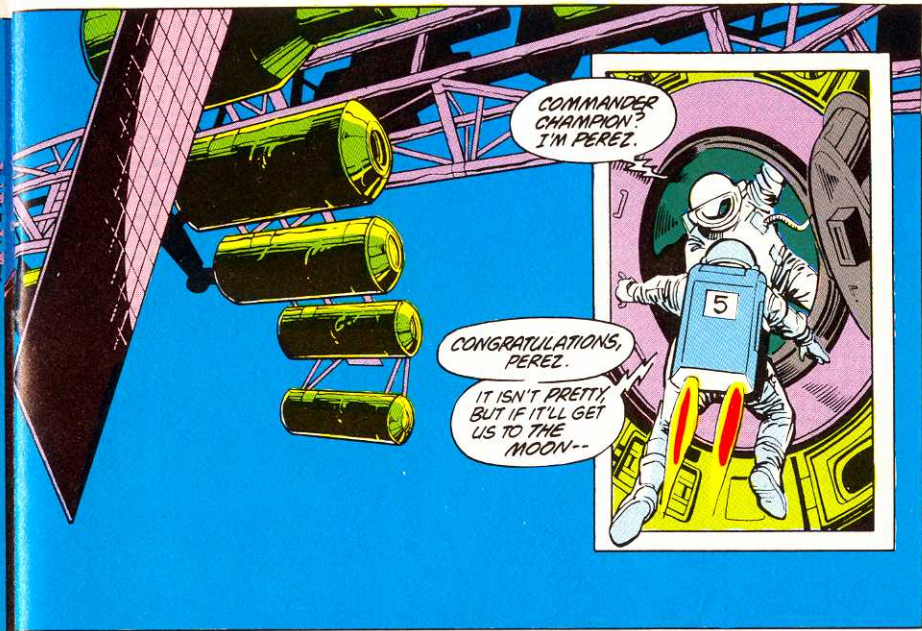


THIS GUY PEREZ WORKS FAST!

HE'S TAKEN A SOLAR PANEL PLATFORM-- WELDED ON A SET OF BOOSTER-ROCKETS-- AND A COMMAND MODULE--

-- STRUNG THE WHOLE THING WITH OXYGEN TANKS LIKE ORNAMENTS ON A CHRISTMAS TREE--

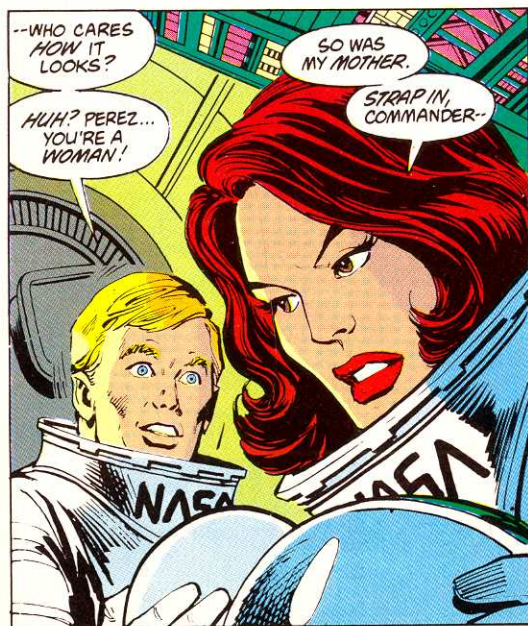
-- AND FINISHED THE ENTIRE JOB IN LESS THAN FIVE HOURS!



COMMANDER CHAMPION? I'M PEREZ.

CONGRATULATIONS, PEREZ.

IT ISN'T PRETTY BUT IF IT'LL GET US TO THE MOON--



--WHO CARES HOW IT LOOKS?

SO WAS MY MOTHER.

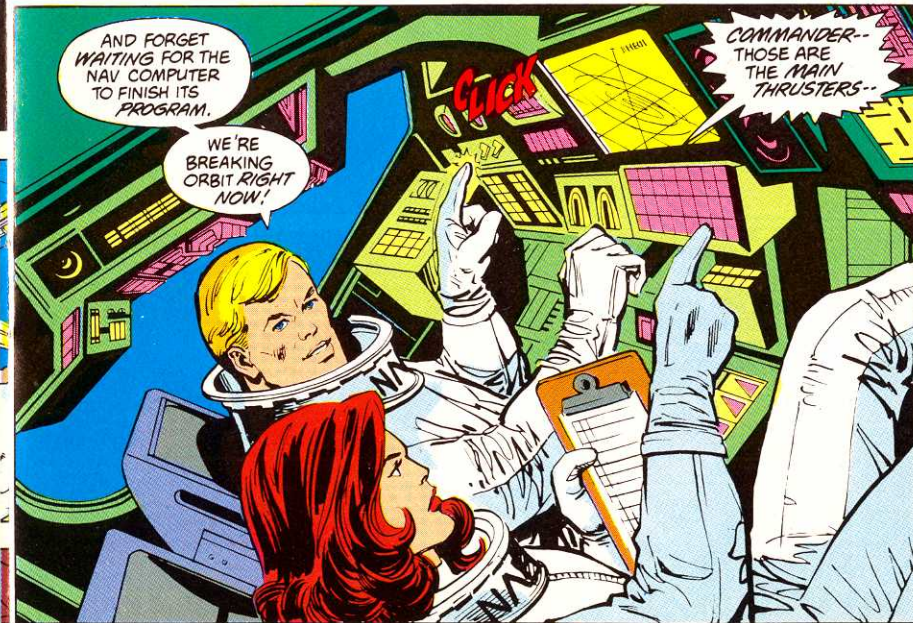
HUH? PEREZ... YOU'RE A WOMAN!

STRAP IN, COMMANDER--



--WE'LL BE LEAVING EARTH ORBIT AS SOON AS THE NAV COMPUTER COMES UP WITH A MISSION TRAJECTORY.

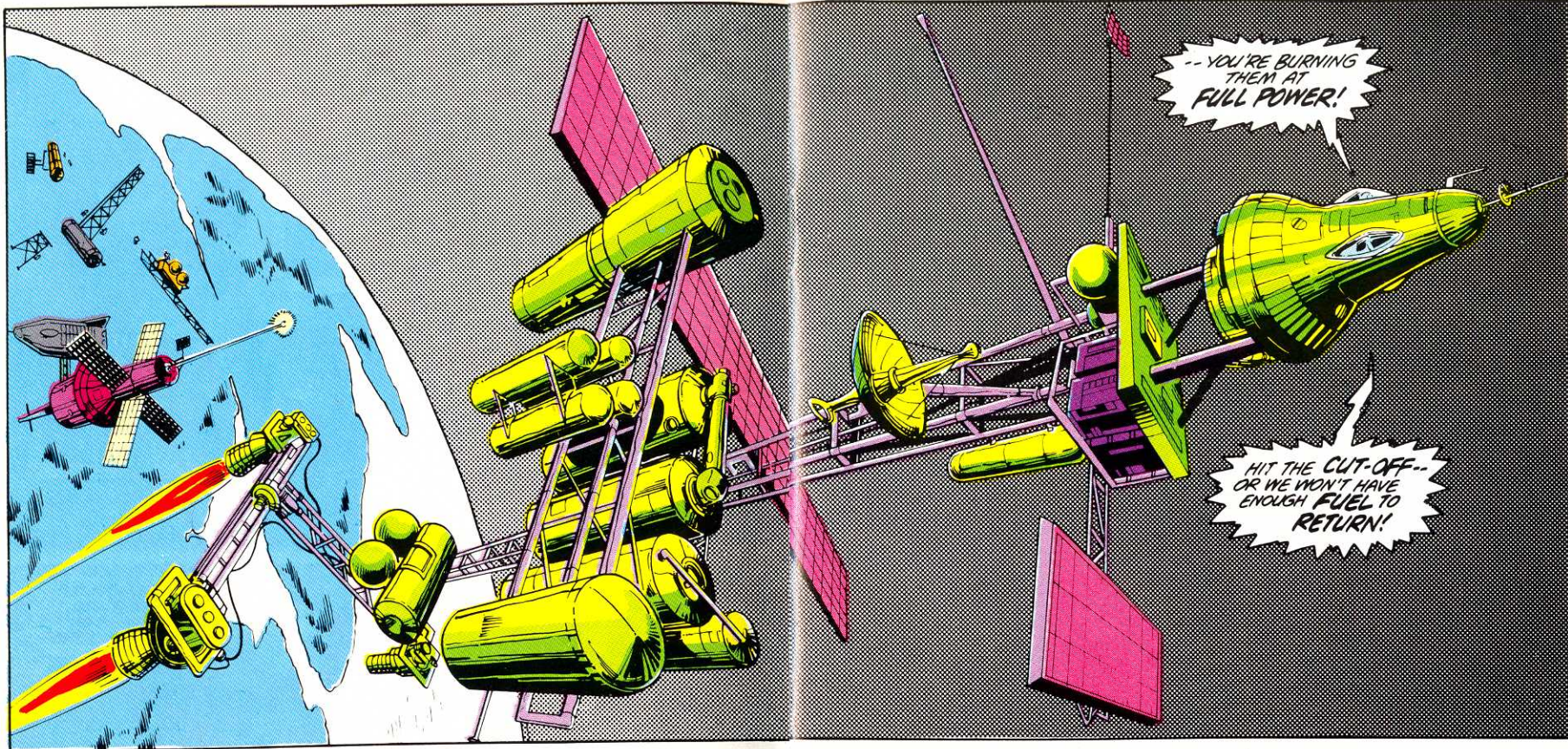
LOOK, I DIDN'T MEAN TO-- FORGET IT.



AND FORGET WAITING FOR THE NAV COMPUTER TO FINISH ITS PROGRAM.

WE'RE BREAKING ORBIT RIGHT NOW!

COMMANDER-- THOSE ARE THE MAIN THRUSTERS--



-- YOU'RE BURNING THEM AT FULL POWER!

HIT THE CUT-OFF-- OR WE WON'T HAVE ENOUGH FUEL TO RETURN!



YOU--YOU IDIOT! YOU'VE DEPLETED OUR TANKS--WE'LL BARELY HAVE ENOUGH POWER FOR MID-COURSE CORRECTIONS!

HOW WILL WE GET BACK?

CALM DOWN, PEREZ...



...AND LOOK AT THE CHRONOMETER!

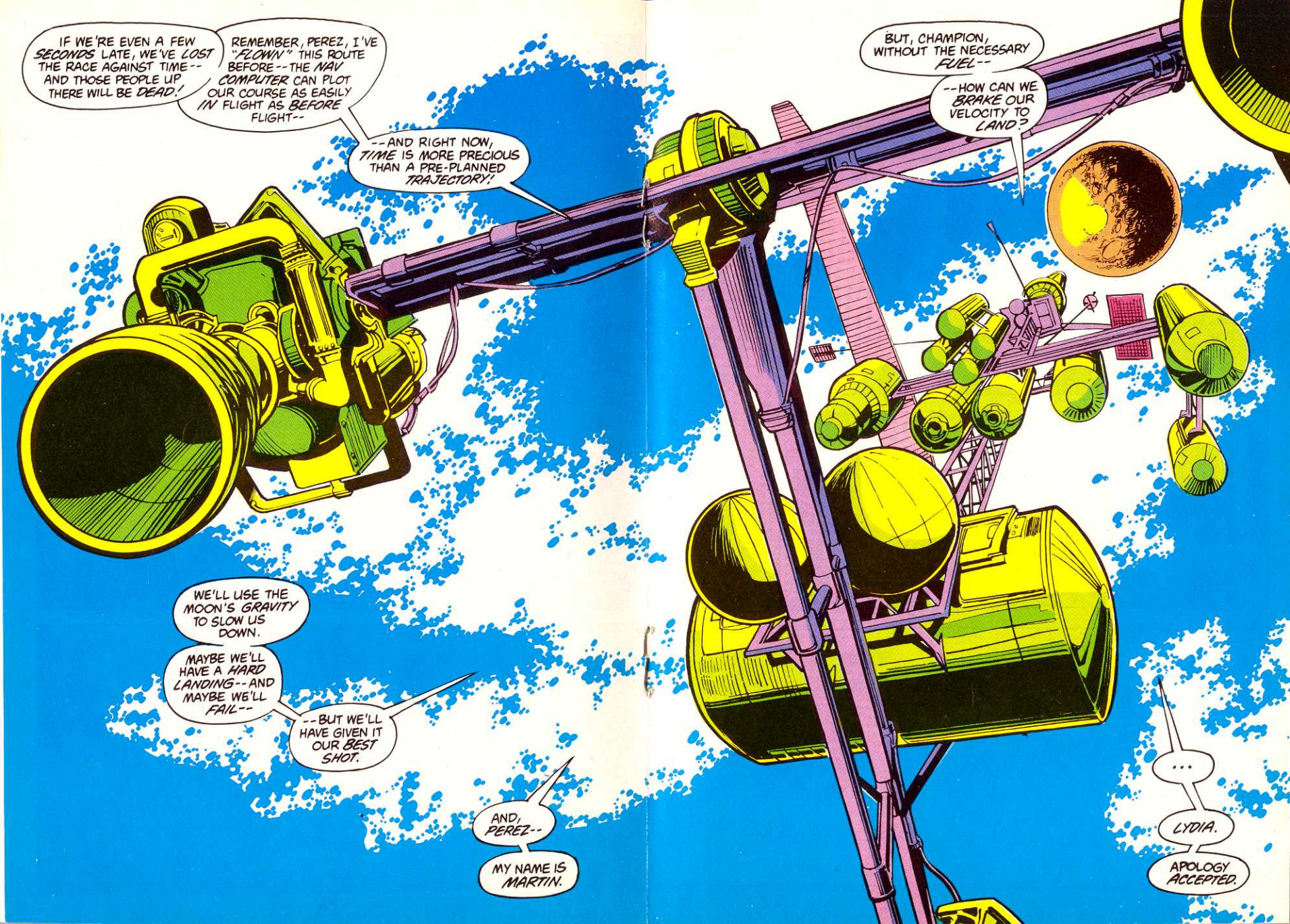
SIXTY-SEVEN HOURS...



...THAT'S HOW MUCH TIME THE COLONISTS HAVE BEFORE THEIR AIR RUNS OUT.

WE NEED TO MAKE SPEED, PEREZ.

NOTHING ELSE MATTERS.



IF WE'RE EVEN A FEW SECONDS LATE, WE'VE LOST THE RACE AGAINST TIME-- AND THOSE PEOPLE UP THERE WILL BE DEAD!

REMEMBER, PEREZ, I'VE "FLOWN" THIS ROUTE BEFORE-- THE NAV COMPUTER CAN PLOT OUR COURSE AS EASILY IN FLIGHT AS BEFORE FLIGHT--

--AND RIGHT NOW, TIME IS MORE PRECIOUS THAN A PRE-PLANNED TRAJECTORY!

BUT, CHAMPION, WITHOUT THE NECESSARY FUEL--

--HOW CAN WE BRAKE OUR VELOCITY TO LAND?

WE'LL USE THE MOON'S GRAVITY TO SLOW US DOWN.

MAYBE WE'LL HAVE A HARD LANDING-- AND MAYBE WE'LL FAIL--

-- BUT WE'LL HAVE GIVEN IT OUR BEST SHOT.

AND, PEREZ--

MY NAME IS MARTIN.

...

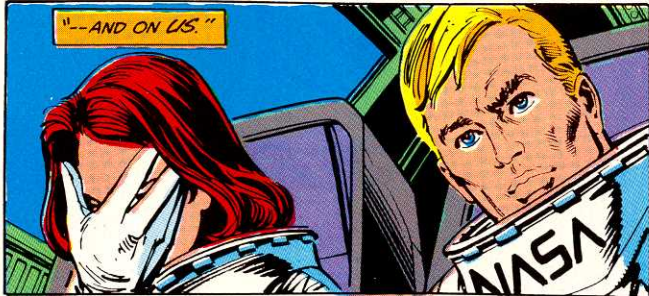
LYDIA.

APOLOGY ACCEPTED.

"MISSION CONTROL RELAYED REPORTS FROM THE COLONY... THINGS WERE GETTING BAD AS THE AIR TURNED FOUL. FIGHTS BROKE OUT ... A MAN WENT SCREAMING MAD FROM CLAUSTROPHOBIA... AND EVERY HOUR THAT PASSED INCREASED THE PRESSURE ON THEM--



"-- AND ON US."



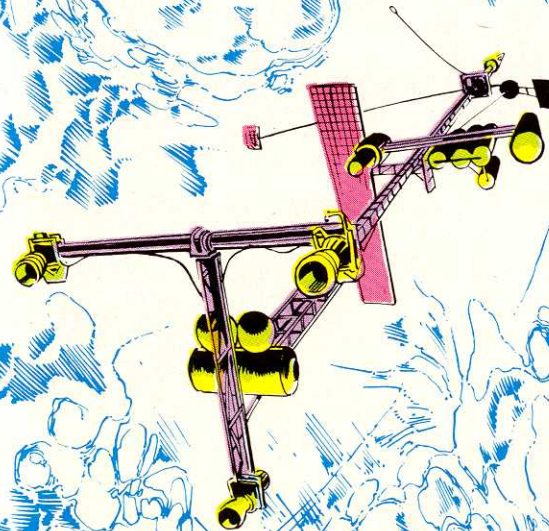
"THEN, ON THE MORNING OF THE THIRD DAY, WE LOOKED THROUGH THE VIEWPORT--

"-- AND THERE IT WAS."

"LUNAR RESCUE TEAM, THIS IS MISSION CONTROL. WE'VE JUST LOST RADIO CONTACT WITH LUNAR BASE."

"COMPUTER PROJECTIONS INDICATE-- A 95% PROBABILITY-- THAT IT'S ALL OVER."

"YOUR MISSION IS SCRUBBED. STAY IN LUNAR ORBIT UNTIL A PROPER RELIEF SHIP CAN--"



NEGATIVE, MISSION CONTROL

WE DIDN'T COME THIS FAR TO QUIT WITHOUT TRYING FOR A TOUCHDOWN!

"CHAMPION! THIS IS DIRECTOR LASKY! DON'T BE A FOOL--RISKING YOUR LIVES WHEN THERE'S SO LITTLE HOPE!"

"I'M ORDERING YOU TO--
SKWAARK!"

SO MUCH FOR MISSION CONTROL.

WE CAN'T HEAR THEM AS WE SWING AROUND LUNAR DARKSIDE.

ANY RESERVATIONS, PEREZ?

NONE. YOU'RE PILOTING THIS JUNKPILE, CHAMPION.

GO FOR IT!

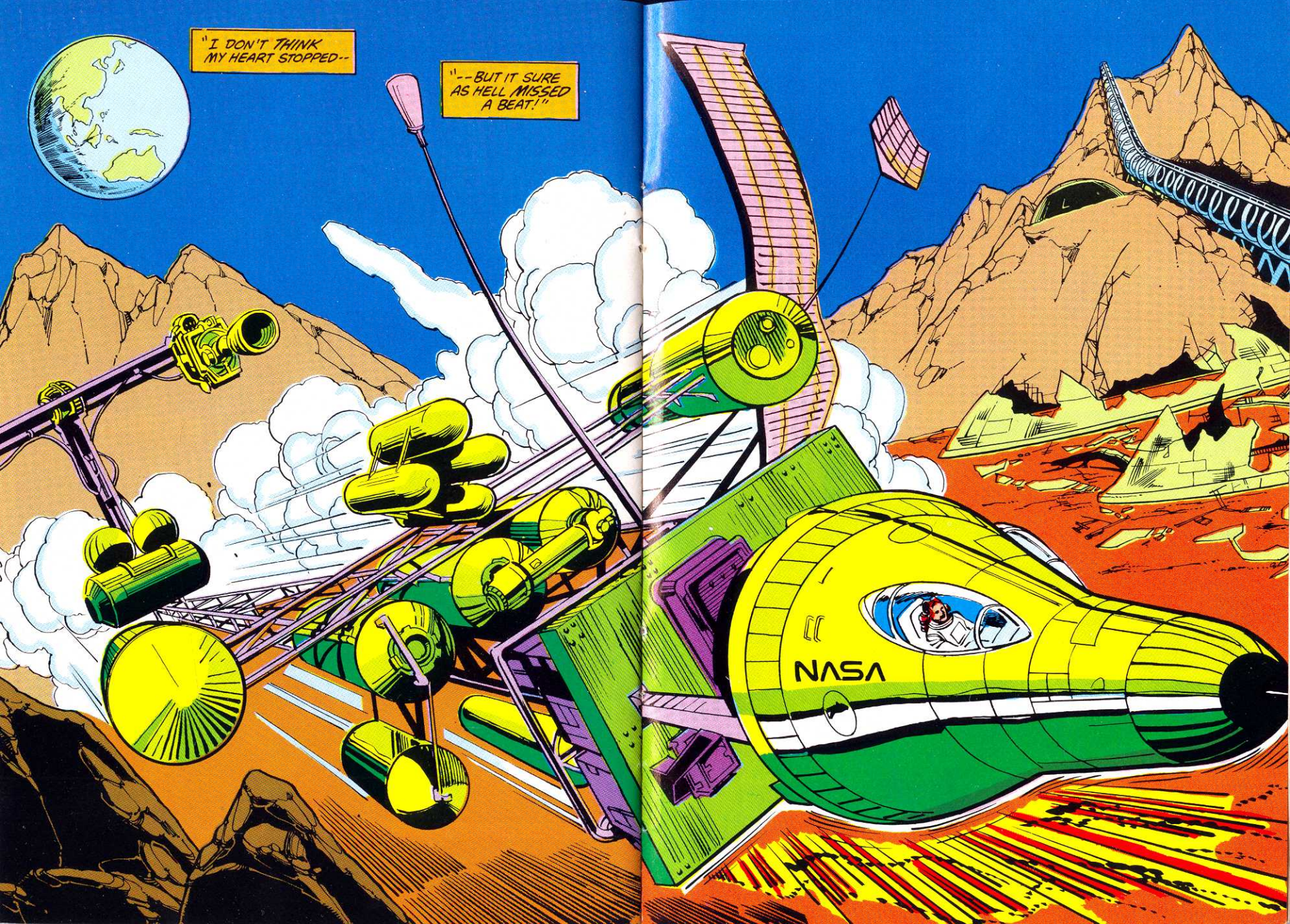
"ONCE... TWICE... HALF A DOZEN TIMES, WE CIRCLED THE MOON, AND WITH EACH ORBIT WE DROPPED LOWER, SLOWING OUR DESCENT WITH A COMBINATION OF GRAVITY AND DYING RETRO-ROCKETS..."

"FINALLY, WE WERE TOO LOW TO MAKE ANOTHER ORBIT... AND, LIKE IT OR NOT--"

"--IT WAS TIME TO BRING THAT BABY DOWN!"

"I DON'T THINK
MY HEART STOPPED--

"--BUT IT SURE
AS HELL MISSED
A BEAT!"



CHAMPION, YOU'RE CERTIFIABLE-- BUT YOU'RE ALSO ONE HECK OF A PILOT.

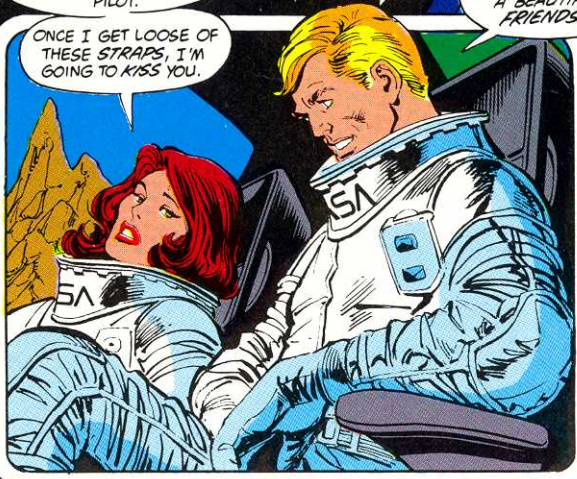
PEREZ, AS A HERO OF MINE ONCE SAID--

"THIS MAY BE THE START OF A BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP"

ONCE I GET LOOSE OF THESE STRAPS, I'M GOING TO KISS YOU.

AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT AT THE TIME.

A FEW DAYS LATER-- WHILE WE WERE WAITING WITH THE LUNAR COLONISTS FOR A RESCUE SHIP TO ARRIVE-- THE WAR STARTED.

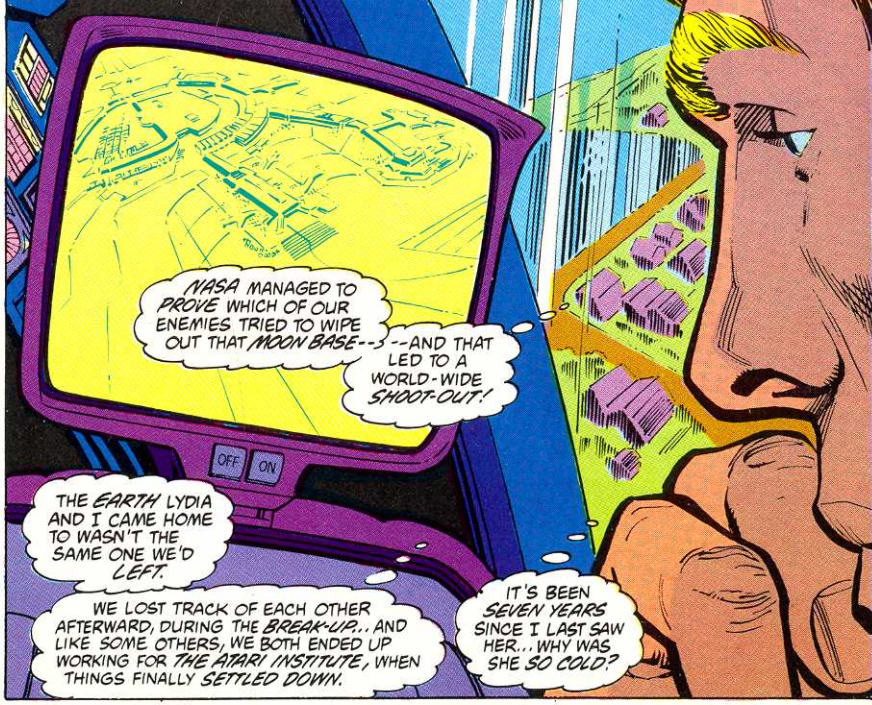


NASA MANAGED TO PROVE WHICH OF OUR ENEMIES TRIED TO WIPE OUT THAT MOON BASE-- --AND THAT LED TO A WORLD-WIDE SHOOT-OUT!

THE EARTH LYDIA AND I CAME HOME TO WASN'T THE SAME ONE WE'D LEFT.

WE LOST TRACK OF EACH OTHER AFTERWARD, DURING THE BREAK-UP... AND LIKE SOME OTHERS, WE BOTH ENDED UP WORKING FOR THE ATARI INSTITUTE, WHEN THINGS FINALLY SETTLED DOWN.

IT'S BEEN SEVEN YEARS SINCE I LAST SAW HER... WHY WAS SHE SO COLD?



CHAPTER THREE:

FINAL APPROACH

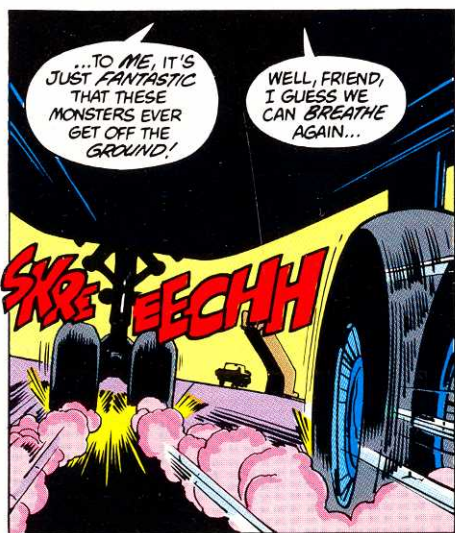
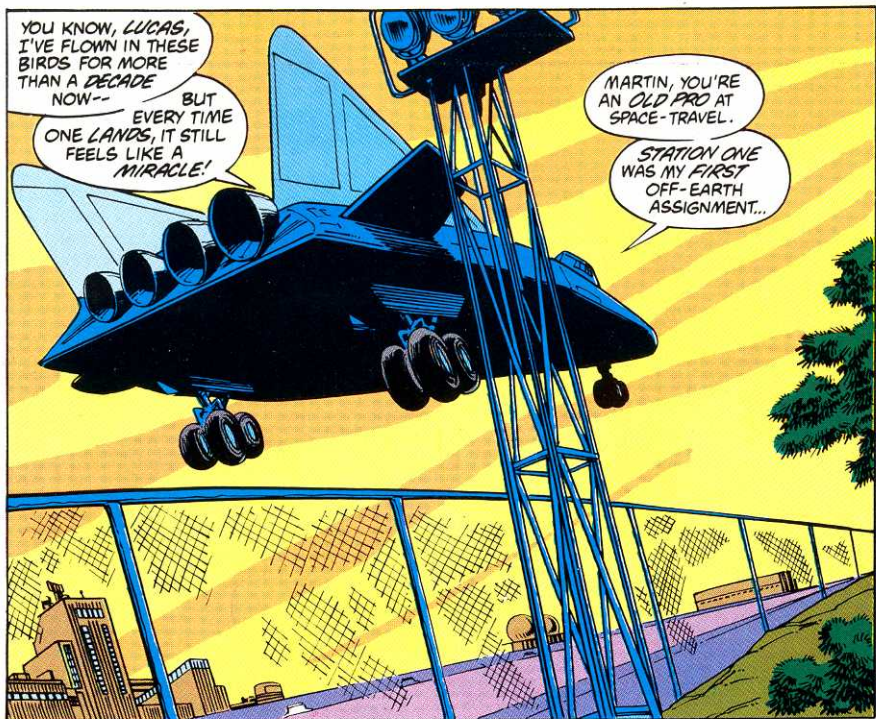
"ATARI CONTROL,
WE'RE IN THE
GLIDE PATH."

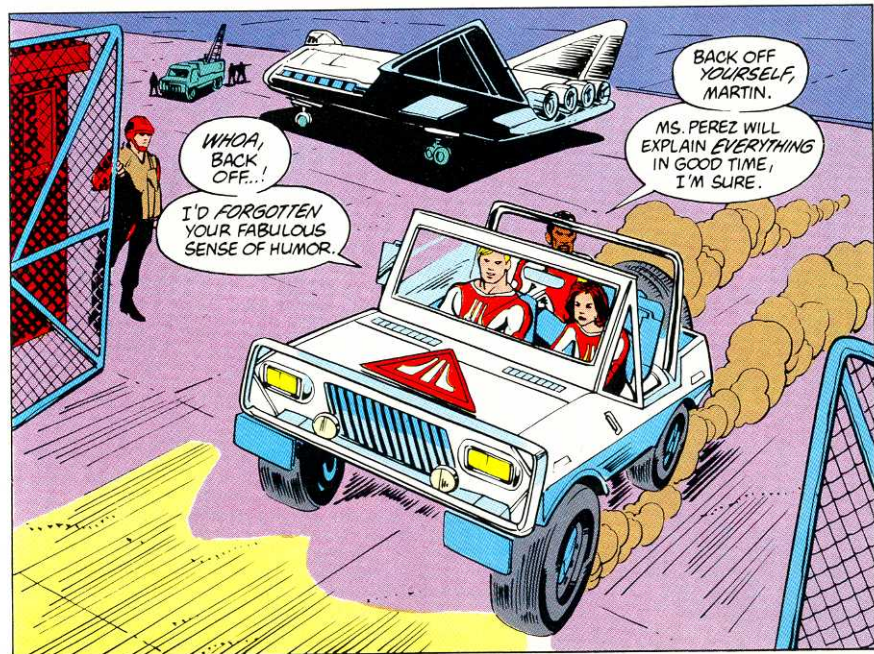
"ESTIMATED
TOUCHDOWN AT
2202:00:00."

"ROGER,
SHUTTLE EIGHT.
YOU'RE RIGHT
ON THE BUTTON."

"INFORM YOUR PASSENGERS
THAT ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
PEREZ WILL BE ON THE PAD
WITH A TRANSPORT VEHICLE
WHEN THEY DEBARK."

"ATARI
CONTROL--
OUT!"







IT'S NOT MY PLACE TO EXPLAIN, DOCTOR.

THAT'S UP TO THE DIRECTOR-- HE'S BEEN IN COMMAND OF PROJECT: MULTIVERSE FROM THE BEGINNING. I WAS ONLY BROUGHT IN ON THE DESIGN END SIX MONTHS AGO.

BUT I CAN TELL YOU THIS... SINCE THE WAR, WE'VE SEARCHED FOR A SOLUTION TO THE WORLD FOOD SHORTAGE...

... AND WITH PROJECT: MULTIVERSE, WE MAY HAVE FOUND THE SOLUTION TO THAT, AND A WHOLE HOST OF OTHER POTENTIAL DISASTERS!

LUCAS ORION LISTENS WITH ONLY HALF-ATTENTION: THE MENTION OF THE WAR, AND THE SIGHT OF THE RUNNERS WHO JOG HOMEWARD ALONG THIS ABANDONED STRETCH OF HIGHWAY, HAVE STIRRED MEMORIES HE THOUGHT WERE DEEPLY BURIED...

... MEMORIES OF A DAY SIX YEARS IN THE PAST, DURING THE DARK MONTHS OF THE BREAK-UP, THAT PROLONGED PERIOD OF WORLD-WIDE CHAOS WHICH FOLLOWED ON THE HEELS OF THE WAR...

RUNNING FIGURES:

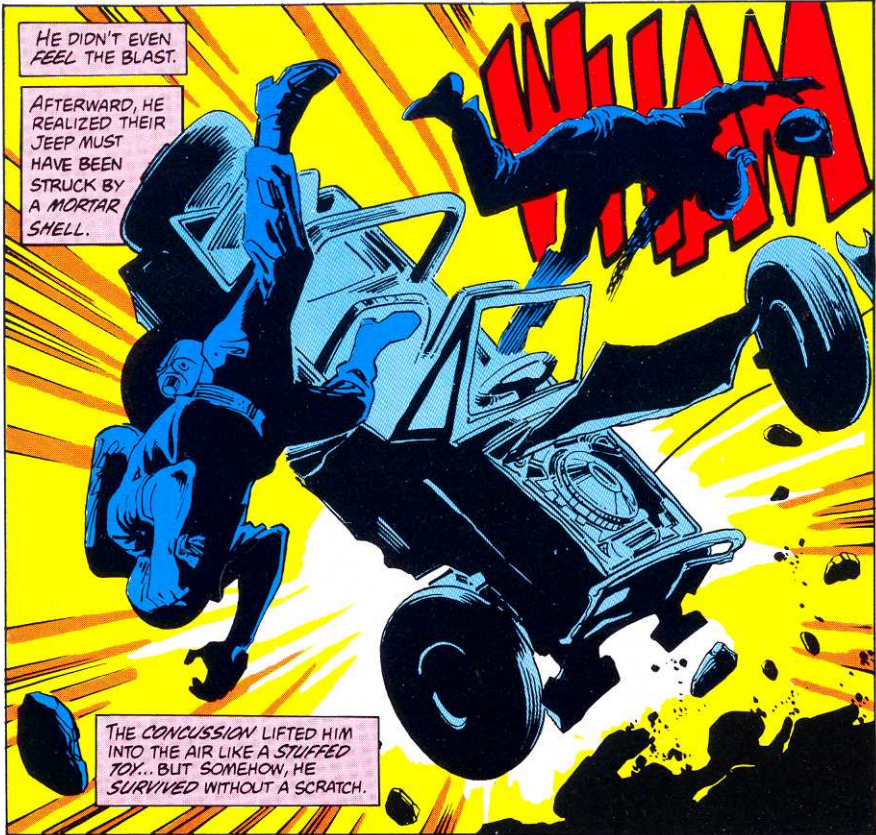
THE RUNNERS OF HIS MEMORY WERE REFUGEES, FLEEING A BLOODY CIVIL WAR IN THE HEART OF A ONCE-STABLE AFRICAN STATE.

LUCAS ORION WAS A MEDIC ATTACHED TO A UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING FORCE... THE LAST SUCH "PEACE-KEEPING" FORCE THAT DYING ORGANIZATION WAS EVER TO SPONSOR.

DEAR HEAVEN--THIS IS THE FOURTH BURNING VILLAGE WE'VE PASSED THIS MORNING!

WHEN IS THE FIGHTING GOING TO STOP?


WHEN THE LAST MAN DROPS DEAD, DOC, AND THE WHOLE WORLD IS--



HE DIDN'T EVEN FEEL THE BLAST.

AFTERWARD, HE REALIZED THEIR JEEP MUST HAVE BEEN STRUCK BY A MORTAR SHELL.

THE CONCUSSION LIFTED HIM INTO THE AIR LIKE A STUFFED TOY... BUT SOMEHOW, HE SURVIVED WITHOUT A SCRATCH.



HIS DRIVER WASN'T AS LUCKY...

LUCAS MIGHT HAVE STAYED THERE, HUNCHED OVER IN SHOCK, WITHDRAWING FURTHER AND FURTHER FROM REALITY... BUT THEN HE HEARD A SMALL VOICE, CRYING...

WAAAA



... AND HE REALIZED THAT THERE WERE OTHERS IN THE WORLD WHOSE HORRORS WERE GREATER THAN HIS OWN:

THAT CHILD--

WHAM!

WAAAAA



-- SHE'S IN THE PATH OF THE BOMBARDMENT!

HAVE TO GET HER AWAY!



SHELLS WHISTLED AROUND HIM-- FLYING DIRT BLINDED HIM-- BUT THE GIRL'S CRIES DREW HIM ON...

WAAAA



BEHIND HIM, LUCAS COULD HEAR ENEMY TROOPS CLOSING IN ON THE WASTED TOWN.

MACHINE GUNS CHATTERED HUNGRILY IN THE DUSK, NEARER, NEARER...



LOOK OUT!

TAKA TAKA

TAKA!



SOLDIERS--CLOSING
IN FROM NORTH
AND WEST!

YOU'RE A CIVILIAN,
LITTLE ONE, AND
I'M A MEDIC--

--BUT IN WAR,
THESE DAYS,
THAT DOESN'T
MEAN MUCH
ANYMORE!



RASA-TAK

TAKA

GIVE A MAN A
GUN AND A 'CAUSE'
--AND HE'LL KILL
ANYTHING THAT
MOVES!

TAKA!



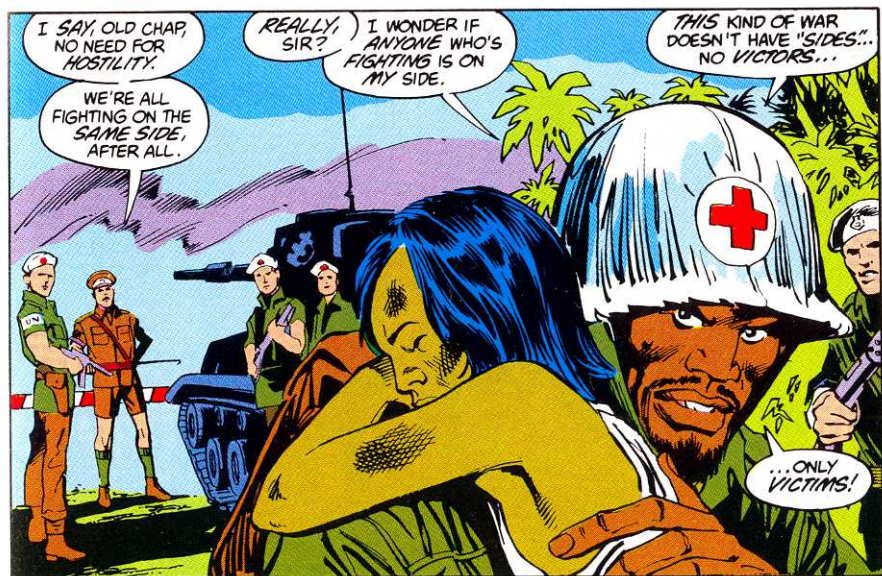
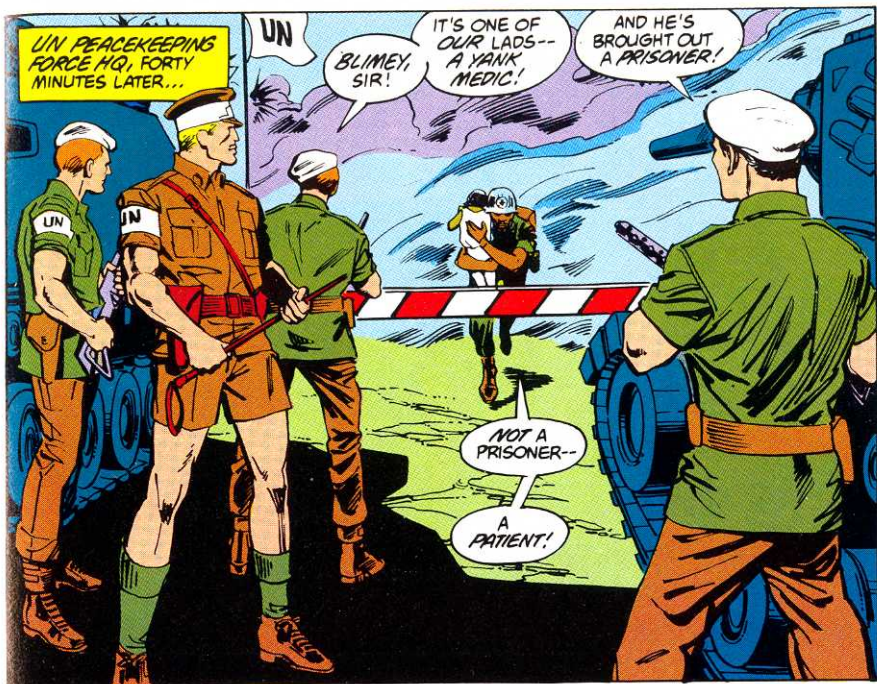
SOMEHOW, HE MADE
IT INTO THE FOREST.

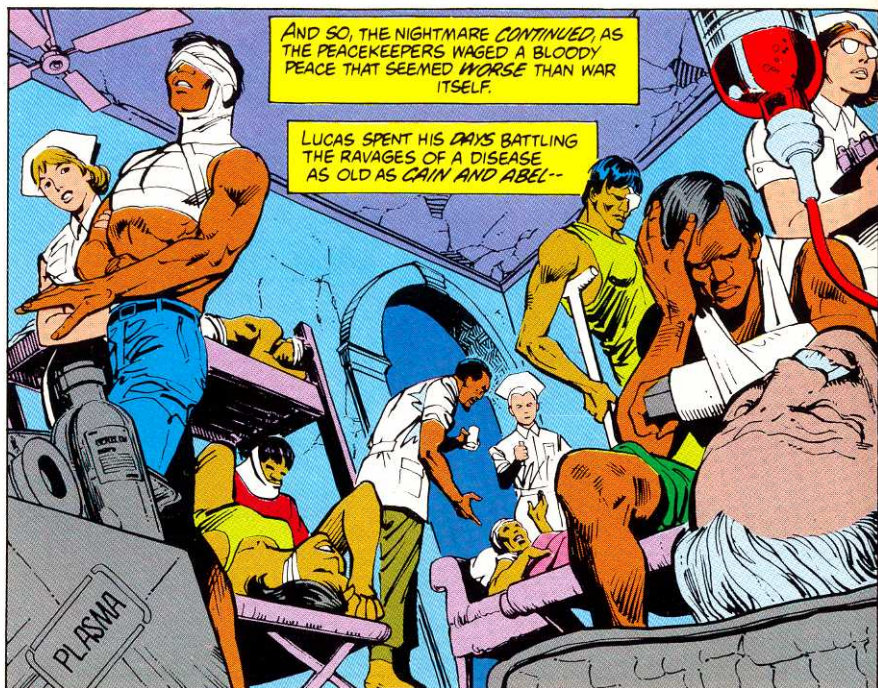
TAKA

TAKA

TAKA!

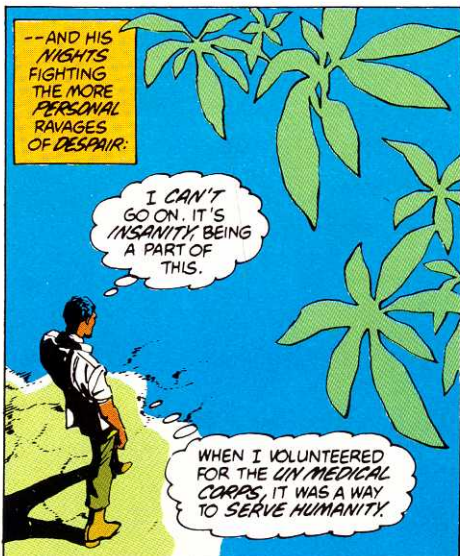
THEY WERE SAFE... IF
'SAFETY' HAD MEANING
IN A WORLD GONE MAD!





AND SO, THE NIGHTMARE CONTINUED, AS THE PEACEKEEPERS WAGED A BLOODY PEACE THAT SEEMED WORSE THAN WAR ITSELF.

LUCAS SPENT HIS DAYS BATTLING THE RAVAGES OF A DISEASE AS OLD AS CAIN AND ABEL--



--AND HIS NIGHTS FIGHTING THE MORE PERSONAL RAVAGES OF DESPAIR.

I CAN'T GO ON. IT'S INSANITY, BEING A PART OF THIS.

WHEN I VOLUNTEERED FOR THE UN MEDICAL CORPS, IT WAS A WAY TO SERVE HUMANITY.



INSTEAD, RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY, I FEEL AS IF I'M AIDING HUMANITY'S ENEMIES.

I HEAL MEN SO THEY CAN DIE.

NO MORE. NO MORE.

PERHAPS IT'S FATE
THAT THIS CAME
TODAY.

A NEW BEGINNING
...NEW HOPES,
NEW DREAMS...

...PERHAPS EVEN
A NEW FUTURE FOR
ALL HUMANKIND.

UNITED NATIONS
SPECIAL COMMUNIQUE

TO: DR. LUCAS ORION
5/6 UN FORCE X320

FROM: ATARI
INSTITUTE
SUNNYVALE, CA.

DEAR DR. ORION:
BECAUSE OF EXPANDED RESPONSIBILITIES
DUE TO THE BREAK-UP OF TRADITIONAL
POLITICAL-NATION-STATES, ATARI INSTITUTE
IS ASSUMING CONTROL OF NASA AND THE
NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCE. STOP. YOUR
OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC RECORD LEAVES
US TO OFFER YOU A POSITION AS
MEDICAL RESEARCH

ATARI
INSTITUTE
WANTS TO MAKE
ME THEIR
DIRECTOR OF
MEDICAL
RESEARCH.

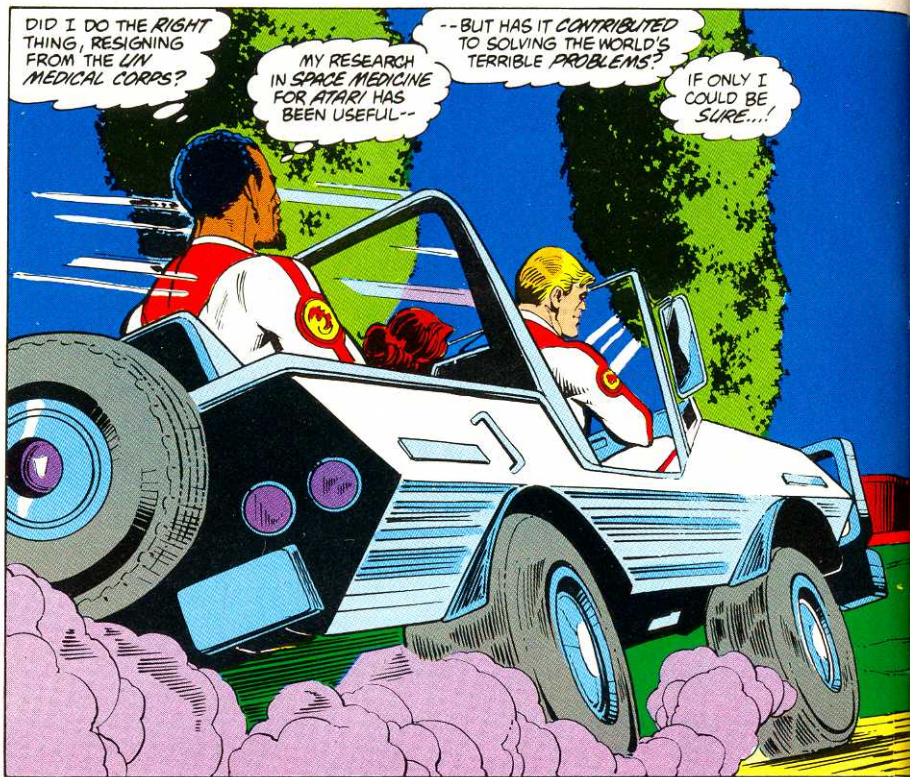
I COULD
LEAVE ALL
THIS BEHIND.

AND THAT'S
WHAT I WANT,
ISN'T IT?

ISN'T
IT...?

THE STARS HAD
NO ANSWER FOR
LUCAS ORION,
THAT NIGHT...

...AND NOW, SIX
YEARS LATER,
THEY ARE AS
CRYPTIC AS
EVER.



DID I DO THE RIGHT THING, RESIGNING FROM THE U/V MEDICAL CORPS?

MY RESEARCH IN SPACE MEDICINE FOR ATARI HAS BEEN USEFUL--

--BUT HAS IT CONTRIBUTED TO SOLVING THE WORLD'S TERRIBLE PROBLEMS?

IF ONLY I COULD BE SURE...!



...WHY DON'T YOU DROP THE MYSTERIOUS ROUTINE?

WHAT IS PROJECT: MULTIVERSE?

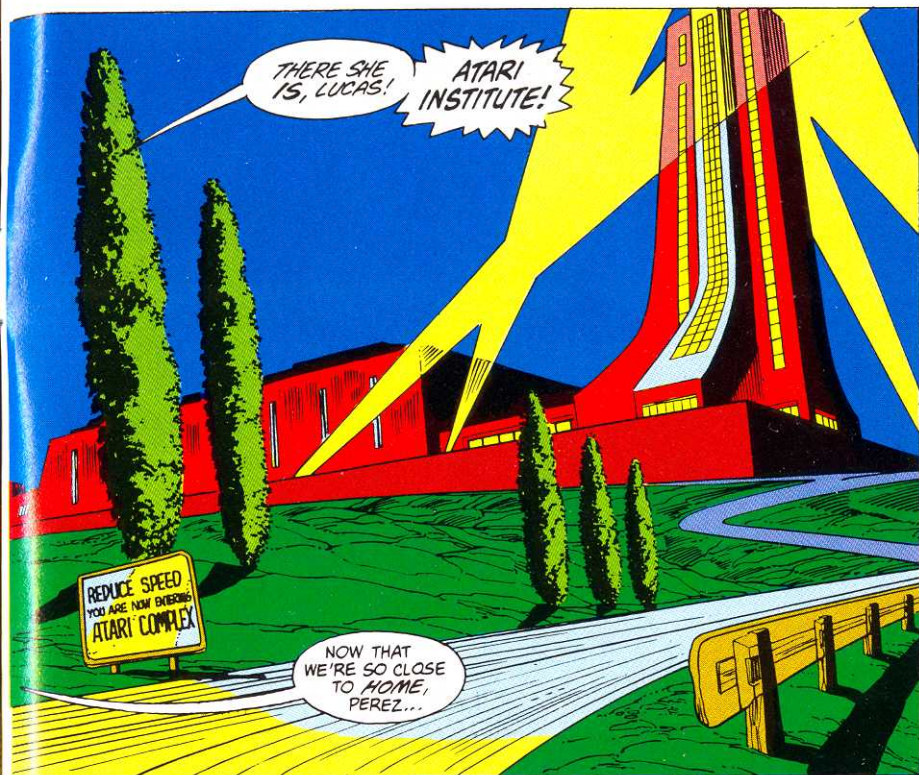
A HINT, CHAMPION.

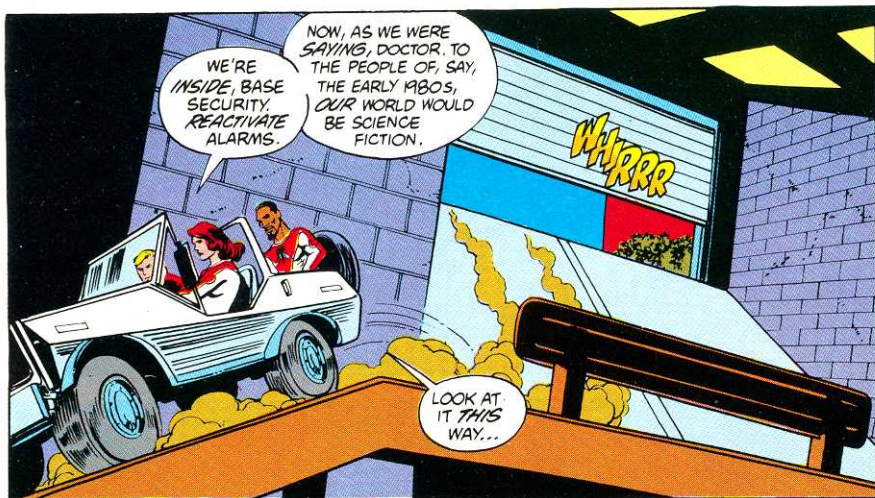
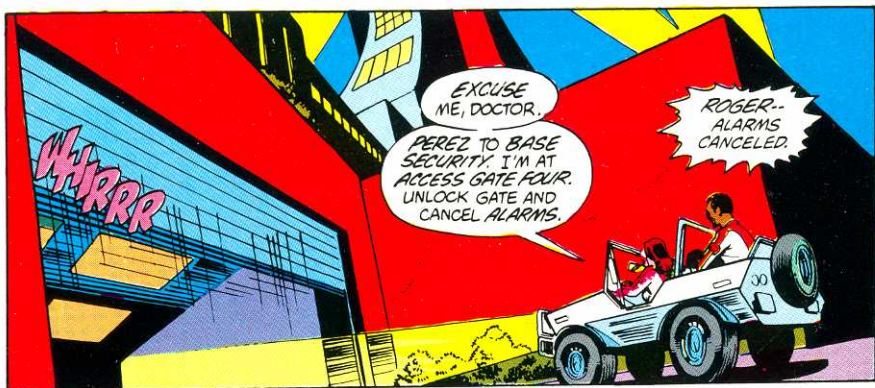
IT HAS TO DO WITH ALTERNATE REALITY!



WHAT? YOU MEAN--PARALLEL WORLDS?

WORLDS LIKE OUR OWN--IN OTHER DIMENSIONS--







SO IT'S TO BE AS EASY AS THIS, IS IT?

I'D ALMOST EXPECT A TRAP--

-- BUT IT'S CLEAR THE LADS IN SECURITY HAVEN'T A NOTION THAT ANYTHING'S WRONG!

AYE, THIS SENSOR-DETECTOR TELLS THE TALE--

--AND WHAT A WOEFUL TALE 'TIS!

A MERE SLIP OF A GIRL HAS PENETRATED THE TIGHTEST SECURITY SYSTEM IN ALL NORTHCAL, LAYING BARE ITS GREATEST SECRET FOR THE PLUNDERING--

-- AND NOT A MAN OR WOMAN IN THE ENTIRE ATARI COMPLEX EVEN SUSPECTS I'M HERE!

TO BE CONTINUED

SEE ATARI'S "BERZERK!"
GAME CARTRIDGE
FOR THE STARTLING
CONCLUSION OF
"ATARI FORCE--
THE ORIGIN!"



**THE EXCITEMENT
IS JUST
BEGINNING!**

**DC AND ATARI
PROUDLY PRESENT
THE FURTHER EPIC
ADVENTURES OF**

ATARI FORCE

**IN FREE BONUS COMICS
AVAILABLE ONLY
IN SPECIALLY-MARKED
CARTRIDGES FOR ATARI'S
VIDEO COMPUTER SYSTEM!**

WATCH FOR

ATARI FORCE 2 in BERZERK*

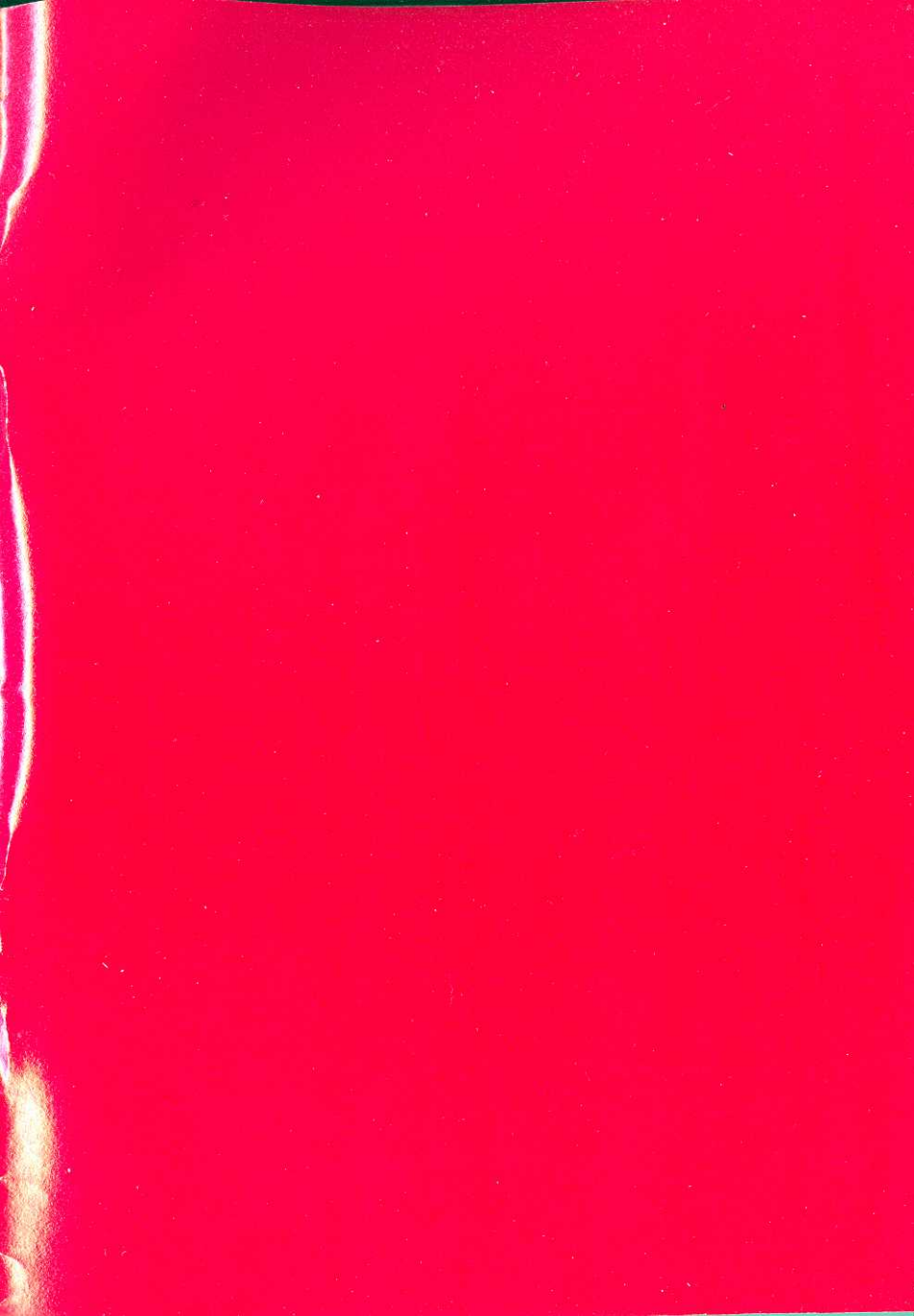
ATARI FORCE 3 in STAR RAIDERS

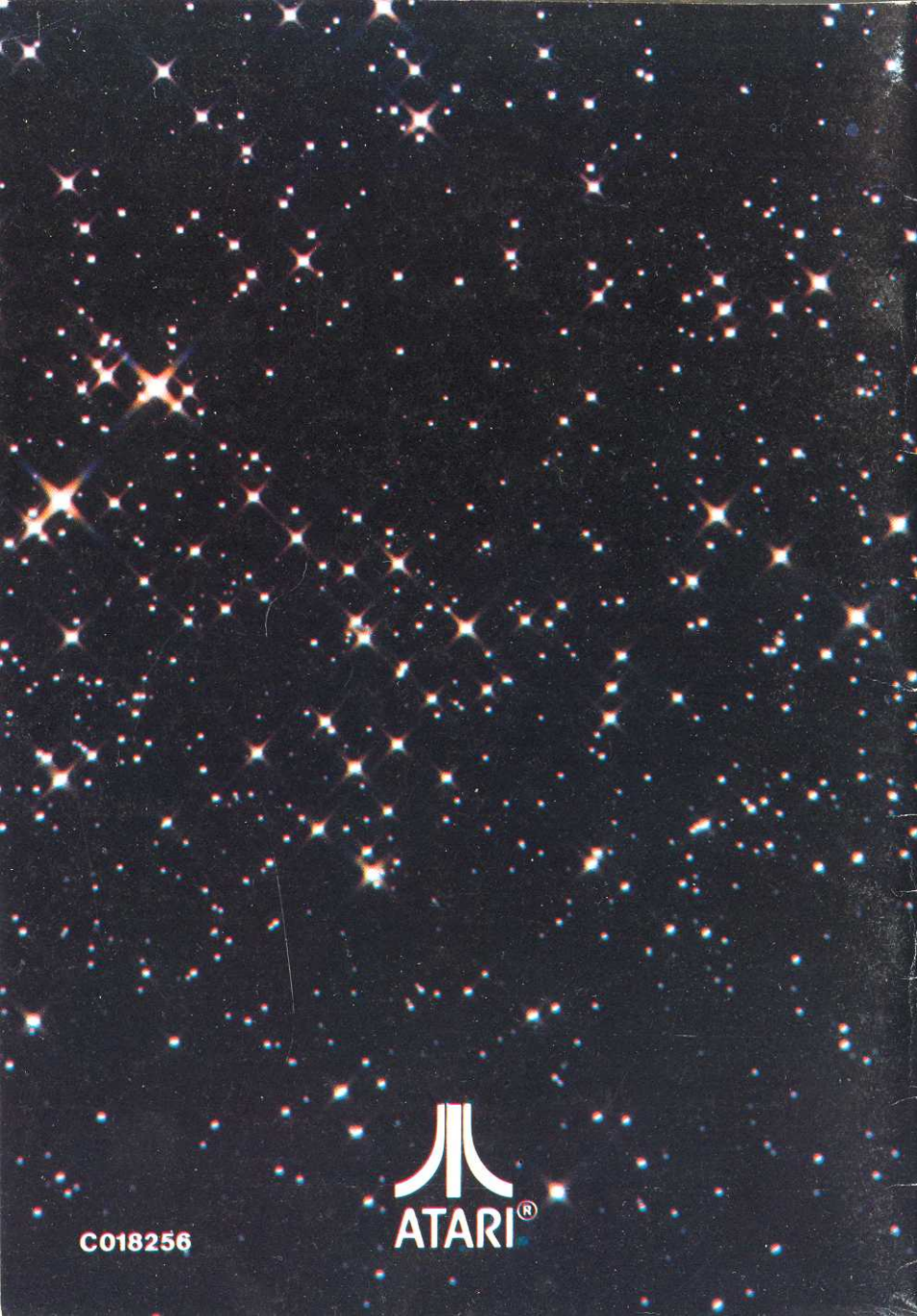
BOTH AVAILABLE SOON!



ATARI® --VIDEO GAME ACTION AT ITS BEST--AND MORE!

*TRADEMARK STERN ELECTRONICS, INC.





C018256