



BY  
GERRY CONWAY AND  
JOSE LUIS GARCIA LOPEZ

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MAR. 84  
APPROVED  
BY THE  
COMICS  
CODE  
AUTHORITY

# ATAARI FORCE



*Garcia Lopez*

## PAKRAT GOES WILD!

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C-637

**FROGGER**<sup>SM</sup>  
Video Game and Home Computer cartridges



## At last. Different croaks for different folks.

Almost anyone can play Frogger at home.

Because now Parker Brothers makes exciting home versions of Sega's Arcade Game for ColecoVision, the Atari 5200, all Atari Home Computers, the Commodore 64 and VIC 20, TI 99/4A, and Intellivision. And, of course, there's the award-winning version for the Atari 2600.

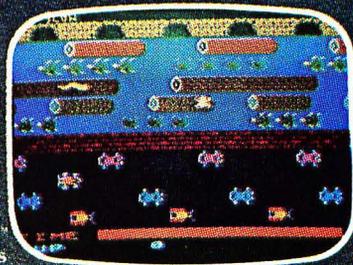
Frogger dodges cars and crocodiles just like he always has. Only now he hops across your screen with state-of-the-art graphics that make the most of any home system. Including yours.

So stop waiting for Frogger.

Because now Frogger is waiting for you.

**PARKER BROTHERS**

Atari 5200<sup>SM</sup>  
Graphics



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ROC'S WORLD:

BLACKJAK!

DART--?

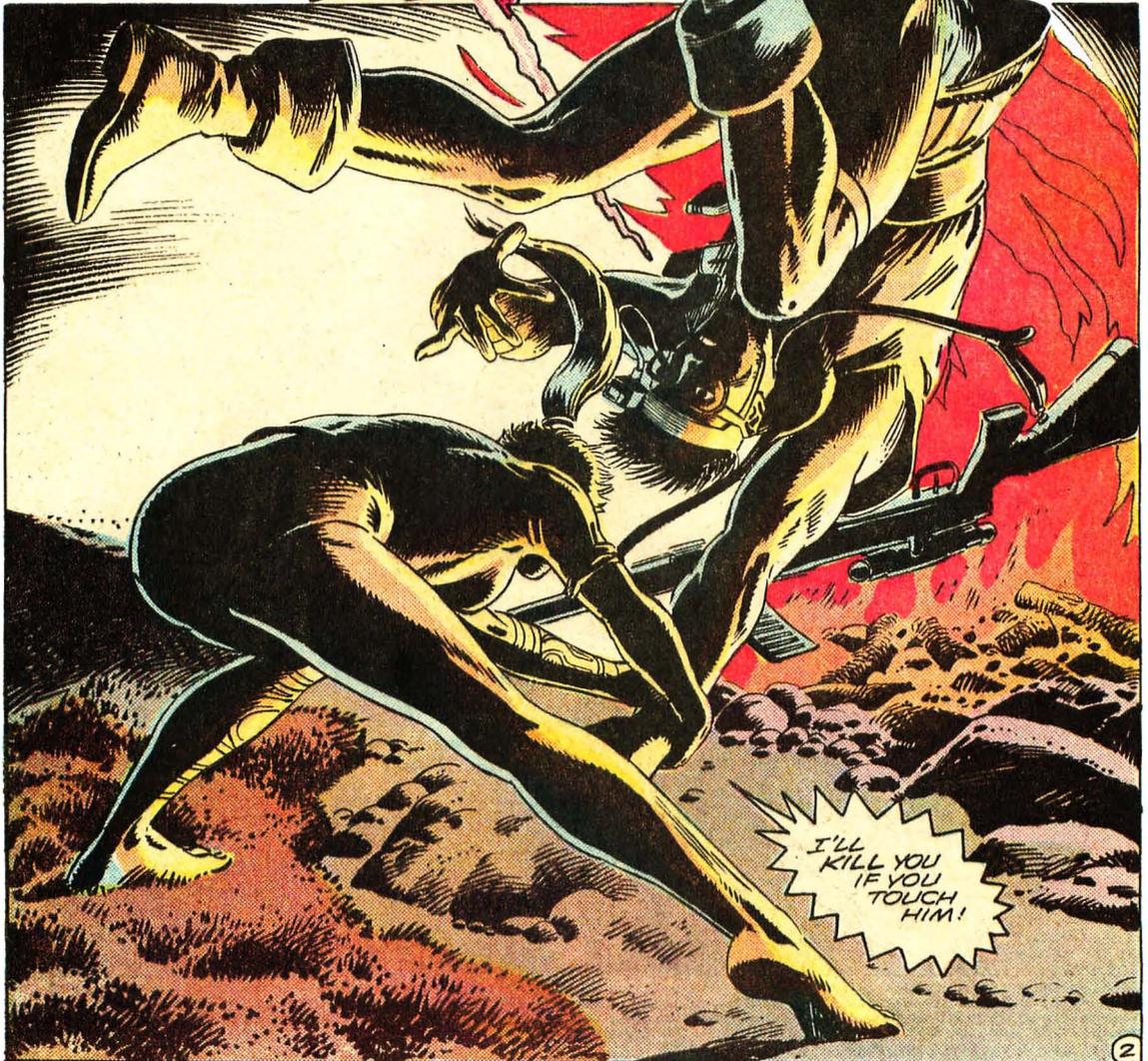


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--EEEAARRK!!





DAMN, SNAP OUT OF IT, WILL YOU? I'VE GOT ENOUGH SCARS ON THIS OLD BONE BAG WITHOUT YOU ADDING A FEW MORE!



BLACKJAK?  
IT IS YOU...



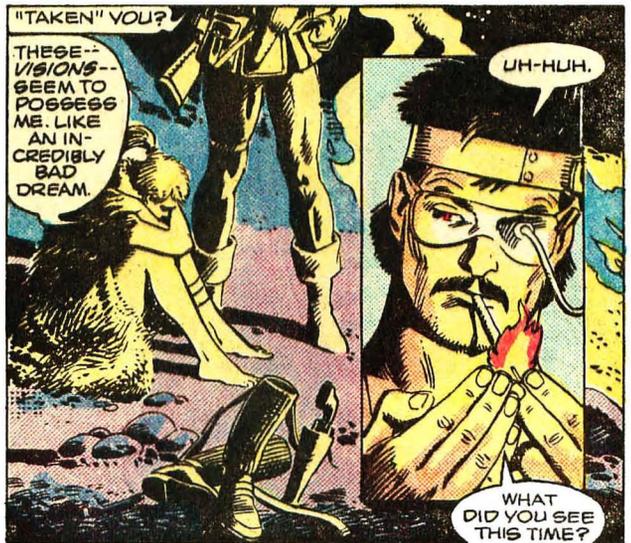
YEAH, WHAT'S LEFT OF ME.  
SORRY... BELIEVE ME...

ALL THESE MONTHS WE'VE MERCED TOGETHER, I'VE GOTTEN USED TO YOUR MOODS, KID.  
BUT, LATELY...



EVER SINCE THAT SKUZZBALL GENERAL KI TURNED BACKKNIFER ON US, YOU'VE BEEN WALKIN' THE EDGE.  
WHAT WAS IT? ANOTHER VISION?

THE STRONGEST ONE THAT'S EVER TAKEN ME, BLACKJAK.



"TAKEN" YOU?  
THESE-- VISIONS-- SEEM TO POSSESS ME. LIKE AN INCREDIBLY BAD DREAM.

UH-HUH.

WHAT DID YOU SEE THIS TIME?

**"I SAW YOU DIE"**

**ATARI FORCE**

BOB LAPPAN

CREATED BY GERRY CONWAY, ROY THOMAS & JOSE GARCIA LOPEZ

GERRY CONWAY WRITER

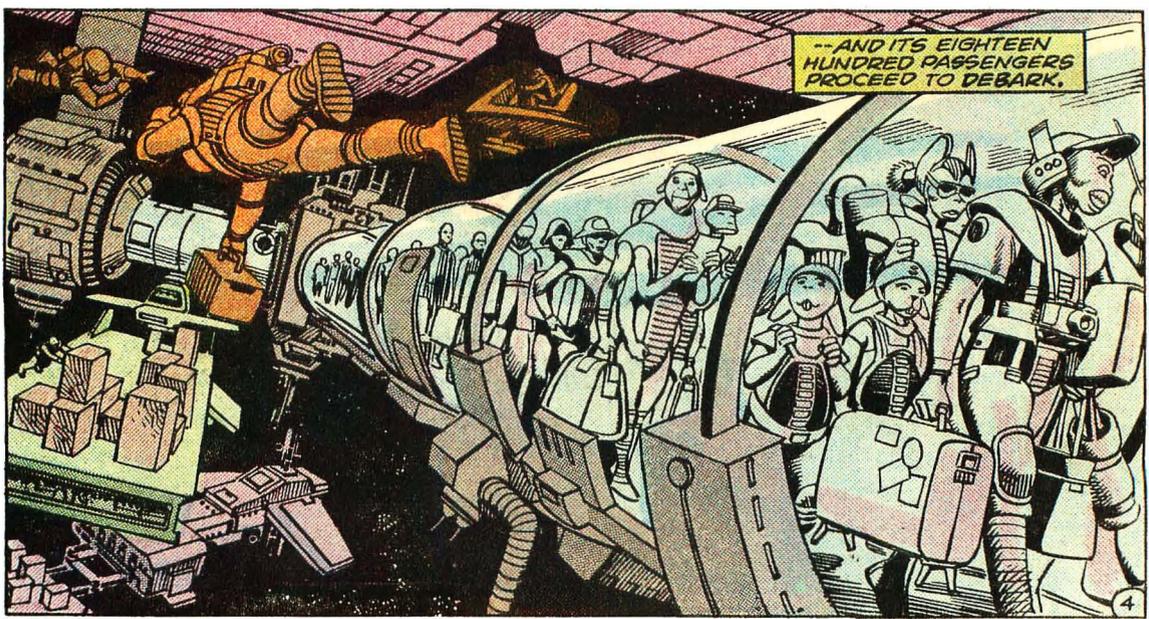
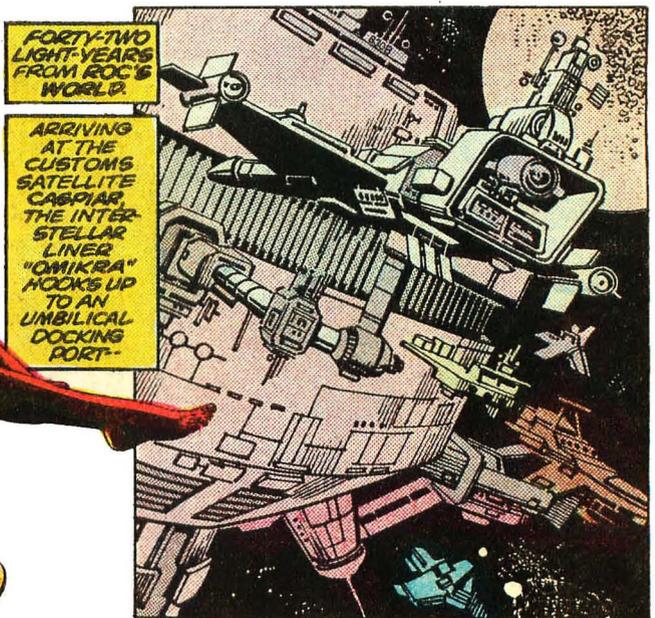
RICARDO VILLAGRAN INKER

TOM ZILUKO COLORIST

JOSE LUIS GARCIA LOPEZ PENCILLER

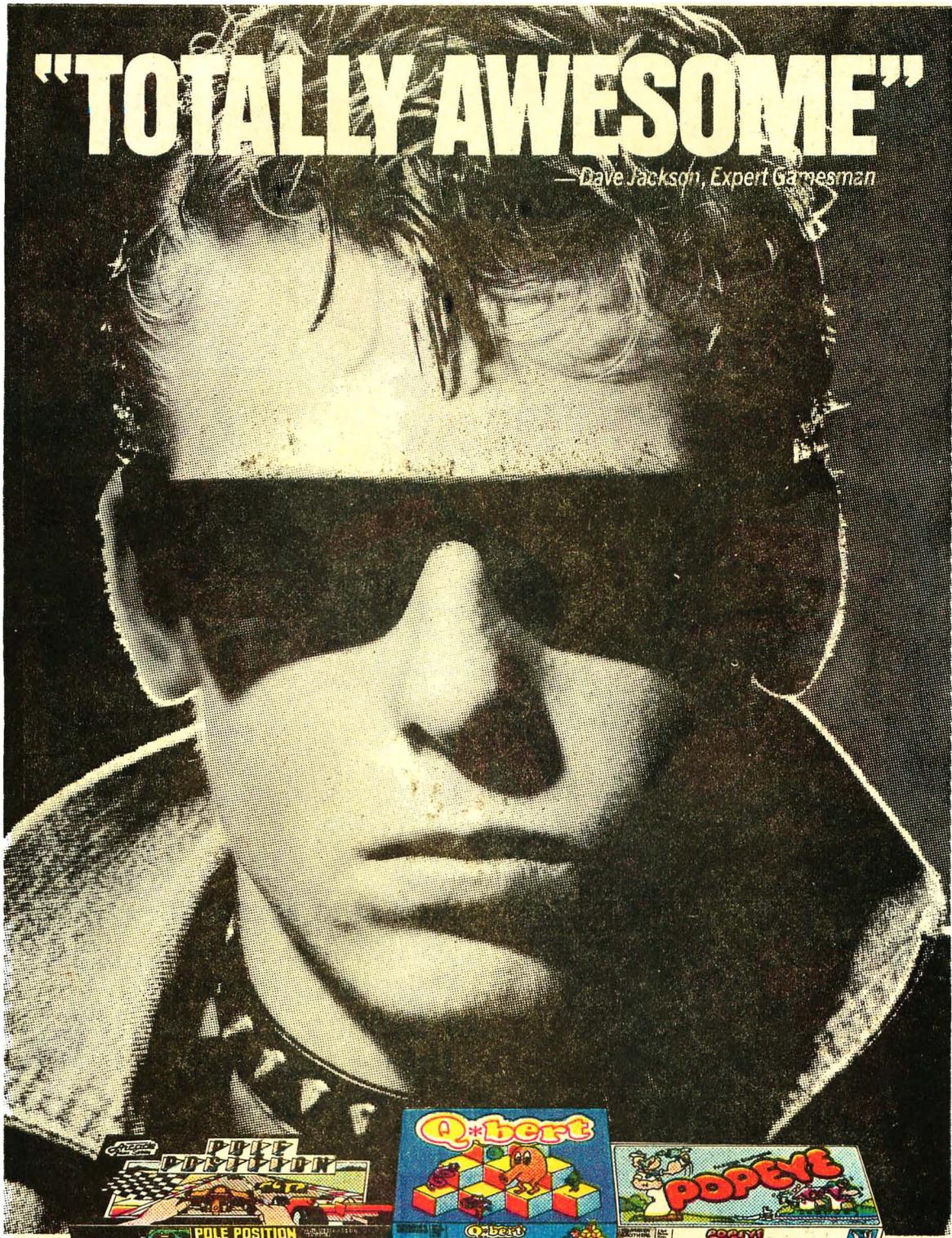
BOB LAPPAN LETTERER

ANDY HELFER EDITOR



# "TOTALLY AWESOME"

—Dave Jackson, Expert Gamesman



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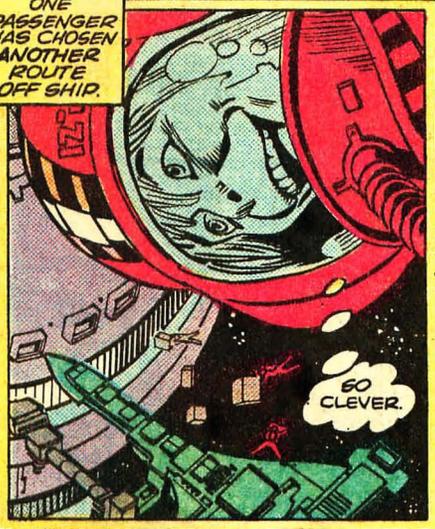


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ALL FILE PAST THE WATCHFUL EYES OF INTERFEDERATION CUSTOMS AGENCY OFFICERS.

ALL SAVE ONE.

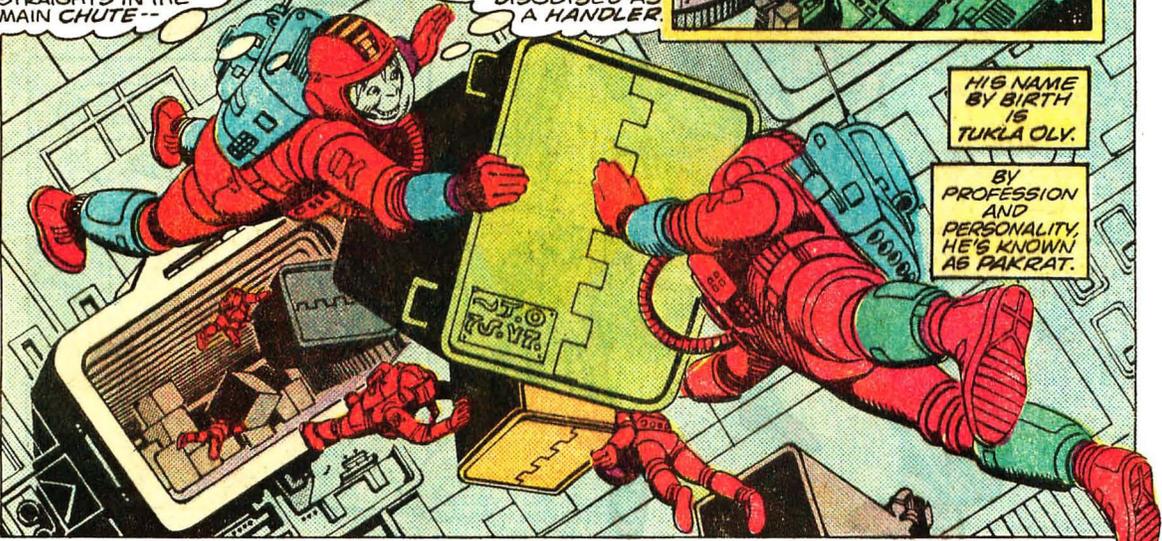
ONE PASSENGER HAS CHOSEN ANOTHER ROUTE OFF SHIP.



SO CLEVER.

WHILE THE BLUES SEARCH FOR ME AMONG THE STRAIGHTS IN THE MAIN CHUTE--

--I SLIP IN THROUGH THE CARGO GANGWAY DISGUISED AS A HANDLER.



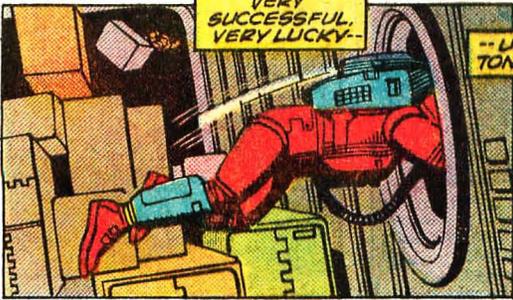
HIS NAME BY BIRTH IS TUKLA OLV.

BY PROFESSION AND PERSONALITY, HE'S KNOWN AS PAKRAT.

PAKRAT IS A THIEF.



SO SO CLEVER.



VERY SUCCESSFUL. VERY LUCKY--

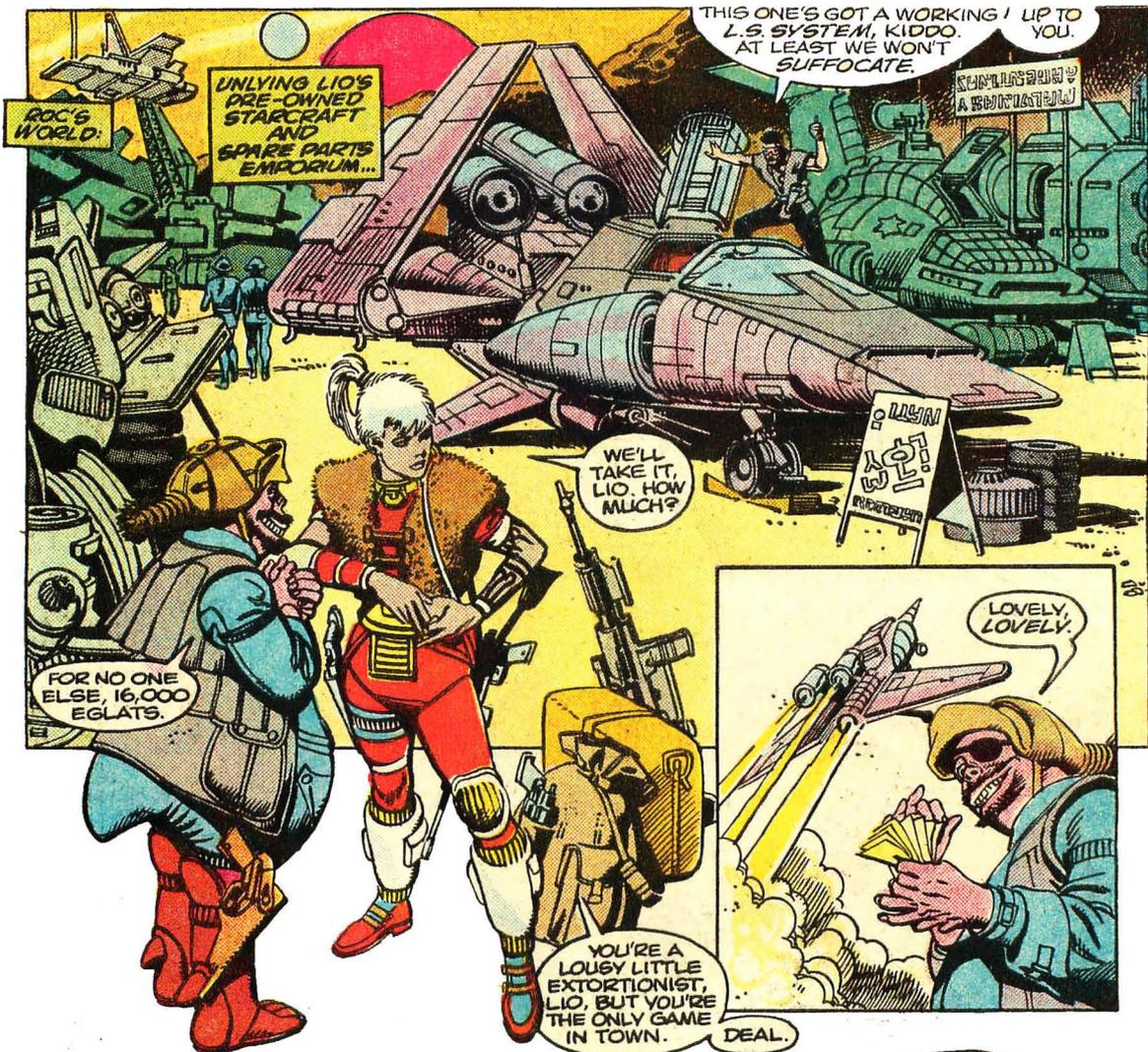
--UNTIL TONIGHT.



URK. RIDENT.

GREETINGS, LITTLE BROTHER.

LONG TIME NO SEE.





NEW EARTH:

ABOARD THE ORBITING ATARI RESEARCH SATELLITE:

IN THE TESTING MAZE OF PROFESSOR LUCIA VENTURE:

THE LATEST IN A LONG SERIES OF EXPERIMENTS--



-- IS ABOUT TO RUN ITS COURSE:

NUTS!

CONCERNING THE YOUTH CODE-NAMED "TEMPEST"--

PHASE OUT!



FAM

BLAST IT, PROFESSOR, YOU DON'T PLAY FAIR!

NEITHER DO YOU, CHRIS.

YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO RUN THAT MAZE WITHOUT RESORTING TO YOUR MULTIVERSE-BASED PHASE-TRANSITION POWERS.



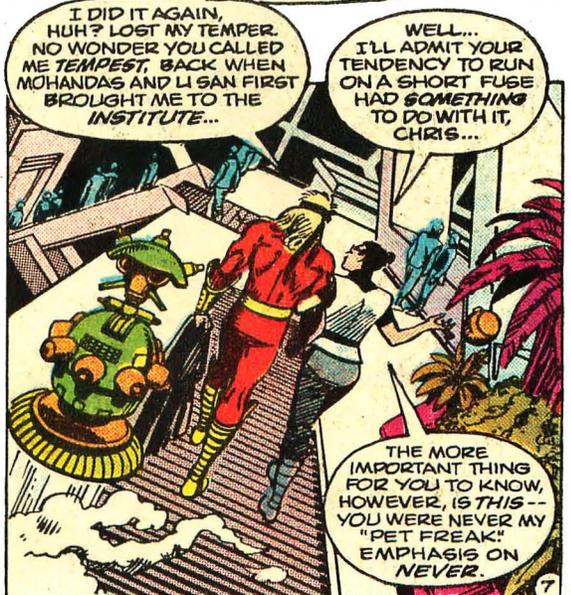
NOW WE'LL HAVE TO START AGAIN, AT THE--

NOT WITH ME, YOU WON'T. I'M THROUGH BEING YOUR PET FREAK.

NO MORE. UNDERSTAND? I'M FINISHED. TEMPEST IS DEAD.

FROM NOW ON, I'M PLAIN CHRISTOPHER CHAMPION.

JUST CHRISTOPHER CHAMPION...



I DID IT AGAIN, HUH? LOST MY TEMPER. NO WONDER YOU CALLED ME TEMPEST, BACK WHEN MOHANDAS AND LI SAN FIRST BROUGHT ME TO THE INSTITUTE...

WELL... I'LL ADMIT YOUR TENDENCY TO RUN ON A SHORT FUGE HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT, CHRIS...

THE MORE IMPORTANT THING FOR YOU TO KNOW, HOWEVER, IS THIS-- YOU WERE NEVER MY "PET FREAK"! EMPHASIS ON NEVER.



BUT SOMEONE PUT THAT IDEA INTO YOUR HEAD-- WHO?

C'MON, PROFESSOR-- NEW EARTH IS A SMALL WORLD.

YOU MUST HAVE HEARD BY NOW--WHAT HAPPENED WITH ME AND MELISSA.

OR MAYBE I SHOULD SAY, ME AND MELISSA'S FATHER, THE WORLD SENATOR.

THAT TECHN-PHOBE? YOU LET HIM BOTHER YOU?

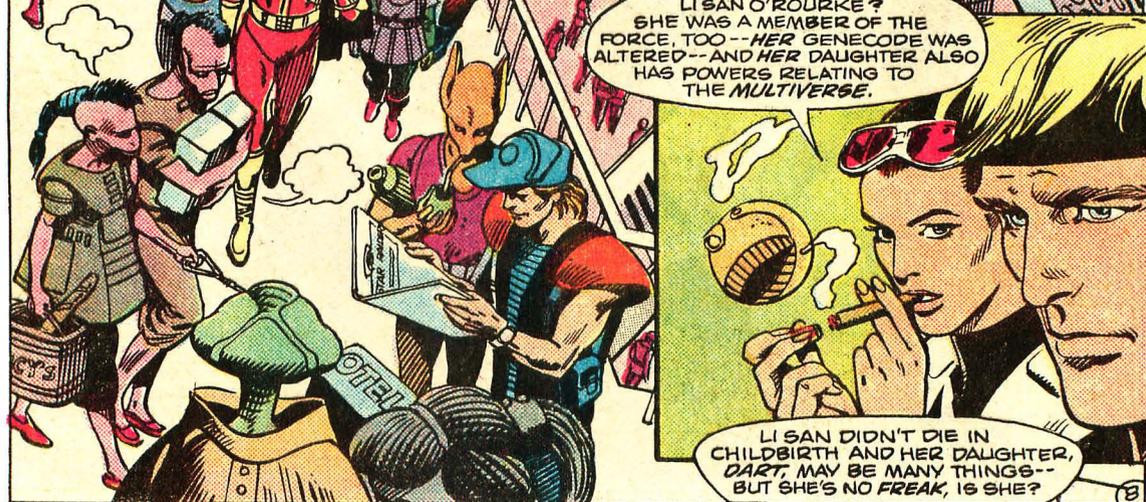
HE CALLED ME A FREAK, PROFESSOR, AND LET'S FACE IT, I AM A FREAK. MY MOTHER'S GENECODE WAS AFFECTED BY HER EXPOSURE TO THE MULTIVERSE WHEN SHE AND DAD COMMANDED SCANNER ONE AS PART OF THE ATARI FORCE.

I WAS BORN WEIRD--AND MY MOTHER DIED--AND MAYBE DAD'S RIGHT, THINKING I KILLED HER.

THE HELL HE'S RIGHT.



WHAT ABOUT LI SAN O'ROURKE? SHE WAS A MEMBER OF THE FORCE, TOO--HER GENECODE WAS ALTERED--AND HER DAUGHTER ALSO HAS POWERS RELATING TO THE MULTIVERSE.



LI SAN DIDN'T DIE IN CHILDBIRTH AND HER DAUGHTER, DART, MAY BE MANY THINGS-- BUT SHE'S NO FREAK, IS SHE?

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game the generals  
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that's so realistic, generals might even play it. Isn't it time you tested your skills?

# PROBE 2000

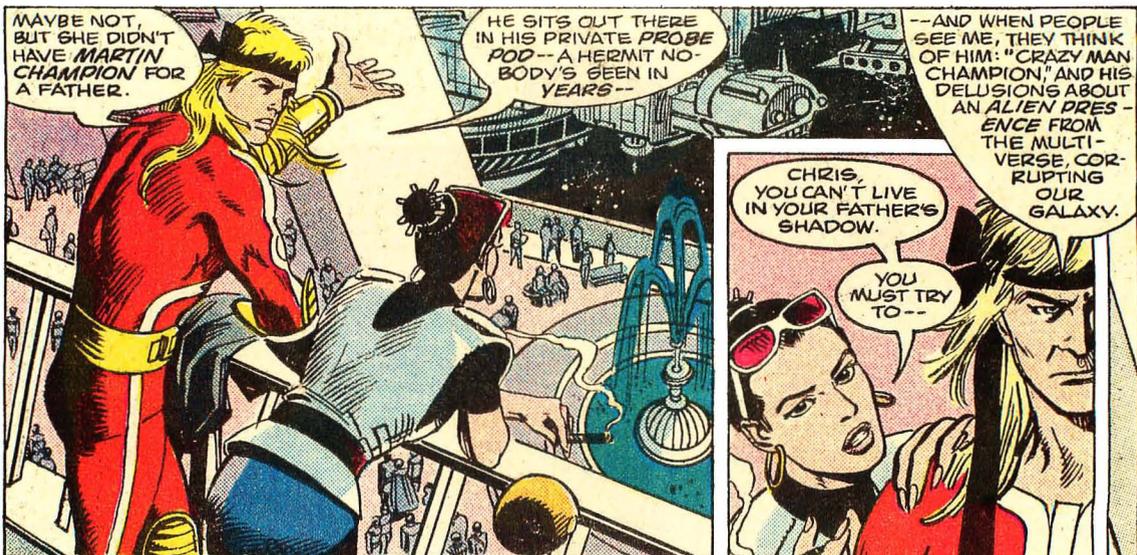
Series

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MAYBE NOT, BUT SHE DIDN'T HAVE MARTIN CHAMPION FOR A FATHER.

HE SITS OUT THERE IN HIS PRIVATE PROBE POD-- A HERMIT NOBODY'S SEEN IN YEARS--

--AND WHEN PEOPLE SEE ME, THEY THINK OF HIM: "CRAZY MAN CHAMPION," AND HIS DELUSIONS ABOUT AN ALIEN DRESS-ENCE FROM THE MULTI-VERSE, CORRUPTING OUR GALAXY.

CHRIS, YOU CAN'T LIVE IN YOUR FATHER'S SHADOW.

YOU MUST TRY TO--

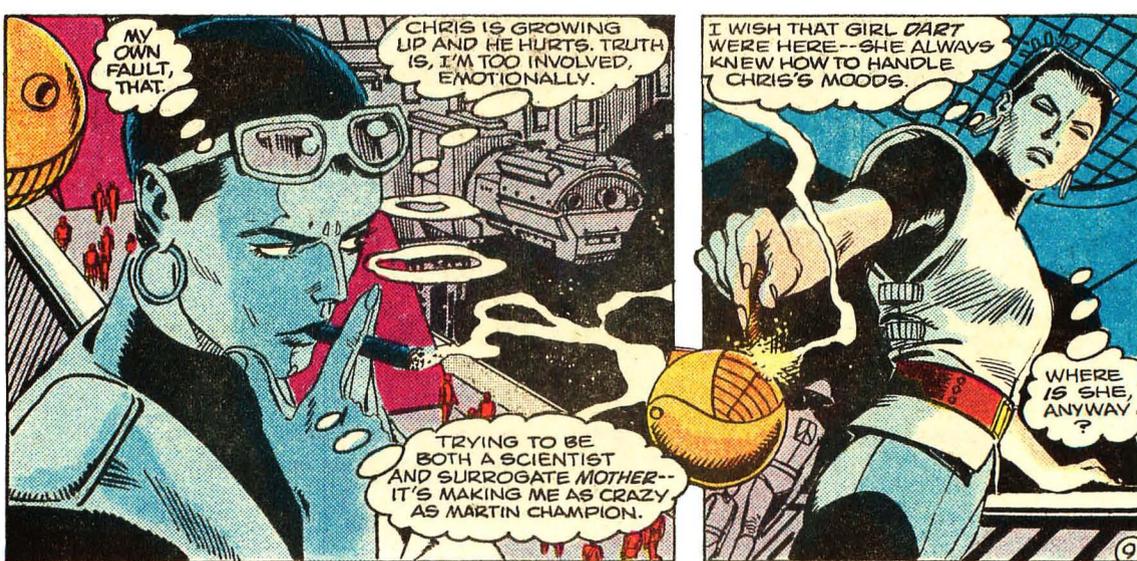
**FAAM**

SAVE THE ADVICE, PROFESSOR. I'M IN NO MOOD FOR IT, FROM YOU OR ANYONE. I JUST WANT TO BE ALONE, OKAY?

CHRIS! DON'T YOU DARE PHASE OUT ON ME--



CHRIS!



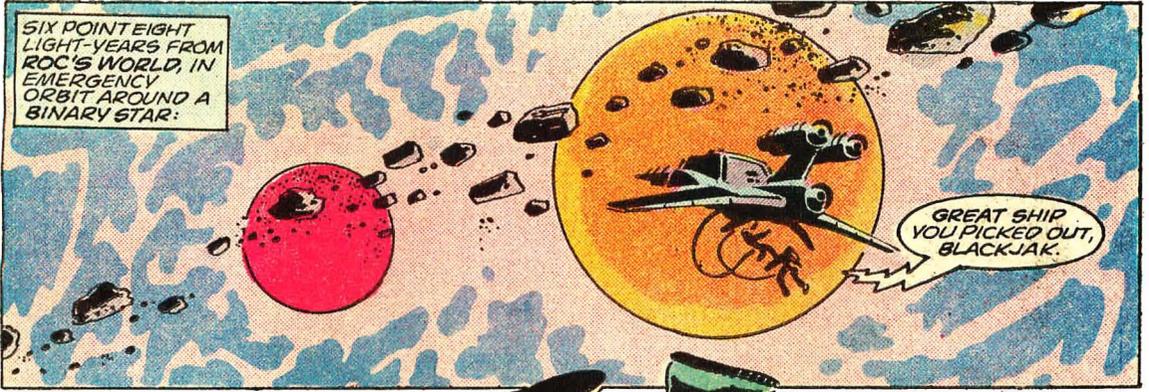
MY OWN FAULT, THAT.

CHRIS IS GROWING UP AND HE HURTS. TRUTH IS, I'M TOO INVOLVED, EMOTIONALLY.

I WISH THAT GIRL DART WERE HERE-- SHE ALWAYS KNEW HOW TO HANDLE CHRIS'S MOODS.

TRYING TO BE BOTH A SCIENTIST AND SURROGATE MOTHER-- IT'S MAKING ME AS CRAZY AS MARTIN CHAMPION.

WHERE IS SHE, ANYWAY?



SIX POINT EIGHT LIGHT-YEARS FROM ROC'S WORLD, IN EMERGENCY ORBIT AROUND A BINARY STAR:

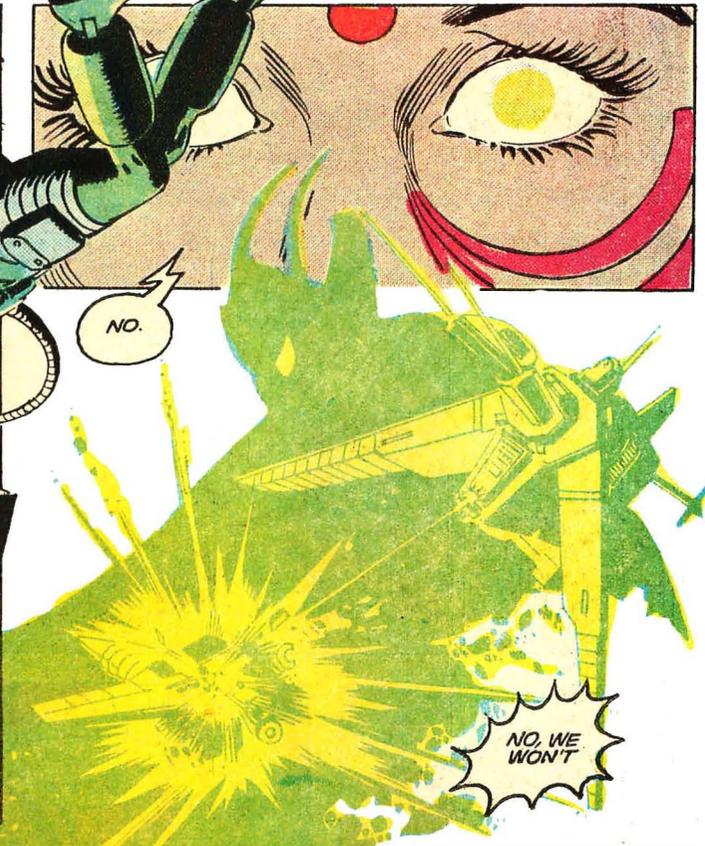
GREAT SHIP YOU PICKED OUT, BLACKJAK.



EXPLAIN TO ME HOW WE'RE GOING TO GET ANYWHERE WITH THE MAIN DRIVER DRAINING ITS CHARGE LIKE A SIEVE.

PICKY, PICKY.

AT LEAST THE LIFE-SUPPORT SYSTEM WORKS LIKE I SAID, RIGHT? WE'LL HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO FIX THIS BUCKET BEFORE--



NO.

NO, WE WON'T



HEY, WHAT'S THE--

INSIDE, LOVER.

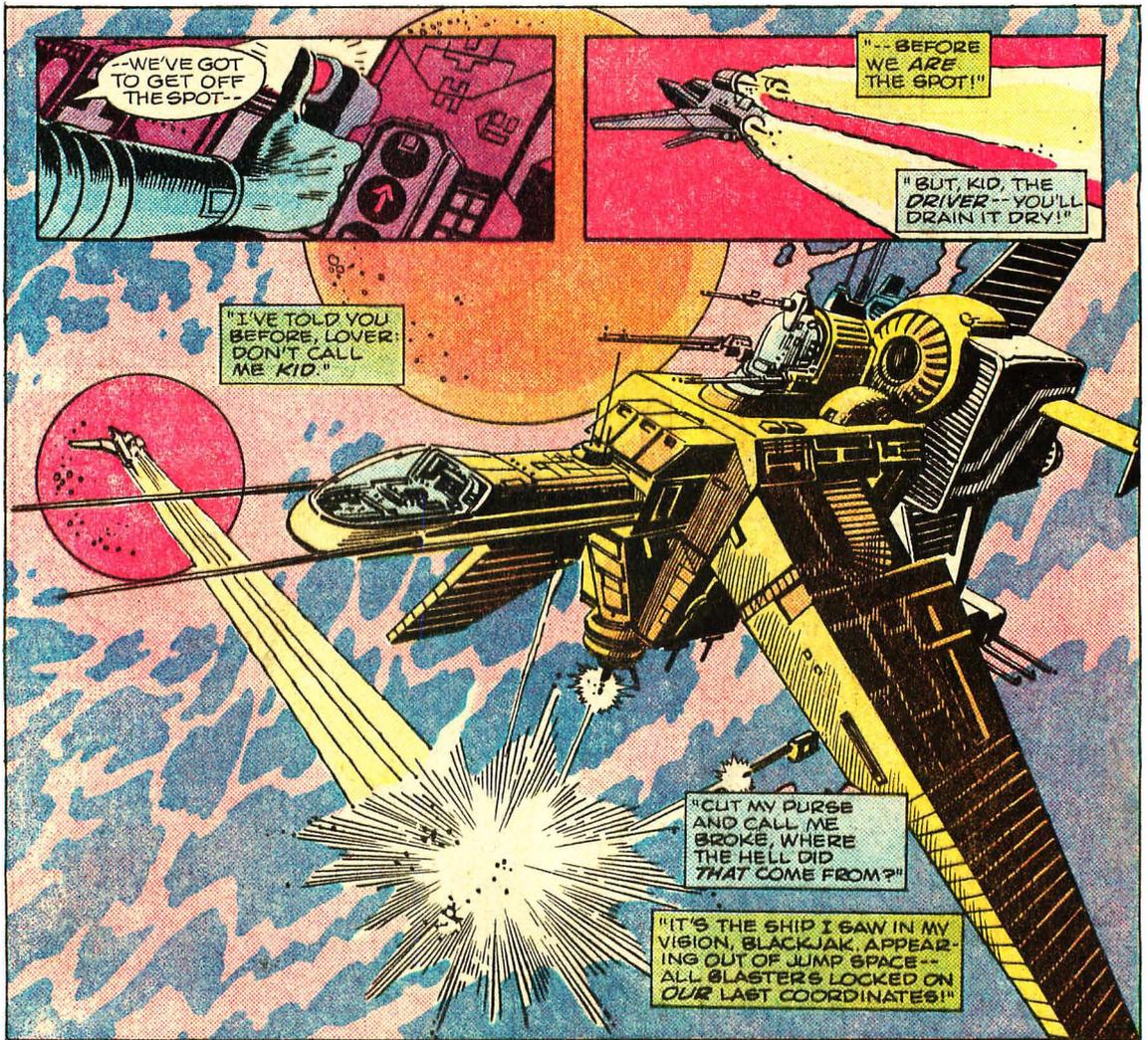
WE'VE GOT MAYBE HALF A SECOND TO BLAST OUT OF HERE!



ANOTHER VISION?

THE CLEAREST ONE YET.

WE'RE A SITTING TARGET, LOVER--



--WE'VE GOT TO GET OFF THE SPOT--

"-- BEFORE WE ARE THE SPOT!"  
"BUT, KID, THE DRIVER-- YOU'LL DRAIN IT DRY!"

"I'VE TOLD YOU BEFORE, LOVER: DON'T CALL ME KID."

"CUT MY PURSE AND CALL ME BROKE, WHERE THE HELL DID THAT COME FROM?"

"IT'S THE SHIP I SAW IN MY VISION, BLACKJAK APPEARING OUT OF JUMP SPACE-- ALL BLASTERS LOCKED ON OUR LAST COORDINATES!"



"CORRECT ME IF I'M BEING PARANOID, KID:"

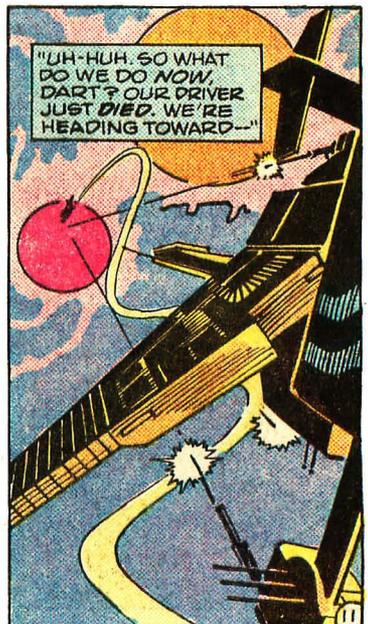
"BUT I'D SAY THOSE FOLKS AREN'T TOO FOND OF US..."



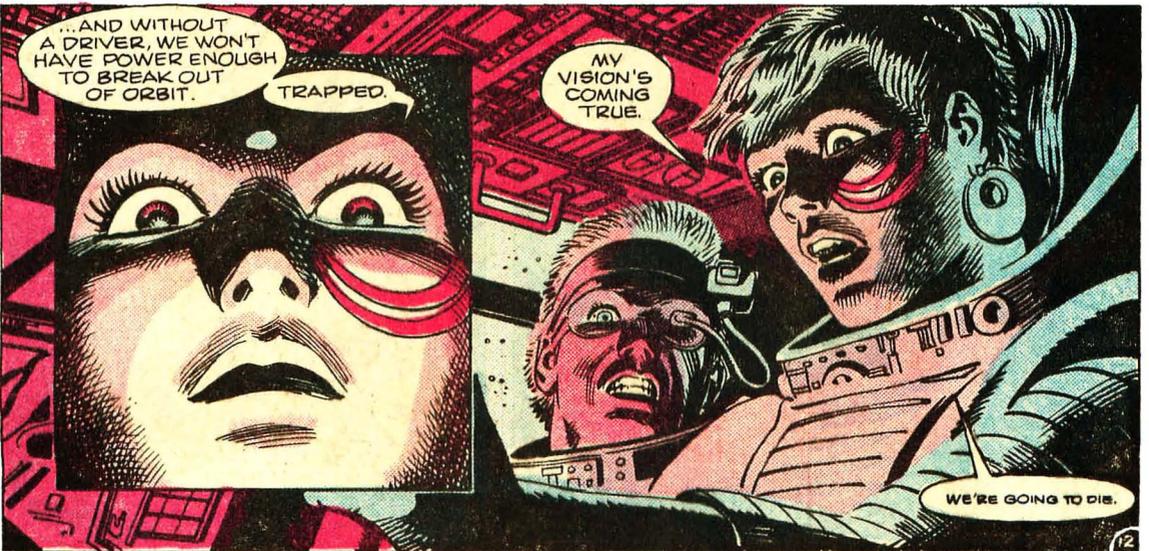
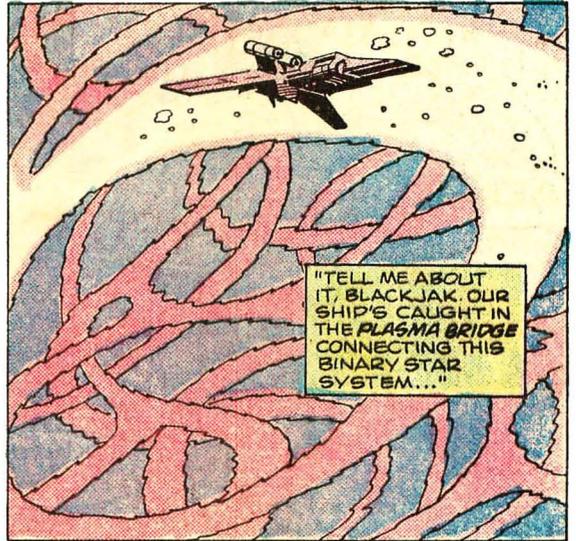
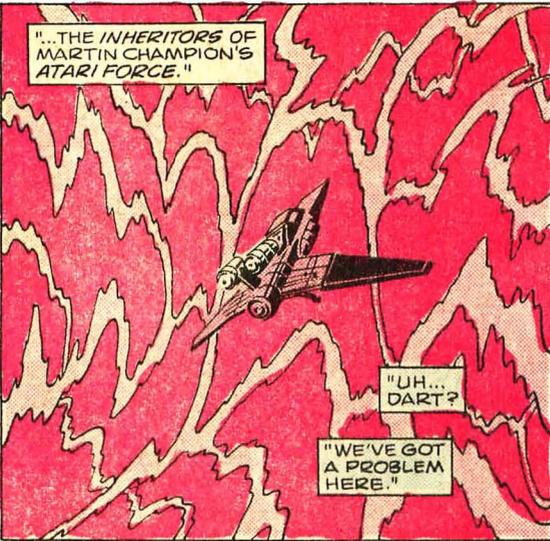
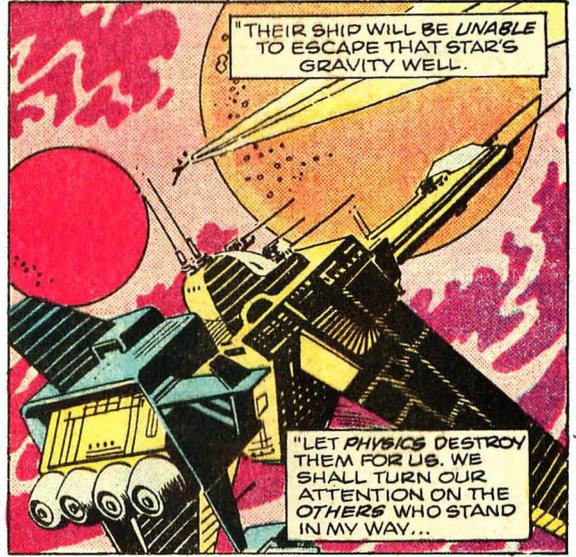
"... THE ONLY QUESTION IS, WHY?"

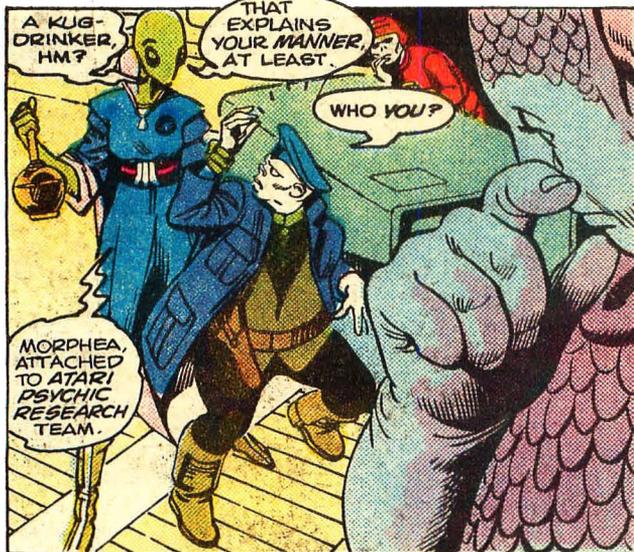
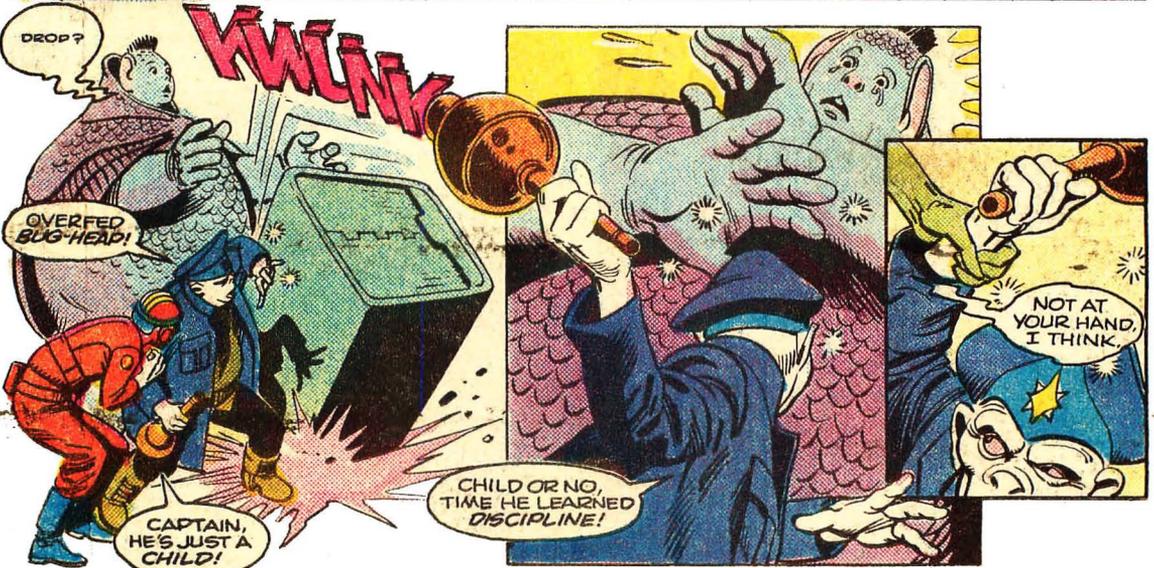
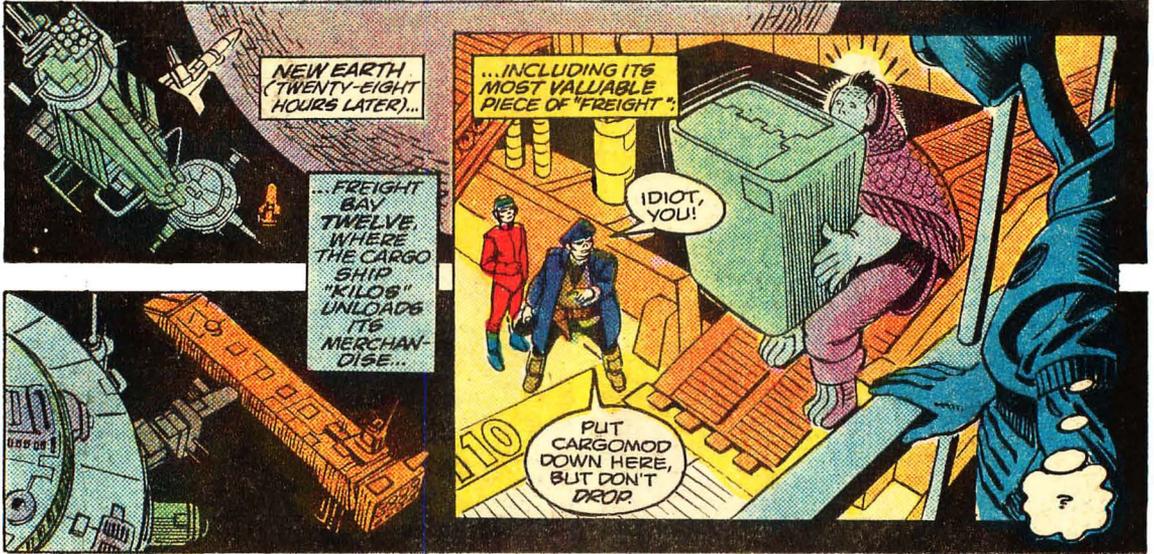
MY VISIONS DON'T SUPPLY ANSWERS, LOVER... ONLY HINTS AND POSSIBILITIES. BUT I HAVE A HUNCH WHOEVER'S CONTROLLING THAT SHIP ALSO SENT THE WARBEAST AFTER ME!

\*LAST MONTH, --ANDY.



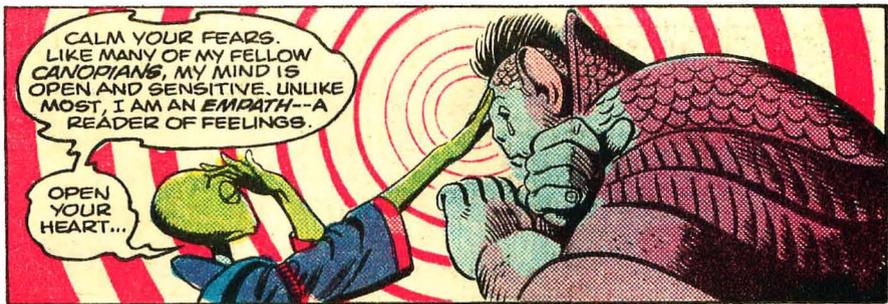
"UH-HUH. SO WHAT DO WE DO NOW, DART? OUR DRIVER JUST DIED. WE'RE HEADING TOWARD--"







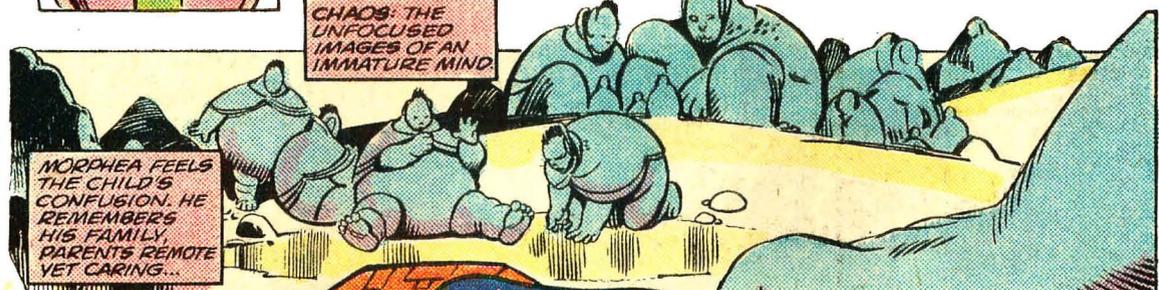
I WOULD RATHER ASK THE CHILD.



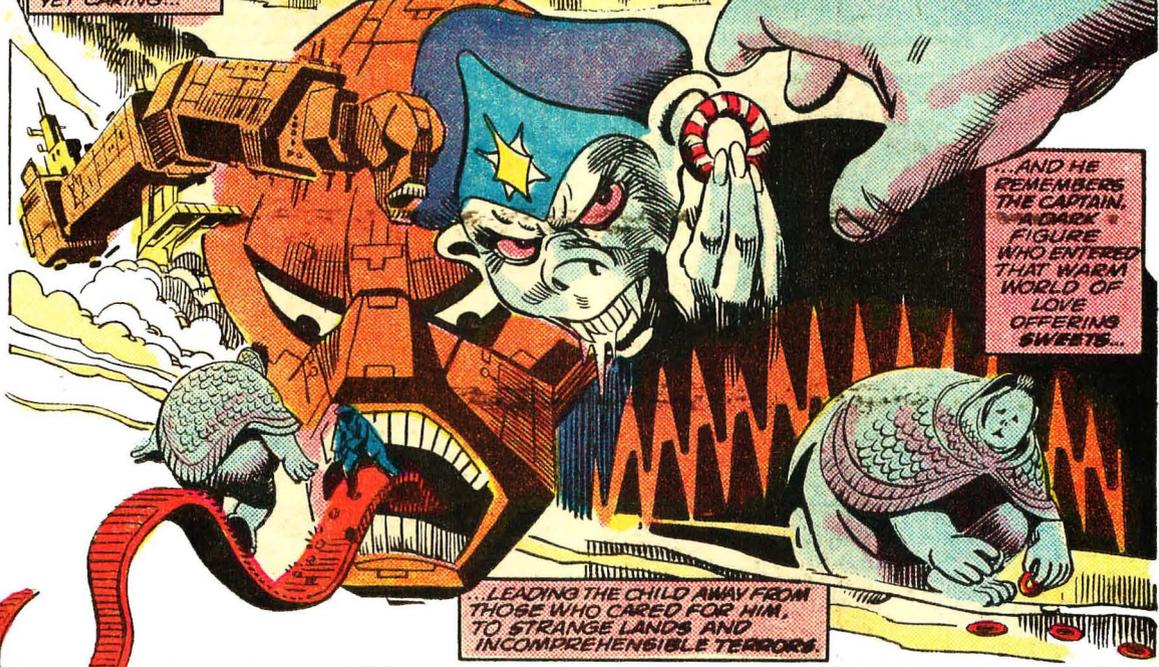
CALM YOUR FEARS. LIKE MANY OF MY FELLOW CANOPIANS, MY MIND IS OPEN AND SENSITIVE. UNLIKE MOST, I AM AN EMPATH--A READER OF FEELINGS.

OPEN YOUR HEART...

CHAOS: THE UNFOCUSED IMAGES OF AN IMMATURE MIND



MORPHEA FEELS THE CHILD'S CONFUSION. HE REMEMBERS HIS FAMILY, PARENTS REMOTE YET CARING...



AND HE REMEMBERS THE CAPTAIN, "MORPHEA" FIGURE WHO ENTERED THAT WARM WORLD OF LOVE OFFERING SWEETS...

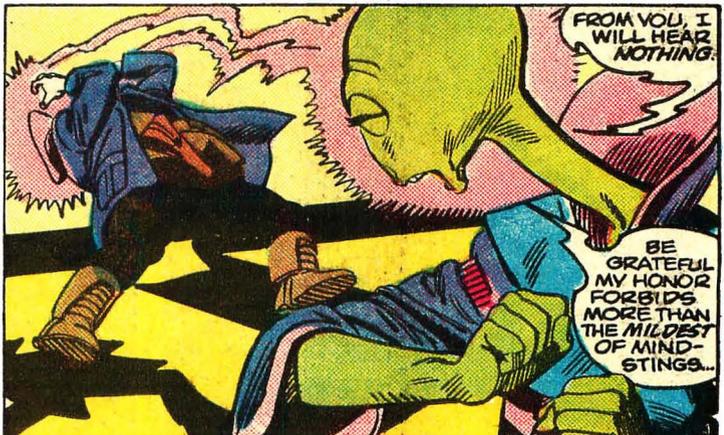
LEADING THE CHILD AWAY FROM THOSE WHO CARED FOR HIM, TO STRANGE LANDS AND INCOMPREHENSIBLE TERRORS



YOU'RE JUST A BABY FAR FROM HOME-- AND TERRIBLY AFRAID.

THIS CAPTAIN HAS ENSLAVED YOU, BUT SOON, I PROMISE, YOU WILL BE FREE.

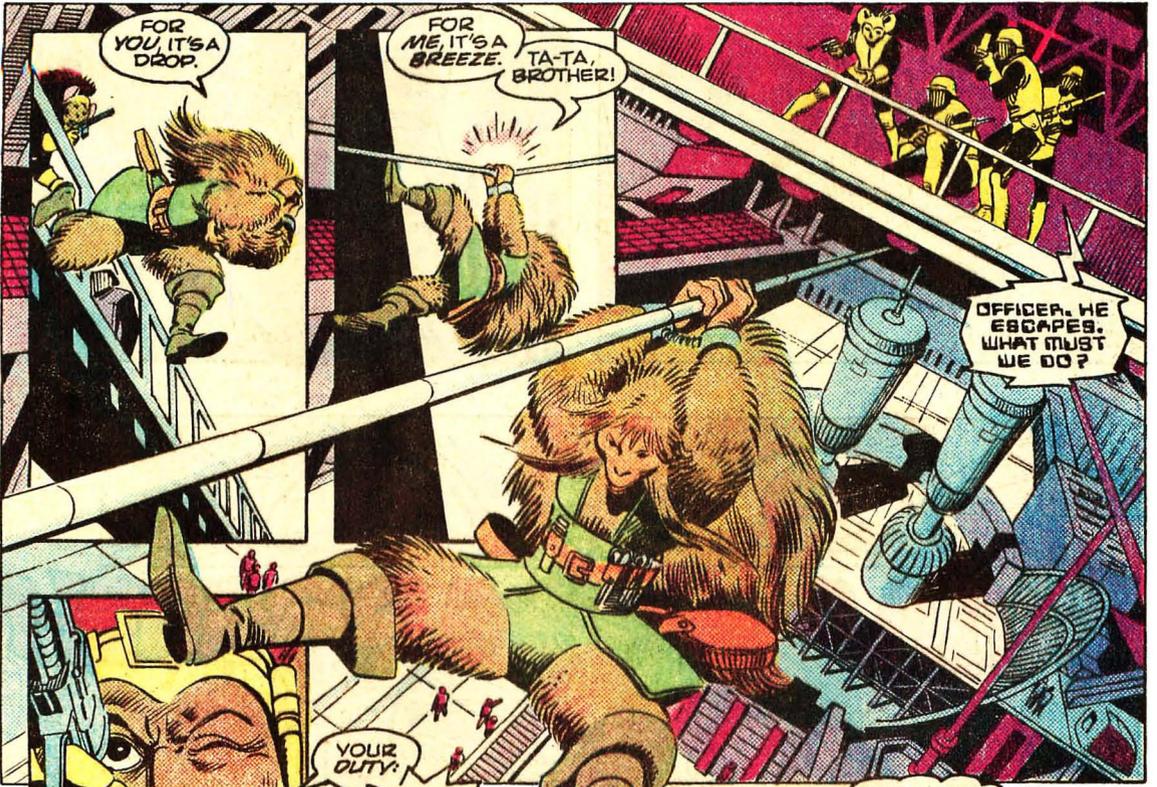
WAIT, YOU--



FROM YOU, I WILL HEAR NOTHING.

BE GRATEFUL MY HONOR FORBIDS MORE THAN THE MILDDEST OF MIND-STINGS...





FOR YOU, IT'S A DROP.

FOR ME, IT'S A BREEZE. TA-TA, BROTHER!

OFFICER. HE ESCAPES. WHAT MUST WE DO?



YOUR DUTY!

SHOOT TO KILL!

WHOA-HO, I REALLY GOT A RISE OUT OF RIDENT THAT TIME.

JUST LIKE PLAYING HIDE-AND-HUNT AS WHELPS!



RIDENT NEVER WAS VERY GOOD AT HIDE-AND-HUNT...



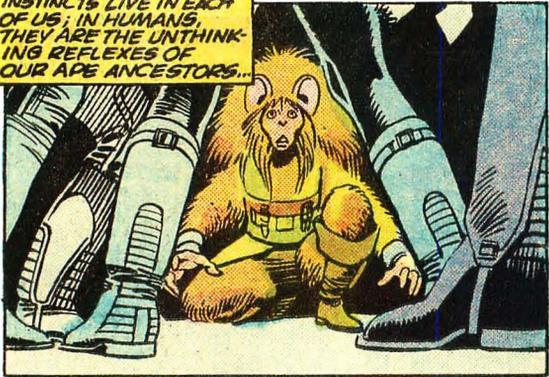
...AND HE HASN'T GOTTEN MUCH BETTER.



YOOPS.

CLICK!

INSTINCTS LIVE IN EACH OF US; IN HUMANS, THEY ARE THE UNTHINKING REFLEXES OF OUR APE ANCESTORS...

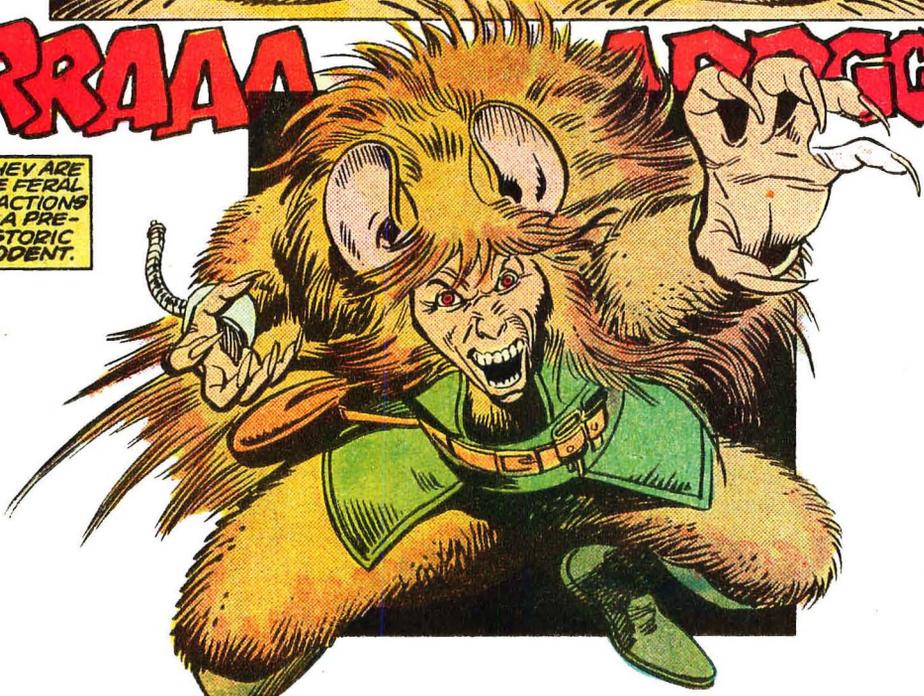


IN PAKRAT--

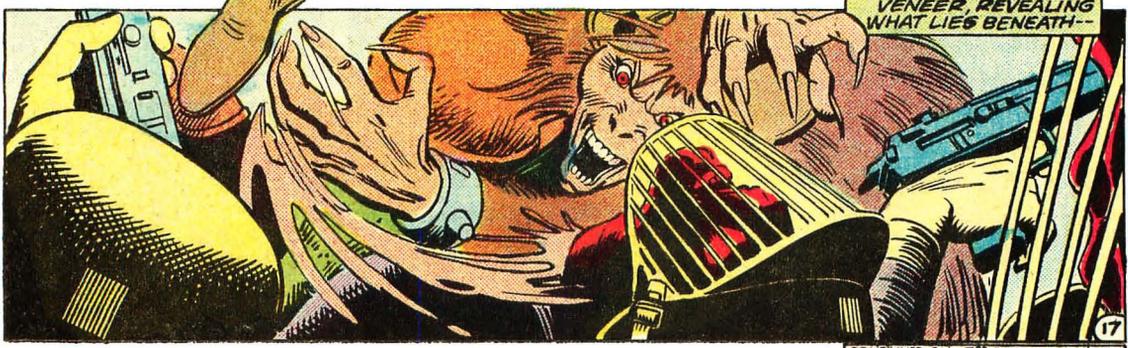


**RRAAA** **RRGGGH**

--THEY ARE THE FERAL REACTIONS OF A PRE-HISTORIC RODENT.



CIVILIZATION, COWARDICE, CHARM: IT'S ALL STRIPPED AWAY LIKE A PAINTED VENEER, REVEALING WHAT LIES BENEATH--



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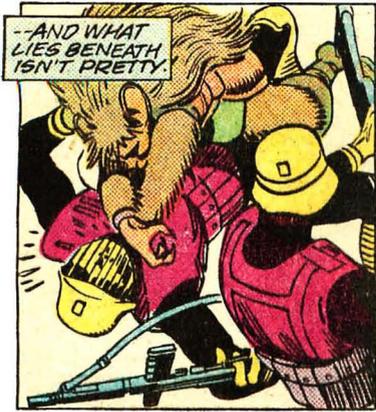
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INSIDE PACKAGE -- "BATTLE BENEATH THE EARTH!" A FULL-COLOR DC COMIC BOOK WHILE SUPPLY LASTS!

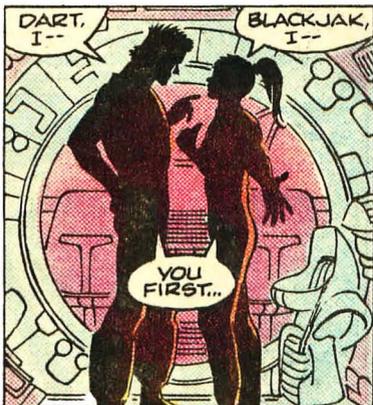
**HERCULES**

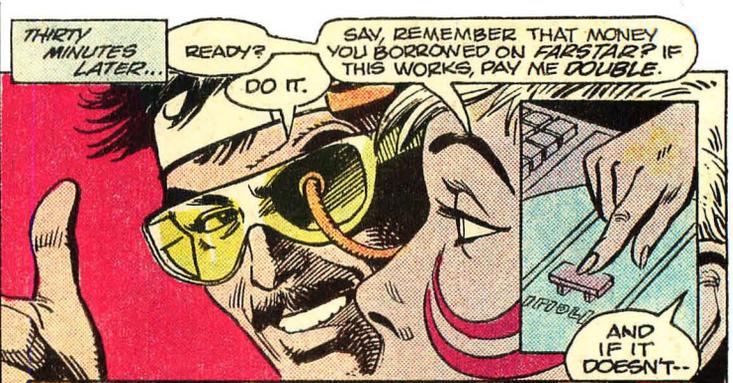


ACTUAL SIZE  
5 1/2"



ELSEWHERE:





THIRTY MINUTES LATER...

READY? DO IT.

SAY, REMEMBER THAT MONEY YOU BORROWED ON FARSTAR? IF THIS WORKS, PAY ME DOUBLE.

AND IF IT DOESN'T--



GREAT.

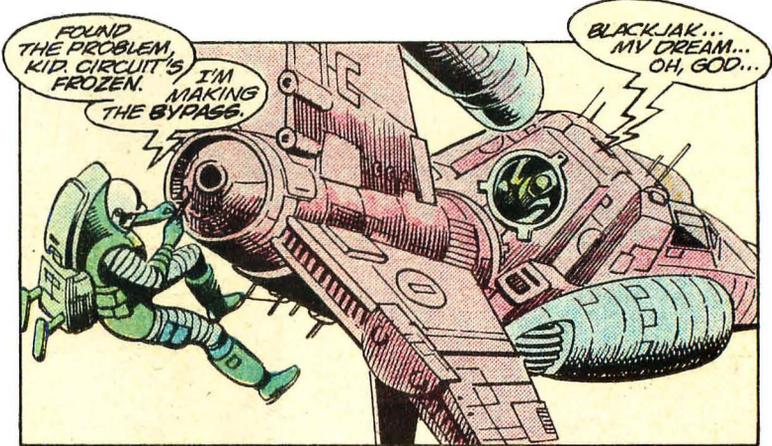
THE LS SYSTEM IS HOLDING, BUT NOW THE DRIVER UNIT'S SHORTED OUT!



MY TURN TO FIX IT.

WORK, WORK, WORK.

FUNNY, FUNNY, FUNNY.



FOUND THE PROBLEM, KID. CIRCUIT'S FROZEN.

I'M MAKING THE BYPASS.

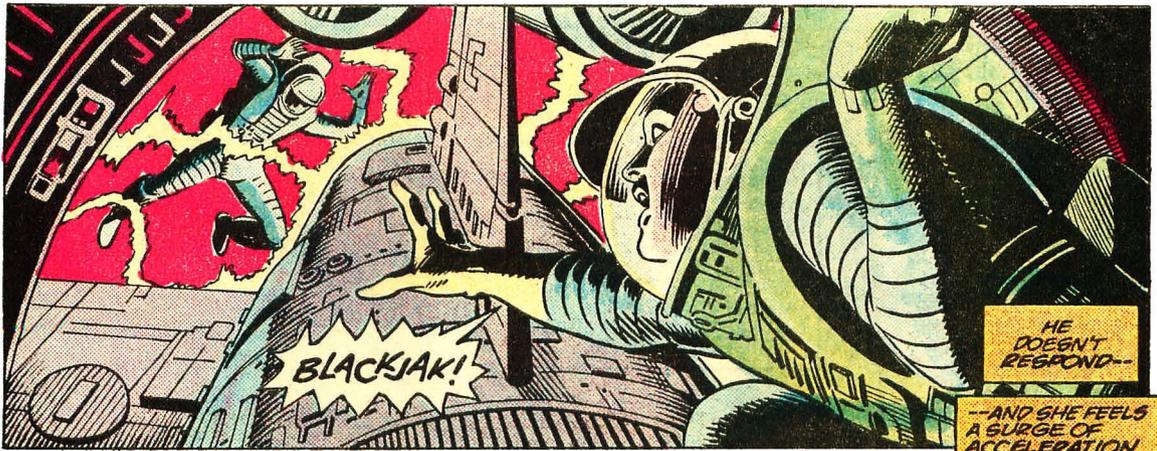
BLACKJAK... MY DREAM... OH, GOD...



THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED IN MY DREAM!

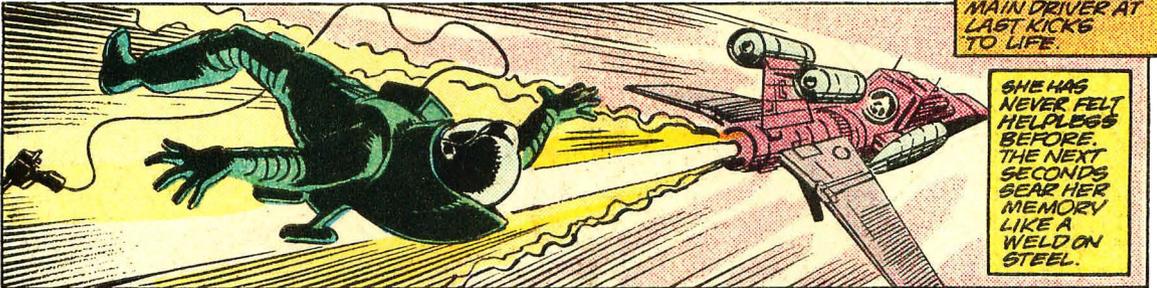


**CRASH**

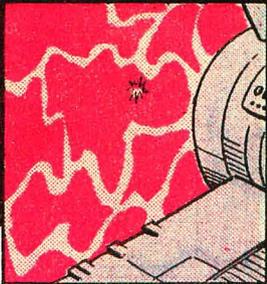
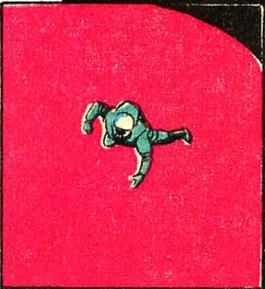


HE DOESN'T RESPOND--

--AND SHE FEELS A SURGE OF ACCELERATION AS THE BYPASSED MAIN DRIVER AT LAST KICKS TO LIFE.

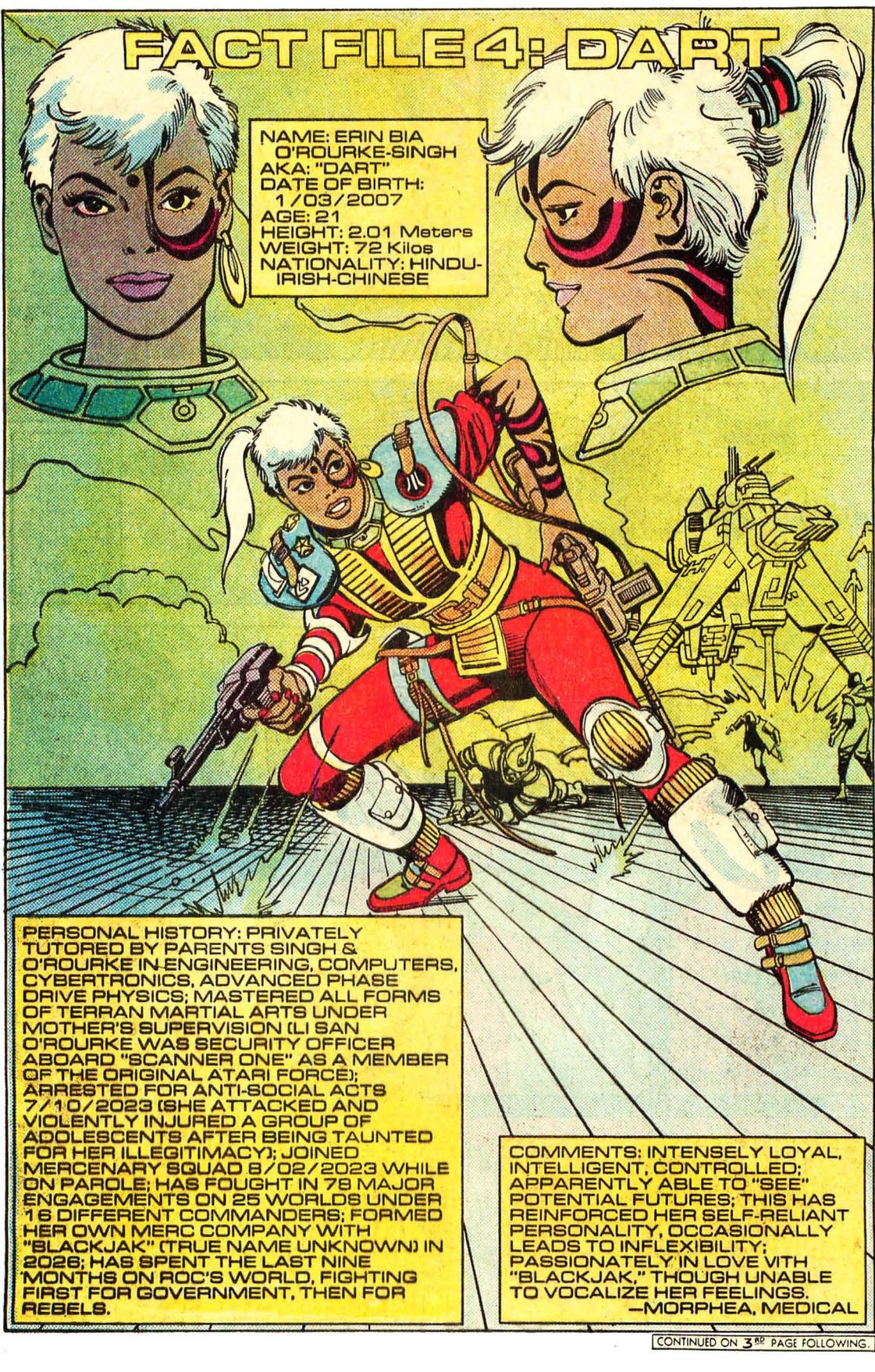


SHE HAS NEVER FELT HELPLESS BEFORE. THE NEXT SECONDS SEAR HER MEMORY LIKE A WELD ON STEEL.



**NEXT  
THE FORG**

# FACT FILE 4: DART



NAME: ERIN BIA O'ROURKE-SINGH  
AKA: "DART"  
DATE OF BIRTH: 1/03/2007  
AGE: 21  
HEIGHT: 2.01 Meters  
WEIGHT: 72 Kilos  
NATIONALITY: HINDU-IRISH-CHINESE

**PERSONAL HISTORY:** PRIVATELY TUTORED BY PARENTS SINGH & O'ROURKE IN ENGINEERING, COMPUTERS, CYBERTRONICS, ADVANCED PHASE DRIVE PHYSICS; MASTERED ALL FORMS OF TERRAN MARTIAL ARTS UNDER MOTHER'S SUPERVISION (LI SAN O'ROURKE WAS SECURITY OFFICER ABOARD "SCANNER ONE" AS A MEMBER OF THE ORIGINAL ATARI FORCE); ARRESTED FOR ANTI-SOCIAL ACTS 7/10/2023 (SHE ATTACKED AND VIOLENTLY INJURED A GROUP OF ADOLESCENTS AFTER BEING TAUNTED FOR HER ILLEGITIMACY); JOINED MERCENARY SQUAD 8/02/2023 WHILE ON PAROLE; HAS FOUGHT IN 78 MAJOR ENGAGEMENTS ON 25 WORLDS UNDER 16 DIFFERENT COMMANDERS; FORMED HER OWN MERC COMPANY WITH "BLACKJAK" (TRUE NAME UNKNOWN) IN 2026; HAS SPENT THE LAST NINE MONTHS ON ROC'S WORLD, FIGHTING FIRST FOR GOVERNMENT, THEN FOR REBELS.

**COMMENTS:** INTENSELY LOYAL, INTELLIGENT, CONTROLLED; APPARENTLY ABLE TO "SEE" POTENTIAL FUTURES; THIS HAS REINFORCED HER SELF-RELIANT PERSONALITY, OCCASIONALLY LEADS TO INFLEXIBILITY; PASSIONATELY IN LOVE WITH "BLACKJAK," THOUGH UNABLE TO VOCALIZE HER FEELINGS.  
—MORPHEA, MEDICAL



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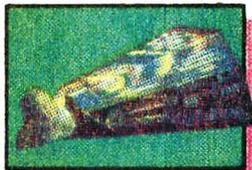
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**GREAT ADVENTURE AT GREAT PRICES!**

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Young Astronauts can crawl IN or THRU their own secret hiding place (more than one ship creates a squadron, space station, a tunnel and more).



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The roomy interior has over 35 sq. ft. of clean white working space for children to customize their ship by drawing, coloring, stickers, etc.

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Nontoxic, no sharp edges and no metal parts.

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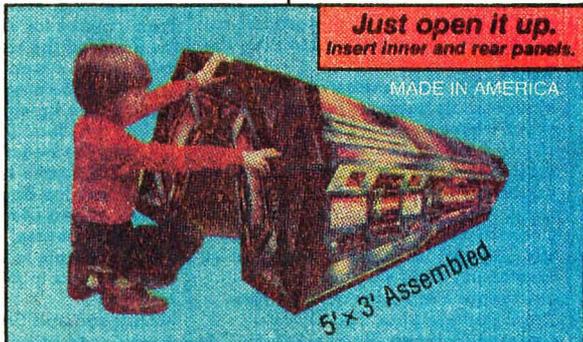
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# M E A N W H I L E

## RANDOM THOUGHTS: ON THE CONVENTION TRAIL, 1983

I like flying, I really do! (Providing I'm in an airplane ... no matter what the ads said, I don't believe a man can fly!) I hate getting to and from airports, though, and since I'm a bit paranoid about missing flights I tend to allow a little extra time to get to the airport (just in case) and inevitably find myself hanging around for an hour or two before I can board my flight. Thank God for airport bookstores, coffee shops and, I guess, cocktail lounges. Getting home after a trip is *always* a hassle. I live in Connecticut, about seventy miles from N.Y. airports and whether I have my car or hop a limo, the ground trip home seems to tire me more than the flight.

I became more aware of these attitudes this summer as just about every weekend I traveled to a distant city to attend a comic convention, the most ambitious convention tour ever undertaken by DC and/or yours truly. With Sal Amendola (our Talent Coordinator) for company on every trip and various other DC luminaries on some of them we attended conventions at Anaheim, CA; New York; Philadelphia, PA; Ottawa, Canada; Chicago, IL; San Diego, CA; Orlando, FL; still to come are Boston, Hartford, Wichita and New York again. I missed Houston, though I was scheduled to go and a small show in the Washington, D.C. area was cancelled.

I'm writing this a few days before Labor Day with Bob Rozakis (and the typesetter) hovering anxiously in the background. (copy was due September 1st ... late again!) A jumble of fleeting remembrances, impressions and random thoughts vie for attention.

I remember;

—Sal Amendola calling my home from Houston to make sure I was still alive. He'd flown there from Washington, D.C. where he had just completed teaching a week-long seminar on drawing S.F. comics at the Smithsonian Institute. He expected to meet me at the Houston convention. A rumor spread on the

convention floor that I had collapsed, passed out or had been taken to the hospital in a state of exhaustion. All untrue, of course ... but I was tired and not feeling well enough to take the trip. Still, Sal's concern (and the rumor-monger's) was touching.

—The wonderful reception afforded DC's 16MM sound film which was shown at least once each convention. It's about ten minutes long and after a brief retrospective, it outlines all the new and exciting comics coming from DC for the rest of '83 and some of '84.

—Having Murphy Anderson (and Mrs. "Murph") show up, unexpectedly, at many of the conventions. Murph has been away from comics for about 10 years while he handled the immense task of producing a monthly preventive maintenance magazine for the U.S. Army. He's finished with that and his byline and familiar style will be gracing the pages of DC Comics again! Welcome back, Murph.

—Meeting Joe Shuster and Jerry Siegel at San Diego. We've met before, of course, and we didn't have too much time to talk this time but it's always good to meet Superman's creators.

—Chicago and San Diego which continue to be among the best attended and best organized cons around. (Although there was a massive room foul-up at Chicago this year, it was the hotel's fault.) Lotsa pros, lotsa fans and dealers at both.

—The Ottawa con held on a modern college campus. We slept in small, clean dorm rooms (Ye Gods! No TV?) Some pros thought that wasn't sophisticated enough, I guess, and opted for hotel accommodations nearby. Sal and I (the DC contingent) stayed and had fun! Sloshing beer with college guys made me feel young again ... Briefly.

—Talking to so many of our readers and fans. About comics in general and DC Comics in particular. Most of 'em thought comics today are more exciting than they've been in years.

—Wishing I could have talked to more.

—Grateful to be alive after being attacked (sort of) by about a half

dozen crazed DC writers upon my return to the hotel in San Diego. I was coming home from a nice dinner at a Mexican restaurant down at the harbor and these six loonies had concocted an idea for a new maxi-series and were looking for me to approve the idea. They charged at me as I entered the lobby and in exchange for sparing my life I gave them the go ahead ... and the DC Challenge was born! (More on that later.)

—Talking with DC regulars and old friends Roy Thomas, Gerry Conway, Dan Jurgens, Mark Evanier, Dan Spiegel, Jerry Ordway, Mike Machlan, Jan Strnad, Don Newton, Steve Gerber and others (whose names I will remember the moment this goes to press) who live and work too far from the home office for me to see regularly.

—All those hotel rooms, all those restaurant meals, all those rented cars, all those cab rides. All those carefully collected receipts for my expense vouchers.

—Talking comics with old friends Mike Friedrich (of Star\* Reach) and Dez Skinn (Editor of *Warrior*, a top-notch British comic).

—Beating Marvel (by a nose!) at the Comics Feud, a San Diego Con version of *The Family Feud*! They'll be after us next year, with blood in their eyes, at a re-match.

—The projector breaking down at Philadelphia about 2 minutes into our film and Sal Amendola and me having to do about 15 minutes of impromptu chatter and fielding questions from the audience while a new projector was found and set-up.

—The unprecedented steak 'n' eggs breakfast for attending pros given by the new guys on the block, Multi-Media conventions, at Philadelphia. Thanks, guys.

—The hotel itself at the aforementioned Multi-Media Con in Philly. Brand new and beautiful!

—Talking to aspiring writers and artists as Sal Amendola and I looked at their portfolios. So many reminded me of myself some thirty-odd years ago. Incidentally, we're being forced to temporarily shelve our talent search for a time. We've been overwhelmed by samples mailed to us and folk who have talked to us and showed us samples at conventions. We're going to have to spend some time working closely with the talent that has surfaced and responding to all who have submitted samples. If you've thought of submitting, please hang on for a while as we dig out. We'll give you the go-ahead in this column as soon as all's clear.

—Seeing and chatting with our comic distributors all of whom I was lucky enough to meet at a meeting on the Warner's lot in L.A. earlier this year.

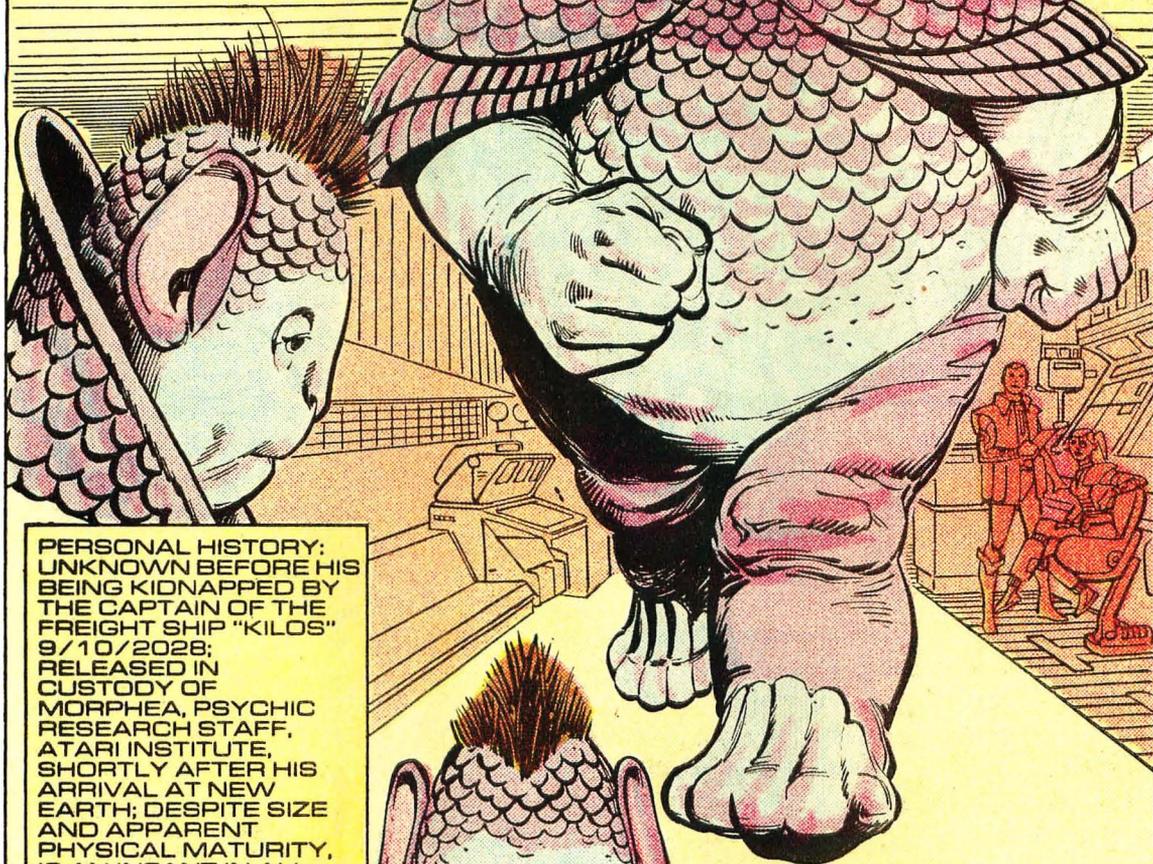
—Hearing the universally positive attitudes expressed by publishers, distributors, dealers and fans about the future of comics in this country.

Thank you and Good Afternoon.

Dick

# FACT FILE 5: BABE

NAME: UNKNOWN  
AKA: BABE  
DATE OF BIRTH: 2026  
(ESTIMATED)  
AGE: 2 TERRAN  
YEARS  
HEIGHT: 8.1 Meters  
WEIGHT: 750 KILOS  
NATIONALITY: EGGITE  
(NATIVE OF PLANET  
"EGG")



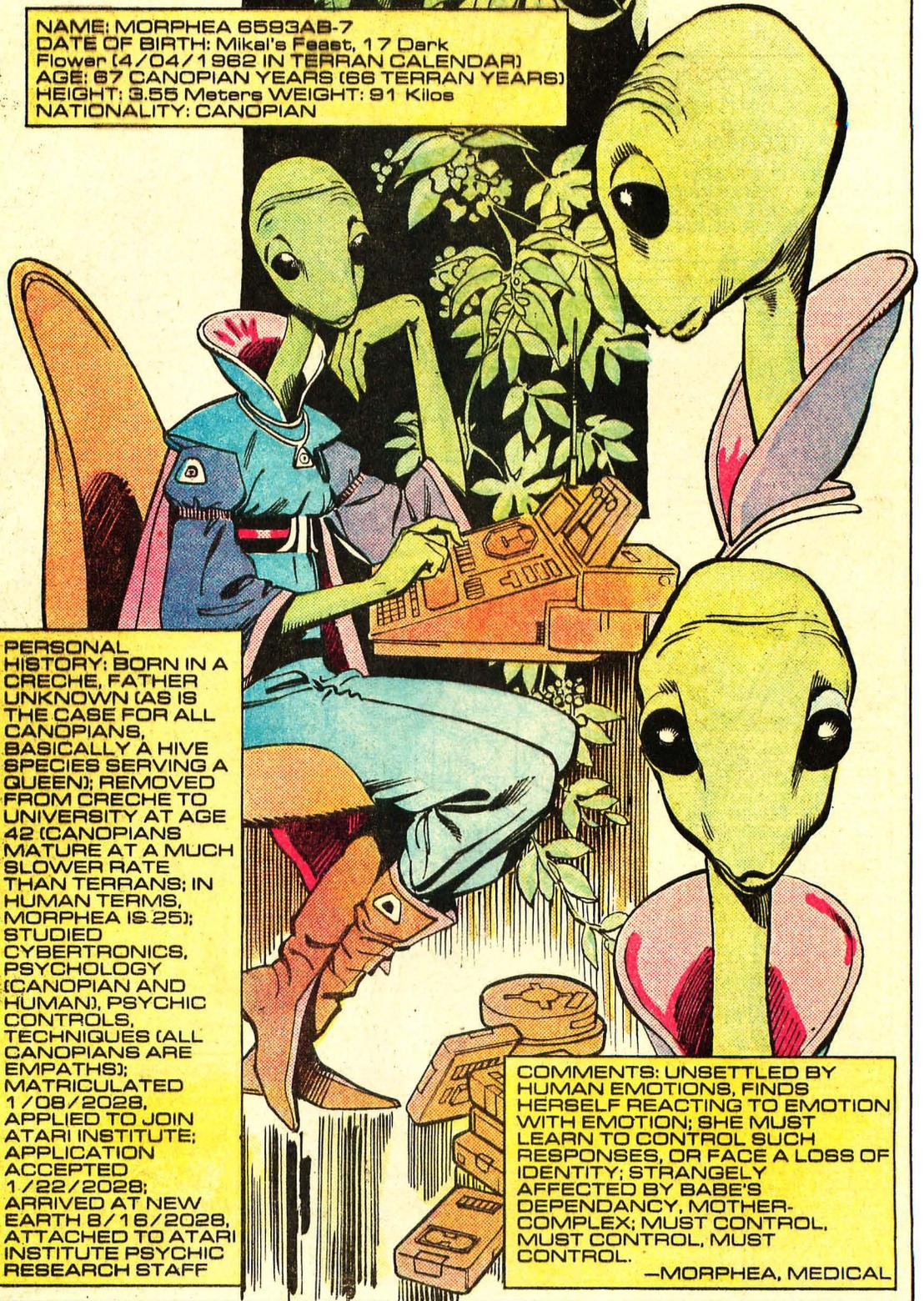
**PERSONAL HISTORY:**  
UNKNOWN BEFORE HIS  
BEING KIDNAPPED BY  
THE CAPTAIN OF THE  
FREIGHT SHIP "KILOS"  
9/10/2028;  
RELEASED IN  
CUSTODY OF  
MORPHEA, PSYCHIC  
RESEARCH STAFF,  
ATARI INSTITUTE,  
SHORTLY AFTER HIS  
ARRIVAL AT NEW  
EARTH; DESPITE SIZE  
AND APPARENT  
PHYSICAL MATURITY,  
IS AN INFANT IN ALL  
IMPORTANT  
RESPECTS; "EGGITES"  
MATURE THROUGH A  
MOBILE STAGE,  
GRADUALLY  
INCREASING THE  
AMOUNT OF MINERALS  
PRESENT IN THEIR  
BODIES, UNTIL THEY  
BECOME, IN EFFECT,  
SENTIENT MOUNTAINS,  
INCAPABLE OF  
INDEPENDENT  
MOVEMENT;  
ESTIMATED LIFESPAN—  
4,000-16,000 YEARS.



**COMMENTS:** A  
TRUSTING CHILD,  
MISUSED BY AN  
UNETHICAL  
FREIGHTER  
CAPTAIN;  
INCAPABLE OF  
CRUEL OR VIOLENT  
EMOTIONS; GENTLE  
AND DESPERATELY  
CRAVING OF  
AFFECTION.  
—MORPHEA,  
MEDICAL

# FACT FILE 6: MORPHEA

NAME: MORPHEA 6583AB-7  
DATE OF BIRTH: Mikal's Feast, 17 Dark Flower (4/04/1982 IN TERRAN CALENDAR)  
AGE: 67 CANOPIAN YEARS (66 TERRAN YEARS)  
HEIGHT: 3.55 Meters WEIGHT: 91 Kilos  
NATIONALITY: CANOPIAN



PERSONAL HISTORY: BORN IN A CRECHE, FATHER UNKNOWN (AS IS THE CASE FOR ALL CANOPIANS, BASICALLY A HIVE SPECIES SERVING A QUEEN); REMOVED FROM CRECHE TO UNIVERSITY AT AGE 42 (CANOPIANS MATURE AT A MUCH SLOWER RATE THAN TERRANS; IN HUMAN TERMS, MORPHEA IS 25); STUDIED CYBERTRONICS, PSYCHOLOGY (CANOPIAN AND HUMAN), PSYCHIC CONTROLS, TECHNIQUES (ALL CANOPIANS ARE EMPATHS); MATRICULATED 1/08/2028, APPLIED TO JOIN ATARI INSTITUTE; APPLICATION ACCEPTED 1/22/2028; ARRIVED AT NEW EARTH 8/16/2028, ATTACHED TO ATARI INSTITUTE PSYCHIC RESEARCH STAFF

COMMENTS: UNSETTLED BY HUMAN EMOTIONS, FINDS HERSELF REACTING TO EMOTION WITH EMOTION; SHE MUST LEARN TO CONTROL SUCH RESPONSES, OR FACE A LOSS OF IDENTITY; STRANGELY AFFECTED BY BABE'S DEPENDANCY, MOTHER-COMPLEX; MUST CONTROL, MUST CONTROL, MUST CONTROL.

—MORPHEA, MEDICAL

# ATARI FORCE

L-1555

## CONFESSION OF THE MONTH

Ready? Okay. My name's Andy Helfer, and I've gotta admit—I've never done this before. Edited a regular comic book, that is. Sure, I've been at DC for more than three years now, working on special projects with cohort Dave Manak and boss Joe Orlando, but special projects is distinctly "one-shot" work. You do the job, whether it's helping toy manufacturers design this year's superhero products, packaging a series of paperbacks featuring the superheroes, or editing a graphic novel like *STAR RAIDERS* or a miniseries like *POWER LORDS*. When you're finished, you're thanked for your efforts and, after catching your breath, you move on to the next project. It's wonderful, varied work, and it's as much fun as any job I could think of doing, but there's one thing missing—feedback. You seldom, if ever, hear from the people who ultimately purchase the products of your labor.

On the morning two days after *ATARI FORCE* #1 hit the stands, I discovered a small packet of mail lying by my locked office door. I seldom get more than one or two pieces of mail a day—usually for mail-order desk organizers or weight-loss-in-a-can programs—so the pile intrigued me. Upon examination, I realized that these were—gasp—**FAN LETTERS!** As the knowledge slowly seeped into my sleep-clouded brain (it was ONLY 10 A.M., y'know) I started to feel a bit nervous. **OHMIGOD!** This is it—it's sink-or-swim time!

Needless to say, the package took me by surprise. I'd completely forgotten that comic books get fan mail! I stepped into my office and sat down behind my desk, trying to maintain a facade of self-control. Neatly (always neatly if you want to look cool) I opened the first letter and read it. I'm not sure who wrote it, but the word **AWESOME** stuck in my mind. Next letter. The word **SUPERB** in bold letters. Third—**FANTASTIC**. Fourth—**NEAT**. The fifth and sixth offered similar adjectives. I felt good. I knew *ATARI FORCE* was a great book, but I never expected anyone to confirm my beliefs. Yet, here it was, in black and white.

Now it's two weeks later and the letters *still* haven't stopped coming. Every morning there're about a dozen of 'em, and in the afternoon another six, and it feels great. Feedback is a wonderful thing, and Gerry and Jose appreciate it as much as I do—although I must admit, they're a little more used to it

than I am.

So this "confession" is also a thank you—for your kind words and insights, and for taking the time to put them on paper and mail them off.

There, I've made my confession and feel alot better now. But I still have a pile of letters in front of me, so here we go—

Dear Gerry and Jose:

When I first read about the *ATARI FORCE* comic a few months ago, I scoffed. I thought the idea of making a video game company into a group of superheroes was—well—silly (Just as silly as *ROM*, *SPACETOASTER*). Now I'm eating my words. *ATARI FORCE* #1 was great, one of the greatest comics I've read in a long while. The writing was perfect, the art was perfect, everything was perfect. What can I say—I'm hooked! Thanks for a terrific comic!

CHRIS WEPPLER  
112 Lydon Ln.  
Louisville, KY 40222

*(We're glad you took a chance on ATARI FORCE, Chris. Other readers were just as skeptical as you, and we're happy to report that once they picked up the book, they, too, were hooked!)*

Dear Andy:

I've been an enthusiastic comic book collector and fan for over twenty years. I've seen scores of new titles introduced during that time, most of which never lasted past the first ten issues. I think you've got a solid winner in the *ATARI FORCE*, and I'm predicting a long life after having read only the first issue.

There are a lot of things that make this book great right from the start, and that gets me excited about future issues. The planet *EGG*, the cigar-chomping Professor Venture, and Pakrat are just a few. I have a feeling that our mystery villain will rank right up there with other greats like Darth Vader and Darkseid before Gerry and Jose get through with him.

As much as I'd like to see more of the *ATARI FORCE*, take your time with this one, and keep the quality high. You've set some high standards with your first issue that will be tough to maintain over the long haul, but you've assembled a top-notch crew, and I know they'll do the job. Looking forward to the next issue of *ATARI FORCE*, and the next ... and the next...

JIM ROSSOW  
19405 Dresden Drive  
South Bend, IN 46637

*(Talk about taking our time! We're writing this column on October 6, 1983.)*

DC Comics Inc.  
686 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10103

Jenette Kahn, President and Publisher  
Dick Giordano, Vice Pres.-Executive Editor  
Andrew Helfer, Editor  
Tom Condon, Managing Editor  
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Bob Rozakis, Production Manager  
Joe Orlando, Vice Pres.-Editorial Director  
Paul Levitz, Vice Pres.-Operations  
Bruce Bristow, Marketing Director  
Arthur Gutowitz, Treasurer

*If you know anything about comic book scheduling, you'll see we're more than just taking our time—we're downright LATE!!)*

Dear Atari Folk:

*ATARI FORCE* looks like it will become the latest comic based on a toy or game to become a top series, so I have a suggestion concerning the five *ATARI FORCE* mini-comics. Combine them into a single graphic novel or five graphic novels, so that those folks out there who don't own all the cartridges and who find the A.F. interesting can read the early stories. This can be done with the *WORDQUEST* mini-comics too.

On another note—Will we be seeing more of the characters from the *STAR RAIDERS GRAPHIC NOVEL* in the *ATARI FORCE*?

NINA TWERSKY  
14848 Manuella Ave.  
Los Altos Hills, CA 94022

*(None of those are bad ideas, Nina—although I can't say that we here at DC haven't at least THOUGHT of them all. What do other readers think?—Would they like to see the adventures of the ORIGINAL ATARI FORCE reprinted? How about the WORDQUEST books? Or the return of Jed, Tommy, Zeke, and Skrimsh—the STAR RAIDERS crew? As STAR RAIDERS artist, it's a job we're sure Jose would love to tackle. Let us know.)*

Dear *ATARI-ITES*:

*ATARI FORCE* #1: To say the least, I was pleasantly surprised! After that "preview" many months back, AF #1 was wonderful! The story was well crafted, the pacing was deft, and the dialogue even better.

Visually, the characters are incredible. Such a diverse-looking bunch is usually reserved for the Legion. I can only hope that characterization can be developed and sustained.

Artistically, I never had a single doubt about this book. Jose has long been a fave, and I've been waiting for him to take on a monthly book. Though I'd still like to see him do Superman, I feel that *ATARI FORCE* is a superb vehicle for his great talents. And this Villagran person inks his work very nicely.

As you can see, I'm quite pleased with the *ATARI-FORCE*, and hope for a long, successful run.

JON GREEN  
1927 Orrington, #8210  
Evanston, IL 60201

(Jon's letter brings up a couple of interesting points: First, the ATARI FORCE preview that ran in two DC books about a year ago was not intended to spotlight the characters in the book you're now reading, or any ATARI FORCE comic. Instead, it was created to promote an Atari Videogame, and was later reprinted as ATARI FORCE mini-comic #4.

Second, Jose is still doing an occasional Superman job—at least covers. His pencils and inks are currently gracing the cover of the latest DC COMICS PRESENTS—Superman meets Santa Claus. Also, Jose's Superman renditions are on practically all DC's licensed products—look for 'em.

Third, and finally, that "Villagran person" is Ricardo Villagran, one of DC's latest finds, and one of the foremost Argentinian comic book illustrators. Although he's done some work for the competition recently, we're keeping him busy right now inking both ATARI FORCE as well as Tom Sutton's pencils on STAR TREK.

And while we're at it, we may as well mention the rest of our creative crew—letterer Bob Lappen and colorist Tom Zuiko. Bob is truly one of the most thoughtful letterers I've ever met—look closely and you'll see how much thought and consideration goes into each sound effect and balloon. By day, he works in DC's production department, and we keep him up all night lettering!

Tom Zuiko is also a production department alumnus, but now he's a full-time colorist, deftly brushing his Dr. Martin dye on photostat copies of SUPER-GIRL and AMETHYST as well as the ATARI FORCE.)

Dear Mr. Helfer:

All the best stories begin in medias res. I'm not familiar with the original ATARI FORCE, but I had no trouble understanding ATARI FORCE #1, "Fresh Blood."

Chris Champion, code-named Tempest, is the 18-year-old son of Martin Champion and Lydia Perez. He has the mutant ability of teleportation. Chris doesn't teleport from here to there; he goes from here to another dimension to there. Tempest's girlfriend, Melissa, is the daughter of a senator who opposes the Atari Institute.

Dart, the precognitive mercenary, is Li San O'Rourke's and Mohandas Singh's daughter. Blakjak is Dart's romantic and business partner. On page four, Dart saw herself and Blakjak as prisoners of the shock troops. Does she see possible futures rather than THE future?

Never corner a rat. Pakrat looks interesting ... and dangerous. Is the young Eggite old enough to talk yet? Are all Canopians empaths or does Dr. Morpheus just happen to be psychic? Professor Venture is a terrific lady.

Finally, thank you for saying S-F rather than Sci-Fi on your cover.

Peace and Prosperity.

SUSAN M. MURRIE

(Well, Susan, you certainly have some interesting observations, especially in

regard to Tempest and Dart, but I'm afraid most of the answers to your questions will have to come from the comic itself. As you can see, things are already beginning to move in unexpected directions—what with the death of Blakjak and the first appearance of Rident, Pakrat's brother. Gerry and Jose and I would much rather keep on ... SURPRISING you.

Another question that keeps popping up in letters is, How do the mountain-like Eggites reproduce if they turn to stone after reaching puberty? Well, no one is really sure yet, but our own E. Nelson Bridwell has this theory about avalanches...)

To Whom It May Concern:

This is my first fan letter to a comic book publisher, so please bear with me. I'd like to give you my comments on the first issue of Atari Force. But first, I must backtrack a bit...

Not long ago, while waiting for a friend to finish browsing the comic book racks, I started leafing through a comic art textbook when I came across a lesson by Jose Luis Garcia Lopez. I had never heard his name or seen his art before.

The lesson described the steps he took to bring a story idea to the drawing board—in this case, a pirate story. What caught my eye was one of his characters: a woman pirate at the helm of her ship in the midst of a battle. She was beautiful: long black hair, a pretty face, a trim figure, and a flowing dress. And she was strong: a cigar in her mouth, fire in her eyes, and a firm grip on the ship's wheel. She fascinated me—so much so that I wished I could write to Senor Lopez and ask: Was this an idea he had written stories about, or (as I suspected) just an example for the lesson?

Today, while waiting for the same friend to finish browsing the racks, a woman on the cover of STAR RAIDERS caught my eye and, after looking through the book, I decided it was worth buying. I didn't know then that Star Raiders was the work of Senor Lopez. A few minutes later, on the cover of ATARI FORCE, Dart caught my eye, and when I saw the name of the artist, I was sold. Only after reading the editorial page did I realize that Star Raiders, too, was the work of Senor Lopez. But I wasn't surprised. His art has a style that fascinates me in a way that I can't explain.

I notice, too, that one of the characters in ATARI FORCE is a cigar-smoking woman. I hope to see more of Professor Venture.

The story line in ATARI FORCE #1 was a bit hard for me to follow. So many characters going their separate ways, not knowing that their paths will soon cross, or where they will go from there. I guess things'll clear up as the story goes along.

But I loved the humor of ATARI FORCE. I had to laugh when Pakrat slaughtered those three guards, and said simply, "I hate being cornered."

By the way, the friend I was with bought two copies of #1. He seemed to think it might become a collector's item.

Who knows? Keep up the good work!  
EDWARD J. WOOD  
165 East 33rd St.  
New York, NY 10016

(As far as the story line being hard to follow, just bear with us a moment longer, Eddie—by next issue, all the pieces will begin to fit into place—see the bottom of this page for a LITTLE more information.)

## THE LETTERCOL CONTEST

Well, we asked for letter column titles, and we got 'em. Practically every letter had a suggestion—it seems like these ATARI FORCE mini-comics are really in demand! Rather than decide right now, we'll let you take a look at some of the more interesting ones thus far:

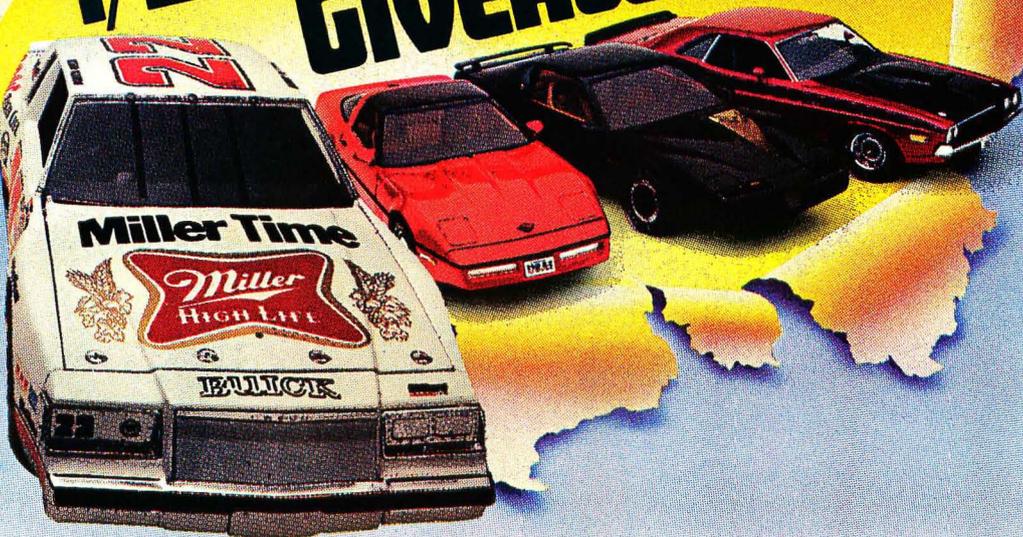
Misses to the Multiverse, Force Feedback—Mark Mazur; Star Readers (sorry, wrong book!)—Dennis Page; Force Fans, Atari Archives, Multiverse Mailbox—Rob Everett; Project MULTIVERSE (get it?)—Tony Bowen; Atari Talk—Paul Kopsick; Multiverse Mailbag—Kyle Burchart; Atari Feedback—Mike Kitchen; New Earth News, Forceful Comments—Michael Dennler; Atar-REACTIONS—William Huffman; Atari Feedback—Tim Hewing; Multi-Mail—Jim Preston; and scads of others too numerous to mention. There were a lot of repeats and variations, so we simply took the first to come in. If your name wasn't mentioned, try again—better luck next issue.

Russ Cleverley of Poughkeepsie, N.Y. contributed the title ATARI AGE, among others. Nice try, Russ, but ATARI AGE is already taken—it's the name of the official ATARI fan club magazine, and it's available free with the purchase of an ATARI game machine!

NEXT ISSUE: Ross Andru is guest penciller, and Jose Luis Garcia Lopez tries his hand at inking in the full-length fourth chapter of our continuing saga. This time, the new ATARI FORCE finally comes together, as they meet ... the ORIGINAL ATARI FORCE!



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