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PENTHOUSE ON March/April 1995



COVER ART BY ARTHUR SUYDAM

For more all new
Suydam-alicious™ art,
check out our
Pet of the Year
Pictorial on page 93.

Penthouse Comix (ISSN 0090-2020) Vol. 1, No. 6, Mar./Apr. 1995 issue. Penthouse Comix is published six times a year by Penthouse International, Ltd., 1965 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023-5965. Copyright @1995 Penthouse International, Ltd. All rights reserved. Distributed in the U.S.A., Canada, U.S. territorial possessions, and the world (except Australia) by Curtis Circulation Company, P.O. Box 9102, Pennsauken, N.J. 08109. Distributed in Australia by the Horwitz Group, P.O. Box 306. Cammeray, N.S.W. 2062 Australia. Distributed in the rest of the world (including the United Kingdom) by Worldwide Media Service, Inc., 30 Montgomery St., Jersey City, N.J. 07302. Please direct all editorial correspondence to Penthouse Comix, 1965 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023-5965. Nothing in this magazine may by reproduced in whole or in part without written permission from the publishers. Any similarity between persons or places mentioned and real places or persons living or dead is coincidental. Canadian GST registration #R1226607902. Printed in the U.S.A.. Why are you reading this tiny type instead of looking at pictures of nude babes?

FEATURES

HOUSECALL
Who's who in
Penthouse Comix...

YOUNG CAPTAIN ADVENTURE

Does not appear in this issue...sort of...

MEN'S ADVENTURE COMIX PREVIEW: ACTION FIGURES

The adventures of an all-girl superhero group, detective agency, modeling agency, & escort service.

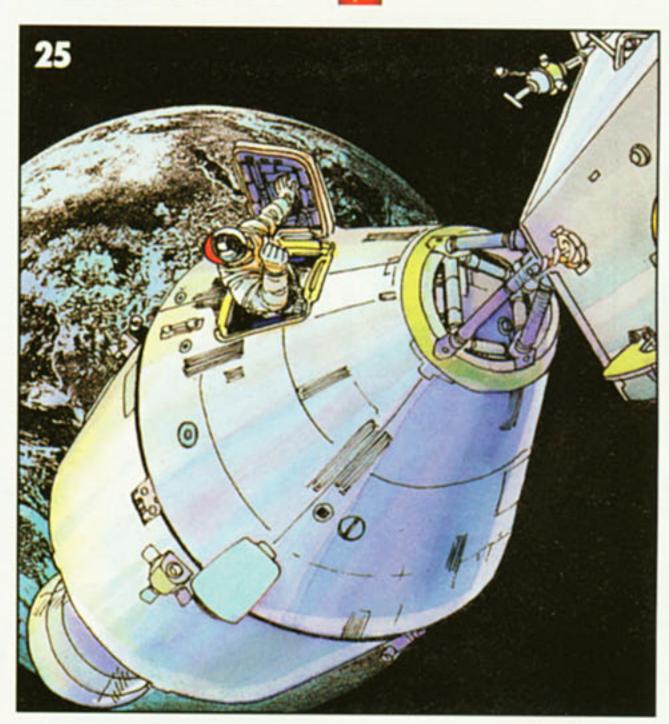
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The return of the Pulps!!





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RETURN TO SENDER
The King knows what the gloved one's been up to and now he's ready to dispense a little of his own special brand of rock & roll justice.

Art by Jeff Johnson & Terry Austin

PENTHOUSE COMIX PET OF THE YEAR

She's the best of the best, the Comix heroine you, our beloved readers, picked as this year's hottest.

Art by all of our best guys...







GALLERY SECTION

Featuring all-new art by Adam Hughes, Boris Vallejo, Milo Manara, Jason Pearson and Kevin Nowlan!

NEXT ISSUE

What's the only mag that gives you Adams, Azpiri, Beachum, Geiger, Morrow, Suydam, Texeira and special guest artist...

Moebius? You're lookin' at it!



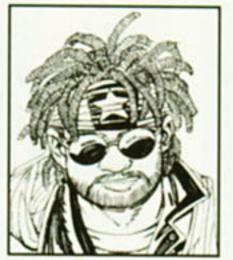
HOUSEC ALL







WILLIAMS



CULLENS



SANGIOVANNI



ALEKMAN

WHO'S WHO IN PENTHOUSE COMIX

Now that Ye Olde Editor-In-Chief has been doing this for a year, I can finally get something off my chest. When I started this gig, I didn't have a damn clue as to what I was doing. I had some good ideas, but I basically bluffed my way through, made things up as I went along and hoped for the best. Believe it or not, I actually started this whole thing to impress a woman! That being said, I think I've done pretty well for a first-timer and for that I must thank Mr. Bob Guccione and Ms. Kathy Keeton who trusted in my potential even more than I did. It just goes to prove, Penthouse Pals, that you never know what you're capable of until you try. Take it from a man once called "The biggest loser in comics." Dare to take the big chances, never give up, never compromise on your principles, deal straight (even with your enemies), and the world is yours.

In addition to Bob and Kathy, I have many others to thank for my success, too many to mention them all here, but I want to single out four: my second-in-command, Mark McClellan; Tom Thornton, the best collaborator a man could ask for; Wayne Hawkes, my art director; and Arthur Suydam, who bet on the right horse.

It's been a hell of a first year, and we have a lot of things brewing for year two: the debut of our second adult mag, **PENTHOUSE MEN'S ADVENTURE COMIX** on sale in March, and **OMNI COMIX** (our first book for fans of all ages) in **OMNI MAGAZINE** on sale in February. I've assembled the best team in comics today and, with your help, we're changing the face of this industry.

Until next time, you tell 'em I'm coming and hell's coming with me.

MARK BEACHUM

If there was ever an artist born to draw Penthouse Comix, it's Mr. Beachum. As with so many of our artists, Beachum has always done our kind of two fisted (no pun intended) sizzling action, but always had his hands tied (again, no pun intended) by gutless wimps at other comic companies, whining about PC bullshit. His brilliant eye for design and the female form are welcome here for many years to come.

PARIS CULLENS

Coming on board the *Penthouse* Freight Train after penciling several issues of my upcoming *T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents* series, Paris is my "just so" penciller, virtually living in the mighty CDI Sweatshop night after night, working on making each page to perfectly visualize our stories. Paris is also doing much of the design work for our upcoming '95 characters, Including about a hundred or so new Superheroes for the *Team Supremeverse*™.

VICKIE WILLIAMS

With all the mugs we've been having on the old top row in the last year, we've been sadly deficient in properly thanking VW and her collaborator/husband Jack for all their hard work. Vic was the first letterer I hired, back on Young Cap #1 (*Penthouse* November '93) and has been with me ever since. Look for Vicky on *Libby in the Lost World* each issue.

SANGIOVANNI

Lou "Numbers" Sangiovanni is Mark "Mac" McClellan's second member of his "Unholy-Army-of-the-Night" and is the diabolical genius behind the finances of the Mighty CDI Empire. With payroll and panache, Lou is number one with a bullet at *Penthouse Comix, Omni Comix* and *Men's Adventure Comix*.

ERIC ALEKMAN

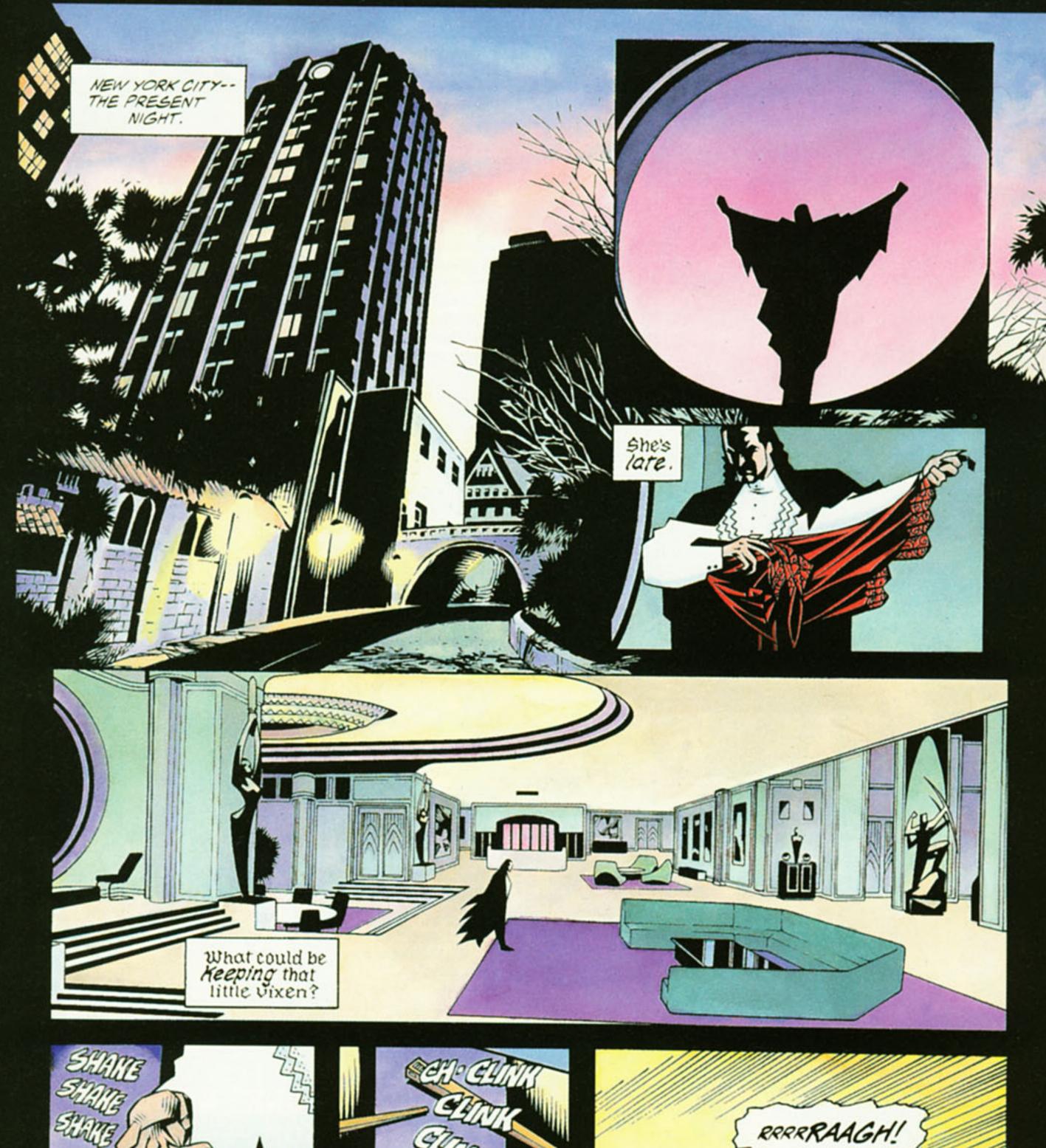
Last month we screwed up big time in our credits and left out Newsstand Sales Manager, Eric Alekman. Under the command of GMI Circulation Czar Jim Martise, Eric works like a coolie to place our books on newsstands and comic shops. Eric also holds the title of Most Perfectly Developed (male) Physique at *Penthouse* and can often be seen leaving the office after a grueling day heading for the gym!

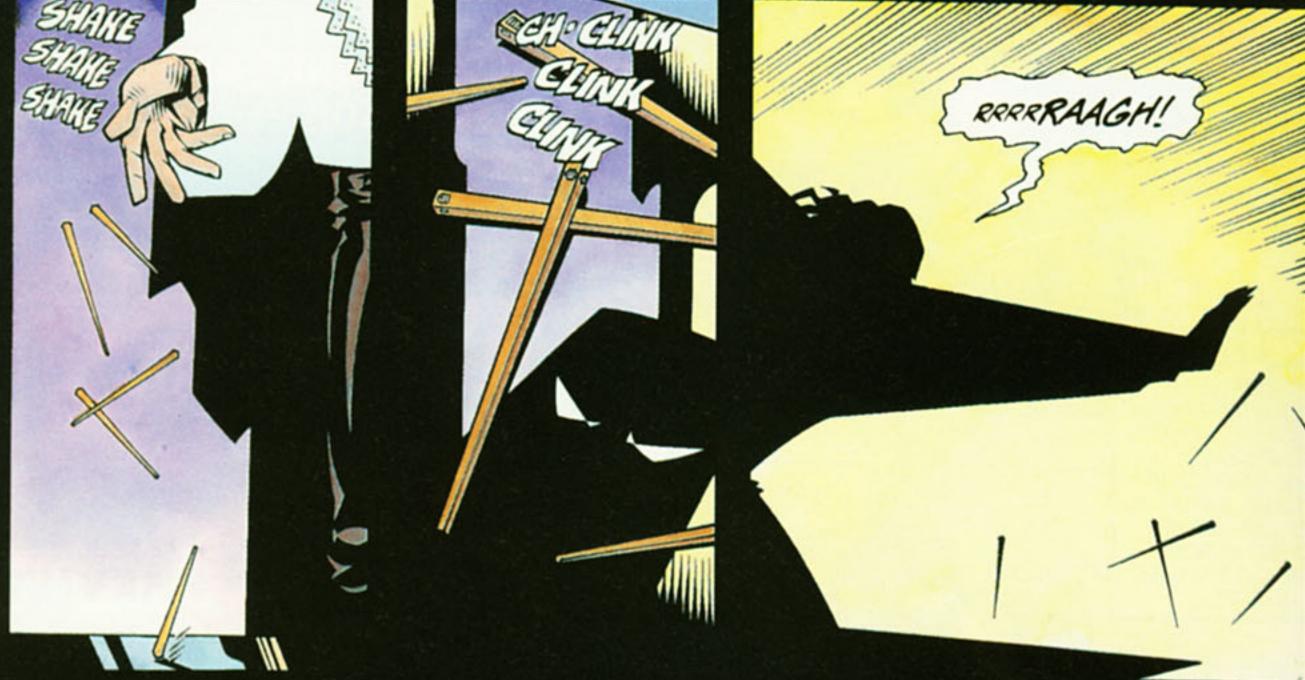
Special Thanks Section: Thanks to Tracy G. for her help in the office. Plus--have you noticed that there is no Young Captain Adventure or Scion this month. Why? Even the mighty Penthouse is not invulnerable to the dreaded deadline doom that plagues all comics some time or another. We decided to make it up to you with 18 extra pages at the same price with two of the best strips from our new Men's Adventure and Omni Comix books. All for the same low price. Is that fair or what? Let us know.

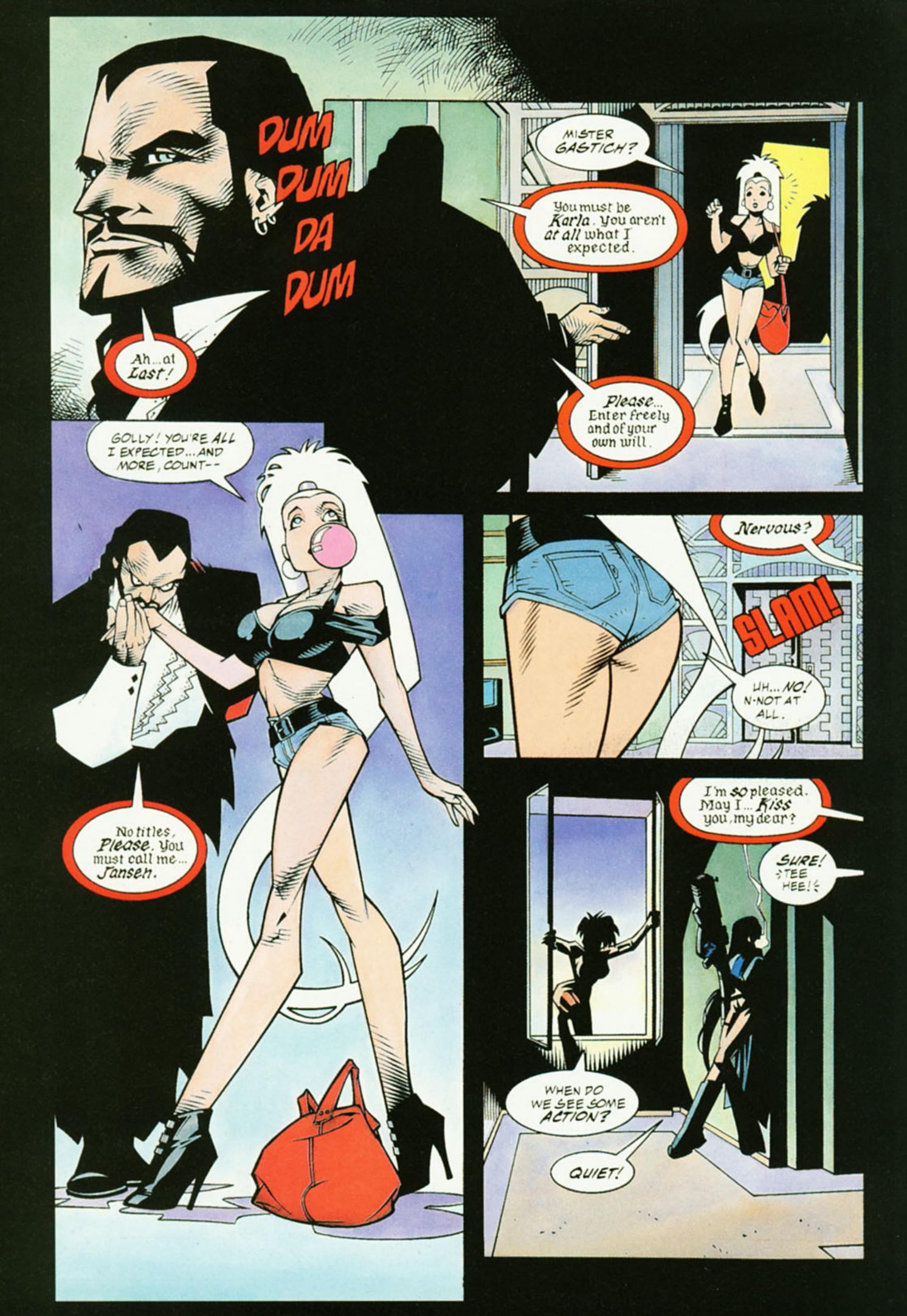
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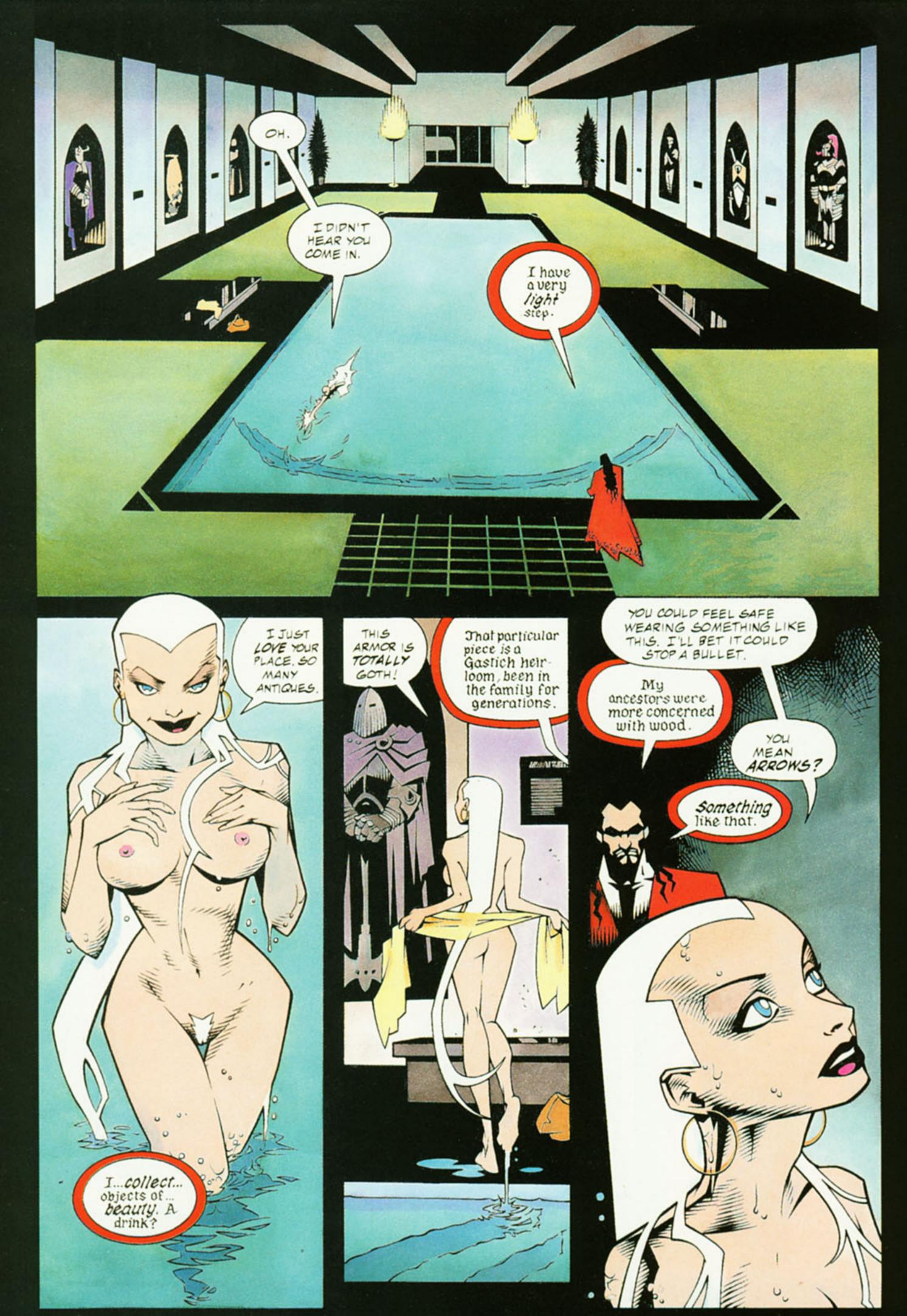






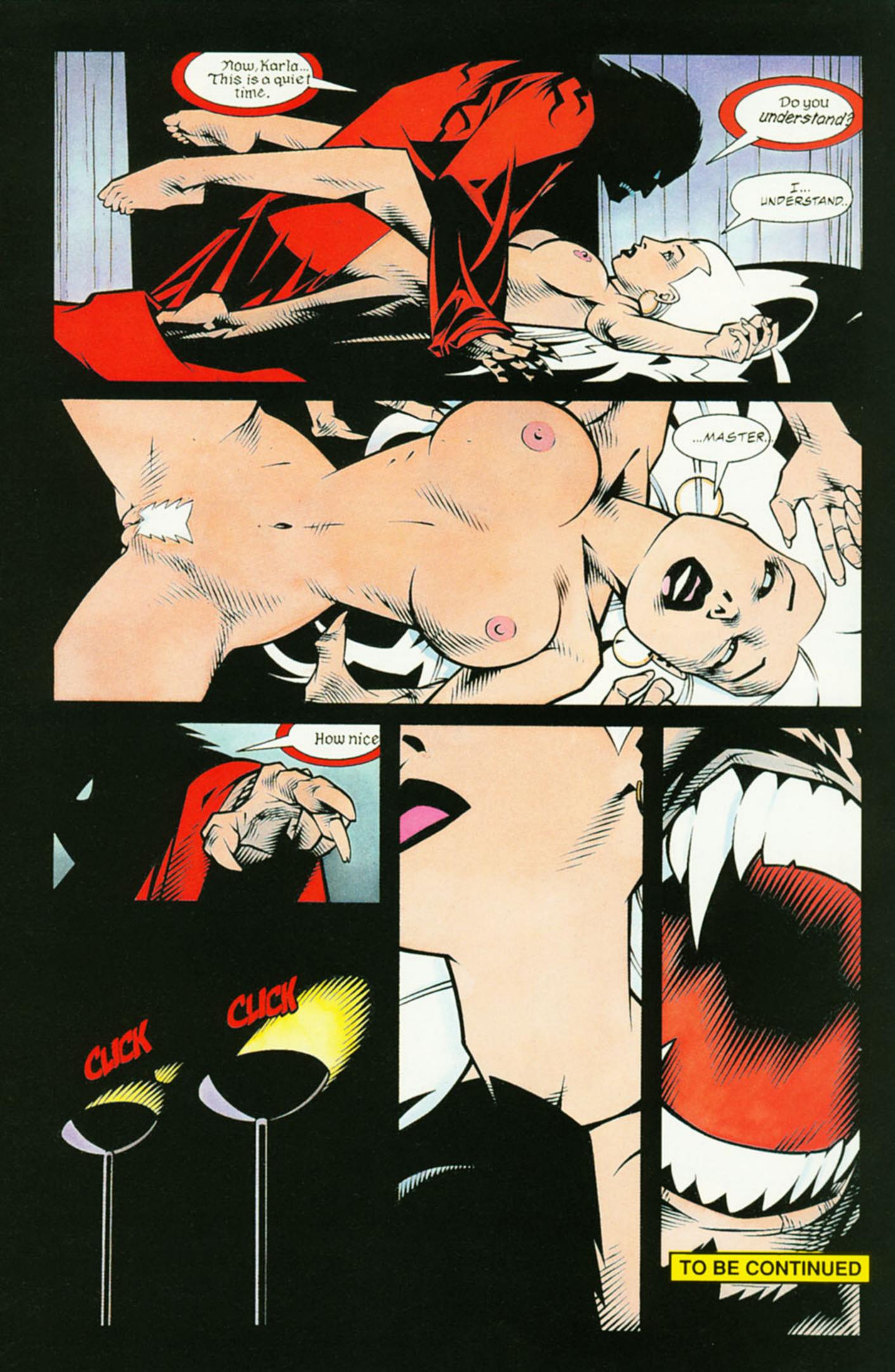








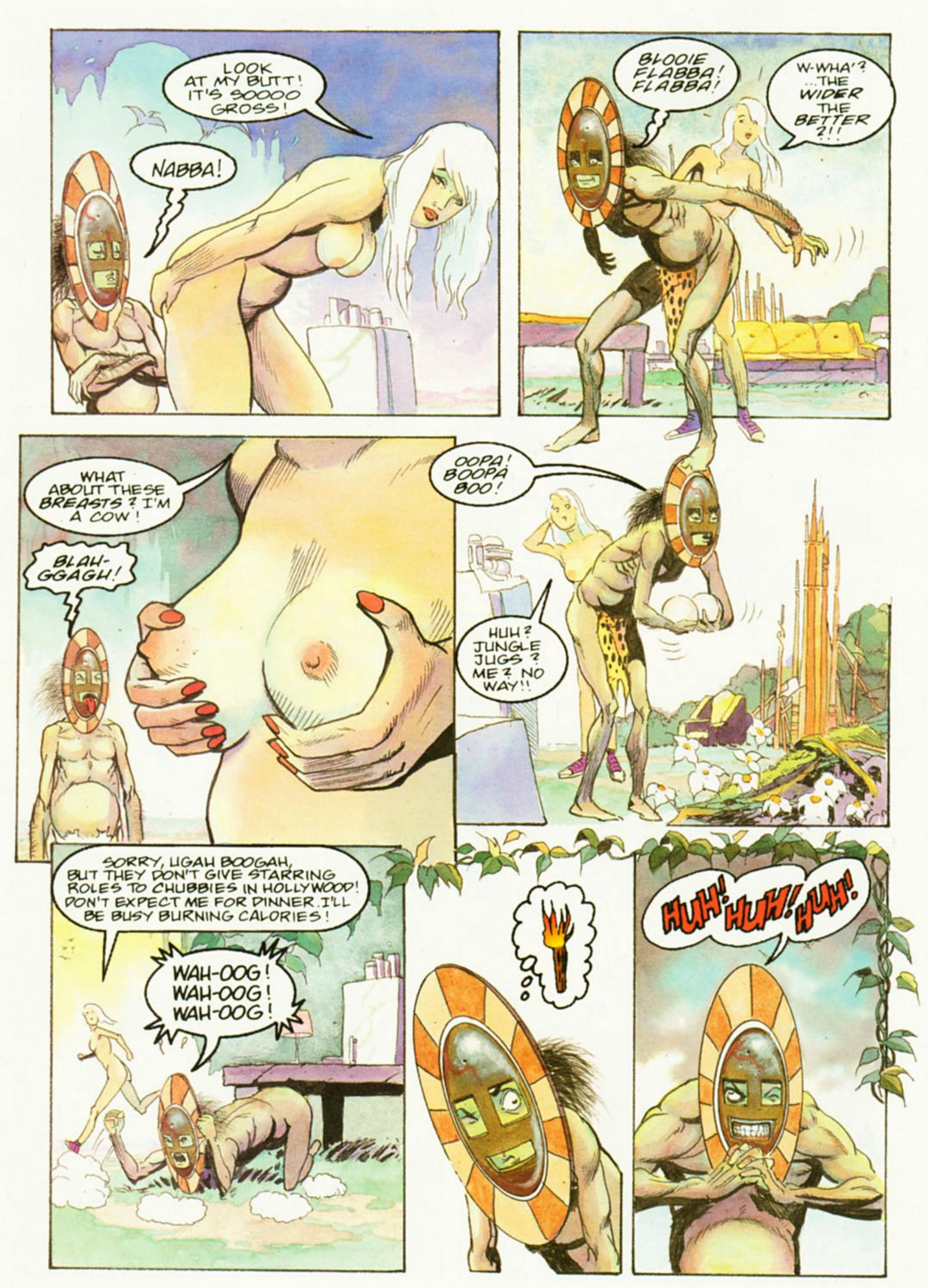


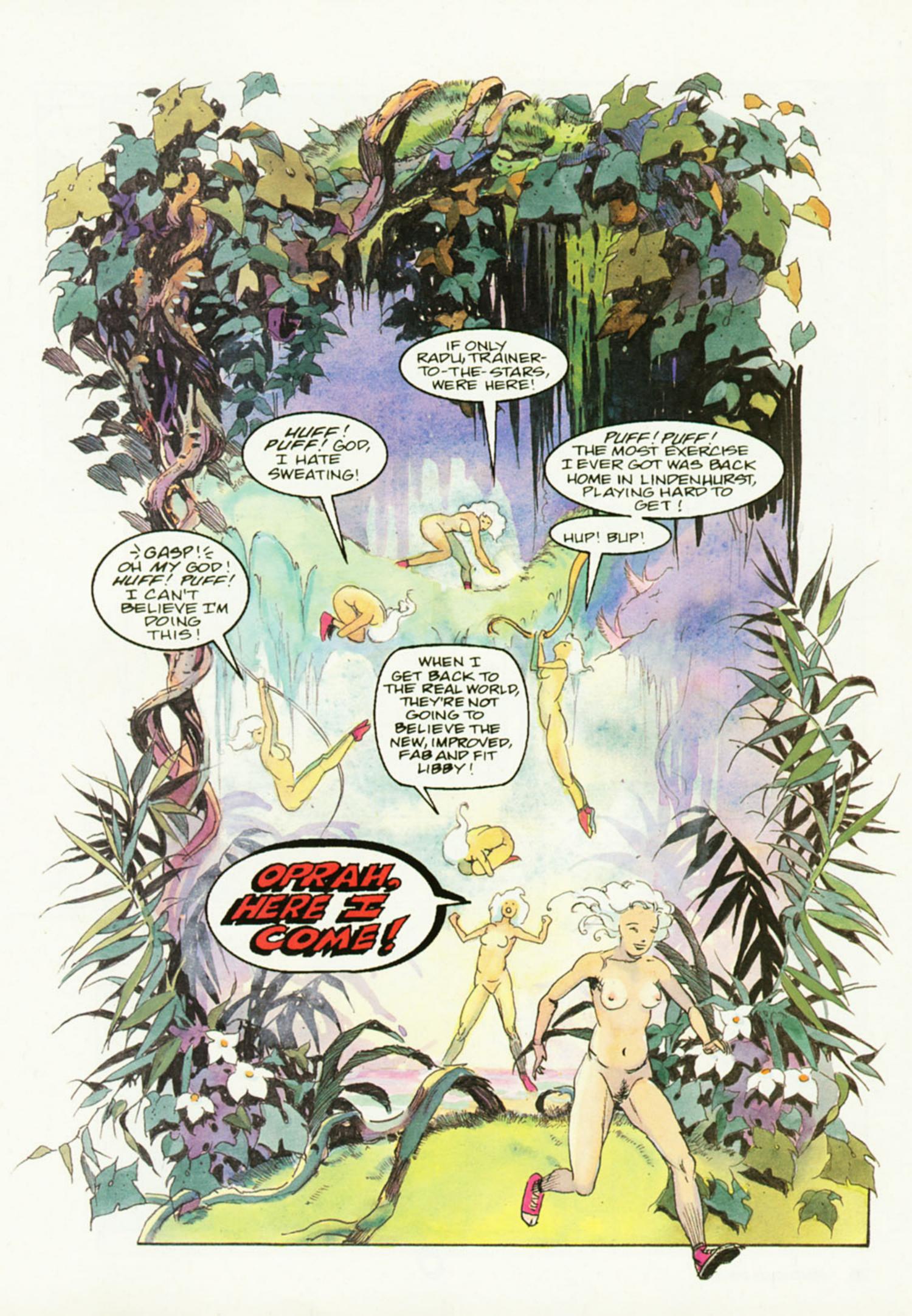


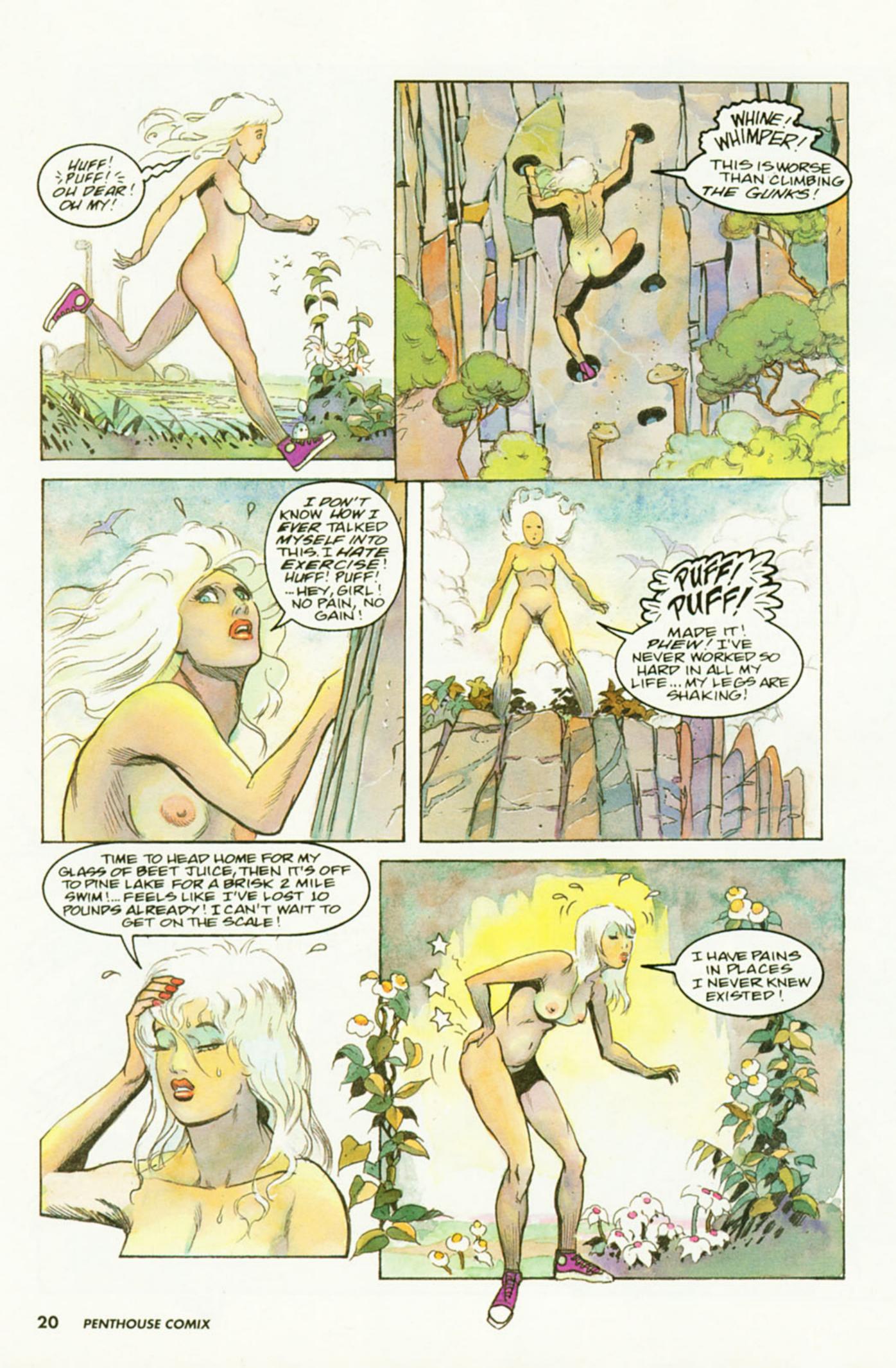


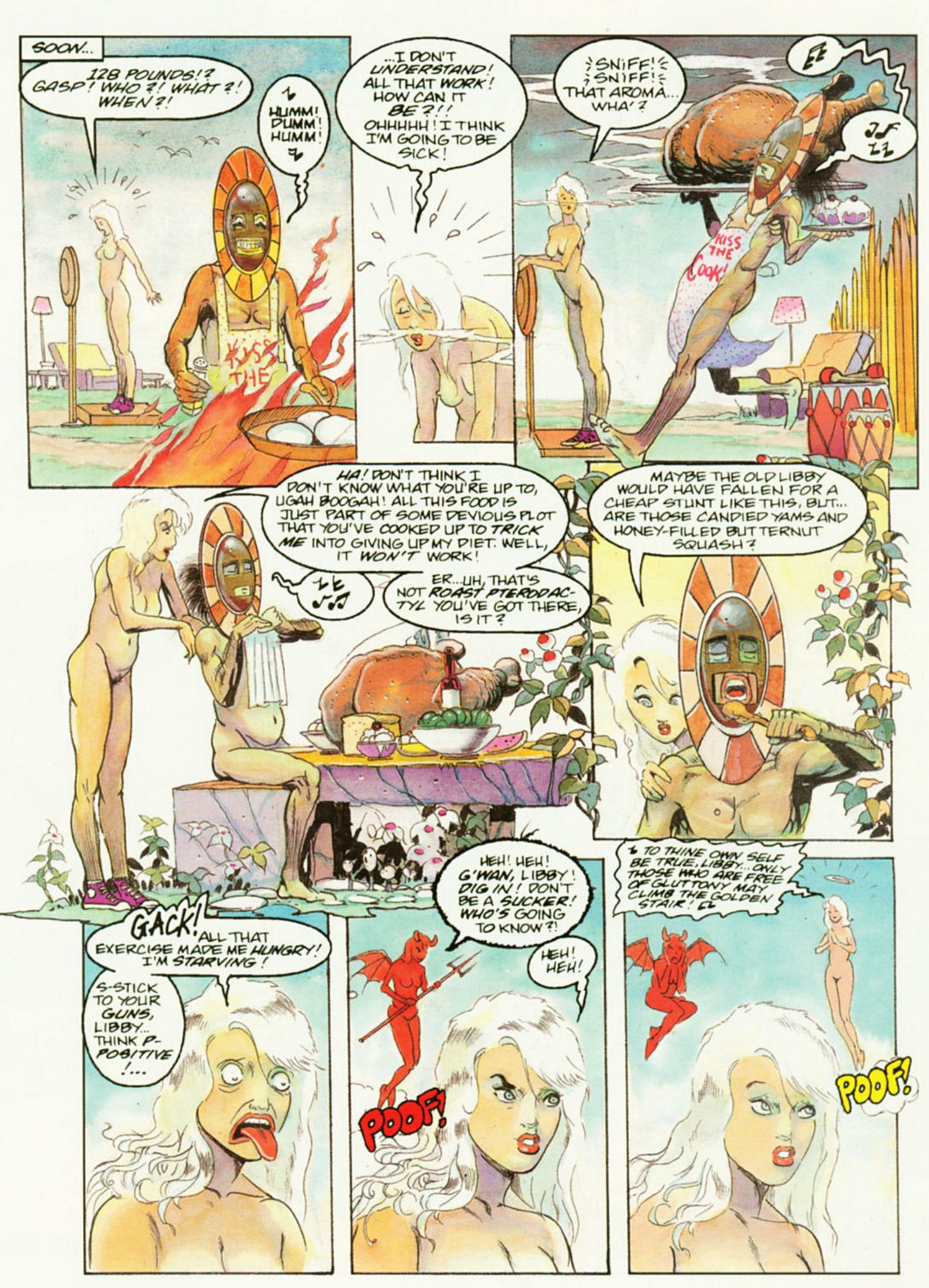






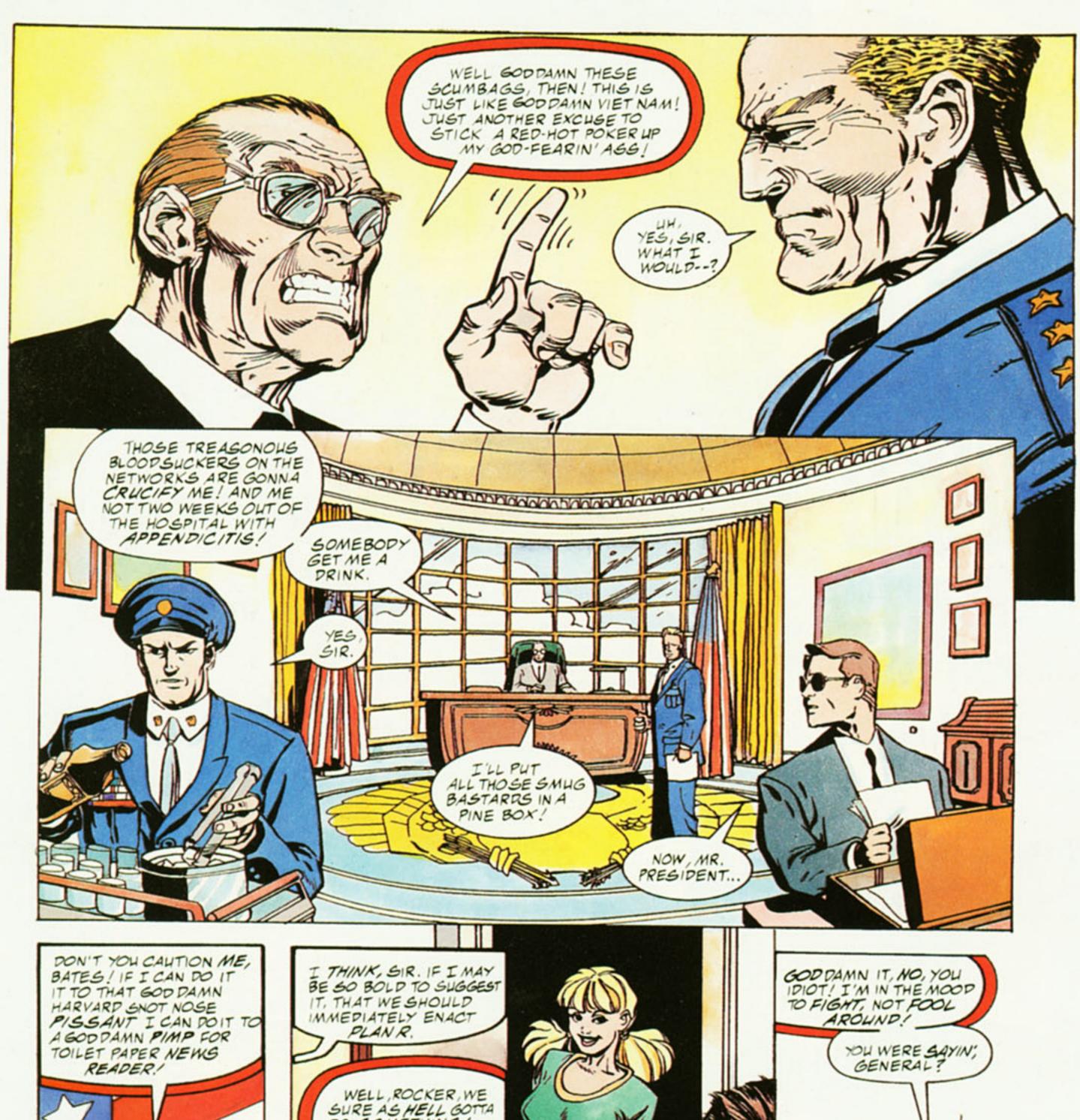




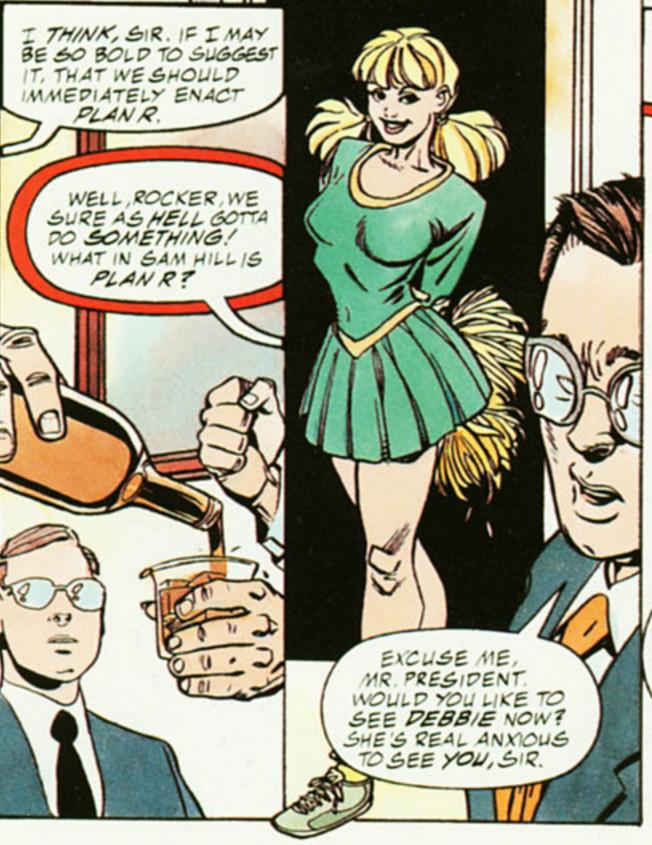








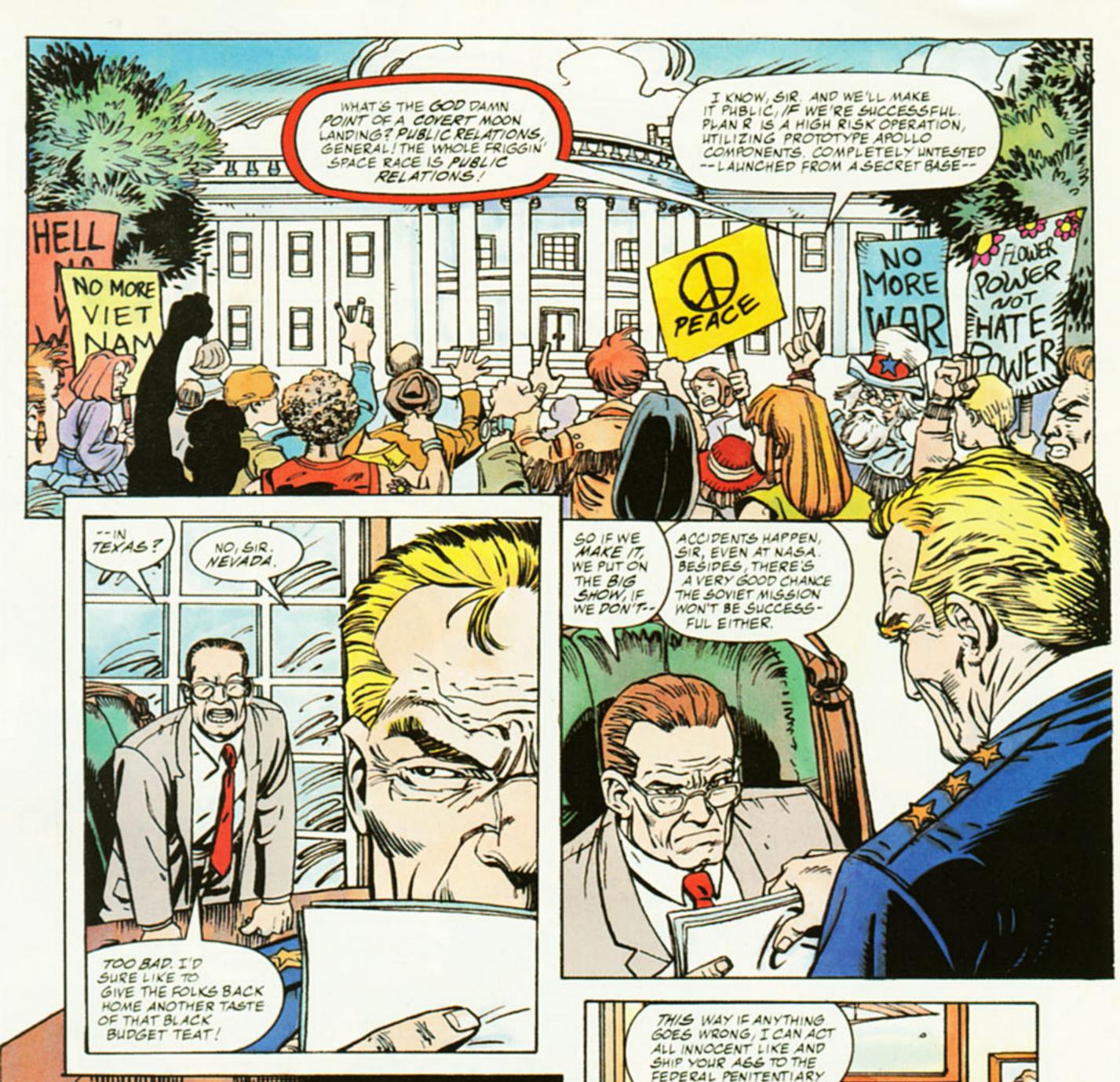


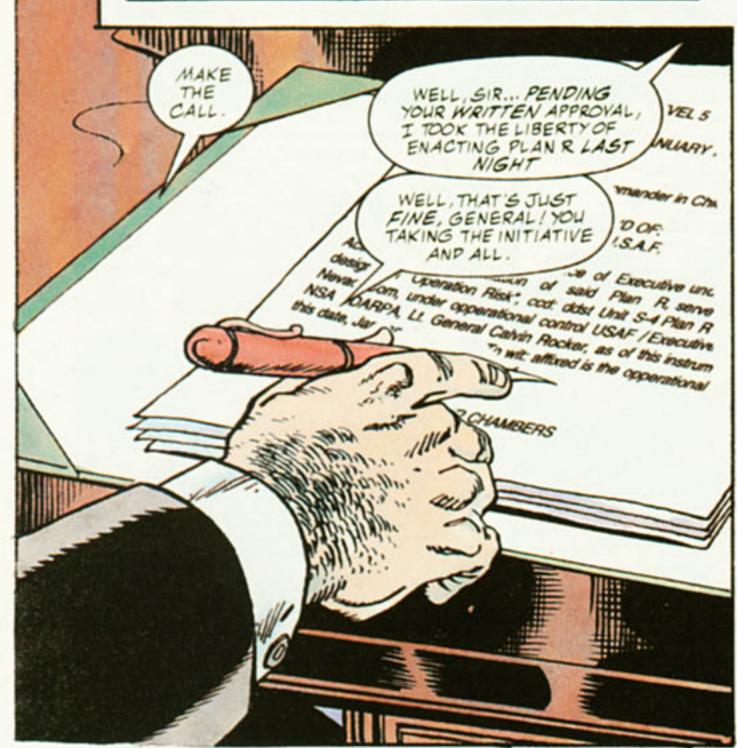


UH ... YES, SIR. PLAN R WAS ENACTED TO DEAL

WITH EXACTLY THIS KIND OF UNEXPECTED SOVIET LAUNCH. TO BEAT THE REDS TO THE MOON.

IT'S AN EMERGENCY PROTOCOL TO LAUNCH A COVERT MILITARY MOON LANDING.

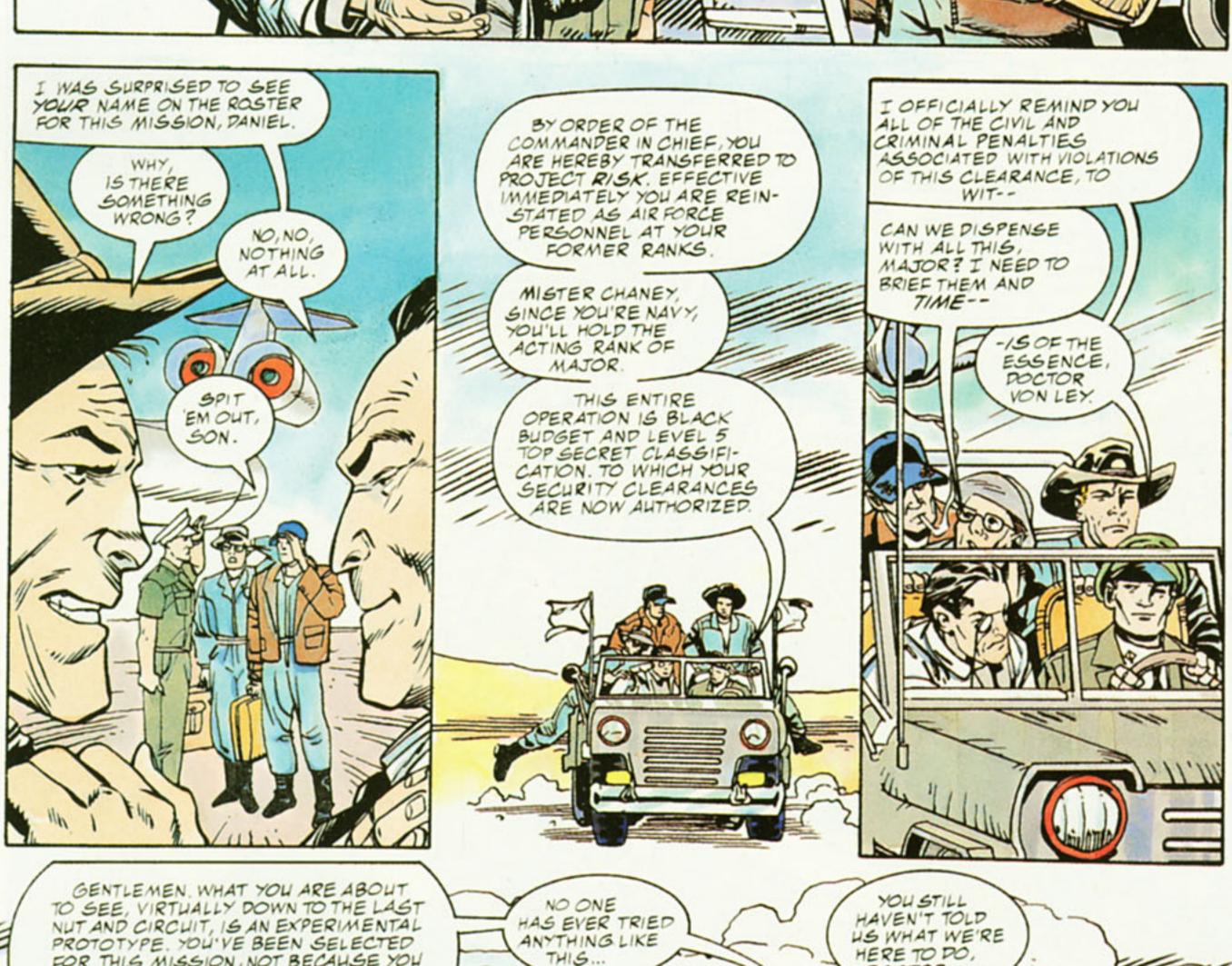












FOR THIS MISSION, NOT BECAUSE YOU

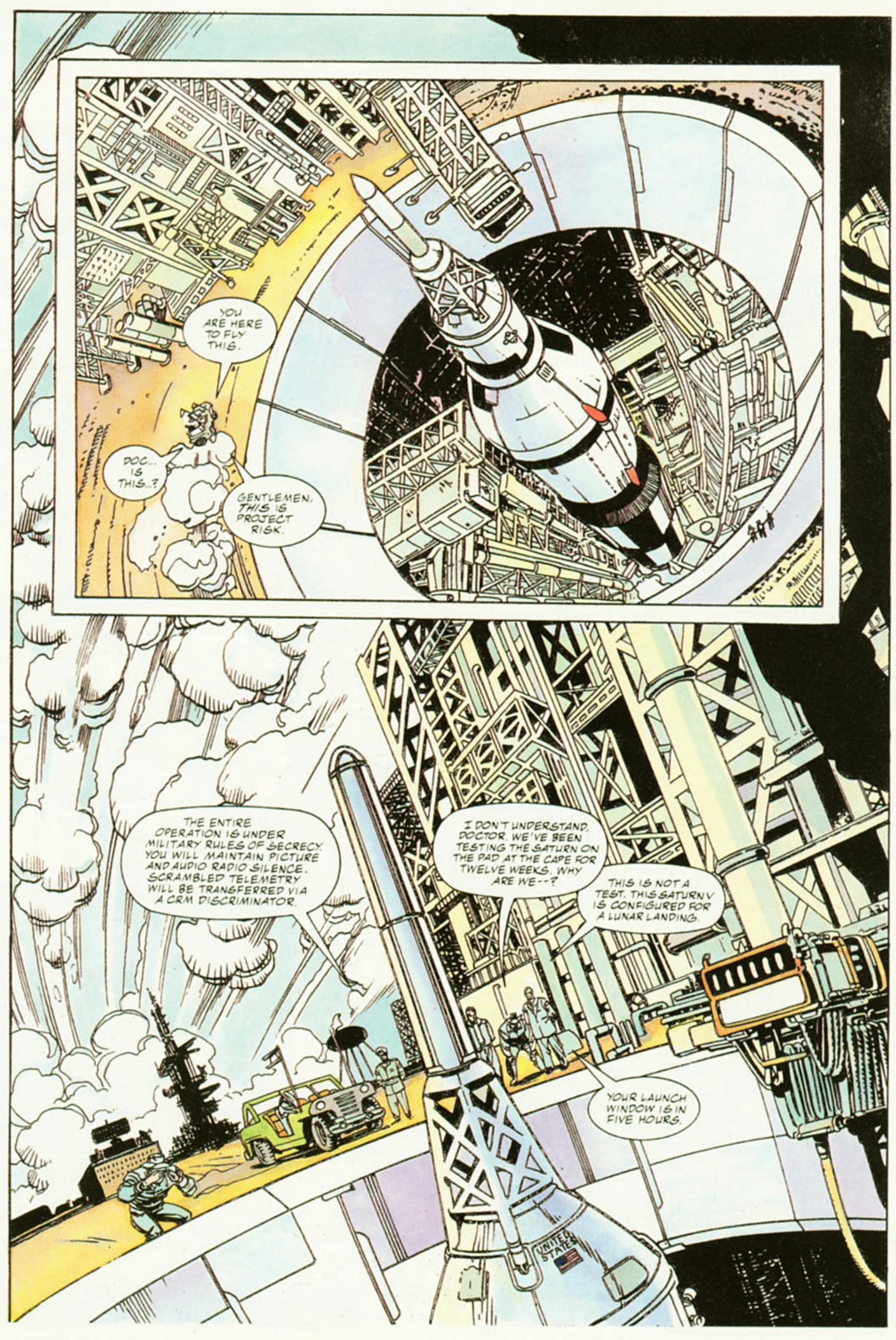
EQUIPMENT, BUT BECAUSE YOU'RE FURTHER ALONG IN THE PROCESS OF

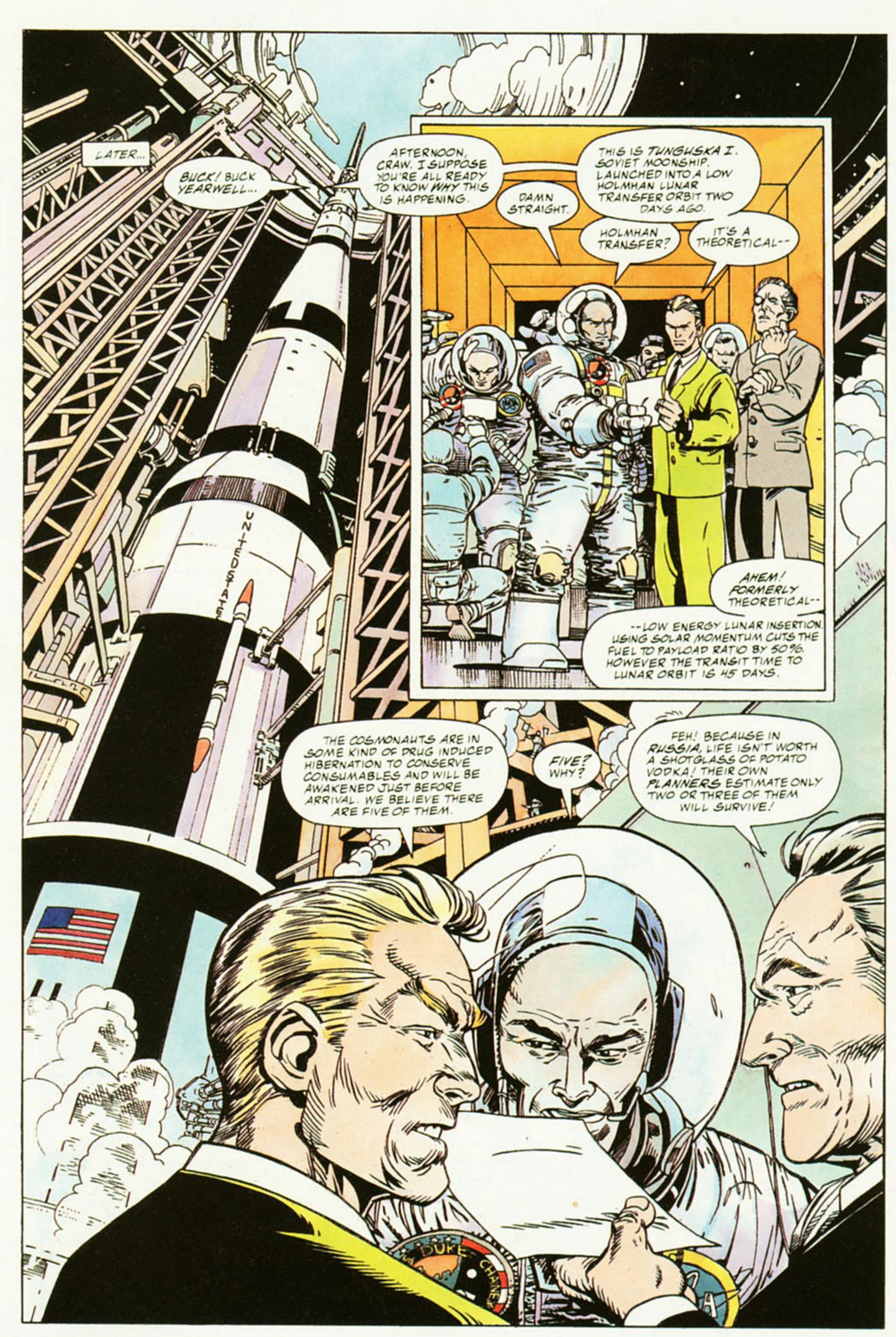
LEARNING TO OPERATE IT THAN

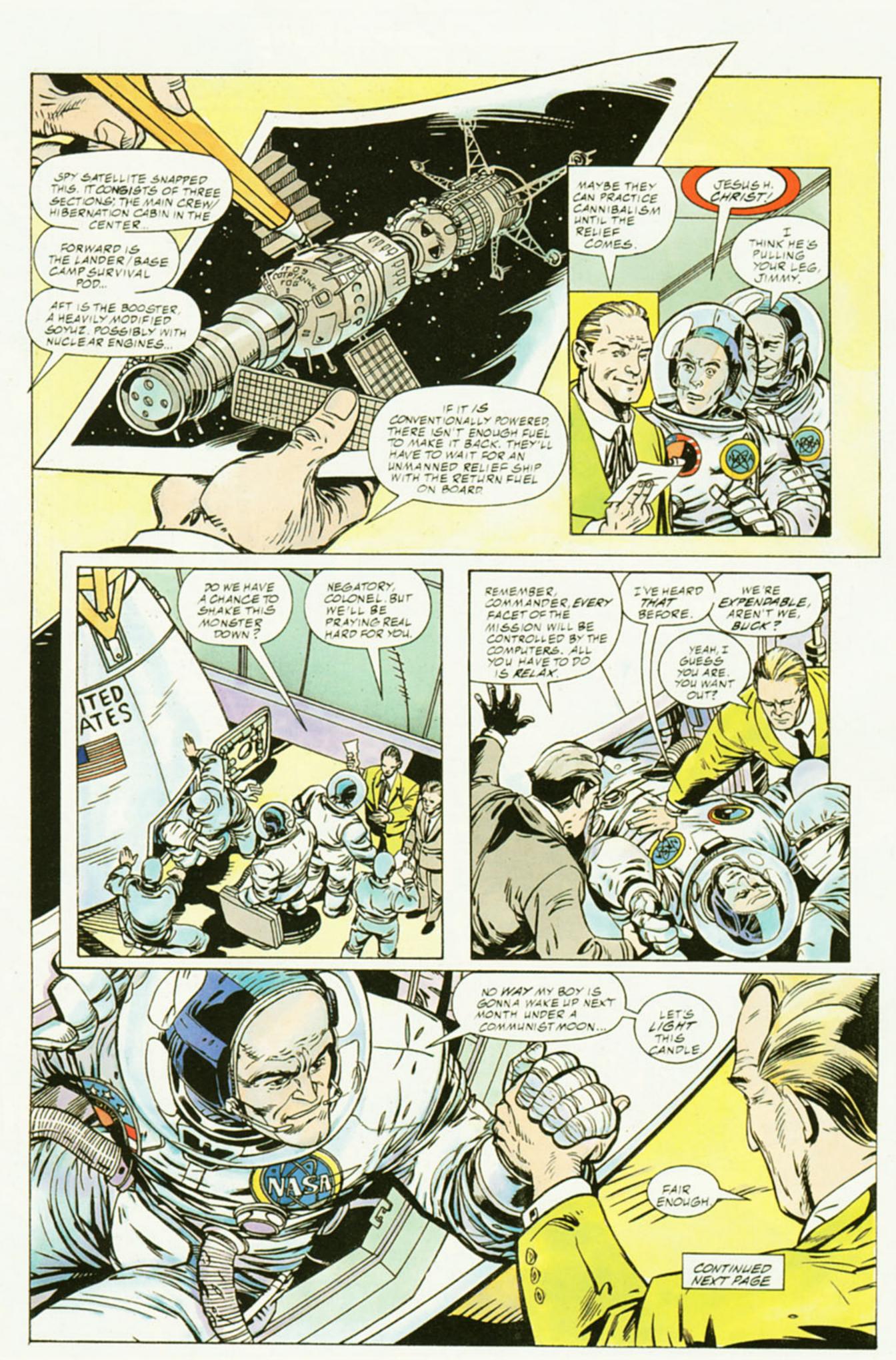
ANYONE ELSE.

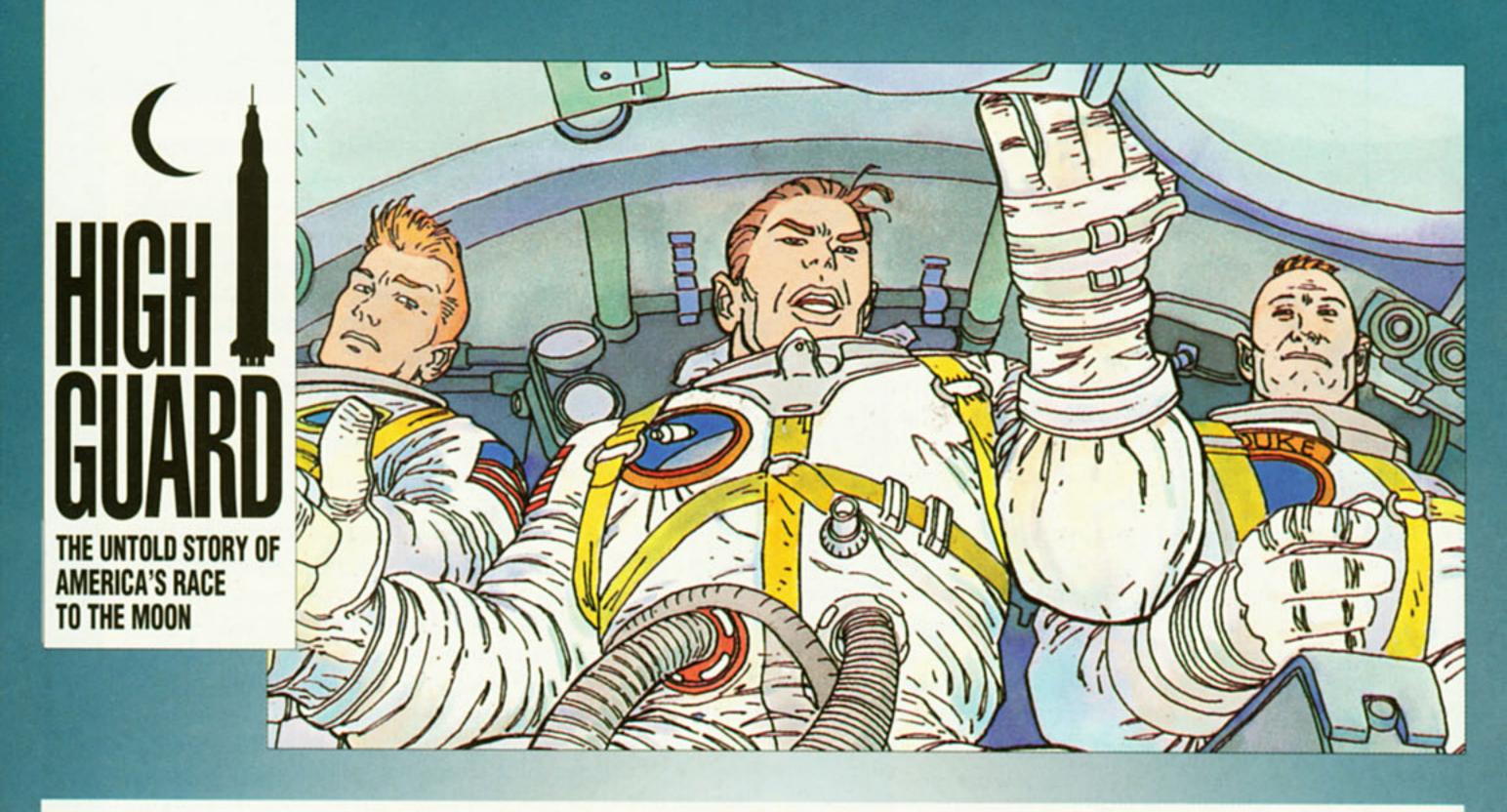
ACTUALLY KNOW HOW TO OPERATE THE

DOCTOR ...









even hydraulic lifts, grinding under the strain of their first and only use, slowly lifted the experimental Saturn V booster and its gantry, all eight and a half million pounds of it, out of the underground silo, like a steel furnace slow extruding a metal rod. The heavy braces around the mouth of the silo locked into place and the Saturn now stood completely above ground and ready for launch. Near the top of the 314 foot rocket, the largest and most powerful ever build by man, was the Apollo 1 Command Module, now nicknamed The Lark. Inside, the three Astronauts, going through their pre-launch checklist at breakneck speed, heard the firm midwestern drawl of Dice Nelson breaking in, "T-Minus four minutes and counting. All personnel

clear gantry. Repeat. All personnel, clear gantry."

Like army ants swarming out of a nest, the roughly 100 civilian and military technicians still working in the gantry and silo rode high speed elevators to ground level, all of them heading for the row of buses parked at the foot of the giant rocket. The plan called for the buses to pull out at tminus two minutes, with whoever was on board and drive like hell across the dry lake bed to what was hoped would be a safe distance (since a Saturn V had never been launched before, this was only an estimate). Anyone who was not on board when the buses pulled out would receive a classified burial, with full military honors, of course.

The Astronauts, inside the fully-pressurized space capsule, were alone now. The commander, Calvin Crawford Duke, looked glumly at his instrument panel. This was a fine way for a whole new space program to start, he thought. In secrecy, in haste, and amid the kind of sloppiness that would have never been tolerated during the days of Mercury.

Unfortunately, the Mercury boys were just about gone now. Buck Yearwell, the former glory flyboy — whose bright claims in answer to any question that if they were looking for the best, 'they had no further to look than yours truly' — had been grounded with a heart condition. He had been the oldest pilot at the start of the program and was now a grandfather. In truth, Yearwell could fly today as well as ever, but his braggadocio, mostly a put-on, had rubbed President Chambers the wrong way, and the Texas born Commanderin-Chief had personally insisted that the only other Texan in the space program be given a desk job.

Of the original seven Mercury astronauts, three had left the program, two had been grounded with medical problems - only 'Craw' Duke and Vincent 'Dice' Nelson, the CapCom (Capsule Commander) for this mission — were truly still active. The new breed of Astronaut, many of whom had flown during the Gemini years, had included Dan Wills, the first American to walk in space and Jimmy Chaney, who would be flying the Lunar module down to the surface with Duke while Wills stayed in orbit in the Command Module. "How's the checklist going?" Duke called over.

"Okay," Chaney answered. This was the first space mission Jimmy Chaney had flown. A former U-2 pilot during the Cuban Missile Crisis, the young aviator had been a last minute substitution on Duke's team for Paul Speraw, a Gemini astronaut, who had been killed in a training accident six months ago. "Cabin pressure relief valves open."

The voice of CapCom came through the console in response. "Check. How's your direct O2, Dan?

"Open and A-OK, Dice," Wills responded. The massive strong man, nearly the same age as the two Mercury vets but from the second group of nine who had flown for the first time during Gemini, Dan Wills was practicing opening the main hatch. He was the only man in the program strong enough to do it all by himself, and although there was no plan to do a spacewalk, one never knew in a mission like this one what emergency was going to spring up.

"Too bad," Duke asked, feeling the pack of cigarettes he had sneaked on board inside his flight suit, "we couldn't stretch our legs one more time."

Wills laughed. "To quote the good doctor, 'Der Astronauts vill not leave der capsule for any reason'."

Duke turned to the smiling giant, an unembarrassed patriot who had posed for his official picture wearing a flag draped over his chest, and commented, "Well, Dan. If we have to abort after countdown, you can always fire up the escape tower."

The three men all had a laugh at that one. In the six years it was used in both Mercury and Apollo programs, the escape tower had never been fired off with a man on board. Even the designers of the spindly, solid rocket boosters mated to the tip of the Command Module gave it less than a one-in-four chance of successfully performing its function: that of lifting the cone shaped capsule off the top of the Saturn booster and carrying it to a safe distance where the Command Module's triple parachutes could open and bring the capsule to the ground without killing the men inside on impact.

Duke, listening in to the CapCom channel, heard Werner von Ley, the German engineer whose baby the Apollo Program was, nagging Dice Nelson in the back-

ground. Von Ley, normally the most cautious man in the program, had finally been galvanized into action. The Soviet scientist responsible for the Russian Tunguska Moonship which the American team would be racing to the moon, Guenther Helm, had been Von Ley's protege back in their Peenemunde days, building "Vengeance Weapon" rockets for the Nazis. Back in 1939, Guenther had the audacity to lay out before the Fuhrer plans for a Nazi manned moonshot and designs for a massive complex of mirrors to be placed on the lunar surface to rain death rays on the Allies. Had Hitler not been preoccupied with his invasion plans for Russia, the mission might have been approved. When the Allies rolled into Peenemunde, Helm had offered his services to both the Americans and the Russians. In the end choosing the eastern side of the Iron Curtain, where his unusual sexual preferences could be easily satisfied from among the inhabitants of the slave labor camps of Siberia.

In recent years, Helm had been openly critical of Von Ley, saying that the old man should be put out to pasture. This was precisely the *wrong* tack to take with a man like Werner von Ley who was now not only determined to beat his Russian counterpart to the moon, but in so doing to so, embarrass the Soviets so that they would relieve Helm of both his position and his life in retaliation.

"T-minus three minutes and counting. Switching communications to scrambled telemetry."

Nelson's voice cut into the Command Module's audio alone. "Duke, engage your CRM Discriminator. As soon as we're sure we have secure Comlines, we'll show you the door."

"Here's your hat, what's your hurry?" Wills asked.
"Exactly." Duke nodded. "What about our families?"
Buck Yearwell's craggy voice came in over CapCom's
line. He cleared his throat uncomfortably. "They'll be lied

to at first. Then, as soon as we know you're safe in space they'll be quietly briefed."

"I don't want my family worrying about me," Wills said at once.

Nelson shrugged. "I know, Dan. None of us like the idea - but look at it sensibly. What we're doing is dangerous. If you don't make it - who cares how you really died?"

"Maybe I do," Jimmy Chaney responded from across the capsule.

"I'm sorry, boys," Yearwell responded, as he left the capsule. "That's all I can say."

"Yeah," Duke agreed. "We know what the philosophy is now, boys. We're the best and last chance for this country to catch up to the Russians. They're committed and so are we."

"And if we fail?" Jimmy Chaney asked.

"You know the answer to that one, Jim," Duke responded quietly. "They'll blame it on us. Pilot error. Duke and his boys screwed the pooch."

Chaney shook his head, trying not to sound too selfpitying. "I wonder if the Cosmonauts have to put up with shit like this."

"T-Minus two minutes and counting." The voice of CapCom- boomed out from every speaker in the complex. Jimmy Chaney and Dan Wills ran the last of the pre-flight tests. Chaney, who had watched (to his quiet horror) the technicians load and install equipment as recently as an hour ago, looked on nervously as Wills did his series of check-offs. Wills had been a great fighter pilot in Korea and his strength and en-durance during the much publicized first American space walk had been inspiring, but Wills had large fingers and a tendency to carelessness which could quickly result in disaster.

"Relax, little buddy," Wills boomed, seeing his junior partner fretting. "I got just one more to try here. Let's see - secondary evaporators..."

As Chaney saw Wills' hand snake in the wrong direction. He piped up quickly, "Uh, Dan. It's the other one."

"That's right," Wills responded, unconcerned, releasing, just in the nick of time, the switch that would have vented their fuel.

"T-minus one minute and counting..."

Duke looked around the capsule one last time to make sure everything that could move around was securely tied down. He remembered the long hours he'd spent waiting on the pad in his Mercury Capsule. One thought kept popping into his mind then as it did now. Every part of this ship, down to the last switch and dial, was bought from the lowest bidder.

"T-minus thirty seconds and counting. We have transferred to internal power..."

He also thought of his infant son, Jack. As a Test Pilot, Crawford Duke rarely allowed the possibility of death to enter into his thinking. Dead Pilots, the thinking was, were Pilots who *allowed* death to enter their minds. If any one of a million things that could go wrong did go wrong in the next few days, he would never see the young man grow up.

"...And the transfer is satisfactory. T-minus twenty seconds and counting..."

A reporter had once asked Duke about what he thought the reaction of the American public would be if one or more of the Astronauts died on a mission. Duke responded to the question in an even and unemotional tone: "I think people are mature enough to realize how important the program is, and that it's a program that must go on. And if something should happen...why, it happened. The rest of us have to go on living the next day and it's up to us to finish the job."

"Thirteen, twelve, eleven..."

'Go Fever' the Astronauts and technicians called it. The monomaniacal determination to be the first to push the envelope out beyond the edge and haul it back in. The Russians had been the first in space, the first to send up a man. Duke and men like him had taken up the gauntlet and accepted the goal of reaching the moon first. No matter the cost or risk.

"Ten, nine...ignition start..."

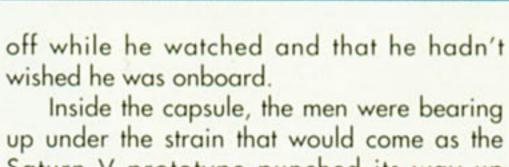
Now, with the Russians headed to the moon, Duke and his crew were the only hope America had left to win. Perhaps by the time Jack was a man it would not make sense to folks that so much time, effort, money and so many lives were spent trying to be the first. But to men like Duke, it was important. Important enough to go up in an untested spacecraft and show them who's number one...

"Three, two, one...LIFT OFF! We have lift off and the clock is running."

A torrent of fire erupted from the Pad. For an interval which seemed endless (although it was only a few seconds), the incandescent flame continued, hitting the cooling water released on the pad and turning it into steam. At zero, the Saturn cluster (which of course the men had dubbed 'The Cluster Fuck') slowly heaved itself off the pad.

The shaking from the mighty rocket could be felt as far away as Las Vegas. National Weather service employees were instructed to give out double-talk messages of "tectonic plate expansion" if anyone called to ask for explanations of the rumbling.

As the spacecraft crept up, blasting the support structures aside as if they were children's toys, a great wall of sound pounded against the building some five miles from the pad, housing Mission Control, making it shake. "Jeeze" Dice Nelson thought to himself. The crew must be feeling like they were in the middle of a tornado. It was, he thought to himself as the rocket slowly arced up into the clear night sky, the first time a spacecraft had taken



up under the strain that would come as the Saturn V prototype punched its way up through dense layers of air. In addition the earth's atmosphere compressed at the nose of the craft, creating a building sonic boom, similar to those of jets or missiles.

"2.5 G's," Wills said at once, as the big Texan kept his eye on the pressure-readers, Chaney started to feel a tingling under his seat. "Three G's!" Wills updated, as a giant hand seemed to push them back into their lounges.

"What's that flutter, Chaney?" Duke asked.

Chaney's heartbeat increased as he tried to puzzle out what exactly was happening. "High frequency vibrations," Chaney forced out. "Probably from the pressure relief valves on the booster."

"Five-G's," Will Said tersely. "First Stage Separation in ...mark. Three. Two. One. First Stage away." As the second stage engines ignited, the three men braced themselves. The G forces raised to Five-five, then six. It was as if an elephant were sitting on their chests.

"C'mon, baby," Chaney thought to himself. "Hold together." As the pressure gradually decreased in the vehicle, the piping and popping noises, which Chaney assumed were caused by the metal flexing, finally stopped. As the vibrations slowly tapered off, Duke kept an eye on the "Eight Ball" - the artificial/horizon indicator that showed the spacecraft's orientation. It showed the craft rolling as the onboard computer steered onto the proper heading.

"Second Stage Separation T-Minus twenty seconds." All of a sudden, the Master Alarm started blinking, and within seconds all the electrical system warning lights came on.

"What the—?"

"Platform's gone," Chaney announced calmly. "We've got the AC busses 1-3 all indicating that fuel is gone."

Duke looked at his eightball and saw it tumbling like the pearl in the famous shampoo commercial. "Shall I break radio silence, Skipper?"

"I think I've got it." Chaney offered, looking at the Signal Condition Monitor which now was reading out an indecipherable stream of numbers instead of the usual telemetry circles. "I'm switching the SCE to Auxiliary."

All of a sudden the second stage fell away and the three men were slammed against their harnesses. "Third stage engines igniting!" Frank Wills sang out. The vibrations started again. The G-meter had now risen to 3 again.



"The orient timer's offline, Jimmy..." Duke forced out, his voice sounding like it was being played back on a record at a speed too slow.

Chaney nodded, and pointed to a row of green lights coming back on. "We've got our busses back, Cap. I'm going to cue the back-up EDS timer."

Later, the third stage engine, having pushed the

moonship into orbit, shut down, what fuel remained in its tanks would be used for one final burn, sending the rocket and its cargo in Trans Lunar Injection, TLI , a orbital path that would carry them to the Moon in less than 72 hours.

Duke nodded and checked the star chart. "Swing me the com-box, Dan."

The big Astronaut swung a small screen with a "chiclet" style keyboard, about the size of fat paperback book. It had two rows of LED's to display text messages sent back and forth between the Command Module and the Ground along with the scrambled telemetry. With audio and video radio silence in effect, this was the only means of communicating with the ground. The screen read: "LARK - CLEARED FOR TLI - READY?"

Duke keyed in his response and grunted "I guess I'd better be, huh?"

All right, gentlemen," Duke commented, "Remember, you volunteered for this thing."

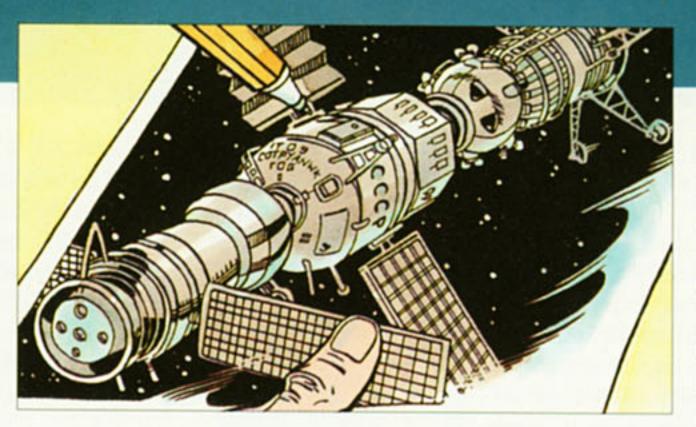
In the briefing room behind the hastily-put-together mission control, Alonzo Flagg, using a pull-down briefing map he'd borrowed from the nearby Area 51 facility, pointed to some pictures which had been neatly taped onto a large white screen. Near each picture was a paragraph of text written clearly in large, neat, block letters.

The briefing was for the military and security men in the complex, not for the civilian technicians. Specifically, the briefing was for the purpose of familiarizing the

military pilots of Red Hat, the Air Force Intercept

Squadron stationed at the base and the handful of National Security Agency operatives (of the kind generally used for assassination and intimidation—it was the NSA and not

the CIA as often alleged —who had disposed of Jonas



Chambers' predecessor) assigned to this mission, and Bert Yearwell, who would command the backup crew. This would become necessary if Apollo 1 was not successful and there was still enough time to send up another spaceship to beat the Russians to the moon.

"Here's some information on the Tunguska crew," Flagg began, referring to the competing Soviet craft. "I'm hoping they don't come back, but we've got to proceed on the assumption that they could abort and parachute down — 'accidentally' — landing on United States soil and causing who knows how much damage. There's also the possibility, Colonel Gorman, that the bogies will turn one or more of their 'weather' satellites into killers, perhaps using them to attack our planes."

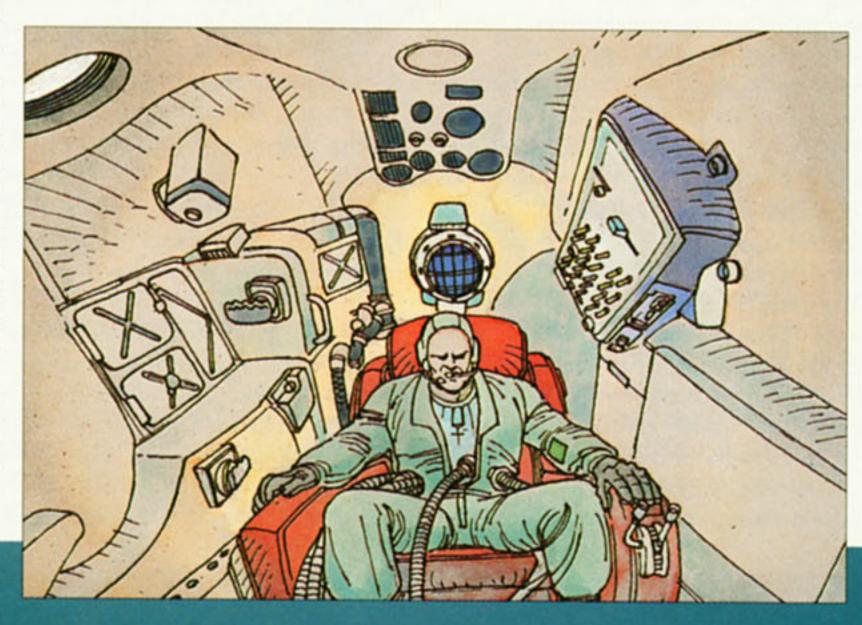
Colonel Eugene Gorman, in charge of the Red Hat Squadron, set his his jaw and grimly determined that the first time something like that happened, that the goddamn Soviet ambassador in his goddamn Soviet embassy would be picking the shrapnel of a goddamn Minute Man missile out of his teeth. And if they wanted to start a shooting war, well goddamn it, Red Hat and the rest of the U S of

A military were ready for them!

"Finally," Flagg concluded, "there's the possibility that they will make it to the moon and find some way to stay there. In that case, we'll have to send someone up to terminate them with extreme prejudice." Lowell Shipley, a large, block of granite and a fine NSA agent, nodded grimly. After years of killing assassination witnesses and anti-war protesters, it would be a pleasure to actually turn his killing skills to the pursuit of actual bad guys — especially if included in the package was a free trip to outer space.

Flagg then directed his wooden pointer to the first picture, depicting a craggy handsome, lean-faced man with straw-colored hair about forty years old. "This is Vladimir Krachev, The Commander, one of the origi-

nal cosmonauts of the 'Twenty Group'. He was the fourth Soviet to solo in space, where he was forced to abort early because of space sickness. They grounded him for a while - then he got lucky. They put him in charge of one of the middle Vostok flights when the prime cosmonaut developed a













hemorrhage during a centrifuge run. He's tough. A twice-decorated fighter pilot and a man who knows that to fail twice in the Soviet Union is a one-way ticket to a cold place. He is rumored to be fairly fluent in English, French and German, although that is unconfirmed."

Flagg then pointed to the next picture, a man with short, fiery red hair and huge eyebrows. His face was calicoed with patches of eczema, indicating a life of hard drinking. His eyes, even in the black and white photo, seemed bloodshot.

"...This man is Andrian Soloveya, a mean, crazy drunk. Absolutely fearless, even when sober, and a man who's flown everything from helicopters to rocket planes. The forty-five days or so he'll be in hibernation will probably be the longest he's been without a drink since he was old enough to pull the cork out of a vodka bottle. He's dangerous, a killer, deadly with his bare hands, absolutely ruthless. During his days attached to the KGB, it was said Soloveya always found some excuse to kill someone. Even on routine investigatory cases. He's also unpredictable. I doubt he has any friends on the crew, and if I were along, I wouldn't trust this bastard as far as I could throw him."

Flagg then pointed to a healthy-looking fellow with slicked back dark hair like Valentino, who looked like one of the Kirov Ballet who had defected to the United States. "This fellow is Mstislav Kristianovitch. A distant relative of the late Josef Stalin, a handsome stud who works directly for the Politboro. We assume he's KGB trained and that he's Moscow's insurance policy that everyone else on this mission does what he's supposed to do. Mstislav is almost certainly armed."

Flagg then pointed to a picture of a sloe-eyed woman, whose petite, heart-shaped Slavic-featured face was closely framed by jet black, wavy hair. She definitely carried some muscle on her otherwise shapely limbs. "This is Valentina Titov, a geologist, and former combat medic in the Red Air Force. There is an unconfirmed report that she was one of the cosmonauts in one of the Voskhod scientific flights, investigating the effect of zero-G on human sexual function. She speaks some English and some Japanese."

Flagg then brought the pointer down to the last man: a thin, balding, sad-faced Finn with a toolbelt strapped on his waist. "Last but not least, we have Pytr Khronov, a technician. He has served with Commander Krachev before and is probably just an expendable, brought along to keep the machines working smoothly while the others sleep. He's been surgically altered, meaning that one of his lungs has been removed, to survive on a minimum of oxygen during the flight. He's spent the last year living in a mock-up of the Tunguska, and he knows his craft better than any man alive. He may be more valuable to them then we can guess."

Having finished the briefing, Yearwell and Flagg walked back to the Director's Office where the fussy Werner von Ley was arguing with Dice Nelson.

"You have to convince this man," von Ley did not bother trying to remember Crawford Duke's name, one American was the same as another to him, and frankly he had been happier in the days when he was just flying chimpanzees. "To listen to our every order, mit out the usual kvetching and second-guessing. He must understand - virtually every piece of equipment on board is experimental, barely tested, extremely temperamental - und ven the machines are temperamental, the operators must act like a machine. You understand?"

"I understand," Nelson answered non-committally. He knew that Crawford Duke was not likely to be any less abrasive on this run than any other. Indeed, if ever an Astronaut commander had an excuse to be recalcitrant, it would be on this mission.

Flagg ignored the power struggle for the moment and dialed the phone. It was answered on the first ring. "Oval Office, this is Charles Bates."

"Bates, this is Flagg."

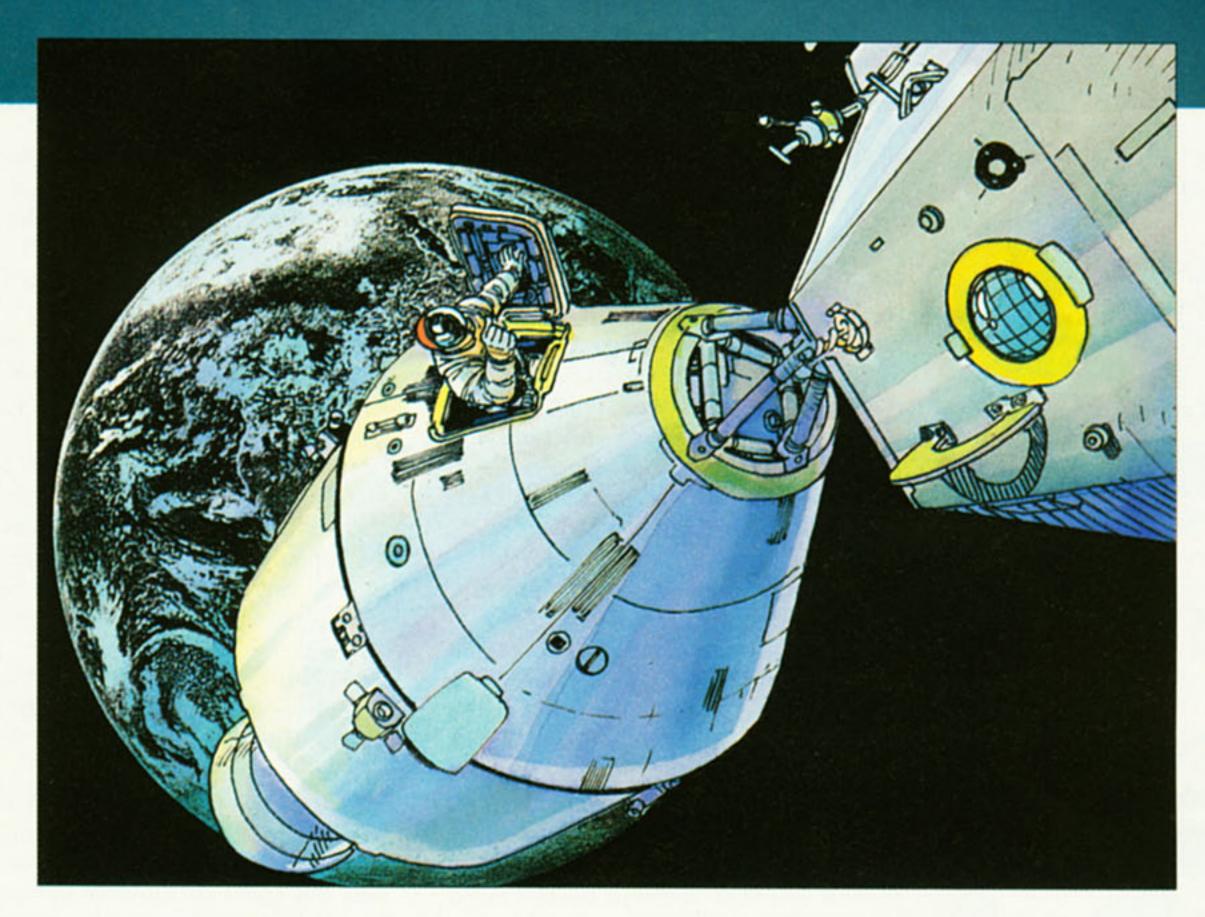
"Yes, Major."

"Tell the President I'm leaving Nevada. One of the supervisors of S-4, Bert Yearwell, will be accompanying me."

"Yes, sir. I'll give him that message."

As Flagg hung up the phone, Nelson looked up at Bert Yearwell. "Going to Washington, Bert?"

"Yeah," Yearwell responded. "I just want to let the President know how we feel about this operation."



"Good luck," Nelson responded.

"We should all be blessed vis a little luck!" the eccentric von Ley shouted as he stormed out of the office.

"We are go for TLI." Wills announced as the third stage of the Saturn V ignited for the second time, giving the craft additional acceleration to escape the earth's gravity. It was known as Trans-Lunar-Injection and it meant that for better or worse, there was no turning back now. Apollo 1 was heading for the moon, some 240, 000 miles and three days away.

Dan Wills compulsively squeezed the Command Module's joystick controller. The title of "Pilot" was more a point of pride with Astronauts than an accurate description of their function. Except for docking maneuvers and the occasional emergency, almost every movement of the ship would be controlled by craft's computers or from the ground telemetry. The margin for error in a craft moving at these speeds toward a target a quarter million miles away was well beyond the reflexes of a human being.

Dan Wills had grown up as a rancher's son amidst the dust storms and cow farts of the Texas panhandle. His father was a Fundamentalist Baptist who believed in the literal truth of the Bible. His mother, a woman of nature, was a lady with a great love for animals. She did not much approve of her husband's line of work, which she found cruel. Instead, she encouraged young Dan's interest in math and science, which irked Dan's father the moment the science went past what was laid out in Deuteronomy.

Dan had joined the Navy the day he had graduated from high school and had let them put him through school through their ROTC program. He had volunteered, all right, but it was not as if he'd ever had much of a choice.

Jimmy Chaney was encouraged to join the service by

his older brother who had inherited the family candy store. Roland Chaney had pointed out that Jimmy would make a lot more money as a pilot in the Air Force than he ever would knocking around his home town of Providence, Rhode island. After a stint as a U-2 pilot, whose service included a vital but not publicly known role in the Cuban Missile Crisis, Chaney had been recruited for astronaut duty without having any real affection or enthusiasm for it.

Crawford Duke, on the other hand, had gratefully joined the Marine Corps, when he found out that he had knocked up his high school sweetheart. Duke had fought in Korea and was probably one of the few pilots in the program who actually felt he was a shirker for taking Astronaut duty, an assignment where he would only have to risk life and limb every couple of months or years instead of every day, like the men he had served with in the war.

Duke was worried. Everything seemed to be going smoothly. Too smoothly for a flight with this much experimental equipment. Once they had passed though Trans-Lunar-Injection, they disconnected the Command Module from the third stage. The three panels in the top of the third stage now swung apart to reveal the Lunar Excursion Module or LEM, which the crew had decided to call it the Mayflower. As Wills jockeyed the ship into position to dock the command module with the LEM, Duke checked the mission clock. So far so good. Letting the two ships touch gently, Duke listened for the familiar ripple-bang you get when the twelve docking latches snapped shut. He didn't hear the sound and a moment later they had drifted apart.

"Damn," Duke thought to himself. He should have known better than to ask for trouble from the dark, humorless gods that controlled the lives of space travellers. "Dan, see what's wrong with the docking mechanism."

Wills, sitting in the center seat, slightly behind the other two men, released himself from his harness and floated to his feet. As he unhitched, Wills smiled broadly. This weightless business wasn't half-bad. It had been a while since his last mission and he had forgotten the way his spine stretched out in space, taking some pressure of his neck and lower back. Then, reaching up to the sill of the hatch window, he pulled himself up in a chin-up. "Looks like there might be some debris on her, Cap," he responded.

Duke cursed softly. "All right, damn me. Jimmy, take over the stick, hold her steady."

"Yes, sir."

"You'll need your helmets, boys."

Wills nodded, guessing what his Commander was fixing to do.

"Get your gloves and top hat on, Dan," Duke instructed.

Wills handed Duke his helmet.

"Should we break radio silence, sir?" Channey asked.

"Negative." Duke responded, "Danny, we're gonna need that top hatch open." Wills nodded and moved to get a carbon rod from the tool box.

As he tugged on his gloves, Duke looked around to see if there was anything he needed to secure before depressurizing the cabin. "Skipper," Jimmy interrupted him.

"Yeah?"

"What if we fire the thrusters to hold the command module against the LEM? Then flip the switch to retract the docking probe out of the way. If the two craft are lined up properly, the contact might just trigger the docking latches."

"Try it, Jim. Dan finish your prep for EVA in case it doesn't work."

Jim Chaney did try. The Command Module jolted forward and the three astronauts felt it bump into the LEM and rebound back away from it just as quickly. "No go, Skipper." Jimmy then turned to Dan Wills, now grunting and groaning above him. "You need help up there, Dan?"

"Nah. Just... tell you what. Lean forward and let me step against your back. I need just a little more leverage..."

While his crew made their adjustments, Craw Duke tapped out a coded message to Dice Nelson on the ground. "ATTEMPTING MANUAL DOCKING EVA", it read.

Back in Mission Control in Nevada, Dice Nelson took a moment before speaking to the clearly livid Werner von Ley. "I think he's going outside to see if he can fix whatever's blocking the docking clamp. Fiddle with the probe or..."

Von Ley was practically foaming at the mouth. "Vot are they doing? Why von't they answer?"

"They've depressurized the cabin," Nelson pointed out on the capsule monitor lights.

"I think he's going to try pulling the two ships together by hand."

"They've got a hardlock," a technician named Jeno, confirmed, pointing to the indicator panel in front of them which had gone from white to a pattern of stripes.

At the same time, back in the Command Module, a smiling Chaney showed his commander his indicator, which of course showed the same thing.

"Close her up," Duke then ordered Wills, while simultaneously pulling on one of the big Astronaut's tree trunk legs. "We've got a barberpole."

Later, with their helmets back off and Dan Wills snoring lustily on his couch (working in an unpressurized cabin was a terrific exertion - equivalent to an EVA - although not as rigorous as the one the big Texan had undertaken



eight months before when he had lost sixteen pounds during the exercise), Jimmy Chaney took a break to look back out the rear window. All of a sudden, as the craft rolled slightly, Chaney saw something that almost took his breath away.

The Earth.

'Wow, that's pretty,' he thought to himself as the radiant blue and white orb emerged from the black sky behind them. It was, Chaney noted, the only spot of color in the sky.

"Better get some sleep, Jim," a voice then said quietly. Chaney half-turned and saw that his commander was standing next to him.

"Think we'll ever get back?" he asked the weary Marine.

"Someday," Duke answered. "Someday maybe when all the crap we're concerned about now doesn't matter any more."

Two and one-half nights later, giving up after an hour or two or restless sleep, Jimmy Chaney got up and went back over to his seat at the Command Module. He knew that for the time being, Isaac Newton was doing most of the driving, and that strict radio silence was being enforced because of the very real possibility that the Russians could overhear them. He could, however, make sure the onboard Navigation computer was working correctly. Having determined the command module's position using the star charts and his sextant, Chaney entered the coordinates and noted with approval that the sextant immediately swung to the right spot to determine the neat reading. It had even moved far enough to compensate for the spacecraft's swift forward motion.

"How are we doing?" a voice asked him.

Chaney turned to see Craw Duke, rubbing his face and chewing a piece of nicotine gum. "Pretty good, Skipper. We're about ready to drop into lunar orbit."

"Good," Duke popped another piece of nicotine gum, chewed vigorously (this was not the week he'd planned to give up cigarettes) and sat down beside his pilot. "Any sign of the bad guys?"

"No, sir." "Good."

Six hours later, the Command Module went around the dark side of the moon and fired its main engine to slow them down into Lunar orbit. For the first time, they were truly all alone in the darkness. As Jimmy Chaney checked the lunar map for the coordinates of the Sinus Medii, the preferred landing site, Duke prepared to enter the LEM.

Some thirty minutes later, as they swung around the dark side, Craw Duke opened the command module's forward hatch and removed the docking mechanism. This opened up the tunnel between the two craft. Pushing off the command module's floor and floating through the tunnel was like entering another world.

"Have a good time while we're gone, Dan," Jim Chaney called back to the pilot, as he opened the

Mayflower's hatch.

Duke somers

Duke somersaulted into the tiny cabin and looked at the insides of the strange machine which by now he had come to know as well as anyone. The LEM looked like the inside of a submarine, generally. There were two sets of hand controllers at waist height, one for each man and two small triangular observation windows on either side of the square main instrument panel. There was another smaller, rectangular rendezvous window in the ceiling on the commander's side. The sidewalls were covered with more panels and circuit breakers, bundles of wiring and all kinds of plumbing all visible because covering them would have added more weight.

Behind where Duke would lean (there were no seats in the lander) there was a small ledge which one could lean on if one had to remove the can-shaped cover for

the lander's ascent engine.

With no need for aerodynamic sleekness the lunar module was filled with strange angles and box shapes. Outside with its landing legs and its antennae jutting at all angles, the LEM looked like a strange sort of flying beetle.

The skin of the lander was thin, in some places little more than mylar wrapping stretched over a frame like a kite. When the cabin was pressurized, the front hatch bulged slightly and a thin stream of fiberglass leaked out of an insulator near the overhead light panel, making it look like it was snowing inside.

"Welcome to our new home, Jimmy," Duke joked.
"Guess it's a fixer-upper. Oh well." He then burst into something resembling song. "Fly me to the moon. Let me

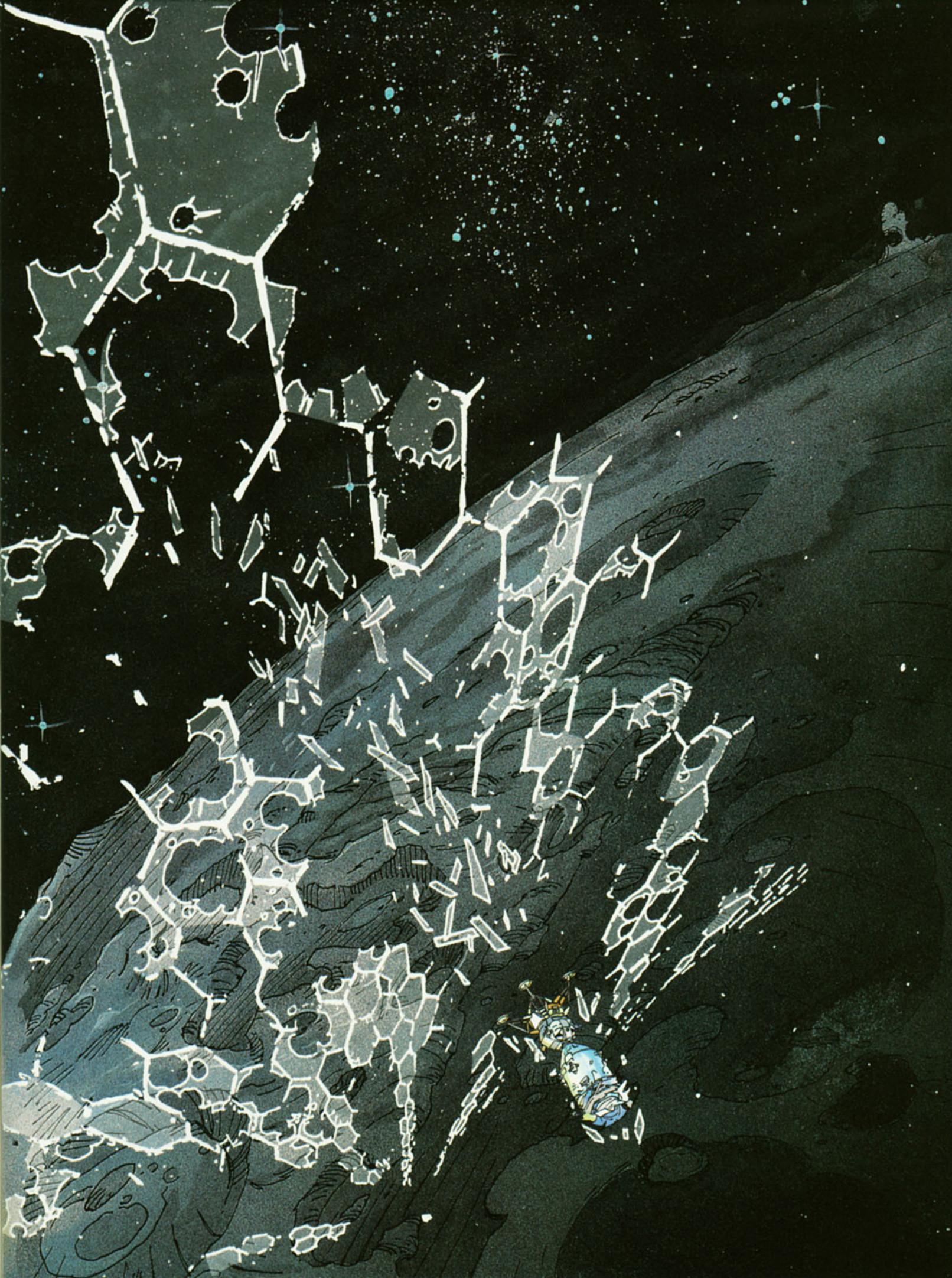
swing upon the stars..."

"Standing by for roll," Wills then informed them. The Command Module and LEM would now be rotated 180 degrees so that the LEM'S main engine would be facing in the direction they were travelling, enabling it to slow the LEM for landing.

Inside the LEM, Jim Chaney looked up for a split second and saw past the Command Module. Coming out of the Sinus Medii, was a giant object, reflecting the sunlight, made of some sort of crystal, like a sloped wall of glass panels, suspended in the sky in front of them. Supported on a lattice work of more glass and metal, extending across the horizon. Though ruined and missing in many places, it loomed up some seventy miles above the Lunar surface... directly in their path.

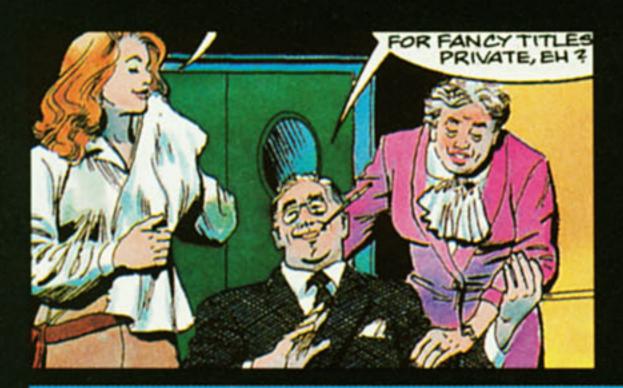
"Great Mother of God..." Chaney managed to choke out just before the bottom of the Command Module

smashed into the wall of crystal glass...





EPISODE VI BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE ROME



OUR STORY THUS FAR:

1939: The iron fist of Hitler's fascism has already engulfed most of Europe. Britain stands alone and though America is still officially neutral, First Lady ELEANOR ROOSEVELT and her husband, president-for-life FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT are lending a hand against the Axis in the form of America's newest secret weapon...



DOCTOR JOANNA DARE, a plucky lady scientist whose secret formula transforms her into a woman of steel whenever she climaxes! Dare and her trusty sidekick, two-fisted Archeologist-Adventurer PAT PIKE, have come to darkest Africa searching for the famed equity feminist and heroic aviatrix, Amelia Earhart...



Sent to Africa to locate the famed aviatrix, AMELIA EARHART. Once there, Dare discovered a lost ancient Roman city, whose ruler, the legendary Prestor John, has taken Earhart (who now suffers from amnesia) for his queen. Believing that his beloved Queen had betrayed him when he caught her in the sack with Joanna (activating Joanna's powers of course), Prestor John sentenced all three to the Arena of Death...



While Dare was fighting for her life against a Tyrannosaurus Rex, Nova Roma was attacked by Axis armies under the command of Dare's nemesis, the fearsome feminazi, AGENT D on a mission for Der Führer himself to recover Prestor John's mystical SPEAR OF DESTINY, the weapon proported to have pierced Christ on the Cross. It is said that the army that carries the Spear cannot be defeated. With Joanna, who'd joined forces with the Romans against the Nazis seemingly killed, Prestor John has been forced to surrender...











AMELIA EARHART, IS

TARRY. WE SEE YOU HAVE A WIRELESS









YOU ESPECIALLY, MY DEAR WIFE. KNOW THAT IF THE OUTSIDE WORLD IS NOT TO YOUR LIKING, MY CITY AND MY HEART WILL ALWAYS HOLD A PLACE FOR YOU.

AND WHAT ABOUT YOUR PLACE IN OUR WORLD, YOUR HIGHNESS. THE OUTSIDE WORLD IS GEARING UP FOR A WAR AGAINST TYRANNY, PRESTOR JOHN OHR SIDE COULD USE SOMEONE WITH THE SORT OF POWER YOU WIELD.

EVEN IF YOU COULD TEMPT ME INTO CARING ABOUT THE SORDID AFFAIRS OF A WORLD I FORESWORE MANY YEARS AGO, IT WOULD BE QUITE USELESS, I'M AFRAID.

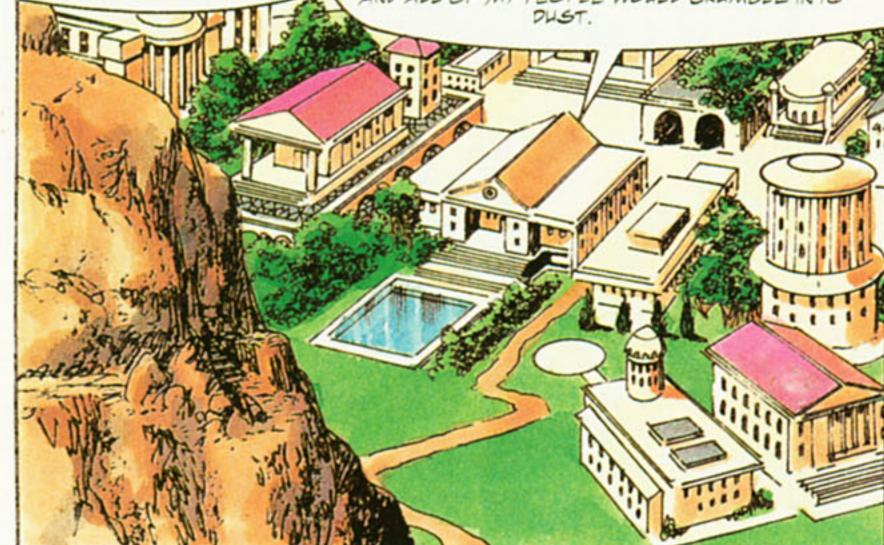






OUTSIDE OF THIS VALLEY I AM POWERLESS. THE SPEAR OF DESTINY IS NOT FOR THE WORLD OF MORTAL MEN.

WHATEVER STRANGE AND WONDROUS PROPERTIES THIS MAGICAL VALLEY OF OURS HAS TO PRESERVE LIFE PRECISELY AS IT IS FROM THE DAWN OF TIME, VANISH WITHIN A DAYS MARCH OF THIS CITADEL. WERE WE TO LEAVE, I AND ALL OF MY PEOPLE WOULD CRUMBLE INTO

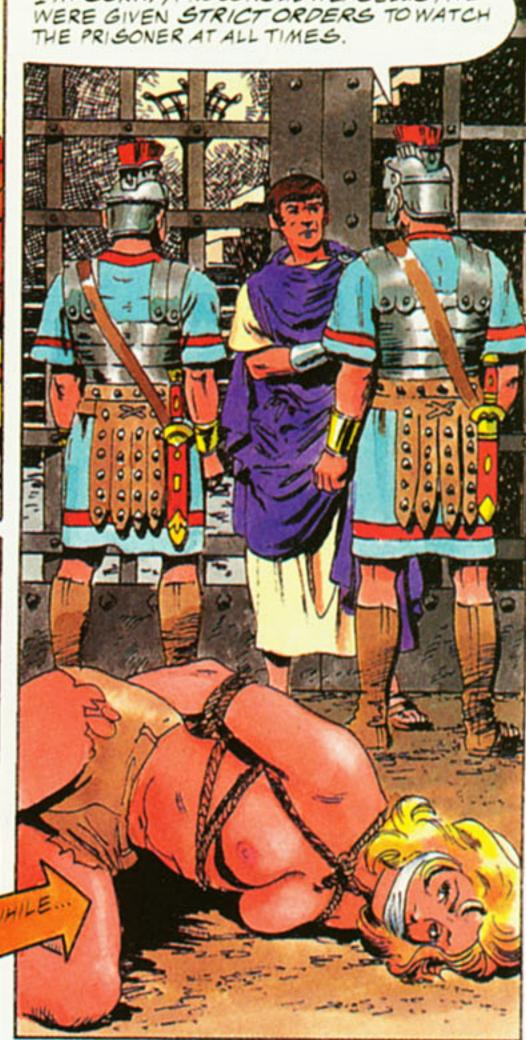


WHAT A RIPPING GOOD YARN THIS WOULD MAKE! TOO BAD I'M NOT A WRITER! PERHAPS I SHOULD TELL IT TO HILTON DOWN AT THE CLUB!









I'M SORRY, PROCONSUL WEASELUS, WE

THERE'S NO NEED FOR CONCERN, CENTHRION!
YOU MEN GO OFF AND ENJOY THE BANQUET!
I WILL KEEP AN EYE ON THE OUTLANDER
BITCH, AND IF SHE TRIES TO ESCAPE...









EPISODE 5: MADAME W'S SCHOOL FOR GIRLS



OUR STORY THUS FAR:

"If you want a picture of the future, imagine a spike-heeled stiletto pump stamping on a human face ... forever!"

The year is 2014, and a secret team of radical, man-hating, lesbian gender feminists has taken over America. The sadistic SUBORNA ROSS the head of the WOLLENSTONE CRAFT **HEALTH-CARE ALLIANCE**, rules this country with an iron fist. Those who refuse to serve end up as mindless sex slaves. In the case of **ROBERTA LINDSEY**, a Wollenstone executive who refused to follow Suborna's orders, an even worse fate awaits...



Roberta had been assigned to Suborna's topsecret "DOUBLE•Y PROJECT," a plan to identify aggressive males in the womb and have their sex changed to female. She refused to follow Suborna's orders and resigned from Wollenstone Craft forever. Roberta escaped Suborna's clutches with the aid of the mysterious MADA W, the queen bee of the underground resistance movement.



After a harrowing (and raunchy) series of adventures, Roberta escaped the Wollenstone Center and located Madame W and her Lipstick Lesbian resistance fighters. Madame W (also known as THE MOSTRESS), always on the look out for double agents, was taking no chances with Roberta. A well placed stun-beam renders our heroine unconscious and, as our story opens, Roberta finds herself in the inner sanctum of the Resistance, little realizing that her trial by fire has just begun...

WRITERS: Caragonne & Thornton ARTIST: Mark Beachum LETTERS: Lopez

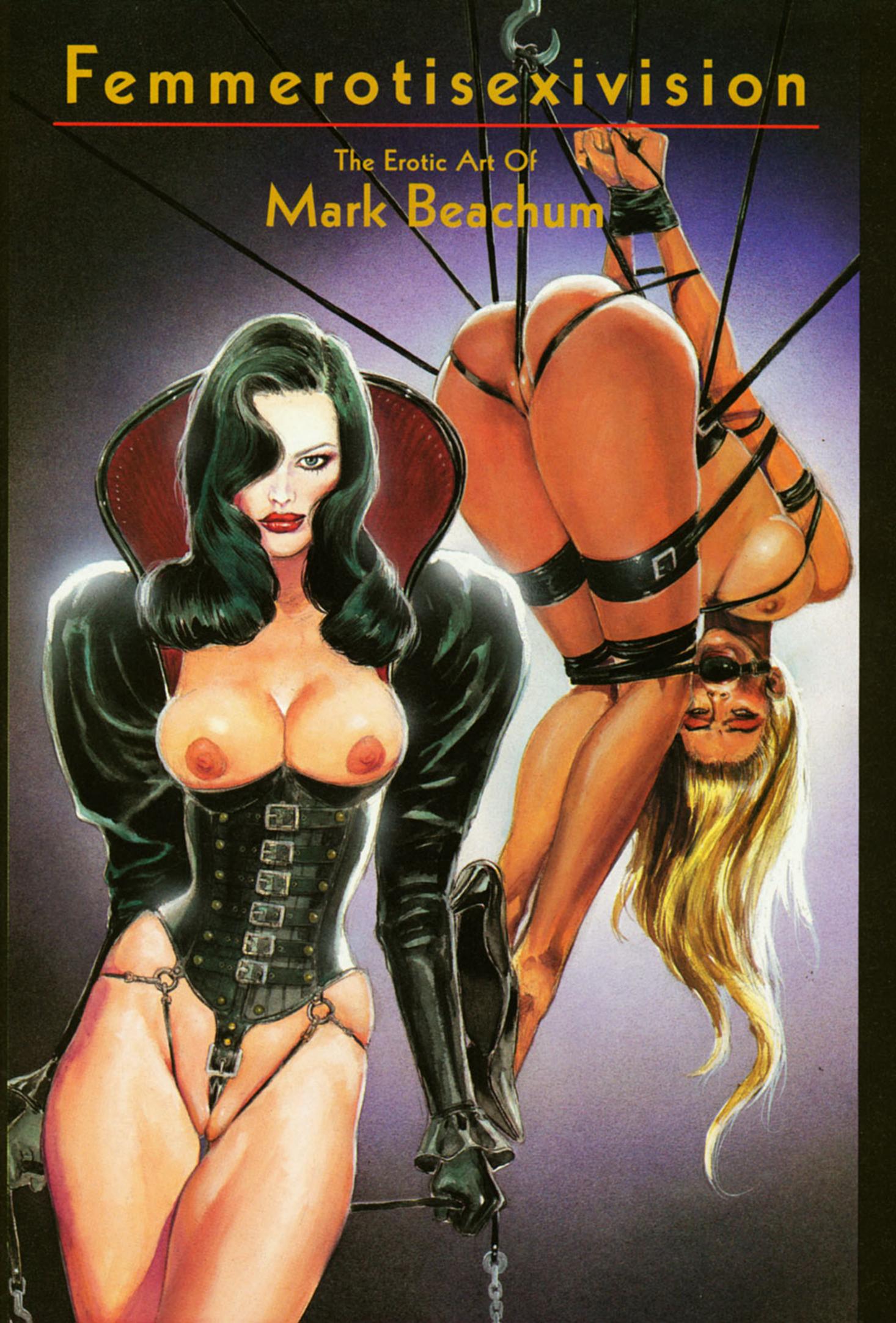
STOP
THE PROCESS FOR
A MOMENT, POCTOR
SAPIEN. BUT MOSTRESS... SHE'S TOLD US NOTHING! I TOLD YOU, OAF! WE ARE NOT INTERROGATING HER. WE'RE DEPROGRAMMING HER. AIEEEEE!! THANK YOU, MOSTRESS, MAY I HAVE ANOTHER ...?



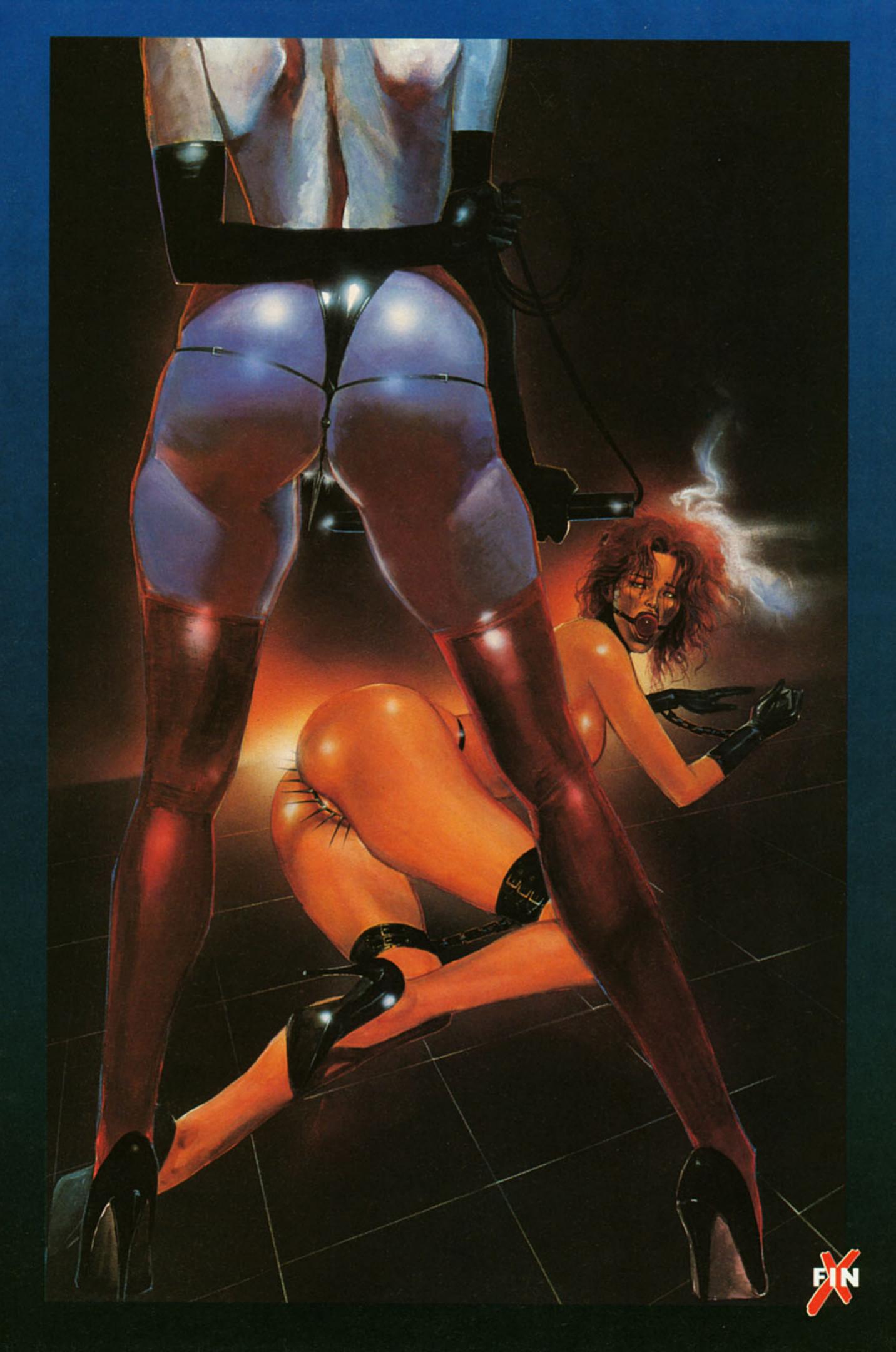


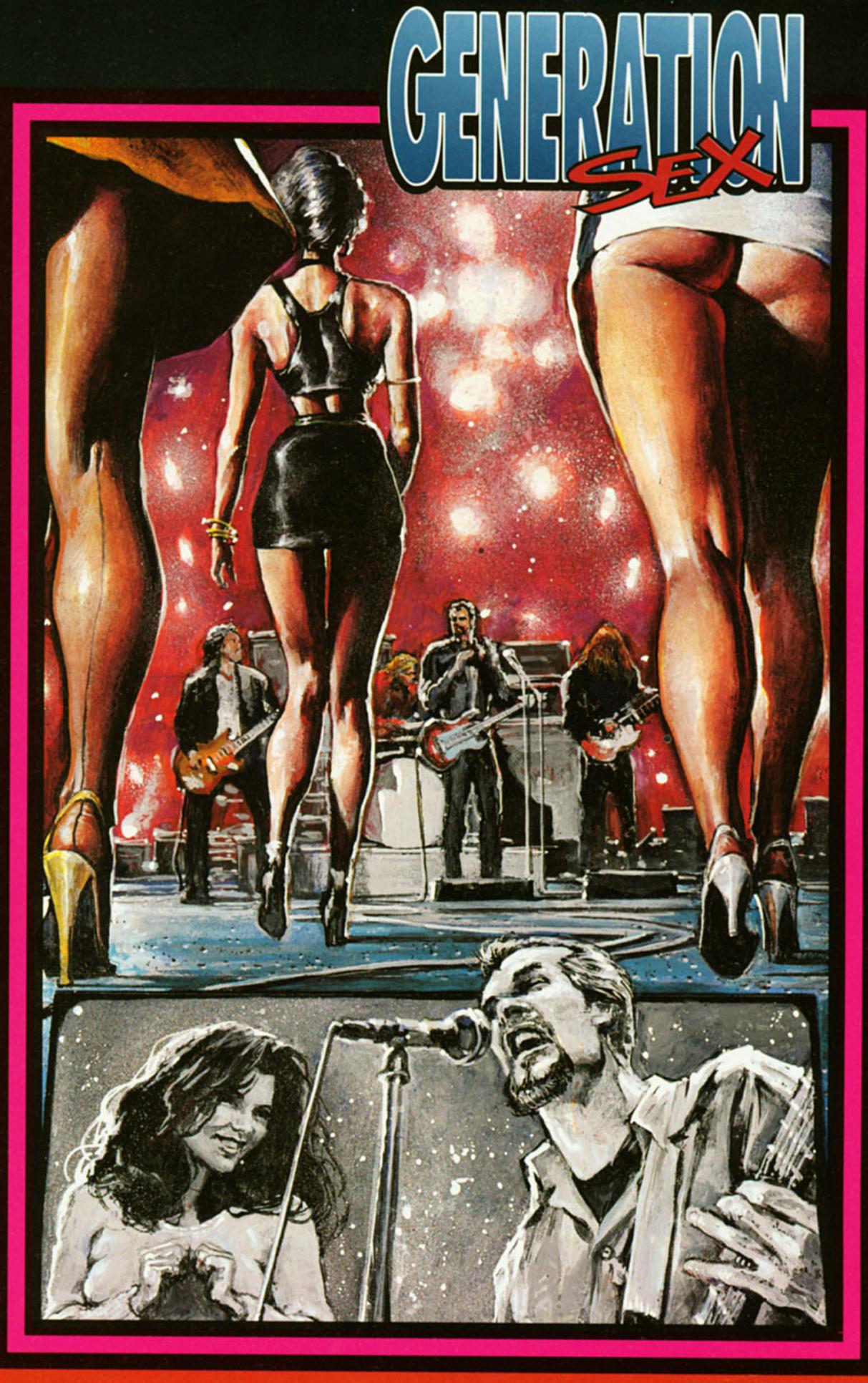












FROM THE AGE THAT BROUGHT YOU LOWERED EXPECTATIONS, IT'S A BITE OF REALITY FOR SLACKERS FROM SEATTLE.

ART BY MARK TEXEIRA





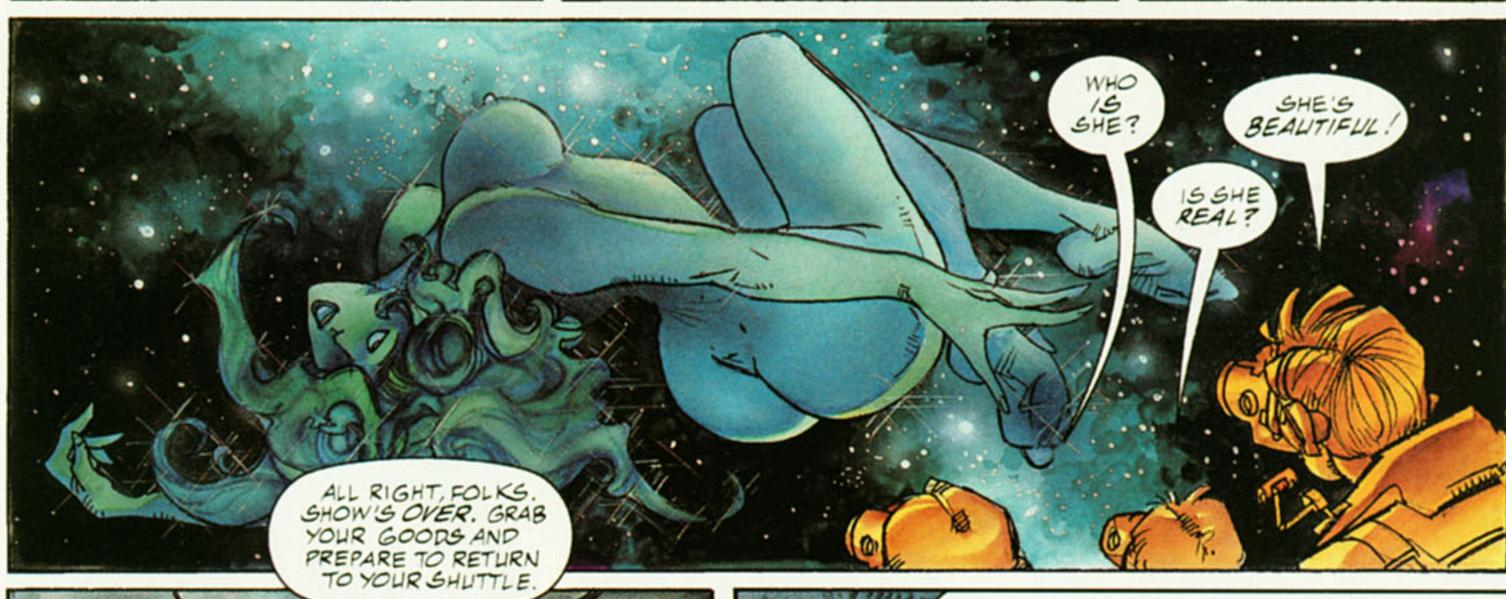


68 PENTHOUSE COMIX













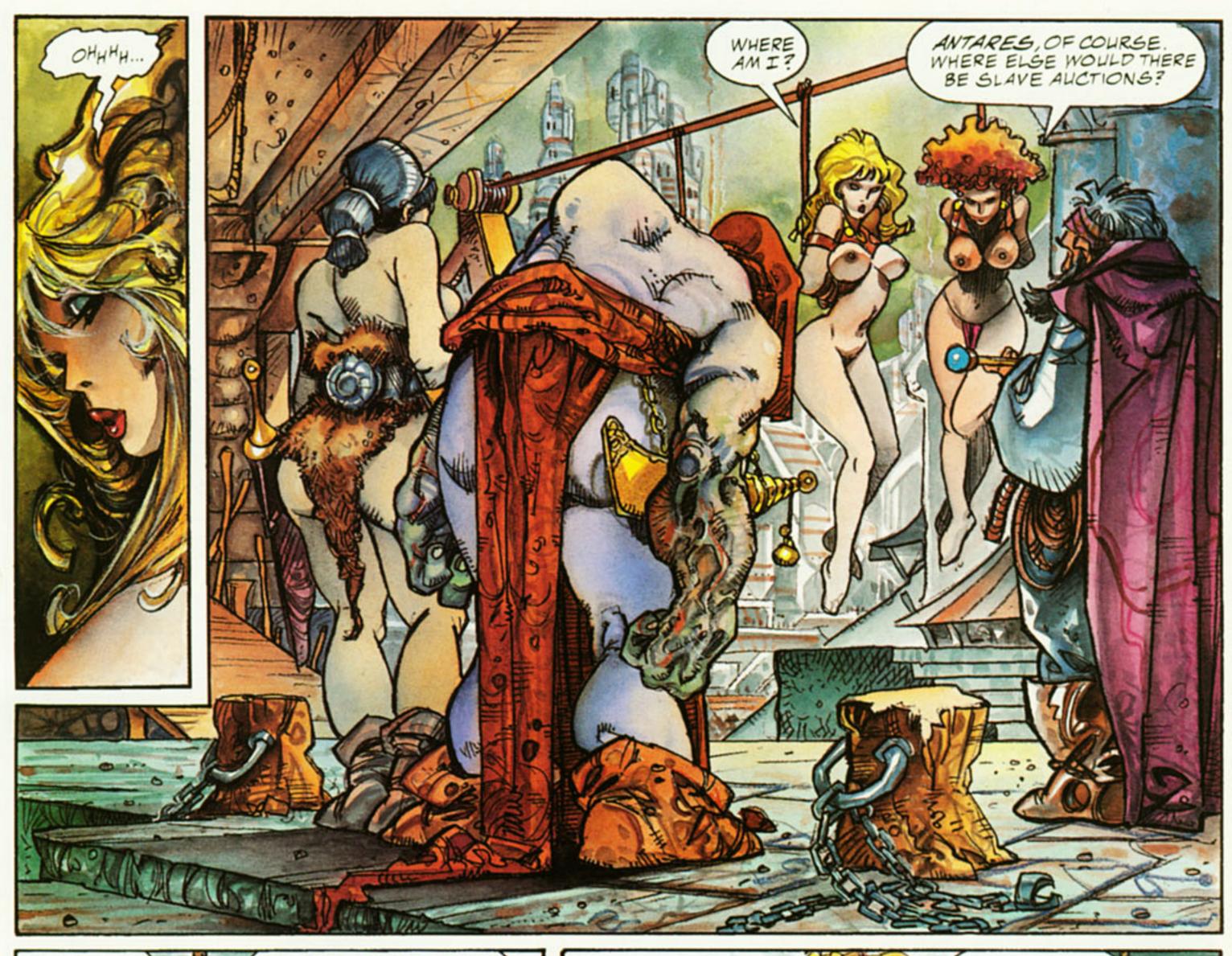




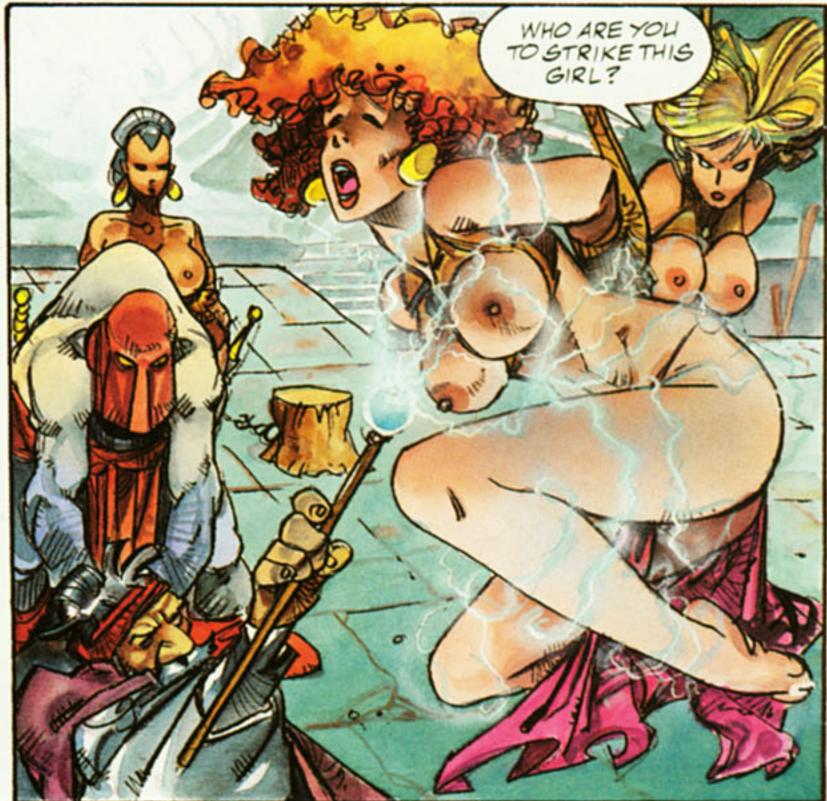










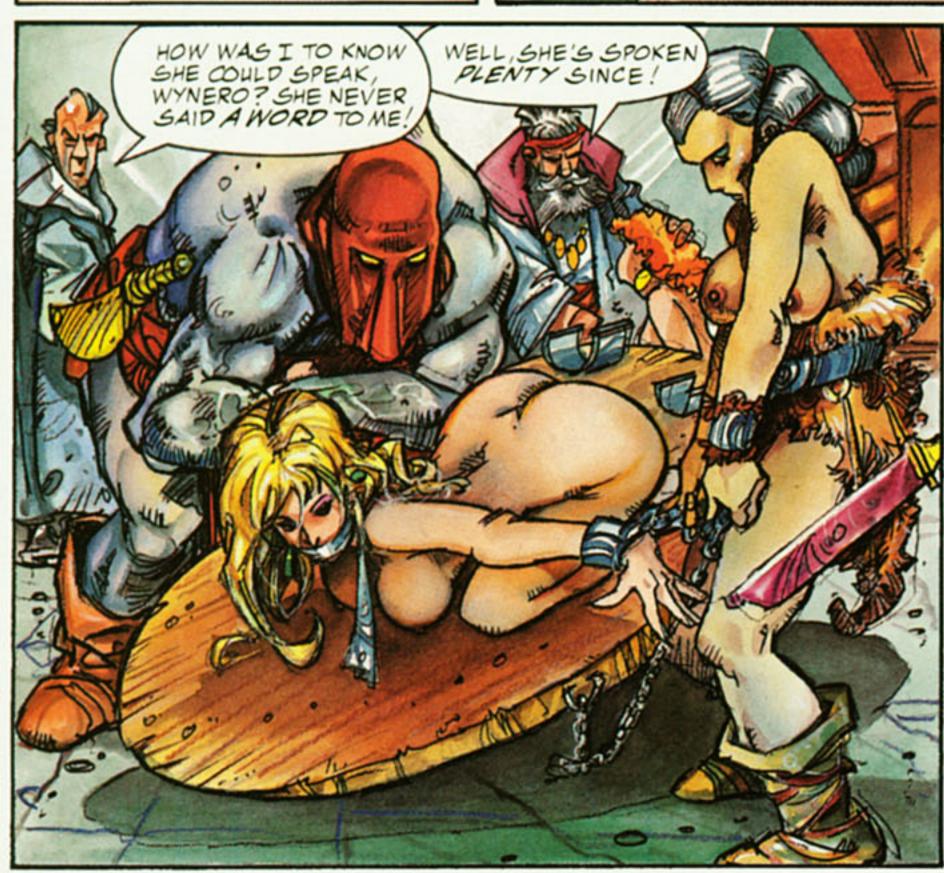




WELL, YES ... I WOULD HOPE A SLAVE WOULD NOT PRESUME TO STRIKE HER MASTER! THE QUESTION IS, WHAT HAS SHE DONE FOR ME? AND THE ANSWER IS, NOTHING!





















































EPISODE 3: RETURN TO SENDER

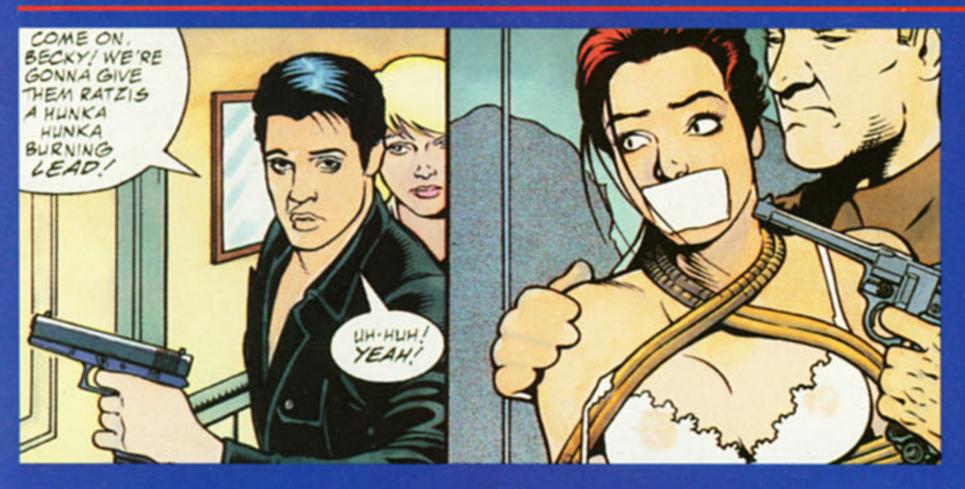


OUR STORY THUS FAR:

REBECCA STORI is the Weekly World Enquirer's ace reporter, who races to every corner of the globe, covering stories far bigger than Wars, disasters, and terrorist bombings. This gorgeous and tough news babe covers the most topical, most sizzling news stories of our time: OJ'S CLONE KILLED NICOLE FOR DATING BIGFOOT! PRINCESS DI ABDUCTED BY ALIENS! MATLOCK'S DOG SOLVES REAL CRIMES! And, as we have seen in our story thus far: ELVIS HELD PRISONER BY SOUTH AMERICAN NAZIS! ...



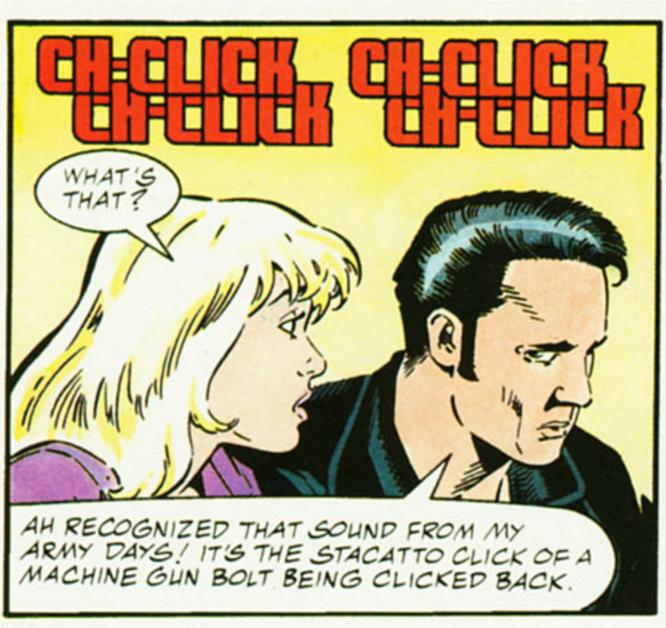
Having travelled to the hidden headquarters of a gang of ruthless wanted war criminals, Becky learned that these villains had discovered a secret formula that grants eternal youth and have used it to open a "health spa" catering to celebrities that have faked their own deaths over the last 30 years. Little did the superstars, like the legendary KING OF ROCK AND HOLL realize that as with the Eagle's Hotel California, "You can check out any time you like, but you can never leave...". Forced to sing in order to stay alive, the King learned from Rebecca the one thing that would make him risk almost certain death in a desperate bid to escape; she told him about Lisa Marie's marriage to Michael Jackson.

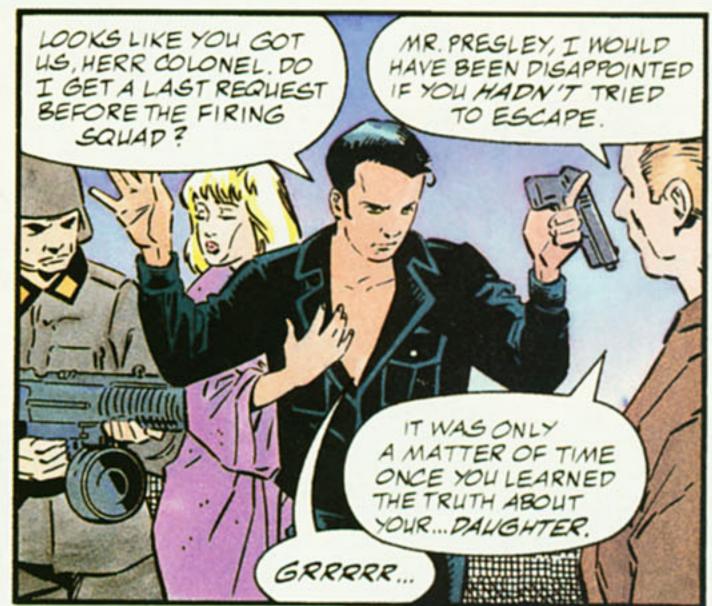


What Becky and the King don't know is that Rebecca's companion, the daredevil lady pilot ALEXIS CASH, has already been captured by the ruthless Nazi Colonel Rudolph to whom she spilled the beans. As we return to the action, the King and Becky are walking into a trap...

WRITERS: Caragonne & Thornton ART: Jeff Johnson INKS: Terry Austin COLORS: Suydam LETTERS: Lopez





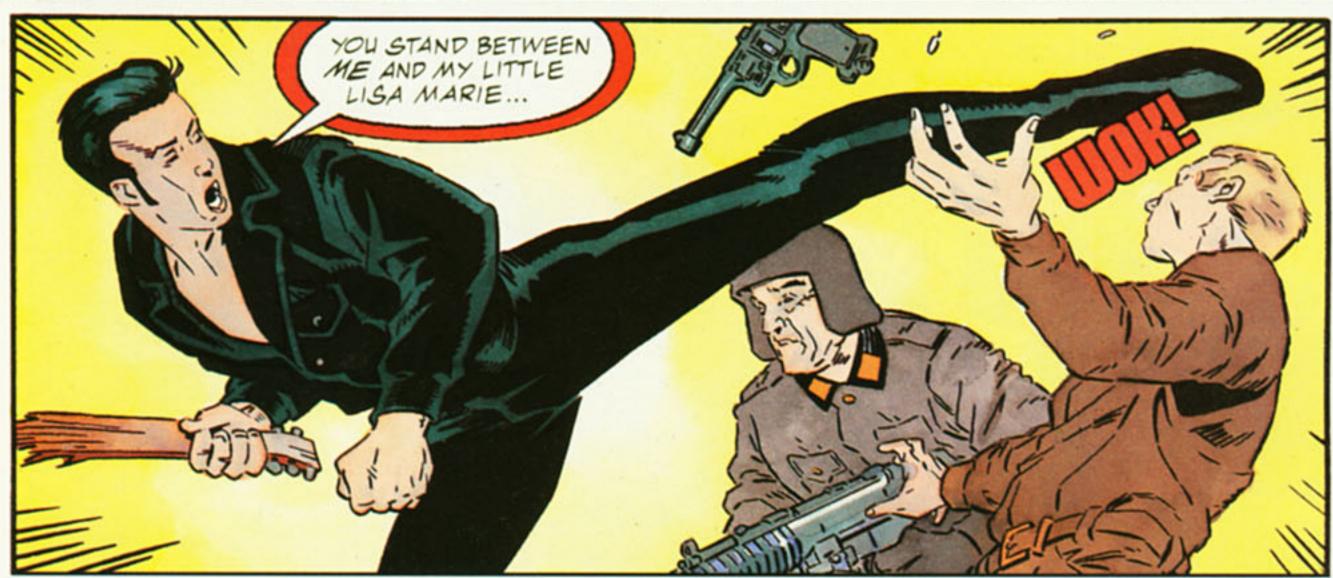




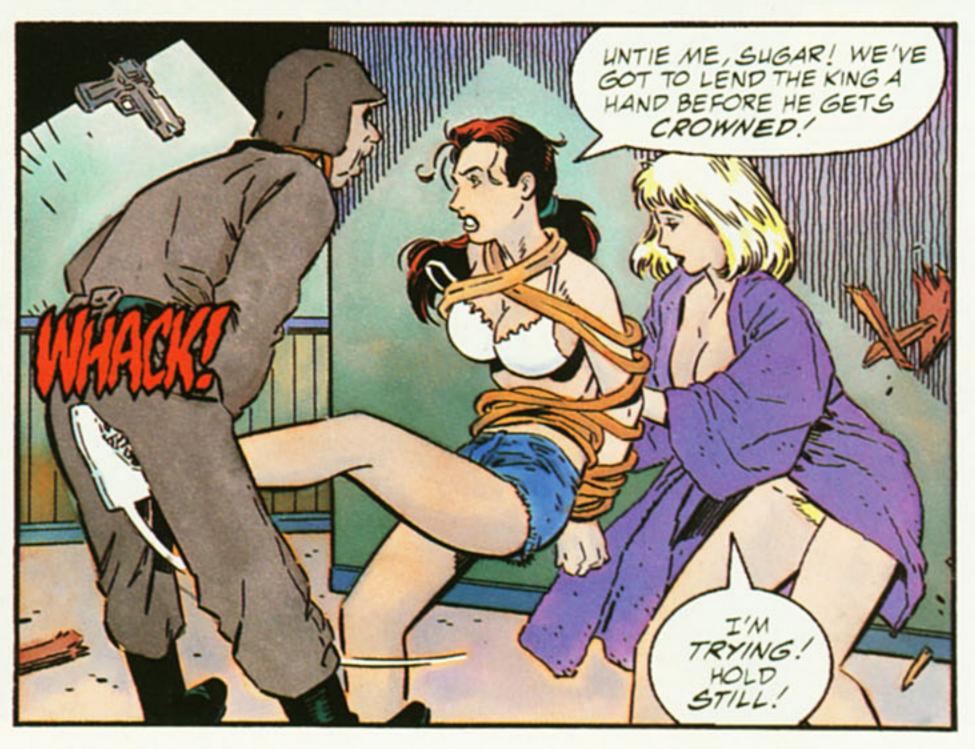






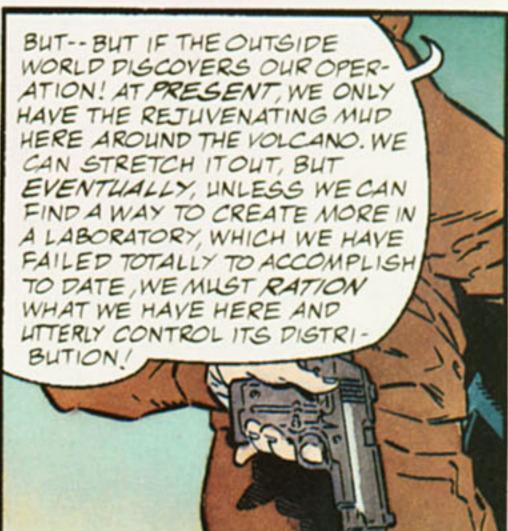


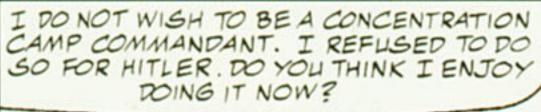




















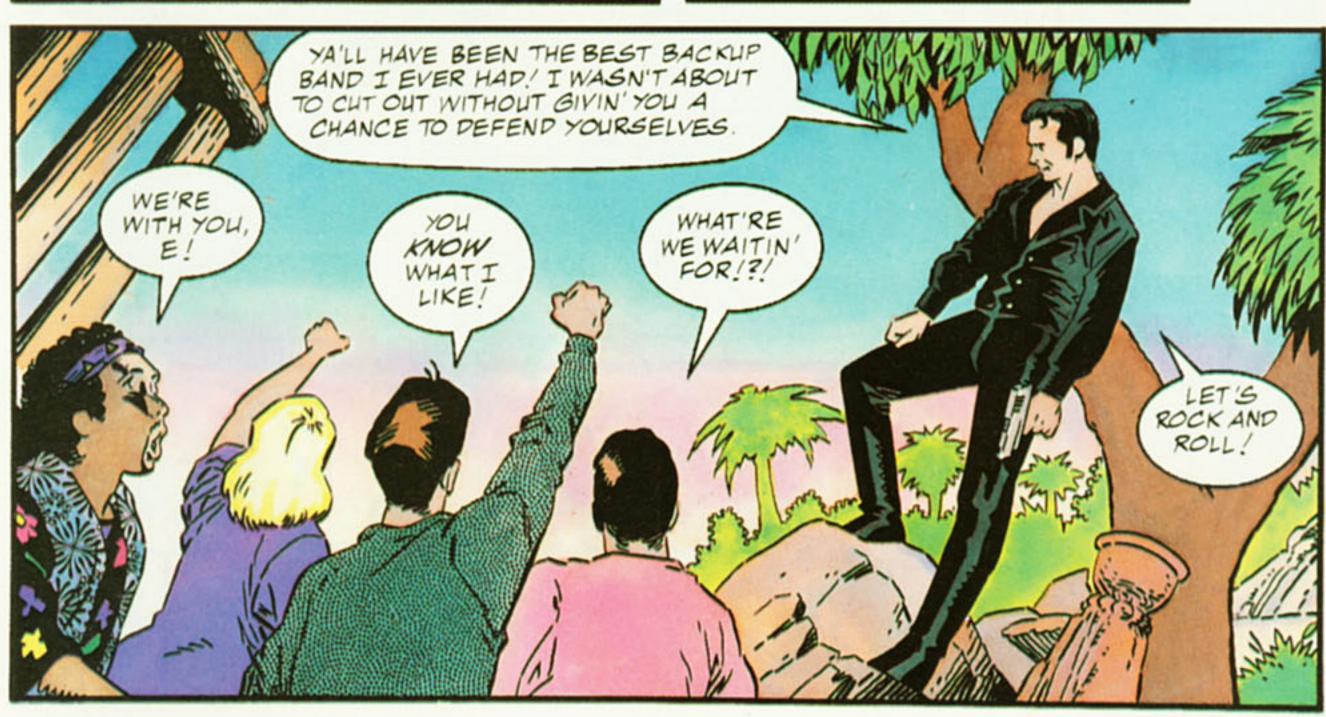


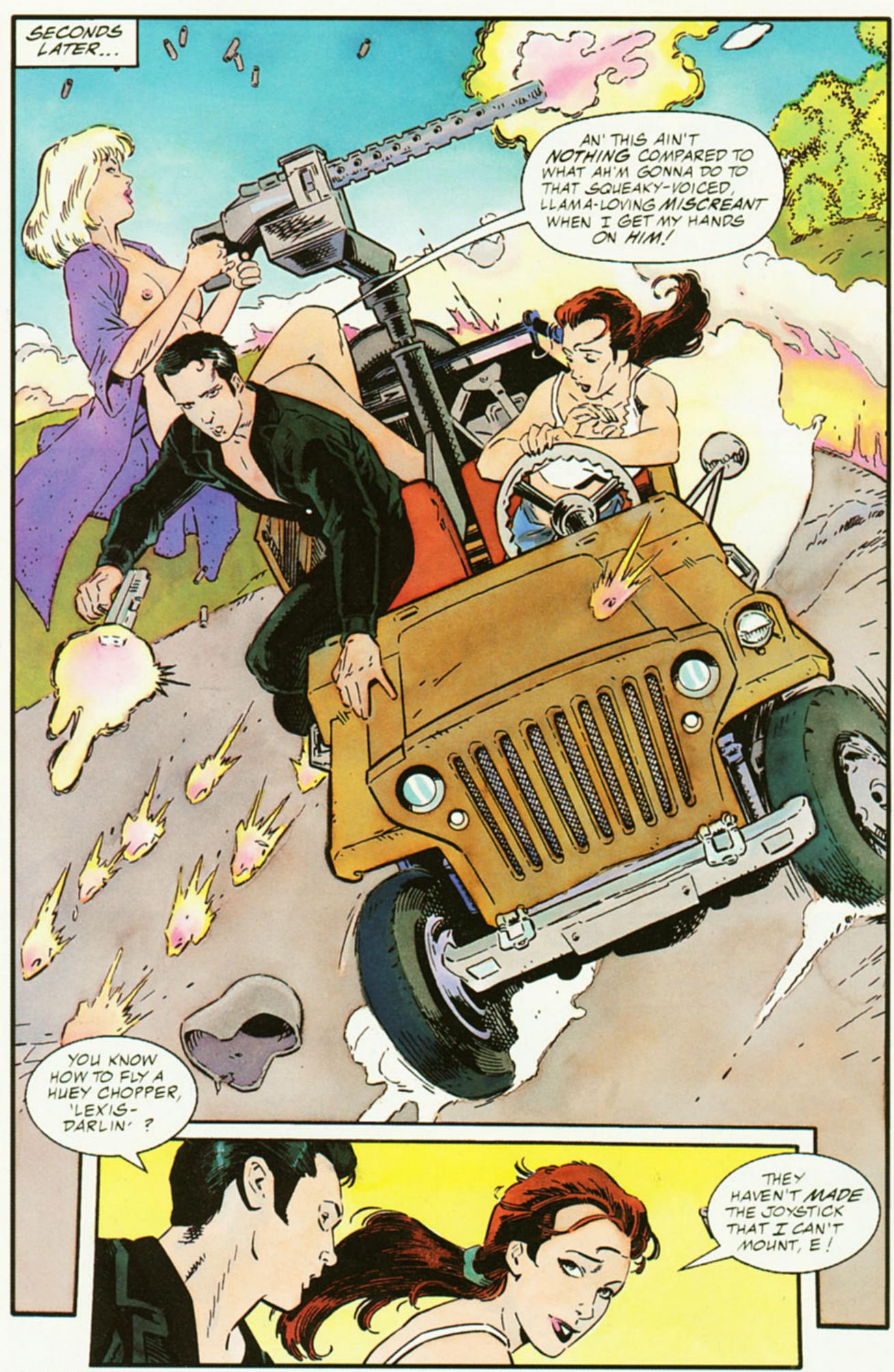






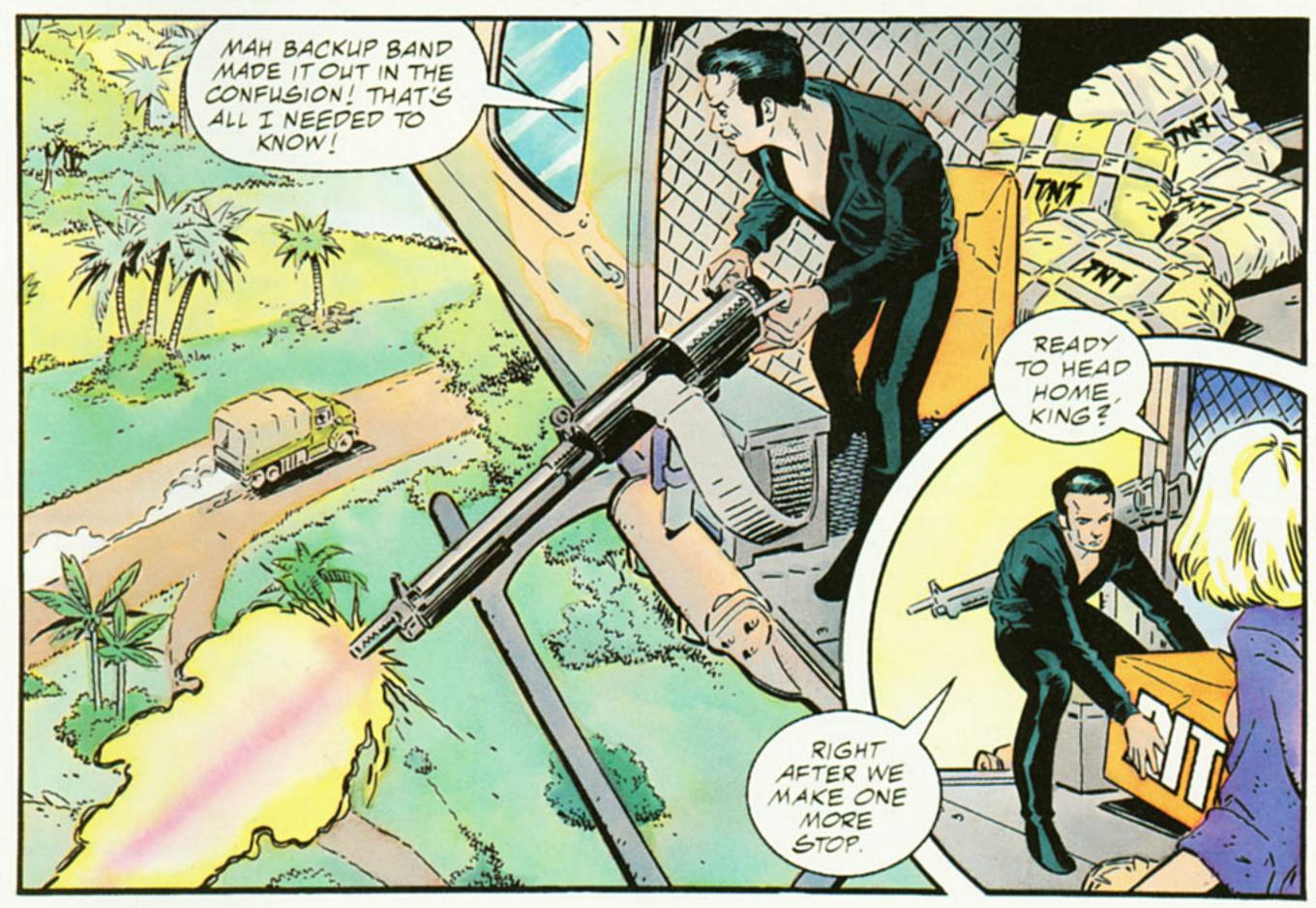


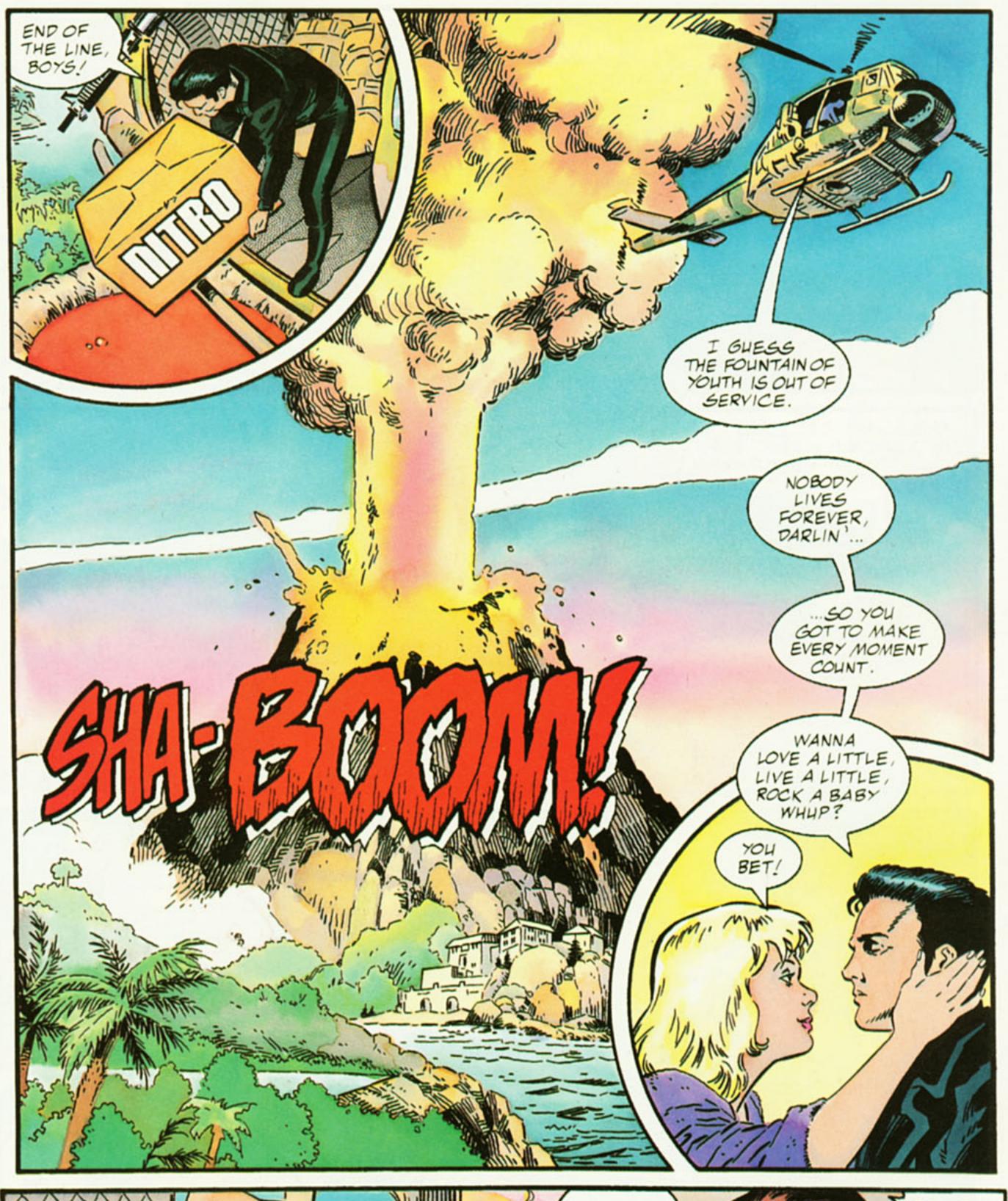


















Our cover "Space Abduction"
By Arthur Suydam

Concept sketch for "Space Abduction" By Arthur Suydam











FEATURING THE ART OF ARTHUR SUYDAM, MARK BEACHUM, ADAM HUGHES, KEVIN NOWLAN, KEVIN MAGUIRE, GRAY MORROW, AND MORE.

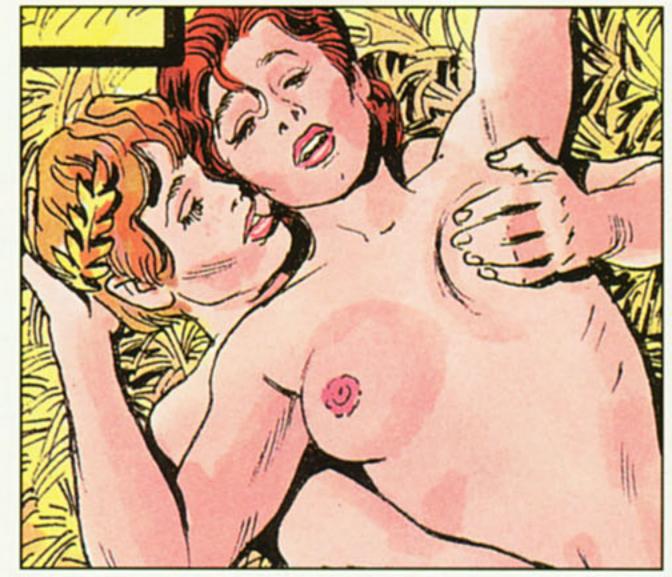








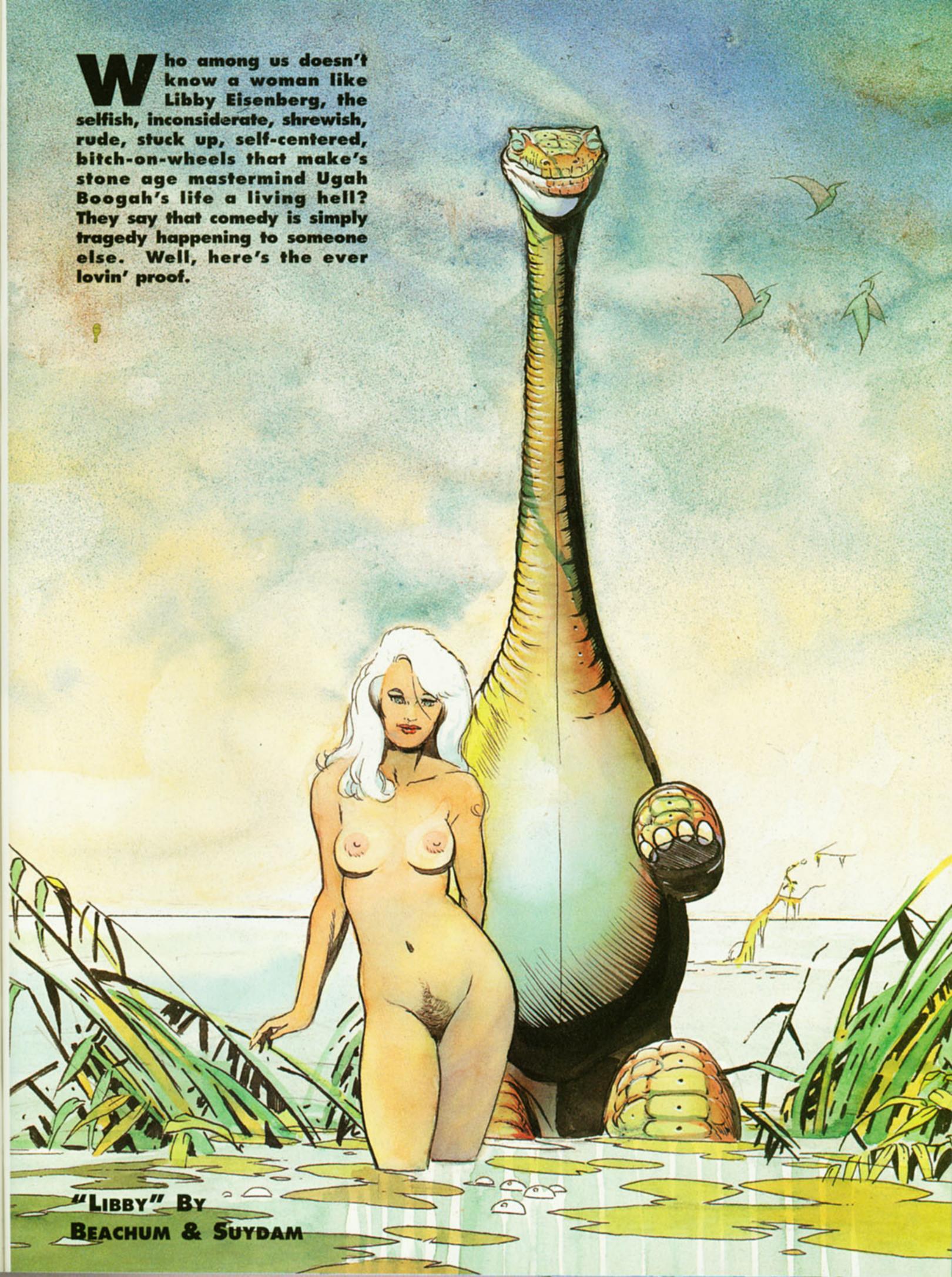




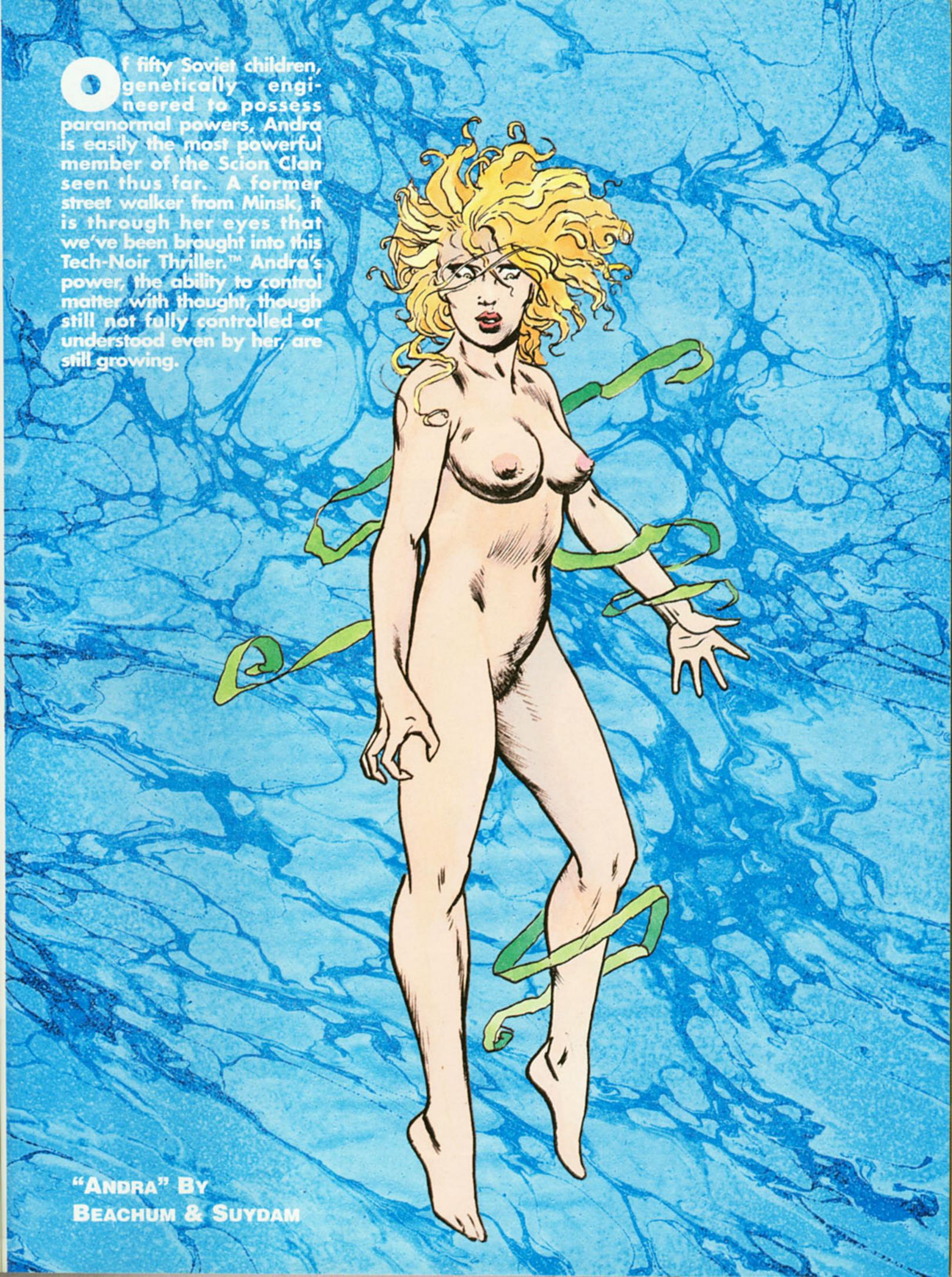














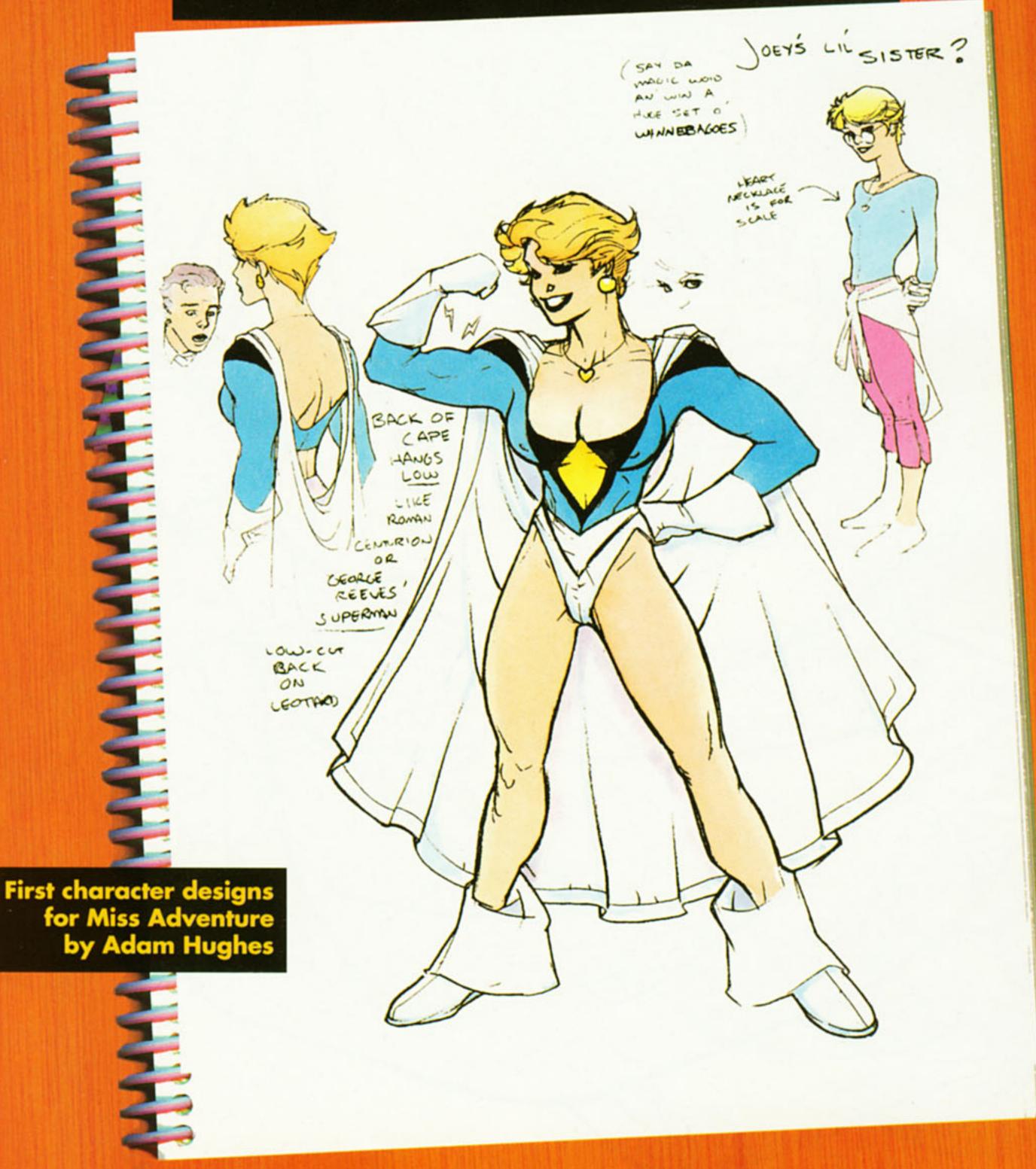




"BAD GIRL" By Jason Pearson



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From time to time I come upon individual pieces of art that don't neatly fit into any of our features, many from some of the most important artists in comics from around the world. In this first of what will be an annual series at Penthouse Comix, I present a gallery of the rest of the best.



