

GOLD DIGGER NO. 59

FRED PERRY



GOLD DIGGER



WWW.ANTARCTIC-PRESS.COM
\$2.99 US - \$4.05 CANADA
0 5911
6 10721 07003 1
DECEMBER 2004

SO IT'S
OKAY?

GINA GAVE
YOU PERMISSION
FOR US TO USE
HER **COMPUTER**?

WELL, SHE NEVER
SAID WE COULDN'T...
I MEAN, JUST BE-
CAUSE SHE NEVER
INSTALLED A **MACHINE-
MACHINE** INTERFACE
FOR US PEEBOS...

...**DOESN'T** MEAN
SHE **DIDN'T** INTEND
FOR US TO SURF
THE WEB AND
BUY STUFF
ONLINE...

SO GET THAT
ANALOG APPENDAGE
OF YOURS WARMED
UP FOR SOME
CLICKIN', THUMB-
GIRL...

WEEE!
I LOVE **WEB-
SURFING**!!

PENNY DOESN'T
LET ME USE HER
COMPUTER ANY
MORE... SINCE
THE... UHhhh...
INCIDENT...

**FIRST STOP!!!
MEGA-MIL-TECH-
ONLINE-DOT-
COM!!!**

WE GONNA
BUY US SOME
**FUSION
REACTORS**
FOR A LITTLE...
UH... **PROJECT**
I'M WORKIN'
ON...

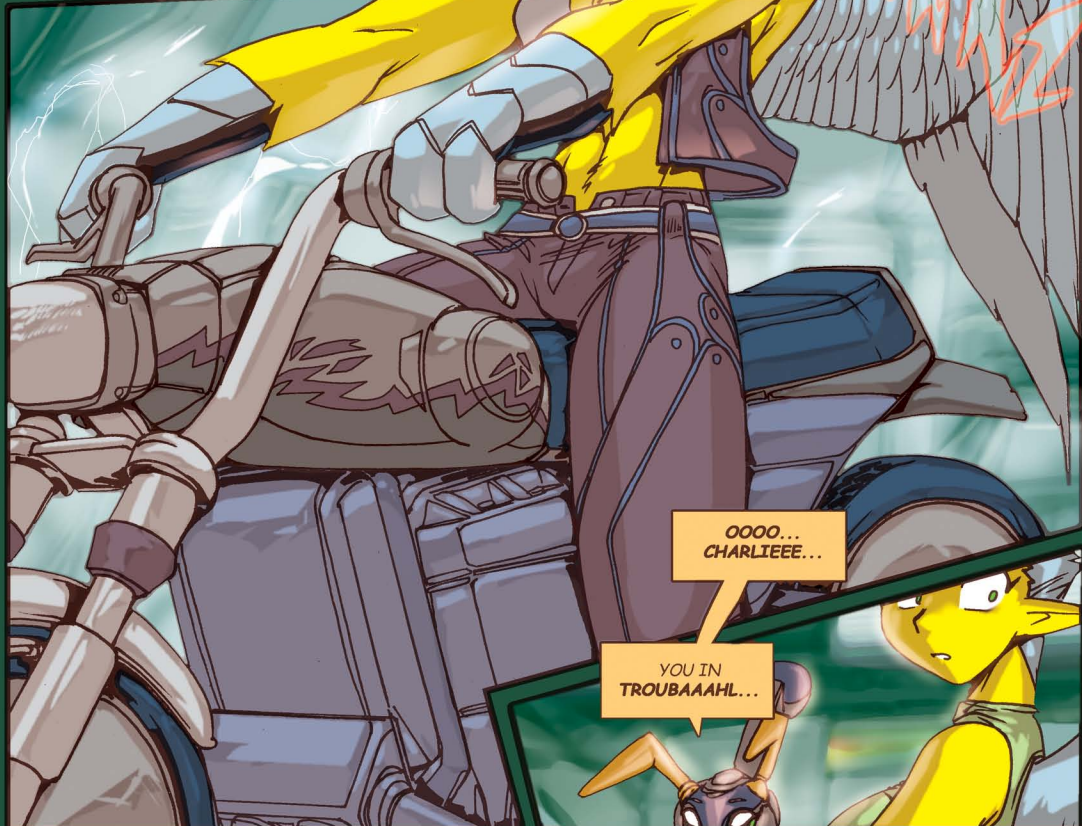
I-ITS NOT
A **GUN**, THO'.
I'M ON
PUNISHMENTS.

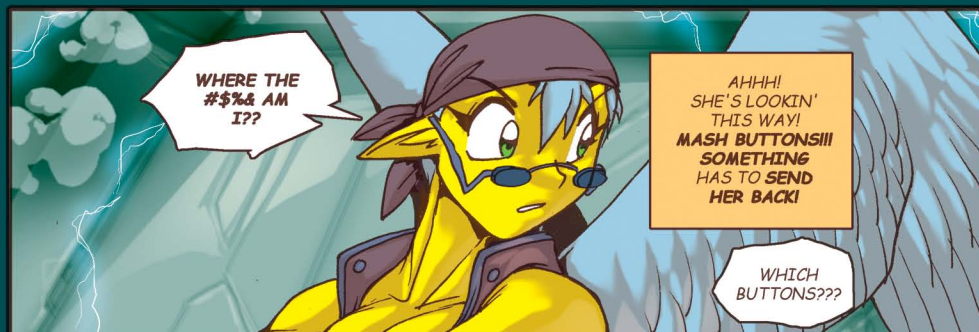
AND DON'T
BOther WITH
THAT SLOW
**OVERNIGHT
FED-UPS**
SHIPPIN'
STUFF...

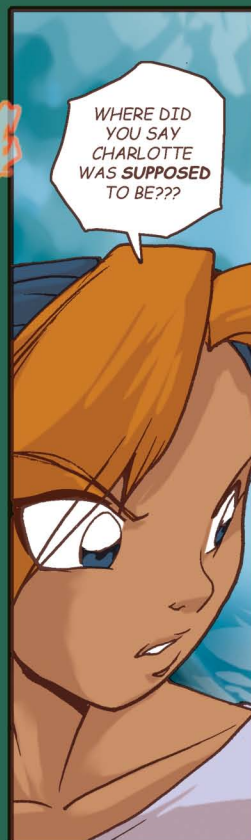
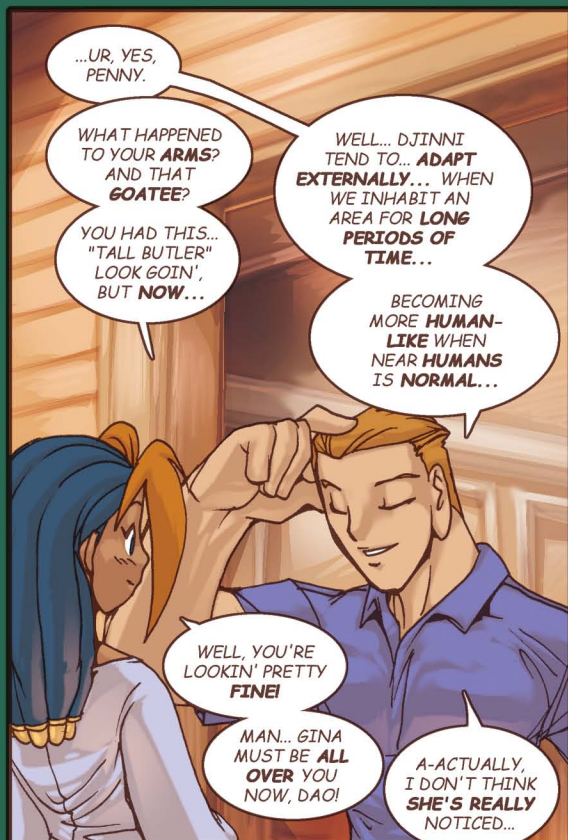
...'**CAUSE THIS**
IS WHERE HAVIN'
YOUR OWN
**WORMHOLE
GENERATION
DEVICE...**

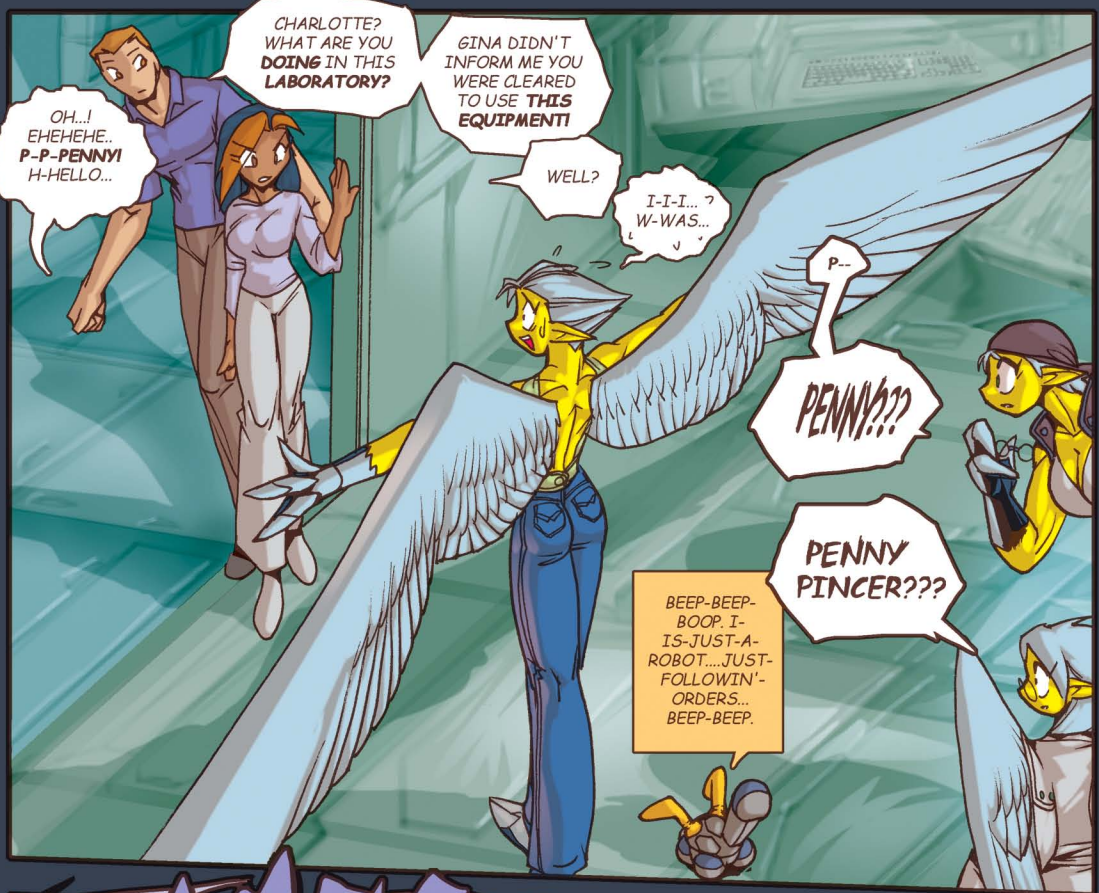
...COMES
IN REEEAL
HANDY!!!

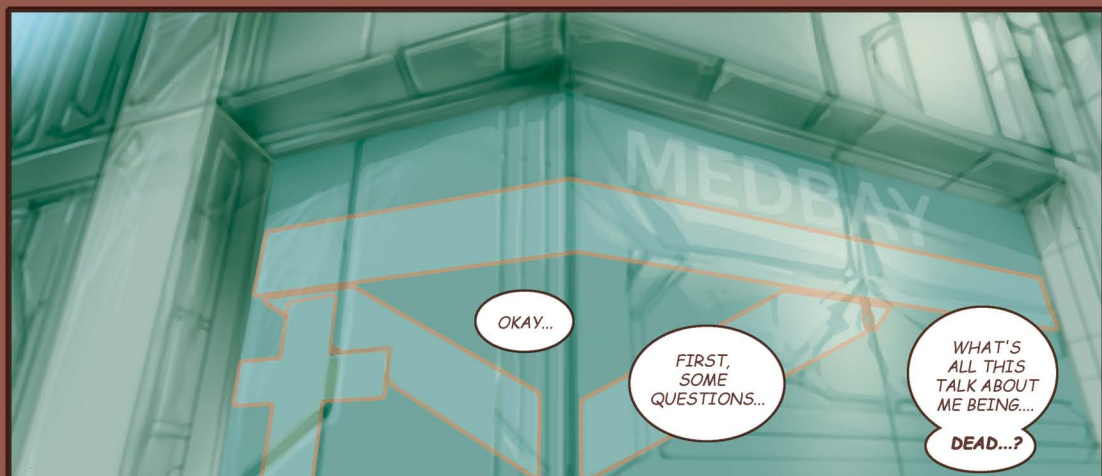
**SINGULARITY
CONTAINER
UNIT**

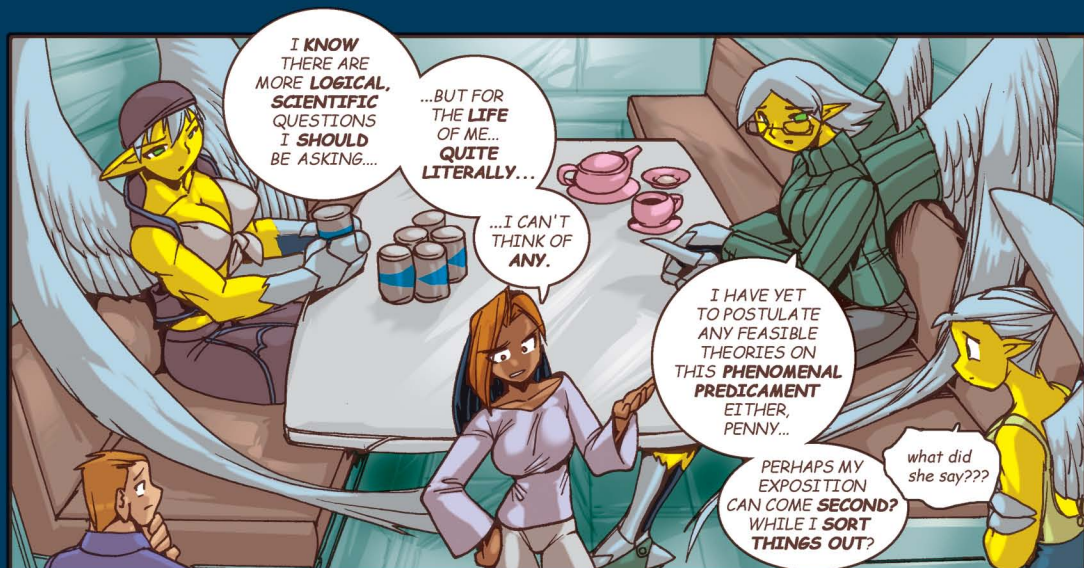














I DIDN'T
KNOW WHAT
TO DO OR
WHO TO TURN
TO AFTER
THAT...

...SO I
WANDERED.

THE FIRST
YEAR WAS
TOUGH, BUT...
IT MADE
ME **TOUGH**.

EVENUALLY,
I BECAME AN
**ADVENTURER...
AN EXPLORER!**

NOW I GO
WHEREVER
I WANT AND
MAKE **DISCOVERIES**
JUST LIKE WE
USED TO DO,
PENNY...

I'M **THE
BEST** IN
THE WHOLE
WORLD
TOO!

I'M **STRONGER**
NOW... AND...
I **SWORE...**

I'll never
be a coward
again...



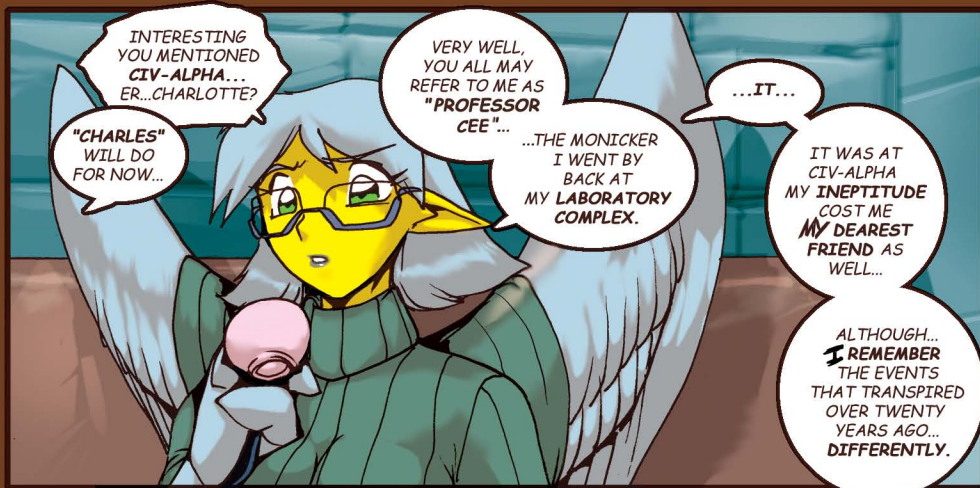
...THAT'S...
REALLY
ODD...

CHARLOTTE AND
I CAME BACK FROM
CIV-ALPHA JUST
A COUPLE OF YEARS
AGO... NOT
"TEN YEARS
AGO"...

HMMM...

I HAVE
A FEW THEORIES
FORMING...

...BUT
I'LL NEED TO
LISTEN TO THE
OTHER STORY TO
MAKE A **SOLID
CONCLUSION**
ABOUT WHAT'S
GOING ON
HERE...



INTERESTING
YOU MENTIONED
CIV-ALPHA...
ER...CHARLOTTE?

"CHARLES"
WILL DO
FOR NOW...

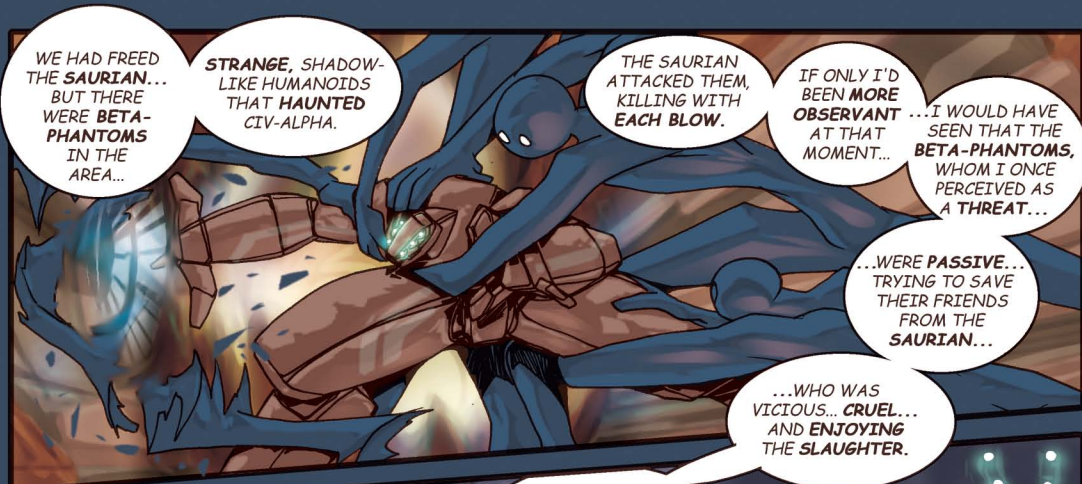
VERY WELL,
YOU ALL MAY
REFER TO ME AS
"PROFESSOR
CEE"...

...THE MONICKER
I WENT BY
BACK AT
MY LABORATORY
COMPLEX.

...IT...

IT WAS AT
CIV-ALPHA
MY **INEPTITUDE**
COST ME
MY **DEAREST
FRIEND** AS
WELL...

ALTHOUGH...
I **REMEMBER**
THE EVENTS
THAT TRANSPIRED
OVER TWENTY
YEARS AGO...
DIFFERENTLY.



WE HAD FREED THE SAURIAN... BUT THERE WERE BETA-PHANTOMS IN THE AREA...

STRANGE, SHADOW-LIKE HUMANOIDS THAT HAUNTED CIV-ALPHA.

THE SAURIAN ATTACKED THEM, KILLING WITH EACH BLOW.

IF ONLY I'D BEEN MORE OBSERVANT AT THAT MOMENT...

...I WOULD HAVE SEEN THAT THE BETA-PHANTOMS, WHOM I ONCE PERCEIVED AS A THREAT...

...WERE PASSIVE... TRYING TO SAVE THEIR FRIENDS FROM THE SAURIAN...

...WHO WAS VICIOUS... CRUEL... AND ENJOYING THE SLAUGHTER.



I LET MYSELF BECOME BLIND TO THE TRUTH.

EVEN AS PENNY ASKED ME TO GET HER EQUIPMENT FROM THE SUPPLY AREA...

...WHILE EVERYONE ELSE WENT TO HELP THE SAURIAN FIGHT THE BETA-PHANTOMS...



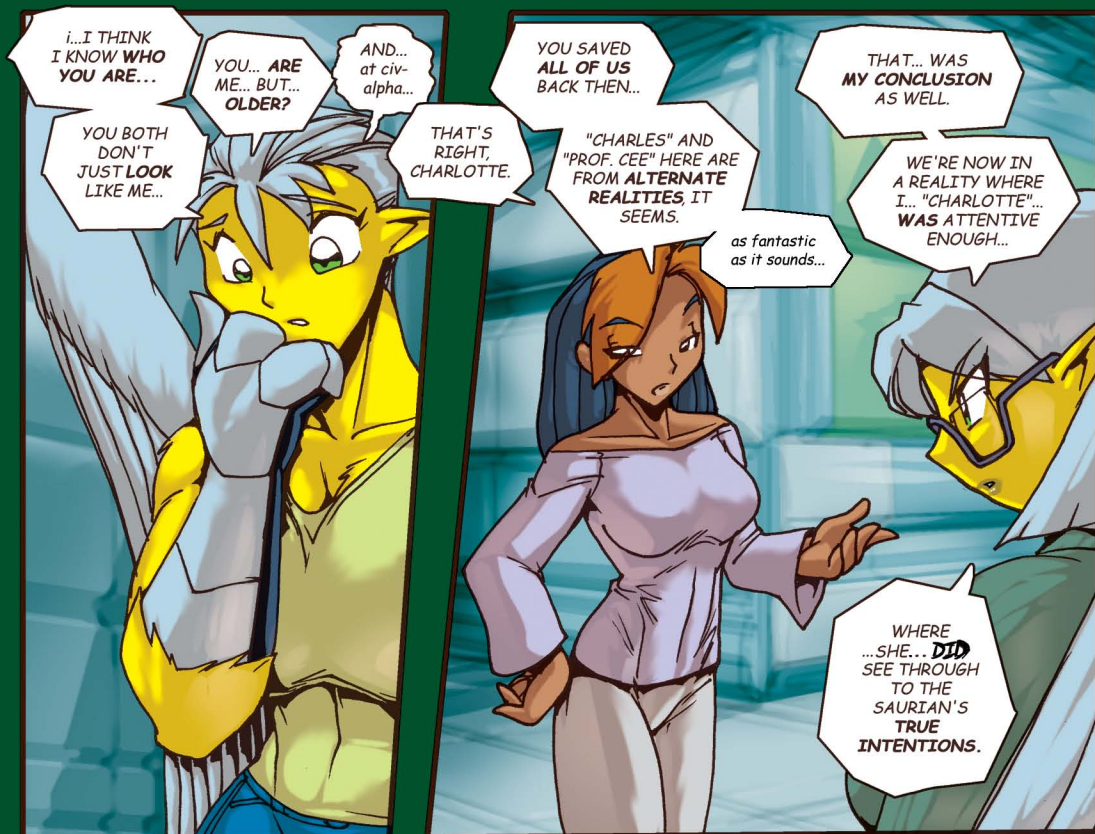
...I REFUSED TO ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT I HAD SEEN... THE TRUE FACE OF THE SAURIAN...

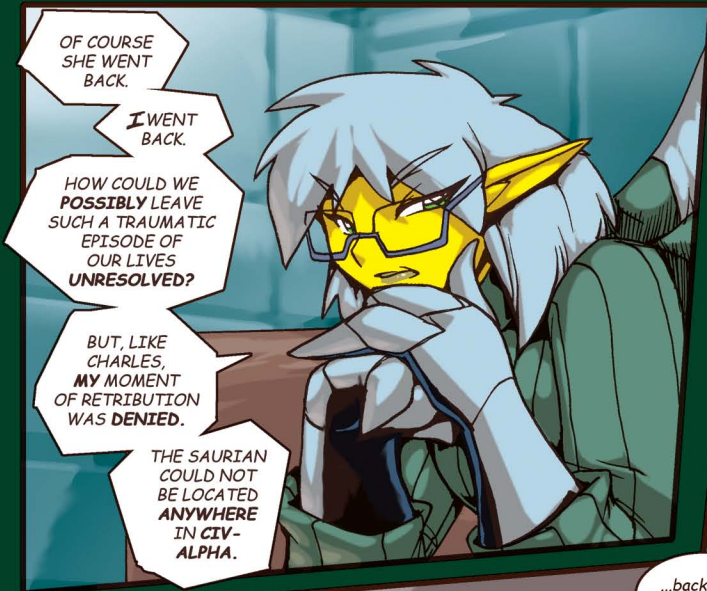
...UNTIL I HEARD THE SOUND OF WHAT I LATER DETERMINED TO BE GINA'S PHANTOM-RING EXPLODING.

THE SAURIAN SACRIFICED ALL MY FRIENDS... INCLUDING PENNY... TO DEFEAT HIS ENEMY.

AND I HAD LET HIM DO IT.







OF COURSE SHE WENT BACK.

I WENT BACK.

HOW COULD WE POSSIBLY LEAVE SUCH A TRAUMATIC EPISODE OF OUR LIVES UNRESOLVED?

BUT, LIKE CHARLES, MY MOMENT OF RETRIBUTION WAS DENIED.

THE SAURIAN COULD NOT BE LOCATED ANYWHERE IN CIV-ALPHA.



BUT THE MYSTERY OF "MY" SAURIAN'S DISAPPEARANCE MUST WAIT BACK AT MY "HOME"...

A MORE RELEVANT PUZZLE IS BEFORE US.

HOW DID CHARLES AND I GET "HERE"?

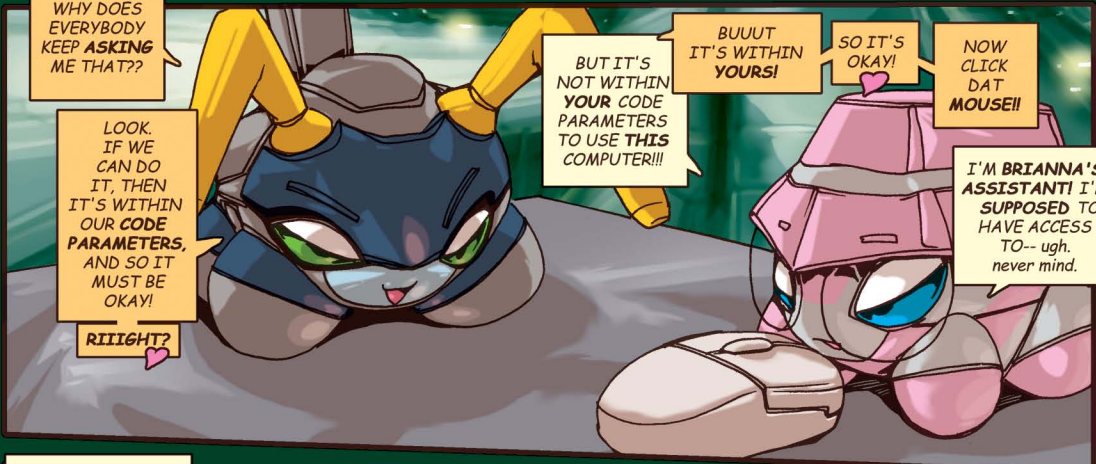
WHAT PRECISELY OCCURRED...

...back at the lab?



ARE YOU SURE?

YOU'RE POSITIVE WE'RE ALLOWED TO DO THIS?



ARRRGH! WHY DOES EVERYBODY KEEP ASKING ME THAT??

LOOK. IF WE CAN DO IT, THEN IT'S WITHIN OUR CODE PARAMETERS, AND SO IT MUST BE OKAY!

RIIIGHT?

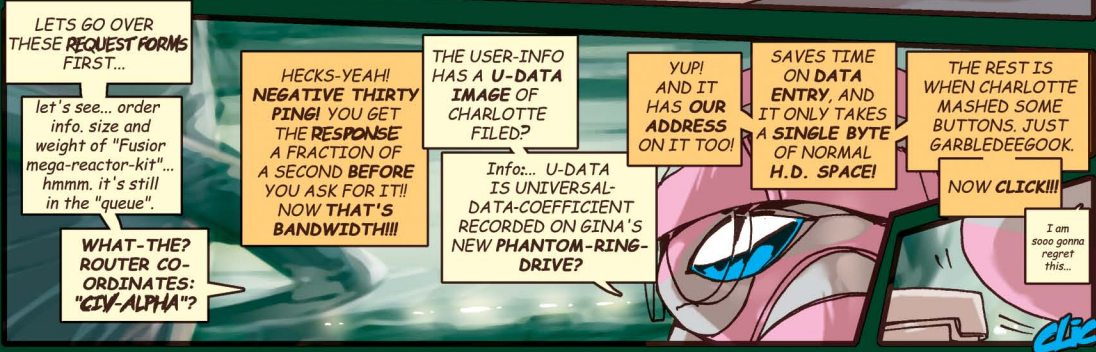
BUT IT'S NOT WITHIN YOUR CODE PARAMETERS TO USE THIS COMPUTER!!!

BUUUT IT'S WITHIN YOURS!

SO IT'S OKAY!

NOW CLICK DAT MOUSE!!

I'M BRIANNA'S ASSISTANT! I'M SUPPOSED TO HAVE ACCESS TO-- ugh, never mind.



LET'S GO OVER THESE REQUEST FORMS FIRST...

let's see... order info, size and weight of "Fusior mega-reactor-kit"... hmmm, it's still in the "queue".

WHAT-THE? ROUTER CO-ORDINATES: "CIV-ALPHA"?

HECKS-YEAH! NEGATIVE THIRTY PING! YOU GET THE RESPONSE A FRACTION OF A SECOND BEFORE YOU ASK FOR IT!! NOW THAT'S BANDWIDTH!!!

THE USER-INFO HAS A U-DATA IMAGE OF CHARLOTTE FILED?

Info:... U-DATA IS UNIVERSAL-DATA-COEFFICIENT RECORDED ON GINA'S NEW PHANTOM-RING-DRIVE?

YUP! AND IT HAS OUR ADDRESS ON IT TOO!

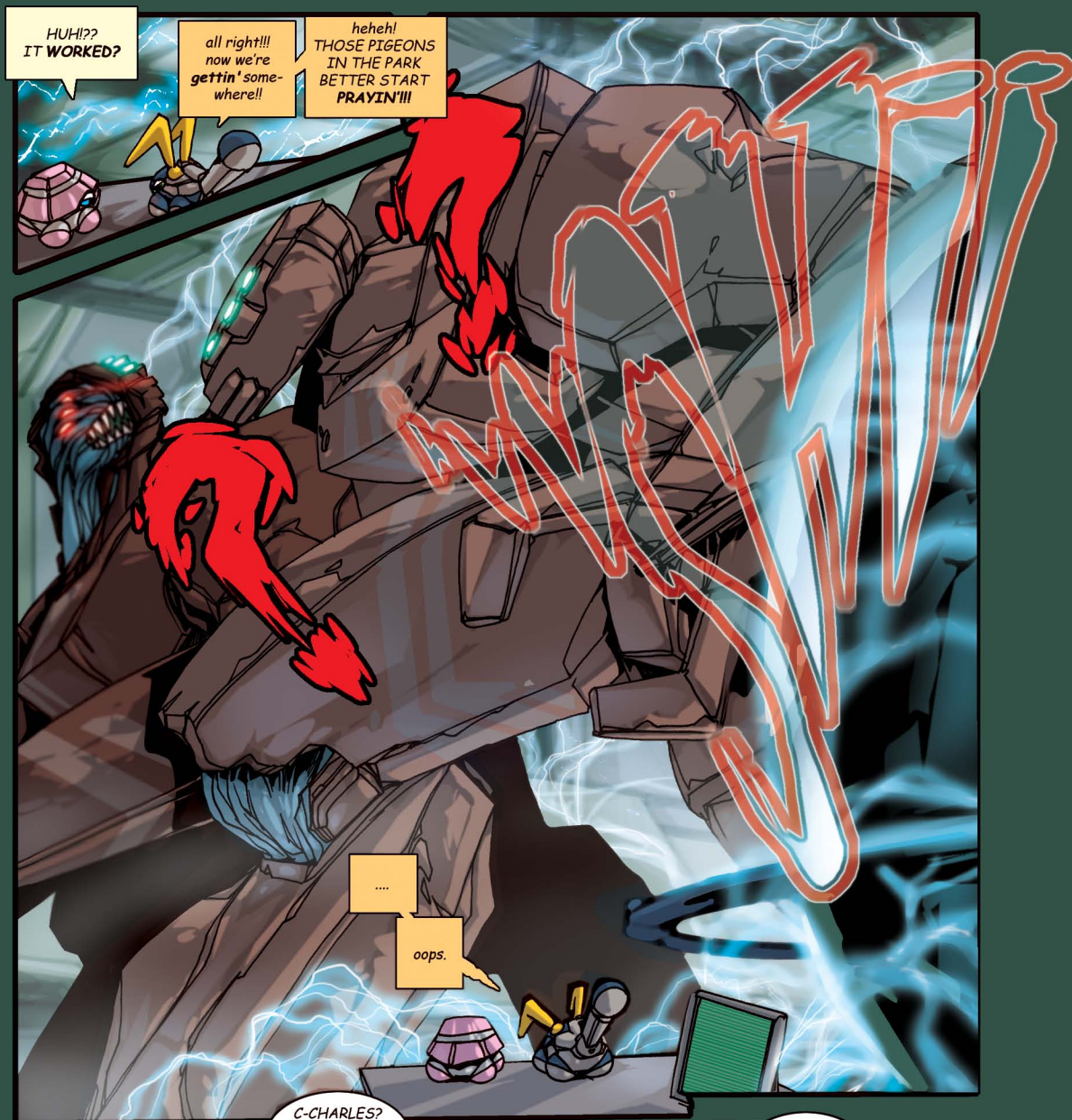
SAVES TIME ON DATA ENTRY, AND IT ONLY TAKES A SINGLE BYTE OF NORMAL H.D. SPACE!

THE REST IS WHEN CHARLOTTE MASHED SOME BUTTONS, JUST GARBLEDEEGOOK.

NOW CLICK!!!

I am soooo gonna regret this...

CLIC



HUHI??
IT WORKED?

all right!!!
now we're
gettin' some-
where!!

heheh!
THOSE PIGEONS
IN THE PARK
BETTER START
PRAYIN'!!!

....

oops.

C-CHARLES?
Y-YOUR ARMS
LOOK REALLY
STRONG...

DO
YOU THINK?
ONE DAY?

I'LL BE
**STRONG
LIKE YOU?**

NOTHING SEEMS
TO BE **SET IN
STONE**, CHARLOTTE.

YOU CAN
BECOME **STRONGER**
IF YOU SO
WILL IT...

AS THIS MEETING
HAS ILLUSTRATED,
A **SINGLE NOTION**
CAN CHANGE
EVERYTHING...

AND SPEAKING
OF **NOTIONS**,
I'VE NOTED
A FEW FROM
PENNY...

♥
TOWARDS
DAO?

DON'T
TELL ME
YOU
BROKE UP
WITH
KEVIN?



WHA??

WHOA, WHOA
WHOA!!
WAITAMINUTE!!

DID YOU
JUST SAY I'M
COMIN' ON
TO DAOI??

I-I'M SURE
SHE WAS
ONLY JOKING,
PENNY...

MAKING
LIGHT OF
THIS
SITUATION?



SHAME
ON YOU,
PROFESSOR!!

QUIT
MAKING
FUN OF
PENNY'S
WANDERING
EYES!!

SHE MAY
HAVE BEEN
LOOKIN'
AT DAO'S
HEINIE, BUT
SHE REALLY
LOVES
KEVIN!!

H-HEY!!

OOPS...
sorry.

I GUESS
I SHOULD
KEEP MY
OBSERVATIONS
TO MYSELF
A BIT
MO--

P-Penny??

oh, no...



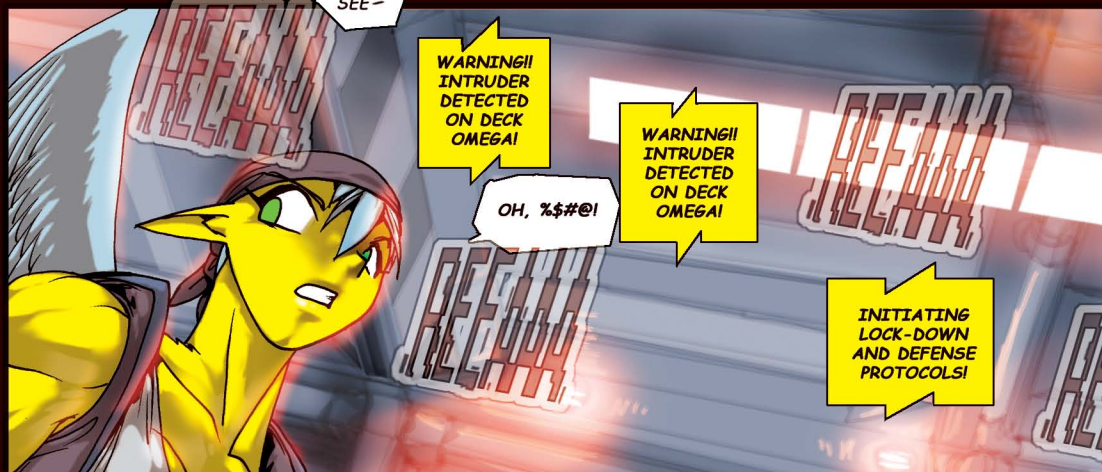
PENNY!!!

YOUR MOLECULES
ARE BEGINNING
TO LOSE THEIR
ABILITY TO
ABSORB LIGHT!!

W-WHAT?

I-I'M FADING
AWAY??

BUT I
DON'T
SEE--



WARNING!!
INTRUDER
DETECTED
ON DECK
OMEGA!

OH, %\$#@!

WARNING!!
INTRUDER
DETECTED
ON DECK
OMEGA!

INITIATING
LOCK-DOWN
AND DEFENSE
PROTOCOLS!

INITIATING
SAFETY ISOLATION
PROCEDURE FOR
ALL "GUEST"
AND "REGISTERED"
PERSONNEL...

WHAT
THE--

THESE
ARE THE
BLAST-
DOORS...

GINA PUT
THEM IN
IN CASE OF
EMERGENCIES!

ACTIVATING
DEFENSE
SYSTEMS!

DAO! WE
NEED TO SEE
WHAT'S
HAPPENING!!!

R-RIGHT!
COMPUTER,
DISPLAY
THREAT
AREA!!

DATA FEED:
CAMERA (003)
CONNECTING...
[connected]
STREAMING...

THREAT
AREA...

a six: TP= 100 ready.
a nine: HP > 456/980. Help
a two: raise please.
a one: TP= 120 starting SC. "Photo"
a nine: Beta-Burst from SC in 3.

...DISPLAYED.





VIDEO FEED:
LOST. DAMAGE
TO LAB OMEGA:
MINIMAL...

ALL
RIGHT.

WE'LL STAY
HERE AND
ACCESS THE
LAB COMPUTER.

I'LL HELP
PENNY TRY
TO FIGURE
OUT A WAY TO
SEND THOSE
MONSTERS
BACK WHERE
THEY CAME
FROM.

DO IT
AS SOON
AS YOU
CAN...

I WANTED
THIS FIGHT,
BUT NOT
HERE...

...NOT IN
THE MIDDLE
OF GINA'S
HOUSE OR
WHERE
PENNY CAN
GET HURT...

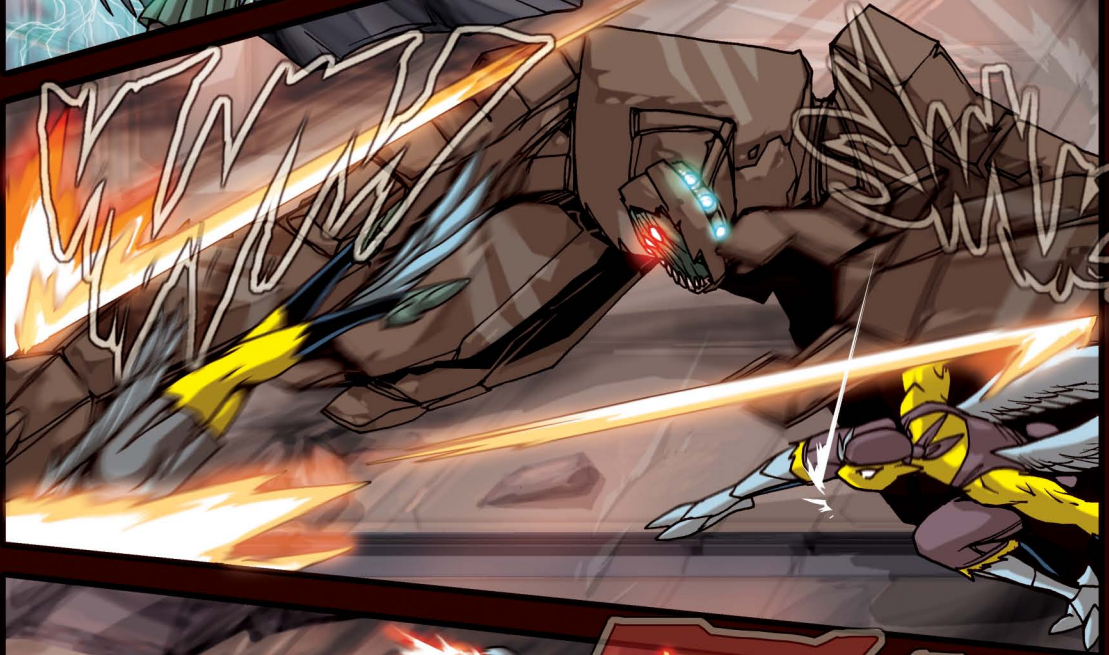
CHARLOTTE,
WE'RE COUNTING
ON YOU....

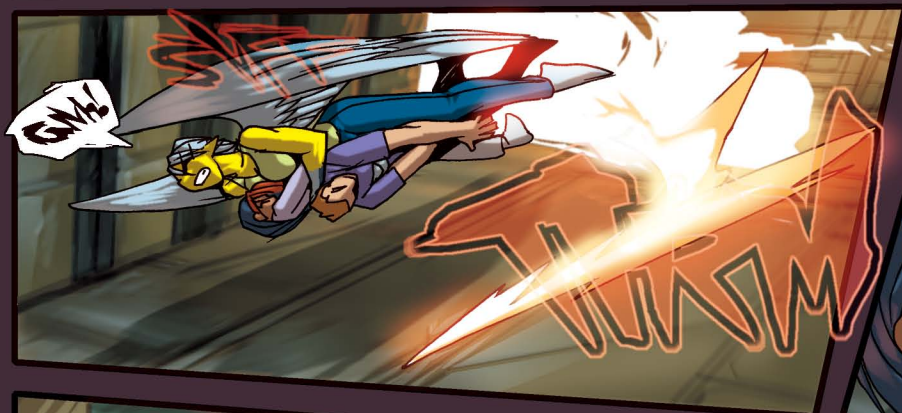
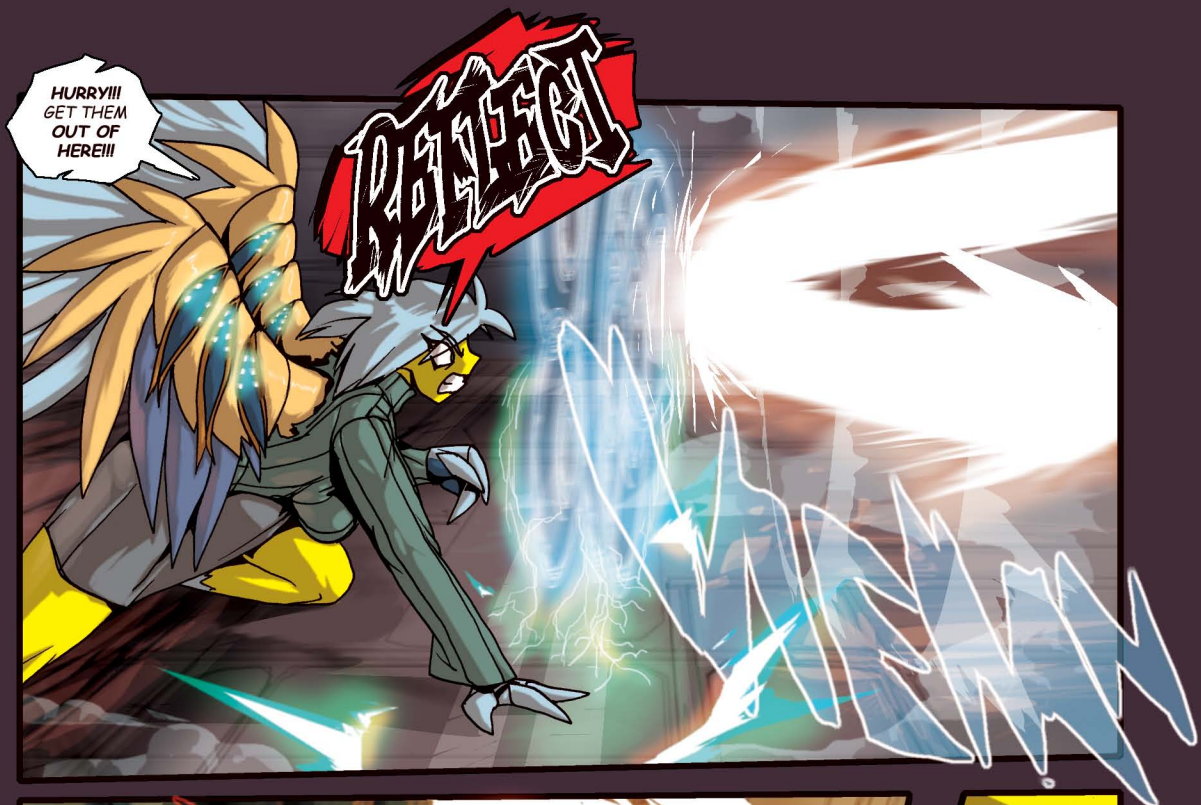
PROTECT
PENNY!



No!
No!







You infest
our world...

You steal
our secrets...

now, you
ensnare
us--

You are
MAGGOTS
feeding on
our flesh...

...MAGGOTS...

...TO BE--

CRASHED

TK

I'M
CLEAR.
NINA
EM.

THANKS.
THE ONE
TOOK A
WHILE TO
CRASH!



YOU
STILL
DON'T
UNDER-
STAND...

YOU HAVE
NO IDEA OF
WHERE YOU
ARE...

...OR THAT
YOU'RE FIGHTING
ALONGSIDE
YOUR OWN
"TIME-TWIN"...

...BUT HOW
COULD YOU
UNDERSTAND?

YOU
HAVE NO
FRAME OF
REFERENCE
WHATSO-
EVER...

...and it
doesn't
matter.

WHAT MATTERS
IS THAT YOU'RE
GETTING YOUR
@\$\$ KICKED...

...BY AN OLD...

... "FRIEND" ...



heheh!!!
THAT WOKE
'EM UP,
PROFESSOR!

WMM KKK

WATCH
YOUR
BACK,
CEE...

I LEFT
IT UNGUARDED
ON PURPOSE!
OBSERVE!

WMM
ARRG

HEH!
NICE!

I GUESS
THEY **DO**
REMEMBER.
I'M **TOUCHED**,
TO SAY
THE LEAST!

Professor
Cee...

...and
Charles...

...are both
so **STRONG**...

...and...

...one
day...

...I could
be that
strong
too...

WE
FOUND
IT!!!



DAO! CEE
NEEDS TO
HEAR THIS!!

THERE. THE
INTERCOM
FUNCTION
IS IN THAT
FILE.

THANKS.

PROFESSOR
CEE?

A TAD
BUSY RIGHT
NOW...

IT'S
IMPORTANT!

WE DISCOVERED
THE ANOMALY
THAT CAUSED
THE "TEMPORAL
ENVELOPES."



ENVELOPES?

YES...

... YOU AND
CHARLES WERE
DRAGGED FROM...
WELL... "INFINITY"...
THANKS TO...
...**SOMEONE**...
MESSING AROUND
WITH GINA'S
SINGULARITY
CONTAINMENT
UNIT...

... BUT YOU'RE
STILL **CONNECTED**
TO "INFINITY"...
ENVELOPED IN
ITS "SKIN"!



IT SEEMS...

...SOME OF THAT
"SKIN" RUBBED
OFF WHEN YOU
AND CHARLIE
HUGGED ME,
PROFESSOR

.....

WHEN I **SWITCH OFF**
THE S.C.U., "INFINITY'S"
INFLUENCE ON ME
AND EVERYONE ELSE
SNAPS BACK TO
NORMAL.

I HOPE...



DAMN...
SO
IT WAS
OUR FAULT...

...THAT
PENNY'S
ENDANGERED!

PENNY!
SHUT DOWN
THE S.C.U.
IMMEDIATELY!!

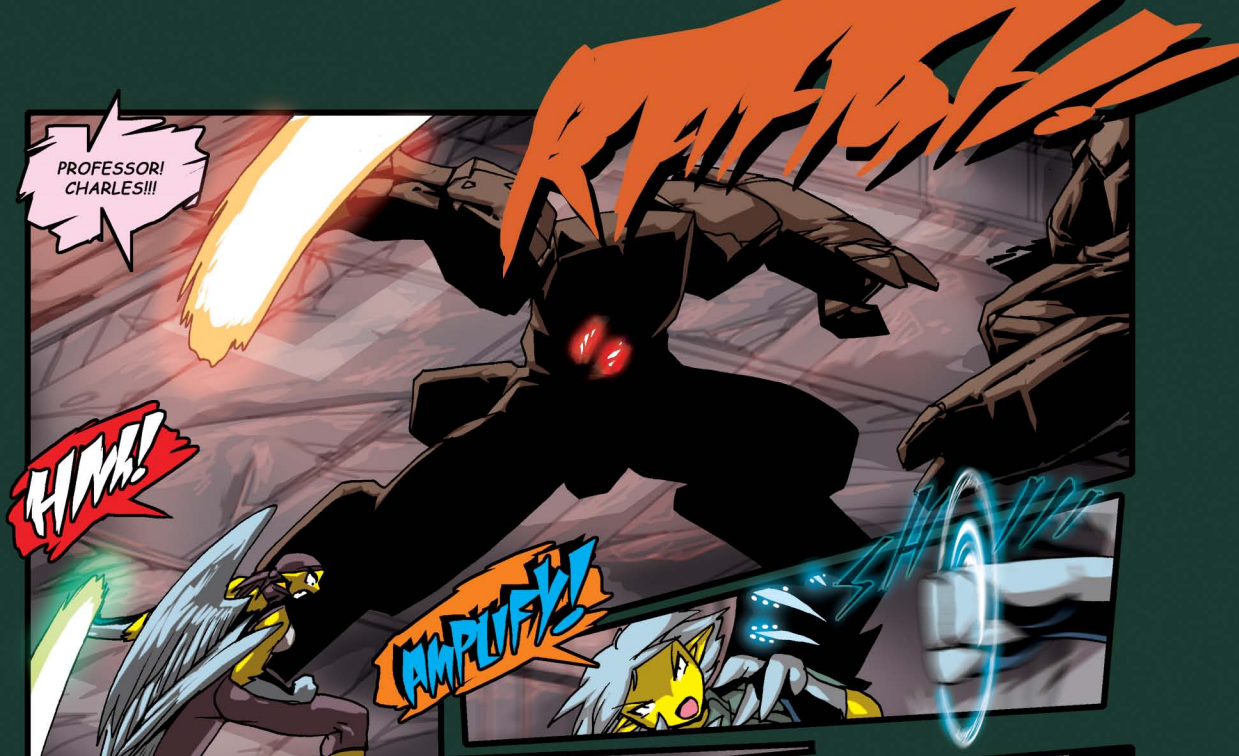
DON'T
WORRY ABOUT
US...



WHATEVER
HAPPENS, WE'LL
BE **ALL RIGHT!**

YOU'RE
SAFE! AND
THAT'S **ALL**
THAT
MATTERS!!!

P-PROFESSOR!
CHARLES!!





PENNY!
PLEASE TELL
ME IT'S NOT
DOING WHAT
I THINK IT'S
DOING!

I CAN'T,
PROFESSOR!!

BECAUSE
IT IS!!!

THEY'RE
OVERCHARGING
THEIR BETA-
ENGINES!!

THEY'RE
TRYING TO
SELF-
DESTRUCT!!!

THE READINGS
ARE OFF THE
METER!

...AND
I MEAN
GOODBYE
EAST
COAST!!

NOT
ON MY
WATCH!

HOW DO
WE DISARM
IT?

YOU CAN'T!!!
n-NEITHER
YOU NOR
CEE CAN
TOUCH
THEM
NOW!!

WHAT?

I'M
SERIOUS!!!

WITH THEIR
BETA-ENGINES ON
"OVERCHARGE"...

...IF YOUR
"ENVELOPES"
INTERACT
WITH THEIRS
NOW...

...THE DETONATION
WILL NOT ONLY
OCCUR INSTANTLY...

...BUT THE
EXPLOSION
WILL BE
MUCH MORE
POWERFUL!!

BUT AT THESE
READINGS...

...THE OVER-
CHARGE WILL
OBLITERATE
ANYONE WHO
TOUCHES
THE ENGINE!!

EVEN WITHOUT
AN "ENVELOPE"!

WE'RE
STUCK!!

OUR WORLD...

W-NOT... SHADOWS!...

NOT... MAGGOTS!...

OUR W ORLD!...

OP... NO... ONE'S...
WORK!

PENNY?
WHEN WILL
THE S.C.U.
COMPLETE ITS
SHUTDOWN?

AND WHAT'S
THE ESTIMATED
DETONATION
TIME?

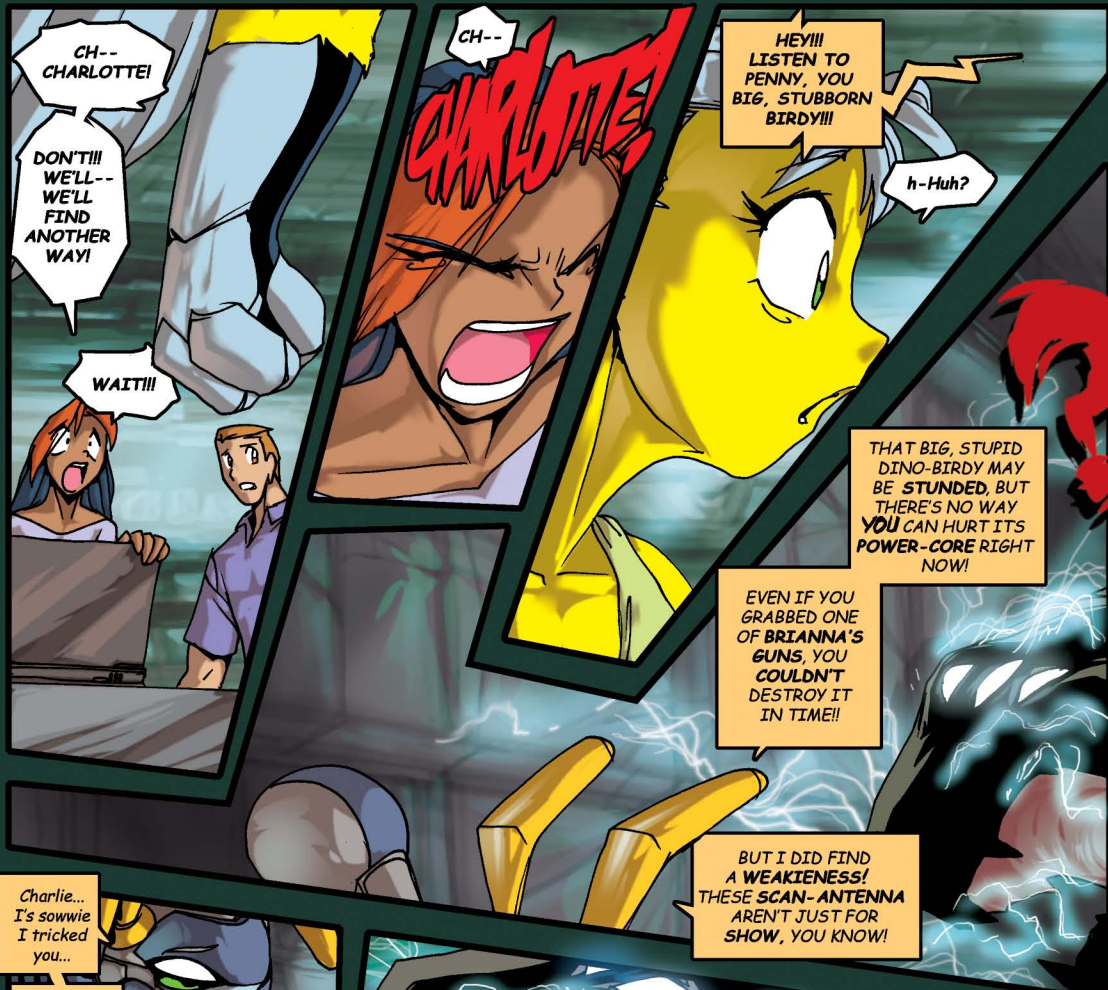
F-FORTY
SECONDS!!!

PENNY.

TWO
MINUTES,
CEE...

I'LL
GO.

IP



CH--
CHARLOTTE!

DON'T!!!
WE'LL
FIND
ANOTHER
WAY!

WAIT!!!

CH--

CHARLOTTE!

HEY!!!
LISTEN TO
PENNY, YOU
BIG, STUBBORN
BIRDY!!!

h-Huh?

THAT BIG, STUPID
DINO-BIRDY MAY
BE **STUNDED**, BUT
THERE'S NO WAY
YOU CAN HURT ITS
POWER-CORE RIGHT
NOW!

EVEN IF YOU
GRABBED ONE
OF BRIANNA'S
GUNS, YOU
COULDN'T
DESTROY IT
IN TIME!!

BUT I DID FIND
A **WEAKIENESS!**
THESE **SCAN-ANTENNA**
AREN'T JUST FOR
SHOW, YOU KNOW!

Charlie...
It's sowwie
I tricked
you...

I was a
baaaad
girl...

This whole
mess is my
fault...

BUT I
KNOW
HOW TO
MAKE IT
ALL
BETTER!!!

AN ANTI-MATTER
EXPLODEE RIGHT
DOWN DINO-
BIRDY'S
SOUP-COOLER!!!

THE EXPLODEE
WILL **CHAIN-REACT**,
WHICH WILL
NULLIFY THE TWO
BETA-EXPLODEES!!*

BUT EVERYTHING
IN A TWENTY-FOOT
RADIUS WILL GO "**POOF**",
SO YOU TWO NEW
CHARLIES BETTER
BOOK!!!

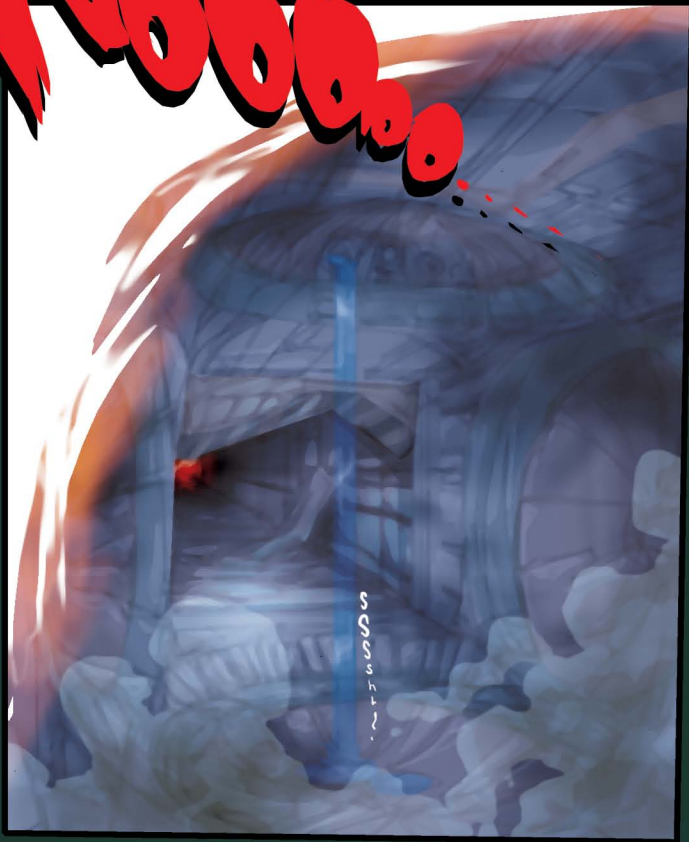
*IF THERE'S ONE THING
BRIANNA'S BIT BOMBS KNOW,
IT'S **EXPLOSIONS**...-F.

No...



No...

Noooooo



...and Charlie?
whatever you
do...

Don't marry
the nins.

the divorce'll
be a nightmare!

BYE...



PENNY?

DO YOU THINK...
THAT ONE DAY?

i-I COULD
BE STRONG?
LIKE THEM?

NO.

you're
going to
be stronger.

