



**CELEBRATING 20 GOLDEN YEARS!**

# GOLD DIGGER

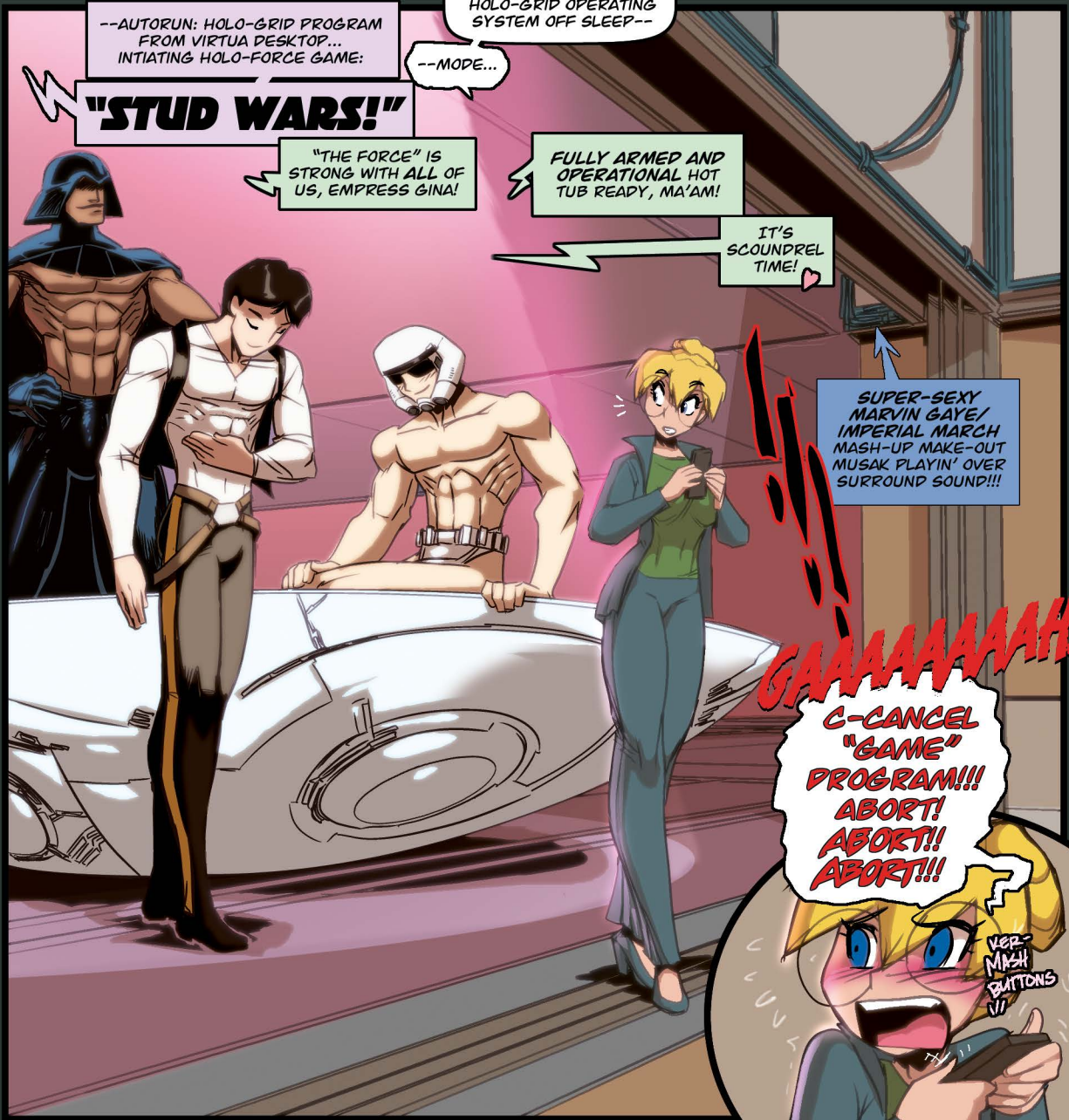
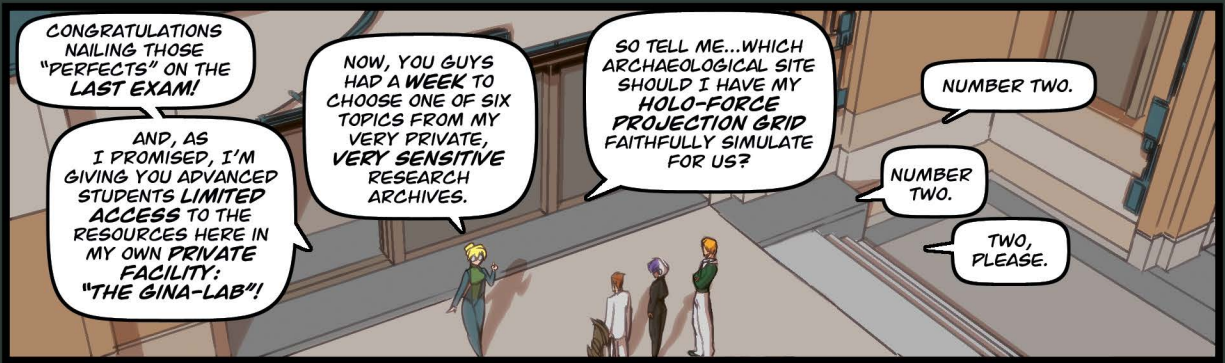
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**FRED PERRY**

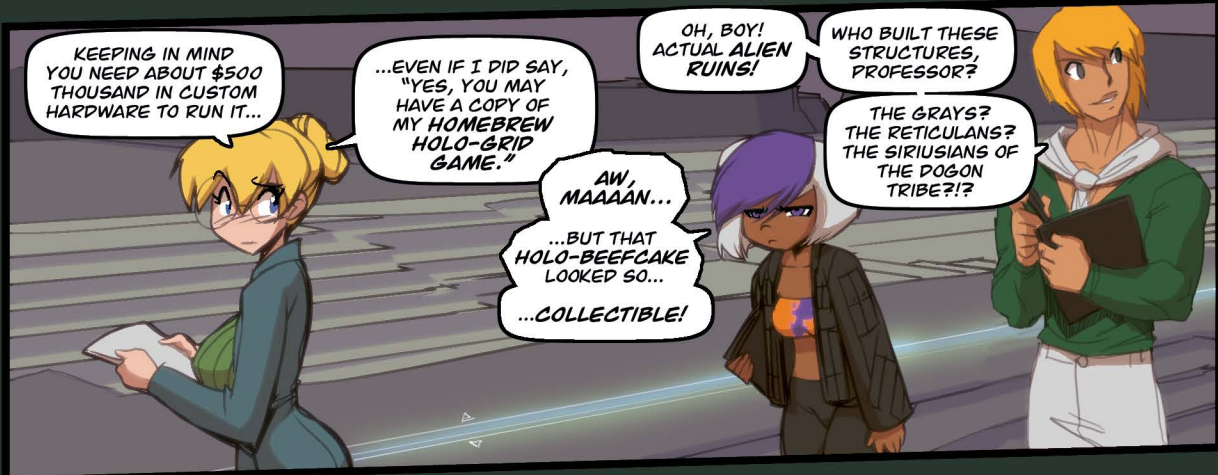


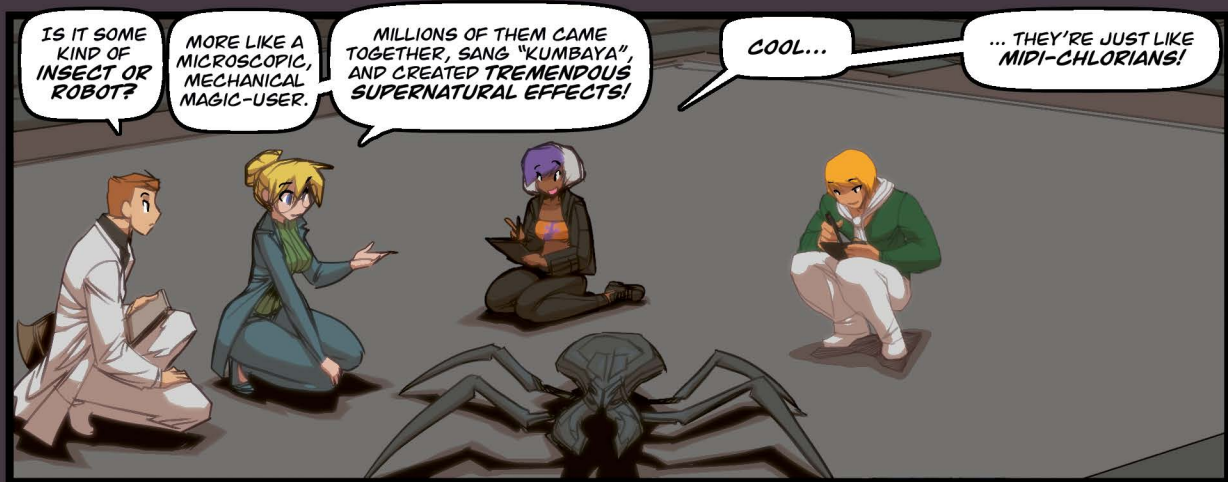
**AUGUST 2011**











IS IT SOME  
KIND OF  
INSECT OR  
ROBOT?

MORE LIKE A  
MICROSCOPIC,  
MECHANICAL  
MAGIC-USER.

MILLIONS OF THEM CAME  
TOGETHER, SANG "KUMBAYA",  
AND CREATED TREMENDOUS  
SUPERNATURAL EFFECTS!

COOL...

... THEY'RE JUST LIKE  
MIDI-CHLORIAN!



...MIDI...  
CHLORIAN?

YOU KNOW...THE  
MICROSCOPIC  
ORGANISMS THAT  
ALLOW JEDI AND  
SITH TO USE  
THE FORCE.

WHAT.

HEY...I HAPPEN  
TO LIKE THE  
PREQUELS!

DON'T BE  
PLAYAH-  
HATIN' ON  
LUCAS'  
GENIUS!



SLIT HER!!!

SUCH BLASPHEMY SHALL  
NOT BE TOLERATED IN MY  
SANCTUM SANCTORUM,  
KYLIE LABRANCHE!!!

Yeah

cliff

NAB

TRUE, WE ARE KINDRED SPIRITS  
AS MEMORABILIA COLLECTORS...  
BUT YOU JUST CROSSED THE--

GREAT...  
THE HOLO-GUARDS  
ARE STILL SET ON  
"IMPERIAL BEEF!"



WELL, YOU JUST  
TAKE A TIME OUT  
IN THE CORNER  
FOR A WHILE,  
YOUNG LADY!

AND THINK ABOUT  
THE SERIOUSNESS  
OF YOUR BREACH  
IN ETHICAL  
BEHAVIOR!

THE PREQUEL  
"FAN FICTION" IS  
A FORBIDDEN  
TOPIC WITHIN  
THESE WALLS!

YOU KNOW...  
THIS IS  
KINDA COOL  
TOO!!

THEY EVEN  
TASTE LIKE  
KENNER  
PLASTIC!



OKAY, THEN...IF WE CAN  
AVOID ANY FURTHER  
INFLAMMATORY  
DISTRACTIONS...

...HERE IS MY  
RESEARCH DATA.

THE ORIGINS OF THESE  
MICROSCOPIC ALIEN  
NANOMAGICIANS BEGIN  
MILLIONS, PERHAPS  
BILLIONS OF YEARS AGO  
IN A GALAXY FAR AWAY.

ENGINEERED FROM A  
MYSTERIOUS ALMAGAM  
OF TECHNOLOGIES,  
THE "SYMBIOTS" WERE  
DEVELOPED BY AN ANCIENT  
RACE OF BEINGS KNOWN AS  
THE GARDENERS.

UTILIZING THEIR NEW  
NANOMAGICAL TOOLS,  
THE GARDENERS SET  
FORTH TO CULTIVATE AND  
NURTURE LIFE ACROSS  
THE KNOWN UNIVERSE.

UNFORTUNATELY,  
THE PEACE AND  
TRANQUILITY OF THAT  
"COSMIC GARDEN"  
DID NOT LAST  
AS LONG AS IT  
SHOULD HAVE.






SUDDENLY AND TERRIBLY,  
A FAMILY OF GARDENERS  
ASCENDED!

THEIR **SYMBIOTS** WERE  
SOMEHOW **AUGMENTED** AND  
FORCED TO BRING FORTH  
NEW, **DESTRUCTIVE**  
ABILITIES...

...AND WITH THOSE POWERS,  
**THE DYNASTY** TURNED ON THE  
REST OF THE GARDENERS AND  
THE WORLDS THEY NURTURED!



DURING ONE OF MY  
MORE "OUTLANDISH"  
EXPEDITIONS, I WAS  
ABLE TO CONDUCT AN  
INTERVIEW WITH ONE  
OF THE DYNASTY'S  
SURVIVING SYMBIOT  
COLONIES.

I TOOK SCANS AND  
LEARNED OF THE  
TERRIBLE HAVOC THE  
DYNASTY INFLICTED ON  
VICTIMS ACROSS THE  
KNOWN UNIVERSE.

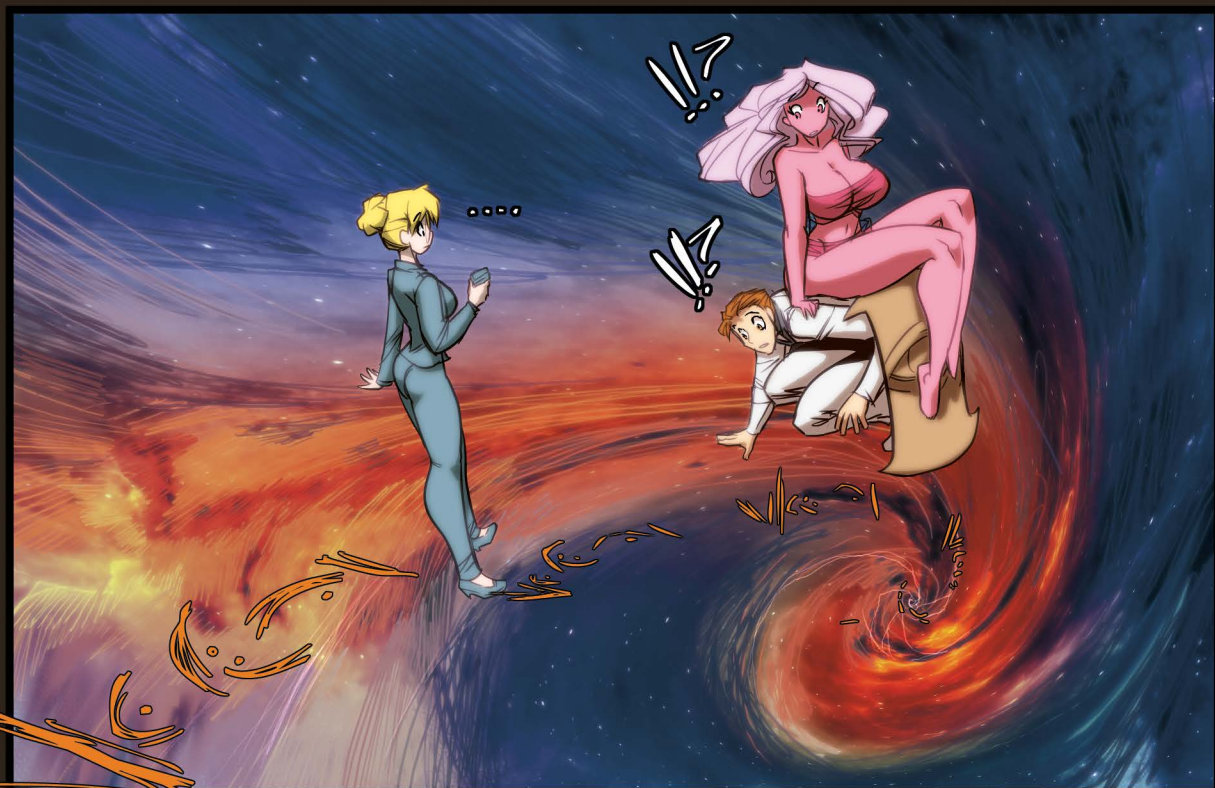
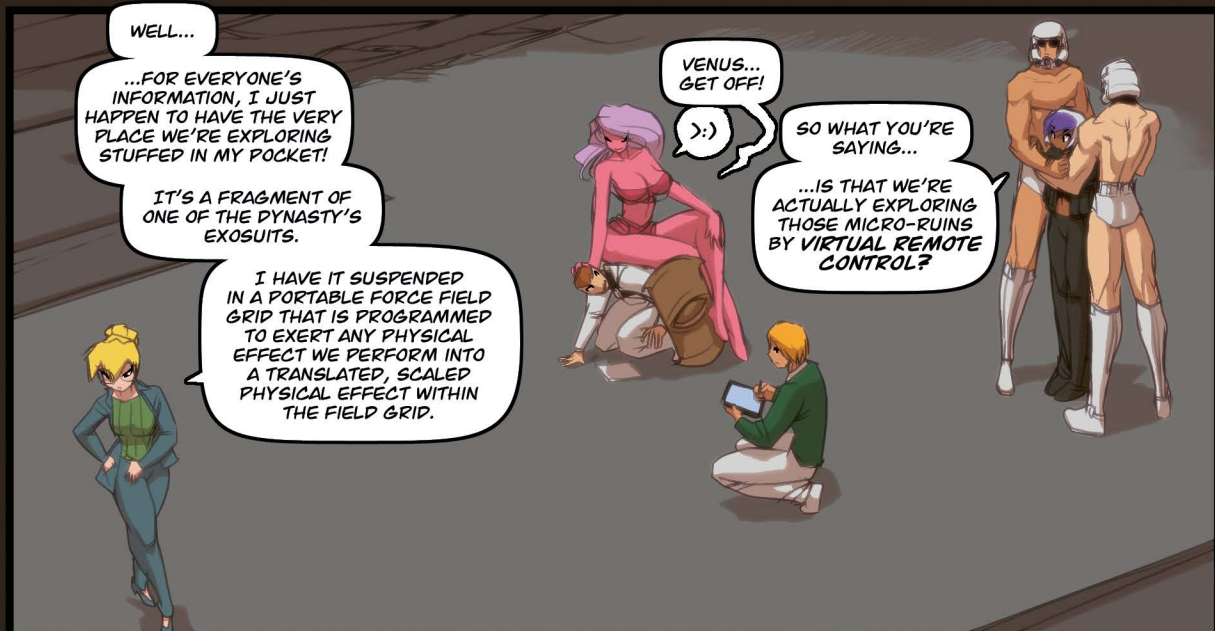
BUT THERE'S ONE  
MYSTERY I HAVEN'T  
BEEN ABLE TO SOLVE  
TO ANY SATISFACTION.

AFTER THOUSANDS AND  
THOUSANDS OF YEARS OF  
BULLYING GALAXIES... WHY  
DID THE DYNASTY ABANDON  
THEIR POWERS AND FLEE  
INTO THE DIMENSIONAL  
SWIRLING MORASS OF  
QUASI-SPACE?

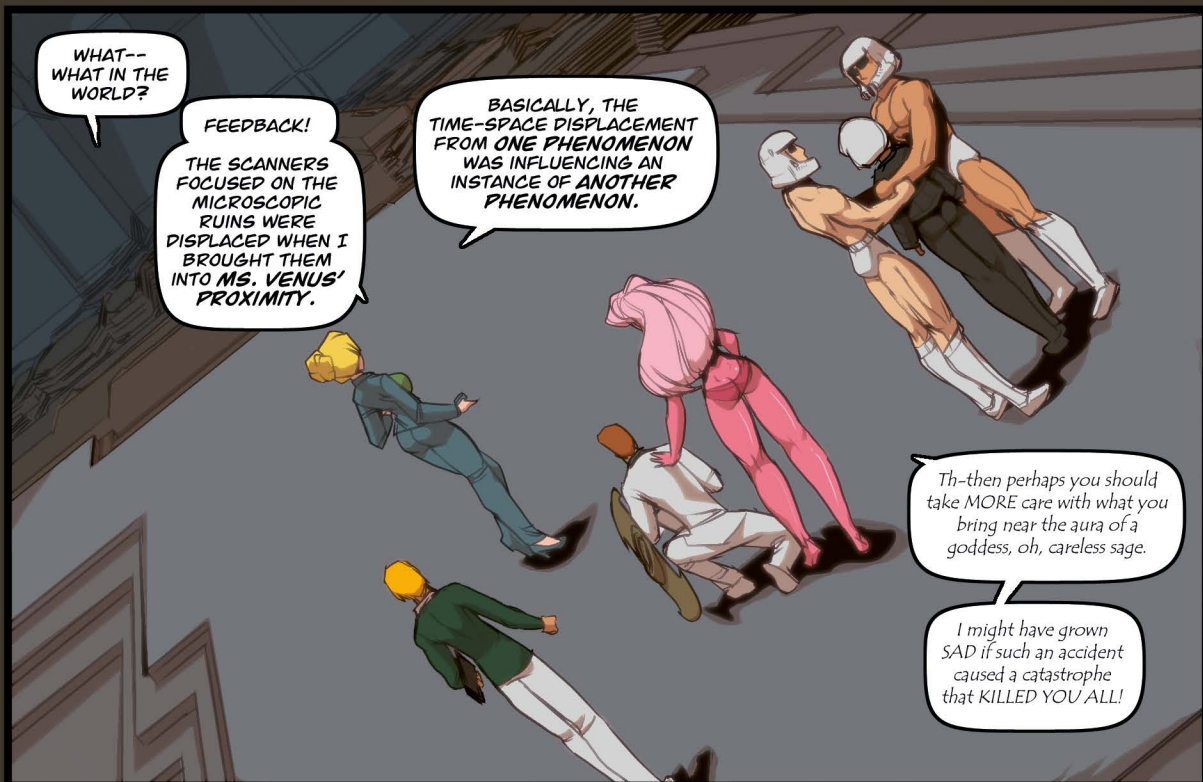












WHAT--  
WHAT IN THE  
WORLD?

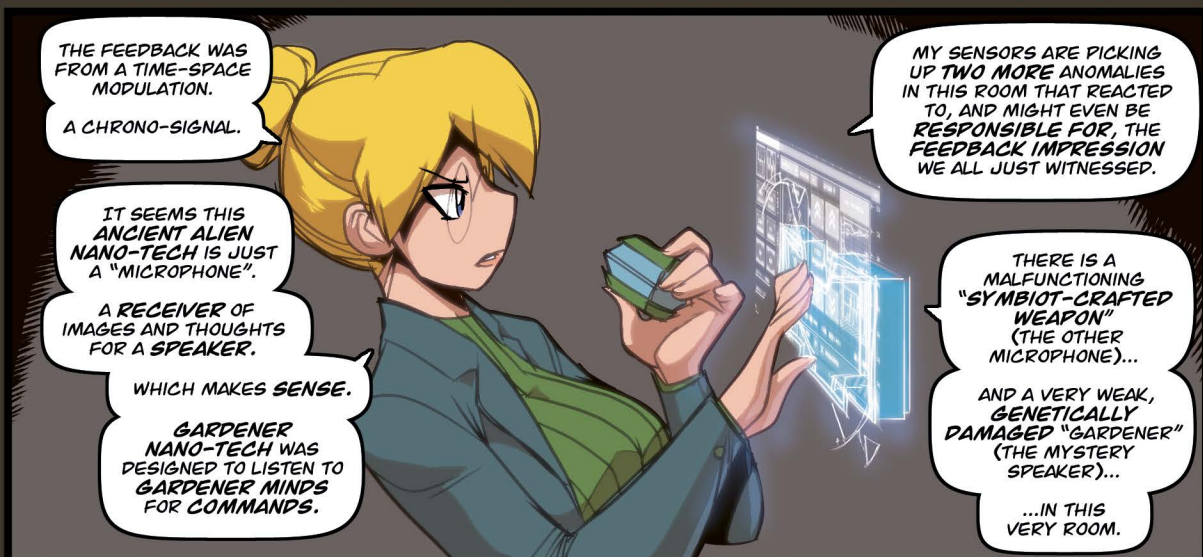
FEEDBACK!

THE SCANNERS  
FOCUSED ON THE  
MICROSCOPIC  
RUINS WERE  
DISPLACED WHEN I  
BROUGHT THEM  
INTO **MS. VENUS'**  
PROXIMITY.

BASICALLY, THE  
TIME-SPACE DISPLACEMENT  
FROM **ONE PHENOMENON**  
WAS INFLUENCING AN  
INSTANCE OF **ANOTHER**  
PHENOMENON.

Th-then perhaps you should  
take **MORE** care with what you  
bring near the aura of a  
goddess, oh, careless sage.

I might have grown  
SAD if such an accident  
caused a catastrophe  
that **KILLED YOU ALL!**



THE FEEDBACK WAS  
FROM A TIME-SPACE  
MODULATION.

A CHRONO-SIGNAL.

IT SEEMS THIS  
**ANCIENT ALIEN**  
**NANO-TECH** IS JUST  
A "MICROPHONE".

A RECEIVER OF  
IMAGES AND THOUGHTS  
FOR A **SPEAKER**.

WHICH MAKES SENSE.

**GARDENER**  
**NANO-TECH** WAS  
DESIGNED TO LISTEN TO  
**GARDENER MINDS**  
FOR **COMMANDS**.

MY SENSORS ARE PICKING  
UP **TWO MORE ANOMALIES**  
IN THIS ROOM THAT REACTED  
TO, AND MIGHT EVEN BE  
**RESPONSIBLE FOR**, THE  
**FEEDBACK IMPRESSION**  
WE ALL JUST WITNESSED.

THERE IS A  
MALFUNCTIONING  
**"SYMBIOT-CRAFTED**  
**WEAPON"**  
(THE OTHER  
MICROPHONE)...

AND A VERY WEAK,  
**GENETICALLY**  
**DAMAGED "GARDENER"**  
(THE **MYSTERY**  
**SPEAKER**)...

...IN THIS  
VERY ROOM.

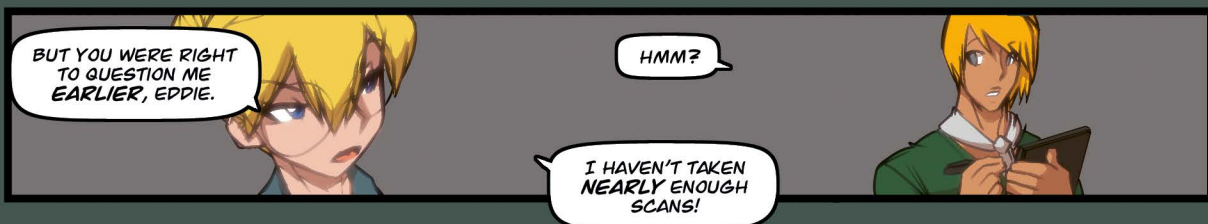


WAIT A MINUTE...

PROFESSOR...ARE YOU  
SAYING THAT **VENUS...** AND  
PERHAPS ALL OF THE OLD  
**OLYMPIAN GODS...**

...WERE **ORIGINALLY**  
**GARDENERS!?!**









A-ACTUALLY...  
I WAS HOPING  
YOU COULD--  
UHM...TAKE ONE  
OF MY **SURVEY**  
**MODULES** WITH  
YOU ON YOUR  
TRIP TO AEBRA!

WAIT...  
WAIT A  
MINUTE!!!

THIS IS **EXACTLY** WHAT  
YOU WANTED ME TO DO  
THAT TIME WHEN I WENT  
**FISHING** FOR "SCARFACE"  
ON THE **S.S. TUNAQUEEN**  
FIVE YEARS AGO!!!

YEAH!...

THAT WAS THE TIME  
WHEN THAT **HUGE**  
**THINGIE** ATTACKED  
MY BOAT!

ONLY **THIS** TIME, STRYYP'S HOME  
PLANET INVITED TIFFY OVER FOR  
HER **KRYN PRINCESS SUPER-**  
**DUPER BIRTHDAY BASH!**



AND NOW, YOU WANT ME TO  
DRAG YET ANOTHER OF YOUR  
WEIRD-SCIENCE PROJECTS  
ALONG!

WAIT--  
D-DON'T **BLOW**  
A **GASKET**,  
BRITTANNY!

HEAR ME OUT  
ON THIS ONE!

**NO! YOU**  
**HEAR ME**  
**OUT!**

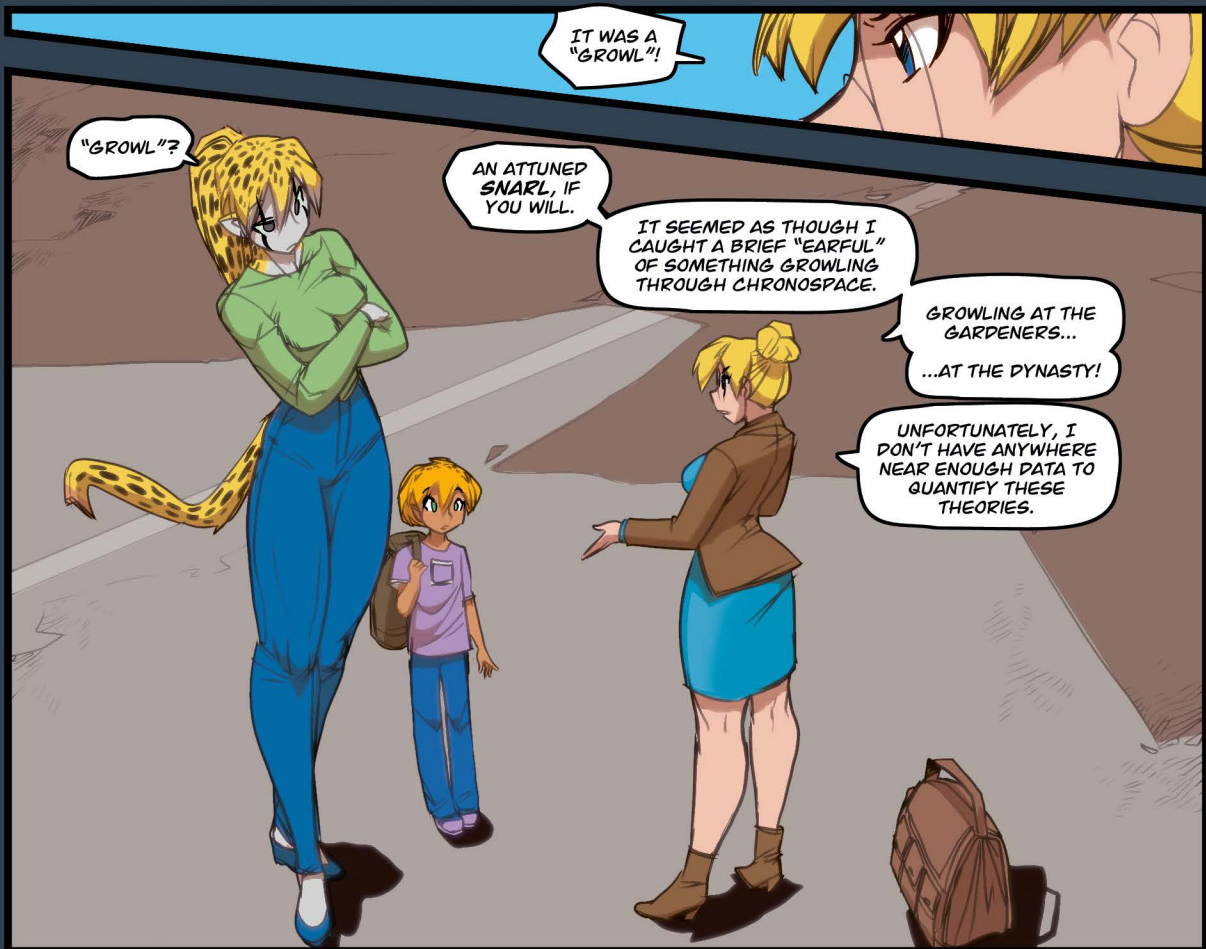


THIS IS MY LITTLE GIRL'S  
**INTERPLANETARY BIRTHDAY**  
**CELEBRATION** WITH ALL OF  
HER **INTERPLANETARY**  
ROYAL KRYN "IN-LAWS"!

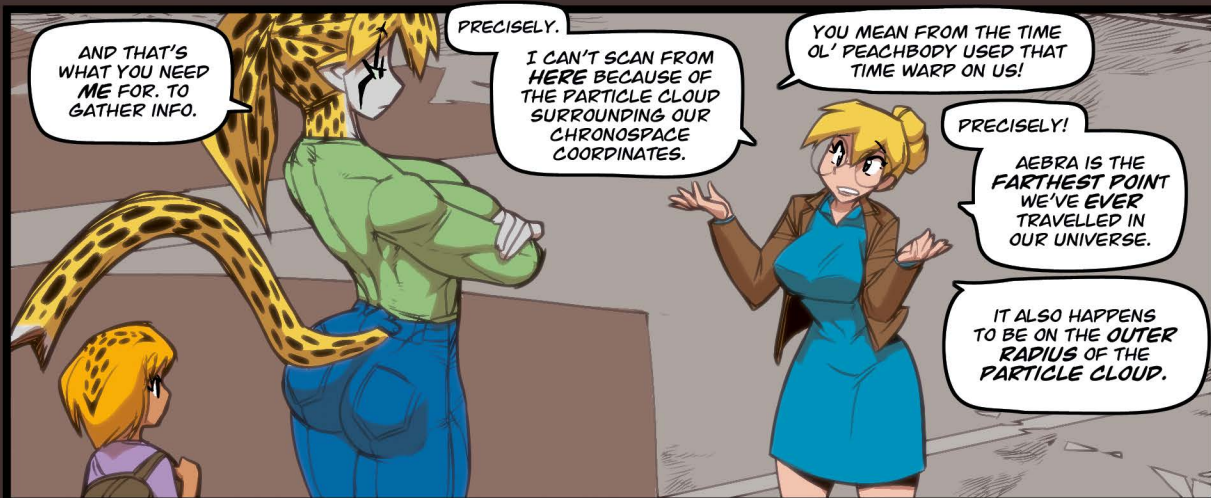
PENNY, STRYYP AND ACE  
ALL CAME TOGETHER, GOT  
THE **VISIGOTH** READY AND  
EVERYTHING, AND SET IT  
ALL UP **JUST** FOR US!

THIS IS **NOT**  
GINA DIGGERS'  
**HYPERSPACE**  
**SCIENCE BUS!!!**













**SHREE**

HERE YA GO, GINA!  
ONE PLASMA-WAVE BARBECUE GRILL DELIVERY, COURTESY OF BRI'S CRAZY TAXI SERVICE!

AND ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANNA DRIVE OUT WITH ME AND ZAN TO HIS BEACH HOUSE THIS WEEKEND?

NEZ SAID HE'D GO IF YOU'D GO!

YOU GUYS CAN HANG OUT IN THE WEST WING WHILE WE TAKE THE EAST WING!

NO THANKS, BRIANNA, I HAVE A TON OF WORK TO FINISH THIS QUARTER.

HEY! BRITANNY! SAY "HI" TO EVERYBODY IN EL DORADO CITY FOR ME!

HELLO!

ZAN ENTHUSIASTICALLY GREET'S BRIANNA'S TRIBE!

NOW THEN...

HOW ABOUT THIS, BRITANNY?

REMEMBER MY LATEST INVENTION?

THE "PICNEXUS" PLASMA-WAVE BARBECUE GRILL?

WHEN STRYYP USED AN EARLIER, BULKIER VERSION OF THIS BABY AT THE ASTRAL RIFT COOKOUT...

...HE RAVED THAT IT WAS THE BEST COOKING SURFACE HE'S EVER UTILIZED...

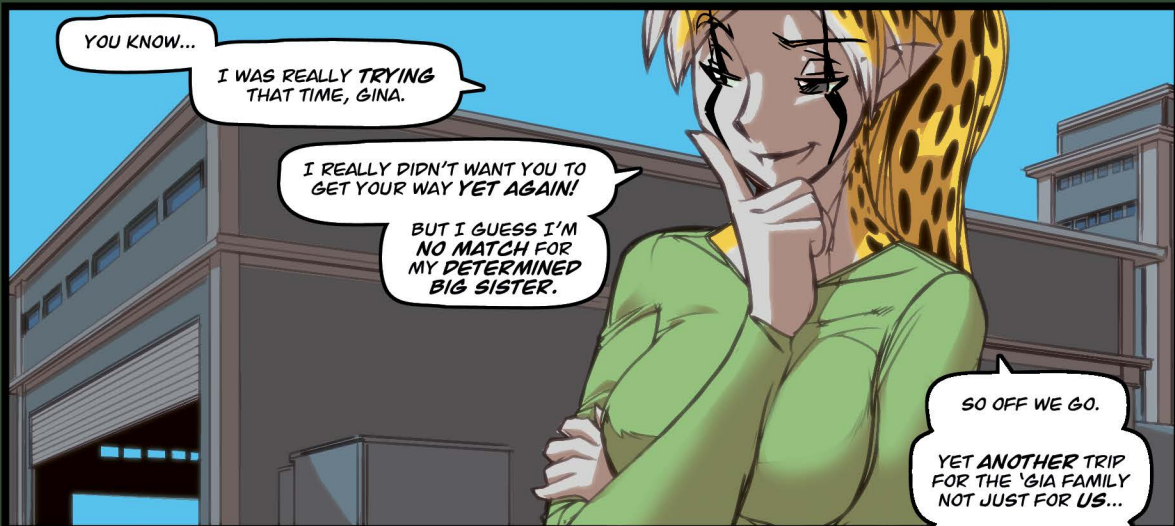
...SURPASSING THE ROYAL OVENS AND STOVES OF EL DORADO BY QUANTUM LEAPS!

...IMAGINE HOW SCRUMPELICIOUS TIFFANY'S KRYN PRINCESS BIRTHDAY FEAST WILL TASTE...

...WHEN STRYYP COOKS IT UP ON THIS LITTLE HONEY!

AS LONG AS YOU DON'T MIND THAT I INSTALLED AN EXTRINSIC LITTLE CHRONOSENSOR INSIDE TO TAKE A FEW TINY SCANS FOR MY RESEARCH!





YOU KNOW...

I WAS REALLY TRYING  
THAT TIME, GINA.

I REALLY DIDN'T WANT YOU TO  
GET YOUR WAY YET AGAIN!

BUT I GUESS I'M  
NO MATCH FOR  
MY DETERMINED  
BIG SISTER.

SO OFF WE GO.

YET ANOTHER TRIP  
FOR THE 'GIA FAMILY  
NOT JUST FOR US...

...BUT ALSO IN THE  
NAME OF GINA'S  
BOTTOMLESS  
SCIENTIFIC  
CURIOSITY!

BUT...  
NEXT TIME...

...GO EASIER  
ON ME, OKAY?



ALL RIGHT, Y'ALL...  
TWO MINUTES UNTIL WE  
ESCAPE THE NADIR OF  
EARTH'S GRAVITY WELL.

THREE MORE MINUTES  
IN HYPERSPACE...  
AND TWO MORE HOURS  
TO AEBRA AFTER THAT!

SO LAY BACK  
'N' CHILL!

LEAVE TH'  
DRIVIN' TO ACE,  
DIG?

SWITCHING  
OVER FROM  
INERTIAL DRIVE  
COMPENSATION,  
PENNY.

THANKS, ACE...  
THE COM'S ALL  
YOURS.

AND...YOU KNOW, BRIT'?

I FIND IT HARD TO BLAME  
GINA FOR ASKING YOU FOR  
A FAVOR...EVEN WHILE  
YOU'RE JUST TRYING TO  
HAVE SOME QUALITY  
TIME WITH YOUR  
FAMILY...

HMM?











SORRY TO  
BUST IN ON  
Y'ALL...

IT'S OKAY, ACE...  
TO TELL THE TRUTH,  
I **SHOULD** BE HELPING  
TIFFY GET READY FOR  
THE **ROYAL RED**  
CARPET WHEN WE  
TOUCH DOWN.

...BUT I NEED PENNY TO  
FOCUS ON MONITORING  
OUR PROGRESS ON THE  
NAV-COMPUTER.

ALREADY  
TAKEN CARE OF,  
BRITANNY.

WE'RE AT MINUS  
FORTY SECONDS  
TO THE NADIR!

TIFANNY  
FIGURED OUT  
HOW TO DON A  
**CEREMONIAL**  
ROBE ALL BY  
HERSELF.



♥ **TADAH!!!** ♥  
MOMMA!  
HOW DO I  
LOOK!?





WHAA!

PENNY!  
GET A PICTURE!  
GET A PICTURE!

GHN!

B-BRITANNY!?!

HEY!  
THIS IS ALL  
YOUR FAULT,  
MUFFIN!

DRESSIN'  
UP WITHOUT  
TELLIN' ME!

YOU SHOULD  
HAVE KNOWN  
I'D GO INTO  
**SQUEE MODE**  
AT FIRST  
SIGHT!



"SQUEE MODE"?!

HAHAHA!  
MOMMA, YOU'RE  
SMUSHING ME!

OH, CRUP...  
WAIT A MINUTE,  
PENNY!

I-I GOTTA GET  
MY KRYN-STYLE  
OUTFIT ON TOO!



N-NOBODY  
MOVE!!!

I'LL BE RIGHT  
BACK!!!

PENNY! WHERE  
YOU AT, GIRL?

HUH?

WE'RE  
JUMPIN'!

I NEED THE SPOT  
ON OUR COURSE  
PROGRESS!

OH!!!





...AND I MIGHT NEED A DOUBLE TAKE ON THIS COURSE BECAUSE--

WHA-WHAT IN THE...

THERE'S A HUGE GRAVITONIC ANOMALY IN OUR PATH!?!

YEAH... THAT'S WHAT'S FREAKING ME OUT!

IT WASN'T THERE WHEN YOU DID THE MATH THIS MORNING!



HMMM.

WE HAVE TO DELAY OUR HYPERSPACE JUMP NOW!

AT LEAST UNTIL WE FIND OUT WHAT JUST PARKED ON OUR HYPERSPACE "HOV-LANE"!

OUR BUMP IN THE ROAD IS ABOUT ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-TWO MILLION LIGHT YEARS AWAY...

I'LL HAVE THE SHIP'S A.I. WARM UP THE PHASED SPACE DISSONANCE CONE ON THE STARBOARD SENSOR ARRAY.

LET'S LOOK AT WHAT BOUNCES BACK AT US FROM HERE.



UM...ACTUALLY, MA'AM...THERE'S ALREADY A HIGH-RESOLUTION IMPRESSION OF THAT AREA IN THE SCANNER DATA BANK!

AHA! GOOD WORK, KIT! I KNEW IT WAS A GOOD IDEA TO UPGRADE AND OVERHAUL YOUR PROCESSOR CORE THIS MONTH!

M-MA'AM!!! I DIDN'T PUT IT THERE!

SCANS OF THIS RESOLUTION ARE BEYOND MY CAPABILITY!!!

WHAT?



WHOEVER THEY ARE... THEY GOT GANKED!

AND THOSE SHIPS ARE LOOKIN' A LITTLE FAMILIAR, Y'ALL!

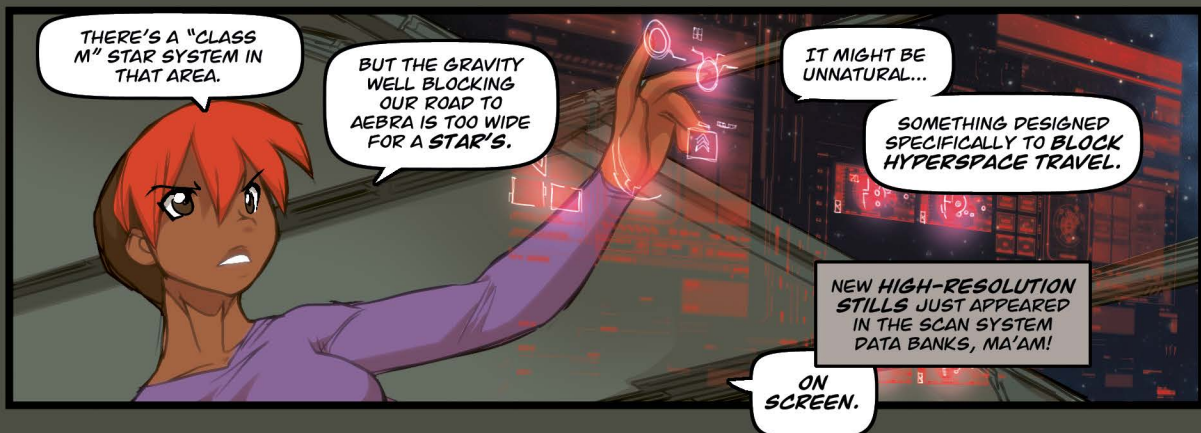
INDEED!

THEY'RE AMARAN SCOUT SHIPS!

AMARAN TECHNOLOGY IS HOW THE KRYN MANAGED TO REACH THE STARS!

THOSE VICTIMS ARE FRIENDS OF MY PEOPLE!





THERE'S A "CLASS M" STAR SYSTEM IN THAT AREA.

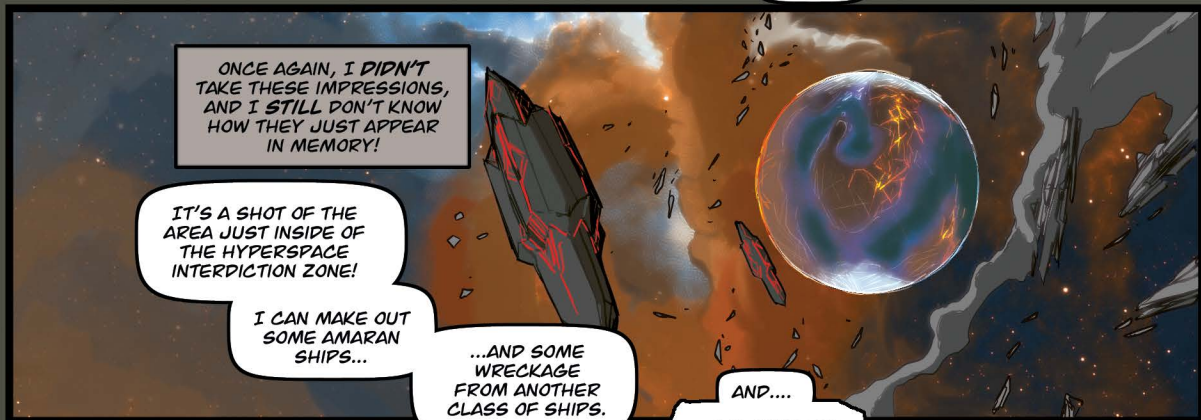
BUT THE GRAVITY WELL BLOCKING OUR ROAD TO AEBRA IS TOO WIDE FOR A STAR'S.

IT MIGHT BE UNNATURAL...

SOMETHING DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY TO BLOCK HYPERSPACE TRAVEL.

NEW HIGH-RESOLUTION STILLS JUST APPEARED IN THE SCAN SYSTEM DATA BANKS, MA'AM!

ON SCREEN.



ONCE AGAIN, I DIDN'T TAKE THESE IMPRESSIONS, AND I STILL DON'T KNOW HOW THEY JUST APPEAR IN MEMORY!

IT'S A SHOT OF THE AREA JUST INSIDE OF THE HYPERSPACE INTERDICTION ZONE!

I CAN MAKE OUT SOME AMARAN SHIPS...

...AND SOME WRECKAGE FROM ANOTHER CLASS OF SHIPS.

AND....

...THE DYNASTY.



THAT'S A DYNASTY PILLAR BURNING THAT PLANET!

I CONCUR, MISTER 'GIA...

IT APPEARS THE DYNASTY'S RE-EMERGENCE HAS BEGUN!



FORGIVE ME FOR HACKING INTO YOUR DATA BASE, A.I. KIT.

MASTER GINA INSTALLED ME WITHIN HER SISTER'S PRESENT ONLY TO ACTIVATE IN JUST SUCH AN EMERGENCY.

WAIT A MINUTE...

IN THIS, I STAND READY TO SUPPORT AND ASSIST.

I KNOW THAT SNARKY, SMART-@\$\$ COMPUTERY VOICE!

IT'S YOU, AIN'T IT, 'PUTER!!!

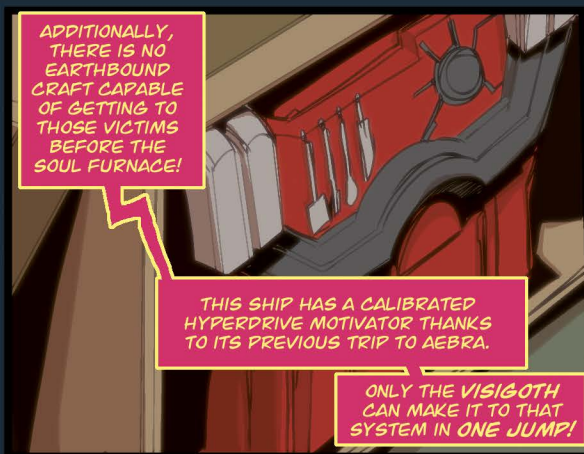
YOU'RE THE SAME A.I. THAT GINA SNUCK ON BOARD MY FISHIN' BOAT YEARS AGO!!!

GINA PUT YOU IN THE BARBECUE GRILL!!!





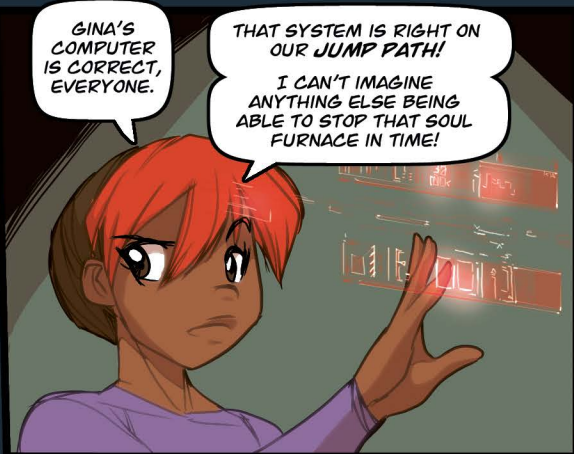




ADDITIONALLY, THERE IS NO EARTHBOUND CRAFT CAPABLE OF GETTING TO THOSE VICTIMS BEFORE THE SOUL FURNACE!

THIS SHIP HAS A CALIBRATED HYPERDRIVE MOTIVATOR THANKS TO ITS PREVIOUS TRIP TO AEBRA.

ONLY THE VISIGOTH CAN MAKE IT TO THAT SYSTEM IN ONE JUMP!



GINA'S COMPUTER IS CORRECT, EVERYONE.

THAT SYSTEM IS RIGHT ON OUR JUMP PATH!

I CAN'T IMAGINE ANYTHING ELSE BEING ABLE TO STOP THAT SOUL FURNACE IN TIME!



PENNY! HOW CLOSE ARE WE TO GINA'S PET SPACE FORTRESS, KIA?

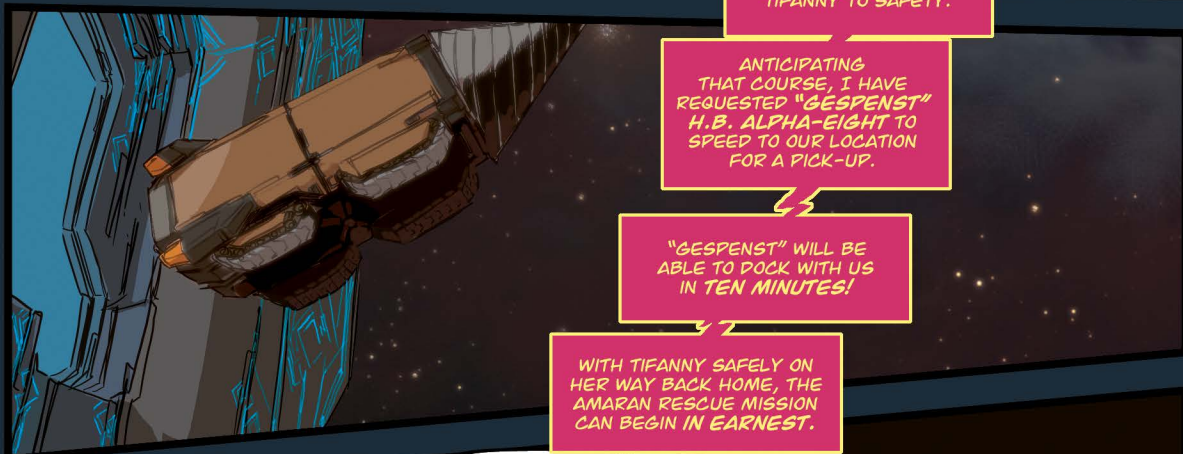
WE'RE IN ITS "NEIGHBORHOOD" OUT HERE.

CAN'T BE MORE THAN FORTY THOUSAND MILES AWAY.

BUT WE'LL LOSE OUR JUMP CALCULATIONS IF WE MAKE A DETOUR FOR IT RIGHT NOW!

I DON'T THINK MRS. 'GIA IS SUGGESTING A DETOUR.

I BELIEVE MRS. 'GIA INTENDS TO SIGNAL FOR A **TRANSPORT** TO TAKE TIFFANY TO SAFETY.



ANTICIPATING THAT COURSE, I HAVE REQUESTED "**GESPENST**" H.B. ALPHA-EIGHT TO SPEED TO OUR LOCATION FOR A PICK-UP.

"GESPENST" WILL BE ABLE TO DOCK WITH US IN TEN MINUTES!

WITH TIFFANY SAFELY ON HER WAY BACK HOME, THE AMARAN RESCUE MISSION CAN BEGIN IN EARNEST.



YOU'RE JUST AS SMART-@\$\$Y AS EVER, 'PUTER!!!

BRITTANY!

"I'LL NEED YOU TO STAY BEHIND AS WELL!"

"WHERE I KNOW YOU'LL BE SAFE!"







"EARTH".

IT IS LIKELY THEIR  
DISCOVERY OF THIS  
CONVERSION MISSION  
WAS AN ACCIDENT.

HOWEVER, WE DOUBT  
THE TRUE, SPINE-CHILLING,  
KNEE-TREMBLING NATURE  
OF OUR ENDEAVOR HAS  
BEEN DISCOVERED.

NEVERTHELESS,  
WE SHALL PREPARE  
INTERFERENCE  
CONTINGENCIES!

YOU HAVE  
DONE WELL,  
MY CHILDREN.

I SEE NOW THE GRAVE ERROR  
I MADE A THOUSAND, THOUSAND  
YEARS AGO IN NOT INCLUDING  
YOUR PEOPLE INTO THE FAMILY.

I SAW YOU AS  
WEAKLINGS.

I OVERLOOKED YOUR  
TRUE STRENGTHS.

JANRIEL.

RIOL.

I LEAVE  
EVERYTHING  
TO YOU!

YES, FATHER  
RIO.

ALL WILL  
JOIN US...  
...OR DIE.

CONTINUED...