

#3

DAVE JONES

# FRONTIER



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**D.J.  
COMICS**



## ELITE'S HISTORY

BOTH ELITE & ELITE II FRONTIER COMPUTER GAMES MADE HISTORY WHEN THEY WERE DEVELOPED BY DAVID BRABEN & IAN BELL. EVEN TODAY 25 YEARS AFTER ELITE HIT THE SHELVES FOR THE BBC MICRO COMPUTER, THE ELITE SERIES IS STILL A BIG HIT WITH MILLIONS OF GAMERS ALL OVER THE WORLD. THERE IS A HUGE FOLLOWING ON THE INTERNET WITH COUNTLESS WEBSITES, FORUMS AND PROGRAMMERS THAT CONTINUE TO TWEAK THE GRAPHICS AND GAME PLAY TO BRING BACK THE APPEAL. ELITE HAS ALSO INSPIRED MANY OTHER GAMES USING THE SAME OR SIMILAR GAME STYLE, SUCH AS EVE ONLINE, X3 TERRAN CONFLICT AND EVEN A COMMUNITY BASED GAME IN DEVELOPMENT CALLED PIONEER. THERE IS ON AND OFF TALK OF A 4TH INSTALMENT OF THE SERIES. PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD ARE PLEADING WITH DEVELOPER BRABEN TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE GAME AS IT HAS BEEN A LONG AWAITED SEQUEL THAT COULD BRING NEWER AND YOUNGER PEOPLE INTO THE FRANCHISE. I PERSONALLY HOPE THAT BRABEN AND HIS TEAM DO FINALLY START WORKING ON ELITE 4 AS SOON AS POSSIBLE...

## THE COMIC

THIS COMIC IS FOR NON PROFIT REASONS & IS MEANT PURELY AS FICTIONAL ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE FANS AND GAMERS OF THE 90'S THAT SPENT MANY MONTHS EVEN YEARS PLAYING FRONTIER: ELITE 2. THE STORY FOLLOWS JOHN JAMESON THE GRANDCHILD OF NOTORIOUS SPACE ADVENTURER PETER JAMESON, WHO IS KILLED BY PIRATES AND SUBSEQUENTLY THROWS JOHN INTO THE WORLD OF SPACE EXPLORATION. IT WILL COVER AS MUCH FROM FRONTIER AS POSSIBLE, KEEPING THE STORY ORIGINAL AND AS CLOSE TO THE GAME AS POSSIBLE, WITH AN IN DEPTH STORYLINE AND ILLUSTRATED WITH STATE OF THE ART COMPUTER GRAPHICS. ALL RIGHTFUL COPYRIGHTS BELONG TO DAVID BRABEN AND HIS TEAM, HOWEVER THIS COMIC IS DEDICATED TO BRABEN AND ALL THE FANS OF THIS TRULY AMAZING GAME.

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STORY, ARTWORK & TEXT

DAVE JONES

ORIGINAL STORY

DAVID BRABEN  
IAN BELL



# TIMELINE

- 1950S - FIRST MAN IN SPACE, CONTROLLED NUCLEAR FISSION, TRANSISTOR, START OF THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE.
- 1960S - FIRST MAN ON MOON, COMMERCIAL FISSION POWER, INTEGRATED CIRCUITS, COMPUTERS.
- 1970S - PROBES IN SOLAR STSTEM.
- 1980S - END OF FIRST NUCLEAR ARMS RACE.
- 1990S - FIRST PROBE LANDED ON MARS
- 2000S - FIRST SIGNS OF GLOBAL WARMING, GOVERNMENTS LOOK AT GREEN ENERGY SOLUTIONS.
- 2010S - FIRST SERIOUS POPULATION PROBLEMS ON EARTH.
- 2020S - FIRST INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ENFORCEMENT AGENCY, FIRST COMMERCIAL SPACE STATION.
- 2030S - MAJOR ENERGY CRISIS, FOSSIL FUEL RESTRICTIONS, RELIGIOUS UNREST, FIRST BABY BORN OFF EARTH.
- 2040S - WORLD WAR III. HUGE TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS, HUGE LOSS OF LIFE, DREADFUL ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE.
- 2050S - WAR GRADUALLY ABANDONED DUE TO POPULAR REBELLIONS. COMMERCIAL FUSION POWER.
- 2060S - REBUILDING. DOMINANCE OF CORPORATIONS INCREASED.
- 2070S - FIRST MAN ON MARS, FIRST PERMANENT MOON BASE.
- 2080S - MANNED EXPLORATION OF SOLAR SYSTEM, ORBITAL CITIES AROUND EARTH, FIRST INTERSTELLAR PROBES LAUNCHED.
- 2090S - FIRST PERMANENT MARS BASE, HEAVY INDUSTRY ON MOON.
- 2100S - DISCOVERY OF FOSSILS ON MARS BASE, "HYPERSPACE" DISCOVERED, HUMANS THROUGHOUT SOLAR SYSTEM.
- 2110S - ARRIVAL OF MESSAGE FROM FIRST INTERSTELLAR PROBE TO ALPHA CENTAURI SYSTEM. FIRST PICTURES TAKEN OF AN EXTRA-SOLAR PLANET IN THE LAGRANGE POINT ON THE TWO MAIN STARS.
- 2120S - PRESENCE OF LIFE ON TAU CETI 3 DETECTED, FIRST ARMED CONFLICT IN SPACE OVER RIGHTS IN THE ASTEROID BELT.
- 2130S - HYPERSPACE CAPABLE PROBES SENT TO ALL NEARBY SYSTEMS.
- 2140S - MANNED SPACE CRAFT SENT TO TAU CETI.
- 2150S - COLONY ESTABLISHED ON TAU CETI 3. MAJOR CORPORATIONS SENDING FIRST PRIVATE COLONY SHIPS.
- 2160S - THE RACE FOR THE STARS. ENOURMOUS PRODUCTION EFFORT TO PRODUCE SHIPS, AND MASS EXODUS STARTED.
- 2170S - FIRST ATTEMPT TO TERRA-FORM MARS STARTED.
- 2180S - LIFE ON DELTA PARVONIS DISCOVERED AND MADE EXTINCT IN SAME YEAR FROM BACTERIOLOGICAL INFECTION.
- 2190S - DISCOVERY OF LIFE ON BETA HYDRI 4, ALTAIR 5. HUMAN COLONIALS SPREADING OUT OF CONTROL.
- 2200S - EARTH ENVIRONMENTAL RECOVERY PROGRAM STARTED, TERRAFORMING OF MARS ABANDONED.
- 2220S - EXTINCTIONS ON TAU CETI 3 INCREASING. EARTH THREATENS TO SEND A POLICE FORCE IF NOTHING IS DONE ABOUT IT.
- 2230S - ULTIMATUM SENT TO TAU CETI IGNORED.
- 2240S - FIRST INTERSTELLAR BATTLE, FORMATION OF THE FEDERATION, FOUNDER MEMBERS: EARTH, TAU CETI, DELTA PAVONIS, ALTAIR, BETA HYDRI.
- 2260S - SPREAD OF FEDERATION INFLUENCE.
- 2270S - SECOND ATTEMPT TO TERRA-FORM MARS STARTED.
- 2280S - DISCOVERY OF FIRST NON-HUMAN RELIC IN SPACE. ORIGIN STILL UNKNOWN IN 3200.
- 2290S - FIRST MAN "OUTSIDE" ON MARS (IE BREATHING UNAIDED) ON COMPLETION OF TERRAFORMING.
- 2300S - REMAINING INDIGENOUS LIFE ON TAU CETI 3 PRESERVED IN SPECIAL ENCLOSURES.
- 2310S - NEWS OF ELIMINATION OF A REPUTEDLY SENTIENT RACE ON ACHENAR 6D BY PRIVATE COLONISTS CAUSES OUTRAGE IN THE FEDERATION. ACHENAR REFUSES TO JOIN FEDERATION, MANY TERRA-FORMING PROJECTS STARTED.
- 2320S - FEDERATION SENDS WAR FLEET TO ACHENAR. RESULTING ENORMOUS SPACE BATTLE WON BY ACHENAR.
- 2330S - SPREAD OF EMPIRE FROM ACHENAR TO SURROUNDING WORLDS. WAR BETWEEN EMPIRE AND FEDERATION.
- 2340S - CONTINUING BATTLES BETWEEN FEDERATION AND EMPIRE.
- 2350S - SIRUS CORPORATION FOUNDED, AND GREW RICH SUPPLYING THE WAR FLEETS.
- 2380S - TREATY SIGNED BETWEEN EMPIRE AND FEDERATION. THE COLD WAR BEGINS....




THERE WAS NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, WE HAD NOWHERE TO GO, NOT ENOUGH GUN MOUNTS TO FIRE ON ALL OF THEM, WE COULDN'T EVEN MAKE AN EMERGENCY JUMP WITHOUT HITTING AT LEAST THREE ENEMY SHIPS HEAD ON AT HYPERSPACE SPEED. THEY HAD US SURROUNDED IN A PERFECTLY EXECUTED BOXED IN FORMATION, OPTIONS WERE LIMITED...



WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO, SIR? THEY ARE ALL ARMED WITH PLASMA ACCELERATORS & THERE IS NO SHIELD UNIT AVAILABLE TO WITHSTAND A SECOND OF THAT KIND OF BLAST DAMAGE.

THERE IS ALWAYS A SOLUTION, YOU JUST HAVE TO BE SMARTER THAN YOUR ENEMY. PLEASE TELL ME WE STILL HAVE THAT PROTOTYPE EMP BOMB ON LOAN FROM THE MILITARY. WE WERE MEANT TO FIELD TEST IT FOR THEM, BUT DIDN'T GET ROUND TO IT.





WE DO HAVE IT SOMEWHERE IN THE CARGO HOLD BURIED UNDER TONS OF COMPUTERS & LUXURY GOODS. THAT ISN'T THE PROBLEM, TO DETONATE THAT BOMB WE NEED TO HAVE THE EMP SHIELD TO PROTECT THIS SHIP FROM THE MAGNETIC PULSE THAT SHUTS EVERYTHING DOWN. WE ATTACHED THE SHIELD GENERATOR TO THE HULL, BUT NEVER GOT ROUND TO PLUGGING IT IN. SOMEONE NEEDS TO WIRE IT UP IN THE ENGINE ROOM.

NOTHING IS EVER SIMPLE, IS IT? OKAY, PEOPLE, LISTEN UP. WE HAVE APPROXIMATELY 4 MINUTES TO PULL OFF A MIRACLE.



COOPER, I NEED YOU TO TAKE MARSDEN TO THE HOLD, FIND THAT BOMB & PUT IT IN THE SHUTTLE. PREP THE SHUTTLE FOR LAUNCH & WIRE IN THE EMP SHIELD. YOU DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME SO BE QUICK. ANYONE ELSE NOT IN FRONT OF A NAVIGATIONAL CONSOLE I NEED YOU TO MAN A GUNNERY TURRENT. TARGET ONLY THE ENEMY SHIPS DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF US, WAIT FOR MY COMMAND TO FIRE, DO NOT FIRE BEFORE MY ORDER.



YOU HEARD THE CAPTAIN, GET TO IT. EVERYONE TO YOUR POSTS, ACTION STATIONS, MAN THE GUNNERY TURRETS.

MURRAY & STANTON, STAY PUT, I NEED YOU IN HERE. MURRAY, PLOT A COURSE FOR SOL & CHARGE THE HYPERDRIVE. STANTON, SEND A TRANS REQUEST TO THE ENEMY SHIP IN COMMAND.




MESSAGE INCOMING!

YOU?

CAPTAIN JAMESON... LOOK AT YOU, WHY HAVEN'T YOU DONE WELL FOR YOURSELF? IT HAS TAKEN ME FIFTEEN YEARS TO FINALLY TRACK YOU DOWN & I HAD TO JOIN THE IMPERIAL NAVY TO MAKE IT EASIER. YOU SHOULD HAVE KILLED ME WHEN YOU HAD THE CHANCE, BUT NO, YOU LEFT ME TO DIE IN MY ESCAPE POD. I WAS PICKED UP BY A TRANSPORT, & THEY CLEANED MY WOUNDS YOU LEFT ME SCARRED WITH.


JUST FOR THE RECORD, I WANTED TO KILL YOU & I WAS GOING TO, BUT I SPARED YOU TO GIVE YOU A 2ND CHANCE. IF I HAD OPENED FIRE I WOULD HAVE BEEN NO DIFFERENT FROM YOU. NOW LOOK AT YOU, A COMMON PIRATE, NOW HIDING BEHIND THE IMPERIAL UNIFORM.






WELL, AREN'T YOU THE HERO? STOP STALLING FOR TIME BECAUSE IT WON'T WORK.

YOU HAVE THREE MINUTES, CAPTAIN. BOTH YOU & THE TRAITOR, SURRENDER TO US OR WE DESTROY YOUR SHIP.



WHAT GUARANTEE DO I HAVE THAT YOU WILL KEEP YOUR WORD, MY CREW WILL BE SPARED?


ABSOLUTELY NONE. YOU JUST HAVE TO TRUST ME, BECAUSE I WILL STAND BY MY PROMISE THAT YOU & ALL YOUR CREW WILL BE FLOATING IN SPACE FOR ETERNITY IF YOU REFUSE.




MARSDEN, I GOT THE EMP BOMB. DO YOU HAVE THE SHIELD WIRED UP YET?

YOU NEED TO HURRY UP, WE ARE OUT OF TIME & I NEED HELP GETTING THIS THING ON THE SHUTTLE.

ALMOST... I HAVE TO REMOVE SOME OTHER MINOR ELECTRICAL CIRCUITS, LIKE THE DOOR CONTROLS OR THIS THING WILL TRIP OUT THE WHOLE SHIP ELECTRICS.




COME ON... COME ON... OKAY, I GOT IT!



EASY... THAT'S IT PASS IT UP, GENTLY.

THIS THING WEIGHS A TON.



CAPTAIN, THE SHUTTLE IS ARMED & THE EMP SHIELD IS NOW ACTIVATED.

ROGER THAT. CLEAR THE CARGO BAY, I AM GOING TO LAUNCH THE SHUTTLE IN TWENTY SECONDS.







WE UNLEASHED A FURIOUS BARRAGE OF LASER & PLASMA FIRE ON THE ENEMY, COMPLETELY SWITCHING THE ODDS INTO OUR FAVOUR...



AAAAAARRGGHH!



IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE THEY GET THEIR SYSTEMS BACK ONLINE. FULL POWER, WE NEED TO CLEAR THE BARRICADE & BE CAREFUL NOT TO FLY INTO ANY DEBRIS.



YES SIR.

SIR, WE ARE CLEAR TO JUMP TO HYPERSPACE.



PUNCH IT!

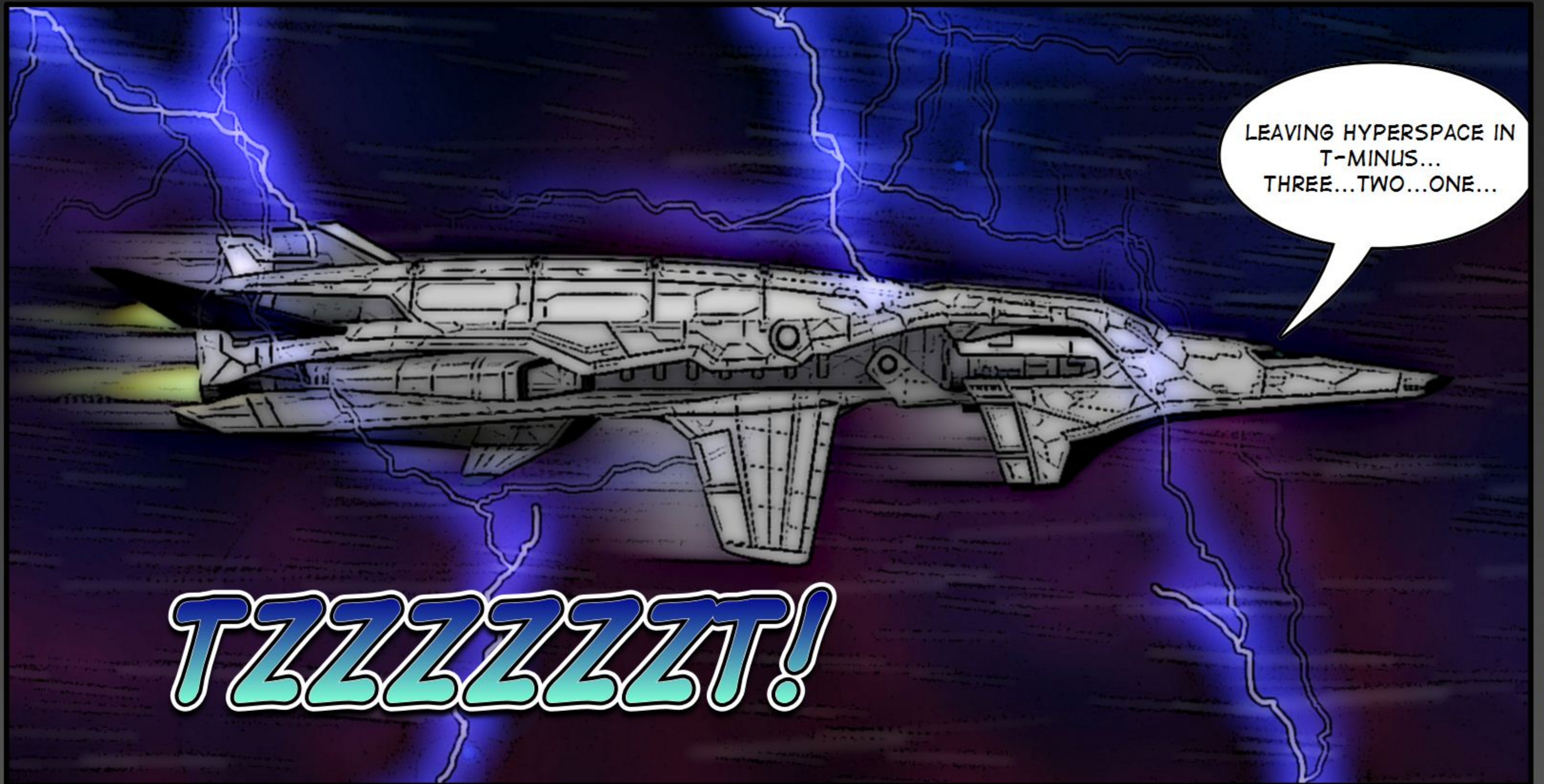






NAVIGATION SYSTEMS  
LOCKED, HYPERDRIVE  
ARMED... ENGAGING.

**WHHHUUUUUMPPP!**



LEAVING HYPERSPACE IN  
T-MINUS...  
THREE...TWO...ONE...

**TZZZZZZT!**



HYPERDRIVE DISENGAGED. WE  
ARE NOW IN SOL &  
APPROXIMATELY TWENTY TWO  
HOURS FROM OUR FINAL  
DESTINATION.

**Sol System**  
two days later



THAT'S HOW IT'S  
DONE! **YEAH!**  
**WOOOOOT!**

**YEAH!**  
HOW ON EARTH DID WE  
JUST PULL THAT OFF? I  
ACTUALLY THOUGHT WE  
WERE FINISHED.





THIS IS WHY YOU ALL JOINED MY CREW, BECAUSE YOU ARE THE BEST. EVERYONE ON THIS SHIP DID THEIR PART ADMIRABLY. WELL DONE, ALL OF YOU.

WE ARE ONLY THE BEST, BECAUSE WE ARE LED BY THE BEST.

STANTON, YOU ARE SUCH A SUCK UP.



WELL DONE TO YOU, MURRAY. YOUR NAVIGATIONAL SKILLS IS THE REAL REASON WE ESCAPED. WHEN WE GET TO EARTH, YOU'RE GETTING A COMMENDATION.

THANK YOU, SIR.

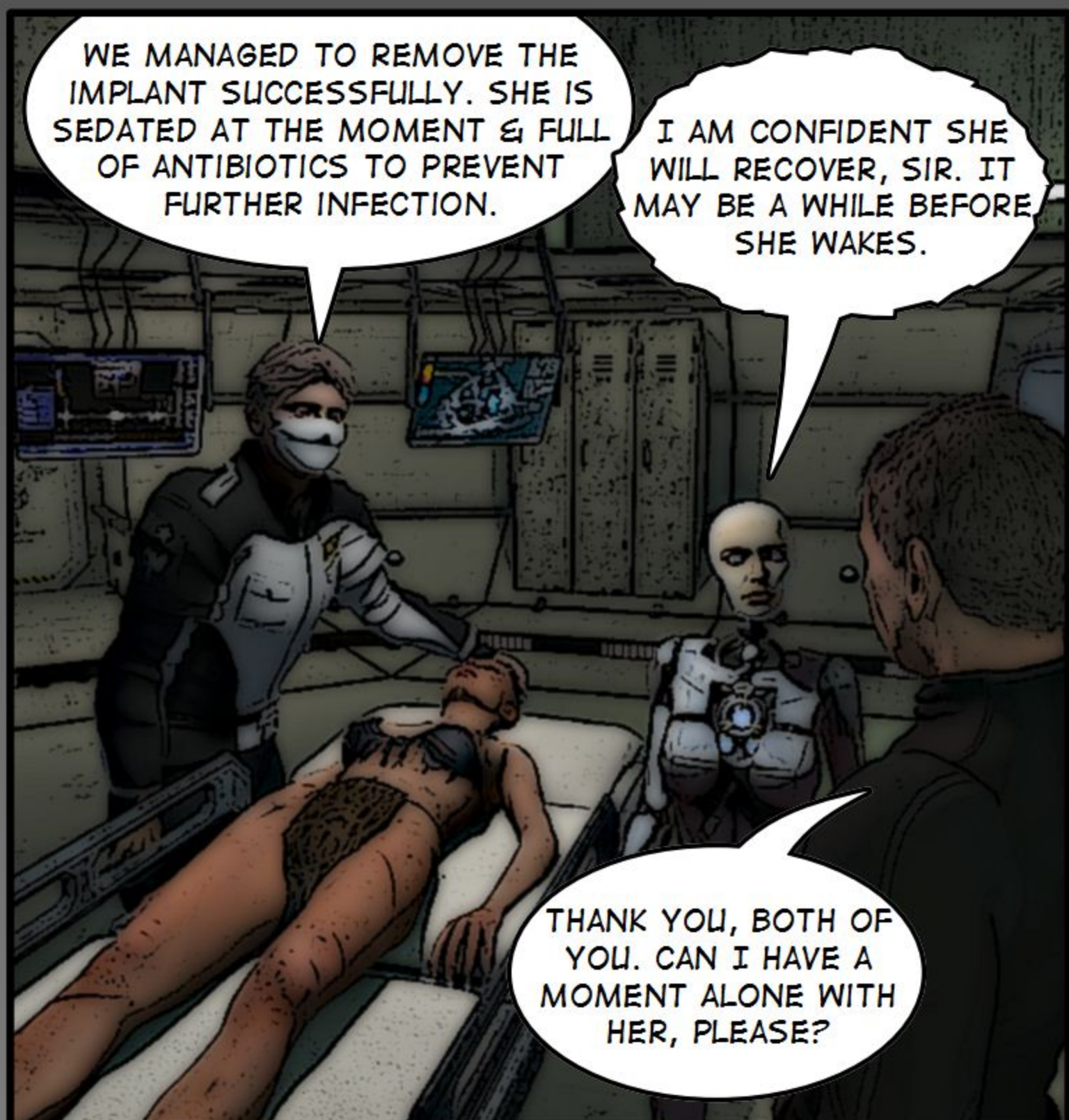


KEEP THE SHIP AT CRUISE SPEED, I HAVE SOME THINGS TO ATTEND TO. I'M SORRY TO SAY THIS, BUT WE CAN'T GO INTO STASIS ON THIS TRIP, SO I NEED YOU ALL FOCUSED.



VERY CAREFULLY, USE THE LASER & CLOSE THE WOUND.

HOW IS SHE? IS EVERYTHING OKAY?

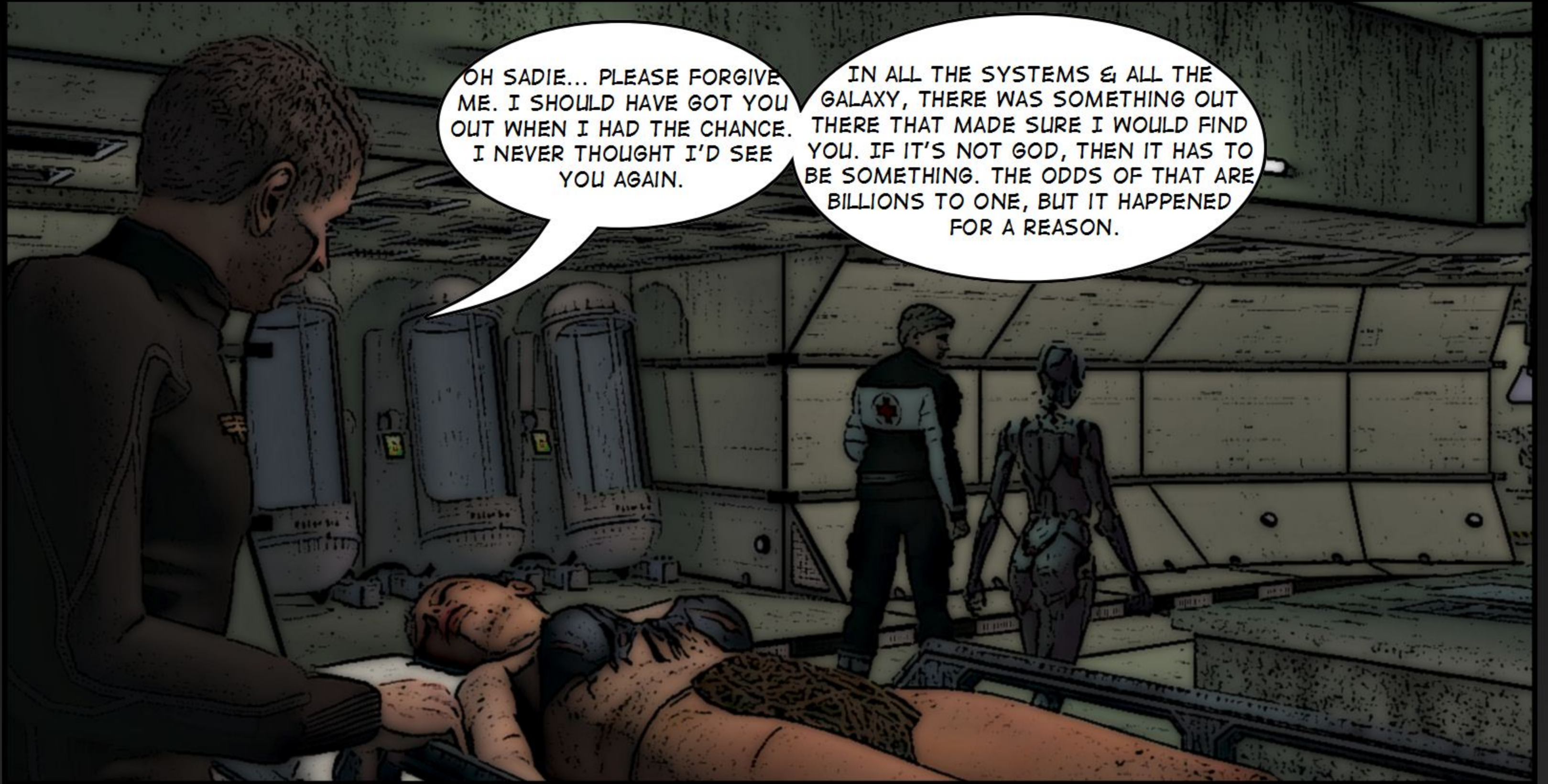


WE MANAGED TO REMOVE THE IMPLANT SUCCESSFULLY. SHE IS SEDATED AT THE MOMENT & FULL OF ANTIBIOTICS TO PREVENT FURTHER INFECTION.

I AM CONFIDENT SHE WILL RECOVER, SIR. IT MAY BE A WHILE BEFORE SHE WAKES.

THANK YOU, BOTH OF YOU. CAN I HAVE A MOMENT ALONE WITH HER, PLEASE?





OH SADIE... PLEASE FORGIVE ME. I SHOULD HAVE GOT YOU OUT WHEN I HAD THE CHANCE. I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE YOU AGAIN.

IN ALL THE SYSTEMS & ALL THE GALAXY, THERE WAS SOMETHING OUT THERE THAT MADE SURE I WOULD FIND YOU. IF IT'S NOT GOD, THEN IT HAS TO BE SOMETHING. THE ODDS OF THAT ARE BILLIONS TO ONE, BUT IT HAPPENED FOR A REASON.



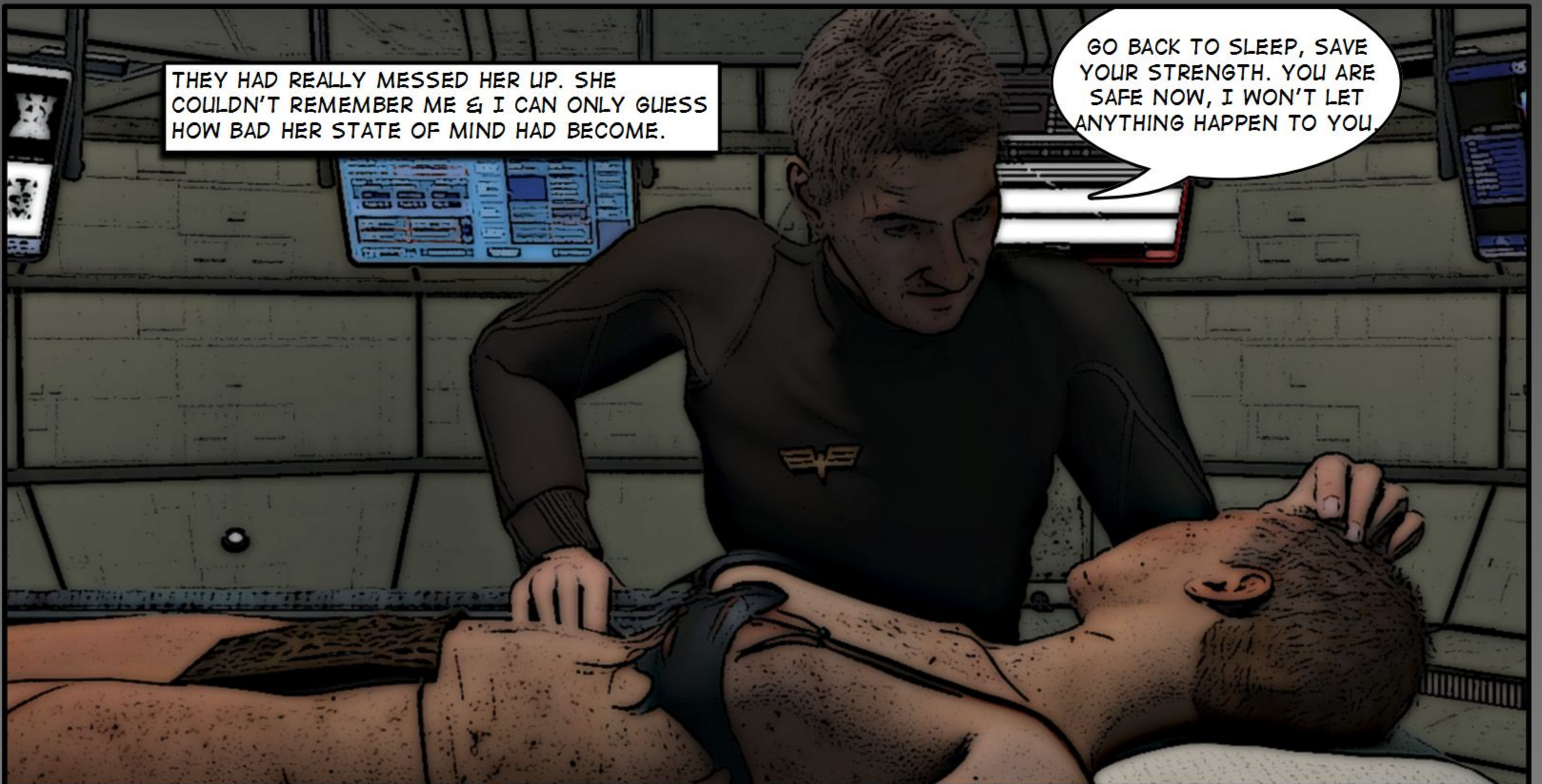
I JUST HOPE THEY DIDN'T CRUSH YOUR SPIRIT. IT WAS THE ONE THING I ALWAYS LOVED ABOUT YOU.



...LUUUH...WH..WHO ARE YOU? ...

IT'S ME, JOHN JAMESON FROM ROSS 154. YOU'RE ON MY SHIP, I SAVED YOU.

ARE YOU MY NEW MASTER? PLEASE, DON'T BEAT ME, I WILL SERVE YOU WELL.



THEY HAD REALLY MESS'D HER UP. SHE COULDN'T REMEMBER ME & I CAN ONLY GUESS HOW BAD HER STATE OF MIND HAD BECOME.

GO BACK TO SLEEP, SAVE YOUR STRENGTH. YOU ARE SAFE NOW, I WON'T LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO YOU.





YOU GOT A LOT OF EXPLAINING TO DO, MISS REDBRIDGE. THAT BLOCKADE OF IMPERIAL SHIPS WERE WAITING FOR US, DID YOU TIP THEM OFF?

HOW COULD I HAVE DONE? YOU CLIPPED ME TO THIS CHAIR AS SOON AS WE BOARDED, I HAVEN'T MOVED SINCE.

REALLY? WELL FOR SOMEONE WHO CAN CHANGE THEIR FINGERPRINTS & FOOL A BIOMETRIC SCANNER TO ESCAPE FEDERAL CAPTURE I THINK YOU ARE ABLE TO DO A LOT MORE THAN YOU LET US THINK.



THERE WERE FIFTEEN IMPERIAL SHIPS TRYING TO TAKE YOU BACK. FIFTEEN, ALL ARMED WITH HIGH-TECH WEAPONS.

I HAVE NEVER SEEN THE EMPIRE SO DETERMINED TO CAPTURE ONE PERSON LIKE THAT, *NEVER!*



WHAT HAVE YOU DONE? WHY ARE THEY SO DESPERATE TO GET HOLD OF YOU? WE ONLY ESCAPED THEM BY THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH & WE DO NOT THINK THEY HAVE GIVEN UP YET. TELL ME NOW, WHY ARE YOU SO IMPORTANT TO THEM?

I CANNOT TELL YOU, I AM ONLY ALLOWED TO REPORT TO THE GRAND FEDERAL COUNCIL.



WE ARE RISKING OUR LIVES FOR YOU, THE LEAST YOU COULD DO IS TELL US WHY. YOU SAY YOU HAVE DEFECTED FROM THE EMPIRE, THAT IS A SENTENCE CARRIED BY DEATH.

YOU ARE RUNNING OUT OF FRIENDS, SO YOU MIGHT WANT TO TRY & CO-OPERATE WITH US.



COOPER! THAT IS ENOUGH. SHE CANNOT TELL YOU & EVEN IF SHE DID, IT ISN'T GOING TO MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE.

REPORT BACK IN THE BRIDGE. I NEED YOUR EYES & EARS IN CASE WE RUN INTO ANOTHER AMBUSH.

YES, SIR. I'M SORRY.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS, MR JAMESON. I HEARD THAT ABOUT YOU, THAT YOU DON'T JUDGE PEOPLE & YOU TREAT EVERYONE WITH RESPECT.

THANK YOU MISS REDBRIDGE. I GET IT FROM MY GRANDFATHER, HE WAS A GREAT MAN.

I'M NOT A BAD PERSON. THE EMPIRE HAS BEEN MY WHOLE LIFE, I ALWAYS THOUGHT I WAS DOING SOMETHING FOR THE GREATER GOOD. THE MORE & MORE I THOUGHT ABOUT IT I FINALLY REALISED, THEY ARE FUELLED BY GREED & CORRUPTION.

THE EMPIRE WANT FULL DOMINATION OVER THE GALAXY. THEY WANT ALL SYSTEMS TO LIVE UNDER THEIR RULES & BELIEFS. FOR MANY YEARS THEY JUST SAW THE FEDERATION AS A THREAT TO THEIR WAY OF LIFE.

IN WAR THERE IS NEVER A GOOD SIDE OR A BAD SIDE. BOTH ARE FIGHTING FOR A CAUSE THEY BELIEVE IN.

ALL BATTLES IN HISTORY ARE FOUGHT BECAUSE NEITHER SIDE SHARE THE SAME VALUES & DO NOT WANT TO SIT DOWN & COMPROMISE A SOLUTION.

IN THE END YOU HAVE MILLIONS DEAD ON BOTH SIDES & THE LEADERS EITHER GIVE UP & MAKE A TRUCE OR CONTINUE FIGHTING UNTIL THERE IS NOBODY LEFT TO OPPOSE THEM.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS GOING TO HAPPEN TO ME WHEN WE GET TO EARTH?

I HONESTLY DO NOT KNOW. IT DEPENDS ON WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER THEM. I WILL GET YOU THERE I PROMISE. I HAVE TO GO NOW, SIT TIGHT & WE WILL DEAL WITH THIS TOGETHER.

LOCATION: SATURN  
TIME TO EARTH: 12 HOURS.







WE WERE RIGHT TO BE WORRIED, THE EMPIRE WAS NOT GOING TO GIVE UP THAT EASY, PHASE TWO OF THE ATTACK HAD BEGUN...



BATTLESTATIONS! I GOT MULTIPLE ARRIVAL CLOUDS APPEARING ON THE SCOPE. JESUS! THERE ARE OVER TWENTY IMPERIAL FIGHTERS CLOSING IN!

**BEEP! BEEP!**

SHIELDS UP, ARM WEAPON SYSTEMS & ACCELERATE TO ATTACK SPEED. SEND OUT AN S.O.S. TO ANYONE IN RANGE.



**BOOM!**

**BOOM!**









SHALL I ISSUE THE ORDER TO ABANDON SHIP, SIR?

NO! THE ESCAPE PODS WON'T MAKE IT, THEY'LL PICK US OFF ONE BY ONE



I NEED YOU TO MAKE SURE EVERYONE IS IN THE FRONT SECTION OF THE SHIP, I MEAN EVERYONE. THEN SECURE ALL THE PRESSURE DOORS.

UNDERSTOOD, SIR.



BOOM!

BOOM!

BOOM!

THEIR MAIN ENGINES ARE DOWN. FINISH THEM OFF!



PREPARE THE EMERGENCY DETACHMENT SEQUENCE!

WE LOST THE CARGO BAY & ENGINE ROOM.

BUT, CAPTAIN, THAT WOU...

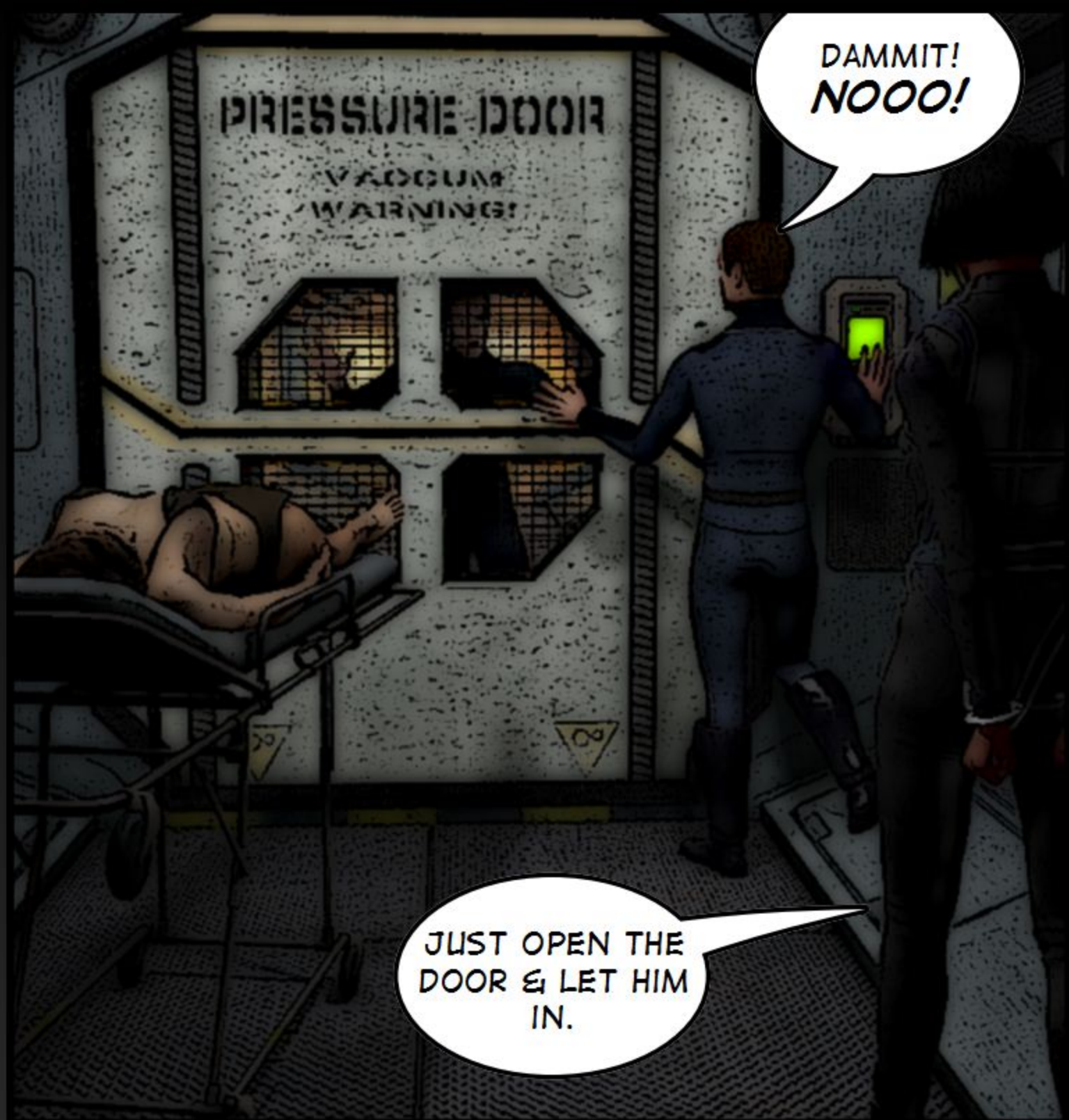


DON'T QUESTION ME, JUST DO IT, THE SHIP IS LOST. IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE.





RUN! HURRY UP! THE DOOR IS CLOSING!



DAMMIT! NOOO!

JUST OPEN THE DOOR & LET HIM IN.



I CAN'T THE EMERGENCY OVERRIDE HAS BEEN INITIATED. ALL PRESSURE DOORS ARE ON LOCK DOWN.



I'M SORRY, MARSDEN, SO SORRY. PLEASE FORGIVE ME.

CAPTAIN, THE PRESSURE DOORS ARE SECURED, OVER

ROGER THAT, COOPER. RETURN TO THE BRIDGE.



WARNING! SYSTEM FAILURE

CLICK!

NOW! DETACH!



KLING!







NOOOOO! DON'T LEAVE ME!



WE HAVE DETACHED FROM THE MAIN SHIP & ARE CLEAR TO INITIATE AFTERBURNERS.

PUNCH IT, FULL BURN!



ENEMY FIGHTERS COMING IN FOR ANOTHER PASS.



**KA-BOOM!**





WE SHOULD BE LIGHT ENOUGH TO OUTFRAN THEM NOW. THEY WILL STRUGGLE TO KEEP UP AT THIS SPEED.



WELL DONE, COOPER. DID EVERYONE MAKE IT OKAY?

NO, SIR. MARSDEN WAS LEFT BEHIND, A FEW OTHERS PERISHED IN THE ATTACK.

THERE'S NO TIME TO DWELL ON THAT NOW, WE NEED TO CONCENTRATE ON KEEPING THE REST OF US ALIVE.



THEY'RE NOT GIVING UP, I HAVE SEVEN FIGHTERS STILL ACTIVE ON OUR SIX.



FINE. RELEASE ALL THE MINES IN THE AFT WEAPON POD.

AYE, AYE, SIR.



**BOOM!**

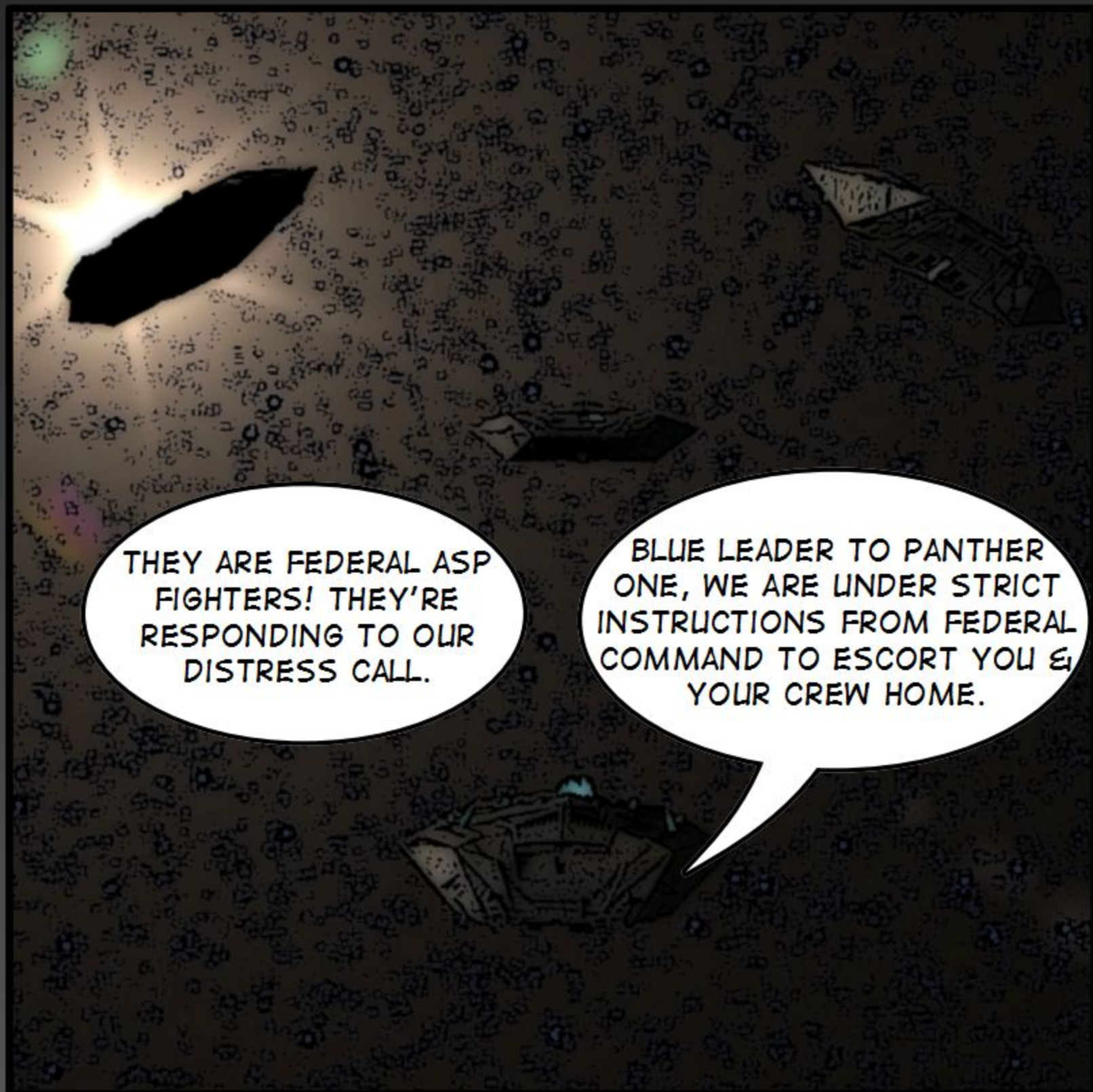
**BOOM!**

AAAARRRGHH!  
RETREAT! IT'S A MINEFIELD!





THE SCANNER IS PICKING UP MULTIPLE SHIPS, COMING RIGHT AT US, SIR. RUNNING THE RADAR MAPPER NOW.



THEY ARE FEDERAL ASP FIGHTERS! THEY'RE RESPONDING TO OUR DISTRESS CALL.

BLUE LEADER TO PANTHER ONE, WE ARE UNDER STRICT INSTRUCTIONS FROM FEDERAL COMMAND TO ESCORT YOU & YOUR CREW HOME.



**BOOM!**

**BOOM!**

THANK YOU, BLUE LEADER, WE HAVE MULTIPLE IMPERIAL SHIPS ON OUR SIX. THEY ARE AFTER OUR VIP.



WE GOT THEM, SIR. JUST KEEP ON COURSE.

MISSILE AWAY!



ALL ENEMY SHIPS ARE DESTROYED. WE ARE FORMING ON YOUR WING, PANTHER ONE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP. ALL OF YOU. WE OWE YOU OUR LIVES.



THE SQUADRON OF ASP'S ESCORTED US FROM THAT POINT ON. WE NOW HAD A SURE CHANCE OF GETTING TO EARTH.



CAPTAIN, WE LOST LESSER, MARSDEN & PHILIPS.



WE WILL HOLD A MEMORIAL FOR THEM WHEN WE ARRIVE AT EARTH. THEIR SACRIFICE WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN.

MARSDEN WAS THE ONLY ONE THAT DIDN'T DIE IN THE ATTACK. HE DIDN'T MAKE IT THROUGH THE PRESSURE DOORS & I COULD HAVE TRIED TO LET HIM BACK IN. HE DIED BECAUSE OF ME.

YOU CANNOT THINK LIKE THAT, COOPER. YOUR ACTIONS SAVED THIS SHIP. SOMETIMES YOU CAN'T SAVE EVERYONE. YOU DID WHAT YOU HAD TO & I DON'T THINK ANY LESS OF YOU.



CAPTAIN JAMESON, YOUR PATIENT IS AWAKE.




SADIE, ITS ME. DO YOU REMEMBER? JOHN JAMESON FROM ROSS. I FREED YOU, YOU'RE SAFE NOW.

JOHN... YOU ALWAYS DID PROMISE TO RESCUE ME, DIDN'T YOU? I HAVE BEEN SO STUPID, THEY TRICKED ME INTO TAKING A JOB THAT TURNED INTO A NIGHTMARE.

FORGET ABOUT THAT, NOW. NOBODY IS GOING TO HURT YOU ANYMORE. I'M GOING TO DO WHAT I WAS NEVER ABLE TO DO BACK ON SIROCCO.









I AM GOING TO GET YOU CLEANED UP & GIVE YOU THE BEST MEDICAL CARE YOU DESERVE. I WILL EVEN PAY FOR THE MEMORY WIPE IF YOU NEED TO FORGET ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU.

OH JOHN... YOU WERE THE ONLY ONE WHO CARED ABOUT ME.




I NEVER GAVE UP ON YOU. I SPENT YEARS TRYING TO FIND YOU, FATE... FATE FOUND A WAY. YOU REST NOW.

THANK YOU. FOR EVERYTHING.



IS THERE ANYTHING YOU CAN DO FOR HER?


I DO NOT HAVE ANY TOOLS OR MEDICATION. THE MEDLAB WAS DESTROYED WITH THE REST OF THE SHIP.




CAN YOU AT LEAST FIND HER A BLANKET OR CREW UNIFORM, SO SHE DOESN'T CATCH A COLD?

I WILL SEE WHAT I CAN DO, SIR.

6 HOURS LATER...



WE HAVE REACHED EARTH'S ORBIT. THAT'S REALLY A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES.



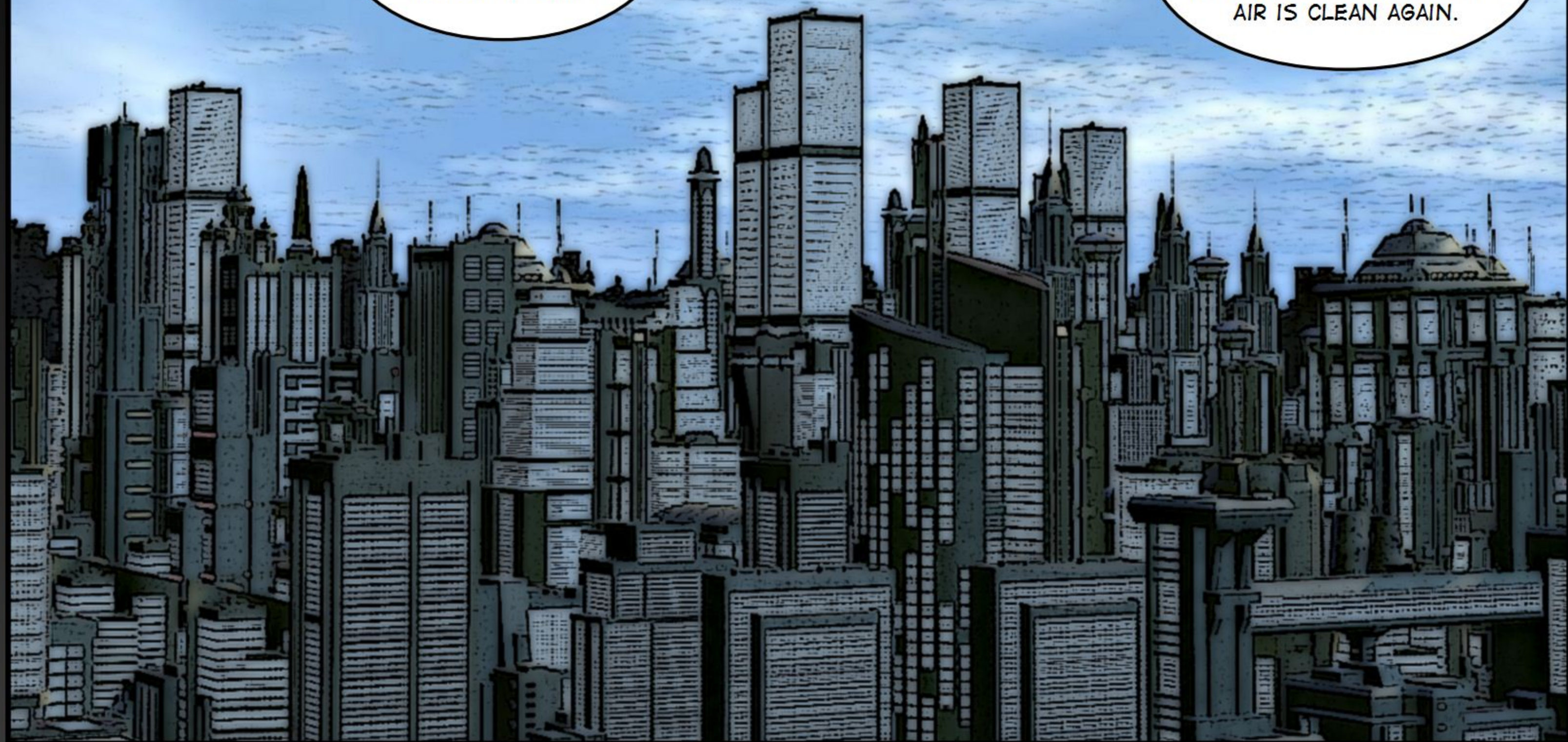
SET LANDING CO-ORDINATES TO FEDERAL COMMAND IN NEW WASHINGTON. THEY'RE EXPECTING US.



...I HADN'T BEEN TO EARTH FOR MANY YEARS. SURE I STOPPED OFF AT THE SPACEPORTS ORBITING THE PLANET, BUT THE DULL GREEN FOG THAT COVERED THE SURFACE HAD FINALLY BEEN CLEANED UP...

LOOKS LIKE THEY HAVE BEEN BUSY HERE. I THOUGHT EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE WAS STILL TOXIC IN PLACES.

USED TO BE. IN THE LAST FEW YEARS THEY BEGAN A HUGE ENVIRONMENTAL RECOVERY PROGRAM. THE AIR IS CLEAN AGAIN.



...WE ARRIVED AT THE FEDERATION HEADQUARTERS IN NEW WASHINGTON. AFTER LANDING ON THE PAD I NOTICED A NAVAL OFFICER WAITING WITH HIS GUARDS. HE LOOKED VERY IMPORTANT. IT WAS BEST THAT WE DIDN'T KEEP HIM WAITING...

I NEED YOU ALL TO POWER DOWN THE SHIP, COOPER I WANT YOU TO ESCORT MISS REDBRIDGE, FOLLOW ME.







WELCOME TO NEW WASHINGTON, I AM ADMIRAL ALEXANDER. COMMANDER IN CHARGE OF THE FEDERAL MILITARY.



CAPTAIN JOHN JAMESON. COMMANDER OF THE PANTHER ONE... WHAT'S LEFT OF HER.

AT EASE, CAPTAIN. YOU HAVE DONE ABOVE & BEYOND FOR THE FEDERATION.



I HEARD ABOUT YOUR TRIP. YOU WILL BE FULLY COMPENSATED FOR THE LOSS OF YOUR SHIP, AS WILL THE FAMILIES OF YOUR CREW WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT.



I HAVE SET UP SOME ROOMS FOR YOU & YOUR CREW IN THE VISITORS CENTER, & THE INFIRMARY IS PREPED TO TAKE ANY WOUNDED YOU MAY HAVE. PLEASE RELAX & TAKE SOME TIME OFF, YOU HAVE EARN'T IT.



SOPHIE REDBRIDGE, I ASSUME YOU HAVE THE DOCUMENTS WE AGREED ON.

PROVIDING WE HAVE A DEAL FOR MY PROTECTION & IMMUNITY, THEN YES I HAVE THEM.





IF YOUR FILES ARE LIGITIMATE, I PROMISE WE WILL DO EVERYTHING WE CAN, YOU HAVE MY WORD.



SERGEANT, TAKE HER TO THE INTERROGATION ROOM.

YES SIR.



ADMIRAL, MAY I ASK WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT? I LOST MY SHIP & SOME GOOD MEN TODAY, I THINK THE LEAST YOU COULD DO IS TELL ME WHY.



I THINK THAT'S FAIR. ABOUT 7 DAYS AGO, REDBRIDGE CONTACTED THE FEDERATION. SHE SAID SHE FEARED FOR HER LIFE & WANTED TO DEFECT.

SHE ACCESSED THE IMPERIAL MAIN DATABASE & FOUND THEIR CLASSIFIED FILES. THEY FOUND OUT & ISSUED A BOUNTY ON HER HEAD.



THE FILES INDICATE THE EMPIRE IS DEPLOYING A FLEET OF BATTLESHIPS. THEY HAVE A NEW WEAPON CAPABLE OF DESTROYING A PLANET & THEY ARE HEADING HERE. THE EMPIRE IS PLANNING TO WIPE OUT ALL FEDERAL SYSTEMS & HAVE FULL CONTROL OVER THE GALAXY.



IF WHAT MISS REDBRIDGE SAYS IS TRUE, WE ARE DAYS AWAY FROM FULL SCALE WAR.

TO BE CONCLUDED...