



ALIENS
VERSUS
PREDATOR
WAR
1 OF 4

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STRADLEY
MANLEY
VILLAGRÁN

OBI

ALIENS

V E R S U S

PREDATOR

WAR



Phil Carpen

ALIENS™ VERSUS PREDATOR™ WAR



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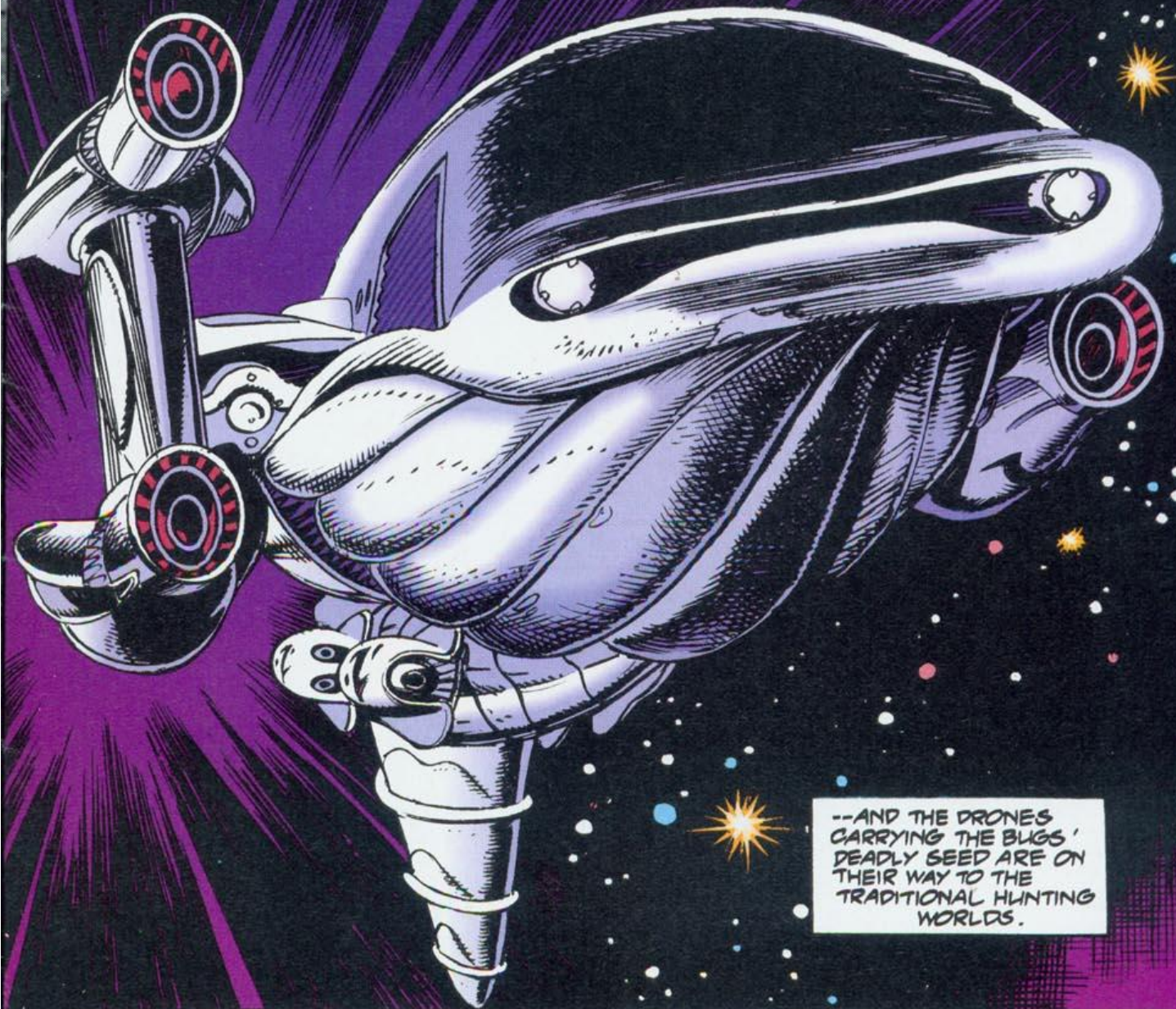
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Life isn't easy for Machiko Noguchi, who's chosen to live on board a Predator spaceship engaged in seeding Predator hunting worlds with Alien eggs. A harrowing escape from a vicious Queen Alien turns out to be nothing more than a Predator test of survival. She passes, by the skin of her teeth. In her adopted Predator clan's eyes, she's worthy of their grudging respect — but they never let her forget that she's different. It's no wonder that Machiko is beginning to desperately miss human companionship after all this time.

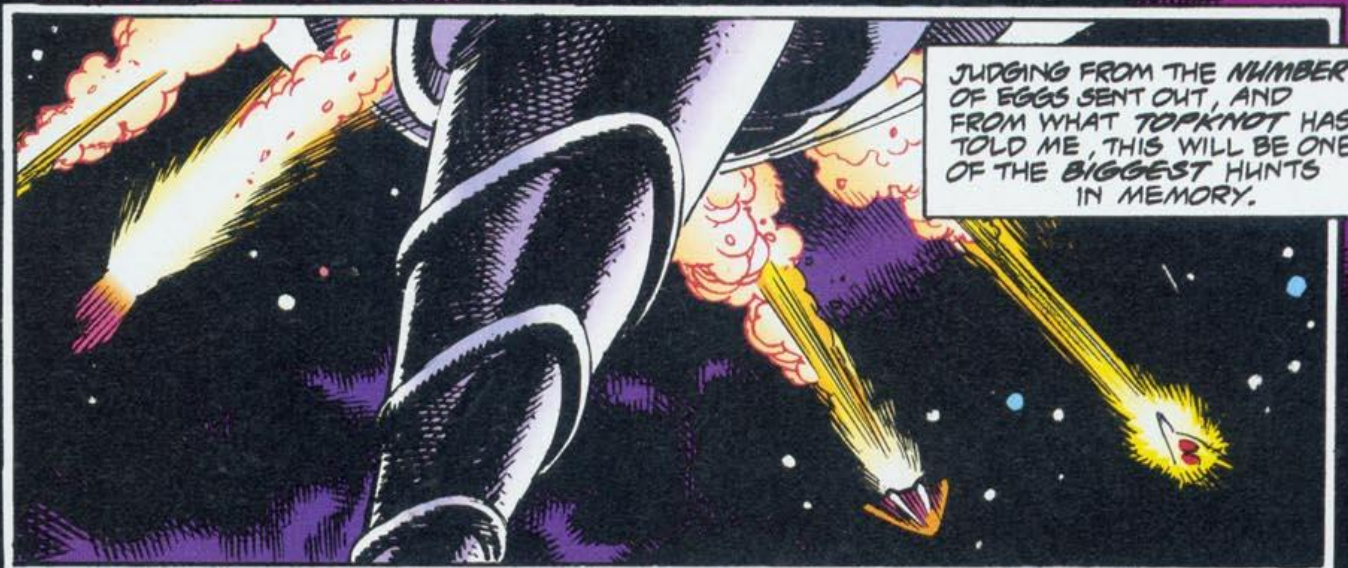
And for those of you who recall our dauntless crew of Lara, Ellis, and Jess, that survived *Aliens: Berserker*, human companionship could be a lot closer than Machiko might think . . .

IT'S ALMOST TIME.

THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE HUNT ARE NEARLY COMPLETE. THE CLANS ARE GATHERING--



--AND THE DRONES CARRYING THE BUGS' DEADLY SEED ARE ON THEIR WAY TO THE TRADITIONAL HUNTING WORLDS.



JUDGING FROM THE NUMBER OF EGGS SENT OUT, AND FROM WHAT TOPKNOT HAS TOLD ME, THIS WILL BE ONE OF THE BIGGEST HUNTS IN MEMORY.



THE HUNT IS THE REASON I JOINED UP WITH **BROKEN THSK'S** PEOPLE. I SHOULD FEEL EXCITED.



INSTEAD, ALL I FEEL IS *ALONE*.

MACHIKO NOGHCHI. COULDN'T MAKE IT IN HUMAN SOCIETY, SO SHE JOINED UP WITH A BUNCH OF XTS. LIKE IT WOULD BE ANY EASIER.



HARD TO BELIEVE IT'S BEEN OVER A YEAR SINCE I CAME TO LIVE WITH THE HUNTERS. AN *OUTSIDER* ACCEPTED AS AN EQUAL.

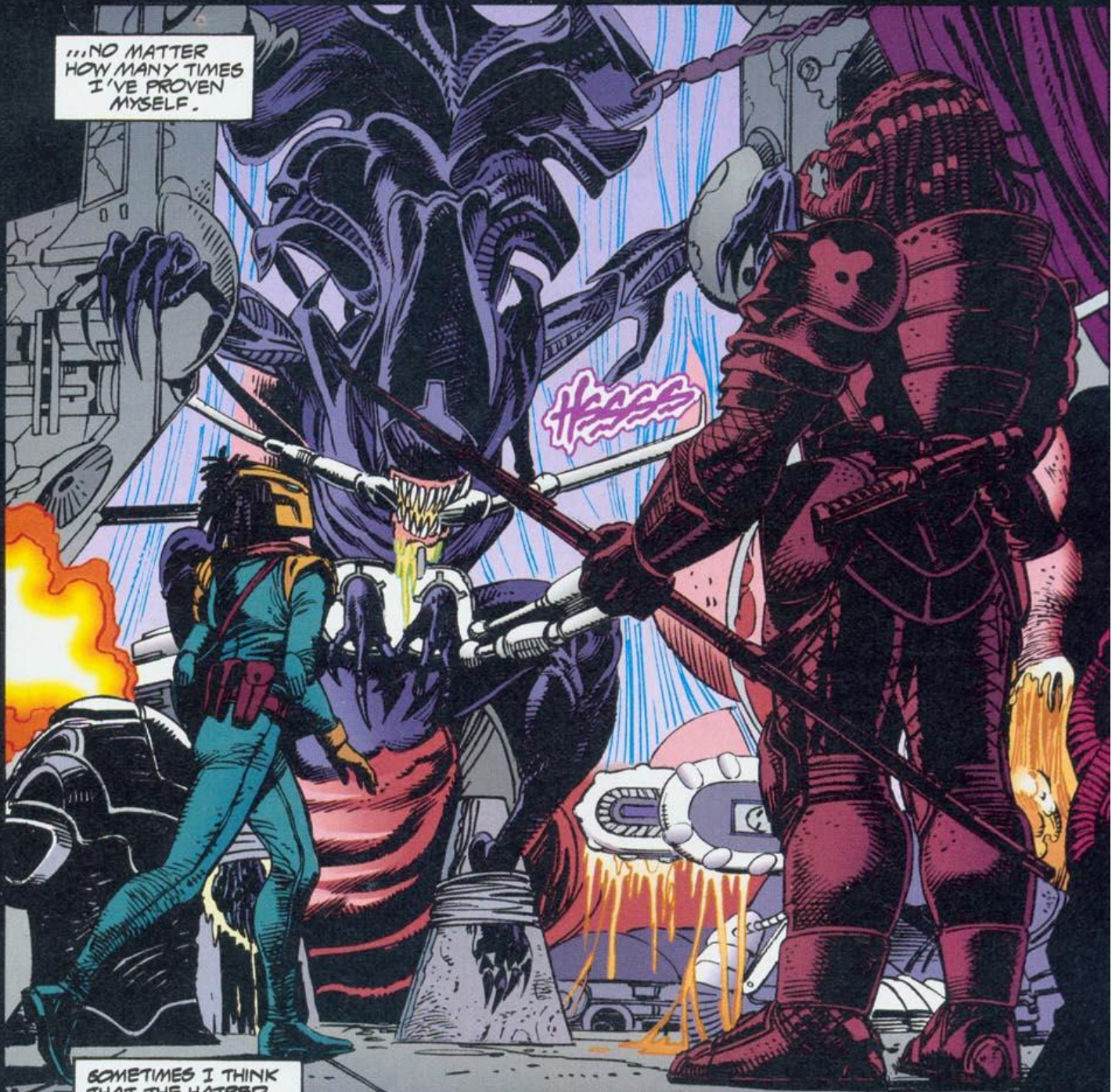


NO, THAT'S WRONG. NOT REALLY AN EQUAL...



...AND NOT TRULY ACCEPTED...

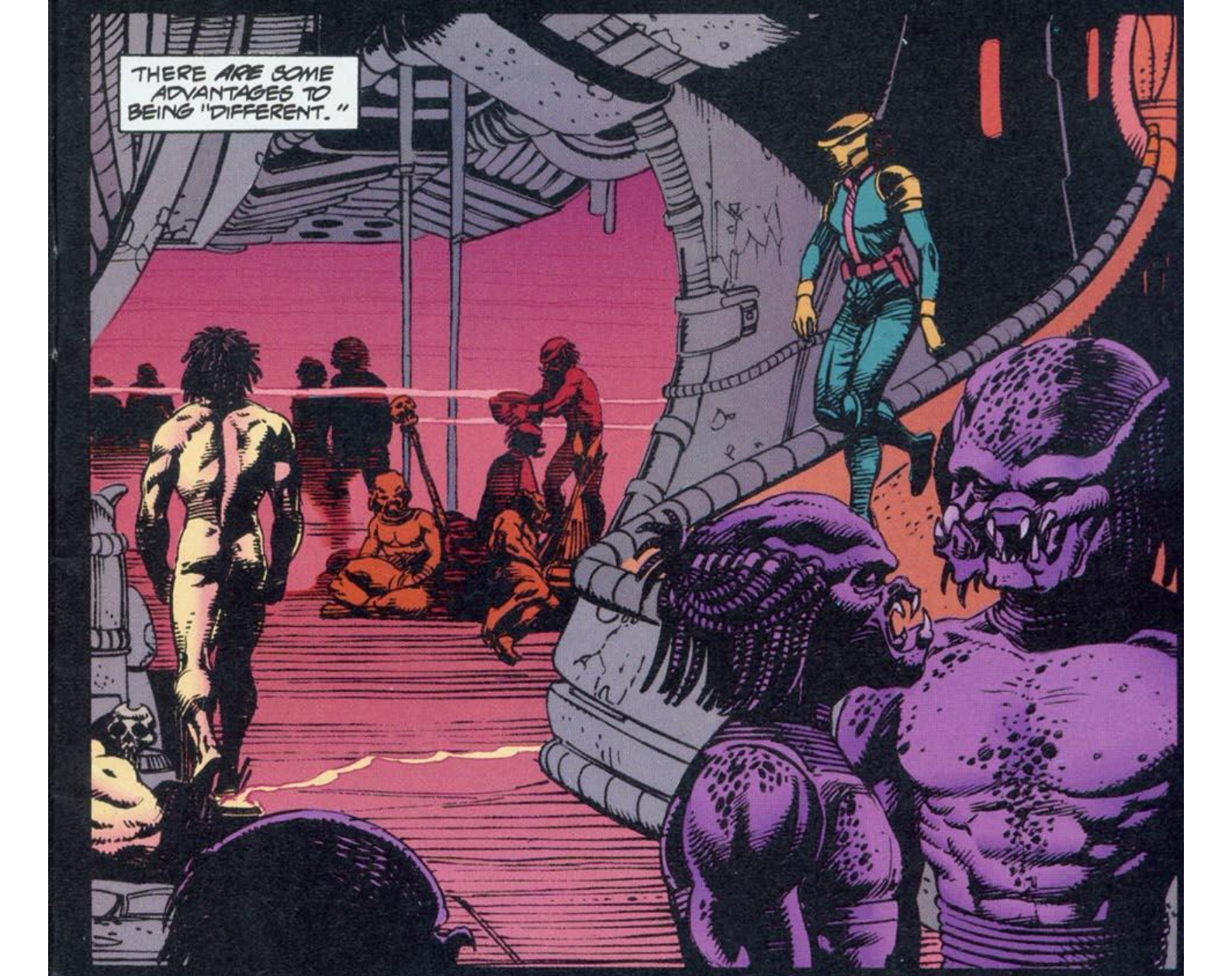
...NO MATTER
HOW MANY TIMES
I'VE PROVEN
MYSELF.




SOMETIMES I THINK
THAT THE HATRED
THE BUG-QUEEN HAS
FOR ME IS PREFERABLE
TO THE INDIFFERENCE
I GET FROM MY
ADOPTED COMPANIONS.







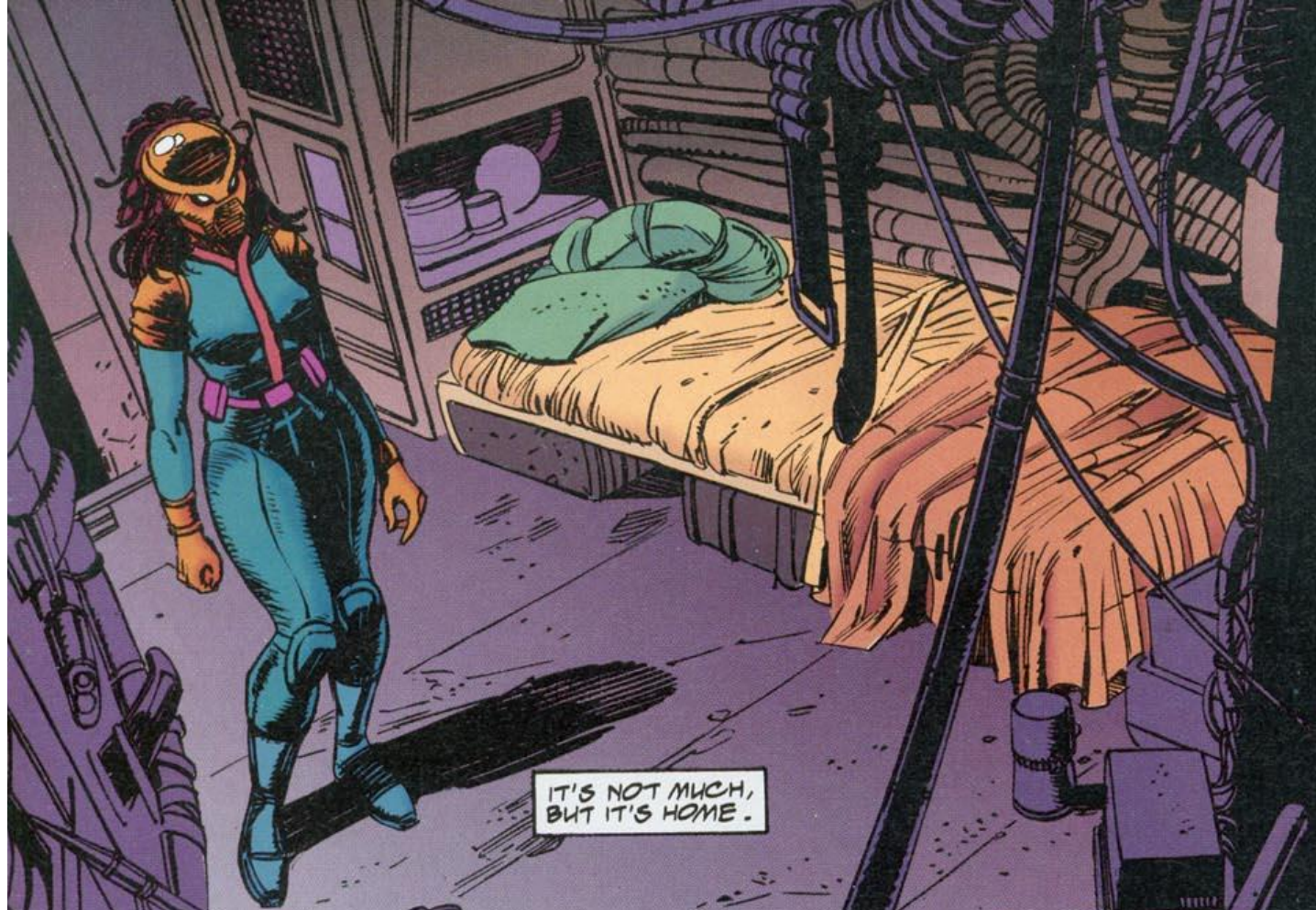
THERE ARE SOME ADVANTAGES TO BEING "DIFFERENT."



FOR ONE THING, I DON'T HAVE TO SLEEP IN "THE PIT" WITH THE LOWER CASTES.

THE ONLY ONES ON BOARD WITH PRIVATE QUARTERS ARE THE STRONGEST AND MOST AGGRESSIVE OF THE OLDER HUNTERS...

...AND ME.

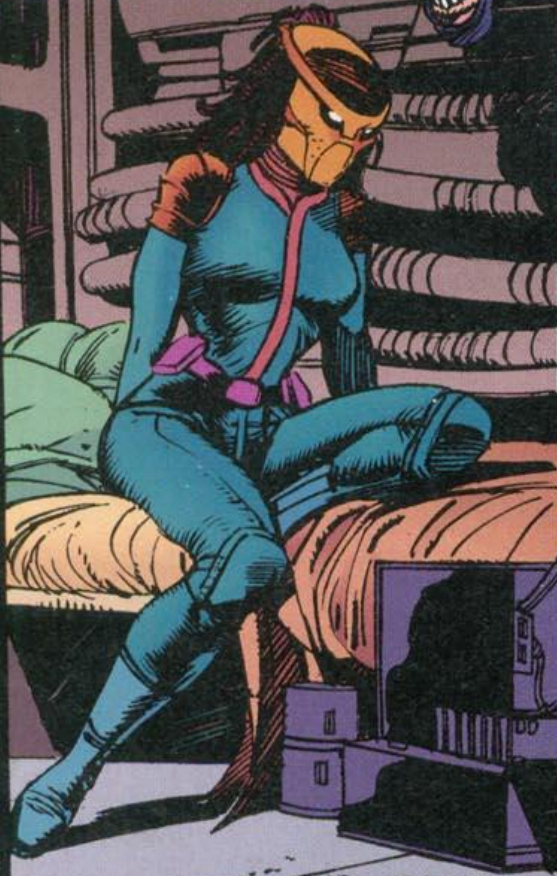


IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT IT'S HOME.

MAYBE IT WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT IF ~~BROKEN TUSK~~ HAD LIVED. ~~MAYBE~~. WE WERE THROWN TOGETHER UNDER UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

PERHAPS IN ANY OTHER SITUATION HE WOULD HAVE BEEN NO DIFFERENT THAN ANY OF HIS PEOPLE !!!

...AND I'D BE A TROPHY HANGING ON HIS WALL NOW.



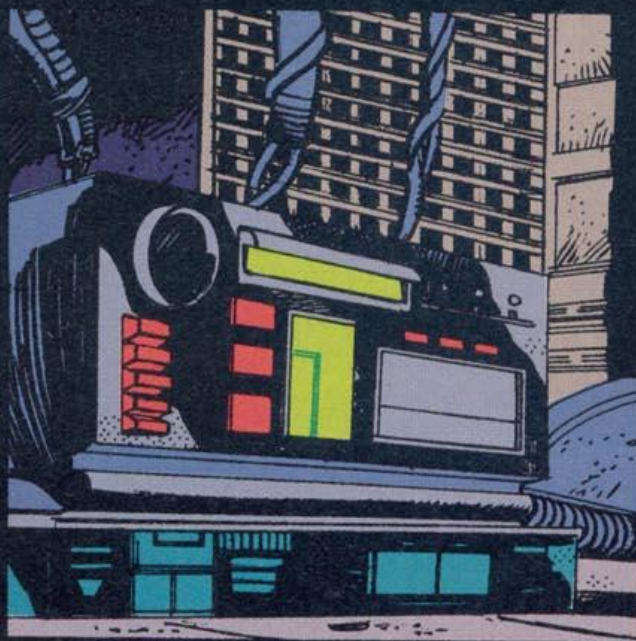
MAYBE THIS MARK I BEAR MEANS LESS THAN I THINK IT DOES.



MAYBE BROKEN TUSK FELT CONFIDENT ENOUGH IN HIS RANK WITHIN THE CLAN TO ALLOW HIMSELF FEELINGS OF RESPECT FOR ME...



...OR, MAYBE IT WAS HIS DYING JOKE.



I DON'T KNOW WHY I BROUGHT THIS WITH ME FROM MY CABIN ON RYUSHI.

BZZT

CRACKLE



USUALLY ALL I GET IS STATIC.

SZZT
BZZT



ON THE RARE OCCASIONS WHEN I DO PICK UP VOICES, THEY'RE ONLY GARBLED BITS OF CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN OTHER PEOPLE...

ZZT...
...FEAT...
...CRACKLE...
...SIS--
...OUT OF...

... REMINDING ME OF THE DISTANCE I'VE PUT BETWEEN MYSELF AND THE REST OF HUMANITY.



...KRRZT...
...QUEST EMER...
...ZT...OM ANY
...SHIPS O...
...ZT-ZT...

... REPEAT:
THIS IS THE SHUTTLE
FROM THE WEYLAND-YUTANI
CRUISER NEMESIS -- OUT
OF FUEL AND ADRIFT.
REQUEST EMERGENCY
ASSISTANCE FROM ANY
SHIPS OR HUMAN
OUTPOSTS RECEIVING
THIS MESSAGE...

GIVE
IT A REST,
ELLIS.



THINK ABOUT IT,
DICKWEED. ANYBODY
WHO MIGHT HEAR YOU
WILL HAVE PICKED UP
OUR DISTRESS
BEACON HOURS
BEFORE.

LET ELLIS TALK,
IF IT MAKES HIM
FEEL BETTER. WE
ALL HAVE TO DEAL
WITH THE STRESS
IN OUR OWN WAY.

NEMESIS
SHUTTLE, THIS
IS BUNDA SURVEY.
WE READ YOU
FOUR-BY-FOUR,
OVER.

BUNDA
SURVEY, THIS
IS NEMESIS
SHUTTLE!

GO AHEAD
AND DO NOTHING
JESS--I'M GONNA
GET US
RESCUED!

YEAH?
WELL, I'M
GONNA
DEAL WITH
HIM IF HE
DOESN'T--

KEEP 'IM
TALKIN', ELLIS!
WHAT'S THE
MATTER WITH
YOU?



MR. VINCENT,
YOU'RE NEEDED
ON THE
CONTROL
LEVEL.



ROGER, NEMESIS
SHUTTLE. WE'RE
DISPATCHING A SHIP
TO YOUR POSITION.
E.T.A.-- SIX HOURS.

WHAT
HAVE YOU
GOT,
CABOT?

A
DISTRESS
CALL FROM
A LOST
SHUTTLE.

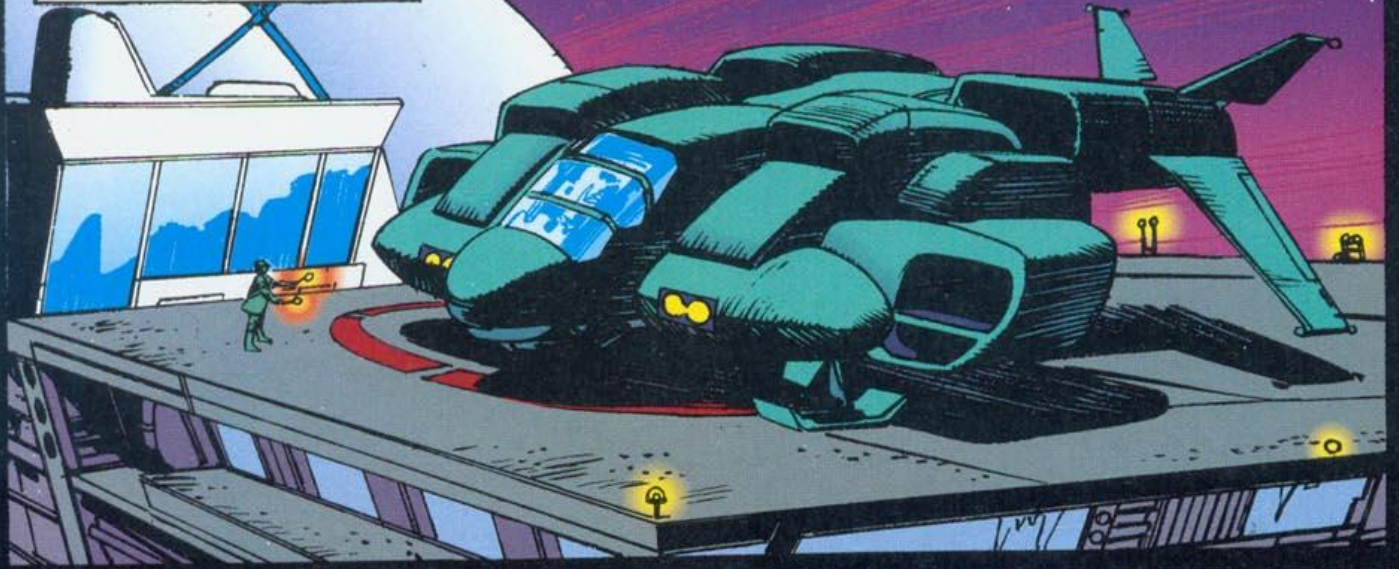


CAN
WE HELP
THEM?

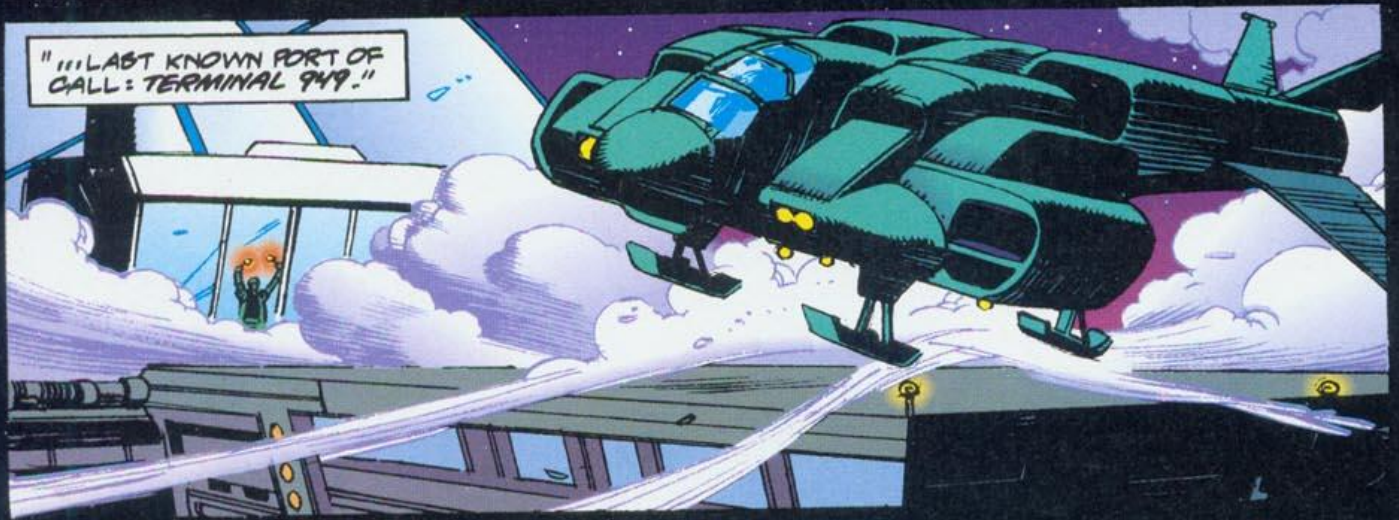
THEY SAY THAT IF WE CAN GET
FUEL TO THEM, THEY CAN COME
DOWN UNDER THEIR OWN
POWER. OUR D-SHIP IS
WARMING UP RIGHT NOW,
MR. VINCENT.

AND?

"THE SHUTTLE IS FROM
W-Y49392, THE NEMESIS..."



"...LAST KNOWN PORT OF
CALL: TERMINAL 949."

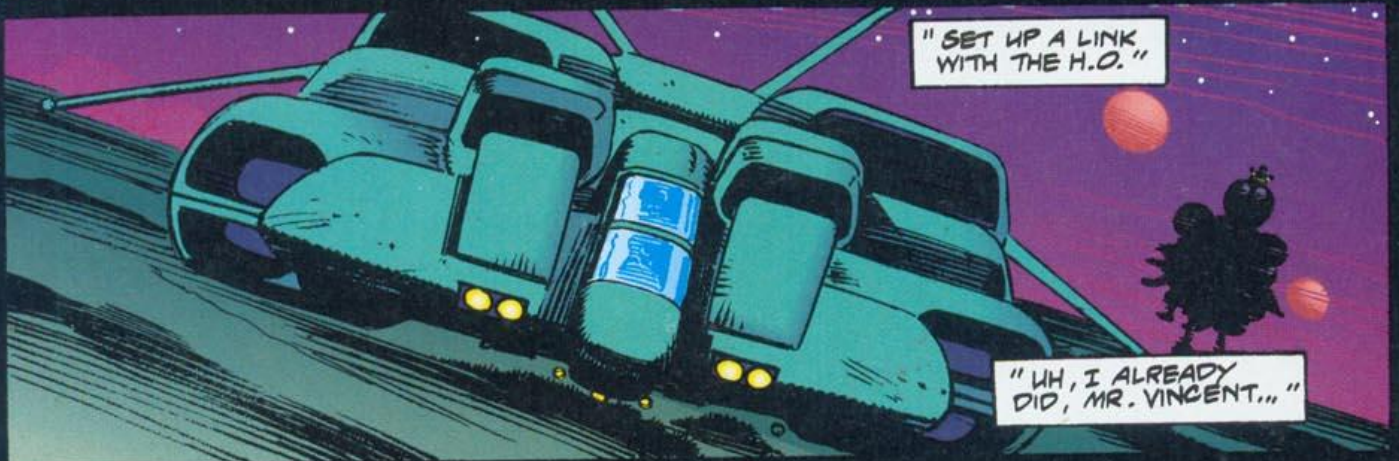


"949? DIDN'T WE GET A
'HEADS-UP' FROM THE
HOME OFFICE ABOUT THAT?"

"RIGHT. THE COMPANY'S
DESPERATE FOR ANY
WORD ON 949 OR THE
NEMESIS."



"SET UP A LINK
WITH THE H.O."



"UH, I ALREADY
DID, MR. VINCENT..."



YOU ALREADY--?

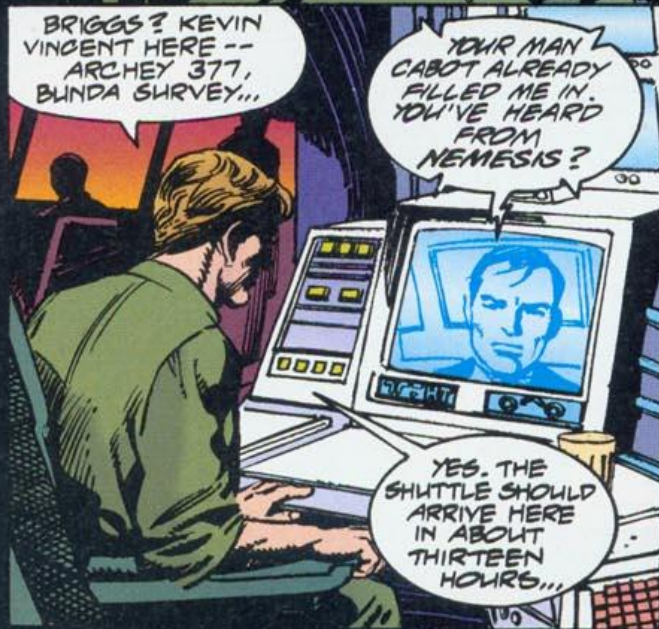
I KNEW YOU'D WANT TO...
WA, THEY SAID THEY WANT
YOU TO COORDINATE
WITH A MR. BRIGGS--



HE... MR. BRIGGS, THAT
IS, IS ALREADY EN ROUTE.
HE'S WAITING FOR YOU
ON COM 6...

THANK
YOU, MR.
CABOT.

EVERYBODY
BACK TO
WORK.



BRIGGS? KEVIN
VINCENT HERE --
ARCHIEY 377,
BUNDA SURVEY...

YOUR MAN
CABOT ALREADY
FILLED ME IN.
YOU'VE HEARD
FROM
NEMESIS?

YES. THE
SHUTTLE SHOULD
ARRIVE HERE
IN ABOUT
THIRTEEN
HOURS...



THAT'LL
MAKE IT
11:00 A.M.
LOCAL
TIME--

WHATEVER. LISTEN--
EARTHSIDE WANTS
ME TO HANDLE
THIS PERSONALLY,
BUT I'M STILL
TWENTY-FIVE HOURS
AWAY.

I'M GOING
TO GIVE YOU
A CODE WORD,
VINCENT. **CANCER-
BLACK.**



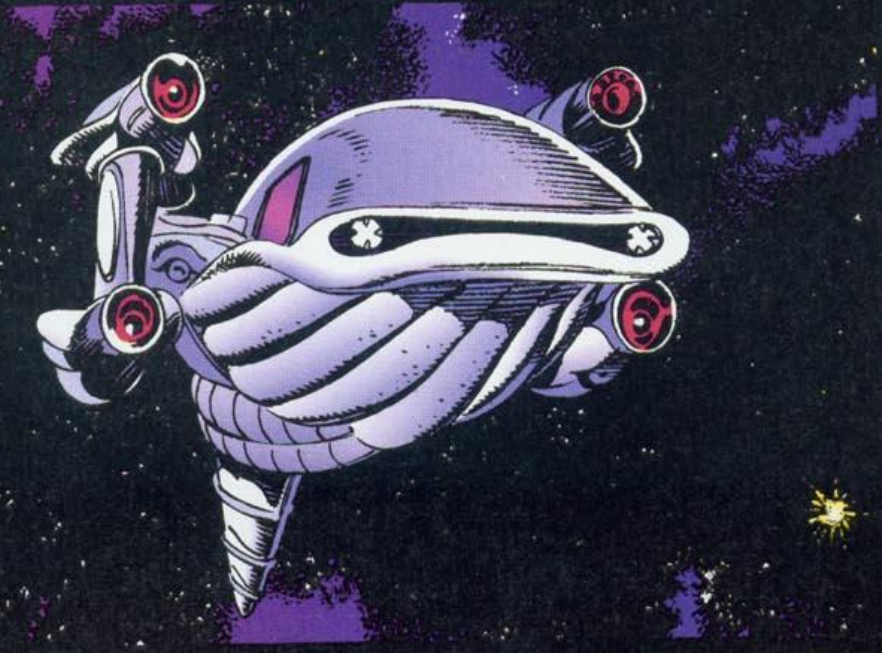
DO YOU
UNDERSTAND,
VINCENT?

B-BUT
THAT'S--

KEEP
IT QUIET
UNTIL I
GET
THERE.



THE LAST STRAGGLERS FROM THE CLAN HAVE ARRIVED. THE FIGHTING WILL BEGIN SOON.



WHOEVER THEIR LEADER IS, HE MUST BE IMPORTANT. ONLY SOMEBODY LIKE TOPKNOT WOULD GET THIS KIND OF ATTENTION.



STILL YOUNG, BUT WITH SCARS THAT WOULD DO A VETERAN PROUD...





IT'S HUMAN...

...MADE BY HUMANS... MARINE...



MISTAKE. STUPID.



I DESERVE WHAT I GET.



I MAKE THE APPROPRIATE SUBMISSIVE GESTURE AUTOMATICALLY, BUT MY MIND'S ON JUST ONE THING--

AROUND THAT HUNTER'S WRIST... A MARINE CORPS BANNER... NO HUNTER WOULD WEAR SOMETHING LIKE THAT UNLESS...
...UNLESS IT WAS TAKEN DURING A...



NO. IT MUST HAVE BEEN A FAIR FIGHT--THE CODE OF THE HUNT WOULD DEMAND IT BE SO.

AND THAT SOMEHOW MAKES IT ALL RIGHT?



TOPKNOT. HE'S THE CURRENT CLAN BOSS.

I GET THE IMPRESSION THERE WAS NO LOVE LOST BETWEEN HIM AND BROKEN TUSK ...

... BUT HE'S GIVEN ME TIME TO PROVE MYSELF.

HE TELLS ME IT'S TIME TO DO IT AGAIN.



THAT'S THE FIRST THING I LEARNED ABOUT HUNTER CULTURE -- YOU'RE ONLY AS GOOD AS YOUR LAST FIGHT. AND THAT GOES FOR EVERY MEMBER OF THE CLAN ...

... INCLUDING ME, INCLUDING TOPKNOT. IN THAT RESPECT, WE'RE ALL EQUALS.

" FIGHT 'SHORTY,'" HE SIGNS TO ME.



" I KNOW. "

THE SECOND THING I LEARNED WAS THAT I'M THE LEAST AMONG EQUALS.




TOPKNOT ~~COULD~~ TALK TO ME -- I KNOW HE UNDERSTANDS ENGLISH, BUT HE WON'T. NONE OF THEM WILL.

THE SIGNS WERE NEVER INTENDED TO CONVEY COMPLICATED THOUGHTS, BUT TOPKNOT'S MESSAGE IS CLEAR ENOUGH.


" THOSE WITHOUT HONOR ARE NOT PART OF THE HUNT / CLAN, AND THOSE WHO DO NOT FIGHT FOR THEIR HONOR HAVE NO HONOR. "

INSTEAD THEY "SPEAK" TO ME IN THE SILENT HAND-SIGNAL LANGUAGE OF THE HUNT.





SO I HAVE TO FIGHT--
SCRABBLE FOR MY
SPOT IN THE PECKING
ORDER.




AND THAT
MEANS
SHORTY.




I GUESS I
ALWAYS
KNEW IT
WOULD
HAVE TO
COME DOWN
TO THIS.



I WISH IT
WASN'T SO
HOT IN
HERE.



SHORTY'S SMALL FOR A
HUNTER, BUT HE'S BIG
ENOUGH. HE GETS A
HAND ON ME AND THE
FIGHT'S OVER.



GOT TO MAKE SURE
THAT DOESN'T HAPPEN...
TRUST THAT MY TRAINING.



...IS ENOUGH TO COUNTERACT HIS STRENGTH.



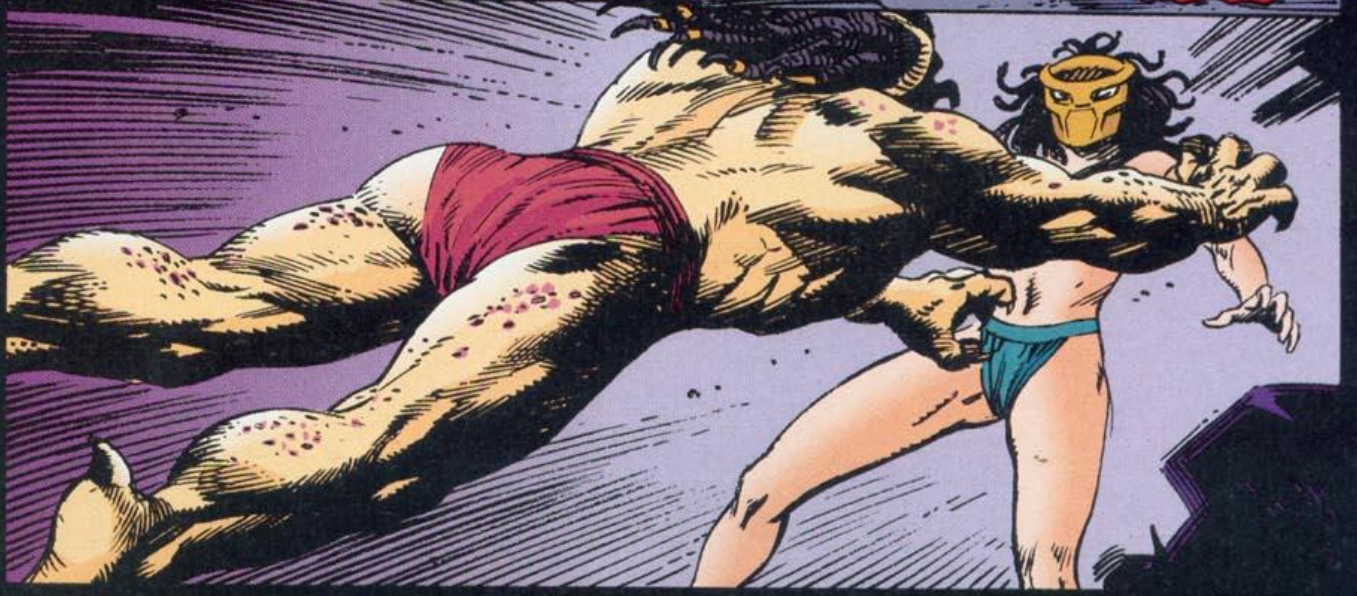
WUMP



NOW HE'S MAD.



GOOD, MAYBE I CAN USE THAT TO MY ADVANTAGE.





KEEP THE PRESSURE ON.

RULES SAY I HAVE TO KNOCK SHORTY OFF THE STAGE OR RENDER HIM UNCONSCIOUS. I'M NOT PARTICULAR--



-- BUT KICKING HIM
SENSELESS HOLDS A
CERTAIN APPEAL .



CHEATING. I SHOULD
HAVE EXPECTED IT
FROM SHORTY AND
HIS PALS.



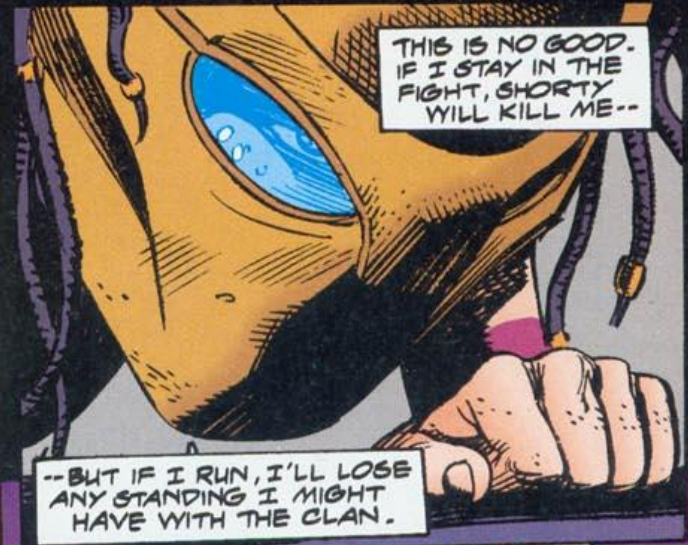
I HAVE TO
DEAL WITH
THIS QUICKLY--



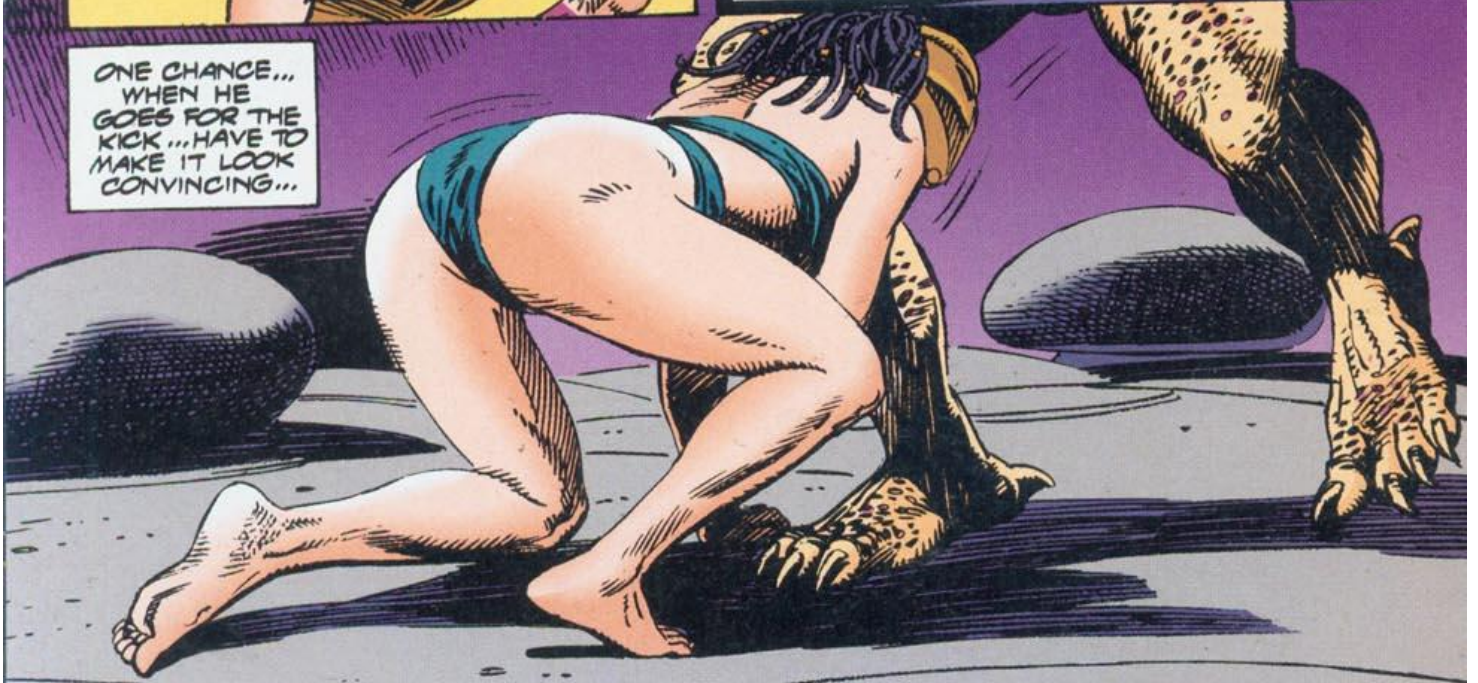
--CAN'T LET SHORTY
HAVE A CHANCE TO--

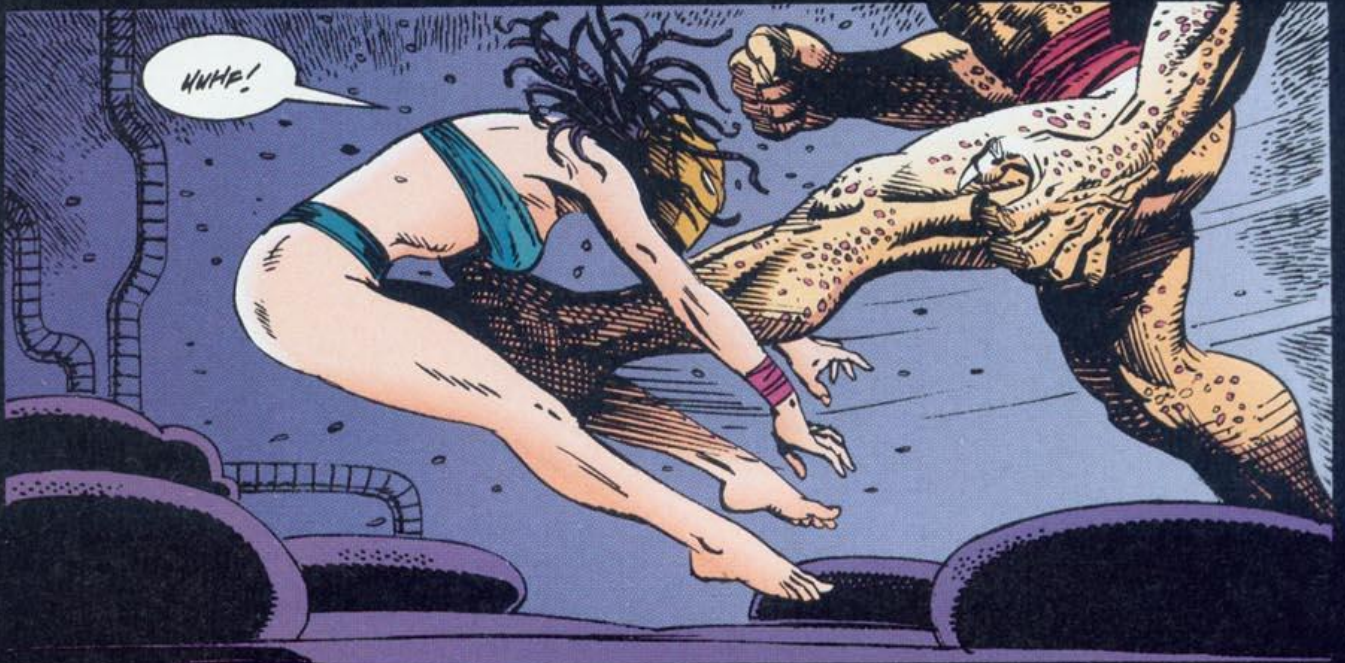
--RECOVER...





ONE CHANCE... WHEN HE GOES FOR THE KICK... HAVE TO MAKE IT LOOK CONVINCING...





WUMP!



DID IT...
BARELY.

I LOST MY CHANCE TO
JOIN THE HUNT, BUT I
SAVED MY LIFE.



WHY DO I
WONDER IF
IT WAS EVEN
WORTH IT?





ROGER THAT, NEMESIS SHUTTLE. YOU'RE CLEARED FOR LANDING ON DECK SEVEN.



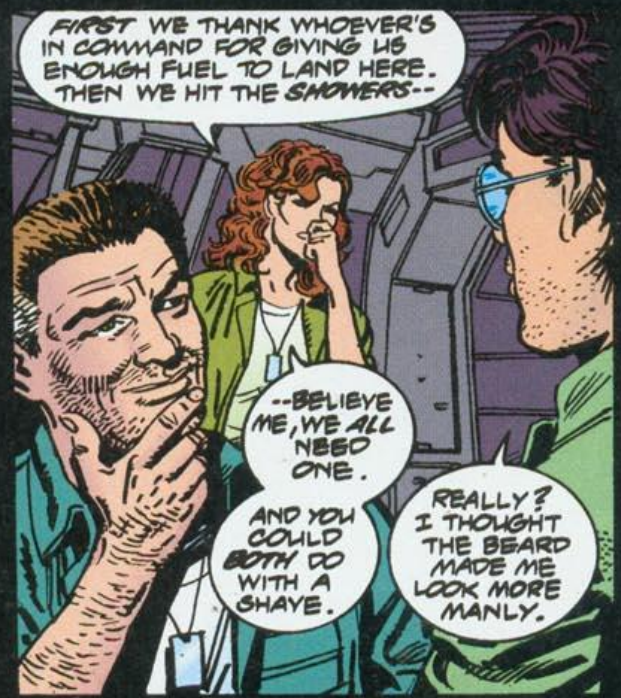
EASY, LARA-- DON'T RUSH IT.

CAN IT, JESS. THIS ISN'T ANYTHING I HAVEN'T DONE A MILLION TIMES BEFORE.



WE'RE DOWN.

FINALLY! FIRST STOP, THE MESS HALL. A THING THIS BIG HAS GOT TO HAVE REAL FOOD IN ITS LARDER.



FIRST WE THANK WHOEVER'S IN COMMAND FOR GIVING US ENOUGH FUEL TO LAND HERE. THEN WE HIT THE SHOWERS--

--BELIEVE ME, WE ALL NEED ONE.

AND YOU COULD BOTH DO WITH A SHAVE.

REALLY? I THOUGHT THE BEARD MADE ME LOOK MORE MANLY.



YOU DON'T NEED A BEARD FOR THAT, ELLIS. GETTING INTO THAT MAX ARMOR PROVED YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES.

GIVE THE KID A BREAK, LARA. YOU'RE EMBARRASSING HIM.



CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE!

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SKOTINKA76

*From
Jeska Jaroslav's
Collection*

