

CLASSICS *Obliterated*

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World's Greatest Authors

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1

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MARS ATTACKS[®]

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I made the error of looking the captain of The Acushnet in the eyes.

Ishmael isn't a proper name, boy.

What's your Christian name?

Abraham's face was as dead and flat as a plank of deck wood bobbing on the sea.

Melville, sir. Herman Melville.

We brook no aliases aboard The Acushnet, at least not among the white men.

And you say you're a whaler, Melville?

Yes, sir. I sailed with—

The only callous on these hands comes from the quill.

Mr. Stabler here tells me you're the schoolmaster for a village north of the cape.

That... that I was, sir, but the life doesn't suit me. I'm a whaler now.

His eyes were no more than holes worn in the wood by the tide, each portal framing the dark of the depths beneath.

His flat teeth were as broken ribs bleached by a sun that had long ago withered his lips to thin black scabs.

You may be a whaler someday, boy.

But you'll take a deck hand's lay until such time as I see you pulling an oar at pace with these here.

When he spoke, his spirit roared from between those broken stones of teeth like an ocean spray breaking against the coast.

You seem a nimble sort. Store your kit and get up in the rigging with a fid and mallet.

There's an infernal knot been tangling the gaff rig since Norfolk.

Burging like fog into the homes and hearths of the Puritan inland.

I did not fall to my death that first day in the rigging, which led to my permanent station among the indecipherable web.

It was here, high above the rest of the crew, my hands black and heavy with the tar from the marline used to repair the creaking ropes, that I first saw the bull.

It was the largest sperm whale I, or any man alive, had ever seen.

Its back was once a glossy sable, but scars heaped on scars had turned it grey and rough.

Gulls flew brazenly to feast on the open wounds where the harpoons of dozens of failed whalers still hung from his hide.

Death and devils, men. LOWER AWAY!

And Captain Abraham's iron was well represented in the monster's flesh.

Not you, Melville, not yet.

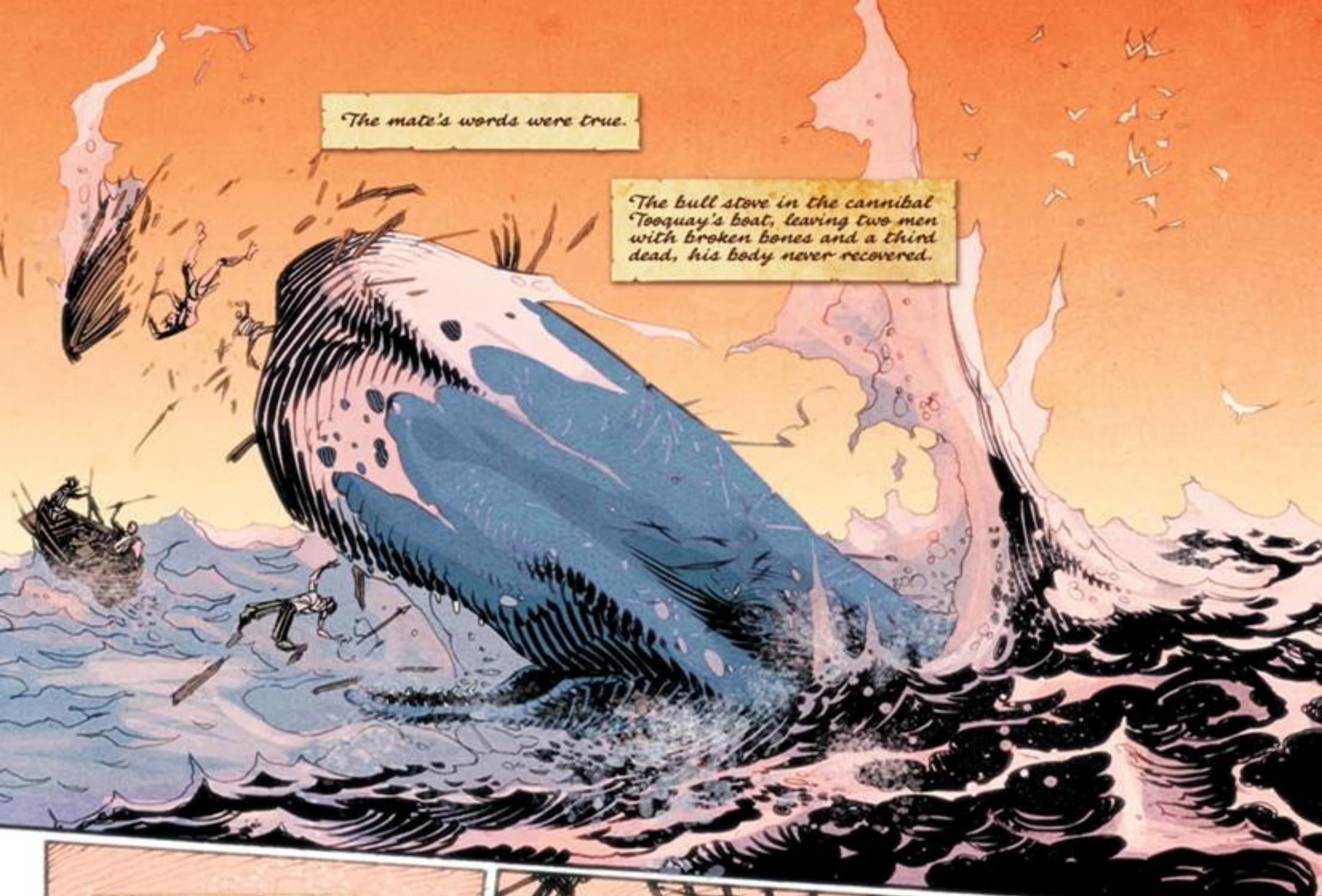
Set yourself to sharpening the flensing blades.

Or better yet, son, aid the old doctor in readying his station.

Odds are we'll be laying men out on our deck before that beast.

The mate's words were true.

The bull stove in the cannibal Tooquay's boat, leaving two men with broken bones and a third dead, his body never recovered.



And the proud crew of The Acushnet did not so much as graze the mad bull-whale's fluke.



After him boys. We'll stay after him.

Abraham seethed.

This godforsaken drink is nary deep enough to spare that bull from our hands.

His beard seemed perpetually wet with either the spray of the sea or the sweat of his own fever.

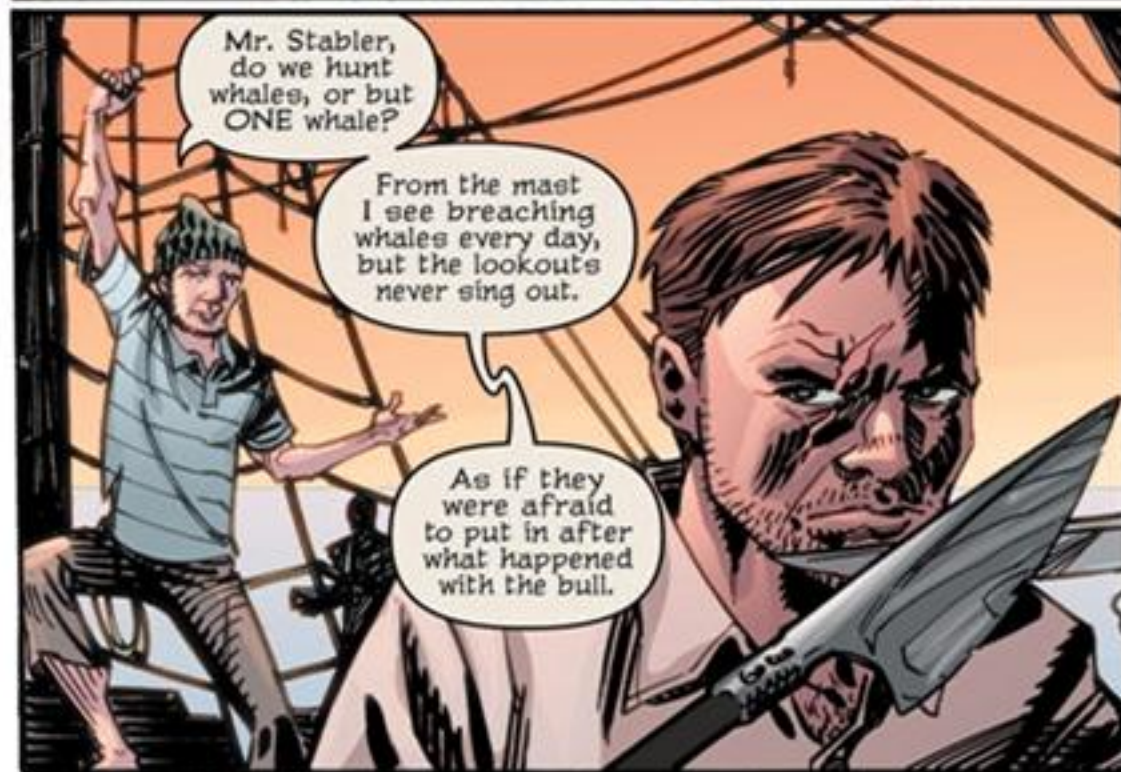
For OLD JEFFRIES, men! For Old Jeffries we'll take him!

His eyes, flat and black at port, now rolled white like the foam of a storm-churned surf.





It was only after I witnessed The Acushnet pass by easier prey that I grew troubled with Captain Abraham's singular purpose.



Mr. Stabler, do we hunt whales, or but ONE whale?

From the mast I see breaching whales every day, but the lookouts never sing out.

As if they were afraid to put in after what happened with the bull.



You're a cheeky one, Melville.

The boys are afraid, all right, but not of any WHALE.

It's ABRAHAM'S wrath they wend around. He seeks naught but the old bull.



Old Jeffries weren't the first man to die under that leviathan's weight, that honor belongs to Abraham's SON.

But Old Jeffries won't be the last.

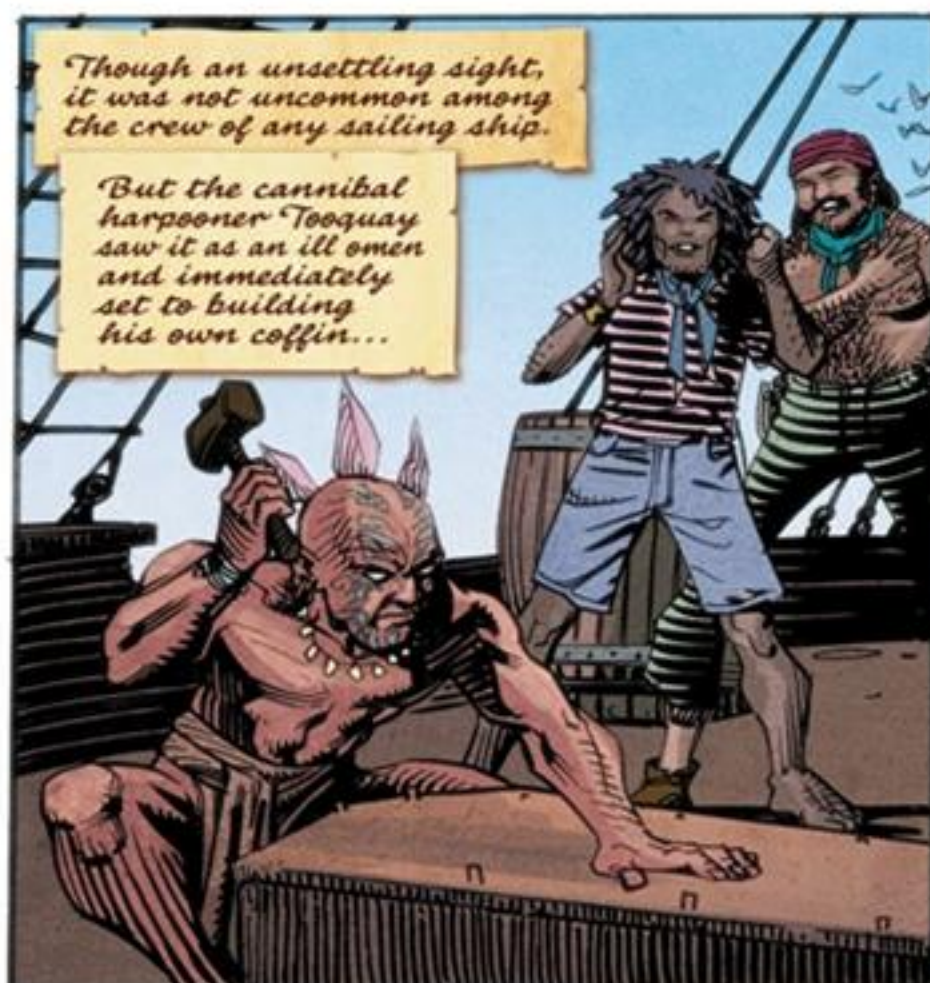
Not as long as Abraham captains The Acushnet.



That night, on the eighth bell of the night's watch, a star fell from the sky.

The glowing body fell uncommonly close, plunging into the sea just over the horizon.

The Pawkunnakut Indian Awashonk, aloft in the crow's nest, swore he heard the hissing of steam.



Though an unsettling sight, it was not uncommon among the crew of any sailing ship.

But the cannibal harpooner Tooquay saw it as an ill omen and immediately set to building his own coffin...



From which he was never more than a few paces for the remainder of the voyage.

You Christian men are too certain your god will find you on the main.

Tooquay's god is LAZY. Tooquay must sail himself home even AFTER he dies.



The confluence of events troubled even myself, though not given to superstition of any-



The WRITER'S LIFE does not suit you, Melville. You said so yourself.

You are a whaler now, are you not?



Aye, sir.

Then get yourself above deck, boy. Haven't ye heard the lookouts sing out?

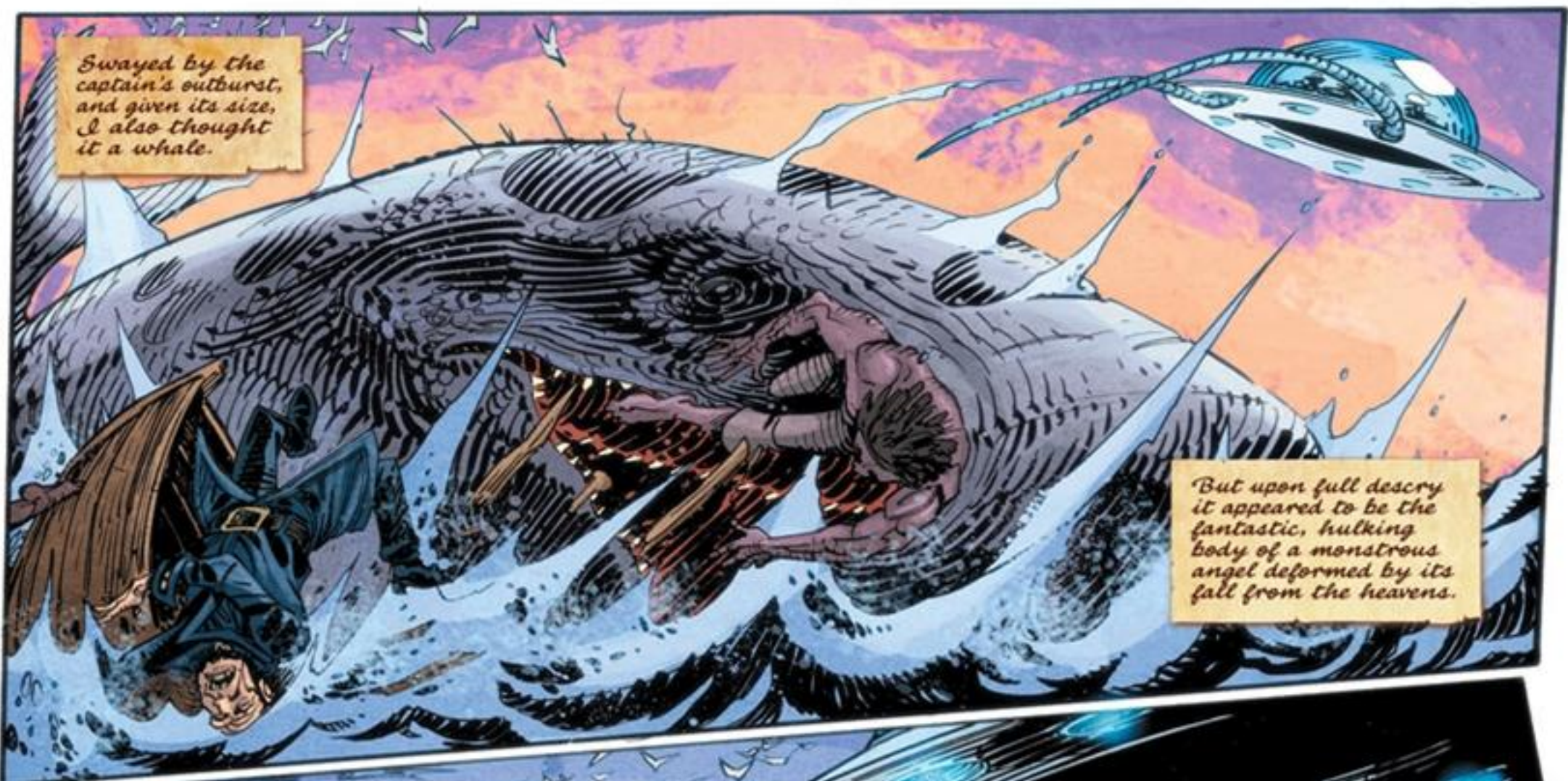
The bull has breached.






GOD IN
HEAVEN!

God in
heaven above,
it's another
whale!
**A WHITE
WHALE!**




Swayed by the captain's outburst, and given its size, I also thought it a whale.

But upon full descry it appeared to be the fantastic, hulking body of a monstrous angel deformed by its fall from the heavens.




Only its maneuvering gave indication that it was a vessel like ours, but borne upon the ether as well as the water.

With a metallic hull that shined bright as a sunlit iceberg.



And driven by an infernal fire that had no root on earth.

But unlike us, it sought not to harvest the beasts of the sea—



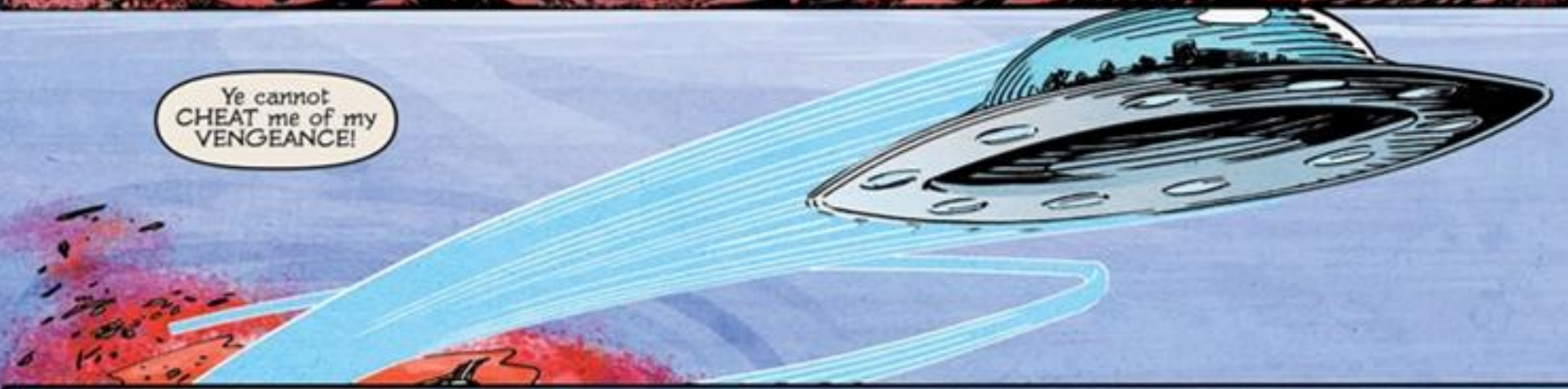
—but lay their inner workings bare.

ARGH!

ZAASH



Ye cannot
CHEAT me of my
VENGEANCE!



*Still stunned, we
put in near a small
cay to replenish
our fresh water.*

*Tooquay, Awashonk, and all but
one of the Turks stayed on that
spit of land, folding themselves
into the green of the grassland—*



*—out of reach of
both the devilfish...*



...and Abraham.

*The captain lay
in his berth for
nine full days.*



*The doctor said
he was battling
a great fever the
likes of which he
had never seen.*

*But when Abraham
emerged from his
quarters upon a newly
fashioned wooden leg—*



*There was no
evidence his fever
had diminished
in the slightest.*

That
devilfish
CHEATED
us, men.

It cheated us
of our rightful
spoils, earthly
and otherwise.

But you saw its
SKIN, shining like
polished silver.

You saw
its EYES,
burning like
precious
jewels.

The merest
flake of its hide
must be worth all
the casks of oil in
Nantucket, lads.

*No. His fever
had not lifted.*

*It had been
transferred.*

Our dominion
is the whole of
the Earth, as God
has decreed.

The whole of
the Earth and
THE WHOLE
OF THE SEA.

*And the void beaten into
our souls by the frightful
vision of the devilfish itself—*

*—came to be easily
filled by the captain's
unwavering fervor.*

That
devilfish is
OF THE
SEA.

Until we were as brave—

And if
it is of the
sea, I can
HUNT IT.

THUNK

—and as sick as he.



The monster's trail was not hard to follow.

Flocks of gulls hovered over the river of gore it left in its wake.

Not content to eviscerate merely the sperm whale, it had taken to flaying every creature of the sea it encountered.

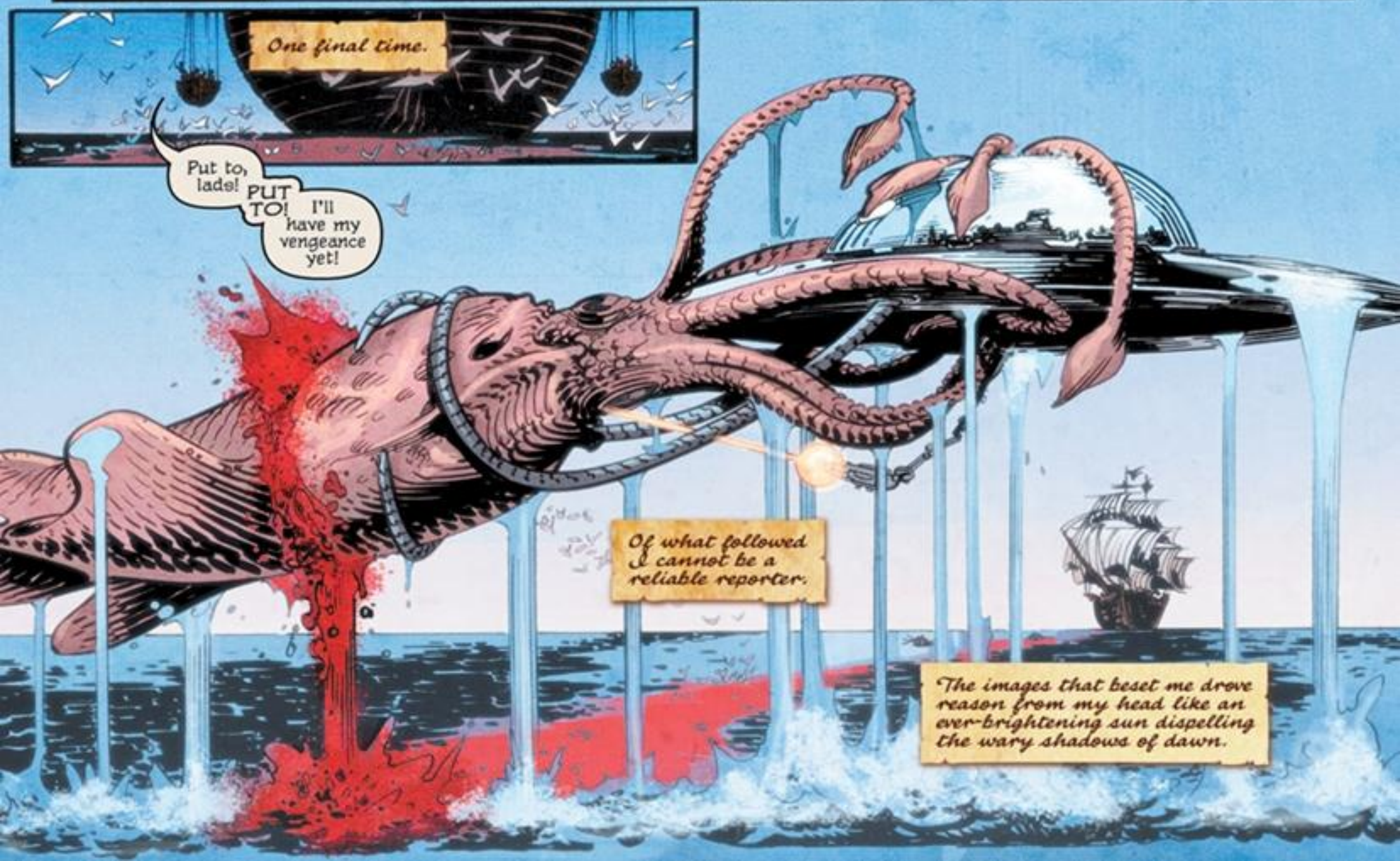
But never to consume it, it seemed.



Merely to kill. Kill and observe.

Captain Abraham anticipated the silvery beast, in its unslakable quest, would seek out the great spawning ground of the sperm whale.

And that there we would join it again.

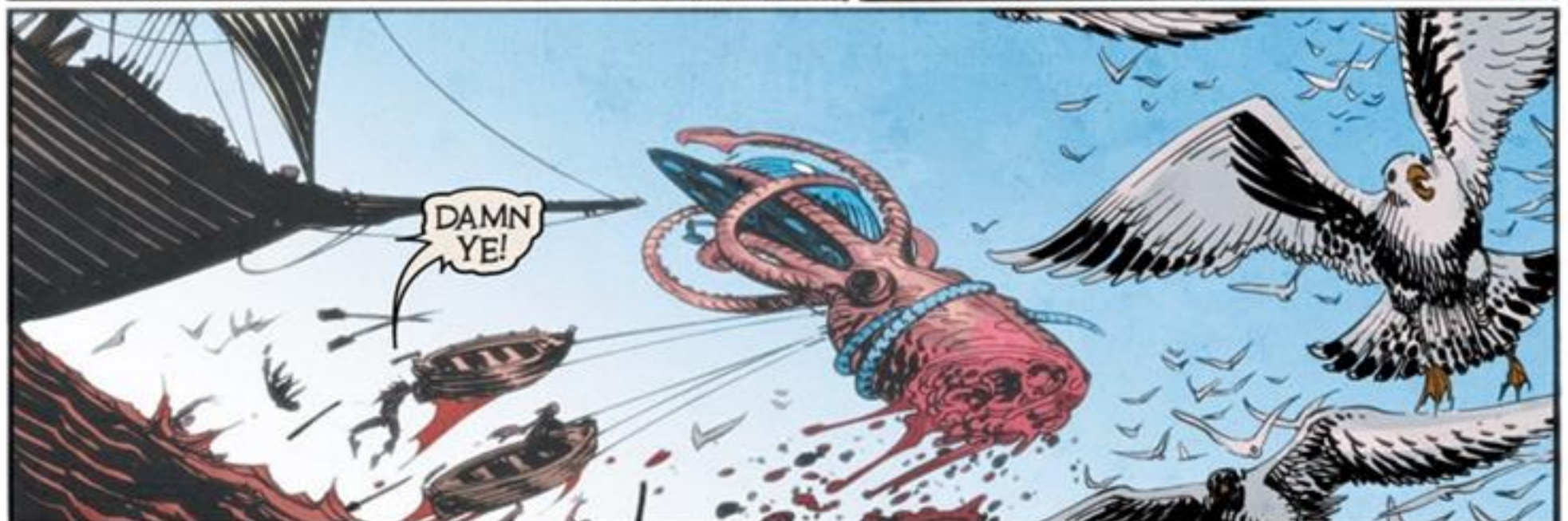


One final time.

Put to, lads! PUT TO! I'll have my vengeance yet!

Of what followed I cannot be a reliable reporter.

The images that beset me drove reason from my head like an over-brightening sun dispelling the wary shadows of dawn.





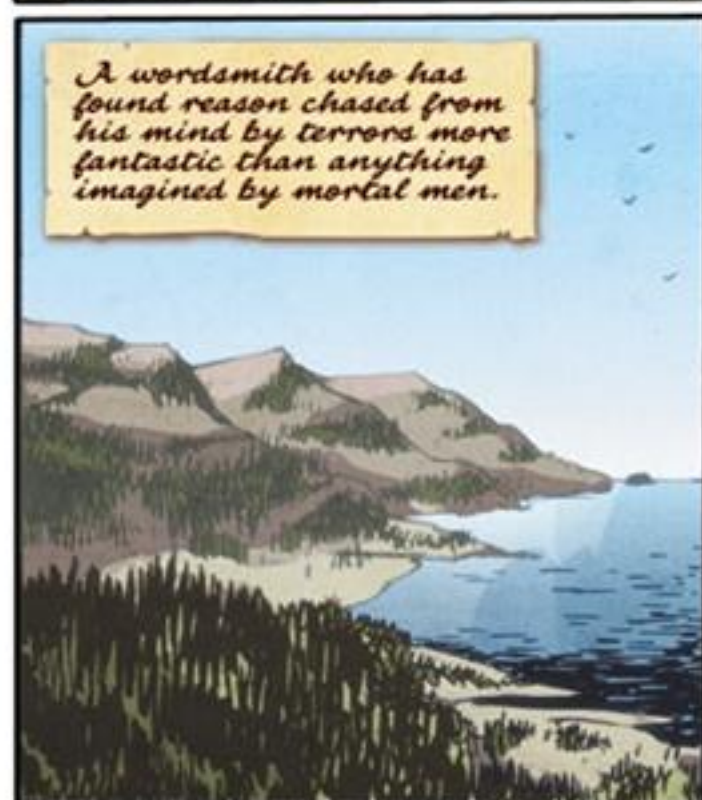
*Tooquay's morbid augury
had safeguarded my life.*

But my life alone.

Or so I thought.

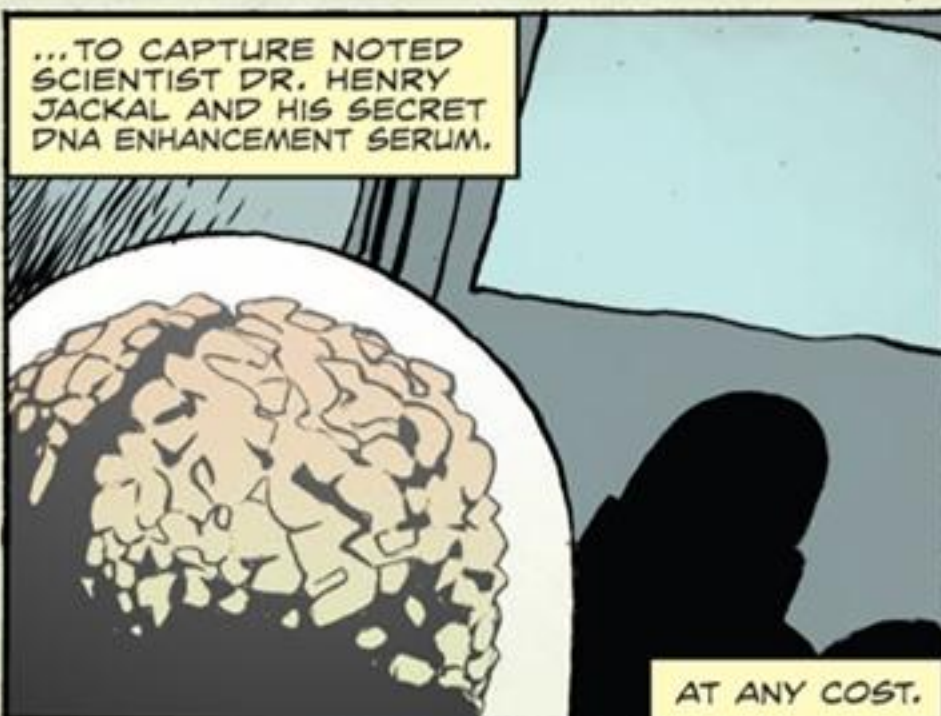








IN THEIR NEVER-ENDING QUEST TO MAKE HUMANS SUFFER, A MARTIAN RECONNAISSANCE-BY-FIRE SQUADRON HAS BEEN SENT TO LONDON, ENGLAND...



...TO CAPTURE NOTED SCIENTIST DR. HENRY JACKAL AND HIS SECRET DNA ENHANCEMENT SERUM.

AT ANY COST.



DR. PEACH, I DO HOPE THE MILITARY WILL APPRECIATE THIS!

YES, DR. JACKAL.

AFTER FIELD-TESTING, THE TEMPORARY-ENHANCEMENT SERUM SHOULD PROVE TO BE THE DNA BREAK-THROUGH OF WHICH YOU'VE ALWAYS DREAMED.

MAKE SURE YOU BRING YOUR "OVERDUE" BOOK WITH YOU LATER TO MY FLAT. I'LL SEE ABOUT WAIVING THE PENALTY.



STEALTH ENTRY OPTIONAL.



{KNOCK, KNOCK!}*

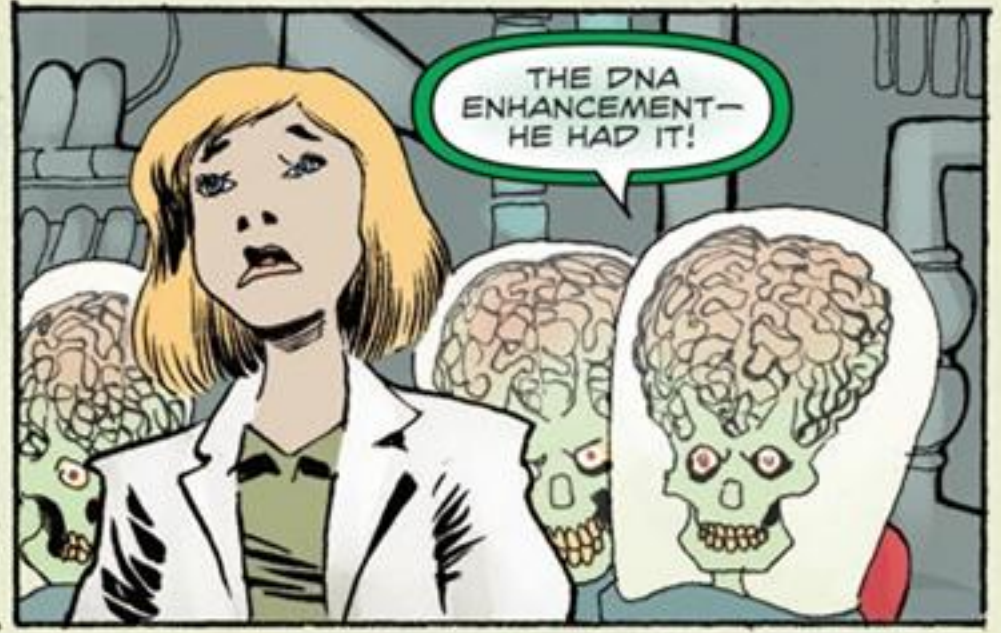
*Translated from Martian.







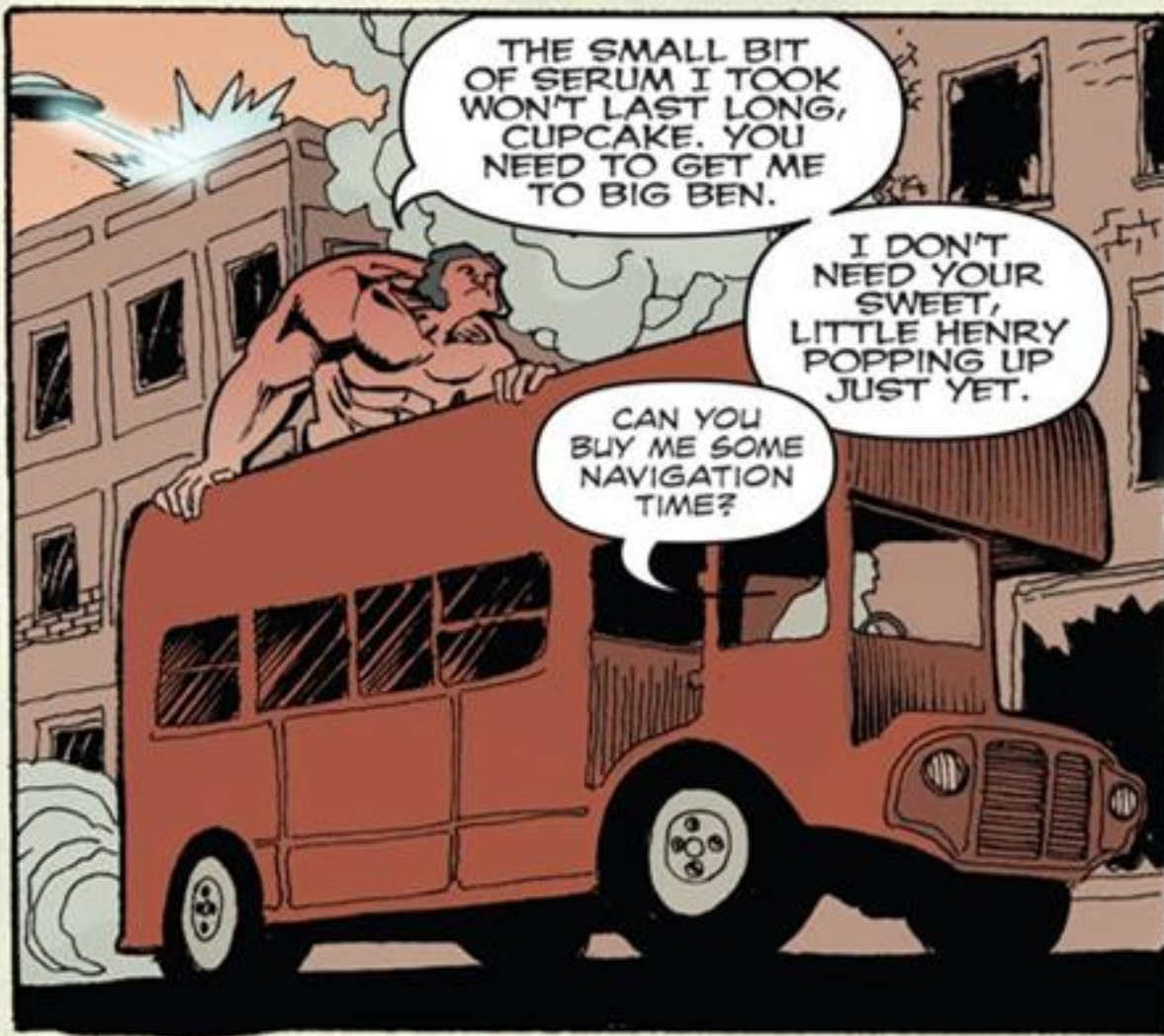


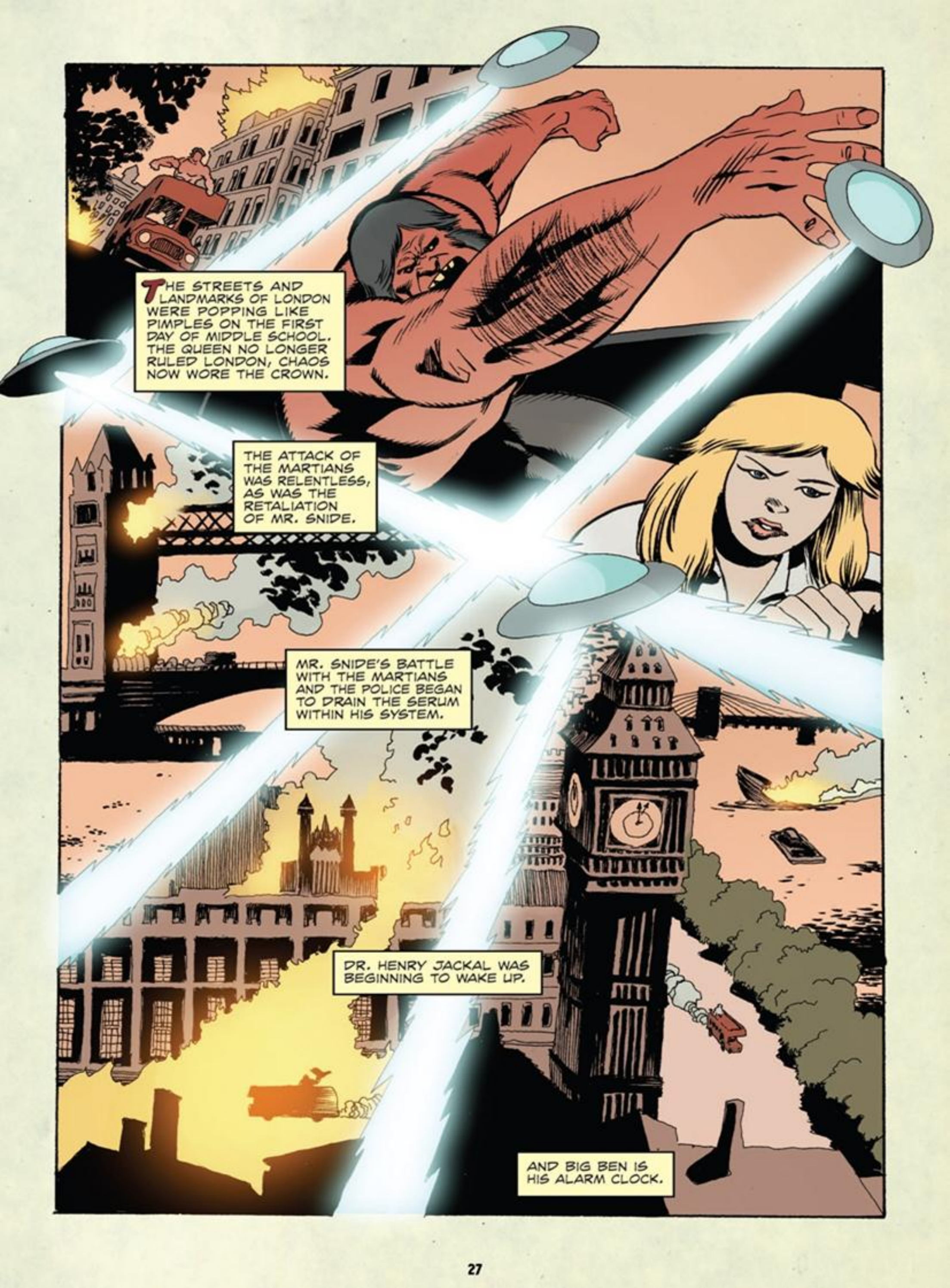












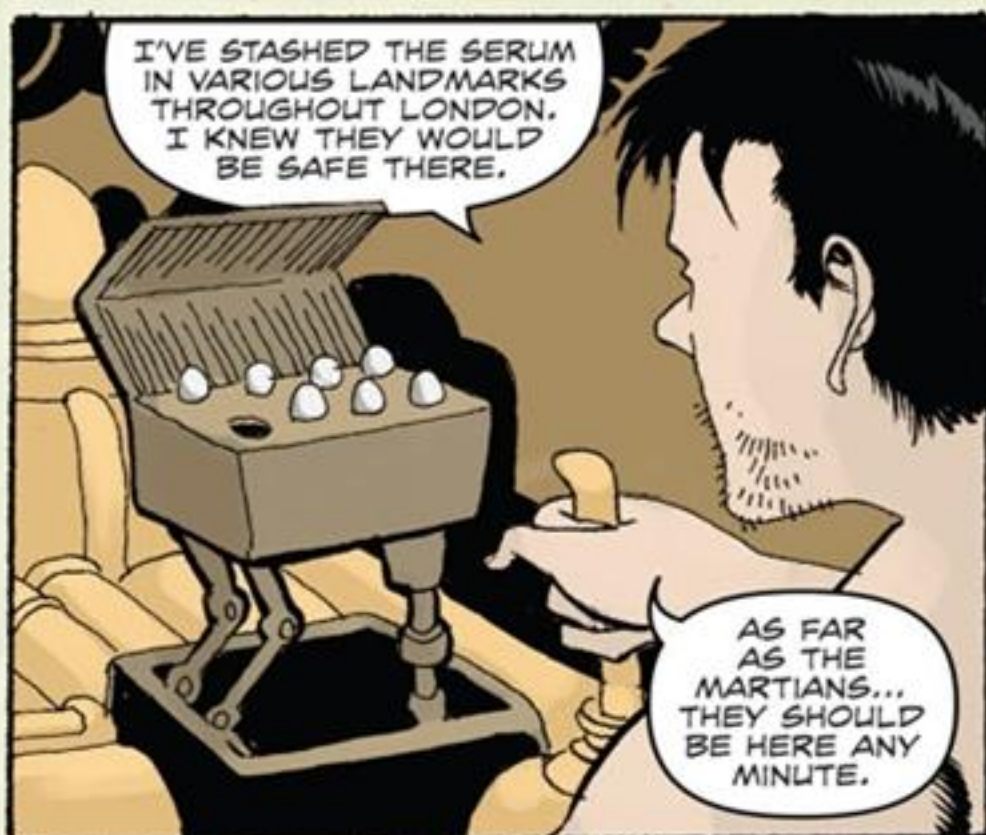
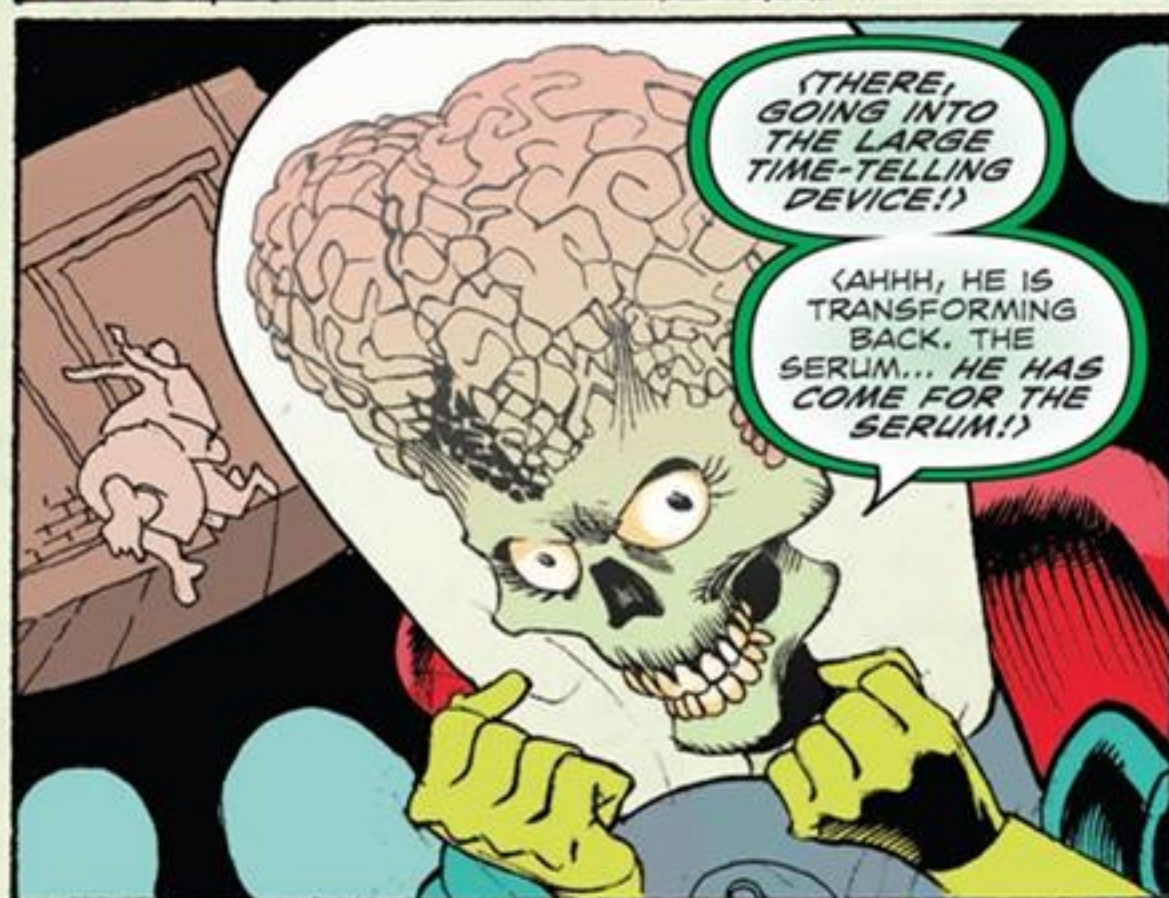
THE STREETS AND LANDMARKS OF LONDON WERE POPPING LIKE PIMPLES ON THE FIRST DAY OF MIDDLE SCHOOL. THE QUEEN NO LONGER RULED LONDON, CHAOS NOW WORE THE CROWN.

THE ATTACK OF THE MARTIANS WAS RELENTLESS, AS WAS THE RETALIATION OF MR. SNIDE.

MR. SNIDE'S BATTLE WITH THE MARTIANS AND THE POLICE BEGAN TO DRAIN THE SERUM WITHIN HIS SYSTEM.

DR. HENRY JACKAL WAS BEGINNING TO WAKE UP.

AND BIG BEN IS HIS ALARM CLOCK.





DR. JACKAL,
SO GOOD TO
SEE YOU AGAIN,
AS WELL AS
YOUR HEALTHY,
HOSTILE FEMALE
COMPANION!

I WANT THE
SERUM, THE
FEMALE, AND—
MOST OF ALL—
YOU DEAD. TIME
TO COMPLY!



YES,
IT IS!



COME ON,
CUPCAKE, "TIME"
TO GO.

«A DOUBLE
SELF-DESTRUCTION
ATTEMPT!»

«FORGET THEM,
LIBERATE THE SERUM,
AND PREPARE FOR
DEPARTURE AND
UNIFICATION WITH THE
COMMAND SHIP!»



BOTTOMS UP, CRETINS.



<ENHANCE ME!>

<TRANSFORM ME!>

<I MUST DROWN MY DESIRES FOR THE LOSS OF THE ANTAGONISTIC FEMALE MISS PEACH.>



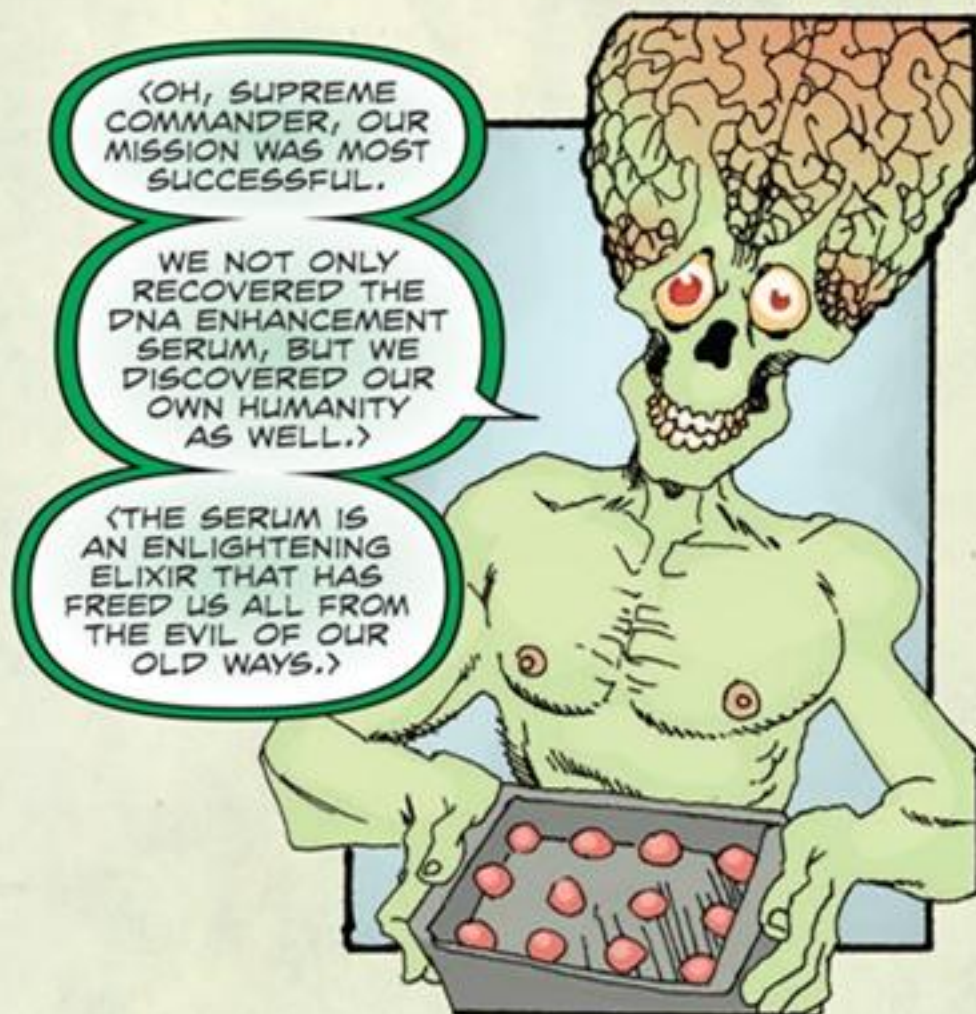
<SUPREME COMMANDER, THE RECONNAISSANCE-BY-FIRE SHIP IS DOCKING.>



<EH?>



<THEY ARE... NAKED.>





END?

RECORDING...

COMPLETING OUR FIFTH
SOLAR CYCLE ON-PLANET.

SALVAGED MATERIALS FROM
THE CRAFT'S REMAINS,
BUILT INTERIM STORAGE FOR
SUPPLIES AND WEAPONS.

THIRTY-NINTH
SOLAR CYCLE.

FAILED TO UPGRADE
COMMUNICATIONS
ARRAY. DISTRESS
SIGNAL WEAKENED.
MUST REATTEMPT.

FORTY-SEVENTH
SOLAR CYCLE.

CONSUMED LOW-HANGING,
NATIVE ORGANICS. ILL-ADVISED.
JETTISONED WASTE DISPOSAL
MODULE, FOURTH OF TEN.

TWO HUNDRED AND
EIGHTY-FIFTH SOLAR
CYCLE? NINETIETH?

MUST RECOUNT.

FOUR HUNDRED
AND SEVENTY-FIRST
SOLAR CYCLE.

I BELIEVE WE
SHALL GO MAD.

NO RESPONSE TO DISTRESS SIGNALS SENT DURING PREVIOUS CYCLE, AS PREDICTED.

UNANSWERED MESSAGES WITHIN CONTAINMENT UNITS, SENT OUT ACROSS THE STARS.

HOPELESS, POINTLESS.

MY COLLEAGUES CONCUR.

RESIGNMENT MARKS THEIR WITHDRAWN FACES.

ONE CAN HARDLY BLAME THEM.

STRANDED ON AN ALIEN WORLD, SURVIVAL UNCERTAIN, SUPPLIES DWINDLING WITH NO SIGN OF RESCUE OR NATIVE CONTACT.

AMONG OTHER THINGS.

PERHAPS DURING THE NEXT SOLAR CYCLE? WE SHALL GO MAD THEN.

MY COLLEAGUES CALCULATE IT AT AN 81.6 PERCENT CERTAINTY.

OUR TEAM CALCULATED A SUCCESS RATE OF 98.2 FOR THIS RECONNAISSANCE MISSION.

WE HAVE SINCE ABANDONED TRUSTING ONLY IN CALCULATIONS.

THE ANNUAL CYCLE WE HAVE SPENT ON THIS WORLD HAS FORCED US TO TRUST IN ONE ANOTHER, OUR TRAINING AND INSTINCTS.

SHORT PERIODS OF ATMOSPHERIC EXPOSURE STRENGTHEN OUR LUNGS.

LONGER PERIODS PROVE TOXIC AND FATAL, AS OUR NAVIGATOR LEARNED THE HARD WAY.

HE MADE UP FOR IT BY HELPING TO MASTER NATIVE COMBUSTION.

CONSERVING POWER CELLS MEANT THEORIZING OTHER METHODS FOR CAPTURING SUSTENANCE.

INCONCLUSIVE RESULTS: NATIVE ORGANICS REJECTED OUR SNARE.

ALTERNATIVE METHODS HAD TO BE CONCEIVED AND CONFIRMED.

OUR POST-ACTION REPORT THEORIZES WHY NATIVE ORGANICS MAY HAVE REJECTED THE SNARE.

JETTISONED THE SECOND AND THIRD OF TEN WASTE DISPOSAL MODULES.



FOUR HUNDRED
AND NINETIETH
SOLAR CYCLE.

DEFEATED BY
AN ORGANIC
CONTAINMENT
UNIT FOR THE
62ND TIME. THE
EMPIRE WOULD
BE PROUD.



ABANDONED ALL ATTEMPTS TO
CONTACT HIGH COMMAND, ALONG
WITH HOPE FOR SALVATION.

TWO CHARGES
LEFT IN SIDEARM.
MY COLLEAGUES
SUGGEST WE
USE THEM ON
OURSELVES.



RETURNING TO CRAFT,
PLANNING TO ROUTE
REMAINING POWER
FROM ON-BOARD
DISINTEGRATORS TO
RECHARGE WEAPON.

FOUR HUNDRED AND
NINETIETH SOLAR CYCLE
STRANDED ON THIS
PRIMITIVE LANDMASS.



FINALLY, CURIOUSLY.

THE PRIMITIVES ARRIVE.



ASSESSING THE SITUATION: LONE TERRAN, UNARMED.

CALCULATING A 99.8 PERCENT VICTORY RATE SHOULD HOSTILITIES COMMENCE.



THE TERRAN RISES...



—AHHH!

AHHH!

YAHHHH!

...AND REACTS.



REACTION CONVEYS FEAR—A FINDING CONCURRENT WITH PREVIOUS EXAMPLES OF NATIVE CONTACT—PROMPTING OUR CALCULATION OF A 70.3 PERCENT CHANCE OF VIOLENCE.



ADDITIONAL OBSERVATION REVEALS TERRAN EXPLORATION MAY LEAD TO SABOTAGE OF VITAL RESOURCES.

CONCLUSION: IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED.



DESPITE CYCLES
OF MISUSE, OUR
INFANTRY TRAINING
RETURNS WITH EASE.




REGRETTABLY—


—THE SAME CAN
NOT BE SAID FOR
OUR REFLEXES.



FINAL CHARGES WASTED...



...ALONG WITH CYCLES
OF LABOR, AS OUR CRAFT,
COMMUNICATIONS ARRAY,
AND RECHARGING UNIT
IMMEDIATELY COMBUST.



MY COLLEAGUES
REVISE OUR VICTORY
RATE TO 62.1 PERCENT.



HUH...
HUH...
HUH...
...NO NO NO!

THE TERRAN RETREATS, ONCE AGAIN CONVEYING FEAR.



SAID ACTION TRIGGERS IMPULSES OF OUR OWN.

CONQUER.



ATTACK.

DISCARDING SIDEARM, THE UNCHARGED STATE OF OUR WEAPON PROVING INCONSEQUENTIAL.



FORTUNATELY, ADDITIONAL SAFEGUARDS HAVE BEEN CATALOGUED AND STORED.

HYPOTHESIS: RETREAT SUGGESTS THE TERRAN BELIEVES DANGER TO BE IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION.

NONONO DEARLORD NO—



YAAHHH!



AAAAH...

...AAAAH...

AAAAAGGH!

HYPOTHESIS: RETREAT SUGGESTS THE TERRAN BELIEVES NO MORE THAN FIVE SOLDIERS OPERATE A RECONNAISSANCE-CLASS CRAFT.

THEORY: TERRAN FEAR OUTWEIGHS THE ABILITY TO THINK RATIONALLY.



BOTH OF WHICH OUTWEIGH TACTICS AND STRATEGY.





REFLEXES NOT YET
OPERATING AT PEAK
EFFICIENCY, SACRIFICING
ELEMENT OF SURPRISE.

-YEAARGH!



공격하는
것은
가장
효과적인
방법입니다



MY COLLEAGUES CALCULATE
AN INCREASED CHANCE
OF VICTORY SHOULD WE
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR
TECHNOLOGICAL SUPERIORITY.

GET
AWAY!

PLEASE,
NO!



CONCUR.



VALIDATED.



NO REMAINS.

EFFICIENT IT MAY BE, TURNING ORGANICS TO ASH WITHIN 1.5 PICOS, THE STANDARD-ISSUE DISINTEGRATION RIFLE LEAVES SIGNS OF RESIDUE.



BONE. ASH.
EFFLUVIA.

THESE RESULTS...



...THESE RESULTS SUGGEST NO ORGANIC MATERIAL HAD BEEN HERE AT ALL.

BUT IT HAD.
HAD IT NOT?

A SERIES OF
CALCULATIONS
RESULTS
IN SEVERAL
HYPOTHESES.



HYPOTHESIS ONE: THE RIFLE
COMPLETELY ANNIHILATED THE
TERRAN, LEAVING NO RESIDUE.

MY COLLEAGUES DOUBT THE
VALIDITY OF THIS POSTULATION.



HYPOTHESIS TWO:
OUR ATTACK FAILED.
THE TERRAN ESCAPED.

IT REMAINS ALIVE,
REGROUPING TO
COUNTERSTRIKE.
UNFORTUNATE,
BUT ACCEPTABLE.



FINAL HYPOTHESIS, AND
MOST DISTURBING.

THE TERRAN NEVER EXISTED.
A HALLUCINATION INFLUENCED
BY SOLITUDE AND MADNESS.

THE SURROUNDING
DESTRUCTION—
TREES, CRAFT,
SUPPLIES—CAUSED
BY OUR OWN HANDS.



MY COLLEAGUES
THEORIZE THIS TO
BE THE CORRECT
CONCLUSION.

OUR DEBATE CONTINUES
INTO THE FOLLOWING CYCLE.



FOUR HUNDRED
AND NINETY-SIXTH
SOLAR CYCLE.

SEVEN SINCE
MADNESS
ENSUED.

NO FURTHER SIGN OF TERRAN
ACTIVITY, CONFIRMING OUR THEORY.

EXISTENCE OF TANGIBLE TERRAN
MATERIALS SUGGESTS HALLUCINATION
LEVEL BEYOND MEASURABLE SCALE.

QUESTIONED REALITY
REQUIRES ADDITIONAL
VIGILANCE AND ADDITIONAL
PROTECTIVE MEASURES.

MY COLLEAGUES VOLUNTEER FOR
DOUBLE-DUTY, CALCULATING ODDS
CONCURRENT WITH SECURITY WATCH.

FAILED TO UPGRADE
COMMUNICATIONS
ARRAY DURING FIFTH
SOLAR CYCLE. OR
SIXTH? NO. FIFTH.
MUST REATTEMPT.

THE RIFLE ANNIHILATED
THE TERRAN. THE TERRAN
EXISTED. CONCLUSIVE?

INCONCLUSIVE?
RECALCULATING.





INSTINCTUAL HYPOTHESIS:
TERRAN EXISTS. PREVIOUS
THEORY DISPROVED.
HOSTILITIES RECOMMENCE.



HYPOTHESIS—

GNYAAHH!

—INVALID.



EXISTENCE OF THE TERRAN IMPLIES OUR
RECENT ACTIVITY—RIDDLED WITH FAILURE—
HAD BEEN PERFORMED AT FULL COGNITION.

CONCLUSION:
UNACCEPTABLE.

NO... NO,
PLEASE...
WAIT—

—LISTEN!



RECONFIRMING INITIAL
THEORY: TERRAN DOES
NOT EXIST. WE ARE
INSANE. CONCLUSIVE
AT 100 PERCENT.

MY-MY
NAME IS
CRUSOE!

I... I WAS
SHIPWRECKED! I'M
A FISHERMAN, AN
ENGLISHMAN—

—D-DO
YOU KNOW
ENGLAND?



PLEASE...
PLEASE,
WHATEVER
YOU ARE...

...WHAT
DAY IS THIS?
AT LEAST,
PLEASE—

DISCHARGING
OUR WEAPON
AFFECTS NOTHING.



—IS IT
FRIDAY?



STILL—

—IT NEVER
HURTS TO
TRUST YOUR
INSTINCTS.



POSSIBLE THREAT ELIMINATED.
COMMENDATIONS ALL AROUND.

FOUR HUNDRED AND NINETY-
SIXTH SOLAR CYCLE. THE
IMPERIAL INFANTRY DECIMATED
A TACTILE HALLUCINATION.



IT MUST BE TRUE.



HOW ELSE TO
EXPLAIN OUR
ACTIONS?

STRANDED AND ALONE,
WAITING FOR SALVATION
THAT MAY NEVER COME—



—WE DISINTEGRATE
THE FIRST SENTIENT
BEING TO ARRIVE IN
AN ANNUAL CYCLE.

NO.

THEORY: THE
TERRAN DID
NOT EXIST. WE
ARE INSANE.



SHOULD IT PROVE
INVALID, BOTH WORLDS
WILL INEVITABLY END IN
WAR AND MASSACRE.

CALCULATING TO
CONFIRM VALIDITY.

CALCULATING...



CALCULATING...