

STAR TREK[®]

VOLUME 10



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Special thanks to Risa Kessler and John Van Citters of CBS Consumer Products for their invaluable assistance.

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Originally published as STAR TREK issues #41-45.

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VOLUME 10

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BEHEMOTH



I SPEND EVERY DAY
READING STAR CHARTS.

SOLAR SYSTEMS REDUCED
TO POINTS ON A MAP.

EVERY SO OFTEN I NEED
TO STEP AWAY. CHANGE
MY PERSPECTIVE.

SO I COME TO ONE OF
THE OBSERVATION DECKS
AND SPEND A FEW HOURS
JUST LOOKING OUT...

...TO REMEMBER HOW BEAUTIFUL
THE UNIVERSE IS.

"AMAZING, ISN'T IT?"

TO THINK THAT
NOBODY'S EVER
TRAVELED THIS
FAR FROM EARTH
BEFORE?

DA,
IT IS...
...AMAZING,
UH...

IRINA.

YES...
YOU...

YOU DON'T
REMEMBER
ME, DO YOU,
LIEUTENANT?

O-OF
COURSE,
YOU'RE...

FROM RUSSIA. LIKE YOU.
WE MET BRIEFLY AT THE
ACADEMY, JUST BEFORE YOU
WERE ASSIGNED TO THE
ENTERPRISE.



I JUST WANTED TO SAY HELLO. I CAME ONBOARD AFTER THE ATTACK ON SAN FRANCISCO.

IT'S NICE TO HAVE SOMEONE FROM THE HOME COUNTRY ALL THE WAY OUT HERE.



I IMAGINE FOR YOU IT MUST BE NICE TO LOOK UP FROM THE STARCHARTS ONCE IN A WHILE AND JUST SOAK IN THE VIEW?

D-DA, IT'S WERY—

VVVVRY—

—NICE!



I WILL HAVE TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR "V"'S, LIEUTENANT.

YOU'LL GET THE HANG OF IT.

MR. CHEKOV TO THE BRIDGE.



AYE COMMANDER! COMING, COMMANDER!



I'M SORRY, I MUST GO. NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN, IRINA.

YOU CAN ALWAYS FIND ME HERE, LIEUTENANT!



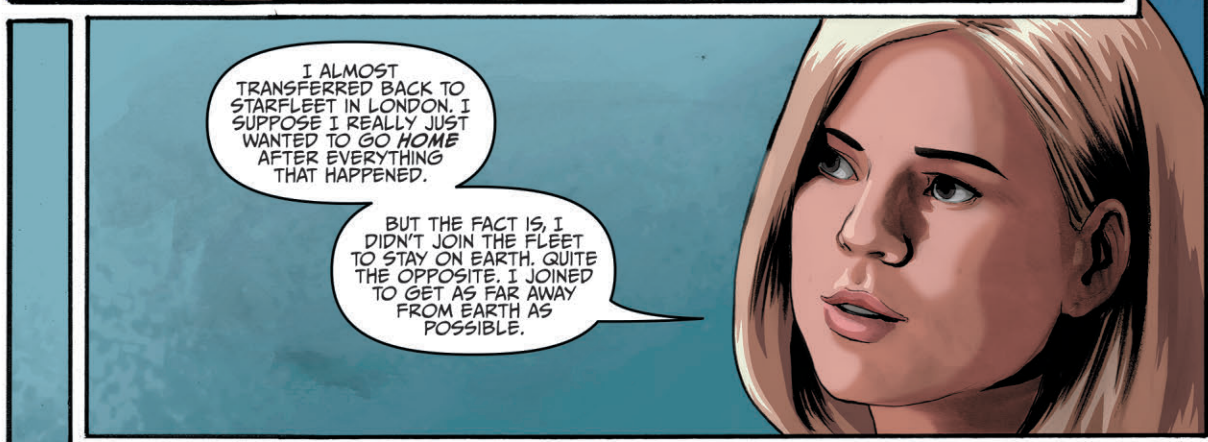
WHAT WAS
IT YOU WANTED
TO DISCUSS,
CAPTAIN?

TECHNICALLY
WE'RE OFF THE
CLOCK, CAROL.
YOU CAN CALL
ME JIM.



WE MET UNDER
LESS-THAN-IDEAL
CIRCUMSTANCES. I'VE BARELY
HAD A CHANCE TO GET TO
KNOW MY NEW WEAPONS
SPECIALIST.

I'M
GLAD YOU'RE
ONBOARD.



I ALMOST
TRANSFERRED BACK TO
STARFLEET IN LONDON. I
SUPPOSE I REALLY JUST
WANTED TO GO HOME
AFTER EVERYTHING
THAT HAPPENED.

BUT THE FACT IS, I
DIDN'T JOIN THE FLEET
TO STAY ON EARTH. QUITE
THE OPPOSITE, I JOINED
TO GET AS FAR AWAY
FROM EARTH AS
POSSIBLE.



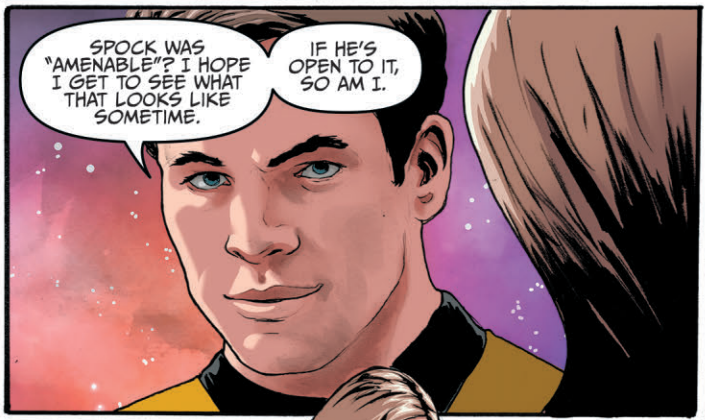
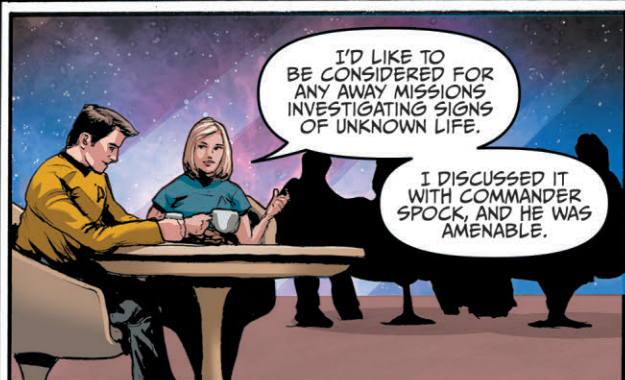
YOU AND
ME BOTH. NO
OFFENSE TO
THE HOME
PLANET.

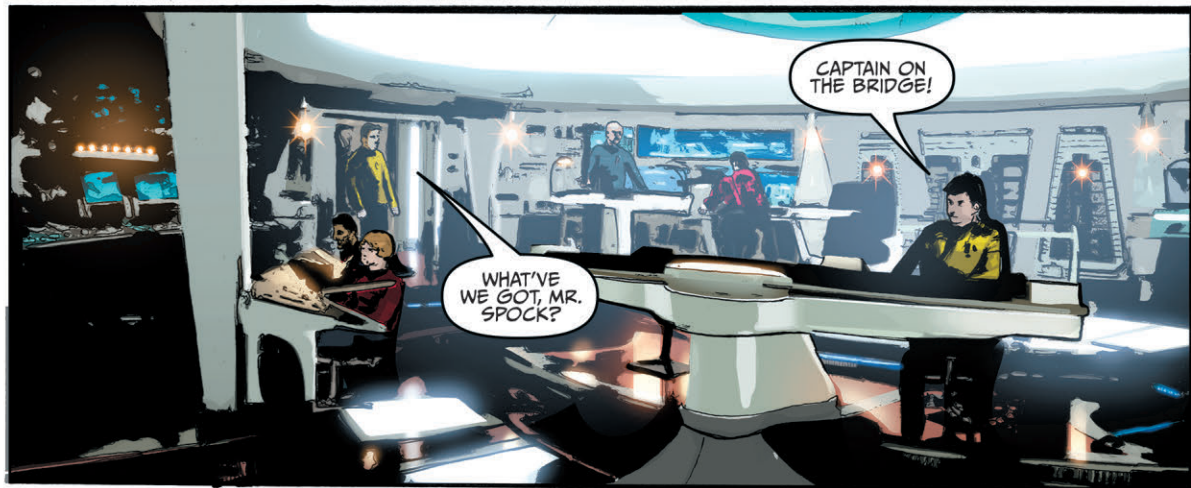
TO
THE BLUE
MARBLE.

THE BLUE
MARBLE.

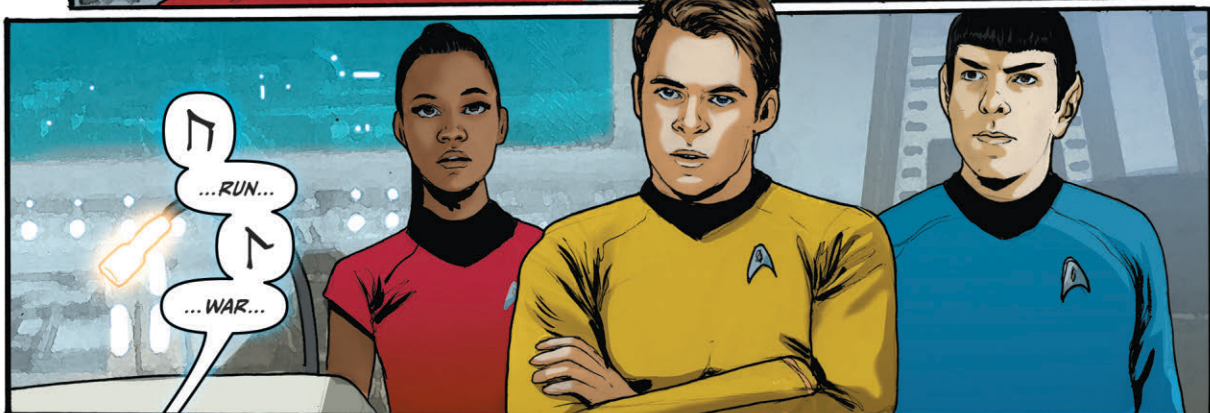
SO, WHY
WEAPONS
SYSTEMS?

CURIOSITY, I
SUPPOSE. IT SEEMED LIKE
SUCH A BOYS' CLUB AT THE
ACADEMY. I WANTED
TO CRASH IT.











...SAVE...

...SUN...

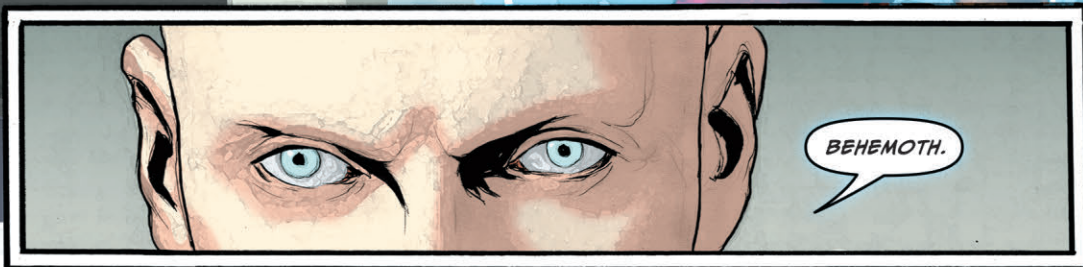
...WAR...

...NING.



CAPTAIN, I DON'T THINK THIS IS AN AUTOMATIC SIGNAL. SOMEONE'S SPEAKING TO US FROM INSIDE THE SHIP.

IT'S SOMEONE'S VOICE.



BEHEMOTH.



IF SCANS WON'T HELP, WE'LL TAKE A FIRST-HAND LOOK.

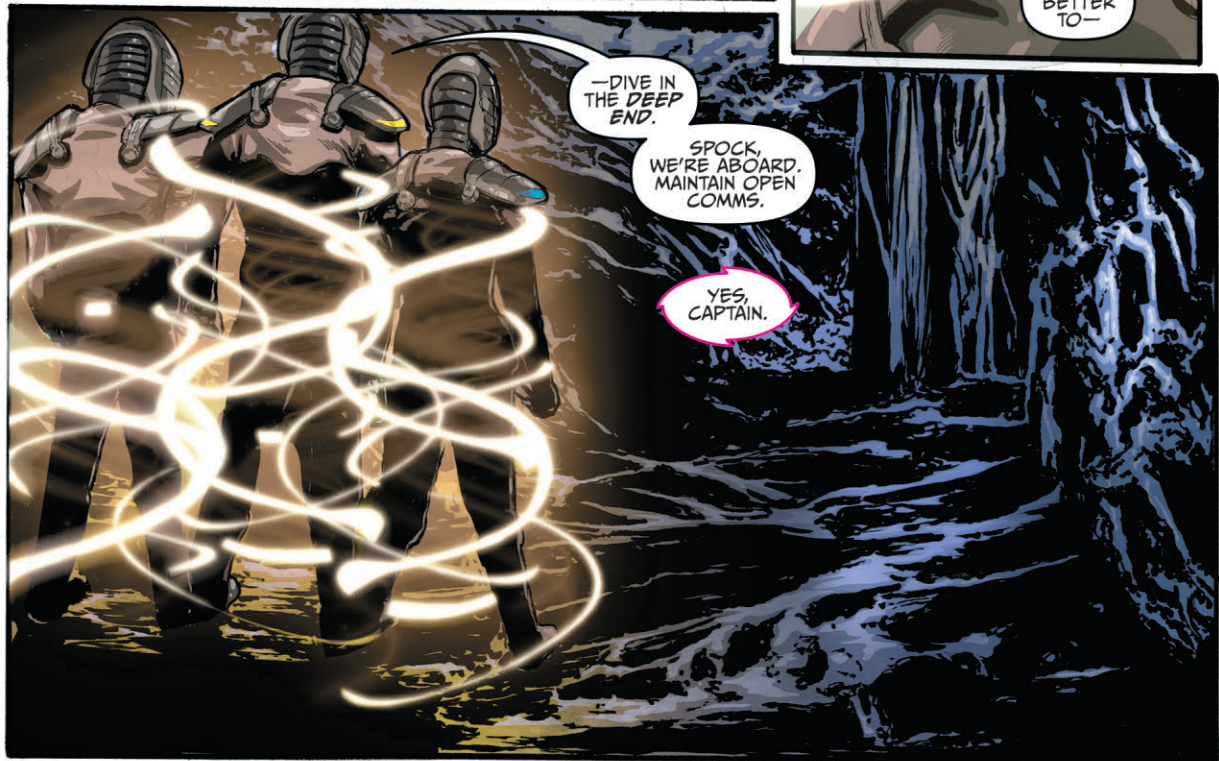
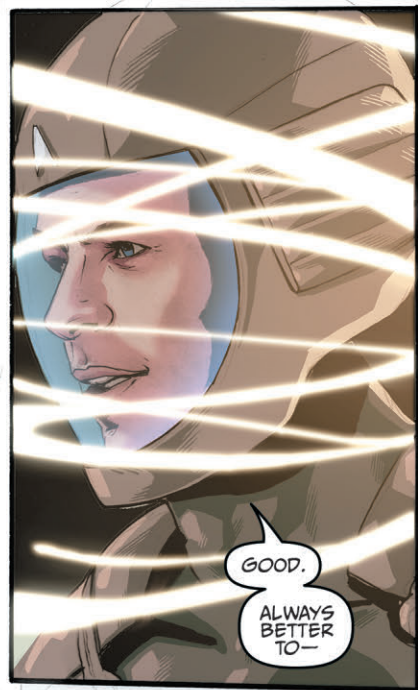
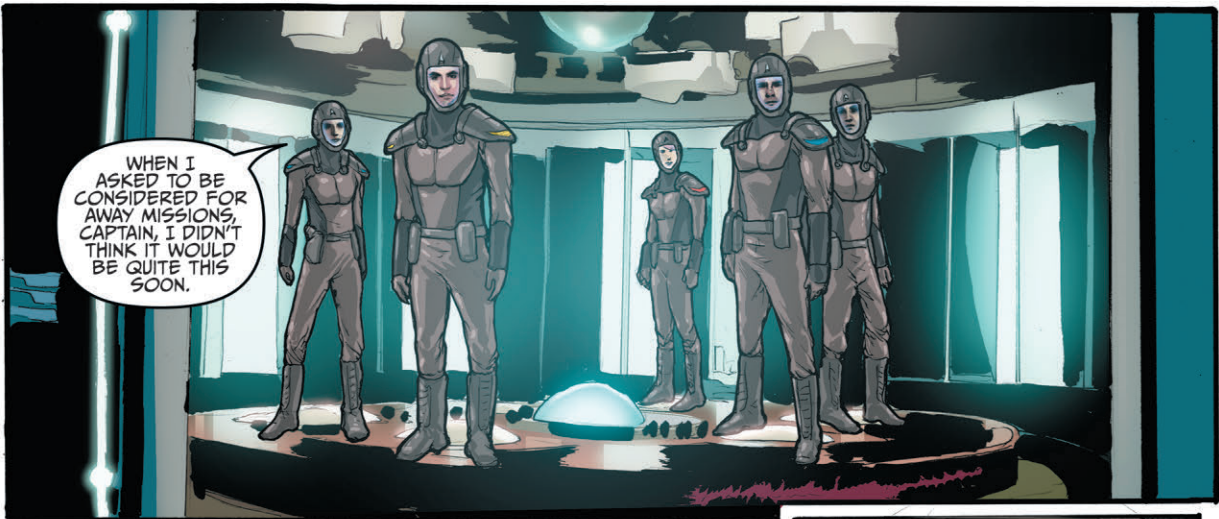
UHURA, MEET ME IN THE TRANSPORTER ROOM. MR. SPOCK, YOU HAVE THE CONN.

PERHAPS IT WOULD BE WISE TO FULLY ASCERTAIN THE MEANING OF THE MESSAGE WE HAVE RECEIVED. FURTHER ANALYSIS—



—WILL TAKE TIME THAT WHOEVER IS OVER THERE MAY NOT HAVE.

GIVEN THE DAMAGE TO THAT SHIP, I'M GUESSING THEY CAN USE OUR HELP. WARNING OR NOT.





ZAHRA, KEEP
YOUR PHASER
HOLSTERED.

BUT NOT TOO
HOLSTERED.

AYE, SIR.



ATMOSPHERE?

DECIDEDLY
UNFRIENDLY. KEEP
YOUR HELMETS
ON.

IN CASE WE DON'T
MAKE IT OUT ALIVE, I
JUST WANT TO THANK YOU
NOW FOR GIVING ME THE
OPPORTUNITY TO DIE
ALONGSIDE YOU.

YOU'RE
WELCOME,
BONES. I DON'T
THINK WE'RE IN
ANY DANGER.

BUT WHOEVER'S ON
THIS SHIP MIGHT BE,
WHICH IS WHY I BROUGHT
THE BEST DOCTOR IN
STARFLEET TO HELP
THEM.

THIS WAY!

I'M PICKING UP
WHAT COULD BE
A LIFE-SIGN UP
AHEAD!







SORRY, PAL.
I'VE NEVER LEFT A
PATIENT TO BLEED
OUT ON MY WATCH.
NOT ABOUT TO
START NOW.

I AM CAPTAIN KIRK
OF THE FEDERATION
STARSHIP ENTERPRISE.
WE COME FROM A PLANET
CALLED EARTH, IN THE SOL
SYSTEM. WE ARE HERE
TO HELP YOU IF
WE CAN.



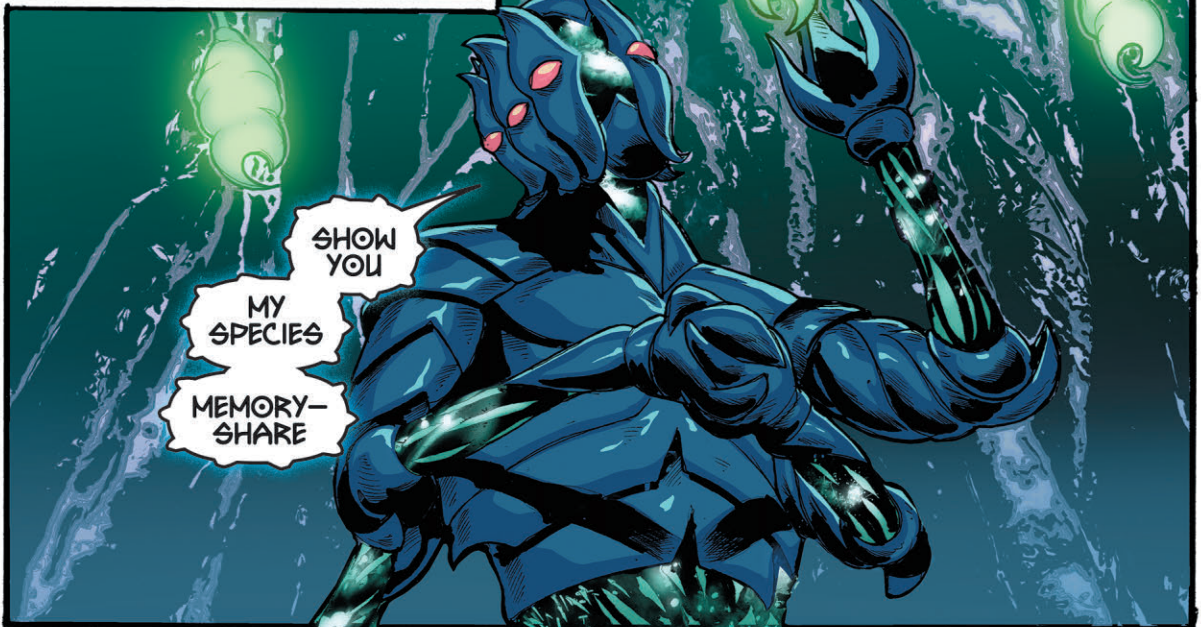
I AM

FROM



ITS NAME—AND ITS
PLANET'S NAME—CAN'T
BE TRANSLATED INTO
STANDARD.

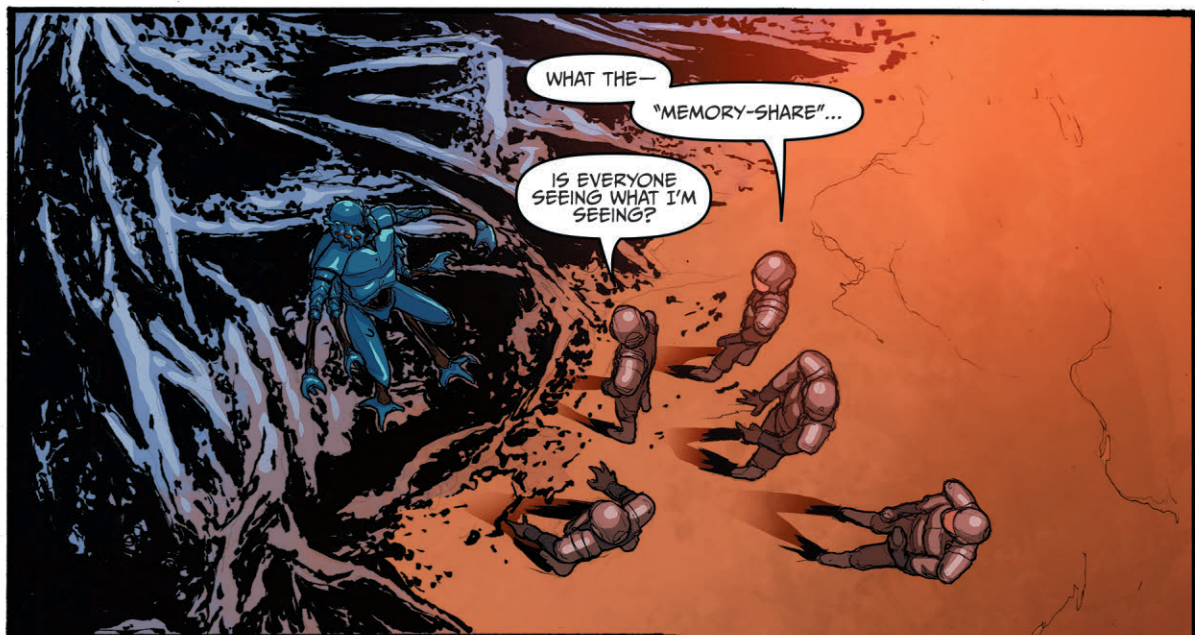
WHAT
HAPPENED TO
YOUR SHIP?



SHOW
YOU

MY
SPECIES

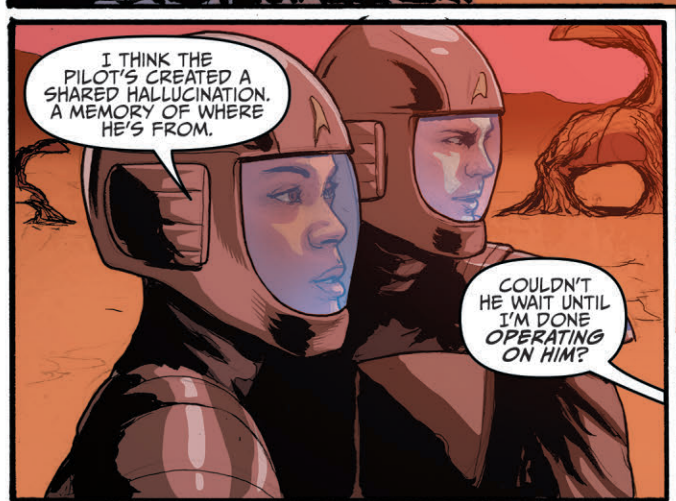
MEMORY—
SHARE



WHAT THE—

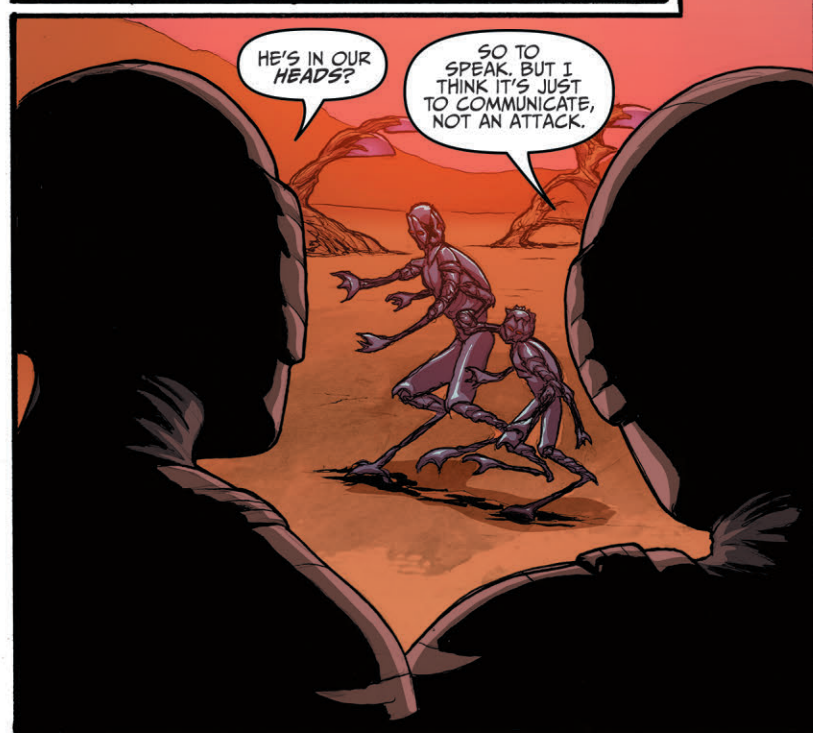
"MEMORY-SHARE"...

IS EVERYONE
SEEING WHAT I'M
SEEING?



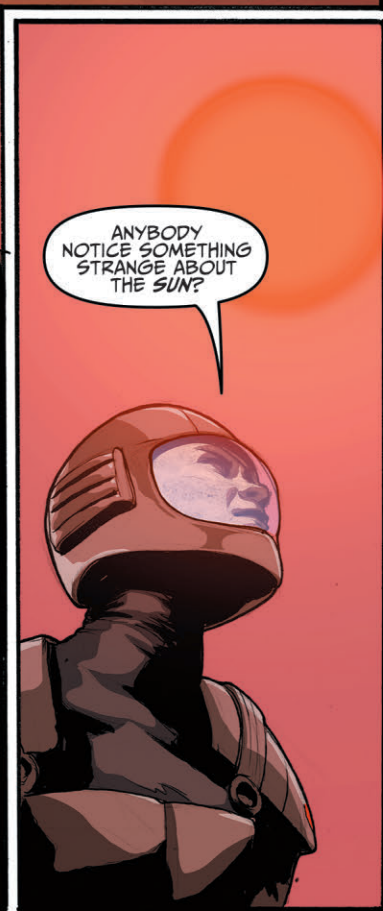
I THINK THE
PILOT'S CREATED A
SHARED HALLUCINATION.
A MEMORY OF WHERE
HE'S FROM.

COULDN'T
HE WAIT UNTIL
I'M DONE
OPERATING
ON HIM?

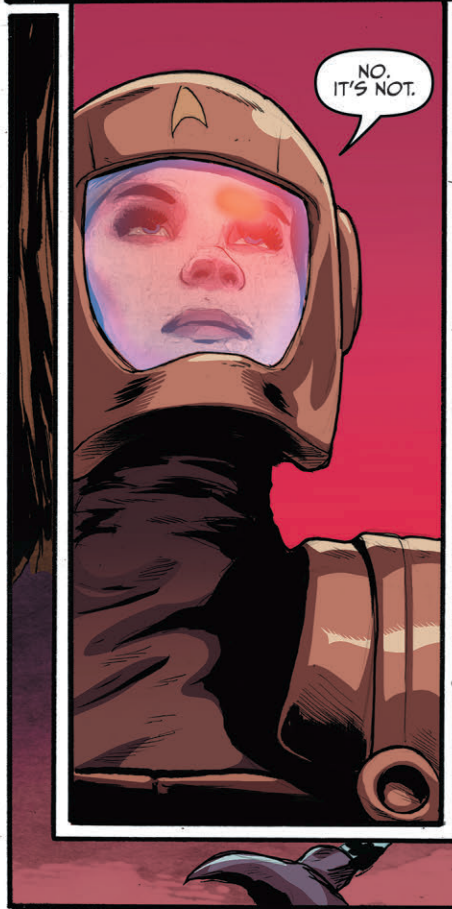
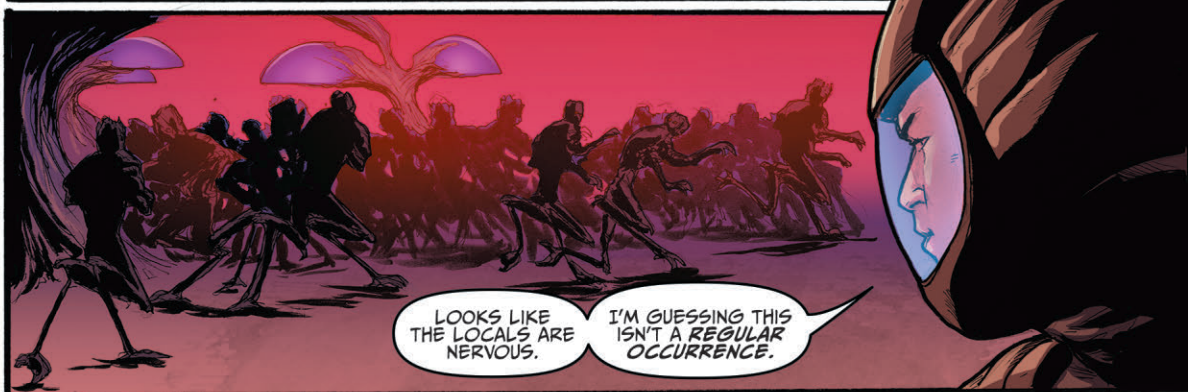


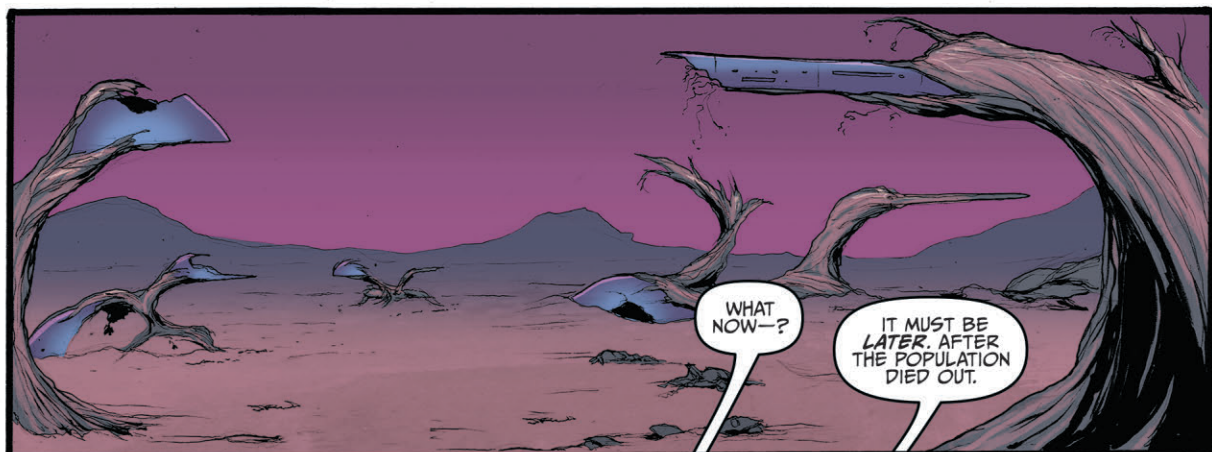
HE'S IN OUR
HEADS?

SO TO
SPEAK. BUT I
THINK IT'S JUST
TO COMMUNICATE,
NOT AN ATTACK.



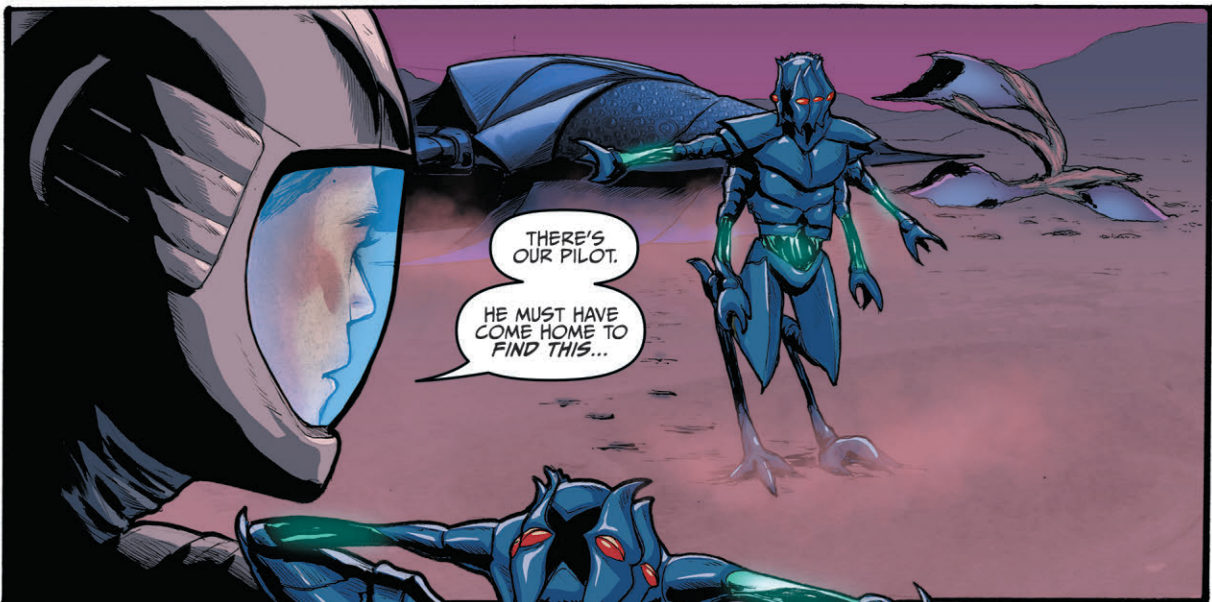
ANYBODY
NOTICE SOMETHING
STRANGE ABOUT
THE SUN?





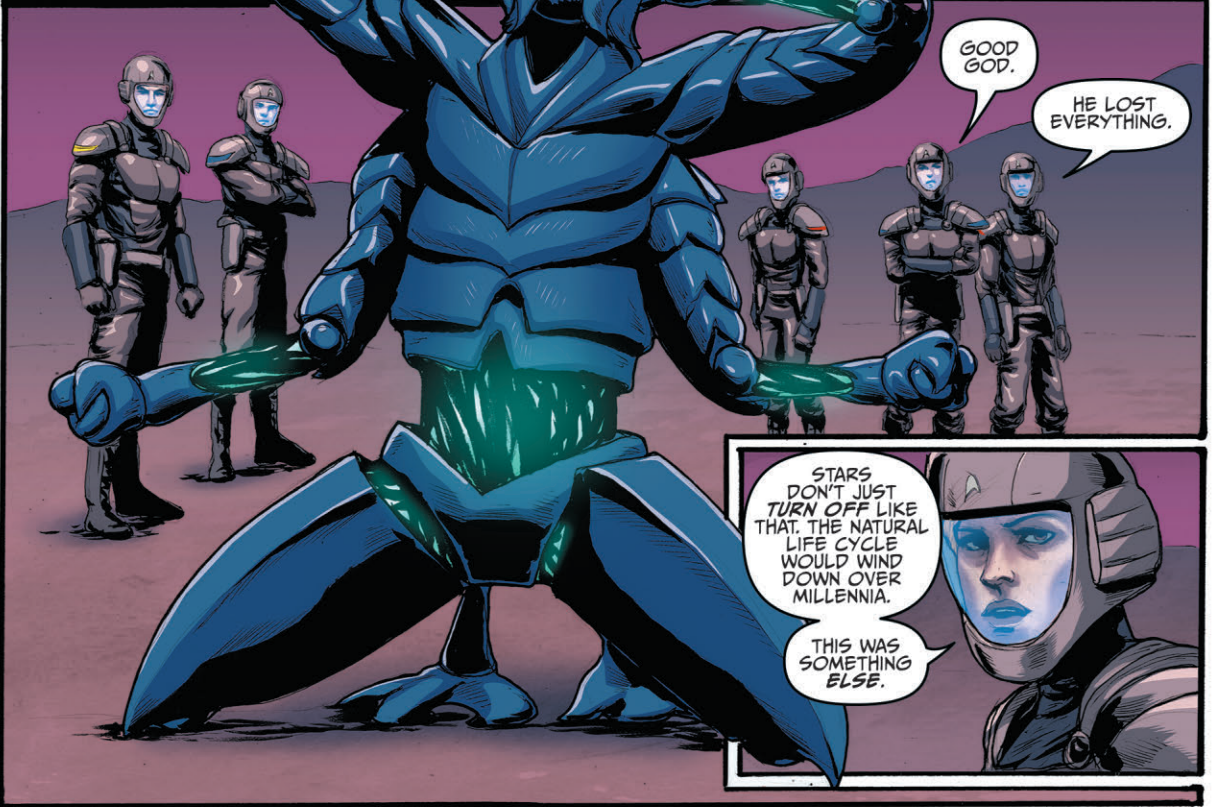
WHAT
NOW—?

IT MUST BE
LATER, AFTER
THE POPULATION
DIED OUT.



THERE'S
OUR PILOT.

HE MUST HAVE
COME HOME TO
FIND THIS...



GOOD
GOD.

HE LOST
EVERYTHING.

STARS
DON'T JUST
TURN OFF LIKE
THAT. THE NATURAL
LIFE CYCLE
WOULD WIND
DOWN OVER
MILLENNIA.

THIS WAS
SOMETHING
ELSE.



MURDERED
OUR
STAR

MY
FAMILY

MURDERED



"MURDERED"?
HOW?

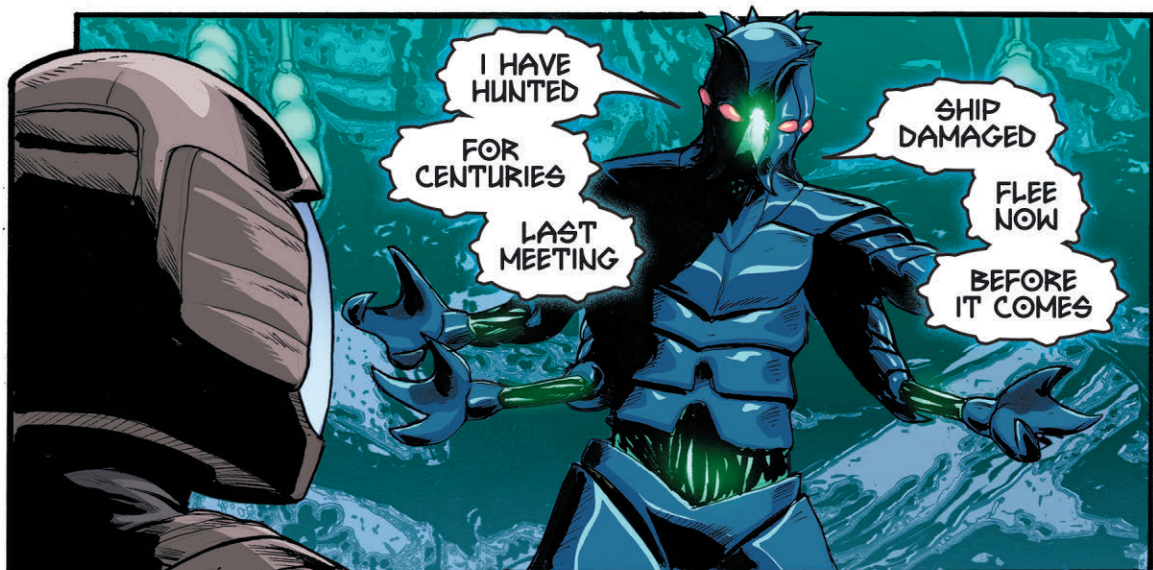
NOT
HOW



A
STAR-EATER



WHAT
AN
ORGANISM



I HAVE
HUNTED

FOR
CENTURIES

LAST
MEETING

SHIP
DAMAGED

FLEE
NOW

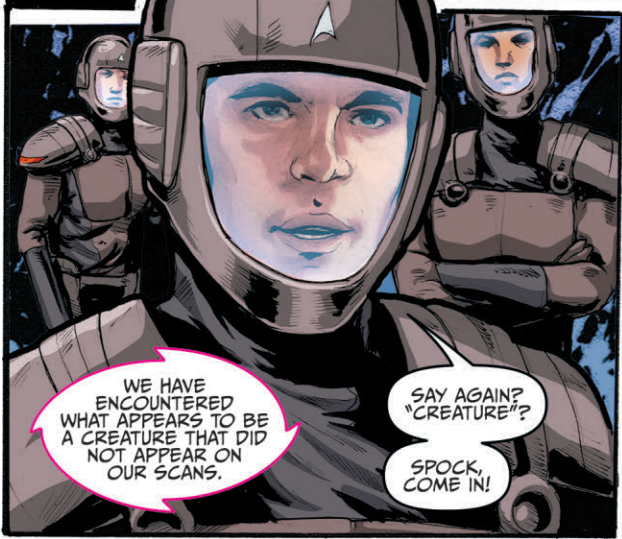
BEFORE
IT COMES



ZZZTAPTAIN?
COME
INNZZT—

GO AHEAD,
SPOCK!

CAPTAIN, I WOULD
ADVISE YOU TO RETURN
TO THE SHIP
IMMEDIATELY.



WE HAVE
ENCOUNTERED
WHAT APPEARS TO BE
A CREATURE THAT DID
NOT APPEAR ON
OUR SCANS.

SAY AGAIN?
"CREATURE"?

SPOCK,
COME IN!



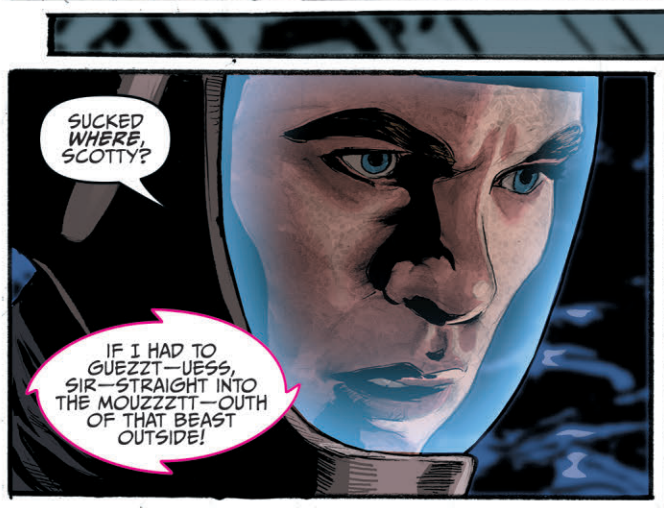
I SENSE IT





"BEHEMOTH
IS HERE"





TZZT—
MATTER OF
HOURSZZZ
—ZZTTZ

SAY AGAIN,
SCOTTY?

WARNED
YOU

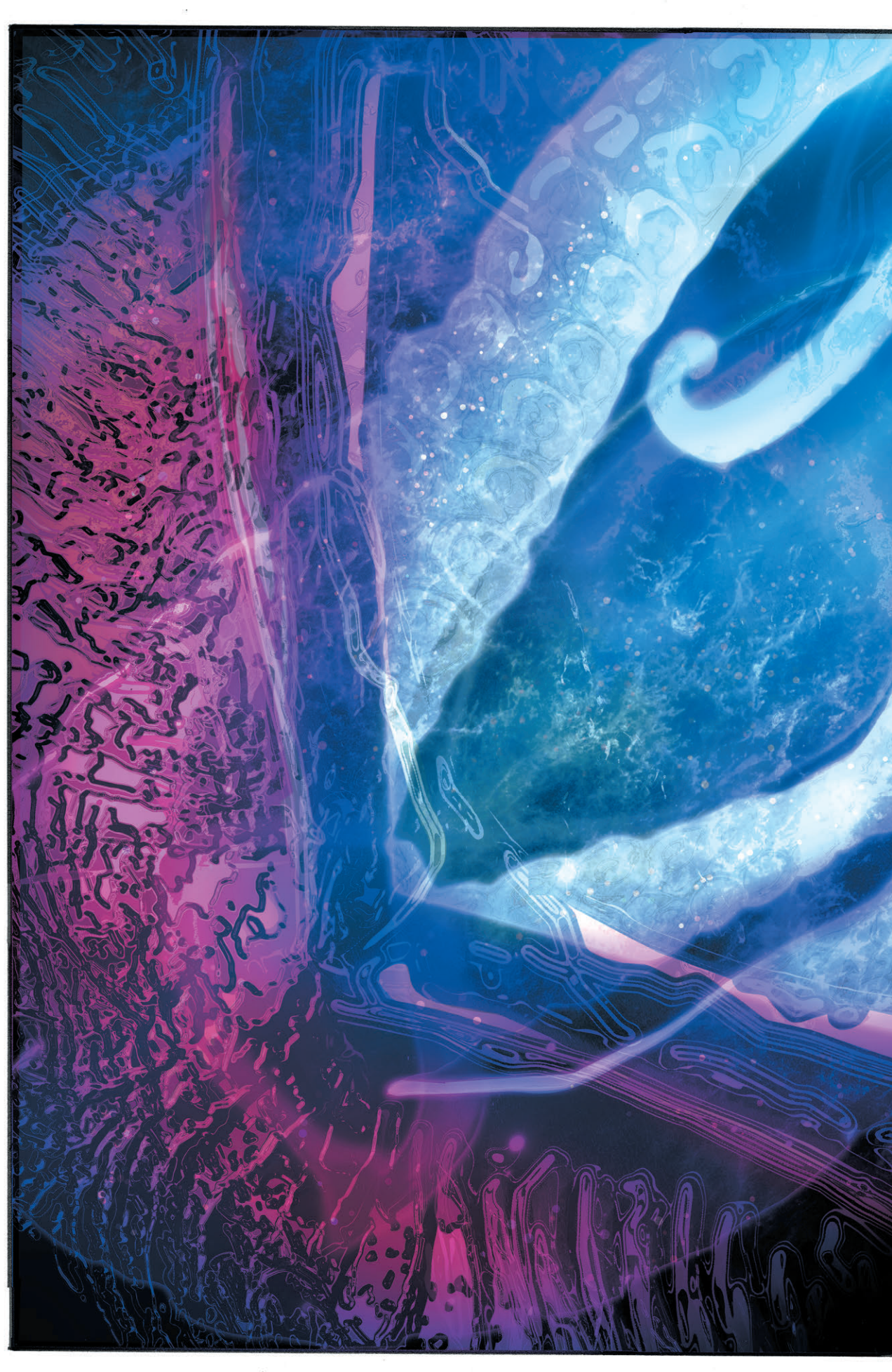
TOO LATE
NOW

BEHEMOTH

WHAT'S
"BEHEMOTH"?

SIR, I THINK HE'S
BEEN TRYING TO TELL
US. IT'S THE THING THAT
DESTROYED HIS
HOME PLANET—

—KILLED HIS
FAMILY—





—AND NOW IT'S
RETURNED!

RED ALERT.

CAPTAIN, I WOULD
ADVISE RETURNING TO THE
SHIP IMMEDIATELY—



—ZZSTAND
BY TO BEAM
BACK—

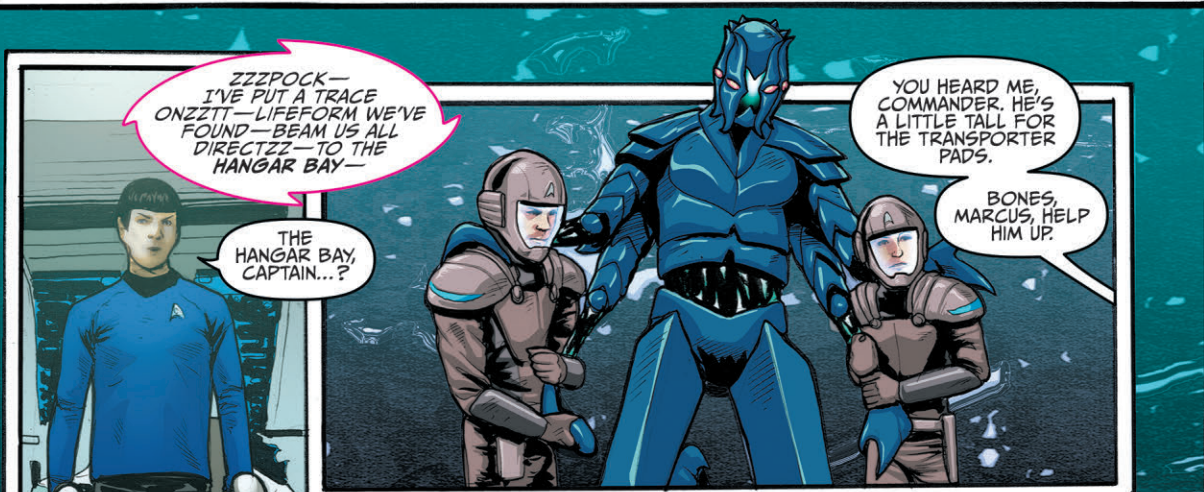
I'M WILLING
TO LISTEN TO
THE VULCAN FOR
ONCE, JIM.

AGREED.

BUT WE'RE
NOT LEAVING
HIM HERE INJURED
ON A DAMAGED
SHIP.



WHATEVER YOUR
NAME IS, YOU'RE COMING
WITH US. LOOKS LIKE
YOUR PHYSIOLOGY CAN
HANDLE OUR SHIP'S
ATMOSPHERE.





SPOCK!
WHAT WAS
THAT?

WE APPEAR TO
BE UNDER ATTACK,
CAPTAIN—

"—IN A MOST
UNUSUAL MANNER."

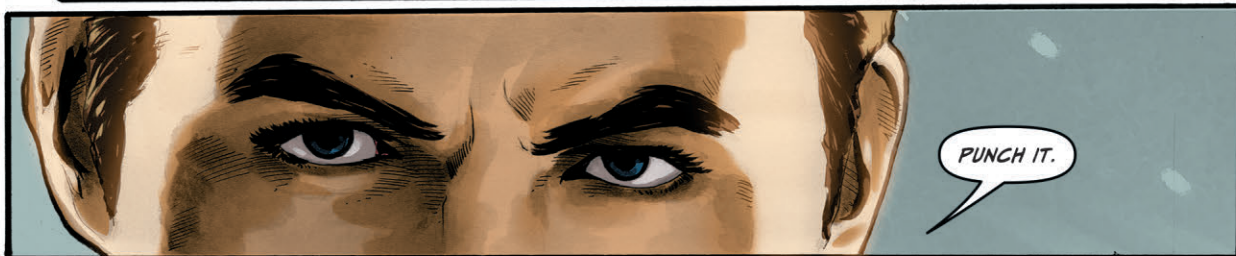
I'M ON
MY WAY!

SULU, FULL
POWER TO
IMPULSE! GET
US OUT OF
HERE!

AYE SIR!

IMPULSE
AT MAX!





CAPTAIN'S LOG,
STARDATE 2262.18.

WE MANAGED TO
ESCAPE FROM
BEHEMOTH WITHOUT
ANY MAJOR DAMAGE.

OUR NEW GUEST IS
ADJUSTING WELL TO
THE ENTERPRISE.

DR. MCCOY SAYS
HIS INJURIES ARE
HEALING WELL.

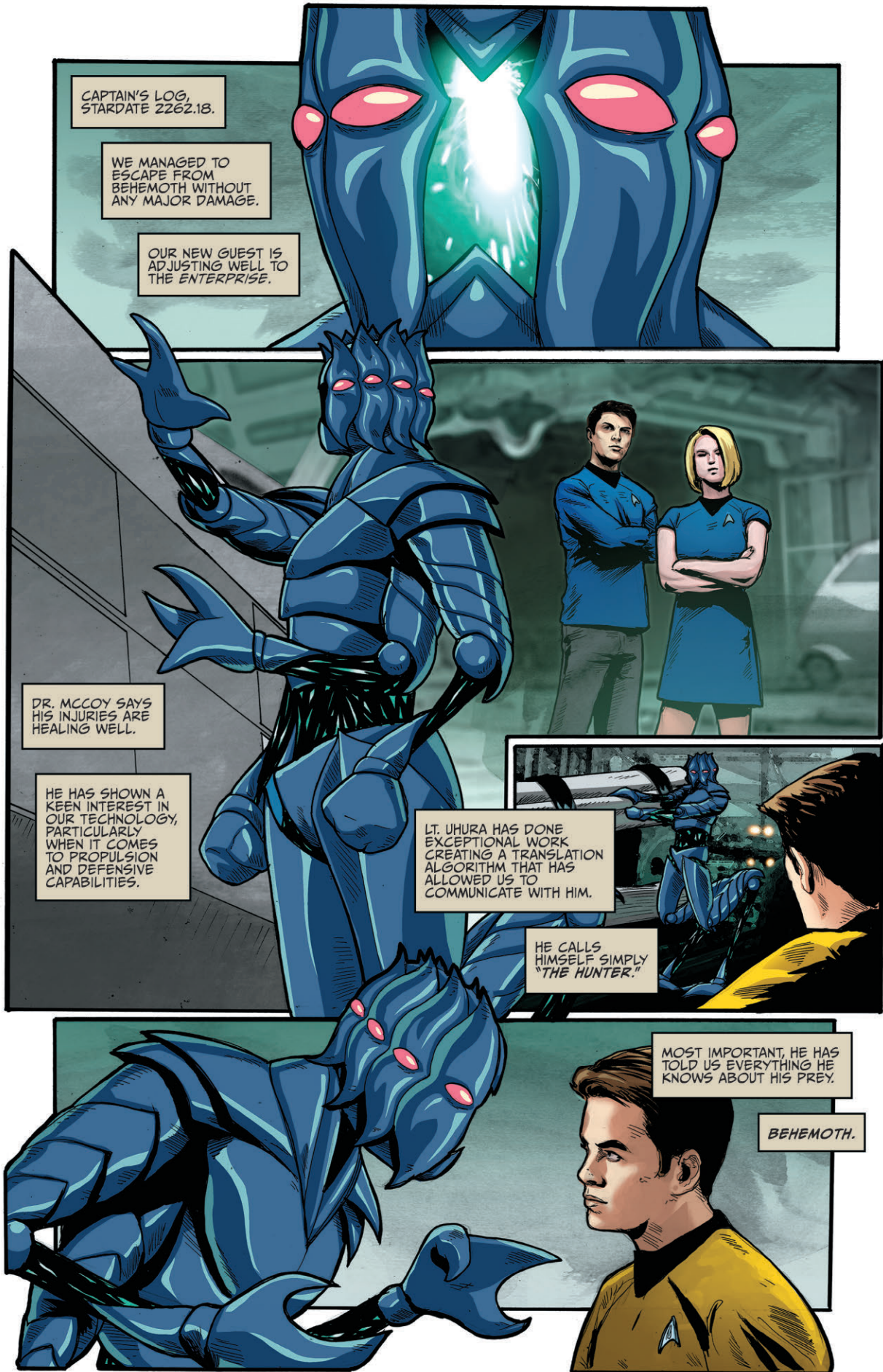
HE HAS SHOWN A
KEEN INTEREST IN
OUR TECHNOLOGY,
PARTICULARLY
WHEN IT COMES
TO PROPULSION
AND DEFENSIVE
CAPABILITIES.

LT. UHURA HAS DONE
EXCEPTIONAL WORK
CREATING A TRANSLATION
ALGORITHM THAT HAS
ALLOWED US TO
COMMUNICATE WITH HIM.

HE CALLS
HIMSELF SIMPLY
"THE HUNTER."

MOST IMPORTANT, HE HAS
TOLD US EVERYTHING HE
KNOWS ABOUT HIS PREY.

BEHEMOTH.





THE *STAR-EATER*.



A CREATURE THAT *FEEDS* ON SOLAR ENERGY TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT IT *EXTINGUISHES* SUNS...



...LEAVING BEHIND ENTIRE SYSTEMS FULL OF *DEAD* *WORLDS* LIKE THE ONE OUR HUNTER ARRIVED HOME TO FIND.

IF THAT WASN'T BIZARRE ENOUGH...



...WHEN THE BEAST HAS HAD ITS FILL, IT *CONVERTS* THE ENERGY IT HAS ABSORBED AND SOMEHOW...



...ORGANICALLY...

...*WARPS* AWAY TO FIND ITS NEXT MEAL.



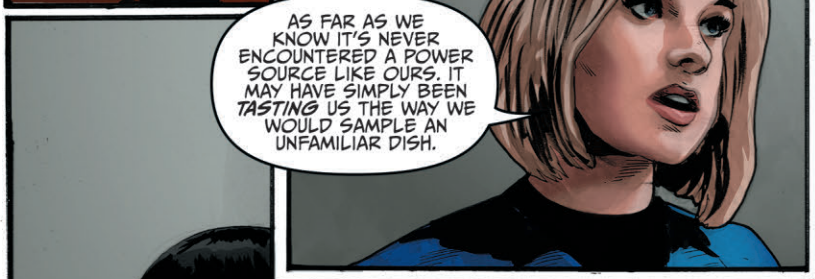
WELL, IT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE ANYONE'S GOING TO BE MAKING A PET OF IT ANYTIME SOON.



HOW'S OUR DILITHIUM, SCOTTY?

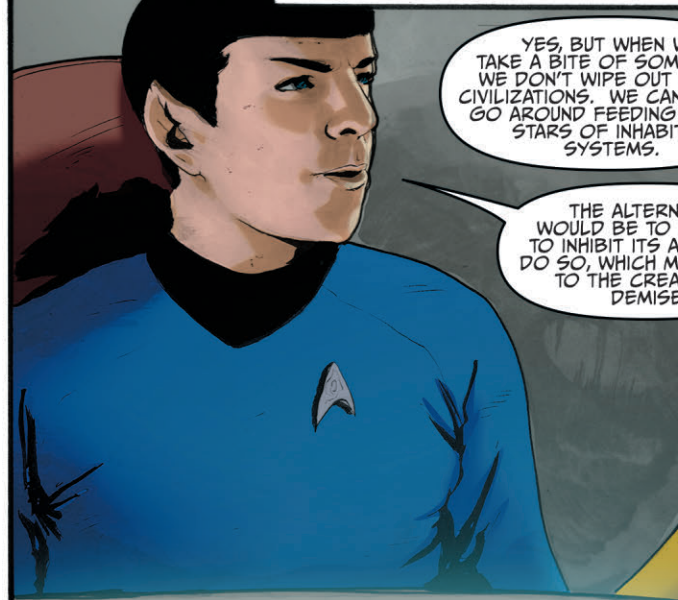
THANKFULLY STILL ROBUST, CAPTAIN, BUT I HATE TO IMAGINE WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF WE'D STAYED MUCH LONGER.

WHY A CREATURE THAT EATS SUNS WOULD WANT A TASTE OF US, I'VE NO IDEA.



CURIOSITY, I SUPPOSE.

AS FAR AS WE KNOW IT'S NEVER ENCOUNTERED A POWER SOURCE LIKE OURS. IT MAY HAVE SIMPLY BEEN TASTING US THE WAY WE WOULD SAMPLE AN UNFAMILIAR DISH.



YES, BUT WHEN WE TAKE A BITE OF SOMETHING WE DON'T WIPE OUT ENTIRE CIVILIZATIONS. WE CAN'T LET IT GO AROUND FEEDING ON THE STARS OF INHABITED SYSTEMS.

THE ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE TO ATTEMPT TO INHIBIT ITS ABILITY TO DO SO, WHICH MIGHT LEAD TO THE CREATURE'S DEMISE.



BUT WE DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT TO DO THAT.

ISN'T IT SIMPLY FOLLOWING ITS BIOLOGICAL IMPERATIVE, ALBEIT ON A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT SCALE?



LOGICALLY, THE DEMISE OF ONE LIFE FORM TO ENSURE THE SURVIVAL OF BILLIONS OF OTHERS IS AN ACCEPTABLE LOSS, REGARDLESS OF THE SCALE INVOLVED.



AYE, BUT SURELY WE'RE NOT OUT HERE TO PLAY **EXTERMINATOR**, ARE WE? PARTICULARLY OF A NEW SPECIES WE'VE ONLY JUST ENCOUNTERED!



PERHAPS WE CAN PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE TO ITS NORMAL DIET. FIND A WAY TO GIVE IT WHAT IT WANTS WITHOUT LEAVING A TRAIL OF EXTINGUISHED SUNS IN ITS WAKE?

I'M ALL FOR CONTINUED STUDY. THAT IS WHAT WE'RE OUT HERE FOR.

BUT WE CAN'T DO THAT IF WE CAN'T GET CLOSE TO IT. OUR FIRST PRIORITY IS TO MAKE SURE THE DILITHIUM IS SECURE BEFORE WE TRY TO—

KEPTIN TO THE BRIDGE!

WHAT IS IT, CHEKOV?

THE CREATURE, SIR—



IT
FOLLOWED
US!

KA-KO BOOOOOM



RED ALERT! ALL
HANDS TO BATTLE
STATIONS!

THAT INCLUDES
ME. YOU STAY HERE
IN THE MEANTIME.
YOU MIGHT FIND IT A
LITTLE *CRAMPED*
ANYWHERE ELSE.

SAME AS
BEFORE, MR.
SULU! GET US
OUT OF
HERE!



TRYING,
SIR—



—BUT IT'S
GOT A *GOOD*
GRIP!



CAPTAIN,
WE ARE
BEING PULLED
INSIDE THE
CREATURE.



SULU,
TAKE US
TO WARP!
NOW!

WARP'S NOT
RESPONDING,
SIR!



IT'S DRAINING
OUR DILITHIUM
EVEN *FASTER*
THAN BEFORE,
CAPTAIN!

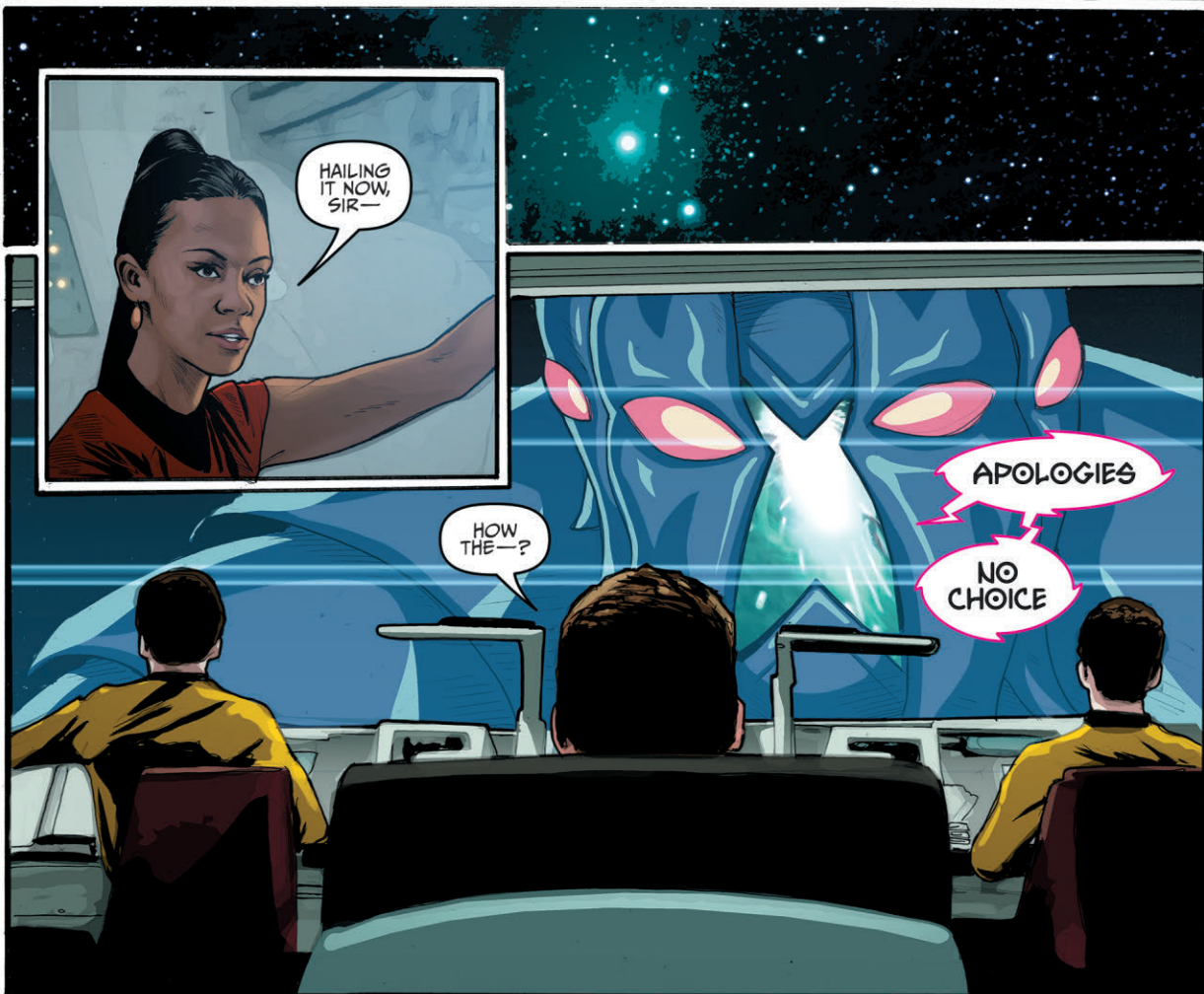
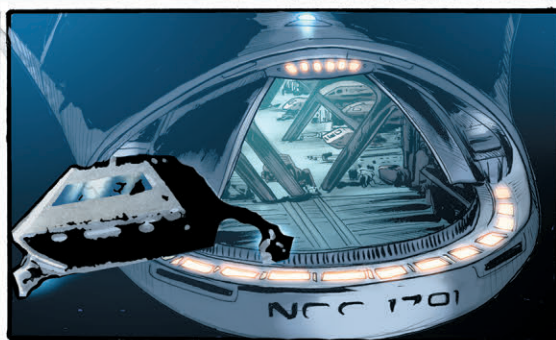


KEPTIN,
SENSORS
INDICATE THAT WE
ARE **COMPLETELY**
INSIDE THE BEAST
NOW!



WAIT—
A
SHUTTLECRAFT IS
LAUNCHING FROM
THE MAIN SHUTTLE
BAY!

WHAT
SHUTTLE—?



HAILING
IT NOW,
SIR—

HOW
THE—?

APOLOGIES

NO
CHOICE



WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?!

YOU NEED TO
STAY ONBOARD
THE ENTERPRISE
FOR YOUR OWN
SAFETY!~



CAPTAIN,
SENSORS DETECT
MULTIPLE PHOTON
TORPEDOES IN THE
SHUTTLE'S CARGO
BAY.

ARMED.

MY
SAFETY
IRRELEVANT

DEATH OF
BEHEMOTH

THE ONLY
CHOICE

SAVE
YOURSELVES

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

WARP CONTROL
CUTTING IN AND OUT!
TRYING TO LOCK
IT DOWN!



CAPTAIN,
I'M PICKING UP
VERY STRANGE
READINGS
OUTSIDE—



"LIKE THE BEGINNING OF AN ANTI-MATTER REACTION—

"BUT WITHOUT THE CONTAINMENT OF A WARP CORE! IT'S ALL AROUND US!"

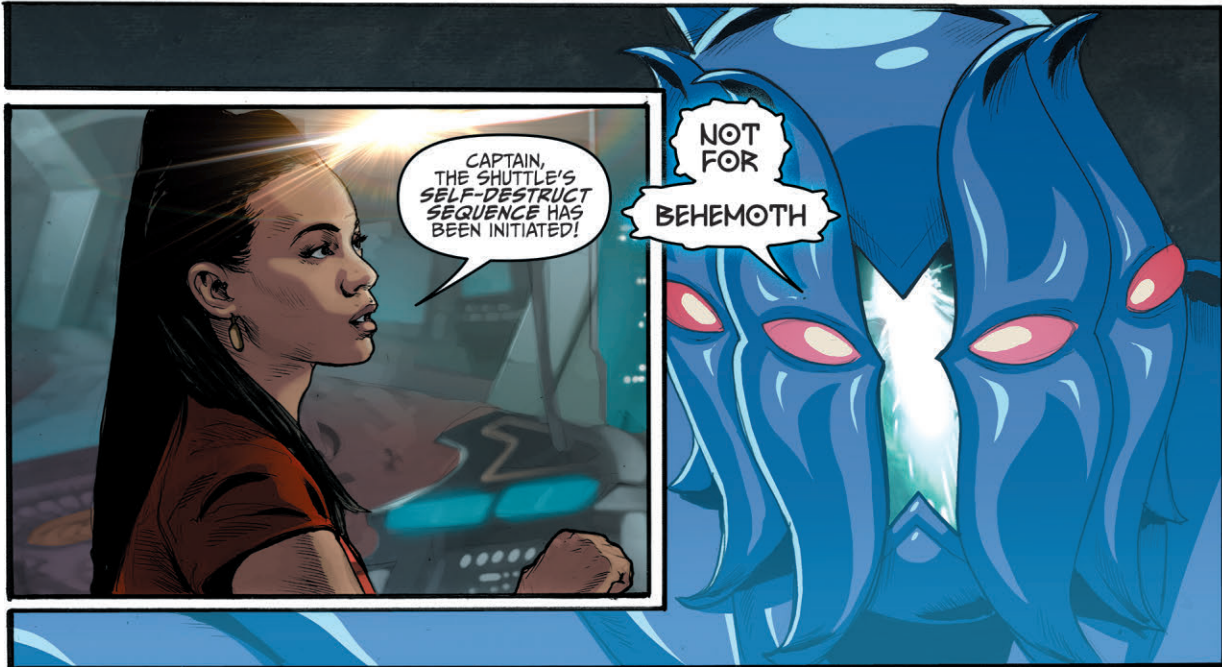
SCOTTY, WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF TORPEDOES WERE IGNITED IN THE MIDDLE OF IT?

I WOULD VERY MUCH PREFER NOT TO BE HERE TO FIND OUT, SIR!

PLEASE, DON'T DO THIS. THERE'S ANOTHER WAY.

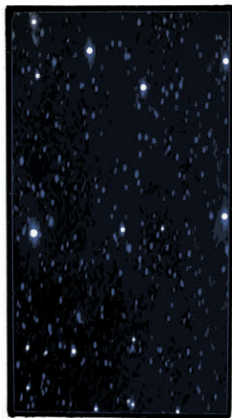
THERE'S ALWAYS ANOTHER WAY.

NOT FOR ME



CAPTAIN, THE SHUTTLE'S SELF-DESTRUCT SEQUENCE HAS BEEN INITIATED!

NOT FOR BEHEMOTH

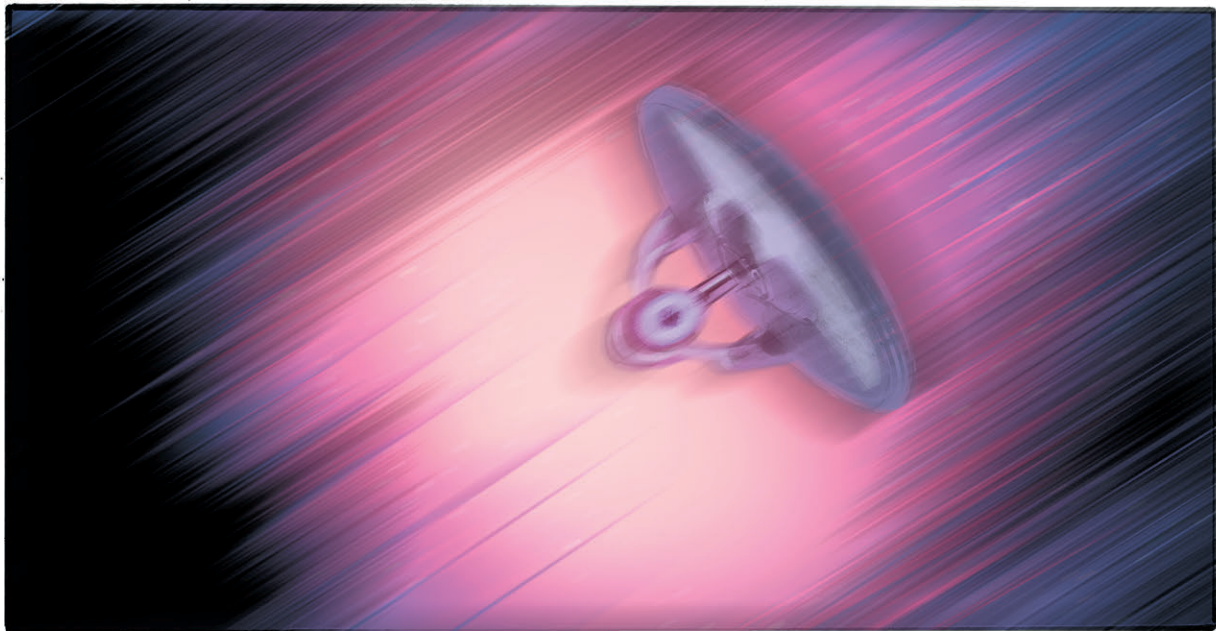


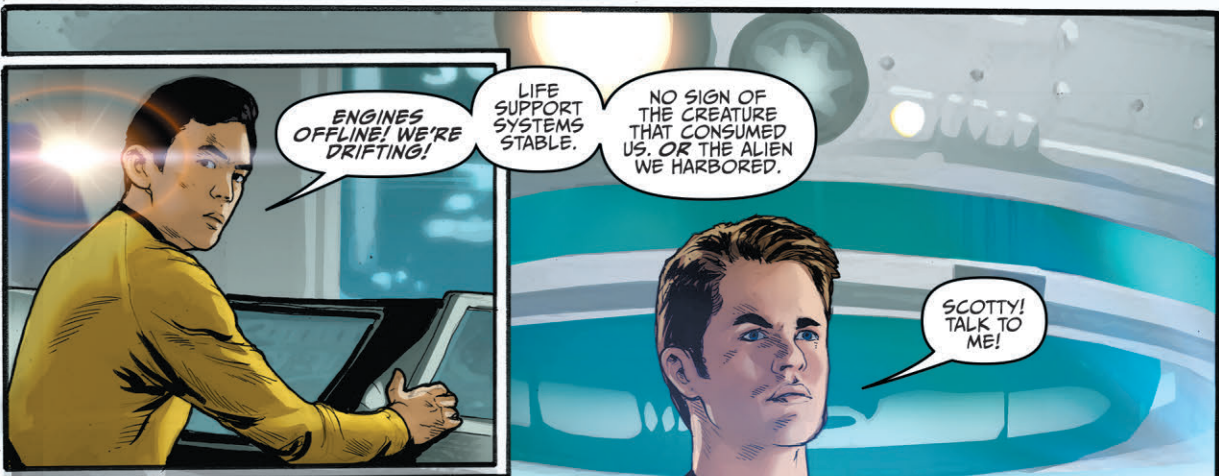
CAPTAIN'S LOG, SUPPLEMENTAL.
I CAN ONLY SPECULATE WHAT
HAPPENED INSIDE BEHEMOTH
AFTER WE WARPED AWAY.

IF THE HUNTER WAS SUCCESSFUL,
HE DETONATED THE SHUTTLE'S
TORPEDOES...

...BEGINNING A CHAIN REACTION...

...THAT BROUGHT HIM
THE SOLACE HE WAS
DETERMINED TO FIND.







EURYDICE



A DAY 1.



CAPTAIN, WE ARE SIXTY-THREE DEGREES OFF THE GALACTIC PLANE. THRUSTERS NOT RESPONDING!

KEEP TRYING, MR. SULU!

SCOTTY, GIVE ME BETTER NEWS!



I WISH I COULD, CAPTAIN! WARP AND IMPULSE ARE BOTH OFF-LINE!

KEPTIN, IF THESE SCANS ARE CORRECT...

WE'VE COME OUT OF WARP ALL THE WAY IN THE DELTA QUADRANT!





REET
REET
REET
REET

CHECK AGAIN,
LIEUTENANT. I WANT
TO KNOW OUR EXACT
POSITION—

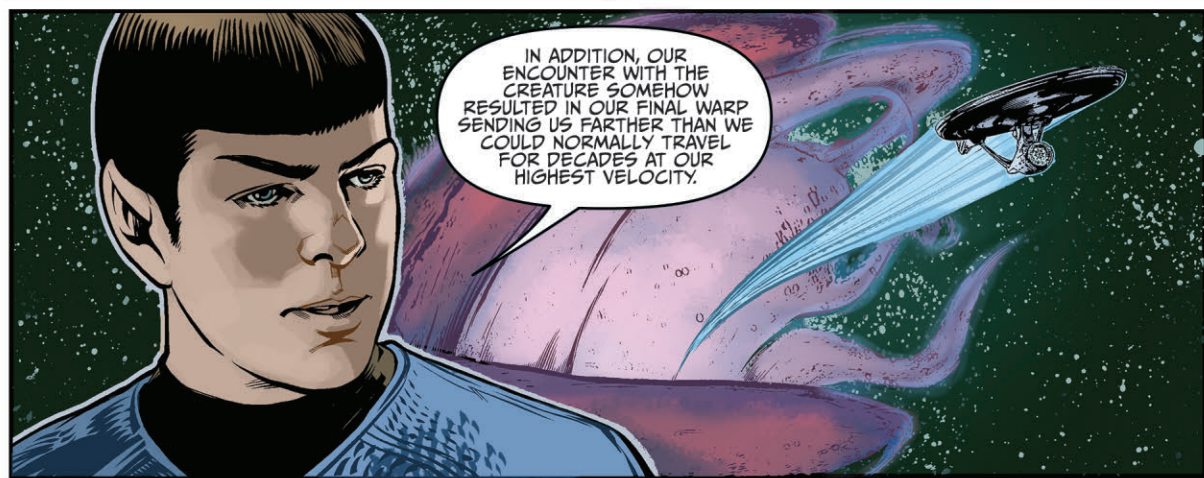
—AND CAN WE
PLEASE TURN
OFF THAT DAMN
ALERT?



THANK YOU.

CAPTAIN, IT
APPEARS THAT WE
HAVE SUCCESSFULLY
ESCAPED FROM THE
CREATURE THAT
ATTEMPTED TO INGEST
THE SHIP BUT AT
A SIGNIFICANT
COST.

OUR DILITHIUM
STORES ARE
EMPTY.



IN ADDITION, OUR
ENCOUNTER WITH THE
CREATURE SOMEHOW
RESULTED IN OUR FINAL WARP
SENDING US FARTHER THAN WE
COULD NORMALLY TRAVEL
FOR DECADES AT OUR
HIGHEST VELOCITY.



WHICH MEANS
WE'RE DECADES
FROM HOME.

MAIN ENGINEERING
SECTION.

I'M SORRY,
CAPTAIN.

THAT BEHEMOTH BEASTIE
DISINTEGRATED AND ABSORBED
EVERY LAST MOLECULE OF OUR DILITHIUM,
SHUTTLECRAFT STORES INCLUDED. WITHOUT
THE CRYSTALS TO REGULATE THE REACTION
IN THE CORE, ANY ATTEMPT TO WARP
WOULD RESULT IN A QUICK AND VERY
THOROUGH END TO US ALL.

WHAT ABOUT
IMPULSE?

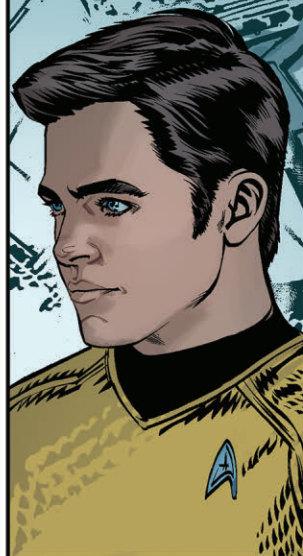


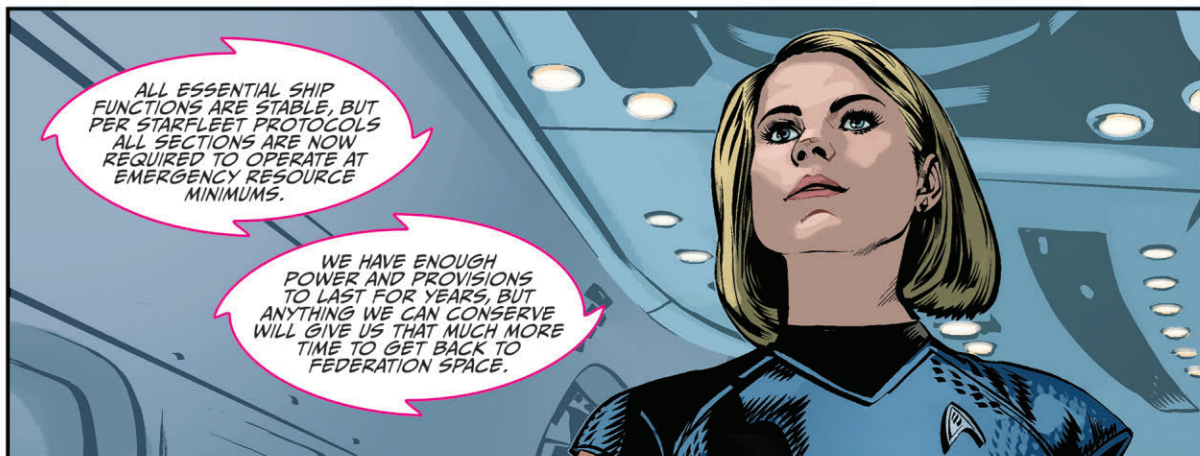
AYE, WE'VE BETTER
LUCK THERE. THE REACTOR
TOOK A KNOCK BUT I'VE GOT
HER HUMMING AGAIN. I WOULDN'T
PUSH HER TOO HARD INITIALLY,
BUT AT LEAST WE WON'T BE A
SHINY PIECE OF FLOTSAM
OUT HERE.

IF WE MAINTAIN THE
MOST DIRECT COURSE BACK
TO THE ALPHA QUADRANT, WE WILL
PASS CLOSE TO JEMISON-575, A
SYSTEM OF SEVENTEEN PLANETS,
ONE OR SEVERAL OF WHICH
MAY POSSESS DILITHIUM.

BUT
JEMISON-575
IS THREE HUNDRED
AND TWENTY-SIX
LIGHT YEARS AWAY.
WE'LL NEVER REACH
IT ON IMPULSE
ALONE.

DON'T GET ME
WRONG, SPOCK, I
APPRECIATE THE
OPTIMISM...







A DAY 12.

CAPTAIN'S LOG,
SUPPLEMENTAL.

I HAVE THE
BEST CREW
IN THE FLEET.

THEIR PROFESSIONALISM
AND ENERGY HAVEN'T
WAVERED FOR A SECOND.



IF ANYTHING, MORALE
SEEMS HIGHER.

LIKE WE'VE ALL
REALIZED THAT THE
ONLY WAY WE'RE
GOING TO GET
THROUGH THIS IS
TO PULL TOGETHER.

AND EVERY DAY I GET BETTER
AT IGNORING THE LITTLE
VOICE IN MY HEAD THAT TELLS
ME I'M DELUDING MYSELF.

A DAY 26.

I WILL SUGGEST
TO THE CAPTAIN THAT THE
ARBORETUM'S RESOURCES
BE REASSIGNED TO MORE
ESSENTIAL SHIP
FUNCTIONS.

AND LET ALL
THESE BEAUTIFUL
PLANTS DIE?



THAT WOULD INDEED
BE THE RESULT, BUT GIVEN
OUR PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES
THE ARBORETUM'S UTILITY
WOULD SEEM TO BE LESS VITAL
THAN THAT OF OTHER
DEPARTMENTS.

AH.

"UTILITY."



WELL, THE
ARBORETUM ISN'T
JUST FOR STORING
SPECIMENS. IT'S A
PLACE TO COME AND
RELAX. TO MEDITATE.
TO RESTORE
YOURSELF.

SURELY
THERE'S
"UTILITY" IN THAT?
ESPECIALLY
NOW?



I FIND THAT YOUR
COMPANIONSHIP IS
SUFFICIENTLY
RESTORATIVE.

OH,
SPOCK...

... I'M GLAD
YOU'RE HERE
TOO.



A DAY 38.

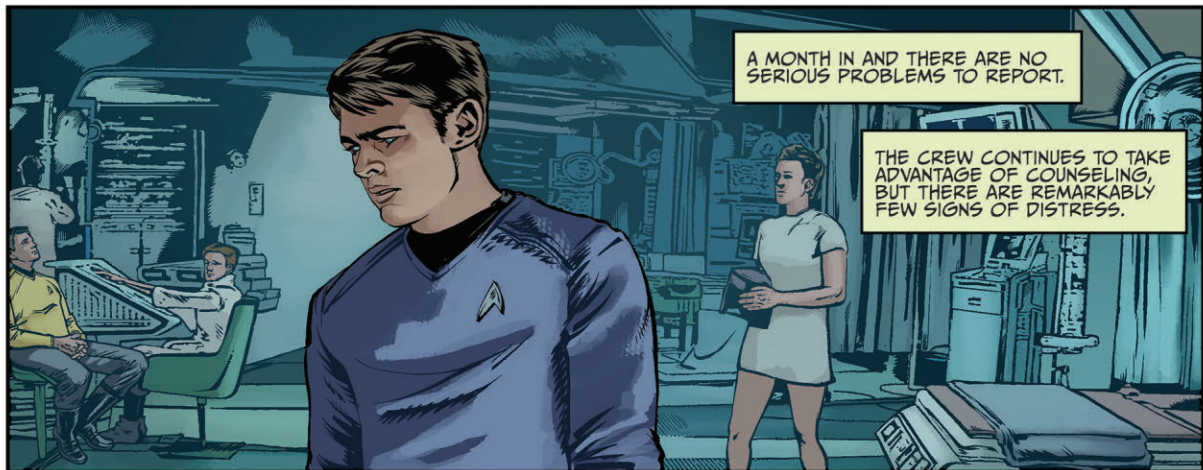
CHIEF MEDICAL
OFFICER'S LOG,
CONTINUED.

SO FAR,
SO GOOD.



A MONTH IN AND THERE ARE NO
SERIOUS PROBLEMS TO REPORT.

THE CREW CONTINUES TO TAKE
ADVANTAGE OF COUNSELING,
BUT THERE ARE REMARKABLY
FEW SIGNS OF DISTRESS.



I HOPE THE MIRACLE LASTS.

BECAUSE IF WE DON'T
FIND A WAY OUT OF THIS...



...THERE WON'T BE ENOUGH
ROOM IN HERE TO HOLD
THE CASUALTIES.



A DAY 50.

<I GIVE UP, IRINA!>*

<I REFUSE TO ALLOW THAT, PAVEL.>

(*TRANSLATED FROM RUSSIAN.)

<WE'RE NEVER GOING TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO CREATE DILITHIUM IN THE REPLICATOR! IT'S SIMPLY TOO COMPLEX!>

<PAVEL, HOW DID YOU EVER PASS AN ACADEMY EXAM WITH THAT ATTITUDE?>

<IT'S THE COMPLEXITY THAT MAKES IT FUN!>

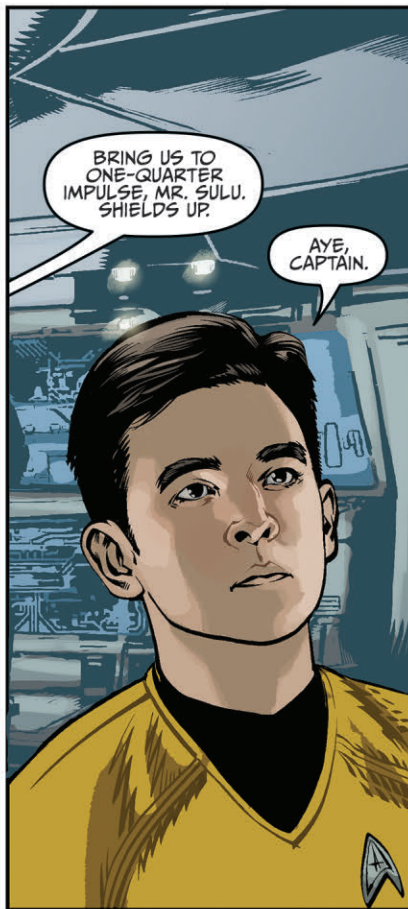
<I DON'T THINK YOU UNDERSTAND THE CONCEPT OF "FUN.">

<AT LEAST THIS PROJECT KEEPS ME FROM PONDERING OUR INEVITABLE MISERABLE FATE...>

MR. CHEROV TO THE BRIDGE.

AYE KEPTIN!

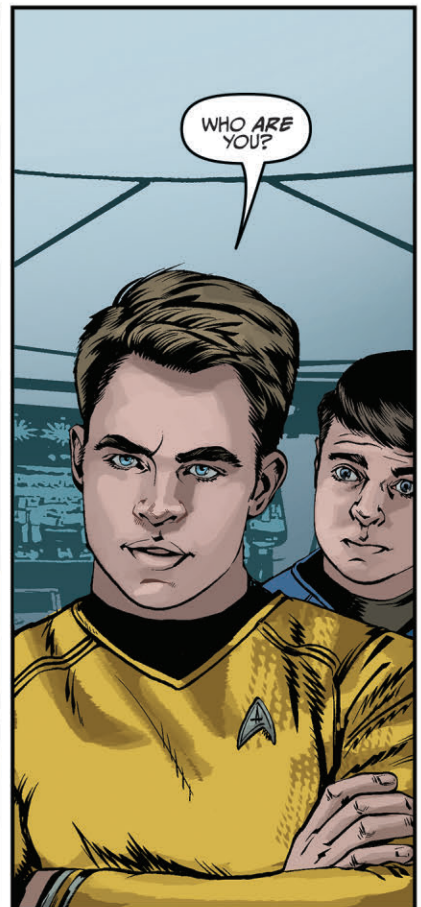
<GOOD LUCK WITH THE IMPOSSIBLE, IRINA!>



"—WE HAVE A VISUAL!"









I'M EURYDICE.

SAVIOR OF DEEP SPACE.



"SAVIOR"...?

WELL, MOSTLY SALVAGE. USUALLY SHIPS IN A LOT WORSE SHAPE THAN YOURS.

BELIEVE ME, IT'S ALWAYS NICE TO FIND ONE THAT'S NOT FULL OF CORPSES.



I LIKE YOUR EARS.

WHERE IS YOUR HOME SYSTEM?



SPACE IS HOME.

BUT IF YOU MEAN THE PLACE I RAN AWAY FROM AS SOON AS I WAS ABLE TO HIT "IGNITION," IT'S CALLED HEXEL SEVEN. THANKFULLY VERY FAR FROM HERE.

WHAT ABOUT YOU? NEVER SEEN YOUR TYPE BEFORE.



I'M CAPTAIN JAMES T. KIRK OF EARTH. THIS SHIP IS THE U.S.S. ENTERPRISE. WE'RE ON AN EXPLORATORY MISSION ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS.

THAT'S A MOUTHFUL.



WELL, CAPTAIN JAMES T. KIRK OF EARTH ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS...

...I CAN TOW YOU TO A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN BUY ENOUGH DILITHIUM FOR A THOUSAND U.S.S. ENTERPRISES.



TOW US? AT WARP SPEED?

INTRIGUING.

YOU HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT WARP TOW TECH YET? WELL, DON'T WORRY. I'VE ONLY VERY RARELY LOST ANYBODY MIDSTREAM.

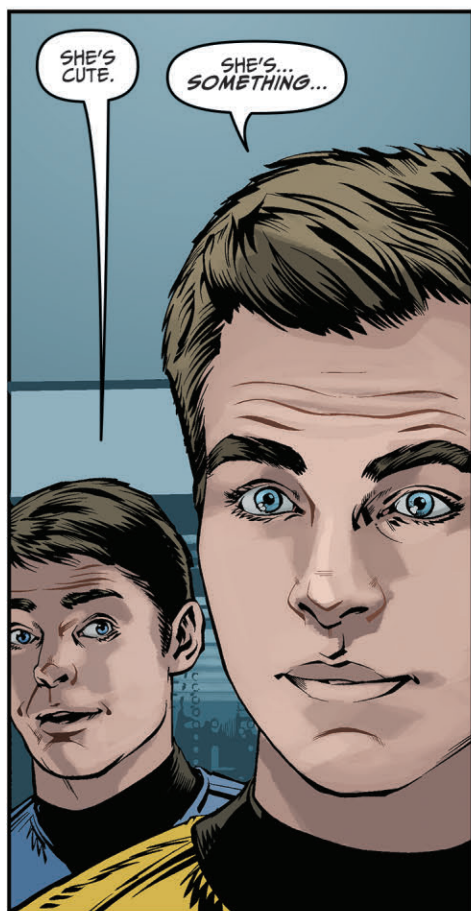
AND WHAT DO YOU ASK IN RETURN?



NOTHING. I MAKE ENOUGH ON PAID SALVAGE JOBS TO OFFER CHARITY WHEN I CAN.

ANYWAY, CLOCK'S TICKING. I CAN'T WAIT HERE FOREVER.

LET ME KNOW WHAT YOU DECIDE...



SHE'S CUTE.

SHE'S... SOMETHING...



I DON'T LIKE IT.

WE'D ESSENTIALLY BE HANDING HER CONTROL OF THE SHIP WITH NO GUARANTEE THAT WE'LL EVER GET IT *BACK*.

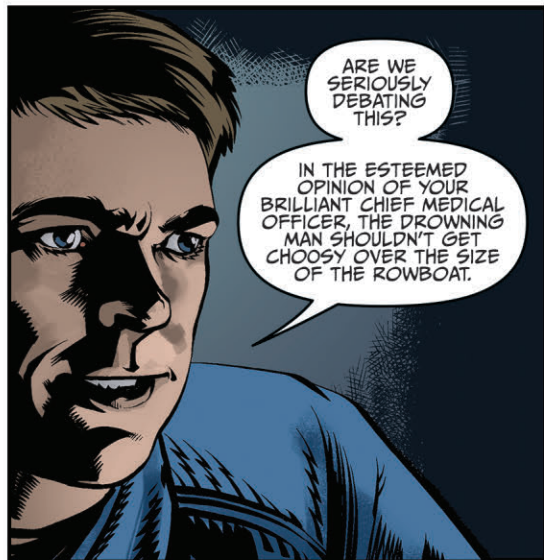


AND YET IT WOULD BE ILLOGICAL TO DECLINE HER OFFER GIVEN THE SIGNIFICANT ODDS AGAINST US FINDING MORE DILITHIUM ON OUR OWN, OR ENCOUNTERING ANOTHER VESSEL CAPABLE OF ASSISTING US.



AYE, I CONCUR. AS FOR THIS "WARP TOWING," I LOOKED AT THE DATA SHE SENT OVER—THAT WHICH THE COMPUTER COULD TRANSLATE INTO ENGINEERING AS WE KNOW IT, ANYWAY—AND THE FUNDAMENTALS APPEAR SOUND.

HONESTLY, I'M CURIOUS TO SEE IT IN ACTION!



ARE WE SERIOUSLY DEBATING THIS?

IN THE ESTEEMED OPINION OF YOUR BRILLIANT CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER, THE DROWNING MAN SHOULDN'T GET CHOOSY OVER THE SIZE OF THE ROWBOAT.



I THINK IT'S OUR ONLY OPTION. INTERESTING, THOUGH, THAT THE TRANSLATORS INTERPRETED HER NAME AS "EURYDICE."

IT'S JUST THE CLOSEST SOUND ANALOGUE, OF COURSE, BUT IN GREEK MYTHOLOGY...



"...EURYDICE DIED FROM A SNAKEBITE."

READY WHEN YOU ARE, CAPTAIN JAMES T. KIRK OF EARTH!

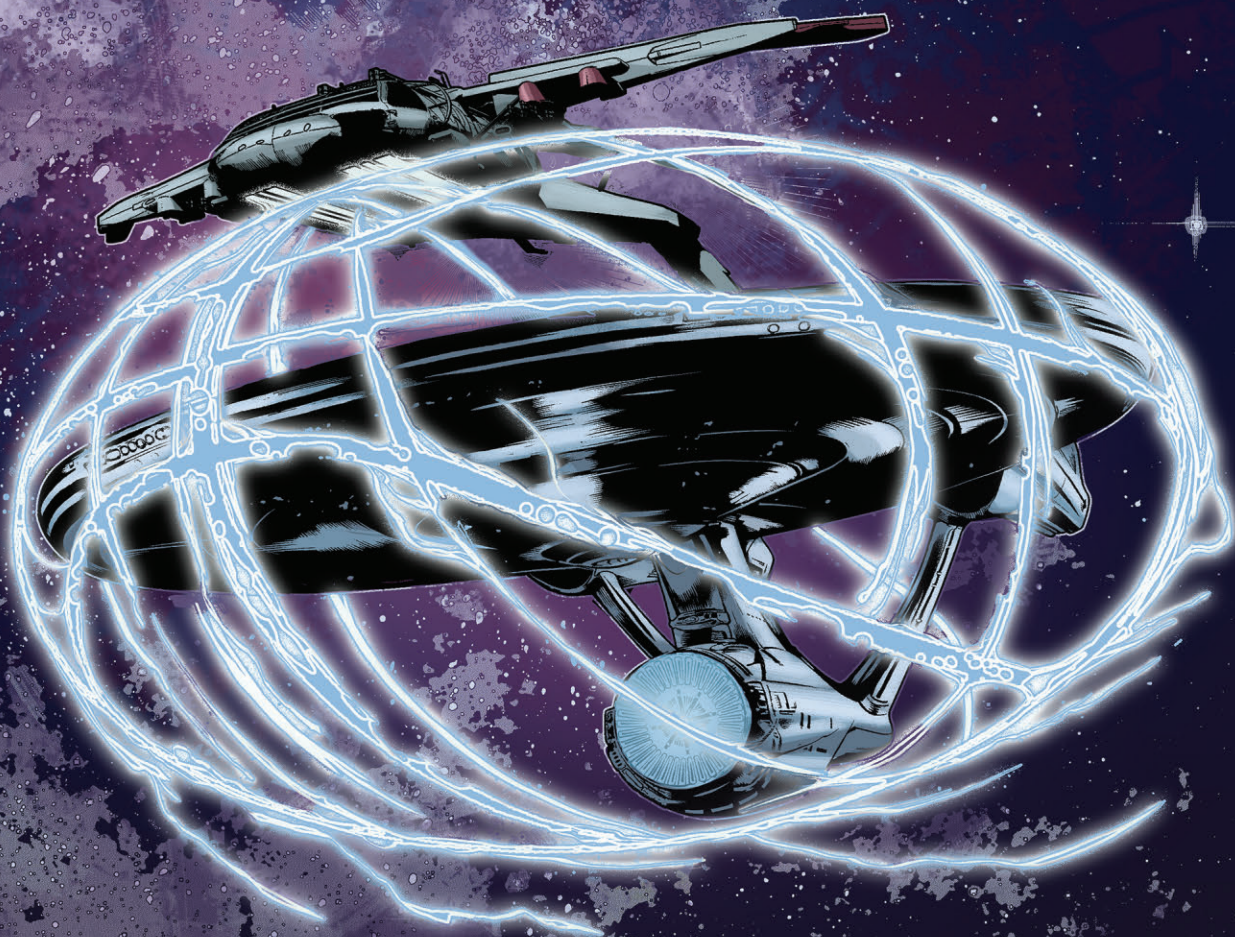


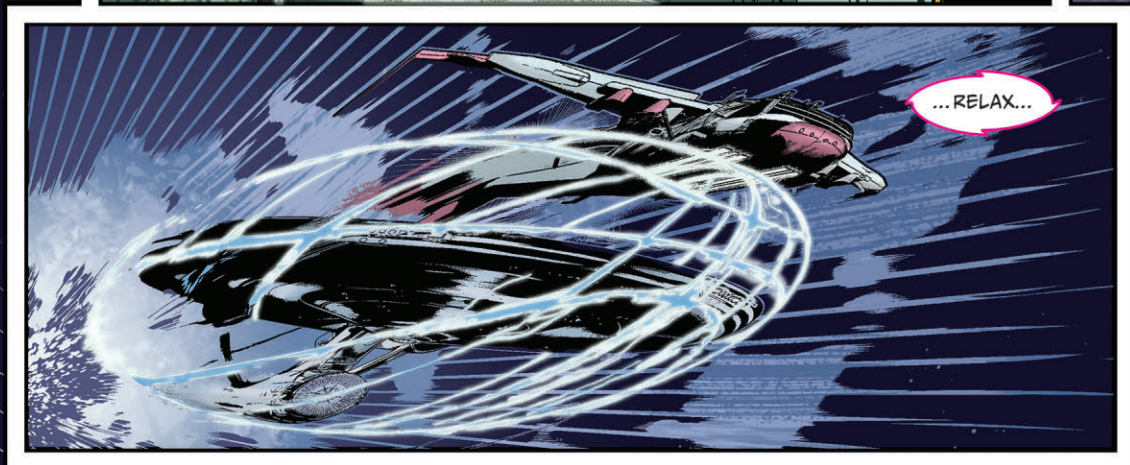
JUST "KIRK" WILL BE FINE.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO ON THIS END?



DROP YOUR SHIELDS AND DEFLECTOR ARRAYS. THEY MESS WITH THE CONTAINMENT MATRIX I'M ABOUT TO WRAP AROUND YOU.







SPECTRAL LOG, THIRTEENTH
DAY OF THE SECOND DARK
MARKET QUARTER.

I'M THE LUCKIEST
GIRL IN THE GALAXY.



IF I HADN'T STUMBLED ON
THIS "ENTERPRISE," I WAS
READY TO JUST GIVE UP.

NOW AT LEAST I
HAVE A FIGHTING
CHANCE.



THEY SEEM LIKE
DECENT PEOPLE.

JUST STUCK IN THE WRONG
PLACE AT THE WRONG TIME.



I ALMOST FEEL BAD FOR
WHAT'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN.

CAPTAIN'S LOG,
SUPPLEMENTAL.

I DON'T LIKE THIS.

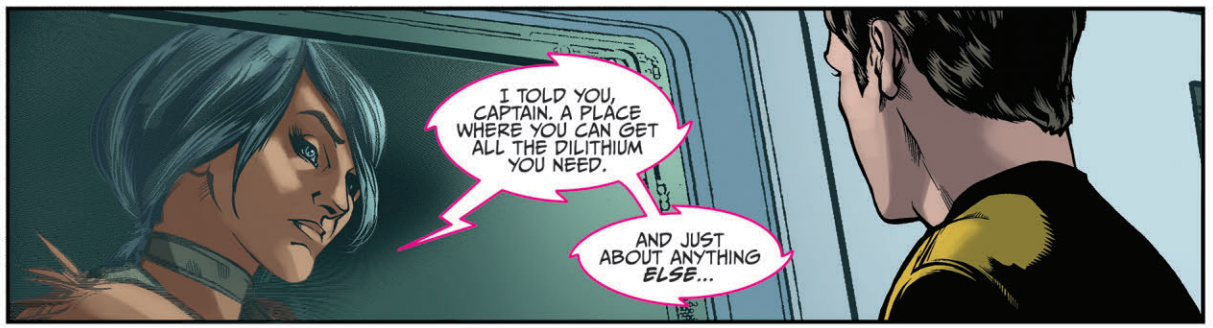
WITHOUT WARP CAPABILITY, OUR
BEST CHANCE TO SURVIVE IS FOR
THE ENTERPRISE TO BE TOWED BY
A STRANGER TO AN UNKNOWN
LOCATION, LIKE A PIECE OF SCRAP.

OUR MISSION MANDATE IS EXPLORATION,
BUT MY PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY—MY
REAL JOB—IS ENSURING THE SAFETY
OF MY CREW.

PUTTING THEIR LIVES IN THE
HANDS OF A STRANGER WAS
A NECESSARY DECISION...

...BUT AT THIS MOMENT I
FEEL LIKE I'M IN COMMAND
OF MY SHIP IN NAME ONLY.





I TOLD YOU, CAPTAIN. A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN GET ALL THE DILITHIUM YOU NEED.

AND JUST ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE...



WHERE IS IT? WHAT'S IT CALLED?

IT'S NOT FAR. AND IT HAS A MILLION NAMES. A DIFFERENT ONE FOR EVERY SPECIES THAT PASSES THROUGH.



I'M GETTING THE SENSE YOU DON'T TRUST ME, JAMES T. KIRK. CAN'T SAY I BLAME YOU, GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

TELL YOU WHAT...



...LET'S CONTINUE THIS DISCUSSION...

WHAT—?!

CAPTAIN!

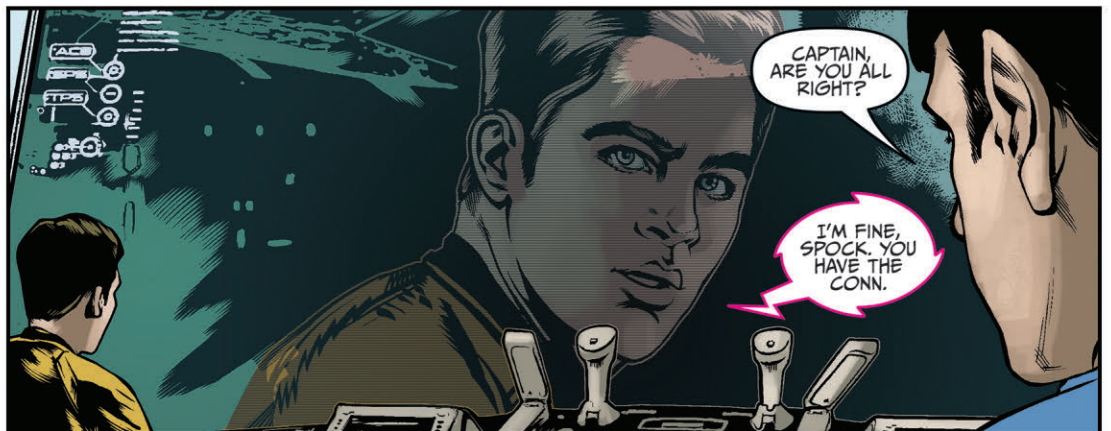


...FACE
TO FACE.



...I THINK
I'M GONNA
BE SICK.

TRY
TO HOLD IT
TOGETHER. I
JUST CLEANED
UP AROUND
HERE.



CAPTAIN,
ARE YOU ALL
RIGHT?

I'M FINE,
SPOCK. YOU
HAVE THE
CONN.



SEE?
NOTHING TO
WORRY
ABOUT.

WELCOME
ABOARD THE
SPECTRAL. HUMBLE
SAVIOR OF LOST
SHIPS AND LONELY
SOULS!



AND WHAT
DOES THE HUMBLE
SAVIOR GET IN
RETURN?



TO THE
POINT, I
LIKE IT.

ASIDE FROM IT
BEING *THE RIGHT
THING TO DO*, I MAKE
ENOUGH FROM PAID
SALVAGE JOBS TO
AFFORD CHARITABLE
CASES LIKE
YOURS.

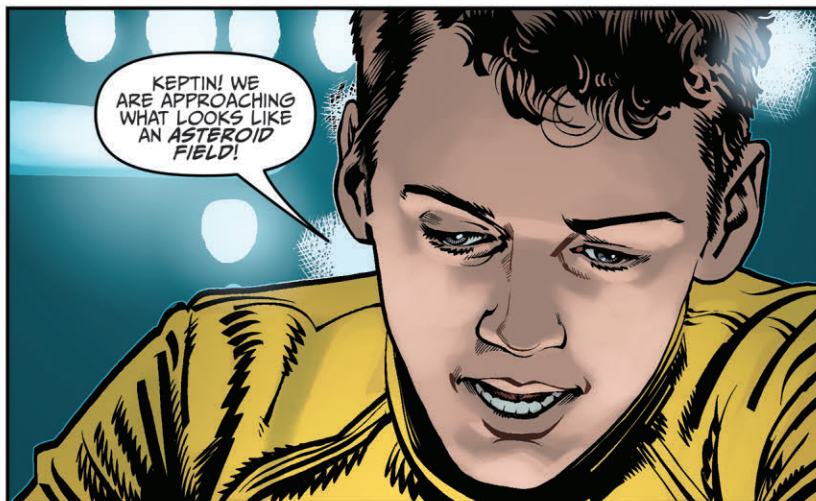
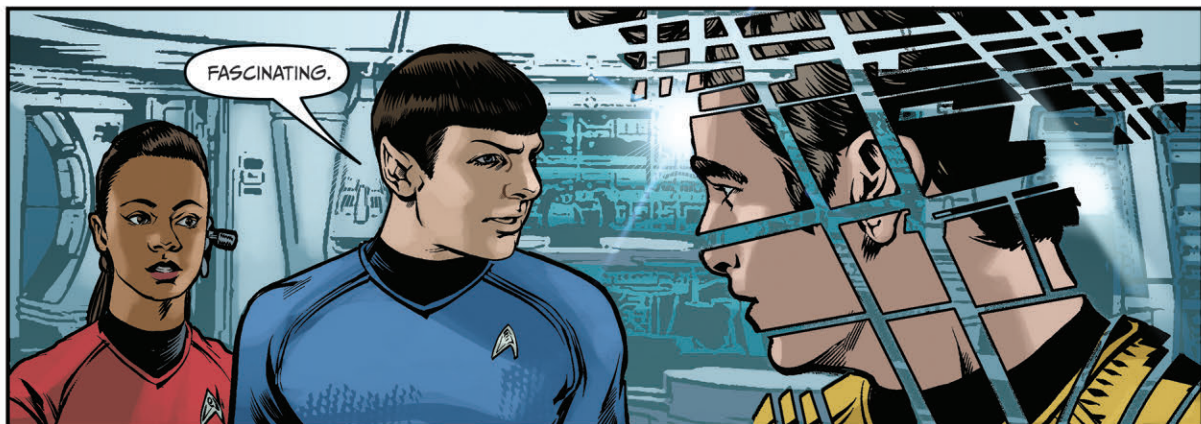


SO THAT'S IT?
YOU JUST ROAM
THE STARS ALONE,
LOOKING FOR
ADVENTURE?

YOU DON'T
APPROVE?



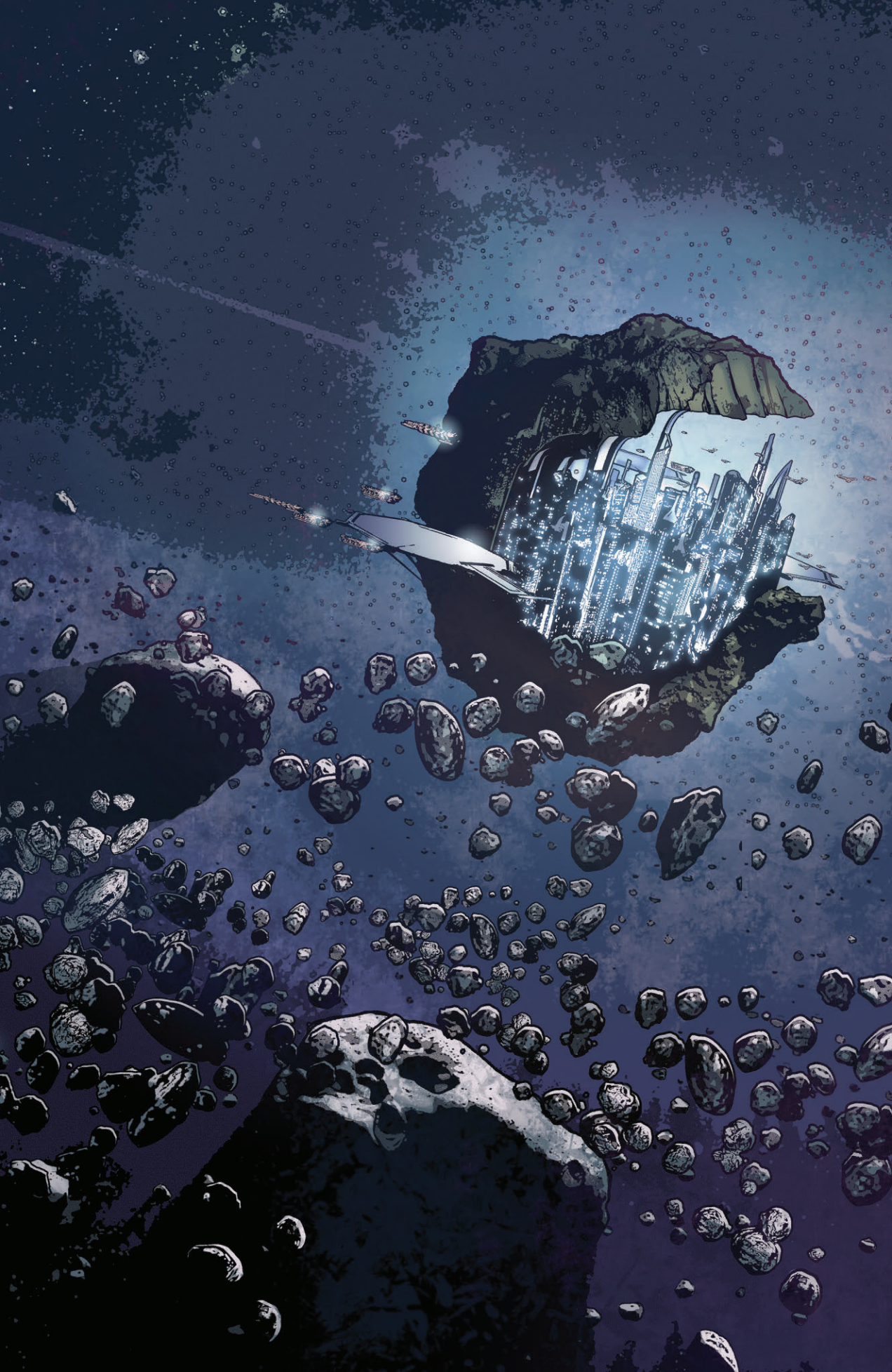






WELCOME
TO THE DARK
MARKET!

NCC-1701



TWO EARTH-HOURS
LATER.

"YOUR SHIP WILL BE
SECURE HERE WHILE
WE SHOP FOR THE
DILITHIUM."

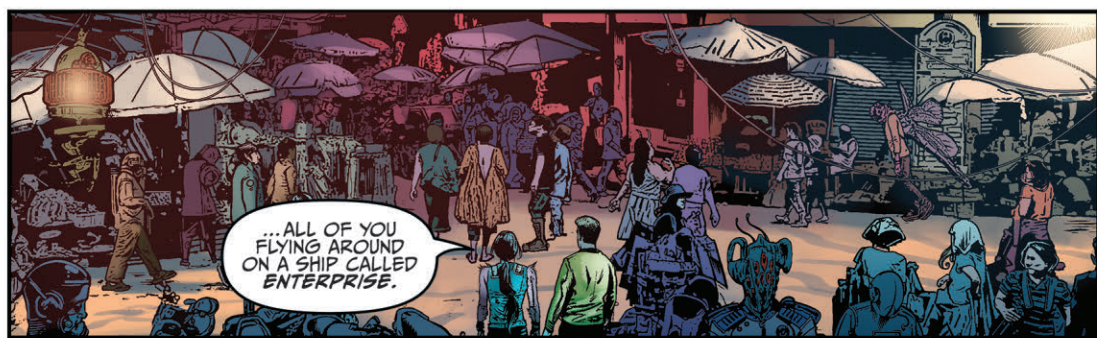
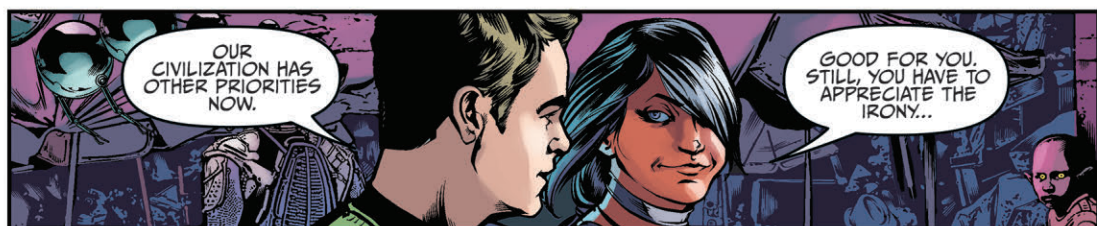
I'VE GREASED
ENOUGH PALMS HERE
OVER THE YEARS TO ENSURE
THAT NO ONE MESSES WITH
THE SPECTRAL WHILE SHE'S
DOCKED. SAME GOES FOR
ANY SHIP I BRING
WITH ME.

THERE WILL
BE PLENTY OF
MERCHANTS HAWKING
DILITHIUM, NOT ALL OF
IT QUALITY, BUT I
KNOW A GUY WE
CAN TRUST.

AS MUCH AS
YOU CAN TRUST
ANYONE IN THE
DARK MARKET,
ANYWAY.


SOUNDS LIKE
DILITHIUM ISN'T AS
RARE HERE AS IT IS
BACK HOME. WE
SHOULD GATHER AS
MUCH AS WE CAN,
CAPTAIN.

AGREED.





THEM'S GOOD
CRYSTALLINES.
STAKE MY LITTER'S
LIVES ON IT.



DUNNO WHY
YOU WANT 'EM
THOUGH. MUCH
BETTER WAYS
TO GET TO
WARP.

I KNOW THAT,
GRUNTHUM. BUT MY
FRIENDS HERE HAVE
A SHIP THAT RUNS ON
THE STUFF, AND THEY
NEED ALL YOU'VE
GOT ON HAND.



SCOTTY?

AYE, SIR,
IT'S JUST
WHAT WE NEED.
A FEW MINOR
IMPURITIES, BUT
NOTHING I CAN'T
FIX.



HERE'S THE
CATCH, GRUNTHUM.
MY FRIENDS DON'T USE
MONEY, SO IT'LL HAVE
TO BE BARTER.

-GRRRUMBLE-





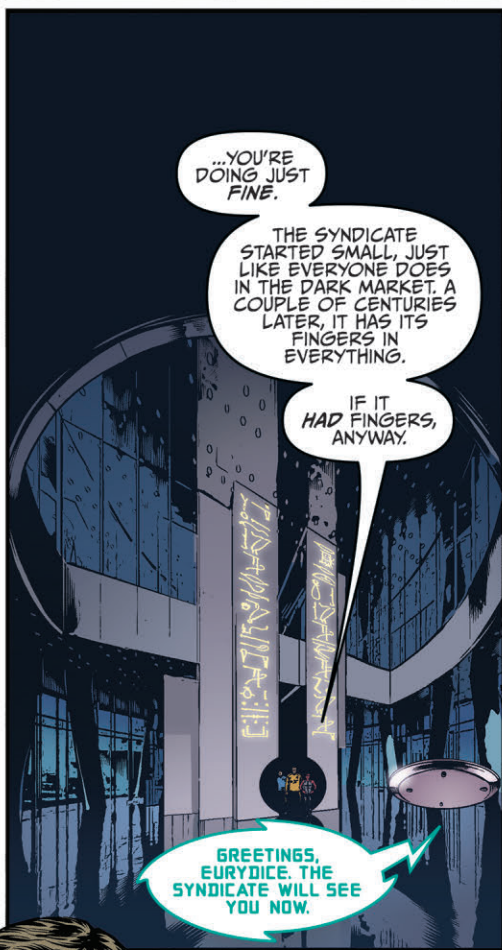


THE
GEOGRAPHY
OF THE MARKET
IS PRETTY
SIMPLE.

IF YOU WORK
ON THE GROUND,
YOU'RE SCRATCHING
OUT A LIVING.



AND IF UP
HERE YOU'RE
LOOKING DOWN
AT THE PEOPLE
SCRATCHING OUT
A LIVING...



...YOU'RE
DOING JUST
FINE.

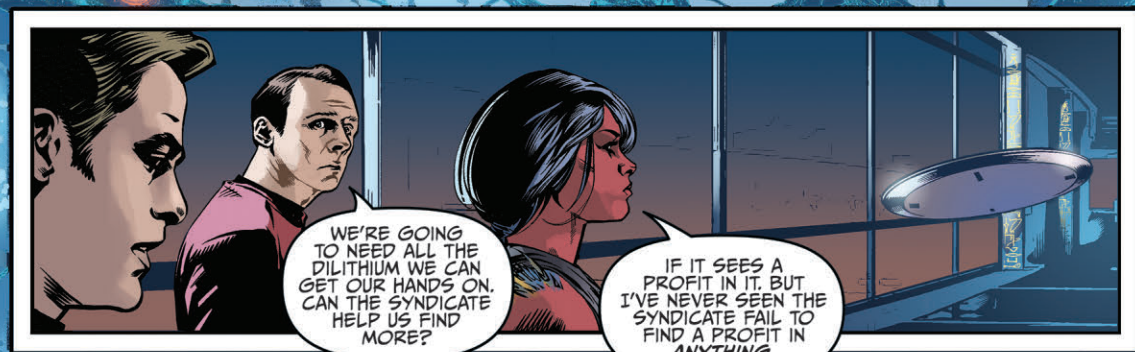
THE SYNDICATE
STARTED SMALL, JUST
LIKE EVERYONE DOES
IN THE DARK MARKET. A
COUPLE OF CENTURIES
LATER, IT HAS ITS
FINGERS IN EVERYTHING.

IF IT
HAD FINGERS,
ANYWAY.

GREETINGS,
EURYDICE. THE
SYNDICATE WILL SEE
YOU NOW.

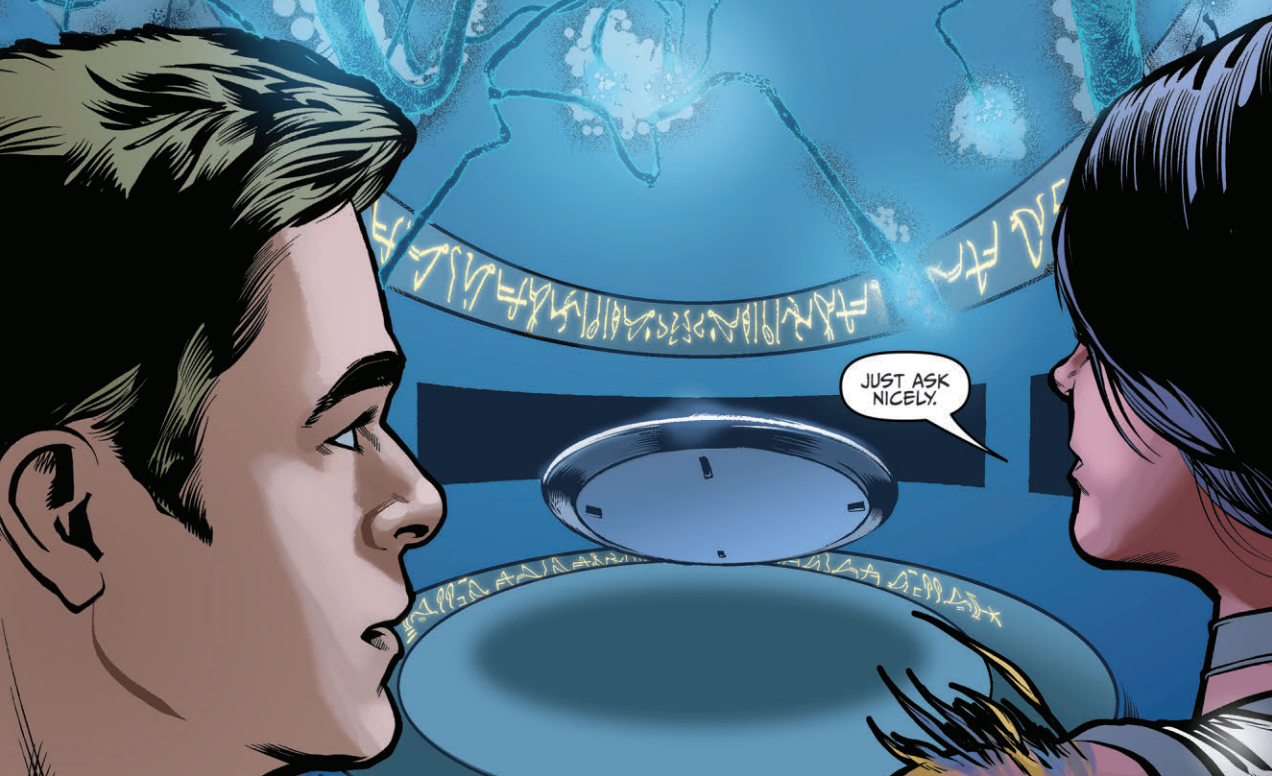


WE JUST WALK IN
THE FRONT DOOR?
WHY DOES THE LACK OF
SECURITY IN THIS PLACE
MAKE ME FEEL LESS
COMFORTABLE?

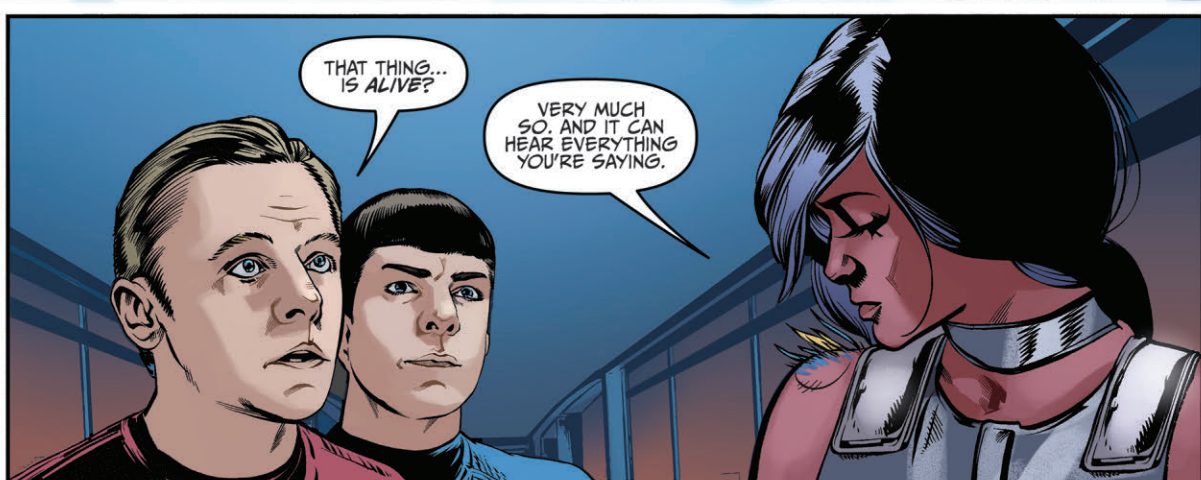


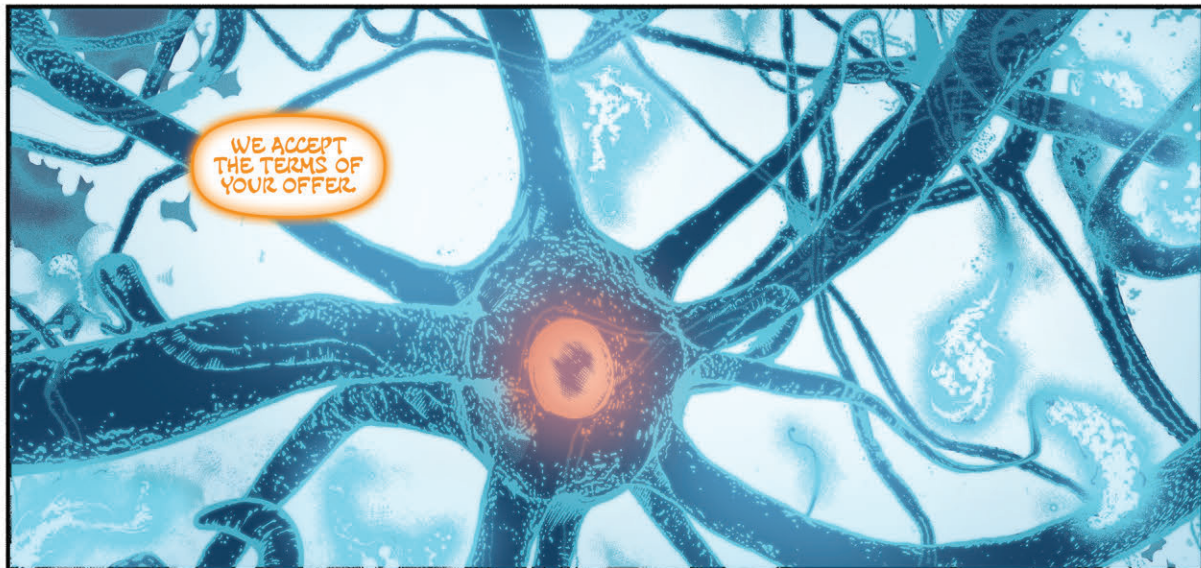
WE'RE GOING
TO NEED ALL THE
DILITHIUM WE CAN
GET OUR HANDS ON.
CAN THE SYNDICATE
HELP US FIND
MORE?

IF IT SEES A
PROFIT IN IT, BUT
I'VE NEVER SEEN THE
SYNDICATE FAIL TO
FIND A PROFIT IN
ANYTHING.



JUST ASK
NICELY.





WE ACCEPT
THE TERMS OF
YOUR OFFER.



GOOD. WE'D
LIKE TO CONTINUE
COLLECTING AS
MUCH DILITHIUM
AS WE CAN.



WE ARE
NOT SPEAKING OF
THE DILITHIUM
TRANSACTION.

IT IS BUT ONE
OF BILLIONS WE
HAVE OBSERVED IN
THE MOST RECENT
CYCLE.

WE ARE
SPEAKING OF OUR
AGREEMENT WITH
EURYDICE.



I THOUGHT YOU
SAID WE NEEDED
THIS THING'S
APPROVAL.

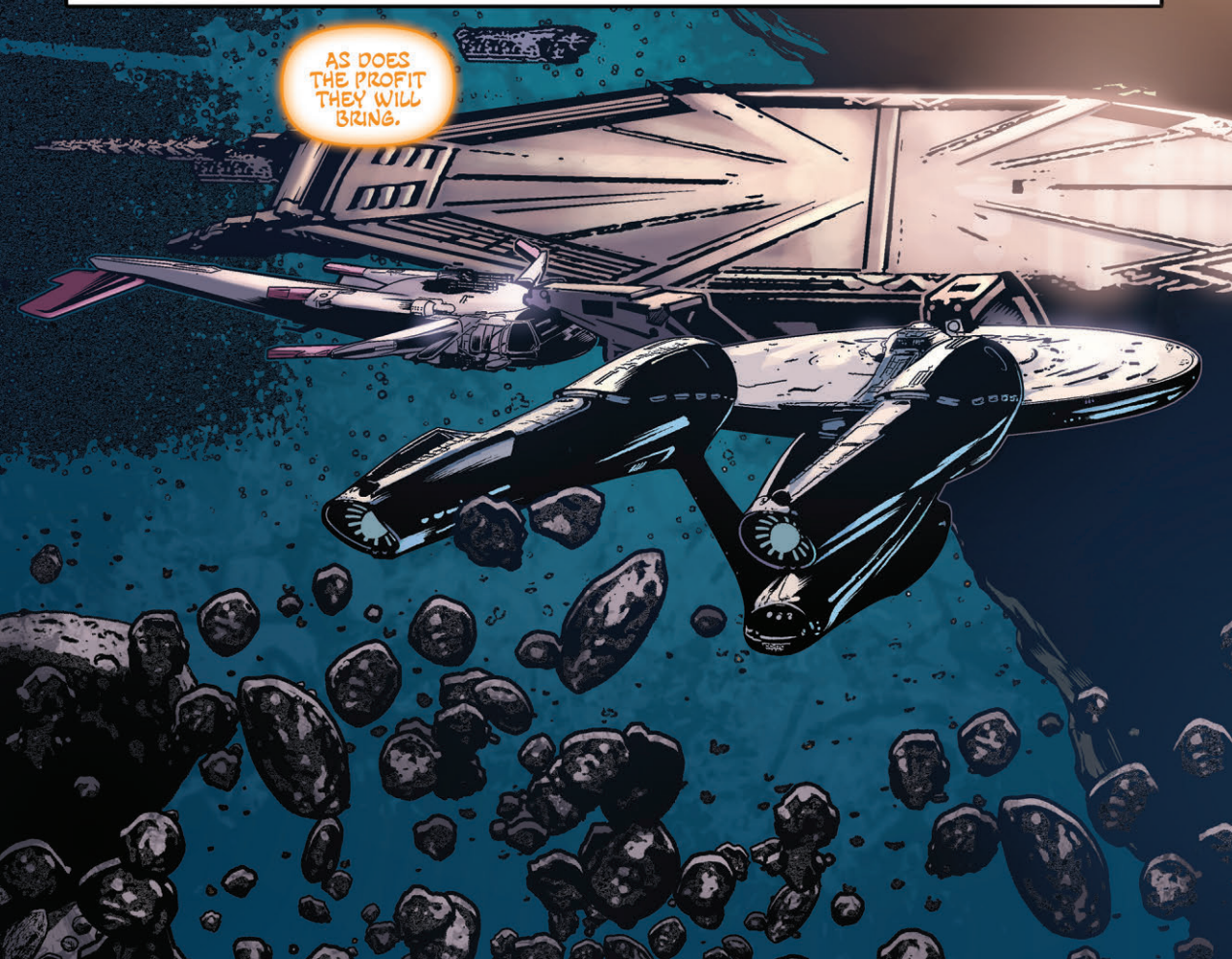
I NEEDED TO GET
YOU UP HERE SOMEHOW.
AND WITHOUT ANY
WEAPONS ON YOU.

I'M
SORRY,
KIRK.



YOUR
DEBTS ARE PAID,
EURYDICE.





I KEEP TELLING MYSELF
IT'S WORTH IT.

SELLING OUT A WHOLE
SHIP FULL OF INNOCENT
PEOPLE TO SAVE THE
LIFE OF ONE.

WHAT KIND OF PERSON
DOES THAT MAKE ME?

BUT I KNOW, DEEP DOWN,
THAT I'D DO IT AGAIN IF I
HAD TO. AND AGAIN. AND
AGAIN. FOREVER.

BECAUSE THE ONE
LIFE I'VE SAVED...

MAMA!

...IS THE ONLY
THING THAT MAKES
LIFE WORTH LIVING.



CAPTAIN'S LOG,
SUPPLEMENTAL.

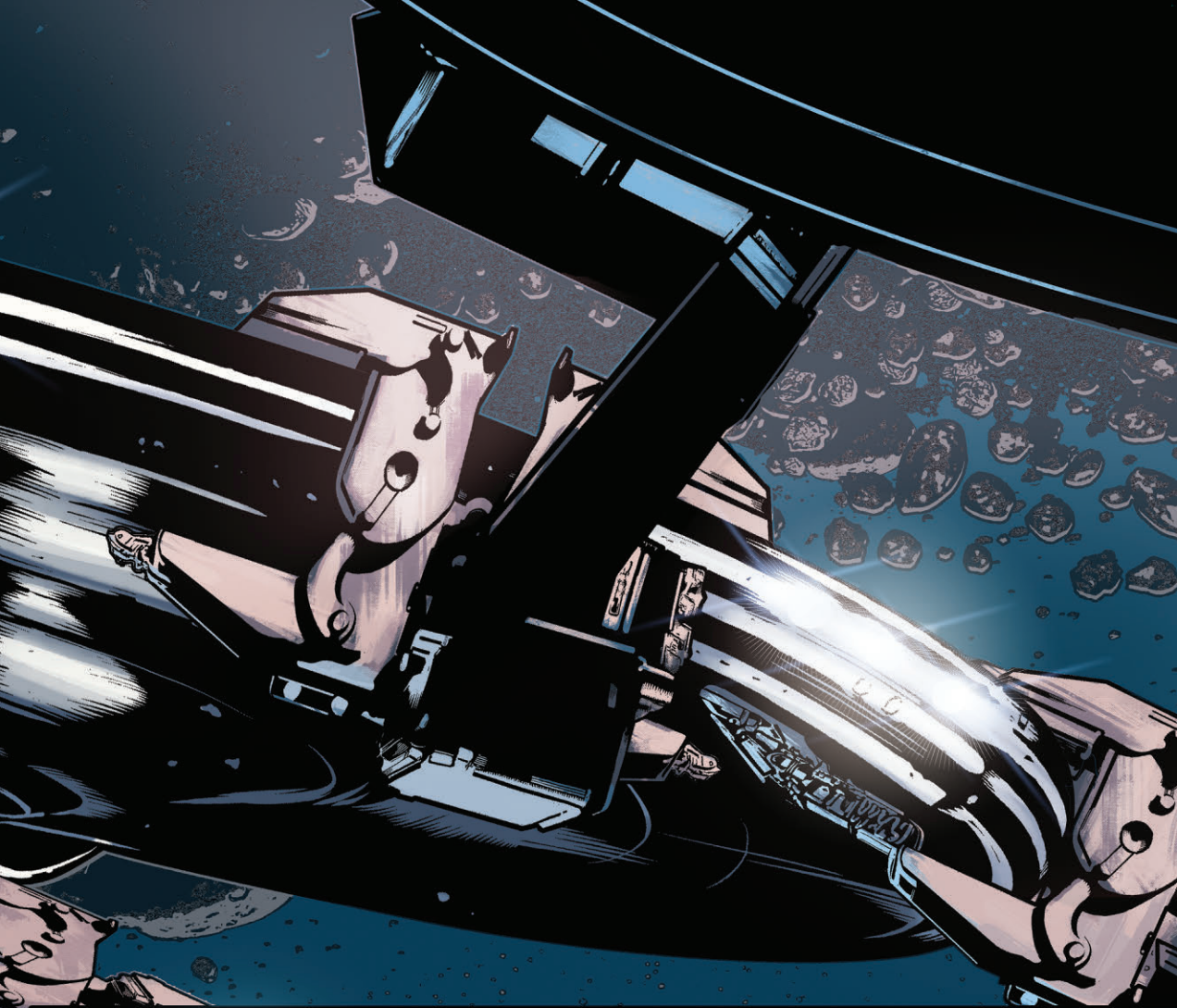
EURYDICE
SOLD US OUT.

SHE LED OUR AWAY TEAM RIGHT
INTO THE WAITING ARMS OF THE
DARK MARKET SYNDICATE.

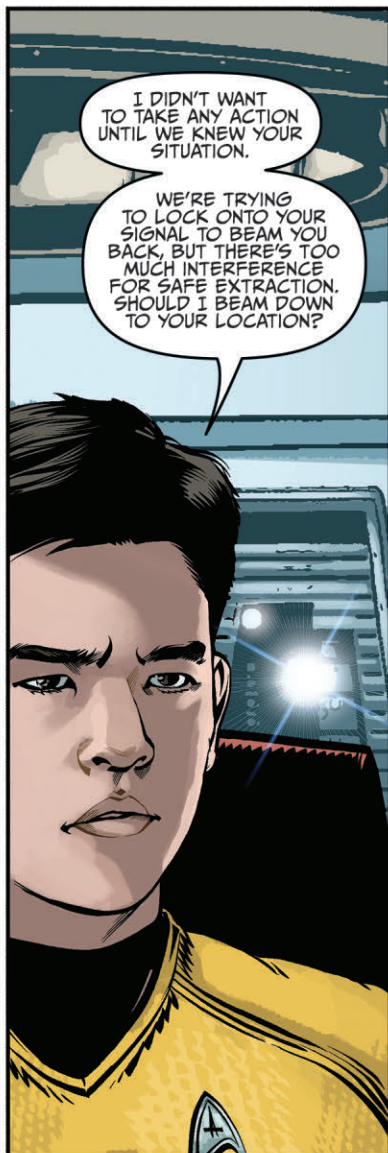
THE SYNDICATE PLANNED TO SELL
OFF THE *ENTERPRISE* AND ITS
CREW TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER.

I'VE SEEN A LOT OF STRANGE
WORLDS IN MY FIRST FEW
YEARS OF EXPLORATION.

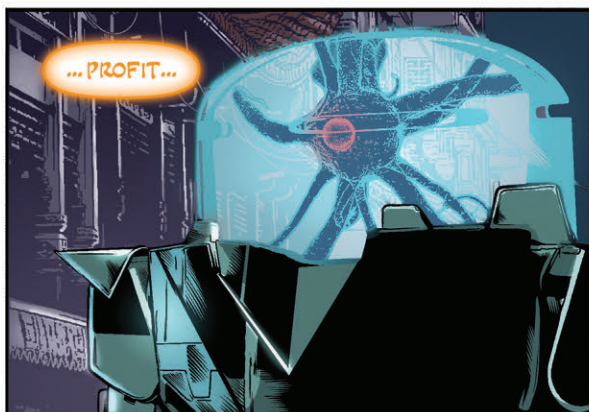
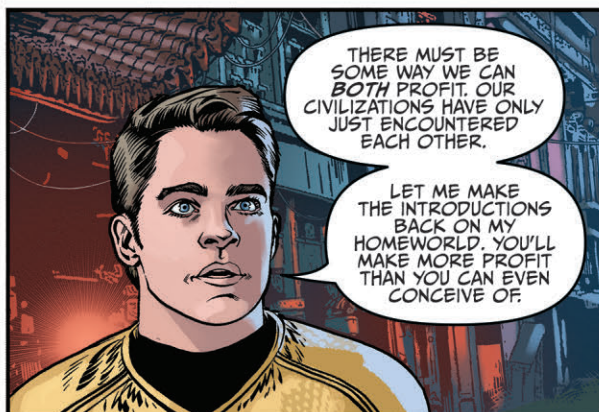
THIS IS THE FIRST THAT
APPEARS TO BE DRIVEN
SOLELY BY *PROFIT*.







"IT MEANS GET READY FOR A *BRAWL*."





THIS IS WHY
I NEVER LIKE
TO LEAVE THE
ENGINEERING
SECTION.

ALTHOUGH THERE IS
SOME QUITE INTERESTING-
LOOKING TECHNOLOGY
SCATTERED ABOUT
THIS PLACE...

DO YOU THINK
OUR HOST WILL LET
ME HAVE A CLOSER
LOOK BEFORE HE
EATS US?

A close-up, black and white illustration of a woman's face. She is looking down and slightly to the left with a somber or pensive expression. Her hair is dark and pulled back. The style is reminiscent of comic book art, with strong lines and shading.

THEY
GAVE HIM A
DISCOUNT FOR
BUYING FIVE OF
US. I JUST HOPE
THE CAPTAIN'S
OKAY.

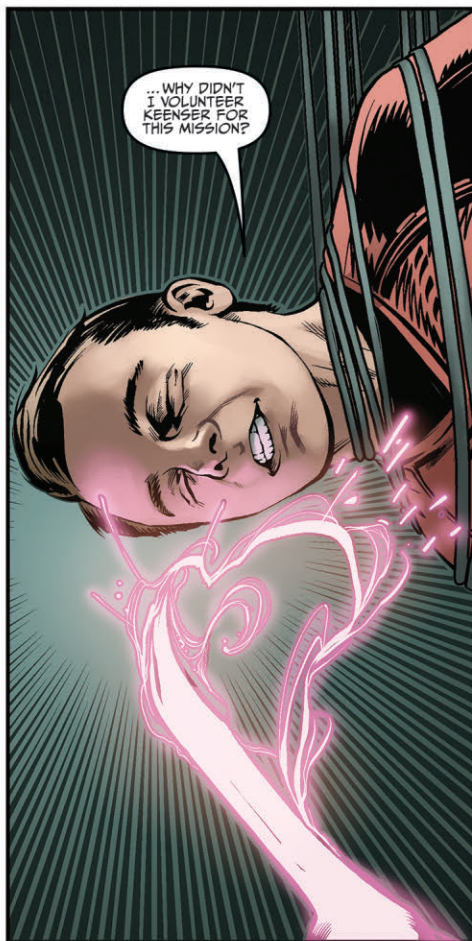
CODES IN THEIR
POSSESSION.

CHKCHKCHK

A close-up, high-contrast black and white illustration of a character's head and shoulders. The character has short, spiky white hair. They are looking down, with their face partially obscured by deep shadows. A red collar or garment is visible at the bottom right. The style is reminiscent of manga or anime art.

PREPARATION TAKES
TIME, PREPARATION
TAKES CARE.

SO HONORED
YOU HAVE JOINED ME,
SO HONORED YOU
ARE HERE.





EURYDICE!

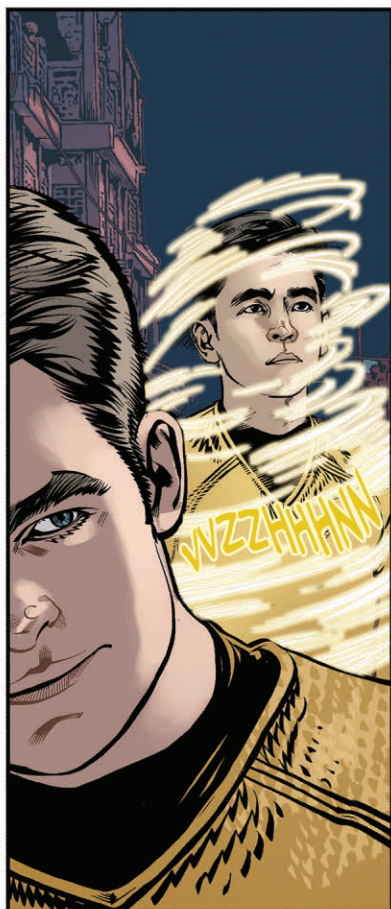
HERE
TO FINISH US
OFF *YOURSELF*?
HOW MUCH WILL
YOU GET PAID
FOR IT?

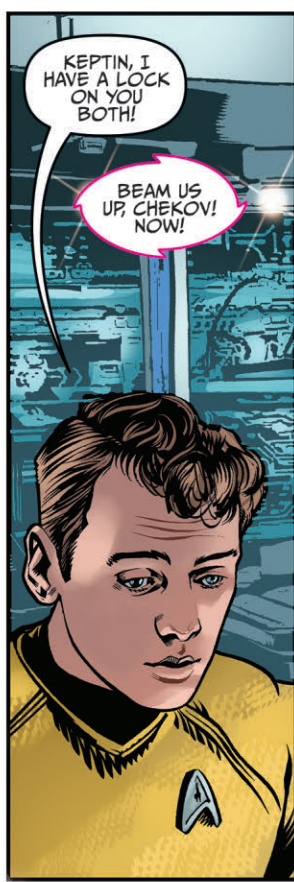


I DON'T
BLAME YOU
FOR THE RAGE.
I DESERVE
IT.



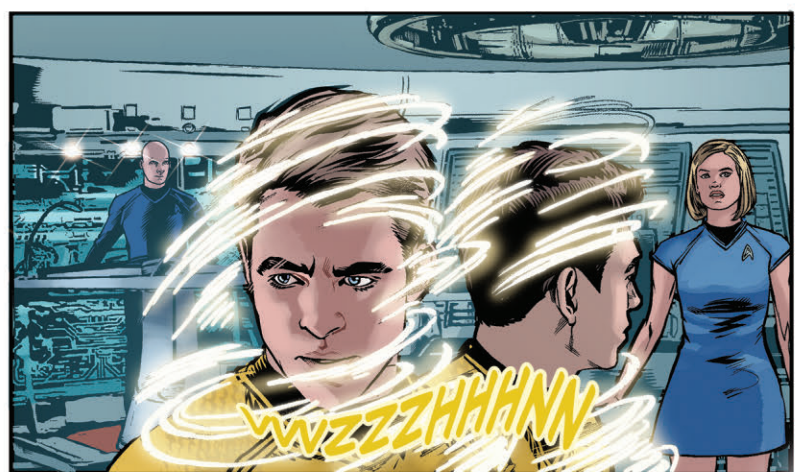
NOW LET'S
GET OUT OF HERE
BEFORE I REALIZE
WHAT A HUGE MISTAKE
I'M MAKING.





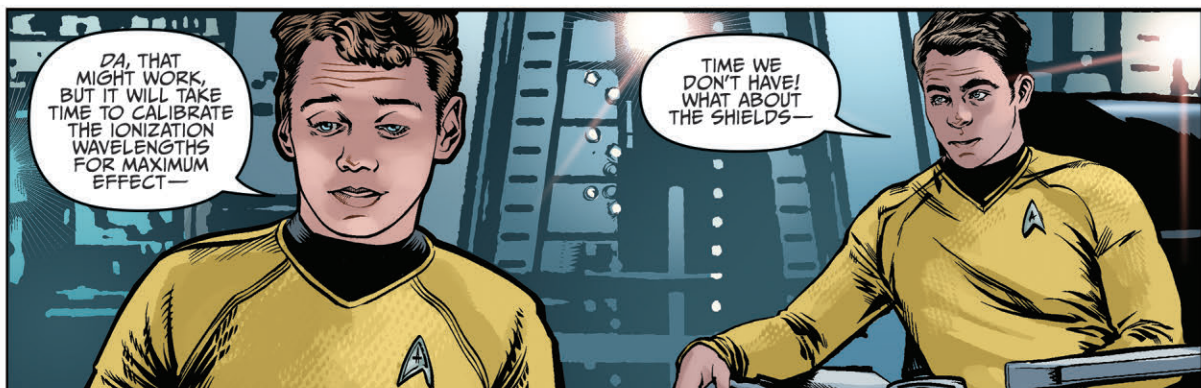
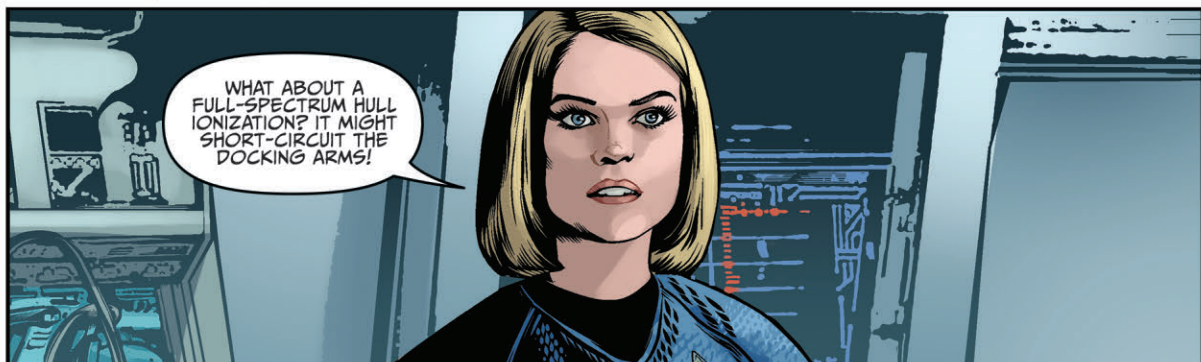
KEPTIN, I
HAVE A LOCK
ON YOU
BOTH!

BEAM US
UP, CHEKOV!
NOW!



CAPTAIN,
WHAT OF THE
REST OF THE
AWAY TEAM?

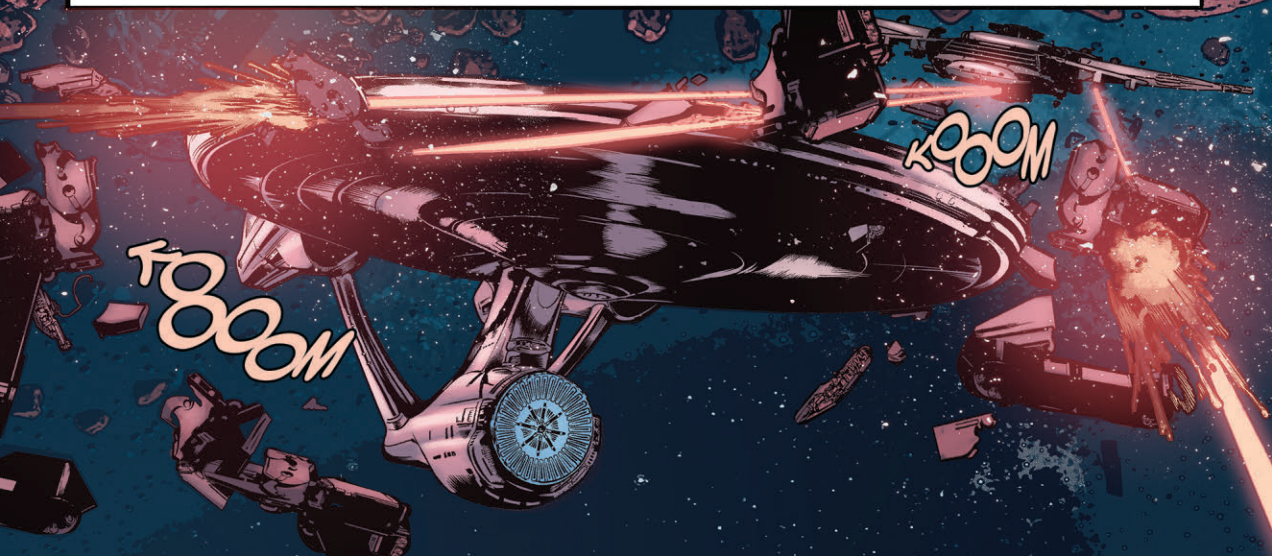
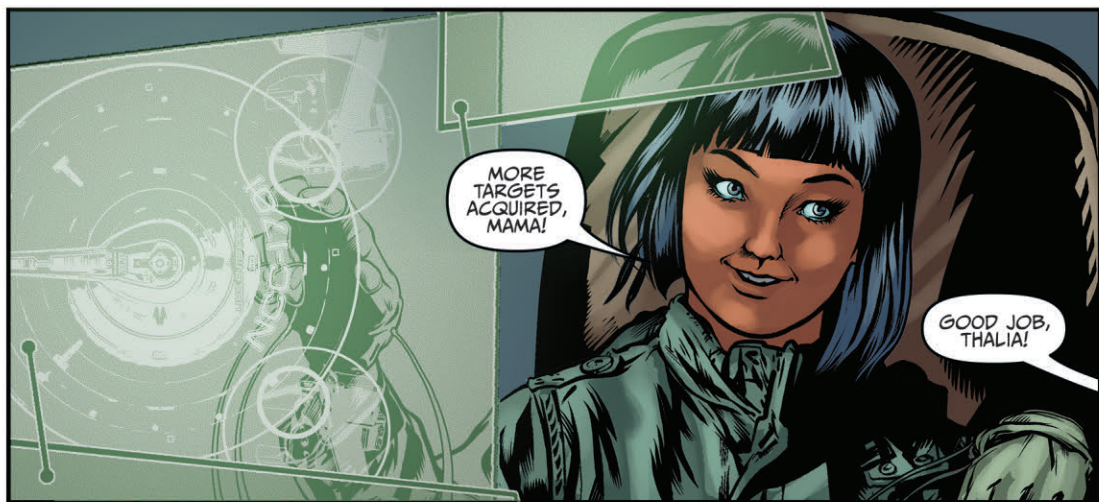
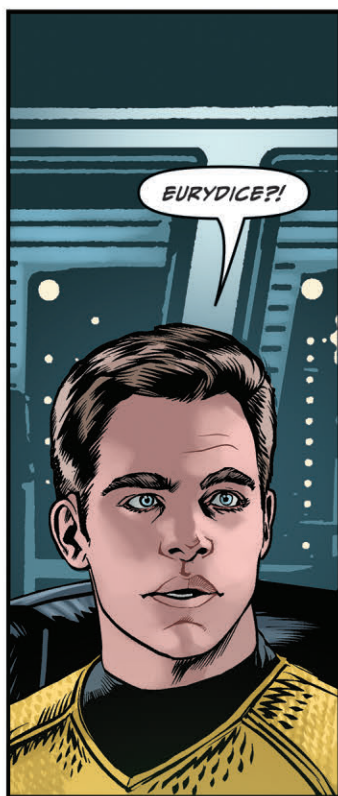
WE WERE
SEPARATED.
WE'LL FIND THEM,
BUT FIRST WE
HAVE TO GET
THE SHIP
FREE.





KOOM
KOOM
KOOM

GET READY
TO GET
MOVING!







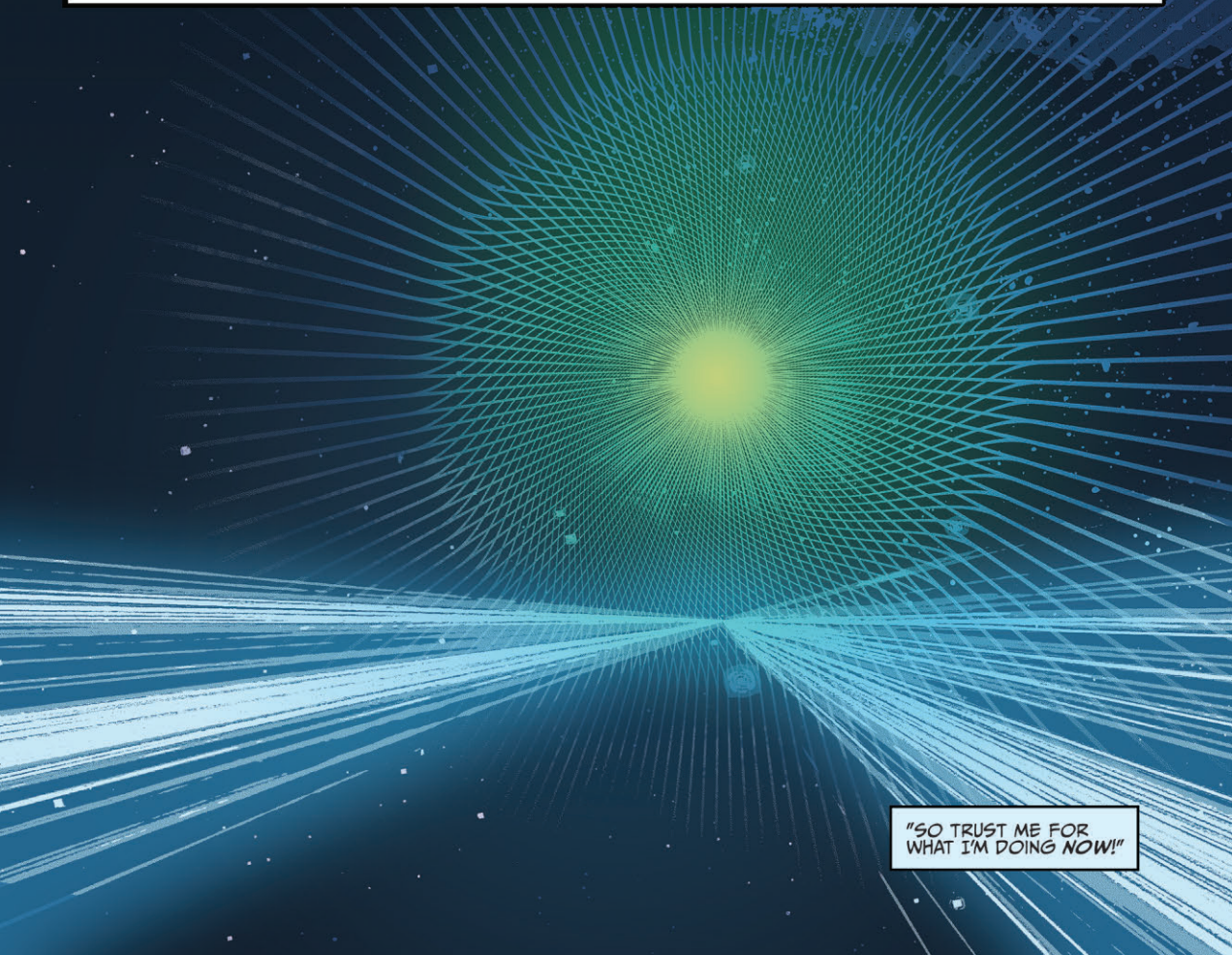
LOWER
YOUR SHIELDS
SO I CAN
BEAM MY
PEOPLE
BACK!

NOT UNTIL
WE'RE GOOD AND
GONE! TRANSFERRING
WARP COORDINATES
TO YOU NOW. WE'LL
RENDEZVOUS AT
THAT LOCATION!



WHY SHOULD I
TRUST YOU AFTER
WHAT YOU DID
TO US?

YOU
SHOULDN'T.



"SO TRUST ME FOR
WHAT I'M DOING NOW!"



"I'M GOING TO HAVE
A HARD TIME GETTING
HER OFF THIS SHIP."





FOR YEARS I'D BEEN DOING BUSINESS WITH THE SYNDICATE. YOU CAN'T STAY IN BUSINESS IF YOU DON'T.

BUT AS THEY GREW STRONGER THEIR TERMS GREW WORSE. EVENTUALLY I WAS BORROWING FROM THEM JUST TO PAY THE COSTS OF FINDING SALVAGE TO SELL BACK TO THEM.

TO MAKE SURE I PAID MY DEBTS, THEY TOOK MY DAUGHTER.



FINDING YOUR SHIP WAS A MIRACLE. THERE'S NOTHING THE DARK MARKET LIKES MORE THAN DISCOVERING SOMETHING NEW TO TURN INTO PROFIT. BE IT NEW TECH OR NEW PEOPLE.

BUT YOU THREW IT ALL AWAY—AND PUT YOURSELF EVEN MORE AT RISK—BY SAVING US.

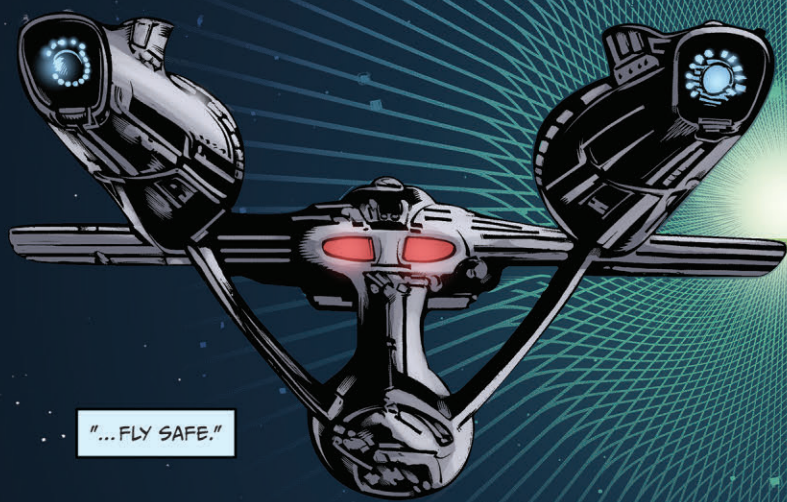


I'VE BEEN A FUGITIVE BEFORE. THAT STRESS IS NOTHING COMPARED TO THE GUILT I FELT AFTER I TURNED YOU IN.

I KNOW JUST HOW DARK THE MARKET CAN GET, KIRK. WHATEVER LIVES YOU HAD LEFT TO LIVE WOULD HAVE ENDED... BADLY.



SO WHERE DO YOU GO NOW? HOW WILL YOU SURVIVE IF YOU CAN'T DO BUSINESS IN THE MARKET?



THE END





Cover by Cat Staggs



CORRONEY JUNE 22

Cover by Joe Corroney



Cover by Joe Corroney

FOLLOWING THEIR ENCOUNTER WITH THE EXTRADIMENSIONAL ENTITY KNOWN AS "Q", CAPTAIN KIRK AND THE CREW OF THE *ENTERPRISE* CONTINUE THEIR FIVE-YEAR MISSION INTO UNEXPLORED SPACE. IN "BEHEMOTH," THE CREW COME UPON A DAMAGED ALIEN VESSEL OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN. DISCOVERING THE INJURED PILOT INSIDE, THEY LEARN OF A NEW THREAT OF UNPRECEDENTED POWER. IN "EURYDICE," THE *ENTERPRISE* FINDS ITSELF ADRIFT, FARTHER FROM EARTH THAN ANY OTHER STARSHIP HAS EVER TRAVELED. WRITTEN BY MIKE JOHNSON WITH ART BY CAT STAGGS AND TONY SHASTEEN.



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