

# STAR TREK®

VOLUME 3



Introduction by David Gerrold



# STAR TREK<sup>®</sup>

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## VOLUME 3

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Based on the original teleplays of *The Return of the Archons* by Boris Sobelman  
and *The Trouble with Tribbles* by David Gerrold.

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# I Love Comic Books

by David Gerrold

I grew up in the golden age of comic books. It was a great time to be a kid.

My friends were Superman and Batman, Little Lulu and Wonder Woman, Donald Duck and Bugs Bunny. Those were my role models. Those were the people who informed my world. Life in comic books was simple, bright, colorful, and understandable. Problems were solvable. And best of all, people were essentially good. Things always worked out all right in the end.

And then, one day, I turned into a teenager. What they don't tell you about adolescence is that it's the period of life when you discover your ability to be truly depressed— but comic books were always a welcome escape back into the magic world of innocence. Yes, I was one of the weird kids. And today I'm a weird adult. I think it's because I had my comics, and I had my science fiction magazines, and I had all the mind-boggling movies too. It was a great time to be a teen. We had sparkling summer days and lazy afternoons and a stack of great stories.

I never lost my love of comics. Comics defy space and time and logic. They can be gritty and savage and dark. They can be silly and outrageous and bawdy. They can be anything. Even today, I still want to leap into the wonderful worlds inside comic books and live there, even if only for an afternoon. Who doesn't want to be a part of all those great sprawling adventures?

So when John Van Citters told me that IDW was going to reimagine "The Trouble With Tribbles" and when Scott Dunbier sent me an advance look, it was a marvelous homecoming for me. The circle was complete. In my own peripheral way, I was now part of the comic book world.

In 1967, *Star Trek* was another one of those weird things that only weird kids looked at. And when I sold the tribble episode to the series, it just confirmed how weird I really was. Those of us who worked on the show, we loved what we were doing. We knew the show was special— but we didn't know how special. It wasn't until after the show was cancelled and the fans started holding *Star Trek* conventions with 30,000 people attending that we began to realize the scale of what we'd created.

As I write this, *Star Trek* is only a few years away from its half-century anniversary— and it's still going strong. At Comic-Con, Creation-Con, and Dragon-Con, thousands of fans turn out to celebrate, proudly wearing Starfleet uniforms, dressing up as Klingons and Vulcans, and walking out of the dealers' room with armloads of tribbles. ([www.tribbletoys.com](http://www.tribbletoys.com))

There's a point to be made here— not just the enduring and endearing quality of Kirk, Spock, and McCoy, but something more. It's that same love of comics and science fiction that I experienced growing up. It's the hunger for adventure. It's curiosity, it's exploration, it's the need to know what's out there on the other side of the mountain or the other side of the sky.

It's not a kid thing, it's not about how old you are or how young. It's a human thing. It's about how connected you are to the universe you're living in.

Gene Roddenberry used to say that *Star Trek* is a way of saying that the way things are is not the way they have to be. It's about imagining other possibilities, better possibilities. I think science fiction is even more than that. It's about the question, "What does it mean to be a human being?" and every new story is another opportunity to consider the question.

And sometimes— this is where the tribbles come in— being human is about being silly, funny, and even a bit cuddly. Being human isn't always a serious thing. Most of the time, it's a great big, wibbly-wobbly, squishy ball of complexities and contradictions. Sometime we bounce, sometimes we go splat— but the victory is that we never stay splatted. That's what our adventures teach us. The only failure is not getting back up.

Here's another chapter in *Star Trek*, here's another chapter in the history of comic books, another world to leap into and enjoy for an afternoon.

Somewhere on this planet, someone will read this book— maybe it's you— with the same weird fascination, the same love and excitement that I experienced so many years ago and maybe that person— or maybe a lot of persons— will be inspired enough to become part of the next generation of storytellers and artists and movie-makers.

I hope so. There are too many great stories that haven't been told yet. I want to read more great comic books.



# THE RETURN OF THE ARCHONS



Artwork by Tim Bradstreet  
Colors by Grant Goleash





SAN FRANCISCO.

EIGHTEEN MONTHS AGO.

"YOUR ACADEMY RECORD SPEAKS FOR ITSELF, MR. SULU. CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR ASSIGNMENT TO THE ENTERPRISE."



THANK YOU, SIR. EXCITED ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITY, SIR.

THAT'S GOOD, SON. WELL DESERVED. BUT WE ASKED TO SEE YOU BECAUSE WE HAVE ANOTHER OPTION FOR YOU TO CONSIDER.

ANOTHER OPTION, SIR?

YOU ARE WELL AWARE THAT STARFLEET'S PRIORITIES ARE PEACEKEEPING AND HUMANITARIAN MISSIONS.



YES, SIR.

UNFORTUNATELY, "PEACEKEEPING" AND "HUMANITARIAN" ARE PLEASANT WORDS FOR OFTEN UNPLEASANT REALITIES.

STARFLEET HAS HAD TO ADJUST TO THIS TRUTH.



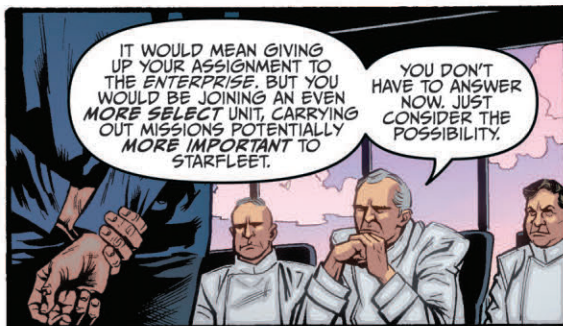
WE'D LIKE TO RECRUIT YOU TO BE A PART OF A NEW INITIATIVE. WE'RE CHOOSING ONLY THE BRIGHTEST STARS IN THE ACADEMY. THOSE WITH THE RIGHT MIX OF INTELLIGENCE, COURAGE, AND PHYSICAL ABILITY.



FOR WHAT KINDS OF MISSIONS, SIR?

HIGH RISK. HIGH PRECISION. AND MOST OF ALL... COMPLETELY COVERT.

SO MUCH SO THAT IF YOU RELATE THIS CONVERSATION TO ANYONE OUTSIDE OF THIS ROOM, YOU WILL BE IMMEDIATELY DISCHARGED FROM SERVICE.



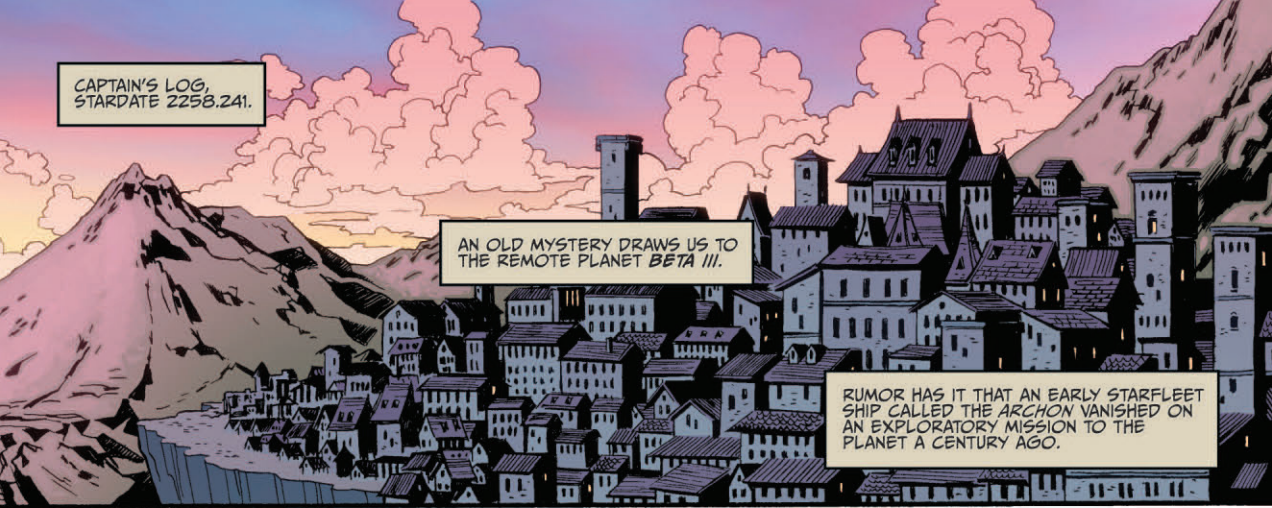
IT WOULD MEAN GIVING UP YOUR ASSIGNMENT TO THE ENTERPRISE. BUT YOU WOULD BE JOINING AN EVEN MORE SELECT UNIT, CARRYING OUT MISSIONS POTENTIALLY MORE IMPORTANT TO STARFLEET.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER NOW. JUST CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY.



WE'LL BE IN TOUCH.





CAPTAIN'S LOG,  
STARDATE 2258.241.


AN OLD MYSTERY DRAWS US TO  
THE REMOTE PLANET BETA III.

RUMOR HAS IT THAT AN EARLY STARFLEET  
SHIP CALLED THE ARCHON VANISHED ON  
AN EXPLORATORY MISSION TO THE  
PLANET A CENTURY AGO.



STRANGELY, THERE'S NO MENTION OF THE  
ARCHON IN FEDERATION ARCHIVES. IT'S  
AS IF THE SHIP NEVER EXISTED. BETA III  
IS LISTED AS A BARREN ROCK.

THE ONLY REASON I KNOW ABOUT IT AT  
ALL IS THANKS TO AN OLD ACADEMY  
PROFESSOR WHO TOLD ME WILD STORIES  
OVER A FEW BOTTLES OF ORION WHISKEY  
AT A DIVE OFF THE EMBARCADERO.



ALL I REALLY REMEMBER IS THE NAME  
OF THE SHIP, AND THE PLACE. "BETA III,"  
HE KEPT SAYING. "STAY AWAY FROM  
BETA III. ARCHON SHOULD HAVE."

SINCE OUR COURSE  
HAS BROUGHT US  
RIGHT PAST BETA III,  
I'M TAKING THE BAIT.



WE'VE DISCOVERED A SMALL  
SETTLEMENT ON THE SURFACE.  
STRANGER STILL, THE  
POPULATION APPEARS HUMAN.

I'VE SENT DOWN A TWO-MAN  
RECON TEAM CONSISTING OF  
LIEUTENANTS SULU AND O'NEILL  
TO INVESTIGATE, DISGUISED IN  
OUR BEST APPROXIMATION OF  
LOCAL CLOTHING BASED ON  
OUR ORBITAL SCANS.

O'NEILL,  
WAIT!

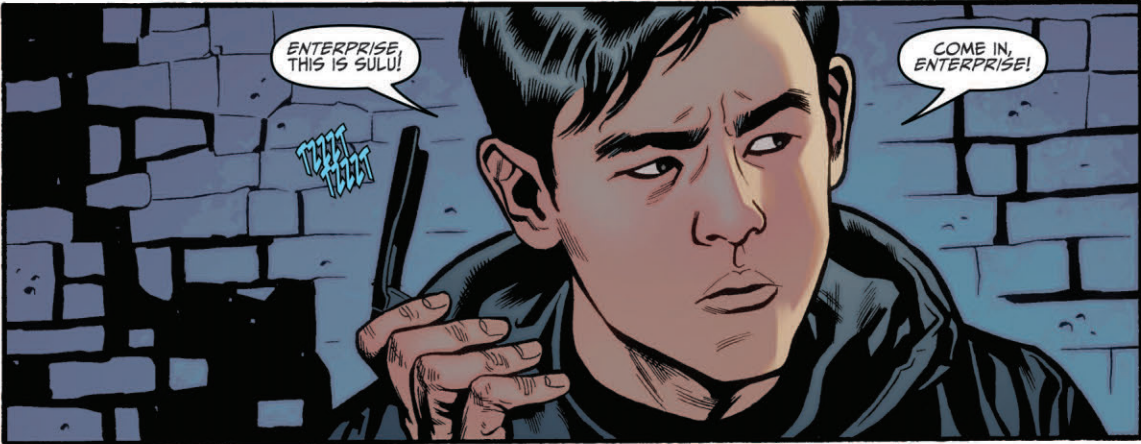








O'NEILL!  
COME BACK  
HERE! YOU'RE  
GOING THE  
WRONG WAY!



ENTERPRISE  
THIS IS SULU!

COME IN,  
ENTERPRISE!

TEXT  
FLASH



...DAMMIT!

O'NEILL!  
WHERE ARE  
YOU?



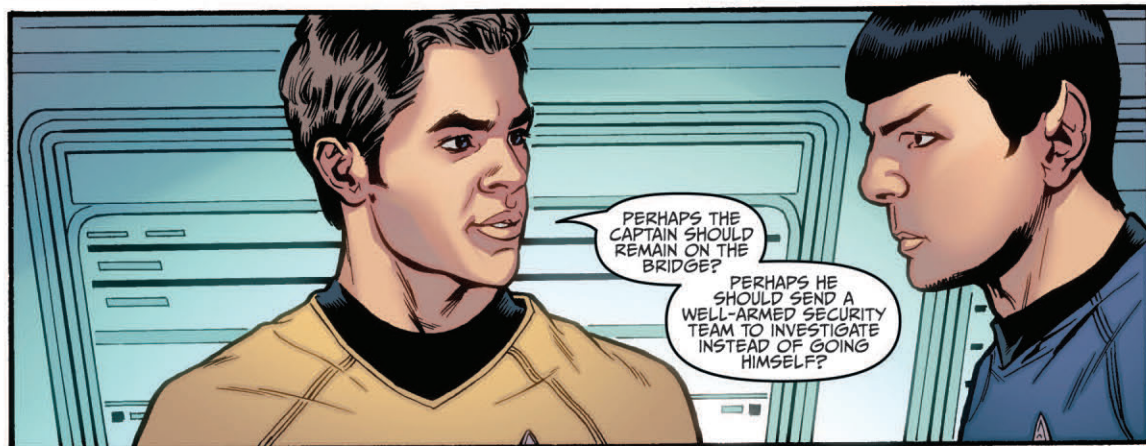
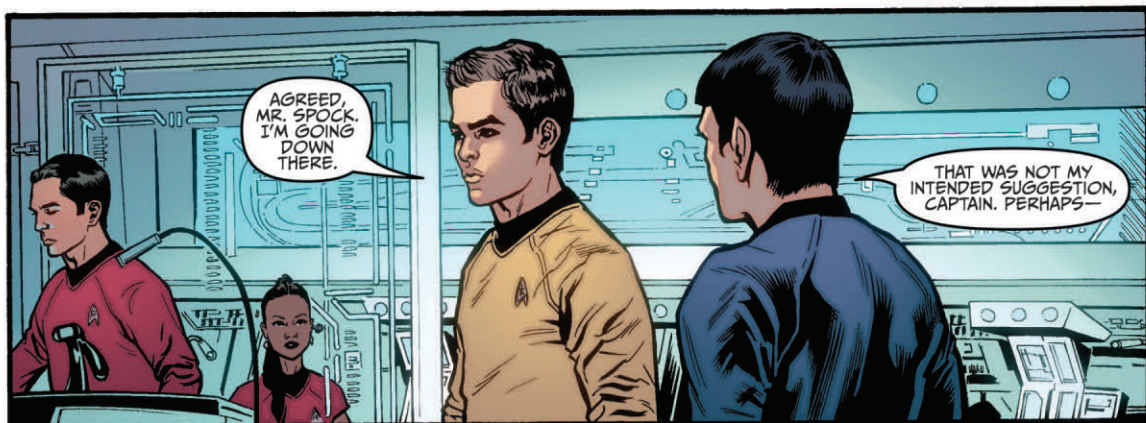
O'NEILL,  
IS THAT—

OH NO...

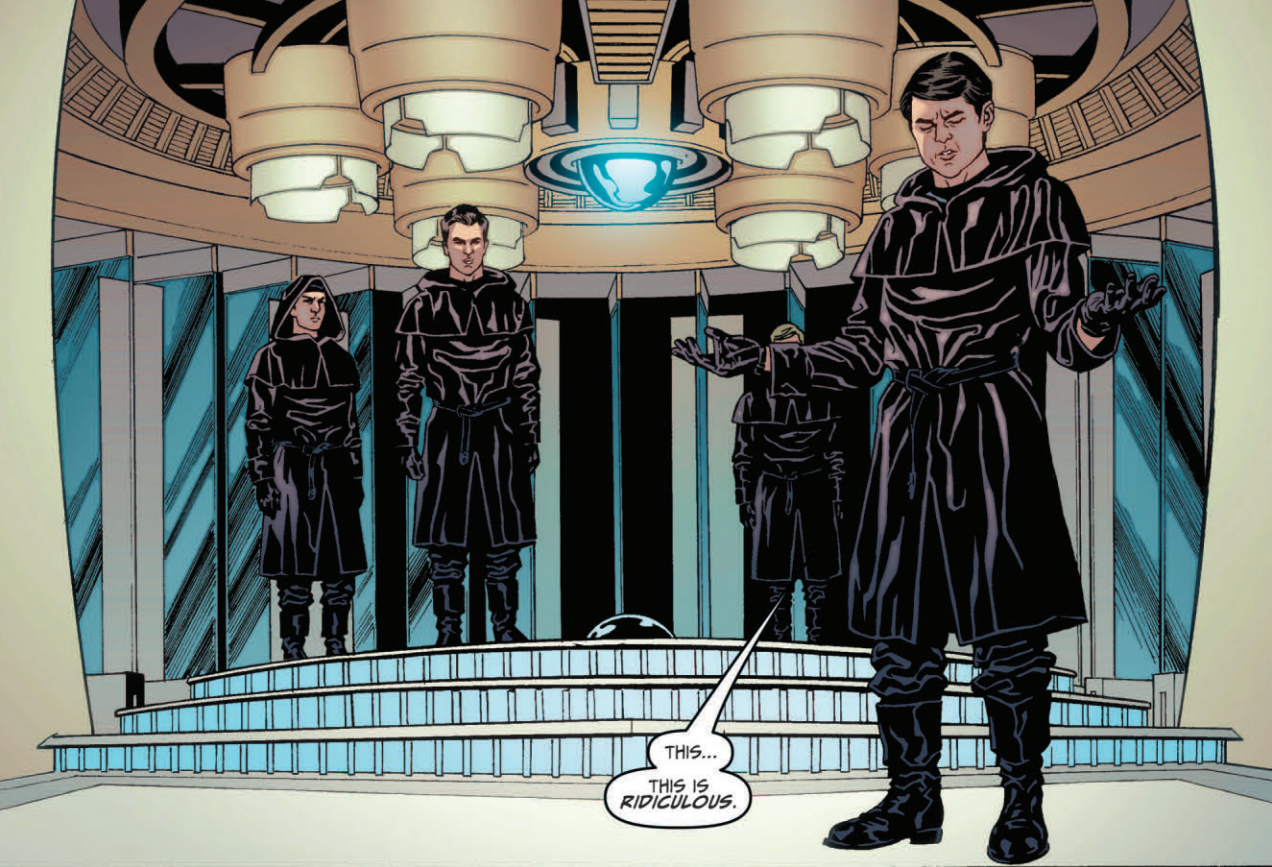




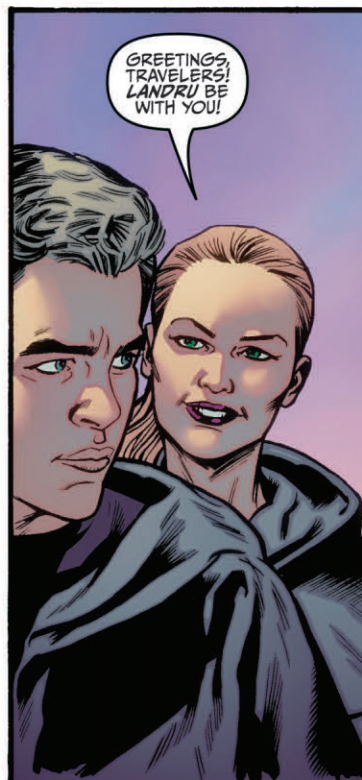




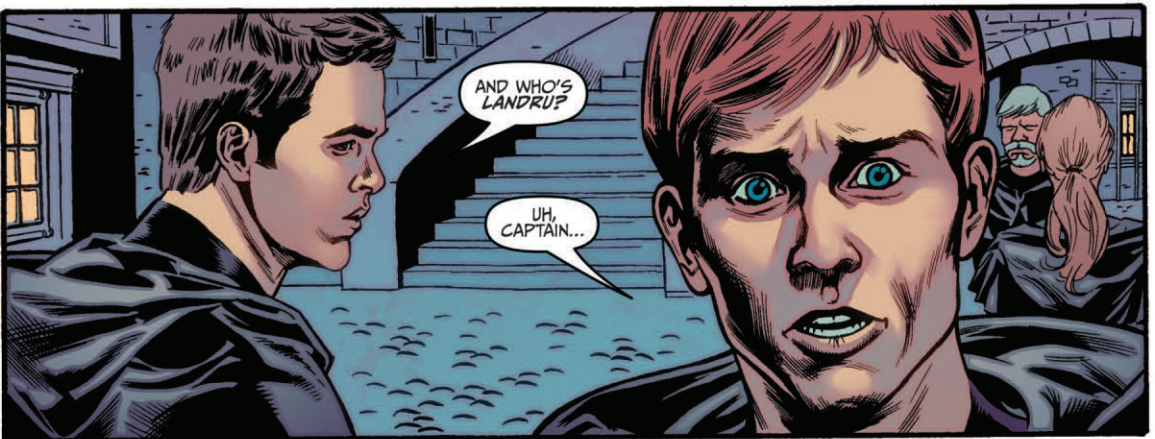
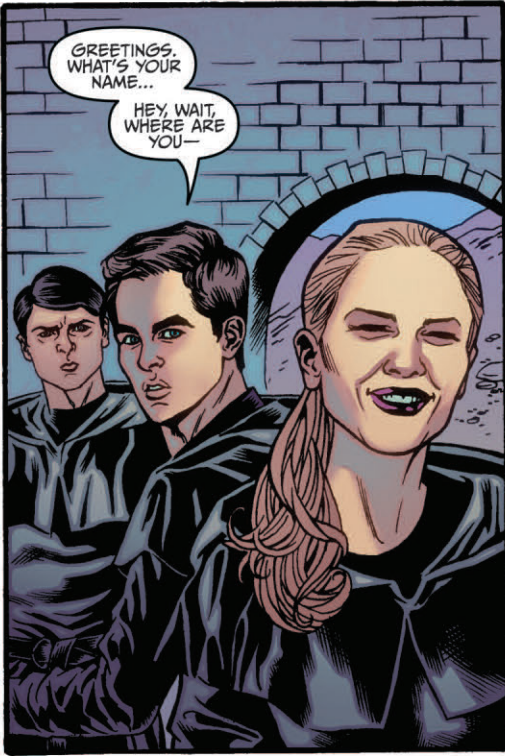




















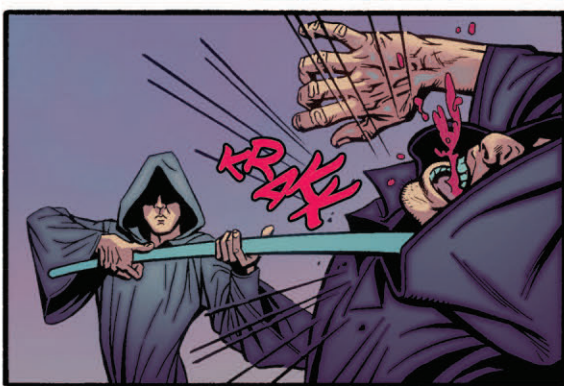
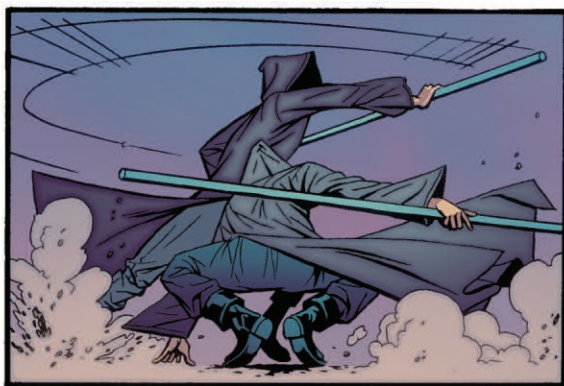












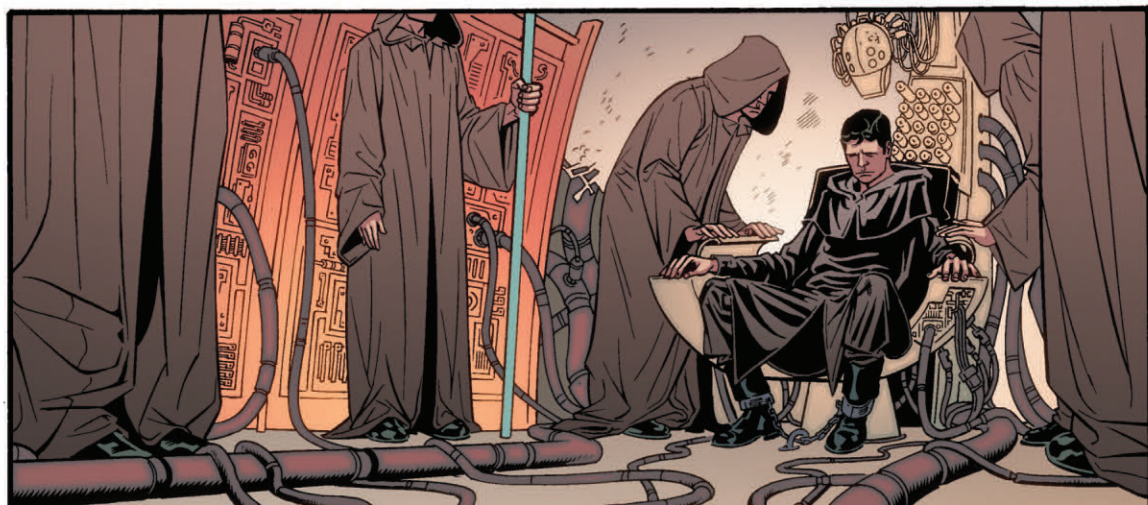
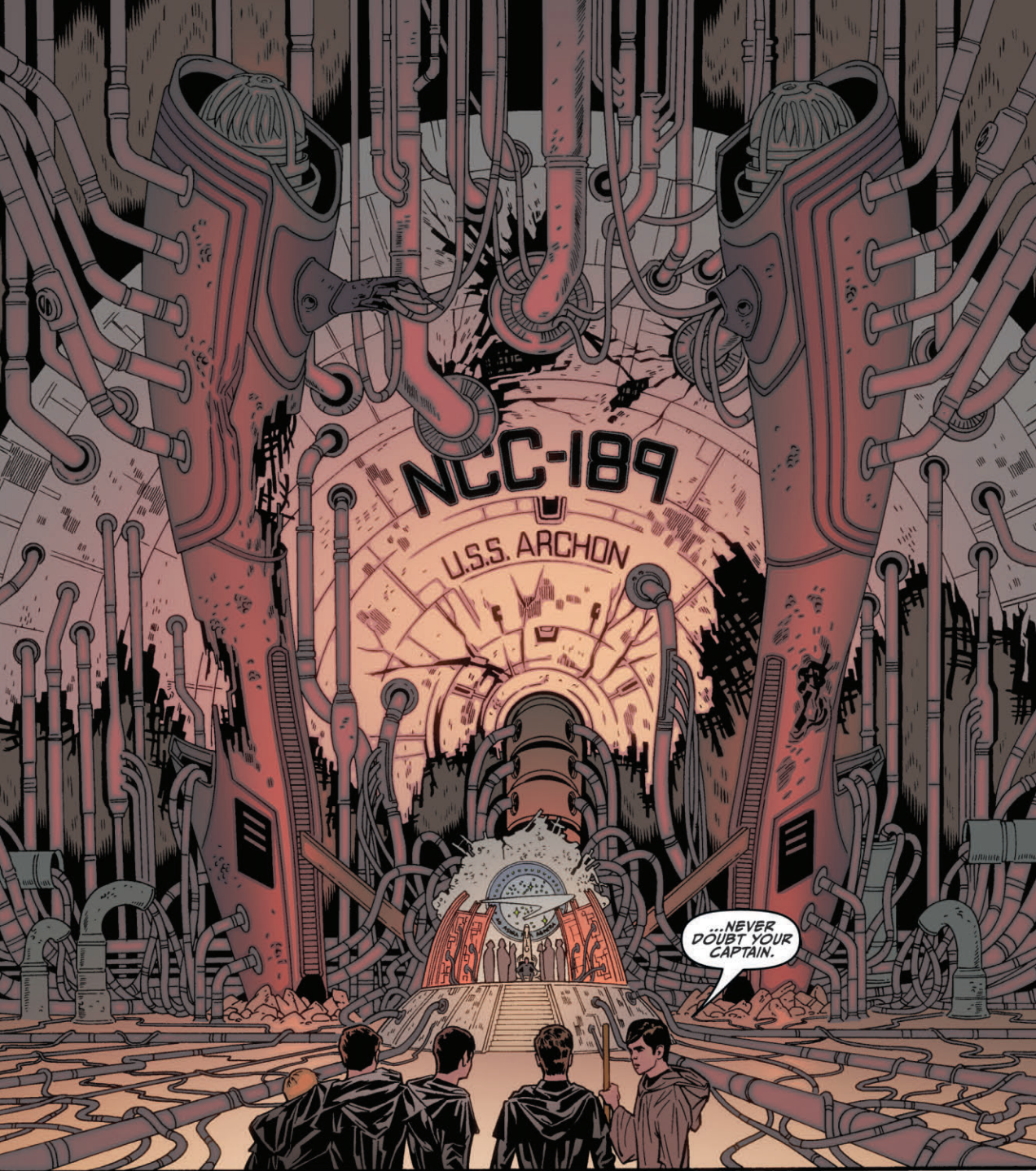




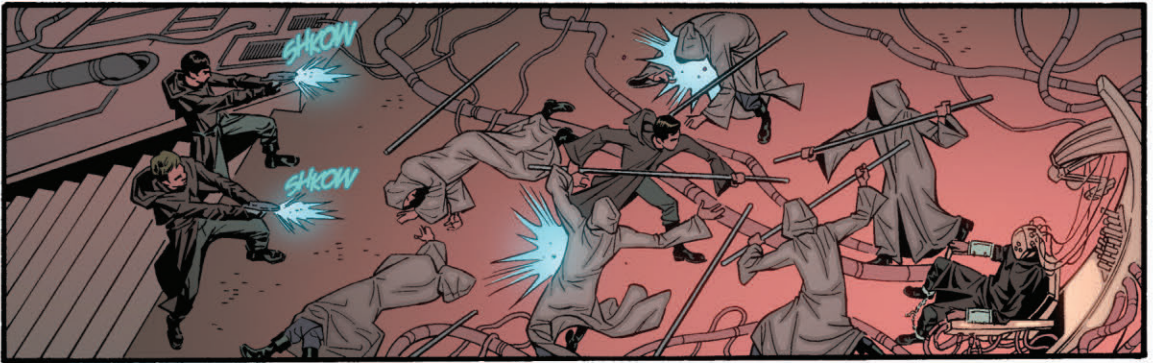














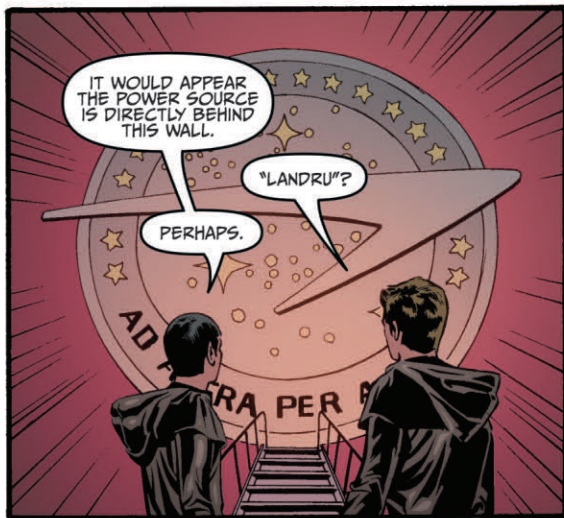


CAPTAIN, ARE YOU SURE OUR USE OF PHASERS WAS WISE GIVEN THE DICTATES OF THE...

...PRIME DIRECTIVE? THEY'VE BUILT AN UNDERGROUND ALTAR OUT OF PIECES OF A STARSHIP. SPOCK, I THINK WE'RE OKAY.



INCREDIBLE...



IT WOULD APPEAR THE POWER SOURCE IS DIRECTLY BEHIND THIS WALL.

"LANDRI"?

PERHAPS.



ALL RIGHT THEN, TIME TO OPEN THE MYSTERY BOX.



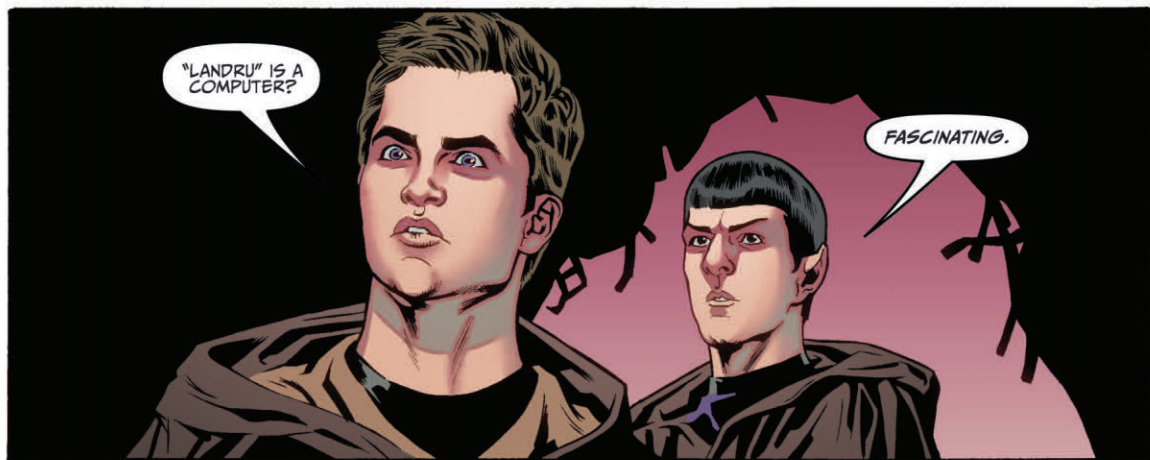
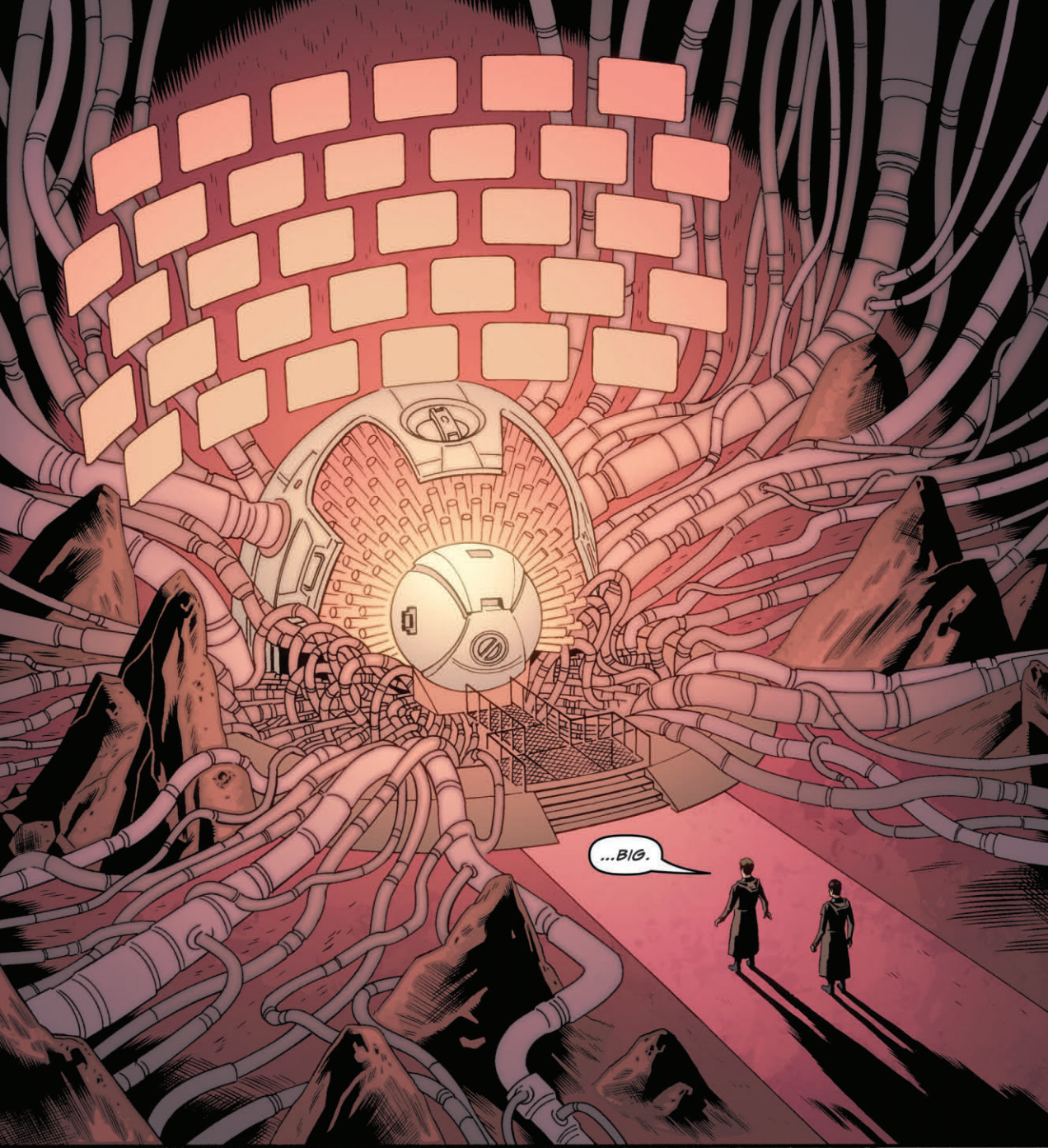
WHOA!!



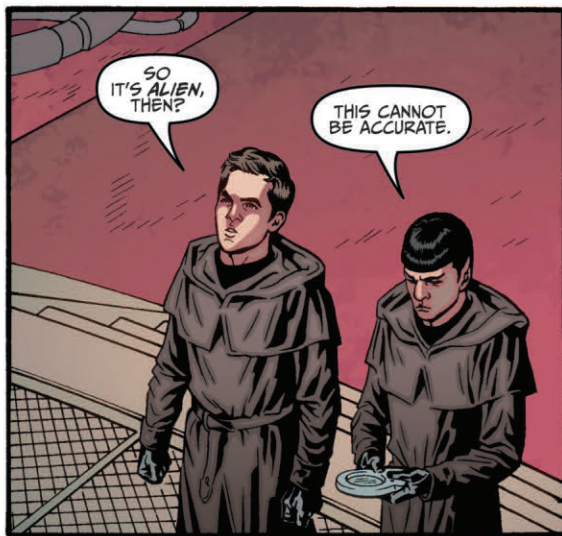
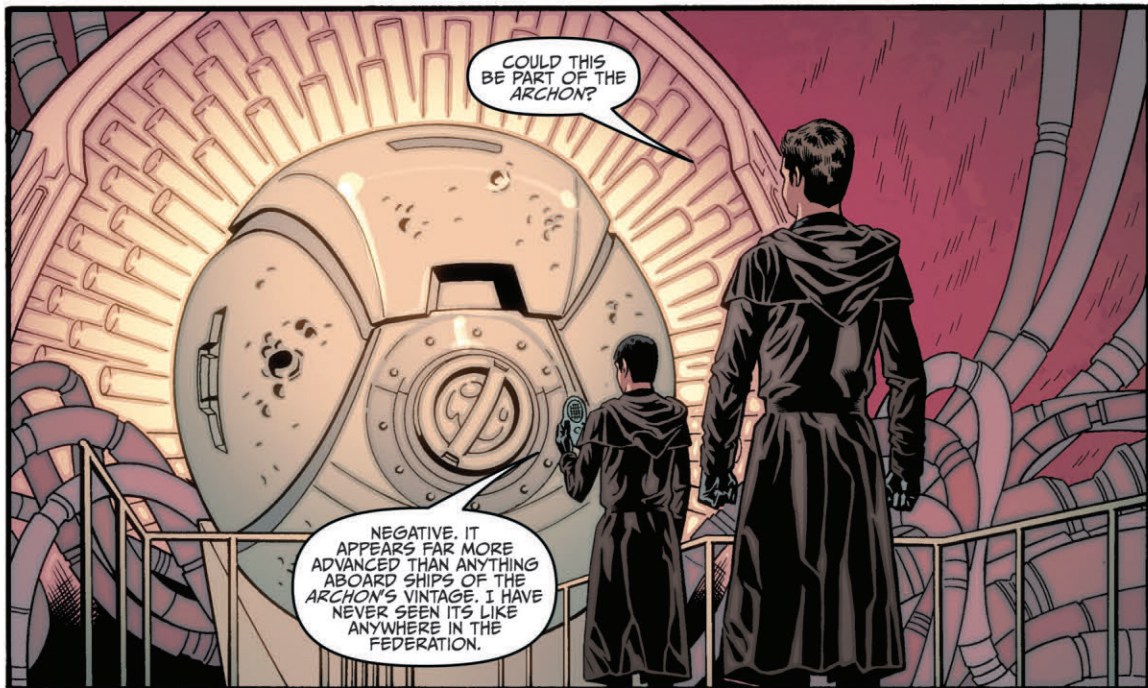
SOMETHING BACK HERE...

SOMETHING...





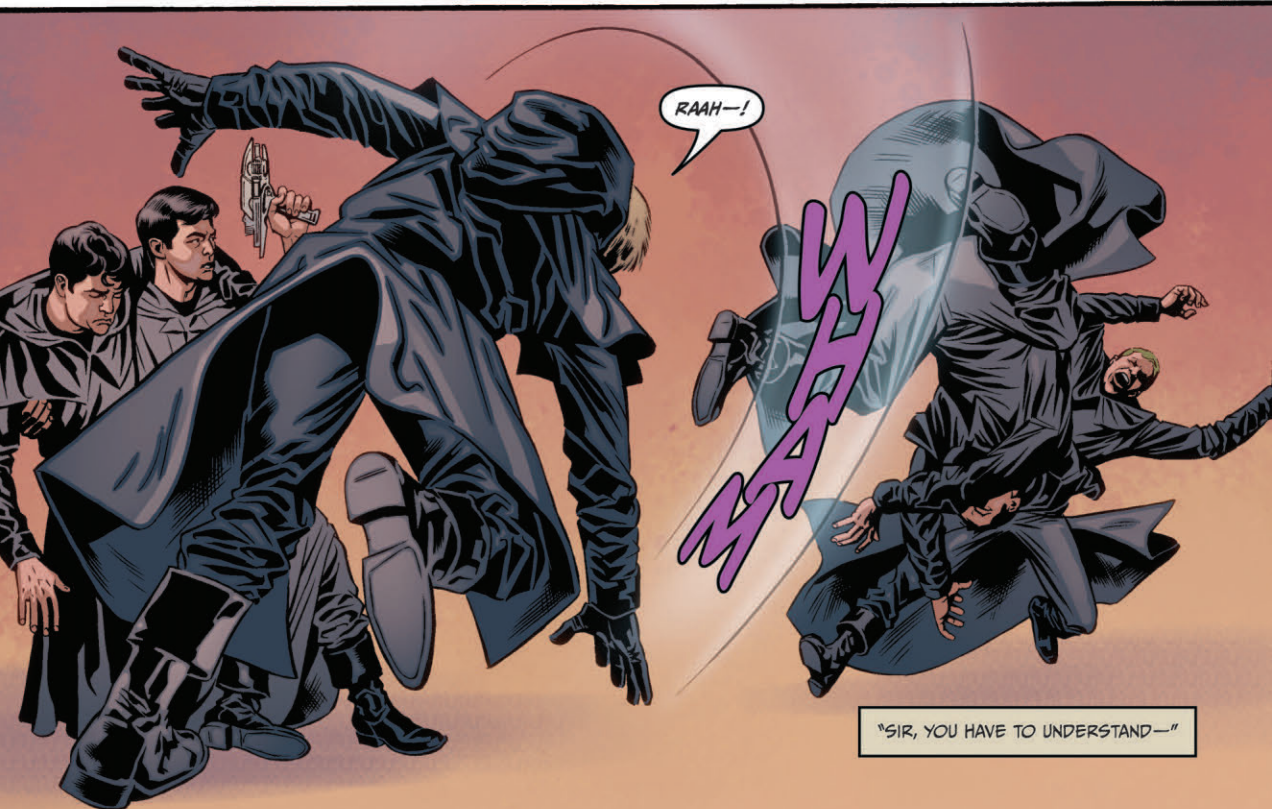












"SIR, YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND—"





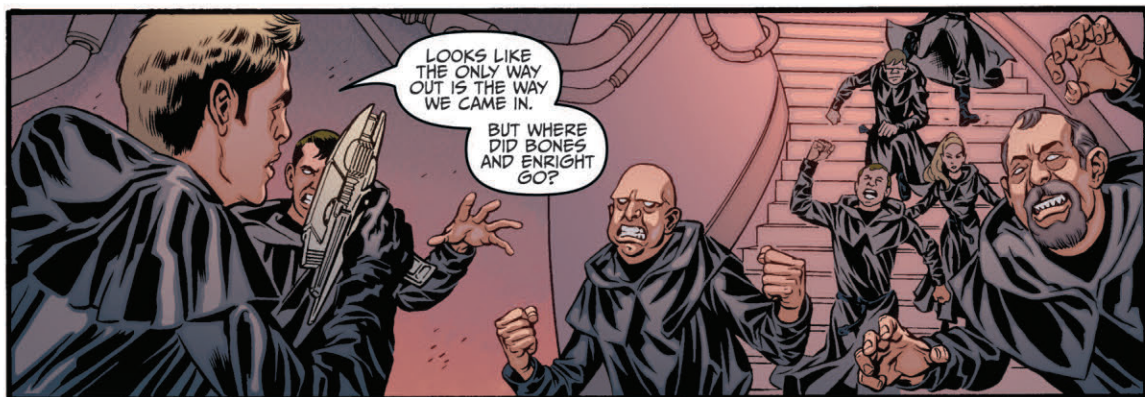
"—THERE WERE A LOT OF THEM."



OPEN TO  
SUGGESTIONS,  
MR. SPOCK!

OUR OPTIONS  
WOULD APPEAR TO  
BE SEVERELY LIMITED,  
CAPTAIN.

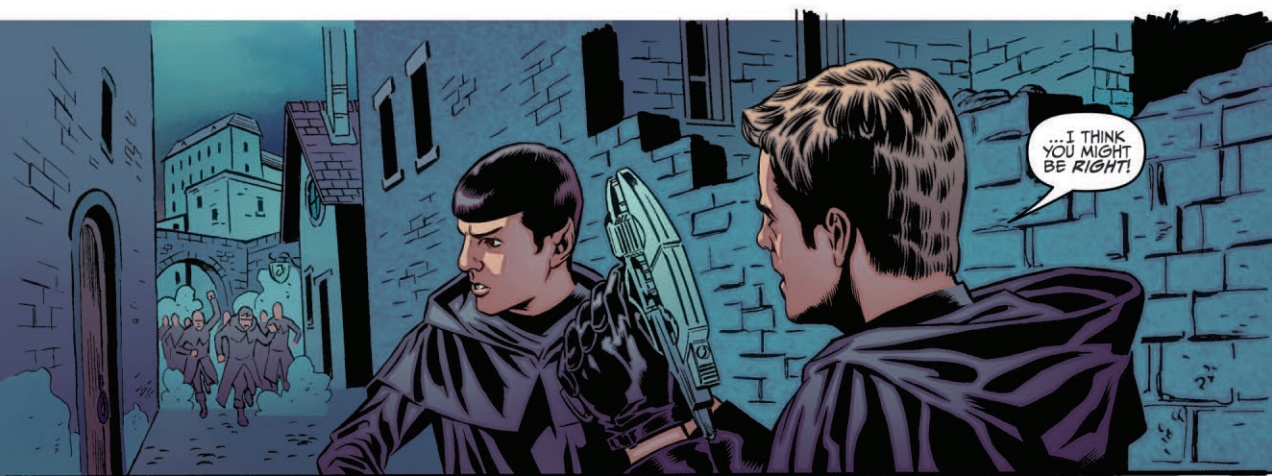


























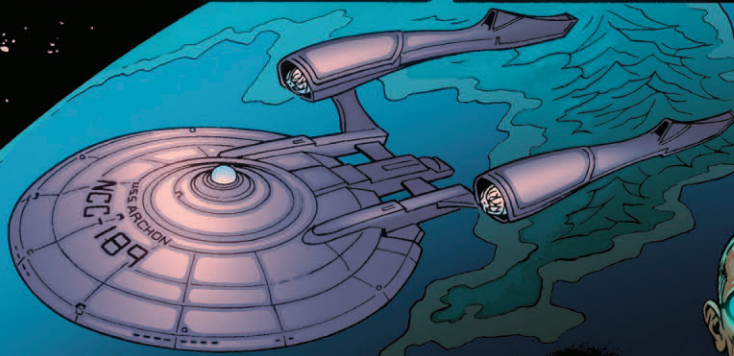


WHAT  
HAPPENED TO  
THE ARCHON?  
AND JUST WHO  
IS "LANDRU"?



NOT  
"WHO." NOT  
ANYMORE.

WHAT  
WE KNOW  
ARE *PIECES*  
OF THE TRUTH,  
PASSED DOWN  
THROUGH TWO  
GENERATIONS.



"THE ARCHON WAS SENT TO BETA III TO ESTABLISH AND WATCH OVER ONE OF THE FIRST DEEP SPACE COLONIES. THE COLONY WOULD BE POWERED AND REGULATED BY A PIECE OF PROTOTYPE TECHNOLOGY INVENTED BY THE HEAD OF STARFLEET'S ADVANCED RESEARCH DIVISION AT THE TIME...



"...A MAN NAMED  
*CORNELIUS LANDRU*.

"HIS CREATION WAS A MASTERPIECE  
OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE  
INTENDED TO HELP THE COLONY  
GROW AND THRIVE.



"BUT HIS *TRUE INTENTIONS*  
WERE JUST THE OPPOSITE."



"YES, LANDRU INTENDED TO BUILD SOMETHING. BUT NOT A COLONY..."

"...AN EXPERIMENT."

"AN EXPERIMENT IN POPULATION CONTROL. HE WIPE THE MINDS OF THE COLONISTS AND PROGRAMMED THEM ACCORDING TO HIS WHIM. AND HIS WHIM WAS TO START A UTOPIA THAT HE WOULD RULE LIKE A GOD."

"WHEN THE TRUTH OF LANDRU'S PLAN CAME TO LIGHT, THE CREW OF THE ARCHON TRIED TO STOP HIM. BUT LANDRU'S TECHNOLOGY WAS SO POWERFUL THAT IT PULLED THE SHIP FROM THE SKY..."

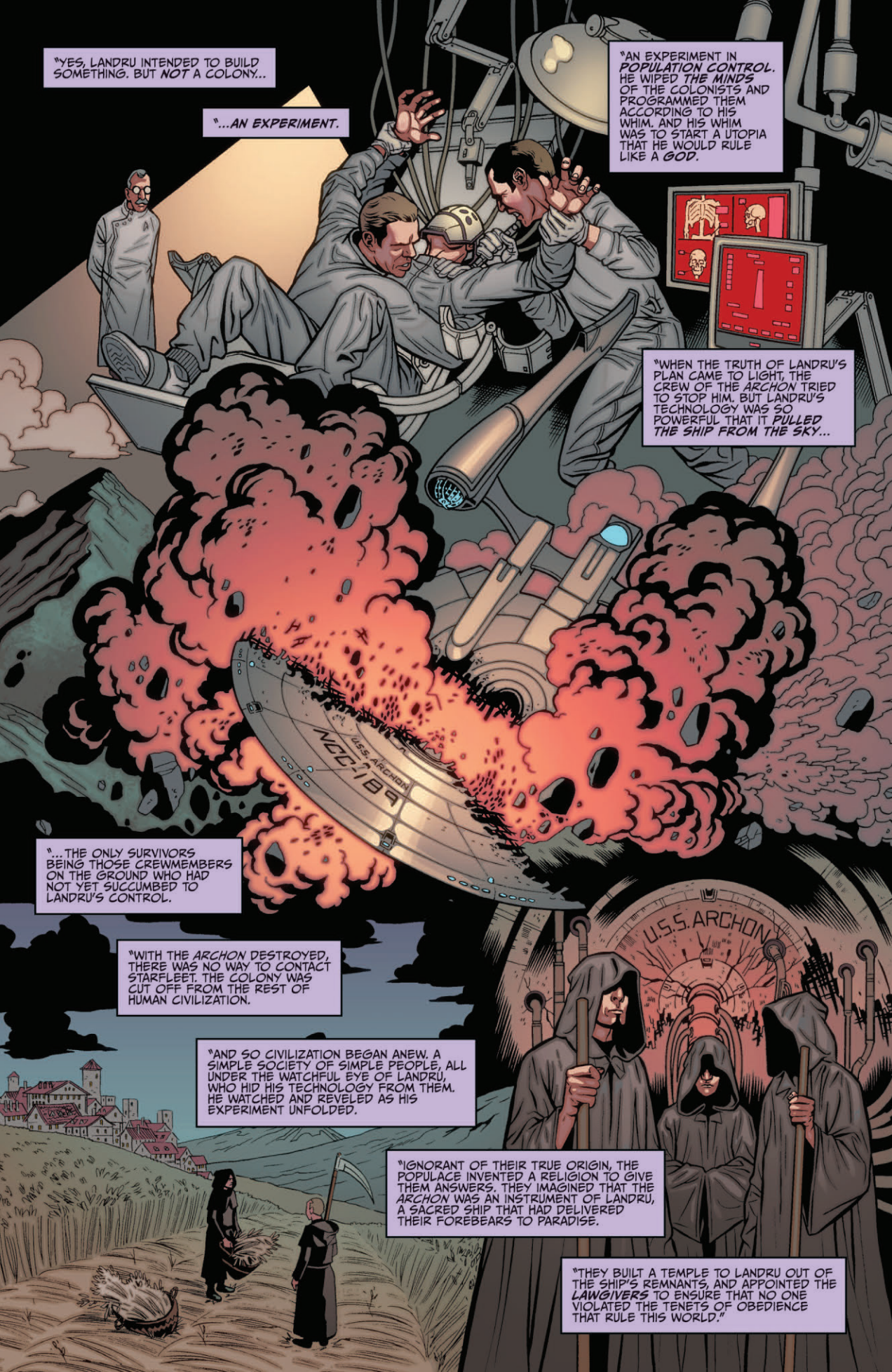
"...THE ONLY SURVIVORS BEING THOSE CREWMEMBERS ON THE GROUND WHO HAD NOT YET SUCCEMBED TO LANDRU'S CONTROL."

"WITH THE ARCHON DESTROYED, THERE WAS NO WAY TO CONTACT STARFLEET. THE COLONY WAS CUT OFF FROM THE REST OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION."

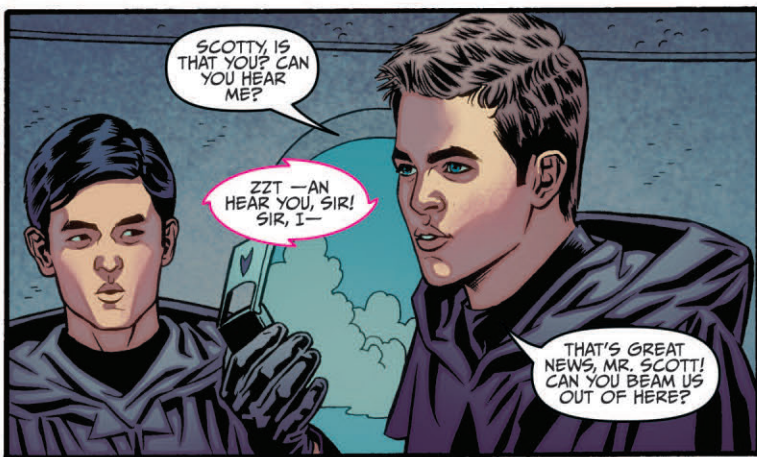
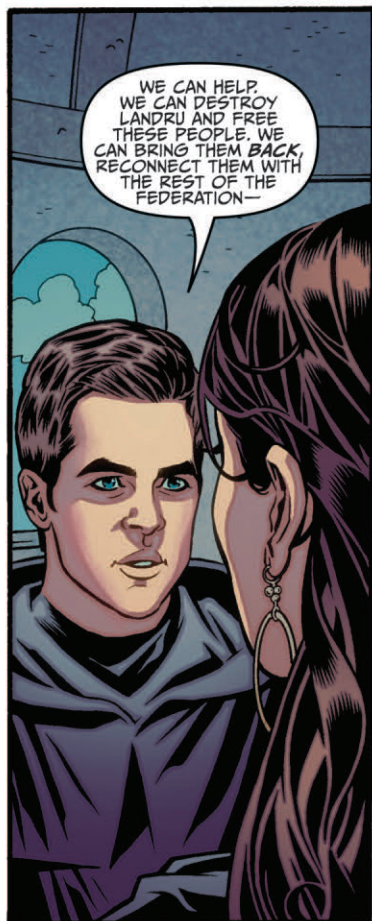
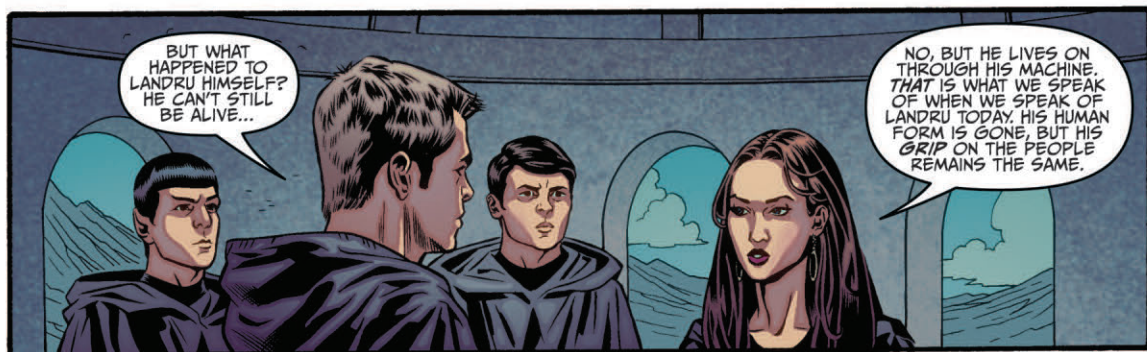
"AND SO CIVILIZATION BEGAN ANEW. A SIMPLE SOCIETY OF SIMPLE PEOPLE, ALL UNDER THE WATCHFUL EYE OF LANDRU, WHO HID HIS TECHNOLOGY FROM THEM. HE WATCHED AND REVELED AS HIS EXPERIMENT UNFOLDED."

"IGNORANT OF THEIR TRUE ORIGIN, THE POPULACE INVENTED A RELIGION TO GIVE THEM ANSWERS. THEY IMAGINED THAT THE ARCHON WAS AN INSTRUMENT OF LANDRU, A SACRED SHIP THAT HAD DELIVERED THEIR FOREBEARS TO PARADISE."

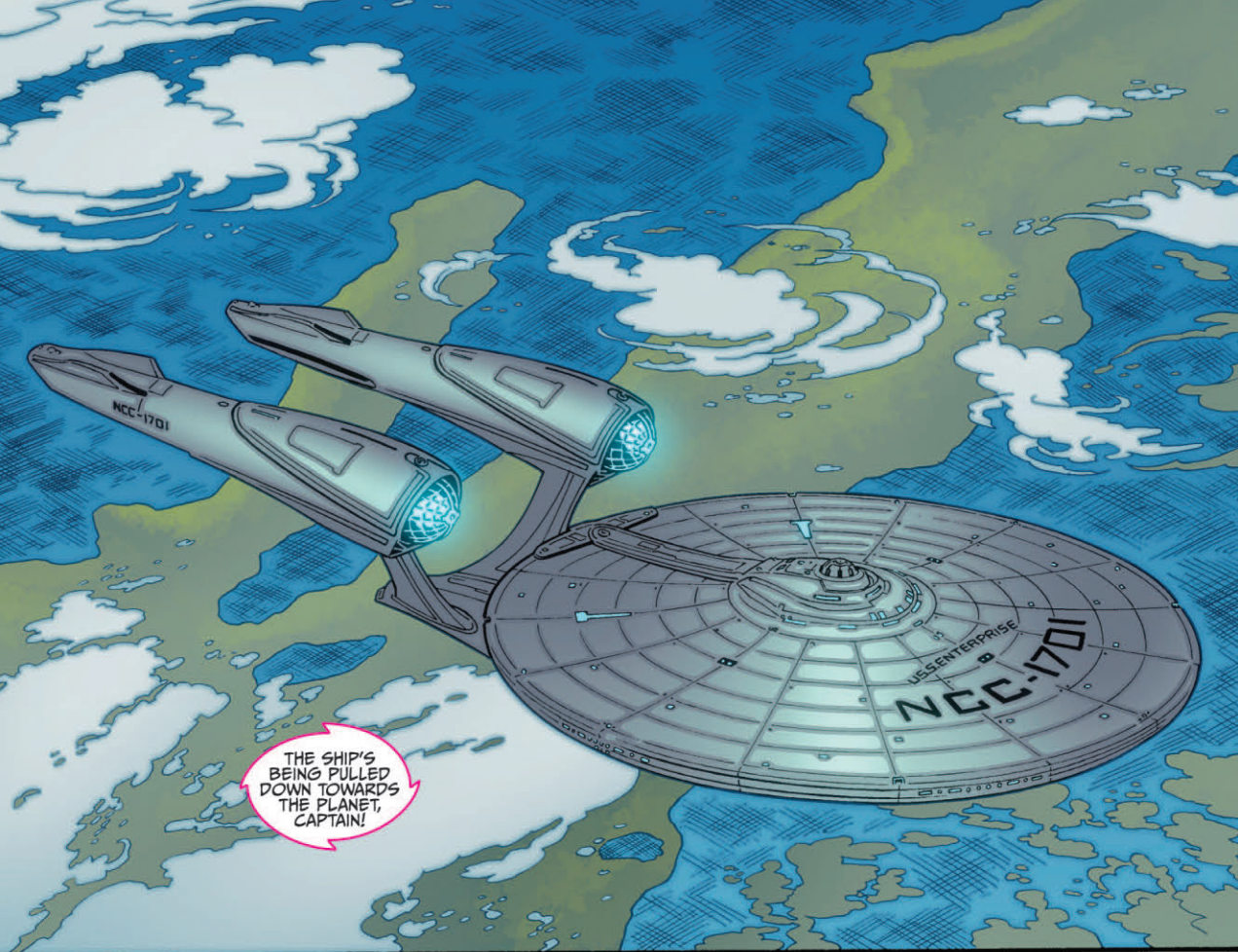
"THEY BUILT A TEMPLE TO LANDRU OUT OF THE SHIP'S REMNANTS, AND APPOINTED THE LAWGIVERS TO ENSURE THAT NO ONE VIOLATED THE TENETS OF OBEDIENCE THAT RULE THIS WORLD."











THE SHIP'S  
BEING PULLED  
DOWN TOWARDS  
THE PLANET,  
CAPTAIN!



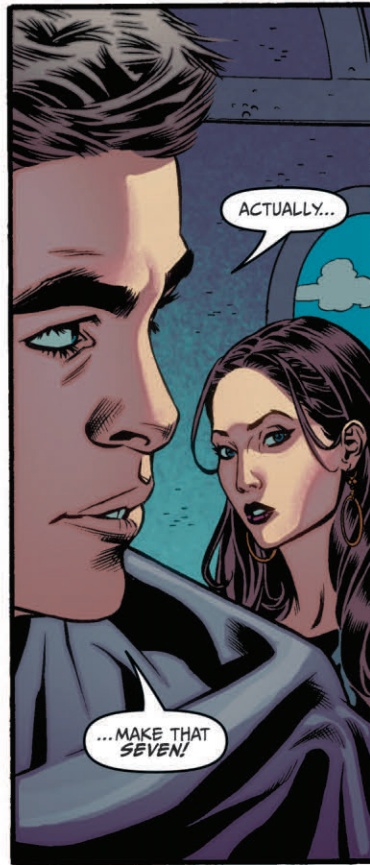
I'VE TRIED  
EVERYTHING, BUT  
SOMETHING CLOSE TO  
YOUR LOCATION IS EXERTING  
SOME SORT OF TRACTOR  
BEAM! I'VE NEVER SEEN  
ANYTHING LIKE IT!

HOW MUCH  
TIME DO WE  
HAVE, MR.  
SCOTT?



A MATTER  
OF HOURS,  
SIR! IF WE'RE  
LUCKY!

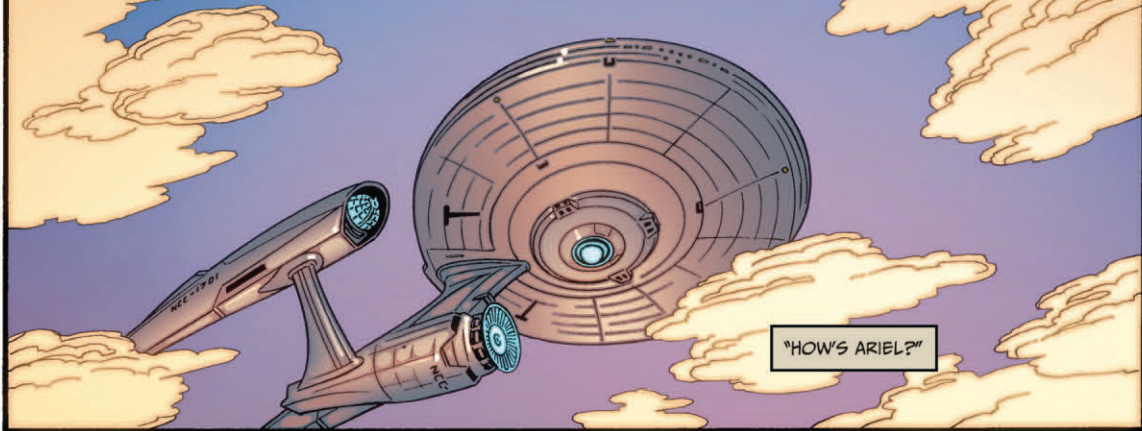
LOCK ON TO  
US, SCOTTY! SIX  
TO BEAM OUT!



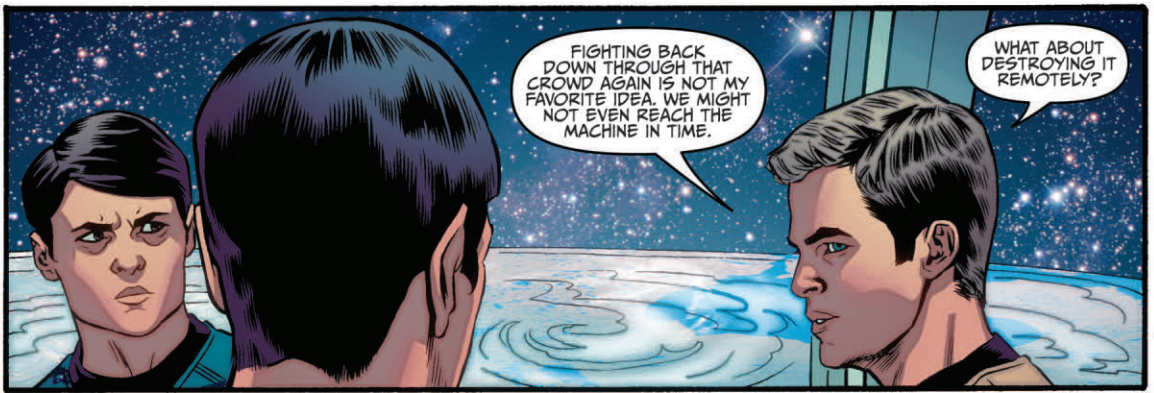
ACTUALLY...

...MAKE THAT  
SEVEN!









FIGHTING BACK DOWN THROUGH THAT CROWD AGAIN IS NOT MY FAVORITE IDEA. WE MIGHT NOT EVEN REACH THE MACHINE IN TIME.

WHAT ABOUT DESTROYING IT REMOTELY?



VEAPON SYSTEMS ARE STILL ONLINE, KEPTIN. WITH THE DATA FROM YOUR TRICORDERS VE CAN PINPOINT THE LOCATION OF THE MACHINE IN THE CAVERN.

BOMBING IT FROM ABOVE? THE CAVERN'S DIRECTLY UNDERNEATH THE COLONY. WHAT ABOUT THE POPULATION?



SO...

...LET'S BEAM IT OUT.



INTERESTING.



BEAM...? BUT IT'S EMBEDDED IN THE ROCK, SPREADING OUT EVERY WHICH WAY... AND WHERE WOULD WE BEAM IT TO?



HERE. INTO ONE OF THE CARGO BAYS. ALL WE NEED IS THE CENTRAL UNIT THAT SPOCK AND I FOUND. FORGET ABOUT THE REST OF IT.

RIP OUT ITS HEART.



DA, KEPTIN! VE CAN SET TRANSPORTER COORDINATES TO AN AREA JUST VIDE ENOUGH TO GRAB IT!

SURELY ZAT VILL DESTROY IT AND FREE ZE ENTERPRISE!





MR. SCOTT,  
MR. CHEKOV, MAKE  
IT HAPPEN.

MR. SULU, SEE WHAT  
YOU CAN GET OUT OF  
THE THRUSTERS. DO THE  
BEST YOU CAN TO PUT  
US **DIRECTLY ABOVE**  
THE CAVERN.

AYE,  
THAT'LL  
HELP!



BUT IF IT  
**DOESN'T**  
WORK,  
SIR...!

SCOTTY, THE  
FIRST TIME I MET  
YOU, YOU MANAGED  
TO BEAM US BOTH  
ABOARD THE  
ENTERPRISE  
MID-WARP.

I THINK  
YOU CAN DIG A  
COMPUTER OUT  
OF THE GROUND  
WITHOUT A  
HITCH.



AYE, BUT I HAD  
NICE OLD WRINKLY  
SPOCK HELPING  
ME THAT LAST  
TIME...

JIM...  
...WHAT  
ABOUT THE  
POPULATION?



THAT MACHINE  
HAS SOME KIND OF  
**HOLD OVER THEIR**  
**MINDS**. WE RIP THAT  
MACHINE OUT OF THE  
GROUND—**SHUT IT**  
**DOWN**—

—AND WE  
COULD END UP WITH  
SEVERAL HUNDRED  
**DEAD COLONISTS**  
ON OUR HANDS.

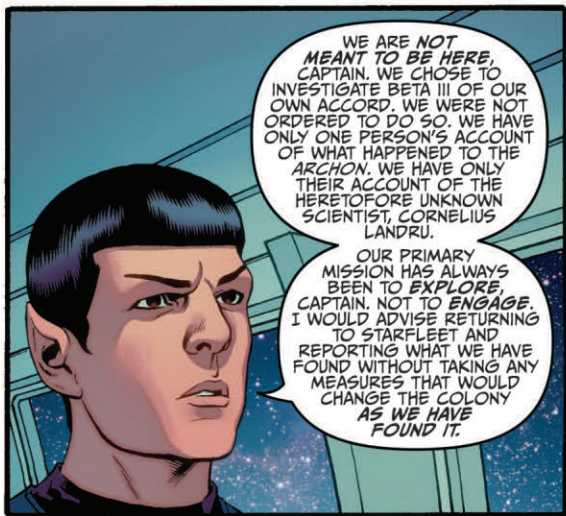


I CONCUR,  
CAPTAIN. WE SHOULD  
FIND ANOTHER WAY TO  
FREE THE SHIP.

I CAN'T BELIEVE  
WE AGREE FOR  
ONCE, SPOCK—

BUT NOT FOR  
THE REASON PUT  
FORWARD BY  
DR. MCCOY.

EXPLAIN.



WE ARE **NOT**  
**MEANT TO BE HERE**,  
CAPTAIN. WE CHOSE TO  
INVESTIGATE BETA III OF OUR  
OWN ACCORD. WE WERE NOT  
ORDERED TO DO SO. WE HAVE  
ONLY ONE PERSON'S ACCOUNT  
OF WHAT HAPPENED TO THE  
ARCHON. WE HAVE ONLY  
THEIR ACCOUNT OF THE  
HERETOFORE UNKNOWN  
SCIENTIST, CORNELIUS  
LANDRU.

OUR PRIMARY  
MISSION HAS ALWAYS  
BEEN TO **EXPLORE**.  
CAPTAIN, NOT TO **ENGAGE**.  
I WOULD ADVISE RETURNING  
TO STARFLEET AND  
REPORTING WHAT WE HAVE  
FOUND WITHOUT TAKING ANY  
MEASURES THAT WOULD  
CHANGE THE COLONY  
AS WE HAVE  
FOUND IT.





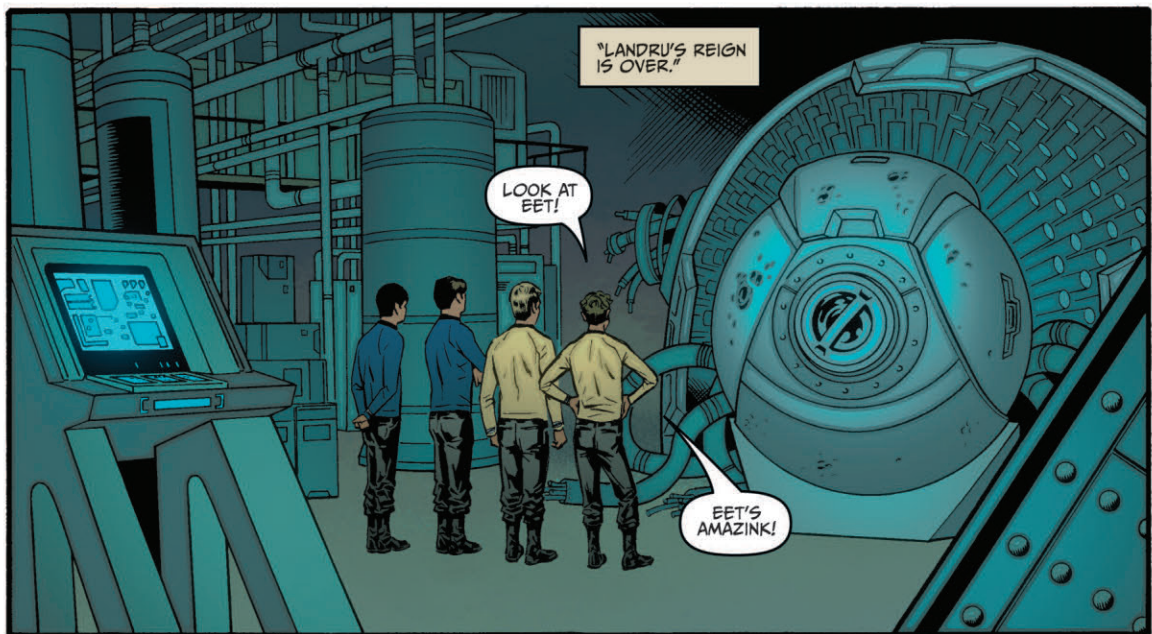
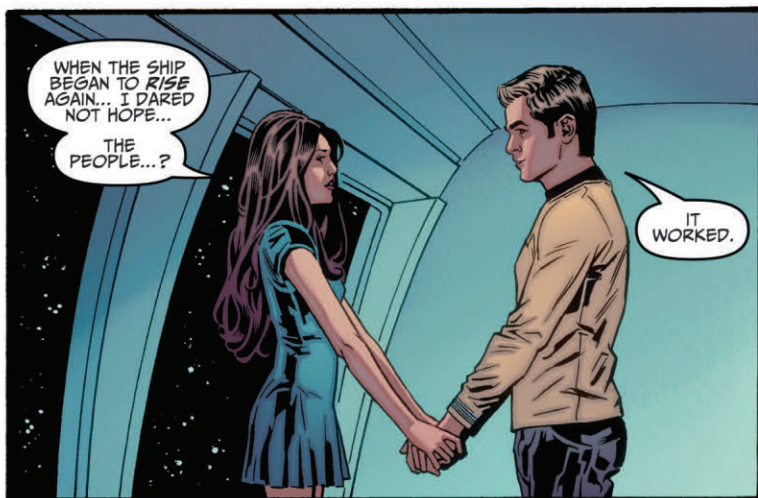
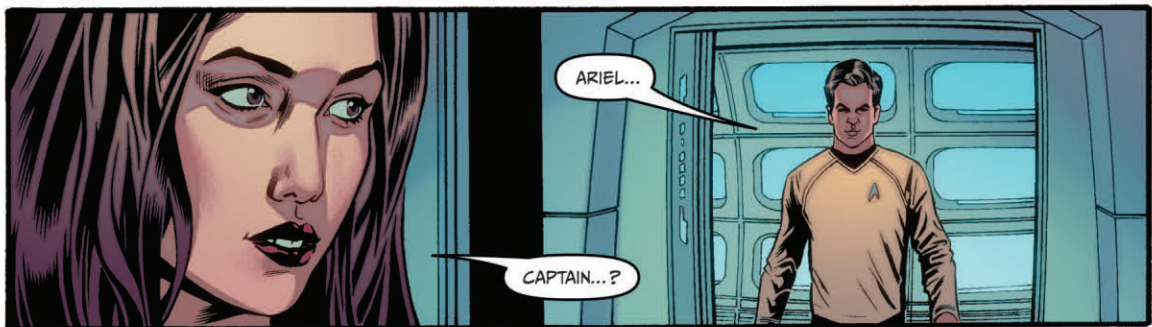








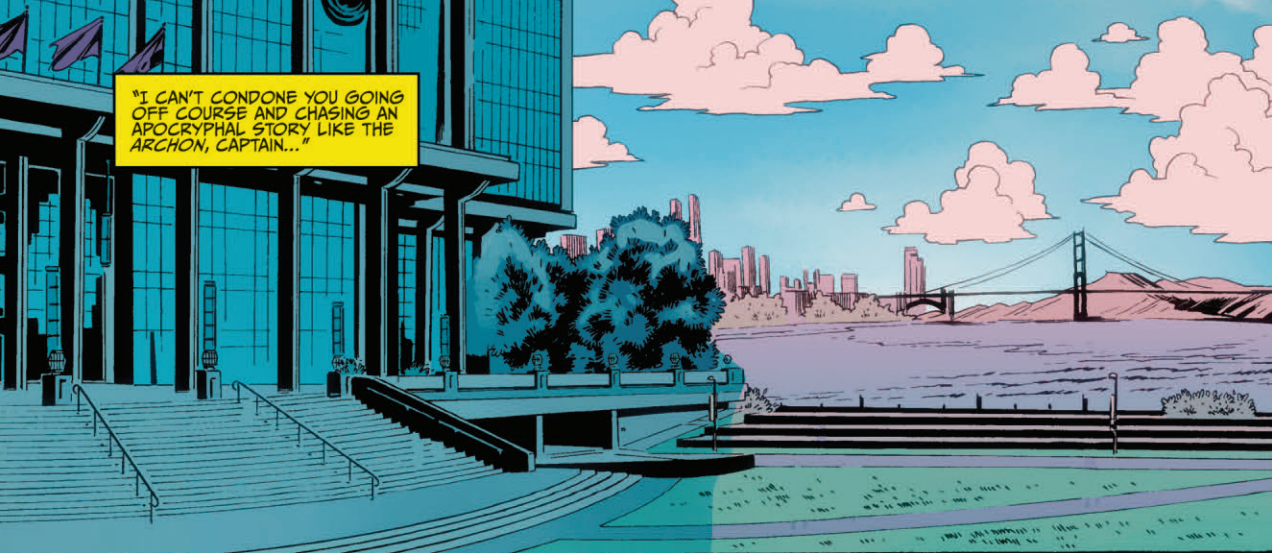




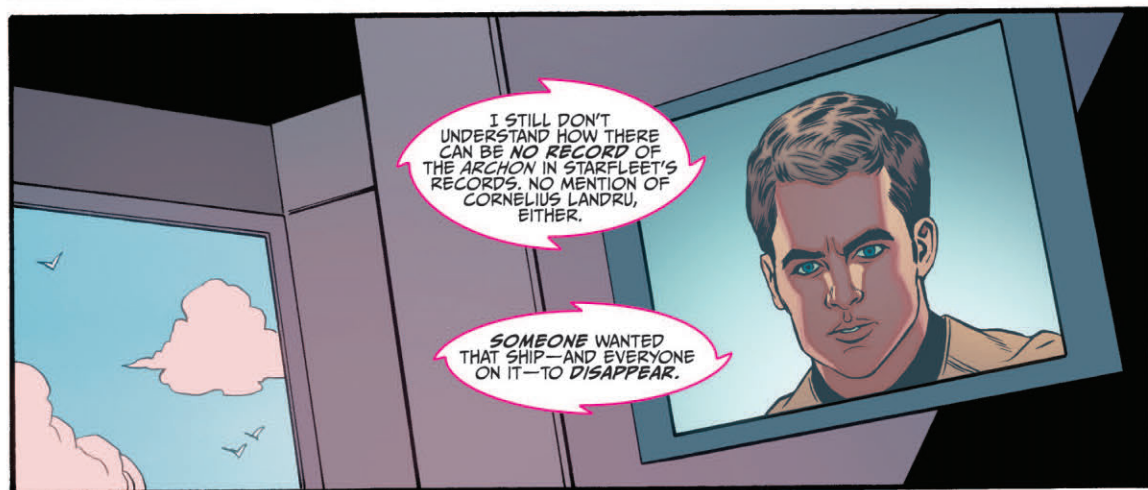
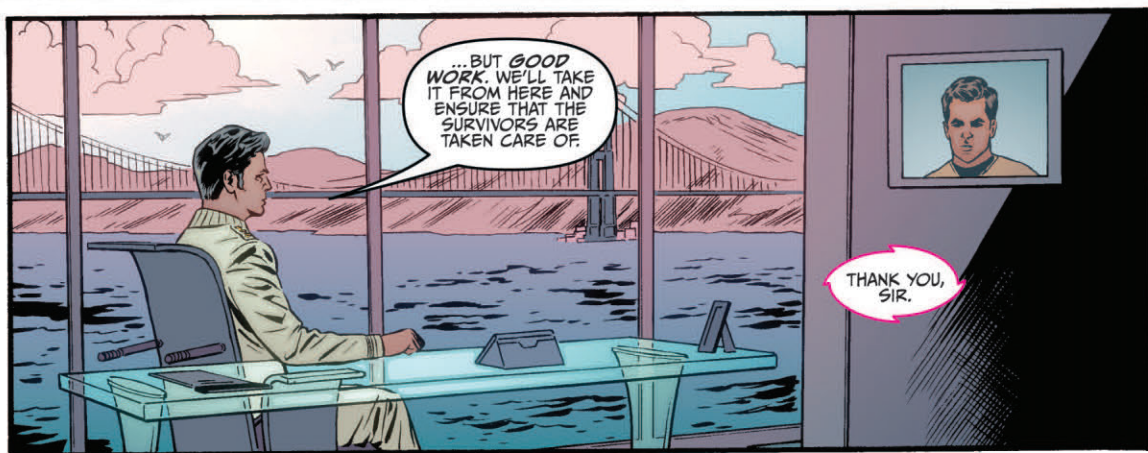








"I CAN'T CONDONE YOU GOING OFF COURSE AND CHASING AN APOCRYPHAL STORY LIKE THE ARCHON, CAPTAIN..."







END.







# THE TRUTH ABOUT TRIBBLES



Artwork by Tim Bradstreet  
Colors by Grant Goleash

TIM  
BRADSTREET  
2011



DELTA VEGA. SEVERAL MONTHS AGO.

"IS THAT A TRIBBLE ON YOUR DESK?"

WHAT, THAT THING?

TO BE HONEST, I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS. BOUGHT IT OFF A PARTICULARLY SHADY TRADER BY THE NAME OF JONES. BEEN MEANING TO SEND IT BACK TO MY NEPHEW AT THE ACADEMY.

IT'S THE IDEAL PET! DOESN'T EAT, DOESN'T MAKE A MESS. JUST SITS THERE AND MAKES A VERY RELAXING PURRING SOUND.

IT DOESN'T EAT...?

...AND IT HASN'T... REPLICATED?

'COURSE NOT! WHAT'S IT GONNA REPLICATE WITH? I CAN'T SPEAK FOR KEENSER HERE, BUT I'VE NEVER BEEN QUITE THAT LONELY OUT HERE.

IS SOMETHING WRONG? YOU SEEM AWFULLY CONCERNED ABOUT ONE LITTLE BALL OF FUR.

FASCINATING...

MR. SCOTT, YOU WANTED TO SHOW US THIS "TRANSWARP BEAMING" IDEA OF YOURS?

AYE, FOLLOW ME!

AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE FURBALL, MR. SPONK...

SPOCK.

...MR. SPOCK. I CAN'T IMAGINE HE'LL GET INTO TOO MUCH TROUBLE.



THE USS ENTERPRISE. NOW.

RIGHT THEN,  
HERE GOES! ALL  
READY ON YOUR  
END, CHRIS?

READY, UNCLE  
MONTY!

GOOD! NOW  
REMEMBER, I'VE  
GOT TO BOUNCE THE  
LITTLE BASTARD'S  
MOLECULES OFF A  
COUPLE OF RELAYS  
TO MAKE IT ALL THE  
WAY TO EARTH, SO  
IT MIGHT TAKE A  
LITTLE TIME!  
YOU'RE SURE  
NO ONE'LL  
INTERRUPT  
US?

BEAMING  
NOW!

GIVE MY BEST TO  
SAN FRANCISCO, YOU  
LUCKY FURBALL!

I'M SURE!  
THE ACADEMY'S A  
GHOST TOWN FOR  
THE HOLIDAYS! THE  
TRANSPORTER  
BAY'S EMPTY!  
FIRE AWAY!

EXCELLENT!



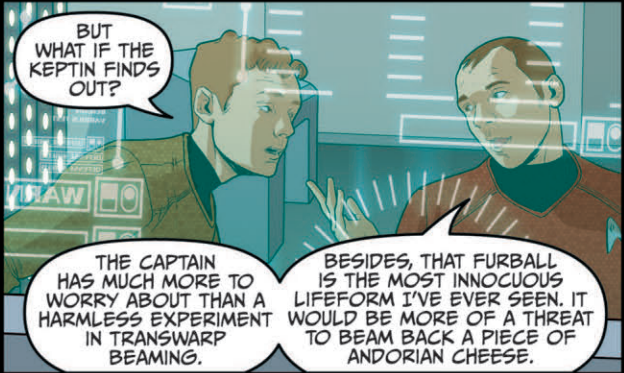




YOU'RE SURE  
VE AREN'T  
VIOLATING  
SEVERAL  
VIGOROUSLY  
ENFORCED  
**QUARANTINE  
RESTRICTIONS**  
VIS ZIS  
EXPERIMENT?



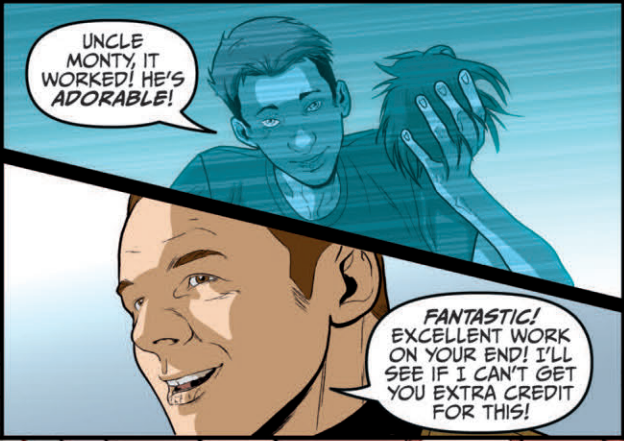
PAVEL,  
MY FRIEND,  
IF SCIENCE  
DIDN'T EAGERLY  
FLOUT THE  
CONVENTIONAL  
RULES OF ITS DAY  
IN THE NAME OF  
PROGRESS, YOU  
AND I WOULD BE  
SITTING IN A CAVE  
SOMEWHERE  
PAINTING  
MAMMOTHS  
ON THE WALLS.



BUT  
WHAT IF THE  
KEPTIN FINDS  
OUT?

THE CAPTAIN  
HAS MUCH MORE TO  
WORRY ABOUT THAN A  
HARMLESS EXPERIMENT  
IN TRANSWARP  
BEAMING.

BESIDES, THAT FURBALL  
IS THE MOST INNOCUOUS  
LIFEFORM I'VE EVER SEEN. IT  
WOULD BE MORE OF A THREAT  
TO BEAM BACK A PIECE OF  
ANDORIAN CHEESE.



UNCLE  
MONTY, IT  
WORKED! HE'S  
**ADORABLE!**

**FANTASTIC!**  
EXCELLENT WORK  
ON YOUR END! I'LL  
SEE IF I CAN'T GET  
YOU EXTRA CREDIT  
FOR THIS!



**RED ALERT! ALL  
HANDS TO BATTLE  
STATIONS!**

RED  
ALERT...?


OH, NO!  
ZE KEPTIN HAS  
FOUND US  
OUT!





"SEEMS LIKE THE CAPTAIN'S  
OVERREACTING JUST A WEE  
BIT, DOESN'T IT?"

CAPTAIN'S LOG, STARDATE 2259.155.  
AN EXPLORATORY MISSION TO THE  
*IOTA GERMINORUM* SYSTEM HAS  
RESULTED IN AN ENCOUNTER WITH A  
*KLINGON BIRD OF PREY* FAR FROM  
THE BORDER OF THEIR EMPIRE.



STAY ON  
THEIR TRAIL,  
MR. SULU!

ER... CAPTAIN?  
I TAKE FULL  
RESPONSIBILITY  
FOR—









ALMOST IN VISUAL RANGE, SIR!



SIR, THEY'RE HAILING US! AUDIO ONLY!

THIS IS CAPTAIN JAMES T. KIRK OF THE FEDERATION STARSHIP ENTERPRISE! IDENTIFY YOURSELVES!



ZZZTT—NADEWVO  
YIGHOS—ZZTTZZ—MUH  
ALZZZTT—



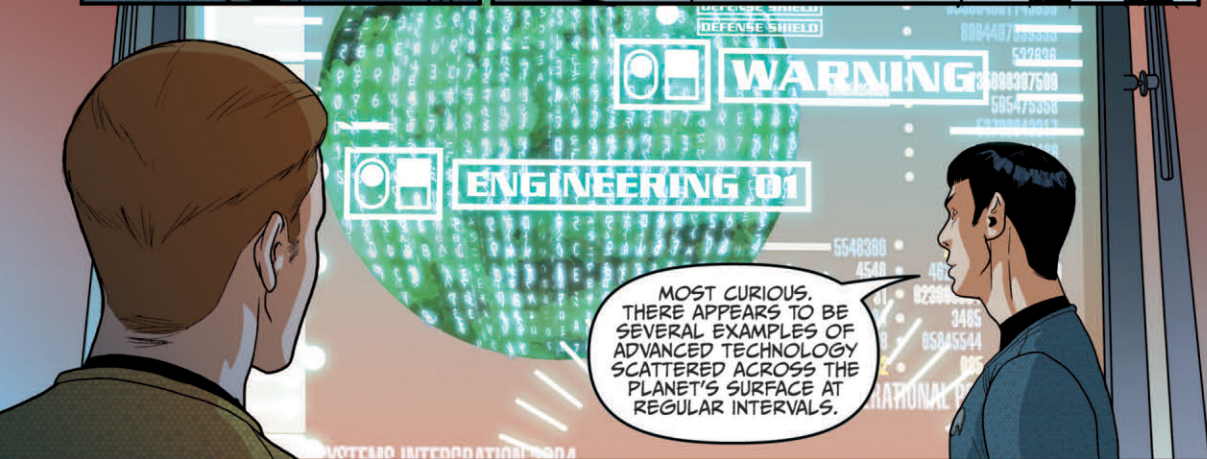
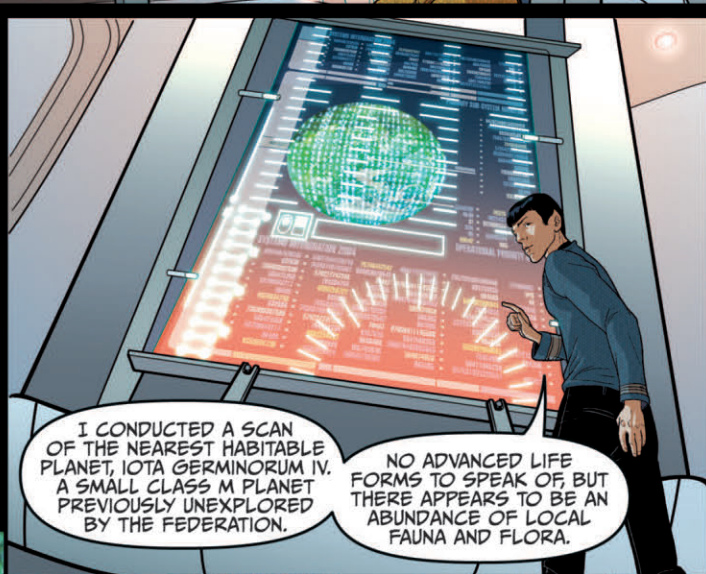
LIEUTENANT, WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

IT'S BREAKING UP! SOMETHING ABOUT AN "EXECUTION"!

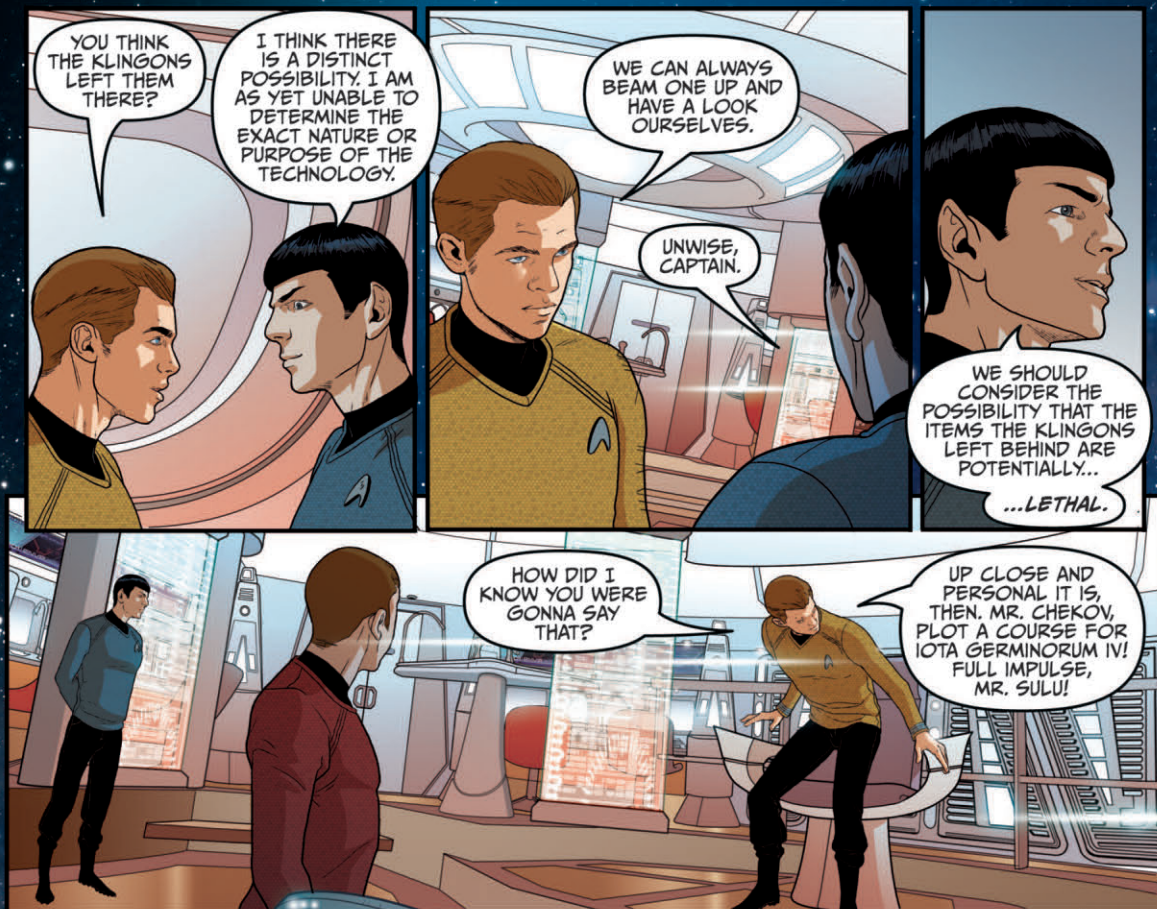


SIR, THEY'VE JUMPED TO WARP! WE'VE LOST THEM!

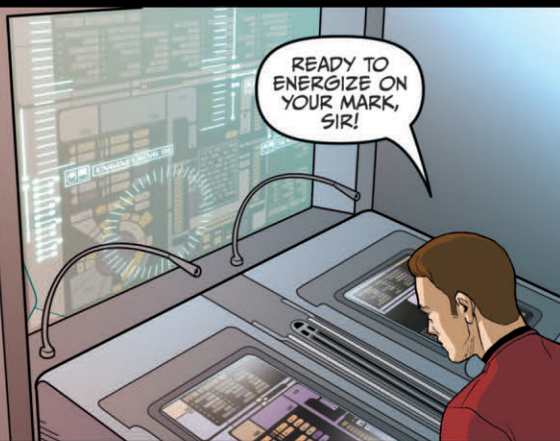
















...AND KEEP  
YOUR PHASER  
HANDY.





STRANGE  
NEW WORLD,  
ALL RIGHT.

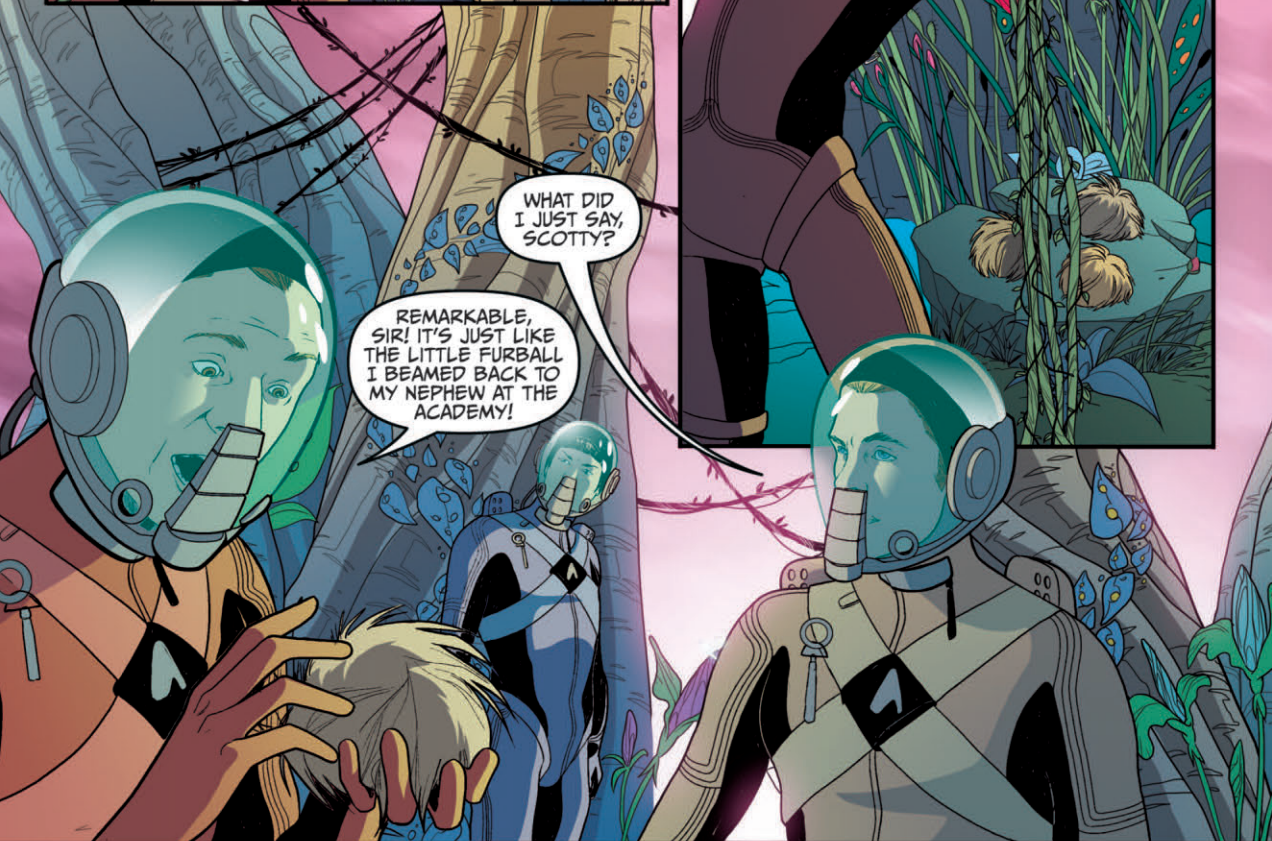
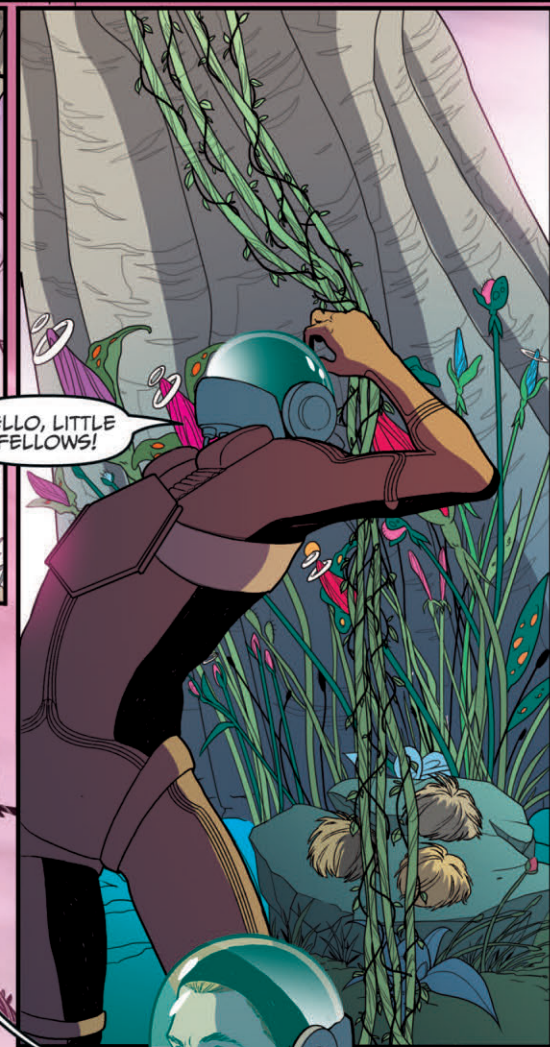
EET'S...  
VONDERFUL!

WE WOULD  
DO WELL TO KEEP  
OUR HELMETS ON  
AT ALL TIMES.

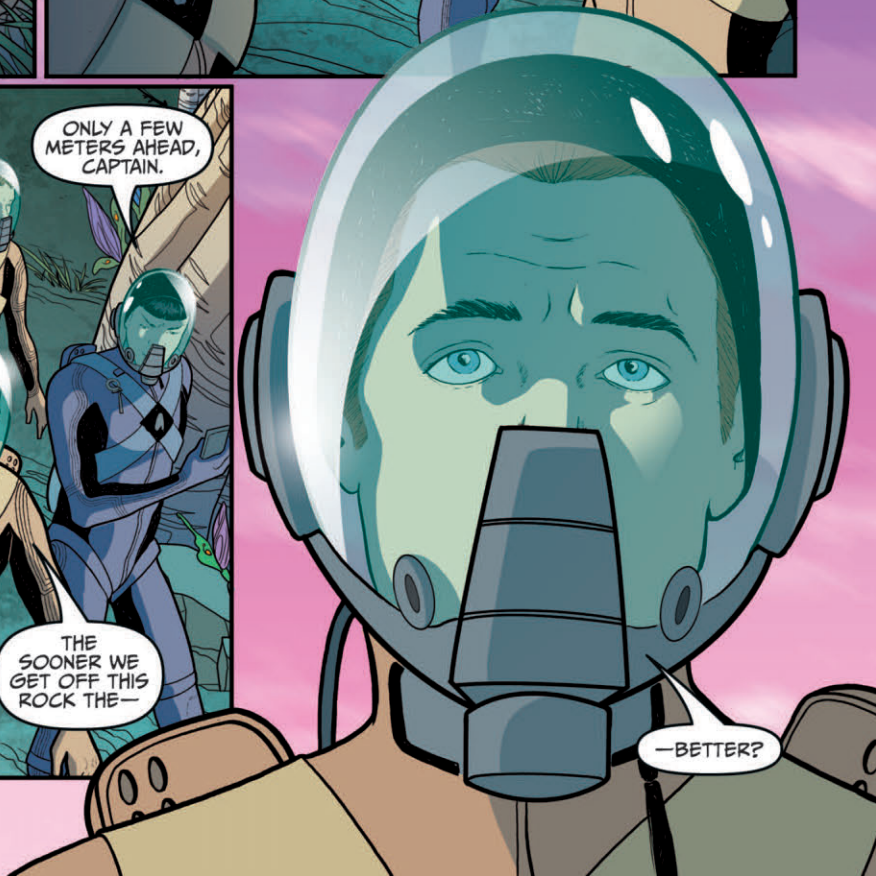
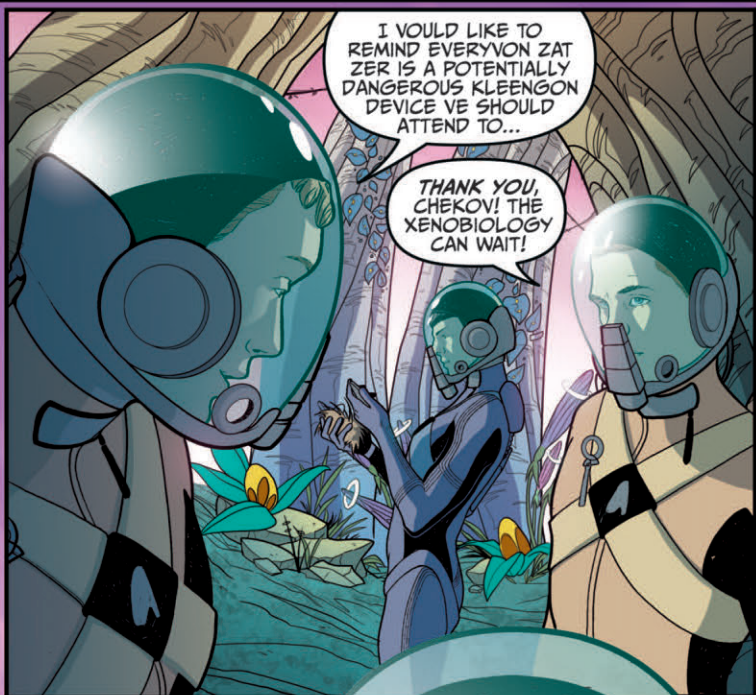
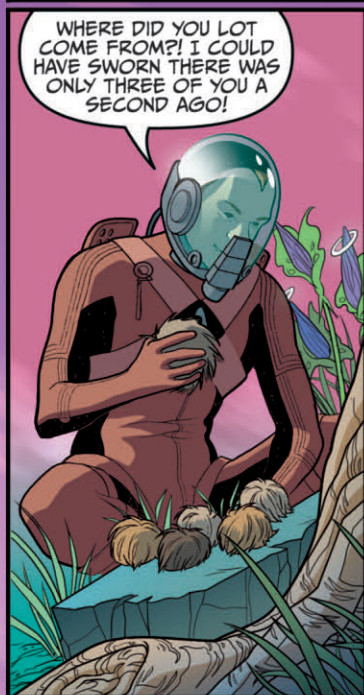
I AM  
TRIANGULATING  
THE LOCATION OF  
THE CLOSEST  
DEVICE...



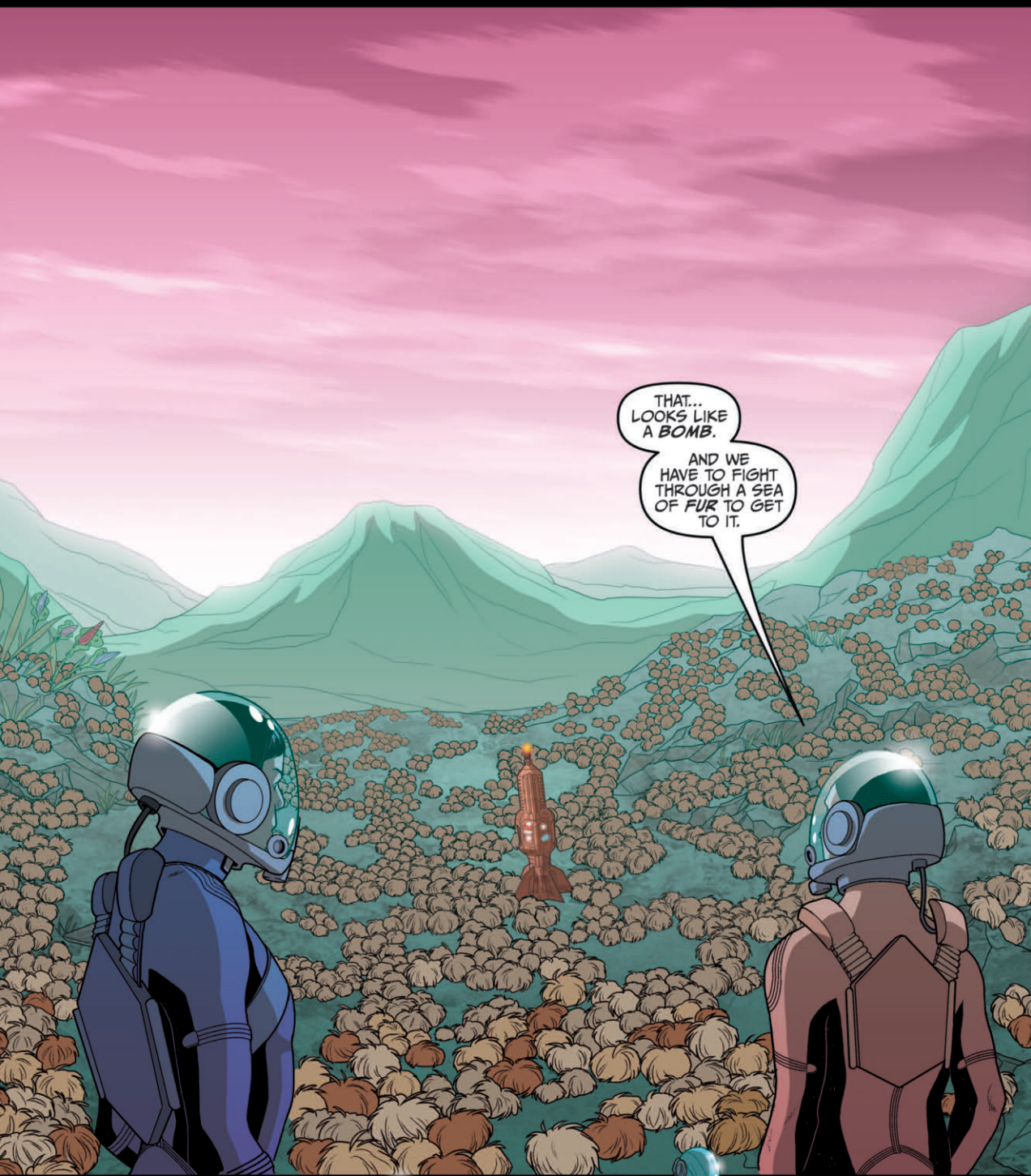






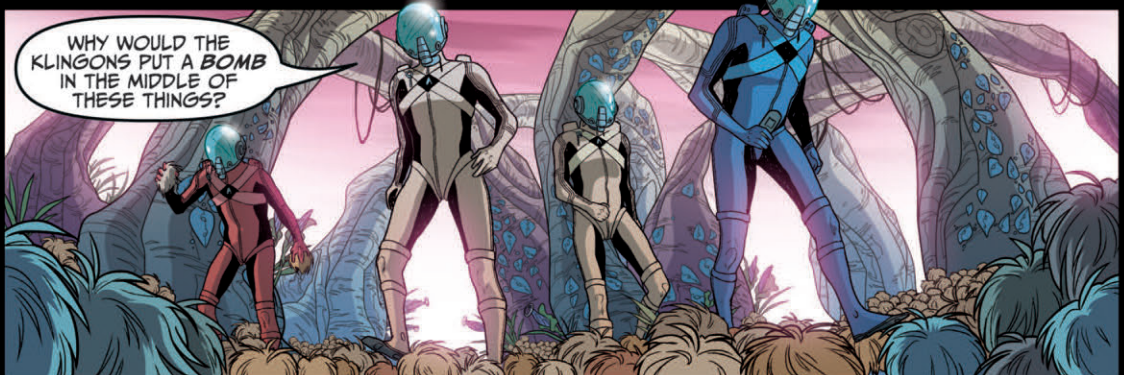






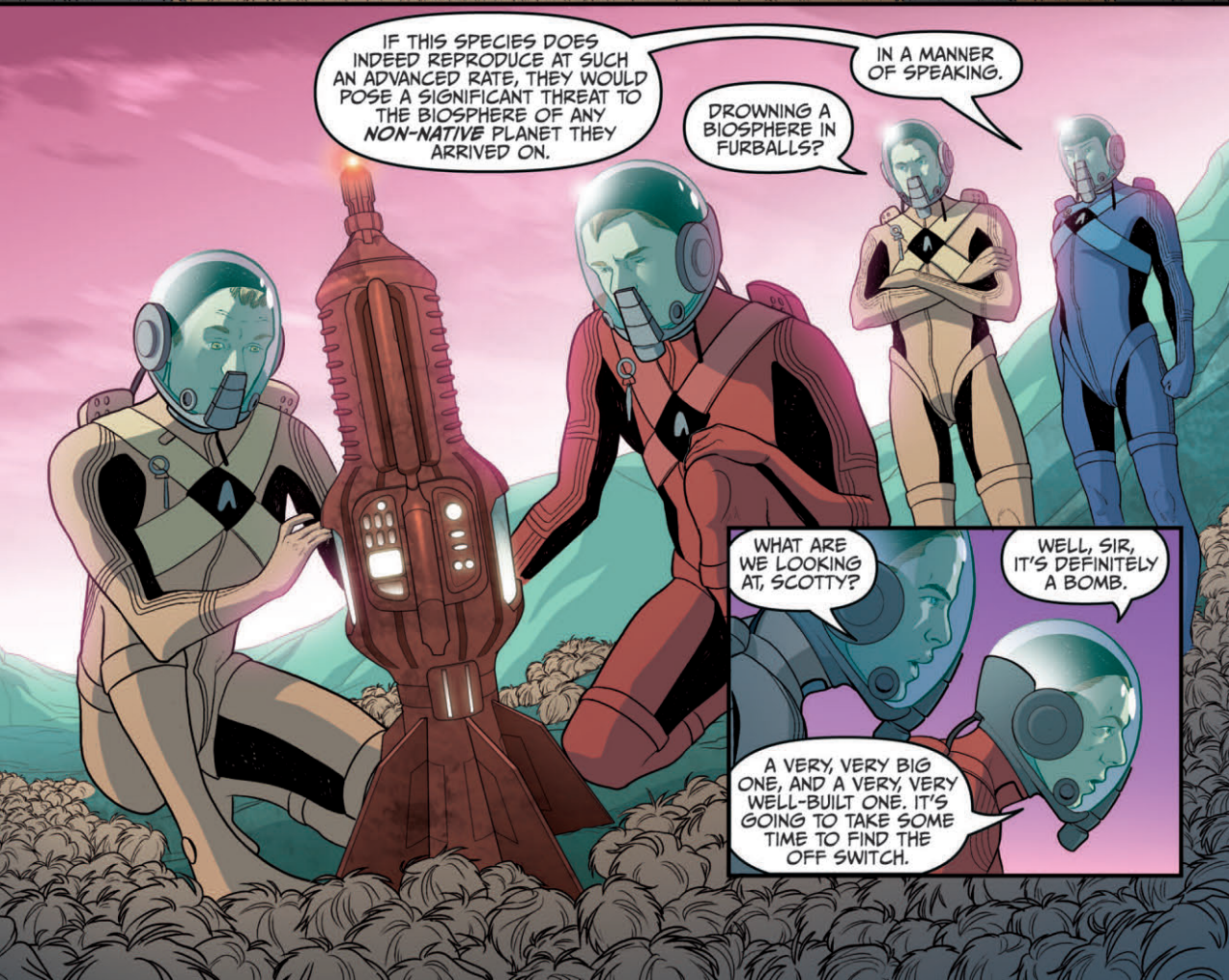
THAT...  
LOOKS LIKE  
A *BOMB*.

AND WE  
HAVE TO FIGHT  
THROUGH A SEA  
OF *FUR* TO GET  
TO IT.



WHY WOULD THE  
KLINGONS PUT A *BOMB*  
IN THE MIDDLE OF  
THESE THINGS?



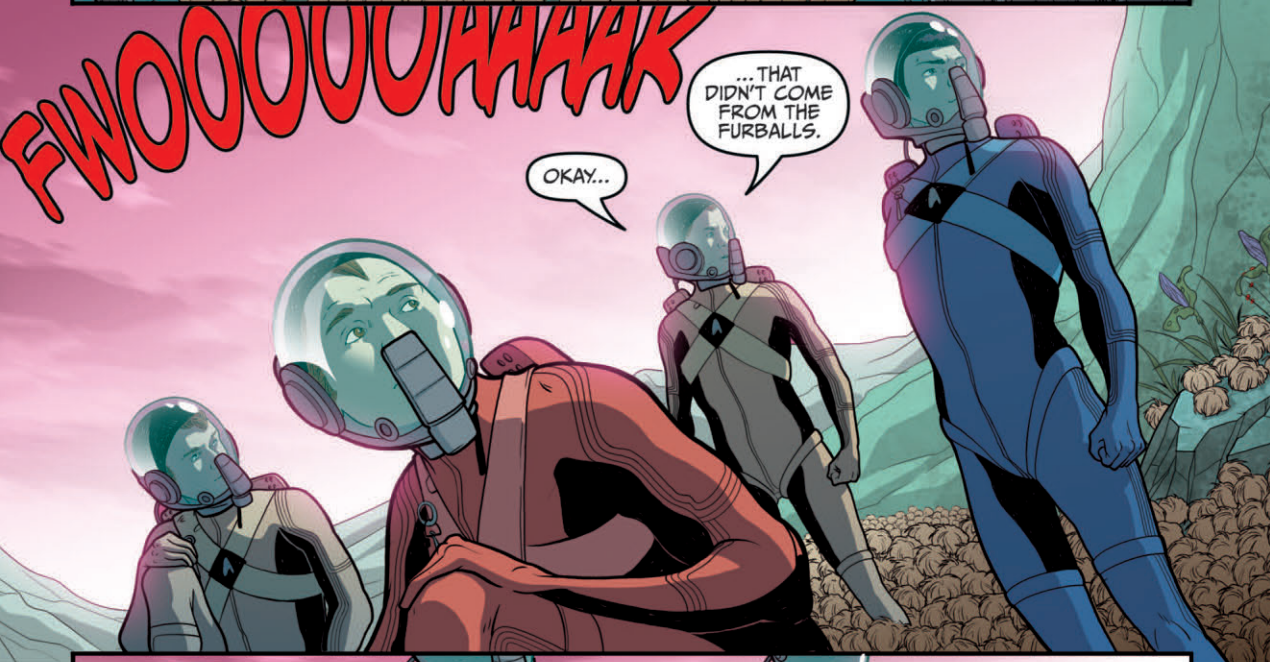






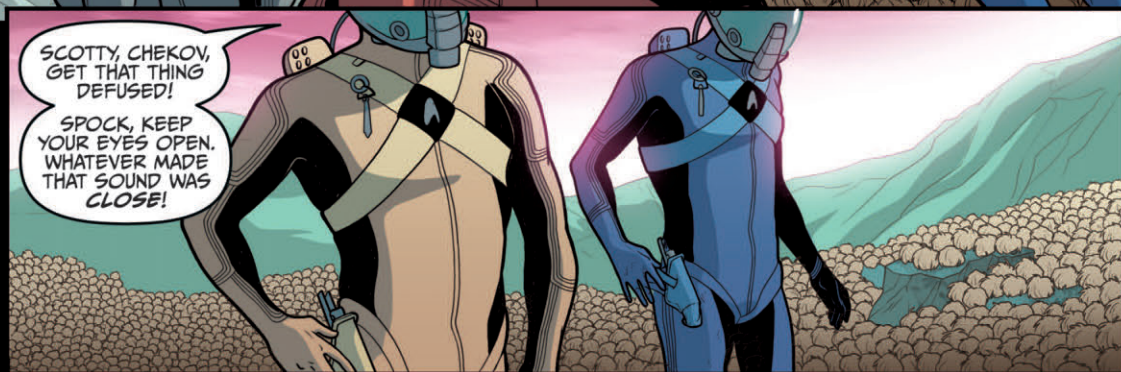
WHY DON'T WE JUST BEAM IT INTO SPACE? DETONATE IT WITH A TORPEDO FROM A SAFE DISTANCE.

WE DON'T KNOW WHAT FAIL-SAFES ARE BUILT IN. TRYING TO BEAM IT OUT COULD BLOW IT UP RIGHT—



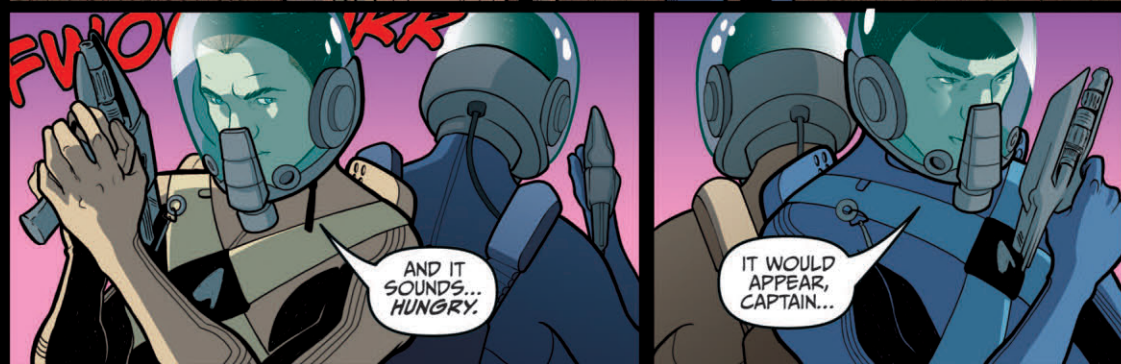
OKAY...

...THAT DIDN'T COME FROM THE FURBALLS.



SCOTTY, CHEKOV, GET THAT THING DEFUSED!

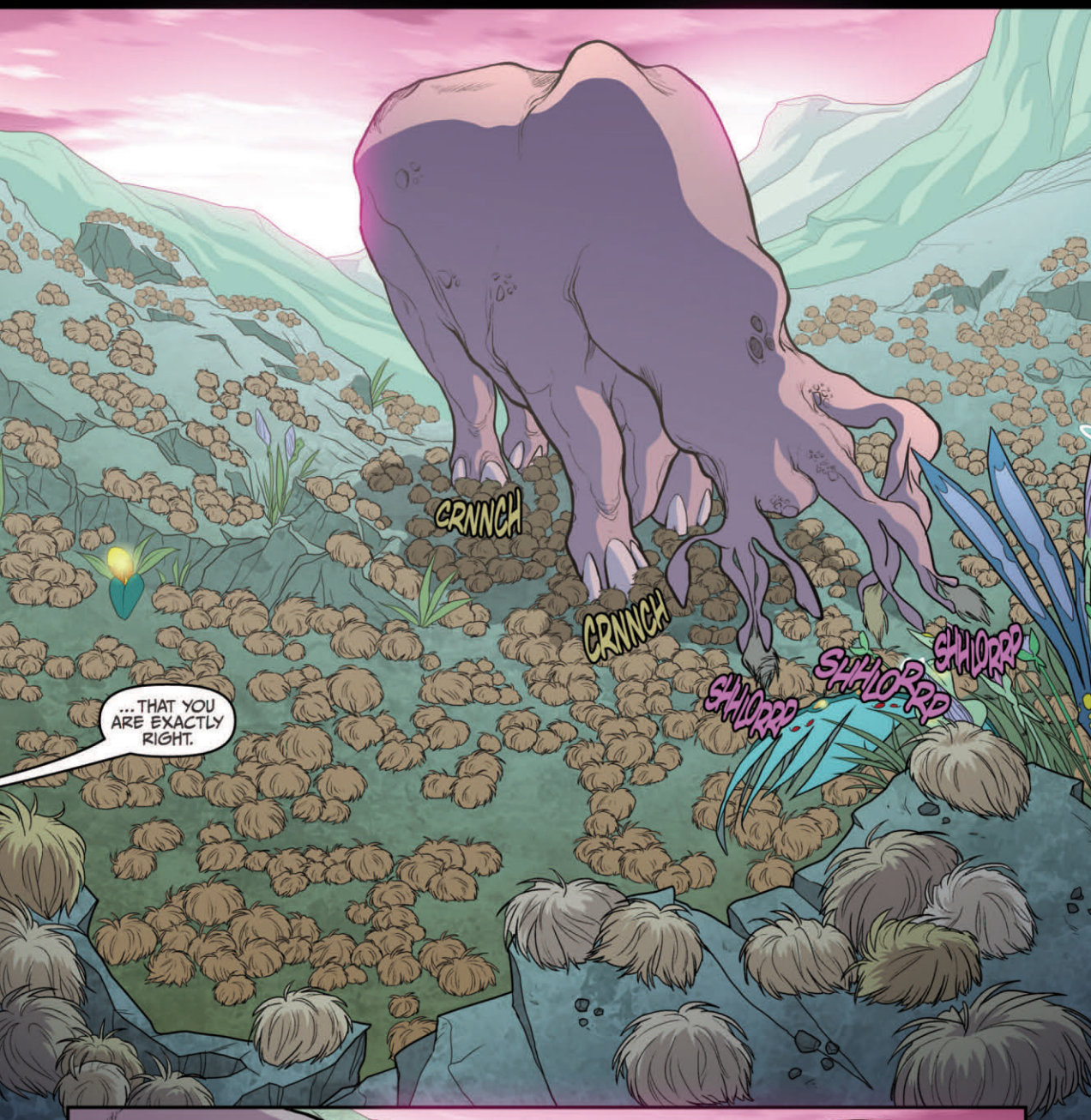
SPOCK, KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN. WHATEVER MADE THAT SOUND WAS CLOSE!



AND IT SOUNDS... HUNGRY.

IT WOULD APPEAR, CAPTAIN...





... THAT YOU  
ARE EXACTLY  
RIGHT.

CRUNCH

CRUNCH

SHLORP

SHLORP

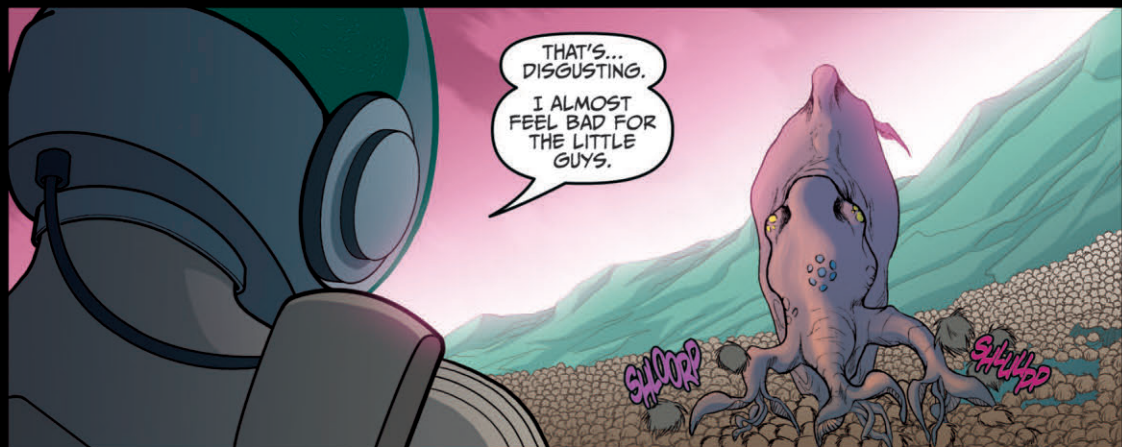
SHLORP

SHLORP

WOULD  
YOU LOOK  
AT THAT!

SCOTTY, KEEP  
YOUR EYES ON THE  
BOMB! WE'LL HANDLE  
THE WILDLIFE!





THAT'S...  
DISGUSTING.  
I ALMOST  
FEEL BAD FOR  
THE LITTLE  
GUYS.



THIS BEAST  
WOULD APPEAR TO  
BE THE SMALLER  
CREATURE'S  
**NATURAL  
PREDATOR.**

ITS PRESENCE EXPLAINS WHY  
THE SMALLER CREATURES HAVE NOT  
OVERRUN THE ENTIRE BIOSPHERE, AND  
YET THEY REPLICATE FAST ENOUGH TO  
COMPENSATE FOR THE PREDATOR'S  
APPETITE. A MOST INTRIGUING  
NATURAL BALANCE.

LET'S JUST  
HOPE IT STICKS  
TO EATING THE  
LOCAL CUISINE.

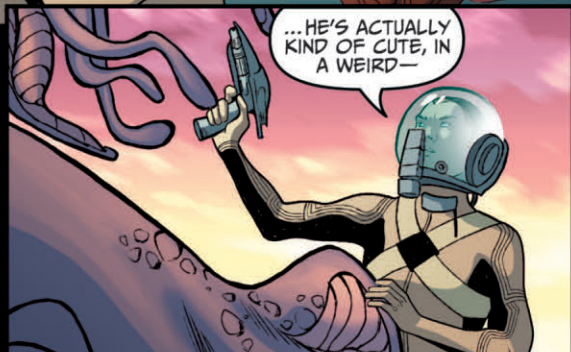


GREAT. IT'S COMING TO  
INVESTIGATE. PHASER ON  
CYCLE ONE, BUT GET  
READY TO DIAL IT UP  
FAST.

I WOULD  
SUGGEST THAT  
THE CALMER WE  
APPEAR, THE MORE  
DOCILE THE ANIMAL  
WILL REMAIN.

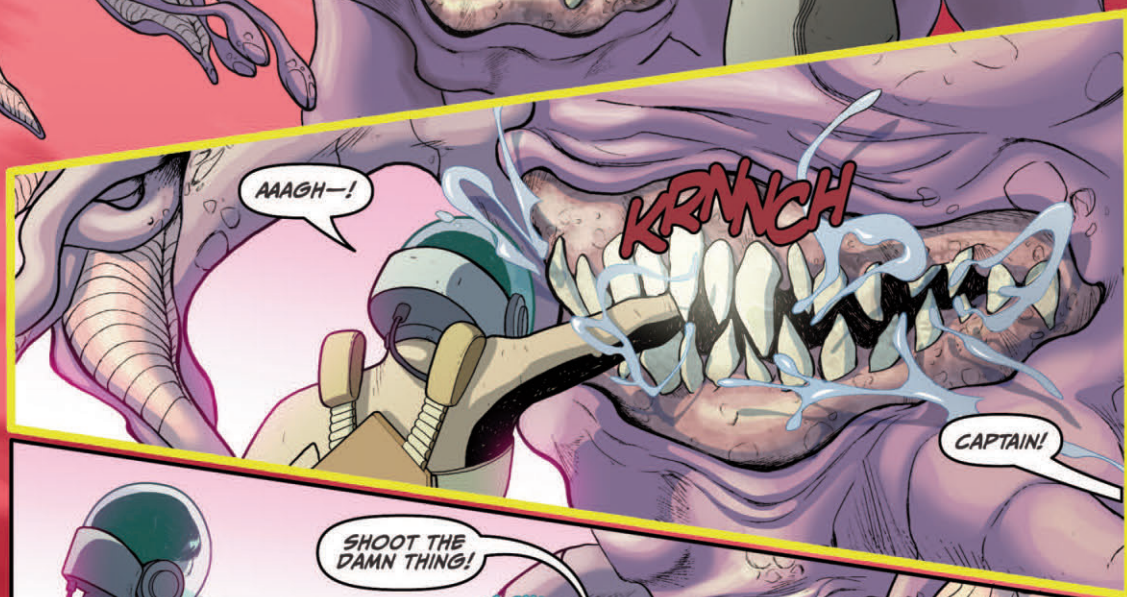


NIIICE  
DOGGIE...

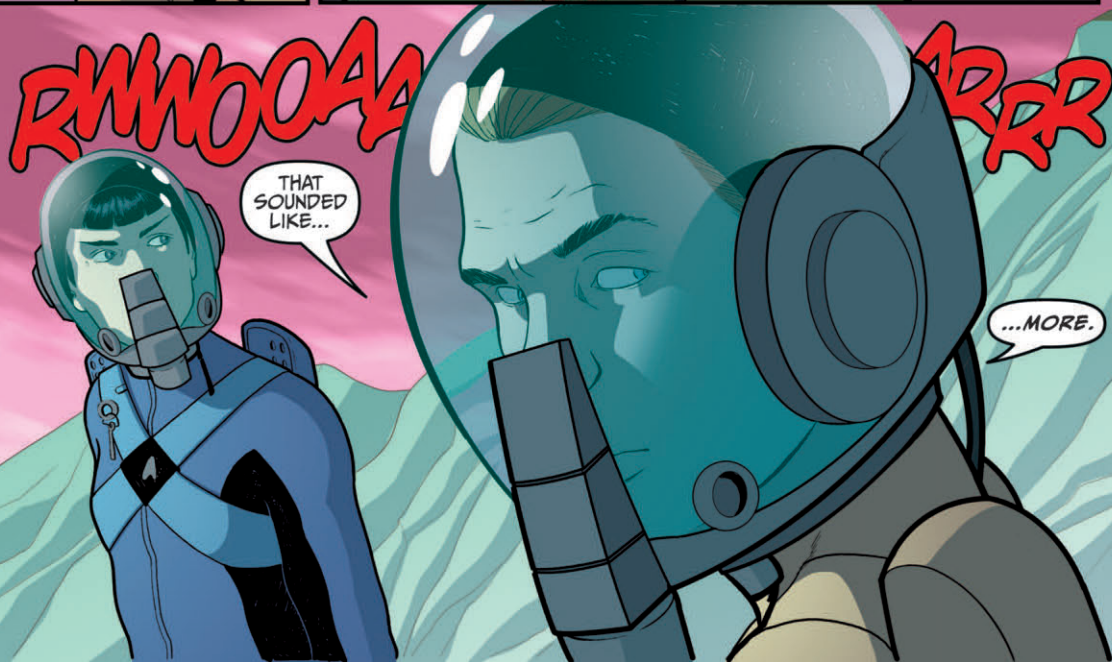
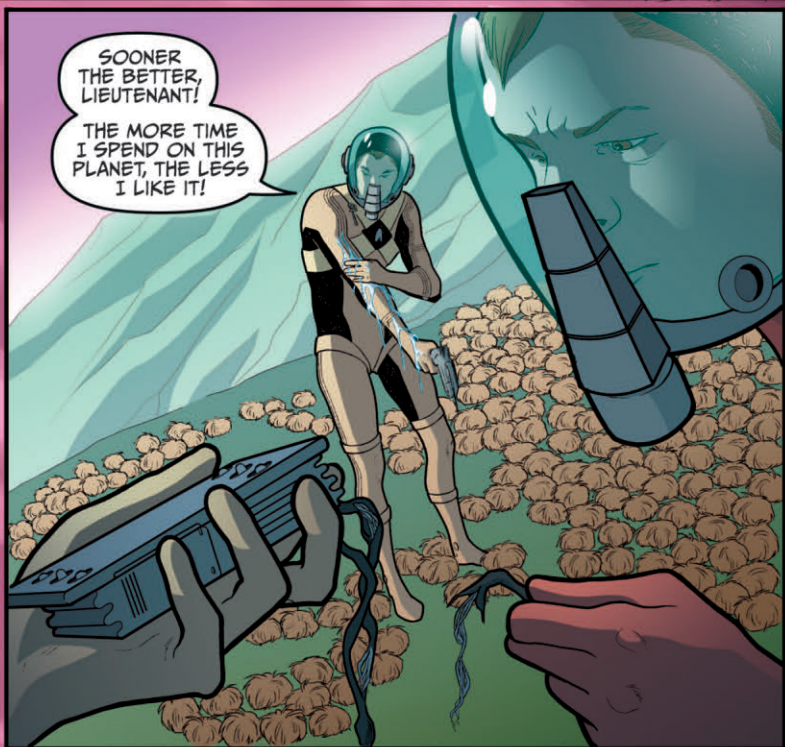
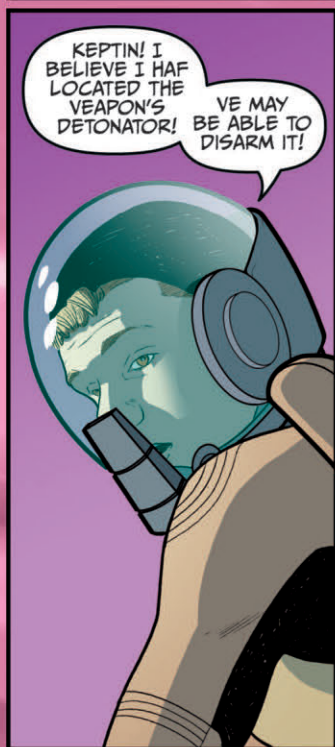
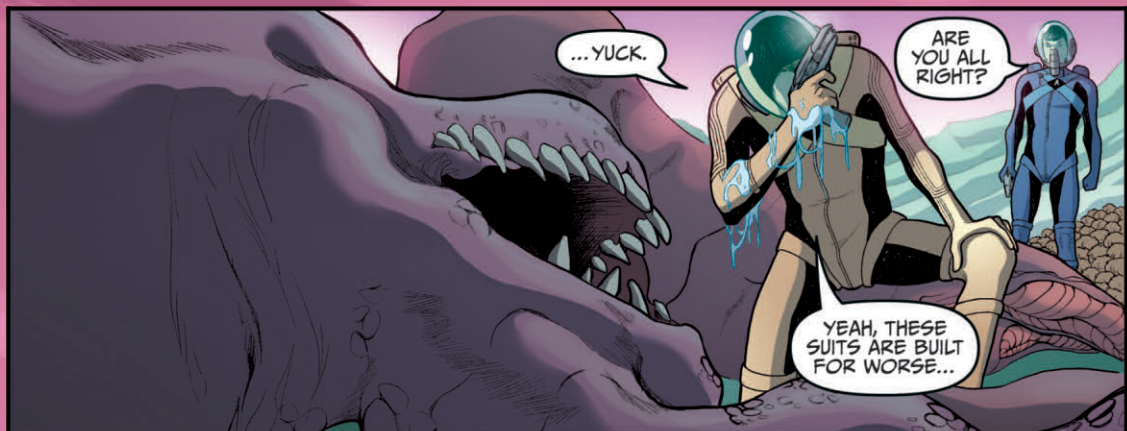


...HE'S ACTUALLY  
KIND OF CUTE, IN  
A WEIRD—

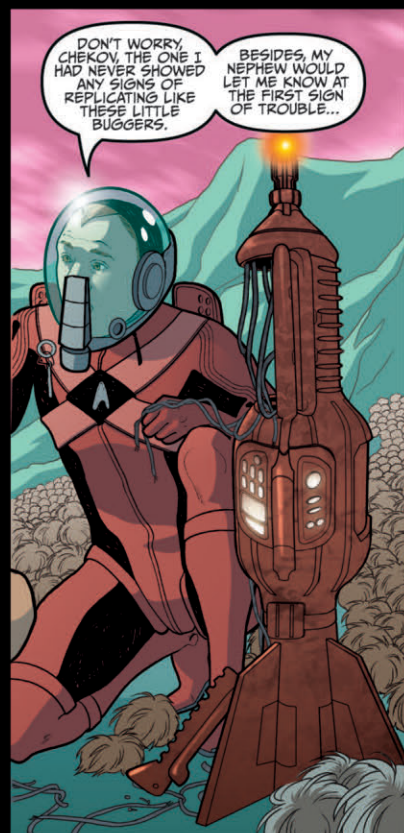














"...HE'S A VERY RESPONSIBLE LAD!"



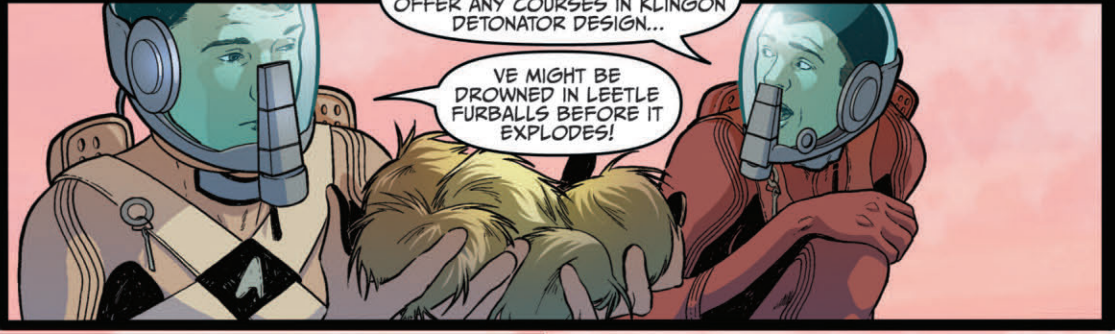






HOW MUCH TIME DO WE HAVE?

HARD TO SAY, SIR, AS THE ACADEMY TRAGICALLY FAILED TO OFFER ANY COURSES IN KLINGON DETONATOR DESIGN...



WE MIGHT BE DROWNED IN LEETLE FURBALLS BEFORE IT EXPLODES!



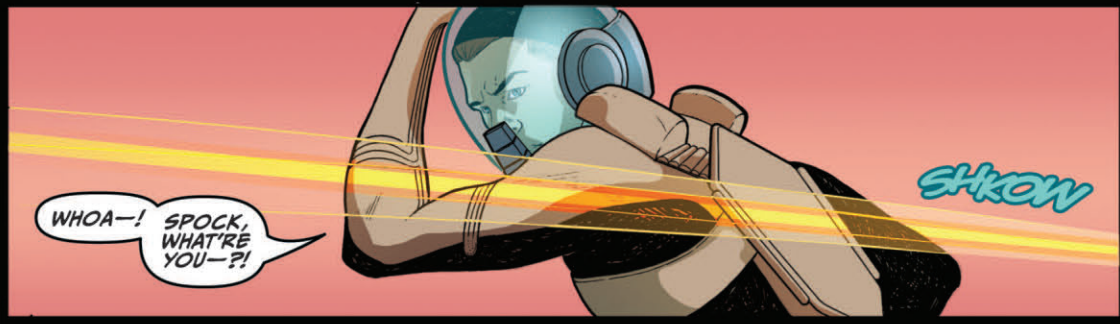
MAYBE—  
—BUT I'M NOT GOING TO LEAVE A KLINGON BOMB SITTING AROUND WAITING TO BLOW!

IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE ARRIVAL OF THE FUR CREATURES' NATURAL PREDATORS HAS RESULTED IN A PRONOUNCED ACCELERATION OF THEIR SPONTANEOUS ASEXUAL REPRODUCTION.

FASCINATING, CAPTAIN.

COMMANDER, BELIEVE ME, I APPRECIATE YOUR COMMITMENT TO SCIENTIFIC OBSERVATION, BUT I THINK WE'D BETTER FOCUS ON—





WHOA—! SPOCK,  
WHAT'RE  
YOU—?!

SHKOW



I AGREE,  
CAPTAIN.  
FOCUS IS  
ALWAYS A  
PRIORITY.

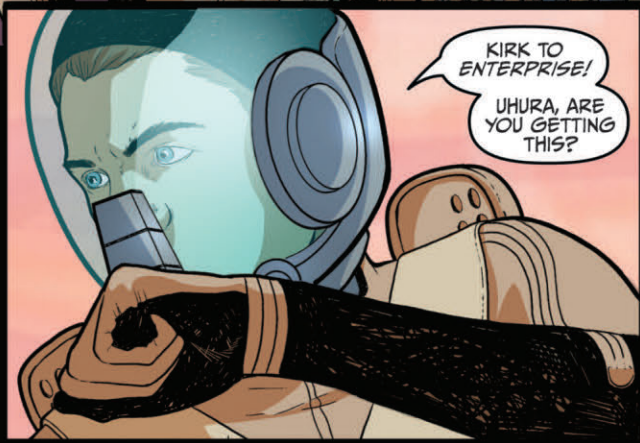
RIGHT....  
... THANKS.



CHU'

UMM, CAPTAIN,  
THE BOMB...  
IT'S...  
TALKING  
TO US.

TLHAG  
TAGHA'



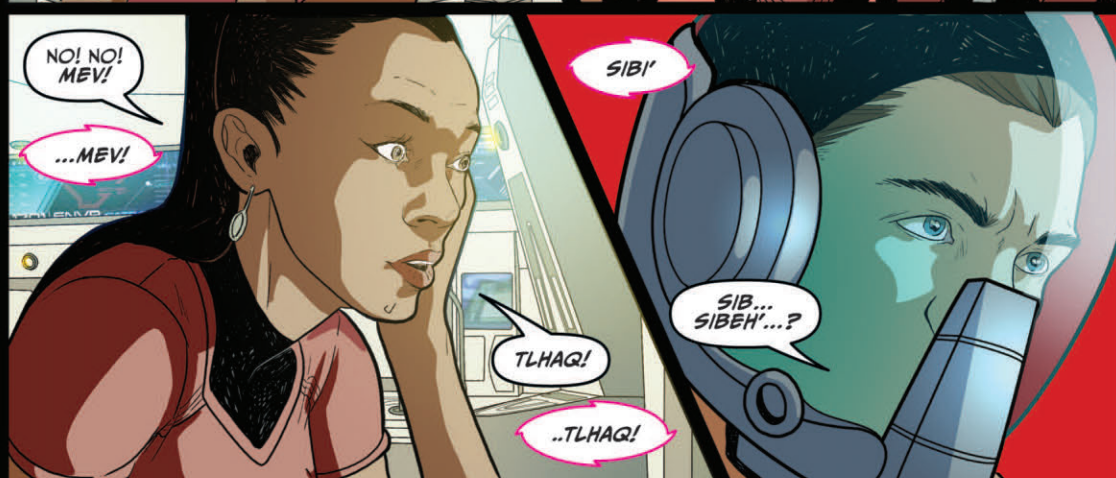
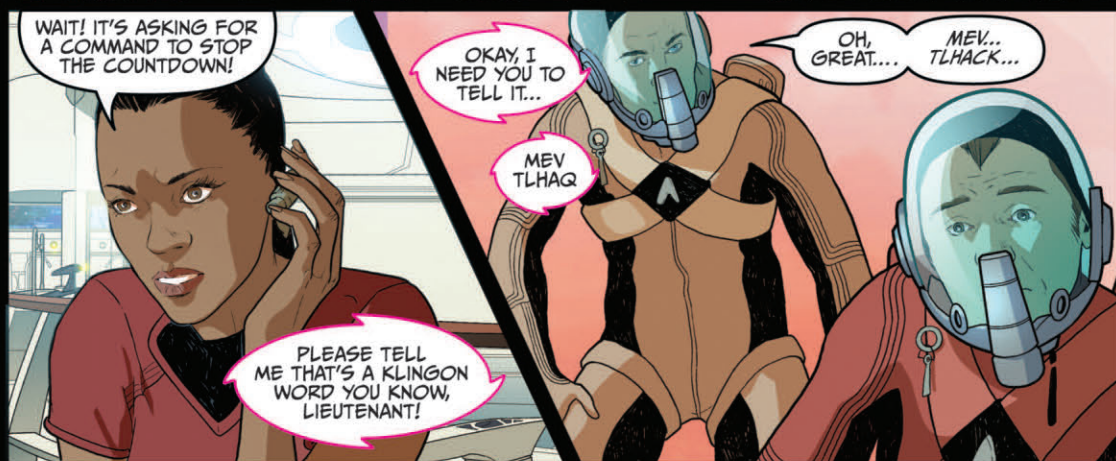
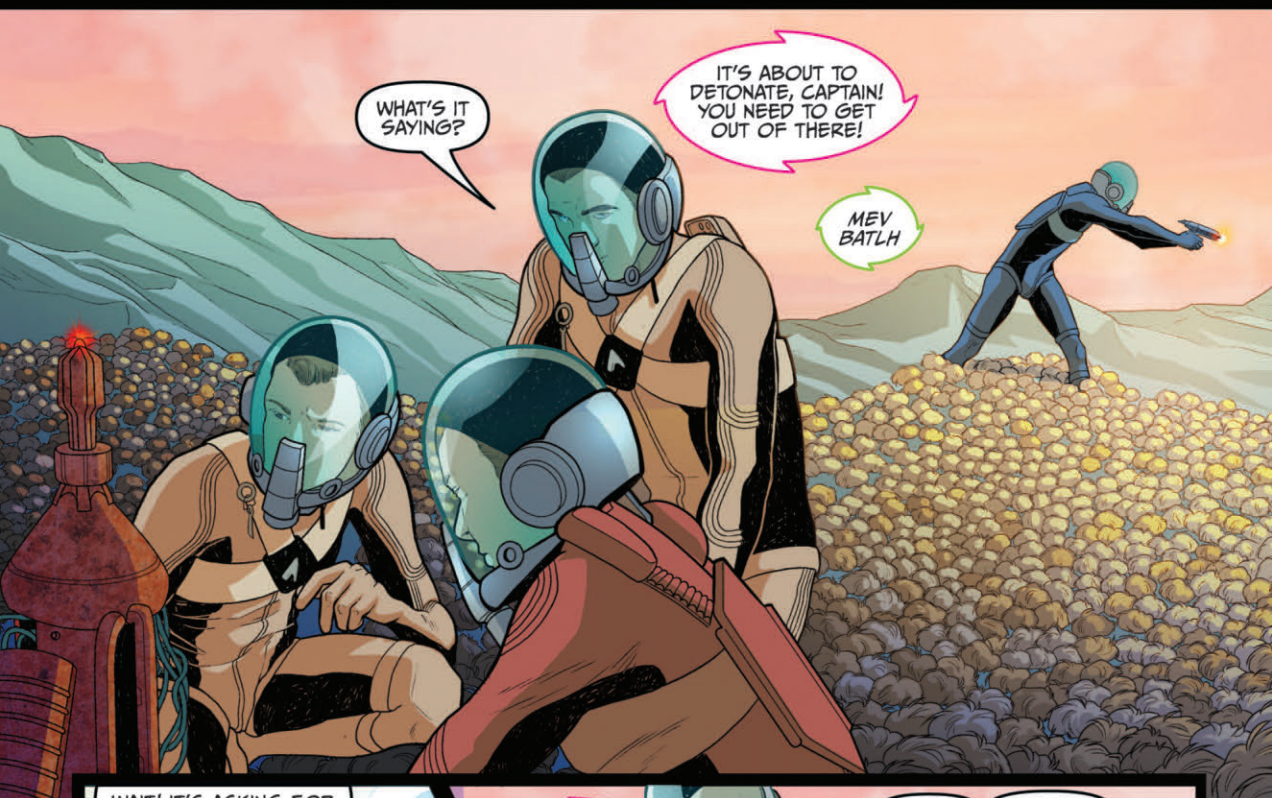
KIRK TO  
ENTERPRISE!  
UHURA, ARE  
YOU GETTING  
THIS?



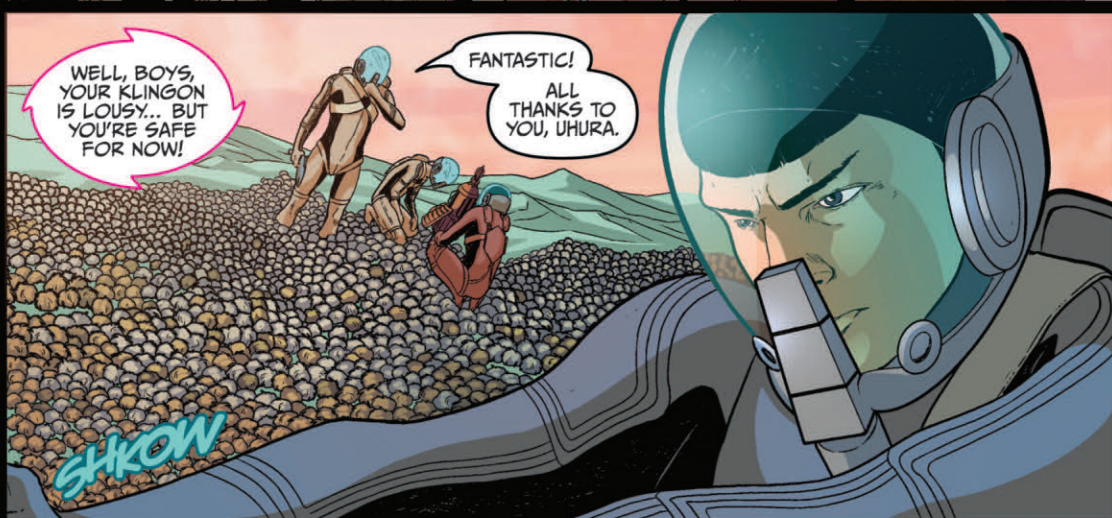
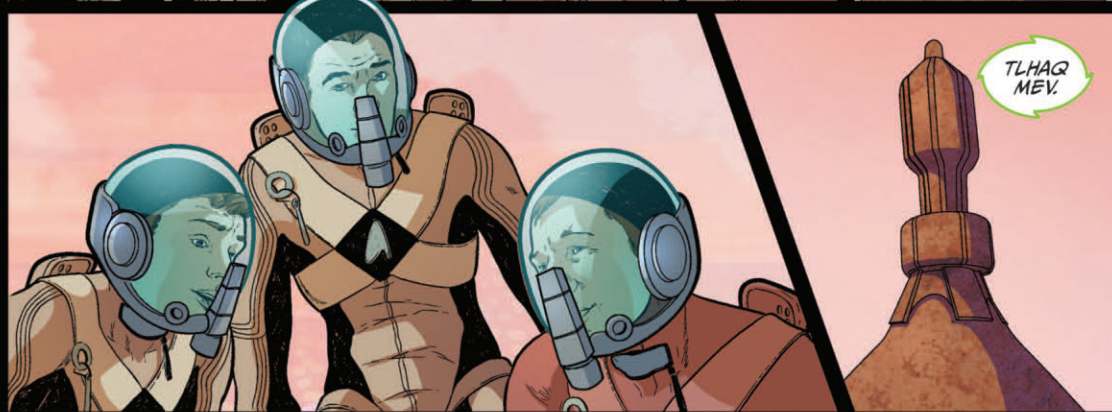
AFFIRMATIVE!

TLHAG  
TAGHA'





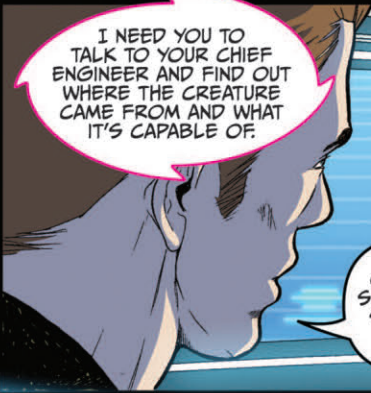










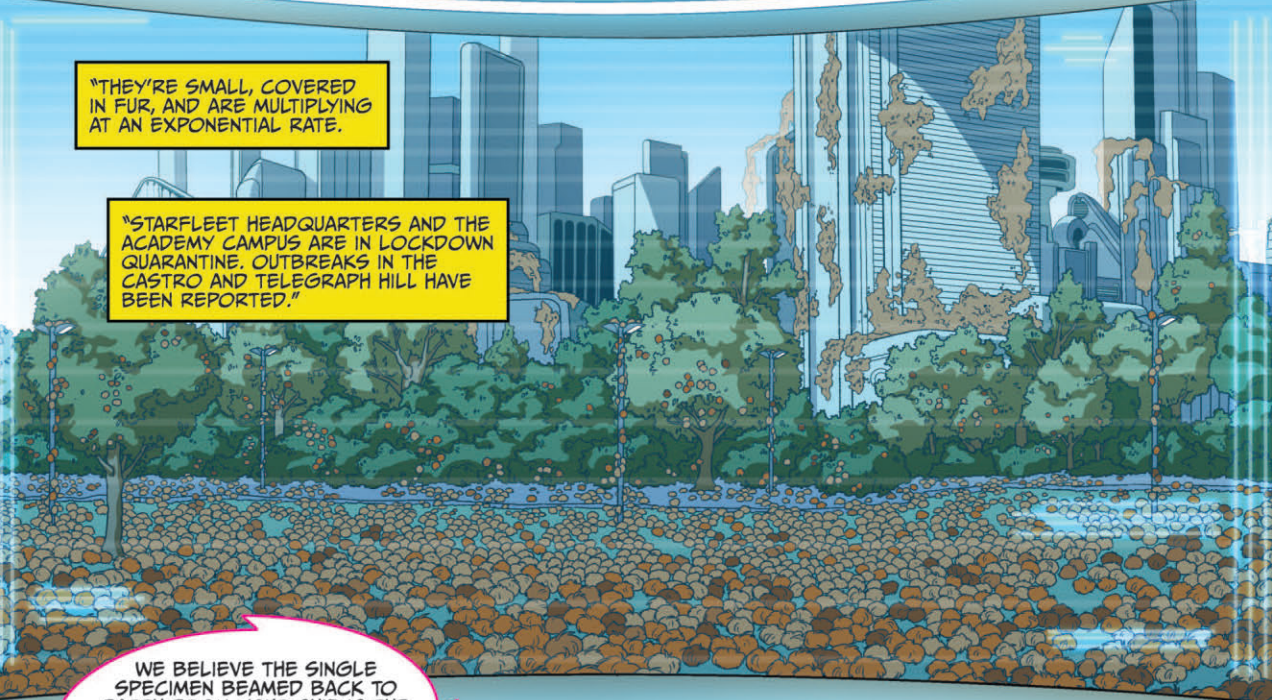


I NEED YOU TO  
TALK TO YOUR CHIEF  
ENGINEER AND FIND OUT  
WHERE THE CREATURE  
CAME FROM AND WHAT  
IT'S CAPABLE OF.



WHAT KIND  
OF CREATURE,  
SIR? WHAT'S THE  
SITUATION YOU  
REFERRED  
TO?


SEE FOR  
YOURSELF.



"THEY'RE SMALL, COVERED  
IN FUR, AND ARE MULTIPLYING  
AT AN EXPONENTIAL RATE.

"STARFLEET HEADQUARTERS AND THE  
ACADEMY CAMPUS ARE IN LOCKDOWN  
QUARANTINE. OUTBREAKS IN THE  
CASTRO AND TELEGRAPH HILL HAVE  
BEEN REPORTED."

WE BELIEVE THE SINGLE  
SPECIMEN BEAMED BACK TO  
EARTH FROM YOUR SHIP IS THE  
VECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR THE  
SUBSEQUENT POPULATION  
EXPLOSION.



WE'VE GOT EVERY  
XENO-BIO GENIUS WE  
HAVE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT  
WHAT MAKES THEM TICK AND  
HOW TO SLOW THEM  
DOWN. BECAUSE IF  
WE CAN'T...



UNDERSTOOD,  
SIR.

I'LL SEE IF  
WE CAN FIND A  
SOLUTION ON  
THIS END.

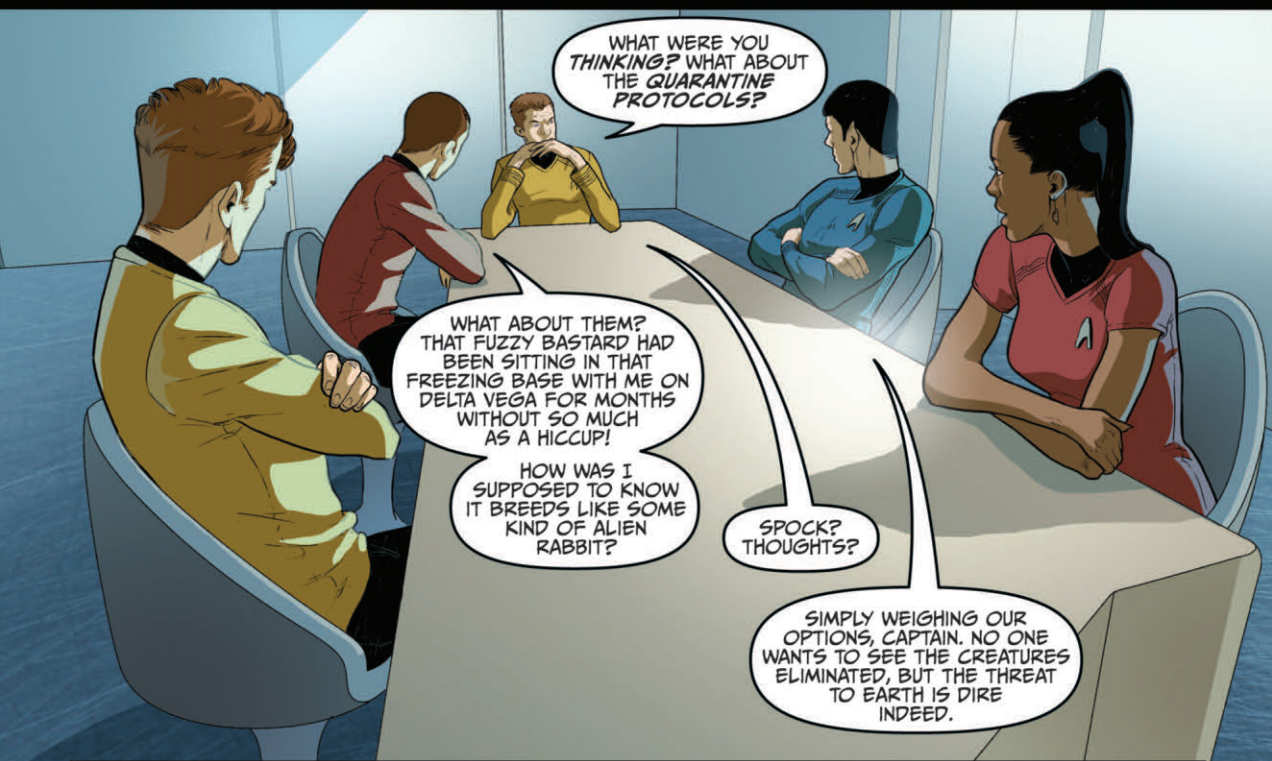
...WE'LL  
HAVE TO START  
**EXTERMINATING THEM.**  
WHICH GOES AGAINST  
THE HEART OF THE  
FEDERATION  
CHARTER.





I WAS JUST TRYING TO GET ADMIRAL ARCHER'S PRIZE BEAGLE BACK.

AS BEST I'VE BEEN ABLE TO DETERMINE, THE POOR BEAST'S ATOMS ARE STILL OUT THERE FLOATING IN THE VOID. BEAMING THE WEE FURBALL HOME WAS A WAY TO TEST MY THEORIES.



WHAT WERE YOU THINKING? WHAT ABOUT THE QUARANTINE PROTOCOLS?

WHAT ABOUT THEM? THAT FUZZY BASTARD HAD BEEN SITTING IN THAT FREEZING BASE WITH ME ON DELTA VEGA FOR MONTHS WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A HICCUP!

HOW WAS I SUPPOSED TO KNOW IT BREEDS LIKE SOME KIND OF ALIEN RABBIT?

SPOCK? THOUGHTS?

SIMPLY WEIGHING OUR OPTIONS, CAPTAIN. NO ONE WANTS TO SEE THE CREATURES ELIMINATED, BUT THE THREAT TO EARTH IS DIRE INDEED.



WE HAVE ONLY TO LOOK AT THE KLINGONS' PLANNED RESPONSE TO THE THREAT FOR CONFIRMATION OF ITS SEVERITY.



HANG ON A MINUTE! BACK ON DELTA VEGA THE "OLDER YOU" ACTED AS IF HE'D SEEN THE THING BEFORE!

WHY NOT CALL HIM UP AND ASK HIS ADVICE? MAYBE HE KNOWS HOW TO STOP THEM!



I... MY... OLDER SELF... WAS ADAMANT THAT HE COULD NOT INTERFERE IN THE EVENTS OF THIS TIMELINE. NO MATTER WHAT KNOWLEDGE HE POSSESSED.

NO MATTER HOW GRAVE THE THREAT.





WELL, THAT'S JUST GRAND! I HOPE HE'S ENJOYING HIS RETIREMENT!

THAT'S ENOUGH, MR. SCOTT.

RECOMMENDATIONS?

WE SHOULD RETRIEVE ONE OF THE CREATURES FROM THE PLANET. ANALYZE ITS PHYSIOLOGY AS QUICKLY AND THOROUGHLY AS POSSIBLE TO DETERMINE IF ITS POWER OF ASEXUAL REPRODUCTION CAN BE ARRESTED BY ANY MEANS CURRENTLY IN OUR POSSESSION.



THEN RELAY ANY SOLUTION WE FIND TO STARFLEET IMMEDIATELY.



CAPTAIN, THIS IS RAND IN ENGINEERING!

GO AHEAD, YEOMAN!

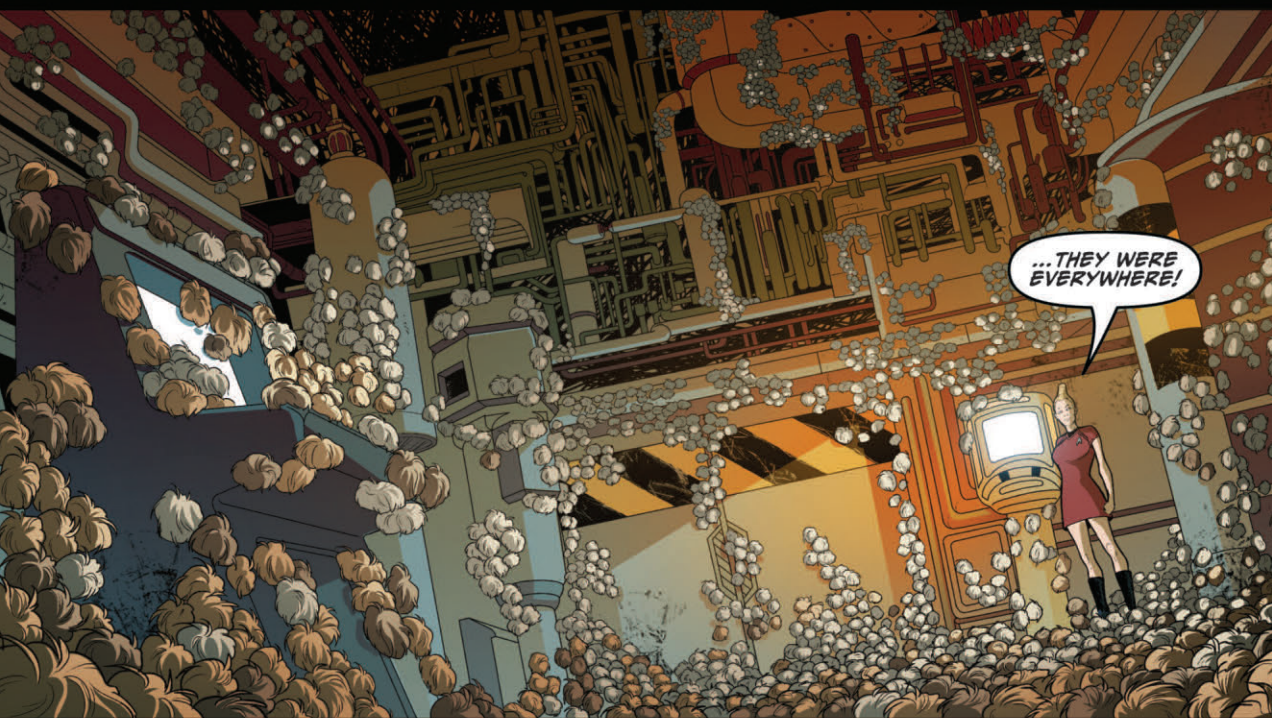


WE HAVE A PROBLEM, SIR! WE'VE BEEN BREAKING DOWN THE KLINGON WEAPON TO STUDY IT, AND...



...WELL, IT LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING FROM THE PLANET WAS STUCK INSIDE, AND BEFORE WE KNEW IT...





...THEY WERE EVERYWHERE!



OF COURSE THEY ARE...

SIR, I'M KEEPING ENGINEERING ON LOCKDOWN! NO ONE IN OR OUT! BUT THESE THINGS DON'T SEEM TO WANT TO STOP MULTIPLYING!

IT WOULD APPEAR TO SUPPORT MY HYPOTHESIS ABOUT THE CREATURES' MULTIPLICATION ACCELERATING WHEN THEY FIND THEMSELVES IN A POTENTIALLY THREATENING SITUATION.



NO DOUBT FINDING THEMSELVES ABOARD A STARSHIP—OR ON EARTH—IS SUFFICIENTLY DISTRESSING FOR THEM.

I'LL APOLOGIZE LATER.

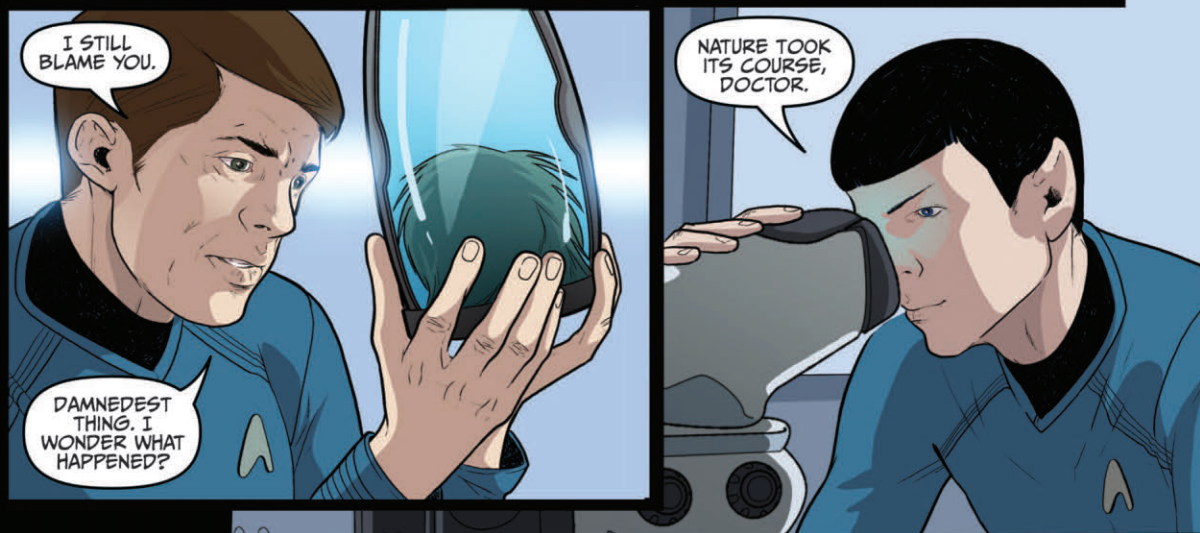
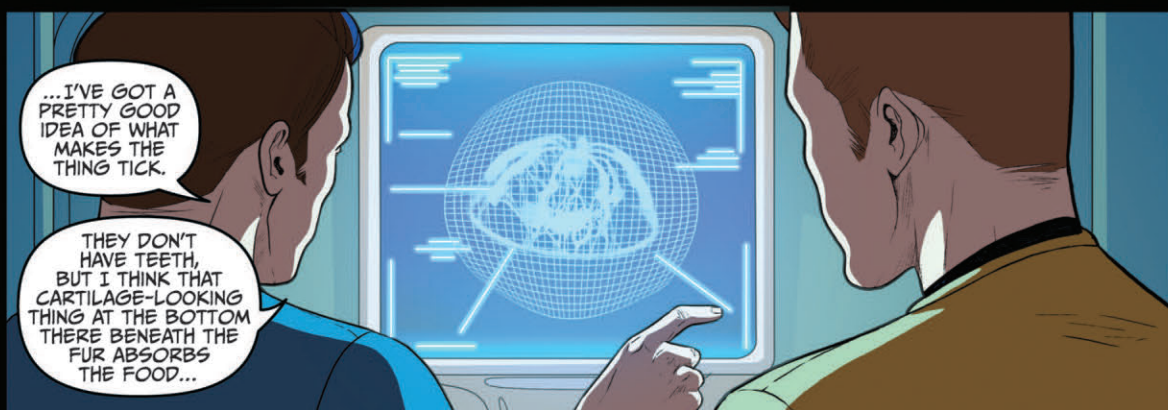
RAND! GET EVERYBODY OUT OF ENGINEERING. I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU DROWN IN THERE! TRY TO SECURE ONE—AND ONLY ONE—OF THE THINGS AND MEET ME IN SICKBAY!

AYE, SIR!







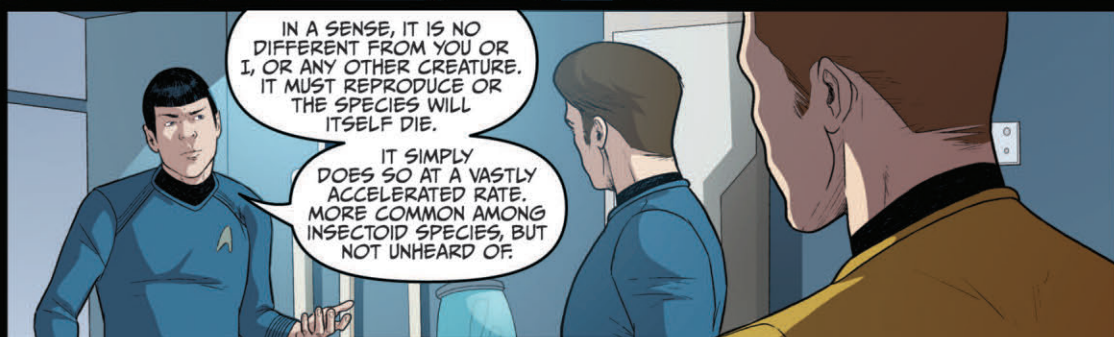






FROM WHAT I AM ABLE TO DISCERN FROM A STUDY OF ITS PHYSIOLOGICAL PROCESSES, THIS CREATURE IS NOT DESIGNED TO LIVE FOR LONGER THAN A MATTER OF DAYS.

I WOULD SURMISE THAT THE CREATURE'S RAPID REPLICATION IS AN EVOLUTIONARY RESPONSE TO ITS SHORT LIFESPAN.



IN A SENSE, IT IS NO DIFFERENT FROM YOU OR I, OR ANY OTHER CREATURE. IT MUST REPRODUCE OR THE SPECIES WILL ITSELF DIE.

IT SIMPLY DOES SO AT A VASTLY ACCELERATED RATE. MORE COMMON AMONG INSECTOID SPECIES, BUT NOT UNHEARD OF.



JUST LIKE US, HUH?

REST IN PEACE, BROTHER.



AT LEAST THAT OFFERS US A POSSIBLE SOLUTION. CAN WE JUST WAIT FOR THEM ALL TO DIE OFF?

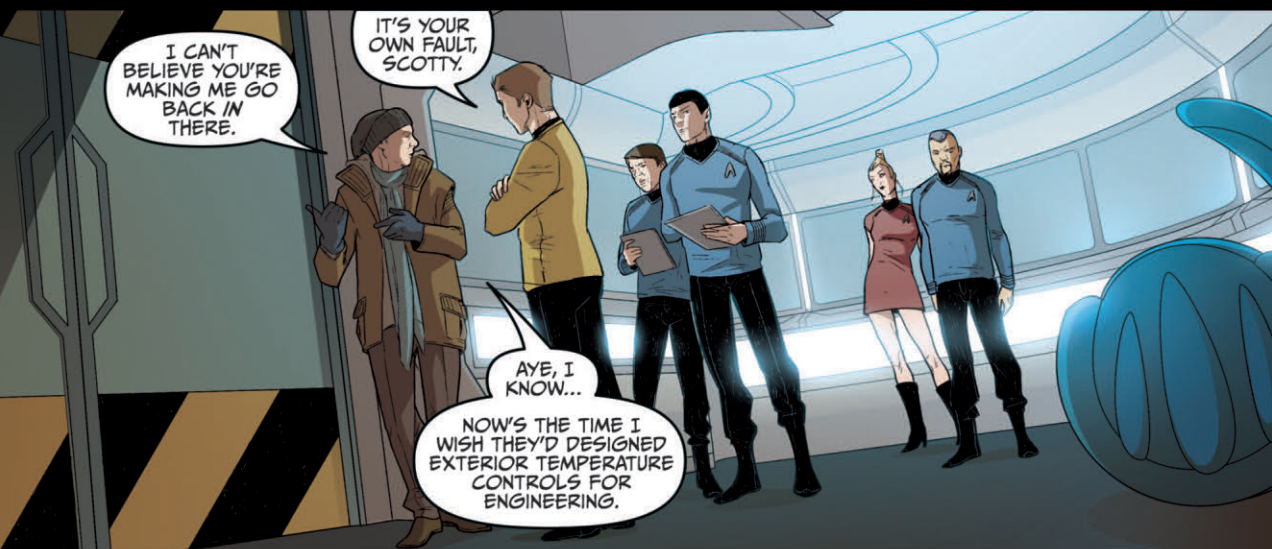
ON THE CONTRARY, CAPTAIN. BASED ON THE LATEST REPORT FROM ENGINEERING, THERE IS NO SIGN THAT THE CREATURES' REPLICATION HAS SLOWED.



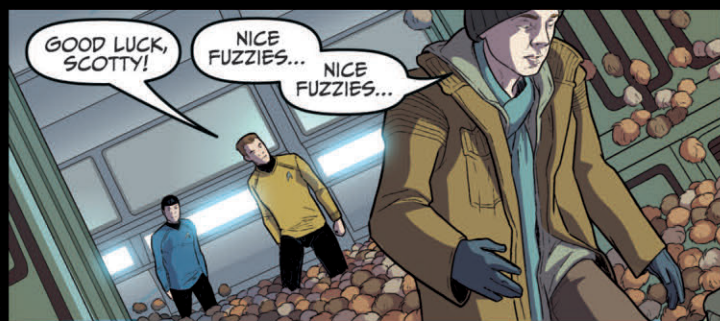
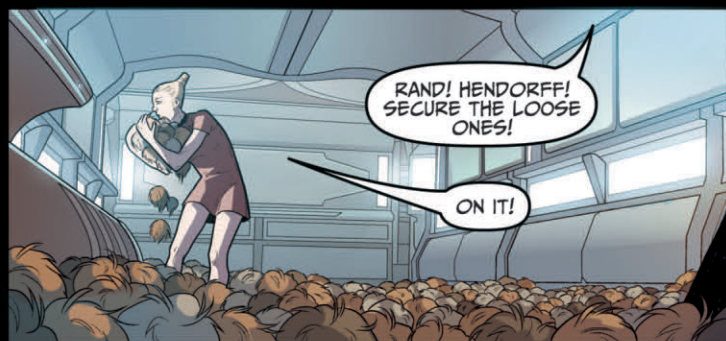
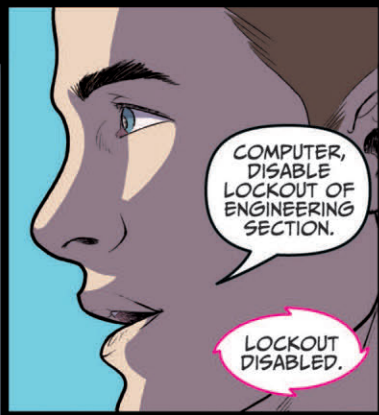
I DO, HOWEVER, HAVE A HYPOTHESIS I WOULD LIKE TO TEST.

PROVIDED MR. SCOTT IS COOPERATIVE.

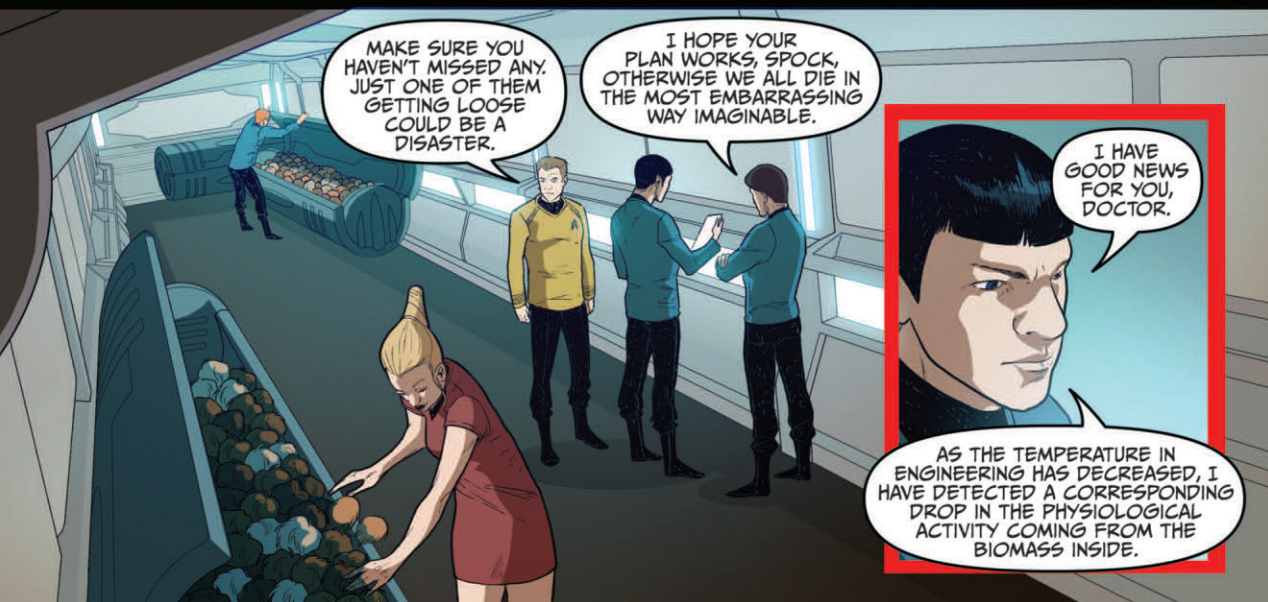




















BIOMASS  
ACTIVITY HAS  
STABILIZED JUST  
ABOVE THE LEVELS  
DETECTED WHEN  
THE TEST SUBJECT  
DIED.

GOOD  
ENOUGH  
FOR ME.

UHURA!



YES,  
CAPTAIN!

GET ME  
ADMIRAL  
PIKE!

AYE, SIR!



CAN I  
COME OUT  
NOW?

HELLO...?

"...ANYONE?"



CAPTAIN'S LOG, SUPPLEMENTAL.  
THANKS TO COMMANDER SPOCK'S  
DEDUCTIVE SKILLS WE MANAGED  
TO CONTAIN THE PROLIFERATION  
OF CREATURES ON THE SHIP.

THE FROZEN SPECIMENS WERE  
BEAMED BACK TO THE SURFACE  
OF IOTA GERMINORUM IV WITH  
NO APPARENT ILL EFFECTS.

ENGINEERING HAS BEEN  
RESTORED TO FULL FUNCTION.  
WE AWAIT WORD FROM  
STARFLEET ON THE STATUS OF  
THE INFESTATION ON EARTH.



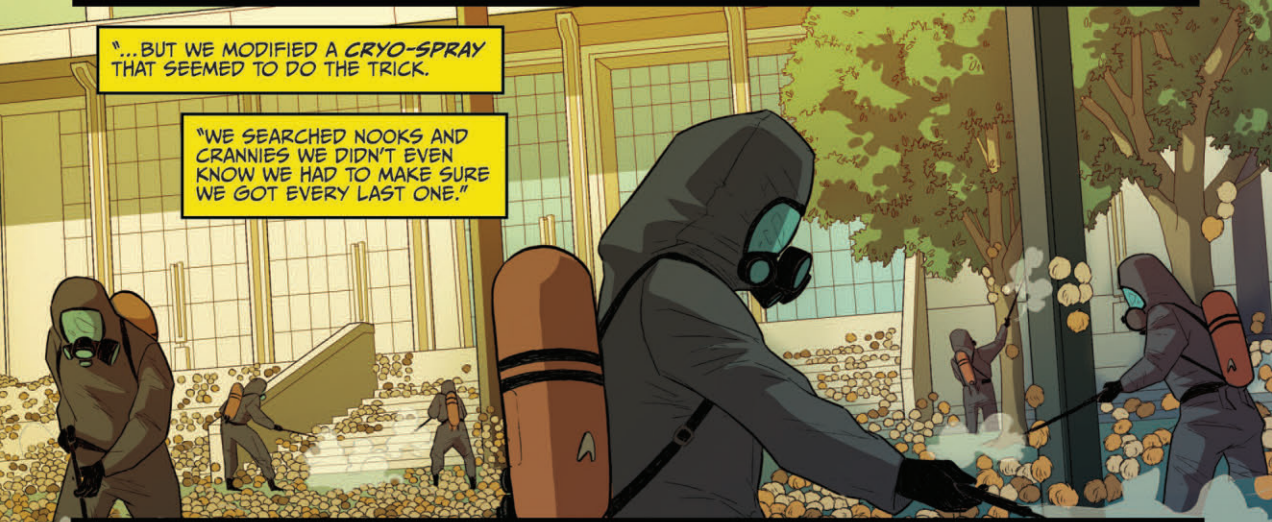


YOU'RE IN LUCK, CAPTAIN KIRK.



SPOCK'S PLAN WORKED. FREEZING THE CRITTERS STOPPED THEIR REPLICATION.

IT TOOK AWHILE...



"...BUT WE MODIFIED A *CRYO-SPRAY* THAT SEEMED TO DO THE TRICK.

"WE SEARCHED NOOKS AND CRANNIES WE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WE HAD TO MAKE SURE WE GOT EVERY LAST ONE."



STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE HAS TAKEN POSSESSION OF THE CREATURES FOR FURTHER STUDY.

STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE, ADMIRAL?  
WHY NOT JUST LET XENOBIO HANDLE IT?





THERE ARE  
PLENTY OF GOOD  
XENO BIOLOGISTS ON  
THE INTELLIGENCE  
STAFF.

AS FOR  
YOUR CHIEF  
ENGINEER—



SIR,  
PLEASE, HE'S  
SINCERELY—

RELAX, KIRK.  
AND NEVER  
INTERRUPT AN  
ADMIRAL.

SORRY,  
SIR.

I TOLD  
STARFLEET WHAT  
YOU TOLD ME ABOUT  
MR. SCOTT RISKING HIS  
LIFE TO TEST THE  
SOLUTION TO THE  
PROBLEM.



IT WAS ENOUGH  
TO KEEP FROM  
BEING DEMOTED.  
BUT HE'S ON  
NOTICE.

WHAT ABOUT  
HIS NEPHEW AT  
THE ACADEMY?



HE'S ON  
ACADEMIC  
PROBATION FOR A  
COUPLE OF CENTURIES.  
NOTIFYING US OF THE  
PROBLEM AS QUICKLY  
AS HE DID MINIMIZED  
THE PUNISHMENT.



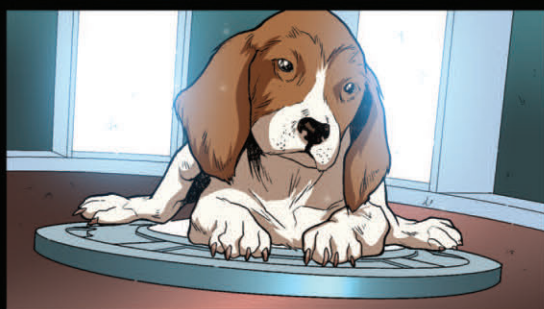
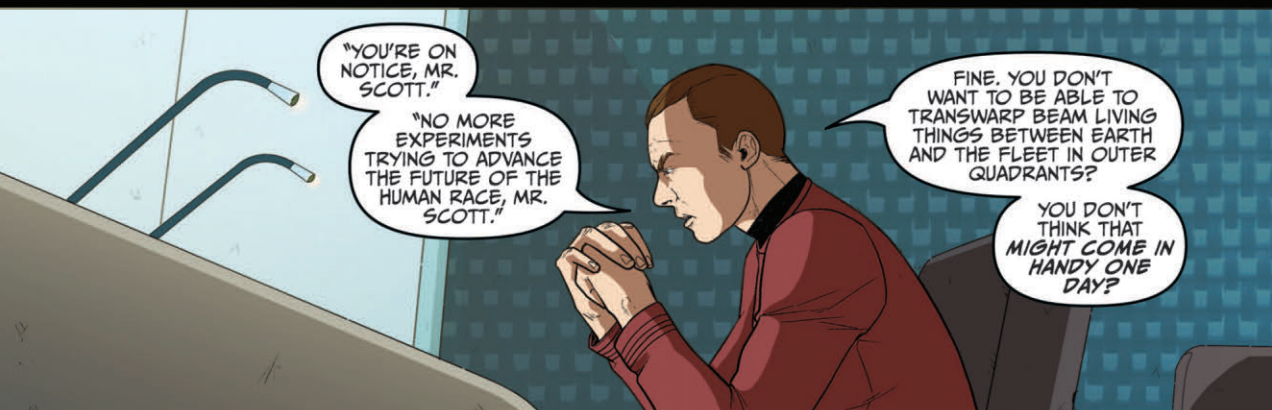
BUT DO  
ME A FAVOR,  
CAPTAIN.

KEEP A  
CLOSER EYE  
ON YOUR  
CREW.











# ART GALLERY



Artwork by  
The Sharp Bros.





Artwork by  
Tim Bradstreet





Artwork by  
Tim Bradstreet





Artwork by  
Tim Bradstreet



TIM  
BRAD-  
STREET  
2012  
48

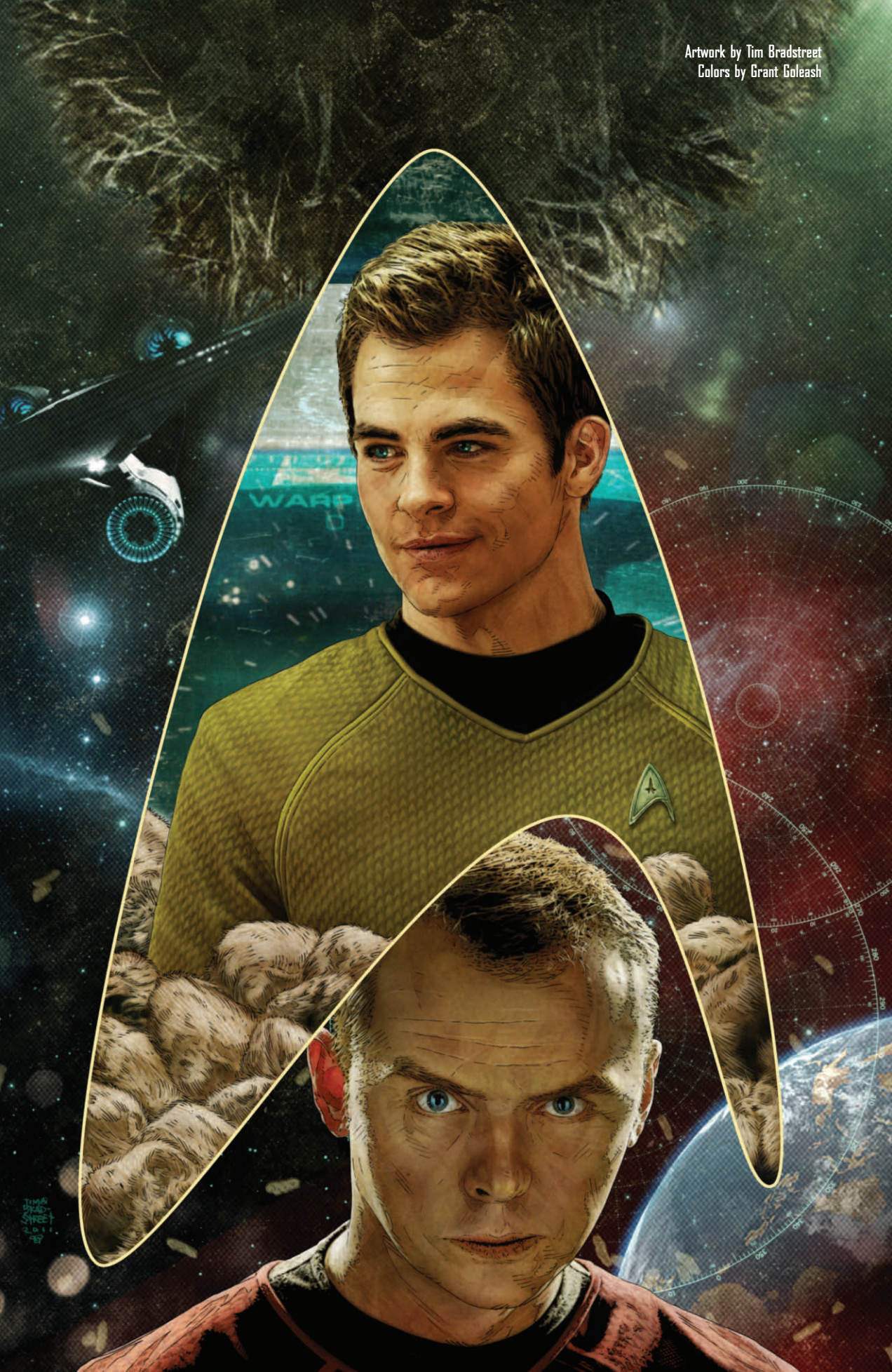


Artwork by  
Tim Bradstreet





Artwork by Tim Bradstreet  
Colors by Grant Goleash

















"Check out this GREAT comic! It'll give you your monthly *Star Trek* fix while delivering something both familiar and new!"

— **Geeks of Doom**

THE  
COUNTDOWN  
TO THE NEXT  
*STAR TREK* MOVIE  
CONTINUES HERE. IN  
"THE RETURN OF THE  
ARCHONS!" KIRK, SPOCK,  
AND THE CREW SEARCH FOR A  
LOST STARFLEET SHIP THAT MAY  
HOLD CLUES TO THE FUTURE OF  
THE ENTIRE FEDERATION, AND IN  
"THE TRUTH ABOUT TRIBBLES!" THE  
CREW OF THE *ENTERPRISE* ENCOUNTERS  
THE CLASSIC ALIEN SPECIES IN AN ALL-  
NEW STORY INSPIRED BY THE FAN-FAVORITE  
EPISODE. TREK WRITER/PRODUCER ROBERTO  
ORCI OVERSEES THIS LATEST CHAPTER IN THE  
ONGOING ADVENTURES OF THE  
*STARSHIP ENTERPRISE*!

WITH A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION BY ORIGINAL  
"TRIBBLES" SCRIPT WRITER DAVID GERROLD!

**IDW**