

# STAR TREK<sup>®</sup>

## THE Q GAMBIT



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TONY  
GIAC  
TECH

# ***STAR TREK***<sup>®</sup>

**VOLUME 9**



# ***STAR TREK***®

**VOLUME 9**

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CHAPTER 1







SPOCK SAVED US ALL.



MY OLD FRIEND  
SACRIFICED HIMSELF  
TO DESTROY THE  
MAELSTROM THAT  
HAD ALREADY WIPED  
OUT THE ROMULAN  
EMPIRE AND WAS  
NOW THREATENING  
THE FEDERATION.



NERO GAVE CHASE, BENT ON  
MISGUIDED REVENGE AFTER  
THE DEATH OF HIS PEOPLE.

BUT HE WAS TOO LATE.



NERO DISAPPEARED WITH  
SPOCK AS THE MAELSTROM  
COLLAPSED IN UPON ITSELF.

THE THREAT WAS AVERTED.



ALL THAT IS LEFT IS TO THANK  
SPOCK FOR HIS SACRIFICE...



...AND TO MOURN HIM.

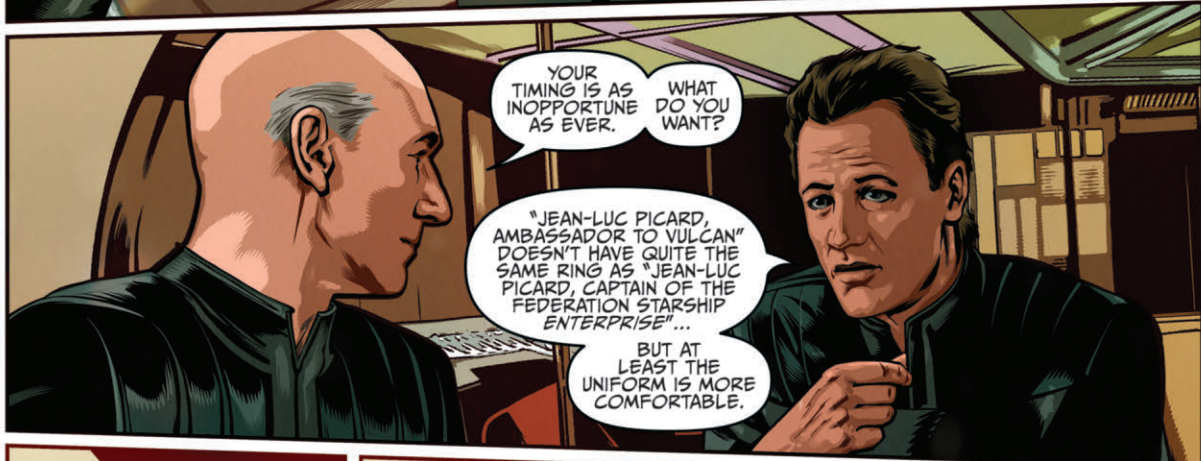
TEA.  
EARL GREY.  
HOT.



WOULD IT  
KILL YOU TO TRY  
CHAMOMILE  
FOR ONCE?











I'VE NO PATIENCE  
FOR ANOTHER OF  
YOUR GAMES, Q. NOT  
HERE. NOT NOW.

NO GAMES,  
JEAN-LUC, I PROMISE  
YOU. ALL YOU HAVE TO  
DO IS LISTEN.



SPOCK  
LIVES.

... WHAT?



WHEN HE FLEW INTO THAT—WHATEVER  
IT WAS—HE FLEW OUT THE OTHER  
SIDE AGAIN. HE ARRIVED A CENTURY  
EARLIER THAN WHEN HE LEFT, BUT  
IT BEATS NOT ARRIVING AT ALL,  
DON'T YOU AGREE?

IT'S A  
FASCINATING  
ALTERNATE  
TIMELINE, JEAN-LUC.  
TO GIVE YOU JUST  
ONE EXAMPLE,  
OVER THERE  
KHAN NOONIEN  
SINGH—



STOP!

I DON'T  
WANT TO  
KNOW ANY  
OF IT, Q.



THE EVENTS OF  
PARALLEL TIMELINES  
ARE NOT WITTY  
ANECDOTES TO BE  
RELATED AS A  
LARK!

THEY ARE  
REAL EVENTS,  
HAPPENING TO  
REAL PEOPLE,  
AS REAL AS  
YOU OR...

... WELL, AS  
REAL AS I  
AM, AT ANY  
RATE.





IT'S BEST THAT  
THE INTEGRITY OF  
EACH TIMELINE BE  
MAINTAINED.

BEST THAT  
NONE HAVE ANY  
KNOWLEDGE OF  
THE OTHERS.



FINE.

CLING TO  
YOUR TRAGICALLY  
**SKULL-ENCASED**  
**PERSPECTIVE** IF YOU  
MUST, JEAN-LUC.

I SIMPLY THOUGHT  
YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW  
THAT YOUR FRIEND  
SURVIVED... AND IN  
RETURN I SOUGHT  
ONLY YOUR  
**COUNSEL**.



MY  
COUNSEL...?

SPOCK'S  
JOURNEY TO  
THAT ALTERNATE  
TIMELINE SAVED  
THIS ONE,  
JEAN-LUC...



...BUT IT  
TRIGGERED A  
SEQUENCE OF  
EVENTS THAT  
WILL **DOOM**  
THAT ONE.

I THOUGHT  
YOU WOULD  
WANT TO KNOW,  
AND WOULD WANT  
TO HELP IF YOU  
COULD. I WAS  
OBVIOUSLY  
MISTAKEN.

PROMISE ME, Q.  
PROMISE ME YOU  
WON'T INTERFERE  
IN THAT ALTERNATE  
TIMELINE AS YOU  
HAVE IN THIS  
ONE!



OH, I  
PROMISE.

AS SOON  
AS YOU PROMISE  
TO BREATHE ONLY  
**ONE OXYGEN**  
**MOLECULE** AND NOT  
THE **ALTERNATES**  
SURROUNDING  
IT.

GOODBYE.  
FOR NOW.



Q!  
NO!

JEAN-LUC...





"...YOUR TEA IS GETTING COLD."

CAPTAIN'S LOG,  
STARDATE 2261.34.

THE *ENTERPRISE* HAS ARRIVED  
AT THE PREVIOUSLY UNEXPLORED  
STAR SYSTEM DESIGNATED  
MENZIES 216, AT THE EDGE OF  
THE ALPHA QUADRANT.

IT'S BEEN SEVERAL MONTHS  
SINCE WE LEFT EARTH ON  
OUR FIVE-YEAR MISSION.

TO BORROW A PHRASE FROM  
CHIEF ENGINEER SCOTT, THE  
SHIP AND HER CREW ARE  
FIRING ON ALL CYLINDERS.





ALL SHIP SYSTEMS ARE OPERATING AT PEAK EFFICIENCY. MORALE ON THE SHIP IS GOOD.



THE BETTER I COME TO KNOW THE CREW, THE MORE CONFIDENT I AM THAT THEY'RE THE BEST IN THE FLEET.



BRIDGE.



OH, SORRY. DIDN'T SEE YOU THERE.

NO APOLOGY NECESSARY, CAPTAIN.

YOU'RE...?



SECURITY.

LET ME JUST SAY, SIR, IT'S AN HONOR TO SERVE ABOARD THE ENTERPRISE.

AND THE DESIGN OF THIS ONE IS SO MUCH BETTER THAN THE BEIGE LOOK.



HERE'S MY STOP. NICE TALKING WITH YOU, SIR.

UH, YEAH...



"BEIGE?"





CAPTAIN  
ON THE  
BRIDGE.

STATUS,  
MR. SPOCK!



WE ARE  
APPROACHING  
THE OUTER  
LIMIT OF  
MENZIES 216, A  
TOTAL OF FIVE  
PLANETS. THE  
FIRST WE WILL  
SURVEY APPEARS  
TO HAVE A MOST  
INTERESTING  
ATMOSPHERIC  
COMPOSI—



CAPTAIN!  
I'M PICKING UP  
A DISTRESS CALL  
NEARBY! IT'S A CIVILIAN  
SHIP—FEDERATION—  
THE *SMALLWOOD*—

FEDERATION? I  
THOUGHT WE WERE  
THE FIRST ONES  
OUT HERE!



KEPTIN, I'M  
DETECTING  
MULTIPLE  
*WESSELS*  
AHEAD! ONE IS  
A DISABLED  
CIVILIAN  
WESSEL, AND  
THE OTHER  
TWO—

—THE OTHER  
TWO ARE  
*KLINGON*,  
KEPTIN!



RED ALERT!  
SHIELDS UP! MR.  
SULU, SET COURSE  
TO INTERCEPT!

AYE SIR!





CHEKOV,  
WHAT HIT  
US?



THREE  
MORE  
KLINGON  
SHIPS, KEPTIN,  
DE-CLOAKING  
ALL AROUND  
US!



"THAT MAKES FIVE, SIR!"

"WE'RE SURROUNDED!"





FIRE PHOTON  
TORPEDOES!



AYE SIR!  
SHIELDS  
AT SIXTY  
PERCENT!



A DISTRESS  
CALL... TWO  
KLINGON SHIPS...  
THREE MORE  
DE-CLOAKED...

WHY DOES  
THIS SEEM  
SO...



BOOOOOM

SHRAAK

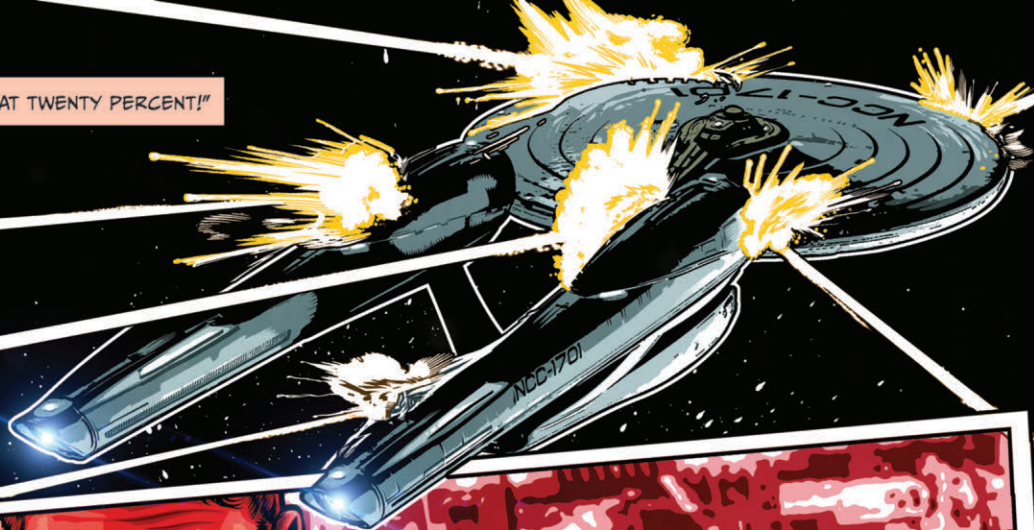
AAGH—!



CAPTAIN, LIFE  
SUPPORT ON  
THE SMALLWOOD  
IS FAILING!



"SHIELDS AT TWENTY PERCENT!"



KEPTIN, WE  
CAN'T SURVIVE THIS  
BOMBARDMENT  
MUCH LONGER!

CAPTAIN, I HAVE  
REROUTED ENGINE  
CONTROL FROM MR.  
SULU'S STATION  
TO MY OWN.

EVASIVE ACTION,  
NOW!

SYSTEM

POWER ON

IF WE CAN  
GET THEM TO  
CHASE US, WE  
CAN AT LEAST BUY  
THE SMALLWOOD  
SOME TIME—

INDEED,  
BUT WE FACE  
IMMINENT SHIELD  
FAILURE  
OURSELVES—

SMALLWOOD...

NO WAY. IN  
JAPANESE THAT  
WOULD BE—

KOBAYASHI!

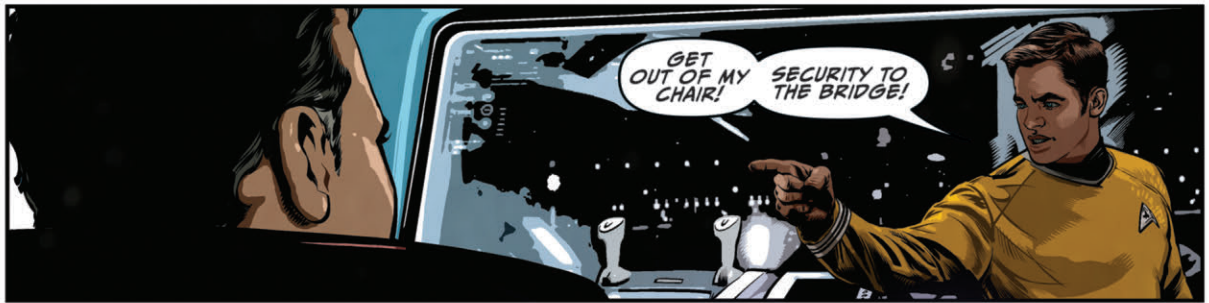




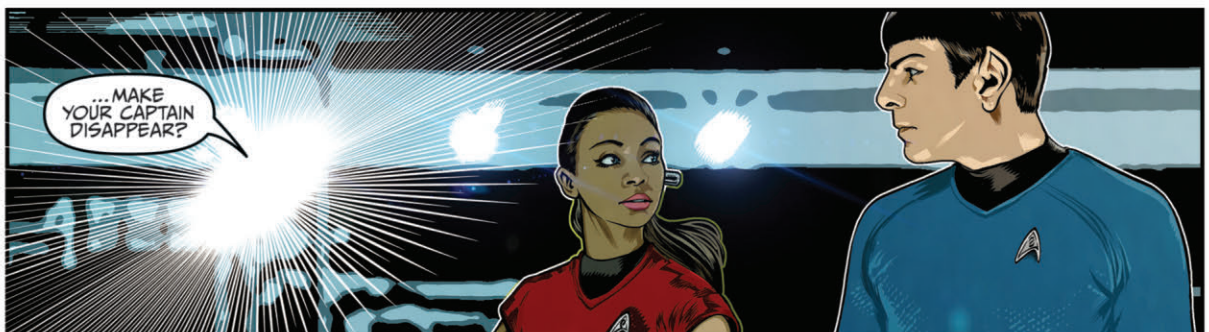
CLAP  
CLAP  
CLAP
















THIS CAN'T BE  
HAPPENING.



IT'S A DREAM.  
A HALLUCINATION.

OR WE ARE  
ACTUALLY STANDING  
ON THE HULL OF YOUR  
SHIP AND I AM KEEPING  
YOU ALIVE WHEN YOU  
WOULD OTHERWISE BE  
A GIANT ICE CUBE  
IN BOOTS.

FULL  
DISCLOSURE?  
I'M NOT LIKE  
YOU.



I BELONG  
TO AN IMMORTAL  
RACE OF  
EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL  
BEINGS WHO CAN  
MANIPULATE THE TIME  
AND SPACE OF YOUR  
REALITY THE WAY  
THAT YOU WOULD  
CHANGE THE  
WATER IN A  
FISHBOWL.

YOU'RE  
THE FISH, IF  
MY ANALOGY  
ISN'T CLEAR  
ENOUGH.



LET'S SAY I  
BELIEVE YOU.  
WHICH I DON'T.  
YET.

THAT "TEST" BACK  
THERE, WITH THE  
KLINGONS?





I WANTED YOU TO SEE THAT THERE ARE SOME TESTS YOU CAN'T CHEAT, CAPTAIN. NOT HERE. NOT OUTSIDE THE COMFORT OF AN ACADEMY TRAINING SIMULATION WHOSE PROGRAMMING YOU CAN CHANGE TO YOUR LIKING.

TO BE FAIR, I CREATED THE ILLUSION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS ENCOUNTER. BUT THE FACT REMAINS: THERE ARE SUCH THINGS AS NO-WIN SCENARIOS.

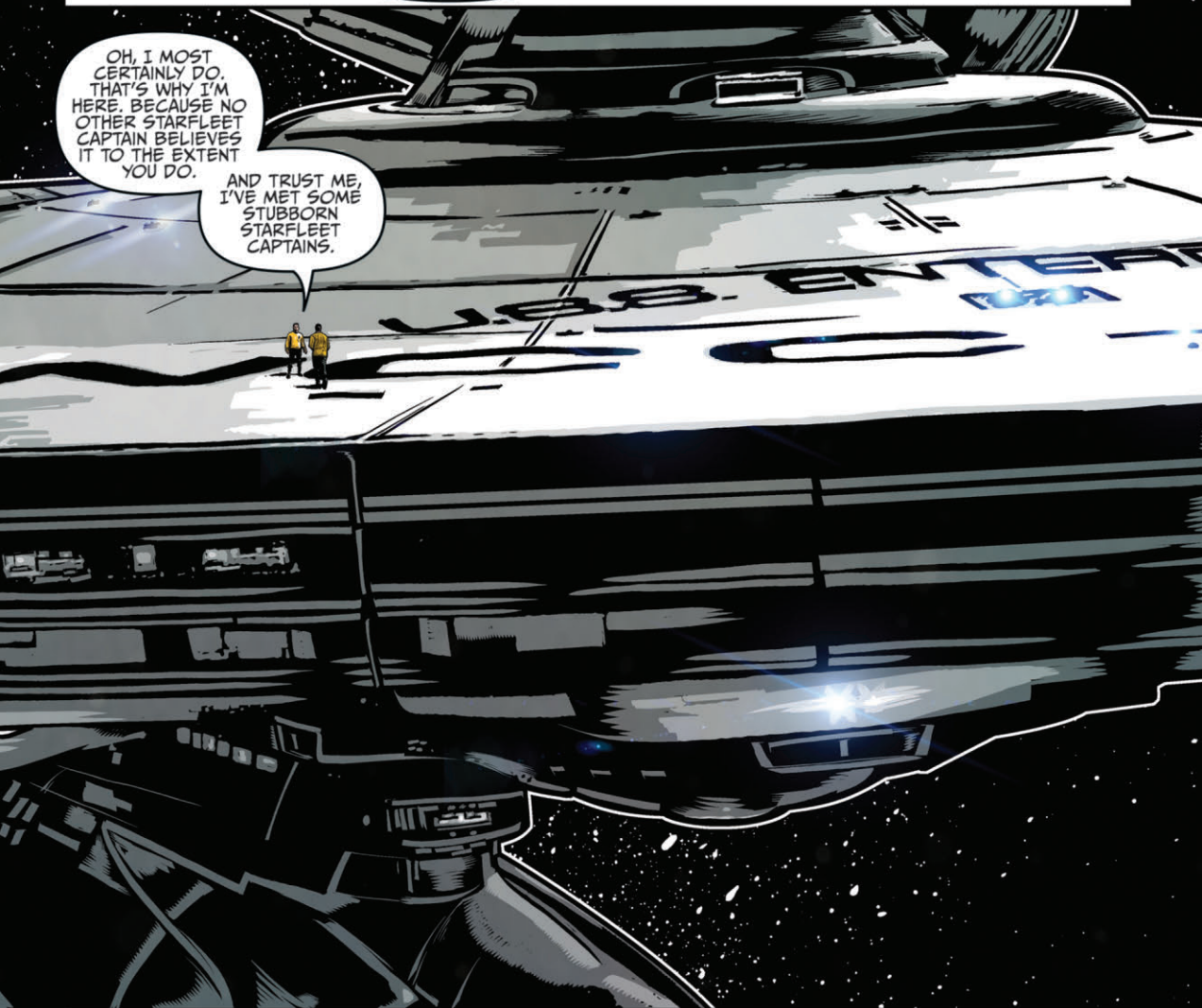


SINCE YOU SEEM TO KNOW ME WELL ALREADY...

I THINK YOU KNOW MY RESPONSE TO THAT.

OH, I MOST CERTAINLY DO. THAT'S WHY I'M HERE. BECAUSE NO OTHER STARFLEET CAPTAIN BELIEVES IT TO THE EXTENT YOU DO.

AND TRUST ME, I'VE MET SOME STUBBORN STARFLEET CAPTAINS.



I'M NOT A WET-NOSED CADET ANYMORE.

I'VE HAD ENOUGH EXPERIENCE WITH NO-WIN SCENARIOS BY NOW TO KNOW THAT THERE IS ALWAYS A WAY.

ALWAYS.



OF COURSE!

JUST LIKE THE SITUATION IN WHICH YOU FOUND YOURSELF A FEW MONTHS BACK!









THIS IS WHAT YOU MEANT, RIGHT?

THAT YOU BEAT THE ULTIMATE "NO-WIN SCENARIO"?



"THAT YOU BEAT DEATH ITSELF?"



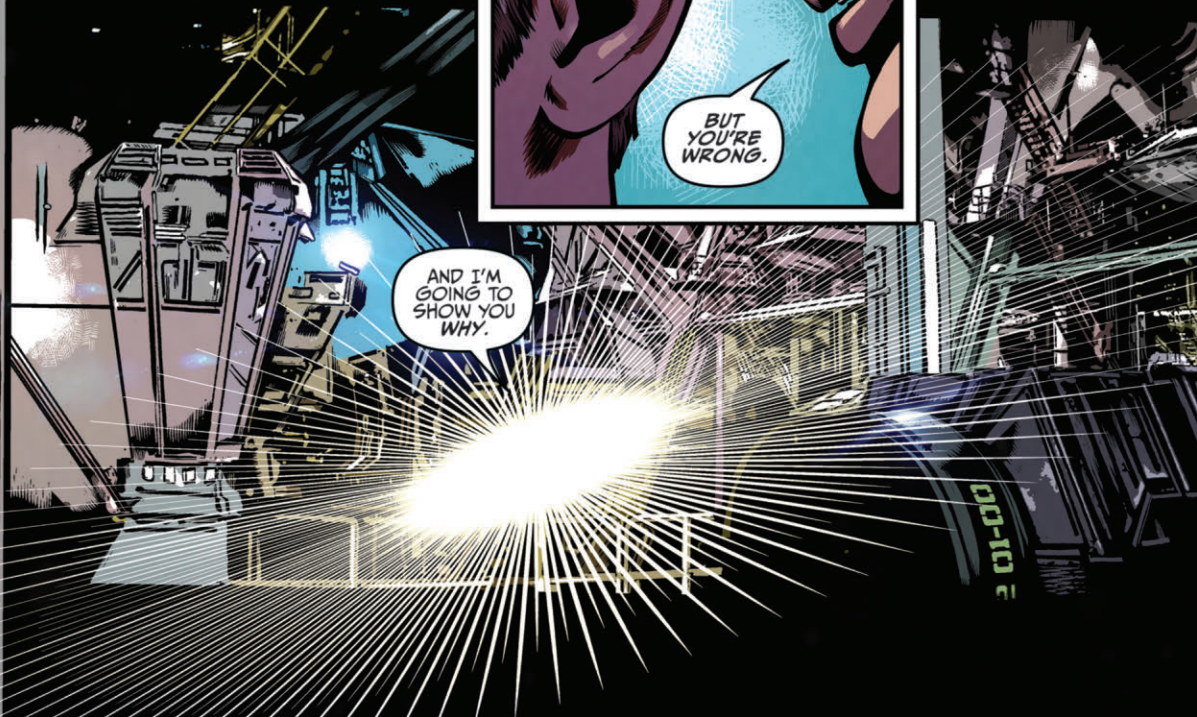
WHY ARE YOU SHOWING ME THIS...

BECAUSE I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I UNDERSTAND, JIM.

I UNDERSTAND WHY YOU'D THINK THAT FAILURE IS NEVER A CERTAINTY.

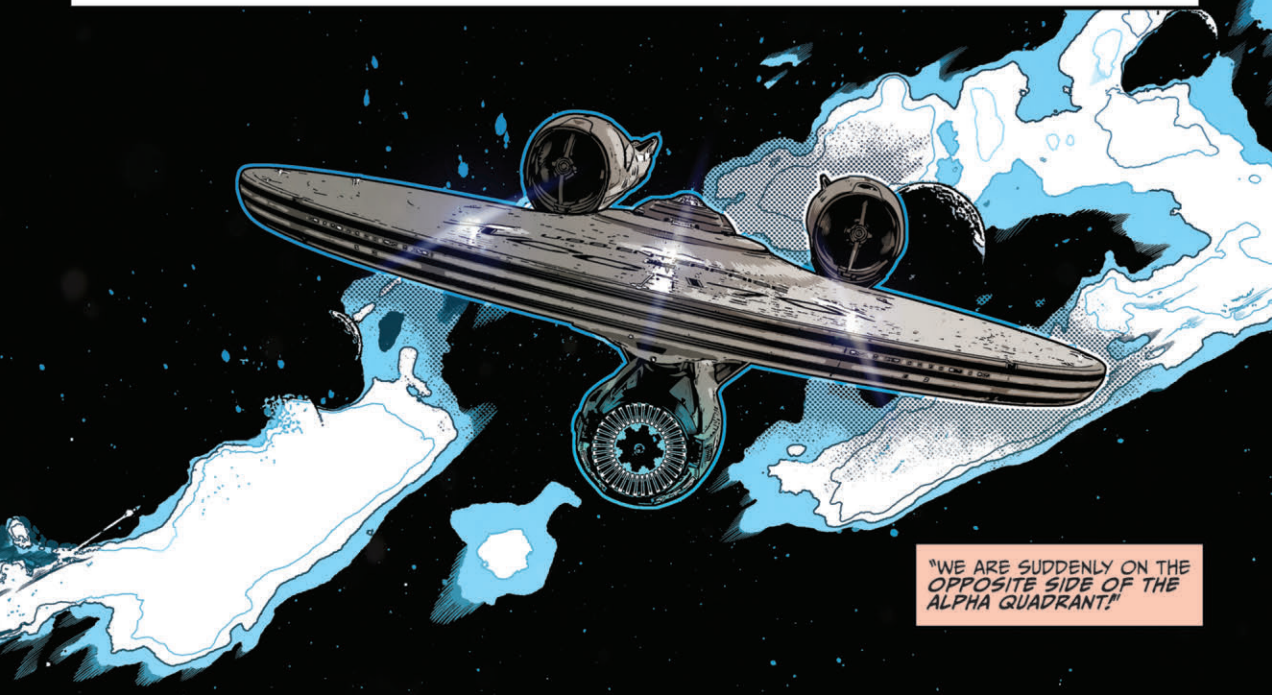
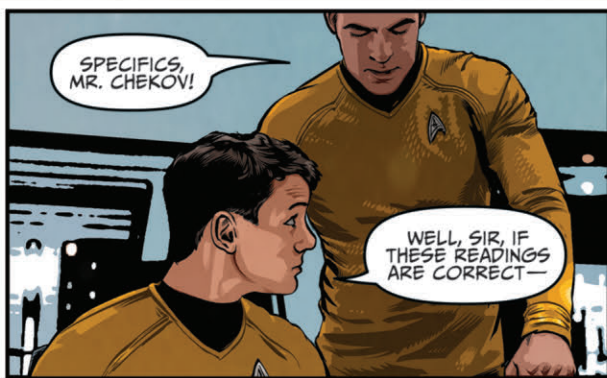
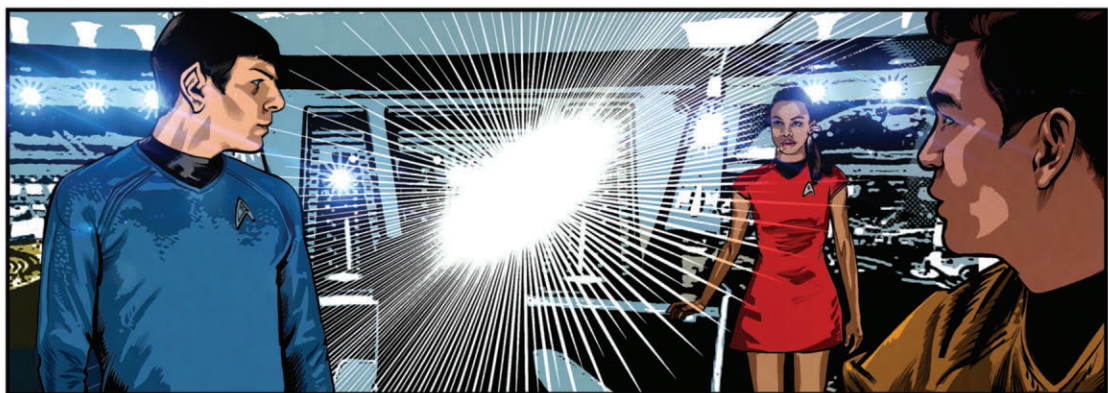


BUT YOU'RE WRONG.



AND I'M GOING TO SHOW YOU WHY.









WE ARE CLOSE  
TO AN UNCHARTED  
SYSTEM...

FOURTEEN  
PLANETS...

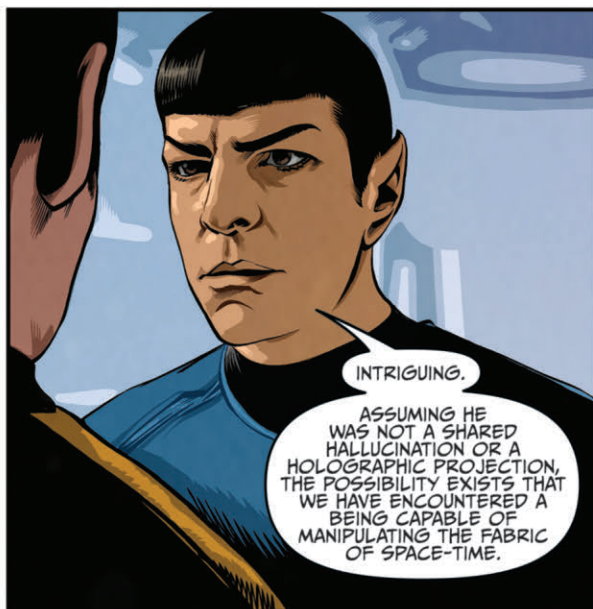


"I'M GOING  
TO SHOW YOU  
WHY..."

CAPTAIN?

THE INTRUDER.  
WHEN HE ZAPPED  
ME OFF THE  
BRIDGE, HE  
TOOK ME—

WELL, NEVER MIND  
WHERE HE TOOK ME, BUT  
HE OFFERED SOME KIND OF  
CHALLENGE. SAID HE WAS  
GOING TO PROVE THERE'S  
SUCH A THING AS A  
NO-WIN SCENARIO.



INTRIGUING.

ASSUMING HE  
WAS NOT A SHARED  
HALLUCINATION OR A  
HOLOGRAPHIC PROJECTION,  
THE POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT  
WE HAVE ENCOUNTERED A  
BEING CAPABLE OF  
MANIPULATING THE FABRIC  
OF SPACE-TIME.



THANKS,  
COMMANDER,  
THAT'S  
REASSURING.

KEPTIN!



WE ARE  
APPROACHING  
SOMETHING... WERY  
LARGE...

WITH MULTIPLE SHIP  
SIGNATURES, BUT NOT  
OF ANY TYPE I  
RECOGNIZE!

WE WILL  
HAVE VISUAL  
IN MINUTES!







"BUT WHEN?"

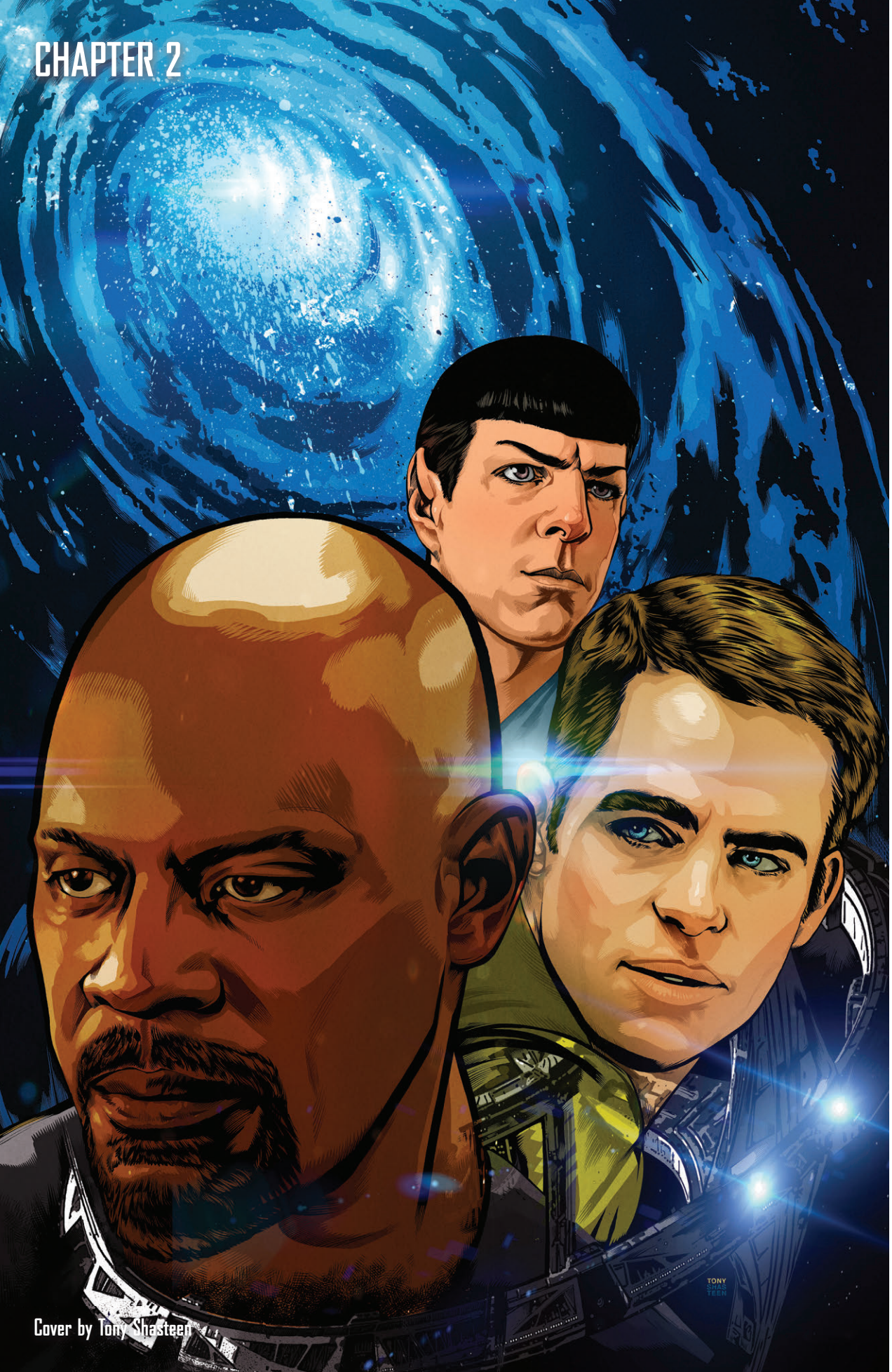








CHAPTER 2







RED ALERT!  
SHIELDS UP!



NO  
RESPONSE TO  
OUR HAILS,  
SIR!

WHOEVER  
THEY ARE, THEY  
DON'T WANT  
TO TALK!



KEPTIN,  
THEY ARE  
LOCKING  
WEAPONS  
ON US!



EVASIVE  
ACTION, MR.  
SULU!

AYE SIR!



SHIELDS AT  
SIXTY-SEVEN  
PERCENT.

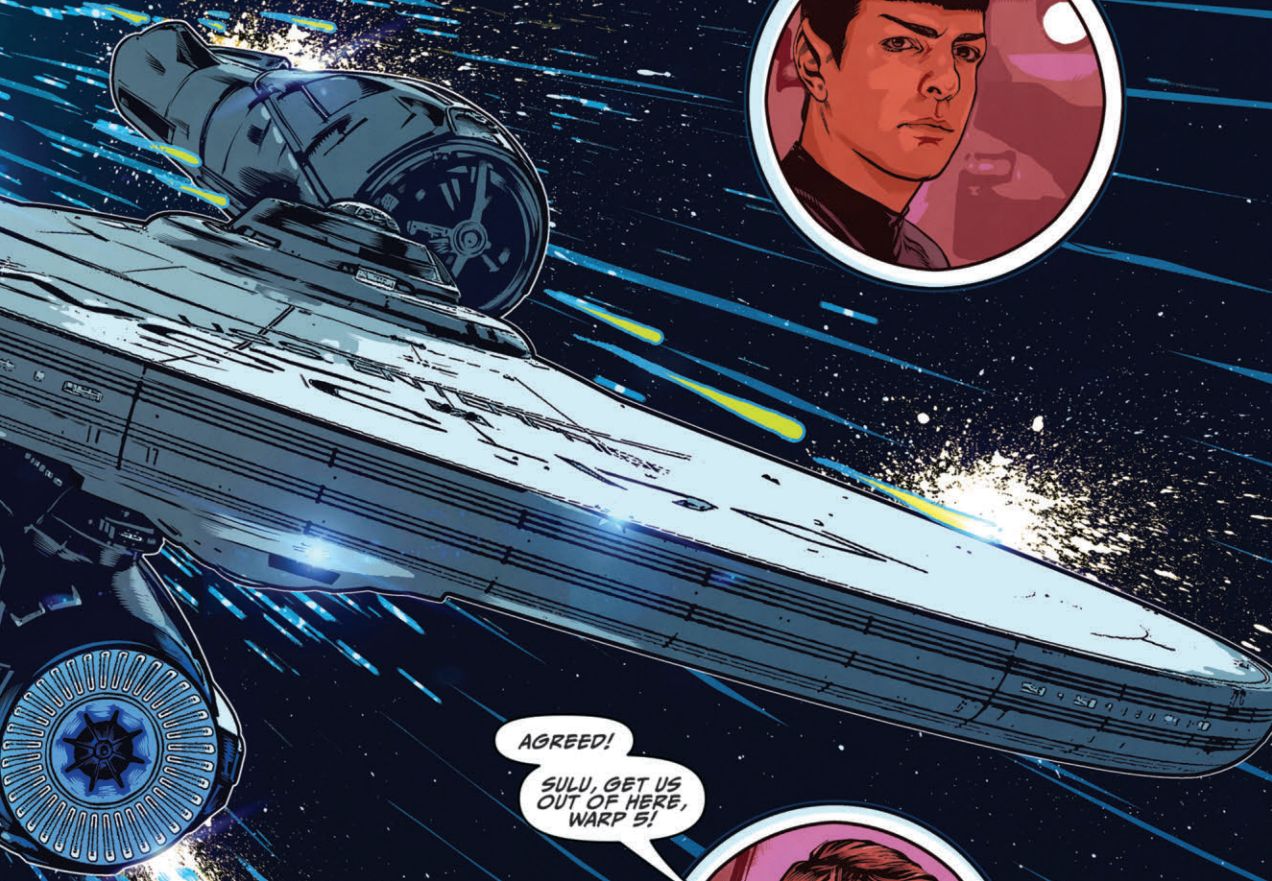






CAPTAIN, I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY'VE GOT IN THEIR TORPEDOES, BUT OUR SHIELDS WON'T HOLD MUCH LONGER!

I MUST CONCUR, CAPTAIN. WE WOULD BE WISE TO DEPART FROM THIS ENCOUNTER WHILE WE ARE STILL CAPABLE OF DOING SO.



AGREED!

SULU, GET US OUT OF HERE, WARP 5!







LIEUTENANT,  
WHY AREN'T WE  
MOVING?

ENGINES AREN'T  
RESPONDING, SIR!  
I'VE ONLY GOT  
IMPULSE!



INTERESTINGLY  
ENOUGH, THIS  
PARTICULAR PICKLE  
ISN'T THE NO-WIN  
SCENARIO I WAS  
TALKING ABOUT.

IT'S JUST  
THE START OF  
THE REAL  
ONE.



WHAT HAVE  
YOU DONE TO  
MY SHIP,  
"Q"?

I HAVEN'T  
DONE  
ANYTHING.

IT'S IMPORTANT THAT  
YOU KNOW I AM SIMPLY  
AN INTERESTED OBSERVER  
FROM THIS POINT ON.  
WHATEVER HAPPENS NEXT  
IS COMPLETELY OUT OF  
MY CONTROL...



... BUT STILL  
VERY MUCH WITHIN  
YOURS. TRY TO  
MAKE GOOD  
DECISIONS.

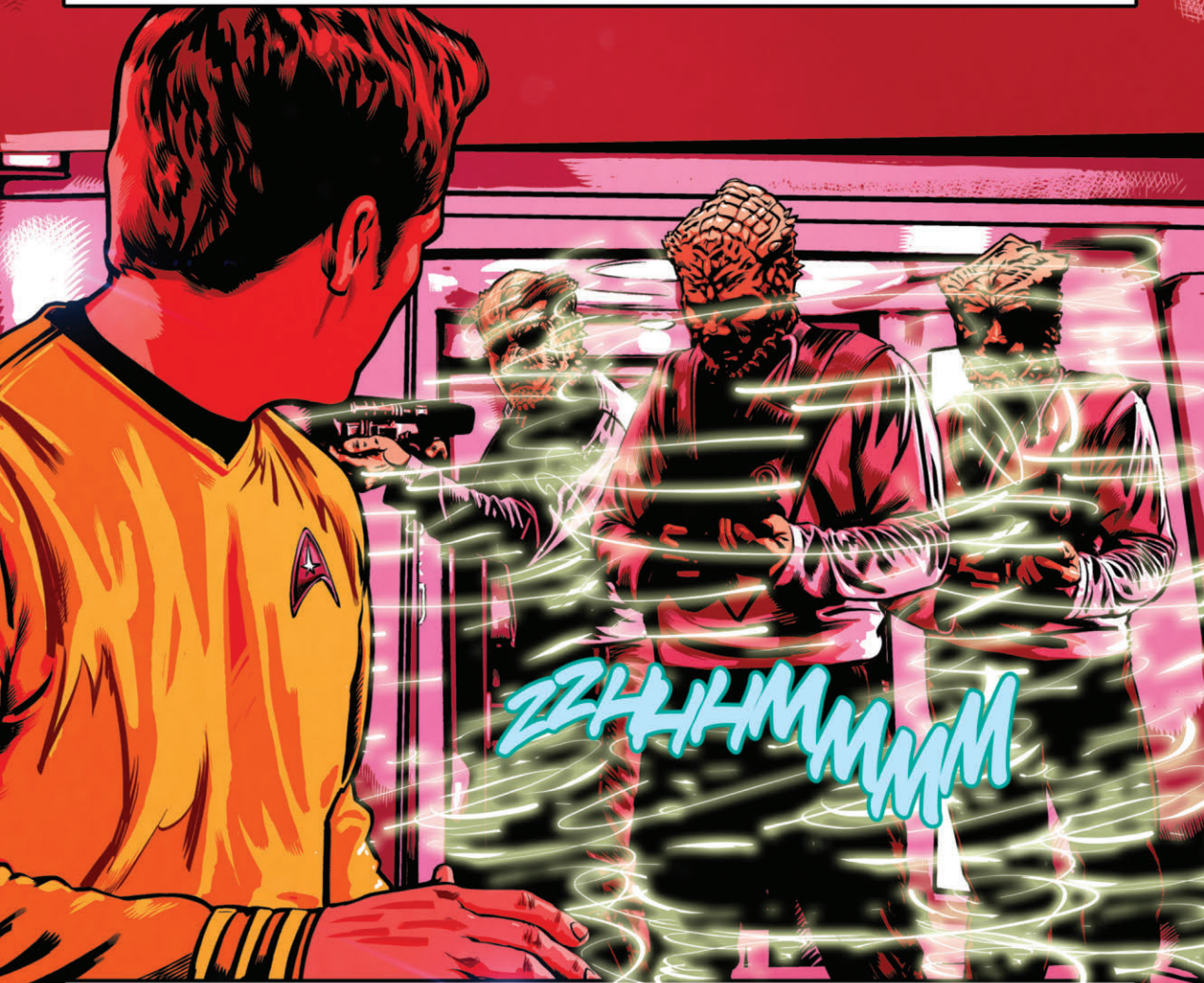
CAPTAIN,  
SHIELDS AT  
TWENTY-THREE  
PERCENT.



I'LL EXCUSE  
MYSELF FOR  
A MOMENT.  
COMPANY'S  
COMING.

WAIT--!











"WHAT THE HELL  
IS THIS PLACE?"



SILENCE!

KRAK

YOU WILL ONLY  
OPEN YOUR MOUTH  
TO OFFER ANSWERS  
TO THE QUESTIONS  
WE ASK.

...OW...







JUST CONSIDER YOURSELF LUCKY THAT YOU ARE STILL ALIVE TO SEE THIS PLACE.

I JUST WANT TO SEE MY CREW.

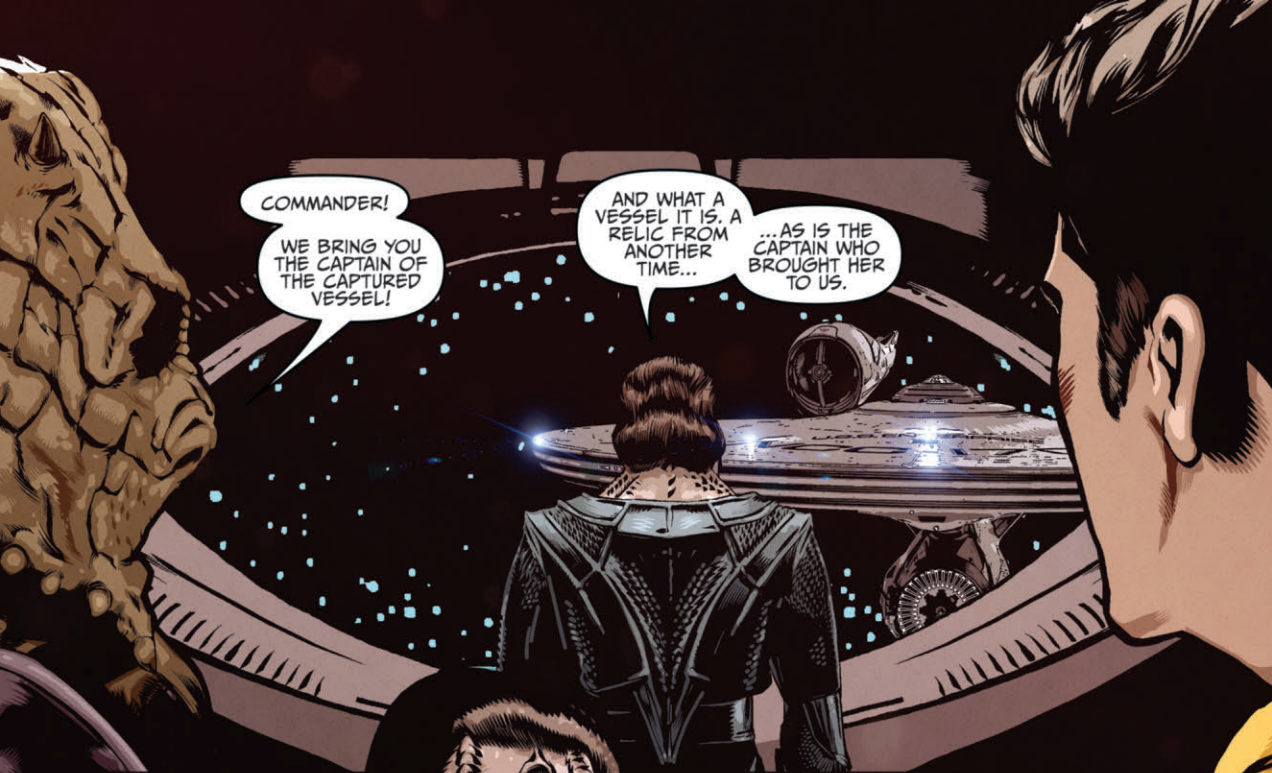


NO CREW, NO ANSWERS.



NO ANSWERS, AND YOU'LL NEVER SEE YOUR CREW AGAIN, CAPTAIN.





COMMANDER!

WE BRING YOU  
THE CAPTAIN OF  
THE CAPTURED  
VESSEL!

AND WHAT A  
VESSEL IT IS. A  
RELIC FROM  
ANOTHER  
TIME...

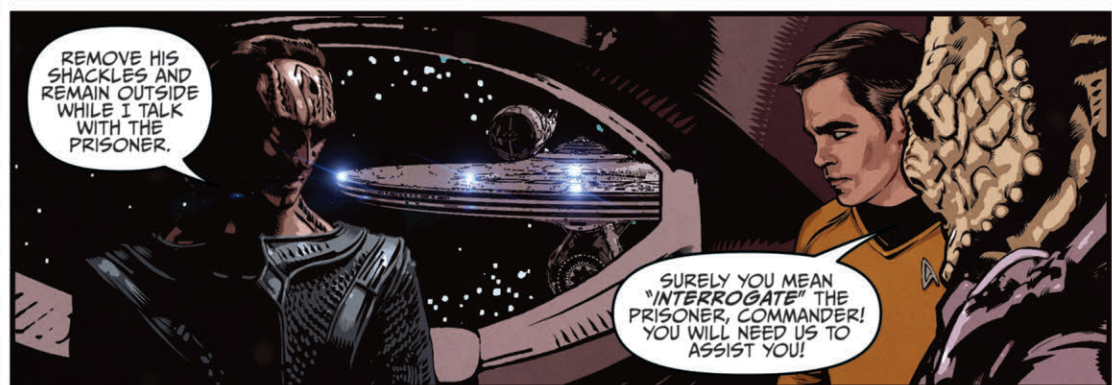
...AS IS THE  
CAPTAIN WHO  
BROUGHT HER  
TO US.



YOU MUST BE  
JAMES TIBERIUS  
KIRK.

MY NAME IS  
GUL DUKAT.

WELCOME TO  
TEROK NOR.



REMOVE HIS  
SHACKLES AND  
REMAIN OUTSIDE  
WHILE I TALK  
WITH THE PRISONER.

SURELY YOU MEAN  
"INTERROGATE" THE  
PRISONER, COMMANDER!  
YOU WILL NEED US TO  
ASSIST YOU!

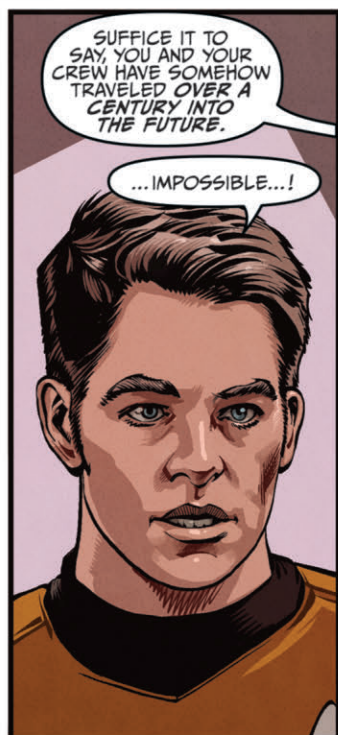


I AM ALL TOO  
FAMILIAR WITH  
WHAT JEM'HADAR  
"ASSISTANCE"  
ENTAILS.

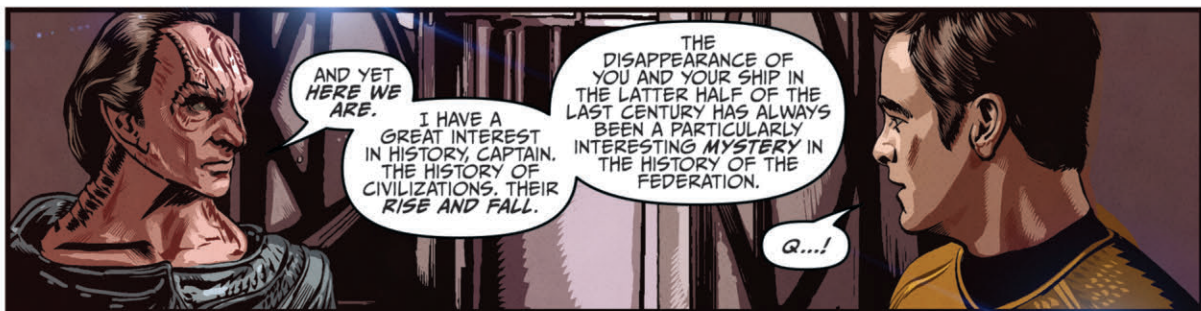
AND YOU  
WOULD DO WELL  
TO REMEMBER TO  
WHOM YOU ARE  
SPEAKING.

WAIT  
OUTSIDE.













UNNH—!



"HONORED GUESTS..."  
MY—



CAPTAIN!  
ARE YOU ALL  
RIGHT?

LOOKS  
LIKE THEY GAVE  
YOU A NASTY  
WELCOME,  
SIR!



I'LL  
BE FINE,  
SCOTTY.



WHERE  
ARE THE  
OTHERS?

THEY SPLIT US  
UP! SPOCK AND THE  
REST OF THE SCIENCE  
SECTION WERE TAKEN  
SOMEWHERE  
ELSE!

CAPTAIN,  
WE'RE NOT  
ALONE IN HERE!  
THERE'S—



THERE'S ANOTHER  
UNIFORM I HAVEN'T  
SEEN SINCE I STUDIED  
STARFLEET HISTORY  
AT THE ACADEMY.

WHO—?





YOU CAN  
TRUST ME, MY  
FRIEND.

AS I  
TOLD YOUR  
COLLEAGUES,  
MY NAME...



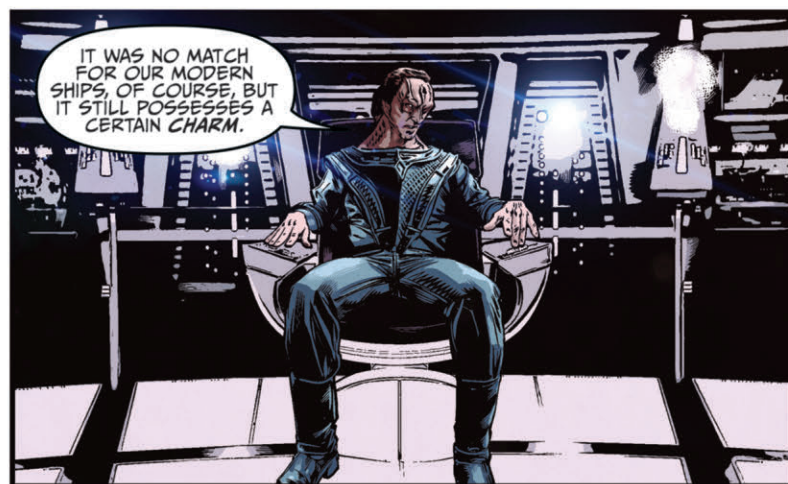
...IS  
**BENJAMIN  
SISKO.**

AND I'M  
VERY MUCH  
ON YOUR  
SIDE.









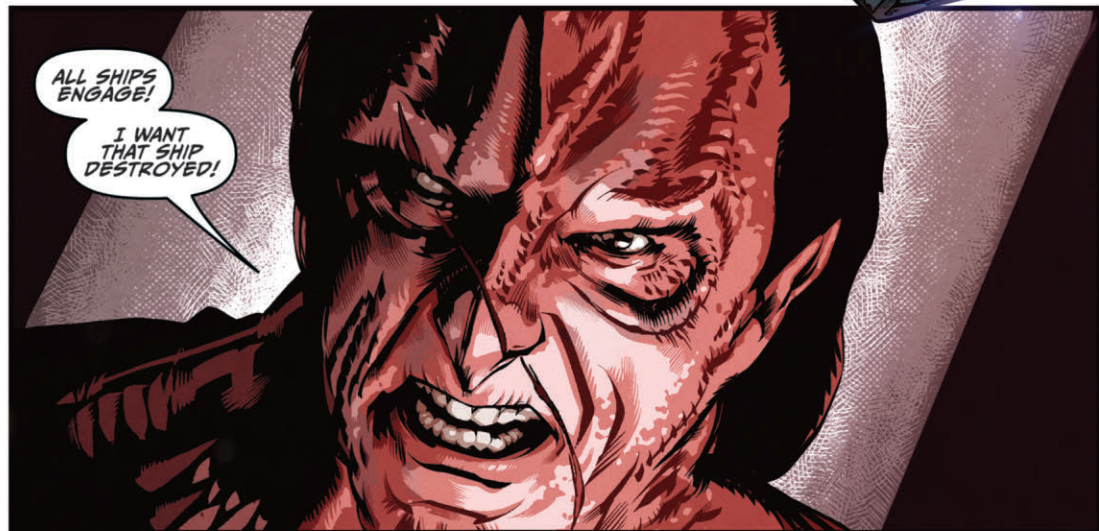


—IT'S THE  
DEFIANT!



ALL SHIPS  
ENGAGE!

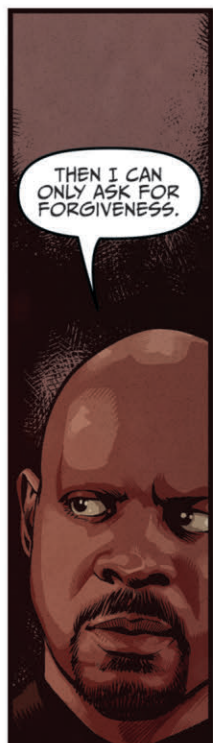
I WANT  
THAT SHIP  
DESTROYED!



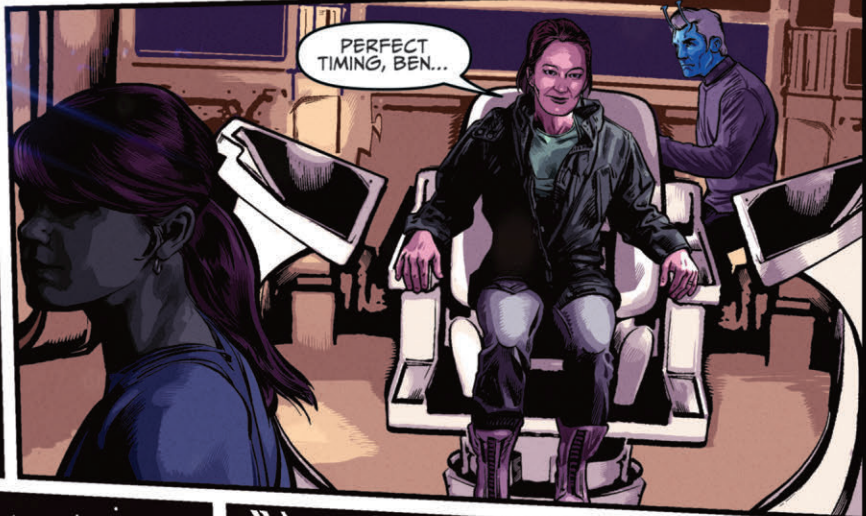










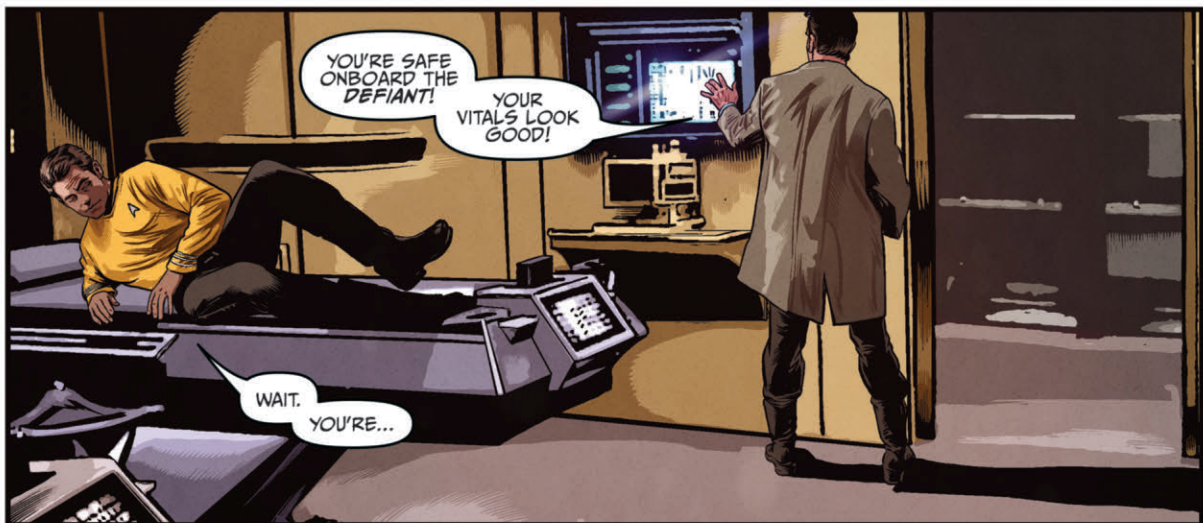






NNHH...

WHA—



YOU'RE SAFE  
ONBOARD THE  
DEFIANT!

YOUR  
VITALS LOOK  
GOOD!

WAIT.

YOU'RE...



JUST  
CHECKING UP  
ON YOU! WHAT AN  
EXCITING TURN  
OF EVENTS! OF  
COURSE, WE'RE  
STILL IN THE  
EARLY DAYS  
YET.

DON'T WORRY.  
NO ONE CAN HEAR  
US TALKING. I'VE...  
MUDDLED THEIR  
PERCEPTION.  
MOMENTARILY.



ENOUGH! THIS  
ISN'T A GAME! MY  
CREW'S LIVES  
ARE AT RISK!

BUT OF  
COURSE THEY  
ARE!



HOW CAN YOU  
WIN IF YOU HAVE  
NOTHING TO  
LOSE?

WAIT!





PLEASE  
JUST LET ME  
WAKE UP...

I'VE OFTEN HAD  
THAT SAME WISH  
OVER THESE PAST  
FEW YEARS,  
CAPTAIN.



BUT I  
ASSURE YOU,  
I AM AS REAL  
AS I APPEAR  
TO BE.

HOW ARE  
YOU?

FINE. NICE  
PUNCH.



MY SINCERE  
APOLOGIES.  
TIME WAS OF  
THE ESSENCE.

I'M SORRY  
WE COULDN'T RESCUE  
ALL OF YOUR CREW, BUT  
THERE'S TIME FOR THAT  
YET. FOR NOW MY  
FRIENDS AND I NEED  
ALL THE HELP WE  
CAN FIND.



BACK ON  
THE STATION. THE  
COMMANDER—

DUKAT. HE  
MASKS HIS  
MADNESS  
WELL.

HE SPOKE  
ABOUT THE  
FEDERATION  
IN THE *PAST  
TENSE*?

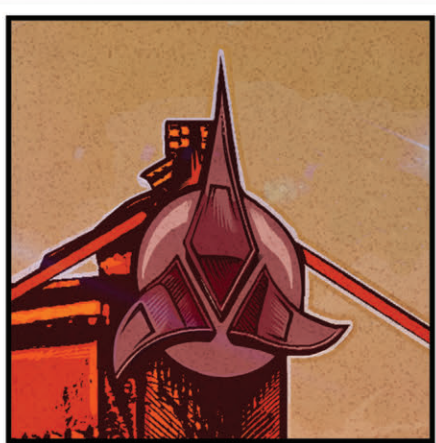
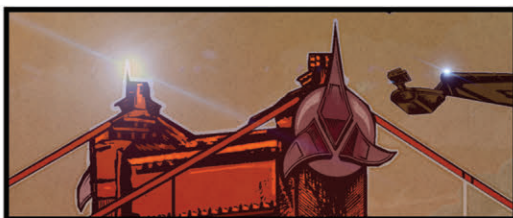


I'M AFRAID SO,  
CAPTAIN. YOU'LL KNOW  
EVERYTHING ONCE WE  
RENDEZVOUS WITH OUR  
ALLIES ON EARTH.  
WE'LL BE ARRIVING  
SHORTLY.

BUT  
I SHOULD  
WARN YOU IN  
ADVANCE...



"...EARTH ISN'T WHAT  
IT USED TO BE!"









CHAPTER 3







SORRY...  
SISO, IS  
IT?

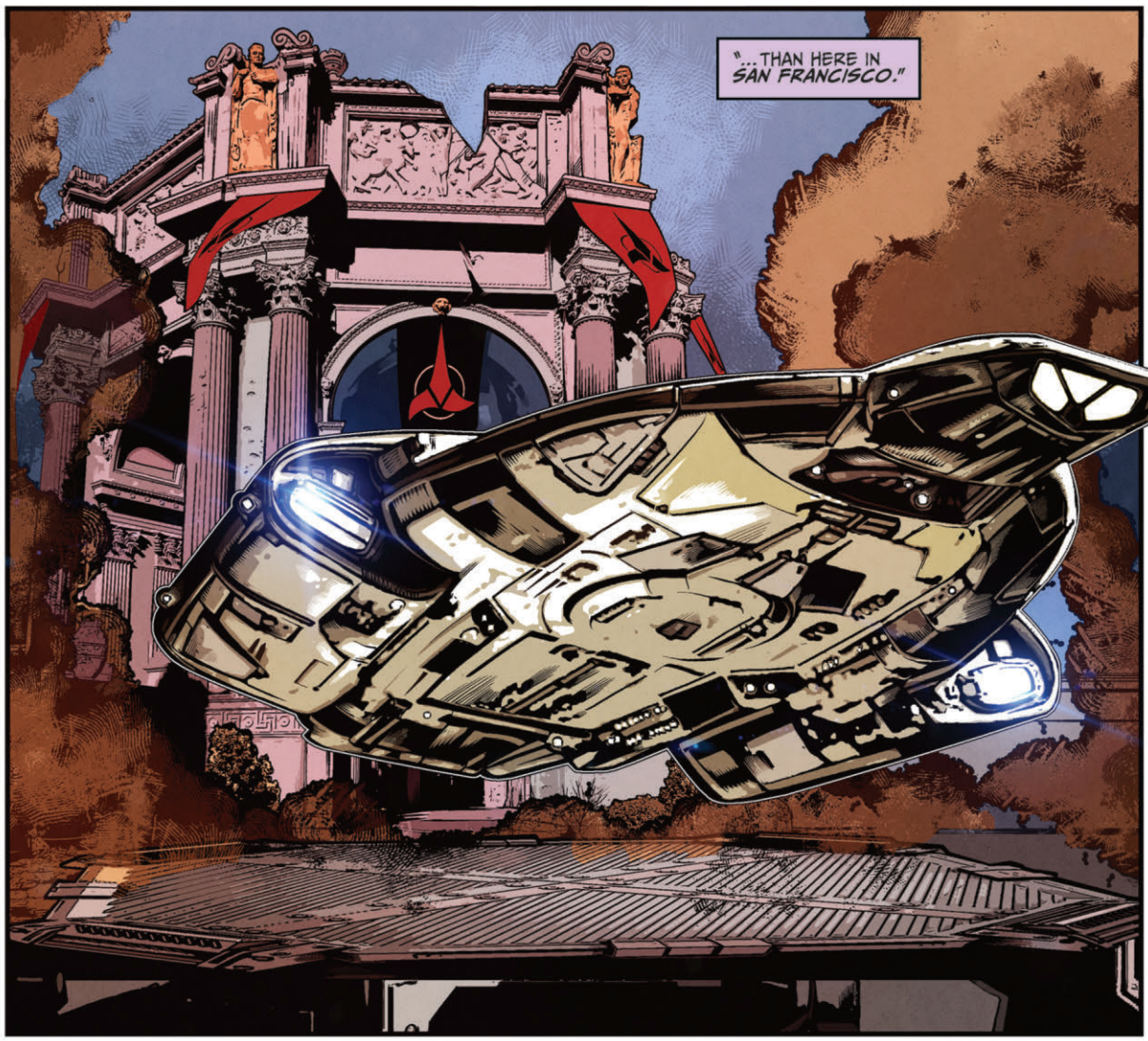
FOR A  
SECOND THERE I  
THOUGHT YOU SAID  
THE KLINGONS  
CONQUERED  
EARTH!



YOU HEARD  
ME CORRECTLY,  
CAPTAIN KIRK.

I'M AFRAID THE  
GALAXY HAS CHANGED  
DRAMATICALLY SINCE  
YOU AND YOUR CREW  
DISAPPEARED OVER A  
CENTURY AGO.

AND  
NOWHERE  
MORE SO...



"...THAN HERE IN  
SAN FRANCISCO."





"IT ALL STARTED WITH THE WORMHOLE.

"THAT'S HOW *THE DOMINION* ARRIVED FROM THE GAMMA QUADRANT. THE CARDASSIAN UNION WAS THE FIRST TO FALL UNDER THEIR SWAY.

# DOMINION

"THE DOMINION MADE IT CLEAR THAT DIPLOMACY WAS THE LAST THING IT WAS LOOKING FOR.

"THEY INFILTRATED THE ROMULAN HOMEWORLD AND USED THE ROMULANS' OWN RED MATTER TO DESTROY THE PLANET.







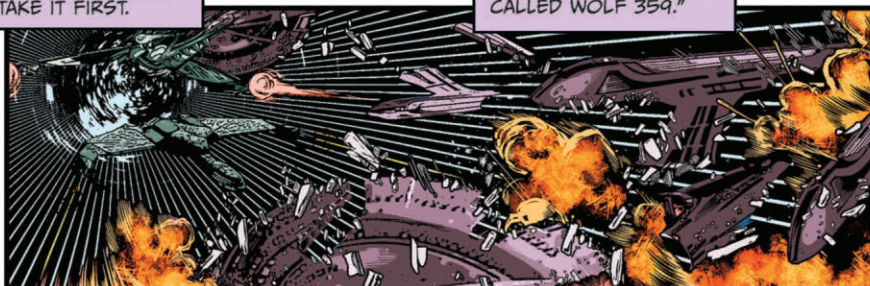
"WAR MAKES STRANGE BEDFELLOWS. THE KLINGONS AND ROMULANS PUT THEIR OWN BATTLES ASIDE TO FIGHT THE DOMINION."

"THE FEDERATION, BLESS ITS HEART, TRIED A DIPLOMATIC APPROACH."

# KLINGON EMPIRE

"THE KLINGONS DECIDED THAT IT WAS MORE PRUDENT TO TAKE EARTH FOR THEMSELVES RATHER THAN WAIT FOR THE DOMINION TO TAKE IT FIRST."

"STARFLEET MADE ITS LAST STAND AT A PLACE CALLED WOLF 359."







"THE HUMAN RESISTANCE TO THE KLINGON INVASION WAS AS FIERCE AS IT WAS SHORT-LIVED."

"THE KLINGONS HAVE ALWAYS HAD A SPECIAL KNACK FOR ELIMINATING THE VOICES OF DISCONTENT."



"I GREW UP UNDER A KLINGON FLAG."

"FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, EARTH HAS BEEN CALLED BY ANOTHER NAME..."

"...TERA'."



"AND FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, I'VE LONGED TO LEAVE THE PLANET TO EXPLORE OTHER WORLDS."

"THE BEST WAY TO DO THAT WAS TO JOIN IN THE HUMAN AUXILIARY CORPS."



"I'VE SPENT MOST OF MY CAREER AS A CARGO PILOT, SHIPPING SUPPLIES ACROSS THE EMPIRE AS THE WAR WITH THE DOMINION RAGES ON."

"SUPPLIES... AND INFORMATION."

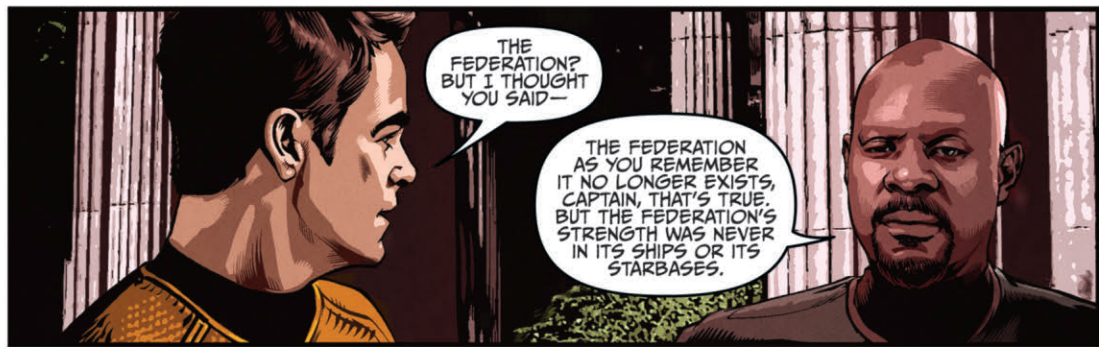




YOU'RE  
A SPY.

IS THAT WHY YOU  
WERE A PRISONER  
ON THAT SPACE  
STATION?

INDEED. I WAS  
ON A MISSION TO  
RENDEZVOUS WITH  
MY PARTNER IN THE  
FREE FEDERATION  
RESISTANCE.



THE  
FEDERATION?  
BUT I THOUGHT  
YOU SAID—

THE FEDERATION  
AS YOU REMEMBER  
IT NO LONGER EXISTS,  
CAPTAIN, THAT'S TRUE,  
BUT THE FEDERATION'S  
STRENGTH WAS NEVER  
IN ITS SHIPS OR ITS  
STARBASES.



ITS  
STRENGTH WAS  
IN ITS IDEALS. THEY  
WERE INSTILLED  
IN ME BY MY  
PARENTS.

AND THEY'VE  
PROVED MUCH  
HARDER TO  
ERADICATE THAN  
ANY ARMY OR  
FLEET.



SO WHY HAVE  
WE COME TO  
KLINGON-HELD  
TERRITORY?

AND HOW DID  
YOU PASS THROUGH  
THEIR PLANETARY  
DEFENSES WITHOUT  
SO MUCH AS A  
HELLO?



OH, I'M STILL A  
SUBJECT OF THE  
EMPIRE. QUITE A  
VALUED ONE, IN  
FACT—

BENJAMIN  
SISKO!





I AM PLEASED TO SEE THAT YOU ARE NOT DEAD.

BUT WHO ARE THESE OTHERS YOU BRING WITH YOU?



YOU KNOW MY ASSOCIATE, ODO.

THE OTHERS ARE MY FRIENDS, NEWLY FREED FROM THE DOMINION'S PRISON ON TEROK NOR. I BELIEVE THEY CAN HELP US.

THESE KLINGONS LOOK A LITTLE... DIFFERENT... THAN THE ONES I REMEMBER.



WHY DO THEY WEAR SUCH STRANGE GARB? IT SEEMS... ODDLY FAMILIAR.

A LONG STORY, KURN, AND ONE I WOULD TELL YOUR BROTHER PERSONALLY.

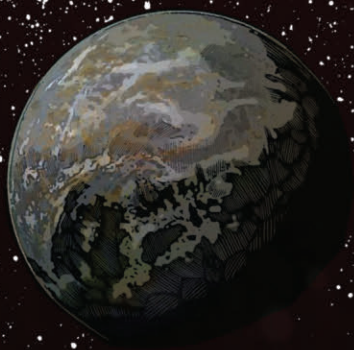


JUST AS WELL. HE HAS BEEN INFORMED OF YOUR ARRIVAL.

LET US NOT KEEP THE CHANCELLOR WAITING!



"WHAT DID THEY CALL THIS PLACE? *BAJOR?*"



NEVER  
HEARD OF  
IT.

MOST LIKELY  
BECAUSE THE FEDERATION  
HAD YET TO MAKE FIRST  
CONTACT WITH IT IN OUR  
OWN TIME, DOCTOR  
MCCOY.



YEAH, WELL,  
HOORAY FOR  
EXPLORATION.  
ALL WE'VE FOUND  
IS A NEW PLACE  
TO DIE.

UNLESS  
YOU'VE COME  
UP WITH A WAY  
TO GET US  
OUT OF—



SILENCE!

UNNH—!

KRAK









I SHOULD  
WARN YOU, I'M A  
DOCTOR TOO.

IS THAT SO?  
AND WHAT TERRIBLE  
CHANGE IN FORTUNE  
LED YOU INTO MY  
CARE?

AN APPARENTLY  
*OMNIPOTENT* BEING THREW  
US FORWARD IN TIME FROM  
THE YEAR 2261, OUR SHIP WAS  
CAPTURED, OUR CREW WAS  
DIVIDED UP, AND HERE I AM  
ON THE RECEIVING END OF  
A MEDICAL SCAN.



UH-HUH...

TELL ME,  
HOW LONG HAS  
YOUR FRIEND BEEN  
SUFFERING FROM  
DELUSIONS?



DR. MCCOY  
SPEAKS TRUTHFULLY,  
DOCTOR. WE ARE  
INDEED VISITORS  
FROM THE PAST.

I AM LT.  
COMMANDER  
SPOCK OF THE  
*U.S.S. ENTERPRISE*,  
AND THIS IS OUR  
CHIEF MEDICAL  
OFFICER,  
LEONARD  
MCCOY.



THE  
ENTER—

IT CAN'T  
BE—

YOU'RE—



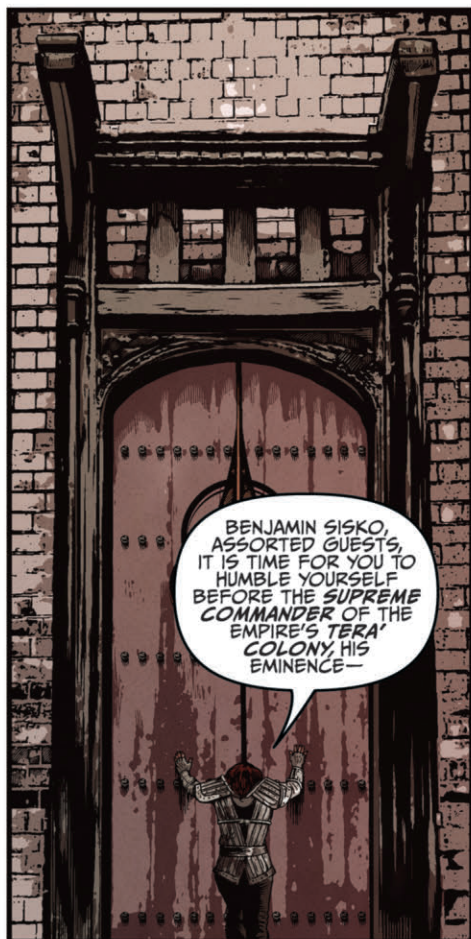
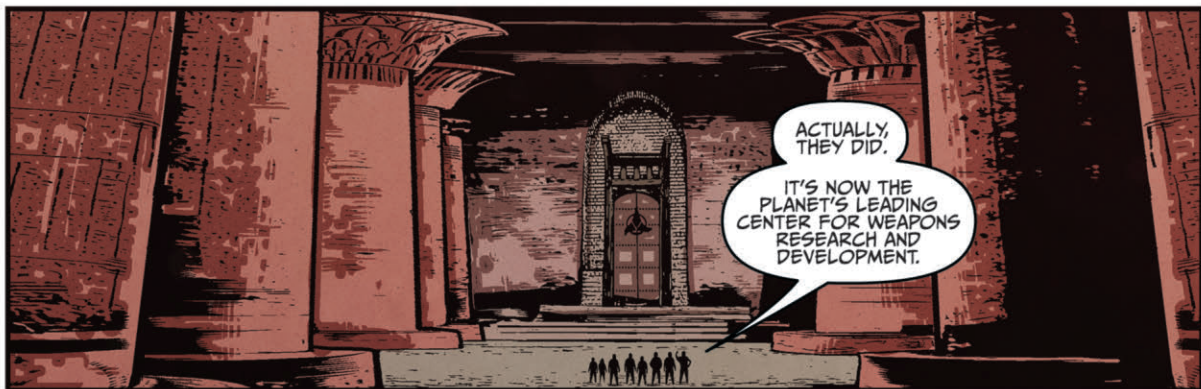
YOU KNOW  
OF OUR SHIP,  
DOCTOR  
BASHIR?

OF  
COURSE,  
I—  
—BUT THIS IS  
IMPOSSIBLE!



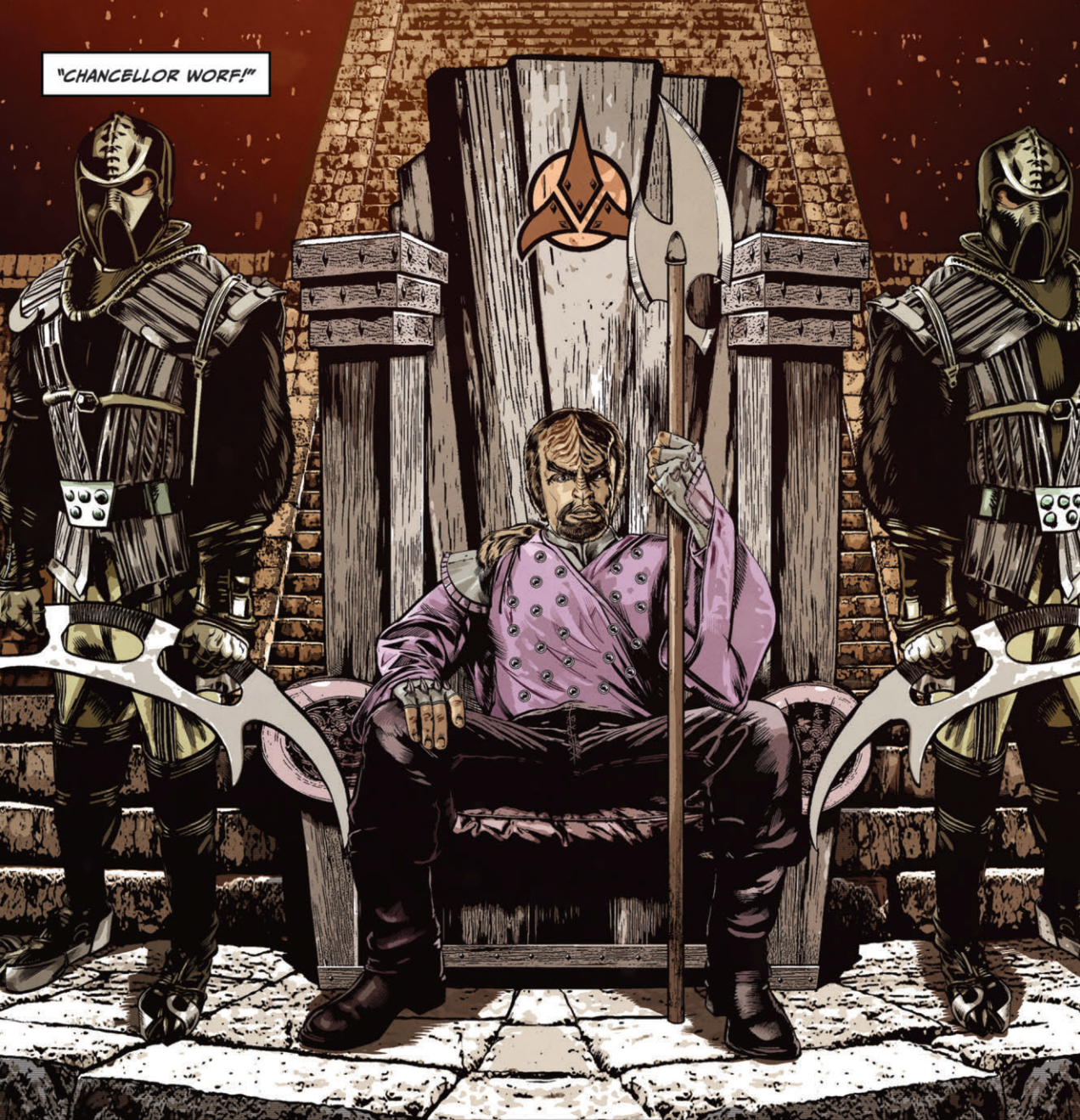








"CHANCELLOR WOLF!"



SISKO. WELL MET.

AND YOU AS WELL, CHANCELLOR. I BRING REPORTS OF OUR ENEMIES' SCHEMES FROM WITHIN THE HEART OF THE BETA QUADRANT.

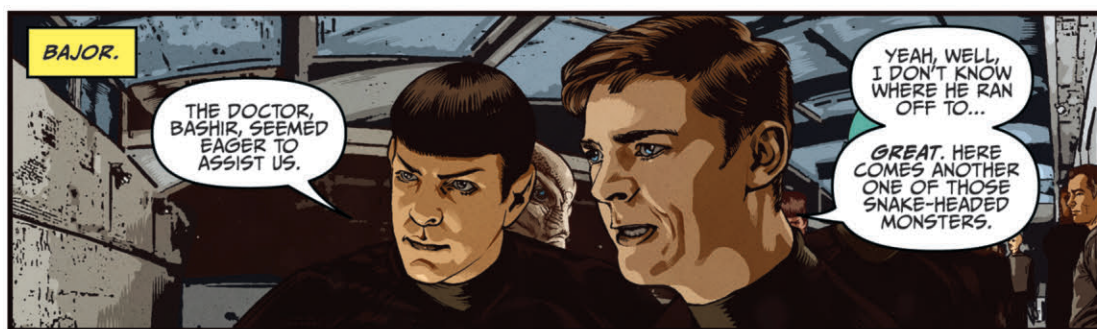
I AM PLEASED, SISKO.

BUT I SEE THAT NEW INTELLIGENCE IS NOT ALL THAT YOU BRING.









BAJOR.

THE DOCTOR,  
BASHIR, SEEMED  
EAGER TO  
ASSIST US.

YEAH, WELL,  
I DON'T KNOW  
WHERE HE RAN  
OFF TO...

GREAT. HERE  
COMES ANOTHER  
ONE OF THOSE  
SNAKE-HEADED  
MONSTERS.



COMMANDER  
SPOCK! DR. MCCOY!  
HOW ARE YOU  
ENJOYING YOUR NEW  
ACCOMMODATIONS?

YOU HAVE  
GOT TO BE  
KIDDING  
ME...

YOU!



NO.

"Q."

IS IT REALLY  
THAT HARD TO  
REMEMBER?



I SUPPOSE WE  
SHOULD NOT BE  
SURPRISED THAT YOU  
ARE ABLE TO CHANGE  
YOUR APPEARANCE  
AT WILL.

YES, BUT  
THE CARDASSIAN  
SPECIES IS ONE  
OF MY LEAST  
FAVORITE TO  
IMITATE.

EVERY  
TIME I DO  
IT I FEEL SO...  
CONSTIPATED.



THEN WHY  
DO IT? AND  
WHY NOW?

OH,  
LIGHTEN UP,  
COMMANDER.  
I JUST WANTED  
TO SURPRISE  
YOU!





AND REASSURE YOU THAT YOU WILL NOT BE CONDEMNED TO YOUR APPARENTLY DIRE CIRCUMSTANCES FOREVER.

YOUR STORY... *OUR* STORY... IS STILL UNFOLDING!



SO I DON'T WANT YOU TO GET DISCOURAGED.

WHATEVER IT IS YOU'RE UP TO, YOU MADMAN, JUST GET IT OVER WITH!



AND THE FUN IN THAT WOULD BE *WHAT*, EXACTLY?

PATIENCE, DOCTOR. AS A GESTURE OF GOODWILL, I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW THAT YOUR COMRADES, INCLUDING YOUR CAPTAIN, ARE ALIVE AND WELL. YOU *WILL* SEE THEM AGAIN.



BUT TO TELL YOU THE *WHEN* AND THE *HOW*...

THAT WOULD SPOIL EVERYTHING...



THE NEXT TIME I SEE HIM, MY HIPPOCRATIC OATH GOES OUT THE WINDOW. "DO NO HARM," MY ASS...

A SENTIMENT I CANNOT HELP BUT APPRECIATE, DOCTOR.



TEROK NOR.

"WE HAVE WORD FROM OUR SPIES IN THE SOL SYSTEM, COMMANDER."

SISKO AND THE FEDERATION OFFICERS WHO ESCAPED WITH HIM HAVE MADE CONTACT WITH THE KLINGONS.

THANK YOU, LIEUTENANT, BUT MY PRIMARY CONCERN IS WITH THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT ON *BAJOR*.

WHAT WORD OF OUR INITIATIVE THERE?

NOTHING YET, SIR.

BUT IS NOT SISKO OUR PRIMARY CONCERN? AS ONE OF THE LEADERS OF THE RESISTANCE HIS CAPTURE MUST BE—

SISKO AND HIS NEWFOUND ALLIES DO NOT CONCERN ME.

ALL THAT *DOES* IS THE *ARTIFACT* THAT RUMORS SAY THE RESISTANCE HAS *ACQUIRED* ON *BAJOR*.

THE ARTIFACT COULD MEAN THE OVERTHROW OF THE *DOMINION ITSELF* IF IT REMAINS IN THEIR HANDS.

SO I VERY MUCH PREFER THAT IT FIND ITS WAY INTO *MINE!*



BAJOR.

THIS IS COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE! A CONTRACT IS A CONTRACT!

EXACTLY! AND THE CONTRACT CALLED FOR TWO ORDERS OF VIABLE VACCINE!

THIS USELESS SWILL YOU DELIVERED WOULD KILL ANYONE I GAVE IT TO, QUARK! I DEMAND THAT YOU TAKE IT BACK AND PROVIDE RESTITUTION!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE, QUARK?

OH! GOOD EVENING, SIR!

JUST YOUR STANDARD EXTORTION OF A WELL-MEANING MERCHANT BY A SCURRILOUS SO-CALLED "PRACTITIONER" OF MEDICINE!

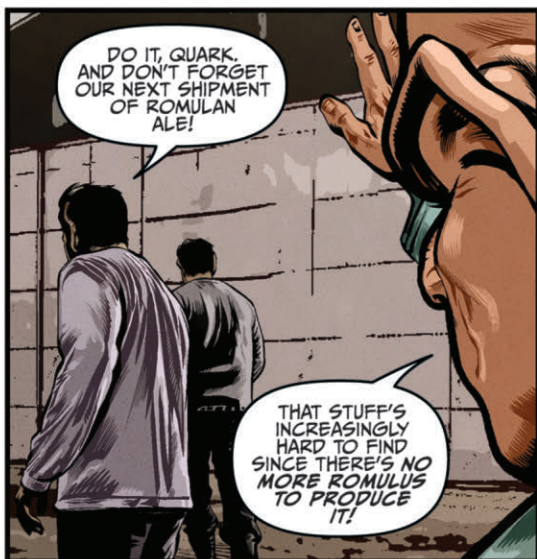
THAT'S RIDICULOUS! I'VE BEEN DELIVERED SUB-STANDARD SUPPLIES!

IF THEY AREN'T REPLACED WITH THE PROPER VACCINE, HALF THE PRISONERS IN THE LABOR CAMP WILL BE SUBJECT TO INFECTION BY NATIVE PATHOGENS!

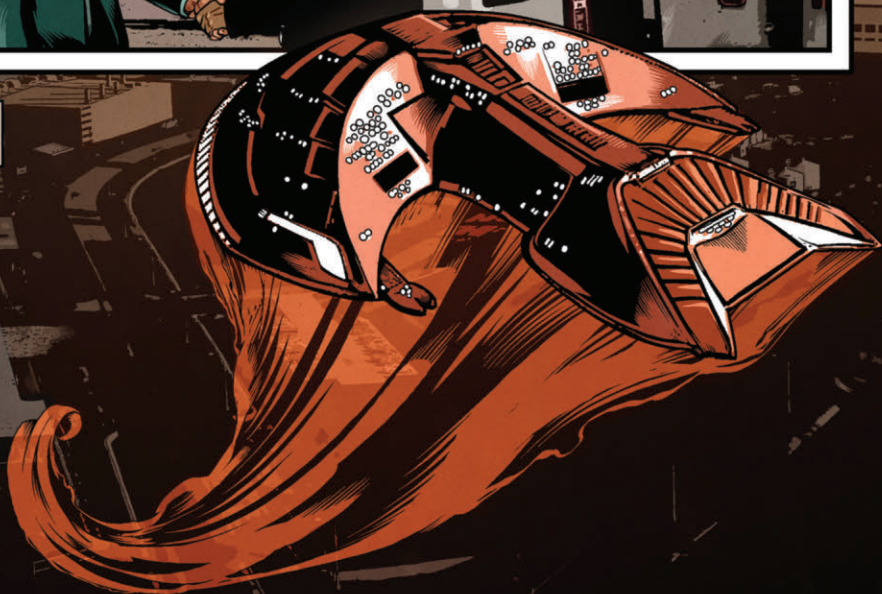
SO?

SO HOW WOULD YOUR COMMANDING OFFICER REACT IF HE KNEW THAT YOU IMPEDED THE FULL HEALTH AND FUNCTIONING OF A LABOR FORCE VITAL TO THE PROCUREMENT AND REFINING OF NATURAL RESOURCES CRITICAL TO THE DOMINION'S WAR EFFORT?





"...AND ENJOY THE ALE I BROUGHT YOU."







RISE AND  
SHINE! WE'VE  
ARRIVED!

WHO...



...OR  
WHAT...

...ARE  
YOU?



YOU ACT LIKE  
YOU'VE NEVER  
SEEN A *FERENGI*  
BEFORE!

I HAVEN'T  
HAD THE  
PLEASURE.

FASCINATING.  
ANOTHER SPECIES WITH  
WHICH WE HAVE YET TO  
MAKE FIRST CONTACT  
IN OUR OWN TIME  
PERIOD.



SO IT'S *TRUE*!  
YOU REALLY ARE A  
LOST STARFLEET  
CREW!

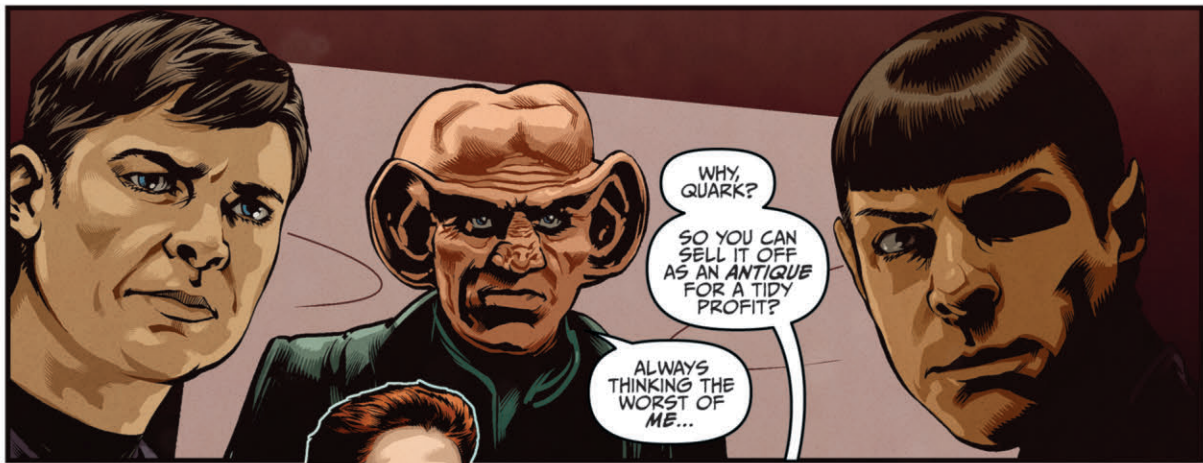
YES.  
AND WE ARE  
GRATEFUL FOR  
YOUR HELP.



MY PLEASURE.  
TELL ME...

DO YOU THINK  
I COULD GET A  
LOOK AT YOUR  
*SHIP*?





WHY, QUARK?  
SO YOU CAN  
SELL IT OFF  
AS AN *ANTIQUE*  
FOR A TIDY  
PROFIT?

ALWAYS  
THINKING THE  
WORST OF  
ME...



...AREN'T  
YOU, KIRA?

WOULDN'T  
BE VERY  
SMART OF ME  
IF I DIDN'T.

WELCOME TO  
THE RESISTANCE,  
GENTLEMEN. IT'S THE  
CLOSEST THING TO  
THE *FEDERATION* AS  
EXISTS THESE  
DAYS.



CAN  
YOU HELP US  
CONTACT OUR  
CAPTAIN? GET  
OUR SHIP  
BACK?

IF EVERYTHING  
GOES ACCORDING  
TO PLAN, DOCTOR, WE  
WON'T JUST SAVE  
YOUR FRIENDS, AND  
YOUR SHIP..



...WE'LL SAVE  
THE *ENTIRE*  
GALAXY!



SAN FRANCISCO.

I SHALL  
ASSEMBLE MY  
ADVISORY COUNCIL TO  
DISCUSS BOTH THE  
INTELLIGENCE YOU  
HAVE GATHERED,  
SISKO...

...AND THE  
EVENTS THAT LED  
TO YOUR UNUSUAL  
ARRIVAL, CAPTAIN  
KIRK.

IN THE  
MEANTIME I WILL  
SEE THAT ROOMS  
ARE PREPARED  
FOR YOUR—

I THINK NOT,  
BROTHER.

WHAT  
DID YOU SAY,  
KURN?

I'M AFRAID  
THERE HAS BEEN  
A CHANGE IN  
PLANS...

...ON A  
PLANETARY  
SCALE.

AAAGH—!











CHAPTER 4

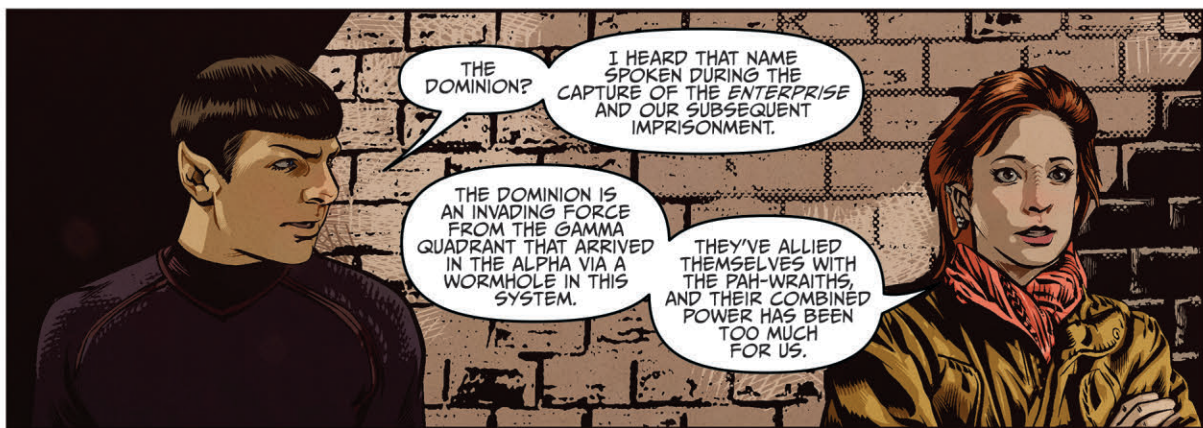




BAJOR.







THE  
DOMINION?

I HEARD THAT NAME  
SPOKEN DURING THE  
CAPTURE OF THE ENTERPRISE  
AND OUR SUBSEQUENT  
IMPRISONMENT.

THE DOMINION IS  
AN INVADING FORCE  
FROM THE GAMMA  
QUADRANT THAT ARRIVED  
IN THE ALPHA VIA A  
WORMHOLE IN THIS  
SYSTEM.

THEY'VE ALLIED  
THEMSELVES WITH  
THE PAH-WRAITHS,  
AND THEIR COMBINED  
POWER HAS BEEN  
TOO MUCH  
FOR US.



"DOMINION"?  
"WRAITHS"?  
"PROPHETS"?

I PREFER THE  
GOOD OLD DAYS,  
WHEN WE JUST HAD  
TO WORRY ABOUT  
KLINGONS.



CONFUSING, I KNOW.  
BUT AS MY WISE OLD  
GRANDMOTHER USED TO  
SAY, THE MORE FACTIONS  
IN THE FIGHT, THE MORE  
PROFIT IN YOUR  
POCKET!

SOUNDS LIKE  
A CHARMING  
WOMAN.

FERengi!

GESUNDHEIT.



HOW DO YOU  
INTEND TO FREE THIS  
"PROPHET" INSIDE  
THE TABLET?

VERY  
CAREFULLY.

I WAS SUPPOSED  
TO RENDEZVOUS WITH MY  
PARTNER—BEN SISCO—AND DELIVER  
THE TABLET TO OUR BASE ON A PLANET  
HIDDEN FROM THE DOMINION'S PRYING  
EYES. THAT'S WHERE WE'LL TRY  
TO FREE THE PROPHET.



BUT SISCO  
WAS CAPTURED.  
THE REBELLION  
WAS A MAN  
DOWN...

...UNTIL YOU  
TWO DROPPED  
INTO MY LAP FROM  
THE LONG-LOST  
PAST.

SO WHAT DO  
YOU SAY, BOYS?  
READY TO GET  
REBELLIOUS?



SAN FRANCISCO.

"THE WAR IS OVER."

THE DOMINION  
HAS INFILTRATED THE  
KLINGON HIGH COMMAND  
ON EARTH AND TAKEN  
CONTROL OF THE  
COLONY.

ALL THAT REMAINS IS  
THE INEVITABLE SURRENDER  
OF THE KLINGON HOMELAND,  
AND OUR CONQUEST OF THE  
ALPHA QUADRANT WILL  
BE COMPLETE.

"INEVITABLE  
SURRENDER?"







YOU  
OBVIOUSLY  
DON'T KNOW  
MUCH ABOUT  
KLINGONS.

WHO THE  
HELL ARE  
YOU?

CHANGELINGS.  
THE FOUNDERS OF  
THE DOMINION.

GO AHEAD.  
KILL US. BUT THE  
RESISTANCE FIGHTING  
THE DOMINION WILL  
SURVIVE ON EVERY  
FREE WORLD  
LEFT.



AH YES. YOUR  
VALIANT RESISTANCE.  
SO CONVINCED OF ITS  
OWN IMPORTANCE ON  
THE GALAXY'S  
BATTLEFIELD.

YOUR EFFORTS  
ARE NOTHING MORE  
THAN THE BEATING OF  
AN INSECT'S WINGS  
INSIDE A STORM.



YOU.

ODO.

YOUR  
BETRAYAL OF  
THE FOUNDERS—OF  
YOUR OWN SPECIES—  
HAS EARNED YOU THE  
HONOR OF DYING  
FIRST.



A BETRAYAL I  
WOULD COMMIT A  
THOUSAND TIMES  
OVER.

YOU AND THOSE LIKE  
YOU HAVE TWISTED OUR  
ONCE PEACEFUL CIVILIZATION  
INTO A MOCKERY OF ALL  
THAT IS HONORABLE.



A MISGUIDED  
SENTIMENT THAT  
WILL DIE WITH  
YOU.

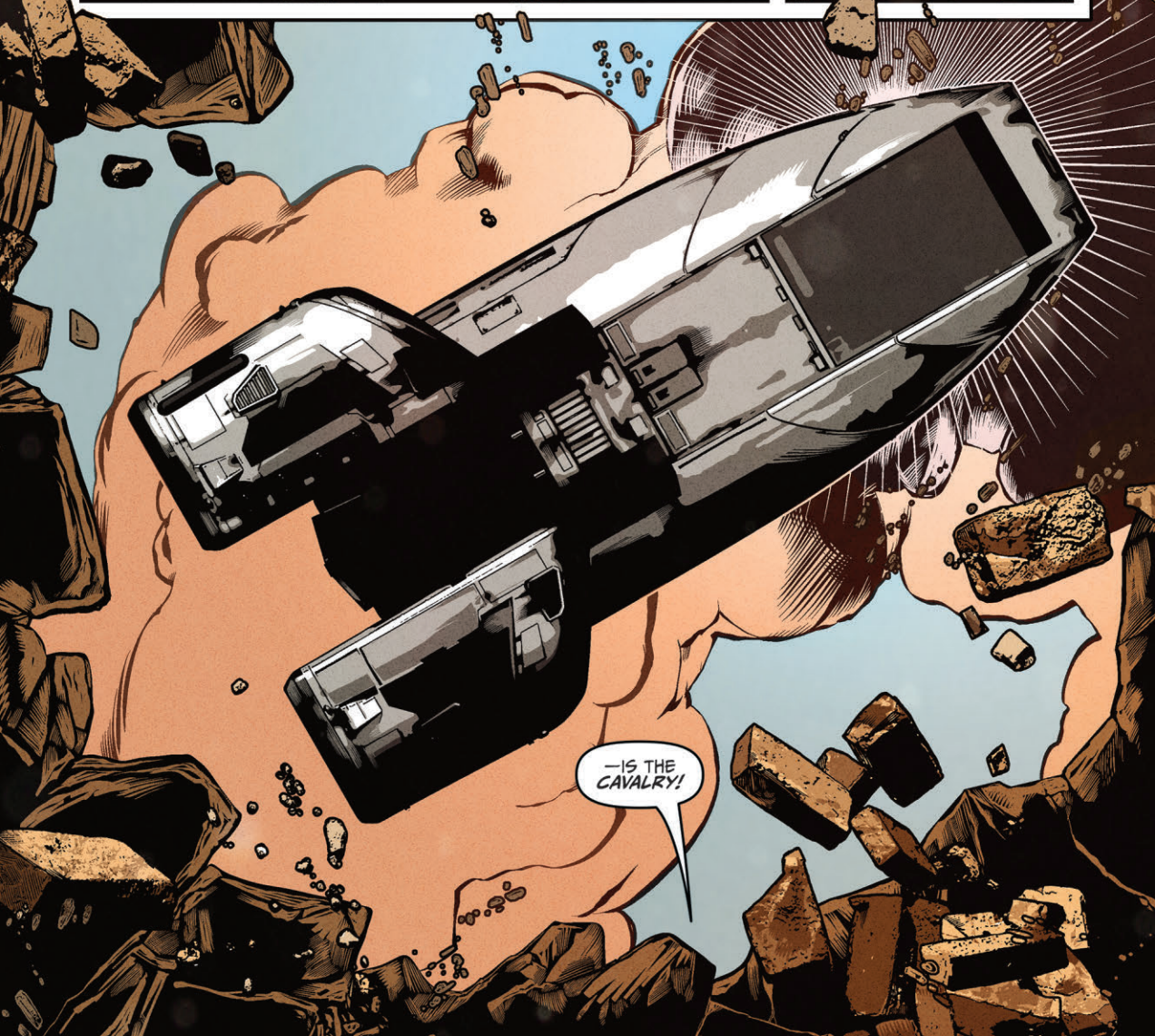




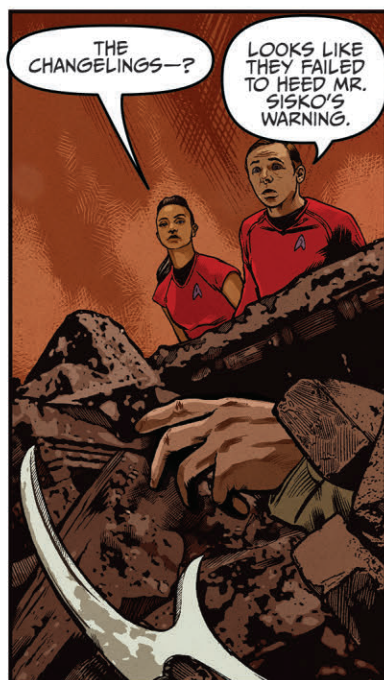












THE CHANGELINGS—?

LOOKS LIKE THEY FAILED TO HEED MR. SISO'S WARNING.



LATER YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME HOW YOU ARRANGED THIS.

IT WASN'T ME.



MY APOLOGIES, BENJAMIN. I COULD NOT INFORM YOU OF MY COMMUNICATION WITH THE *DEFIANT* WITHOUT RISKING DISCOVERY BY OUR ENEMIES.



NEVER HESITATE TO ASK FORGIVENESS INSTEAD OF PERMISSION, MY FRIEND. WELL DONE.

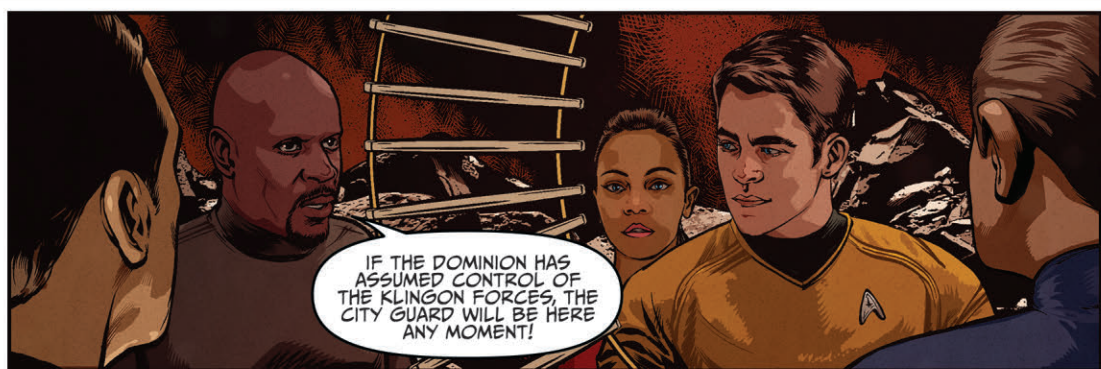


IF YOU'RE ALL DONE CHATTING—





—I'D QUITE LIKE TO GET OUT OF HERE, BECAUSE I'M ALL OUT OF PHOTON GRENADES!



IF THE DOMINION HAS ASSUMED CONTROL OF THE KLINGON FORCES, THE CITY GUARD WILL BE HERE ANY MOMENT!



LADIES FIRST!

JUST GET GOING, SCOTTY!



CHIVALRY. DEAD.

MILES, I'M PICKING UP MULTIPLE CONTACTS APPROACHING!



MOVING AS FAST AS WE CAN, KEIKO! PREPARE FOR RENDEZVOUS!





THREE  
BIRDS-OF-PREY,  
MILES! YOU ARE  
OUT OF TIME!



WE'RE ALL  
ONBOARD!  
GO! GO!



WE'LL BE UP  
THERE WITH YOU  
IN A FLASH,  
DARLING!



SHUTTLE BAY'S  
READY, MILES.  
SOON AS YOU'RE IN,  
WE'RE GONE!

YES, DEAR.





BAJOR.

WE'LL TAKE THE SHUTTLE TO A SHIP WAITING IN LOW ORBIT, AND FROM THERE WE'LL HEAD TO OUR HIDDEN BASE.

THESE SUPPLIES WILL BE VERY WELCOME THERE, BELIEVE ME.



QUARK! WRAP UP THE TABLET AND BRING IT ABOARD!

WOULD THAT I COULD, KIRA. WOULD THAT I COULD.



TAP TAP TAP



THEY SURE TOOK THEIR SWEET TIME GETTING HERE.



QUARK! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!



I'M SORRY, KIRA. I REALLY AM.

BUT AT THE END OF THE DAY, I'M A MERCHANT.

AND I WOULDN'T BE MUCH OF A MERCHANT—





-IF I DIDN'T  
SELL MY WARES  
TO THE HIGHEST  
BIDDER.



QUARK, YOU  
TRAITOROUS  
BASTARD--!

KIRA. STOP.  
WE ARE  
OUTNUMBERED.



YES,  
VULCAN.

OUTNUMBERED.  
OUTGUNNED. OUT  
OF TIME.

SURRENDER  
PEACEFULLY, AND YOU  
MAY YET LIVE OUT YOUR  
LIVES AS SERVANTS OF  
THE DOMINION.





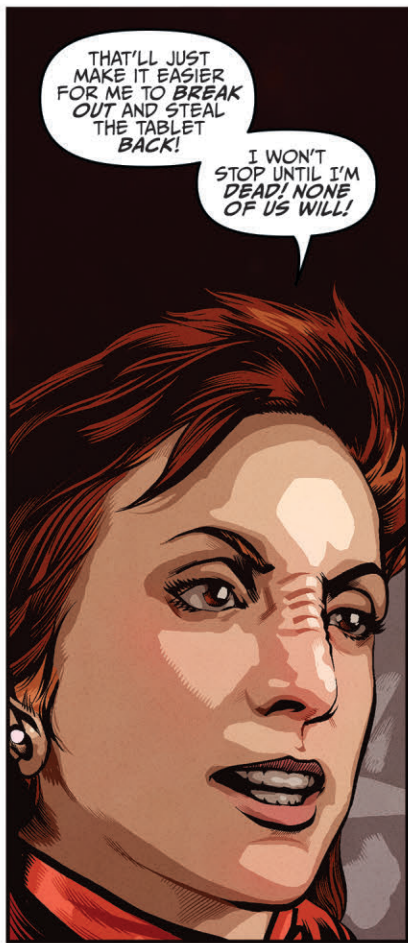
RUMOR HAD IT  
THE TABLET WAS  
BURIED SOMEWHERE  
HERE ON BAJOR.

I WAS  
BEGINNING TO  
DOUBT IT EVEN  
EXISTED.



HOW  
CONSIDERATE  
OF YOU TO GO  
TO THE TROUBLE  
OF FINDING IT  
FOR US.

COMMANDER  
DUKAT MAY EVEN  
SENTENCE YOU TO ONE  
OF THE **LESS LETHAL**  
CAMPS FOR YOUR  
TROUBLE.



THAT'LL JUST  
MAKE IT EASIER  
FOR ME TO **BREAK**  
OUT AND STEAL  
THE TABLET  
**BACK!**

I WON'T  
STOP UNTIL I'M  
**DEAD! NONE**  
OF US WILL!



UNFORTUNATELY,  
I DON'T HAVE  
PERMISSION TO  
KILL YOU.  
YET.

UNTIL I  
DO, YOU WILL  
REMAIN OUR  
GUEST AS WE  
DELIVER THE  
TABLET TO  
**TEROK**  
**NOR.**

AND  
ONCE WE  
ARRIVE...



...WE SHALL  
ALL DISCOVER  
ITS SECRETS  
**TOGETHER.**



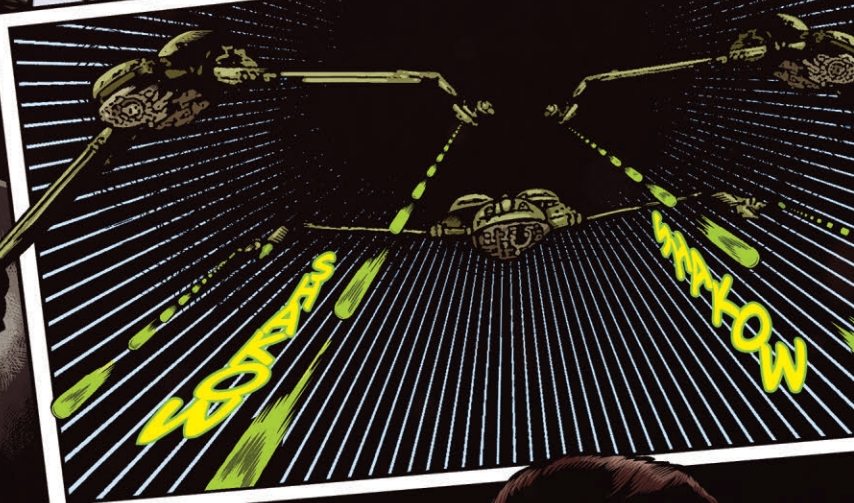


KEIKO, WHY  
AREN'T WE AT  
WARP?!

BECAUSE  
I THOUGHT IT  
WOULD BE FUN TO  
TRY TO OUTRUN THEM  
AT IMPULSE? THERE'S  
OBVIOUSLY  
SOMETHING WRONG  
WITH THE WARP  
DRIVE!



LOOK AT THIS,  
CAPTAIN! IT'S  
LITERALLY THE  
WARP SYSTEM OF  
THE FUTURE!



TAKING  
EVASIVE ACTION!  
MILES, GET THAT  
WARP CORE  
ONLINE!







SOMETHING'S  
INTERFERING WITH  
THE DILITHIUM  
MIX!



INDEED!

HMMM. I  
WONDER  
IF...



SCOTTY?  
WHAT ARE  
YOU—

WITH ALL DUE  
RESPECT, CAPTAIN, I'M  
JUGGLING QUITE A FEW  
RATHER COMPLICATED  
ALGORITHMS IN MY BRAIN  
AT THE MOMENT, SO IF  
YOU DON'T MIND  
JUST—

SHUTTING  
UP.

THANK  
YOU.

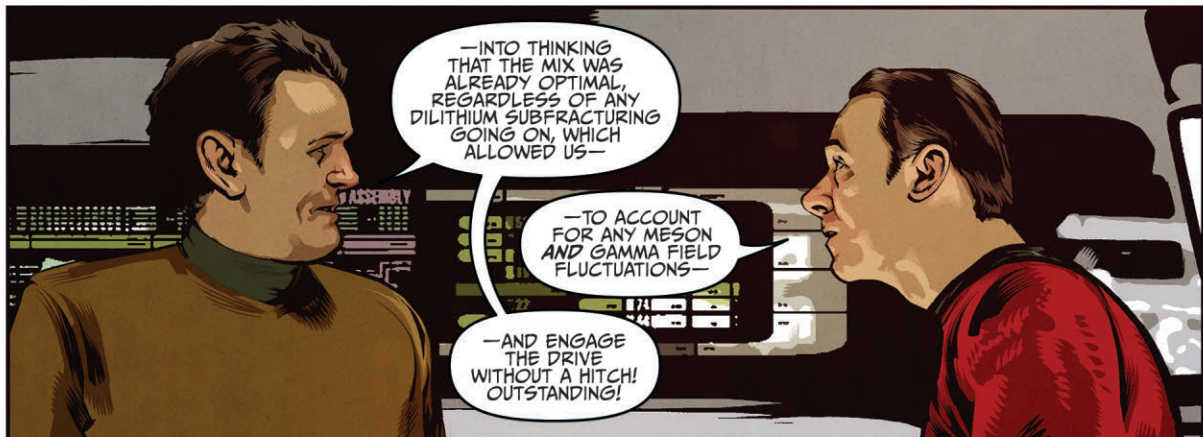
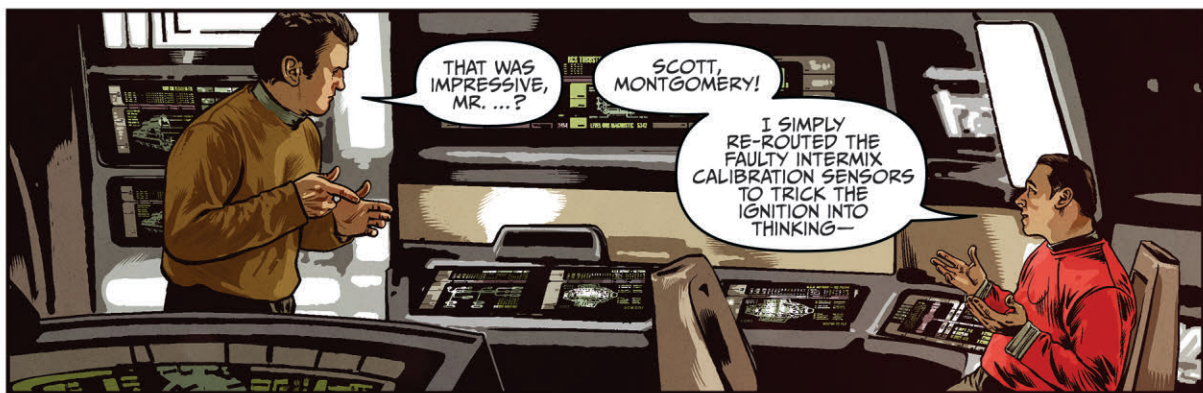


IT'S FIXED!  
WARP'S ONLINE!

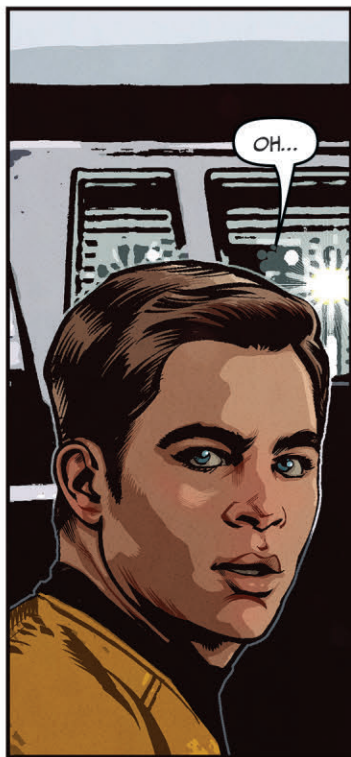
GO GO  
GO!















I WANT YOU TO FEEL YOUR OPTIONS *DWINDLING*, UNTIL YOU ACKNOWLEDGE THE EXISTENCE OF THAT PARTICULAR SCENARIO YOU SO ABSURDLY REFUSE TO ACKNOWLEDGE!

THE NO-WIN!



WHERE IS THE REST OF MY CREW?

OH, HERE AND THERE. IT'S A BIG GALAXY. BUT YOUR VULCAN BUDDY IS JUST A TRIBBLE'S THROW AWAY FROM WHERE WE'RE STANDING NOW.



YOU'LL BE REUNITED SOON ENOUGH. BUT NOT NOW.

NOW, I LOOK FORWARD TO THE NEXT SO-CALLED CHOICE YOU MAKE...



"...IN THE FACE OF INEVITABILITY."

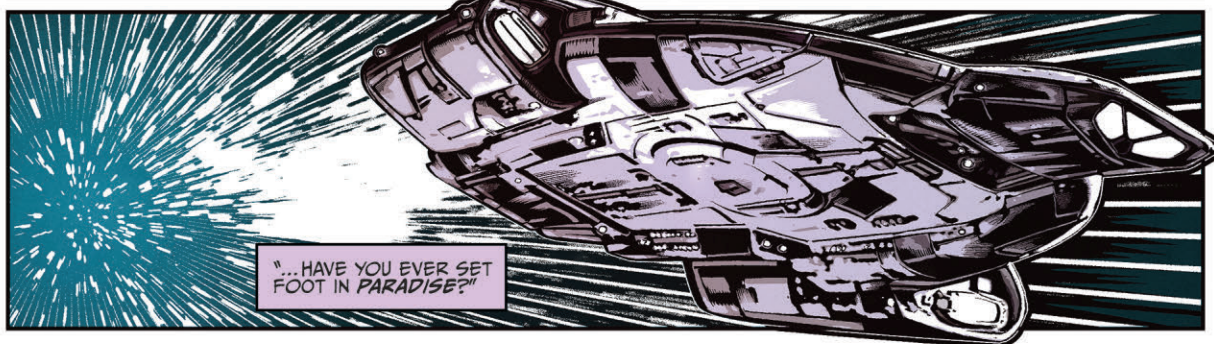
CAPTAIN, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?



I'M FINE. IT WAS *Q* AGAIN. TAUNTING ME.

SISKO, I'LL NEED YOUR HELP IF I'M GOING TO GET THE ENTERPRISE BACK.

YOU'LL HAVE IT. BUT THERE'S SOMETHING I MUST DO FIRST. TELL ME, CAPTAIN KIRK...



"...HAVE YOU EVER SET FOOT IN PARADISE?"



"WELCOME BACK, COMMANDER  
SPOCK. DOCTOR MCCOY."



I ASSURE YOU,  
SENDING YOU TO  
THE CAMP ON BAJOR  
WAS A SIMPLE AND  
REGRETTABLE  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
OVERSIGHT.

IT WAS MY  
PREFERENCE THAT YOU  
REMAIN HERE ON TEROK NOR,  
SO THAT I MIGHT LEARN MORE  
DETAILS ABOUT THE TIME  
PERIOD FROM WHICH YOU  
ARRIVED. SUCH AN UNUSUAL  
OPPORTUNITY!





AND YOU, KIRA NERYS!

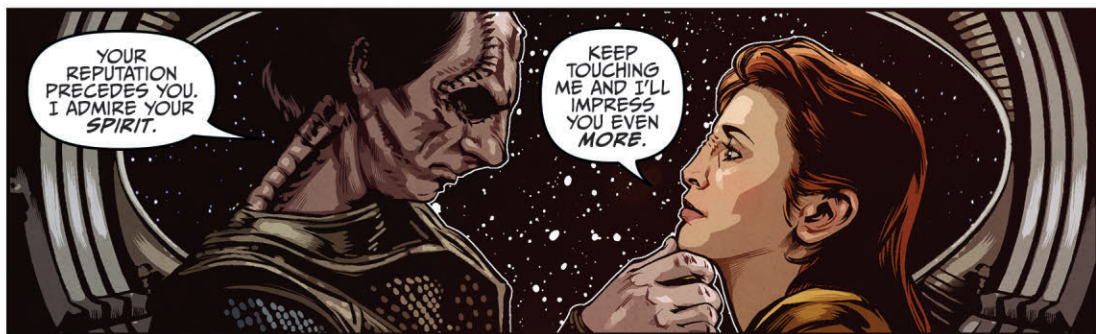
I WAS SO DISAPPOINTED WHEN YOUR COLLEAGUE BENJAMIN SIKO CHOSE TO ABANDON OUR HOSPITALITY.

WHAT A JOY IT IS TO REPLACE ONE GUEST OF THE DOMINION WITH ANOTHER.



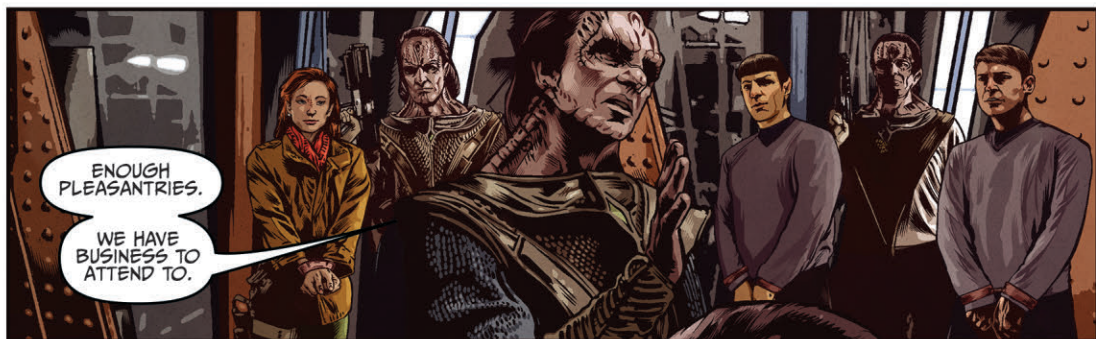
ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE THIS PLACE.

I JUST HOPED IT WOULD BE WHEN THE RESISTANCE WAS KICKING YOU OUT OF IT.



YOUR REPUTATION PRECEDES YOU. I ADMIRE YOUR SPIRIT.

KEEP TOUCHING ME AND I'LL IMPRESS YOU EVEN MORE.



ENOUGH PLEASANTRIES.

WE HAVE BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO.



NO DOUBT YOU ARE AS EAGER AS I AM TO UNLOCK THE TABLET'S SECRETS!





DON'T EVEN  
THINK ABOUT IT,  
DUKAT! YOU HAVE  
**NO IDEA** WHAT  
WILL HAPPEN IF  
YOU BREAK THE  
TABLET!

I MUST  
CONCUR.



IF WHAT KIRA  
TOLD US IS TRUE,  
THERE ARE NO  
MEANS TO PREDICT  
WHAT COULD HAPPEN  
IF TWO BEINGS NOT  
INDIGENOUS TO THIS  
DIMENSION ARE  
SUDDENLY FREED  
FROM THEIR  
CAPTIVITY.

I CANNOT,  
AS YET, EXPLAIN  
THE **SCIENTIFIC**  
*BASIS* OF OUR  
PREDICAMENT, BUT  
THE CHANCE  
REMAINS THAT THE  
OUTCOME COULD  
BE DETRIMENTAL  
TO ALL OF  
US.



I SIMPLY  
LOVE THE WAY  
YOU VULCANS SPEAK.  
SUCH A SHAME THAT  
YOUR PEOPLE ARE  
ALL BUT *EXTINCT*  
TODAY.

THANK  
YOU FOR THE  
WARNING, SPOCK.  
I CHOOSE TO  
IGNORE IT.



BEHOLD,  
ONCE AND  
FOR ALL—

**DUKA  
NO!**



—THE END  
OF THE OLD  
GALAXY—



—AND THE  
BIRTH OF THE  
NEW!









CHAPTER 5







BATTLE CRUISER DEFANT, IN ORBIT ABOVE RESISTANCE OUTPOST *PARADISE*.

"THIS IS ODD. NO RESPONSE TO OUR HAILS FROM THE BASE ON THE GROUND."



IT COULD BE THE PLANET'S NATURAL INTERFERENCE PATTERNS.

BEING ABLE TO HIDE FROM PRYING EYES IS WHY WE CHOSE THIS PLANET AS OUR HIDEOUT IN THE FIRST PLACE.

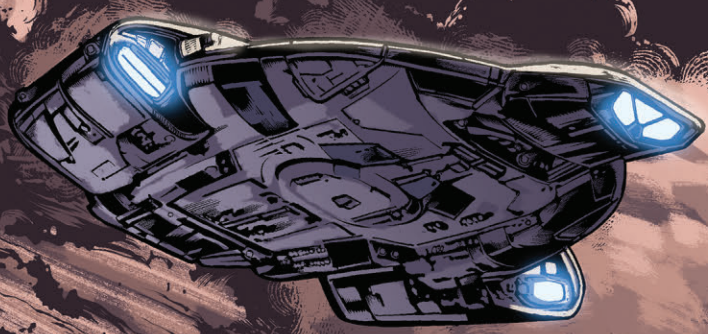


WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN ABLE TO ACCOUNT FOR THE INTERFERENCE BEFORE.

NO, THIS IS DIFFERENT.



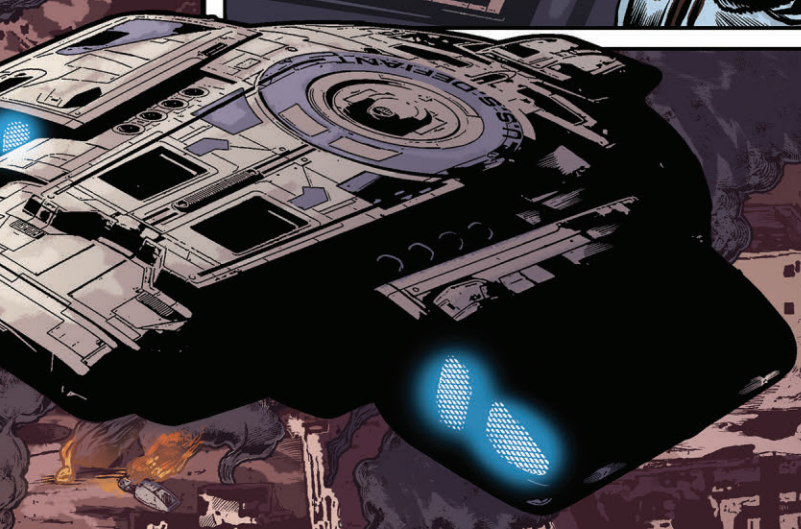
"I'M GETTING A VISUAL NOW..."



NO...



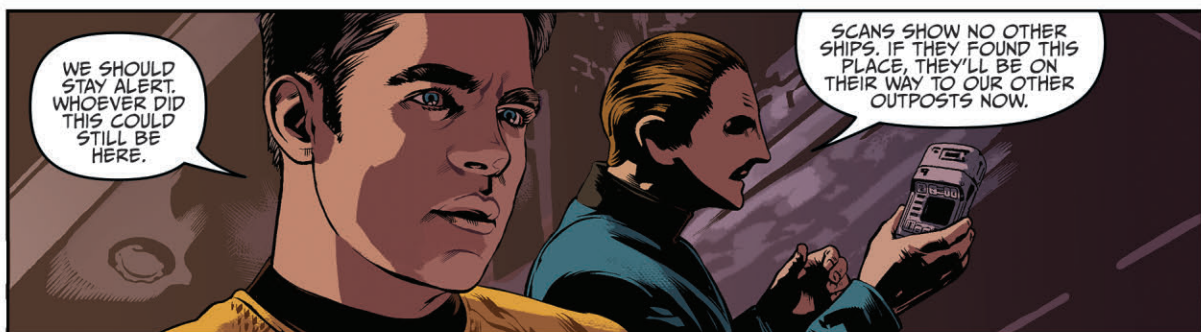
"THE DOMINION FOUND US!"







HELLO!  
CAN ANYONE  
HEAR ME?!



WE SHOULD  
STAY ALERT.  
WHOEVER DID  
THIS COULD  
STILL BE  
HERE.

SCANS SHOW NO OTHER  
SHIPS. IF THEY FOUND THIS  
PLACE, THEY'LL BE ON  
THEIR WAY TO OUR OTHER  
OUTPOSTS NOW.



ODO, ALERT THE  
SMALLER OUTPOSTS  
THAT OUR SECURITY HAS  
BEEN COMPROMISED.  
THEY SHOULD EVACUATE  
IMMEDIATELY.

THERE WERE...  
FAMILIES HERE...



DAD!

OH THANK  
GOD...





JAKE!  
DAX!



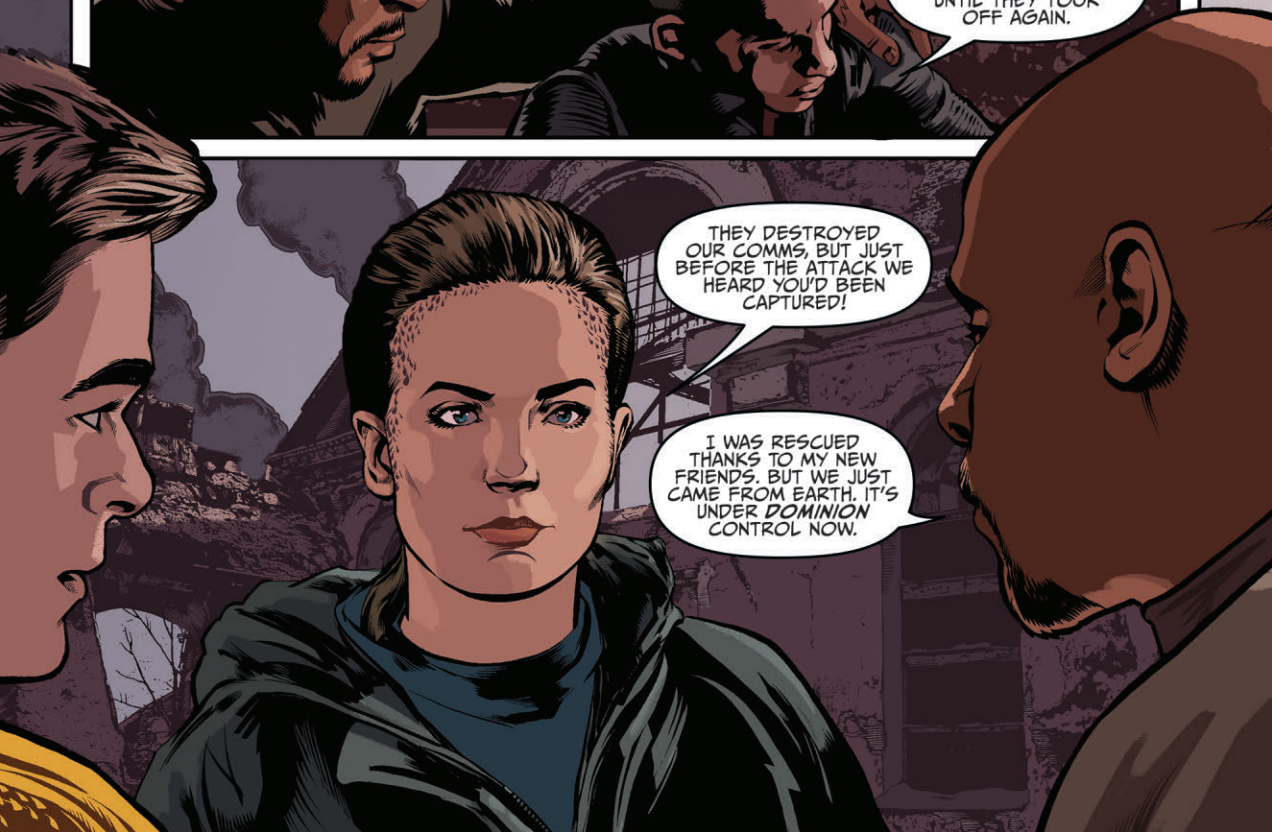
MY SON!  
I'M OKAY, DAD.



WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

THEY HIT US YESTERDAY. NO WARNING. JAZDIA AND I MANAGED TO GATHER SURVIVORS AND TAKE COVER IN THE TREES.

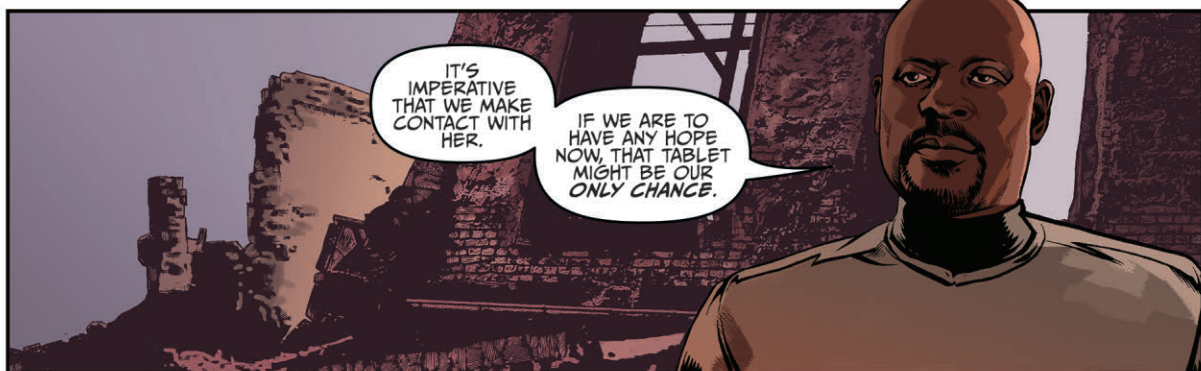
THEY FOLLOWED UP THE AIRSTRIKES WITH A GROUND SWEEP BUT WE DODGED THEM UNTIL THEY TOOK OFF AGAIN.



THEY DESTROYED OUR COMMS, BUT JUST BEFORE THE ATTACK WE HEARD YOU'D BEEN CAPTURED!

I WAS RESCUED THANKS TO MY NEW FRIENDS. BUT WE JUST CAME FROM EARTH. IT'S UNDER DOMINION CONTROL NOW.







ABOARD THE DOMINION  
STATION TEROK NOR.

THE TABLET IS  
DESTROYED. ITS  
PRISONERS ARE  
FREED.

I FEEL  
THE WRAITH'S  
POWER COURSE  
THROUGH ME...

I FEEL MY  
OLD BODY...  
MY OLD LIFE...  
GIVING WAY TO  
THE NEW!

WITNESS,  
ALL OF  
YOU—

THE  
BIRTH OF  
A GOD!





"DOMINION.

"CARDASSIAN.

"THESE WORDS ARE  
MEANINGLESS NOW."



NOW  
THERE IS ONLY  
DUKAT.



THE LAST  
PROPHET—!



IT SENSES A  
WILLING VESSEL  
TO POSSESS.





WE  
CAN'T HAVE  
THAT.

SHA-RAAAK



YOU MONSTER!  
YOU'VE MURDERED  
HER!



NO. I'VE FREED  
HER FROM THE BURDEN  
OF AN EXISTENCE THAT  
NO LONGER HOLDS ANY  
MEANING FOR THE  
LIKES OF HER.





AND THE  
PROPHET HAS  
DISAPPEARED.

NO MATTER. IT  
IS THE LAST OF ITS  
KIND. ONLY FITTING  
THAT IT BEARS WITNESS  
TO MY ULTIMATE  
VICTORY.



AS WILL  
YOU.

SPARE ME. IF  
YOU'RE EVENTUALLY  
GONNA KILL US  
ANYWAY, MIGHT AS  
WELL GET IT  
OVER WITH!



I HAVE NOT  
YET DECIDED  
YOUR FATE,  
DR. MCCOY.

YOUR ARRIVAL  
IN THIS TIME STILL  
HOLDS A CERTAIN  
FASCINATION  
FOR ME.

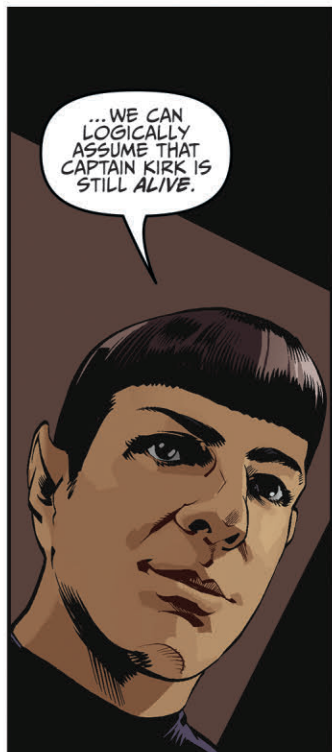
FOR NOW, YOU  
WILL REMAIN MY  
GUESTS ABOARD  
TEROK NOR.



ALL IS  
NOT LOST,  
DOCTOR.

OH YEAH? AND  
BY WHAT LOGIC  
DO YOU FIGURE  
THAT?

BECAUSE,  
WITHOUT ANY  
EVIDENCE TO THE  
CONTRARY...



...WE CAN  
LOGICALLY  
ASSUME THAT  
CAPTAIN KIRK IS  
STILL ALIVE.



PARADISE.

Q!

I KNOW  
YOU CAN  
HEAR ME!

I WANT  
TO TALK,  
Q!

O CAPTAIN,  
MY CAPTAIN...  
NO NEED TO  
SHOUT.

THIS IS THE  
NO-WIN SCENARIO  
YOU WANTED TO SHOW  
ME, RIGHT?

THE DOMINION  
TAKING OVER THE GALAXY.  
THE LAST REMNANTS OF  
RESISTANCE—OF WHAT WAS  
ONCE THE FEDERATION—  
WIPE OUT?

PART  
OF THE  
SCENARIO,  
YES.

"PART  
OF IT?"

THERE ARE DEAD  
FAMILIES OVER THERE,  
AND YOU'RE STILL ACTING  
LIKE THIS IS ALL A GAME!  
THIS HAS TO STOP!

OH, IT WILL  
STOP, JAMES.  
SOON.

BUT IT'S A GAME  
YOU HAVE TO PLAY TO  
THE END. NOW IF YOU'RE  
DONE WHINING ABOUT  
THE RULES...



"...YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK  
ON YOUR NEW FRIEND."

WHAT'S  
HAPPENING  
TO HIM?

THIS—**ENERGY**  
**THING**—JUST APPEARED  
OUT OF NOWHERE AND  
ATTACKED HIM!



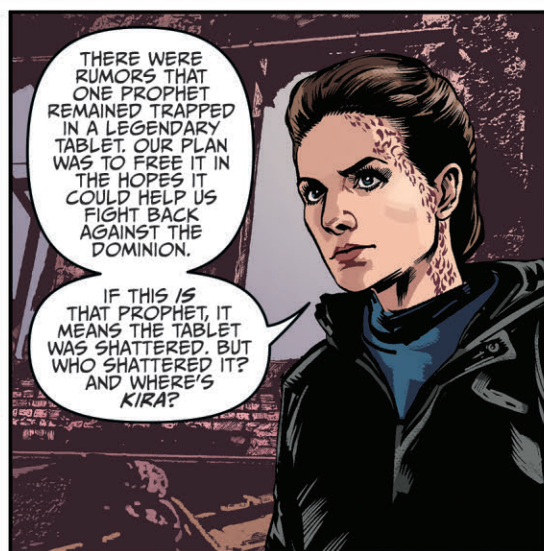
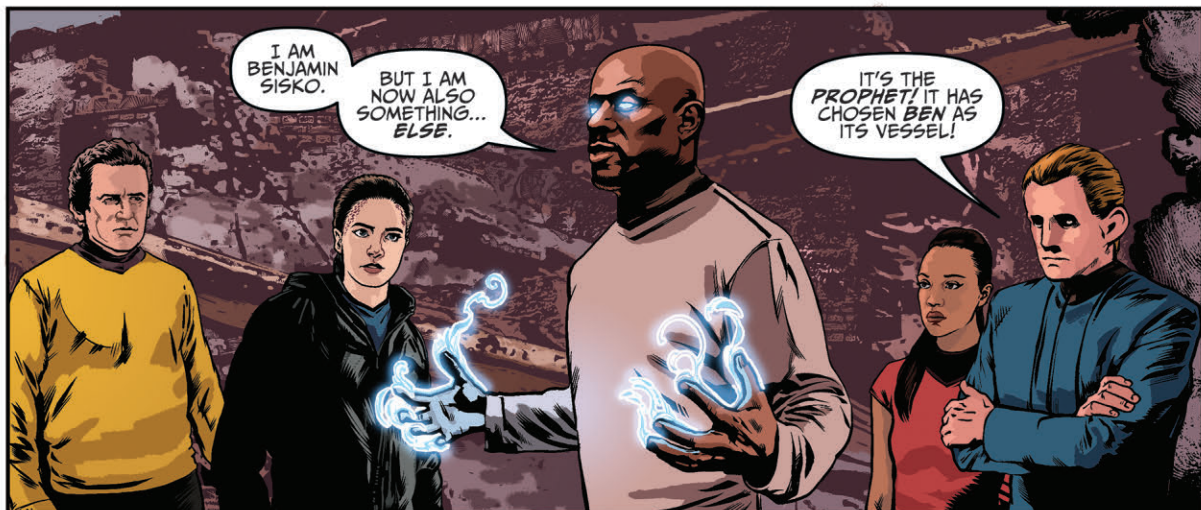
IT'S  
KILLING  
HIM!



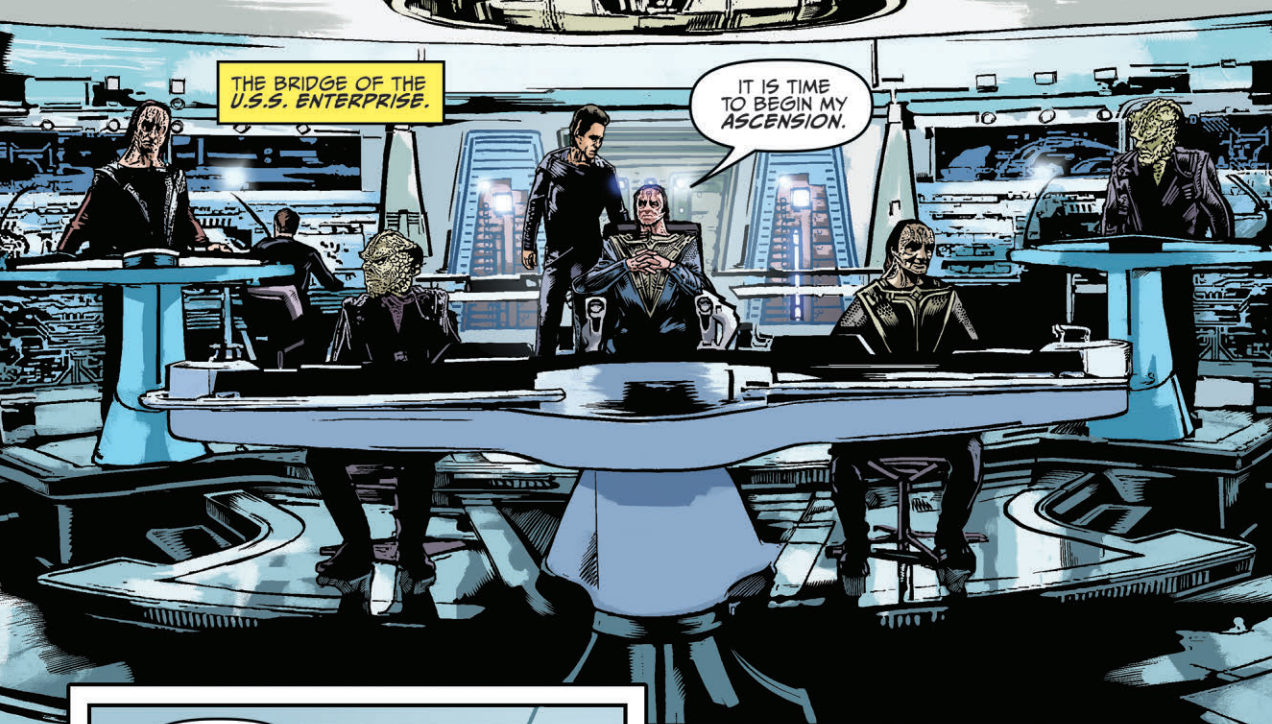
NO,  
JAKE...

I HAVE NEVER  
BEEN MORE  
ALIVE.









THE BRIDGE OF THE  
U.S.S. ENTERPRISE.

IT IS TIME  
TO BEGIN MY  
ASCENSION.



LIEUTENANT,  
SET A COURSE  
FOR THE  
WORMHOLE!

YES,  
COMMANDER!



WHAT  
EXACTLY ARE  
YOU PLANNING,  
DUKAT?

IT WOULD BE  
PRUDENT TO INFORM  
THE DOMINION BEFORE  
TAKING ANY ACTION.

AND WHY  
WOULD I DO  
THAT?



THE DOMINION  
IS NO LONGER  
MY CONCERN. NOR IS  
ANY OTHER PATHETIC  
THREE-DIMENSIONAL  
ENTITY.



I AM  
EMBARKING  
ON A COURSE  
TO SOMETHING  
GREATER.

TO BECOME  
SOMETHING  
GREATER!

BUT  
COMMANDER...







ABOARD TEROK NOR.

ALLMOST...  
THERRE...

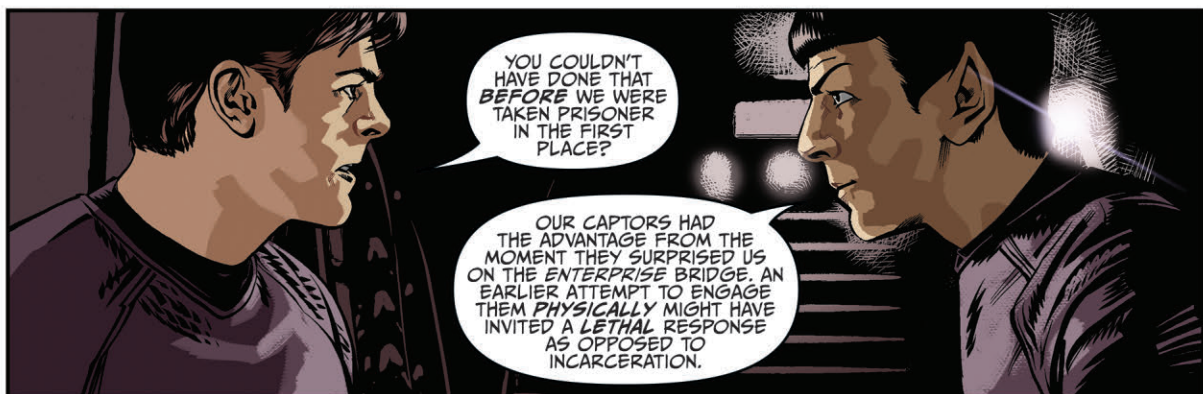
DA!  
IT  
WORKED!  
WE ARE  
FREE!

THEY SPLIT US UP BY  
DIVISION. LET'S FIND THE  
SCIENCE AND COMMAND  
PRISONERS AND THEN  
GET BACK TO THE  
ENTERPRISE.

DA,  
LIEUTENANT.  
WE MUST MOVE  
FAST BEFORE  
WE ARE—

—DISCOVERED!





YOU COULDN'T  
HAVE DONE THAT  
BEFORE WE WERE  
TAKEN PRISONER  
IN THE FIRST PLACE?

OUR CAPTORS HAD  
THE ADVANTAGE FROM THE  
MOMENT THEY SURPRISED US  
ON THE ENTERPRISE BRIDGE. AN  
EARLIER ATTEMPT TO ENGAGE  
THEM PHYSICALLY MIGHT HAVE  
INVITED A LETHAL RESPONSE  
AS OPPOSED TO  
INCARCERATION.



THIS  
COMPUTER  
SYSTEM IS VERY  
UNUSUAL, BUT AS  
FAR AS I CAN  
TELL—

THE  
ENTERPRISE IS  
DEPARTING THIS  
PLACE!



THINK CAPTAIN  
KIRK REGAINED  
CONTROL?

UNLIKELY.  
I BELIEVE  
COMMANDER DUKAT  
IS IN CONTROL  
OF THE SHIP.

IF THAT'S THE  
CASE, AND IF JIM'S  
NOT HERE WITH THE  
REST OF THE  
COMMAND  
CREW—



"...WHERE THE HELL IS HE?"



COMING  
OUT OF  
WARP IN  
3...



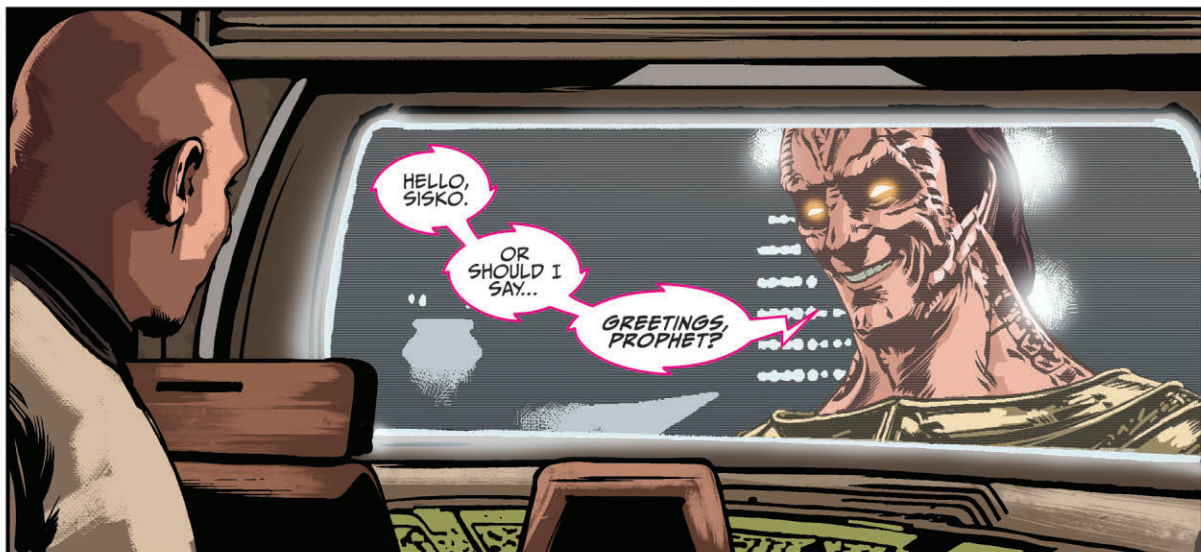
2...



1...











"...YOU DARE  
NOT FOLLOW?"



THEY'VE  
GONE TO  
WARP! STRAIGHT  
INTO THE  
WORMHOLE!

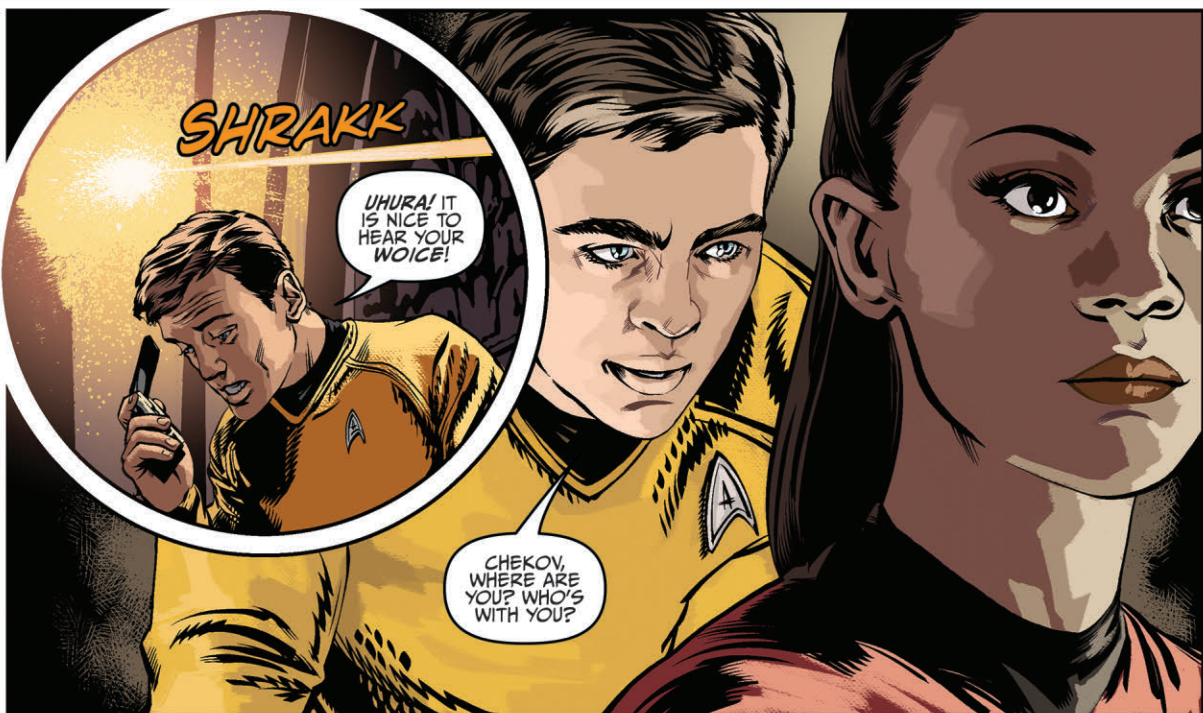
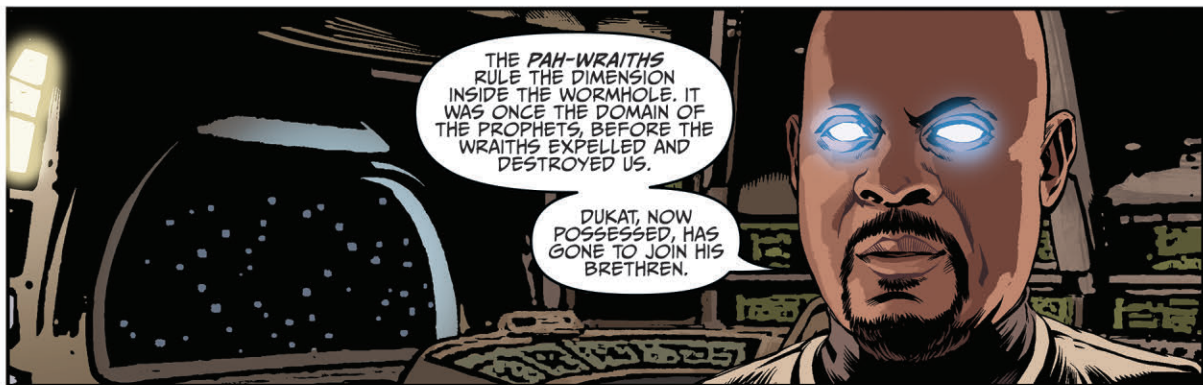


THEN WE GO  
AFTER THEM! WHAT  
ARE WE WAITING  
FOR?

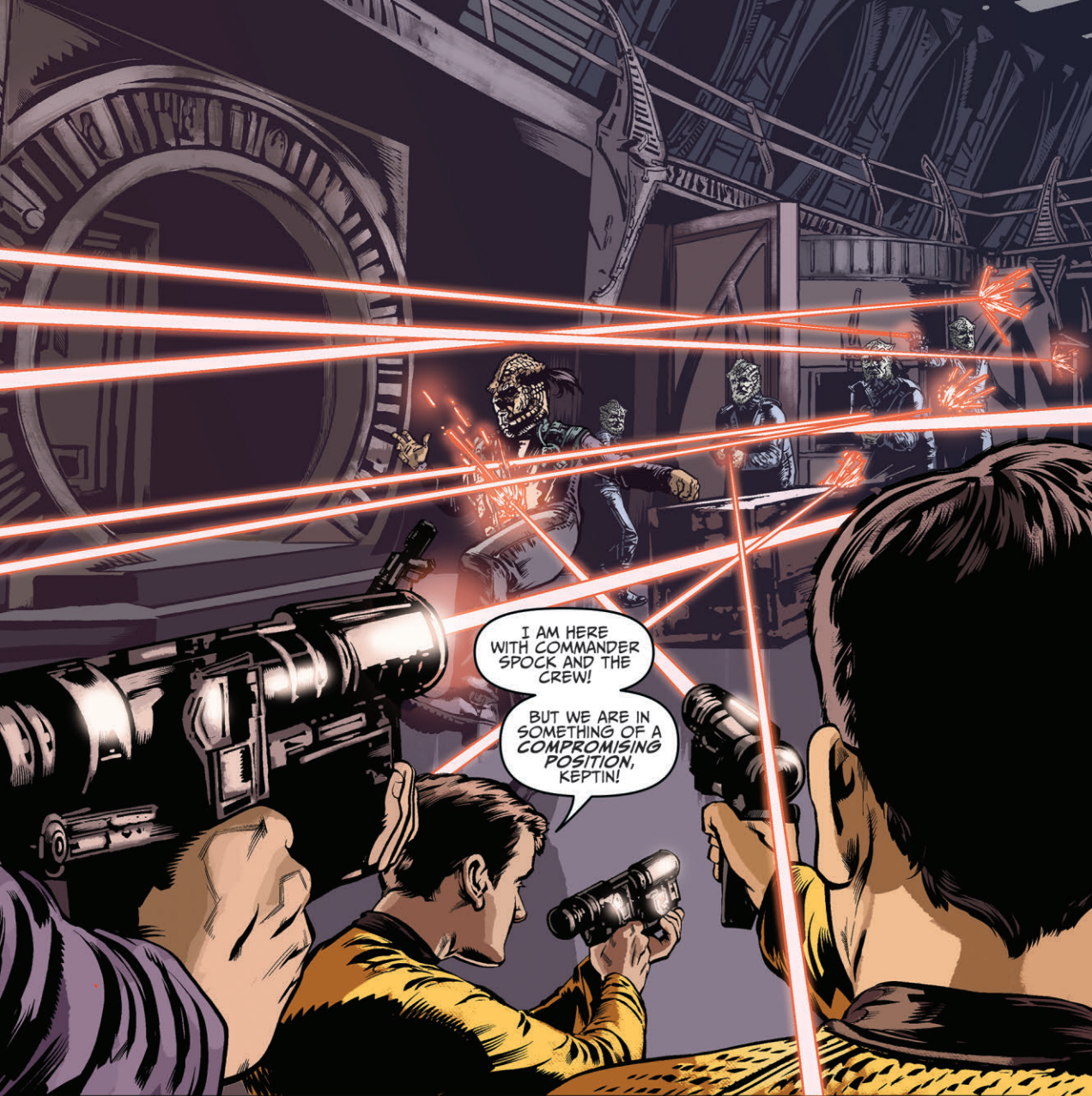


TO DO SO  
WOULD MEAN  
CERTAIN DEATH,  
CAPTAIN.









I AM HERE  
WITH COMMANDER  
SPOCK AND THE  
CREW!

BUT WE ARE IN  
SOMETHING OF A  
COMPROMISING  
POSITION,  
KEPTIN!



HANG ON,  
CHEKOV!  
WE'RE COMING  
TO HELP!



AND THEN WE'RE  
FOLLOWING DUKAT  
INTO THE WORMHOLE  
AND I'M GETTING MY  
SHIP BACK!

I'M AFRAID  
SISKO'S RIGHT,  
JIM...





IF YOU CHASE  
AFTER DUKAT, YOU  
WON'T MAKE IT  
OUT AGAIN.



BUT IF YOU  
STAY *HERE*, IT'S  
ONLY A MATTER OF  
TIME BEFORE DUKAT  
RETURNS— EVEN  
MORE POWERFUL  
THAN BEFORE—  
AND *WIPES YOU*  
ALL OUT.



THE NO-WIN  
SCENARIO YOU  
PROMISED TO  
SHOW ME.

INDEED. BUT  
NOT JUST TO *SEE*,  
CAPTAIN. AND HERE IS  
WHERE I LAY ALL MY  
CARDS ON THE  
TABLE, SO TO  
SPEAK.

YOU MUST MAKE  
A CHOICE, BECAUSE  
DEPENDENT ON YOUR  
DECISION...

...I, AND  
THE ENTIRE Q  
CONTINUUM, WILL  
CEASE TO  
EXIST.







CHAPTER 6





THE ENTRANCE TO THE  
CARDASSIAN WORMHOLE.

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO  
RECORD A CAPTAIN'S LOG.

I COULDN'T, EVEN IF I DID.

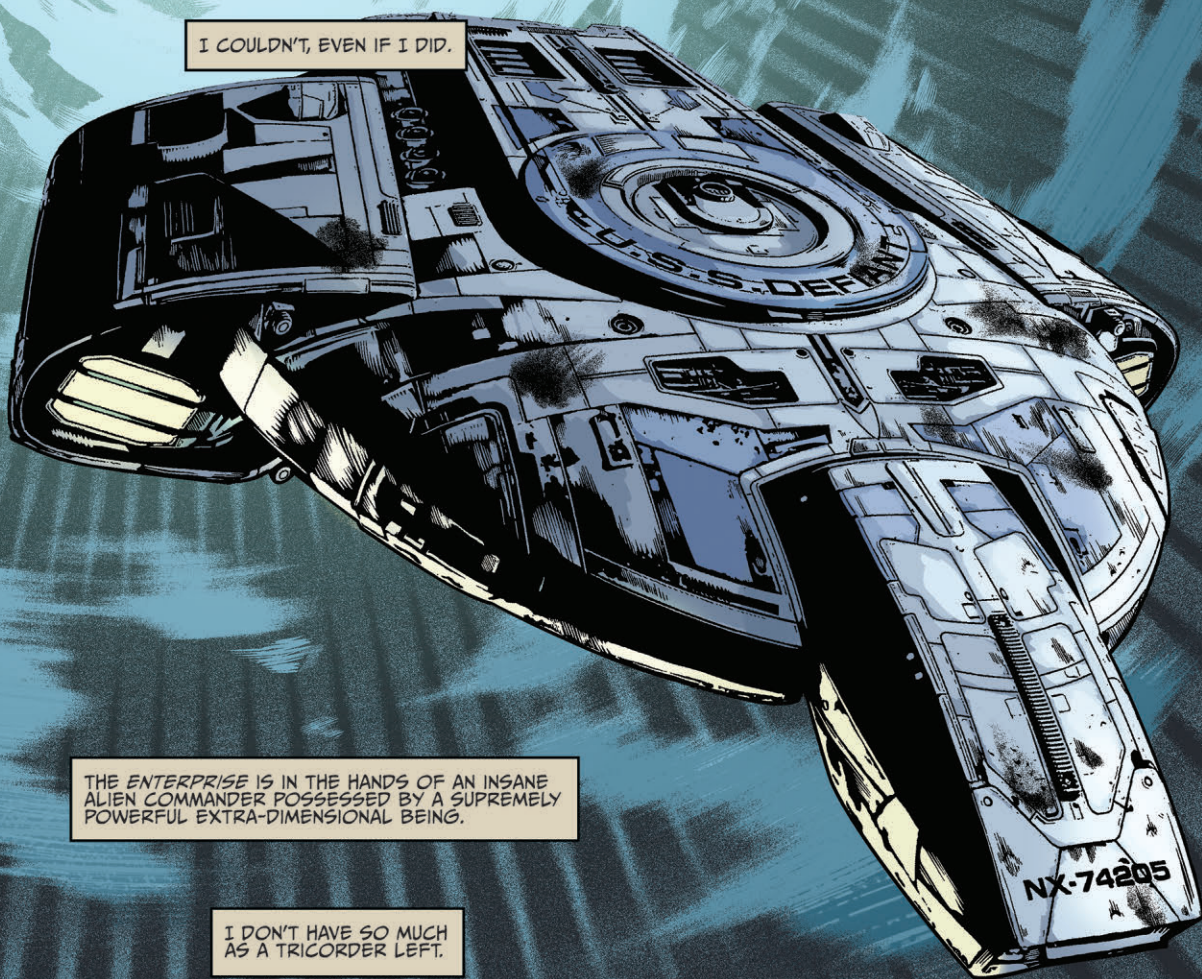
THE ENTERPRISE IS IN THE HANDS OF AN INSANE  
ALIEN COMMANDER POSSESSED BY A SUPREMELY  
POWERFUL EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL BEING.

I DON'T HAVE SO MUCH  
AS A TRICORDER LEFT.

Q SAID HE WANTED TO SHOW  
ME A TRUE NO-WIN SCENARIO.

I'LL NEVER BELIEVE IN THEM.

BUT I HAVE TO ADMIT...





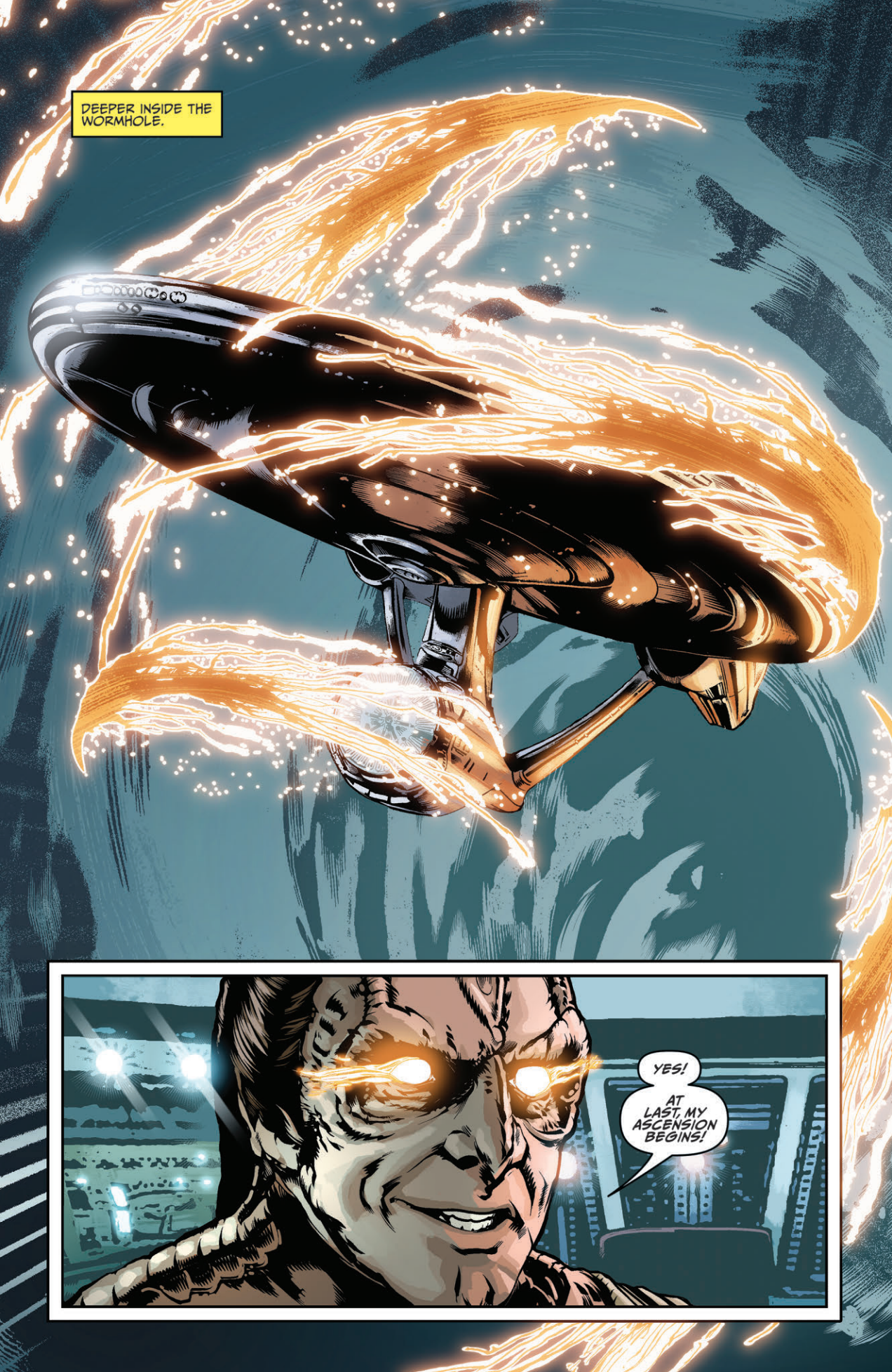






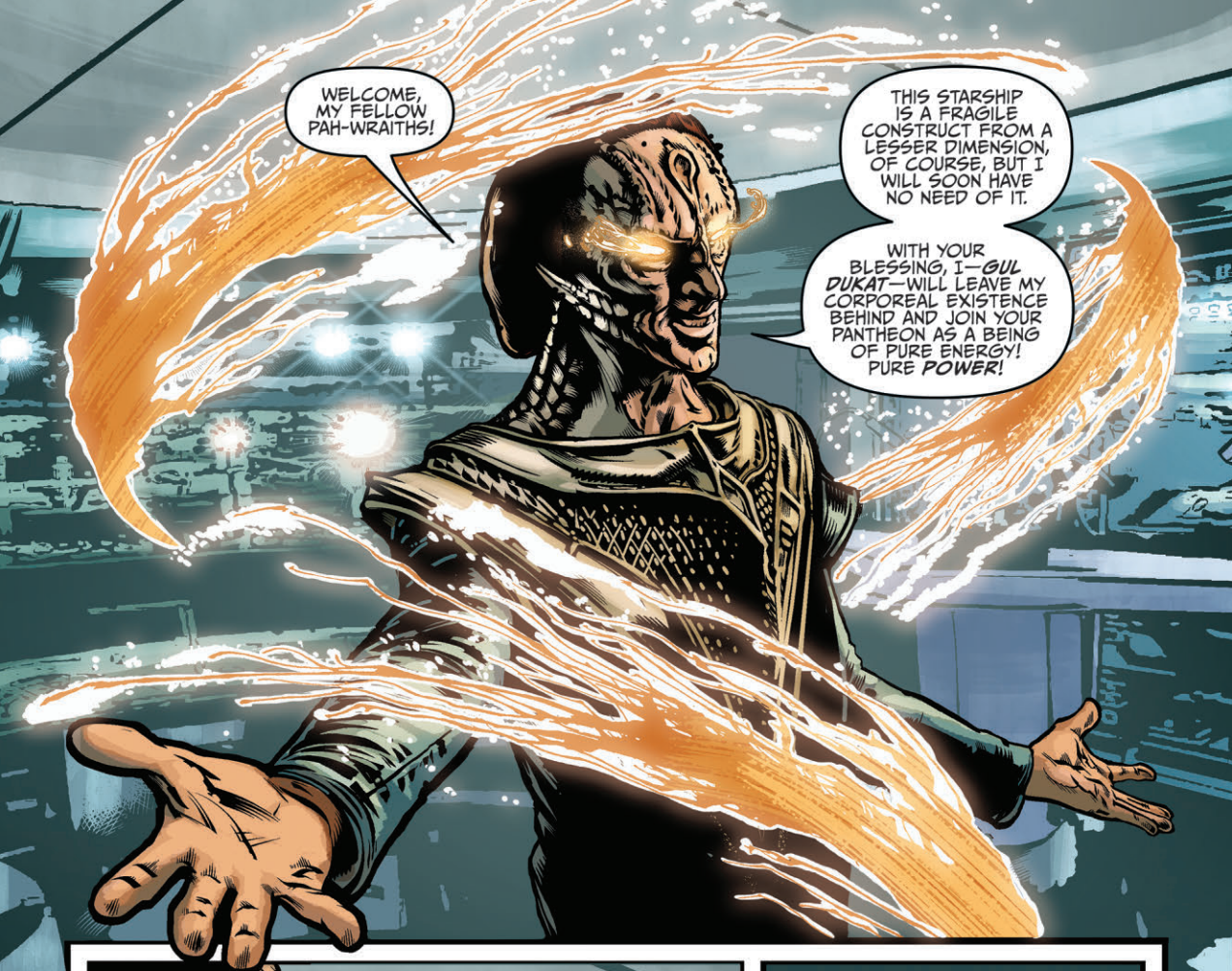


DEEPER INSIDE THE  
WORMHOLE.



YES!  
AT  
LAST, MY  
ASCENSION  
BEGINS!





WELCOME,  
MY FELLOW  
PAH-WRAITHS!

THIS STARSHIP  
IS A FRAGILE  
CONSTRUCT FROM A  
LESSER DIMENSION,  
OF COURSE, BUT I  
WILL SOON HAVE  
NO NEED OF IT.

WITH YOUR  
BLESSING, I—*GUL  
DUKAT*—WILL LEAVE MY  
CORPOREAL EXISTENCE  
BEHIND AND JOIN YOUR  
PANTHEON AS A BEING  
OF PURE ENERGY!  
PURE POWER!



WAIT... WHAT  
ARE YOU DOING  
TO MY CREW?



YOU WOULD  
CONVERSE  
WITH US.

THUS OUR  
POSSESSION OF THESE  
CRUDE FORMS, THE BETTER  
FOR YOU TO UNDERSTAND  
GIVEN YOUR LIMITED  
PERCEPTION.





YES.  
WHAT I SEEK  
IS TO BE **FREED**  
OF THIS BODILY  
PRISON, WITH  
YOUR HELP.



YOU SEEK OUR  
BLESSING, AND YET WE  
SENSE ONE OF OUR OWN  
**TRAPPED** WITHIN YOUR  
CORPOREAL FORM.  
  
NEVER HAVE  
WE ENCOUNTERED A  
LESSER BEING CAPABLE  
OF IMPRISONING A  
WRAITH AGAINST  
ITS WILL.

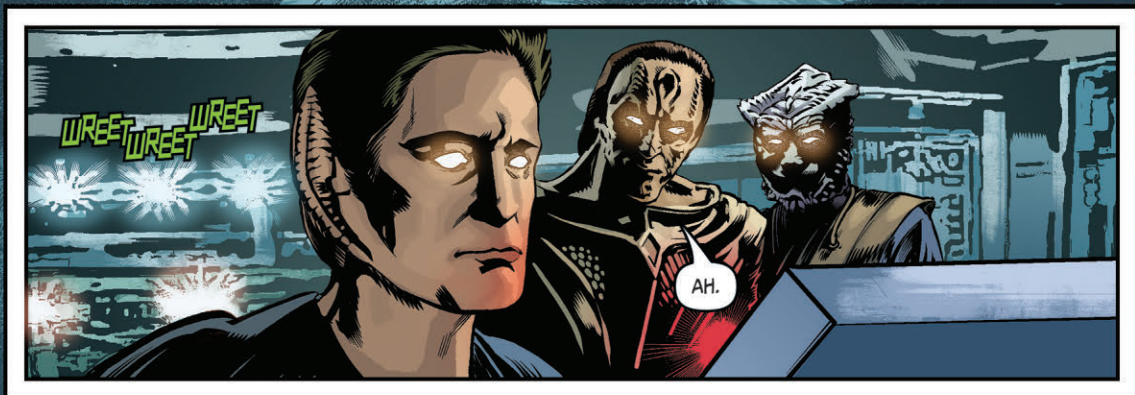


THAT IS  
BECAUSE I AM  
NO **LESSER**  
BEING.

I AM  
**DUKAT.**

AND WERE I TO  
SURRENDER THE POWER INSIDE  
ME, I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT YOU  
WOULD ENSURE MY DEMISE SOON  
AFTER. THEREFORE I OFFER A  
PROPOSAL THAT IS **MUTUALLY**  
**BENEFICIAL.**









ANOTHER  
CRUDE VESSEL?

NOT JUST  
ANY. ABOARD  
THAT SHIP IS THE  
LAST REMAINING  
PROPHET.



"THE LAST SURVIVOR  
OF THE RACE YOU  
DESPISE MOST."



I HAVE LURED IT  
HERE, BONDED TO A  
HUMAN HOST, SO THAT  
YOU MIGHT *EXTINGUISH*  
THE LAST FLICKER OF  
RESISTANCE TO  
YOUR POWER.

ALL I ASK  
IN RETURN,  
HUMBLY...

IS THAT  
YOU ALLOW  
ME TO JOIN YOU  
IN *GLORY*.

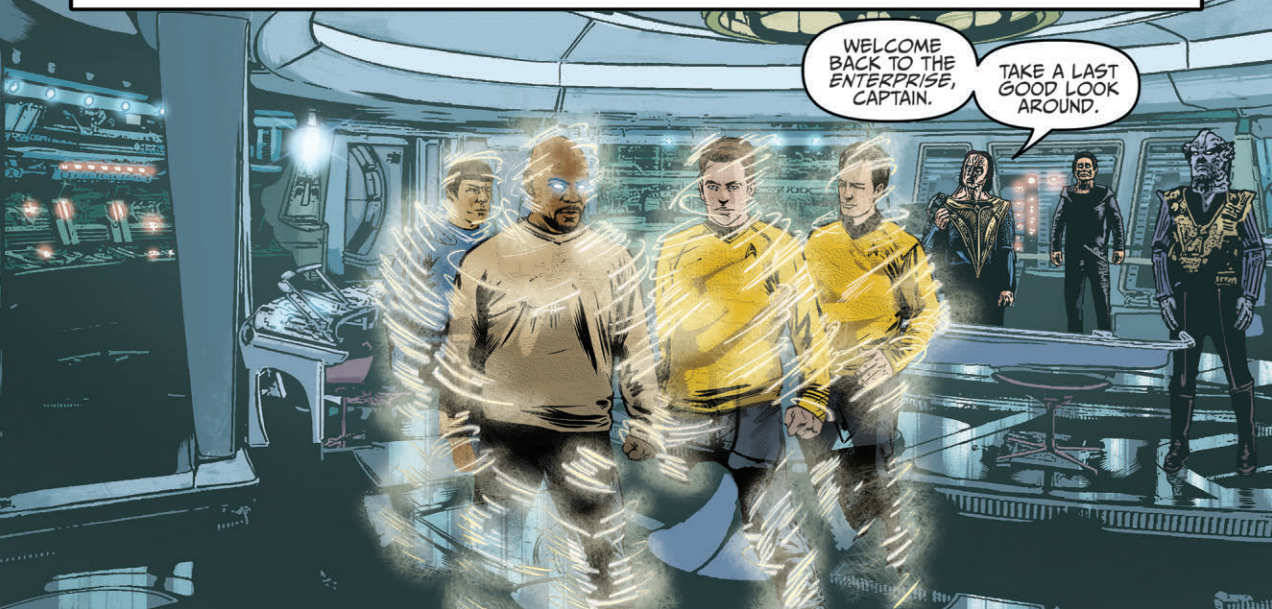


SHIELDS UP!  
RED ALERT!

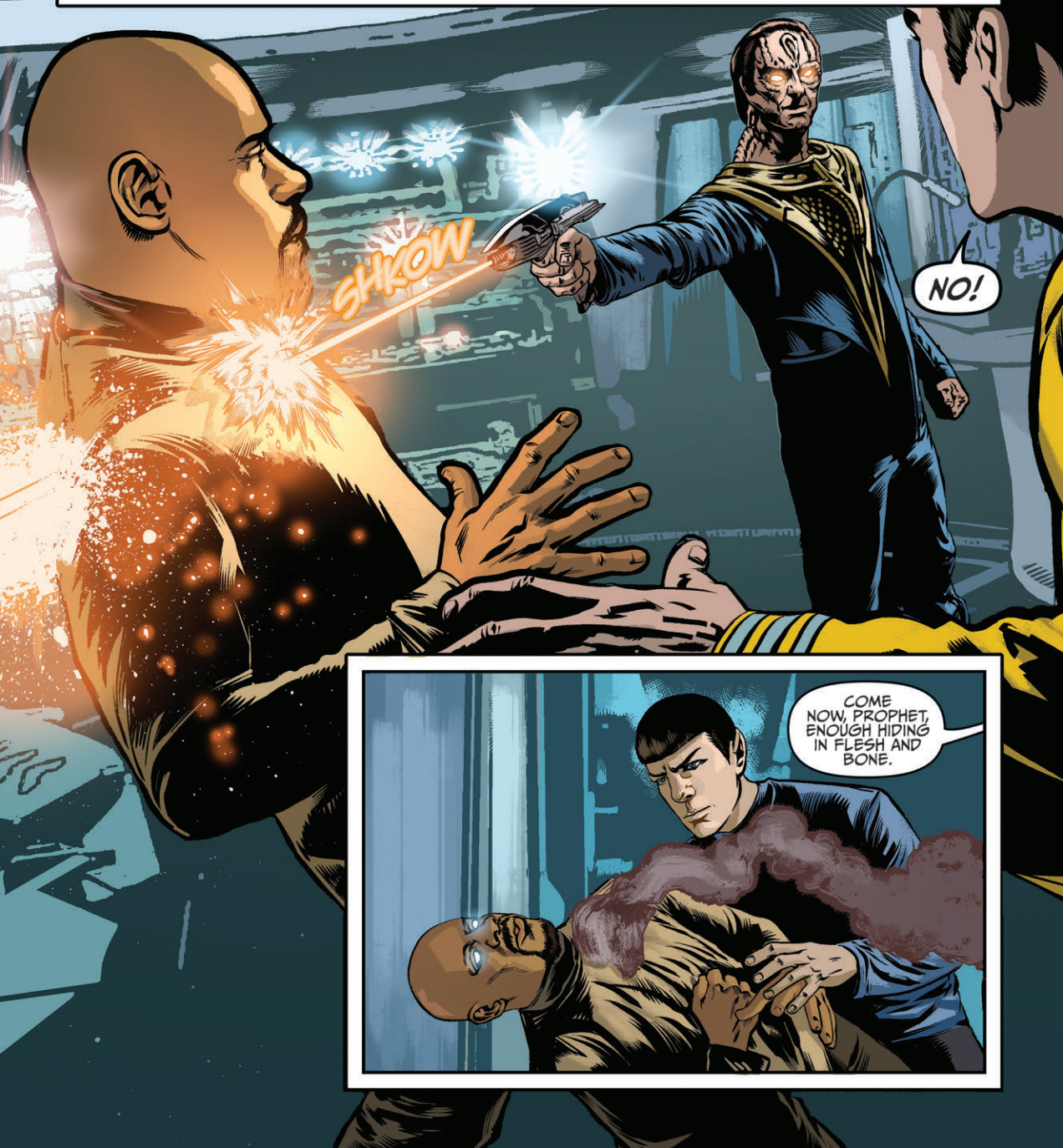








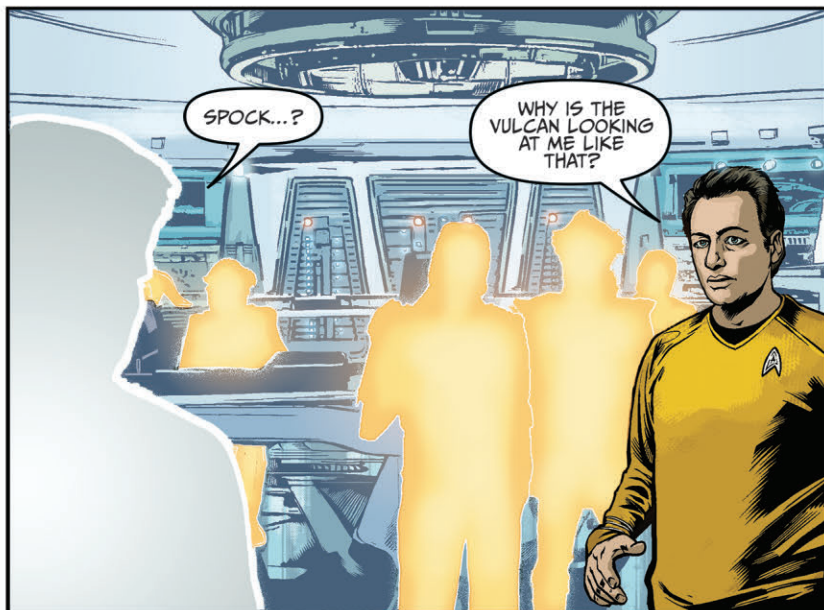


















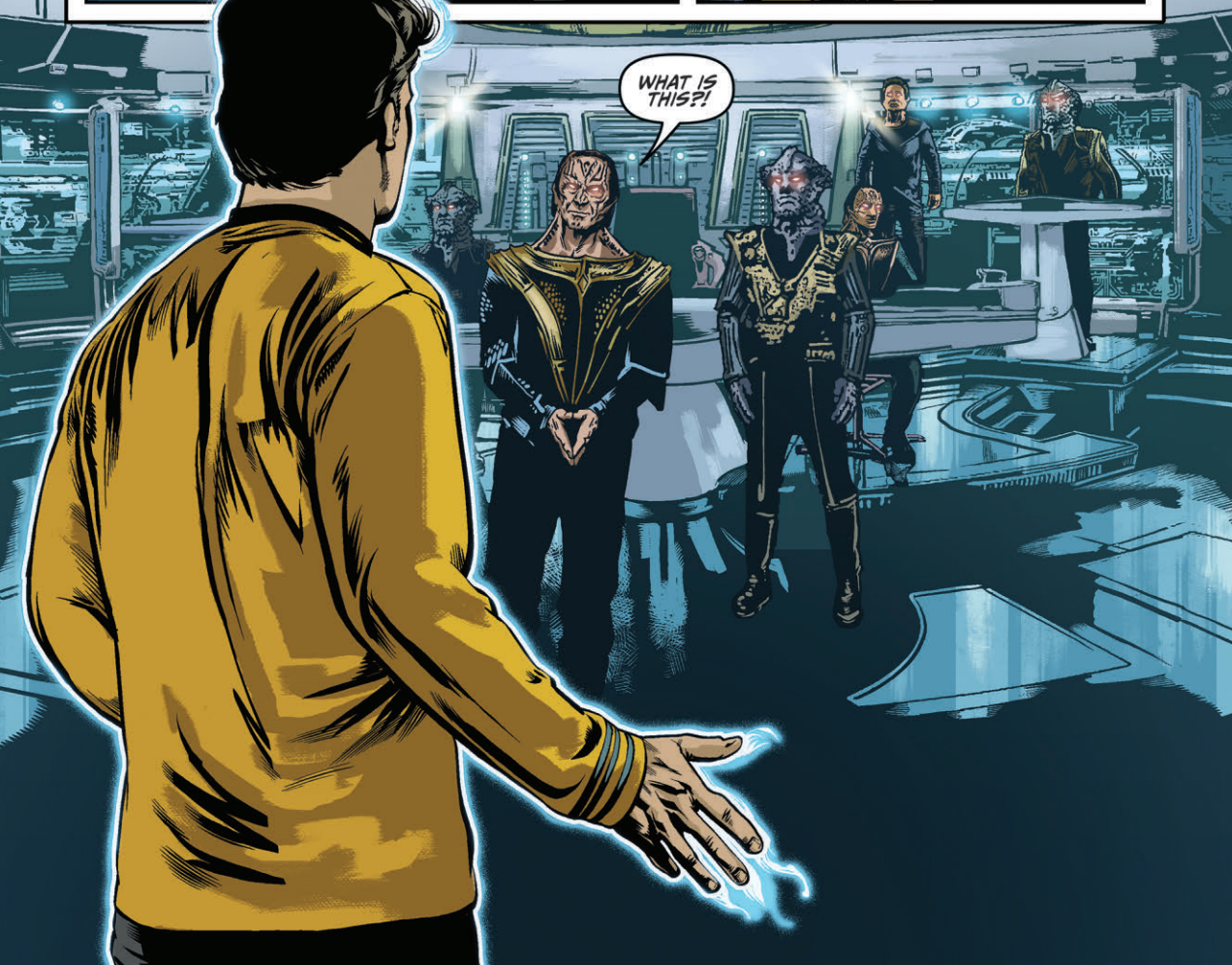


SPOCK!



YOUR FRIEND IS  
ALIVE AND WELL,  
CAPTAIN.

WHEN HE  
WAKES UP  
YOU'LL WANT TO  
THANK HIM FOR  
SAVING US  
ALL.

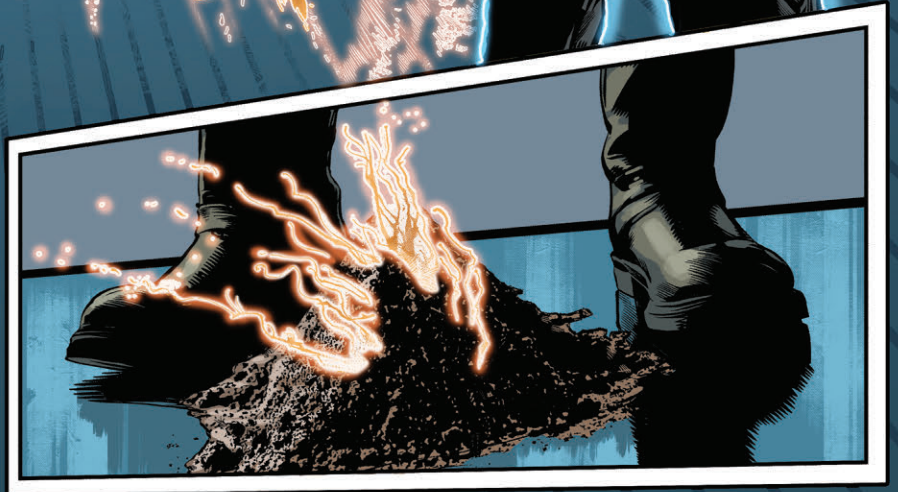


WHAT IS  
THIS?

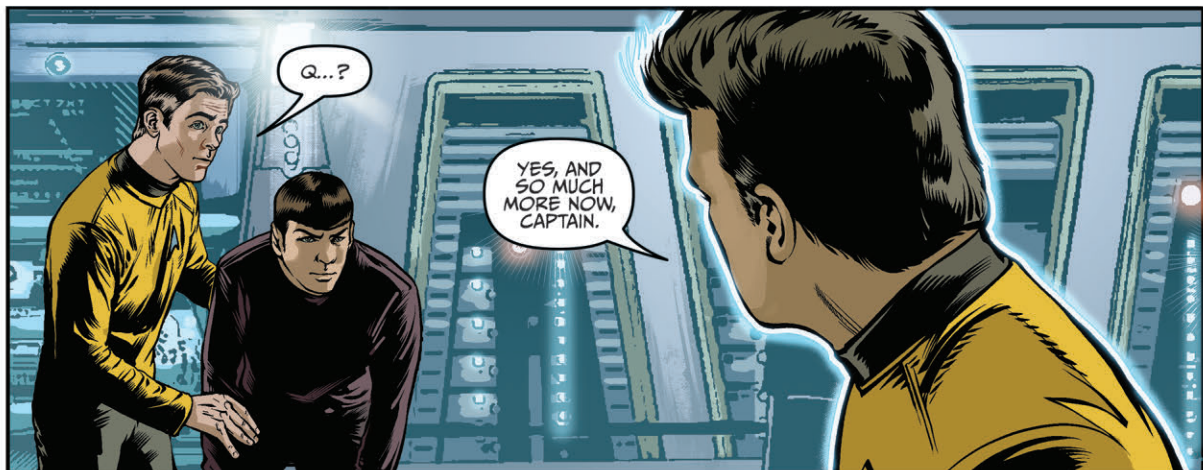




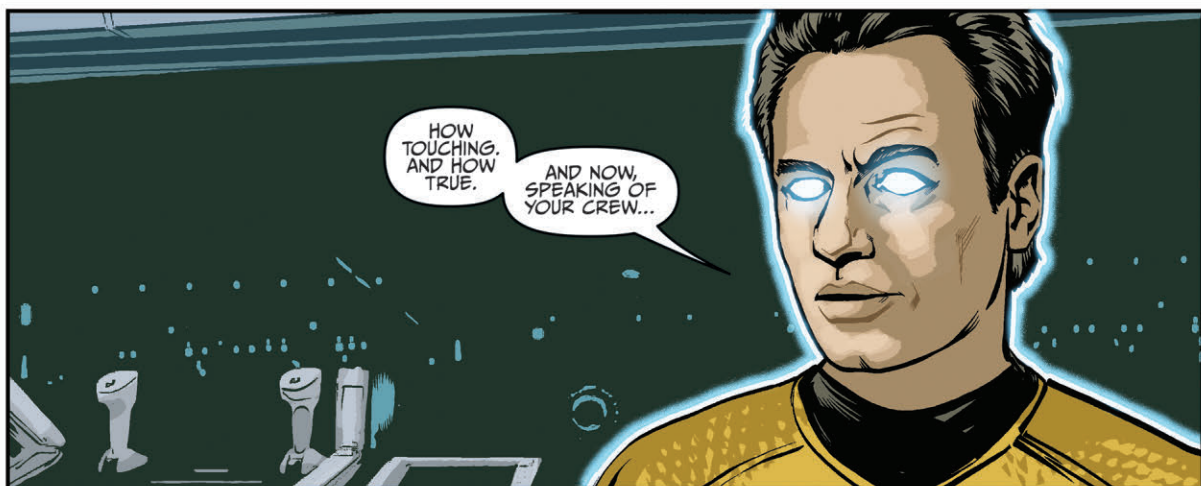
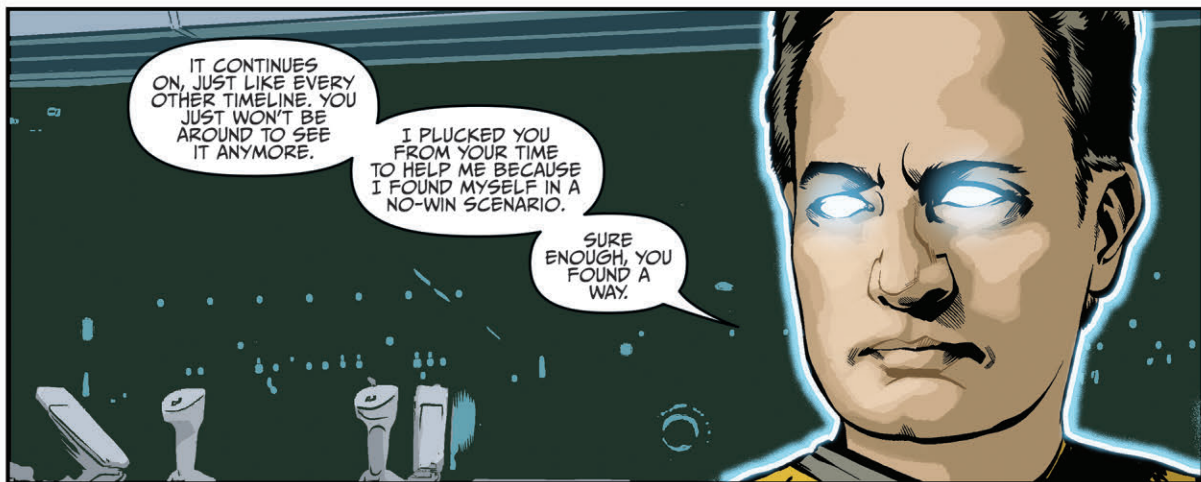






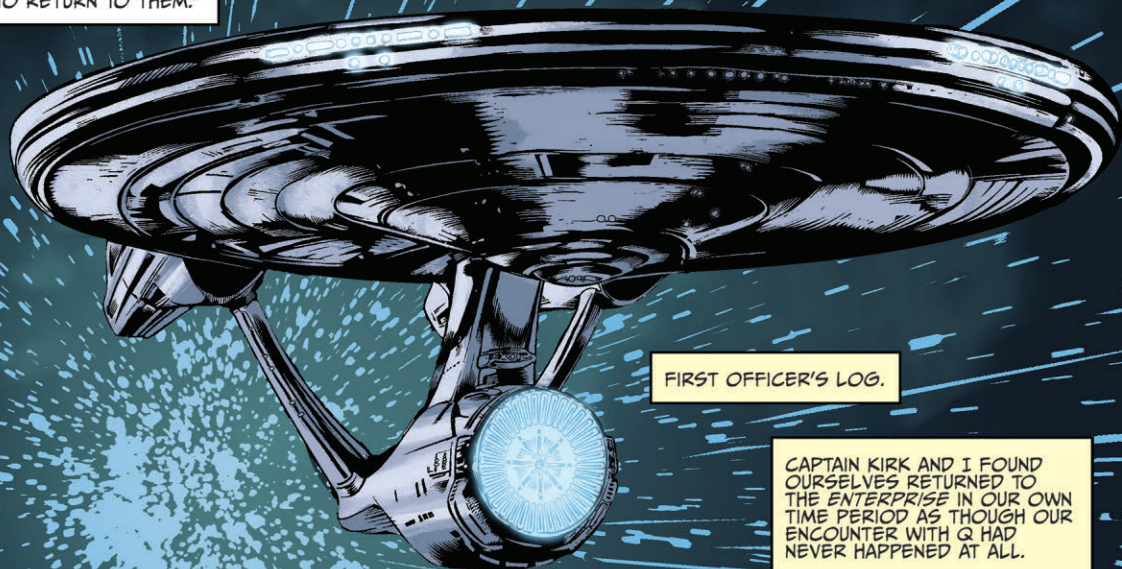








"...IT'S TIME FOR YOU  
TO RETURN TO THEM."



FIRST OFFICER'S LOG.

CAPTAIN KIRK AND I FOUND  
OURSELVES RETURNED TO  
THE ENTERPRISE IN OUR OWN  
TIME PERIOD AS THOUGH OUR  
ENCOUNTER WITH Q HAD  
NEVER HAPPENED AT ALL.



NONE OF THE OTHER  
CREWMEMBERS HAVE  
ANY RECOLLECTION OF  
Q OR THE EVENTS THAT  
FOLLOWED HIS FIRST  
APPEARANCE TO US.

ONLY THE CAPTAIN  
AND I REMEMBER.

REET  
REET

COME IN.

YOU WISHED  
TO SEE ME,  
CAPTAIN?

YES,  
COMMANDER,  
I...







...I COULDN'T  
HELP THINKING  
ABOUT THE *FUTURE*.  
OUR FUTURE. THIS  
TIMELINE.

AND WHETHER  
THE FUTURE Q  
SHOWED US IS  
*INEVITABLE*.



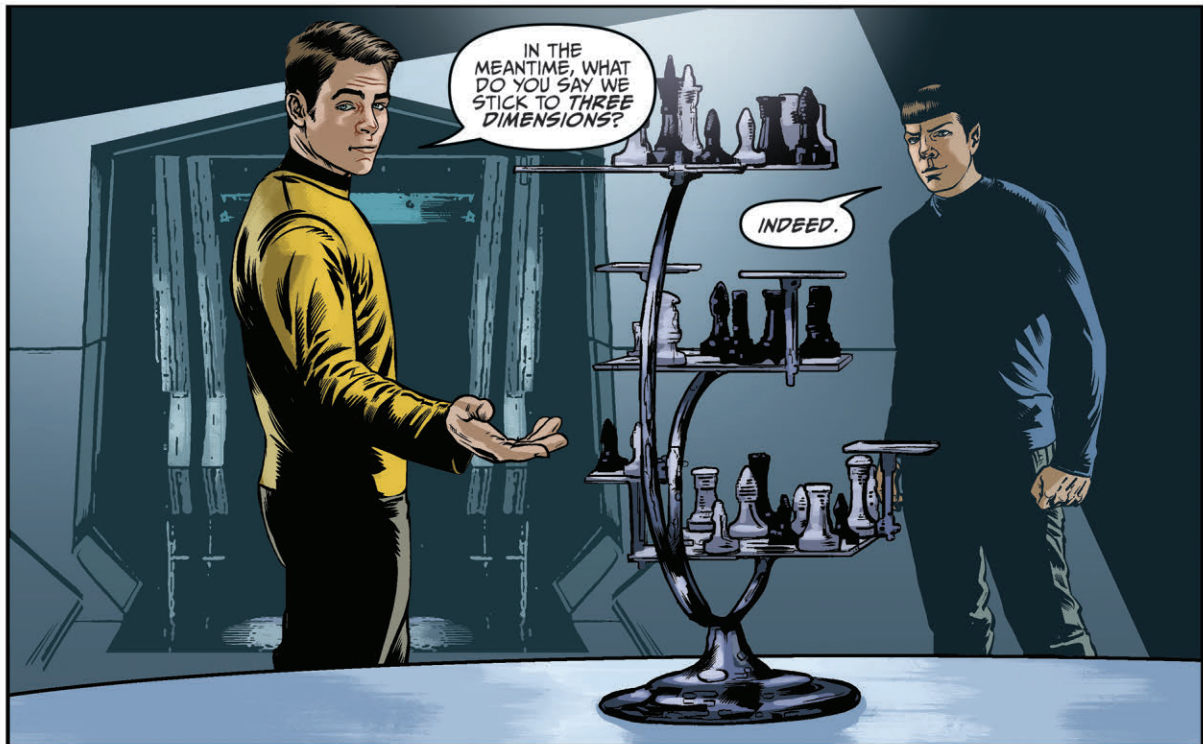
PERHAPS  
IT IS.

ALTHOUGH  
IT MAY ALSO BE  
TRUE THAT SIMPLY  
BY ALLOWING US TO  
EXPERIENCE THAT  
FUTURE, Q HAS  
ALREADY ALTERED OUR  
PRESENT IN SUCH A  
WAY THAT THE FUTURE  
WILL UNFOLD QUITE  
DIFFERENTLY, IN  
WAYS THAT YOU  
AND I CANNOT  
ANTICIPATE.



NEVER  
THOUGHT I'D  
SAY IT, BUT I  
WISH HE'D *POP  
BACK UP AGAIN*  
TO GIVE US THE  
ANSWERS.

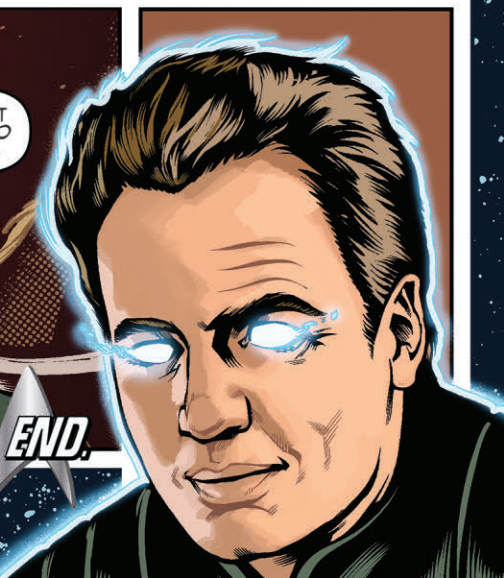
WHO  
KNOWS WHERE  
HE IS—OR WHAT  
HE'S BECOME—  
NOW.



IN THE  
MEANTIME, WHAT  
DO YOU SAY WE  
STICK TO *THREE  
DIMENSIONS*?

INDEED.











# STAR TREK<sup>®</sup>

THE **Q** GAMBIT



FOLLOWING THE EVENTS OF *STAR TREK INTO DARKNESS*, THE *U.S.S. ENTERPRISE* EMBARKS ON A NEW FIVE-YEAR MISSION OF DISCOVERY, BUT IS INTERRUPTED BY A VISIT FROM THE CLASSIC CHARACTER Q, WHO CHALLENGES THIS TIMELINE'S CAPTAIN KIRK TO SOLVE A CLASSIC NO-WIN SITUATION...IF HE CAN! THIS GALAXY-SPANNING ADVENTURE, WRITTEN BY MIKE JOHNSON WITH ART BY TONY SHASTEEN, WAS DEVELOPED IN ASSOCIATION WITH SCREENWRITER/PRODUCER ROBERTO ORCI! THE MISCHIEVOUS Q SENDS JAMES T. KIRK ON A QUEST THAT WILL SEE THE *ENTERPRISE* JOINING FORCES WITH FAMILIAR FACES FROM *STAR TREK* LORE, IN "THE Q GAMBIT!"



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