

COUNTERFEIT GIRL



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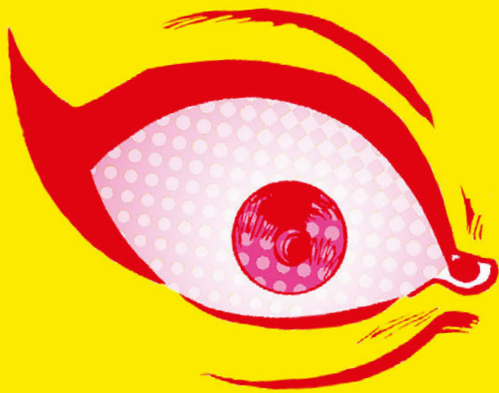
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MY NAME IS LULU FUN. SIX WEEKS AGO IT WAS SYBIL MANN. LAST YEAR I SAUNTERED AROUND AS MARY HAIR.

I CHANGE MY NAME MORE OFTEN THAN SOME OF THE MEN I KNOW CHANGE THEIR UNDERPANTS.

WELL, IN MY LINE OF BUSINESS YOU CAN'T BE ONE PERSON FOR TOO LONG.

COUNTERFEIT GIRL

TALKING OF BUSINESS, I'VE BEEN MIRRORING BUSINESSWOMAN HILARY QUEEN FOR A WEEK NOW. INTERNALISING TRIGGER MOVEMENTS, MUSCLE MEMORY, BUTTOCK TICS.

(MY DAD TAUGHT ME YOU CAN TELL A LOT ABOUT A PERSON FROM THEIR BUTTOCKS.)

ALL OF THIS INFORMATION WILL BE UPLOADED INTO PERSONA.

THREE DAYS AGO I BROKE INTO HILARY QUEEN'S APARTMENT. I'D ALREADY PILLAGED HER CYBER LIFE — NOW I WANTED SOMETHING MORE PERSONAL.

LOVE LETTERS, ILLICIT DRUGS, DRIED SKIN.

ALL THE INGREDIENTS OF A ROUNDED IDENTITY.

THIS IS THE MAZE. IT'S THE KIND OF PLACE THAT PEOPLE LIKE HILARY QUEEN NEVER COME TO. THERE'S LITTLE LIGHT AND EVEN LESS LAW AND ORDER.

THE PERFECT PLACE TO MEET MY NEXT CLIENT.

BRINDA QUARK IS WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL A POLITICAL AGITATOR. A FIGHTER FOR NAMELESS PEOPLE'S RIGHTS.

THAT'S WHY THE GUARDS ARE LOOKING FOR HER, EVEN DOWN HERE.

THE FRIENDLY LOCALS ARE ONLY TOO HAPPY TO HELP THEM WITH THEIR ENQUIRIES.

WHICH IS WHERE 'SIMMERS' LIKE GENE SELFISH COME IN...

... HER NAME'S JOYCE DATA. GORGEOUS CREDIT LIMIT AND HEALTH RATING. SHE'LL MAKE YOU DISAPPEAR.

I-I'M MEANT TO BE MEETING SOMEONE —

TAKE THE JOYCE AND I'LL SPLICE IN A HOPELESS DREAMER WITH UNUSUAL SEXUAL FANTASIES FOR FREE...

FREE?

YOU'VE NEVER DONE ANYTHING FOR FREE IN YOUR LIFE, GENE.

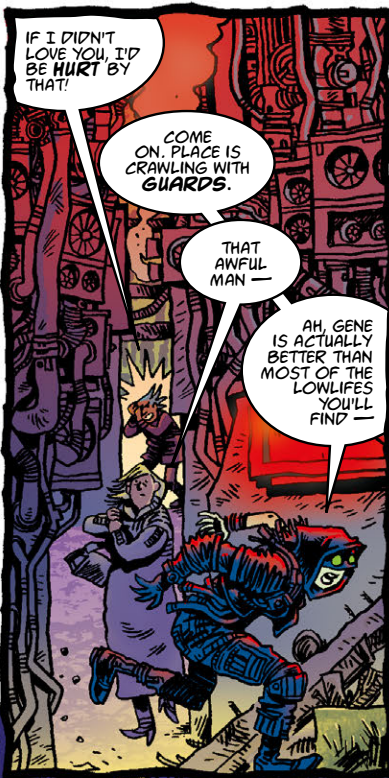
BACK OFF, LULLU. I'M TRYING TO EARN A LIVING HERE. YOU KNOW I'M THE CLEANEST SIMMER IN THE MAZE —

WHERE IS SHE? WHERE'S BRINDA QUARK?



I HEARD YOU'RE STILL CUTTING YOUR I.D.'S WITH SYNTHETIC MOOD SWINGS.

OW! THAT WAS MY BLOODY EYE, LULU! WHAT DID YOU DO THAT FOR?



IF I DIDN'T LOVE YOU, I'D BE HURT BY THAT!

COME ON, PLACE IS CRAWLING WITH GUARDS.

THAT AWFUL MAN —

AH, GENE IS ACTUALLY BETTER THAN MOST OF THE LOWLIFES YOU'LL FIND —



DOWN!

UHN! WH-WHAT IS IT? MORE GUARDS?

EVEN WORSE...



AGENTS OF THE ALBION CORPORATION.

TH-THEY'RE LOOKING FOR YOU?

DO ROBOTS SHIT RUST? LUCKY MY I.D.'S WATER-TIGHT.



THERE ARE PLENTY OF REASONS TO DISLIKE ALBION.

THEY'RE A WORLDWIDE INNOVATOR OF WEAPONS SYSTEMS. THEY EXPLOIT THEIR WORKERS AND DODGE THEIR TAXES.



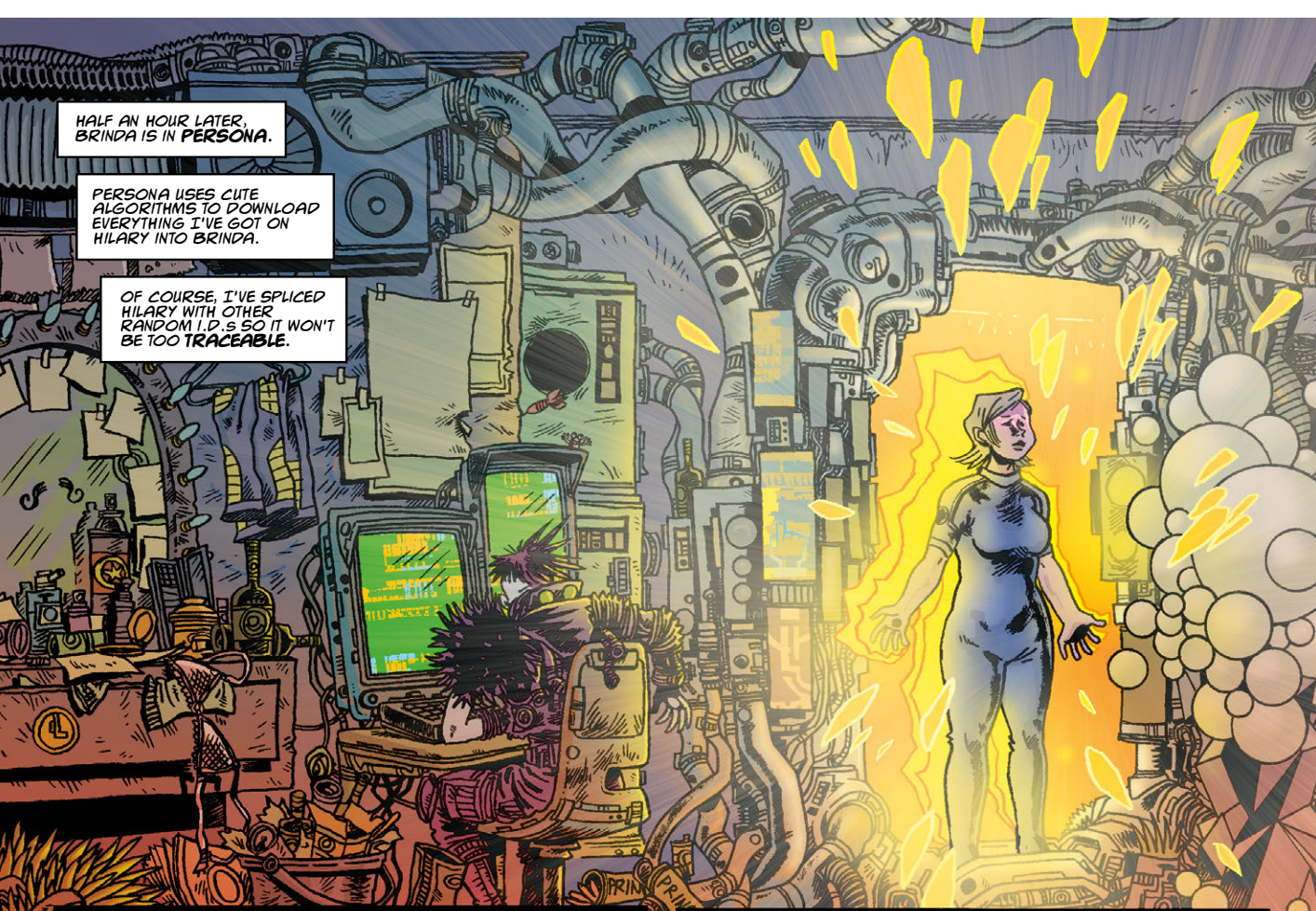
BUT I HAVE A PERSONAL REASON FOR HATING THEM. I'M NOT READY TO TALK ABOUT THAT JUST YET, THOUGH...

LET'S GO. QUICKER WE GET YOU OUT OF THAT CHARACTER THE BETTER.

HALF AN HOUR LATER,
BRINDA IS IN PERSONA.

PERSONA USES CUTE
ALGORITHMS TO DOWNLOAD
EVERYTHING I'VE GOT ON
HILARY INTO BRINDA.

OF COURSE, I'VE SPLICED
HILARY WITH OTHER
RANDOM I.D.'S SO IT WON'T
BE TOO TRACEABLE.



BY THE TIME BRINDA COMES
OUT THE OTHER SIDE SHE'S
NINETY PER CENT HILARY
QUEEN. SHE'S GOT A NEW
NAME — HARRIOT QUINN.

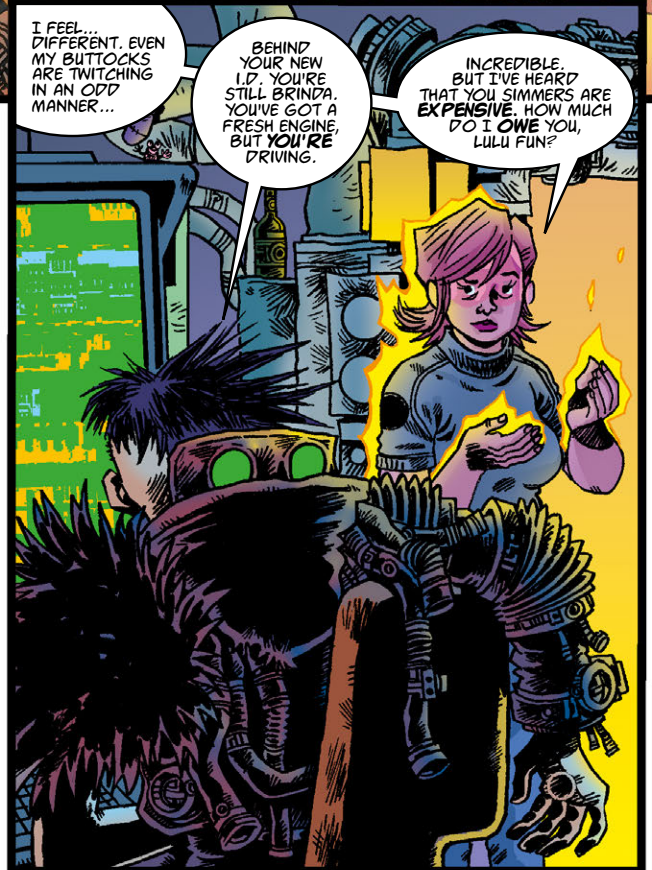
NO FAKE I.D. IS PERMANENT
BUT FOR A FEW MONTHS
SHE'LL GET ACCESS TO
TRANSPORT AND BUILDINGS
AND FOOL THE I.D. POLICE.



I FEEL...
DIFFERENT. EVEN
MY BUTTOCKS
ARE TWITCHING
IN AN ODD
MANNER...

BEHIND
YOUR NEW
I.D. YOU'RE
STILL BRINDA.
YOU'VE GOT A
FRESH ENGINE,
BUT YOU'RE
DRIVING.

INCREDIBLE.
BUT I'VE HEARD
THAT YOU SIMMERS ARE
EXPENSIVE. HOW MUCH
DO I OWE YOU,
LULU FUN?



I COULD USE THE MONEY. I HAVEN'T EATEN FOR TWO DAYS AND PERSONA NEEDS REPAIRS, BUT I HAVE A RULE.

ANYONE FIGHTING THE SYSTEM, ANYONE MESSING WITH THE CORPORATIONS, THEY GET MY SERVICES FOR FREE.

SO WHEN MY SCREEN COMES ALIVE I'M PRAYING IT'S A PAYING JOB. MAYBE A RICH BANKER RUNNING FROM A JEALOUS SEX-CYBORG.

TALK, SCREEN.

L-LULU?

LULU, THIS IS **OLA KLOOF**. YOU REMEMBER? YOU H-HELPED ME ESCAPE FROM THOSE TRAFFICKERS?

HAVE YOU LOST YOUR MIND? CLIENTS CAN'T GET IN TOUCH WITH THEIR I.D. THIEVES. THAT'S RULE NUMBER ONE!

I TOLD THEM ALL I KNEW ABOUT YOU. I-I'M SORRY. I TOLD THEM WHERE YOU ARE — I TOLD THEM WHO YOU ARE...

B-BUT THIS IS AN EMERGENCY. THEY TORTURED ME. THEY TORE MY TOENAILS OFF.

AND I'D JUST HAD THE NAILS PAINTED WITH SENTIENT TATTOOS —

WHO DID THIS TO YOU, **OLA**?

BUT I ALREADY KNOW THAT.

I'M SORRY, LULU. M-MAYBE YOU SHOULD THINK ABOUT MOVING —

AND I KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS...

IT MEANS MORE THAN JUST MY I.D. IS IN FOR A BIG CHANGE —



IT MEANS THE ALBION CORPORATION.

YES, MY CURRENT NAME IS LULU FUN. BUT THAT'S NOT WHO THESE SUITED BIO-MACHINES ARE AFTER.

THEY'RE NOT INTERESTED IN BEATRIX UPP, NOR ANAIS RANK, NOR EVEN VIRGINIA PLAIN —

KRUNCH!

KRAK!



SMASH!

THEY DON'T CARE ABOUT FRANCES PARIS OR GEISHA BLACK.

AND THEY ARE TOTALLY INDIFFERENT TO BILLIE JEAN JUPITER.



THEY'RE ONLY INTERESTED IN ME.

THE REAL ME BEHIND ALL THESE MASKS.

AND THE REAL ME IS —

THUD!

IN THIS FAST, IMPERSONAL WORLD, IT'S NICE TO KNOW SOME PEOPLE ARE INTERESTED IN YOU.



UNLESS THOSE PEOPLE ARE AGENTS OF THE ALBION CORPORATION.

CONTACT MADE. TARGET RUNNING OUT OF BREATH.

ACTUALLY, THEY'RE NOT AFTER ME. THEY'RE AFTER LULU FUN. BUT RIGHT NOW, I AM LULU FUN.

THESE ARE COMPLICATED TIMES.

TAXI!!

THE TAXI HAS SCANNED MY I.D., CREDIT RATING AND CRIMINAL RECORD BEFORE MY ARSE TOUCHES ITS SEAT.

GET ME ANYWHERE. FAST.

A RIDE? WITH YOUR CREDITS? DO ME A FAVOUR.

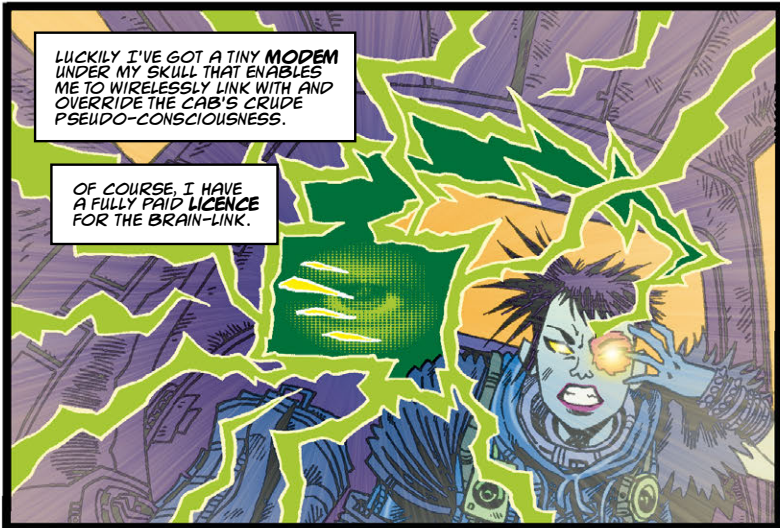
WAIT, I'M RECEIVING INSTRUCTIONS...

I'LL OWE YOU. PLEASE, JUST DRIVE.

I MUST TAKE YOU TO THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE ALBION CORPORATION.

WHOA! NO! YOU CAN'T DO THAT!

CABS HAVEN'T KIDNAPPED PASSENGERS SINCE THE LAST UBER RIOTS!



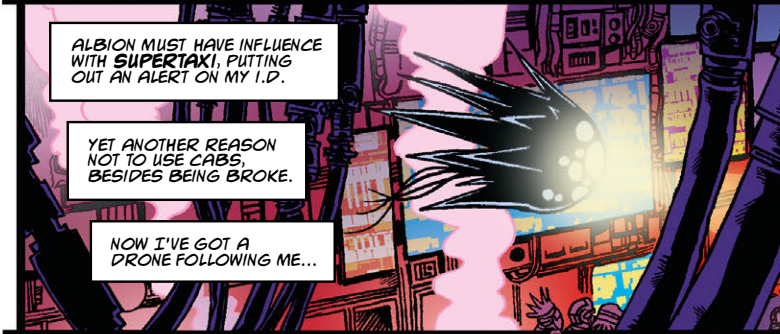
LUCKILY I'VE GOT A TINY **MODEM** UNDER MY SKULL THAT ENABLES ME TO WIRELESSLY LINK WITH AND OVERRIDE THE CAB'S CRUDE PSEUDO-CONSCIOUSNESS.

OF COURSE, I HAVE A FULLY PAID LICENCE FOR THE BRAIN-LINK.



AND IF YOU BELIEVE THAT, YOU DON'T KNOW ME YET.

UNNF!



ALBION MUST HAVE INFLUENCE WITH **SUPERTAXI**, PUTTING OUT AN ALERT ON MY I.D.

YET ANOTHER REASON NOT TO USE CABS, BESIDES BEING BROKE.

NOW I'VE GOT A DRONE FOLLOWING ME...



MY **BRAIN MODEM** CAN'T GET INTO THIS THING.

LULU FUN, YOUR CHOICE IS SIMPLE, YOU HAND YOURSELF IN TO ALBION, OR I OBLITERATE YOU.

ORBITAL COMICS
PLANET OVERLOAD

DON'T WORRY IT'S TOO LATE

L-LISTEN, LET ME GO AND I'LL FIX YOU WITH AN I.D., SELF-AWARENESS, SUBJECTIVE REALITY, EXECUTIVE CONTROL OVER YOUR DECISIONS...



SOUNDS MESSY.

AHH!

YOU'VE ALREADY SEEN THE MAZE.

SO YOU KNOW HOW DESPERATE I MUST BE TO ENTER THAT TOILET AGAIN...



BY THIS TIME, YOU MIGHT BE WONDERING WHAT ALBION'S PROBLEM IS WITH ME.

I'M JUST ONE PERSON.



ALL RIGHT, I'VE BEEN A LOT OF PERSONS, LULU AND MARY AND VIRGINIA AND ALL THE OTHERS...

BUT WHY WOULD A ZILLION-CREDIT CORPORATION BOTHER ITSELF WITH SUCH A BUNCH OF NON-ENTITIES?



YOU COULD SAY IT'S PERSONAL.

UFF!

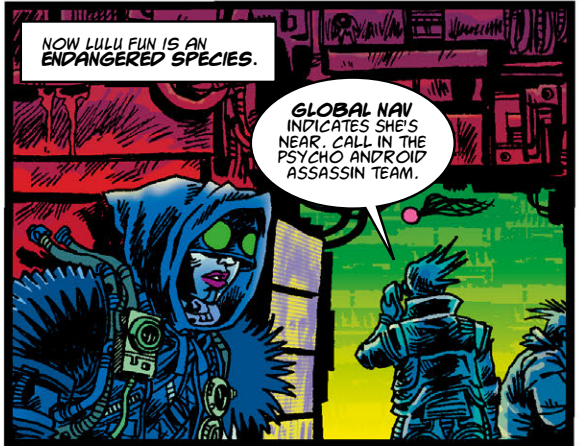


FOR TWO MONTHS THIS HAS BEEN A USEFUL I.D...



BEING A RETIRED EXOTIC DANCER CERTAINLY DOES WONDERS FOR YOUR SENSE OF RHYTHM... AND ALBION NEVER LINKED LULU WITH MY REAL SELF.

UNTIL NOW.



NOW LULU FIN IS AN ENDANGERED SPECIES.

GLOBAL NAV INDICATES SHE'S NEAR. CALL IN THE PSYCHO ANDROID ASSASSIN TEAM.



NORMALLY, I TAKE MY TIME WHEN CHANGING I.D.S. SEE IF THEY'RE A GOOD FIT, CHECK THEIR HISTORY.

RUMMAGE THROUGH THEIR DIRTY SOFTWARE.



I'D NEVER NORMALLY GO NEAR A BACKSTREET SIMMER LIKE AUTHENTIKUS.

NEED A NICE NEW I.D., SISTER? SKIMMED FROM A POLITICIAN'S LONELY WIFE, SPLICED WITH —

WHAT ALGORITHMIC MODEL DO YOU USE TO DOWNLOAD ENCODED CONSCIOUSNESS PRINTS?

I'M AN ARTIST, BABY. I FOLLOW MY INSTINCT LIKE MICHELANGELO.

I NEED A NEW PERSONA, NOT THE SISTINE CHAPEL.



THERE ARE PLENTY OF OTHER I.D. THIEVES IN THE MAZE.

DODGY SELF-LIFTERS LIKE KAMELEON, ABSORBO, I.D.10T...



AND THEN, OF COURSE, THERE'S **GENE SELFISH**.

SO YOU'VE COME TO ME FOR THE OLD **IDENTITY SHUFFLE** BECAUSE I'M THE BEST SIMMER IN NEW CITY?

TRY, YOU'RE PROBABLY NOT **QUITE** AS INCOMPETENT AS THOSE OTHER **HATCHET JOBS**.

AND THE FACT THAT YOU LOVE ME **MIGHT** MEAN YOU WON'T **STITCH** ME UP.



HMM. I **DO** HAVE A **LOVELY** I.D. **BUSINESSWOMAN**. **VERY** **LOW-PRO-FILE**. **ALMOST** **UNTRACEABLE**.

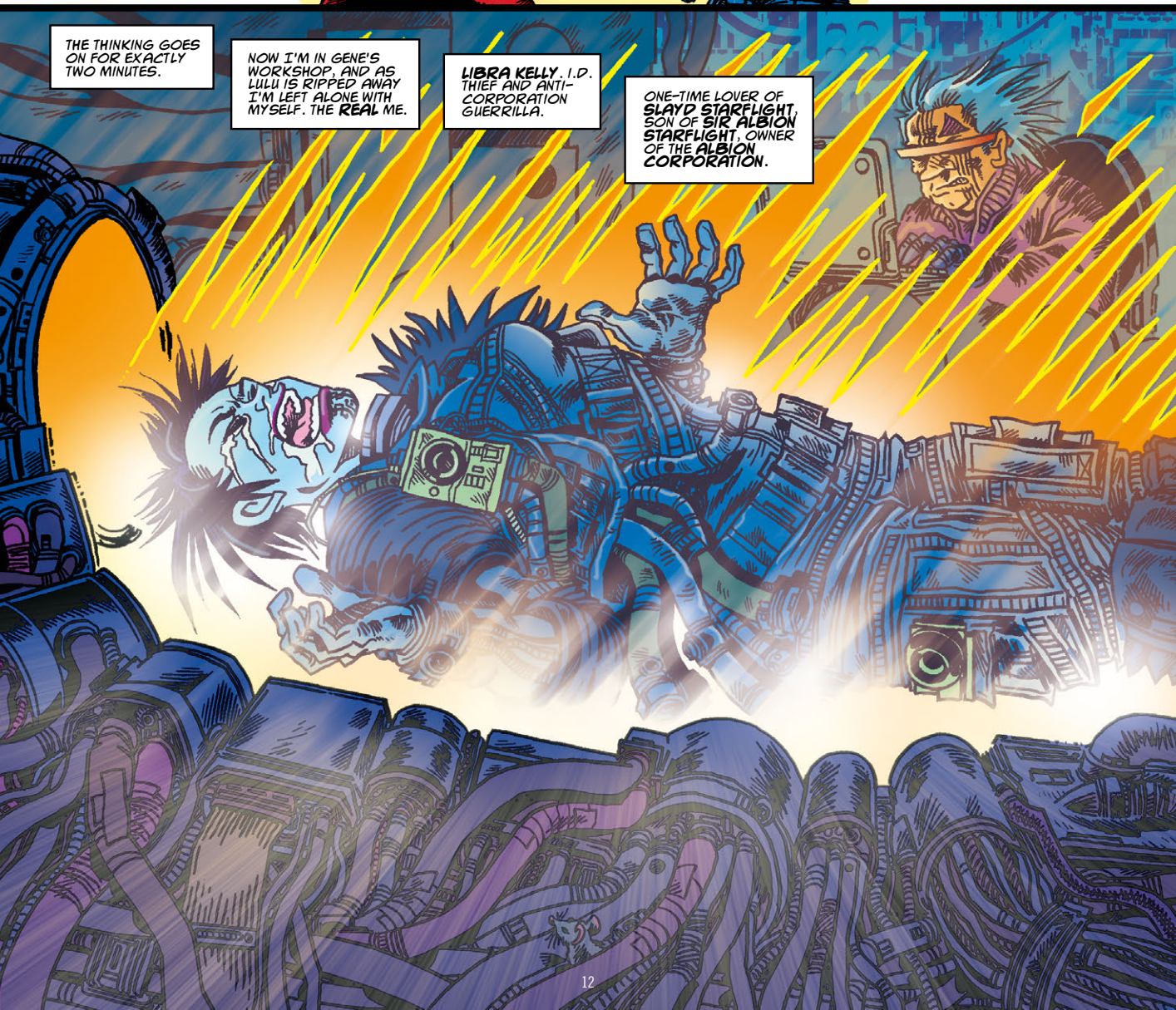
BUT I WAS WAITING TO **SELL** IT TO A **WEALTHY** **CLIENT**.



I'M **OUT** OF **CREDIT**. **BUT** I **COULD** LET YOU HAVE A **HIGH-RES** **HOLOGRAM** OF ME **TAKING** A **LONG** **SHOWER**.



LET ME **THINK** ABOUT IT...



THE **THINKING** **GOES** ON FOR **EXACTLY** **TWO** **MINUTES**.

NOW I'M IN **GENE'S** **WORKSHOP**, AND AS **LULU** IS **RIPPED** AWAY I'M **LEFT** ALONE WITH MYSELF. **THE REAL** **ME**.

LIBRA **KELLY**. **I.D.** **THIEF** AND **ANTI-CORPORATION** **GUERRILLA**.

ONE-TIME **LOVER** OF **SLAYD** **STARFLIGHT**, **SON** OF **SIR** **ALBION** **STARFLIGHT**, **OWNER** OF THE **ALBION** **CORPORATION**.

TWO HOURS AND ONE DIRTY SECRET LATER, IT'S OVER. GENE'S SPlicing IS AS CRUDE AND DISTASTEFUL AS I IMAGINE HE'D BE IN BED.

NOT THAT I'LL EVER BE DESPERATE ENOUGH TO FIND OUT.



BUT HOWEVER CHEAP AND NASTY IT FEELS, THE I.D. THAT GENE GAVE ME SEEMS TO BE HOLDING.



I'VE GOT A NEW NAME. A NEW HISTORY. FOR A WHILE, A NEW CREDIT RATING.

I'VE GIVEN ALBION THE SLIP.

SO WHY DO I FEEL AS THOUGH I'VE JUST MADE THE **BIGGEST** MISTAKE OF MY LIFE?



THEY COME FOR ME IN
THE BURNING NIGHT.

ALL THOSE IDENTITIES THAT I'VE
STOLEN, THOSE SHADES AND ECHOES
OF THE PEOPLE I'VE BEEN, THOSE
LULUS AND BEATRICES AND MARYS.

SKIDMARKS OF
DISCARDED PERSONAS.

IT SEEMS LIKE I'VE BEEN
RUNNING FOR EVER. BUT I
CAN'T SHAKE THESE GHOSTS
OF MY FORMER SELVES OFF.

AND THE HEAT! MAYBE I
DIED AND WENT TO HELL...



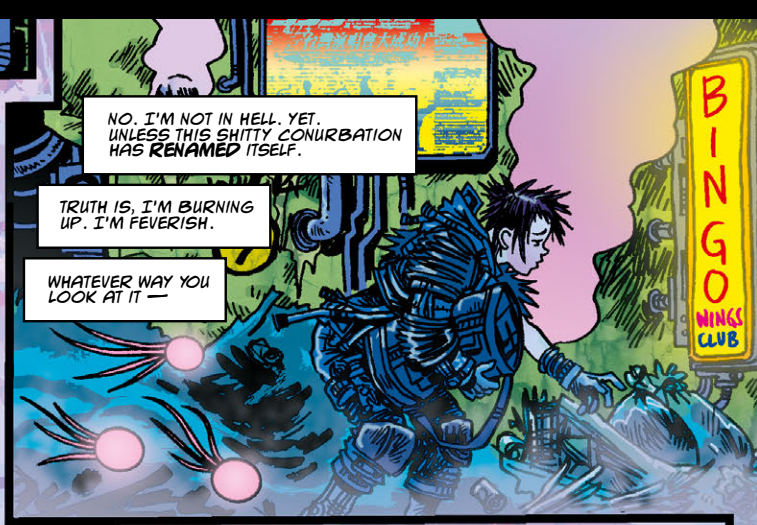
COUNTERFEIT



UHHNNNN...
NO... NO...



HUH?

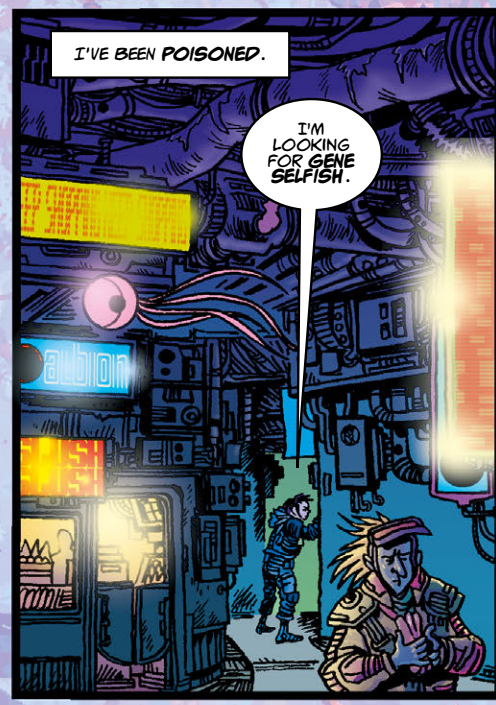


NO. I'M NOT IN HELL. YET. UNLESS THIS SHITTY CONURBATION HAS RENAMED ITSELF.

TRUTH IS, I'M BURNING UP. I'M FEVERISH.

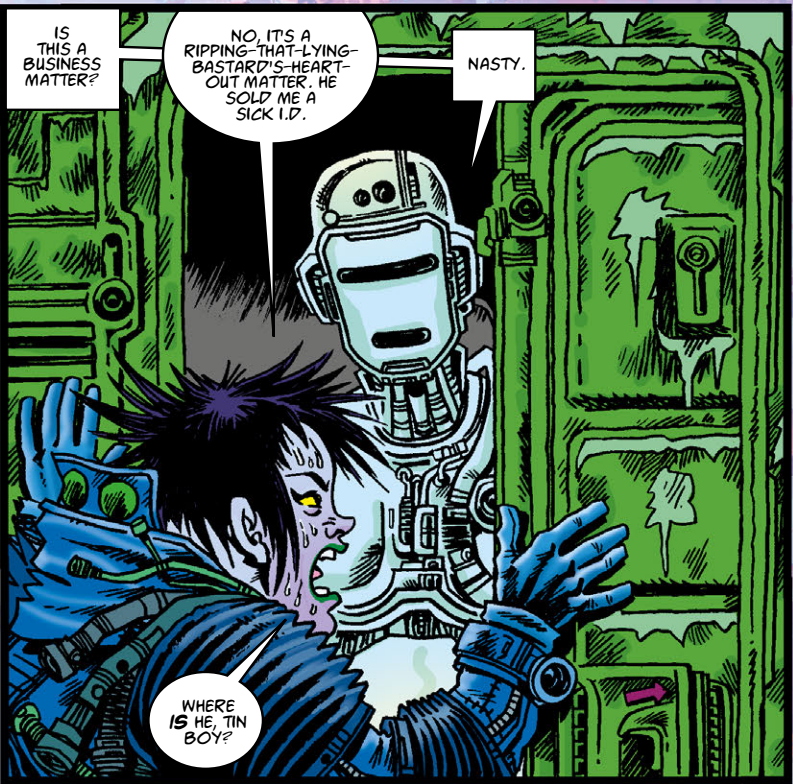
WHATEVER WAY YOU LOOK AT IT —

BINGO WINNER CLUB



I'VE BEEN POISONED.

I'M LOOKING FOR GENE SELFISH.

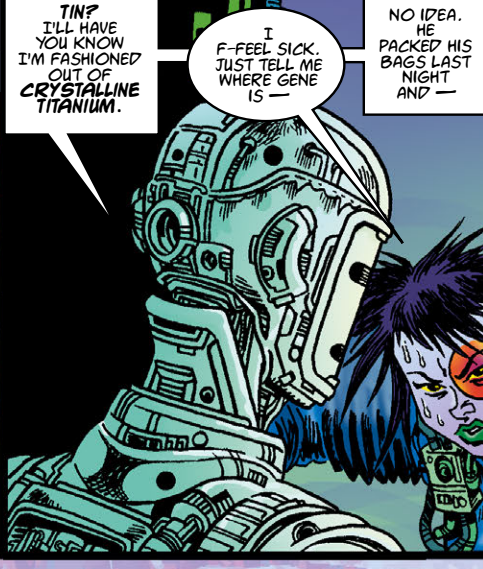


IS THIS A BUSINESS MATTER?

NO, ITS A RIPPING-THAT-LYING-BASTARD'S-HEART-OUT MATTER. HE SOLD ME A SICK I.D.

NASTY.

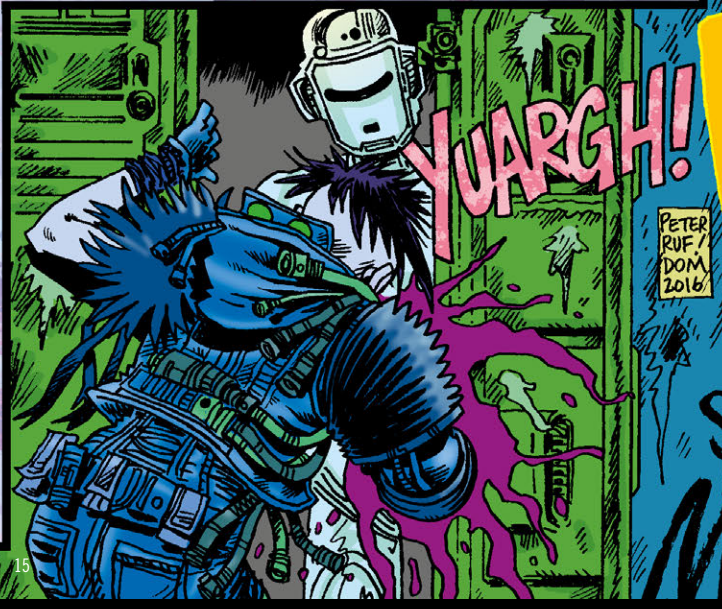
WHERE IS HE, TIN BOY?



TIN? I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW I'M FASHIONED OUT OF CRYSTALLINE TITANIUM.

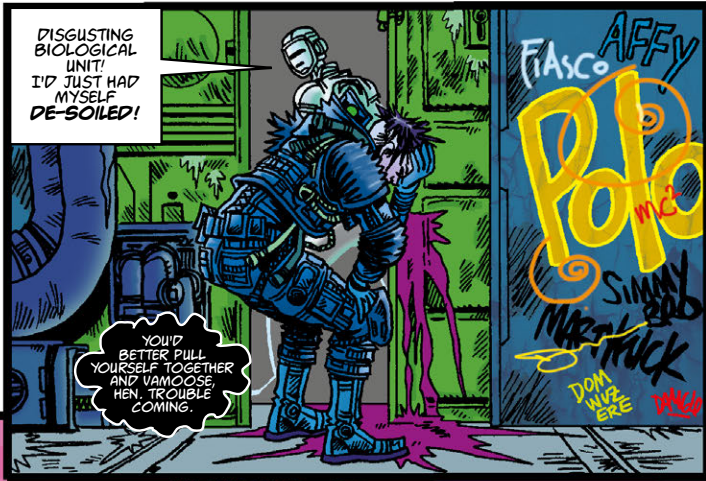
I F-FEEL SICK. JUST TELL ME WHERE GENE IS —

NO IDEA. HE PACKED HIS BAGS LAST NIGHT AND —



YUARGH!

PETER RUF / DOM 2016



DISGUSTING BIOLOGICAL UNIT! I'D JUST HAD MYSELF DE-SOILED!

YOU'D BETTER PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER AND VAMOOSE HEN, TROUBLE COMING.



HUH? WH-WHO SAID THAT? WHERE ARE YOU?

PULL YOUR LEFT TROUSER LEG UP, GIWAN, QUICK.



HELLO RORY, THE WEE THING THAT'S GOING TO KILL YOU.

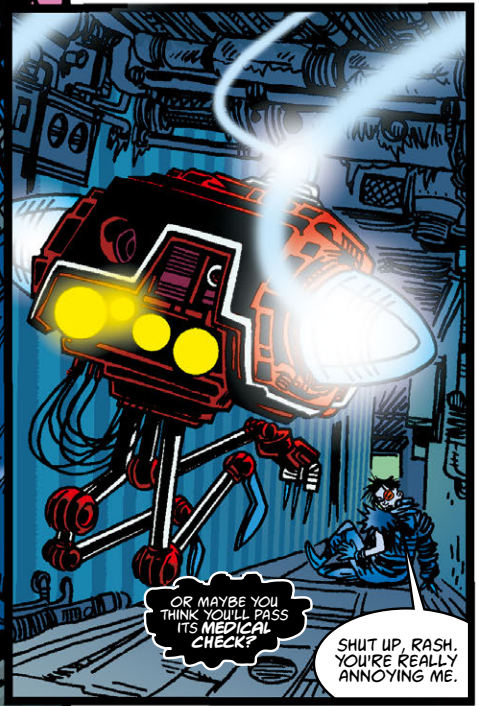
OH SHIT, A COGNIZANTUS RASH.

AYE, ONE OF THE BATCH THAT MUTATED AND ESCAPED FROM THE GLASGOW LAB THAT WAS DEVELOPING BIOLOGICAL HEALTH APPS.



NO, DON'T PICK AT ME, THAT'LL MAKE ME WORSE, AND I WANT OUR RELATIONSHIP TO BE AS LONG AND PAINFUL AS POSSIBLE.

BUT FIRST, CHECK OUT THE WELLBEING DROID BEHIND YOU.



OR MAYBE YOU THINK YOU'LL PASS ITS MEDICAL CHECK?

SHUT UP, RASH, YOU'RE REALLY ANNOYING ME.

PETER RUF! DOM!!!



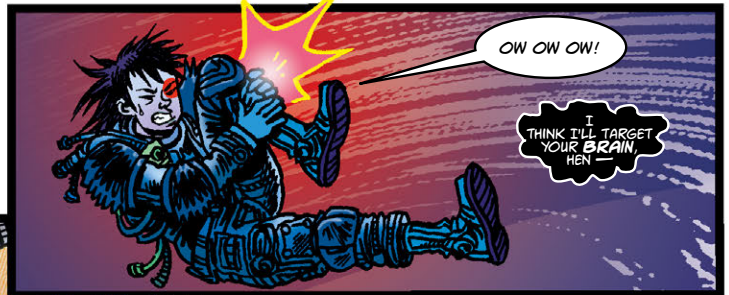
SHALL I TELL YOU HOW YOU'LL DIE?

SHUT UP.

I'LL POISON YOUR BLOODSTREAM, WHICH WILL RESULT IN ACUTE LIVER AND KIDNEY FAILURE, AFTER THAT, NECROTISING FASCITIS —



I SAID SHUT UP!



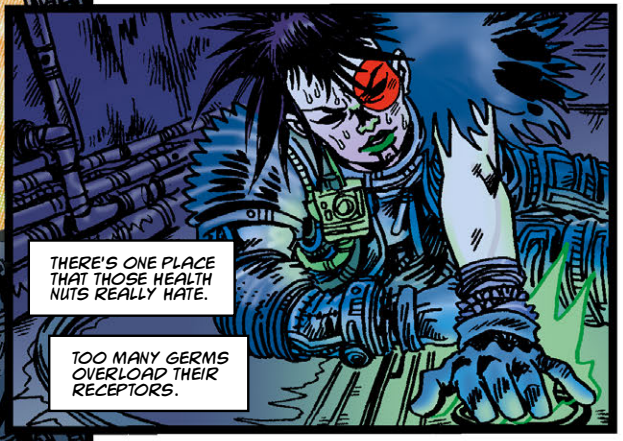
OW OW OW!

I THINK I'LL TARGET YOUR BRAIN MEN —



— YOU CLEARLY DINNAE USE IT MUCH.

COMPULSORY MEDICAL EXAMINATION. IMMEDIATE COMPLIANCE.



THERE'S ONE PLACE THAT THOSE HEALTH NUTS REALLY HATE.

TOO MANY GERMS OVERLOAD THEIR RECEPTORS.



FIRST, MY INTERNAL MODEM NEEDS TO INTERFACE WITH THE MANHOLE COVER'S ANT-SIZED BRAIN...

THE WELLBEING DROIDS ARE EVERYWHERE AND THEY CAN SMELL SICKNESS FROM TWO HUNDRED YARDS. FAILURE TO PASS THEIR MEDICALS MEANS QUARANTINE.

YOU MIGHT BE WONDERING HOW I CAN CATCH A DISEASE FROM A STOLEN IDENTITY.

AAAAHHHH!

UUGH!

SPLEKT!

CAREFUL, HOST, YOU'LL KILL YOURSELF.

GOOD, AND DON'T CALL ME HOST, IT'S CREEPY.

HERE THEY COME. SHIT-EATERS.

MUTANT RATS GENETICALLY GROWN TO EAT OUR DROPPINGS, WHO'VE DEVELOPED A TASTE FOR HUMAN FLESH.

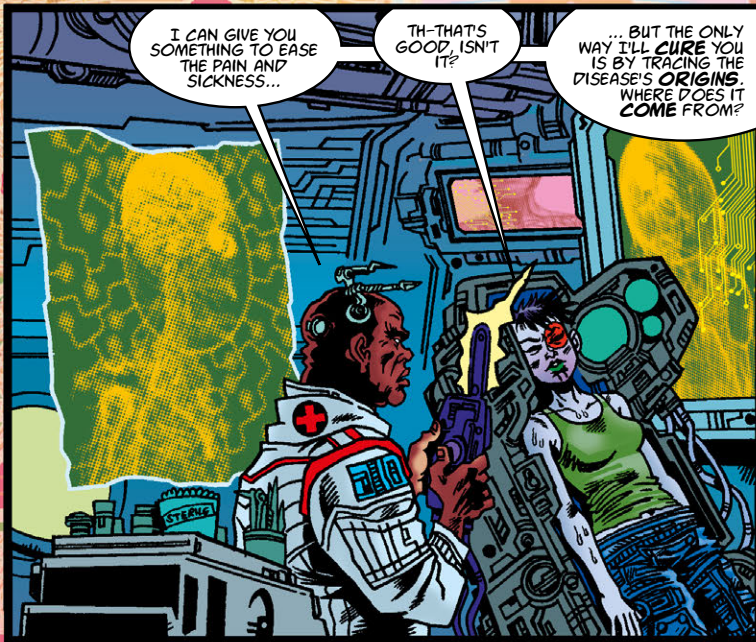
THING IS, WHEN YOU STEAL AN I.D. YOU DON'T JUST PILFER AN IDEA OF A PERSON. YOU GO DEEPER.

YOU GRAB ASPECTS OF THEIR PSYCHE. THEIR SELF.

AND IF THAT SELF HAS A RASH OR A DISEASE, YOU GET IT TOO, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

I'VE GOT TO GET TO A DOCTOR.

THIS IS THE MODERN WORLD, RIGHT? SURELY THERE'S NOTHING A DOCTOR CAN'T PUT RIGHT.



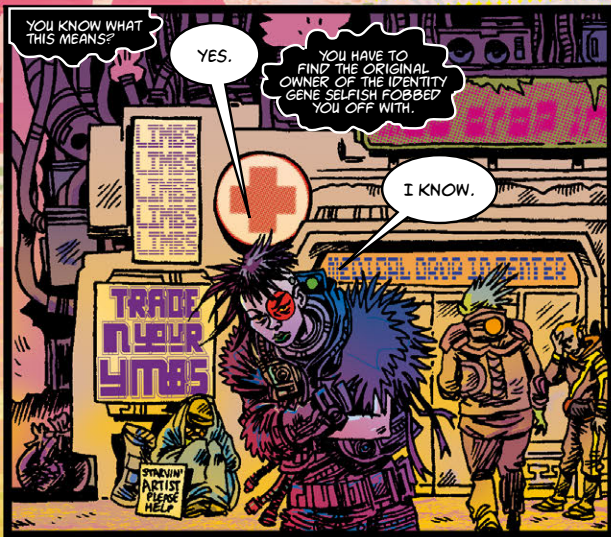
I CAN GIVE YOU SOMETHING TO EASE THE PAIN AND SICKNESS...

TH-THAT'S GOOD, ISN'T IT?

... BUT THE ONLY WAY I'LL CURE YOU IS BY TRACING THE DISEASE'S ORIGINS. WHERE'D DOES IT COME FROM?



I DON'T KNOW. IT'S SECOND HAND.



YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS?

YES.

YOU HAVE TO FIND THE ORIGINAL OWNER OF THE IDENTITY GENE SELFISH FOLDBER YOU OFF WITH.

I KNOW.



WITH GENE SELFISH GONE, I CANNOT SEE HOW YOU'RE GOING TO DO THAT.

I'LL FIND A WAY.

COMMENDABLE OPTIMISM, BUT I DISAGREE. YOUR KIDNEYS ARE SWELLING. BACTERIA IS GROWING IN YOUR LUNGS.

OH, AND THERE'S SOMETHING UNSPEAKABLE MAKING ITSELF AT HOME IN YOUR ARMPIT.



YOU'RE DYING, HOST.

YOU'RE DYING FAST.

LOOK. AN ADVERT FOR ONE OF ALBION CORPORATION'S PRODUCTS.

IT WAS TO AVOID THEIR AGENTS AND THE ATTENTION OF SIR ALBION STARFLIGHT, WHO IS BASICALLY THE DEVIL, THAT I DID SOMETHING I NEVER THOUGHT I'D DO.

I ATE MY OWN COOKING.

ONLY KIDDING. TRUTH IS, I BOUGHT A DODGY I.D.

FROM GENE SELFISH, THAT LOW-LIFE SIMMER.

SORRY, LIBRA. GENE'S DISAPPEARED. I THOUGHT HE WAS WITH YOU...

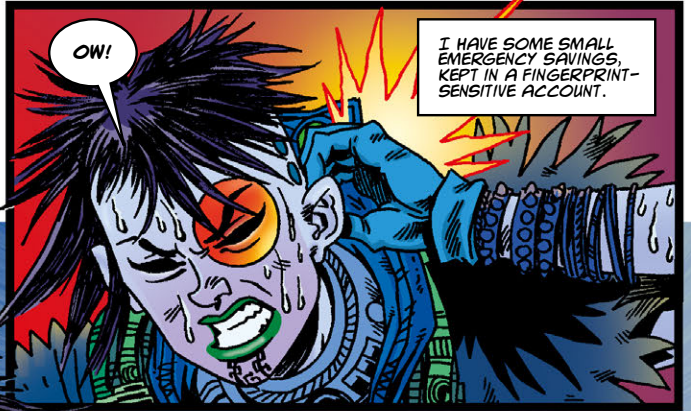
UNLESS I FIND OUT WHO THE DISEASED I.D. GENE SOLD ME BELONGED TO, MY DOCTOR CAN'T CURE ME.

AND HE'S NOT THE ONLY ONE WARNING ME ABOUT MY HEALTH.

HELLO, HEN. IT'S ME, YOUR FRIENDLY COGNIZANTUS RASH, WITH A MEDICAL BULLETIN.

SHUT UP, HIVES.

I DETECT SWELLING OF THE LIVER AND AN ENLARGED SPLEEN. THE NEXT STAGE IN YOUR TERMINAL DETERIORATION WILL —



THE FINGERPRINT IS KEPT IN A PLACE NO ONE WOULD FIND, UNLESS THEY WERE KISSING ME BEHIND THE EAR.

WHICH, KNOWING MY LIFE, IS UNLIKELY TO HAPPEN.

MY IRRITATING RASH IS RIGHT. I'M DYING, AND FAST.

I'VE TRIED REGULAR MEDICINE. IT'S TIME FOR SOMETHING A LITTLE MORE ALTERNATIVE.



KALIFORNIA



IT'S TIME FOR KALIFORNIA.

The End is GR...VY
SCRIPT PETER MILLIGAN
ART RUFUS DAYGLO
COLOURS DOM REGAN
LETTERING ELLIE DE VILLE



THEY'RE DOING A SPECIAL ON THE TELEPATHIC WORMS.

THE HOLY ONES WILL SPEAK TO YOU. THEY WILL COMMAND YOUR BRAIN TO HEAL ITSELF.

TRY NOT TO SWALLOW ANY. THAT'S EXTRA.

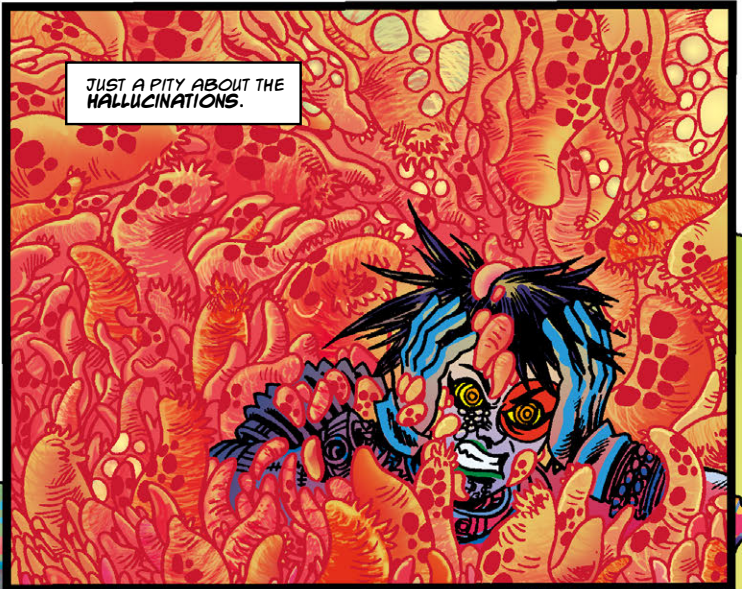


PHTOOO!

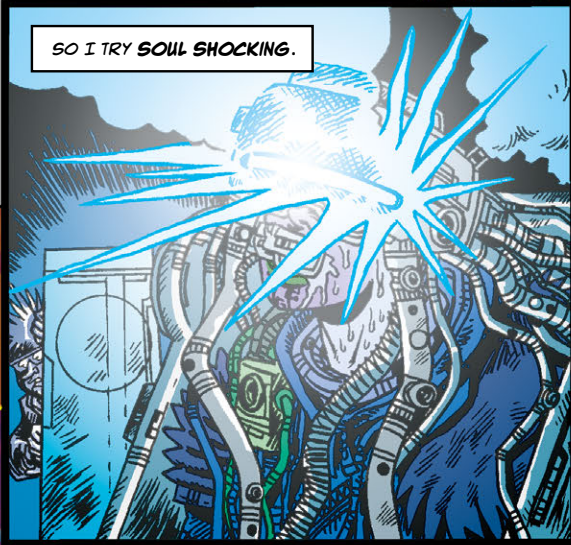


TO BE COVERED WITH DISGUSTING
UNEARTHLY MAGGOTS IS
PROBABLY NOT EVERYONE'S
IDEA OF A BUCKET LIST.

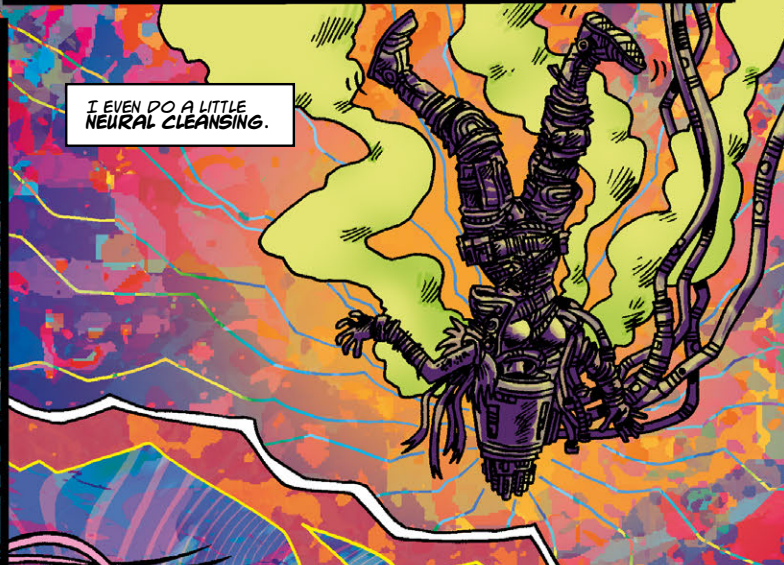
AFTERWARDS, I FEEL SLIGHTLY
BETTER. EVEN THE RASH ISN'T GIVING
ME ITS USUAL MEDICAL REPORT.



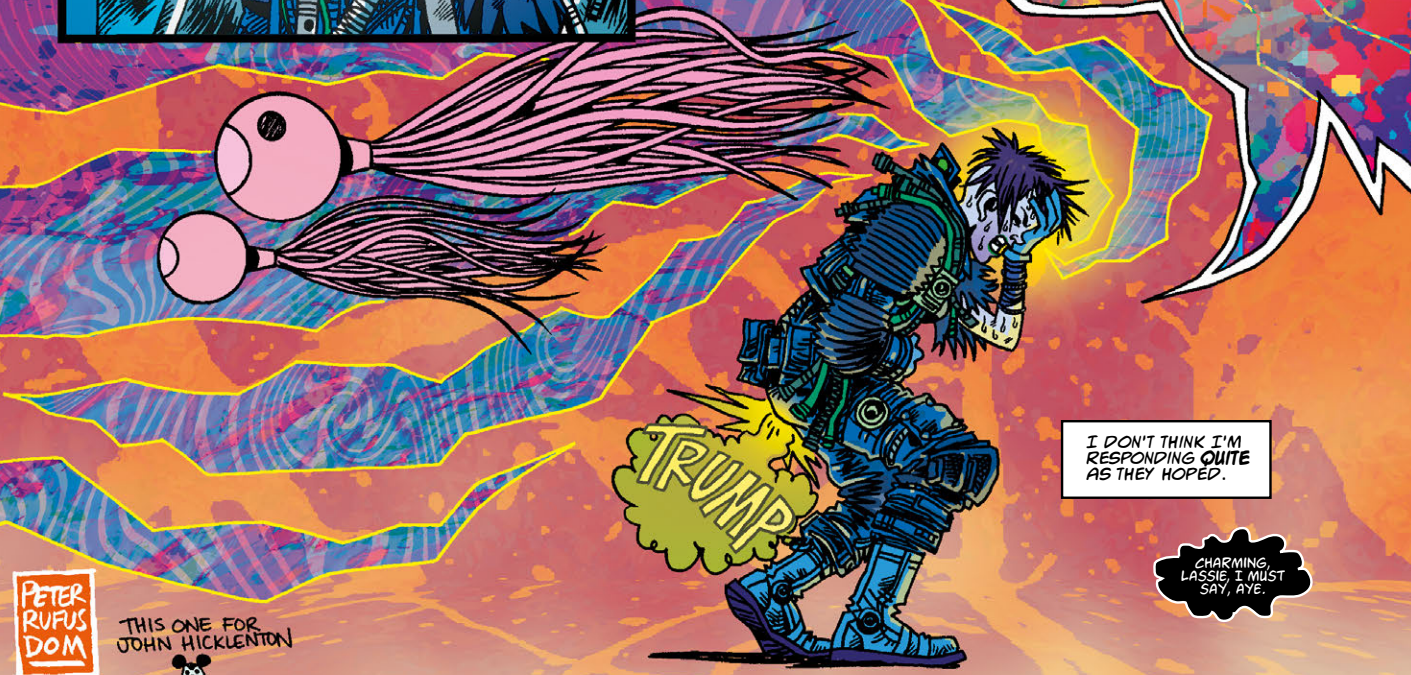
JUST A PITY ABOUT THE
HALLUCINATIONS.



SO I TRY SOUL SHOCKING.



I EVEN DO A LITTLE
NEURAL CLEANSING.



I DON'T THINK I'M
RESPONDING QUITE
AS THEY HOPED.

CHARMING
LASSIE I MUST
SA, AYE.

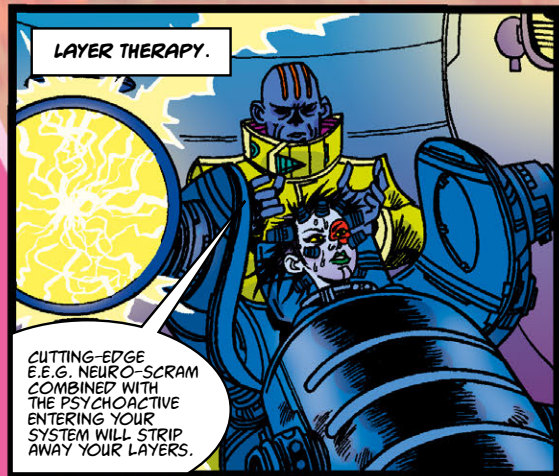
PETER
RUFUS
DOM

THIS ONE FOR
JOHN HICKLENTON



WITH THE LAST OF MY MONEY I COME HERE. I'VE BEEN PUTTING IT OFF. IT HAS THE SAME GLORIOUS REP AS THE LEGENDARY DENTISTS OF TWENTIETH-CENTURY UK.

BUT IF ANYTHING'S GOING TO FIND THE IDENTITY OF THE DISEASED I.D. THAT GENE SOLD ME IT'S THIS —

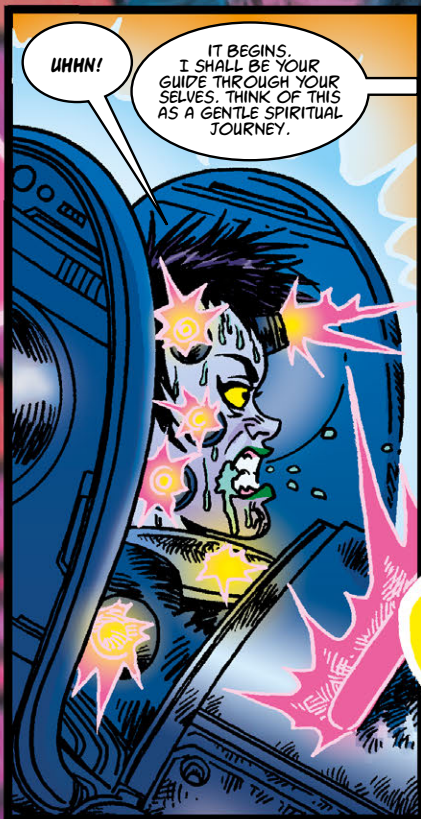


LAYER THERAPY.

CUTTING-EDGE
E.E.G. NEURO-SCRAM
COMBINED WITH
THE PSYCHOACTIVE
ENTERING YOUR
SYSTEM WILL STRIP
AWAY YOUR LAYERS.



IT'S MY MOST RECENT LAYER I'M INTERESTED IN. THE SICK PERSONA I BOUGHT FROM —



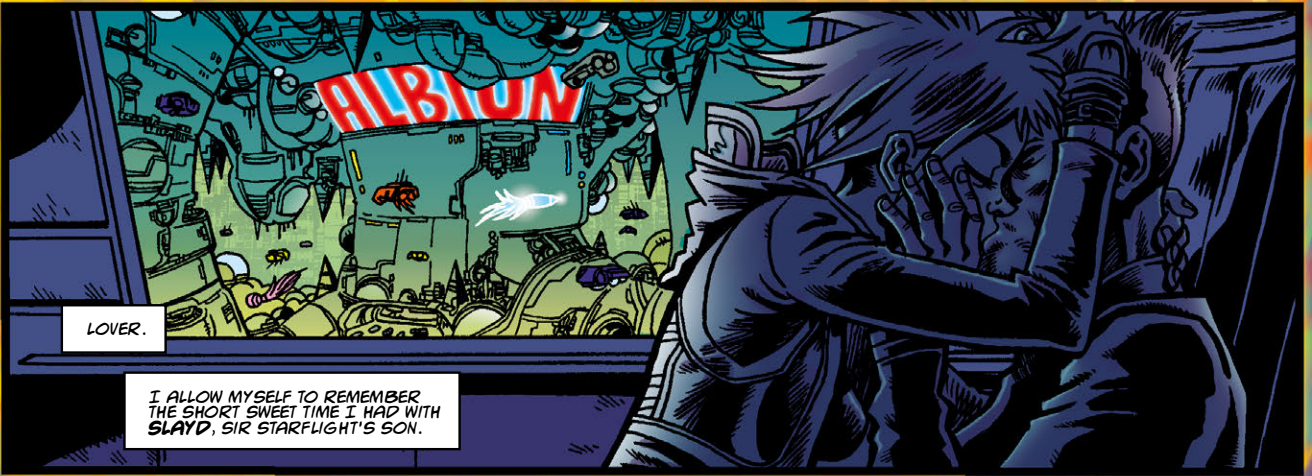
UHHN!

IT BEGINS. I SHALL BE YOUR GUIDE THROUGH YOUR SELVES. THINK OF THIS AS A GENTLE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY.

FOR A MOMENT I SEE THEM — THE PEOPLE I'VE BEEN.

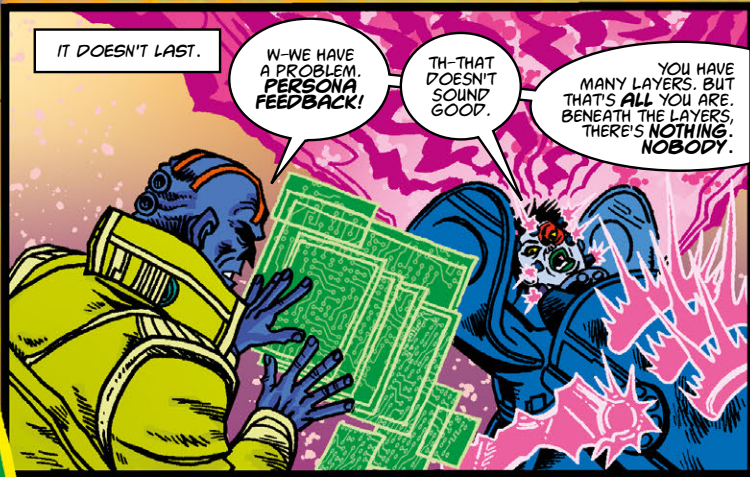
DANCER. BAG LADY. BIOCHEMIST.





LOVER.

I ALLOW MYSELF TO REMEMBER THE SHORT SWEET TIME I HAD WITH SLAYD, SIR STARFLIGHT'S SON.

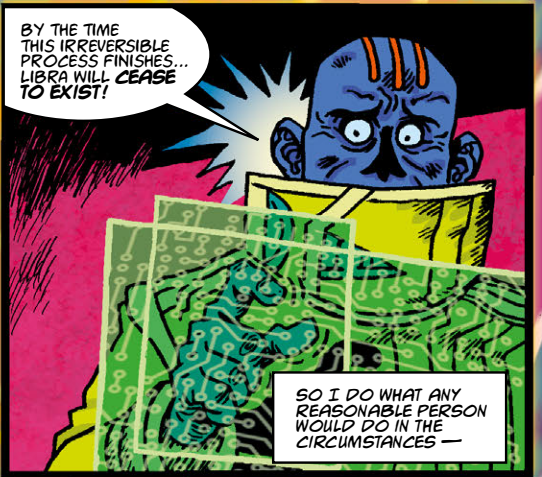


IT DOESN'T LAST.

W-WE HAVE A PROBLEM. PERSONA FEEDBACK!

TH-THAT DOESN'T SOUND GOOD.

YOU HAVE MANY LAYERS. BUT THAT'S ALL YOU ARE. BENEATH THE LAYERS, THERE'S NOTHING. NOBODY.



BY THE TIME THIS IRREVERSIBLE PROCESS FINISHES... LIBRA WILL CEASE TO EXIST!

SO I DO WHAT ANY REASONABLE PERSON WOULD DO IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES —





MY NAME'S LIBRA,
OR MAYBE —

MARY HAIR,
SYBIL MANN,
KARLA COOPER,
SALLY MING,
ANAI'S RANK —

MY GOD,
JUST HOW
MANY PERSONAS
HAVE YOU
HAD?

AAAAHHHH!
I... I...
FORGET...

COUNTERFEIT



WELL, PERSONA
FEEDBACK IS STRIPPING
THEM ALL AWAY. SOON
YOU'LL BE A VOID. A
BLANKET OF HUMAN
SNOW. AND
THEN —



UHH!

FZZT!



I FEEL SICK.

REMARKABLE. IT SEEMS SOME
UNCONSCIOUS SURVIVAL MECHANISM
STOPPED YOU COMPLETELY
UNRAVELLING.

MAYBE I'M JUST
SICK WITH WORRY.

I'M ON ALBION CORPORATION'S KILL-LIST...
AND I'VE CAUGHT A MYSTERIOUS TERMINAL
DISEASE FROM A DODGY BACKSTREET I.D.



WOULDN'T YOU BE WORRIED?

SO WHAT'S THE VERDICT?

OUR SPECIAL-PRICE LAYER THERAPY DIAGNOSIS IS... YOU HAVE A PROFOUND EXISTENTIAL ISSUE.

EXISTENTIAL ISSUE?



AT LEAST I CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT MY DISGUSTING DEADLY RASH IS SAYING...

HERE'S TODAY'S FORECAST: SUNSHINE, LIGHT SHOWERS, AND A POSSIBILITY OF EPIDURAL HAEMATOMA...

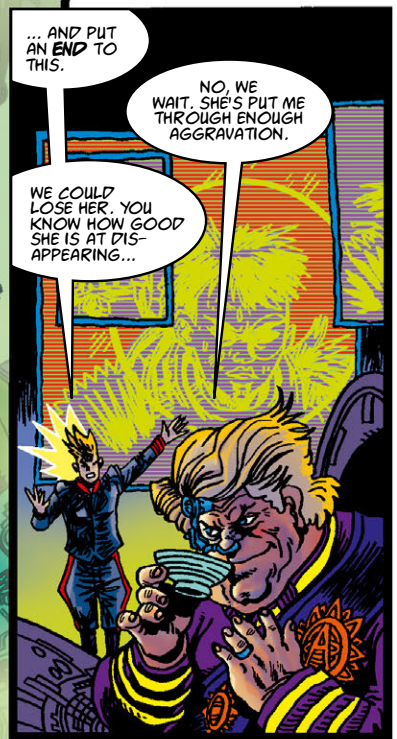
DON'T YOU EVER HAVE ANY GOOD NEWS?

THERE IS NO GOOD NEWS FOR YOU, LASSIE.

WE HAVE EYE CONTACT...



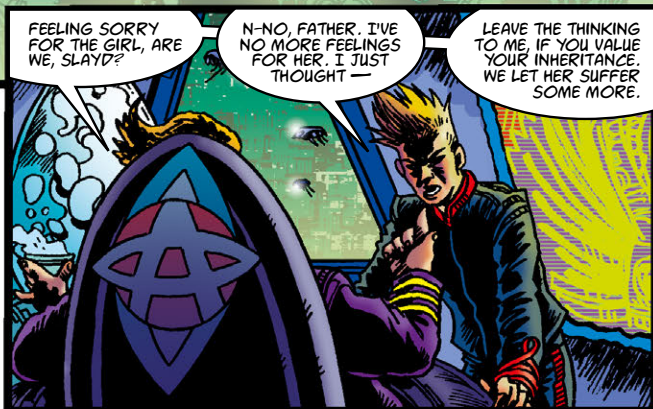
I SAY WE DRAG HER IN NOW, WHILE WE HAVE HER...



... AND PUT AN END TO THIS.

NO, WE WAIT. SHE'S PUT ME THROUGH ENOUGH AGGRAVATION.

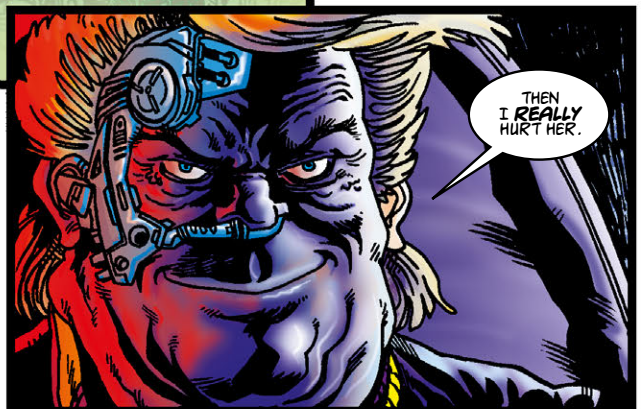
WE COULD LOSE HER. YOU KNOW HOW GOOD SHE IS AT DIS-APPEARING...



FEELING SORRY FOR THE GIRL, ARE WE, SLAYD?

N-NO, FATHER. I'VE NO MORE FEELINGS FOR HER. I JUST THOUGHT —

LEAVE THE THINKING TO ME, IF YOU VALUE YOUR INHERITANCE. WE LET HER SUFFER SOME MORE.



THEN I REALLY HURT HER.

JUST SO
TINY

BAAAAA

THERE'S A DRONE FOLLOWING ME. IT BELONGS TO ALBION CORPORATION.

I LET IT THINK THAT I HAVEN'T NOTICED IT. THEN —

YOU'LL REMEMBER I SAID I HAVE A PERSONAL REASON FOR HATING SIR ALBION STARFLIGHT.

I WASN'T READY TO TALK ABOUT IT.

BORN TO
LATE

MAYBE I SHOULD TALK ABOUT IT NOW, WHILE I STILL HAVE TIME.

SEE, IT STARTED WITH MY DAD, SCORPIO.

SCORPIO WAS HEAD OF SECURITY FOR ALBION. IT WAS HE WHO TAUGHT ME ALL ABOUT THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF I.D. THEFT AND PERSONA HACKING.

WORKING FOR ALBION HAS MADE ME SEE THE FUTURE.

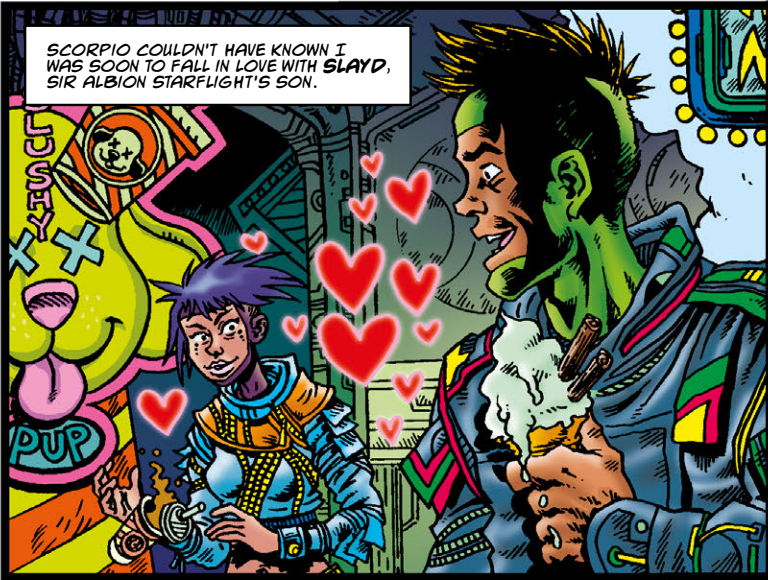
IF THINGS TURN BAD, YOU MIGHT NEED TO GET A NEW I.D. AND DISAPPEAR...

WHAT COULD TURN BAD, DAD?

I DON'T KNOW, GIRL, BUT IT'S BEST TO BE READY.

I SUPPOSE HAVING A LITTLE PARANOIA WAS A PREREQUISITE FOR BEING HEAD OF SECURITY...

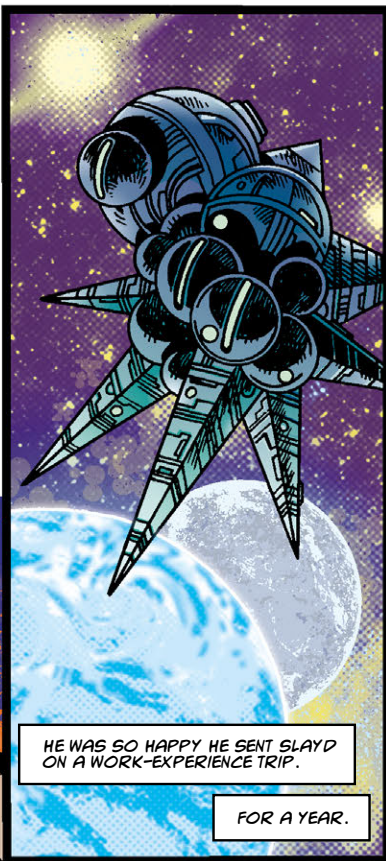
SCORPIO COULDN'T HAVE KNOWN I WAS SOON TO FALL IN LOVE WITH SLAYD, SIR ALBION STARFLIGHT'S SON.



THOUGH BACK THEN I DIDN'T SEE BAD, ONLY GOOD.



SIR ALBION WAS REALLY CHUFFED THAT HIS ONLY SON AND SOLE INHERITOR OF ALBION CORPORATION WAS IN LOVE WITH THE DAUGHTER OF THE SECURITY GUY.

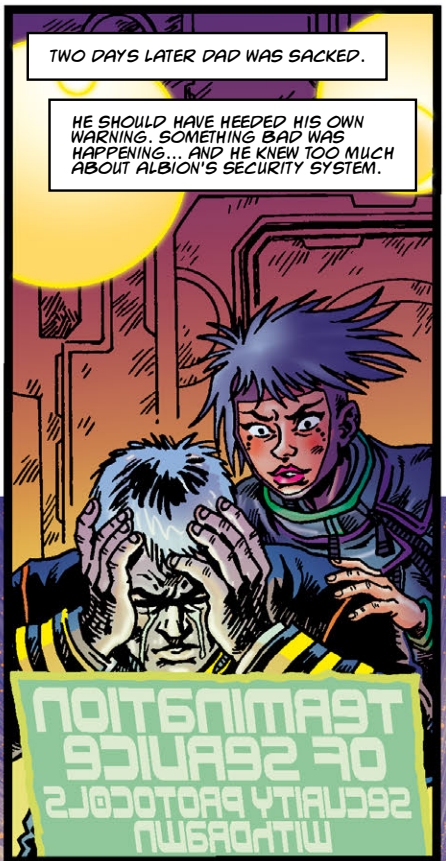


HE WAS SO HAPPY HE SENT SLAYD ON A WORK-EXPERIENCE TRIP.

FOR A YEAR.

TWO DAYS LATER DAD WAS SACKED.

HE SHOULD HAVE HEEDED HIS OWN WARNING. SOMETHING BAD WAS HAPPENING... AND HE KNEW TOO MUCH ABOUT ALBION'S SECURITY SYSTEM.



KKRSSS!

HE SHOULD HAVE DISAPPEARED.

DISAPPEARING. IT'S AN ARTFORM. ME, I'VE BEEN CUTTING IN AND OUT OF BUILDINGS FOR TWENTY YEARS.

NOW I USE THE CHIP IN MY FRONTAL LOBE TO DISENGAGE THE BACKDOOR LOCK.

THEY SAID SCORPIO WAS DRUNK WHEN HE CRASHED HIS POD. BULLSHIT. HE WAS TOO PARANOID TO DRINK AND DRIVE.

I KNOW WHO KILLED HIM.

FIRE EXIT

KREAK!

THE SAME BASTARD WHO SENDS HIS DRONES TO HUNT ME DOWN.

ALL CLEAR.

SPEAK FOR YOURSELF, MEN. ALL THAT RUNNING HAS PLAYED HAVOC WITH YOUR RESPIRATORY INFECTION.

AND WE HAVE ANOTHER WEE PROBLEM...

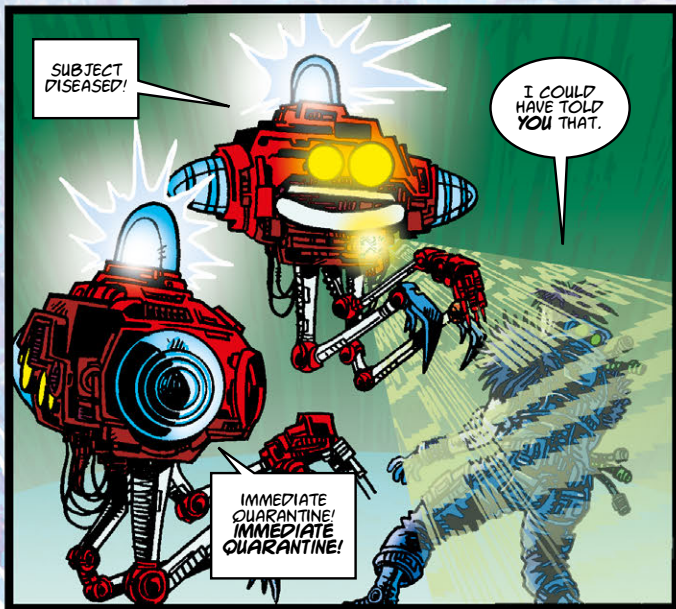
IGNORE ALIEN ODOURS!

STRUMVILLE

DAMN! WELLBEING DROIDS!

REMAIN STANDING. RUNNING MEDICAL DIAGNOSTICS.

O-O-KAY, M-MAYBE THIS IS GOOD. MAYBE YOU CAN TELL ME WHAT'S KILLING ME.



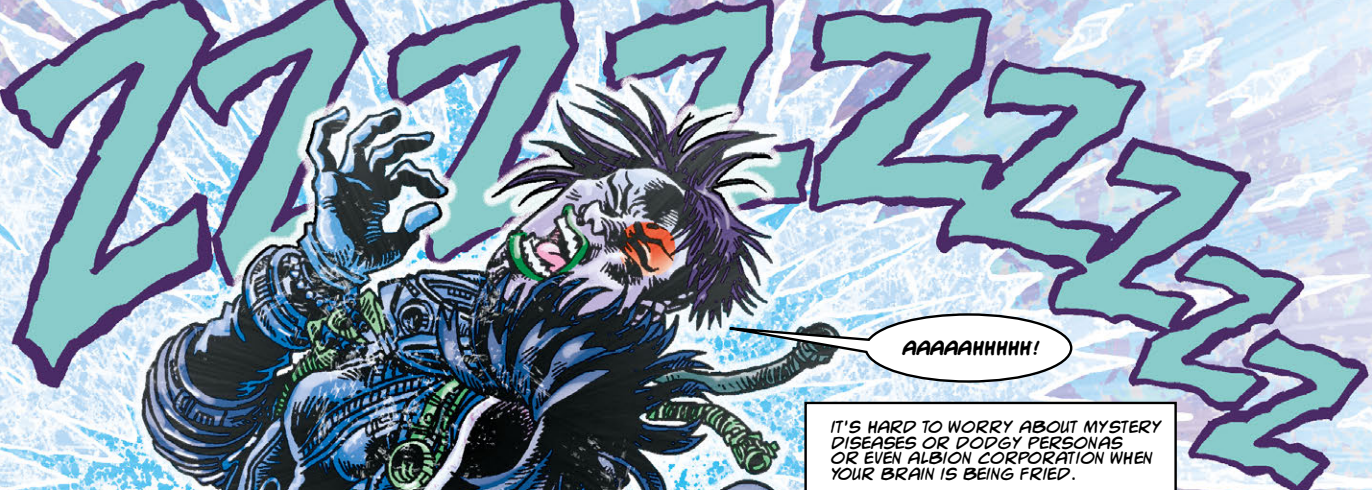
SUBJECT DISEASED!

I COULD HAVE TOLD YOU THAT.

IMMEDIATE QUARANTINE!
IMMEDIATE QUARANTINE!



QUARANTINE? YOU MEAN LOCKED UP WITH A BUNCH OF SICK PEOPLE? NO THANK YOU —



AAAAHHHHH!

IT'S HARD TO WORRY ABOUT MYSTERY DISEASES OR DODGY PERSONAS OR EVEN ALBION CORPORATION WHEN YOUR BRAIN IS BEING FRIED.



I GUESS THERE'LL BE PLENTY OF TIME FOR WORRYING LATER...

YOU DON'T WANT TO END UP IN THE QUARANTINE CENTRE. IT'S BASICALLY A ONE-WAY TICKET TO VOMIT-SMEARED MADNESS AND DEATH.

SO ALL IN ALL, I'D RATHER NOT BE HERE.

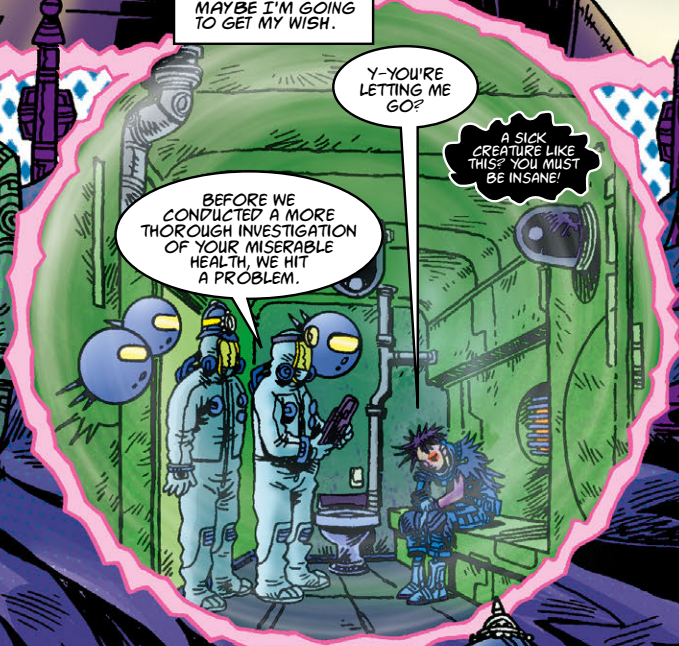


MAYBE I'M GOING TO GET MY WISH.

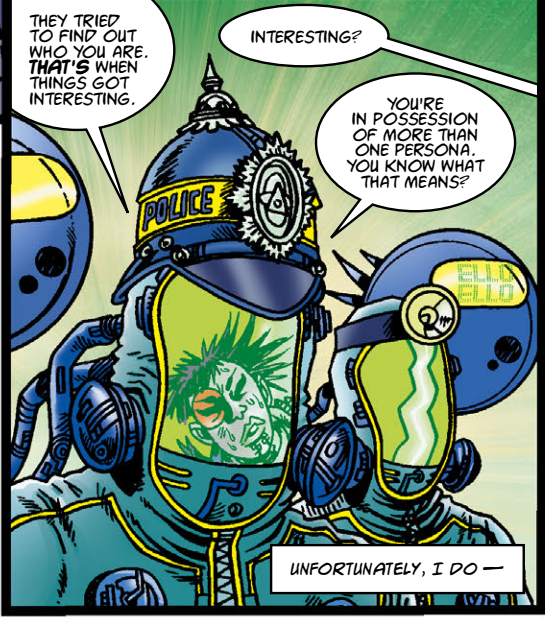
Y-YOU'RE LETTING ME GO?

A SICK CREATURE LIKE THIS? YOU MUST BE INSANE!

BEFORE WE CONDUCTED A MORE THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF YOUR MISERABLE HEALTH, WE HIT A PROBLEM.



COUNTERFEIT

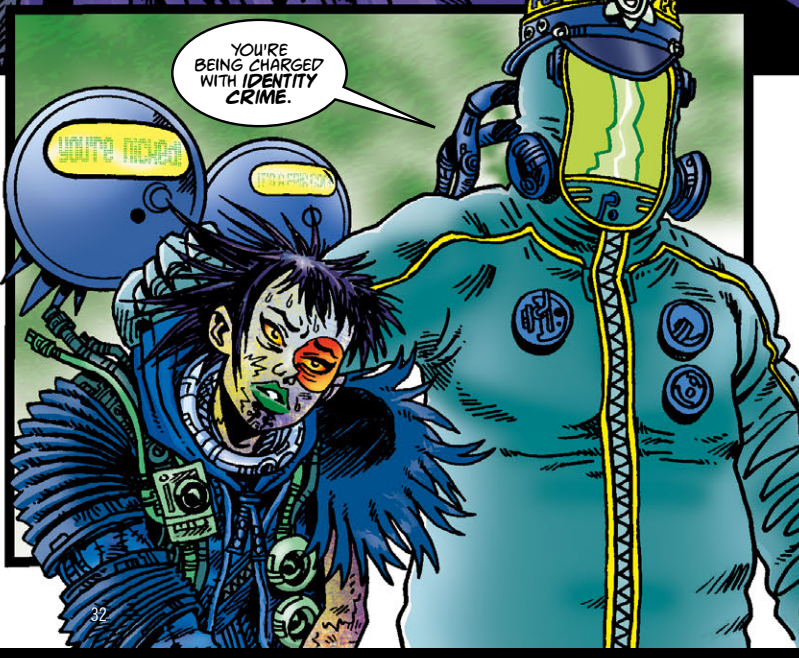


THEY TRIED TO FIND OUT WHO YOU ARE. THAT'S WHEN THINGS GOT INTERESTING.

INTERESTING?

YOU'RE IN POSSESSION OF MORE THAN ONE PERSONA. YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS?

UNFORTUNATELY, I DO —



YOU'RE BEING CHARGED WITH IDENTITY CRIME.

TO BE HONEST, I DON'T HAVE MUCH FAITH IN OUR LEGAL SYSTEM.

MY LAWYER IS AN APP. THE PROSECUTION IS AN ALGORITHM.

MY CHANCES OF A FAIR TRIAL EQUAL A BIG FAT ZERO.

I GUESS OUR JURY SYSTEM CHANGED A LITTLE WHEN IT MERGED WITH SEVERAL PRIME-TIME TV SHOWS.

BRRRP! HER EYES ARE TOO CLOSE TOGETHER! GUILTY AS HELL!

WAIT, ARE WE WATCHING 'BIG BASTARD' OR THEIR LIFE IN YOUR HANDS?!

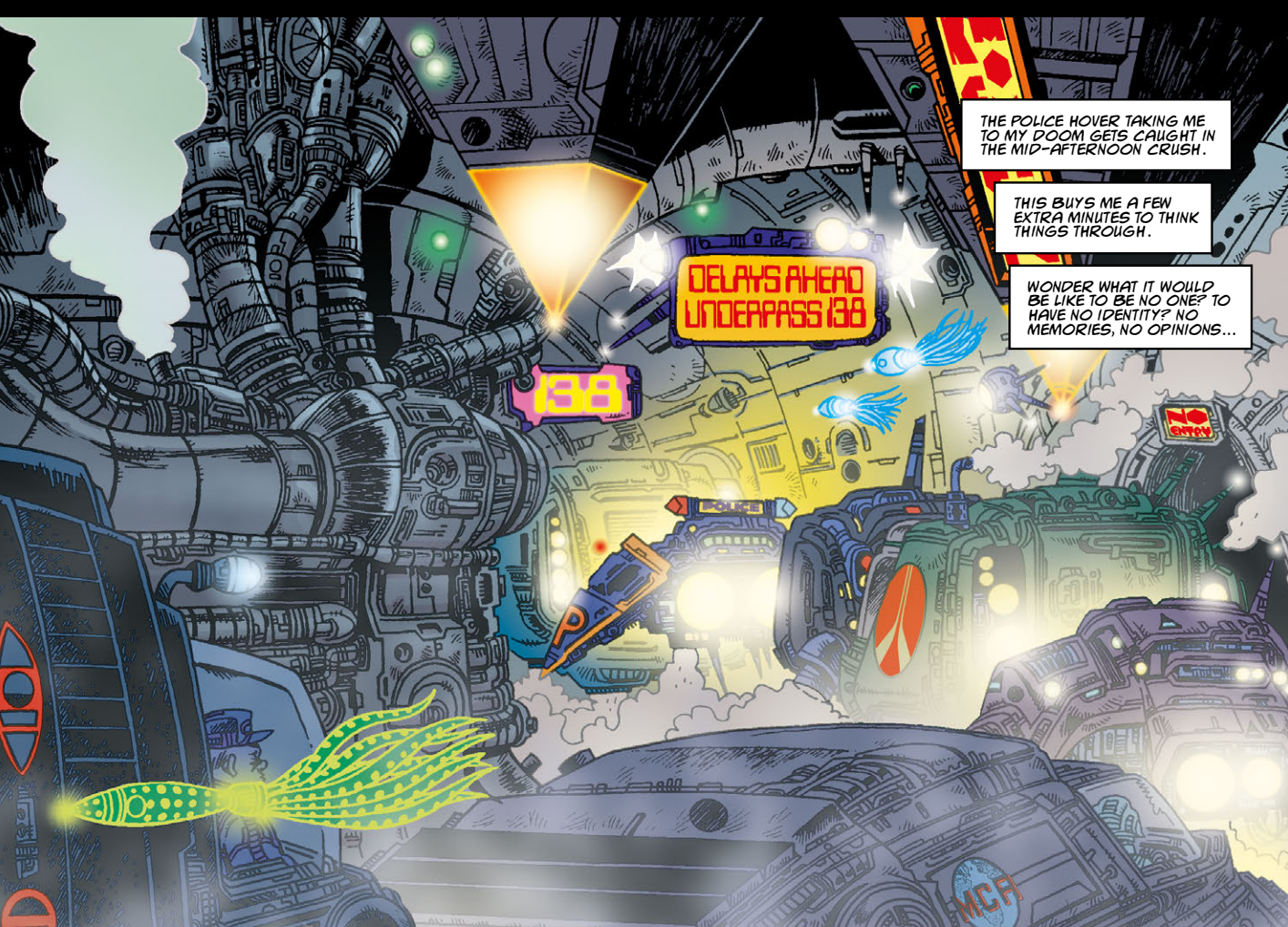
JUST VOTE ALREADY! THERE'S SOMETHIN' GOOD ON THE OTHER SIDE!

LIBRA KELLY, OR WHOMEVER YOU MIGHT REALLY BE, YOU HAVE BEEN FOUND GUILTY OF IDENTITY CRIME, FIRST DEGREE.

I DEMAND TRIAL BY WATER DUNKING. IT'LL BE FAIRER.

YOU WILL BE TAKEN HENCE FROM HERE TO THE HOUSE OF ERASURE, WHERE YOU WILL SUFFER I.P. DEATH UNTIL YOU ARE A BLANK... A SHELL...

A LITTLE MISS NOBODY.



THE POLICE HOVER TAKING ME TO MY DOOM GETS CAUGHT IN THE MID-AFTERNOON CRUSH.

THIS BUYS ME A FEW EXTRA MINUTES TO THINK THINGS THROUGH.

WONDER WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO BE NO ONE? TO HAVE NO IDENTITY? NO MEMORIES, NO OPINIONS...

IT'LL BE LIKE BEING DEAD, HEN, EXCEPT YOU'LL STILL FEEL PAIN. THE ONLY THING THE HOUSE OF ERASURE WON'T ERASE IS YOUR TERMINAL DISEASE.

GO TO HELL, RASH. I'M LIBRA, I.D., THIEF AND FREEDOM FIGHTER... THEY WON'T GET ME ANYWHERE NEAR THAT ERASURE HOUSE.

BLIND OPTIMISM IN THE FACE OF CERTAIN ANNIHILATION? I EXPECTED A LITTLE MORE OF YOU.

I'VE GOT FRIENDS.

YOU CERTAINLY HAVE! RHINOVIUS, RUBELLA, MYCOBACTERIUM TUBERCULOSIS. ALL THESE FRIENDLY MICROBES MAKING A HOME IN YOUR BODY.

YOU FORGET I'M A FREEDOM FIGHTER...

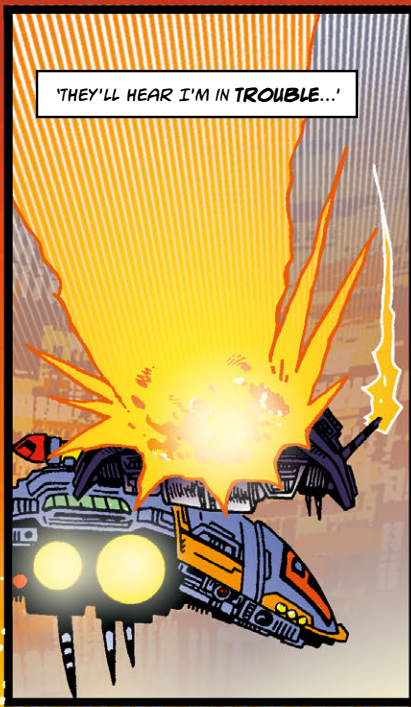
'... I'VE HELPED A LOT OF PEOPLE IN MY TIME.'

POLICE

POLICE



POLITICAL PRISONERS I GAVE STOLEN I.D.'S TO. RUNAWAY WOMEN, WANTED AGITATORS, DESPERATE GUERRILLAS...



THEY'LL HEAR I'M IN TROUBLE...



... AND WHEN THEY DO THEY'LL COME HELP ME.

THE LAW OF THE PETRI DISH IS EVERY CELL FOR ITSELF.

THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM ISN'T A PETRI DISH. WE'RE COMRADES. WE LOOK AFTER EACH —



— OTHER.

KRSSSH!



STILL ALIVE AND KICKING RASH. SO YOU CAN STICK YOUR PETRI DISH!



WOW. I NEVER KNEW THE GUYS I HELPED COULD BE SO ORGANISED. THESE ARE LIKE REAL PROFESSIONALS.

LIBRA.



TAKE THIS AND RUN.

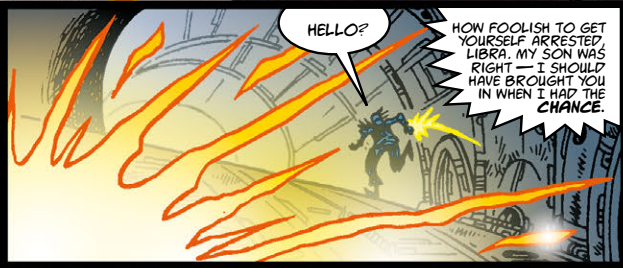
WH-WHO ARE YOU?

GO! WE ONLY GET PAID IF YOU ESCAPE.



WHO WOULD HAVE PAID SOMEONE TO HELP ME?

BRNce
BRNce
BRNce



HELLO?

HOW FOOLISH TO GET YOURSELF ARRESTED, LIBRA. MY SON WAS RIGHT — I SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT YOU IN WHEN I HAD THE CHANCE.



ALBION? SIR ALBION STARFLIGHT?

AREN'T YOU GOING TO THANK ME FOR SAVING YOU?



THANK YOU?
I'D RATHER EAT
MY RIGHT
ARM.

I WOULDN'T DO
THAT. IT'S INFECTED
LIKE THE REST OF
YOU.

H-HOW
DO YOU KNOW
ABOUT THAT?



IT WAS I WHO
ARRANGED TO HAVE
YOU CATCH SOMETHING
DEADLY WITH THAT
FAKE I.D.

Y-YOU?

THE GOOD
NEWS IS, I POSSESS
A CURE. HAND YOUR-
SELF IN AND I'LL RID
YOU OF THE THING
THAT'S KILLING
YOU.



I'LL ALSO
RE-ADJUST
YOUR CHARACTER
TO MAKE YOU
SUBSERVIENT. WE
NEED SOMEONE WITH
YOUR SKILLS TO
WORK IN SECURITY.
YOUR FATHER'S
OLD JOB.

DROP
DEAD,
ALBION.

IT'S YOU
WHO'S DOING
THAT... UNLESS
YOU COME
TO ME.



HE'S RIGHT.
THE INFECTION IS
BUILDING. YOUR
TOXIN LEVELS ARE
RIDICULOUS.

N-NO, I
FEEL FINE, I
JUST —



PROJECTILE
VOMITING. IT'S
THE FINAL STAGE,
LASSIE.

ALL ABOARD
FOR COMPLETE
ORGAN
SHUTDOWN!

PARADISE PLAZA, WHERE HUMAN AND CYBORG COME TO BLOW THEIR CIRCUITS WITH THE LATEST PSYCHOTROPES AND SYNTH-OPIATES.

YOU WOULDN'T USUALLY FIND ME DEAD AROUND HERE, BUT I'M DESPERATE.

I'VE JUST SCORED A LITTLE X-MORPH. NASTY STUFF BUT IT KILLS PAIN. IT KILLS YOU, TOO, EVENTUALLY. BUT, LIKE I SAID, I'M DESPERATE.

A WHILE AGO I BOUGHT A SECOND-HAND INFECTED I.D. OFF A SIMMER CALLED GENE BELFISH, WHO'S NOW DISAPPEARED.

NO LOITERING



UNLESS I TRACK DOWN GENE, AND FIND THE ORIGINAL OWNER OF MY FAKE PERSONA, I'M A DEAD WOMAN.

A LITTLE X-MORPH WILL HOLD BACK ALL THOSE KILLER BUGS THAT ARE DESTROYING ME. IT MIGHT GIVE ME TIME.

A DAY. TWO, IF I'M LUCKY.

BUT WHEN'S THE LAST TIME I WAS LUCKY?



MY FIRST MEET IS HERE — FIVE-POINTS. THE X-MORPH SEEMS TO BE DOING ITS JOB.

M-MEETING UP WITH YOU IS TOO DANGEROUS. I'M A W-WANTED MAN, LIBRA.

WHICH IS WHY I GOT YOU YOUR LAST FAKE I.D.

IF THEY SEE OR HEAR US TOGETHER —

WITH ALL THIS NOISE AND SMOG? IT'S THE SAFEST PLACE IN THE CITY. NOW, I NEED TO FIND GENE SELFISH.

I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS. NOW STAY AWAY FROM ME!

I DON'T GET ANY LUCK NEXT TIME...

DON'T CONTACT ME AGAIN. THE AUTHORITIES ARE AFTER ME.

... OR THE NEXT.

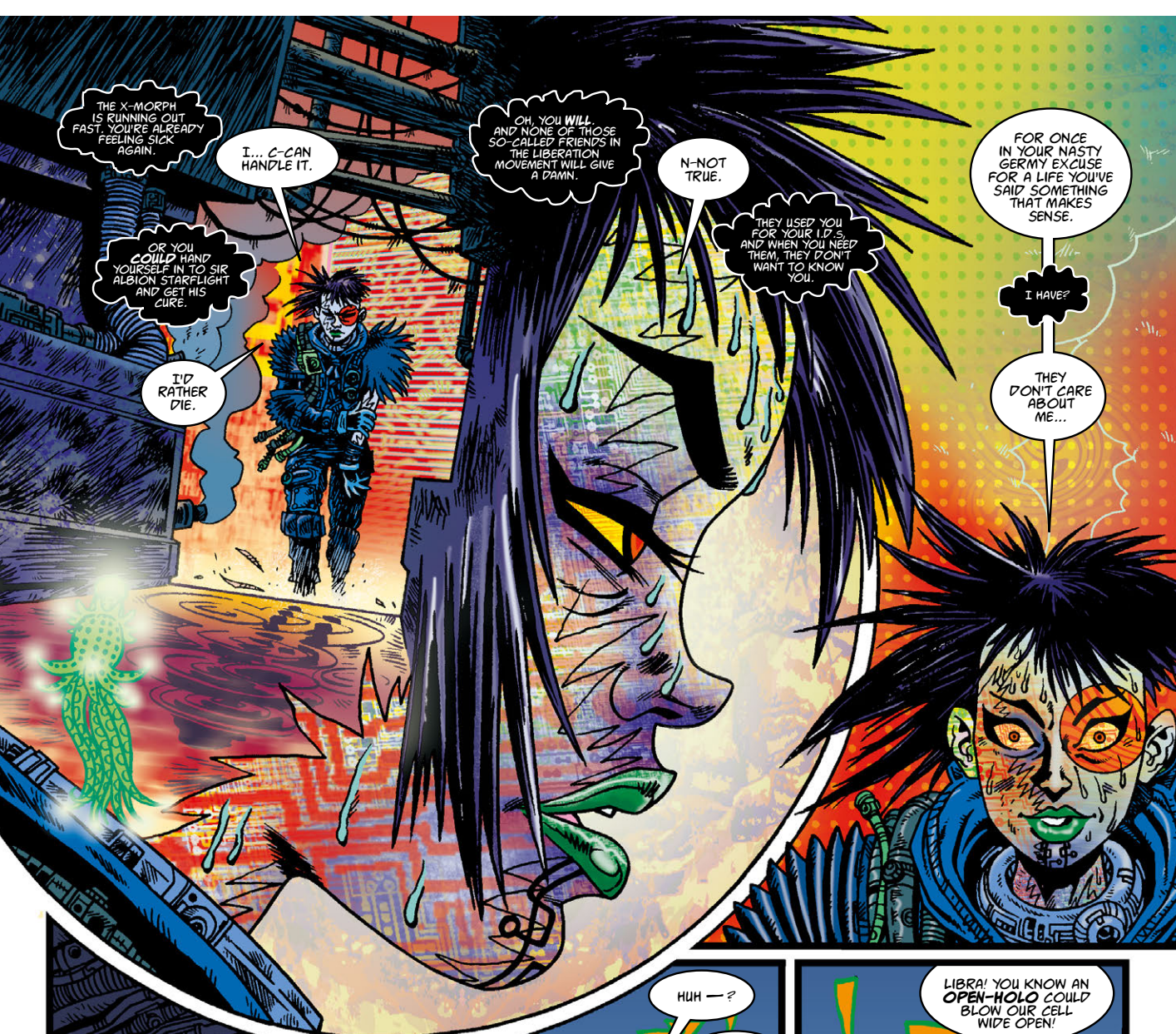
YOU'RE ENDANGERING THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE BY CONTACTING ME.

BUT I NEED —

THE REVOLUTION COMES BEFORE YOUR PETTY NEEDS!

JUST STAY OUT OF MY LIFE, LIBRA.

GENE WHO?



THE X-MORPH IS RUNNING OUT FAST. YOU'RE ALREADY FEELING SICK AGAIN.

I... C-CAN HANDLE IT.

OH, YOU WILL, AND NONE OF THOSE SO-CALLED FRIENDS IN THE LIBERATION MOVEMENT WILL GIVE A DAMN.

N-NOT TRUE.

FOR ONCE IN YOUR NASTY GERMY EXCUSE FOR A LIFE YOU'VE SAID SOMETHING THAT MAKES SENSE.

I HAVE?

THEY DON'T CARE ABOUT ME...

OR YOU COULD HAND YOURSELF IN TO SIR ALBION STARLIGHT AND GET HIS CURE.

I'D RATHER DIE.

THEY USED YOU FOR YOUR I.D.S. AND WHEN YOU NEED THEM, THEY DON'T WANT TO KNOW YOU.



'... WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT THEM?'

WE'LL STICK A LOT OF PAMPHLETS AROUND THE CITY.

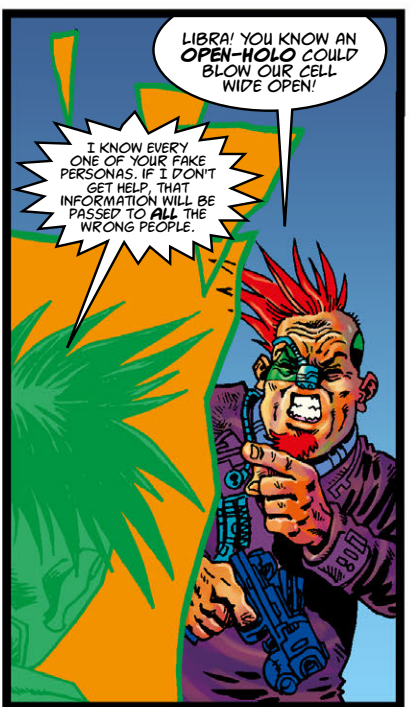
OH, THAT WILL HAVE THE CORPORATE FASCISTS QUAKING IN THEIR JACK-BOOTS.

WE NEED TO EDUCATE THE PEOPLE IN THE TIMELESS TRUTHS OF DIALECTIC MATERIALISM AND —



HUH — ?

UN-ENCRYPTED HOLOGRAM! PACK THE WEAPONS!



LIBRA! YOU KNOW AN OPEN-HOLE COULD BLOW OUR CELL WIDE OPEN!

I KNOW EVERY ONE OF YOUR FAKE PERSONAS. IF I DON'T GET HELP, THAT INFORMATION WILL BE PASSED TO ALL THE WRONG PEOPLE.

I DON'T ENJOY ACTING THIS WAY, MAKING ALL THESE NASTY CALLS. YOU COULD SAY IT'S OUT OF CHARACTER.

HELP ME FIND GENE SELFISH OR SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES.

AND THEN I WAIT. HAVE I PUSHED THEM TOO FAR?

WILL THOSE BACKROOM REVOLUTIONARIES SEND RED ASSASSINS TO WIPE ME OUT?

OXIE CHICKEN SO ANGRY SO YUMMY

I DIDN'T THINK SO.

TWENTY MINUTES LATER I'M AT THE BERGMAN HOSTEL FOR CRACKED PERSONAS...

... WHERE MANY SIMMERS HOOKED ON CHEAP I.D.'S COME TO LEARN SWEDISH AND REBUILD THEIR SHATTERED SELVES.

IT TAKES ME TEN MINUTES TO FIND THE ONE I'M LOOKING FOR.

GENE!

HE SEEMS PLEASED TO SEE ME.





YOU'RE GOING TO DO AS I TELL YOU — AND REMEMBER, UNLIKE GENE, I **AM** WILLING TO SHOOT YOU.

WH-WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?

WHO DOES IT LOOK LIKE, DUMMY? I'M **LIBRA**.



B-BUT... I'M **LIBRA**.



I'M NOT GOING TO ARGUE ABOUT THIS, BITCH.

I. AM. **LIBRA**.



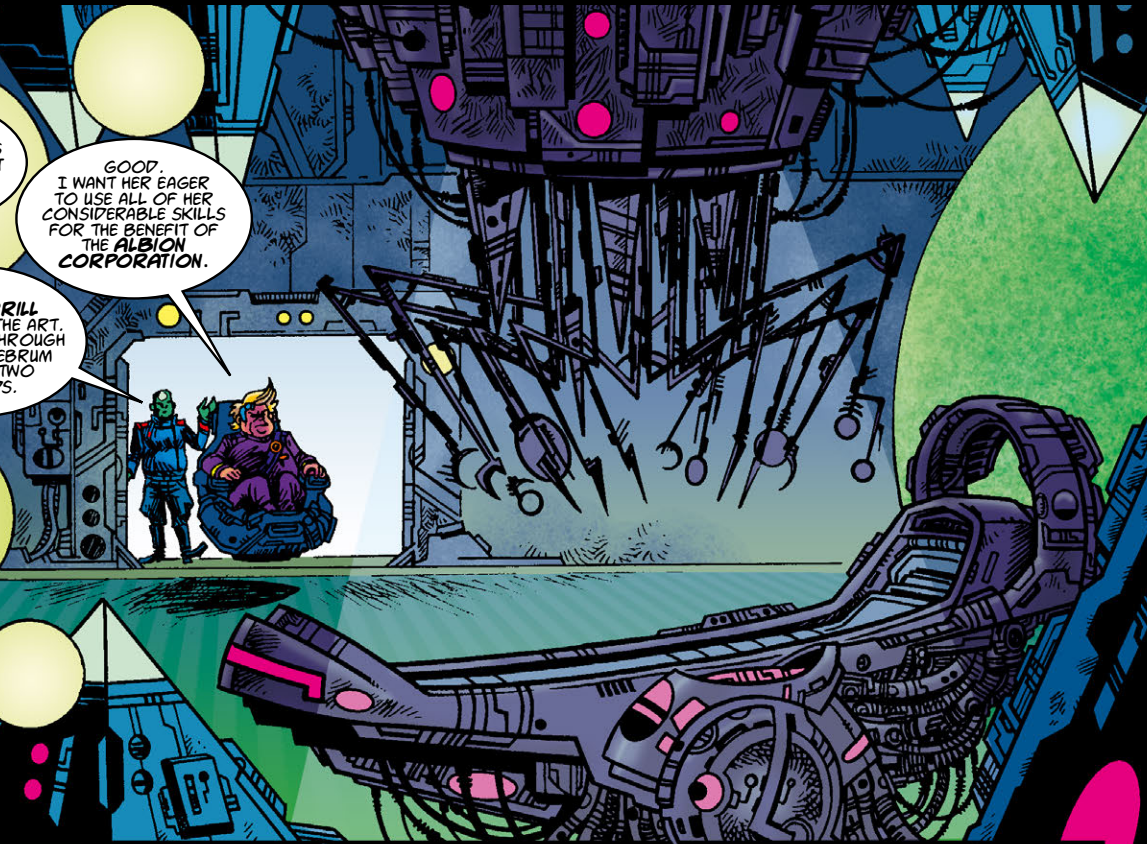
IN... IN TH-THAT CASE...

... WHO AM I?

IF YOU'LL FOLLOW ME, SIR ALBION, THIS IS WHERE THE PATIENT WILL BE READJUSTED.

GOOD. I WANT HER EAGER TO USE ALL OF HER CONSIDERABLE SKILLS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE ALBION CORPORATION.

THE CYBER DRILL IS STATE OF THE ART. IT WILL CUT THROUGH TO HER CEREBRUM IN UNDER TWO SECONDS.



OUR SKILFUL BRAIN RE-MODELLERS WILL MODIFY THE NECESSARY NERVOUS TISSUE. THEN THEY'LL WORK ON THE AMYGDALA.

SHE WILL EMERGE A DIFFERENT PERSON.

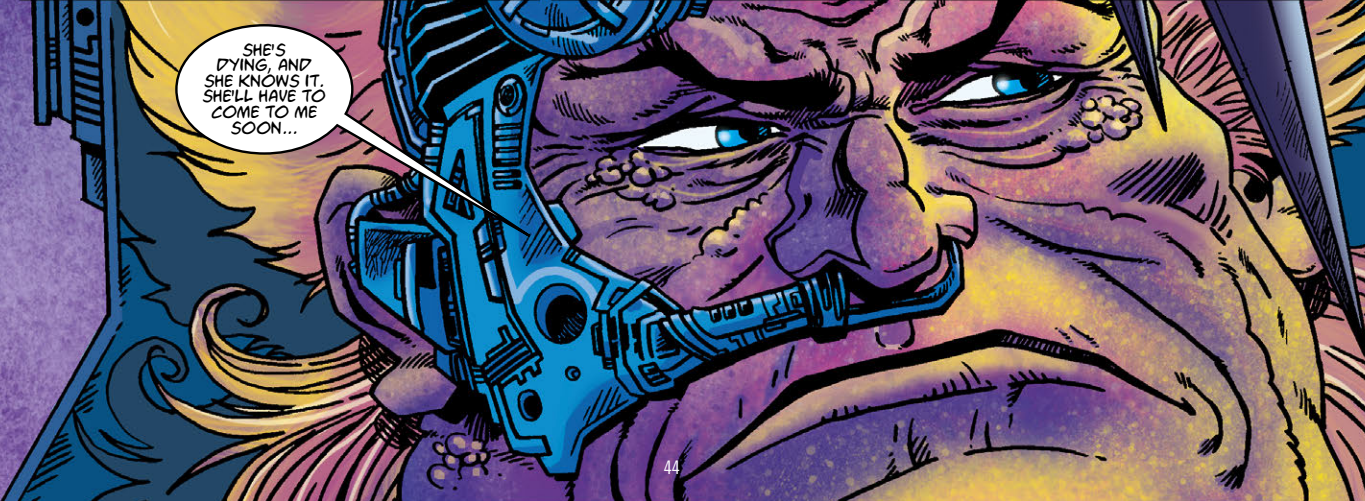
ALL HER OLD CUNNING AT I.D. THEFT AND HACKING WILL BE RETAINED, BUT WITHOUT THE INDEPENDENT STREAK... AND SHE'LL REMEMBER NONE OF WHAT'S HAPPENED.

WE CAN REMODEL HER TO HAVE AN INSATIABLE DESIRE FOR YOU. SHE WON'T GET ENOUGH OF YOU!

THIS ISN'T ABOUT SEX. LIBRA HAS HARRIED MY ORGANISATION FOR YEARS. I SIMPLY WANT HER TURNED INTO MY LOYAL WORKER.

U-UNDERSTOOD, SIR. AND... WHEN CAN WE EXPECT THE PATIENT?

SHE'S DYING, AND SHE KNOWS IT. SHE'LL HAVE TO COME TO ME SOON...



SINCE POISONING MYSELF WITH AN INFECTED PERSONA I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR ITS ORIGINAL OWNER. I'M LIBRA, BY THE WAY. THE I.D. THIEF.

COUNTERFEIT

AT LEAST I THOUGHT I WAS, UNTIL ABOUT TEN SECONDS AGO —

AFTER ALBION HAD MY POOR FATHER KILLED IN A CAR CRASH —

HEY, SIR ALBION KILLED MY FATHER IN A CRASH TOO!



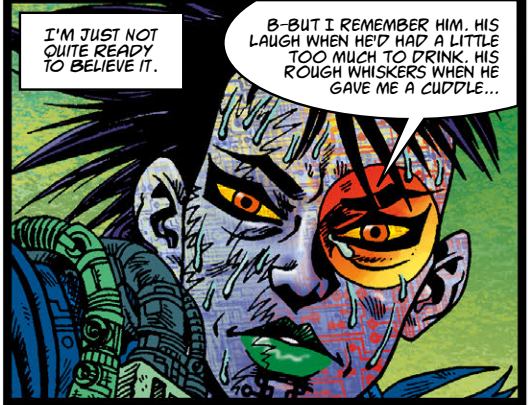
YOU'RE NOT GETTING IT YET, SISTER.

SCORPIO WAS MY FATHER, NOT YOURS.

TRUTH IS, I'M ALREADY STARTING TO UNDERSTAND.

I'M JUST NOT QUITE READY TO BELIEVE IT.

B-BUT I REMEMBER HIM. HIS LAUGH WHEN HE'D HAD A LITTLE TOO MUCH TO DRINK. HIS ROUGH WHISKERS WHEN HE GAVE ME A CUDDLE...



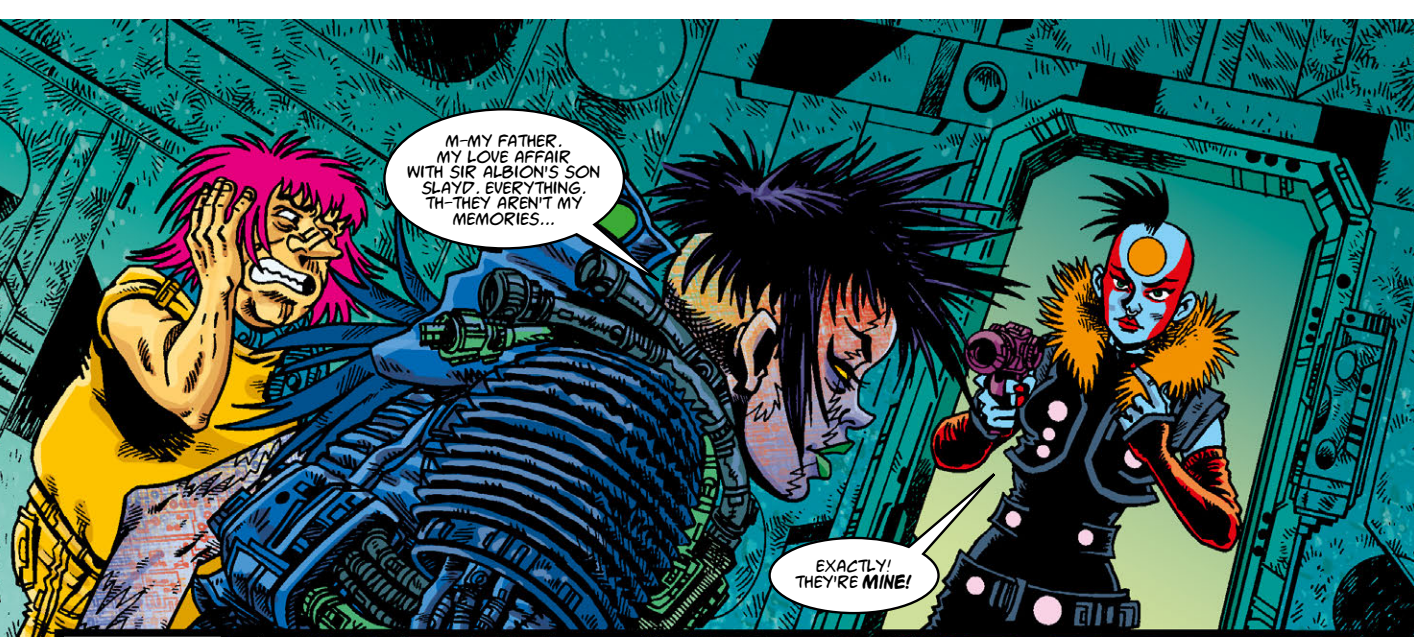
GOD, YES, HIS WHISKERS! I USED TO ALMOST PEE MYSELF WHEN HE RUBBED THEM ON MY FACE.

I... I REMEMBER HIM TEACHING ME ABOUT I.D. THEFT AND PERSONA HACKING AND THE IMPORTANCE OF BUTTOCK TICS...

OF COURSE YOU REMEMBER. COME ON, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE AN IDENTITY THIEF. YOU SHOULD KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE!

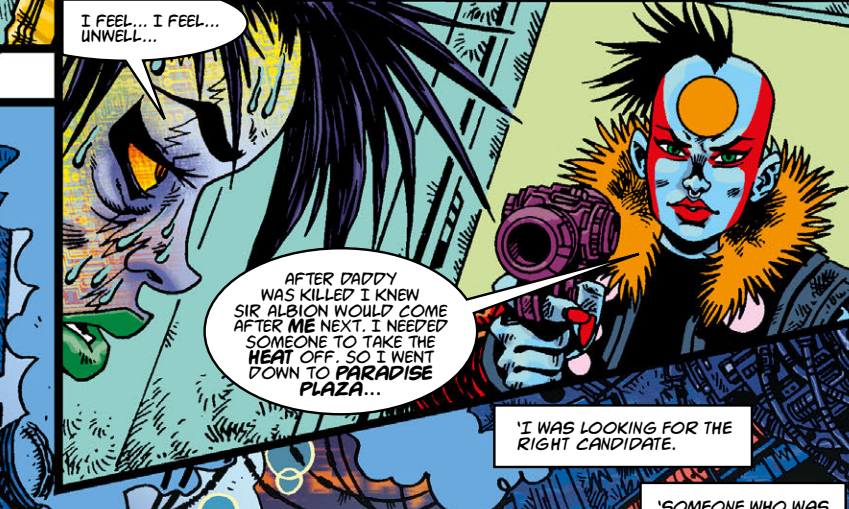
WHAT'S SHE TALKING ABOUT, HEN? I'M JUST A SIMPLE INFECTION — THIS IS TOO COMPLICATED FOR ME.





M-MY FATHER, MY LOVE AFFAIR WITH SIR ALBION'S SON SLAY'D. EVERYTHING. TH- THEY AREN'T MY MEMORIES...

EXACTLY! THEY'RE MINE!



I FEEL... I FEEL... UNWELL...

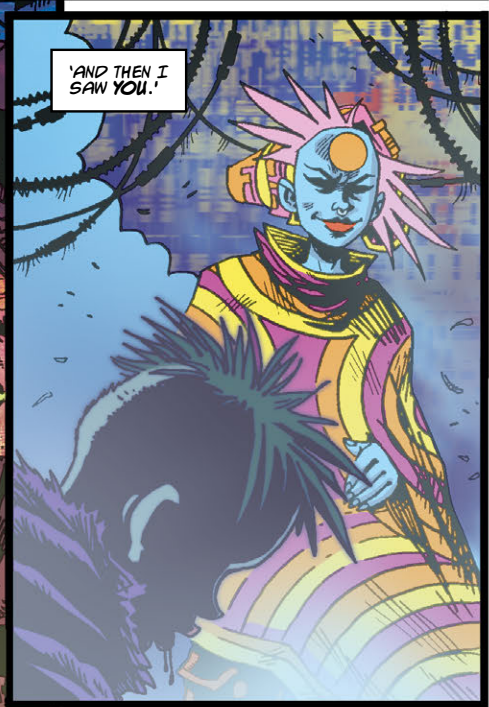
AFTER DADDY WAS KILLED I KNEW SIR ALBION WOULD COME AFTER ME NEXT. I NEEDED SOMEONE TO TAKE THE HEAT OFF. SO I WENT DOWN TO PARADISE PLAZA...

'I WAS LOOKING FOR THE RIGHT CANDIDATE.

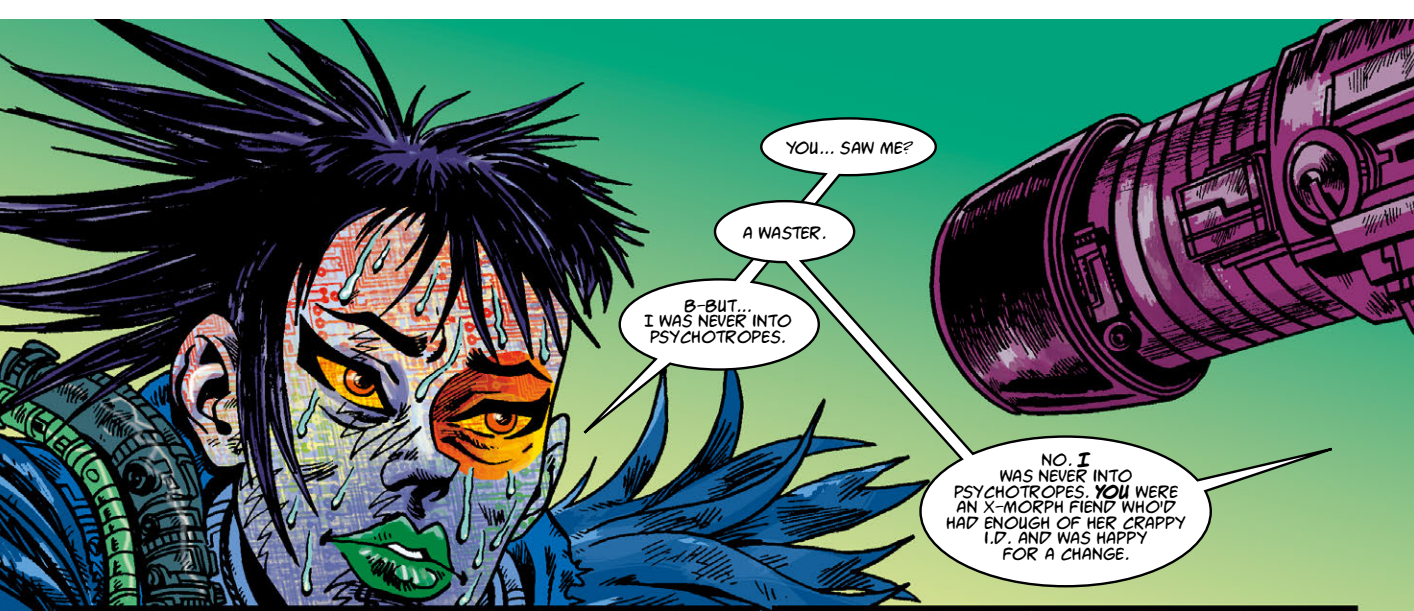
'SOMEONE WHO WAS DESPERATE...



'... BUT NOT TOO FAR GONE.



'AND THEN I SAW YOU.'

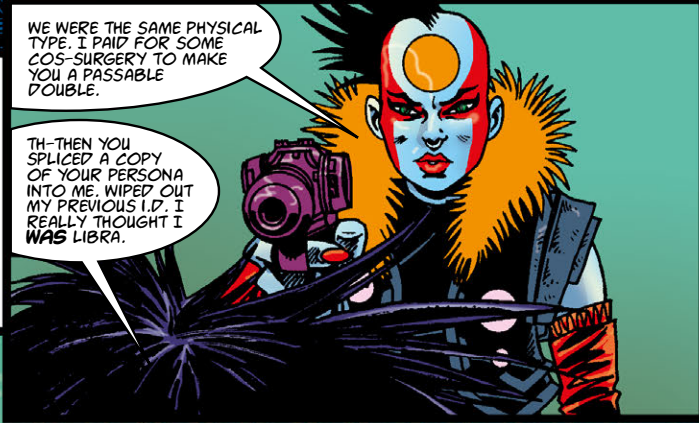


YOU... SAW ME?

A WASTER.

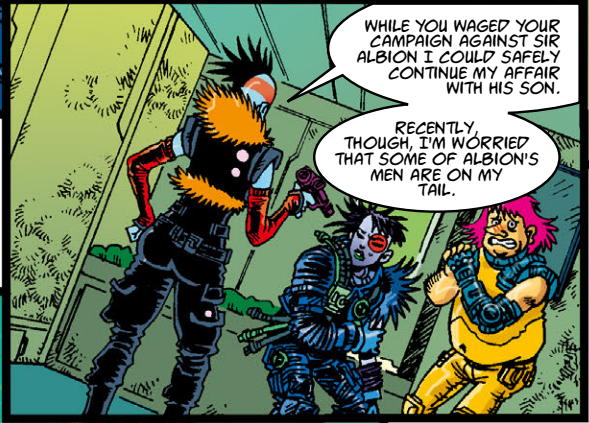
B-BUT... I WAS NEVER INTO PSYCHOTROPES.

NO. I WAS NEVER INTO PSYCHOTROPES. YOU WERE AN X-MORPH FIEND WHO'D HAD ENOUGH OF HER CRAPPY I.D. AND WAS HAPPY FOR A CHANGE.



WE WERE THE SAME PHYSICAL TYPE. I PAID FOR SOME COS-SURGERY TO MAKE YOU A PASSABLE DOUBLE.

TH-THEN YOU SPLICED A COPY OF YOUR PERSONA INTO ME, WIPED OUT MY PREVIOUS I.D. I REALLY THOUGHT I WAS LIBRA.



WHILE YOU WAGED YOUR CAMPAIGN AGAINST SIR ALBION I COULD SAFELY CONTINUE MY AFFAIR WITH HIS SON.

RECENTLY, THOUGH, I'M WORRIED THAT SOME OF ALBION'S MEN ARE ON MY TAIL.



TIME TO THROW HIM SOME BAIT. HIS DOCTORS WILL MESS WITH YOUR HEAD... AND HIS MEN WILL LEAVE ME ALONE.

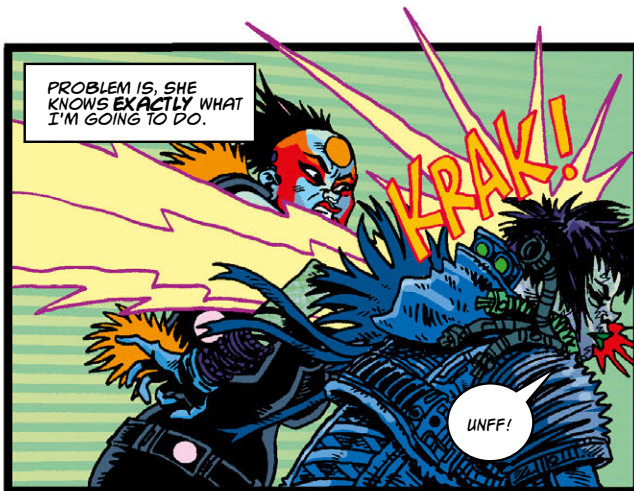
I'M NOT MUCH OF AN ACTION HERO. I GET BY ON MY BRAINS AND GOOD LOOKS.



BUT THESE ARE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

AAAAH —!

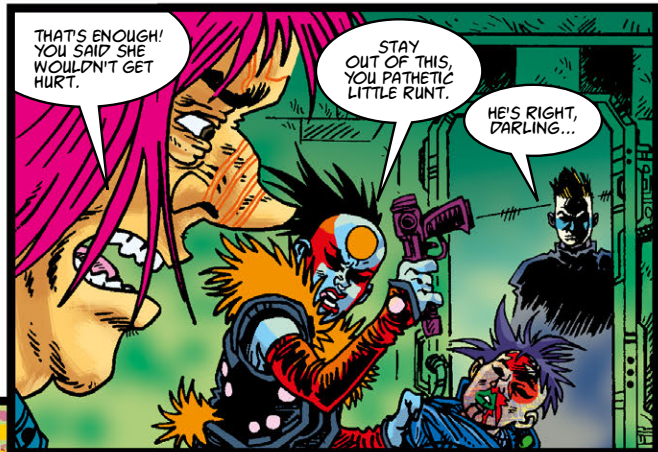
R.I.P. STEVE DILLON ♥



PROBLEM IS, SHE KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT I'M GOING TO DO.

KRAK!

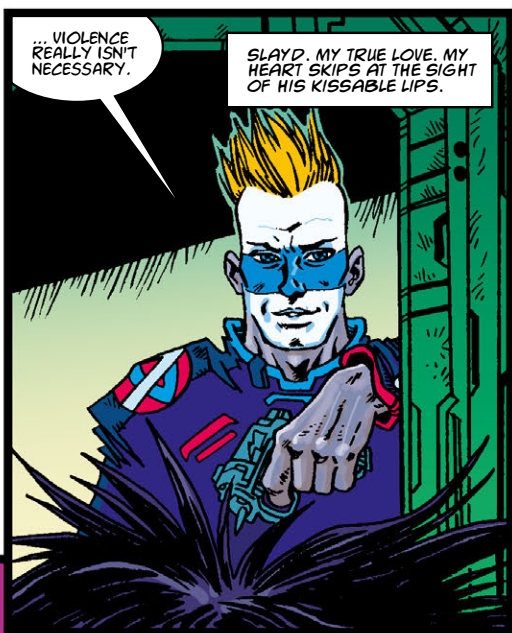
UNFF!



THAT'S ENOUGH! YOU SAID SHE WOULDN'T GET HURT.

STAY OUT OF THIS, YOU PATHETIC LITTLE RUNT.

HE'S RIGHT, DARLING...



... VIOLENCE REALLY ISN'T NECESSARY.

SLAYD, MY TRUE LOVE, MY HEART SKIPS AT THE SIGHT OF HIS KISSABLE LIPS.



THEN I REMEMBER, HE WAS NEVER MY LOVE, I NEVER KISSED THAT MOUTH.

THAT WAS SOME-ONE ELSE.



THAT WAS LIBRA.

ZTT!



I FELT UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT THIS INFECTED I.D. TRICK MY FATHER ARRANGED.

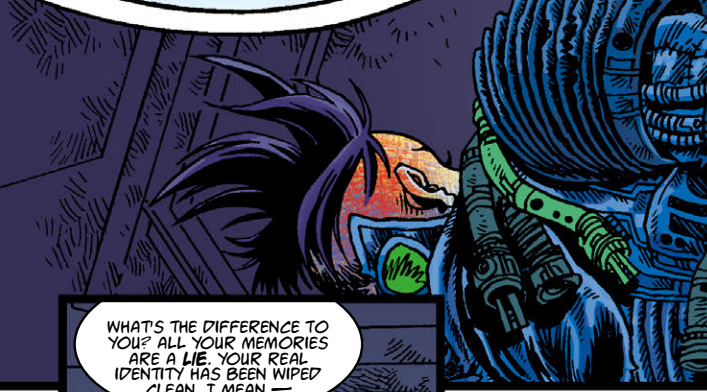
AFTER ALL, HE WAS POISONING A SIMULACRUM OF THE WOMAN I LOVED.



THAT'S VERY SWEET, YOU BASTARD. WH-WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?

TO SIR ALBION.


S-SO HE CAN TURN ME... INTO ONE OF HIS MINDLESS SLAVES?



WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE TO YOU? ALL YOUR MEMORIES ARE A LIE. YOUR REAL IDENTITY HAS BEEN WIPED CLEAN. I MEAN —



— HOW MUCH WORSE CAN YOUR LIFE POSSIBLY GET?



I AM AN I.D. THIEF.

FOR YEARS I'VE STOLEN PERSONAS. I'VE WORN THEM, OR SOLD THEM, OR GIVEN THEM TO ANYONE FIGHTING THE SYSTEM.

THAT SYSTEM USUALLY MEANT THE ARMS-DEALING, TECH-FLOGGING, TAX-AVOIDING OUTFIT KNOWN AS ALBION.

LIFE SEEMED PRETTY STRAIGHTFORWARD, OR AS STRAIGHTFORWARD AS AN I.D. THIEF'S LIFE CAN EVER BE.

DOWNTOWN GIRL

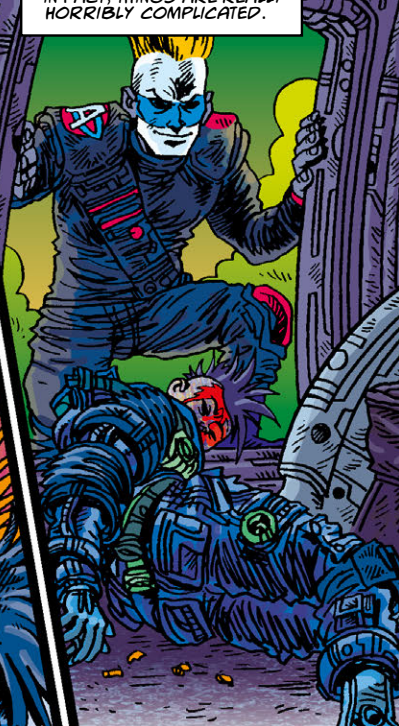
PETER MILLIGAN - RUFUS DAYGLO - DOMINIC REGAN - ELLE DEVILLE

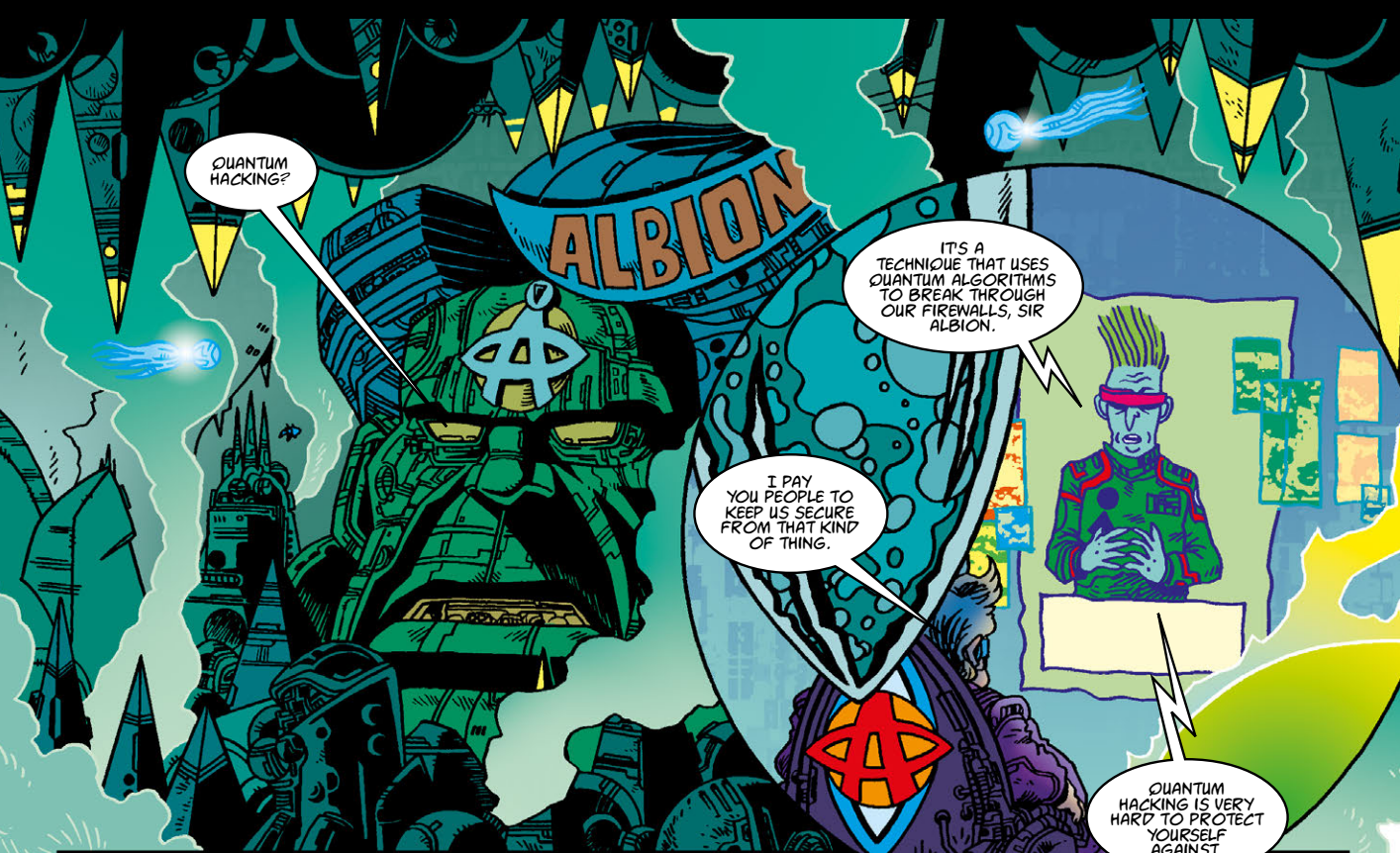
I NATURALLY ASSUMED THAT THE 'I' BEHIND ALL THIS WAS ME. LIBRA.

THE SAME LIBRA WHO INFECTED HERSELF WITH A POISONED FAKE I.D.

THEN I DISCOVERED THAT THINGS AREN'T THAT SIMPLE.

IN FACT, THINGS ARE REALLY HORRIBLY COMPLICATED.





QUANTUM HACKING?

IT'S A TECHNIQUE THAT USES QUANTUM ALGORITHMS TO BREAK THROUGH OUR FIREWALLS, SIR ALBION.

I PAY YOU PEOPLE TO KEEP US SECURE FROM THAT KIND OF THING.

QUANTUM HACKING IS VERY HARD TO PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST.



HOW BAD IS IT?

I'M AFRAID THEY PLUNDERED THE DESIGNS FOR OUR NEW EINSTEIN PHONE.

PING!

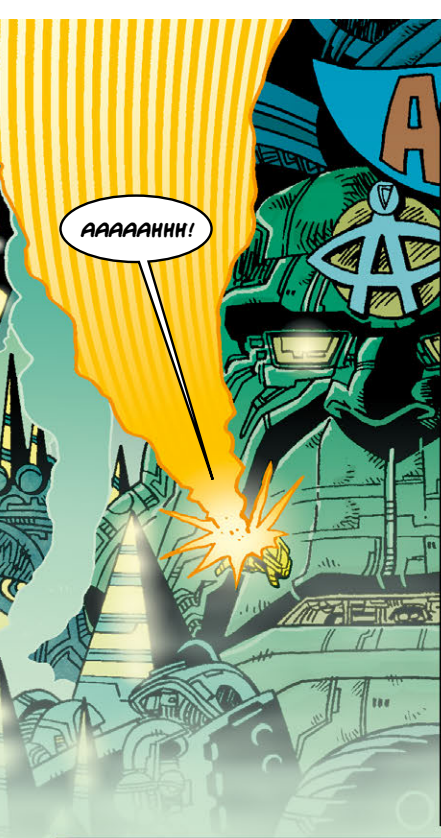


YES, MISS SECRETARY? ARE YOU GOING TO BRING ME MORE BAD NEWS?

A MESSAGE CAME THROUGH ON YOUR PRIVATE LINE, SIR.



IT SAID YOU SHOULD EXPECT A DELIVERY.



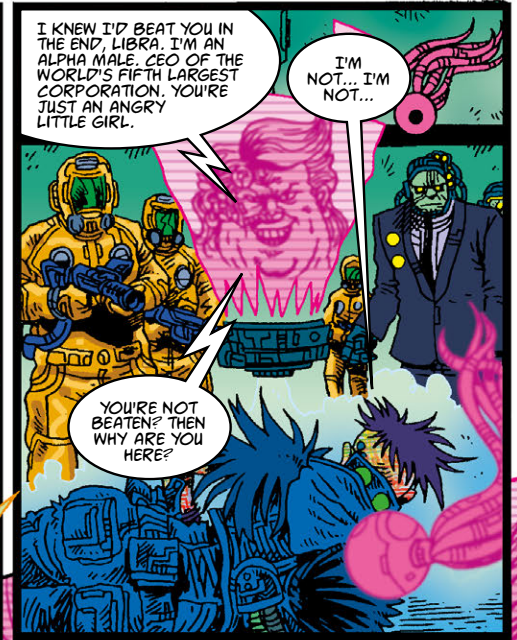
AAAAAHHH!



BOOT

UNFF!

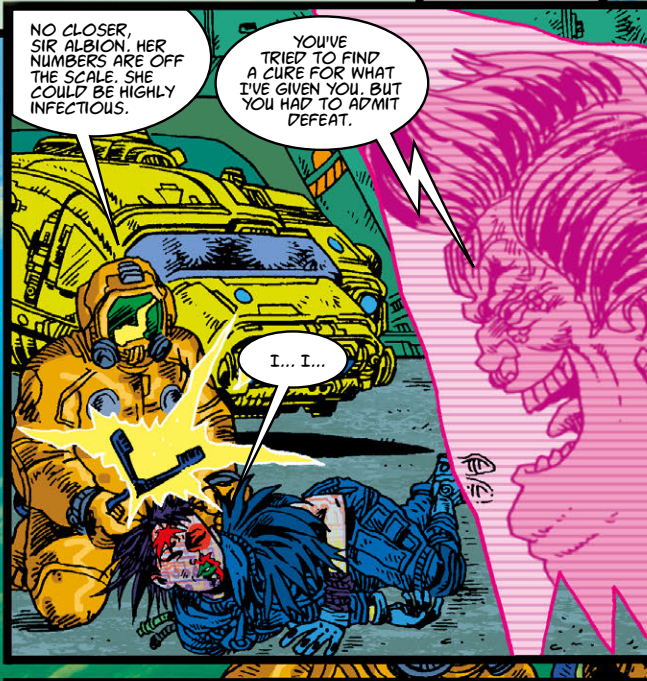
KRUNK!



I KNEW I'D BEAT YOU IN THE END, LIBRA. I'M AN ALPHA MALE, CEO OF THE WORLD'S FIFTH LARGEST CORPORATION. YOU'RE JUST AN ANGRY LITTLE GIRL.

I'M NOT... I'M NOT...

YOU'RE NOT BEATEN? THEN WHY ARE YOU HERE?



NO CLOSER, SIR ALBION. HER NUMBERS ARE OFF THE SCALE. SHE COULD BE HIGHLY INFECTIOUS.

YOU'VE TRIED TO FIND A CURE FOR WHAT I'VE GIVEN YOU. BUT YOU HAD TO ADMIT DEFEAT.

I... I...



HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA



TAKE HER INSIDE. GIVE HER THE ANTIDOTE. AND THEN OPEN UP HER SKULL.



THE ANTIDOTE SHOULD BE ALMOST IMMEDIATE.

THE LATER STAGES OF THE INFECTION AFFECTS THE COGNITIVE PROCESS.



IN SHORT, IT DRIVES YOU A LITTLE CRAZY.

AAIIGH!



LEADING TO SEVERE HEAD PAIN.

LITTLE MINX! THAT'S ALL THE THANKS YOU GET —

OW!

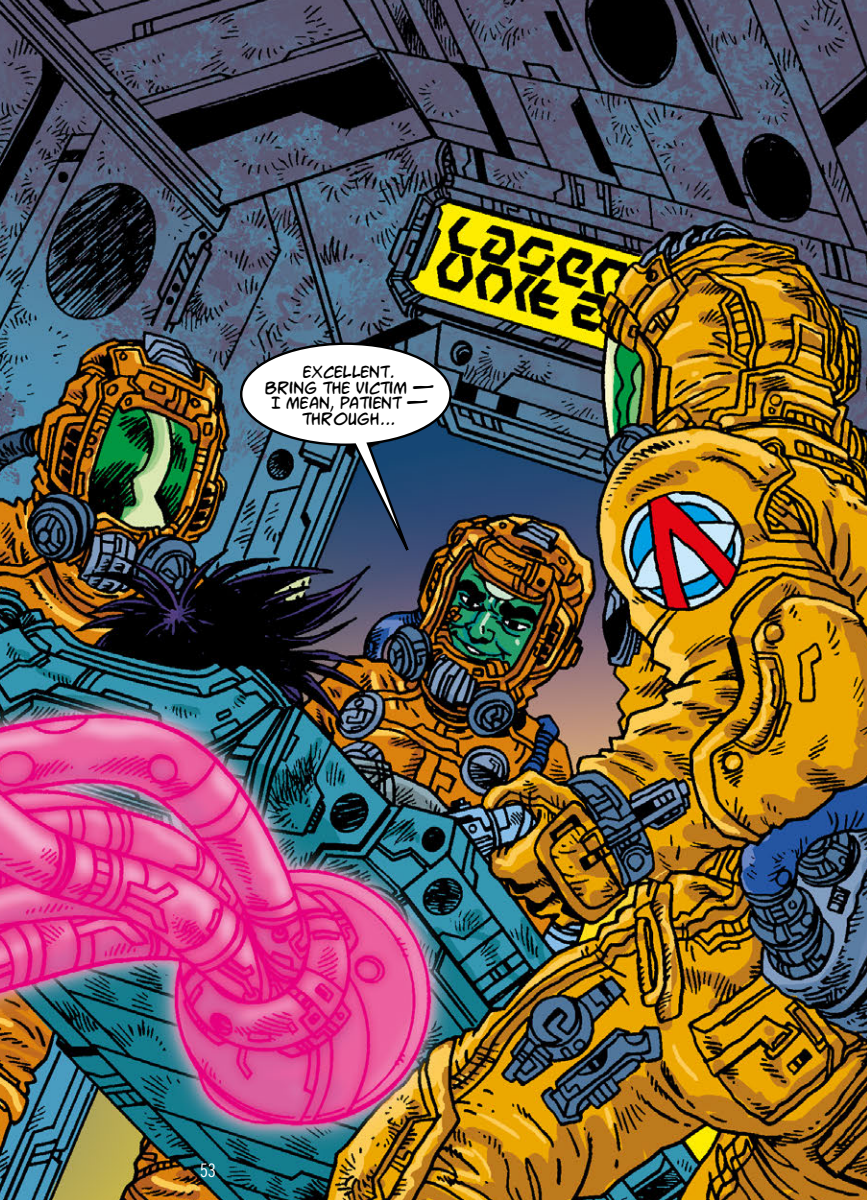
BOP!



— FOR TRYING TO HELP PEOPLE!

UGHNN...

PTT!



EXCELLENT. BRING THE VICTIM — I MEAN, PATIENT — THROUGH...

... THE CYBER
DRILL IS READY!

NO! NO!

THAT YOUNG WOMAN
HAS CAUSED ME SO
MUCH TROUBLE. SHE
CONVINCED MY SON HE
WAS IN LOVE WITH HER.
THEN HER CAMPAIGN OF
TERRORISM AGAINST
ME COST ME
MILLIONS.

THAT SIDE OF HER
PERSONALITY WILL
SOON BE DRILLED
INTO OBLIVION. IN
ITS PLACE WILL BE
AN OBEDIENT...

... NON-THINKING...
NON-UNION... NON-PAID...
TOTALLY SUBSERVIENT...

AAAAAAAAAHHHHH!

'... TECHNICAL
SUPPORT GIRL!'

TWO DAYS LATER —

LIBRA?

SHE MIGHT BE A LITTLE GROGGY FOR A FEW MORE DAYS.

DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM, LIBRA?

YOU'RE... YOU'RE SIR ALBION STAR-FLIGHT.

AND... WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS TOWARDS ME?

MY FEELINGS? I... I THINK... I WANT TO HELP YOU. YES, YOU'RE A GOOD MAN. MY DEEPEST DESIRE IS TO SERVE YOU. TO BE OF USE, ANY WAY I CAN...

VERY GOOD.

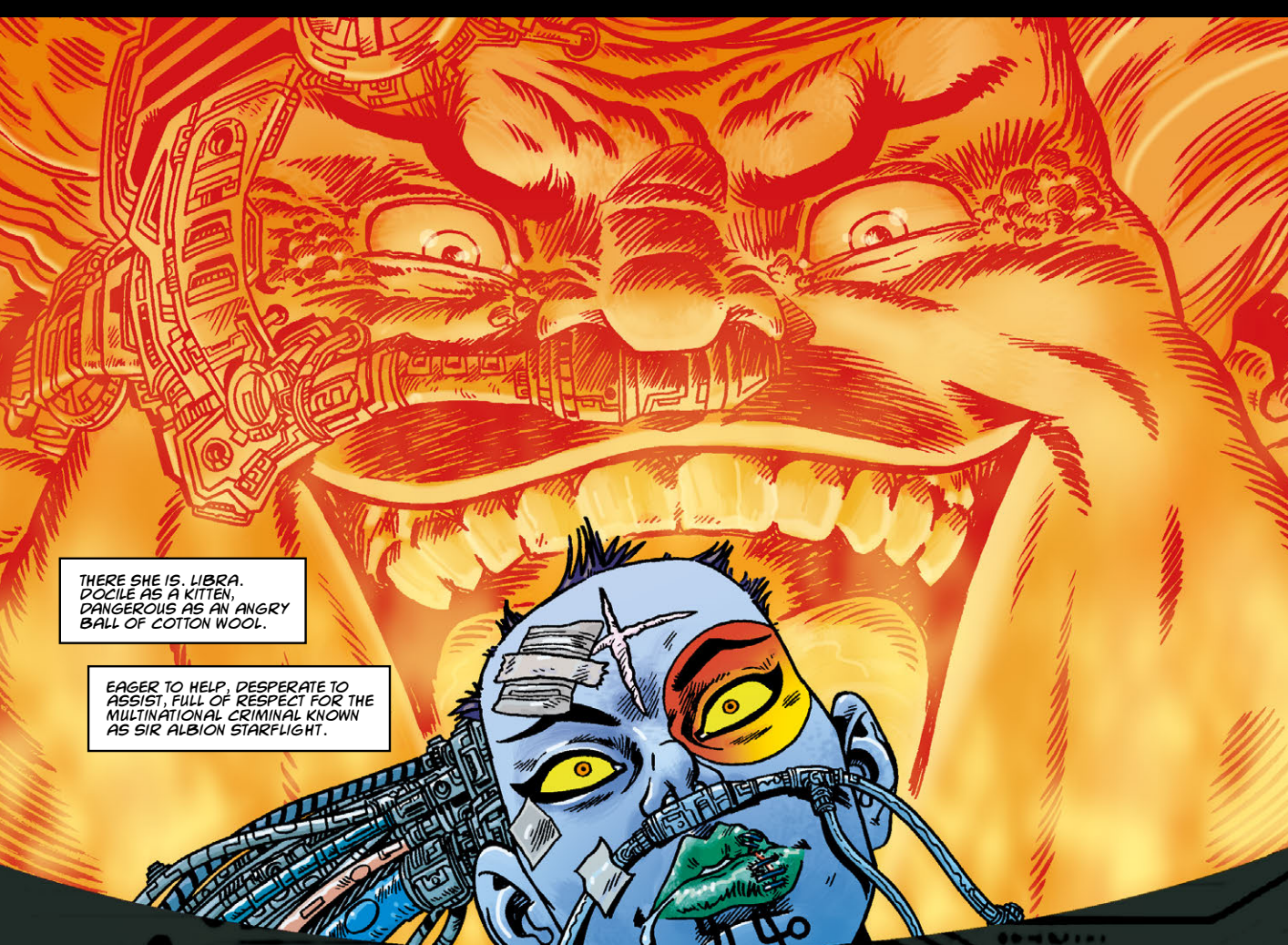
NOW... DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT QUANTUM HACKING?

YOU MEAN QUANTUM ALGORITHMS? YES... FOR SOME REASON I KNOW A LOT ABOUT THAT. MAYBE PEOPLE THINK YOU CAN'T DEFEND AGAINST IT, BUT THEY'RE WRONG.

SHE SHOULDN'T DO TOO MUCH THINKING JUST YET.

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, NURSE. I'VE SEEN ALL I NEED TO SEE...

...THE OPERATION ON LIBRA'S BRAIN HAS BEEN A COMPLETE SUCCESS!



THERE SHE IS. LIBRA. DOCILE AS A KITTEN, DANGEROUS AS AN ANGRY BALL OF COTTON WOOL.

EAGER TO HELP, DESPERATE TO ASSIST, FULL OF RESPECT FOR THE MULTINATIONAL CRIMINAL KNOWN AS SIR ALBION STARFLIGHT.

COUNTERFEIT

PETER WILLIAMS
RUFUS D'AVILA
DOMINIC CHEN
ELUE DE VILLE



BUT LET'S GO BACK A FEW DAYS...

I'LL KILL YOU! YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME, YOU LYING, CHEATING BASTARDS!



BUT WE ARE DOING IT TO YOU, WHOEVER YOU ARE!

SHE LOOKS KINDA PRETTY WHEN SHE'S ANGRY, DOESN'T SHE?



BACKSTREET I.D. SIMMER GENE SELFISH HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN MY DOWNFALL.

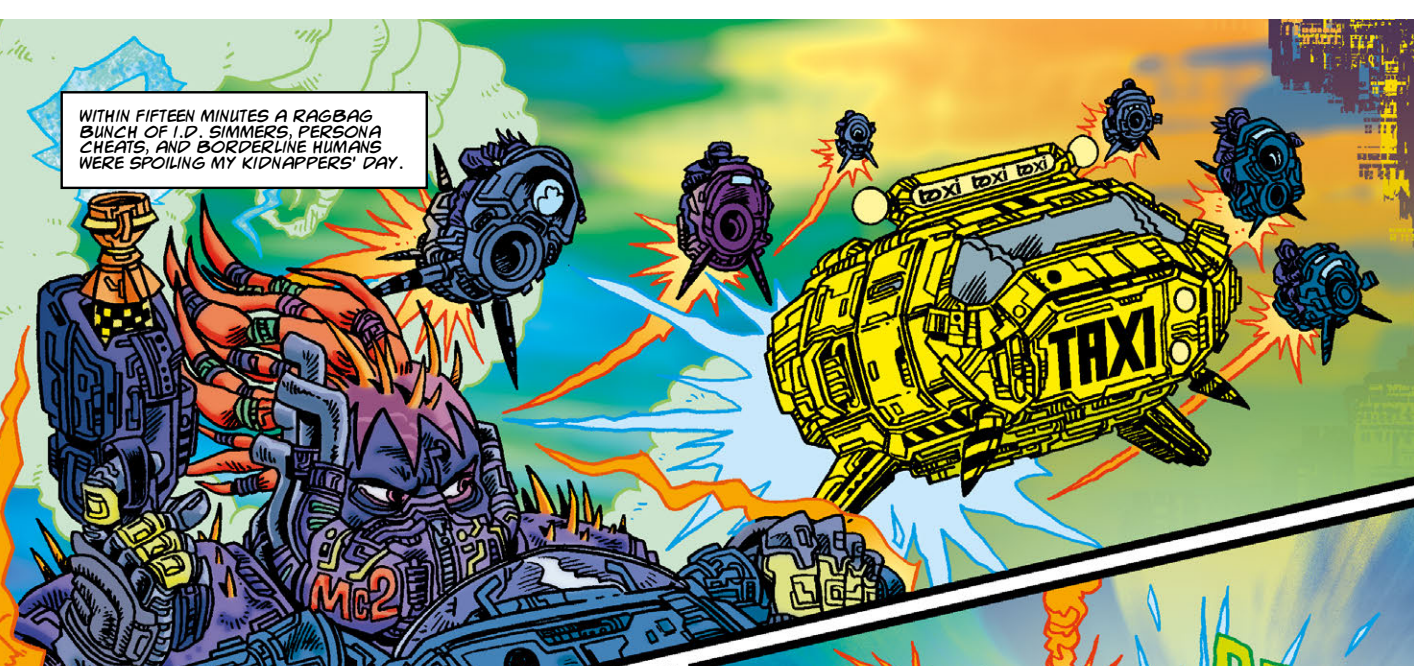
BUT NOW HE REGRETS IT, AND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE —



— HE DOES WHAT WE MIGHT CALL 'THE RIGHT THING'.

ROUND UP THE BOYS AND GIRLS.

WITHIN FIFTEEN MINUTES A RAGBAG BUNCH OF I.D. SIMMERS, PERSONA CHEATS, AND BORDERLINE HUMANS WERE SPOILING MY KIDNAPPERS' DAY.



WHICH OF COURSE, WAS MAKING MINE.



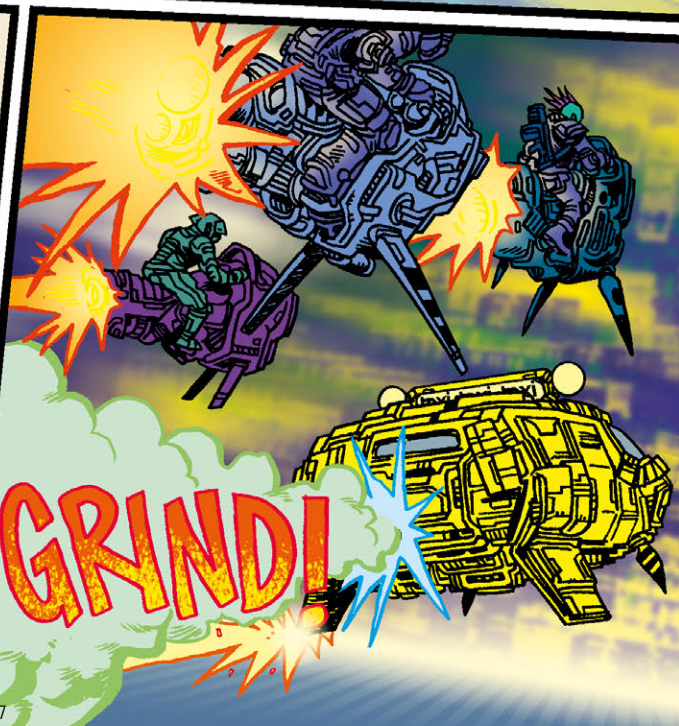
GENE SELFISH ALWAYS SAID HE LOVED ME.



WARNING! THIS VEHICLE HAS BEEN IMMOBILISED! ATTEMPTING EMERGENCY LANDING —



MY, GENE'S FRIENDS PLAY ROUGH.

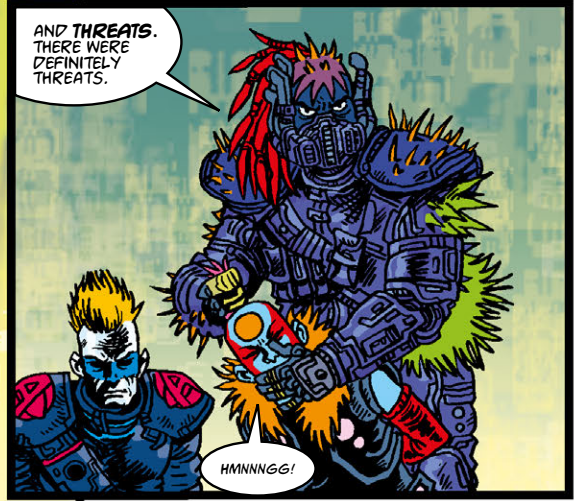




I FELT SO GUILTY ABOUT WHAT THEY WERE GOING TO DO TO YOU —

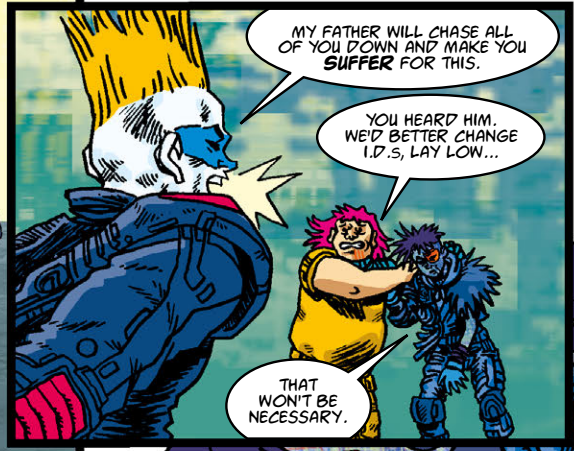
I'LL ATTEMPT TO FORGIVE YOU. HOW DID YOU PERSUADE THE RESCUE TEAM TO HELP?

OH, SOME FAVOURS. A LITTLE BRIBERY.



AND THREATS. THERE WERE DEFINITELY THREATS.

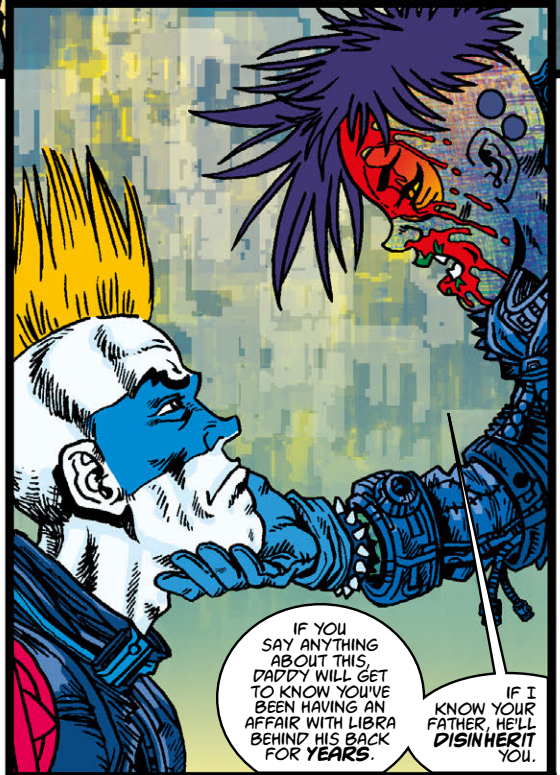
HMNNNGG!



MY FATHER WILL CHASE ALL OF YOU DOWN AND MAKE YOU SUFFER FOR THIS.

YOU HEARD HIM. WE'D BETTER CHANGE I.D.'S, LAY LOW...

THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY.



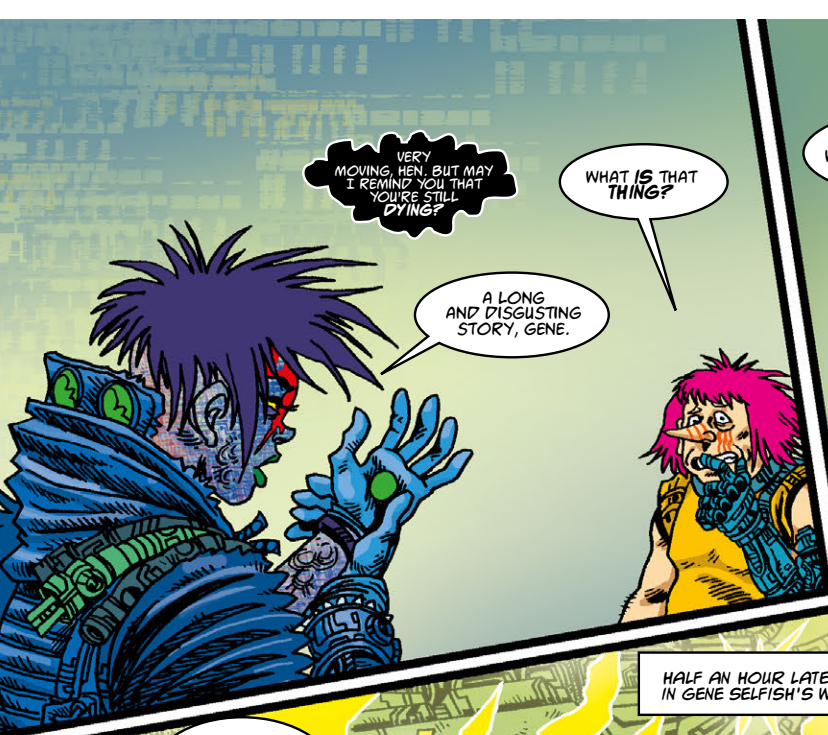
IF YOU SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THIS, DADDY WILL GET TO KNOW YOU'VE BEEN HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH LIBRA BEHIND HIS BACK FOR YEARS.

IF I KNOW YOUR FATHER, HE'LL DISINHERIT YOU.



FUNNY, YOU'RE NOT AS PRETTY WHEN YOU'RE ANGRY.

NOW, CALL SIR ALBION. TELL HIM HE'S ABOUT TO GET A DELIVERY...



VERY MOVING, HEN. BUT MAY I REMIND YOU THAT YOU'RE STILL DYING?

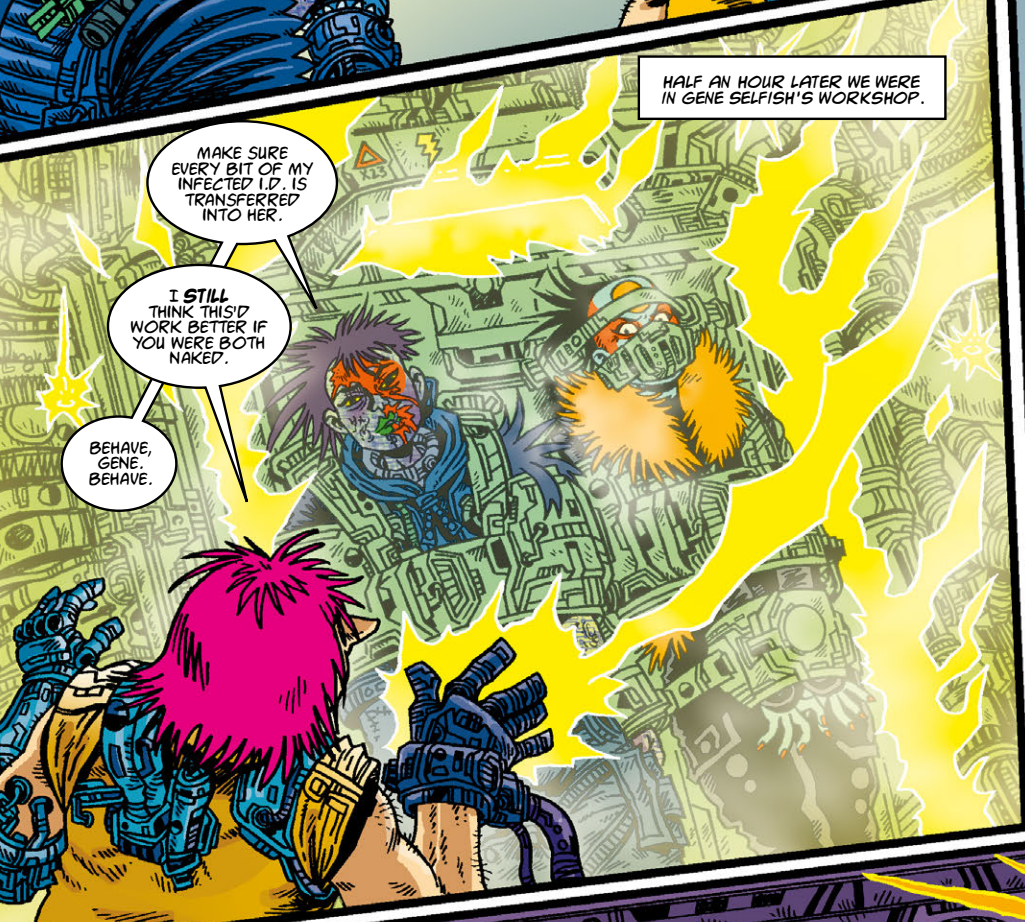
WHAT IS THAT THING?

A LONG AND DISGUSTING STORY, GENE.



SO WHAT DO WE DO WITH WRIGGLE-PANTS?

NNNGGH!



HALF AN HOUR LATER WE WERE IN GENE SELFISH'S WORKSHOP.

MAKE SURE EVERY BIT OF MY INFECTED I.D. IS TRANSFERRED INTO HER.

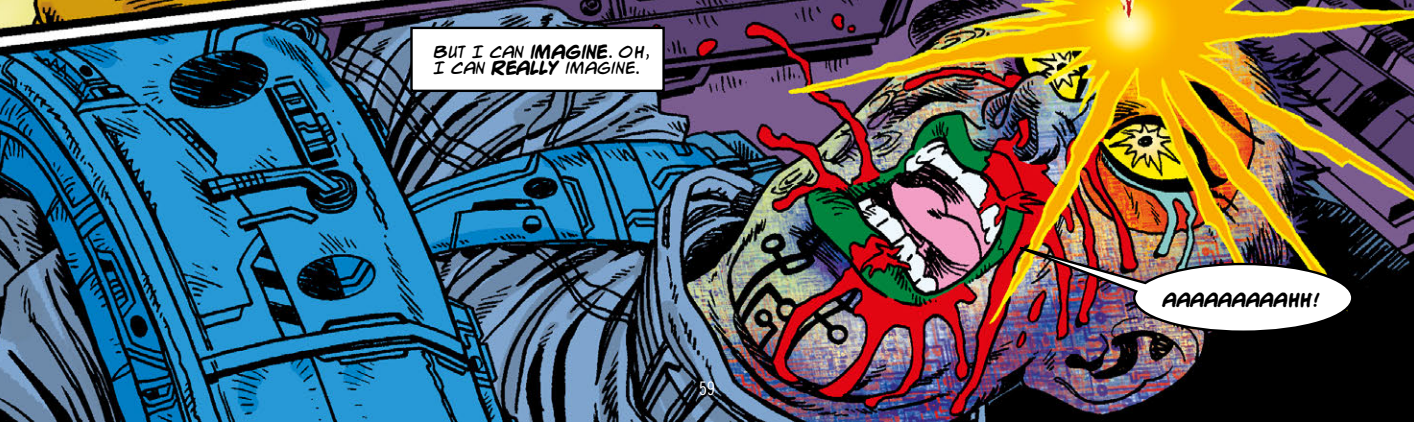
I STILL THINK THIS'D WORK BETTER IF YOU WERE BOTH NAKED.

BEHAVE, GENE. BEHAVE.



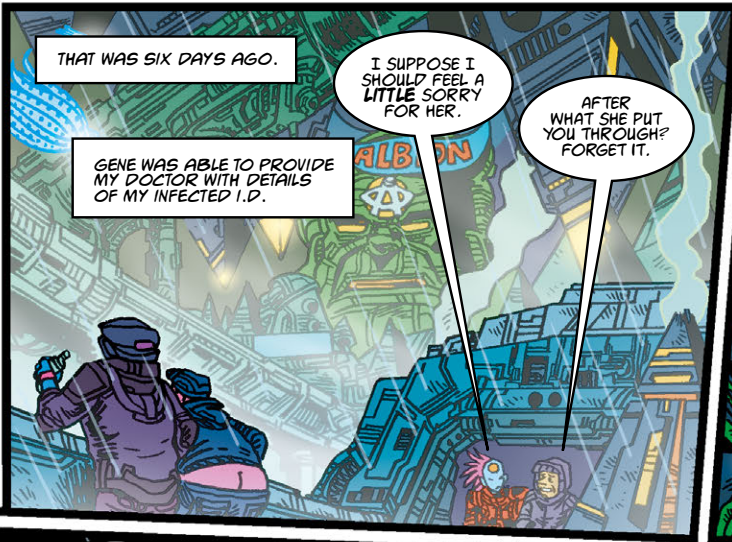
THEN IT WAS JUST A CASE OF REUNITING HER WITH SLAYD'S DADDY.

I DIDN'T SEE WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THEY TOOK HER INSIDE.



BUT I CAN IMAGINE. OH, I CAN REALLY IMAGINE.

AAAAAAAHHH!

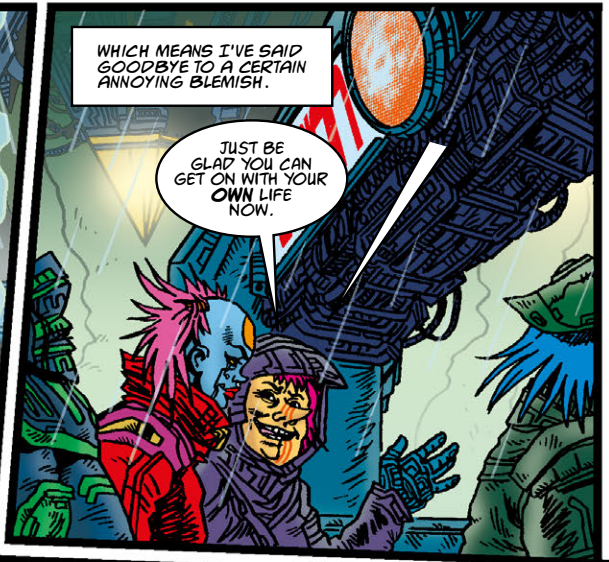


THAT WAS SIX DAYS AGO.

GENE WAS ABLE TO PROVIDE MY DOCTOR WITH DETAILS OF MY INFECTED I.D.

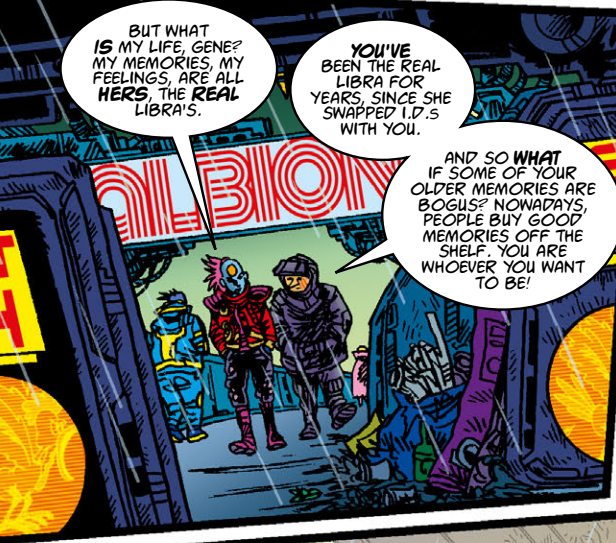
I SUPPOSE I SHOULD FEEL A LITTLE SORRY FOR HER.

AFTER WHAT SHE PUT YOU THROUGH? FORGET IT.



WHICH MEANS I'VE SAID GOODBYE TO A CERTAIN ANNOYING BLEMISH.

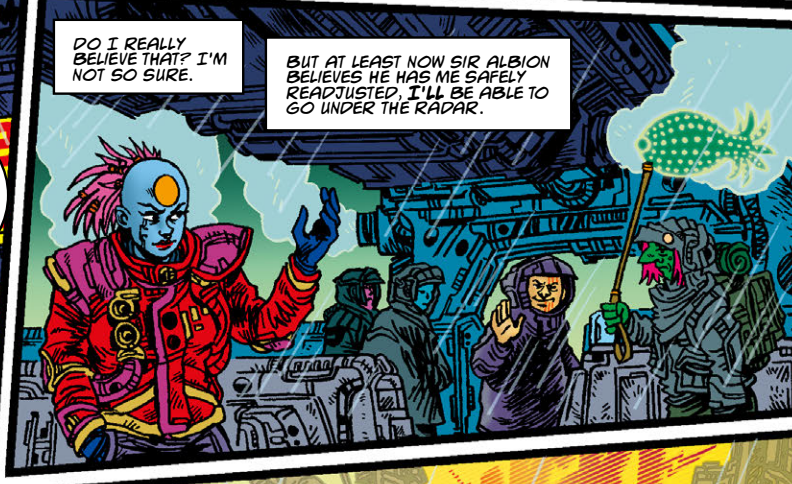
JUST BE GLAD YOU CAN GET ON WITH YOUR OWN LIFE NOW.



BUT WHAT IS MY LIFE, GENE? MY MEMORIES, MY FEELINGS, ARE ALL **HERS**, THE **REAL** LIBRA'S.

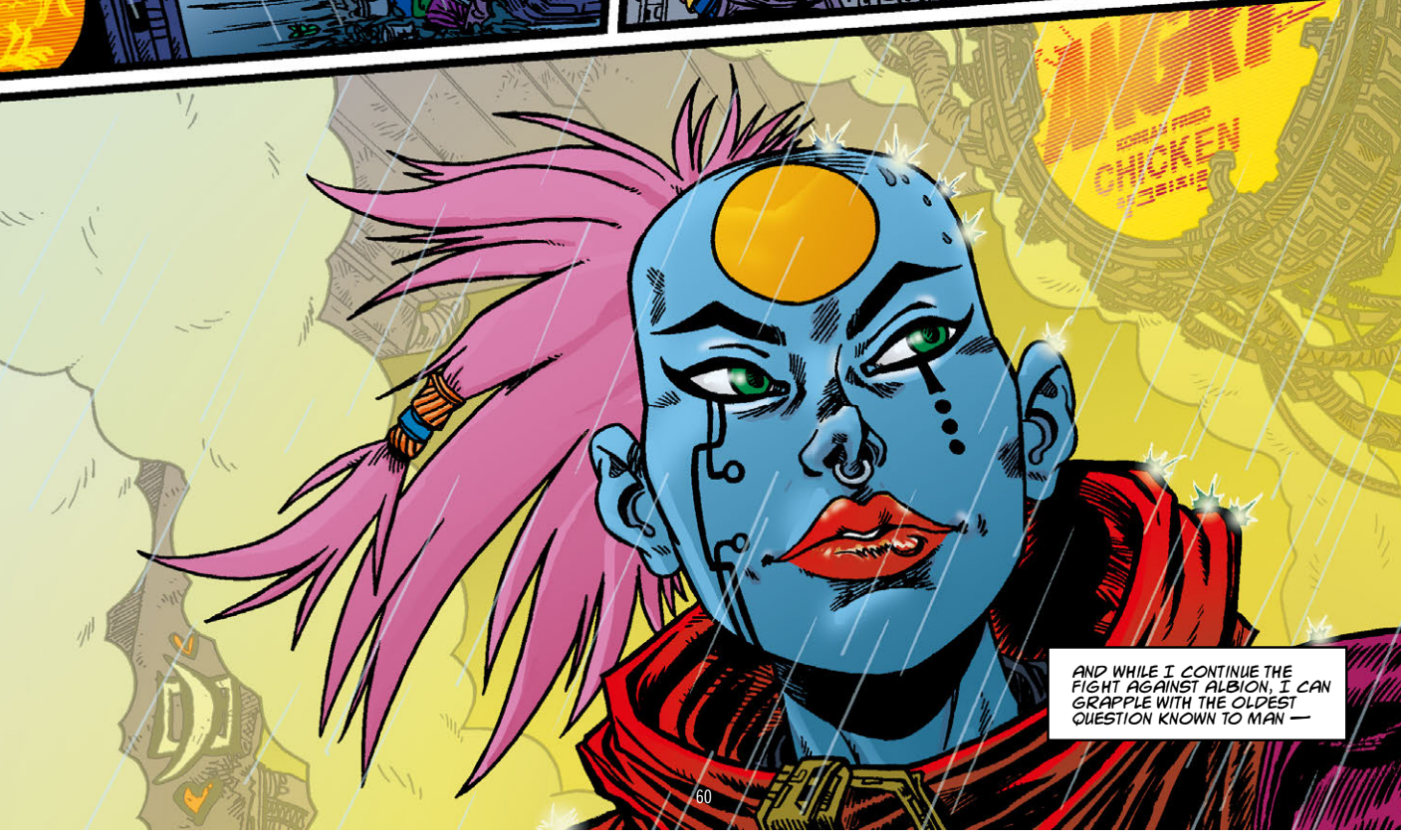
YOU'VE BEEN THE REAL LIBRA FOR YEARS, SINCE SHE SWAPPED I.D.'S WITH YOU.

AND SO WHAT IF SOME OF YOUR OLDER MEMORIES ARE BOGUS? NOWADAYS, PEOPLE BUY GOOD MEMORIES OFF THE SHELF. YOU ARE WHOEVER YOU WANT TO BE!



DO I REALLY BELIEVE THAT? I'M NOT SO SURE.

BUT AT LEAST NOW SIR ALBION BELIEVES HE HAS ME SAFELY READJUSTED. I'LL BE ABLE TO GO UNDER THE RADAR.



AND WHILE I CONTINUE THE FIGHT AGAINST ALBION, I CAN GRAPPLE WITH THE OLDEST QUESTION KNOWN TO MAN —



WHO AM I?

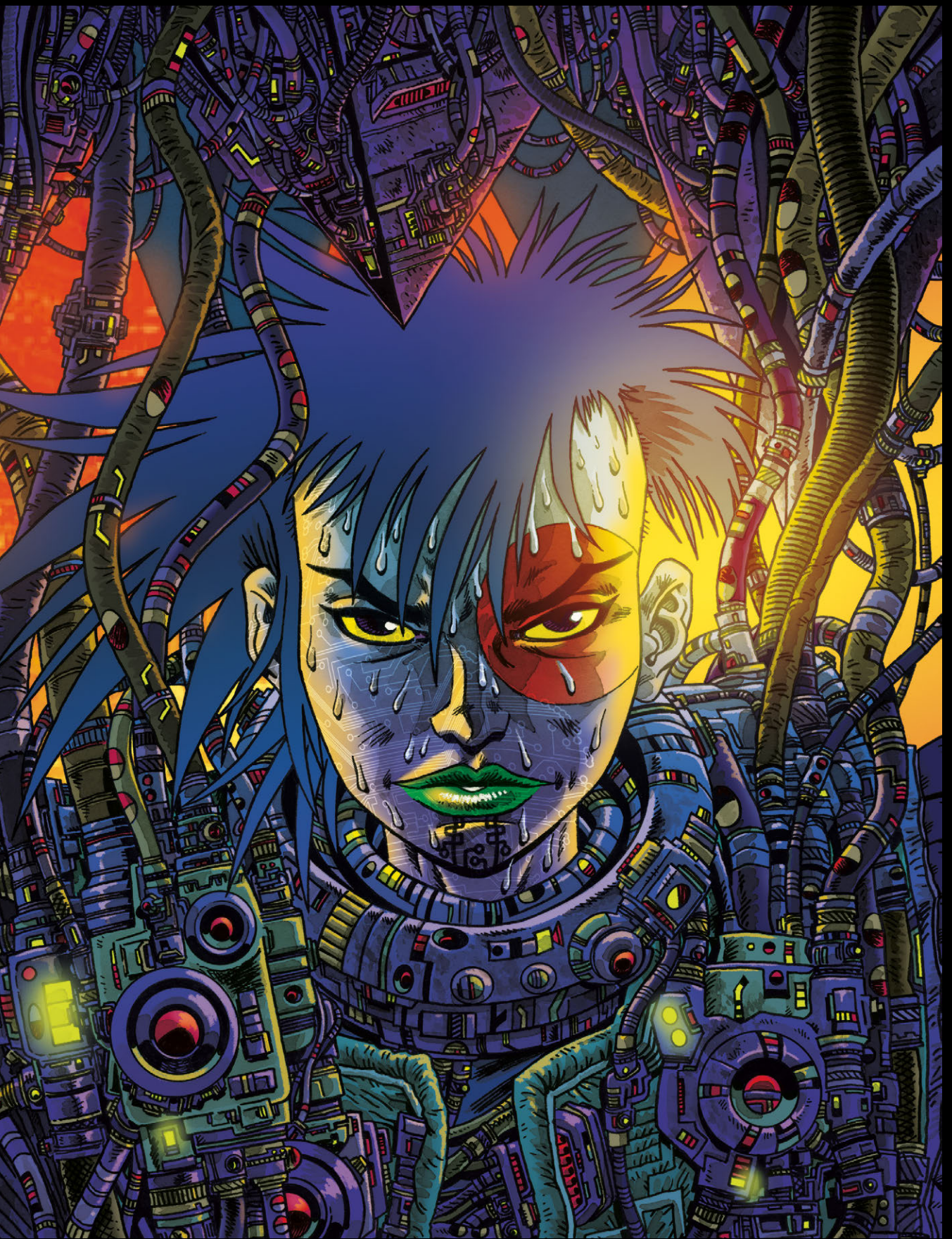
MEMO
DETECTIVE
AGENCY

de

orbital
comics



Cover by Rufus Daylo





PETER MILLIGAN

Peter Milligan is one of **2000 AD**'s most prolific story creators, and has now, of course, graduated to much wider comics fame. As well as co-creating *Hewligan's Haircut* with Jamie Hewlett, Milligan created the classic future war story *Bad Company*, in addition to creating *Freaks*, *Shadows*, *Sooner or Later*, *The Dead* and *Tribal Memories*. He also contributed several short stories and *Future Shocks*, and has written *Judge Dredd* and *Rogue Trooper* stories.

His work outside the Galaxy's Greatest Comic has received enormous critical and fan acclaim; notably Vertigo's existentialist superhero mystery *Enigma*, via *The Eaters*, *Girl*, *Tank Girl: The Odyssey*, *A1*, *Animal Man*, *Batman*, *Minx*, *Shade the Changing Man*, *Skreemer* and *Vertigo Pop! London*, a rock 'n' roll tale of the big city. For Marvel he co-created the best-selling *X-Statix*, a vicious pop culture satire, illustrated by Mike Allred.

Milligan was the longest-running writer of the cult horror comic *Hellblazer*, and his take on *Human Target* inspired the TV series. His latest works include the critical hit *Britannia*, about an Ancient Roman detective and a retelling of *The Mummy* for Hammer/Titan. Milligan has written several screenplays, as well as the surreal *Kid Lobotomy* for IDW. Recently he has written a wildly popular new take the cult TV series *The Prisoner* for Titan.

RUFUS DAYGLO

Rufus Dayglo escaped from his animation cubicle and was regened by Tharg the Mighty as an artdroid for **2000 AD**. He went on to work with Ashley Wood at IDW on *Metal Gear Solid*, before successfully relaunching *Tank Girl* with co-creator Alan Martin. Escaping the jaws of Mek-Quake, Rufus has drawn extensively for IDW, Image, Titan, DC and **2000 AD**.

Rufus recently illustrated the *Judge Dredd: The Cursed Earth* board game for Osprey Games, two series of *Bad Company*, and is now working on a brand new series for the galaxy's Greatest with co-conspirator Peter Milligan!

LEBION
LEBION
LEBION
LEBION
LEBION



FAKE NEWS

IN A CITY RULED BY THE MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS, IDENTITY IS CRUCIAL — no one can get anywhere without being monitored, logged, and status-checked. Fortunately for some, if a new I.D. is needed, there are 'simmers' — backstreet I.D. thieves that can create new personas by stealing the identities of others.

Libra Kelly is a simmer with an axe to grind, doing jobs that cause trouble for the corporations free of charge, but soon finds herself stuck with a terminally diseased I.D. and a price on her head...

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