BRITAIN'S GREATEST HYPER-POWERED SECRET AGENT RETURNS!
AAAAHHHHH!
M.A.C.H.1
CLOSE ENCOUNTERS
PAT MILLS ★ SCOTT GOODALL ★ ALAN HEBDEN ★ STEVE MACMANUS ★ NICK LANDAU
JOHN COOPER ★ RAMON SOLA ★ TREVOR GORING ★ JESUS REDONDO ★ KEVIN O'NEILL

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M.A.C.H.1

CREATED BY PAT MILLS & ENIO

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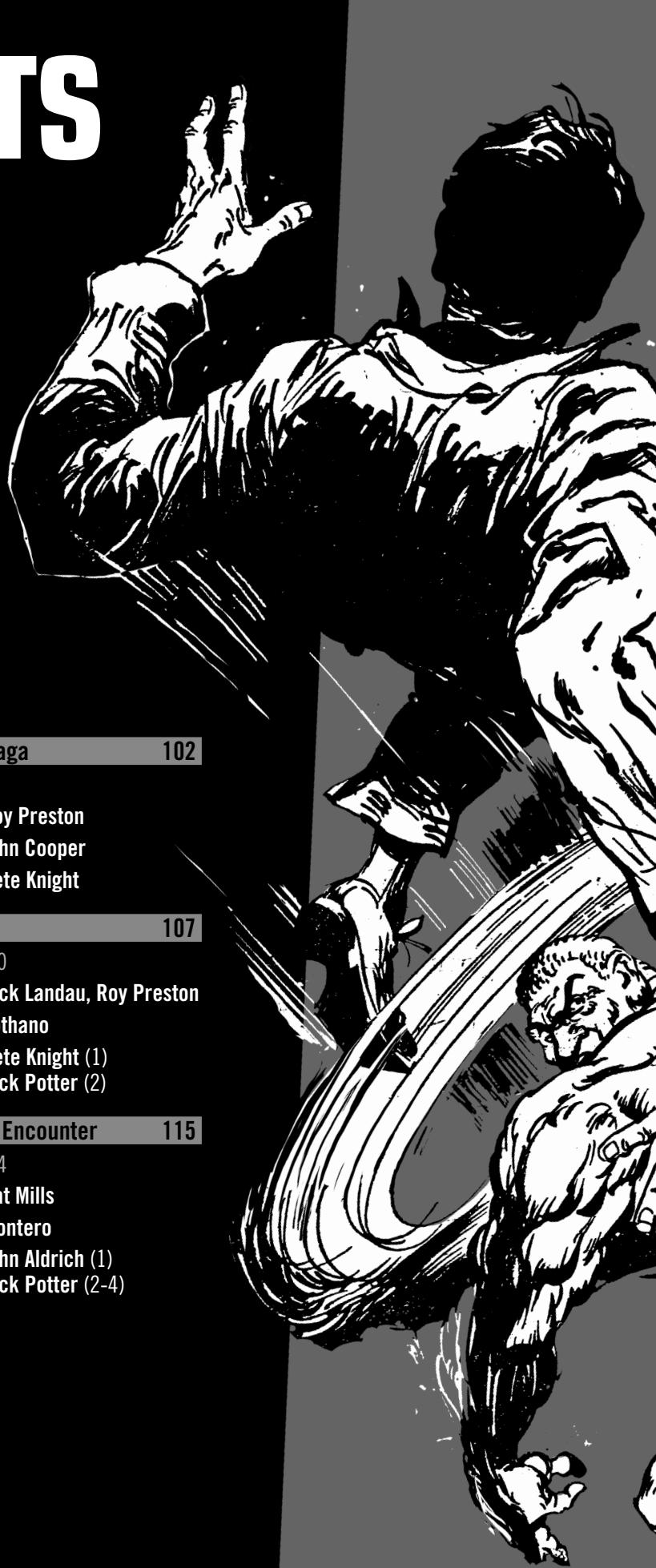

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M.A.C.H.1
THE YEAR— 1983. A NEW BRITISH EXPEDITION HAS TAKEN UP THE CHALLENGE TO CONQUER EVEREST BY THE PERILOUS DIRECT ROUTE!
IN 1938
FAILURE!
IN 1953
TRIUMPH!
IN 1924
TRAGEDY!
IN 1979
DISASTER!
BUT, AT CAMP 5, 25,500 FEET UP ON EVEREST...
AVALANCHE!
AAAGH!
2000 A.D.
THRILL 5

SIX MORE DEAD! TEN AVALANCHES IN TEN HOURS! THESE AREN'T ORDINARY CONDITIONS, HALLORAN! WE MUST TURN BACK!
SHUT UP, MILES! IT'S THE SUMMIT OR NOTHING!
JOHN HALLORAN... LEADER OF THE EXPEDITION!
THIS STINKIN' ROCK OWES ME A LIFE! MY GRANDFATHER DIED HERE IN 1924!
SUDDENLY...
GNUUUGH!
NO— TH-THE ICE WALL! IT'S FALLING!... MELTING!
YES, MELTING— TO REVEAL A GRUESOME SECRET...
TWO DAYS LATER, JOHN PROBE, (CODENAME MACH I), ARRIVED IN THE NEPALESE VILLAGE OF KHUMDE...
SEVERE FLOODING HAS BEEN REPORTED IN THE KHUMBU VALLEY! IS THAT WHERE YOU'RE HEADED, MISTER?
I'M GOING TO FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THAT HALLORAN EXPEDITION!
YOU MUST BE A MADMAN TO TACKLE EVEREST ALONE!
I'M A MACH-MAN, FRIEND... AND THERE'S ONE HELLUVA DIFFERENCE!

FULL HYPERPOWER WILL GET ME FROM KHUMDE TO THE FOOT OF EVEREST IN ONE DAY INSTEAD OF EIGHT!
DANGER! NEGLECT OF HIGH ALTITUDE CONDITIONS MEANS GRAVE RISK OF PULMONARY AND CEREBRAL DAMAGE -------
YEAH— ANYTHING ELSE I SHOULD KNOW, COMPUTER?
ALTITUDE 19,000 FEET ----- FIRST SIGNS OF FROSTBITE -- ALL-WEATHER CLIMBING GEAR AND SNOW GOGGLES NEEDED --
LATER, AFTER A LONG, HARD CLIMB...
25,000 FEET... AND THE SNOW'S TURNING TO SLUSH! AND WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME IS THAT REVOLTING SMELL?
ATTRIBUTE SMELL TO HUMAN BODIES IN ADVANCED STATE OF DECOMPOSITION ------
THREE CORPSES BELONGED TO HALLORAN EXPEDITION-- OTHERS KILLED DURING 1924 ATTEMPT ON EVEREST ---
THEY MUST'VE BEEN WASHED OUT AS THE GLACIERS MELTED— SO SOME OF HALLORAN'S MEN MUST STILL BE ALIVE! I'VE GOT TO GET AFTER THEM!

DISCARD PITONS--USE HYPER FINGER FORCE TO CREATE HANDHOLDS...
ROCK PILLAR BARS PROGRESS--DESTROY!
HAAA...
...YAAH!
LATER...
28,000 FEET--TEMPERATURE STILL RISING---MELTING SNOW CONDITIONS SUICIDAL------
A SOLAR ENERGY STATION BUILT 300 FEET BELOW THE SUMMIT SLOPE!
.246 HEAVY CALIBRE PYRON BULLET--YOU ARE UNDER ATTACK--SUGGEST RETALIATION----
AAGH!
SUDDENLY...
WHITE-OUT CONDITIONS BELOW MAIN SUMMIT, COMPUTER! GIMME FULL HYPER-VISION!
JOHN COOPER
PROBE SPUN ON HIS ATTACKER...
But...
INFORMATION DENIED--YOUR BRAIN CELLS CAN NO LONGER FUNCTION--REPEAT---NO LONGER FUNCTION--------
UGH!
YAARRGH!
RIGHT ON THE BUTTON, COMPUTER! NOW LET'S HAVE A CLOSER LOOK-SEE!
WHO IS THIS GUY? INFORMATION, COMPUTER- FAST!
MACH ONE OUT COLD! BUT THE HEAT IS ON IN NEXT PROG'S THRILLING INSTALMENT!

M.A.C.H.1
2000 A.D.
THRILL 5
GLACIERS MELTING ON EVEREST! A PARTY OF BRITISH MOUNTAINEERS VANISHES...
...AND THE BODIES OF THREE DEAD CLIMBERS BELONGING TO THE 1924 EXPEDITION ARE WASHED FROM THEIR ICY TOMB!
THE CAUSE? A SOLAR ENERGY STATION BUILT 300 FEET BELOW THE MAIN SUMMIT!
JOHN PROBE, CODENAME MACH 1, WAS SENT TO INVESTIGATE... BUT ENDS UP A PRISONER!
ANOTHER INTRUDER, EXCELLENCY! HE CAUSED MUCH TROUBLE!
NO MORE! POD HIM TO CELL SIX!
AS THE PLASTIC POD SWISHED TOWARD'S PROBE'S CELL...
UUH! WHAT HAPPENED, COMPUTER?
TEMPORARY PARALYSIS CAUSED BY 5 MLS INJECTION OF NERVE DRUG. EFFECTS NOW WEARING OFF--
I'M PROBE — YOU GUYS HAD BETTER FILL ME IN ON WHAT'S GOIN' ON...
HALLORAN, MILES AND BENNETT! SURVIVORS OF THE BRITISH EVEREST EXPEDITION! WE'RE PRISONERS OF THE TIBETAN ARMY!

THESE NUTS ARE GONNA USE POWER FROM THEIR SOLAR ENERGY STATION TO MELT THE HIMALAYAN GLACIERS— AND FLOOD INDIA! THEY'RE CRAZY!
WE DON'T STAND A CHANCE —THERE'S NO WAY OUT!
JOHN COOPER
THAT SLIDING DOOR... MAYBE ONE HYPER-PUNCH—
YEP! THAT OLD HYPER-PUNCH— ALWAYS WORKS!
AAH! QUICK— GET GUARDS! BREAKOUT FROM CELL SIX!
KER-ANG!
AAAGH!
BENNETT! GET THOSE GUNS, PLASTO-BOMBS AND OXYGEN EQUIPMENT— MOVE!
BEFORE WE LEAVE, I'M GONNA BLOW THAT SOLAR STATION BACK TO THE SUN!
CONCENTRATE ATTACK ON MAIN PARABOLIC MIRROR AND SOLAR OVEN--

CABIN IN THE FURNACE TOWER HOUSES ALL OPERATING CONTROLS. PLASTO-BOMB MARK 7 -SERIES 2X-YB WILL HAVE REQUIRED DESTRUCTIVE EFFECT.
GOTCHA, COMPUTER! ON MY WAY UP NOW!
HELLO AND GOODBYE, GENTS! NOW TO GET BACK OUTSIDE—FAST!
AAIEEEEE!
MADE IT!
ARMY GUARDS, PROBE! CLOSING IN FAST!
MILES, YOU AND BENNETT LEAVE YOUR WEAPONS AND DESCEND TO CAMP 5! HALLORAN AND I WILL HOLD THEM OFF!
AND SO THEY FIGHT! MACH 1 AND A BRITISH MOUNTAINEER ... IN A BATTLE FOR LIFE ITSELF!

UNTIL...
THEY'RE PULLING BACK! THIS IS OUR CHANCE, HALLORAN, LET'S GO!
NO! I CAME HERE TO CONQUER EVEREST— MY GRANDFATHER DIED TRYING, SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO— IT'S A DEBT I OWE HIM!
YEAH— I'M COMING FOR YOU, EVEREST! I'LL GET TO THE TOP! TOP OF THE WORLD!
CRAZY FOOL, YOU HAVEN'T ENOUGH OXYGEN! YOU'LL DIE UP THERE!
HALLORAN'S OBSESSION WITH MOUNTAIN IRRELEVANT. YOU MUST COMMENCE DESCENT IF OTHER TWO EXPEDITION MEMBERS ARE TO SURVIVE---
UPPER SNOW-FIELDS NOW FROZEN AGAIN. ADOPT HUMAN SLEDGE POSITION FOR SPEED----
OVER PRECIPICE. FREE-FALL POSITION WILL STEADY DESCENT AND ABSORB IMPACT--
I HOPE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING, COMPUTER! I'M ONLY HUMAN!
PAIN FACTOR MINIMAL. COMMENCE BURROWING TO EAST ON COURSE ZERO-SEVEN-ZERO. WILL RESULT IN EXIT FROM SNOW GULLY AT CAMP 5---
UMFFF!
HALF AN HOUR LATER...
PROBE! THANK GOD YOU FOUND US! MORE TROOPS CONVERGING FROM THE LOWER SLOPES—AND WE HAVEN'T A WEAPON BETWEEN US!
YES WE HAVE, MILES! THAT FROZEN CORPSE FROM THE 1924 EXPEDITION!

THE HEROES RETURN NEXT PROG - IN INFERNO

M.A.C.H.1
DEEP IN THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE, A VERY SPECIAL HOUSE IS BEING BURGLED...
2000A.D.
Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT
ALAN HEBDEN
ART ROBOTS
LOZANO/ CANOS
LETTERING ROBOT
JACK POTTER
COMPU·73E
DON'T SHOOT! LET THE DOGS GET HIM!
EXTREME DANGER
HIGH VOLTAGE ELECTRICITY
GOTTA... THROW THE PACKAGE OUT!
ZZZZZZ
HE'S HIT THE FENCE— ELECTROCUTED HIMSELF!
AT THAT INSTANT A MOTORCYCLE ROARED BY—
THEY'VE GOT THE PACKAGE! SOMEBODY BETTER TELL SHARPE!

NOT FAR AWAY, SECRET AGENT JOHN PROBE, (CODENAME MACH 1) WAS HEADING TOWARDS THE HOUSE...
CONTROL TO MACH 1. THIS IS SHARPE! GOT AN EMERGENCY— THE HOUSE HAS BEEN ROBBED!
EASTERN AGENTS ON MOTORCYCLE HEADING ALONG B4157 IN YOUR DIRECTION— MUST BE STOPPED—THEY'VE GOT VIDEO-TAPE SHOWING COMPU-PUNCTURE PROCESS!
AS PROBE SWUNG HIS CAR TO BLOCK THE ROAD, HIS INBUILT COMPUTER FED DATA TO HIS BRAIN—
BLAST! THEY'VE TURNED UP THE CLIFF PATH!
WIDTH OF PATH 1 METRE. YOUR VEHICLE UNABLE TO FOLLOW!
DON'T NEED A CAR, COMPUTER— I'LL OVERTAKE 'EM ON FOOT!
AFFIRMATIVE. MOTORCYCLE MAX SPEED 120 MPH OVER ROUGH TERRAIN. INTERCEPTION POSSIBLE ——
SOON, AT THE TOP OF THE CLIFF PATH...
CRAK!!
TH-THE DRIVER'S COMING STRAIGHT FOR ME— TIME FOR A BIT OF BATTING PRACTICE!
YEEAAARGH!
ONE DOWN... AND ONE TO GO!
BUT...
MOTORCYCLE SPEED 100 KPH. HYPERPOWER REQUIRED 8%
THE OTHER ONE'S GETTING AWAY OVER THE SEA— BY HANG GLIDER! GOT TO FOLLOW HIM!

GOIN' DOWN!
ACCELERATING AT 33 FT PER SECOND PER SECOND----
IMPACT IN 0.08 SECS. TERMINAL VELOCITY: 130 KPH.
IMPACT! WATER TEMPERATURE 2.1°C.
SO IT'S COLD AN' IT'S A LONG WAY DOWN! TELL ME SOMETHING I DON'T KNOW, COMPUTER!
EDITOR'S NOTE.
ONLY AN IDIOT WOULD COPY A SUPERHUMAN LIKE MACH 1. READERS OF 2000 A.D. AREN'T IDIOTS, OF COURSE – BUT DON'T LET YOUR FANTASTIC PAPER FALL INTO THE HANDS OF A 'DUM-DUM'!
KERNIN CLASS NUCLEAR-POWERED HUNTER-KILLER OF THE EASTERN NAVY. TEARDROP HULL GIVES UNDERWATER SPEED IN EXCESS OF 70 KPH. PURSUIT IMPOSSIBLE!
WELL, WE TRIED, COMPUTER— BUT SHARPE IS GONNA BE WILD THAT THE OTHER SIDE HAVE GOT THEIR HANDS ON THE PROCESS THAT TURNED ME INTO A SUPERHUMAN!
A FEW WEEKS LATER IN LONDON'S OXFORD STREET...
ALERT! ALERT! SOUND FROM ABOVE NOT CONSISTENT WITH NORMAL ACTIVITY DANGER! ---- TAKE EVASIVE ACTION---
WHAT 'YA TALKIN' ABOUT, COMPUTER! IT'S A NICE, NORMAL SUMMER'S DAY AN' ALL...
HECK! CHUNK OF FALLING MASONRY— GOTTA SMASH IT TO DUST!
HYPERPOWER REQUIRED 12%
PROBE RACED INTO THE BUILDING...
HEY... WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING!
I RECKON THAT LUMP OF STONE DIDN'T FALL BY ACCIDENT!

BUT ON THE ROOF...
SO! THE EASTERN BOYS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO USE THE INFORMATION THEY STOLE... AND IT LOOKS AS IF THEIR MACH MAN'S OUT TO GET ME!
DATA SCAN RESULT: PARAPET DISLODGED BY HUMANOID MEANS. CONCLUSION: HUMAN WITH HYPER STRENGTH RESPONSIBLE ------
PROBE WAS SOON BACK IN HIS CAR, BUT—
LOOKS LIKE WE HAVE A 'TAIL', COMPUTER..
AFFIRMATIVE. REGISTRATION NUMBER BELONGS TO EASTERN EMBASSY.
WELL, THINK I'LL FOLLOW IT!
SO YOU WANNA CHASE, D'YOU, PAL? WE'LL I'LL BE WITH YOU ALL THE WAY! GOTTA STOP YOU BEFORE YOU KILL YOURSELF OR SOMEBODY ELSE!
THE EMBASSY CAR ROARED AWAY...
LMH 667Z
IT'S A SET UP!
BRAKING DISTANCE INSUFFICIENT. ABANDON VEHICLE!
PROBE ABANDONED THE CAR— MACH 1 STYLE!

JUST IN TIME!
AT A TIME LIKE THIS— A GUY NEEDS FRIENDS— IN THE SCRAP-METAL BUSINESS!
CRASH!
BUT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TRUCK A RIVAL COMPUTER WAS AT WORK!
HYPER STRENGTH REQUIRED TO TOPPLE VEHICLE: 15 PERCENT★★
GRIEF, IT'S COMING DOWN ON ME... NO... NO TIME TO GET CLEAR!
GOTTA STOP IT FROM CRUSHING ME TO A PULP!
IT TOOK A LOT MORE POWER TO STOP THE FALL THAN TO START IT...
INERTIAL MASS INCREASES WITH EVERY DEGREE OF FALL. HYPER STRENGTH REQUIRED: 35%-- 40%---45%---
IT... IT'S BURNING ME UP! WEIGHT... WEIGHT'S INCREASING WITH EVERY SECOND!
HYPER STRENGTH REQUIRED: 50% PLUS!---------
BLIMEY— HOW'D HE MANAGE THAT!?
VROOM!
DONE IT! THAT'S GOTTA BE SOME KIND OF RECORD!

NOT SO MUCH A SECRET AGENT... MORE A SECRET WEAPON!

M.A.C.H.1

M.A.C.H.1
2000A.D.
Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT
ALAN HEBDEN
ART ROBOTS
LOZANO/CANOS
LETTERING ROBOT
JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E
AN EASTERN REPUBLIC HAS STOLEN THE COMPU-PUNCTURE SECRETS AND USED THEM TO GIVE ONE OF THEIR FEMALE AGENTS THE SAME SUPER-HUMAN POWERS AS BRITISH AGENT JOHN PROBE. (CODENAME MACH 1). SENT TO LONDON TO ASSASSINATE PROBE, SHE IS NOW ON THE RUN FROM HIM...
NOW, AS THE HYPER-CHASE LEADS INTO AN UNDERGROUND STATION...
RUN IF YOU WANT, HYPER-CHICK! ANYTHING YOU CAN DO—I CAN DO BETTER!
HEADING FOR THE PLATFORM, EH, HONEY? WELL, I'M HOT ON YOUR TAIL!
SECONDS LATER...
YEEAAARGH!
HECK, SHE'S PUSHED A BOY OFF THE PLATFORM!

TRAIN COMING! GOTTA SAVE HIM!
EDITOR'S NOTE.
ONLY AN IDIOT WOULD COPY A SUPERHUMAN LIKE MACH 1. READERS OF 2000 A.D. AREN'T IDIOTS, OF COURSE – BUT DON'T LET YOUR FANTASTIC PAPER FALL INTO THE HANDS OF A 'DUM-DUM'!
TRAIN SPEED 40 KPH. BRAKING DISTANCE INSUFFICIENT!
PROBE LEAPT ON TO THE TRACKS AND...
CRAACK!
SCRRIIICH!
GOTCHA, KID!
TRAIN MOVING TOO SLOW FOR DERAILMENT TO CAUSE ANY INJURY TO PASSENGERS ----
...TO THE NEXT STATION ALONG THE LINE, WHICH WAS CLOSED FOR REPAIRS...
THE COMPUTER IN PROBE'S HEAD GAVE HIM PERFECT NIGHT VISION AS HE RACED DOWN THE TUNNEL...
NOW TO GET AFTER THAT LADY!
STAY PERFECTLY STILL, MR PROBE!
NOT ME, MISTER. I'M HYPER-POWERED!
THAT'S ONE BIG GUN FOR SOMEBODY YOUR SIZE!
DATA ON WEAPON: CANADIAN BROWNING HI-POWER 9mm AUTOMATIC HOLDING 13 CARTRIDGES ----

PITY YOU ESCAPED THE LITTLE ACCIDENTS I FIXED FOR YOU, BECAUSE NOW I'M GOING TO HAVE TO—
CATCH THIS, SWEETIE!
TOO SLOW, MACH 1!
CAUTION— OBJECTIVE IS TO CAPTURE— NOT KILL. AIM FOR PACKING CASE—
CRAASH!
YOU'VE GOTTA MOVE LIKE A MACH 2 TO GET ME—
IT'S A PLEASURE, LADY!
HER... HER STRENGTH IS UNBELIEVABLE!
HE'S TOO STRONG! CAN'T... KEEP UP... ENERGY!
BUT EVERY FIGHT HAS ITS UPS AND DOWNS...
AAAARH!
I'M NOT BEATEN YET, PROBE! YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE EASED OFF!
SHE'S WEAKENED... I'VE WON!

NO MORE GAMES... NOW YOU DIE!
SHE'S RIGHT... I'VE HAD IT!
OKAY, HONEY! YOU WANT TO SPREAD MY HEAD ALL OVER THE PLATFORM— GET ON WITH IT!
BUT SHE WASN'T AS RUTHLESS AS SHE SEEMED— DESPITE THE ORDERS SHE RECEIVED FROM HER BUILT-IN COMPUTER!
I'VE NEVER KILLED ANYONE IN COLD BLOOD...
IRRELEVANT. EXTERMINATE SUBJECT ★★
HE SAVED A BOY'S LIFE BACK THERE...
IRRELEVANT. YOUR MISSION TO DESTROY SUBJECT ★★★
HE COULD HAVE KILLED ME, BUT DIDN'T!
ELIMINATE MACH I ★★
NOOO! I CAN'T DO IT... I'M A HUMAN NOT A MACHINE!
HOW DO YOU LIKE THAT? SOMEONE ELSE DOESN'T GET ON WITH THEIR COMPUTER!
CAN'T... CAN'T GO BACK AFTER THIS. THE ONLY THING I CAN DO IS ASK FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM... IF YOUR COUNTRY WILL TAKE ME..
YOU WANT TO DEFECT? SHARPE'LL BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO HAVE YOU ON OUR SIDE! C'MON, LADY... LET'S GO PAY HIM A VISIT!

LATER, IN SHARPE'S OFFICE . . .
SHE'S TANYA MASKI—A MEMBER OF THEIR SECURITY SERVICE—BUT THIS WAS HER FIRST MISSION!
WE'VE PUT HER IN THE PSYCHIC INTERROGATION UNIT—THAT WAY WE'LL FIND OUT WHAT SORT OF JOB THE OPPOSITION DID WITH THE COMPU-PUNCTURE DATA THEY STOLE FROM US!
THE NEXT DAY, SHARPE, PROBE, AND A SCIENTIST WATCHED TANYA THROUGH A ONE-WAY MIRROR . . .
SHE CERTAINLY WANTS TO DEFECT, BUT SPEAKING TECHNICALLY . . . SHE'S A RUSH JOB!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
HER COMPUTER ISN'T AS ADVANCED AS YOURS, MACH 1 . . . THAT'S WHY HER EMOTIONS OVERRODE IT AND SHE COULDN'T KILL YOU. BUT HER HYPER POWERS ARE PITCHED HIGHER THAN YOURS—MORE LIKELY TO BURN OUT!
HOPE SHE DOESN'T BURN OUT BEFORE SHE'S DESTROYED THE PLACE WHERE SHE WAS PUT TOGETHER!
IF YOU SEND HER BACK—THEY'LL KILL HER!
YOU'LL GO ALONG TO ENSURE THEY DON'T!
A FEW DAYS LATER, AN EXPRESS TRAIN CARRYING PROBE AND TANYA THUNDERED INTO EASTERN EUROPE . . .
DISGUISED, AND TRAVELLING AS MAN AND WIFE, THE MACH MAN AND WOMAN WERE SPEEDING INTO TERRIBLE DANGER . . .
THE ESTABLISHMENT IS IN PINE FOREST, NORTH OF THE CAPITAL. IT'S HEAVILY GUARDED . .
I DON'T CARE IF IT'S GUARDED LIKE FORT KNOX! THE SOONER WE GET IN AND OUT THE BETTER!

SUDDENLY...
YOUR PAPERS!
HOPE THE FORGERY BOYS'VE DONE THEIR JOB!
HMM, SOMETHING IS WRONG HERE, COMRADE— ARREST THEM!
NOT TODAY, SUNSHINE! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, TANYA!
AAAARGH!
WE'LL HAVE TO MAKE OUR OWN DOOR!
CRAASH!
COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT BETTER MYSELF! LET'S GO!
BUT—
NO! WE CAN'T JUMP HERE... WE'D BE KILLED!
AND WE'RE DEAD IF WE STAY ON THIS TRAIN...
YOU'VE GOT THE CHOICE BETWEEN A 200 FT. DROP OR A POLICE BULLET, MACH ONE— AND YOU'VE GOT TILL PROG 38 TO MAKE UP YOUR MIND!

2000A.D.
Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT
ALAN HEBDEN
ART ROBOTS
LOZANO/CANOS
LETTERING ROBOT
JACK POTTER
COMPU·73E
M.A.C.H.1
AN EASTERN REPUBLIC STOLE THE SECRETS OF THE COMPU-PUNCTURE METHOD AND GAVE THEIR AGENT, TANYA MASKI, THE TREATMENT. NOW SHE HAS DEFECTED TO JOIN BRITISH MACH MAN, JOHN PROBE IN TRYING TO RECOVER THEM...
BELOW, AN UNSUSPECTING FAMILY WERE ABOUT TO START DINNER...
NYET! WAIT TILL MAMMA HAS SERVED DA BROTH!
SUDDENLY-
SORRY IF WE'VE SPOILT YOUR DINNER, FOLKS!
EEEEEK!
BUT THE TRAIN CARRYING THEM INTO THE REPUBLIC IS SWARMING WITH ENEMY AGENTS— SO IT'S JUMP OR DIE!
BETTER TO BE SMASHED ON THE GROUND THAN CAPTURED UP THERE!

WE'RE IN A BIT OF A STEW OURSELVES RIGHT NOW!
QUICK, PROBE, LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
NOW TO GET A MOVE ON! WE'LL NEED ALL OUR HYPERPOWER TO MAKE OUR TARGET BEFORE NIGHTFALL!
THAT NIGHT...
THIS FOOD'LL KEEP US GOING. AT THE RATE WE'VE BEEN BURNING ENERGY WE'VE GOTTA REPLACE IT BEFORE WE REACH THE TARGET...
WISH I COULD GET SOME SLEEP. I KNOW IT'S IMPOSSIBLE... BUT I MISS MY DREAMS!
YEAH, WE LOOK LIKE PEOPLE, BUT WITH OUR SUPERHUMAN POWERS WE PERFORM LIKE MACHINES... AND MACHINES DON'T EVER SLEEP OR DREAM!
AFTER TRAVELLING OVER 100 MILES ON FOOT, PROBE AND TANYA FINALLY REACHED THEIR DESTINATION...
THAT'S IT! THAT'S WHERE MY GOVERNMENT ARE EXPERIMENTING WITH THE COMPU-PUNCTURE SECRETS. THE FENCES ARE ELECTRIFIED, OF COURSE!
DOESN'T MATTER IF THEY'RE DUSTED WITH GAMMA RAYS... WE'VE GOT TO GET IN AND BLOW THAT PLACE APART! WE WAIT TILL IT'S DARK— MEANTIMES, LET'S PULL UP A COUPLE OF TREES...
WHEN DARKNESS HAD FALLEN...
WE'LL WAIT TILL THE GUARDS ARE A COUPLE OF HUNDRED FEET APART...

—AND USE OUR HOME-MADE VAULTING POLES TO GET US OVER!
HEIGHT 11 METRES ★★
APPROACH SPEED 60 KPH
★★★HYPER POWER
REQUIRED: 10% ★★★
HEIGHT 11 METRES ---
APPROACH SPEED 60 KPH
----HYPER POWER
REQUIRED: 10% -----
THE COMPUTERS IN PROBE'S AND TANYA'S BRAINS FED THEM VITAL INFORMATION!
THE COMPUTER TAPES ARE IN THAT BUILDING.. ONLY THE GUARD INSIDE KNOWS THE CODE TO GET US IN THE VAULT ROOM...
SO WE'VE GOT TO DEAL WITH THE GUARDS ***OUTSIDE***, FIRST... NOW, LISTEN—
JUST PLAY-ACTING, PAL... I HOPE!
SECONDS LATER...
WH-***WHAT*** IS SHE ***DOING***..?
I'M OKAY. AFTER JUMPING FROM THAT TRAIN, THIS WAS KIDS' STUFF!
SOON, IN THE DUTY OFFICER'S ROOM...
COFFEE BREAK'S OVER, CHUM... YOU'RE GONNA OPEN SOME DOORS FOR US...

NOW, TELL THE LADY WHAT THE DOOR CODE IS... FAST!
PULSE RATE UP 30%--- PERSPIRATION UP 35% CONCLUSION: SUBJECT IS LYING!
AAAGH! I TELL, I TELL! 639957!
TRY AGAIN... GET IT RIGHT THIS TIME OR I'LL TEAR YOUR ARM OFF!
8...2...5...6...9!
STATEMENT TRUE.
SHARPE GAVE IT TO YOU? BUT HOW..?
WE DON'T HAVE TO. YOUR BOSS, SHARPE, GAVE ME THE VAULT CODE BEFORE WE LEFT ENGLAND!
HERE'S THE LAST DOOR BEFORE THE VAULT—
INSIDE THE BUILDING...
SO WE DON'T NEED HANDSOME ANY MORE... BUT HOW DO WE BUST THAT OPEN SHORT OF USING NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES?
CAUTION: THIS INTELLIGENCE SOURCE IS RESTRICTED. CONTINUE WITH MISSION-----
BUT SUDDENLY— FROM OUT OF THE SHADOWS...
..WHAT A MONSTER!
YOU OPEN THE VAULT, TANYA... I'LL HANDLE FIDO!

BUT PROBE WAS IN FOR A SHOCK!
IT'S A HYPER-HOUND!
GRRRRR!
ALERT! ALERT! DOG APPROACHING AT 150 KPH. ANIMAL HAS HYPERSPEED--- REPEAT-HYPERSPEED!
GOT IT'S TEETH IN MY ARM.. IT..IT'S STRONGER THAN I AM!
LET'S GIVE THIS DOGGY A HYPER-KICK!
IT'S TURNED ON ME NOW!
STEEL PIPING 10 cms THICK. HYPER FORCE REQUIRED: 7%
THIS'LL STOP IT!
SORRY, FIDO- IT'S YOU OR ME AND IT AIN'T GONNA BE ME!

NOT SO MUCH A SECRET AGENT... MORE A SECRET WEAPON!

M.A.C.H.1

M.A.C.H.1
SECRET AGENT, MACH-MAN, JOHN PROBE, AND MACH WOMAN, TANYA MASKI, HAVE BROKEN INTO AN EASTERN RESEARCH CENTRE TO DESTROY SECRET, STOLEN TAPES OF THE BRITISH COMPU-PUNCTURE METHOD. BUT SCIENTIST DR. HOROWITZ HAS USED THE PROCESS ON CHILDREN!
NO-! HYPER-POWERED CHILDREN! YOU MONSTER, HOROWITZ!
SEIZE THEM, KIDDIES!
KEEP OFF ME, BRATS!
GET BACK, KIDS -WE DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU-
BUT THE CHILDREN ATTACKED, AND —
CAN'T BELIEVE IT— THEY'RE STRONGER THAN US!
C-CLAWS.. LIKE STEEL AROUND MY NECK—
2000 A.D.
Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT ALAN HEBDEN
ART ROBOT LOZANO
LETTERING ROBOT JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E

YOU SEE YOU COULDN'T HURT MY LITTLE HYPER-ANGELS IF YOU TRIED!
SO WHAT D'YOU WANT US TO DO NOW, BABYSIT?
TANYA IS A TRAITOR— INSTEAD OF KILLING YOU, SHE DEFECTED— NOW SHE MUST DIE! AND AS FOR YOU —
YOU'RE STILL THE BEST EXAMPLE OF COMPU- PUNCTURE IN THE WORLD, PROBE— I'M GOING TO FIND OUT WHY, EVEN IF I HAVE TO DISSECT YOU, LIMB BY LIMB!
JOHN! GOODBYE...
PROBE WAS DRAGGED INTO A CONTROL ROOM...
BUT WHY KIDS, HOROWITZ?
PERFECT SUBJECTS, PROBE! THEIR BRAINS ARE SO MUCH EASIER TO CONTROL— LET ME EXPLAIN—
FROM THIS ONE MAIN COMPUTER, I CAN CONTROL THEIR EVERY MOVE... THEY'RE SIMPLY LITTLE HUMAN ROBOTS— WITH HYPERPOWER!
BUT AT THE EXPENSE OF THEIR LIVES AS INDIVIDUALS!
AS HOROWITZ EXPLAINED, ONE OF THE CHILDREN LOOSENED HIS GRIP—
LOOKS LIKE AN ANGEL IS RELAXING ON THE JOB, HOROWITZ— CATCH!

Wooooooosh!
NOW TO SHAKE OFF THE REST OF THESE LEECHES!
AND DON'T BOTHER TO SHOW ME OUT!
THE CONTROL ROOM IS STEEL-LINED... I'LL LOCK HOROWITZ IN... KEEP HIM OUT OF THE WAY LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO FIND TANYA!
OUTSIDE, TANYA WAS IN TROUBLE...
READY... AIM...
IF ONLY I COULD BREAK THESE CHAINS...
NEGATIVE. CHAINS ARE STRENGTHENED TITANIUM ALLOY TO WITHSTAND PULL OF 500 METRIC TONS★★
CRASH!
WHEN SUDDENLY...
TUNK!
ZOOOOM!
HOW NICE— A SHOOTING PARTY! MIND IF I JOIN IN?
JOHN!—THANK GOODNESS!

PROBE FOUND THE KEY TO RELEASE TANYA ON THE UNCONSCIOUS OFFICER IN CHARGE . . .
NO TIME TO ARGUE— YOU GET INTO THAT VAULT AND DESTROY THE TAPES. I'LL STAY HERE—GOT A NASTY FEELING HOROWITZ IS GOIN' TO SEND A FEW ANGELS OUT AFTER US!
YES, PROBE! I'D LIKED TO HAVE EXAMINED YOU PROPERLY— BUT YOUR DESTRUCTION HAS PRIORITY. GO ON, MY ANGELS, TEAR YOUR VICTIM APART!
NO... C-CAN'T DO IT... THEY'RE TOO MUCH LIKE CHILDREN... KIDS... THEY'RE ONLY KIDS, BLAST IT!
EMOTION IRRELEVANT. THEY ARE INHUMAN. DEADLY ROBOTS PROGRAMMED TO KILL YOU. TAKE EVASIVE ACTION!
MUSTN'T LET THEM TOUCH ME— IF THEY GET ME TO THE GROUND, I'M DEAD!
USING THE TITANIUM CHAINS, MACH ONE FOUGHT HIS HARDEST BATTLE . . .

MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE ESTABLISHMENT'S GREAT VAULT...
IT'S DONE! THE STOLEN COMPU-PUNCTURE TAPES ARE DESTROYED! I MUST TELL JOHN—
TANYA MADE HER WAY OUT...
JOHN— I'LL HELP YOU!
NO! IT'S ME THEY'RE AFTER! GET AWAY WHILE YOU CAN!
I SHAN'T LEAVE HIM TO DIE—THAT TANK! IT MAY BE AN OLD RELIC WITH NO FUEL OR AMMO —BUT I CAN USE IT TO SAVE HIM!
DATA ON TANK: MODEL K-70. WEIGHT 70 METRIC TONS. WARNING: MAXIMUM HYPER STRENGTH REQUIRED! CONSEQUENCES: POSSIBLY FATAL! DESIST! DESIST! ★★
K-70 TANK FROM THE WAR OF LIBERATION
PROBE WAS FIGHTING A LOSING BATTLE. THEN HE NOTICED TANYA...
YOU FOOL! ...YOU'LL KILL YOURSELF! STOP!
YOU'RE DEAD IF I DON'T TRY!
YOU NEVER WERE AS CLEVER A COMPUTER AS PROBE'S, AND YOU COULD NEVER STOP ME DOING WHAT I REALLY WANTED. SO SHUT UP... AND GIVE ME THE STRENGTH I NEED!
JUST GOT TO CRASH IT INTO CENTRAL CONTROL ROOM—
SPEED 30 KPH - AND INCREASING. HYPER FORCE: 100 PERCENT! OVERLOAD! OVERLOAD!
HERE COMES HELL, HOROWITZ! DIE... YOU DEMON!
WRAAOOM!
NOOOO... AAAARGH!

SHE DID IT! THEY'RE OUT OF CONTROL— DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY'RE GOING... BUT TANYA MUST HAVE USED MAXIMUM POWER— NOW SHE'S IN DANGER...
I'LL SAVE YOU—
TOO LATE, JOHN... I'M BURNT OUT... FINISHED... REMEMBER, I SAID I MISSED MY DREAMS— WELL I'LL BE ABLE TO DREAM FOR AN ETERNITY NOW ... AND.. AN..
SHE'S DEAD... DEAD. ALL BECAUSE OF COMPU-PUNCTURE. YEAH, ALL IT'S BROUGHT IS DEATH AND DESTRUCTION... SHARPE... HE'S THE ONE RESPONSIBLE...
WEEKS LATER, HELPED BY THE BRITISH EMBASSY, PROBE RETURNED TO LONDON, AND TO SHARPE, HIS BOSS...
I'M NOT TOO EASY TO KILL, SHARPE— AN' I'M GONNA MAKE IT MY BUSINESS TO FIND OUT HOW YOU KNEW THE CODE TO THE ENEMY'S TOP SECRET VAULT! — THERE'S SOMETHING ROTTEN IN YOU, SHARPE — REAL ROTTEN!
HOW DARE YOU— I'M YOUR SUPERIOR!
BLAM BLAM!
UNNECESSARY FORCE USED TO CLOSE DOOR!
COMPUTER... YOU HAVEN'T SEEN ANY FORCE YET!

*MAN ACTIVATED by COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER
M.A.C.H.1
DEATH RAY
PART 1
2000 A.D.
Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT
ALAN HEBDEN
ART ROBOTS
LOZANO/CANOS
LETTERING ROBOT
JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E
SUSPENDED SILENTLY IN ORBIT 1,000 MILES ABOVE EARTH, AN AMERICAN MILITARY SATELLITE WAS ABOUT TO BE . . .
BLASTED OUT OF THE SKY!
THE WEAPON ? A MYSTERIOUS SATELLITE . . .
THE EFFECTS WERE FELT FROM THE U.S. 7TH FLEET IN THE PACIFIC . . .
. . . TO C.I.A. HEADQUARTERS IN ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA . . .
GENERAL LOGAN'S GONNA WANT OUR HIDES FOR THIS SATELLITE FAILURE— BETTER KEEP IT QUIET TILL WE KNOW WHAT HAPPENED UP THERE !
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS WITH WASHINGTON SEVERED ! SWITCH TO EMERGENCY GROUND STATION RELAY !
HOURS LATER, IN LONDON, BRITISH SECRET AGENT, JOHN PROBE, RECEIVED A TELEGRAM . . .
TELEGRAM
BEAT MAP REF H3S1 . 1500 HRS. -ALONE . TELL NO ONE YOUR WHEREABOUTS
NO SENDER'S NAME.. LOOKS LIKE I'M IN FOR A FEW SURPRISES !

A FEW HOURS LATER IN RURAL DORSET...
THIS IS THE MAP REFERENCE. SMACK IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE. WHAT THE HECK'S GOING ON?
THE COMPUTER IN PROBE'S BRAIN FED HIM INFORMATION...
ALERT. ENGINE APPROACHING FROM NORTHWEST-
HELLO DOWN THERE! GRAB THE LADDER AND HANG ON— WE'VE NO TIME TO LAND!
THIS IS KNOWN...
HELICOPTER APPROACH SPEED 200 KPH. HEIGHT OF LADDER 3 METRES-
...AS A FLYING VISIT!
HYPER FORCE REQUIRED: 12%
THIS HOW YOU USUALLY GET TO MEET PEOPLE?
THE ARMS OF ANY NORMAL HUMAN WOULD HAVE BEEN TORN FROM THEIR SOCKETS- BUT PROBE WAS SPECIAL— PROBE WAS A MACH MAN!
THE HELICOPTER LANDED AT A R.A.F. FIGHTER BASE A FEW MILES AWAY...
APOLOGIES FOR THE JAMES BOND STUFF, PROBE, BUT WE DON'T WANT UNAUTHORISED TOUCHDOWNS SHOWING UP ON THE FLIGHT RECORDER— DON'T WANT ANY RECORD OF YOUR BEING HERE!

INSIDE THE HANGAR, PROBE WAS INTRODUCED TO GENERAL LOGAN OF THE AMERICAN AIR FORCE...
REAL PLEASED TO MEET YA, SON! I AIN'T TOO FOND OF CIVILIANS RIGHT NOW, BUT WE SURE NEED THEM SPECIAL TALENTS OF YOURS!
FEW YEARS BACK THE RUSKIES MADE A BREAKTHROUGH IN HIGH ENERGY PHYSICS. I RECKON THEY'VE DEVELOPED A LASER BEAM WEAPON— A REAL DEATH RAY— SOMETHIN' LIKE THIS— AN' THEY WERE TESTIN' IT YESTERDAY ON OUR SATELLITE!
BUT YOU GOTTA KNOW FOR SURE, EH, GENERAL? AND YOU WANT ME TO GO UP AND TAKE A LOOK!
C.I.A. AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC ADVISERS DON'T BELIEVE MY THEORY— WANT TA GET THEIR OWN ANSWERS, AND BRITAIN'S SECRET SERVICE HAS AGREED TO HELP THEM...
SO REMEMBER, PROBE, WE'VE HAD NO OFFICIAL OKAY TO HELP THE GENERAL, BUT USAF INTELLIGENCE AND NASA ARE BEHIND HIM, AND THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE RAF. YOU'LL BE WORKING AGAINST YOUR OWN DEPARTMENT AND THE CIA... THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG!
DON'T WORRY, SIR, I CAN LOOK AFTER MYSELF... AND GENERAL LOGAN!
BUT A TELEPHONE CALL WAS ALREADY TELLING SHARPE, PROBE'S BOSS, WHAT WAS HAPPENING...
THE PLANE'S ABOUT TO TAKE OFF WITH LOGAN AND PROBE ABOARD, MR-SHARPE!
SO YOU'RE GETTING INVOLVED IN THIS WITHOUT MY PERMISSION ARE YOU, PROBE?
WELL, THE CIA ARE AFTER LOGAN, AND I'M AFTER YOU!

MEANWHILE...
I STILL DON'T KNOW WHERE WE'RE GOING, GENERAL!
NON-STOP TO EDWARDS AIR BASE IN THE CALIFORNIAN DESERT, SON. A SPACE SHUTTLE WILL BE READY FOR IMMEDIATE TAKE-OFF. STEWARDESS... GET ME SOME OF YA LOUSY LIMEY COFFEE!
JES' LIKE DRINKIN' SLOP, AS USUAL—WHY YA LIMEYS CAN NEVER MAKE A DECENT CUP OF COFFEE I DON'T KNOW...
THIS COFFEE DOES TASTE STRANGE...
BARBITURATE DRUG IN COFFEE. CEASE INTAKE AT ONCE!
WARNING. BARBITURATE OVERDOSE HAS BEEN ABSORBED. LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS IMMINENT---
COF... COFFEE'S BEEN DOPED...
YEAH- GONNA.. PASS... OUT..
ZZZZZZZZZ
CA... CAN'T FIGHT IT... UUUGH!
SWEET DREAMS, GENTLEMEN!
LATER...
WHAT ON EARTH HAPPENED? WHY ARE WE TIED UP?
WE WORK FOR MR SHARPE, NOT THE RAF, GENERAL. WE'LL DELIVER YOU TO THE CIA AT OUR DESTINATION.. AND PROBE, I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOUR HYPER POWERS. THE ROPE WON'T HOLD YOU, BUT ONE MOVE AND YOU'LL CATCH A BULLET IN THE GUTS!
GOOD JOB WE'RE TIED DOWN—'COS IF WE WEREN'T..
CRA
SH!

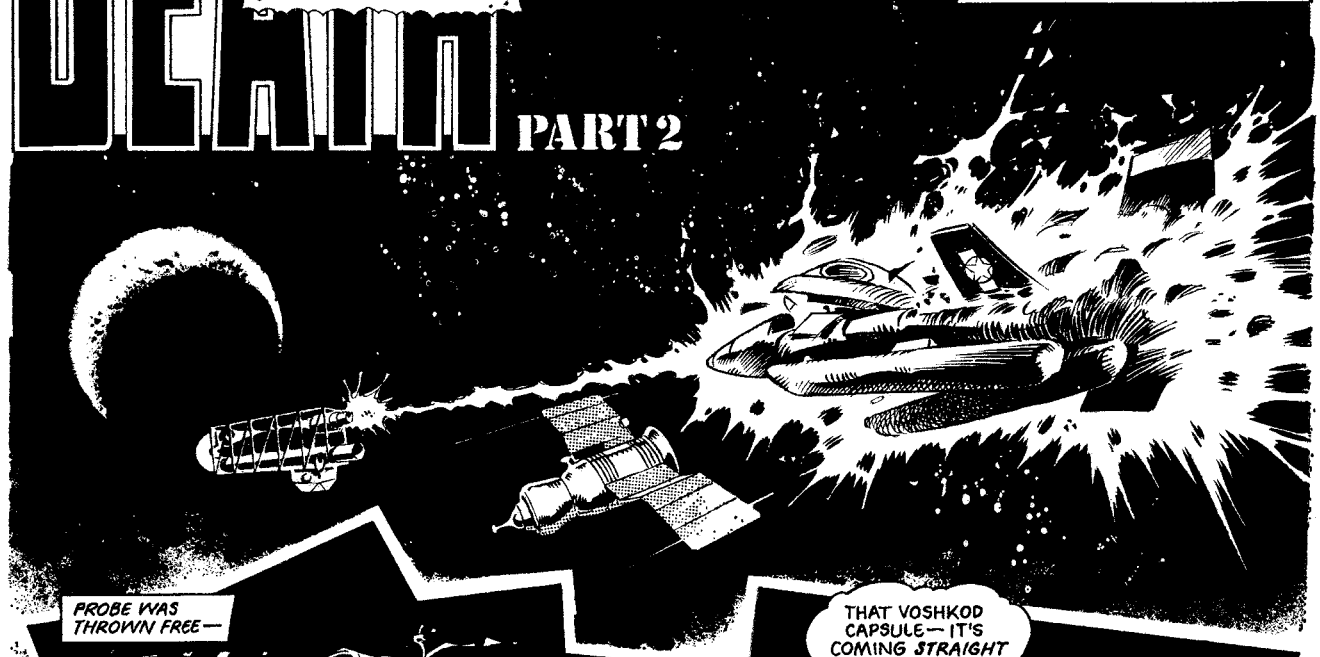
... WE'D BE SUCKED OUT THROUGH THE WINDOW WHEN THE CABIN DECOMPRESSED!
HOLY MOSES!
OH NO, THE GUN!
THANK YOU, MA'M! NOW TO GET THE PILOTS TO RESUME ORIGINAL COURSE!
HOURS LATER, THEY LANDED SAFELY AT EDWARDS AIR BASE—
SHARPE'S CREW WILL BE LOOKED AFTER BY MY MEN. NOW WE GOTTA SORT OUT YOUR MISSION PROBE. I'M AFRAID WE CAN'T ARRANGE FOR YOU TO GO UP IN SHUTTLE—
YEAH— BENT THE LAST ONE A LITTLE TOO MUCH, HUH?
THE X15... A GOOD SHIP, PROBE. HIGH ALTITUDE RESEARCH VEHICLE WE USED IN THE SIXTIES! WITH THE EXTRA TANKS WE'VE MOUNTED SHE'LL JUST ABOUT REACH ORBIT!
LAUNCHED FROM UNDER THE WING OF A B52! OKAY, GENERAL, LET'S GET THE MISSION UNDER WAY..
U.S. AIR FORCE
ALL SYSTEMS GREEN, PROBE. ROCKET MOTORS HAVE IGNITED AND YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY!

SPEED MACH 6.70 AND RISING ---- ALTITUDE 100,000 FEET. TIME TO STABILISED ORBIT --3 MINS 15 SECS.
SOON, PROBE WAS APPROACHING THE WRECK OF THE SATELLITE...
THERE IT IS... CERTAINLY LOOKS LIKE IT'S BEEN HIT BY SOMETHING A LOT NASTIER THAN A METEORITE! I'LL GET THE CAMERAS RUNNING!
NO! I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
IT'S A MANNED VOSHKOD CAPSULE!
AND SOMETHING THAT LOOKS VERY LIKE GENERAL LOGAN'S DEATH BEAM WEAPON... AND IT'S AIMED DIRECTLY AT ME!
X-15
BLAST OFF NEXT PROG WITH MACH 1 IN PART 2 OF THIS HYPERPOWERED STORY!

DEATH RAY M.A.C.H.1

PART 2

BRITISH AGENT, JOHN PROBE, CODENAME **M.A.C.H.1.** IS INVESTIGATING THE DESTRUCTION OF AN AMERICAN COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE **1,000 MILES ABOVE THE EARTH** WHEN HIS X15 CRAFT IS BLASTED BY THE POWERFUL NEW SOVIET **LASER BEAM WEAPON**—



2000 A.D. Credit Card:

SCRIPT ROBOT *ALAN HEBDEN*

ART ROBOTS *LOZANO/CANOS*

LETTERING ROBOT *STEVE POTTER*

COMPU·73E

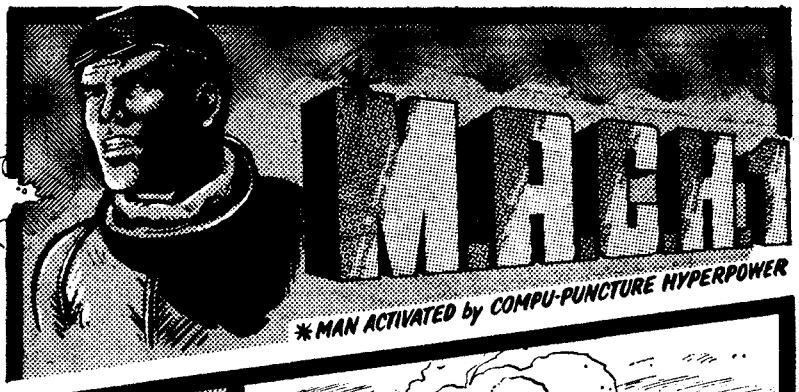
BUT PROBE WAS ALIVE AND FIGHTING — FOR AT THAT MOMENT, A COSMONAUT WAS MAKING HIS WAY OUT OF THE VOSHKOD, AND HE DIDN'T LOOK FRIENDLY—
GUESS THEY DON'T INTEND LEAVING ANY WITNESSES—
LEAST NOW I'M A M-O-V-I-N-G TARGET!
HAVEN'T GOT A JET PACK, BUT A BLAST OF AIR FROM THE SPARE OXYGEN TANK OUGHT TO BLOW ME CLEAR...
BUT WITHOUT THAT CORD, HE ISN'T GOING ANYWHERE!
CORD IS HIGH TENSILE STEEL IN FLEXIBLE SECTIONS. HYPERPOWER REQUIRED TO PART IT: 15%
LIKE IF IT'S CUT... HE'S DEAD!
NIET, NIET..!
NOW TO GET IN THAT VOSHKOD BEFORE THEY BATTEN DOWN THE HATCHES—

TOO LATE! NOT VERY SOCIABLE, ARE THEY, COMPUTER?
WARNING. IF CAPSULE BEGINS DESCENT WHILE YOU ARE OUTSIDE, ATMOSPHERIC FRICTION WILL DESTROY YOU.
YEAH? JUST TELL ME HOW MUCH POWER IT TAKES TO BRING UP THIS LEVER, WILL YOU?
INSUFFICIENT DATA ON THIS CRAFT FOR ESTIMATE. RECOMMEND UNRESTRAINED USE OF HYPERPOWER. FAILURE TO OPEN HATCH MEANS CERTAIN DEATH.
INSIDE THE CAPSULE, THE TWO SURVIVING COSMONAUTS WATCHED IN AMAZEMENT—
BU...BUT NO HUMAN HAS THE STRENGTH TO BEND THOSE BRACES!
DONE IT!
WHATEVER YOU ARE YOU'LL DIE WHEN I SLIT YOUR SUIT OPEN!
BUT PROBE STRUCK FAST—
EAT GLASS, RUSKIE!

NOW ARE YOU GOING TO CO-OPERATE—OR SHALL I PUT YOU INTO ORBIT WITH YOUR CHUMS—D'YA WANNA BE A FROZEN CORPSE?
NIET! NIET!
NOW, WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
THE GUIDANCE UNIT ON OUR BEAM WEAPON WAS MALFUNCTIONING. WE... WE WERE SENT UP TO PUT IT RIGHT WITH THE COMPUTER WE HAVE ON BOARD...
SOON, PROBE HAD STUDIED THE CONTROLS...
RECKON IT'S TIME WE PUT A DENT IN THAT DEATH-RAY. ANY SUGGESTIONS, COMPUTER?
ORBITAL WEAPON STABILISED AT 17 DEGREES. SUGGEST YOU DOUBLE THE ANGLE OF INCLINATION TO MAKE IT TOPPLE OUT OF ORBIT OVER THE SOUTH ATLANTIC...
THERE IT GOES—NOW, LET'S BRING THIS VOSHKOD BACK TO EARTH—
WHAT!
BU... BUT THIS CRAFT IS CONTROLLED COMPLETELY FROM THE GROUND!
SUBJECT CORRECT. VOSHKOD CAPSULES HAVE LIMITED MANUAL CONTROL. PRE-DETERMINED RE-ENTRY ROUTE CANNOT REPEAT CANNOT BE ALTERED.
... SO I'M TRAPPED IN THIS TIN CAN TILL IT'S BROUGHT BACK TO EARTH... TO THE LAST POSSIBLE PLACE ON EARTH THAT I WANT TO BE!

MEANWHILE, IN THE WHITE HOUSE...
YOUR EFFORTS ARE FULLY APPRECIATED, GENERAL LOGAN, BUT I ALREADY KNEW ABOUT THE RUSSIAN'S USE OF THE BEAM. WE HAVE BEEN DEVELOPING ONE OF OUR OWN FOR SOME YEARS NOW— IN FACT—
ER, I DION'T KNOW, MR. PRESIDENT. I THOUGHT...
WE'VE HAD OUR FLEET OF POLARIS SUBS ON RED ALERT SINCE OUR SATELLITE WAS HIT— OH, WAR ROOM? CALL THE NUKES BACK TO STANDBY— WE WON'T BE STARTING WORLD WAR THREE JUST YET— WE'LL SEND A NOTE OF PROTEST THIS TIME—
MR. PRESIDENT, NUCLEAR SUB 'CHARLIE BROWN' HASN'T RESPONDED TO FAIL-SAFE TRANSMISSION! SHE'S NOW IN THE WAR MODE— WE CAN'T CALL HER BACK!
AND ON BOARD THE 'CHARLIE BROWN'...
U.S.S. CHARLIE BROWN
WE ARE NOW AT WAR WITH THE USSR, MEN. OUR JOB IS TO LAUNCH ONLY ONE CRUISE MISSILE AT THE TARGET ASSIGNED TO US AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS CRISIS—
CRUISE MISSILE LAUNCH
ONE WILL SOON BE ON ITS WAY TO THE STEPPES OF CENTRAL ASIA... TO WIPE OUT THE BASE OF THE SATELLITE THAT STARTED THE WHOLE THING...
THE STEPPES OF CENTRAL ASIA— WHERE THE VOSHKOD CAPSULE WAS COMING IN TO LAND— WITH A WELCOMING PARTY FOR A RELUCTANT GUEST—
YOU'RE TRAPPED NOW, MACH 1... OUT OF THE FRYING PAN AND INTO THE FIRE ...AS YOU ENGLISH SAY— A FIRE LIKE HELL ITSELF!
DON'T MISS THE FINAL PART OF THIS THRILL-PACKED STORY— NEXT PROG.

DEATH RAY



PART 3

JUST ONE TINY BURNT OUT TRANSISTOR IN A COMPUTER MEANT AN AMERICAN NUCLEAR SUB DID NOT RECEIVE A FAIL-SAFE TRANSMISSION... AND HAS LAUNCHED—A CRUISE MISSILE!

THIS IS FOR REAL, MEN! WE'RE AT WAR WITH THE USSR!

IT SHOT UPWARDS FROM THE SEA, POWERED BY MIGHTY ROCKET BOOSTERS...

THEN, AIRBORNE, THE TURBO-FANS OPENED, THE WINGS SPRANG OUT FROM THE BODY AND IT BEGAN THE SLOW STEADY JOURNEY TO ITS TARGET... THE TARGET? THE HQ. OF THE NEW SOVIET LASER BEAM WEAPON, DEEP IN THE STEPPES...

2000 A.D. Credit Card:

SCRIPT ROBOT
ALAN HEBDEN

ART ROBOTS
LOZANO/CANOS

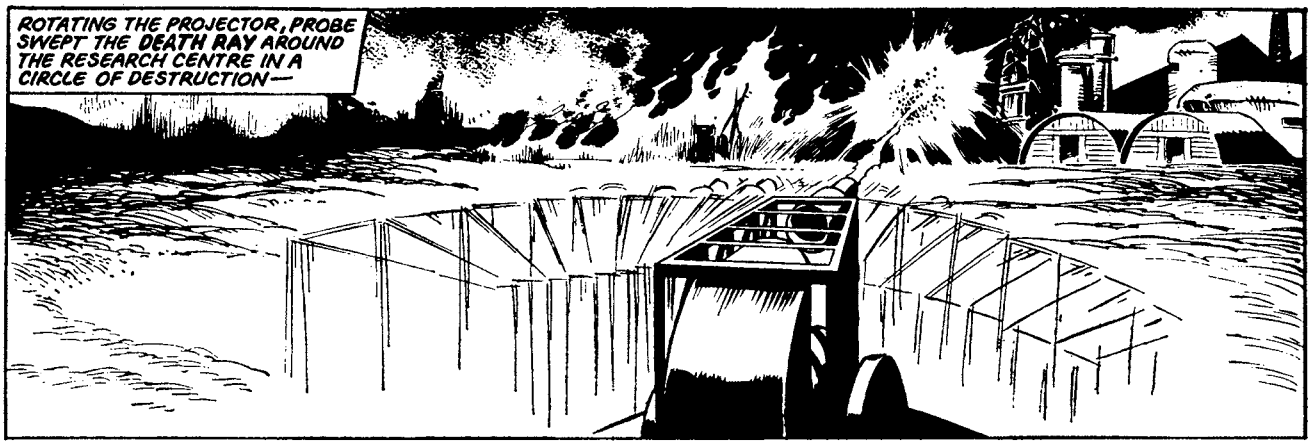
LETTERING ROBOT
STEVE POTTER

COMPU-73E

BUT AT THAT MOMENT, ONLY MILES FROM THE TARGET ITSELF, A VOSHKOD SPACE CAPSULE WAS DESCENDING FROM AN ORBITAL MISSION — WITH AN EXTRA PASSENGER, PICKED UP ON THE WAY!
ON BOARD, WAS SECRET AGENT JOHN PROBE, CODENAME M.A.C.H.1., WHO HAD BEEN INVESTIGATING THE DESTRUCTION OF A U.S. SATELLITE BY THE RUSSIAN LASER BEAM WEAPON. PROBE HAD SUCCEEDED IN TOPPLING THE DEATH RAY OUT OF ITS ORBIT...
INSIDE THE VOSHKOD —
YOUR RUSKIE FRIENDS KNOW SOMETHING WENT WRONG WITH THE MISSION BUT THEY WON'T KNOW HOW WRONG TILL THEY PEEL THIS CAN OPEN — SO YOU JUST KEEP QUIET — SAVVY?
YE... YES, ENGLISH...
ON THE INSTANT OF TOUCHDOWN —
I CAN TELL YOU THAT... THE MISSION WAS A FLOP!
YEEEAARGH!
OOOF!
STOP HIM!
CAN'T STAY TO CHAT, FOLKS — AFTER BEING COOPED UP IN THAT CAPSULE I GOTTA LOT OF HYPERPOWER TO BURN UP!
I DON'T KNOW IF HE WAS A MAN OR A MACHINE, BUT DESTROY HIM!
COMRADE COMMANDER — IT IS NOT POSSIBLE, HE IS MOVING TOO FAST FOR OUR SCANNERS TO TRACK!
AN HOUR LATER —
SWISSSSH...
I OUGHT TO KEEP GOING BUT EVEN A MACH-MAN NEEDS A REST AFTER A HUNDRED MILE CROSS-COUNTRY RUN!
WHAT THE HECK'S THAT WEIRD SOUND?
SOUND ORIGINATING AT 095 DEGREES. SOURCE IDENTIFIED AS A DESCENDING INTER-CONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE.

SWISSSSSSSSSH!!
HAVE I WANDERED INTO SOME NUCLEAR TESTING SITE?
AFFIRMATIVE. PURPOSE CONFIRMED AS EXPERIMENT TO TEST EFFICIENCY OF RUSSIAN MISSILES AGAINST INTERCEPTOR WEAPON.
AND ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HILL—
AFFIRMATIVE; CONCLUDE THIS ESTABLISHMENT IS THE CENTRE OF THE BEAM WEAPON PROJECT. IMPERATIVE THAT YOU DESTROY.
WRAOOM!!
BLOWN UP! THAT BEAM DESTROYED IT—GOT TO FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON!
ANOTHER LASER BEAM WEAPON... A LAND BASED ONE!
SO FIRST I'M FLUNG INTO SPACE TO DESTROY THE DEATH RAY—AN' NOW I'VE GOT TO RISK LIFE AND LIMB ON EARTH—WELL I MAY BE ONLY HALF A MAN—BUT I'M NOT SHORT OF GUTS!
SO HERE GOES! I'LL SMUGGLE MYSELF IN ON THAT CONVOY.
7
PASS INSIDE!
THIS IS JUST THE EASY PART... GETTING IN!

THE BEAM-PROJECTOR'S EMBEDDED IN THE GROUND— RECKON THE INNARDS LIE UNDERGROUND. I'LL TRY CLIMBING DOWN ONE OF THOSE MINE SHAFTS.
AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SHAFT, IN A VAST UNDERGROUND CHAMBER—
THEY LOOK LIKE THEY'RE PREPARING FOR ANOTHER TEST. MUST TAKE THE CONTROL ROOM FAST WITHOUT DAMAGING IT. ANY SUGGESTIONS, COMPUTER?
LIQUID HYDROGEN IN CYLINDER WOULD FREEZE ANY LIVING FLESH ATTEMPTING TO INTERFERE.
H_2
SPLENDID IDEA, COMPUTER. COOL OFF FOR A WHILE, FRIENDS!
AAAAGH!
NOW, LET'S SEE IF WE CAN ALTER THE ANGLE OF THAT PROJECTOR.
MINUTES LATER, ABOVE GROUND, TWO GUARDS ON DUTY NOTICE THE BEAM OF THE PROJECTOR HAD CHANGED POSITION—
THAT IS ODD. I THINK PROJECTOR POINTS AT US...
I...I... I... YOU ARE... RIGHT, STIVA...
PROBE HAD PRESSED THE FIRING BUTTON!
YEE
AAAARRGH!
THE DEATH WAS LASER SHARP, QUICK, PAINLESS, CLEAN.


ROTATING THE PROJECTOR, PROBE SWEPT THE DEATH RAY AROUND THE RESEARCH CENTRE IN A CIRCLE OF DESTRUCTION—

BUT BELOW GROUND—
THAT'S THE ESTABLISHMENT TAKEN CARE OF, NOW... GOOD GRIEF, WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THE SPHERE?
WARNING... BEAM PROJECTOR OVERLOAD. INSTABILITY WILL RESULT IN SMALL THERMO-NUCLEAR BLAST IN 100 SECONDS. ABANDON THIS LOCATION IMMEDIATELY.

MACH 1 RACED BACK TO THE SURFACE.
90 SECONDS LEFT BEFORE THE WEAPON GOES UP LIKE A NUCLEAR BOMB. TIME TO MAKE FOR THE HILLS!

MACH ONE RACED AGAINST DEATH—
COUNTDOWN TO BLAST: THREE... TWO... ONE...
AND DIVED FOR HIS LIFE!
BRRM!
...ZERO...
BUT THE MISSILE LAUNCHED FROM THE U.S. SUB WAS ZOOMING TO ITS TARGET...
EH? WHAT'S A CRUISE MISSILE DOING HERE? IT MUST'VE BEEN SENT TO MAKE SURE THIS PLACE WAS WIPED OFF THE MAP. WELL, MISSILE, YOU'RE TOO LATE FOR THAT...

...BUT YOU MIGHT HELP ME GET OUT OF HERE!
CRUISE MISSILE VELOCITY: 450 KPH. HYPER STRENGTH REQUIRED TO BOARD 28%
ESSENTIAL YOU REPROGRAM MISSILE COMPUTER BEFORE IT REACHES TARGET. SWITCH TERMINAL B TO POSITION F AND TERMINAL G TO POSITION C. REPROGRAM TO 059 DEGREES SOUTH. SPEED IS IMPERATIVE...
CERTAINLY IS! I'VE GOT ABOUT TWO SECONDS FLAT TO FIND OUT IF YOU'RE RIGHT OR NOT...
MACH ONE RODE THE MISSILE!
SHE'S TURNING! FOR ONCE, COMPUTER, I'M GRATEFUL!
GRATITUDE IS A HUMAN EMOTION AND THEREFORE IRRELEVANT. SUGGESTED COURSE OF ACTION WAS THE ONLY LOGICAL SOLUTION.
A THOUSAND MILES LATER THE MISSILE RAN OUT OF FUEL...
THANKS FOR THE RIDE, PAL. THE YANKS CAN TAKE IT FROM HERE!
CRIPES, EITHER I'M SEEIN' THINGS, OR THAT WAS A GUY RIDIN' A CRUISE MISSILE!
NEXT DAY PROBE CONFRONTED HIS BOSS, SHARPE, BACK IN LONDON—
YOU UNDERTOOK A MISSION FOR THE U.S. AIR FORCE WITHOUT PERMISSION. IF I HAD MY WAY I'D STEP ON YOU REAL HARD, PROBE.
THEN WHY DON'T YOU? YOU AND THE CIA WERE WRONG ABOUT THE BEAM WEAPON, AND LOGAN WAS RIGHT. SO GO AHEAD ...STEP!
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES HAS REQUESTED YOU RECEIVE THIS — HIS PERSONAL THANKS. TAKE IT, AND GET OUT OF MY SIGHT!
MY PLEASURE, SHARPE. ALWAYS A PLEASURE TO SEE YOU PROVED WRONG... ONE DAY YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE JUST ONE TOO MANY MISTAKES... AND I WANT TO BE AROUND TO SEE IT!
NEXT PROG: MACH ONE—MINUS ONE!

FRAMED IN A SNIPER'S SIGHTS, GUESTS AT A GARDEN PARTY IN BUCKINGHAM PALACE ARE ONLY SECONDS AWAY FROM DEATH! BUT, IN CHARGE OF SECURITY IS AGENT JOHN PROBE, CODENAMED...
M.A.C.H.1
SUBJECT'S CODENAME: MACH 1
MAN ACTIVATED BY COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPER-POWER
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT STEVE MCMANUS
ART ROBOT RAMON SOLA
LETTERING ROBOT TOM FRAME
COMPU-73E
SOMETHING'S WRONG. SOMETHING TELLS ME WE'RE ALL STARING DEATH IN THE FACE!
WAIT—THAT WINDOW—METAL GLINTING IN THE SUNLIGHT!..
SNIPER IN THE HILTON HOTEL! GOT TO GET HIM BEFORE THIS GARDEN PARTY BECOMES A BLOOD-BATH!
I SAY...!
GOOD LORD!

AS HE BURST INTO THE HILTON, THE COMPUTER CIRCUITS IN PROBE'S HEAD FED DATA INTO HIS BRAIN....
SUBJECT LOCATED IN ROOM 2010, TWENTIETH FLOOR. TIME TAKEN BY LIFT 20 SECONDS, CAN BE HALVED BY TAKING STAIRS AT MACH SPEED.
WITH THE MANAGER'S COMPLIMENTS!
WHA...?
UUURRGH!
PROBE'S KICK DEFLECTED THE SNIPER'S AIM — JUST!
EEEK!
DON'T HURT ME! I—I'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING!
YOU'D BETTER, PAL! LET'S START WITH HOW YOU GOT PAST OUR SECURITY CORDON...!

AFTER THE INTERROGATION, PROBE WENT STRAIGHT TO HIS BOSS, SHARPE.
DO I HAVE TO DO EVERYONE'S WORK IN THIS DAMN DEPARTMENT? SECURITY AT THE HILTON IS THE JOB OF THAT LITTLE CREEP BENSON...
HOW DARE YOU BURST IN HERE LIKE THIS, PROBE? OKAY, SO BENSON'S FOULED UP, BUT DON'T PUSH YOUR LUCK!
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY MACH MAN, YOU KNOW!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHERE ARE THE OTHERS THEN?
ER...FORGET IT, PROBE, YOU HEAR? NOW GET OUT OF MY OFFICE! I'VE GOT AN IMPORTANT VISITOR!

SHARPE'S VISITOR—THE NEW FINANCIAL CONTROLLER...
YOU'RE SPENDING TOO MUCH MONEY, SHARPE. FOR A START, WHAT'S THIS RIDICULOUS £500,000 A YEAR ON PROJECT ZERO?
SORRY, SIR, THAT'S GRADE 'A' SECURITY. ONLY THE PRIME MINISTER CAN KNOW ABOUT IT!
H'MM, BONE CHINA. VERY EXPENSIVE. I MAKE DO WITH PLASTIC CUPS!..
ER, WELL...
...AND A 'VIDEO' PHONE! I'VE HAD THE SAME PHONE FOR YEARS...
YES, BUT I-ER-
AND OH, HOW NICE! A REAL PERSIAN CARPET!
EITHER YOU PROVE TO ME PROJECT ZERO'S ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL, OR I'LL SHOW MY ESTIMATES ON HOW MUCH YOU'VE SPENT ON YOUR OFFICE TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND THEN—
ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT...
I'LL SHOW YOU PROJECT ZERO!
AND SO, THE NEXT DAY, AT A REMOTE RESEARCH STATION IN THE WELSH HILLS...
THIS IS PROJECT ZERO, SHARPE? HOW COULD THIS RUN-DOWN PLACE COST £500,000 A YEAR?
PROJECT ZERO IS UNDERGROUND, SIR. THIS IS ONLY THE TIP OF A MASSIVE SECURITY OPERATION!
INSIDE, THE TWO MEN BEGAN AN INCREDIBLE JOURNEY...
A LIFT FIVE HUNDRED FEET UNDERGROUND? WHAT HAVE YOU GOT DOWN THERE, SHARPE? KING KONG? HAH, HAH!
WHEN HE FINDS OUT HE'LL BE SCREAMING, NOT LAUGHING, EH, BERT?
TOO RIGHT, GEORGE! VISITORS CLEARED FOR DESCENT!

ENTERING THE TOP SECURITY VAULT, VOICE PRINTS WERE CHECKED...
NAME?
SHARPE – DENIS SHARPE...
PROCEED.
SECRETARY ARTHUR WEED.
PROCEED.
THANK HEAVENS ALL THIS SECURITY NONSENSE IS OVER...
OH, IT'S ONLY JUST STARTED, SIR!
WE SCRAPE SKIN FOR CELL-STRUCTURE I.D. AS WELL!
EEK! THAT HURTS...
A TIME-LOCK VAULT! AREN'T YOU GOING JUST A LITTLE TOO FAR, SHARPE? JUST WHAT IS PROJECT ZERO?
YOU'LL FIND OUT BEHIND THIS DOOR, SIR. BUT PREPARE YOURSELF – IT'S NOT A PRETTY SIGHT!
WUURGH! IT'S THE CRUMPETS! WE LIKE THE CRUMPETS!
HALLO, FROG! HALLO, BEAR! WUUURGH!
I LIKE THEM
M.A.C.H. W
M.A.C.H. Y
WHO IS IT? WHAT IS IT?
THE FORE-RUNNER TO MACH ONE, SIR...MACH ZERO!
MACH ZERO WAS THE LAST OF THE UNSUCCESSFUL PROTOTYPE MACH MEN. WE SUCCESSFULLY GENERATED MASSIVE STRENGTH INSIDE HIM, BUT HE WAS UNABLE TO CONTROL IT...
WE LEARNED FROM THAT AND PUT A SPECIAL COMPUTER IN MACH ONE'S HEAD TO CHANNEL THE STRENGTH. UNFORTUNATELY, WE WERE LEFT WITH A MAN BURSTING WITH ENERGY ON OUR HANDS...

ENERGY HE CANNOT CONTROL. THAT IS WHY WE HAVE TO KEEP HIM HERE; OUT OF HARM'S WAY!
SUDDENLY, ZERO TURNED . . .
WUUUURGH! SHARPE! WUUURGH!
QUICK, SIR - WE MUST LEAVE! WE'VE STAYED FAR TOO LONG ALREADY! THE SIGHT OF ME UPSETS HIM!
SHARPE! YOOOH BAD TO ZERO! BAAAAD!
NOW DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE NEED TO KEEP ZERO HERE, SIR?
CERTAINLY NOT! IT'S INHUMAN TO KEEP THE POOR MAN CAGED UP! I'LL MAKE A REPORT ON THIS...
AFTER THE TWO HAD LEFT, LIFE AT THE STATION RETURNED TO ITS USUAL QUIET PACE.
BUT DEEP BELOW, LIKE A VOLCANO, A SPARK HAD BEEN LIT IN THE DIM RECESSES OF ZERO'S MIND. HE STARTED TO REMEMBER.
HE REMEMBERED THE DAY SHARPE PUT HIM ON THE COMPU-PUNCTURE MACHINE.
HE WILLINGLY ENTERED INTO THE EXPERIMENTS. HE TRUSTED SHARPE.
AND TO BEGIN WITH THINGS WENT WELL...
HIS NEW STRENGTH MADE ALL MISSIONS SUCCESSFUL!

BUT THEN HIS STRENGTH OUTGREW HIM...
DAD! THE CAT! YOU'VE KILLED IT!
BUT I ONLY STROKED IT, TOMMY. I ONLY...
UNTIL THE DAY THEY TOOK HIM AWAY. HIS STRENGTH HAD RUN WILD AND SHARPE HAD ORDERED HIM LOCKED UP UNTIL A CURE COULD BE FOUND.
DAD! DAD!
I WON'T BE AWAY LONG, TOMMY! DON'T WORRY!
BUT IT HAD BEEN A TRICK. THERE WAS NO CURE..
AAARGH!
SUDDENLY, THREE YEARS OF HATE FOR SHARPE EXPLODED!
HE WOULD ESCAPE! ESCAPE AND SEE HIS SON! AND THEN HE WOULD DEAL WITH SHARPE!
WHAT THE BLAZES...? NO, NO!
WUURGH!
GOTTA SEAL HIM IN!

WATCH THRILL-POWERED CONTINUANCE + + + NEXT PROG

TAKE THE STRENGTH OF FIFTY MEN— MIX IT WITH ENOUGH HATE FOR A HUNDRED— THAT'LL GIVE YOU THE MAN CALLED— MACH ZERO!
UUUUURGH! ZERO FREE!
MACH ZERO'S ESCAPING... AAAH!
OBJECT OF THE COMPU-PUNCTURE PROCESS: TO TURN A TOP SECRET AGENT INTO A SUPERHUMAN... FOR MACH ZERO, THE EXPERIMENT HAD GONE BADLY WRONG!
M.A.C.H.
MAN ACTIVATED BY COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT STEVE MACMANUS
ART ROBOT RAMON SOLA
LETTERING ROBOT JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E

IN LONDON, A MAN READ ZERO'S FILE...
MACH ZERO
EXPERIMENT FAILED SUBJECT LEFT WITH UNCONTROLLABLE, DEADLY ENERGY. KEEP UNDER MAXIMUM SECURITY TILL FURTHER NOTICE.
D. Sharpe
I LIKE THE GIRL
ZERO GOING HOME! HOOOME!
AFTER ESCAPING FROM HIS UNDERGROUND 'PRISON' LOCATED IN THE WILDS OF WALES, MACH ZERO HAS ONLY TWO THOUGHTS. TO SEE HIS SON TOMMY, AND TO KILL SHARPE IN REVENGE!
SUDDENLY...
UUUHHHH!
YOU BETRAYED THE SOCIETY, DAI— YOU MUST BE TAUGHT A LESSON!
NO! NO! AAAGH!
SO ZERO'S FREE. I MUST DESTROY HIM BEFORE HE DESTROYS ME!
SHARPE HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TESTS WHICH HAD TURNED A NORMAL MAN INTO MACH ZERO.
BAD! BAAAAD! STOP IT, YOU BAD BOYYYYS!
WH-WHAT IS IT?
I DON'T KNOW, BUT IT AIN'T HUMAN— RUN!
TOMMY! YOU COME HOME AT ONCE!
M-MY NAME ISN'T TOMMY! IT-IT'S DAI, AND THOSE BULLIES WERE...
ZERO WAS CONFUSING THE BOY WITH HIS OWN SON. THE SON HE HAD NOT SEEN FOR THREE YEARS...
ER- THANKS FOR SAVING ME, MISTER!
...SOON THEY WOULD BE TOGETHER AGAIN. SOON ALL WOULD BE AS IT WAS BEFORE SHARPE'S EXPERIMENTS!

DAI! WHAT DID THAT THING DO TO YOU?
BOY BEING HURT, MOTHER— ZERO SAVE HIM!
GET OUT OF HERE, YOU FIEND!
NO! ZERO HELP! ZERO GOOD PARENT...
SLAM!
ZERO BRING BOY HOME— TRYING TO HELP!
DAI, THAT CREATURE IS A MENACE TO SOCIETY AND I'M GOING TO CALL THE POLICE!
BUT, MUM, HE HELPED ME!
CHOKE!
MINUTES LATER THE NEWS REACHED SHARPE, CONTROLLING THE HUNT FROM HIS MOBILE HEADQUARTERS...
IF THE PRESS EVER GOT HOLD OF THIS MY CAREER WOULD BE RUINED!
SHARPE QUICKLY ALERTED THE ARMY...
DON'T ARGUE WITH ME, MAN. THIS IS A SECRET SERVICE JOB. JUST FIND HIM, FINISH HIM—AND DO IT NOW!
SOON, A ROCKET-EQUIPPED 'LYNX' HELICOPTER WAS ON THE HUNT...
ROCKETING A MAN IN COLD-BLOOD ISN'T MY IDEA OF FIGHTING, BUT AN ORDER'S AN ORDER!
LOOK! THERE HE IS!
HAVE TARGET IN SIGHT— MOVING IN FOR KILL!
LIKE THE GRUMP
HUUUH? NOISE— WHAT NOISE IN AIR?

FIRE ONE!
AAAGH!
SHARPE! SHARPE SENT YOU! WHY CAN'T YOU LEAVE ZERO ALONE? LEAVE ZERO IN PEACE?
ZERO STOP YOU HUNTING HIM LIKE ANIMAL...
NO! THAT TREE... HE'S THROWN IT!
WUUUURGH!
COMING STRAIGHT FOR US LIKE A SAM MISSILE!
THE ROTOR'S BEEN HIT— AIEEEEEEE!

ZERO WAS TO BE DESTROYED!
THAT BIG HULK OF NOTHING'S MURDERED THE LYNX CREW!
YOU KNOW YOUR ORDERS— SHOOT HIM TO PIECES!
HUUURRRRGHH!
DAMMIT, STRONG— YOU FIRED TOO SOON!
SO HE WAS OUTTA RANGE! C'MON, WE CAN STILL CATCH THE LOUSY KILLER!
MEN STILL COMING, BUT THIS TIME ZERO BE CLEVER. YES, ZERO HAS BRAINS TOO...
LOST SIGHT OF THE CREATURE!
L-LOOK UP THERE..!

WWUUURRGH!
NO!
HE'S SMASHED THE BRIDGE!
AAAARGH!
MEN MADE ME FIGHT. ZERO ONLY WANTED TO SEE BOY TOMMY!
SHARPE COULD NOT BELIEVE HIS EARS!
ESCAPED!
ZERO'S GOT A FATHER'S LOVE FOR HIS SON! HE'LL GO TO HIS OLD HOUSE ON THE COAST—
GET FRESH TROOPS TOGETHER. BY SUNDOWN ZERO WILL BE DEAD!
BUT, ELSEWHERE—ANOTHER MACH MAN HAD READ ZERO'S FILE AND TAKEN A DECISION...
THE MACH ZERO FILE IS INCREDIBLE! I ALWAYS TRUSTED SHARPE AND BELIEVED THAT THROUGH COMPU-PUNCTURE I WAS THE FIRST AND ONLY MACH MAN!
NO, MACH ZERO MUST NOT DIE! MACH ONE WILL SAVE HIM!
NEXT PROG: MACH I VS MACH ZERO!

MAN ACTIVATED BY COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER!
M.A.C.H.1
MACH ZERO'S HEADING FOR THE HOUSE HE USED TO LIVE IN— YOU MAKE SURE IT'S THE HOUSE HE DIES IN!
THE HUNTER— DENIS SHARPE, THE MAN IN THE ARMOURED VEHICLE, HEAD OF THE SECRET SERVICE AND RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COMPU-PUNCTURE EXPERIMENTS WHICH TURNED A SECRET AGENT INTO MACH ZERO!
THE HUNTED — MACH ZERO. A MAN LEFT WITH AN INCREDIBLE, UNCONTROLLABLE STRENGTH. ALTHOUGH IMPRISONED BY SHARPE, ZERO HAS ESCAPED WITH TWO AMBITIONS IN HIS CONFUSED MIND... TO SEE HIS SON TOMMY... AND TO SEEK REVENGE ON SHARPE!
2000A.D.
Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT
STEVE McMANUS
ART ROBOT
RAMON SOLA
LETTERING ROBOT
JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E

JOHN PROBE (CODE NAME MACH ONE)... THE EXPERIMENT THAT HAD WORKED!
THIS IS AS FAR AS YOU GO, SHARPE! I KNOW ALL ABOUT MACH ZERO NOW!
PROBE!

GET OUT OF THE WAY, PROBE! ZERO'S A MENACE TO SECURITY AND I'VE GOT THE AUTHORITY TO DEAL WITH HIM HOW I SEE FIT!

YOU HEARD, MISTER— MOVE!
SURE!
PROBE MOVED AT HYPER-SPEED...
AAAAHHHH!
ZERO'S A MACH MAN, LIKE ME!
YOU'VE BLOWN HIS MIND, BUT YOU'LL ONLY BLOW HIS HEAD OVER MY DEAD BODY! WE'RE GOING TO HELP HIM NOT KILL HIM!
MEET MACH ZERO
ZERO'S HEAD HURT HURT LIKE FIRE!
HE WANDERED NEARBY— STILL SUFFERING THE PAIN FROM THE FAILED EXPERIMENT— PAIN CAUSED BY SHARPE—THE MAN HE HAD TRUSTED!

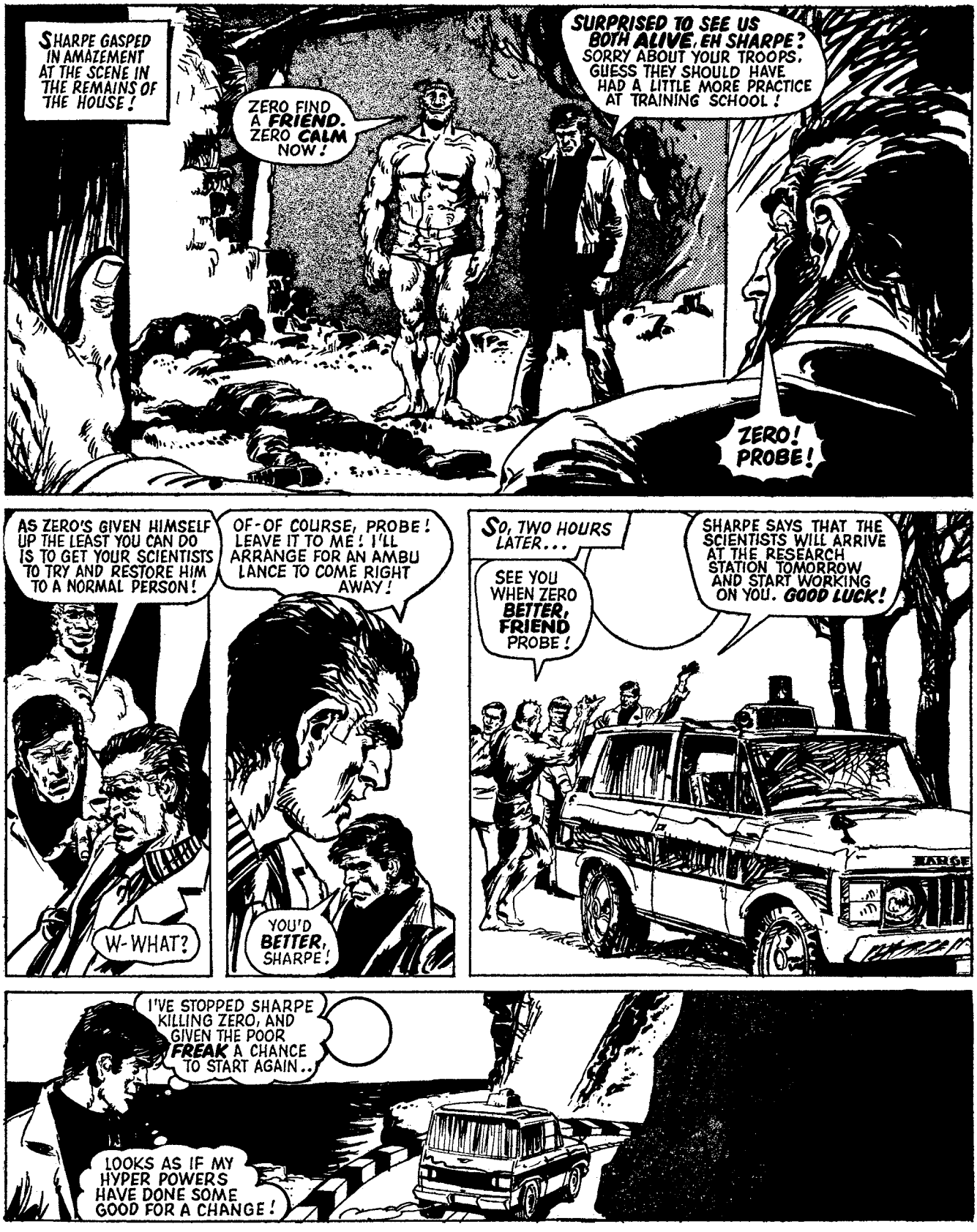
UUUUH... WATER! WATER PUT OUT FIRE...
A DEMON! DEMON IN WATER!
NO!
IT- IT ME! ...NOSE BENT... MOUTH CRUEL!
ZERO— ZERO UGLY!
WHO DID THIS?
SHARPE!

ZERO RAN TO HIS HOUSE, UNAWARE OF THE FIGURES CONCEALED ALL AROUND . . .
TOMMY! DADDY'S HOME!
THERE YOU ARE, PROBE. I'LL GIVE YOU FIFTEEN MINUTES TO MAKE PEACE WITH YOUR FRIEND!
ZERO'S IN FOR A CRUEL SHOCK WHEN HE FINDS THAT HIS SON TOMMY WAS MOVED AWAY FROM THE HOUSE ON SHARPE'S ORDERS. I'LL HAVE TO TREAD CAREFULLY IF I WANT TO WIN ZERO'S TRUST!
INSIDE...
GOOD GRIEF, I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
TOMMY'S GONE, FROG. EVERYONE'S BETRAYED ZERO...
DON'T BE SAD, ZERO. TRUST ME, I'M STILL YOUR FRIEND!
ZERO'S TALKING TO HIS T-SHIRT AND MIMICKING ITS VOICE! NOW, MORE THAN EVER HE NEEDS MY HELP!
I'M A FRIEND. I'VE COME TO HELP!
UHHHH?
YOU LIE! SHARPE SENT YOU! ZERO NOT STUPID!
ARGH! L-LISTEN TO ME—YOU'RE WRONG! YOU CAN TRUST ME! URGH!

NO! ZERO SHOW YOU WHAT TRUST MEANS! TRUST MEANS KILLING AND NOW ZERO KILL YOU!
I DON'T WANT TO HURT HIM...
UHHHH!
...JUST TRY TO QUIETEN HIM DOWN!
BUT...
YOU NOT HURT ZERO! ZERO STRONG!
GRIEF! HE DIDN'T FEEL A THING, AND HE'S MOVING IN FOR THE KILL!
ZERO TIRED OF THIS GAME. ZERO END IT— NOW!
IF I CAN'T STOP HIM NOW WE'RE BOTH DEAD!
BUT, OUTSIDE...
PROBE'S ONLY HAD TEN MINUTES, BUT ALL HELL'S BREAKING LOOSE IN THERE. I DON'T WANT TO LOSE ANOTHER MACH MAN... MOVE IN AND SHOOT TO KILL!
1978 - A NEW YEAR/2000 A.D. A NEW-LOOK COMIC/ DON'T MISS NEXT PROG!

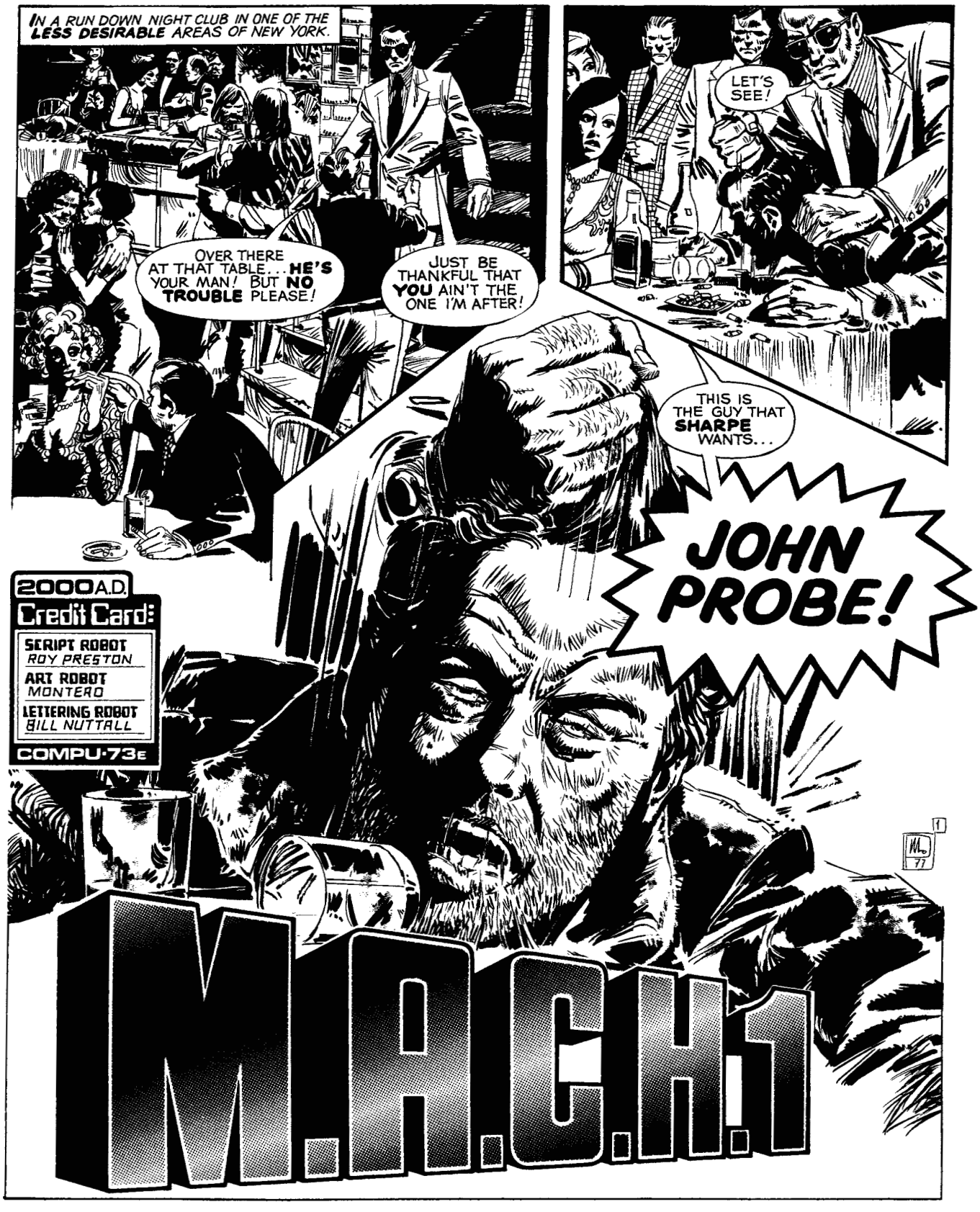
MACH ZERO
MACH I IS SUPPOSED TO BRING MACH ZERO OUT PEACEFULLY, YET THE HOUSE IS GETTING KNOCKED TO PIECES!
MOVE IN AND MAKE SURE THAT ZERO DOESN'T COME OUT ALIVE!
THE EXPERIMENTS OF SECRET SERVICE BOSS DENIS SHARPE HAD GIVEN TWO AGENTS INCREDIBLE HYPER-POWERS. FOR THE FIRST TIME THE TWO MEN HAD COME FACE TO FACE!
INSIDE THE HOUSE THE BATTLE OF THE MACH MEN WAS IN FULL SWING...
AAAGGH!
JOHN PROBE (CODENAME MACH I) COULD CONTROL HIS HYPERPOWER— MACH ZERO COULD NOT!
ZERO NOT TRUST YOU!
MUST GET ZERO TO TRUST ME. IF HE DOESN'T CALM DOWN, SHARPE WILL HAVE HIM DESTROYED!
2000 A.D.
Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT
STEVE MACMANUS
ART ROBOT
RAMON SOLA
LETTERING ROBOT
JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E

WURRGGHH!
SUDDENLY...
THERE HE IS! BLAST HIM WITH THE GRENADE-LAUNCHER!
YOU BLOODTHIRSTY FOOL!
LOOK, MISTER, SHARPE WANTS THIS THING DEAD!
ZERO'S A MACH MAN JUST LIKE ME! IF YOU'RE GOING TO DEAL WITH HIM YOU'LL HAVE TO DEAL WITH ME TOO!
PROBE'S GONE NUTS, TOO! GRAB HIM!
NOISE! FEELS LIKE HEAD EXPLODING!
THE SOLDIERS CLOSED IN ON PROBE...
WELL, ZERO— ARE YOU GONNA HELP A FELLOW MACH MAN?
YES!
ZERO TRUST YOU!
WE FIGHT TOGETHER!
OUTSIDE SHARPE WAITED UNTIL ALL WAS QUIET...
COME ON, IT SHOULD ALL BE OVER!


SHARPE GASPED IN AMAZEMENT AT THE SCENE IN THE REMAINS OF THE HOUSE!
ZERO FIND A FRIEND. ZERO CALM NOW!
SURPRISED TO SEE US BOTH ALIVE, EH SHARPE? SORRY ABOUT YOUR TROOPS, GUESS THEY SHOULD HAVE HAD A LITTLE MORE PRACTICE AT TRAINING SCHOOL!
ZERO! PROBE!
AS ZERO'S GIVEN HIMSELF UP THE LEAST YOU CAN DO IS TO GET YOUR SCIENTISTS TO TRY AND RESTORE HIM TO A NORMAL PERSON!
W-WHAT?
OF-OF COURSE, PROBE! LEAVE IT TO ME! I'LL ARRANGE FOR AN AMBU LANCE TO COME RIGHT AWAY!
YOU'D BETTER, SHARPE!
SO, TWO HOURS LATER...
SEE YOU WHEN ZERO BETTER, FRIEND PROBE!
SHARPE SAYS THAT THE SCIENTISTS WILL ARRIVE AT THE RESEARCH STATION TOMORROW AND START WORKING ON YOU. GOOD LUCK!
I'VE STOPPED SHARPE KILLING ZERO, AND GIVEN THE POOR FREAK A CHANCE TO START AGAIN..
LOOKS AS IF MY HYPER POWERS HAVE DONE SOME GOOD FOR A CHANGE!

BUT AS THE AMBULANCE DREW OUT OF SIGHT...
AMBULANCE
OKAY, THAT'LL DO! WHAT NOW?
WHAT DO YOU THINK, STUPID?
WE JUMP AND LET THE CHIEFTAIN TAKE OVER!
AROUND THE NEXT BEND A CHIEFTAIN TANK WAS WAITING AS SHARPE HAD ORDERED!
READY TO FIRE...
FIRE!
AAIEEE!!
MINUTES BEHIND WAS PROBE, DRIVING BACK TO LONDON...
WHAT TH—? THE AMBULANCE! IT'S LEFT THE ROAD!

IT'S A BALL OF FIRE! ZERO'S DEAD! AND THIS WAS NO ACCIDENT!
AT MACH-SPEED, PROBE RAN BACK TO SHARPE'S MOBILE H.Q.—
SHARPE LIED TO ME!
HE NEVER MEANT ZERO TO LIVE!
AND NOW I'M THE ONE WITH MURDER IN HIS HEART-
YOU'RE GONNA DIE SHARPE!
WHERE IS HE? WHERE'S SHARPE?
YOU JUST MISSED HIM, PROBE. SAID HE HAD TO LEAVE IN A HURRY BUT HE LEFT A MESSAGE FOR YOU ON THIS VIDEO PLAYER—
I KNOW HOW ANGRY YOU'LL BE, PROBE, BUT IT HAD TO BE DONE! THERE IS NO WAY THAT THE PROCESS CAN BE REVERSED, AND I WAS ACTING IN THE NATION'S INTEREST!
I'LL BE AWAY FOR A FEW WEEKS ON HOLIDAY. BY THE TIME I COME BACK YOU'LL HAVE COOLED DOWN AND SEEN REASON!
MAYBE, SHARPE. MAYBE...
BUT RIGHT NOW I DON'T HAVE TO SEE OR HEAR YOU AT ALL! YOU ASSASSIN!
FIRST YOU DOUBLE-CROSSED MACH ZERO...
SECOND YOU DOUBLE CROSSED ME...
MAYBE THERE'S EVEN A MACH TWO WAITING TO TAKE OVER WHEN I BECOME ANOTHER MAN YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO LEAVE ALIVE!
JOHN PROBE TAKES A BREAK TO THINK THINGS OVER WHILE SHARPE'S OUT OF THE COUNTRY —LOOK OUT FOR A NEW STORY NEXT PROG!


IN A RUN DOWN NIGHT CLUB IN ONE OF THE LESS DESIRABLE AREAS OF NEW YORK.
OVER THERE AT THAT TABLE... HE'S YOUR MAN! BUT NO TROUBLE PLEASE!
JUST BE THANKFUL THAT YOU AIN'T THE ONE I'M AFTER!
LET'S SEE!
THIS IS THE GUY THAT SHARPE WANTS...
JOHN PROBE!
2000A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT ROY PRESTON
ART ROBOT MONTERO
LETTERING ROBOT BILL NUTTALL
COMPU·73E
M.A.C.H.1

W-WHO ARE YOU? DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU!
NO? WELL MR. SHARPE WANTS TO SEE YOU!
TELL SHARPE HE CAN GO TO HELL!
SHARPE WAS SURE RIGHT WHEN HE SAID THAT YOU WERE LOSING YOUR HYPER-POWER.
YOU'RE A WRECK, M.A.C.H.1.!
HE-HE'S DONE THIS TO ME! SHARPE JUST USED ME AS A GUINEA PIG FOR HIS VILE EXPERIMENTS.
COME ON CREEP, LET'S GET OUTTA HERE, BEFORE...
I SUPPOSE WE OUGHTTA HELP THE BOSS?
-ER- YEAH!
NOBODY... HAS AN EASY FIGHT WITH JOHN PROBE!
HOLD HIM STILL!
W- WE'RE TRYING TO!
UUGHH!

AT THE HEIGHT OF HIS POWERS JOHN PROBE WOULD HAVE HAD THE STRENGTH OF FIFTY MEN. EVEN IN HIS WEAKENED STATE...
OOOF!
ARGGHH!
...HE WAS STILL NO PUSH OVER!

TIRING FAST... HAVE TO FINISH THIS FIGHT QUICKLY!

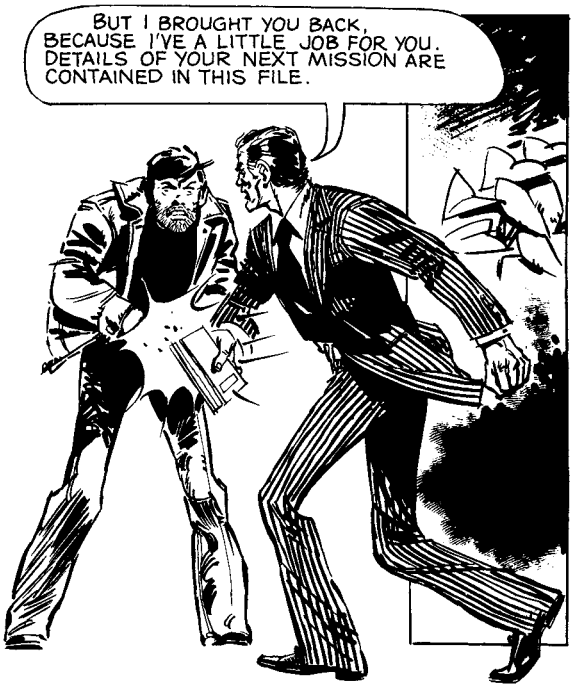
ALL SHARPE HAS EVER DONE...
I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

...IS DESTROYED THINGS!

GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE!

I MUST HAVE TIME TO THINK...
CLEAR MY HEAD— AHHH!
LATER, IN ENGLAND...
BROUGHT YOU A VISITOR, MR. SHARPE!
AHH, SPLENDID. DO BRING HIM IN!
WELL, JOHN, IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN. I WAS SO WORRIED THAT YOU MIGHT BE LOST, SO I ASKED SOME FRIENDS TO TRY AND FIND YOU.
IF I DIDN'T KNOW YOU BETTER, JOHN, I'D HAVE THOUGHT THAT YOUR, ER—LITTLE EXCURSION WAS AN ATTEMPT TO RUN AWAY FROM MY ORGANISATION.
COFFEE?
AHHHH!
OH, I SEE THAT YOU'RE AWAKE NOW!
DON'T FORGET THAT IT'S SIX WEEKS SINCE YOU LAST UNDERWENT COMPU-PUNCTURE TREATMENT...
SO LISTEN TO THIS!
I WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR GIVING YOU HYPER-POWERS, AND MAKING YOU WHAT YOU ARE. I DON'T JUST EMPLOY YOU. I OWN YOU!

...AND IF YOU DON'T GET ANOTHER DOSE IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS, YOUR ENERGY WILL BE **BURNT OUT COMPLETELY...**
...THEN IT'S GOODBYE, JOHN PROBE!

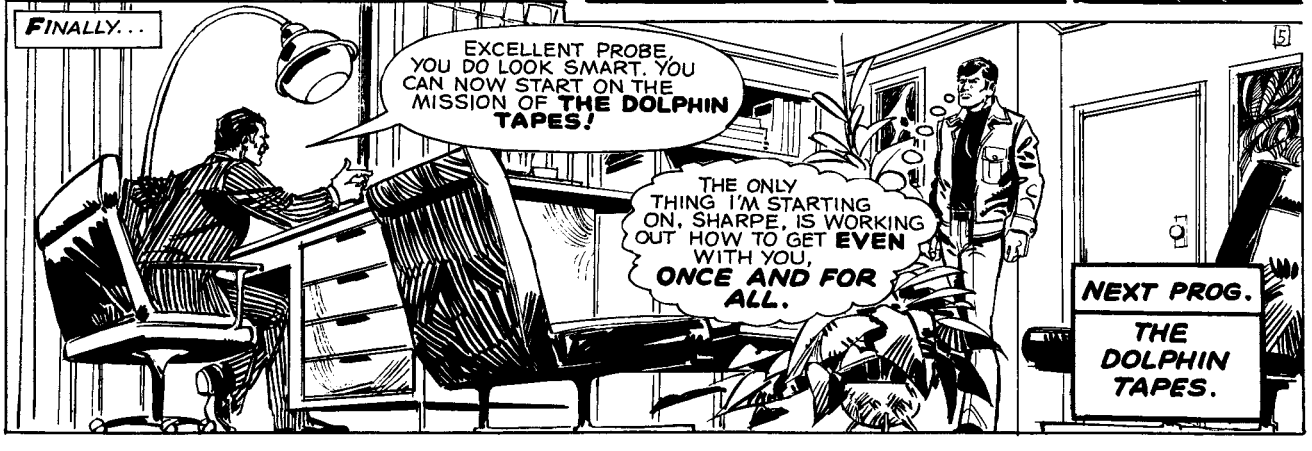

BUT I BROUGHT YOU BACK, BECAUSE I'VE A LITTLE JOB FOR YOU. DETAILS OF YOUR NEXT MISSION ARE CONTAINED IN THIS FILE.

BUT LOOK AT YOU! UNWASHED, **UNCLEAN. *UNSHAVEN*** AND ***UNTIDY...*** SO GET OUT OF HERE AND GET YOURSELF CLEANED UP—
YOU REALLY STINK!

AND SO THE PROCESS OF CLEANING PROBE UP...

PROVIDING HIM NEW CLOTHES...

AND SUPPLIES OF ENERGY, TOOK PLACE.


FINALLY...
EXCELLENT PROBE. YOU DO LOOK SMART. YOU CAN NOW START ON THE MISSION OF **THE DOLPHIN TAPES!**
THE ONLY THING I'M STARTING ON, SHARPE, IS WORKING OUT HOW TO GET **EVEN** WITH YOU, ***ONCE AND FOR ALL.***
5
NEXT PROG.
THE DOLPHIN TAPES.

M.A.C.H.1
THE DOLPHIN TAPES
TRYING TO FEED TOO MUCH INFORMATION INTO MY COMPUTERISED BRAIN CIRCUITS!
IT'S GONNA EXPLODE MY HEAD!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT STEVE McMANUS
ART ROBOT REDONDO
LETTERING ROBOT JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E
COMPU-PUNCTURE TREATMENT HAD GIVEN AGENT JOHN PROBE HYPER-POWERS WHICH COULD GENERATE IN HIM THE STRENGTH OF FIFTY MEN.
HOWEVER, WITHOUT FURTHER INJECTIONS HE WILL BURN HIMSELF OUT COMPLETELY, AND HIS BOSS, DENIS SHARPE, THE ONLY MAN WHO CAN GIVE THE LIFE-SAVING TREATMENT, IS NOW FORCING PROBE TO UNDERTAKE A MISSION AGAINST HIS WILL!
MISSION: TO VISIT A DOLPHIN RESEARCH AREA IN THE FLORIDA KEYS. USING THE COVER OF BEING A DELPHINOLOGIST, STEAL A TOP SECRET U.S.A. GOVERNMENT RESEARCH PROJECT CALLED THE DOLPHIN TAPES. ALSO, FIND WHAT HAPPENED TO AGENT ROBERT PEEL LAST LOCATED IN FLORIDA KEYS WHILE WORKING ON THE SAME MISSION--

SETTING OFF ON ANOTHER MISSION, WITH FULL CONTROL OF ALL MY HYPER-POWERS... JUST LIKE OLD TIMES!
BUT NOTHING CAN EVER BE THE SAME AGAIN NOW THAT I KNOW WHAT A DOUBLE DEALER SHARPE IS!
DESTINATION: FLORIDA KEYS OF U.S.A.----
THE COMPUTER CIRCUITS IN PROBE'S HEAD STORED THE CONTENTS OF THE FILE, AS HE SCANNED THE PAGES...
STILL, FOR THE MOMENT I'LL HAVE TO GO ALONG WITH HIM, SO I BETTER CATCH UP ON SOME READING, AS I'M GOING UNDER COVER AS A DELPHINOLOGIST...
DOLPHIN'S AVERAGE WEIGHT = 330 POUNDS -- AVERAGE LENGTH = EIGHT FEET---
PROBE APPROACHED THE RESEARCH CENTRE...
THE DOLPHIN ALMOST LOOKS AS IF HE'S SMILING AT ME!
AFTER MAN THE DOLPHIN IS EARTH'S MOST INTELLIGENT CREATURE---
HMM! LET'S HOPE THAT THEY NEVER ABUSE THEIR INTELLIGENCE IN THE WAY THAT MAN TRIES TO!
COMING IN TO LAND, BUDDY!
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!
BUT NOT EVERY-ONE AROUND HERE APPEARS TO BE SO FRIENDLY!
I DON'T TAKE TO SNOOPERS, MISTER!
IF YOU WANT TO PLAY ROUGH...

AAAHHHHH!
...WE'LL PLAY ROUGH!
WHY, YOU-!
T-THAT WILL DO, HACKER!
WOULDN'T I LOVE TO HAVE SMASHED SHARPE LIKE THAT!
HUMPHH! I'M MEANT TO BE CHIEF SECURITY GUARD AROUND HERE, FISHER.
SO JUST LET ME KNOW WHEN YOUR CRONIES ARE COMING NEXT TIME!
I'M PROFESSOR FISHER. S-SORRY ABOUT THAT, MISTER P-PROBE!
THINK NOTHING OF IT, PROFESSOR FISHER!

FISHER TOOK PROBE INSIDE, WHERE THE DATA BANKS WERE STORED...
SECURITY CHIEF HACKER GETS CARRIED AWAY, SOMETIMES, MISTER PROBE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT EFFECT HE HAS ON PROWLERS — BUT HE SCARES THE LIFE OUT OF ME!
WELL YOU CAN NEVER BE TOO CAREFUL, PROFESSOR, ESPECIALLY AS THIS IS SOME SET UP!
THIS GUY IS SO MEEK AND MILD I CAN'T IMAGINE HIM HURTING A FLY. WHATEVER HAPPENED TO ROBERT PEEL COULD SURELY NEVER HAVE HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH HIM!
YOUR SPECULATIVE ASSUMPTIONS ARE OF NO RELEVANCE ------ CONCENTRATE ON YOUR MISSION ----------
THIS ROOM CONTAINS 'THE DOLPHIN TAPES'--- THE ENTIRE DATA OF THE PROJECT IS STORED IN THESE MEMORY BANKS-
IT IS VITAL TO OBTAIN ALL THIS INFORMATION--

TO BE HONEST, MR. PROBE, I DON'T KNOW TOO MUCH ABOUT THE ACTUAL EXPERIMENTS THAT ARE TAKING PLACE. AS YOU NO DOUBT APPRECIATE THAT'S TOP SECRET INFORMATION —
OF COURSE, PROFESSOR. I SUPPOSE THE ACTUAL DOLPHINS TAPE PROJECT TAKES PLACE AT ANOTHER RESEARCH AREA ?
INCONCEIVABLE THAT A MAN IN FISHER'S POSITION SHOULD KNOW SO LITTLE--- NEED TO EXTRACT FURTHER INFORMATION ----
YES— SOMEWHERE IN THE EVERGLADES I BELIEVE. BUT LET'S GO AND LOOK AT SOMETHING REALLY FASCINATING — THE DOLPHINS!
SUGGEST TORTURE!
NO WAY, COMPUTER! I'M NO TORTURER!
AT THAT MOMENT A HIGH-POWERED MEETING WAS TAKING PLACE IN THE CENTRE OF NEW YORK. THE MAN DOING THE TALKING WAS LUIGI SCARLOTTI...
SO, GENTLEMEN, OUR AGENT MR HACKER HAS INFORMED ME THAT WE ARE READY TO MOVE IF WE WANT TO STEAL THE GOVERNMENT SECRET OF THE DOLPHIN RESEARCH PROJECT. WITH YOUR PERMISSION I WILL TRAVEL TO FLORIDA KEYS TONIGHT!
I SAY NO!
THIS THING HAS GONE FAR ENOUGH! I WANT OUT!
VERY WELL, VENNER! I'M QUITE PREPARED TO DROP YOU FROM THE ORGANISATION!
HMMM! DOLPHIN TAPES! PAH!
LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE'S DECIDED TO BACK OUT!

GOING DOWN, GUV?
MR SCARLOTTI ASKED US TO SHOW OUT ANYONE WHO LEFT THE MEETING EARLY!
N-NO!
THERE WAS ONLY ONE WAY IN WHICH MEN WERE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE ORGANISATION...
AAAGH!
AAAA
WELL, GENTLEMEN, I BELIEVE THAT WE ARE NOW UNANIMOUS IN OUR LOYALTY TO THE ORGANISATION!
MY COMPANY HAS FORWARDED CONSIDERABLE SUMS OF MONEY TOWARDS THIS SCHEME, I TRUST THAT YOUR DEALINGS TONIGHT WILL BE- ER- DISCREET?
NO NEED TO WORRY, AS NONE OF YOU HERE CAN BE IMPLICATED. THE STEALING OF THE DOLPHIN TAPES SECRET WILL BE CARRIED OUT BY MR HACKER AND MYSELF — I EXPECT NO PROBLEMS!
AT THE DOLPHIN RESEARCH CENTRE...
THE GOVERNMENT FINANCE THIS PLACE, SO I SUPPOSE THAT IT'S ONLY FAIR THAT THEY HAVE THEIR SAY IN WHAT GOES ON... BUT THE THINGS I HEAR ABOUT GOING ON AT THE TOP SECRET BASE REALLY FRIGHTEN ME!
FISHER'S HONEST, I'M SURE OF IT- WHY CAN'T THEY JUST LEAVE THE POOR GUY TO HIS OWN STUDIES?
IRRELEVANT OBSERVATION. SHOULD FISHER NOT BE ACQUAINTED WITH FULL SECRET THEN BEST SOURCE OF INFORMATION WILL BE THE DATA BANKS--- COMPUTER ROOM--
CARRIE AND ZUMA - COME AND BE INTRODUCED TO MR PROBE!
WELL, HELLO!
THE STEALING OF THE SECRET CAN TAKE PLACE TONIGHT!

THAT EVENING...
HERE I AM SNEAKING AROUND LIKE A CHEAP THIEF, JUST TO STEAL SOME CRUMMY RESEARCH PROJECT FOR A RAT LIKE SHARPE...
YOU SURE YOU CAN HANDLE THIS, COMPUTER ?
IF I WASN'T TRYING TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO BOB PEEL— I'D NOT GO THROUGH WITH THIS !
PUT THE HEAD-PHONES ON. ALL THE INFORMATION IN THE DATA BANKS ARE ABOUT TO BE FED DIRECTLY INTO YOUR BRAIN---------
PROCEED-
OKAY...
ARRGGH!
DANGER! OVERLOAD ON CIRCUITS!
MY BRAIN FEELS LIKE IT'S EXPLODING!
TOO GREAT INTENSITY OF DATA. CONCLUSION: DOLPHIN TAPES NOT TAKEN IN. NEW COURSE OF ACTION: TRY AGAIN---
COMPUTER, YOU ALMOST FRY MY SKULL BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T WORK YOUR SUMS OUT CORRECTLY, AND NOW YOU WANT ME TO TRY AGAIN. I OUGHT TO...
NOISE OUTSIDE ---- VOICE OF FISHER ---
HMMM! LOOKS LIKE WE'LL HAVE TO CARRY ON THIS ARGUMENT LATER!
N-NO, HACKER!! I-F-FORBID IT!!

I THOUGHT YOU COULD CONTROL THIS LITTLE MAN, HACKER. YOU SEEM TO BE HAVING DIFFICULTIES!
THE DOLPHINS HAVE NEVER DONE ANYTHING TO HARM A SOUL, H-H-HACKER. WHY DO YOU WANT TO INVOLVE THEM IN YOUR S-S-SCHEMES?
LISTEN, WORM, ALL WE WANT IS TO FIND OUT WHERE THE RESEARCH AREA IS THAT CARRIES OUT THE EXPERIMENTS! IT'S NOT TOO MUCH TO ASK-NOW IS IT? I DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO HURT YOU—
YOU STILL PLAYING IT ROUGH, HACKER?
PROBE!
HACKER! WHOEVER THIS SUPER-GUY IS— STOP HIM NOW!
WHAT...?
MY PLEASURE!
UGGHHH!
TOUGH LUCK, BUTTERFINGERS! JUST TOO SLOW!
L-LOOK OUT!
Next prog—
TIME OF IMPACT: PRECISELY 0.53 SECONDS
STILL SUFFERING EFFECTS OF OVERLOAD. UNABLE TO RESPOND IN TIME. DEATH IMMINENT!

M.A.C.H.1
THE DOLPHIN TAPES
PART 2
HA!
Y-Y-YOU, K-KILLED HIM, H-HACKER!
U-U-UGGHHH!
LOCATION: FLORIDA KEYS. MISSION: TO STEAL THE DOLPHIN TAPES---
2000 A.D.
Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT STEVE McMANUS
ART ROBOT REDONDO
LETTERING ROBOT JACK POTTER
COMPU·73E
LOOK, FISHER, WE GOT ENOUGH PROBLEMS IF WE WANT TO STEAL THE DOLPHIN TAPES— AND WE DON'T NEED THIS LOUSY GUY INTERFERING!
ARRGH! HELP ME, BOYS!
EVER FOUGHT WITH A CORPSE BEFORE, HACKER?
SECRET AGENT JOHN PROBE (CODENAME MACH 1) HAD COMPUTERISED CIRCUITS LINKED INTO HIS BRAIN, WHICH ENABLED HIM TO REACT AT HYPER-SPEED. A MALFUNCTION OF HIS CIRCUITS HAD SLOWED HIM DOWN AS HE TRIED TO AVOID A KNIFE THROWN TOWARDS HIM...

...BUT HE HAD STILL MANAGED TO JUST GET HIS HANDS TO THE KNIFE, AND PREVENT CERTAIN DEATH!
NOW HE WAS FIGHTING BACK!
GET OUT OF HERE, YOU RABBLE, BEFORE SOMEONE GETS HURT!
FROM EVIDENCE AVAILABLE CHIEF-SECURITY OFFICER HACKER IS PLANNING TO STEAL THE SECRET OF THE DOLPHIN TAPES RESEARCH PROJECT----------
YEAH, AND I INTEND TO FIND OUT JUST WHAT'S GOING ON ON THIS DAMN ISLAND!
WE CAN'T HOLD HIM, MR SCARLOTTI!
UNNNFFF!
REALLY, HACKER, YOU'RE SUCH AN AMATEUR!
LUIGI SCARLOTTI WAS MASTERMINDING THE OPERATION ON BEHALF OF A GIANT AMERICAN BUSINESS COMBINE—
FORTUNATELY, PROFESSOR FISHER HAS DESIGNED EQUIPMENT THAT WILL HELP US GET RID OF THIS FOOL!
WE LEAVE PROBE IN THE WATER...
..BUT WE CAN DROP THE TEMPERATURE AT SUCH SPEED, THAT THE WATER FREEZES INSTANTLY—

"AND MR PROBE IS PUT ON ICE, PERMANENTLY!"
L-L-LOOK AT HIM! IT'S T-TERRIBLE!
YOU AIN'T GOT NO CLASS, FISHER— IT'S A WORK OF ART, YESSIR!
REGRETABLY, I HAVE NEITHER THE TIME NOR THE PATIENCE TO FOSTER YOUR ART APPRECIATION, HACKER!
WE'VE GOT WORK TO DO!
PROFESSOR FISHER, WHOSE ONLY INTEREST WAS IN THE WELFARE OF HIS PRECIOUS DOLPHINS, HAD SEEN ENOUGH!
W-WHAT?
WHY CAN'T YOU LEAVE THIS PLACE ALONE? YOU BETTER NOT TOUCH THOSE DOLPHINS!
GOT 'IM, MR SCARLOTTI!
SWEET, LOVABLE CREATURES THOSE DOLPH!—!
THAT MAN'S A LUNATIC! GET HIM OUT OF HERE— HE'S TOO PATHETIC TO BE OF ANY HARM TO US!..
... HE WON'T HELP US— BUT THE DOLPHINS WILL!

AS MORNING DAWNED SCARLOTTI WAS READY TO MOVE . . .
YES, THAT'S RIGHT, CONTROLLER, WE'RE TAKING ONE OF THE DOLPHINS WITH US AND HEADING FOR THE RESEARCH AREA IN THE EVERGLADES WHERE THE EXPERIMENTS ARE TAKING PLACE . . .
YES, SIR— I'VE DEALT WITH EVERYTHING. YOU COULD SAY—OUR OPPOSITION HAVE GOT COLD FEET!
BUT, AT THAT MOMENT!
METABOLIC RATE REDUCED TO MINIMUM-BUT DEATH IMMINENT UNLESS BLOOD TEMPERATURE RAISED EIGHT DEGREES ABOVE NORMAL TO ALLOW FOR MANOEUVRE--
SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?
60/40 CHANCE IN FAVOUR OF SEVERE BRAIN DAMAGE AS A RESULT----
YOU WOULD BE LEFT WITH THE MENTAL AGE OF A 3-YEAR-OLD!
BUT IF I STAY HERE I'M A GONER—SO DO IT!
TEMPERATURE RISING--37 DEGREES CELCIUS++38++ 39++40 DANGER! DANGER!!!
ICE IS MELTING SLIGHTLY, JUST ENOUGH FOR ME TO MOVE ME HANDS...
AND BREAK OUT!
HUUUHHH!
OPERATION SUCCESSFUL
JACK FROST NEVER PACKED A PUNCH LIKE THIS!

THE DAZED FISHER WAS WANDERING AROUND AIMLESSLY—
FISHER IS IN STATE OF SHOCK -- MIND SLIGHTLY UNBALANCED
SLOWLY NOW, FISHER, TAKE IT EASY!
EVIL MEN, THEY'VE TAKEN THE DOLPHIN, CARRIE—
SHE'S BEEN TRAINED TO ACT AS A GUIDE!
MY DOLPHINS, THEY TOOK THEM AWAY— THOSE W-W-WICKED MEN!
PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER, MAN, AND TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON! WHERE HAVE HACKER AND SCARLOTTI TAKEN THE DOLPHIN?
SHE KNOWS HOW TO GET TO THE SECRET RESEARCH AREA!
HACKER AND SCARLOTTI WILL BE FOLLOWING HER THERE, NOW!
SOME STRANGE THINGS GO ON THERE— AWFUL EXPERIMENTS! THE LAST ENGLISHMAN WHO CAME HERE— I'M SURE THAT HE FOUND HIS WAY THERE. POOR, POOR ROBERT PEEL!
PROCEED IMMEDIATELY TO THE EVERGLADES --- ZUMA THE DOLPHIN WILL ACT AS YOUR GUIDE. WHATEVER THIS MYSTERY IS YOU MUST BE THE FIRST TO FIND OUT!
HACKER AND SCARLOTTI HAVE GOT A HEAD START ON ME, BUT WITH THE HELP OF ZUMA THE DOLPHIN I RECKON I CAN CATCH THEM—
SO, COME ON ZUMA, YOU'RE GOING TO GUIDE ME TO THE SECRET OF THE DOLPHIN TAPES!
ROBERT PEEL! HE'S THE SECRET AGENT WHO WAS ORIGINALLY SENT TO STEAL THE DOLPHIN TAPES. IF ANYTHING HAS HAPPENED TO HIM I WANT TO FIND THE GUY RESPONSIBLE!
Next prog
REVEALS THE HORRIBLE TRUTH OF THE EXPERIMENTS IN AQUARIUM OF FEAR!

THE PATH ISN'T VERY MUDDY, MR SCARLOTTI!
EXCELLENT, HACKER! I DON'T WANT TO GET MY SUIT DIRTY!
LUIGI SCARLOTTI AND HACKER ARE ON THEIR WAY TO STEAL A TOP SECRET RESEARCH PROJECT...
... SO, TOO, IS SECRET AGENT JOHN PROBE (CODENAME M.A.C.H.I)
C'MON, ZUMA, WE'VE GOT TO BE THE FIRST TO FIND THE SECRET OF THE DOLPHIN TAPES!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT ONIANO
ART ROBOT MONTERO
LETTERING ROBOT JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E
M.A.C.H.1
DOLPHIN TAPES Part 3
PROBE'S GUIDE WAS A DOLPHIN SPECIALLY TRAINED FOR THE MISSION...
... STILL I'LL TAKE NO CHANCES AND USE THE TRADESMAN'S ENTRANCE!
IS THIS THE PLACE ZUMA? IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE THERE'S ANY SIGN OF LIFE..
COMPLETE WASTE OF ENERGY BY FOOL-HARDY AND UNNECESSARY ACTION!

MR. SHARPE GAVE STRICT INSTRUCTIONS NOT TO WASTE POWER.
DESERTED! ALL RIGHT, COMPUTER— FIVE POINTS TO YOU THIS TIME!
AND DON'T MENTION MY RAT OF A BOSS TO ME, COMPUTER!
HUUUH?
PROBE DESCENDED BY A METAL LADDER.
GUESS THAT EVENS THE SCORE, COMPUTER!
VIOLENT ACTION HAS FORTUITOUSLY LOCATED MECHANISM TO OPEN A CONCEALED ENTRANCE IN THE FLOOR!
GOOD GRIEF— LASER BEAMS!
WHAT HAPPENS NOW?
PLEASE SHOW YOUR IDENTITY CARD!
AS YOU ARE UNABLE TO PRODUCE ANY IDENTIFICATION YOU HAVE BEEN CLASSED AS AN INTRUDER! YOU WILL BE DESTROYED!
ALTHOUGH HYPER-POWERS INCREASE SURVIVAL CHANCES MACH I MUST AVOID LASER BEAMS
A-A-A-ARGH!
MOVE 4.8 CMS TO LEFT—
TOO SLOW!
JUST GOTTA GO THROUGH THOSE BEAMS AND REACH THAT DOOR!
YOU ARE NOT PERMITTED TO PASS THIS POINT WITHOUT AUTHORITY!

YOU ARE NOT PERMITT... WURR R...
INJURIES SEVERE- BUT NOT FATAL--
THAT'S COMFORTING! WHAT'S THE DATA ON THIS PLACE, COMPUTER ?
THIS AREA IS RUN BY COMPUTERS AND MECHANISED AIDS- NO HUMANS IN VICINITY------
RIGHT, I'LL GO LOOK ROUND!
WHAAAT THE-! THE WHOLE PLACE MUST BE BUILT UNDER THE BED OF THE SWAMP!
NO SIGN OF ROBERT PEEL, OR ANYTHING TO SUGGEST WHAT GOES ON HERE ...
ANOTHER SECRET AGENT- ROBERT PEEL- HAD NOT BEEN SEEN SINCE FINDING THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE SECRET LABORATORY...
WHAT A WEIRD FISH I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE!
TYPE OF FISH UNKNOWN--
AND WHAT ON EARTH IS THAT THING IN THE LARGE TANK ?

KEEP ON THIS FREQUENCY FOR MAXIMUM HYPER-POWER

2000A.D.
Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT
ONIANO
ART ROBOT
MONTERO
LETTERING ROBOT
JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E
The DOLPHIN TAPES
Part 4
M.A.C.H.1
SENT TO STEAL THE SECRET OF THE DOLPHIN TAPES, SECRET AGENT JOHN PROBE (CODENAME M.A.C.H.1) FINDS HE HAS OPPOSITION . . .
HAVE TO SNAP OUT OF IT BEFORE THIS BUTCHER CARVES ME UP!
HAAAAAHH!
UHHHHHHH!
MY COMPANION, MR HACKER, SEEMS TO BEAR A SLIGHT GRUDGE AGAINST YOU, MR PROBE. I HOPE YOU CAN RESOLVE YOUR DIFFICULTIES, ONCE AND FOR ALL!
OOOFFFF!
COMPU-PUNCTURE HAD GIVEN PROBE HYPER-POWERS, AND COMPUTERISED BRAIN CIRCUITS— BUT THESE WERE NOT FULLY OPERATIONAL AFTER EXPERIENCING SEVERE SHOCK!
LUIGI SCARLOTTI CALMLY WATCHED THE FIGHT—
HACKER'S PART IN THE OPERATION WAS TO GET ME INTO THIS RESEARCH AREA, SO I COULD STEAL THE SECRET TAPES... I DON'T THINK THAT HE'LL BE OF ANY MORE USE TO ME!
HE DECIDED IT WAS TIME TO TAKE OVER...

HE DREW A LASER-PISTOL FROM HIS POCKET...
...PIERCED THE CEILING WHICH FORMED THE BED OF THE SWAMP ABOVE...
...PICKED UP THE TAPES...
...AND WAS READY TO LEAVE PROBE AND HACKER TO THEIR FATE!
MEANWHILE, AS WATER POURED INTO THE AQUARIUM THE STRUGGLE WAS WATCHED BY THE TERRIBLE, SEMI-HUMAN FISH-MAN, WHO HAD ONCE BEEN SECRET AGENT ROBERT PEEL!
I'M GONNA CUT YOU—SOMETHING UGLY!
COMPUTER, SORT YOURSELF OUT BEFORE MY BRAIN GETS TURNED INTO A CASSEROLE!
DISCOVERY THAT THE DOLPHIN TAPES PROJECT INVOLVES THE CREATION OF A HUMAN-TYPE OF CREATURE, ABLE TO LIVE UNDERWATER, HAS SHATTERED MACH 1'S NERVOUS SYSTEM!
...AND I MUST SMASH THIS PROJECT!
SHATTERED OR NOT, I HAVE TO KEEP FIGHTING...

GETTING HOLD OF THE DOLPHIN TAPES WILL BE EVIDENCE ENOUGH TO BRING AGAINST THE PERSON WHO AUTHORISED THIS SCHEME!
I'LL MAKE HIM PAY FOR WHAT HAPPENED TO BOB PEEL!
THE TRICKLE OF WATER FROM THE CRACKED CEILING GAVE WAY TO A FLOOD, WHICH CASCADED IN!
AAAHH!
BUT HACKER HAD MANAGED TO WITHSTAND THE IMPACT...
THIS IS IT, PROBE!
NOOOOOO!
HACKER HAD NOT NOTICED THAT PEEL WAS FREE!
UHH! PEEL SAVED ME FROM HACKER, AND DIED IN DOING SO!
A NORMAL HUMAN WOULD HAVE DIED! MACH 1 ABLE TO HOLD BREATH UNDERWATER, AND ABLE TO WITHSTAND AMOUNT OF WATER ALREADY TAKEN INTO LUNGS! IMMEDIATE ESCAPE REQUIRED IF LIFE TO BE MAINTAINED!

GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE...
..AND CATCH SCARLOTTI...
...'CAUSE HE'S THE ONLY MAN WHO CAN TESTIFY TO THE THINGS GOING ON IN THIS RESEARCH AREA...
WHATEVER HAPPENS I NEED SCARLOTTI ALIVE!
UNAWARE OF THE OUTCOME OF THE STRUGGLE, LUIGI SCARLOTTI HAD WALKED ON THROUGH THE EVERGLADES, TAKING OUT A PATH THAT LED TO A PRE-ARRANGED PICK-UP POINT...
POOR HACKER! IF HE HADN'T BEEN SUCH A SIMPLE BRUTE HE WOULD HAVE REALISED THAT I COULD NEVER ALLOW HIM TO COME OUT OF THIS OPERATION ALIVE!
SCARLOTTI!
NO! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
NO-ONE COULD HAVE LIVED IN THAT FLOODED ROOM!
AND NO-ONE WILL SURVIVE A BLAST FROM MY LASER-PISTOL
ARGH! THIS SWAMP IT'S LIKE QUICKSAND —SUCKING ME DOWN!
BUT I'LL TAKE YOU WITH ME, PROBE!
NO, SCARLOTTI, I'M HERE TO SAVE YOU!
3.8 SECONDS TO PULL SCARLOTTI OUT OF SWAMP BEFORE HE WILL BE SUCKED DOWN COMPLETELY!

IF HE GOES ALL THE WITNESSES GO— EXCEPT ME!
TOO LATE!
THE RESEARCH LABORATORY IS DESTROYED... HACKER AND PEEL HAVE GONE... EVEN THE DOLPHIN WHO WAS BROUGHT HERE HAS ESCAPED!
AND NOW THE LAST LINK.. THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD TESTIFY TO THE PROJECT BEHIND THE DOLPHIN TAPES, AND WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO ROBERT PEEL! CURSE YOU, SCARLOTTI!
BOB PEEL WAS A TRUE FRIEND TO ME— HE WAS ONE OF THE GOOD GUYS!
BUT—SO WHAT? HE'S NOW JUST ANOTHER SECRET AGENT TO BE CROSSED OFF THE PAY ROLL OF MY BOSS, DENIS SHARPE!
IRRELEVANT! YOUR MISSION HAS FAILED! MR SHARPE WILL NOT BE PLEASED YOU HAVE NOT OBTAINED THE TAPES!!!!!!!
ALERT STATUS RED + + + CRISIS POINT EXCEEDED + + +

SECRET AGENT, JOHN PROBE (CODENAME MACH1) NEVER WANTS TO RETURN TO ENGLAND FROM THE PEACE OF THE EVERGLADES, U.S.A...
WHERE CAN HE GO?
HE BELIEVES HIS BOSS, DENIS SHARPE, IS INVOLVED IN POWER SEEKING SCHEMES, BUT IS UNABLE TO PROVE ANYTHING.....
WHAT CAN HE DO?
WHAT IS THERE LEFT FOR M.A.C.H.1?
JOHN PROBE'S LAST MISSION HAD ENDED UNSUCCESSFULLY, AS THE COMPUTERISED CIRCUITS IN HIS BRAIN WERE EAGER TO POINT OUT...
YOUR MISSION, HAS PROVED TO BE A TOTAL FAILURE.
OKAY, COMPUTER I BLEW IT, NOW FORGET IT, HUH?
HEY WAIT!
STOP YOU'VE GOTTA HELP ME, MISTER!
AM I DREAMING, COMPUTER?
NEGATIVE. DATA CHECK REVEALS MACH1 FULLY AWAKE.
MY BROTHER, DANNY,— H-HE'S IN D-DANGER!
SHOW ME WHERE, LADY!
YOU HAVE NO ORDERS TO INTERVENE.
PROBE FOLLOWED THE HYSTERICAL GIRL.
DANNY!
AAAAH!
I CAN'T JUST LEAVE THIS POOR KID TO DIE, COMPUTER. IT WOULDN'T BE HUMAN!
IRRELEVANT. NOT PART OF MISSION. MACH1 SHOULD BE RETURNING HOME.
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT ROY PRESTON
ART ROBOT JOHN COOPER
LETTERING ROBOT PETE KNIGHT
COMPU-73E

COMPU-PUNCTURE TREATMENT HAD GIVEN PROBE THE ENERGY OF FIFTY MEN...
STUFF IT COMPUTER!
HE WENT INTO ACTION AT HYPER-SPEED!
19% HYPER POWER REQUIRE-
I CAN MANAGE THIS COMPUTER, WITHOUT YOU CLUCKING ROUND LIKE A MOTHER HEN!
THE M-M-MONSTER, SHE-SHE...
EASY, SON!
DANNY SHOULD BE SAFE WHEN WE GET HIM HOME. I CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH!
GRANDMA AND PA WILL BE SO PLEASED TO MEET YOU, MR...?
PROBE-ER, JOHN PROBE!
I'M LOUISE!
MACH I INSTRUCTED TO REVEAL IDENTITY ONLY IN AN EMERGENCY!
ON ARRIVING AT LOUISE'S HOMESTEAD.
THIS IS BROTHER IKE...
ER-HE DON'T SAY TOO MUCH!

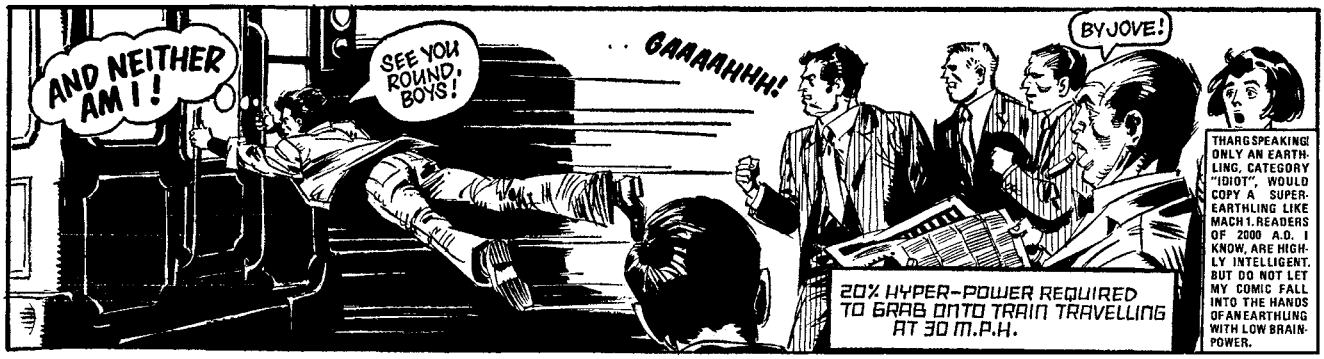
PROBE WAS TAKEN INSIDE THE HOME.
GRANDMA, PA - DANNY NEARLY DROWNED IN THE SWAMP. BUT JOHN HERE SAVED HIM!
NEARLY? THAT DARNED BOY NEVER HAS A MIND TO FINISH OFF ANYTHING!
WELL YOU'RE MIGHTY WELCOME SON, MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME!
HOW COME SUCH WEIRD PEOPLE HAVE A GIRL LIKE LOUISE LIVING HERE?
YES SIR, IT'S QUIET AND OFF THE BEATEN TRACK OUT HERE. I KINDA LIKE THE PLACE...
EVEN THOUGH SOME LOONY WITH A MEAT CLEAVER DID ATTACK ME AND TAKE MY ARM CLEAN OFF ONE DARK NIGHT!
THE MORE I SEE OF THIS PLACE, THE LESS I LIKE IT. IS LOUISE SAFE HERE?
NOT PROGRAMMED TO ANSWER SUCH FRIVOLOUS TRIVIA!
SUDDENLY, AN EAR-PIERCING SCREAM OF TERROR SHATTERED THE SILENCE.
EEEEEEEE!
LOUISE! GOTTA SEE WHAT'S WRONG!
JOHN COOPER.
PROBE ENTERED THE SHED MACH-STYLE!
LOUISE!
AIEEEEEEEE
HEN FEATHERS ON THE GROUND...! BLOOD ON THE BOY'S FINGERS...!

OH, JOHN!
IT'S ALL OVER NOW, LOUISE!
CAN'T LEAVE HER, I RECKON THESE CREEPS ARE DANGEROUS!
LATER, AS THE DAY DREW TO A CLOSE...
RECKON YOU BETTER STAY HERE FOR THE NIGHT, SON!
BUT MAKE SURE YOU LOCK YOUR DOOR - THERE'S SOME DANGEROUS CRITTERS AROUND!
THANKS!
NO PURPOSE IN STAYING.
MACH 1 HAD SO MUCH ENERGY THAT HE COULD NOT SLEEP.
REASON FOR STAYING IS PURELY EMOTIONAL.
YES, I KNOW, I KNOW!
MUST RETURN HOME FOR FURTHER ORDERS.
BUT THE BOY DANNY IS CRAZY! AND IKE, AND THE OLD COUPLE THEY MIGHT DO ANYTHING!
...ENDANGERING GOVERNMENT SECURITY BY BEING HERE...
BUT THE GIRL...!
...MUST RETURN AT ONCE.
I MAY HAVE THE STRENGTH OF FIFTY MEN - BUT WHAT'S THE USE OF THAT WHEN I CAN'T THINK FOR MYSELF?
-THESE COMPUTERISED CIRCUITS IN MY BRAIN RULE MY LIFE!
PROBE HAD NOT HEARD THE SOUND OF A FIGURE ENTERING THE ROOM.

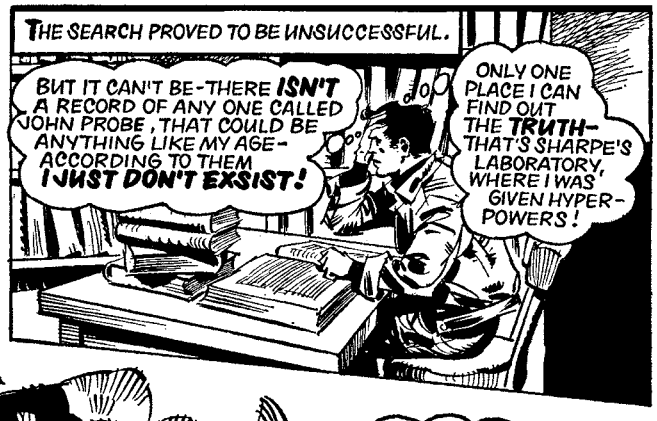
THE HOODED FIGURE BROUGHT THE DEADLY BLADE DOWN TOWARDS ITS TARGET.
UHHH! MOVED JUST IN TIME!
AHHHHH!
NOW I'LL FIND OUT WHO THIS JOKER IS!
NO, IT'S LOUISE!
THE GIRL IS A HOMICIDAL PYSCOPATH SHE LURED YOU HERE IN ORDER TO MAKE YOU HER NEXT VICTIM.
MINUTES LATER PROBE SET OFF INTO THE NIGHT...
HOW WAS I TO KNOW, COMPUTER? OKAY, I FEEL FOR HER, BUT I'M A MAN NOT A MACHINE!
PROGRAMMED ONLY TO OBSERVE RATIONALLY, IN INTERESTS OF SPECIFIED ORDERS!
YEAH! GUESS I'M PROGRAMMED TOO...
...I HAVE TO FORGET ALL HUMAN FEELINGS...
...AND RETURN TO THE GUY WHO DID THIS TO ME, DENIS SHARPE!
KEEP ON THIS FREQUENCY FOR MAXIMUM HYPER-POWER

SECRET AGENT JOHN PROBE HAD BEEN SUBJECTED TO COMPU-PUNCTURE, UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF HIS BOSS, DENIS SHARPE.
COMPU-PUNCTURE IS A COMPUTERISED FORM OF ACUPUNCTURE. BY INSERTING SPECIAL ELECTRO-NEEDLES INTO PROBE'S BODY HIS ENERGY WILL INCREASE UNTIL HE HAS THE STRENGTH OF FIFTY MEN!
THE EXPERIMENTS WENT WELL...
...COMPUTERISED CIRCUITS WERE LINKED TO HIS BRAIN...
...A NEW FIGHTING MACHINE HAD BEEN DEVELOPED!
-BUT NO-ONE TOLD PROBE THAT WITHOUT FURTHER TREATMENT HIS ENERGY WOULD BURN HIM OUT-RESULTING IN DEATH!
TOO LATE, HE REALISED THAT HIS LIFE DEPENDED ON HIS POWER-SEEKING BOSS, DENIS SHARPE!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT LANDAU/PRESTON
ART ROBOT LOTHANO
LETTERING ROBOT PETE KNIGHT
COMPU-73E
M.A.C.H.1

ON A FLIGHT FROM FLORIDA TO LONDON, ANOTHER HORRIBLE REALISATION DAWNED ON JOHN PROBE.
I'M SO USED TO BEING A MACH-MAN, THAT I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO BE WITHOUT HYPER-POWERS!
IN FACT, I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING THAT HAPPENED BEFORE THE ACUPUNCTURE EXPERIMENTS!
MY MIND'S A BLANK— NOT A SINGLE THING'S THERE ABOUT MY PAST LIFE!
NO DATA STORED.
THE PLANE ARRIVED.
BUT THIS IS CRAZY! THIRTY OR SO YEARS OF MY LIFE JUST COMPLETELY FOREGOTTEN
WHERE AM I FROM? WHAT DID I DO UP TO THE TIME OF THE ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENT?
HMM-I DON'T NEED HYPER-POWERS TO TELL ME THAT THOSE GUYS WERE SENT BY SHARPE TO PICK ME UP!
I'LL LOSE THEM— I'VE GOT MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO!
THE MEN WAITED FOR PROBE...
SAY, I'M TIRED OF WAITING, LET'S GO SEE WHAT'S GOING ON!
YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON—AND THERE'S NO WINDOWS IN THERE, OR ANY WAY HE CAN GET AWAY—SO RELAX!
BUT CURIOUSITY GOT THE BETTER OF THE IMPATIENT MEN...
HE'S ESCAPED THROUGH THE WALL!
PROBE WAS ALREADY TRAVELLING...
EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED SINCE I BECAME A MACH MAN IS AS CLEAR AS CRYSTAL—WHY CAN'T I REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE THAT?
REPEAT NO DATA STORED.
ON THE PLATFORM OF A LONDON UNDERGROUND STATION...
MORE OF SHARPE'S MEN... BUT THAT TRAIN'S NOT STOPPING...


AND NEITHER AM I!
SEE YOU ROUND, BOYS!
. . GAAAAHHH!
BY JOVE!
20% HYPER-POWER REQUIRED TO GRAB ONTO TRAIN TRAVELLING AT 30 M.P.H.
THARG SPEAKING! ONLY AN EARTHLING, CATEGORY "IDIOT", WOULD COPY A SUPER-EARTHLING LIKE MACH 1. READERS OF 2000 A.D. I KNOW, ARE HIGHLY INTELLIGENT, BUT DO NOT LET MY COMIC FALL INTO THE HANDS OF AN EARTHLING WITH LOW BRAIN-POWER.

HAVING SHAKEN OFF HIS PURSUERS, PROBE REACHED HIS DESTINATION, SOMERSET HOUSE, WHERE RECORDS OF DATES OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS WERE STORED...
THERE HAS TO BE SOME MENTION OF ME IN HERE, AT LEAST I'LL FIND OUT MY AGE, AND WHERE I WAS BORN!


THE SEARCH PROVED TO BE UNSUCCESSFUL.
BUT IT CAN'T BE-THERE ISN'T A RECORD OF ANY ONE CALLED JOHN PROBE, THAT COULD BE ANYTHING LIKE MY AGE-ACCORDING TO THEM I JUST DON'T EXSIST!
ONLY ONE PLACE I CAN FIND OUT THE TRUTH- THAT'S SHARPE'S LABORATORY, WHERE I WAS GIVEN HYPER-POWERS!

BREAKING INTO THE RESEARCH AREA WHICH HE KNEW ONLY TOO WELL....
DANGER TOP SECURITY KEEP OUT

...POSED LITTLE PROBLEM FOR A MACH-MAN.
FURTHER DOWN THIS CORRIDOR ON THE LEFT, THAT'S THE PLACE!

MACH-1 PROJECT TERMINATED
HERE IT IS T---!
TERMINATED?
NO KNOWLEDGE OF ENDING OF MACH-1 PROJECT. ANY SUCH CLOSURE WOULD MEAN NO FURTHER ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENT CAN BE GIVEN.

INSIDE THE LAB.
THE EQUIPMENT THAT GIVES ME POWER, AND KEEPS ME ALIVE, IT'S ALL SMASHED I'VE GOT TO SEE SHARPE!
OH, BUT YOU'RE GOING TO, JOHN!
SHARPE! YOU MUST HAVE SOME DEATH WISH TURNING UP HERE ALONE!
NOW BEFORE YOU DO ANYTHING HASTY, YOU OUGHT TO HAVE A WORD WITH YOUR REPLACEMENT— MACH 2!
ARE YOU REALLY SUCH A FOOL AS TO THINK THAT I HADN'T TAKEN COPIES OF THE FORMULA! CAN'T YOU SEE THAT THE WHOLE OPERATION WAS SET UP BY ME!
DON'T BLUFF, SHARPE, THE COMPU-PUNCTURE TREATMENT FORMULA WAS STOLEN BY THE RUSSIANS, AND TANYA DESTROYED IT! * SHE LOST HER LIFE IN CARRYING OUT THAT MISSION!
I ALLOWED THE SECRET TO BE STOLEN KNOWING THAT YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO ENSURE IT WOULDN'T BE IN ENEMY HANDS FOR TOO LONG. IT WAS ALL A TRICK TO FOOL OUR COMPETITORS!
* THARG NOTE: TANYA MASKI WAS A MACH-WOMAN. SEE PROGS 37, 38, AND 39.
BUT THEN TANYA SACRIFICED HER LIFE FOR NOTHING!
TANYA WAS NO LONGER OF USE TO ME. SHE WAS ALWAYS NO MORE THAN A PAWN IN A GAME— JUST AS YOU ARE, PROBE!
AND AS YOU SEE I'VE DEVELOPED MACH 2, SO YOU ARE NO LONGER OF ANY USE TO ME!
MY GRIEF!
THE GIGANTIC FIGURE MOVED MENACINGLY FORWARD...
YOU'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT, PROBE, THAT NO-ONE IS INDISPENSABLE!
Next Prog MACH 1 v MACH 2

ON RETURNING TO THE LABORATORY WHERE HE HAD UNDERGONE COMPU-PUNCTURE TREATMENT, JOHN PROBE DISCOVERED THAT HIS BOSS, DENIS SHARPE, HAD A LITTLE SURPRISE IN STORE...
SUBJECT: SECRET AGENT JOHN PROBE
PROCESS: COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER
DATA: COMPU-PUNCTURE IS A COMPUTERISED FORM OF ACUPUNCTURE. BY INSERTING SPECIAL ELECTRO NEEDLES INTO PROBE'S BODY, HIS ENERGY FLOW WILL INCREASE UNTIL HE HAS THE STRENGTH OF FIFTY MEN!
MACH 2! HE'S COMING STRAIGHT FOR ME!
YOU CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING THAT HAPPENED BEFORE THE COMPU-PUNCTURE EXPERIMENTS, AND YOU CAME HERE TO FIND THE TRUTH...
BUT, THE TRUTH IS THAT MACH 2 IS STRONGER THAN YOU, AND I'VE ORDERED HIM TO DESTROY YOU!
SUBJECT'S CODENAME: MACH 1
MACH Man Activated by Compu-Puncture Hyperpower
M.A.C.H.1
NOTHING PERSONAL, BUT IF YOU'RE A FRIEND OF SHARPE...
...YOU'RE NO FRIEND OF MINE!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT LANDAU / PRESTON
ART ROBOTS LOTHANO
LETTERING ROBOT JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E

MACH 2 NOT ONLY WITHSTOOD MY ATTACK BUT HE WAS able TO FIGHT BACK!
CRACK!
CONFIRMED. MACH 2's STRENGTH AS YET CANNOT BE ASSESSED, BUT IS AT LEAST EQUAL TO THAT OF MACH 1 ------
PROBE, THE MAN, COULD ALWAYS OVERCOME PROBE, THE MACH-MAN! YOUR OWN THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS COULD OVERCOME THE ADVICE OF YOUR COMPUTERISED BRAIN!
BUT MACH 2 ISN'T ABLE TO REASON ON HIS OWN!
C-CAN'T SHIFT HIM!
THE COMPUTERISED CIRCUITS LINKED TO MACH 2'S BRAIN ARE PROGRAMMED SO THAT HE OBEYS MY EVERY COMMAND!
HE WON'T QUESTION MY ORDERS LIKE YOU USED TO!
NOTHING CAN STOP HIM FROM HIS TASK OF DEALING WITH YOU!
SHARPE'S RIGHT, MACH 2 IS GOING TO RIP ME APART!
BRRROUMM!
MACH 1'S REACTIONS NOT FAST ENOUGH!
THANKS, COMPUTER!
NO METHOD OF DEFENCE HAS BEEN FORMULATED

MACH 1 WAS THROWN AROUND LIKE A HELPLESS PUPPET...
AGGGGHHHHHH!
HIGH VOLTAGE CABLES SEVERED. ELECTRIC CURRENT OF 2000 VOLTS PASSING THROUGH BODY----------
I'M OKAY, BUT MACH 2 LOOKS FRIGHTENED OF THE FIRE THAT'S STARTED!
LET'S SEE HOW YOU LIKE THIS!
UNNNNN!
MY GRIEF! HIS FACE IS MELTING!
MNNGGGG!
YES! IT'S MELTING, PROBE! MACH 2 WASN'T A MAN! —IT WAS A MACHINE!
WHY? WHY TRY AND CREATE A ROBOT WHO WOULD BE MORE POWERFUL THAN ME?
BECAUSE YOU ARE UN-RELIABLE, PROBE! I CAN'T DEPEND ON YOU. YOUR OWN HUMAN EMOTIONS WOULD OVERRIDE THE LOGIC OF YOUR COMPUTERISED BRAIN!

BUT MACH 2 WAS NOT FINISHED...
URGH! CHOKING ME!
YET AS YOU SEE, A LITTLE THING LIKE HAVING HIS PLASTI-SKIN MELT WON'T STOP MACH 2. HE GOES ON TILL HIS MISSION IS COMPLETE!
AND YOU, PROBE, HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT YOU AREN'T A ROBOT, TOO?
NO KNOWLEDGE OF INCIDENTS BEFORE COMPU-PUNCTURE TREATMENT. CANNOT DENY STATEMENT---
YOU DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE OR WHAT YOU WERE BEFORE COMPU-PUNCTURE — IF YOU EXISTED AT ALL THEN! YOU COULD BE ANYONE! ANYTHING!
DROP HIM, MACH 2. HE HAS TO LIVE!
MACH 1 ABLE TO BREATHE AGAIN!
FOR ALL HIS FAULTS, HE IS STILL THE ONLY HUMAN MACH-MAN!
REMEMBER, PROBE, I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN TELL YOUR FULL STORY, AND IF I DIE YOUR SECRET DIES WITH ME, AND YOU DON'T WANT THAT!
I HATE YOU, AND YOU HATE ME— BUT I NEED YOU, AND YOU NEED ME AND THAT'S THE WAY IT'S GOT TO STAY!
SO SHARPE WAS PREPARED FOR THIS SITUATION— BUT, WHO, OR WHAT AM I?.. WILL I EVER FIND OUT?
NEXT PROG- THE FINAL ENCOUNTER

M.A.C.H.1

THE FINAL ENCOUNTER

THINK OF THE **WILDEST, MOST AMAZING MISSION OF ALL TIMES**, AND YOU ARE ON THE RIGHT LINES... BUT CAST YOUR MIND **BEYOND THE BOUNDS OF IMAGINATION** AND YOU ARE READY FOR **THIS!**

TOP SECRET

DEATH REPORT
SECURITY FILE CLASSIFIED
NUMBER: 3652/A

NAME: ... PROBE
CHRISTIAN NAME: JOHN
AGE...32
CODE NAME:...MACH ONE
COLOUR OF HAIR:...
BROWN
COLOUR OF EYES: ...
BLUE
DISTINGUISHING MARKS:...
KNIFE SCAR ON ABDOMEN
CAUSE OF DEATH:...
MULTIPLE BULLET WOUNDS
CIRCUMSTANCES OF DEATH:
TOP SECRET

2000 A.D. 1 WL 78

Credit Card:

SCRIPT ROBOT *PAT MILLS*
ART ROBOTS *MONTERO*
LETTERING ROBOT *JOHN ALDRICH*

COMPU-73E

A GRAVEYARD IN SOUTHERN ENGLAND...

WE THEREFORE COMMEND THE BODY OF **JOHN PROBE** TO THE GROUND...

DUST TO DUST... ASHES TO ASHES...

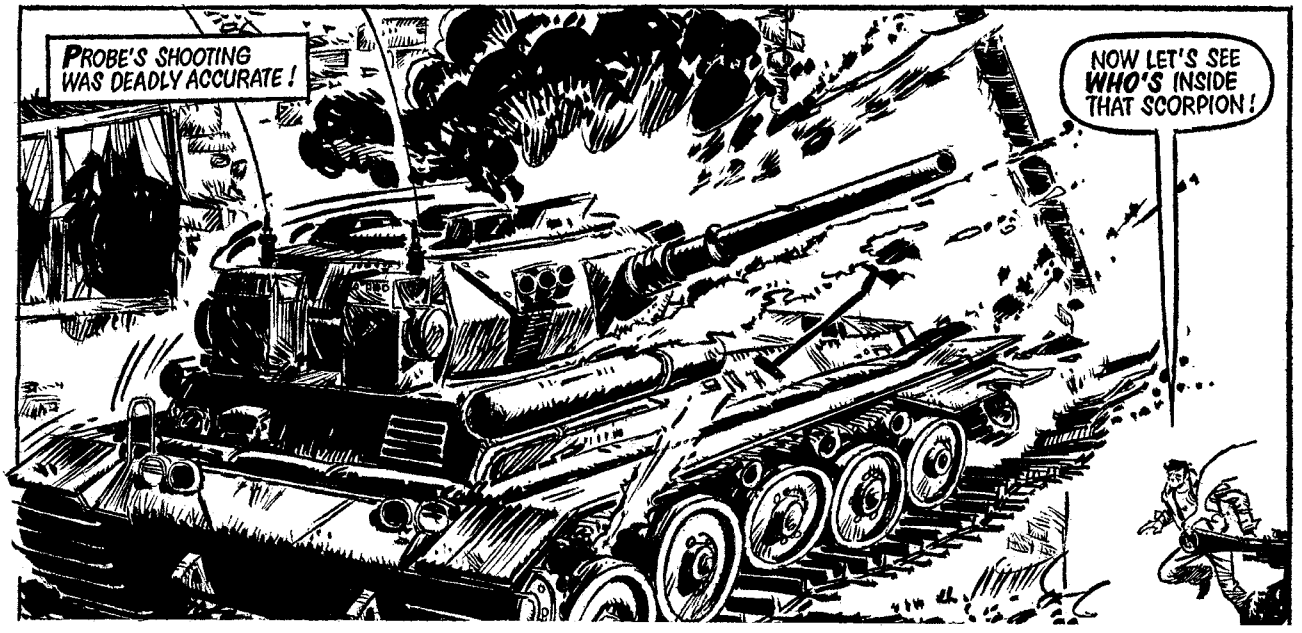
JOHN PROBE

TWO MEN SOLEMNLY TURNED AWAY FROM THE GRAVE; SIR MILES RATHBONE, HEAD OF THE SECRET SERVICE, AND DOCTOR MOXAN, CHIEF OFFICER.
WELL, WE BURIED MACH ONE, SIR MILES... BUT WE'VE STILL GOT TO DECIDE WHETHER HE DIED A TRAITOR TO HIS COUNTRY, OR A HERO!
THAT'S WHAT THE ENQUIRY TOMORROW MUST FIND OUT!
NEXT MORNING IN WHITEHALL... A MEETING OF THE CHIEFS OF STAFF PRESIDED OVER BY SIR MILES...
REALLY, SIR MILES— IS THIS ENQUIRY NECESSARY? IT'S OBVIOUS AGENT MACH ONE WAS A TRAITOR!
LOOK AT THE FACTS... HE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OF HIS OWN BOSS, DENIS SHARPE!
IF YOU ASK ME... MACH ONE DESERVED TO DIE!
THAT'S ENOUGH!
IT IS FOR THIS ENQUIRY TO DECIDE, ONLY AFTER HEARING ALL THE EVIDENCE, WHETHER MACH ONE WAS INNOCENT... OR GUILTY!
FIRST, LET US HEAR THE FACTS!
MACH ONE'S LAST ASSIGNMENT BEGAN WHEN A HELICOPTER FROM THE ARMY AIR CORPS FLEW INTO ARMY BASE ALDERSHOT, EARLY ONE SPRING MORNING...
BLIMEY! THE LADS MUST HAVE OVER-SLEPT THIS MORNING!
AS THE HELICOPTER APPROACHED THE BASE, THE CREW NOTICED EVERYTHING SEEMED... STRANGELY QUIET...

THE PILOT SWITCHED ON HIS MEGAPHONE...
OI! WAKEY, WAKEY, YOU LOT! HOW ABOUT RUSTLING US UP SOME BACON AND EGGS?
BILL... LOOK!
EVERYONE'S BEEN CUT DOWN IN THEIR TRACKS— THERE'S NOT A SIGN OF LIFE!
I'M GOING TO LAND!
HOLD IT, BILL! WHATEVER'S DONE THIS TO OUR MATES COULD STILL BE DOWN THERE!
THE HELICOPTER CREW RADIOED BACK TO HEADQUARTERS...
AND, JOHN PROBE WAS SOON ATTENDING AN URGENT BRIEFING BY HIS BOSS, DENIS SHARPE.
A TIGHT SECURITY NET HAS SEALED THE PLACE OFF, AND THE INCIDENT HAS BEEN HUSHED UP. I WANT YOU TO FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENED!
REPORTS SAY THAT THESE MEN SEEM TO BE PARALYSED IN A STATE OF SHOCK— SO THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO TELL ME ANYTHING!
THAT'S WHERE THIS LITTLE GADGET COMES IN. YOU CAN GIVE THE MEN ELECTRICAL SHOCK TREATMENT TO TRY AND REVIVE THEM!

SOON, AT THE ARMY BASE...
NO SIGN OF ANY EXTERNAL INJURIES ON THE POOR DEVILS...
EMOTIONS IRRELEVANT. PROCEED WITH MISSION.
SOMETHING REALLY STRANGE HAS CAUSED THIS TO HAPPEN, AND I'VE GOT TO FIND OUT WHAT IT WAS!
HERE GOES!
IT'S WORKING HE'S STARTING TO MOVE!
ORLRIGHT, YOU 'ORRIBLE LOT... BY THE LEFT TURN— LEFT, RIGHT! LEFT, RIGHT!
WHAT YOU LOOKING UP IN THE SKY FOR, WILKINS..? EH? FLYIN' SAUCERS... HAW! I'LL GIVE YOU FLYIN' FLIPPIN' SAUCERS!
BLIMEY, WILKINS! YOU'RE RIGHT... THREE GLOWIN' LIGHTS IN THE SKY— AND THEY'RE COMIN' CLOSER! SQUAD...
GET UNDER COVER... MOVE YERSELVES!

FLYIN' SAUCERS? DOES THAT MEAN A U.F.O.* IS BEHIND ALL THIS?
*Tharg Note: UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT
BUT BEFORE PROBE COULD FIND OUT ANY MORE INFORMATION...
SCORPION TANK. ESTIMATED SPEED: 30 M.P.H. 76 MM GUN. MOUNTED ON 360 DEGREE TRAVERSE TURRET. TAKE EVASIVE ACTION... IMMEDIATE...
WHAAT!
YOU HAVE AN ANNOYING HABIT OF STATING THE OBVIOUS, COMPUTER!
WHOEVER'S DRIVING THAT TANK MEANS BUSINESS!
BUT I'M NOT ACTUALLY HERE...
...JUST FOR FUN!


PROBE'S SHOOTING WAS DEADLY ACCURATE!
NOW LET'S SEE WHO'S INSIDE THAT SCORPION!

BUT NO-ONE'S THERE! IT'S EMPTY!

PROBE REGARDED THE TANK WITH AMAZEMENT, UNAWARE THAT HE WAS NOT ALONE..!
SO WHO WAS CONTROLLING THE TANK—AND HOW?
NEXT PROG: STRANGE MEETING!

M.A.C.H.1 in
THE FINAL ENCOUNTER
Part 2
SECRET AGENT JOHN PROBE (CODENAME M.A.C.H. 1) HAS BEEN SENT TO INVESTIGATE A SIGHTING OF A U.F.O. AT AN ARMY CAMP...
A CAMP FULL OF LIFELESS MEN—AND SOMEWHERE OUT THERE, IS A "THING" THAT WANTS ME OUT OF THE WAY, TOO... BUT I'VE GOT TO DISCOVER THE TRUTH ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED...
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT PAT MILLS
ART ROBOT MONTERO
LETTERING ROBOT JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E
LET'S SEE IF THIS GUNNER CAN SHED ANY MORE LIGHT ON THE MYSTERY...
PROBE WAS CARRYING A GADGET, WHICH COULD GENERATE AN ELECTRIC CHARGE TO SHOCK THE MEN OUT OF THEIR PARALYSED STATE...
SLOWLY THE GUNNER BEGAN TO SHOW SIGNS OF LIFE...
...OH I SHOULD PUT THAT FAG OUT... 'ERE COMES SOME BRASSSSSGH..!
LOOK, SIR... THREE FLYING OBJECTS... BUT BUT MAYBE THEY DON'T MEAN US NO HARM... YES, SIR.. ALL RIGHT...
YOU HEARD WHAT THE OFFICER SAID... FIRE!
WE GOT ONE... IT'S SPINNING OUT OF CONTROL... HECK... IT'S BLOWING UP... AAAAGH!

SO THEY SHOT DOWN A U.F.O.... AND THE RADIATION FROM THE BLAST MUST HAVE DONE THIS TO THEM ALL—
KLIK!
BUT WHERE ARE THE ALIENS NOW?
BRAT-AT-AT-AT-AT
DANGER! DANGER! UNDER ATTACK FROM 762mm G.P. MACHINE GUN
FIRST A TANK—NOW THIS!
ARMOURY
IN CASE OF EMERGENCY BREAK GLASS
WHATEVER I'M UP AGAINST —IT CAN CONTROL WEAPONS FROM A DISTANCE...
I WASN'T KIDDING!
NO! THE PINS ARE FLYING OUT OF THOSE GRENADES... I'VE GOT JUST TEN SECONDS TO EXIT...
H.E. GRANADES HANDLE WITH CARE

WALL STRUCTURE: BRICK- 28cms THICK. HYPER-POWER REQUIRED: 20% ESTIMATED SHOCK TO NERVOUS SYSTEM: 4.5.
MAYBE, BUT IT'S LESS PAINFUL THAN STAYING AROUND FOR THE...
EXPLOSION!
PROBE SPRANG INTO ACTION, BEFORE THE SMOKE FROM THE BLAST HAD CLEARED...
I'M GETTING A LITTLE TIRED OF BEING BOMBED, BLASTED AND SHOT AT...
THERE'S MY MYSTERY ENEMY!
IT'S TIME TO LAUNCH A SURPRISE COUNTER-ATTACK!
MUST BE A SURVIVOR FROM THE U.F.O.!
HE CERTAINLY ISN'T HUMAN!

I'M NO EXPERT ON ALIENS— BUT THE SHADE OF GREEN HE'S GOING DOESN'T SEEM NATURAL... EVEN FOR SOMETHING FROM OUTER SPACE! AND HE'S NOT USING HIS POWERS TO ATTACK ME...
WA-WA-WAT...
SOUNDS LIKE HE'S ASKING FOR WATER...
PROBE FETCHED A GLASS OF WATER...
I MUST BE CRAZY HELPING YOU— AFTER YOU TRIED TO KILL ME... BUT I ALWAYS WAS A SOFT TOUCH! DRINK THIS!
AS THE ALIEN RECOVERED...
I THOUGHT YOU WERE LIKE THE SOLDIERS WHO DESTROYED MY SHIP. THAT IS WHY I ATTACKED YOU. I APOLOGISE, MY NAME IS FRXXXSZKLDS!
ER-MAYBE WE COULD SETTLE FOR "FRED". I'M JOHN PROBE. WELCOME TO EARTH, FRED!
LATER, AFTER PROBE HAD REPORTED BACK TO SHARPE...
I SEE YOU BOOKED "FRED" INTO THE SAME COSY ESTABLISHMENT YOU KEPT MACH ZERO* IN, SHARPE: BUT YOU ALWAYS WERE ONE FOR MAKING FOLKS FEEL AT HOME!
SECURITY MUST BE MAINTAINED, MACH ONE. IT'S NOT EVERY DAY I GET MY HANDS ON A REAL LIVE ALIEN!
*THARG NOTE: MACH-ZERO. A FAILED MACHMAN WHO SHARPE KEPT UNDER CLOSE SECURITY. SEE PROGS 43/44/45/46
"FRED," AS YOU CALL HIM, TOLD US THERE WAS A FAULT IN HIS SHIP'S DEFENCE FIELD...
WHEN THE ARMY'S SHELL STRUCK HOME, AND THE ALIEN COMMANDER PUT HIS SHIP ON SELF DESTRUCT...
... FRED WAS THE ONLY SURVIVOR!
HIS RACE HAVE BEEN STUDYING EARTH FOR MANY YEARS—LEARNING OUR LANGUAGES AND WAYS..
THEIR LONG TERM AIM IS TO MAKE CONTACT AND ESTABLISH A FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIP..
WE CERTAINLY GAVE THEM A WARM WELCOME!
YES, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE HE SEEMS TO TRUST, MACH ONE, APART FROM ONE OF THE GUARD DOGS, WHO HE'S ADOPTED..
IS HE ANY BETTER?

ER... I'M AFRAID NOT—HE'S SLIPPING FAST!
I'M NOT SURPRISED!
PLEASE TURN OVER. I WANT TO TAKE A SAMPLE OF YOUR BONE MARROW—
P-PLEASE.. I AM TIRED!
SURELY THERE MUST BE SOMETHING YOU CAN DO, SHARPE! WHAT EXACTLY IS WRONG WITH HIM?
THE ALIEN'S BODY HAS NO RESISTANCE TO EARTH'S MOST COMMON AILMENT... FRED IS DYING OF THE COMMON COLD!
NEXT PROG: THE TRAP!

MACH 1 IN
THE FINAL ENCOUNTER
Part 3
THE WORLD'S FIRST ALIEN IN CAPTIVITY—'FRED'—SURROUNDED BY A TEAM OF SCIENTISTS EAGER TO LEARN HIS SECRETS . . .
MOST INTERESTING!
I CAN'T WAIT TO UNDERTAKE AN EXPLORATORY BRAIN EXAMINATION!
HIS POWERS OF LEVITATION AND TELEKINETIC MOVEMENT ARE FANTASTIC!
P-P-PLEASE, I HAVE HAD ENOUGH!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT PAT MILLS
ART ROBOT MONTERO
LETTERING ROBOT JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E
SECRET AGENT, JOHN PROBE (CODENAME MACH 1), WHO DISCOVERED FRED, HAD OTHER IDEAS...
DIDN'T YOU GHOULS HEAR HIM?
HE'S HAD ENOUGH!
OH, MY EQUIPMENT!
EVERY DAY MY POWERS GROW WEAKER, JOHN PROBE. CAN YOU NOT MAKE THEM UNDERSTAND..? I MUST BE SET FREE!
I'LL TALK TO SHARPE, FRED

I TRUST YOU, JOHN PROBE, BUT THE EARTH MAN CALLED SHARPE... THERE IS... SOMETHING ABOUT HIM...
...SOMETHING THAT SMELLS BAD, EH? YEAH, I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN, FRED!
LATER, PROBE SAW HIS BOSS, DENIS SHARPE...
WE'RE PUMPING THE STAR MAN FULL OF ANTIBIOTICS, BUT IT'S NO USE, MACH ONE. HIS SYSTEM HAS NO RESISTANCE TO THE COMMON COLD VIRUS!
I'M AFRAID HE WON'T LAST LONG!
THEN SET 'FRED' FREE! WE'VE NO RIGHT TO TREAT HIM LIKE A LABORATORY GUINEA PIG!
VERY WELL! TELL THE ALIEN TO GET IN RADIO CONTACT WITH HIS PEOPLE. THEY CAN COME AND COLLECT HIM!
JUST LIKE THAT? HOW DO I KNOW THIS ISN'T ANOTHER OF YOUR DIRTY TRICKS, SHARPE?
MY DEAR FELLOW— IT IS IN THE INTERESTS OF THE HUMAN RACE THAT FRIENDLY RELATIONS ARE ESTABLISHED WITH THE ALIENS—
I GIVE YOU MY WORD!
MY PEOPLE AGREE. THE LANDING WILL BE TONIGHT—
THEY WILL REQUIRE A SPECIAL LANDING LIGHT CODE—
OF COURSE!
THIS IS A SMALL GESTURE BY MAN, BUT A GREAT ACT FOR MANKIND!
ER- YES...

YOU SEE, MACH ONE- THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT-
NOW WHY DON'T YOU GO BACK TO YOUR HOTEL AND RELAX?
I GUESS SHARPE IS RIGHT. YET I TRUST HIM AS FAR AS I COULD THROW HIM!
MACH 1 COULD THROW A MAN 300 YDS -----
OKAY! OKAY!
HE'S ON HIS WAY UP!
PROBE RETURNED TO HIS HOTEL ROOM...
JUST FINISHING OFF IN HERE, SIR...
uuuuh!
DANGER! DANGER! XYLON GAS — RESULTING IN LOSS OF HYPER-POWER: 30-40% INCREASING---
THE UNCONSCIOUS MACH 1 WAS DRAGGED OUTSIDE, WHERE A VAN WAS ALREADY WAITING...
... TO TRANSPORT HIM TO A REMOTE FARM HOUSE ...
C'MON, MOVE IT! BRING HIM INSIDE!

SHARPE'S TAKING NO CHANCES!
NO, HE WANTS PROBE OUT OF THE WAY, WHILE HE DEALS WITH THE ALIEN!
QUIT TALKING, AND GET HIM INSIDE THE SAFE BEFORE HE COMES ROUND!
PROBE SLOWLY REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS ...
UHHHHH!... WHERE AM I, COMPUTER?
INSIDE MODEL GB COMBINATION SAFE. MAXIMUM SECURITY. THICKNESS OF WALLS: 60cm POSSIBILITY OF FORCING WAY OUT: NEGATIVE ----------
SO I CAN'T BREAK OUT... BUT I'VE GOT A COMPUTERISED BRAIN AS WELL AS BRAWN
MACH ONE'S COMPUTER CIRCUITS ANALYSED THE LOCK...
MAYBE THIS COMBINATION LOCK CAN BE PICKED FROM THE INSIDE!
COMBINATION: 6 LEFT-4 RIGHT-4 LEFT ----------
I'M GLAD MACH ONE'S BEHIND SOLID STEEL. I BREAK OUT IN A COLD SWEAT JUST THINKING OF HIM ON THE LOOSE...
YEAH, SURE WOULDN'T LIKE TO MEET HIM!
GOOD EVENING, GENTLEMEN! IT SEEMS THAT ALL YOUR CARDS ARE ON THE TABLE..
TIME TO PLAY MY HAND!
M-M-MACH ONE!

THE THREE MEN MEEKLY ENTERED THE SAFE . . .
SO MUCH BETTER THAN MY HAVING TO RESORT TO CRUDE VIOLENCE, DON'T YOU THINK? YOU'LL BE SAFE IN THERE!
MACH ONE ROARED AWAY ON A BIKE, WHICH HE BORROWED FROM ONE OF THE AGENTS . . .
BOJ443C
NOW TO GET BACK TO THE BASE, AND DISCOVER WHY SHARPE WANTED ME OUT OF THE WAY . . .
AS NIGHT FELL AT THE BASE WHERE 'FRED' WAS HELD . . .
ALL SPECIAL COMBAT SQUADS IN POSITION, SIR!
GOOD! THEY KNOW THEY MUST STAY IN THEIR HIDING PLACES UNTIL THEY RECEIVE MY SIGNAL!
SHARPE WAS PREPARING A SURPRISE WELCOME FOR THE ALIENS.

JOHN PROBE HAD CREPT IN UNNOTICED
ATTENTION ALL COMBAT UNITS! WHEN THE U.F.O.'S LAND—MOVE IN FAST! WE MUST CAPTURE THEM INTACT, SO WE CAN DISCOVER THEIR SECRETS. IF THE ALIENS TRY AND STOP US... SHOOT TO KILL!
SO THAT'S WHY SHARPE HAD ME LOCKED UP... IN CASE I BLEW A FUSE WHEN I DISCOVERED HE WAS DOUBLE-CROSSING 'FRED'!
BUT NO-ONE WAS TO BLAME FOR THAT! THERE'S GOING TO BE A BLOOD BATH TONIGHT!
AYE, WE'LL SHOOT TO KILL, ALL RIGHT. WE OWE THEM ALIENS FOR WHAT THEY DID TO OUR LADS!
MEANWHILE, IN THE CONTROL ROOM...
THREE UNIDENTIFIED OBJECTS SHOWING UP ON THE RADAR, SIR... IT'S THEM!
RIGHT ON TIME! STAND BY ALL COMBAT UNITS... THIS IS IT—
THE FINAL ENCOUNTER!
Next prog FINALE!
THE ALIENS ARE THOUSANDS—MAYBE MILLIONS OF YEARS MORE ADVANCED THAN WE ARE! SHARPE'S PLAYING WITH FIRE!
I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM AT ALL COSTS!

MAN MAKES CONTACT WITH ALIENS FROM THE STARS... A MEETING IS ARRANGED THAT COULD BEGIN A NEW ERA IN THE HISTORY OF THE EARTH . . . BUT SECRET SERVICE BOSS, DENIS SHARPE, HAS TURNED IT INTO A TRAP!
SURROUNDING A TOP SECURITY LANDING GROUND, ELITE SHOCK TROOPS ARE READY FOR ACTION!
THE MINUTE THE UFO'S LAND AND YOU RECEIVE MY SIGNAL MOVE IN — FAST! IT'S VITAL WE TAKE THEM INTACT!
M.A.C.H.1 IN
THE FINAL ENCOUNTER
FINALE!

IN THE RADAR ROOM SHARPE WAS CONTROLLING OPERATIONS...
THREE UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS ON THE SCREEN, SIR. IT'S THE ALIENS— THEY'RE COMING IN TO LAND ...
RIGHT ON TIME!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT PAT MILLS
ART ROBOT MONTERO
LETTERING ROBOT JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E

COMMANDER SHARPE, DOES WHITEHALL KNOW EXACTLY WHAT'S HAPPENING..?
I'M IN CHARGE HERE, GENERAL! IF WE CAPTURE THE UFO'S INTACT— THEIR SECRETS WILL MAKE US THE SUPREME POWER!

AND IN THE DARKNESS, SECRET AGENT JOHN PROBE (CODENAME M.A.C.H.1) CARRIES OUT A DESPERATE PLAN . . .
HE'S RISKING THE LIVES OF EVERYONE ON THIS PLANET! BUT IF MY PLAN WORKS THE ALIENS WILL SEE THAT THERE'S A TRAP!
THE STAR MEN COME IN PEACE AND THAT POWER MAD MANIAC SHARPE IS ENDANGERING EVERYTHING!
BUT MY PLAN MIGHT JUST WORK... AND NOW I'VE GOT TO GET "FRED" OUT OF HIS CELL...
AGENT MACH ONE — I HAVE AUTHORISATION TO SEE THE PRISONER!
OF COURSE, SIR — YOU KNOW THE WAY—
GETTING INTO THE PRISON IS GOING TO BE A WHOLE LOT EASIER THAN GETTING OUT...
MACH ONE WAS SHOWN INTO THE CELL, WHERE THE PRISONER — AN ALIEN NICK-NAMED "FRED" — WAS DYING OF AN EARTH DISEASE... THE COMMON COLD!
THERE'S NOT MUCH TIME, FRED — SO LISTEN CAREFULLY. YOU'VE BEEN BETRAYED, BUT THERE'S STILL A CHANCE I CAN GET YOU BACK TO YOUR OWN PEOPLE, SO YOU CAN BE CURED—
BUT WE'VE GOT TO MOVE FAST!
THE GUARD DOG, WHO HAD BECOME DEVOTED TO 'FRED,' FOLLOWED...
I'M SORRY, MACH ONE. I CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO TAKE THE PRISONER OFF THIS LEVEL. YOU MUST HAVE THE RIGHT CREDENTIALS!
ARE THESE CREDENTIALS GOOD ENOUGH?
UUUUUH!
STOP!
YOU'RE HURT!
UUH... I'LL BE OKAY... GOT TO MAKE IT UP TO GROUND LEVEL!
SHOULDER WINGED. LOSS OF HYPER-POWER: 2% -----

WHY DO YOU HELP ME, JOHN PROBE?
MAYBE IT'S 'COS I'M TRYING TO SHOW YOU STAR MEN THERE'S A GOOD SIDE TO US HUMANS. BUT IT DOESN'T MATTER - AS THERE'S NO TURNING BACK NOW!
UGH! MUST MAKE IT!
EMERGENCY! EMERGENCY! PRISONER TRYING TO ESCAPE! CLOSE DOWN ALL SECURITY DOORS!
AND - IN THE COMMAND AREA...
WE HAVE THE U.F.O.'S ON VISUAL! SIR! HERE THEY COME!
SWITCH ON THE LANDING LIGHTS!
"LANDING LIGHTS COMING ON... NOW!"
HEY? WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE LIGHTS?
MACH ONE HAD TAMPERED WITH THE LANDING LIGHTS, SO THAT THE WHOLE AREA WAS BATHED IN BRIGHT LIGHT, AND THE HIDDEN TROOPS WERE CLEARLY ILLUMINATED!

DISTURBANCE IN 'FRED'S' QUARTERS, SIR!
THE U.F.O.'S ARE PULLING OUT OF THEIR DIVE... THEY'RE TURNING AWAY...
MOBILISE ALL TROOPS—IF INTRUDERS ARE SPOTTED—
SHOOT TO KILL!
SECURITY TO COMMANDER SHARPE... PRISONER ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE ON GROUND LEVEL... RED ALERT!
I'M GOING TO DEAL WITH FRED!
SHARPE RUSHED TO THE MAIN SECURITY AREA, TO FIND PROBE WAS PITTING HIS POWERS AGAINST THE DEFENCE SYSTEM...
BUT I'M GONNA MAKE IT, COMPUTER... 'COS I GOT SOMETHING ELSE APART FROM HYPER-POWER...
A DIRTY GREAT STUBBORN STREAK!
SPECIAL SECURITY DOOR CLOSING--- BUILT TO BE MACH-PROOF--- LOSS OF HYPER-POWER: 15-20% INCREASING-
PROBE—YOU! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN!
YOU LOUSED EVERYTHING UP FOR ME, PROBE! YOU'RE A TRAITOR TO THE HUMAN RACE!
IT'S MY DUTY TO EXECUTE YOU—
AAAAGH!
LOSING HYPER-POWER: 30%-- INCREASING----
AND I'M GOING TO CARRY OUT MY DUTY— REAL SLOW!
SUDDENLY, THE TROOPS ARRIVED...
YOU'VE GOT YOUR ORDERS- SHOOT ON SIGHT!
ARGHHH!
BORAGGS! I'VE HIT COMMANDER S-SHARPE!
78

HE'S GONE!
CURSE YOU, SHARPE YOU'RE THE ONLY MAN WHO COULD HAVE TOLD ME THE SECRET OF WHO I REALLY AM—
MAY YOUR SOUL ROT!
*THARG NOTE: SEE PROGS 59 and 60. MACH I IS UNABLE TO REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE COMPU-PUNCTURE EXPERIMENTS
PROBE HAD NOT TIME TO WORRY OVER HIS OWN PROBLEMS...
MACH ONE MUST STOP FOR URGENT MEDICAL ATTENTION---
COME ON, FRED! ONE OF THE U.F.O'S IS WAITING TO PICK YOU UP... IT'S YOUR STAR-SHIP... HOME!
GENERAL! COMMANDER SHARPE'S DEAD... YOU'RE IN COMMAND! AT YOUR SIGNAL, EVERY SHOCK TROOPER WILL OPEN FIRE ON THE FUGITIVES!
A TRACTOR BEAM LANCED DOWN FROM THE U.F.O...
NO... THE ALIEN'S ALL WE'VE GOT NOW— HE'S TOO VALUABLE... BUT I WANT HIM STOPPED! REPEAT— HE MUST BE STOPPED!
JUST A FEW MORE YARDS, FRED... JUST A FEW MORE YARDS...
YOU HEARD OUR ORDERS, MEN... THEY AIN'T GOT TO MAKE IT!

CLEAR OFF, MUTT!
KEEP FIGHTING, 'FRED'!
ARGGHH!
50% LOSS OF HYPER-POWER-
IF YER KEEP STRUGGLING, ALIEN— WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO KEEP HITTIN' YER... NOW DO YERSELF A FAVOUR!
I M-MUST HELP, JOHN PROBE!
SUDDENLY, A FLASH OF ENERGY SEEMED TO SPARK FROM THE STAR MAN'S EYES—
-AND SHONE ONTO THE DOG!
THE TROOPERS FROZE IN THEIR TRACKS! THEY WERE AWARE THAT SOME STRANGE POWER HAD SUDDENLY POSSESSED THE DOG. ITS VERY PRESENCE WAS UNEARTHLY AND MENACING!
GULP!
RRRARRGH!
DON'T JUST STAND THERE, O'TOOLE, GET THE MUTT!
C'MON, 'FRED'— YOU CAN DO IT!
THE DOG'S LIKE A HOUND OUT OF HELL!
KORRRGH!
SIR... THEY'RE ALMOST IN THE BEAM!
BETTER WE HAVE A DEAD ALIEN FOR EXAMINATION — THAN NO ALIEN AT ALL!
GENERAL TO FIRST SNIPER...
70% LOSS OF HYPER-POWER-
FRED'S MADE IT, BUT WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO ME NOW?
...SHOOT TO KILL!

AS THE STAR MAN AND HIS DOG BEGAN TO DEMATERIALISE...
REPEAT: SHOOT TO KILL!
MARKSMAN! AND HE'S GOT 'FRED' COLD, UNLESS...
MY PEOPLE WILL REMEMBER THIS. FAREWELL, JOHN PROBE!
FATAL INJURIES SUSTAINED!
78

THE UFO DEPARTED ON ITS JOURNEY BACK TO THE STARS... ITS LIGHTS FLASHING FOR A MOMENT IN THE NIGHT SKY...
LOSS OF HYPER-POWER 99%-100% CONCLUSION: MACH ONE TERMINATED! NOW CLOSING DOWN TRANSMISSION---
AT THE ENQUIRY HELD AFTER-WARDS IN WHITEHALL...
WELL, GENTLEMEN... YOU HAVE HEARD THE EVIDENCE. WAS JOHN PROBE— CODE-NAME MACH ONE— A TRAITOR TO HIS COUNTRY AND THE WORLD?
WHAT IS YOUR VERDICT?
IT IS THE OPINION OF US ALL THAT COMMANDER SHARPE EXCEEDED HIS ORDERS, TO THE POINT OF ENDANGERING LIFE ON EARTH, AND THAT MACH ONE WAS JUSTIFIED IN HIS COURSE OF ACTION!
ALSO THAT MACH ONE RENDERED HIS COUNTRY GREAT SER-VICE BY MAINTAINING GOOD RELATIONS WITH A SUPERIOR RACE OF BEINGS..
WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND HIM FOR THE USUAL POSTHUMOUS DECORATIONS!
BUT THE SECRET OF MACH ONE'S ORIGIN— WHAT OF THAT?
MACH ONE
SHARPE WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD HAVE TOLD THE TRUTH!
THANK YOU, GENTLEMEN. THE FILE ON MACH ONE IS NOW OFFICIALLY CLOSED!
THE END

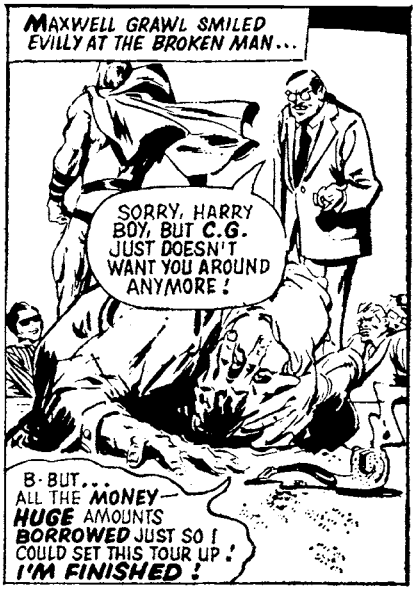
M.A.C.H. ZERO

NEW THRILL · NEW THRILL · NEW THRILL
MACH ZERO
SUBJECT'S NAME: TOP SECRET
EXPERIMENT: TO PRODUCE A MAN ACTIVATED BY COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER
DATA: COMPU-PUNCTURE IS A COMPUTERISED FORM OF ACUPUNCTURE. BY INSERTING THOUSANDS OF ELECTRO-NEEDLES INTO SUBJECT'S BODY THE ENERGY FLOW WILL INCREASE TO GIVE SUBJECT HYPER POWERS!
THE LATE SECRET SERVICE BOSS DENIS SHARPE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR MACH ZERO, A MAN WITH TREMENDOUS PHYSICAL STRENGTH BUT WITHOUT THE MENTAL POWER TO CONTROL IT!
REALISING THAT ZERO CONSTITUTED A SECURITY RISK, SHARPE LAID A TRAP TO HAVE HIM DESTROYED — THE VEHICLE CARRYING HIM WAS BLASTED BY A CHIEFTAIN TANK AND PLUMMETTED INTO THE WATERY DEPTHS OF A DEEP RIVER CHASM. NO MAN COULD HAVE SURVIVED... BUT ZERO IS NO ORDINARY MAN!
BEFORE THE EXPERIMENTS:
AN ORDINARY MAN WITH A SON NAMED TOMMY, OF WHOM HE WAS VERY PROUD!
THE EXPERIMENTS:
THE AIM WAS TO PRODUCE A SUPERMAN!
AFTER THE EXPERIMENTS:
A BEING WITH SEEMINGLY UNLIMITED, UNCONTROLLABLE POWER FLOWING THROUGH HIS BODY!
WURRGGGHH!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT STEVE McMANUS
ART ROBOT RAMON SOLA
LETTERING ROBOT JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E

A LOW-FLYING AIR BLIMP WAS NOT CAUSING TOO MUCH INTEREST IN LONDON'S TRAFALGAR SQUARE--
UNTIL...
THAT MAN!
HE'S FALLEN FROM THE BLIMP!
AAAGGH!
IN THE NICK OF TIME THE FALLING MAN OPENED A PARA-CHUTE...
WHY, THAT CRAZY FOOL COULD HAVE KILLED SOMEONE!
SAY, IT'S HIM!
"IT'S COUSIN GEORGE!"
YOU FOLKS ARE KIND ENOUGH TO CALL ME THE WORLD'S GREATEST STUNT-MAN, SO I FIGURED THAT I OUGHT TO MAKE A FITTING ENTRANCE!
BUT, THAT WON'T SEEM NUTHIN' TO THE SURPRISE THAT I'VE LINED UP FOR YOU TODAY!
COUSIN GEORG
YOU'RE ALL GOING TO SEE THE STUNT OF THE CENTURY!
LET ME TOUCH HIM!
OOOOOOOO!
C'MON, STAND ASIDE THERE-- I WANT TO SEE HIM CLEARLY!
THE SQUARE WAS SUDDENLY TRANSFORMED INTO A PULSATING, TEEMING MASS OF PEOPLE WHO WERE THRILLED BY THE DARING OF THE ALL-AMERICAN SUPER-SHOWMAN!
THE CAMERAS ROLLED, GIRLS SCREAMED, PRESS MEN PUSHED TO GET NEARER TO THE CENTRE OF ATTRACTION... JUST THE SORT OF RECEPTION THAT COUSIN GEORGE WAS USED TO... AND LOVED!

HARRY- SURE IS GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
GREAT TO HAVE YOU BACK IN ENGLAND, COUSIN GEORGE!
I'VE ORGANISED EVERYTHING FOR YOU!

WELL, HARRY, THAT'S JUST SWELL! MY NEW MANAGER -MAXWELL GRAWL- WILL BE REAL GRATEFUL!
MAX? YOUR N-NEW MANAGER? B-BUT I THOUGHT I WAS MANAGING THE SHOW!
WHY NOT COME DOWN TO THE RIVERSIDE WHERE YOU CAN WATCH MY STUNT!


MAXWELL GRAWL SMILED EVILLY AT THE BROKEN MAN...
SORRY, HARRY BOY, BUT C.G. JUST DOESN'T WANT YOU AROUND ANYMORE!
B-BUT... ALL THE MONEY- HUGE AMOUNTS BORROWED JUST SO I COULD SET THIS TOUR UP! I'M FINISHED!

A PARTY OF TOURISTS WERE ENJOYING A SIGHT-SEEING TOUR OF LONDON AS THEY TRAVELLED DOWN THE THAMES ON A HOVER-BOAT...
SAY IT SURE IS A CUTE IDEA SAILING DOWN THE THAMES. LONDON IS SUCH A QUAINT, UN-SPOILT CITY..
COUSIN GEORGE WAS NOT THE ONLY ONE TO BE MAKING A SPECTACULAR ENTRY INTO LONDON...
... FOR AT THAT VERY MOMENT...

... SOMEONE ELSE WHO HAD JOURNEYED MANY MILES...
TRY AND GET THE LEFT OF MY FACE IN THE PICTURE— IT'S MY BEST SIDE!
HOLD STILL, JACKIE!
... WAS ABOUT TO CREATE A SENSATION OF HIS OWN!

MACH ZERO WAS BACK!
UHHHHH! WHERE ZERO GOING? ZERO LOST!
AAAGHHHHH!
THE INCREDIBLE RESERVES OF ENERGY, GENERATED IN ZERO'S BODY THROUGH COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPER POWER TREATMENT, HAD ENABLED HIM TO SURVIVE FROM THE PLAN TO SEND HIM TO A WATERY GRAVE. HE HAD SUFFERED INDESCRIBABLE PAIN AND AGONY, BUT NOT ENOUGH TO DESTROY THE MOST POWERFUL MAN ON EARTH!
HE SWAM, BLINDLY AND WILDLY, UNTIL THE PAIN EASED AND HIS THOUGHTS WERE ABLE TO FORM MORE CLEARLY...
ZERO NOT MEAN TO SCARE, ONLY TRYING TO FIND WHERE GOING!... CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING!
OHHHHHHH!
ZERO SENSED THE FEAR AND HOSTILITY OF THE PEOPLE...
AAAHHH! PEOPLE NOT BE FRIENDS WITH ZERO!
NOW CALM DOWN EVERY-ONE!
NUURGHHH!
WE ALL KNOW THAT OUR COUSIN GEORGE IS IN TOWN. WHY, THIS MUST BE PART OF HIS SHOW!
WITH AN EFFORTLESS LEAP, ZERO REACHED OUT FOR THE BRIDGE...
... AND PULLED HIMSELF ON TO IT...
ZERO WAS ATTRACTED BY THE VIDEO-SCREENS WHICH HAD BEEN SET UP ON THE SIDE OF THE THAMES, TO RELAY COUSIN GEORGE'S ACTIVITIES TO EAGER CROWDS!
ZERO WANT TO SEE BIG PICTURE!
HIS SIMPLE, CONFUSED MIND WAS THRILLED BY THE NOISE AND EXCITEMENT!

MEANWHILE, COUSIN GEORGE'S STUNT WAS ABOUT TO TAKE PLACE BEFORE A PACKED RIVERSIDE, AS THE WORDS OF A COMMENTATOR BLAZED OUT OF GIGANTIC SPEAKER SYSTEMS...
NOW COUSIN GEORGE, WHO WILL BE BOUND IN METAL CHAINS, WILL BE PLACED INSIDE A LEAD SAFE...
THE CRANES WILL THEN LIFT HIM TO A GREAT HEIGHT ABOVE THE THAMES, WHEN FLAMES WILL CUT THE SUPPORT ROPES...
THUS SENDING HIM TO THE WATERY DEPTHS FROM WHICH ONLY ONE MAN COULD ESCAPE...
COUSIN GEORGE!
THE GREATEST ESCAPE STUNT OF ALL TIME WAS UNDER WAY!
ZERO WATCHED THE SPECTACLE WITH WIDE-EYED AMAZEMENT!
IT- IT SOME KIND OF CIRCUS SHOW. ZERO LIKE CIRCUS SO DID SON TOMMY!
THE EMBERS OF A FORGOTTEN MEMORY HAD SPARKED IN ZERO'S MIND...
TOMMY? YES TOMMY! HE ZERO'S SON..
BUT-THAT- MAN TRAPPED, IN TROUBLE!
THERE SHE GOES!
ZERO SAVE HIM!

ZERO SWAM ALONG THE RIVER BED TILL HE SAW THE SAFE...
ZERO MUST HURRY— DRAG MAN OUT OF DANGER!
RETURNING TO THE SURFACE ZERO SET TO WORK...
WUUURGGHHH!
MY WORD, WHAT IS THAT THING?
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO COUSIN GEORGE?
HE RIPPED THROUGH THE LEAD SAFE AS IF IT WERE MADE OF PAPER...
Y-YOU TORE THE SAFE TO SHREDS!
WHATEVER IT IS— IT'S THE HERO!
A BETTER STUNT THAN COUSIN GEORGE COULD HAVE DONE!
C.G! W-WHAT HAPPENED?
UHHHHHH?
CAN'T YOU SEE, STUPID? —THAT THING UPSTAGED ME, AND HE'S RECEIVING THE APPLAUSE THAT SHOULD BE MINE!
WHAT'S YOUR NAME STUNT MAN? WHO DO YOU WORK FOR?
THE CROWD COULD NOT UNDERSTAND IT— WHO WAS THIS STRANGE MAN THAT HAD STOLEN THE SHOW?
ZERO COULD NOT UNDERSTAND IT— HE HAD ONLY TRIED TO SAVE A MAN FROM DANGER, AND ALL THIS COMMOTION TOOK PLACE!...
AND BELIEVE ME THERE AIN'T NO-ONE ALIVE WHO STEALS THE SHOW FROM COUSIN GEORGE!
YET COUSIN GEORGE UNDERSTOOD ALL HE NEEDED TO— ZERO HAD STOLEN HIS GLORY, TAKEN HIS LIMELIGHT, AND MADE HIM LOOK A FOOL! THE STUNT MAN WAS NOT GOING TO LET HIM GET AWAY WITH THAT!
Next prog: THE TRAP

THE HEART OF LONDON'S FOG-BOUND DOCKLAND, AT THE DEAD OF NIGHT.
NO- HONEST, I AIN'T SEEN 'IM!
OKAY! BUT MAKE SURE YOU KEEP LOOKING.
HEY- WHAT'S THAT STRANGE WAILING SOUND?
GET OUTTA HERE, SCUM!
THAT'S HIM ALRIGHT! THE BOSS WILL BE PLEASED.
MACH ZERO
MAN ACTIVATED BY COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER. SUCCESS RATING: ZERO.
ZERO LOST! LOOSSSTTT!
COMPU-PUNCTURE, A COMPUTERISED FORM OF ACUPUNCTURE, WAS MEANT TO TURN A MAN INTO A SUPERIOR BEING WITH COMPUTERISED BRAIN CIRCUITS, AND HYPER-POWER THAT WOULD GENERATE THE STRENGTH OF FIFTY NORMAL MEN.
ALL IT CREATED WAS MACH ZERO, A MAN WITH TREMENDOUS STRENGTH, BUT WITHOUT THE MENTAL POWERS TO CONTROL IT PROPERLY.
FRIENDLESS, LONELY, AND VERY TIRED HE TRUDGES THROUGH THE EVENING FOG, WITH ONE HOPE STILL ALIVE IN HIS CONFUSED MIND... THAT HE MIGHT FIND HIS LOST SON, TOMMY!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT STEVE McMANUS
ART ROBOT MIKE DOREY
LETTERING ROBOT STEVE POTTER
COMPU-73E

VAST AREAS OF CRUMBLING, CONDEMNED BUILDINGS HAD BECOME THE HOME OF VAGRANTS AND TRAMPS, PEOPLE WHO HAD NO HOME WITHIN THE REST OF SOCIETY.
HEY, WHO'S THERE?
MAKE HASTE WITH THE FEAST, THORLEY.
ALWAYS BAKED BEANS! I HATE BAKED BEANS!
THE FIRELIGHT HAD ATTRACTED MACH ZERO.
ZERO HEAR VOICES... SEE FIRE.
YOU LOOK DOWN ON YOUR LUCK, FRIEND... AND THAT'S A GOOD ENOUGH INVITE FOR ME—SO COME AND SIT DOWN BY OLD GIMPY!
'FRAID THERE'S NOT MUCH IN THE WAY OF FOOD...
...ONLY ROTTEN BEANS!
...BUT TAKE THIS COAT TO KEEP YOURSELF WARM.
YOU KIND TO ZERO!
YOU TREATING ME LIKE A FRIEND - ZERO NOT FORGET THIS!
AS THE POWERFUL MAN PULLED ON THE TATTERED RAGS OF AN OLD OVERCOAT, NOT FAR AWAY SOMEONE ELSE WAS ALSO GETTING DRESSED...
...GETTING DRESSED TO KILL!
CAREFUL YOU CLUMSY FOOLS, I SHOT TEN LEOPARDS TO MAKE THIS CLOAK.
I'VE FOUND HIM, C.G!
COUSIN GEORGE— THE ALL-AMERICAN STUNT MAN, WHO HAD SET OUT TO TRACK DOWN ZERO.
THE MAN RELATED HIS FINDINGS TO COUSIN GEORGE.
AN' HE'S HOLDING OUT WITH SOME OF THEM TRAMPS, NEAR THE RIVER SIDE.
SO ZERO IS LOOKING FOR HIS SON, TOMMY. WELL I RECKON THAT WE ALL SHOULD HELP HIM, YESSIR!
TONIGHT THE HUNT IS ON!
WITH THIS INFORMATION I CAN SETTLE THAT BIG HULK ONCE AND FOR ALL. HE WILL PAY FOR CROSSING THE PATH OF EVERYBODY'S FRIEND— COUSIN GEORGE!
BEHIND THE HANDSOME VISAGE WAS A MIND POSSESSED WITH THE DESIRE FOR REVENGE.

MEANWHILE...
UHHH— TIRED, ZERO SLEEPY.
YOU SLEEP THEN— THAT'S SOME TALE YOU'VE TOLD US ABOUT LOOKING FOR YOUR LAD, AND YOU'LL NEED TO BE WIDE AWAKE IF THERE'S TO BE A HOPE OF FINDING HIM.
ZERO SLEPT SOUNDLY AS THE NIGHT WORE ON, WHILE HIS STRANGE NEW ACQUAINTAINCES SAT ROUND BY THEIR FIRE.
ARE THOSE BEANS READY YET, THORLEY?
WHAT IS IT JOHN THOMAS, WHAT HAVE YOU HEARD?
A NOISE OF MOVING MACHINES...
THE BIKERS ARE COMING!
THE DREAMING, MOTIONLESS MEN SPRANG TO LIFE...
THORLEY, THOMAS, TINTAGENAL! DON'T YOU LEAVE OLD GIMPY— SOMEONE GIVE ME A HAND!
YAAAAAH!
THE BIKERS ARE COMING— THE BIKERS ARE COMING!
TO THE RIVER! WE CAN HIDE IN THE OLD DOCK BUILDINGS!
THE BIKERS CLOSED IN ON GIMPY.
'ULLO, GRANDAD, HOW'S TRICKS?
ME AND MY MATES GOT BORED WIV DINING AT THE NEW MAYFAIR HOTEL... SO WE COME TO GIVE YOU A VISIT!
YOU BETTER NOT TOUCH ME!
BETTER NOT! WHY? THINK WE MIGHT CATCH SOMETHIN'?

SO SMILE, GRANDAD, AIN'T YA PLEASED TO SEE ME?
HEY, THAT'S MY CRUTCH!
HAAAA! SURE BEATS WATCHING THE OLD HOLOGRAPHIC MOVIES!
LET'S SEE WHO GRANDAD'S MATE IS!
HUUUH! WHO WAKE ZERO?
MY GAWD!
THE BIKER HAD EXPECTED TO FIND A FRAIL OLD TRAMP UNDERNEATH THE COAT...
WURGGHHHHH!
AAAAAAGGHH!
YOU COWARDLY BOYS HURT ZERO'S FRIEND! ZERO NOT PLEASED!
'ERE, THAT WAS ME BIKE!
ZERO ABOUT TO GET ANGRY, YOU BAD BOYS!
C'MON, ZERO! WE BETTER GIT, BEFORE THE COPPERS ARRIVE!
LEMME OUTTA ERE!

GIMPY LED ZERO AWAY.
WHERE DID YOU MANAGE TO GET SUCH STRENGTH FROM?
ZERO CAN NOT REMEMBER!
MEMORIES OF THE COMPU-PUNCTURE TREATMENT COULD NOT BE RECALLED BY ZERO.
SUDDENLY, THE MAN IN THE OVERCOAT, WHO HAD TRACKED ZERO DOWN, APPEARED FROM THE SHADOWS.
SAY, YOU GUYS THERE'S A YOUNG KID OVER THERE WHO'S LOST— SAYS HIS NAME'S TOMMY!
UHHHH? TOMMY!
HANG ON, ZERO. IT MAY BE A TRICK!
TOMMMyyyy!
ZERO DID NOT HEED GIMPY'S WARNING, BUT RUSHED DOWN THE DARK ALLEY...
WHAT? WHERE NET COMING FROM!
... INTO COUSIN GEORGE'S TRAP!
KEEP STRUGGLING ZERO, EVEN YOUR GREAT STRENGTH WON'T BE ENOUGH TO BREAK THAT NET. I'VE HUNTED FOR WILD ANIMALS ALL OVER THE EARTH, AND NOT EVEN THE MOST POWERFUL HAS MANAGED TO ESCAPE.
WURRGGGHHH!
BUT IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO HAVE CAUGHT YOU! I'M GOING TO TAME YOU, EVEN IF I HAVE TO BREAK YOU TO DO IT!
NEXT PROG:
The PRISON

MACH ZERO
MACH ZERO HAS BEEN LED TO BELIEVE THAT HIS SON, TOMMY, FOR WHOM HE IS SEARCHING, WAS NEARBY IN THE LONDON DOCKLAND AREAS... BUT HE HAS BEEN LED INTO A TRAP!
EXPERIMENTAL PROCESS: MAN ACTIVATED BY COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER
SUCCESS RATING: ZERO
PART 3: THE PRISON.
WURRGHHHH!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT STEVE McMANUS
ART ROBOT RAMON SOLA
LETTERING ROBOT JOHN ALDRICH
COMPU-73E
HIS PURSUER IS COUSIN GEORGE, THE WORLD FAMOUS AMERICAN STUNT-MAN, WHO ZERO INADVERTENTLY UPSTAGED BEFORE A HUGE CROWD OF ADMIRERS.
HE'S TRYING TO GET OUT, BOSS!
STOP WHIMPERING! THE NET IS JUST TO HOLD HIM, SO THAT I CAN HAVE SOME TARGET PRACTICE WITH THESE DRUGGED DARTS!
NOW C.G. WANTS REVENGE!
I'VE USED THESE TO CAPTURE THE MOST FEROCIOUS WILD GAME IN THE WORLD. NOTHING ALIVE CAN WITHSTAND THE KNOCKOUT DRUG.
SWEET DREAMS ZERO!

YAWWRRGH!
YOU GOT HIM, C.G! YOU GOT HIM!
THE DART WAS NOT POWERFUL ENOUGH TO KNOCK ZERO OUT...
...BUT THE PAIN STIRRED HIM TO SUMMON HIS FINAL RESERVES OF ENERGY, AND TO BREAK FREE.
WURGGHHH!
HOW MUCH STRENGTH HAS THIS MAN?
BUT DON'T JUST STAND THERE, YOU FOOLS... PROTECT ME! START FIRING!
ALTHOUGH ZERO IS INCREDIBLY STRONG...
...THE DRUGGED DARTS ARE TOO MANY AND TOO POWERFUL...
...AND EVEN A COLOSSUS HAS TO FALL.
PHEW, CAN HARDLY SHIFT 'IM!
FOUND THIS BAG OF BONES SKULKING ABOUT C.G. RECKON THAT HE SAW EVERYTHING.
I WANT NO WITNESSESS, SO GET RID OF THAT REVOLTING SPECIMEN!
TAKE A BATH FRIEND, YOU NEED ONE!
RECKON THE POLLUTION IN THE THAMES'LL FINISH 'IM IF HE DON'T DROWN FIRST!
YAAHHH!
GIMPY WAS ONE OF THE MANY TRAMPS AND VAGRANTS WHO LIVED IN THE CRUMBLING WASTE LAND WHICH PARTS OF LONDON HAD DETERIORATED INTO. HE AND ZERO HAD STRUCK UP A STRANGE FRIENDSHIP...
MOMENTS LATER, AS THE VAN DREW AWAY, THE OLD MAN DRAGGED HIMSELF FROM OUT OF THE WATER...
OH NO, YOU WON'T GET RID OF GIMPY THAT EASILY!
ZERO HELPED ME, SO I RECKON THAT I OUGHT TO HELP HIM AND I KNOW JUST THE PEOPLE WHO WILL BE ABLE TO DEAL WITH COUSIN GEORGE!

HOURS LATER ZERO BEGAN TO COME ROUND...
UUHHH!
...SLOWLY HIS EYES OPENED...
NO!
...TO THE STARK REALITY OF HIS SURROUNDINGS...
ZERO CHAINED, ZERO A PRISONER AGAIN... BUT NOT FOR LONG!
THE JAGGED METAL RIPPED INTO ZERO'S FLESH.
UUUUHHH!
ZERO HAD NOT THE PATIENCE TO ALLOW HIS GREAT STRENGTH TO BREAK THE CHAINS, SO HE LEFT THE CHAINS ON HIS ARM...
WURGGHHH!
...AND PULLED THE WALLS TO PIECES INSTEAD...
THE NOISE ATTRACTED SOME OF COUSIN GEORGE'S HENCHMEN...
AAHHH, DOOR-WAY TO FREEDOM!
GULP! HE'S ON THE LOOSE!
ER! I'LL JUST RUN AND TELL C.G!

YOU FIRED DARTS INTO ZERO, USED WEAPONS WITH ZERO DEFENCELESS!
THAT BENCH!
ARE YOU THINKING WHAT I'M THINKING?
LEMME OUTA HERE!
BUT NOW ZERO TURNED TABLES!
AAG GHH!
ZERO CHARGED FROM HIS PRISON INTO THE PASSAGEWAY OUTSIDE...
YOU!
COUSIN GEORGE CALMLY STOOD BEFORE ZERO, A YOUNG BOY AT HIS SIDE...
AREN'T YOU GOING TO WELCOME THIS BOY?
UUUHHH?
DON'T TELL ME THAT YOU DON'T RECOGNISE HIM! HE'S THE REASON THAT YOU'VE BEEN SEARCHING THROUGH THE STREETS OF LONDON!
C-CAN IT BE?
IT'S YOUR SON, TOMMY!
I HAVE TAKEN CERTAIN SAFETY PRECAUTIONS AGAINST YOUR ESCAPE! EVEN YOUR FREAK STRENGTH WON'T GET THROUGH THIS PLAXI-SHIELD!
BUT THEN YOU WON'T TRY TO ESCAPE, WILL YOU? FOR YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENS TO TOMMY IF YOU DO!
ZERO STOOD ROOTED TO THE SPOT, UNSURE OF WHAT TO DO. IT WAS LONG SINCE HE HAD SEEN TOMMY, AND MUCH HAD HAPPENED; TOMMY HAD NOT BEEN QUITE SO TALL, HAD HE? AND WAS HIS HAIR ALWAYS THAT SHADE OF BROWN? BUT SURELY THIS MUST BE HIS SON!

NEXT PROG: SEE NO EVIL, HEAR NO EVIL AND SPEAK NO EVIL.

THE SEARCH IS ON TO FIND

MACH ZERO

MAN ACTIVATED BY COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER / SUCCESS RATING: ZERO

THE MAN WHO HAD CAPTURED MACH ZERO WAS COUSIN GEORGE, THE WORLD'S RICHEST AND MOST FAMOUS STUNT-MAN.
THERE'S A LARGE CROWD GATHERING OUTSIDE TO SEE YOUR SPECTACULAR NEW SHOW. MIND YOU, EVERYTHING COUSIN GEORGE DOES IS BOUND TO BE POPULAR!
KEEP TALKING, MAX. YOU'RE SAYING THE THINGS I LIKE TO HEAR!
NOW LET'S SEE THIS CROWD OF YOURS—
WHEREVER COUSIN GEORGE WENT, CROWDS WOULD FOLLOW, JUST TO CATCH A GLIMPSE OF THE EXTROVERT, DAREDEVIL AMERICAN...
ISN'T HE HANDSOME!
I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE HIS NEW SHOW!
BEFORE THE CROWDS COUSIN GEORGE WAS ALL SMILES AND GOOD NATURED CHARM...
SEE Y'ALL TONIGHT AT MY LATEST, GREATEST, MOST SPECTACULAR THEATRE SHOW!
BUT ONCE INSIDE THE ROOM, HIS TRUE CHARACTER WAS REVEALED!
CALL THAT A CROWD? I EXPECT MORE PEOPLE TO TURN UP TO WATCH ME EAT BREAKFAST!
I WANT EVERYONE TO SEE ME IN ACTION, AND TO WITNESS HOW I COMPLETELY HUMILIATE ZERO!
ZERO HAD UNWITTINGLY UP-STAGED GEORGE WHEN THE STUNT-MAN HAD AMASSED HUGE CROWDS ON THE BANKS OF THE RIVER THAMES TO WITNESS A DAREDEVIL STUNT!
SO GET OUT AND GET TO WORK!
DOUBLE THE ADVERTISING, DRAG PEOPLE OFF THE STREETS— DO ANYTHING— BUT GET MORE PEOPLE HERE!
AND YOU CAN STOP FOLLOWING ME AROUND, LITTLE MAN, YOU IRRITATE ME!
AARRGH!
AIN'T THERE NO-ONE ABLE OF DOIN' ANYTHIN' 'CEPT ME?
AND STOP WHIMPERING!
MY HAAANND!

THAT NIGHT, THE CROWDS FLOCKED TO COUSIN GEORGE'S SHOW...
AMONG THEM, TWO CHARACTERS NOT USED TO THE WEALTHY NIGHT LIFE OF LONDON
THROUGH THE DAY OF WHISPERING, THE VAGRANTS HAD SOON DISCOVERED WHERE GEORGE WAS, AND GIMPY, WITH HIS FRIEND LIGHTNIN', WERE READY TO INVESTIGATE FOR THEMSELVES...
WELL, LIGHTNIN'! OLD MATE, THIS IS THE PLACE WHERE GEORGE IS, AN' YOU CAN BET YOUR LAST PENNY THAT THIS IS WHERE ZERO IS TOO!
I H-HAVEN'T G-GOT ANY P-P-P- PENNIES!
NEVER YOU MIND, WE WON'T NEED TO PAY TO GET IN, THE BACK DOOR'LL SUIT US FINE!
THE CONTACTS OF THE THREE WERE MANY AND VARIED...
STAGE DOOR
GIMPY! I'D HAVE GOT THE RED CARPET OUT IF I'D KNOWED YOU WAS COMING!
RECKON YOU CAN SQUEEZE IN TWO EXTRA SPECIAL GUESTS?
ECK, THIS IS P-P-P- POSH!
THE TWO MEN WERE LED INSIDE THE EXCLUSIVE THEATRE AND SHOWN THEIR WAY TO A TABLE!
LOR', BUT THESE FANCY TOGS ARE KILLING ME!
HERE IS YOUR TABLE- ER- GENTLEMEN!?
WELL, REALLY!
THE SHOW WAS ABOUT TO BEGIN, AND THE LIGHTS DIMMED...
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WELCOME TO THE HOUSE OF HORRORS AND HERE IS YOUR HOST...
SUDDENLY, A DARK SHAPE SWOOPED DOWN FROM THE BACK OF THE THEATRE...
HAAAAAAA!
WHAT IS IT?
EEEEEK!

A FREE FALL GLIDE FROM THE PARAPET OF THE BALCONY— ONLY ONE MAN WOULD DARE TO MAKE SUCH AN ENTRY...
IT'S COUSIN GEORGE!
WELCOME MY FRIENDS! I HOPE I DIDN'T SCARE Y'ALL!
TONIGHT THERE'S SOMETHING TO THRILL AND TO CHILL, TO DELIGHT AND TO FRIGHT!
COUSIN GEORGE SMILED, AN EVIL, GLOATING SMILE OF SELF SATISFACTION, FOR THIS WAS TO BE HIS MOMENT OF TRIUMPH!
AND FIRST OF ALL, I WANT YOU TO MEET THE MOST AMAZING CREATURE OF MODERN TIMES!..
MACH ZERO!
OH THAT MONSTER! IT'S SO AWFUL!
IS IT HUMAN?
THE STUNT MAN'S EYES NARROWED AS HE QUIETLY EXCHANGED WORDS WITH ZERO...
GO ALONG WITH THIS ACT, FREAK, IF YOU WANT TO SEE YOUR SON, TOMMY, EVER AGAIN!
ZERO HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO DO AS HE'S TOLD!

BELIEVING THAT COUSIN GEORGE HOLDS HIS SON AS A HOSTAGE, MACH ZERO IS FORCED TO PARADE HIS STRENGTH IN THE MANNER OF A SIDE-SHOW-FREAK...
WURRGGHHH!
BREAK BARS EASILY, COULD BREAK FREE, BUT DARE NOT RISK BAD MAN HURTING TOMMY!
AAAAAAAAA!
KEEP CALM— FOR I KNOW HOW TO CONTROL HIM!
BUT THE AMERICAN HAS TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF ZERO'S LACK OF MEMORY AND CONFUSED STATE OF MIND TO PASS AN IMPOSTOR OFF AS HIS SON!
WHAT ZERO FELT, WAS NOT THE PHYSICAL PAIN INFLICTED BY THE WHIP, BUT THE PAINFUL KNOWLEDGE THAT HE HAD TO BEHAVE JUST AS GEORGE WANTED HIM TO!
GIMPY WAS UNABLE TO CONTAIN HIS ANGER ANY LONGER!
THAT CHEAP COWARD, HE'S TRYING TO HUMILIATE ZERO!
Q-QUITE, G-G-GIMPY!
BRAVO!
HOW DID THESE GUYS GET IN HERE?
I'LL GET YOU, COUSIN GEORGE, FOR THIS!
GET 'EM OUTSIDE, QUICK!
'ERE, IT'S THE TRAMP WHO SNOOPED ON US BEFORE!
GIMPY AND LIGHTNIN' WERE MARCHED OUT INTO THE DARK BACK ALLEY...
SO WE DIDN'T FINISH YOU LAST TIME, BUT THERE'LL BE NO MISTAKE THIS TIME!
NEXT PROG: THE SHOW MUST GO ON!

MACHINE

IN ONE OF LONDON'S DARK BACK ALLEYS, TWO TRAMPS, NAMED GIMPY AND LIGHTNIN', HAVE MET WITH A SPOT OF TROUBLE...
YOU'VE BEEN A BIT OF A NUISANCE TRAMP, AND I THINK MY BOSS, COUSIN GEORGE, WILL BE REALLY GLAD TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENT!
Part 6

THE ALLEY HAD SEEMED TO BE DESERTED, BUT FROM OUT OF THE DARK SHADOWS AND LONDON FOG, HUMAN SHAPES BEGAN TO APPEAR AND MOVE MENACINGLY FORWARD.
MORE TRAMPS! WHAT THE..? BOYS, WE BEEN SET UP!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT G. MILLER
ART ROBOT R. SOLA
LETTERING ROBOT S. POTTER
COMPU-73E

THE STREETS OF LONDON FORMED THE ONLY SHELTER FOR THE HOMELESS TRAMPS AND VAGRANTS...
WORD GOT ROUND THAT YOU WAS IN TROUBLE!
HA! YOU DONE US PROUD LADS, I KNEW WE COULD RELY ON OUR BRETHREN!
...AND DESPITE BEING REJECTED BY THE REST OF SOCIETY, THERE WAS ALWAYS HELP NEARBY, FOR ANY MEMBER OF THIS GROUP OF OUTCASTS.

MAX GRAWL, COUSIN GEORGE'S MANAGER, DECIDED IT WAS TIME TO INTERVENE...
YARGGHHHH!
HE'S DRIVIN' THAT VAN STRAIGHT FOR US!
BUT AS THE TRAMPS FLED DOWN THE ALLEY...
'ERE, THIS WAY, QUICK!
I'M COMIN' QUICK AS I CAN!
GRAWL STARED WITH DISBELIEF DOWN THE OPEN MANHOLE.
THOSE TRAMPS HAVE GONE AND ESCAPED DOWN INTO THE SEWERS — LIKE THE RATS THEY ARE.
BUT WHAT'LL I TELL C.G?
INSIDE THE THEATRE THE WORLD FAMOUS STUNT MAN COUSIN GEORGE, WAS BASKING IN THE LIMELIGHT OF THE FIRST NIGHT OF HIS NEW ENTERTAINMENT...
NOW THE THINGS YOU'VE SEEN TONIGHT HAVE BEEN REALLY WONDERFUL, BUT BELIEVE ME — AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I RECKON THE WORD OF COUSIN GEORGE, SHOULD BE ENOUGH FOR Y'ALL —
YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHING YET!
OH HE'S SO HANDSOME!
I WONDER WHO HIS TAILOR IS!
"A TRIAL OF STRENGTH IS ABOUT TO TAKE PLACE BETWEEN...
...MIKE THE MANGLER...
...KARL THE CHOPPER...
...WILD MAN McGHEE...
...AND SOME TWENTY OF MY STRONGEST MEN...

AGAINST MACH-ZERO— A WILD CREATURE THAT I CAME ACROSS ON MY TRAVELS.
CAN'T SHIFT HIM AN INCH!
UGHHH!
MACH ZERO BELIEVED THAT HIS SON, TOMMY, WAS IN THE POWER OF THE STUNT MAN, AND FOR FEAR OF ANYTHING HAPPENING TO THE BOY, HAD TO OBEY COUSIN GEORGE'S ORDERS.
ZERO DID NOT KNOW THAT COUSIN GEORGE HAD MERELY TRICKED HIM!

UGH!
GRUNT!
URGH!
HEY, YOU'RE PULLING MY HAIR!

THE CROWD COULDN'T BELIEVE THAT ONE MAN HAD SO MUCH STRENGTH, SO THEY CONCLUDED THAT THE WHOLE ACT WAS JUST A FAKE!
BOO! WE WANT TO SEE COUSIN GEORGE, SOME ACTION!
YEAH! GET THAT HUNK OFF THE STAGE, AND TELL HIM TO TAKE THAT SILLY MASK OFF!
UHHHHH? PEOPLE THROW THINGS AT ZERO!

THE CROWD WANT TO SEE ME, AND THEY WANT TO SHOWER THAT BIG FREAK ZERO WITH GARBAGE! HE WON'T DARE TO RETALLIATE WHILE HE THINKS THAT HIS BOY IS MY PRISONER.

THE ANGER WHICH ZERO HAD BEEN FORCED TO STIFLE FOR SO LONG HAD BUILT UP TO A PITCH THAT HE NO LONGER COULD CONTROL.
AS A VOLCANO SPRINGS TO LIFE, AFTER SEEMINGLY LYING DORMANT, ZERO SUDDENLY ERUPTED INTO ACTION!
AIEEEEEEEEE!
WURRRGGHH!
HOW MUCH STRENGTH DOES ZERO POSSESS? HE'S SCATTERED THOSE MEN AS IF THEY WERE SKITTLES!
I'LL HAVE TO STOP HIM BEFORE HE GOES ON THE RAMPAGE!
SIR! KINDLY GET YOUR BEARD OUT OF THE MINESTRONE!
UHHHHHH!
OHHHH! THAT THING- IT'S GONE WILD!

AMIDST THE MAYHEM AND CONFUSION COUSIN GEORGE LAUNCHED OUT AT THE ENRAGED ZERO!
HAAAAA!!
YOU NO MATCH FOR ME! DONE NOTHING BUT ILL-TREAT ZERO SINCE YOU FIND HIM!
NOW TIME TO...
W-W-WAIT! THINK OF YOUR SON!
WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL HAPPEN TO HIM, IF YOU HARM ME?
AGGHHH!
ZERO CAN DO NOTHING - MUST OBEY BAD MAN!
AS ZERO LEFT THE STAGE, GEORGE TURNED TO THE CROWD TO ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR APPLAUSE.
THERE'S DANGER, THERE'S EXCITEMENT, WHEN COUSIN GEORGE IS AROUND! I'M SURE THAT YOU'LL AGREE FOLKS, THAT ALL THE TERROR AND SCARES JUST ADDED TO YOUR EVENING'S ENTERTAINMENT!
THANK Y'ALL, AND I SINCERELY MEAN THAT!
COUSIN GEOOOORRGGE! RAAAA!
THE PHOTOGRAPHERS CROWDEDED ROUND AS MAX GRAWL APPROACHED HIS BOSS.
NOT TOO MANY PICTURES, BOYS, AND TRY TO CONCENTRATE ON MY RIGHT SIDE.
GREAT SHOW TONIGHT EH, MAX?
ER-FANTASTIC, C.G., BUT I MUST HAVE A WORD WITH YOU!

SMILE, PLEASE!
THE TRAMP WHO WAS THERE WHEN WE PICKED UP ZERO — CAME ROUND TONIGHT WITH A GROUP OF HIS PALS, THEY SEEM TO BE ALMOST ORGANISED. TROUBLE WAS HE-ER- ESCAPED!
RELAX MAX, NO NEED TO WORRY.
SAY THAT'S GREAT, FOR A MOMENT I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE SORT OF ANGRY!
IT WAS SUCH A SMALL THING...
...BUT REMEMBER NOT TO COLLECT ANY SALARY FOR THE NEXT COUPLE OF MONTHS!
GULP!
COUSIN GEORGE THOUGHTFULLY WATCHED AS ZERO'S BULKY FRAME SLUNK AWAY...
SO PERHAPS ZERO HAS SOME FRIENDS SOMEWHERE WHO ARE GOING TO CAUSE TROUBLE FOR ME.
IT'S POSSIBLE, FOR I KNOW SO LITTLE ABOUT THE FREAK! I BETTER MAKE SURE THAT I'M READY FOR ANYTHING!
BUT WOULD COUSIN GEORGE HAVE PREPARED FOR THE STRANGE GATHERING THAT WAS TAKING PLACE IN THE HEART OF THE DERELICT WASTE LANDS OF LONDON?
THE TRAMPS AND VAGRANTS WHO COMPRISE THE 'BROTHERHOOD OF THE THREE' ARE HAVING A SPECIAL MEETING...
THIS MAN HAS OPENLY AND DEFIANTLY HARMED MY FRIEND, THE ONE CALLED ZERO, AND I DEMAND THAT JUSTICE BE DONE...
...I DECLARE THAT THE BROTHERHOOD IS AT WAR, WITH THIS EVIL MAN, COUSIN GEORGE!
BETTER WATCH OUT, COUSIN GEORGE, YOU ARE NOT GOING TO LIKE WHAT IS HEADING YOUR WAY!
NEXT PROG: THE MARCH OF THE VAGRANT ARMY!

MAN ACTIVATED COMPU PUNCTURE HYPER POWER. SUCCESS RATING: ZERO

MACH ZERO

I OBJECT TO TH— OOOFFF!
WE'VE DEMOCRATICALLY REACHED A UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT—COS I SAY SO... NOW SHUT YER MOUTH!
HMMMM—THAT'S INTERESTING! YES IT IS, YES IT IS!
NOT ALL MEMBERS HELD GREAT LOYALTY FOR THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE THREE, ONE SUCH MEMBER WAS SNEAKER THE RAT!
THE MONEYED MAN, GEORGE, SHOULD BE TOLD OF THIS! HE WOULD DEARLY LIKE TO KNOW— HE WILL BE RICHLY PLEASED.
BUT WHO'S TO TELL HIM, EH? EH? WHO WOULD SNEAK ON THEIR OWN BROTHERS?
ME! THAT'S WHO
THE DECISION OF THE THREE WAS SOON REACHED, AND PASSED ON TO THE MEMBERS
HOOORAAHHHH!
IT IS WAR TONIGHT! AN EVENING RAID BY THE VAGRANT ARMY! ALL OUR MEN MUST GATHER FOR THE BATTLE MARCH.
THE THREE HAVE SPOKEN!
OH, BUT THE ENEMY WILL BE READY AND WAITING— SNEAKER THE RAT WILL SEE TO THAT!
BUT THE WAY TO COUSIN GEORGE WAS ALREADY BEING WATCHED BY THE VAGRANTS...
MUST BE CAREFUL, NOT TO BE SEEN, MUST BE, OH, SO CUNNING!
RAT KNEW VERY WELL THAT HE WOULD SUFFER IF IT WAS FOUND OUT THAT HE WAS GOING TO INFORM GEORGE ABOUT THE MARCH.
OH, SO DANGEROUS! BUT MANY PENNIES FROM THE RICH MAN—
MUST GO ON!

WHY WE WATCHING THIS PLACE, LIGHTNIN' THERE AIN'T NUFFIN' GOING ON!
T-T-THAT'S WHY WE'RE WATCHING! T-TO MAKE S-SURE THAT N-N-NOTHING DOES GO ON UNTIL T-TONIGHT, WHEN W-WERE R-R-READY!
SNEAKER HAD OTHER PLANS...
MUST RUN FOR THE THEATRE, RUN LIKE THE DEVIL!
OI!
W-W-W-WHAT THE...!
MORE MEN ON GUARD! OH SNEAKER, YOU'RE IN TROUBLE!
YOU B-B-B-B..
HELP WAS AT HAND. AS COUSIN GEORGE'S MEN CAME TO SNEAKER'S AID.
WE GOT ORDERS TO DRAG YOU IN, SCUM.
STOP HIM, HE MUST BE STOPPED!!
THE RAT WAS BROUGHT BEFORE COUSIN GEORGE, AND HIS MANAGER, MAX GRAWL.
SURELY YOU DON'T BELIEVE THIS FILTHY CREATURE!
QUIET, MAX! THIS GENTLEMAN HAS OBVIOUSLY VERY KINDLY COME HERE IN ORDER TO HELP ME!
OH, YES, INDEED SIR, THAT'S IT!
NOW IF PERHAPS YOU WOULD LIKE TO REWARD THE INFORMATION, KNOW WHAT I MEAN, EH?
GET YOUR STINKING HANDS OFF ME, YOU GARBAGE!
REWARD? YOU THINK THAT I WOULD REWARD YOU, GUTTER-LOUT! I'LL THROW YOU BACK FROM WHERE YOU CAME!
UHH! NO, S-SIR!

N-NOT THE TRAMPS- THEY'LL— ARGHHHH!
THE RAT DISCOVERED THAT HE WAS NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO WAS A DOUBLE DEALER.
I'VE ALWAYS LOVED HUNTING, MAX, AND THESE FEW WEAPONS CAN BE USED AGAIN NOW THAT THERE'S A MOST INTERESTING TYPE OF ANIMAL TO CATCH.
THERE SHOULD BE SOME GOOD SPORT THIS EVENING!
MACH-ZERO REMAINED A HELPLESS PRISONER, UNAWARE THAT THE VAGRANT ARMY INTENDED TO FREE HIM.
ZERO COULD BREAK THESE WALLS DOWN, BUT BOY, TOMMY, IS HELD BY EVIL MAN, GEORGE.
ZERO TREATED LIKE ANIMAL, BUT MUST WAIT FOR TIME TO ESCAPE!
TIME FOR SOME FOOD, FREAK!
WHAT'S UP WITH YOU, YOU'RE QUIET TODAY?
WURRRGGHHH!
OHHH! NOW, THERE'S NO NEED TO BE LIKE THAT!

MEANWHILE THE VAGRANT ARMY WAS STARTING TO MOVE IN ITS OWN UNIQUE WAY.
ONE GROUP WAS MOVING THROUGH THE SEWERS, LED BY BLIND BARTY.
FORWARD, BROTHERS! BLIND BARTY NEEDS NO EYES; HE KNOWS EVERY INCH OF THESE SEWERS!
ANOTHER, LED BY LIGHTNIN', MADE ITS WAY ACROSS THE ROOFTOPS.
WAIT FOR ME!
C-C-C-COME ON! WE MUST M-MAKE SPEED.
A THIRD GROUP OF TRAMPS, LED BY GIMPY, MOVED UNOBSERVED ALONG THE EMPTY TUNNELS, WHICH HAD ONCE BEEN USED AS PART OF THE LONDON UNDERGROUND'S CIRCLE LINE.*
NO-ONE WILL HAVE HEARD US, SEEN US, OR SPOKEN OF OUR MOVEMENTS.
* THARG NOTE: THE CIRCLE LINE HAD CLOSED DOWN WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF THE HOVER-RAIL OPERATING ABOVE GROUND.
NEXT PROG: FIGHTERS OF THE THREE

MAN ACTIVATED BY COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER. SUCCESS RATING: ZERO

MACH ZERO

MACH ZERO IS BEING HELD PRISONER, INSIDE AN OLD THEATRE IN LONDON, BY COUSIN GEORGE, THE WORLD-FAMOUS AMERICAN STUNT-MAN, WHO HAS BEEN PARADING ZERO'S GREAT STRENGTH TO SHOW OFF TO THE PUBLIC IN A CIRCUS-LIKE FREAK SHOW...

AS THE ARMY MOVED INSIDE THE THEATRE...
'DARN, BUT THE PLACE IS EMPTY!
DE DOORS! CLOSING 'DEMSELVES!
AS THE DOORS SLAMMED TOGETHER WITH AN OMINOUS, RESOUNDING CRASH, THE CURTAINS OF THE STAGE SWUNG OPEN TO REVEAL...
...COUSIN GEORGE!
WELL, WELL. NICE TO SEE Y'ALL...
I CAN PROMISE YOU GOOD PEOPLE REAL ENTERTAINMENT—A FINE SPORTING, FAIR FIGHT...
...'CEPT THAT WE GOT WEAPONS, AND YOU AINT!
AIEEEE!
BUT SUDDENLY...
BE STRONG, MY BRETHREN, FOR HELP IS AT HAND!
BLIND BARTY HAD ARRIVED.
WHERE DID THIS BAG OF BONES COME FROM?
WITH THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF THE AREA, OTHER GROUPS OF TRAMPS HAD FORCED ENTRY INTO THE THEATRE, FROM THE ROOFTOPS AND UP FROM THE SEWERS.
♪ On this the Day of Brotherhood, True Warriors Sent by the THREE.... ♪
♪ THREE LONG TALONED TOMS...
...TWO TOAD-LIKE TRAMPS...
ALTHOUGH HE WAS BLIND, BARTY'S ACUTE SENSE OF HEARING WAS ENOUGH TO PICTURE IN HIS MIND THE POSITIONS OF THE GROUPS OF MEN... AND NOW HE WAS ORGANISING THE ATTACK, TO THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF A STRANGE CHANT.

...and appear, PETER REAPER for me!
LOR', HOW MANY OF THESE FREAKS ARE THERE?
AMIDST THE FIGHT, GIMPY, WITH HIS FRIEND LIGHTNING CAME ACROSS COUSIN GEORGE'S PERSONAL VALET, NAMED SANOY.
BATTLE ON FAITHFUL TRAMPS!
GIMPY, THE MAN CALLED ZERO IS IMPRISONED IN A CELL BACKSTAGE DOWN THE CORRIDOR...
GEORGE HAS MADE ZERO BELIEVE THAT HIS SON IS HELD CAPTIVE, BUT THAT'S JUST A LIE TO KEEP A HOLD OVER HIM!
S-S-S-SCUSE ME!
GRAH!
HA! LIGHTNING STRIKES!
NO! THEY'RE GOING TO FREE ZERO!
THEY MUST BE STOPPED!
G-G-G-GIMPY, R-R-RUN! GET TO ZERO!
AVENGE YOUR OLD MATE L-L-L-...!
LIGHTNIN'!
KNOWING THAT ZERO WOULD SOON BE FREE, COUSIN GEORGE DECIDED THAT DISCRETION WAS THE BETTER PART OF VALOUR.
GOTTA GIT THE HELL OUTTA HERE!
HE SWUNG UP TOWARDS THE BALCONY...
...AND BRUSHED BLIND BARTY ASIDE.
MOVE, YA SCUM!
YAAAA!

COUSIN GEORGE HAD ESCAPED JUST IN TIME...
ZERO FREED BY GIMPY, AND TOLD OF LIES OF EVIL MAN GEORGE...
GULP!
RECKON THIS IS IT!
RAGGHHH!
WE FIGHT TO THE DEATH!
ZERO STAGGERED BACK, RECOILING FROM THE PAIN OF THE BULLETS!
HIS VAST RESERVES OF ENERGY, GENERATED BY THE COMPU-PUNCTURE EXPERIMENTS, HAD NOT BEEN CALLED UPON FOR SOME TIME, AND ALL THE HATE INSIDE HIM WELLED UP AT THE THOUGHT OF HOW COUSIN GEORGE HAD TRICKED HIM...
...ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN NEXT!
UHHH! ZERO BEEN CHEATED, AND ILL-TREATED! TO BAD MEN WHO CARE NOT FOR LIVES OF OTHERS...
LET DEATH COME TO THEM!
NEXT PROG: THE RAT IN THE TRAP!

MACH ZERO
MAN ACTIVATED BY COMPUPUNCTURE HYPER POWER SUCCESS RATING: ZERO.
TO SATISFY HIS OWN LUST FOR GLORY AND ATTENTION, COUSIN GEORGE, THE WORLD-FAMOUS AMERICAN STUNT-MAN, HAD TRICKED MACH ZERO INTO PARADING HIS STRENGTH IN THE MANNER OF A SIDE SHOW FREAK...
... BUT TONIGHT IS DIFFERENT, FOR ZERO IS STEALING THE SHOW — IN FACT HE IS ABOUT TO BRING THE HOUSE DOWN!
HE'S PUSHING THE COLUMNS APART! DESTROYING THE PLACE WITH HIS OWN HANDS!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT G MILLER
ART ROBOT MIKE DOREY
LETTERING ROBOT TOM FRAME
COMPU-73E
THE MAN CALLED MACH IS WILD, RUN MY BROTHERS, OUTSIDE THE THEATRE!
COMPU-PUNCTURE, A COMPUTERISED FORM OF ACUPUNCTURE, HAD LEFT ZERO WITH SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH, WHICH HE HAD NOT USED AGAINST COUSIN GEORGE BEFORE, AS HE BELIEVED THAT THE AMERICAN HELD HIS SON, TOMMY AS A CAPTIVE... NOW ZERO HAS BEEN TOLD OF THE DECEPTION, HE CAN LET OFF HIS EXCESS ENERGY!

THE TRAMPS AND VAGRANTS, ALL MEMBERS OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE THREE, FLED FROM THE THEATRE.
RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!
SECONDS LATER, AS THE CLOUDS OF DUST BEGAN TO SETTLE ON THE FALLEN MASONRY...
MACH, HE HAS GONE!
AYE! WE OF THE THREE FREED HIM ONLY TO BRING ABOUT HIS DEATH!
YET, INCREDIBLY...
WUUHHHH!
ZERO!
MACH IS BACK... MACH'S BACK!
YOU GOOD, KIND MEN!
YOU FIND ZERO AND HELP HIM BREAK FREE FROM EVIL ONE — GEORGE!
YOU HELPED US BEFORE, WITH YOUR STRENGTH, AND NOW OUR STRENGTH OF NUMBERS HAS HELPED YOU, IT IS JUST!
BUT COUSIN GEORGE, WHAT OF HIM?
I CAN TELL YOU OF HIM!
BLIND BARTY, OUR WISE BELOVED BROTHER, WHO GIVES US PROPHET-LIKE WISDOM. WE THOUGHT WE HAD LOST YOU, AND WHAT A TRAGEDY THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN!
I AM A PROPHET, AND WOULD HAVE BEEN NO LOSS!
BUT THE EVIL ONE IS FREE! HE RAN PAST ME, AND THOUGH MY EYES NEVER SAW HIM, MY EARS FOLLOWED HIS STEPS. HE WENT DOWN THE ONLY POSSIBLE ESCAPE ROUTE...
...THE DISUSED UNDERGROUND TUNNEL!
THEN WE MUST GO AFTER HIM, WE CANNOT LET HIM GET AWAY!
NO! ZERO WILL GO ON OWN! HE SETTLE SCORE WITH EVIL MAN. YOU HAVE RISKED LIVES ENOUGH!
SOMEHOW I FEEL IN MY OLD BONES THAT WE WON'T BE SEEING YOU AGAIN, MACH!
WHAT YOU SAY TO A FEAST OF BEANS, THORLEY?
YAHHH! I HATE BEANS!
REJOICE FOR THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE THREE HAS TRIUMPHED IN ITS APPOINTED TASK!

COUSIN GEORGE WAS MAKING HIS ESCAPE ALONG THE DARK TUNNEL WHICH HAD ONCE BEEN PART OF THE LONDON UNDERGROUND TRANSPORT NETWORK...
ZERO MAY HAVE ME ON THE RUN FOR THE MOMENT, BUT I'LL RETURN WITH MORE MEN AND WEAPONS TO DEAL WITH THE FREAK! YES SIR, HE AIN'T SEEN THE LAST OF OLD COUSIN GEORGE!
SUDDENLY A NOISE ECHOED ROUND THE WALLS WHICH FROZE COUSIN GEORGE IN HIS TRACKS . . .
GEOORGGEEE ZERO COMING FOR YOOUUU...
NO! THAT'S ZERO'S VOICE! HE'S COMING AFTER ME!
GOTTA GET AWAY!
WATER SEEPING IN, MUST BE COMING FROM SOMEWHERE!
THIS IS IT!
I CAN PUSH THIS SLAB ASIDE AND HIDE IN THIS RECESS, AND LET THAT BIG HUNK, ZERO, GO RANTING BY!
COUSIN GEORGE HAD JUST TIME TO HIDE, BEFORE...
MAN'S TORCH... BUT WHERE MAN GONE? MUST HAVE RUN ON, BUT ZERO CATCH HIM!
IN THE SAFETY OF HIS HIDING PLACE, COUSIN GEORGE LISTENED AND LAUGHED TO HIMSELF AS HE HEARD ZERO LUMBERING PAST.
WHAT A STINKIN' HOLE THIS IS — WATER MUST BE COMING IN FROM THE THAMES!
MINUTES PASSED BY BEFORE THE AMERICAN DECIDED IT WAS SAFE TO LEAVE THE HIDE AWAY.
UHHH? WATER'S RISEN WHILE I'VE BEEN IN HERE, AND THAT SLAB OPENS INWARDS! I CAN'T SHIFT IT!
THE WATER HAD BUILT UP AGAINST THE STONE SLAB, AND THE PRESSURE WAS NOW TOO GREAT FOR IT TO BE MOVED.

AS THE SECONDS PASSED, THE WATER LEVEL GREW STEADILY HIGHER. . .
I'M TRAPPED... BUT THIS CAN'T HAPPEN TO ME! I'M THE GREATEST STUNT MAN IN THE WORLD.
I CAN ESCAPE FROM ANYWHERE.
I'M EVERYONE'S FAVOURITE, COUSIN GEORGE!
THROUGHOUT HIS MIS-SPENT LIFE COUSIN GEORGE HAD SOUGHT ADULATION AND WORSHIP FROM THE CROWDS, NO MATTER WHAT THE COST TO OTHERS. YET HE WAS TO SPEND HIS LAST MINUTES TRAPPED IN TERRIBLE ISOLATION.
THE FINAL SOUND IN HIS EARS WAS NOT THE THUNDER OF APPLAUSE, BUT THE THUNDER OF ROARING WATER!
MEANWHILE, ZERO HAD ARRIVED AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL AND BURST HIS WAY THROUGH THE BARRIERS WHICH SEALED OFF THE UNDERGROUND. . .
WURGHHH! NO SIGN OF EVIL MAN, HE HAS ESCAPED FROM ZERO!
CANNOT GO BACK TO GIMPY AND FRIENDS, IF EVIL MAN ALIVE — HE WOULD ILL-TREAT THEM.
AND SO MACH ZERO, UNAWARE THAT HIS ENEMY WAS DEAD, SET OFF...
ZERO ON OWN AGAIN, MUST SEARCH FOR BOY, TOMMY...
...INTO THE WET, COLD, UNFRIENDLY NIGHT!
BUT WHERE ZERO GO, AND WHO HELP ZERO?

NIGHT TIME IN THE DEPTHS OF THE HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE...
MACH ZERO TRUDGES ONWARDS, UNSURE OF WHERE HE IS GOING. NOW FRIENDLESS AND LONELY, HE IS SUSPICIOUS OF DISCOVERY BY NORMAL HUMANS.
UUHH! LIGHTS... ZERO HIDE!
INSIDE THE CAR, BUSINESSMAN AND FINANCIER, SIR CHARLES HILLIERS, SPEEDS DOWN THE ROAD IN HIS CHAUFFEUR-DRIVEN CAR...
GOOD GRIEF, HOSKINS, WHAT'S THAT THING CAUGHT IN THE HEADLIGHTS?
AN ANIMAL... COULD HAVE BEEN A DEER I SUPPOSE, SIR!
ALTHOUGH THEIR PATHS HAVE JUST CROSSED, MACH ZERO AND SIR CHARLES ARE NOT YET DESTINED TO MEET!
MACH ZERO
MAN ACTIVATED BY COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPER POWER
SUCCESS RATING: ZERO
SIR CHARLES' CAR STOPPED OUTSIDE THE GATES OF HIS COUNTRY MANSION, PEMBERTON LODGE...
The SUIT: Part 1
I WANT MAXIMUM SECURITY IN OPERATION TONIGHT. NO-ONE MUST DISTURB ME, AS I'LL BE IN WITH THE PROFESSOR!
VERY GOOD, SIR CHARLES!
ZERO SEE LARGE GARDEN— GOOD PLACE TO SLEEP FOR NIGHT!
2000 A.D.
Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT GEOFFREY MILLER
ART ROBOT MONTERO
LETTERING ROBOT JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E

INSIDE THE LABORATORY, SIR CHARLES SAW THE PROFESSOR, AND THE PROJECT HE WAS WORKING ON — THE SUIT!
WELL, SIR CHARLES? THERE IT IS! AN INVENTION WHICH — EVEN THOUGH I MODESTLY SAY SO MYSELF — IS ABSOLUTELY INCREDIBLE!
A WORK OF GENIUS OF THE HIGHEST ORDER... A REAL..
DANGER
QUITE SO, PROFESSOR!
AND THE TESTS? HAVE THEY ALL BEEN CARRIED OUT?
ALL APART FROM TESTING THE HUMAN FACTOR! I THOUGHT IT WISE TO WAIT UNTIL YOU WERE HERE, TO WITNESS THE TRIUMPH OF MY GREATNESS!
VERY-ER- CONSIDERATE OF YOU, PROFESSOR. NOW WHERE'S THE MAN TO TRY THIS OUT?
OVER THERE!
HOW PLEASANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN, ER-ER?
HARRY WINTHROP, SIR!
OF COURSE! NOW, HARRY, I'M PLEASED TO HEAR THAT YOU ARE READY TO UNDERGO THE FINAL TESTING!
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO DO SOMETHING TO MAKE ME FAMOUS!
HAVE YOU MANAGED ALL THE LITTLE BITS OF BUSINESS, SIR CHARLES?
PERHAPS IT'S 'CAUSE I'M A LITTLE FELLA, BUT PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS JUST IGNORED ME, AND CARRIED ON AS IF I WASN'T REALLY THERE!
C'MON, SHORT HOUSE!
OH, JUST THE FEW ROUTINE DEALS WITH MAJOR INDUSTRIALISTS, BUSINESS CONGLOMERATIONS AND FINANCIERS. THAT SUIT WILL MAKE OUR MILLIONS, PROFESSOR!
SOON, HARRY WAS READY FOR THE EXPERIMENT TO BEGIN...
GOOD LUCK HARRY, THIS'LL MAKE A MAN OUT OF YOU!
ER I HOPE SO!

HARRY WINTHROP FELT THAT THIS WAS HIS CHANCE TO BECOME A "SOMEONE"...
DANGER
BUT AT THAT MOMENT HE WOULD HAVE GIVEN ANYTHING TO BE PLAIN, INSIGNIFICANT HARRY WINTHROP, BACK BEHIND THE SAFETY OF HIS LABORATORY BENCH!
THE NEXT STAGE TOOK PLACE...
NOW THE SUIT IS SEALED IT CAN BE SUBJECTED TO—
MASSIVE DOSES OF RADIATION!
THAT SUIT WILL REDUCE THE SOMATIC EFFECT. IT WILL ABSORB RADIATION, LEAVING THE BODY UNCONTAMINATED!
AND IT WORKS, WELL—AT ANY RATE, HE'S STILL ALIVE!
Tharg note: SOMATIC EFFECT—THE EFFECT PRODUCED BY RADIATION IN THE BODY OF THE PERSON IRRADIATED.
IT SEEMED HARRY HAD UNDERGONE THE DANGEROUS PART...
NOW HE HAD TO GO THROUGH A SOPHISTICATED CLEANING PROCESS...
...TO MAKE SURE THAT HE WAS NOT CONTAMINATED!
HARRY WAS ALMOST BEGINNING TO ENJOY HIMSELF!
IN FACT HE WAS QUITE ATTACHED TO THE SUIT...
ER... PROFESSOR!
...IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE!
THE SUIT DID TAKE IN ALL THE RADIATION WITHOUT A TRACE REMAINING... BUT, ER-WELL, WE CAN'T GET HARRY OUT OF THE SUIT!
NO, IT CAN'T BE! MY MARVELLOUS INVESTIGATIONS, THE YEARS OF WORK, WHAT'S TO BECOME OF THEM?
PROFESSOR!! WHAT'S TO BECOME OF ME?
MEANWHILE OUTSIDE THE LODGE, THE GUESTS WERE STARTING TO ARRIVE, ANXIOUS TO HEAR ABOUT THE MYSTERY PROJECT THAT SIR CHARLES WAS DEVELOPING!
FELIX! SUPER TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
SOUNDS LIKE OLD HILLIERS HAS GOT SOMETHING VERY UNUSUAL TO SELL THIS TIME!

SIR CHARLES HAD INVITED A WEALTHY AND INFLUENTIAL GATHERING TO WITNESS THE UNVEILING OF THE SUIT...
EVERYTHING IS GOING SMOOTHLY... I CAN ALMOST HEAR THE MONEY ROLLING INTO THE COFFERS. PEOPLE WILL BE OUTBIDDING EACH OTHER IN AN EFFORT TO BUY THAT SUIT!
THEY'RE CUTTING ME, GOING RIGHT THROUGH MY SKIN!
BACK IN THE LABORATORY...
NOW, HARRY. IT APPEARS THAT FOR SOME REASON THE SUIT IS BEING A BIT AWKWARD TO REMOVE.. BUT SLATER AND WALKER WILL SOON HAVE IT OFF YOU!
NOW IT WON'T HURT A BIT!
AIEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!
GOOD GRIEF! THE SUIT HAS BECOME LIKE AN EXTRA LAYER OF SKIN! IT'S WELDED TO HARRY'S BODY!
THE PROFESSOR QUIETLY BROKE THE NEWS TO SIR CHARLES...
TRAPPED IN THE SUIT! IS THERE NOTHING THAT WE CAN DO TO GET HIM OUT?
NOTHING! AND HE'S IN SOME PAIN NOW, SO WE CAN'T REALLY KEEP HIM QUIET!
WELL IF WE CAN'T FREE HIM, OR KEEP HIM QUIET, THERE'S ONLY ONE THING LEFT... WE MUST DISPOSE OF HIM!
GET ME SECURITY!
THE PROFESSOR RETURNED TO THE LABORATORY...
ALL LAB-TECHNICIANS, I WANT YOU OUT OF THE WAY AT ONCE! SIR CHARLES HAS ARRANGED FOR-ER-SOME OF HIS SPECIAL SECURITY MEN TO-ER-TAKE CARE OF HARRY!
PROF! WHEN ARE YOU GETTING ME OUT OF THIS THING?

OH IT WILL SOON BE OVER, HARRY!
THAT'S GOOD! THIS SUIT FEELS TIGHT AND IT IRRITATES ME, LIKE IT'S MY OWN SKIN!
SIR HARRY HAD MAINTAINED A RUTHLESSLY EFFICIENT SECURITY FORCE, WHO COULD COPE WITH ANY UNEXPECTED SITUATION . . .
OKAY, LET HIM HAVE IT!
HEY, WHAT'S THE BIG—
AAAEEEAAA!
I'M ON FIRE— MY WHOLE BODY— I'M BEING BURNT ALIVE!
NEXT PROG: THE HEATISON!

MAN ACTIVATED BY COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPER POWER! SUCCESS RATING: ZERO!
ZERO HAS ENTERED THE GARDENS OF PEMBERTON LODGE—OWNED BY WEALTHY FINANCIER SIR CHARLES HILLIERS—TO FIND A PLACE TO REST IN PEACE AND QUIET...
INSIDE THE HOUSE, LABORATORY ASSISTANT HARRY WINTHROP IS TESTING OUT A NEW PROJECT FINANCED BY SIR CHARLES—A SUIT WHICH CAN ABSORB RADIATION—AND NOW FINDS THAT THE SUIT IS WELDED TO HIS BODY!
THE SITUATION HAS STARTED TO GET SOME WHAT HEATED...
ANGER
THOSE FLAMES... THEY SHOULD BE BURNING ME UP, YET I DON'T FEEL ANY PAIN!
KEEP BLASTING HIM. SIR CHARLES WANTS ALL EVIDENCE OF THE EXPERIMENT'S FAILURE TO BE DESTROYED!
MACH ZERO
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT GEOFFREY MILLER
ART ROBOT MONTERO
LETTERING ROBOT JACK POTTER
COMPU-73E

YET, INCREDIBLY, THE SUIT WAS NOT DESTROYED!
THE WALL'S MELTING FROM THE HEAT OF THE SUIT!
AND THE GUY IS STILL ALIVE!
HEYYYY! WHAT'S HAPPENING... THAT WALL? AM I DOING THIS?
YIPEEE! THE SUIT HAS PROTECTED ME FROM THE FLAMES. SO I'M NO LONGER WEAK AND HELPLESS... I'M POWERFUL!
NAAAAAA!
YARGGGHHHH!
THOUGHT YOU WOULD PICK ON LITTLE OLD HARRY, DID YOU? BUT THEN WHO WAS EVER FRIGHTENED OF HARRY— HE WOULDN'T HURT A FLY! HA-HA!
OUTSIDE IN THE GROUNDS THE PROFESSOR WAS WAITING WITH ANOTHER GROUP OF GUARDS...
PROFESSOR, YOU GAVE ME THIS NEW POWER, LET ME GIVE YOU A SHOW OF MY APPRECIATION!
I KNEW IT! I AM NEVER WRONG ABOUT MY OWN INGENIOUS IN-VENTIONS!
THE SUIT WAS ABLE TO ABSORB THE HEAT, JUST AS IT DID THE RADIATION. I HAVE CREATED A MARVEL, A MASTERPIECE OF MODERN METHODOLOGY, A...
STOW IT, PROF! HOW DO WE DESTROY HIM!
LET'S SEE WHAT A BULLET DOES!
AAAAGGHH!
THE SUIT DID NOT STOP THE BULLET!

BEFORE MORE BULLETS COULD BE FIRED, MACH ZERO APPEARED...
YOU WICKED PEOPLE!
USING NOISY GUNS TO HURT POOR MAN!
M-M-M-MY GRIEF!
IS THIS ANOTHER OF THE PROF'S CRAZY EXPERIMENTS!
WURRGGHH! YOU NOT FIT TO HAVE SUCH DANGEROUS TOYS TO PLAY WITH!
GRAAA!
I'VE GOT TO RUN... BUT WAIT, THE OLD HARRY WOULD HAVE RUN! BUT NOW HARRY CAN HANDLE THINGS FOR HIMSELF!
THIS GUY MUST BE ANOTHER OF THE PROFESSOR'S CREATIONS, AND I CAN PERHAPS USE HIM TO HELP ME!
AS THE GUARDS FLED, HARRY INTRODUCED HIMSELF TO ZERO...
I'M LITTLE OLD HARRY. JUST A QUIET NO-ONE!
ME, ZERO!
THE PROFESSOR GAVE ME POWER, HE MUST HAVE DONE THE SAME FOR YOU!
ZERO TRIED TO RECALL INCIDENTS FROM THE JUMBLED MAZE OF HIS MIND...
UHH! PROFESSOR? ZERO REMEMBERS THE EXPERIMENTS...
BRIGHT LIGHTS AND SHARP NEEDLES...
NOT CLEAR, BUT THEY WICKED, EVIL MEN. THEY UNKIND TO ZERO!
THE SECRET SERVICE HAD CARRIED OUT THE EXPERIMENTS, BUT FROM THE HALF-DRAWN IMAGES WHICH ZERO REMEMBERED, IT SEEMED THAT HARRY'S WORDS MADE SENSE. YES, THE PROFESSOR MUST HAVE DONE THIS TO HIM!
ZERO WANT REVENGE FOR THIS — YES, MEN MUST PAY!
HOORAY, WE'LL SHOW 'EM, ZERO! THEY'VE KICKED US AROUND LONG ENOUGH...
YES, WE FIGHT BACK NOW!
INSIDE THE LODGE, SIR CHARLES' UNSUSPECTING GUESTS EAGERLY AWAITED THE FIRST VIEWING OF THE SUIT!
CAN'T YOU GIVE US SOME IDEA OF THE NATURE OF THIS EXPERIMENT, SIR CHARLES?
NO COMMENT, EXCEPT THAT YOU'LL BE SURPRISED WHEN YOU SEE IT!
REGGIE, WHAT'S THAT STRANGE SMELL? NOT YOUR CIGARETTE IS IT?
GOOD HEAVENS, NO M'DEAR!

HAVEN'T TOUCHED A CIGGY WITH REAL TOBACCO SINCE THE GOVERNMENT 'STOP SMOKING' CAMPAIGN IN THE EIGHTIES!
THIS SUBSTITUTE BACCY IS HAM AND TOMATO FLAVOURED!
MMMM! BUT THERE DOES SEEM TO BE A LOT OF SMOKE IN THE ROOM!
HAVING MELTED THE WALL, HARRY BURST INTO THE ROOM...
HE'S STILL ALIVE, AND HE'S COMING FOR ME!
AIEEEE!
NO CAUSE FOR ALARM, NO NEED TO LOOK UP, ONLY LITTLE INSIGNIFICANT HARRY, CALLING IN FOR A QUICK WORD WITH HIS DEAR BOSS, SIR CHARLES!
SIR CHARLES TURNED TO FLEE, BUT...
HELL! THIS IS A GHASTLY NIGHTMARE! I DON'T KNOW WHERE THIS THING CAME FROM BUT I CAN GUESS WHAT HE WANTS... MY BLOOD!
WURGGHHH!
OHHHHHH!
UHHHH! BAD MAN NOT ESCAPE FROM ZERO, NOT THIS TIME!
'SCUSE ME, SO SORRY TO BREAK UP THE PARTY! LITTLE HARRY NEVER BROKE UP A PARTY BEFORE... THINGS ARE DIFFERENT NOW!

NOT SO MUCH A SECRET AGENT... MORE A SECRET WEAPON!

M.A.C.H.1

INSIDE THE GATE HOUSE OF PEMBERTON LODGE, THE COUNTRY HOUSE OWNED BY BUSINESS TYCOON, SIR CHARLES HILLIERS...
WHAT'S THAT YOU SAY, BILL? A GIANT MAN HAS JUST ATTACKED TWO JEEPS OF SIR CHARLES' TOP SECURITY UNIT!
WHY THAT'S A GOOD 'UN!
COURSE I'M TAKING YOU SERIOUSLY! THIS GIANT HAS GONE ON THE RAMPAGE WITH LITTLE HARRY WINTHROP, AND THEY'RE DESTROYING EVERYTHING IN THEIR PATH!
OH, BY THE WAY, A TEN-LEGGED GREEN DRAGON HAS JUST COME IN AND NICKED MY CUPPA! HA, HA
AND... BILL. HEY, WHERE ARE YOU, MATE..?
LOR' ME PHONE'S BEEN CUT OFF!
MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE...
WUURRGH!
THAT'S THE WAY, ZERO, LET'S MAKE SURE THAT NO-ONE CAN GET A MESSAGE OUT FOR HELP, THEN WE GO BACK IN AND FINISH OFF THE JOB! HA, HA
NOO! IT'S TRUE - A GIANT MAN, WITH HARRY, LITTLE HARRY WINTHROP!
DANGER
MACH ZERO
LITTLE HARRY WAS A TIMID LABORATORY ASSISTANT, UNTIL HE BECAME A GUINEA PIG FOR AN EXPERIMENT WHICH HAS TURNED HIM INTO A RAMPAGING KILLER!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT GEOFFREY MILLER
ART ROBOT MONTERO
LETTERING ROBOT JOHN ALDRICH
COMPU-73E

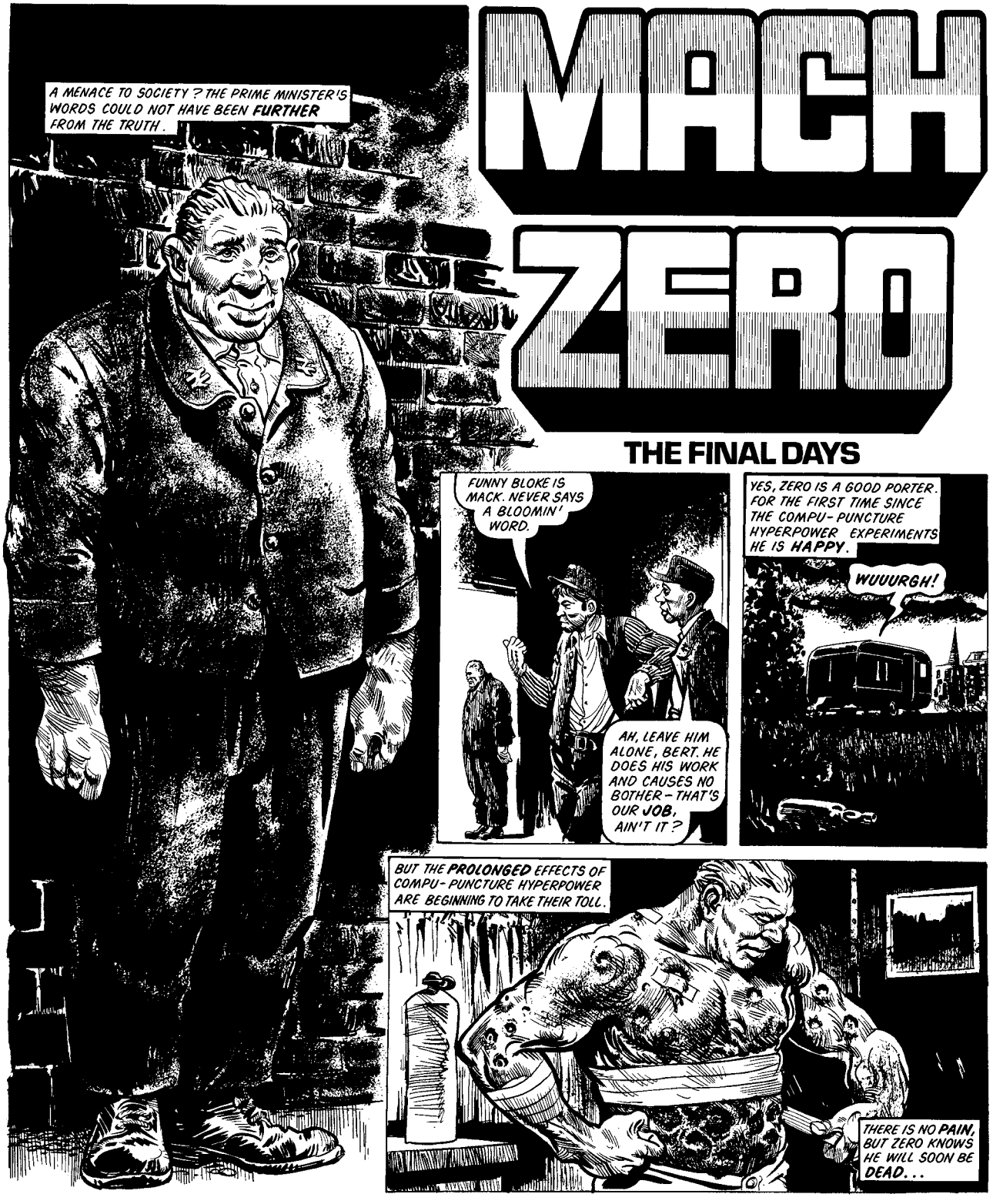
ALTHOUGH THE SUIT SUCCESSFULLY PROTECTED HARRY FROM RADIATION RAYS, IT HAS NOW BECOME WELDED TO HIS BODY, LIKE AN EXTRA-OUTER SKIN, AND HARRY FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE FINDS THAT HE HAS POWER!
RAAGGHHH! LEMME GO!
YOU KNOW ME – 'LITTLE HARRY'! HARRY THE NO-ONE. BUT NOW HARRY'S A BIG BOY, HARRY'S A SOMEONE!
ZERO SEAL OFF ENTRANCE... UUUHHH!
P-PLEASE, PUT ME DOWN!
PUT MAN DOWN. NO NEED TO HURT HIM, ONLY WANT REVENGE ON BAD MAN WHO DID THE WICKED EXPERIMENTS..!
NOW THAT'S NOT FAIR, I WAS ONLY HAVING A BIT OF FUN! YOU'RE NOT PLAYING THE GAME, ZERO!
OKAY, LET'S GO AND FIND SIR CHARLES!
STILL PEOPLE TRYING TO PUSH HARRY ROUND! HAVE TO GET RID OF YOU ZERO, BUT FIRST YOU CAN HELP ME!
AT THAT MOMENT, SIR CHARLES AND THE PROFESSOR WERE IN HIDING...
HARRY'S ALREADY REALISED THAT HE CAN GIVE OFF INTENSE HEAT. IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE HE REALISES THAT HE COULD GIVE OFF RADIATION TOO!
WHAAT? SO YOU MEAN THAT HE'S A WALKING RADIATION STORE HOUSE WHICH CAN BE TRIGGERED OFF WHENEVER HE CHOSES! WELL...
...THERE'S A SAYING IN BUSINESS, PROFESSOR— SAVE YOUR OWN SKIN FIRST!
SIR CHARRLLEESS!
THE PROF RETURNED TO THE GATHERING WHO HAD COME TO WITNESS THE FIRST SHOWING OF THE SUIT...
NOW, LISTEN EVERYONE, I WANT YOU ALL TO KEEP CALM, THERE'S NO NEED TO PANIC, BUT THE GENTLEMAN IN THE SUIT HAS THE POWER TO SET OFF A RADIATION FALL-OUT WHICH COULD AFFECT ALL ENGLAND!
OHHHHHH!
WHATEVER'S GOING ON IT'S TIME TO GET HELP!

MOXAN WAS THE DOCTOR WHO HAD WORKED FOR THE GOVERNMENT DURING THE ACU-PUNCTURE EXPERIMENTS WHICH TOOK PLACE ON MACH ZERO AND MACH ONE...
MOXAN HERE! GREEN ALERT— ZERO SIGHTED, CASE 984— IMMEDIATE DESTRUCTION!
MEANWHILE, ZERO AND HARRY HAD SIGHTED THE OBJECT OF THEIR SEARCH...
LOOK—THERE'S CHARLEY BOY. LITTLE HARRY USED TO SHAKE AND QUIVER WHENEVER HE CAME NEAR, BUT NOW HE RUNS FROM ME! WE MUST STOP HIM, ZERO!
UHHH! BAD MAN TRYING TO ESCAPE— ZERO NOT LET HIM!
IF THAT IDIOT, THINKS HE'S GOING TO STOP ME ESCAPING...
... HE MUST BE...
CRAAAZY...
AAAAHHHHH!
THE ACU-PUNCTURE TREATMENT ENABLED HYPER POWER TO BE GENERATED THROUGHOUT ZERO'S BODY—TO LIMITS WHICH COULD PROVE TO BE SHATTERING!
AS ZERO WENT TO THE WRECKAGE OF THE CAR...
THIS IS NOT THE MAN! HE NOT THE ONE WHO CARRIED OUT EXPERIMENTS ON ZERO!
OF COURSE HE IS, ZERO. COME TO HARRY, CHARLIE BOY, AND SEE WHO'S THE WEAK ONE NOW!

YOU KNOW, ZERO, I'M TIRED OF YOU—YOU AREN'T GOING TO PLAY ANYMORE!
WURGGHHHH!
THE "FRIENDS" STARTED QUARRELING!
NO! IT WRONG TO WANT TO DESTROY!
AIEEE! YOU'RE HURTING... BUT—IF YOU WANT TO PLAY ROUGH!
HA! THAT'S NAUGHTY TRYING TO HURT POOR INOFFENSIVE LITTLE HARRY! WHY HARRY HASN'T HURT ANYONE...FOR THE LAST FEW MINUTES!
HOWEVER MOXAN'S WARNING HAD BEEN HEEDED...
X17 TO BASE...HAVE ZERO IN MY SIGHTS AND THE OTHER GUY...
THE HELICOPTERS DROPPED CANISTERS OF NERVE GAS...
...WHICH HAD IMMEDIATE EFFECT.

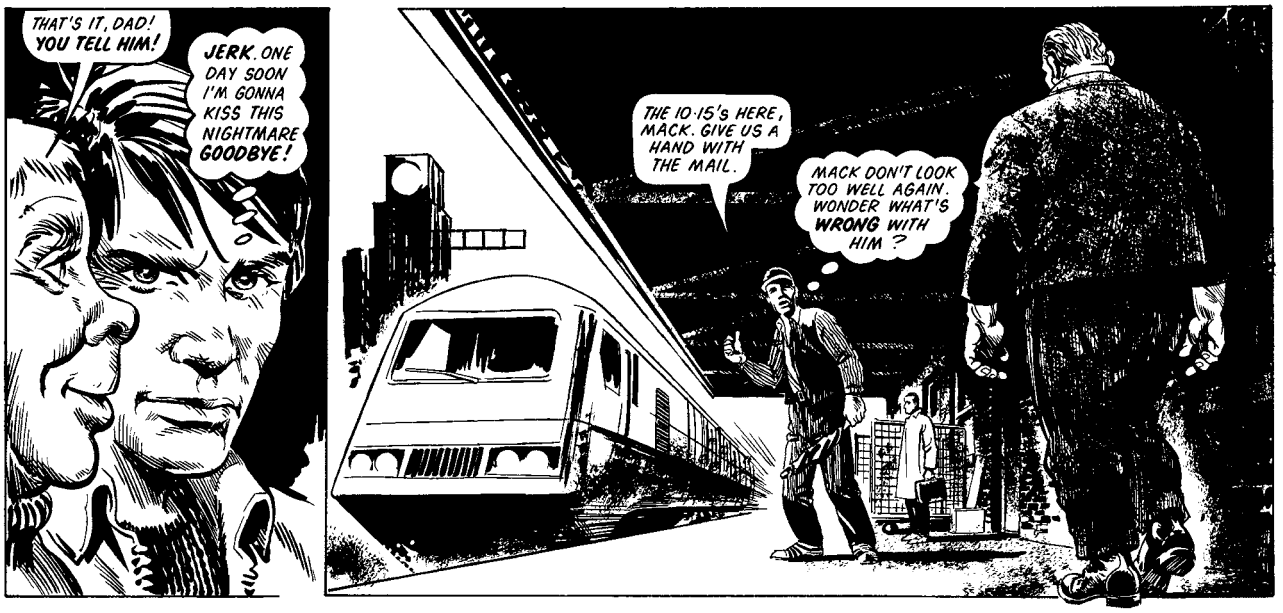
EVEN ZERO WAS RENDERED HELPLESS BY THE GAS, BUT HARRY WAS PROTECTED BY THE SUIT...
HARRY STANDS SUPREME! THEY COULDN'T DEAL WITH HARRY... BUT NOW HARRY, IT'S YOUR TURN TO GET YOUR OWN BACK... TIME TO UNLEASH ALL THE RADIATION WHICH HAS BEEN ABSORBED BY MY SUIT...
THIS IS IT, THE MOMENT WHEN THE WORLD WILL TAKE NOTE OF HARRY WINTHROP... THE MOMENT!
BUT THE MOMENT WAS NOT TO BE!
ARRGGHHHH!
AS MOXAN, WITH THE REVIVED PROFESSOR, RACED OUT TO WITNESS AN UNCANNY SIGHT...
MY GOD! THE SUIT IS BURNING ITSELF UP!
THE GAS HAS EFFECTIVELY SPEEDED UP THE PROCESS... AN OVERLOAD, YOU MIGHT SAY!
BUT LOOK, HARRY'S OKAY!
...WHICH IS MORE THAN COULD BE SAID FOR MACH ZERO, WHO WAS RETURNED TO HIS OLD CELL WHERE HE AWAITED THE FINAL DECISION ON HIS FATE!
THE END

MACH ZERO
PROLOGUE
A CHAUFFEUR-DRIVEN CAR TURNS INTO DOWNING STREET. ITS PASSENGERS? SIR MILES RATHBONE, HEAD OF THE SECRET SERVICE, AND DOCTOR MOXAN, CHIEF OFFICER.
AN URGENT SUMMONS TO MEET THE P.M. WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT, SIR?
TROUBLE, MOXAN– TROUBLE! EVER SINCE THE MOLE AFFAIR SHE'S BEEN GRUBBING THROUGH OUR FILES, LOOKING FOR MORE DIRT. I JUST HOPE SHE HASN'T FOUND THE FILE!
GENTLEMEN, THAT THIS COUNTRY HAS BEEN UP TO EVEN A FRACTION OF WHAT IS TOLD IN THIS FILE IS ABHORRENT!
BUT, PRIME MINISTER–
SILENCE! INSERTING NEEDLES INTO A MAN'S BODY TO INCREASE HIS STRENGTH BY A FACTOR OF FIFTY– IT'S AGAINST THE LAWS OF NATURE!
LET US JUST BE THANKFUL THAT THE SECRET OF THIS MACH ONE'S ORIGIN IS NO LONGER WITH US. IT'S THE OTHER ONE THAT CONCERNS ME. . . MACH ZERO.
TOP SECRET
MAN ACTIVATED BY COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER
MACH 1 MACH 0
PRIME MINISTER, THERE IS REALLY NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT MACH ZERO. HE IS, ER, QUITE SAFE!
MACH ZERO IS NOT SAFE AT ALL! MY PERSONAL SECRETARY INFORMS ME THAT YOU HAVE LET HIM ESCAPE ONCE MORE!
DON'T PLAY GAMES WITH ME, GENTLEMEN! YOU TRIED TO COVER UP HIS ESCAPE FOR FEAR OF YOUR JOBS! THE MAN IS A MENACE TO SOCIETY AND I WILL NOT HAVE HIM WANDERING ABOUT THIS COUNTRY!
WELL, ER, YES, BUT THAT WAS OVER A YEAR AGO. WE'VE HAD NO REPORTS OF HIM CAUSING TROUBLE– THE MAN IS LIKE A CHILD REALLY.
THERE WAS NO POINT IN INSTIGATING A HUGE SEARCH FOR HIM, PRIME MINISTER. AND BESIDES, THE MONEY SAVED NOT LOOKING AFTER HIM IS ENORMOUS!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT IAN ROGAN
ART ROBOT MIKE DOREY
LETTERING ROBOT TONY JACOB
COMPU-73E
FIND HIM, GENTLEMEN– RID ME OF THIS WALKING TIME-BOMB!


MACH ZERO
THE FINAL DAYS
A MENACE TO SOCIETY? THE PRIME MINISTER'S WORDS COULD NOT HAVE BEEN FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH.
FUNNY BLOKE IS MACK. NEVER SAYS A BLOOMIN' WORD.
AH, LEAVE HIM ALONE, BERT. HE DOES HIS WORK AND CAUSES NO BOTHER - THAT'S OUR JOB, AIN'T IT?
YES, ZERO IS A GOOD PORTER. FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER EXPERIMENTS HE IS HAPPY.
WUUURGH!
BUT THE PROLONGED EFFECTS OF COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER ARE BEGINNING TO TAKE THEIR TOLL.
THERE IS NO PAIN, BUT ZERO KNOWS HE WILL SOON BE DEAD...

HE ACCEPTS THIS. HE HAS SHUT OUT THE TORMENT OF THE PAST FEW YEARS, THOUGHTS OF HATE FOR THOSE WHO MADE HIM A MONSTER, LONGING FOR HIS BOY TOMMY.
ALL HE WANTS IS TO BE LEFT ALONE TO DIE IN PEACE.
BUT THE NIGHTMARE WILL NOT LEAVE HIM ALONE. . .
THE RECURRING DREAM THAT SOMEHOW HIS PAST WILL RETURN, THAT HE WILL AGAIN BE FORCED TO USE THE STRENGTH THAT CAN LITERALLY TEAR TANKS APART!
BUT MACH ZERO NEVER APPEARED IN A SCENE LIKE THIS. SURELY IT IS JUST A DREAM ?
SURELY PEACE IS NOT TOO MUCH TO ASK FOR ?

THE 10·15 FROM PADDINGTON TO PENZANCE. IN COMPARTMENT B, THE SYKES FAMILY...
...AND THEN HE TWISTED MY ARM AND DRANK MY COKE! YOU GOTTA TEACH HIM A LESSON, DAD!
YEAH, I HIT THE LITTLE SQUIRT, BUT HE'S A PAIN IN THE NECK AND HAD IT COMING!
YOU UNGRATEFUL BEGGAR! YOU'D STILL BE IN AN ORPHANAGE IF WE HADN'T TAKEN YOU IN OUT OF THE KINDNESS OF OUR HEARTS!
AAH!


THAT'S IT, DAD! YOU TELL HIM!
JERK. ONE DAY SOON I'M GONNA KISS THIS NIGHTMARE GOODBYE!
THE 10·15'S HERE, MACK. GIVE US A HAND WITH THE MAIL.
MACK DON'T LOOK TOO WELL AGAIN. WONDER WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?

HAW! LOOK AT THE FREAK, DAD! HE'S WORSE THAN FRANKENSTEIN!
BRITISH RAIL WILL EMPLOY ANYONE THESE DAYS, SON. PROBABLY A THIEF INTO THE BARGAIN!

ZERO HEARS THE RUDE BOY AND THE SNEERING MAN. ONCE, HE WOULD HAVE GIVEN THEM A LECTURE ON GOOD MANNERS, BUT HE WANTS NO TROUBLE.
HE IS USED TO THE INSULTS... HE KNOWS HE IS NOT A PRETTY SIGHT.

BUT AS HE TURNS ANOTHER FACE CATCHES HIS EYE.
SOMETHING IN IT MAKES HIM HALT FOR A SECOND.

THE FACE BURNS THROUGH THE PROTECTIVE LAYERS HE HAS THROWN UP AROUND HIS MEMORY...
SCORCHES DEEP INTO HIS UNCONSCIOUS... HE FEELS A STRANGE CHILL IN HIS BODY.

BUT AS FAST AS THE FACE BURROWS, HE PUSHES IT OUT. IT IS A TRICK, A TRICK TO HURT HIM.
PEACE IS WHAT HE WANTS... NOTHING MORE.

TWO DAYS PASS. AND THEN, ON THE THIRD NIGHT, MACH ZERO HAS VISITORS...
THIS IS WHERE HE LIVES. NOW REMEMBER, JUST DRUG HIM AND GET HIM INTO THE AMBULANCE.
RIGHT! THE STATION MASTER SAYS HE'S DOCILE ENOUGH.

MACH ZERO HAS BEEN FOUND. BUT—
HE'S FLOWN!
CONTACT SIR MILES IMMEDIATELY. LORD KNOWS WHERE HE IS— BUT WE MUST FIND HIM!

MACH ZERO WON'T BE RETURNING TO THE CARAVAN. DESPITE HIS RESOLUTION TO IGNORE THE PAST HE KNOWS BEYOND ALL DOUBT THAT IT WAS HIS SON TOMMY...
...THAT HE WAS UNHAPPY AND ZERO MUST HELP HIM!
NEXT PROG: HERE COMES THE NIGHT!

MACH ZERO

WHEN MACH ZERO, LAST OF THE MEN ACTIVATED BY COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER, ESCAPED FROM HIS UNDERGROUND PRISON HE TRIED TO LIVE OUT HIS FINAL DAYS IN PEACE. BUT A GLIMPSE OF HIS SON TOMMY ON A PASSING TRAIN AWOKE OLD MEMORIES, AND HE SET OUT IN SEARCH OF THE BOY. NOW, OUTSIDE A LONELY HOUSE ON DARTMOOR...
WOULD I LIKE TO BE HERE WHEN THEY WAKE UP AND FIND ME GONE!
YEAH, BUT BY THEN I'LL BE MILES AWAY- THEY'LL HAVE TO FIND SOMEONE ELSE TO BE THEIR SLAVE!
2000 A.D.
Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT
IAN ROGAN
ART ROBOT
MIKE DOREY
LETTERING ROBOT
TONY JACOB
COMPU-73E
GOT YOU, YOU LITTLE DEVIL!
TOLD YOU HE'D BE MAKING A BREAK FOR IT, DIDN'T I, DAD? I SAW HIM LOADING UP WITH FOOD FROM THE LARDER!

AAAH! YOU'RE BREAKING MY ARM!
I'LL BREAK MORE THAN THAT, BOY. GET MY "RED DEVIL" FROM THE STABLE, RUPERT!
SURE, DAD. THIS IS GOING TO BE FUN!
YOU NEED DISCIPLINING, BOY- YOU NEED SOME DECENCY KNOCKED INTO YOU!
COME AND LOOK, MA... TOMMY'S GETTING ANOTHER BEATING!
EEEEEEH!
THE WHIP FALLS REPEATEDLY, BUT TOMMY REFUSES TO CRY OUT.
INSTEAD EACH STROKE HARDENS HIS DETERMINATION TO ESCAPE FROM HIS FOSTER PARENTS.
ELSIE! WHAT THE DEVIL'S WRONG?
A FACE AT THE WINDOW... IT WAS H-HORRIBLE!
THERE'S NOTHING HERE, MA. YOU MUST BE—
KERASH!
WUUURGH!
BLIMEY!

WHO KNOWS WHAT STRANGE ANIMAL INSTINCT HAS GUIDED MACH ZERO TO THE HOUSE? ALL THAT MATTERS TO HIM IS THAT HE HAS FOUND THE BOY HE CALLS TOMMY!
RUDE BOY...
IT'S THE FREAK FROM THE STATION, DAD. BUZZ OFF, FREAK – THIS IS PRIVATE PROPERTY!
SLAP!
ZERO TEACH YOU TO BE POLITE, LIKE HE TAUGHT TOMMY!
A MANIAC GOT TO KEEP HIM QUIET TILL THE POLICE CAN GET HERE...
BUT ZERO WAS TOO QUICK...
NO!
GUNS DANGEROUS! A PARENT SHOULD KNOW BETTER!
HE'S TWISTING IT WITH HIS BARE HANDS!
OH MY GOD, I KNEW IT WOULD HAPPEN ONE DAY... MURDERED IN OUR BEDS!
NO, LADY, ZERO NOT MAD, ZERO COME FOR TOMMY, ZERO'S SON!
SON? THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! THE BOY'S FATHER DIED YEARS AGO. THE GOVERNMENT TOLD US!
DO ZERO LOOK DEAD?
N-NO... NOT AT ALL!
BETTER PLAY ALONG WITH HIM BEFORE HE GETS MORE VIOLENT.
ER, YOUR FATHER'S COME TO PICK YOU UP, TOMMY. RUN ALONG AND GET YOUR THINGS!
HE AIN'T MY DAD, BUT I'LL GO. THIS IS MY CHANCE TO GET AWAY!

WE LEAVE NOW, BUT ZERO NOT STUPID. ZERO TAKE PHONE OFFHOOK!
CRUMP!
NOOO! MY MICKEY MOUSE PHONE... WE WAITED AGES FOR IT!
BLIMEY, DAD, MUM'S FAINTED!
WE CAN GET ANOTHER PHONE LATER. THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT HULK FORGOT THE ONE IN THE CAR!
AAAAAAH!
VERY CLEVER, MR. ZILCH, OR WHATEVER YOUR NAME IS... BUT YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS. IT'S PERSONAL NOW!
ZERO MAKES TOMMY RUN THROUGH THE NIGHT, BUT THEN THE PAIN COMES... THE SEARING PAIN THAT HE KNOWS IS THE LONG-TERM EFFECT OF COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPER-POWER. HE CAN GO NO FARTHER.
UUURGH! MUST STOP HERE, TOMMY... MUST WAIT FOR... PAIN TO PASS.
ER, OKAY, DAD!

UUUUUH!
HE'S HAVING SOME KIND OF ATTACK. NOW'S MY CHANCE...
THE STATION'S NOT FAR - AND THEN IT'S GOODBYE HELL, HALLO FREEDOM!
BUT THREE MILES ON...
ROADBLOCK.
HERE COMES THE BIGWIG FROM LONDON NOW, SIR!
POLICE
THE CAR CONTAINED THE MEN ORDERED TO RECAPTURE ZERO AT ALL COSTS. SIR MILES RATHBONE, HEAD OF BRITISH SECRET SERVICE, AND HIS CHIEF OFFICER DOCTOR MOXAN...
A LOCAL MAN NAMED SYKES RAISED THE ALARM, SIR, RODE TO A PHONE ON HORSEBACK!
GOOD. CORDON OFF THE ENTIRE MOOR AND BRING IN THE ARMY TO HELP. ZERO MUST NOT GET OFF THE MOOR!
ISN'T SYKES THE MAN WHO ADOPTED ZERO'S SON, SIR MILES?
YES, THIS COMPLICATES MATTERS, MOXAN, THE BOY MUST NEVER FIND OUT ZERO'S HIS FATHER!
IT-IT'S TRUE! BUT WHY WAS I NEVER TOLD? WHAT DID THESE MEN DO TO DAD?
ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT...
HANG ON, DAD - I'M COMING BACK TO YOU!
NEXT PROG: SURROUNDED!

MACH ZERO

DARTMOOR, WHERE THE HUNT IS ON FOR MACH ZERO – LAST OF THE MACH MEN! LEADING THE SEARCH IS SIR MILES RATHBONE, HEAD OF BRITISH SECRET SERVICE, WHO HAS BEEN ORDERED TO RECAPTURE ZERO AT ALL COSTS...
DO YOUR MEN KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN THEY SIGHT ZERO, MAJOR SMART?
YES, SIR MILES. EACH MAN HAS BEEN ISSUED WITH TRANQUILLISER SHELLS. BUT I HARDLY SEE THE REASON FOR SUCH A SHOW OF STRENGTH!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT IAN ROGAN
ART ROBOT MIKE DORKEY
LETTERING ROBOT TONY JACOB
COMPU-73E
ZERO IS NO ORDINARY MAN, MAJOR – HE HAS TWICE THE HYPER POWER OF HIS SUCCESSOR, MACH 1 – AND MACH 1 COULD DEMOLISH A BUILDING WITH HIS BARE HANDS!
BUT SOMEONE ELSE IS LOOKING FOR ZERO. THE BOY TOMMY, WHO HAS JUST FOUND OUT THAT ZERO IS HIS FATHER!
I LEFT HIM IN AGONY, THOUGHT HE WAS JUST A NUTTER...
BUT NOT ANYMORE! HANG ON, DAD – HANG ON.

BUT NOT FAR AWAY—
BLIMEY, BERT... I THINK THIS IS THE BLOKE WE'RE AFTER. SEEMS TO BE HAVING A FIT.
WUUURGH!
YEAH, MAYBE WE OUGHT NOT TO TOUCH HIM. I DON'T LIKE THE LOOK OF THOSE SORES.
STOP MOANING AND LEND US A HAND. WE'LL CARRY HIM TO THE MAIN SEARCH PARTY.
AAAAH!
HECK, HE'S SCREAMING! BETTER HURRY UP, BERT.
BERT? ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE LIFTING, BERT?
BERT— UUUN!
MINUTES LATER, ZERO COMES OUT OF THE ATTACK CAUSED BY THE DREADFUL LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER.
UUUH... TOMMY! YOU GOOD BOY.
HE THINKS I STAYED WITH HIM. CAN'T TELL HIM THAT I RAN OUT AND LEFT HIM.
THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE, DAD, THE SOLDIERS ARE AFTER YOU. WE'VE GOT TO GET OFF THE MOOR AND REACH SAFETY. BETTER DITCH THAT JACKET OF YOURS FOR A START.
SOLDIERS? ZERO NOT UNDERSTAND. ZERO ALWAYS BEEN LAW-ABIDING MAN.

ZERO'S FUDDLED BRAIN DOES NOT REMEMBER HIS HORRENDOUS PAST.
MAYBE WE SHOULD GO SEE SOLDIERS, TOMMY.
NO! TRUST ME, DAD - I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING.
BUT THE TROOPS ARE CLOSING IN. NOT FAR AWAY IS ANOTHER SCOUTING PARTY —
I-I DON'T LIKE THIS, SARGE. I'VE HEARD RUMOURS ABOUT ZERO AND WHAT HE CAN D-DO.
SHUT UP, JONES, AND STOP WAVING YOUR RIFLE AROUND - I DON'T WANT A TRANQ DART UP MY BACKSIDE.
HOLD IT! CAN HEAR SOMETHING COMING OVER THE RIDGE, SARGE!
EASY, JONES!
WUURGH!
NO, IT'S HIM!
GET ON TO THE MAIN COLUMN BY RADIO, FRANKS — NOW!
DO NOT FEAR US, SOLDIERS. WE WANT ONLY TO PASS.
O-OKAY, FELLER. WE WON'T HARM YOU.
D-DEAD RIGHT - I'M GETTING OUT OF HERE!
BUT AS JONES TURNS TO RUN - HE TRIPS!
AAAGH!
ZIT!
UUUNGH!
BOY HIT-

TOMMEEEEEEE!
HE THINKS THE THE BOY'S DEAD! LORD KNOWS WHAT HE'LL DO!
TRANQ HIM, IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE!
UUUURGH!
ZIP!
ZIP!
ZERO KILL!
RUN!
AT THAT MOMENT THE MAIN PARTY ARRIVED—
MORE SOLDIERS— GOOD! ZERO FEEL READY TO WIPE-OUT WHOLE ARMY!
NEXT PROG: TO THE DEATH!

MACH ZERO

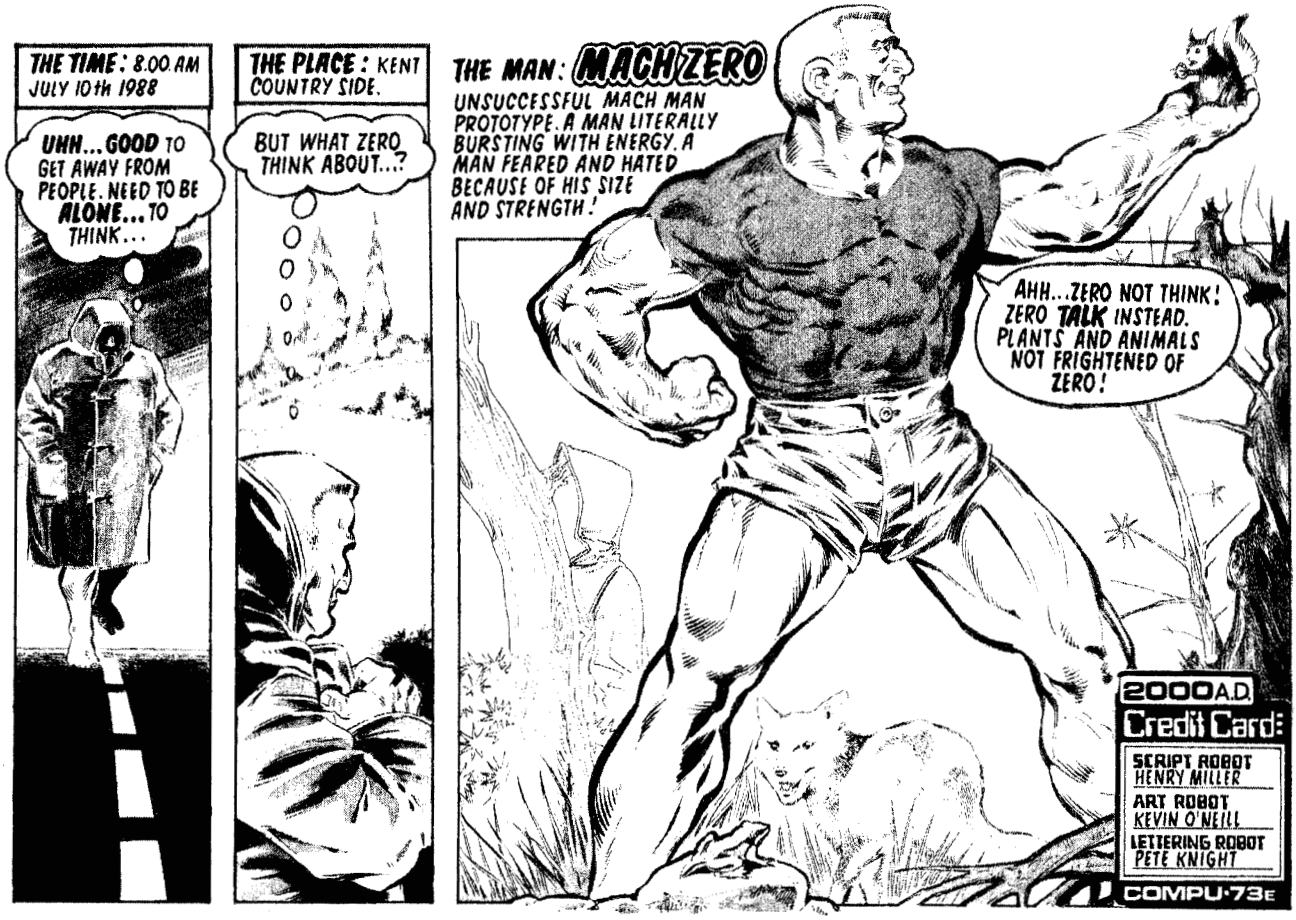
ON THE PLAINS OF DARTMOOR AN EPIC BATTLE IS ABOUT TO BE FOUGHT... MACH ZERO, LAST OF THE M.A.C.H. MEN, IS MAKING HIS FINAL STAND!
ZERO'S GONE BERSERK! ORDER YOUR MEN TO OPEN FIRE, MAJOR... NOW!
LOAD TRANQ-SHELLS!
2000A.D
Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT
IAN ROGAN
ART ROBOT
M. DOREY
LETTERING ROBOT
T. JACOB
COMPU-73
THE SOLDIERS' PUNY DARTS DO NOT WORRY ZERO. ANGER FILLS HIS MIND AND THE UNCONTROLLABLE STRENGTH OF COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER COURSES THROUGH HIS BODY.
UUNNNH! ZERO FIGHT FIRE WITH STONE... AND ZERO...
WIN!
AAAARGH!

ZERO EMITS A CHILLING VICTORY CRY THAT RINGS ACROSS THE MOOR....
WUUUURGH!
AND THE LAST STAND GOES ON!
ZERO'S GOING TO FIGHT TO THE FINISH, SIR MILES! THE TRANQ-SHELLS WON'T BE ENOUGH!
SHUT UP, MOXAN! USE THE TANK, MAJOR... GAS SHELLS!
WHOOMPH!
UUUHHH?
NO-ONE WALKS AWAY FROM C.R. GAS!
FSSSSSS!
WE'VE GOT HIM!
NO-ONE EXCEPT A MACH MAN!
WUUUUURGH!
IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!
I'M GETTING OUT OF HERE... THIS ISN'T IN QUEEN'S REGS!
ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE WITH HYPERPOWER!
KERAAAK!
AAAAGH!

MY-MY TANK!
WE'LL BE NEXT, SIR MILES! PLEASE GET US OUT OF HERE!
STOP WHIMPERING, MOXAN... I'VE HAD SOMETHING IN RESERVE IN CASE THINGS DIDN'T GO ACCORDING TO PLAN. BLUE ANGEL TO RED LEADER. COME IN, RED LEADER.
RED LEADER TO BLUE ANGEL ... RECEIVING YOU. OVER!
IMPLEMENT STRIKE PLAN ALPHA. REPEAT IMPLEMENT STRIKE PLAN ALPHA. COORDINATES G35 Q20.
ZERO STOPS AS HE HEARS THE APPROACHING SOUND AND SEES THE THREE BLACK DOTS COMING LOW OVER THE HORIZON...
SECONDS LATER THE BOMBS FALL. ZERO STANDS AS IF FASCINATED BY THE PRECISION WITH WHICH THE TORNADO PILOT HAS LAID THEM...
AND A SPLIT SECOND LATER IS ENGULFED IN A HOLOCAUST OF FLAME!
WUURGH!
AS THE SMOKE CLEARS SILENCE ONCE AGAIN REIGNS...
TOMMY...TOMMY...
BROKEN ONLY BY THE CRIES OF A DYING MAN...
ZERO'S BOY! STOP HIM! DON'T LET HIM NEAR HIS FATHER!
DAD! DAD!

BUT TOMMY IS TOO QUICK. AS HE HOLDS ZERO IN HIS ARMS A STRANGE CHANGE COMES OVER THE MACH MAN.
TOMMY, I-I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD. LOOKS... LOOKS LIKE WE'RE NEVER GOING TO BE TOGETHER.
HE'S TALKING NORMALLY AGAIN — JUST LIKE ANYONE ELSE.
BUT I'M GLAD I FOUND YOU AT LAST, KID, IF ONLY FOR A FEW HOURS. I...UNH-I'D HAVE LIKED TO TAKE YOU AWAY, BUT THINGS DIDN'T QUITE WORK OUT...
IT'S OKAY, DAD, JUST LIE STILL. THEY'LL SAVE YOU...
NO, TOMMY...THIS IS MY LAST EXIT. AND..UNH.. DON'T BLAME THE SECURITY FORCES... THEY WERE JUST DOING THEIR JOB...
DAD! DAD!
A HELICOPTER CAME FOR THE BODY. WITH IT, OTHERS TO CLEAR UP THE MESS.
MACH ZERO HAD DIED FIGHTING.
EPILOGUE.
BUT SOMETHING POSITIVE CAME OUT OF ZERO'S END.
SO, GENTLEMEN, THIS MACH ZERO IS DEAD, YES?
UNFORTUNATELY SO, PRIME MINISTER. WE TRIED TO CAPTURE HIM ALIVE, BUT HE WENT BERSERK WHEN A SOLDIER SHOT HIS SON ACCIDENTALLY.
THERE WAS NOTHING WE COULD DO.
PERHAPS NOT, GENTLEMEN. BUT FOR YOUR PART IN THIS DISGRACEFUL AFFAIR THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE PUNISHMENT. LET ME HAVE YOUR RESIGNATIONS IN THE MORNING.
AND FOR TOMMY THERE WAS A FRESH DETERMINATION TO START A NEW LIFE.
I'M LEAVING, BUT THIS TIME THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR. DON'T TRY TO STOP ME!
ER, OF COURSE, TOMMY. YOU'RE OLD ENOUGH TO LOOK AFTER YOURSELF NOW.
HE'S CHANGED SINCE HIS FATHER DIED. THERE'S A KIND OF AUTHORITY ABOUT HIM NOW.
YES, TOMMY HAS CHANGED. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE HE KNOWS WHO HE IS...
...AND WHERE HE'S GOING!
THE END

ANNUAL STORIES



MACH ZERO in: CYBORG EXPRESS

INSIDE THE STATION HOUSE WAS THE OWNER, ONE BASIL SPRATLEY, FORMER ACCOUNTANT AT MEGATRON INTERNATIONAL - AND ENTHUSIASTIC AMATEUR ELECTRONICS WIZARD..!
TUM TI TUM BETTER GET MY BOY UP - BIG DAY TODAY.
BUT IN TRYING TO SEE MORE, ZERO STUMBLED.
CRANG!
?
UPON MY SOUL WHAT HAVE WE HERE..?
... A GIANT?
Z-ZERO MEAN NO HARM. ZERO LOOK FOR FOOD.
WELL, YOU WON'T FIND ANY IN THERE COME INSIDE AND HAVE SOME PORRIDGE! WITH LOTS OF SALT..!
ZERO NOT LIKE PORRIDGE!
LATER...
UMMMM! SALT WAS GOOD!
YOU KIND TO ZERO!
ZERO, EH. HMMM. THAT'S A STRANGE NAME. WELL, FINISH YOUR TEA AND COME WITH ME...
UHHHH?
COME ON, DON'T BE SHY!
Time: 9.15 am. Cyborg compu reaout: All systems A-OK. predict all existing rail speed records will be broken in 45 minutes.
CYBORG

I WANT YOU TO MEET ... MY BOY!
EH, WELL, YOU SEE... IT'S LIKE THIS. I SPENT ALL MY LIFE AS AN ACCOUNTANT - AND NEVER HAD TIME FOR A FAMILY, YET MY REAL LOVE WAS ELECTRONICS...
AND I ALWAYS WANTED A SON... SO I BUILT ONE!
ZERO HAVE SON SOMEWHERE...I FIND HIM AGAIN ONE DAY!
UHHH? THAT NOT BOY!
"NOW IF YOU COULD JUST DO AN OLD MAN A BIG FAVOUR..."
"... AND PUT THIS POWER GLOBE..."
"... INTO HIS HEAD UNIT..!"
PING!
THE ROBOTIC BOY SPRANG TO LIFE...
MORNING, DAD :YAWN:
GOOD MORNING, SON - HAPPY BIRTHDAY... HARD TO BELIEVE THAT IT'S ONE YEAR SINCE I SLAPPED LIFE INTO YOUR CIRCUITS...
STRANGE MAN - BUILDING OWN BOY WONDER WHAT PRESENT IS?
...COME AND SEE YOUR PRESENT!
A SLIDING PANEL REVEALED THE ANSWER...
GEE! A TRAIN SET. JUST WHAT I'VE ALWAYS WANTED! YOU'RE THE BEST DAD A BOY EVER HAD!
I KNOW!
?
Time: 9·30 am. minor fault in braking system no cause for concern..

BY THE WAY, SON, THIS IS MR. ZERO I WANT YOU TWO TO BE GOOD FRIENDS!
SURE, DAD!
THE AFFECTIONATE PAT ON THE BACK WAS LIKE BLOW FROM A JACK HAMMER!
THAT GOOD! ZERO NOT HAVE FRIENDS - NOT TIN ONES. ANYWAY!
SOON...
YES - IT'S ALMOST READY, NOW, SON! YOU'LL LIKE YOUR MEGATRONIX 00/HO GAUGE AUTO-SWITCHING TRAIN SET, WITH POSITRONIC POINT CONTROLS AND PROGRAMMABLE SIGNAL BOX!
ITS REAL NEAT, DAD, REAL NEAT!
SHUFFLING IMPATIENTLY, ZERO STEPS ON A LOOSE WIRE AND...
BANG!
WUUURGH!
CRIKEY!
OH MY...!
THAT WAS DAD'S PRESENT! YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT...
Time: 10:00 am: New rail speed record set at 278 m.p.h. will now begin BRAKING PROCEDURE!

NOW YOU'VE GOT ME MAD!
PLASTI-STEEL TENDONS AND PNEUMATIC MUSCLES WHIPLASH AN IRON FIST INTO ACTION...
OH NO!
... AND FOR EVERY ACTION THERE IS A REACTION... AND IN THIS CASE IT IS A PAINFUL ONE!
WHOOSH!
ZERO SOARS ACROSS THE ROOM - 250 lbs OF RAW MUSCLE AND BONE ON A FLIGHT PATH OF DESTRUCTION.
... AND COMES TO AN ARRESTING HALT!
MEANWHILE INSIDE...
IF I'VE TOLD YOU ONCE, I'VE TOLD YOU A THOUSAND TIMES. DON'T PLAY ROUGH GAMES INDOORS!
SORRY DAD!
ZERO ANGRY WITH TIN BOY - HIM MAKE HEAD HURT!
JUST LOOK AT THIS MESS. OH WELL, I SUPPOSE BOYS WILL BE BOYS. NOW GO OUTSIDE AND...
...YOU MUST BE PUNISHED!
KRANG!
SQUEEEE
BASIL HEARS THE HIGH PITCHED METALLIC SCREAM. AND RUNS OUTSIDE!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO MY BOY?
SPEAK TO ME, SON!
Time: 10-11 a.m.
SCREEE

KERAASH!
LIKE A HUMAN DEMOLITION BALL HE EXPLODES INTO THE STATION PLATFORM...
... PLAY!
HELLO AGAIN FUNNY FACE!
ZERO STAGGERS TO HIS FEET - NO ORDINARY MAN WOULD HAVE SURVIVED SUCH AN ATTACK - BUT ZERO WAS NO ORDINARY MAN!
ME MEAN NO HARM, YOU BAD BOY...
ZERO BORED WITH GAME! ZERO LEAVE!
YOU'LL NEVER LEAVE, YOU BIG BULLY.
STOP! STOP!
CAUGHT IN A DEATH GRIP - ZERO SUMMONED UP HIS LAST RESERVE OF HYPER-POWER AND...
CHOKE WHY YOU NOT LEARN?
DADDY!
EEE!!
Brakes slow to respond. speed approx 90 m.p.h. amber alert... something on the line!

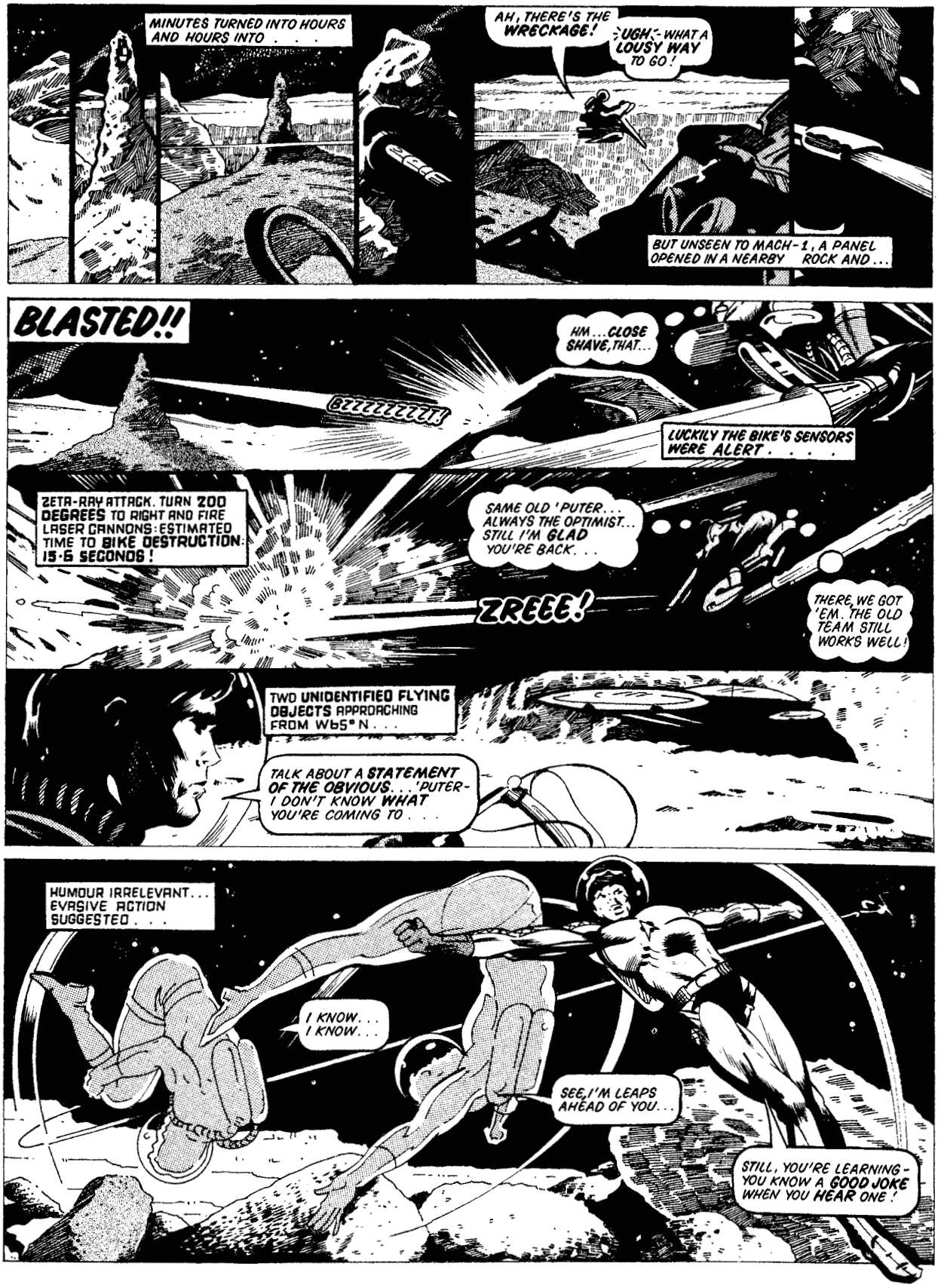
WITH AN EARSPLITTING SCREECH, THE CYBORG EXPRESS PLOUGHED THROUGH ITS ROBOTIC OBSTACLE!
THE ROBOT WAS REDUCED TO THE PILE OF SPARE PARTS AND SCRAP IT ORIGINATED FROM. ONLY ITS POWER GLOBE WAS THROWN CLEAR...
CYBORG COMPU-READ-OUT. OBSTRUCTION: HUMAN EFFIGY. MAKE UP: PLASTI-STEEL. DANGER RATING: ZERO. CONCLUSION: DAMAGE TO CAB MINIMAL MINOR FAULT IN BRAKES RESPONSIBLE FAULT NOW CLEARED.
WHOOPS!
WAROOOOOM!
CRACK!
GRIND!
SNAP!
AAHHHELPPPP MMMMMMMEEEEEEEEEEEEEEDAAAADEEEEEEEEEEEEE
CRASH
THE ROAR OF THE EXPRESS STILL ECHOED THROUGH THE OLD MAN'S HEAD AS HE JUMPED ONTO THE RAILS, AND....
SPEAK TO ME SON: SNIFF:... TELL YOUR DAD YOU'RE OKAY!
I-I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD - SO GOOD - SO GOOD SO GOOD...
M-MY HEAD... HURTS...HURTS... HURTS!
BEEP!
ZERO AMBLED AWAY LOST IN HIS OWN TORMENTED WORLD...
WHY ME HERE?
...BY THE TIME HE REACHED LONDON HE'D ONLY VAGUE MEMORIES OF THAT MORNING...
ME HUNGRY!
PERHAPS IT WAS JUST AS WELL!
THE END

324792–MACH–0
324793–MACH–1
THE MACH–MAN FILE
TOP SECRET
SUBJECT: JOHN PROBE
ALIAS MACH-1 (NOW DECEASED)
INFORMATION: MAN ACTIVATED BY COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPER POWER.
MISSION: TO INVESTIGATE THE DISAPPEARANCE OF TWO SCIENTISTS FROM MOON BASE "ENTERPRISE."

PROLOGUE:

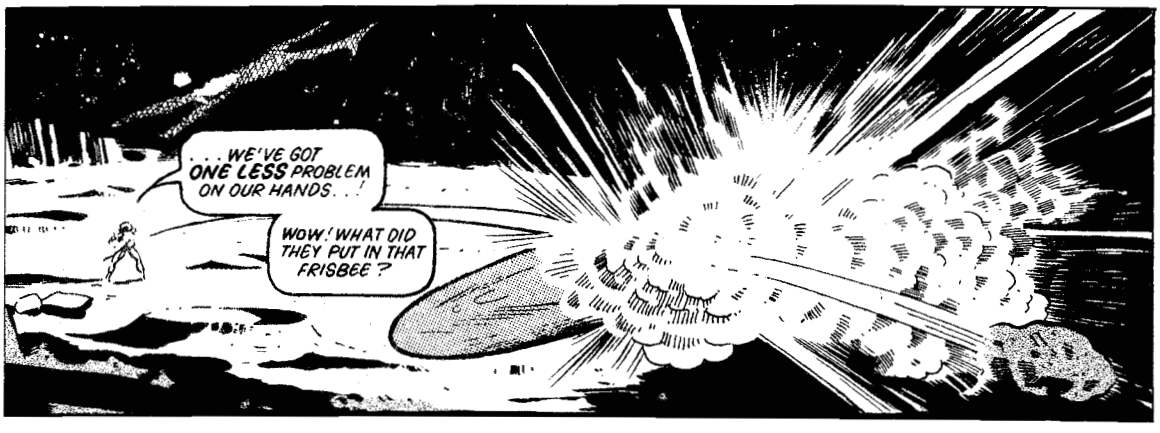
THE MOON: 1991: MARE IMBRIUM CRATER. TWO SCIENTISTS FROM MOON-BASE ENTERPRISE ARE INVESTIGATING A STRANGE SOURCE OF RADIO-ACTIVITY, DETECTED IN THE HEART OF THE CAUCASUS MOUNTAINS...
I THINK WE'RE GETTING CLOSE TO THE SOURCE, JACQUES. THE GEIGER'S GOING CRAZY!
IT'S REGISTERING 150 ROENTGENS, AND RISING!
IMPOSSIBLE, MON AMI... NON... THIS CANNOT BE TRUE... NOT EVEN A HIGH CONCENTRATION OF URANIUM-235 WOULD GIVE THESE READINGS!
THEN..PERHAPS MY THEORY OF...
...LIFE ON THE MOON..? SURELY NOT...YOU MUST BE JOKING...!
BUT SUDDENLY...
BZZZZZZZZZZZZ!
ZZZZZZ!
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT MIKE LAKE
ART ROBOT TREV GORING
LETTERING ROBOT TONY JACOB
COMPU-73E
BUT IT WAS NO JOKE!

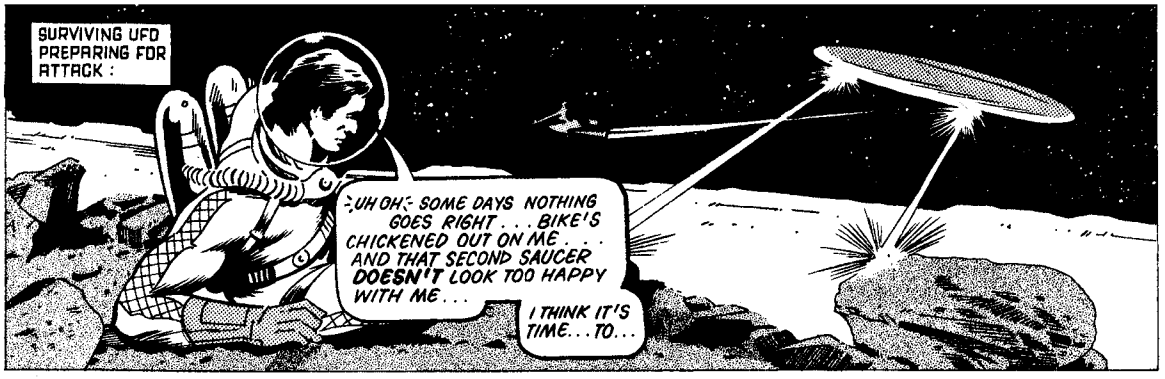
TWO DAYS LATER, AT MOON-BASE ENTERPRISE, JOHN PROBE IS GREETED BY JERRY COYLE, THE BASE COMMANDER...
GLAD TO HAVE YOU WITH US, JOHN-BUT WE HAVEN'T GOT A MOMENT TO LOSE-OUR TECHNICIANS HAVE BEEN WORKING ROUND THE CLOCK TO GET YOU FIXED UP WITH TRANSPORT...
AS YOU CAN SEE, IT'S AN ADAPTED HOVER-BIKE... IT'S AN ATOMIC-POWERED HARLEY-DAVIDSON... HAS UNLIMITED RANGE... CARRIES IT'S OWN 20 HOUR OXYGEN SUPPLY... AND...
...BUT WHAT DOES IT DO TO THE GALLON...?
...AND HARUMPH! REMOTE CONTROL IS POSSIBLE BY RADIO-LINK TO YOUR COMPUTER, WHICH WILL ALSO LEAD YOU, AUTOMATICALLY, TO THE MOON BUGGY... AND JOHN...
YES..?
TRY AND BRING THE BIKE IN ONE PIECE..!
SOME HOPE!

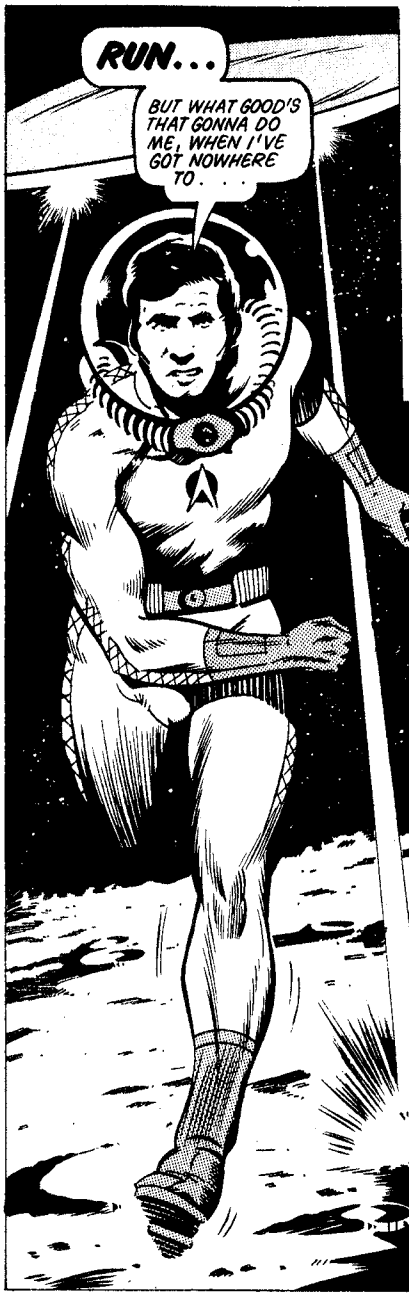

MINUTES TURNED INTO HOURS AND HOURS INTO . . .
AH, THERE'S THE WRECKAGE!
UGH! - WHAT A LOUSY WAY TO GO!
BUT UNSEEN TO MACH-1, A PANEL OPENED IN A NEARBY ROCK AND . . .
BLASTED!!
HM . . . CLOSE SHAVE, THAT . . .
BZZZZZZZZZ!
LUCKILY THE BIKE'S SENSORS WERE ALERT . . . .
ZETA-RAY ATTACK. TURN 200 DEGREES TO RIGHT AND FIRE LASER CANNONS: ESTIMATED TIME TO BIKE DESTRUCTION: 15·6 SECONDS!
SAME OLD 'PUTER . . . ALWAYS THE OPTIMIST . . STILL I'M GLAD YOU'RE BACK . . .
ZREEE!
THERE, WE GOT 'EM. THE OLD TEAM STILL WORKS WELL!
TWO UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS APPROACHING FROM W65° N . . .
TALK ABOUT A STATEMENT OF THE OBVIOUS . . . 'PUTER - I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE COMING TO . . .
HUMOUR IRRELEVANT . . . EVASIVE ACTION SUGGESTED . . .
I KNOW . . . I KNOW . . .
SEE, I'M LEAPS AHEAD OF YOU . . .
STILL, YOU'RE LEARNING - YOU KNOW A GOOD JOKE WHEN YOU HEAR ONE!

ONE SAUCER FOLLOWED THE BIKE, WHICH WAS STILL UNDER MACH-1'S COMPUTER CONTROL.

...WHICH MEANS THAT THE OTHER ONE IS... AFTER ME!
UH... OH... HERE SHE COMES...
5 SECONDS TO NEXT UFO ATTACK!
ONLY ONE CHANCE!
BOULDER WEIGHT 80 TONS. MOON WEIGHT 20 TONS. 65% HYPER POWER REQUIRED.
GOTTA HEAVE THIS MOON BOULDER INTO BIG MAMA OVER THERE AND...


...WE'VE GOT ONE LESS PROBLEM ON OUR HANDS...
WOW! WHAT DID THEY PUT IN THAT FRISBEE?


SURVIVING UFO PREPARING FOR ATTACK :
:UH OH:- SOME DAYS NOTHING GOES RIGHT . . . BIKE'S CHICKENED OUT ON ME . . . AND THAT SECOND SAUCER DOESN'T LOOK TOO HAPPY WITH ME . . .
I THINK IT'S TIME . . . TO . . .


RUN . . .
BUT WHAT GOOD'S THAT GONNA DO ME, WHEN I'VE GOT NOWHERE TO . . .

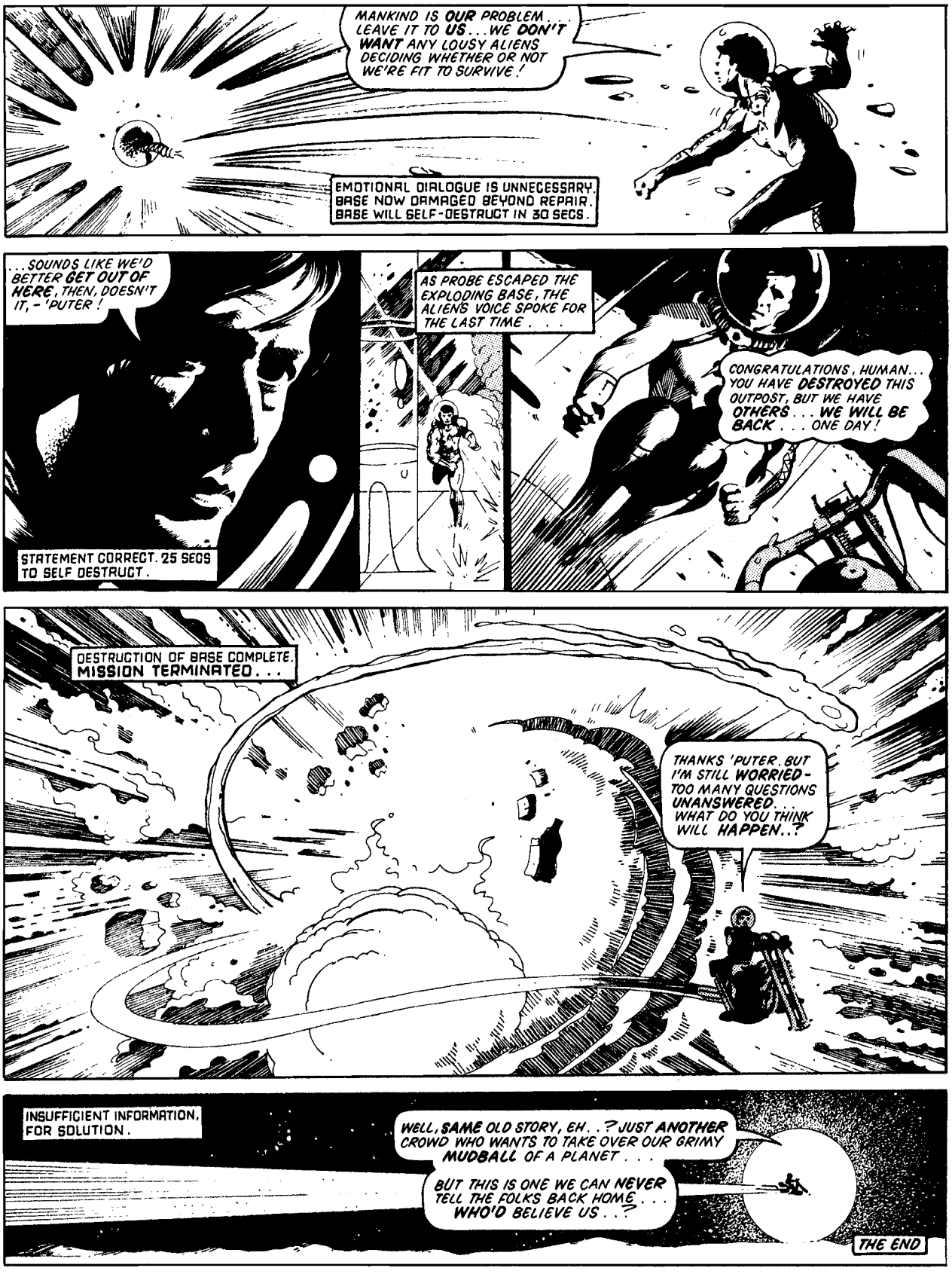
. . . HIDE
WAAAH!
BLASTS HAVE OPENED UP ARTIFICAL SHAFT IN MOON'S SURFACE. DEPTH ESTIMATE IMPOSSIBLE.
HYPER-STRENGTH . . . DON'T GIVE OUT ON ME NOW . . . PLEASE!
STATEMENT IRRELEVANT . . . HYPER-STRENGTH AT FULL POWER . . . 0001% CHANCE OF FAILURE . . .

THANKS FOR THE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE . . .
. . . NOW LET'S SEE WHERE I'VE LANDED . . .

ANALYSIS INDICATES METAL APPROXIMATELY TWO THOUSAND YEARS OLD . . . OF ALIEN ORIGIN . . . SENSORS DETECT MACHINERY WITHIN BASE AS STILL ACTIVE !

...WHICH MEANS THAT UNLESS I'M MISTAKEN, I'M STILL IN DANGER!
ASSUMPTION CORRECT. AUTOMATIC MECHANISMS NOW TRIGGERED IN THIS BASE. ATTACK IMMINENT.
THANKS FOR THE INFO, COMPUTER ... BUT YOUR TIMING IS LOUSY...
AND AS FOR, TIN-HEAD, YOU'RE JUST BEGINNING TO GET ME ANGRY!
ATTACKED BY FLYING SAUCERS, ALMOST MANGLED BY A ROBOT... SHEESH! WHAT A DAY... I KNEW I SHOULD HAVE STAYED IN BED!
PROBE VENTURED FURTHER INTO THE ALIEN BASE... ON A FLICKERING SCREEN BEFORE HIM A BIZARRE FACE APPEARED...
GREETINGS, STRANGER. WELCOME TO EARTH OBSERVATION OUTPOST No.3. WE ARE PLEASED YOU HAVE REACHED THIS FAR... IT SHOWS A COURAGE AND STRENGTH WE THOUGHT HUMANS LACKED...
YOU WILL INDEED PROVIDE US WITH A CHALLENGE WORTHY OF OUR SUPERIOR ABILITIES!

WE HAVE BEEN OBSERVING YOUR CIVILISATION FOR MANY THOUSANDS OF YEARS - WATCHING YOU COMMIT COUNTLESS ATROCITIES AGAINST MEMBERS OF YOUR OWN SPECIES...
...HOPING THAT YOUR WARLIKE NATURE WOULD LEAD TO THE ULTIMATE DESTRUCTION OF MANKIND!
BUT YOU HAVE EVOLVED... YOUR KNOWLEDGE HAS EXPANDED AND YOU NO LONGER SEEK TO DESTROY YOURSELVES...
AS YOU PROGRESS YOU WILL REACH OUT - JOURNEY FAR BEYOND THE REALMS OF YOUR OWN GALAXY - AND PERHAPS ONE DAY FIND US... THAT WE CANNOT ALLOW!
BUT BEFORE THAT CAN HAPPEN WE WILL ACTIVATE OUR BASES AND CAUSE THE DESTRUCTION OF EARTH...
IN THE MEANTIME PREPARE TO DIE!
OH NO... NOT MORE ROBOTS...
NOW YOU'VE DONE IT... YOU'VE GOT ME REALLY MAD!
FIRST YOU KILL TWO MEN... TWO FINE MEN WHO ACCIDENTALLY STUMBLED UPON YOU - AND WHOSE ONLY AIM WAS THE ADVANCEMENT OF MANKIND...
AND NOW YOU WANT TO KILL OFF OUR ENTIRE PLANET...
THAT... WILL... NOT... HAPPEN!


MANKIND IS OUR PROBLEM... LEAVE IT TO US... WE DON'T WANT ANY LOUSY ALIENS DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT WE'RE FIT TO SURVIVE!
EMOTIONAL DIALOGUE IS UNNECESSARY. BASE NOW DAMAGED BEYOND REPAIR. BASE WILL SELF-DESTRUCT IN 30 SECS.
...SOUNDS LIKE WE'D BETTER GET OUT OF HERE, THEN, DOESN'T IT, - 'PUTER!
STATEMENT CORRECT. 25 SECS TO SELF DESTRUCT.
AS PROBE ESCAPED THE EXPLODING BASE, THE ALIENS VOICE SPOKE FOR THE LAST TIME...
CONGRATULATIONS, HUMAN... YOU HAVE DESTROYED THIS OUTPOST, BUT WE HAVE OTHERS... WE WILL BE BACK... ONE DAY!
DESTRUCTION OF BASE COMPLETE. MISSION TERMINATED...
THANKS 'PUTER. BUT I'M STILL WORRIED - TOO MANY QUESTIONS UNANSWERED... WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL HAPPEN..?
INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION, FOR SOLUTION.
WELL, SAME OLD STORY, EH..? JUST ANOTHER CROWD WHO WANTS TO TAKE OVER OUR GRIMY MUDBALL OF A PLANET...
BUT THIS IS ONE WE CAN NEVER TELL THE FOLKS BACK HOME... WHO'D BELIEVE US..?
THE END

M.A.C.H.1
not so much a secret agent...
more a secret weapon!
SUBJECT:
SECRET AGENT
JOHN PROBE
PROCESS:
COMPU-PUNCTURE
HYPERPOWER
DATA:
COMPU-PUNCTURE IS A COMPUTERISED FORM OF ACUPUNCTURE.
BY INSERTING SPECIAL ELECTRO NEEDLES INTO PROBE'S BODY, HIS ENERGY FLOW WILL INCREASE UNTIL HE HAS THE STRENGTH OF FIFTY MEN!
SUBJECT'S CODENAME:
MACH 1
MAN ACTIVATED BY COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER

MONTREAL – CANADA. THE TOURING RUSSIAN ICE-HOCKEY TEAM PLAY THEIR LAST MATCH AGAINST THE CANADIANS. THE BROTHER OF VOLSHA, THE RUSSIAN GOALMINDER, IS A BRILLIANT SCIENTIST WHO HAS JUST DEFECTED TO THE WEST...
I HAVE TOLD YOU ALREADY, UNLESS YOU HELP MY BROTHER TO DEFECT ALSO, I SHALL NEVER REVEAL THE SECRETS OF THE NEW BOMB MY PEOPLE HAVE DEVELOPED.
OKAY, OKAY! BUT YOUR BROTHER, LIKE ALL HIS TEAM-MATES, IS UNDER CONSTANT WATCH. WE'VE GOT TO TREAD WARILY.
ONE OF OUR AGENTS HAS BEEN PLACED IN THE CANADIAN TEAM. IT'S THE ONLY WAY WE CAN GET CLOSE TO YOUR BROTHER. THE AGENT WILL GET THE MESSAGE YOU'VE WRITTEN AND YOUR PERSONAL RING TO YOUR BROTHER DURING THE MATCH...
...THEN THEY'LL ARRANGE HIS GETAWAY.
AH, A MAN HAS BEEN INJURED! THE SUBSTITUTE PLAYER COMING ON IS A VERY SPECIAL, SPECIAL AGENT!
HERE GOES, I'VE GOT THE RING AND THE WRITTEN MESSAGE... SOMEHOW I'VE GOT TO GET THEM TO VOLSHA DURING THE MATCH.
WATCHING PROBE THROUGH NARROWED EYES, THE RUSSIAN TEAM LEADER – TROSKA, A SAVAGE MONGOLIAN K.G.B. SPY.
TROSKA, RUSSIAN TEAM LEADER AND K.G.B. SPY AHEAD. KNOWN TO HAVE KILLED 123 MEN IN SEPARATE SECRET OPERATIONS IN THE WEST.
THAT'S JUST FINE, COMPUTER! MY FIRST ICE-HOCKEY MATCH AND THEY'VE GOT 'CUDDLES' TROSKA ON THEIR SIDE!

EASILY STOPPED! NO-ONE PASSES ME, SCUM!
BLOW TO KIDNEYS INDICATES SIX TIMES NORMAL MAN'S STRENGTH.
HERE'S MY CHANCE TO CAUSE A BIT OF CONFUSION. THIS SHOULD START AN ALMIGHTY FIGHT.
THESE GUYS PLAY TO WIN! EVEN I FELT THAT! WAIT THOUGH—
AAAAH!
TEMPERS FLARED ON BOTH SIDES AND SOON THE ICE WAS A FRENZY OF TANGLED BODIES.
I BRING NEWS FROM YOUR BROTHER. THAT'S HIS RING AND NOTE IN HIS HANDWRITING. I CAN HELP YOU DEFECT. TRUST ME. AFTER THE BREAK, TELL ME YOUR DECISION.
NOW TO GET THAT MESSAGE TO VOLSHA. GOOD JOB I HAD THAT CRASH COURSE IN SPEED SKATING.

WATCH, TROSKA APPROACHES!
HE'S SPOTTED US. GOT TO STOP ANY SUSPICION. SMASH ME WITH YOUR STICK!
B-BUT... IT COULD KILL YOU!
YEAH, BUT ONLY A LITTLE BIT! C'MON— HIT ME, MAN— HARD!
AAAAH!
IMPACT SUFFICIENT TO IMMOBILISE NORMAL HUMAN — M.A.C.H.I. DAMAGE SUPERFICIAL BRUISING. EXCLAMATION UNNECESSARY.
YEAH, BUT IT SOUNDS EFFECTIVE!
HE WAS ABOUT TO ATTACK ME. I HAD TO.
OKAY. LET'S GET THIS SHOW BACK ON TO THE ROAD!
VERY WELL, VOLSHA. I SHALL SEE YOU LATER.
ORDER RESTORED, THE MATCH CONTINUED, AN EXHAUSTING TEST FOR PLAYERS AND CROWD. THE BREAK CAME AS A WELCOME RELIEF.
THANKS. I—UH... TRAIN HARD.
YOU PLAY WELL, FELLA! AREN'T YOU EVEN OUT OF BREATH?
HOPE VOLSHA GETS A CHANCE TO READ THAT NOTE. WE'VE GOT TO ARRANGE AN ESCAPE PLAN DURING THE MATCH.

AFTER THE RESTART, TROSKA WAS IN DEADLY FORM.
GEE! TROSKA PUT EVERYTHING INTO THAT! OUR MINDER WILL BE KILLED TRYING TO STOP IT! I GOTTA INTERCEPT!
NEGATIVE USE OF HYPER-POWER NOT ESSENTIAL TO MISSION— LIFE OF KEEPER DISPOSABLE.
PROBE TOOK OFF IN A FANTASTIC M.A.C.H. POWERED 'HYPER-LEAP'.
NOT TO ME, COMPUTER!
PROBE THEN LAUNCHED HIS OWN ATTACK.
GOT TO REACH VOLSHA AND ARRANGE HIS ESCAPE!
OOOF! THIS SURE BEATS JUDO FOR EXCITEMENT!
AS PROBE REACHED VOLSHA...
I TRUST YOU. THE TEAM LEAVES TOMORROW. I WILL MEET YOU IN THIS STADIUM AT MIDNIGHT. IT WILL BE MY ONLY CHANCE OF ESCAPE.
WATCH YOURSELF. I THINK TROSKA'S SUSPICIOUS.

THE MESSAGE DELIVERED AND MEETING ARRANGED, M.A.C.H. 1 WAVES TO THE CANADIAN BENCH THAT HE WAS INJURED...
EVENTUALLY GOT YOU, EH? HE, HE!
I HOPE WE MEET AGAIN, MATE! WE'LL MAKE UP OUR OWN RULES THEN!

AT 11.55P.M. THAT NIGHT, THE GUARD AT THE GIANT STADIUM NEVER SAW THE FIGURE WHICH SAILED OVER THE FENCE.
REACTION FROM SECURITY GUARD—NIL.
WELL, THAT WAS EASY ENOUGH.

M.A.C.H. 1 CREPT DOWN INTO THE EERIE ECHOING SILENCE OF THE DESERTED STADIUM.
HOPE VOLSHA GETS A MOVE ON. IT'S FREEZING.
TEMPERATURE— 15° BELOW ZERO— NEEDED TO KEEP ICE SOLID.

MEANWHILE, IN THE RUSSIAN TEAM CAMP...
SOON I WILL SEE MY BROTHER. MY LIFE OF CONSTANT FEAR WILL BE OVER. FREEDOM, AT LAST, IS NEAR.

VOLSHA CREPT NERVOUSLY INTO THE STADIUM.
IT IS FIVE PAST MIDNIGHT. WHERE IS THAT MAN? IT WILL NOT BE LONG BEFORE TROSKA FINDS THAT BROKEN WINDOW.

NO... MMFF... LET... GO!

ALL RIGHT, MATE. IT'S ME, REMEMBER? YOUR FRIENDLY ICE-HOCKEY PLAYER!
SORRY. I AM READY TO GO. NO-ONE SAW ME LEAVE.
THE TWO WERE HALFWAY ACROSS THE ICE, WHEN—
AS I THOUGHT. OUR FRIEND FROM THE MATCH. VOLSHA, DID YOU THINK I WAS SO STUPID AS NOT TO SUSPECT SOME MOVE TO JOIN YOUR TRAITOROUS BROTHER? YOUR FUTURE AS A PLAYER WAS BRIGHT, NOW YOU FACE A LABOUR CAMP.
WE'LL SEE, FRIEND.
AAAH! SHARPENED SKATES!
SKATES MADE FROM TUNGSTEN STEEL—HONED TO RAZOR EDGE.
WANNA PLAY IT ROUGH, LADS?

THEY DON'T COME ROUGHER THAN MACH I.!
HERE, TROSKA. COLLECT YOUR MEN—
IT IS IMPOSSIBLE—
WHAT'S WRONG? DON'T YOU LIKE EQUAL ODDS!

AAAAH!
UUFF! JUST LIKE THROWING THE DISCUS.
HYPER-POWER REQUIRED. 40%. ICE-PUCK TRAVELLING AT 592.45 M.P.H. ACCURACY TO WITHIN 1.1 MILLIMETRES.
WAIT A MINUTE, TROSKA. WHY ARE YOU RUNNING? DIDN'T YOUR 123 VICTIMS RUN?
DEATH—— INSTANTANEOUS.
GOOD RIDDANCE. HE'LL KILL NO MORE FOR THE K.G.B.
M.A.C.H. 1 EXAMINED THE BADLY BEATEN VOLSHA...
SUBJECT HAS BADLY FRACTURED RIBS AND SEVERE BRUISING.
HE'LL SURVIVE. AND I'M SURE HIS BROTHER WOULD GIVE UP A FEW SECRETS ONCE THEY'RE BOTH SAFE.
WHAT ABOUT MAKING MY NEXT MISSION AN EASY ONE LIKE SAVING THE WORLD OR WALKING TO THE MOON, SHARPE? I'M FED UP WITH THE DIFFICULT JOBS!
LATER, WHEN THE THE BROTHERS WERE RE-UNITED.
THAT'S ENOUGH HUMOUR, MACH ONE!
The End

THE "TAXACO VENTURE", AN OFF-SHORE OIL RIG SITTING ON ONE OF THE BIGGEST OIL FIELDS IN THE NORTH SEA. WITH AN OUTPUT OF ONE MILLION BARRELS A DAY IT IS MORE THAN JUST AN EXAMPLE OF MAN'S INGENUITY— IT IS A NATIONAL 'GOLDMINE' WORTH BILLIONS OF POUNDS TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. IT IS ALSO...
...A PRIME TARGET FOR TERRORIST ATTACK!
SURPRISE IS WITH US! STORM THE RIG!
THE ATTACK WAS FAST...
UUURGH!
...AND DEADLY EFFICIENT!
KURT! DIVERS IN THE DECOMPRESSION CHAMBER!
A FUSILLADE OF BULLETS SHATTERED THE GLASS — AND THE 100 POUNDS PER SQUARE INCH PRESSURE INSIDE THE CHAMBER RUSHED TO EQUALISE WITH THE LOWER PRESSURE OUTSIDE. THE EFFECT ON THE DIVERS WAS IMMEDIATE — AND FATAL!
YAAAAARGH!
IN FIVE MINUTES THE TERRORISTS HAD TAKEN CONTROL OF THE RIG, AND ISSUED THEIR DEMANDS TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.
BUT THEY HADN'T RECKONED WITH THE INTERVENTION OF A MAN CALLED...
2000 A.D. Credit Card:
SCRIPT ROBOT G. RICE
ART ROBOTS G. LEACH
LETTERING ROBOT S. RICHARDSON
COMPU·73E
M.A.C.H.1
*MAN ACTIVATED by COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER

THIS STORY IS TAKEN FROM THE FILE OF MACH 7, ALIAS JOHN PROBE, A BRITISH AGENT NOW DECEASED. BUT AT THE TIME OF THE ATTACK JOHN PROBE WAS ALIVE — IF ONLY JUST!
LASER BEAM HIDDEN IN THE CEILING! THANKS FOR WARNING ME, COMPUTER!
EMOTIONS IRRELEVANT. LASER WIDE OF TARGET BY 1.01 INCHES PRECISELY. PROCEED WITH CAUTION.
THE COMPUTER CIRCUITS IMPLANTED IN PROBE'S HEAD FED DATA DIRECTLY TO HIS BRAIN!

THE MICROFILM'S IN A SAFE AT THE END OF THE CORRIDOR. I'VE AVOIDED HIDDEN MACHINE GUNS, A SONIC BEAM AND THE LASER—WHAT ELSE WILL THEY THROW AT ME?

AS IF IN ANSWER —
SLIDING PANEL SEALING OFF MY PATH! AND THE CEILING'S DESCENDING!
COMPOSITION OF WALLS AND CEILING: TITANIUM, IMPOSSIBLE FOR A NORMAL BEING TO RUPTURE.

IF THERE'S ONE THING I'M NOT, COMPUTER— IT'S NORMAL!
GIVE ME SEVENTY PER CENT HYPER-POWER!
* HYPER-POWER: PROBE'S STRENGTH HAD BEEN INCREASED FIFTY TIMES BY A COMPUTERISED FORM OF ACUPUNCTURE.

MADE IT! AND NOW THERE'S ONLY TEN FEET TO GO. SO LET'S FINISH WITH A...
CLANG

BANG!
AH, PROBE. GLAD TO SEE YOU'VE PASSED YOUR ANNUAL EVALUATION TEST! NOW I HAVE A REAL MISSION FOR YOU!

SHARPE, MY BOSS! YOU MEAN THIS WAS ALL A SET-UP?
YES. OUR PLANE TO SCOTLAND LEAVES IN ONE HOUR. I'LL FILL YOU IN ON THE WAY.

SOON—
...AND THE TERRORISTS ARE DEMANDING A TEN MILLION POUND RANSOM FOR THE RIG, PROBE! OTHERWISE THEY DESTROY IT— AND FIVE HOSTAGES! I'VE TOLD THE P.M. MY DEPARTMENT CAN HANDLE IT ... THAT IS, OF COURSE, YOU CAN!
WELL, THANKS! IF I SUCCEED, YOU GET THE GLORY. IF I FAIL —I'M BLAMED FOR BANKRUPTING THE COUNTRY!
BUT TWO HOURS LATER PROBE WAS GUNNING A BOAT TOWARDS THE RIG—
THERE SHE IS. I'LL CUT THE ENGINE AND SWIM THE REST OF THE WAY...
TOO LATE— I'VE BEEN SPOTTED!
H'MM, A RECEPTION COMMITTEE DOWN HERE, TOO— AND THOSE SPEAR GUNS ARE JUST AS DEADLY!
BUT SUPER-FAST REACTIONS—
— ARE EVEN DEADLIER!
N-NO! HE THROWS BACK OUR SPEARS — UUUHH!

PROBE BROKE SURFACE, BUT—
SOMEONE COMING UP THE SIDE OF THE PLATFORM— UUGH!
DON'T MOVE! PUT YOUR HANDS UP IN THE AIR...
LIKE THIS?
UH? HE CRUSHES MY GUN!
SCRUNCH
I'LL CRUSH YOUR FACE NEXT, PAL, UNLESS YOU TAKE ME TO THE HOSTAGES!
NO! I'LL SHOW YOU WHERE THEY ARE!
EVERYBODY FREEZE— WHAT TH—?
KILL HIM! HE'S A BRITISH SPY!
UURGH!
AAAARGH!
A BULLET HAD GRAZED PROBE'S HEAD, KNOCKING HIM OUT. WHEN HE CAME TO...
WH-WHAT HAPPENED?
THEY'RE GOING TO BLOW THE RIG THAT'S WHAT! WE'LL ALL BE KILLED— AND YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE!
PROGNOSIS CORRECT. SCAN REVEALS EXPLOSIVE LOCATED ON MAIN OUTLET VALVE, BENEATH DERRICK. EFFECTS OF EXPLOSION WILL CREATE BLOW-BACK INTO FIELD. RESULT: COMPLETE DESTRUCTION.
THAT'S NOT ALL— I CAN HEAR A CHOPPER TAKING OFF!

PROBE RACED OUT TO THE LANDING BAY...
HELICOPTER IS VIPER COMMANDO. TOTAL WEIGHT 21,000 LBS. TOP SPEED 129 M.P.H. HYPER-POWER REQUIRED TO ABORT TAKE-OFF: 85%.
YOU MEAN...
...ANCHOR MYSELF TO THIS RAILING— AND USE ITS OWN MOMENTUM TO PROPEL IT— UNH!—INTO...
THE SEA! RIGHT ON TOP OF THE SUB!
AAAARGH!
TERRORISTS DESTROYED, BUT SCAN REVEALS CHARGE WILL DETONATE IN TEN SECONDS' TIME. CONCLUSION: YOU WILL FAIL TO REACH IT IN TIME.
SAVE THE FIGURES, COMPUTER! IF I SAY I'M GOING TO SAVE THIS HUNK OF METAL—
— THEN THAT'S WHAT I'M GOING TO DO!
NINE SECONDS...

EIGHT SECONDS...
QUIT THE SPEAKING CLOCK ACT, COMPUTER! I'VE FOUND THE BOMB—
DANGER!! DANGER!! DIAMOND-TIPPED DRILLING PIPE FALLING AT 200 FEET PER SECOND! IMPACT IMMINENT!
IN A SINGLE, FLOWING MOVEMENT, PROBE TWISTED, LOOKED UP—AND CAUGHT!
UUUUNH!
GOTTA BE ONE TERRORIST LEFT ABOVE ME. WELL, HE CAN HAVE THIS TOOTHPICK...
BACK!
AAARGH!
TWO SECONDS...
ZERO!
THROWN THE BOMB OUT TO SEA WHERE IT EXPLODED HARMLESSLY!
AS PROBE TURNED TO RADIO SHARPE 'MISSION ACCOMPLISHED'...
H'MM, LOOK AT ME. A MAN WHO'S SAVED BRITAIN FROM DISASTER, AND NO-ONE TO CLAP ME ON THE BACK...
STILL, YOU MONITORED IT ALL, COMPUTER. WHAT DO YOU SAY..?
AM NOT PROGRAMMED TO CONGRATULATE. RETURN TO LONDON IMMEDIATELY FOR BRIEFING FOR NEXT MISSION.
THE END

GALLERY

Brian Bolland

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2000 A.D.

20 MAY 78

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Brian Bolland

Kevin O'Neill

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SCOTT GOODALL

Scott Goodall joined IPC in the 1960's and ended up writing some of the most popular strips, including *Captain Hurricane*, *Kelly's Eye*, *Cursitor Doom* and *The Steel Claw* in **Valiant**, and *Thunderbirds*, *Lady Penelope* and *Captain Scarlet* strips in *TV Century 21*. His other notable strips include *Kid Chameleon*, *Fishboy* and *Marney the Fox* which he co-created with John Stokes for **Buster**, as well as Goodall's favourite, *Rat Trap* in **Cor!** In 2005 he was awarded an MBE.

ALAN HEBDEN

Alan Hebden scripted a number of comics in the late 1970's and early 1980's , including *Major Eazy* for **Battle**, *Mind Wars* for **Starlord** and *Return of the Mean Team* for **2000 AD**. Alan is still working in the industry today, writing various stories for **DC Thomson's** *Commando*.

STEVE MACMANUS

Steve MacManus was the editor of **2000 AD** during its 1980s heyday, shepherding it through its 'Golden Age' as he commissioned numerous hit series such as *The Ballad of Halo Jones, Sláine, Rogue Trooper, Nemesis the Warlock* and more. For many, he remains the definitive editor of the multi-award-winning SF anthology.

ROY PRESTON

Roy Preston is a veteran writer of British comics. For **2000 AD** he wrote several strips including *M.A.C.H. 1, Dan Dare* and a number of *Tharg's Future Shocks* and *Time Twisters.* He also wrote *The Collector* and *The Amstor Computer* for the **Eagle** and several strips for popular UK girl's comics such as **Tammy** and **Jinty**.

NICK LANDAU

Before landing a job as chief sub-editor for **Action**, Nick Landau had long been involved in the British comics industry, having been the co-editor of the Comic Media fanzine and the organiser of several comic marts. Working with editor Kelvin Gosnell at IPC, both Landau and Roy Preston provided a great deal of support to **2000 AD**, while Gosnell focused on launching **Starlord**. After establishing Titan Distributors in the late Seventies, Landau now runs the Titan Entertainment Group.

PAT MILLS

Pat Mills' writing and editorial career started in Dundee, working for **D.C. Thomson** on the teenage romance magazine **Romeo**. Later Pat went freelance and started a long relationship with **IPC Magazines**, initially writing for girl's titles like **Tammy**, **Pink** and **Sandy**. He was an assistant editor on **Tammy**, the publication which began the comic revolution. Then, with Malcolm Shaw, he did some preliminary work devising **Jinty** before moving over to rejuvenate boy's comics. He created **Battle** (with John Wagner), **Action**, **Misty** and **2000 AD**.

GEOFFREY MILLER

Geoffrey Miller scripted *M.A.C.H Zero* and the second book of *Flesh* for **2000 AD**.

ARTISTS

JOHN COOPER

Johnny Red penciller John Cooper was already a fan-favourite at **Battle** comic before he made the move to **Starlord**, where he illustrated *Time Quake*. Later he came to **2000 AD**, after it was merged with **Starlord**, where he illustrated several *Future Shocks* as well as *Judge Dredd* and *M.A.C.H. 1*. Throughout the eighties and nineties he worked on various titles for Marvel UK, **Eagle**, **Warlord** and **Roy of the Rovers**, returning to **2000 AD** in 2008 to draw *Armitage*. He passed away in 2015.

LOZANO

Lozano drew for **IPC i**n the seventies and eighties, his credits including **2000 AD**'s *Ant Wars* and *M.A.C.H 1***,** and *Wagner's Walk* for **Tornado**.

MARZAL CANOS

Known for his work in French comics, Jaime Marzal Canos has worked on a *Future Shock* and *M.A.C.H. 1* for **2000 AD**.

RAMON SOLA

Ramon Sola provided the art for *Black Hawk*, *Flesh*, several *Future Shocks* and episodes of *M.A.C.H. 0* for **2000 AD**. Sola also worked with Pat Mills on a strip called *Hook Jaw* which ran in the highly influential British comic, **Action**.

MONTERO

Montero lent his artistic talents to **2000 AD** way back in the seventies, working mainly on *M.A.C.H. 1* and *M.A.C.H. 0*.

MIKE DOREY

Mike Dorey joined **2000 AD** following its merger with rival action comic **Tornado**, where he pencilled *Victor Drago*. Following his move to greener pastures, he pencilled several *Future Shocks* and a *Time Twister*, as well as *M.A.C.H. 0*, *M.A.C.H. 1*, *Ro-Busters*, *Invasion!, Rogue Trooper* and *Tharg the Mighty*.

KEVIN O'NEILL

Kevin O'Neill is a **2000 AD** legend. From working as an art assistant on the very first prog, he quickly became involved in the creative side of the comic, co-creating classics like *A.B.C. Warriors*, *Bonjo From Beyond The Stars*, *Metalzoic* and *Nemesis the Warlock*. O'Neill has also written for the comic on strips including *Dash Decent*, *Future Shocks*, *One-Offs*, *Tharg the Mighty*, and has illustrated *Future Shocks*, *Judge Dredd*, *M.A.C.H. 0*, *One-Offs*, *Ro-Busters*, *Ro-Jaws' Robo-Tales*, *Tharg the Mighty* and *Torquemada*.

TREVOR GORING

As well as working on Rogue Trooper for 2000 AD, Trevor Goring has illustrated episodes of Dan Dare and Tharg's Future Shocks.

GARY LEACH

Garry Leach is a highly-respected artist who has pencilled *Dan Dare*, *Judge Dredd*, *Tharg's Future Shocks* and *The V.C.'s*. His career beyond **2000 AD** is highly notable for his work on the legendary *Miracleman*, which he effectively co-created with Alan Moore.

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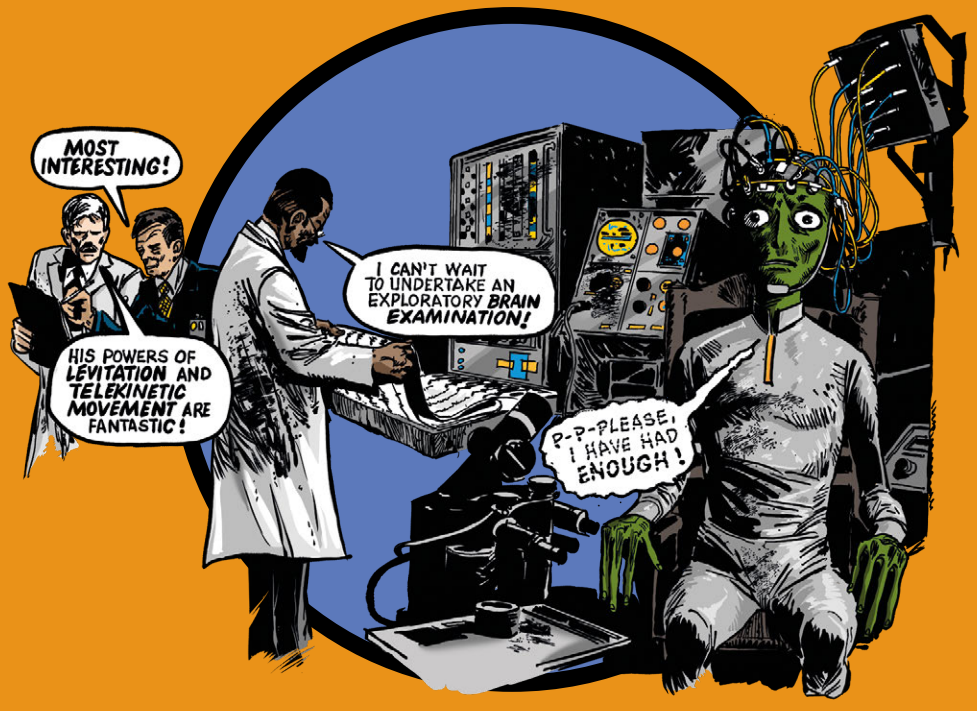

SUBJECT:
SECRET AGENT JOHN PROBE.

PROCESS:
COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER.

DATA:
COMPU-PUNCTURE IS A COMPUTERISED FORM OF ACUPUNCTURE.
BY INSERTING SPECIAL ELECTRO-NEEDLES INTO PROBE'S BODY,
HIS ENERGY FLOW WILL INCREASE UNTIL HE HAS THE STRENGTH OF FIFTY MEN!

+++ALERT STATUS RED + CRISIS POINT EXCEEDED+++

When terrorists, super-weapons and other-worldly forces plot destruction, the British Secret Service need John Probe – their number one super-agent. But when Probe begins to question the motives of his superiors and the ruthless logic of his cybernetic brain, he finds the service has dark secrets up its sleeve… including failed prototype, M.A.C.H. Zero!

The agency will find out what happens when they try to control Men Activated by Compu-Puncture Hyperpower!

TERRORISTS AND ENEMY AGENTS BEWARE! JOHN PROBE IS MUCH MORE THAN A MAN;
HE IS A MAN ACTIVATED BY COMPU-PUNCTURE HYPERPOWER!

This second volume collects the finale of 2000 AD's super-spy thriller and the M.A.C.H. Zero spin-off story.

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