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SAVAGE 181

DRAGON



SAVAGE DRAGON

by 

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Colors
MIKE TORIS
Flats

JOSH EICHORN
sends them silly with his
star-shine shimmy shuffle smile



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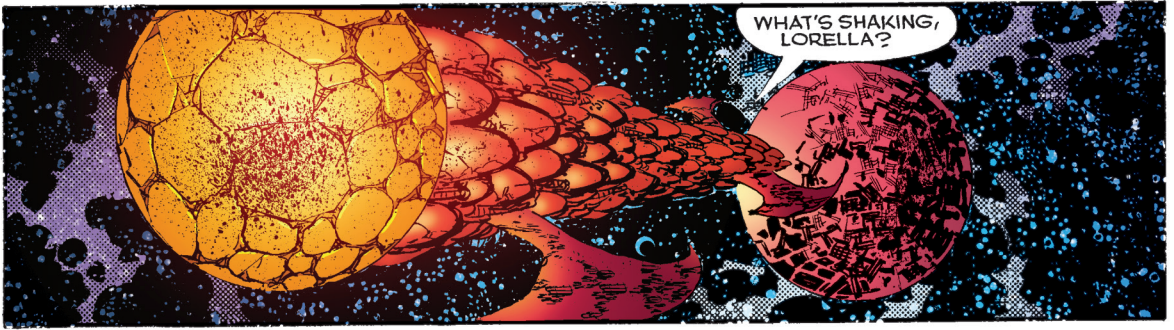
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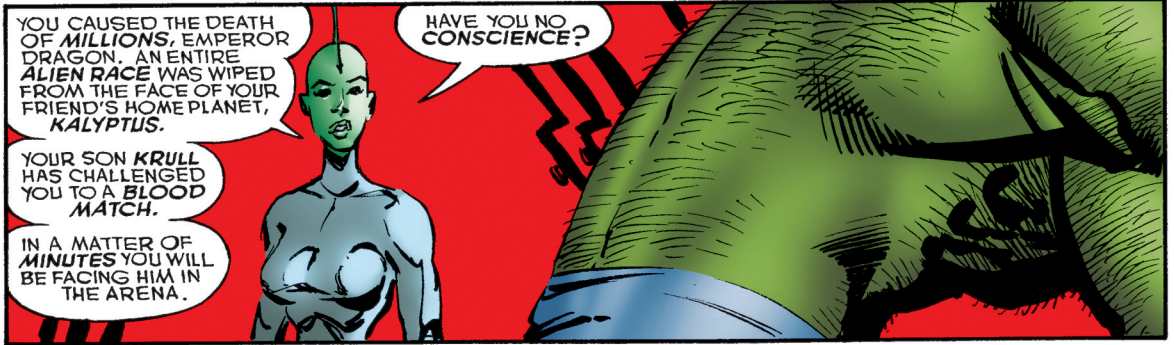
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WHAT'S SHAKING, LORELLA?



YOU CAUSED THE DEATH OF MILLIONS, EMPEROR DRAGON. AN ENTIRE ALIEN RACE WAS WIPED FROM THE FACE OF YOUR FRIEND'S HOME PLANET, *KALYPTUS*.

HAVE YOU NO CONSCIENCE?

YOUR SON *KRULL* HAS CHALLENGED YOU TO A BLOOD MATCH.

IN A MATTER OF MINUTES YOU WILL BE FACING HIM IN THE ARENA.



PLENTY.

THOSE ALIENS WIPED OUT VANGUARD'S RACE. THEY DESERVED WHAT THEY GOT. I HAVE NO REGRETS.

AS FAR AS *KRULL* GOES--THE KID'S A LITTLE HEADSTRONG. WE'LL KNOCK EACH OTHER AROUND A BIT AND HE'LL SEE HOW FUTILE THIS ALL IS.

I DON'T SEE THE POINT IN GETTING ALL WORKED UP ABOUT IT. HE'S NOT EVEN 20 YEARS OLD. YOU GUYS ARE A BUNCH OF *PANSIES*. HOW TOUGH CAN HE BE?



WHEN YOU WERE EMPEROR *KURR* YOU HAD NO COMBAT EXPERIENCE, YET YOU MANAGED TO DO CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE BACK ON EARTH.

KRULL HAS HAD THE SAME EXPERIENCE THAT YOU ONCE HAD. FACED THE SAME TRAINING ROBOTS--STUDIED THE SAME TRAINING FILMS.

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE *KRULL*. HE IS IN HIS PRIME WHILE YOU ARE LONG PAST YOURS. IN THE ARENA YOU WILL BE FACING A YOUNGER, STRONGER, MORE VITAL VERSION OF YOUR FORMER SELF.

YOU MAY DIE THERE.



THANKS FOR THE PEP TALK.

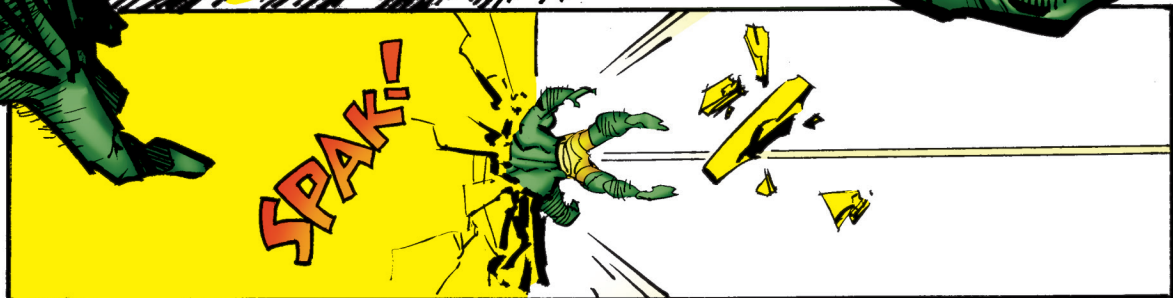
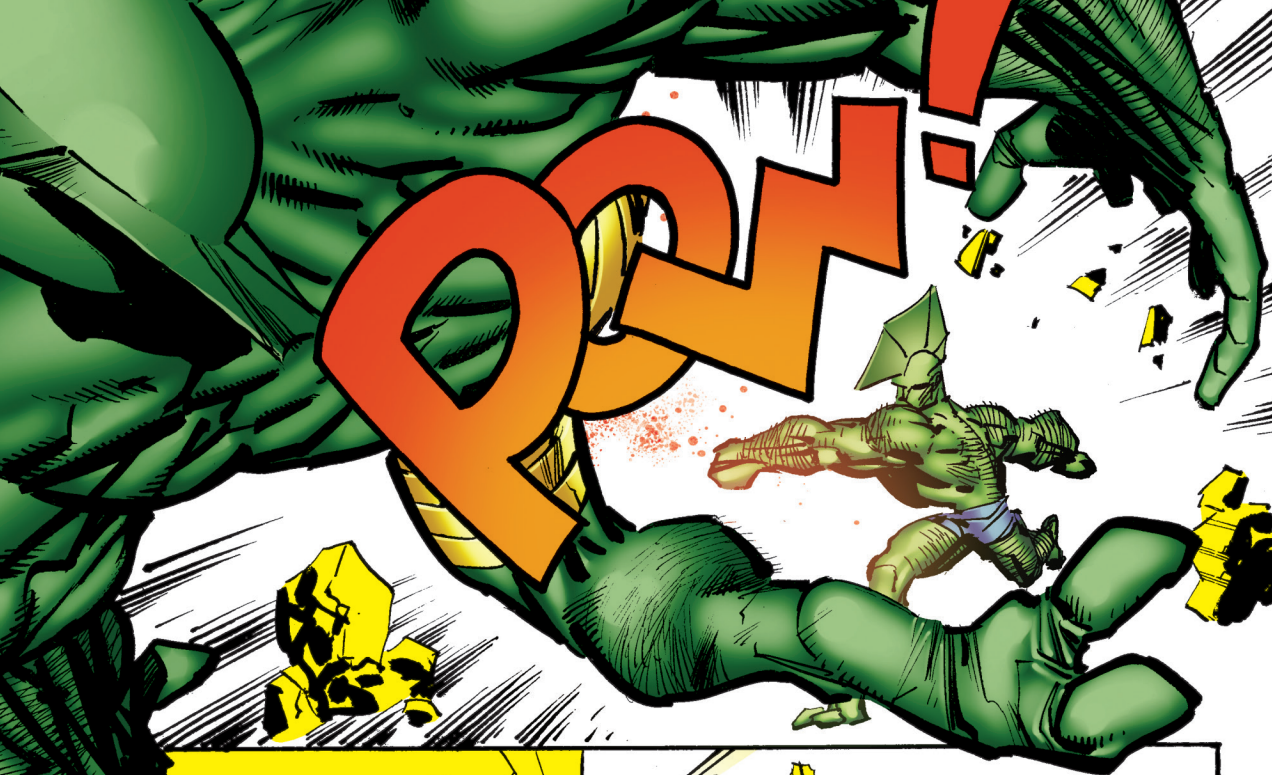


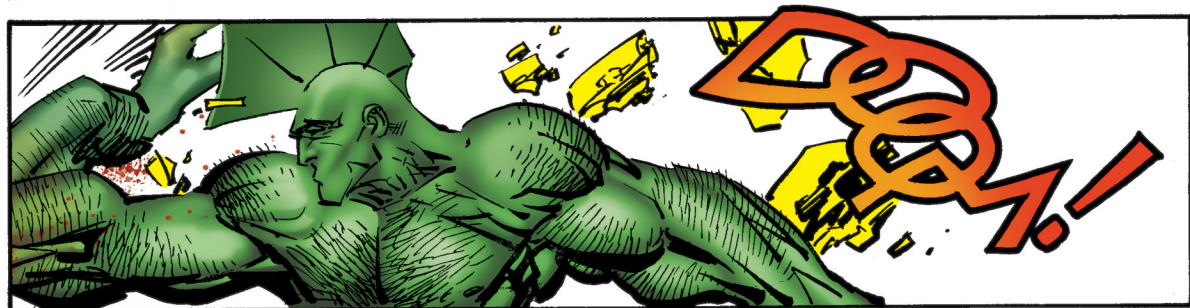
IT HAS COME TO *THIS*, FATHER!

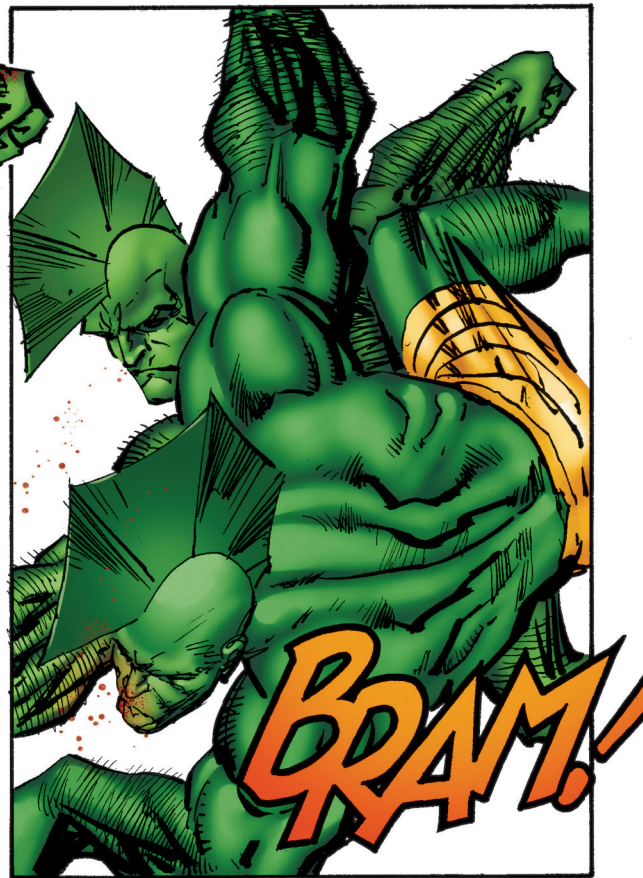
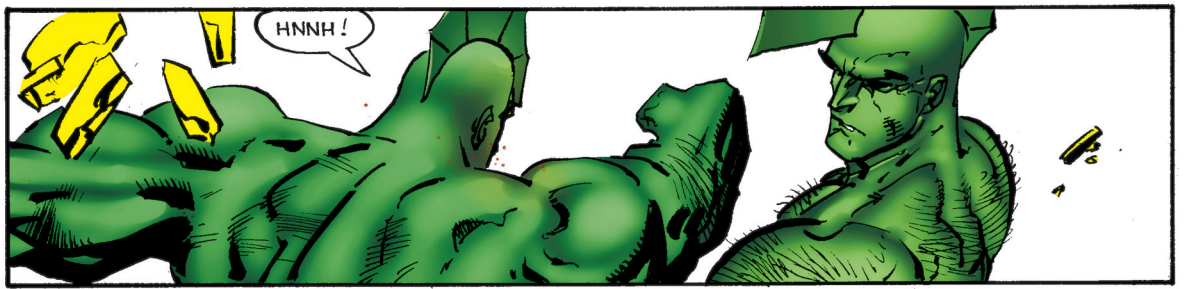
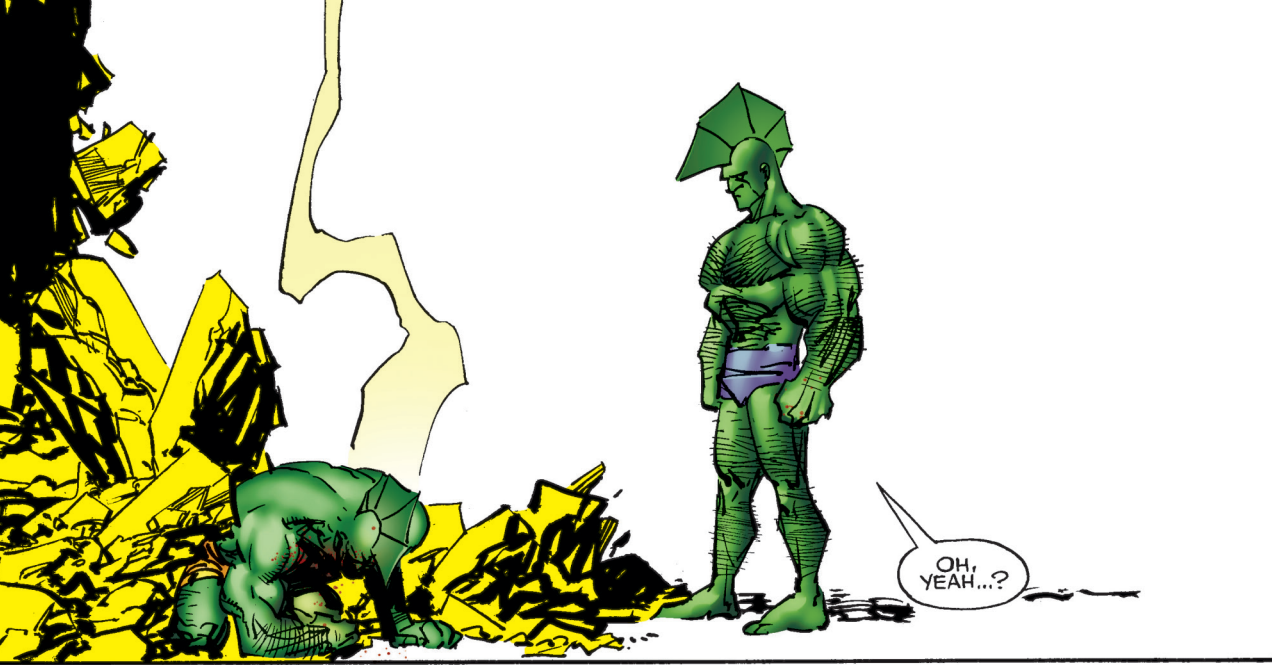
YOU WILL *DIE* AT MY HANDS!

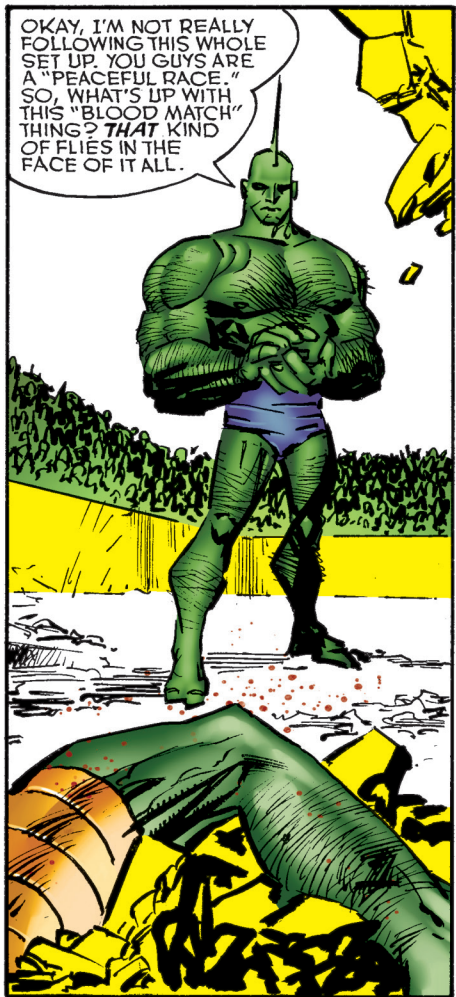
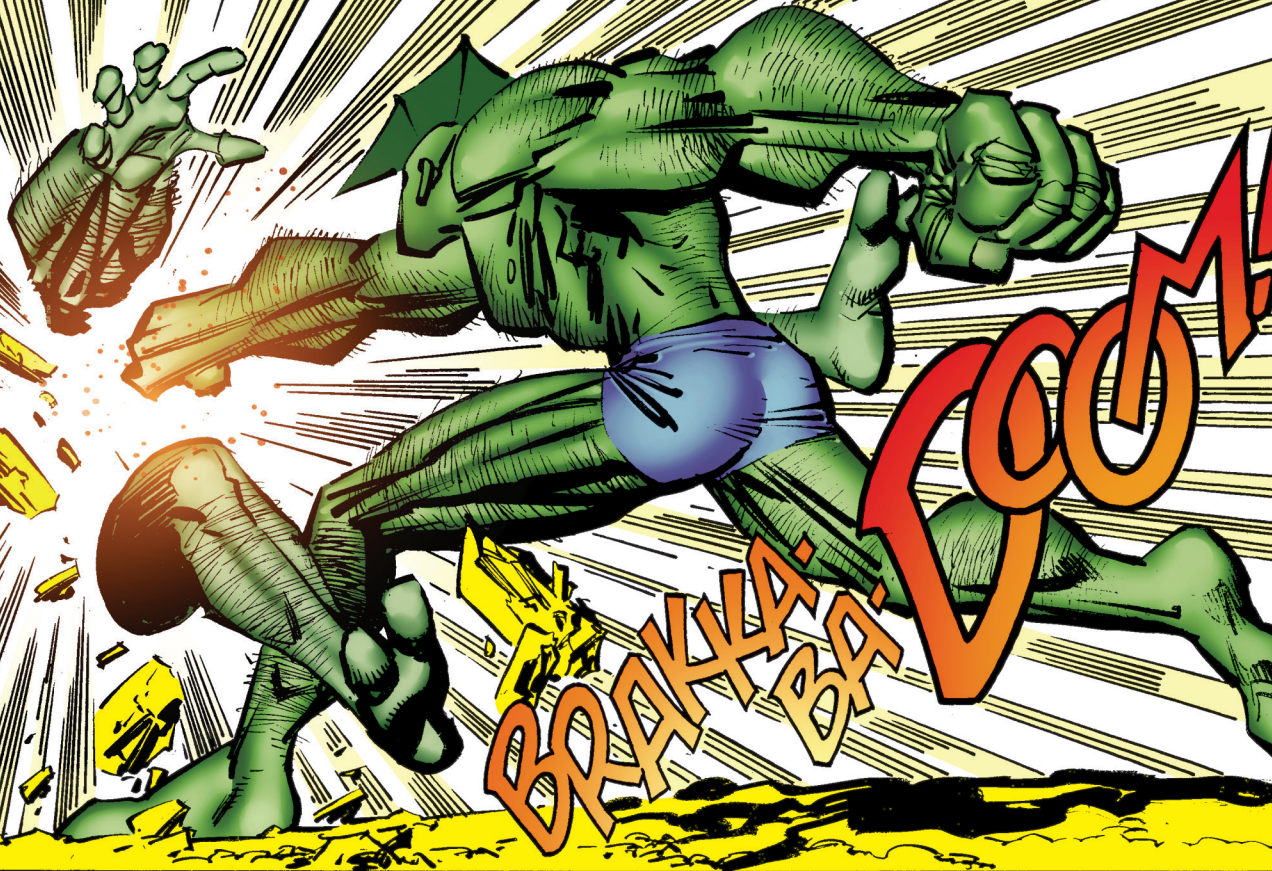


YEAH... WHATEVER.









OKAY, I'M NOT REALLY FOLLOWING THIS WHOLE SET UP. YOU GUYS ARE A "PEACEFUL RACE." SO, WHAT'S UP WITH THIS "BLOOD MATCH" THING? THAT KIND OF FLIES IN THE FACE OF IT ALL.



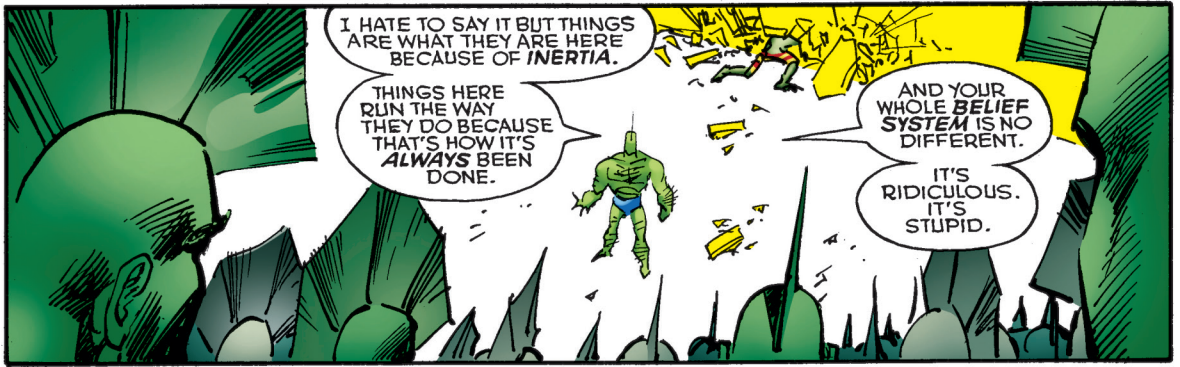
AND, IN ALL SERIOUSNESS-- HAVING ONLY GUYS WITH **SUPERPOWERS** BE THE DE FACTO LEADER IS PRETTY SCREWY.

IT'S NO WONDER THINGS ARE SO MESSED UP WITH YOU GUYS.

BACK ON EARTH WE HAD THIS THING CALLED A **DEMOCRACY**. INDIVIDUALS WOULD CAMPAIGN TO BE THE LEADER AND THE PEOPLE WOULD VOTE TO CHOOSE THE PERSON THEY THOUGHT WOULD DO THE BEST JOB.



WE **DIDN'T** JUST SLUG IT OUT TO SEE WHO WOULD RUN THINGS. WHAT MAKES THE GUY WITH THE MOST POWER THE MOST QUALIFIED TO CALL THE SHOTS?



I HATE TO SAY IT BUT THINGS ARE WHAT THEY ARE HERE BECAUSE OF INERTIA.

THINGS HERE RUN THE WAY THEY DO BECAUSE THAT'S HOW IT'S ALWAYS BEEN DONE.

AND YOUR WHOLE BELIEF SYSTEM IS NO DIFFERENT.

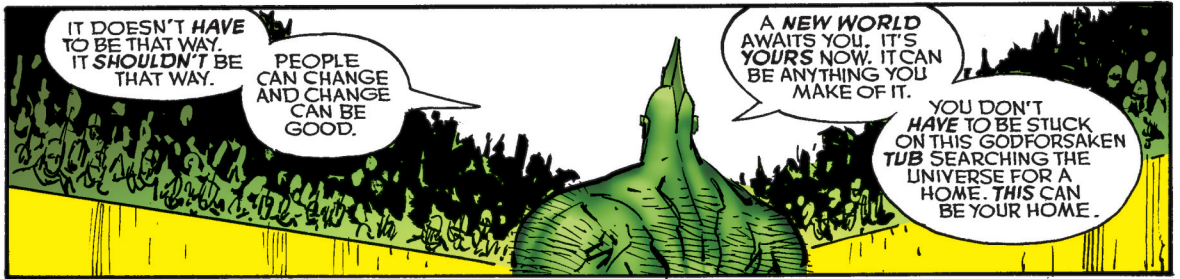
IT'S RIDICULOUS. IT'S STUPID.



SOMEBODY WRITES DOWN SOME BIT OF NONSENSE AND YOU ALL JUST GO ALONG WITH IT INSTEAD OF QUESTIONING ITS VALIDITY.

YOU PUT IN PLACE THIS WHOLE SET OF RULES AND BELIEFS AND BECAUSE OF IT NOTHING GETS DONE. IT'S NO WONDER YOU COULD NEVER FIND A SUITABLE PLANET TO CALL HOME.

ALL OF YOUR RULES PREVENTED THAT FROM HAPPENING. ANY PLANET CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING LIFE INEVITABLY HAD LIFE AND WAS THEREFORE UNSUITABLE. NO WONDER YOU'VE WANDERED THE GALAXY FOR UNTOLD MILLENNIA.

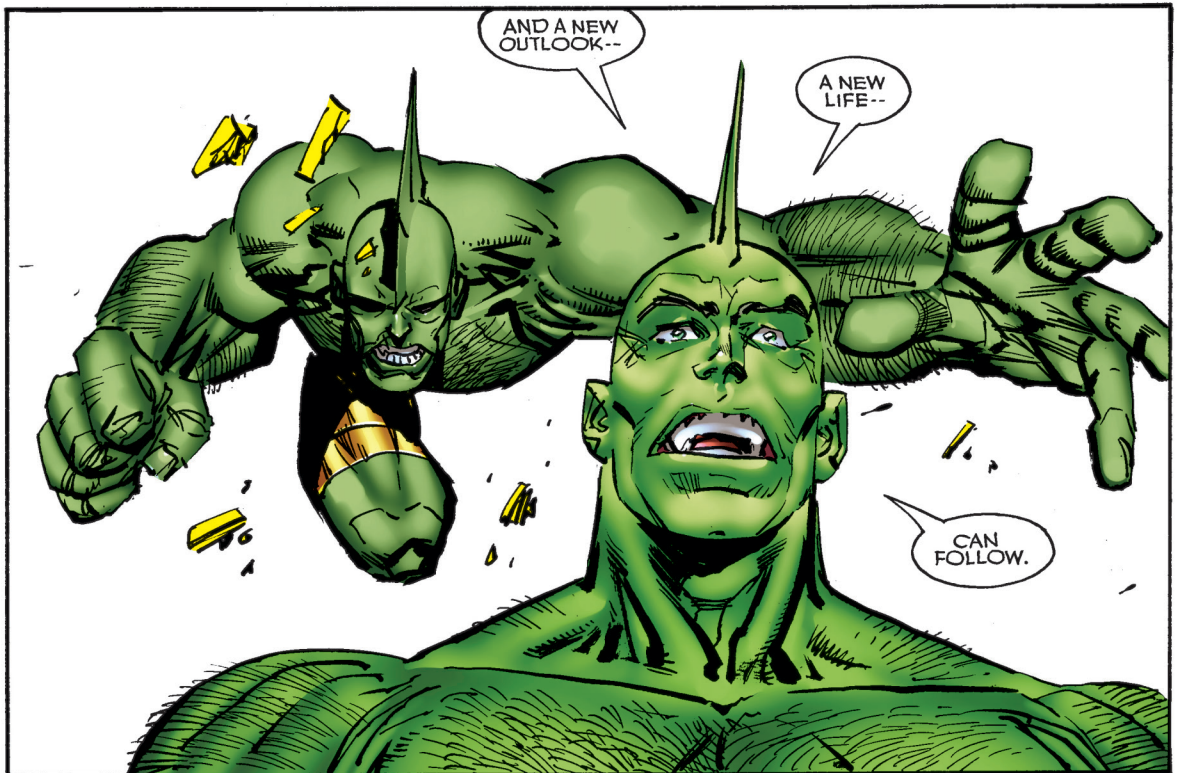


IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THAT WAY. IT SHOULDN'T BE THAT WAY.

PEOPLE CAN CHANGE AND CHANGE CAN BE GOOD.

A NEW WORLD AWAITS YOU. IT'S YOURS NOW. IT CAN BE ANYTHING YOU MAKE OF IT.

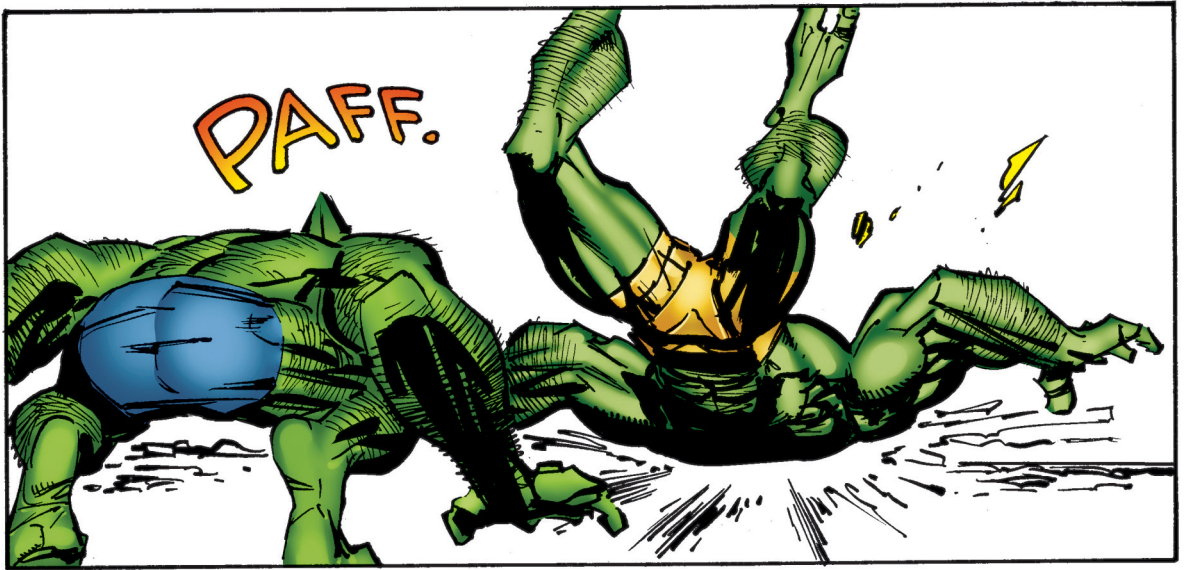
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE STUCK ON THIS GODFORSAKEN TUB SEARCHING THE UNIVERSE FOR A HOME. THIS CAN BE YOUR HOME.

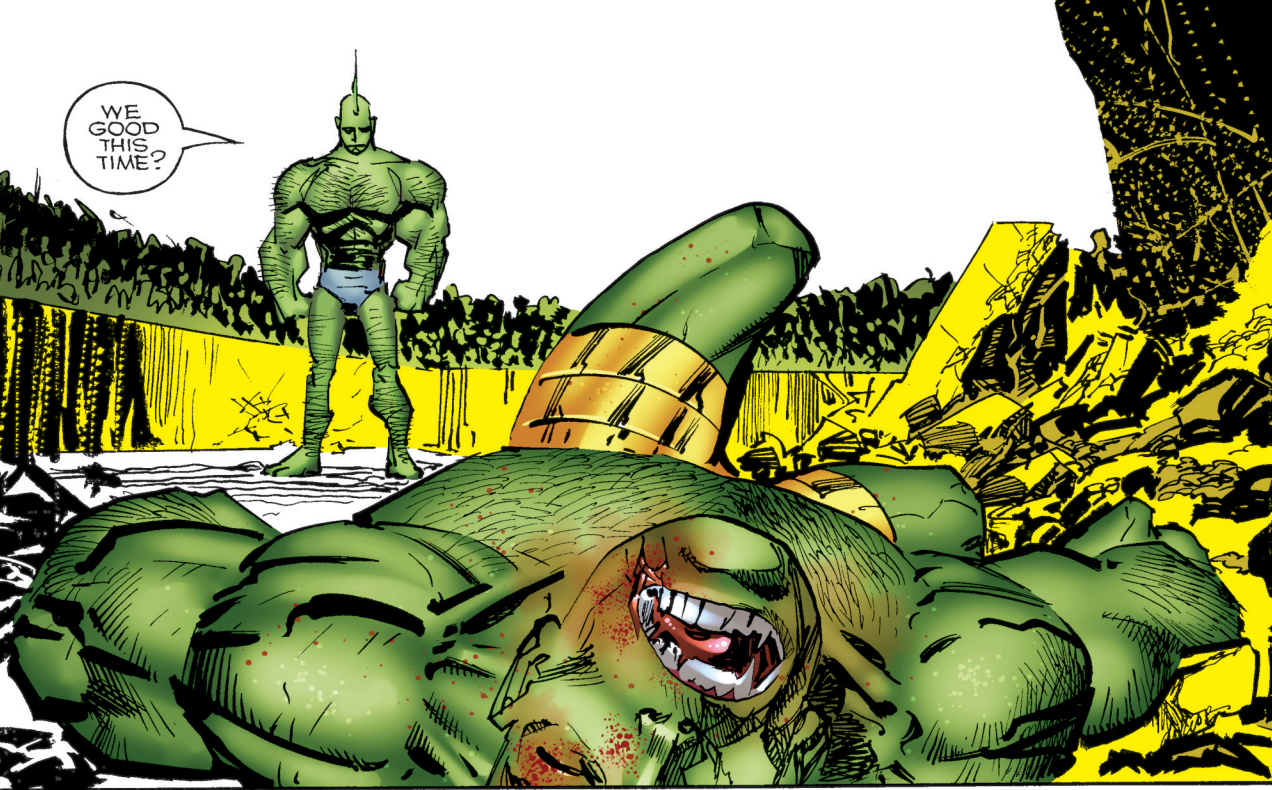


AND A NEW OUTLOOK--

A NEW LIFE--

CAN FOLLOW.

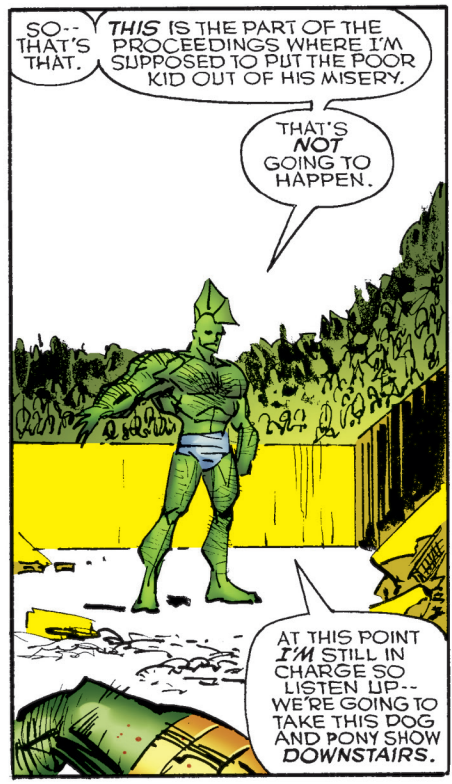




WE GOOD THIS TIME?



OKAY THEN.



SO-- THAT'S THAT.

THIS IS THE PART OF THE PROCEEDINGS WHERE I'M SUPPOSED TO PUT THE POOR KID OUT OF HIS MISERY.

THAT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.

AT THIS POINT I'M STILL IN CHARGE SO LISTEN UP-- WE'RE GOING TO TAKE THIS DOG AND PONY SHOW DOWNSTAIRS.



WE'RE GOING TO SETTLE IN.

WE'RE GOING TO MAKE IT INTO A HOME AND THEN WE'RE GOING TO HAVE ELECTIONS.



IF YOU FEEL LIKE GIVING ME THE OLD HEAVE-HO AT THAT TIME, YOU'RE WELCOME TO DO SO.

UNTIL THEN--

PACK YOUR BAGS, BOYS AND GIRLS. MOVING DAY IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER.



GOD IS DEAD.

IN OUR DARKEST HOUR
GOD CAME TO OUR RESCUE.

GOD ERADICATED THE INVADING ALIENS-- DESTROYED THEIR SHIPS!

GOD EXPENDED ALL OF HIS MIGHT TO SAVE US ALL.

AND, DRAINED OF HIS POWER, VULNERABLE AND WEAK, GOD WAS BLOWN TO PIECES BY AN AIR FORCE PILOT WHO MISTOOK HIM FOR THE ENEMY.

GOD IS DEAD-- AND WE KILLED HIM.



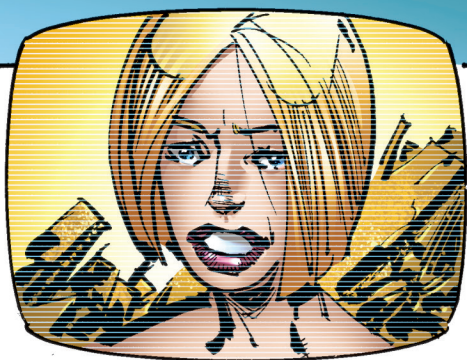
ANGEL DRAGON WAS ON THE SCENE AND WITNESSED WHAT HAPPENED FIRSTHAND...

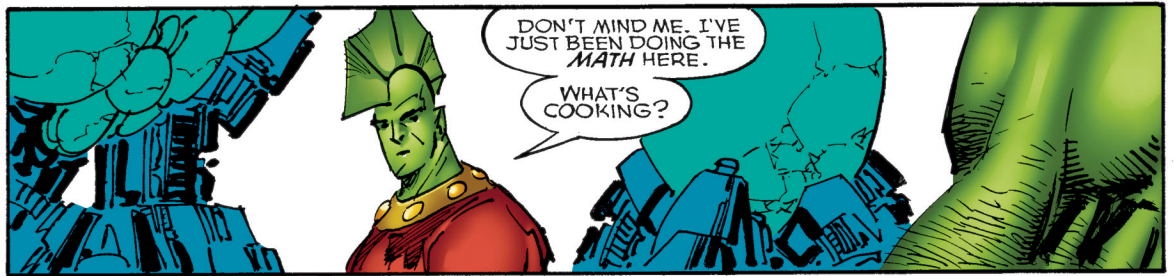
ALL GOD DID WHAT...

WE WERE IN TROUBLE. WE CALLED HIM TO HELP.

ALL GOD... SAVED THE WORLD...

AND NOW ALL GOD IS... IS DEAD.







IT'S HARD TO KNOW WHERE TO START.



WE'RE NOT GOING TO FIX IT ALL OVERNIGHT.

ASTOUNDING WHAT DAMAGE THOSE ALIENS DID IN JUST-- WHAT-- SIX HOURS?

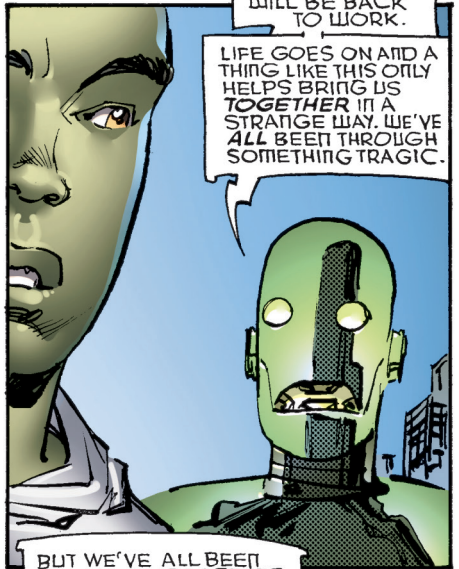


MILLIONS DEAD.

MILLIONS.

THIS IS NEVER GOING TO BE OKAY.

POPSENSE. KIDS WILL BE BACK IN SCHOOL IN A FEW WEEKS. PEOPLE WILL BE BACK TO WORK.

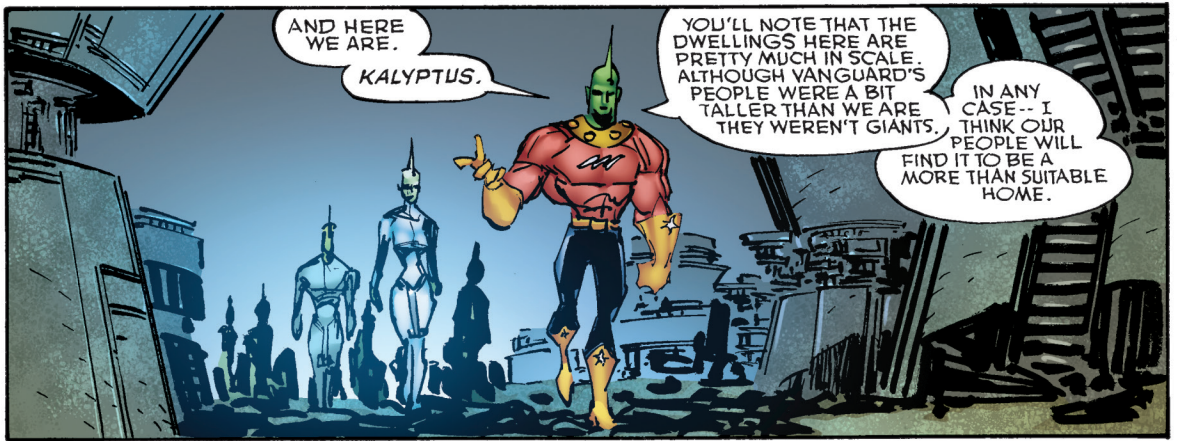


LIFE GOES ON AND A THING LIKE THIS ONLY HELPS BRING US TOGETHER IN A STRANGE WAY. WE'VE ALL BEEN THROUGH SOMETHING TRAGIC.

BUT WE'VE ALL BEEN THROUGH IT TOGETHER. WE SURVIVED. AND FOR ALL OF US IT'S IMPORTANT THAT LIFE GOES ON.

IT'LL BE OKAY. IF WE CAN MAKE IT THROUGH SEBASTIAN KHAN, MR. GLUM, AND A COUPLE OF WORLD WARS-- WE CAN BOUNCE BACK FROM THIS.

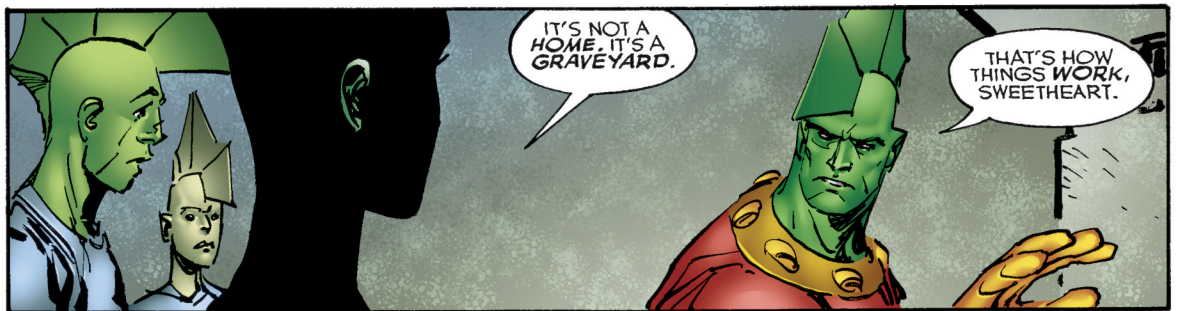




AND HERE WE ARE.
KALYPTUS.

YOU'LL NOTE THAT THE DWELLINGS HERE ARE PRETTY MUCH IN SCALE. ALTHOUGH VANGUARD'S PEOPLE WERE A BIT TALLER THAN WE ARE, THEY WEREN'T GIANTS.

IN ANY CASE-- I THINK OUR PEOPLE WILL FIND IT TO BE A MORE THAN SUITABLE HOME.



IT'S NOT A HOME. IT'S A GRAVEYARD.

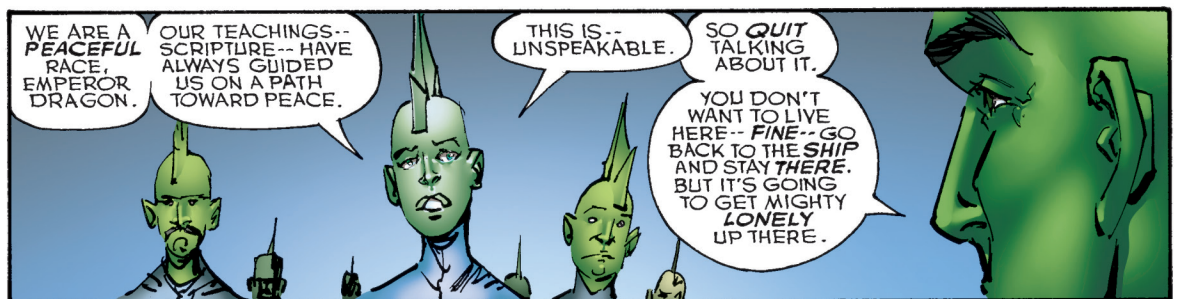
THAT'S HOW THINGS WORK, SWEETHEART.



ONE GROUP INVADES AND ANOTHER IS WIPED OUT. IT'S HAPPENED TIME AND TIME AGAIN.
THE BIG DIFFERENCE HERE IS THAT THE ONES I TOOK OUT HERE HAD JUST KILLED OFF THIS WORLD'S NATIVE PEOPLE. THEY WEREN'T LOCALS-- THEY WERE CONQUERORS-- INVADERS-- KILLERS.

THEY WERE A THREAT TO EVERYBODY IN THE UNIVERSE AND FROM WHAT I KNOW, THEIR OUTPOST HERE IS THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG. THESE GUYS ARE CRAWLING ALL OVER THE PLACE-- INCLUDING BACK ON EARTH!

THIS WAS LESS THAN WHAT THEY DESERVED.



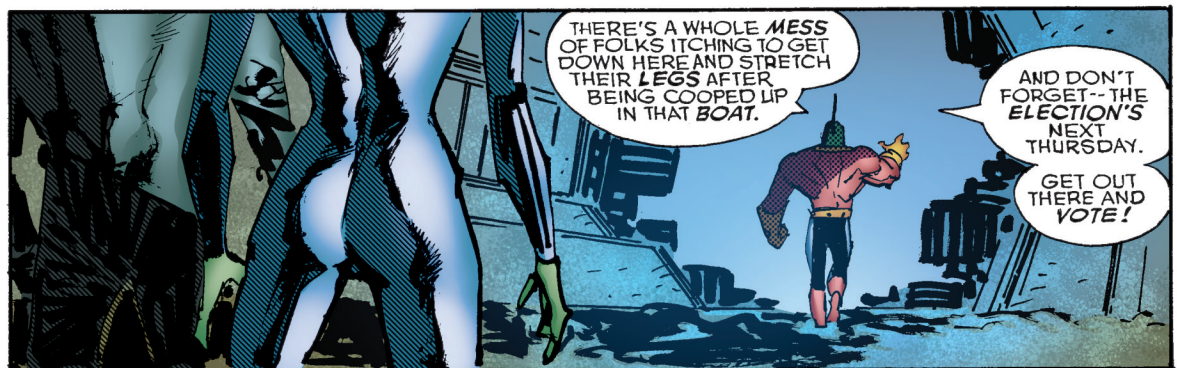
WE ARE A PEACEFUL RACE, EMPEROR DRAGON.

OUR TEACHINGS-- SCRIPTURE-- HAVE ALWAYS GUIDED US ON A PATH TOWARD PEACE.

THIS IS-- UNSPEAKABLE.

SO QUIT TALKING ABOUT IT.

YOU DON'T WANT TO LIVE HERE-- FINE-- GO BACK TO THE SHIP AND STAY THERE. BUT IT'S GOING TO GET MIGHTY LONELY UP THERE.



THERE'S A WHOLE MESS OF FOLKS ITCHING TO GET DOWN HERE AND STRETCH THEIR LEGS AFTER BEING COOPED UP IN THAT BOAT.

AND DON'T FORGET-- THE ELECTION'S NEXT THURSDAY.

GET OUT THERE AND VOTE!



NOTHING BUT **DEATH** AND **DESTRUCTION** AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE.



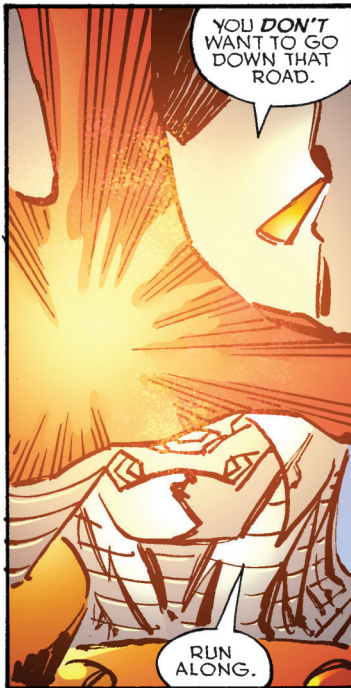
THE ALIENS ARE GONE BUT AT WHAT A PRICE...!



THANG!

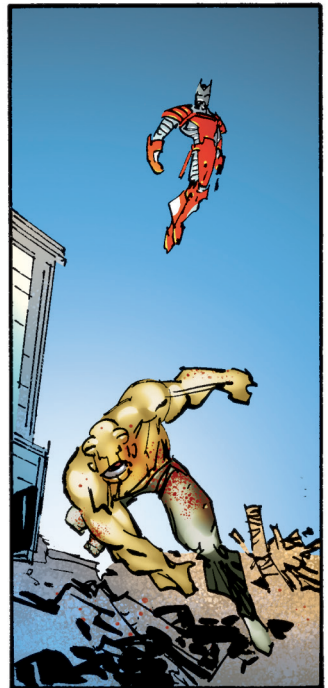


YOU LED THEM TO THEIR DEATHS! THEY TRUSTED YOU AND NOW THEY'RE DEAD!



YOU DON'T WANT TO GO DOWN THAT ROAD.

RUN ALONG.



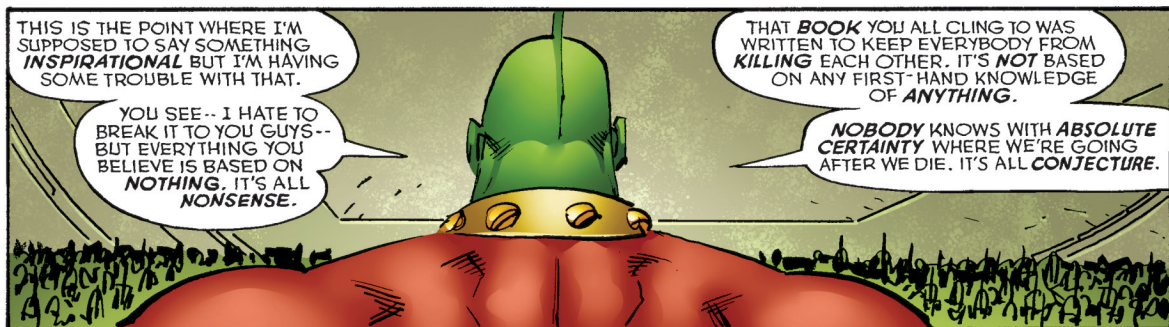


SO...
HERE WE ARE.

THE VOTE IS IN AND, INEXPLICABLY, I HAVE BEEN CHOSEN TO BE YOUR LEADER.

YOU HAD A CHANCE TO START ANEW AND GO IN A NEW DIRECTION AND YOU DECIDED **NOT** TO DO THAT.

NOT THAT IT'S **COMPLETELY** UNEXPECTED... I DID FIND YOU A **HOME** AND HUMILIATE **KRULL**-- AND IT'S NOT AS THOUGH YOU'VE GOT ANY **OTHER** VIABLE CANDIDATES LINED UP, BUT YOU'LL GET THERE OVER TIME.

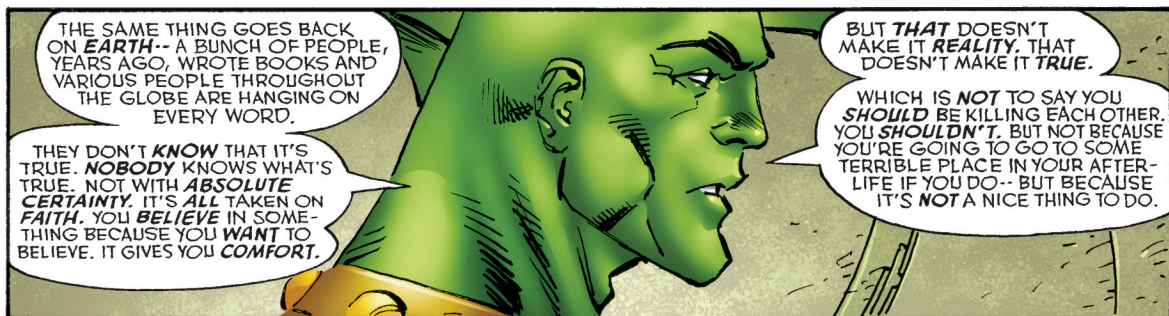


THIS IS THE POINT WHERE I'M SUPPOSED TO SAY SOMETHING **INSPIRATIONAL** BUT I'M HAVING SOME TROUBLE WITH THAT.

YOU SEE-- I HATE TO BREAK IT TO YOU GUYS-- BUT EVERYTHING YOU BELIEVE IS BASED ON **NOTHING**. IT'S ALL **NONSENSE**.

THAT **BOOK** YOU ALL CLING TO WAS WRITTEN TO KEEP EVERYBODY FROM **KILLING** EACH OTHER. IT'S **NOT** BASED ON ANY FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE OF **ANYTHING**.

NOBODY KNOWS WITH **ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY** WHERE WE'RE GOING AFTER WE DIE. IT'S ALL **CONJECTURE**.



THE SAME THING GOES BACK ON **EARTH**-- A BUNCH OF PEOPLE, YEARS AGO, WROTE BOOKS AND VARIOUS PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE GLOBE ARE HANGING ON EVERY WORD.

THEY DON'T **KNOW** THAT IT'S TRUE. **NOBODY** KNOWS WHAT'S TRUE. NOT WITH **ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY**. IT'S ALL TAKEN ON **FAITH**. YOU **BELIEVE** IN SOMETHING BECAUSE YOU WANT TO BELIEVE. IT GIVES YOU **COMFORT**.

BUT **THAT** DOESN'T MAKE IT **REALITY**. THAT DOESN'T MAKE IT **TRUE**.

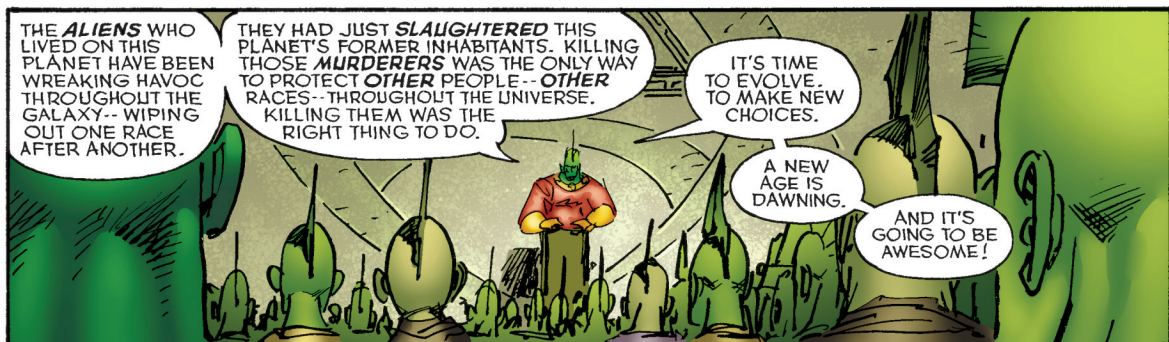
WHICH IS **NOT** TO SAY YOU **SHOULD** BE KILLING EACH OTHER. YOU **SHOULDN'T**. BUT NOT BECAUSE YOU'RE GOING TO GO TO SOME TERRIBLE PLACE IN YOUR AFTER-LIFE IF YOU DO-- BUT BECAUSE IT'S **NOT** A NICE THING TO DO.



SOMETIMES **WAR IS INEVITABLE**.

THERE ARE TIMES WHEN **KILLING IS** THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

YOU NEED TO KNOW THAT UNDER **CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES** IT IS OKAY TO **DEFEND** YOURSELF.



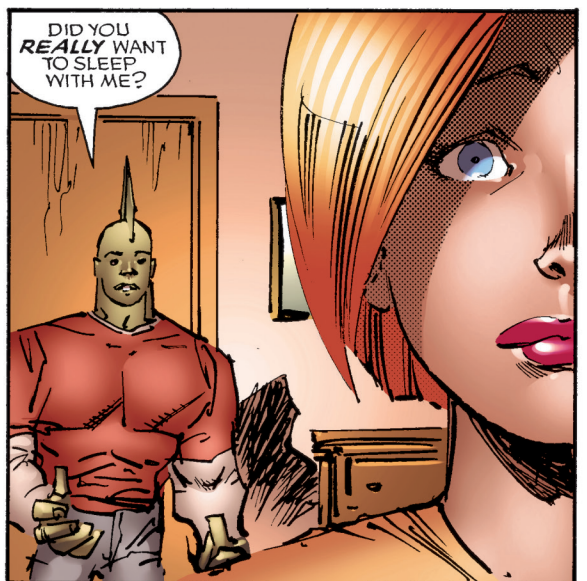
THE **ALIENS** WHO LIVED ON THIS PLANET HAVE BEEN WREAKING HAVOC THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY-- WIPING OUT ONE RACE AFTER ANOTHER.

THEY HAD JUST **SLAUGHTERED** THIS PLANET'S FORMER INHABITANTS. **KILLING** THOSE **MURDERERS** WAS THE ONLY WAY TO PROTECT **OTHER** PEOPLE-- **OTHER** RACES-- THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSE. **KILLING** THEM WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

IT'S TIME TO **EVOLVE**. TO MAKE NEW CHOICES.

A NEW AGE IS DAWNING.

AND IT'S GOING TO BE **AWESOME!**





THERE YOU ARE.

LISTEN, KID-- I'M TAKING OFF.

YOU'RE WHAT?



I'M LEAVING. I'M GOING BACK TO EARTH.

THIS ISN'T MY HOME. EVER SINCE MY MIND WAS WIPED CLEAN AND I WAS DUMPED THERE, EARTH HAS BEEN MY HOME.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND. THE ELECTION...



I NEVER EXPECTED TO WIN AND FRANKLY-- I DON'T WANT THE JOB.

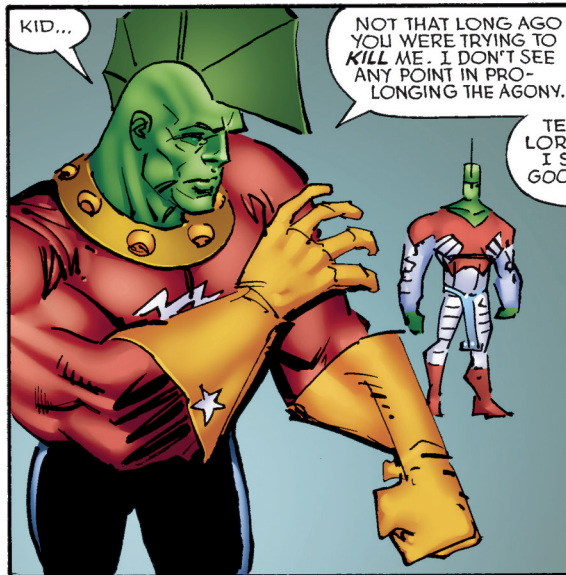
THESE AREN'T MY PEOPLE. NOT ANYMORE.



I DID WHAT I SET OUT TO DO. YOUR PEOPLE HAVE A PLACE TO LIVE. THEY CAN SETTLE IN HERE AND GET FAT AND SASSY. BUT I NEED TO GO BACK TO WHERE I BELONG.

THEY NEED ME THERE.

DON'T GO.



KID...

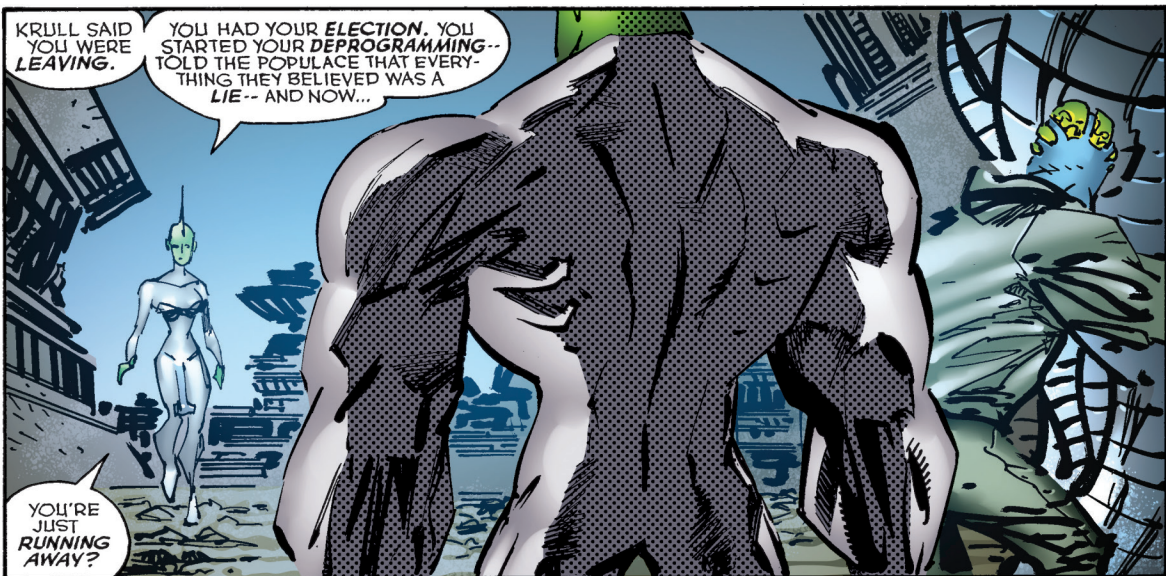
NOT THAT LONG AGO YOU WERE TRYING TO KILL ME. I DON'T SEE ANY POINT IN PRO-LONGING THE AGONY.

TELL LORELLA I SAID GOODBYE.



IS EVERYTHING READY, DARKLORD?

IT IS.



KRULL SAID YOU WERE LEAVING.

YOU HAD YOUR *ELECTION*. YOU STARTED YOUR *DEPROGRAMMING*-- TOLD THE POPULACE THAT EVERYTHING THEY BELIEVED WAS A *LIE*-- AND NOW...

YOU'RE JUST RUNNING AWAY?



YEAH.

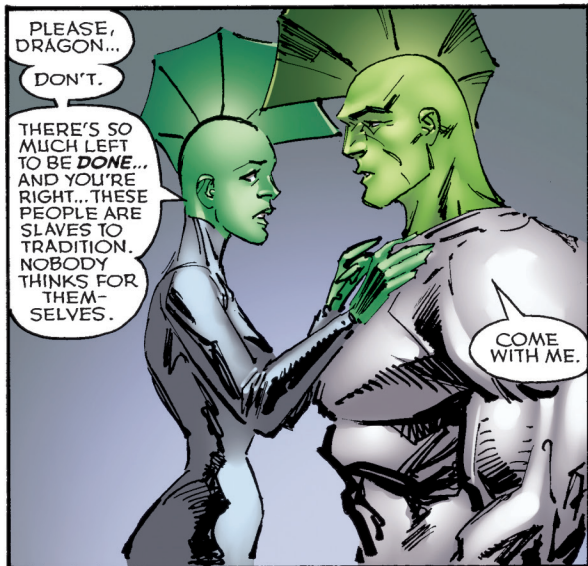
LOOK, WE BOTH KNOW I'M A *SQUARE PEG* IN A *ROUND HOLE*.

I DON'T *BELONG* HERE. I'M NO LONGER ONE OF *THEM*-- OF *YOU*.

I'VE *CHANGED*.

I'VE CHANGED AND I *CAN'T* CHANGE BACK AND FRANKLY, YOU WOULDN'T WANT ME TO CHANGE BACK IF I COULD.

THIS REALLY *IS* FOR THE BEST.



PLEASE, DRAGON... DON'T.

THERE'S SO MUCH LEFT TO BE *DONE*... AND YOU'RE RIGHT... THESE PEOPLE ARE SLAVES TO TRADITION. NOBODY THINKS FOR THEMSELVES.

COME WITH ME.



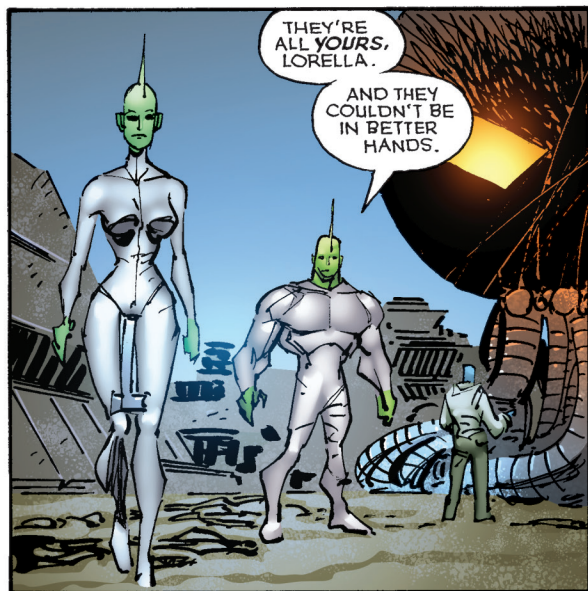
I CAN'T.

I CAN'T ABANDON THEM. THEY'RE HELPLESS.

THESE PEOPLE *NEED* YOU.

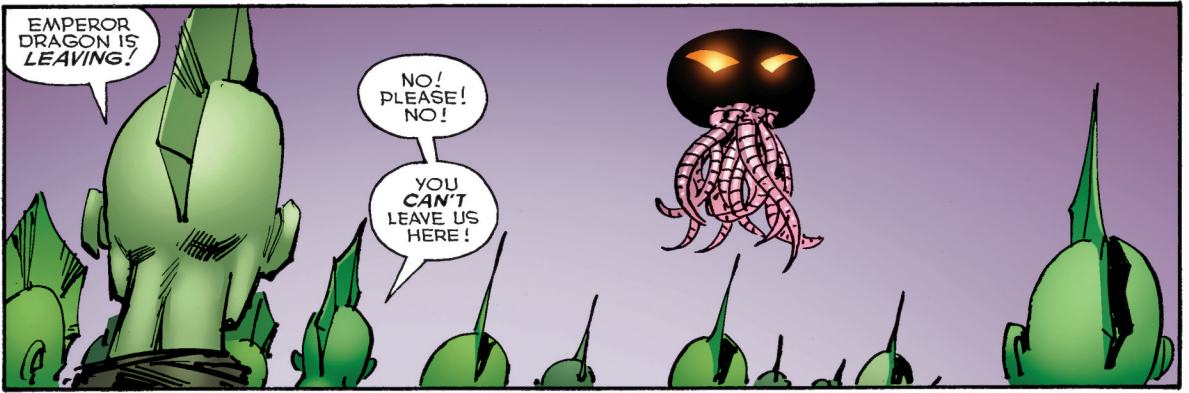
THEY NEED TO WAKE UP AND START THINKING FOR *THEMSELVES*.

YOU CAN HELP THEM DO THAT.



THEY'RE ALL *YOURS*, LORELLA.

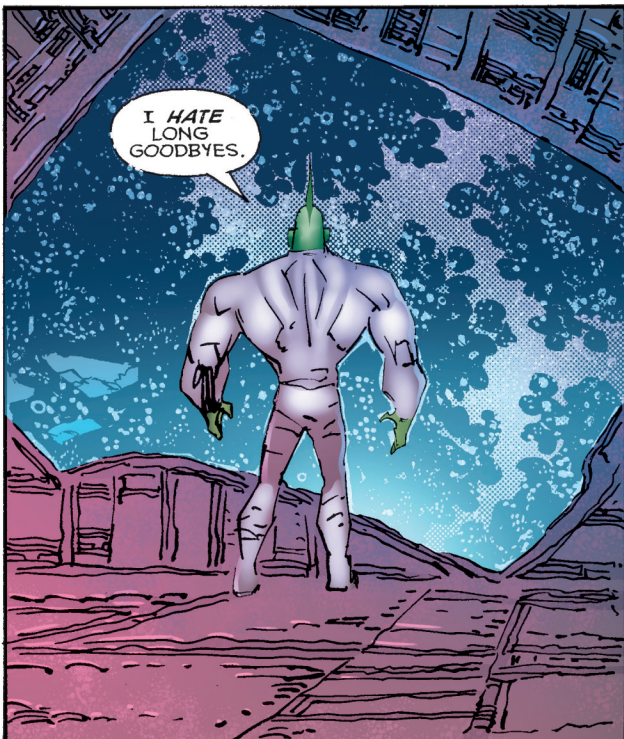
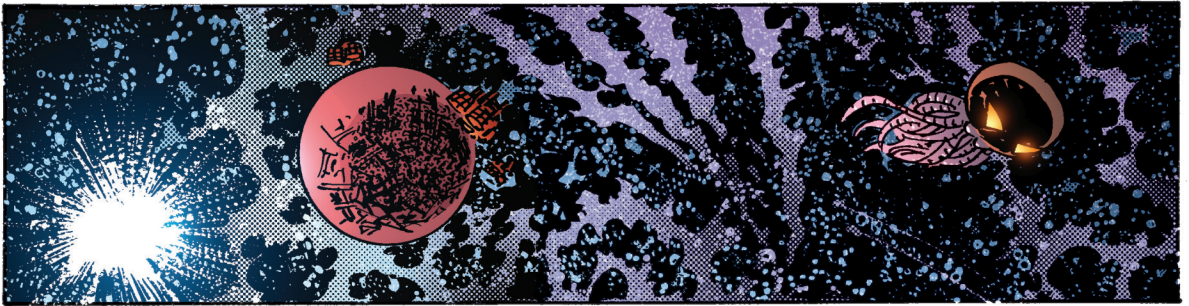
AND THEY COULDN'T BE IN BETTER HANDS.



EMPEROR
DRAGON IS
LEAVING!

NO!
PLEASE!
NO!

YOU
CAN'T
LEAVE US
HERE!



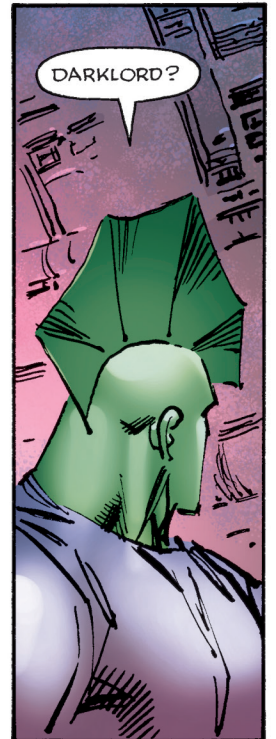
I HATE
LONG
GOODBYES.

WELL, I GUESS
THAT'S THAT. LOOKS
LIKE IT'S JUST YOU AND
ME, DARKLORD.

I HOPE YOU
REMEMBERED TO
PACK YOUR **TOOTH-
BRUSH**. IT'S GOING
TO BE A LONG
RIDE HOME.



DARKLORD?



DARKLORD?



GREAT.

FIN ADDICTS!

Send letters to:
2134 Allston Way, 2nd Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704

e-mail: Erik@savagedragon.com

visit our website at www.savagedragon.com

It was inevitable, I suppose, but Savage Dragon #179 received no mail whatsoever. Consequently, this is what the letters page looks like without you doing your part.

-Erik Larsen

NEXT: OVERLORD.

And hey, don't forget to keep reading this book for more big-time funnybook fun!

Question of the Month

"WHAT COMIC DO YOU WISH YOU HAD TO READ IN SCHOOL?"

"WATCHMEN, not because the story itself will teach anyone anything, but the way the story is told really demonstrates how comics aren't always simplistic stories for kids. And it does all this while still utilizing super-heroes, which is what most people think of when they think of comic books."

Jay Faerber
NEAR HEATH

"Probably some Jack Kirby comics like The Demon or Devil Dinosaur. I didn't truly appreciate his work as a kid because I wasn't interested in those old superhero comics and I had not yet seen some of the more weird stuff he did later in his career."

Ken Garing
PLANETOID

"I think Channel Zero could have inspired me to use all my anger to tell stories or at least make things, instead of just being a big spazz."

Riley Rossmo
GREEN WALK, REBEL BLOOD

"Remake" by Lamar Abrams because it's hilarious!"

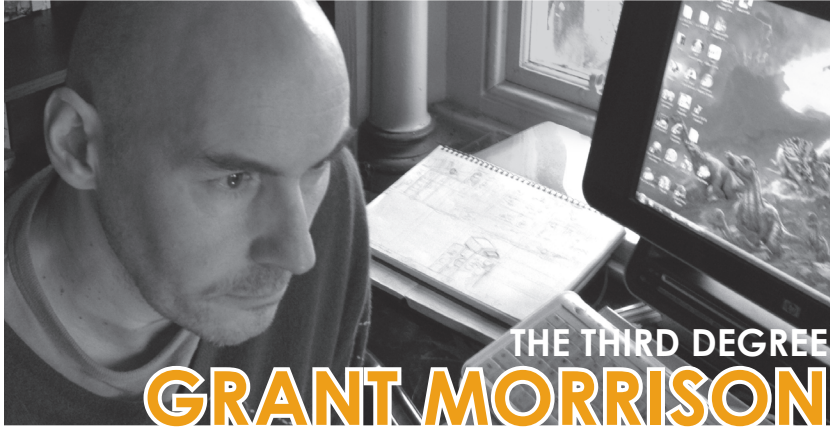
Ross Campbell
GLORY

SEPTEMBER 2012

the word
image
EXPERIENCE CREATIVITY

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Grant Morrison is one of those writers who almost doesn't need an introduction. Aside from era-defining work on All-Star Superman, Batman and Robin and JLA, he's also written New X-Men, Doom Patrol and Animal Man, and created The Invisibles, Joe the Barbarian, The Filth and We3. And that's not even a full list! Grant makes his Image Comics debut this month alongside artist Darick Robertson, with an offbeat new crime miniseries, Happy!

What are you working on right now?
'Happy' #2 and Action Comics #13, a Halloween issue entitled 'The Ghost in the Fortress of Solitude'.

What's the best part of your job?
It's also my hobby.

What's the worst part of your job?
Sunny days.

How did you first discover comics?
My family was always into comics. I can't remember a time I haven't been a fan.

If you weren't working in comics, what would you be doing?
I'd be writing a lot more for other media.

What's the best thing a fan has ever said to you?
'Your work stopped me from killing myself.'

Who is the biggest influence on your work?
Enid Blyton. Alan Garner. Dennis Potter.

What is the single work of which you're most proud?
The Filth.

Own up to one of your guilty pleasures.
Geordie Shore, the Brit version of Jersey Shore.

What was the last comic book you bought?
Bulletproof Coffin.

If you could be someone else for a day, who would it be?
Tarzan.

Pick three things you couldn't live without.
Food, water, air.

What's the strangest thing you have in your house?
History.

What makes you laugh?
Limmy's World of Glasgow.

What is one of your favorite places?
Rarotonga in the South Pacific.

What music are you listening to these days?
Tyler the Creator, Akira the Don, Momus

What is your favorite film of all time?
O Lucky Man!

Who is your best friend?
My wife Kristan.

What is the best advice you've ever received?
Don't follow leaders.

When was the last time you were truly frightened?
During my recent life or death struggle in space with Sinestro Corps member Arkillo

Name someone you really admire and explain why.
Odin.

What would you like to see happen in comics in the next 12 months?
More new and unexpected stuff.

HAPPY #1 (of 4)



Meet NICK SAX - a corrupt, intoxicated ex-cop turned hit-man, adrift in a stinking twilight world of casual murder, soulless sex, eczema and betrayal. With a hit gone wrong, a bullet in his side, the cops and the mob on his tail, and a monstrous child killer in a Santa suit on the loose, Nick and his world will be changed forever this Christmas. By a tiny blue horse called Happy...

GUARDING THE GLOBE #1



The Guardians of the Globe are BACK in an all-new, all-exciting ongoing series! Your favorite heroes - Brit, Outrun, Invincible, Robot, Yeti, Kaboomerang, and more - face new challenges of epic proportions in stories by the all-star team of PHIL HESTER & TODD NAUCK!

VALENTINE, VOL. 1 TP

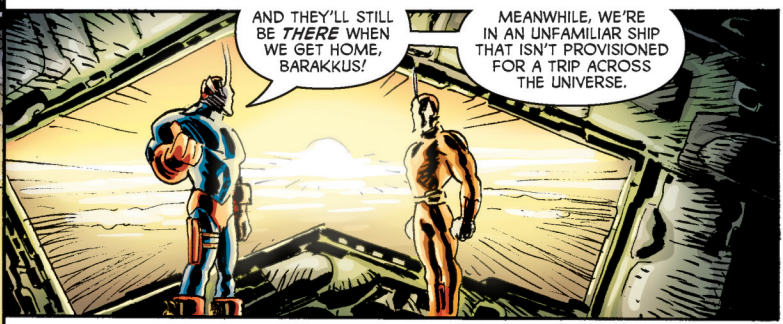


1812. As the mightiest army in the world is pitilessly ground into dust by the Russian winter, two soldiers, lost in a blizzard, are given a package by a dying general. Suddenly the young soldiers find themselves hunted by relentless, blood-eyed monsters out of their worst childhood nightmares. For these tales of terror and legend told across the Earth all have a kernel of truth: humans are not alone.

THIEF OF THIEVES #8



Redmond's big heist did not turn out as planned... and the aftermath shows that every action has an equal - and equally violent - reaction. GENERATION HOPE writer James Asmus kicks off an all-new story arc!



AND THEY'LL STILL BE *THERE* WHEN WE GET HOME, BARAKKUS!

MEANWHILE, WE'RE IN AN UNFAMILIAR SHIP THAT ISN'T PROVISIONED FOR A TRIP ACROSS THE UNIVERSE.

"THE INVASION IS OVER! THIS PLANET IS SAFE!"

"WHY ARE WE STILL HERE, VANGUARD? THE BUGS ARE CRAWLING ALL OVER OUR OWN WORLD OF KALYPTUS!"



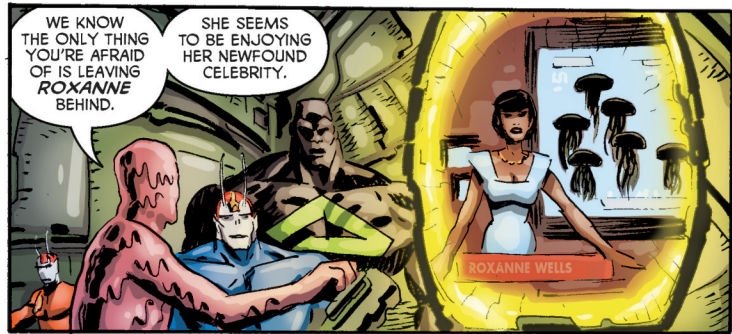
I'M TIRED OF WAITING, VANGUARD.

IF YOU'RE AFRAID TO GO, THRAMM AND I WILL TAKE THIS SHIP AND CONTINUE THE FIGHT ON OUR OWN.



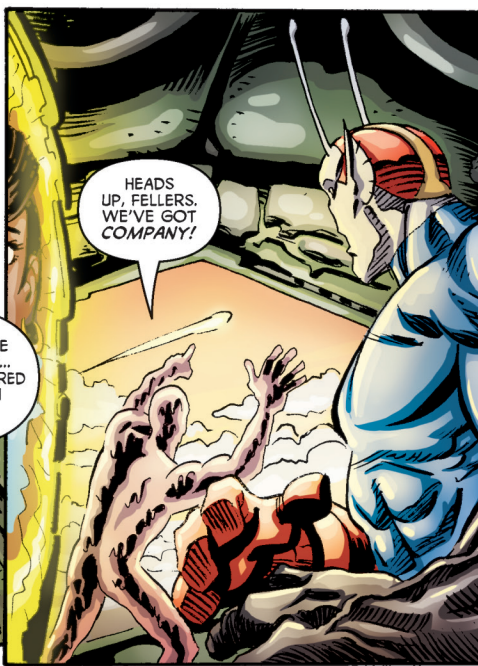
ONE OF THESE DAYS...
BANG--
ZOOM!

HE IS MUCH MORE LIKE THE OTHER KALYPTANS I MET YEARS AGO THAN YOU ARE, VANGUARD!
ARROGANT.
AGGRESSIVE.
PRESUMPTIVE.

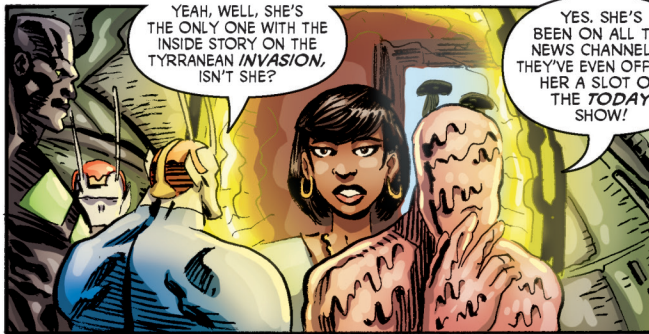


WE KNOW THE ONLY THING YOU'RE AFRAID OF IS LEAVING ROXANNE BEHIND.

SHE SEEMS TO BE ENJOYING HER NEWFOUND CELEBRITY.



HEADS UP, FELLERS. WE'VE GOT COMPANY!



YEAH, WELL, SHE'S THE ONLY ONE WITH THE INSIDE STORY ON THE TYRRANEAN INVASION, ISN'T SHE?

YES, SHE'S BEEN ON ALL THE NEWS CHANNELS... THEY'VE EVEN OFFERED HER A SLOT ON THE TODAY SHOW!

HIS NAME IS...

ETHRIAN

STORY GARY CARLSON • ART FRANK FOSCO • LETTERS ADAM O. PRUETT • EDITOR ERIK LARSEN
COLORS DAVID SELTZER WITH RED HERRING COLOR: NICK RODGERS • KENNY MADRID • TRAVIS EDSON

NOT LONG AGO, HE WAS A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT NAMED JAMES PETERSON, UNTIL A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH ALIENS IN THE ARIZONA DESERT TURNED HIM INTO A DEMI-GOD CHARGED WITH PROTECTING THE EARTH.*



TODAY HE'S PISSED BECAUSE HE ALMOST FAILED AT HIS TASK. EARTH WAS OVERRUN BY A HORDE OF EXTRATERRESTRIAL BUG WARRIORS, AND WHILE HE DECIMATED HUNDREDS OF THE FIENDS, THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS MORE OF THEM WREAKED HAVOC ALL OVER THE PLANET.

THEN, SOMETHING HAPPENED. THE ATTACK WAS BROKEN AND THE INVADERS TURNED TAIL AND LEFT! JAMES IS TIRED, BUT THE ETHRIAN PART OF HIM IS STILL FUMING WITH PENT-UP FURY. LUCKILY, ONE LAST SKULL SHIP HAS APPEARED FOR HIM TO VENT HIS RAGE UPON.

*FOR THE WHOLE STORY, SEE SAVAGE DRAGON #145-159.

BOMBAY

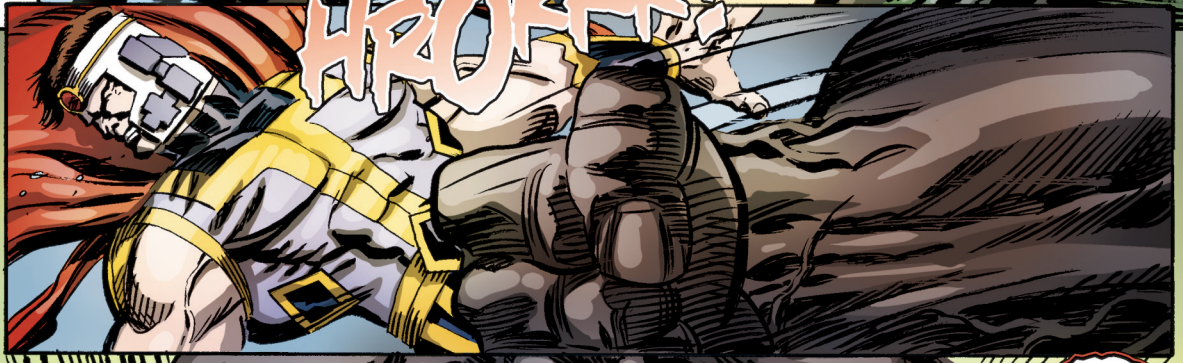
YOU ALIENS
INVADED MY
PLANET!

IT'S MY
TURN TO
REPAY THE
FAVOR!

PREPARE
TO DIE!

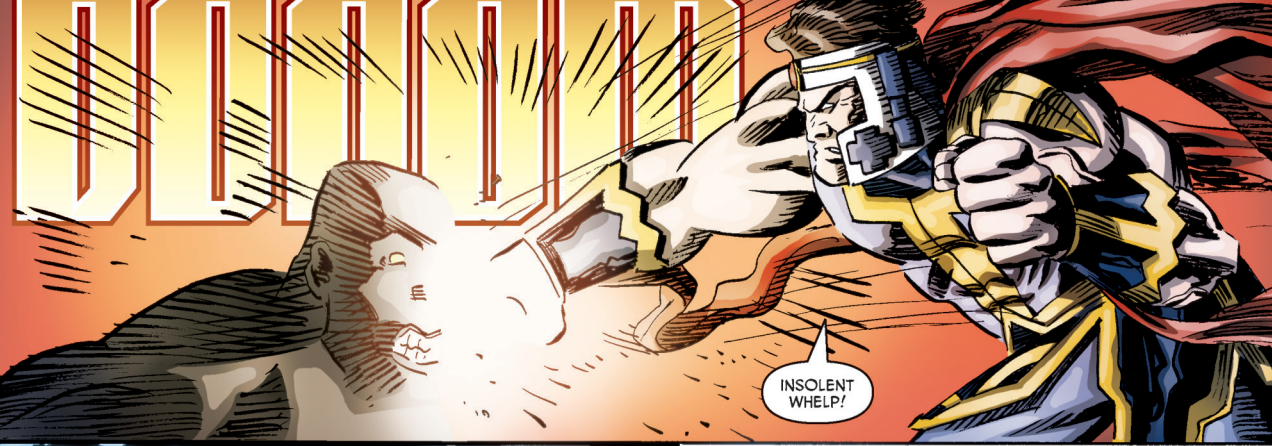


HROKKK!



DID YOU
COME HERE
TO TALK OR
FIGHT, PRETTY
BOY?





INSOLENT WHELP!



IMPOSSIBLE!

THAT BLOW WOULD HAVE SHATTERED A MOUNTAIN!

I ACTUALLY FELT THAT, LITTLE MAN!

I'M GOING TO ENJOY THIS.



EASY, GUYS. WE'RE ALL FRIENDS HERE!



VANGUARD? MY APOLOGIES!

WE THOUGHT YOU DIED WHEN YOUR CRUISER EXPLODED!

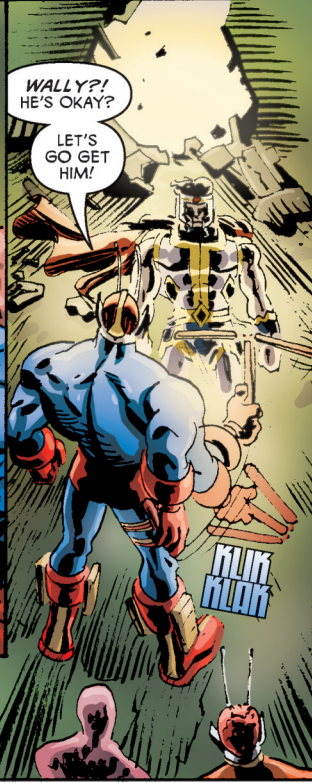
NOPE. WE ALL ESCAPED TO THIS SKULL SHIP.

ALMOST ALL OF US.



THEN I BRING GLAD TIDINGS!

ONE OF YOUR FRIENDS TELEPORTED TO POWERHOUSE AFTER THE EXPLOSION!



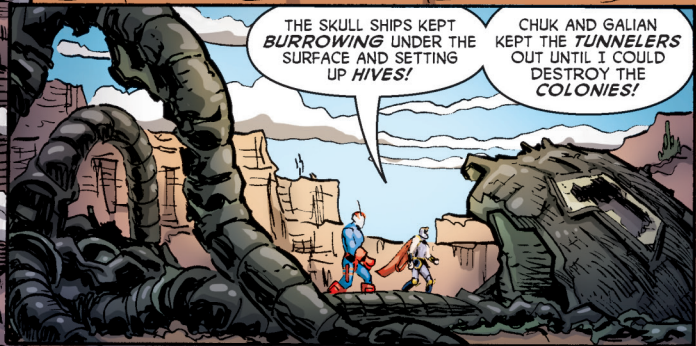
WALLY?! HE'S OKAY?

LET'S GO GET HIM!

FALLING FALLING

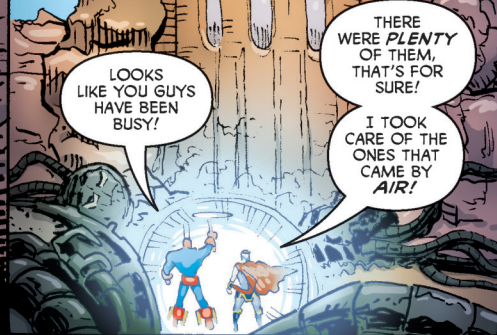
TOWERING HIGH ABOVE THE ARIZONA DESERT, **POWERHOUSE**: CREATED BY VISITORS FROM A DISTANT WORLD, IT IS THE LIVING EMBODIMENT OF THE EARTH. ITS DUTY-- TO POWER THE ETHEREAL WARRIOR ETHRIAN!

HIS JOB IS TO PROTECT THE TOWER-- AND THE PLANET!



THE SKULL SHIPS KEPT BURROWING UNDER THE SURFACE AND SETTING UP HIVES!

CHUK AND GALIAN KEPT THE TUNNELERS OUT UNTIL I COULD DESTROY THE COLONIES!



LOOKS LIKE YOU GUYS HAVE BEEN BUSY!

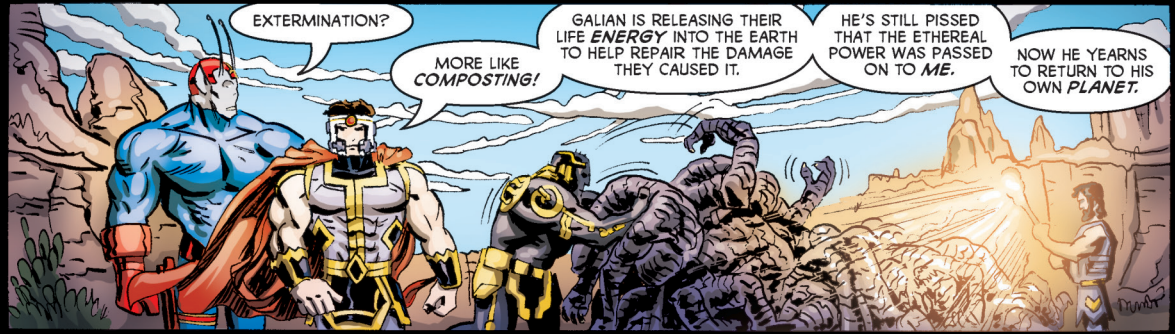
THERE WERE PLENTY OF THEM, THAT'S FOR SURE!

I TOOK CARE OF THE ONES THAT CAME BY AIR!



YO, VANGUARD.

I THINK WE FINALLY HAVE THE BUG PROBLEM UNDER CONTROL.



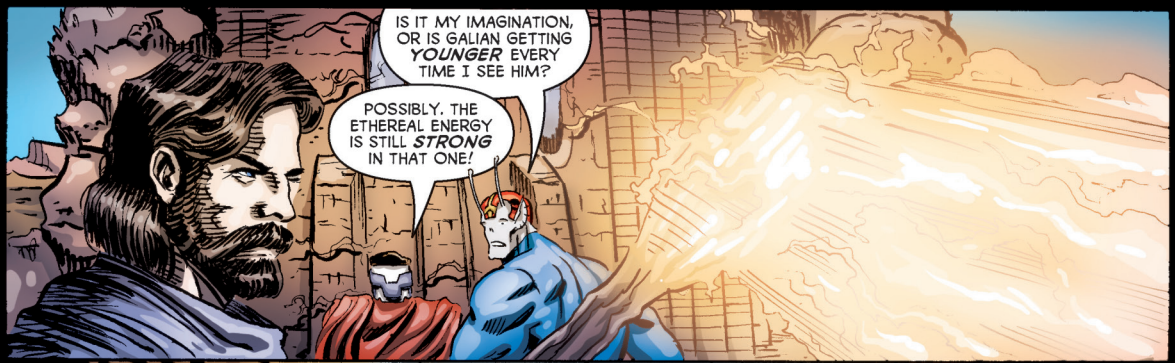
EXTERMINATION?

MORE LIKE COMPOSTING!

GALIAN IS RELEASING THEIR LIFE ENERGY INTO THE EARTH TO HELP REPAIR THE DAMAGE THEY CAUSED IT.

HE'S STILL PISSED THAT THE ETHEREAL POWER WAS PASSED ON TO ME.

NOW HE YEARNS TO RETURN TO HIS OWN PLANET.



IS IT MY IMAGINATION, OR IS GALIAN GETTING YOUNGER EVERY TIME I SEE HIM?

POSSIBLY. THE ETHEREAL ENERGY IS STILL STRONG IN THAT ONE!



ER, YOU SAID THAT MY FRIEND WAS HERE?

YES. FOLLOW ME INTO POWERHOUSE.



VALERIE IS THE KEEPER HERE.
I BELIEVE YOU MET HER PREDECESSOR, KRELL?

POWERHOUSE REMEMBERS YOU FONDLY, VANGUARD.



THAT MAY BE WHY YOUR FRIEND WAS DRAWN HERE WHEN YOUR SHIP EXPLODED.



SHE WAS... DAMAGED SOMEHOW.

SHE?!



VANGUARD!
HE'S DEAD, VANGUARD!



MODEM.



POWERHOUSE HAS BEEN UNABLE TO CURE OR CALM HER.

I AM SORRY.

“THE MOST UNLIKELY ACT OF MAGIC IS THE CREATION OF SOMETHING OUT OF NOTHING. SOMETHING NEW AND UNEXPECTED THAT HAS NEVER EXISTED BEFORE. COMICS OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR SELF-EXPRESSION THAT NO OTHER MEDIUM CAN MATCH. COMICS = MAGIC.”

GRANT MORRISON



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VANGUARD



RATED T+ TEEN PLUS