



STRANDED




WHAT IS IT, ORAC, AND HOW DID IT COME TO BE HERE?

WHAT YOU SEE IS THE REMAINS OF A FEDERATION SPACE STATION IT WAS PARTIALLY DESTROYED IN THE ATOMIC WARS. NOW CLASSIFIED AS SPACE DEBRIS



INTERESTING...




TAKE US CLOSER, SLAVE. WHAT REMAINS OF THAT WHEEL COULD BE USEFUL TO US.

UH? ARE YOU MAD, AVON? THAT THING'S DANGEROUS IT'S STILL TURNING!



ORAC, TAKE COMMAND OF THE MANOEUVRE. MATCH ROTATION WITH SCORPIO.



THERE'S NO NEED TO GO SO CLOSE. WE COULD TELEPORT ABOARD.

PERHAPS, TARRANT BUT IF THERE'S ANYTHING WORTH RECOVERING, WE COULD NEVER TELEPORT BACK WITH IT.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? CAN'T YOU SEE THERE'S NO WAY IN? THE LANDING PLATFORM DOORS ARE SHUT!

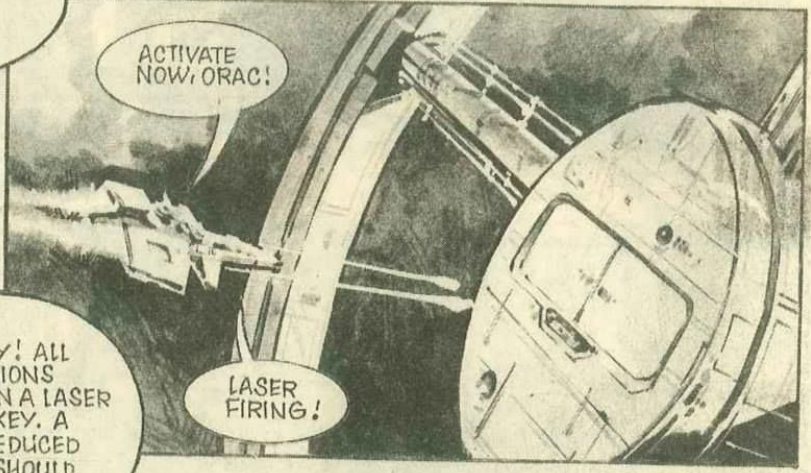
YOU ARE MAD!



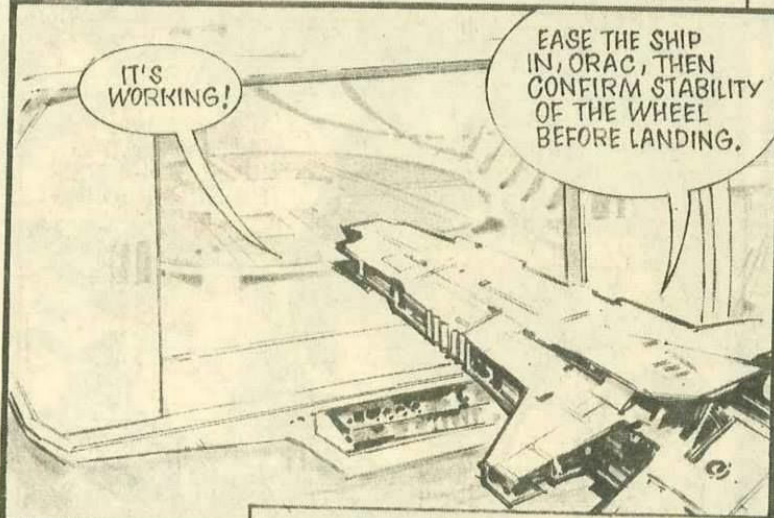
ORAC, IS THERE A METHOD OF TRYING TO OPEN THOSE DOORS FROM HERE?

ACTIVATE NOW, ORAC!

NATURALLY! ALL SUCH STATIONS WORKED ON A LASER TRIGGER KEY. A SMALL REDUCED CHARGE SHOULD ACTIVATE THE MECHANISM.



LASER FIRING!



IT'S WORKING!

EASE THE SHIP IN, ORAC, THEN CONFIRM STABILITY OF THE WHEEL BEFORE LANDING.



STABILITY CONFIRMED. SCORPIO IS LANDING NOW.

LOOK! THE EXTERNAL DOORS ARE CLOSING! WE'RE TRAPPED!



WHAT HAPPENS IF WE CAN'T OPEN THE DOORS AGAIN EH?

IF THAT IS THE CASE, WE'D BETTER START EXPLORING OUR NEW HOME. ARM YOURSELVES AND FOLLOW ME.

CONFIRM THERE IS A SUITABLE ATMOSPHERE IN THE STATION, ORAC.



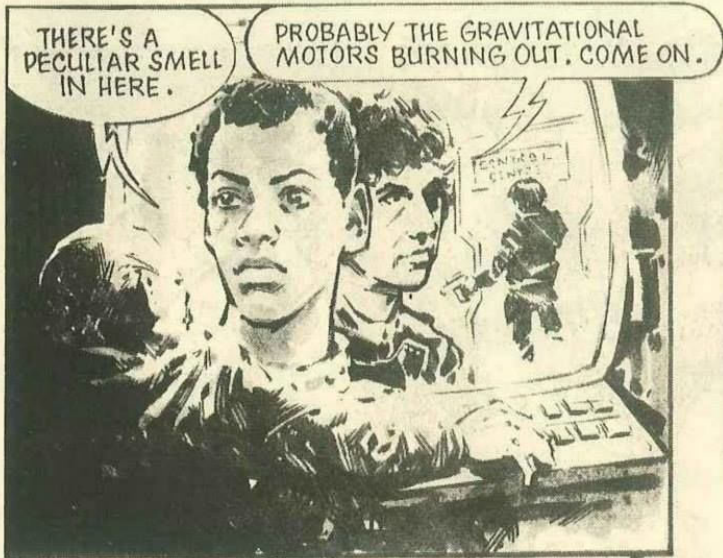
CONFIRMED, ALTHOUGH THERE IS A HIGH NITROGEN CONTENT.



THE CONTROL CENTRE SHOULD BE THIS WAY. FOLLOW ME.

IT LOOKS CREEPY. DO YOU THINK ANYONE COULD STILL BE LIVING HERE?

IN THIS DUMP? YOU MUST BE JOKING!



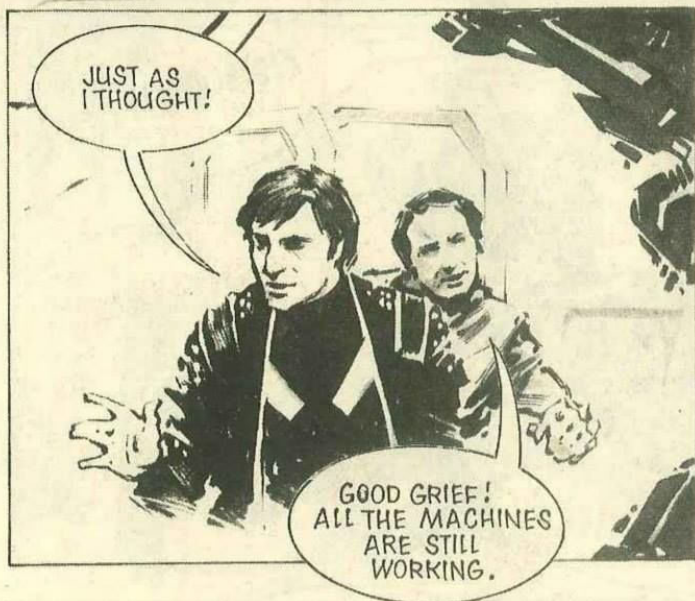
THERE'S A PECULIAR SMELL IN HERE.

PROBABLY THE GRAVITATIONAL MOTORS BURNING OUT. COME ON.



WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

I KNEW THEY WOULD COME ONE DAY. THERE IS NOTHING ELSE FOR IT. I SHALL HAVE TO DEAL WITH THEM.



JUST AS I THOUGHT!

GOOD GRIEF! ALL THE MACHINES ARE STILL WORKING.



PERFECT... JUST PERFECT. WE CAN USE ALL OF THESE AS BACK-UP SYSTEMS ON SCORPIO. START DISCONNECTING THEM.

ALL OF THEM BUT WHAT ABOUT THE STATION..?



WE'LL TAKE NOTHING VITAL TO ITS OPERATION NOT YET, ANYWAY. WE COULD ALWAYS COME BACK...

AVON...

WHAT'S THE MATTER? SEEN A GHOST?



COULD BE, AVON... COULD BE...!



AHRRGH!

SHTAANNGG!

WHAT THE...?

JUST THEN...



DID YOU SEE WHO HE WAS?

NO... BUT HE WAS GOING TO KILL YOU. LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT HIM!



NNNGHH!

UURGGHH...!

A TINY GRENADE FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY...



S... SOOLIN...
A... AVON...!



THAT SHOULD KEEP THEM OCCUPIED FOR A WHILE...!



VILA... THE DOORS...!

THEY'RE SHUT TIGHT! CAN'T GET THEM OPEN...!



WH... WHAT THE DEVIL'S GOING ON?

WE'RE STRANDED AVON. TRAPPED IN THIS BLASTED CONTROL CENTRE! THAT'S WHAT...!



THANK THE STARS YOU'RE ALIVE, FATHER. I THOUGHT THEY'D KILLED YOU.

IT TAKES MORE THAN A FEDERATION CHARGE TO STOP ME MANSHA. WHERE ARE THOSE KILLERS NOW?



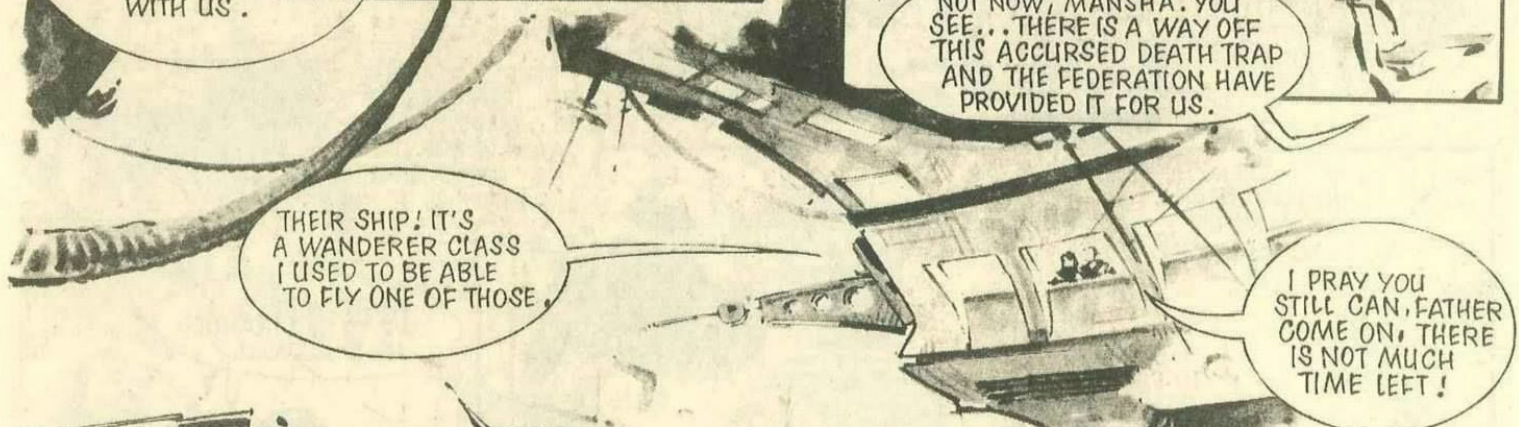
I'VE SEALED THEM IN THE CONTROL ROOM. THEY ARE TRAPPED. THEY CAME TO KILL US BUT THEY WILL PERISH WITH US.

PERHAPS THEY ALONE WILL PERISH MANSHA. I THINK WE CAN SAVE OURSELVES!



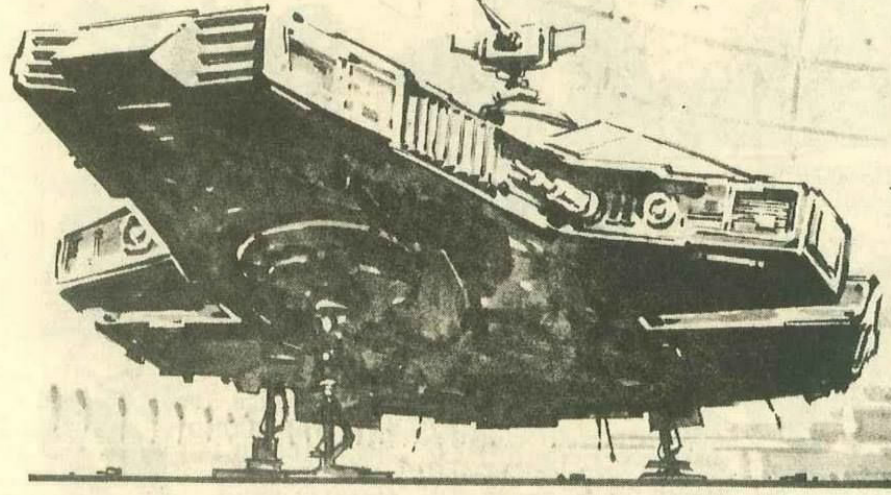
I DON'T UNDERSTAND FATHER. SURELY WE ARE DESTINED TO DIE WHEN THE WHEEL'S GRAVITY MOTORS FAIL.

NOT NOW, MANSHA. YOU SEE... THERE IS A WAY OFF THIS ACCURSED DEATH TRAP AND THE FEDERATION HAVE PROVIDED IT FOR US.



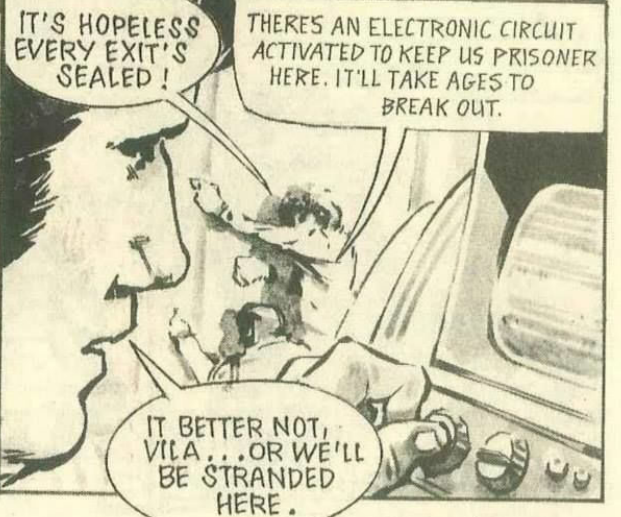
THEIR SHIP! IT'S A WANDERER CLASS I USED TO BE ABLE TO FLY ONE OF THOSE.

I PRAY YOU STILL CAN, FATHER. COME ON, THERE IS NOT MUCH TIME LEFT!



IT'S HOPELESS EVERY EXIT'S SEALED!

THERE'S AN ELECTRONIC CIRCUIT ACTIVATED TO KEEP US PRISONER HERE. IT'LL TAKE AGES TO BREAK OUT.



IT BETTER NOT, VILA... OR WE'LL BE STRANDED HERE.



STRANDED?

YES, VILLA
THEY'RE TRYING
TO STEAL
SCORPIO...!



IN THAT CASE
I'LL HAVE US OUT
OF HERE IN
MINUTES.

BETTER MAKE
IT SECONDS. THERE'S
NO TIME TO LOSE!

AT THAT MOMENT, ON SCORPIO'S
FLIGHT DECK...



ALL THOSE
CONTROLS...!
WHERE DO WE
START, FATHER?

EVERY WANDERER
CLASS SHIP HAS A
FLIGHT COMPUTER
IT DOES MOST OF THE
WORK. NOW... LET
ME SEE...

I DEEPLY REGRET,
SIR, I AM UNABLE
TO COMPLY WITH
YOUR WISHES. I'M
NOT PROGRAMMED
TO RESPOND TO YOUR
COMMANDS.

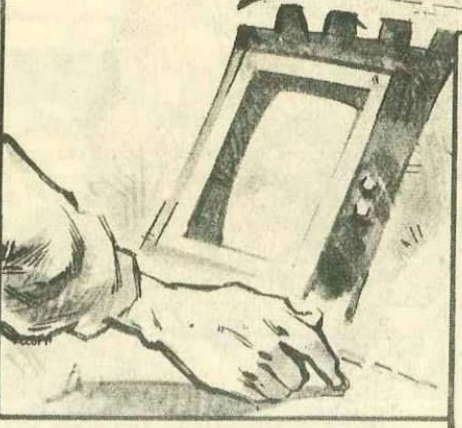


THERE...!
COMPUTER...
CAN YOU
HEAR ME?

I BEG LEAVE
TO SAY THAT I
CAN. WHAT IS
IT YOU REQUIRE,
SIR?



WHAT? ARE
WE TO BE STRANDED
HERE AS WELL?



YOU'RE A GENIUS,
FATHER!



COMPUTER...
I WANT TO FLY US
OUT OF HERE
TOWARDS A
HABITABLE
PLANET.

THERE MUST
BE A WAY ROUND
THE MACHINE. I
MUST FIND THE
MANUAL DRIVE
CONTROLS!

BACK IN THE CONTROL ROOM...



DONE IT!
WHAT D'YOU
THINK OF
THAT?

NOT BEFORE TIME
NOT ONLY ARE THOSE
TWO TRYING TO
STEAL OUR SHIP,
BUT...



THERE ARE TWO
FEDERATION PATROL
SHIPS COMING
THIS WAY!

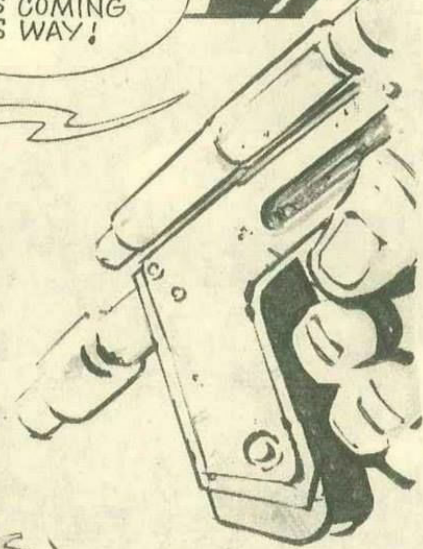
MOMENTS
LATER...

THERE MUST BE
A MANUAL CONTROL
FATHER...!



YES, BUT I
CAN'T FIND
IT. TIME'S
RUNNING
OUT.

YOU NEVER SAID
A TRUER WORD
FRIEND. START
EXPLAINING!!!
OR YOU DIE!



UHH? THE
FEDERATION
PEOPLE...!

WE ARE NOT
OF THE
FEDERATION!



ON THE APPROACHING
FEDERATION COMMAND
SHIP...

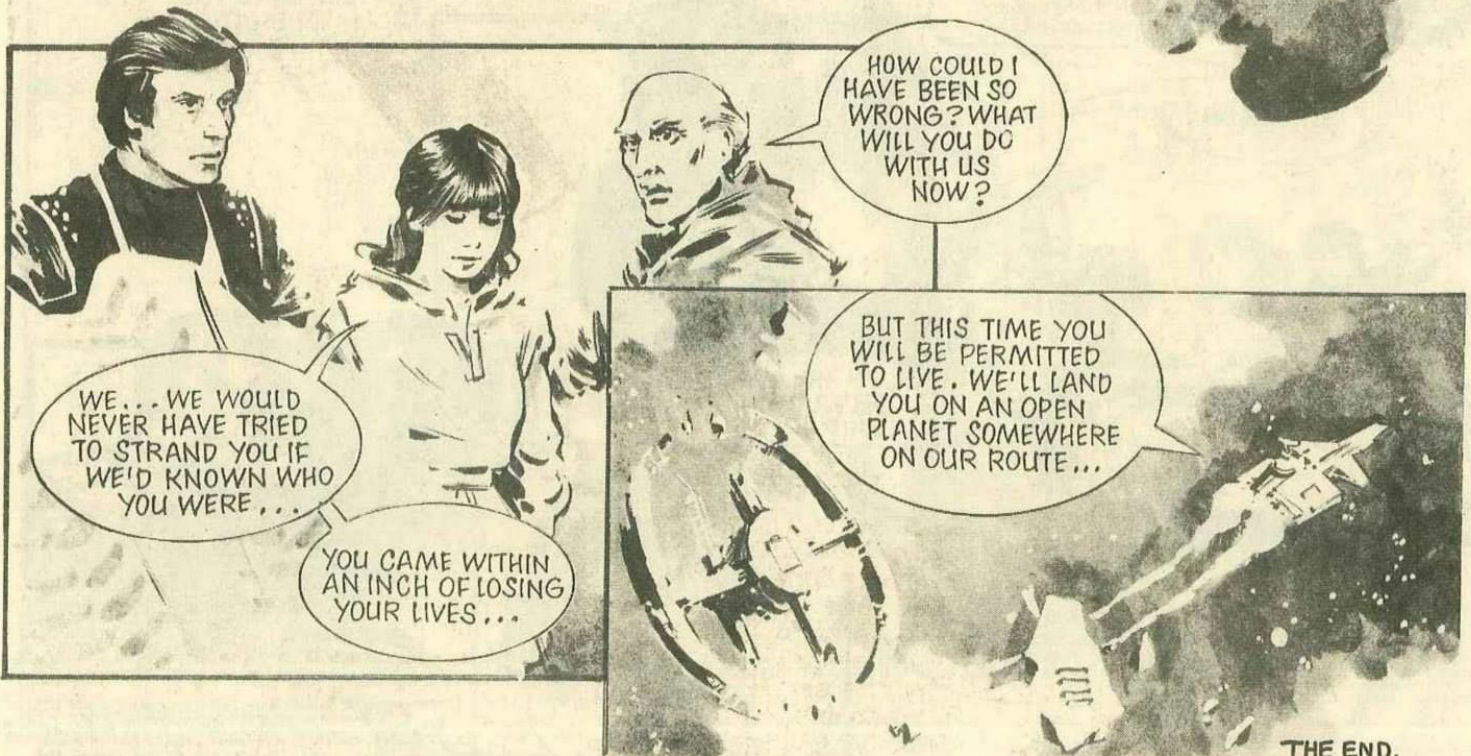
B... BUT
YOUR
COSTUME...

THERE'S NO TIME
FOR EXPLANATIONS
AVON. THOSE
FEDERATION SHIPS
ARE GETTING
CLOSE!



SPACE DEBRIS
NUMBER 709
LOCATED
COMMANDER.

COMMENCE DESTRUCTION
WE CAN'T LEAVE HAZARDS
LIKE THAT FLOATING IN
SPACE.



THE END.

Overboard

SECTOR FIFTEEN—STAR SYSTEM CRYNO
CALLUS—A SHATTERING IMPACT ROCKS
SCORPIO...

ALERT—ALERT
OUTER HALL
PENETRATED!

SLAVE—YOU BUNGLING
MACHINE—WHAT THE
DEVIL HAPPENED? WHY
WEREN'T WE WARNED?

I... I'M DEEPLY SORRY
MASTER, BUT NO DEBRIS
REGISTERED ON MY
SCANNERS. I DON'T KNOW
HOW IT HAPPENED.

ATMOSPHERIC PRESSURE'S
HOLDING BUT NOT FOR LONG
THERE'S STILL SOME DEBRIS
WEDGED IN THE HULL.

THEN WE'D BETTER
REMOVE IT. GET YOUR
SPACE SUIT, VILA.
YOU'RE COMING
WITH ME!

Y... YOU DON'T WANT
ME OUT THERE. I'M
NO GOOD WORKING
IN A SUIT.

YOU EITHER PUT IT
ON AND HELP ME
OUTSIDE... OR WE
ALL HAVE TO WEAR
SUITS WHEN SCORPIO'S
ATMOSPHERE IS
SUCKED OUT. GET
DRESSED!

THERE'S THE
PROBLEM. LET'S
GET TO WORK.

GOOD GRIEF! HOW
COME SLAVE NEVER
SPOTTED SOMETHING
THAT BIG—AND THERE'S
MORE ALL ROUND US.

THERE'S OUR ANSWER
VILA. THE SHIP, OR WHAT-
EVER IT WAS, MUST HAVE
BEEN HIT BY RANTOGEN
CHARGED METEORITES.

ABSORBS RADAR
WAVES, DOESN'T IT
AH, WELL—ONE GOOD
HEAVE...

THAT INSTANT...

IT'S
COMING...

VILA—LOOK
OUT! MORE
METEORITES...

AAAAAH!

VILA—HOLD TIGHT! WE'RE BREAKING AWAY...!

SOMETHING'S HAPPENED TO THEM THEY'RE DRIFTING FROM THE SHIP!

WE'VE GOT TO HELP THEM BEFORE THEY GET TOO FAR! THE TELEPORT!

NO CHANCE, DAYNA. NEITHER AVON NOR VILA HAVE A BRACELET. WE CAN'T TELEPORT THEM BACK.

TRYING TO FIX THEIR TRACK IN SPACE IS TRICKY. MORE THAN A FEW SECONDS OUT THERE AND WE COULD LOSE YOUR LOCATION AS WELL!

GIVE ME TEN SECONDS—NO MORE—THEN REVERSE THE TELEPORT. I'LL HAVE THE BRACELETS ON THEM IN THAT TIME.

THEN I SHALL JUST HAVE TO TELEPORT OUT TO THEM WITH THE BRACELETS. SET THE CO-ORDINATES!

GIVEN MOMENTUM BY THE METEORITE IMPACT, AVON AND VILA DRIFTED FURTHER AND FASTER FROM SCORPIO...

KEEP A TIGHT GRIP, VILA! THEY'LL THINK OF A WAY TO REACH US!

C... CAN'T HOLD MUCH LONGER. WRENCHED ARM ON IMPACT... CAN FEEL VERY LITTLE WITH THE OTHER...

JUST THEN...

LOOKS LIKE HELP IS ARRIVING!



QUICKLY, PUT THE BRACELET ON. ONLY TEN SECONDS...

I... I CAN'T HOLD ON...



D... DRIFTING AWAY...! HELP ME...!

I'LL THROW THE BRACELET VILA. CATCH IT!

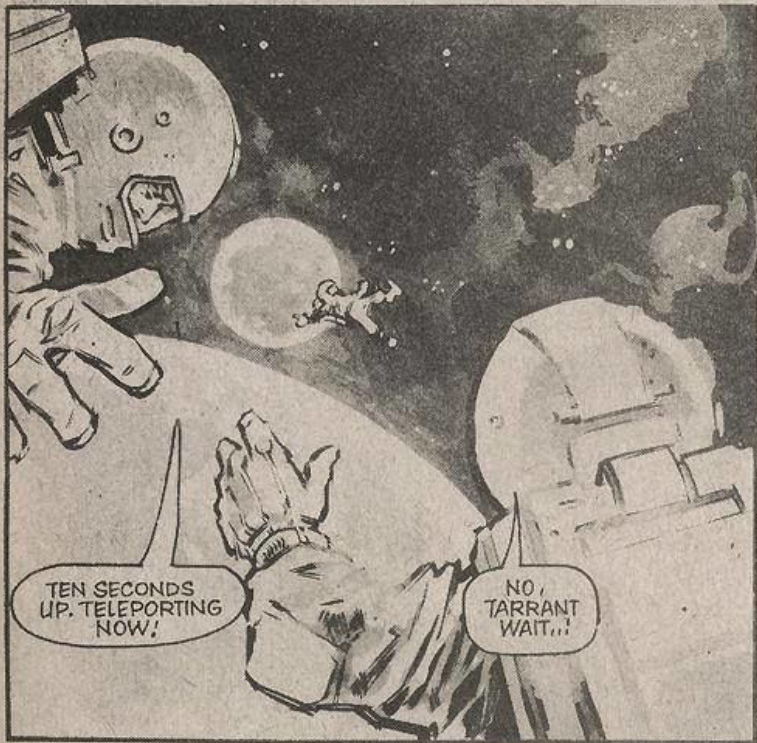


WITH AGONISING SLOWNESS THE BRACELET DRIFTED IN VILA'S DIRECTION...

B... GOT TO REACH IT...



C... CAN'T MAKE IT...!



TEN SECONDS UP. TELEPORTING NOW!

NO, TARRANT WAIT...!

DAYNA'S CRY CAME TOO LATE...

I... I'M ON MY OWN AND DRIFTING FASTER TOWARDS THE PLANET GRAVITY'S PULLING ME DOWN! THIS IS IT... I'M FINISHED...!



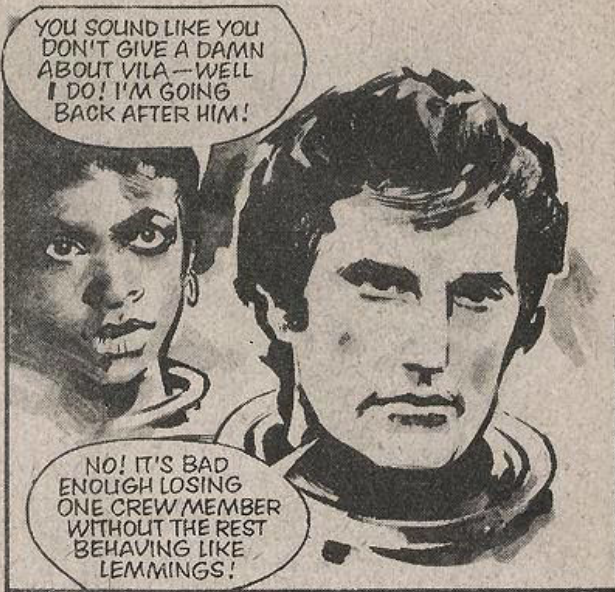
MEANWHILE...



YOU MADE IT - BUT WHERE'S VILA?

YOU PULLED US BACK TOO SOON HE'S STRANDED IN SPACE THANKS TO YOU!

IT WASN'T TARRANT'S FAULT!



YOU SOUND LIKE YOU DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT VILA - WELL I DO! I'M GOING BACK AFTER HIM!

NO! IT'S BAD ENOUGH LOSING ONE CREW MEMBER WITHOUT THE REST BEHAVING LIKE LEMMINGS!



WE CAN'T STAND BY AND WATCH VILA DIE!

SURELY THE LIFE OF A FRIEND IS WORTH THE RISK!

I HAVE NO FRIENDS! BUT VILA COULD STILL BE OF USE TO THIS SHIP IF HE CAN BE SAVED. GET ME AN ASTROCORD.



REDUCE SPEED WHEN I START TRAILING BEHIND SCORPIO, THEN FOLLOW MY COMMANDS FOR FLIGHT APPROACH TOWARDS VILA.

NOW I KNOW YOU'RE MAD! VILA'S CLOSING WITH THE PLANET AT ONE HECK OF A RATE. HE'LL BURN-UP IN THE ATMOSPHERE IN MINUTES!



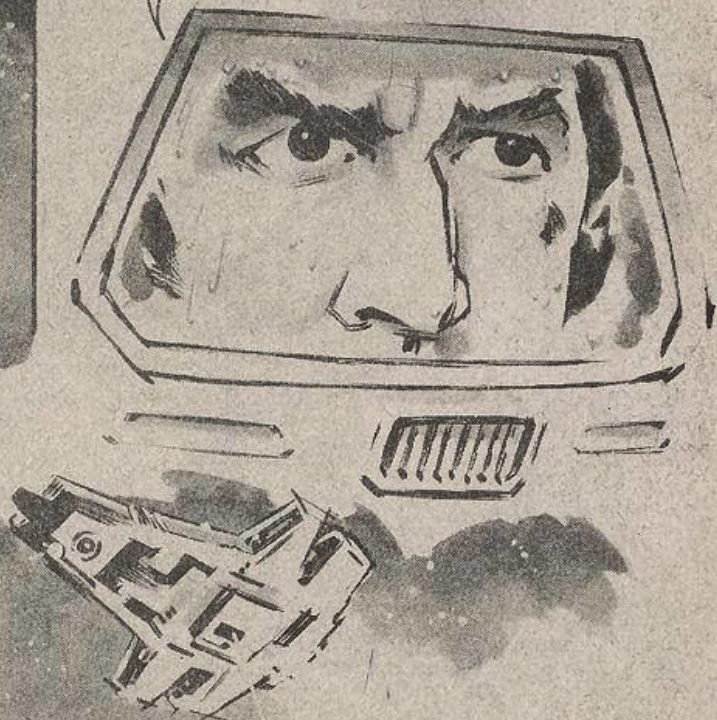
AND SO WILL I UNLESS YOU FOLLOW MY DIRECTIONS TO THE LETTER. NOW DO IT! THAT'S AN ORDER!



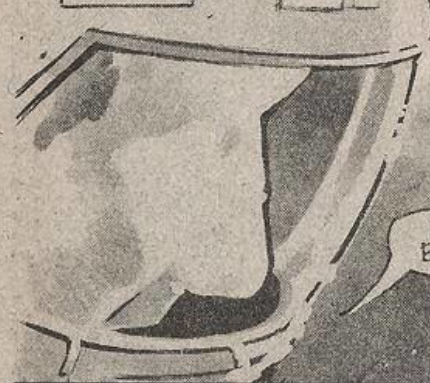
AT THAT MOMENT...

I KNEW I'D DIE ONE DAY— BUT NOT LIKE THIS! I HOPE IT'S GOING TO BE QUICK!

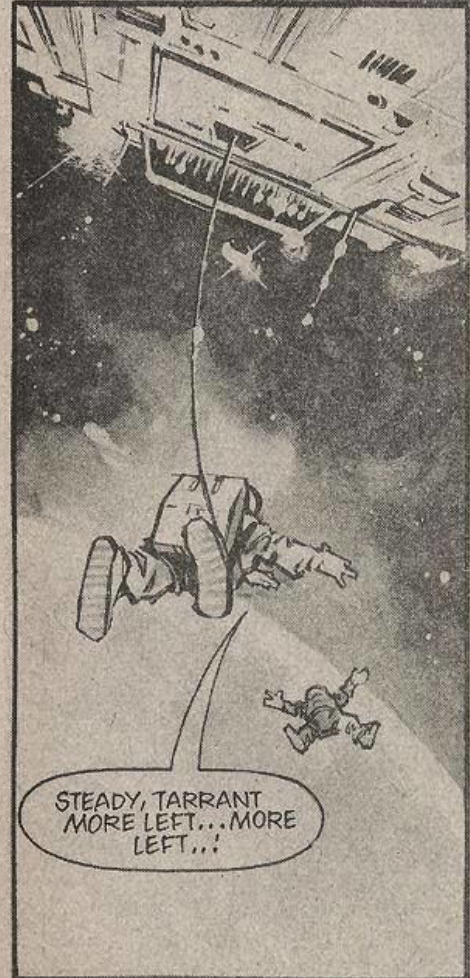
TH— THE HEAT...! IT... IT'S STARTING. CURSE YOU, AVON! YOU'VE FINALLY KILLED ME!



THEN, OUT OF THE CORNER OF HIS EYE, VILA SAW AN UNBELIEVABLE SIGHT...



UH? I MUST BE DREAMING!



STEADY, TARRANT MORE LEFT... MORE LEFT...!



A... AVON... I THOUGHT...!

DON'T THINK, VILA IT ONLY COMPLICATES THINGS. TAKE US UP TARRANT!



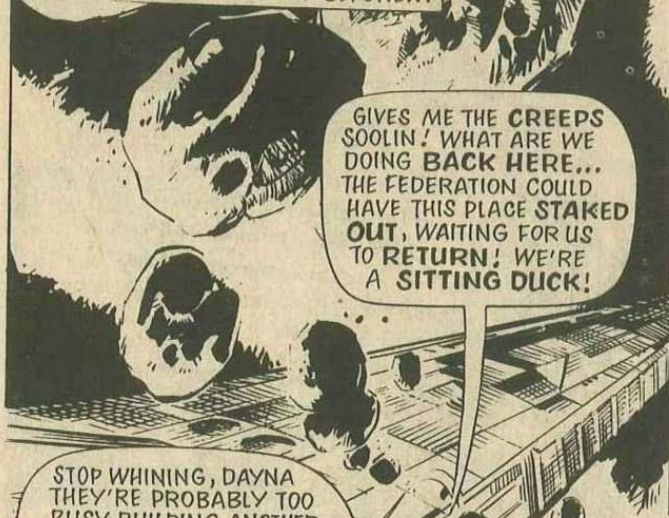
WE THOUGHT WE'D LOST YOU, VILA! IT'S GREAT TO HAVE YOU BACK!

AVON RISKED HIS LIFE FOR ME. I OWE HIM A LOT!

YOU OWE ME THE PRICE OF A BRACLET. NEXT TIME CATCH IT!

Clustin '82

THE STARSHIP SCORPIO EDGES BETWEEN THE DRIFTING DEBRIS OF A SHATTERED MOON... A MOON THAT IT DESTROYED SOME MONTHS BEFORE...



GIVES ME THE CREEPS SOOLIN! WHAT ARE WE DOING BACK HERE... THE FEDERATION COULD HAVE THIS PLACE STAKED OUT, WAITING FOR US TO RETURN! WE'RE A SITTING DUCK!

STOP WHINING, DAYNA THEY'RE PROBABLY TOO BUSY BUILDING ANOTHER COMPUTER-PLANET, AFTER WE MADE THIS ASTEROID BELT OUT OF THEIR FIRST TRY!

I DON'T LIKE THIS, TARRANT THEY'VE BEEN GONE FOR TOO LONG!

MONITOR THEIR CONVERSATION!

I CAN'T... THEY'VE TURNED DOWN THE POWER OF THEIR SUIT TRANSMITTERS...

THAT CLINCHES IT- I'M GOING OUT THERE!



OUTSIDE THE SHIP, AVON AND VILA HAVE LOCATED THEIR QUARRY, A PARTICULAR PIECE OF SPACE DEBRIS... OR MORE CORRECTLY IT HAS LOCATED THEM!

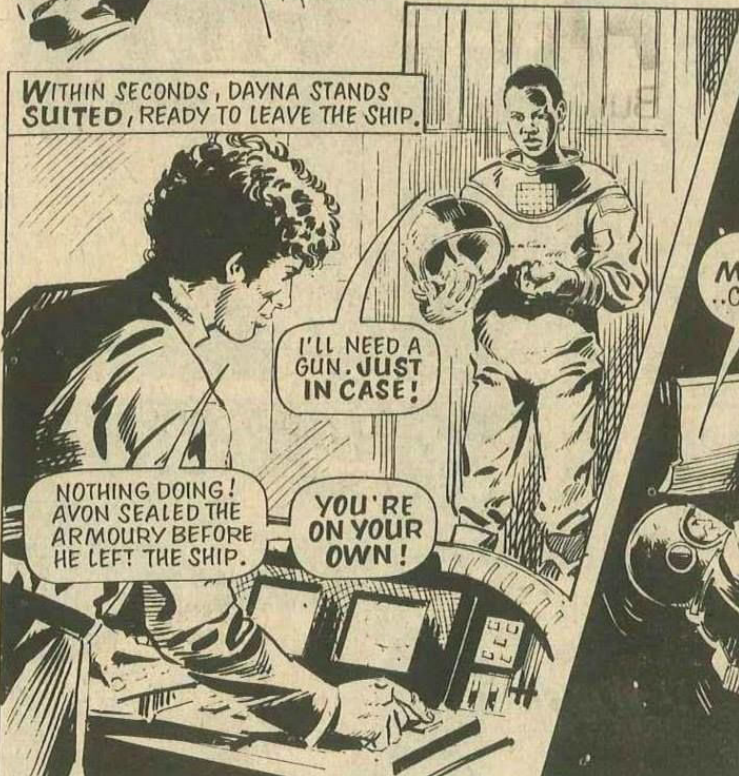
MY HEAD... SPINNING...

SO... TIRED...



DON'T WORRY, THEY'RE JUST CONSERVING ENERGY...

MAYBE SO! BUT I WON'T BE HAPPY UNTIL I'VE CHECKED THINGS OUT FOR MYSELF!



WITHIN SECONDS, DAYNA STANDS SUITED, READY TO LEAVE THE SHIP.

I'LL NEED A GUN. JUST IN CASE!

NOTHING DOING! AVON SEALED THE ARMOURY BEFORE HE LEFT THE SHIP.

YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN!

MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE, STRANGE OCCURRENCES... AS THE SPACE-DEBRIS JERKS INTO LIFE...



IT'S MOVING... ..CAN'T LET GO!

NOR CAN I... HAND... PARALYSED!

DAYNA TO SCORPIO... CONDITION RED! THE WRECKAGE THEY'RE HOLDING'S MOVING BY ITSELF!



AVON! VILA
WHAT'S
HAPPENING?

WEAK... CAN'T
MOVE... SOMETHING
STRANGE ABOUT
THIS DEBRIS...

... UNDER
SOME... STRANGE
COMPULSION



HERE -
OOOOFF!

WATCH
OUT!

SUDDENLY, THE WRECKAGE TWISTS TOWARDS THE GIRL! SHE IS CAUGHT UNAWARES, TRYING TO PASS THE SAFETY-LINE TO AVON...

IN A FLASH, THE METALLIC SHARD HAS NUDGED THE THREE FIGURES PLANET-WARD, AND MOVED CLEAR...



IT PUSHED THEM!
THE DEBRIS HAS A
LIFE OF IT'S OWN!

GOOD LORD
-VILA!!

DAYNA WAS
RIGHT... THERE
IS SOMETHING
WRONG!



IN RESPONSE TO DAYNA'S SHOUT, THE SEMI-CONSCIOUS MAN'S EYELIDS LABORIOUSLY OPEN...

DAYNA...
HELP ME!



HELP
ME!

A HURRIED DAYNA REPORTS TO THE SHIP...

TARRANT!
VILA'S GONE
OUT OF
REACH!

- IN SECONDS
AVON AND THE GIRL
ARE WINCHED BACK.

LEAVE HIM!
RETURN WITH
AVON ONLY!
REPEAT... SAVE
AVON AND
RETURN TO
SHIP!

VILA'S GLOVED HAND CLUTCHES AT NOTHINGNESS, AS HE ACCELERATES TOWARDS THE PLANET BELOW... AND CERTAIN DEATH!



NOW IN PLANET FALL THE HELPLESS FIGURE OF VILA IS APPROACHED BY A CURIOUS FORM...

A CURIOUS FORM PERHAPS,
BUT A BEING NEVERTHELESS...

AND IT
SPEAKS...

SSPK I HAVE
YOU... AT MY SSPSK
MERCY, SSKPTT
VILA! AFTER ALL
THESE SSKPK MONTHS!

... REVENGE
IS SSKSPP
MINE!

... WHEN I COUNT TO
SSPK ... THREE, YOU
WILL SSP ... REMEMBER
AND SSKKT ... SUFFER...
ONE ... SPT ... TWO...
THREE...

SUDDENLY, VILA REMEMBERS! HE REMEMBERED SO CLEARLY NOW, THAT DAY 6 MONTHS BEFORE... THE IMAGES FLOOD HIS MIND, AND THE VOICE DRONES ON...

IT IS I WHO SPEAKS TO YOU
≡ SKPSSF ≡ JUST A FEW PALTRY
RELAYS, SWITCHES, SOLAR
PANELS AND CIRCUITS REMAIN...
≡ SKRPPT ≡ OF WHAT I ONCE WAS
≡ SPKSS ≡ ... FEDERAC THE
COMPUTER WORLD!

... THEY GAVE ME LOGIC ...
SPSS ≡ REASON, AND EVEN
SKRPPSS ≡ ... PERSONALITY...
I AWOK, THERE IN SPACE,
BRIGHT ≡ SPSST ≡ SHINY AND
≡ SPTZLSS ≡ ... NEW, MY
WISDOM GROWING AS THEY
CONNECTED ≡ SPSST ≡ IN
MY ≡ SPSK ≡ ... CIRCUITS...
AND THEN ≡ SPZE ≡ ...

≡ ... SPSS ≡ ... ≡ KSPSS ≡
... YOU CAME ... ≡ SPSS ≡

THE OTHERS ON YOUR SHIP
COULDN'T BREAK MY SECURITY
DEFENCE SYSTEM, BUT I WAS
YOUNG ≡ SPSST ≡ AND NAIVE
AND YOU TRICKED ME ≡ SSPST ≡
YOU TRICKED ME WITH YOUR
≡ SPSST ≡ DIM WITTED COMPUTER,
AS GO BETWEEN ... AND I SENT
MY DEFENCE SHIPS ON A FOOL'S
ERRAND ...

... AND I WAS A ... ≡ SPSS ≡ A
HELPLESS TARGET FOR YOUR
CANNONS ... YOU BLEW ME TO
≡ SPSST ≡ SMITHEREENS, BUT
ONE OF THE PIECES ≡ SPST ≡
RETAINED MY CONSCIOUSNESS,
AND ...

WE'VE DESTROYED THE
COMPUTER-WORLD, BUT
WE'VE BEEN HOLED BY A
PIECE OF WRECKAGE ...
IT COULD BE DANGEROUS...
WE'D BETTER TAKE A LOOK
FROM THE OUTSIDE ...

I HAD TRIED AND FAILED TO
DESTROY YOUR ≡ SPSST ≡
SHIP... AND YOU REMOVED ME...
I WAS ≡ SPZZT ≡ SPENT...
EXHAUSTED... I NEEDED TO
RECUPERATE ...

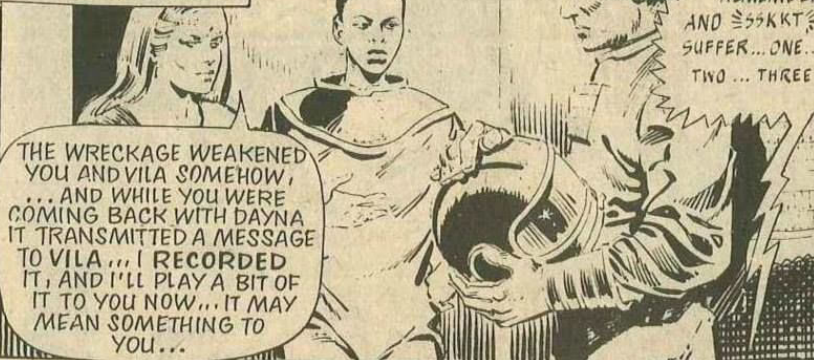
... WITH MY LAST
REMAINING SURGE OF
ENERGY I ≡ SPSST ≡
HYPNOTISED YOU TO
RETURN WHEN I COULD
≡ SKPSS ≡ ... DEAL
WITH YOU ...

WHAT'S
THAT?

AN ELECTRICAL
DISCHARGE? BUT...
SUCH STRANGE
COLOURS...

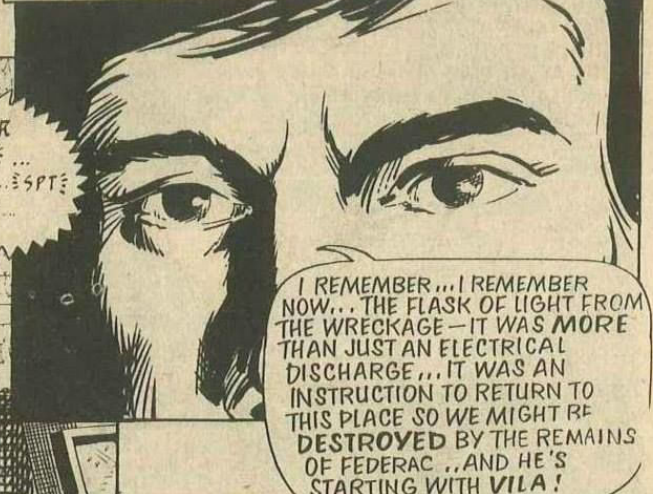
AS THE REMAINS OF FEDERAC GLOAT OVER IMPENDING REVENGE, SOOLIN AND DAYNA DISCUSS EVENTS WITH A SOMEWHAT RECOVERED AVON, WHO IS STILL UNAWARE OF HAVING BEEN HYPNOTISED BY THE REMAINS OF FEDERAC...

SOOLIN HAS LOCATED THE PART OF THE TAPE SHE KNOWS WILL CAUSE AVON TO REMEMBER THE HYPNOTIC MESSAGE...



REMEMBER AND SUFFER... ONE... TWO... THREE...

THE WRECKAGE WEAKENED YOU AND VILA SOMEHOW, ... AND WHILE YOU WERE COMING BACK WITH DAYNA IT TRANSMITTED A MESSAGE TO VILA... I RECORDED IT, AND I'LL PLAY A BIT OF IT TO YOU NOW... IT MAY MEAN SOMETHING TO YOU...



I REMEMBER... I REMEMBER NOW... THE FLASK OF LIGHT FROM THE WRECKAGE—IT WAS MORE THAN JUST AN ELECTRICAL DISCHARGE... IT WAS AN INSTRUCTION TO RETURN TO THIS PLACE SO WE MIGHT BE DESTROYED BY THE REMAINS OF FEDERAC... AND HE'S STARTING WITH VILA!



WE CAN'T OPEN FIRE, THEY'RE TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT!

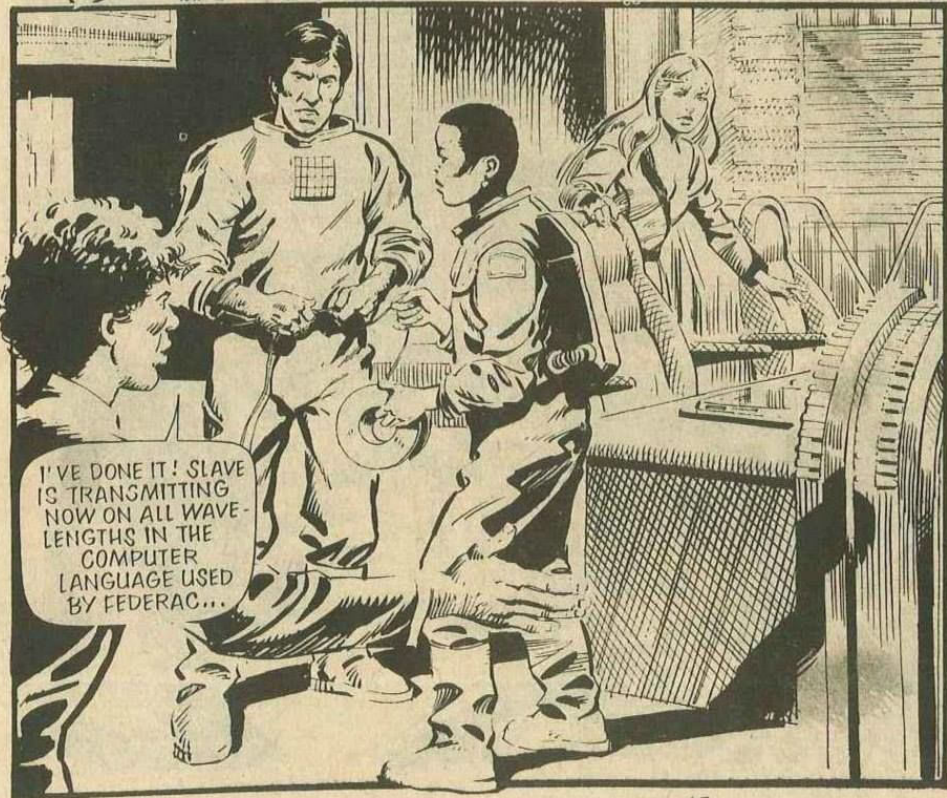
TARRANT... LINK SLAVE UP TO BLANKET TRANSMIT ON ALL FREQUENCIES AND PROGRAMME HIM WITH THIS MESSAGE... AND GET HIM TO KEEP REPEATING IT...



SECONDS LATER...

DO YOU THINK THAT'LL BE ENOUGH?

IT'LL HAVE TO BE! -I'M BETTING THAT WHATEVER REMAINS OF FEDERAC IS STILL HUMAN ENOUGH TO RESPOND...



I'VE DONE IT! SLAVE IS TRANSMITTING NOW ON ALL WAVELENGTHS IN THE COMPUTER LANGUAGE USED BY FEDERAC...



LET'S HOPE HE GETS THE MESSAGE...

OPEN THE AIRLOCK!

AT THAT MOMENT IN SPACE THE SUITED FIGURE OF VILA STILL FALLS PLANETWARD! THE TEMPERATURE IN HIS SUIT IS BECOMING UNBEARABLE AS HE PLUNGES THROUGH THE THICKENING ATMOSPHERE...

HE'S GONE... FEDERAC'S GONE!

WHAT'S HAPPENED? WHERE'S THE SCORPIO?

- BUT THERE IS ONE DIFFERENCE... HIS SUIT RADIO IS SILENT!..

AS IF IN ANSWER THE SHIP FLASHES BY HIM... IN TOW HE SEES THE FIGURE OF...

AVON!

I THOUGHT YOU'D ABANDONED ME!

Phil Gascoine

HOW DID YOU DO IT? HOW DID YOU GET RID OF FEDERAC WITHOUT VAPORISING US BOTH?

IT SEEMS THAT FEDERAC WAS STILL A LITTLE TOO HUMAN FOR HIS OWN GOOD...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

COME ON BOARD! YOU'LL GET THE WHOLE STORY!

WITHIN MINUTES THE TALE IS TOLD...

AND SO WE HAD SLAVE BROADCASTING 'YOU... AREE... SLEEPY'... AND THE DIRECTIONS TO ALPHA CENTAURUS OVER AND OVER AGAIN UNTIL HE WAS WELL AND TRULY HYPNOTISED...!

HE PUT HIMSELF INTO HIGH GEAR HE SHOULD BE SOMEWHERE NEAR ARCTURUS NOW...

THERE IS REJOICING FROM ALL BUT ONE MAN... WHO CHOOSES TO PONDER THE PASSING OF A ONCE GREAT INTELLECT.

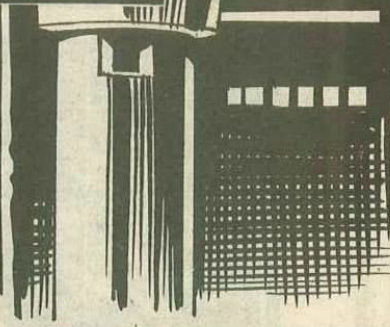
THE END

MAXIMUM SECURITY WAS IN FORCE AT SERVALAN'S OUTER SECTOR SECURITY HEADQUARTERS ON PAALUS MAJOR.

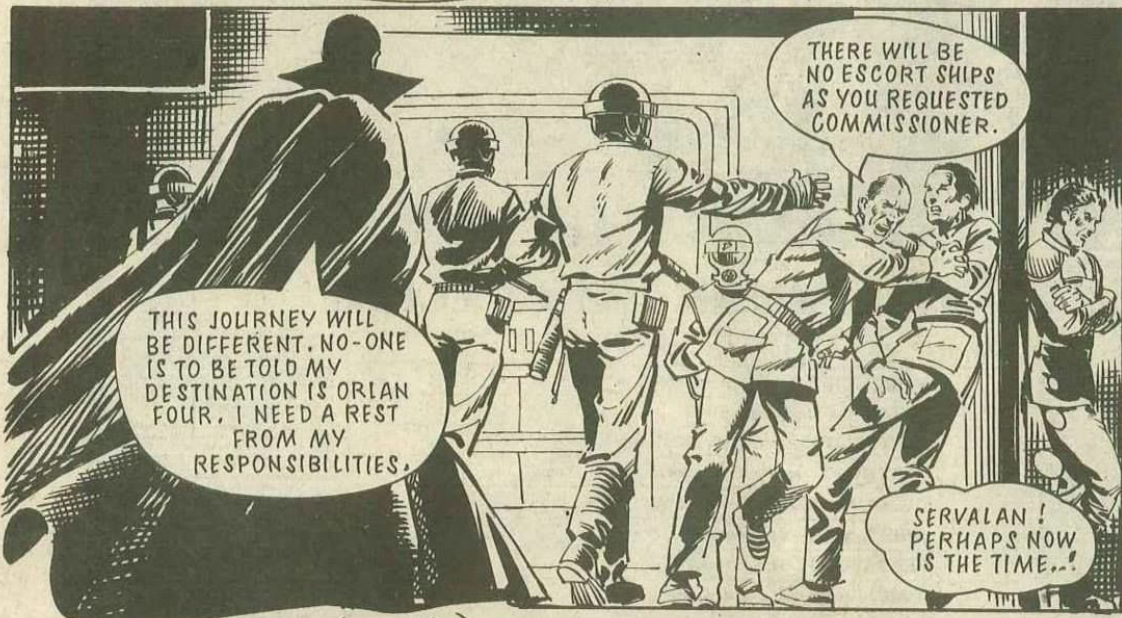


SECURITY IS ABYSMAL CAPTAIN! IT SEEMS REBEL AGENTS KNOW MY EVERY MOVE. I CANNOT EVEN TAKE A PLEASURE TRIP WITHOUT THEM DOGGING MY FOOTSTEPS!

HUNTED



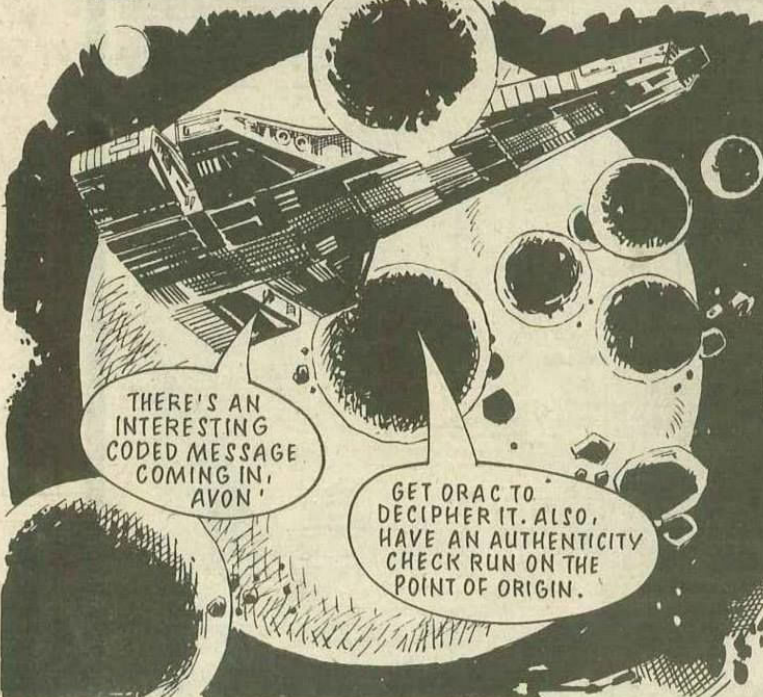
FOX 3 TO FOX BASE. DESTINATION ORLAN FOUR. MINIMUM GUARDS- NO ESCORTS. SERVALAN IS PLAYING INTO OUR HANDS.



THIS JOURNEY WILL BE DIFFERENT. NO-ONE IS TO BE TOLD MY DESTINATION IS ORLAN FOUR. I NEED A REST FROM MY RESPONSIBILITIES.

THERE WILL BE NO ESCORT SHIPS AS YOU REQUESTED COMMISSIONER.

SERVALAN! PERHAPS NOW IS THE TIME...



THERE'S AN INTERESTING CODED MESSAGE COMING IN, AVON!

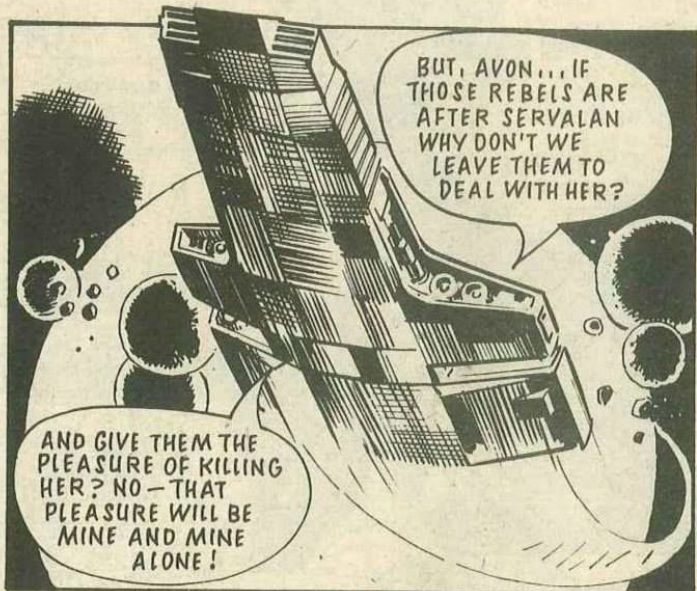
GET ORAC TO DECIPHER IT. ALSO, HAVE AN AUTHENTICITY CHECK RUN ON THE POINT OF ORIGIN.



WOW! A REBEL AGENT REPORTS SERVALAN IS FLYING TO ORLAN FOUR FOR A REST. NO ESCORTS!

ORIGIN CONFIRMED AS PAALUS MAJOR- SERVALAN'S FORWARD HEADQUARTERS.

A SPY IN HER CAMP, EH? TIME WE PAID ORLAN FOUR A VISIT OURSELVES!



BUT, AVON... IF THOSE REBELS ARE AFTER SERVALAN WHY DON'T WE LEAVE THEM TO DEAL WITH HER?

AND GIVE THEM THE PLEASURE OF KILLING HER? NO - THAT PLEASURE WILL BE MINE AND MINE ALONE!



WHY GO LOOKING FOR TROUBLE, AVON? BESIDES WE KNOW NOTHING OF A REBEL GROUP OPERATING NEAR ORLAN FOUR.

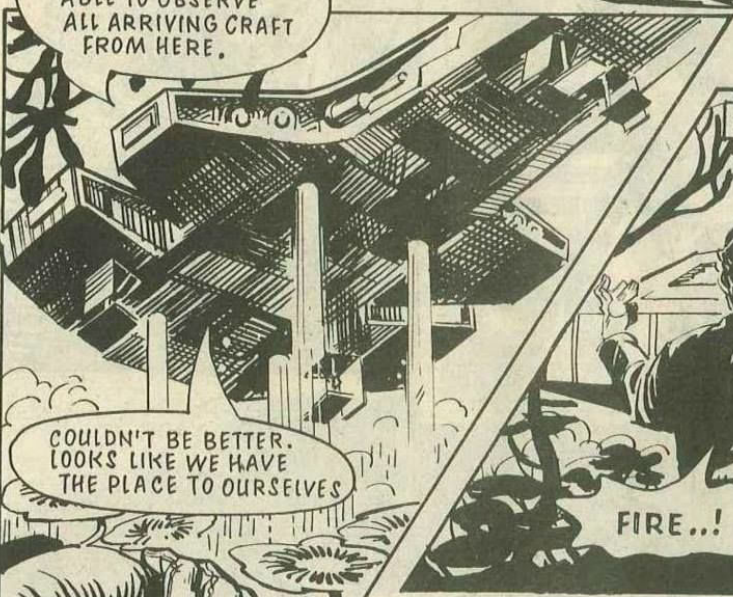
THAT'S ANOTHER GOOD REASON FOR GOING, VI LA WE NEED ALLIES VERY BADLY. WE CAN'T HOPE TO WIN A WAR AGAINST THE FEDERATION ON OUR OWN.



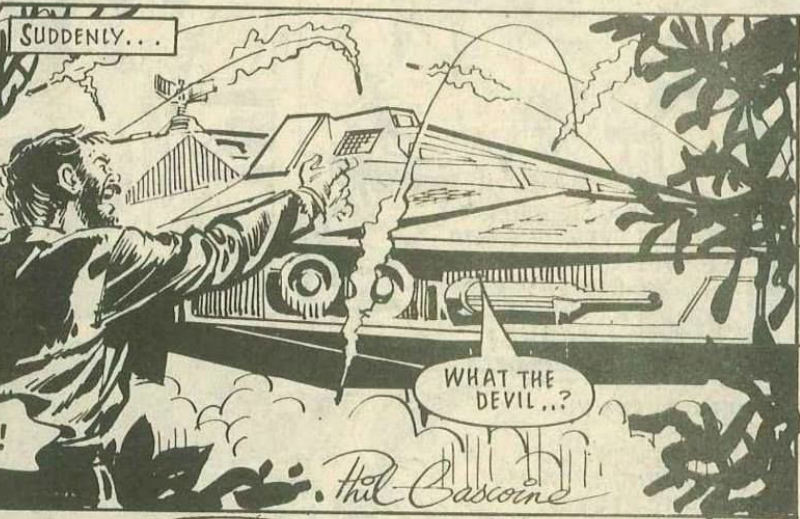
ORLAN FOUR, MAIN RECREATION PLANET AHEAD. NO SIGN OF SERVALAN'S SHIP YET.

EXCELLENT! FIND US A PLACE TO LAND. WE'LL PREPARE A WARM WELCOME FOR HER.

OPTIMUM LOCATION SELECTED. WE'LL BE ABLE TO OBSERVE ALL ARRIVING CRAFT FROM HERE.



COULDN'T BE BETTER. LOOKS LIKE WE HAVE THE PLACE TO OURSELVES



SUDDENLY...

FIRE..!

WHAT THE DEVIL...?

Phil Cascone



WE'RE TRAPPED DRAGONITE LINES ALL OVER US! WE CAN'T BOOST FREE!

IS THAT A FACT? EVERYONE TO BATTLE POSITIONS! WE MAY HAVE TO FIGHT OUR WAY OUT.



LISTEN TO ME, SERVALAN! SURRENDER NOW OR WE'LL BLOW YOU AND YOUR SHIP TO PIECES! DO YOU HEAR ME?

THIS IS KER, AVON, AND THE SHIP YOU CLAIM SERVALAN TO BE ON IS SCORPIO - A REBEL PRIVATEER! NOW REMOVE YOUR LINES OR I OPEN FIRE!

AVON? SCORPIO? BUT...

UH? THE STUPID FOOL...



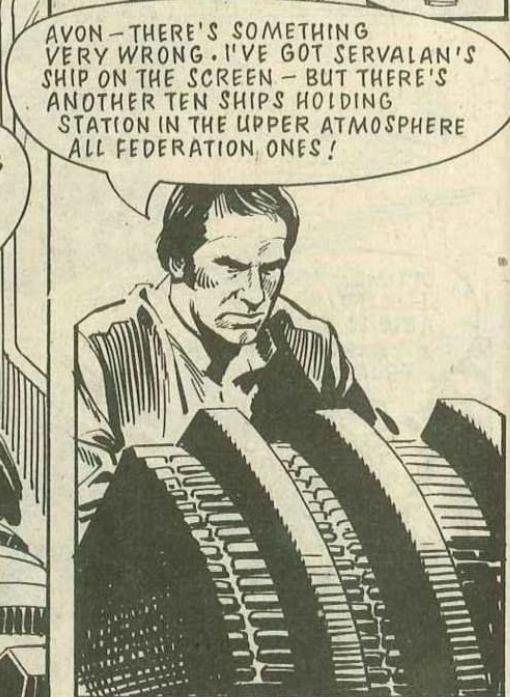
LOOK, KARTAL THAT IS SERVALAN'S SHIP! WE'RE ATTACKING THE WRONG ONE!

THE MEN, QUICK GET EVERYONE INTO POSITION OVER THERE WE CAN STILL ATTACK THE CORRECT SHIP. MOVE!

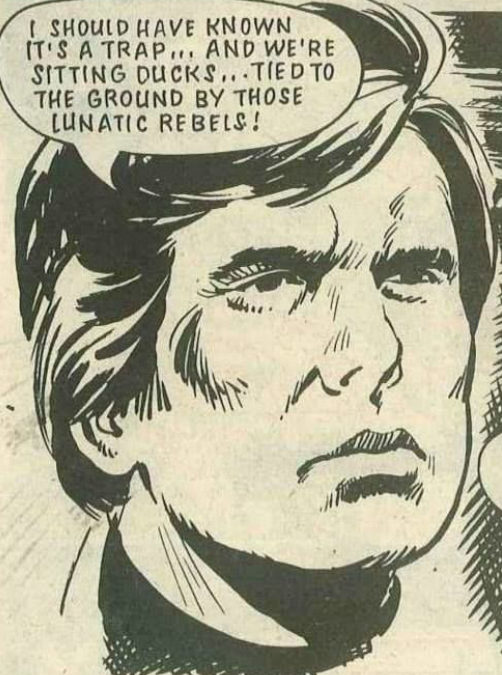


AVON - THEY'RE RUNNING OFF... MAKING FOR WHERE THAT OTHER SHIP IS LANDING.

YES - SERVALAN'S SHIP! THE BUNGLING FOOLS! STAND BY, WE'RE GOING TO BLAST OURSELVES OUT OF HERE!



AVON - THERE'S SOMETHING VERY WRONG. I'VE GOT SERVALAN'S SHIP ON THE SCREEN - BUT THERE'S ANOTHER TEN SHIPS HOLDING STATION IN THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE ALL FEDERATION ONES!



I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN IT'S A TRAP... AND WE'RE SITTING DUCKS... TIED TO THE GROUND BY THOSE LUNATIC REBELS!



THE PLAN IS WORKING, COMMISSIONER. THE AGENT WHO SENT THE 'WARNING SIGNAL' WAS ARRESTED AT YOUR HEADQUARTERS A FEW MINUTES AGO.

EXCELLENT! AND THE SHIP CONTAINING MY DOUBLE IS ABOUT TO TOUCH DOWN. THE REBELS ARE BOUND TO ATTACK. PREPARE FOR BATTLE!

THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE, COMMISSIONER. THERE'S A LARGE SHIP DOWN THERE. IT MIGHT EVEN BE SCORPIO.



THIS IS GETTING BETTER A REBEL FORCE TO WIPE OUT... AND SEVERAL OLD SCORES TO SETTLE WITH AVON! PREPARE TO DIVE!

THAT INSTANT, IN THE CLEARING BELOW...

FIRE! CUT AS MANY OF THE LINES AS YOU CAN!

AVON - THE FEDERATION FORCE... IT'S COMING IN NOW!



UNAWARE OF THE IMPENDING DANGER, THE REBELS ATTACKED...



BLAST HER! KILL SERVACAN BEFORE SHE CAN ESCAPE!

AARRGH!

MAXIMUM LIFT! IT... IT'S STARTING TO RISE...!



GOOD GRIEF! THOSE REBELS HAVE ATTACKED THAT OTHER SHIP... BUT I DON'T THINK THEY'VE SEEN THE OTHERS OVERHEAD!

ATTACKING SHIPS CLOSING FAST. MOVE THIS TUB, TARRANT!

SHE'S ON FULL THRUST NOW! ANY MORE POWER COULD TEAR HER APART!

NO...NO...! EEECHH...!

COMMISSIONER LOOK! IT IS SCORPIO!





FIRE... FIRE...! TEAR THAT SHIP APART!

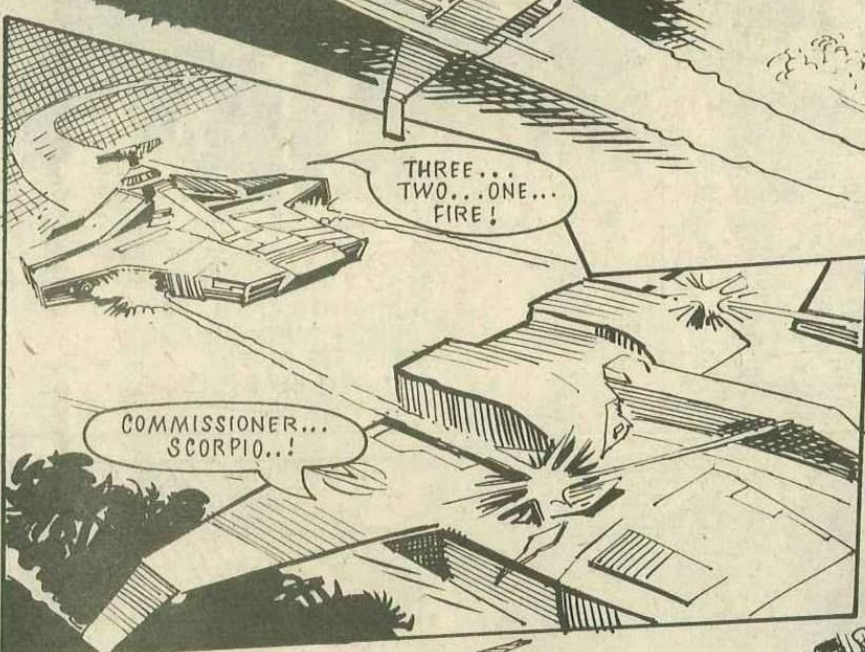
SHE'S SPOTTED US. WE'RE SUSTAINING HITS!

EVERYONE STAY CALM! SHE DOESN'T KNOW IT— BUT SERVALAN'S JUST DONE US A FAVOUR!



WE'RE FREE LET'S MAKE A RUN FOR IT!

NOT YET, VILA WE CAN'T LEAVE WITHOUT THANKING SERVALAN PERSONALLY. PREPARE TO OPEN FIRE!



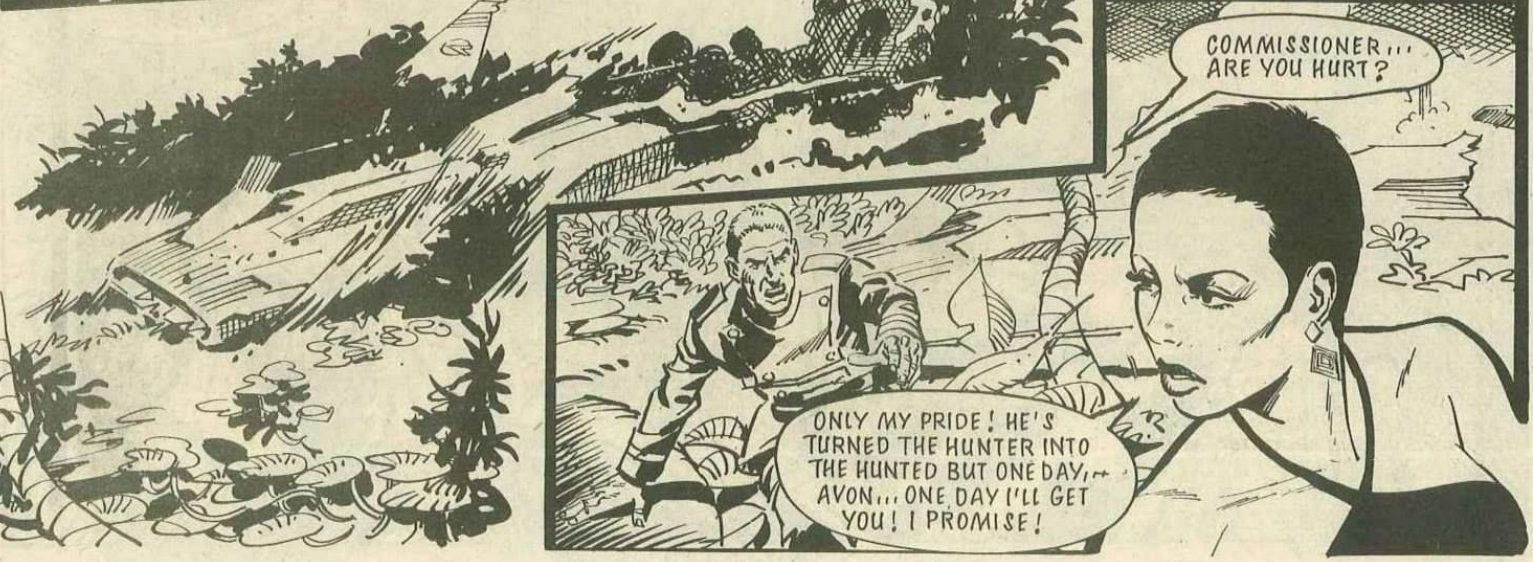
THREE... TWO... ONE... FIRE!

COMMISSIONER... SCORPIO...!



DIRECT HIT ON ENGINES, AVON!

OPEN THE THROTTLE TARRANT. TIME WE WEREN'T HERE.



COMMISSIONER... ARE YOU HURT?

ONLY MY PRIDE! HE'S TURNED THE HUNTER INTO THE HUNTED BUT ONE DAY, AVON... ONE DAY I'LL GET YOU! I PROMISE!

ON ONE OF THE MAIN SPACE FLEET CONVOY ROUTES, SCORPIO POWERED IN ON A CAREFULLY PREPARED ATTACK PLAN...



ESCORT ENGAGED AND DESTROYED!

THE TRANSPORT'S MAKING A RUN FOR IT!

HUNGER

OPENING A CHANNEL TO THE TRANSPORT NOW, AVON.

THIS IS THE SCORPIO. IT IS POINTLESS TRYING TO ESCAPE. WE HAVE THE CAPABILITY OF DESTROYING YOU IMMEDIATELY.

HEAVE-TO! WE'RE SENDING A BOARDING PARTY. ANY TREACHERY AND YOUR SHIP, IT'S CREW AND CONTENTS WILL BE BLOWN TO PIECES!

IT'S WORKING. THEY'VE SHUT DOWN THEIR POWER.



ESCAPE PODS... THAT INSTANT, ON THE FEDERATION TRANSPORT...

STAND BY TO TELEPORT US TO THE TRANSPORT!

I'M REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS. WONDER WHAT KIND OF FOOD THEY'VE GOT ON BOARD?

CAPTAIN, THE ESCAPE PODS ARE READY. WE'RE IN RANGE OF THE PLANET.

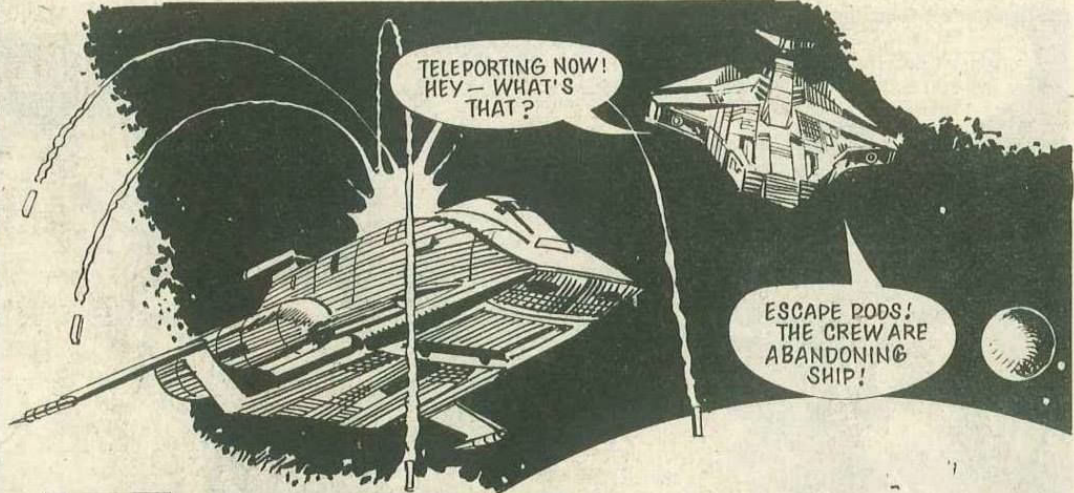
RIGHT! ABANDON SHIP! WE'LL SHOW THESE REBELS WE'RE NOT SUCH A SOFT TARGET AS THEY THINK!





HURRY, CAPTAIN!
WE MUST LEAVE!

TEN SECONDS-
THAT SHOULD DO
NICELY!



TELEPORTING NOW!
HEY - WHAT'S
THAT?

ESCAPE PODS!
THE CREW ARE
ABANDONING
SHIP!

MOMENTS
LATER...



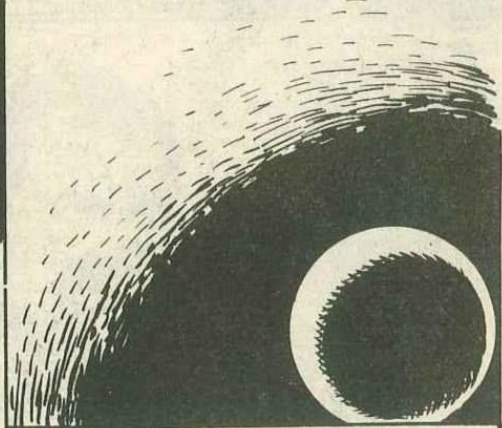
WHAT THE
DEVIL...? THERE'S
NO-ONE HERE!

THEY'VE DONE
A BUNK! GREAT!
NOW WE CAN TAKE
OUR TIME OVER
THE CARGO!

LOOKS LIKE
SOMETHING
VILA SHOULD
FIX FOR US.



ER, AVON - I THINK
THIS MAY BE WHY
THE CREW ABANDONED
SHIP.



IT'S A BOMB!
IT'LL DETONATE
IN THREE
SECONDS!

DAYNA!
IMMEDIATE
TELEPORT! YOU
HEAR?
IMMEDIATE...





TH...THE SHIP'S DISINTEGRATED! DID YOU GET THEM?

HOW MUCH OF THEM I DON'T KNOW - BUT WHATEVER I GOT IS TELEPORTING ABOARD NOW.



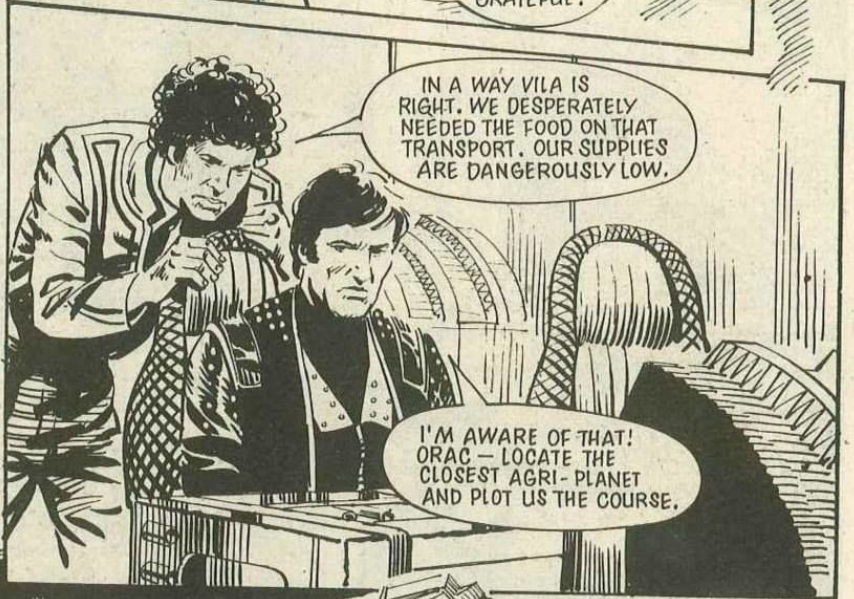
THEY'RE ALIVE, DAYNA!

AND IN ONE PIECE, I HOPE THEY'RE SUITABLY GRATEFUL.



NEVER MIND, VILA. I'LL SELECT THE BEST OF WHAT FOOD WE HAVE LEFT FOR A MEAL.

HUH! MORE PROCESSED JUNK! I THOUGHT THE BIG MAN WAS GOING TO ENSURE DECENT GRUB FOR US WITH THIS LATEST, DARING ADVENTURE. WHAT A FIASCO!



IN A WAY VILA IS RIGHT. WE DESPERATELY NEEDED THE FOOD ON THAT TRANSPORT. OUR SUPPLIES ARE DANGEROUSLY LOW.

I'M AWARE OF THAT! ORAC - LOCATE THE CLOSEST AGRI-PLANET AND PLOT US THE COURSE.



TORRAC SIX IS THE NEAREST PLANET. OUR COURSE IS ALREADY PLOTTED AND ACTIVATED.

YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING! TORRAC SIX SERVES FEDERATION HEADQUARTERS! THEIR SECURITY IS IMPREGNABLE!

NO SECURITY IS TOTAL, VILA. ORAC WILL BREAK THEIR CODES AND SCHEDULE US JUST ANOTHER FREIGHTER...

A SIGNAL ALTERING CONSIGNMENT 105, SIR. IT WILL BE COLLECTED BY A 'WANDERER CLASS' FREIGHTER.

WHAT? THIS IS MOST IRREGULAR LET ME SEE THE SIGNAL!



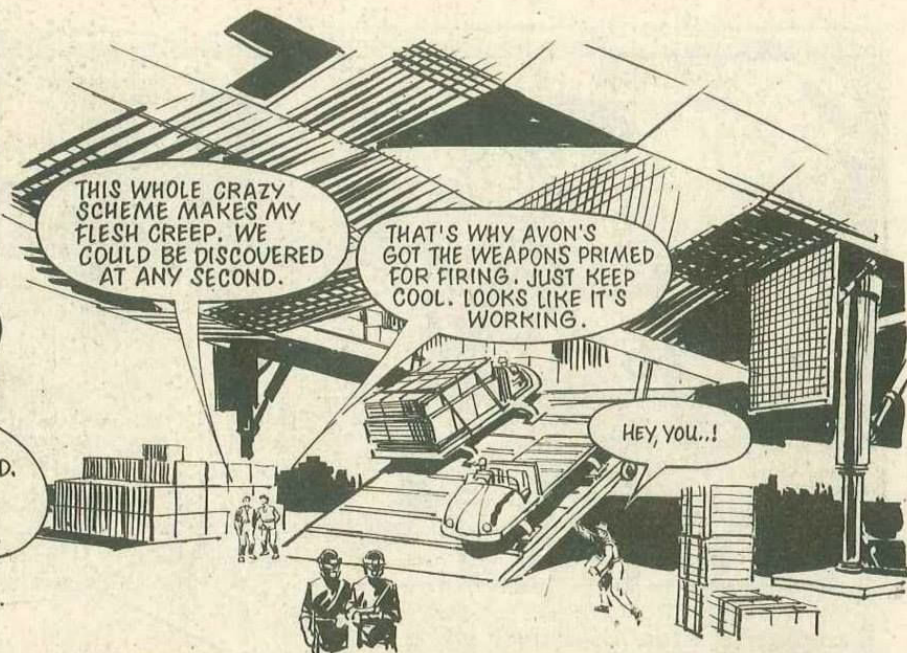
LATER, ON TORRAC SIX...

Phil Cascone



THE SHIP IS AWAITING LANDING INSTRUCTIONS NOW, SIR. SHALL I BRING IT IN?

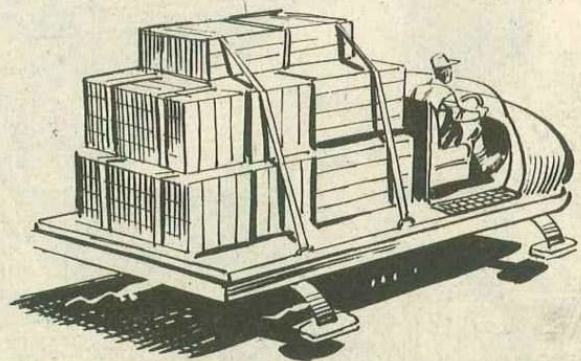
I SUPPOSE SO. THE CODE IS CORRECT BUT I'M DISAPPOINTED. I WAS HOPING TO MEET THE LADY IN PERSON THIS TIME.



THIS WHOLE CRAZY SCHEME MAKES MY FLESH CREEP. WE COULD BE DISCOVERED AT ANY SECOND.

THAT'S WHY AVON'S GOT THE WEAPONS PRIMED FOR FIRING. JUST KEEP COOL. LOOKS LIKE IT'S WORKING.

HEY, YOU..!

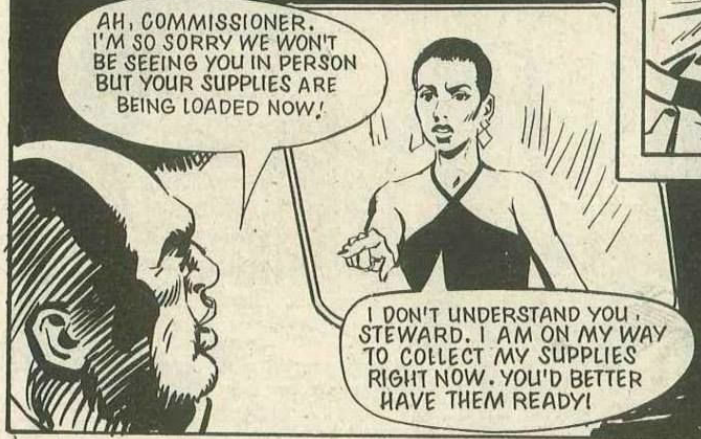


SHE MUST TRUST YOU GUYS PRETTY WELL. NOT USUAL FOR COMMISSIONER SLEER TO HAVE ANYONE ELSE COLLECT HER RATIONS. PUT YOUR THUMBPRINT ON THE ORDER FORM HERE.

C... COMMISSIONER SLEER? ER, YES. SHE'S A BIT BUSY RIGHT NOW.

SERVALAN'S RATIONS! I THINK I'M GOING TO BE SICK!

MEANWHILE, IN THE CHIEF STEWARD'S CONTROL ROOM...



AH, COMMISSIONER. I'M SO SORRY WE WON'T BE SEEING YOU IN PERSON BUT YOUR SUPPLIES ARE BEING LOADED NOW!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOU, STEWARD. I AM ON MY WAY TO COLLECT MY SUPPLIES RIGHT NOW. YOU'D BETTER HAVE THEM READY!



B... BUT, COMMISSIONER... THE ORDER TO CONSIGN YOUR SUPPLIES TO THE SCORPIO HAD YOUR CODE...

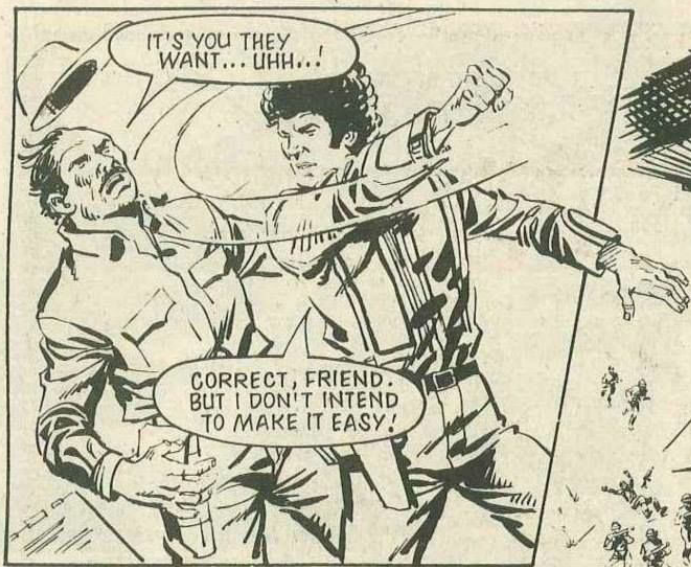
SCORPIO? IT'S A TERRORIST SHIP! ARREST THE CREW OR I'LL HAVE YOUR HEAD!

THE ALARM SIREN SCREECHED OUT OVER THE LOADING BAY...



WHAT'S GOING ON? THE GUARD'S BEEN CALLED OUT!

WE'VE BEEN RUMBLED. RUN FOR IT!



IT'S YOU THEY WANT... UHH...!

CORRECT, FRIEND. BUT I DON'T INTEND TO MAKE IT EASY!



HANG ON, YOU TWO! WE'RE BEATING A HASTY RETREAT!

WE'RE ON THE RAMP! RAISE IT, FOR DITY'S SAKE!

AHHIEE!

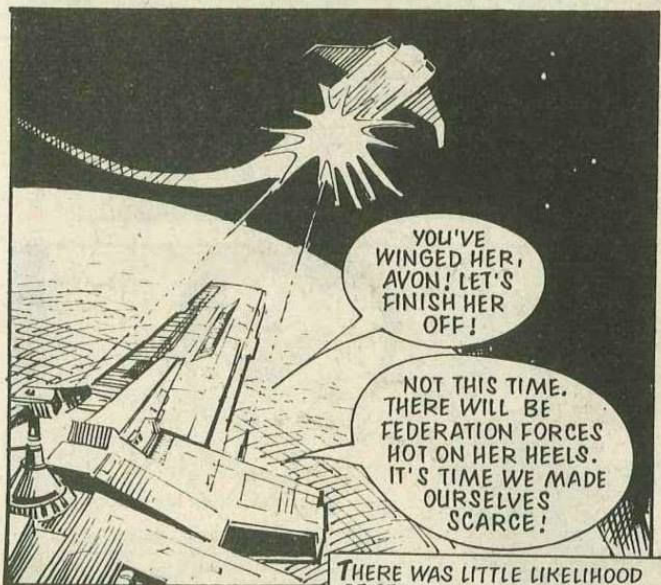


PHEW! MADE IT...!



WE'RE NOT IN THE CLEAR YET LOOK - THAT SHIP...!

SERVLAN...!



YOU'VE WINGED HER, AVON! LET'S FINISH HER OFF!

NOT THIS TIME. THERE WILL BE FEDERATION FORCES HOT ON HER HEELS. IT'S TIME WE MADE OURSELVES SCARCE!

THERE WAS LITTLE LIKELIHOOD OF SERVALAN'S CURSE COMING TO PASS...



LATER...

SPARE ME - I BEG YOU, COMMISSIONER I'D NEVER HAVE GIVEN THEM YOUR RATINGS IF I'D KNOWN...

SILENCE! YOU'VE HUMILIATED ME AND THE PRICE OF THAT IS DEATH! I HOPE THE FOOD CHOKES YOU, AVON!



IF ALL THE OTHER CRATES ARE LIKE THIS WE'LL LIVE LIKE KINGS FOR MONTHS!

I GIVE YOU A TOAST. SERVALAN - MAY SHE ALWAYS GO HUNGRY!

THE END

Target Practice

THEY'RE TAKING NO EVASIVE ACTION, AVON. DO YOU RECKON IT'S WORTH ATTACKING?

ANY FEDERATION CRAFT, LARGE OR SMALL, IS FAIR GAME, TARRANT. ATTACK!

COMMANDER! THERE'S ANOTHER SHIP FOLLOWING THE UNMANNED TARGET CRAFT. IT'S WITHIN THE DANGER AREA!

A FREIGHTER, EH? THEIR CAPTAIN HAS JUST MADE A MAJOR MISTAKE. NOW WE HAVE TWO TARGETS FOR OUR EXPERIMENT. FIRE!

A HIT! IT'S DROPPING LIKE A STONE!

INTERESTING TARRANT — ESPECIALLY AS YOU MISSED IT!

LET'S HOPE IT CAN SUPPORT THAT SHIP'S CREW. THEY'RE ABOUT TO LOSE THEIR MODE OF TRANSPORT. FIVE SECONDS TO FIRING!

CRAFT ENTERING ATMOSPHERE OF SIGNANTUM MAJOR. WE HAVE NO RECORD OF CIVILISATION ON THE PLANET ALTHOUGH IT CAN SUPPORT LIFE FORM.

THAT INSTANT, HIGH ABOVE THE PLANET'S SURFACE...

PLASMA BOLTS FIRED AND RUNNING...!



EMERGENCY SIGNALS!
WE'VE LOST ALL
POWER!

TARRANT!
WHAT THE DEVIL'S
HAPPENING?

WE'RE FLYING
LIKE A BRICK
STRAIGHT TOWARDS
THE MOUNTAINS!



ORAC — WE
NEED ANSWERS
FAST! WHAT
MUST WE DO TO
SAVE
OURSELVES?



ALL THE SHIP'S SYSTEMS
ARE PARALYSED. THE ONLY
POWER AVAILABLE IS WHAT
RESIDES IN MY LOGIC CELL
BUT...

NO BUTS, ORAC!
I'M DIVERTING
THAT POWER
NOW!



THE FEDERATION'S
SHIP DISINTEGRATED
AND WE'RE DESTINED
FOR THE SAME FATE.
SAY YOUR PRAYERS
EVERYONE!

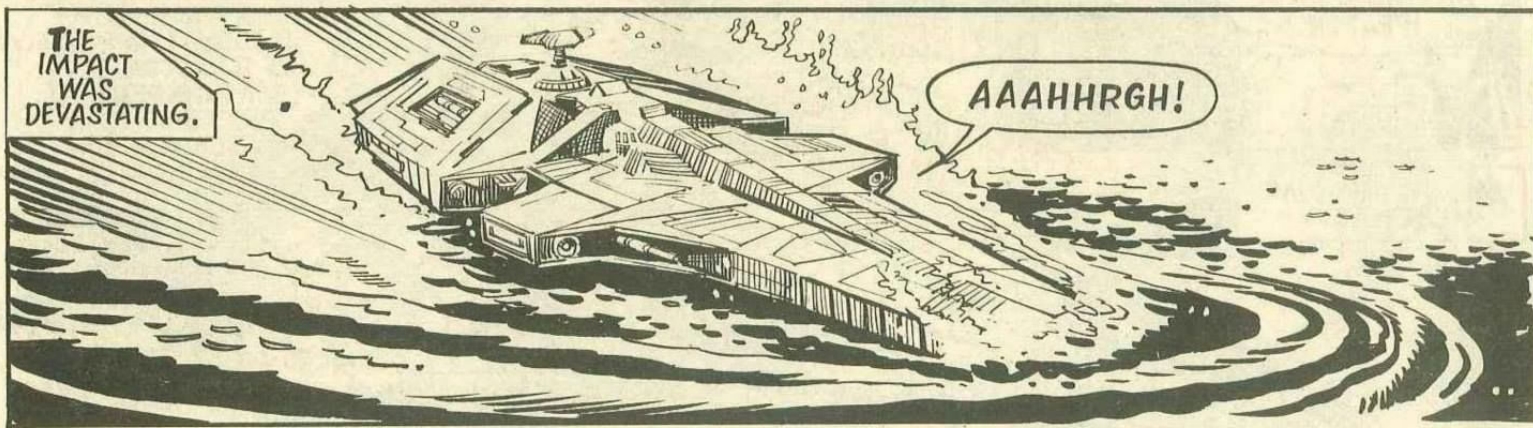
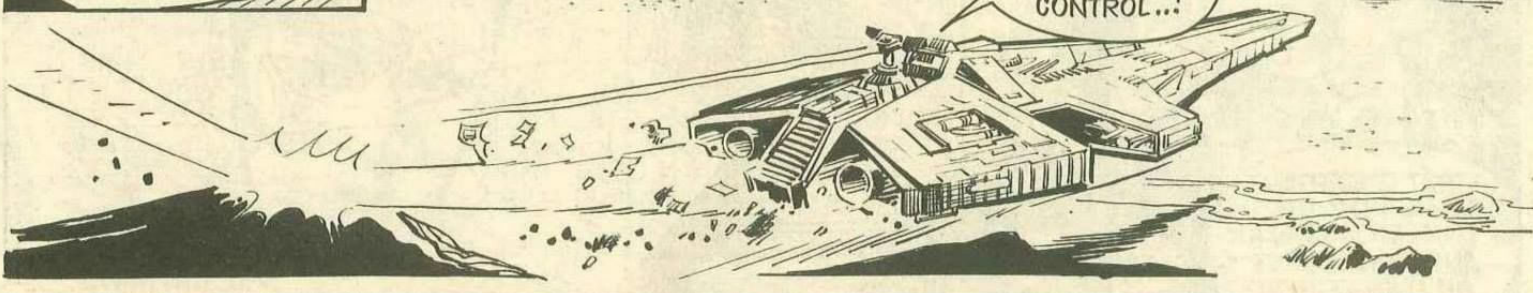
RESPOND
SCORPIO, DAMMIT!
COME ON!



THE NEXT INSTANT...

NNNGHHH!
BRACE
YOURSELVES!

W... WE'RE
BEING TORN
APART! NO
CONTROL...!



THE
IMPACT
WAS
DEVASTATING.

AAAHRGH!



ENGAGEMENT A SUCCESS, COMMANDER. THE TARGET VEHICLE HAS CRASHED AS PREDICTED BUT WE LOST TRACK OF THAT FREIGHTER!

EXCELLENT. ARRANGE COLLECTION OF SAMPLE DEBRIS TO CONFIRM THE TEST AND CHECK FOR SURVIVORS FROM THE FREIGHTER.



JUST THEN...

AH, COMMISSIONER, I CAN REPORT COMPLETE SUCCESS FOR THE CHARGED PARTICLE CANNON.

YOU HAVE ALREADY CARRIED OUT THE TESTS, COMMANDER?



NEXT TIME OBEY ORDERS! I ORDERED YOU TO WAIT UNTIL I ARRIVED!

UURGH...?



IT WAS NECESSARY TO START WITHOUT YOU, COMMISSIONER. OTHERWISE WE WOULD HAVE MISSED THE FREIGHTER.

FREIGHTER? WHAT FREIGHTER?



A VIDEO TAPE WAS REPLAYED...

THAT FREIGHTER CAME INTO THE DANGER AREA. I AUTHORISED FIRE ON IT TO TEST THE WEAPON.


SCORPIO..!

MEANWHILE, SOME MILES AWAY...



IF YOU HAVE BROUGHT DOWN THAT SHIP I WANT IT FOUND IMMEDIATELY! IF IT IS SCORPIO, COMMANDER, YOU ARE ABOUT TO BECOME A RICH MAN INDEED.

T... TARRANT AVON...? SOMEONE SPEAK TO ME...!



I... I THOUGHT YOU WERE ALL DEAD!

NEARLY, VILA. CONSIDERING WHERE WE ARE, HOWEVER WE MIGHT AS WELL BE DEAD.

W... WE'VE COME TO A STOP BUT WHERE THE BLAZES ARE WE?

AT A ROUGH GUESS I'D SAY IN ABOUT TWENTY FATHOMS OF WATER. RIGHT, AVON.

OKAY, ORAC. HOW DO WE GET OUT OF THIS MESS THEN?

ORAC IS USELESS TO US NOW, VILA. I USED HIS LAST RESERVES OF POWER WHEN I APPLIED THE FORCE FIELD WHICH SAVED US FROM PLOUGHING INTO THE MOUNTAINS.

SO— YOU'RE BACK ON LINE, EH, SLAVE? EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED!

I ONLY WISH I COULD. THERE WAS SOME KIND OF POWER DRAIN THEN I LOST CONTROL OF ALL GUIDANCE. EVEN MY MEMORY WENT.

THAT SHOULDN'T MATTER TO US. SHOULD IT, AVON? WE'RE STILL SAFE INSIDE THE PRESSURISED HULL. AREN'T WE?

IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING. THIS SHIP, HOWEVER, WAS NEVER DESIGNED TO WITHSTAND PRESSURE FROM OUTSIDE, ONLY INSIDE.

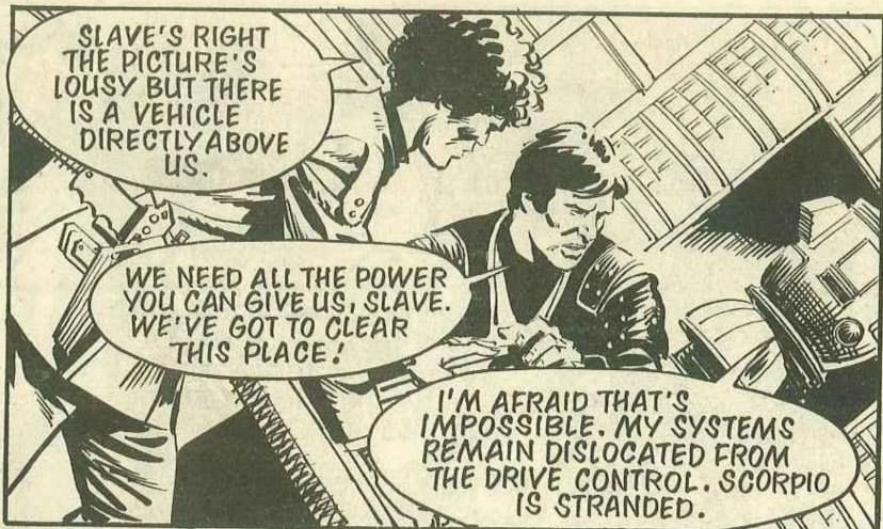
THEN ONE OF US WILL HAVE TO GET TO THE SURFACE THROUGH AN AIRLOCK. WE CAN'T STAY TRAPPED DOWN HERE FOR EVER.

I'M DEEPLY SORRY TO INFORM YOU THAT ATTEMPTED ESCAPE COULD PROVE MORE DANGEROUS THAN STAYING HERE.



THEN WHY DID YOU ISSUE A WARNING ABOUT DANGER JUST NOW?

OH, I SHOULD HAVE SAID. ONE OF THE SENSORS HAS LOCATED A SEARCH CRAFT CLOSE BY. I'M AFRAID IT BELONGS TO THE FEDERATION!



SLAVE'S RIGHT THE PICTURE'S LOUSY BUT THERE IS A VEHICLE DIRECTLY ABOVE US.

WE NEED ALL THE POWER YOU CAN GIVE US, SLAVE. WE'VE GOT TO CLEAR THIS PLACE!

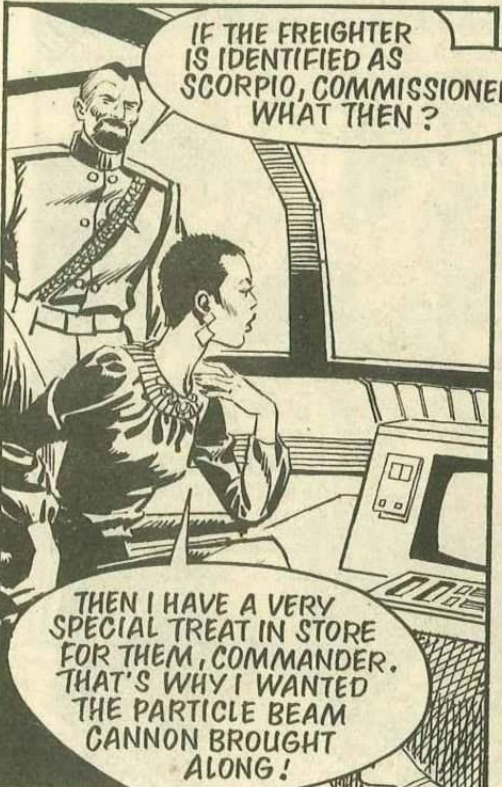
I'M AFRAID THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE. MY SYSTEMS REMAIN DISLOCATED FROM THE DRIVE CONTROL. SCORPIO IS STRANDED.



JUST THEN, AT THE SPOT WHERE SCORPIO DISAPPEARED,

THE CRASHED FREIGHTER IS PLOTTED, COMMANDER. AWAITING FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.

REMAIN IN POSITION DELTA TWO. COMMISSIONER SLEER IS APPROACHING IN MY BATTLE CRAFT. SHE WISHES TO TAKE PERSONAL CHARGE OF THIS OPERATION.



IF THE FREIGHTER IS IDENTIFIED AS SCORPIO, COMMISSIONER, WHAT THEN?

THEN I HAVE A VERY SPECIAL TREAT IN STORE FOR THEM, COMMANDER. THAT'S WHY I WANTED THE PARTICLE BEAM CANNON BROUGHT ALONG!



RECEPTION WAS POOR BUT TARRANT DID HEAR ONE NAME VERY CLEARLY.

AVON—THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT COMMISSIONER SLEER! SERVALAN MUST BE UP THERE WE'VE GOT TO SURRENDER!

THIS IS THE END OF THE LINE, AVON! WE'RE STUCK IN THIS SUBMERGED COFFIN WITH NO POWER AND NO WAY OUT. WE'VE GOT TO THROW OURSELVES ON SERVALAN'S MERCY.

SERVALAN HAS NO MERCY, VILA, AND SHE DOESN'T WANT OUR SURRENDER. SERVALAN ONLY WANTS ONE THING—AND THAT'S TO SEE US DEAD!



PART 2 - NEXT MONTH!

Target Practice

CONCLUSION.

HAVING BEEN SHOT DOWN BY A NEW, SECRET FEDERATION WEAPON, SCORPIO AND ITS CREW LIE TRAPPED UNDERWATER ON THE PLANET SIGNANTUM MAJOR. PREPARING TO COMPLETE THEIR DESTRUCTION, SERVALAN MOVES IN FOR THE KILL...

THE CANNON IS POSITIONED OVER THE CRASHED SHIP, COMMISSIONER.

PREPARE TO FIRE. NOW FOR MY REVENGE AVON...!

AT THAT MOMENT...

AHHH! FRESH AIR...!

WAIT! HOLD FIRE! THEY'RE SURRENDERING!

I GUESS WE'VE HAD IT NOW. OUT OF THE FRYING PAN INTO THE FIRE.

THERE'S ONLY FOUR OF THEM! WHERE IS AVON?

AVON DIDN'T MAKE IT. HE DIED WHEN THE SHIP HIT THE WATER. HE'S STILL IN THE HULL.

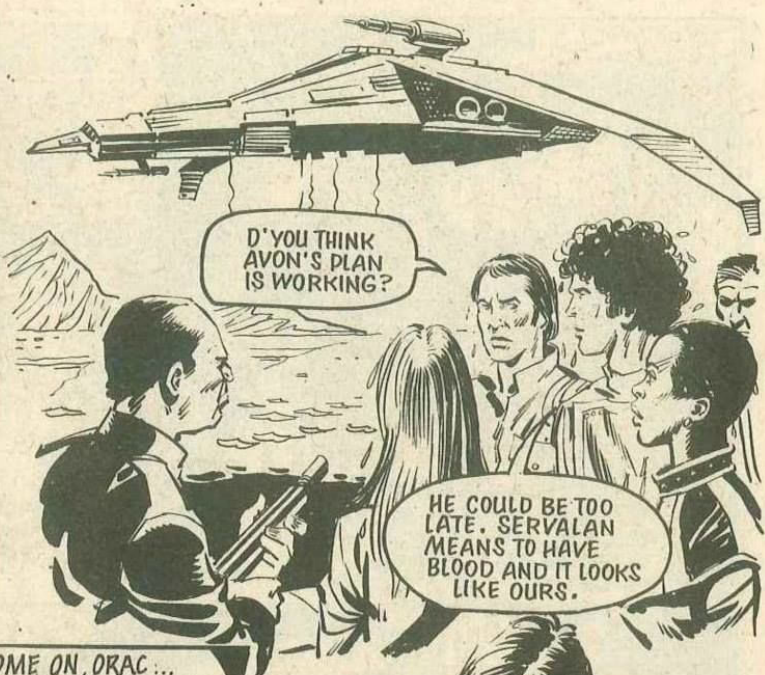
PAH! TAKE THEM AWAY. THEY WILL BE EXECUTED THIS AFTERNOON. MEANWHILE, PREPARE TO RAISE THE SCORPIO. I WANT TO SEE AVON'S BODY FOR MYSELF!

B... BUT, COMMISSIONER! IT WILL TAKE ALL OUR RESOURCES...



DAMN YOUR RESOURCES! I'VE GOT TO SEE AVON'S BODY. I MUST KNOW IF HE'S REALLY DEAD. NOW OBEY MY ORDERS — OR FACE THE CONSEQUENCES!

AS YOU WISH, COMMISSIONER.



D'YOU THINK AVON'S PLAN IS WORKING?

HE COULD BE TOO LATE. SERVALAN MEANS TO HAVE BLOOD AND IT LOOKS LIKE OURS.



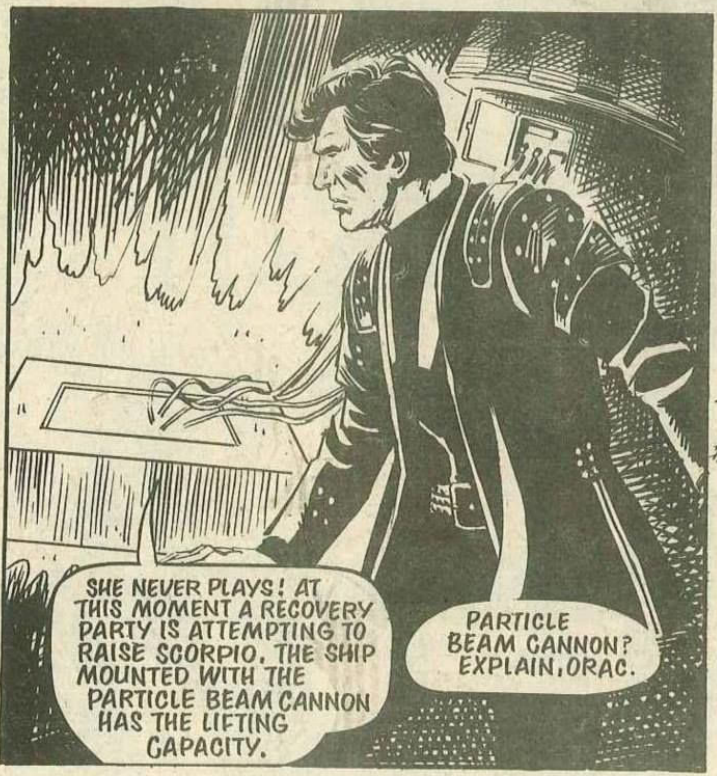
AT THAT MOMENT INSIDE SCORPIO'S HULL...

COME ON, DRAC... THIS HAS GOT TO WORK. I NEED YOU TO GIVE ME SOME ANSWERS!



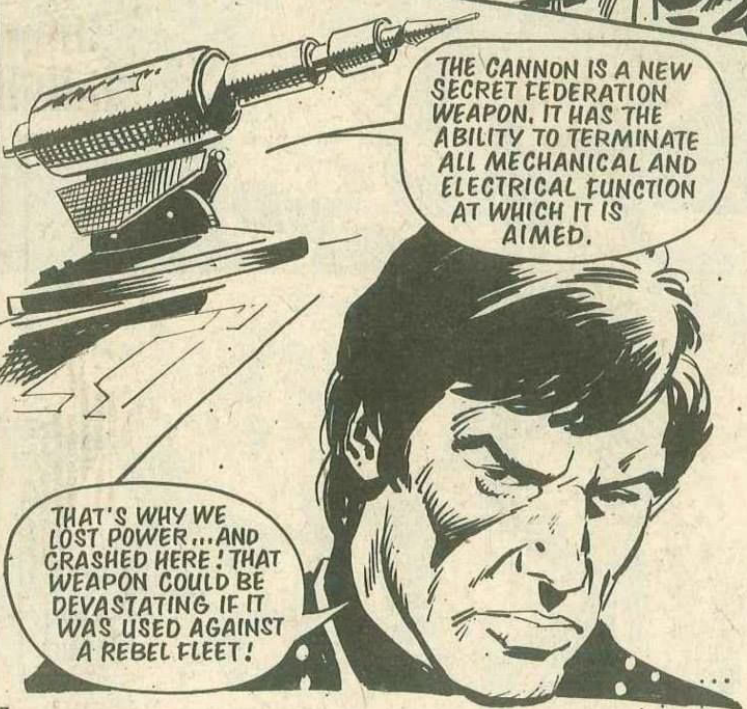
AT LAST YOU HAVE DECLARED YOU NEED ME! THEN WHY DID YOU DEPRIVE ME OF MY POWER?

THE POWER WAS NEEDED TO SAVE THE SHIP... NOW TELL ME—WHAT'S SERVALAN PLAYING AT?



SHE NEVER PLAYS! AT THIS MOMENT A RECOVERY PARTY IS ATTEMPTING TO RAISE SCORPIO. THE SHIP MOUNTED WITH THE PARTICLE BEAM CANNON HAS THE LIFTING CAPACITY.

PARTICLE BEAM CANNON? EXPLAIN, DRAC.



THE CANNON IS A NEW SECRET FEDERATION WEAPON. IT HAS THE ABILITY TO TERMINATE ALL MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL FUNCTION AT WHICH IT IS AIMED.

THAT'S WHY WE LOST POWER... AND CRASHED HERE! THAT WEAPON COULD BE DEVASTATING IF IT WAS USED AGAINST A REBEL FLEET!

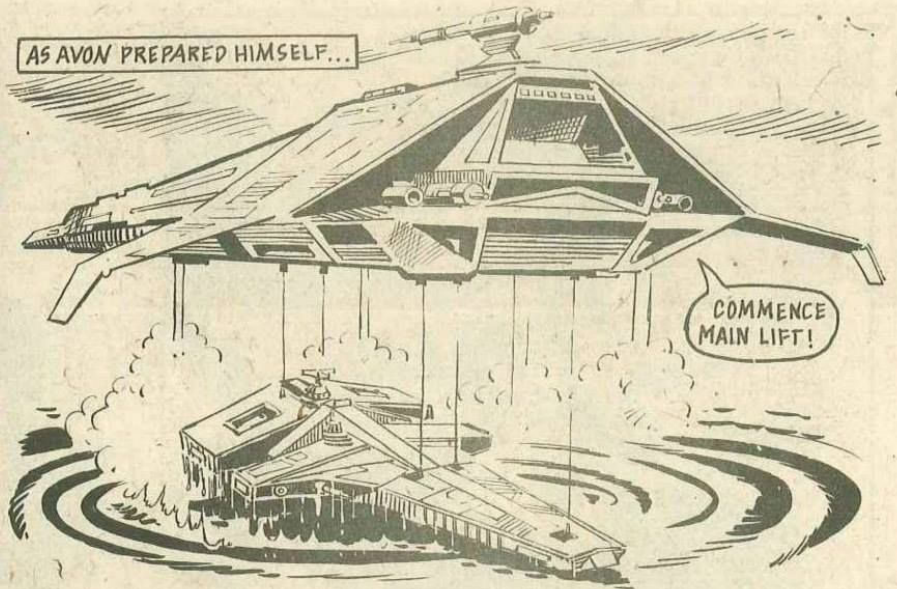
SCORPIO GAVE
A SUDDEN LURCH.



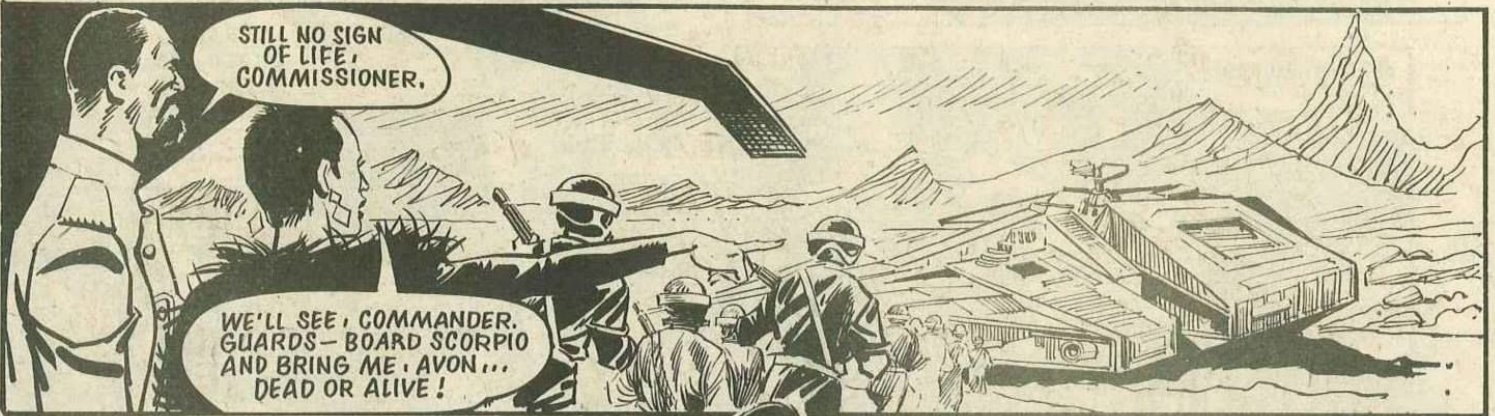
THE CANNON IS OF
SECONDARY IMPORTANCE.
THE LIFT HAS BEGUN AND
A BOARDING PARTY
WILL ENTER ANY
MOMENT.

TIME I
MADE
MYSELF
SCARGE!

AS AVON PREPARED HIMSELF...



COMMENCE
MAIN LIFT!



STILL NO SIGN
OF LIFE,
COMMISSIONER.

WE'LL SEE, COMMANDER.
GUARDS— BOARD SCORPIO
AND BRING ME, AVON...
DEAD OR ALIVE!



SPREAD OUT!
THE TERRORIST
MUST BE FOUND!

THE HUNTED
BECOMES THE
HUNTER, MY
FRIEND...



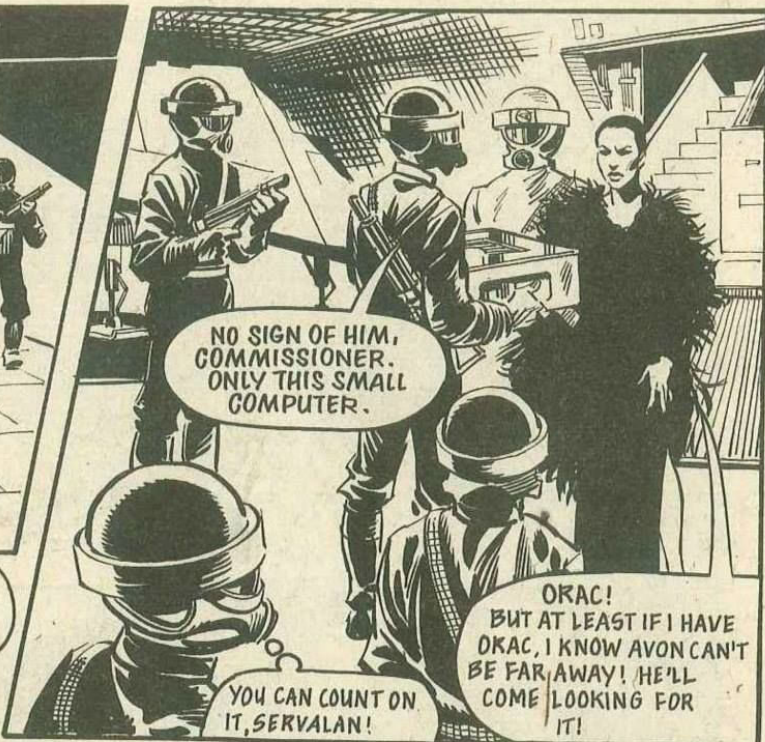
GENTLY
DOES IT...



ELECTRO
CHARGE—
NO MESS—
NO MARKS!



ONLY JUST IN TIME - BUT WHAT'S THIS? THEY'VE GOT ORAC!



NO SIGN OF HIM, COMMISSIONER. ONLY THIS SMALL COMPUTER.

ORAC! BUT AT LEAST IF I HAVE ORAC, I KNOW AVON CAN'T BE FAR AWAY! HE'LL COME LOOKING FOR IT!

YOU CAN COUNT ON IT, SERVALAN!



COMMANDER, I'M GOING TO SUPERVISE THE EXECUTION OF THE TERRORIST BACK AT THE BASE. FOLLOW WITH THE CANNON. I WILL HAVE USE OF IT LATER.

AS YOU WISH, COMMISSIONER.

MUST GET ON BOARD!



MOMENTS LATER, ON THE BATTLE CRUISER...

PREPARE TO RETURN TO BASE. I DON'T WANT TO MISS THAT EXECUTION.

YOU WON'T, COMMANDER. THAT'S A PROMISE... BUT IT COULD BE YOURS!



AT THE TEST BASE...

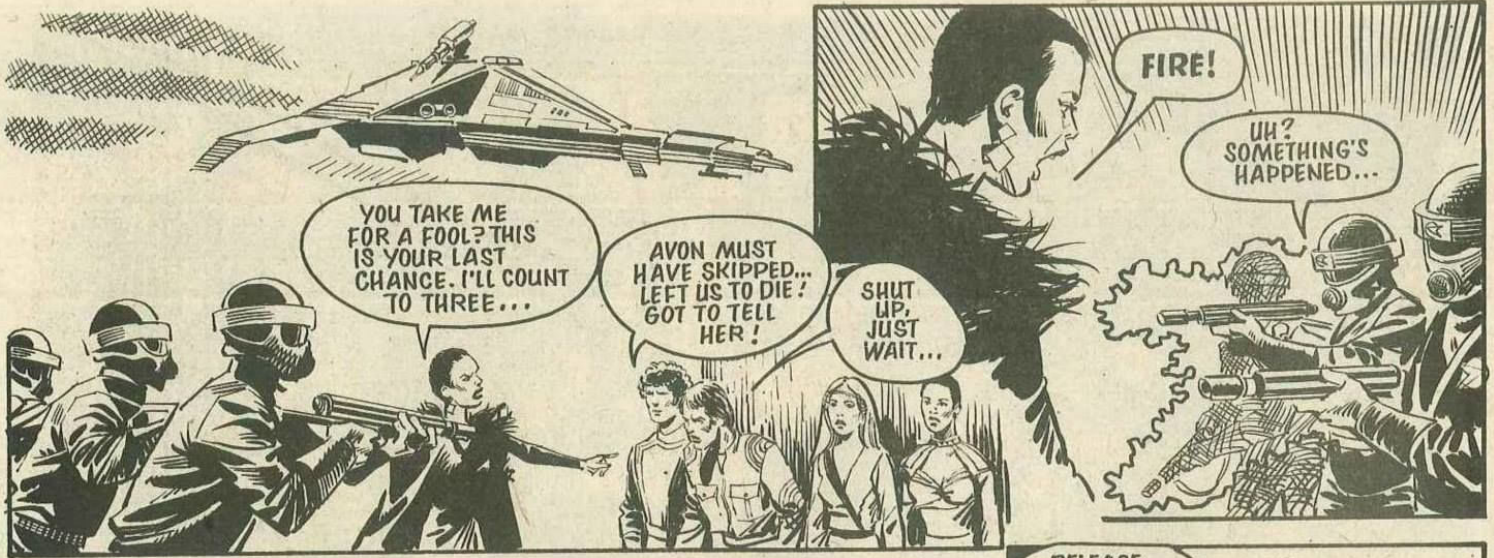
IT'S SERVALAN!

LOOKS LIKE AVON'S PLAN'S GONE WRONG. WE'RE AS GOOD AS DEAD!



YOU LIED TO ME! I'LL GIVE YOU ONE LAST CHANCE. WHERE IS AVON... AND WHERE IS THE KEY FOR ORAC?

BUT HE DIED ON SCORPIO...



YOU TAKE ME FOR A FOOL? THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE. I'LL COUNT TO THREE...

AVON MUST HAVE SKIPPED... LEFT US TO DIE! GOT TO TELL HER!

SHUT UP, JUST WAIT...

FIRE!

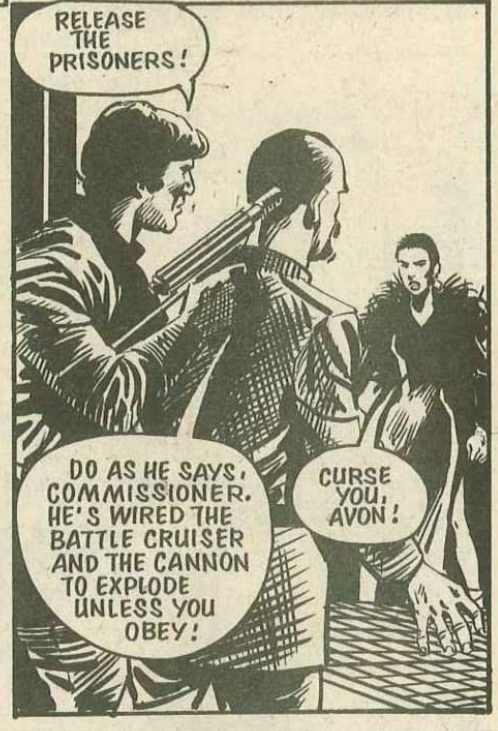
UH? SOMETHING'S HAPPENED...



I SAID FIRE! KILL THEM!

B... BUT THE GUNS! THEY'RE NOT WORKING...

LAY THE WEAPONS ON THE GROUND... ALL OF YOU!



RELEASE THE PRISONERS!

DO AS HE SAYS, COMMISSIONER. HE'S WIRED THE BATTLE CRUISER AND THE CANNON TO EXPLODE UNLESS YOU OBEY!

CURSE YOU, AVON!



I'LL TAKE ORAC. YOU WON'T BE NEEDING HIM NOW!

I'LL GET ORAC BACK ONE DAY - I SWEAR!

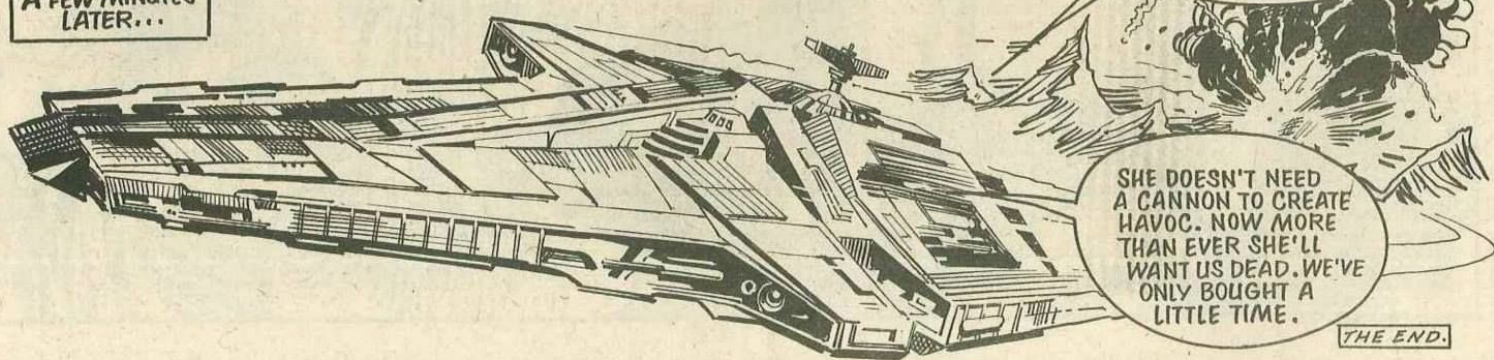


WE THOUGHT YOU'D DESERTED US, AVON. YOU CUT IT PRETTY FINE!

SAVE YOUR THANKS FOR WHEN WE LEAVE THIS PLANET. WE STILL HAVE SCORPIO TO GET WORKING AGAIN!

THAT'S PUT SERVALAN'S TAKE-OVER OF THE UNIVERSE BACK A FEW YEARS! SHE COULD HAVE CAUSED A LOT OF DAMAGE WITH THAT CANNON.

A FEW MINUTES LATER...



SHE DOESN'T NEED A CANNON TO CREATE HAVOC. NOW MORE THAN EVER SHE'LL WANT US DEAD. WE'VE ONLY BOUGHT A LITTLE TIME.

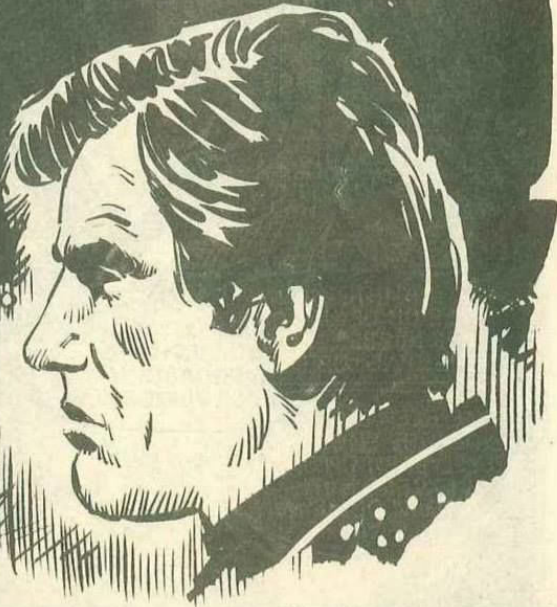
THE END.

THE OMEN



DEATH...
DEATH...!

IT'S HAPPENED.
THE TIME HAS
COME...



I TRIED TO
WARN YOU BUT
YOU WOULDN'T
LISTEN...

TH.. THAT
VOICE... IT
CAN'T BE...



NO! YOU CAN'T
DO THIS TO ME...!

AVON...
AVON...!



WHERE IS HE
TELL ME, DAMN
IT! UH... TARRANT...?

YOU WERE CALLING
OUT IN YOUR SLEEP, AVON
WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU
LOOK LIKE YOU'VE SEEN
A GHOST.



MAYBE I HAVE
TARRANT, AND NOT
FOR THE FIRST TIME.

WELL, YOUR GHOSTS
WILL HAVE TO WAIT A
WHILE. SCORPIO'S
READY FOR THAT TEST
FLIGHT YOU ORDERED
COMING?

AT THE LAUNCHING RAMP...

WHAT'S WRONG WITH AVON? HE LOOKS TERRIBLE.

PERHAPS HIS PAST IS CATCHING UP WITH HIM AT LONG LAST. YOU NEVER KNOW. EVEN AVON MAY HAVE A CONSCIENCE. SEE YOU AFTER THE FLIGHT.

CLEAN EXIT FROM ATMOSPHERE. APPROACHING HALF POWER NOW.

SET WIDE ELLIPTICAL COURSE, SLAVE. ENSURE YOU AVOID ANY TROUBLE ON THE WAY.

I DEEPLY REGRET THAT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE, MASTER.

WHAT THE DEVIL DO YOU MEAN? ANSWER ME!

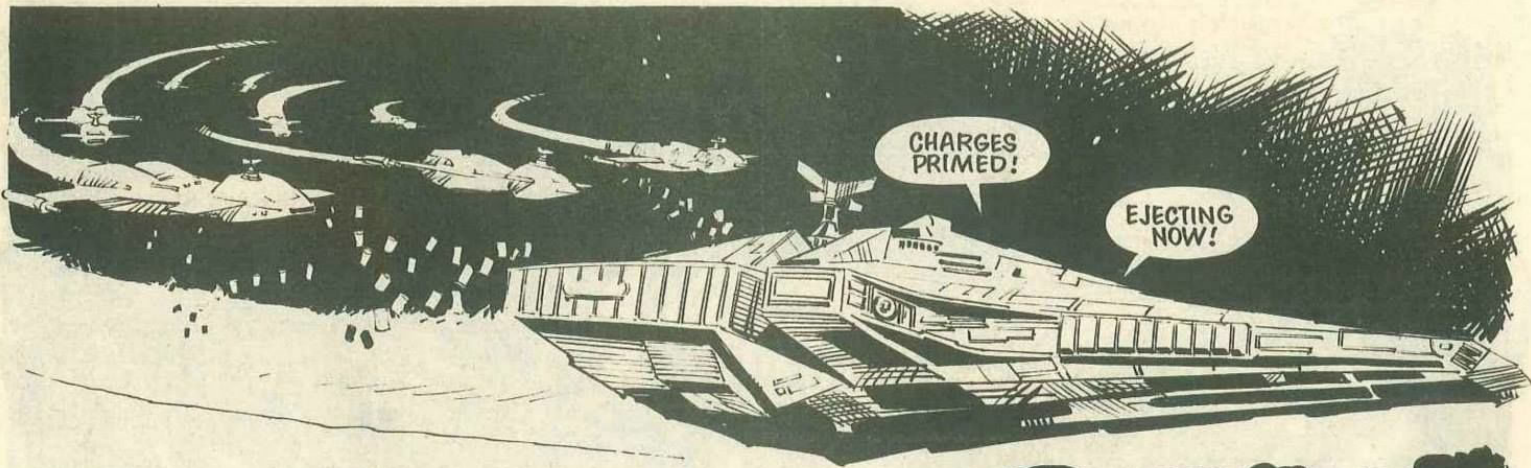
THE INFERIOR MACHINE IS TRYING TO TELL YOU THERE IS A FEDERATION BATTLE FLEET APPROACHING. WE ARE ALREADY TARGETED BY THEIR WEAPONS.

WE'RE HIT! EVASIVE ACTION SLAVE!

ANOTHER STRIKE ON THE FORCE WALL AND WE'VE HAD IT!

PREPARE THE DELAY CHARGES, TARRANT! WE'LL SHOW THEM SCORPIO'S NO SITTING DUCK!

SWITCHING TO MANUAL! SAVING OUR LIVES IS NOT A TASK FOR MERE MACHINES!



CHARGES PRIMED!

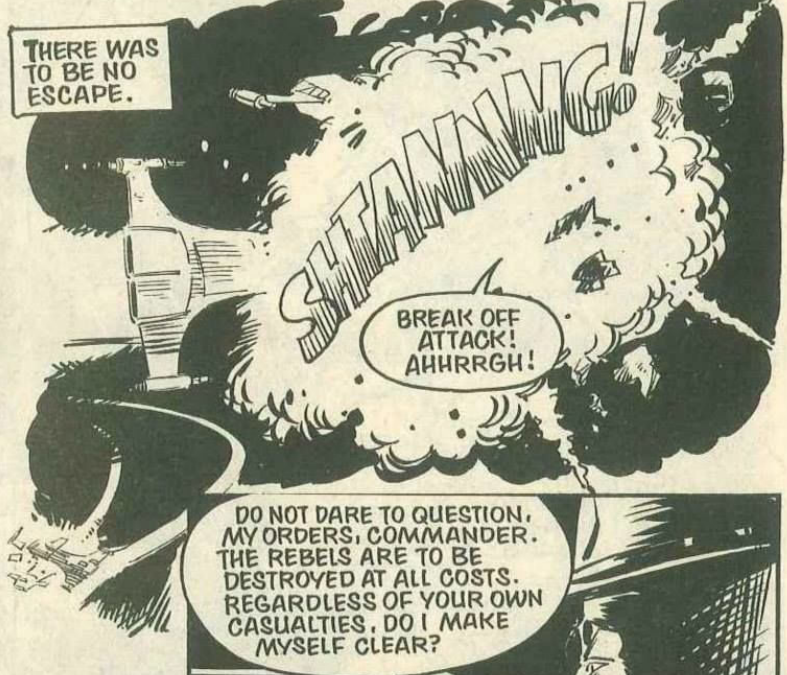
EJECTING NOW!



THE FEDERATION CREWS WERE TAKEN BY SURPRISE.

HEY... WASSAT?

DELAY CHARGES! DIVE... DIVE!



THERE WAS TO BE NO ESCAPE.

SHTANNING!

BREAK OFF ATTACK! AHRRRGH!

DO NOT DARE TO QUESTION, MY ORDERS, COMMANDER. THE REBELS ARE TO BE DESTROYED AT ALL COSTS. REGARDLESS OF YOUR OWN CASUALTIES. DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR?



FOR THE FEDERATION COMMANDER IT WAS A SOUR MOMENT.

THEY'VE ESCAPED AGAIN! I CAN'T RISK THE REST OF THE FLEET.

COMMANDER... THERE'S AN URGENT MESSAGE COMING IN FROM SECURITY IT'S COMMISSIONER SLEER HERSELF!

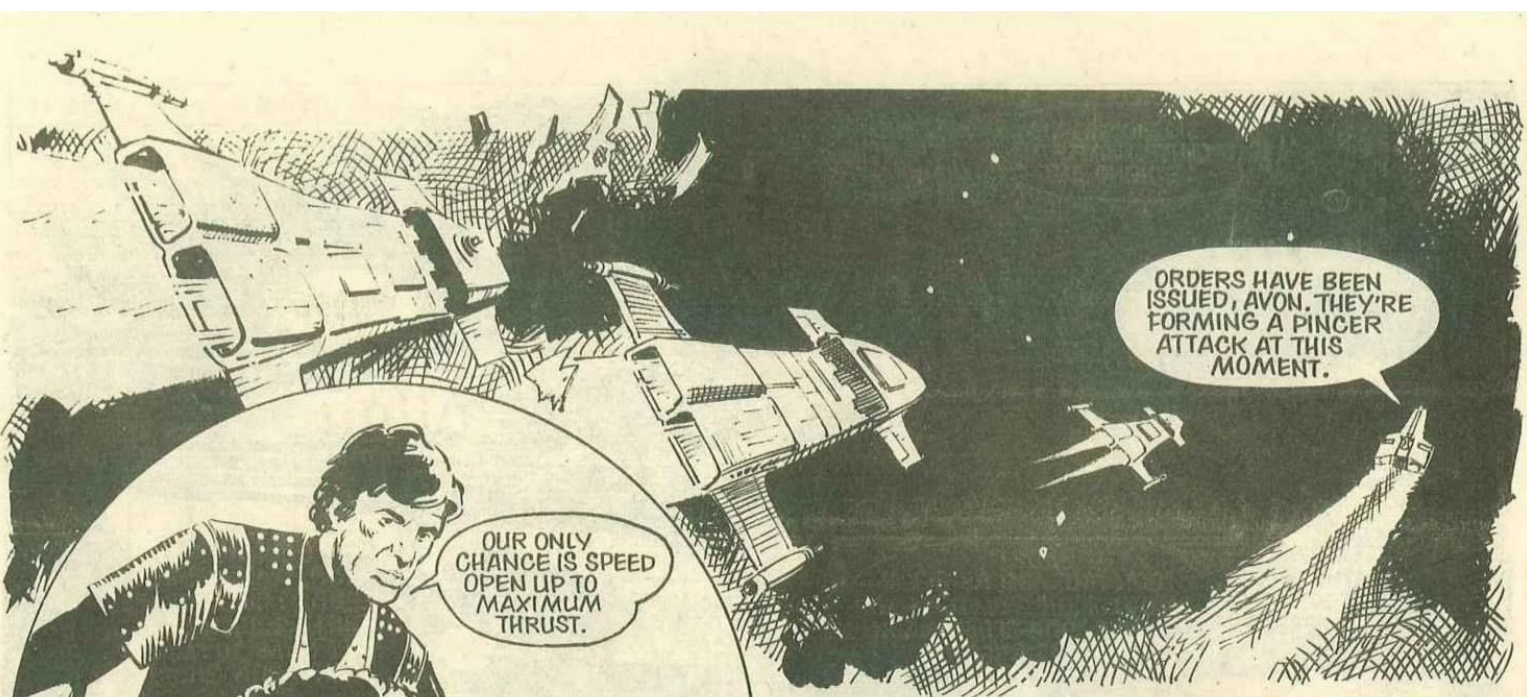


PERFECTLY, COMMISSIONER. YOU'RE PREPARED TO SACRIFICE US ALL TO GET AVON. BUT DON'T WORRY. IT WILL BE DONE.



BRILLIANT, AVON! WE CAUGHT THE WHOLE LEADING FORMATION THEY'LL DISENGAGE NOW.

I HAVE MY DOUBTS TARRANT. MONITOR THEIR MOVES, ORAC. INFORM ME WHEN THEY HAVE REGROUPED.



ORDERS HAVE BEEN ISSUED, AVON. THEY'RE FORMING A PINNER ATTACK AT THIS MOMENT.




OUR ONLY CHANCE IS SPEED OPEN UP TO MAXIMUM THRUST.

I CAN'T, AVON THE MAIN DRIVE WILL NOT EXCEED HALF SPEED EVEN ON OVER-RIDE! THE ENGINES HAVE BEEN DAMAGED.



THEY'VE GOT US TRAPPED! I'LL HAVE TO RISK A FLAT SPIN!

THAT WOULD BE EXTREMELY FOOLISH. THE TIME-RELATED CONTINUUM WOULD BE DESTABILISED. I CAUTION AGAINST IT!



THE TIME FOR CAUTION HAS PASSED! THIS IS LIFE OR DEATH, ORAC! TURNING NOW!



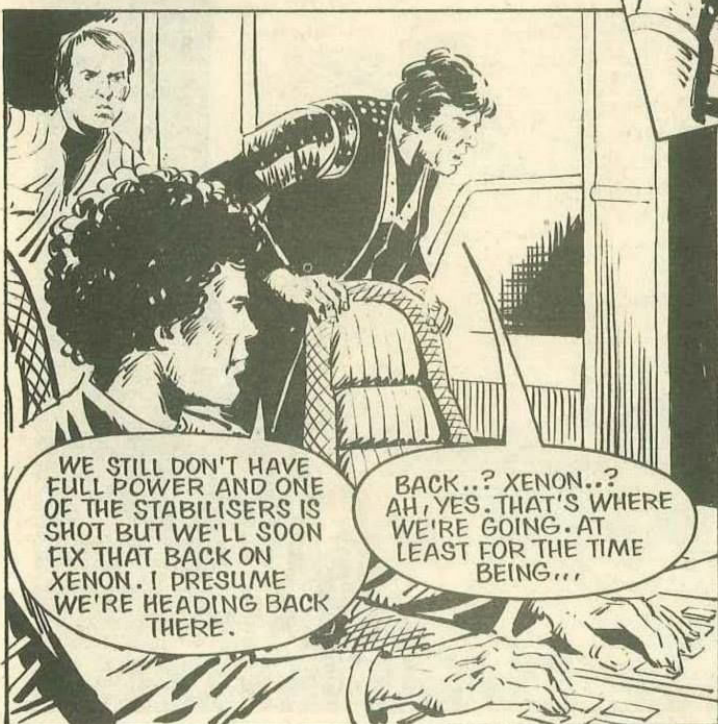
WE'VE TRAPPED THEM! BLOW THEM TO ATOMS!

HEY... WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THEM?

VIBRATION INSIDE SCORPIO REACHED THE CRITICAL POINT.

AVON - FOR PITY'S SAKE! I... I CAN'T TAKE MUCH MORE...

SUFFER OR DIE, TARRANT! THAT'S THE CHOICE!



"INFORMATION. SPACECRAFT LEAVING ATMOSPHERE OF PLANET KONESTRA. ON DIRECT BEARING, ONE THOUSAND SPACIALS."

SHIP IDENTIFIED AS FEDERATION PERSONNEL CARRIER. NOW WITHIN STRIKE RANGE. NEUTRON BLASTERS CLEARED FOR FIRING.

WELL? THIS IS THE SORT OF THING YOU ENJOY, ISN'T IT?

PREPARE TO FIRE, ZEN.

BLAKE! I'M PICKING UP A VISI-SIGNAL, FROM THE CARRIER. IT'S ADDRESSED TO YOU IN PERSON.

PUT IT ON THE MAIN SCREEN, JENNA.

ROJ BLAKE. I KNOW YOU HAVE THE POWER TO DESTROY THIS SHIP.

I WANT TO ASK YOU FOR SOMETHING, BLAKE. MERCY.

SCRIPT: GARETH ROBERTS
ART: MARTIN GERAGHTY
LETTERS: GARY GILBERT
EDITOR: GARY RUSSELL

BLOCKADE!



MY NAME IS DR. ZEER HILLS. THIS SHIP IS CARRYING CIVILIAN CASUALTIES FROM THE WAR ON KONESTRA.

WHY SHOULD THEY? THEY HAVE NOTHING TO GAIN FROM ATTACKING US.

ASSUMING THEY ARE WHO THEY SAY THEY ARE.



I AM AN INDEPENDENT AID WORKER. PLEASE, ALLOW THIS SHIP TO PASS.

WE'RE WASTING TIME, BLAKE. THEY COULD OPEN FIRE AT ANY MOMENT.



DR. HILLS, WE HAVE TELEPORT FACILITY. I'M GOING TO COME OVER TO CHECK YOUR STORY.

THANK YOU, BLAKE. YOU ARE A GOOD MAN.



COME ON, AVON. LIGHTEN UP. BLAKE CAN LOOK AFTER HIMSELF.



OF THAT I HAVE NO DOUBT. BUT AS WE KNOW, VILA, HE IS NOT VERY GOOD AT LOOKING AFTER OTHER PEOPLE.

OH, WHAT IS IT NOW? I AM ENGAGED IN IMPORTANT RESEARCHES ON THE NATURE OF PULSARS AND DO NOT WISH TO BE DISTURBED.

SHUT UP, ORAC. I WANT YOU TO CONSULT FEDERATION RECORDS. FIND OUT WHATEVER YOU CAN ON PERSONNEL CARRIER X557. ALSO ANYTHING ON AN 'INDEPENDENT AID WORKER' CALLED ZEER HILLS.

THIS REQUEST IS MOST FRUSTRATING. I CONSIDER IT BENEATH MY STANDING TO BE BURDENED BY SUCH TRIFLES.

DO AS THE MAN SAYS, ORAC. ER... IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO, AVON?

NOT THAT I'VE NOTICED.

ABOARD THE CARRIER...

COME ON, MAN! YOU CAN MAKE IT...

IT'S NO USE, DR. HILLS. WE'VE LOST HIM.

OUR SEVENTH FATALITY ON THIS FLIGHT. HOW CAN WE COPE WITH THESE FACILITIES?

DR. HILLS?

DOWN AND SAFE, CALLY. I'LL REPORT AS WE AGREED.

YOU HAVE TO BE BLAKE.

IS THIS THE EVIDENCE YOU WANTED? MOST OF THESE PEOPLE WERE INJURED IN A FEDERATION RAID ON A SMALL TOWNSHIP.

YES, THE WAR ON KONESTRA. WE PICKED UP RUMOURS AND CAME TO INVESTIGATE. TELL ME ABOUT IT.

"THE FEDERATION ANNEXED KONESTRA SEVEN YEARS AGO, AFTER A LONG AND BLOODY STRUGGLE. BUT THE PEOPLE NEVER TRULY ACCEPTED THE TYRANNY."

"THE RESISTANCE STRUCK BACK, FORCING THE FEDERATION TO UNLEASH THEIR OWN MASSIVE RETALIATION."

"THOUSANDS WERE KILLED."

"MY TEAM WAS ALLOWED IN BY THE FEDERATION, UNDER THEIR SUPERVISION, OF COURSE. WE ASKED FOR A SHIP TO TAKE SOME OF THE CIVILIANS TO BETTER FACILITIES. THEY GAVE US THIS CARRIER."





IF YOU'VE FINISHED THESE PATHETIC SQUABBLES, I HAVE THE INFORMATION YOU REQUESTED. ZEER HILLS IS REGISTERED AS AN AID WORKER.

THERE YOU ARE, AVON. NO NEED TO BE SO SUSPICIOUS.



"HOWEVER, CARRIER X557 IS A FALSE REGISTRATION. THE VEHICLE IN QUESTION IS IN TRUTH A CAMOUFLAGED FEDERATION BATTLESHIP. ARMED WITH PLASMA MISSILES."



AT THIS RANGE THEY'LL TEAR US APART!

BLAKE! LISTEN TO ME -

DON'T MOVE, ANY OF YOU!



YOU'RE ABOARD A FEDERATION BATTLESHIP!

AVON, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?



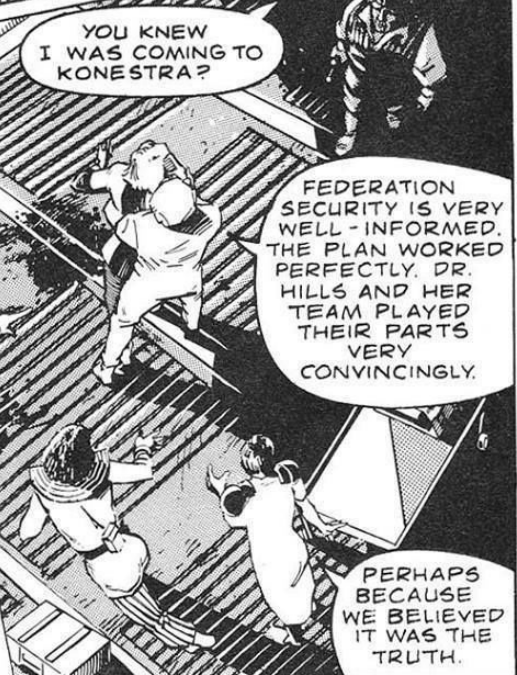
FORGET IT, BLAKE - IF YOU TRY TO TELEPORT AWAY FROM HERE, CHANCES ARE I CAN STILL PULL THE TRIGGER.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, HARVIK? RETURN TO YOUR POST AT ONCE!

YOU KNEW I WAS COMING TO KONESTRA?



YOU DON'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND, DR. HILLS. I'M TAKING COMMAND.



FEDERATION SECURITY IS VERY WELL-INFORMED. THE PLAN WORKED PERFECTLY. DR. HILLS AND HER TEAM PLAYED THEIR PARTS VERY CONVINCINGLY.

PERHAPS BECAUSE WE BELIEVED IT WAS THE TRUTH.





WE CAN'T ABANDON YOU...

YOU ALREADY HAVE.



KAAA-BOOM!!!



LATER...

HILLS WAS A PAWN IN THE FEDERATION'S GAME. THEY MADE HER DEATH UNAVOIDABLE.

DEATH'S A FAIRLY UNAVOIDABLE THING.

I DON'T KNOW. SOME PEOPLE HAVE A TALENT FOR AVOIDING IT.



AND AVON - THANK YOU FOR BRINGING ME BACK. YOU COULD HAVE LEFT ME OVER THERE. YOU SURPRISED ME.



I SURPRISED MYSELF.

THE END.