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PAM HARRISON'S
A DEVIANT MIND
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"BEST CGI COMIC ARTIST EVER" - BRIAN CRONIN, COMIC BOOK RESOURCES; SERGIO ARAGONÉS
TEEN T
INTERGALACTIC AUTHORITY
LOOKING FORWARD

IN THIS ISSUE:

A DEVIANT MIND

TARA IS SUMMONED BEFORE THE IMPERIAL HIGH COURT OF THE ALPHA CENTAURIAN TRIBUNAL TO ANSWER FOR CHARGES BROUGHT FORTH BY SENATOR VORTAU IN A DEVIANT MIND #2!

PROSECUTING ATTORNEY KAIS KAR'TYR ATTEMPTS TO RECAP THOSE DARK FINAL DAYS OF THE UPRISING ON ATTALLA V AND THE WAR ON THE CONFEDERATION THAT LATER ENSUED!

SHOCKING FOOTAGE OF TARA SHOOTING DOWN A CAMERAMAN IN COLD BLOOD PROMISES TO DAMN HER TO EXTRADITION AND TRIAL BY CONFEDERATION MARTIAL LAW.

IT IS A SURPRISE WITNESS, A PROMISE KEPT, AND UNEXPECTED EVIDENCE THAT THROWS COURT PROCEEDINGS ON THEIR EAR. TARA IS FORCED TO CONFRONT A PAST THAT SHE CANNOT REMEMBER IN ORDER TO RECLAIM A FUTURE THAT IS NOT GUARANTEED.

TARA AWAKENS IN A REGENERATION TUBE WITH NO RECOLLECTION OF WHO SHE IS AND WHERE SHE COMES FROM. THE INSIDIOUS TRUTH BEHIND TARA'S AMNESIA IS, SHE HAS A SECRET THAT MAKES HER WORTH HUNTING--AND IT'S FAR MORE TERRIBLE THAN ANYONE COULD HAVE EVER IMAGINED. DOES TARA EVER FIND THE SECRETS OF HER PAST? FOLLOW THE ADVENTURE HERE, AND LEARN WHAT HAUNTING, DARK SECRETS LIE DEEP WITHIN...

A DEVIANT MIND

CREATED, WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY PAM HARRISON

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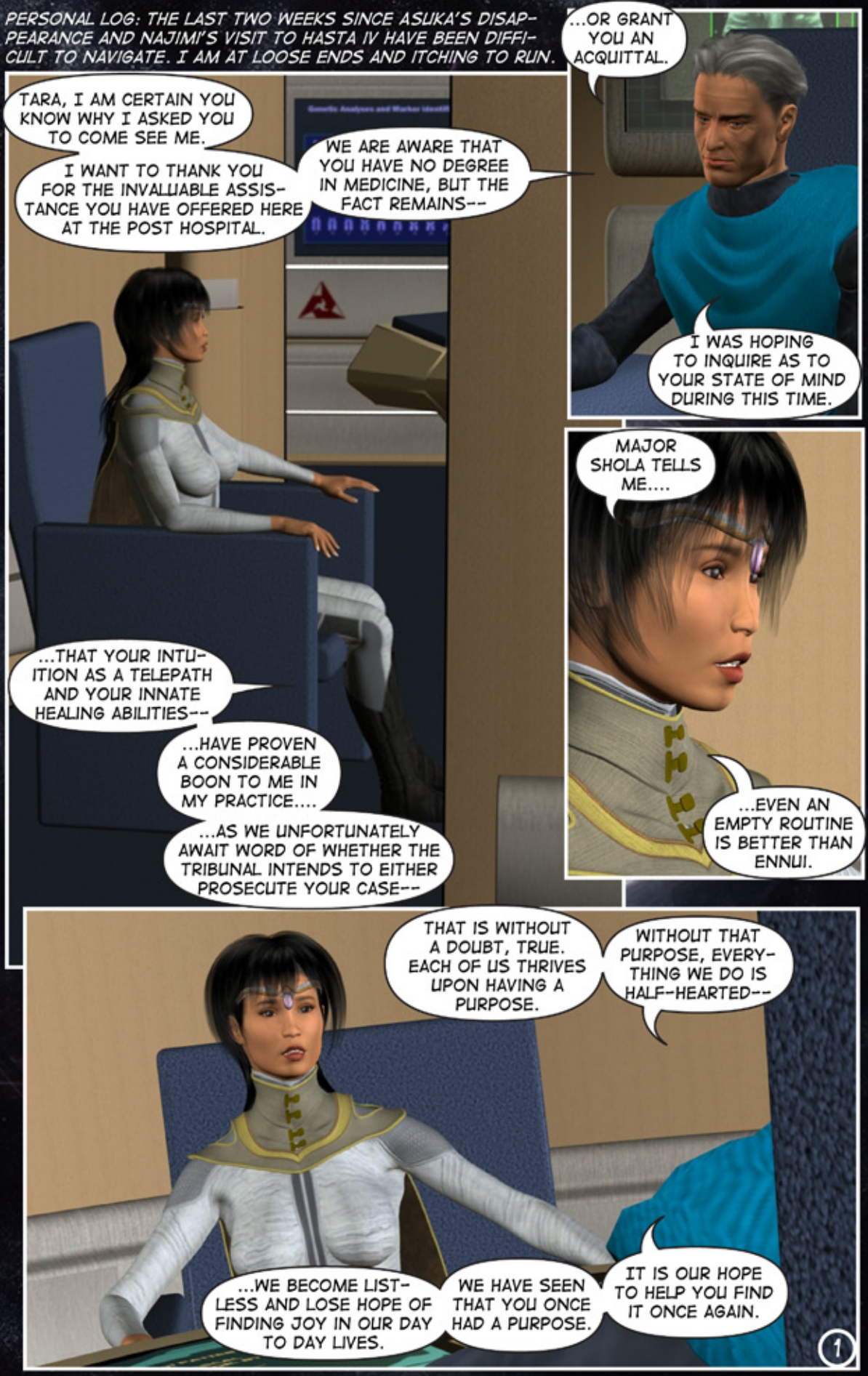
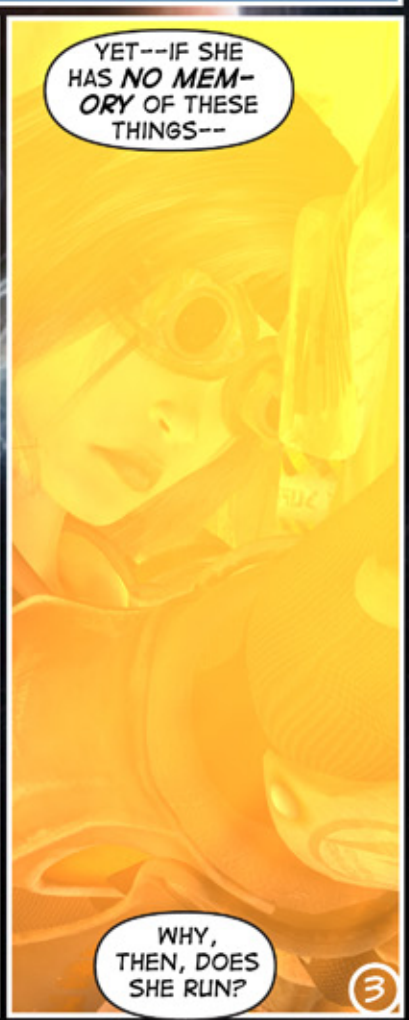

PERSONAL LOG: THE LAST TWO WEEKS SINCE ASUKA'S DISAPPEARANCE AND NAJIMI'S VISIT TO HASTA IV HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT TO NAVIGATE. I AM AT LOOSE ENDS AND ITCHING TO RUN.
TARA, I AM CERTAIN YOU KNOW WHY I ASKED YOU TO COME SEE ME.
I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR THE INVALUABLE ASSISTANCE YOU HAVE OFFERED HERE AT THE POST HOSPITAL.
WE ARE AWARE THAT YOU HAVE NO DEGREE IN MEDICINE, BUT THE FACT REMAINS--
...THAT YOUR INTUITION AS A TELEPATH AND YOUR INNATE HEALING ABILITIES--
...HAVE PROVEN A CONSIDERABLE BOON TO ME IN MY PRACTICE....
...AS WE UNFORTUNATELY AWAIT WORD OF WHETHER THE TRIBUNAL INTENDS TO EITHER PROSECUTE YOUR CASE--
...OR GRANT YOU AN ACQUITTAL.
I WAS HOPING TO INQUIRE AS TO YOUR STATE OF MIND DURING THIS TIME.
MAJOR SHOLA TELLS ME....
...EVEN AN EMPTY ROUTINE IS BETTER THAN ENNUI.
THAT IS WITHOUT A DOUBT, TRUE. EACH OF US THRIVES UPON HAVING A PURPOSE.
WITHOUT THAT PURPOSE, EVERYTHING WE DO IS HALF-HEARTED--
...WE BECOME LISTLESS AND LOSE HOPE OF FINDING JOY IN OUR DAY TO DAY LIVES.
WE HAVE SEEN THAT YOU ONCE HAD A PURPOSE.
IT IS OUR HOPE TO HELP YOU FIND IT ONCE AGAIN.
1

HAVE YOU HEARD ANY WORD OF ASUKA?
YES. SHE IS SAFE. SHE HELPED NAJIMI SETTLE SOME AFFAIRS ON HER HOMEWORLD.
I FIND THAT FRUSTRATING. I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO HELP.
BUT I AM NOT ALLOWED TO LEAVE.
I AM GRATEFUL THEY ARE BOTH SAFE.
ASUKA IS MY FAMILY. I'VE NOT EVEN HAD A CHANCE TO KNOW HER.
WE WERE ALL CONCERNED FOR HER SAFETY.
I HOPE WE RECEIVE SOME WORD OF YOUR OWN RESOLUTION SOON.
DOCTOR KOUSHIR? SO SORRY TO INTERRUPT. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT.
TARA, I HAVE BAD NEWS!
AN OFFICIAL FROM HIGH TRIBUNAL IS HERE.
WHAT DOES HE WANT, ADRIAN?
HE JUST HANDED ME A SUMMONS.
THE TRIBUNAL IS READY TO HEAR YOUR CASE.
WHAT IF I LOSE?
THIS IS ONLY A HEARING. I DON'T WANT TO THINK OF THAT NOW.
2

YOU HAVE HAD TIME TO REVIEW WHAT LITTLE WE KNOW.
HAVE YOU ANY CONCLUSIONS FOR HOW TO PROCEED?
IT IS INDEED A MYSTERY THAT MUST BE RESOLVED.
THE RIYAKI HAS SHOWN HEROIC BEHAVIOR DESPITE THESE CHARGES AGAINST HER.
GSTHAN
A.F.A.T

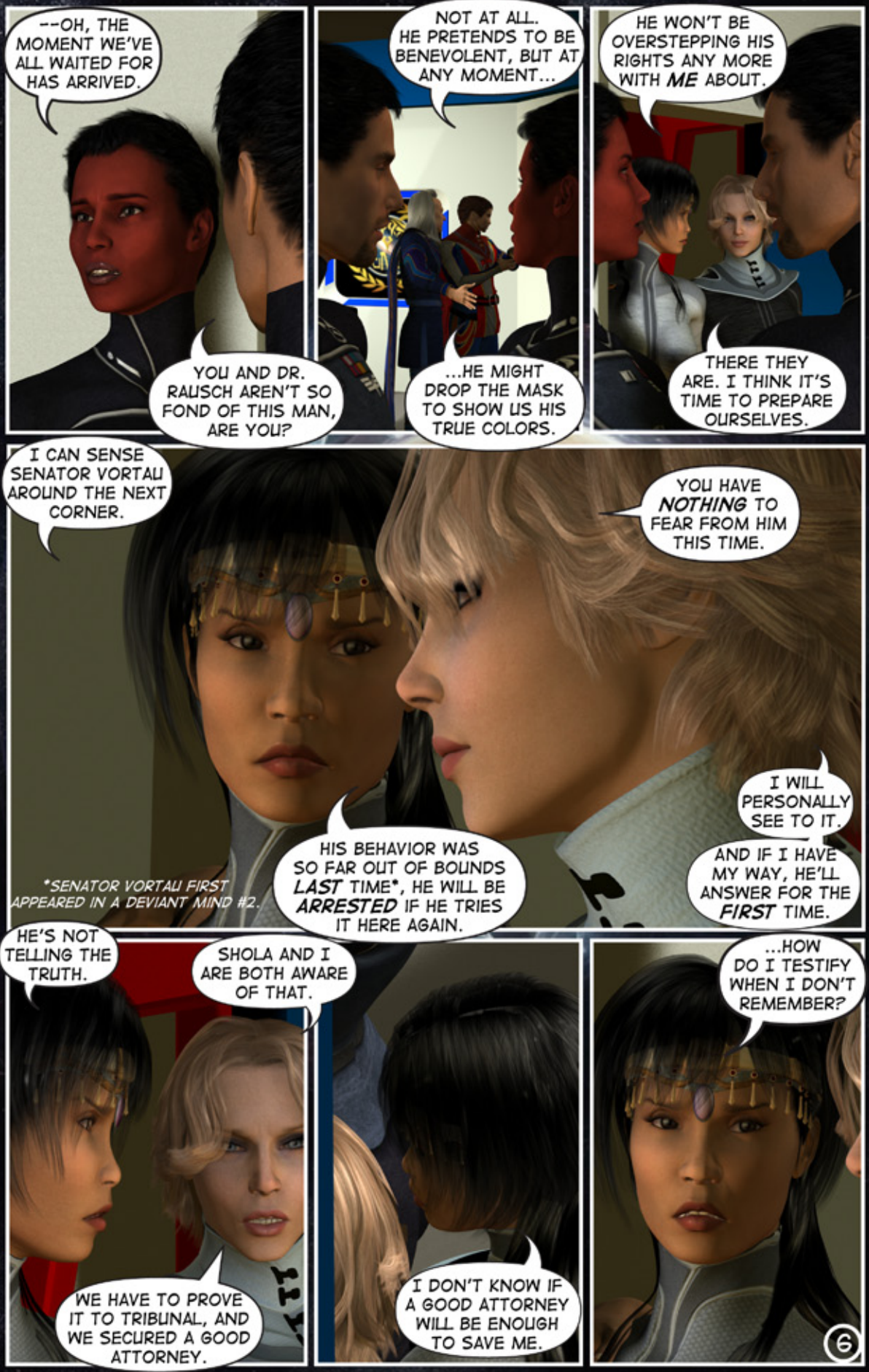
THIS LAST PIECE OF FOOTAGE IS CHILLING.
SHE *MURDERS* THE CAMERAMAN IN COLD BLOOD.
SENATOR VORTAU* CLAIMED THAT IT WAS FILMED WELL INSIDE CONFED TERRITORY.
BUT YOU SAY THE EXPERTS VERIFY THAT IT WAS MADE ON ATTALLA V?
*A DEVIANT MIND #2.
BASED UPON OUR OWN RECORDS OF THEIR WORLD, YES IT WAS.

THE RIYAKI UPRISING ON ATTALLA V WAS UNPRECEDENTED.
GSTHAN
A.F.A.T
IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT THE RESPONSIBILITY LIES ON THE SHOULDERS OF ONE.


YET--IF SHE HAS *NO MEMORY* OF THESE THINGS--
WHY, THEN, DOES SHE RUN?
3

--IT FEELS LIKE MY ARRIVAL ALL OVER AGAIN.
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. THE TRIBUNAL WANTS ANSWERS, BUT WE DON'T HAVE ANY, EITHER.
I WISH I'D KNOWN YOU BACK THEN. WHEN SHOLA AND I WERE ON ATTALLA V LEADING THE EVACUATION--
...WE HAD NO IDEA THERE WAS SOMETHING DEEPER.
THAT WAS HARDLY YOUR FAULT. I WISH I COULD REMEMBER, TOO.
I DON'T KNOW IF ALL THE STRESS IS BRINGING IT BACK FOR ME OR NOT.
ALL I FEEL IS ANGER.
DESPITE THE AMNESIA, I'VE SEEN YOU RESPOND TO SOME STRESSFUL SITUATIONS--
...THAT OTHERS WOULD HAVE NO CLUE HOW TO RESOLVE.
I CAN ONLY GET LUCKY FOR SO LONG.
THERE IS MORE TO THIS THAN JUST LUCK.
WE HAVE A LOT OF HISTORY ON THE RIYAKI.
YOUR PEOPLE WERE REKNOWNED AS WARRIORS FOR CENTURIES.
MANY OF THEIR HEROES WERE DRIVEN UNDERGROUND DURING THE RIMWARS.
THAT IS VERY INTERESTING. I WOULD LIKE TO READ MORE IF YOU HAVE IT.
FROM REKNOWN TO UNDERGROUND TO OUTLAW...I KNOW THIS:
...I HAVE TO FIND THE TRUTH.
THE FUTURE FOR YOU AND I DEPENDS ON IT.
I CAN'T KEEP RUNNING FOREVER.
4

KAIS KAR'TYR, HAVE YOU BEEN ABLE TO LEARN WHAT THESE PROCEEDINGS ARE ABOUT?
THE IMPERIAL TRIBUNAL TOOK YOUR ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE RIYAKI VERY SERIOUSLY.
THEY WISH TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION INTO WHAT HAPPENED ON ATTALLA V SIX YEARS AGO.
IT WON'T DO ANY GOOD ANYMORE.
THE LAST EVIDENCE OF THOSE DAYS IS GONE.
YOU ARE CERTAIN OF THAT?
THE RIYAKI OUTLAW WAS REPORTED KILLED SEVERAL MONTHS AGO.*
*A DEVIANT MIND #10: THE VACATION NOBODY HAD.
I FEAR WE MAY HAVE BEEN FALSELY ADVISED.
MY ATTEMPTS TO SUBPOENA ANY INFORMATION WERE MET WITH:
"SORRY, CLASSIFIED, WE CANNOT DISCLOSE." I WOULD SUGGEST YOU PREPARE--
...FOR ANY EVENTUALITY.
...THERE IS MAJOR SHOLA. I TRIED SO HARD TO WARN HER.
SHE BETRAYED MY TRUST AND ALLOWED THE RIYAKI TO ESCAPE.
THAT IS JUST THE SORT OF TREACHERY I SHOULD COME TO EXPECT FROM AN IMPERIAL.


--OH, THE MOMENT WE'VE ALL WAITED FOR HAS ARRIVED.
YOU AND DR. RAUSCH AREN'T SO FOND OF THIS MAN, ARE YOU?
NOT AT ALL. HE PRETENDS TO BE BENEVOLENT, BUT AT ANY MOMENT...
...HE MIGHT DROP THE MASK TO SHOW US HIS TRUE COLORS.
HE WON'T BE OVERSTEPPING HIS RIGHTS ANY MORE WITH ME ABOUT.
THERE THEY ARE. I THINK IT'S TIME TO PREPARE OURSELVES.
I CAN SENSE SENATOR VORTALI AROUND THE NEXT CORNER.
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR FROM HIM THIS TIME.
I WILL PERSONALLY SEE TO IT.
AND IF I HAVE MY WAY, HE'LL ANSWER FOR THE FIRST TIME.
HIS BEHAVIOR WAS SO FAR OUT OF BOUNDS LAST TIME*, HE WILL BE ARRESTED IF HE TRIES IT HERE AGAIN.
*SENATOR VORTALI FIRST APPEARED IN A DEVIANT MIND #2.
HE'S NOT TELLING THE TRUTH.
SHOLA AND I ARE BOTH AWARE OF THAT.
WE HAVE TO PROVE IT TO TRIBUNAL, AND WE SECURED A GOOD ATTORNEY.
I DON'T KNOW IF A GOOD ATTORNEY WILL BE ENOUGH TO SAVE ME.
...HOW DO I TESTIFY WHEN I DON'T REMEMBER?
6

BOJI, GET ME THE LATEST DATA FILE FOR THIS CASE.
YES, MA'AM.
APC NEWS FINALLY RELEASED THE VIDEO TO US THIS WEEK.
REMARKABLE. HOW DO THE RIYAKI DO THAT?
PSIONICS. LOOKS LIKE SOME--
...MOLECULE BENDING, DOESN'T IT?
HAVE YOU DISCOVERED THE IDENTITY--
...OF THE OPPONENT IN THIS VIDEO?
NOT YET, CHAALI.
IT'S HARD TO TRACE CLUES WITH HALF A STORY.
BUT IN THIS CASE, WE HAVE TO--DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
YES, COUNSELOR. I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT SET--
...WITH MAJOR SHOLA AND DR. RAUSCH FOR LATER THIS AFTERNOON TO CONFER.
IF I AM TO PROPERLY REPRESENT AKARI'S CASE IN COURT, WE MUST EXAMINE ALL ANGLES.
THERE IS A BOUNTY HUNTER WE NEED TO SEE AS WELL.
IS HE TESTIFYING FOR OR AGAINST HER?
JURY'S STILL OUT.
...AND KAIS KAR'TYR IS AN AGGRESSIVE ATTORNEY.
I THINK HE WANTS TO MAKE HIS CAREER WITH THIS CASE.
WE CAN'T FAIL, BOJI.
I'LL DO MY BEST.
7

...KAIS KAR'TYR WAS CHARGED BY THE CONFEDERATION TO CONVICT ME.
HE WISHED TO CONVINCE TRIBUNAL TO RECONSIDER ANY NOTION THAT I WAS INNOCENT OF WRONGDOING.
AS HE PLED HIS CASE, IT WAS APPARENT THAT I WAS SOLELY RESPONSIBLE--
...FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF MY OWN HOMEWORLD.
...THE UPRISING ON ATTALLA V AND ITS LATER DESTRUCTION FIVE YEARS AGO WAS FOLLOWED BY A RIYAKI RAMPAGE THAT SENT A CAMPAIGN OF BLOOD, FIRE AND DEATH ACROSS CONFED TERRITORY.
ON THE EVE OF THE ATTALLAN REBELLION, THE RIYAKI SEIZED--
...EVERY CONFEDERATION DIPLOMAT ON THEIR WORLD--
...AND EXECUTED THEM.
KAIS KAR'TYR WAS TELLING THE TRUTH. IT ALL HAPPENED JUST AS HE SAID.
THE QUESTION THAT I WANTED TO HEAR--
TRIBUNAL, THIS FUGITIVE HAS BEEN ON THE RUN FOR FIVE LONG YEARS.
...WAS "WHY?"
THE TRIBUNAL SEARCHED EACH FACE, EVERY WORD, FOR ANY SIGN OF GUILT, ANY SIGN OF FALSEHOOD.
IT IS TIME TO BRING HER NOW TO JUSTICE.
I WAS RELIEVED TO SENSE THAT MY FRIENDS DID NOT WAVER IN THEIR BELIEF IN MY INNOCENCE.
I WAS THE ONE WHO NEEDED CONVINCING.
WHO IS TRYING TO CALL NOW?
COULD AMNESIA CHANGE A PERSON? AND IN THIS CASE...WOULD IT EVEN MATTER?
8

FOR ALL THE CONFEDERATION LOYALISTS WHO DIED TERRIBLY AT THEIR HANDS--
...FOR ALL THE INNOCENTS WHO DARED OPPOSE THEM--
...AND PAID THE ULTIMATE PRICE.
HEY, DOC!! IT'S NAJI. IS TARA AROUND?
WE'RE AT THE TRIBUNAL HEARING RIGHT NOW.
WHAT?? WHAT FOR?
NAJI, WE'VE DISCUSSED THIS BEFORE.
THE CONFEDS JUST WANT TO EXTRADITE HER, DON'T THEY?
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU DIDN'T ARRANGE TO HAVE ME PRESENT FOR THESE PROCEEDINGS!!
IT'S GOING TO TAKE MORE THAN JUST YOUR WORD TO SET HER FREE, NAJI.
WE ONLY GOT THE SUMMONS A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO.
BUT I MADE HER A PROMISE!
FOR AS LONG AS THE RIYAKI REMAIN FREE--
...THEY SHALL EVER CONTINUE TO BE A THREAT TO THE CONFEDERATION.
AND...?
9

WHAT IS GOING ON OUT THERE??
I'M ON THE PHONE WITH NAJIMI.
WE FOUND SOME STUFF IN OUR MOTHER'S RECORDS, MAN.
ASK TARA ABOUT THE DOLL.
DOLL? WHAT DOLL?
WELL THAT OUGHT TO PISS VORTAU OFF. IT'S ON VORTAU'S VIDEO, TARA.
LOOK AT THE VIDSCREEN.
TAKE A GOOD, LONG LOOK AT THE MAN YOU KILLED IN COLD BLOOD!
THAT DOLL BELONGED TO TWO CHILDREN WHOM I WAS SWORN TO PROTECT--!
--AND YOU DARE TAUNT ME WITH IT!!!
THESE MEN WILL HAVE YOU BELIEVE THAT I AM A RUTHLESS KILLER!
!
BUT I SAY TO YOU THAT I ONLY PROTECTED WHAT WAS MINE!!
BOOOM

SHE'S GIVING THEM HELL!
I HOPE THIS HAS JOGGED HER MEMORY.
UH-OH.
DR. RAUSCH! --WHO IS THAT??
HE'S WEARING FACE PAINT, BUT I DON'T THINK HE IS AN ENTERTAINER.
NO TIME, NAJIMI.
I REALLY HAVE TO END THIS CALL--
GET THE %£$#! OUT OF THERE!
GIRLS, I HAVE TO GO NOW!
SHE HUNG UP ON US!!!
11

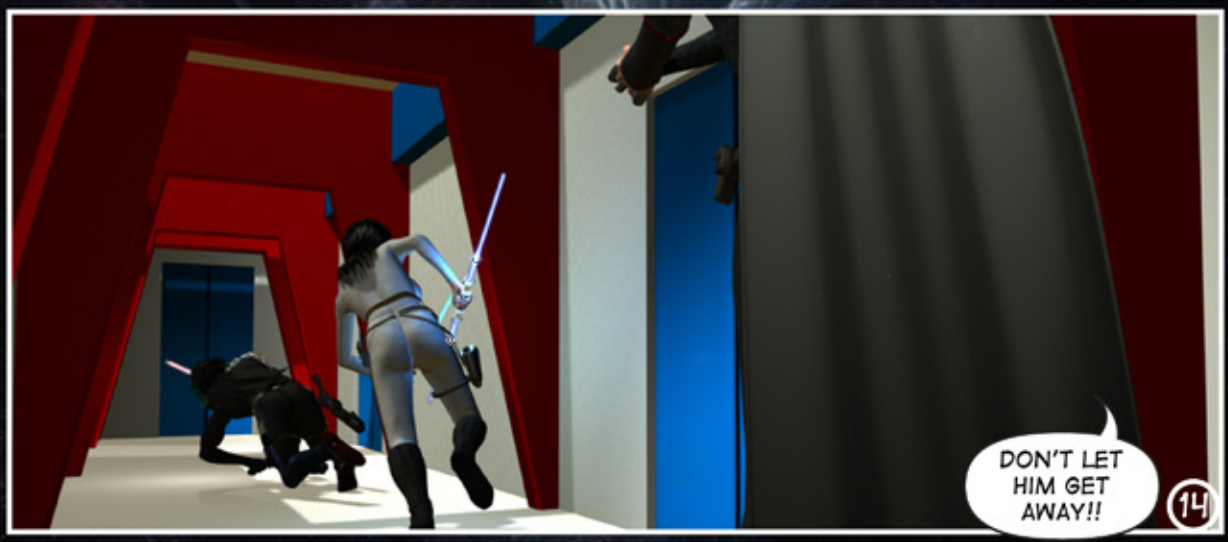
--YOU MISSED.
THAT HURT--!
BUT I ALWAYS INVEST IN GOOD BODY ARMOR.
TARA--!!
YOU CAN'T PROTECT THE TELE-PATH FROM US.
THEY ARE A THREAT THAT MUST BE STOPPED.
WHERE DOES SHE THINK SHE IS GOING?
YOU CAN'T LET HER WALK OUT!
SINCE HE WISHED TO BE SUCH A HEADACHE--
CALL SECURITY AND HAVE HER AH-RUH-RUH-RUH--*
...I COULD SURELY GIVE HIM ONE.
IF YOU PULL THAT TRIGGER--
...I WILL KILL YOU.
12

BAM
DAMMIT, TARA, YOU'RE NOT GIVING ME A CLEAR SHOT!
ADRIAN! GET OUT OF HERE NOW!!

HE FOUGHT WITH BRASH AND ARROGANT FURY, SMILING AS HE SLASHED AT ME--
--HIS KICK NEARLY CAUGHT ME IN THE EYE. HIS TONE AND POSTURE SAID HE WAS OUT TO HUMILIATE ME, THEN DESTROY ME UTTERLY.
THE RULES OF HONORABLE COMBAT WOULD NOT APPLY, AND I REALIZED I WAS THINKING TOO MUCH.
TORN BY ALLEGATIONS THAT I MYSELF MIGHT BE EVIL, I WAS HOLDING BACK, AND I KNEW THAT WOULD BE A FATAL MISTAKE.

I COULD NOT READ THIS ASSASSIN'S MIND. I DID NOT HAVE TO.
HE TRIED TO BASH MY HANDS WITH HIS WEAPONS AND LASHED OUT TO KICK ME IN THE FACE AGAIN.
POK
!
--SO I DECIDED I'D HAD ENOUGH OF PLAYING FAIR.

PRESS HIM, TARA! I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE WANTS--
...BUT DON'T GIVE IT UP TO HIM WITHOUT A FIGHT!!
FIND OUT WHO HE IS.
YOUR PAST IS SURFACING--LET'S SEIZE IT.


DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!!
14

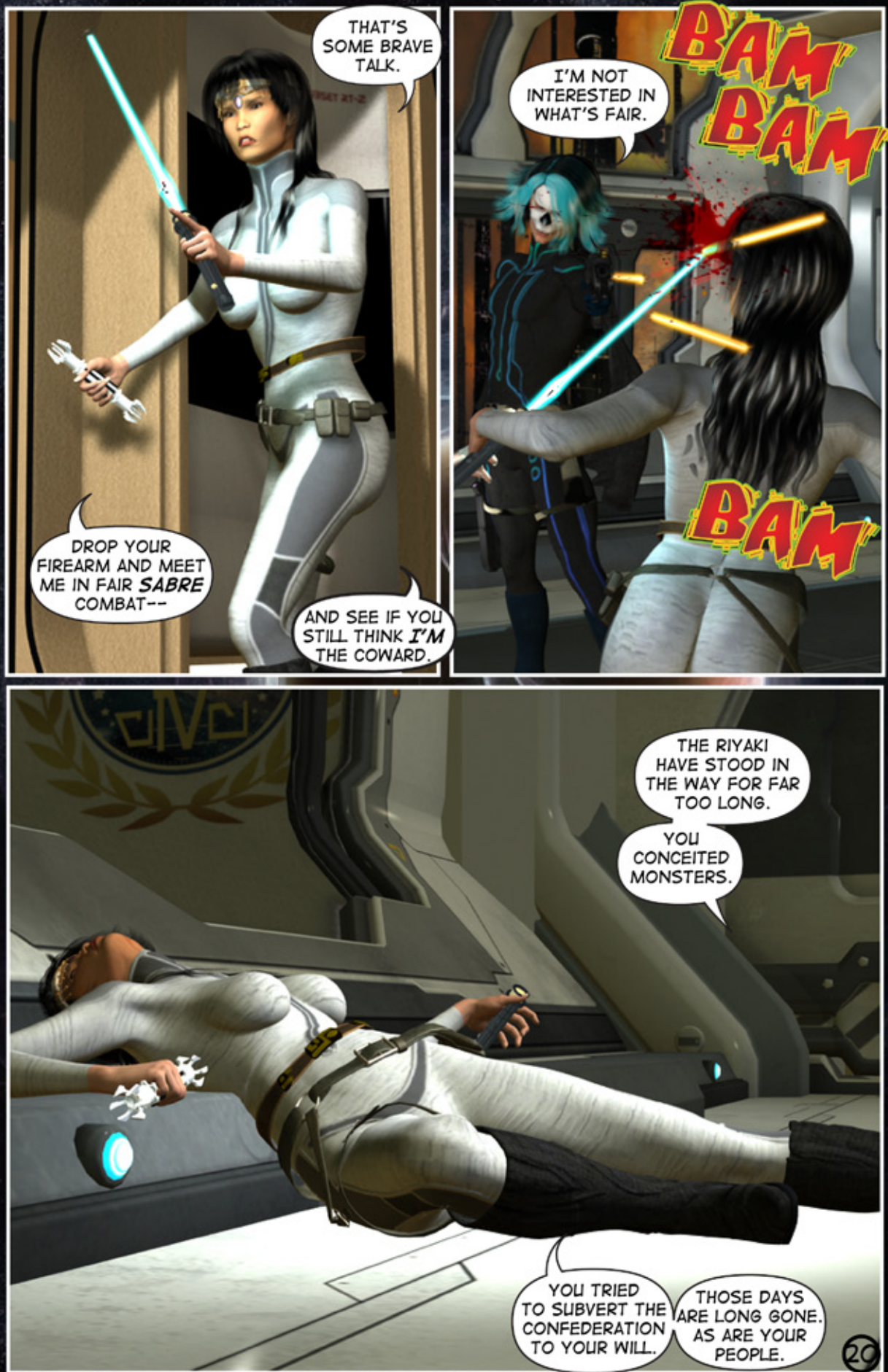
TRIBUNAL! DO YOU NOT SEE WHAT THE RIYAKI HAS DONE??
SHE HAS RENDERED MY CLIENT UNCONSCIOUS AND ESCAPED!
CALL SECURITY AND BRING HER TO JUSTICE!
WANTED
T.A.R.A
SECURITY IS ON ITS WAY, KAR'TYR.
DO YOU NOT HEAR SOUNDS OF LIGHT SABRES IN THE HALLS?
THE SAFETY OF THIS GATHERING IS PARAMOUNT.
HOW CAN YOU ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN?
WE KNOW SHE IS DANGEROUS.
I ACCUSE THE TRIBUNAL OF BIAS!!
AS YOU WISH.
THIS WAS NOT A RANDOM OCCURRENCE, AND YOU KNOW THIS.
REGARDLESS OF WHOM IS RESPONSIBLE, WE KNOW THIS IS A TRAP.
KILL THE RIYAKI!!!
FSSSHHHT!!!
FASH
FRMMMM!!!!
AAAAHH!!!
15

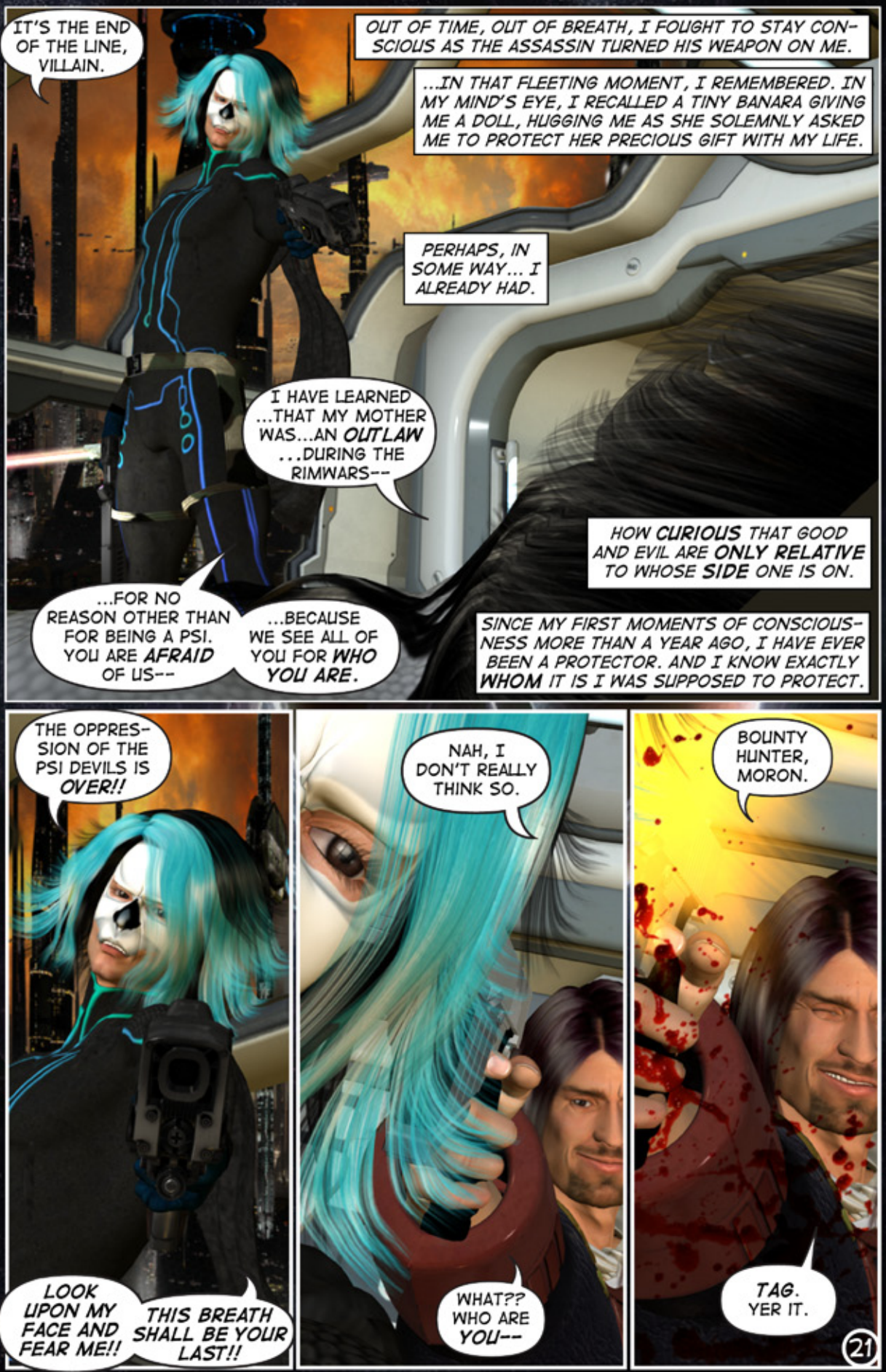
THOK!
UGH--!
THUD!
POW!
MUST LURE THEM AWAY FROM ADRIAN AND THE OTHERS.
KILL HER!!!

I DUCKED INTO A SIDE OFFICE AND LOCKED THE DOOR.
I ROLLED THE SMALLER LIGHT SABER UNDER THE CONFERENCE TABLE.
I HAD A PLAN, BUT ONLY A FEW SECONDS TO SET IT UP.
THEY SWEPT THE ROOM FOR ME: QUIETLY, CAUTIOUSLY. IF THEY FOUND ME IT WOULD BE OVER. I FOUND MY VANTAGE POINT AND WAITED TIL THEY CROSSED PATHS.
!
FSSSHHHTT!!!
!

RATATATATATATATA
RATATATATATATATA
TWO DOWN, ONE TO GO...
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU DID THAT.
YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH ME DEFENDING MYSELF?
AS A MATTER OF FACT, I DO.
YOU'RE NOT FOLLOWING THE PROGRAM AT ALL.
YOU'RE NOT GETTING OUT OF HERE ALIVE!
WATCH ME.
18

AT THE OTHER END OF THE HALL, SECURITY POUNDED AT THE BLAST DOORS--
...SHOUTING THAT SOMEONE HAD OVERRIDDEN THE SECURITY CODES TO OPEN THEM.
I FELT A SINKING FEELING AS I REALIZED THIS HALLWAY CAME TO A DEAD END.
I WAS ALONE OUT HERE.
YOU'RE A COWARD, RIYAKI.
...YOU CAN'T HIDE YOUR TRUE COLORS. TURN AND FACE ME, COWARD.
HIS WORDS ANGERED ME. NOW, ALL THIS TIME I HAD TRIED TO HOLD FAST TO WHO I THOUGHT I WAS.
COULD AMNESIA TRULY ALTER ONE'S TRUE NATURE? WAS THERE A POSSIBLE CHANCE--
...THAT I MIGHT REVERT TO MY EVIL SELF AT A WRONG MOMENT?
WHY HAD I FOUGHT SO HARD TO PROTECT NAJIMI, TO BRING HER HOME?
IT WAS IMPORTANT TO ME THAT THE TRIBUNAL SEE ME FOR WHO I WAS.
...BUT NOW IT WAS CLEAR THAT, IF I WERE GOING TO SURVIVE-- I WOULD HAVE TO KILL SOMEONE THIS DAY.


THAT'S SOME BRAVE TALK.
DROP YOUR FIREARM AND MEET ME IN FAIR SABRE COMBAT--
AND SEE IF YOU STILL THINK I'M THE COWARD.
I'M NOT INTERESTED IN WHAT'S FAIR.
BAM BAM
BAM
THE RIYAKI HAVE STOOD IN THE WAY FOR FAR TOO LONG.
YOU CONCEITED MONSTERS.
YOU TRIED TO SUBVERT THE CONFEDERATION TO YOUR WILL.
THOSE DAYS ARE LONG GONE. AS ARE YOUR PEOPLE.
29

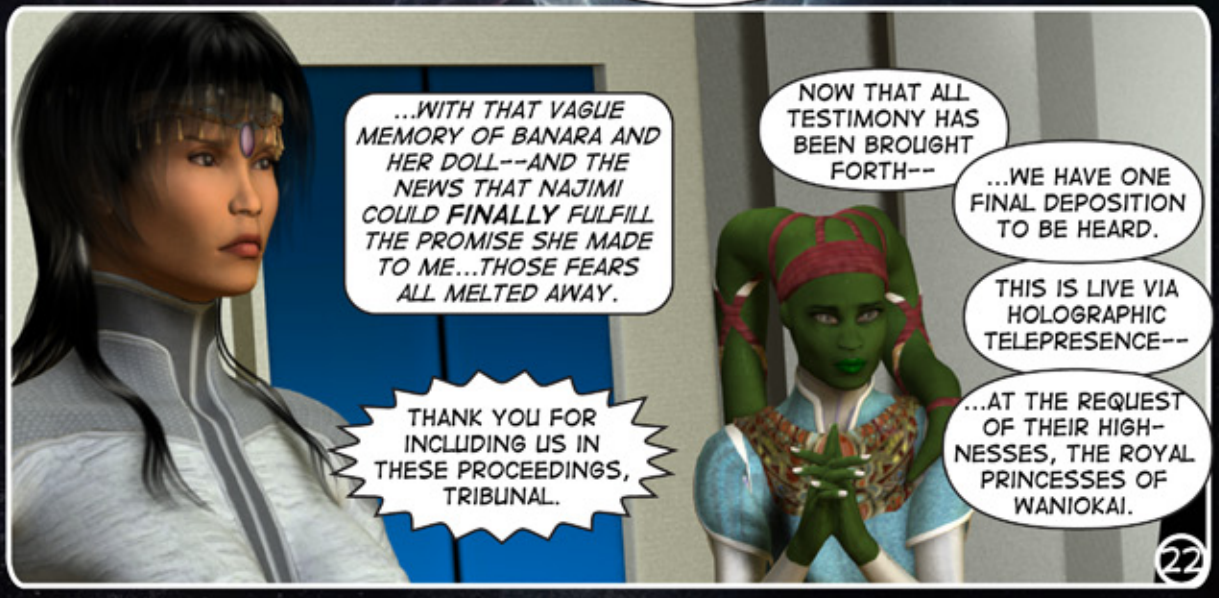

IT'S THE END OF THE LINE, VILLAIN.
OUT OF TIME, OUT OF BREATH, I FOUGHT TO STAY CONSCIOUS AS THE ASSASSIN TURNED HIS WEAPON ON ME.
...IN THAT FLEETING MOMENT, I REMEMBERED. IN MY MIND'S EYE, I RECALLED A TINY BANARA GIVING ME A DOLL, HUGGING ME AS SHE SOLEMNLY ASKED ME TO PROTECT HER PRECIOUS GIFT WITH MY LIFE.
PERHAPS, IN SOME WAY... I ALREADY HAD.
I HAVE LEARNED ...THAT MY MOTHER WAS...AN OUTLAW ...DURING THE RIMWARS--
HOW CURIOUS THAT GOOD AND EVIL ARE ONLY RELATIVE TO WHOSE SIDE ONE IS ON.
...FOR NO REASON OTHER THAN FOR BEING A PSI. YOU ARE AFRAID OF US--
...BECAUSE WE SEE ALL OF YOU FOR WHO YOU ARE.
SINCE MY FIRST MOMENTS OF CONSCIOUSNESS MORE THAN A YEAR AGO, I HAVE EVER BEEN A PROTECTOR. AND I KNOW EXACTLY WHOM IT IS I WAS SUPPOSED TO PROTECT.
THE OPPRESSION OF THE PSI DEVILS IS OVER!!
LOOK UPON MY FACE AND FEAR ME!!
THIS BREATH SHALL BE YOUR LAST!!
NAH, I DON'T REALLY THINK SO.
WHAT?? WHO ARE YOU--
BOUNTY HUNTER, MORON.
TAG. YER IT.
21

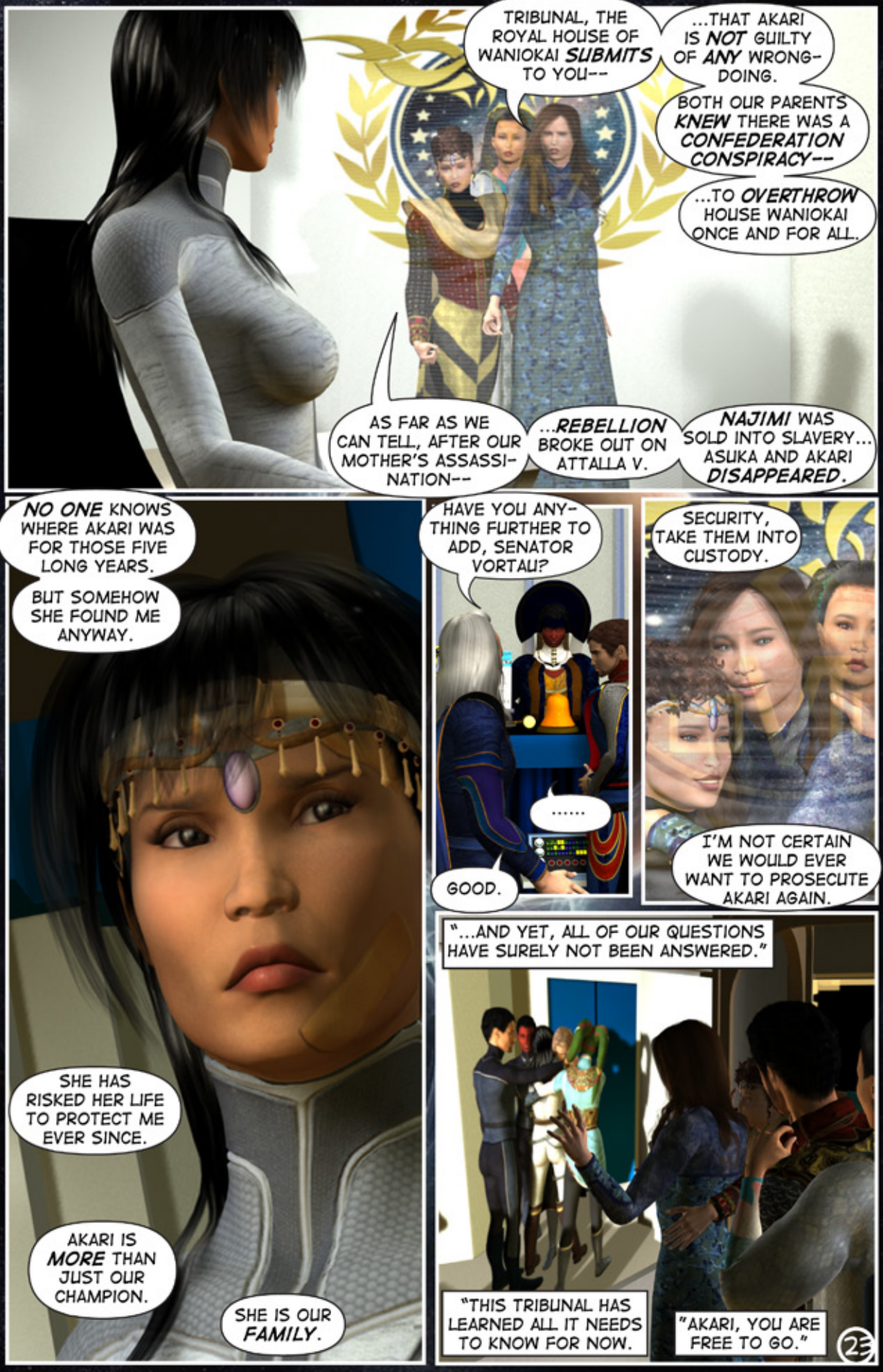
OH, KOHL, YOU KILLED HIM--!
THE DAY HAD TURNED OUT MORE REVELATION THAN ADRIAN AND I COULD HAVE PREDICTED. DESPITE ALL THE CHARGES AGAINST ME--
I DON'T PLAY BY THE SAME RULES YOU DO, WIREHEAD.
THIS LITTLE STOOGE ISN'T THE ONE YOU WANT ANYWAY.
AND, HE DID SORTA HAVE YOU--
...DEAD TO RIGHTS.
DON'T EVEN TRY TO TELL ME YOU HAD HIM ON THE ROPES.
...I KNEW I WAS MOST AT HOME PROTECTING OTHERS. A COUPLE OF THINGS STILL TROUBLED ME, THOUGH.

LEARNED A FEW THINGS SINCE WE LAST TALKED.
I'M AFRAID I'M GONNA HAVE TO EXPLAIN LATER.
I TOLD THE DOC I WASN'T THE ONLY ONE HUNTIN' YOU FOLKS.*
WHO WAS HE, KOHL?
*A DEVIANT MIND #11.

THIS IS A CLIQUE OF CONFED ASSASSINS. I'VE LEARNED --
...THINGS DIDN'T QUITE HAPPEN AS WE WERE TOLD.
NOW, I'VE HAD TO ADJUST MY TARGETS, SLIGHTLY.
SO YOU WALK ON THE GRAY SIDE.
IT'S A DIRTY JOB, BUT SOMEONE'S GOTTA DO IT.
C'MON, KID, LET'S GET YOU SQUARED AWAY.

CAN AMNESIA REALLY CHANGE SOMEONE'S TRUE NATURE?
WAS THERE A POSSIBILITY THAT I MIGHT--
WELL DONE, MY LOVE.
...REVERT TO MY EVIL SELF AT A WRONG MOMENT?


...WITH THAT VAGUE MEMORY OF BANARA AND HER DOLL--AND THE NEWS THAT NAJIMI COULD FINALLY FULFILL THE PROMISE SHE MADE TO ME...THOSE FEARS ALL MELTED AWAY.
THANK YOU FOR INCLUDING US IN THESE PROCEEDINGS, TRIBUNAL.
NOW THAT ALL TESTIMONY HAS BEEN BROUGHT FORTH--
...WE HAVE ONE FINAL DEPOSITION TO BE HEARD.
THIS IS LIVE VIA HOLOGRAPHIC TELEPRESENCE--
...AT THE REQUEST OF THEIR HIGHNESSES, THE ROYAL PRINCESSES OF WANIOKAI.


TRIBUNAL, THE ROYAL HOUSE OF WANIOKAI SUBMITS TO YOU--
...THAT AKARI IS NOT GUILTY OF ANY WRONG-DOING.
BOTH OUR PARENTS KNEW THERE WAS A CONFEDERATION CONSPIRACY--
...TO OVERTHROW HOUSE WANIOKAI ONCE AND FOR ALL.
AS FAR AS WE CAN TELL, AFTER OUR MOTHER'S ASSASSI-NATION--
...REBELLION BROKE OUT ON ATTALLA V.
NAJIMI WAS SOLD INTO SLAVERY... ASUKA AND AKARI DISAPPEARED.
NO ONE KNOWS WHERE AKARI WAS FOR THOSE FIVE LONG YEARS.
BUT SOMEHOW SHE FOUND ME ANYWAY.
SHE HAS RISKED HER LIFE TO PROTECT ME EVER SINCE.
AKARI IS MORE THAN JUST OUR CHAMPION.
SHE IS OUR FAMILY.
HAVE YOU ANY-THING FURTHER TO ADD, SENATOR VORTAU?
.....
GOOD.
SECURITY, TAKE THEM INTO CUSTODY.
I'M NOT CERTAIN WE WOULD EVER WANT TO PROSECUTE AKARI AGAIN.
"...AND YET, ALL OF OUR QUESTIONS HAVE SURELY NOT BEEN ANSWERED."
"THIS TRIBUNAL HAS LEARNED ALL IT NEEDS TO KNOW FOR NOW.
"AKARI, YOU ARE FREE TO GO."
23

THE NEXT DAY, WANIOKAI SAW THE FIRST DOUBLE CORONATION IN THAT PLANET'S HISTORY.

THE CROWNING OF THE TWIN QUEENS OF THIS LESSER FIEFDOM WAS TELEVISED THROUGHOUT THE IMPERIUM, UNDER THE BLESSING OF THE HIGH EMPEROR N'ANAX.

THE PARLIAMENT AND THE PEOPLE CELEBRATED THIS ARRANGEMENT, FOR THE YOUNG QUEENS OF WANIOKAI EACH HAD DIFFERING SKILLS THAT WOULD BEST BENEFIT A DUARCHY.

NEVER AGAIN WOULD WANIOKAI BE LEFT WITHOUT A LEADER IN TIMES OF CRISIS.

BOTH GIRLS WOULD UNDERGO SPECIALIZED TRAINING, RULING THEIR WORLD ALONGSIDE ONE ANOTHER, STRIKING BALANCE IN WAR AND IN PEACE--

...AS THE TWO OF THEM REALIZED IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN ALL ALONG.

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A DEVIANT MIND

BANARA'S GUIDE BOOK SEVEN TO THE RIMWORLDS

THE RIYAKI SAGA

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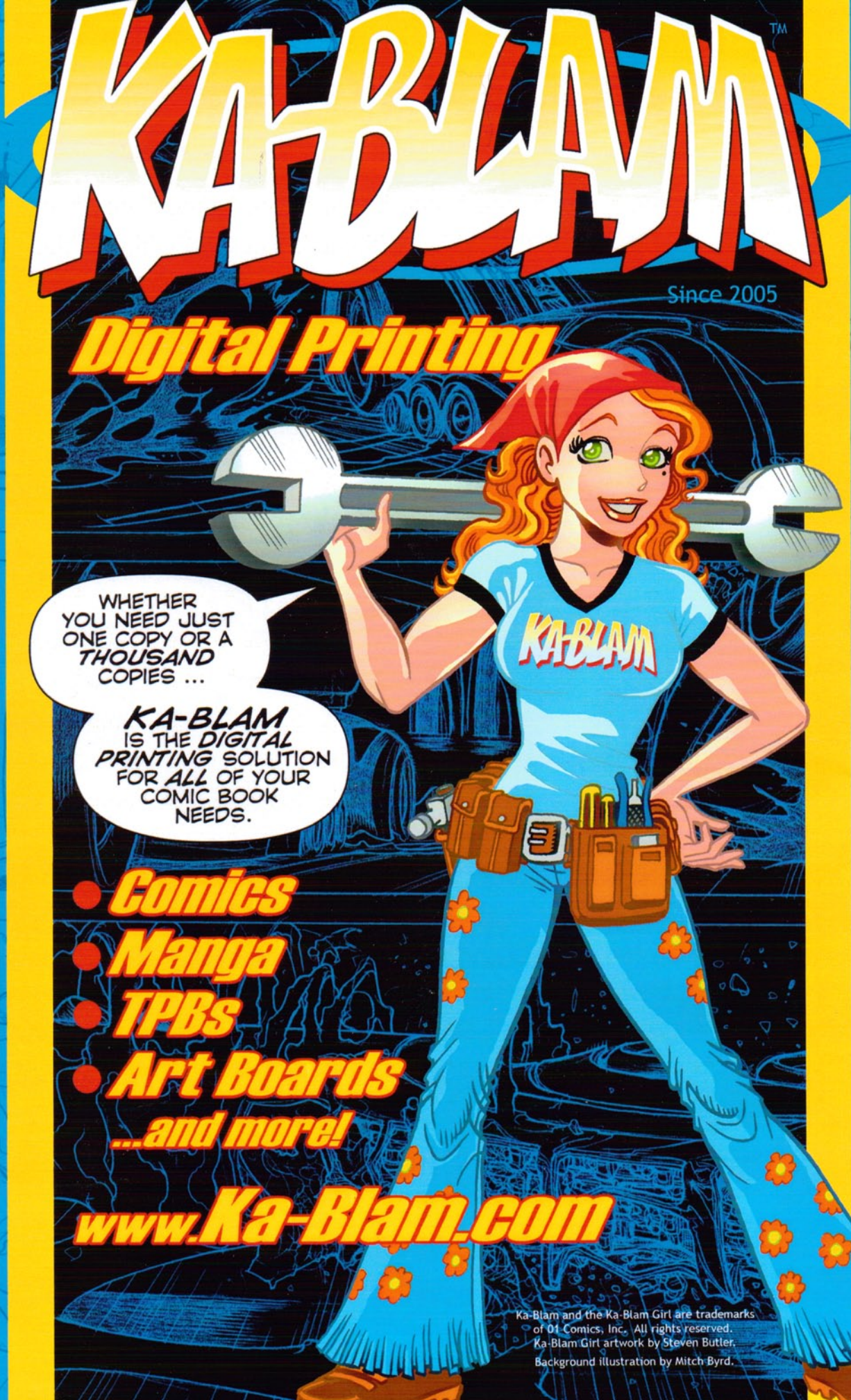
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