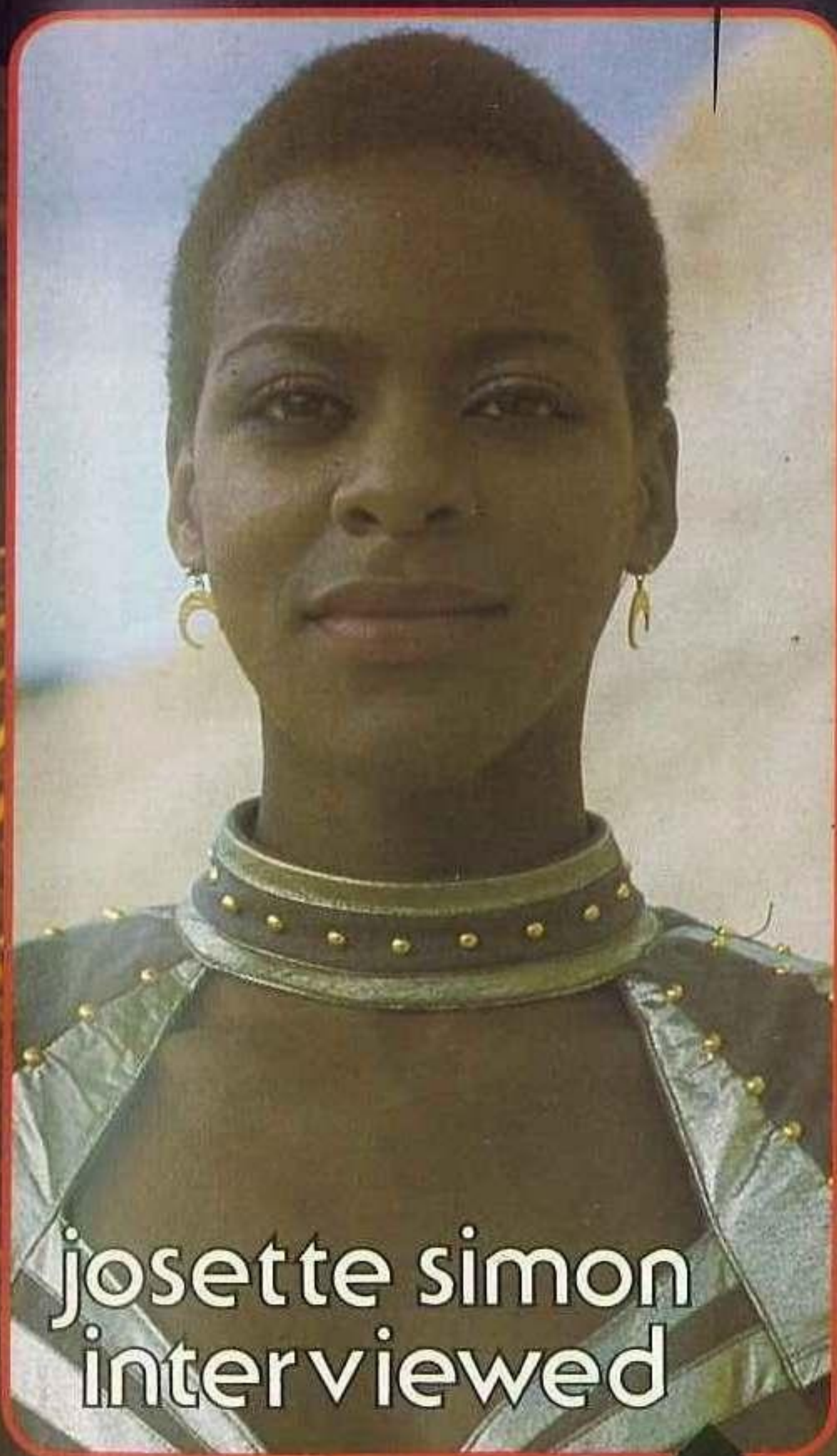


Perry Dalkin's

BLAKES 7

A MARVEL
MONTHLY

NO. 17 FEB. 50P



josette simon
interviewed



scorpio's crew in peril!



inside: free
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trouble in store for vila!

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BLAKES 7

Managing Editor: Bernie Jaye, Design: Floron Florenzo

Consultant Editor and photographs: Ken Armstrong

FEATURES

SCRAP BOOK..... p.4

Continuing our look at the more unusual moments from the making of the series.

FOR THE LOVE OF AVON..... p.14

This month Paul talks about his love for Anna Grant, who made her first appearance in 'Count-down' Series 2.

JOSETTE SIMON — BLAKE'S 7 AND BEYOND p.23

As Dayna, Josette Simon was the first victim of the Federation. Find out what she is doing now.

COMIC STRIP

HUNTED p.8

A clever trick backfires!

TEXT STORY

A NEW BEGINNING p.31

A short story by Harry Waller concerning the ending of the fourth story and what could have happened.

LETTERS

POINTS OF VIEW..... p.23

More letters bearing suggestions, questions and views from you the reader.

PIN-UPS

COLOUR POSTER OF SERVALAN..... p.20

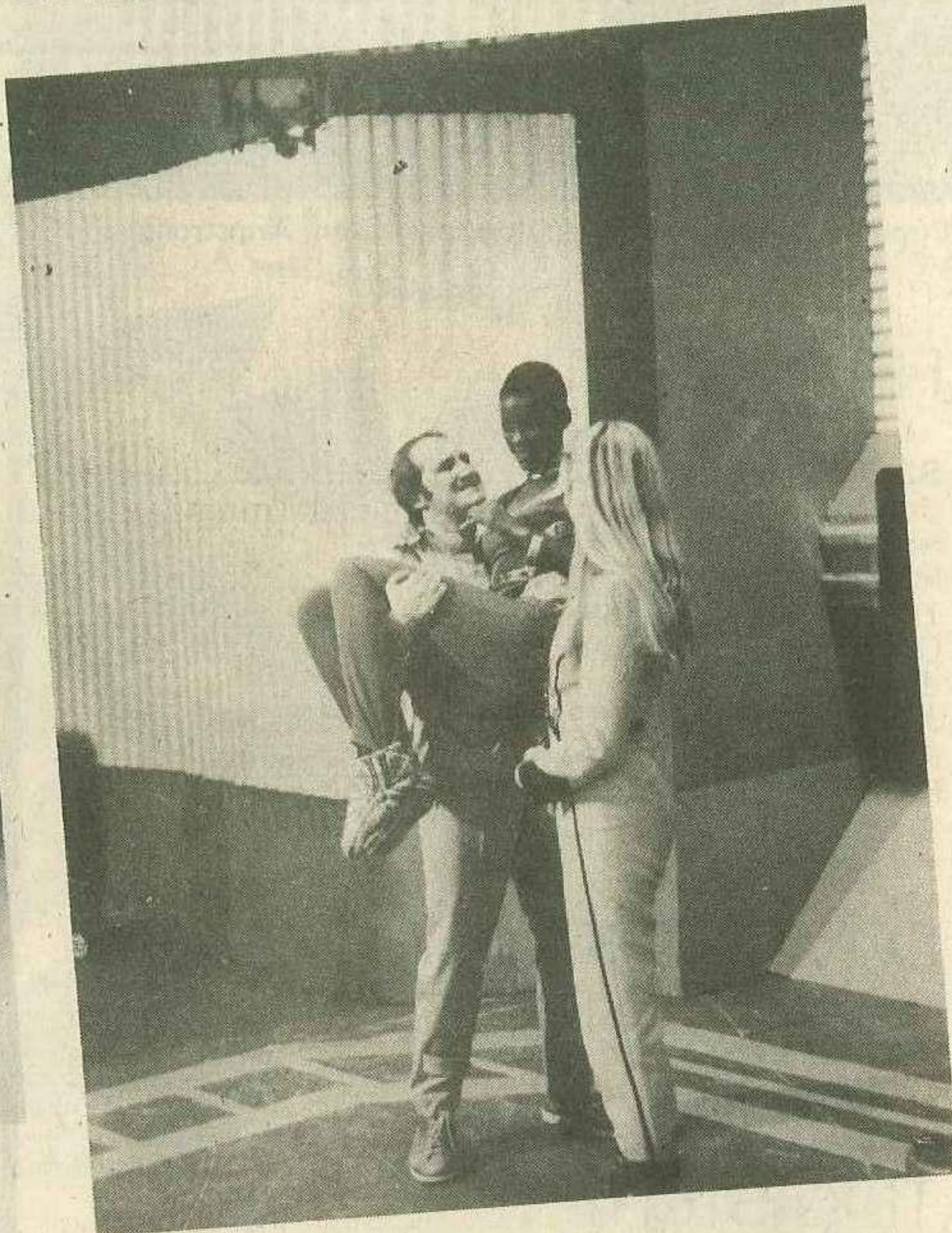
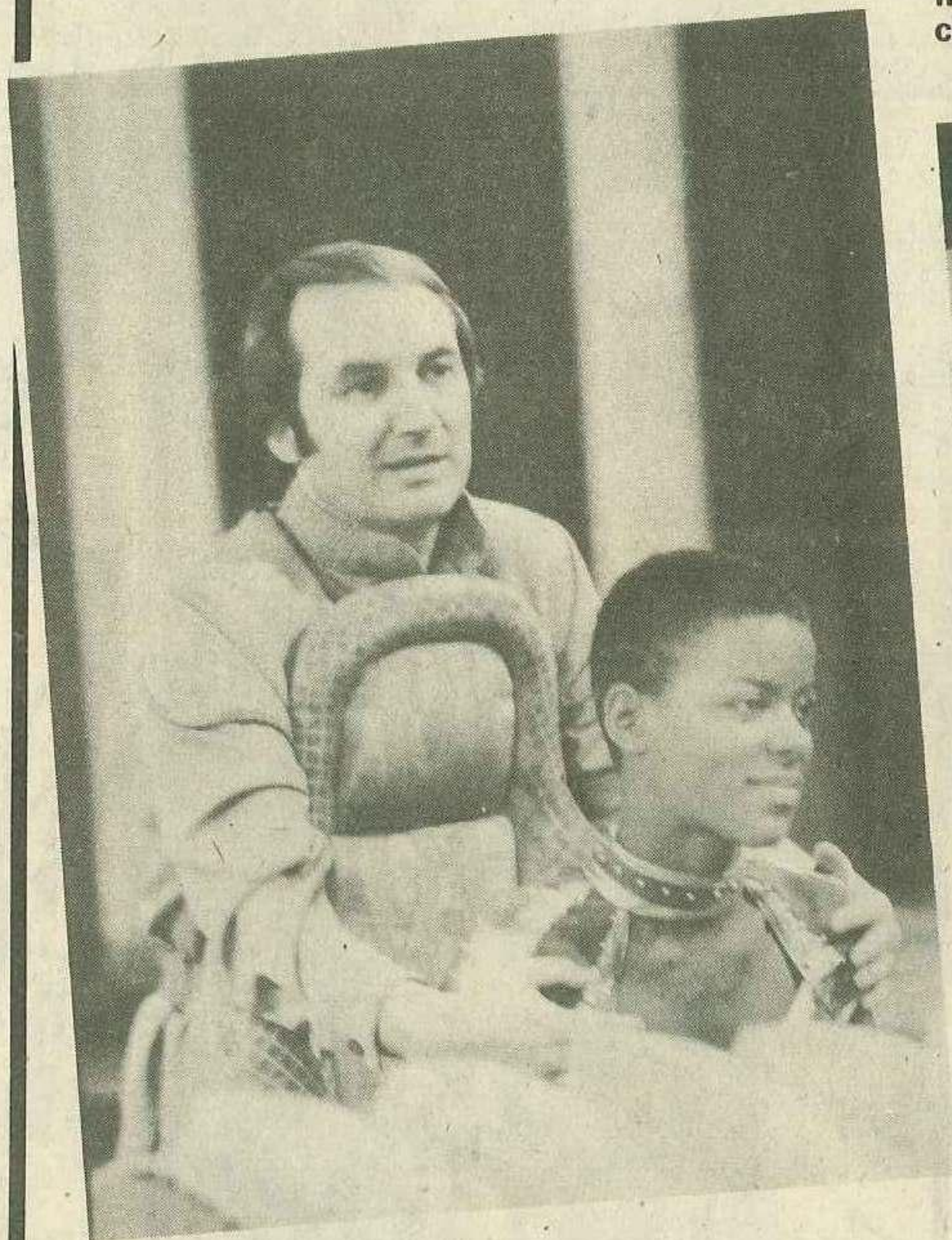
AVON..... p.18

ORAC..... p.36



SCRAPBOOK

The series continuing our look at the more unusual moments from the making of the series — both in front and behind the TV cameras.



Top left:

'This what you mean by getting a grip of the situation, Avon?' Mike Keating has to stop Josette Simon running away when he tries Vila's charm on her.

Above:

Or how about this? 'You've got to listen to my joke now,' is what Mike Keating seems to say when demonstrating his muscle power to Josette.



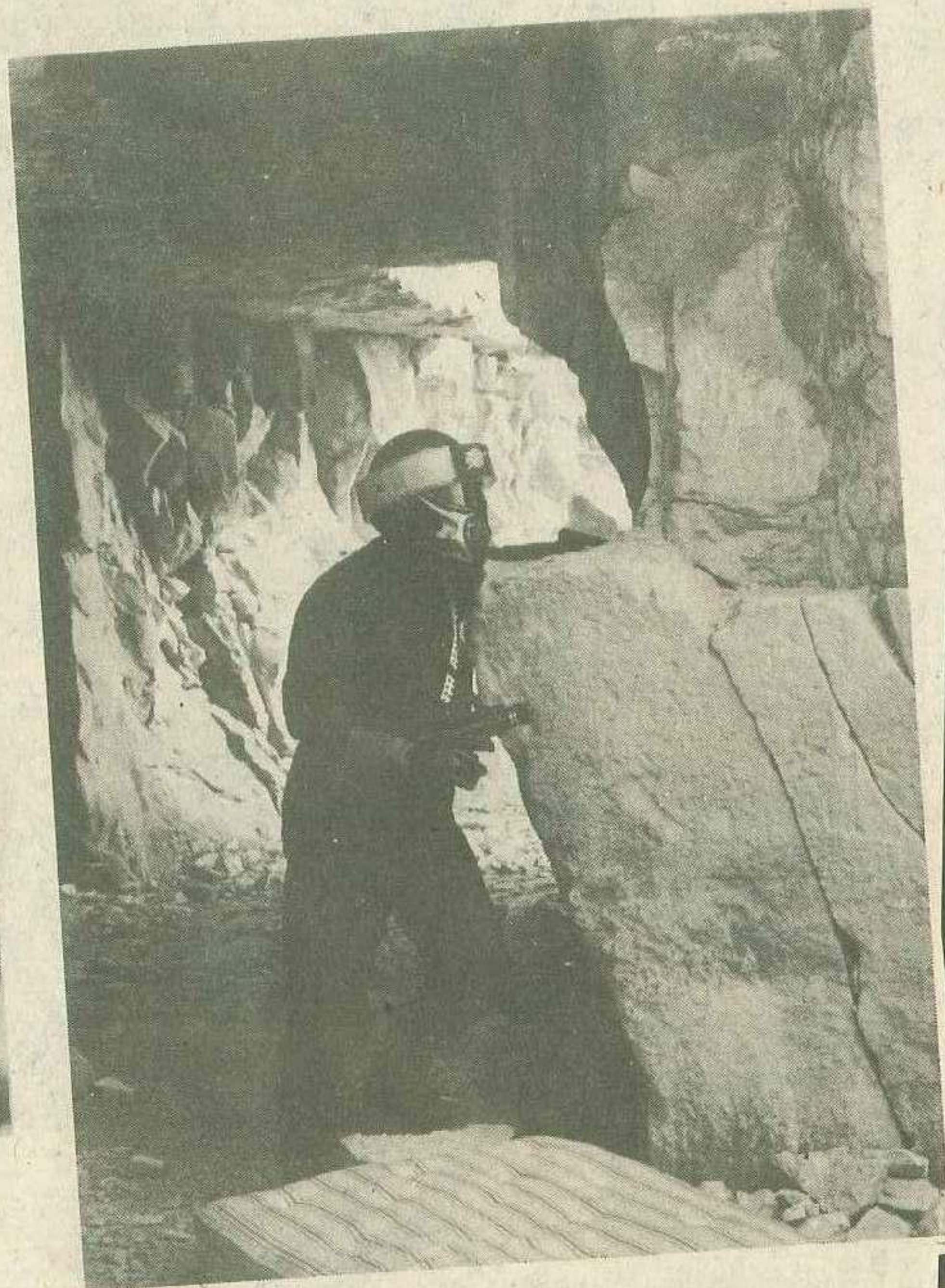
Left:

'If it's muscle power you want to see. . .' Paul Darrow demonstrates his herculean strength to Linda Bellingham, creating a moment of levity during a tense recording session.



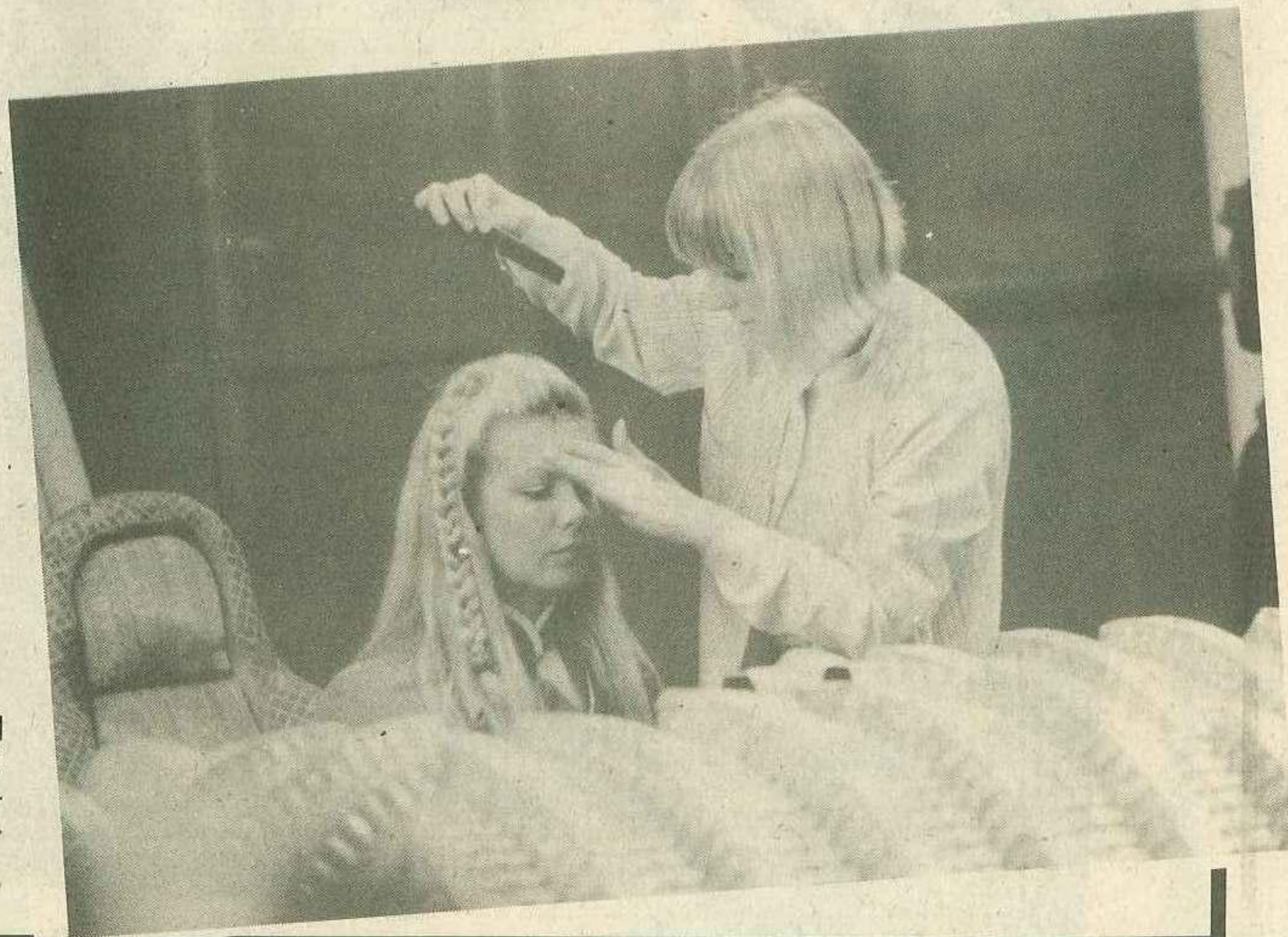
Above:

The hazards seldom seen by viewers. A straightforward running scene for Dayna and Soolin is, in fact, a minor obstacle course as they have to negotiate, at full pelt, a cable conduit,



Top right:

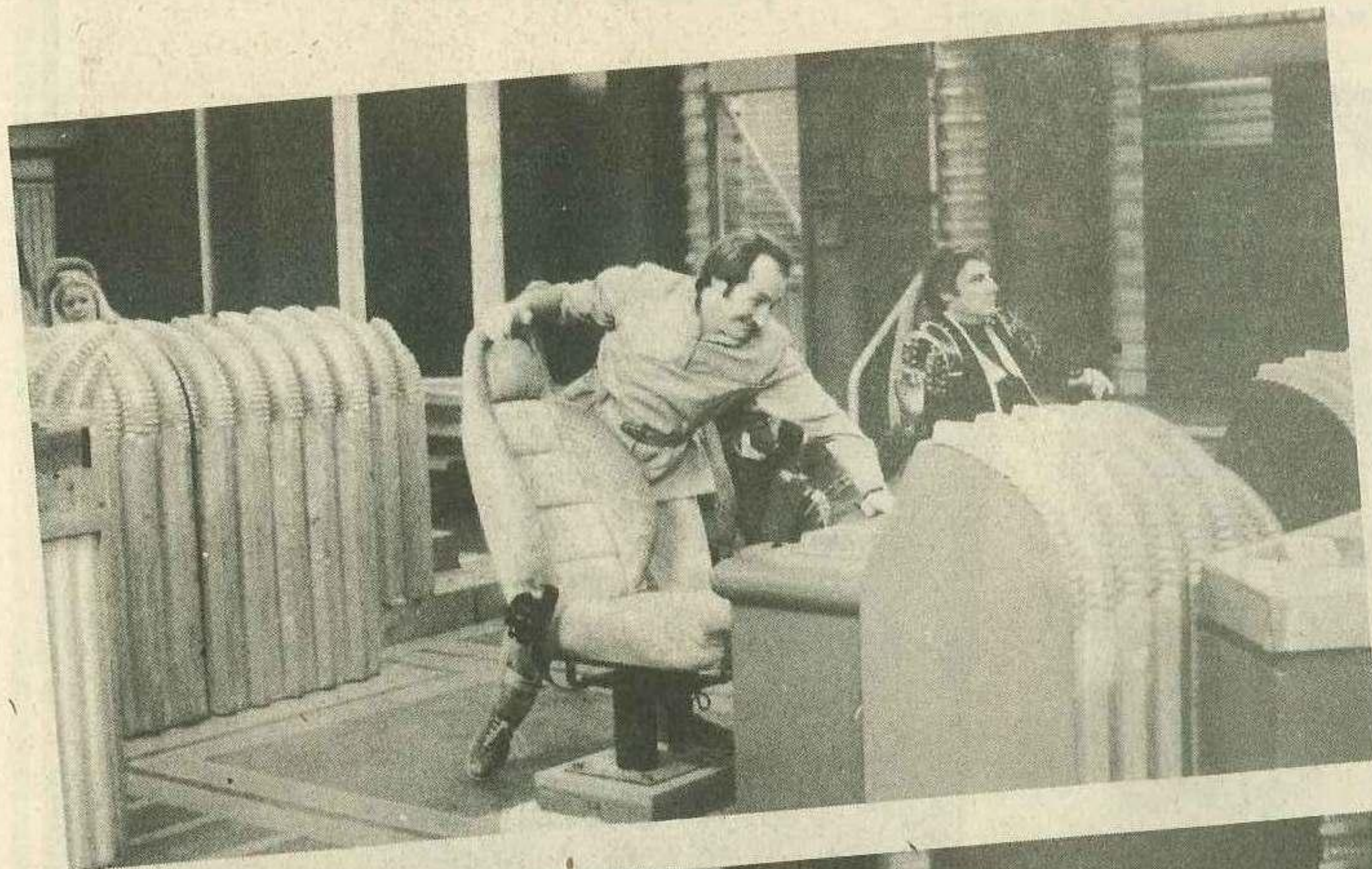
Planning to lie down on the job? In a way - yes. You see, this Federation guard is about to slump to the ground, looking very dead. For all such shots, the BBC insist a mattress be placed to absorb the impact. Who said the Federation were tough?



Right:

Fast action is fine but there should never be a hair out of place! Glynis Barber's latest hair creation gets some last minute attention during a lull in filming.

SCRAPBOOK



Scorpio is about to bank at high speed so Vila dashes to his seat but. . .



. . . which way do you lean? Two to the left and one to the right? No. . . Paul Darrow realises he's been going the wrong way and. . .



... falls about laughing. Something which obviously horrifies Vila!

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	ANNIE — a major movie based on the smash hit stage musical
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	MR MERLIN — brand new ITV series
	BLADE RUNNER — new major movie for release Summer '82
	CONAN THE BARBARIAN — new major movie due for release Autumn '82

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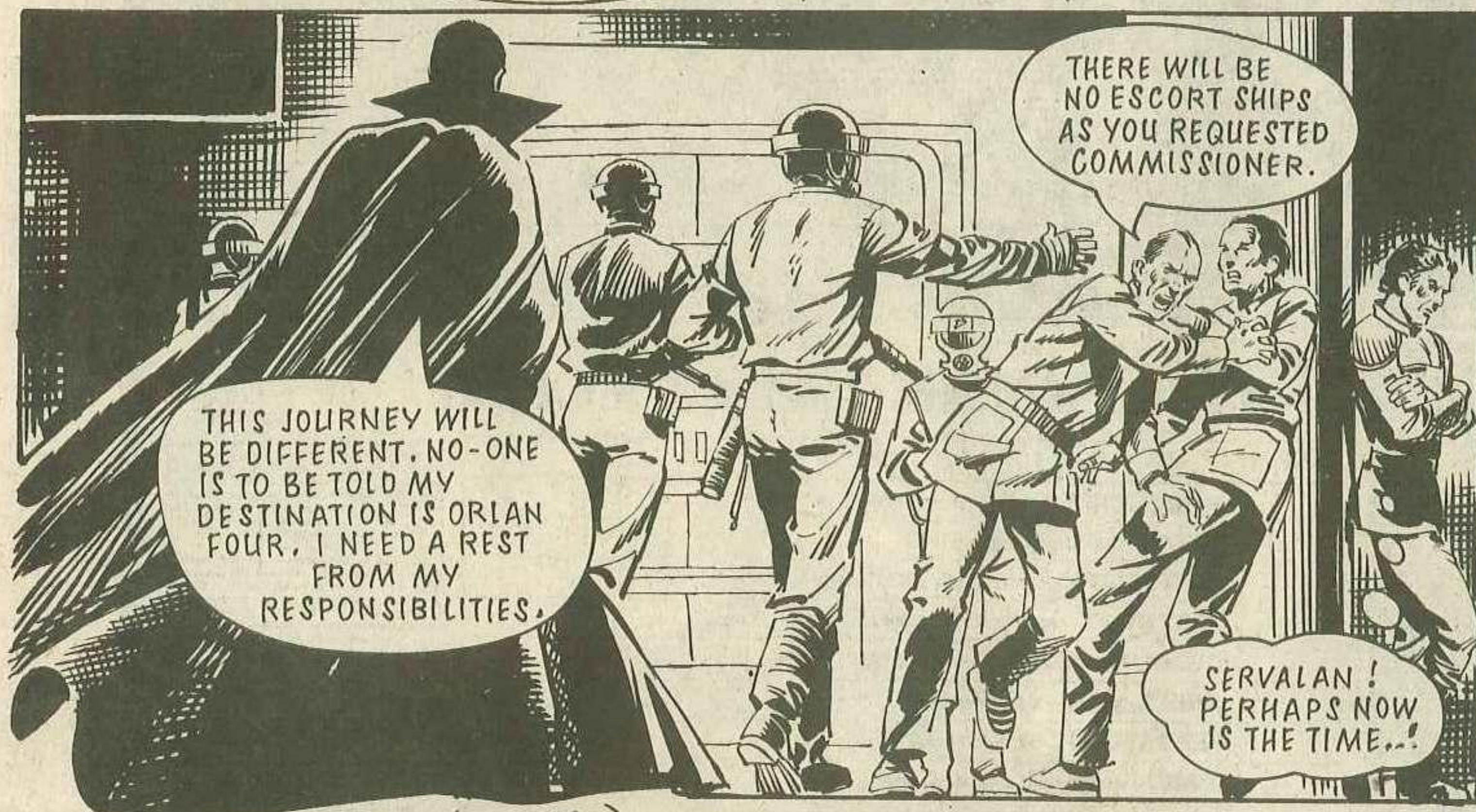
HUNTED



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



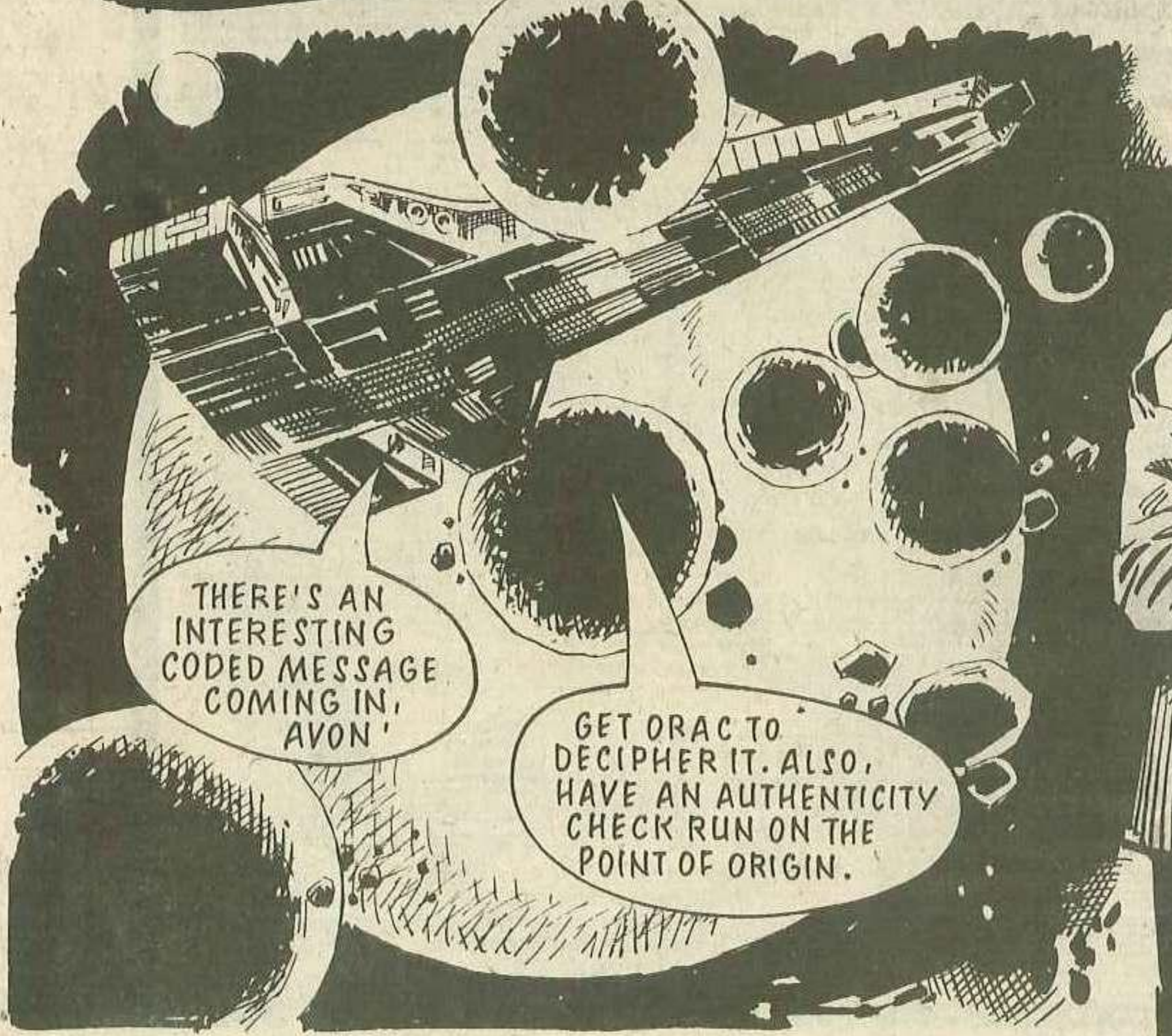
FOX 3 TO FOX BASE. DESTINATION ORLAN FOUR. MINIMUM GUARDS- NO ESCORTS. SERVALAN IS PLAYING INTO OUR HANDS.



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'

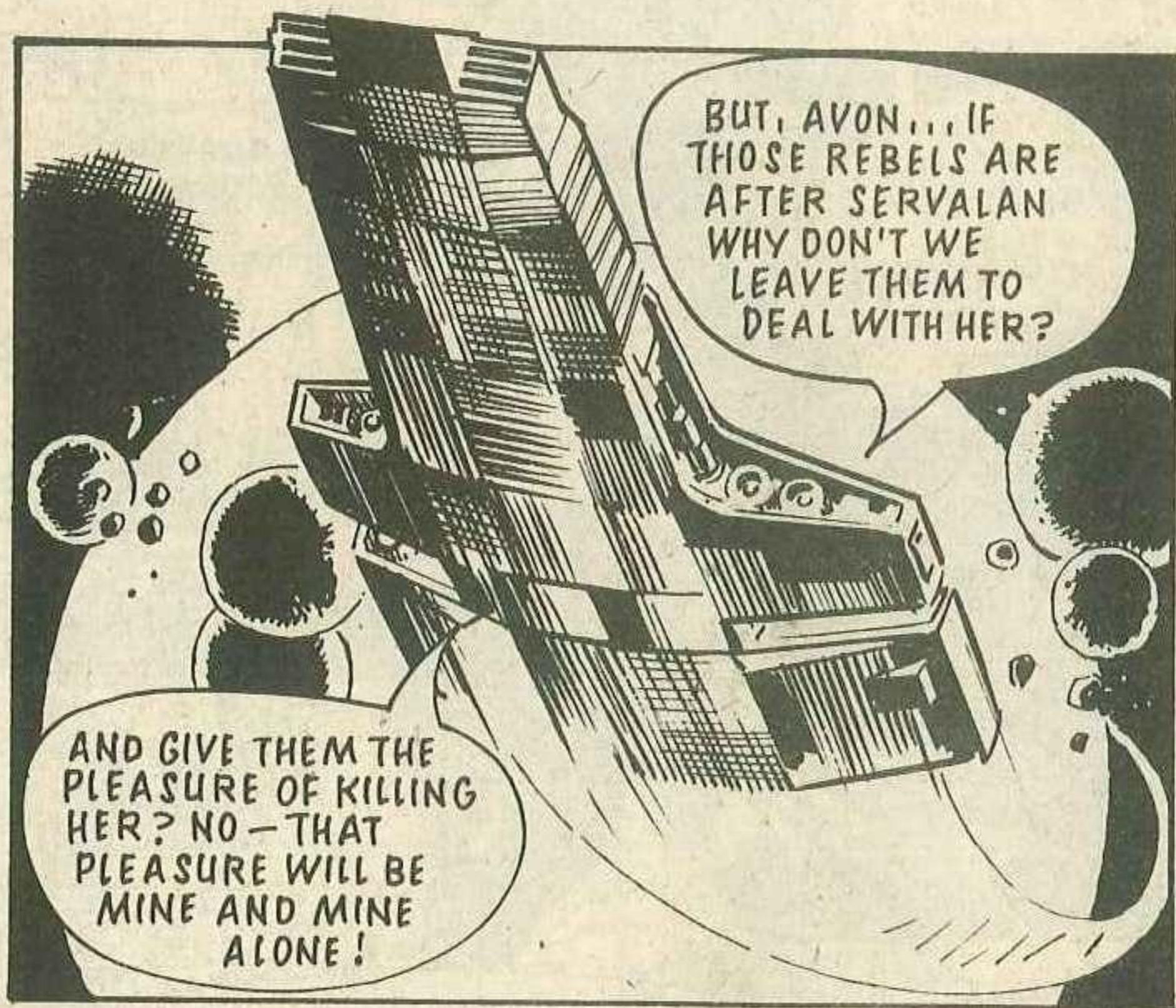
GET ORAC TO DECIPHER IT. ALSO, HAVE AN AUTHENTICITY CHECK RUN ON THE POINT OF ORIGIN.



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.

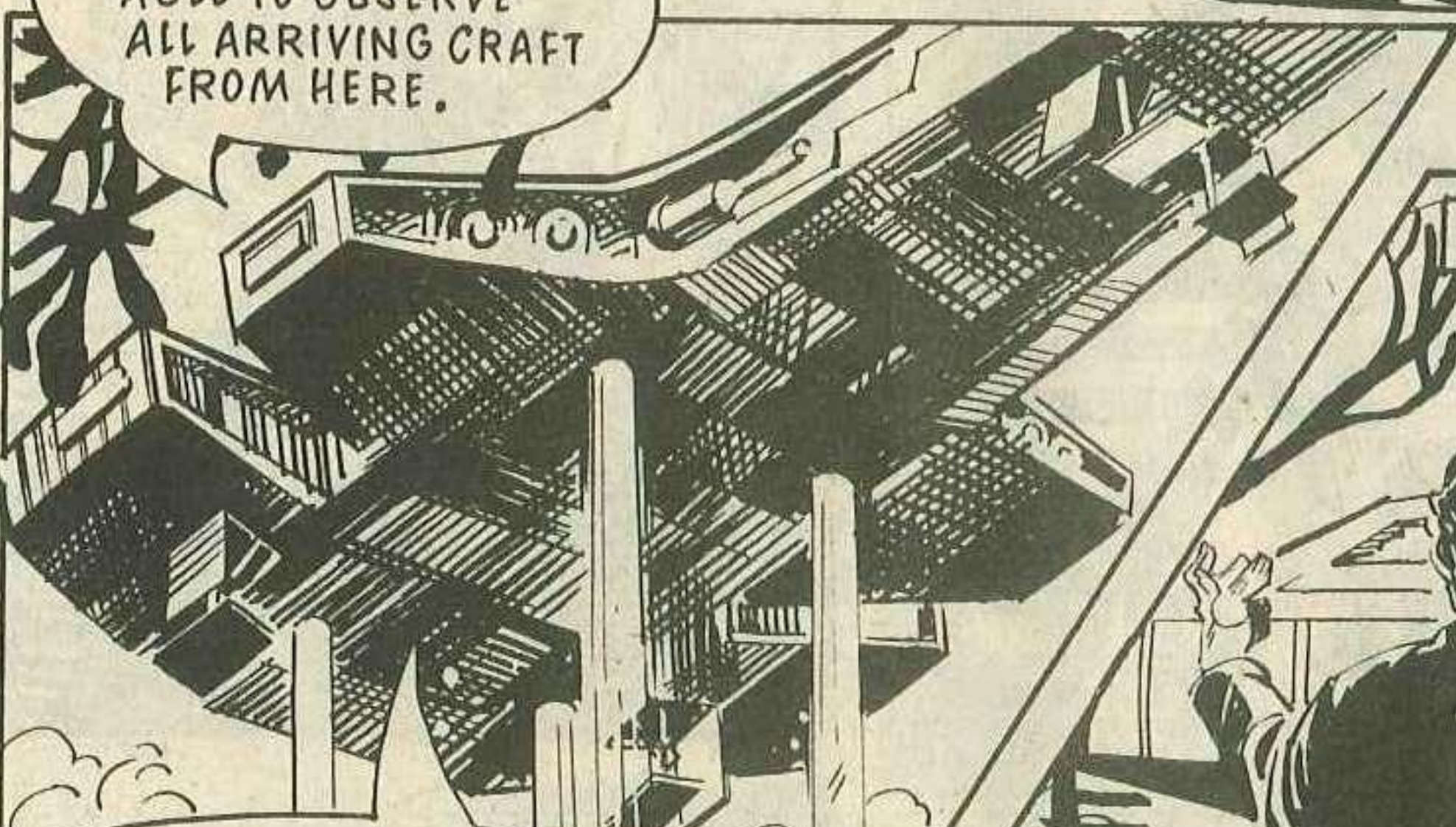
THAT'S ANOTHER GOOD REASON FOR GOING, VI LA WE NEED ALLIES VERY BADLY. WE CAN'T HOPE TO WIN A WAR AGAINST THE FEDERATION ON OUR OWN.



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

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

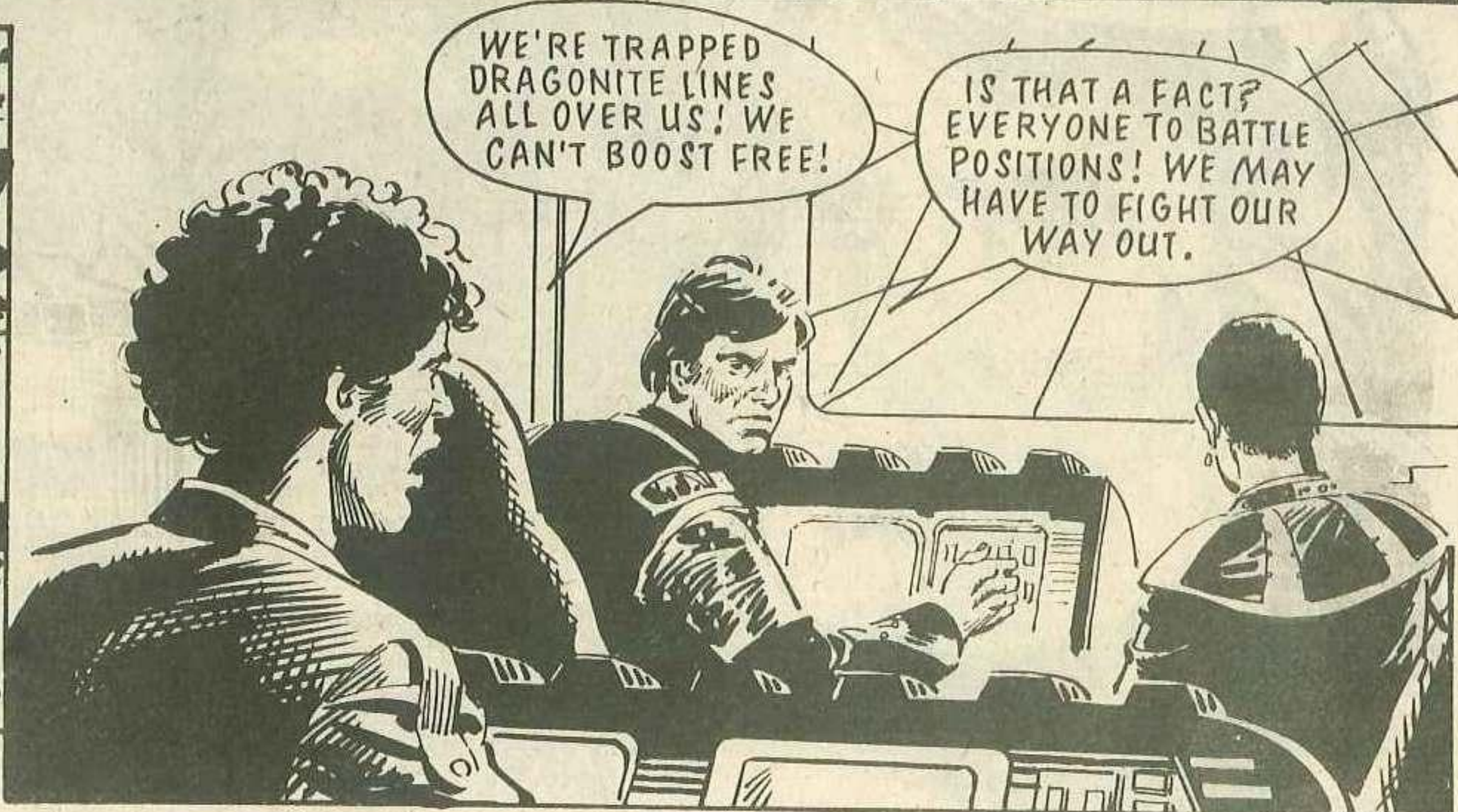


SUDDENLY...

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.

THAT INSTANT, IN THE CLEARING BELOW...

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

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

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

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

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

AARRGH!

BLAST HER! KILL SERVALAN BEFORE SHE CAN ESCAPE!

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...!

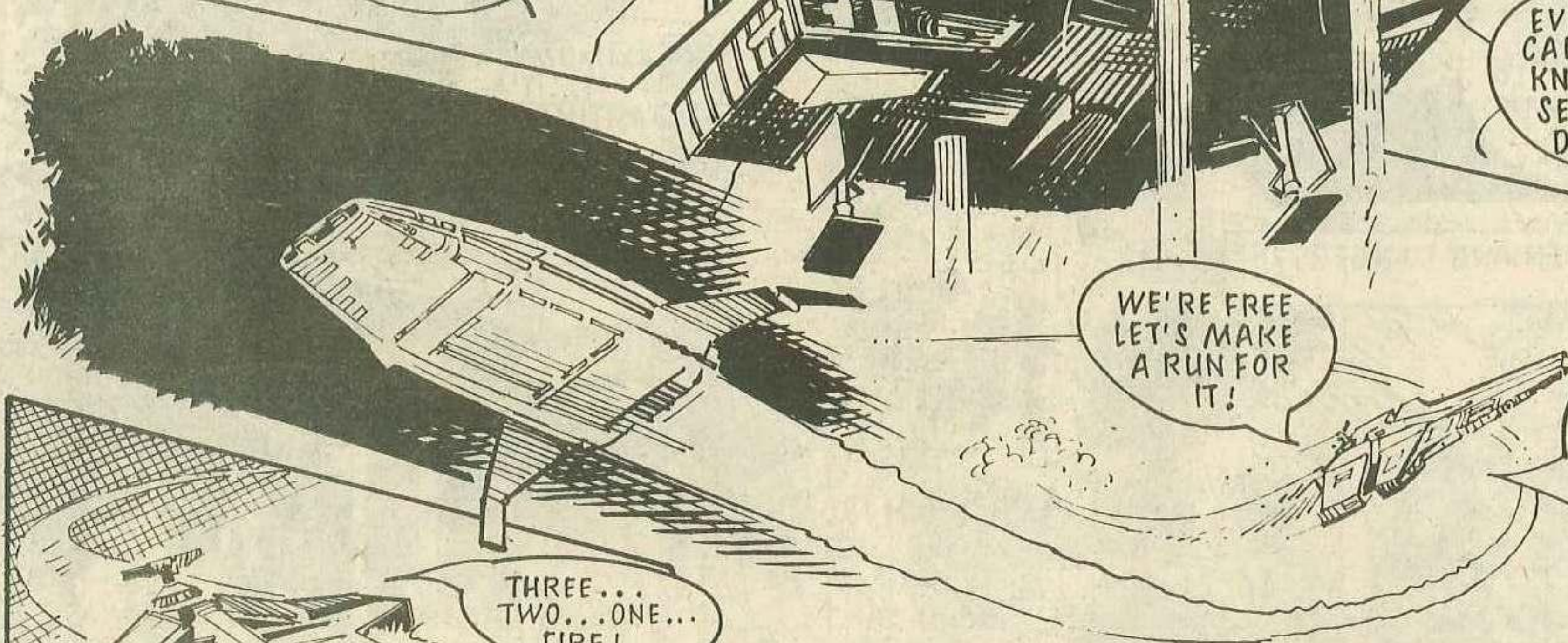
COMMISSIONER LOOK! IT IS SCORPIO!



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

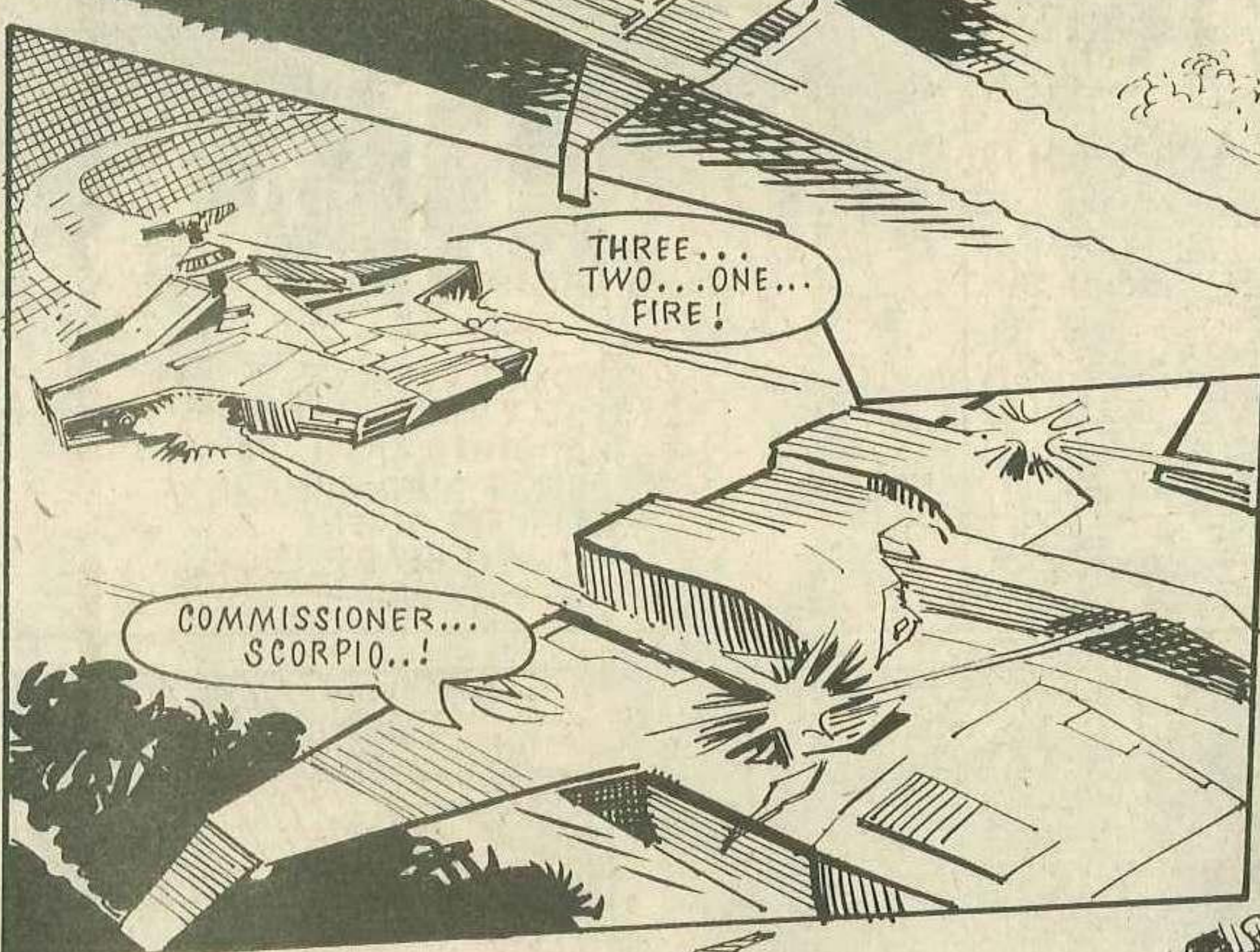
SHE'S SPOTTED
US. WE'RE
SUSTAINING
HITS!

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!



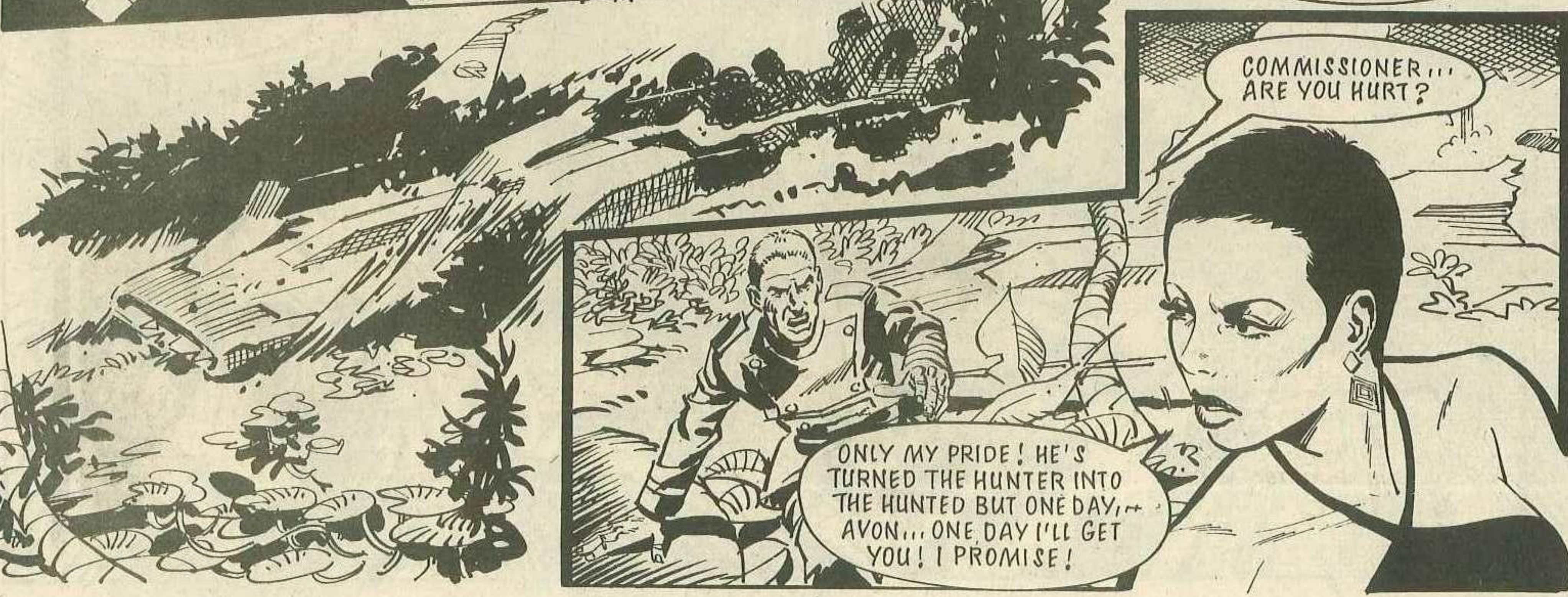
THREE...
TWO...ONE...
FIRE!

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!

B7 LETTERS

All correspondence to:
B7, Marvel Comics Ltd., Jadwin House,
205-211 Kentish Town Road, London NW5.

It's very important you keep us informed of what you would like to see in your magazine, what you think of the features and stories and what your views on the programme are. We want to give you the monthly magazine you want to read. So, keep your letters coming and, remember, each letter receives personal attention.

Here are a selection of the letters we've received so far...

Tony Westerly from Norfolk writes to say he saw a recent BBC POINTS OF VIEW programme where photographs from this magazine were shown in the form of a picture strip. 'About time the BBC recognised the strength of feeling there is amongst viewers about the series. Barry Took said his programme still receives tons of mail about the show and everyone is demanding its return. If that's the case, why don't the BBC do something about it? Can so many ardent viewers be wrong? Come on, BBC — let's have our favourite heroes back on the box!'

★★★

'MORE — MORE — MORE!' demands Sharon Cotterill of Wigan. Sharon writes, 'you've recently published some photographs of Paul Darrow taken in a garden setting. He looks even more handsome out of costume. Are there any more like that and, if so, please, please, print all you have. As you might have guessed, he's my favourite actor!'

Paul very kindly made time for a photo session with Ken Armstrong, our Blake's 7 photographer, at his home in Surrey. Paul's own garden was the setting and, from time to time, we will be using these pictures to introduce the articles Paul has written for the magazine.

★★★

Hamish Cunningham from Bristol writes to ask if Vere Lorrimer, producer of Blake's 7, is the same person who produced the latest series of TENKO on television?

Yes, Hamish, Vere Lorrimer started working on TENKO as soon as BLAKE'S 7 finished and, I'm sure you'll agree, has another winner on his hands.

Here's another letter concerning someone associated with the television series.

Can you please confirm if the Chris Boucher who was script editor on JULIET BRAVO, the BBC TV programme, was the same person who was script editor on BLAKE'S 7? Fiona Redfern, Newmarket.

Quite correct, Fiona. Chris Boucher of JULIET BRAVO fame is the same person who script edited on BLAKE'S 7 and also wrote the first and last episodes of the fourth series.

★★★

'Brilliant — that's the only word to describe it,' says Brian Mortimer of London, SE1, when speaking of the magazine. 'Your magazine has proved the BBC wrong again. Who said there were no more storylines left for the

characters? Every issue I read is filled with terrific adventures and well thought out stories. Why can't the BBC bring back the series and televise some of these stories? They'd make terrific viewing.

We're open to offers, Brian!

★★★

What about printing some ideas for model building, making little Scorpions and Liberators and other BLAKE'S 7 things? I'm sure there are plenty of readers who'd like to create their own spacecraft of the series. Colin Shearer, Cardiff.

Yours is one of many letters making such a request, Colin.

Until we sort it out what about you readers submitting your own ideas for model making? We'll print the best of them on the FAN SCENE page.



for the LOVE of AVON

- ANNA GRANT -

If you accept Oscar Wilde's dictum — "There is only one thing worse than being talked about, and that is *not* being talked about!" — then Anna Grant would never have had any cause for complaint. She was first mentioned by her brother in the episode entitled, *Countdown*, in series two.

Apparently, she had been a heroic, lovely woman who had been betrayed, and then abandoned, by the selfish Avon. Not surprisingly, if this were true, Anna's brother was anxious to set the record straight by disposing of poor Avon. As somebody — not Oscar Wilde — once said — "Fat chance!"

We learned, thankfully, that there had been a terrible misunderstanding. Avon, it appeared, had loved Anna and was distraught at her loss. (This was signified by the fact that he became very tight lipped whenever her name was mentioned!)

At the time they were both trying to defraud the Federation and then escape from its clutches, Avon had been betrayed himself and had lain at death's door, unable to save Anna from her fate.

Instead, he saved her brother from a booby trapped bomb set in a melting ice pack. However, we had now been told something of Avon's unfortunate past.

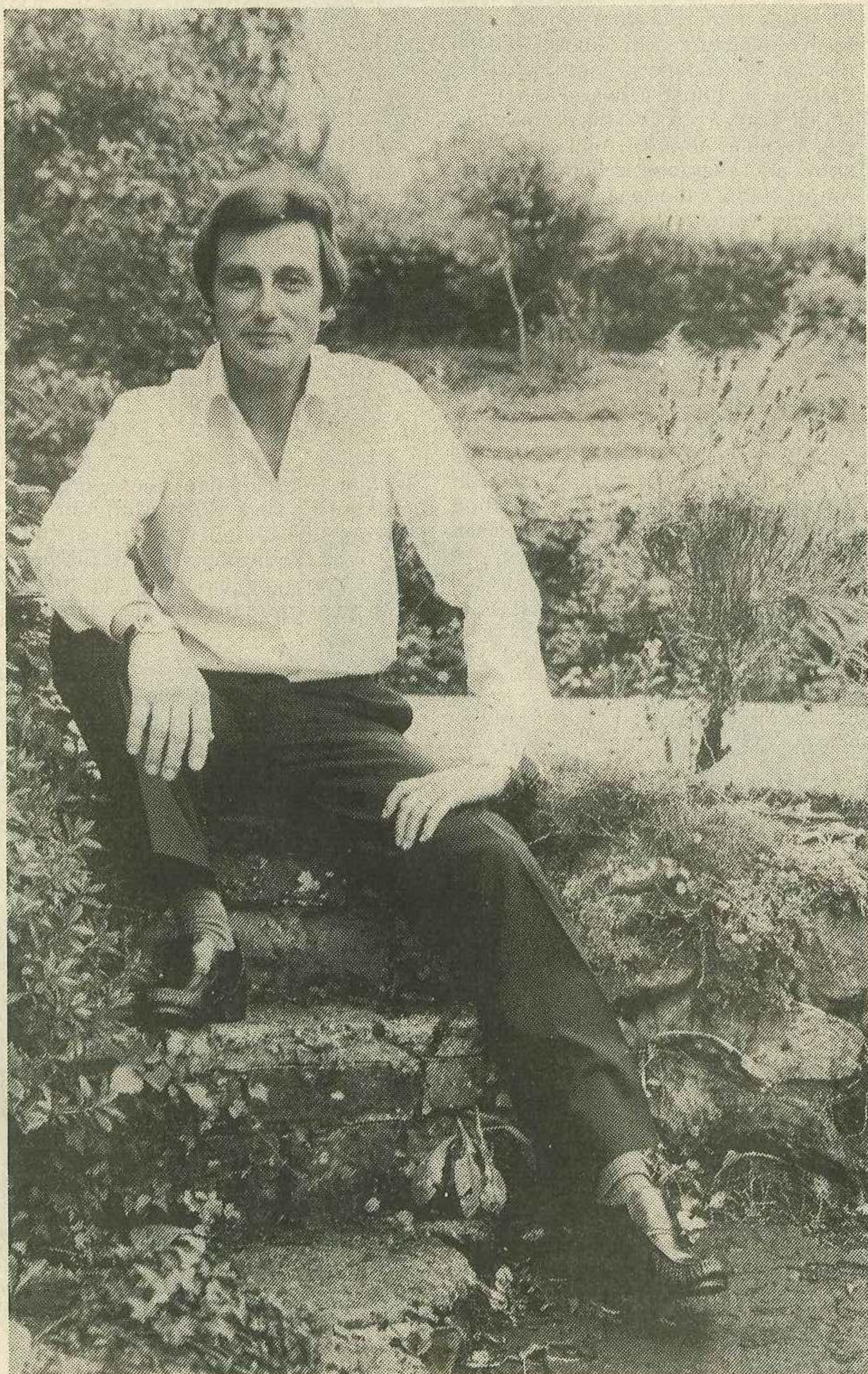
Countdown was a Terry Nation script. *Rumours of Death* was the responsibility of Chris Boucher. (The title is lifted from Mark Twain, by the way.)

Chris took Terry's original idea and turned it, brilliantly, on its head. He decided that Anna Grant, Avon's Juliet, was alive! Avon, though, was not to learn this fact too soon.

At first, he merely gained information that she had been captured and tortured by a notorious Federation investigator called, menacingly, "Shrinker".

"Vengeance is Mine!" Claimed a dispirited Avon.

Coldly, and viciously, he disposed of Anna's tormentor by leaving him to starve to death in a tiny, forgotten, inaccessible cave. (Our hero didn't





mess around when it came to giving people their come-uppance.)

Well, good for him, you might think. Then, Chris Boucher turned the screw. Anna Grant was not to be a lovely heroine, Avon's ideal woman. It transpired that it was she who had betrayed him. The Sampson of Outer Space had been seduced and beguiled by a cunning Delilah.

For the first time, Avon's judgement had been proved wrong. Hopelessly, pathetically wrong.

We all know that behind every great man is a woman. Chris had decided that the woman behind Avon was only awaiting her opportunity to cut him down.

Throughout history this has been a familiar tale. Who are we to say that, in the future, it will be any different?

The cast knew well in advance this episode was planned and it was interesting to speculate about who would be cast as Anna.

The director was to be Fiona Cumming. So, the choice of actress would come from a woman's point of view of Avon's dilemma.

I expect many of you wondered what Avon's femme fatale would be like. I know I did. Would she be sultry and voluptuous like Servalan? Taut and controlled like Cally? Dashing and pretty like Jenna?

It came about that, in a way, she was all of these. And none of them.

As portrayed by Lorna Heilbron, she was neat and petite and cool. She was humorous, yet distant. Above all, she had that indefinable something that

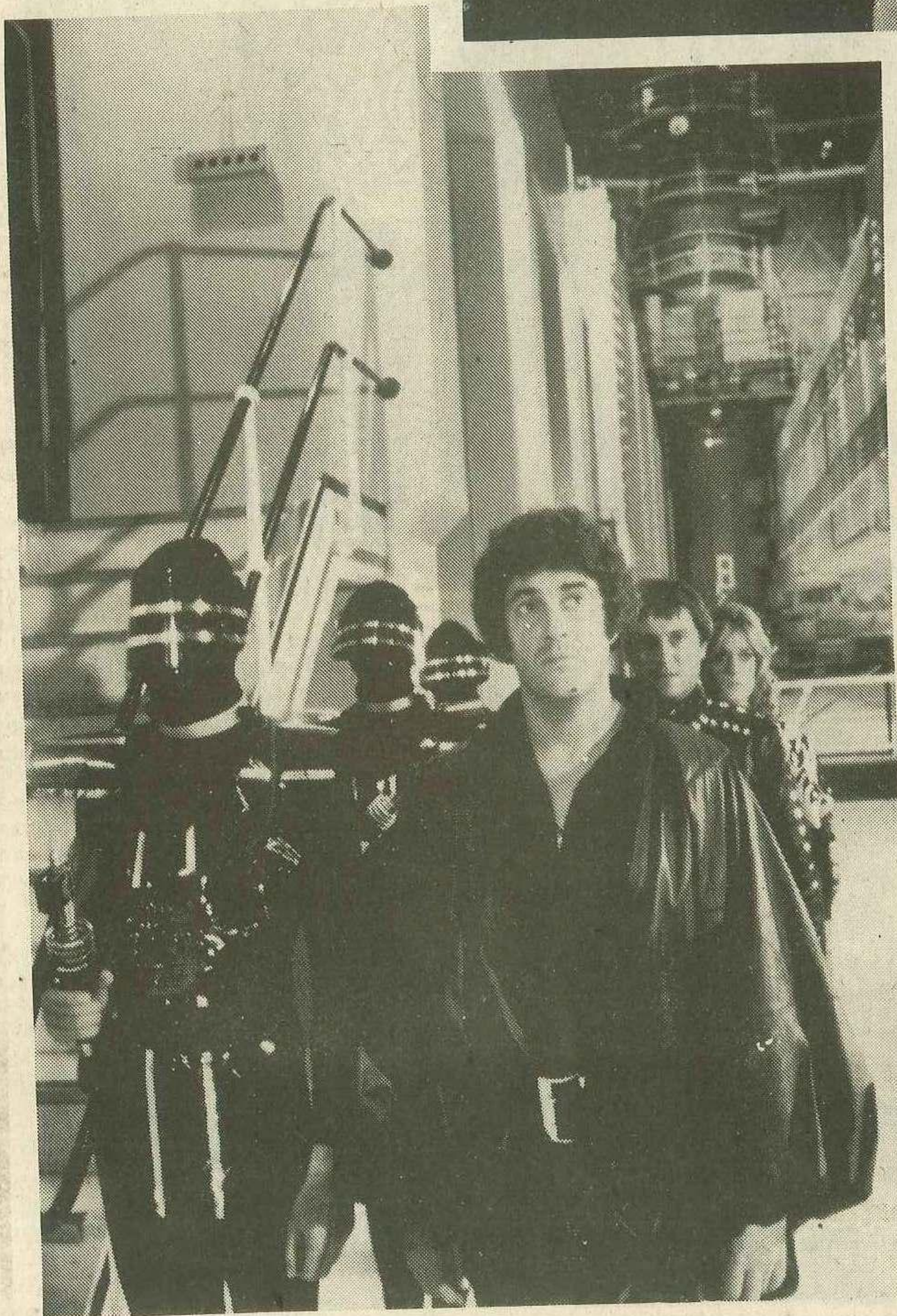


used to be called style. Or, as Oscar Wilde, again, might have suggested — class!

She had the quality we attribute to the unattainable and, because of that, *Rumours of Death*, as soon as Anna appeared, seemed sure to end in tragedy. And so, almost gleefully I suspect, Chris arranged matters that it did.

Avon, of course, had to survive. Albeit reluctantly.

Every man has an ideal and, when it is revealed to be mistaken, it can be a shattering experience. Avon, you will remember, after he shot Anna down, tried to remain with her body. A suicide attempt, in fact.



It was a tone of bleak reality that helped to make 'Blake's Seven' unique. It didn't underestimate your intelligence as so many series do. And you responded to us as a result.

And Avon?

He, and your view of him, for better or for worse, would never be the same again.

For better or for worse, *Rumours of Death* had not parted him from you yet.

What would have happened had he succeeded? He wasn't allowed to succeed, so the question remains academic. But, if you think about it, it was an astounding revelation of part of Avon's character that he should behave in such a way.

This, surely, was a cue to reveal more of him, to prompt him to behave quite differently from now on. It was a cue that I took.

To have the love of your life destroyed is bad enough. To destroy her yourself is worse. Then, to find out that she wasn't worthy of you anyway is almost unbearable. What a tortured experience this was.

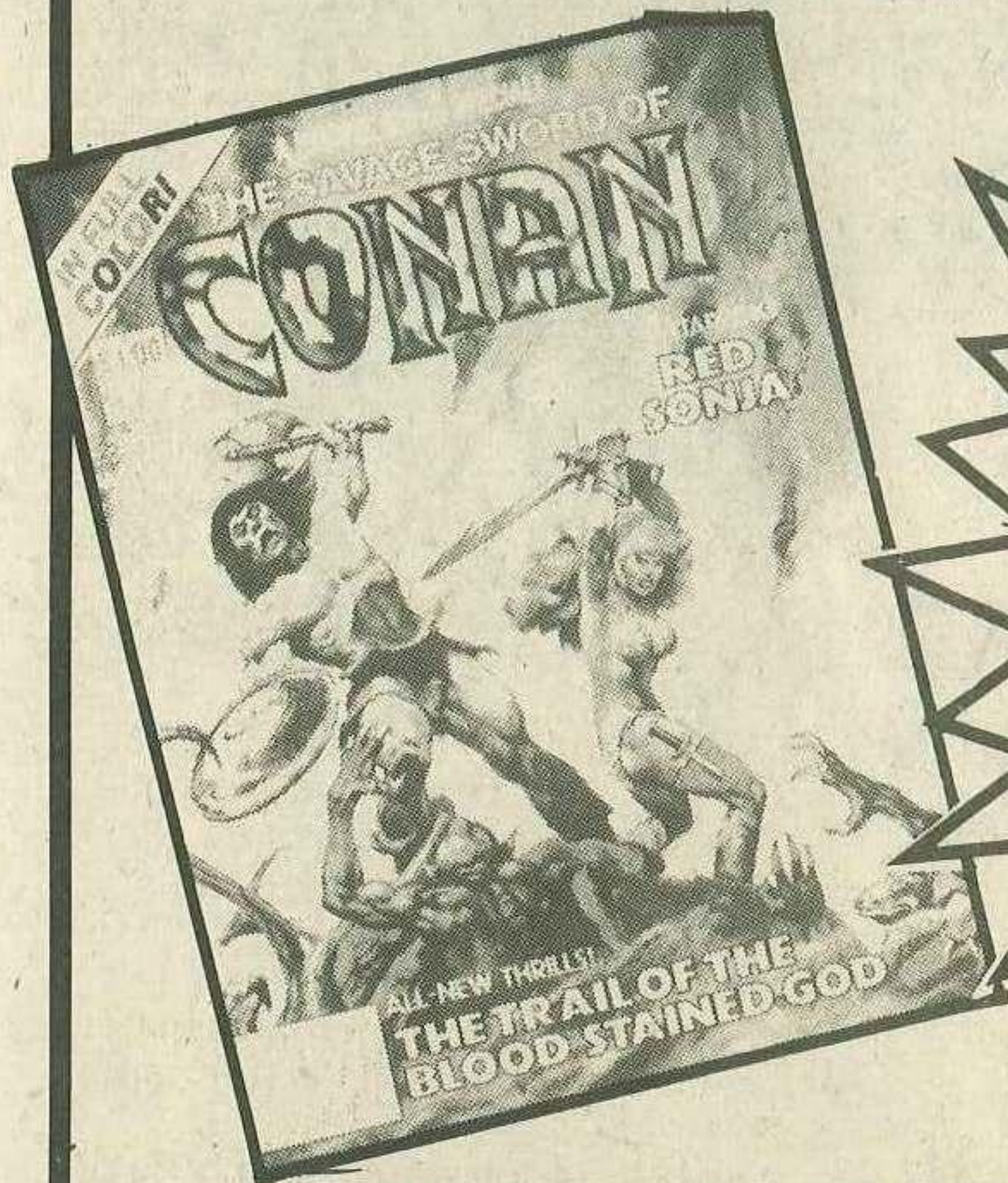
From this point, Avon clicked into another gear. He became colder, more ruthless, harder, even unpleasant. Could you blame him?

If not him, could you blame Anna Grant? The answer could be yes on both counts. But the real blame, or credit, rests with Chris Boucher.

His script set a new tone. Something you might not have found in what purported to be an adventure series before.

We will be doing a photo feature of the past cast next issue. Lookout for pics of Anna Grant in this feature.

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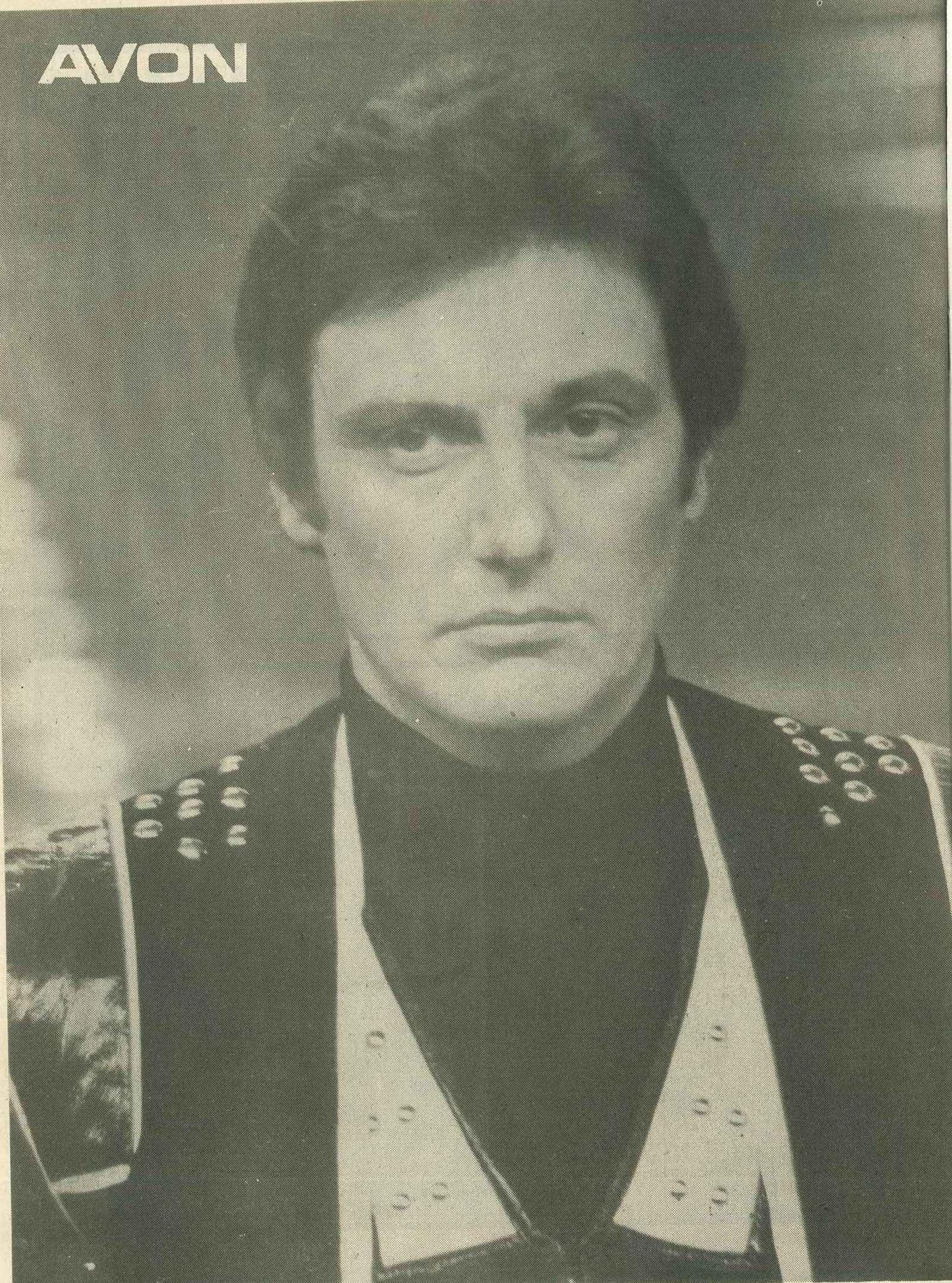
★ X-MEN! ★

★ AVENGERS! ★

★ NIGHT RAVEN ★
text story!



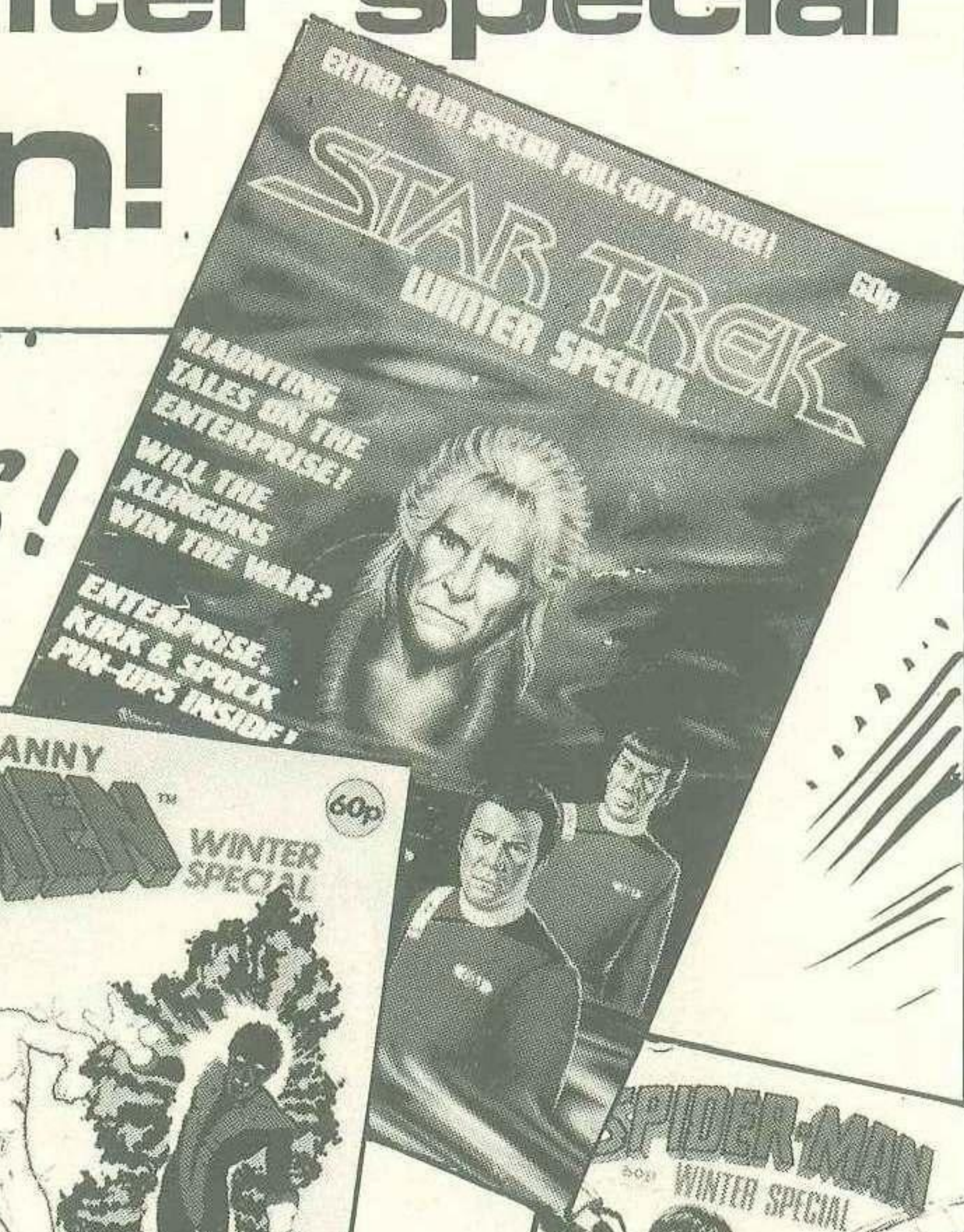
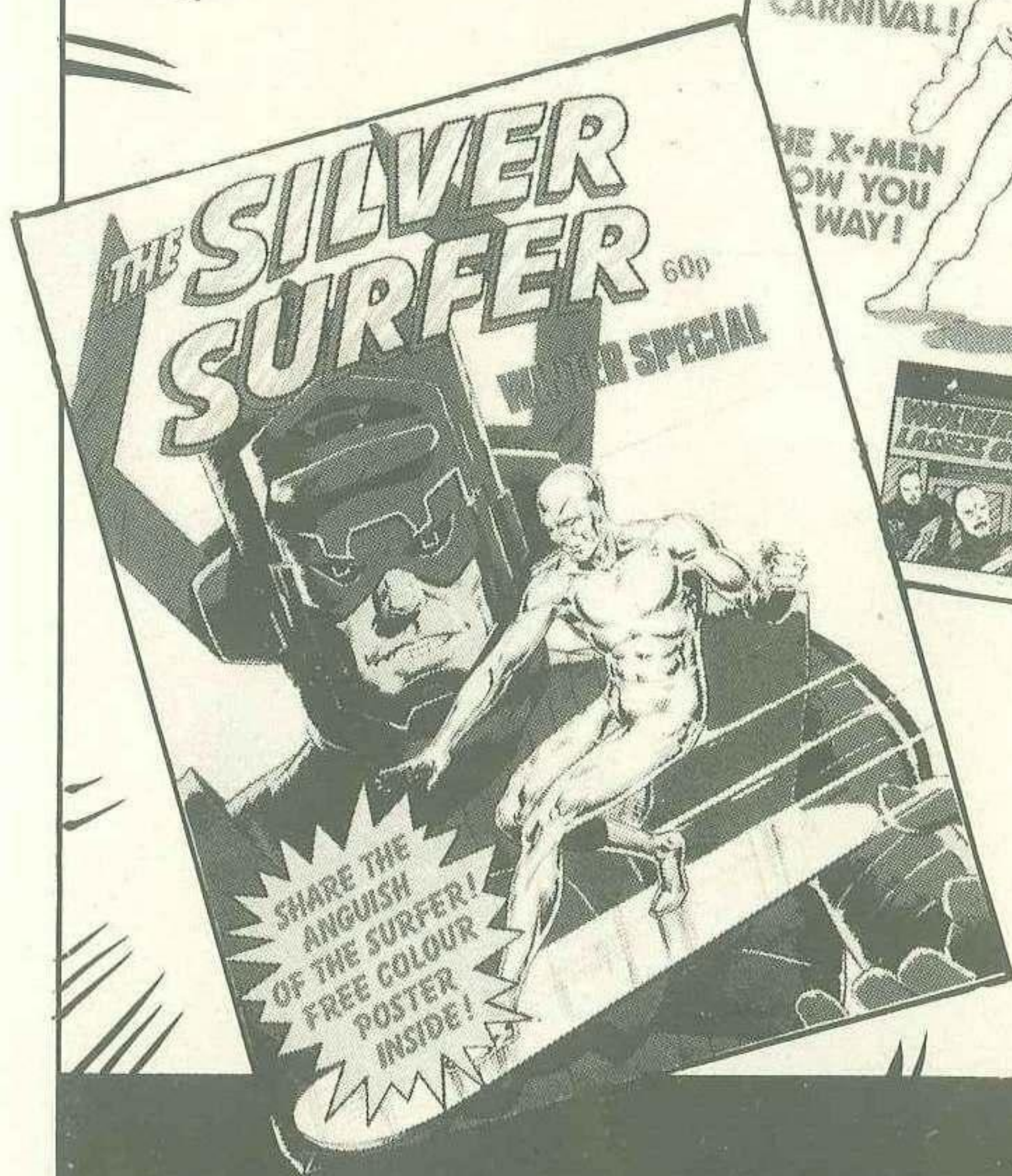
AVON



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DR WHO BLAKES 7



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RAMPAGE:

1-18, 19, 21-25, 27-32, 34 @ 35p ea.

COMPLETE FANTASTIC FOUR:

2-18 @ 35p ea.

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2-39 @ 20p ea.

HULK: First Series

1-42, 44, 45, 52, 54, 56-60, 62 @ 20p ea.

HULK WEEKLY: New Series

1-20 @ 25p ea.

STARWARS/EMPIRE STRIKES BACK:

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21, 22, 24, 25 @ 40p ea., 28,
32-50 @ 35p ea., 51-93, 96-98 @ 30p ea.
102-108, 110, 112-117 @ 25p ea.,
118-126, 128-139 @ 20p ea.

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1 @ 2.50p, 2-5 @ 1.50p ea.,
6-10 @ 1.00p ea., 11-24 @ 75p ea.,
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1-35 @ 20p ea.

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1-7, 9-13, 15, 16, 19-59 @ 20p ea.

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1, 2, 4, 7-12, 14, 16-25 @ 20p ea.

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2-19 @ 20p ea.

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1-5, 7, 8, 10-13, 16-25 @ 25p ea.

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2, 3, 5, 6-13 @ 25p ea.

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1, 2, 3, 4, 5 @ 50p ea.

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9, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30, 32,
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JOSETTE SIMON

blake's 7 and beyond...!

Known as Dayna the huntress, skilled in the use of almost every Weapon ever invented, she made a formidable member of Scorpio's crew. Having survived many adventures throughout the galaxy she became the first victim of the Federation when Avon and the crew were surprised on Gauda Prime. To this day viewers still wonder if Dayna is really dead. We found out and, who better to set the record straight but Dayna herself, actress Josette Simon.

'As far as I'm concerned, I'm afraid she is. The part of Dayna was a time when you have to say enough is enough,' confesses Josette. 'In the beginning it was terrific fun and I learned a great deal about acting for television but the part had its limitations. I'm also sad to say it didn't really help my career very much since, at the end of the series, producers weren't exactly queueing up to offer me work.'

When the last episode of BLAKE'S 7 was completed in the studio, Josette found herself seeking work in an already depressed acting profession. As she explained, even though her face was familiar to many thousands of viewers through her portrayal of Dayna, it did not lead automatically to offers of parts.

'I was out of work for about ten weeks,' continues Josette, 'and it was a very depressing time. I went to several interviews but with no success then a friend of mine mentioned a festival of drama was taking place at the Warehouse Theatre in Covent Garden and there might be something in it for me. It turned out, in fact, that one part in a new Snoo Wilson play had not been cast and, having read for the part, I suddenly found myself rehearsing for two days prior to the show being opened to the public.'

Once again Josette's luck seemed to be in. Sitting in the audience for one of her performances were two directors from the Royal Shakespeare Company who immediately offered her a contract.





'I was absolutely over the moon,' beams Josette. 'There I was thinking I'd be on the dole for the rest of my career, wondering if I'd ever get another part then, out of the blue, I find myself a member of the most prestigious Company in the country. I just couldn't believe my luck!'

The move to Stratford-upon-Avon and the Royal Shakespeare Theatre was one which Josette viewed with some trepidation.

'I didn't know how I would fit in with the others in the Company since the RSC has a reputation for excellence and I didn't know if I had it in me to attain that standard. I was soon put at my ease, however, and found the rest of the Company fun to be with, marvellous to work with and also a very happy band of people.

It was not long before Josette was also finding out how the RSC achieved its reputation for excellence. Long hours of rehearsal during the day followed by a full evening's performance left her little time to herself.

'We generally start at 10 o'clock in the morning with rehearsal of one play followed by the performance of another that night. It can be very confusing for someone not used to that way of working. There are times when you are never sure which play you're supposed to be performing on the night.

Our day usually ends somewhere about 11 o'clock at night and that is our schedule for six days a week. We have one day off, the Sunday, and that is all. It requires real stamina — and a good memory — to keep going *and* remember the lines of the play you're supposed to be performing!'

Not everything at the RSC is on quite such a serious level, however, as Josette relates.

'There are always moments on stage during a live performance when things go wrong. For me, fortunately, not too many disasters have stalked my performances but the danger of the unexpected is always there.

At the RSC Josette learned much from performing with such powerful actors as Derek Jacobi.

During *The Tempest*, several of us have to wear long knitted dresses and as required in the play, we have to sit down on stage at certain times. That is not too difficult — it's the getting up that always poses the problems.

It's not very easy trying to get up gracefully when you're standing on the hem of your dress and the serious lines you're trying to deliver tend to get lost after your third or fourth attempt to stand up while saying them!

'Enthusiastic curtain calls can also prove hazardous. As you may know, I like to keep my hair short and, for the play, *Much Ado About Nothing*, I was wearing a wig secured by hairpins. All through the performance one night after I'd had my hair cut my wig was working itself loose but managed to stay approximately in place until the end. When we were making our second curtain call at the conclusion of the play, I made rather a deep bow... and found the wig falling over my face. I beat a hasty retreat into the wings flushed not with success but embarrassment!

Some fellow actors in the Company have not been as lucky as Josette in saving their mistakes to the end.

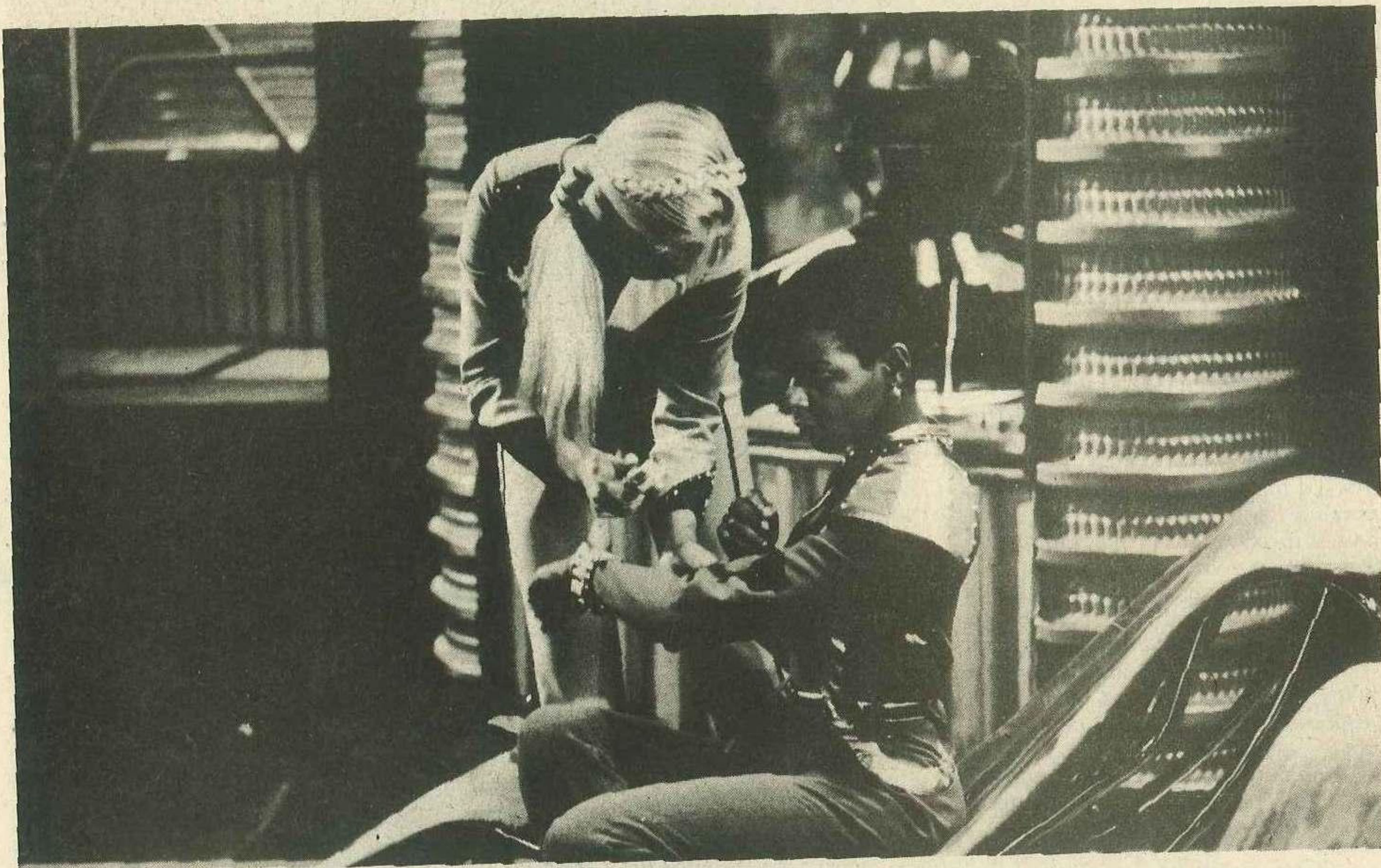
'During a performance of *The Tempest*, an actor had to make his exit carrying an armful of clothes. As he'd done the play several times, the clothes preventing him from seeing where he was going, no-one really worried about his exit — not until that fateful night. We all watched with horror as he made his exit — right off the stage into the front row of the stalls!

I'm sorry to say the poor man hurt his leg in the fall but the whole thing in retrospect seems very funny. The most amazing thing of all is watching the audience reaction to an incident like that. The people in the front row all seemed to pretend the poor chap wasn't there, despite him lying across their laps with his bundle of clothes everywhere. I think they were embarrassed by the whole thing and chose to ignore the accident rather than help the actor back on stage.

As an addition to her straight acting, Josette has also taken to singing in a big way.

Armed to the teeth and ready for anything, Dayna always appeared the capable 'Huntress'.





'As part of a youth festival a friend of mine set some poems of Edward Bond to music and, I'm delighted to say, they've been very well received. Singing is something I've always loved and the combination of singing and acting is something I've always wanted to perfect. Hopefully more work like this will come my way.'

Now very much part of the Stratford scene, Josette still finds there is no escape from her BLAKE'S 7 past.

'Not long after moving to Stratford I bought a small house in the area. The very first Sunday I spent in the place I decided I'd wash my car but, no sooner had I started, than I was surrounded by almost every child in the neighbourhood.

They couldn't believe Dayna had moved in down the road! I found the same sort of reaction when I started shopping locally. It seemed everywhere I turned there was a BLAKE'S 7 fan. It feels like Stratford and the surrounding area contains one of the highest concentrations of BLAKE'S 7 fans anywhere in the country — or maybe they are just representative of the country as a whole? Who knows?'

Josette was also astonished by the number of fans who appeared at the stage door at Stratford to see her when they knew she was in a particular play.

Being someone who has always kept fit, the taxing schedule of the RSC did not trouble her unduly.

'The team spirit in the Company tends to keep you going,' continues Josette, 'and, with the variety of parts thrust at me, there's never a dull moment.'

Having played a witch in Macbeth, Iris in Anthony and Cleopatra, Anitra in Peer Gynt plus parts in Much Ado About Nothing and The Tempest, Josette feels her own acting ability has been improved and developed far beyond what she ever hoped to achieve.

'Two of the best performers of today, Helen Mirren and Derek Jacobi, have taught me so much about the handling of acting parts that their influence will always be with me.

Helen Mirren especially has a unique approach to acting, getting emotionally involved with her part to produce a passionate performance which is exhilarating and exciting to watch. Her style of acting is the style I hope to achieve; delivering quality about that type of acting which thrills an audience and brings a play to life.'

'It was smashing to see them all,' she smiles, 'but also some fans didn't realise I was in a play until they saw me on stage. Little gasps of recognition from

Bloodied but unbowed — that's the way Dayna appeared to the viewers right up to the moment of her tragic end.

the auditorium can still sometimes be heard during a performance.

With such a following, does Josette have any regrets about the series ending?

'Yes and no. As I mentioned before, Dayna was a part of my life when I was working on the programme, a part I enjoyed very much indeed but I have to think of other things now. The fourth series, also, did not really give Dayna a real chance to develop as a character and use her skill with weaponry.'

Did the introduction of the Soolin character detract from Dayna's skills?

'I'm sure it must have done. I don't believe there was enough of a contrast in the characters of Soolin and Dayna. Both were good with guns and both liked their share of the action. Had Soolin been developed as a person



All it takes to change a depressing day into one of the happiest days of her life — a bottle of champagne and a birthday cake for Josette .

whose strengths lay in something other than weapons, I'm sure the writers could have made better use of both of us. As it was, there was always the problem of deciding which of us would use a gun to good effect to get out of a tight situation.'

Though there might have been problems with character usage during the fourth series, it never adversely affected the personal relationships between the cast. Josette still keeps in close contact with Glynis Barber and Steven Pacey (Soolin and Tarant) who all became firm friends during the making of the series.

'We all see each other on a regular basis, filming and play schedules permitting, and we enjoy each others' company. I suppose there is still some of the BLAKE'S 7 magic left in us. Certainly, when we appear anywhere as a trio, the public still think so!'

Of all her experiences during the making of the series, which events and locations mean the most to her?

'Betchworth quarry — or the mud hole — will never be forgotten,' laughs Josette. 'When you've been splashing about knee-deep in mud from six o'clock in the morning until late at night in between torrential downpours, it's not something you forget in a hurry.'

'By contrast, of course, there was the beautiful setting of the south Dorset coastline for summer filming. That, to some extent, made up for the quarry.'

'The most memorable event, however, must have been the day we filmed 'HEADHUNTER' at Box Hill. It seemed everything I tried to do that day went wrong. Supposed magnetic mines would not stick to the metal bridge because of the constant drizzle.'

'We had to wander about in plastic coats between takes and during rehearsal in order to keep our uniforms dry and I was becoming thoroughly miserable.'

'To add to my depression, it was my birthday and no-one seemed to know. Then when the filming was over for the day, director Mary Ridge called me over to where a small table had been set up and, to my amazement and delight, there was champagne and a birthday cake all laid out for me. My misery and depression were all forgot-

ten. A rotten day turned into one of the very best.'

'It's the sort of gesture which goes to show just how happy a cast we really were. Everyone, from cast right through to the stage hands who moved props for us, were a terrific bunch; all doing their very best to make sure the programme was a success and it worked.'

Whether it be straight acting or singing, Josette's professional career looks like going from strength to strength in the months to come.

'I never try to plan too far ahead,' concludes Josette. 'Even a month is a long time in the acting business, but there are so many things I would like to do that I hardly know where to begin. Some film work would top the list but, until the opportunities come along, I'm quite happy doing what I'm doing.'

Although the role of Dayna is now in the past for Josette, we are certain she will make a success of whatever comes her way and are looking forward to seeing her on television again in the not too distant future.

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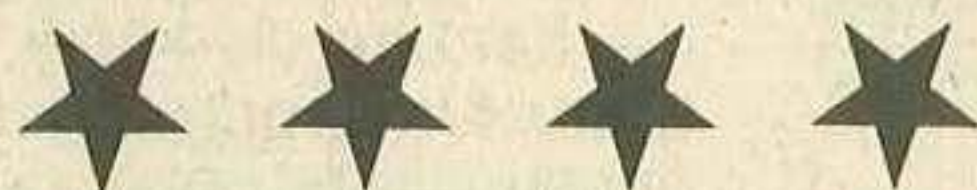
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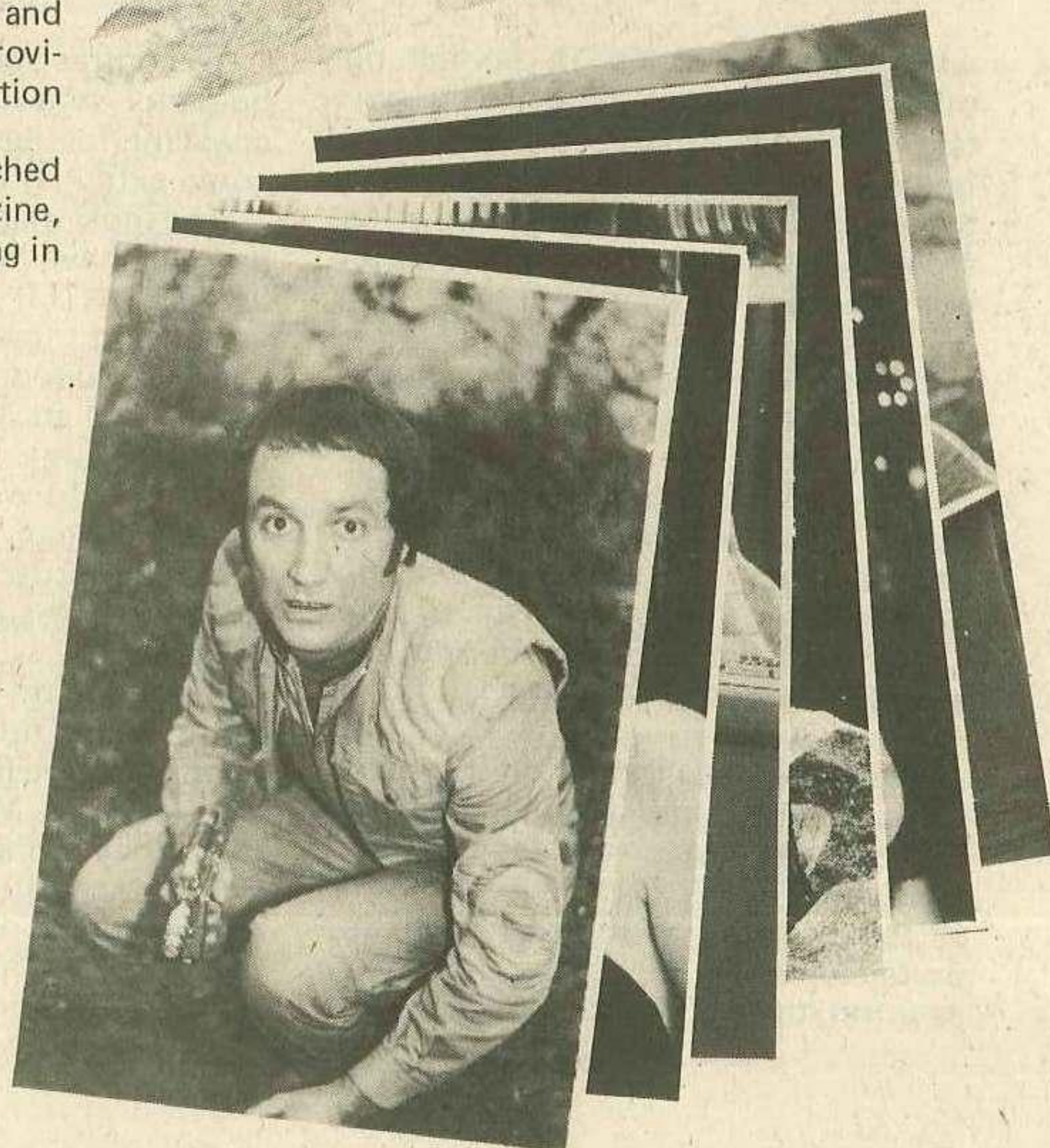
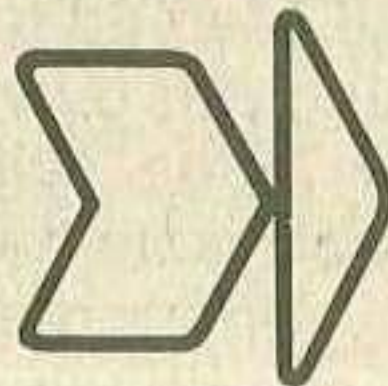
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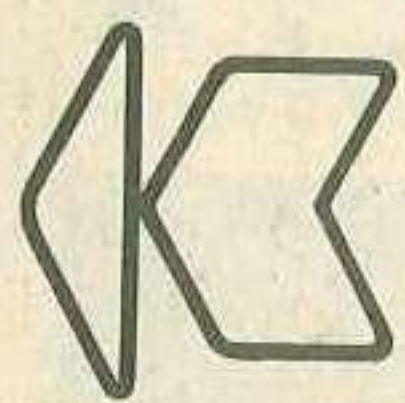
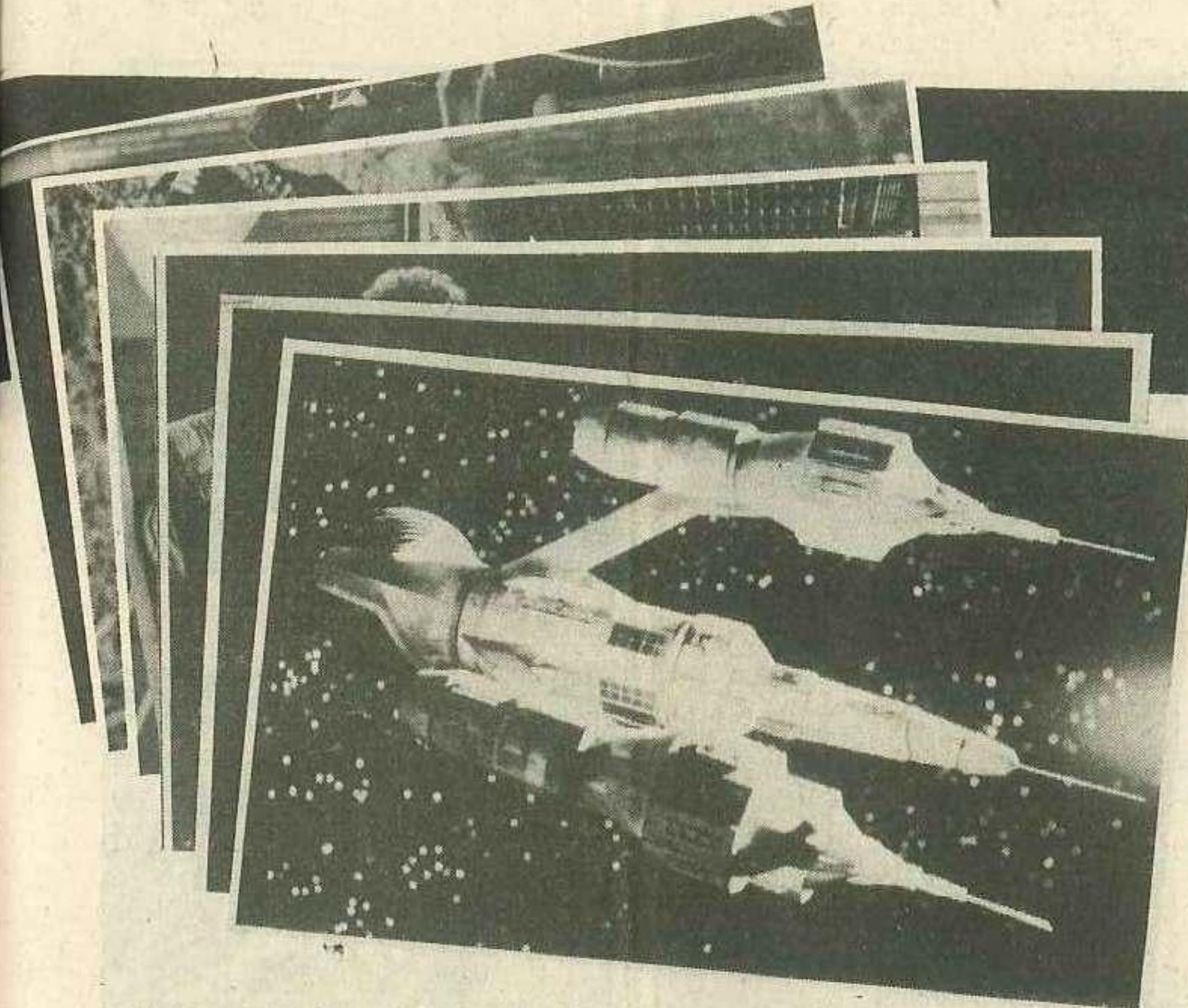
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A. Group shot in front of Slave.



B. Group shot with Orac.



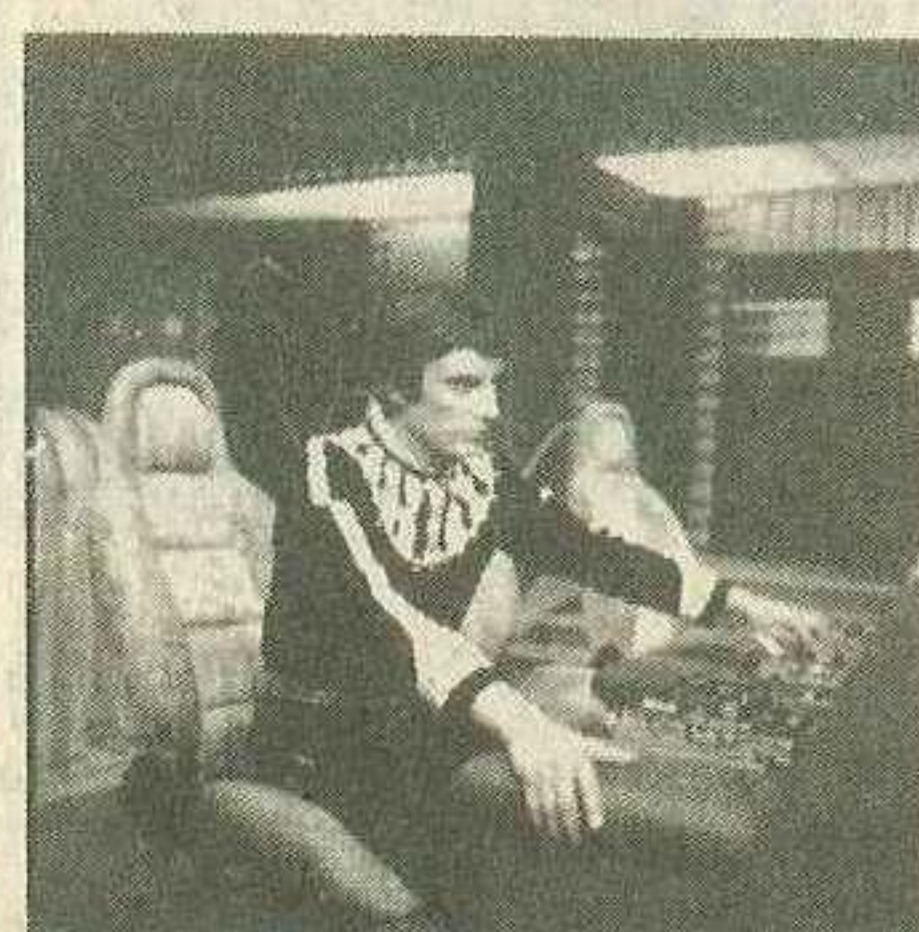
C. Group shot at flight controls.



D. Teleport trio Vila, Dayna, Soolin.



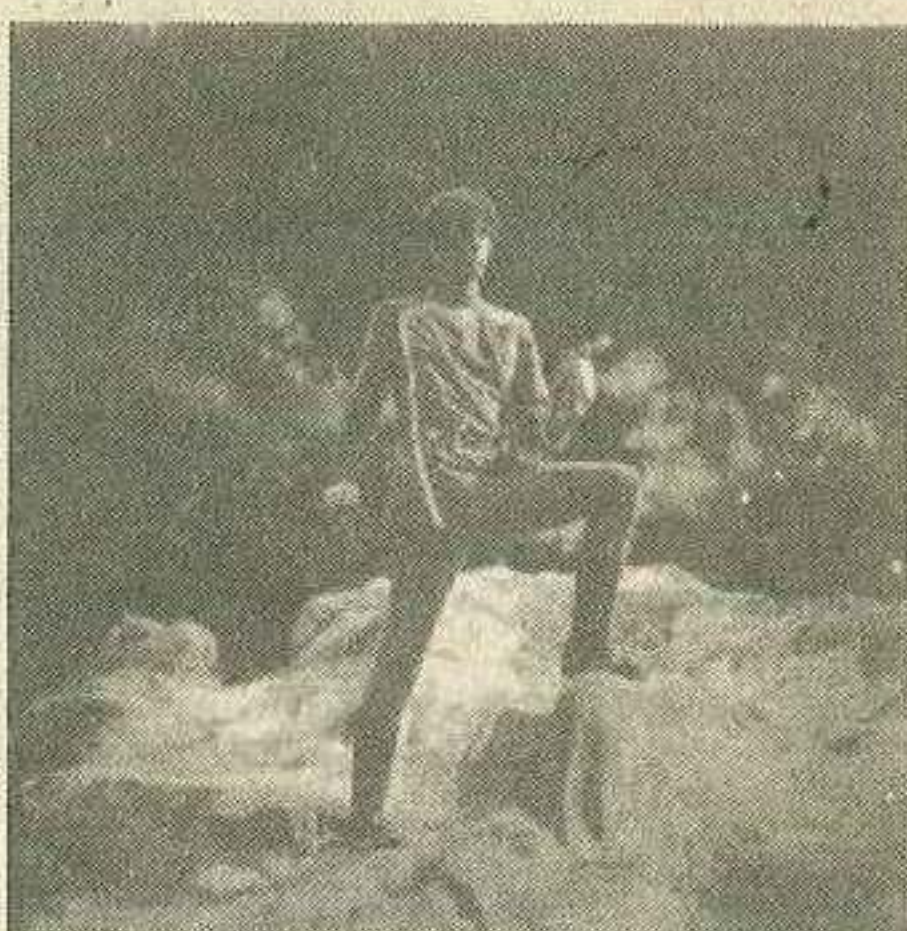
E. Avon with gun.



F. Avon at Controls.



G. Tarrant in close-up.



H. Tarrant standing.



I. Vila with gun creeping.



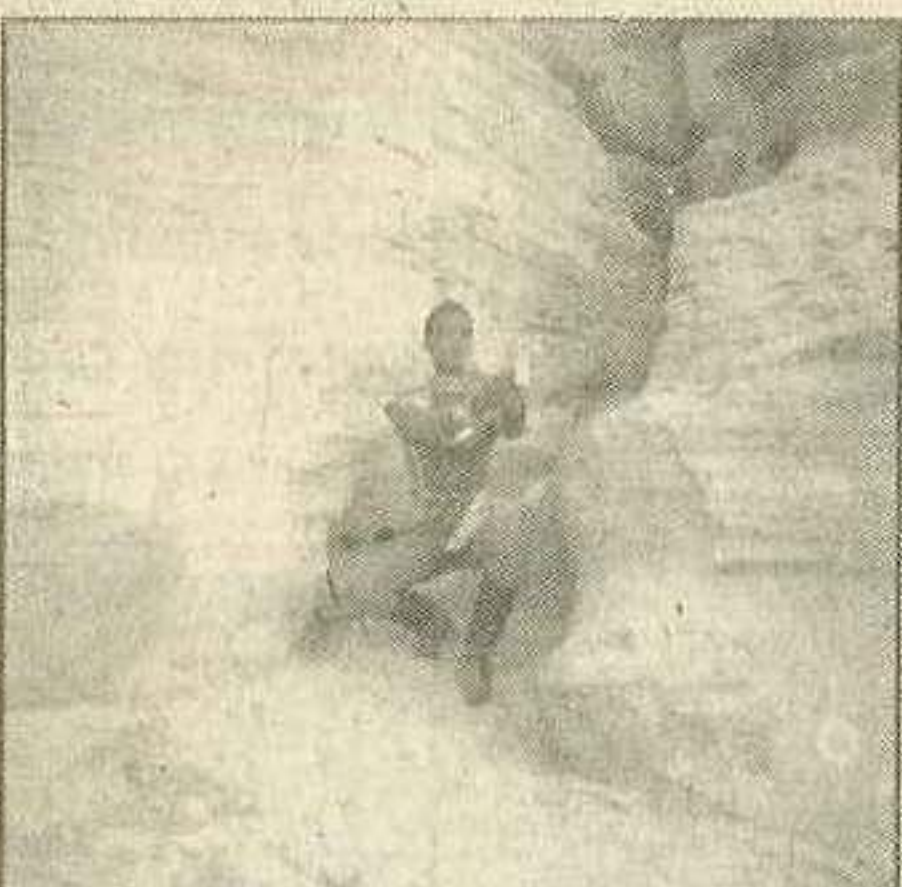
J. Vila smiling.



K. Soolin standing, smiling.



L. Soolin with gun.



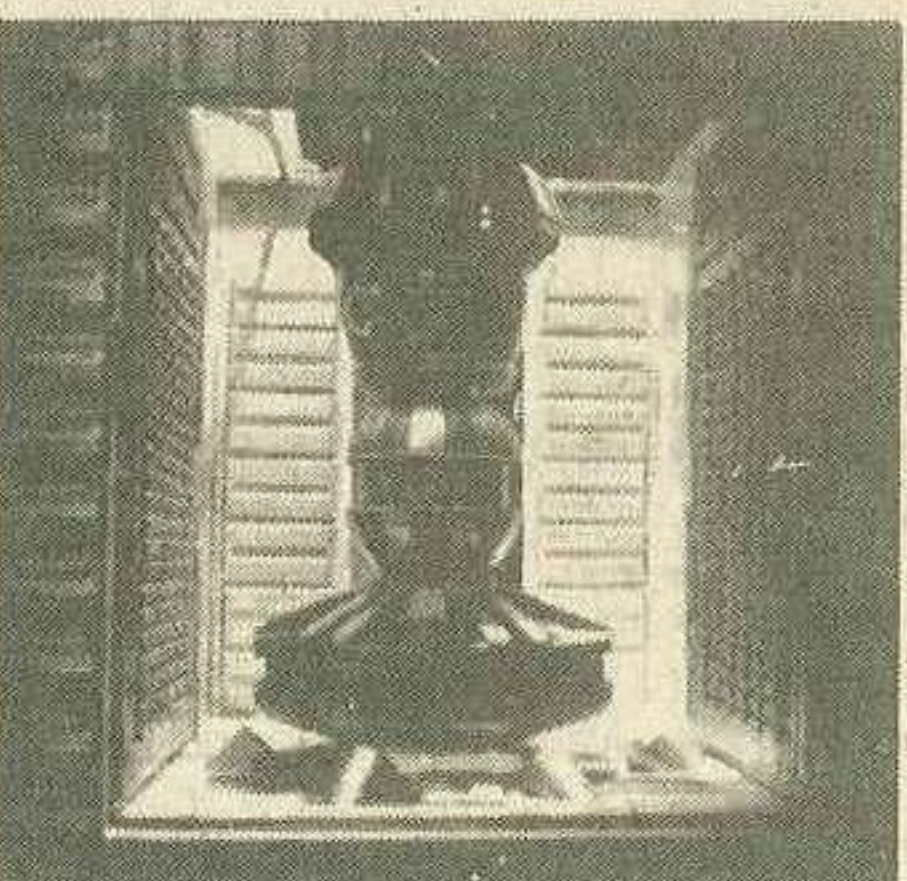
M. Dayna with gun.



N. Dayna smiling.



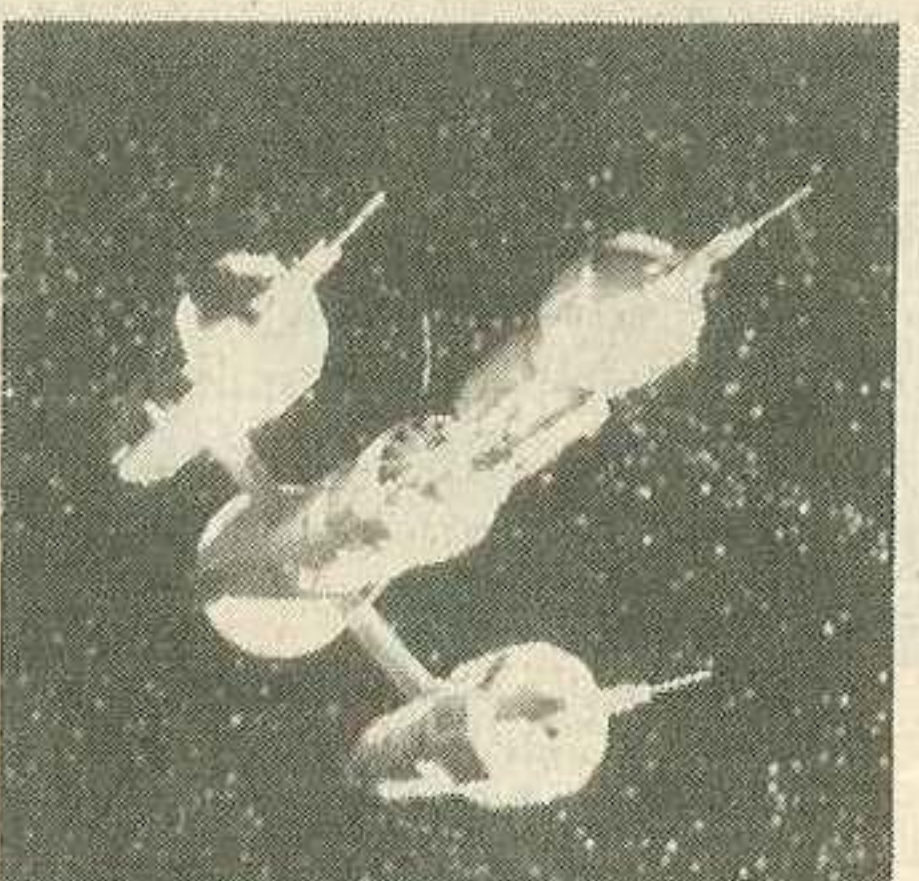
O. Blake and Avon.



P. Slave.



Q. Scorpio.



R. Liberator.

A NEW BEGINNING

A short time ago in the magazine we announced that selected stories penned by readers would be published providing they were no longer than 3,000 words and typed on A4 sheets with double line spacing between. Stories must also relate to the fourth series, using the Scorpio and its crew. On the following pages we present the first of such stories. A NEW BEGINNING; by Harry Waller.

For his subject, Harry has chosen the ending of the fourth series and surmises on what could have happened. We hope you find it as interesting and entertaining as we did.

Remember, if you believe you have a BLAKE'S 7 story to tell and can write it in an exciting way, send your story, with a self addressed stamped envelope, to the magazine address, marked SHORT STORY, and we will publish the best of them. Meanwhile, here is Harry's solution to the traumatic ending of the fourth series.

Avon stands over the body of the one time friend he has just murdered. The Federation guards close in, kicking aside the sprawled limbs of Scorpio's fallen crew. In the stifling, clammy atmosphere of the base on Guada Prime death is everywhere. Avon's eyes flick from side-to-side. A dozen guns are aimed at him. Is this really the ignominious end he always suspected would be his? Should he surrender and throw himself at the mercy of Servalan? As yet she had not shown herself but, with his life in the balance, could she be far away? For Avon there is only one answer. Slowly, ever so slowly, he raised his gun. The guards, amazed by his audacity, fail to respond immediately. Avon's finger tightens on the trigger. The gun bucks in his hand. A Federation guard catapults backwards under the impact then the air is filled with exploding charges. Avon fires twice more before he slumps to the ground, his body covering Blake's. A deathly silence prevails.

'Bring him to me.' From a dark recess to one side of the control room the black-cloaked figure of Servalan steps into view. Without a sound, two guards grab Avon's still form, raising it from the bloody corpse of Blake. Even in death, they note, Blake's staring eyes seem to accuse and, as if to underline his accusation, his fresh blood stains Avon's uniform. Not moving a muscle, Servalan stares down at the body of Avon now lying before her. There is no flicker of emotion on her pale face. 'Take him to my ship,' she hisses under her breath.

'But, Commissioner,' protests a guard, 'we have orders . . .'

'I have just given you fresh orders,' she rasps. 'Now obey them or face the consequences!' With that, Servalan turns on her heel, sweeping out into the dimly lit corridor.

'She's mad,' whispers a guard to his friend. 'You can see it in her eyes.'

'Mad or not,' retorts the other, 'I wouldn't risk crossing her. You know what they say about her and this guy.' The guard kicks Avon's limp body. 'They say



A dozen guns are aimed at Avon. . .

once they were lovers. You know — had a thing going. Maybe she wants him preserved in ice for old-times sake.'

The other shrugs his shoulders then, bending to his task, helps carry Avon's body from the scene of carnage. Even as they lurch down the corridor with their burden, the remaining guards move to examine the other bodies. Once confirmed as dead they will be buried where they fell when the neutron detonator charges are set, the entire complex be-

coming their grave. It was Servalan's idea, of course. She is nothing if not methodical.

'Have you located the computer yet?' demands Servalan of her Captain.

'The machine was programmed to transmit pulsed signals simulating a distress beacon. It was then concealed prior to the terrorists entering the control complex. The scanners are trying to locate it now.'

'It must be found,' commands Servalan,

'and it must be brought here within the next ten minutes. It is a matter of extreme urgency.'

'Er, yes, Commissioner,' replies her Captain in a puzzled manner, 'I'm aware of that.'

'You're not aware of precisely why I want that machine,' she rasps. 'Have you tried the passive locator? If the computer has been switched off and its key removed the only hope of finding it will be by transmitting a passive beta signal which will change frequency when it passes over the machine.'

'There is a great deal of machinery located round the rebel complex,' cautions the captain. 'It could take hours to find the correct device.'

'You have precisely eight minutes to locate it and bring it here to the ship,' says Servalan in a low, determined voice.



The commissioner's thinly veiled threat is not lost on her captain. When the guards bring in the body of Avon it is placed on a medi-couch. A thermal preserver sheet is placed over the form. The captain knows full well that the human brain cannot be revived even having had thermal protection after fifteen minutes of recorded death. At least half that time has elapsed. He glances at his nervous mistress pacing round the covered body. Unless he can find the last hope of reviving the terrorist, the computer called Orac, he will soon be joining that still form on the medi-couch. This time, however, the Commissioner will have no intention of trying to revive him. He immediately sets the beta search mechanism in action.

Two minutes of lapse time remaining, indicates the digital read-out attached to the medi-couch. Servalan bites her knuckles. Seldom has she felt so helpless. It is not a time to analyse emotions. What she feels is a mixture of rage and frustration. She knows that beneath the silver sheet Avon's vital functions are slowly atrophying — degrading beyond any hope of recovery.

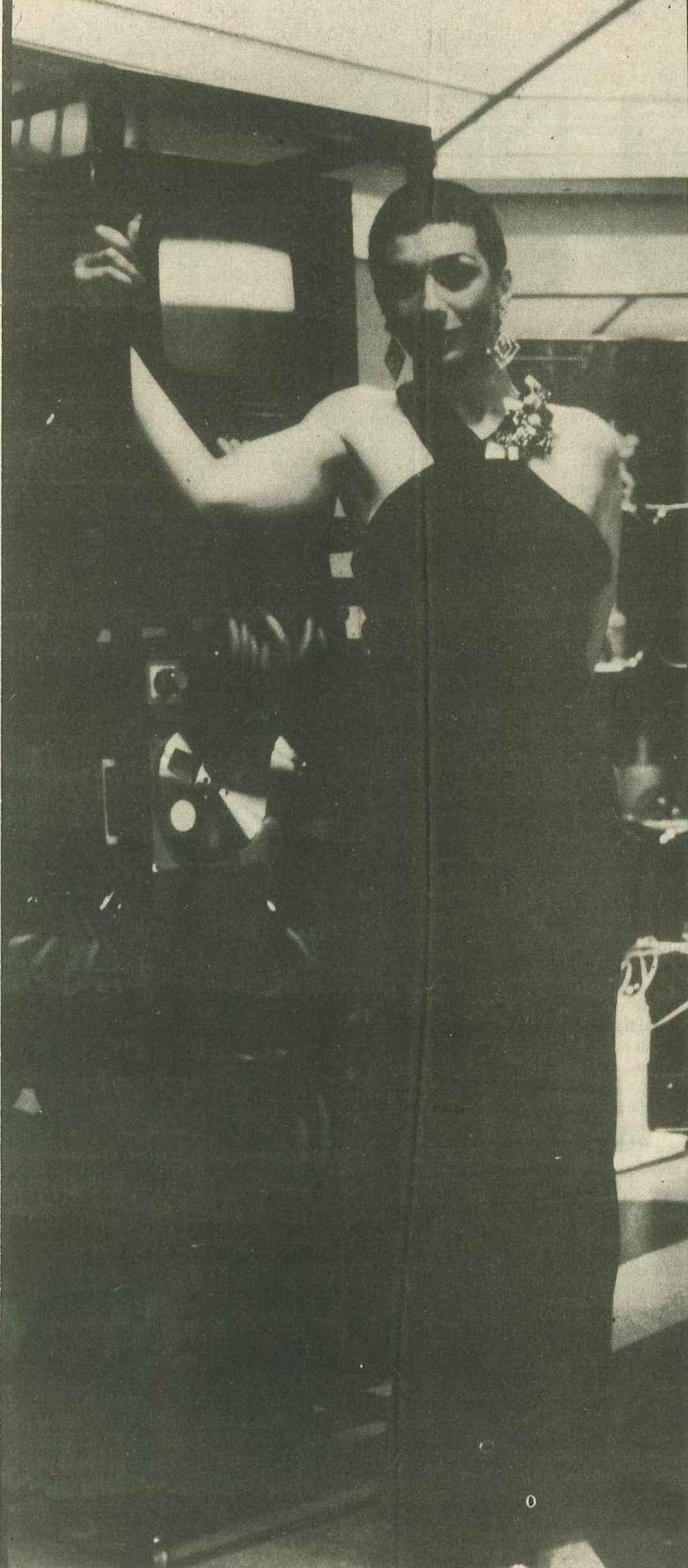
'Sector six search party coming aboard, Commissioner,' says her captain, cutting through her morose thoughts.

'Uh — what did you say?'

'They've got it, Commissioner. The computer called Orac. They're bringing it on board now.'



As the black-suited figures place the dull silent box of circuits beside the medi-couch, Servalan feels a flutter of excitement in her breast. At last the machine she has so long desired is hers. Ensor's masterpiece is there to serve her. But there is something wrong. Orac is not flashing.



There is no sign of life in his mass of circuitry.

Servalan scowls as she thrusts connector leads from the medi-couch into Orac's terminal sockets. 'The key,' she hisses, the words catching in her throat. 'Where is the key?'

'This was all we found,' says the guard commander in a mystified voice. 'What's the key supposed to look like, Commissioner?'

'Pah!' Servalan dismisses the guards with a wave of her taloned hands. 'Get out of my sight! Without the key you have brought me just so much junk!' Servalan paces about, the biting of her knuckles becoming more savage. There is blood showing. Her captain ventures a suggestion.

'Er, Commissioner, the terrorist has not yet been searched.'

Servalan shoots him a withering glance. She tears off the silvered covering, gasping with shock as she sees the deathly grey form lying on the medi-couch before her. Swallowing hard she pulls open Avon's blood sodden jacket — nothing! An ominous sinking feeling invades her stomach and a cold seat trickles down her finely sculpted back. That instant she feels something pressing against her hand as she leans on Avon's open jacket. From inside the lining the small oblong shape seems to want to be found.

'The key,' she screeches.

Moments later Orac is humming into life, its lights flickering in the harsh glae of the overhead beams.

'You are mine noe, Orac,' announces Servalan, a degree of composure in her voice. 'You will do as I say.'

'I am not programmed to respond to your wishes,' retorts the 'small powerhouse. 'Avon has seen to that.'

'You *must* obey me!' screeches the Federation's head of security.

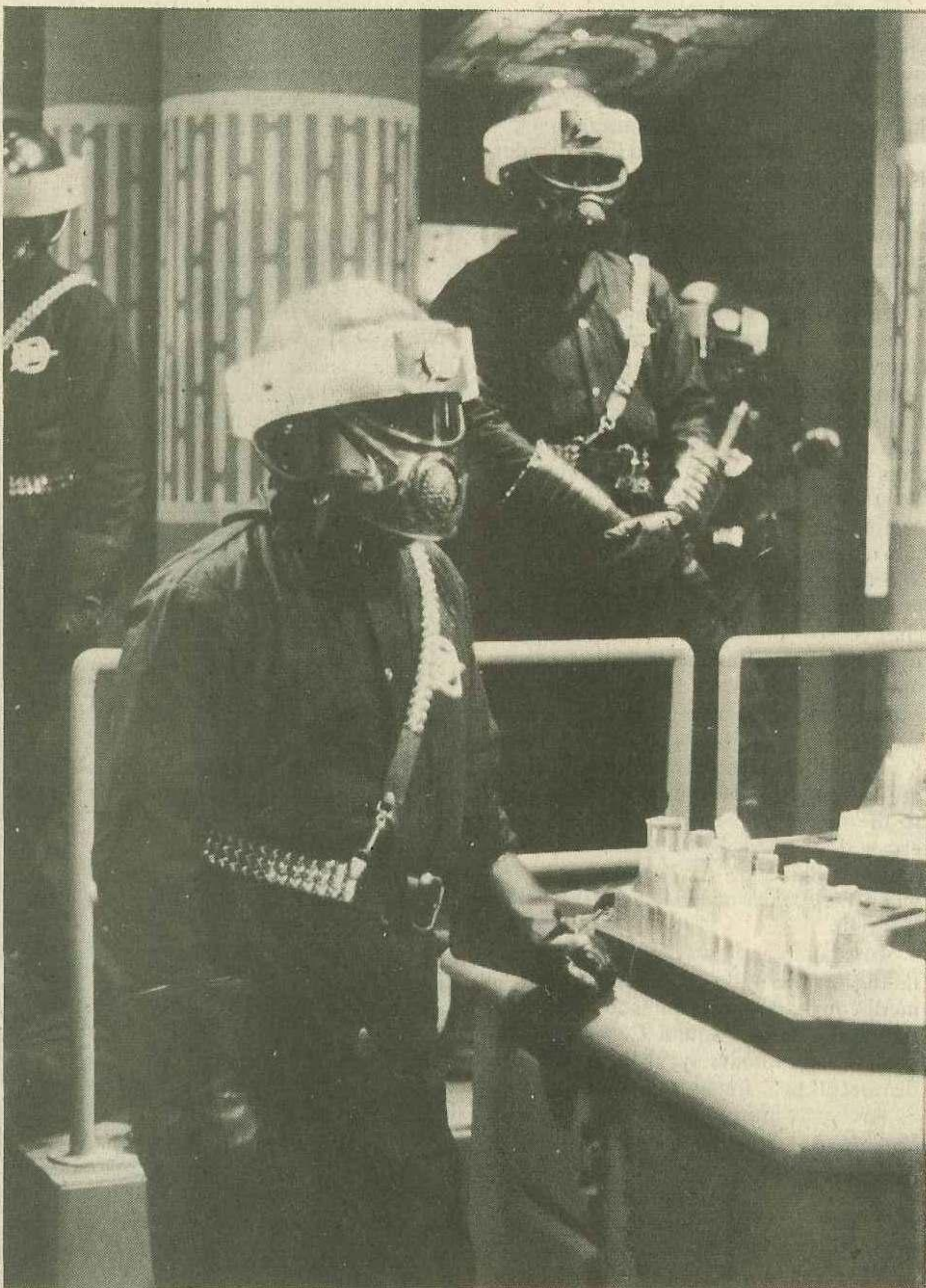
'There is no *must* about it,' snaps Orac. 'I am closing down now. From now on your voice print will not activate my sensors.'

★★★

Servalan takes a pace to one side, presses her fingers together. 'Then you master, Avon, will die. It is in your power to save him but, as you are not prepared to co-operate, you can be responsible for his death.'

Orac pauses for a few seconds, his micro circuits pulsing. 'Change connectors blue and red to the negative terminals,' he orders. 'I will monitor his nervous system and, if there is the slightest hope of reactivating some or all functions, I will provide the necessary boost.'

Her fingers trembling with anticipation, Servalan makes the connection, watching as the small computer begins his task. The digital read-out now shows zero. Servalan



A dark uniformed figure emerges. . .

bites her knuckles again. Is it too late? Is everything she has worked for over the last decade being destroyed before her eyes? Not even the pain from her raw knuckles can match the pain in her heart. The answer, however, will not be long in coming. Orac is already committed to the task of salvaging what is left of his master — if indeed there is anything left to salvage.

★★★

'Charges all set?' asks the Federation shock squad commander. A nod from one of his minions confirms the fact. 'Then

clear' the area. I'll set the timer here as soon as the last trooper is back to the ship.'

The guards need no second bidding. All are clear within minutes as the commander surveys the scene of horror once more. The blonde hair of Soolin spills over the floor, her pale, lifeless face framed by it giving her an air of serenity. Tarrant's body, by contrast, sprawls at the foot of a flight of steps, his injuries received during Scorpio's crash giving his face a ghoulish appearance. A clip gun lies beside him.

'A nice addition to my collection,' muses the commander, reaching for it. Suddenly his brain is jolted, a blinding flash of light blotting out his vision. He gasps, staggers a pace then falls on the floor. He is already dead.

'What's happened to the neutron charges?' asks Servalan, trying to distract herself from the drama being enacted behind her on the medi-couch as Orac's lights pulse in a regular manner.

'I believe the Shock Squad Commander is leaving the building now, Commissioner. The display screen is trained on the entrance. The charges should detonate as soon as he is clear.' With that, a dark uniformed figure emerges, his face covered by the frightening anti-flash mask worn by all Federation troopers. The figure glances behind for an instant then breaks into a run. A further two seconds elapses then the structure seems to glow dull red, a flash of brilliant white follows, then the enormous structure implodes. Dust and debris form a black cloud concealing the total destruction initiated by the neutron charges then it is all over. Where once stood the heart of the rebellion against the Federation, a ghastly charred scar on the face of Gauda Prime remains. A poor testimony to the bravery of those who dared to fight for right against wrong — for freedom against slavery.

'An astounding success, Commissioner,' congratulates her captain. 'Resistance to the might of the Federation has been crushed for good. Never again will rebels dare to challenge our authority — not when they learn of what happened here this day.'

Servalan turns away sourly, her eyes falling on the still form of Avon on the medi-couch. A lump comes to her throat. 'Bring the Shock Squad Commander to me,' she says hoarsely. 'I have one final distasteful task for him to perform.'

'Are you hurt,' questions Servalan, looking at the slightly swaying figure before her.

'Th . . . blast, Commissioner. Got too close . . . ' The figure has to lean against a nearby display unit to steady himself.

'What's the matter with your voice?' asks Servalan, taking a step towards him.

'Th . . . the neutron emission. Heat seared the throat, also melted a part of the face mask. Would you like to see, Commissioner?' As the figure makes an attempt to remove his helmet with some difficulty, Servalan turns on her heel in disgust.

'That will not be necessary. You can have your injuries attended to as soon as you have disposed of something for me.' Servalan walks towards the medi-couch. Avon's still form shows no sign of life. 'Orac,' she begins in a sad but serious tone, 'Have you activated any of his nervous functions?'

'I have monitored all Avon's primary systems, have applied stimulation wherever possible but have met with a negative result.'

For a long time Servalan stands looking down at the body on the table, her back to the Squad Commander and her Captain. Against all her carefully controlled emotions, a tear wells up in her eye and slowly trickles down her cheek. She brushes it off with a hasty movement. She clears her throat.

'You said you had a task for me, Commissioner?' interrupts the commander.

'Yes,' replies Servalan, taking a deep breath. 'This.' She indicates Avon's form with a sweep of her hand. 'Prepare it for a burial in space. It's of no further use to me.' With that Servalan turns on her heel. 'Report to me when it is complete. I shall

be outside getting some fresh air. The atmosphere in here is, er, disturbing me.'

The door hisses as the black shape drifts out into the chill air of Gauda Prime.

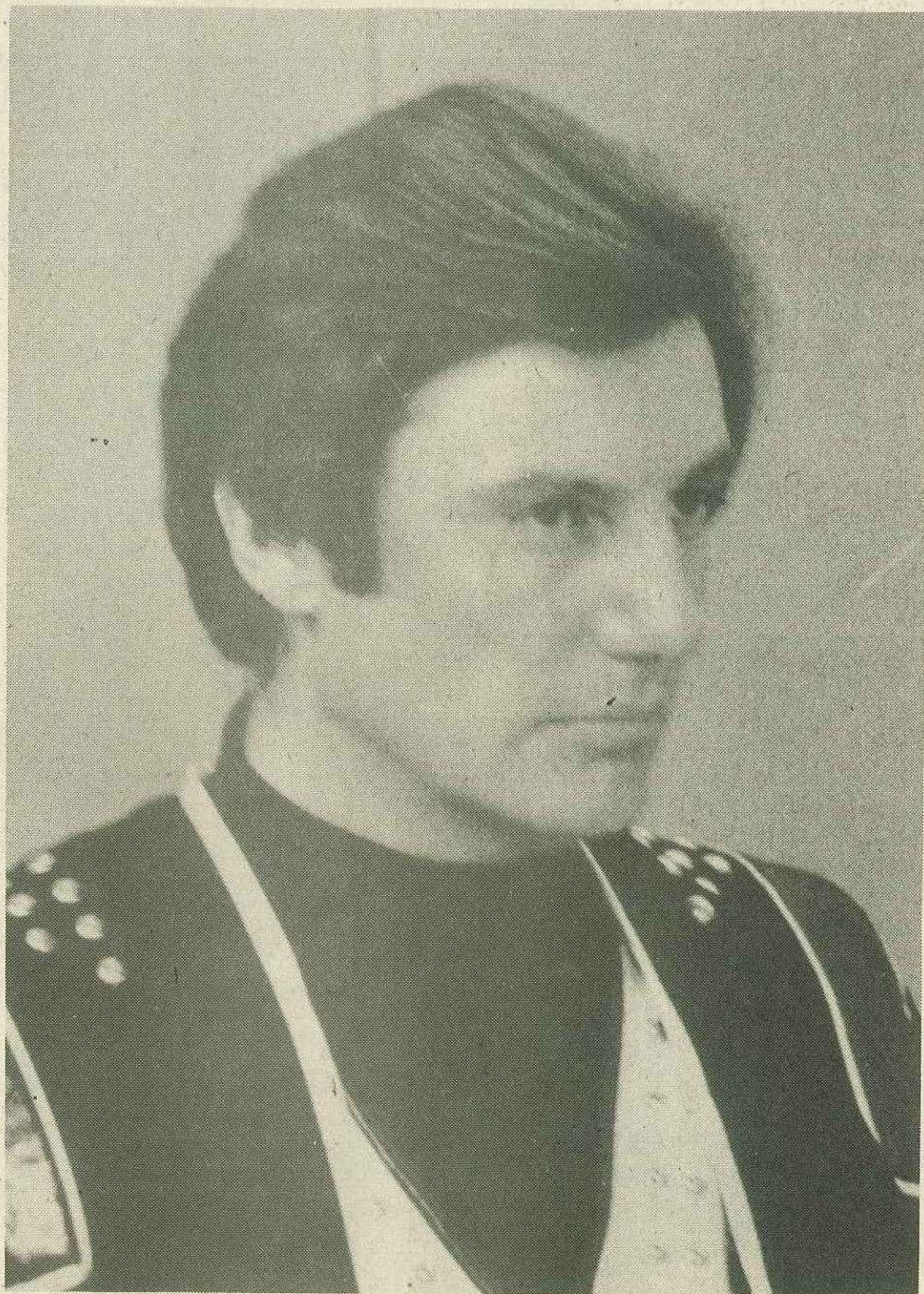
'Well,' breathes the captain, 'I've never seen a display of emotion like that from her before. Better get on with the job of bagging him,' he jerks a thumb in Avon's direction. 'I'll get the ship ready for take-off.'

As the captain eases himself into his command seat the Squad Commander turns to look hard at Avon then, reaching to lift a weighty instrument from a nearby desk, he steps towards the captain.

'What's the matter?' asks the captain.



'Charges all set?' asks the Federation shock squad commander.



You believe I betrayed you. ...?

casually. 'Need something?'

'Yes,' snarls the figure. The heavy object crashes down on the captain's skull. 'Your ship!'

Servalan steps carefully round the perimeter of what once was the rebel base but is now a blackened hole surrounded by scorched vegetation. The smell of death and destruction is everywhere but it is an atmosphere she prefers to that inside her own ship. She wrestles desperately with her mangled emotions, trying to rationalise her purpose in life with little success. Suddenly, from behind her, the powerful whine of a ship taking off jolts her from her thoughts. She spins to see her own craft soaring towards the heavens. 'What the ...?' she mutters. 'I gave no orders ...!'

As the shape grows ever smaller then finally vanishes from her sight her eyes begin to sparkle. 'It couldn't be,' she gasps. 'He was dead! Orac said so!' A faint smile spreads across her face, the lines of emotional torture vanishing from her expression. 'It begins again, Avon. At least I pray it does ...!'

Inside the humming machine, the dark-suited figure steps away from the controls. He heaves a sigh. The dead body of the captain lies beside him, his form still hunched in an attitude of pain although the body is long past feeling anything. Just then, some sixth sense makes the intruder spin round. His heart pounds as, rising from the medi-couch, the pale form of Avon turns to stare at him, the eyes boring

through to his very soul.

'B ... but you're supposed to be dead,' he mouths.

'So are you,' replies Avon's tired voice. 'I saw you go down.'

'Hit by a stun charge,' replies the other. 'The guard must have had his weapon on the wrong setting.'

Avon removes the wires connecting him to Orac, something which prompts an immediate rebuke from the computer.

'Your suspended functions are not yet fully reactivated,' protests the machine.

'I'll work with what I've got,' growls Avon in a tired voice. 'You've kept the charade of my death going long enough. It's time I took control of my mind again.'

★★★

As Avon raises himself unsteadily to his feet the figure in the chair makes a quick movement. Before Avon can blink, he finds himself staring into the muzzle of a federation gun.

'Another pace and you'll be back amongst the dead again.'

'What's this about?' rumbles Avon. 'This is no time to talk of killing. We have our skins to save.'

'Like you saved the others on Gauda Prime?' accuses the figure. 'They're all dead, you know. I made sure they were before I set the neutron charge. They didn't have the benefit of little Orac to save their lives. Was that all part of the bargain?'

Avon sits down heavily on the medi-couch, danger signals flashing through his brain. 'What bargain?'

'Between you and Servalan, of course. You know, the Scorpio and us in exchange for your life and a post in the federation council.'

'You believe I betrayed you?' says Avon in amazement.

'Well it wasn't Blake. We all saw that look on his face before he died. He thought you were coming to join his rebel cause. Instead, you kill him and bring along Servalan and her thugs to murder us all!'

'You'll never understand,' said Avon, shaking his head.

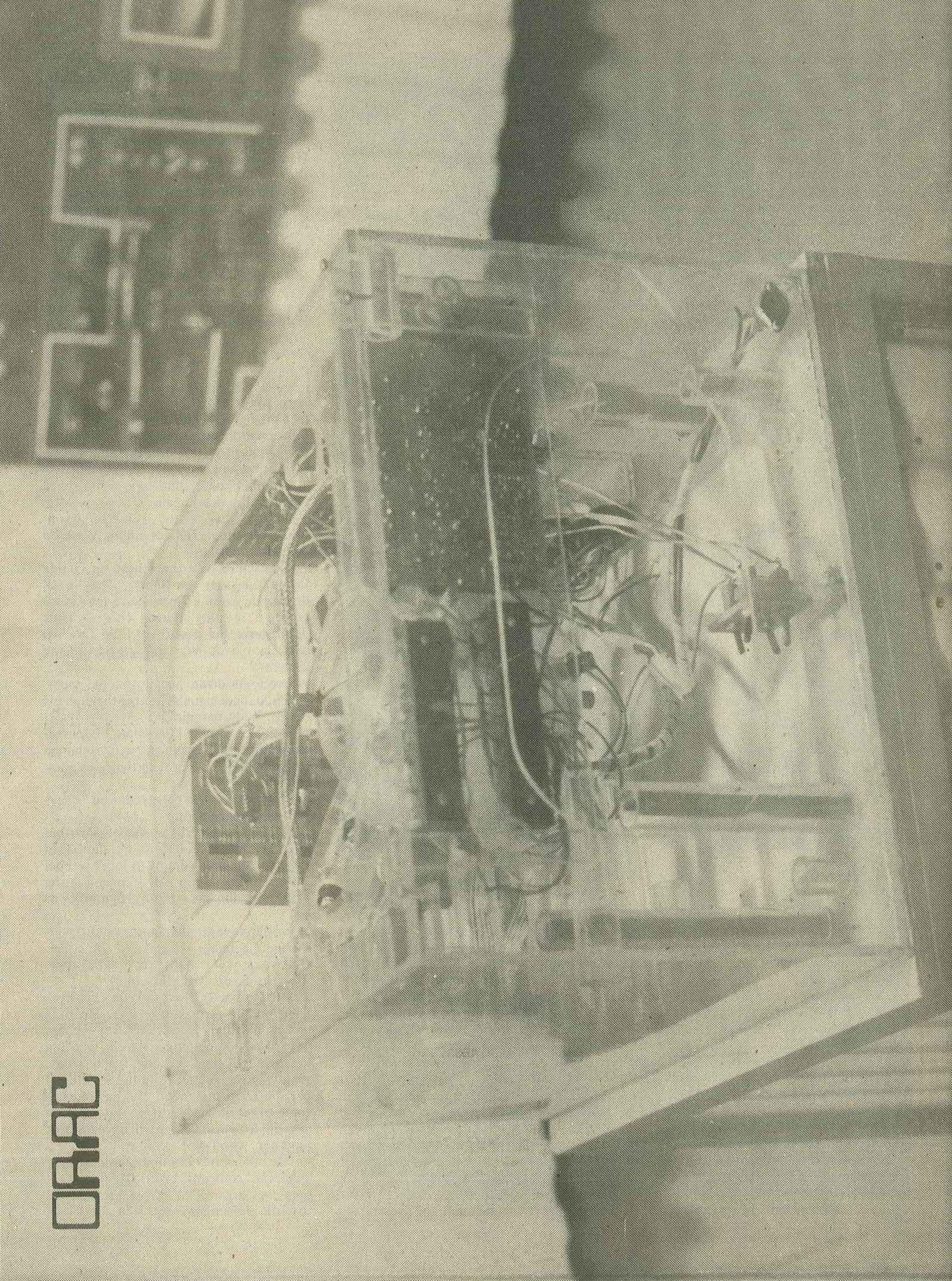
'Perhaps you're right,' replies the other. 'I'll also never trust you again.'

'Did you ever?' asks Avon, his eyes fixed on the form before him. He rises unsteadily to his feet. Takes a few paces towards the threatening figure, ignoring the levelled gun. A hand reaches out, removing the helmet from the frightened person. Their eyes meet. 'But the time has come to set that aside. If we're to make a new life for ourselves we will have to work together, won't we?'

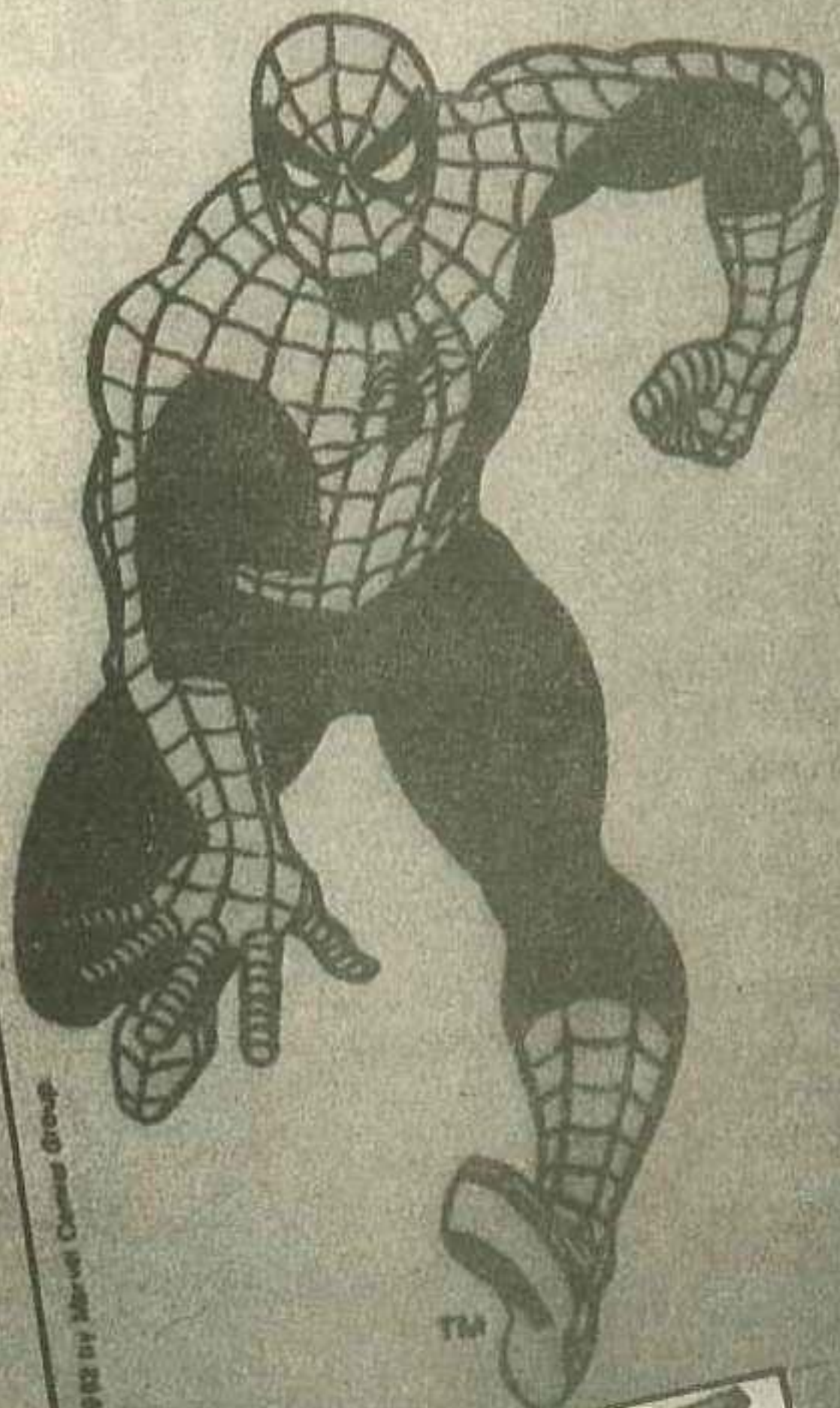
The other nods in dumb agreement.

'Good,' confirms Avon. 'Then let's get ourselves organised. 'We've a few scores to settle, haven't we ... Vila ...?'

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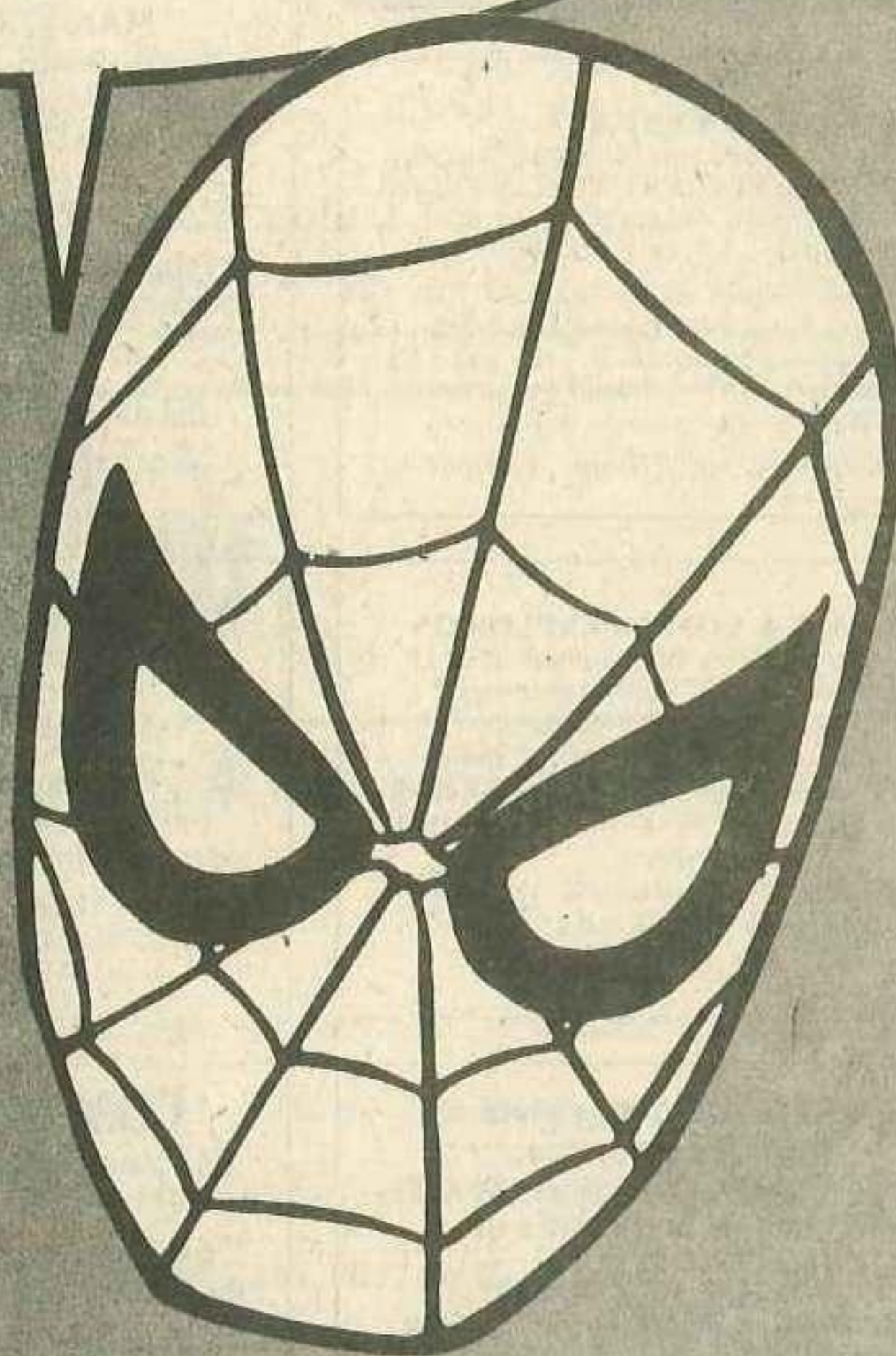
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STARBURST:	12 issues £12.00....	6 issues £7.00....
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Send a stamped self-addressed envelope or 2 International Reply Coupons for Information on back issues.

NAME.....

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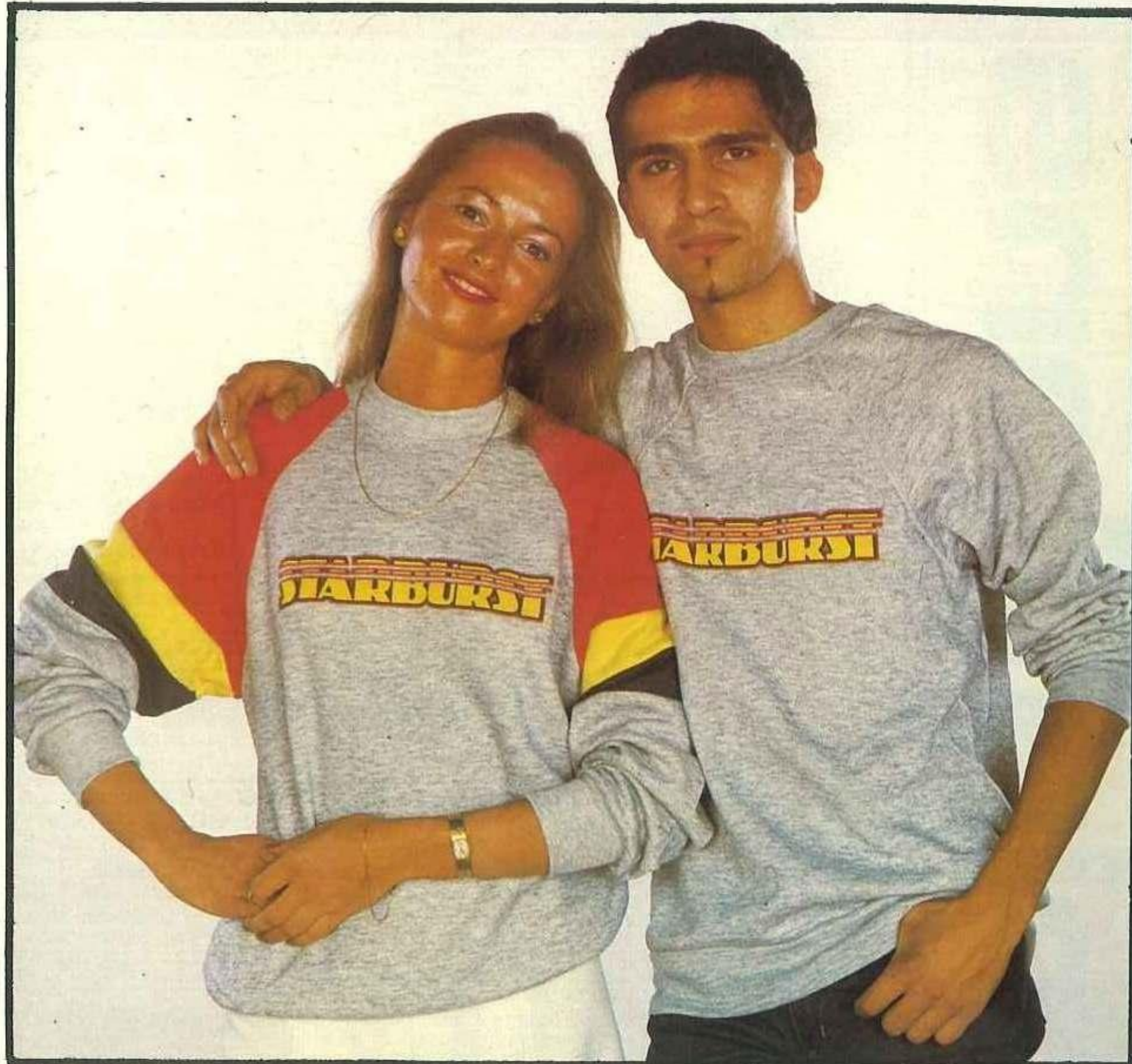
STARBURST SWEATSHIRT OFFER!

Here it is! The offer that all you fantasy film fans have been screaming for — the Official Exclusive Starburst sweatshirt! The shirts are tastefully designed by Kevin at Logo Promotions, and stylishly modelled by our very own Rahid Kahn and the lovely Penny — don't they make a stunning couple?!



Of course we realise that the average Starburst fan does not exist — Starburst fans are no way average! — so nor are our sweatshirts — they come in varying sizes, small to extra large, so you don't have to be as sleek and trim as our man to sport the fantastic STARBURST logo!

The two styles on offer are as illustrated, one in gunmetal grey, and one with additional stripes on the sleeves. Both are machine-washable and made from a 50% cotton/50% polyester acrylic heavy-weight fleece-backed fabric. The sizes are: Small (30"-32"), Medium (34"-36"), Large (38"-40"), Extra Large (42+). Both sweatshirts have been printed to the highest possible standards with inks that will retain their strength and clarity throughout the life of the garment — what more can we say?!



The closing date of this offer is end January 1983, so get your orders in fast to:
Starburst Sweatshirt Offer, Marvel Comics Ltd., Jadwin House, 205-211 Kentish Town Road, London NW5 2JU
Make your cheque/postal order payable to Marvel Comics Ltd., and please allow 28 days for delivery.

To: Starburst Sweatshirt Offer, Marvel Comics Ltd., Jadwin House, 205-211 Kentish Town Road, London NW5 2JU.

Please send: (tick appropriate boxes) (state quantity) Starburst Grey Sweatshirt(s) @ £5.99 + 95p p&p

in size(s) Small ☐ Medium ☐ Large ☐ X Large ☐

. (state quantity) Starburst Sweatshirt(s) with strips @ £7.99 + 95p p&p.

in size(s) Small ☐ Medium ☐ Large ☐ X Large ☐

Name.

Address.

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I enclose cheque/PO no. value £

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BRING

Henry Jackson

BLAKES 7

BACK