

In the seemingly endless wastes of space there are certain planets where no man goes willingly. Kantak was such a place . . .

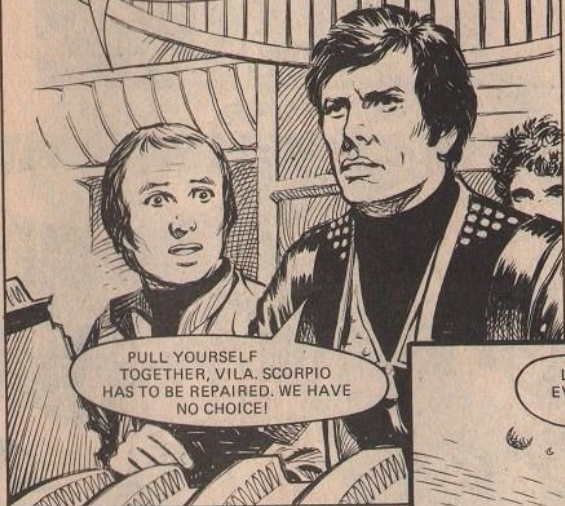
THE FLYING BOMB

LOOK AT THAT LOT! IT MAKES MY FLESH CREEP JUST FLYING OVER THOSE WRECKS.

THEN PREPARE YOURSELF FOR A REAL SHUDDER, VILA. WE'RE GOING TO LAND. SELECT A SUITABLE SITE, TARRANT.



B . . . I'VE HEARD ALL KIND OF STRANGE STORIES ABOUT THIS PLACE. THERE ARE MONSTERS AND DEMONS SUPPOSED TO HAUNT THE WRECKS DOWN ON THE SURFACE. CAN'T WE JUST LEAVE AND FIND SOMEWHERE ELSE?



PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER, VILA. SCORPIO HAS TO BE REPAIRED. WE HAVE NO CHOICE!

POSSIBLE MATCHING CRAFT LOCATED AT BEARING TWO-SEVEN - FIVE. THERE IS SEMI-OPEN GROUND LOCATED FOUR-HUNDRED METRES WEST OF THAT SITE.

THERE MUST BE SOME OTHER WAY . . . ?

ORAC'S FOUND WHAT WE'RE AFTER, AVON. STARTING APPROACH NOW.



LANDING POSITIONS, EVERYONE. THIS COULD BE ROUGH.

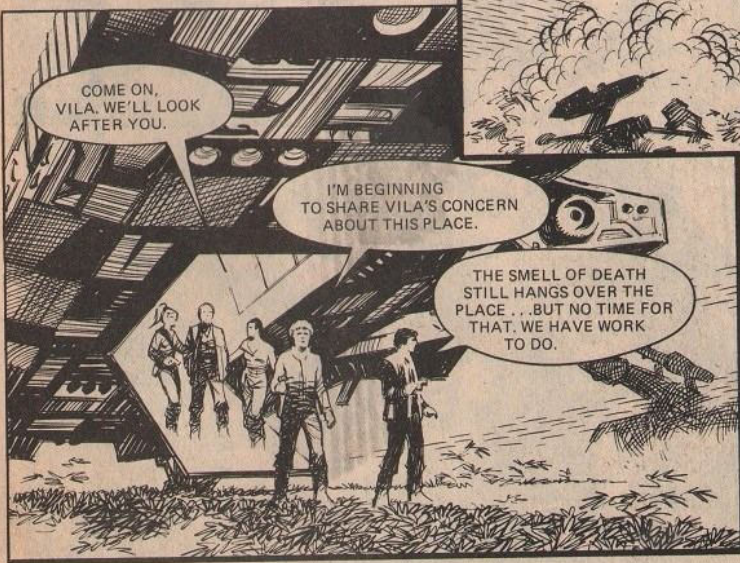
STEADY AS YOU CAN, TARRANT. WE'RE NOT CERTAIN OF DAMAGE TO THE SHIP YET.



COME ON, VILA. WE'LL LOOK AFTER YOU.

I'M BEGINNING TO SHARE VILA'S CONCERN ABOUT THIS PLACE.

THE SMELL OF DEATH STILL HANGS OVER THE PLACE . . . BUT NO TIME FOR THAT. WE HAVE WORK TO DO.

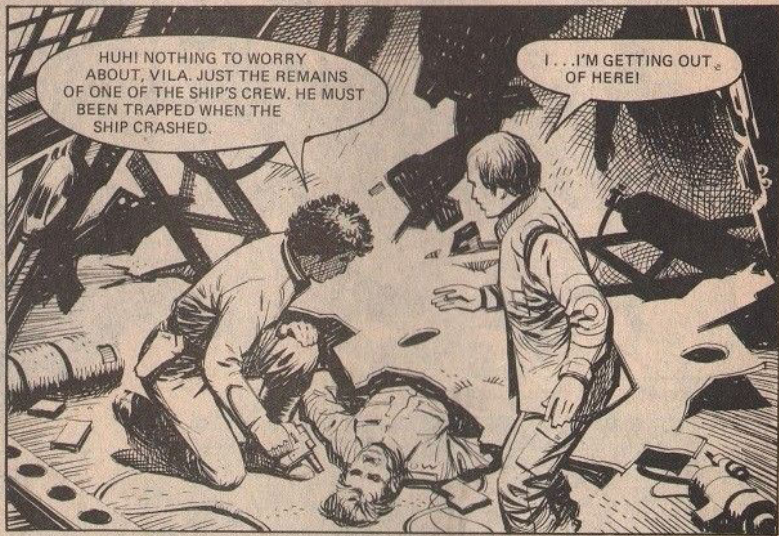


SO MANY WRECKS. WHAT IS THIS PLACE? A SPACE JUNKYARD?

MORE LIKE A GRAVEYARD. HAVE YOU HEARD OF EARTH'S BERMUDE TRIANGLE? THE PLACE WHERE SHIPS VANISH MYSTERIOUSLY.

Y . . . YOU MEAN WE'LL NEVER LEAVE THIS PLACE?







UHHH? JEEZ...!

AVON...! HELP! FOR PITY'S SAKE...!



AHHHIEEE...! V...VILA...DO SOMETHING!

I...I'M TRYING!

Just then...



NNNFFFFF...!

UHH? DID I DO THAT...?



NO, VILA. YOU NEVER DO!

TH... THANKS, AVON. I WAS NEARLY FINISHED THERE. IF IT HAD BEEN UP TO VILA...

I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND. I...I PRESSED THE TRIGGER... I THINK...



PERHAPS YOU DID, VILA... BUT WITHOUT YOUR BRACELET NOTHING WOULD HAPPEN. DID I NOT TELL YOU TO KEEP IT ON AT ALL TIMES TO COUNTERACT THE NATURAL EFFECTS OF THIS PLANET?

UHH? THIS WHOLE PLACE IS WEIRD! I'M GETTING OUT. YOU CAN FIND THE PANEL YOURSELVES!



HEY, VILA! COME BACK! WE NEED YOUR HELP.

NO WE DON'T. WE CAN LOCATE THE PANEL OURSELVES. DON'T STRAY TOO FAR, VILA. REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED THE LAST TIME!



WHY IS IT ALWAYS ME WHO'S MADE TO LOOK THE FOOL? I'M JUST AS GOOD AS AVON ANY DAY... AND I'M A BETTER CROOK! UH...? WHAT'S THIS I'M SITTING ON?



GOOD GRIEF! KRYTOMITE LIQUID! JUST A TINY PORTION OF THAT IS WORTH OVER FIFTY THOUSAND CREDITS! THIS LOT IS WORTH MILLIONS! I WONDER...



A few moments later...

WHAT'S THAT YOU'VE GOT THERE, VILA?

OH, JUST SOMETHING TO HELP WITH REPAIRS. DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS EXACTLY...



Just then... outside Scorpio...

IT LOOKS GOOD, TARRANT.

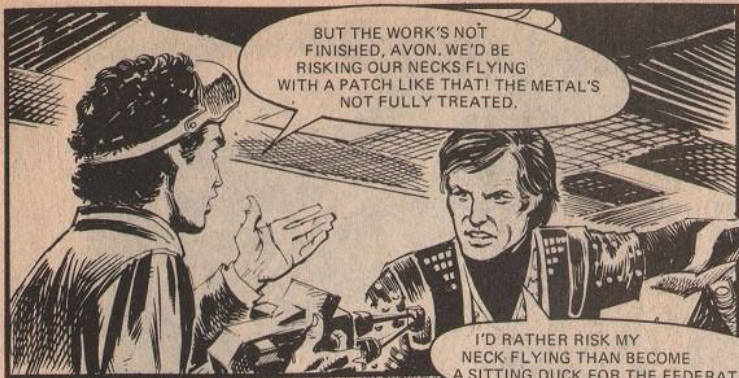
THERE'S STILL WORK TO BE DONE ON IT BEFORE IT CAN BE TESTED.

NO TIME FOR THAT! SOOLIN'S SPOTTED TWO FEDERATION PATROL SHIPS HEADING THIS WAY. WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT FAST!

Deep in the heart of Scorpio...



THERE! THE KRYTOMITE WILL BE SAFE THERE UNTIL I FIND A BUYER RICH ENOUGH TO PAY FOR IT. I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE AVON'S FACE WHEN HE DISCOVERS I'M WORTH MILLIONS!



BUT THE WORK'S NOT FINISHED, AVON. WE'D BE RISKING OUR NECKS FLYING WITH A PATCH LIKE THAT! THE METAL'S NOT FULLY TREATED.

I'D RATHER RISK MY NECK FLYING THAN BECOME A SITTING DUCK FOR THE FEDERATION. MOVE IT!

FEDERATION SHIPS BEARING FOUR THOUSAND. RANGE TWO SPACIALS AND CLOSING.



THEIR SENSORS HAVE LOCATED US. FULL POWER, TARRANT!



That instant ...

IT'S THE REBELS, CAPTAIN! WE'VE GOT THEM!

NO YET, MURTA ... BUT SOON! INITIATE LASER SEQUENCE WITH THE OTHER PATROL SHIP.



WE'RE UNDER ATTACK! PREPARE TO RETURN FIRE!

THAT'S MADNESS, AVON! THEY'VE ALREADY DAMAGED US. ANOTHER HIT WILL BE FATAL!

SOMEHOW I DON'T THINK THEY'LL HAVE ANOTHER CHANCE TO FIRE, TARRANT. LET'S WATCH THEM, SHALL WE?

NO, TARRANT! SAVE OUR POWER FOR ENGINE TRUST ... AND THAT'S AN ORDER!



Two seconds later ...



TH...THE SHIPS...THEY'RE BREAKING UP!

NOOOO! AHHHHIEEE...!



WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM...AND HOW DID YOU KNOW IT WOULD?

TELL THEM, ORAC.

SIMPLE. ALL NORMAL METALS EXPOSED TO THE ATMOSPHERE OF KANTAK DISINTEGRATE AS SOON AS EXPOSED TO THE VACUUM OF SPACE... UNLESS THEY ARE PROTECTED AS WE WERE WITH THE SYSTEM DEvised BY AVON AND MYSELF.



METALS DISINTERGRATE...?

AN ALARM SOUNDING IN CARGO SECTION KILO. DON'T KNOW WHAT IT CAN BE.

LET'S GO AND CHECK, SHALL WE?



DAYNA AND SOOLIN... THEY'RE UNCONSCIOUS! COME ON...HELP THEM!

AVON...I WAS TRYING TO TELL YOU...

SHUT UP, VILA!



ER, AVON... THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO TALK ABOUT...

AVON...HELP! H...HELP...

DAYNA...WHAT IS IT? TELL ME...!



THEY HAVE TO BE MOVED! AVON ...

STAND BACK, VILA!

UH? Y... YOU'RE LOCKING THE DOOR...?



SPEAK, VILA! WHAT IS THAT STUFF?

I... I WAS TRYING TO TELL YOU. IT... IT COULD HAVE COME FROM SOME OF THOSE CYLINDERS I FOUND.

IT... IT'S KRYTOMITE... THOUGHT I COULD TAKE A FEW TO SELL LATER... IT'S WORTH A FORTUNE.

I'M AWARE OF THAT! IT'S ALSO THE MOST DANGEROUS GAS IN THE UNIVERSE! THE METAL ATOMS IN IT ARE SO VOLATILE WHEN EXPOSED TO AIR THE SLIGHTEST SPARK CAN CREATE AN INSTANT BLACK HOLE!



THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE! HERE... GET THIS ON AND PREPARE FOR RESCUE.

Y... YOU MEAN WE'RE GOING IN THERE? IN ALL THAT KRYTOMITE?



NOT WE, VILA. YOU! SOMEONE HAS TO STAY OUT HERE AND VENT THE SHIP'S ATMOSPHERE. TAKE A MEDI-KIT WITH YOU AND TELL ME WHEN YOU'VE PREPARED THE OTHERS. AFTER ALL... YOU'RE THE ONE WHO TURNED SCORPIO INTO A FLYING BOMB!

Vila worked quickly... but with great care.

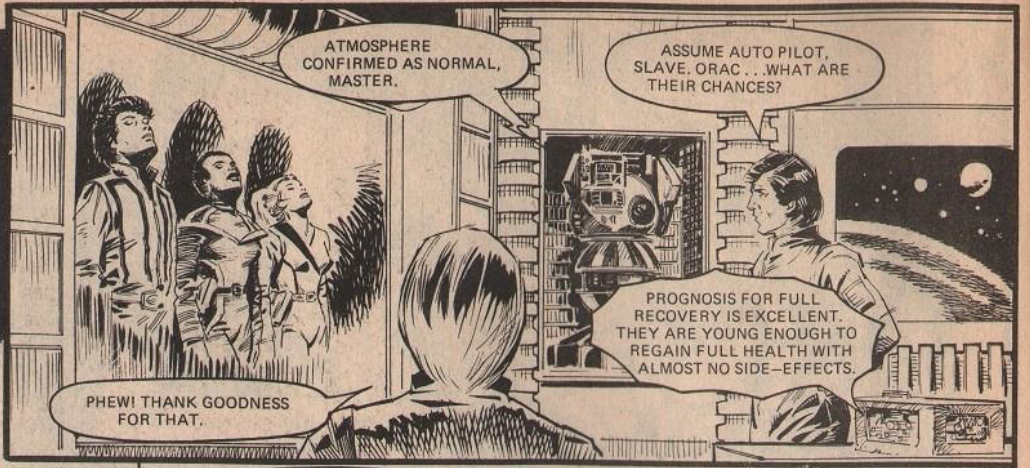
OKAY, AVON. IT'S DONE. YOU CAN START VENTING NOW... BUT I DON'T KNOW IF WE'VE REACHED TARRANT AND THE GIRLS IN TIME.

IT'S THE SHIP THAT CONCERNS ME, VILA. A NEW CREW WE CAN GET... BUT WE NEED TRANSPORT. VENTING NOW.





ENGINES CLOSED-DOWN AND COLD, MASTER.



ATMOSPHERE CONFIRMED AS NORMAL, MASTER.

ASSUME AUTO PILOT, SLAVE. ORAC...WHAT ARE THEIR CHANCES?

PHEW! THANK GOODNESS FOR THAT.

PROGNOSIS FOR FULL RECOVERY IS EXCELLENT. THEY ARE YOUNG ENOUGH TO REGAIN FULL HEALTH WITH ALMOST NO SIDE-EFFECTS.

THANK YOU, SLAVE. MONITOR VENTING AND CONFIRM WHEN ALL KRYTOMITE HAS BEEN DISCHARGED.

PITY MY SCHEME DIDN'T WORK, THOUGH. I'D HAVE BEEN A VERY RICH MAN. I MIGHT HAVE EVEN SOLD THE STUFF TO THE FEDERATION. THEY'RE DESPERATE FOR KRYTOMITE.



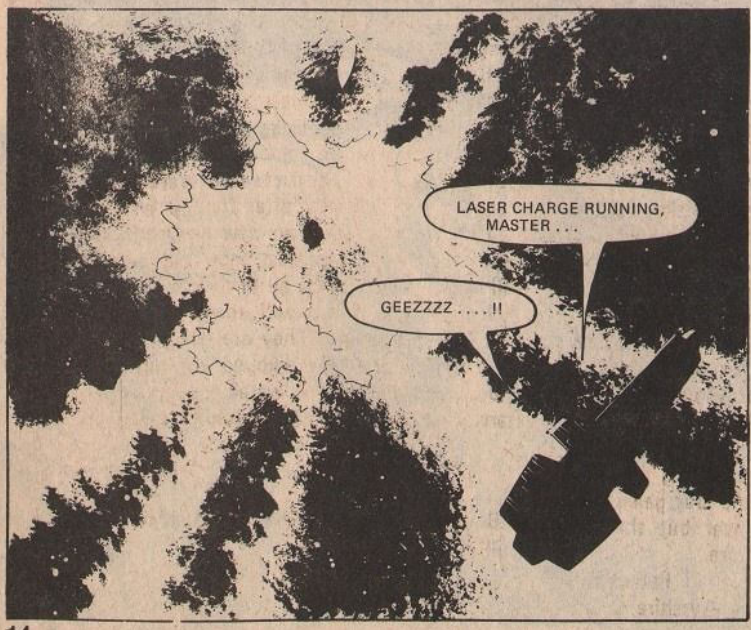
AND DO YOU KNOW WHY, VILA? HAVE YOU EVER SEEN WHAT KRYTOMITE CAN DO?



CAN'T SAY I HAVE...BUT I HEAR IT'S HOT STUFF. SHY? WHY WHAT HAVE YOU IN MIND?

SLAVE, COMPUTE OPTIMUM SAFE DISTANCE THEN LAUNCH SMALL LASER CHARGE TOWARDS KANTAK.

When Avon had recovered control of the pitching ship...



LASER CHARGE RUNNING, MASTER...

GEEZZZZ...!!



IT...IT'S GONE... THE ENTIRE PLANET! D... DID THE KRYTOMITE DO THAT?

JUST ONE, TINY SPARK... THAT'S ALL IT NEEDED. AND THAT'S WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED TO SCORPIO! REMEMBER THAT THE NEXT TIME YOU THINK ABOUT TURNING US INTO A FLYING BOMB!

CROSSED WIRES

SCORPIO WAS UNDERGOING A MAJOR OVERHAUL WHEN...

AHHHRRGH...!



GOOD GRIEF! WHAT'S HAPPENED?

I'VE NO IDEA — BUT TARRANT'S IN THERE SOMEWHERE. COME ON!



THE PLASMA REGENERATOR'S EXPLODED. THE FIRE MUST BE EXTINGUISHED FAST!

YOU SAVE YOUR PRECIOUS MACHINERY— I'LL SAVE TARRANT!

YOU'LL NEED THIS!



WITH LUCK THE DAMAGE CAN BE CONFIRMED TO THIS SECTOR ... BUT WHAT THE DEVIL CAUSED THE EXPLOSION?

ONLY TARRANT CAN TELL YOU AND HE'S IN NO POSITION TO SPEAK. VILA ... DOUSE THOSE FLAMES, FOR PITY'S SAKE!

I... I'M TRYING!

DAYNA KNEW IMMEDIATE ACTION WAS REQUIRED TO SAVE TARRANT'S LIFE...



THE MEDI-COUGH QUICK! TARRANT NEEDS CARDIAC SUPPORT OR HE'LL DIE!

I'LL GIVE HIM THE FULL TREATMENT— HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

WE STILL DON'T KNOW BUT AVON'S WORKING ON IT.



IT'S NOT GOOD. HE'S IN DEEP SHOCK.

HE'S GOING TO DIE, ISN'T HE?

NOT IF I CAN HELP IT. HERE, GIVE ME A HAND TO PLUG ORAC INTO HIS SYSTEM. IT'S OUR ONLY HOPE.

A FEW MINUTES LATER...



I'VE MANAGED TO SAVE THE SHIP AND LIMIT DAMAGE TO THE PLASMA REGENERATOR. WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS WHAT THAT FOOL WAS DOING TO CAUSE THE EXPLOSION?

YOU'LL GET NO ANSWER FROM HIM FOR SOME TIME BUT I'M SURE THE ACCIDENT WASN'T HIS DOING.

...AVON...



FEDERATION SHIPS... TWO OF THEM! THEY'RE COMING THIS WAY!

WHAT? LET ME SEE!



THEY'RE COMING STRAIGHT HERE... AS IF THEY KNOW WHERE OUR BASE IS!

THEY PROBABLY DO... OR AT LEAST HAVE A STRONG SUSPICION. SENSORS SHOW THE SMOKE FROM TARRANT'S EXPLOSION RISING FROM THE SILO ENTRANCE. IT'S ACTING LIKE A BEACON FOR THEM.



HE'S GOING TO SCORPIO!

OF COURSE I AM... AND SO ARE YOU TWO! SCORPIO CAN STILL FLY AND FIGHT. WE'VE GOT TO STOP THOSE FEDERATION SHIPS BEFORE THEY ATTACK US! COME ON!

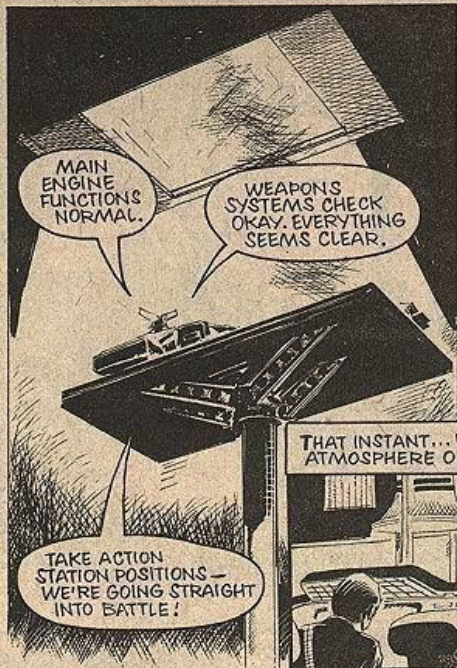
HE'S RIGHT. WE'LL LEAVE SOOLIN HERE WITH TARRANT.



BUT WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT CAUSED THE EXPLOSION ON THE SHIP.

AS SOON AS TARRANT COMES ROUND I'LL CALL YOU.

RIGHT, YOU HEARD HER— LET'S GET MOVING!



MAIN ENGINE FUNCTIONS NORMAL.

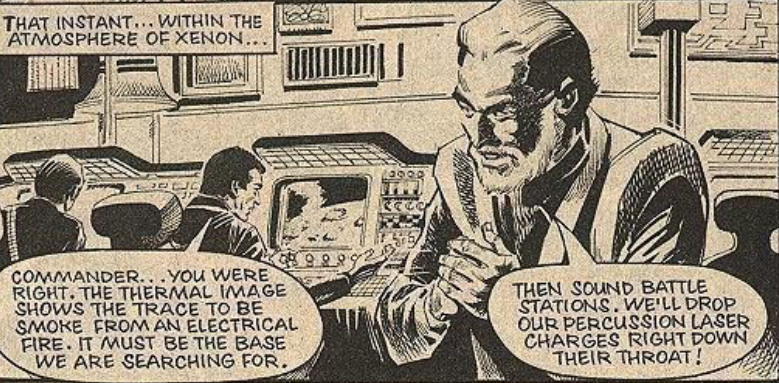
WEAPONS SYSTEMS CHECK OKAY. EVERYTHING SEEMS CLEAR.

TAKE ACTION STATION POSITIONS — WE'RE GOING STRAIGHT INTO BATTLE!



FEDERATION CRAFT ZERO POINT SEVEN-THREE HUNDRED SPECIALS. ONE MINUTE TO CONTACT.

I'D BE HAPPIER GOING INTO ACTION IF I KNEW WHAT HAPPENED TO TARRANT... BUT ALL SYSTEMS CHECK OUT. HERE GOES.



THAT INSTANT... WITHIN THE ATMOSPHERE OF XENON...

COMMANDER... YOU WERE RIGHT. THE THERMAL IMAGE SHOWS THE TRACE TO BE SMOKE FROM AN ELECTRICAL FIRE. IT MUST BE THE BASE WE ARE SEARCHING FOR.

THEN SOUND BATTLE STATIONS. WE'LL DROP OUR PERCUSSION LASER CHARGES RIGHT DOWN THEIR THROAT!

CONFIRM DELTA CIRCUIT ARMED. POWER DIVE NOW!



FROM FIVE MILES ABOVE THE ATTACKERS...

YOUR PLAN'S WORKED, AVON! WE'RE ATTACKING FROM SPACE AND THEY HAVEN'T SPOTTED US YET!

I'M AWARE OF THAT, VILA. ARM THE PLASMA BOLTS, DAYNA. USE CIRCUIT DELTA. ALPHA AND BRAVO WERE DESTROYED IN THE FIRE.

ARMING NOW.



AS SCORPIO DIVED TO ATTACK...

UHHH...! WH-WHAT'S GOING ON...?

IT'S ALL RIGHT — AVON'S TAKEN SCORPIO TO INTERCEPT TWO FEDERATION SHIPS. HE'S ATTACKING THEM THIS MINUTE.



TEN SECONDS TO FIRING. NINE... EIGHT...

NO! GOT TO STOP THEM! FAULT ON PLASMA ARMING! RISK OF THERMO PLASMA REACTION.

Y... YOU MEAN THEY WILL BLOW THEMSELVES TO ATOMS? OH, NO!



THREE... TWO...

NO, AVON! NO! DON'T TOUCH THE FIRING BUTTON FOR DITY'S SAKE!

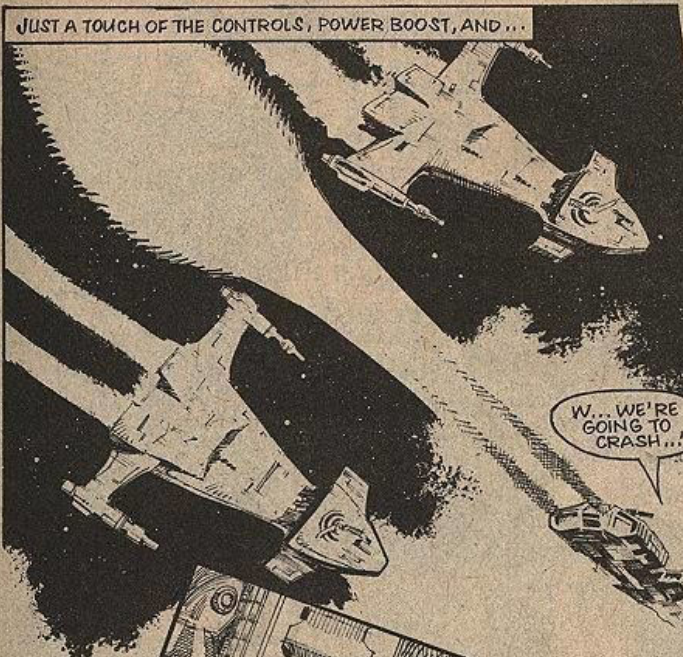


TARRANT SAYS THERE'S A FAULT. YOU COULD BLOW YOURSELVES TO PIECES.

WHAT? B... BUT WE'RE COMMITTED ON THE ATTACK. WE'LL COLLIDE WITH THE FEDERATION SHIPS!

THERE'S ONLY ONE CHANCE — BRACE YOURSELVES!

JUST A TOUCH OF THE CONTROLS, POWER BOOST, AND...



W... WE'RE GOING TO CRASH...



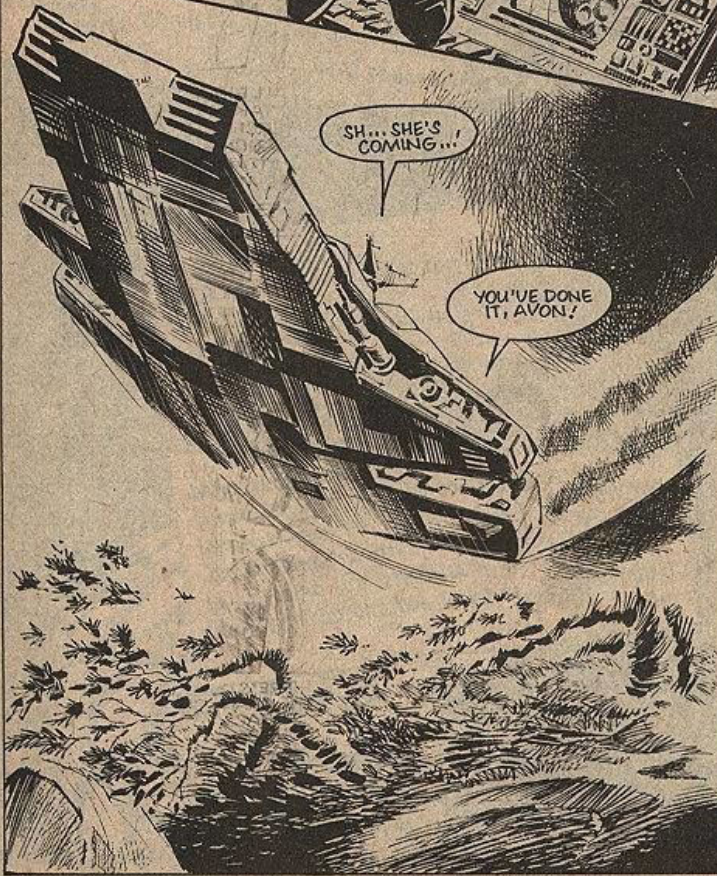
UUHH? WHAT WAS THAT?

WE'RE BEING SUCKED TOGETHER! NO... AARRGHHH!



I DON'T BELIEVE IT! THE VACUUM BEHIND US MUST HAVE PULLED THEM TOGETHER. THEY'VE EXPLODED.

AND SO WILL WE UNLESS I CAN PULL THE SHIP OUT OF THIS DIVE BEFORE WE PLOUGH INTO XENON!



SH... SHE'S COMING...

YOU'VE DONE IT, AVON!

WHEN SCORPIO WAS BACK UNDER CONTROL...

I'M GLAD WE MANAGED TO REACH YOU IN TIME. IT COULD HAVE BEEN A NASTY EXPERIENCE.

I FOUND A CROSSED WIRE IN THE PLASMA ARMING CIRCUIT WHEN I WAS WORKING ON THE SHIP. I WAS ABOUT TO REPAIR IT WHEN THE WHOLE THING BLEW UP IN MY FACE.



THEN LET ME MAKE THIS CLEAR. I WANT NO CROSSED WIRES ON SCORPIO EVER AGAIN. IN FUTURE I SHALL DO ALL THE MAINTENANCE. DO I MAKE MYSELF PLAIN? I NEVER WANT TO FIGHT FROM AN UNARMED SHIP AGAIN!

IN THE VAST AND EMPTY WASTES OF SPACE, A NEW AND PITIFUL LANDMARK HAS BEEN ADDED.

SOMEONE MUST STILL BE ALIVE, COMMISSIONER. THERE'S A FAINT PERSONAL DISTRESS SIGNAL STILL ECHOING.

THEN INVESTIGATE IT. I WANT AN ANSWER FOR THIS MESS!



THE SHIP'S NAVIGATOR, COMMISSIONER. HEAVEN KNOWS HOW HE SURVIVED... BUT HE NEEDS URGENT MEDICAL TREATMENT.

ALL IN GOOD TIME. THERE ARE QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED FIRST.

TREACHERY



YOUR SHIP WAS SHADOWING ONE OF THE REBEL LEADER'S SHIPS. WHAT HAPPENED?

UHHH... THE... THE PAIN...

HE'S IN NO CONDITION TO SPEAK, COMMISSIONER! HE MUST HAVE TREATMENT.



INJECT HIM WITH ATROLAM. I WANT ANSWERS.

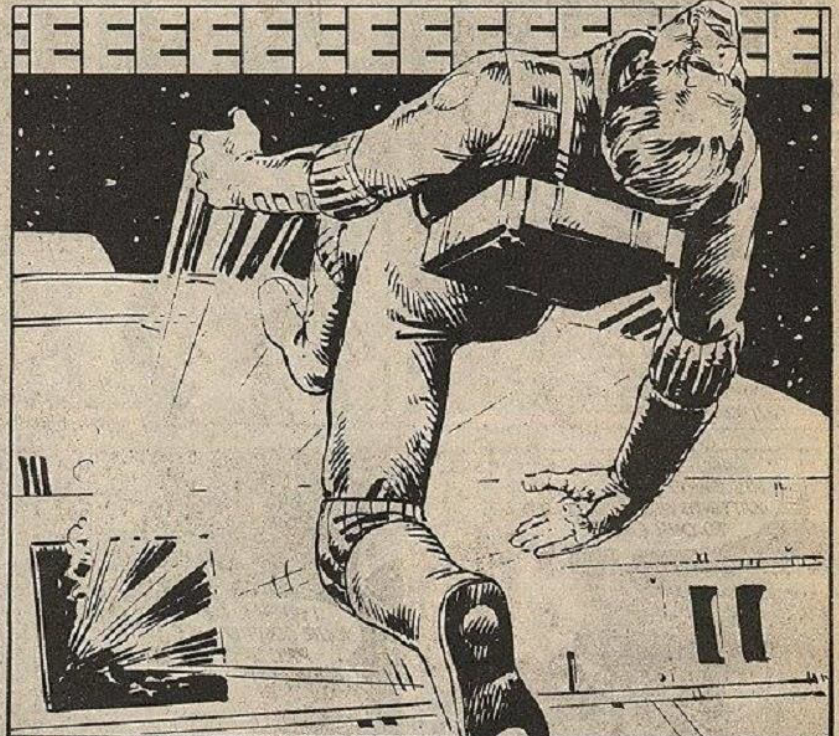
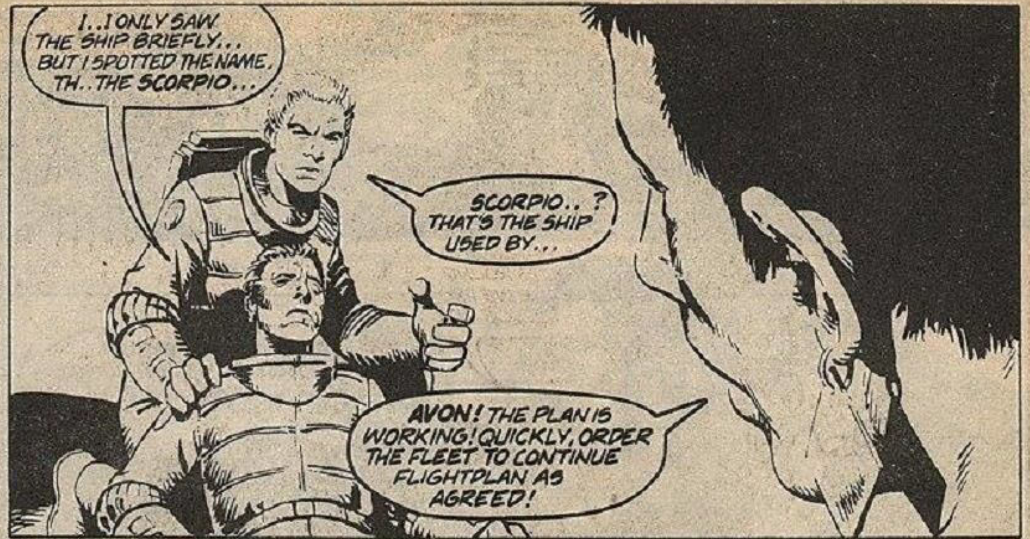
B.. BUT IT WILL SURELY KILL HIM! HE NEEDS INTENSIVE CARE.



DON'T QUESTION MY ORDERS! DO AS I SAY... OR FACE THE CONSEQUENCES!

A.. AS YOU COMMAND, COMMISSIONER.

AHHHHIEEEE...!

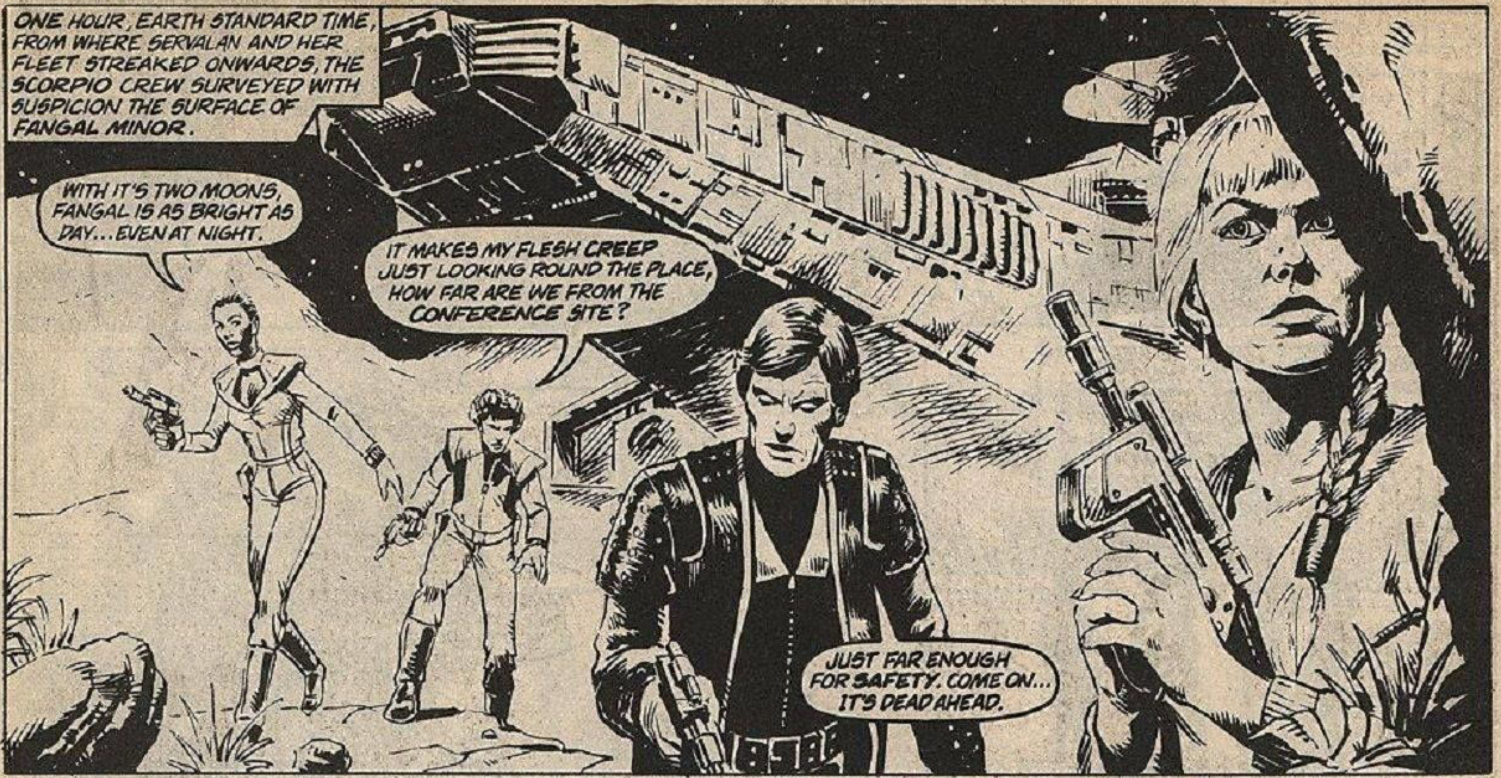


ONE HOUR, EARTH STANDARD TIME, FROM WHERE SERVALAN AND HER FLEET STREAKED ONWARDS, THE SCORPIO CREW SURVEYED WITH SUSPICION THE SURFACE OF FANGAL MINOR.

WITH IT'S TWO MOONS, FANGAL IS AS BRIGHT AS DAY... EVEN AT NIGHT.

IT MAKES MY FLESH CREEP JUST LOOKING ROUND THE PLACE, HOW FAR ARE WE FROM THE CONFERENCE SITE?

JUST FAR ENOUGH FOR SAFETY. COME ON... IT'S DEAD AHEAD.



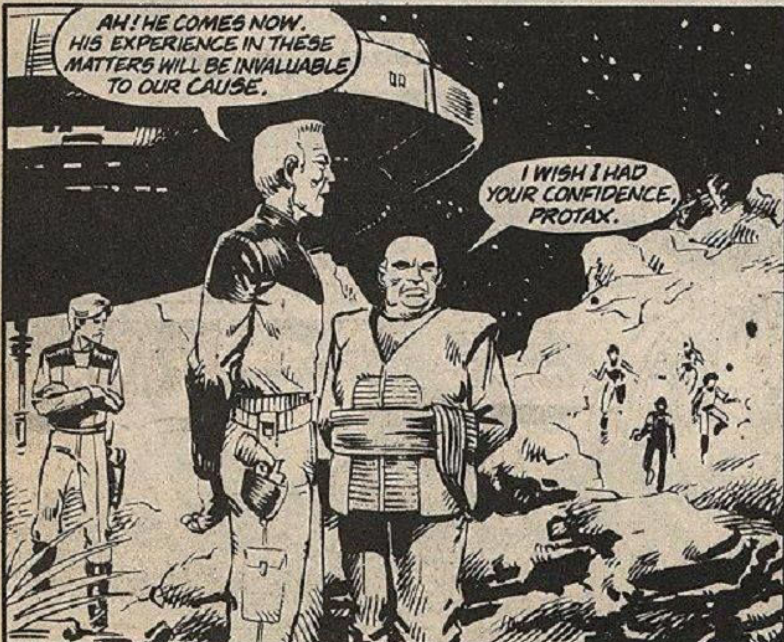
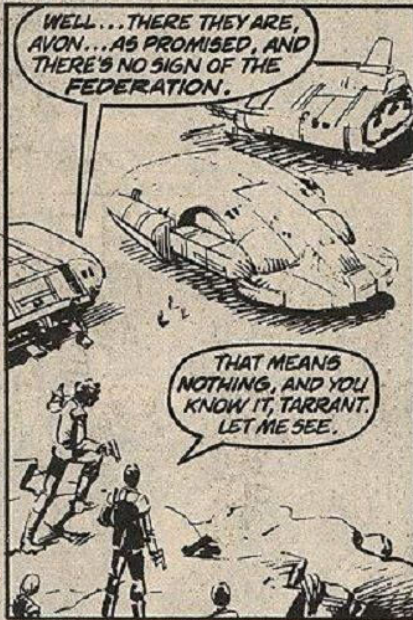
Y... YOU WON'T FORGET ABOUT ME STUCK UP HERE ON MY OWN... WILL YOU?

WELL... THERE THEY ARE, AVON... AS PROMISED, AND THERE'S NO SIGN OF THE FEDERATION.

DO YOU REALLY THINK ANYTHING WILL COME OF THE MEETING, AVON? I MEAN... CAN THEY REALLY FORM THEMSELVES INTO AN EFFECTIVE STRIKE FORCE AGAINST THE FEDERATION?

THAT MEANS NOTHING, AND YOU KNOW IT, TARRANT. LET ME SEE.

THERE IS ALWAYS A CHANCE, TARRANT. IF THEY ARE PREPARED TO RISK THEIR LIVES... WHO AM I TO STOP THEM? COME ON... LET'S TAKE OUR PLACE AT THE CONFERENCE.



AH! HE COMES NOW. HIS EXPERIENCE IN THESE MATTERS WILL BE INVALUABLE TO OUR CAUSE.

I WISH I HAD YOUR CONFIDENCE, PROTAX.

WELCOME, AVON. LEAVE YOUR GUARDS WHERE THEY ARE AND APPROACH ALONE. THIS IS A MEETING OF LEADERS ONLY.

I LIKE THAT!

DO AS PROTAX SAYS. I WILL TELL YOU WHAT IS AGREED.



AVON, THIS IS MINLAG OF THE MANCONIANS...

AND GOSFAL FROM UNTAR MAJOR...

GREETINGS TO YOU... BUT WHERE IS VALKAC? THE ALLIANCE IS NOT COMPLETE WITHOUT HIS BATTLE FORCE.

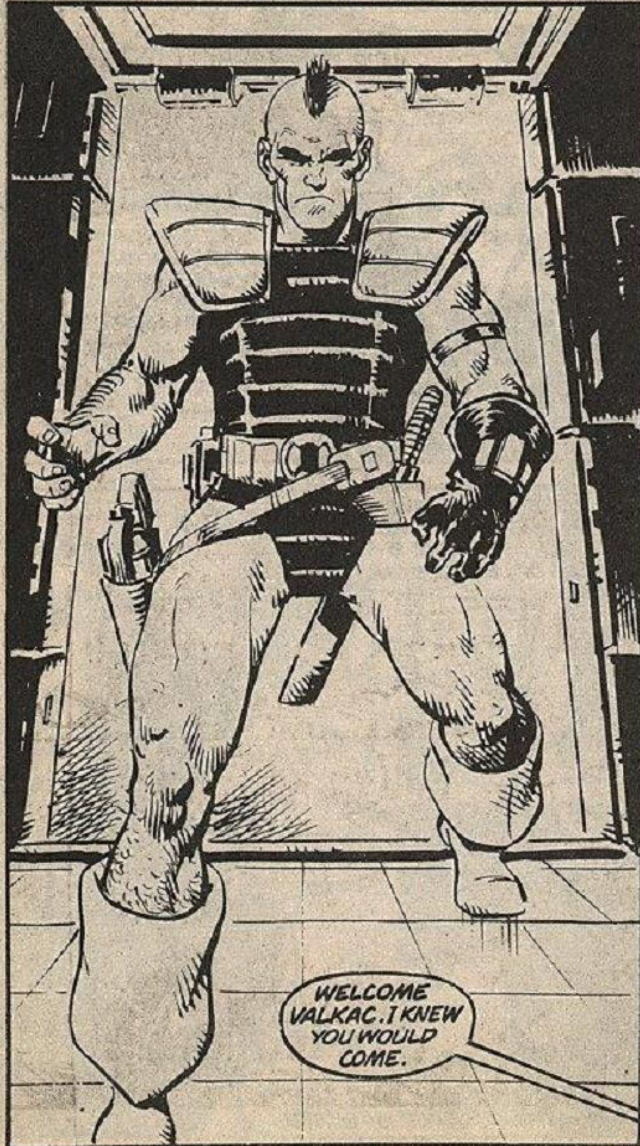
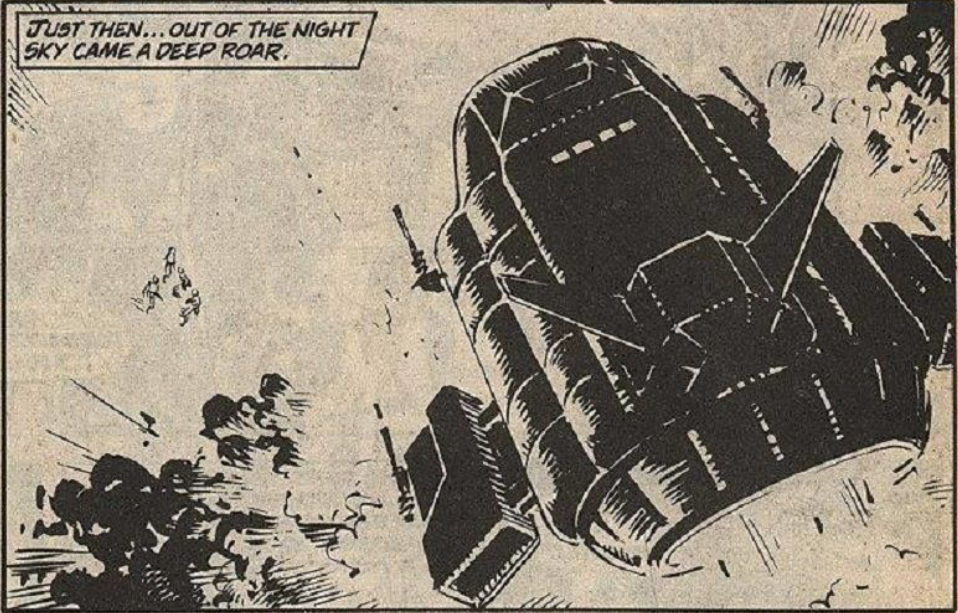
VALKAC? HUH... HE WILL ARRIVE LATE AS USUAL.

YOU HAVE ALL DECIDED TO FORGET YOUR DIFFERENCES AND UNITE AGAINST THE FEDERATION... BUT ARE YOU SURE VALKAC WILL SUPPORT YOU?



HE WAS RELUCTANT AT FIRST, SAYING HE COULD LIVE WITH THE FEDERATION AS HIS PEOPLE WERE STRONG ENOUGH TO RESIST THEM... BUT LATER HE CHANGED HIS MIND. HE WILL COME... YOU WILL SEE...

JUST THEN... OUT OF THE NIGHT SKY CAME A DEEP ROAR.



WELCOME VALKAC. I KNEW YOU WOULD COME.

THE ALLIANCE IS COMPLETE, I BELIEVE YOU KNOW EVERYONE... WITH THE EXCEPTION OF AVON. I INVITED HIM BECAUSE OF HIS EXPERIENCE IN DEALING WITH THE FEDERATION.



YOU MEAN HIS EXPERIENCE IN MURDERING THEM!

YOU SPEAK AS SOMEONE WHO SUPPORTS THEIR OPPRESSION... RATHER THAN AN ALLY AGAINST THEM!

HOW DARE YOU INSULT ME, WORM! WITHOUT ME THIS ALLIANCE IS NOTHING! I HAVE REASON ENOUGH TO OPPOSE THE FEDERATION.

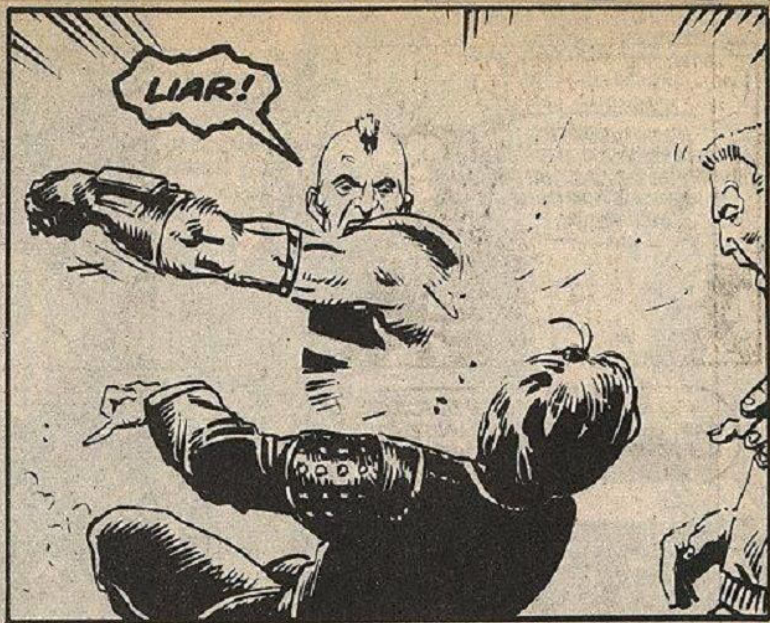


THEN WHY DO YOU SEEK TO BETRAY US?!



AVON! YOU WILL WRECK THE ALLIANCE BEFORE ITS EVEN BEGUN!

IT WILL NEVER BEGIN AS LONG AS VALKAC MAKES PACTS WITH THE FEDERATION AGAINST US!



LIAR!



THEN EXPLAIN WHY YOUR SHIP WAS SHADOWED BY A FEDERATION BATTLE CRUISER ON IT'S WAY HERE?

FORTUNATELY WE LOCATED AND DESTROYED IT... BUT HOW MANY MORE WILL FOLLOW IT?

YOU'VE JUST MADE A FATAL MISTAKE, WRETCH!



FOR THAT YOU WILL DIE!



AVON... CLEAR THE LINE OF FIRE!

NO, TARRANT! HE'S MINE!



YOU'VE MEDDLED ONCE TOO OFTEN, REBEL!

AND NOT FOR THE LAST TIME, TRAITOR!



CONFESS! YOU HAVE BETRAYED US TO THE FEDERATION... HAVEN'T YOU?

AVON... AVON! SHIPS APPROACHING ON SCREEN... FEDERATION ONES!

IT DOESN'T MATTER NOW, REBEL! MY FRIENDS ARE ON THEIR WAY!

THAT INSTANT... HIGH ABOVE THE CONFERENCE SITE...

IT HADN'T WORKED, COMMISSIONER. THE REBEL, AVON, HAS DISCOVERED VALKAC IS WORKING FOR US! WHAT SHALL WE DO?

VALKAC IS OF NO FURTHER USE TO US. ORDER THE ATTACK. WIPE THEM ALL FROM THE GALAXY!

I WANT NO-ONE LEFT ALIVE DOWN THERE... ESPECIALLY AVON. UNDERSTAND?



TH.. THEY'RE ATTACKING! BUT... MY SHIP...!

YOU FOOL! SERVALAN WAS MERELY USING YOU. NOW SHE'S CONDEMNED YOU TO DEATH LIKE THE REST OF US!



AVON... THE ALLIANCE...! YOU CAN'T DESERT US NOW...!

WITH NO LEADERS... THERE CAN BE NO ALLIANCE! IT'S BACK TO THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE... EVERYONE FOR HIMSELF! FAREWELL!



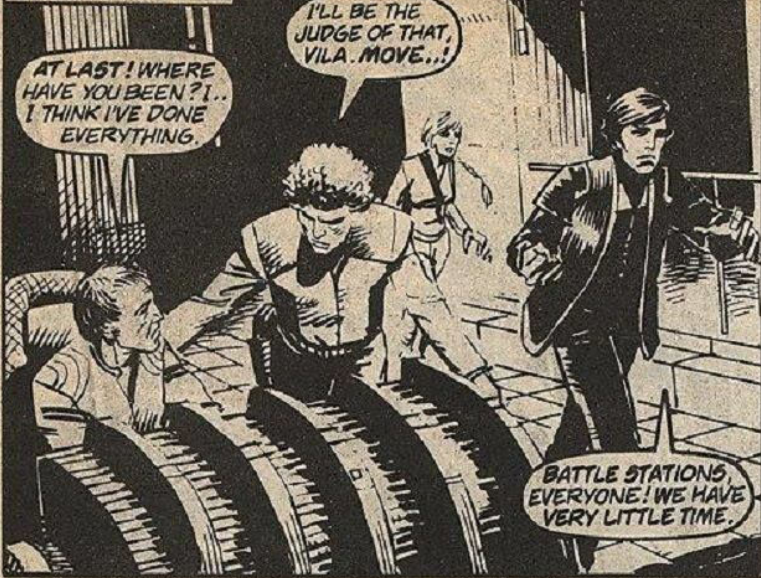
VILA... GET THE SHIP READY FOR FLIGHT AND ARM THE WEAPON SYSTEM FOR IMMEDIATE USE!

JUST PRAY WE HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO USE THEM!



IT'S FINE FOR AVON TO GIVE THE ORDERS... BUT WHERE DO I START?

3 MINUTES LATER...



AT LAST! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?! I THINK I'VE DONE EVERYTHING.

I'LL BE THE JUDGE OF THAT, VILA. MOVE...!

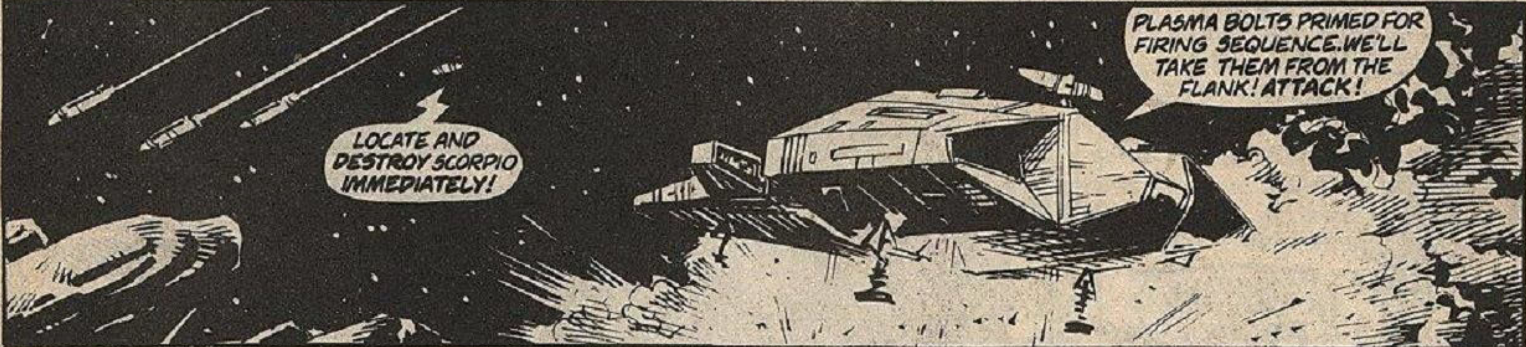
BATTLE STATIONS EVERYONE! WE HAVE VERY LITTLE TIME.

MEANWHILE, ABOARD SERVALAN'S FLAGSHIP...



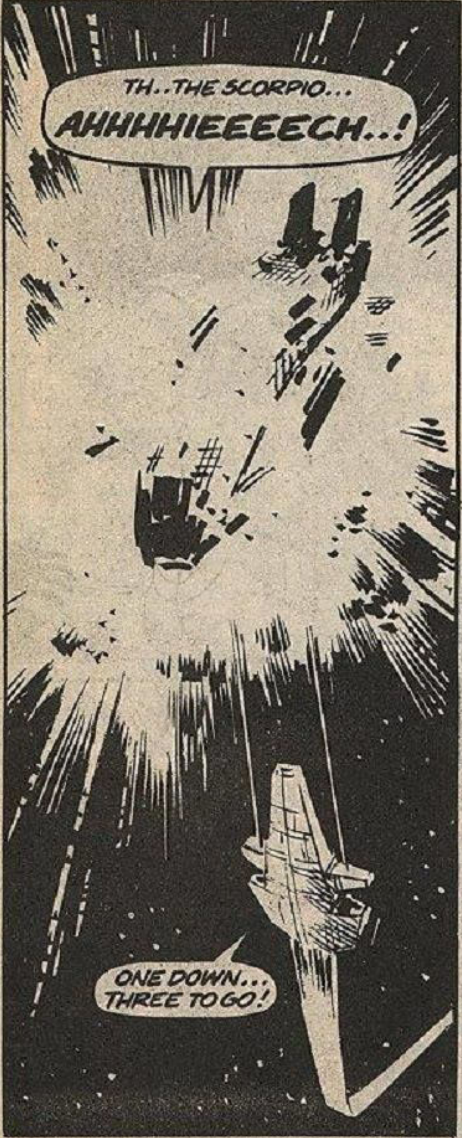
THE STRIKE COMMANDER REPORTS THREE SHIPS DESTROYED AND ONE BURNING, COMMISSIONER. THE REBELS HAVE BEEN CRUSHED.

BUT WHAT OF THE SCORPIO? NO REPORTS OF IT YET? IT MUST BE FOUND!



LOCATE AND DESTROY SCORPIO IMMEDIATELY!

PLASMA BOLTS PRIMED FOR FIRING SEQUENCE. WE'LL TAKE THEM FROM THE FLANK! ATTACK!

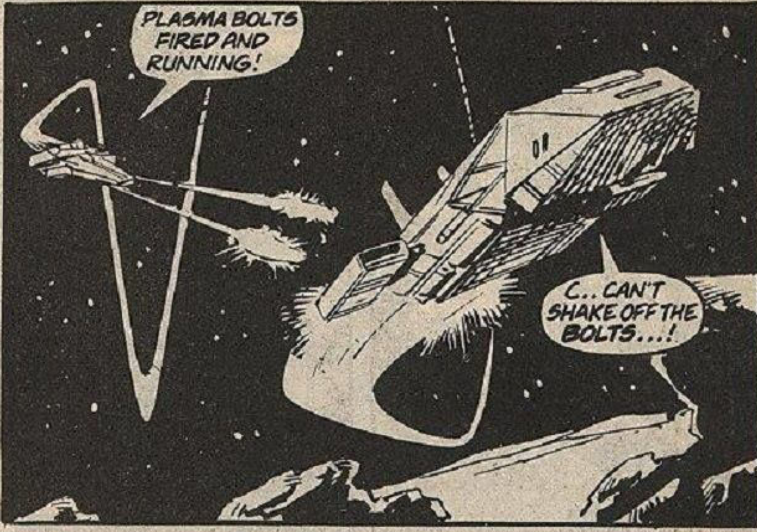


TH...THE SCORPIO...
AHHHHIEEECH...!

ONE DOWN...
THREE TO GO!



STOP THEM!
BLOW SCORPIO FROM THE SKY... THAT'S AN ORDER!



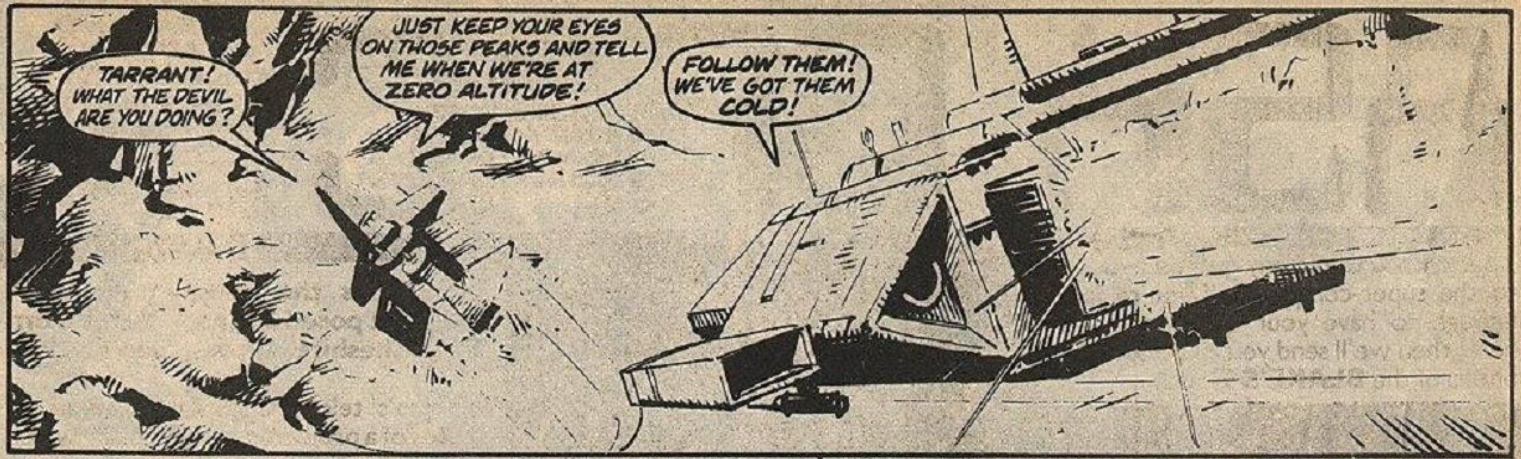
PLASMA BOLTS FIRED AND RUNNING!

C... CAN'T SHAKE OFF THE BOLTS...!



DIRECT HIT ON THEIR POWER UNITS!
THEY'RE FINISHED!

AND SO WILL WE BE IN A MINUTE... UNLESS I CAN SHAKE OFF THE THIRD CRUISER. IT'S ON OUR TAIL! HOLD TIGHT, EVERYBODY!



TARRANT!
WHAT THE DEVIL
ARE YOU DOING?

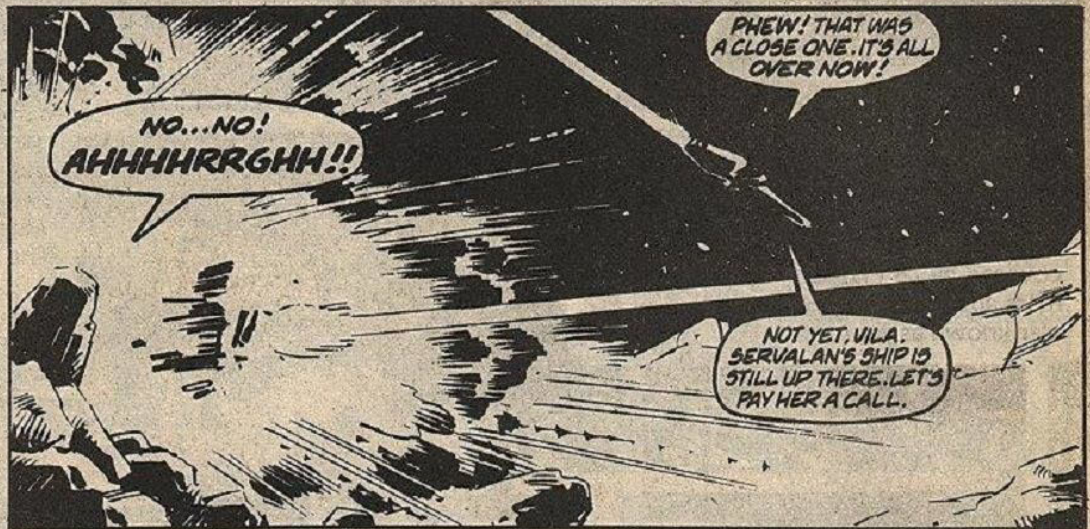
JUST KEEP YOUR EYES
ON THOSE PEAKS AND TELL
ME WHEN WE'RE AT
ZERO ALTITUDE!

FOLLOW THEM!
WE'VE GOT THEM
COLD!



NOW, TARRANT!
FOR PITY'S SAKE
PULL UP!

COMMANDER...
C...CAN'T HOLD
THE DIVE...!



NO...NO!
AHHHRRGHH!!

PHEW! THAT WAS
A CLOSE ONE. IT'S ALL
OVER NOW!

NOT YET, VILA.
SERVALAN'S SHIP IS
STILL UP THERE. LET'S
PAY HER A CALL.



C... COMMISSIONER... TH..
THE CRUISERS ARE ALL GONE.
BLOWN OUT OF EXISTENCE.
WE'RE ON OUR OWN...
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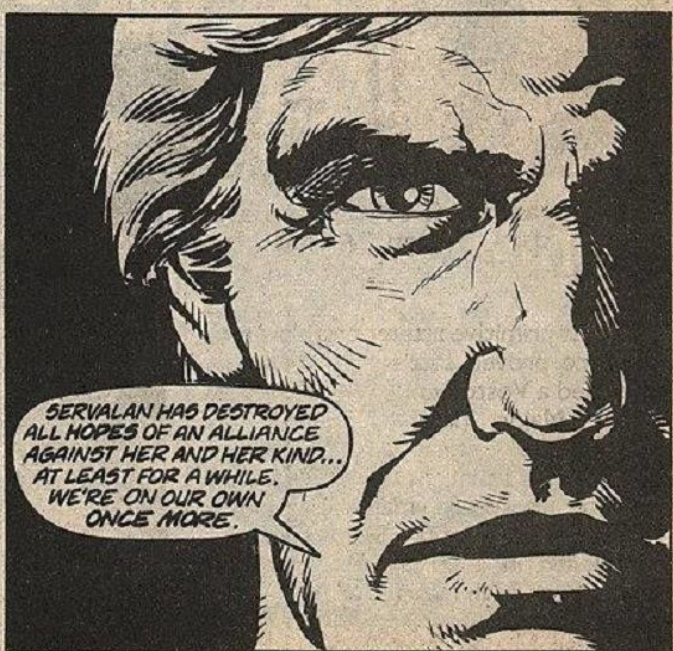
THEN SET A
COURSE AT MAXIMUM
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THIS SECTOR!



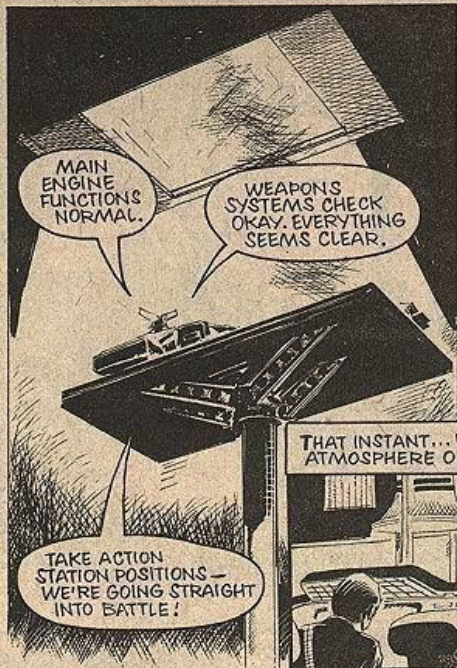
SCAN COMPLETE, AVON.
SERVALAN'S SHIP MUST HAVE
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NO MATTER.
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WHAT ABOUT THIS
ALLIANCE AGAINST THE
FEDERATION THAT WAS ALL
THE RAGE BEFORE WE
CAME TO THIS PLACE?



SERVALAN HAS DESTROYED
ALL HOPES OF AN ALLIANCE
AGAINST HER AND HER KIND...
AT LEAST FOR A WHILE.
WE'RE ON OUR OWN
ONCE MORE.



MAIN ENGINE FUNCTIONS NORMAL.

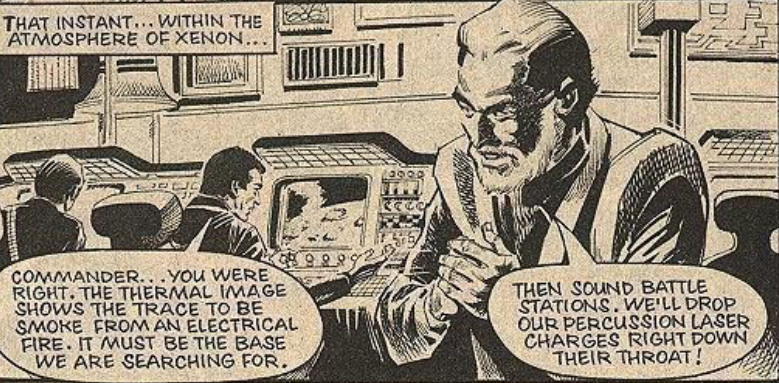
WEAPONS SYSTEMS CHECK OKAY. EVERYTHING SEEMS CLEAR.

TAKE ACTION STATION POSITIONS — WE'RE GOING STRAIGHT INTO BATTLE!



FEDERATION CRAFT ZERO POINT SEVEN-THREE HUNDRED SPECIALS. ONE MINUTE TO CONTACT.

I'D BE HAPPIER GOING INTO ACTION IF I KNEW WHAT HAPPENED TO TARRANT... BUT ALL SYSTEMS CHECK OUT. HERE GOES.



THAT INSTANT... WITHIN THE ATMOSPHERE OF XENON...

COMMANDER... YOU WERE RIGHT. THE THERMAL IMAGE SHOWS THE TRACE TO BE SMOKE FROM AN ELECTRICAL FIRE. IT MUST BE THE BASE WE ARE SEARCHING FOR.

THEN SOUND BATTLE STATIONS. WE'LL DROP OUR PERCUSSION LASER CHARGES RIGHT DOWN THEIR THROAT!

CONFIRM DELTA CIRCUIT ARMED. POWER DIVE NOW!



FROM FIVE MILES ABOVE THE ATTACKERS...

YOUR PLAN'S WORKED, AVON! WE'RE ATTACKING FROM SPACE AND THEY HAVEN'T SPOTTED US YET!

I'M AWARE OF THAT, VILA. ARM THE PLASMA BOLTS, DAYNA. USE CIRCUIT DELTA. ALPHA AND BRAVO WERE DESTROYED IN THE FIRE.

ARMING NOW.



AS SCORPIO DIVED TO ATTACK...

UHHH...! WH-WHAT'S GOING ON...?

IT'S ALL RIGHT — AVON'S TAKEN SCORPIO TO INTERCEPT TWO FEDERATION SHIPS. HE'S ATTACKING THEM THIS MINUTE.



TEN SECONDS TO FIRING. NINE... EIGHT...

NO! GOT TO STOP THEM! FAULT ON PLASMA ARMING! RISK OF THERMO PLASMA REACTION.

Y... YOU MEAN THEY WILL BLOW THEMSELVES TO ATOMS? OH, NO!



THREE... TWO...

NO, AVON! NO! DON'T TOUCH THE FIRING BUTTON FOR DITY'S SAKE!

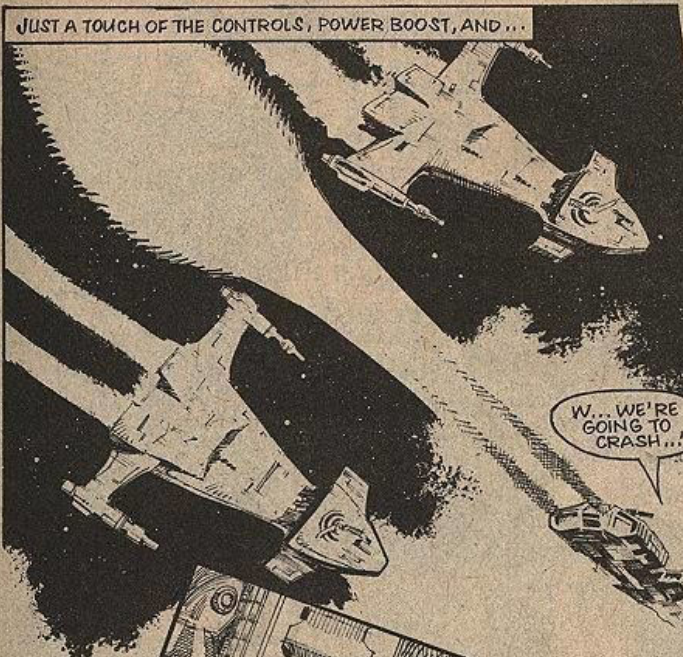


TARRANT SAYS THERE'S A FAULT. YOU COULD BLOW YOURSELVES TO PIECES.

WHAT? B... BUT WE'RE COMMITTED ON THE ATTACK. WE'LL COLLIDE WITH THE FEDERATION SHIPS!

THERE'S ONLY ONE CHANCE — BRACE YOURSELVES!

JUST A TOUCH OF THE CONTROLS, POWER BOOST, AND...



W... WE'RE GOING TO CRASH...



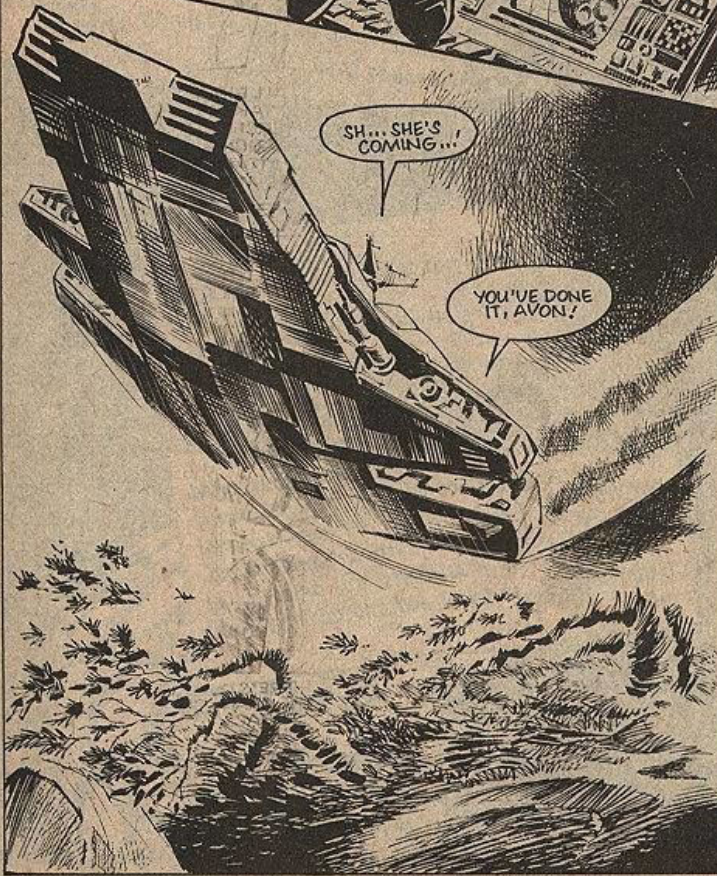
UUHH? WHAT WAS THAT?

WE'RE BEING SUCKED TOGETHER! NO... AARRGHHH!



I DON'T BELIEVE IT! THE VACUUM BEHIND US MUST HAVE PULLED THEM TOGETHER. THEY'VE EXPLODED.

AND SO WILL WE UNLESS I CAN PULL THE SHIP OUT OF THIS DIVE BEFORE WE PLOUGH INTO XENON!



SH... SHE'S COMING...

YOU'VE DONE IT, AVON!

WHEN SCORPIO WAS BACK UNDER CONTROL...

I'M GLAD WE MANAGED TO REACH YOU IN TIME. IT COULD HAVE BEEN A NASTY EXPERIENCE.

I FOUND A CROSSED WIRE IN THE PLASMA ARMING CIRCUIT WHEN I WAS WORKING ON THE SHIP. I WAS ABOUT TO REPAIR IT WHEN THE WHOLE THING BLEW UP IN MY FACE.



THEN LET ME MAKE THIS CLEAR. I WANT NO CROSSED WIRES ON SCORPIO EVER AGAIN. IN FUTURE I SHALL DO ALL THE MAINTENANCE. DO I MAKE MYSELF PLAIN? I NEVER WANT TO FIGHT FROM AN UNARMED SHIP AGAIN!

IN THE VAST AND EMPTY WASTES OF SPACE, A NEW AND PITIFUL LANDMARK HAS BEEN ADDED.

SOMEONE MUST STILL BE ALIVE, COMMISSIONER. THERE'S A FAINT PERSONAL DISTRESS SIGNAL STILL ECHOING.

THEN INVESTIGATE IT. I WANT AN ANSWER FOR THIS MESS!



THE SHIP'S NAVIGATOR, COMMISSIONER. HEAVEN KNOWS HOW HE SURVIVED... BUT HE NEEDS URGENT MEDICAL TREATMENT.

ALL IN GOOD TIME. THERE ARE QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED FIRST.

TREACHERY



YOUR SHIP WAS SHADOWING ONE OF THE REBEL LEADER'S SHIPS. WHAT HAPPENED?

UHHH... THE... THE PAIN...

HE'S IN NO CONDITION TO SPEAK, COMMISSIONER! HE MUST HAVE TREATMENT.



INJECT HIM WITH ATROLAM. I WANT ANSWERS.

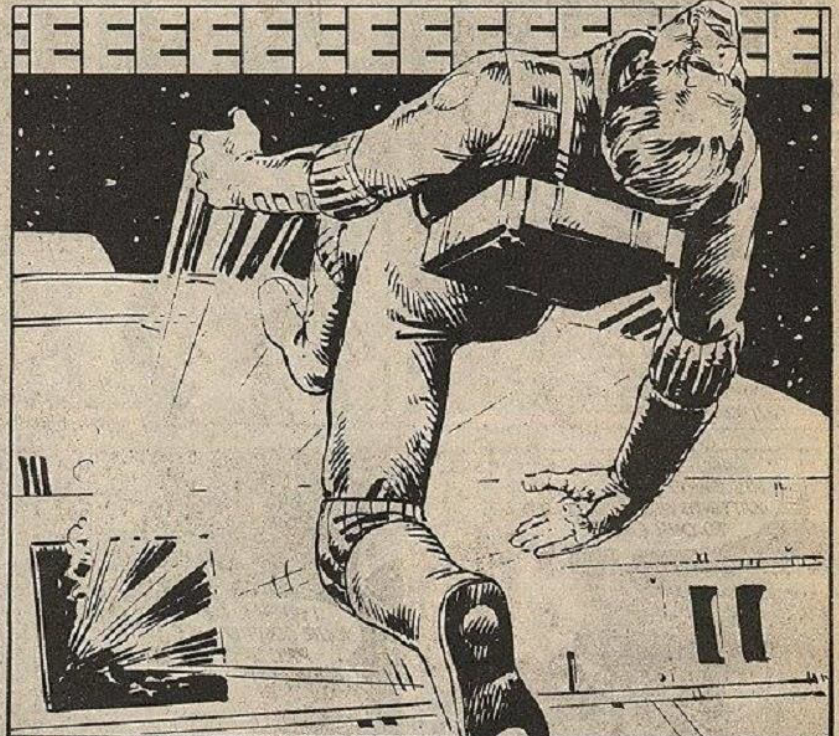
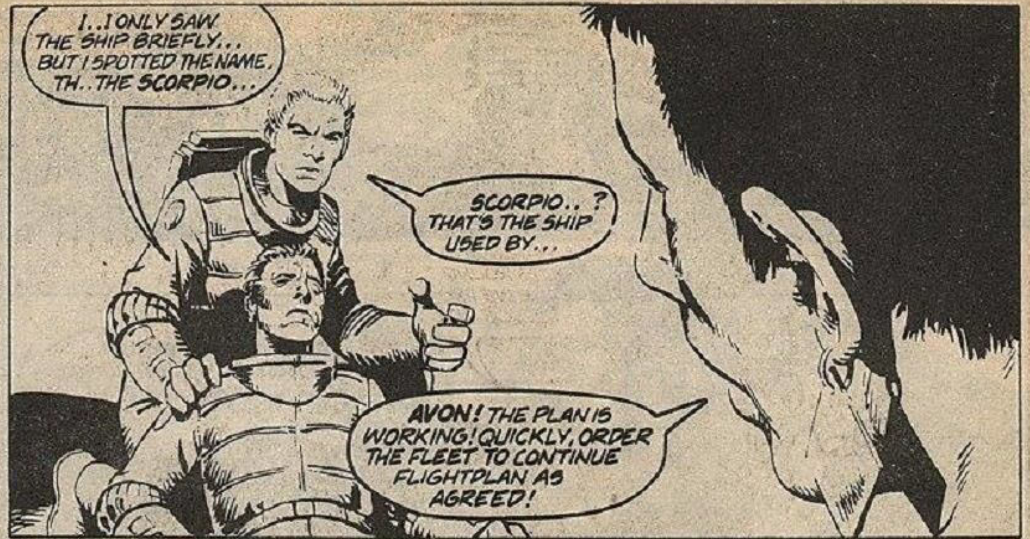
B.. BUT IT WILL SURELY KILL HIM! HE NEEDS INTENSIVE CARE.



DON'T QUESTION MY ORDERS! DO AS I SAY... OR FACE THE CONSEQUENCES!

A.. AS YOU COMMAND, COMMISSIONER.

AHHHHIEEEE...!

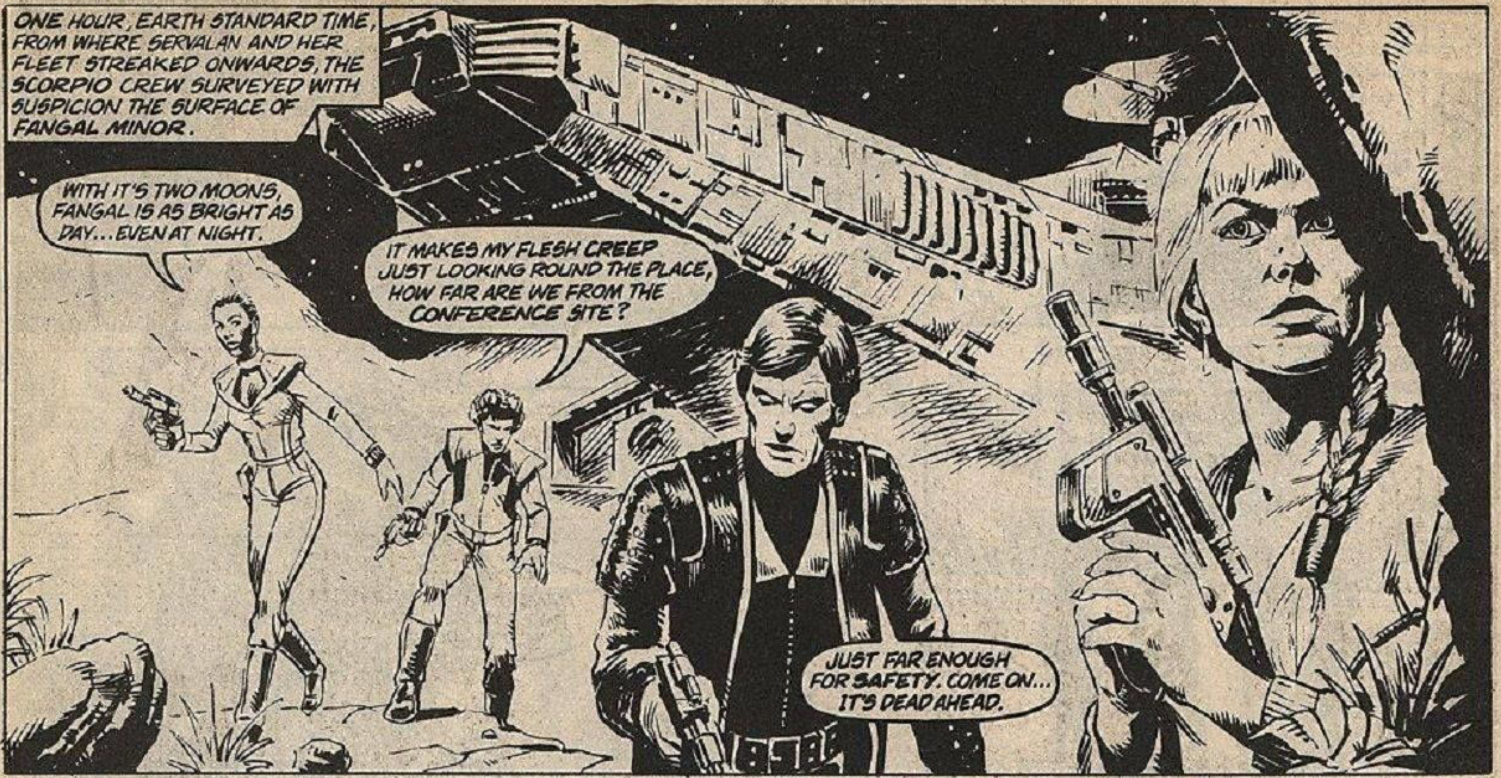


ONE HOUR, EARTH STANDARD TIME, FROM WHERE SERVALAN AND HER FLEET STREAKED ONWARDS, THE SCORPIO CREW SURVEYED WITH SUSPICION THE SURFACE OF FANGAL MINOR.

WITH IT'S TWO MOONS, FANGAL IS AS BRIGHT AS DAY... EVEN AT NIGHT.

IT MAKES MY FLESH CREEP JUST LOOKING ROUND THE PLACE, HOW FAR ARE WE FROM THE CONFERENCE SITE?

JUST FAR ENOUGH FOR SAFETY. COME ON... IT'S DEAD AHEAD.



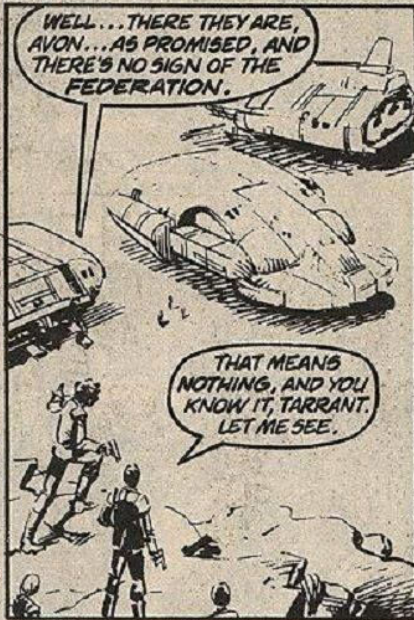
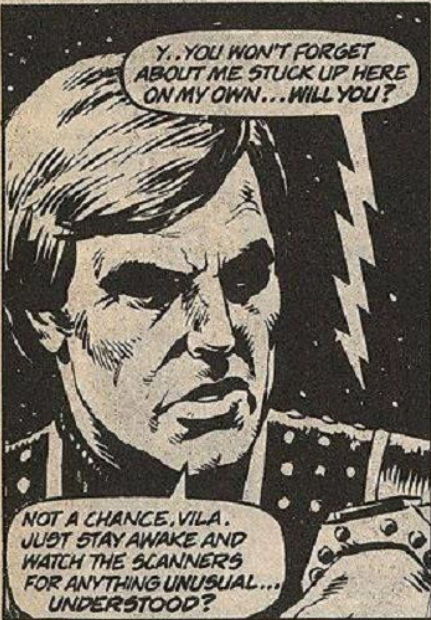
Y... YOU WON'T FORGET ABOUT ME STUCK UP HERE ON MY OWN... WILL YOU?

WELL... THERE THEY ARE, AVON... AS PROMISED, AND THERE'S NO SIGN OF THE FEDERATION.

DO YOU REALLY THINK ANYTHING WILL COME OF THE MEETING, AVON? I MEAN... CAN THEY REALLY FORM THEMSELVES INTO AN EFFECTIVE STRIKE FORCE AGAINST THE FEDERATION?

THAT MEANS NOTHING, AND YOU KNOW IT, TARRANT. LET ME SEE.

THERE IS ALWAYS A CHANCE, TARRANT. IF THEY ARE PREPARED TO RISK THEIR LIVES... WHO AM I TO STOP THEM? COME ON... LET'S TAKE OUR PLACE AT THE CONFERENCE.



AH! HE COMES NOW. HIS EXPERIENCE IN THESE MATTERS WILL BE INVALUABLE TO OUR CAUSE.

I WISH I HAD YOUR CONFIDENCE, PROTAX.

WELCOME, AVON. LEAVE YOUR GUARDS WHERE THEY ARE AND APPROACH ALONE. THIS IS A MEETING OF LEADERS ONLY.

I LIKE THAT!

DO AS PROTAX SAYS. I WILL TELL YOU WHAT IS AGREED.



AVON, THIS IS MINLAG OF THE MANCONIANS...

AND GOSFAL FROM UNTAR MAJOR...

GREETINGS TO YOU... BUT WHERE IS VALKAC? THE ALLIANCE IS NOT COMPLETE WITHOUT HIS BATTLE FORCE.

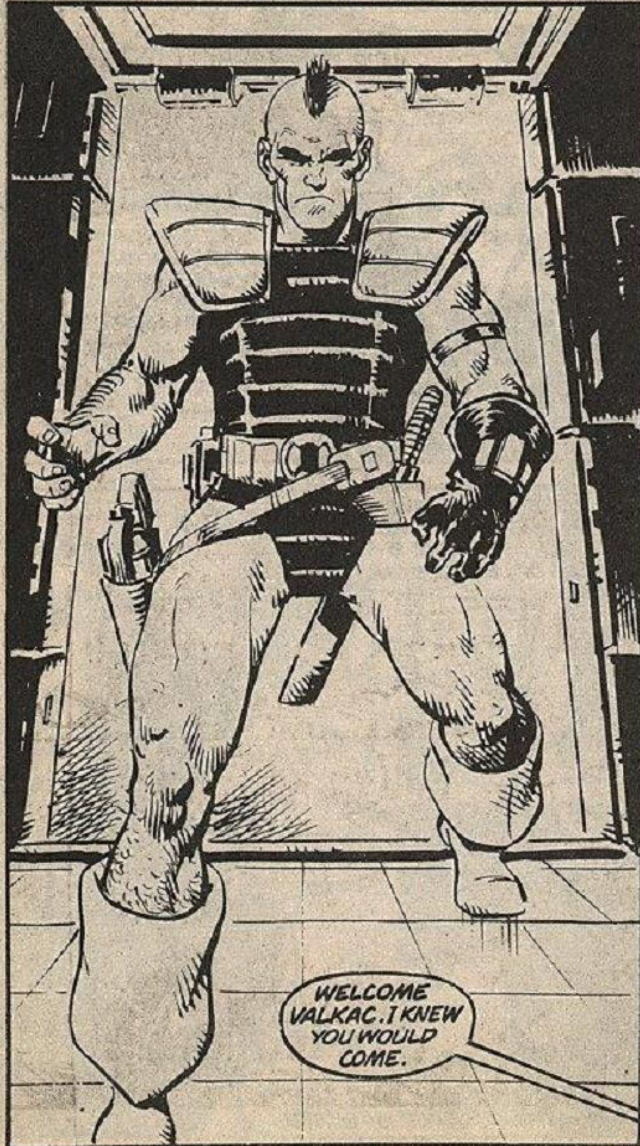
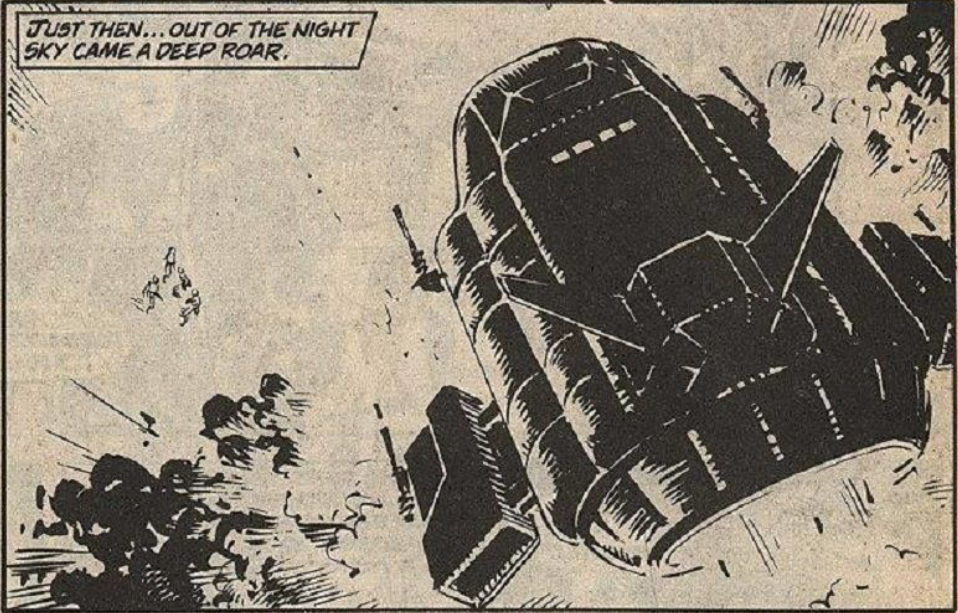
VALKAC? HUH... HE WILL ARRIVE LATE AS USUAL.

YOU HAVE ALL DECIDED TO FORGET YOUR DIFFERENCES AND UNITE AGAINST THE FEDERATION... BUT ARE YOU SURE VALKAC WILL SUPPORT YOU?



HE WAS RELUCTANT AT FIRST, SAYING HE COULD LIVE WITH THE FEDERATION AS HIS PEOPLE WERE STRONG ENOUGH TO RESIST THEM... BUT LATER HE CHANGED HIS MIND. HE WILL COME... YOU WILL SEE...

JUST THEN... OUT OF THE NIGHT SKY CAME A DEEP ROAR.



WELCOME VALKAC. I KNEW YOU WOULD COME.

THE ALLIANCE IS COMPLETE, I BELIEVE YOU KNOW EVERYONE... WITH THE EXCEPTION OF AVON. I INVITED HIM BECAUSE OF HIS EXPERIENCE IN DEALING WITH THE FEDERATION.



YOU MEAN HIS EXPERIENCE IN MURDERING THEM!

YOU SPEAK AS SOMEONE WHO SUPPORTS THEIR OPPRESSION... RATHER THAN AN ALLY AGAINST THEM!

HOW DARE YOU INSULT ME, WORM! WITHOUT ME THIS ALLIANCE IS NOTHING! I HAVE REASON ENOUGH TO OPPOSE THE FEDERATION.



THEN WHY DO YOU SEEK TO BETRAY US?!



AVON! YOU WILL WRECK THE ALLIANCE BEFORE ITS EVEN BEGUN!

IT WILL NEVER BEGIN AS LONG AS VALKAC MAKES PACTS WITH THE FEDERATION AGAINST US!



LIAR!



THEN EXPLAIN WHY YOUR SHIP WAS SHADOWED BY A FEDERATION BATTLE CRUISER ON IT'S WAY HERE?

FORTUNATELY WE LOCATED AND DESTROYED IT... BUT HOW MANY MORE WILL FOLLOW IT?

YOU'VE JUST MADE A FATAL MISTAKE, WRETCH!



FOR THAT YOU WILL DIE!



AVON... CLEAR THE LINE OF FIRE!

NO, TARRANT! HE'S MINE!



YOU'VE MEDDLED ONCE TOO OFTEN, REBEL!

AND NOT FOR THE LAST TIME, TRAITOR!



CONFESS! YOU HAVE BETRAYED US TO THE FEDERATION... HAVEN'T YOU?

AVON... AVON! SHIPS APPROACHING ON SCREEN... FEDERATION ONES!

IT DOESN'T MATTER NOW, REBEL! MY FRIENDS ARE ON THEIR WAY!

THAT INSTANT... HIGH ABOVE THE CONFERENCE SITE...

IT HADN'T WORKED, COMMISSIONER. THE REBEL, AVON, HAS DISCOVERED VALKAC IS WORKING FOR US! WHAT SHALL WE DO?

VALKAC IS OF NO FURTHER USE TO US. ORDER THE ATTACK. WIPE THEM ALL FROM THE GALAXY!

I WANT NO-ONE LEFT ALIVE DOWN THERE... ESPECIALLY AVON. UNDERSTAND?



TH.. THEY'RE ATTACKING! BUT... MY SHIP...!

YOU FOOL! SERVALAN WAS MERELY USING YOU. NOW SHE'S CONDEMNED YOU TO DEATH LIKE THE REST OF US!



AVON... THE ALLIANCE...! YOU CAN'T DESERT US NOW...!

WITH NO LEADERS... THERE CAN BE NO ALLIANCE! IT'S BACK TO THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE... EVERYONE FOR HIMSELF! FAREWELL!



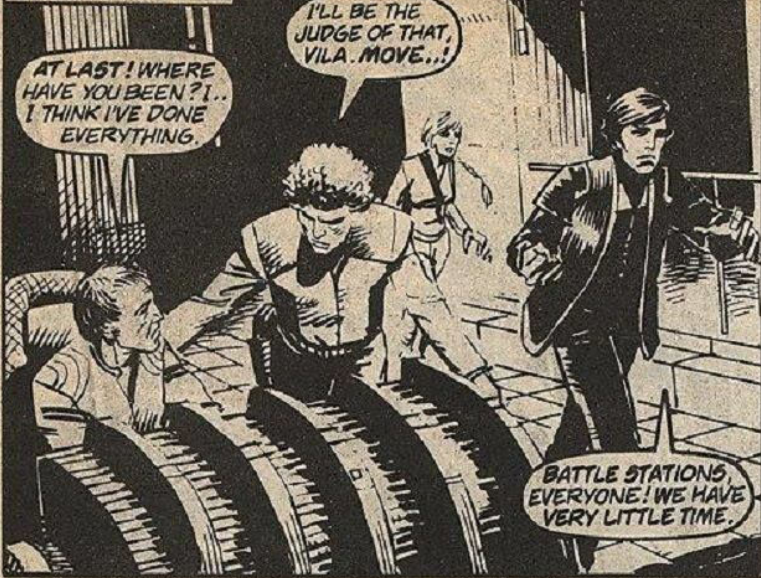
VILA... GET THE SHIP READY FOR FLIGHT AND ARM THE WEAPON SYSTEM FOR IMMEDIATE USE!

JUST PRAY WE HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO USE THEM!



IT'S FINE FOR AVON TO GIVE THE ORDERS... BUT WHERE DO I START?

3 MINUTES LATER...



AT LAST! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?! I THINK I'VE DONE EVERYTHING.

I'LL BE THE JUDGE OF THAT, VILA. MOVE...!

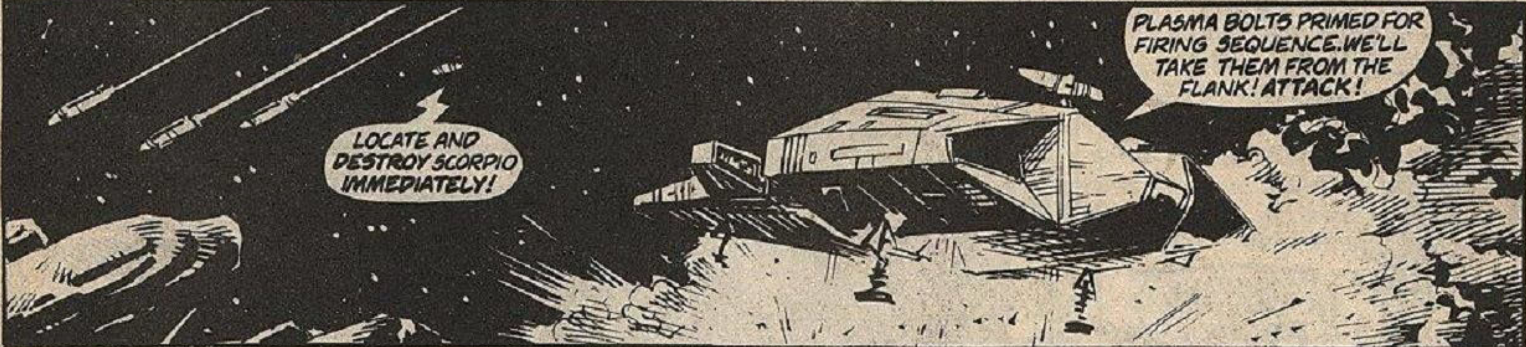
BATTLE STATIONS EVERYONE! WE HAVE VERY LITTLE TIME.

MEANWHILE, ABOARD SERVALAN'S FLAGSHIP...



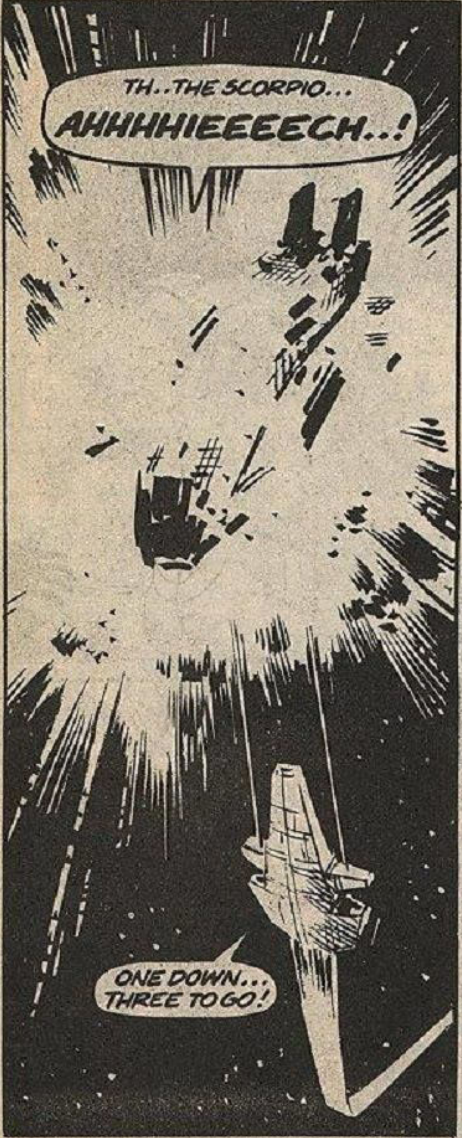
THE STRIKE COMMANDER REPORTS THREE SHIPS DESTROYED AND ONE BURNING, COMMISSIONER. THE REBELS HAVE BEEN CRUSHED.

BUT WHAT OF THE SCORPIO? NO REPORTS OF IT YET? IT MUST BE FOUND!



LOCATE AND DESTROY SCORPIO IMMEDIATELY!

PLASMA BOLTS PRIMED FOR FIRING SEQUENCE. WE'LL TAKE THEM FROM THE FLANK! ATTACK!

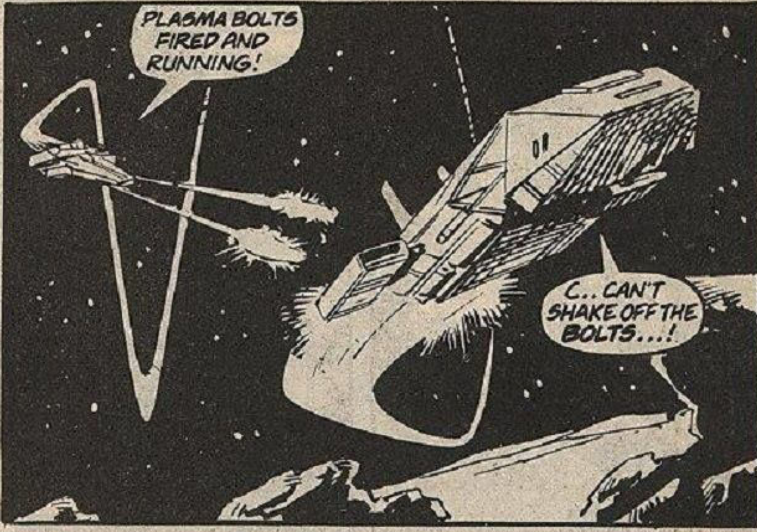


TH...THE SCORPIO...
AHHHHIEEECH...!

ONE DOWN...
THREE TO GO!



STOP THEM!
BLOW SCORPIO FROM THE SKY... THAT'S AN ORDER!



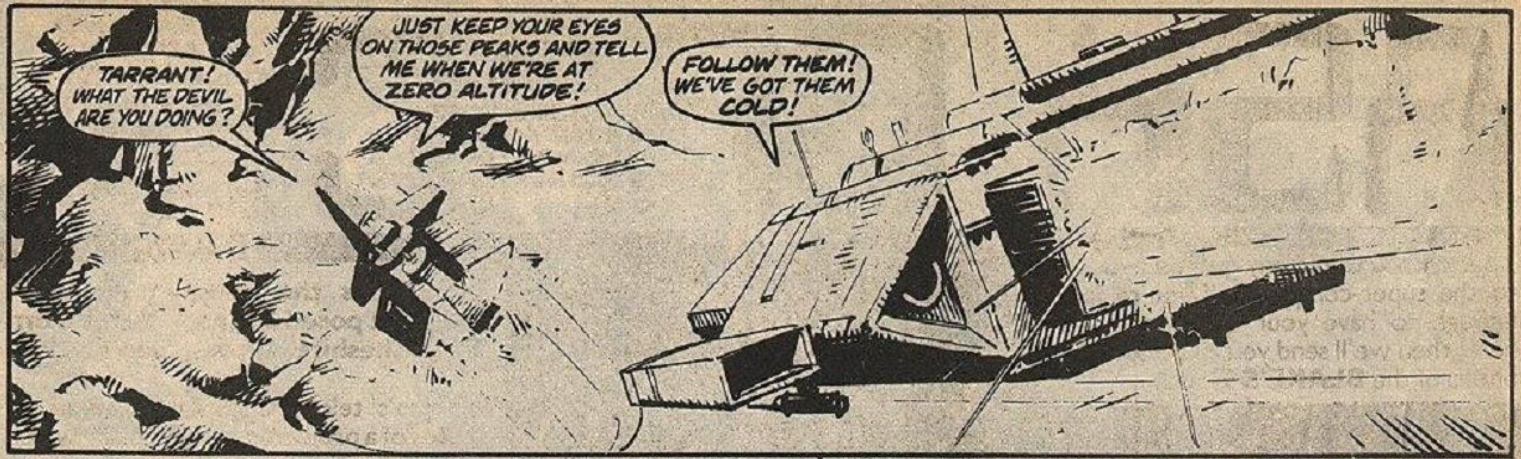
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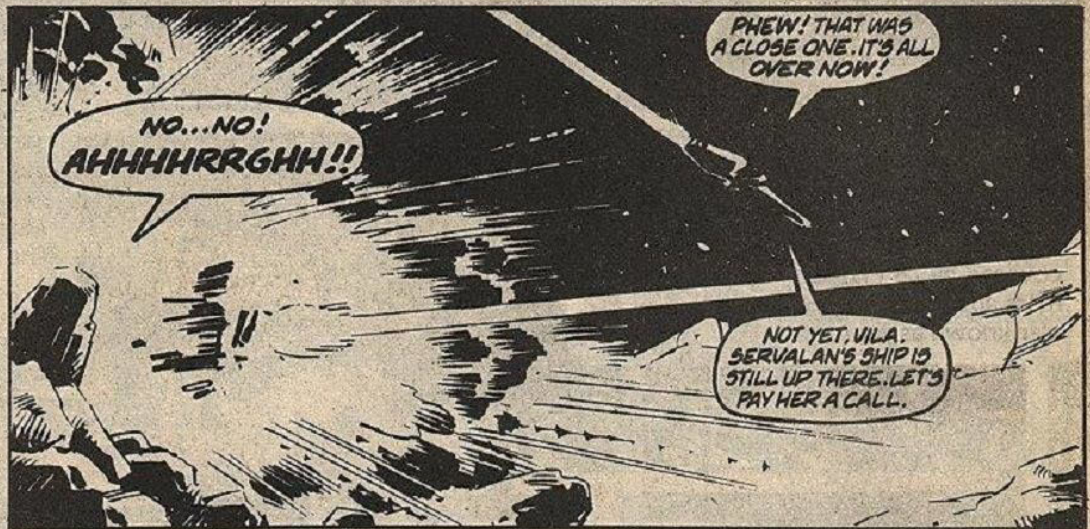
JUST KEEP YOUR EYES
ON THOSE PEAKS AND TELL
ME WHEN WE'RE AT
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FOLLOW THEM!
WE'VE GOT THEM
COLD!



NOW, TARRANT!
FOR PITY'S SAKE
PULL UP!

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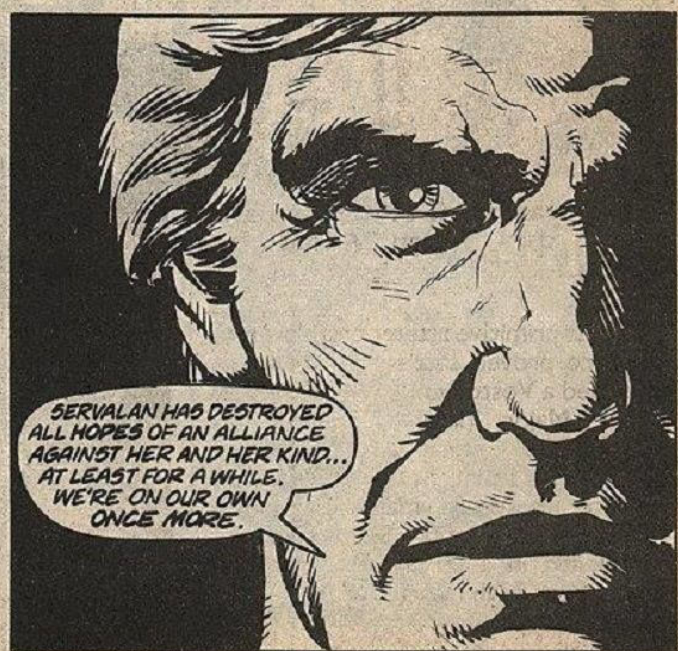
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SCAN COMPLETE, AVON.
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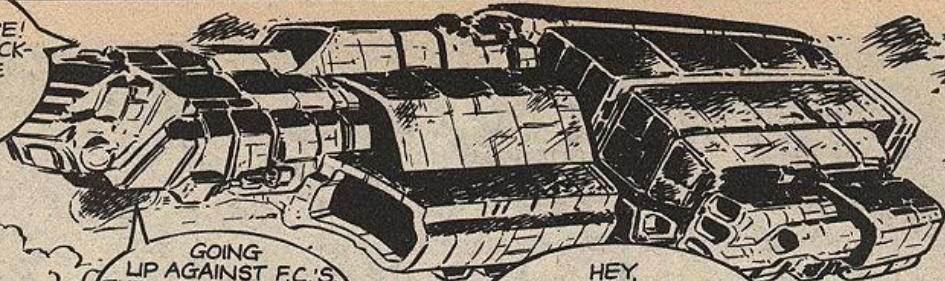
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WE'VE MADE
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WHAT ABOUT THIS
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CAME TO THIS PLACE?



SERVALAN HAS DESTROYED
ALL HOPES OF AN ALLIANCE
AGAINST HER AND HER KIND...
AT LEAST FOR A WHILE.
WE'RE ON OUR OWN
ONCE MORE.

LOOKS AS IF THERE'S BEEN A SMALL WAR HERE! SENSORS INDICATE WRECKAGE CONSISTS OF THREE FEDERATION BATTLE CRUISERS AND FOUR, PERHAPS FIVE OTHER CRAFT.



GOING UP AGAINST F.C.'S, THEY EITHER HAD A LOT OF GLITS... OR A DWARF STAR CANNON.

HEY, I'M PICKING UP A LIFE READING HUMANOID. COULD BE A SURVIVOR.

I KNOW I KNOW, BUT THE FIRST SIGN OF TROUBLE...

GOT TO CHECK IT OUT WARDEN, WE CAN'T JUST IGNORE IT.



COULD BE A HOSTILE TOO.

AND I'LL BLAST THE SUCKER! OK!



JUST DON'T BLAST ME, YOU MANIAC!

THE SIGNAL ORIGINATES FROM IN THERE MUST HAVE CRAWLED HERE AFTER THE BATTLE!



KEEP ALERT WITH THAT TORCH. IF IT IS A HOSTILE... I WANT A CLEAR SHOT.

THIS DAMN TRACKER CAN'T BE FUNCTIONING PROPERLY. IT'S READING A LIFE FORM RIGHT HERE.

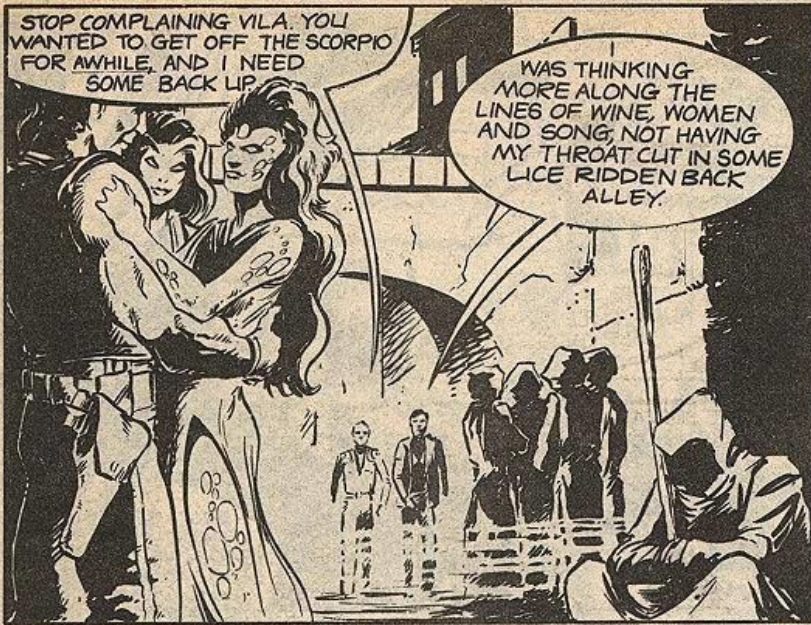


UNFORTUNATELY FOR YOU, HUMANS...



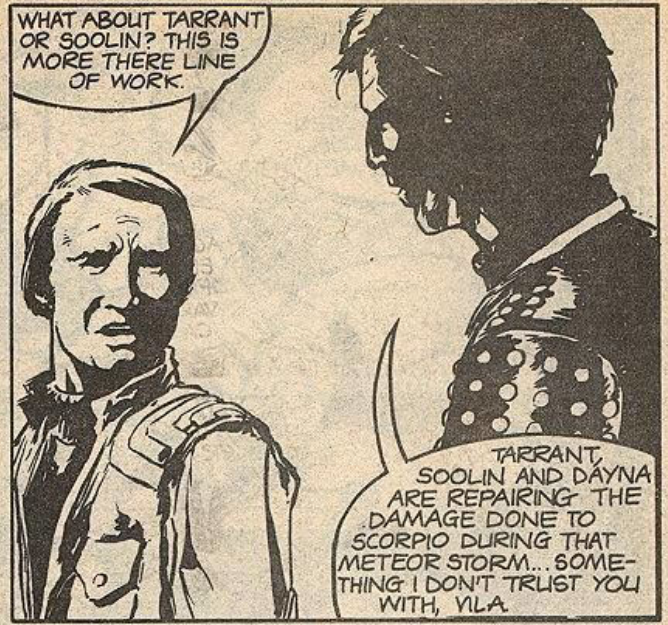
...THERE IS...





STOP COMPLAINING VILA. YOU WANTED TO GET OFF THE SCORPIO FOR AWHILE, AND I NEED SOME BACK UP.

WAS THINKING MORE ALONG THE LINES OF WINE, WOMEN AND SONG, NOT HAVING MY THROAT CUT IN SOME LICE RIDDEN BACK ALLEY.



WHAT ABOUT TARRANT OR SOOLIN? THIS IS MORE THERE LINE OF WORK.

TARRANT, SOOLIN AND DAYNA ARE REPAIRING THE DAMAGE DONE TO SCORPIO DURING THAT METEOR STORM... SOMETHING I DON'T TRUST YOU WITH, VILA.



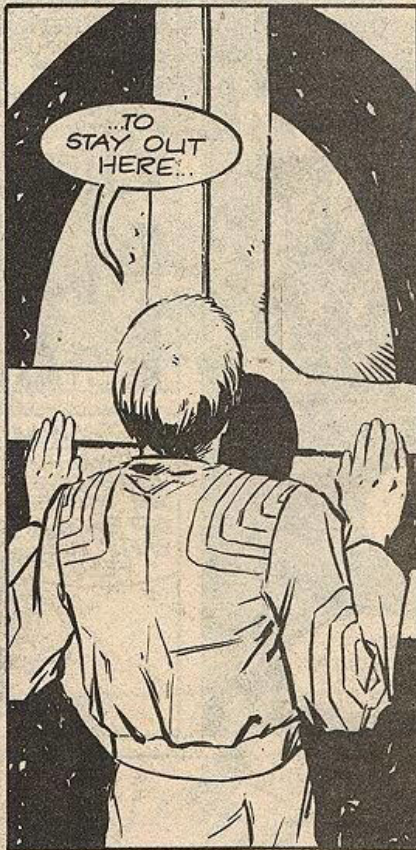
AH. THERE IT IS, VILA.

THE HOUSE OF PELLORIM VAC VANNER.



KEEP A LOOKOUT FOR FEDERATION PATROLS. IF ANYTHING HAPPENS, LET ME KNOW ON THE WRIST CON.

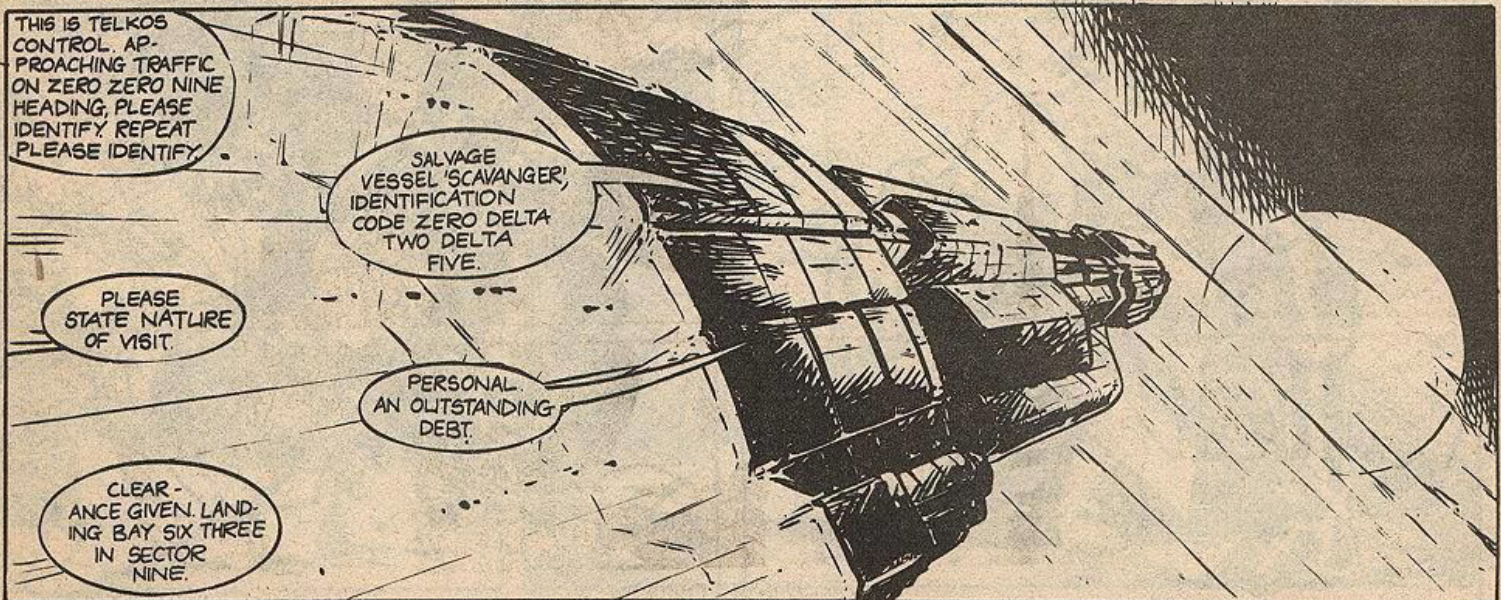
SURELY YOU DON'T EXPECT ME...



...TO STAY OUT HERE...



...ON MY OWN.



THIS IS TELKOS CONTROL. APPROACHING TRAFFIC ON ZERO ZERO NINE HEADING, PLEASE IDENTIFY REPEAT PLEASE IDENTIFY.

SALVAGE VESSEL 'SCAVANGER', IDENTIFICATION CODE ZERO DELTA TWO DELTA FIVE.

PLEASE STATE NATURE OF VISIT.

PERSONAL. AN OUTSTANDING DEBT.

CLEARANCE GIVEN. LANDING BAY SIX THREE IN SECTOR NINE.



IT IS ALWAYS A PLEASURE TO SEE YOU, AVON...IT HAS BEEN TOO LONG SINCE LAST WE MET.

UNAVOIDABLE I'M AFRAID, PELLORIM. IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR THAT STORM, I WOULDN'T BE HERE NOW. YOU'LL HAVE YOUR GERVANTS DELIVER THE COMPONENTS?

IT IS ALREADY DONE.

IT WILL SOON BE NIGHTFALL. I THINK I HAD BEST REJOIN VILA BEFORE HE GETS HIMSELF INTO ANY TROUBLE.



GO CAREFULLY, AVON. THE STREETS OF TELKOS ARE DANGEROUS ENOUGH DURING THE DAY. AT NIGHT...

THEY ARE CERTAIN DEATH.



AVON! I WAS JUST ABOUT TO CALL YOU. SEE THOSE THINGS OVER THERE? THEY'VE BEEN WATCHING ME EVER SINCE YOU WENT INSIDE!

I'M NOT SURPRISED THEY'RE PART OF PELLORIM'S PERSONAL GUARD. COME ON.

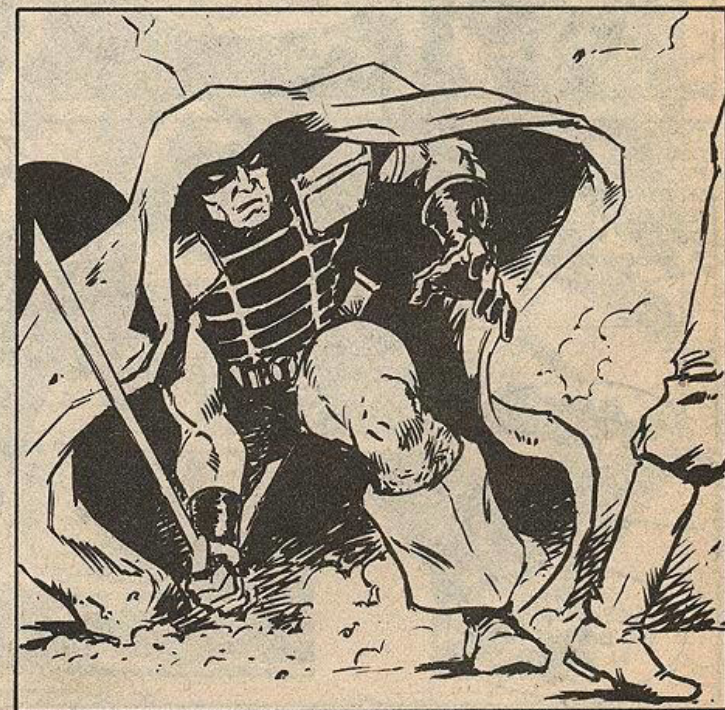


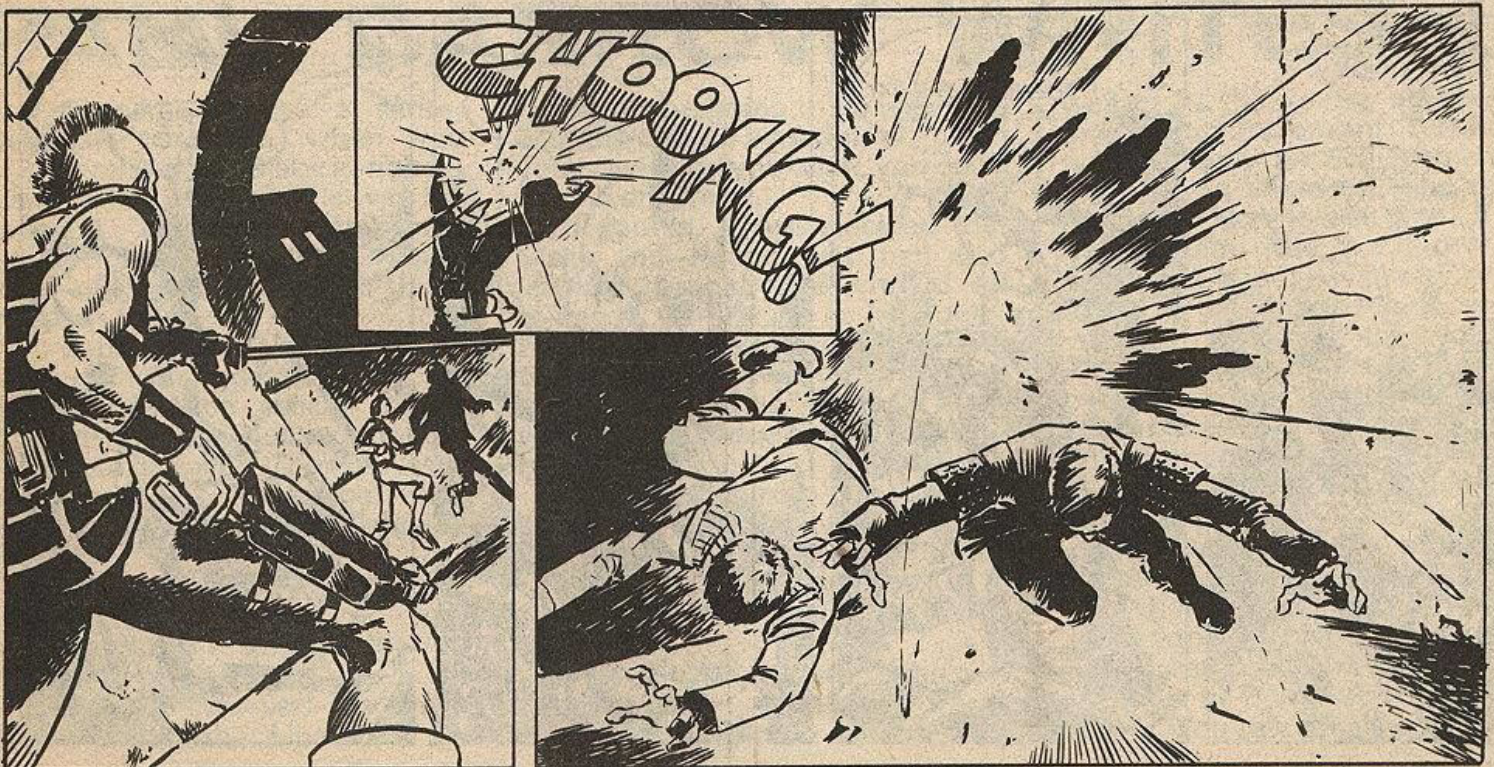
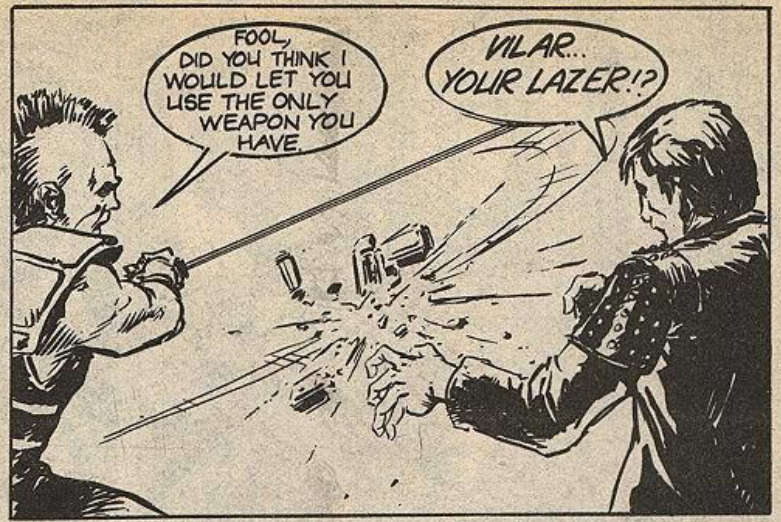
SEVERAL MINUTES LATER.

CAN WE HURRY PLEASE, AVON! THE SOONER WE GET BACK, THE SAFER I'LL FEEL!

DID ANYONE EVER TELL YOU, VILA, THAT YOU ARE AS SPINELESS AS A CHAKANI WORM.

I TELL MYSELF EVERY MORNING... IT KEEPS ME OUT OF TROUBLE.







THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING TO ME...!



WELL, WELL!.. AVON AND VILA. DIDN'T YOU KNOW THERE'S A WARRANT OUT FOR YOU AND YOUR REBEL FRIENDS?

DEAD OR ALIVE! ISN'T THAT RIGHT SERGEANT



YES, SIR. DEAD OR ALIVE.

I PREFER THEM DEAD, KILL THEM!

NO!



FEDERATION 6CLIM! THEY'RE MINE! YOU DESTROY MY BATTLE CRUISER, YOU TRY TO KILL ME... AND NOW YOU TRY TO CHEAT ME OF MY VENGEANCE...



ON YOUR FEET, VILA. LET'S GET BACK TO THE SCORPIO WHILE VALKAC'S STILL SLICING UP THOSE TROOPERS!



THERE'S NOWHERE FOR YOU TO HIDE, AVON...

YOU HAVEN'T GOT AWAY WITH IT...



I'LL HUNT YOU ACROSS A GALAXY IF I HAVE TO...




...AND WHEN I FIND YOU...



YOU'RE A DEAD MAN...

CRANPAX CORE



THIS IS MADNESS, AVON!
TRYING TO CONTROL SCORPIO
THROUGH THESE NARROW VALLEYS
IS MURDER. CAN'T I INCREASE
ALTITUDE EVEN A HUNDRED FEET?

GET ON WITH
IT, TARRANT! IF YOU
CAN'T FLY THIS SHIP...
THEN I WILL!



I CAN MANAGE, AVON...
BUT THE RISK OF COLLISION
WITH THE MOUNTAINS
IS FRIGHTENING.

JUST THEN...

WE'VE BEEN
SPOTTED!

GO TO BATTLE
STATIONS!

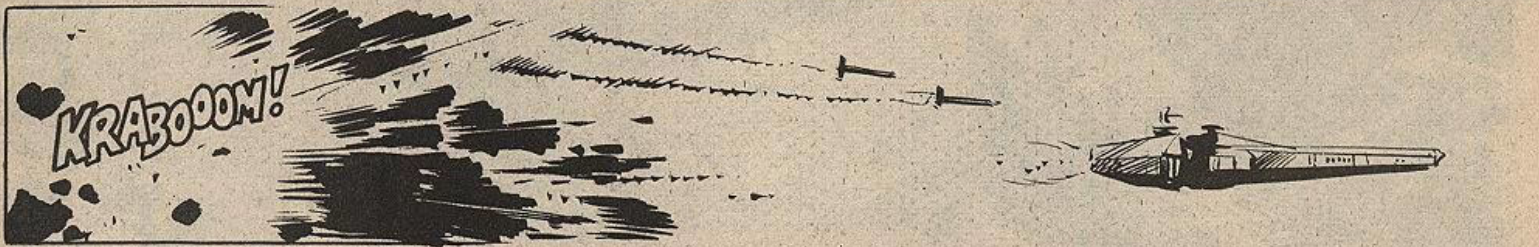
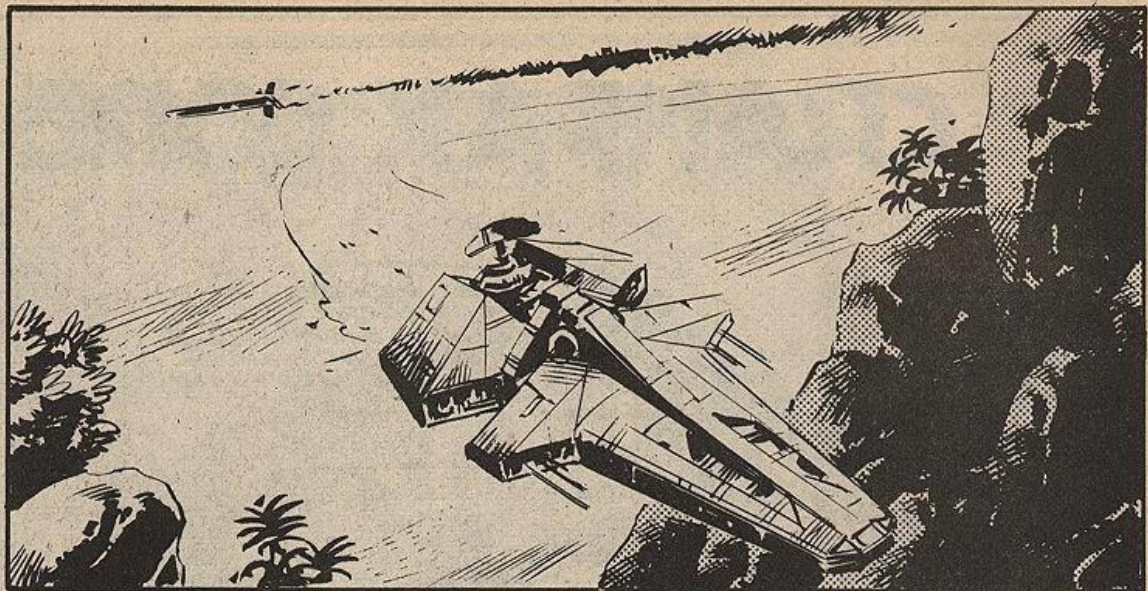
CONFIRMED. WE'VE
JUST CROSSED A LASER
TRACKING BEAM.

THE WARNING CAME AS THE
FIRST MISSILE WAS RELEASED.



WE'VE HAD IT!
WE'RE A BITTING
DUCK!

AND SO ARE THE
FEDERATION COUNTER MEASURES
AGAINST ENEMY CRAFT... SUCH
AS SCORPIO. WE KEEP
LOW. THAT'S AN
ORDER!



WE ARE HERE BY INVITATION OF THOSE WHO HAVE CHOSEN TO STAND AGAINST THE FEDERATION AND DEFEND WHAT IS RIGHTFULLY THEIRS. IT'S A NOBLE CAUSE AND ONE WE SHOULD SUPPORT.



CUT THE CLAPTRAP, AVON! WHAT'S IN IT FOR US, EH?

SO ELOQUENTLY PUT, VILA... BUT QUITE RIGHT. THERE IS SOMETHING IN IT FOR US... AS YOU WOULD SAY.



WELL? WE'RE WAITING. AND THIS BETTER BE GOOD OR I'M TELLING TARRANT TO TAKE US OUT OF THIS FEDERATION MISSILE RANGE!

YOU WILL GIVE NO ORDERS UNLESS I SAY SO, VILA. BUT, ENOUGH OF THAT. WE ARE HERE TO GAIN ACCESS TO WHAT THE FEDERATION SO DESPERATELY WANT... AND CANNOT GET.



WHAT IS IT THAT'S SO IMPORTANT?

MUST BE MINERALS... MAYBE GOLD... OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

NO, VILA. IT'S SOMETHING MUCH MORE VALUABLE THAN A CRUDE METAL. IT'S KNOWLEDGE, SOMETHING OF WHICH YOU HAVE VERY LITTLE.

CLEAR THE SCREENS, YOU TWO. I'VE GOT TO SEE WHAT'S AHEAD!



I THINK I'M OFFENDED.

SO WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT KNOWLEDGE, EH?



NO TIME FOR EXPLANATIONS! LOOK!

GOOD GRIEF! IT'S A SMALL CITY!



ORAC! THAT STRUCTURE WAS NOT MENTIONED WHEN YOU BRIEFED ME ON THIS PLANET!



I HAD NO DATA FOR THE CONSTRUCTION. IT MUST HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN IN TOTAL SECURITY.

TERRIFIC! AND WE'RE FLYING STRAIGHT INTO THE TEETH OF THE FEDERATION MAIN BASE!



TARRANT! ARM THE PLASMA BOLTS. WE'RE GOING TO ATTACK!

ARMING NOW!

ATTACK THEM? A WHOLE FEDERATION FORCE? ARE YOU CRAZY!?



WE CANNOT FLY OVER THE CITY... WE CANNOT TURN ROUND... SO WE'RE GOING TO FLY THROUGH IT. UNDERSTAND?

YOU ARE CRAZY!

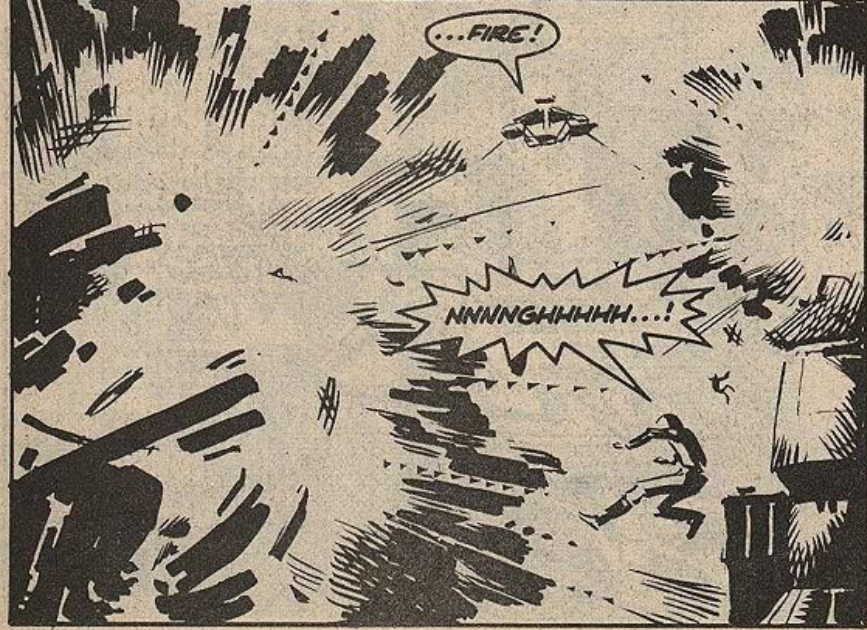


RENEGADE SHIP APPROACHING! ALL DEFENCE SYSTEMS RED ALERT. FIRE AT WILL!



WE'RE SUSTAINING HITS. WE'VE GOT TO RETURN FIRE, AVON!

NOT YET! STAND-BY! THREE... TWO... ONE...



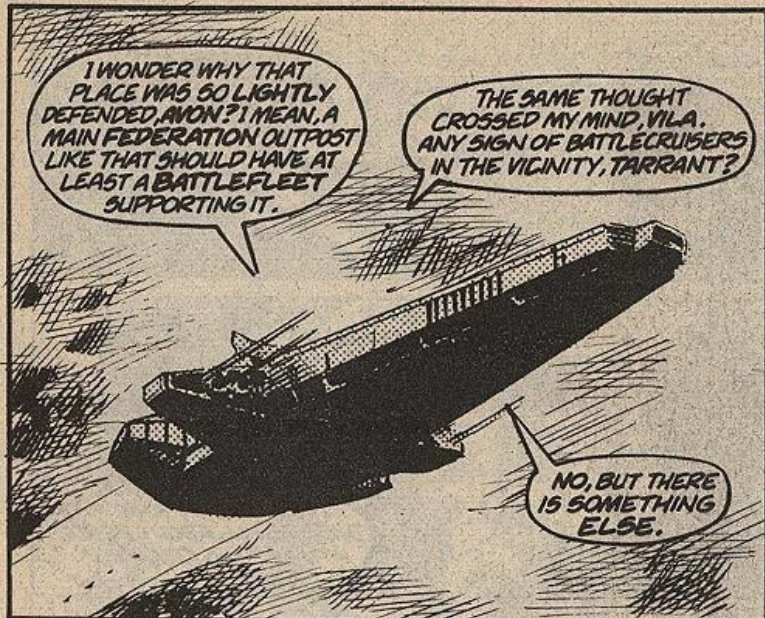
...FIRE!

NNNNNGHHHHH...!



WE... WE'RE GOING TO MAKE IT! THE PLASMA BOLTS HAVE CLEARED A PATH FOR US!

YES, VILA, AND ALSO LEFT QUITE AN IMPRESSION ON THE FEDERATION FORCE.



I WONDER WHY THAT PLACE WAS SO LIGHTLY DEFENDED, AVON? I MEAN, A MAIN FEDERATION OUTPOST LIKE THAT SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST A BATTLEFLEET SUPPORTING IT.

THE SAME THOUGHT CROSSED MY MIND, VILA. ANY SIGN OF BATTLECRUISERS IN THE VICINITY, TARRANT?

NO, BUT THERE IS SOMETHING ELSE.



I DON'T RECOGNISE IT AS FEDERATION. ANY IDEAS?

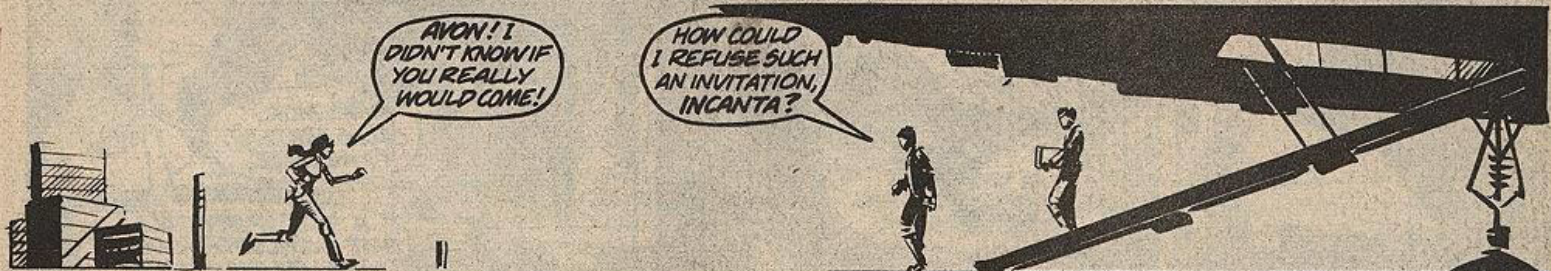
YOU CAN RELAX, TARRANT. SEEMS AS THOUGH OUR FRIENDS HAVE COME TO GREET US. REDUCE SPEED AND PREPARE FOR LANDING!



LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE TAKEN A REAL PASTING FROM THE FEDERATION!

TARRANT, WHEN WE LAND, I WANT SCORPIO KEPT AT BATTLE READINESS. VILA AND I WILL GO TO MEET THEM.

UHH? NOT AGAIN?!



AVON! I DIDN'T KNOW IF YOU REALLY WOULD COME!

HOW COULD I REFUSE SUCH AN INVITATION, INCANTA?



IT'S BEEN SO LONG, AVON... I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT HAVE FORGOTTEN ME. SENDING YOU A SIGNAL WAS A LAST DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO PREVENT THE FEDERATION EXTERMINATING US!

IT'S TIME WE TALKED WITH YOUR FATHER. WHERE IS HE?



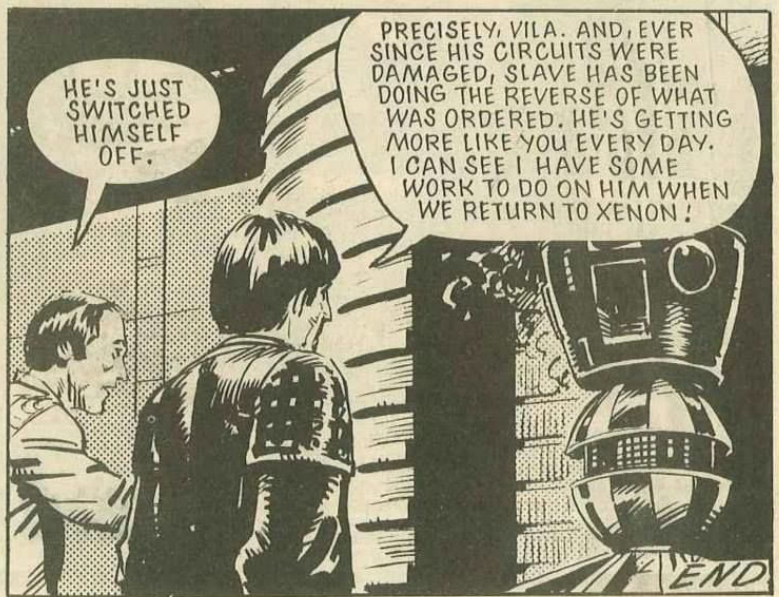
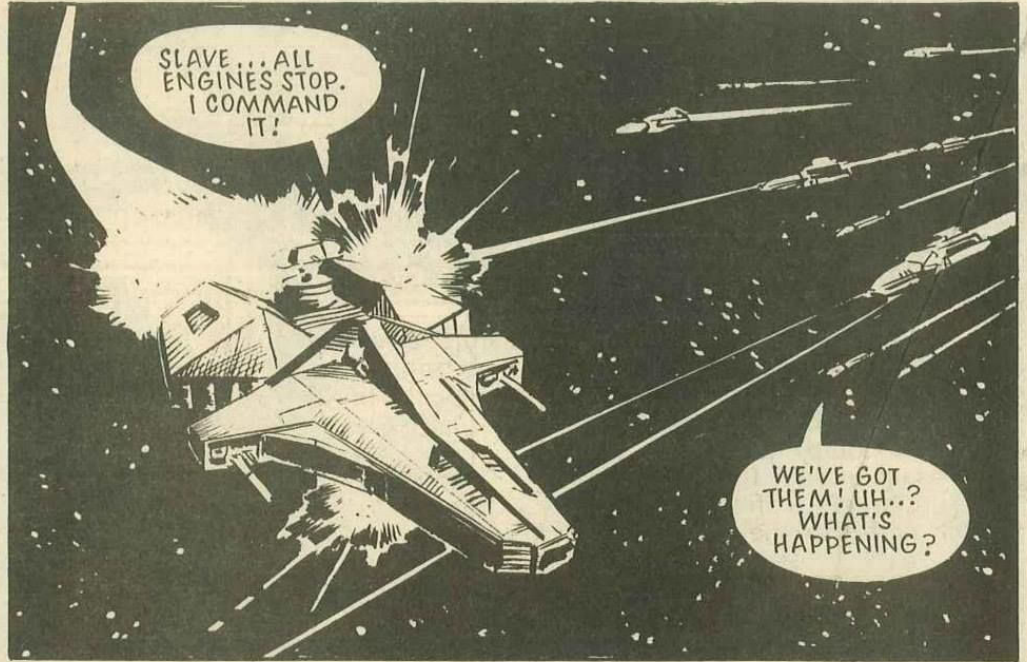
THERE WAS A BATTLE WITH THE FEDERATION INVASION FLEET. WE GAVE AS GOOD AS WE GOT... MANAGED TO DESTROY ALL THEIR MAIN CRAFT... BUT FATHER WAS CAPTURED BY GROUND FORCES WHEN SHIP CRASHED. HE'S BEING HELD HOSTAGE IN THEIR VALLEY BASE.

YOU MEAN THAT PLACE NOT FAR FROM HERE? THE ONE...



KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT, VILA! WHEN I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU I'LL ASK, UNDERSTAND?

ER... IF YOU SAY SO....



ALLIANCE

A MEETING ON A DISTANT PLANET — AN AGREEMENT REACHED BETWEEN AN INDEPENDENT WARLORD AND THE CREW OF SCORPIO. A DESPERATE PLAN OF ACTION AGREED AGAINST A FEDERATION CONVOY. AND INTO ACTION FLIES THE ALLIANCE!

SCORPIO IS INDEED A POWERFUL SHIP, AVON. WITH ITS WEAPON SYSTEMS THE ALLIANCE CANNOT FAIL!

SCORPIO WILL DO ITS JOB OF DESTROYING FEDERATION ESCORTS GOWAN. JUST ENSURE YOUR FLEET PERFORMS AS WELL WHEN WE SIGHT THE CONVOY.

CONTACT, AVON! IT IS THE CONVOY!

THEN IT IS TIME TO RETURN TO MY OWN SHIP. YOU'RE CERTAIN SCORPIO CAN DEAL WITH THE ESCORTS!

HAVE NO FEAR GOWAN. SCORPIO WILL DRAW THE FEDERATION FIRE AS YOUR SHIPS ATTACK. DO AS WE AGREED AND WE WILL WIN!

TARGET CRAFT IN SIGHT. STAND-BY TO ATTACK!

UNIDENTIFIED CRAFT APPROACHING FROM SECTOR TWO!

WEAPON SYSTEMS
ARMED AND READY!
HERE WE GO!

FIRE! BLAST
THEM TO
OBLIVION!

CONVOY UNDER
ATTACK. CLOSE
FORMATION AND
PREPARE FOR BATTLE.
WE'LL TEACH THEM
A LESSON THEY
WON'T FORGET
IN A HURRY!

AVON... WE'VE
GOT TO RETURN
FIRE BEFORE
THEY GET OVER
OUR RANGE!

STAND-BY...
FIRE!

NOT YET,
TARRANT.
JUST A LITTLE
CLOSER...

PLASMA
BOLTS FIRED
AND
RUNNING!

BREAK OFF!
BREAK OFF!

WE'VE SMASHED
THEM, AVON!

GOWAN AND HIS FLEET
ARE BOARDING THE
MAIN TRANSPORT NOW.
EVERYTHING IS GOING
ACCORDING TO PLAN.

THAT'S WHAT YOU
THINK! FEDERATION
SHIP MAKING FLANK
APPROACH...
AND FAST!

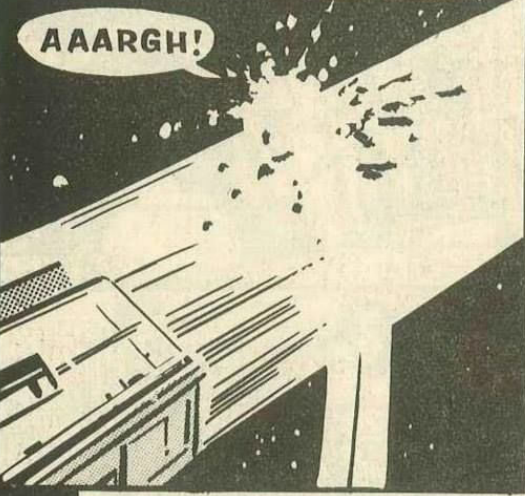


WE'RE HIT! WHERE THE DEVIL DID HE COME FROM?

I DON'T CARE... BUT I KNOW WHERE HE'S GOING! FULL THRUST, TARRANT!

MILLIONS OF POWER UNITS GENERATED A POWERFUL HEAT TRAIL BEHIND SCORPIO AS IT SURGED FORWARD...

TARGET DESTROYED, AVON. IT... IT JUST BLEW UP!



AAARGH!



NO MORE FEDERATION SHIPS THAT WAS THE LAST OF THEM. WE'RE CLEAR TO REJOIN THE FLEET!



NOT SO FAST, VILA. WE **COULD** REJOIN THE OTHERS IF WE HAD SOME POWER LEFT... BUT THERE'S NONE!

WHAT?



THE DRIVE SYSTEMS HAVE BEEN HIT. WE HAVE NO MAIN THRUST UNTIL ITS REPAIRED WE'RE STRANDED.

TIME TO CALL ON OUR FRIENDS FROM THE ALLIANCE!



COWAN... THIS IS AVON. THE FEDERATION SHIPS HAVE BEEN DESTROYED!

EXCELLENT, AVON AND WE HAVE THE **ATOMIC STAR CANNON!** COME AND REJOIN THE FLEET!

I'M AFRAID WE CAN'T, COWAN. SCORPIO'S POWER DRIVE HAS BEEN HIT. WE NEED YOUR ASSISTANCE TO REJOIN YOU.



YOU MEAN THE ALL-POWERFUL SCORPIO CAN NO LONGER FLY? ARE YOU SERIOUS, AVON?

IT'S PURELY A TEMPORARY THING, COWAN. NOW SEND ASSISTANCE IMMEDIATELY. YOU KNOW YOU NEED SCORPIO'S PROTECTION.

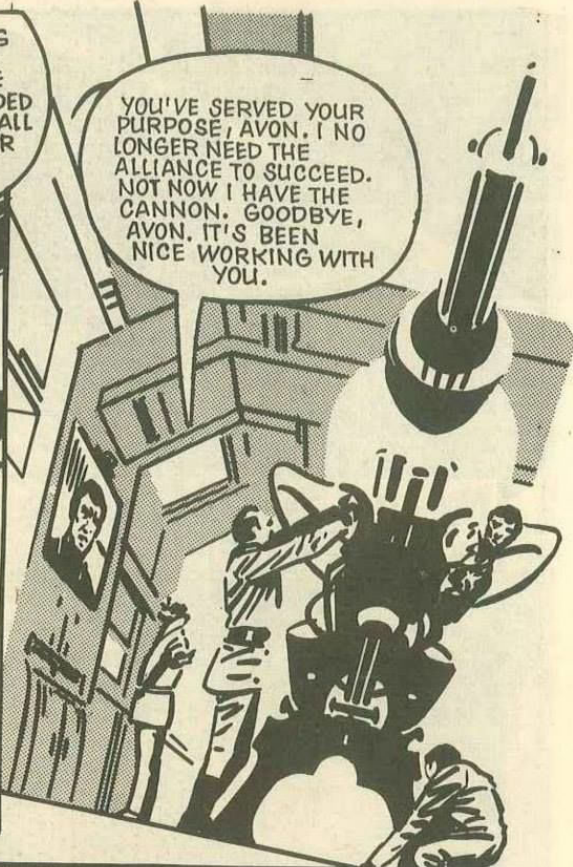


WHAT? WITH THE ATOMIC STAR CANNON IN MY POSSESSION? MY SHIP IS NOW MORE POWERFUL AND DEADLY THAN SCORPIO EVER WAS.

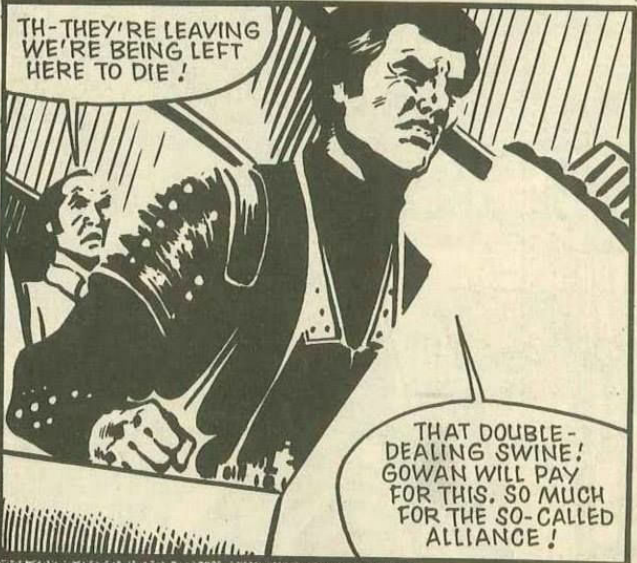
ARE YOU TELLING ME YOU'RE PREPARED TO LEAVE SCORPIO STRANDED HERE... AFTER ALL WE'VE DONE FOR YOU AND THE ALLIANCE?



YOU'VE SERVED YOUR PURPOSE, AVON. I NO LONGER NEED THE ALLIANCE TO SUCCEED. NOT NOW I HAVE THE CANNON. GOODBYE, AVON. IT'S BEEN NICE WORKING WITH YOU.

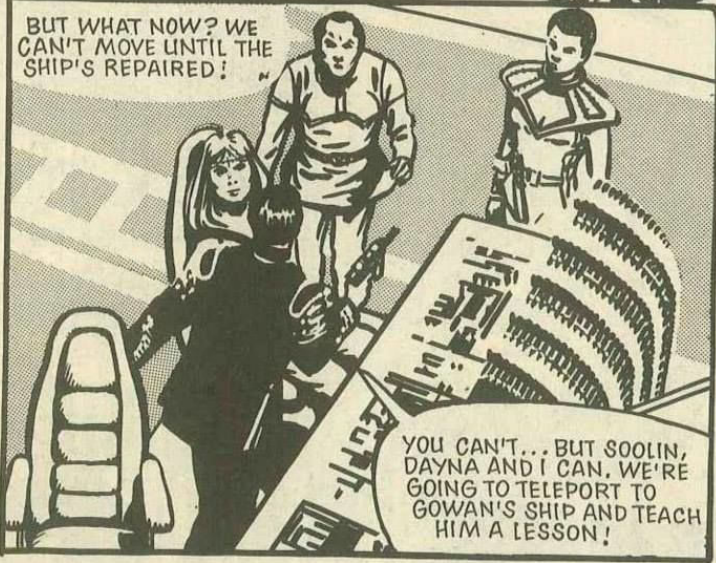


TH- THEY'RE LEAVING WE'RE BEING LEFT HERE TO DIE!



THAT DOUBLE-DEALING SWINE! GOWAN WILL PAY FOR THIS. SO MUCH FOR THE SO-CALLED ALLIANCE!

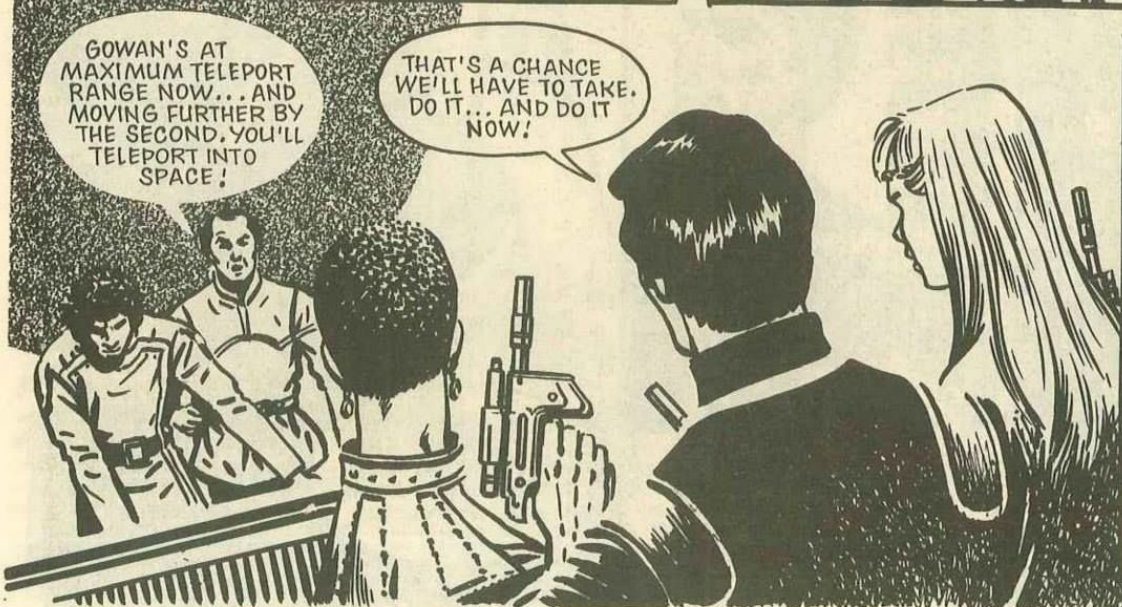
BUT WHAT NOW? WE CAN'T MOVE UNTIL THE SHIP'S REPAIRED!



YOU CAN'T... BUT SOOLIN, DAYNA AND I CAN. WE'RE GOING TO TELEPORT TO GOWAN'S SHIP AND TEACH HIM A LESSON!

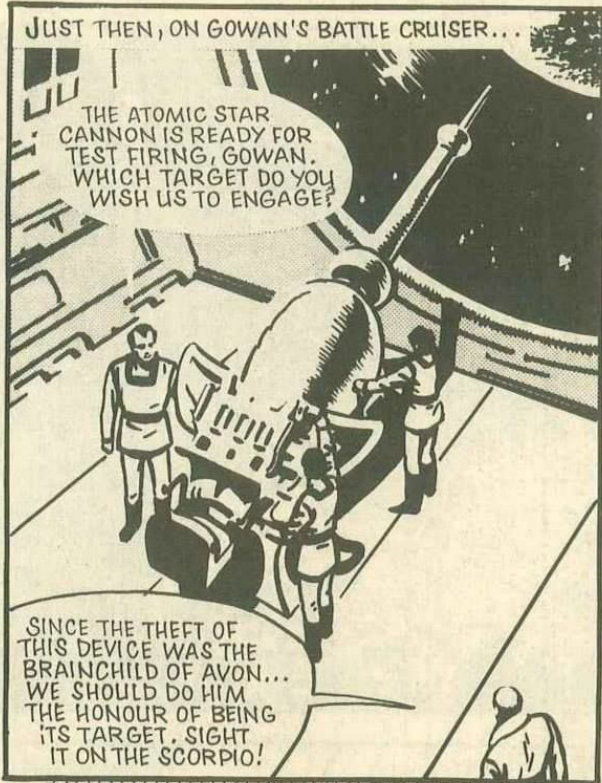
GOWAN'S AT MAXIMUM TELEPORT RANGE NOW... AND MOVING FURTHER BY THE SECOND. YOU'LL TELEPORT INTO SPACE!

THAT'S A CHANCE WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE. DO IT... AND DO IT NOW!



TELEPORTING! GOOD LUCK!





AARRGH...!

A STREAM OF ATOMIC STAR PARTICLES BLASTED OUT INTO SPACE... THEIR TARGET AN INNOCENT CELESTIAL BODY WHICH WOULD BE NO MORE...

KAZ!

PHEW! I'M GLAD WE WEREN'T ON THE RECEIVING END OF THAT! AT LEAST WE'RE SAFE NOW.

I WISH WE WERE DAYNA. IN FACT THE DANGER IS JUST BEGINNING.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

THE ATOMIC CANNON'S CREATED A BLACK HOLE WHERE THAT PLANET USED TO BE... AND WE'RE BEING SUCKED TOWARDS IT. UNLESS WE GET OURSELVES OUT OF HERE SOON... WE'LL BE CRUSHED TO NOTHING AS WE ENTER THE HOLE!

TARRANT... VILA YOU MUST TELEPORT US OFF THIS SHIP IMMEDIATELY!

IMPOSSIBLE, AVON. WE'VE NO POWER LEFT.

IT'LL TAKE AT LEAST AN HOUR TO GET THE CIRCUITS WORKING AGAIN, AVON.

JUST THEN ALARM KLAXONS SOUNDED...

WHAT IS IT, SLAVE?

IN AN HOUR WE'LL BE DEAD... SUCKED INTO A BLACK HOLE. GET US OUT NOW!

I HUMBLY BEG TO REPORT, SIR, MORE FEDERATION SHIPS ARE ON THEIR WAY HERE... A FULL BATTLE FLEET.

SLAVE'S RIGHT! SIX OF THE BEGGARS COMING IN FAST! WE'VE GOT TO OPEN FIRE!

WAIT, VILA! TRY THAT...



NOTHING!
NOT A
DAMMED
THING!



MAYBE IT'S
THIS ONE...

THERE'S NO
TIME FOR GUESS-
WORK, TARRANT!
WE'RE UNDER
ATTACK!



THEY'RE
HELPLESS! TIGHT
FORMATION
ATTACK!

THIS HAS
GOT TO WORK!
FIRE, VILA...
FIRE!

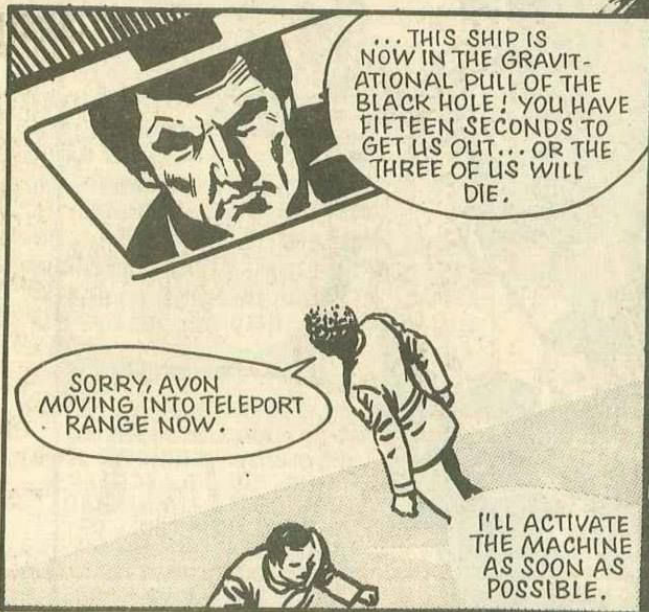
SCORPIO SHUDDERED AS EVERY
WEAPON SYSTEM WAS TRIGGERED.



YOU DID IT
VILA! DESTROYED
EVERY LAST
ONE!

FANTASTIC
WASN'T IT. AND
WE'VE GOT OUR
POWER BACK!

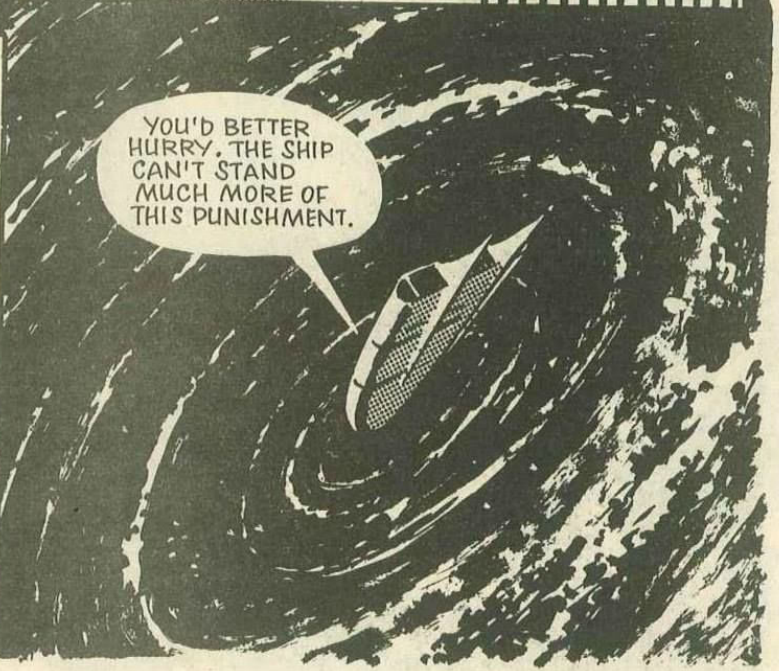
WHEN YOU'VE
QUITE FINISHED
CONGRATULATING
YOURSELVES...



... THIS SHIP IS
NOW IN THE GRAVIT-
ATIONAL PULL OF THE
BLACK HOLE! YOU HAVE
FIFTEEN SECONDS TO
GET US OUT... OR THE
THREE OF US WILL
DIE.

SORRY, AVON
MOVING INTO TELEPORT
RANGE NOW.

I'LL ACTIVATE
THE MACHINE
AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE.



YOU'D BETTER
HURRY. THE SHIP
CAN'T STAND
MUCH MORE OF
THIS PUNISHMENT.

CAN THEY REALLY GET US OUT IN TIME..?

IF THEY CAN'T YOU WON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT IT. WE HAVE ABOUT FIVE SECONDS TO GO.

THE TELEPORT CAN'T LOCK ON TO THEM. THEY'RE STILL OUT OF RANGE!

SCORPIO'S TRAVELLING AS FAST AS SHE CAN GO WITH THEM. DAMAGED ENGINES KEEP TRYING!

VILA... WHAT THE BLAZES ARE YOU DOING?

GOT TO TAKE A CHANCE! I'M GOING TO NARROW THE TRACTOR BEAM. IT'LL GIVE US MORE RANGE WITH THE TELEPORT, BUT...

... IT COULD MEAN WE PULL OUT ONLY ONE PERSON FROM THE SHIP.

THAT INSTANT...

UH? AVON... WHAT'S HAPPENING!

YOUR HANDS GIVE ME YOUR HANDS..!

FOR THE TRIO, TIME AND SPACE STOOD STILL AS THE TELEPORT BEAM FOUGHT TO DRAG THEM FROM THE DISASTER AND DEATH...

TWO SECONDS LATER...

VILA... YOU DID IT! THEY'RE SAFE!

THAT'S ONE YOU OWE ME, AVON. IT WAS MY BRAINS THAT FOUND A WAY TO SAVE YOU AND TURN DISASTER... INTO SUCCESS!

SUCCESS? HOW CAN IT BE A SUCCESS WHEN THE ONLY WORTHWHILE THING, THE ATOMIC STAR CANNON, IS A MANGLED MESS IN THE MIDDLE OF A BLACK HOLE? NEXT TIME YOU'LL HAVE TO DO BETTER, VILA!