

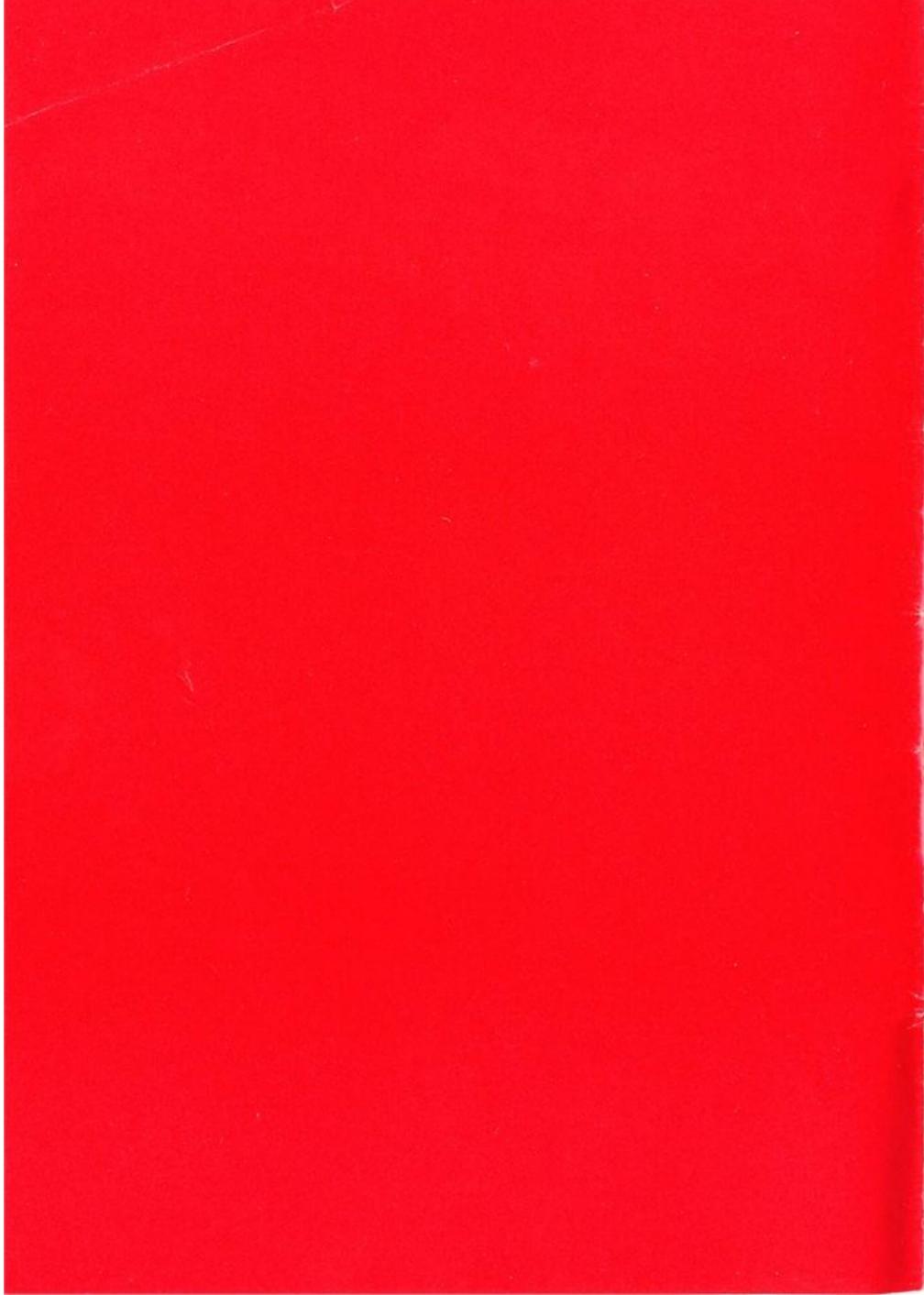


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ATARI FORCE™



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ATARI FORCE



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PART TWO

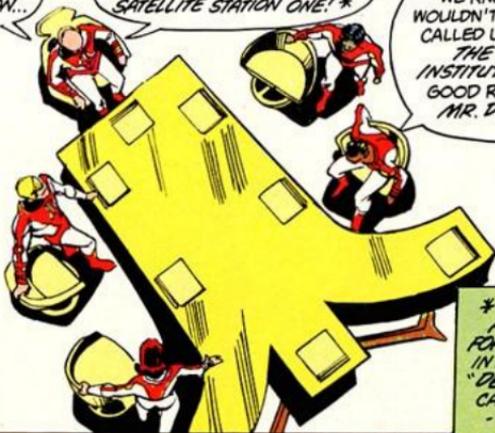
CHAPTER ONE:

BERSERK

COMMANDER
CHAMPION...
DOCTOR ORION...

...THANK YOU FOR MAKING
THE TRIP HERE FROM SOLAR
SATELLITE STATION ONE! *

WE KNOW YOU
WOULDN'T HAVE
CALLED US BACK TO
THE ATARI
INSTITUTE WITHOUT
GOOD REASON,
MR. DIRECTOR!



* SEE
ATARI
FORCE #1,
IN ATARI'S
"DEFENDER"
CARTRIDGE.
--EDITOR.

BUT WHY SUCH
TIGHT SECURITY?

WE HAVE WHAT WE
THINK ARE GOOD
REASONS, DOCTOR.

PROJECT:
MULTIVERSE IS
TOP SECRET--



AH, 'TIS A RUDE AWAKENING YOU'RE IN FOR, MR. DIRECTOR!

SAD TO SAY, YOUR DEAR SECURITY ISN'T QUITE SO TIGHT AS YOU MIGHT THINK!

--AND FOR THE SAKE OF OUR WAR-WEARY WORLD, WHAT'S REVEALED TO YOU TODAY--MUST NEVER LEAVE THIS ROOM!

THE YEAR:
2005 A.D.

THE PLACE:
THE NORTHCAL HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE ATARI TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE, IN THAT PART OF NORTH AMERICA THAT USED TO BE KNOWN AS CALIFORNIA BEFORE THE "BREAK-UP..."

THE SITUATION:
A WORLD IN CRISIS...

FOR ALL
YOUR FINE
TECHNOLOGY--

-- ALL YOUR
RADAR AND HEAT-
SENSITIVE
SENSORS--

-- A MERE SLIP OF
A GIRL HAS MANAGED
TO MAKE HER WAY INTO
THE VERY HEART OF
YOUR "WELL-GUARDED"
ATARI COMPLEX!



SURE,
AND IT'S
AS I
ALWAYS
SAY--

"ANY
SECURITY
SYSTEM CAN
BE BEATEN.

"ALL IT TAKES
IS TIME--

-- AND A
LITTLE
INGENUITY!"



TAKE THIS SOUND-
PROOF PLASTIGLAS
DOME, NOW.

IT'S SUPPOSED
TO KEEP AN EAVES-
DROPPER FROM
HEARIN' THE
SECRETS BEING
WHISPERED
BELOW.

BUT,
WITH A
PORTABLE
STETHA-
SCAN...

...YOUR VOICES
COME THROUGH AS
SUNRISE OVER
DUBLIN BAY!

--PROJECT: MULTIVERSE IS
THE CODE NAME FOR AN ATTEMPT
TO BREAK THE DIMENSIONAL
BARRIER THAT SEPARATES US
FROM AN INFINITY OF ALTERNATE
WORLDS!

"ALTERNATE"
WORLDS?

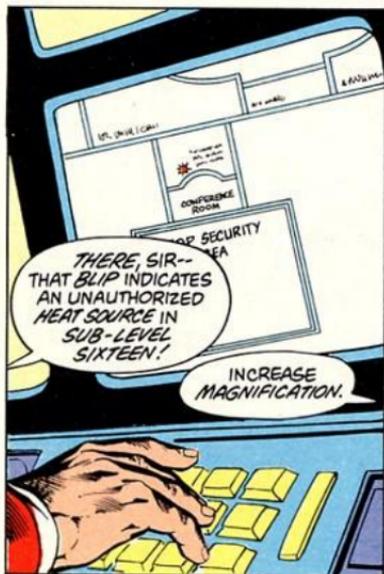
WORLDS WHOSE
HISTORY DIVERGES
FROM OUR OWN,
COMMANDER.

BUT ISN'T
THAT JUST A
FANTASY?

PURE SCIENCE
FICTION?

PLEASE,
DOCTOR... LET
THE DIRECTOR
EXPLAIN...

...WITHOUT
ANY MORE
INTERRUPTIONS!







EH? WHAT'S HAPPENING TO SINGH?

HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S GOING INTO A TRANCE...!

NOT A TRANCE, BUT RATHER, A REVERIE...

... AN UNWILLING FLASH-BACK OF MEMORY TO A TIME TWENTY YEARS BEFORE, IN THE CROWDED STREETS OF NEW DELHI, WHEN A MUCH YOUNGER MOHANDAS SINGH LIVED THE WILD LIFE OF AN URBAN ORPHAN IN THE WORLD'S MOST DESPERATE CITY...



HE WAS POOR-- HE WENT HUNGRY EVERY DAY, OR SO IT SEEMED--

-- BUT IN ONE AREA OF HIS LIFE, HE WAS RICH:

HE HAD A FRIEND... A FELLOW URCHIN WHO CALLED HIMSELF RAJA.

MOHANDAS-- WAKE UP-- A TOURIST!

A BRITISH RAJ, TOO-- MAYBE WORTH A FEW COINS, IF YOU BEG RIGHT!



HMM, WHAT'S THIS?

WHAT DO YOU WANT, YOU LITTLE SCAMP?

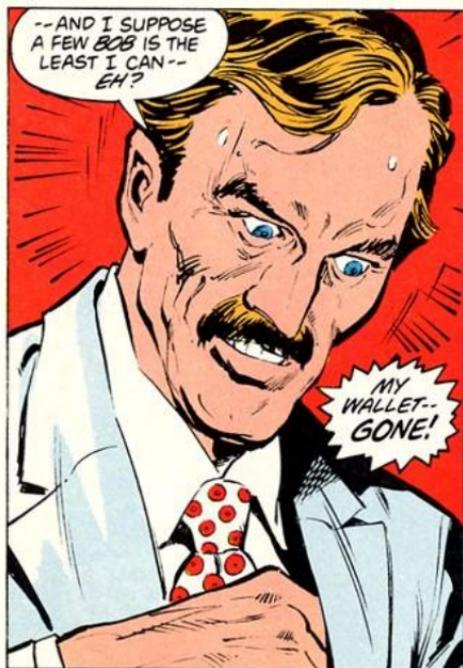
PLEASE, SIR, A FEW PENCE FOR FOOD--?

FOOD, AY?

HOW YOU CAN EAT IN THIS BLOODY HOT CLIMATE, I'LL NEVER KNOW.



STILL, YOU LOOK LIKE A GOOD BOY--



--AND I SUPPOSE A FEW BOB IS THE LEAST I CAN-- EH?

MY WALLET-- GONE!



PLAYING FAGIN'S GAME, ARE YOU?

ONE OF YOU DISTRACTS ME WHILE THE OTHER PINCHES MY PURSE!

NO, SIR, I NEVER--



EVEN IN MEMORY, MOHANDAS SINGH CAN FEEL THE POUNDING OF HIS HEART, THE PURE, PHYSICAL TERROR THAT GRIPPED HIS CHEST AND MADE EACH BREATH AN AGONY...

HE RAN WITHOUT REALLY KNOWING WHY...



...AND OF THAT NIGHTMARE MORNING, ALL HE CAN TRULY REMEMBER IS THE WAIL OF SIRENS AND THE POLICE CAR'S FLASHING RED LIGHTS...

BREE BREE

MY WORD...

...WHAT HAVE I DONE?







HE WILL NEVER FORGET.

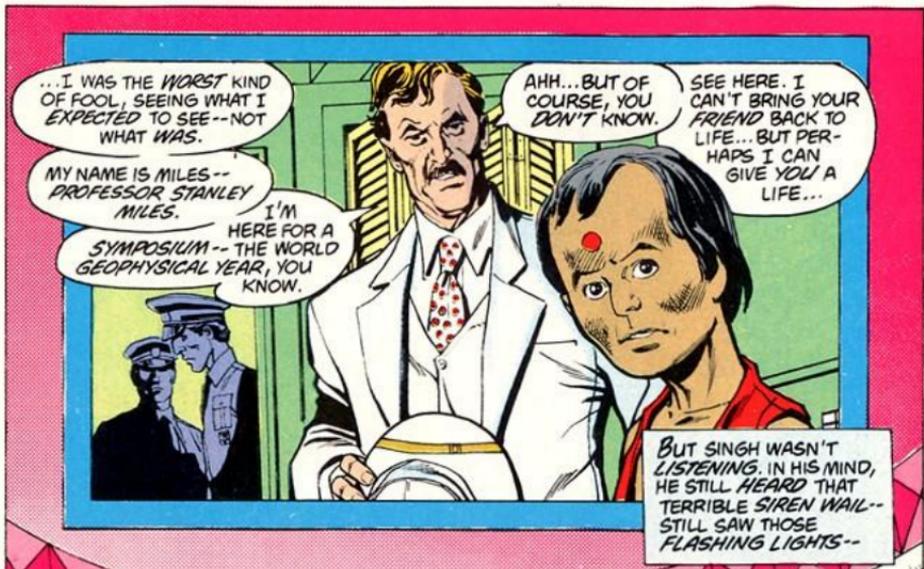
THE LIGHTS, THE SOUNDS, SEARED INTO HIS BRAIN.

BREE
BREE
BREE
BREE

IN SPITE OF HIS POVERTY...
IN SPITE OF DAILY HUNGER
AND CONSTANT FEAR...

...UNTIL THAT MOMENT,
HE HADN'T KNOWN
WHAT IT MEANT TO BE POOR...

I'M SORRY...
THIS WAS MY
FAULT...



...A MIND THAT NOW
FOCUSES WITH INSTANT
ALERTNESS ON NEW
INPUT, CAUSING MOHANDAS
SINGH TO CRY OUT:

COMMANDER,
DIRECTOR--THERE
IS THE CAUSE
OF THE ALARM!

A
SPY!

SO MUCH FOR SIX
YEARS OF TRAINING
IN THE MARINES--
I NEVER EVEN
LOOKED UP!

I THOUGHT
YOU TOLD US
PROJECT: MULTIVERSE
WAS TOP SECRET,
PEREZ!

I DON'T
UNDERSTAND,
MARTIN--SECURITY
WAS SO TIGHT--!

DEAR LADY, IF I
RAN MY MEDICAL
RESEARCH
DEPARTMENT
THE WAY SECURITY
APPARENTLY HAS
RUN THIS
OPERATION--





OKAY,
SISTER,
END OF
THE
ROAD!

WH-WHA--?

-- I'D SOON
HAVE NO
PATIENTS
LEFT ALIVE!

SARGE! SHE'S JUMPIN' AROUND LIKE SOME KIND OF KANGAROO!

TOO CLOSE TO USE MY WEAPONS-LASER WITHOUT HITTING YOU!

GOTTA GET SOME ROOM TO MANEUVER OR SHE'LL--







--SHE'S SLIPPED INTO THE VENTILATING DUCT THAT LEADS TO THE SCANNER ONE HANGAR!

SCANNER ONE IS THE VERY HEART OF PROJECT MULTIVERSE!

EVEN SECURITY ISN'T ALLOWED ON THIS LEVEL!

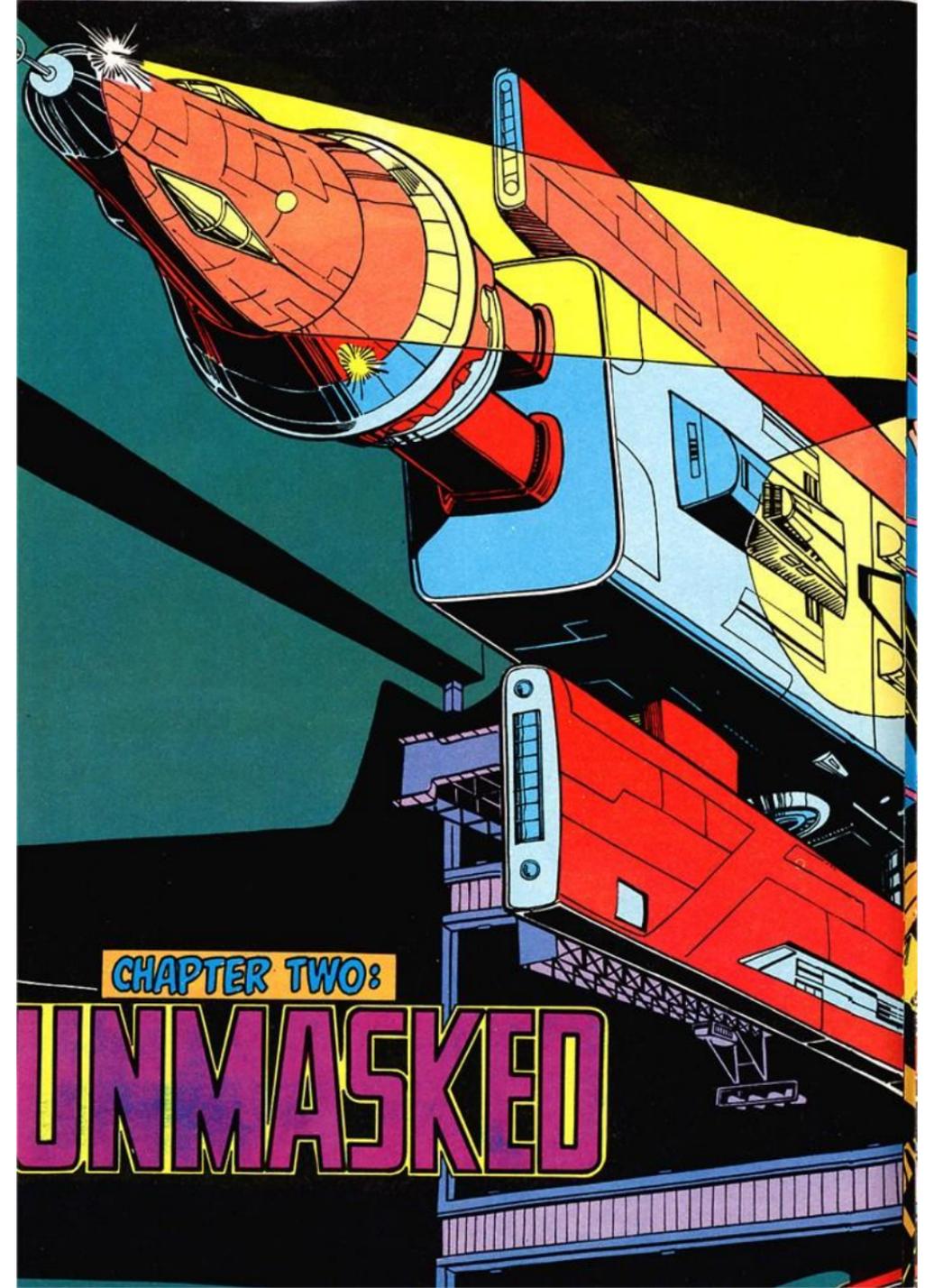
HURRY-- WE HAVE TO STOP HER-- BEFORE SOMETHING DISASTROUS HAPPENS!

...HIS BREATH LITERALLY STOLEN BY THE SIGHT BEFORE HIM...

THE PROTECTIVE HATCH UNSEALS WITH A PNEUMATIC HISS, AND COMMANDER CHAMPION LEADS THE OTHERS THROUGH THE DOUBLE-LOCK... DRAWING UP SHORT ON THE FAR SIDE...



SO THAT'S THE BIG SECRET--



CHAPTER TWO:

UNMASKED

-- SCANNER
ONE IS A
SPACESHIP!

OH, MARTIN--
DON'T BE SUCH
A BLIND IDIOT!

HOW CAN A
SPACESHIP TAKE
OFF FROM INSIDE
A SEALED ROOM?

PEREZ, YOU
MUST LEARN TO
CURB THAT SHARP
TONGUE OF YOURS!

COMMANDER
CHAMPION CAN BE
FORGIVEN FOR
JUMPING TO
CONCLUSIONS.

FOR NOW, LET ME ASSURE
YOU, COMMANDER--YOU
COULDN'T BE MORE WRONG!

CLANG!



IT'S HER--
THE
INTRUDER!

SHE'S GOT TO BE
STOPPED BEFORE SHE CAN
REACH SCANNER ONE!
SHE MIGHT BE CARRYING
EXPLOSIVES--SHE COULD
BE A SABOTEUR--!

WHATEVER SHE
IS, MR. DIRECTOR--
AND WHOEVER SHE
WORKS FOR--IT'S A SAFE
BET SHE DIDN'T WANDER
IN HERE LOOKING FOR
THE LADY'S WC!



SHE'S
EQUIPPED--
AND TRAINED--
FOR COMBAT--







NOT
BAD.
YOU'RE
FAST.

SURE, AND IT'S MORE
THAN MERELY FAST THAT
I AM, COMMANDER.

WHOOOSH!

I'LL
SAY!

THEY DIDN'T TEACH
US TO FIGHT WOMEN IN
THE MARINES, IF
THAT'S WHAT YOU
MEAN--

--BUT I'VE
ALWAYS
BEEN A
QUICK
STUDY!

IF THAT HAD COME
EVEN A CENTIMETER
CLOSER--*UHHH!*

TELL THE TRUTH
NOW, COMMANDER:

'TIS MORE
OF A STRUGGLE
THAN YOU
EXPECTED,
BESTING THIS
LITTLE LASSIE!

AH, AND
IF THAT'S THE
CASE, MY
LAD--

--THEN
YOU'VE STILL GOT
A LOT TO LEARN!

YEEOW



UHHH!
I DON'T GET IT-- YOU
COULD'VE SNAPPED MY
NECK LIKE A DRY TWIG--

-- BUT
INSTEAD,
YOU'RE
LAUGHING
AT ME!

HAHA

ADMIT IT,
COMMANDER,
YOU MAKE A
FRANTIC
SIGHT!

WHOOOPS!

YOUR FACE--
I'VE SEEN IT
BEFORE--!

THAT YOU HAVE,
COMMANDER, ON THE
INSTITUTE REPORTS:

THE NAME'S
O'ROURKE... LI SAN
O'ROURKE...

YOU LADS
DEPEND TOO
HEAVILY ON
YOUR FINE
COMPUTERS
AND SOPHIS-
TICATED
SENSORS.

SORRY IF I'VE DISRUPTED YOUR
LITTLE PARTY, MR. DIRECTOR, BUT
AS YOU KNOW, ATARI HAS ITS
ENEMIES-- AND VICIOUS THEY
ARE, TOO, SINCE THE WAR.

WE HAVE TO PROTECT
OURSELVES-- AND THAT
MEANS WE MUST BE
CONSTANTLY ALERT!

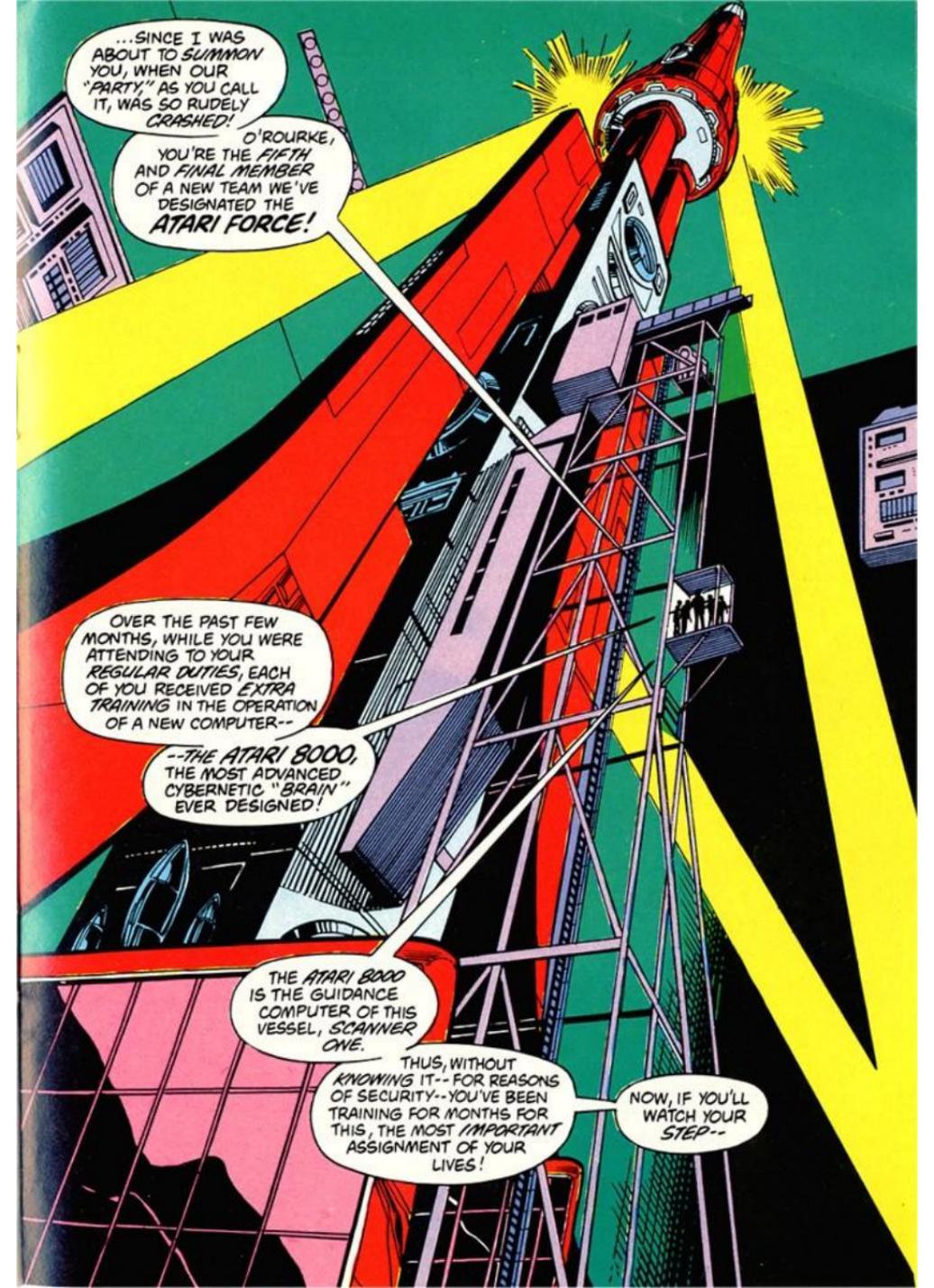


...EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF
ATARI
SECURITY!

IT'S A LITTLE FIELD
TEST OF OUR SECURITY
PERSONNEL THAT I'VE BEEN
RUNNING-- AND A SORRIER
LOT OF OVER-ARMED
BUMPKINS I'VE NEVER
SEEN!

YOU'LL HAVE
NO ARGUMENT
ON THAT FROM
ME, O'ROURKE.

IN FACT,
I'M GLAD
YOU'RE
HERE...



... SINCE I WAS ABOUT TO SUMMON YOU, WHEN OUR "PARTY," AS YOU CALL IT, WAS SO RUDELY CRASHED!

O'ROURKE, YOU'RE THE FIFTH AND FINAL MEMBER OF A NEW TEAM WE'VE DESIGNATED THE **ATARI FORCE!**

OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS, WHILE YOU WERE ATTENDING TO YOUR REGULAR DUTIES, EACH OF YOU RECEIVED EXTRA TRAINING IN THE OPERATION OF A NEW COMPUTER--

--THE ATARI 8000, THE MOST ADVANCED CYBERNETIC "BRAIN" EVER DESIGNED!

THE ATARI 8000 IS THE GUIDANCE COMPUTER OF THIS VESSEL, SCANNER ONE.

THUS, WITHOUT KNOWING IT-- FOR REASONS OF SECURITY-- YOU'VE BEEN TRAINING FOR MONTHS FOR THIS, THE MOST IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT OF YOUR LIVES!

NOW, IF YOU'LL WATCH YOUR STEP--



--I'LL SHOW YOU AROUND.

THIS FIRST COMPARTMENT IS THE MASTER AIRLOCK...

WHAT HAVE WEAPONS EVERYWHERE, I SEE. MOST STRANGE.

WEAPONS EVERYWHERE, I SEE. MOST STRANGE.

DON'T BE NAIVE, SINGH.

WE MAY HOPE FOR PEACE--



--BUT WE MUST BE READY FOR WAR!

MY FATHER WAS A SOLDIER, AND MY MOTHER, TOO.

SHE WAS CHINESE--HE WAS IRISH--AND THEY RAISED ME IN AN IRELAND TORN BY CIVIL WAR FOR MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS!



"AND SO, WHEN THE FIVE DAY WAR BROKE OUT, SEVEN YEARS AGO, ON OCTOBER 18, 1998, I WAS READY...OR SO I THOUGHT.

"MY UNITED NATIONS PARATROOP UNIT WAS PART OF A SPECIAL RESPONSE FORCE TO BE DROPPED BEHIND ENEMY LINES..."

"DURING THE FIRST HOURS OF THE WAR, AFTER THE ATTACK ON NASA'S LUNAR COLONY THAT STARTED THE WHOLE MESS, THE ENEMY OCCUPIED A MAJOR OIL FIELD IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA.

"OUR MISSION WAS TO FREE THE OIL FIELD WITHOUT GIVING THE ENEMY A CHANCE TO DESTROY IT.

"I WAS A LIEUTENANT-IN CHARGE OF MY OWN SQUAD.

"SAINTS PRESERVE ME, BUT I THOUGHT I WAS GOD'S SPECIAL CHILD, AND THAT NOTHING COULD HARM ME."

SPOILS OF WAR

"I WAS ALMOST
RIGHT."

THAT'S ONE LESS
ANTI-AIRCRAFT LASER
TO BE BURNIN' OUR
LADS LIKE TARGETS
AT A SKEET SHOOT!





BWHOOOM!

WHEN YOU HIT THE GROUND, TAKE COVER BEHIND THOSE TANKS!

WE'LL HAVE TWO MINUTES TO REGROUP, AND NOT A SECOND MORE!





"I WINCED AT THE DISAPPROVAL
IN HER TONE, BUT AFTER ALL, WE
WERE SOLDIERS--WE WERE PAID
TO TAKE RISKS; IT WAS OUR
DUTY AND OUR HONOR."

"THE OTHERS WOULD JUST
HAVE TO CATCH UP..."

"...IF
THEY
COULD."



OUR FLYBOYS
ARE LAYING DOWN
A COVERING
BOMBARDMENT.

WE HAVE TO GET INSIDE--
DEFUSE THE EXPLOSIVES--
AND CLEAN OUT THOSE
BUNKERS!









"THE EXPLOSIONS ECHOED LIKE NEAR THUNDER-- BUT I DIDN'T HEAR THEM.



"I'D GONE CRAZY-- STRIKING THAT ENEMY SOLDIER AGAIN AND AGAIN, SOB-BING WITH GRIEF--

"--UNTIL, FINALLY, MY MEN HAD TO DRAG ME AWAY.



"YOU SEE, SINGH, I THOUGHT GOD WAS ON MY SIDE... THAT I COULDN'T BE HURT.



"BUT I'D FORGOTTEN THAT SOME OF WAR'S WORST WOUNDS... ARE THE WOUNDS YOU NEVER SEE."

FORGIVE ME, LI SAN, BUT UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, I AM SURPRISED YOU'RE NOT A PACIFIST.

BUT I AM, SINGH.

AFTER THE WAR, I QUIT THE ARMY-- AND JOINED ATARI.

BEING WILLING TO DEFEND YOURSELF -- AND BEING A PACIFIST-- ARE NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE!

IF YOU SAY SO, LI SAN.

I FEAR DOCTOR ORION MIGHT NOT AGREE!





LIKE ATARI, THE CO-OP... A COLLECTION OF GOVERNMENT-OWNED MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS... IS SEEKING A SOLUTION TO THE WORLD'S MOST DIRE PREDICAMENT--

--A HEMISPHERIC DROUGHT THAT HAS REDUCED THE AMOUNT OF ARABLE LAND BY ALMOST A MILLION ACRES OVER THE PAST SEVEN YEARS.

SOME BELIEVE THIS DROUGHT IS A RESULT OF THE WAR, A KIND OF GREENHOUSE EFFECT CAUSED BY FALLOUT FROM THE DEATH-BOMBS UNLEASHED BY BOTH SIDES.

FORTUNATELY, ONLY TWO DEATH-BOMBS WERE EXPLODED IN THOSE LAST HOURS BEFORE OUR ENEMY'S GOVERNMENT COLLAPSED--

--OTHERWISE, WE WOULD NOT BE STANDING HERE TODAY.

IN ANY CASE, EVEN THOUGH GREATLY REDUCED-- THE WORLD'S POPULATION IS IN DANGER OF IMMINENT STARVATION!



PROJECT MULTIVERSE IS AN ATTEMPT TO ALLEVIATE POTENTIAL FAMINE --BY LOCATING INHABITABLE WORLDS AMONG THE INFINITY OF ALTERNATE REALITIES EXISTING IN OTHER DIMENSIONS PARALLEL TO OUR OWN!

SUCH WORLDS MAY BE PRIMITIVE JUNGLES--

--FUTURISTIC PARADISES--

--OR UNDERWATER WONDERLANDS! EACH WILL BE UNIQUE, WITH ITS OWN CULTURE, ITS OWN HISTORY!





WE'LL BEGIN WITH A SHORT TRIP--JUST A FEW DIMENSIONS--AS A WARM-UP, YOU UNDERSTAND.

IS EVERYONE COMFORTABLE?

SECURITY OFFICER O'ROURKE?

'TIS ALL HAPPENING SO FAST, MY HEAD'S BEEN SENT TO SPINNING!



BUT TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTION, LADDIE-- AYE, I'M AS COMFORTABLE AS A LEPRECHAUN WITH HIS OWN POT OF GOLD!

EXCELLENT. AND YOU, FLIGHT ENGINEER SINGH?

I AM BREATHLESS AND AWED, BUT SUCH, AFTER ALL, IS THE NATURAL CONDITION OF MAN.

OTHER THAN THAT--



--I TOO AM QUITE COMFORTABLE.

NO NEED TO ASK
HOW I'M DOING,
COMPUTER.

MY GREATEST DESIRE
IS TO HELP HUMANITY
RECOVER FROM THE
MADNESS OF THE
WAR.

THIS IS LIKE
A DREAM COME
TRUE.



I TAKE THAT AS
AN AFFIRMATIVE,
DOCTOR. COMMANDER
CHAMPION... MISSION
PILOT PEREZ...

...ARE YOU
READY?

I CAN'T SPEAK
FOR MY EXECUTIVE
OFFICER, COMPUTER--

-- BUT I'M
STRAINING AT
THE BIT.

ONE POINT,
THOUGH-- DON'T WE
NEED SOME HANGAR
DOORS UP THERE?

HOW DO
WE GET
OUT?



WE DON'T NEED
HANGAR DOORS,
COMMANDER--

--BECAUSE WE ARE
NOT TRAVELING
THROUGH SPACE, NOR
EVEN THROUGH
TIME!

OUR
VOYAGE IS
THROUGH
MULTIPLE
DIMENSIONS!

LIKE THE
CHESHIRE CAT IN
"ALICE IN WONDER-
LAND," WE SHALL BE
HERE ONE MOMENT,
AND IN THE NEXT
MOMENT, WE SHALL
BE--

MMM*

GONE!







BEFORE THIS TRIP IS OVER, I'M GOING TO FIND OUT WHAT'S BUGGING YOU, PEREZ.

I THOUGHT WE WERE FRIENDS-- BUT YOU'VE BEEN CRITICAL OF ME EVER SINCE WE GOT BACK TOGETHER!

THE MYSTERIES OF THE MULTIVERSE AREN'T THE ONLY MYSTERIES WE'RE GOING TO UNRAVEL ON THIS VOYAGE.

THAT'S A PROMISE!

FOR NOW--THE END!

THE ADVENTURE CONTINUES-- READ THE NEXT EXCITING CHAPTER IN THE SAGA OF THE ATARI FORCE, IN: **STAR RAIDERS™** AVAILABLE SOON!



THEIR MISSION:
SAVE THE UNIVERSE!

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THE FURTHER
EPIC ADVENTURES
OF THE CREW OF

SCANNER ONE

IN FREE BONUS COMICS
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