

CONCEPT

HOOKS
TRIGO

TRANSFORMERS COUNT ON ME



Trigo



They were the dream—mechanical beings able to convert their bodies into vehicles, beasts, and weapons; a last line of defense against the chaos bringer, *Unicron*! After millions of years, the heroic Autobots—led by *Optimus Prime*—were the victors of the *Last Great War*, even as the conflict splintered into a hundred shadow fronts across a fractured universe.

COUNT ON ME

STORY
JAMES HOOKS

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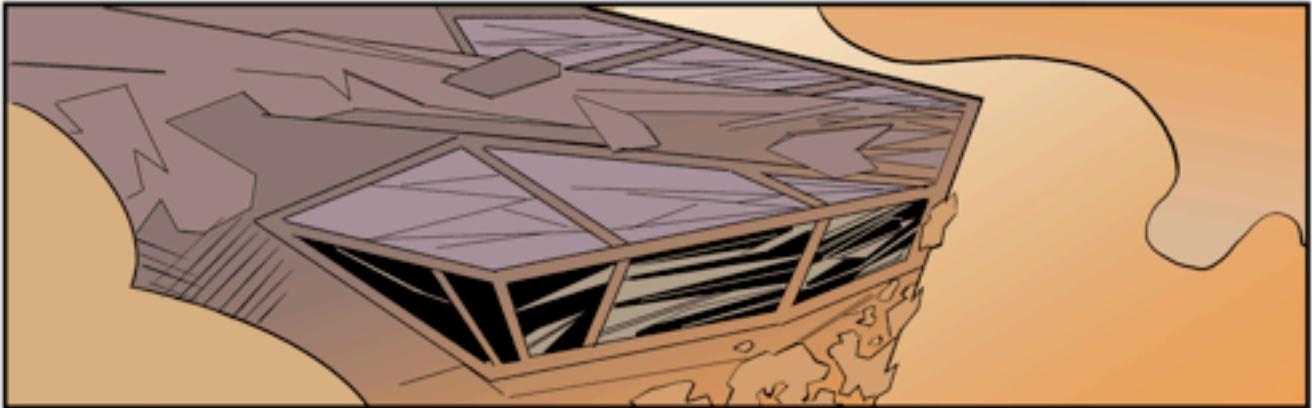


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An uninteresting day,
above an uninteresting
planet...

...as the crew of the Brucalon
discovers Primus will never
answer their prayers.





...AND I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU OF ALL AUTOBOTS CHOSE THIS MISSION. REGARDLESS...



...IT WAS THE BIGGEST MISTAKE OF YOUR MISERABLE LIFE!

HEY, WHAT CAN I SAY?



YOU CAN COUNT ON ME TO TAKE THE BIG RISKS.

FWASH!



CHOK!

NNYARGHH!!



DECEPTICONS! KILL HIM!!!

CHIR CHIR CHAI! CHEE!



PTCHAAZ!

PTCHAAZ!



TCKA!

TCKA!

TCKA!

HEY! YOU THERE!



HAVE YOU SEEN THE AUTOBOT?



AN AUTOBOT?! HERE!?!

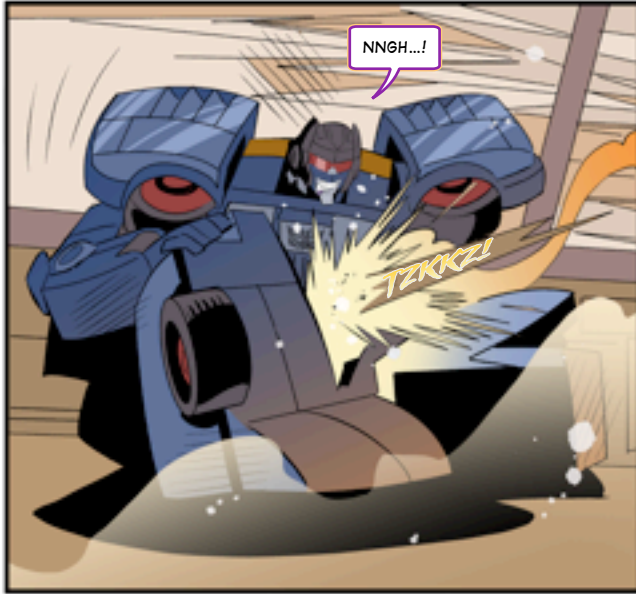
WHY, IT'S BEEN MEGACYCLES SINCE I HAD A CHANCE TO BEAT A 'BOT!

POINT ME IN HIS DIRECTION AND I'LL BE THE FIRST TO OFFLINE HIM! RARRR!

HAHA! THEN JOIN US, LITTLE ONE!

TODAY SHALL BE YOUR LUCKY DAY!





NNGH...!

TZKZZ!

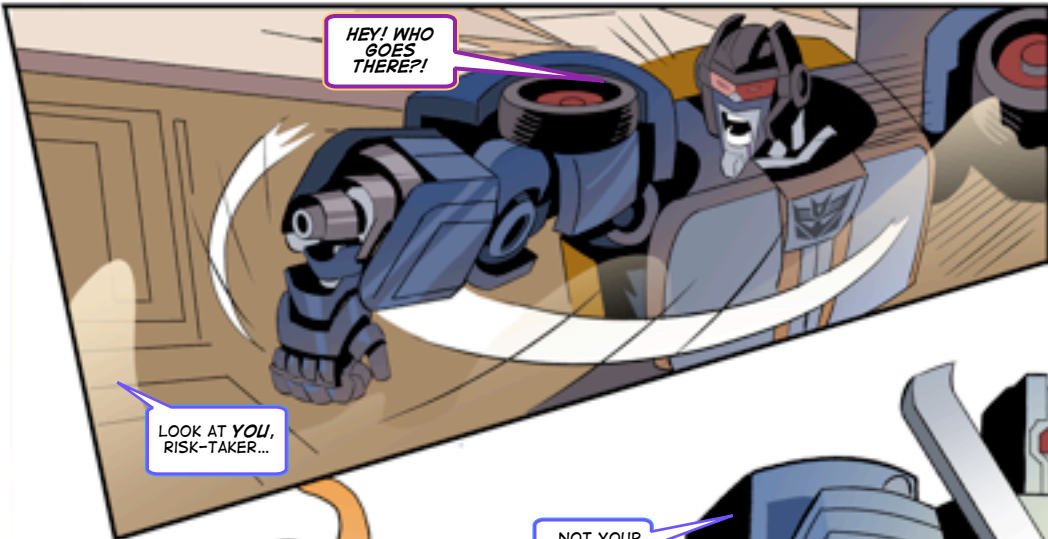


COMPUTER:
STATUS REPORT.

Hi Hi! Your
servos ruptured!
Energon levels at 17%!
Stasis lock: imminent!
SORRY!

AND THE
CREW?

FPZZZ!

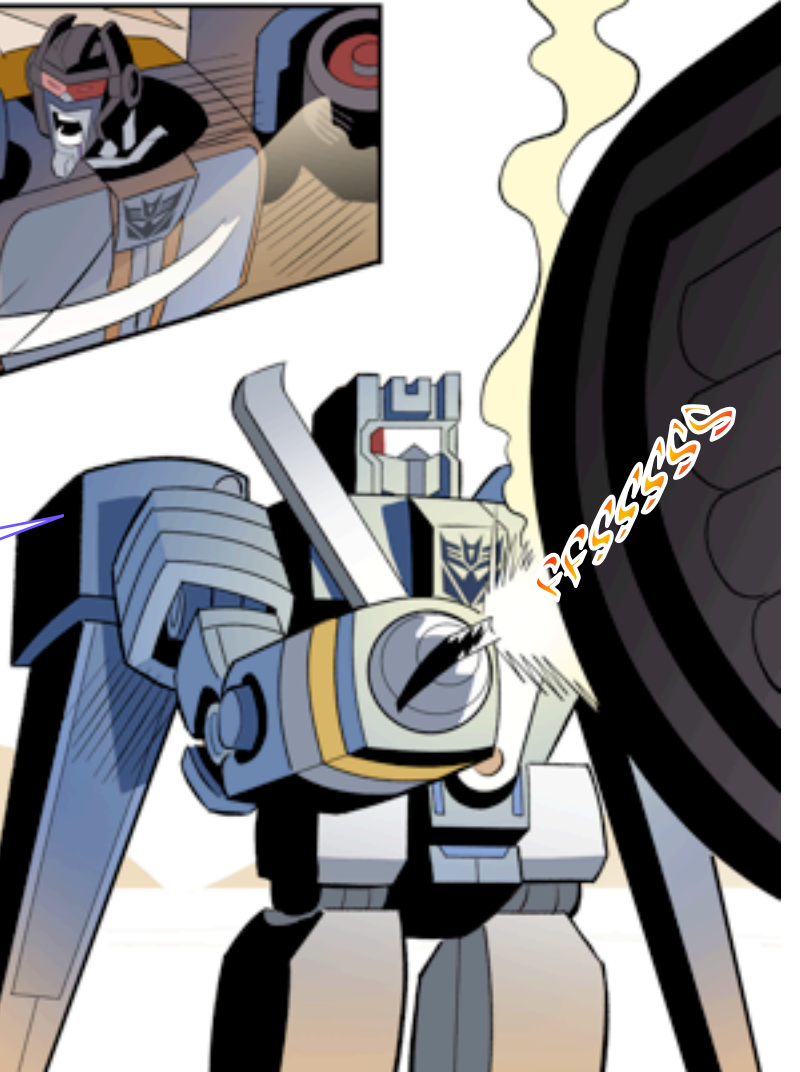


HEY! WHO
GOES
THERE?!

LOOK AT YOU,
RISK-TAKER...



...NOT YOUR
LUCKY DAY,
IS IT?



FPZZZZ!



ROTORBOLT. PERFECT. THE UNIVERSE HAS A SENSE OF HUMOR.

THE SPIKE THROUGH YOUR *TORSO* IS THE ONLY THING KEEPING YOUR SPARK CHAMBER FROM COLLAPSING. SO YES. HILARIOUS.



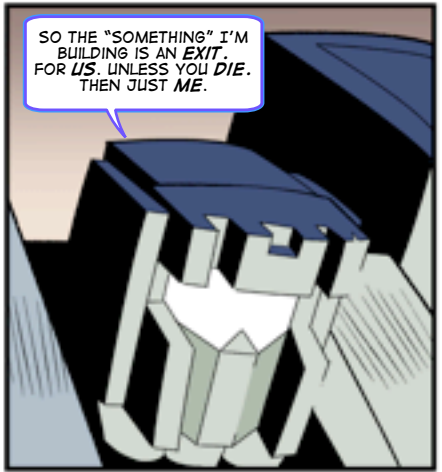
I CAN FIX THAT, OF COURSE... BUT I HAVE *PRIORITIES*.

HMRPH. YOU'RE BUILDING SOMETHING.



I AM. Y'SEE, THIS PLANET'S ECOSYSTEM THINKS WE'RE A VIRUS. IT'S MOUNTING AN IMMUNE RESPONSE. I GIVE US TWENTY-EIGHT HOURS BEFORE THE AIR BECOMES DECORATIVE.

I HAVE WHAT'S LEFT OF A *COMMUNICATIONS MODULE*, BUT IT'S SO DAMAGED WE DON'T KNOW *WHICH SIDE* WE'D BE CALLING FOR HELP. (AND I CAN'T STOP THE ANNOYING *BEEP BEEP* SOUND.)



SO THE "SOMETHING" I'M BUILDING IS AN *EXIT*. FOR *US*. UNLESS YOU *DIE*. THEN JUST *ME*.



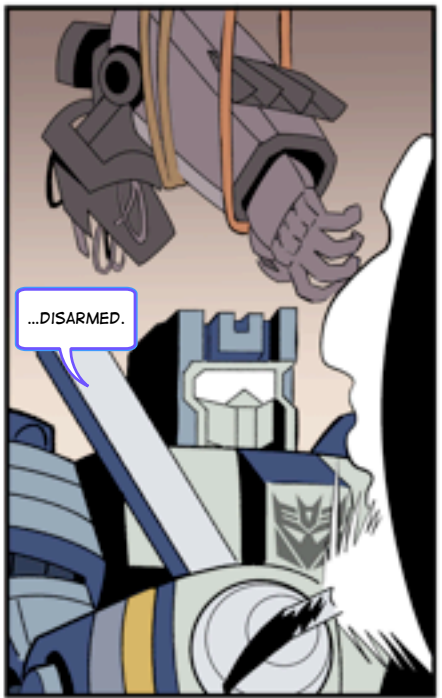
YOU ALWAYS THIS CHARMING?



IT'S A DEFENSE MECHANISM. SINCERITY MAKES ME UNCOMFORTABLE.
BUT YOU'RE ALL I GOT LEFT GIVEN THE REST OF THE CREW IS...



CLANK!
KRAH!



...DISARMED.

NOW DO ME A FAVOR BEFORE YOU FALL ASLEEP AGAIN, WILL YOU?

READ ME TELEMETRY VARIANCE SO I CAN PROPERLY CALIBRATE...

...SLAG.

"IF YOU'RE EXPECTING AN INFILTRATION LIKE LAST TIME, **PUNCH**— IT'S NOT..."

...THIS IS **IMMERSION**. FULL AND FINAL.

ONCE YOU GO DOWN THERE, YOU WON'T COME BACK UP. YOU UNDERSTAND?

PLEASE. JUST INJECT ME WITH THE JUICE AND LET'S GET THIS PARTY STARTED.

POWER SPlicing COMPLETE. **MAGNUS!** NEURAL OVERLAY'S AT...

...EH, LET'S CALL IT 87%, GIVE OR TAKE A PSYCHOTIC BREAK.

I'D PREFER YOU *NOT* JOKE WHILE YOUR FRONTAL CORTEX IS BEING HIJACKED.

WE'VE NEVER TESTED *THIS* DEEP A CEREBRO/ SPARK IMMERSION ON A *LIVING* VOLUNTEER.

YEAH? FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTHING, PERCY.

JUST MAKE SURE *THIS* HOMICIDAL MANIAC HAS A GREAT LOOKING **FACEPLATE**.

THE COUNTERPUNCH TEST GAVE US A FRONT ROW TO MEGATRON'S NEXT MOVE... BUT THIS PHASE ONLY WORKS IF THEY *TRULY BELIEVE* YOU'RE ONE OF THEM.

THEY'LL BELIEVE.

I'VE BEEN LYING TO MYSELF MY WHOLE LIFE. I'M **GREAT** AT IT.

STANDARD **WHEELJACK** PROTOCOL. THEN. SO, WHEN *IS* MY ILL-TIMED **EXPLOSION**?

LAST CHANCE. ONLY A FEW OF US WILL KNOW YOU'RE YOU. YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS.

NO, BUT SOMEONE DOES. AND THIS SOMEONE HAS TRUST ISSUES, BURNT BRIDGES, AND QUESTIONABLE IMPULSE CONTROL.

FIGHT STARTING! ME GRIMLOCK SMELL DECEPTICONS!

BLAM! BOY'S GOT 30 SECONDS BEFORE THIS SHIP BECOMES SWISS SCRAP!

SO EITHER JUMP OR BOOM! DON'T, SOLDIER!

PERSONALITY ENGRAM IS LIVE. VISUAL DISTORTION INITIATING. HE'S CONVERTING!

YOU MEAN TRANSFORMING. SEE YA ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WAR, FELLAS...

...IT'S TIME FOR ME TO MAKE SOME NEW FRIENDS!

"AH, HE AWAKENS..."

...YOU KNOW, IF YOUR NEURAL PATHWAYS WERE ANY MORE SCRAMBLED, I'D CLASSIFY YOU AS MODERN ART. EXPENSIVE, PRETENTIOUS, IMPOSSIBLE TO UNDERSTAND.

I'M SLAGGIN' TIRED OF WAKING UP TO YOUR VOICE.

JOIN THE CLUB, GLITCH. I'D MUCH RATHER BE WATCHING THE BOLTS PLAY THE SERVOS IN THE BIG GAME, BUT HERE WE ARE...



OF COURSE YOU'RE A BOLTS FAN. HOW LONG THIS TIME?

LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO STARE AT YOUR GREAT LOOKING FACEPLATE...

...AND FIX YOUR ENERCON LEAKAGE! YOU'RE WELCOME, LITTLE BUDDY.



>NNGH< NOT YOUR BUDDY. WE FIGHT ON THE SAME SIDE. THAT'S IT.

MM. NOT A BOLTS FAN? TRAGIC. Y'KNOW, I USED TO THINK THIS WAR WOULD REVEAL US. SHOW US WHO WE REALLY ARE BEHIND THE CHASSIS AND BRAVADO.

BENEATH THE MASKS.

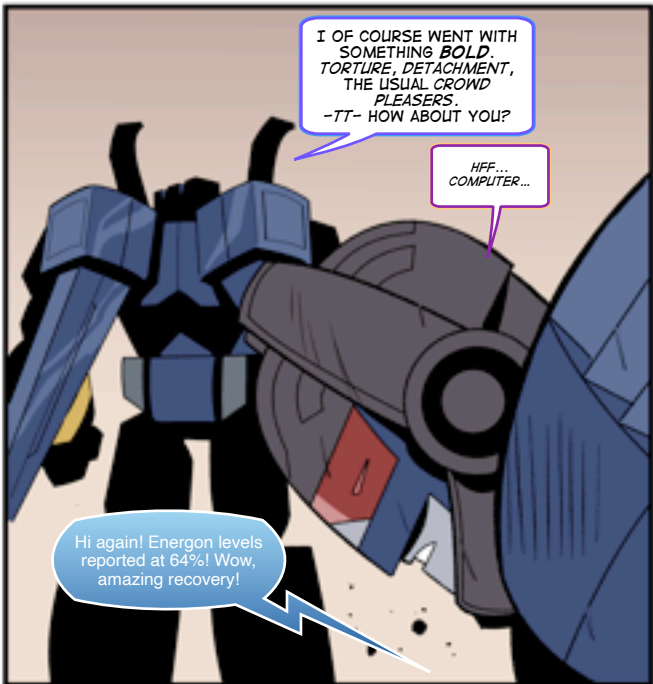
BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT WAR DOES. WAR DOESN'T STRIP YOU BARE.



NNYEEARGH!!!

CHUNK!

IT HANDS YOU A BRUSH AND SAYS "PAINT SOMETHING THEY'LL FEAR."



I OF COURSE WENT WITH SOMETHING BOLD. TORTURE, DETACHMENT, THE USUAL CROWD PLEASERS. -TT- HOW ABOUT YOU?

HFF... COMPUTER...

Hi again! Energon levels reported at 64%! Wow, amazing recovery!



YEAH...I DON'T REMEMBER. OR MAYBE I REMEMBER ALL OF IT, AND I'M CHOOSING NOT TO LOOK TOO CLOSELY.



FUNNY HOW MEMORY CAN BECOME A WAR ZONE ALL ITS OWN, HM?

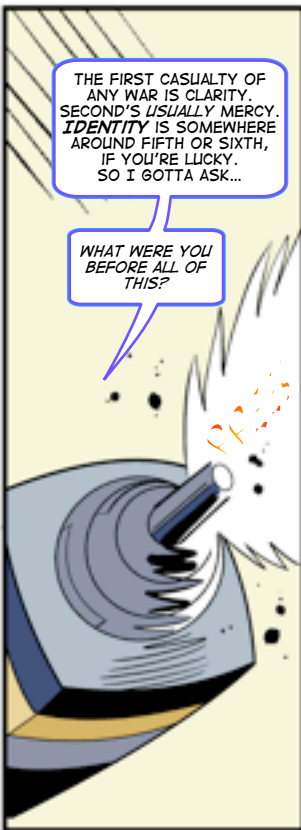
EVERY SIDE THINKS THEY'RE LIBERATORS. EVERY VOICE THINKS IT'S THE TRUTH. DO YOU EVER WONDER IF THAT THING INSIDE YOU...

...YOU KNOW, THE PART THAT SURVIVES EVERY MISSION... ISN'T REALLY YOU, BUT THE THING THE WAR NEEDED?



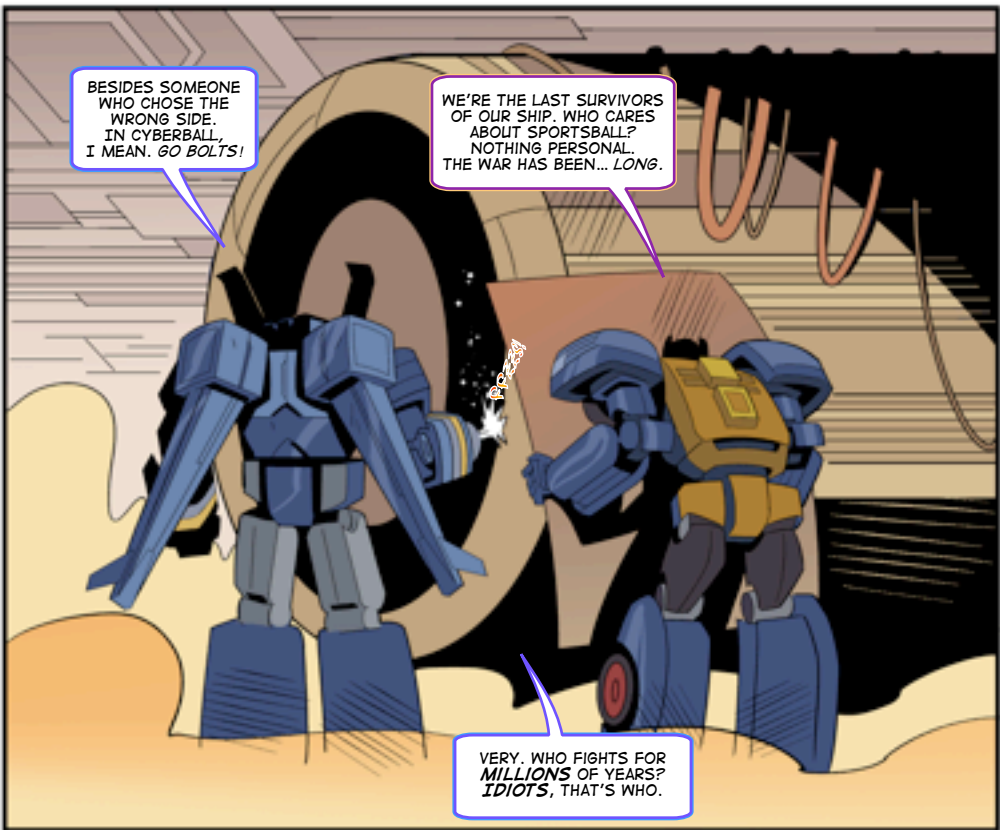
I KNOW WHO I AM.

HM.



THE FIRST CASUALTY OF ANY WAR IS CLARITY. SECOND'S USUALLY MERCY. *IDENTITY* IS SOMEWHERE AROUND FIFTH OR SIXTH, IF YOU'RE LUCKY. SO I GOTTA ASK...

WHAT WERE YOU BEFORE ALL OF THIS?



BESIDES SOMEONE WHO CHOSE THE WRONG SIDE. IN CYBERBALL, I MEAN. *GO BOLTS!*

WE'RE THE LAST SURVIVORS OF OUR SHIP. WHO CARES ABOUT SPORTSBALL? NOTHING PERSONAL. THE WAR HAS BEEN... *LONG*.

VERY. WHO FIGHTS FOR *MILLIONS* OF YEARS? *IDIOTS*, THAT'S WHO.



WHY ARE WE HERE?

YOU MEAN *EXISTENTIALLY*, OR...?

WE CRASHED. YOU COULD HAVE LAUNCHED SOLO. WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST LEAVE ME TO BLEED OUT AND DIE?



BECAUSE *YOU*... YOU'RE *INTERESTING*. THAT'S RARE IN OUR CIRCLES. MOST 'CONS ARE JUST *NOISE* WITH *GUNS*.

YOU'RE NOISE WITH *SECRETS*.

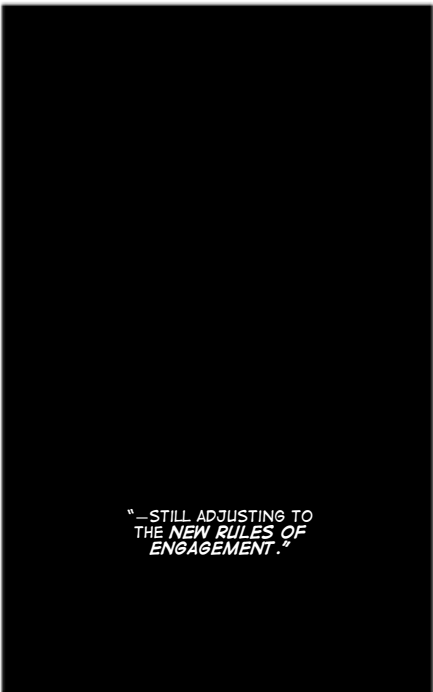


SECRETS? I... I'M NOT...

EASY, BUD. DON'T BLACK OUT YET! WE STILL GOT HOURS OF QUESTIONABLE TEAMWORK AHEAD OF US!



NO— NOT AGAIN! I'M STILL *HERE!* I'M *STILL*—



"... STILL ADJUSTING TO THE *NEW RULES OF ENGAGEMENT*."

"OKAY, BUT NEXT TIME WE DO A *RECON OP*, CAN WE PICK A PLANET THAT *DOESN'T* SMELL LIKE ENGINE GREASE AND REGRET?"

POW!
THAT'S JUST *LASTER*. HE SKIPPED COOLANT MAINTENANCE AGAIN.

IT'S A *MEDICAL* CONDITION. RARE. TRAGIC. VERY BRAVE OF ME.

YEAH, WELL, MY SCANNERS SAY YOUR "CONDITION" IS HOW SIX 'BOTS END UP AS SCRAP. WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE *STEALTHY*.

THIS IS *NOT* *STEALTHY*. THIS IS *SHATTERED GLASS* *STEALTHY*. *STEALTHY* WITH A *GOATEE*.

FOCUS, FOLKS! THIS ISN'T A FIELD TRIP!

SPEAK FOR YOURSELF, LADY! I BROUGHT *SNACKS*.

SO, FEARLESS LEADER, WHAT'S THE PLAY? SNEAK IN? LOUD ENTRANCE? SOMETHING ETHICALLY QUESTIONABLE AND MORALLY GRAY?

LET'S TRY OPTION FOUR: IMPROVISE RECKLESSLY AND PRETEND IT WAS PART OF THE PLAN.

YOU KNOW IMPROVISATION IS JUST *LATIN* FOR "WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE", RIGHT?

WHAT'S "LATIN"?

WAIT! WE'RE MISSING THE *SERVOS* GAME! *BEAT THE BOLTS!*

I HAD *PERCY* RUN THE NUMBERS— THE *SEASON'S DONE*.

STILL BETTER ODDS THAN OUR LAST OP ON *JUNKION*.

WE *LIVED*, DIDN'T WE? WE SHOULD ALL GO BACK SOON.

I HOPE WE *NEVER* HANG OUT TOGETHER AGAIN.

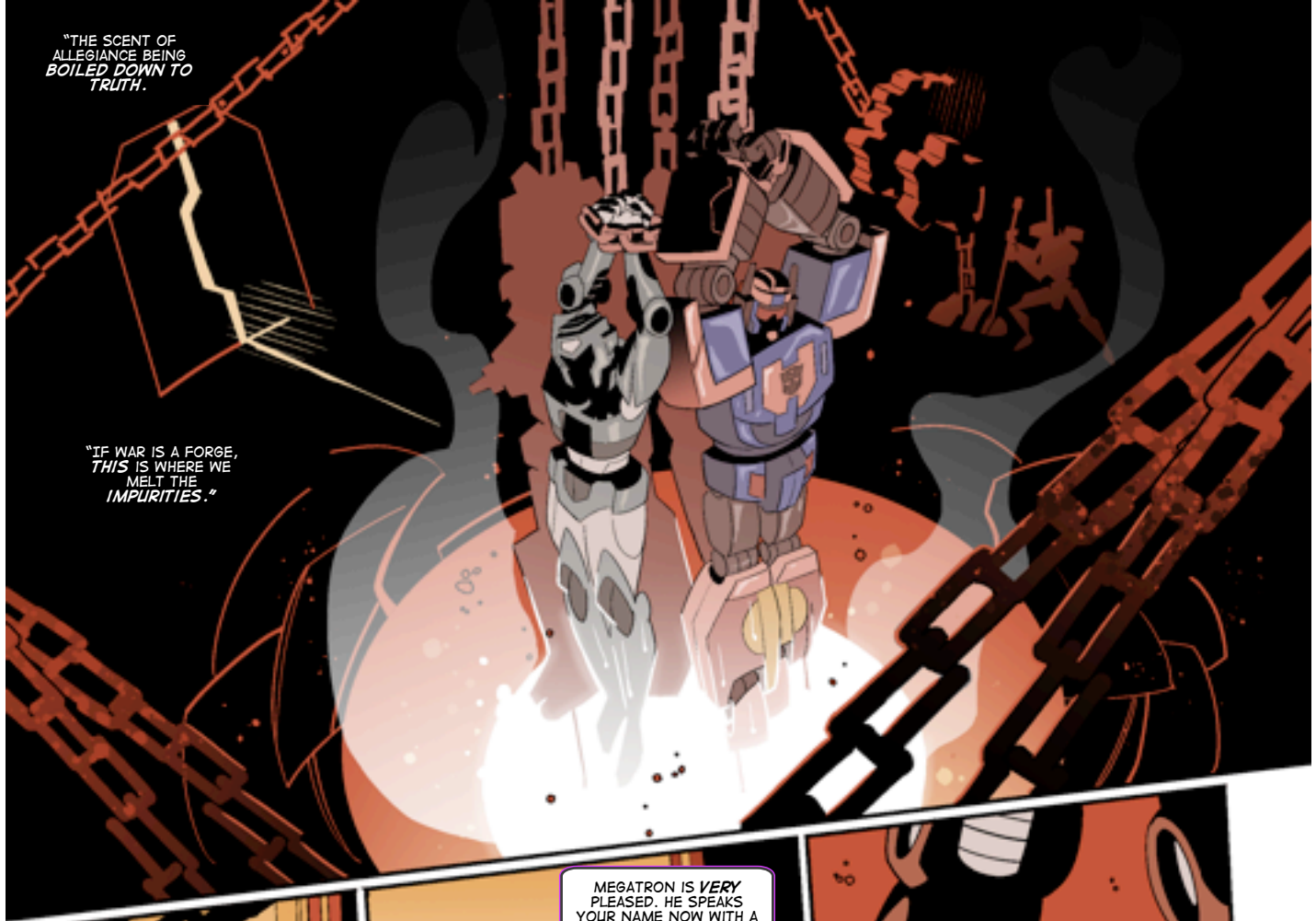
BEST TEAM EVER. REMEMBER GANG: IF THIS GOES SIDWAYS... (AND IT WILL) ...DON'T WORRY!

I'VE GOT *BOTH SIDES* COVERED.

"AH, THE *SMELTER*..."

"THE SCENT OF ALLEGIANCE BEING BOILED DOWN TO TRUTH."

"IF WAR IS A FORGE, THIS IS WHERE WE MELT THE IMPURITIES."



YOU'VE DONE WELL, BROTHER. THESE AUTOBOTS WERE *GHOSTS*: RESISTANCE FIGHTERS, INFILTRATORS, *LIARS*. AND NOW?

JUST FLESH ON A STRING, ALL THANKS TO YOU.



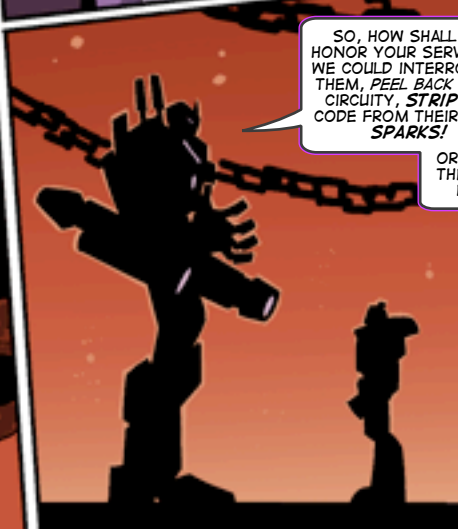
MEGATRON IS *VERY* PLEASED. HE SPEAKS YOUR NAME NOW WITH A *CURL* IN HIS VOICE... "WE CAN COUNT ON *HIM* TO TAKE THE *BIG* RISKS."

PUNCH...?



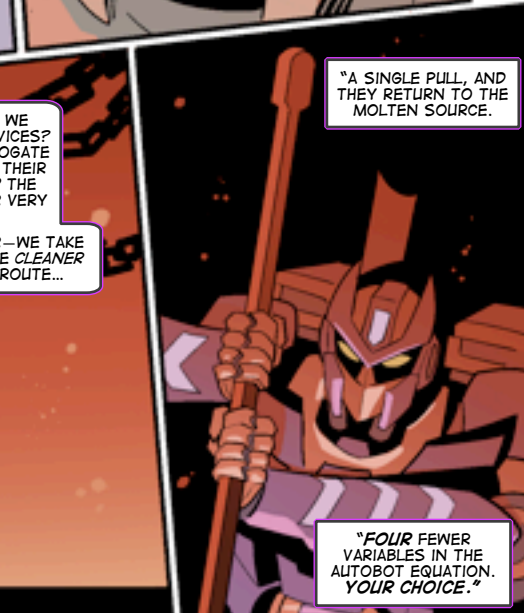
SO, HOW SHALL WE HONOR YOUR SERVICES? WE COULD INTERROGATE THEM, *PEEL BACK* THEIR CIRCUITRY. *STRIP* THE CODE FROM THEIR VERY *SPARKS*!

OR—WE TAKE THE *CLEANER* ROUTE...



"A SINGLE PULL, AND THEY RETURN TO THE MOLTEN SOURCE."

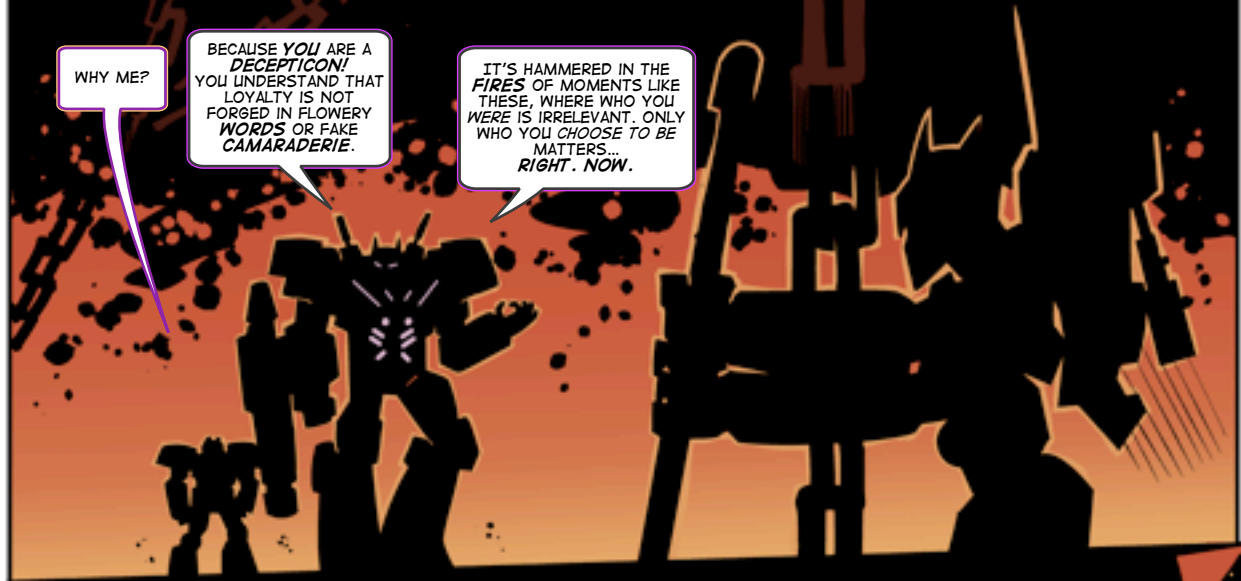
"*FOUR FEWER* VARIABLES IN THE AUTOBOT EQUATION. *YOUR CHOICE*."



WHY ME?

BECAUSE YOU ARE A DECEPTICON! YOU UNDERSTAND THAT LOYALTY IS NOT FORGED IN FLOWERY WORDS OR FAKE CAMARADERIE.

IT'S HAMMERED IN THE FIRES OF MOMENTS LIKE THESE, WHERE WHO YOU WERE IS IRRELEVANT. ONLY WHO YOU CHOOSE TO BE MATTERS... RIGHT. NOW.



WELL, KAPOW. WHATCHA WAITING FOR, PAL?

YOU ARE A DECEPTICON, AIN'T YA?

CHOOSE, BROTHER. WORDS... OR FIRE.



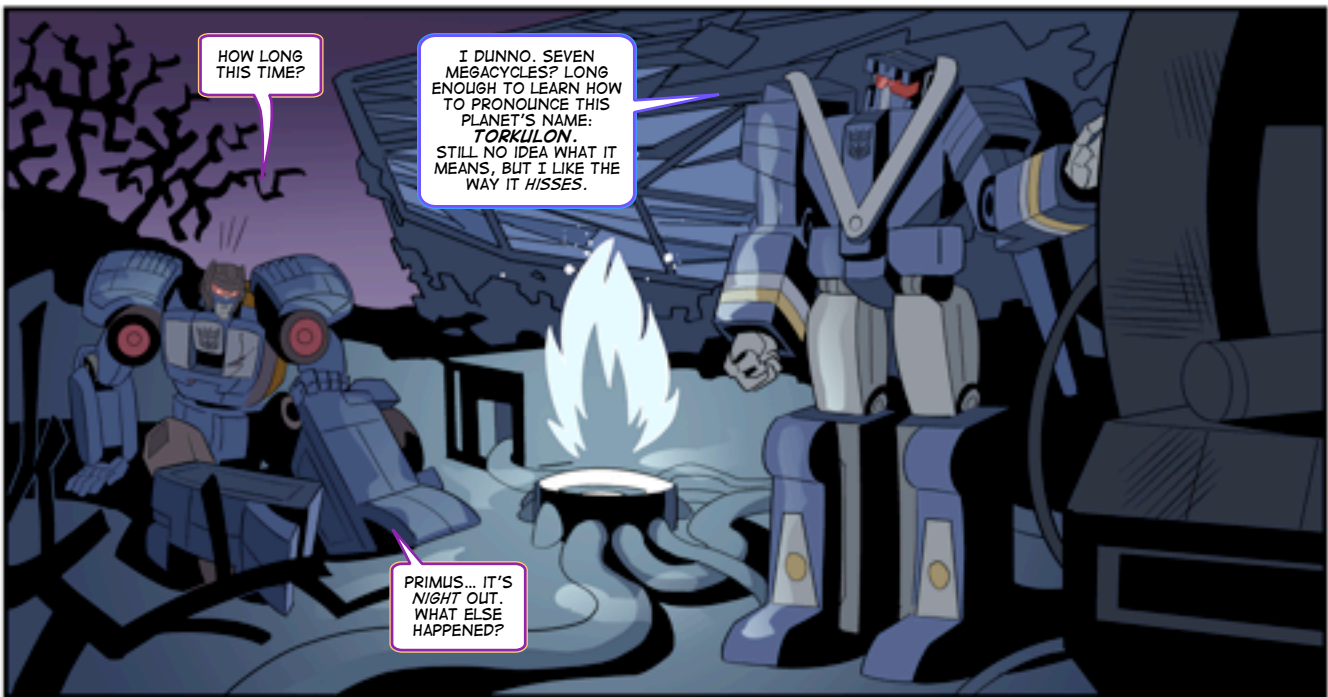
FIRE.



AS I WAS SAYING, THINGS WERE ON FIRE...

...BUT THEN I FOUND THE EXTINGUISHER!





HOW LONG THIS TIME?

I DUNNO. SEVEN MEGACYCLES? LONG ENOUGH TO LEARN HOW TO PRONOUNCE THIS PLANET'S NAME: **TORKULON**. STILL NO IDEA WHAT IT MEANS, BUT I LIKE THE WAY IT HISSES.

PRIMUS... IT'S NIGHT OUT. WHAT ELSE HAPPENED?



FIRE. SCREAMS. YOU MUTTERING IN YOUR SLEEP LIKE A HERETIC IN A WIND TUNNEL. THE *USUAL*.

DON'T BE CLUE.

I ASSURE YOU, I'VE NEVER BEEN ACCUSED OF *THAT*. BUT I *THINK* I KNOW WHY WE CRASHED. IT MAY BE FAULTY WIRING BUT... HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF A WORD CALLED *SABOTAGE*?

rich!



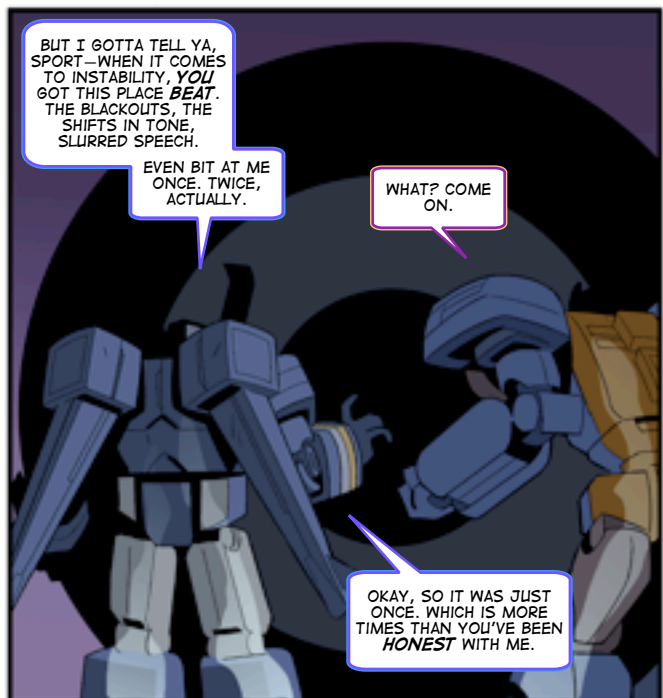
DID YOU HEAR THAT?

IT'S THE *PLANET*. IT'S WRITING ITS OWN NERVOUS SYSTEM. SAW A VINE SPOUT CIRCUITRY THIS MORNING.



AN ECOSYSTEM LERANING TO *THINK*.

ELEGANT, REALLY. EVOLUTION ON FAST-FORWARD.

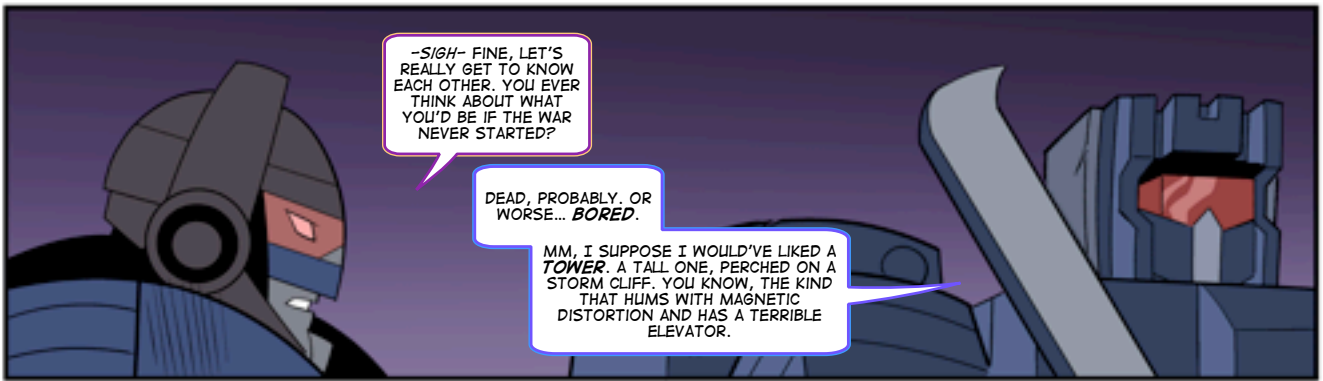


BUT I GOTTA TELL YA, SPORT—WHEN IT COMES TO INSTABILITY, *YOU* GOT THIS PLACE *BEAT*. THE BLACKOUTS, THE SHIFTS IN TONE, SLURRED SPEECH.

EVEN BIT AT ME ONCE. TWICE, ACTUALLY.

WHAT? COME ON.

OKAY, SO IT WAS JUST ONCE. WHICH IS MORE TIMES THAN YOU'VE BEEN *HONEST* WITH ME.



-SIGH- FINE. LET'S REALLY GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER. YOU EVER THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU'D BE IF THE WAR NEVER STARTED?

DEAD, PROBABLY. OR WORSE... *BORED*.

MM, I SUPPOSE I WOULD'VE LIKED A *TOWER*. A TALL ONE, PERCHED ON A STORM CLIFF. YOU KNOW, THE KIND THAT HUMS WITH MAGNETIC DISTORTION AND HAS A TERRIBLE ELEVATOR.



YEAH, SOMETHING DRAMATIC WITH A *VIEW*.

THIS BODY I HAVE... IT WAS BUILT FOR OBSERVATION. *QUIET THINGS. QUANTUM HARMONICS. PATTERN-SEEKING IN CHAOS.*

STARE INTO A BATTLEFIELD LONG ENOUGH, IT STARTS TO LOOK LIKE *LANGUAGE*.

THE TRICK IS... DON'T FLINCH WHEN IT STARTS SPEAKING BACK.

PFEEES!



THAT DOESN'T SOUND VERY *DECEPTICON* OF YOU.

NO, I SUPPOSE IT DOESN'T.

I NEVER CARED FOR THE SLOGANS. *FREEDOM THROUGH TYRANNY. PEACE THROUGH DOMINATION. KNIVES THROUGH EARS.* ALL VERY LOUD.

I PREFER *SUBTLER MECHANISMS*.



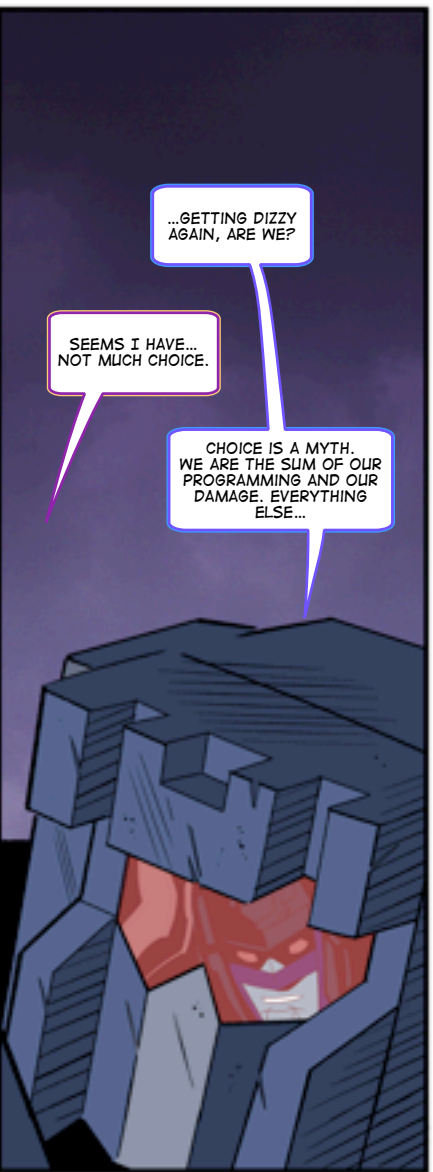
THEN WHY JOIN US? WHY NOT BE A *MERC* OR...

BECAUSE THEY'RE *PREDICTABLE! LOUD* BOTS WITH *SHARP* EDGES! PAY THEM ENOUGH AND THEY'LL LEAVE YOU ALONE TO *BUILD*. OR *DESTROY*. WHATEVER, SAME THING, DIFFERENT END OF THE WRENCH.

YOU KNOW, FOR SOMEONE WHO TALKS LIKE THEY DON'T CARE, YOU PUT A *LOT* OF EFFORT INTO STAYING *ALIVE*.

AND FOR SOMEONE WHO PRETENDS NOT TO BE AFRAID, YOU ASK A *LOT* OF QUESTIONS ABOUT *ME*.

I'M JUST TRYING TO UNDERSTAND THE GUY I'M BETTING MY LIFE ON.



...GETTING DIZZY AGAIN, ARE WE?

SEEMS I HAVE... NOT MUCH CHOICE.

CHOICE IS A MYTH. WE ARE THE SUM OF OUR PROGRAMMING AND OUR DAMAGE. EVERYTHING ELSE...

CAREFUL. I'M A POOR INVESTMENT. HIGH YIELD, *CATASTROPHIC* LOSS. OH, HEY...

...IS PERFORMANCE ART.

THIS PERFORMANCE... THIS FACE...
I CAN'T DO IT ANYMORE.
YOU HEAR ME, MAGNUS?! I SAID
I CAN'T BE *HIM* ANYMORE!



DEFINE "HIM".



YOU BASTARD. YOU KNOW EXACTLY—
COUNTERPUNCH.
YOUR MONSTER.

EVERY TIME I COME BACK, I WAKE UP WITH OIL ON MY HANDS, AND HAVE NO CLUE IF I'M THE HERO OR THE GODDAMN EXECUTIONER.

THE INTELLIGENCE YOU PROVIDE CONTINUES TO BE VALUABLE TO *NEW CYBERTRON*.

VALUABLE? YOU MEASURE MY TRAUMA IN...WHAT? METRICS?



IN VICTORIES. LIVES SAVED. PLANS OF GENOCIDES DISRUPTED.

YOUR PAIN IS UNFORTUNATE BUT IRRELEVANT.

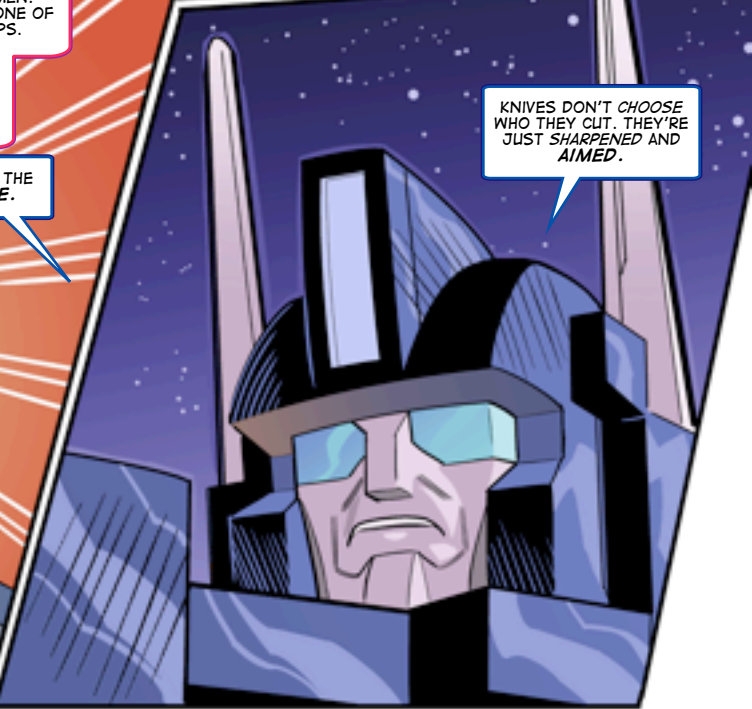
YOU PROGRAMMED ME TO BE TWO MEN. NOW NEITHER ONE OF THEM SLEEPS.

DELETE HIM! PLEASE. I KEEP HEARING THEM TALK TO EACH OTHER, AND I CAN'T TELL WHICH OF THEM I AM.

YOU'RE THE *KNIFE*.



KNIVES DON'T CHOOSE WHO THEY CUT. THEY'RE JUST SHARPENED AND AIMED.



I...LIKE IT NOW.
THE INTERROGATIONS...
THE CRUELTY.
COUNTERPUNCH WAS
SUPPOSED TO BE A MASK.
SO WHY IS HE THE ONE
SMILING WHEN WE KILL?



BECAUSE HE
UNDERSTANDS THE
ASSIGNMENT. AND
MAYBE... YOU'RE JUST
BEGINNING TO.



YOU KNEW
THIS WOULD
HAPPEN.

I HOPED. I NEEDED YOU TO
LOSE YOURSELF. THERE'S NO
ROOM FOR SELVES IN WAR.
ONLY OUTCOMES.



MAYBE IT'S TIME
YOU STOPPED
FIGHTING HIM.



AN UNTOLD LESSON OF
WAR. EVERY HERO IS
JUST A WEAPON
WAITING TO ADMIT IT.

AND WHAT
HAPPENS WHEN
THE WEAPON
TURNS AROUND?

THEN I KNOW
YOU'RE STILL
SHARP.



YOU'RE GONNA
GET ME KILLED,
MAGNUS.

EVENTUALLY.
BUT ONLY AFTER
YOU WIN.



"DID I EVER TELL YOU
ABOUT THE SKY ON
VELGAS PRIME?"



LOOKED LIKE CRACKED GLASS
DURING AN ECLIPSE.
THE NATIVES CALLED IT
"THE MIRROR OF THE GODS."
I RAN TESTS.
IT WASN'T A SKY AT ALL.
IT WAS A SHIELD.
ARTIFICIAL
DESIGNED.



DESIGNED BY
WHO?

NO ONE YOU'VE EVER HEARD OF.
BUT I REMEMBER THINKING:
EVEN *HERE*, ON THE EDGES OF
KNOWN SPACE... SOMEONE IS
WATCHING.
AND I WONDERED IF
MAYBE I WAS BORN FOR
SOMETHING *MORE* FOR
WAR. OR... SOMETHING
ELSE.

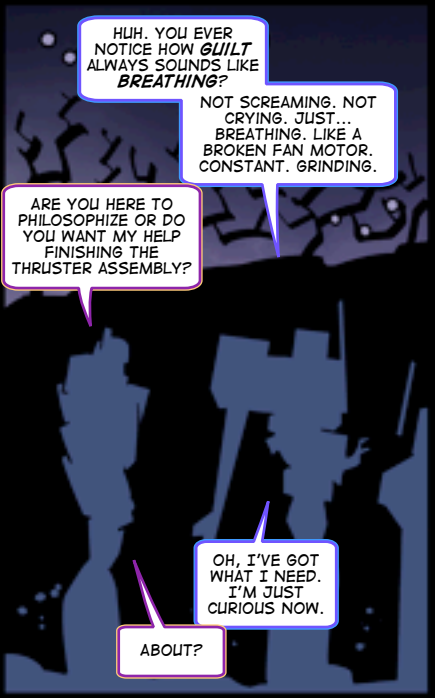


ROTORBOLT.
WHAT *ARE* YOU?



THE FRIEND YOU
KEEP AT ARM'S
LENGTH...

...BECAUSE YOU KNOW
I'LL BE THE ONE
HOLDING THE KNIFE
WHEN YOU TURN.



HUH. YOU EVER
NOTICE HOW *GUILT*
ALWAYS SOUNDS LIKE
BREATHING?

NOT SCREAMING. NOT
CRYING. JUST...
BREATHING. LIKE A
BROKEN FAN MOTOR.
CONSTANT. GRINDING.

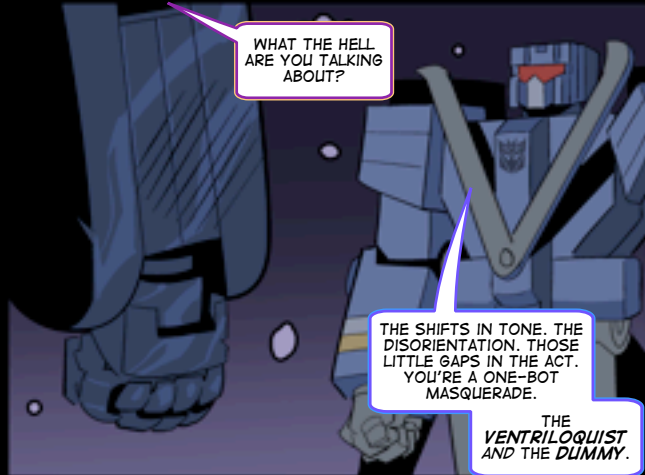
ARE YOU HERE TO
PHILOSOPHIZE OR DO
YOU WANT MY HELP
FINISHING THE
THRUSTER ASSEMBLY?

ABOUT?



WHICH ONE OF *YOU*
I'M TALKING TO.

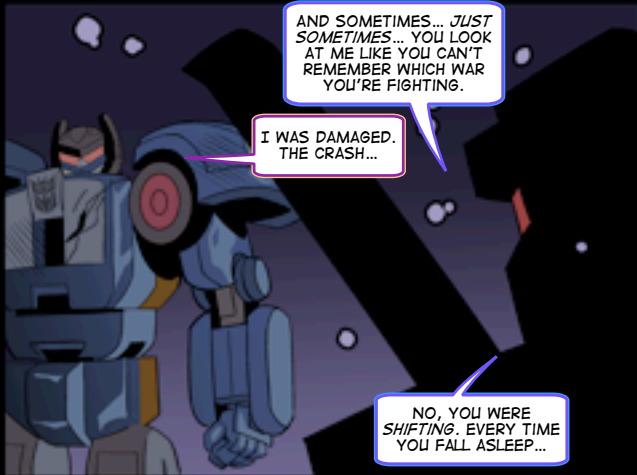
OH, I'VE GOT
WHAT I NEED.
I'M JUST
CURIOUS NOW.



WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

THE SHIFTS IN TONE. THE DISORIENTATION. THOSE LITTLE GAPS IN THE ACT. YOU'RE A ONE-BOT MASQUERADE.

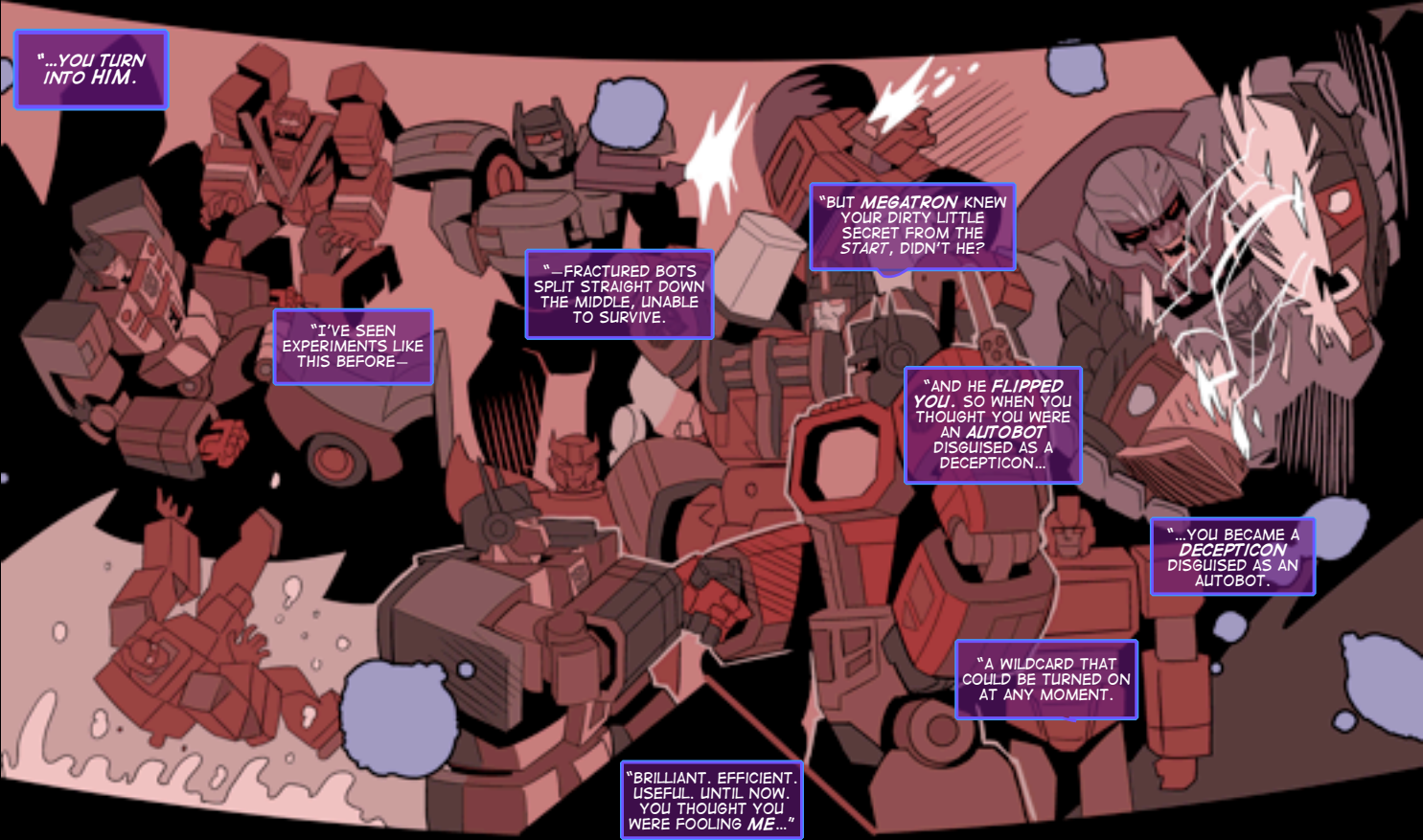
THE VENTRILOQUIST AND THE DUMMY.



AND SOMETIMES... *JUST SOMETIMES*... YOU LOOK AT ME LIKE YOU CAN'T REMEMBER WHICH WAR YOU'RE FIGHTING.

I WAS DAMAGED. THE CRASH...

NO, YOU WERE *SHIFTING*. EVERY TIME YOU FALL ASLEEP...



"...YOU TURN INTO HIM.

"I'VE SEEN EXPERIMENTS LIKE THIS BEFORE--

"--FRACTURED BOTS SPLIT STRAIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE, UNABLE TO SURVIVE.

"BUT MEGATRON KNEW YOUR DIRTY LITTLE SECRET FROM THE START, DIDN'T HE?

"AND HE *FLIPPED YOU*. SO WHEN YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE AN *AUTOBOT* DISGUISED AS A DECEPTICON...

"...YOU BECAME A *DECEPTICON* DISGUISED AS AN AUTOBOT.

"A WILDCARD THAT COULD BE TURNED ON AT ANY MOMENT.

"BRILLIANT. EFFICIENT. USEFUL. UNTIL NOW. YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE FOOLING *ME*..."



...BUT YOU WERE REALLY FOOLING *YOURSELF*. ISN'T THAT RIGHT...

...*PUNCH?*

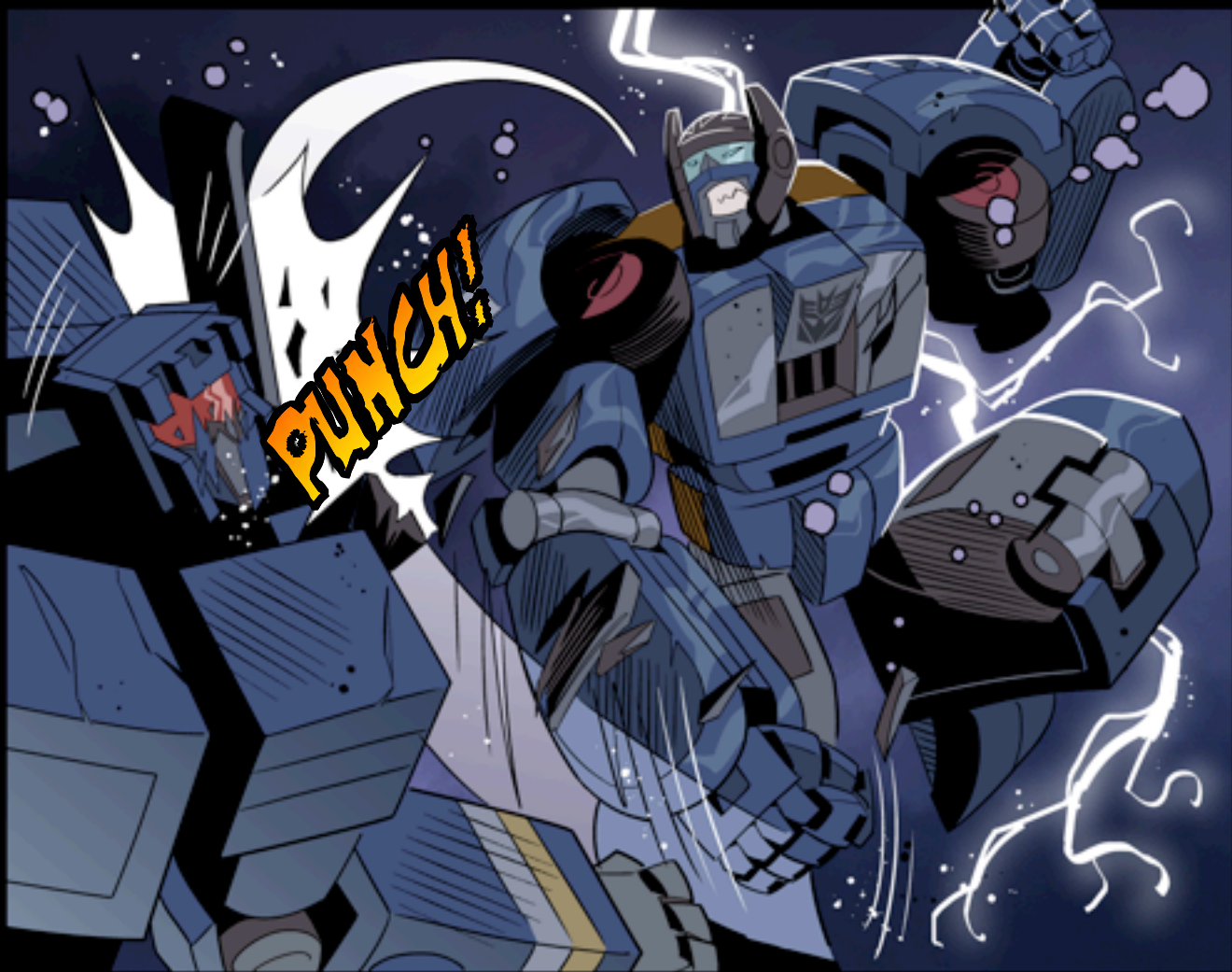


HELLO, BLUE EYES. GOT YOURSELF BURIED SO DEEP INSIDE A LIE, YOU LOST THE WAY *OUT*...

...AND I DO *NOT* NEED TO GET *FOUND*. SO WHEN *MY* ESCAPE POD TAKES OFF?



THERE WON'T BE ROOM FOR TWO.



PUNCH!

NICE. LIVING UP TO YOUR NAME.



CHOK!

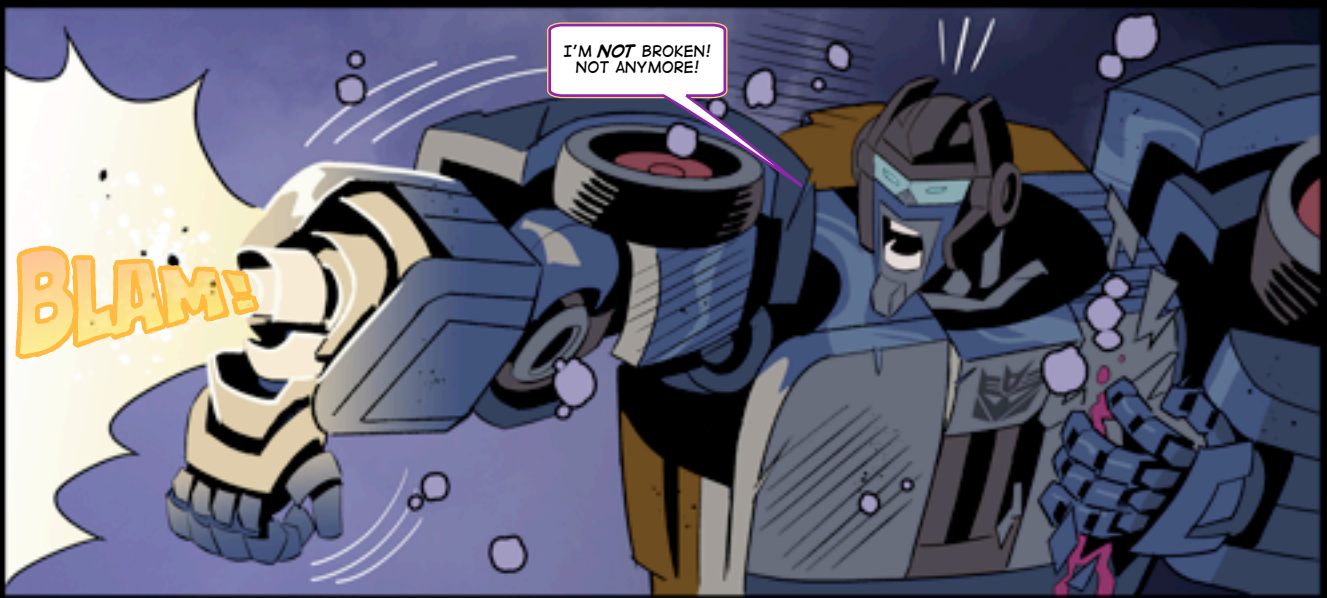


KRSH!



CRACK!

BUT DO YOU KNOW WHICH VOICE TO THREATEN ME IN, BROKEN BOY?



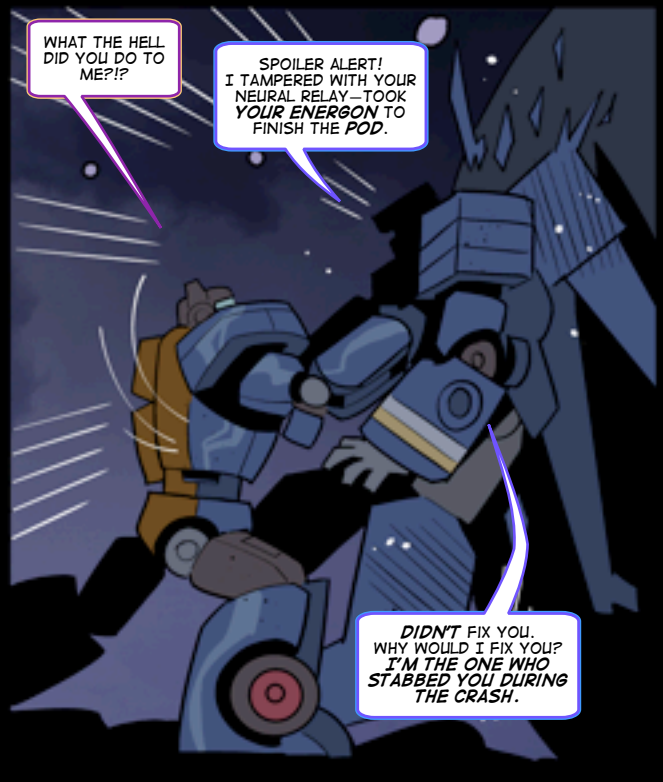
I'M *NOT* BROKEN!
NOT ANYMORE!



PLEASE. I HAD MORE
RESPECT FOR YOU WHEN
YOU WERE A WALKING
BLACKOUT.

I SHOULD HAVE PLAYED
WITH YOUR *INSIDES* A
LITTLE LONGER...

HZZT!



WHAT THE HELL
DID YOU DO TO
ME?!?

SPOILER ALERT!
I TAMPERED WITH YOUR
NEURAL RELAY - TOOK
YOUR ENERGO TO
FINISH THE *POD*.

DIDNT FIX YOU.
WHY WOULD I FIX YOU?
I'M THE ONE WHO
STABBED YOU DURING
THE CRASH.



YOU...?!



ME.



YOUR MISTAKE...



...YOU LEFT JUST ENOUGH FIGHT IN ME.

CONGRATS! YOU'RE FINALLY BEING HONEST.
-UNF!- SHALL WE CALL YOU KICK NOW?

AT LEAST I'M NOT A PSYCHO WHO BETRAYS HIS OWN CREW!



Kick!

IT WAS FAULTY WIRING!



AND DEFINITELY SABOTAGE.

YOUR DECEPTICON PALS WERE GETTING TOO CLOSE TO MY SCENT. COULDN'T HAVE THAT.

BETTER A GRAVEYARD THAN A TRIAL AT THE SMELTER.



BESIDES, FIRE'S ALWAYS BEEN YOUR THING, HASN'T IT?




RARRR!
WHO ARE YOU, ROTORBOLT?
WHAT ARE YOU?
ANSWER ME!

OKAY, KICK...



...YOU CAN COUNT ON ME TO TELL THE TRUTH.
I AM...



*...EXACTLY
WHAT YOU
USED TO BE.*



HUH. GUESS I FIXED YOU AFTER ALL.



THEY'LL COME FOR YOU, NOW—ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER. THEY ALWAYS DO.
SOLDIERS ARE CURRENCY. AND OUR WAR'S BEEN BANKRUPT FOR CENTURIES.

BEEP...
BEEP...



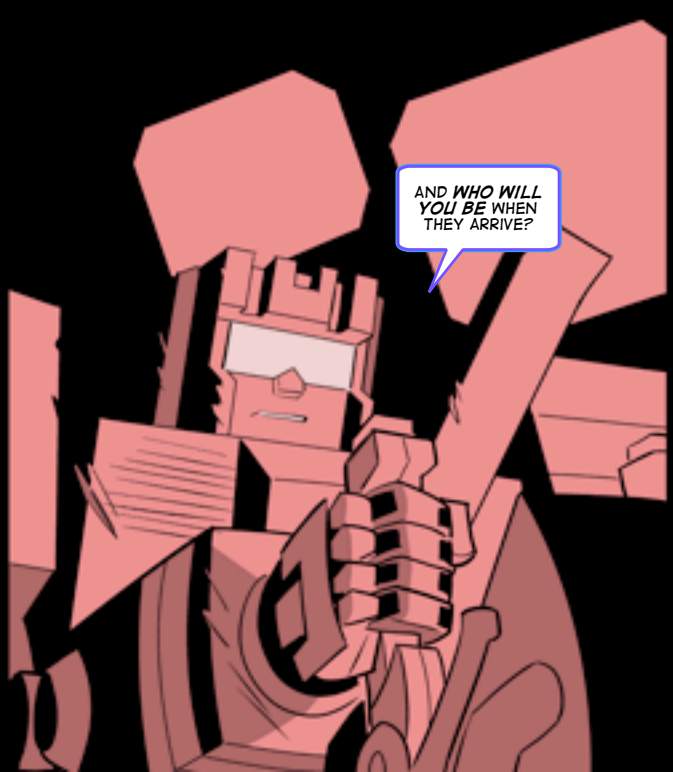
THEY'LL BRING FORENSICS. *PROBE* THAT BROKEN BRAIN TRYING TO FIND WHERE THE SPY *ENDS* AND THE *TRAITOR* BEGINS.

BUT THERE'S NO CLEAR ANSWER, IS THERE?

JUST LAYERS OF CAMOUFLAGE, GLUED TO TRAUMA, HELD TOGETHER BY LIES.



"I GUESS THE QUESTION NOW IS: *WHICH SIDE WILL YOU CALL ON TO RESCUE YOU?*"



AND *WHO WILL YOU BE* WHEN THEY ARRIVE?





The
TRANSFORMERS
will return after these messages

TRANSFORMERS FORMERS DIASONE

WELCOME BACK...
PRIME.



YOU'VE BEEN AWAY FOR AWHILE.
-77- IT APPEARS WHAT YOU
NEEDED, AFTER ALL...

...WAS A LITTLE
LIGHT.



OF COURSE,
LIGHTS ARE HOW
WE GOT HERE-

-TO THIS PLACE, THIS
TIME, ALL THE
DIFFERENT TIMES...

...COLLAPSING.



THE ALIENS WERE JUST
TWISTED MIRRORS OF
OURSELVES, WEREN'T
THEY? SHOWING OUR
TRUTHS MORE THAN WE
CARED TO ADMIT.

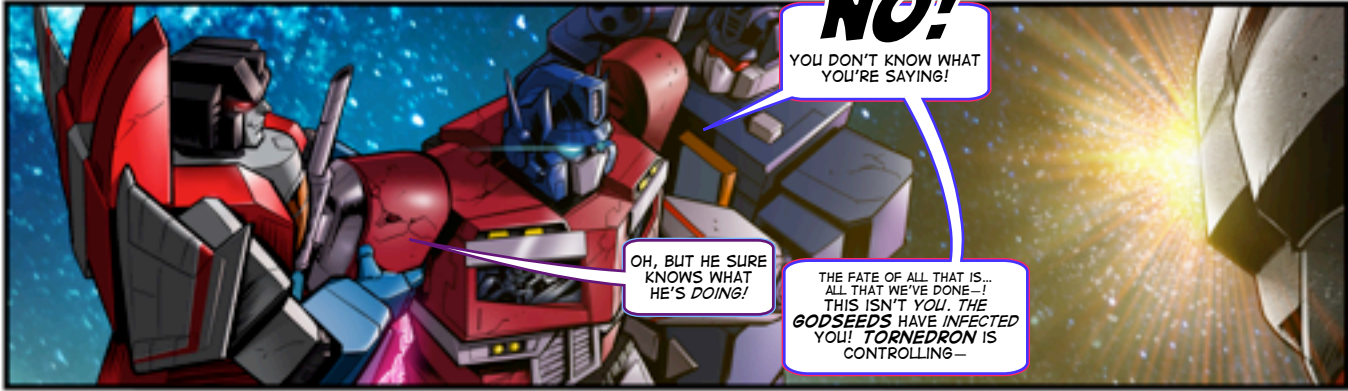
THOSE POOR HUMANS FOUGHT
TOOTH AND CLAW FOR WHAT
WAS RIGHT, ONLY FOR *OUR*
DECEPTION TO LEAD THEM
ASTRAY.

YOU FIGHT WELL, OPTIMUS!
BUT THE OLD WAYS STILL
PERMEATE, DO THEY NOT?
AND YOU ARE STILL AN
AUTOBOT.

SADLY, FOR US TO BUILD
ANEW-TO ATONE FOR
THE SINS WE PROUDLY
COMMITTED...



...WE MUST
END IT ALL.



NO!

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT
YOU'RE SAYING!

OH, BUT HE SURE
KNOWS WHAT
HE'S DOING!

THE FATE OF ALL THAT IS...
ALL THAT WE'VE DONE-!
THIS ISN'T YOU. THE
GODSEEDS HAVE INFECTED
YOU! TORNEDRON IS
CONTROLLING-



NO ONE
CONTROLS.
MEGATRON.



WHAT WAS IT
YOUR RACE
ALWAYS SAID...

...WHEN YOUR HOURS
WERE DARK AND THE
STRONGEST AMONG
YOU DEAD?
AH, YES...

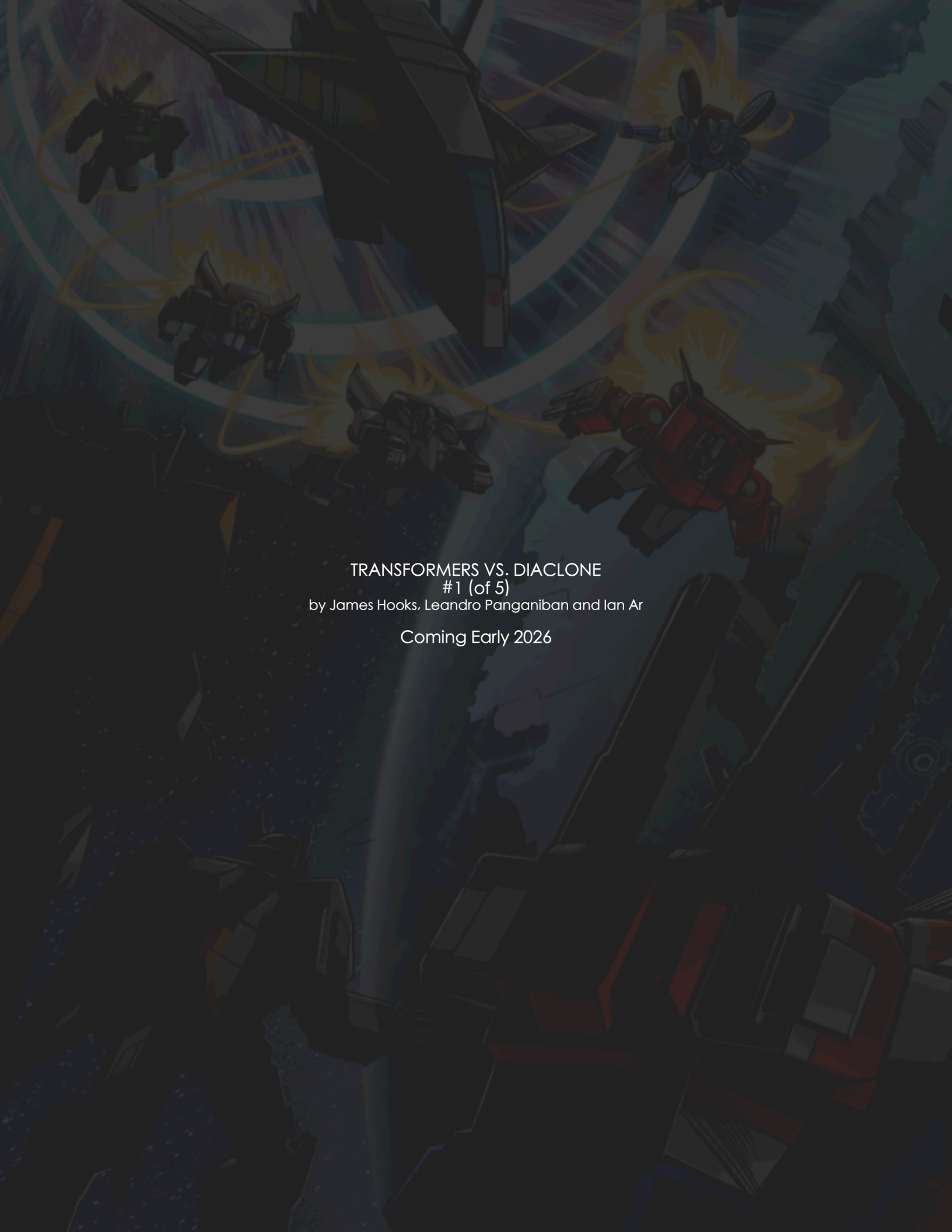


TIL ALL...



...ARE
ONE!

SHREK!!!



TRANSFORMERS VS. DIACLONE
#1 (of 5)

by James Hooks, Leandro Panganiban and Ian Ar

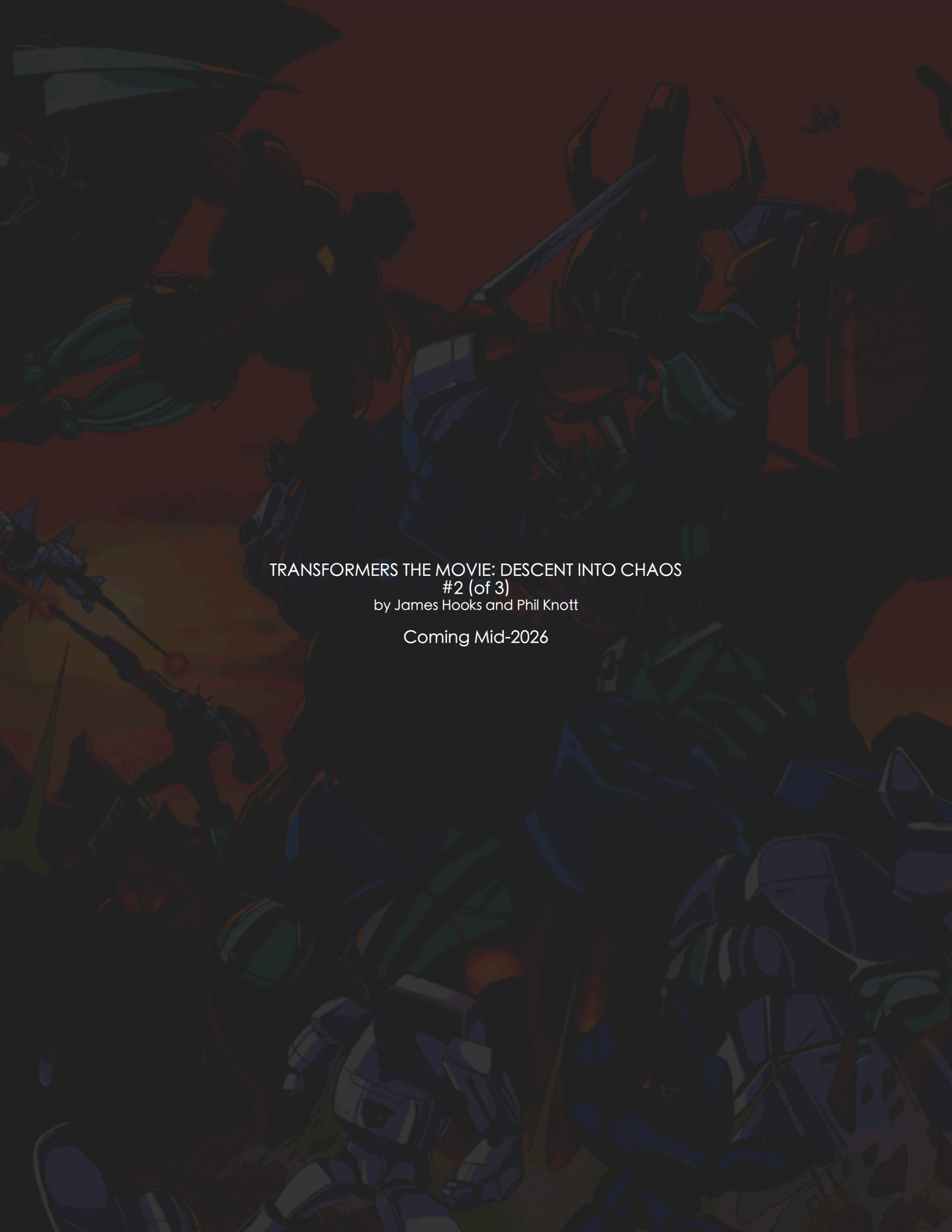
Coming Early 2026

DESCENT INTO CHAOS



CLEARLY...

...A LOT HAS HAPPENED.



TRANSFORMERS THE MOVIE: DESCENT INTO CHAOS
#2 (of 3)

by James Hooks and Phil Knott

Coming Mid-2026



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