

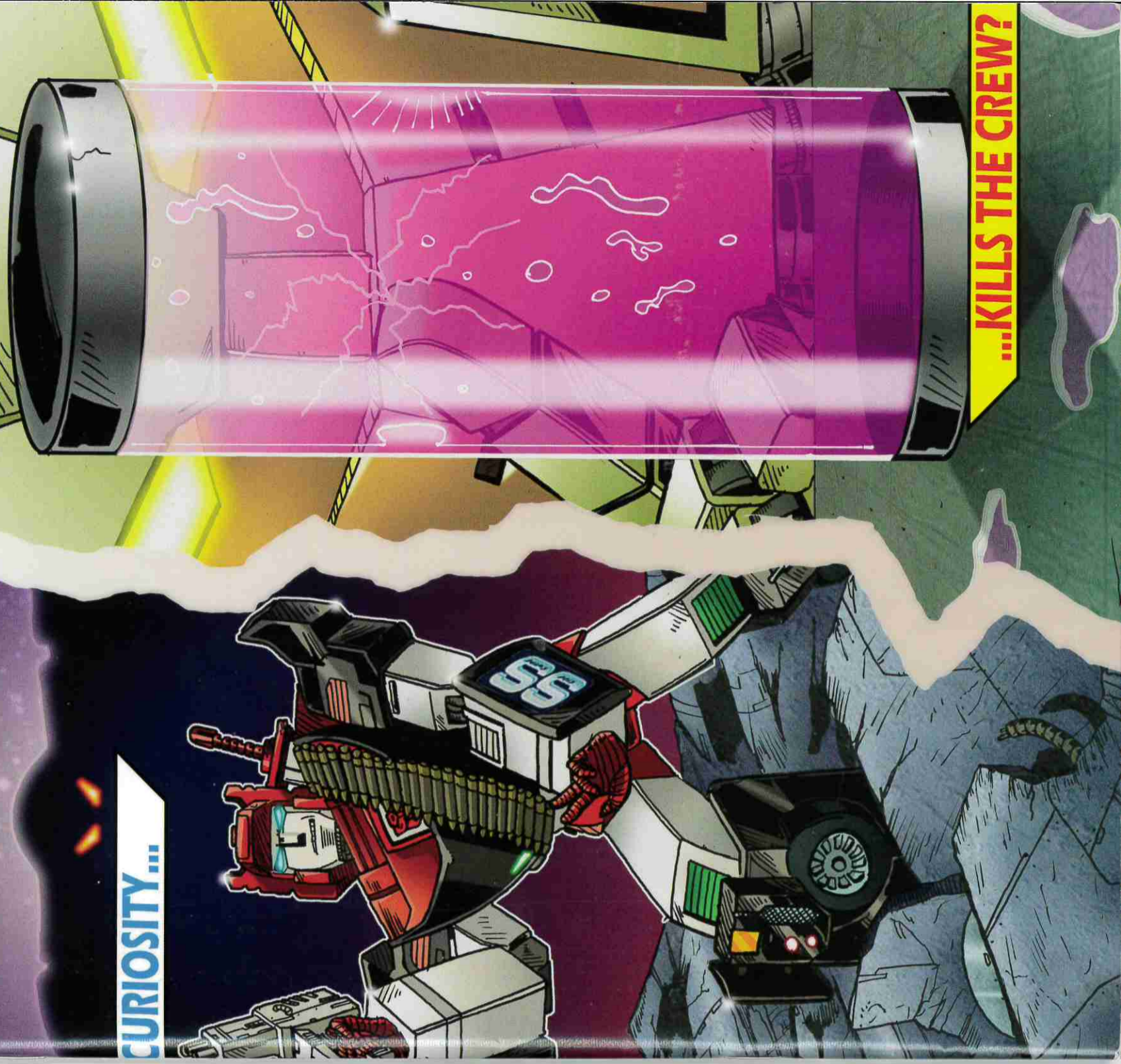
CYBER TROMAN TIMES

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3-5
AUGUST
2012

Issue 13

CURIOSITY...



...KILLS THE CREW?

AUTO ASSEMBLY 2012

AUTOGRAPHS



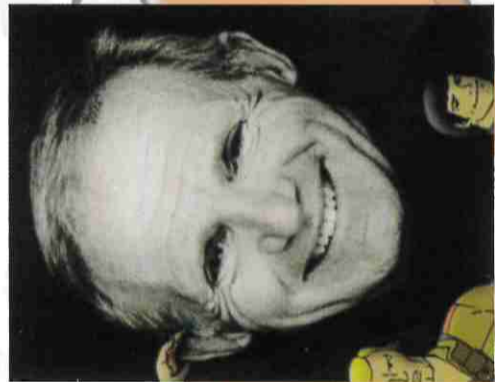
THE CYBERTRONIAN TIMES ISSUE 13 is the official magazine of Auto Assembly 2012. Published by Infinite Frontiers and is copyright 2012. Contributors: John Paul Bove, Josh Burcham, Simon Chiddington, HdE, Allies Meerman, Gavin Merrifield, Ben Pirrie, Ed Pirrie, Simon Plumbe, Liam Shalloo, Priscilla Tramontano, Andy Turnbull & Gareth Watson.

AUTO ASSEMBLY 2012

2012 GUESTS

GUESTS OF HONOUR

MICHAEL BELL



Veteran actor Michael Bell is just as much at home in front of the camera as much as he is in front of a microphone in a studio and he has hundreds of television, animation and video-game credits to his name but for Transformers fans he will always be known as the man behind the voices of Swoop, Prowl, Sideswipe, Bombshell, Scrapper and many more in G1.

Away from Transformers, Michael was one of the stars of the GI Joe cartoon, providing the voice for Duke and several other characters, and his varied career including multiple appearances on Star Trek including the first episode of Star Trek: The Next Generation (and working on several Star Trek video games), on screen roles in shows such as Mission Impossible, The Monkees, Get Smart and Ironside, and providing voices for an endless stream of cult animated shows. Over on the video games front, Michael has voiced characters in the Baldur's Gate, Metal Gear Solid, and the Ratchet And Clank series to name but a few, with many more to come.

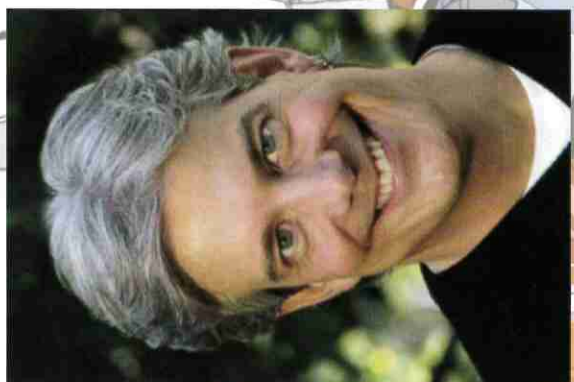
Michael will be making his long-overdue Auto Assembly debut this year. First that would not involve most of the characters he had crafted and helped mold for much of his run.

TOWNSEND COLEMAN

Making his debut at Auto Assembly 2012 is Townsend Coleman. His most notable Transformers role have been to provide the voices of Sentinel Prime and Tracks in Transformers: Animated (although he had previously voiced two minor characters in G1). However, Townsend has been an incredibly prolific voice actor for many years and has provided the voice for characters in some of the most popular and fan-favourite shows of recent years...

For almost a decade, spanning an astonishing 148 episodes, he provided the voice of Michaelangelo, the Rat King and several other voices (including Usagi Yojimbo) in Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and he also provided the voice of the blue-suited superhero, The Tick... who bore an uncanny similarity to his latter Transformers character!

In addition, Townsend took over Michael J Fox's part for the animated series based on Teen Wolf, and has also been in countless other animated series including Batman, Spiderman, Superman, Animaniacs and more. A first glance at his resumé may lead you to think that Townsend may not have as extensive a career as many other voice actors, but as you can tell, he has been fortunate enough to have been cast in the lead role in many of the shows he has been cast in.



PAUL EIDING

Joining us at Auto Assembly for the first time this year is Paul Eiding. He is well known to G1 fans for providing the voice of the Autobots resident scientist Perceptor throughout the series and the 1986 animated movie, although - as with many of his co-stars - he also provided the voices for several other supporting characters.

Paul has worked extensively in animation and video games providing the voice of Grandpa Max in Ben 10, appeared in The Tick, Avatar: The Last Airbender, Batman, The Smurfs and countless others, and he has provided character voices for films such as Cars, Monsters Inc, and Finding Nemo for Pixar. He was the voice of Colonel Roy Campbell in the Metal Gear Solid game series, has been in many of the Ratchet & Clank games, and has also appeared vocally in games ranging from the God Of War and Starcraft series to series as diverse as Star Trek and Final Fantasy. Most recently he can be heard in Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim.

His on-screen work is just as varied and has included appearances in such diverse shows as Star Trek: The Next Generation, ER, My Name Is Earl, CSI: Miami, Martial Law, The West Wing and many more besides...

Paul is always popular at conventions and a true fan-favourite, we're sure that you'll all make him welcome at Auto Assembly.



AUTO ASSEMBLY 2012

2012 GUESTS

Livio Ramondelli



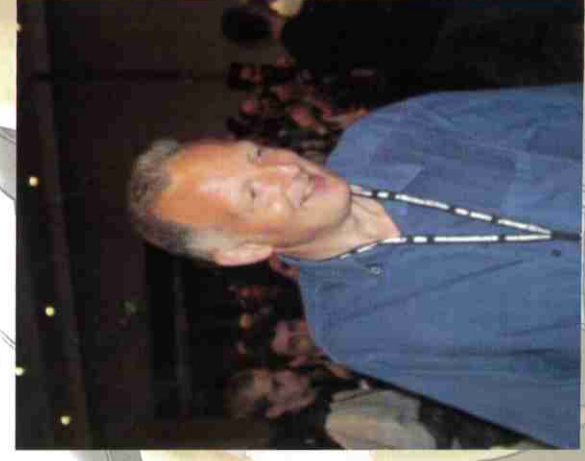
Simon Furman



Andrew Wildman



Stephen Baskerville



Jason Cardy



John-Paul Bove



2012 GUESTS

Nick Roche



James Roberts



Jeff Anderson



Kris Carter



Liam Shalloo



Kat Nicholson



Lee Bradley

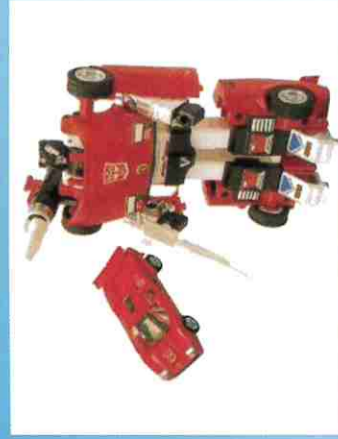


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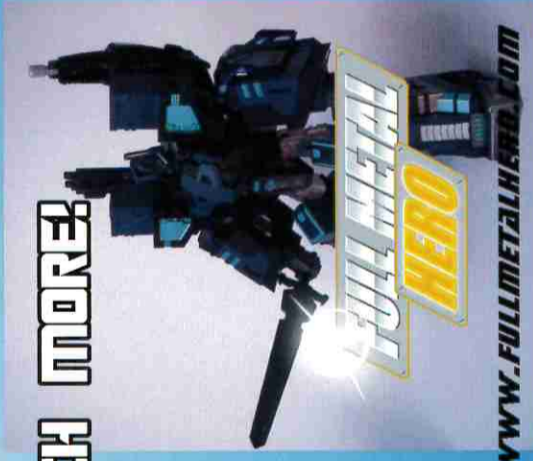
G1 - MASTERPIECE - ARMS MICRON



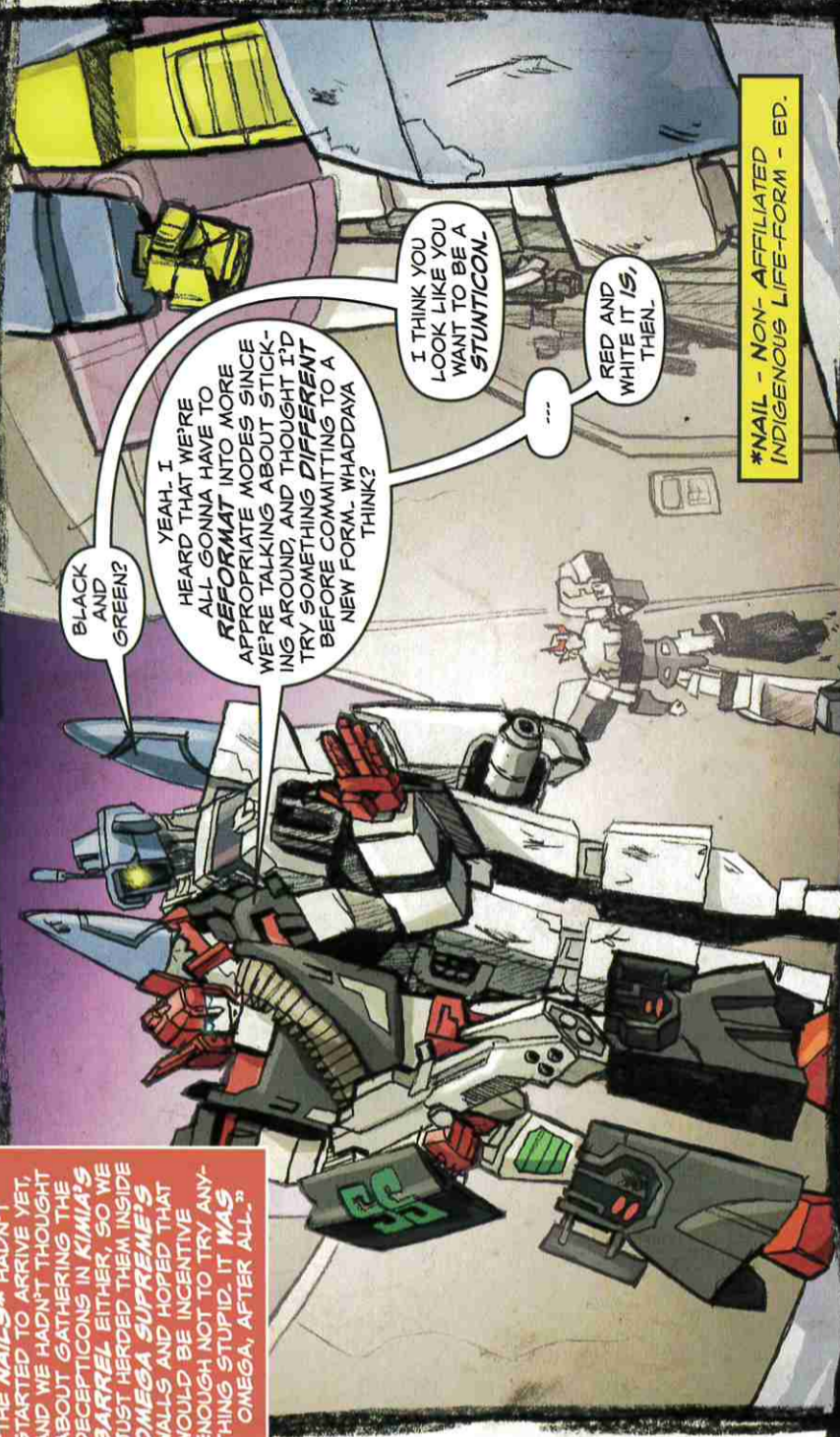
TRANSFORMERS PRIME - EXCLUSIVES - IMPORTS



INDEPENDENT PRODUCTS AND MUCH MORE!



"THE NAILS* HADN'T STARTED TO ARRIVE YET, AND WE HADN'T THOUGHT ABOUT GATHERING THE DECEPTICONS IN KIMIA'S BARREL EITHER, SO WE JUST HERDED THEM INSIDE OMEGA SUPREME'S WALLS AND HOPED THAT WOULD BE INCENTIVE ENOUGH NOT TO TRY ANYTHING STUPID. IT WAS OMEGA, AFTER ALL."



BLACK AND GREEN?

YEAH, I HEARD THAT WE'RE ALL GONNA HAVE TO REFORMAT INTO MORE APPROPRIATE MODES SINCE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT STICKING AROUND, AND THOUGHT I'D TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT BEFORE COMMITTING TO A NEW FORM. WHADDAYA THINK?

I THINK YOU LOOK LIKE YOU WANT TO BE A STUNTCON.

RED AND WHITE IT IS, THEN.

*NAIL - NON-AFFILIATED INDIGENOUS LIFE-FORM - ED.



I HAVE TO CONFESS, THIS IS A SURPRISE.

I KNOW, RIGHT? THE WHOLE FREAKIN' DECEPTICON ARMY, HELPLESS AS A PROTO-FORM AND DOING EXACTLY WHAT WE SAY. YOU GOTTA ADMIT, HOT ROD DID GOOD.

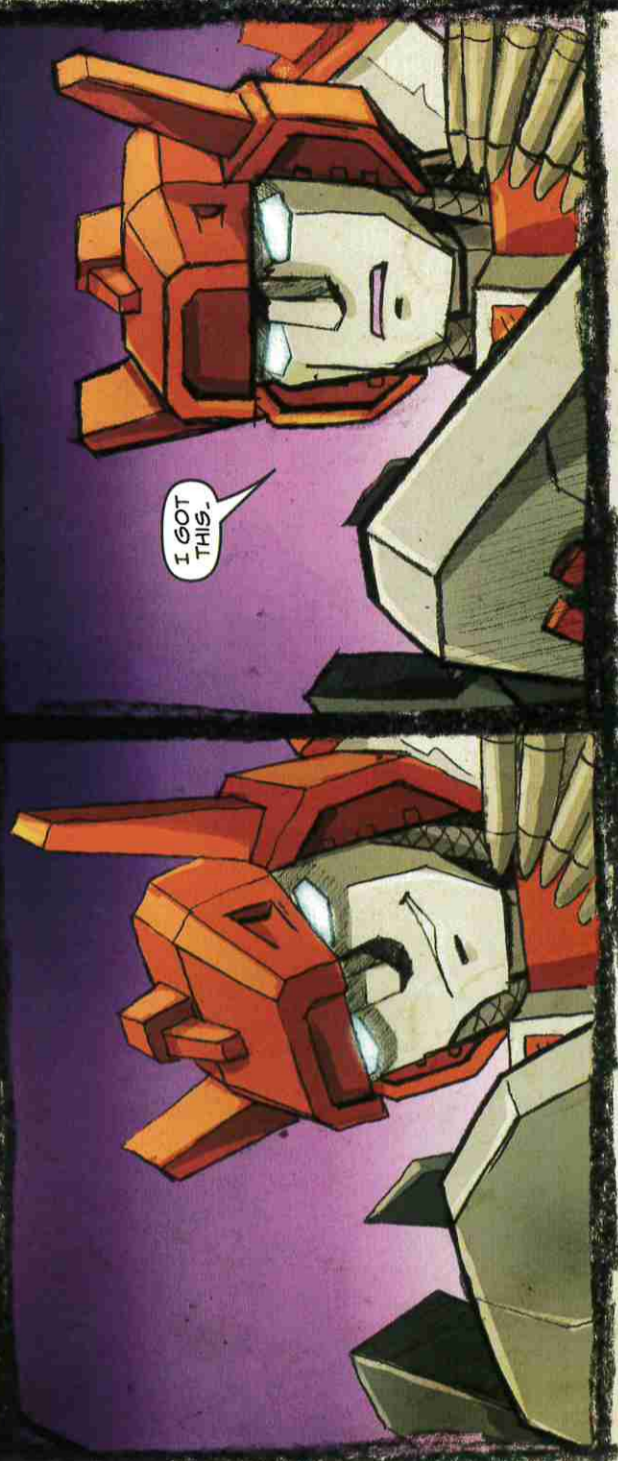
RODINUS.

ALL THE DECEPTICONS WE KNOW WERE PRESENT, ONLY ONE IS UNACCOUNTED FOR.

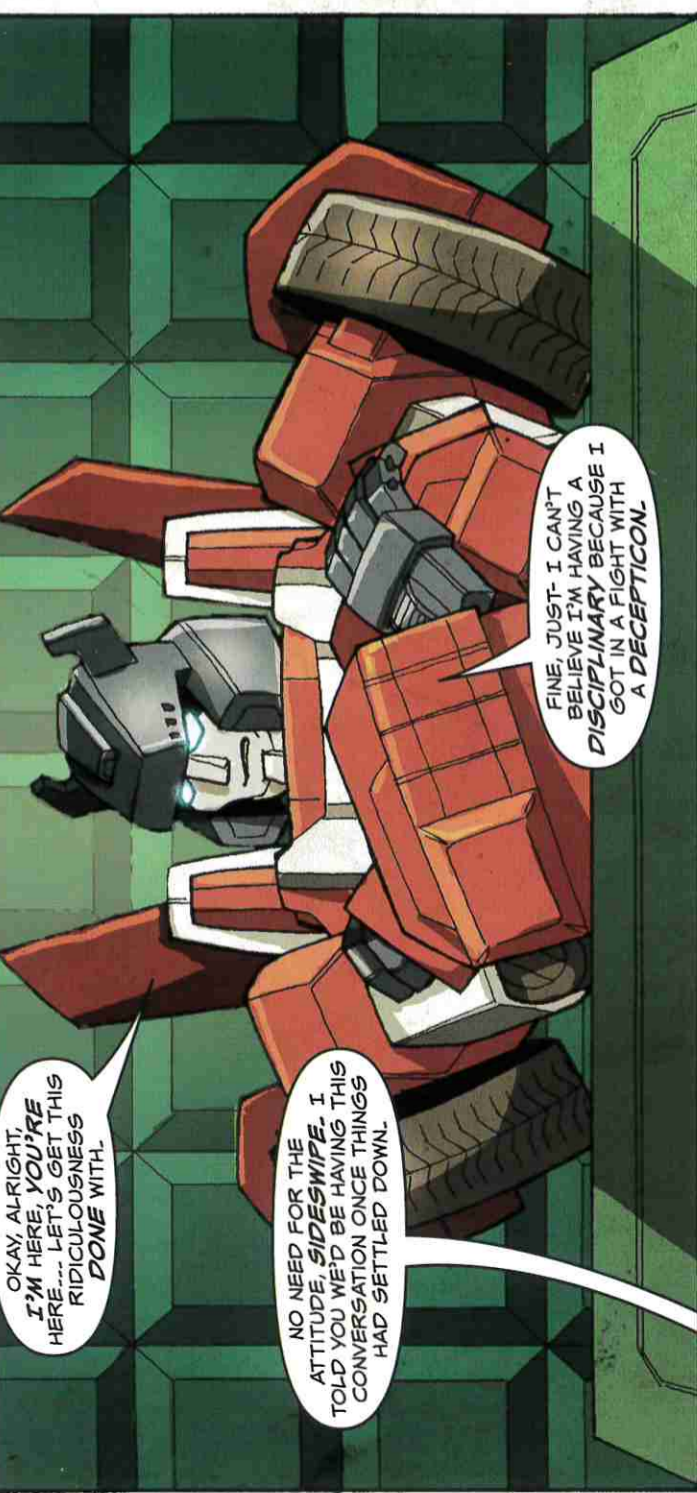
GIVEN THE SHEER NUMBER OF THEM IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN TRICKIER TO FIGURE OUT WHO, BUT SINCE THOSE THREE ARE PRACTICALLY INSEPARABLE, HIS ABSENCE WAS EASY TO SPOT.

WHO...?

FFFT! YOU WOULDN'T CATCH ME GOING BY A NAME SWINDLE GAVE ME.



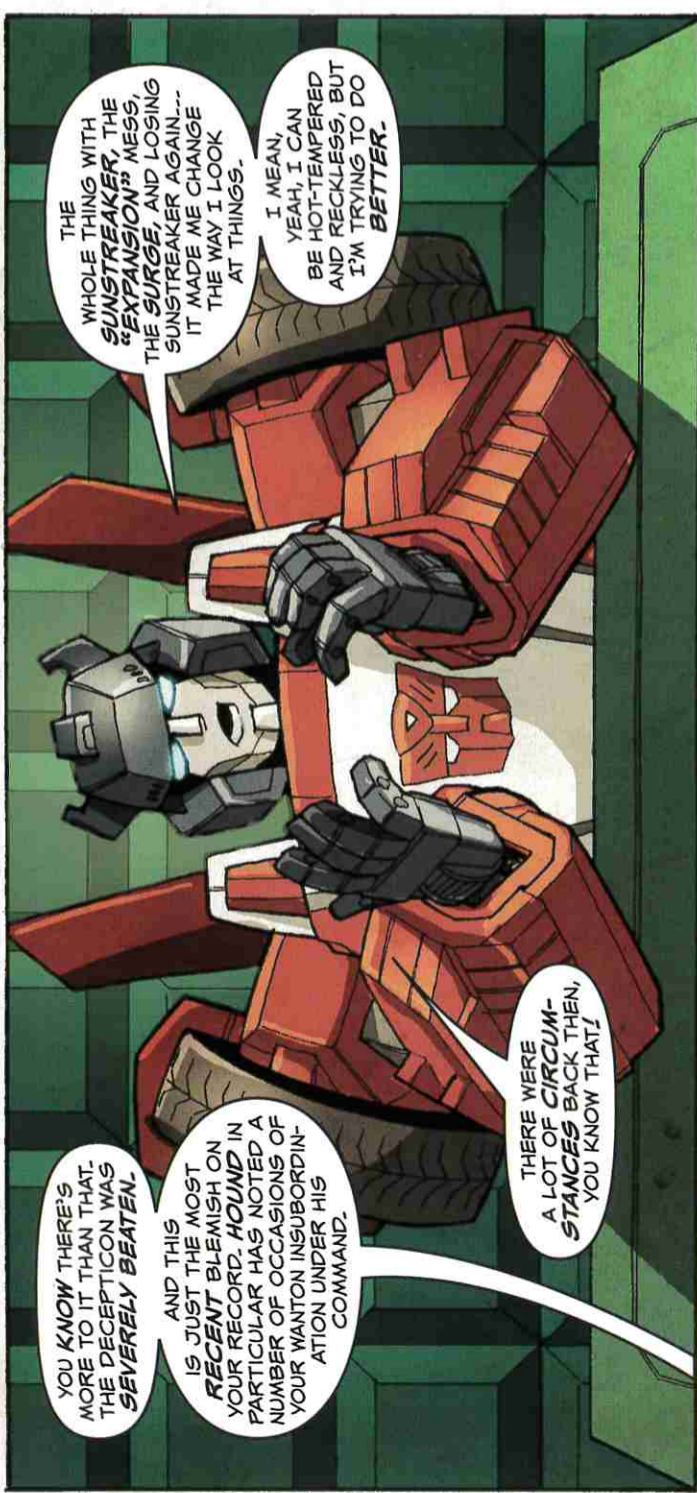
I GOT THIS.



OKAY, ALRIGHT, I'M HERE, YOU'RE HERE... LET'S GET THIS RIDICULOUSNESS DONE WITH.

NO NEED FOR THE ATTITUDE SIDESWIPES. I TOLD YOU WE'D BE HAVING A CONVERSATION ONCE THINGS HAD SETTLED DOWN.

FINE, JUST- I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M HAVING A DISCIPLINARY BECAUSE I GOT IN A FIGHT WITH A DECEPTICON.



YOU KNOW THERE'S MORE TO IT THAN THAT. THE DECEPTICON WAS SEVERELY BEATEN.

AND THIS IS JUST THE MOST RECENT BLEMISH ON YOUR RECORD. HOUND IN PARTICULAR HAS NOTED A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS OF YOUR WANTON INSUBORDINATION UNDER HIS COMMAND.

THE WHOLE THING WITH THE SUNSTREAKER, THE EXPANSION'S MESS, THE SURGE, AND LOSING SUNSTREAKER AGAIN... IT MADE ME CHANGE THE WAY I LOOK AT THINGS.

I MEAN, YEAH, I CAN BE HOT-TEMPERED AND RECKLESS, BUT I'M TRYING TO DO BETTER.

THERE WERE A LOT OF CIRCUMSTANCES BACK THEN, YOU KNOW THAT!



WELL, THAT'S WHY WE'RE HERE. SO I CAN HEAR YOU OUT. THIS WON'T BECOME A DISCIPLINARY UNLESS I DECIDE IT NEEDS TO.

SHALL WE BEGIN?

OKAY, WELL... AFTER THE CHAOS WITH GALVATRON AND THE DEAD UNIVERSE, EVERYTHING WAS A MESS. IT TOOK US AWHILE TO REGROUP AND FIGURE OUT WHO WAS EVEN STILL ALIVE.

THE DECEPTICONS WERE WORN OUT AND CONFUSED, IN NO CONDITION TO FIGHT. THROW INTO ALL OF THAT WHAT HAPPENED TO CYBERTRON ITSELF, WITH NO MEANS OF LEAVING, AND THE 'CONS HAD GIVEN UP AND WERE PRETTY DOCCILE. EVEN BEFORE YOU AND THE OTHERS GOT BACK FROM EARTH.

ARE YOU SURE? I CAN HAVE **STREETWISE** OR **CATILLA** UP HERE IN A COUPLE OF BREMS TO HELP YOU TRACK HIM.

NO TIME. BESIDES, I DON'T **NEED** THEM.

AT LEAST TAKE **WHIRL** ALONG. YOU COULD USE EYES IN THE AIR.

AND TAKE THE **MUSCLE** AWAY FROM SECURING THIS LINE? IF WE LEFT JUST YOU WITH THESE **DECEPTICONS**, I DOUBT THEY COULD FIGHT THE TEMPTATION TO **DOS-PILE** YOU.

DON'T WORRY, **PROWL**. THIS WILL BE OVER BEFORE YOU KNOW IT.

"I KNOW THAT THIS DOESN'T EXACTLY HELP MY CASE AGAINST **INSUBORDINATION** AND **RECKLESSNESS**, BUT I KNEW WHAT I WAS DOING. WE WERE TALKING ABOUT A **DECEPTICON** WHO COULD **FLY**, AND TIME WAS PRETTY IMPORTANT.

"AND BESIDES THAT, HE WAS BOUND TO BE AS LOW ON POWER AND AS WEAK AS THE REST OF THEM. BUT WHO KNEW WHAT THIS NEW WORLD HAD IN STORE FOR US? COULD BE HE WAS GETTING HOPPED UP ON **ORE 13** OR **WORSE** RIGHT AT THAT MOMENT."

"I MADE IT JUST FAR ENOUGH AWAY FROM CAMP TO BE SURE THAT NO-ONE HAD DECIDED TO FOLLOW BEFORE MY **TIRES** GAVE OUT.

"EARTH-FORM WHEELS HAD PROVEN TRICKY ON **CYBERTRON BEFORE**, BUT NOW THEY WERE DOWNRIGHT **SUICIDAL**."

"IT WAS REALLY KIND OF AN **EYE-OPENER**. BY ALL ACCOUNTS I SHOULD HAVE BEEN STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF **VOS**, BUT THERE WASN'T A SINGLE CLUE TO THAT FACT OUTSIDE OF MY **GALACTIC POSITIONING SYSTEM** READOUT. THE CHANGES THAT **PERCEPTOR** AND **BEACHCOMBER** HAD THEORISED LOOKED LIKE THEY BARELY SCRATCHED THE SURFACE."

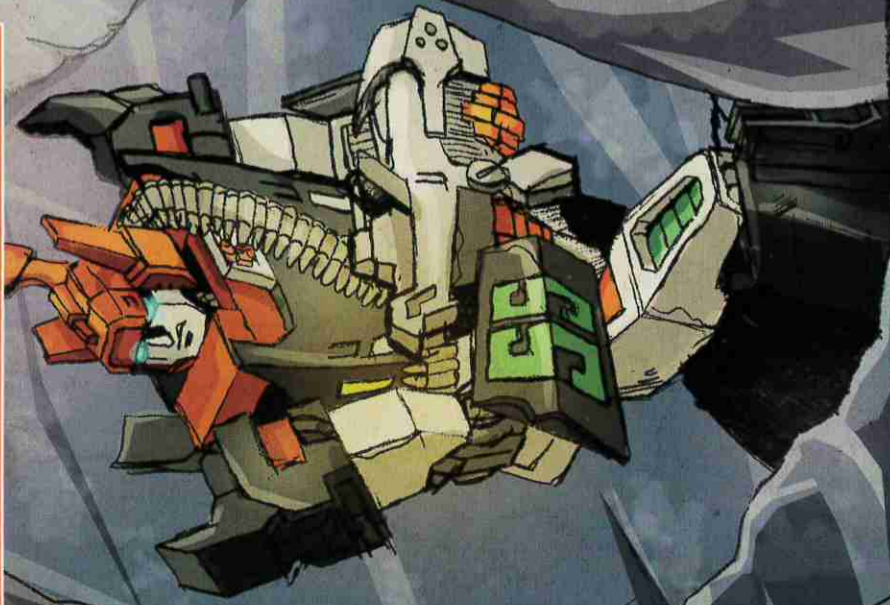
"YOU KNOW I USED TO LIVE THERE, RIGHT? BEFORE EVERYTHING. I WAS A MEMBER OF THE **CIVIL DEFENSE FORCES**. I WAS THERE WHEN **STARSCREAM** TURNED ON THE GOVERNING BODY AND INSTIGATED THE **DECEPTICON** ATTACK WHICH ALL BUT WIPE OUT THE CITY-STATE."

"YES. I REMEMBER THAT YOU CITED THE INCIDENT AS YOUR MOTIVATION FOR SIGNING UP WITH THE **AUTOBOTS**."

"I USED TO THINK THAT NOTHING COULD EVER TOP THAT CARNAGE. EVEN IN ALL THESE MILLIONS OF YEARS OF WAR, I NEVER SAW ANYTHING ON THE SCALE OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THAT DAY."

"UNTIL THAT MOMENT."

"BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THINGS HAVE GOTTEN WORSE SINCE THE CHANGE. I WAS FURTHER OUT THAN IRONHIDE HAS MANAGED TO GET SO FAR, AND I HADN'T RUN INTO ANY DANGEROUS OR HOSTILE LIFE. IN FACT, THE WILDLIFE I DID SEE WAS QUITE PEACEFUL."



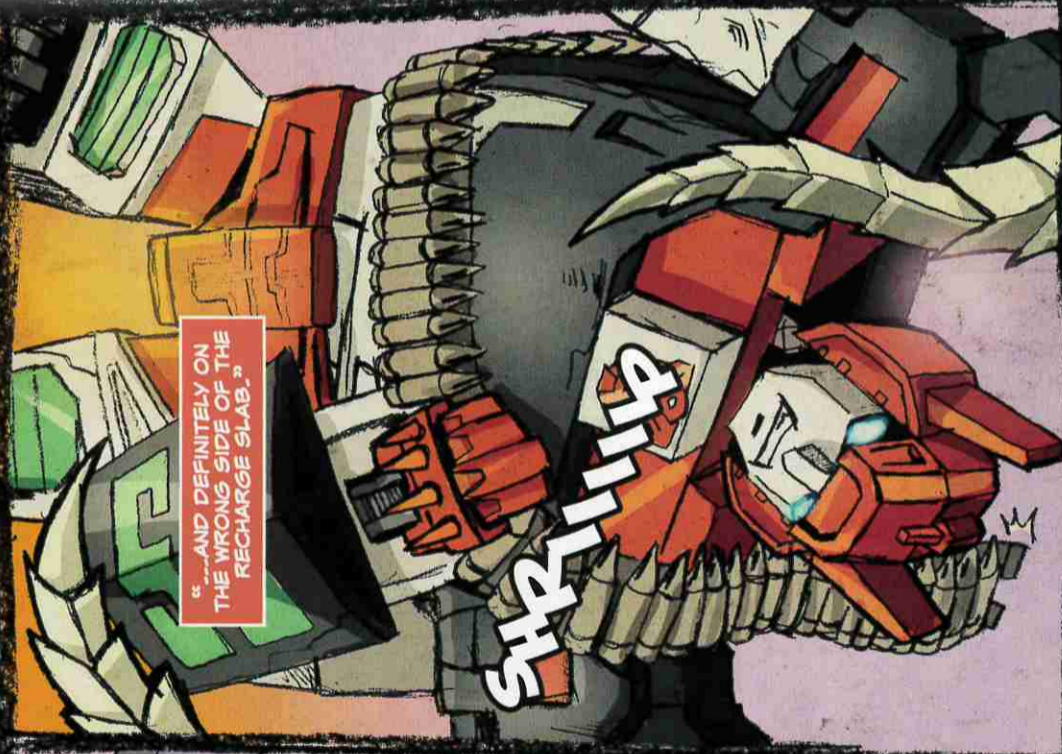
"I GUESS THE PLANET WAS STILL JUST MAKING UP..."



"IN THE BEGINNING, AT LEAST."



"...AND DEFINITELY ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE RECHARGE SLAB."



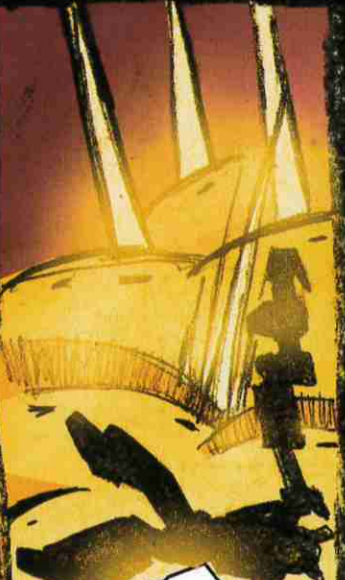
"ABOUT TIME!"

"EHP?"

"PING"



CRASH



"SEE, THIS IS WHY I DIDN'T NEED TO BRING ALONG A TRACKER LIKE STREETWISE. WITH CYBERTRON BEING THE WAY IT IS, EVEN I COULD PICK UP AND FOLLOW A SINGLE DECEPTION ENERGY SIGNATURE. IT WAS JUST A QUESTION OF GETTING IN RANGE."



"I GUESS THE SOUND OF THE BLAST HAD DRAWN HIM OUT TO SEE WHAT WAS GOING ON, AND THAT WAS THE ONE SLIP-UP I NEEDED HIM TO MAKE."

"THERE WAS ONLY ONE PLACE HE COULD BE HIDING."



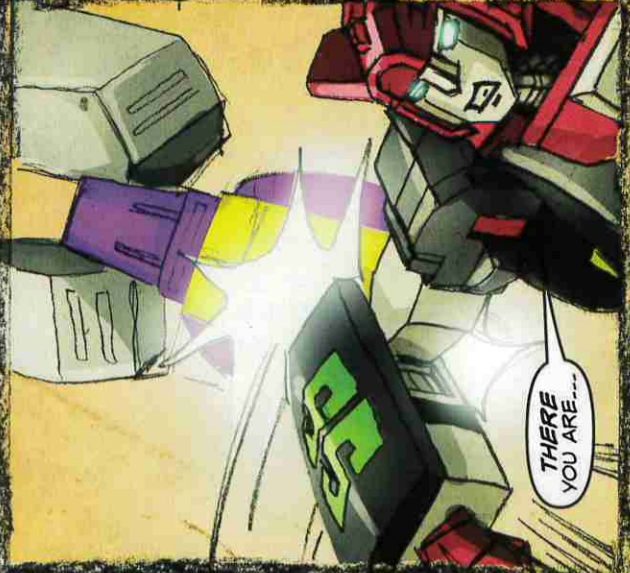
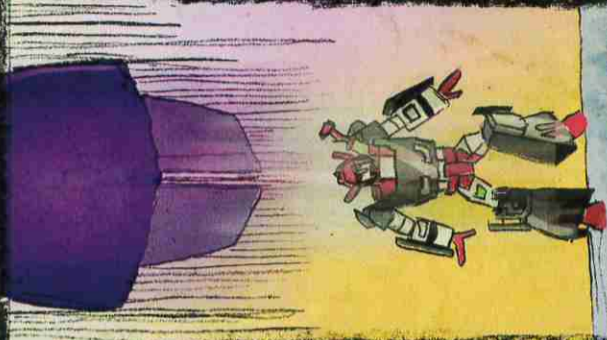
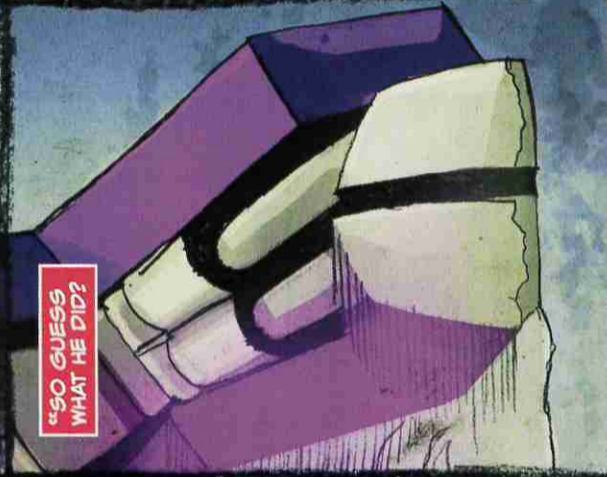
"NOW I KNEW I WAS IN THE RIGHT AREA, I DIDN'T EVEN NEED THE SIGNATURE TO FIND HIM."



"HE WAS TRAPPED..."

"...AND HE KNEW IT."

"SO GUESS WHAT HE DID?"



"THERE YOU ARE..."

"---BOMBSHELL!"



"LET'S PLAY."

"HRAAAGH!"



"OKAY, SO I'LL ADMIT THAT I GOT A BIT OVERZEALOUS, BUT YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I ENJOY A GOOD SCRAP."



"IN THE HEAT OF IT, I GUESS I KINDA FORGOT HOW WEAK HE WAS GOING TO BE AND MAYBE SHOULD'VE PULLED MY PUNCH..."

SMASH!



"...BUT WHAT CAME NEXT WAS NOT MY FAULT."

?

N-NO!
NO!

"AND THAT'S ALL THERE WAS TO IT. HE WAS IN THAT CONDITION BY THE TIME I COULD PULL HIM OUT, AND I BROUGHT HIM BACK TO CAMP WITHOUT FURTHER INCIDENT."

"ANYTHING BOMBHELL HAS SAID TO THE CONTRARY IS JUST HIM TRYING TO SAVE FACE WITH THE OTHER DECEPTICONS, AND HAVING RATBAT TAKING UP THE CAUSE FOR HIM PROBABLY SUITS THEM BOTH TO THE GROUND."

"END OF STORY."

"SO THIS INCIDENT HAD NOTHING AT ALL TO DO WITH WHAT HAPPENED TO HUNTER O'NION?"

GHEEAARRGH!



I THOUGHT AS MUCH.



WHEN YOU'RE HARD-HEADED TO THE POINT OF INSUBORDINATION, IT MEANS YOU'RE DETERMINED, BUT WHEN YOU STEADFASTLY REFUSE TO TALK ABOUT SOMETHING AT ALL, IT MEANS YOU'RE OBSESSED. YOU AND SUNSTREAKER ARE VERY ALIKE IN THAT REGARD.

DAMN YOU, PROWL.

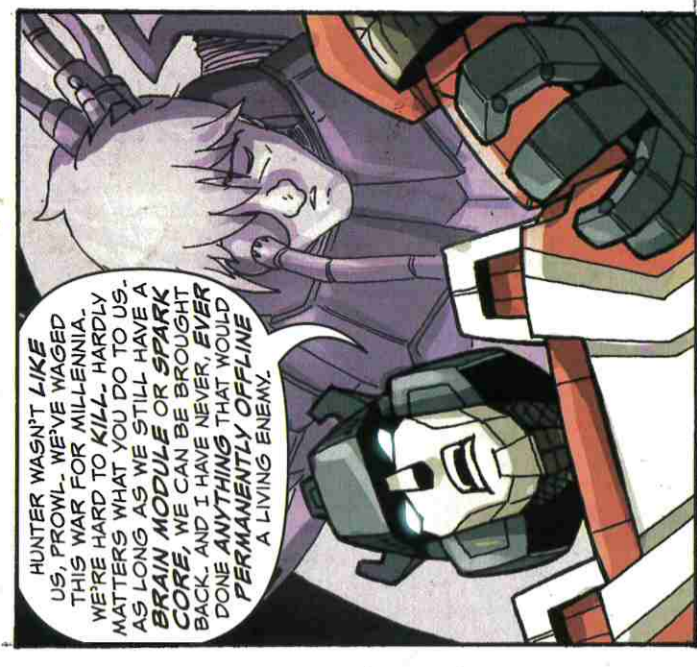
OKAY, HE HAD IT COMING. IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT ME TO SAY? HE DESERVED EVERYTHING HE GOT, AND THEN SOME.



EXPLAIN THIS TO ME: YOU AND HUNTER BARELY EVEN MET, AND RATCHET HAD SUCCESSFULLY REMOVED ANY CONNECTION HE ONCE HAD TO SUN--

BECAUSE HE MADE ME A MURDERER!

BAM!



HUNTER WASN'T LIKE US, PROWL. WE'VE WAGED THIS WAR FOR MILLENNIA. WE'RE HARD TO KILL, HARDLY MATTERS WHAT YOU DO TO US. AS LONG AS WE STILL HAVE A BRAIN MODULE OR SPARK CORE, WE CAN BE BROUGHT BACK. AND I HAVE NEVER, EVER DONE ANYTHING THAT WOULD PERMANENTLY OFFLINE A LIVING ENEMY.

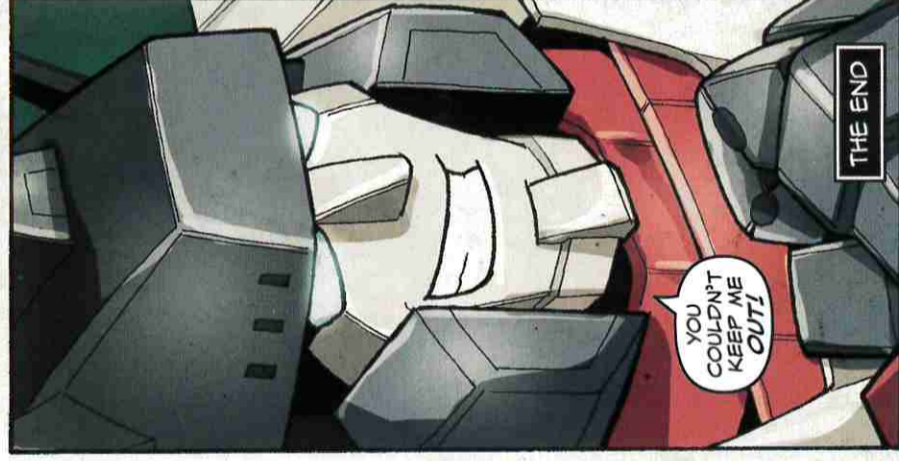
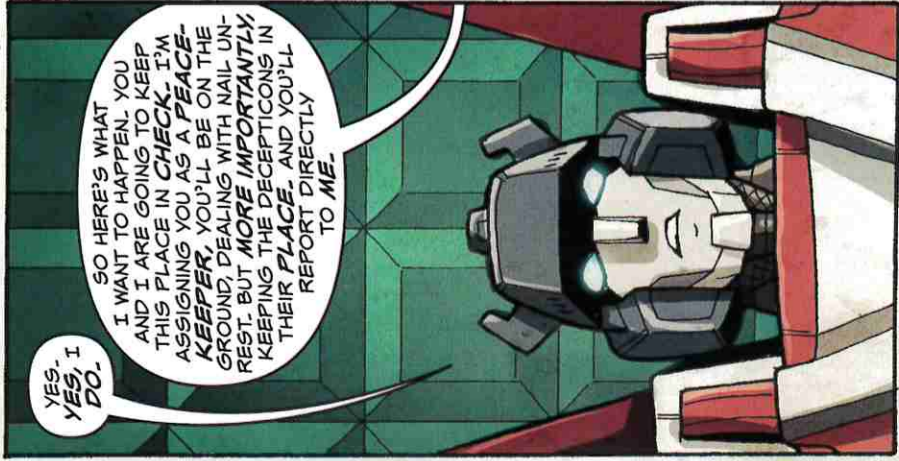
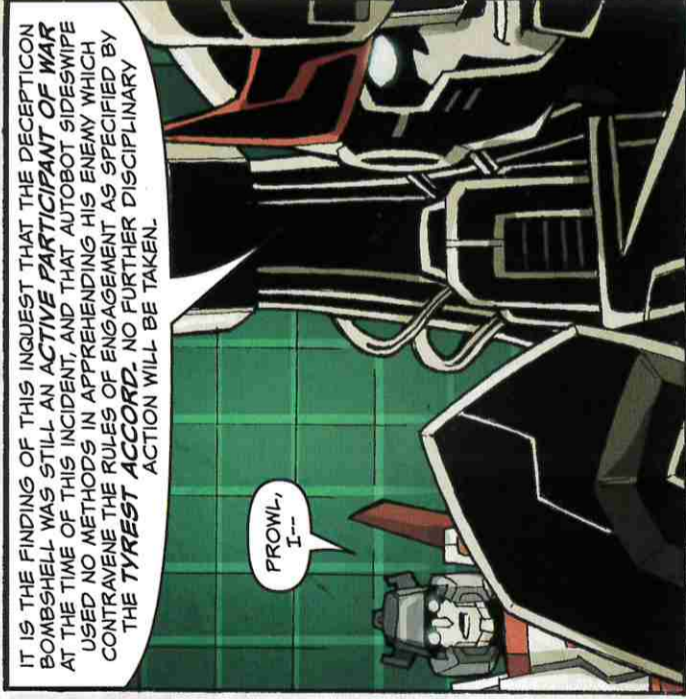
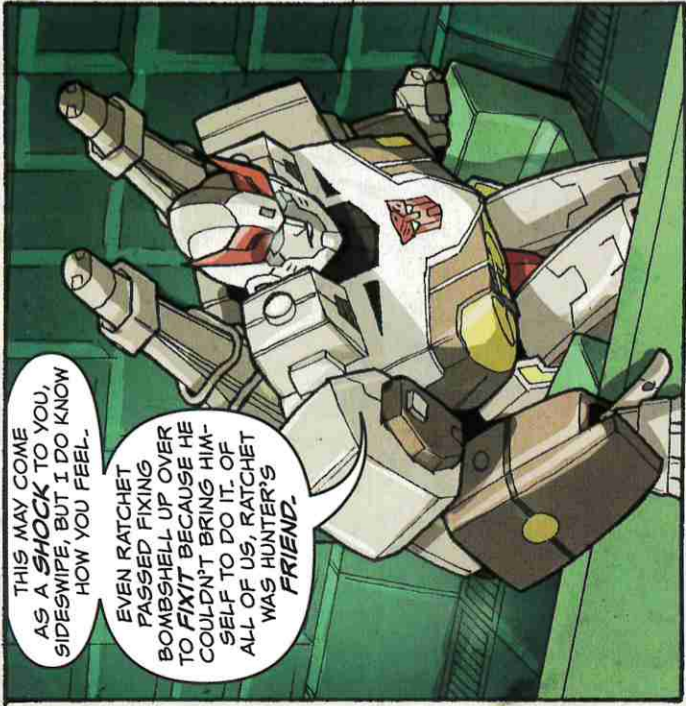


"BUT HUMANS CAN BE KILLED BY ANY OF A MILLION THINGS THAT WE WOULDN'T EVEN THINK ABOUT. AND DESPITE THIS, THROUGH ALL THE THINGS THAT SICK DEFECT DID TO HIM, BOMBHELL MADE SURE THAT HUNTER STAYED ALIVE. MADE CERTAIN HE'D SUFFER."

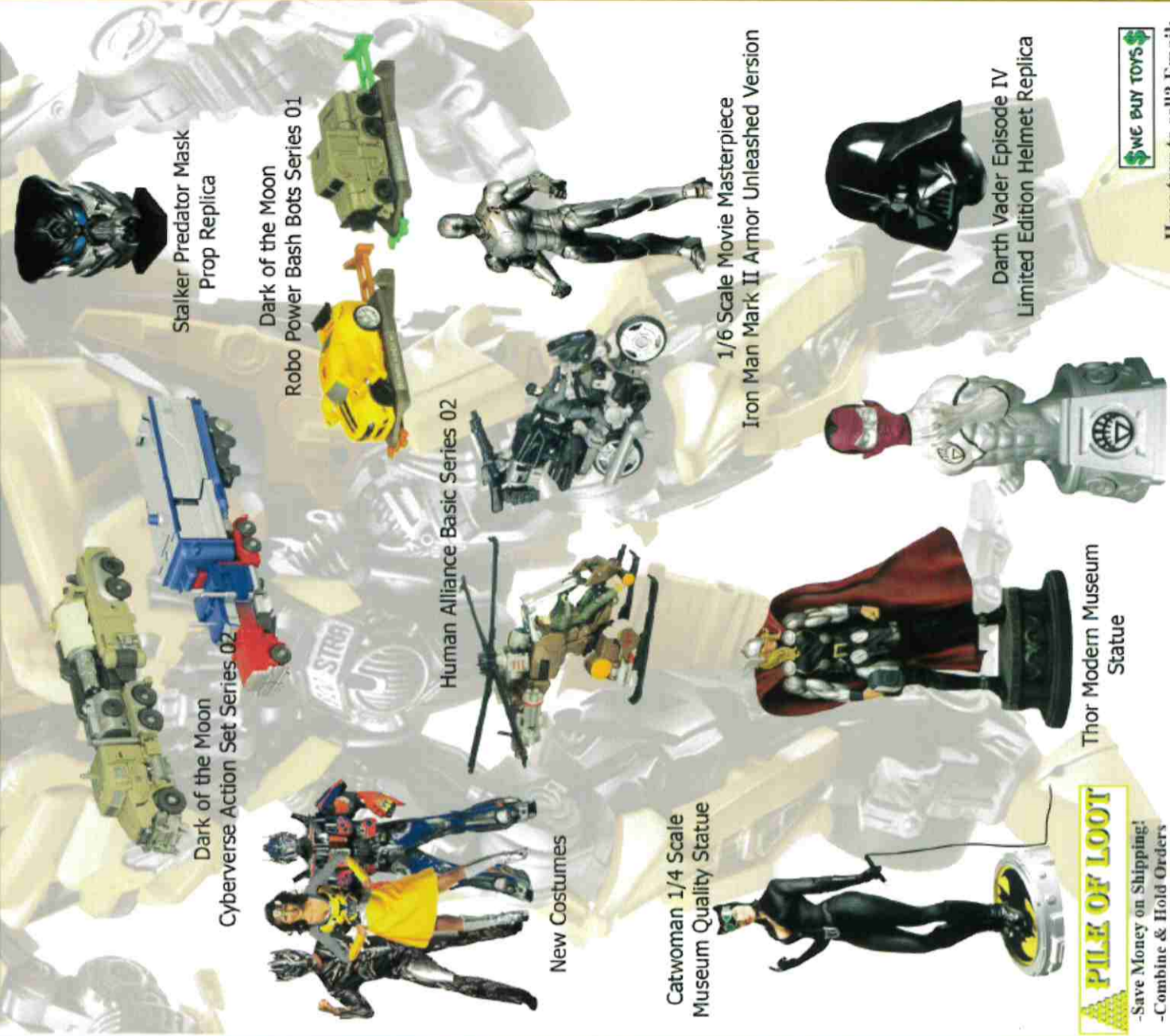
"SO, YEAH. THERE WERE NO TECHNO-VINES."

"I GOT THE DROP ON THAT TWISTED FREAK, AND I ACTIVATED MY PILE DRIVERS, AND I WAILED ON HIM UNTIL HE WAS AS MANGLED AS AND AS BROKEN AS HUNTER WAS WHEN I HAD TO END HIS LIFE."

"HAPPY?"



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RESTRICTED SECURITY CLEARANCE

BINARY BONDING - the interface between organic life and non-biological extra-terrestrial mechaforms.

Dr H. Meadow
Archivist

Exo-Anomalies Research Division
United Solar Security

Intelligence and Information Institute Eyes Only.

Introduction

Binary bonding is the name given to a technological process that merges an organic being with a Cybertronian. This can occur in a variety of different manners, each offering their own benefits and dangers to both partners involved.

Binary bonding has at times been considered necessary for a range of reasons including both diplomatic and military expediency. The process itself was developed under morally ambiguous circumstances and was ultimately rushed into use without full testing as a short-term solution to an immediate problem. The longer term consequences of the technology were unconsidered at the time and ultimately lead to the abandonment of the technology.

History

Although the first systematic application of binary bonding occurred on the planet Nebulos, the precursors to the technology were noted prior on the planet Earth.

The Autobot scientist Brainstorm led a small exploratory team to this world and performed numerous experiments on the native organic life - then a novelty for homeworld Cybertronians. They were aided in this by the human governmental organisation the Intelligence and Information Institute (III). In exchange for advanced Autobot weapons and technology III supplied a study stream of human subjects for the Autobots to study. Increasingly over time Brainstorm's experiments focused on creating hybrids between humans and Cybertronians to be used as a military advantage back on the homeworld.

Early prototypes of merged organic physiology and Cybertronian technology resulted in enhanced humans such as Circuit Breaker. This particular individual used her new powers to capture Earth-bound Cybertronians who were then 'enlisted' into Brainstorm's various experiments. Unfortunately the process came at high price as the mental stability of these early test human test subjects soon broke down. In the case of Circuit Breaker this was somewhat offset due to her direct mental merging with a hastily assembled mechaform constructed from parts of the super-warrior Superior - himself a mental amalgam of five individual Autobots.

Brainstorm and his team left Earth returning to Cybertron and eventually found themselves colonising the planet Nebulos. Their recent Earth experiments bore immediate fruit as they adapted to their new home.

Circumstances conspired against Brainstorm forcing him to reveal the true extent of his experiments to his commander, Fortress Maximus. While concealing their suspect origin Maximus offered them to the Nebulans as a way to combat a Decepticon battle unit recently arrived on the planet under the command of the war lord Scorponok.

With the aid of Arcana, a Nebulan techno-terrorist, some of the immediate imperfections and flaws in the process were rapidly ironed out. Five Nebulans then rapidly underwent cybernetic alteration that prepared them not only to physically merge with a Cybertronian, but mentally as well. Their bodies were upgraded using prototype micro-master armour and transformation architecture allowing a more battle ready and cosmetically pleasing format to the merge.

The merged combination of Nebulan and Cybertronian proved itself beyond expectation in combat, with the participants now out-performing their opponents by several orders of magnitude. With the battle won and the Decepticons in full retreat the Nebulans returned to a rapturous welcome from their fellow citizens.

Although the success of the binary bonding procedure continued to pay dividends in terms of military prowess it increasingly proved divisive and ultimately poisonous to Nebulan society. The Five were initially hailed as heroes, but opinion rapidly turned to suspicion and distrust. It became clear that their priorities, methods and agendas had been altered by the mental merge with their Autobot partners.

While struggling to comprehend their own changes they were confronted with the presentation of binary bonded Decepticons. The Decepticons out of a sense of desperation hastily duplicated the process as best they could regardless of the dangers they already saw emerging. With so-called Headmasters now operating on both sides of an escalating conflict it was the planet and its native inhabitants who were now paying the price as their cities and cultural monuments became war zones.

In an effort to limit the mental difficulties within the Headmaster process binary binding technology was repurposed to make use of Cybertronian weapons instead of individuals themselves. Although the resultant Targetmaster

partnerships were less beneficial in terms of combat upgrades, ultimately they proved the more successful and long-term partnership due to the purposeful distancing of full mental amalgamation involved.

As the war on Nebulos continued it became obvious to non-participants that the technology was now out of control and the individuals involved beyond hope of recovery. The converted Nebulans themselves eventually came to realise this as well. Using their new positions of authority within the ranks of both Autobots and Decepticons they ordered their respective armies away from Nebulos and towards Earth.

En route the potential to augment all warriors on both sides was considered by both Autobot and Decepticons. Negotiations between the two sides concluded that due to the hazardous nature of the resultant merges there would be no further binary bonded creations for either side on the new world.

However, much to the surprise of the Decepticons, the Autobots violated this agreement within days of arriving at Earth when Fortress Maximus bonded with a Earth native after his Nebulan companion expired. Under the terms of their new treaty the Autobots were forced to transfer much of their reserves of energy and materials to the Decepticons as an act of recompense. This left the Decepticons flush with resources for operations and new technology development. During this time Maximus' Autobots were barely able to deploy combat units, severely affecting many of their early operations on Earth.

Meanwhile on Cybertron the unauthorised disappearance of Scorponok's battle unit had not gone unnoticed and two further Decepticons were sent to Nebulos to demand answers. Arriving at the planet after Scorponok had departed, Darkwing and Dreadwind sought to extract information from the planets political leaders.

Unfortunately for them the intervening time between encounters had given the nominally peaceful Nebulans time to activate a planet wide strategy designed to eliminate Transformers. A two-pronged approach not only negated the usefulness of non-renewable energy sources on the planet, but also replaced previous energy sources with a new type of fuel that the Nebulans called 'Nucleon' – a fuel that was designed to be toxic to Cybertronian circuitry. At the same time it allowed the ruling Council of Peers to contain a growing undercurrent of black market dealings in Transformer-derived technology, resolidifying their political power.

One of the scientists behind Nucleon was also involved in the illicit supply of Transformer technology. He used the Nebulans new found complacency to attempt to seize new technology from the now energy drained Decepticons. Stealing miniature Nucleon reactor chambers he reengineered both his own and a criminal partner's bodies. Integrating the reactors into their exo-skeletal structures, they could binary bond with the Decepticons, supplying them with filtered Nucleon energy and boosting their power levels far beyond their original limits.

Eventually a small squadron of Autobots returned to the planet on an unconnected mission. After undergoing the new Powermaster binary bonding process themselves they drove the Decepticons off-world with the aid of newly constructed copy of the legendary Autobot leader Optimus Prime.

Gradually over time the Nebulans who were bonded to the various Transformers died either in battle or from the effects of binary bonding itself, leaving only a handful left.

One of these, Hi Q, mentally merged with the Optimus Prime copy and subsequently outlived Prime – the only recorded example of a Nebulan surviving the destruction of a companion Transformer. This resultant being was physically recast into another copy of Optimus Prime by the Last Autobot in a process that apparently eliminated the last traces of Hi Q himself.

The last confirmed appearance of a binary bonded Nebulan was shortly after the discovery of the Cybertronian Empire at the end of the 20th century. While the Empire was invading Cybertron the Autobots were attempting to negotiate peace with the Star Formers, one of the many Empire sects. In a desperate ploy to convince the Star Formers of the worth of organic life the Autobot Chromedome converted his head back into Staylor - its Nebulan form. Although the Star Formers and their Leige Centuro Thunderclash were delighted with this demonstration they remained unconvinced of the worth of organics and under new orders from the Leige Maximio, Chromedome and his Obliterator companion Pyro were taken into custody. Chromedome (and Staylor's) fate remain unknown.

Records of binary bonded partners beyond this date are sketchy, but what is clear is that they were mostly a regretted anomaly within 30 years of their initial creation.

Technology

• Headmasters

A Headmaster is the result of a physical and mental amalgam of both an organic partner and a Cybertronian. Distinctive benefits of the Headmaster process derive from the increased capacity and range of cognitive abilities in the resulting entity.

The calculating, systematic processes of the technological brain are enhanced with the intuitive, top-down information filtering capabilities of the organic mind. This dramatically increases battlefield performance and insight off the battlefield. The process also allows the created entity to draw on the rich and diverse life experiences and histories of two unique beings.

The merging of the two into one so completely is however the most volatile and unpredictable of all binary bonding formats. Headmaster mental merges are rarely total and often unsustainable. The two minds can fail to fall into line with each other resulting in debilitating internal mental conflicts. Factors affecting the success of the merge include the psychological background and mindsets of participants. However even the worst of partnerships has been known to function at levels above and beyond those of the individual when under high pressure or faced with a shared singular priority such as in battle. Some partnerships can eventually deliberately forego a full mental merge and instead find a working balance between the two distinct minds now sharing the same head.

Tragically cases of persistent mental discontinuity in Headmasters can only be solved by the eventual dominance of one mind over the other (usually the Cybertronian over the organic) resulting in the effective mental death of the other partner as the survivor continues to reap the benefits of the partnership.

• Targetmasters

In the Targetmaster partnership the organic partner forms a processing core within the operational system of a Cybertronian weapon system.

The organic is able to make use of more intuitive understandings of the weapon's systems in order to optimise and calibrate weapon energy usage and cooling systems. This enables heavy weapons to be constructed on a much smaller scale than normal and with increased performance reliability.

In addition the organic core enhances the Cybertronian partner's own abilities in target selection and tracking. The resulting combination of computerised and organic weapon aiming boosts a Targetmaster's accuracy far beyond the level of a standard soldier.

This increase in accuracy combined with a heavy weapon ensures that Targetmasters are notorious and feared on the battlefield. The nature of the non-direct system interface of this binary bonding type also means that Targetmasters are not limited to a single partner, allowing combinations of multiple weapon systems to be deployed on a single Targetmaster platform.

Although usually carried by hand it is also possible to mount Targetmaster weapons onto hard points on the Cybertronian, typically in vehicle configurations. This increases weapon response times but sacrifices a degree of targeting flexibility.

• Powermasters

It is commonly assumed that Powermasters derive their energy directly from their cybernetically enhanced organic partners. This and other myths such as the inability to transform without their partners have been deliberate circulated by Powermasters in order to keep their true abilities shrouded in some level of secrecy.

In truth the organic partner is not an energy source in itself, but instead is an energy regulator and purifier for the Cybertronian partner. The energy source that the Powermaster uses is derived from an array of compact nucleon power packs - typically carried on the back of the organic partner. The organic serves to regulate and distribute safely the otherwise toxic nucleon energy around the Cybertronian's energy distribution grid.

The technologically assisted rapid regeneration of organic body tissues allows much of the dangerous high energy radiation from nucleon to be safely removed from the fuel before it is injected into the Cybertronian. In Cybertronians where nucleon is used without the aid of binary bonding numerous side effects have been noted including the inhibition or alteration of critical circuitry, degradation of cognitive neuro-architecture and in some

cases death.

Long-term use of the Powermaster process is the most irreversible of all the binary bonding process to date. In its end stages it becomes dangerous and then impossible to separate the two partners. This is because each partner gradually infiltrates the vital systems of the other in a reaction catalysed by the nucleon energy being used. This occurs in all systems including the circuits and pathways of the brain, merging the two partners mentally often without recognition until the process has neared completion. For this reason it is strongly encouraged to maintain physical separation between Powermaster partners whenever the situation allows.

Unfortunately once initially bonded the Cybertronian is incapable of processing standard fuels such as energon or chemical-based substitutes resulting in continued use of the organic partner for survival.

The tactical advantages of nucleon powered troops ensures that Powermasters and their abilities are rarely far and never absent from the frontline of a Cybertronian army.

- **Godmasters**

Godmasters are a potential end result of the Powermaster process.

When Powermasters are near the final stage of merging they become totally co-dependent on each others vital systems for continued survival. If either partner is forcibly removed by chance or by combat from the other it results in the slow death of both. The organic typically dies from excess nucleon build up and the Cybertronian from increasing energy depletion and neural shock.

This process however leaves the technological components of both partners functional. In some cases it has been shown that a new compatible organic partner enhanced with the original organic partner's armour can successfully merge with and reactivate the Cybertronian's body, utilising the complementary bio-mechanical pathways set up in both bodies during the Powermaster merging process.

These reactivated Cybertronian's often exhibit miraculous-like displays of energy use and physical feats. In truth these are simply periods of hyper-nucleon fuelling courtesy of their organic partners who need not be concerned about damaging the host body's neural circuitry with overdoses of unmoderated nucleon energy. These 'zombie' Cybertronians are completely under the control of their Powermaster partners, exhibiting no life of their own or initially signs of their previous personalities.

Over time it has been noted that original the Cybertronian's personality traits do begin to emerge and it has been hypothesised that some form of full mental reactivation of the Cybertronian might be possible. In such cases it is thought that both partners may be able to separate permanently as the new organic component is used as a template by the Cybertronian's repair systems to adapt to the original Powermaster modifications and nucleon fuel source. Such Cybertronians would preserve their Powermaster nucleon enhanced powers with no side effects, but lose much of their hyper-nucleon Godmaster abilities.

Summary

Even if the events that expediate the integration of organics into Cybertronian hardware and systems are politically or socially advantageous they tend to only be short term gains.

The necessary augmentation of the organic partner tends to result in social and cultural isolation from their originating societies.

Forced or coerced participation of organics into this process has typically resulted in ill fitting partnerships, degraded benefits and mental instability for both partners. Attempts by organics to subvert or control Cybertronians via the binary bonding process have rarely been successful, resulting only in permanent mental corruption to the organic component. In the long term the partnership also typically becomes dominated by the Cybertronian component.

For these reasons and others binary bonding is recommended only as a method of last resource. Even then it should be limited to willing participants on both sides. Efforts should also be undertaken to physically part participants at regular intervals whenever possible.

ARTICLE WRITTEN BY GAVIN MERRIFIELD.
LOOK FOR MORE OF THESE IN UPCOMING ISSUES OF CT-ALPHA.



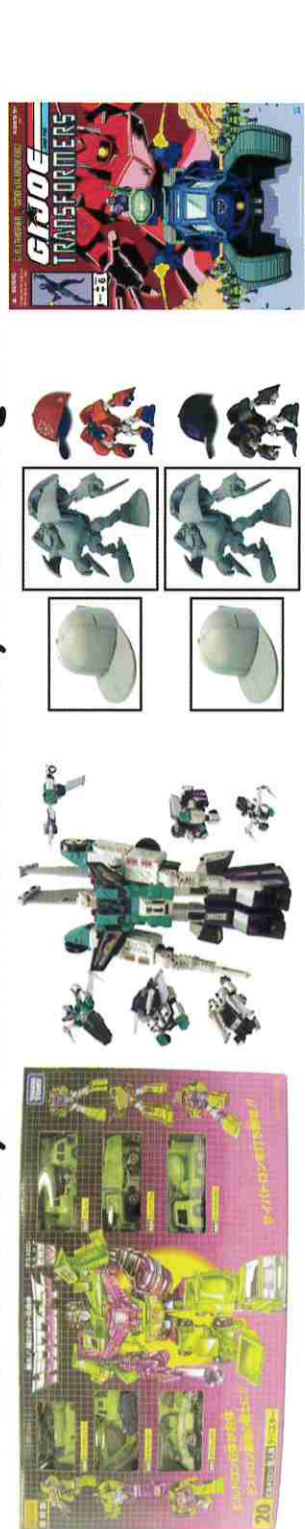
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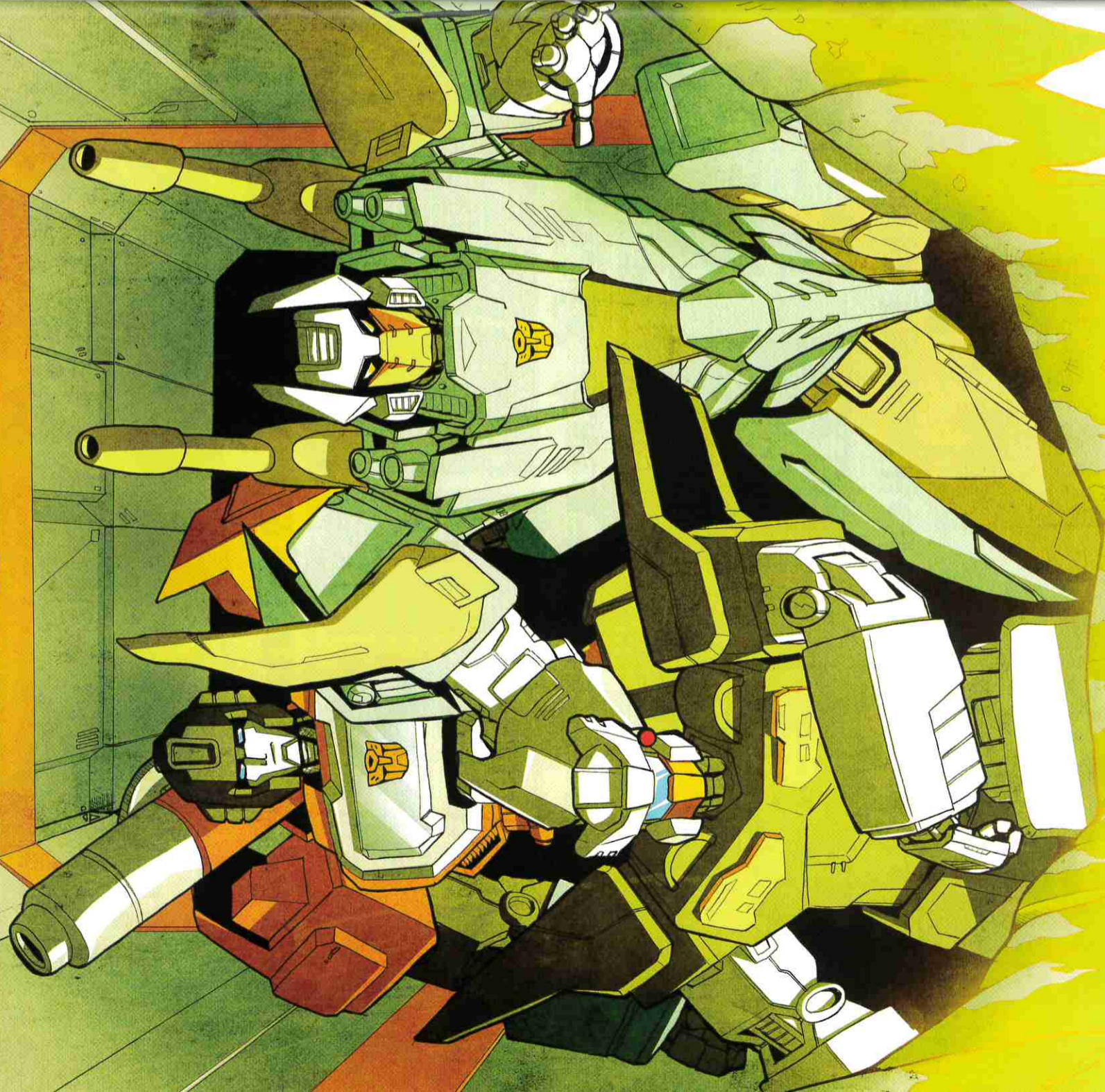


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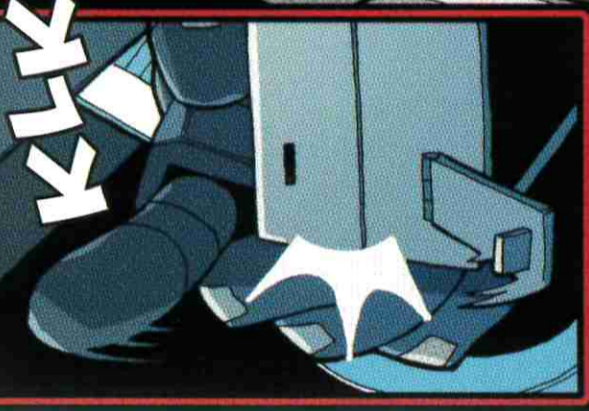
BEN & ED PIRRIE, LIAM SHALLOO, AND HDE
PRESENT A TALE THAT'S

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE



OUTSHINED

Cover by GARETH WATSON and JOSH BURCHAM



KLK

IS THIS THING ON?

IT'S ALWAYS ON.

RIGHT. OF COURSE.

SO, I GUESS I'LL DO SOME KIND OF INTRODUCTION AND WE CAN EDIT IT LATER?

NO.

NO?

REC

NO EDITS. I RECORD FACT AND TRUTH AS IT HAPPENS, UNBIASED ARCHIVING OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION IN ITS PUREST FORM.

BUT WE AREN'T MAKING A HISTORICAL RECORD HERE. IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE MORE MAINSTREAM - ENTERTAINING! LIKE A BIO-PIC OR DOCU-DRAMA.

I DON'T CARE. NOBODY MESSSES WITH MY MASTERS.

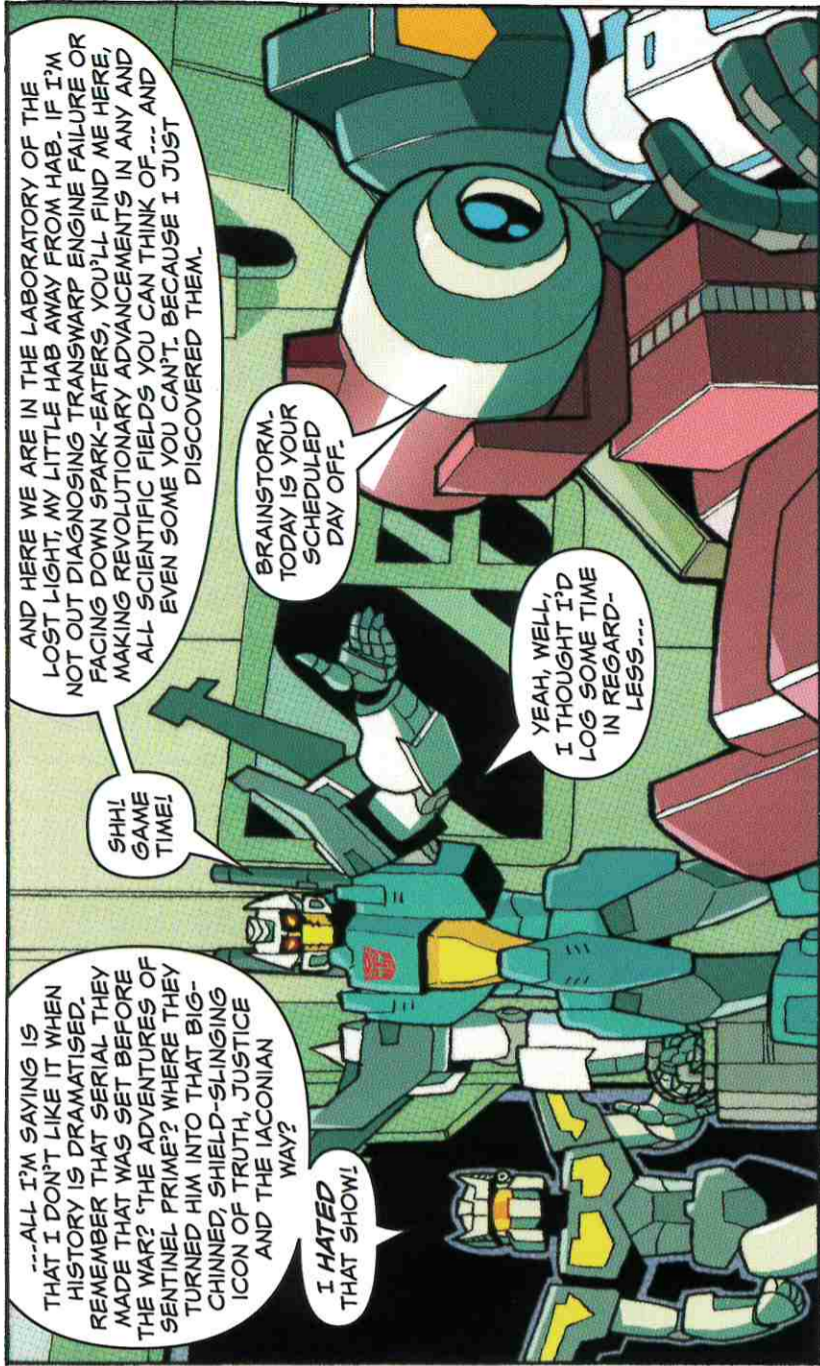
REC

OKAY, OKAY. CAN I AT LEAST GET COPIES TO EDIT FOR DISTRIBUTION?

THAT'S DO-ABLE.

OUTSTANDING.

AHEM.



---ALL I'M SAYING IS THAT I DON'T LIKE IT WHEN HISTORY IS DRAMATISED. REMEMBER THAT SERIAL THEY MADE THAT WAS SET BEFORE THE WAR? 'THE ADVENTURES OF SENTINEL PRIME'? WHERE THEY TURNED HIM INTO THAT BIG-CHINNED, SHIELD-SLINGING ICON OF TRUTH, JUSTICE AND THE IACONIAN WAY?

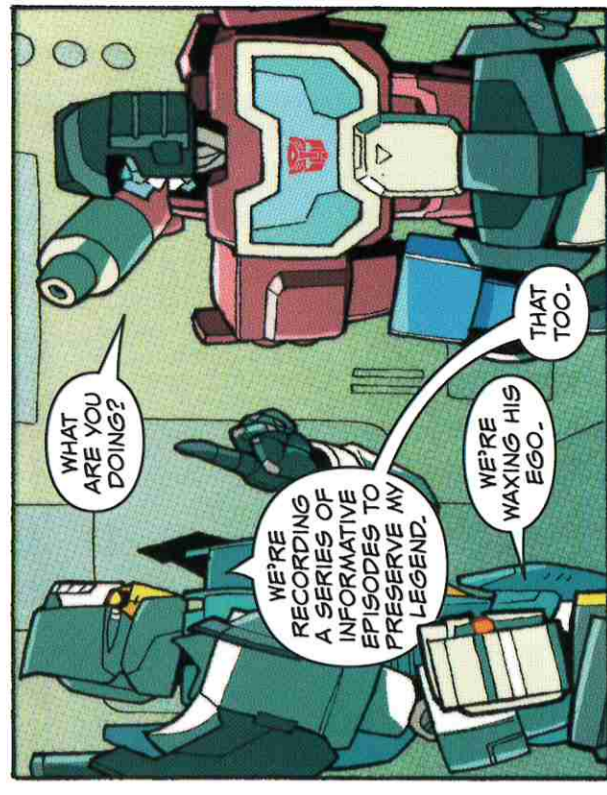
I HATED THAT SHOW!

SHH! GAME TIME!

AND HERE WE ARE IN THE LABORATORY OF THE LOST LIGHT, MY LITTLE HAB AWAY FROM HAB. IF I'M NOT OUT DIAGNOSING TRANSWARP ENGINE FAILURE OR FACING DOWN SPARK-EATERS, YOU'LL FIND ME HERE, MAKING REVOLUTIONARY ADVANCEMENTS IN ANY AND ALL SCIENTIFIC FIELDS YOU CAN THINK OF... AND EVEN SOME YOU CAN'T. BECAUSE I JUST DISCOVERED THEM.

BRAINSTORM, TODAY IS YOUR SCHEDULED DAY OFF.

YEAH, WELL, I THOUGHT I'D LOG SOME TIME IN REGARD-LESS...

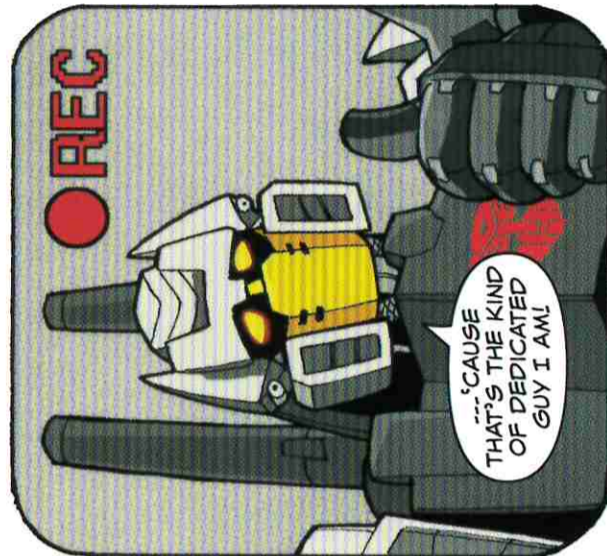


WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

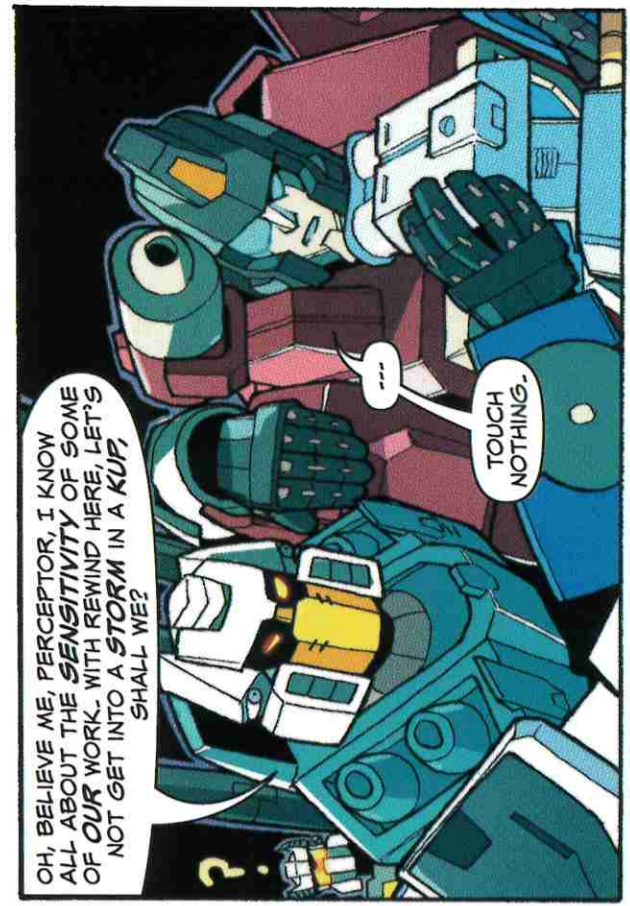
WE'RE RECORDING A SERIES OF INFORMATIVE EPISODES TO PRESERVE MY LEGEND.

WE'RE WAXING HIS EGO.

THAT TOO.



'---'CAUSE THAT'S THE KIND OF DEDICATED GUY I AM!

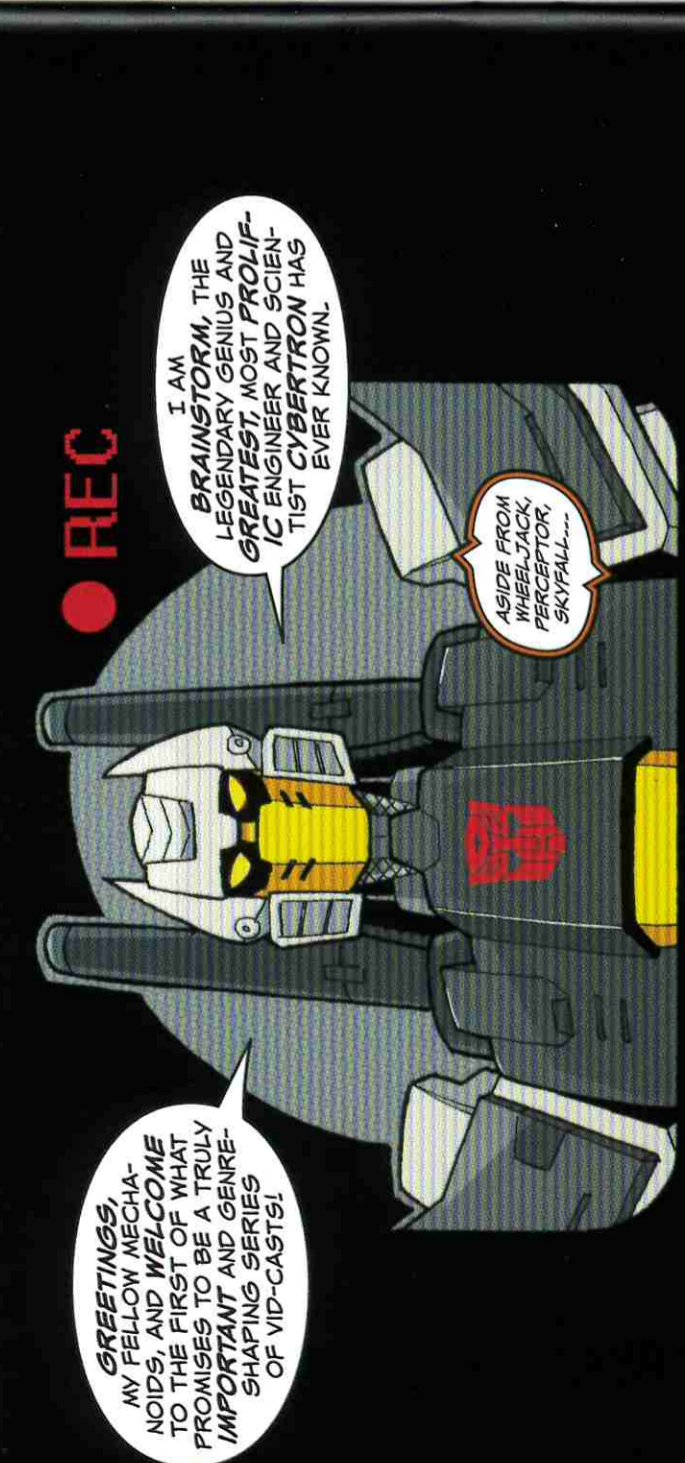


OH, BELIEVE ME, PERCEPTOR, I KNOW ALL ABOUT THE SENSITIVITY OF SOME OF OUR WORK. WITH REWIND HERE, LET'S NOT GET INTO A STORM IN A KUP? SHALL WE?

TOUCH NOTHING.



WELL, KINDLY DO IT ELSEWHERE. NOT BEING SCHEDULED IN THE LAB IS THE SAME AS BEING UN-AUTHORISED, DUE TO THE DELICATE NATURE OF SOME PROJECTS. YOU KNOW THAT.

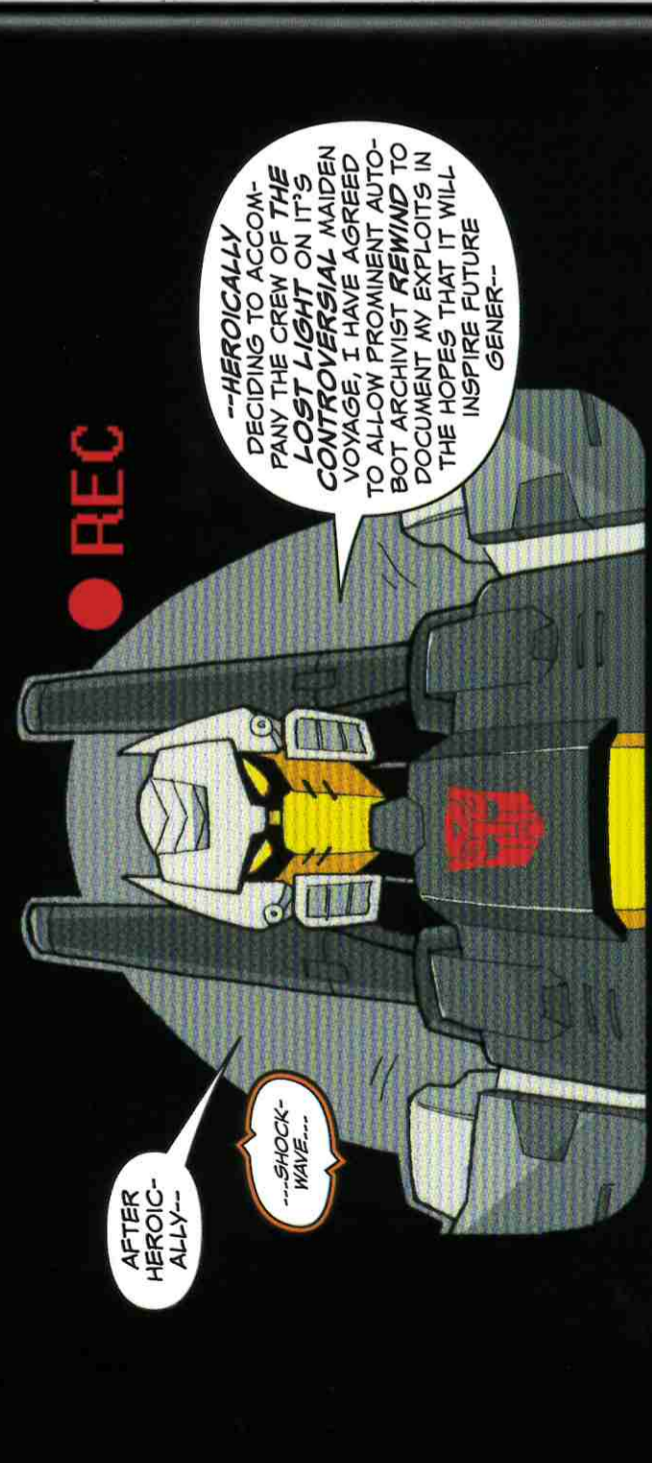


REC

GREETINGS, MY FELLOW MECHANIDS, AND WELCOME TO THE FIRST OF WHAT PROMISES TO BE A TRULY IMPORTANT AND GENRE-SHAPING SERIES OF VID-CASTS!

I AM BRAINSTORM, THE LEGENDARY GENIUS AND GREATEST, MOST PROLIF-IC ENGINEER AND SCIENTIST CYBERTRON HAS EVER KNOWN.

ASIDE FROM WHEELJACK, PERCEPTOR, SKYFALL...

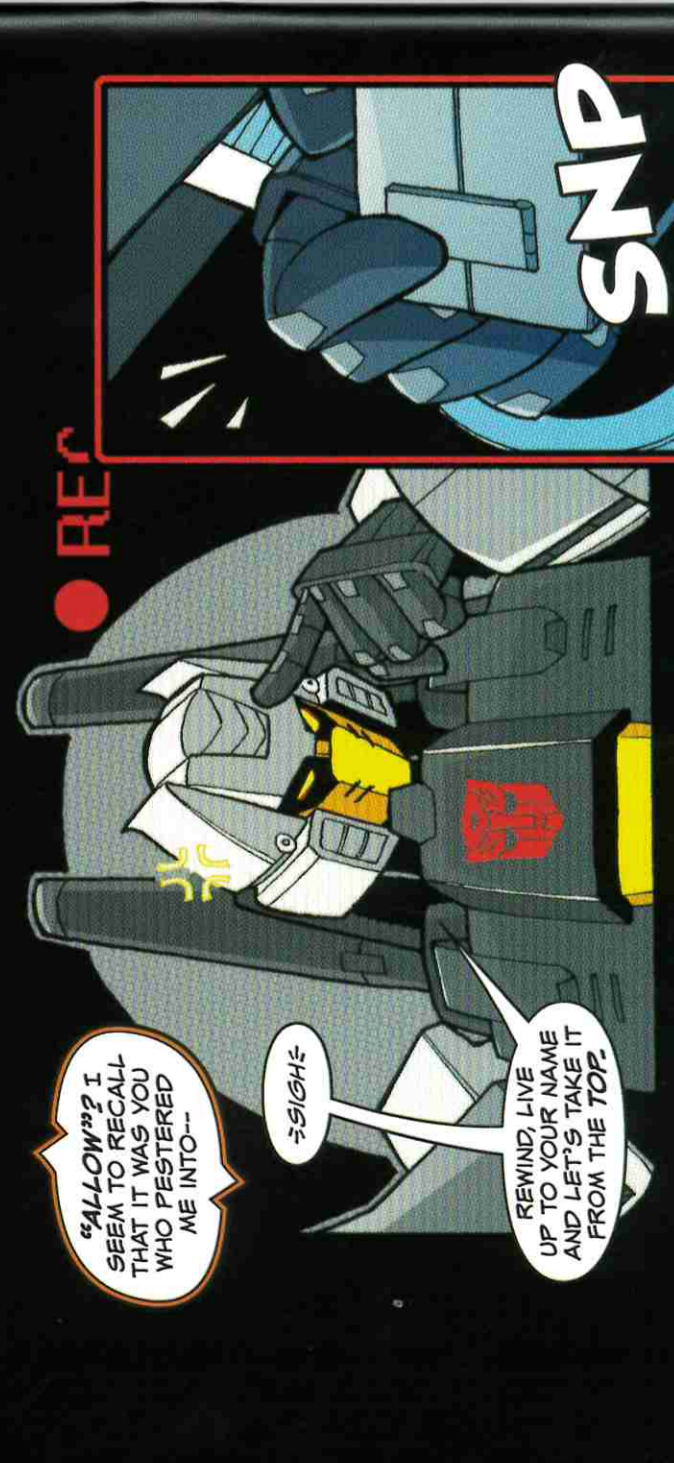


REC

AFTER HEROIC-ALLY---

---SHOCK-WAVE---

--HEROICALLY DECIDING TO ACCOMPANY THE CREW OF THE LOST LIGHT ON IT'S CONTROVERSIAL MAIDEN VOYAGE, I HAVE AGREED TO ALLOW PROMINENT AUTOBOT ARCHIVIST REWIND TO DOCUMENT MY EXPLOITS IN THE HOPES THAT IT WILL INSPIRE FUTURE GENER--

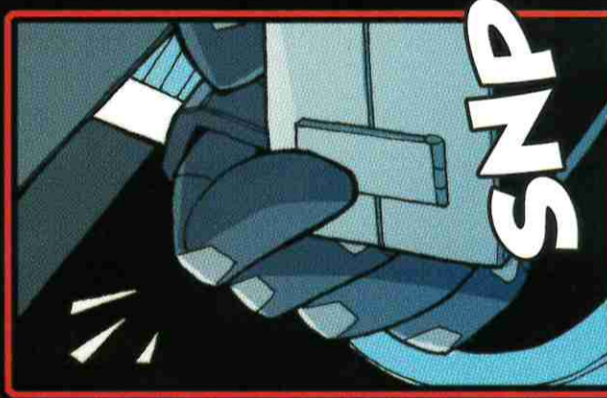


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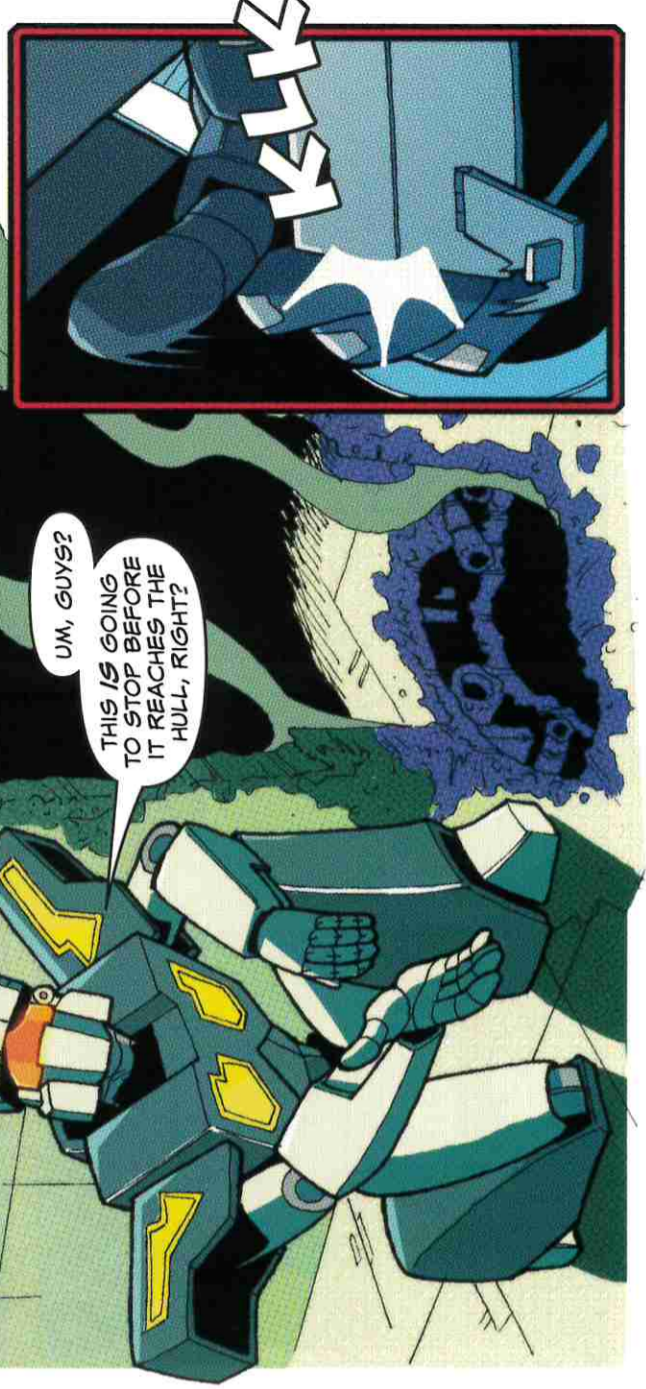
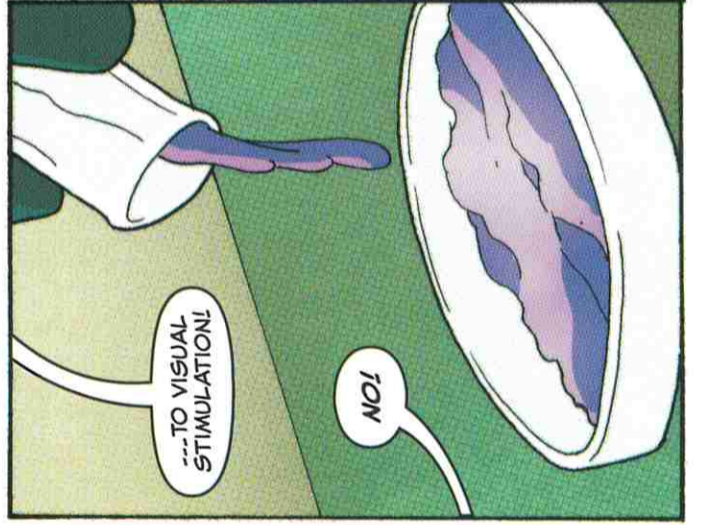
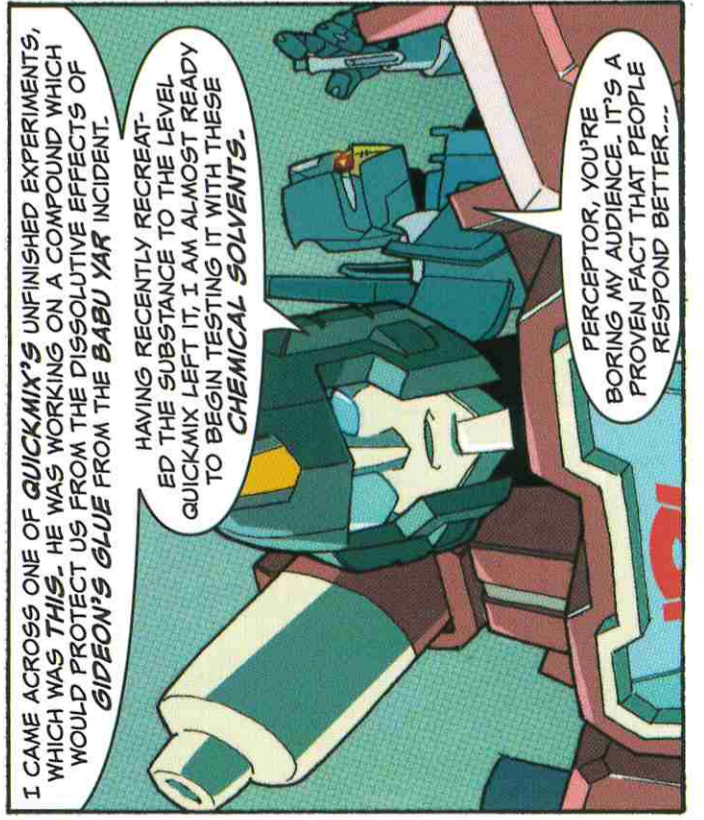
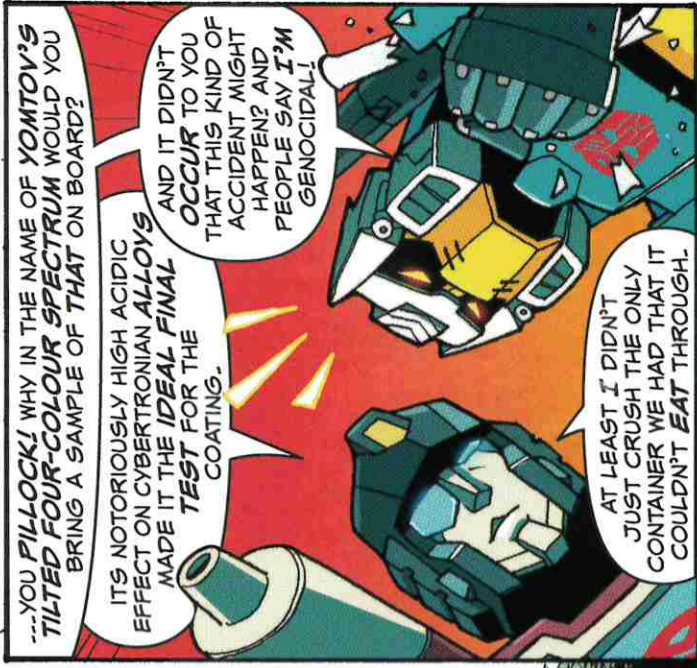
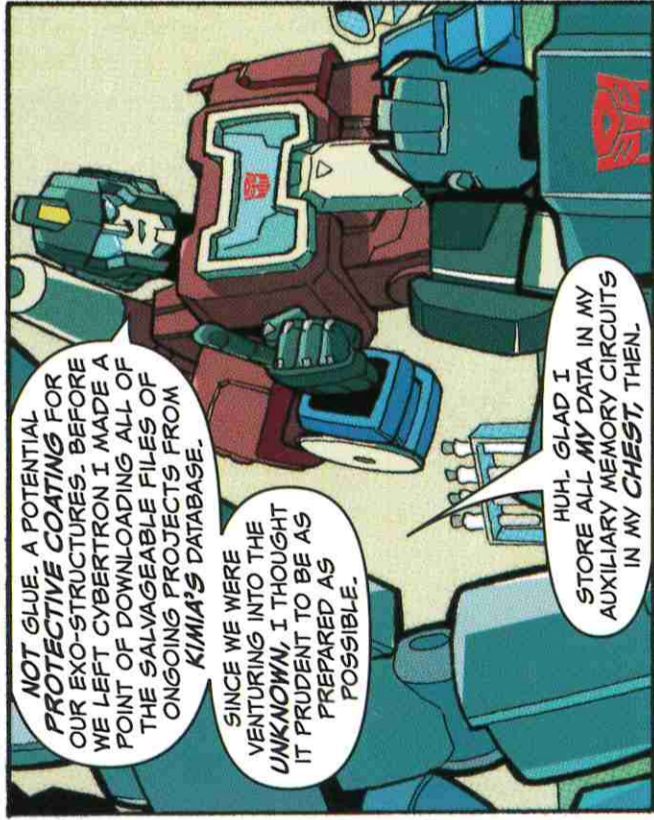
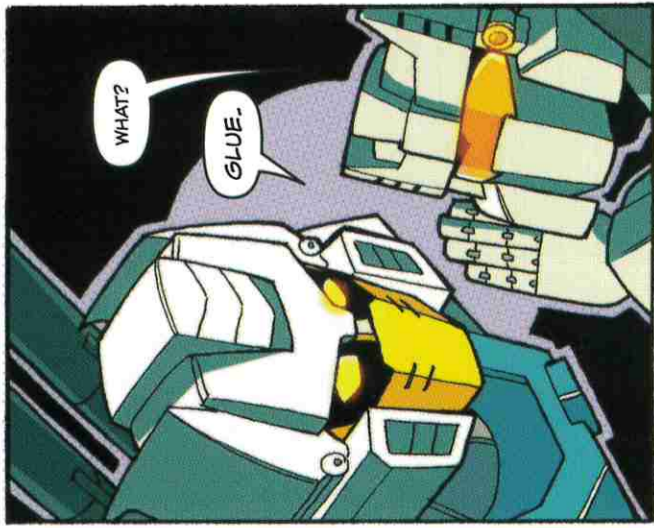
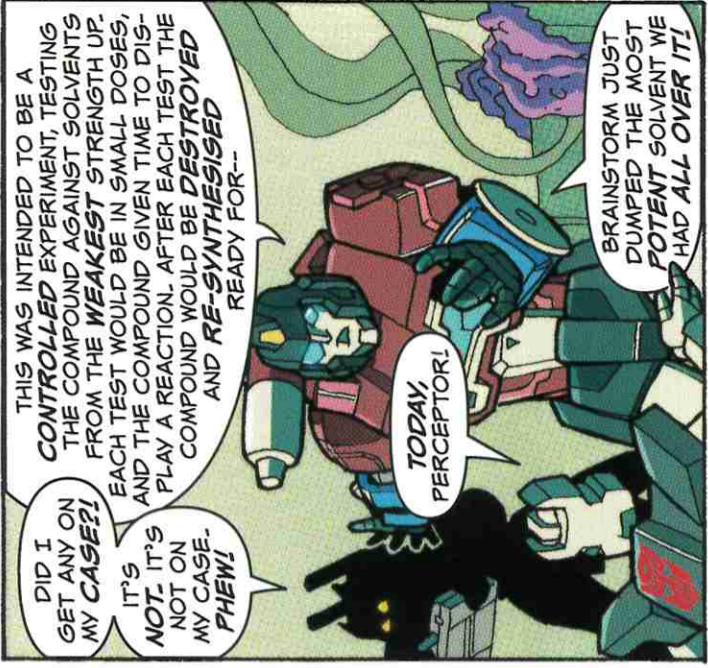
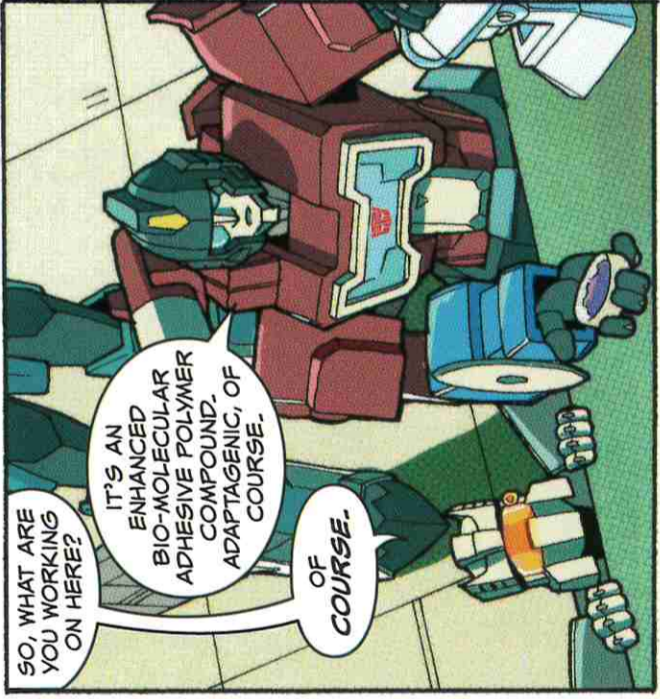
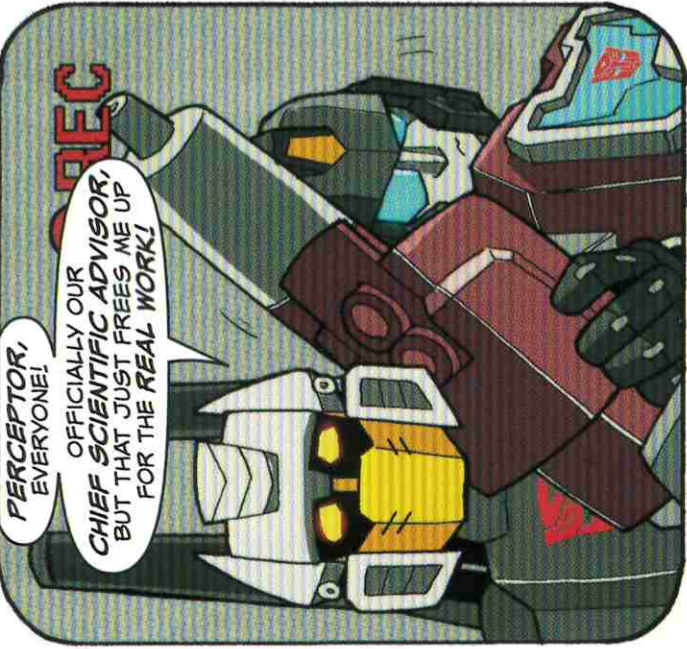
"ALLOW?? I SEEM TO RECALL THAT IT WAS YOU WHO PESTERED ME INTO--"

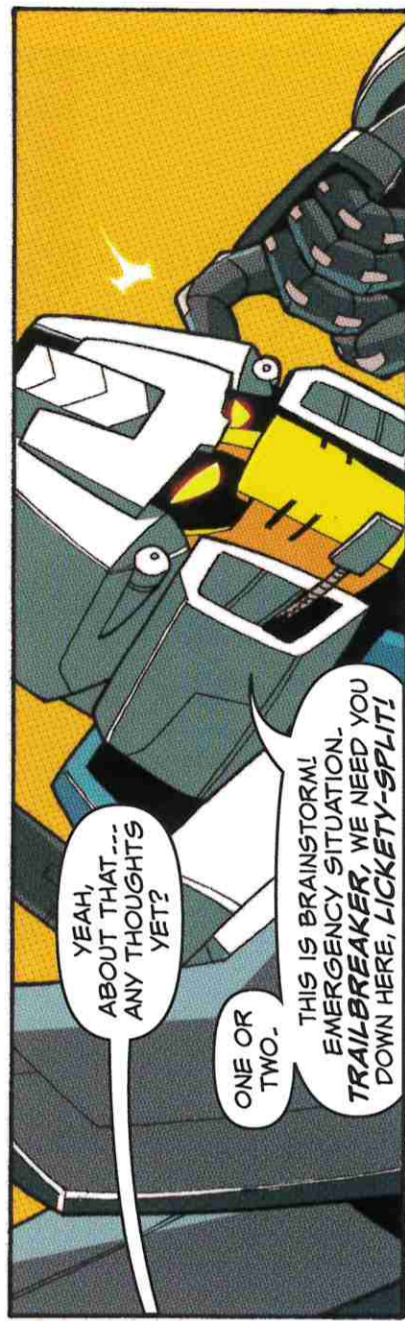
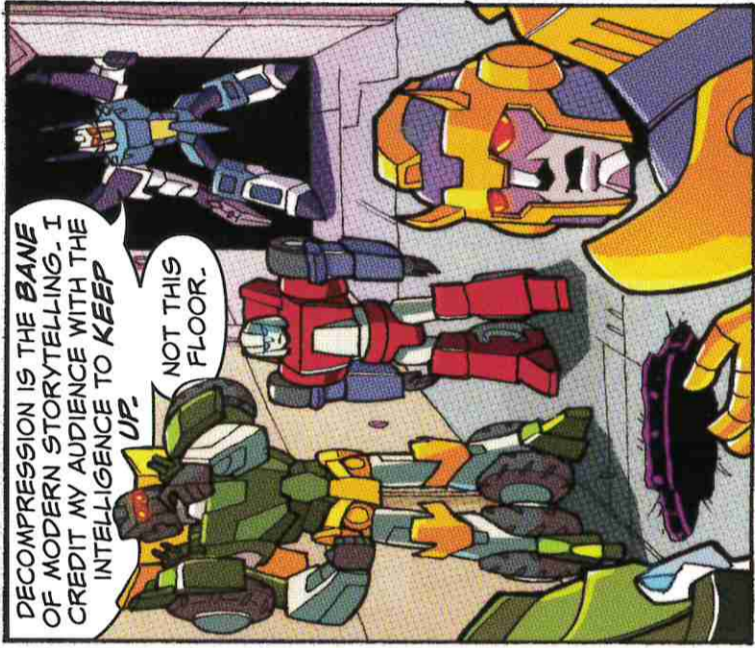
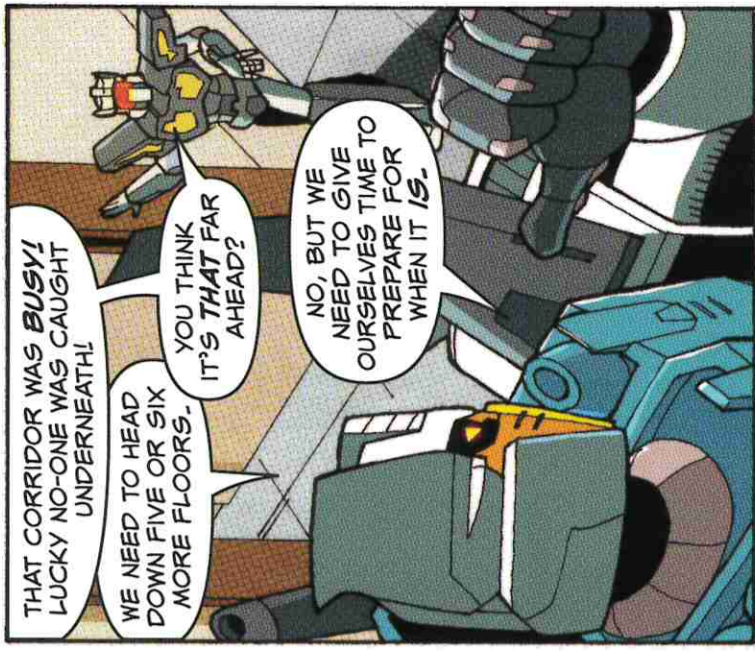
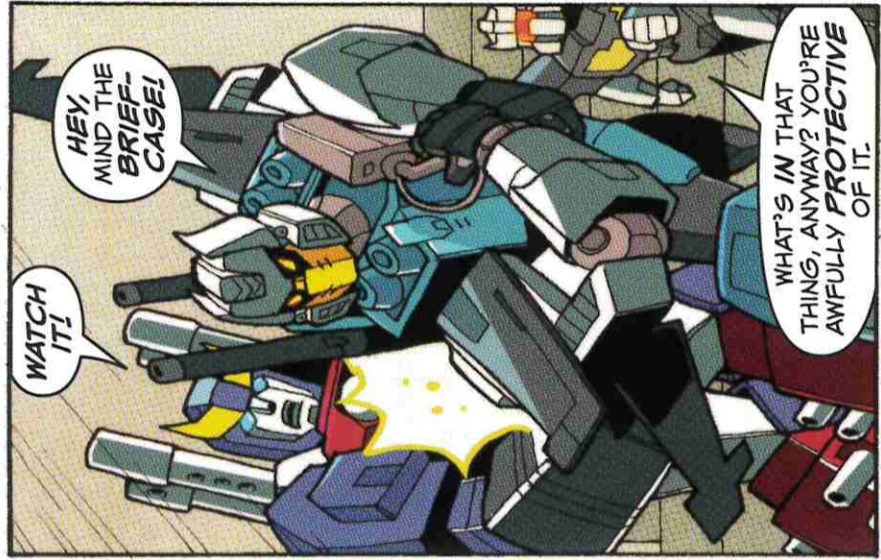
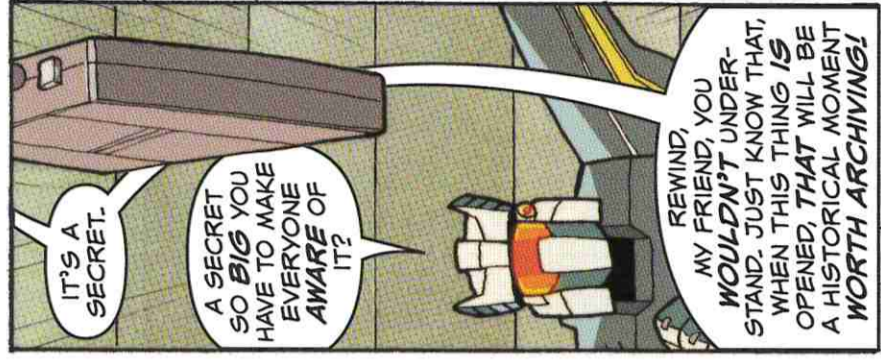
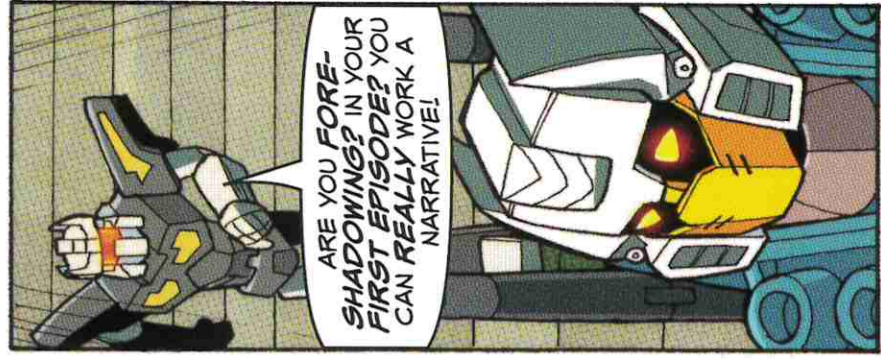
-SIGH-

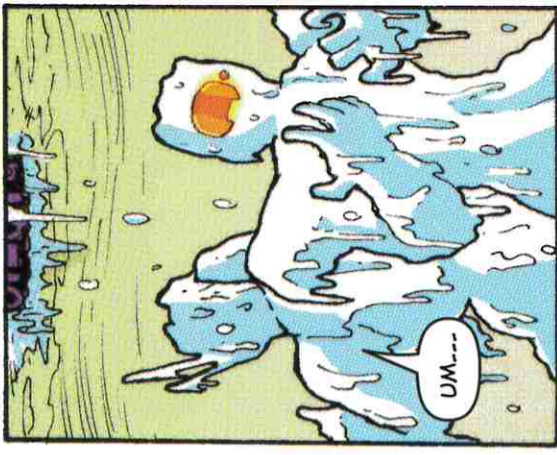
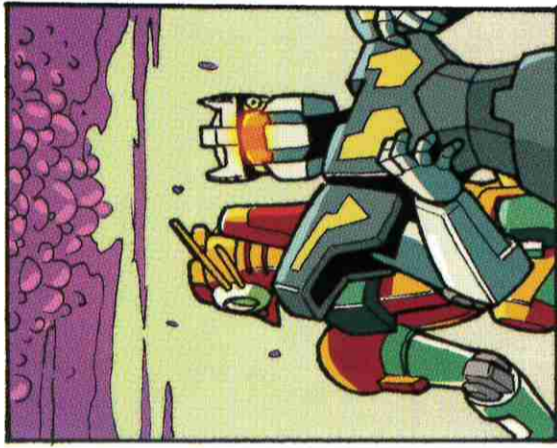
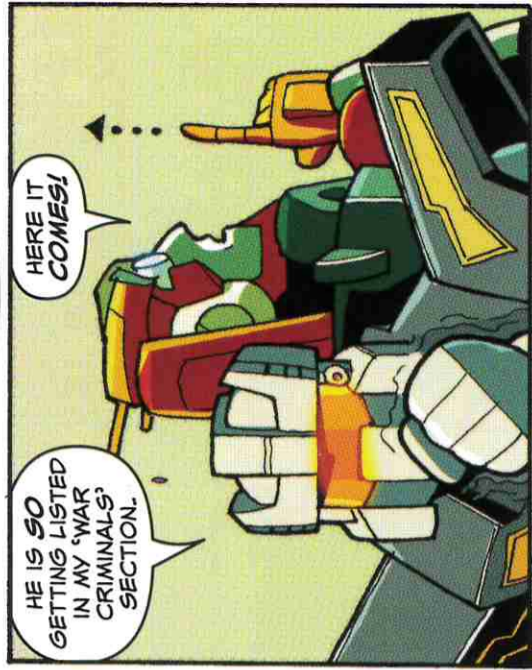
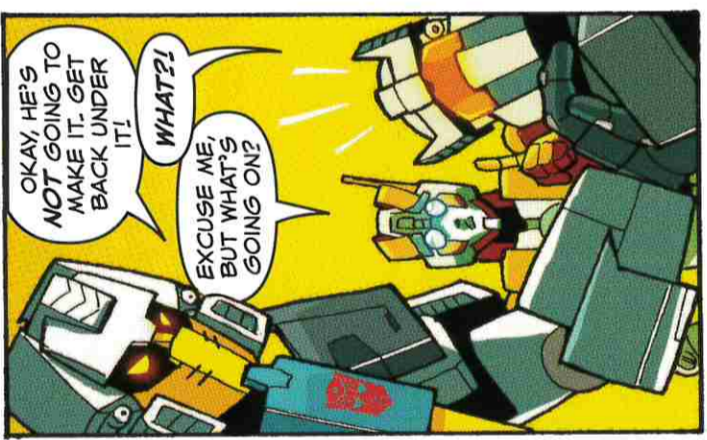
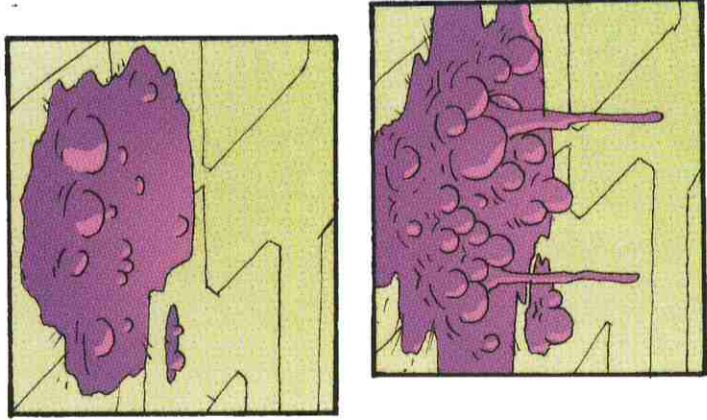
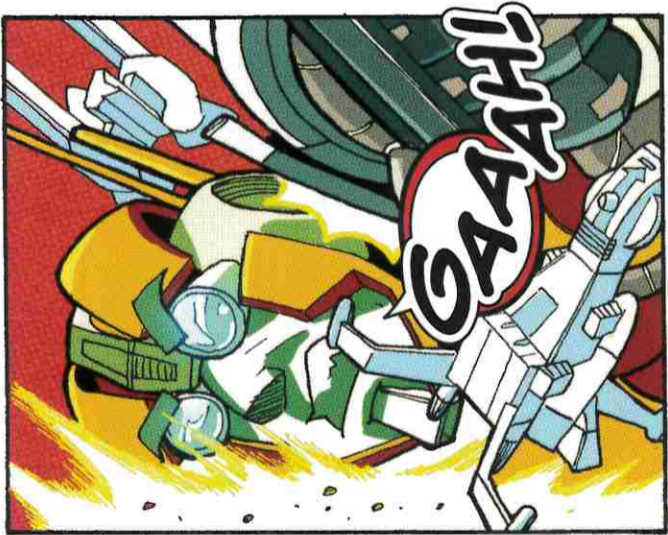
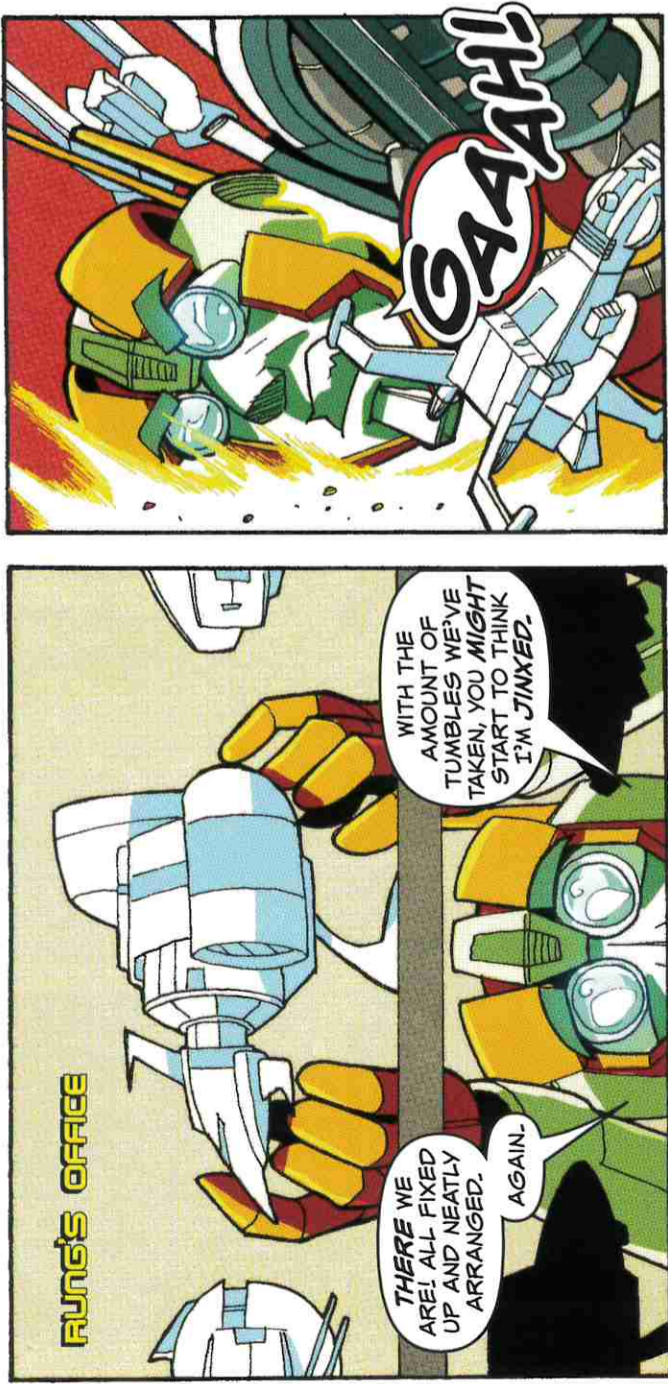
REWIND, LIVE UP TO YOUR NAME AND LET'S TAKE IT FROM THE TOP.



SNP







PERHAPS I MIGHT SHED SOME ILLUMINATION ON THIS HAPPENSTANCE.

PERCEPTOR?

"BASED ON THE TIME IT TAKES FOR THE WATER TO CORRODE EACH LAYER OF PLATING, I WAS ABLE TO MULTIPLY THIS BY THE NUMBER OF PLATES IN EACH DECK, TIMES THE NUMBER OF DECKS BETWEEN THE LAB AND THE OUTER HULL, AND CONCLUDE THAT I HAD NO LESS THAN SEVEN BREEMS TO PREVENT A BREACH.

"PLENTY OF TIME TO FORMULATE AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGEM.

"BEFORE YOU TWO HAD EVEN LEFT THE LAB I KNEW WHAT TO DO.

"I SYNTHESISED A NEW BATCH OF QUICKMIX'S COMPOUND AND CROSS-BLENDED IT WITH CERTAIN INGREDIENTS FROM WHEELJACK'S OLD ANTI-RUST AGENT, CORRO-STOP.

"AFTER TESTING IT ON A LEFT-OVER DROPLET IN THE LAB TO SATISFY RESULTS, ALL THAT WAS LEFT TO DO WAS TO DELIVER THE MIXTURE."

WELL, I HOPE YOU LEARNED YOUR LESSON.

I CERTAINLY HAVE. I HAVE LEARNED NOT TO LISTEN TO YOU.

YOU ENTERED THE LAB UNAUTHORISED. YOU INTERFERED WITH A HAZARDOUS EXPERIMENT OUTSIDE OF ITS CONTROLLED CONDITIONS. ALL IN THE NAME OF SHOW-BOATING.

BECAUSE OF OUR HISTORY, I WILL REPORT TO ULTRA MAGNUS THAT THIS WAS AN UNPREDICTED AND UNAVOIDABLE SIDE-EFFECT OF THE PROJECT...

...BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE, IF ANYTHING LIKE THIS HAPPENS AGAIN, I WILL NOT ONLY HAVE YOU BANNED FROM THE LAB, BUT I WILL DO MY UTMOST TO HAVE YOU BOOTED OFF THE SHIP.

"ANYTHING TO SAY TO YOUR ADORING FANS?"

QUITE THE FIRST EPISODE, HUH? IF NOTHING ELSE, THIS HAS PROVEN EXACTLY WHAT KIND OF LEGEND YOU ARE.

SNP

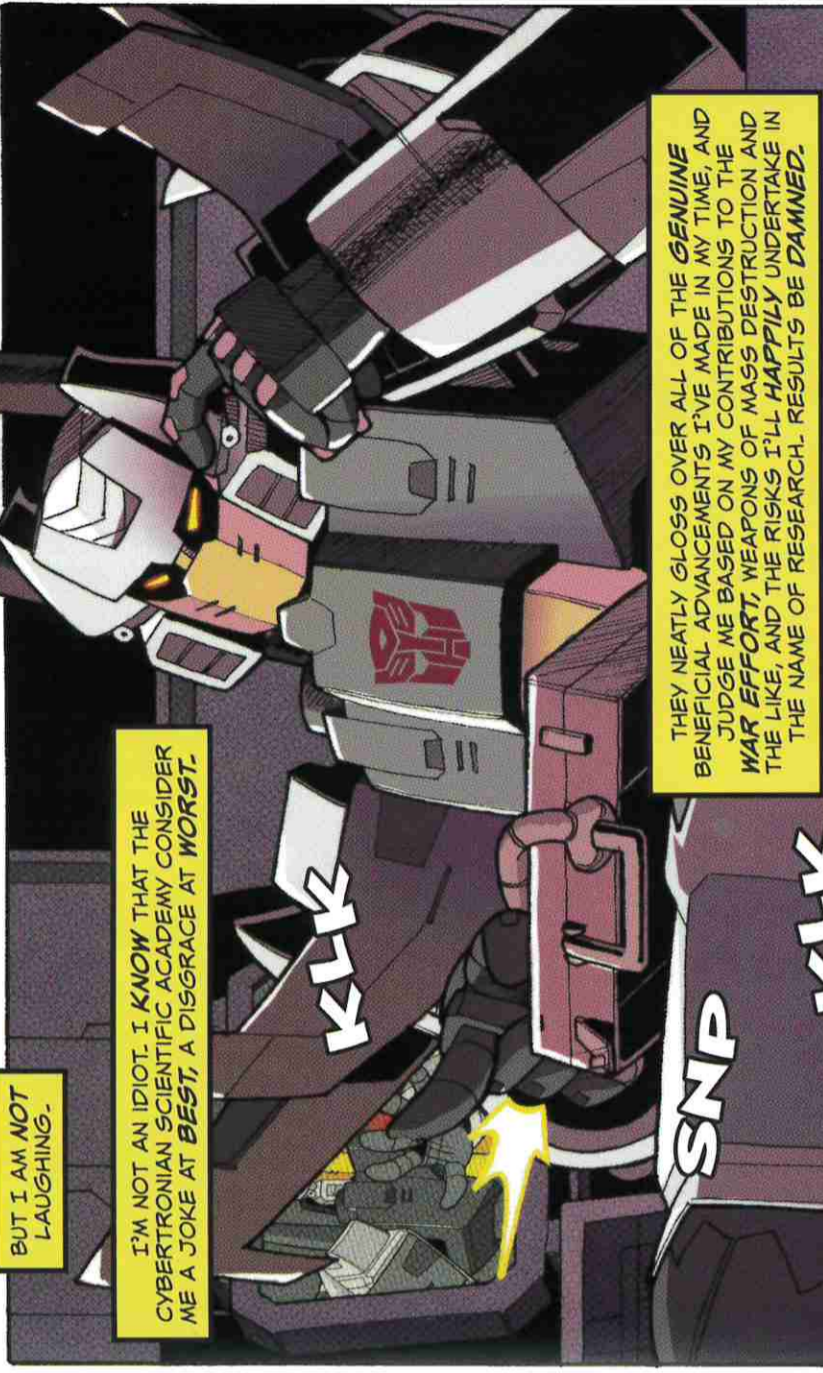


GET OUT OF MY FACE.

REWIND SENT ME THE UNEDITED COPY OF THOSE RECORDINGS AFTER ALL. OBVIOUSLY, AS A JOKE. HE'S TEASING ME.

BUT I AM NOT LAUGHING.

I'M NOT AN IDIOT. I KNOW THAT THE CYBERTRONIAN SCIENTIFIC ACADEMY CONSIDER ME A JOKE AT BEST, A DISGRACE AT WORST.



SNP

KLK

THEY NEATLY GLOSS OVER ALL OF THE GENUINE BENEFICIAL ADVANCEMENTS I'VE MADE IN MY TIME, AND JUDGE ME BASED ON MY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WAR EFFORT, WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION AND THE LIKE, AND THE RISKS I'LL HAPPILY UNDERTAKE IN THE NAME OF RESEARCH. RESULTS BE DAMNED.

AND DON'T GET ME STARTED ON THE ETHICS COMMITTEE!

LET THEM LAUGH. LET THEM JUDGE. AS A SMART 'BOT ONCE SAID, "TIME MAKES ALL THINGS POSSIBLE."

SNP

SO I'LL GET MY DAY IN THE SUN, AND I'LL BE RECOGNISED FOR THE ENORMOUS SCIENTIFIC LEGACY I'LL SOMEDAY LEAVE BEHIND ME.

ONE WAY OR THE OTHER.



KLK

THE END

ONE'S A COP. ONE'S A SCIENTIST. ONE'S HOLDING HIS GUN UPSIDE DOWN.
BUT WHEN THEY JOIN FORCES, THEY CAN ALL...

LAW HARD



AUTO ASSEMBLY PRESENTS A SENTINEL PRIME PRODUCTION "LAW HARD" MICHAEL BELL TOWNSEND COLEMAN AND PAUL EIDING
SPECIAL APPEARANCE BY SENTINEL PRIME CAST BY SIMON PLUMBE BASED ON THE HASBRO NOVEL BY SENTINEL PRIME ART BY SIMON CHIDDINGTON
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