



AARDVARK-VANAHEIM, INC.

8 May 04

Bryan P. Coppola,
Arthur F. Thurnau
Professor of Chemistry
University of Michigan

Dear Bryan:

Thanks for sending along the copies from *Revolt 3000* which I haven't seen since the fellow who ran across them and saved them from destruction when Irjax went out of business contacted me and wanted permission to print them in the back of his new self-published title. I forget the name of it, but clearly he thought that this rare pre-*Cerebus* art would attract some attention his way. Which it didn't. Mercifully. This is really, really bad material. How fast can I write and draw and still stay on a plausible level of professionalism? Clearly not as fast as I am managing to write and draw here. Anyway, to your questions:

- 1) The spot illo of the four features that made up *Revolt 3000* was the proposed *back* cover, by the looks of it. It certainly resembles the approach that I had taken to *Phantacea* which I had done around the same time. No, the front cover is enclosed here. This was where I first got the idea of shamelessly imitating the Marvel Comics Group masthead, numbering style and so on, which I would use on *Cerebus* later that year. Put that typeface in a strip across the top of your cover and a fanboy's hand just starts reaching for his wallet. Pavlov was right.
- 2) No recollections around the circumstances of creating "The Masque". It was, evidently, done for someone called Voyager Publications. Whoever they were, it sounded good, because I'm definitely putting in the time on it and trying to keep all the edges clean. Not to mention doing toothbrush spatter effects which I wouldn't have done on a purely commercial basis. As I recall, they wanted to run it tabloid size, which meant the originals would have been seen pretty close to size as. Another reason to be careful with it. I think between doing *Phantacea* and *Revolt 3000* I had figured out that superheroes weren't my thing. The only appeal was that I was going to get paid. "The Masque" and the Conan illustrations I was doing at the time felt more natural.
- 3) *The Blue Dynamo* was for Irjax as well. I was really, really paranoid about these people. They came out of nowhere and wanted me to draw write, pencil, ink and letter a forty-eight page comic for them—they responded to the ad in the *Comics Journal* that I

BOX 1674 STATION 'C' KITCHENER ONTARIO N2G 4R2

did for COMICgraphics. One of those “if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is” gigs. *Phantacea*, I could understand. A guy who doesn’t draw needs someone to draw his scripts (I also found out years later that Jim McPherson was paying Terry Hamilton—who unbeknownst to me was “repping” me to Jim—more than I was getting paid by Terry). That was the way I always got jobs. Gene Day hated to letter and hated his lettering, so I got work lettering Gene’s stories. I was like this utility player in baseball. I wasn’t going to break any records, but I could plug any leak that you had. As you will see from my attached financial records recently unearthed, I had gotten a payment for \$165 on July 5, 1977 which was substantially more than I usually made. But, then, I hadn’t drawn too many 48 page comic books either. It was a lot of work to get stiffed for if I got stiffed. August 10 was the happy day when a check for \$550 and \$240 came in two separate envelopes. Deposited them about ten minutes later and kept my fingers crossed for ten days until they cleared. And they cleared. Couldn’t believe it. I actually had \$790 in the bank.

But anyway, somewhere around this time, they got back in touch and wanted me to do another strip, a straight super-hero, as much like Spider-man as possible. A 24-page comic book, again all on my own. Because the cheque cleared on *Revolt 3000*, I slowed down on this one. Not a lot, but you can tell that I realize this might actually get published and have my name on it. I got paid \$400 November 14, so that would have been enough money for me to write and draw the first issue of *Cerebus* without starving. Only, that was pretty much it. I got paid for the work and never heard from them again. As publishers, anyway. They resurfaced around issue 31 as New Media Irjax and began distributing *Cerebus*. They only lasted a while at this and went under in a hurry. One of their customers was Steve Geppi who had two or three Geppi’s Comic World stores in the Baltimore area and who basically stepped in and took over because everyone had been left high and dry. He literally became a distributor by accident.

4) Actually the splash pages aren’t long gone. I had half-sized stats of them which were the only parts of the stories that I had (way too expensive to photocopy 48 pages with the money I had at the time—that was why I was nervous. I was sending out pages that I didn’t have copies of). Anyway, when the guy who found the pages contacted me, I just didn’t go digging for the splash pages. I really didn’t want this stuff to be seen by the time the 90s rolled around. So, here are your splash pages, with the proviso that you publish as little of this as you can manage in *Following Cerebus*. Preferably the cover or COMICgraphics ad and maybe one of the better Blue Dynamo pages, but I’m still not crazy about this stuff seeing the light of day.

Anyway, I’ve already shot enlarged photocopies of the stats for myself, so I now have the complete *Revolt 3000* for the first time since 1977. And now, you will too. Lucky us. The COMICgraphics ads are originals. I’ve got about fifty of each, so there’s no point in just sending you photocopies. The original stat for the *Revolt 3000* cover (which is dying before your eyes—you had to wash the developing fluid off of them very thoroughly or the chemicals started to turn brown. This one isn’t bad for twenty-five years old but you can see that parts of it aren’t long for this world. A photocopy of a Masque promo drawing. My original character drawings for *Revolt 3000*. My original story proposals and scripts. Jack Schuster’s letter confirming his business proposal. My original colour

sketch for *Revolt in the year 3000* (the original title). My original colour rough for the *Blue Dynamo* cover which was already rough enough but then, instead of colouring it by hand, I decided to colour it with letrafilm—like tone but in colour. It took a hell of a long time, sure, but remember—it also looks lousy as hell! These last two if you can just get 8½ x 11 colour photocopies done of them and send them to me, you can keep the originals.

Well, thanks Brian. I have now completed my *Revolt 3000/Blue Dynamo* file. A nice, tight, clean 8½ x 11 package that I'll count myself lucky if I never have to look at again.

Thanks and don't forget to get those colour photocopies or scans to me.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Dave', written in a cursive style with a large loop at the top.

Dave

IRJAX ENTERPRISES, INC.

W H O L E S A L E D I S T R I B U T O R

13016 ST. CHARLES PLACE
ROCKVILLE, MD 20853
(301) 946-7891.

Comicgraphics
48 Weber St. East
Kitchener, Ontario
N2H 1C5

Dear Dave,

Received your letter confirming our phone conversation. Upon our receipt and acceptance of your story outline and character development synopsis we will make payment, as per your letter.

It was my understanding that the payment for the script would be at the rate of \$3.00 per page since we are also purchasing the art work from you? Please reply.

Sincerely yours,

LIVE LONG AND PROSPER,


JACK SCHUSTER

JS/PR

MAY 19	KW RECORD BEAVERS	20 ⁰⁰	JULY 30.	Bob Main Quack...	50 ⁰⁰
MAY 31	^{APRIL} MARCIA REDMOND	10 ⁰⁰	AUGUST 2	STORY 2 Illustrations ---	20 ⁰⁰
JUNE 5	Bob Main "Fangs of Gold"	10 ⁰⁰	AUGUST 3	DUGAR illo original	12 ⁰⁰
JUNE 6	Marcia Redmond student	4 ⁰⁰	AUGUST 4	John Bell QUACK NO. 3	165 ⁰⁰
JUNE 13	space explorer in swamp	10 ⁰⁰	AUGUST 4	ROYALTIES SELLING ---	12 ⁰⁰
JUNE 22	MR student	7 ⁰⁰	AUGUST 10	CASS IRJAX ENTERPRISES	550 ⁰⁰
JUNE 24	EAGLESTAR	10 ⁰⁰	AUGUST 10	payment IRJAX ENTERPRISES	240 ⁰⁰
JUNE 28	payment LETTERING	15 ⁰⁰	AUGUST 16	payment The BEAVERS	20 ⁰⁰
JULY 4	DIVINE WIND	20 ⁰⁰	AUGUST 22	K-W RECORD JULY STAMPARTS phantases	520 ⁰⁰
JULY 5	KW RECORD BEAVERS	165 ⁰⁰	SEPT 7	comic book ASTRAZ	12 ⁰⁰
JULY 5	IRJAX ENTERPRISES	14 ⁰⁰	SEPT 12	DIMENSIONS SHALUMARK	14 ⁰⁰
JULY 19	payment STAMPARTS	10 ⁰⁰	SEPT 19	INTERNATIONAL GENE PAV	60 ⁰⁰
JULY 20	JOHN BELL	25 ⁰⁰	SEPT 23	LETTERING K-W RECORD	20 ⁰⁰
JULY 22	list cover	120 ⁰⁰		BEAVERS (August)	
JULY 22	KW RECORD				
JULY 28	BEAVERS (JUNE)				
JULY 28	POWER COMICS				
	payment				



HERO CONCEPT no 2

title: THE RAVEN and THE TROUT

setting: Planet Earth, North America 2056 A.D.

BACKGROUND

planet in turmoil

Earth in the mid-21st Century is a planet in turmoil. Politically, the dream goal of a global community has nearly been realized. The United Nations of New Earth (UNNE) are united in their goal of finding new worlds to conquer as a solution for the Earth's troubles. The three major corporations (having nearly equal power to the UNNE) are IRC (Interstellar Resource Corp.) StarCorp and UNC (United Nations Corp.). The former two are concerned with discovery of planets with usable resources and the harnessing of stellar power for use on Earth respectively. UNC is concerned with the care of the Earth's population with mass-production of necessities (housing, food-stuffs, clothing) and cleaning up of Earth's ecology. There is one monkey wrench in the clockwork. His name is...

killgour dentz

Because rule of the Earth has become a community responsibility, with most of the power (on paper) in the hands of the UNNE Select Committee, many inequities that would come to light during a leader's rule of a small country are magnified and harder to trace. Killgour Dentz, by pet-

itioning for control of incoming and outgoing produce and being granted the position, has become essentially the ruler of Earth. Because he carries the favour of StarCorp and UNC, he cannot be dislodged from this position. Thus, he directs most of the efforts in space exploration and chooses the peoples and communities who will be granted more UNNE assistance, just by approving, disapproving or redirecting shipments. Because he is helping only the already wealthy nations who hold the balance of power, his position is made even more secure. There is one small item which prevents him from resting comfortably in the feathered nest of his own making.

amber sword & the ancients

There is a small group of anarchists who secretly plot to have Killgour assassinated or removed from office. Killgour is aware of the existence of the anarchist organisation (the Amber Sword) but considers them too mild a threat to take seriously. He can afford to have himself guarded constantly and does so. However, a sword hangs precariously above his head. One of the subsidiaries of the UNC, digging beneath the Atlantic Ocean in search of new means of artificially creating food-stuffs discovers a cube, which, like all unusual artifacts so found, is sent to Killgour for examination. The cube predicts to Killgour (through a kind of telepathy) that the removal of the cube from its hiding place heralds the coming of the Overman.

overman

In the dying days of the Ancient Earth civilisations, measures were taken to ensure that future human civilisations would have a chance for survival if they proved themselves worthy. Overman, a human, was endowed with great powers and placed in hibernation on Jupiter until such time as the cube would signal him to come to Earth. The cube was buried beneath the ocean where only a truly advanced civilisation could find it. Once drawn to Earth, Overman would commence learning about the nature of the world and gradually begin to assist in the development of scientific knowledge until he became the ruler of the civilised peoples of the planet.

the story

Raven and Trout are two members of the Amber Sword. They have discovered Overman and secret him from the UNDC (The United Nations Defence Command) who are pledged to destroy any organisation working against the UNNE. They are aware of Overman's powers and hope to turn it against Killgour's efforts to take over the Earth. They are not aware, nor is Overman himself, of the role he is to play. Killgour is

aware that Overman is undoubtedly on the Earth, and so has alerted his security force that any paranormal or super-powered being is to be captured or, if necessary, killed. Conflict will be primarily between 1) Raven, Trout and other members of the Amber Sword and 2) Killgour, his troops and the beaureaucracy of the time. Overman will be a pivotal character, unaware of his role and undecided on whether he should support Raven and the Amber Sword.

* * *

THE CHARACTERS

raven

Raven is a street veteran about thirty or thirty-five years old. He has cultivated a Bronx accent and dialect even though both have been extinct for some twenty years. He prides himself on his coarseness and is a born taunter. Not only will he not back away from a fight, most of those he gets involved in are at his own instigation. Raven is a superb hand to hand fighter, relying mostly on brute strength, rather than skill. He began the Amber Sword because he distrusts anything that smacks of a dictatorship. Because Killgour's policies mean a higher standard of living in North American than elsewhere, Raven is an enemy of the UNNE and wanted for sedition charges. The Amber Sword is a mish-mosh of anti-Killgour, anti-UNNE, anti-authority proponents united only by the impact of Raven's will. His real name is Alfred Spangler, a name he despises and which Trout uses on occasion to annoy him.

trout

Trout is a young woman, about seventeen or eighteen years old. She is an orphan who has survived in the streets by always attaching herself to the most dominant and capable guardian she could get interested in her. Now that she is capable of managing herself, she remains with Raven, following her policy of always seeking the safest position. She is a born survivor and will run from a fight where possible and try to get on someones good side rather than fight them. Raven adds to her income as a cut-purse with his own money. She has no devotion to Raven's cause but pursues it avidly because of Raven's financial support. She is a friend to everyone, though she trusts no one. She is Raven's liason with people, often despite Raven's attempt to be as vulgar and abrasive as possible in their presence.

sneet

Sneet is Raven's agent within the UNNE bureaucracy. He is privy to lower level decisions and occasionally will come up with information from the highest levels by rumour. Even when he doesn't know what is happening, specifically, he knows that something is up. Sneet is strictly a mercenary and augments his income by selling information to Raven.

placet ru

Placet Ru (known principally to all the characters as Ru) is Raven's house-boy in the small apartment that he rents over-top of a tavern. He is a young boy, about twelve, and an albino who joined a juvenile gang at the age of ten, leaving home. In the course of being beaten up by rival gang members, he was rescued by Raven and instantly switched his loyalties to Raven. A fierce admirer of Raven's, he is also an innocent with a tendency to stick his neck out too far (though he has been lucky with never having it cut off). Trout plays a mother role with him, and finds his admiration of Raven reprehensible and Raven's ~~garrying~~ glorying in the attention even more disgusting.

overman

Overman remains a mystery in most of the stories. Though Raven tries very hard to be his friend and hides him away in his apartment, Overman does not react to the friendliness. Overman will never be shown with thought balloons -- the reader must decide what Overman is thinking for himself. Trout mistrusts his quiet attitude and power. Raven devotes considerable attention to him and never doubts for a minute that both of them have the same goals. Ru doesn't notice how quiet Overman is and treats him as he does every other guest -- chattering continuously about Raven's battles and abilities.

killgour dentz

Killgour Dentz is a politician first and foremost. His interest is in power and how it can help him shape the world into the form that will best advance the fortunes of the english speaking world. He believes that so long as his will is being put into action, that he is entitled to the power it brings to him. Far from a despotic dictator, he is a man who wishes to have an impact upon his time and will only acknowledge that he cannot do so if and when someone comes along to overthrow him. He believes that the end justifies the means and so is not beyond persecution of his adversaries if it means he can retain his control of the UNNE.

1. THE RAVEN AND THE TROUT

episode one: "Focus: the Overman!"

12 pages

page one

Splash page. UNDC guards attacking Raven and Trout on a busy street. Trout suggesting that they try and lose their pursuers in the crowd. Raven ignores her, turning, looking for a weapon as he lunges towards the guards.

page two

(Raven, kicking one of the guards in the stomach as the other draws a firearm. Raven: "Nuts -- sendin' Deecees after me what can't even grow side-burns -- I think me feelin's is hurt.") (Trout leaping onto the back of the second guard, pushing him, over-balanced, head-first into a wall. "Raven -- these baboons couldn't capture a stray cat -- In the name of Amber, can we please get out of here?") (Trout pulls at Raven getting him away from the scene as other guards start moving in. "Blast it! All I want is one shot at that joker with the crossed eyes -- just one little punch!" "Aw, C'mon Trout".) (Trout prevails and brings him to a tavern above which is Raven's residence.) (Trout enters cheerfully, Raven grumbling. "Evening, Stout -- a short beer for me..." Raven: "Crummy guards oughta be strung up and shot..." Trout: "...and a whiskey for my charming friend.")

outline to:
Jack Schuster
St. Charles Place
Rockville, Md
20853

page three

(The elegant home of Killgour Dentz, perhaps the most powerful man in the world.) (He contemplates a small cube on the desk in front of him and prepares to hear its message again.) (message is the same essentially as outline under title overman). (Dentz ponders to himself. "My plans for this country, this continent -- only now are they beginning to bear any fruit. I've got to keep this Overman out of the picture, at least until my plans have solidified a little more.)

page four

(Raven on the phone, talking to Sneet which watching Overman practice his energy conversion on a small lamp. Sneet has nothing to report) (except that his work load has been increased tenfold. For some reason, Killgour has blocked himself off from any kind of decision making, passing it on to underlings) (Something is taking all of his attention -- something which requires his taking personal control of the UNDC security forces) (Raven considers this after hanging up. "The whole blamed security forces. Whatever that joker is workin' on it sure don't sound like a weenie roast.") /

page five

(Trout near the centre of the city notices a disturbance. A number of security guards are dragging a strangely garbed man out of a theatre. "What is this? I've got a show to do in there!" Security guard: "Orders of Killgour Dentz; all paranormal and super-powered guys are to be held in custody, Mr. Magician.") (Trout thinks to herself. "In the name of Amber...NO!" and races for a phone) (Raven answers it, "Trout! Geez -- where ya bin? We...what?" Trout: "They know about Overman -- any powered being is fair game and its been authorized by Dentz.")

page six

(Raven slamming down the phone. "Ru -- c'mon! We've got to get Overman to someplace more secure.") (Dentz is in his home hovering over a communication screen. "Damn these fool security men. Magicians and dime-store illusionists! They wouldn't know a paranormal if they stepped on him." Screen activates. "Sector three reports capture of Amos Bull, professional circus strong-man...") (Dentz: "He must be out there somewhere -- and if he is, they'll find him.") (Ru speaks as they are out in the street with Overman in disguise. "I hope the coat and hat I found were what you wanted, sir." Raven: "Just dandy, Ru -- keep that collar up, pal, or we'll up to our hips in Deeces.") (Suddenly Overman spots a cornice breaking off a building and falling into the street.) (Reacts instantly, pulverizing the cornice with a blast of pure energy. Raven: "Overman! What in the blue...") (Overman "Life was endangered. I had to act...") (Voices of uards: "Hey! Hey, you! Hold it!") (Raven leaps into their midst, smashing them left and right. Overman blasts the sidewalk some guards are standing on. "They will only be stunned if I am careful.")

page seven

Guard calling in his report. "Disturbance in sector 4 involving paranormal repeat paranormal. Known as Overman -- request back-up force." (Reaction of Sneet "Mercy of the Gods! They've found him -- they've found him.") (Reaction of Dentz: thought "At last -- the Overman! He's been found!" "Subdue him and bring him to central shipping -- top priority.") But subduing him is less than an easy task. Remainder of page is a fight scene. Overman struggling to get away without hurting the guards and Raven, with relish, running roughshod over all comers.

page eight

Total warfare. Reinforcements are arriving and beginning to overwhelm the two. Overman pleading with Raven to leave and Raven finally agreeing. They run away, looking for a place to hide until everything blows over.

page nine

A man suddenly appears in an open door beside them. "In here." They follow him inside. (Trout talking to Sneet on the phone who informs her of Overman being the object of Dentz's search and where the forces have gone to get him. She hurries there hoping that Raven hasn't been captured. "Maybe this once he had the sense to end a fight while he was winning.") (Guards looking around in confusion as she arrives. "Maybe he managed to escape.") Inside the mystery man's house, Raven and Overman are sipping tea as their host goes on at length about his aversion to the government. Final panel shows Overman and Raven unconscious in their chairs. "...my apologies for going on at length. I see my tea has done its work.")

page ten

(Trout talking to bystanders who tell her, "Big guy in a sort of dark outfit and another guy all in black were fighting the Deecees -- damndest thing I ever saw.") (Trout: "They got away?") "Guess so -- didn't see anybody who looked like he could stop them, anyway." (He finds Ru) who says "Trout (- Raven's gone! He's gone!" "Where?") ("I dunno -- he pushed me out of the way and told me to stay put until the fight was over. When I came out, he was gone.")

page eleven

(Trout: "Ru -- Raven isn't here, and I'm sort of second in command, right?" Ru: "I dunno. I guess so -- why?") ("Never mind -- ask some of these people if they saw where Raven went and I'll be back in a minute.") (At his home again, the mystery man is making a phone call. "The Council Building, please. I'll hold on.") (Trout is also calling on another phone: "Right -- the operation goes into effect as of tonight...that's right. I'm authorizing assassination for Killgour Dentz...no, you pick the people, but I want it done soon.")

(4)

page twelve

(Raven awakes not knowing where he is, while across from him, Overman is also recovering from the drugged tea. They are in a stone dungeon-like room. "Where are we, Raven." "Jeez -- ya got me. Right now I'd settle for knowing how we got here.") (Voice from outside of panel as Raven and Overman look up in surprise. "Your citizen benefactor was a druggist who sought a reward for turning in what he tought were a pair of garden-variety traitors..." "Rest assured that his reward far exceded his wildest hopes -- in keeping with the status of his prisoners." "Overman, permit me to welcome you and your unnamed friend to...") (Final panel shows Killgour Dentz flanked by two burly armed guards standing in the doorway of the cell. "...the home of UNNE Shipments Director! Killgour Dentz, at your service.")

Next: BREAKOUT!



HERO CONCEPT no 4

title: Moloch Em Tas THE HYBRID

setting: Planet Hob's Glow in the star system Rosta Prime
2056 A.D.

BACKGROUND

hob's glow

A planet considered on first sight by the IRC to be the best planet for potential colonisation in the immediate area of the universe, has suddenly become almost more trouble than it is worth. The inhabitants -- the Tochem -- have stopped assisting in the colonisation of their planet. As a result, the Earth settlements (unused to the rapid-growth jungle and predatory animals) is being disrupted and levelled almost daily.

the tochem

Because the Tochem feel an innate kinship with their planet, they refuse to help the Earthmen in their "crazy scheme" to keep the local flora and fauna under control. The one problem is that the IRC, frustrated at their inability to make the planet work for them, have declared open season on the Tochem. Because the Tochem are a smaller and weaker race (depending on telekinesis for lifting objects weighing five or ten pounds), the IRC forces have an easy time pursuing and killing them.

tamen re

A wise old scientist of the Tochem, Tamen Re, suggests that Helmut Powers, an Earthman he has befriended, could be made into a cross between the two cultures -- a hybrid who could make peace with both sides. Transformed by Tamen's knowledge and scientific skill, Helmut becomes Moloch Em Tas, THE HYBRID (the former name is the Tochemian translation of Hybrid) -- much stronger because of the change and also capable of acts of telekinesis. His ability is beyond the dreams of the Tochem, just as his physical strength is now beyond the dreams of the Earthmen; a super-man in two cultures.

the hybrid

Moloch Em Tas does not become the emissary Tamen had hoped he would. The IRC mistrusts him because of his different appearance and believe him now to be a traitor to his home planet. As a result, Moloch turns his back on his former friends and is adopted by the Tochem.

stemmen

Stemmen, located above a rich source of perenium, a rare metal, is the location attracting the interest of the IRC (colonisation is still in the investiagting stages in most areas and is speeded up in this location to aid in the IRC's mining efforts, only). Most of the action in the series will take place in this locality.

the story

The Hybrid and the Tochem face a threat from the IRC that is only thinly disguised as efforts at colonisation. The Tochem are a peaceful and guileless people who do not understand the human need for possession. The result is that the Hybrid is forced into a position as commander-in-chief avenger, negotiator and protector of a people he very often doesn't understand. Conflicts will be primarily between the natives and the off-worlders, between Hybrid and his former friends and within Hybrid himself as he pledges himself to the destruction of the people he shares his origins with.

THE CHARACTERS

the hybrid

The Hybrid as his name suggests is a definite cross between the two cultures that are his origins. He retains the human understanding of avarice and greed, but shares the Tomech's knowledge of their planet -- he realizes that it cannot be conquered in the pioneering sense the Earthmen rely on. The result is confusion from both sides. He can-

not make the Tochem understand the seriousness of the threat from Earth (they being under the impression that it is just a matter of time before the attempts at colonisation are ended). As well he cannot convince his former friends that the world is unconquerable and that persecuting the Tomech is not going to help them in their efforts.

janice stromm

Principle advocate among the Earth colony members for the elimination of the Hybrid and his adopted people, Janice is a trained fighter/defender for the colony. She is of the belief that the Tochem are completely obstinate in their refusal to negotiate with the Earth and must now be compelled by force of arms to do so.

rames tal

Of the Tochem, Rames Tal is the only one who shares the Hybrid's enthusiasm for stopping the persecution of the Tochem. He is a born fighter, who, unfortunately lacks any sense of degree in his fighting. Rames will fight any Earthman who crosses his path without any concern about the man's loyalties. It is an effort for the Hybrid to keep him under control, and one which he is not often successful at.

edmund marks

Governor of the Earth colony, Edmund Marks, because he is accountable for all that transpires on the planet's surface, must tread a fine line between control of the indigenous population and making certain that all colonists respect him as their leader. As a result, he is in the position of having to decide whether to keep the Tochem safe or allow the colonists to vent their frustration on the natives. No choice is a choice. By refusing to decide one way or the other, Marks has opened the flood-gates for a total persecution of the Tochem.

meret shall

Meret Shall is the "leader" of the Tochem at Stemmen (meret is both a name and a title and means teacher. This is the closest the Tochem have to the Earth concept of Mayor or Boss) and so is the one with whom the Earth is negotiating for mining rights. He is a firm believer (as are most Tochem) in the idea that ignoring the Earthmen will make them go away. Because he unites the Tochem at Stemmen, the Hybrid is very anxious to win Meret over to his side.

emmet stubbs

Director of the security force on Hob's Glow, Emmet Stubbs is the one primarily responsible for the persecution of the Tochem. A faceless man who is just "following orders".

1. THE HYBRID

episode one: "This Planet in Peril"

12 pages

outline to:
Jack Schuster
St. Charles Place
Rockville, Md
20853

page one

The Hybrid, punching an IRC Security Force Guard. Rames Tal throwing a rock at another, sending him reeling backwards. The second guard holds a smoking burster. On the ground is a dead Tochemite.

page two

The Hybrid insisting to Rames that they leave. "We cannot bring him back to life." (Finally, Hybrid is forced to lift the two IRC guards out of Rames reach by telekinesis and drag Rames away from the scene. The two security guards drop to the ground behind them.) (In the office of the governor, Edmund Marks, he is talking to Emmet Stubbs. Stubbs is pointing out that the regulation is clear.) ("Intent by indigenous life forms to thwart colonisation attempts may be met with force.")

page three

(Edmund Marks: "My job is difficult enough. I would appreciate it if you could temper your regulations with some compassion for these people." Stubbs: "Yes sir.") (Outside the office, Stubbs' second asks about the meeting "He insists that we take more offensive actions against the Tochem." Next day, Hybrid and Rames meet an assault team, surprised that the Earth forces are firing on them indiscriminantly. Battle four guards and win but Hybrid is worried that the increased fire might be a bad sign.)

(2)

page four

(Meeting of Janice Stromm and Emmet Stubbs. Janice agrees to join Stubbs in his personal war with the Tochem and suggest that they must make the HYBRID their prime target if they hope to have any success at all.) ("With the head cut off, we should have no trouble with the body.") (Janice stands at the window and declares that she will see this through and vows to see the Hybrid dead.) (Back in the jungle, the Hybrid is awakened from a nap in a tree by the sound of troops on the prowl.) ("Raiders.") He leaps down to confront them.)

page five

Epic battle. Large numbers of troops come pouring out of the surrounding jungle. "There he is!" Hybrid is surprised but fights hard to gain an avenue of escape. Finally gets away, but is astounded by the amount of fire power that has been brought to bear against him.

page six

Hybrid makes his way to the hut of Meret Shull insisting that he must resist the Earthmen. Shull tells him he still thinks the Earthmen will grow tired of their attempts to colonize and will go away. FLASHBACK to Hybrid origin.

page seven

Hybrid warns Meret that the Earthmen are trying to kill him (the Hybrid) and that he will no longer be able to meet with Shull because the IRC will be watching for him. Shull is adamant in his belief and they part, wishing each other well.

page eight

Series of panels indicating that things are getting very hot for the Hybrid and Rames. They win all the confrontations, but they are being worn down by the effort. Meeting of Janice and Emmet in Emmet's office. They have decided that trying to capture the Hybrid by force will be too difficult. "I think we will have to try something and little bit subtler."

page nine

Rames returning to his Mother's hut for a visit. Enters with a cheery greeting but suddenly sees his mother bound up in a chair in front of him. Guards swarm over him he fights, but goes down under the weight of numbers. Interior of Stubbs office. He is answering the phone. "Hello? You're sure it's him? Terrific!". He turns and says to Janice, "Our operation has born fruit!"

page ten

Word is brought to the Hybrid that Rames was taken captive earlier in the day by IRC guards. Hybrid is very angry.

"Emmet Stubbs! Only Stubbs could come up with a scheme that smells as bad as this." Rames is being held captive in the small Earth compound used for offices, etc. Page ends with panels of guards being knocked out by the Hybrid from behind. Final panel shows the Hybrid moving carefully towards the compound which is lit by spotlights.

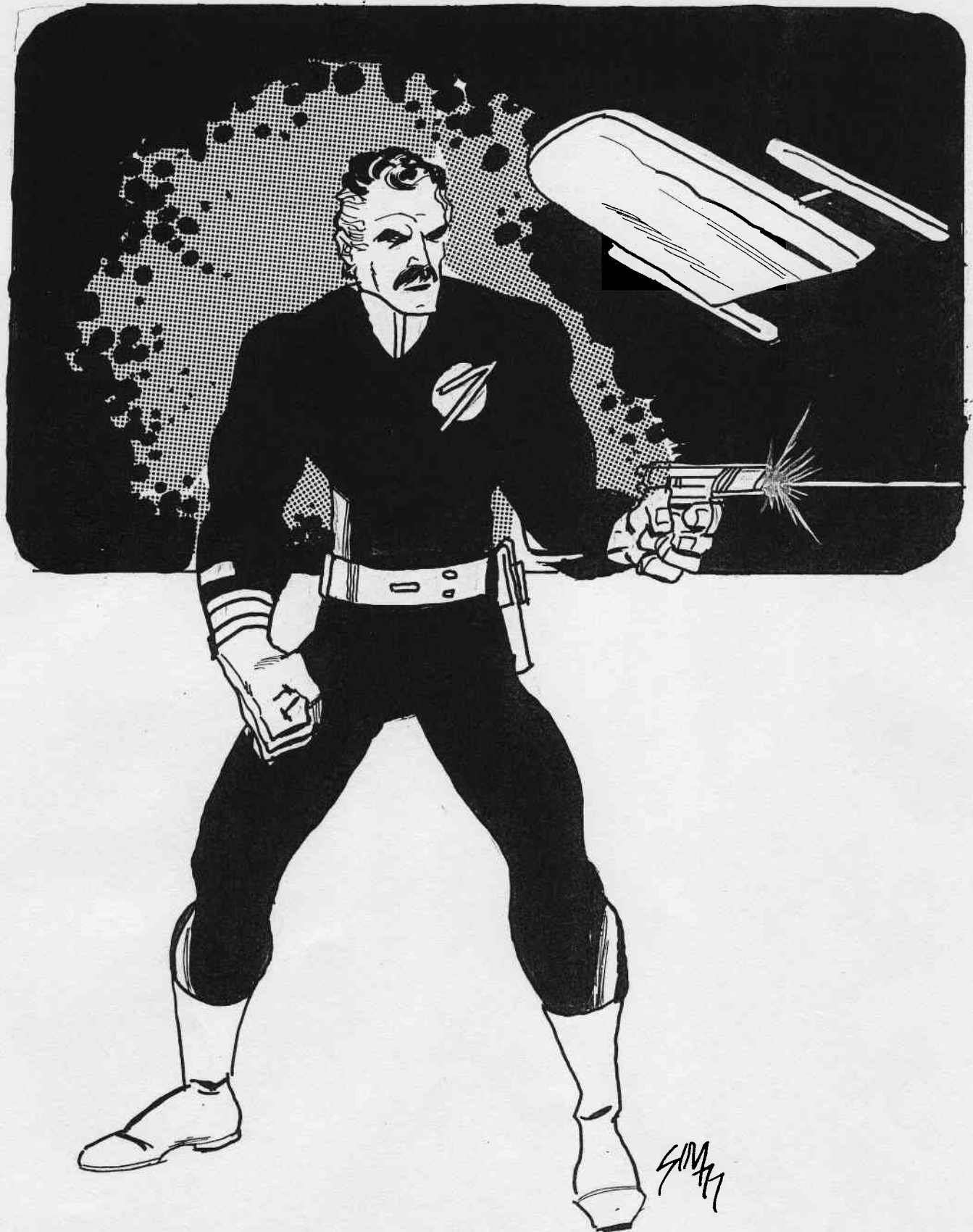
page eleven

Interior of the compound where Rames is being held, a very small cell. A couple of guards are baiting Rames who is tied to a ring on the wall. Rames tells them they will be whistling a different tune when Hybrid comes to get him...that they better get ready for him. One of the guards holds up his burster, menacingly. "Ready? We're not only ready for it...we're looking forward to it, kid!"

page twelve

Office of Stubbs, overlooking the compound which is criss-crossed with spotlights. "Won't be long now. He's probably out there somewhere right now." Janice: "Remember, I am to be credited with his capture -- you swore!" Stubbs: "Yes. Yes of course -- you act us if you have something against this Helmut Powers -- this Hybrid!" Janice: "I suppose you could say that..." Janice: "We were once husband and wife."

NEXT: Assault on the Compound.



HERO CONCEPT no 3

title: STARGAZER ONE

setting: Stargazer One (UNNE Explorer Module Ship)
2056 A.D.

BACKGROUND

the outer reaches

Earth in the year 2056, governed by the UNNE, is in the process of exploring the farthest boundaries of the known universe. The process takes place in three steps. 1) Exploring of all planets in each star system for usable materials and potential colonisation. Also the seeking of any new life forms. 2) assignment of governor for direction and supervision of all activities on the planet's surface and for negotiating with sentient life forms if they exist. 3) Adapting Earth colonists to the planetary environment for resource development, colonisation and/or co-existence with existing life forms.

stargazer program

The IRC's Stargazer program is the initial step in the above process. Stargazer One, the model of the program is on a seven year tour of duty (the longest possible; tours of duty are three, five and seven years in length), the goal being to get the Stargazer One as far into unexplored regions as possible before it has to return to a UNNE Outpost.

the ship

The ship has been cut to the barest essentials to give it speed, ease of control and rapid escape velocity. All information taken in by the crew about the planets they visit is taken in in the form of microfilm recordings so storage is no problem. It is equipped to handle a six man crew.

the story

The Stargazer One, because it is involved in exploring totally unknown territory, will be encountering completely unique situations, creatures and environments. The stories will show that they were chosen as a team for good reason. Although they have major differences of opinion and are involved in Stargazer for different reasons, in the face of adversity, they stand together and are united in their support of each other.

THE CHARACTERS

captain adam walters

Capt. Walters is the final authority on any disputes among the crew members although his orders demand that he not interfere except where necessary according to his own judgement. He is a born military man who goes by the book on almost any given situation. He conflicts with Jim Stanton on a personal level, Stanton being a person who does things almost strictly according to gut reaction and instinct. He also conflicts with anyone who works for the IRC and so, avoids the corporate representatives almost completely. He is a fighter and well-trained in the use of the IRC photon firearms (bursters) he and the pilot are equipped with for security and defense. Considers SG-1 his private craft and does not like to be reminded it is owned and financed by the IRC.

pilot jason lennox

He and Capt. Walters were cross-matched by computer for duty at the time they were in the UNNE Military Academy. As a result, Jason and Adam understand each other and tend to be two faces of the same coin. In action, they are unbeatable as they know by instinct what the other will do in any given situation. Jason is the younger of the two, and although competent and skilled in all areas of ship maintenance, defensive combat and directing of operation, he will defer to Capt. Walters' judgement on any occasion, without hesitation.

dr. jim stanton

"Doc", as he is known by other members of the crew, is an expert on outworld life and organisms and the nature of life

in general on an interstellar level -- how a live organism will tend to function, given its specific environment, etc. He is a young man and more likely than his associate, Dr. Miles Lawson, to be the one to rush headlong into an uncertain situation if it will advance the cause of scientific knowledge. Although subordinate to Dr. Lawson, he will often question the doctor's judgement and even that of the captain which leads to some very abrasive scenes between the three of them.

dr. miles lawson

The senior member of the scientific duo, of all the members of the crew, he is the most likely to think a situation through carefully and the least likely to act impetuously. As a result, his appetite for adventure is almost nil and his patience with those who consider him cowardly or foolishly careful, almost legendary. He is also the oldest member of the crew. His basic duty is to keep an eye on Stanton and further assure that he stays out of the Captain's hair.

martin heath & edward hutch

Known by the other members of the crew (behind their backs) as Frick and Frack, Heath and Hutch are faceless representatives of the IRC. As the other members of the crew deplore the corporate infiltration of the space programs, the two are pariahs on board and only manage to be a part of any exploration or decision-making processes by virtue of their association with the IRC. They share equally in all voting and policy making and tend to advocate risky situations (in the hopes of finding something of value to the IRC for the bonus money they get). Stanton usually supports them in such voting. Lawson avoids such decisions religiously until he can get more information. Lennox usually votes against such ideas on safety grounds. Capt. Walters goes along with the majority in this case. Result -- the Stargazer One avoids very few risky situations.

outline to:
Jack Schuster
St. Charles Place
Rockville, Md
20853

1. STARGAZER ONE

episode one: "TRAPPED!"

12 pages

page one

Confusion on board as a meteor shower pelts the exterior of the ship. Capt. is ordering pilot to set a course for the nearby planet for repairs.

page two

(Crew on the surface of the planet. Barren area with some vines that grow along the ground and various types of animal life.) (Martin Heath notices vines cover the skeleton of an animal.) (Captain warns all not to let the vines touch them until more is known.) (Doc Jim Stanton begins recording readings on the plant when one of them reaches out towards him.)

page three

(Stanton slaps the vine away) and two more begin to reach for him, so he calls for help from the Captain.) (Capt. and Lennox rush forward and fire on the vines, disintegrating them.) (Capt. ponders the way the vines move of their own free will,) when suddenly, "Captain Walters! Look Out!" a half dozen vines reach for Lennox and the Captain.) (They fire on them. Capt.: "Let's get back to the ship!")

(2)

page four

Crew backing away to the ship, firing at the vines as they go. There are now hundreds of vines whipping around them and reaching for them.) (Edward Hutch is caught by one of them.) (Crew struggles to free him as more vines wrap around them all.) (Bursters are fired,) (freeing him and they limp back to the ship)

page five

(Crew inside the ship, continues to hack off pieces of the vines as they penetrate the holes made by the meteors.) (No matter how many they stop, there are always more.) (Stanton says he is going out to collect samples.) (Capt. "Out there? Doc, that would be suicide.") (Stanton says (as the Capt. recites the same words to himself) "If I die, I will be happy it is for the cause of science.")

page six

Capt. leans towards Lawson. "In the name of God -- keep that hot-head inside, okay, Lawson?" Lawson agrees to do his best. (An hour later,) (a scream is heard inside of the ship.) (All look out and see Stanton besieged by vines) "Lawson -- I thought I said..." He assured me he was... going to make some coffeee. The young fool."

page seven

Capt. and Lennox race off the ship, bursters blasting. Full page fight with the vines with Capt. and Lennox finally freeing the trapped Stanton.

page eight

(The three struggle back to the ship,) (the worse for wear,) (their clothing torn and what-not,) (Capt. is uncertain as to whether they can get away from the planet. "If we can't go outside, we can't fix the holes and if we can't fix the holes -- those things have us trapped.") Quick conference is held. All advocate one final attempt to decimate the vines, except Dr. Lawson who wants more time for study. "Sorry, Lawson -- but right now what we need is firepower -- not time for study."

page nine

The crew preparing for a final attack. Capt. and Lennox with the bursters, others with heavy metal clubs or long knives. Final briefing is short: "It has to be done fast and it has to be for keeps." All members don pressure suits.

page ten

They stand in the airlock, with Capt. preparing to hit the OPEN button. Lawson: "Wait! Wait! I've just figured it out -- I know what those creatures are." All doubt his word, but Capt. wants to hear him out. "God when I think of how close you came -- how close I came."

page eleven

Lawson explains that the creature they are fighting against the vines, are totally defensive. It hadn't hurt any other creatures but themselves since they had arrived. They only attacked the crew in defense -- the defense growing stronger with each attack. The creature meets any threat by holding the attacker helpless. The more the attacker struggles, the more vines cover him until they can sometimes smother them. "And if we had...had attacked them with everything we had..." "They would have covered us like a blanket in a few seconds.

page twelve

Vines covering the ship gradually disappear. Repairs are made and they lift off. "The steady hum of the engines is like music to the ears of the crew."

"Information has been recorded on the strange vines -- information Edward Hutch and Martin Heath hope might lead to the IRC someday raising the vines as foodstuffs."

"Ignoring such corporate concerns, the other four turn their attention to a new planet beginning to fill the screen. It is a very large planet and preliminary recordings show some form of life on its surface.

NEXT: Blue Giant.



HERO CONCEPT no 1

title: CRIMSON ALPHA, queen of Androgyne

setting: planet Androgyne in star-system Cerbe
in the year 2056 A.D.

BACKGROUND

Crimson alpha, the queen and her planet

Androgyne was colonized by an ancient Earth civilisation many millions of centuries ago and has survived two nuclear holocausts, the net effect of which has been the assuming of a very primitive culture which does not reflect their great social advancement. There is only one small continental land mass on Androgyne, near the equator, which is inhabitable. All other regions are unexplored but thought to be extremely cold and treacherous. As a result Androgyne as a name is interchangeable between the planet and the small land mass.

the people

The people are strong-willed, very prudish and very patriotic and loyal to the reigning queen. This loyalty is extreme, bordering on worship as the queen is selected from one of two houses either crimson or emerald at the time of the previous queen's death, from the children who are nearly of age. Thus the only exceptions in loyalty are the handful of malcontents from the rival Emerald house who believe an Emerald should rule. The weight of public opinion prevents them from taking any action, though, save subterfuge.

politics

Virtually non-existent. Representatives of the Queen serve in her stead in remote corners of the island continent but each subject is permitted to petition a private audience with the Queen if he feels wronged by the rep, so the Queen's Representatives try to administer justice as they feel the Queen would herself, rather than face charges of "abuse of privilege."

the Crimson States and their Representatives
of Crimson Alpha

<u>states</u>	<u>representative</u>
Calliope	Daran Nu, CA prime*
Clio	Teven, CA prime
Erato	Itwi Sen, CAE**
Euterpe	Tamu Hab, CA prime

the story

Androgyne has been discovered by Earth ships, the first such planet to be found that was colonized by ancient Earth. Most of the conflict will centre around CRIMSON ALPHA's reluctance to allow Earthmen onto her planet. Earth wishes to set up trade agreements with Androgyne, but private corporations on Earth are more interested in conquering the planet than in trading with it. IRC (Interstellar Resources Corp.) is continually sending raiding parties into the primitive cities of Androgyne attempting to capture mining areas and what-not.

* **

THE CHARACTERSalpha

Alpha is not our usual vision of a Queenly sort. Aside from being the titular head of her world, she is also a veteran of several wars. As Queen, she is the leader in all major military ventures and will lead her troops into battle generally in the most critical of battles. Prior to the coming of the EARTH MEN, her military might was needed to keep dissident members of the rival royal house under her rule. Now, virtually the entire world is united behind her in her stand against Earth and its corporations. She is strong-willed, lacks compassion in her judgements of strangers and conflicts automatically with anyone who tries to appeal to her emotions or greed (the two tactics most widely used by the corporation representatives).

* CA prime denotes 1) representative of Crimson Alpha and 2) that the representative was chosen by the reigning queen for his position.

** CAE denotes 1) representative of Crimson Alpha and 2) that the representative has sworn allegiance to the new queen but was selected by the previous queen (of the Emerald house)

nomen tu

Alpha's son (a meaningless role in a society of matriarchal succession). As per Androgian custom, he serves as Administrator of Law on his mother's council, a traditional and essentially ceremonial position he has transformed into a position of authority and no little power by skullduggery and manipulation of the council's members. The role he has manufactured roughly approximates that of Leader of the Opposition in a parliamentary system (opposition to his mother's rule). He wishes to trade Androgyne's natural resources to Earth corporations in exchange for luxurious living and protection for himself.

fat

Alpha's regent at the time that she was crowned (five years before she was of age). She still seeks advice from him at times and goes to him mostly to seek respite from the weight of rule and to enjoy gaming and un-queenly amusements. Fat is a somewhat extraneous member of the court now that his charge is of age. Feeling himself to be in retirement, he spends his time in pursuit of the young ladies of the court and in marathon drinking sessions. He is viewed with disapproval by most of the populace whose sensibilities tend to be Victorian at best. He and Nomen Tu are bitter enemies. Alpha tends to be amused by Fat and his debaucheries and yet respects his mistrust of Nomen.

dean jay

Dean is a troubleshooter for the IRC, used to dealing with weak, greedy and ignorant rulers in Earth and alien cultures (i.e. a policy of "give the head of the tribe what he wants, keep him happy and his subjects subjugated and take all the natural resources in exchange). He does not know what to make of Alpha and consistently makes errors in approaching her for mining rights by trying to play on greed and ignorance (two traits she does not possess). He is utterly ruthless and is one step below having absolute power over Androgyne's fat, being outranked only by Earth Federation Governor Adam Wade, whose job he pursues.

hemmet gal

Alpha's director of the council. Since Nomen began the manipulations which led to Nomen's position of power, Hemmet has become more of a prime minister, advocating Alpha's point of view and charged with keeping the balance of members of the seven member council on the crowns side. Hemmet is a strong advocate of war with Earth. He maintains a small standing guerilla army, unknown to Alpha, and is preparing for just such a war.

1. CRIMSON ALPHA, queen of Androgyn
episode one: "at the RUINS of HADE!"

12 pages

page one

Splash page. Alpha is bathing in a pool near the palace (either in a short tunic or in the nude). She is surprised by two members of an IRC raiding party who had mistaken her for a peasant girl. "Watch the hands, they're pretty good fighters, these kittens." "The noblewomen are fighters -- these peasant girls are gentle as lambs."

page two

Fight scene with Alpha beating the stuffing out of the two IRC raiders, carefully informing them throughout of their error in mistaking her for a peasant just because she doesn't bathe in marble tubs with scented oils.

page three

(Alpha walking through the palace in a long robe, informs two guards that a pair of tree-rats are cooling off in the pool by the western gate and asks them to fetch them.) (In a council meeting, Nomen Tu is again advocating trade with Earth as a good idea.) (As debate rages, with Nomen and Hemmet Gal as the chief debaters, Alpha muses over the newfound difficulties in being a good ruler.) (There is a disturbance in the corridor outside the council chamber and Alpha interrupts to ask what transpires.) (A battered emissary enters. "Majesty of the Crim-

outline to:
Jack Schuster
St. Charles Place
Rockville, Md
20853

son House, the village of Hade in your sovereign state of Euterpe faces assault by agents of the Earth corporation IRC." Dozens of the village's soldiers have been killed by the agents in a surprise attack.) ("Nomen, my son, what kind words have you now for the Earth men?" Nomen is silent.)

page four

(A detachment of soldiers led by Alpha leaves for the village Hade. At Alpha's side rides Hemmet who hopes this is the beginning of the war with Earth he has hoped for.)
(Meanwhile, Nomen Tu is giving a note to one of his messengers to carry quickly to the group of Earthmen at Hade. If he takes the direct frontal route, he will beat Alpha and her soldiers there.) ("If they are made aware of Alpha's intention to stage a counter-attack, there might yet be time to organize an ambush.) (In the orbiting governor's space station, Dean Jay again speaks to Governor Wade, trying to persuade him that the time has come to smash Alpha's opposition to the Earth by force of arms.)

page five

The messenger from Nomen approaches the contingent of IRC Raiders. "I have a message from the Queen's administrator..." The association is a bad one to make and the raiders immediately fire on him, killing him instantly. "That's what we think of your queen, her administrator and this whole stinking two-bit planet, kid." Meanwhile, the Queen and her troops approach stealthily through the wooded area to the rear. Two guards playing dice are surprised by one of the Queen's troops, who makes short work of them, but not before they sound the alarm. And...

page six/seven

The battle with the Queen's troops scoring a decisive victory Even disarmed, they are more than a match for the undisciplined raiding party and their fire-arms. The important thing the battles will show is that the troops win by discipline and greater skill rather than by ferocity and strength.

page eight

The dust clears. One of the Queen's troops tells her that a captured raider said that they were directed by Dean Jay. "You bring no surprises, captain. This whole episode had all the markings of Jay's handiwork -- Jay is a powerful man. For now, we can only await his next move." The village is in ruins and Alpha orders her troops to remain and rebuild the ruined structures. She returns to the palace with Hemmet.

page nine

Back at the palace, Nomen's spies inform him that his messenger was killed on sight and that Alpha won the victory easily. "Damn these Earth-men -- I can give them Androgyne

on a silver platter, and still their stupidity prevents them from taking it." He watches from the window as his mother returns amid cheers from her subjects. "Enjoy them while you can, Alpha -- very soon those cheers will be for me!"

page ten

(Alpha and Hemmet are waving to the crowd and discussing the reaction) when abruptly a man leaps from the crowd -- "Free trade with Earth for all of Androgyne" -- (and slashes at Alpha with a knife) (She easily fells him with a single kick) (and orders him placed in custody) (but she is shaken by this first sign of disenchantment with her reign she has ever seen first-hand.) (The crowd is very quiet as she and Hemmet disappear through the palace gate.)

EPILOGUE

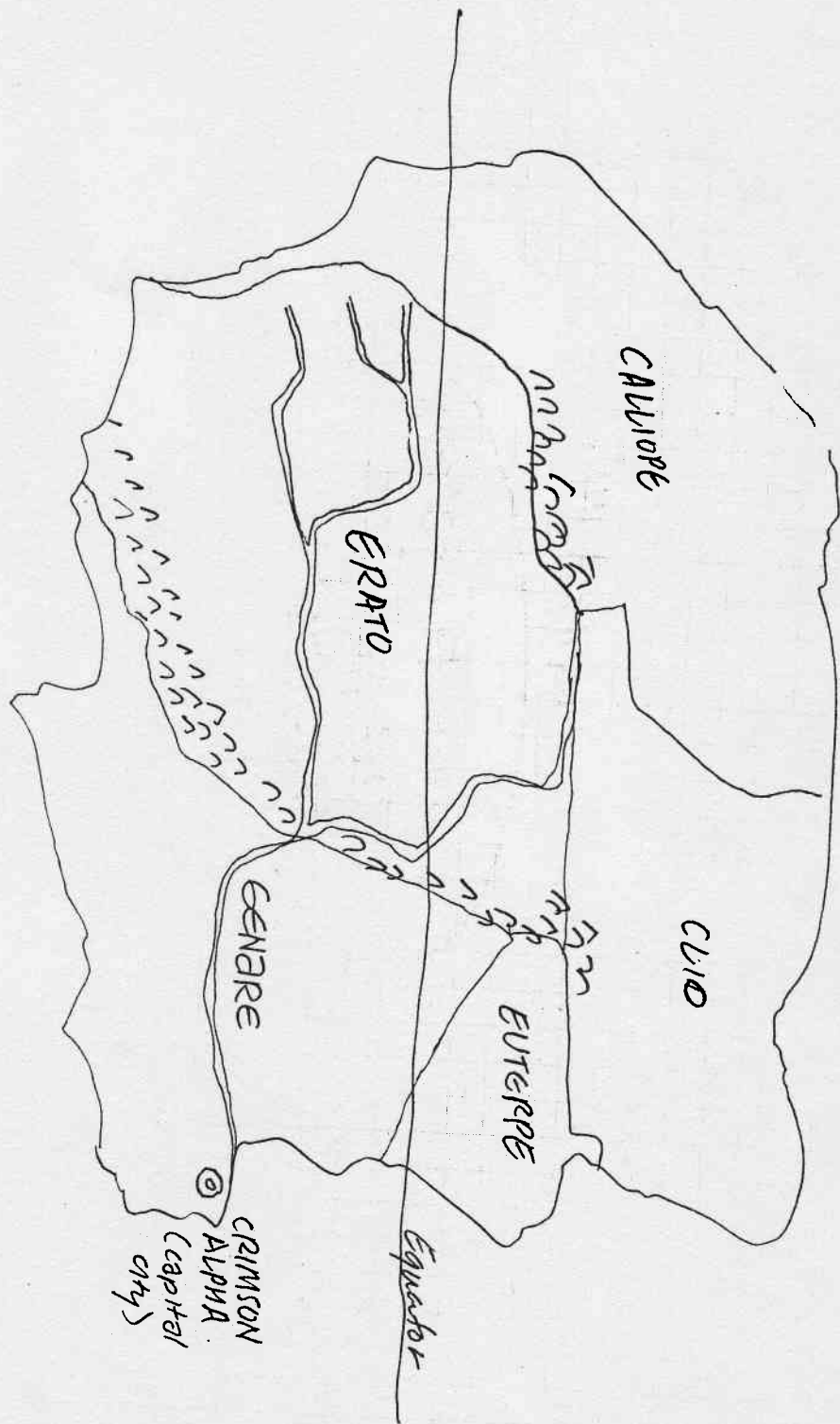
page eleven

(Fat is entertaining a young lady of the court when suddenly he hears from the corridor "Fat! You flea-bitten tree rat where are you?" "Clio's Blood! The Queen!") (Alpha enters still dressed in her battle garb to see a very flustered Fat holding two wine goblets of wine and kicking at the wall tapestries which buldge suspiciously. "Welcome, your majesty." "Hello, Fat -- two goblets of wine?") (Alpha seats herself on the divan. "Medicinal purposes, majesty. Might I inquire as to your reason...") ("Someone just tried to kill me, Fat." "By all the Gods -- surely your majesty doesn't...")

page twelve

("With a knife, Fat -- just now. Someone who...your tapestries look like they could stand a pressing, Fat." She is fingering the edges of the tapestries.) (Alpha pulls the tapestries aside just enough to see the woman behind them. The woman looks up at her very frightened. In the background, Fat looks concerned. "It would appear that my former regent has pressing matters on his mind, so I won't keep you.") (She walks out of his room and he watches her go. "Thank you, Fat. Just seeing you for a few moments was enough to cheer me up.") (Fat pours himself some wine as the woman peaks around the edge of the tapestry. "The weight of authority on those slim shoulders! That poor girl will never learn to...ah, well...another sip of wine, my dear?")

NEXT: "A crown of Discontent!"





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YOU DARE NOT MISS
"THE COMING OF THE
OVERMAN!

PART TWO:

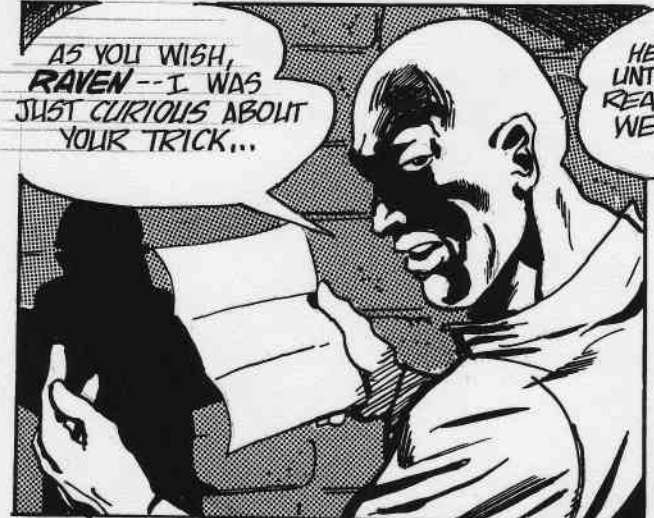
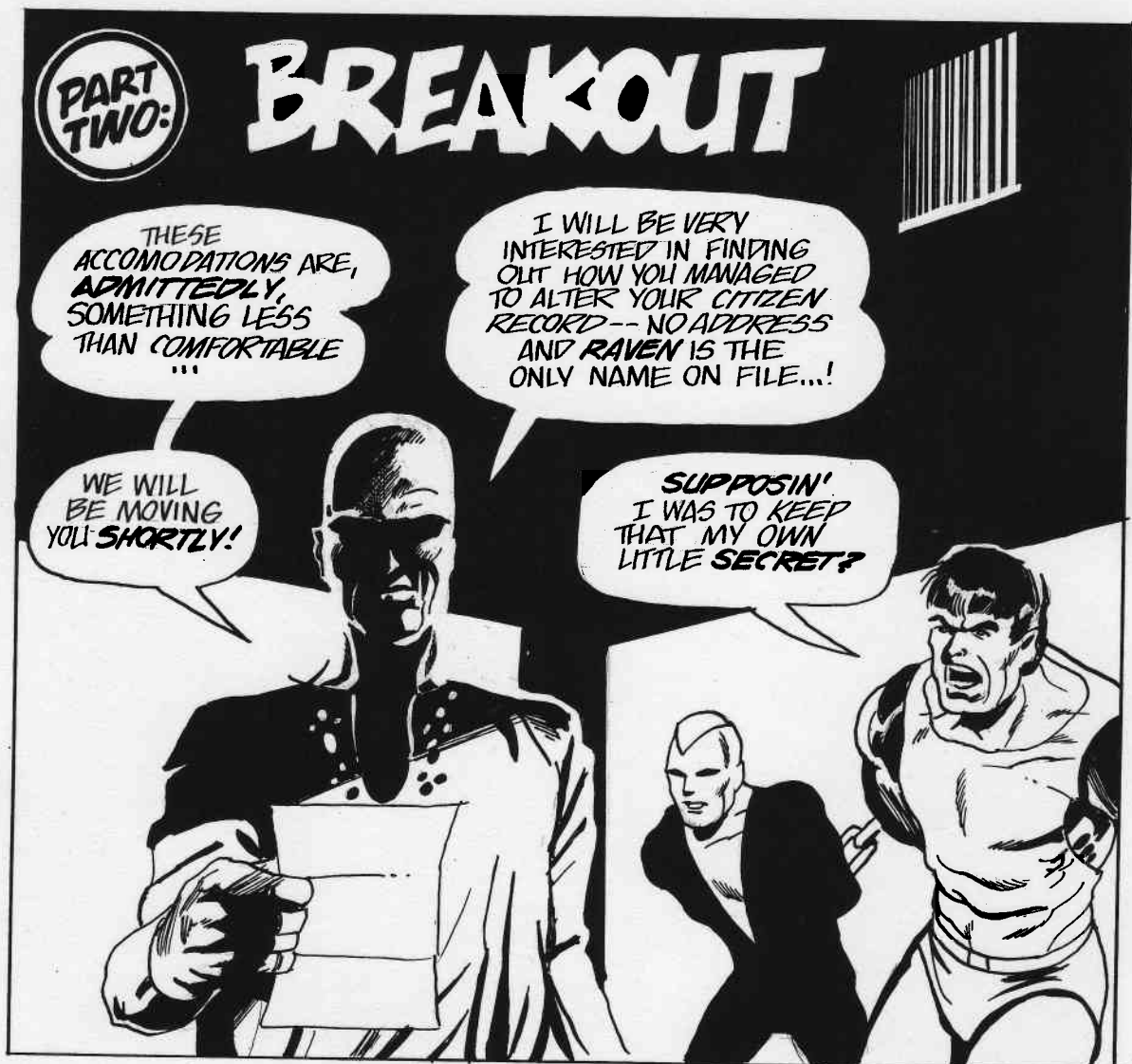
BREAKOUT

THESE ACCOMODATIONS ARE, ADMITTEDLY, SOMETHING LESS THAN COMFORTABLE ...

I WILL BE VERY INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT HOW YOU MANAGED TO ALTER YOUR CITIZEN RECORD-- NO ADDRESS AND RAVEN IS THE ONLY NAME ON FILE...!

WE WILL BE MOVING YOU **SHORTLY!**

SUPPOSIN' I WAS TO KEEP THAT MY OWN LITTLE **SECRET?**

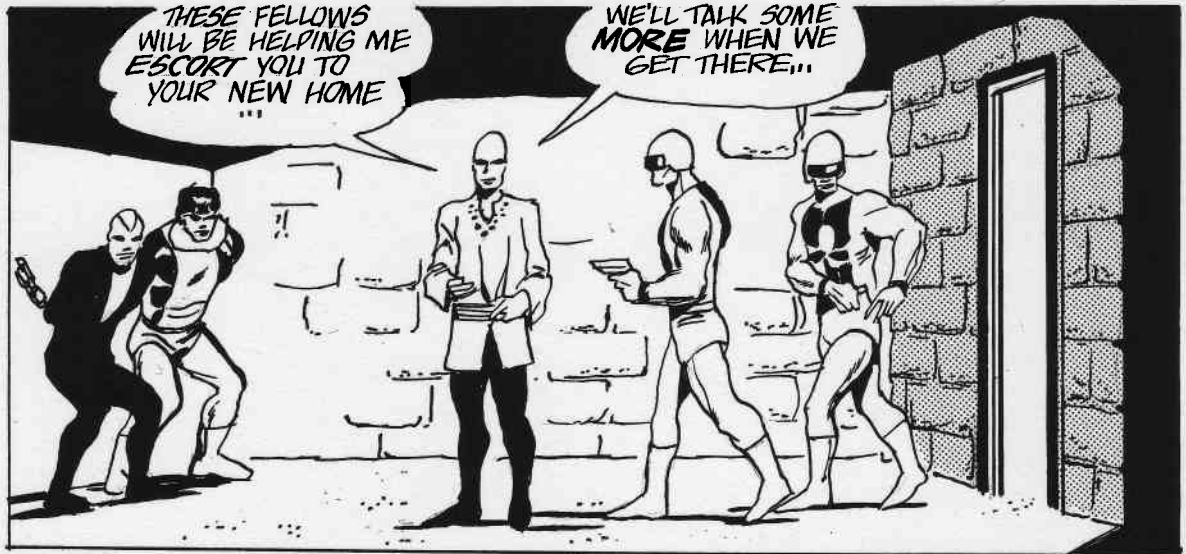


AS YOU WISH, **RAVEN**--I WAS JUST CURIOUS ABOUT YOUR TRICK...

BUT YOU WILL BE HELD IN **CUSTODY** UNTIL YOU TELL US YOUR REAL NAME... OR UNTIL WE ASSIGN YOU ONE ...

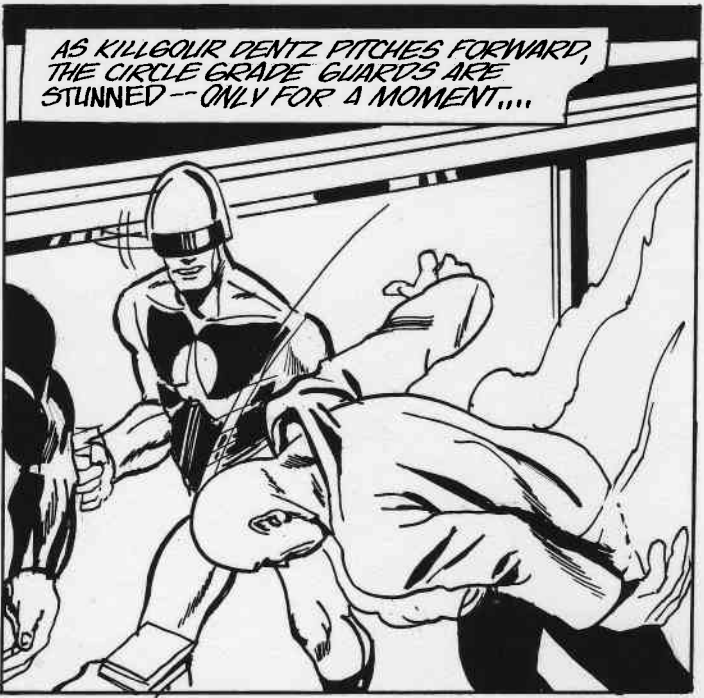


RAVEN and TROUT



A FIGURE MOVES TOWARD THE CAPTIVES AND THEIR GUARDS! THE UNIFORM IS NOT QUITE AS CLEAN AS REGULATION STYLE-- THE HELMET IS BATTERED-- BUT THE COUNTERFEIT IS A GOOD ONE AND HE IS WITHIN A FEW FEET BEFORE HIS PRESENCE IS FELT...







ONCE OUTSIDE,
RAVEN'S TASK
IS MUCH
SIMPLER...

A VETERAN OF MANY
BRUSHES WITH DEFEAT,
HE SLIDES EASILY INTO
THE ROLE OF ESCAPEE
...



HE SPOTS THE LADDER, AND ALMOST
IN THE SAME INSTANT, A SINGLE
JUMP BRINGS THE LOWEST RUNG
WITHIN HIS GRASP...

HIS EVERY SENSE IS DIRECTED
TOWARD A SUCCESSFUL ESCAPE...
SO THAT IT IS SEVERAL MOMENTS
BEFORE HE REALIZES THAT...



FOR SEVERAL MINUTES, RAVEN STARES
AT THE VACANT STREET, LINGERING ON
THE ROOFTOP FOR A DANGEROUSLY
LONG TIME -- AND STILL THERE IS NO SIGN
OF HIS ALLY --

...OVERMAN IS NO LONGER
BEHIND HIM...



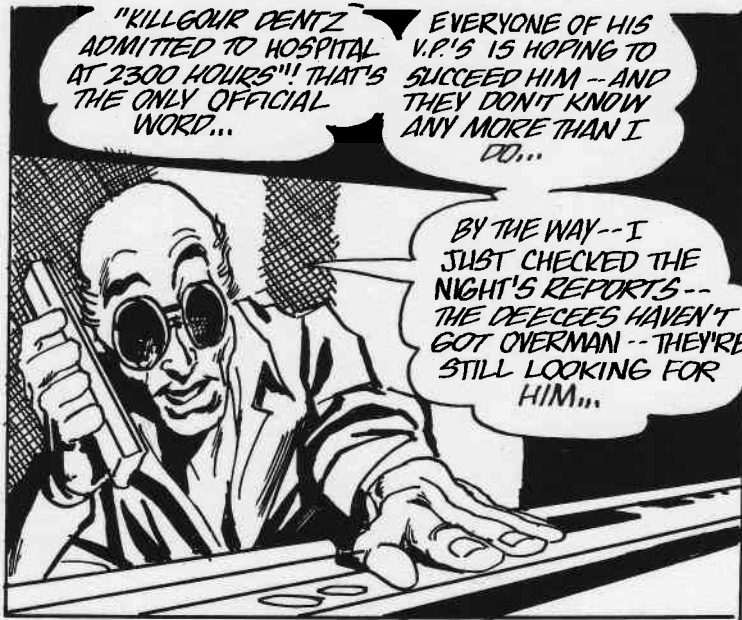
WHERE
THE BLAZES
DID HE
GO?

RAVEN AND ROBT

(16)

AN HOUR LATER, AT TROUT'S APARTMENT...





"KILLGOUR DENTZ ADMITTED TO HOSPITAL AT 2300 HOURS"! THAT'S THE ONLY OFFICIAL WORD...

EVERYONE OF HIS V.I.P.'S IS HOPING TO SUCCEED HIM -- AND THEY DON'T KNOW ANY MORE THAN I DO...

BY THE WAY -- I JUST CHECKED THE NIGHT'S REPORTS -- THE DEECEES HAVEN'T GOT OVERMAN -- THEY'RE STILL LOOKING FOR HIM...



SOMEBODY'S COMING -- I GOTTA GO!!!



WAITAMINNIT! WHATTAYA MEAN THEY HAVEN'T GOT...
...SNEET?... SNEET?...

...YOU CRUMB...



THEY... HAVEN'T GOT THE OVERMAN!...



WHAT ARE YOU YELLING ABOUT, NOW?



WE'VE GOT TO GET OVERMAN BACK, TROUT -- GOT TO FIND HIM

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT HIM THAT'S GOT DENTZ SPOOKED...

I DON'T KNOW WHAT SO SPECIAL ABOUT HIM -- BUT I'M SURE GONNA FIND OUT!...

Rosen and Trout

pg (18)

77-1-10

C'MON! WE'LL START LOOKING FOR 'IM DOWNTOWN!

OVERMAN? SURE-- BUT, WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?



THAT'S WHAT I'D LIKE TO KNOW! HIS HEAT-POWERS COULD BE REPLACED BY A STOLEN BURSTER ...

BUT, STILL, OLD DENTZ ORGANIZES A GIANT MANHUNT FOR HIM-- USING ALL THE AVAILABLE DECEES...

...ONCE CAPTURED HE KATES CIRCLE GRADE GUARDS ...



EVERY WAY I'VE TRIED TO FIGURE IT, IT DOESN'T ADD UP...!



OVERMAN IS THE KEY, THOUGH -- AND I'LL BE A WHOLE LOT HAPPIER IF I FIND HIM BEFORE DENTZ AND HIS BOYS DO...!

WHEAT 10/17/87

19

RAVEN THINKS BACK TO HOW IT ALL BEGAN-- WITH A **SCREAMING** WHINE, IN A, SLIPPENLY, SMOKE-FILLED SKY... HE REMEMBERS THE GRINDING IMPACT OF METAL-ON-SAND, AS THE CRAFT SKIPPED TO A HALT...

...A TEST FLIGHT IN THE STARGAZER PROGRAM? ABRUPTLY THE REAR HATCH HAD BLOWN, AND A SLIM FIGURE SPRANG FORTH TOWARD HIM-- HE WAS STILL SEVERAL FEET AWAY WHEN THE SHIP EXPLODED IN AN ORANGE BALL OF FLAME AWARE OF THE PENALTY FOR DAMAGING A STARGAZER, RAVEN THOUGHT "THAT GUN'S GONNA NEED **PROTECTION**..."



RAVEN and TRUET

88/20

TAKEN BACK TO RAVEN'S APARTMENT, THE STRANGER HAD AWAKENED HOURS LATER, KNOWING ONLY HIS NAME...



...OVERMAN!

IT'S LIKE A JIG-SAW PUZZLE, TROUT ...WE HAVE THE PIECES-- WE JUST HAVE TO FIT THEM TOGETHER!

BEFORE DENTZ DOES!



SPEAKING OF WHOM -- AT A NEARBY TOP SECURITY MEDICAL FACILITY...

NURSE! I MUST SPEAK WITH COLONEL FIELDS OF DEFENSE COMMAND!



MR DENTZ! YOU'VE HAD A VERY CLOSE CALL -- YOU MUST BE STILL, IF...



YOU WILL BRING COLONEL FIELDS TO THIS ROOM WITHIN THE HOUR -- WITHOUT FAIL!...

...OR I'LL HAVE YOU FITTED AS A HOOD ORNAMENT ON THE NEXT STARGAZER FLIGHT....





AND SO, WITHIN THE HOUR ...

COLONEL DEREK FIELDS REPORTING AS ORDERED, SIR!

I'VE LEARNED MY LESSON, FIELDS ... THE OVERMAN IS TOO DANGEROUS TO TAKE LIGHTLY!...

I WANT YOUR BEST MEN LOOKING FOR HIM...



I WANT HIM FOUND, FIELDS-- USE FORCE, IF NEEDED TO CAPTURE HIM! AND IF YOU CAN'T CAPTURE HIM...



SIR?



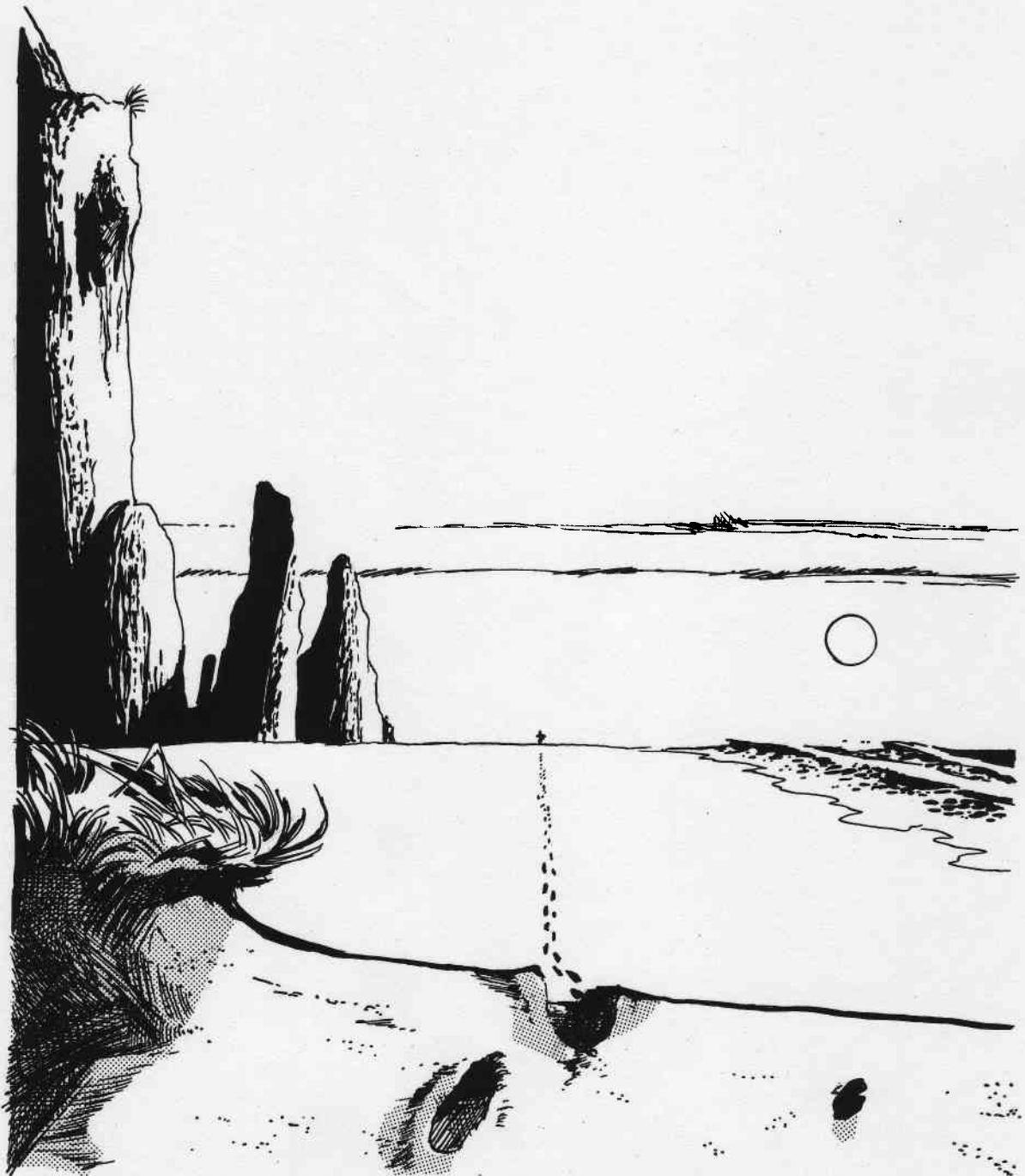
IF YOU CAN'T CAPTURE HIM, FIELDS-- I-- WANT YOU TO KILL HIM ...

RAVEN and TROTT

PG 22

THE WORDS TURN OVER IN HIS MIND AS HE WALKS -- ODDLY COMPELLING WORDS -- WORDS MORE INTRIGUING WITH EACH PASSING MOMENT! RAVEN HAD USED THE WORDS TO DESCRIBE -- WHAT WAS THE NAME? -- DANTEZ... DENTZ! -- TO DESCRIBE DENTZ. "HE ACTS LIKE THE BLASTED KING OF EARTH"... HE FEELS HIS PULSE QUICKEN "BLASTED KING OF EARTH"... THE CLOAK SWIRLS AND SNAPS AROUND HIM "KING OF EARTH" -- KING... OF EARTH..."

REMARKABLE WORDS -- REMARKABLE WORDS, INDEED!...



RAVEN & TROUT

pg (23)



HE PAUSES TO REST, AND DECIDES TO PRACTICE. PROJECTING NARROW-FOCUS BEAMS...

O-V-E-R-M... THE BEAM TRACES ITS WHITE-HOT PATH ON THE FACE OF THE STONE...

SUDDEN REALIZATION! THE GERM OF AN IDEA, THAT HAS BEEN FORMING, EXPLODES, FULL-BLOWN IN HIS MIND!...



THE BEAM FLASHES AGAIN! IT IS DIRECTED, THIS TIME, WITH GREATER CARE...



HE LOOKS UPON HIS HANDIWORK FOR A MOMENT, AND, SMILING, RISES TO LEAVE...



FOR THERE IS MUCH TO DO!

OVERMAN-KING OF EARTH

NEXT: TRIAL BY FIRE!

LAVEN and TROUT

1824