



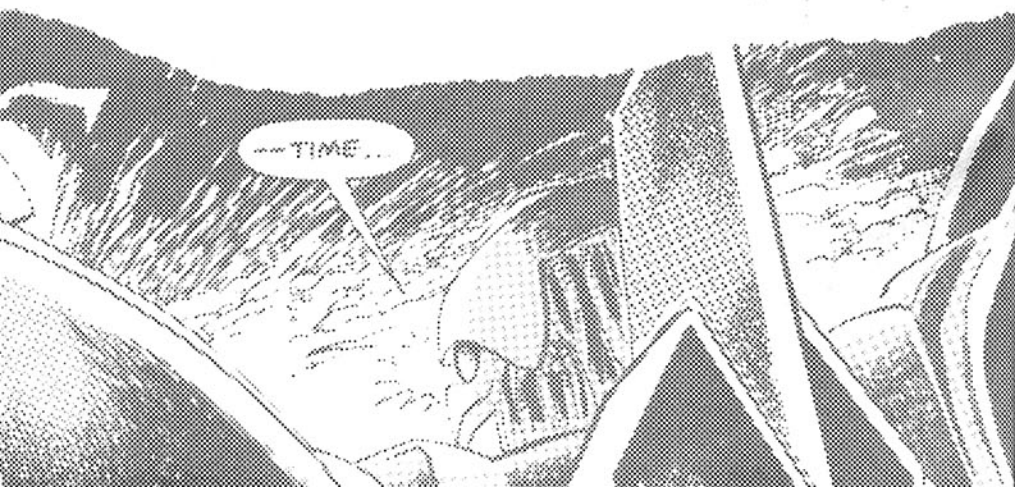
## MECHA "TRIANGLE"

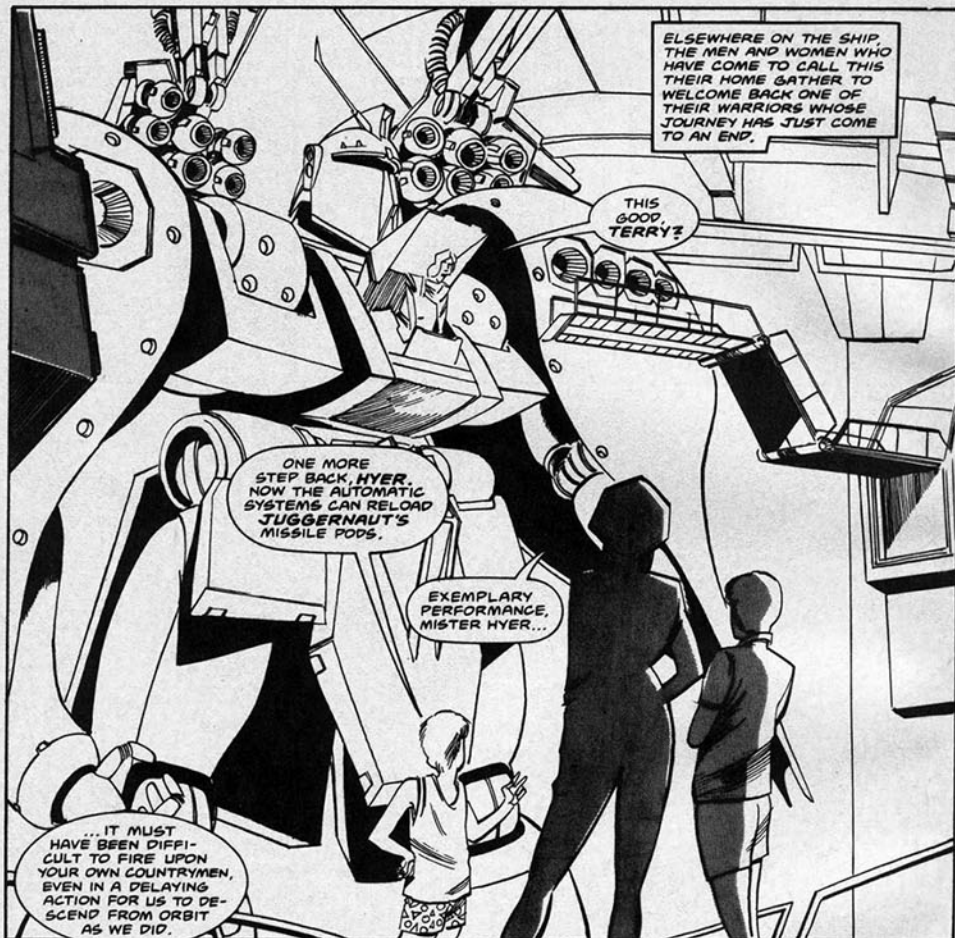
story TIM ELDRED

art HARRISON FONG and ROBERT CARACOL

letters PAT BROSSAU

Powerful alien robots are discovered on Earth, activated by and linked to the touch of their discoverers. With such technology in human hands, global tensions explode, but the alien machines are soon needed to face an invasion from the stars. The robots are severely damaged in the first assault and retreat into space with their human pilots in the immense orbital fortress, *Deephold*. Soon, a new robot arrives from space piloted by a dying alien who has made mental contact with the youngest of the crew, Terry Pierce. Terry announces that more robots are to be found on Earth, the first to be located in the Caribbean. Upon reentry, *Deephold* is attacked by Air Force interceptors and is last seen crash-landing into the ocean's depths.





ELSEWHERE ON THE SHIP, THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE COME TO CALL THIS THEIR HOME GATHER TO WELCOME BACK ONE OF THEIR WARRIORS WHOSE JOURNEY HAS JUST COME TO AN END.

THIS GOOD, TERRY?

ONE MORE STEP BACK, HYER. NOW THE AUTOMATIC SYSTEMS CAN RELOAD JUGGERNAUT'S MISSILE PODS.

EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE, MISTER HYER...

...IT MUST HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT TO FIRE UPON YOUR OWN COUNTRYMEN, EVEN IN A DELAYING ACTION FOR US TO DESCEND FROM ORBIT AS WE DID.



WASN'T ALL THAT HARD, HANA, BELIEVE ME...



...AND THEY PROBABLY DIDN'T BUY OUR FAKE SPLASH-DOWN EITHER. I KNOW THE ARMY TOO WELL. THEY'RE TOO DAMNED PERSISTENT TO WRITE OFF THAT EASILY.



HE'S RIGHT. OUR SPECIES HAS ALWAYS BEEN SINGLEMINDED IN ITS PURSUITS, ESPECIALLY THE SELF-DESTRUCTIVE ONES.

BUT WE'VE GAINED TIME. WE'LL USE IT WISELY.



FATHER, COULD YOU BRING MARTE TO ME? SHE HAS TO PREPARE. THIS IS HER TIME.

YEAH, FINE.

I'M NOT MUCH USE AROUND HERE, AM I?

PEOPLE SAY THE OCEAN IS LIKE SPACE. OUR ASTRONAUTS EVEN TRAINED HERE, BUT NOW THAT I'VE BEEN TO SPACE... I KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.

SPACE IS A CRUEL, DEAD THING. THERE IS NOTHING TO SHARE, NOTHING TO GIVE COMFORT. FOR ALL OUR TECHNOLOGY, WE'RE STILL ITS VICTIM.

THE SEA, BY CONTRAST, IS A FRAGILE, GENTLE BODY. IT WAS THE PLACE OF OUR BIRTH, YET WE HAVE THE POWER TO DESTROY IT FOREVER... LIKE A REBELLIOUS CHILD TURNING ON ITS MOTHER.



THE MORE I SEE OF MAN'S CAPACITY FOR VIOLENCE, THE MORE I BELIEVE THIS IS WHAT WILL HAPPEN, KENNETH. AND SPACE WILL NOT BE A COMFORTING SURROGATE PARENT.

MARTE?



HU--JACK PIERCE! DON'T STARTLE ME LIKE THAT!

I'M SORRY, THE MIDGET MASTER-MIND WANTS TO SEE YOU.

HUH, FINE WAY TO TALK ABOUT YOUR OWN BOY.



I DON'T THINK I HAVE A BOY ANY MORE. HE GREW UP WHILE WE WERE TRYING TO RESCUE HIM FROM THE ARMY.\*

HE KNOWS MORE ABOUT THE WORLD NOW THAN I DO.

IT'S SCARY.

\*SEE MECHA #2-6.



THE INVASION IS CHANGING US ALL, JACK. BEING AROUND THOSE ROBOTS... HAVING ALL THAT POWER IN OUR HANDS...

WE'RE DOING THINGS NOW THAT WE'VE NEVER DREAMED.

REMEMBER THAT SHARK I KILLED WHEN WE WERE IN THE MANTA ROBOT? IT'S BEEN ON MY MIND A LOT SINCE WE CAME BACK DOWN HERE. I HAD NO RIGHT...

I'VE STARTED KEEPING THESE NOTES... SO THAT OTHERS MIGHT BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND THAT.

COME ON... YOU CAN'T DWELL ON THE PAST. IT'LL BURY YOU.

\*SEE MECHA #5.



DON'T--

I... I MEAN...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME JACK. I JUST HAVE TO WORK THIS OUT FOR MYSELF.

SURE.

OKAY.



SHALL WE?

RIGHT BEHIND YOU.

KENNETH?



NOW HERE'S THE SITUATION. WE'RE ENTERING A STRONG MAGNETIC FIELD.

THE SHIP'S INSTRUMENTS WON'T BE AFFECTED BY IT, SO WE'LL BE SAFE AS LONG AS WE STAY INSIDE. BUT ONE OF YOU WILL HAVE TO GO OUT THERE AND LOOK AROUND. YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO USE A COMPASS, SO IT WILL BE DIFFICULT.

THERE IS ONLY ONE OF US QUALIFIED TO DO THIS SAFELY.



PROFESSOR BJORNSETH... IS YOUR DIVING EQUIPMENT STILL USABLE?

I'VE BEEN CHECKING IT EVERY DAY SINCE WE'VE BEEN ON THIS SHIP.

I'M READY.

TERRY-- THIS IS CRAZY. DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE ASKING HER TO RISK?



I'M ASKING HER TO FIND OUR NEXT ROBOT, DAD.

THAT'S WORTH THE RISK.



THEN I WOULD LIKE TO GO. I AM PREPARED... TO TAKE THE RISK.

NO, MIAKO.

I APPRECIATE THE OFFER, BUT WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, YOU'RE NOT A MARINE BIOLOGIST.

I WON'T LET YOU FACE A DEATH MEANT FOR ME.

I ENVY YOU.



SHE ENVIES ME... I DON'T.

LITTLE TERRY'S JUDGEMENTS HAVE BEEN PRETTY ASTUTE SO FAR...





THE TWISTED, SMOTHERED WRECKS SEEM TO GO ON FOR MILES BELOW HER, BUT FINALLY...

THIS MUST BE IT. THE HUMMING IS STRONGEST HERE.

A CRATER. HOW APT. I FOUND MY ROBOT MANTA IN A CRATER LIKE THIS ONE.



SHOULD I CALL THIS ONE MANTA II?

NAH. NEVER DID LIKE SEQUELS.

MARTE BJORNSETH IS ALMOST SURPRISED AT HER OWN CASUAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE HUGE ALIEN MACHINE BELOW HER.

BUT AFTER REMINDING HERSELF OF HOW LITTLE SHE KNOWS ABOUT THESE STELLAR GLADIATORS AND THEIR ORIGIN, SHE REALIZES THAT A LIFETIME OF RESEARCH INTO EARTH'S OWN MYSTERIES HAS PREPARED HER FOR THIS.



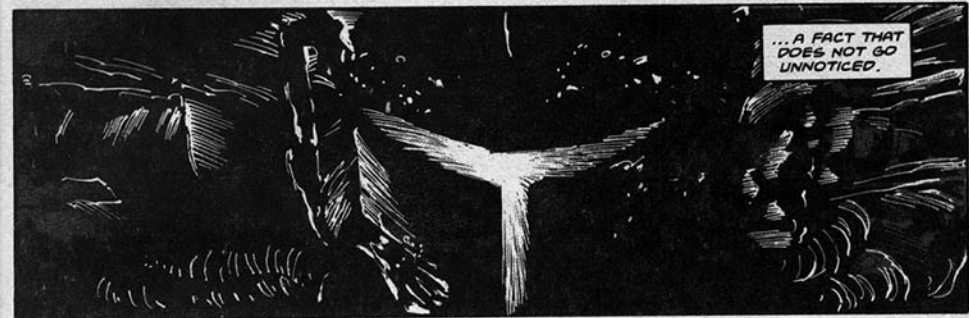
NO RUST OR CORROSION AT ALL... AND AFTER GOD KNOWS HOW LONG IT'S BEEN SITTING IN THIS SALT WATER.

I HOPE THIS WAR OF OURS ENDS SOON.

I'D LOVE TO GET THIS THING BACK TO A REAL LABORATORY.



THE BLINDING FLASH FROM THE MURKY CRATER ANNOUNCES A NEW, IR-REVERSIBLE "PAIRING" OF MACHINE AND PILOT.



...A FACT THAT DOES NOT GO UNNOTICED.



HMMM... THE CONTROLS ARE VERY SIMILAR.

YES, IT'S ALL... WAIT A SECOND...

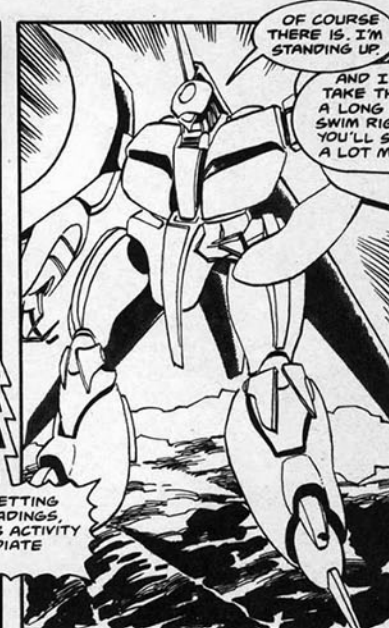
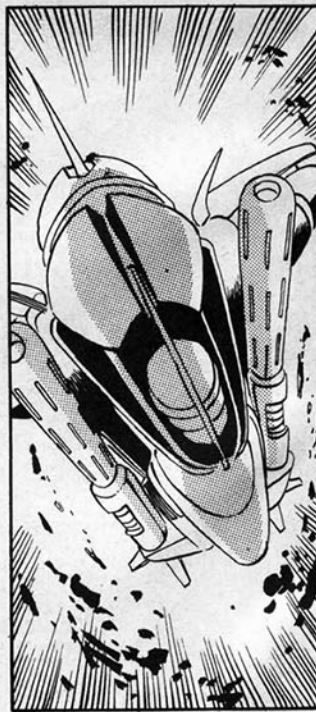
SHOULD BE ABLE TO COPE WITH THEM.

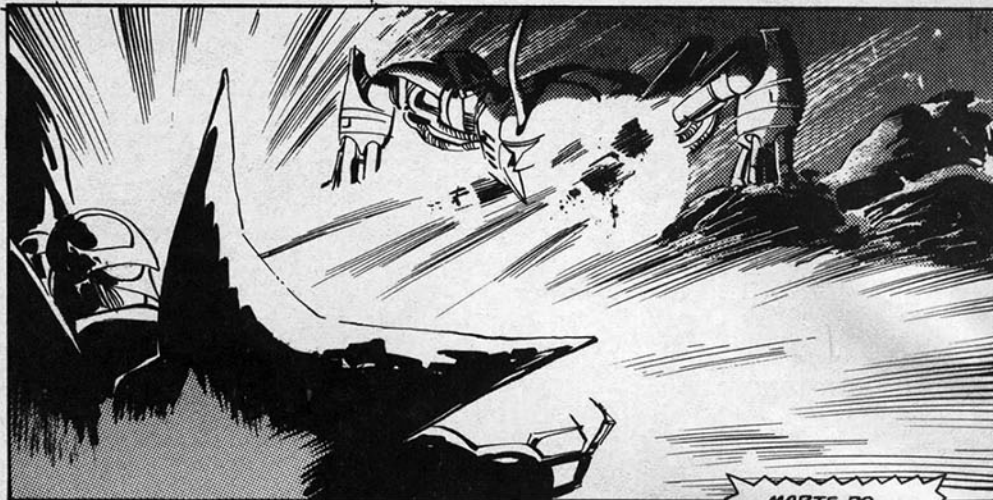
WITHIN MOMENTS, POWER AND OXYGEN PUMPS ARE LOCATED, AND SO...



DON'T RECOGNIZE THAT SWITCH, AND THE COMPASS IS GOING CRAZY...

THAT'S IT!!





MARTE, DO  
YOU COPY?  
TERRY RECOG-  
NIZES HOSTILE  
PRESENCE! MARTE,  
GET OUT OF THERE  
NOW!



**MARTE!  
RESPOND!!**