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ROGUE PLANET

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Rogue Planet /rohg plan-it/ n. A celestial body not not bound to a star. Expelled from the planetary system in which they formed. Abandoned.

ROGUE PLANET

CHAPTER 01 PLANETFALL

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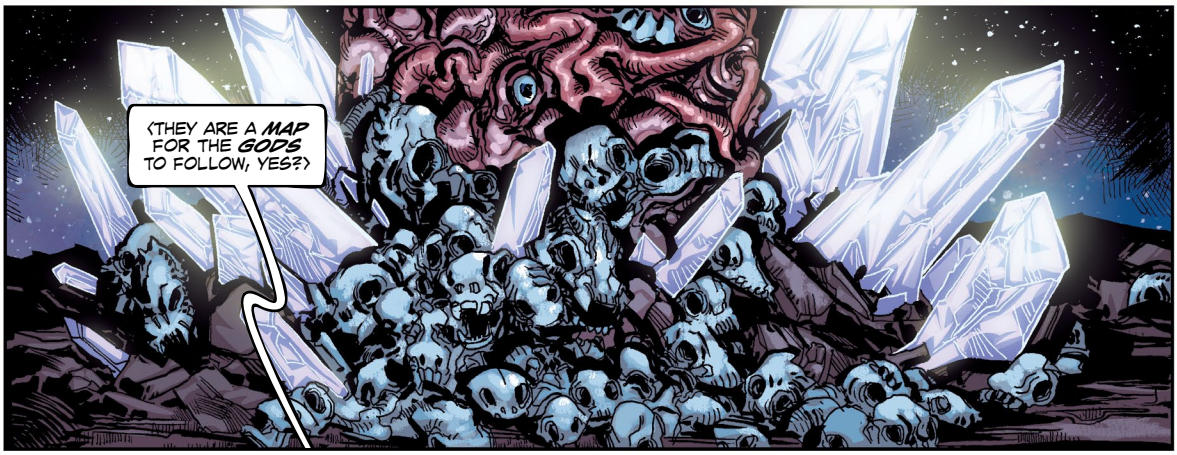
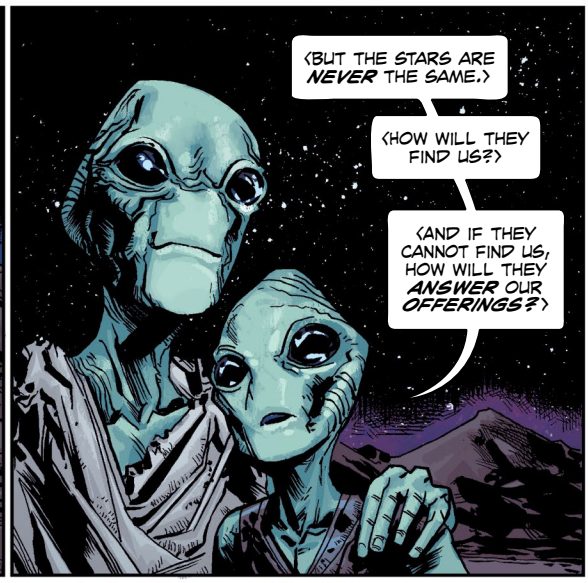
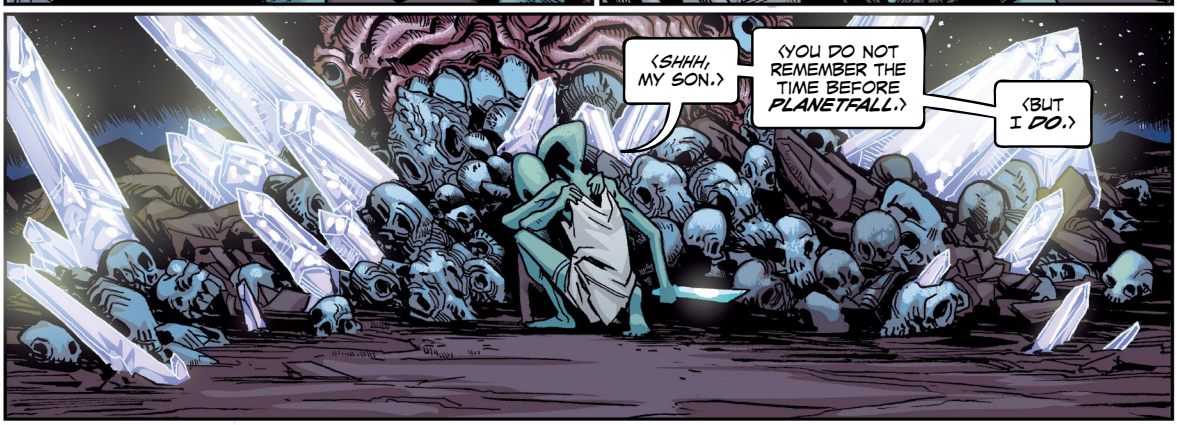
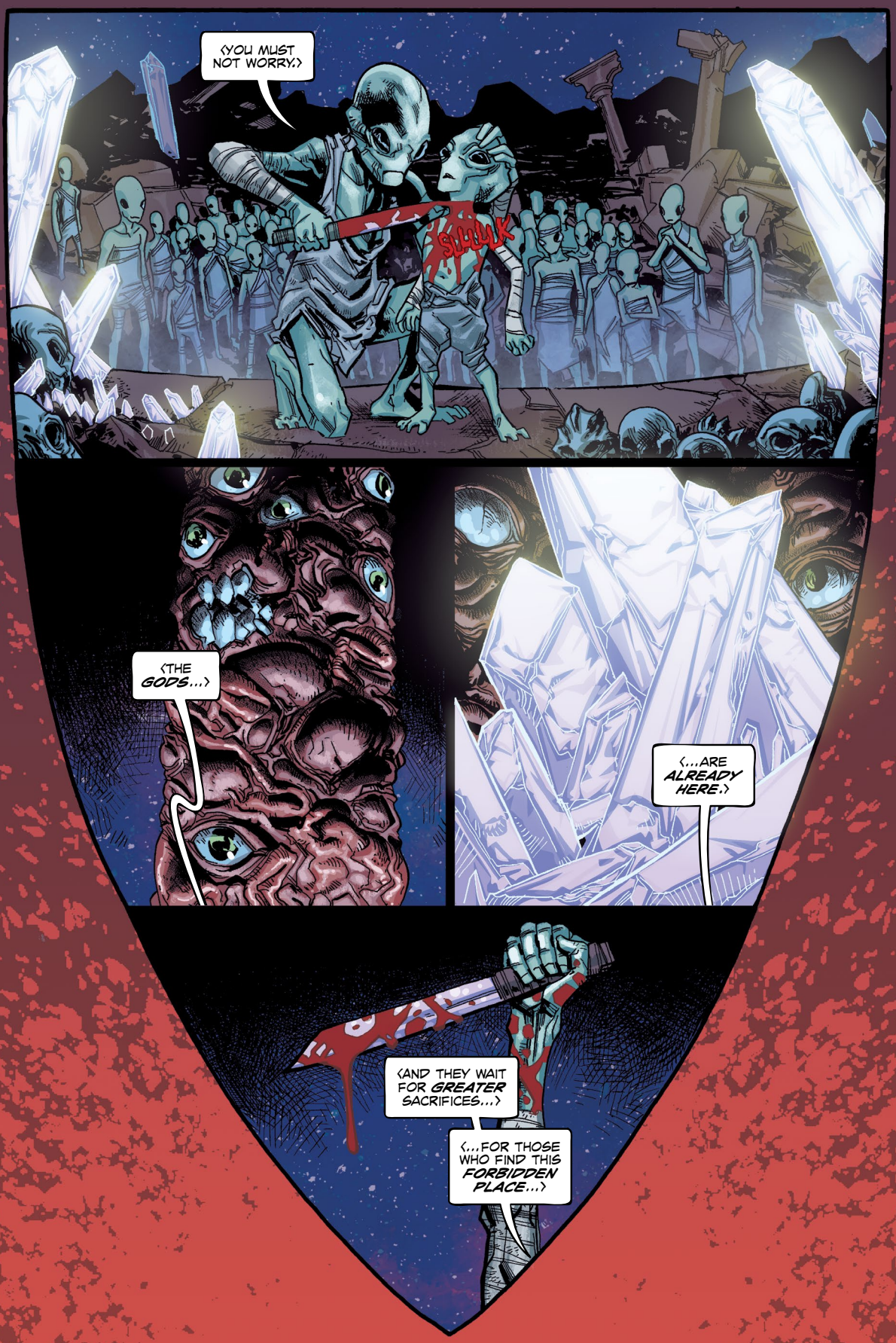
‹THE STARS, PADWA.*›
*TRANSLATED FROM ALIEN SPEECH. --ED.


‹THEY ARE A MAP FOR THE GODS TO FOLLOW, YES?›

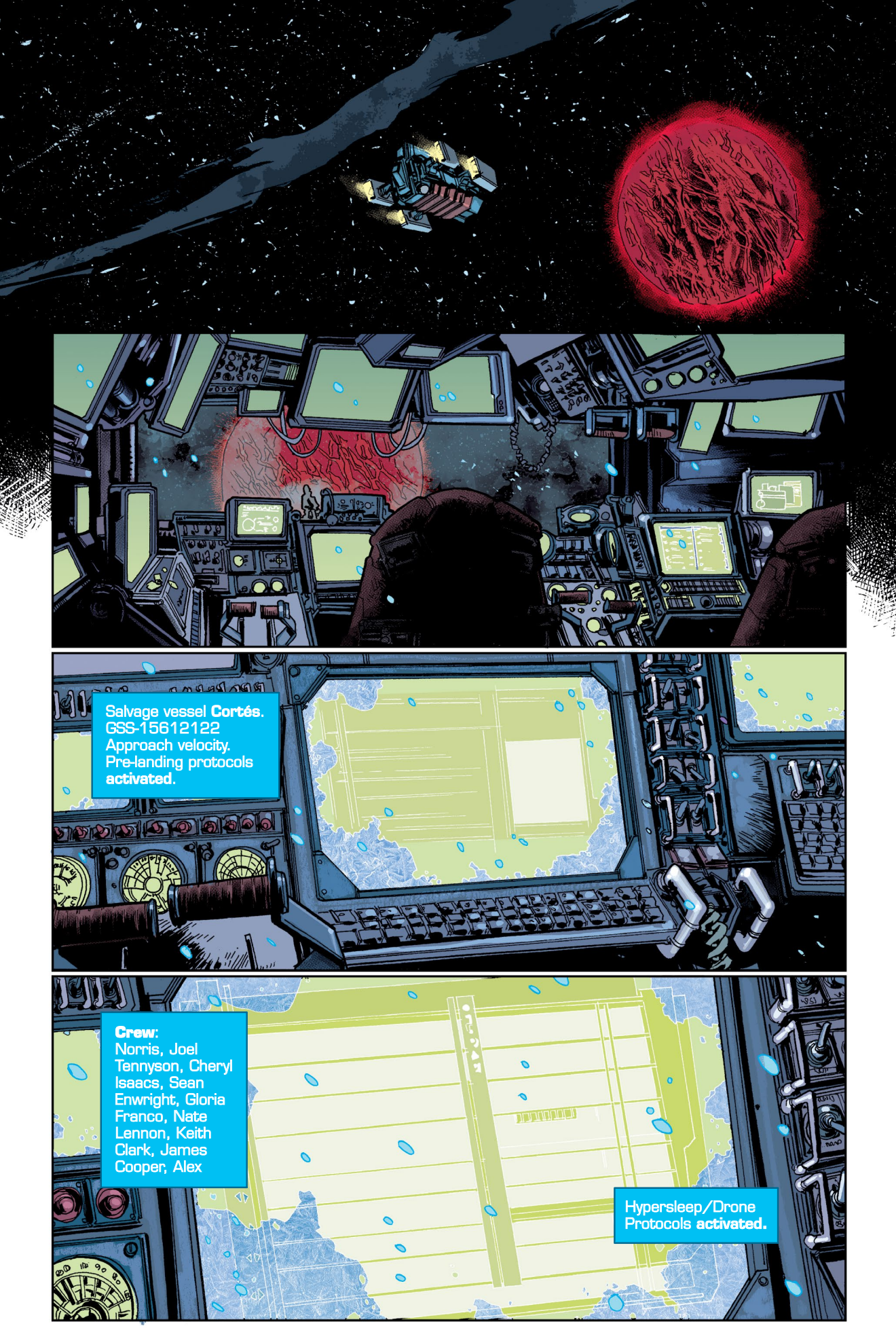
‹THAT IS RIGHT, MY CHILD.›
‹I HAVE SUCH A SMART SON.›


‹BUT THE STARS ARE NEVER THE SAME.›
‹HOW WILL THEY FIND US?›
‹AND IF THEY CANNOT FIND US, HOW WILL THEY ANSWER OUR OFFERINGS?›


‹SHHH, MY SON.›
‹YOU DO NOT REMEMBER THE TIME BEFORE PLANETFALL.›
‹BUT I DO.›

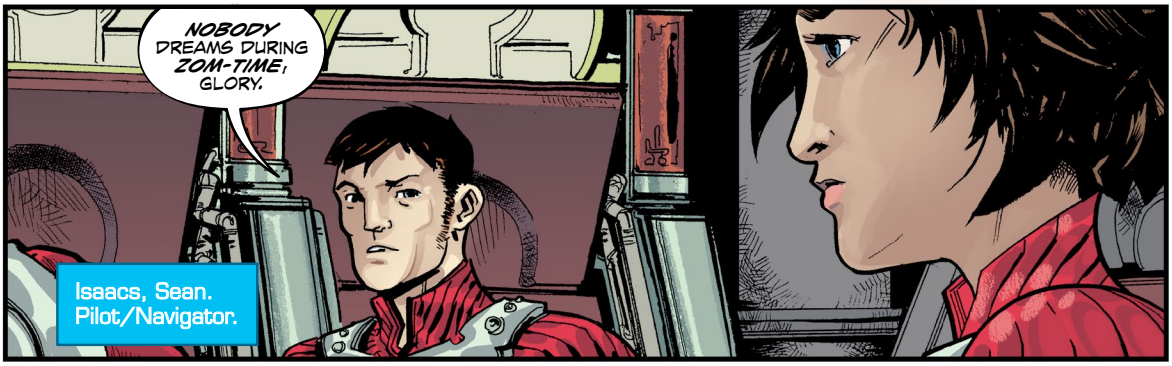

‹YOU MUST NOT WORRY.›
SLLLLK
‹THE GODS...›
‹...ARE ALREADY HERE.›
‹AND THEY WAIT FOR GREATER SACRIFICES...›
‹...FOR THOSE WHO FIND THIS FORBIDDEN PLACE...›

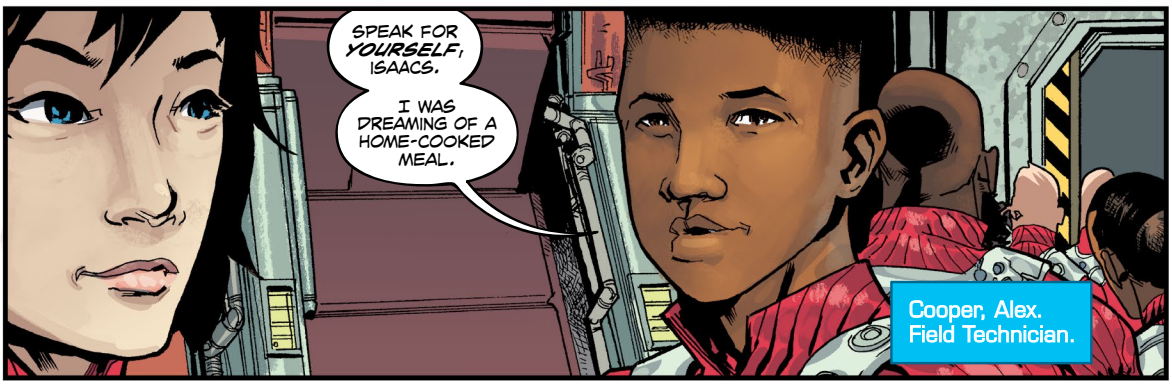
‹"...BY TRAVELING THE *SAME PATH* THEY ONCE NAVIGATED."›

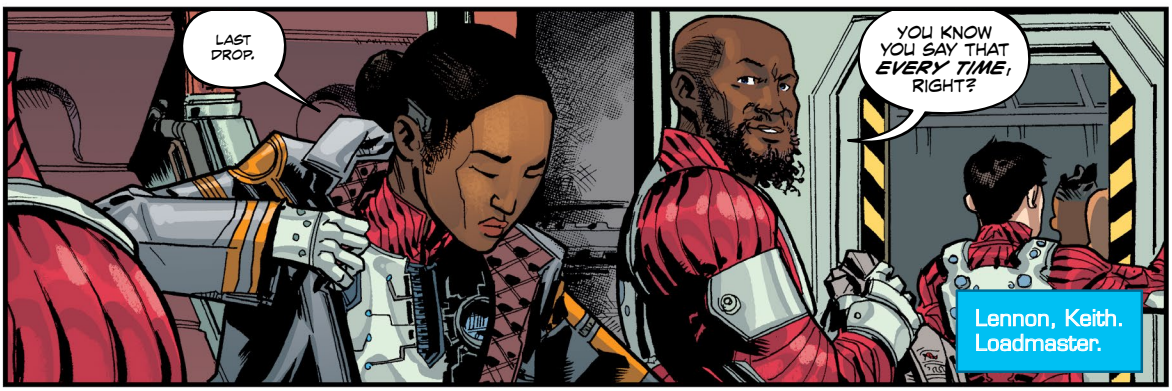

Salvage vessel **Cortés**.
GSS-15612122
Approach velocity.
Pre-landing protocols **activated**.
Crew:
Norris, Joel
Tennyson, Cheryl
Isaacs, Sean
Enwright, Gloria
Franco, Nate
Lennon, Keith
Clark, James
Cooper, Alex
Hypersleep/Drone
Protocols **activated.**

WHRRR-CHK
WHRRR-CHK
WRRR

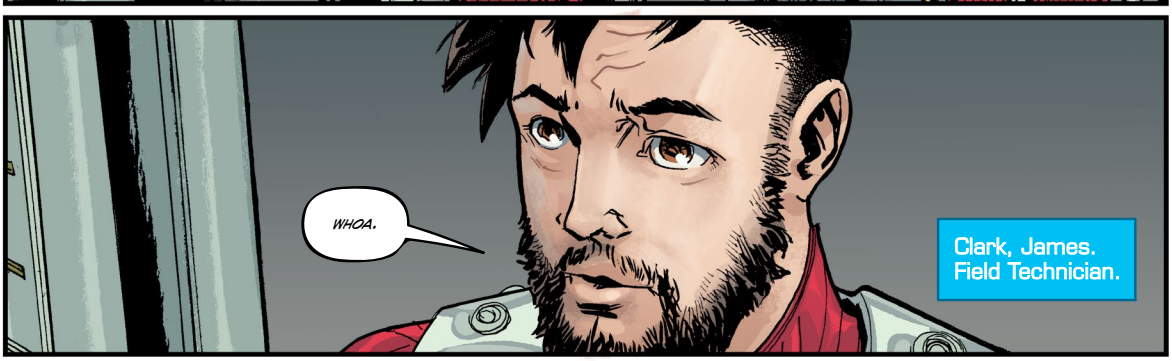
UP AND AT 'EM, FOLKS.
OUR BRAINS HAVE BEEN TURNED OFF LONG ENOUGH, DON'T YOU THINK?
Norris, Joel. Captain.
WHAT THE--
IS THAT SNOW?
WHY THE HELL IS IT SNOWING ON MY SHIP?
MIGHT BE A GLITCH IN LIFE SUPPORT. THE SCRUBBERS, MAYBE.
ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A BIT TWEAKED ON THIS BUCKET.
Franco, Nate. Mechanic.
WHATEVER IT IS, FRANCO, I DON'T LIKE IT.
GET IT FIXED.
I... DREAMED OF SNOW.
Enwright, Gloria. Medical.

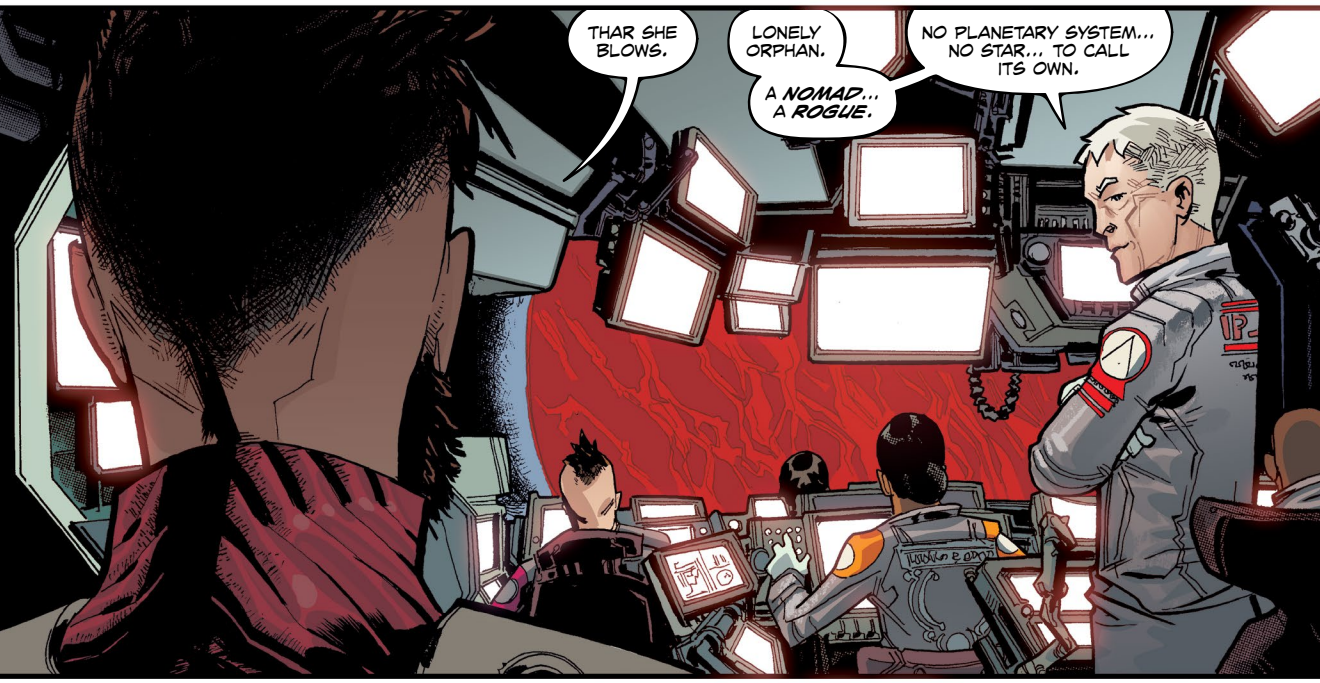

NOBODY DREAMS DURING ZOM-TIME, GLORY.
Isaacs, Sean. Pilot/Navigator.


SPEAK FOR YOURSELF, ISAACS.
I WAS DREAMING OF A HOME-COOKED MEAL.
Cooper, Alex. Field Technician.


LAST DROP.
YOU KNOW YOU SAY THAT EVERY TIME, RIGHT?
Lennon, Keith. Loadmaster.

YEAH... WELL, ONE DAY IT MIGHT COME TRUE.
LIKE GLORY'S SNOW.


WHOA.
Clark, James. Field Technician.

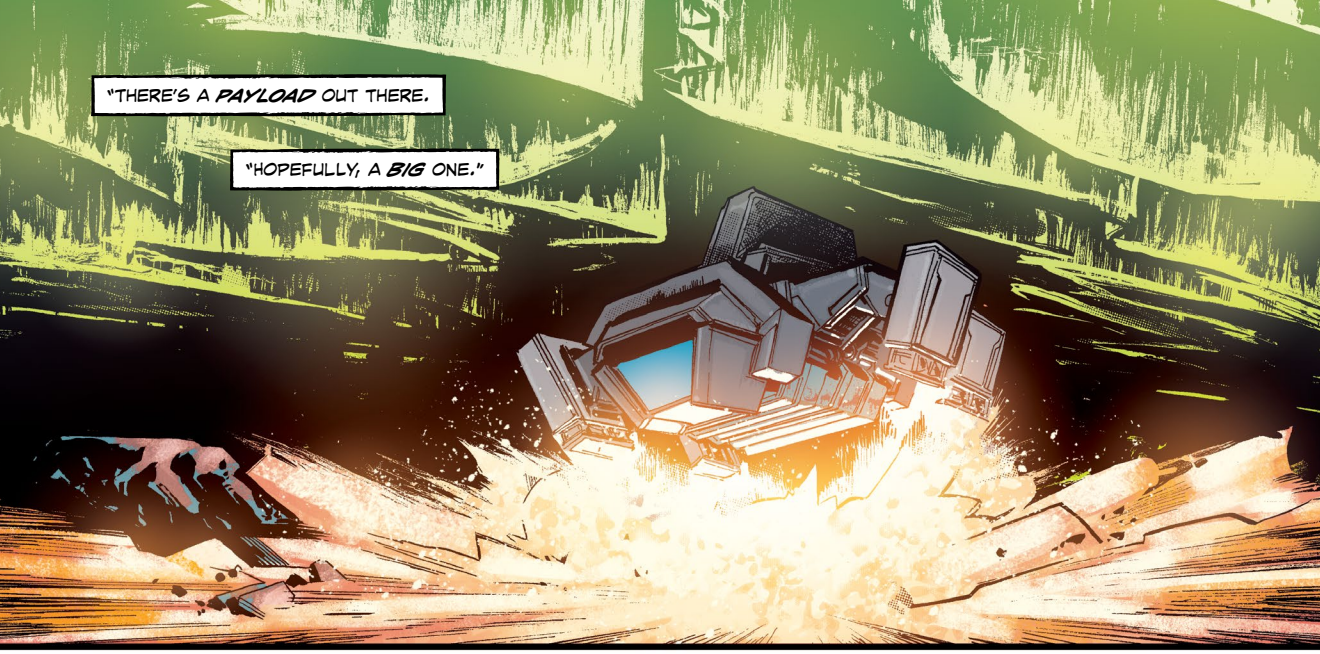

THAR SHE BLOWS.
LONELY ORPHAN.
A NOMAD... A ROGUE.
NO PLANETARY SYSTEM... NO STAR... TO CALL ITS OWN.

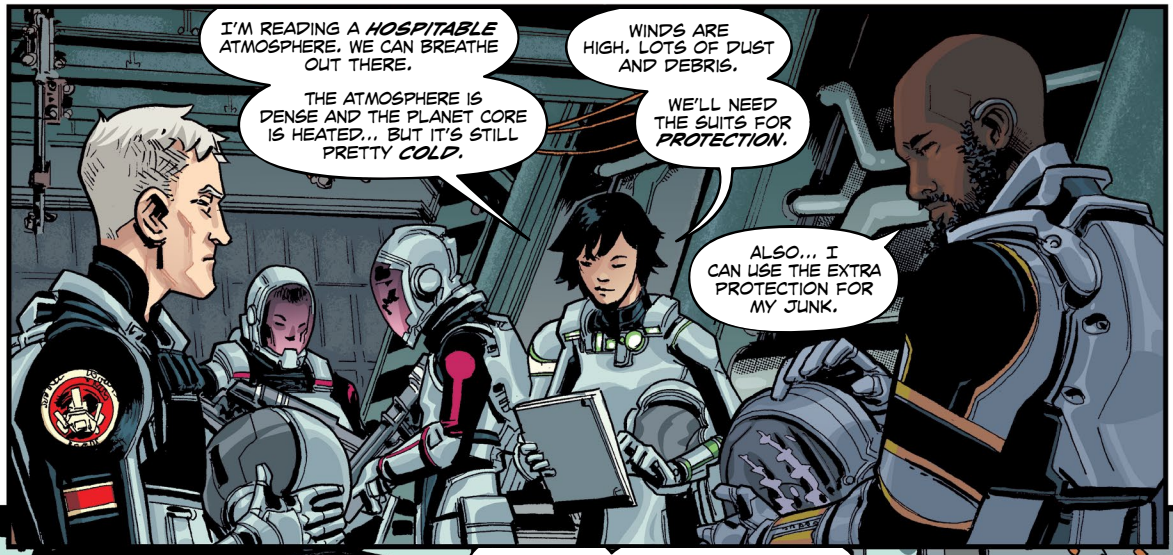
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
WE CAN'T BE THE ONLY SALVAGE CREW TO PICK UP THE SIGNAL.
WE'RE THE ONLY OPERATION ANYWHERE NEARBY.

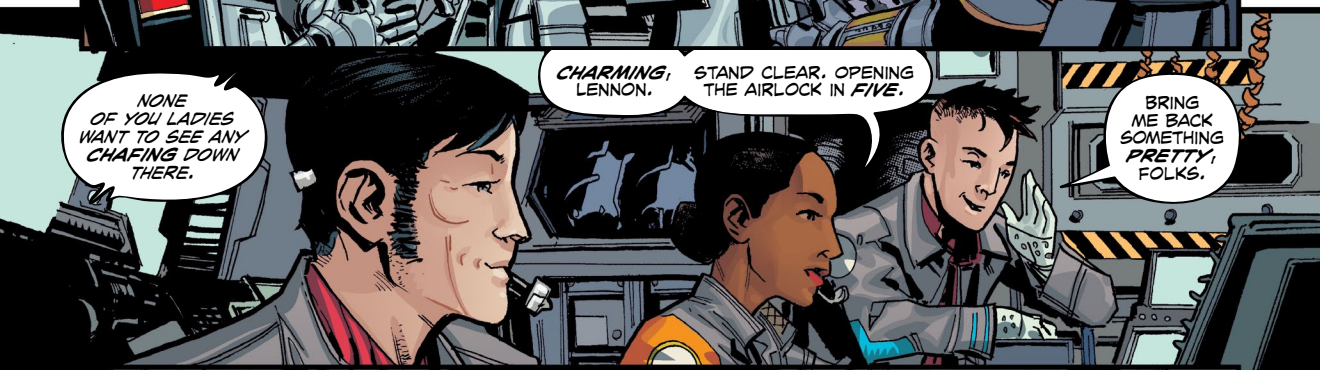
THE ONLY LOGGED OP.
PLANET COULD BE CRAWLING WITH POACHERS.

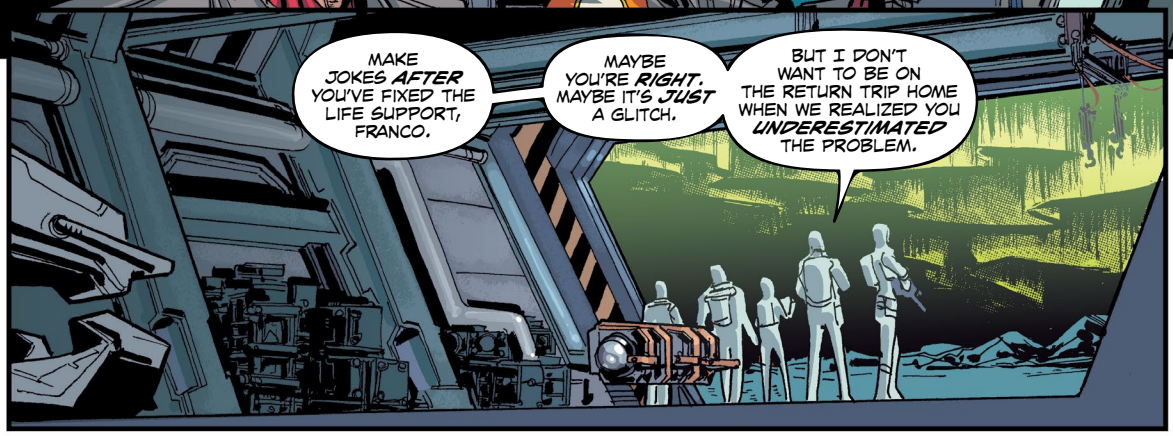
C'MON, JIMMY.
LET'S PREP THE WEAPONS.

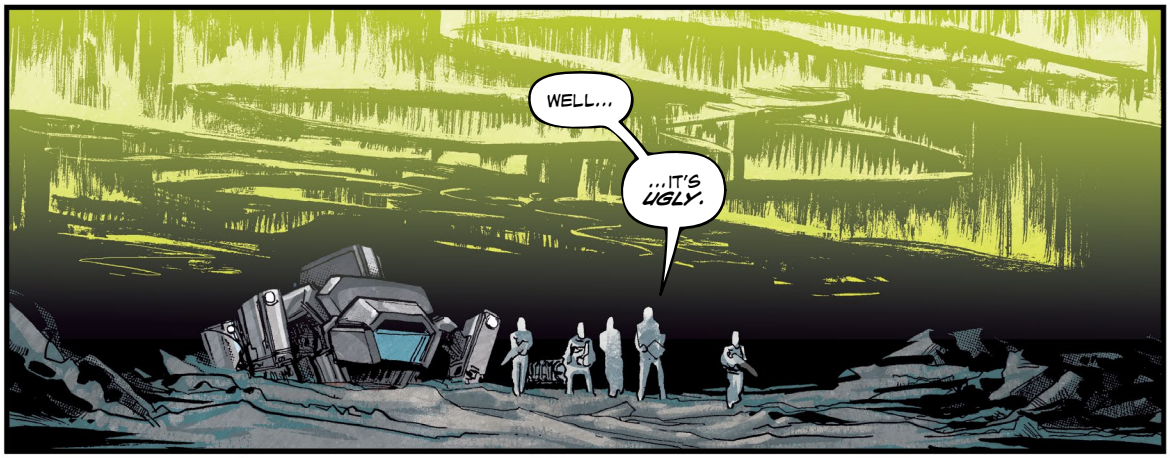
BETTER BE WORTH IT.
YOU KNOW HOW IT'S SUPPOSED TO WORK. THE TRANSMISSION'S NOT SPECIFIC.
BUT IT'S SPECIFIC ENOUGH.

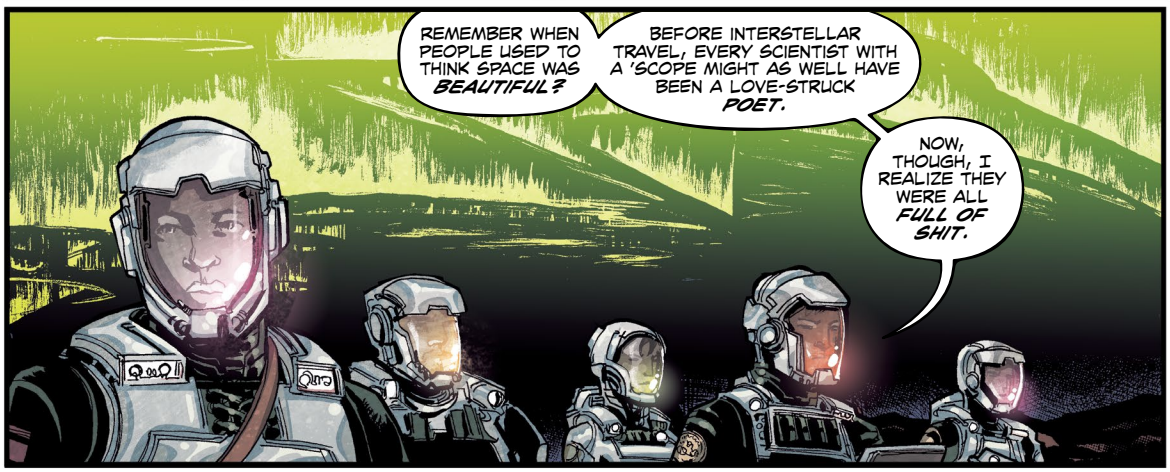

"THERE'S A PAYLOAD OUT THERE.
"HOPEFULLY, A BIG ONE."

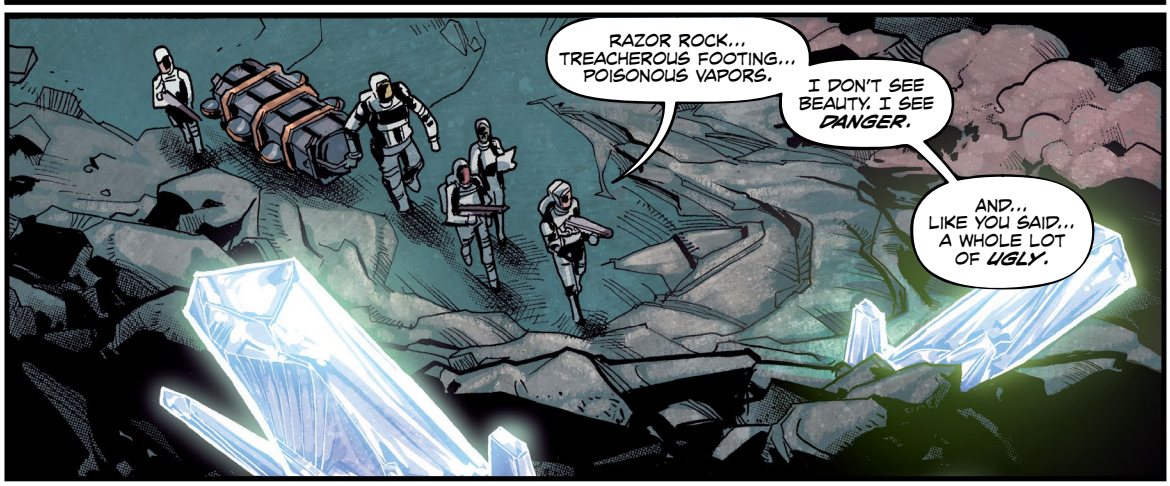

I'M READING A HOSPITABLE ATMOSPHERE. WE CAN BREATHE OUT THERE.
THE ATMOSPHERE IS DENSE AND THE PLANET CORE IS HEATED... BUT IT'S STILL PRETTY COLD.
WINDS ARE HIGH. LOTS OF DUST AND DEBRIS.
WE'LL NEED THE SUITS FOR PROTECTION.
ALSO... I CAN USE THE EXTRA PROTECTION FOR MY JUNK.

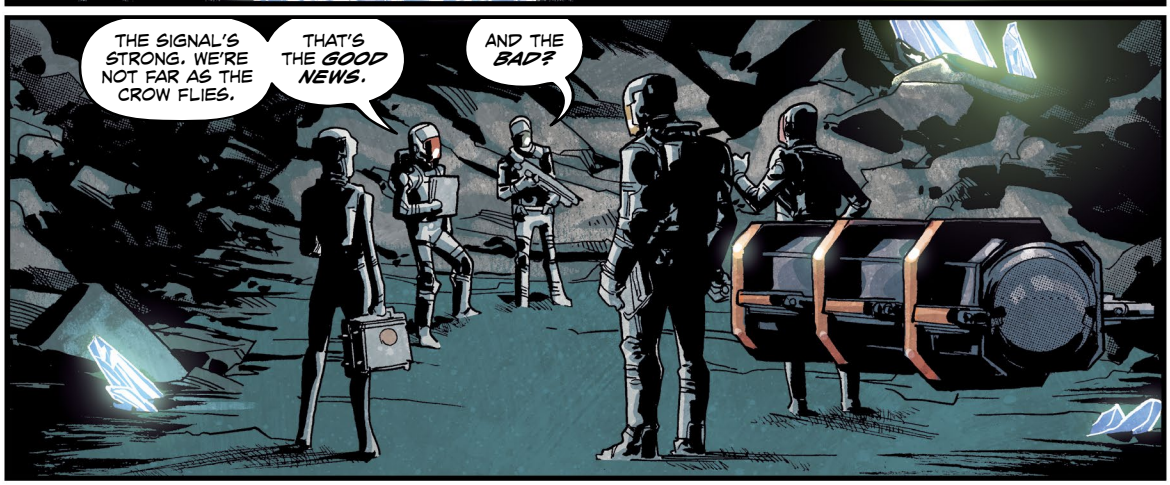

NONE OF YOU LADIES WANT TO SEE ANY CHAFING DOWN THERE.
CHARMING, LENNON.
STAND CLEAR. OPENING THE AIRLOCK IN FIVE.
BRING ME BACK SOMETHING PRETTY, FOLKS.

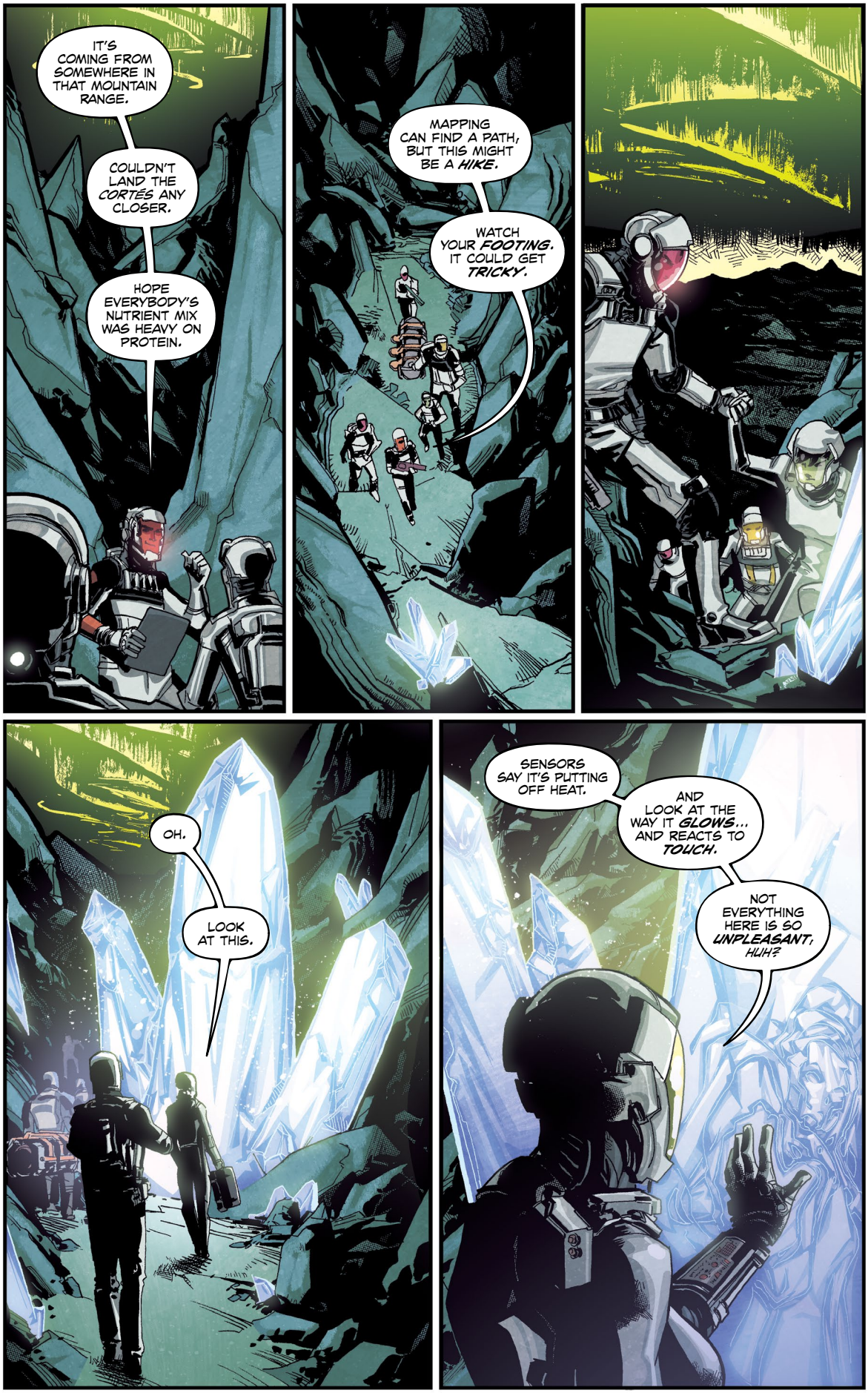

MAKE JOKES AFTER YOU'VE FIXED THE LIFE SUPPORT, FRANCO.
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT. MAYBE IT'S JUST A GLITCH.
BUT I DON'T WANT TO BE ON THE RETURN TRIP HOME WHEN WE REALIZED YOU UNDERESTIMATED THE PROBLEM.

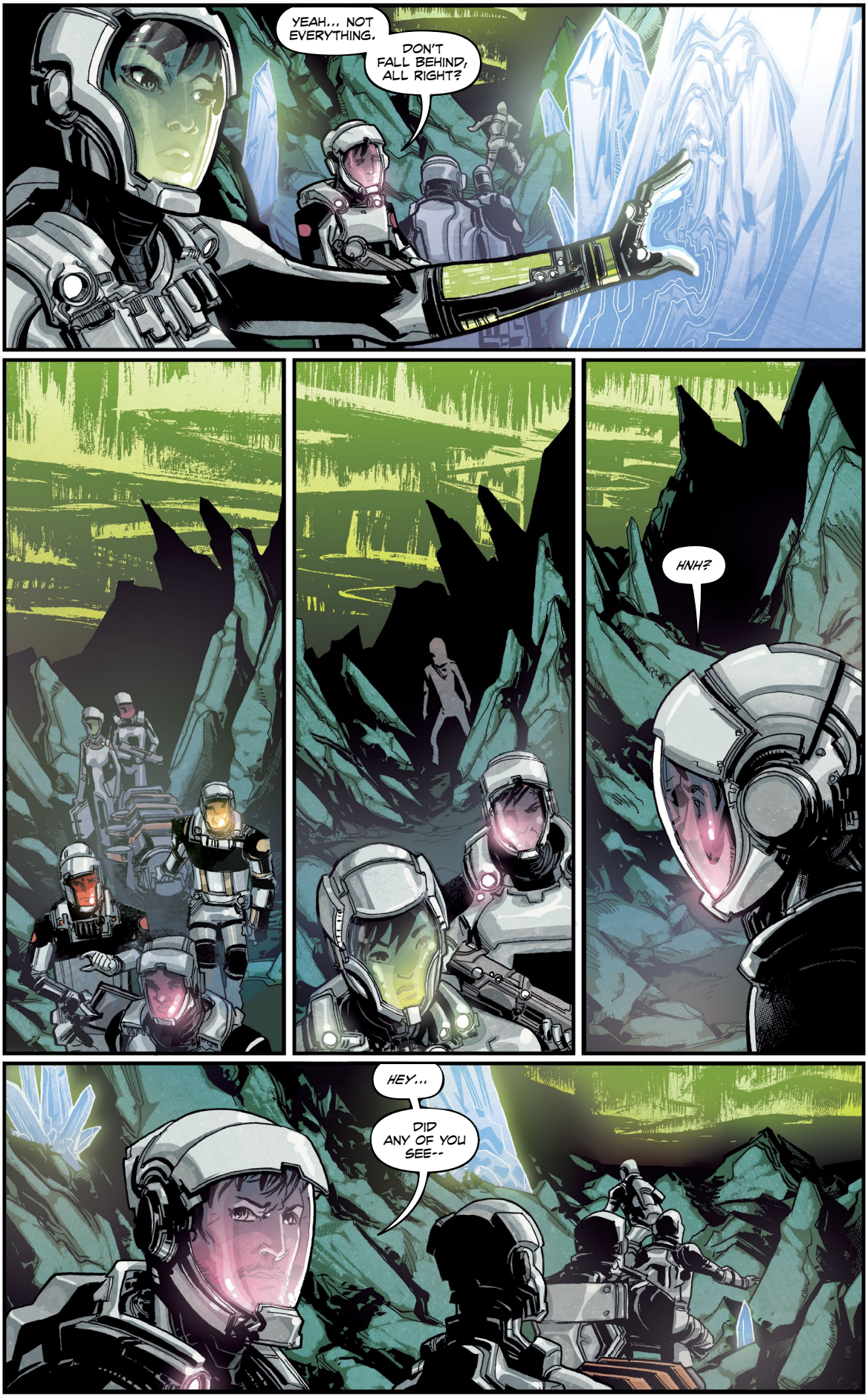

WELL...
...IT'S UGLY.


REMEMBER WHEN PEOPLE USED TO THINK SPACE WAS BEAUTIFUL?
BEFORE INTERSTELLAR TRAVEL, EVERY SCIENTIST WITH A 'SCOPE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE BEEN A LOVE-STRUCK POET.
NOW, THOUGH, I REALIZE THEY WERE ALL FULL OF SHIT.

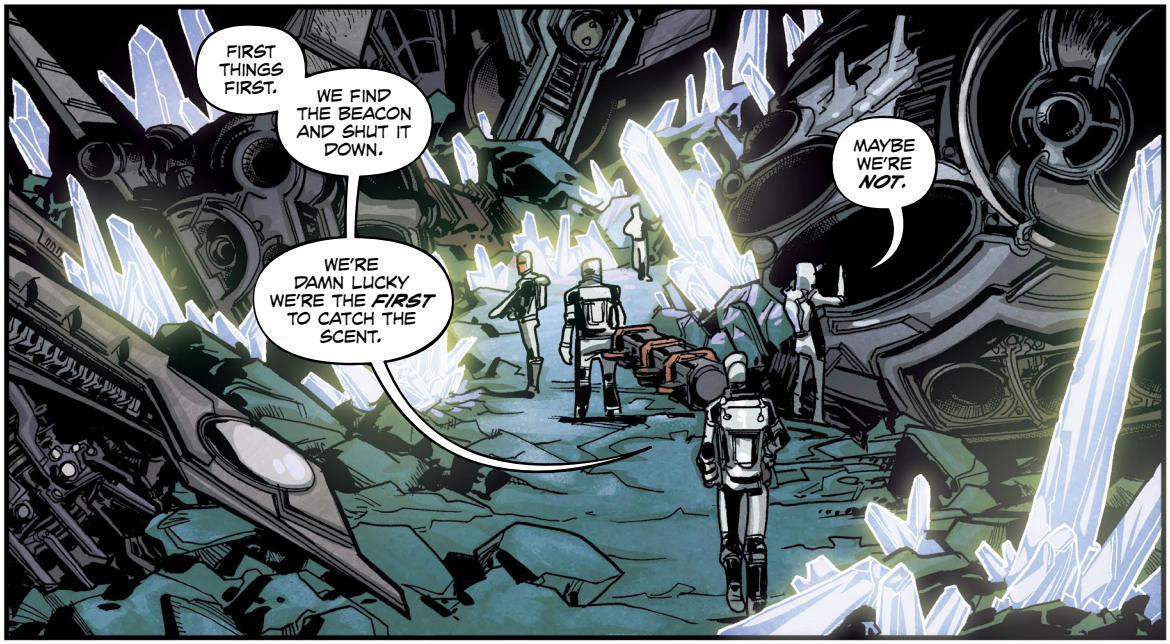

RAZOR ROCK... TREACHEROUS FOOTING... POISONOUS VAPORS.
I DON'T SEE BEAUTY. I SEE DANGER.
AND... LIKE YOU SAID... A WHOLE LOT OF UGLY.


THE SIGNAL'S STRONG. WE'RE NOT FAR AS THE CROW FLIES.
THAT'S THE GOOD NEWS.
AND THE BAD?


IT'S COMING FROM SOMEWHERE IN THAT MOUNTAIN RANGE.
COULDN'T LAND THE CORTÉS ANY CLOSER.
HOPE EVERYBODY'S NUTRIENT MIX WAS HEAVY ON PROTEIN.
MAPPING CAN FIND A PATH, BUT THIS MIGHT BE A HIKE.
WATCH YOUR FOOTING. IT COULD GET TRICKY.
OH.
LOOK AT THIS.
SENSORS SAY IT'S PUTTING OFF HEAT.
AND LOOK AT THE WAY IT GLOWS... AND REACTS TO TOUCH.
NOT EVERYTHING HERE IS SO UNPLEASANT, HUH?


YEAH... NOT EVERYTHING.
DON'T FALL BEHIND, ALL RIGHT?
HNH?
HEY...
DID ANY OF YOU SEE--

ANYTHING?
IT'S A GRAVEYARD.
THE SIGNAL... THE BEACON... THIS IS WHERE IT'S COMING FROM.
THERE MUST BE DOZENS OF SHIPS HERE.
THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT WE MIGHT FIND IN THEIR HOLDS.
YOU SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT A FEW MORE TRUNKS.


FIRST THINGS FIRST.
WE FIND THE BEACON AND SHUT IT DOWN.
WE'RE DAMN LUCKY WE'RE THE *FIRST* TO CATCH THE SCENT.
MAYBE WE'RE *NOT*.

MAYBE THESE SHIPS... MAYBE THEY *ALL* FOLLOWED THE SIGNAL HERE.

AND ALL OF THEM CRASHED IN THE SAME SPOT?
HOW'S THAT WORK?

HRRR-WHHHH
DO YOU HEAR THAT?
SOUNDS LIKE--
HRRR-WHHHH
HRRR-WHHHH

BREATHING.
HRRR-WHHHH

HRRR-WHHHH
HRRR-WHHHH
HRRR-WHHHH
ARE THOSE...
...LUNGS?

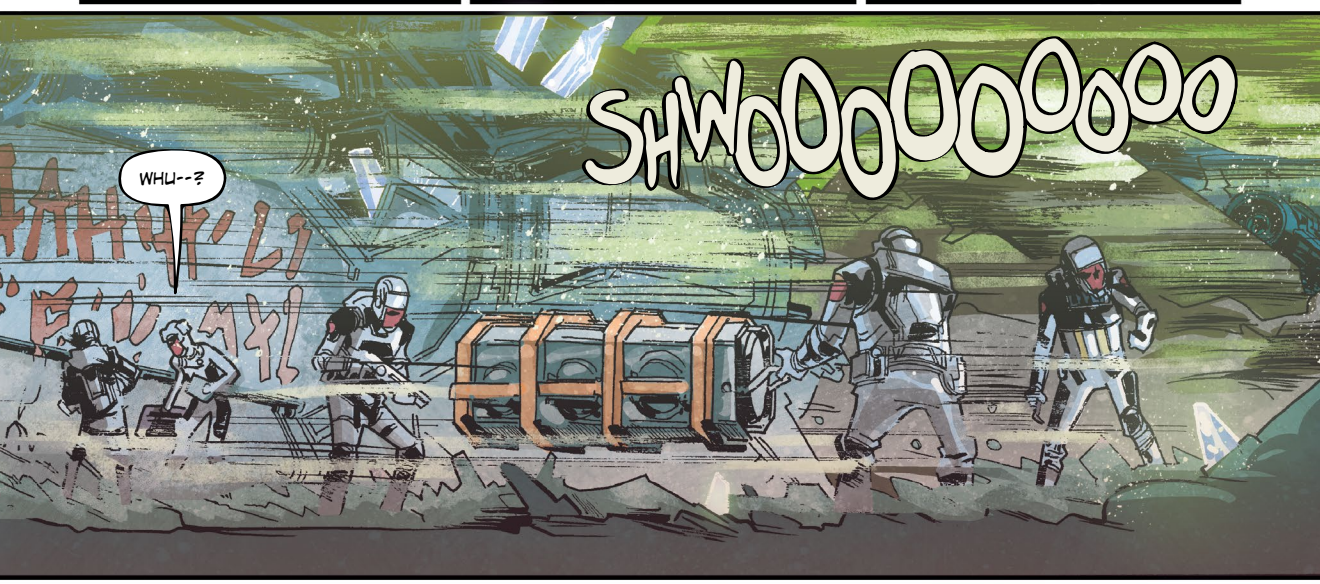
LET'S FIND WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR AND GET THE *FUCK* OUT OF HERE.
OVER HERE!
LOOK AT THIS!
WHO PUT THIS HERE? WHAT DOES IT SAY?
LOOKS LIKE A *WARNING* TO ME.
I THOUGHT I SAW SOMEONE.
EARLIER.

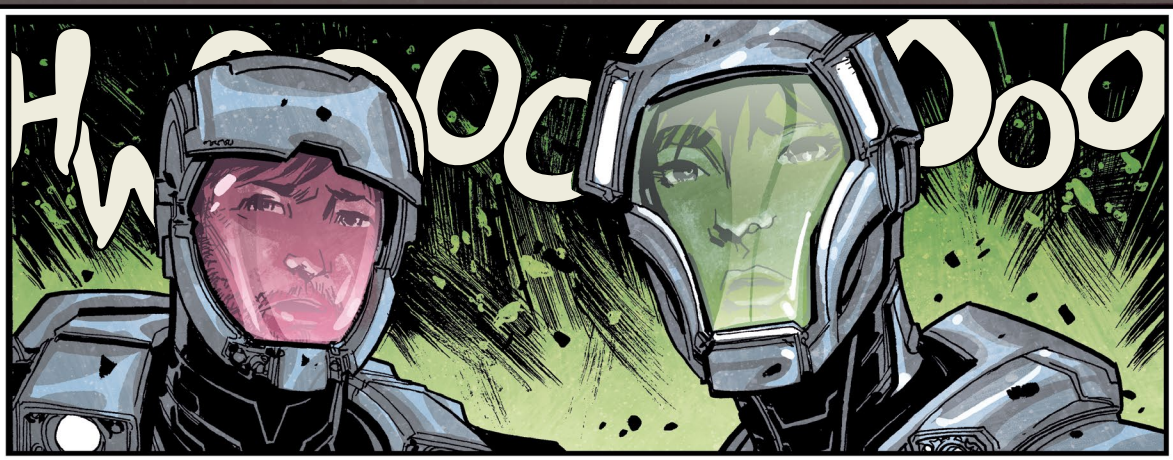
I THOUGHT MAYBE I SAW SOMEONE *FOLLOWING* US.
ALL THESE DOWNED SHIPS...
...GOT ME TO WONDERING.
YOU SURE THE BEACON'S NOT A *DISTRESS SIGNAL?*
THERE'S *PROFIT* OUT HERE.
I HOPE HE'S RIGHT.
THIS CREW HASN'T SEEN A *BLACK LEDGER* IN *MONTHS.*
AND IF THIS IS ANOTHER WASTE OF TIME?
YOU'RE A DOCTOR, GLORY.
YOU KNOW AS WELL AS ANYONE...
...A *TERMINAL* PATIENT CAN ONLY *LIMP ALONG* FOR SO LONG.

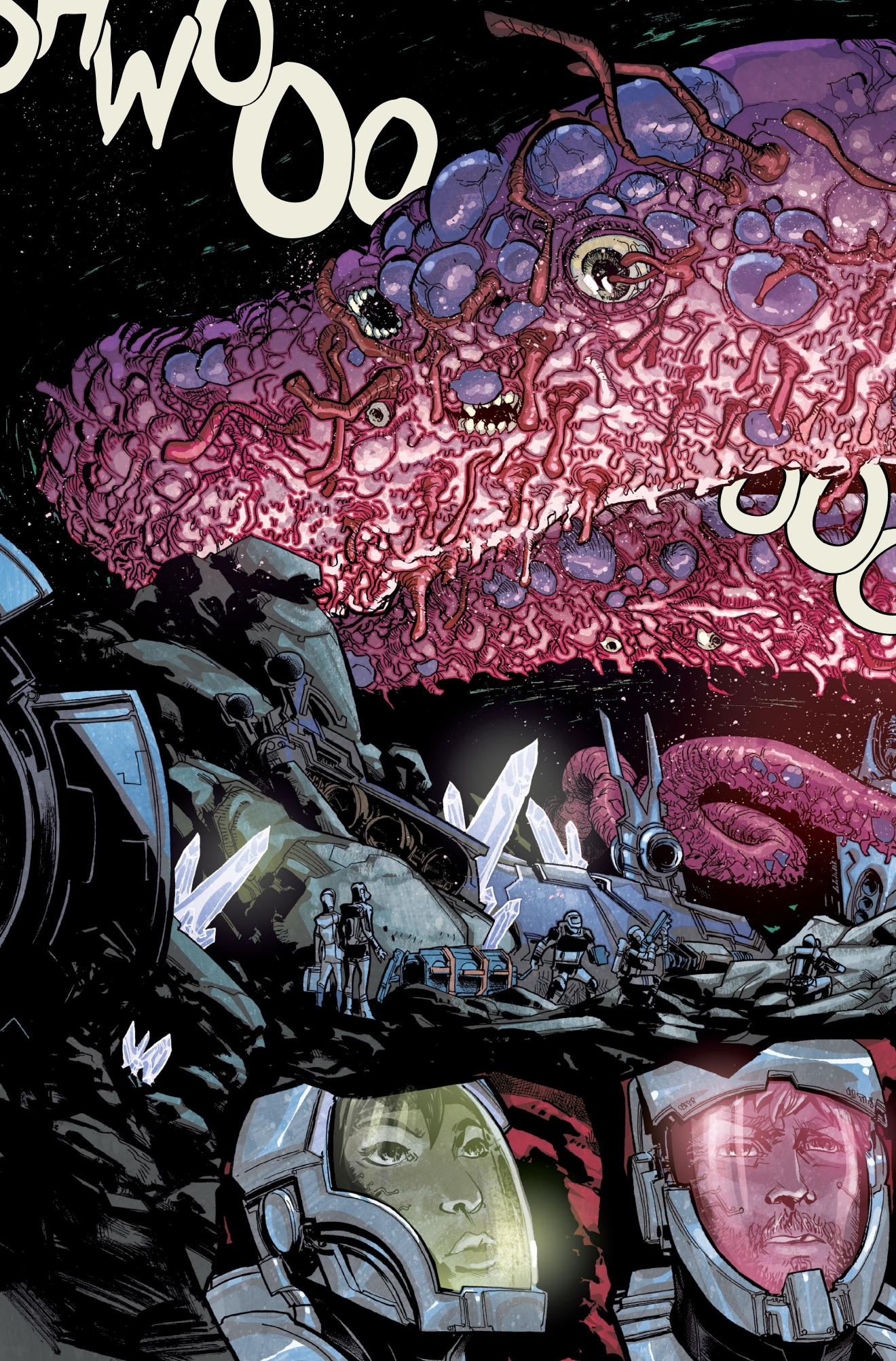
DON'T LET HIM RATTLE YOU.
HE'S JUST ONE OF THOSE GUYS, Y'KNOW?
ALWAYS ON EDGE WHILE ON THE JOB.

IT'S NOT THAT.
I WAS... I WAS THINKING.
ABOUT THOSE... LUNGS... AND ABOUT SOME OF THE DEAD BODIES WE CAME ACROSS.

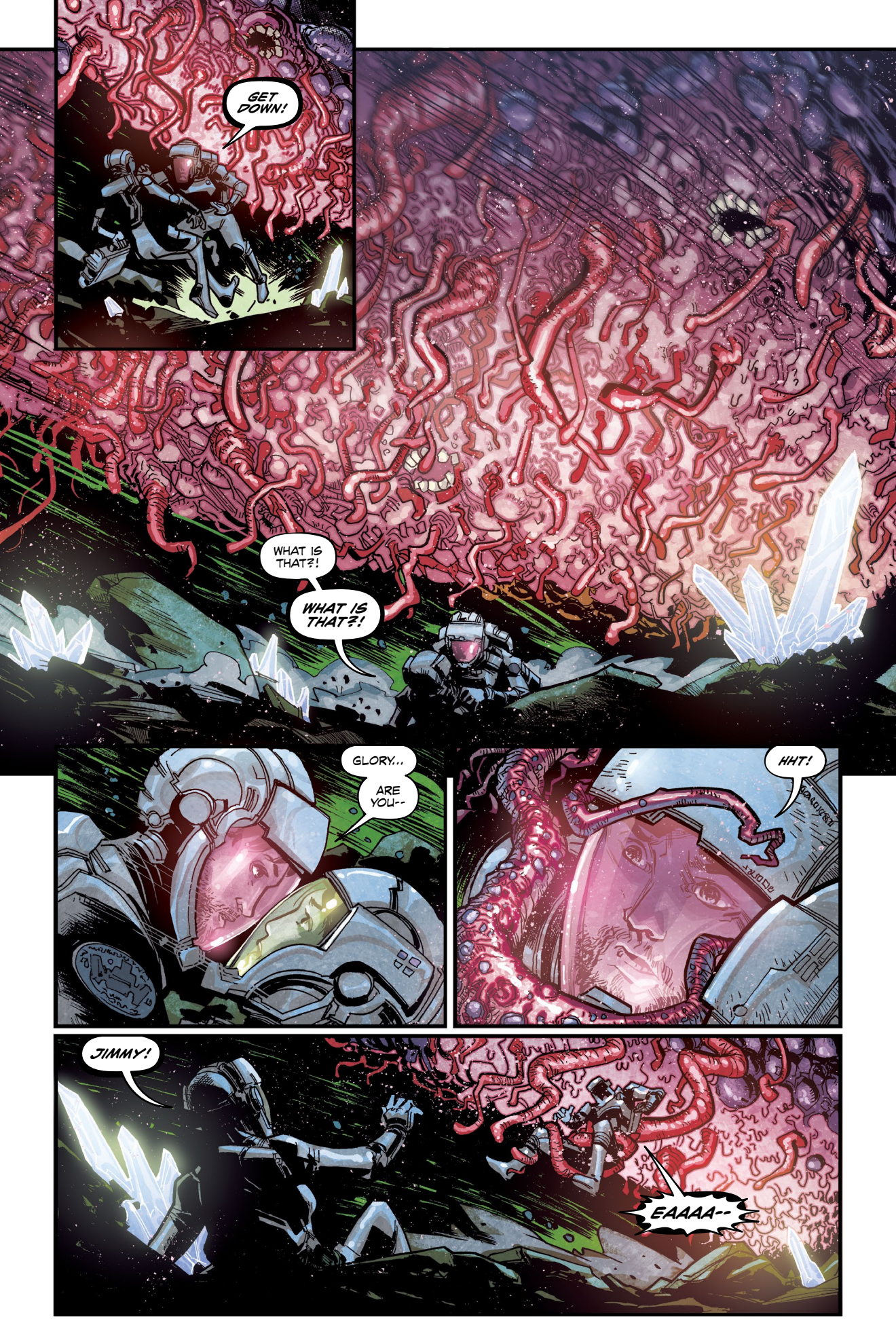
"IT LOOKED LIKE THEIR LIFE SUPPORT WAS DAMAGED.
"IT LOOKED LIKE THEY SUFFOCA--"


SHWOOOOOOOOO
WHU--?




WOOO
OOO

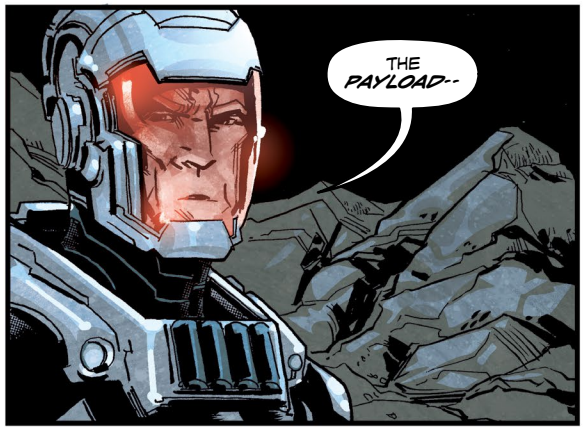
OOOOOOOOOOOO


GET DOWN!
WHAT IS THAT?!
WHAT IS THAT?!
GLORY...
ARE YOU--
HHT!
JIMMY!
EAAAA--

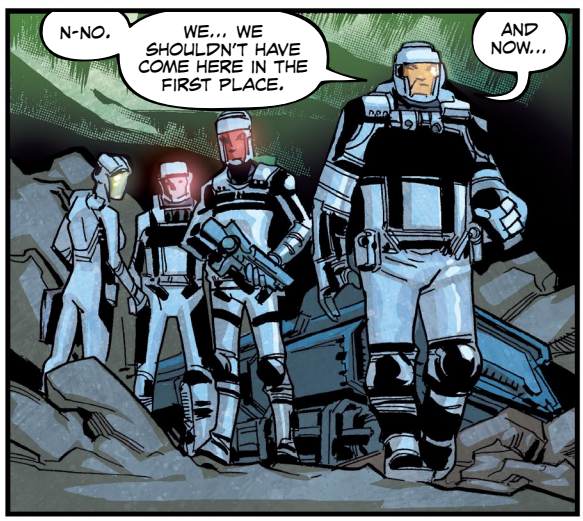
AAAAAAAGGGH!!
SONOVA--
VRRK
VRRK
VRRK
NNNGGG...
NONONONO--

GRRRRRKKK
VRRK
VRRK
VRRK
VRRK
J-JIMMY?
HE'S GONE!
GONE!
IT'S NO GOOD!
IT'S TOO BIG FOR NEEDLERS!
VRRK
VRRK
WHAT THE FUCK?

IT COULD...
...IT MIGHT...
...COME BACK.

BACK TO THE *CORTÉS*, THEN.

THE *PAYLOAD*--

DID YOU *SEE* WHAT JUST HAPPENED?
FORGET THE PAYLOAD!
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO TALK TO ME LIKE THAT ON *MY* OP!
I'LL *LEAVE* YOUR SORRY ASS ON THIS ROCK BEFORE I LET YOU--

SHE'S RIGHT! THIS OP IS A *BUST!*
I'M NOT GOING THROUGH ANOTHER *CLUSTERFUCK*... NOT LIKE ON AEGIS!
ONCE IS GODDAMNED ENOUGH!
BACK TO THE SHIP AND BACK *HOME!*

N-NO.
WE... WE SHOULDN'T HAVE COME HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE.
AND NOW...

...AIN'T NONE OF US EVER GETTING OFF THIS PLANET.