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THE MICRONAUTS

THEY CAME FROM INNER SPACE



HANNIGAN
+
MILGROM

Stan Lee
PRESENTS:

THE MICRONAUTS!

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AL
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JIM
SHOOTER
FORCE COMMANDER

OOOFFFF!

SOMEWHERE
IN THE BERMU-
DA
TRIANGLE...

COMMANDER RANN

MARIONETTE

DEVIL

BUG

ACROYEAR

NANOTRON

WITH OUR DEFEAT
OF ARCADE, THE
SEA-PLATFORM IS
SELF-DESTRUCTING!

HE ESCAPED,
BUT THREE OF MY
MICRONAUTS ARE
STILL TRAPPED
ABOARD--

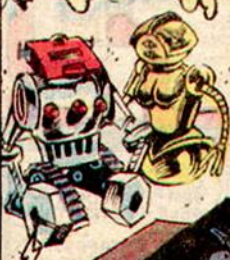
--AND THERE'S
NO SAFE HAVEN
IN SIGHT!

MICROTRON

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BELOW, AS EXPLOSIONS ROCK THE HEAVING SEA-PLATFORM, MICROTRON AND NANOTRON ANXIOUSLY EYE THE HOWLING DEVIL.

HE WAS ALREADY BADLY BURNED DURING OUR BATTLE WITH COMPUTREX--*



--BUT THESE NEW FLAMES DRIVE DEVIL TO THE BRINK OF MADNESS.



*MICROS #44--AL.

IT ISN'T MADNESS WE'RE WITNESSING, MICROTRON-- BUT SAVAGERY!

THE ORDINARILY CONGENIAL DEVIL IS BECOMING MORE ANIMALISTIC BY THE MOMENT--

--AND I DON'T THINK IT'S TOTALLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE PAIN HE'S SUFFERED.



NO, THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT HIS BEING ON EARTH THAT'S MADE OUR MILD-MANNERED MICRONAUT... A MONSTER!

DEVIL'S SALVATION LIES IN MY BEING ABLE TO LEAD US ALL BACK TO THE MICRO-VERSE!

BUT I CAN'T EVEN INSURE THAT WE WON'T BE LOST AT SEA FIRST!

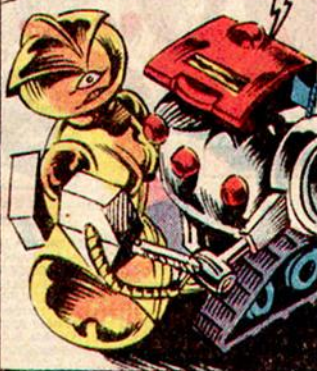


POWRR!

BYROOM

OH, MICROTRON-- ANOTHER EXPLOSION!

DON'T WORRY, NANOTRON! I'LL PROTECT YOU!



BLAST AFTER BLAST SETS THE SEA-PLATFORM TO SHUDDERING...



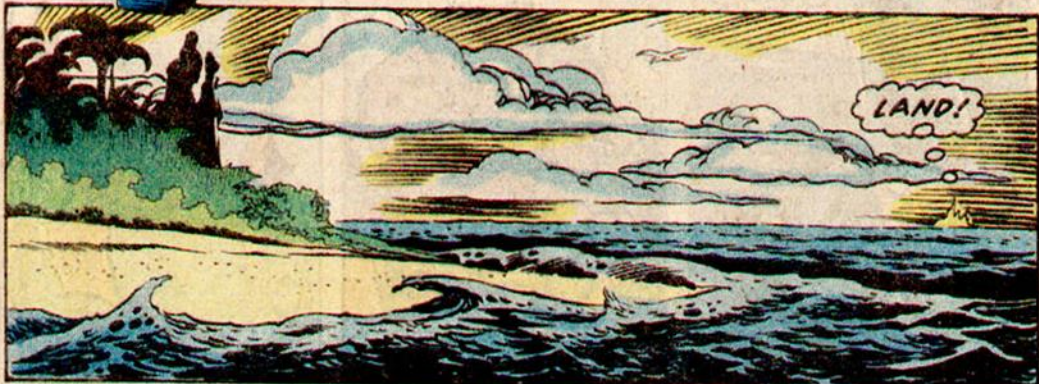
...AND HURLS ARCADE'S MURDER MACHINES INTO THE SEA.

I MUST SAVE THE MICRONAUTS
STILL ON THE PLATFORM, BUT HOW?
ONCE HURLED INTO THE SEA, THE RO-
BOIDS WILL SINK AND DEVIL'S
MIND IS TOO FAR GONE TO
SWIM...

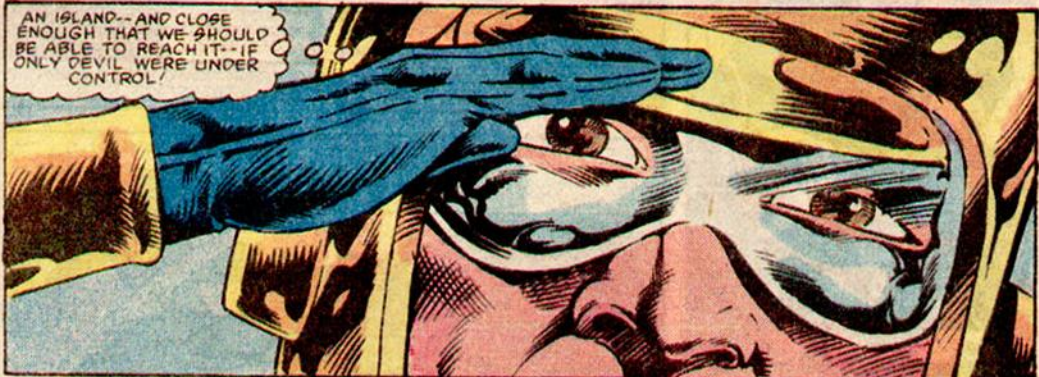
WAIT! WHAT'S
THAT IN THE
HORIZON?



LAND!



AN ISLAND-- AND CLOSE
ENOUGH THAT WE SHOULD
BE ABLE TO REACH IT-- IF
ONLY DEVIL WERE UNDER
CONTROL!



DEVIL, LISTEN TO ME! YOU'VE GOT TO GET
A GRIP ON YOURSELF! YOU'RE NOT AN ANIMAL!
YOU'RE A RATIONAL CREATURE, CAPABLE OF
UNDERSTANDING THE DANGER WE'RE IN!

IF YOU DON'T TRY TO
UNDERSTAND, YOU MAY DROWN--
POSSIBLY TAKING THE REST OF
US WITH YOU!



HE'S TURNING TOWARDS
ME-- AND HIS HOWLING
HAS STOPPED. DOES HE
UNDERSTAND?

AWRROO!

NO! HE WAS
JUST WAITING
FOR ME TO GLIDE
WITHIN REACH--

--SO THAT
HE COULD
LEAP FOR
MY JUGU-
LAR!

KFRAM!

RARRRGH!

ANGRY MASS
OF MUSCLE...
SMASHING ME
TO THE DECK!



GOT TO...
GET DEVIL...
OFF ME!

DESPERATION GIVES COMMANDER
RANN STRENGTH!

BUT, WITH THE AGILITY OF THE
ANIMAL HE IS, DEVIL LANDS ON
ALL FOURS AND RETURNS TO
THE ATTACK!



GNNSS!

DEVIL'S FAST,
FURIOUS... AND
TOTALLY BEYOND
REASON!



ROWRRGH!



NO!

COMMANDER!

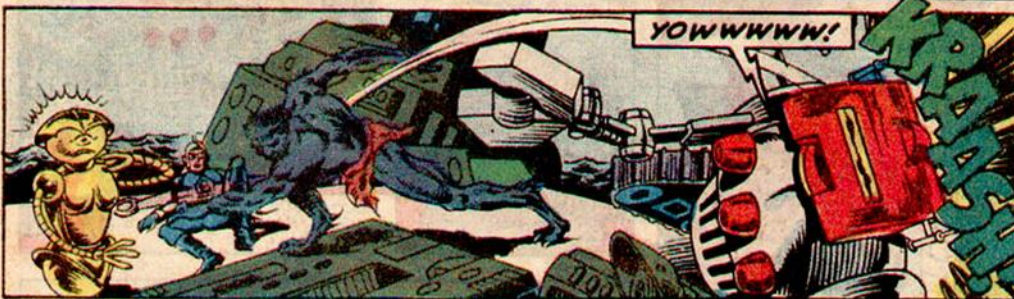
DEVIL AND THE COMMANDER ARE LOCKED TOO CLOSELY IN COMBAT FOR ME TO EMPLOY MY CHEST-CANNONS!



YOU WOULDN'T USE THEM ANYWAY, MICROTRON! BOTH DEVIL AND COMMANDER RANN ARE YOUR FRIENDS!

TRUE BUT ONE FRIEND'S ABOUT TO KILL THE OTHER!

DESPERATE MEASURES ARE CALLED FOR! DEVIL, UNHAND THE COMMANDER OR I'LL...



YOWWWW!

MICROTRON, MY LOVE!



NANOTRON, STAY BACK!



I DID STAY BACK AND DEVIL HURT MY MICROTRON!

WHIRLING LIKE A TOP, NANOTRON'S FLAILING ARMS DRIVE DEVIL BACK--BACK...

...TOWARDS THE WAITING ARC-TURUS RAIN!

I'M SORRY, DEVIL!



I AM SORRY, MICRONAUTS! I'VE LED YOU INTO ONE DISASTER AFTER ANOTHER!

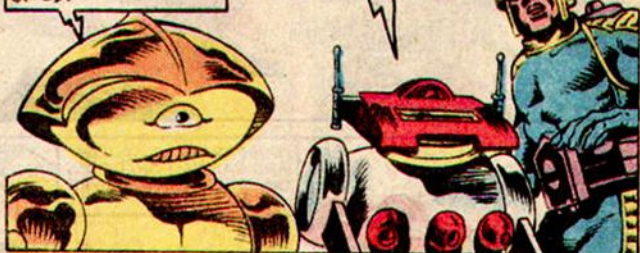
DON'T BLAME YOURSELF, COMMANDER! IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT WE'RE ON EARTH--

--IT'S FORCE COMMANDER'S! THE TYRANT OF THE MICROVERSE DECLARED US OUTLAWS--

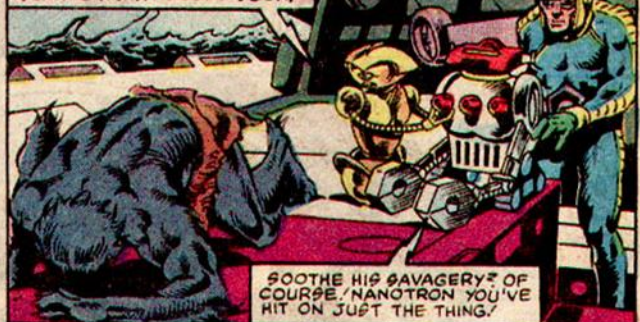
-- AND EARTH WAS THE ONLY PLACE TO WHICH WE COULD FLEE! *

WHY CAN'T WE JUST LEAVE DEVIL HERE ON THE SEA-PLATFORM? AFTER ALL, IT'S HIS SAVAGERY THAT'S ENDANGERING THE REST OF US!

NANOTRON! I'M SHOCKED YOU WOULD EVEN SUGGEST SUCH A THING! DESPITE WHAT HE'S BECOME, DEVIL IS STILL A MICRONAUT!



WELL, HE'S STIRRING! I HOPE YOU COME UP WITH A WAY TO SOOTHE HIS SAVAGERY SOON!

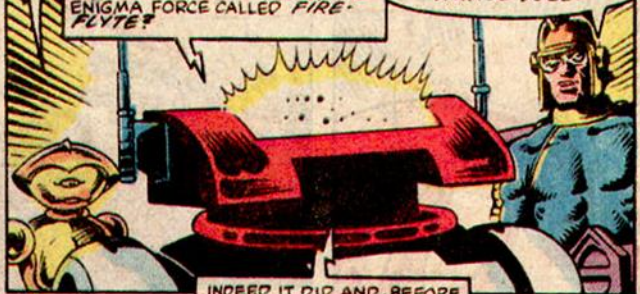


SOOTHE HIS SAVAGERY? OF COURSE, NANOTRON YOU'VE HIT ON JUST THE THING!

I HAVE?

YES! DO YOU RECALL THAT WHEN WE FIRST MET DEVIL HE HAD A CONSTANT COMPANION, A SMALL WINGED CHILD OF THE ENIGMA FORCE CALLED FIRE-FLYTE?

THEY WERE INSEPARABLE. SOME SAY FIREFLYTE'S SONG SOOTHEDEVIL'S SAVAGE SOUL.



INDEED IT DID AND BEFORE FIREFLYTE DIED-- REVIVING THE ENIGMA FORCE-- I RECORDED HER SONG FOR POSTERITY!



IT SAYS A LOT FOR MY LEADERSHIP, DOESN'T IT, THAT IN FLEEING, WE'VE LOST THREE MICRONAUTS-- AND MAY BE ON THE VERGE OF LOSING DEVIL?

WHEN HE WAKES UP, WE'LL HAVE TO SUBDUCE HIM ALL OVER AGAIN.

* SEE MICRONAUTS #135-- ARCHIVAL AL.

WAVES OF STRANGE, SIBILANT MUSIC STREAM FROM MICRO-TRON AND WASH OVER DEVIL, EVOKING MEMORIES OF FIREFLYTE.

... AND CALMING THE
TROPICAN INSTANTLY.

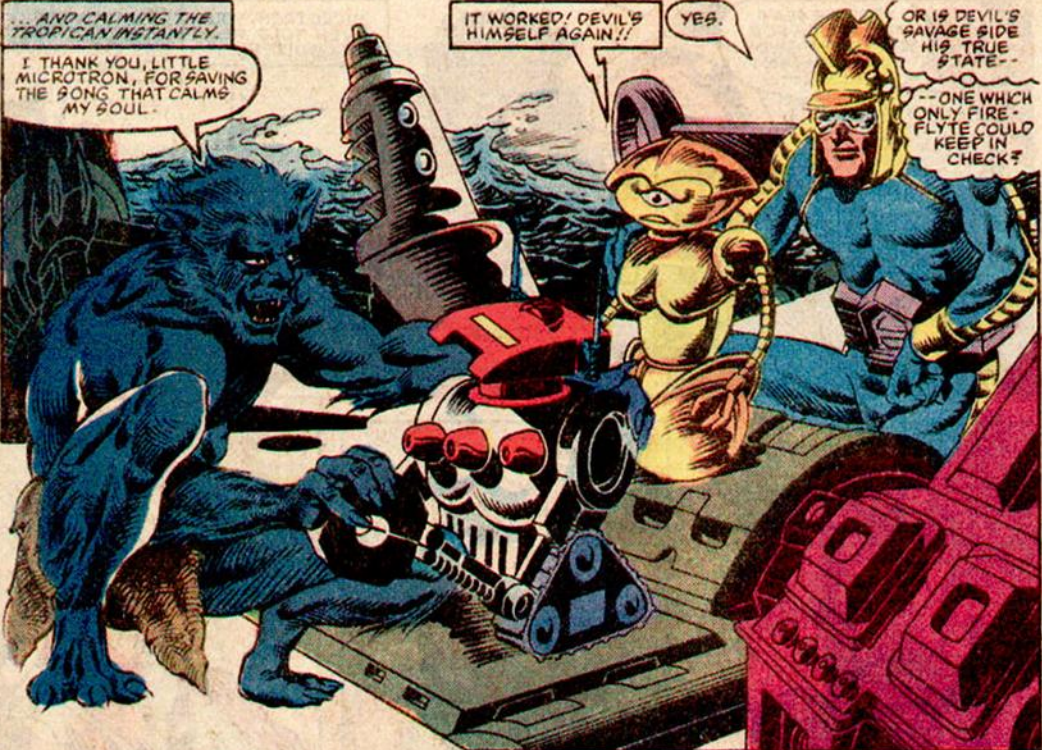
I THANK YOU, LITTLE
MICROTRON, FOR SAVING
THE SONG THAT CALMS
MY SOUL.

IT WORKED! DEVIL'S
HIMSELF AGAIN!!

YES.

OR IS DEVIL'S
SAVAGE SIDE
HIS TRUE
STATE--

-- ONE WHICH
ONLY FIRE-
FLYTE COULD
KEEP IN
CHECK?



MICROTRON,
CAN YOU KEEP
THAT SONG
GOING?

AS LONG AS
NECESSARY,
COMMANDER!

I COULD
LISTEN TO IT
FOREVER.

WE'LL ALL BE DEAD LONG BEFORE
FOREVER, IF WE DON'T GET OFF THIS
SINKING SEA-PLATFORM AND MAKE
IT TO THAT ISLAND I SPOTTED,
DEVIL!

I'VE LOST
MICRONAUTS ALREADY
ON THIS WORLD
CALLED EARTH--



--AND I'LL BE
DAMNED BEFORE
I'LL LOSE ANY
MORE!

YOU HAVE
A PLAN, THEN,
COMMANDER?

YES, THE SEA'S TOO ROUGH FOR YOU TO TRY SWIMMING ASHORE, DEVIL--

--SO I'LL HAVE TO CARRY YOU WHILE MICROTRON BEARS NANOTRON ACROSS THE WAVES.

MICROTRON, YOU NEVER TOLD ME YOU COULD FLY!

I CAN'T--AT LEAST NOT THE WAY THE COMMANDER CAN!

BUT, BY WHIRLING MY ARMS LIKE ROTOR-BLADES, I CAN HOVER FOR LIMITED DISTANCES.

I WON'T, DEVIL-- MY GLIDER-WINGS WILL!

THE TRICK IS GOING TO BE DOING IT WHILE BEARING NANOTRON'S ROBODID WEIGHT!

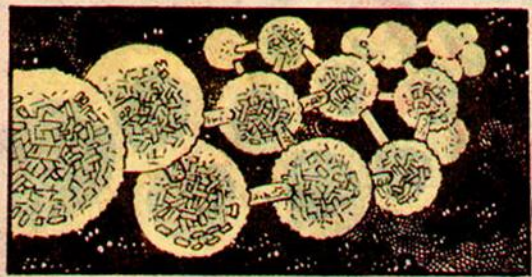
THIS WAY, WE'LL ALL SOON REACH THE ISLAND!

PROVIDED DEVIL DOESN'T REVERT TO SAVAGERY AGAIN!

AND HOW WILL YOU BEAR MY WEIGHT, COMMANDER?

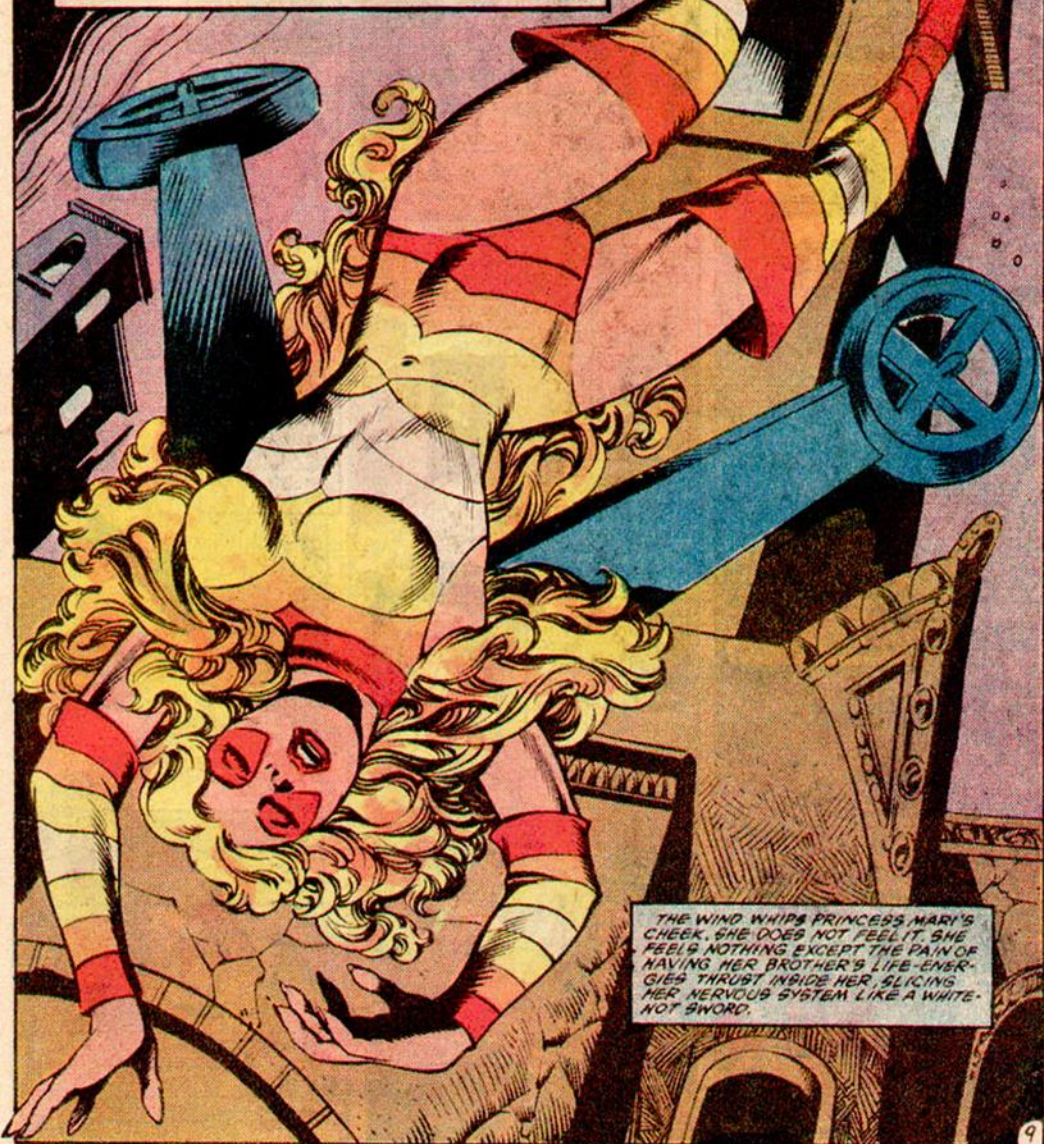
AND AS THREE MICRONAUTS FORGE TOWARDS DISTANT SHORES.

... ANOTHER SEPARATED FROM THEM BY THE SPACE/ SIZE BARRIER KNOWN AS THE SPACEWALL, FALLS-- DAZED AND WOUNDED--FROM A TOWER WINDOW OF THE ROYAL PALACE OF HOMEWORLD.




DIE,
MARIONETTE!
AND LET YOUR
DEATH PROVE TO
THE REBELLIOUS
MASSES--

-- THAT NOONE, NOT
EVEN MY ROYAL SISTER,
CAN RAISE UP ARMS AGAINST
FORCE COMMANDER--
AND LIVE!



THE WIND WHIPS PRINCESS MARY'S CHEEK. SHE DOES NOT FEEL IT. SHE FEELS NOTHING EXCEPT THE PAIN OF HAVING HER BROTHER'S LIFE-ENERGIES THRUST INSIDE HER, SLICING HER NERVOUS SYSTEM LIKE A WHITE-HOT SWORD.



THEN THE WAVES OF PAIN BE-
GIN TO PASS AND, IN THEIR EBB,
RECENT IMAGES WASH UP ON
THE SHORES OF MARIONETTE'S
MEMORY.

THE FIRST IMAGE IS OF THE
MICRONAUT'S BATTLE ON
EARTH WITH THE SUPER-VIL-
LAIN DOCTOR NEMESIS.*

USING HIS ABILITY
TO SHRINK THINGS--

DOCTOR NEMESIS
RETURNED MARI-
ONETTE, BUG AND
ACROYEAR TO THE
MICROVERSE. WITHIN
A MATTER OF HOURS
THEY'D MADE CON-
TACT WITH THE
REBELLION.




WITHIN A
MATTER OF
DAYS THEY WERE
LEADING IT!

THEIR FIRST TASK
WAS TO STOP
FORCE COMMAND-
ER'S IMPEND-
ING MARRIAGE
TO THE RESPECT-
ED REBEL LEADER,
SLUG!

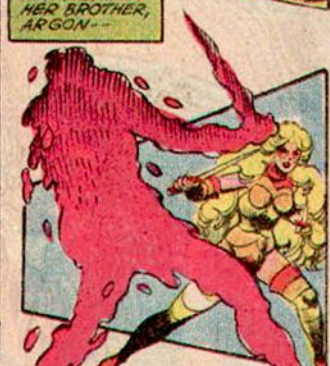
DURING A DIVERSIONARY
RAID ON THE
BODY BANKS,
MARIONETTE GAINED ENTRY
TO THE ROYAL
PALACE.

THERE SHE SAW
THE LADY SLUG
ENGAGED IN A
DEATH-DUEL
WITH THE DUCH-
ESS BELLADONNA,
AS FORCE COM-
MANDER LOOKED
IMPASSIVELY ON.


MARI HAD COME TO
LIBERATE SLUG!




THAT PITTED
HER AGAINST
HER BROTHER,
ARGON--



--WHO RE-
VEALED THAT
HE WAS NO
LONGER A
MAN... BUT
AN ENERGY
BEING!



FURTHER, ARGON
REVEALED THAT SLUG
AND BELLADONNA
HAD SWITCHED BOODIES
IN THE BODY BANKS.



THAT REVELATION
STUNNED MARI! HER
GUARD LOWERED,
SHE FELL VICTIM TO
FORCE COMMAND-
ER'S THRUST.

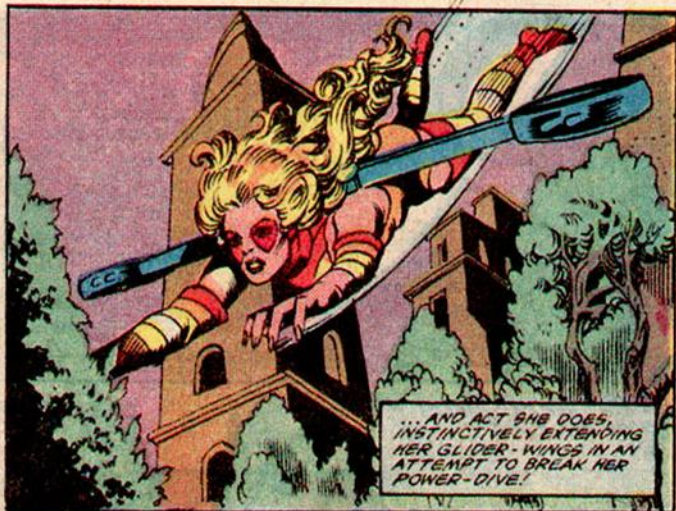
THE MEMORY
OF HER MOMENT
OF PAIN RE-
VIVES HER...



...IN TIME TO
REVEAL THE
GROUND RUSH-
ING TO MEET
HER!



SHE HAS ONLY
SECONDS IN
WHICH TO ACT
IF SHE'S TO
SAVE HERSELF.



... AND ACT SHE DOES,
INSTINCTIVELY EXTENDING
HER GLIDER-WINGS IN AN
ATTEMPT TO BREAK HER
POWER-DIVE!

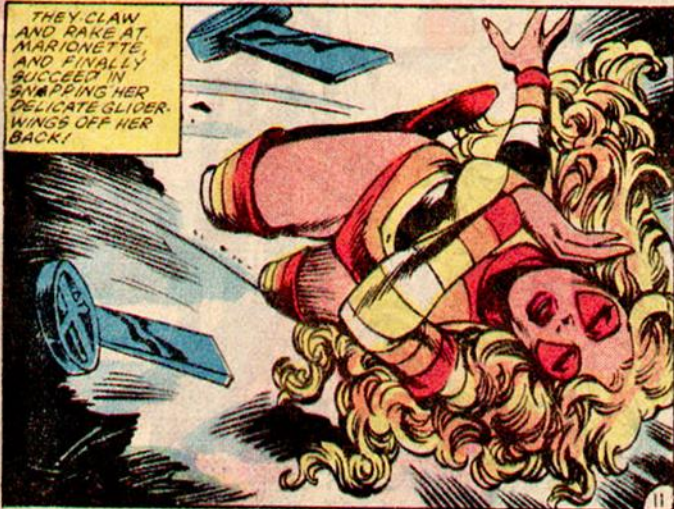


SKRETCH



THE TREES OF THE ROYAL GARDEN ARE NOT
KIND TO THE MAIDEN WHO USED TO PLAY
AMONG THEM AS A CHILD.

THEY CLAW
AND RAKE AT
MARIONETTE,
AND FINALLY
SUCCEED IN
SNAPPING HER
DELICATE GLIDER-
WINGS OFF HER
BACK!



BUT THE PROUD PRINCESS OF HOME-WORLD IS NOW NEAR ENOUGH TO THE GROUND--

--THAT SHE CAN SAFELY SHED HER WINGS--

--AND ALLOW HER AWESOME ACROBATIC AGILITY TO COME INTO PLAY!

SAFE!
WHOLE!
ALIVE!

IT WILL TAKE MY TYRANT BROTHER SOME TIME TO ASCERTAIN THAT HE FAILED TO KILL ME--

--AND I WILL USE THAT TIME TO FURTHER THE CAUSE OF THE REBELLION!

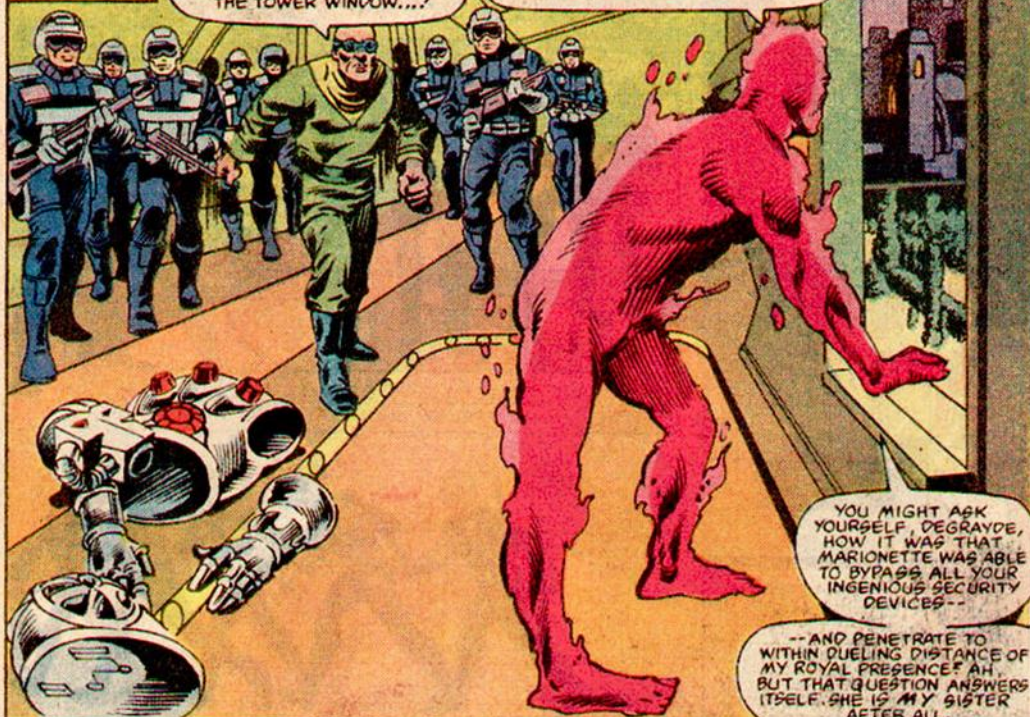
MARIONETTE DISAPPEARS INTO THE CLEAR HOME-WORLD NIGHT...

... A PLAN ALREADY FORMING IN HER MIND TO CLOUD FORCE COMMANDER'S FUTURE!

MEANWHILE,
IN THE ROYAL
TOWER...

MILORD ARGON, YOUR DOG
SOLDIERS REPORT THAT THEY
SAW SOMEONE PLUNGE FROM
THE TOWER WINDOW...

AYE, CHIEF SCIENTIST DEGRAYDE.
I WAS PAID A SURPRISE VISIT BY MY
SISTER, THE PRINCESS MARI.



YOU MIGHT ASK
YOURSELF, DEGRAYDE,
HOW IT WAS THAT
MARIONETTE WAS ABLE
TO BYPASS ALL YOUR
INGENIOUS SECURITY
DEVICES--

--AND PENETRATE TO
WITHIN DUELING DISTANCE OF
MY ROYAL PRESENCE? AH,
BUT THAT QUESTION ANSWERS
ITSELF. SHE IS MY SISTER
AFTER ALL.

YOU ALMOST
SEEM TO ADMIRE
HER, MILORD!

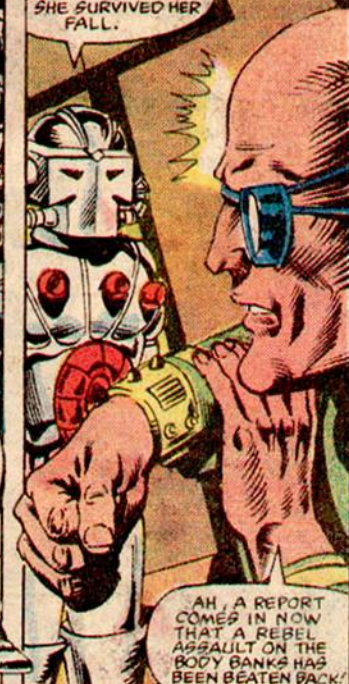
HE IS WISE
WHO POSSES-
SES A HEALTHY
RESPECT FOR THE
ABILITY OF HIS
ENEMIES.



YET MARI LEARNED TO
RESPECT MY MIGHT,
TOO, THIS NIGHT.



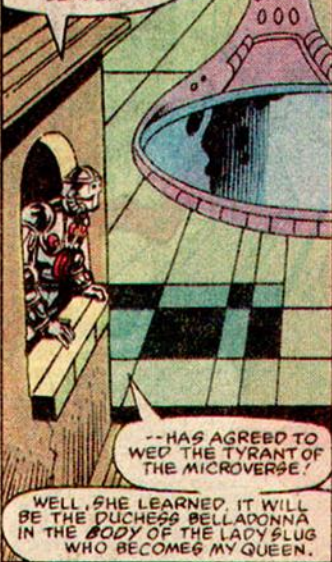
IT WILL BE IN-
TERESTING TO SEE
HOW SHE APPLIES
HER LESSON...IF
SHE SURVIVED HER
FALL.



AH, A REPORT
COMES IN NOW
THAT A REBEL
ASSAULT ON THE
BODY BANKS HAS
BEEN BEATEN BACK!

THE RAID WAS OBVIOUSLY A DIVERSION MEANT TO COVER MARIONETTE'S ASSAULT ON THE ROYAL PALACE--

--SO SHE COULD CONTACT THE LADY SLUG AND DETERMINE WHY IT IS THAT A REBEL LEADER--



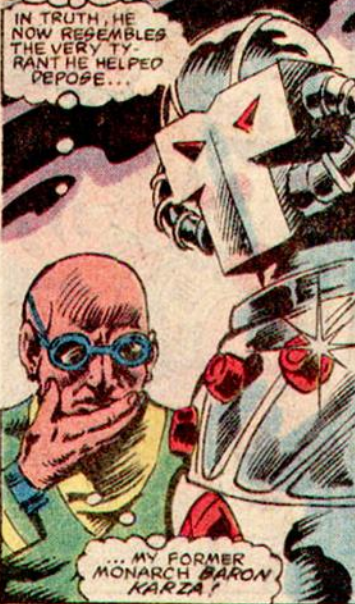
--HAS AGREED TO WED THE TYRANT OF THE MICROVERSE!

WELL, SHE LEARNED. IT WILL BE THE DUCHESS BELLADONNA IN THE BODY OF THE LADY SLUG WHO BECOMES MY QUEEN.

... LEAVING CHIEF SCIENTIST DEGRAYDE TO PONDER HIS MASTER'S PERFORMANCE.

FORCE COMMANDER GROWS MORE CRUEL... MORE INHUMAN... WITH EVERY PASSING MOMENT.

IN TRUTH, HE NOW REMEMBERS THE VERY TYRANT WHO HELPED DEPOSE...



... MY FORMER MONARCH BARON KARZA!

BUT THE MASSES, BELIEVING MY BRIDE TO BE THE GENUINE LADY SLUG, WILL FEEL THE REBELLION HAS GIVEN UP BATTLE AGAINST ME.



BUT WHERE IS THE LADY SLUG?

EHT IS SHE NOT HERE?

SHE AND THE DUCHESS BELLADONNA WERE SEEN LEAVING EVEN AS WE ARRIVED, MILORD.

AND YOU LET THEM GO? I FIND THEM FOOLS!

GRATEFUL TO BE ORDERED OUT OF THEIR FORCE COMMANDER'S INHUMAN PRESENCE, THE DOG SOLDIERS DEPART...



DEEP IN THE BOWELS OF THE ROYAL PALACE, AN UNLIKELY COUPLE FIND MUTUAL SOLACE IN EACH OTHER'S PRESENCE.

WHY ARE YOU AIDING ME, BELLADONNA, WHEN IT IS MY MOST FERVENT DESIRE TO KILL YOU?

OH, SLUG, SLUG, CAN YOU NOT FORGIVE ME? EVER SINCE I TRANSFERRED MY MIND INTO YOUR BEAUTIFUL BODY--



-- I HAVE KNOWN NOTHING BUT HORROR IN THE INHUMAN EMBRACE OF FORCE COMMANDER!

I NOW KNOW THAT MY DREAM OF ACHIEVING POWER THROUGH ARGON WAS A FOOL'S DREAM!

I EXIST TO BE USED BY ARGON LIKE EVERYONE ELSE IN THE HOMEWORLD.

LIKE EVERYONE IN THE MICROVERSE, YOU MEAN.



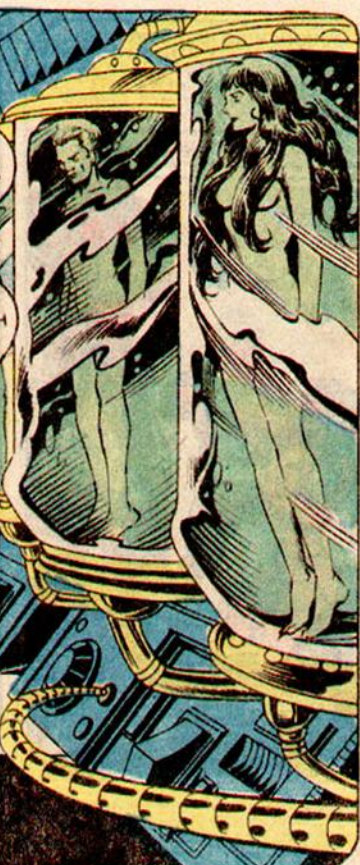
YOU'VE LEARNED A TRUTH ABOUT TYRANNY THAT I CLEARED LONG AGO...

I OCCUPY YOUR BODY, BUT I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT YOU--SAVE YOU ARE A REBEL LEADER AND WERE ONCE BETROTHED TO ARGON!

HE WAS A DIFFERENT MAN WHEN I MET HIM; LEADER OF THE REBELLION AGAINST BARON KARZA.

I CAN ONLY SURMISE THAT ACHIEVING ABSOLUTE POWER HAS CORRUPTED HIM ABSOLUTELY.

WHY ELSE WOULD HE ALLOW MY YOUTH, THE YOUTH OF A WOMAN HE LOVED, TO BE STOLEN--



--AND TRANSFERRED TO A FAWNING SYCO-PHANT SUCH AS YOU, BELLADONNA?

I WAS THAT IT'S TRUE, SLUG-- BUT NOW I HATE ARGON AS MUCH AS YOU DO!

SOON WE WILL WED, AND I WILL KNOW NOTHING BUT HORROR!

"HORROR BEGAN FOR ME WHEN I WAS A CHILD. I WATCHED AS MY MOTHER WAS CHOSEN FROM A GROUP OF HOMEWORLD CITIZENS IN THE DREADED BODY BANKS--

"-- TO BECOME THE BRIDE OF BARON KARZA.

THAT ONE. I WANT HER.



HORROR? I WILL TELL YOU OF HORROR, BELLADONNA.



"THOUGH HE HAD USED HIS
HELLISH BODY BANKS TO TRANS-
CEND HUMANITY, EVEN AS ARGON
NOW HAS, KARZA APPARENTLY
STILL HAD STIRRINGS OF DESIRE
WITHIN HIM--

"--AND MY MOTHER
WAS VERY BEAUTIFUL."

WHAT OF
THE CHILD,
BARON?

KILL IT.



YOU
MONSTER!
NO!



T'AL, DO
NOT DEFEY
HIM, SAY
BACK!

AH, THE PROUD
HUSBAND AND
FATHER, YOU WISH
ME TO SHARE
YOUR CHILD'S
LIFE?



VERY WELL, I SHALL
SATISFY MYSELF BY
TAKING YOURS!



--AND REMOVE
HER LITTLE SLUG
FROM MY SIGHT.



SOME TIME LATER, THE REBELLION
RELEASED ME IN A RAID ON THE
BODY BANKS. WHEN THEY ASKED
MY NAME, I TOLD THEM... SLUG.

AND YOUR
MOTHER?



TYRANTS DO WITH US AS
THEY WILL, AND THEN DISCARD
US WHEN THEY ARE DONE.

OH, SLUG--I--I'M
SO SORRY! HOW CAN
I AID YOU AND THE
REBELLION?



BEGIN BY PULLING FROM
MY ARM THE **SHORT**
SWORD MARIONETTE
THRUST THERE WHEN
SHE MISTOOK ME
FOR YOU.

THEN WE'LL DISCUSS
HOW AN OLD WOMAN
IN A YOUNG WOMAN'S
BODY CAN BEST SERVE
THE REBELLION!



NOW
BRING THE
WOMAN TO
MY CHAM-
BERS--

THE BODY BANKS -- HEART AND SOUL OF ARGON'S TYRANNY. THE REBEL RAID UPON IT EARLIER WAS A DIVERSION...

THE OTHER, ENERGY SWORD AT THE READY, IS THE OUTCAST KING OF SPARTAK, ACROYEAR.

THEIR GOAL, HOWEVER, IS A COMMON ONE.

THEY HAVE TAKEN SEPARATE PATHS TO AVOID DETECTION.

THE PLEASURE PITS -- THE DUNGEONS OF HOMEWORLD -- WHERE THE PRACTICE OF TORTURE HAS BEEN ELEVATED TO AN ART.

THE CANVAS ON WHICH THE DOG SOLDIER TURNKEYS TONIGHT EXHIBIT THEIR TALENTS IS A REBEL CHIEFTAN...

... PRINCE PHAROD OF AEGYPTA.

...INTENDED BOTH TO COVER MARIONETTE'S ASSAULT ON THE ROYAL PALACE, AND TO INFILTRATE TWO MICRO-NAUTS INTO THE BANKS THEMSELVES!

ONE, CRAWLING THROUGH DARKNESS, IS THE INSECTIVORID BUG.

COME ON, REBEL -- MAKE OUR WORK MORE ENJOYABLE!

I'VE HEARD IT SAID THAT SCREAMING MAKES THE NIGHT PASS FASTER!



THEN YER NIGHT'S
GONNA PASS
REAL 3TIKE:
FAST, DOG
SOLDIER!

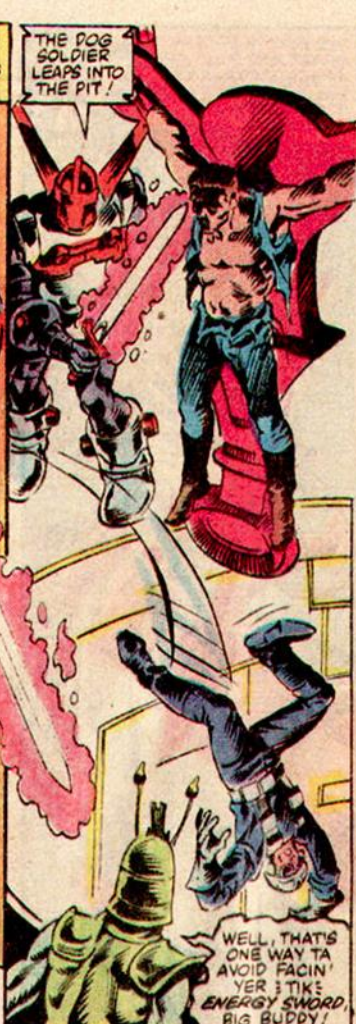
SHKROW

YIIIEEEE!



HE DOES
NOT HAVE
TO.

A-ACROYEAR? I-I'D
HAVE TO BE MAD TO
DEFEY YOU!



THE DOG
SOLDIER
LEAPS INTO
THE PIT!

WELL, THAT'S
ONE WAY TO
AVOID FACIN'
YER 3TIKE
ENERGY SWORD,
BIG BUDDY!



LET US ACT
QUICKLY TO SPARE
PRINCE PHAROID A
SIMILAR FATE!

HE LOOKS
PRETTY
3TIKE:
ROCKY!

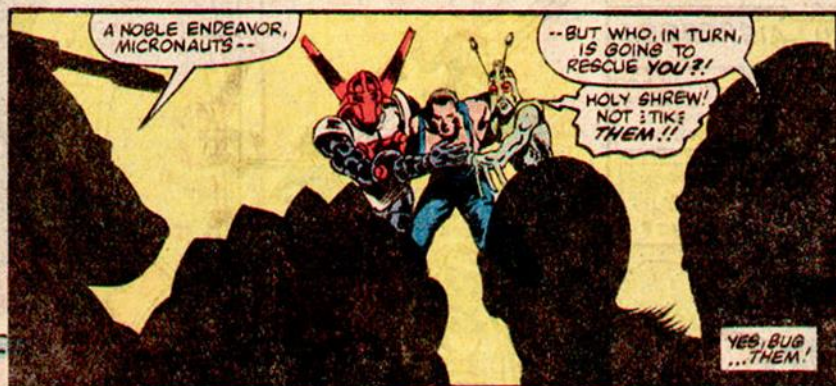
YOU AND I HAVE
BEEN GUESTS IN
BARON KARZA'S
PLEASURE PITS,
BUG. I DOUBT
THE ENTERTAIN-
MENT HAS
CHANGED MUCH
UNDER FORCE
COMMANDER!



THE ... MICRONAUTS --
BACK ON ... HOME-
WORLD ??

WASTE NO TIME...
ON ME! SAVE...
THE LADY
SLUG!

THAT TASK HAS FALLEN
TO OTHERS, PRINCE
PHAROID. OUR MISSION IS
TO RESCUE YOU.



CHAPTER THREE

GRAVEYARD!

SO FAR, SO GOOD,
COMMANDER!
WE'RE MORE THAN
HALFWAY TO THE
ISLAND!

BUT WHAT WILL
WE FIND WHEN WE
GET THERE?

AND HOW LONG WILL
DEVIL'S SAVAGERY
REMAIN IN CHECK?

SO LONG AS MICROTRON CONTINUES
TO REPLAY HIS TAPE-LOOP OF FIRE-
FLYTE'S SONGS...

SILLAILILLAISREEEEE

...WHICH MAY
NOT BE MUCH
LONGER,
INDEED!

NANOTRON?
WHAT IS IT?
WHAT'S
WRONG?

OH,
MICROTRON,
I'M SORRY--

DROPPING TO THE WAVES
BELOW, THE GOLDEN ROBROID
SINKS WITHOUT A TRACE!

NANOTRON!

MICROTRON,
WAIT! DON'T
DIVE DOWN
AFTER HER--!!

--BUT I
CAN'T HOLD
ON ANY
LONGER!!

RARRHH!

ARRGHH!

DEVIL'S
GONE
SAVAGE
AGAIN!

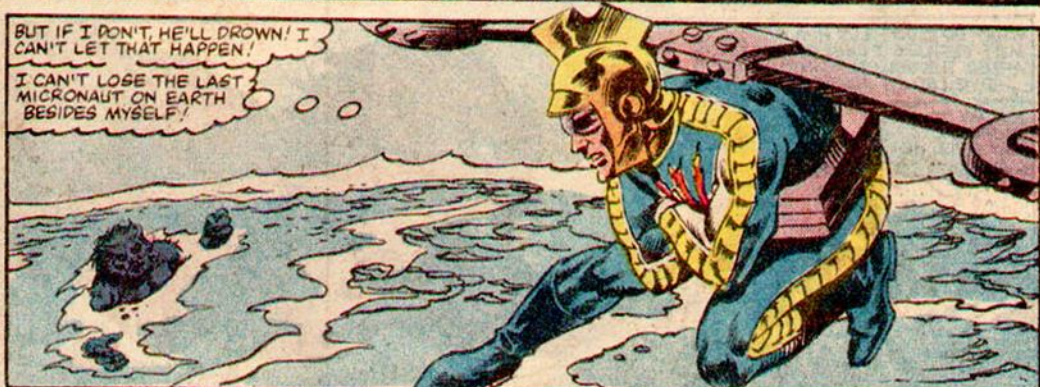
I'VE
GOT TO
GET HIM
OFF ME!

TOO LATE!
THEY'RE
BOTH GONE!

YES, COMMANDER RANN, MICRO-
TRON'S GONE--AND WITH HIM THE
RECORDED SONG OF FIREFLYTE!

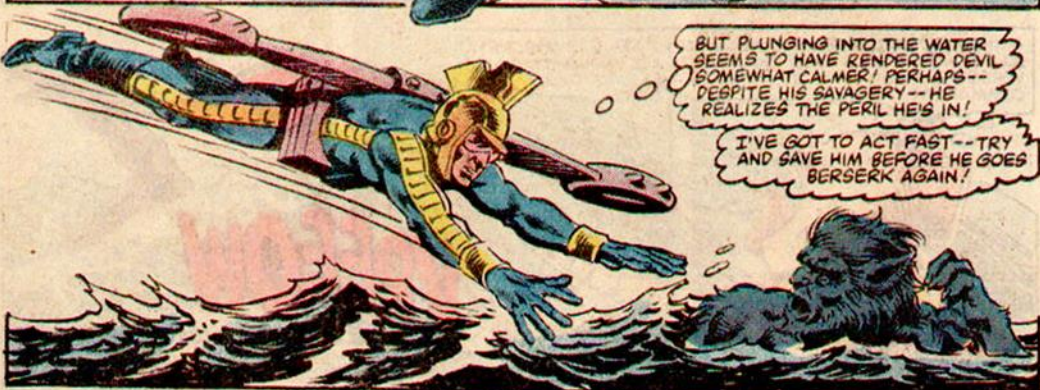


WHAT DO I DO NOW? IF I TRY TO RESCUE DEVIL, HE'LL JUST ATTACK ME AGAIN!



BUT IF I DON'T, HE'LL DROWN! I CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN!

I CAN'T LOSE THE LAST MICRONAUT ON EARTH BESIDES MYSELF!



BUT PLUNGING INTO THE WATER SEEMS TO HAVE RENDERED DEVIL SOMEWHAT CALMER! PERHAPS-- DESPITE HIS SAVAGERY-- HE REALIZES THE PERIL HE'S IN!

I'VE GOT TO ACT FAST-- TRY AND SAVE HIM BEFORE HE GOES BERSERK AGAIN!



RARRGH!

SPLASH

SWOK

DEVIL'S STRIKE
DAMAGED ONE
OF MY GLIDER-
WINGS! I
CAN'T TAKE
OFF AGAIN!

AND HE'S
SWIMMING IN
FOR THE KILL!

WHAT DO I DO? LET HIM REACH
ME? PERHAPS I DESERVE TO DIE
AFTER THE DISASTERS INTO WHICH
I'VE LED MY FRIENDS!

NO! MY OTHER
MICRONAUTS
MAY STILL BE
ALIVE--

--AND MY DYING HERE ON EARTH WON'T
DO A THING TO HELP FREE THE MICRO-
VERSE FROM THE TYRANNY OF FORCE
COMMANDER!

DEVIL, I'M SORRY!!
I BROUGHT YOU
TO THIS!

I
DOOMED
US ALL!

VREEOW

THE HIGH WHINE OF COMMANDER RANN'S
LASERSONIC DROWNS OUT DEVIL'S HOWLS.

BUT HE NEVER LEARNS
WHETHER HIS BLAST
STRUCK HIS FELLOW
MICRONAUT OR NOT...

...FOR, IN THE NEXT
INSTANT, A CRASHING
WAVE SEPARATES
THE TWO.



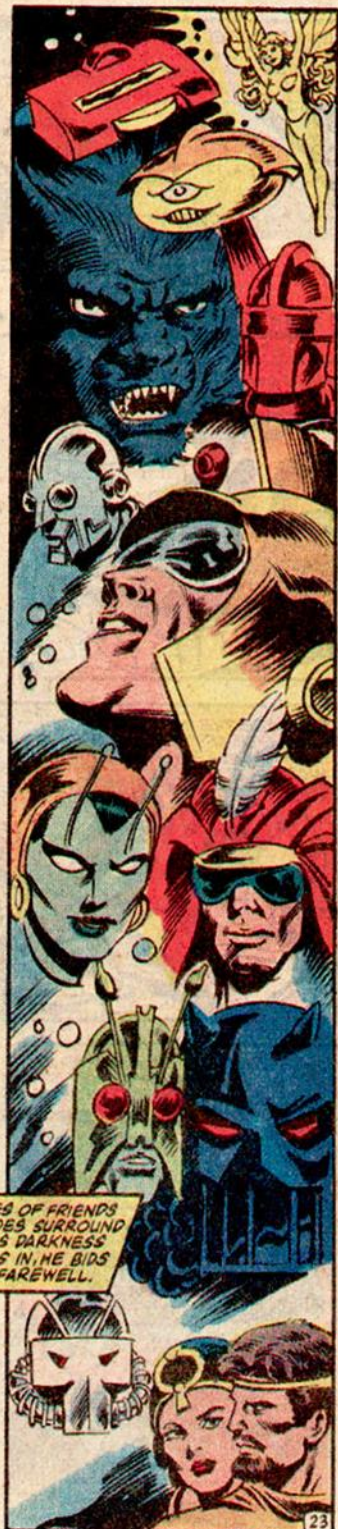
CAUGHT IN THE
UNDERTOW OFF THE
ISLAND'S SHORE,
COMMANDER RANN
IS DRAWN BENEATH
THE WAVES.

POUNDED AND PUMMELED BY
THE CONFLICTING CURRENTS,
HE STRUGGLES...

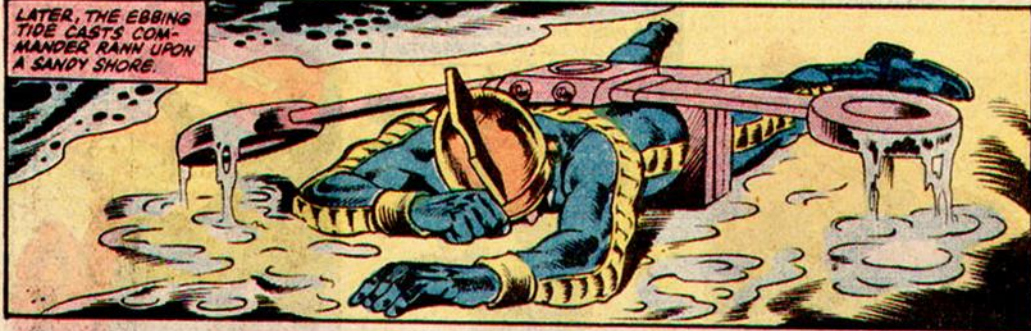
BUT SOON,
HE CEASES
FIGHTING.



IMAGES OF FRIENDS
AND FOES SURROUND
HIM, AS DARKNESS
CLOSES IN; HE BIDS
THEM FAREWELL.



LATER, THE EBBING
TIDE CASTS COM-
MANDER RANN UPON
A SANDY SHORE.

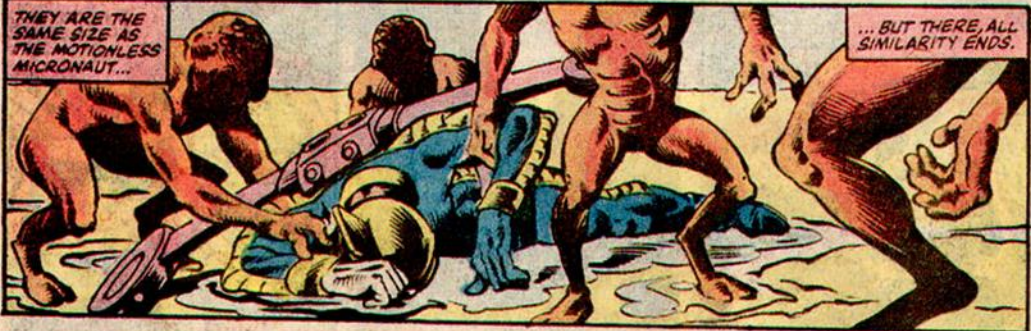


THE SAND
STIRS.



STRANGE, NIGHTMARISH BEINGS RISE UP.

THEY ARE THE
SAME SIZE AS
THE MOTIONLESS
MICRONAUT...



... BUT THERE, ALL
SIMILARITY ENDS.

MAKING NO SOUND, BLINKING IN
THE BRIGHT SUNLIGHT, THEY LIFT
THE HUMAN FLTSAM THAT IS COM-
MANDER RANN...



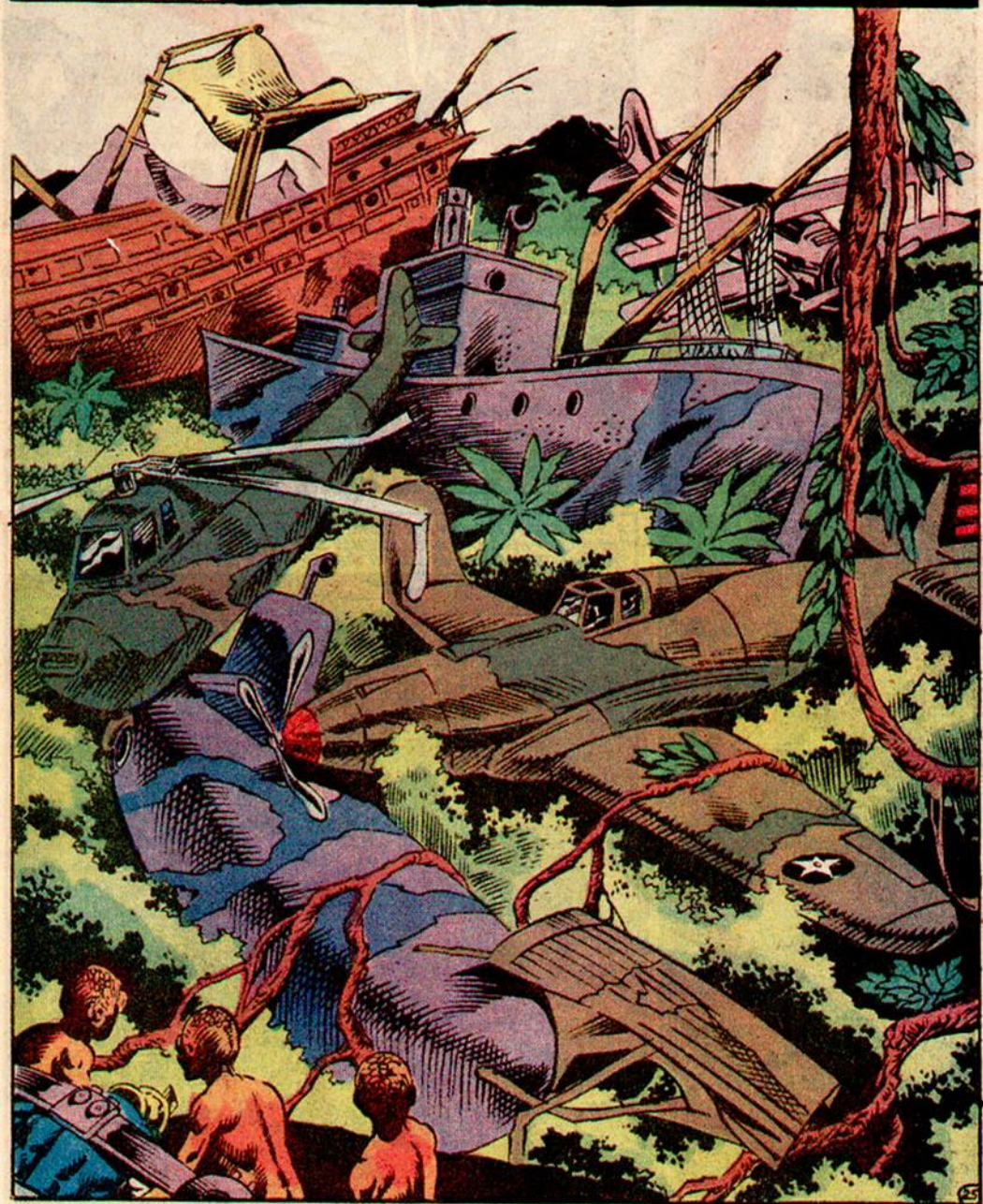
...AND BEAR HIM AWAY FROM
THE BEACH, UP ROCKY SLOPES...



... AND OVER THE TOP OF A ROCKY
RIDGE.



ONLY THEIR
BULBOUS EYES
TAKE IN WHAT
LIES UPON THE
OTHER SIDE.



WITHOUT A WORD
THE STRANGE
BEINGS PROCEED
DOWN THE INNER
SLOPE...

... BEARING THEIR CHARGE DEEPER
INTO THE HUGE OPEN-AIR GRAVEYARD.

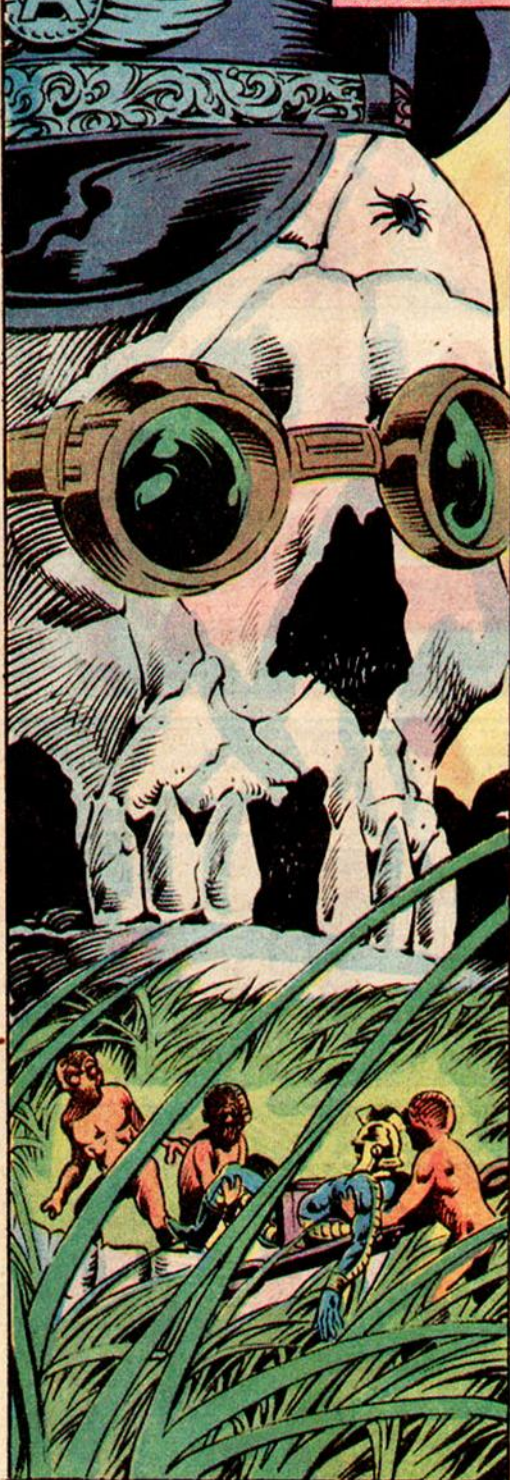
THEN,
THEY
STOP.

A SKELETON LIES BEFORE THEM--HUMAN-SIZED AND THUS MANY TIMES
THEIR OWN HEIGHT--WHERE IT HAS LAIN SINCE HE WHOSE FLESH ONCE
DRAPED ITS BLEACHING BONES DIED OF SLOW STARVATION SEVERAL
DECADES AGO.

ITS MOUTH GAPES
OPEN, AS IF CRYING
FOR ONE LAST MEAL
BEFORE PASSING
FROM THE EARTH.



OPEN, IT SERVES
AS AN EERIE
PORTAL, INDEED!



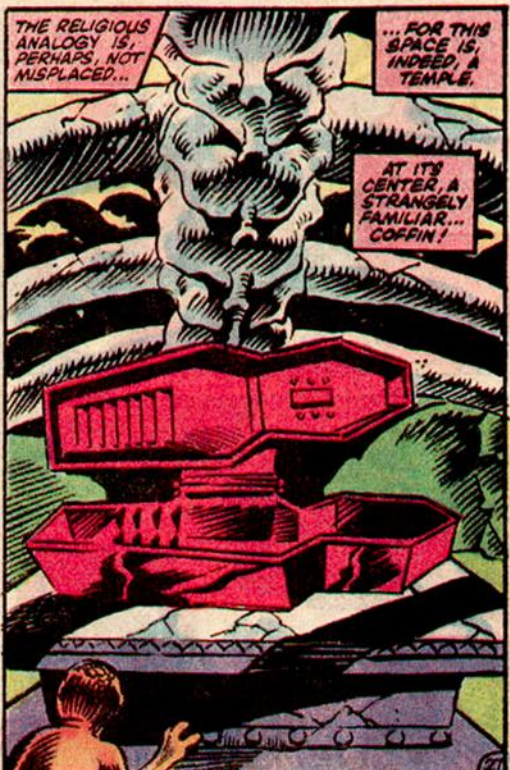
SUNLIGHT SLANTS THROUGH THE ARCHED RIBS
OVERHEAD. THE CHEST CAVITY IS CAVERNOUS,
ALMOST CATHEDRAL-LIKE.

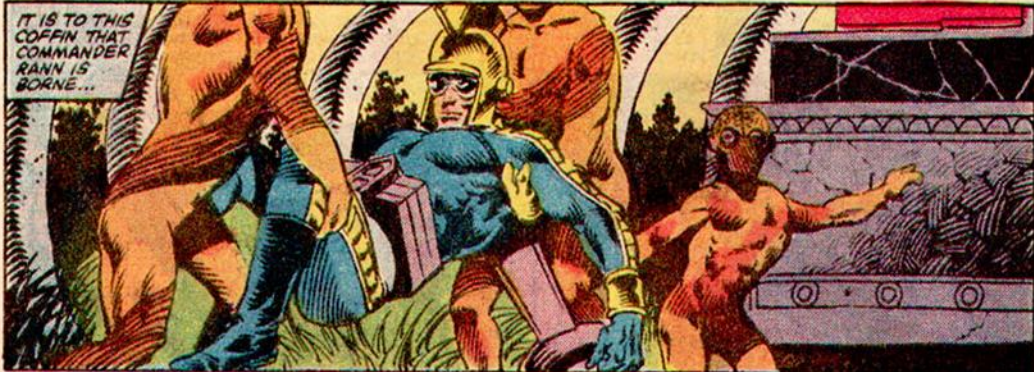


THE RELIGIOUS
ANALOGY IS,
PERHAPS, NOT
MISPLACED...

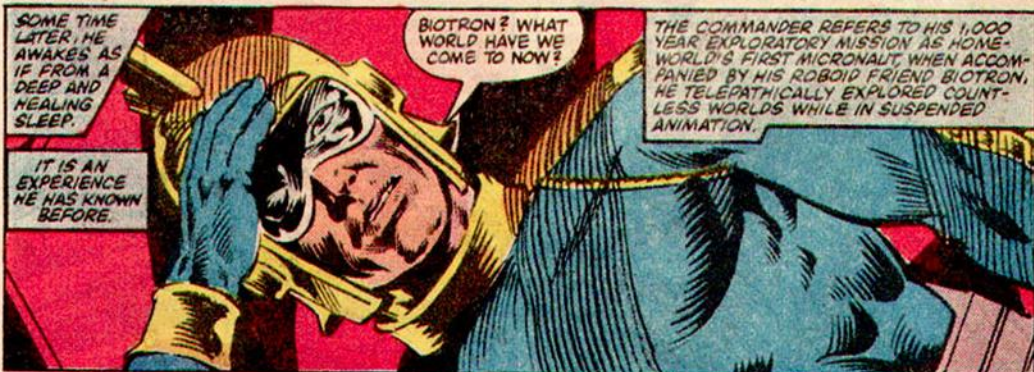
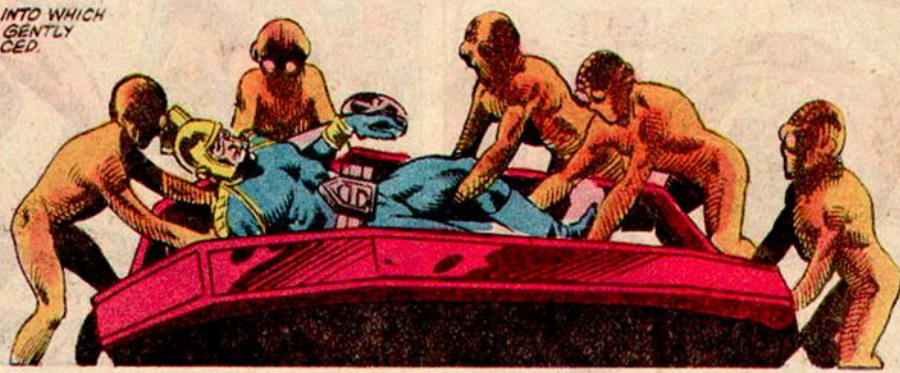
...FOR THIS
SPACE IS,
INDEED, A
TEMPLE.

AT ITS
CENTER, A
STRANGELY
FAMILIAR...
COFFIN!





...AND INTO WHICH HE IS GENTLY PLACED.



SOME TIME LATER, HE AWAKES AS IF FROM A DEEP AND HEALING SLEEP.

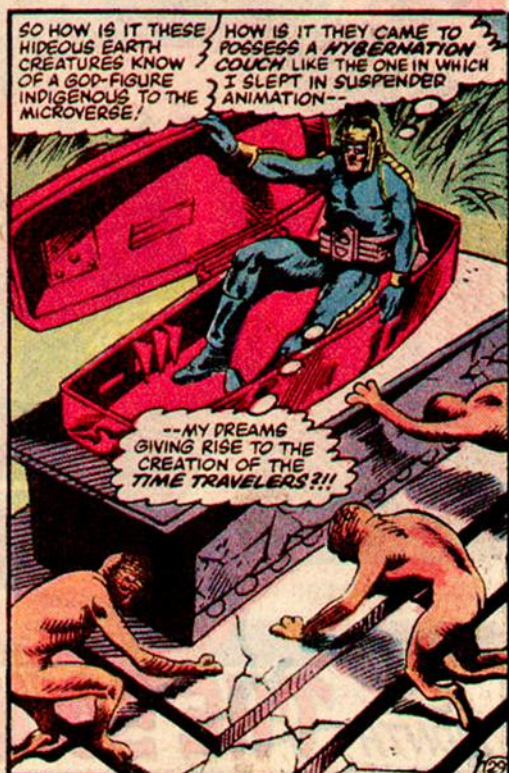
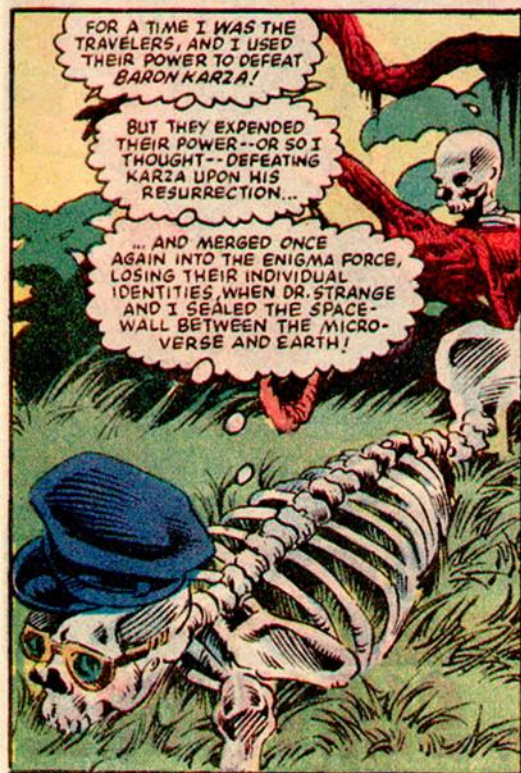
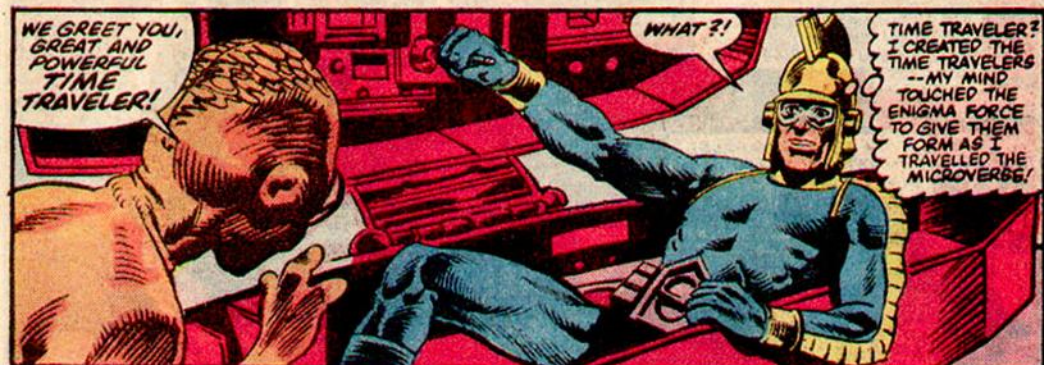
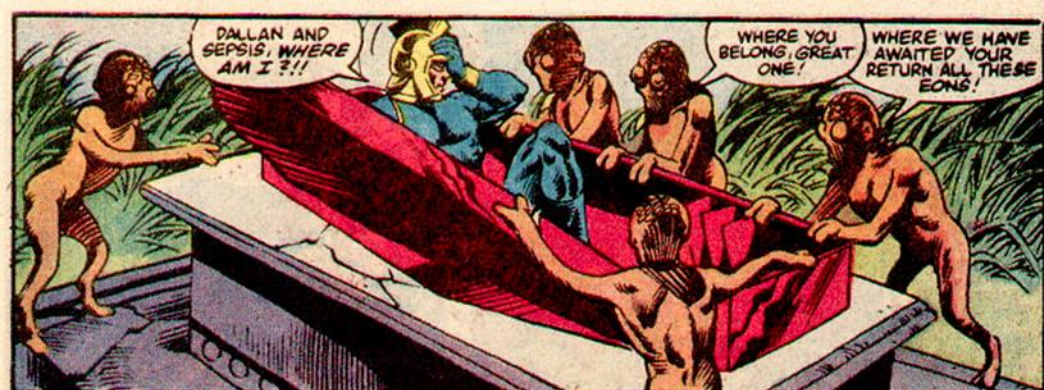
IT IS AN EXPERIENCE HE HAS KNOWN BEFORE.

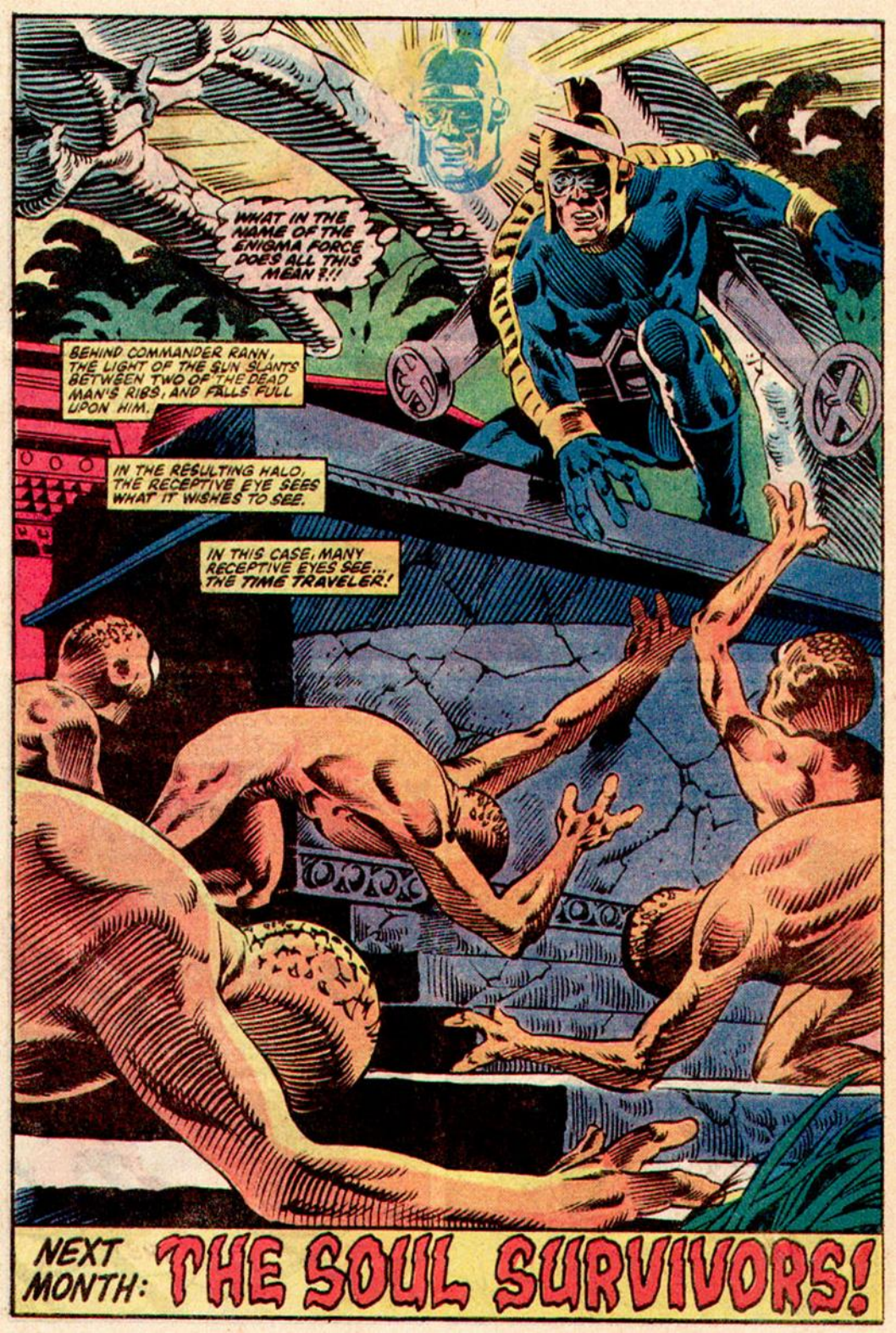
BIOTRON? WHAT WORLD HAVE WE COME TO NOW?

THE COMMANDER REFERS TO HIS 1,000 YEAR EXPLORATORY MISSION AS HOME-WORLD'S FIRST MICRONAUT, WHEN ACCOMPANIED BY HIS ROBOID FRIEND BIOTRON, HE TELEPATHICALLY EXPLORED COUNTLESS WORLDS WHILE IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION.



BUT, OF THE FACES HE SEES NOW, NONE BEAR ANY RESEMBLANCE TO THAT OF HIS RECENTLY SLAIN ROBOID HELMSMAN!





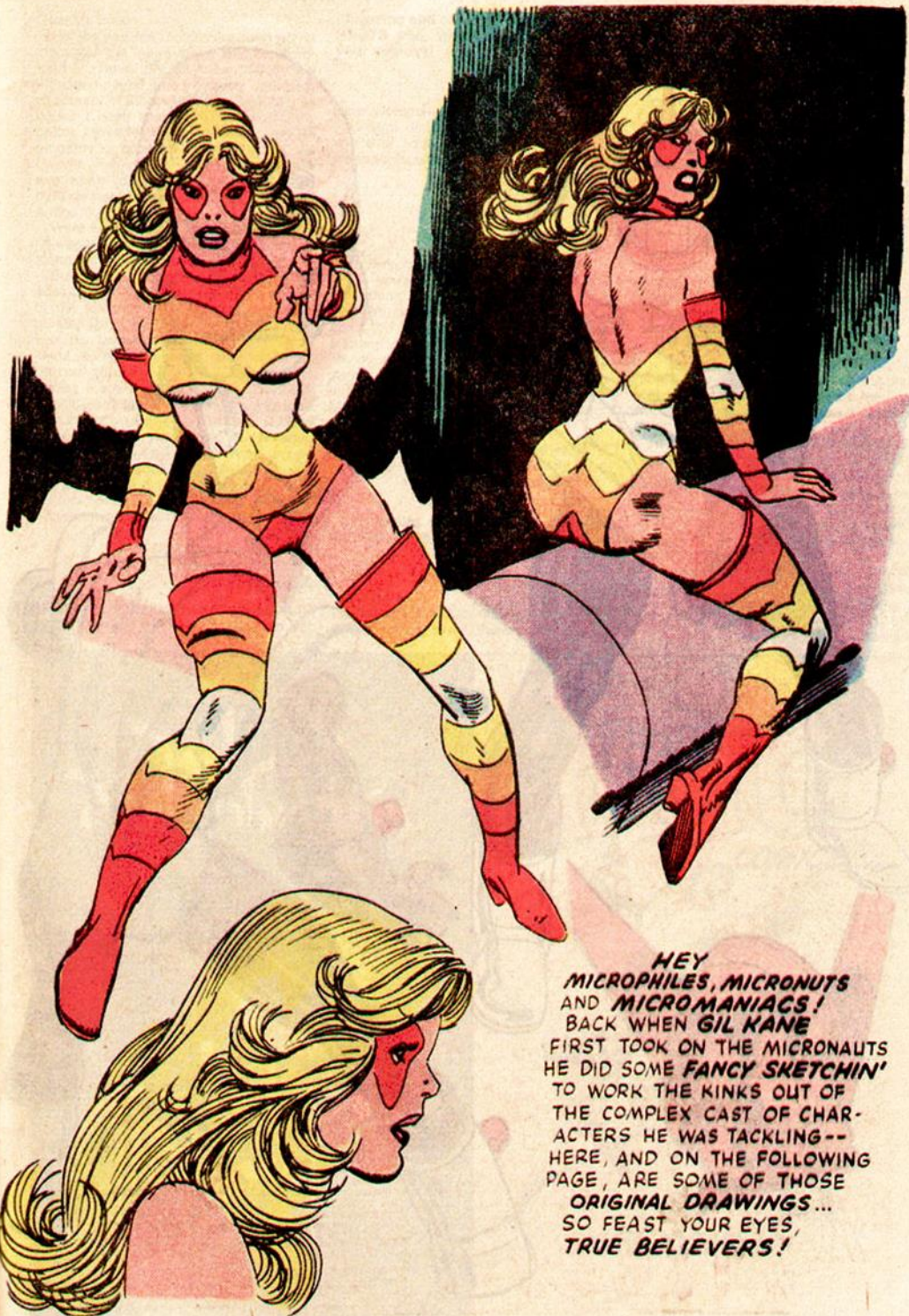
WHAT IN THE
NAME OF THE
ENIGMA FORCE
DOES ALL THIS
MEAN?!!

BEHIND COMMANDER RANN,
THE LIGHT OF THE SUN SLANTS
BETWEEN TWO OF THE DEAD
MAN'S RIBS, AND FALLS FULL
UPON HIM.

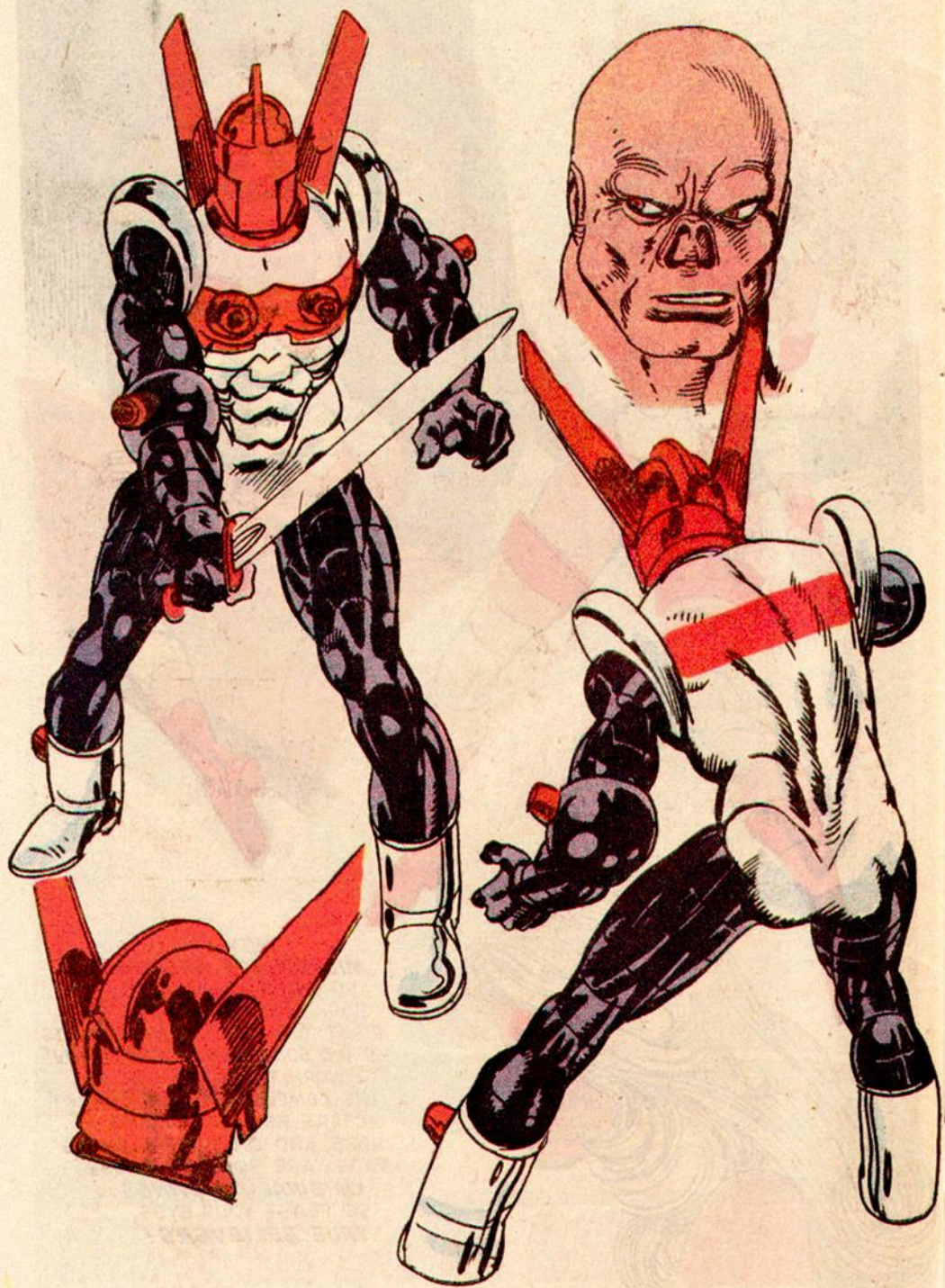
IN THE RESULTING HALO,
THE RECEPTIVE EYE SEES
WHAT IT WISHES TO SEE.

IN THIS CASE, MANY
RECEPTIVE EYES SEE...
THE TIME TRAVELER!

NEXT MONTH: **THE SOUL SURVIVORS!**



**HEY
MICROPHILES, MICRONUTS
AND MICROMANIACS!
BACK WHEN GIL KANE
FIRST TOOK ON THE MICRONAUTS
HE DID SOME FANCY SKETCHIN'
TO WORK THE KINKS OUT OF
THE COMPLEX CAST OF CHAR-
ACTERS HE WAS TACKLING--
HERE, AND ON THE FOLLOWING
PAGE, ARE SOME OF THOSE
ORIGINAL DRAWINGS...
SO FEAST YOUR EYES,
TRUE BELIEVERS!**



MICROMAILS

© MARVEL COMICS GROUP

387 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

ALLEN MILGROM
EDITOR
ANN NOCENTI
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Here we go again...

Due to Gil Kane's departure as penciler, we're back on the MICRONAUTS' merry-go-round again. 'Sigh: Cool-hand Luke McDonnell drew the comic you hold in your hands, Mike Vosburg will fill in next ish, and newcomer Butch Guice will pencil the following month. Well, continuity and confusion aside, it's always fun to see how each new artist interprets the Micronauts, so let us know what you think!!

Dear Micromakers,

To be honest, I didn't think that you could do it, but Doctor Doom vs. the Micronauts in MICRONAUTS #41 worked. I'm especially thrilled when the continuity of Marvel mags spills over into other books, and I was delighted at seeing Dr. Doom and the Puppet Master still at each other's throats in an obvious extension of FANTASTIC FOUR #236.

Gil Kane and Danny Bulanadi's art blended well, and the script was exciting. It seems that events in the Microverse are really heating up. More!

I know that everyone will mention Doom's reference to himself as "Vincent Von Doom" rather than "Victor," but this is not Bill's fault, No-Prize mavens. Doom was referring to the "Vincent Vaughn" android form his mind was trapped in while in Liddleville, and in the heat of his battle with Acroyear he merely got the two confused.

Jeff Mailbane

#3-B

Marshall Avenue
Georgetown, OH 45121

You get the No-Prize, Jeff, 'cause Doc Doom's slip-up occurred exactly the way you explained it! Very perceptive, pal!

Dear Marvel,

I liked MICRONAUTS #41. I knew you would eventually do a follow-up to FANTASTIC FOUR #236, but MICRONAUTS was the last place (except, perhaps, for DENNIS THE MENACE!) I would have expected it to appear.

However, the mighty Micros would have been better off if they'd stuck around the Baxter Building instead of running off to Doom's castle. Then they might have witnessed the events in MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #87, which presumably took place right after the Micronaut's visit, and they might have gained some insight into shrinking down to subatomic universes from Ant-Man.

Daniel Tobias
7 Broadway Road
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603

Funny you should mention that, Dan, because MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #87 kicked off a number of ideas between Bill and Gil, not the least of which was an eventual voyage by the ever amazing ANT-MAN to the marvelous Microverse.

Dear Micromakers,

MICRONAUTS #41 was a classic! May it ever be reprinted!

By the way, who will assume the throne of Homeworld after Argon's overthrow? Surely not Mari; she gave up her claim to the throne way back in MICRONAUTS #14. Who, then? Slug?

And, alas, there's the Endeavor, faithful ship of the Micronauts. It sunk to a watery grave in a New York City sewer, but it did last over 1,000 years. My Mom's electric can-opener isn't even guaranteed that long.

Darby Orcutt
South Bear Hill Road
North Windham, CT 06256

Speaking of the Homeworld Micro-Ship Endeavor: The Marvelous Micros will find themselves with a new vessel before long (in just two issues, to be exact) with a helmsman whose return has been long-awaited by Micromaniacs everywhere!

Dear People,

MICRONAUTS #41 was fantastic! I must admit that having Gil Kane doing the artwork always compels me to buy whatever issue he draws, but the story was also well worth my 75¢. Keep it up!

Barry P. Redmann
2211 California Avenue
Santa Monica, CA 90463

Dear Jim and Al,

MICRONAUTS #41 was terrific! The only thing wrong with it was Gil Kane's cover. Dr. Doom was so small and insignificant.

But the interior story and art made up for it. I'd always wondered if Acroyear was an even match for Doom, and now I know.

Marin Art
1915 E. Peachtree Drive
Arlington Heights, IL 60004

Well, let's say that Acroyear and the good Doctor are evenly matched at six inches each, Marty. We'd hesitate to find out what Doom could do to our heroes at his normal height, however!

Dear Marvel,

MICRONAUTS #41 had a lot of things going for it, from the excellent Gil Kane cover to Bill Mantlo's finely-tuned script. Everyone was handled well. Even Nanotron didn't get on my nerves (a first!).

Usually follow-up stories like this one don't work, mainly because the writer doesn't know how to handle the characters from the previous book. But Bill's treatment of both the Puppet Master and Dr. Doom, as well as of his own Micronauts, was just plain perfect. And what an ending! The thought of Doc Doom trapped inside his own personal "Twilight Zone" really blew me away!

A nice job all around.

Terry Collins
337 Badgett Avenue
Mount Airy, N.C. 27030

This follow-up story worked, Terry, because the first thing Bill Mantlo did upon conceiving the idea of such a tale

was to call up FANTASTIC FOUR writer/artist John Byrne and get feedback on the story. Bill and John thrashed out the basic concepts, and Bill tried to leave the story so that John could pick up on it again in the pages of the FF. That's called teamwork, pilgrim. It's also what makes the Marvel Bullpen go 'round.

Dear Bill & Gil,

Any comic that starts off by suggesting that I reread an issue of THE FANTASTIC FOUR has my seal of approval. I am also grateful for the fact that it leaves things open for a sequel in the pages of the FF with the Puppet Master being aided by "The World's Greatest Team" against Doom. Maybe Ant-Man could get in on the fun, but I digress...

Speaking of Doom, is someone at the Marvel Bullpen in charge of keeping track of his appearances? According to my files, he is about five issues away from his 100th (not counting reprints) appearance. Surely that should be an occasion for something?

Please tell Gil that the hours he spent on research prior to assuming the artistic helm of MICRONAUTS shows and that, like him, I can hardly wait for our wee ones to return to the Microverse.

Bill Hall
PO Box 110
Weedsport, NY 13166

Dear Al,

I originally picked up MICRONAUTS #41 because it featured my favorite malevolent monarch on the cover. It had been nearly a year since I'd read MICRONAUTS, and I find myself hooked again. Something about these "boatpeople" from the Microverse intrigues me, and I find that a lot of changes have taken place in the time I've been away. I must say that your present staff is doing them justice.

Javan L. Cooney
1617 South Nation
Springfield, MO 65804

Dear Micromakers,

MICRONAUTS #41 really bothered me. The story simply could not have taken place in the way that it did. In FANTASTIC FOUR #236, Doc Doom needed a huge magnifying glass to even see the people of Liddleville. The Micronauts are hardly that small. More accurately, I think that the people of Liddleville should have been as small relative to our Micronauts as the Micronauts are to ordinary Earthlings (or perhaps even smaller).

Other than this large (small) error, the issue was pretty good. Keep up the good work, and try to read your other Marvel mags more closely in the future.

Oren Werner
29 Uxbridge Street
Staten Island, NY 10314

Uh, anyone have an explanation that'll satisfy Oren, Marvelites? It's worth a No-Prize if you can help us weasel out of this one. Hint: There's a clue in FANTASTIC FOUR #236.

CONTINUED ON INSIDE BACK COVER.

Dear Mr. Editor,

For the past few months I've been worrying about the future of my favorite Micronaut... Devil. We all know that he's a thousand-pound ball (relatively speaking, of course) of fun-loving fur, and Mr. Mantlo couldn't have shaped his character any better. I love his rollicking nature, and his empathy for peaceful harmony. In fact, my favorite sequence in MICRONAUTS #41 was when you showed Devil as charmed by a delicate melody played by Dr. Doom. A nice touch, there!

Were it not for their immediate situation, I'd wager to see Devil just sit back and hum along with Doom's perilous piece.

But my primary concern sways to the possible fact that Devil may soon want out of the Micronauts for want of a simpler, quieter life. Until Devil came along, Bug was my favorite member (and still is... kinda, sorta, maybe). His feisty, no-holds-barred nature more than manages to create a smile across my face. Devil is a classic example of not taking anything at face value; he's a hulking, savage beast by all appearances, yet with the wholehearted kindness of any good soul. Work around his dilemma... don't just chuck him out of the group. And by all means, please don't kill him out of the book. Even though Biotron's coming back, Devil belongs here.

T. Dragon
5336 West Winona Street
Wilbur Wright College
Chicago, IL 60630

There are major changes in store for the character of Devil, T. They go into

full swing and continue on until MICRONAUTS #50. We hope they meet with your approval.

Dear Micromakers,

Limited distribution was the best idea you ever had! Also, MICRONAUTS #41 was spectacular.

Tom Reagan
18 Bowker Street
Norwell, MA 02061

Dear Micromakers,

Bill, you're slowly turning this mag into something better than could ever have been imagined. Even better than, dare I say it, the X-MEN! I compliment you on the addition of Devil to the Micronauts, but Nanotron isn't so hot. Meanwhile, Gil Kane seems perfectly suited to this book. Everything's flowing smoothly, but please get the Micronauts off Earth and back to the Microverse!

Charles Davis
32 Delaine Drive
Normal, IL 61761

We intend to, Charles. Be here for MICRONAUTS #49!

Dear Bill & Gil,

The new format for MICRONAUTS is the greatest thing since Lifesavers! And I don't

know what I'd do without it!

Oscar Limon
4434 Lowell Avenue #16
Los Angeles, CA 90032

Dear Micromaniacs,

Your new format is excellent, but I have a few complaints about Nanotron, primarily that she's an insult to my intelligence. Get rid of her and bring Biotron back!

Allen Rendel
735 Bridgestone
Rochester, MICH 48063

Any feminobolds out there?

Dear Bill,

Why, in my 18 years of reading comics, have I finally decided to bang my brain cells together, and write a letter to Marvel for the first time?

Simple: MICRONAUTS!

They have, from the viewpoint of these jaded eyes, developed into the most original and varied comic that I have the good fortune to collect. (Not bad for a bunch of toys, huh?)

It may be true to say that MICRONAUTS hasn't enjoyed the mass appeal of THE UNCANNY X-MEN or the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN. But this, in my view, is neither indicative of taste nor quality. I hope that all "fans" will rally around MICRONAUTS in the future. I'd like to see your faith in this mag fully justified.

Stephen G. Miller
44 Cecil Street
Hillhead, Glasgow
G12 8RJ
Scotland

Darkseid
dark phoenix
Apokalips...
Now.

Coming
this summer
to a comic
shop near you. A
Marvel Comics
DC Comics
presentation.



