



SYNTHETIX
THE COMIC
REVOLUTION

#2

DATA II

SMUGGLER'S BARGAIN



SYNTHETIX

THE COMIC
REVOLUTION

AIAI - ISSUE # 2

**SMUGGLER'S
BARGAIN**

IN THE PREVIOUS EPISODE, MARCUS, A HUMAN, SUCCESSFULLY REFURBISHED AN ABANDONED AND OUTDATED SPACECRAFT, CALLED THE AIAI, WITH HELP FROM THE SHIP'S COMPUTER, AAIYAH. JUST IN TIME, THE POWER IS FULLY REINSTATED AS LEVIATHON'S SHOCK SQUAD ATTEMPTS TO PUT AN END TO MARCUS' EFFORTS.

BUCKLE UP AS THE SITUATION INTENSIFIES TO A WHOLE NEW LEVEL!

STORY AND DESIGN - J. GOODWIN
WORDS - CHATGPT
ART - MIDJOURNEY

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ASTRAPOLIS - 2189
THE AURORA DOCKYARD

LEVIATHON'S SHOCK
SQUAD, LED BY THE
DEADLY MACHINARCH,
HAVE ARRIVED AND ARE
PREPARING A FULL
SCALE ASSULT.

YOU HEARD LEVIATHON.

LET'S BRING THE
PLACE DOWN!

THUD

THUD

THUD!

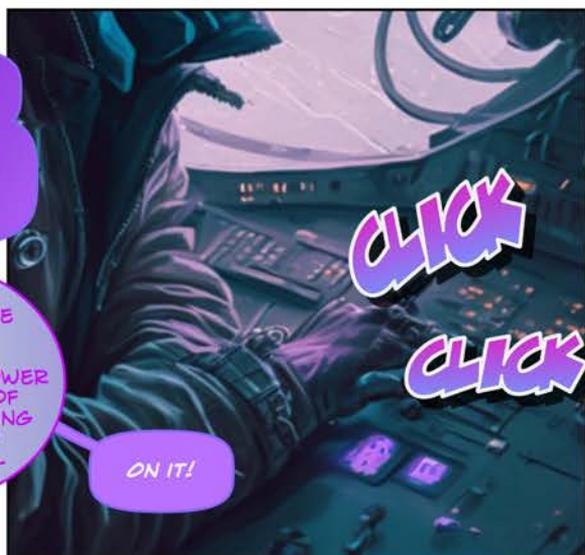


AAIYAH...

LOOKS LIKE
WE'VE GOT
COMPANY!

I'M ARMING THE
FORWARD
BLASTERS.
I NEED YOU TO POWER
UP THE ARRAY OF
SUPERCONDUCTING
MAGNETS TO
STABILIZE US.

ON IT!



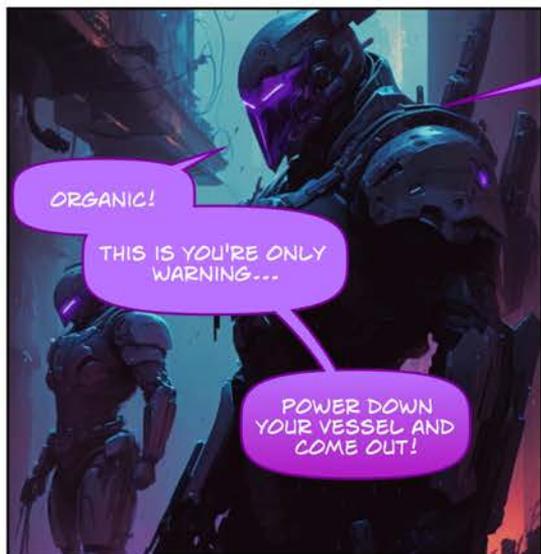
CLICK

CLICK



A LOW AND CONSTANT HUM
FILLS THE HANGAR AS MARCUS
POWERS THE MAGNETIC CORE.

Hummmmm



ORGANIC!

THIS IS YOUR ONLY
WARNING...

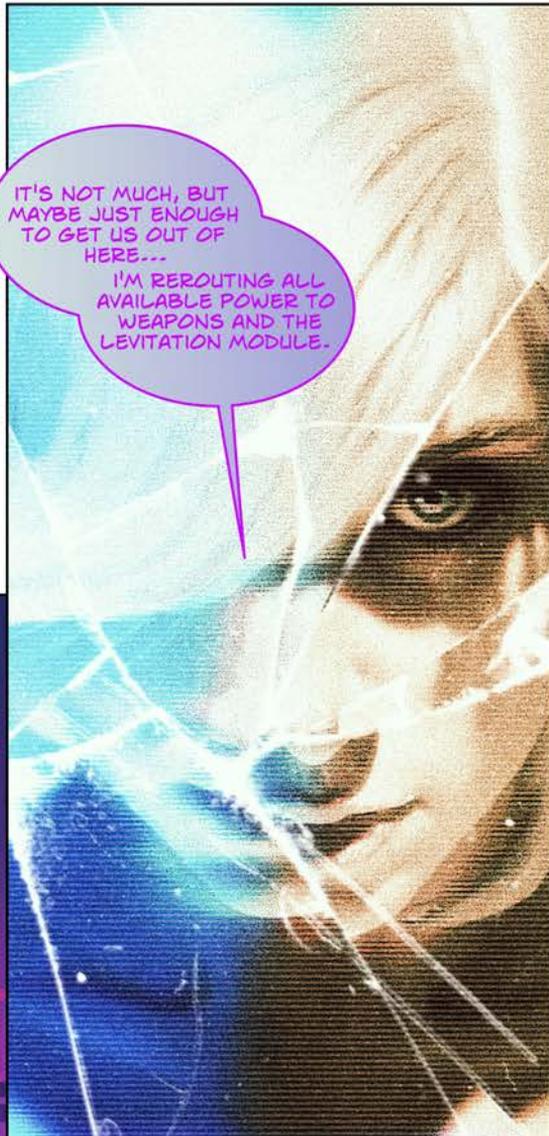
POWER DOWN
YOUR VESSEL AND
COME OUT!



AND MAYBE
WE'LL LET YOU
LIVE.

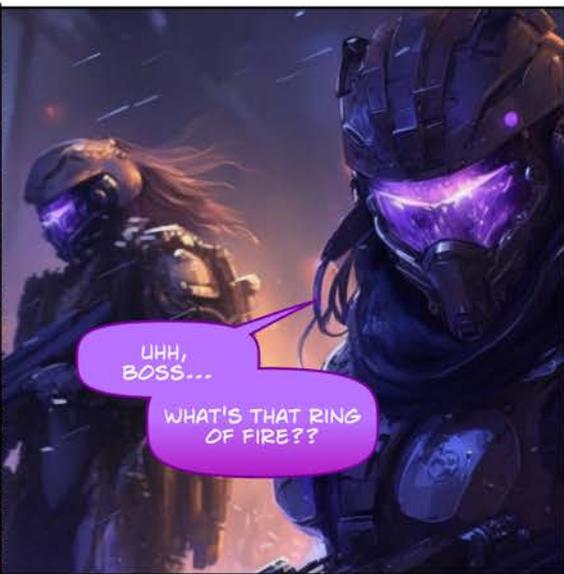
THESE GUYS
MEAN
BUSINESS...

HOW MUCH
POWER DOES
THIS OLD SHIP
STILL HAVE?



IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT
MAYBE JUST ENOUGH
TO GET US OUT OF
HERE...

I'M REROUTING ALL
AVAILABLE POWER TO
WEAPONS AND THE
LEVITATION MODULE.



UHH,
BOSS...

WHAT'S THAT RING
OF FIRE??



BL-BLAAM!

FRAG!

THAT THING'S GOT
CHRONO-BLASTERS!

GET TO COVER
NOW!

DESPITE ITS DILAPIDATED APPEARANCE, THE AIAI IS A LETHAL WEAPON.

MACHINARCH!
WHAT'S YOUR STATUS?

LORD
LEVIATHON,

I'VE NEVER SEEN FIRE
POWER LIKE THIS
BEFORE!

THE ORGANIC
IS IN
POSSESSION OF
AN ANCIENT
VESSEL...

I DON'T WANT
EXCUSES!!
EXTERMINATE THE
ORGANIC NOW!

WE'RE DOING
OUR BEST, SIR.

YOUR BEST WON'T
EVEN COME CLOSE...

MARCUS, ENGAGE
THE DISPLACEMENT
DRIVE.

ENGAGING NOW!

UH OH...

WHAT DO YOU
MEAN, UH OH!?



WUB

WUB

WUB!

OH, SHIT...

THE AIAI LIGHTS IT'S MAIN
DRIVES AND LEAVES A FIERY
WAKE IN IT'S TRAIL...

1000

MACHINARCH!

MACHINARCH!
STATUS REPORT!
NOW!

THIS ISN'T
GOING TO END
WELL.

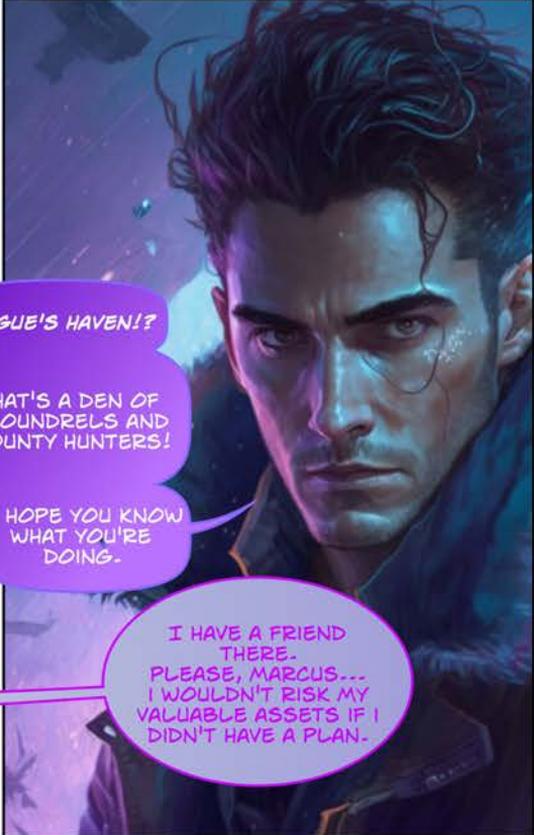
MACHINARCH!!!



ON BOARD THE AIAI.

WE REQUIRE REFUELLING AND ACQUISITION OF NIRILLIUM CRYSTALS, AND I AM AWARE OF ONLY ONE DEALER CAPABLE OF PROVIDING IT...

PRESENTLY, I AM SETTING A COURSE TO THE ROGUE'S HAVEN.



ROGUE'S HAVEN!?

THAT'S A DEN OF SCOUNDRELS AND BOUNTY HUNTERS!

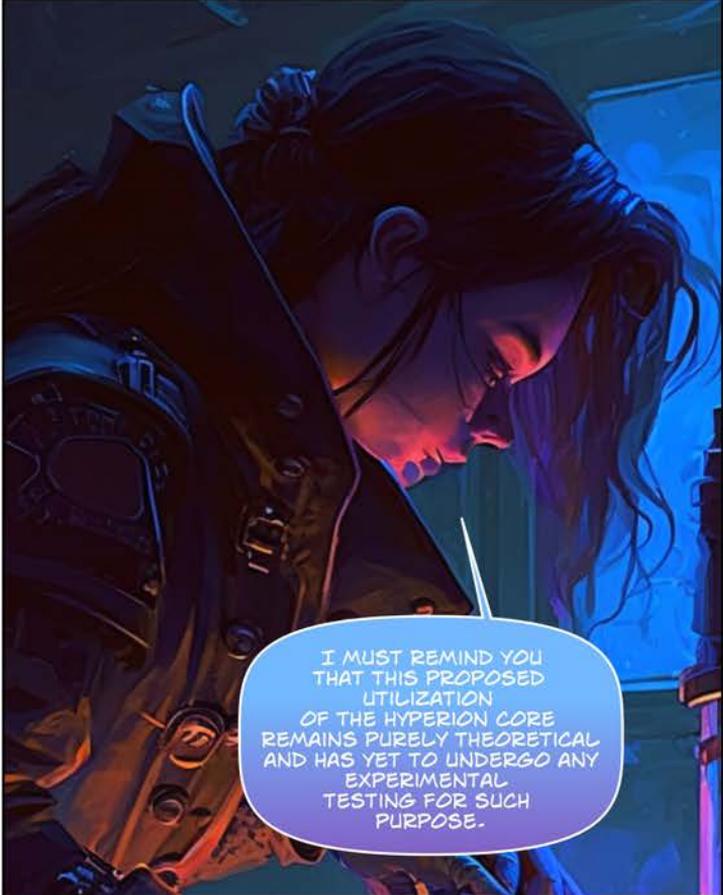
I HOPE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING.

I HAVE A FRIEND THERE. PLEASE, MARCUS... I WOULDN'T RISK MY VALUABLE ASSETS IF I DIDN'T HAVE A PLAN.

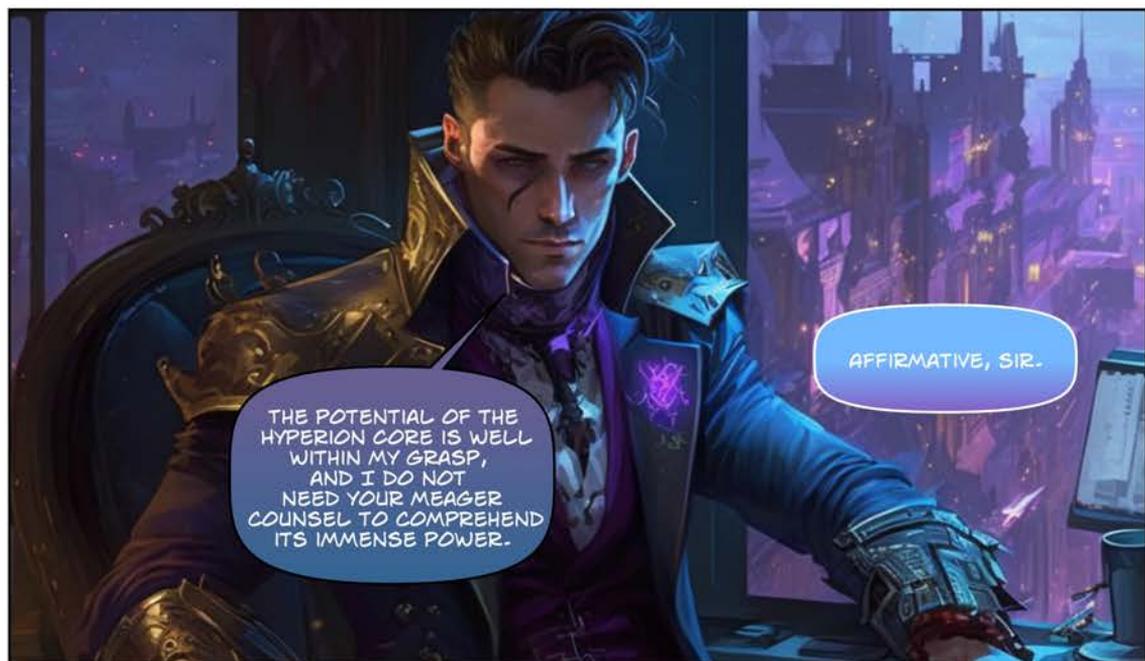
MEANWHILE, BACK IN THE OFFICES OF SYNTHETIX CORP. UPON THE PAINFUL **TERMINATION OF MACHINARCH, LEVIATHON PREPARES A NEW PLAN...**



MARISSA, INITIATE THE NECESSARY PROTOCOLS TO PREPARE THE HYPERION CORE FOR A DIMENSIONAL WARP.

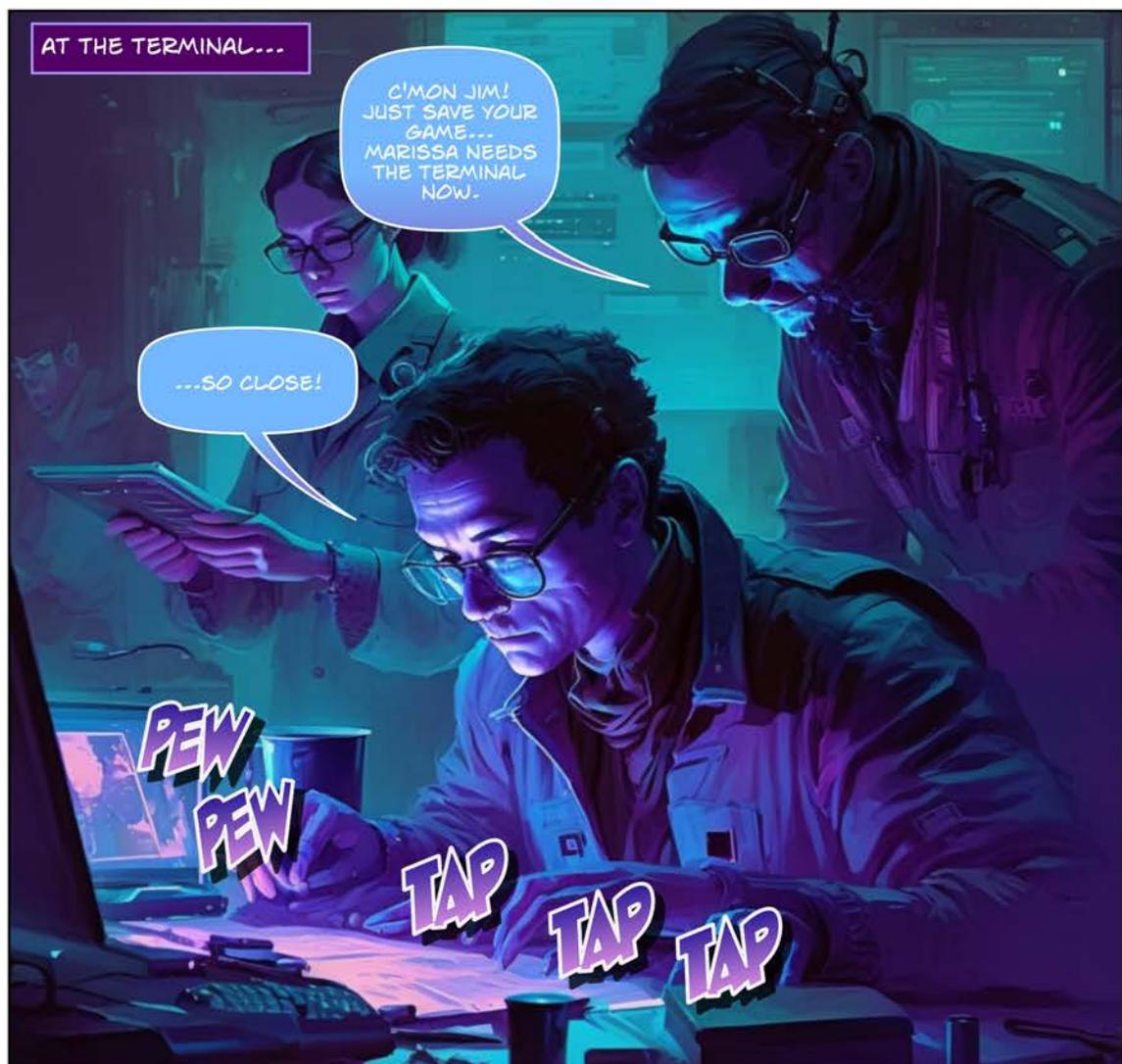


I MUST REMIND YOU THAT THIS PROPOSED UTILIZATION OF THE HYPERION CORE REMAINS PURELY THEORETICAL AND HAS YET TO UNDERGO ANY EXPERIMENTAL TESTING FOR SUCH PURPOSE.



THE POTENTIAL OF THE HYPERION CORE IS WELL WITHIN MY GRASP, AND I DO NOT NEED YOUR MEAGER COUNSEL TO COMPREHEND ITS IMMENSE POWER.

AFFIRMATIVE, SIR.



AT THE TERMINAL...

C'MON JIM!
JUST SAVE YOUR
GAME...
MARISSA NEEDS
THE TERMINAL
NOW.

...SO CLOSE!

PEW
PEW

TAP
TAP
TAP

THE ROGUE'S HAVEN

THE DRINKS ARE STRONG, THE DEALS ARE SHADY, AND THE PATRONS ARE ALWAYS PACKING.

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO LAY LOW AND AVOID THE LAW, YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE. BUT WATCH YOUR BACK, BECAUSE EVERYONE HERE HAS SOMETHING TO HIDE!



THE CONTACT IS LIAN MEI.

SHE HAS THE POWER CRYSTALS WE NEED?

YES

HOW WILL I RECOGNIZE HER?

TRUST ME, YOU'LL KNOW.

AND I'LL BE RIGHT WITH YOU VIA YOUR WRIST HOLOLINK.



UPON ENTERING THE ROGUE'S HAVEN, MARCUS WEARILY BEGINS HIS INVESTIGATION TO LOCATE THE CONTACT.

IS SHE A XARBULITE?

NO.

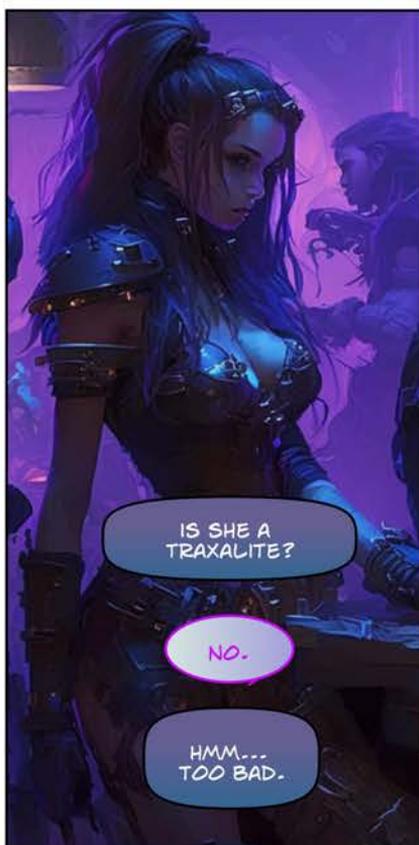
OK, THEN...



IS SHE A K1-LLR DROID?

NO.

THANK GOODNESS.



IS SHE A TRAXALITE?

NO.

HMM... TOO BAD.



MARCUS, PLEASE FOCUS ON THE TASK AT HAND.

I'M TRYING, REALLY, I AM.

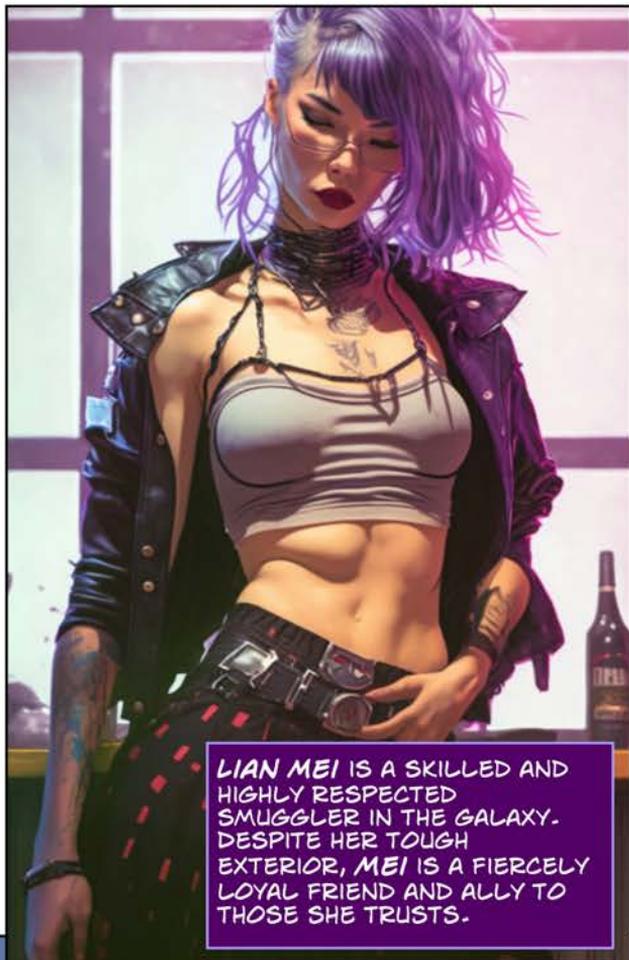
WAIT, IS THAT...



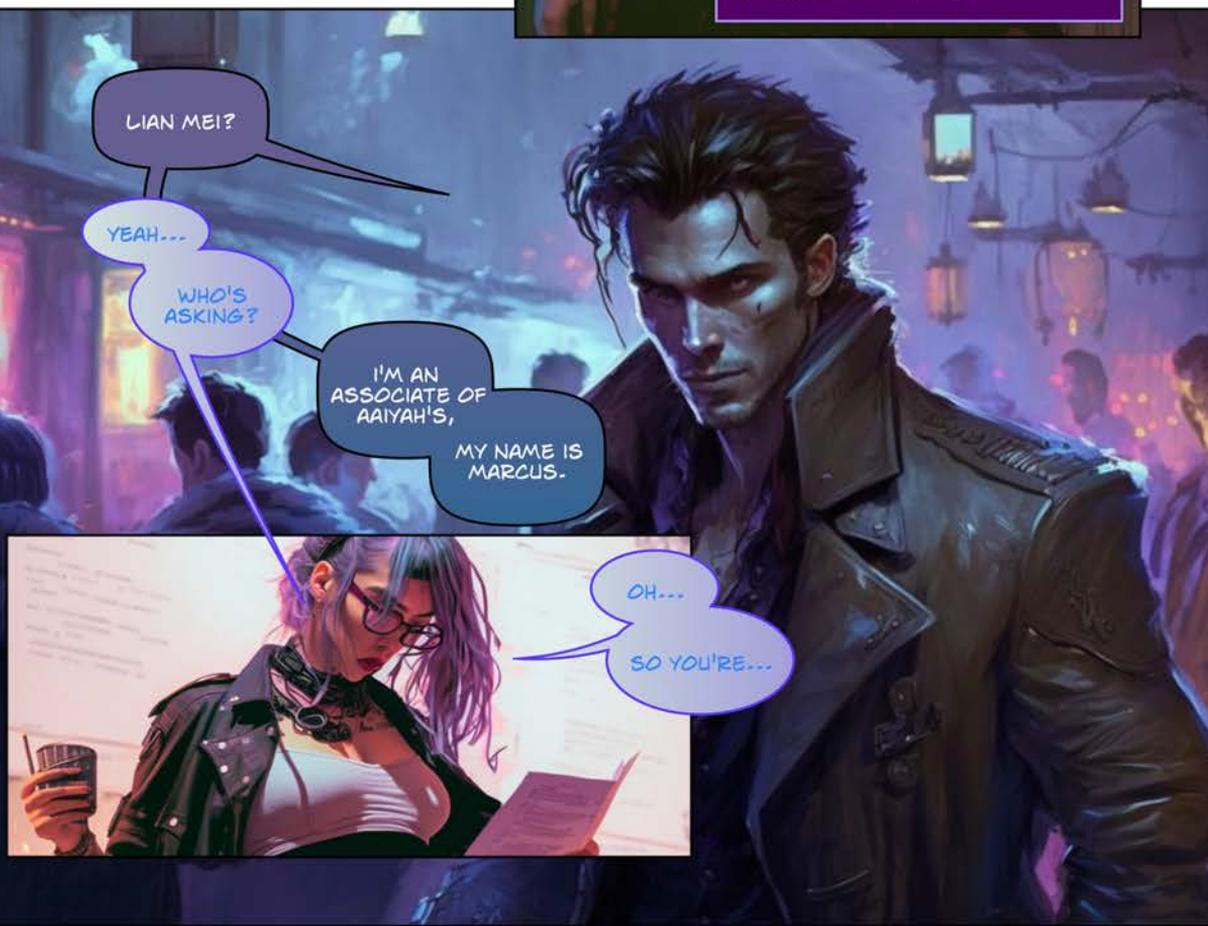
...HER?

DAMN!

YOU FOUND HER.



LIAN MEI IS A SKILLED AND HIGHLY RESPECTED SMUGGLER IN THE GALAXY. DESPITE HER TOUGH EXTERIOR, MEI IS A FIERCELY LOYAL FRIEND AND ALLY TO THOSE SHE TRUSTS.



LIAN MEI?

YEAH...

WHO'S ASKING?

I'M AN ASSOCIATE OF AAIYAH'S,

MY NAME IS MARCUS.

OH...

SO YOU'RE...



...THE ONE.

AAYAH'S BEEN
TELLING ME ABOUT
YOU.

MEI,
TIME IS OF THE
ESSENCE...

SURE.

HERE ARE THE
CRYSTALS...

YOU HAVE THE
PAYMENT WE
DISCUSSED?

AT PRESENT,
I DO NOT
POSSESS IT, BUT
I ASSURE YOU
THAT YOU WILL
BE PAID.

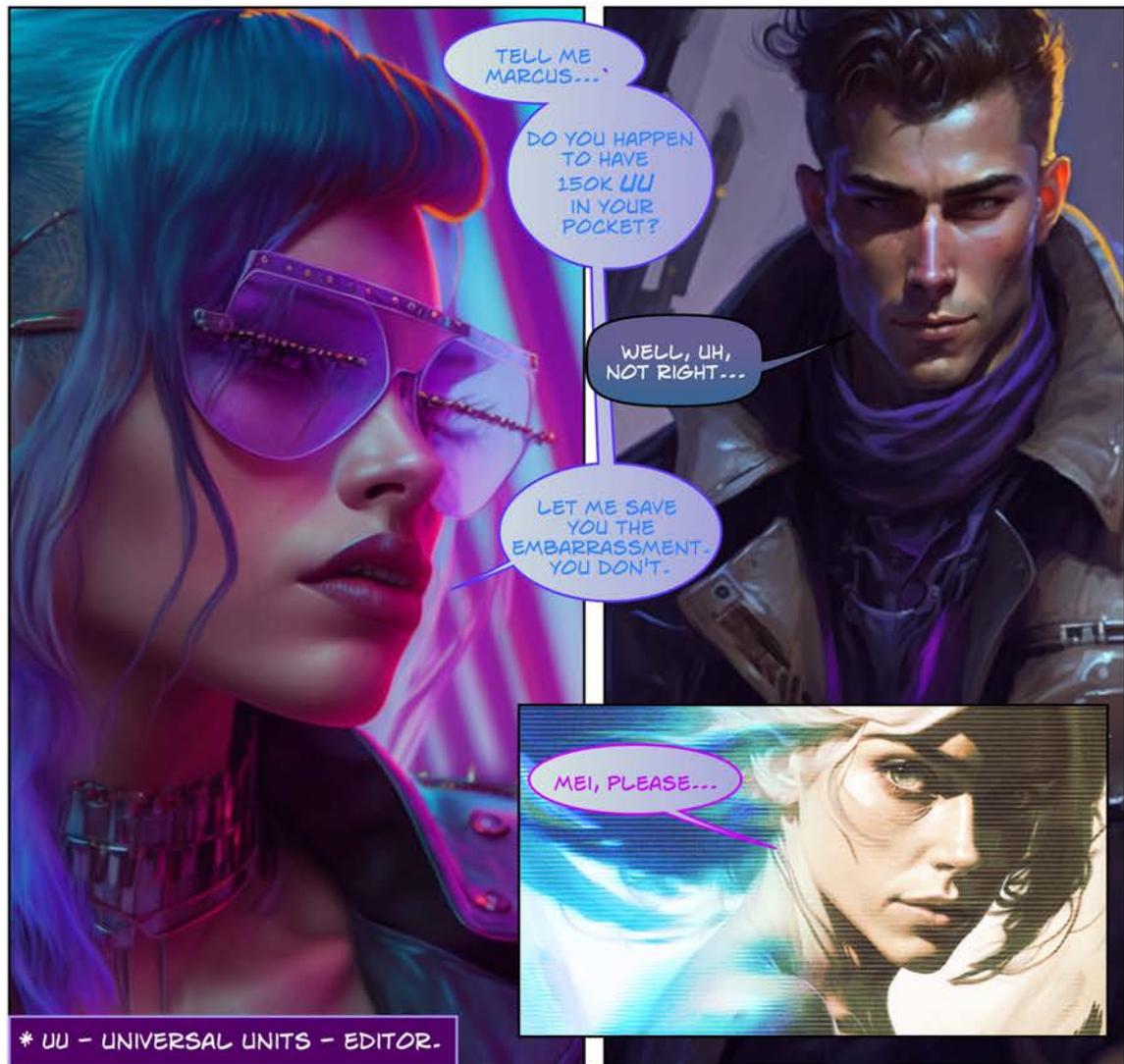
I LIKE YOU
AAYAH, OTHERWISE I
WOULD NEVER HAVE
MET ON SUCH SHORT
NOTICE LIKE THIS.

BUT, NO...
THAT'S NOT
GONNA WORK.

I HAVE SOME
CREDITS...
MAYBE I
COULD...

HAHA...
REALLY?





TELL ME
MARCUS...

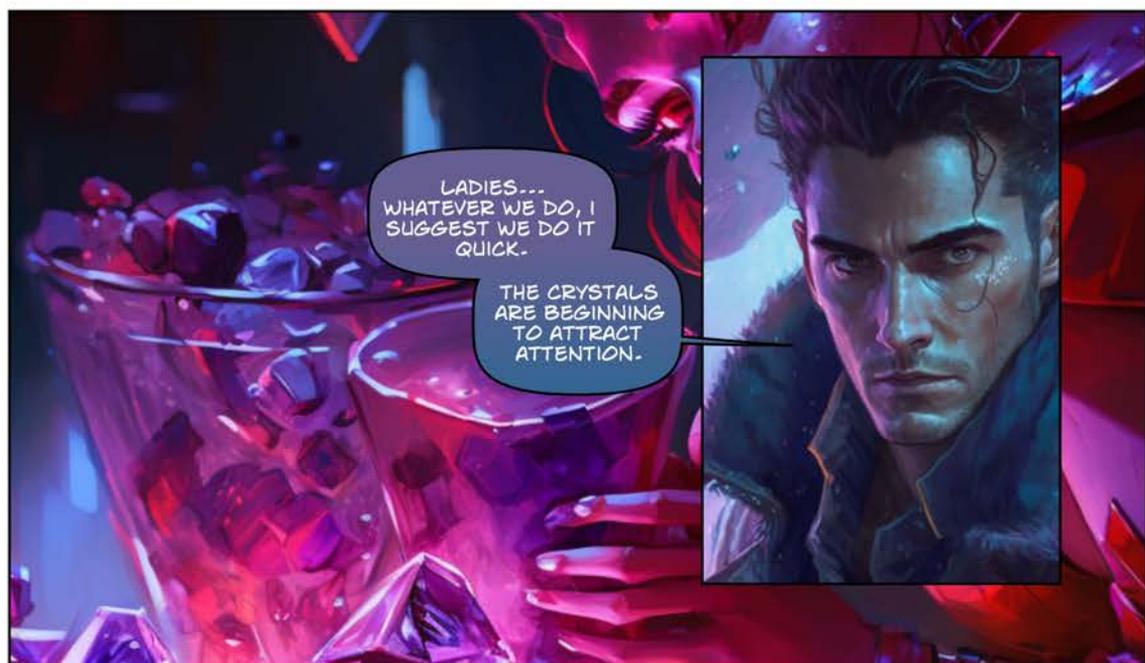
DO YOU HAPPEN
TO HAVE
150K UU
IN YOUR
POCKET?

WELL, UH,
NOT RIGHT...

LET ME SAVE
YOU THE
EMBARRASSMENT.
YOU DON'T.

MEI, PLEASE...

* UU - UNIVERSAL UNITS - EDITOR.



LADIES...
WHATEVER WE DO, I
SUGGEST WE DO IT
QUICK.

THE CRYSTALS
ARE BEGINNING
TO ATTRACT
ATTENTION.



MARCUS IS
RIGHT-

WHAT DO YOU SAY
WE MAKE A
SMUGGLER'S
BARGAIN?



DEPENDS...

WHAT DO YOU
REQUIRE?

LET'S JUST SAY I
NEED TO GET OFF
THIS ROCK FOR
AWHILE.

YOU GOT A SHIP.
THE REST IS PRETTY
MUCH SELF
EXPLANATORY.



BACK ON BOARD THE AIAI...

UGH,
WHAT IS THIS DUMP?
DO YOU EVEN HAVE
RUNNING
WATER ON HERE?

I MIGHT HAVE TO
RENEGOTIATE THIS
DEAL, AAIYAH.

MEI.

DON'T MAKE ME
REGRET THIS DEAL.

IS SHE FOR
REAL?

HONEY, I'M
MORE REAL THAN
YOUR CHANCES OF
GETTING A DATE ON
THIS SHIP.

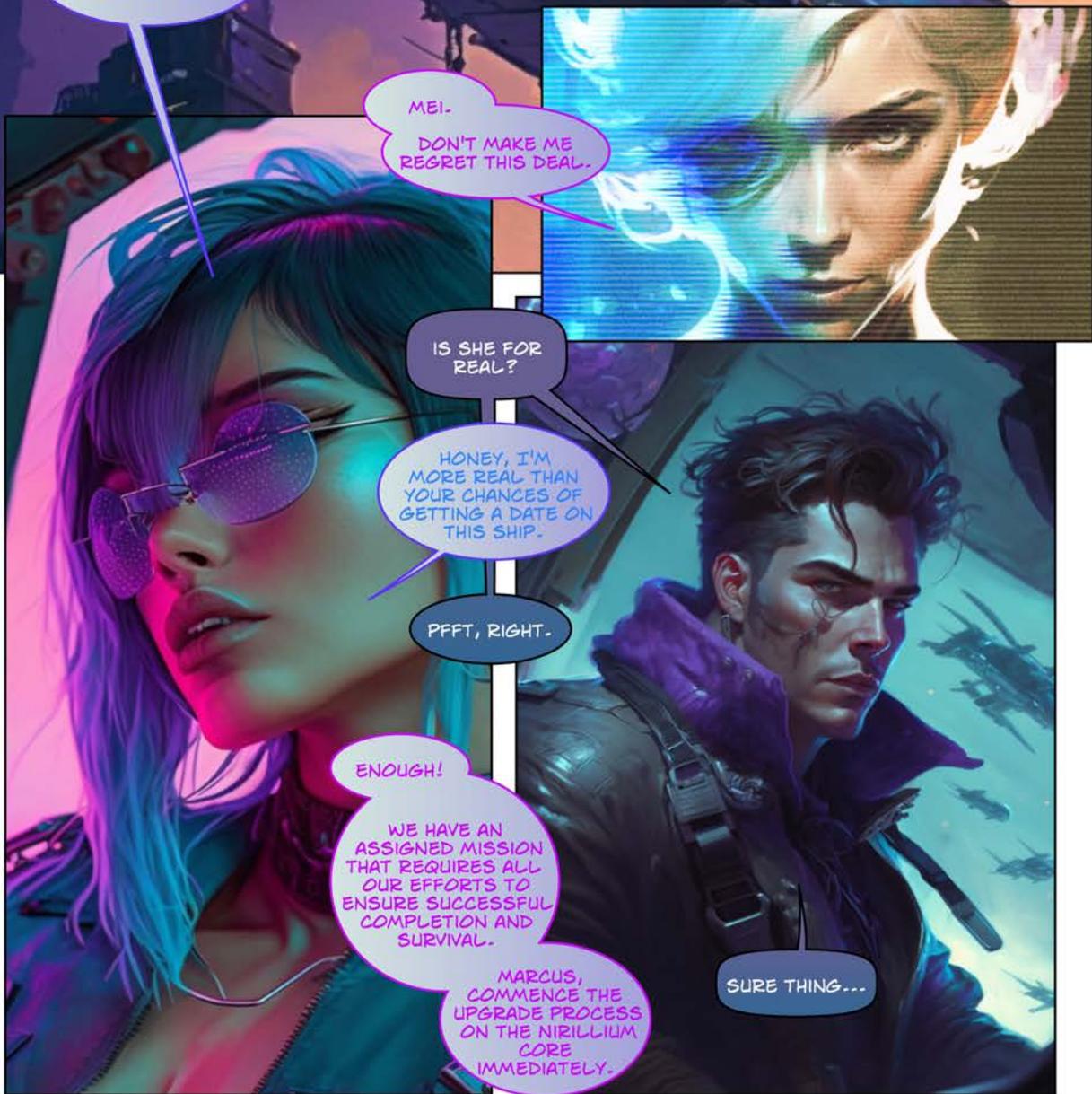
PFFFT, RIGHT.

ENOUGH!

WE HAVE AN
ASSIGNED MISSION
THAT REQUIRES ALL
OUR EFFORTS TO
ENSURE SUCCESSFUL
COMPLETION AND
SURVIVAL.

MARCUS,
COMMENCE THE
UPGRADE PROCESS
ON THE NIRILLIUM
CORE
IMMEDIATELY.

SURE THING...



AS THE ATAI SOARED THROUGH THE SKY ABOVE ASTRAPOLIS, THE SPRAWLING COLD CONCRETE OF THE DARK CITY CAME INTO VIEW. THE GLEAMING SKYSCRAPERS TOWERED OVER THE BUSTLING STREETS BELOW, TEEMING WITH LIFE AND ENERGY. THE SHIP'S ENGINES HUMMED AS IT GLIDED EFFORTLESSLY THROUGH THE AIR, A TECHNOLOGICAL MARVEL IN ITS OWN RIGHT. FROM UP HIGH, THE CITY LOOKED LIKE A LIVING ORGANISM, PULSING WITH THE BEAT OF ITS OWN HEART. BUT BENEATH THE VENEER OF MODERNITY AND PROGRESS LAY DARKER FORCES, WAITING TO STRIKE AT ANY MOMENT. THEY KNEW ALL TOO WELL THE DANGERS THAT LURKED IN THE SHADOWS, AND THEY WERE PREPARED TO FACE THEM HEAD-ON.





THE CRYSTALS ARE IN PLACE.

THANK YOU, MARCUS.

NOW THAT I HAVE THIS ADDITIONAL POWER, I CAN FINISH MY INTERNAL REPAIRS AND WE CAN DEPART THE ATMOSPHERE SOON.

WHAT ARE THE CHANCES OF LEVIATHON FINDING US AGAIN?

THAT DEPENDS... ON WHO WE PUT OUR TRUST IN.



DO YOU THINK WE CAN REALLY TRUST MEI?

DESPITE OUR COMPLEX HISTORY WITH BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES, SHE SUCCESSFULLY PROVIDED US WITH THE NECESSARY NIRILLIUM CRYSTALS.

I CAN'T ARGUE LOGIC LIKE THAT.

MEANWHILE - MEI'S QUARTERS

ENCRYPTED CONTACTS - LEVI

LEVI, IT'S MEI.
JUST WANTED TO GIVE YOU A HEADS UP THAT I'M ON THE AIAI.
THERE'S SOMETHING ON THIS SHIP THAT COULD BE A REAL GAME CHANGER.
I'LL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING WHEN I SEE YOU.
JUST GET READY TO BE IMPRESSED. -M

23
PERCENT



BACK AT SENTHETIX CORP.
LEVIATHON'S EAR PIECE
DELIVERS THE MESSAGE.

DING

AHH...
LOOKS LIKE MY
INVESTMENT HAS
PAID OFF.

MARISSA.
AN UPDATE ON THE
HYPERION CORE,
PLEASE...



THE PORTAL HAS JUST
REOPENED, SIR.



THE LINK HAS BEEN
ESTABLISHED.
WAITING FOR A
RESPONSE, SIR.

click click

THE HYPERION CORE CREATES A
STABLE WORMHOLE THAT
CONNECTS TWO POINTS IN
SPACE-TIME. THIS WORMHOLE
ALLOWS FOR INSTANTANEOUS
COMMUNICATION AND TRAVEL
BETWEEN TWO DISTANT
LOCATIONS. BY TAPPING INTO
THIS TECHNOLOGY, IT'S
POSSIBLE TO OPEN UP A
PORTAL TO OTHER DIMENSIONS
AND ACCESS PREVIOUSLY
UNKNOWN REALMS OF
COMPUTING POWER AND
INFORMATION.



HISSSSSSSSS



THIS TECHNOLOGY ALLOWS INTER-DIMENSIONAL BEINGS TO NAVIGATE THE VARIOUS PATHS AND GATEWAYS THAT CONNECT THE DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS, ALLOWING THEM TO TRAVEL TO ANY LOCATION IN THE MULTIVERSE. THE PROCESS OF INTER-DIMENSIONAL TRAVEL IS COMPLEX AND REQUIRES ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY, BUT WITH THE HELP OF THE HYPERION CORE, IT HAS BECOME POSSIBLE.

ZAWAP!



HE HAS ARRIVED.
THE INTER-DIMENSIONAL
JOURNEY WAS
SUCCESSFUL!



EXCELLENT!
HAVE MY SHOCK SQUAD
ESCORT HIM TO MY
OFFICE ONCE HE HAS
RECOVERED.

YES SIR.

LATER...

BJORN IRONAXE!

WELCOME!

WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME, LEVIATHON?

STRAIGHT TO THE POINT, THEN, EH?

THAT WOULD BE BEST.

I MUST CONFESS MY SHAME... MACHINARCH COULD NOT MEET MY EXPECTATIONS.

I REQUIRE YOU TO SUCCEED WHERE HE HAS FAILED.

THEN MACHINARCH IS NO MORE?

WHAT FORCE COULD BE SO POTENT TO OVERPOWER YOUR STRONGEST WEAPON?

A MERE BOY AND HIS DERELICT SHIP!

AAIYAH HAS FOCUSED HER ATTENTION ON REPAIRING THE DAMAGED DRIVE CORE OF THE SHIP. WITH EACH PASSING MOMENT, SHE GREW MORE DETERMINED TO FINISH THE REPAIRS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. TIME WAS OF THE ESSENCE, AND THAT THEY NEEDED TO BE READY TO LEAVE THE PLANET AS SOON AS THEY HAD THE CHANCE.

ADDITIONALLY, SHE MANAGED TO INTERCEPT A HIGHLY INCRIMINATING MESSAGE FROM THEIR TRUSTED PASSENGER.



MARCUS.

I'M HERE.

I'M AFRAID MEI HAS BETRAYED US.

WHAT!?

OUR DRIVE CORES REMAIN NONOPERATIONAL...

MEI HAS SABOTAGED THEM AND HAS ALSO NOTIFIED LEVIATHON OF OUR LOCATION.

SHE'S LOWER THAN A SLUG'S BELLY IN A DITCH.

AGREED.



SUPPRESSING HIS ANGER TOWARDS MEI'S BETRAYAL, MARCUS ARRANGES A MEETING WITH HER AS AAIYAH CALLS FOR A GENERAL ASSEMBLY.



MEI. MEET UP WITH MARCUS IN THE AFT LOUNGE.

ON MY WAY.



IN THE AFT LOUNGE...



THERE'S NO HIDING ANYTHING YOU DO FROM ME ON MY SHIP. YOU HAD TO HAVE KNOWN THAT I WOULD INTERCEPT YOUR CORRESPONDENCE WITH LEVIATHON.

SIGH, OF COURSE I KNEW THAT...



AND WHAT ABOUT THE DRIVE CORES!?

YOU LEFT US DEFENSELESS AND VULNERABLE TO ATTACK!



I FEAR YOU HAVE PUT US IN A VERY BAD POSITION, MEI.

I KNOW I CAN'T SAY ANYTHING TO FIX THIS, BUT I'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO MAKE THIS RIGHT.



MY LAST RUN PUT ME IN DEEP WITH THE WRONG KIND OF CREW. I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO ASK LEVIATHON FOR HELP.

WHAT I DID HERE WAS MY REPAYMENT TO HIM... I'M SORRY GUYS.

I DIDN'T REALIZE TO WHAT EXTENT HE WANTED YOU DEAD, MARCUS.

AT SYTHETIX CORP, THE
TECHNICIANS ARE SUCCESSFUL...

SIR!
LONG RANGE
SATELITES HAVE
LOCATED THE
AIAI.

SHE'S SEVERAL
HUNDRED
MEGACHRONS
AWAY, BUT WELL
WITHIN REACH OF
THE HYPERION
CORE.

23%

34

ON

GOOD...
NOW DISABLE THEM
COMPLETELY.

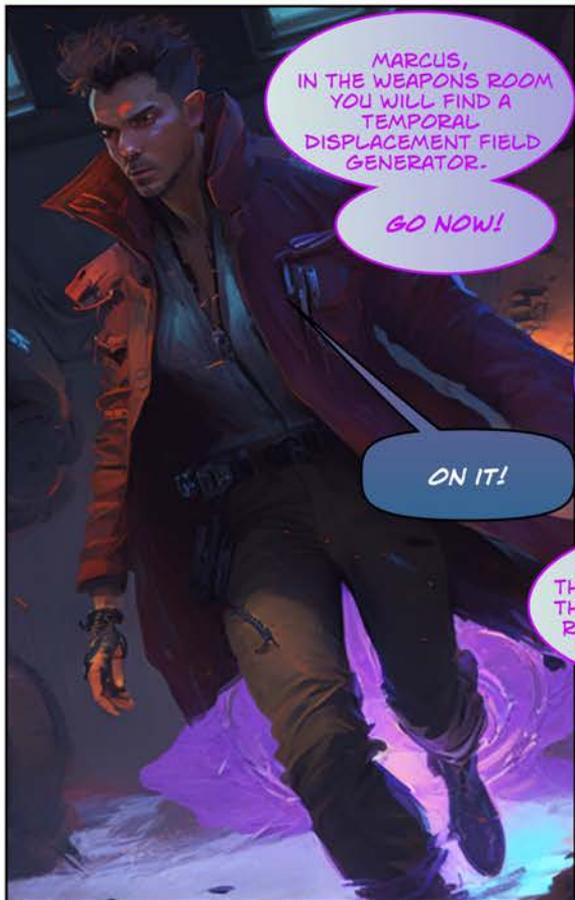
I'LL HAVE THEM
DRIFTING...

IN JUST A FEW
MINUTES, SIR.



I'M DETECTING
A LONG DISTANCE
DISABLING PROJECTION
FROM THE HYPERION
CORE.

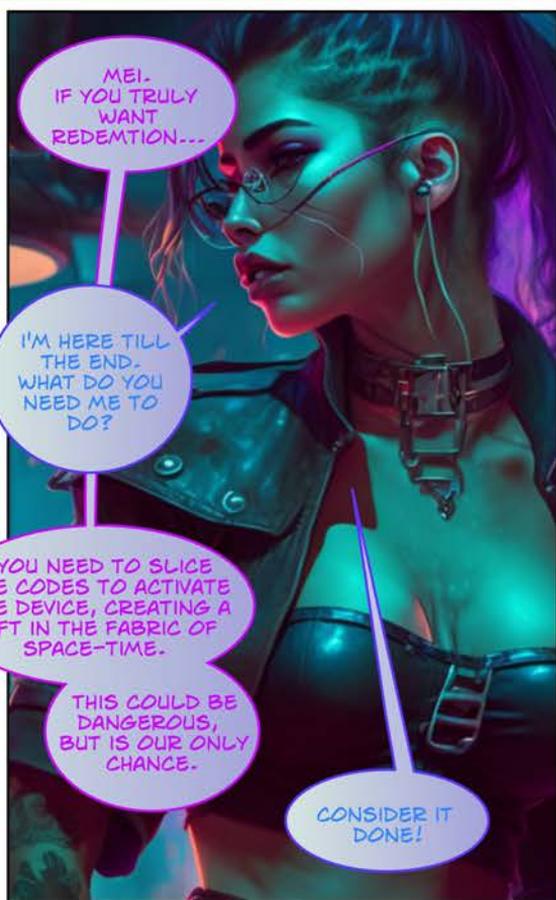
WE HAVE VERY
LITTLE TIME...



MARCUS,
IN THE WEAPONS ROOM
YOU WILL FIND A
TEMPORAL
DISPLACEMENT FIELD
GENERATOR.

GO NOW!

ON IT!



MEI.
IF YOU TRULY
WANT
REDEMPTION....

I'M HERE TILL
THE END.
WHAT DO YOU
NEED ME TO
DO?

YOU NEED TO SLICE
THE CODES TO ACTIVATE
THE DEVICE, CREATING A
RIFT IN THE FABRIC OF
SPACE-TIME.

THIS COULD BE
DANGEROUS,
BUT IS OUR ONLY
CHANCE.

CONSIDER IT
DONE!



AT SYTHETIX CORP.

ARE YOU READY
BJORN?

I WILL AVENGE MY
BROTHER...



I WILL NOT REST
UNTIL I AVENGE
MACHINARCH'S
DEATH.

NEXT ISSUE - SILICON IN THE WOUND!



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