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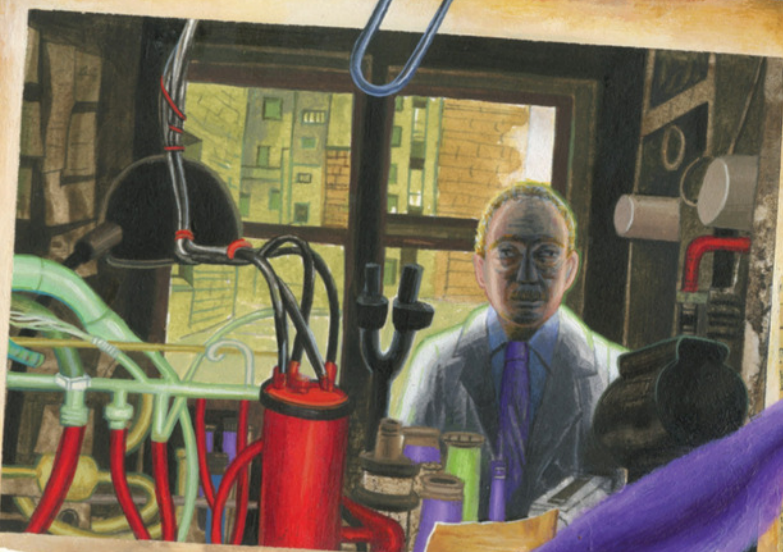
**CRILLEY
VERMA
LAFUENTE**

THE X FILES[™] CONSPIRACY

THE **TRANSFORMERS**[™]

CONSPIRACY
X
PART 4 of 6

TOP SECRET



THE CONSPIRACY SO FAR...

Never ones to stray far from the center of corporate or government intrigue, The Lone Gunmen John Byers, Melvin Frohike, and Richard "Ringo" Langly play like a misguided Mission: Impossible team, embarking on a series of comic adventures that simultaneously highlight their genius and their ineptitude.

The Lone Gunmen have received an email with disturbing reports apparently from the future that detail a lethal virus outbreak. After the stories were corroborated by FBI agents Fox Mulder and Dana Scully, the Gunmen began investigating the various urban legends mentioned in the documents...

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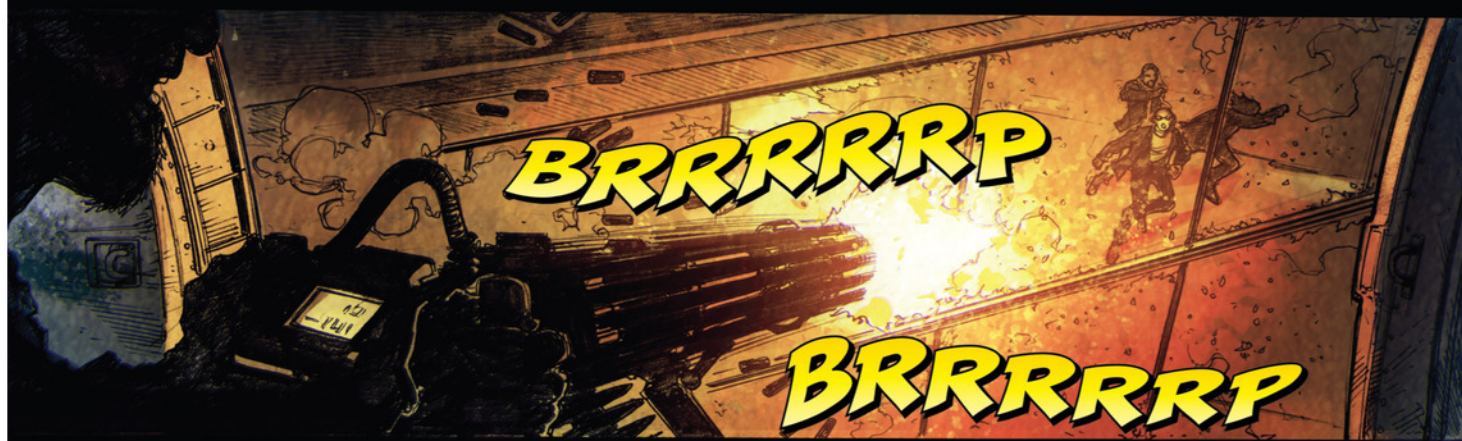
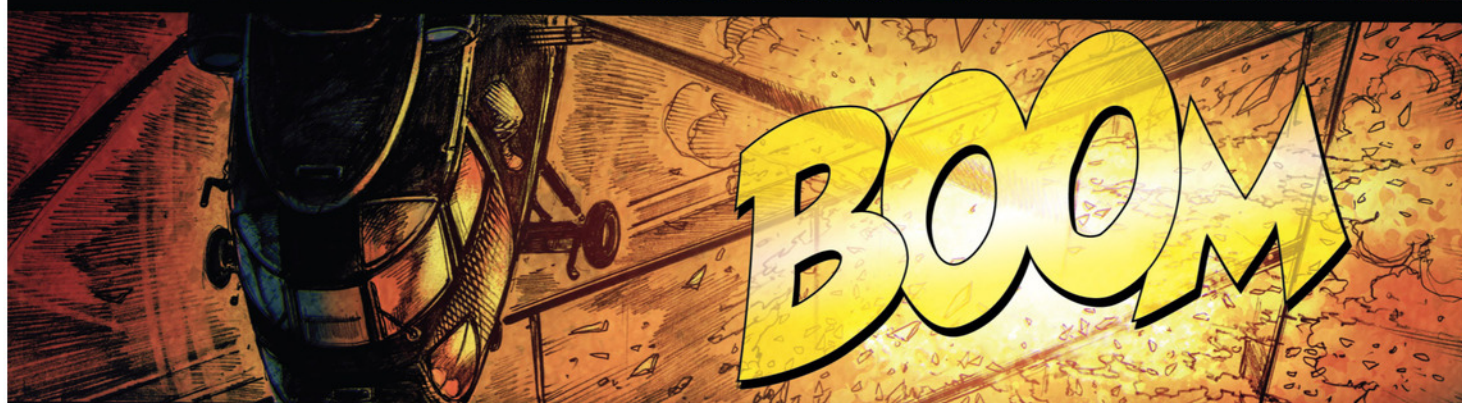
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NOW...



FIVE HOURS AGO...



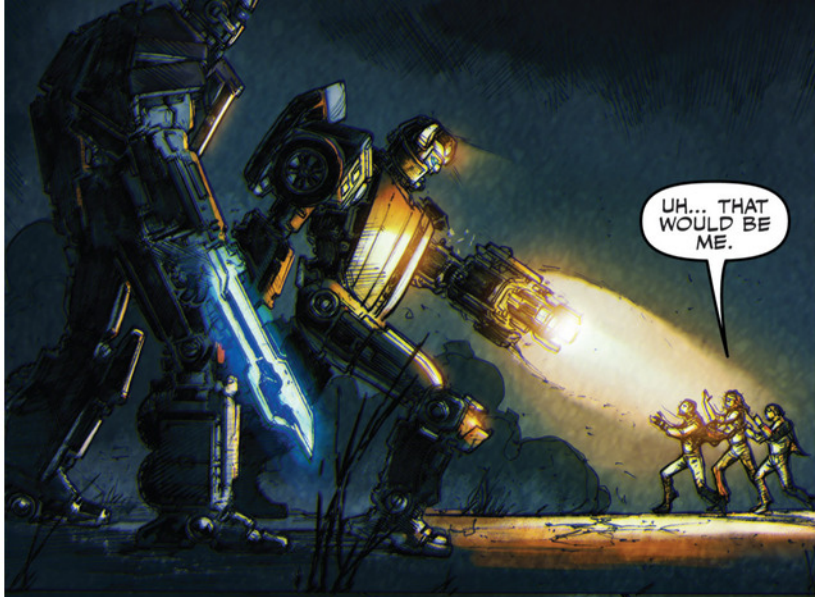


KRK-CTCH-KRR-KRR



WHICH ONE OF
YOU USES THE
ALIAS "LORD
MANHAMMER"?





UH... THAT
WOULD BE
ME.



WHAT HAVE
YOU DONE WITH
RATCHET? YOU
BETTER TALK,
BUSTER, BEFORE
I... BEFORE I
STAND ON YOU.

I'VE DONE
IT BEFORE,
YOU KNOW.



YOU'RE
LOOKING FOR
A **RATCHET**? UH...
FORGIVE ME FOR
STATING THE OBVIOUS,
BUT A **RATCHET** SEEMS
A BIT... **LOW-TECH**
FOR... WHATEVER
YOU ARE.



RATCHET IS ONE
OF OUR COMRADES.
HE HAS GONE MISSING.
YOU TRULY DO NOT
KNOW WHERE HE IS?

NO! YOU'RE
THE FIRST EVER...
TALKING... WALKING...
ROBOTS WE'VE
EVER SEEN.

I'M SORRY,
BUT WHAT
EXACTLY ARE
YOU?



WHAT GIVES?
THEIR CAPILLARY
DILATION AND HEART
RATES INDICATE
THEY'RE TELLING
THE TRUTH.

I AM AWARE
OF THAT,
BUMBLEBEE...



...AND TO ANSWER
YOUR QUESTION,
I AM **OPTIMUS
PRIME**—AND WE ARE
CYBERTRONIANS.

FROM THE
PLANET
CYBERTRON.



COOL...

I KNOW—
RIGHT?



SO WHAT ARE YOU DOING ON OUR PLANET? YOU'RE NOT PLANNING ON *INVADING*, ARE YOU?

"QUITE THE OPPOSITE. WE HAVE BEEN ON YOUR PLANET FOR CENTURIES NOW. WE SEEM TO HAVE TAKEN ON THE TASK OF... *PROTECTING* YOUR RACE."

"WHY DID YOU THINK *WE* WERE INVOLVED IN YOUR FRIEND'S DISAPPEARANCE?"

"RATCHET WAS INVESTIGATING A MYSTERIOUS SIGNAL. WE THOUGHT IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN AN OLD ENEMY RETURNING—"



THEY'RE CALLED *DECEPTICONS*.

EVIL ROBOTS?

YOU GOT IT.

AWESOME.



BUT RATCHET WAS *AMBUSHED*. HE MANAGED TO SEND OUT A GARBLED TRANSMISSION ABOUT SOMETHING CALLED "*SKYLOGIC*" BEFORE EVERYTHING WENT DEAD.

SO YOU'VE BEEN MONITORING INTERNET TRAFFIC, SEARCHING FOR MENTIONS OF *SKYLOGIC*?





EXACTLY.
WHEN YOU
CONTACTED
US—

YOU
THOUGHT WE
HAD SOMETHING
TO DO WITH
SKYLOGIC,
TRYING TO LURE
YOU INTO A
TRAP?

CORRECT.



YOUR TURN. WHY
WERE YOU ASKING
ABOUT SKYLOGIC?



HAVE YOU
HEARD OF THIS
CONTAGION
THAT'S GOING
AROUND?

WE'RE
AWARE OF
IT, YEAH.

WE RECKON
SKYLOGIC SYSTEMS
ARE THE ONES WHO
ENGINEERED THE
WHOLE THING—



LANGLY. IXNAY
ON THE ELLINGTAY
EMTHAY OURWAY
ECRETSSAY.

WHY
WOULDN'T YOU
WANT US TO
KNOW YOUR
SECRETS?



YEAH,
FROHIKE. WHY?
THEY'RE ON
OUR SIDE.



YOU ARE
ON OUR
SIDE, AREN'T
YOU?

'COURSE WE
ARE. RIGHT,
OPTIMUS?

SO IT
SEEMS.



FINE.
SORRY,
SORRY.

WE HAVE
EVIDENCE
THAT SKYLOGIC
ENGINEERED
THE VIRUS,
USING MUTATED
DNA AND...

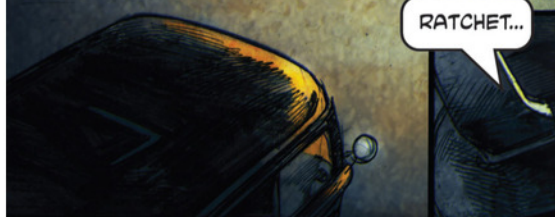
...AND...



WHAT'S
WRONG?



THEY
CREATED
THE VIRUS BY
COMBINING
MUTATED CELLS
WITH ALIEN
DNA.



RATCHET...

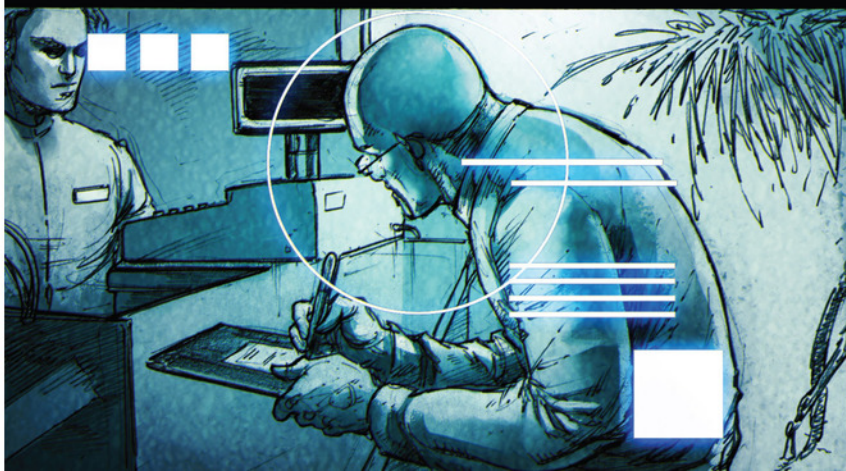
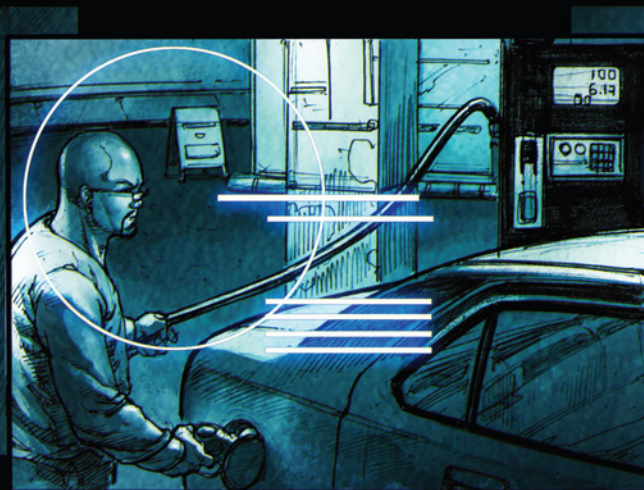
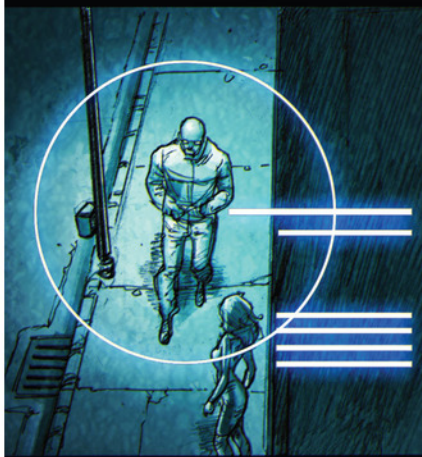
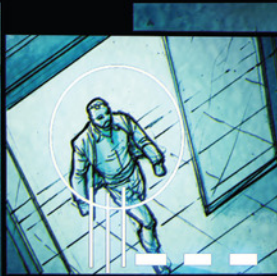
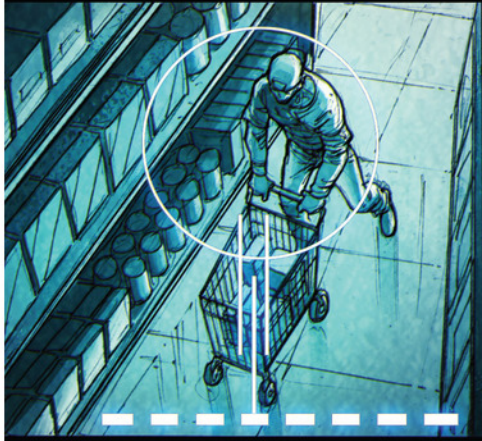


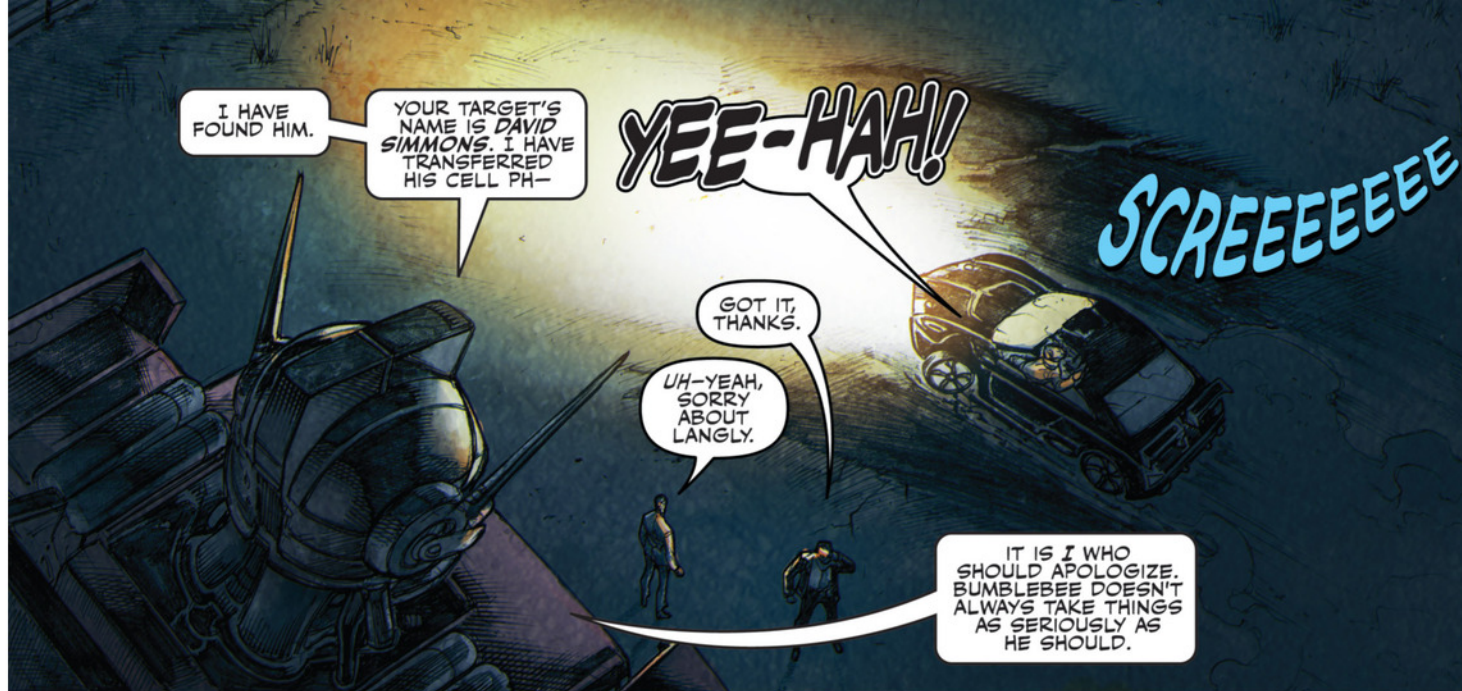
WE'VE BEEN
TRYING TO FIND
INFO ON THIS
SKYLOGIC SYSTEMS,
BUT WE KEEP
HITTING DEAD
ENDS.

WE HAVE
C.C.T.V. FOOTAGE
OF THE PERSON
WHO RELEASED
THE VIRUS, BUT WE
CAN'T MAKE OUT
HIS FACE.



SHOW
ME THIS
FOOTAGE.





I HAVE FOUND HIM.

YOUR TARGET'S NAME IS **DAVID SIMMONS**. I HAVE TRANSFERRED HIS CELL PH—

YEE-HAH!

SCREEEEEEEE

GOT IT, THANKS.

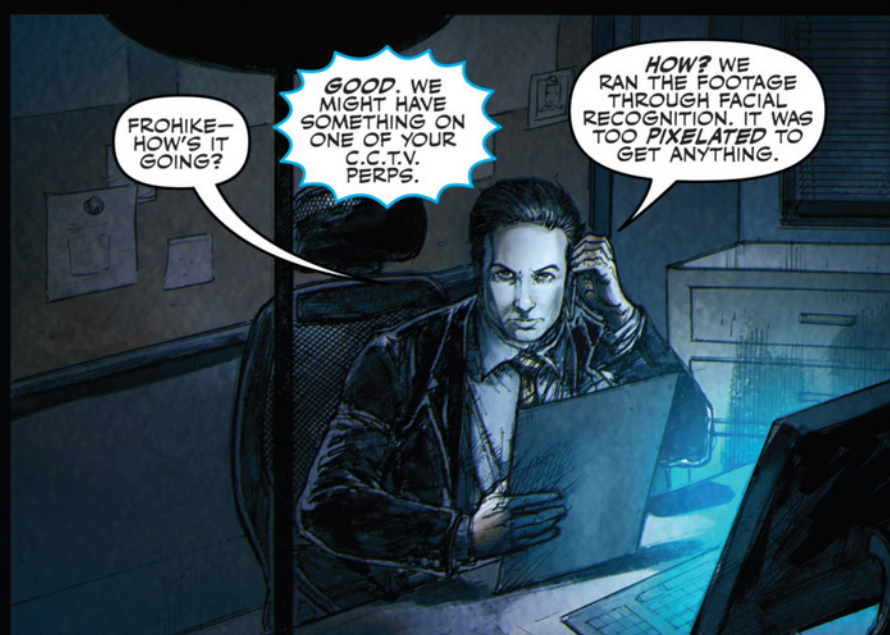
UH-YEAH, SORRY ABOUT LAGGLY.

IT IS *I* WHO SHOULD APOLOGIZE. BUMBLEBEE DOESN'T ALWAYS TAKE THINGS AS SERIOUSLY AS HE SHOULD.



I KNOW SOMEONE WHO CAN HELP TRACK THIS GUY.

HEY, MULDER.



FROHIKE—HOW'S IT GOING?

GOOD. WE MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING ON ONE OF YOUR C.C.T.V. PERPS.

HOW? WE RAN THE FOOTAGE THROUGH FACIAL RECOGNITION. IT WAS TOO **PIXELATED** TO GET ANYTHING.



WE HAVE ACCESS TO SOME... **SPECIALIZED HARDWARE**. THE GUY'S GOING UNDER THE NAME **DAVID SIMMONS**.

HE USED HIS CREDIT CARD AT A BEST BUY IN CONNECTICUT ON THE 23RD OF THIS MONTH. CAN YOU CHECK THE CARD HISTORY AND SEE IF IT TELLS US ANYTHING ELSE?



GOT SOMETHING. THE CARD WAS USED FOUR DAYS AGO AT THE "SWEET LOVIN' HIGHWAY MOTEL."

SOUNDS CLASSY.

HEY—DON'T KNOCK IT TILL YOU TRY IT. I'VE SPENT SOME OF MY HAPPIEST HOURS IN PLACES LIKE THAT.



TOO MUCH INFORMATION, MULDER. SEND ME THE ADDRESS, WILL YOU? WE'LL CHECK IT OUT.



TIME IS OF
THE ESSENCE,
MR. SIMMONS...

...PLEASE TELL
US EVERYTHING
YOU KNOW ABOUT
SKYLOGIC
SYSTEMS.

AND DON'T
LIE TO ME, MAN!
I'M PLAYING THE
BAD COP HERE,
GET IT?

CHRAKK

YOU'RE
NOT SUPPOSED
TO TELL
HIM THAT.

FAIR WARNING, DR. SIMMONS.
WE HAVE C.C.T.V. FOOTAGE
OF YOU AT THE
APARTMENT BLOCK IN
WINCHESTER.

WHAT
HAPPENED
AT THE
APARTMENT
BLOCK?

IT'S *GROUND
ZERO*. WHERE THEY
FIRST RELEASED THE
VIRUS. FORTY-THREE
PEOPLE WERE
KILLED.

THAT WASN'T MEANT
TO HAPPEN! WE WERE
SUPPOSED TO BE
PROTECTING
PEOPLE.

FROM
WHAT?

WHAT
DO YOU
THINK?

FROM THEM!

A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, MYSELF AND A FEW OTHER SCIENTISTS WERE APPROACHED BY THE GOVERNMENT. THEY SHOWED US *PROOF*. REAL, CONCRETE *PROOF* THAT ALIENS WERE REAL.

NOT ONLY THAT—BUT THAT THE ALIENS MEANT US *HARM*. WE WERE TOLD THEY'D BEEN HERE FOR YEARS. HAD ALLIED THEMSELVES WITH A SECRET ORGANIZATION TO CREATE ALIEN-HUMAN *HYBRIDS*.

DID THEY SAY WHY?

INVASION. *GENOCIDE*.

HOW DID THAT LEAD TO THE *VIRUS*?

WE HAD TO COME UP WITH A WAY TO FIGHT THEM. SO WE... WE GOT HOLD OF ONE OF THE ALIENS.

"WE EXTRACTED ITS BLOOD—BROKE IT DOWN, USED MUTATED HUMAN D.N.A. AND COMBINED THEM INTO THE CONTAGION. IT WAS ONLY SUPPOSED TO AFFECT THE *HYBRIDS*. TO WIPE THEM OUT BEFORE THEY GOT A FOOTHOLD.

"THE NEXT STEP WAS THE FIELD TEST IN WINCHESTER.

"OBVIOUSLY, THINGS DIDN'T GO AS PLANNED."

SO WHY ARE YOU IN HIDING?

I'M WAITING FOR A FAKE PASSPORT. I'M GETTING OUT OF HERE! YOU SHOULD, TOO.

WHY?

BECAUSE THEY'RE GOING TO RELEASE THE VIRUS AGAIN. A *LARGER BATCH* THIS TIME.

THEY SAY THEY'VE PERFECTED IT. BUT I DON'T SEE HOW. NOT IN SUCH A SHORT SPACE OF TIME.

WHY ARE THEY DOING THIS? IT MAKES NO SENSE!

BECAUSE THEY'RE CRAZY? WHO KNOWS. BUT I'LL TELL YOU ONE THING...

...IF IT'S THE SAME AS THE FIRST BATCH, THE WHOLE OF THE U.S. WILL BECOME INFECTED. ONE WEEK FROM NOW WE'LL ALL BE DEAD.

WHERE ARE THEY MANUFACTURING THE VIRUS?

I DON'T KNOW. I ONLY WORKED AT SKYLOGIC SYSTEMS. ALL OUR RESEARCH WENT TO ANOTHER LAB.

THEN GIVE US THE ADDRESS OF SKYLOGIC SYSTEMS...

"...WE'LL TAKE IT FROM THERE."

DO WE GO IN ALL GUNS BLAZING?

I DON'T THINK—

HELL YEAH! LET'S GO BLOW SOME STUFF UP!

I'M NOT SURE THAT'S A GOOD TACTICAL PLAN, LANGLY.

I AGREE. THERE'S TOO MANY OF THEM. WE NEED TO GO INTO STEALTH MODE.

YOU KNOW, LIKE A NINJA.

YEAH! LIKE A NINJA.

SO HOW DO WE GET PAST THE GUARDS?

BUMBLEBEE? YOU ARE SMALLER THAN ME...

HEY, THANKS FOR POINTING THAT OUT, OPTIMUS. APPRECIATE IT.

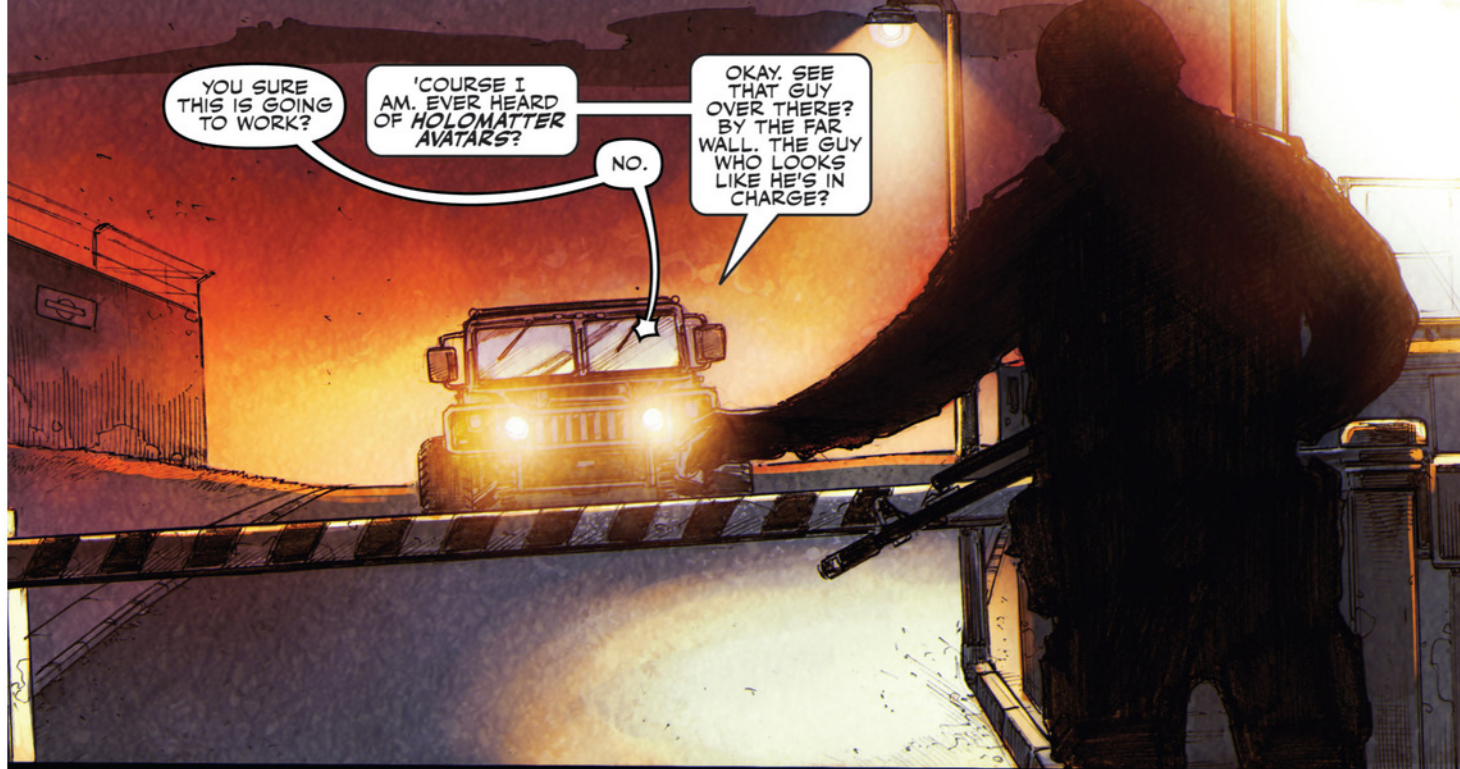
WHAT I MEAN IS, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO MANEUVER INSIDE THE BUILDING EASIER THAN ME. YOU WILL ACCOMPANY THEM.

AND I SUGGEST YOU START BY SCANNING ONE OF THOSE SKYLOGIC VEHICLES.

HEY—COOL! NINJA BUDDIES!

NINJA BUDDIES!

SMACK



YOU SURE THIS IS GOING TO WORK?

'COURSE I AM. EVER HEARD OF HOLOMATTER AVATARS?

NO.

OKAY. SEE THAT GUY OVER THERE? BY THE FAR WALL. THE GUY WHO LOOKS LIKE HE'S IN CHARGE?

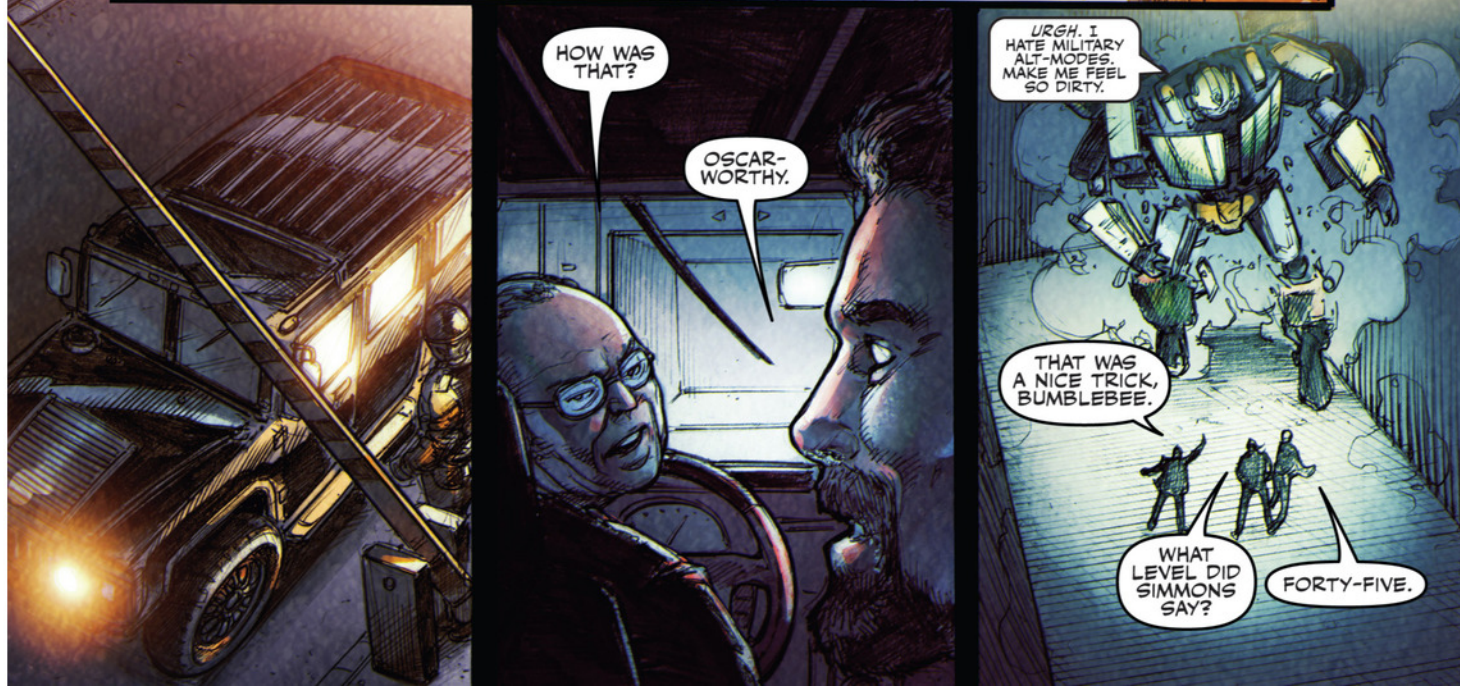


WHAT ABOUT HIM?

THAT'S YOU, NOW. SO PUT YOUR WINDOW DOWN AND ACT TOUGH.



WHAT'RE YOU WAITING FOR? YOU THINK I'VE GOT ALL DAY HERE?



HOW WAS THAT?

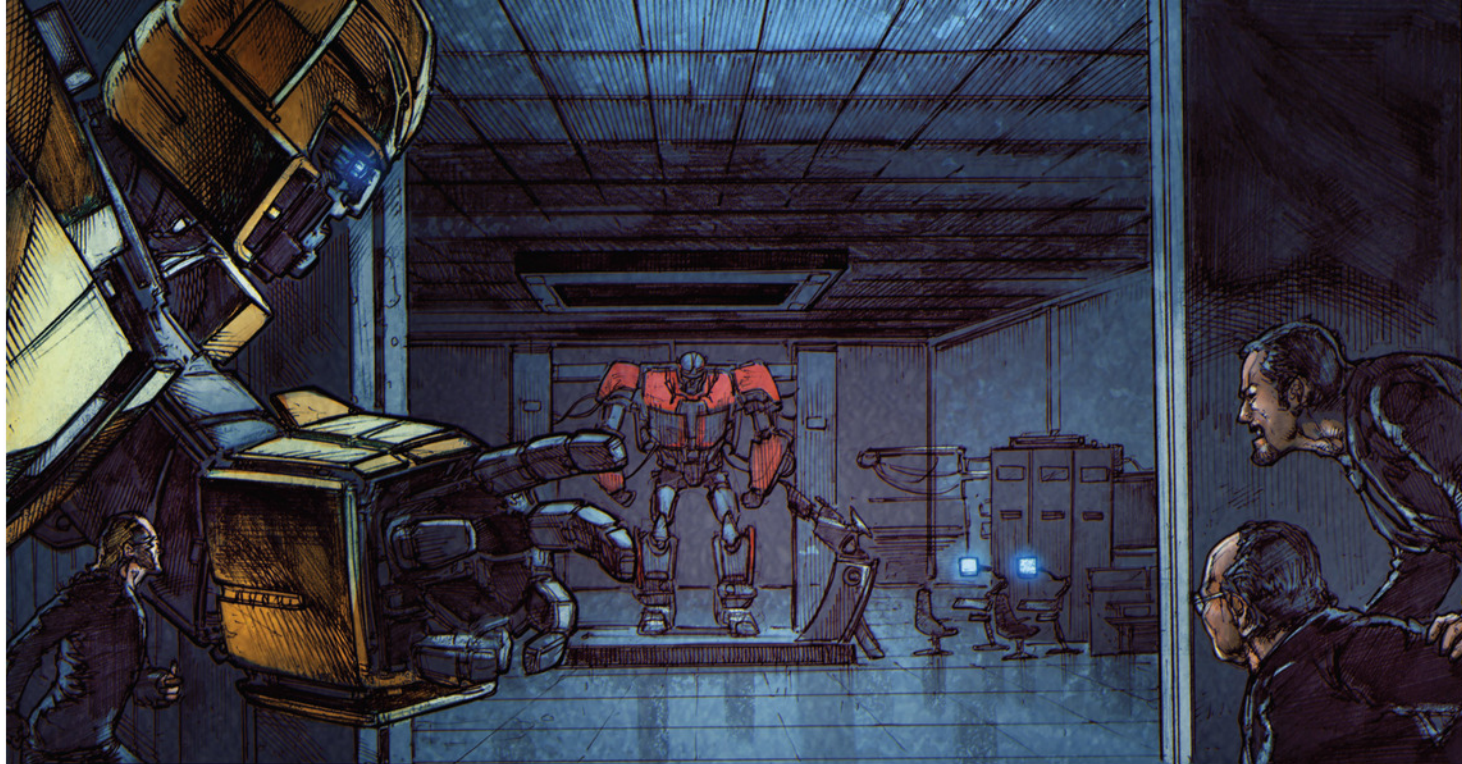
OSCAR-WORTHY.

URGH. I HATE MILITARY ALT-MODES. MAKE ME FEEL SO DIRTY.

THAT WAS A NICE TRICK, BUMBLEBEE.

WHAT LEVEL DID SIMMONS SAY?

FORTY-FIVE.





BUDDA
BUDDA
BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA

**BRRRRP-
BRRRRP**

GO! I'LL
HOLD THEM
OFF!



BYERS!
COME ON!

JUST A
SECOND...
GOT IT.

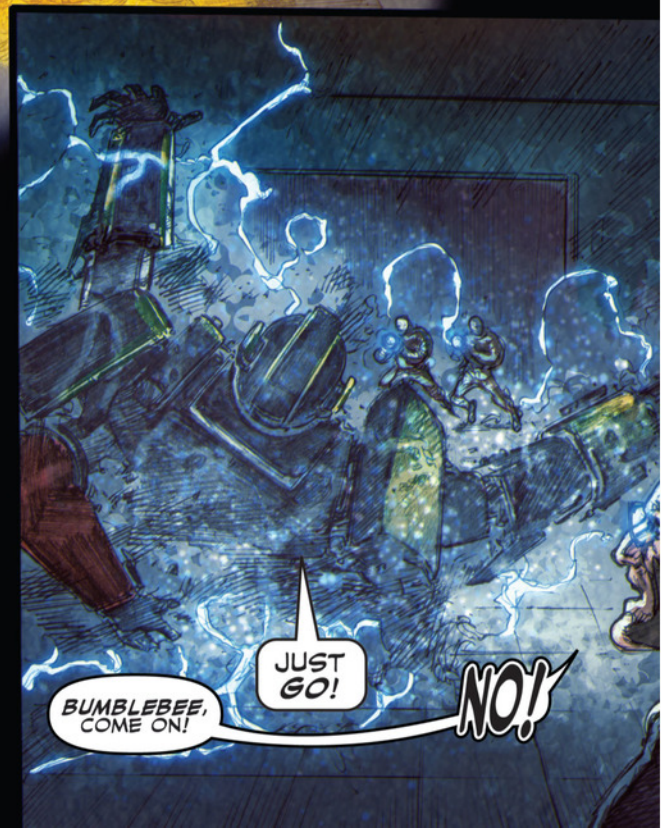


GOT
WHAT?

THE ADDRESS
WHERE THE
SKYLOGIC RESEARCH
IS SHIPPED TO. WHERE
THEY MANUFACTURE
THE VIRUS!



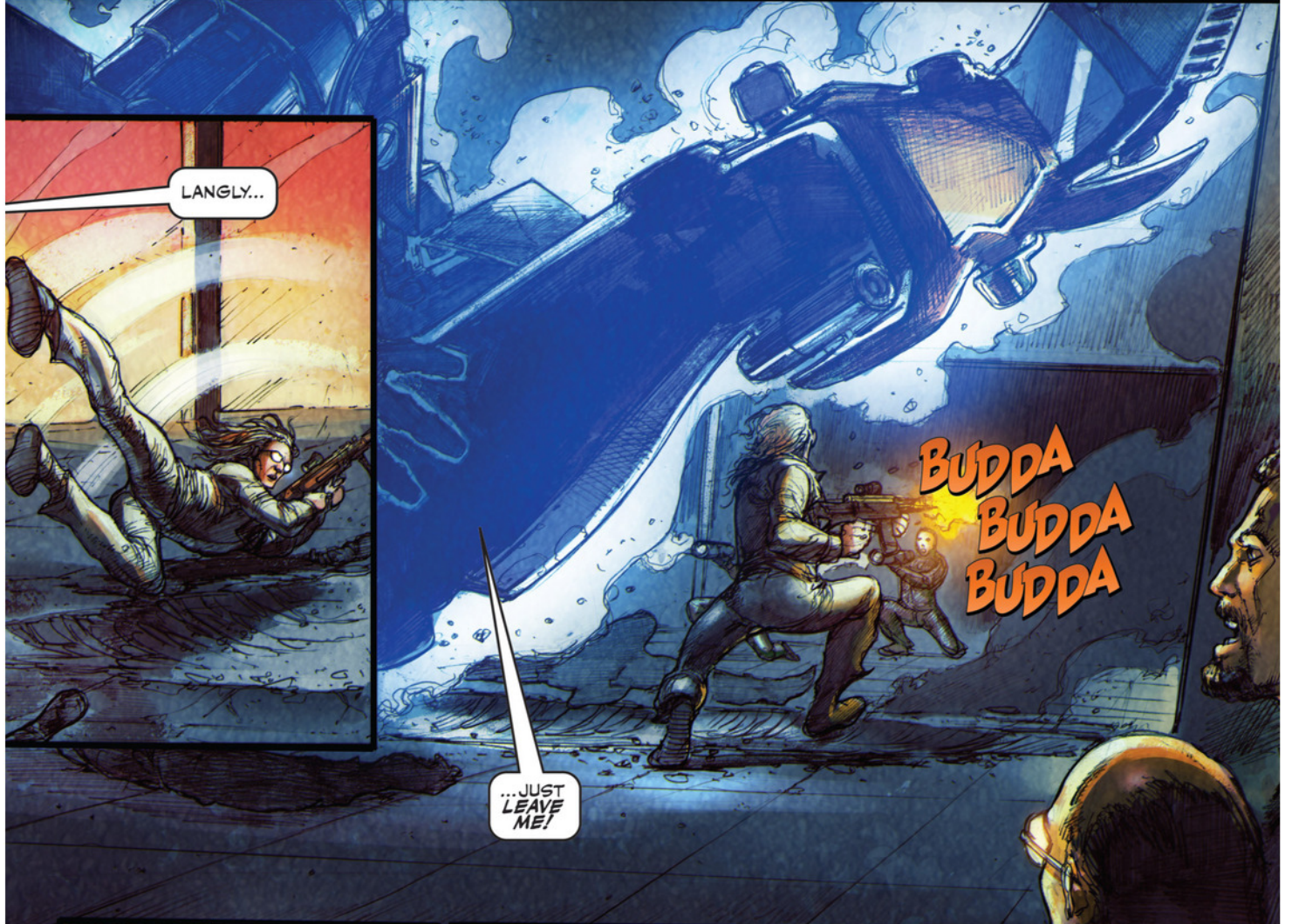
YOU GUYS
GET OUT
OF HERE!



BUMBLEBEE,
COME ON!

JUST
GO!

NO!

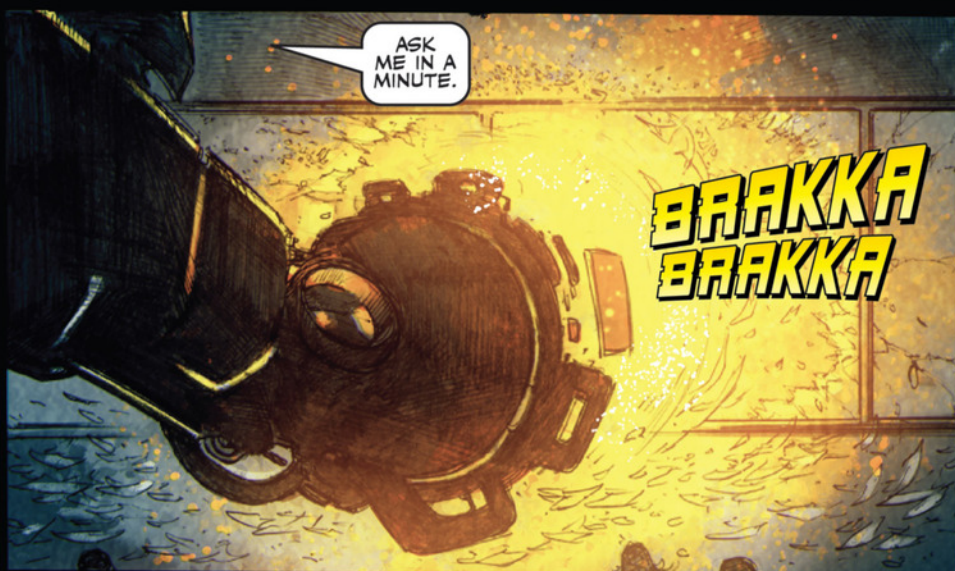
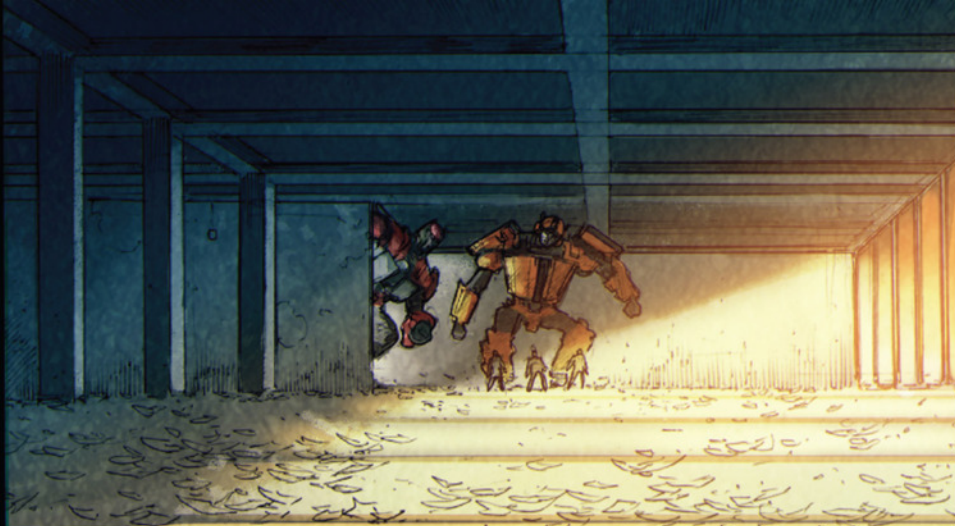




WHAT...
WHAT'S
GOING ON?

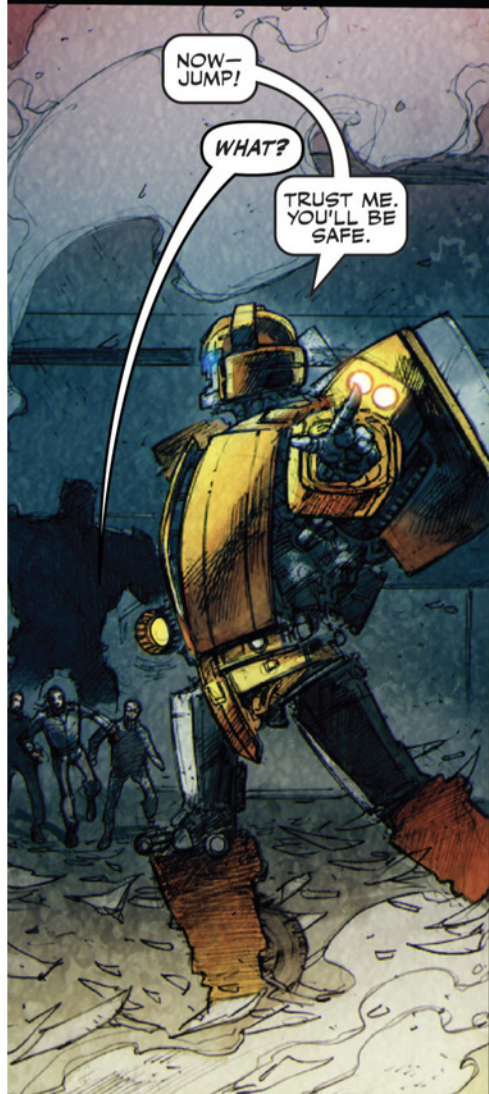
A RESCUE
MISSION,
OL' BUDDY.

H... HOW'S
IT GOING?



ASK
ME IN A
MINUTE.

**BRAKKA
BRAKKA**



NOW—
JUMP!

WHAT?

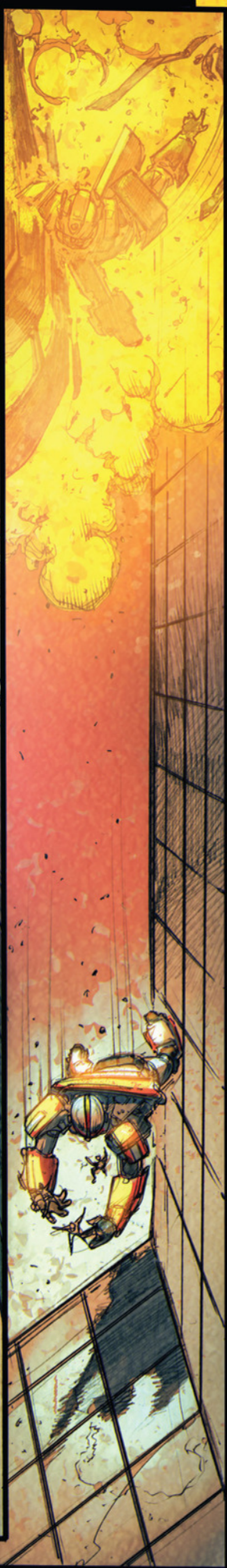
TRUST ME.
YOU'LL BE
SAFE.



GO,
GO!



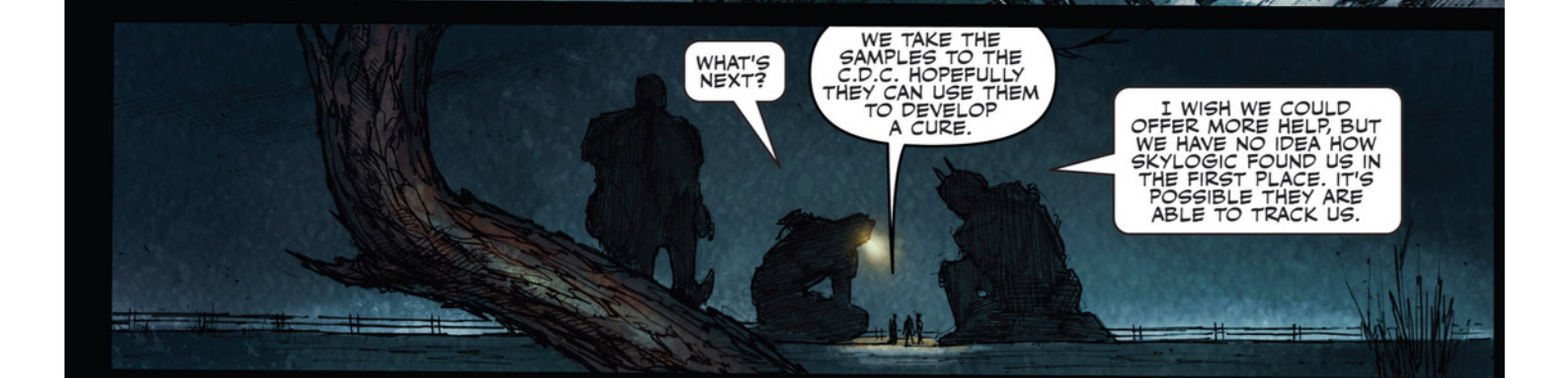
RATCHET...





THANKS FOR LETTING US KEEP THIS. ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN SPARE IT?

IF WHAT YOU SAY ABOUT THIS VIRUS IS TRUE, THEN YEAH— WE CAN SPARE IT.



WHAT'S NEXT?

WE TAKE THE SAMPLES TO THE C.D.C. HOPEFULLY THEY CAN USE THEM TO DEVELOP A CURE.

I WISH WE COULD OFFER MORE HELP, BUT WE HAVE NO IDEA HOW SKYLOGIC FOUND US IN THE FIRST PLACE. IT'S POSSIBLE THEY ARE ABLE TO TRACK US.



WE'LL HEAD NORTH. IF THEY ARE TRACKING US, THEN HOPEFULLY WE'LL BUY YOU SOME TIME.



THANKS FOR WHAT YOU DID BACK THERE. COMING BACK, I MEAN.

NO PROBLEM. NINJA BUDDIES FOREVER.

NINJA BUDDIES FOREVER.

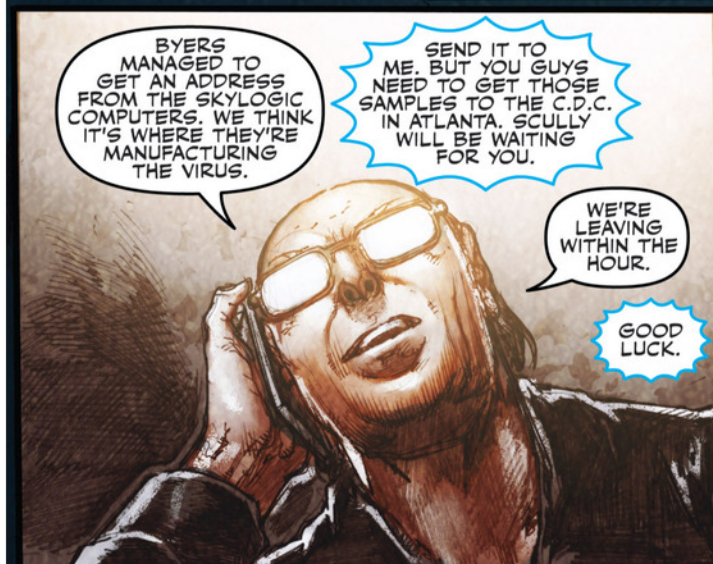


YOU OKAY?

YEAH, SURE. JUST GOT SOMETHING IN MY EYE.



...THAT'S
WHAT HE SAID,
MULDER. THAT THEY
WERE GOING TO
RELEASE ANOTHER
BATCH.



BYERS
MANAGED TO
GET AN ADDRESS
FROM THE SKYLOGIC
COMPUTERS. WE THINK
IT'S WHERE THEY'RE
MANUFACTURING
THE VIRUS.

SEND IT TO
ME. BUT YOU GUYS
NEED TO GET THOSE
SAMPLES TO THE C.D.C.
IN ATLANTA. SCULLY
WILL BE WAITING
FOR YOU.

WE'RE
LEAVING
WITHIN THE
HOUR.

GOOD
LUCK.



HEY,
MAYBE
THINGS ARE
STARTING TO
GO RIGHT
FOR US.

YEAH,
SURE...



...MAYBE...

TO BE CONTINUED IN
THE X-FILES/THE CROW
CONSPIRACY!

