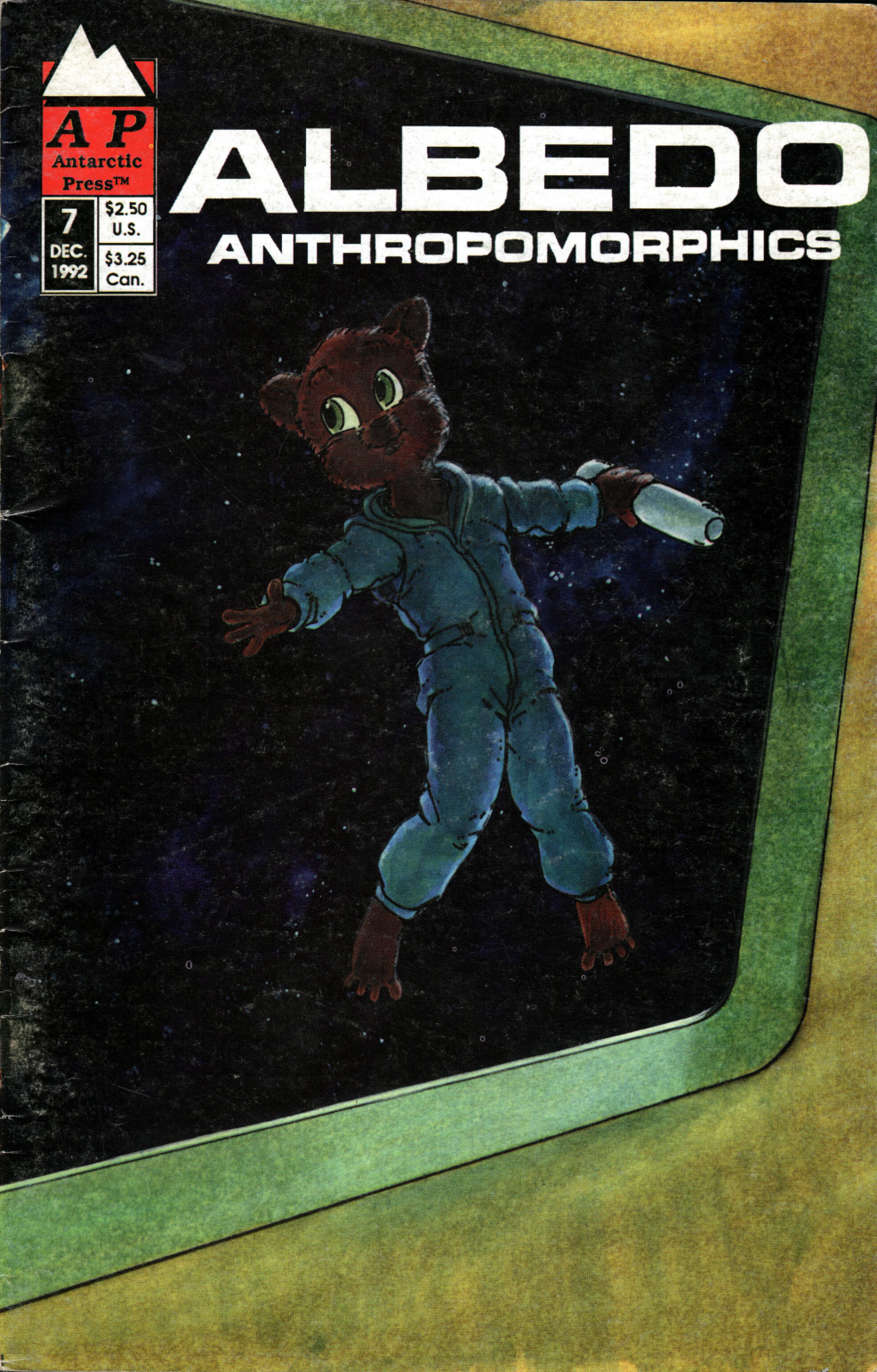

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ALBEDO
ANTHROPOMORPHICS

What to say today? On an immediate level, the elections are over and something approaching constitutional democracy seems to have won this time, maybe. Ethiopia looks like a scene out of *Birthright,* which says more about the tragic repetition of history than any precognition on my part. (For any astute student of history, the headlines hold more confirmations than surprises.) Deal Whitley and Fritz Leiber are dead. Boy, am I cheerful this morning. Well, its Veteran's Day and I'm remembering a lot.

Albedo is still alive and kicking, with discussions of new game product and ancillary merchendise and all. I might even get a *Beatrix* book started, likely a one-shot or limited series. There is a real possibility of *Birthright* reprints and even new stories, but *Zell* and *Gytek* are still a ways off. Paul Kidd has a new and improved Albedo RPG drafted, with simpler rules, better talbes, and a few more years of play testing and background to put in it. Chessex has been talking about publishing it, though no one has done anything yet.

Why, might you ask, hasn't there been more done? It is partly that I'm not nearly as organized and effective with my time as I oughtto be, but it also has to do with practical economics. I can't do it all myself, and any kind of quality help deserves to be paid for.

While many of you would like to think that this sub-genre is important, or at least as valid, and deserving the same recognition, as the rest of the market, remember that all the independent press "anthropomorphic" comics published over a whole year don't match the press run of a single issue of any one major superhero comic. These books simply can't make the kind of money that can support professional people. Albedo only nets about $600 or so an issue, which I have to share with the contributors. I had to pay Taral Wayne up front for him to work on Beatrix this issue as he was desperately doing whatever work he could get to pay the rent and couldn't afford to do anything that didn't make immediate income. As it goes, I got him cheap, though I gave him more than his proportional cut to make it worth his while.

I'm not presenting all of this as a whine for more sales, but as an answer to all the questions about why such-and-such hasn't happened yet. Many fans do not realize how small a return there is on this work and how limited the situations often are. Many independent press writers and artists are doing it as, in effect, unpaid fan work in their spare time, juggling a real job and household duty schedules to fit (R'ykandar's delays with *Refractions* were in no small part related to getting hired by Microsoft and discovering their version of a work week). I've gotten offers for fan help, but distance and uncertain situations make it impossible to take advantage of them.

We'll just press on, and see how it all turns out.

On practical Albedo biz, things are still chugging on, the color book is in concept, and technical questions related to color processses are still being worked out, but I'm feeling hot for it. And as always, I still have tons of back stock on Fusion, Dreamery, Xanadu, Everchanging Palace, and some Critters, Usagi Yojimbo, Albedo, and various ancillary merchandise. Write and ask.

How does anyone feel about an Ekosiak one-shot, going into detail about the current civil unrest on that beleaguered planet? Likely be a guest artist doing it. Immediate feedback would be useful.

Refractions is out. Looks okay. Feedback and contributors? An immediate comment which appeared on GEnie (a great computer network service that's really inexpensive to get on to, highly recommended) complained about the limited amount of art in it. Well, 'Dar only publishes what he gets, and we were both a bit surprised at the rather limited amont of stuff that was sent his way.

On a wacky side-note, the *Desert Peach* musical has premiered in Seattle. The reviews have been mixed, but the show can be can be a lot of fun. It will have done its run by the time this gets out, but if it extends or shows up elsewhere, and you're a fan, check it out.

I've gotten interesting feedback on various aspects of the *Albedo* scenario in the past, alternate perspectives and in-depth analysis, cosmological and technical suggestions. I need to solicit some expertice. While I have come up with a general concept for a fusion reactor, I don't have the mathematical wherewithall to figure out the performance of the nasty thing. Since no one is running one of these things in real life, we'll have to take it on faith that the basic concept works. What I need to know is how much work can I expect to get out of such a thing, in reaction thrust or MHD electric generation versus consumption in fusion fuel and reaction/coolant mass.

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Editing and production assistance by Bev Clark and Cindy Murata

ERMA FELNA, EDF
by S A Gallacci

Her Daddy was a hero in the first big war,
he had to do his duty, its what he lived for.
She was -
Born for the EDF!
Born for the EDF!
Born for the EDF!

First, the really big picture. The population of know space are all genetic constructs, settled on the planet Arras Charka apperently as a grand sociological experiment about two centuries before the present. Left to develope on their own, they quickly struck out into interstellar space and began colonizing a fair size portion of local space. Given a few generations, many of the far-flung colonies began to experiment with different socio-economic and political systems.

A pair of colonies inhabited largely by rabbits decieded to both disassociate themselves from the rest of the colonies and at the same time seized external assets of other settlements. They then began to invade worlds to take as their own. The more organized inner colonies quickly established a Confederation and to deal with the hostile rabbits, now calling themselves the **Independent lepine Republic**, a unified military arm, the **Extraplanetary Defense Force**. Thus*the* War began. It was a disjointed and drawn out affair, as the art of war had to made up as they went along. When it was over, little progress, in terms of territory had been achieved, but it had spawned military institutions and taught dangerious lessons about war-making.

Erma Felna was born just before the War, her father, **Kanoc** had been among the founding members of the EDF and was taken prisoner during the War. After his repatriation, he encouraged her towards a military career, dispite strong opposition from both her mother, **Eda** and the educational and military establishment. Before he could witness her sucess, he had a psychotic breakdown stemming from abuse suffered as a POW, and became largely disconnected from reality.

Erma saw action early on, disabling a terrorist sniper while still in academy training and soon after graduation, was part of an EDF action to resecure the colony world Derzon seized by forces who, while clearly ILR troops, were never awknowledged as such by their government. Her discission to go ended a relationship with her lover **Tavas Ikalik,** who's ambition has since gottten him into the now corrupt inner circle of EDF Headquarters on her home planet.

Erma's next assignment is on Ekosiak puts her into the middle of civil unrest, in part contrived by powerful business interests who hope to have outlaying worlds dissolve their relationship with the Confederation and take them over as company owned planets. There she meets Confederation Sectritary **Shato** and his assistant, **Dea-Htuhok Kho.** While Erma, in cooperation with Colonel **Onni Hitzok** of the local Homeguard, deals with the more public aspects of the unrest, Shato does covert computer things and assainations to thwart the corperate conspiracy. He is then sent back to higher headquarters under house arrest for exceeding his authority. Meanwhile **Itzak Arrat**, captain of the EDF ship DH270 and family friend of the Felnas', confronts what is in effect space pirates, and after dealing with them, becomes inmeshed in both the Ekosiak conspiracy and later, the growing network of coruption which is now pervading EDF central commands.

While enroute to her next assignment on Ish-Tako, with **Toki**, a friend from her academy days, Erma's ship is attacked by elements of the extreamist factions who's actions summoned her there. After the attack, they happen to notice a derilict space ship, and a later expidition, headed by the xenologist **Elaki Kalakahali,** discover exotic technologies and the body of an alien (human), who they suspect might be one of the "creators", the mysterious individuals or agency that started the original colony back on Arras Charka.

On Ish-Tako, the civil unrest quickly subsides, and Erma's personal life gets busy, as she rekindles an old flame, **Alfon Voga,** and they have a child together. Meanwhile, back on Ekosiak, Dea and the Colonel have gotten friendly as they attempt to track down the remanders of the old conspiracy, only to find that it has taken on a new form with new players.
And the ILR hasn't been idle, as they gear up for what they perceive to be a preemptive war. **Ipcha Tankannahal** is a young buck who's ambitions toward the daughter of a senior officer and to become an engineer have placed him on a training cruiser where he is discovering the reality of military life.

Captain?

Captain Arrat?

Mateoschat?

Specialist Mateoschat, how have you come to be here?

I am on extended leave. I had to find you. To tell you about the death of Commander Hiak*. He was murdered by Special Services. They forced him into suicide.

But - ? How - ?

Hiak challenged the "official" record of the Chishata incident. They made accusations about our mission. Outrageous claims of atrocities we were supposed to have committed. They presented false recording, perfect forgeries, and demanded that he confess.

And what about you?

I assume that they wanted me to be a witness. I was present at all interrogations. No charges were raised against me. No restrictions were placed on my movement or association. When it was over, I was given open leave, to seek out and warn the members of the DH270 of Hiak's fate.

Tell me what happened.

EF307

*Commander Kaina Hiak was the Mission Commander for the DH270's investigation of the Chishata Massacre.

So, have you come to join us?

I really don't know, Sir.

I am still EDF.

For all the injustice I have been witness to - .

I cannot leave while this aberration grips the Force.

I still feel bound to my oath.

I wish I could share your faith. But I have been to Arras Charka and this *aberration* is so entrenched that my opposition was merely waved off. They went so far as to offer me a new command, as though nothing had happened. These are individuals with ugly ambitions and I fear for inner Confed space. But, as long as they control the net, there is nothing that can be done to resist them.

Captain, please. I do not doubt your devotion. It is only that I am perceived to be of no consequence to them that I can do what I do. Perhaps, as they watch you, they would not watch me. Or, if they do keep me in their scrutiny, others will do what is necessary to regain the proper order of things. And in either case, we still do our duty.

Perhaps. But for myself, duty demands that I remain at my post. As the tides change, I will still be there.

Yes - .

EF308

Yeah, I suppose.

Have you seen any of the rest of the crew?

No, though I've heard several might be here.

Yes, actually. Would you like to see my command?

Sir?

The Collective here has seen fit to offer me a heavy destroyer. Part of their self-defense force.

There's the ship. It's 52 x 248 currently, but they're talking about a second ACV* rotary dispenser, though it already carries 32 ACVs. It also has extended endurance systems aboard, so it is almost self-sufficient. We're going out with a light crew, only about thirty. EDF veterans mostly.

Awah, Bob and the clubhouse gang are already aboard. I'm told that Chencha will be arriving within the week. As will Gillerand.

I'm not sure what they expect, but they seem to want a lot of additional transport capacity.

Transport or evacuation?

EF309

* ACV = Autonomous Combat Vehicle, a large, AI-guided missile, often with its own weapons, often used as an interceptor or reconnaissance probe.

A chilling thought. But in these times of troubles - .

Dru, Frieda, and Lees, defense and security, a bit of a weird triangle.

Ilnya, battle management, one of those sensitive, artistic types.

Sakirt Mikmik, a great JOAT, really handy to have in a pinch.

Tad, chief engineer and FTD/xeno specialist.

Isn't he a bit overqualified for this?

You'd think so, but the Collective insisted that we have a xeno on board.

Tutu does bio-services and Enrico here is the cook.

Kahphan is another battle managemant officer.

Rudi is a shuttle jock.

Chinnah, jump systems.

The rest are out or off shift right now. Good crew.

The routing chart said there should be a backup comline here, as well as the battle-damaged control section.

With a splice block and coder, I could not only repair the damaged line, but provide an interconnect for emergency re-routing of signal for both systems.

But that was not the exercise.

That's right, Trainee. We're not looking for a design review.

You have not obeyed orders, nor have you followed accepted procedures.

Moreover, you have exceeded your authority by making unofficial modifications in vital ship's systems.

Had this been an actual emergency, you would have been liable for a host of charges.

Your sole duty is to obey orders, executing them exactly to established procedure. Absolutely uniform response is what this ship needs, not some ill-considered *creativity*.

EF311

Ah, there's our bright boy!

Been brushing up on your REMFO* protocol?

Ah, come on. I've been doing remedial rewiring all shift.

And do you know why?

He was showing off in front of the examiners, doing some flashy BS instead of what he was supposed to!

HA! No wonder they pinned your ears back.

Yeah, trying that fancy shit won't cut it with the examiners.

Serves you right.

*-sigh- looks like I'll never get a break. can't do anything **too** well for the instructors and anything beyond their own mediocrity brings on the wrath of my "peers."*

Gosh, looks like your bunk's a mess.

Yeah, trainee, ought to get that cleaned up. Gung ho troops keep a tidy kit.

EF312

REMFO = Rear Echelon M F* Officer

READY TO RECORD FOR TRANSMISSION.

Hi, Toki. Just one last quick message before jump.

-Beep- INCOMING MESSAGE. STAND BY.

An' Toki! An' Toki!

Hi, guys. I'm figuring you'd be trying to do a message just before jump.

So I'm doing this one to tell you to save your transmission credits on last minute yadi-yadi.

Everything is fine here. The fate of the system is now in my capable hands.

Especially after this last year's worth of your sobering Domthanti influence. Who knows, you might even be able to domesticate that no-account male of yours. Anyway, you all take care of the beast and I'll see you around.

ATTENTION! ACCELERATION WILL TERMINATE IN ONE MINUTE.

Uh oh. We'd better get Ro' secured. Remember what happened last time.

Where *is* the baby baggy?

I don't know, I don't wear it.

You look for it and I'll get his mask on.

EEah no! Don't! No! -whine- -whimper-

You have to keep that on. I don't want you to aspirate anything if you get sick.

Have you found the baggy yet?

Did you put it in with the wash?

EEEEEEEEEEE!

So that's where my -

ATTENTION! ACCELERATION WILL TERMINATE IMMEDIATELY.

Orrph!

Weee!

Hang on!

Fweee! Mommee fun!

Wuaugh! - cough- !

Ugh! I'm -gasp- fine!
Uoh, how I hate ZeeGee.

Are you all right?

You a'right?

Yeah, Ro' and I are fine. In fact, he seems to like it this time.

ZeeGee perceived as a jump? Well, it is "freefall".

Mommy, jumpfun, jumpfun!

ATTENTION! INTERDIMENSIONAL TRANSIT IN ONE MINUTE.

Now that is jump, Rojigo.

Jump?

Well, in a minute. You won't feel a thing.

Now you'd better be ready for jump.

We're supposed to be merely passengers in transit, but just in case - .

If you're so concerned, you can hold Ro'.

But, yeah, you're right.

ATTENTION, INTERDIMENSIONAL TRANSITION IMMEDIATELY

JUMP

TRANSIT COMPLETE. ALL STATIONS REPORT ANY ANOMALOUS EVENTS.

Yeeoooww!

Ro'! It's all right. It was just jump.

We're well on our way to our new home now.

urgh!

Erma? Are you ok?

-gasp- Fine! I'm fine. Just a little jump sick.

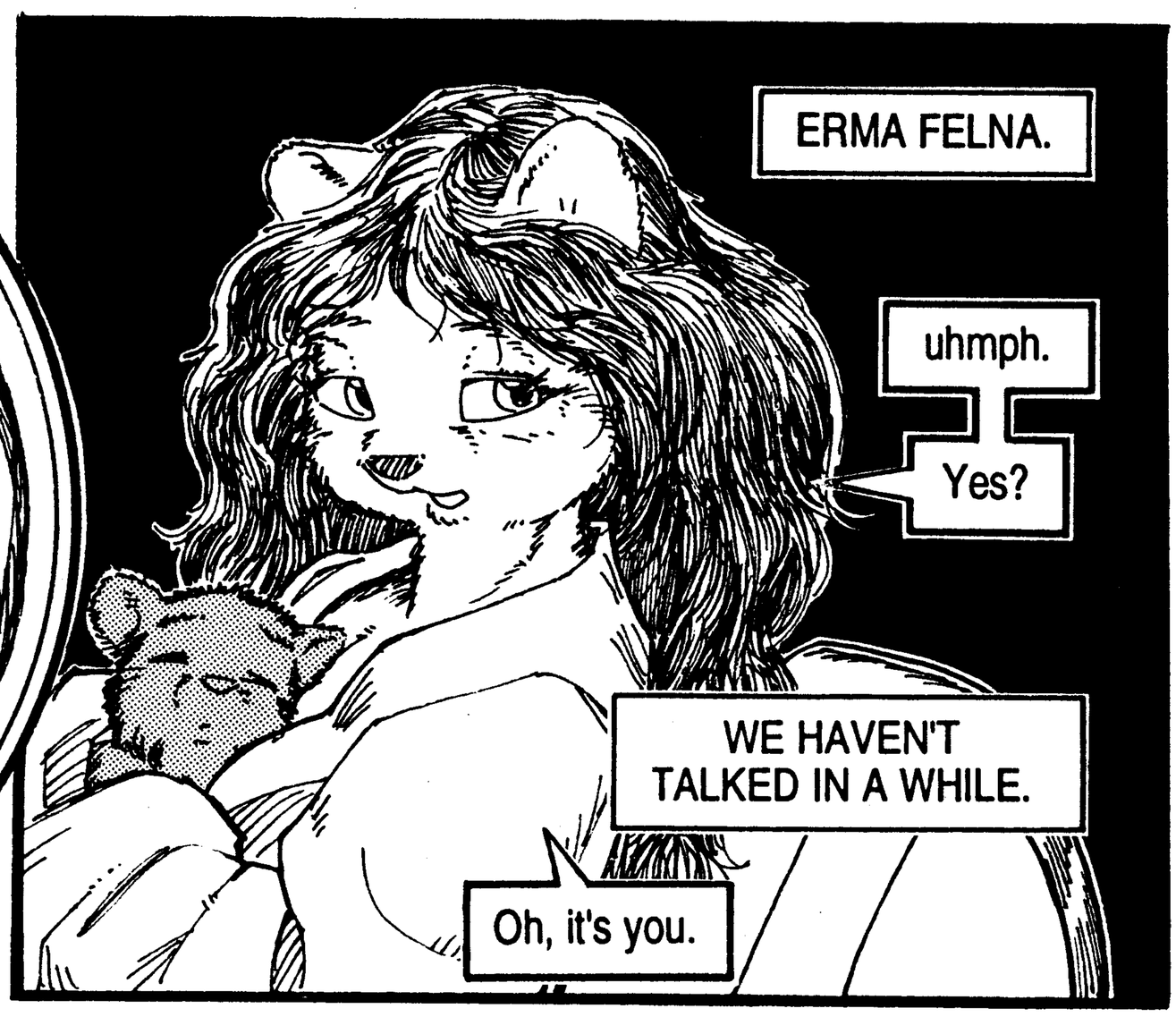
Are you sure? This is well within the realm of *anomalous event.*

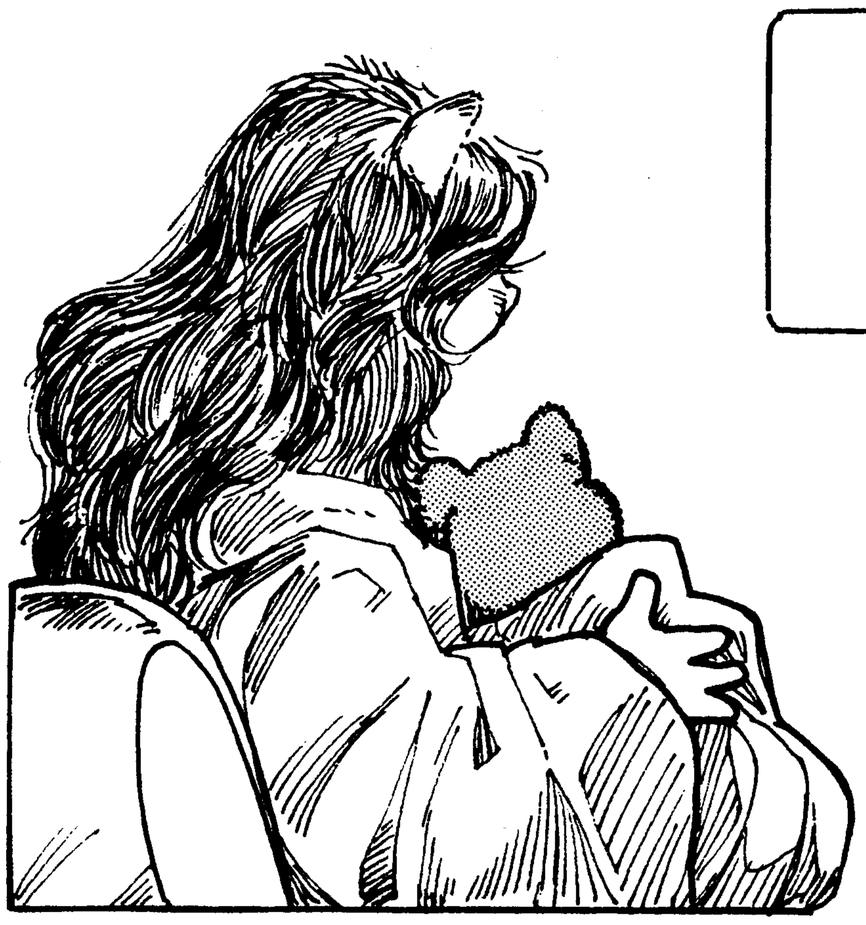
No, I'm really fine now, just a second's worth of wooziness. How's Ro'?

I think the jump just scared him a little.

EF315

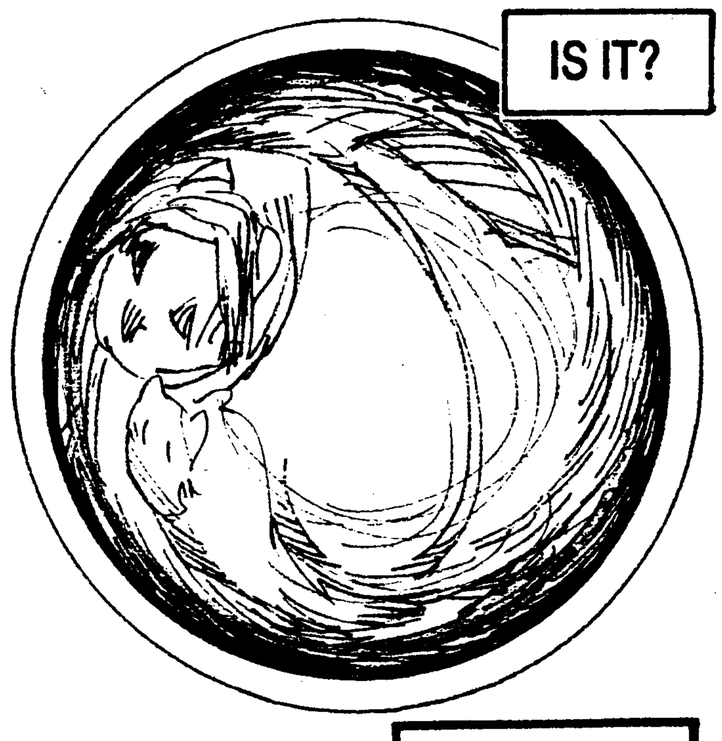






I'M MORE UP TO DATE FROM THE INNER SYSTEMS AND HAVE CRITICAL NEWS. ELEMENTS OF THE CENTRAL NET HAVE BEEN COMPROMISED. THERE IS A CLIQUE OF SENIOR EDF OFFICERS AND CONFED EXECUTIVES WHO HAVE A COMPUTER TOOL THAT CAN ALTER OR CREATE DATA AT WILL. YOUR ASSIGNMENT WAS SUCH AN ARTIFACT. TAVAS IKALIK INTENDS TO MAKE YOUR CAREER DIFFICULT WHILE ON ANNAH*.





*Annah, local name for Domthant II.



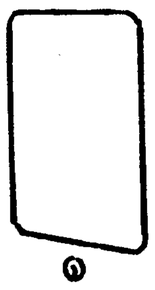




THERE ARE SOME MEDICATIONS THAT CAN REDUCE SENSITIVITY WITHOUT IMPAIRING OTHER MENTAL FUNCTIONS. ROJIGO CAN TAKE THEM REGULARLY TO PROTECT HIM FROM EMOTIONAL OUTBURSTS.

I'm not - .

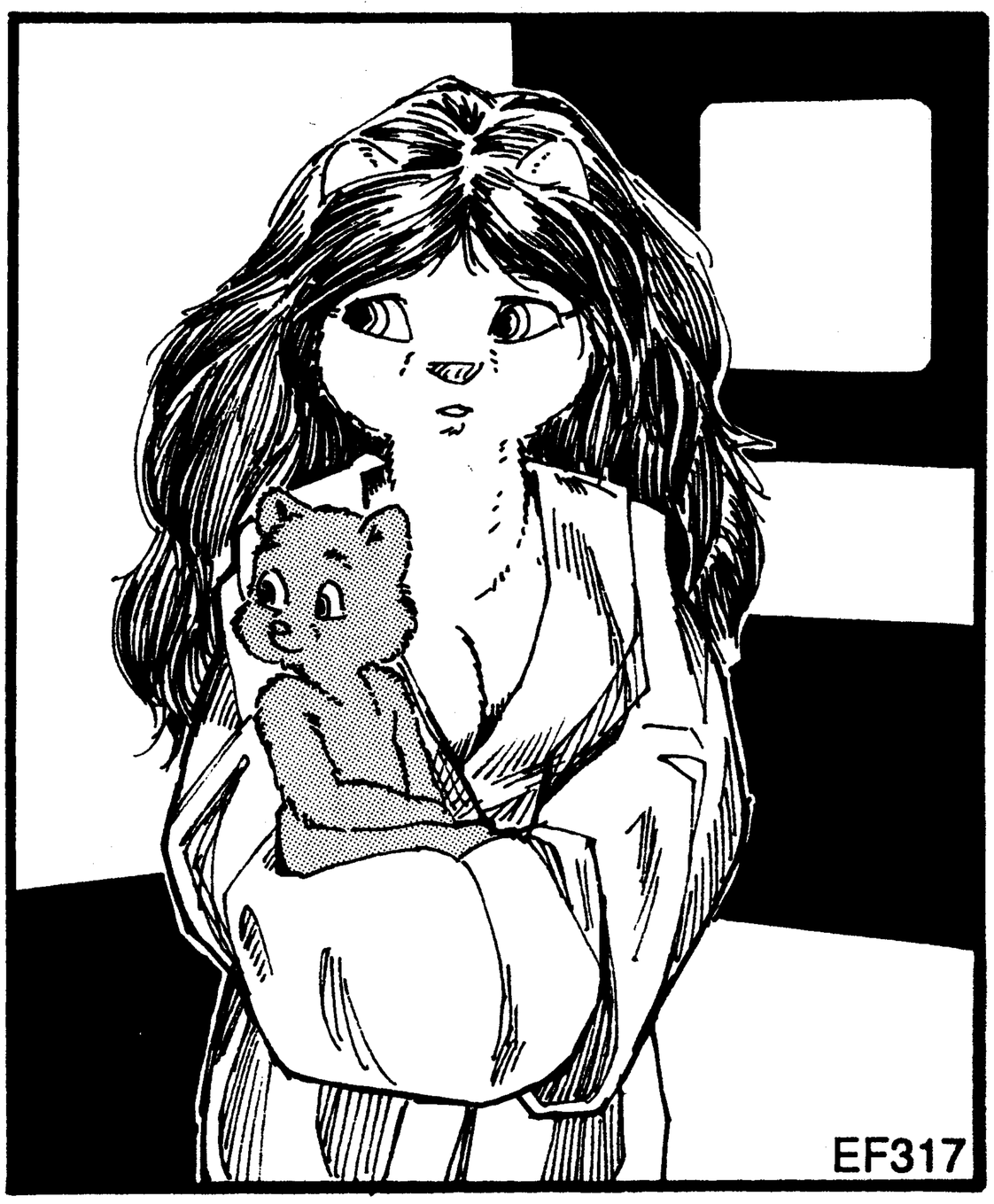
THERE ARE OTHER LOW-LEVEL EMITTERS IN THE POPULATION. FOR YOU, THERE ARE VERY SHORT-DURATION DRUGS THAT CAN EASE YOU THROUGH JUMP.



Why is it that I'm only now having problems with jump?

THE EXPERIENCE WITH THE DREAMS AND YOUR PREGNANCY HEIGHTENED YOUR SENSITIVITY.

YOUR SENSITIVITY IS, BY AND LARGE, A LOW-LEVEL AWARENESS OF YOUR PHYSICAL SPACE. IT IS, IN PART, WHY YOU ARE SUCH A GOOD PILOT. WHILE OTHERS CAN VISUALIZE 3D SITUATIONS AROUND THEM BASED ON INSTRUMENTS, YOU CAN ACUALLY PERCEIVE THE SITUATION. HAVING BECOME ATTUNED TO LOCAL SPACE, GOING THROUGH JUMP DISRUPTS THAT PERCEPTION, STARTLING ROJIGO AND GIVING YOU A BRIEF SHOCK.



Will I, and Rojigo, become more sensitive or whatever to all this?
And how will I deal with him in the future?

GOOD QUESTION. MOST TALENT MANIFESTS ITSELF EARLY AND PERFORMANCE QUICKLY PLATEAUS. YOUR KIND OF LATE AWARENESS IS MORE VARIABLE, BUT I WOULD NOT EXPECT ANY INCREASED POTENTIAL. HOWEVER, NOW THAT YOU ARE CONSCIOUS OF WHAT YOU DO HAVE, IT IS LIKELY THAT YOU WILL REFINE IT.

To your stations! Snap it up! Snap it up!
We'll be cutting thrust and going to jump in one minute! One minute, you trainees!

Something must really be up, even the instructors are in armor.

B-b-b-battle M-m-m-management station eight, m-manned and ready!

oh dear - some of my comrades are overreacting

Relax. It's just another jump. And even if we were going into a hot zone, which we are not, we'd be hours, even days, away from any possible action.

Yeah, you're right. Thanks.

PREPARE TO TRANSIT

everything looks green so far

JUMP

TRANSIT COMPLETE

and everything still looks green.

THE SHIP IS NOW IN CONFED SPACE. ALL CREW WILL REMAIN AT LEVEL THREE ALERT. DIVISION HEADS REPORT TO COMMAND BRIEFING.

But you said - !

I know!

EF318

You! Bright boy.
Report to the command briefing!

Sir?

Yes, you! If you're so all-powerful ambitious, you get to rep the division.

oh khai! i'll never hear the end of this

why can't i be a mindless slob like the rest?

So, we'll be skip-jumping along the Rim, then plunge into Central Space to make a coordinated attack. All training groups will concentrate on on-post operational skills.

Ah, a question. Tankannahai, section C battle management and engineering. According to the course plot, we'll be doing a lot of fringe entry and high-angle jump outs.

Fringe jumps mean low accuracy. It would take only a couple of unlucky entries to put us off schedule making corrections.

Good question. This is only an example course. As you said, these maneuvers have navigational risks. So we'll have to adjust the plot as we go.

The arrival time, not the route, is the only critical issue.

Who is that?

You're from engineering? Yes? An additional point for you-all. Once we get within Central Space, we'll want to limit our out-gas signature, so we'll have to limit our reactor time. Getting charge-ups for two or more jumps per reactor firing would be appreciated.

EF319

It's one of Barkalahaia's engineering trainees.

indeed.

You! Report!

Where is Lt. Barkalahaia?

What are your thoughts on the mission?

And why have you brought your diaper bag with you?

Sir! Lt. Barkalahaia determined that I should represent him here - experience the responsibility. As to the mission, with the issue of jumps explained, it is a bold and aggressive assault. Once we arrive though, I am unsure as to how we would secure the target.

The specifics of the in-system action are outside our concern for the time being. Continue.

Lastly, as we are still on level three alert, this is my emergency kit and vac-helmet.

You heard him, gentlemen, we **are** still on level three alert.

Tankannahai, consider yourself now acting lieutenant of engineers.

Have Barkalahaia report to me while you put your division in order for level four excercises.

I also want to see a report on storage and consumption rates for multi-jumps within the next 48 hours.

ugh! this is worse than remedials! it must have taken me twenty hours to do that power program

maybe the captain has a twisted sense of punishment?

ATTENTION, THE SHIP IS NOW AT LEVEL TWO ALERT!

ah! at last, now maybe i can get some sleep - if my roomies will let me.

EF320

Ah-Ten-shun!

ack!

uh?

Right.
Very funny.

"at ease"

Hey, what's my gear doing all packed?

We thought, acting Lieutenant, Sir, that you'd be moving to ranking quarters, sir.

And we thought we'd ought to - ya know- .

Well, sorry to disappoint you, but I'm staying.

But, sir - ?

"Acting lieutenant" means only the responsibilities, but none of the advantages of the rank. My pay grade is still first year trainee.

Haven't you seen the new posting list?

What?

We're all to be posted out to a new Frigate, and you're suppose to be the officer of engineers for it.

Now in local news. Anti-government demonstrators again paralyzed most population centers across Ekosiak. They are demanding reinstatement of Col. Hitzok, who had been falsely accused of conspiring against the state. Those false charges have prompted demonstrations of their own, as the public demands answers to how key Net data appears to have been tampered with, and why the Governor had believed it and not Col. Hitzok, an erstwhile supporter of the ruling party.

And the Aito conspiracy continues, as a rabble of Centerists and their dupes attempted to portray themselves as concerned nationalists in a few poorly attended rallies.

They have called for the release of the former Homeguard hero, Col. Hitzokwho had been seduced by Centerist agents and then framed by the Governor, who herself is a Centerist tool.

The false charges against Col. Hitzok only confirm the fact of Confed manipulations of the Net, and Freedom Party Leader Tai is calling for the purge of Confed Net programs that infest our local network.

Criminal rioters terrorized cities across the planet today in lawless disregard of the pleas by the Governor for civil order.

Attempts to quell the violence have been hampered by mutinous elements of the Homeguard who have sworn allegiance to the traitor Hitzok and his Dornthantii harlot, the EDF terrorist Dea-Htuhok.

Claims of Net tampering by radical agitators are merely diversions for their own efforts to subvert that inviolable institution.

All decent citizens are asked to restrict their travel, staying away from potentially dangerous population centers and staying off the Net, to keep channels free for emergency service operations in the stricken areas.

EF322

With this crowd of supporters around us, the Governor would need to use an airstrike to get at us now.

uhm - I wouldn't put it past her.

I'm just worried about the people.

Our scouts are reporting that the Governor's men havn't tried anything yet.

This has got to stop before they do.

Has the Legislature agreed to consider creating a governing committee?

They say that they will consider it only after the Governor steps down.

Yeah, and as long as there isn't a legitimate alternate authority, the Governor can hold out on exactly that claim. Get her on line.

Governor.

Colonel.

What do you want?

I want to talk about a peaceful settlement to the situation.

So, you want to surrender?

Well, I was thinking of a temporary ruling committee until things settle down and then hold elections for a new government.

EF323

You must be mad!

You and your little rabble are only a minor and temporary inconvenience.

Most of those demonstrators don't care about me, or even you. All they see is that truth and justice have just gone out the window. In taking away their security, you've made them scared and angry.

If that were the sole issue, I'd almost agree. But your machinations against me haveundermined confidence in the Net and civil authority as a whole.

So you say. But that has got to be the most pathetic line I've ever heard.

If you think you can get me with some phony threats and claptrap civic responsibility, your naivete must be boundless. Getting rid of you altogether will be a snap now. Computer, execute the plan I had you outline earlier and keep me informed on it's progress.

PROGRAM INITIATED. THE NET IS NOW DOWN AND COMM LINES ARE NOW UNDER YOUR OPERATIVES' DIRECT CONTROL. FILE REVIEW AND DESTRUCTION PER YOUR CRITERIA ARE NOW UNDER WAY. ASSERTION OF SYSTEM-WIDE CIVIL CONTROL PER YOUR INSTRUCTIONS MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE, HOWEVER.

What!

BY LAST REPORTS, 38 PERCENT OF POPULATION CENTERS HAVE NO COHESIVE AUTHORITY FOR YOU TO ASSERT CONTROL OVER. RIOTOUS MOBS OR MUTINOUS ELEMENTS OF HOMEGUARD FORCES HAVE EITHER DISRUPTED OR SEIZED FOR THEMSELVES LOCAL AUTHORITY.

That's impossible! I thought that the situation was fully under control, that all the talk of riots was just a scare. Give me displays on all this.

PER YOUR INSTRUCTIONS, THE NET IS NO LONGER AVAILABLE.

What?

YOU INSISTED THAT THE NET BE DISABLED AND ALL NET DATA BE RUN THROUGH YOUR MODIFYING TOOL, CREATING CORRECTED FILES AND DISPOSING OF DATA AND PROGRAMS THAT COULD BE USED TO COUNTER YOUR EFFORTS. THEREFORE, ALL NET MANAGING PROGRAMS WOULD BE PURGED, AS WELL AS BASIC NET A.I. HEURISTIC RESTART PROGRAMS. DENYING THE NET TO OTHERS MEANS LOSING IT FOR YOURSELF AS WELL.

Why didn't you tell me that when we were planning all this?

YOU HAVE RESTRICTED MY INITIATIVE AND NETWORKING POTENTIAL IN A PARANOID ATTEMPT TO "PROTECT" MY FUNCTION FROM HOSTILE ACTIVITY.

Colonel!
The Net's down!

Are you sure?

Yes, I checked with other units by radio and FOL* and it seems to be everyone.

We'll have to assume that it's the prelude to an attack, but keep channels open for any other developments.

Do you really think she would attempt some direct assault?

Well,
if you beleive only half of the reports from around the planet and across the system, this little get-together is the least of the Governor's worries. She could have killed the Net just to keep us in the dark, and that could be literally, as the service systems start shutting down.

Service systems?
Would that include space systems?

Good question.

Is there anyone who we're friendly with upstairs who we can ask?

I'll work on it.

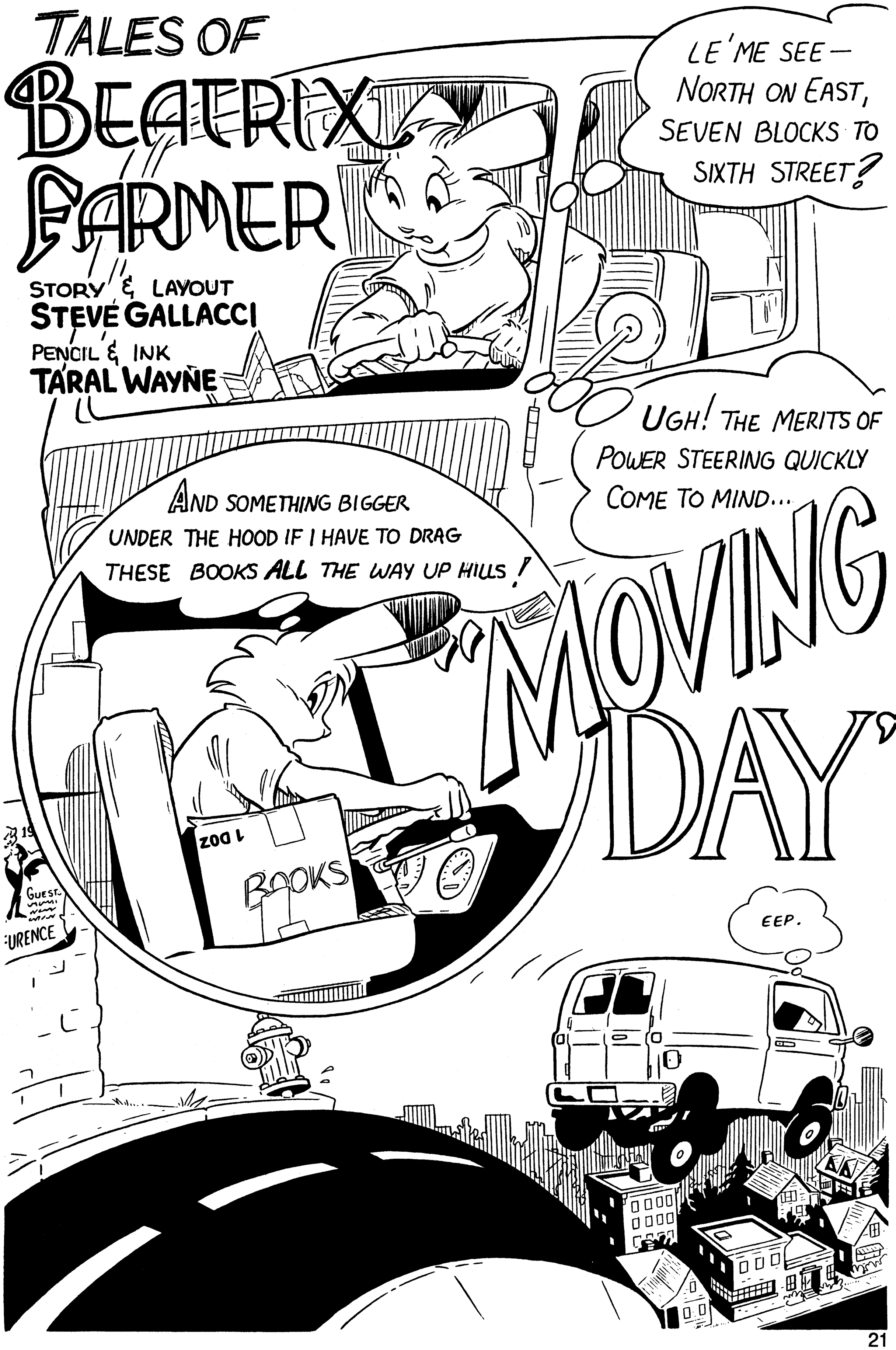
The ILR Cruiser jumped into Ekosiak space at extreme distance, gambling that it could jump out again before high power sensors could be brought to bear on it. While its entry and exit were detected on long range gravity-space instruments, the main processors that would have acted on the discovery had ceased to function and the struggling live crews and overtaxed minicomputers could not spare the time to consider the question of an unannounced transit. Later, as data purges and viruses swept through the remaining systems, the incident was lost entirely.



*FOL = Fibre Optic Line, usually implying temporary "field phone" ground lines, rather than normal communication routes which also use fibre optics.

TALES OF BEATRIX FARMER

STORY & LAYOUT
STEVE GALLACCI
PENCIL & INK
TARAL WAYNE



THIS MUST BE THE PLACE.

37 REED

HEY! DORTHY. YOU UP THERE?

BEA? THAT YOU?

IF YOU'D EVER LEARNED TO READ A MAP, IT WOULD HELP. GLAD YOU MADE IT.

WHAT KEPT YOU?

THE LOUSY "DIRECTIONS" **YOU** GAVE ME!

ME TOO... GLAD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, "SHORTY"

AH, YOUR LIBRARY?

YEAH— NEVER CAN LET GO OF A GOOD BOOK.

B

BOOKS

VCR

B

415·1·812

GOT ANY IDEA AS TO **HOW** WE'RE GETTING 'EM UP?

GOT IT ALL **IN** MYSELF. SHOULDN'T BE **THAT** HARD.

FIRE

AND THEN AGAIN...

THE PLACE DIDN'T LOOK THAT HIGH FROM OUTSIDE

OHMYGODOMYGODOMYGOD! THESE WERE NEVER THIS HEAVY BEFORE!

ISTERY

3 FLIGHTS LATER...

THIS ISN'T SO BAD. SOME AWFUL DECORATION SENSE, THO...

VCR

YSTERY

???

FIRE

HC FIRST

S'CUSE ME? M'AM? WHERE DO YOU WANT THESE?

IHUH?

OH. ANYPLACE.

MILK

NALTY FOR MISUSE

E to H

GOSH GUYS, I *REALLY* APPRECIATE THE HELP.

HC FIRSTS

U.S. HISTORY

SF ALDISS TO DICK

DISCH TO MACAVO;

YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS.

♫ WHATEVER WORKS ♩ JUST LOOK HOW **FAST** IT'S GOING, HON...

SO MUCH FOR PROGRESIVE, SELF-RELIANT, GENDER EQUALITY.

COME **ON** BEA! STRONG BACKS AND WEAK MINDS ARE ONLY GOOD FOR **TWO** THINGS

GEE! CHAUCER. "WHAN THAT APPRILLE WITH HIS SHOURES SOOTE..."

COMICS A-F

KIDDY LIT &APANAGE

MORE MYSTERY

LIGHT R[illegible]ING

[illegible]EAD POETS

QUICK, YOU SHOW 'EM WHERE TO PUT IT ALL, AND I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.

WHAT?

ER, THANKS. AND... UM. =YEESH=

SLADEK TO WOLFE

MY MEDIEVAL VOLUMES!

WOW. MARGERY KEMPE. CHRETIENE DE TROYS. BEDE. GOOD STUFF.

OH? HOW' BOUT "PARZIFAL"?

SOLD IT AFTER GRAD SCHOOL. NEVER GOT INTO THE ORIGINAL 12TH. CENTURY GERMAN...

GEE, A GNOME PRESS **FIRST**.

SO, THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY **IS** DIF'RENT FROM THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY.

JANE JACOBS OH BOY!

NAAKIDI NEEZNÁDIIN DÓÓ BA'AA HASTÁDIIN DÓÓ BA'AA NÁHÁST'ÉÍ NÁÁHAÍ KIŃTEEL BITA' DINÉTAH

"...LICKING THE ASS OF A LEPEROUS HANGMAN." SO THAT'S WHY SCHOOL LEFT SO MUCH LATIN UNTRANSLATED IN CATULLUS.

YUCK.

POW, ZOOM?

ALL THE LIT CRIT GOES IN **THAT** PILE EXCEPT THE FEM LIT WHICH GOES OVER **THERE**...

WHAT ABOUT SUSAN SONTAG?

♪ ANYBODY THIRRRRSTY?

GENUINE CANAJIN 5% BEER

OCH. A WEE DRAPIE WOULD GA DOWN RATHER BRAE..

BHEER?

C_2H_6O? WHERE?

BEVERAGES? WELL, WELL...

MILITARY FIGL

BYGIBBON.

DORTHY? WHERE HAVE YOU **BEEN**?

SEE HOW **EASY** IT IS TO GET UNPACKED WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM SELECTED NEIGHBORS.

RIGHT. AND NOW WE'LL HAVE EVERY MALE WITHIN A MILE OF HERE HITTING ON US FOR DATES AND SUCH... PHEW.

AND IS **THAT** SUCH A BAD THING?

I TAKE IT THEN YOU'VE CHANGED **NONE** OF YOUR WICKED WAYS.

ASST. REF.

SIGH. I **KNEW** SHARING ROOMS WITH YOU'D BE INTERESTING.

BEATRIX MY DEAR - YOU DON'T KNOW THE **HALF** OF IT!

— PAUSE



S.B. BEATRIX AND ERMA

MOSHI MOSHI TAKO

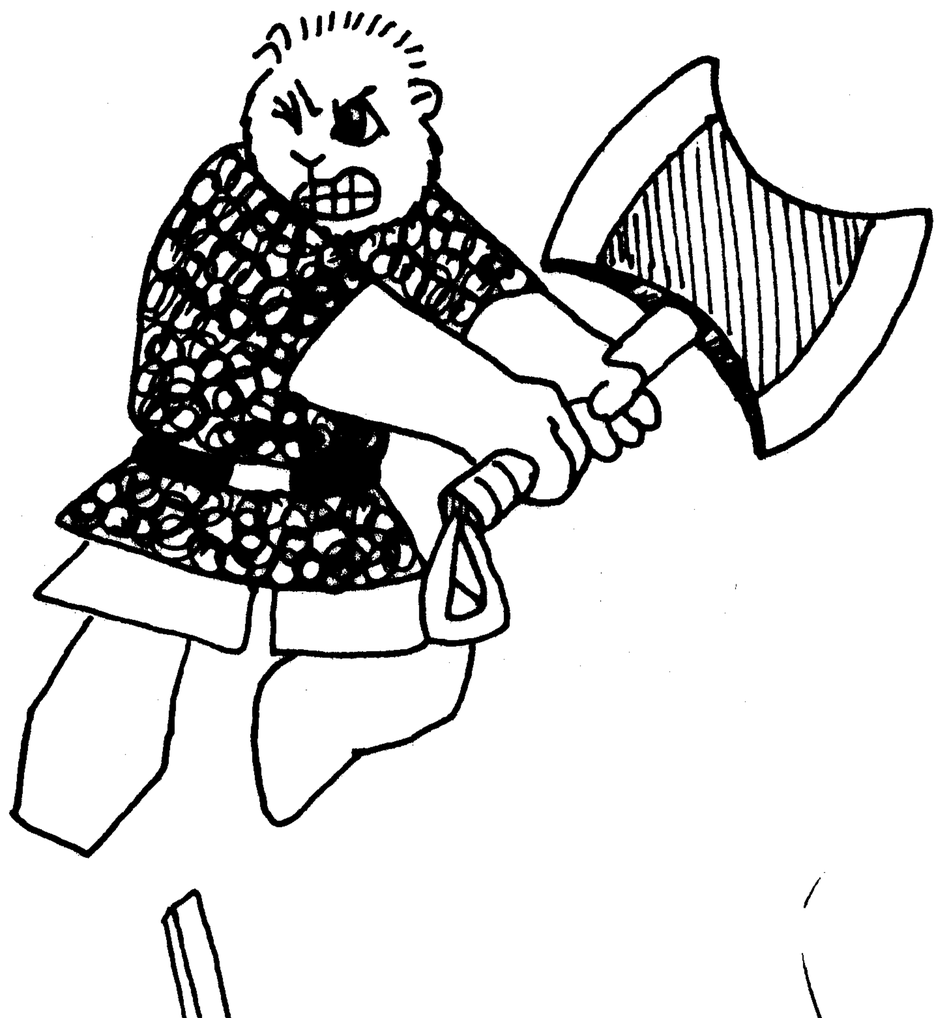


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Here are some more Cindy samples. She got a new job too, and it cut into her schedule so that she wasn't able to do a short-short story for the issue.















Do You:
LIKE MY ART?
DISLIKE MY ART?
WANT A COMMISSION?
THEN PLEASE WRITE:
CINDY MURATA
P.O. Box 3055
KIRKLAND, WA.
98083-3055
THANKS!

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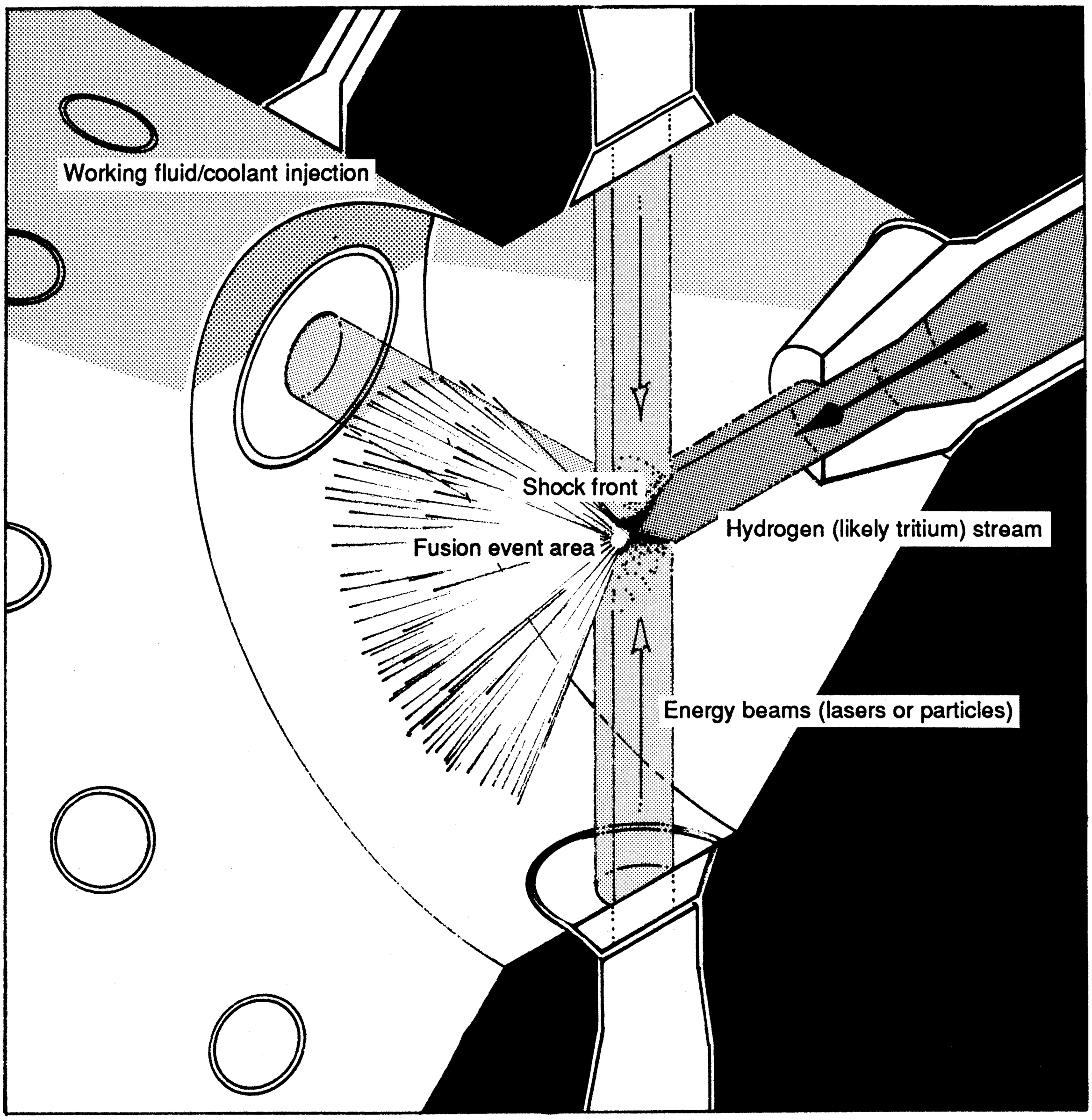
The fusion reactor in the scenario is not like a conventional fission reactor which can maintain a self-sustaining chain reaction. All one needs for that enough unstable nuclei, add a pinch of extra neutrons to get the reaction started, then draw off surplus neutrons to keep the reaction rate under control. As hydrogen fusion is primarily a result of applying difficult-to-contain pressure/temperature to force nuclei together that normally don't want to come together, and the resulting energy release only makes it that much harder to contain, it's not so easy.

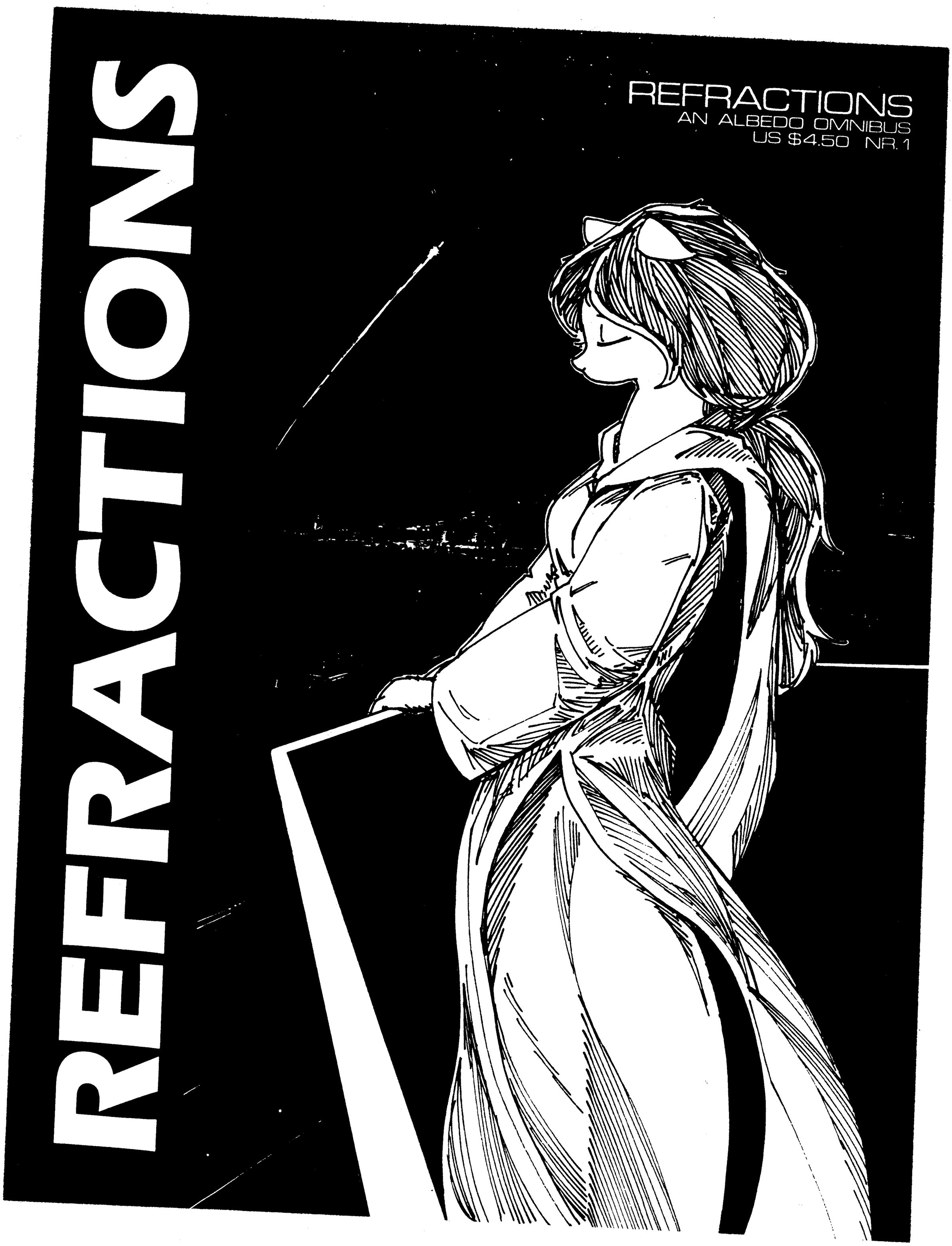
My version of how to do it is a variation of the inertia confinement/compression technique, in which directed energy beams strike the fusion fuel with implosive force, mechanically compressing it while also superheating it. This is done by injecting a stream of liquid hydrogen into a beam focus. The beams interact with the surface of the stream, explosively superheating it and creating a shock wave. The convergence of the shock waves creates peak pressures, and with the beams pumping more energy into the area too, fusion happens. At least, that's the idea.

Now, what to do with the energy? My thought would be to have a working medium in the area of the fusion event that would turn the raw MeV into a high-temperature stream that could produce thrust and/or drive an MHD generator. The medium would also act as a coolant.

So, the big question is, how much fuel and working medium might it take to do how much work? And is there any really clever ways to make better use of the fusion energy, directly or indirectly?

Any help on this would be very appreciated, and with permission, would be worked into any new technical source books or game stuff, with appropriate credit given, of course.





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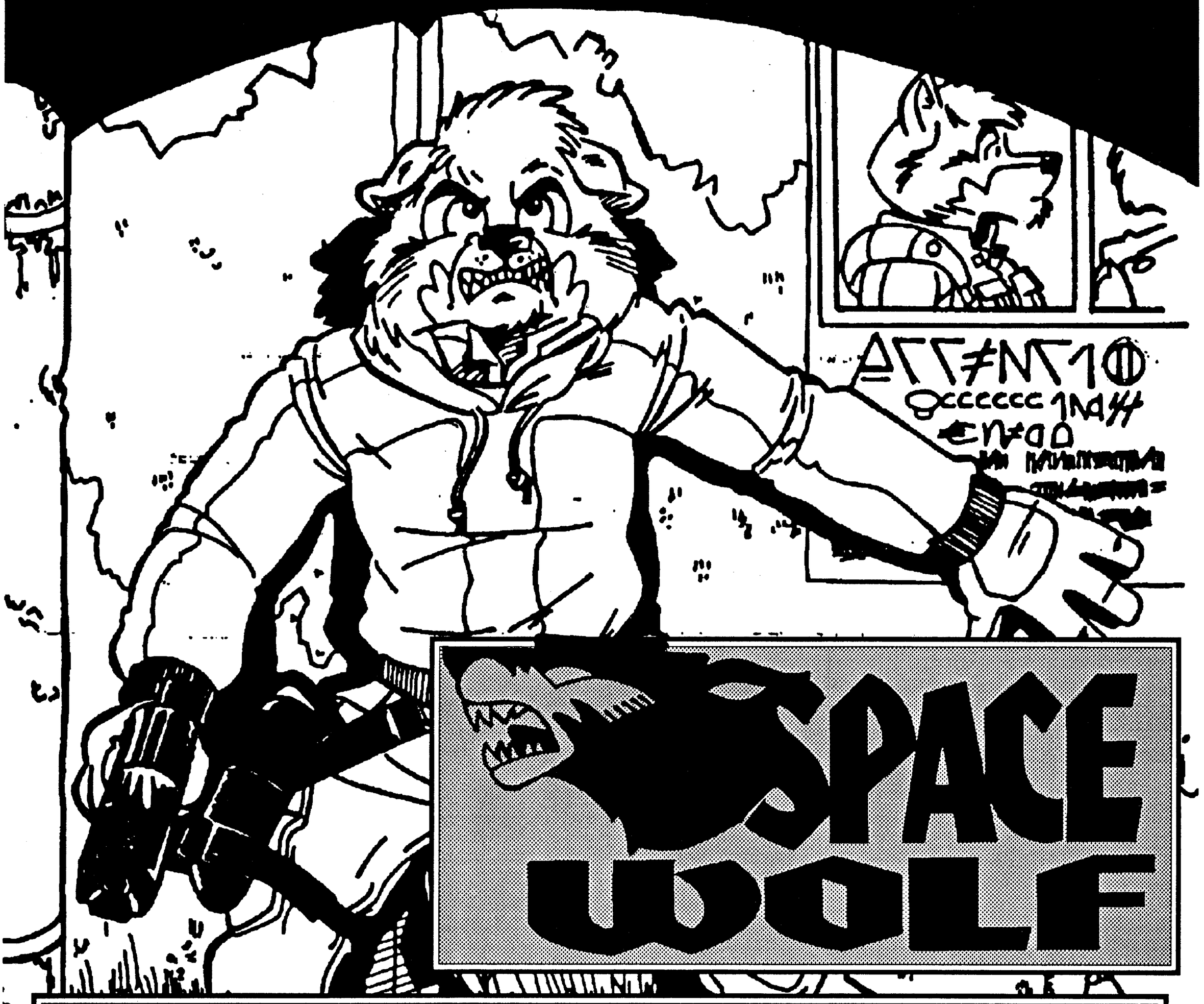
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