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ACTRON vol. 1

1986 - ?

R. Earles penciled the last panel and then smoothed down his packet of pages. Finally finished.

He had been observed.

His pages were snatched up. The teacher sneered as she surveyed his work. Weak anatomy, poor rendering. All in all, insufficient quality to warrant a bending of the rules. ACTRON #3 would languish in the art cabinet for several months, moldering beneath companion copies of SUPERMAN #17 and AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #290. Earles wouldn't get them back until the end of the year.

And then, ACTRON #3 was published.

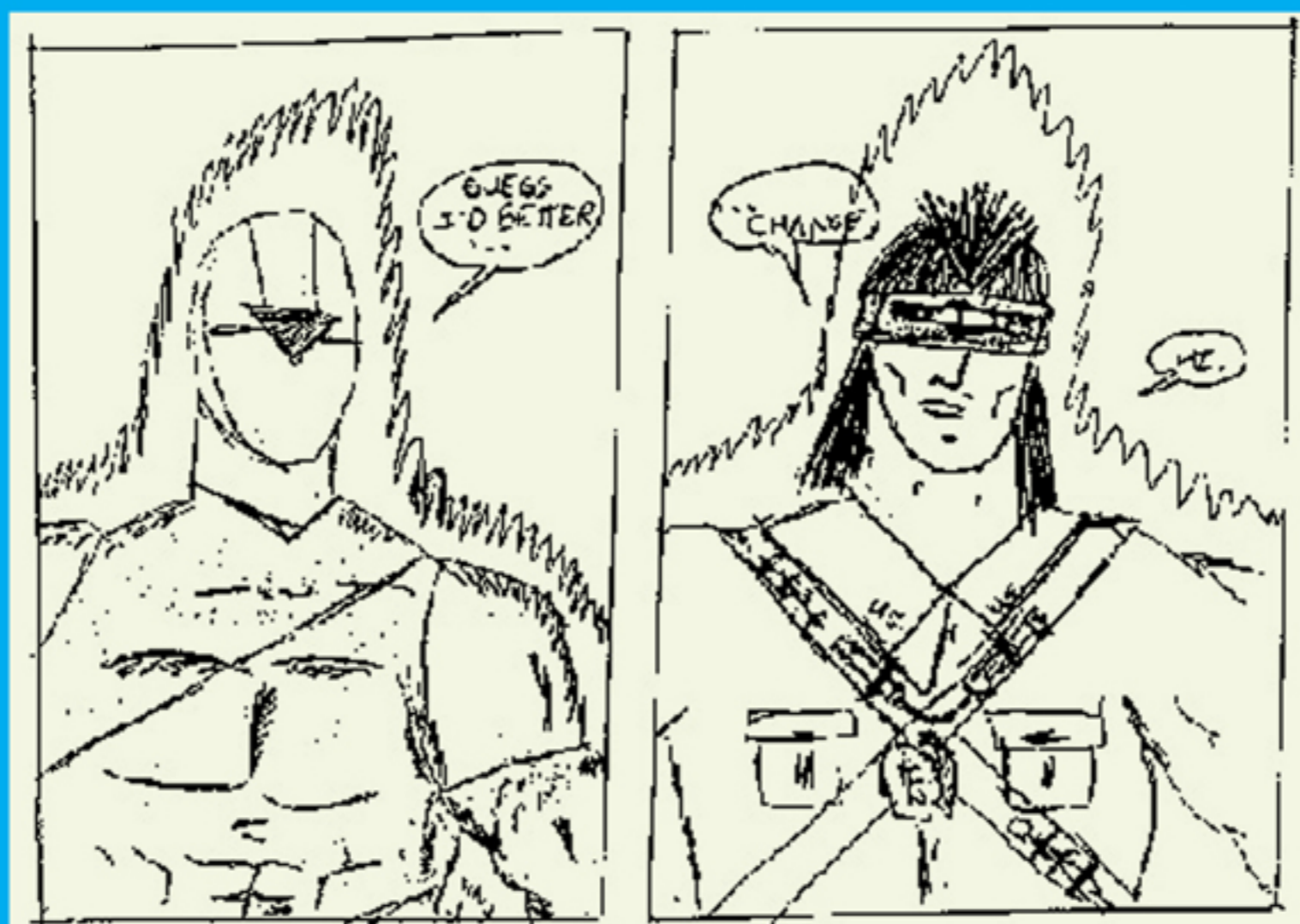
It actually sold. Classmates exchanged lunch money for photocopied mini-comics. Earles recognized an opportunity and re-invested his profits into his burgeoning TURBO GRAPHICS studio. At one point, more than twenty employees were filling out the pages of TG's publications.

And then came the crash.

In the years since the debut of the TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES, the comics industry had been flooded with a glut of black & white titles, each new book seemingly of lesser quality than the last. Earles' line of affordable comic books arrived just as



ACTRON vol. 1, #3 (1987)



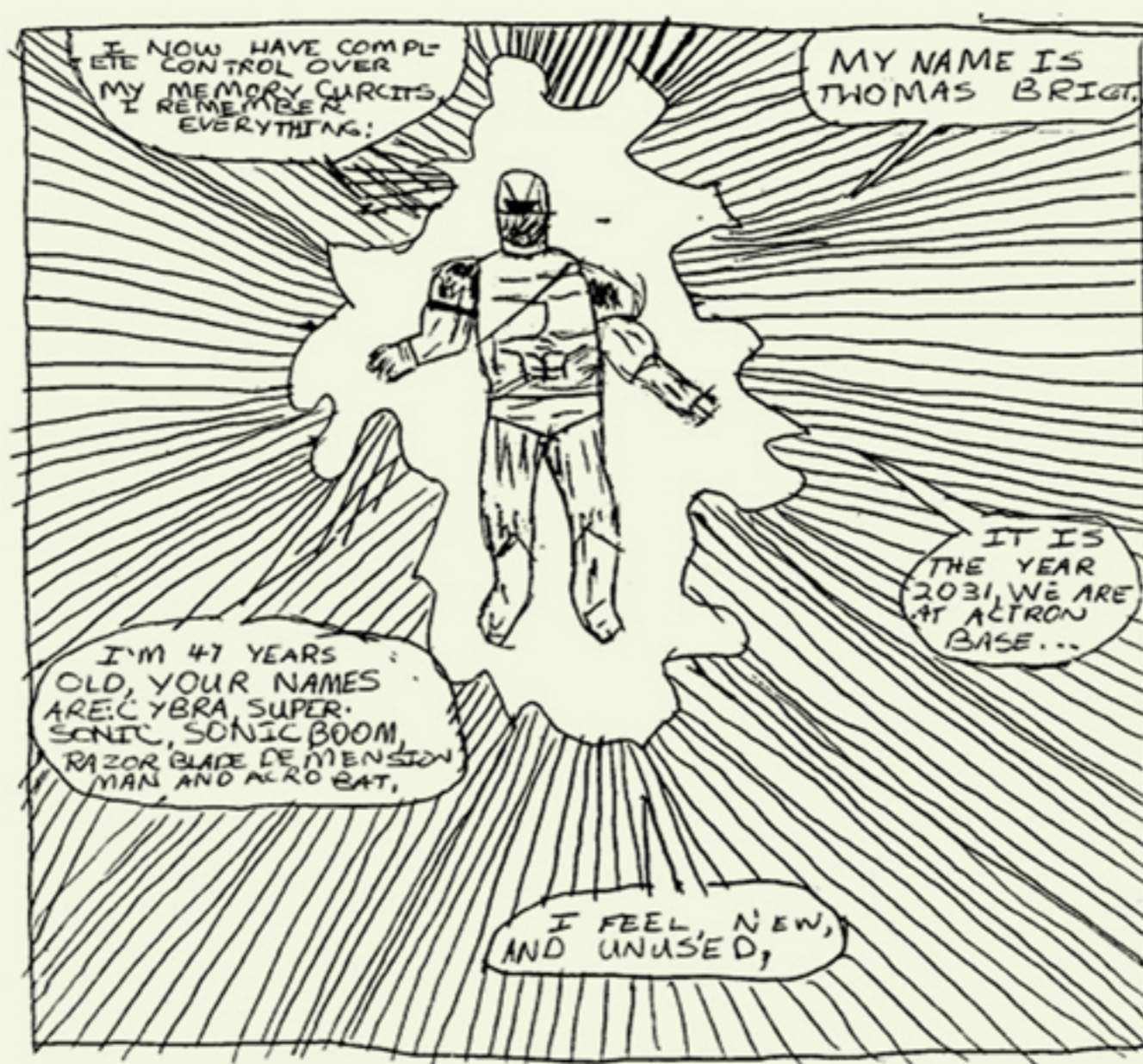
Thomas Bright's first on-panel appearance, from ACTRON vol. 1, #1 (1986)

the bubble finally burst. The reader is invited to draw his or her own conclusions about TG's contribution to the collapse.

But ACTRON persisted. New issues were produced, if not circulated. Since 1986, Earles has apparently churned out over two hundred full-length episodes of THOMAS BRIGHT's story. None of these pages have ever been seen by the general public.

Until now.

Dear reader, you hold in your hands the final installment of the



Actron suit in action, from ACTRON vol. 1, #1 (1986)

ACTRON saga.

An issue that has taken four years to complete. Several times, despite his sterling reputation for punctuality and professionalism, I was certain Earles was about to crap out. With less than thirty pages to go, he was simply not getting a lot of work done. Months would elapse with no new posts to his blog. The pages no one had seen were actually the pages no one had drawn.

It is likely that the coloring of Pete Toms is what finally pulled him through.

The evidence presented here speaks for itself. Earles was obviously reinvigorated by Toms' contributions to the book. The aesthetic shift is self-evident, and yet wholly appropriate to the material.

Hell, I'm even willing to take credit for it myself.

Stanley Lieber
New York, December '10

**THE CHRYSLER
BUILDING**

1986

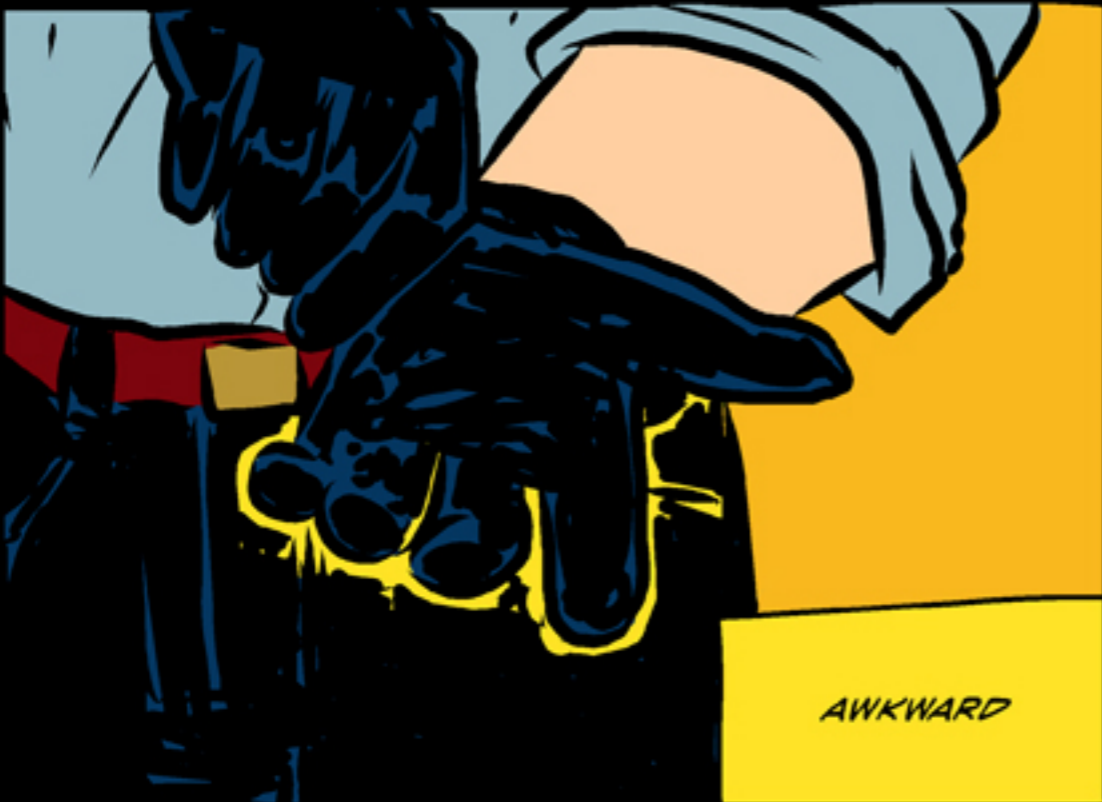
**ANOTHER
DAMN
DAY.**

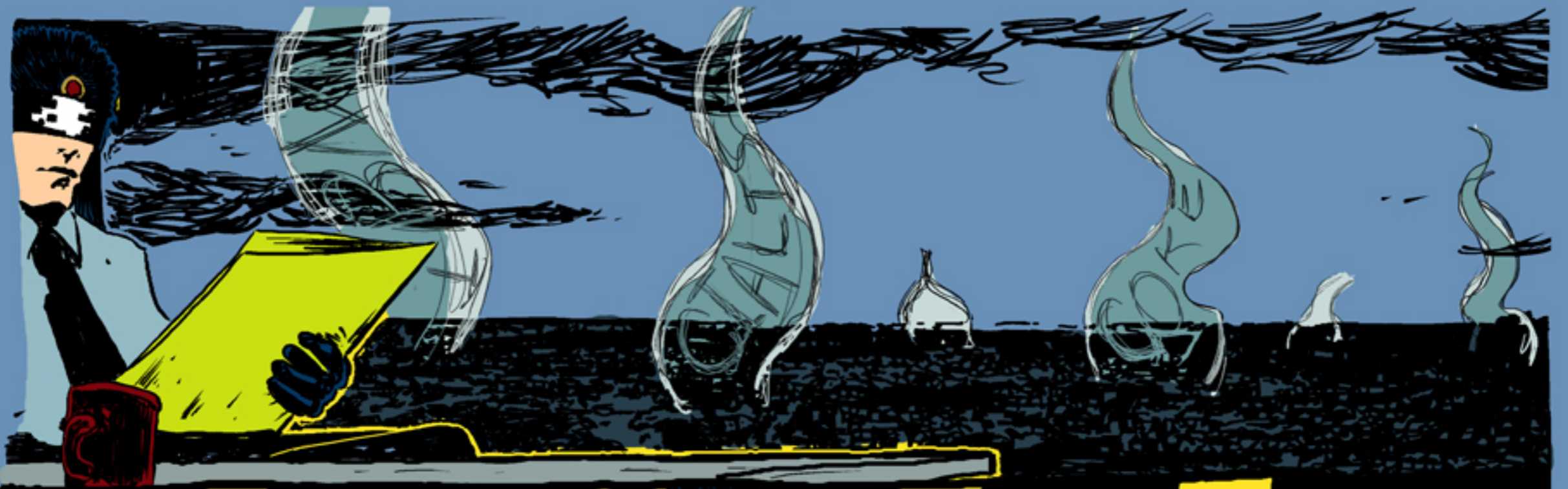
**WORDS + PICTURES:
STANLEY LIEBER**

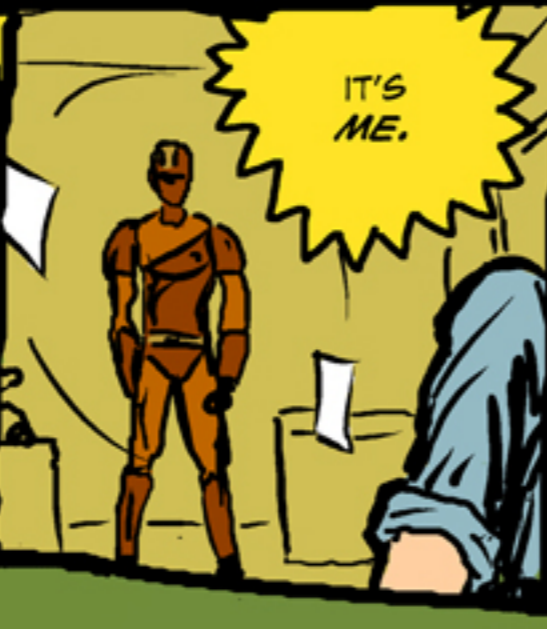
**COLORS:
PETE TOMS**

VOL. 1 NO. 242
PUBLISHED ONCE
PER DECADE BY
MASSIVE FIC-
TIONS.COM.

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OKAY. AFTER ME.

GOOD!

OH ACTRON...

WE'RE REALLY GOING TO HAVE TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER!

HA HA, YOU'RE SO FUNNY, ACTRON!

FINE, CLAM UP ON ME.

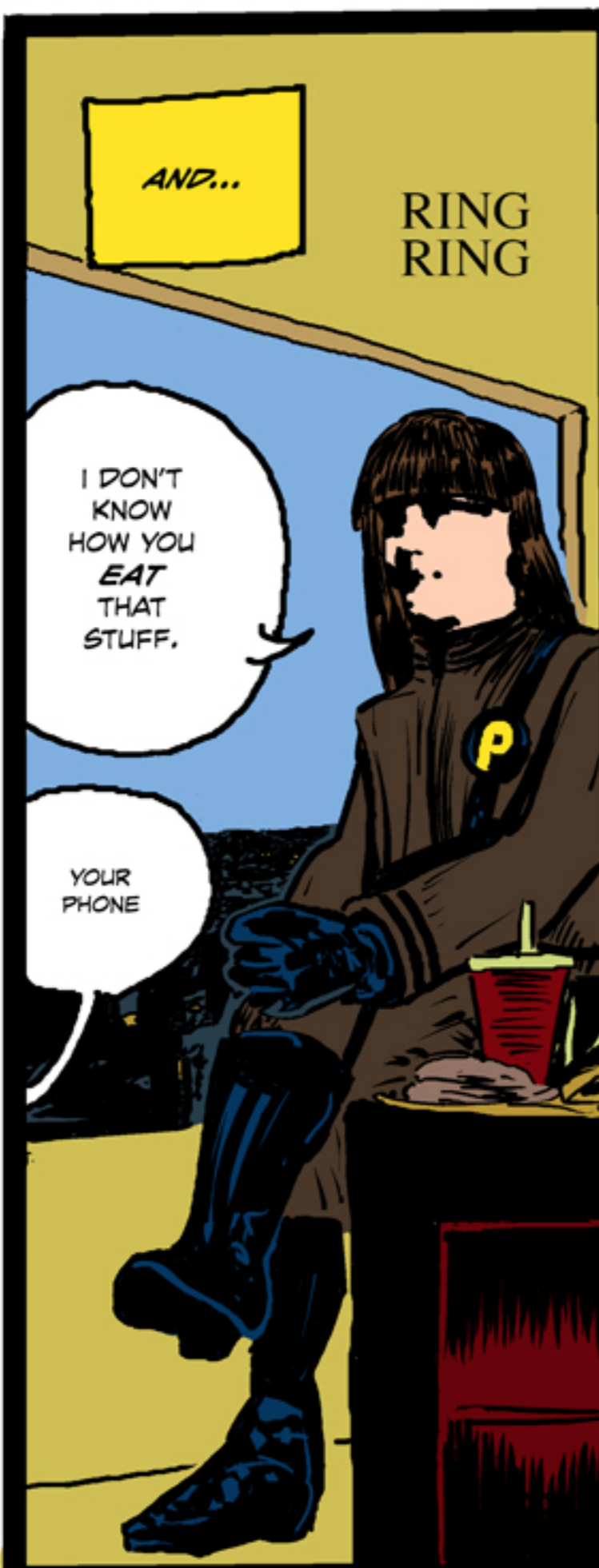
RING! RING!

WHO DIS?

IT'S ME.

...

WELL, COME ON DOWN.



I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU EAT THAT STUFF.

YOUR PHONE



SPEAK.



OKAY...

CALL THE OTHERS



WHAT?



HALF DEAD



THE 9/11 MEMORIAL.

AGAIN.



AND?

DO YOU WANT THE REST OF THIS BISCUIT?





HALF/DEAD IS THE SON OF A SPECIAL FORCES VETERAN...

... A SURVIVOR OF THE 9/11 ATTACKS OF 1981

A CHILD, HALF-CRUSHED BY DEBRIS

THE TRAUMA OF THE EVENT TRIGGERED HIS LATENT TELE-KINETIC ABILITIES...



I THINK THERE'S STILL SOMEONE IN THERE!

NO. THIS AREA HAS ALREADY BEEN CLEARED.

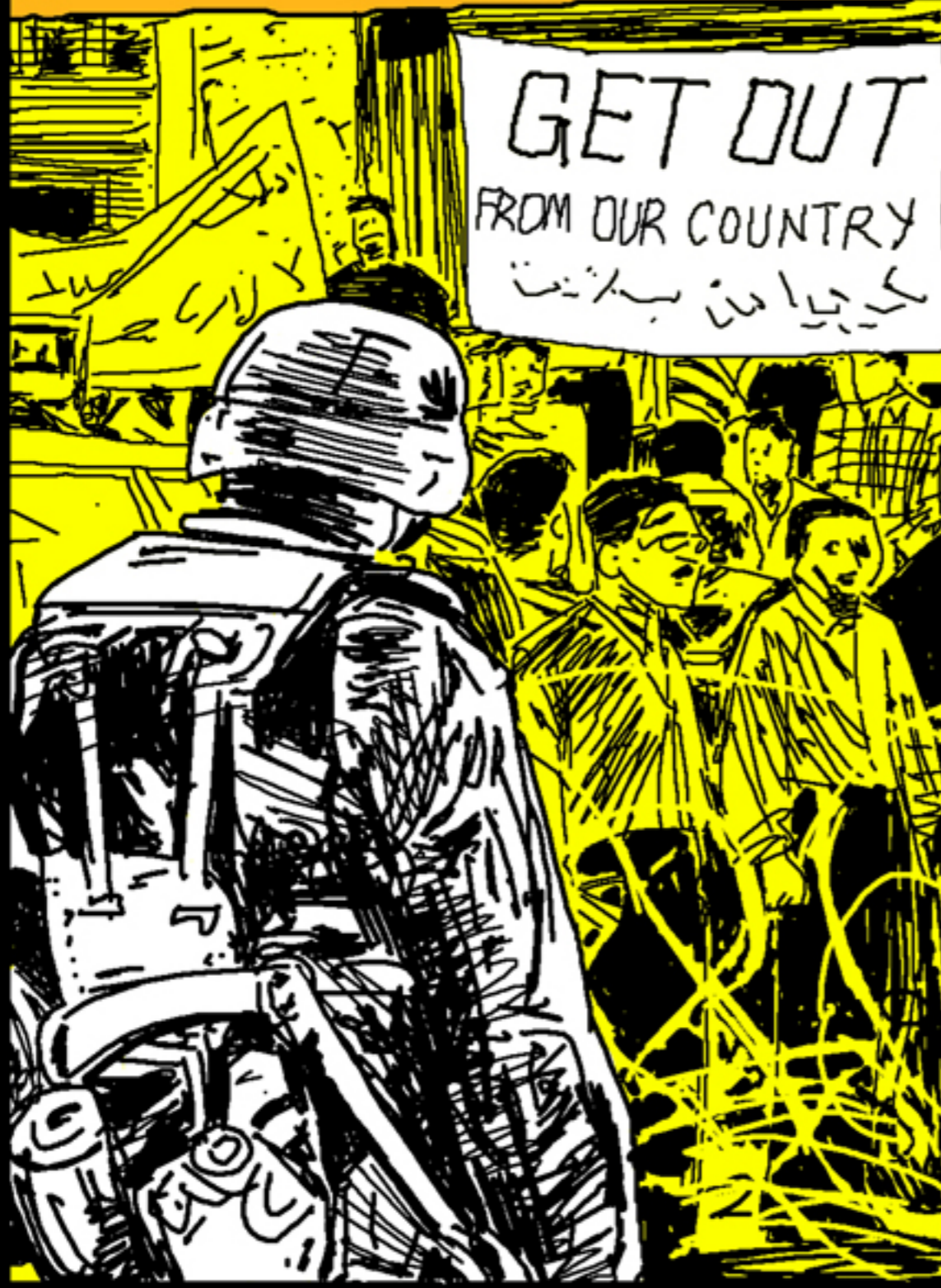


THINGS ARE STILL BLOWING UP

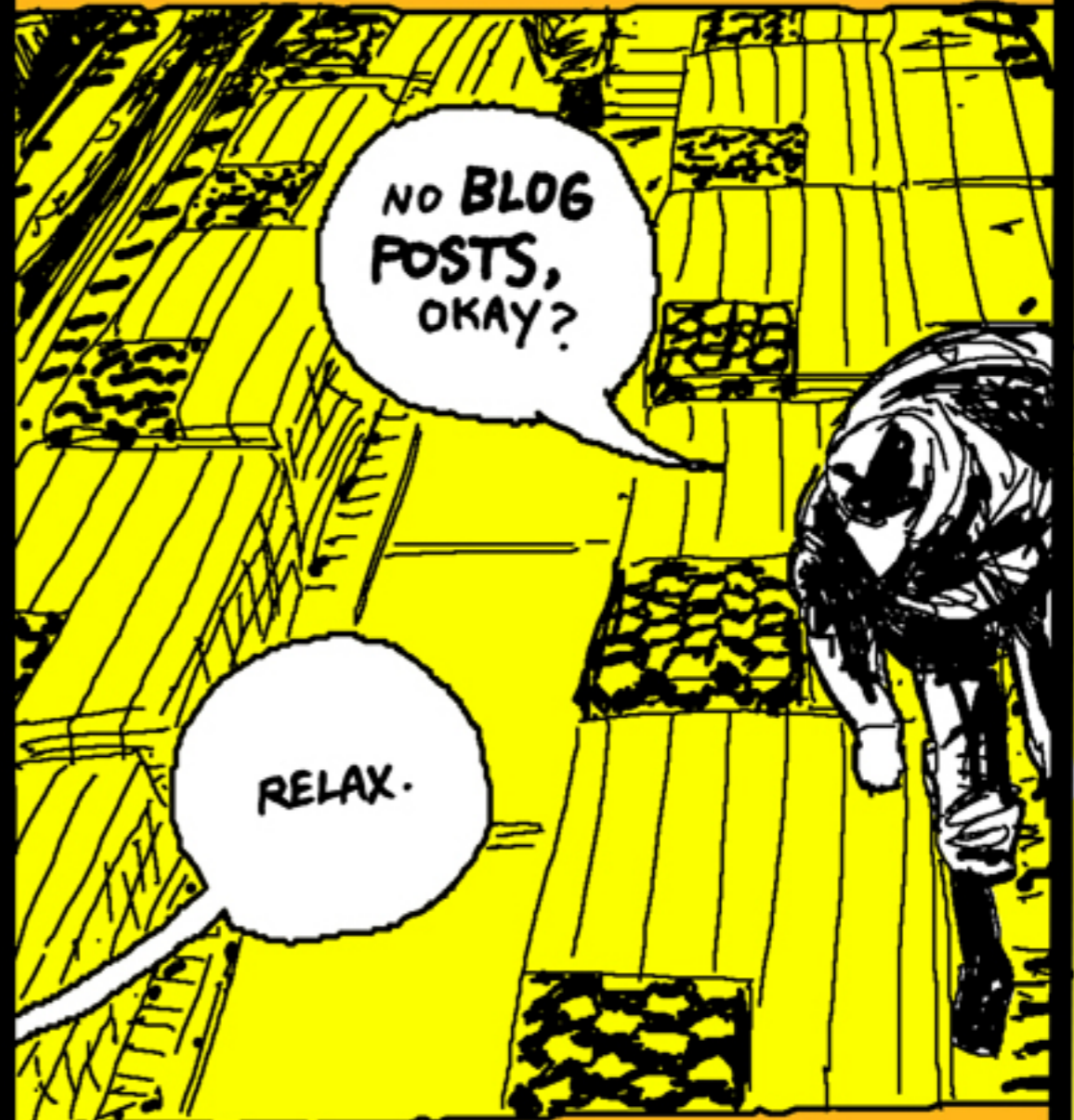
... WHICH HE NOW EXPLOITS TO HOLD THE RIGHT SIDE OF HIS BODY TOGETHER. A SORT OF PROTEST *PIECE DE RESISTANCE*.



HALF/DEAD'S FATHER DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF IN AFGHANISTAN...

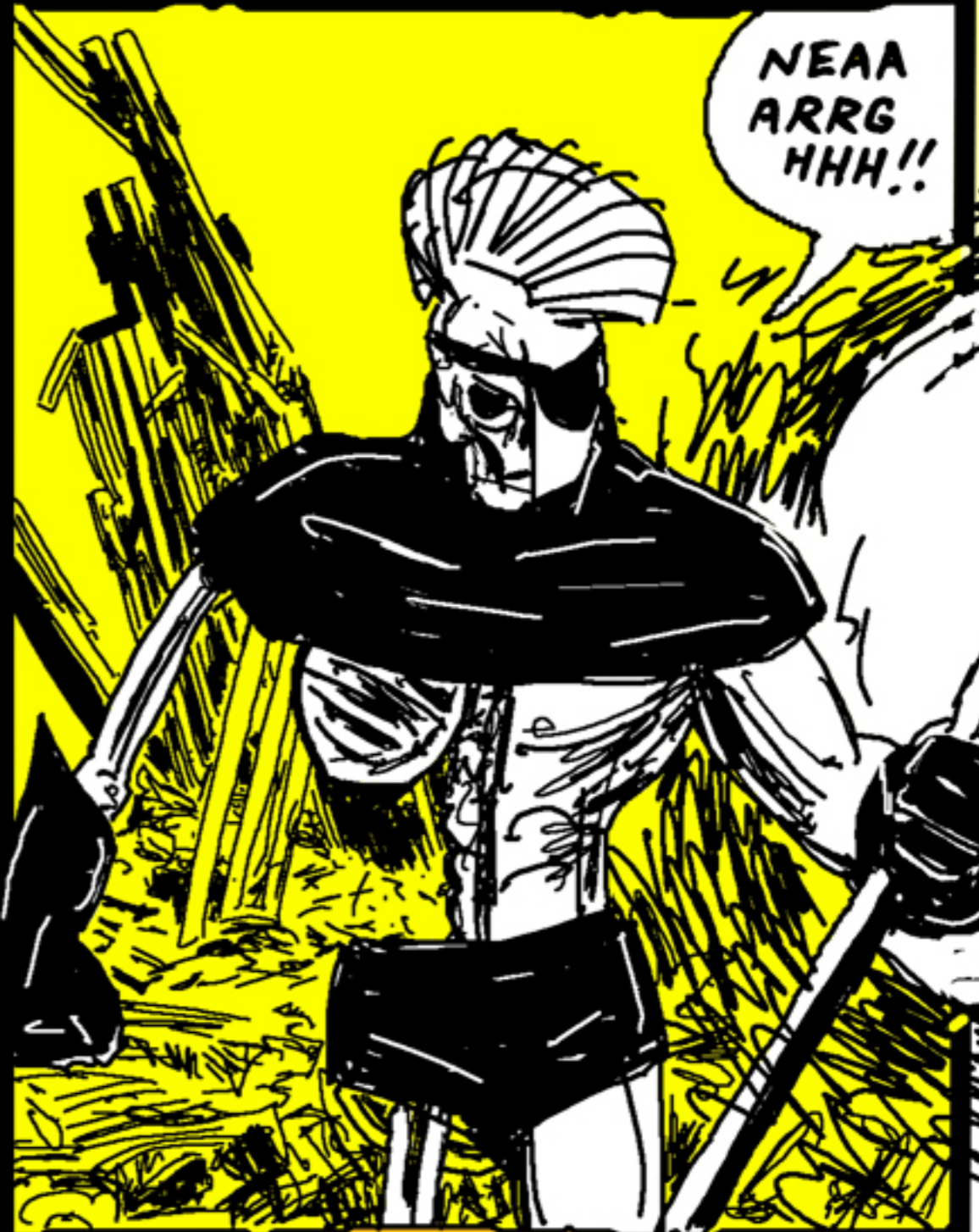


BUT DID NOT SURVIVE HIS FIRST TOUR OF DUTY IN IRAQ.

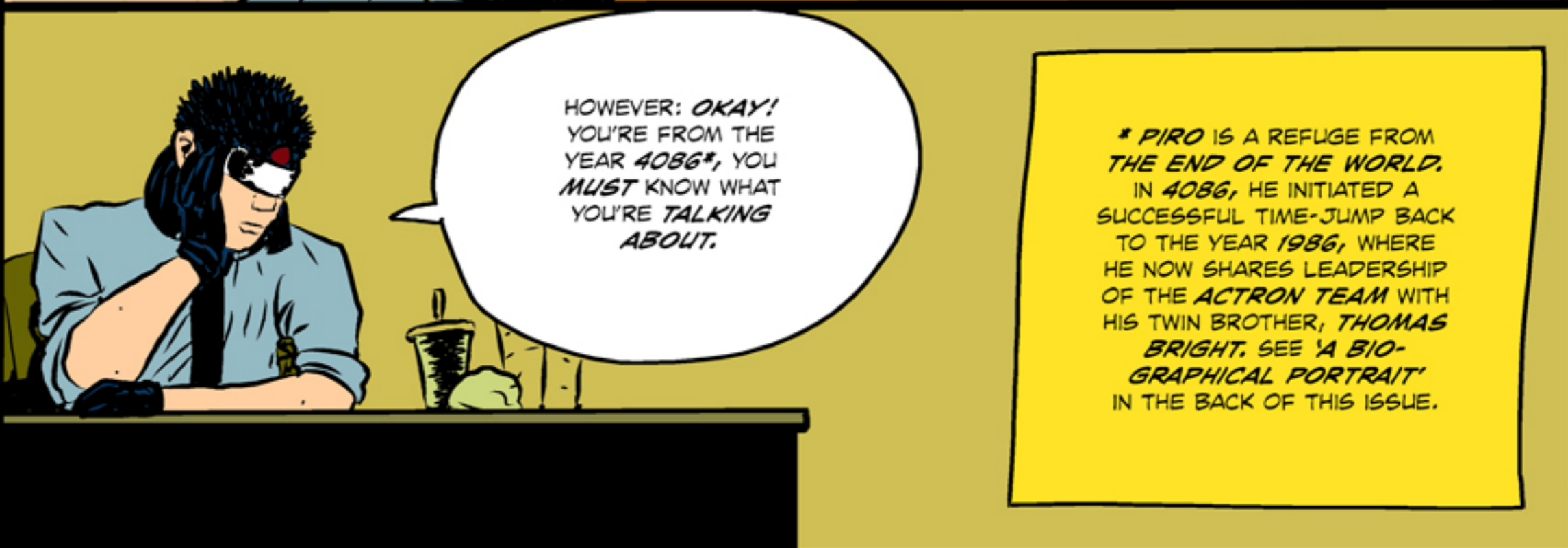
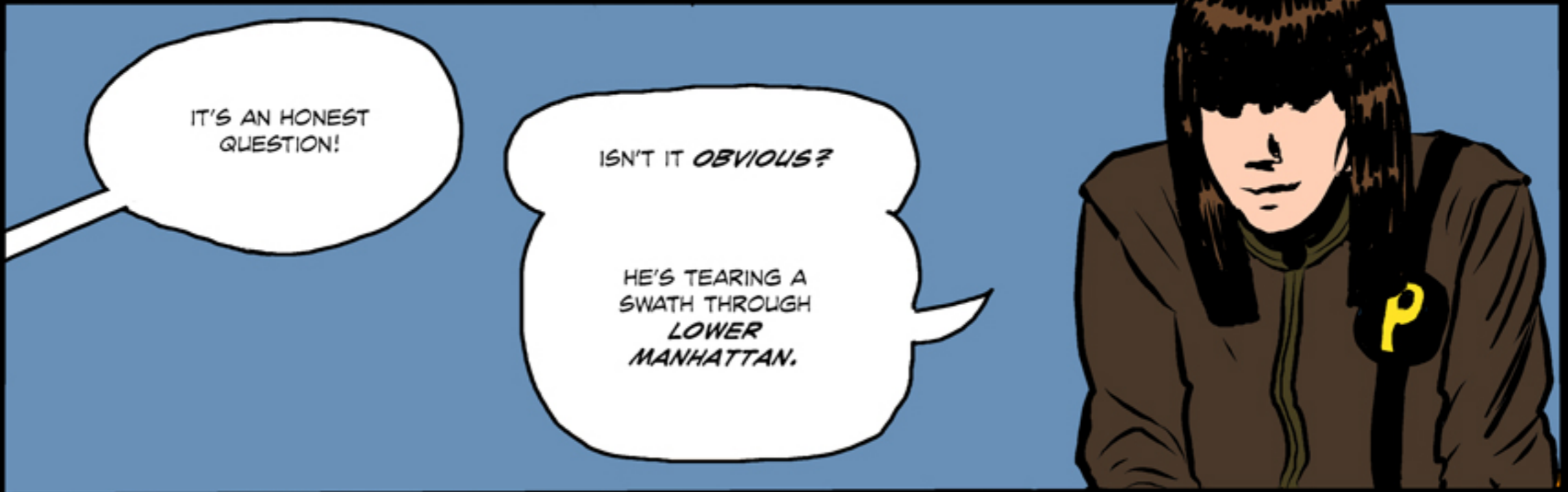


THE BOY HAS WHAT SOME MIGHT DESCRIBE AS A CHIP ON HIS SHOULDER ABOUT AMERICA'S MIDDLE EAST POLICY...

NOW, A CHILD REBUILT IN A SUPER-REMELY POWERFUL CYBORG BODY



HE ROUTINELY CAUSES EXTENSIVE PROPERTY DAMAGE TO THE CITY HE CALLS HOME.

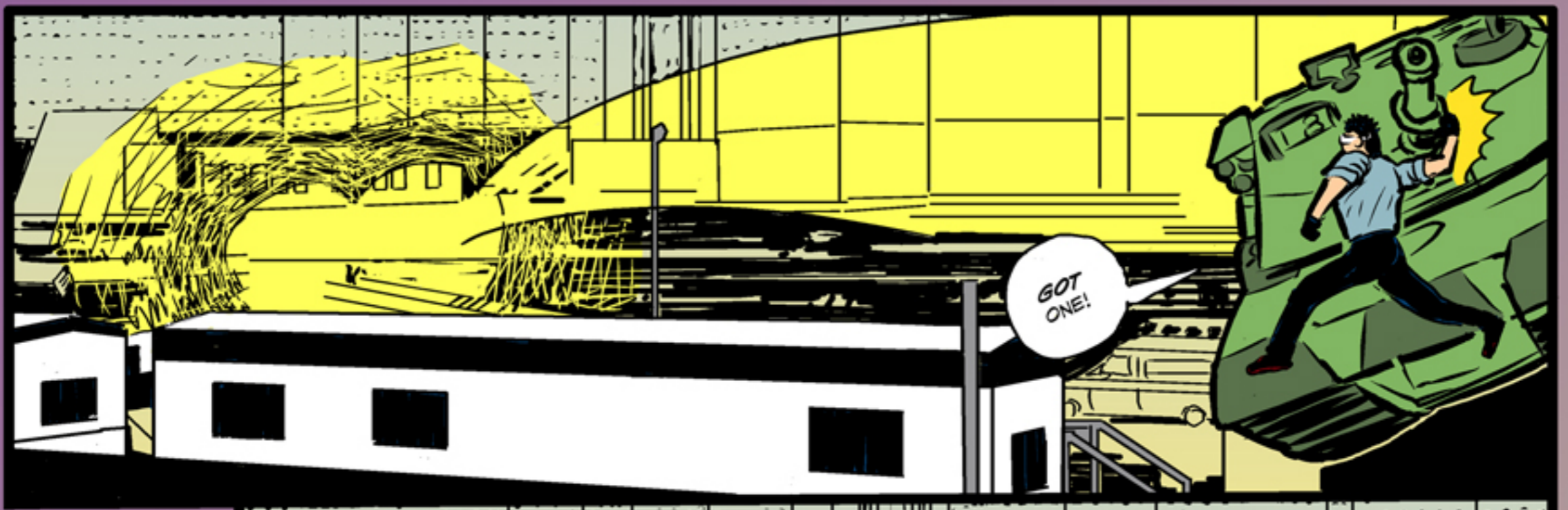


* PIRO IS A REFUGEE FROM THE END OF THE WORLD. IN 4086, HE INITIATED A SUCCESSFUL TIME-JUMP BACK TO THE YEAR 1986, WHERE HE NOW SHARES LEADERSHIP OF THE ACTRON TEAM WITH HIS TWIN BROTHER, THOMAS BRIGHT. SEE 'A BIOGRAPHICAL PORTRAIT' IN THE BACK OF THIS ISSUE.

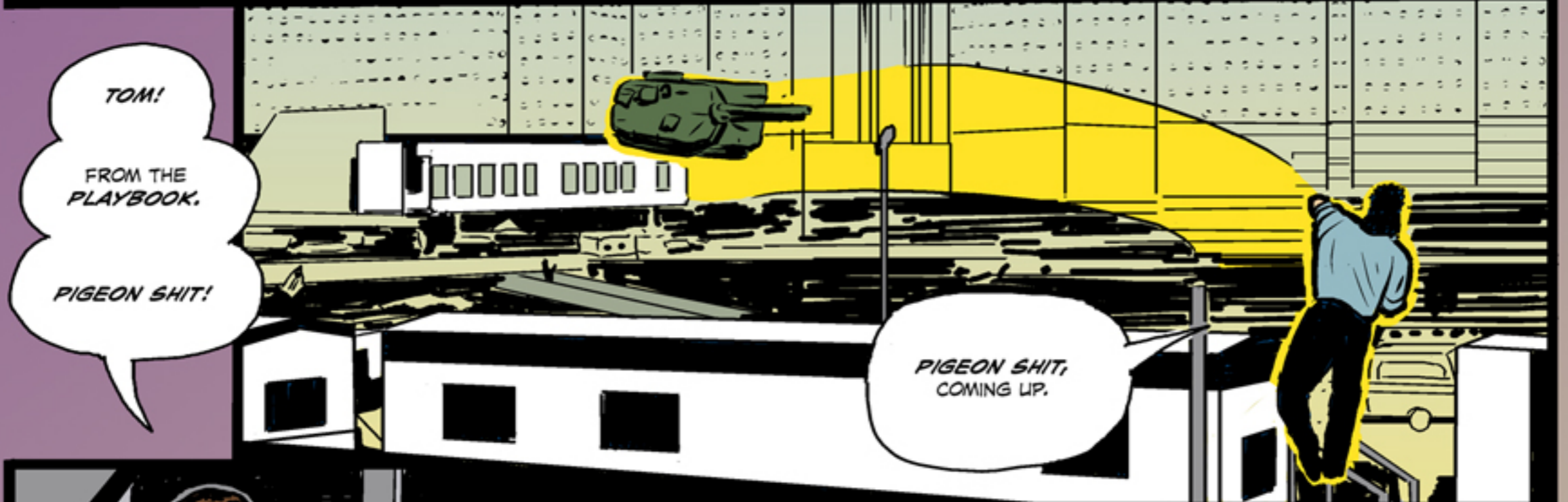






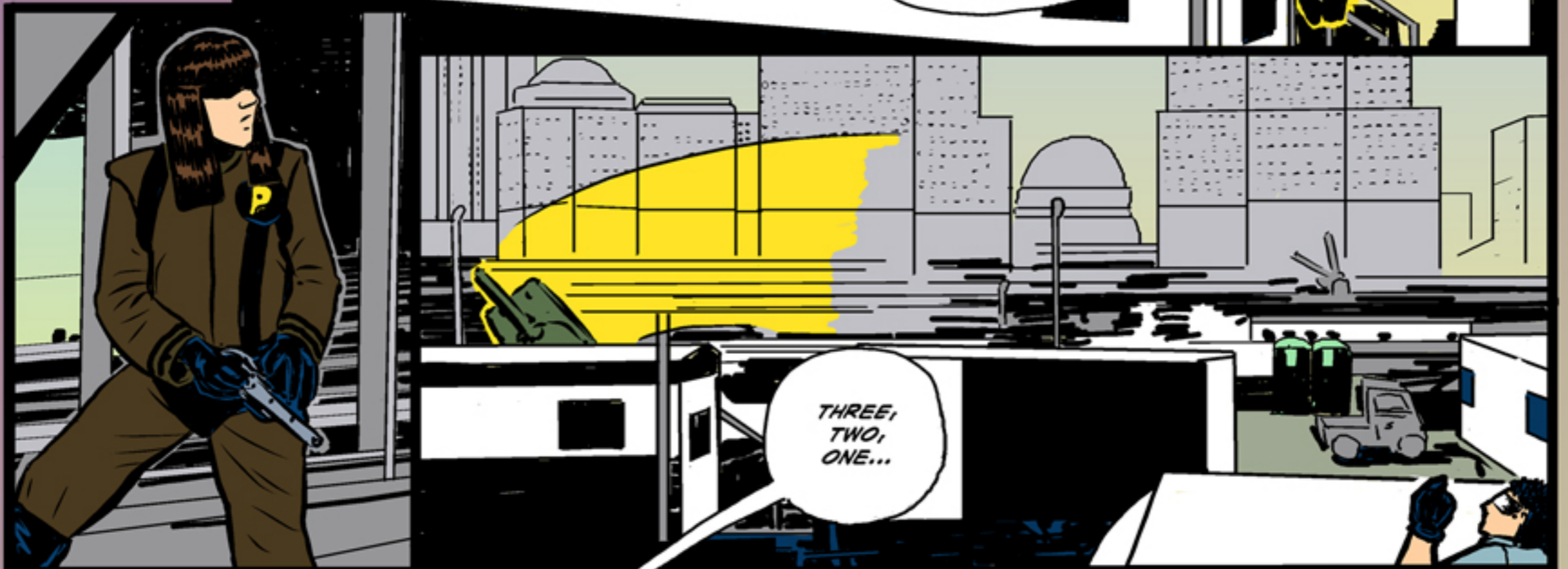


GOT ONE!



TOM!
FROM THE
PLAYBOOK.
PIGEON SHIT!

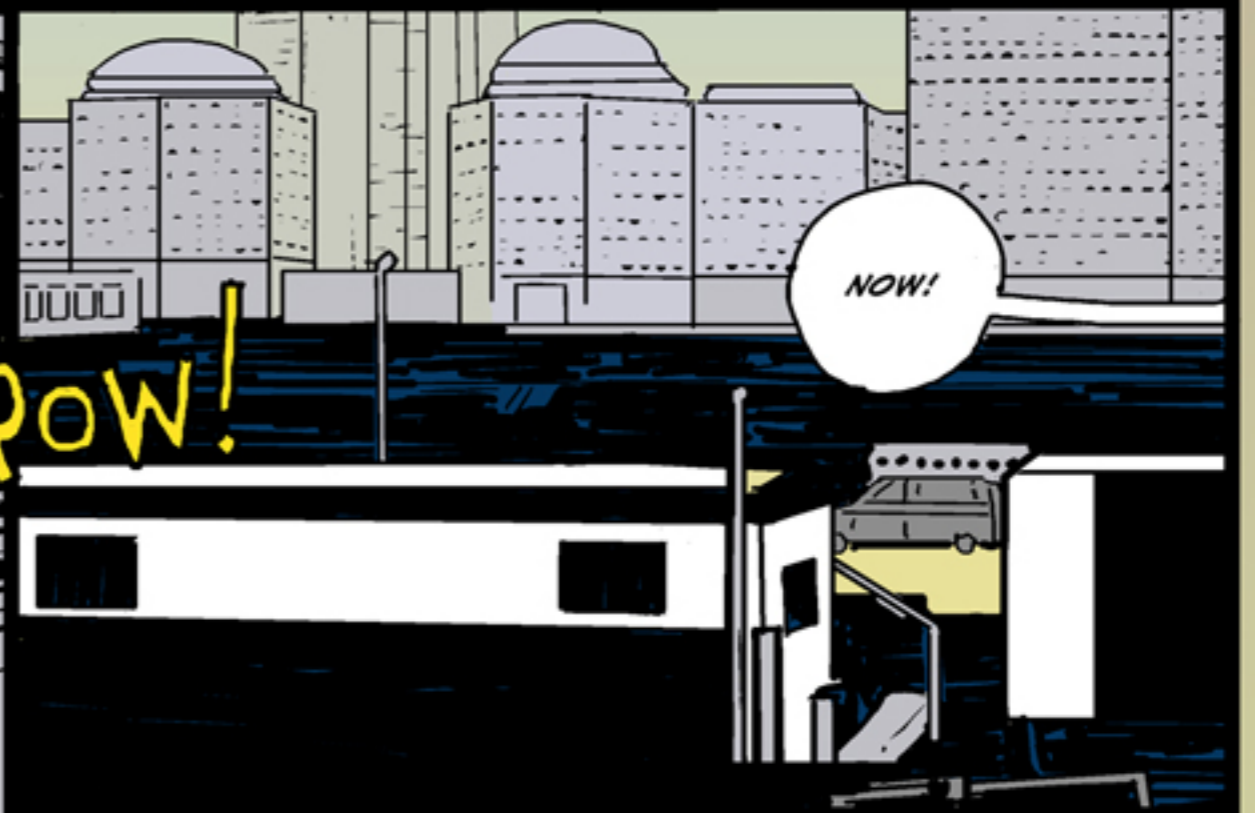
PIGEON SHIT,
COMING UP.



THREE,
TWO,
ONE...



OH
CRAP



NOW!

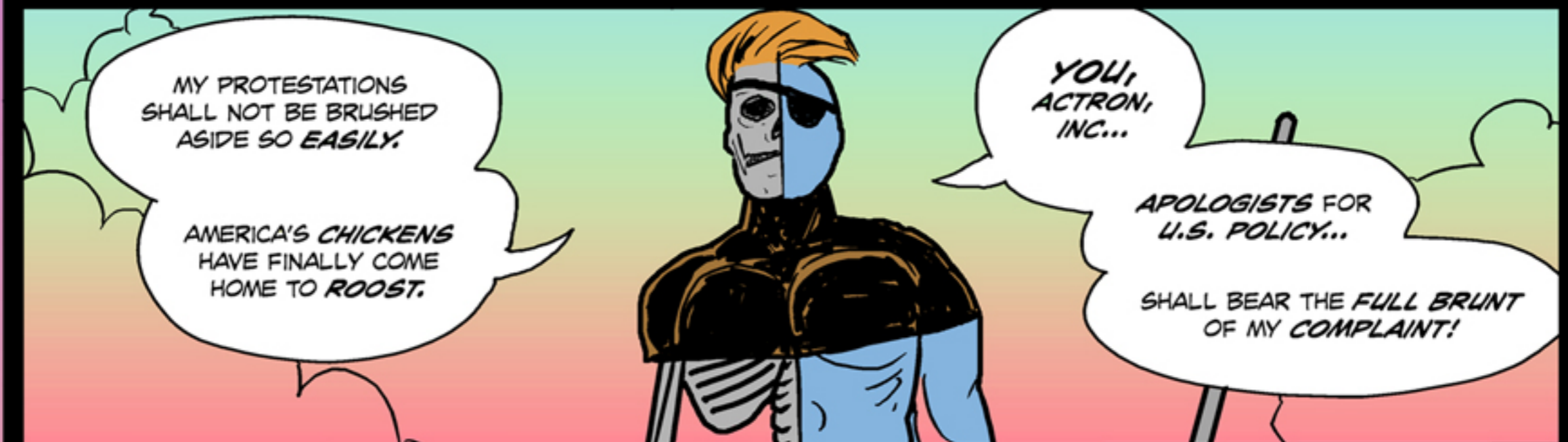


ANOTHER FINE
ACTRON, INC.
PRODUCTION!





RIDICULOUS.

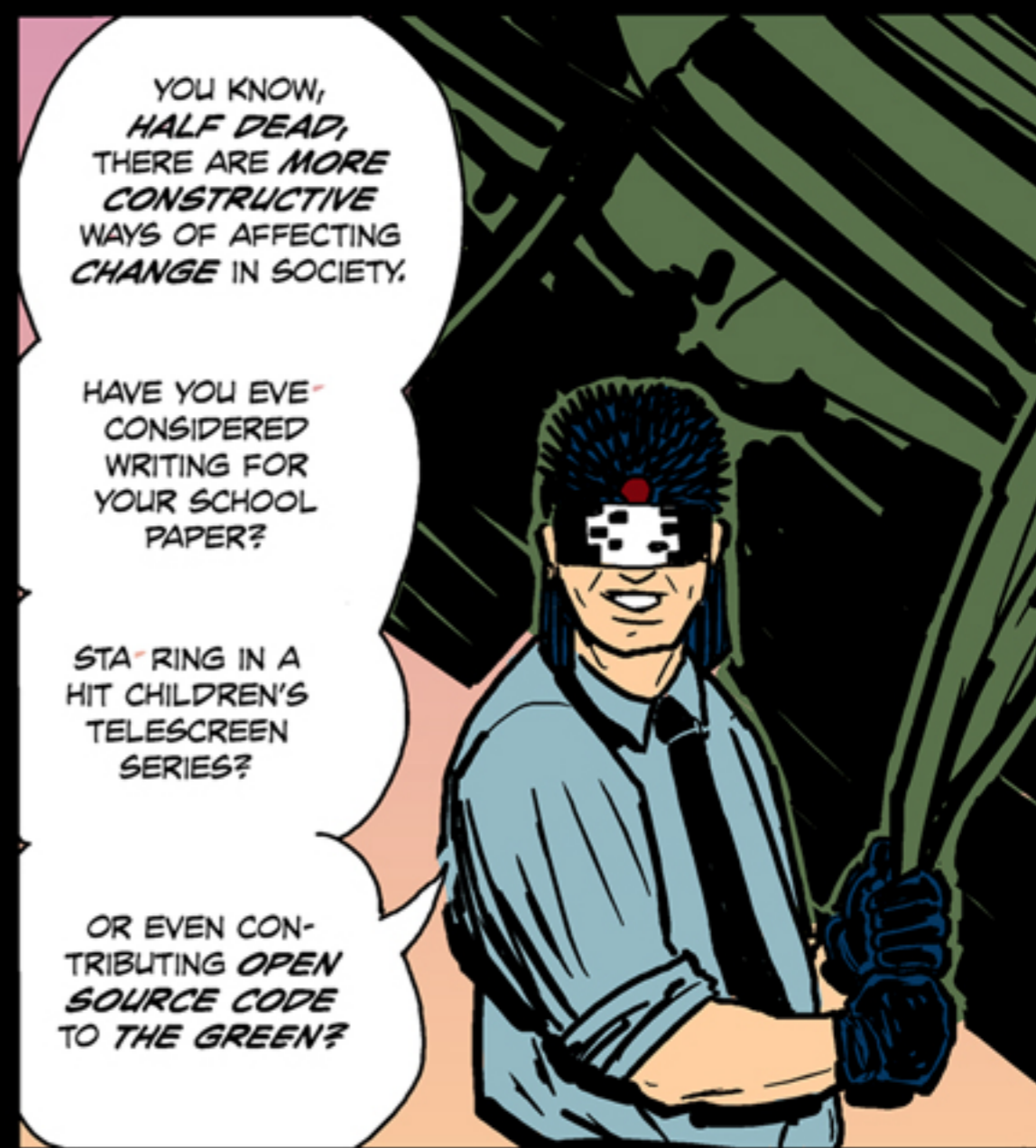


MY PROTESTATIONS SHALL NOT BE BRUSHED ASIDE SO EASILY.
AMERICA'S CHICKENS HAVE FINALLY COME HOME TO ROOST.

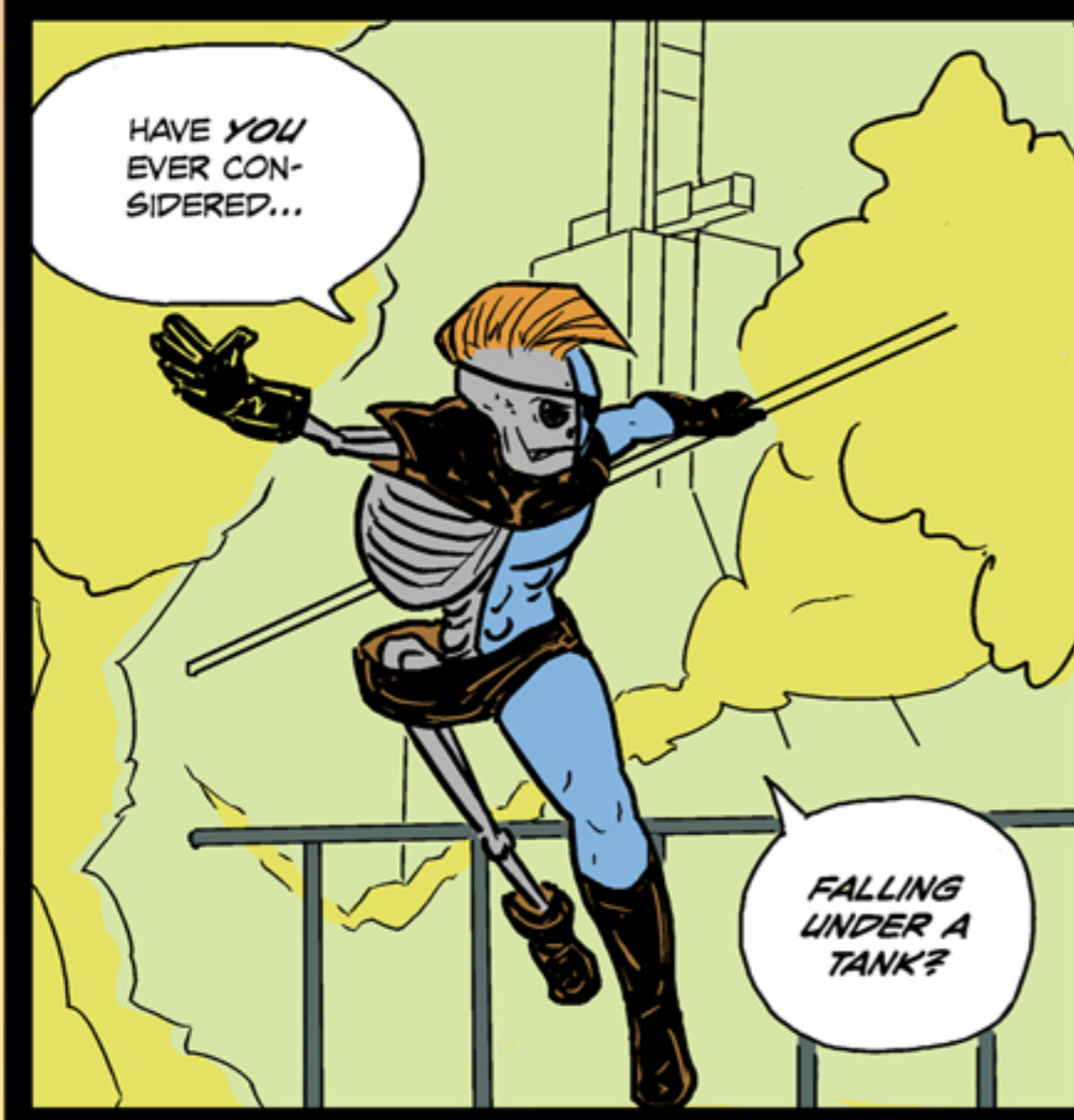
YOU, ACTRON, INC...
APOLOGISTS FOR U.S. POLICY...
SHALL BEAR THE FULL BRUNT OF MY COMPLAINT!



SOUNDS FINE.



YOU KNOW, HALF DEAD, THERE ARE MORE CONSTRUCTIVE WAYS OF AFFECTING CHANGE IN SOCIETY.
HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED WRITING FOR YOUR SCHOOL PAPER?
STARING IN A HIT CHILDREN'S TELESCREEN SERIES?
OR EVEN CONTRIBUTING OPEN SOURCE CODE TO THE GREEN?



HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED...

FALLING UNDER A TANK?



ACTUALLY NO.



HALF/DEAD!

WHAT PRECISELY *IS* THE STORY WITH ALL THESE TANKS?

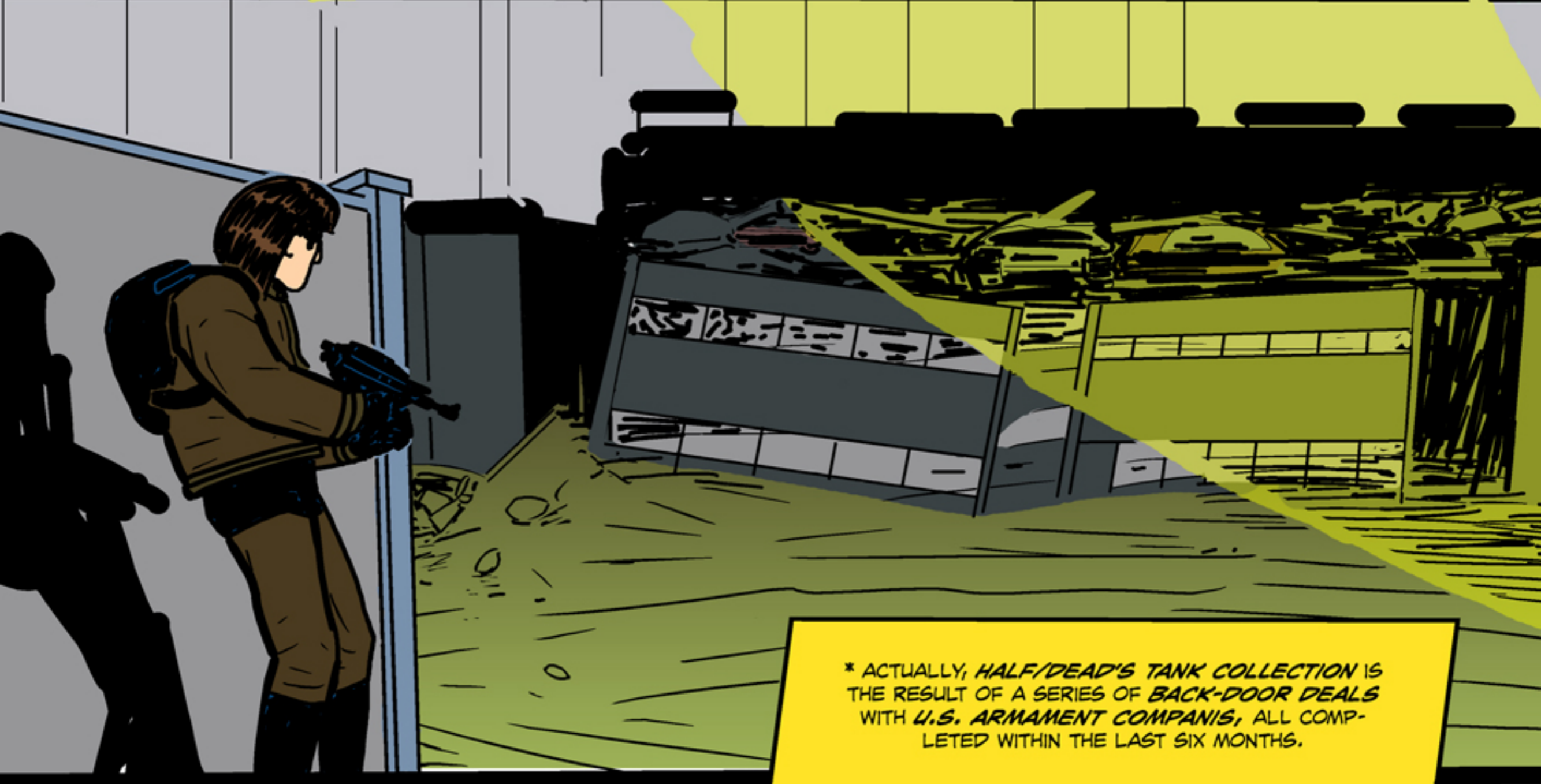
I'VE COLLECTED THEM FROM YOUR WARS OF OPPORTUNITY.*

SOUNDS LIKE A LOT OF WORK!

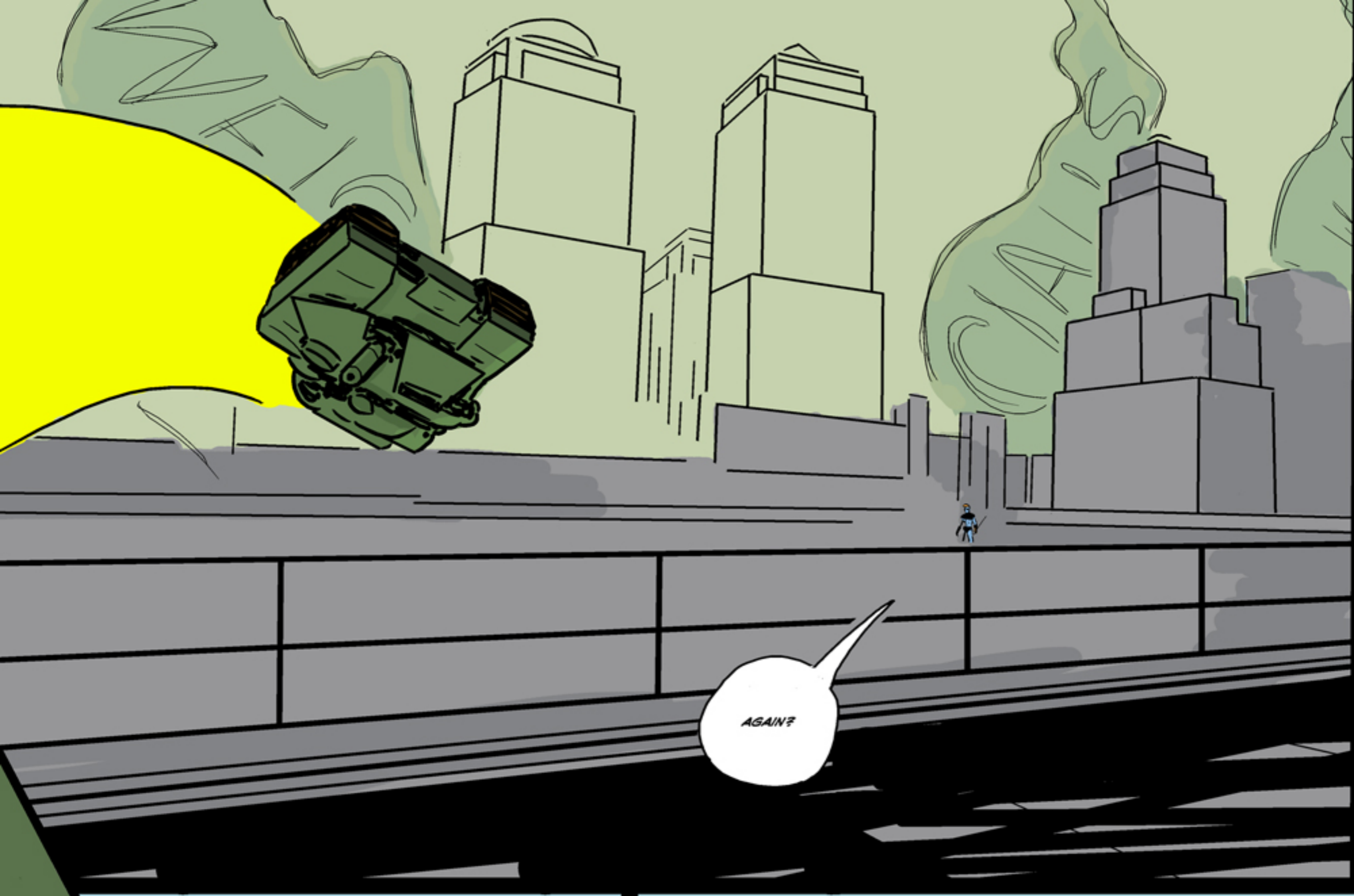


TOM!

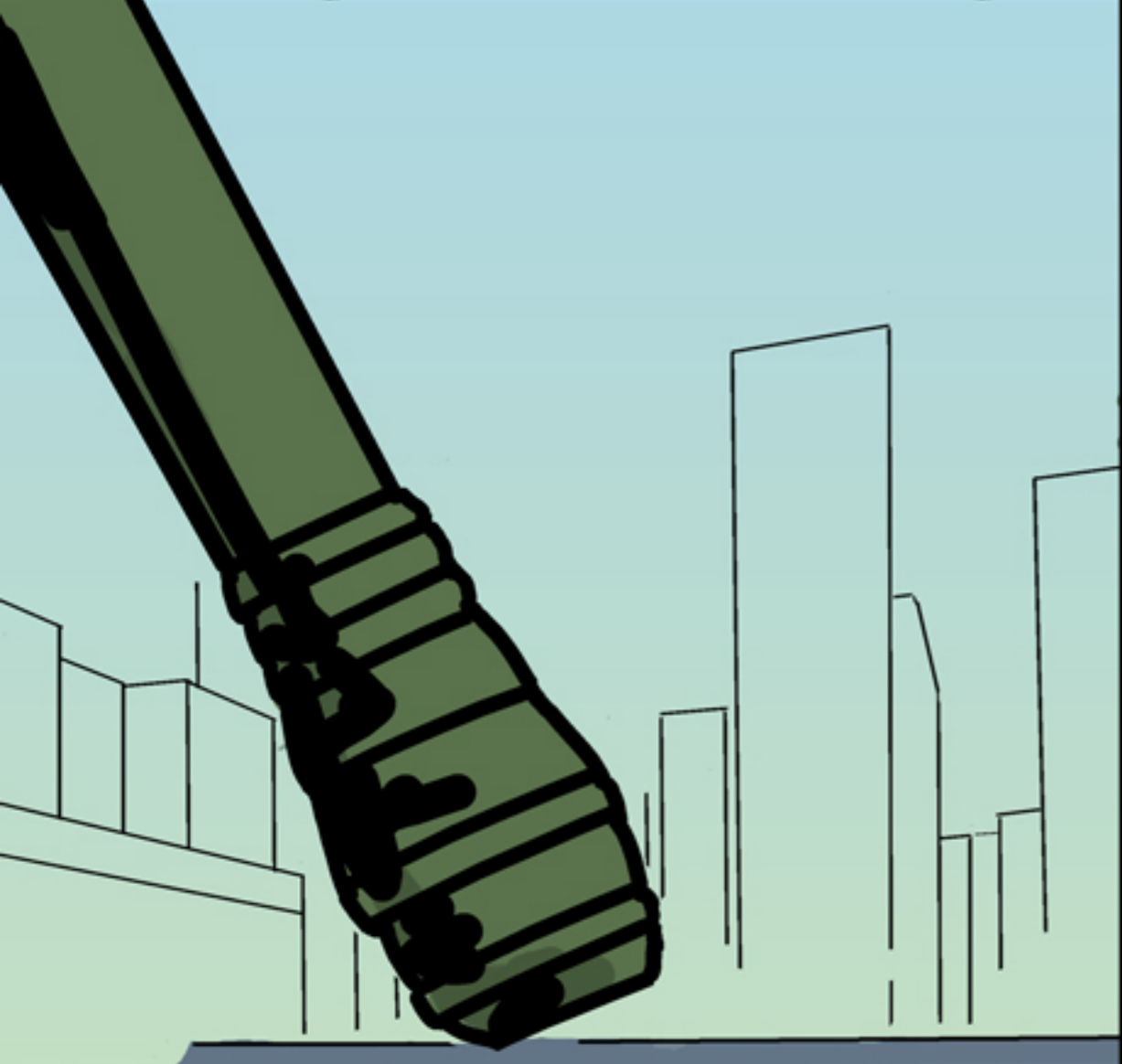
PIGEON SHIT REDUX!



* ACTUALLY, HALF/DEAD'S TANK COLLECTION IS THE RESULT OF A SERIES OF BACK-DOOR DEALS WITH U.S. ARMAMENT COMPANIS, ALL COMPLETED WITHIN THE LAST SIX MONTHS.



AGAIN?



LET'S BOOK!



COMING UP!



THE DEFINITION OF INSANITY IS DOING THE SAME THING OVER AND OVER AND EXPECTING DIFFERENT RESULTS.



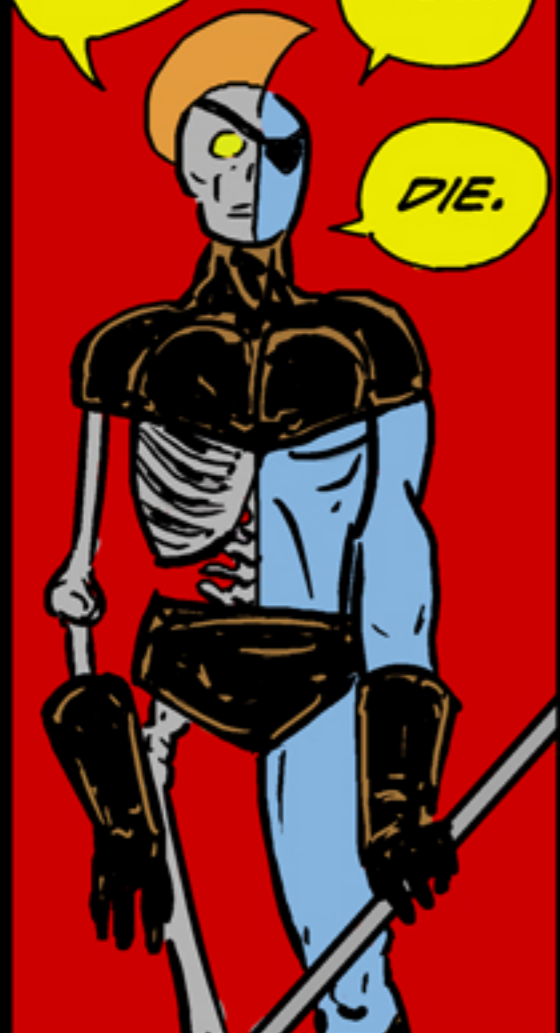
SO, LET'S SEE:
HAVE YOU ACHIEVED DIFFERENT RESULTS?



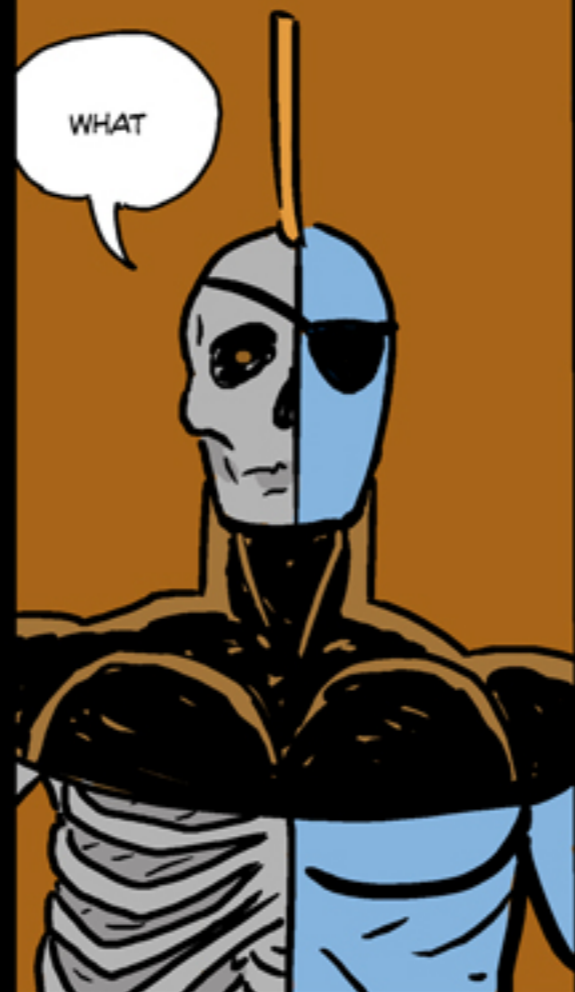
HM...
I SEEM TO STILL BE IN WORKING ORDER...



NOW.
YOU.
DIE.



WHAT



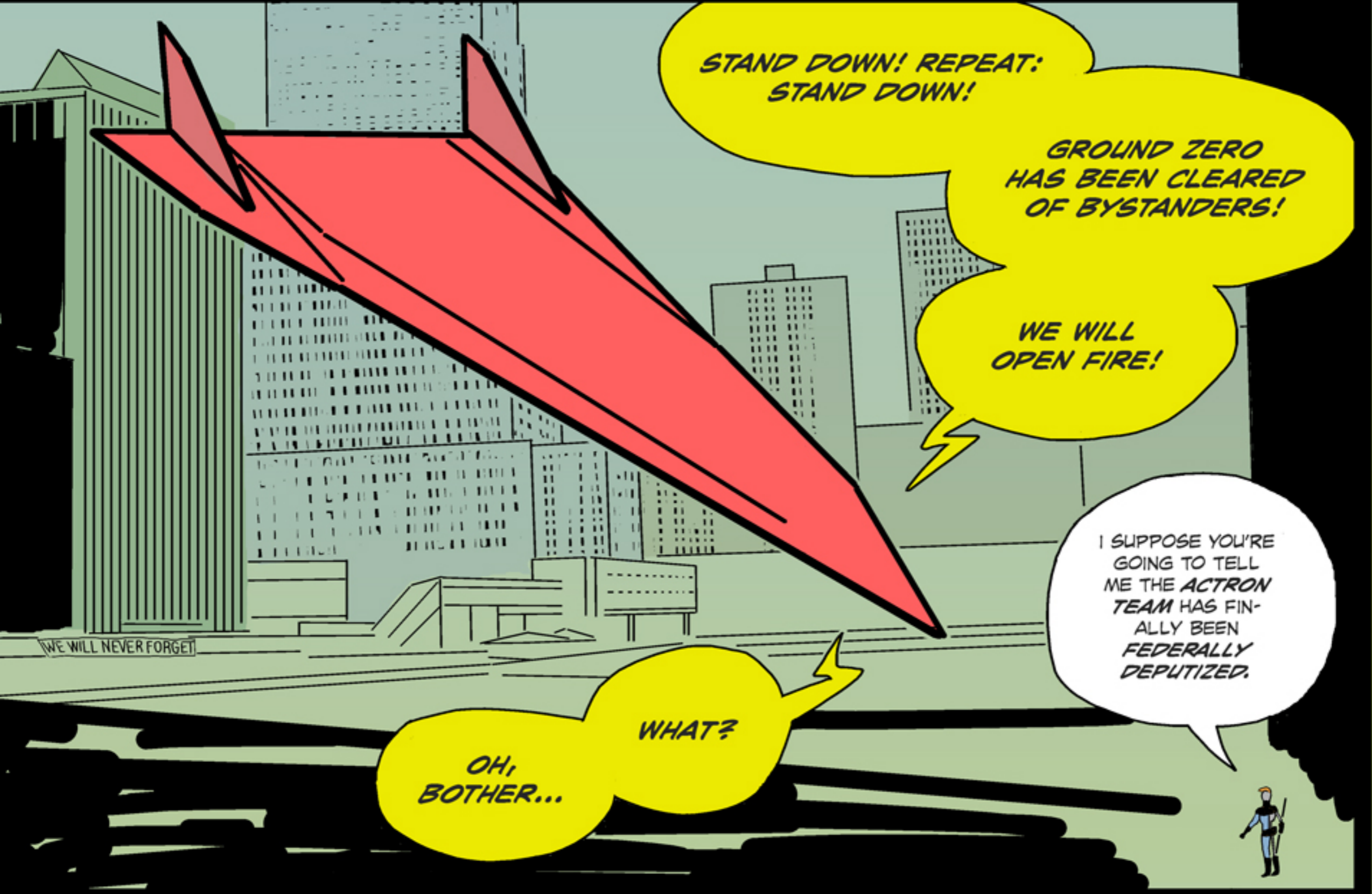


HALF/DEAD!

**DISABLE YOUR
TANKS AND
POWER DOWN
ALL WEAPONS!**

**WE WILL NOT
ASK TWICE!**

!



**STAND DOWN! REPEAT:
STAND DOWN!**

**GROUND ZERO
HAS BEEN CLEARED
OF BYSTANDERS!**

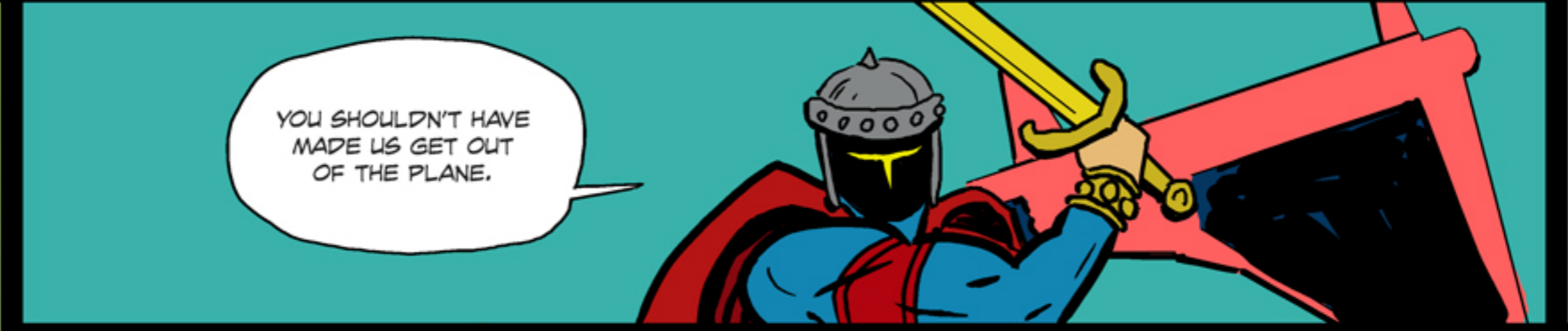
**WE WILL
OPEN FIRE!**

I SUPPOSE YOU'RE
GOING TO TELL
ME THE **ACTRON
TEAM** HAS FIN-
ALLY BEEN
**FEDERALLY
DEPUTIZED.**

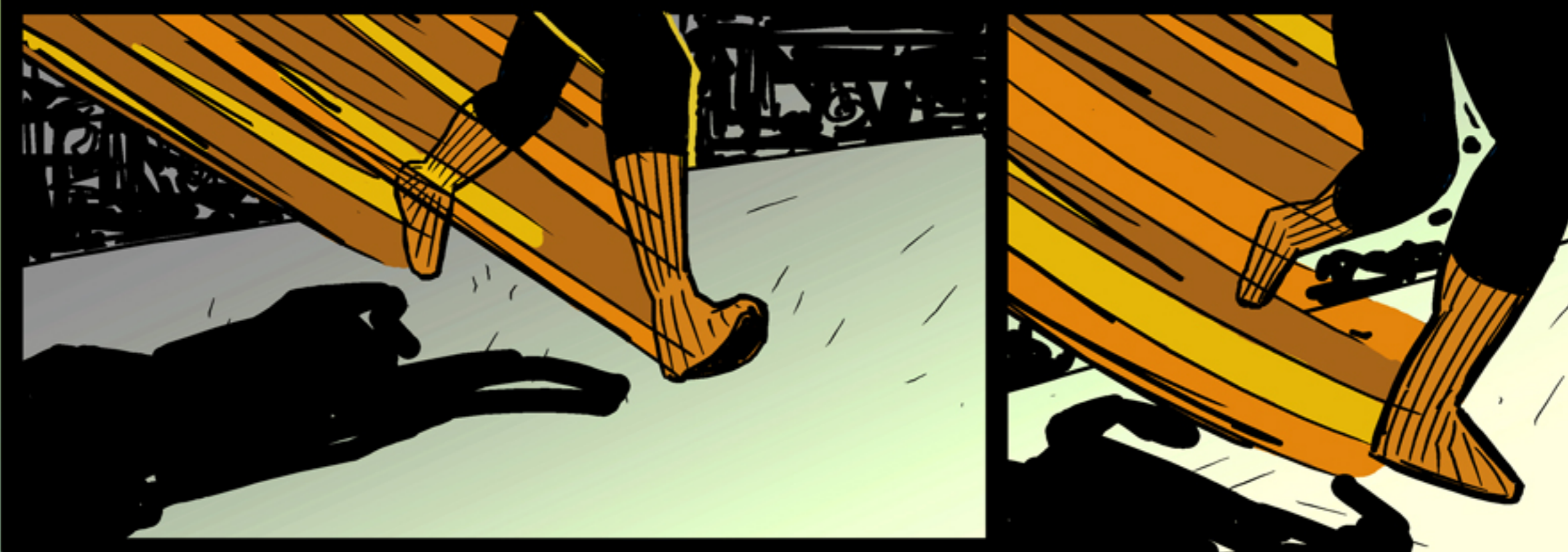
**OH,
BOTHER...**

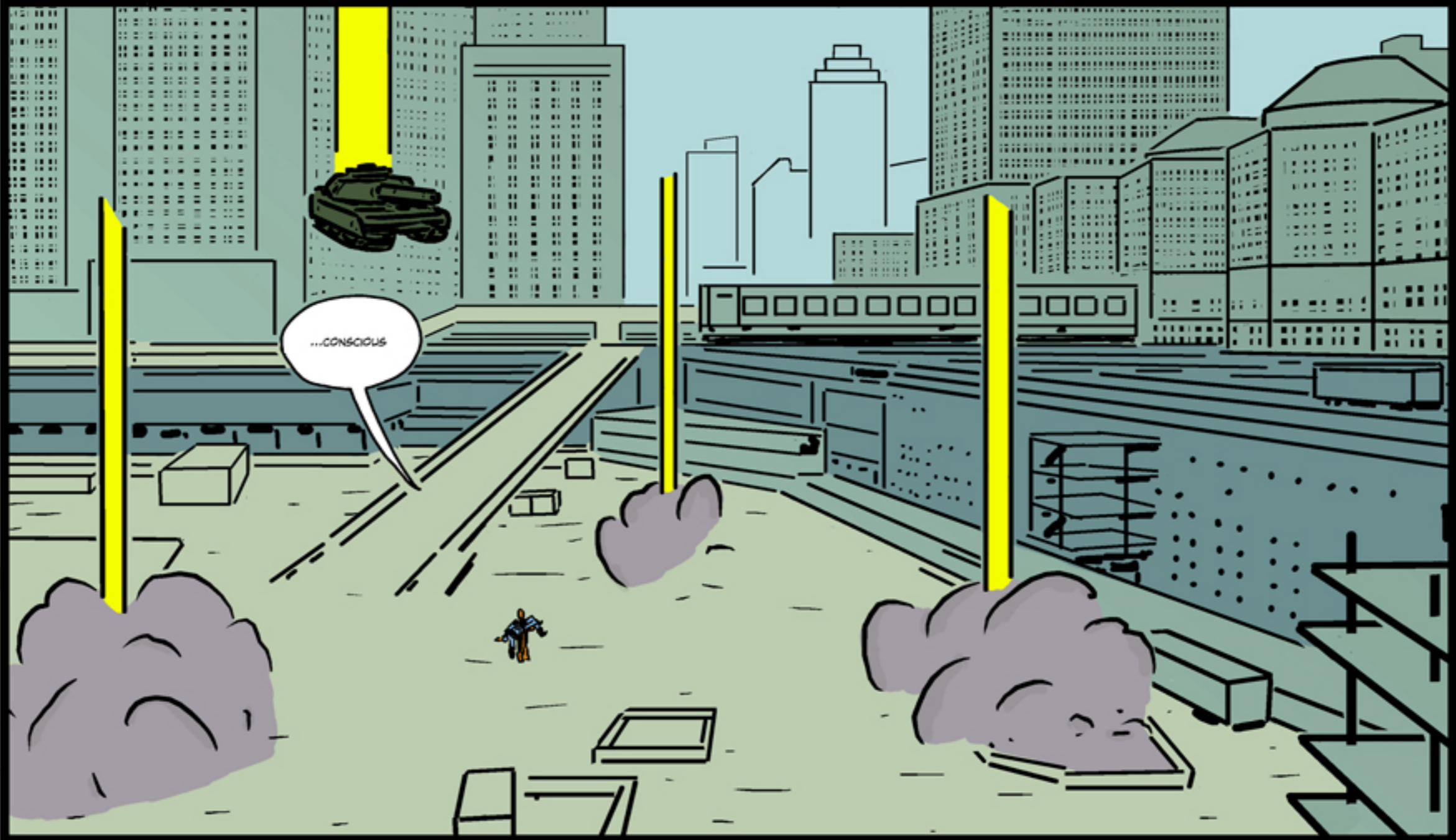
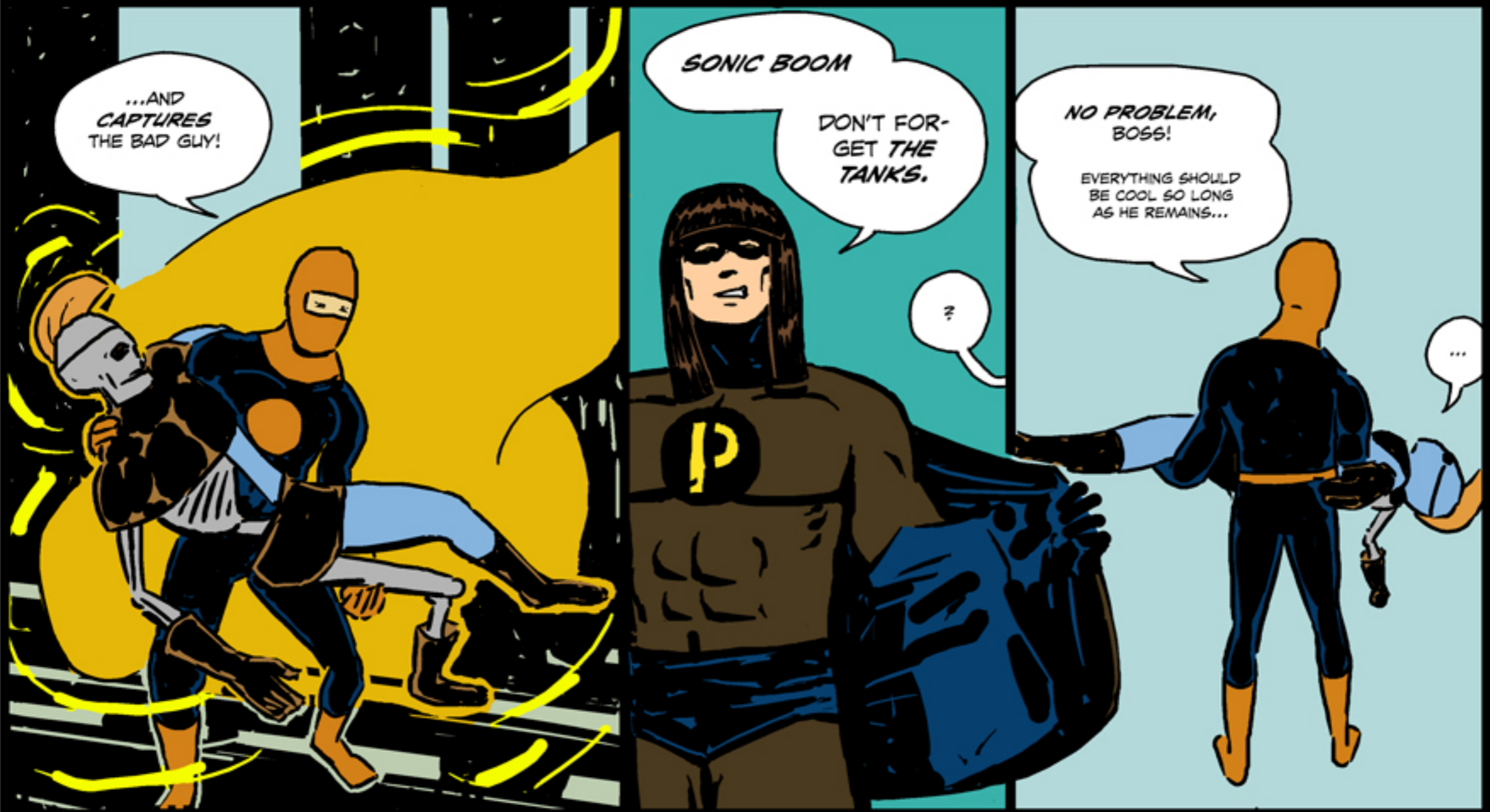
WHAT?

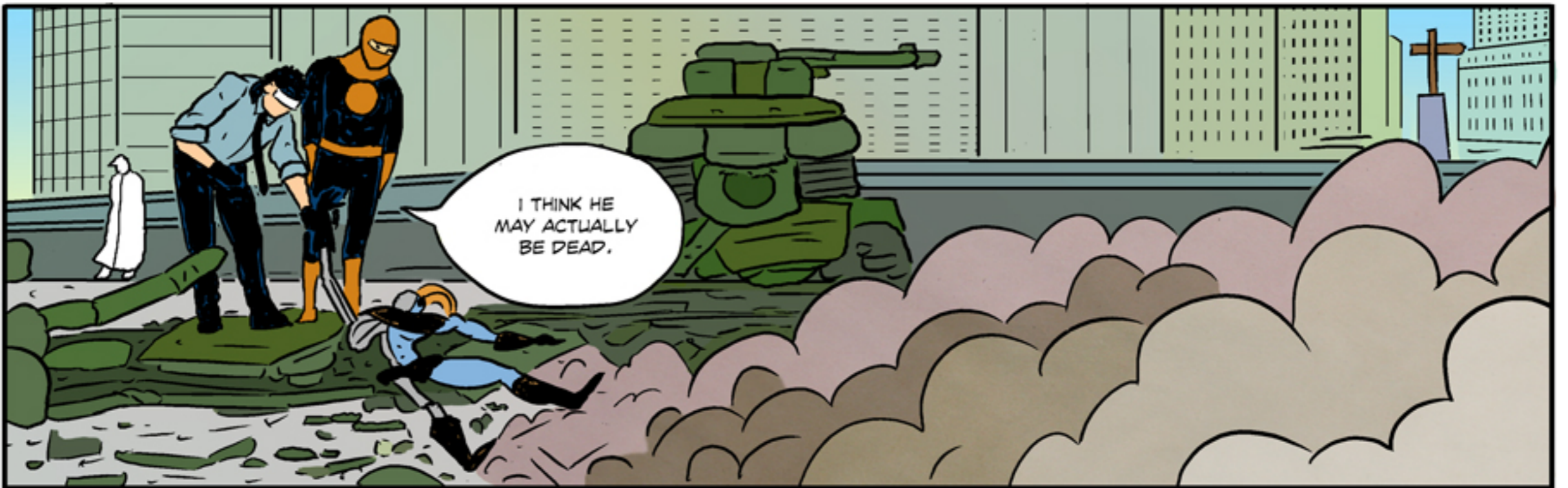
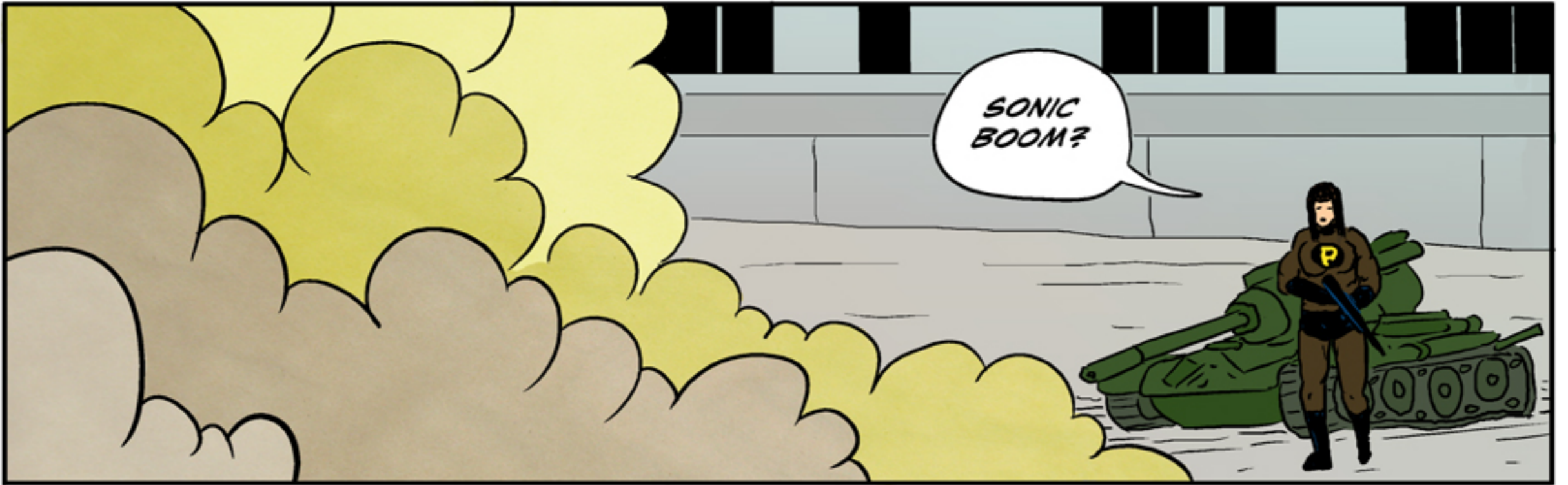
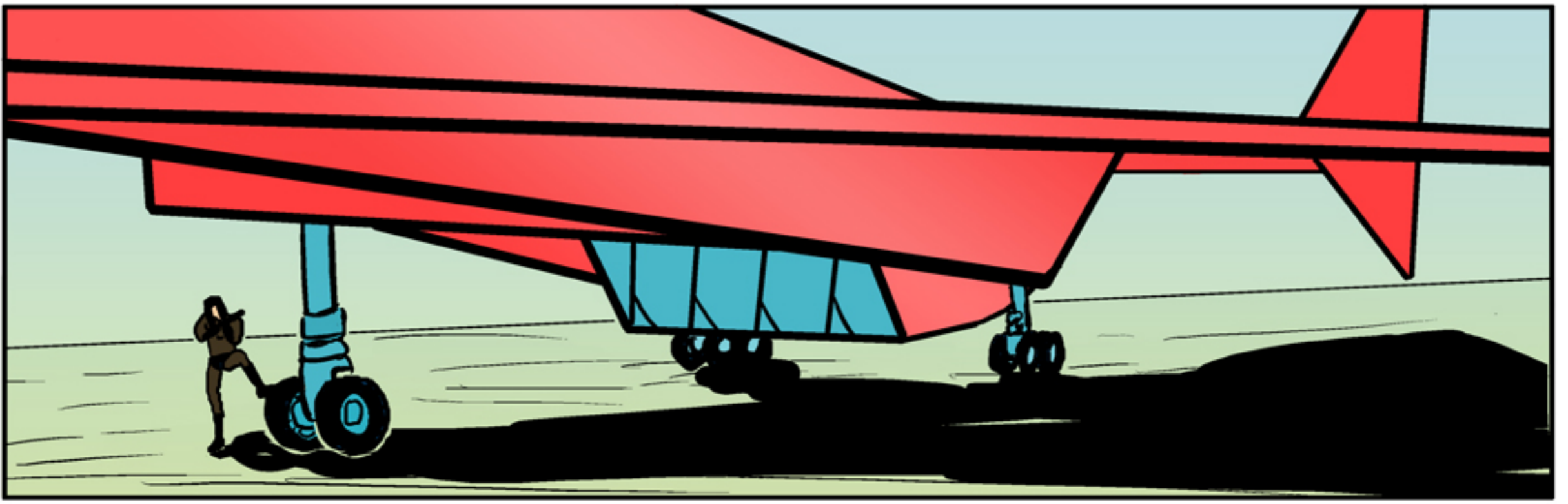
WE WILL NEVER FORGET

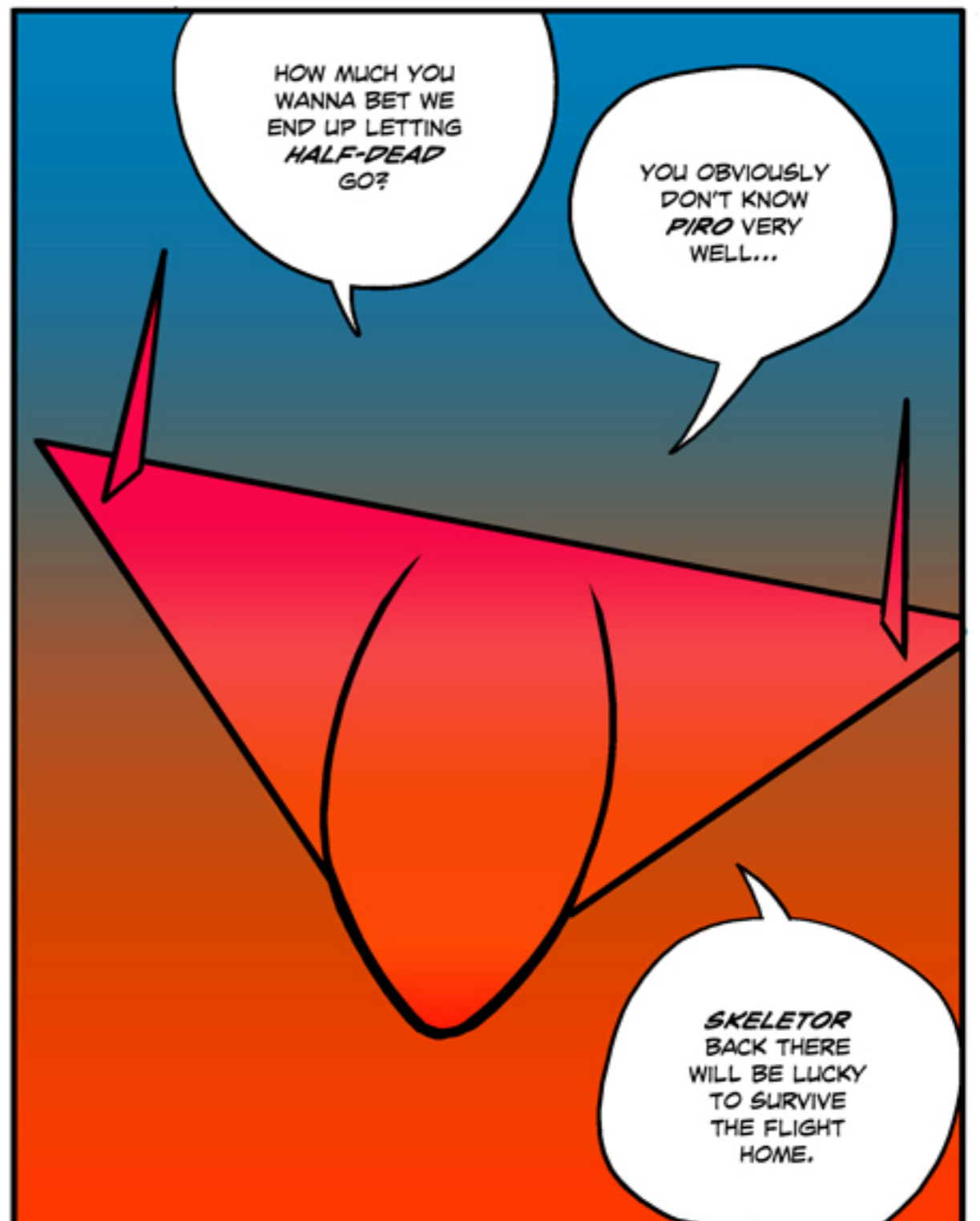
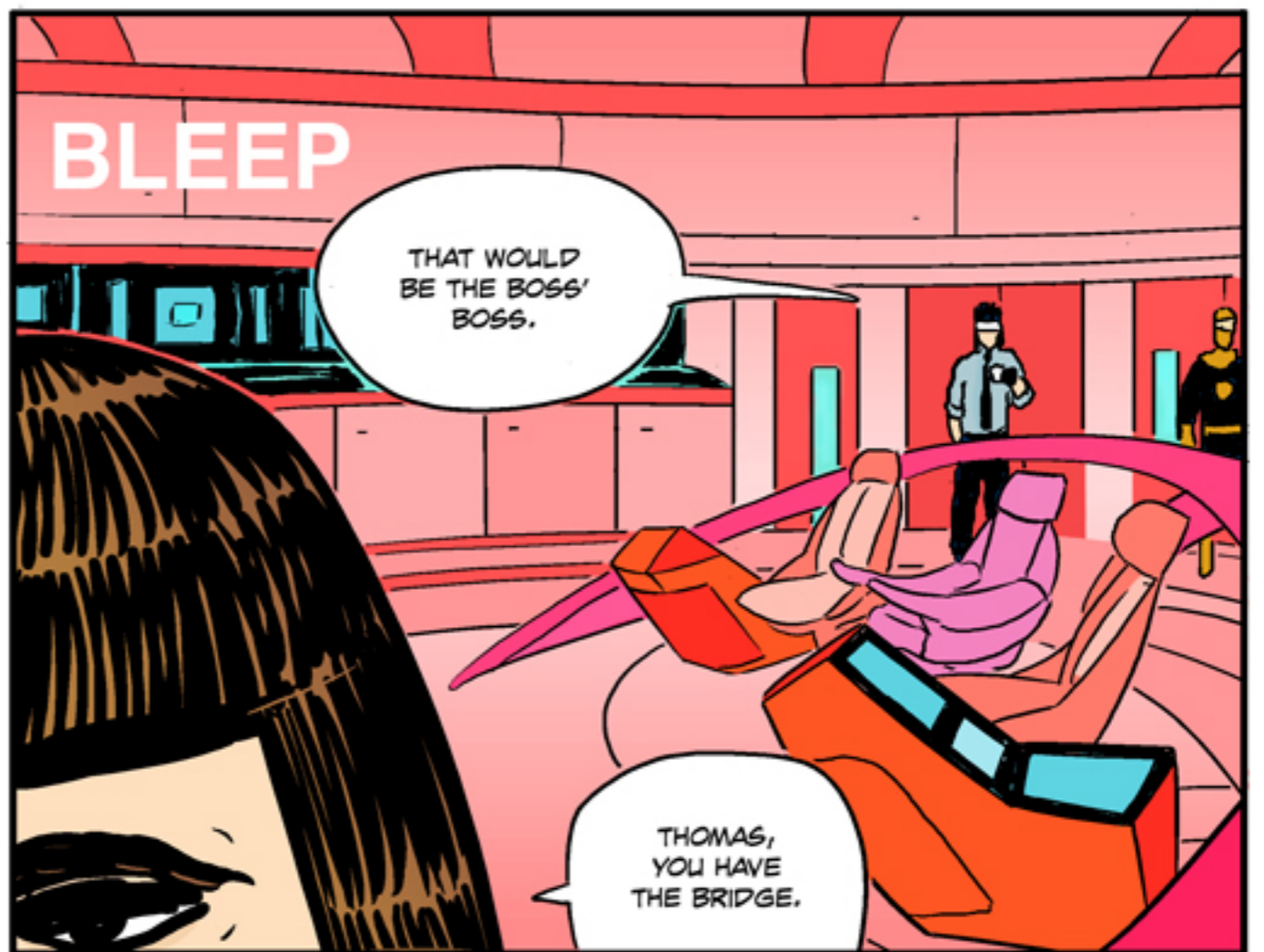
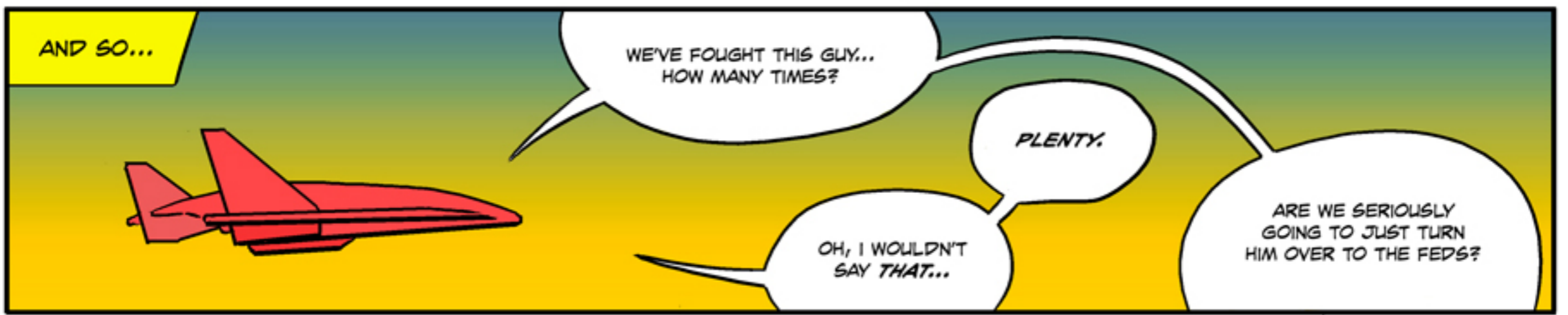


YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE
MADE US GET OUT
OF THE PLANE.









ADVERTISEMENT









THIS IS HAPPENING.



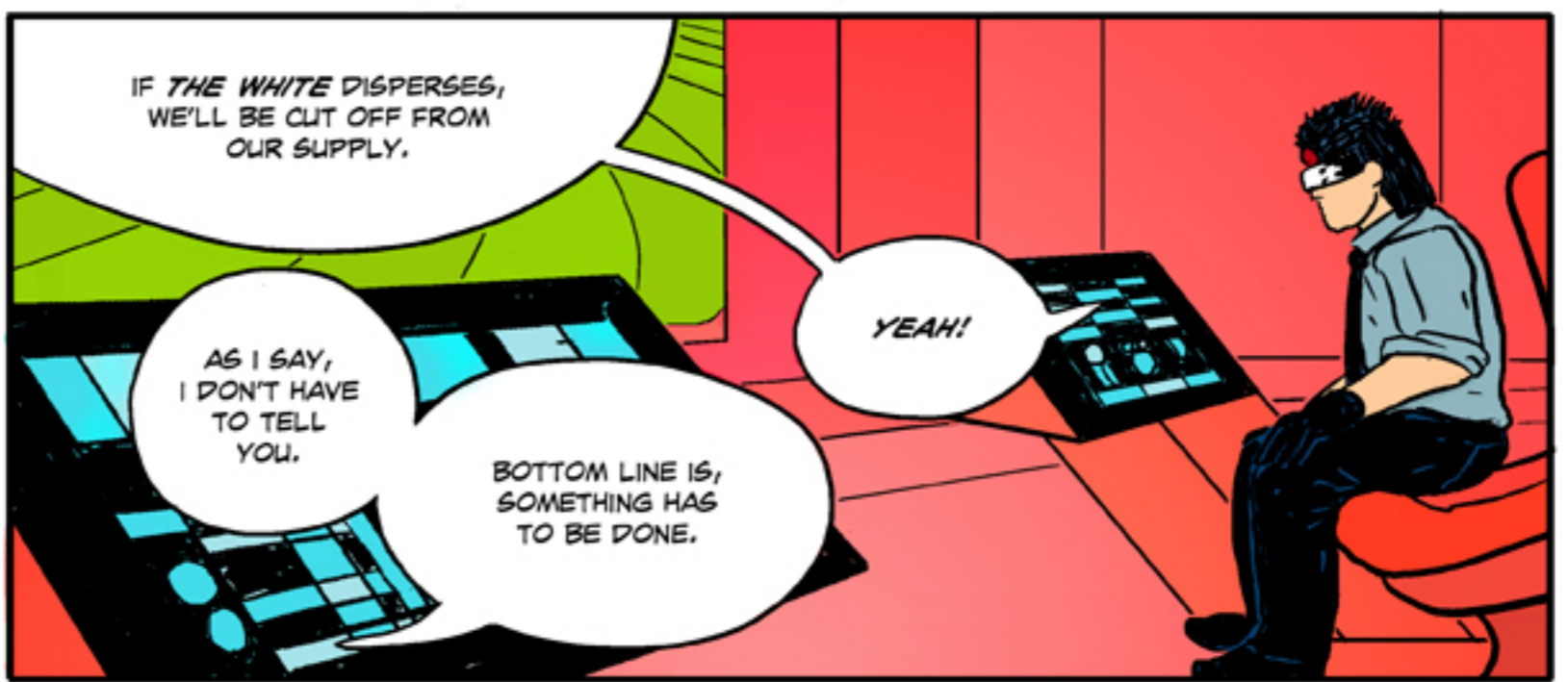
PLINTH MOLD TELLS ME THIS IS THE WHITE DISINTEGRATING.

COCAINE IS LEAKING BETWEEN THE DIMENSIONS.*

*SEE 10CT1993. -ED



I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU WHAT THIS COULD MEAN FOR OUR PROFIT MARGINS.



IF THE WHITE DISPERSES, WE'LL BE CUT OFF FROM OUR SUPPLY.

AS I SAY, I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU.

BOTTOM LINE IS, SOMETHING HAS TO BE DONE.

YEAH!



OBVIOUSLY, WE'RE WITH YOU, BOSS, BUT WHAT CAN WE DO?



WHAT WE ALWAYS DO, TOM.

WE'RE GOING BACK TO H.Q.

NEXT: THEIR STRUGGLE

ACTRON

Real Name: Thomas A. Bright, Jr.

Occupation: Adventurer (comics)

Identity/Class: Human

Legal status: citizen of the United States with no criminal record

Aliases: Tom, Tommy, TAB2

Marital status: Married

Known relatives: Eva Bright (wife), Piro (brother), Violet Bright (sister), Thomas Bright, Sr. (father), Margaret Bright (mother)

Group affiliation: Actron Team

Base of operations: Chrysler Building, New York City

First appearance: ACTRON vol. 1, #1 (1986)

Other appearances: ACTRON vol. 1, #1-3 (1986-1987); ACTRON vol. 2, #4-10 (1988-1989); ACTRON GRAPHIC NOVEL (1988); ACTRON vol. 3, #1-6 (1990), HOUSE OF HERESY #1 (1994); ACTRON CITY vol. 1 (1998)

History: THOMAS BRIGHT's parents both operated as agents of the United States Government throughout the 1950s and 1960s. MARGARET BRIGHT's work in a covert radiology lab is thought to have contributed to the development of superhuman abilities in all three of the BRIGHT children. THOMAS was inducted into the youth C.I.A. training program in August, 1968, and graduated the following September; shattering all previous records for academic progress. In spite of his remarkable progress, he never became an active field agent, preferring instead to enter the private sector. Since the early 1980s, THOMAS has served as leader of the ACTRON TEAM, operating out of the Chrysler Building, New York City.

Height: 6' 1"

Weight: 190 lbs

Eyes: Blue

Hair: Black

Known superhuman powers: Flight, invulnerability, class 100 strength

Weapons: The ACTRON armor consists of a carbon nanofiber outer shell, an array of advanced parical beam weaponry and a unique biomechanical control interface that links with THOMAS' visor.

Accessories: THOMAS wears a custom visor attachment which serves as a real-time personal interface to THE GREEN.



PIRO

Real Name: Piotr

Occupation: Freelance agent, pirate

Identity/Class: Human

Legal status: Citizen of the United States with no criminal record

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: Actron (brother), Eva Bright, (sister-in-law)

Group affiliation: Actron Team, C.I.A.

Base of operations: The Chrysler Building, New York City; The Ship

First appearance: ACTRON vol. 1, #3

Other appearances: ACTRON vol. 2, #4-10 (1988-1989); ACTRON GRAPHIC NOVEL (1988); ACTRON vol. 3, #1-6 (1990), HOUSE OF HERESY #1 (1994); ACTRON CITY vol. 1 (1998)

History: PIRO is a refugee from the end of the world. In 4086, he initiated a successful time-jump back to the year 1986, where he now shares leadership of the ACTRON team with his twin brother, THOMAS BRIGHT. Prior to his time-jump, PIRO served as chief security officer for PLINTH MOLD INDUSTRIES. As early as 1968, PIRO is known to have been a C.I.A. asset in charge of training new recruits in hand-to-hand combat. By the late 1970s he was assigned to monitor the emerging super-powered population of New York City. His current operational status in C.I.A. is not known at this time.

Height: 6' 1"

Weight: 190 lbs

Eyes: Brown

Hair: Brown

Known superhuman powers: Photographic reflexes

Weapons: PIRO has received extensive training in all NATO and WARSAW Pact small arms. He also retains unexplained access to state-of-the art particle beam weaponry, presumably procured through the United States government. ■



SUPER-SONIC

Real Name: John W. Ratcliff

Occupation: Poet, enforcer

Identity/Class: Human

Legal status: citizen of the United States with no criminal record

Aliases: John Alcmena (pseudonym)

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: Hercules (ancestor)

Group affiliation: ACTRON, INC., Greek Pantheon

Base of operations: The Chrysler Building, New York City

First appearance: ACTRON vol. 1, #1 (1986)

Other appearances: ACTRON vol. 1, #2-3 (1986-1987); ACTRON vol. 2, #4-10 (1988-1989); ACTRON GRAPHIC NOVEL (1988); ACTRON vol. 3, #1-6 (1990), HOUSE OF HERESY #1 (1994); ACTRON CITY vol. 1 (1998)

History: Little is known about SUPER-SONIC's background, apart from his apparent status as a descendant of the Greek Pantheon. He was recruited into the ACTRON TEAM by PIRO while living as a resident poet in Venice, Italy.

Comments: JOHN ALCMENA's poetry in the Italian language has garnered numerous awards in the European literary press. His presence on the ACTRON TEAM has been credited with the group's immense popularity with the Italian media.

Height: 6' 4"

Weight: 360 lbs

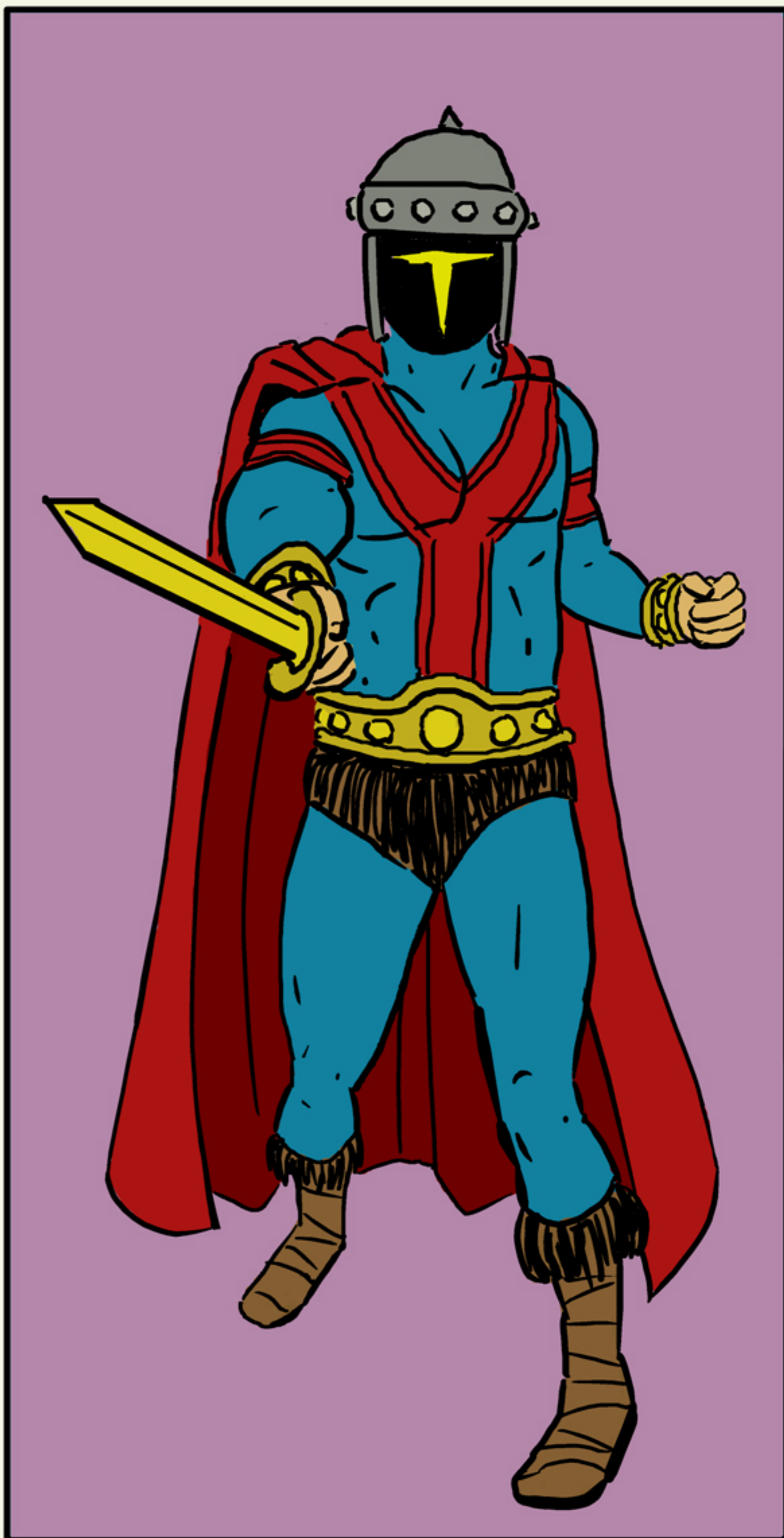
Eyes: Green

Hair: Brown

Known superhuman powers: Invulnerability, Class 100 strength

Weapons: SUPER-SONIC wields a mystical sword of solid gold, which is sheathed in an unknown substance that renders it one of the most durable objects known to man. On occasion he has used the sword to slice through industrial steel with little evident difficulty.

Accessories: SUPER-SONIC's solid gold belt and gauntlets are thought to be somehow connected to his invulnerability and strength. His left gauntlet contains a digital watch beneath one of its jewel facings.



HALF/DEAD

Real Name: Dr. Fred Drift

Occupation: Terrorist, robotics engineer

Identity/Class: Human

Legal status: citizen of the United States with a criminal record

Aliases: None known

Marital status: Single

Known relatives: Father (U.S. military, killed in action)

Group affiliation: ACLU, Skeptic Society, DeMolay International

Base of operations: New York City, Baghdad, Riker's Island

First appearance: ACTRON vol. 3, #5 (1990)

Other appearances: ACTRON vol. 3, #6 (1990)

History: DR. FRED DRIFT is the son of a Special Forces veteran, and a survivor of the 9/11 attacks of 1981. Abandoned by overburdened rescue workers, the trauma of the event triggered his latent telekinetic abilities, which he leveraged to dig himself out of the rubble. DRIFT's father went on to distinguish himself in Afghanistan, but did not survive his first tour of duty in Iraq. DRIFT has what one could describe as a chip on his shoulder about American interventionism in the Middle East. Today, a brilliant child in a supremely powerful cyborg body, he routinely causes extensive property damage to the city he calls home.

Comments: HALF/DEAD's intelligence is quite literally off the scale. Within two years of his father's death, DRIFT had completed his PhD in advanced robotics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In a short period of time he accepted a position as MIT's youngest ever tenured professor. It is unknown if campus politics played a role in his eventual adoption of the HALF/DEAD alter-ego.

Height: 5' 11"

Weight: 250 lbs

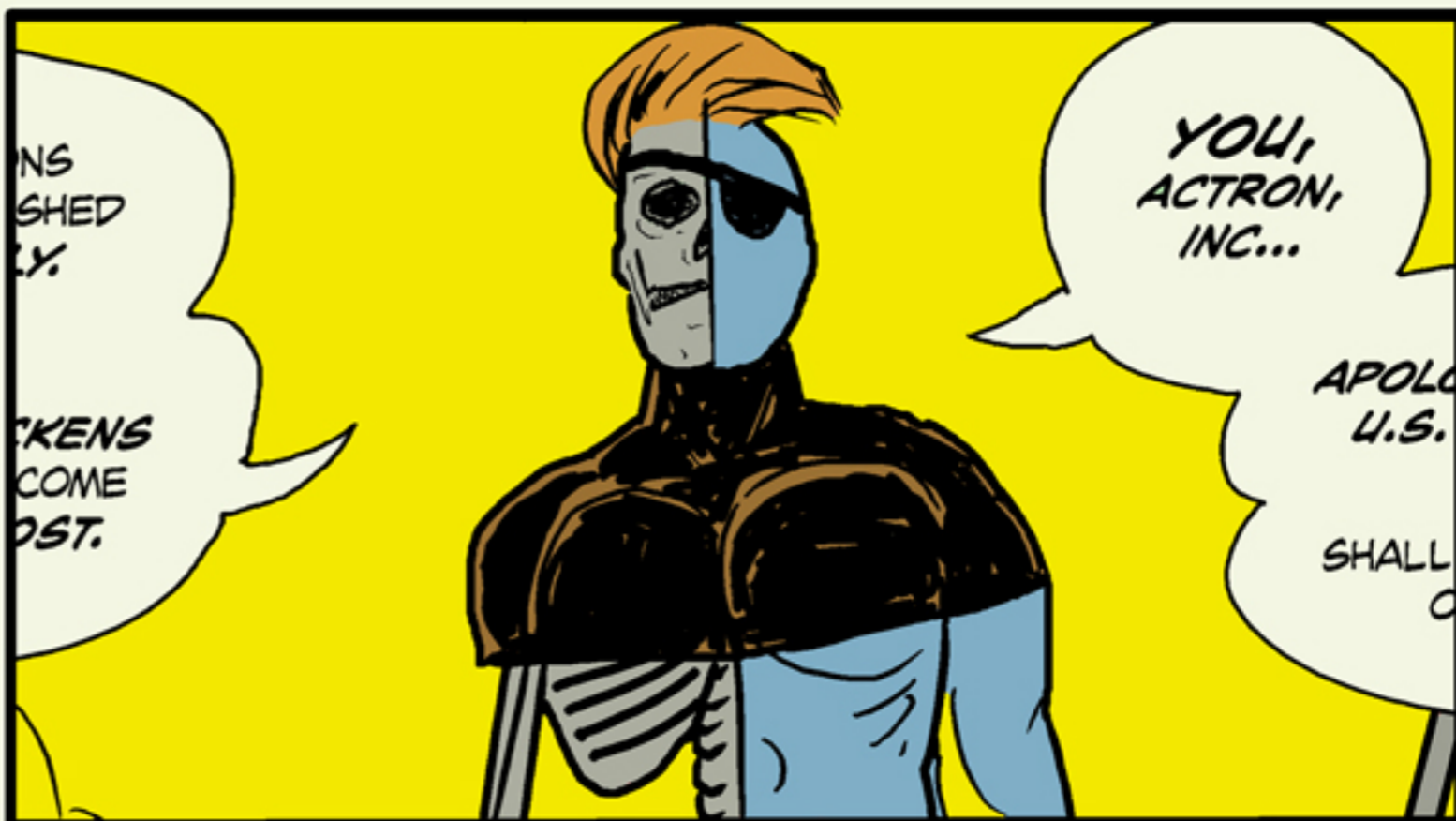
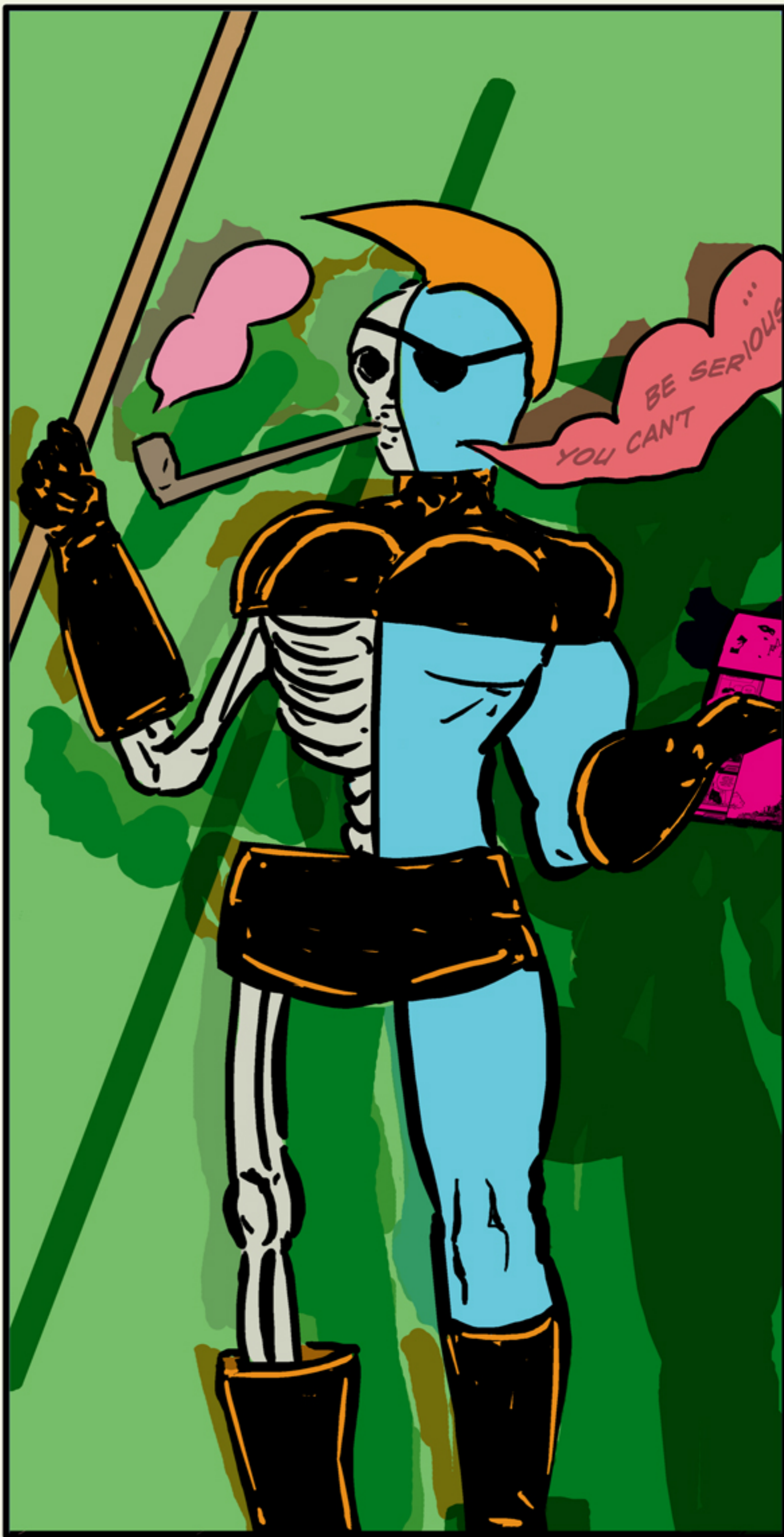
Eyes: None

Hair: None

Known superhuman powers: Telekinesis

Weapons: HALF/DEAD wields an energy staff that serves as a targeting focus for his telekinetic force blasts.

Accessories: As a part of his regular costume, HALF/DEAD wears a clip-on "mohawk" hair weave. ■





'CRASH ORIGIN'

Stanley
Lieber

