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STAR BLAZERS

THE MAGAZINE OF SPACE BATTLESHIP YAMATO



ICARUS
Part 3 of 3



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THE MAGAZINE OF SPACE BATTLESHIP YAMATO

Based on *Space Battleship Yamato*
created by Yoshinobu Nishizaki and Leiji Matsumoto

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FROM THE CAPTAIN'S DESK

Welcome aboard, crewmembers!

This issue features the final chapter of ICARUS, the first STAR BLAZERS "side story" that has graced the pages of our proud publication. What is a "side story?" Simply put, it's a story that exists "outside" a preset continuity. In other words, you won't find it in any of the STAR BLAZERS or YAMATO animated videos. It appears here for the first time anywhere. This does not, however, mean there are no more "side stories" in the future. A saga this big holds many untold tales. We do, in fact, have another one coming right up next issue...but that will be discussed elsewhere.

The main topic of discussion this time is YOU: what do YOU think of the concept of "side stories?" The STAR BLAZERS and YAMATO videos which are available from Voyager Entertainment contain magnificent tales of courage, adventure and romance, and we want to recapture as much of them as is possible in comic book form...but is this what YOU want? Would you prefer for this publication to stay with adaptations of the animated videos, exclusively present new side stories, or continue with a mixture of both? Please share your thoughts with us; we want this to be the best STAR BLAZERS publication it can possibly be, and that means giving the fans what they want!

Speaking of which, this issue contains an article on exactly that subject. Japanese fans of SPACE BATTLESHIP YAMATO knew exactly what they wanted after the original animated series debuted over 20 years ago--more YAMATO! The result was a genuine entertainment phenomenon, which we recount this issue in "Yamato Fever." Following that is the penultimate installment of "Twilight," the history of the real Battleship Yamato, and the first segment of a look at scenes that were animated for the original Japanese TV programs but didn't make it to American screens.

Lastly, I'd like to call your attention to another publication that should be on the stands with this very issue. It's called the STAR BLAZERS INTRODUCTORY PACK. We originally announced the release of this product a few months ago, but decided afterward to hold it back for the upcoming holiday season. If there's someone on your holiday gift-giving list who could do with a little STAR BLAZERS in their life, this is specially-made to fit the bill. It contains not only a special edition of this comic book with all-new material, but also a 45-minute video featuring the beginning of the QUEST FOR ISCANDAR animated series - both for the holiday-friendly price of \$12.95! (And at that rate, you may even want one for yourself!)

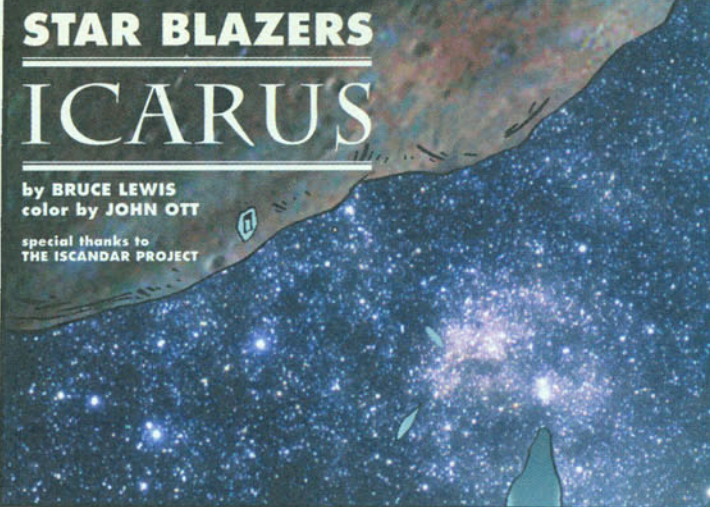
Until next time,
Barry Winston
Publisher

VOYAGER
ENTERTAINMENT
PRESENTS



"IT'S QUIET OUT
HERE IN SPACE ..."

"...QUIET AS
A GRAVE."



STAR BLAZERS ICARUS

by BRUCE LEWIS
color by JOHN OTT
special thanks to
THE ISCANDAR PROJECT



"YOU MEAN
HE'S OUT THERE,
SASHA - OUTSIDE
THE ROCK? BUT
WHY -?"



"BECAUSE OF
ME, DEKE ..."

"...BECAUSE OF ME!"

I BET THEY'RE WONDERING WHERE I AM BY NOW ...

WELL, LET THEM SWEAT.

BECAUSE I DON'T CARE WHAT - HUH? THAT'S FUNNY. MY JUMP JETS JUST WENT OFF-LINE.

I'M TRYING, LIEUTENANT, BUT OUR RADAR IS JUST TOO DIRECTIONAL AND WEAK FOR THIS KIND OF WORK! IT'S LIKE TRYING TO FIND A FLEA WITH A FLASHLIGHT!

SPARE ME THE METAPHORS, MR. SINGH! STEER THE ANTENNA AND JACK UP THE POWER - BUT FIND THE CHIEF!

WHAT POSSESSED HIM TO GO FOR A SPACE-WALK WITHOUT TELLING ANYONE? IT JUST DOESN'T MAKE SENSE ...

I MEANT TO ... IT WAS MY TURN IN THE DUTY ROTATION ... BUT I WAS SO EXCITED ABOUT GOING OUT WITH DEKE IN THE COSMO TIGER THAT ...

OH MY GOD! THE SPACESUIT! I NEVER RECHARGED THE POWER CELL IN HIS SPACE-SUIT!

SIGH WELL, DEREK, GIVEN HIS JUMP-JETS' MAXIMUM PUSH, HE COULD BE IN ANY OF THESE THREE CO-ORDINATE BLOCKS.

EVERY MINUTE THAT PASSES, THE AREA TO SEARCH GETS BIGGER. THANKS, RAJIT - KEEP TRYING!

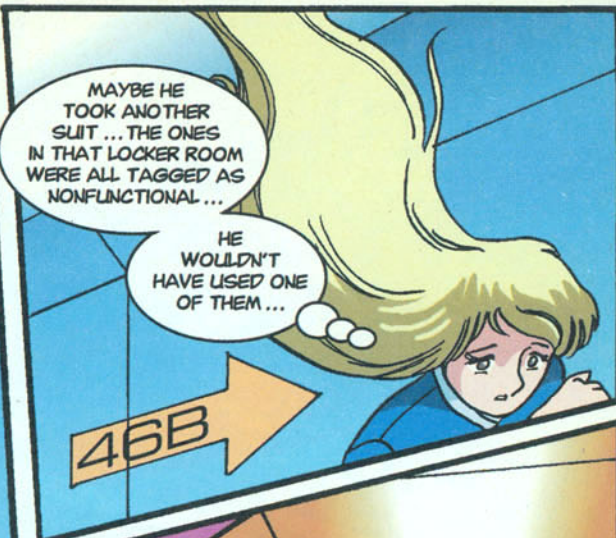
WARNING BATTERY LEVEL LOW DO NOT OPERATE SUIT

Chapter Three: Angel Too Close To The Sun



SASHA, YOU MAY AS WELL GO BELOW. MR. SINGH AND I WILL DO ALL WE -- HUH?

SASHA?



MAYBE HE TOOK ANOTHER SUIT ... THE ONES IN THAT LOCKER ROOM WERE ALL TAGGED AS NONFUNCTIONAL ...

HE WOULDN'T HAVE USED ONE OF THEM ...

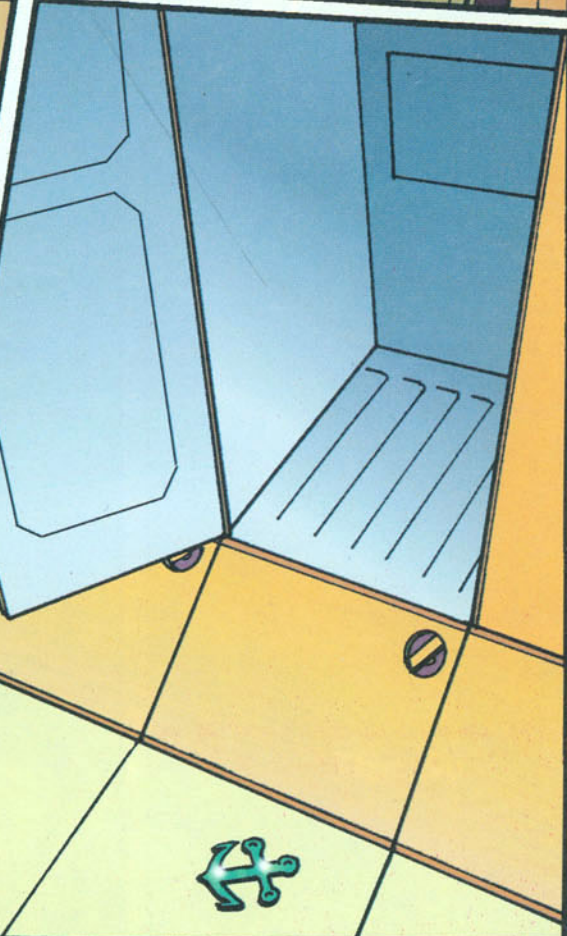


OH PLEASE, PLEASE LET THAT SUIT BE THERE!

OH NO!



OH, GOD! NO!



WE ... WE WERE FIGHTING. HE MUST HAVE BEEN SO UPSET THAT HE TOOK A RED-TAGGED SUIT!

MY BIRTHDAY PRESENT -- AND I THREW IT IN HIS FACE! OH, UNCLE STEPHEN, WHAT HAVE I DONE!



MY POOR UNCLE ...

"HUFF" SASHA -- WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU? RUNNING AROUND LIKE A CRAZY WOMAN -- WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN YOU AND THE CHIEF TO MAKE HIM --?



WHAT THE --?

M-MOTHER?



MOTHER? I CAN SEE YOUR FACE!



...RED-TAGGED.

I TOOK A RED-TAGGED SUIT OUTSIDE AND NEVER THOUGHT TO CHECK. STUPID, SANDOR, STUPID ...

...IN THIS CASE, FATALLY STUPID.



SIGH WELL, THAT'S ALL, THEN. WITHOUT POWER, THESE JETS ARE USELESS, AND I DON'T WANT TO DIE IN A HARNESS ...

IT'S REALLY NOT A BAD WAY TO GO ... ALL I HAVE TO DO IS DRIFT ...

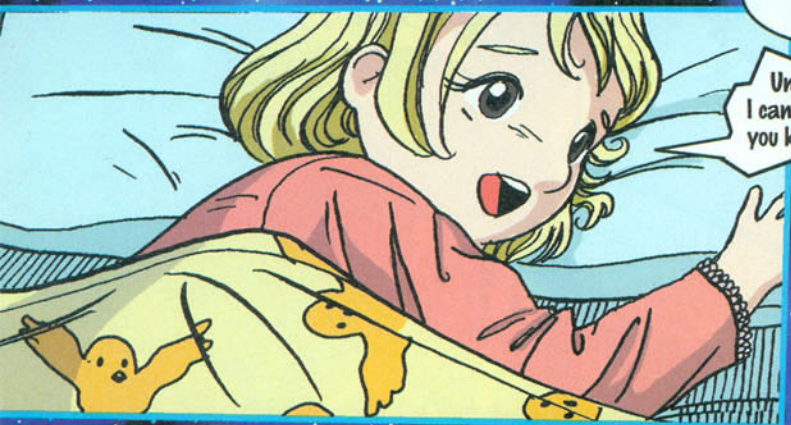
...AND DRIFT ...

...UNTIL I DRIFT AWAY INTO ...

Unca Stephen! I can't sweep untiw you kiss me g'night!

...NOTHINGNESS ...

HUH?



SASHA!!!

DAMMIT, SANDOR, YOU CAN'T GIVE UP NOW! IF I DIE, SASHA WILL BLAME HERSELF AND BE POISONED WITH GUILT ALL HER LIFE!

GOTTA FIGURE ANOTHER WAY OUT!

HMMM ... IF I FIRE THE SUIT'S COLD-GAS JETS SO THAT I KILL MY SMALL OUTWARD VELOCITY ... HEAD BACK IN ICARUS' GENERAL DIRECTION ...

THE APPROACH RADAR IGNORES STATIONARY OR OUT-BOUND OBJECTS ... BUT IF I CAN GET MOVING BACK TOWARDS THE ROCK ...

I'LL STAND OUT ON SINGH'S RADAR LIKE A FOURTH-OF-JULY ROCKET! THEY'LL COME GET ME ...

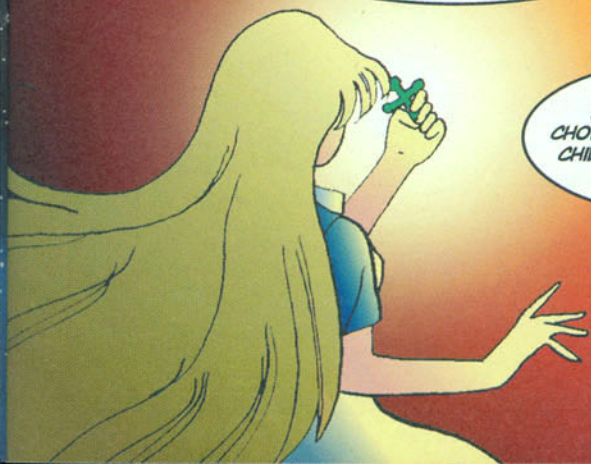
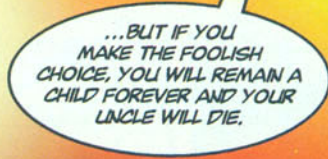
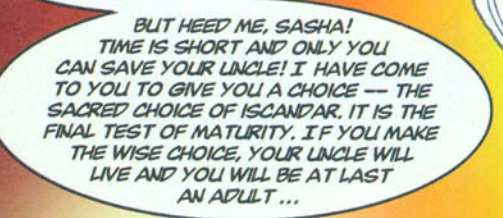
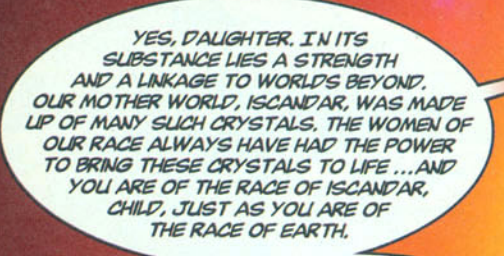
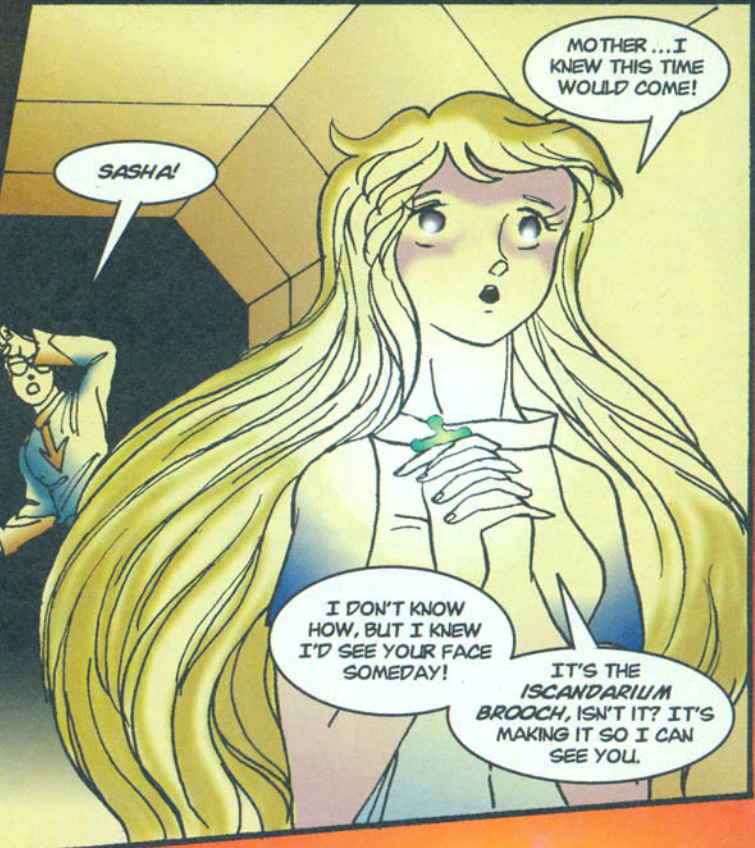
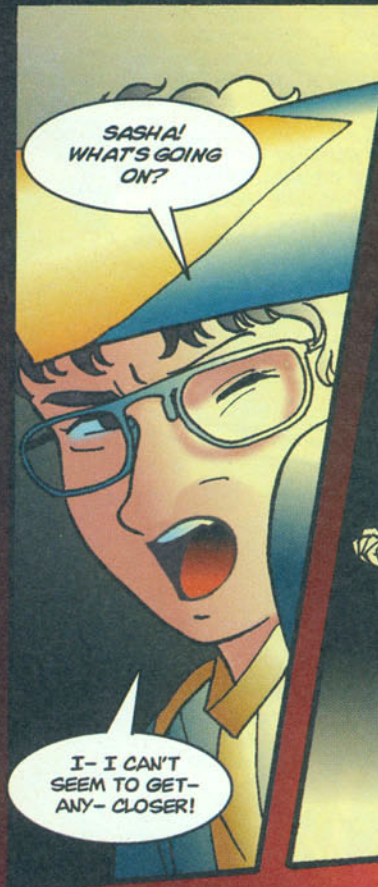


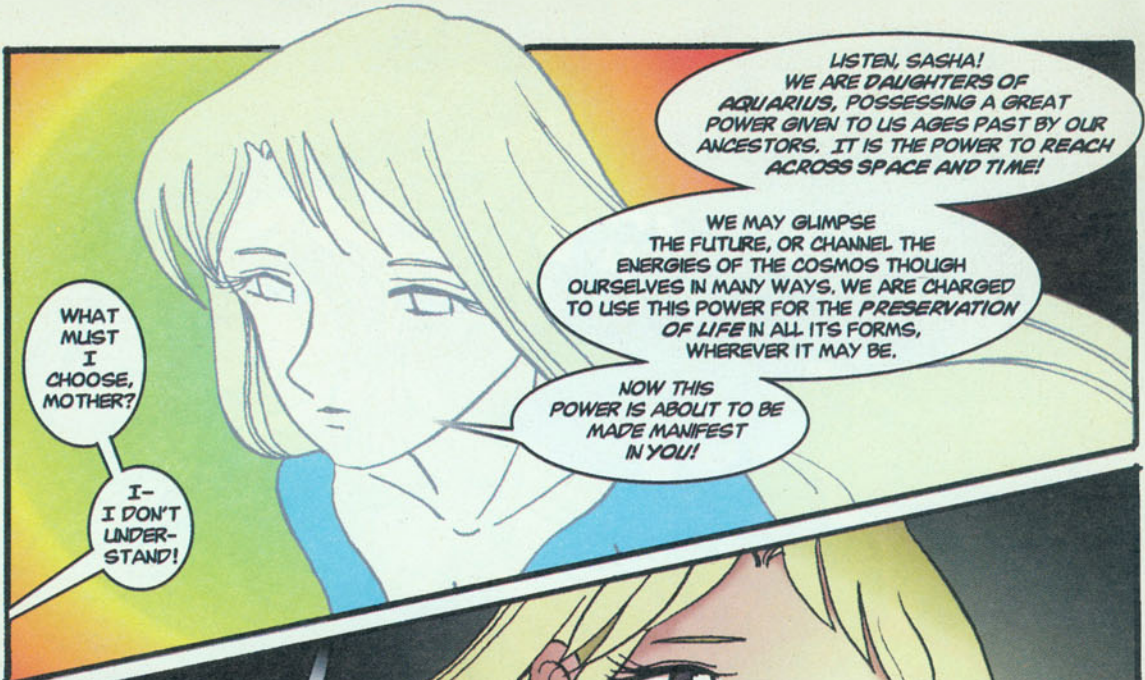
OKAY! VECTOR SET! COLD-GAS PRESSURE READY! THREE ... TWO ... ONE ... FI -- WHAT??

NO POWER, NO JETS -- AND NO WAY TO RUN MY AIR RECYCLER! I CAN FEEL THE CO2 BUILDING UP ...

PLEASE ... I DON'T WANT TO DIE THIS WAY!

"NO POWER?!" OH GOD! -- I'VE BEEN RUNNING ON BACKUP POWER THE WHOLE TIME --?





LISTEN, SASHA!
WE ARE DAUGHTERS OF
AQUARIUS, POSSESSING A GREAT
POWER GIVEN TO US AGES PAST BY OUR
ANCESTORS. IT IS THE POWER TO REACH
ACROSS SPACE AND TIME!

WE MAY GLIMPSE
THE FUTURE, OR CHANNEL THE
ENERGIES OF THE COSMOS THROUGH
OURSELVES IN MANY WAYS. WE ARE CHARGED
TO USE THIS POWER FOR THE PRESERVATION
OF LIFE IN ALL ITS FORMS,
WHEREVER IT MAY BE.

NOW THIS
POWER IS ABOUT TO BE
MADE MANIFEST
IN YOU!

WHAT
MUST
I
CHOOSE,
MOTHER?

I-
I DON'T
UNDER-
STAND!



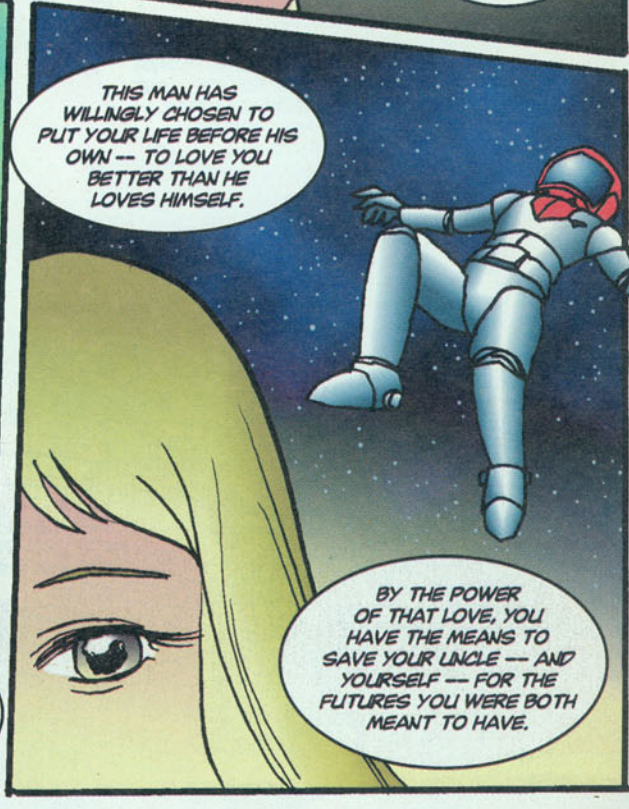
YOUR CHOICE IS
BETWEEN YOUR LIFE AND
ANOTHER'S! YOUR CHOICE
WILL DETERMINE WHETHER
YOU ARE WORTHY TO
WIELD THE POWER.

B-BUT
HOW CAN I
SAVE UNCLE
STEPHEN?



THE ISCARDARIUM,
SASHA! IT IS SENSITIVE
TO THE MIGHTIEST POWER
IN CREATION - THE POWER
OF THE HEART!

THE CRYSTAL
IN YOUR HAND SINGS WITH
THE POWER OF THE LOVE WITH
WHICH IT WAS MADE... AND WITH
THE POWER OF THE LOVE
IN YOUR HEART.



THIS MAN HAS
WILLINGLY CHOSEN TO
PUT YOUR LIFE BEFORE HIS
OWN -- TO LOVE YOU
BETTER THAN HE
LOVES HIMSELF.

BY THE POWER
OF THAT LOVE, YOU
HAVE THE MEANS TO
SAVE YOUR UNCLE -- AND
YOURSELF -- FOR THE
FUTURES YOU WERE BOTH
MEANT TO HAVE.



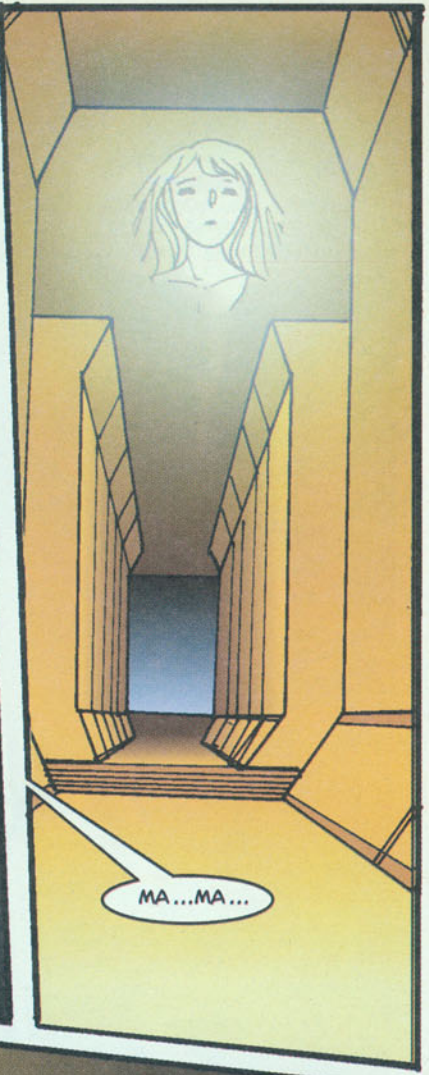
I MUST
LEAVE NOW. THE
CHOICE IS YOURS --
YOUR LIFE, OR THE
LIFE OF ANOTHER!
CHOOSE WELL!

MAMA!
PLEASE DON'T
GO! MAMA!



MAMA!

...PLEASE...
I'M SO
ALONE...



MA...MA...



WHAT ... THE HELL
IS GOING ON HERE,
SASHA?

THERE WERE
LIGHTS ... A VOICE
SPEAKING FROM OUT OF
NOWHERE ... SOMETHING
HOLDING ME BACK ...

SASHA!
ARE YOU ALL
RIGHT?



YES, DEKE.
I'M FINE.

I KNOW
WHAT I HAVE
TO DO.



I'M GOING TO END THIS RECORDING NOW. I'M ALMOST OUT OF BATTERY POWER.



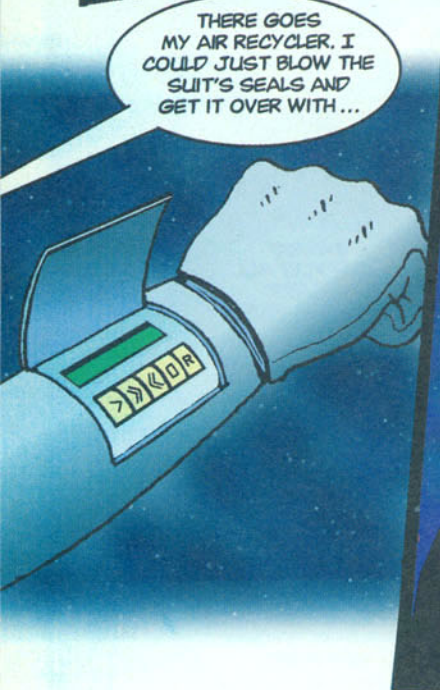
DON'T BLAME YOURSELF FOR ALL THIS, SASHA. IT'S MY FAULT FOR TAKING A SUIT WITHOUT CHECKING THE POWER LEVELS.

THE FIRST RULE OF STAR FORCE LIFE IS THAT EVERYONE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS OWN GEAR. I BROKE THAT RULE-- NEVER FORGET THAT.

AND NEVER FORGET YOUR BORING OLD UNCLE STEPHEN LOVED YOU LIKE ... LIKE HIS OWN CHILD.



SIGH THAT'S ALL, THEN. HAVE THEM BURY ME BESIDE MY SISTER MIO. FAREWELL.

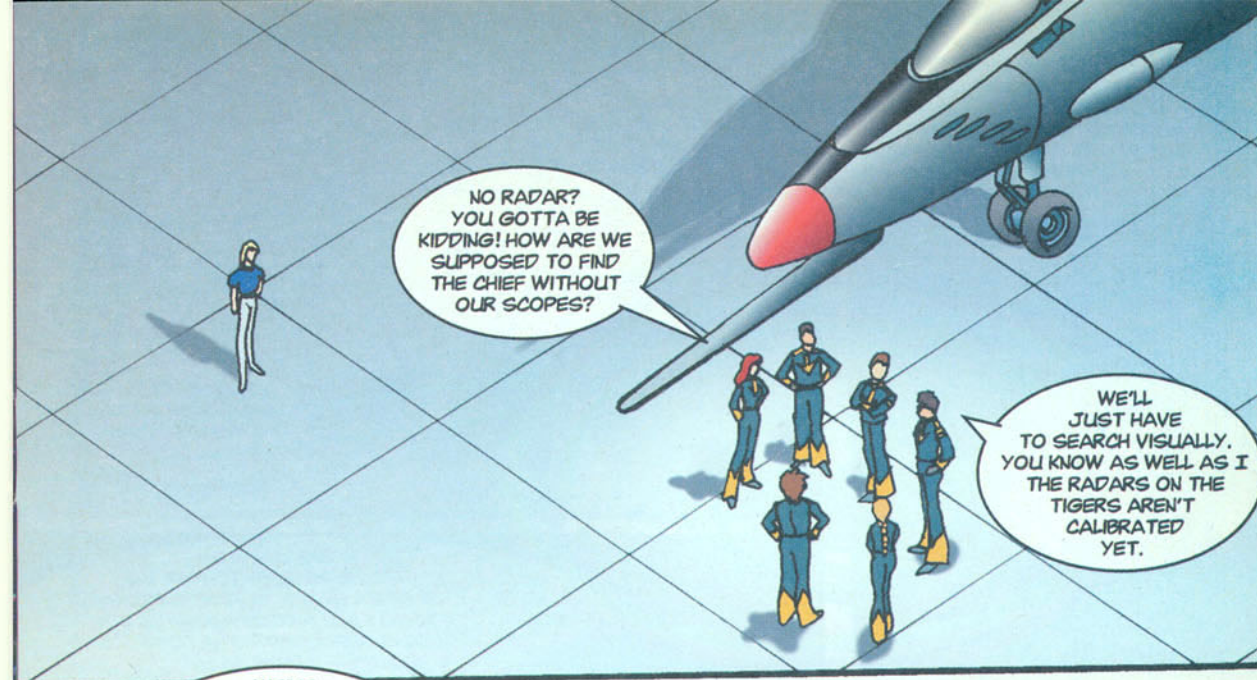


THERE GOES MY AIR RECYCLER. I COULD JUST BLOW THE SUIT'S SEALS AND GET IT OVER WITH ...



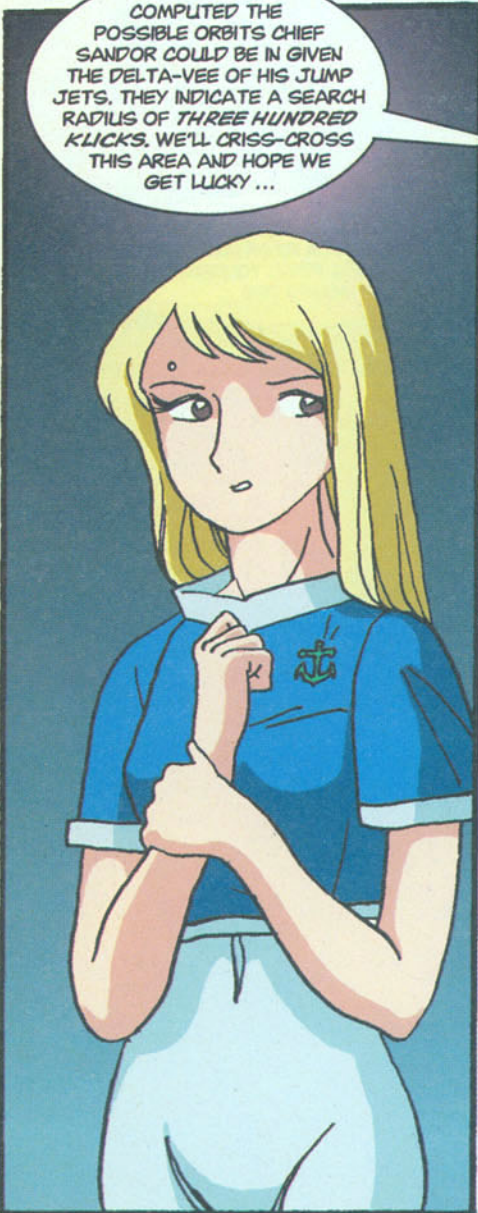
NAAA. THERE'S PROBABLY TEN MINUTES OF AIR LEFT. IF I KEEP STILL, I CAN PROBABLY STAY CONSCIOUS TO THE END.

AND BESIDES ... I LIKE THE VIEW.



NO RADAR? YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING! HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO FIND THE CHIEF WITHOUT OUR SCOPES?

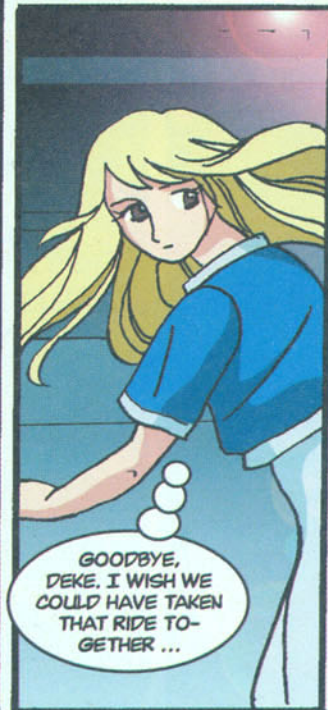
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO SEARCH VISUALLY. YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I THE RADARS ON THE TIGERS AREN'T CALIBRATED YET.



WE'VE COMPUTED THE POSSIBLE ORBITS CHIEF SANDOR COULD BE IN GIVEN THE DELTA-VEE OF HIS JUMP JETS. THEY INDICATE A SEARCH RADIUS OF THREE HUNDRED KILLOMETERS. WE'LL CRISS-CROSS THIS AREA AND HOPE WE GET LUCKY ...



IT'S HOPELESS ... THEY'LL NEVER FIND HIM WITHOUT RADAR. IT'S NOW OR NEVER ...

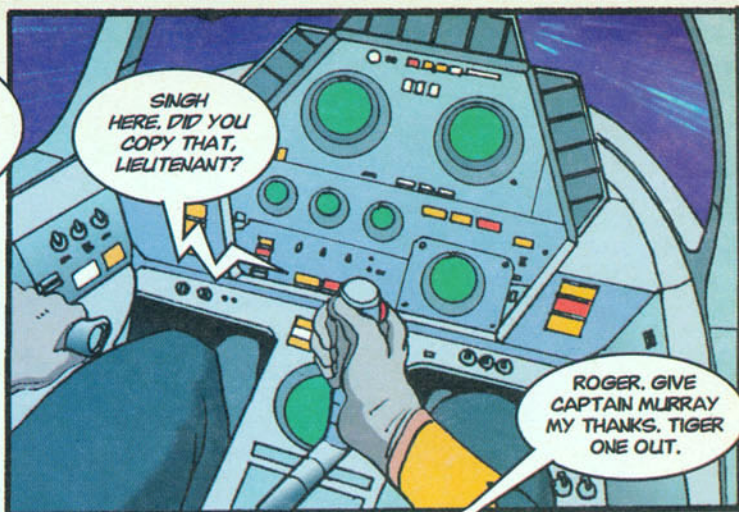


GOODBYE, DEKE. I WISH WE COULD HAVE TAKEN THAT RIDE TOGETHER ...



OKAY, THAT'S IT! MOUNT UP, TIGERS! LAUNCH IN THREE MINUTES!

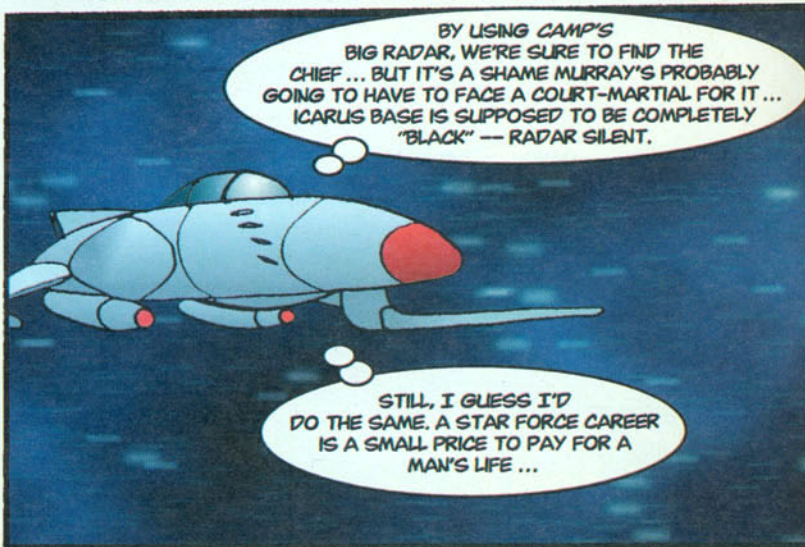
EDS SHAUN
CAMP CALLING
ICARUS BASE, PLEASE
INFORM SQUADRON COMMANDER
WAKEFIELD THAT WE ARE RETURNING
TO BASE AND WILL BE JOINING
THE SEARCH IN APPROXI-
MATELY ONE HOUR



SINGH
HERE, DID YOU
COPY THAT,
LIEUTENANT?

ROGER, GIVE
CAPTAIN MURRAY
MY THANKS, TIGER
ONE OUT.

BY USING CAMP'S
BIG RADAR, WE'RE SURE TO FIND THE
CHIEF ... BUT IT'S A SHAME MURRAY'S PROBABLY
GOING TO HAVE TO FACE A COURT-MARTIAL FOR IT ...
ICARUS BASE IS SUPPOSED TO BE COMPLETELY
"BLACK" — RADAR SILENT.



STILL, I GUESS I'D
DO THE SAME. A STAR FORCE CAREER
IS A SMALL PRICE TO PAY FOR A
MAN'S LIFE ...

BUT WHAT A
WASTE! ONE MAN'S CAREER
OVER — ONE MAN'S LIFE HANGING
BY A THREAD — ALL BECAUSE
OF A CARELESS MISTAKE.



"TIGER ONE TO ALL
TIGERS — BEGIN SEARCH
PATTERNS NOW! LET'S GO
FIND HIM, GLYS!"



COMMANDER
MAYES! I'M GETTING
A SYSTEM ALERT! SOME-
ONE'S IN AIRLOCK SEVEN —
AND THE DECOMPRESSION
CYCLE IS ACTIVE!



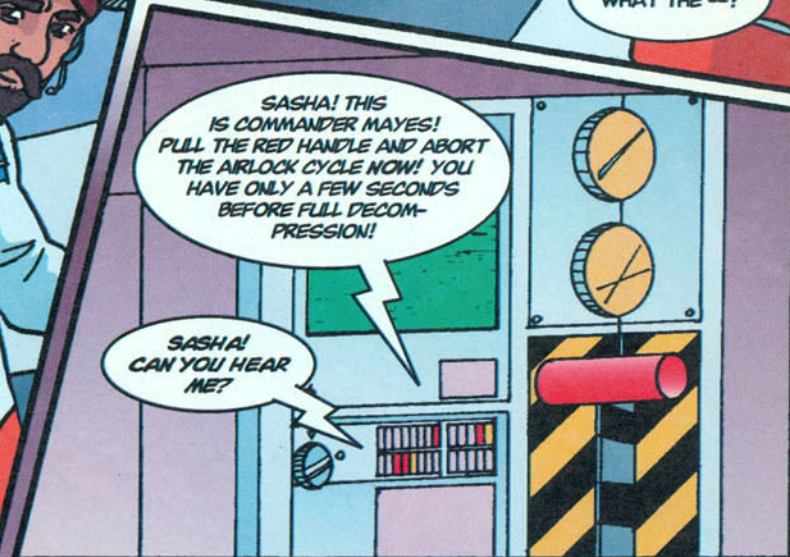
WHAT?
I ORDERED
NO EVA! ACTIVATE
THE VIDEO MONITOR
AND TELL ME WHO'S
IN THERE!

VIDEO ON —
IT'S — MISS
WILDSTAR! WHAT
ARE YOU DOING
IN THERE?

SASHA?
WHAT THE —?

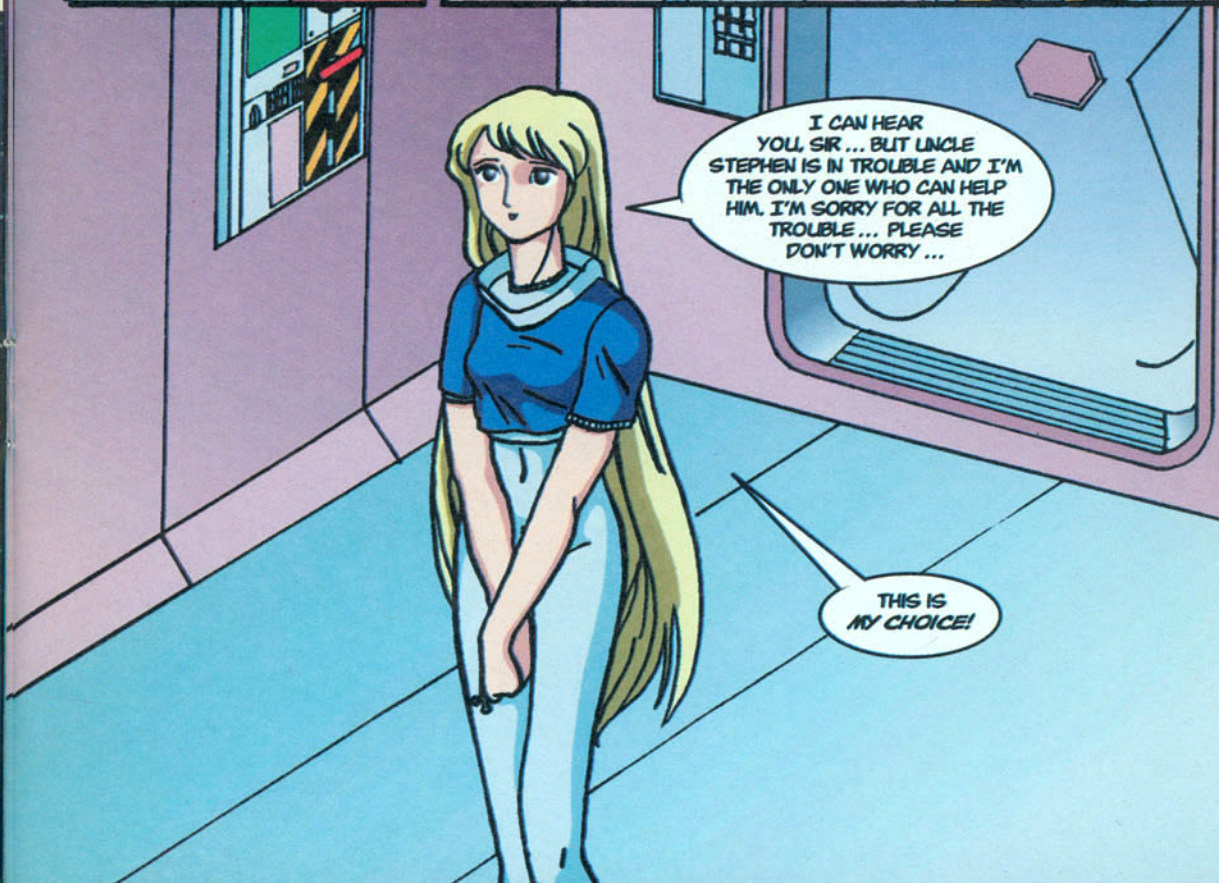
SASHA! THIS
IS COMMANDER MAYES!
PULL THE RED HANDLE AND ABORT
THE AIRLOCK CYCLE NOW! YOU
HAVE ONLY A FEW SECONDS
BEFORE FULL DECOM-
PRESSION!

SASHA!
CAN YOU HEAR
ME?



I CAN HEAR
YOU, SIR ... BUT UNCLE
STEPHEN IS IN TROUBLE AND I'M
THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN HELP
HIM. I'M SORRY FOR ALL THE
TROUBLE ... PLEASE
DON'T WORRY ...

THIS IS
MY CHOICE!



Cycle complete.
Explosive
decompression
in five seconds.

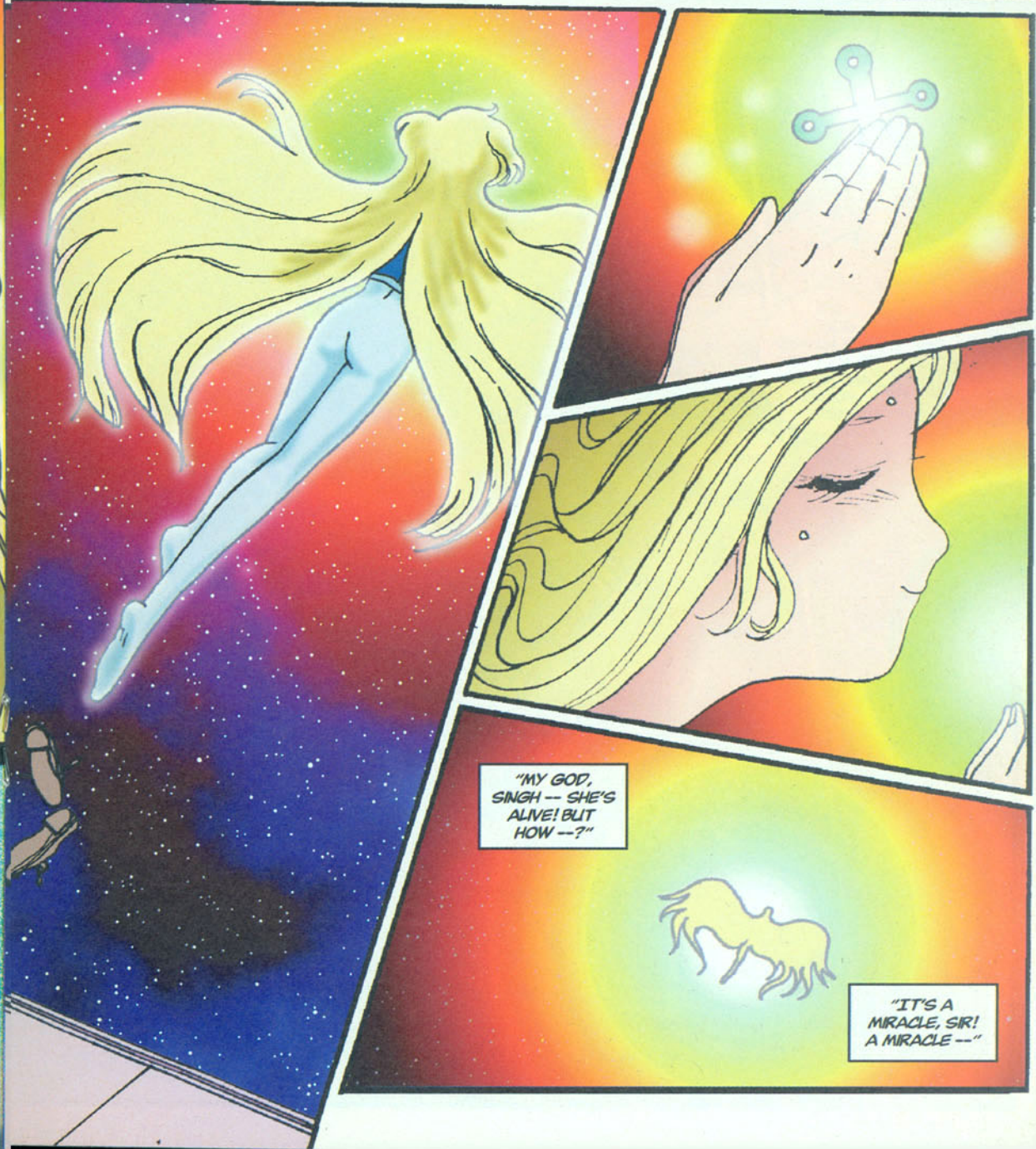
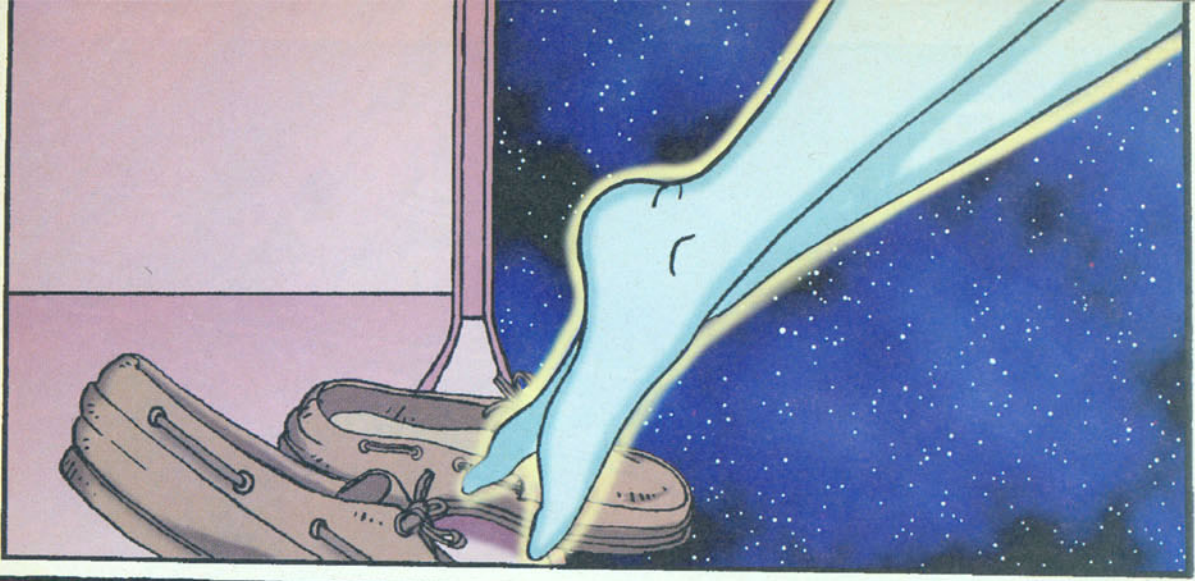
SASHA!
NO! DON'T
DO IT --

MOTHER! ANCESTORS
OF ISCANDAR! HEAR ME! I AM
SASHA, DAUGHTER OF STARSHA,
DAUGHTER OF ISCANDAR AND OF THE
ELDER RACE! I STAND READY TO
FACE THE SACRED CHOICE OF
OUR PEOPLE!

Four ...
Three ...
Two ...
One ...

OF MY OWN
FREE WILL, I CHOOSE
TO OFFER MY LIFE FOR
THE LIFE OF ANOTHER! ELDERS OF
ISCANDAR, SEARCH MY HEART, GUIDE
MY HANDS, AND GRANT ME THE POWER
TO DO WHAT I MUST FOR THE
SAKE OF LIFE! I MAKE MY
CHOICE -- NOW!

Decompression.



"MY GOD,
SINGH -- SHE'S
ALIVE! BUT
HOW --?"

"IT'S A
MIRACLE, SIR!
A MIRACLE --"

MOTHER!

VOOOOONN



"LOOK -- IT'S THE CHIEF! SHE'S FOUND THE CHIEF!"



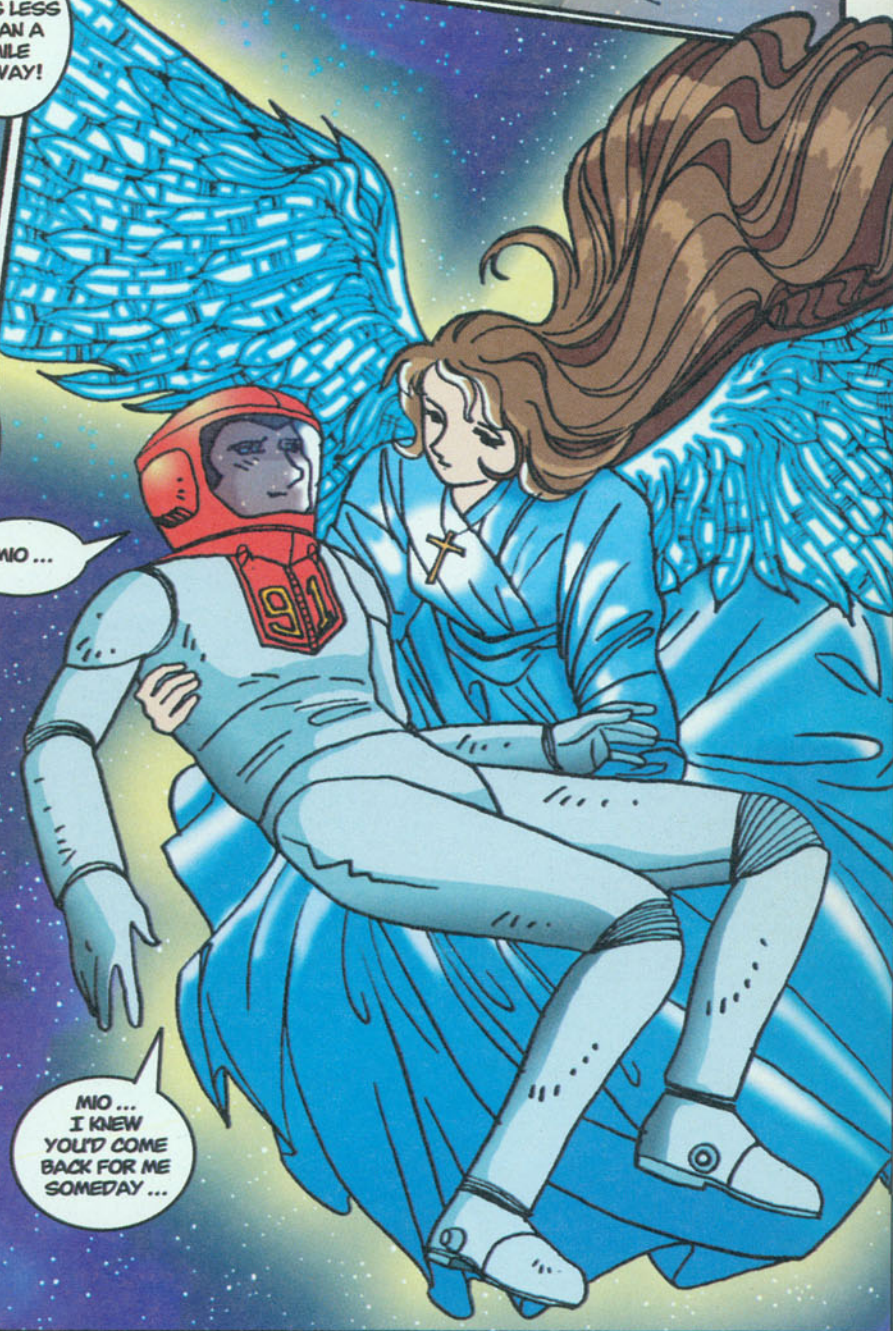
IT'S YOU...

HE WAS LESS THAN A MILE AWAY!

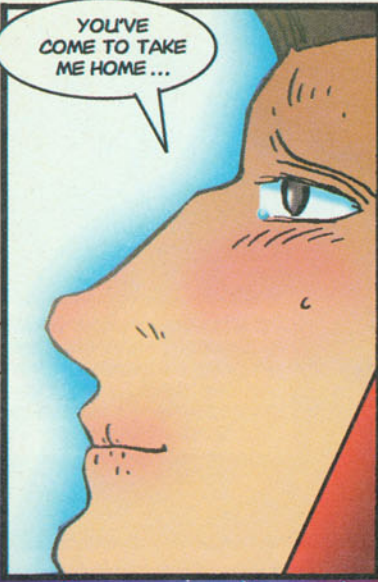
WE COULD HAVE LOOKED FOR DAYS AND NEVER FOUND HIM!

MIO ...

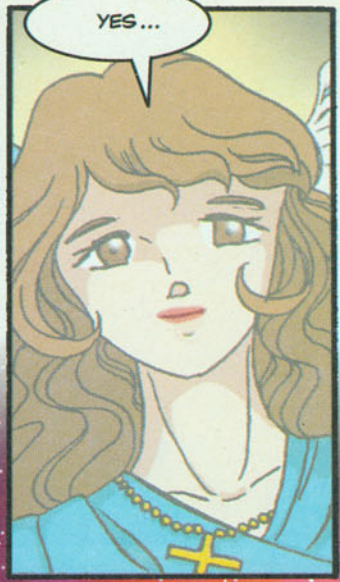
MIO ... I KNEW YOU'D COME BACK FOR ME SOMEDAY ...



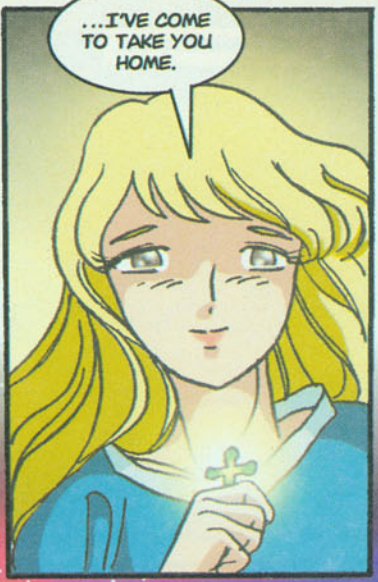
YOU'VE COME TO TAKE ME HOME ...



YES ...



...I'VE COME TO TAKE YOU HOME.



"SINGH! GET ME A LINK TO CAPTAIN MURRAY! TELL HIM TO CANCEL THE RADAR SCAN!"

"DONE, SIR! AND A LASER TRANSMISSION IS COMING IN -- IT'S SQUADRON COMMANDER WAKEFIELD."

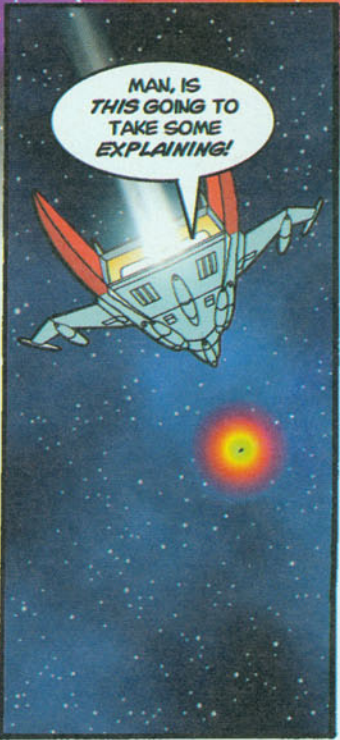


"HE'S GOT SASHA AND THE CHIEF ON VISUAL!"

TIGER LEADER TO ICARUS ... I'LL HAVE THEM UNDER PRESSURE IN SIXTY SECONDS.



MAN, IS THIS GOING TO TAKE SOME EXPLAINING!

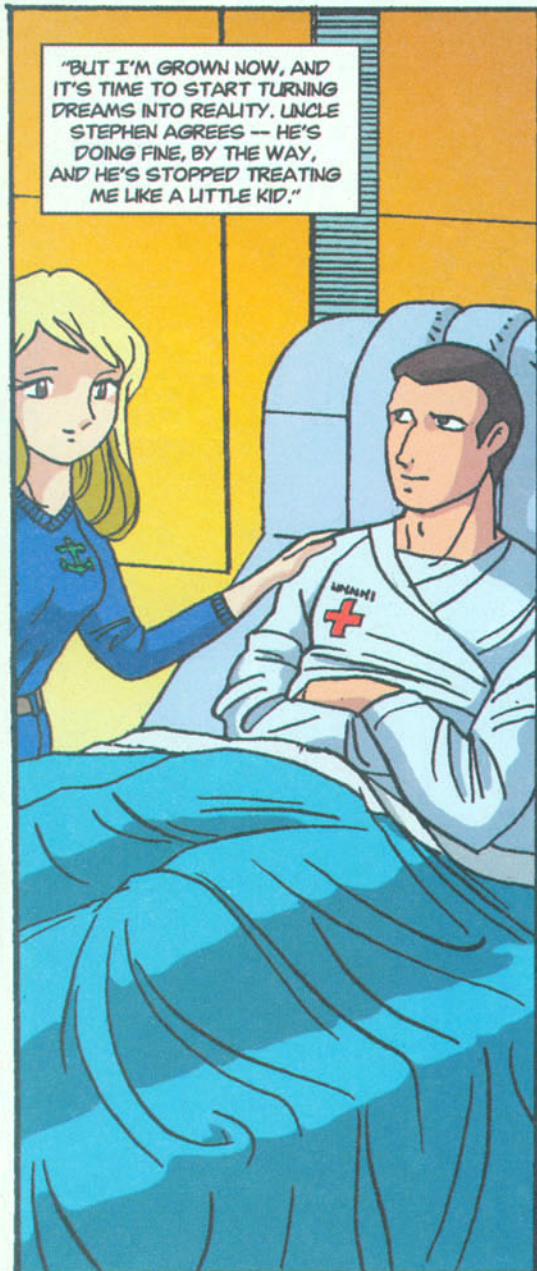


GOT 'EM!

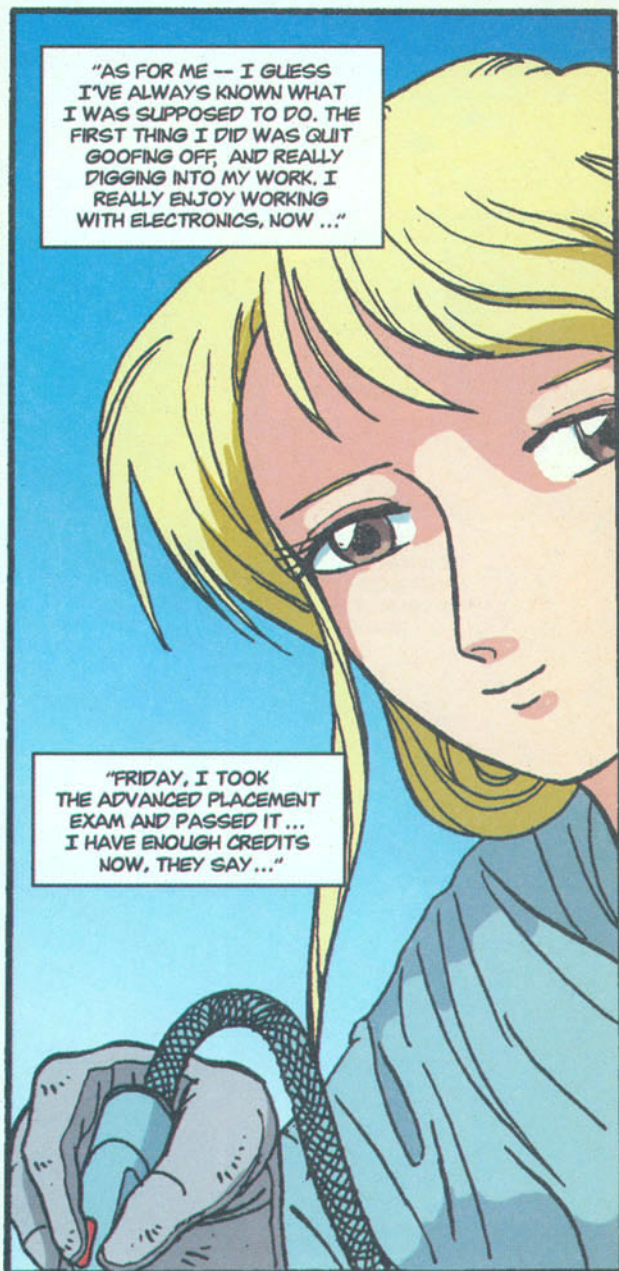




"I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED. I HAVE ONLY THE VAGUEST MEMORY OF THE WHOLE THING... LIKE THE FEVER DREAMS I HAD WHEN I WAS GROWING UP."



"BUT I'M GROWN NOW, AND IT'S TIME TO START TURNING DREAMS INTO REALITY. UNCLE STEPHEN AGREES -- HE'S DOING FINE, BY THE WAY, AND HE'S STOPPED TREATING ME LIKE A LITTLE KID."



"AS FOR ME -- I GUESS I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN WHAT I WAS SUPPOSED TO DO. THE FIRST THING I DID WAS QUIT GOOFING OFF, AND REALLY DIGGING INTO MY WORK. I REALLY ENJOY WORKING WITH ELECTRONICS, NOW ..."

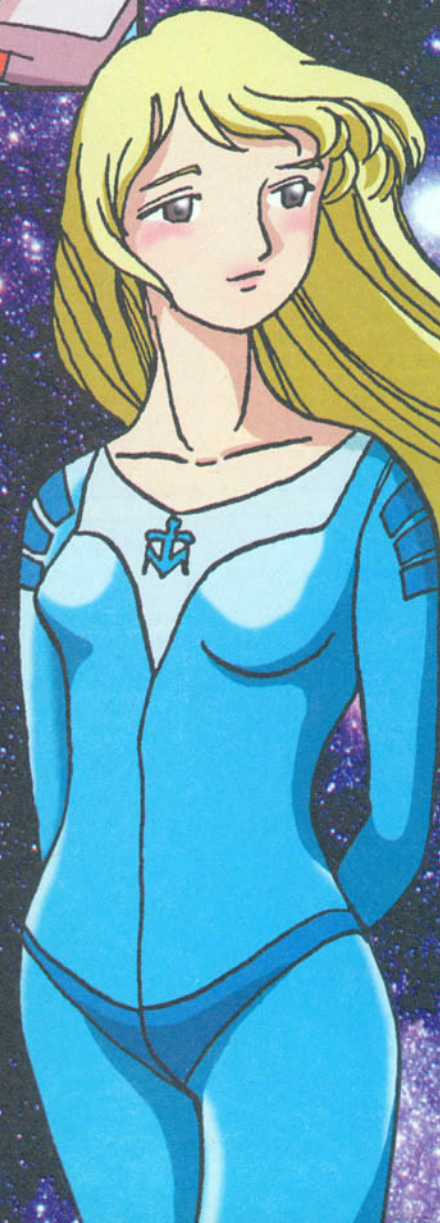
"FRIDAY, I TOOK THE ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAM AND PASSED IT... I HAVE ENOUGH CREDITS NOW, THEY SAY ..."



enlisted
governed
fr

"SO I DID IT."

"UNCLE STEPHEN RECOMMENDED ME, AND DEKE VOLUNTEERED TO BE MY TUTOR... EARTH APPROVED AND SO TOMORROW, ON THE FIRST OF DECEMBER, I WILL TAKE THE OATH AND BEGIN FOLLOWING MY DREAM -- AS A MIDSHIPMAN IN THE EARTH DEFENSE FORCE."



"MY FATHER DOESN'T KNOW YET AND I'M SURE HE'LL BE ANGRY... BUT AS AN ADULT I HAVE TO DO WHAT I KNOW IS RIGHT FOR ME."

"I BELIEVE WE ALL HAVE A DESTINY TO FULFILL, AND SINCE I SAW MY MOTHER'S FACE I KNOW WHAT MINE IS -- TO PROTECT AND DEFEND THE PEOPLE I LOVE. I KNOW NOW WHAT THAT DESTINY MEANS ..."

"...I KNOW WHAT I HAVE TO DO."

22 DECEMBER 2202



"IS THE -- UH, CLONE -- STILL DOING WELL, GENERAL SINGLETON?"



"MR. LAZARUS ISN'T A CLONE, SIR. IT -- HE -- IS A LIVING PERSON, WITH THE SAME PHYSICAL BODY AS HE HAD BEFORE HIS DEATH ..."

"... ONLY THIS TIME, WITHOUT WOUNDS OR INJURIES OF ANY KIND."

"UNBELIEVABLE! SIMPLY UNBELIEVABLE! A MAN COMING BACK FROM THE GRAVE. HOW COULD THIS HAVE HAPPENED?"



"WE DON'T KNOW EXACTLY, MR. PRESIDENT. DRS. PROBE AND RYDER AT THE SCIENCE INSTITUTE ARE STUDYING HIM RIGHT NOW. WE SUSPECT IT'S RELATED TO THE COSMO DNA, BUT WITHOUT FURTHER PROOF --"

REPORT ON THE REANIMATION OF DECEASED INDIVIDUALS
BC 13/000906
BC 13/000801

COSMO
TOP SECRET

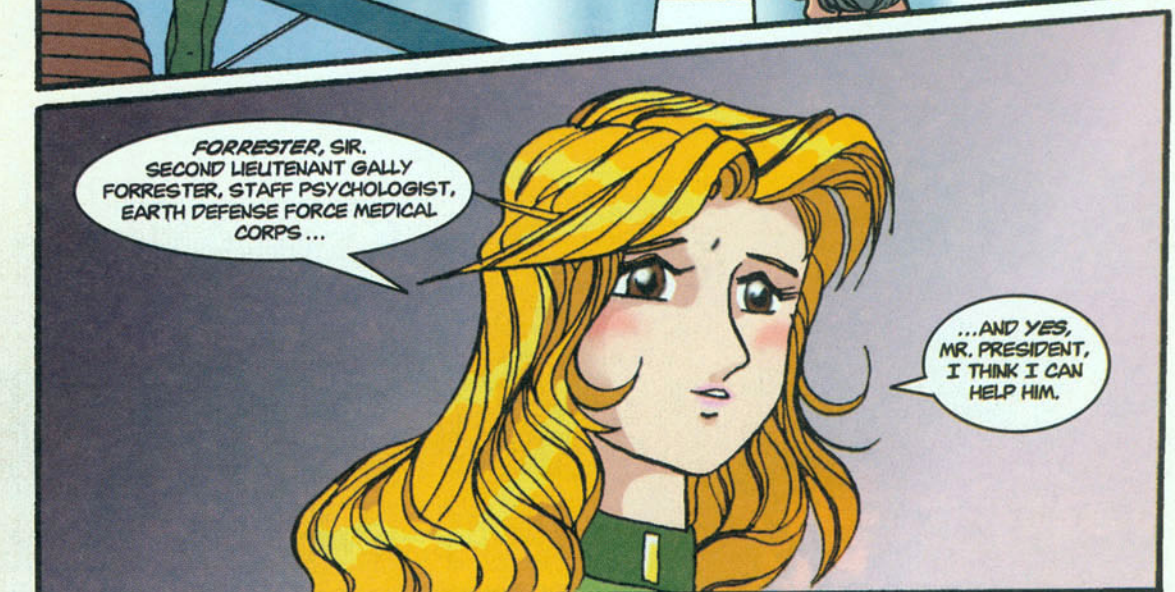


I UNDERSTAND, GENERAL, THAT THIS MR. LAZARUS HAS NO KNOWLEDGE OR MEMORY OF HIS, UH -- FORMER LIFE?

YES SIR, THAT IS THE CASE. PHYSICALLY, HE'S ALIVE AND WELL, BUT MENTALLY HE'S A TABULA RASA. HE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW HIS REAL NAME.



I SEE, WELL, MISS, THE GENERAL TELLS ME IT'S YOUR JOB TO -- UH, REACQUANT MR. LAZARUS WITH THE REAL WORLD. DO YOU THINK IT CAN BE DONE? IT'S A BIG JOB, MISS -- UH --



FORRESTER, SIR. SECOND LIEUTENANT GALLY FORRESTER, STAFF PSYCHOLOGIST, EARTH DEFENSE FORCE MEDICAL CORPS ...

... AND YES, MR. PRESIDENT, I THINK I CAN HELP HIM.

"A DEAD MAN. I'M A DEAD MAN. AND THE WORST THING IS THAT I DON'T KNOW IF I'M IN HEAVEN OR HELL."

"IF ONLY I COULD REMEMBER HOW I GOT HERE -- HOW I DIED..."

"THE GENERAL -- THE YOUNG WOMAN -- THEY TELL ME THIS HOUSE IS MINE. THESE CLOTHES ARE MINE -- BUT I DON'T REMEMBER OWNING THEM."

"I DON'T REMEMBER MY LOVED ONES -- MY CHILDHOOD -- NOTHING! WHY CAN'T I REMEMBER --?"

"--WHY?"

STAR BLAZERS: ICARUS
THE END



NEXT: BE FOREVER YAMATO

ANALYZER

news and feature articles from the world of Yamato/Star Blazers

The mid to late-1970s was not only the most prosperous era for the YAMATO saga, it virtually laid the groundwork for the Japanese animation fandom. In "YAMATO FEVER" we examine those "boom years" and the way they shaped things to come. Also this issue, we have the next installment of "Twilight" and the first part of a new feature on footage edited from STAR BLAZERS! Onward and upward!



edited by
TIM ELDRED

YAMATO FEVER

Over the last several issues of this magazine, we have recounted the development of the first SPACE BATTLESHIP YAMATO animated series (also called THE QUEST FOR ISCANDAR) at its various stages. This period of development concluded in mid-1974, when actual production began. Leiji Matsumoto and Noboru Ishiguro previously recounted for us part of this nightmarish process; the working day was a 24-hour affair, those of the day shift sleeping only a few feet away from those on the night shift. Voice actors were often called upon to record lines before a scene was animated—the reverse of normal procedure in Japan. Entire half-hour episodes often remained in production right up to the day they were broadcast.

Despite the maelstrom, unique experiments by the YAMATO team forged new paths for the anime artform. All-new color theories emerged that established unique palattes for space adventure, some still used today by modern animators. On-screen motion was enhanced by splitting images up onto multiple animation cels that moved at different rates—at times nearly doubling the cel count of a normal 30-minute program. Even the music was revolutionary, with the opening theme starting off with vocals rather than instrumental fanfare. The ending theme was a slow ballad, “The Scarlet Scarf,” which also broke with the usual tradition of adventure programs.

In the words of one animator, “this was one production we put our soul into.”

It was the best of times...and the worst of times. Initially, YAMATO's TV ratings were disappointing. The science fiction boom to be lead by STAR WARS was still three years away—but in some respects, YAMATO's staff had laid the groundwork for it. A few small groups of fans acknowledged the show's greatness at first, but as it became more widely known, its popularity grew. Eventually, real fan clubs began to emerge.



Above: late voice actor Kei Tomiyama reads dialogue for Susumu Kodai. Below: attendees line up for the YAMATO feature film.

Then came the reruns! Fans passed the word to their friends to check out the show. Viewership improved dramatically, easily surpassing earlier poor ratings. Soon, the fans began to ask for more, and the natural next step was a movie. At the time, most anime films were geared only for the elementary school level, but YAMATO was appreciated by older fans in junior high as well as high school—fans who could buy their own movie tickets.

In August 1977, hot on the heels of STAR WARS, the YAMATO movie brought huge crowds to the box offices of Toei theater chains. Die hard fans were among the first in line, many waiting overnight, deep in non-stop discussions with other fans. Their ages varied between elementary students and adults, with the core being in the junior high and high school range. It was the first time a film animated in Japan demonstrated such wide appeal.

The movie reused much of the footage from the TV series, but new original scenes enhanced the experience and aided its success in the theaters. A comprehensive merchandising campaign followed. LP records and 8mm film clips were



released, increasing the number of fans tenfold. Over 800 Yamato fan clubs emerged with an estimated total of 150,000 members throughout the country. By the end of 1977, Office Academy (then the name of Yoshinobu Nishizaki's production company) created Yamato Fan Club HQ, which published newsletters and offered special promotions. Some suspect that the “YAMATO boom” created anime fandom itself, as well as its many subgenres, including fan clubs dedicated exclusively to voice actors.

The movie finished its run, but the fans demanded more. So in November of 1977, Nishizaki announced that there would be a sequel. “Next year,” he said, “we'll be making a new Yamato.” And the crowd, as the saying goes, went wild.

“Yamato Part 2” would be another theatrical effort by Office Academy, made in conjunction with Toei Doga. The title was “Arrivederci Space Battleship Yamato: Soldiers of Love.” (Released on video in America as “Farewell to Yamato: In The Name Of Love.”) Nishizaki and his production staff met for planning sessions in Hawaii. Fans mobbed the Fan Club HQ, frantic for data on the new film. The staff room at Toei Doga was closed to the public, with signs posted on the doors saying, “Employees Only. Do Not Enter!” The production staff included Noboru Ishiguro and Leiji Matsumoto (who was already hard at work on his own new animated series, SPACE PIRATE CAPTAIN HARLOCK). Other well-known talents also signed on, laboring under ever-increasing pressure to keep their work secret.

On the evening of August 4th, 1978, long lines of fans again stood outside Toei theaters. Record numbers of filmgoers flocked to Shibuya, Shinjuku and the west side of Yokohama to join the crowds. Many who couldn't get into the premiere nevertheless camped outside for days waiting for a seat. All this went on despite the fact that ARRIVEDERCI YAMATO brought virtually every popular characters' life to an end, and the Yamato itself was sacrificed against the Comet Empire! Some fans watched it over and over again, creating new fan clubs dedicated to this movie. Many fans thought nothing could top the previous adventure, but ARRIVEDERCI managed to deliver on all



Above: a May 1978 press conference for the film “Arrivederci Yamato.” Yoshinobu Nishizaki is seated fourth from the left. Leiji Matsumoto is seated third from the right.

counts, and some said it was appropriate for this film to bring the series to a close—it just couldn't get any better! Finally, *Animage*, an animation magazine, put a name to this phenomenon when they declared that Japan had been taken over by “Yamato Fever!”

Numerous concerts were held over the following year. The now-historic “Yamato Symphonic Concert,” lead by Conductor Hiroshi Miyagawa in July 1979, became an instant hit. College students began reciting the music on their own instruments, and the Yamato theme received constant airplay. This caught the



Above: Vocalist Isao Sasaki became a heart-throb of Elvisian proportions as he threw red scarfs to his audiences while singing “The Scarlet Scarf.”



attention of "All Night Nippon," an infotainment program dedicated to popular media. YAMATO captured an unprecedented four hour time slot from 1 AM to 5 AM, with both movies showing back to back. "All Night Nippon" even created a "Yamato Corner" on the show where Nishizaki answered questions from fans. The concerts played on to packed houses, and Miyagawa announced he would take them to wherever the fans asked. They even went to department stores, and Nishizaki was right there answering fans' questions. (When was the last time George Lucas or Steven Spielberg did that??)

Yamato Fever ultimately invaded the world of fashion. Nishizaki hired fashion designer Sachiko Hanai to create the "Yamato Style." She designed futuristic clothes that could be worn by the average boy or girl, and soon this had an impact on how things were marketed, from Yamato bags for children to more trendy outfits for college students. Even office ladies knew, "If you don't know Yamato, then you're out of touch!"

The phenomenon showed no sign of dying, and Leiji Matsumoto suggested that the crew of YAMATO should live on in answer to it. As a result, ARRIVED-ERCI gave way to a new TV series, YAMATO 2. The story was altered so that almost every character survived, and was greatly expanded upon to fill 26 half-hours. Long gone were the days when TV ratings lay in doubt. The first episode of YAMATO 2 debuted in October 1978 to ready-made audiences, and both television series finally reached American screens almost two years later as STAR BLAZERS.

The path to the future was clear from there; more YAMATO productions already had an enthusiastic stamp of approval. THE NEW VOYAGE was launched as a made-for-TV movie in July 1979, and an entirely new wave of popularity followed. "Yamato Fever" had run its course...and now it was a way of life.

Above: one of the many popular concert performances of music from the YAMATO films. Below: "The Yamato Style," clothing designs by Sachiko Hanai. The pink jumper became one of Yuki's costumes in ARRIVEDERCI.



This concludes our coverage of the development of early YAMATO productions. But with BE FOREVER YAMATO looming on our horizon, there will be plenty more to talk about in these pages. Very special thanks go to Earnest and Sumiko Migaki for their invaluable translation work over these past several issues!

IN APRIL OF 1945, THE LARGEST BATTLESHIP EVER BUILT LEFT JAPAN ON A LAST-DITCH SUICIDE MISSION. HER ENEMY: THE MOST POWERFUL NAVAL ARMADA EVER ASSEMBLED. THIS IS THE STORY OF THAT SHIP—AND OF ONE MAN WHO SAILED IN HER.

BY BRUCE LEWIS

No light. No sound. No bomb, bullet, or shell disturbed Yoshida. The young ensign floated blood-warm and motionless in a world of silence, his nightmare finally at an end. The last three hours of his life were swirled together now into a blur of blood, shrapnel, and the stink of young men dead before their time. Visions of their ending floated before Yoshida's unseeing eyes: tattered survivors all in a row, cheering the Emperor from what surely could not have been the ship's keel; the Captain, forcing the younger bridge officers overboard with fists and kicks to prevent them from joining him in his final duty—going down with the ship; and the heartbreakingly young and tear-stained face of an anonymous sailor, clinging with determination to *Yamato's* battle-flag mast as it dipped into the sea around him. The horror, the suffering were all over now, thought Yoshida, floating senseless in the silent blackness; now, painlessly, it was time to die...

Suddenly, light!—a wall of silver, bearing down in front of him with frightening speed! With a shock, Yoshida realized that the rippling wall of bubbles and brilliance before him was the side of an enormous cone, a cone of water opening into the sea in which he'd floated helplessly only seconds before! Frantically, he began scrabbling up, up, pulling against the relentless force that tore at him as the immense bulk of *Yamato* herself created an underwater tornado as she sank. Bodies whipped past him as he struggled, bodies embedded in the walls of the funnel by its tremendous power. The whirlpool approached, grew, touched him, pulling him down to die with the rest.

Then, without warning, the pull vanished, to be replaced almost at once by an overwhelming blast of force. Somewhere in the black below, *Yamato's* ammunition was exploding, shredding the ship and sending tremendous waves of pressure through the surrounding sea. Yoshida felt himself tossed like a rag, completely helpless, thrown tumbling through a universe of water and foam by explosion after explosion after explosion.

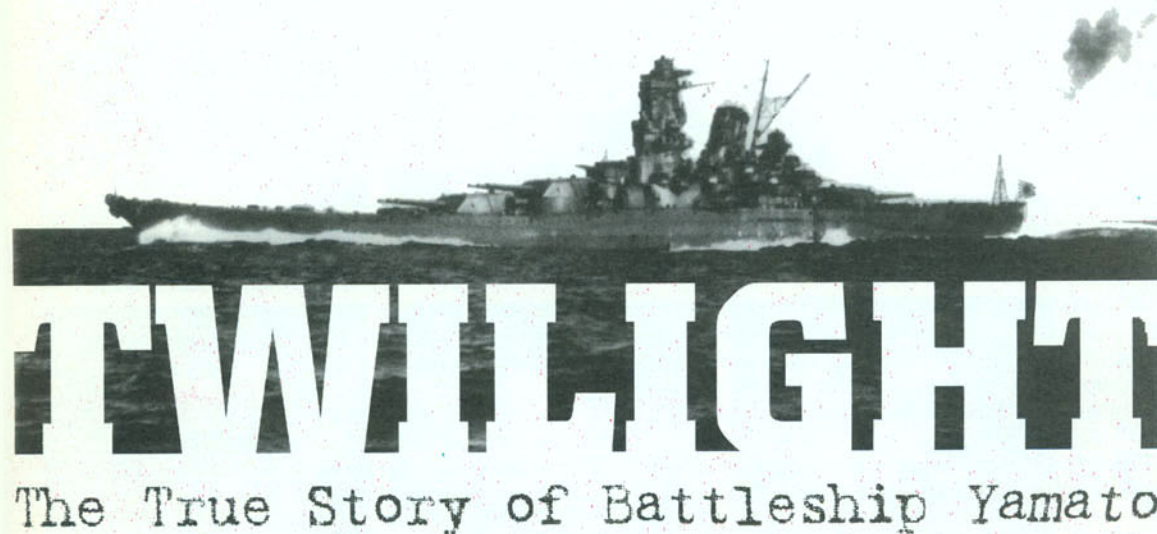
Then, silence; blackness; and, at a great distance, a green and unearthly light. It was 1423 hours, 7 April 1945, and battleship *Yamato*, the flagship of the Imperial Japanese Navy, was no more.

"Torpedo and sink *Hiryu*—then, let us enjoy the beauty of the moon."

—Admiral Tamon Yamaguchi IJN, ordering the destruction of his own sinking ship; Midway, 4 June 1942

The morning sun burned hot over Midway, bathing the decks of the two carrier fleets in blood-red light. Since early morning, waves of American torpedo bombers from carriers *Enterprise*, *Hornet*, and *Yorktown* had thrown themselves valiantly but fruitlessly into the clouds of Zeroes surrounding Japanese carriers *Hiryu*, *Soryu*, *Akagi*, and *Kaga*. Out of the forty-some American attackers, only seven had managed to actually launch torpedoes against Admiral Nagumo's Midway attack fleet, but they all missed, and of the Yankee pilots only a few still survived.

PLEASE TURN THE PAGE



But even as the Japanese commander turned flagship *Akagi* into the wind to launch his counterstrike, the Japanese Empire's fate was being sealed.

At that moment, directly overhead, two squadrons of United States Navy Dauntless dive-bombers from the carrier *Enterprise* burst from the sky. The four Japanese carriers were helpless to stop them; their protective fighter squadrons were "on the deck" and nearly out of ammunition after fighting off repeated American attacks, and their flight decks were stacked with bombs and fuel for the counterstrike. Tipping straight over from 14,000 feet altitude, the 37 planes of Lieutenant Commander Clarence McCluskey's *Enterprise* air group stooped at the circling Japanese flattops below. There could be no escape; *Akagi* shuddered as the first two bombs ripped into her guts.

The first pierced her hangar deck and exploded amidst the piles of ordnance stored there, instantly turning the ship into a hellish inferno from stem to stern. The second bomb exploded in the center of the fuel, ordnance, and aircraft on the flight deck; wrecking it and killing many. Carrier *Kaga* absorbed three bomb hits at almost the same instant, yet even as *Enterprise's* planes broke away from their attack, the 17 Dauntlesses of Commander Maxwell Leslie's *Yorktown* carrier air group began one of their own, bearing down on carrier *Soryu* as she turned into the wind to launch. Seconds later, the Japanese ship was engulfed in flames, shattered by three half-ton American bombs; less than a half hour after that, the U.S. submarine *Nautilus* fired three torpedoes into *Soryu's* gasoline bunkers and sent her crew screaming into the depths. A counterstrike from Nagumo's surviving carrier *Hiryu* succeeded in sinking *Yorktown* after a furious and bravely-fought battle, but before nightfall the remaining Japanese carrier had been sunk as well, while the two remaining U.S. carriers continued to rain bombs on the fleeing remnants of the Midway task force. In six crucial minutes, the U.S. carrier aviators had destroyed the heart of Japan's sea power and avenged the attack on Pearl Harbor; at 1026 hours, 4 June 1942, Japan had lost the Pacific War.

Word of the defeat soon reached Admiral Yamamoto in his teak-lined quarters aboard flagship *Yamato* several hundred miles to the west. Tearfully, the Admiral ordered *Yamato* and his remaining surface forces to press on and attack the Americans with naval cannon and ship-launched torpedoes. Soon, however, even he was forced to admit the battle was over. Finally, at five minutes to three on a black Pacific morning, the Admiral ordered a general retreat. Slowly, the great battleship swung east, leading her fleet home in defeat; *Yamato* had returned from her first mission without ever having fired her guns in anger.

From Midway on, the more mobile U.S. and Allied forces were able to begin turning back the Japanese tide that had washed across the islands of the Pacific. First came the Battle of Guadalcanal, where U.S. amphibious and naval forces fought the Japanese on an equal footing for the first time and came away bloodied but victorious. (*Yamato*, sent by Tokyo to support a Japanese attempt to recapture the island, made it as far as the Imperial Naval base at Truk but did not take part in the fighting.) By the spring of 1943, the Empire was at last forced into retreat at Guadalcanal; from then on, Japan was to be on the defensive.

Then, the counterattack began, an island-hopping campaign in which air and naval power were combined to destroy Japan's

mobile forces while bypassing and cutting off her island garrisons. U.S. submarines began a campaign of unrestricted warfare, targeting the merchant ships that kept the Empire's forces supplied with food, fuel, and the means to fight, while the U.S. surface fleet took on and defeated Japan's remaining combatants. By now, the great machine of America's war industries was running at full speed; from its foundries, shipyards, and factories poured a flood of weapons and materiel the likes of which the world had never before seen. In 1943, for example, the shipbuilders of the United States produced 66 submarines, 205 destroyer escorts, 92 destroyers, 11 cruisers, 3 battleships, and 37 aircraft carriers of all types (in 1996 the U.S. Navy possesses some 15 carriers at any given time). This avalanche of war production made the United States forces the best-equipped and most mobile fighting force in history. Grimly, Admiral Nimitz put them to work.

Through it all, *Yamato* fought on, despite the fact that the age of the great battleships was all but over. The enormous 18" guns she and her sister ship *Musashi* mounted remained without equal in size or power; with the advent of naval air warfare, however, the efficacy of such cannons was soon reduced to near nil. Japanese surface units were sent to the bottom one after another by Allied airpower, regardless of the size or number of naval cannon they bore. And on 18 April, 1943, not long after shifting his flag to *Musashi*, Admiral Yamamoto himself fell victim to American air power, shot down by an U.S. Army Air Force fighter as he flew over Bougainville. With *Yamato* and other ships sailing by her side, *Musashi* bore his ashes home to the fleet anchorage in Tokyo Bay not long after. There, the two super-dreadnoughts were inspected for the first and only time by the Emperor himself before going into refit. After refit, *Yamato* set sail once more in May 1943.

But if the great ship's size was imposing, it also made her an irresistible target. On Christmas Day 1943, the U.S. submarine *Skate* put a torpedo into *Yamato's* starboard side as she patrolled near Truk. Her armor belt cracked, *Yamato* returned to Kure for repairs, where her two 155 mm side turrets were replaced with six 127 mm mounts. Several months later, in March of 1944, it was *Musashi's* turn, as *Yamato's* sister ship was sent into drydock by yet another American torpedo. After repair, the two battle-wagons once again went to sea, from Singapore to Saipan, where *Yamato* fired her big guns in anger for the first time in the Battle of the Mariana Sea (June 1944). After another refit and a high-speed crossing from Brunei to the Philippines, *Yamato* (now the flagship of Combined Fleet Admiral Takeo Kurita) and *Musashi* threw themselves into battle in the Sibuyan Sea. There, on 24 October 1944, *Musashi's* luck ran out, twenty torpedoes and seventeen bombs combined to put her on the bottom. *Yamato* herself took three bombs, but lived to fight the next day—at the Battle of Samar Gulf (25 October 1944), where *Yamato* drew her first blood. Her big guns blasted 104 rounds into the U.S. fleet there, sinking an escort carrier and a destroyer, but to no avail. Soon the Philippines were lost as well. It was *Yamato's* first and last battle with surface forces. Soon after, American aircraft drove her from her refuge at Brunei, and in November she was ordered to return to Japan.

A few days later on 29 November, *Yamato's* only remaining sister ship, the hybrid battleship-carrier *Shinano*, was sunk by U.S. torpedoes minutes after leaving her berth at Yokosuka. The great wave had crested; as 1945 began, *Yamato* stood alone.

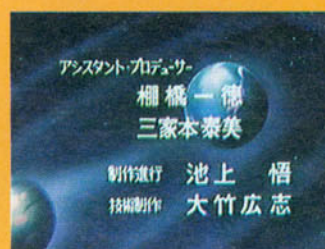
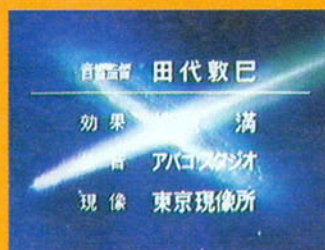
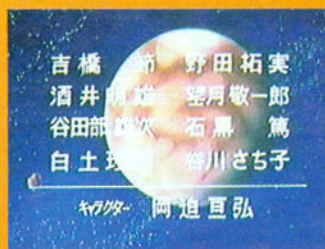
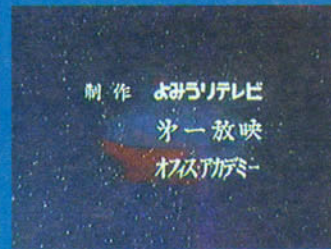
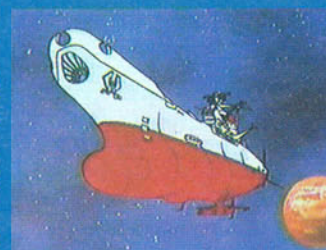
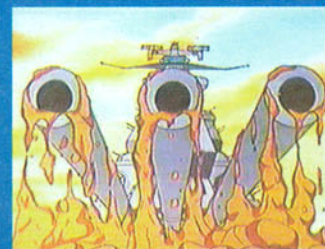
Next: The Final Battle

LOST IN TRANSLATION part 1

Beginning this issue, we bring you scenes from the original YAMATO animated series that, for one reason or another, were cut from the American broadcast of STAR BLAZERS. We open with perhaps the most important identifying features; the opening and closing titles. Whereas the STAR BLAZERS titles reused scenes from the show itself, the YAMATO titles contained separate and distinct visuals, some culled from the Pilot Film we presented in Issue #3. Enjoy!



OPENING TITLE MUSIC: "YAMATO THEME"



CLOSING TITLE MUSIC: "THE SCARLET SCARF"

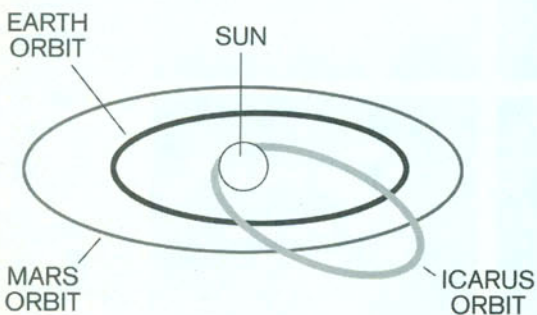


Star Blazers Extra:
THE REAL ICARUS

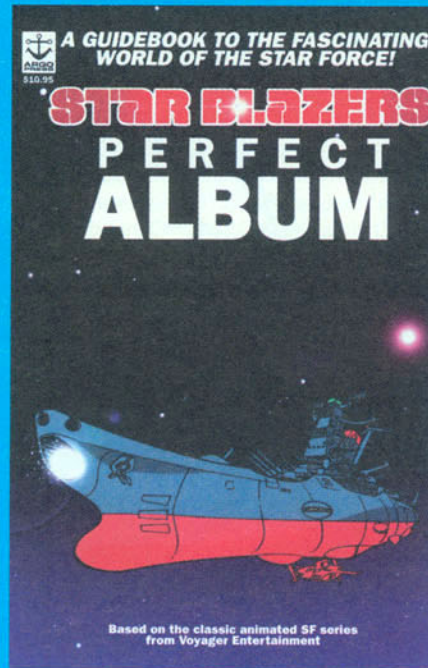
While there is no Icarus Base for astronauts to go to today, Icarus itself is a real place! Icarus [1566 Icarus] is a large rocky planetoid, or asteroid, some 1.4 kilometers (.87 miles) across and massing about a billion metric tons. A so-called "Earth-crosser", Icarus orbits the sun in a highly eccentric (= .827) orbit that intersects the orbit of Earth from time to time. Some scientists believe that an object similar to Icarus hit the Earth millions of years ago, causing the extinction of the dinosaurs. Fortunately, Icarus' orbit is tilted 23 degrees with respect to our planet's orbit, making a collision between the two unlikely. Icarus takes about thirteen months (1.12 years) to orbit the Sun, which means that on average the asteroid orbits at about the same distance as Earth does around the sun. (The distance between the Earth and Sun, some 93 million miles, is called an Astronomical Unit, or AU; Icarus orbits at a distance of 1.078 AU.)

Because of its proximity to Earth's orbit, Icarus and some other planetoids are well within reach of spacecraft we can build today; in the near future, space probes will visit some of these to examine them and bring back samples of the materials from which they are made. Many scientists think that planetoids like Icarus are comprised of valuable metals and ices that will be useful as humanity expands into the Solar System. If so, it's possible that you yourself may someday be part of a mission to Icarus!

Above: 951 Gaspra, an asteroid similar to Icarus. [JPL]
Below: Icarus' orbit crosses that of Earth.



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NEXT ISSUE



As the EDF puts the new mechanized fleet through its trial run, Captain Yamanami takes command of the *Yamato*, but seems less than pleased with his new post. Sandor finally takes steps to make Sasha an official member of the Star Force, and the Dark Nebula gathers for the final countdown...to invasion!

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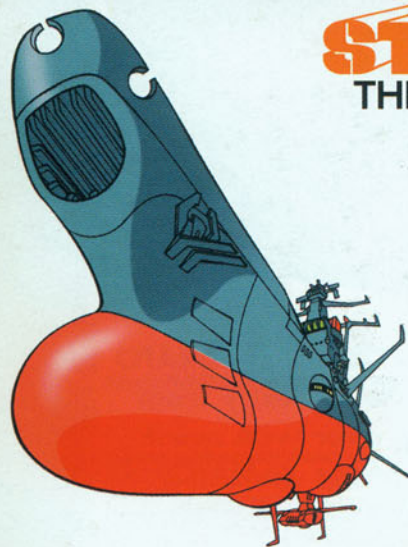


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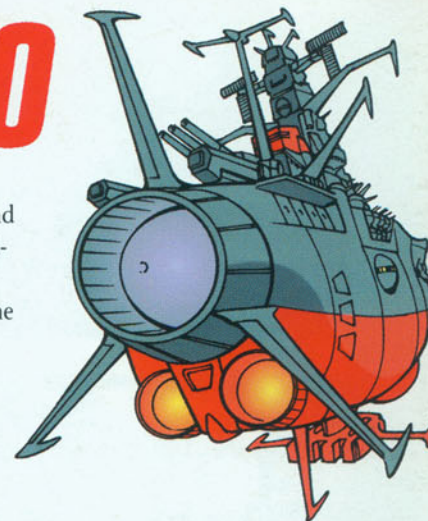
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*"Farewell to Yamato" is also available as a dubbed version.

