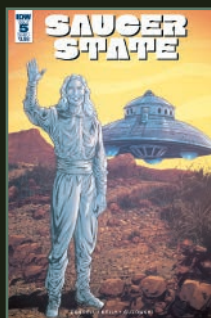


IDW
ISSUE
5
COVER A
\$3.99

SAUCER STATE



CORNELL • KELLY • GUZOWSKI



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PETERSON SFB.

I NEED
TO GET BACK
OUT THERE.

YOU'RE IN
THE MIDDLE OF
CRISIS MEETINGS,
PREPARING FOR
RUSSIA NOW.

I HAVE A LEAD,
ONE THAT MAKES
MORE SENSE NOW
WE'RE UNPICKING
THE AEROSPACE
CONNECTION...

YOU MEAN THE
BLUEBIRDS?

WHOEVER WAS CONTROLLING
THE PIONEER COUPLE HAD
ACCESS TO THE SAME "ALIEN
ARTIFACT" PIECE OF JUNK
ASTELLE WAS SHOWN--

--SO MAYBE
THE BLUEBIRDS
ARE LINKED TO
THE MICROWAVE
HALLUCINATION
WEAPON.

I FOUND SOME
INFORMATION ON
JOE BERMINGEN, THE
ONLY NAME WE HAVE
IN CONNECTION TO
ALL THAT.

APART FROM
ASTELLE, BUT
WE HAVE BEEN
SEARCHING FOR
HER WITH EVERY
ARM OF STATE,
AND...

YOU
GO OPEN UP
OUR SECOND
FRONT.

JUST BE
CAREFUL--

"--THAT WHATEVER
MADE ASTELLE
DISAPPEAR DOESN'T DO
THE SAME TO YOU."

GLEARRGHHH!

AND
CLEAR IN THREE...
TWO... ONE...

...AND
CUT OFF.

THAT'S...
IMPRESSIVE
KIT.

NOTHING BUT
THE BEST FOR THE
BLUEBIRD CONTACT
TEAM. HOW YOU
HOLDING UP?

...EXCELLENTLY.

BUT,
LISTEN,
JACOB...

...I CAN UNDERSTAND
THE NEED FOR SECURITY,
BUT I WAS CALLED HERE
SO QUICKLY... I HAVE
FAMILY I NEED TO--

BIG
NEGATIVE ON THAT,
ASTELLE--



--ISOLATION
ISN'T JUST
SECURITY, IT'S
PHILOSOPHY.
IT'S **FOR THE
VOYAGE.**



"FOR THE VOYAGE."

THEY KEEP
SAYING THAT.



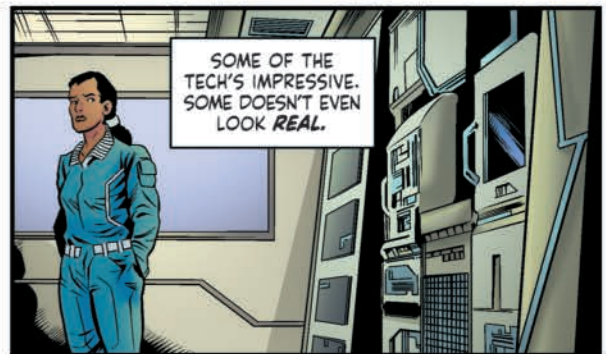
REPEATED MEMES.
THEY'RE **WAITING**
FOR ME TO JOIN IN.

I CAN FEEL
MY SENSE OF
INDIVIDUALITY...
BEING PICKED
AWAY AT.



HOW LONG HAVE
I BEEN HERE?
ONLY A DAY? HOW
LONG HAVE I BEEN
KEPT AWAKE?

IT'S LIKE
THERE'S...
SOMETHING IN
THE... WATER...
OR...



SOME OF THE
TECH'S IMPRESSIVE.
SOME DOESN'T EVEN
LOOK **REAL.**



I FEEL LIKE...
I'M IN OZ.

I FEEL LIKE...

...THE EVERYDAY
IS FAR AWAY.

MEANWHILE, IN
THE NEW MEXICAN
DESERT...

WE PROUDLY
PRESENT...

THE PARANORMAL AND THE SACRED

(FOR JEFF KRIPAL).

...YOU...
WHAT NOW?
WHO ARE YOU
EVEN TALKING
TO?



"YOU DON'T EVEN
KNOW WHO THIS IS
TALKING TO YOU."

"I'M GLAD TO
MEET YOU IN
SAUCER COUNTRY."

WHAT...
WAS THAT?
WHAT DID YOU
JUST DO?

PLEASE,
FOLLOW ME.

"ORTHON IS HERE
TO SPEAK OF A
NEW SCIENCE OF
ASSOCIATION."

"OF SYSTEMS THAT
CONNECT EVENTS IN
WAYS THAT GO ROUND
AND PAST YOUR
CURRENT KNOWLEDGE
OF PHYSICS."

"HENCE A KEY TO
THE DEVELOPING
NARRATIVE WAS
OFFERED AS 'CAKE',
AN OBJECT THAT
BECAME A WORD."

NO! NO!
WHAT'S--

--HAPPENING?!

PLEASE,
MICHAEL,
WAIT--!