

MASK

MOBILE ARMORED STRIKE KOMMAND



EASTON • RODRIGUEZ • VARGAS • SAMU • MOSS • GRIFFITH

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ISSUE #10

ART BY **DREW MOSS**

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LETTERS BY **GILBERTO LAZCANO**

Assembling a black-ops team is a delicate affair.

There are five personality traits that the perfect special forces candidate will possess.

YOU READY FOR THIS, MATT?

DO WE HAVE ANOTHER OPTION?



Stress resistance, extreme competitiveness, self-reliance, self-criticism, and stoicism.

THERE ARE ALWAYS OTHER OPTIONS, TRAKKER. YOU COULD WALK OUT OF HERE RIGHT NOW...

OR YOU CAN ACCEPT THE FACT THAT I'VE PLACED AN INORDINATE AMOUNT OF FAITH IN YOUR ABILITY TO SUCCEED.



DO YOU DOUBT THAT I'VE TRAINED YOU TO BE THE BEST IN THE WORLD?

NO, SIR.

GOOD. DON'T PLANT THE SEEDS OF DOUBT. IT'S A FAST-GROWING CROP THAT SOWS NOTHING BUT DEFEAT.

This group requires a ridiculous amount of spoon-feeding and there's not a cup of self-reliance big enough to satisfy them.





M.A.S.K.
TEAM! LET'S
MOBILIZE!!!

Despite their weaknesses, they'll serve
me well in the ultimate conflict.

VRRRRRROOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO MMMMM



And when they've outlived
their usefulness... they'll be
"retired" from service.



ONE YEAR AGO...

WHAT IS THIS?
AN AUDITION FOR
ANTIQUES
ROADSHOW?

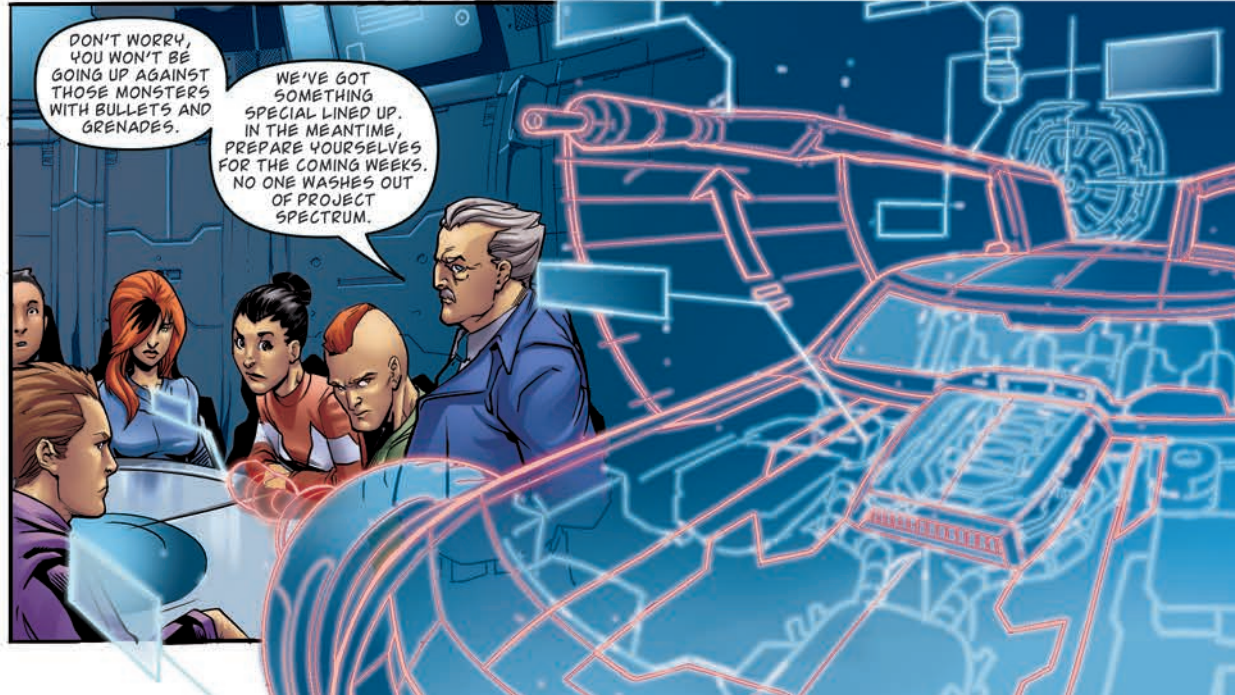


WELCOME TO
"PROJECT SPECTRUM."
BECAUSE OF YOUR
BACKGROUND AND UNIQUE
ABILITIES, YOU'VE BEEN
SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE
IN A CLASSIFIED
TRAINING CAMP.

THE PURPOSE OF
THIS PROGRAM IS TO
FIND PILOTS TO HELP
PROTECT EARTH FROM
NEW THREATS...

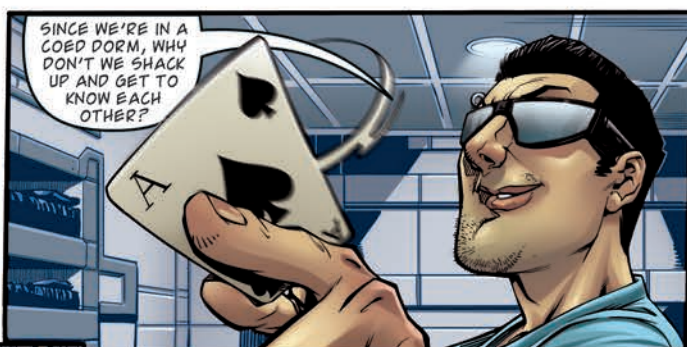
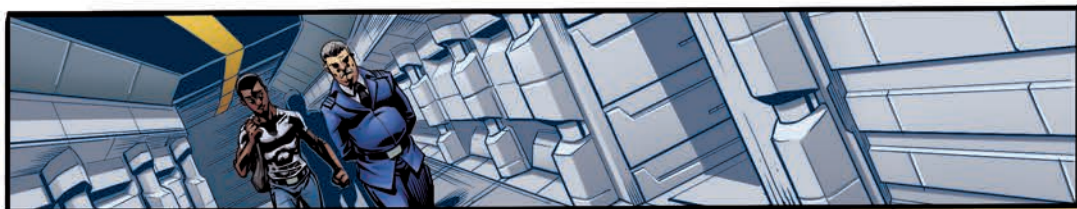


SPECIFICALLY, THE
CYBERTRONIAN
PROBLEM.



DON'T WORRY,
YOU WON'T BE
GOING UP AGAINST
THOSE MONSTERS
WITH BULLETS AND
GRENADES.

WE'VE GOT
SOMETHING
SPECIAL LINED UP.
IN THE MEANTIME,
PREPARE YOURSELVES
FOR THE COMING WEEKS.
NO ONE WASHES OUT
OF PROJECT
SPECTRUM.





We're beginning with the psychoanalysis based on a word association test. I've sent for one of the world's best counterintelligence profilers—

Dr. Verstal Bender. The good doctor assisted the C.I.A. with their MK-Ultra program and worked with major advertising agencies to implement subliminal messaging that increased consumer interest.

My kind of warrior.

THANKS FOR JOINING ME TODAY, DR. BENDER.

YOUR STIPEND WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO RESIST, MILES.



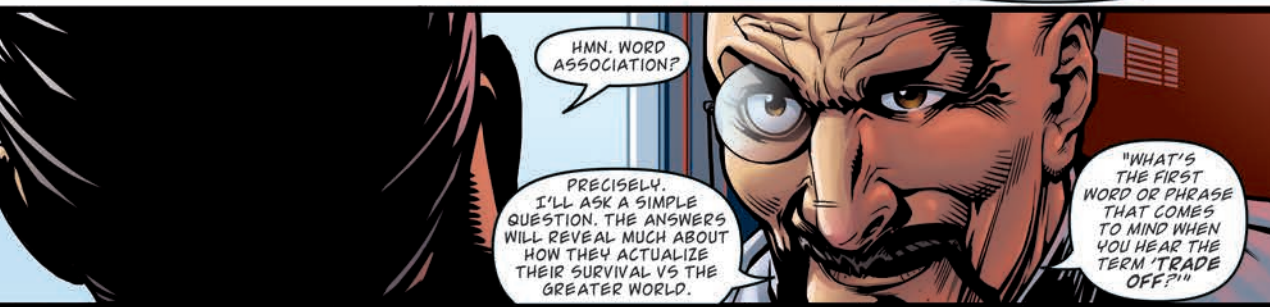
OF THE FIVE TRAITS YOU'RE SEARCHING FOR, YOUR RECRUITS POSSESS AT LEAST THREE. THE ONE WE NEED TO IDENTIFY FIRST IS STRESS RESISTANCE.

NO DIFFERENT THAN THE ASTRONAUTS FROM YOUR MERCURY PROGRAM YEARS AGO.



WHAT WOULD YOU SUGGEST? IMMEDIATE EXPOSURE TO STIMULI?

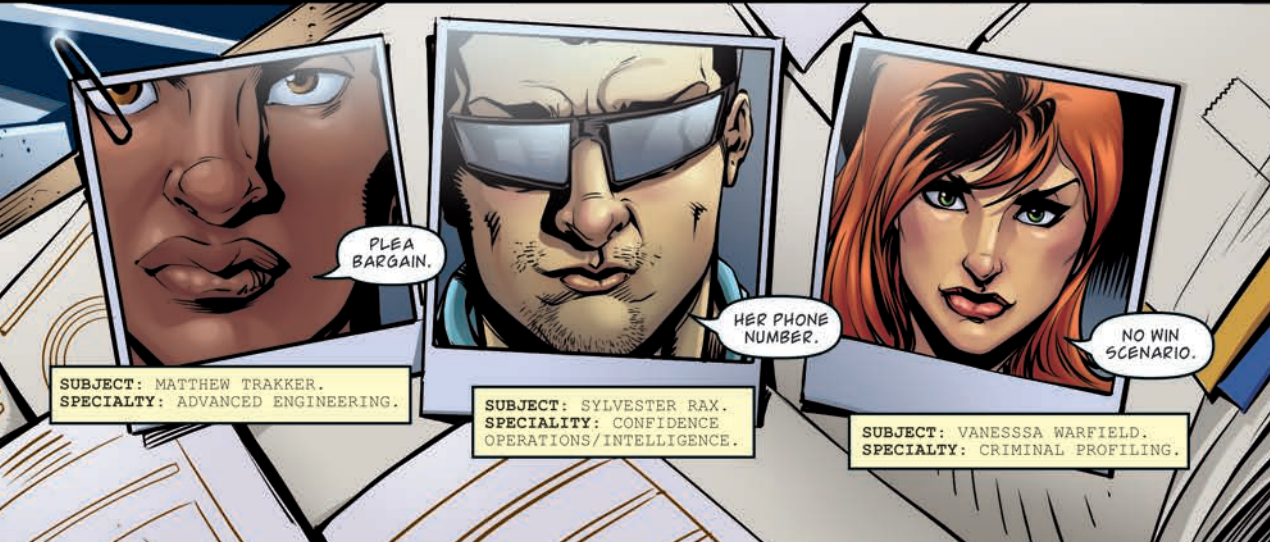
NOT YET. I'D PREFER TO SEE HOW THEY HANDLE THE IDEA OF SELF-PRESERVATION. PART OF DEALING WITH A STRESSFUL COMBAT SCENARIO IS UNLEARNING THE DESIRE TO SURVIVE UNSCATHED.



HMM. WORD ASSOCIATION?

PRECISELY. I'LL ASK A SIMPLE QUESTION. THE ANSWERS WILL REVEAL MUCH ABOUT HOW THEY ACTUALIZE THEIR SURVIVAL VS THE GREATER WORLD.

"WHAT'S THE FIRST WORD OR PHRASE THAT COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU HEAR THE TERM 'TRADE OFF'?"



PLEA BARGAIN.

SUBJECT: MATTHEW TRAKKER.
SPECIALTY: ADVANCED ENGINEERING.

HER PHONE NUMBER.

SUBJECT: SYLVESTER RAX.
SPECIALTY: CONFIDENCE OPERATIONS/INTELLIGENCE.

NO WIN SCENARIO.

SUBJECT: VANESSA WARFIELD.
SPECIALTY: CRIMINAL PROFILING.