

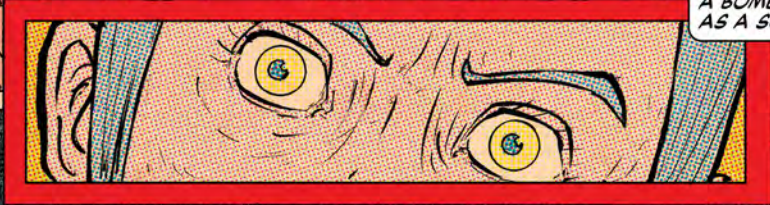


YOU CAN WEAPONIZE **ANYTHING**. ROCKS. CARS. AIRLINERS. HYDROGEN ATOMS. HUMAN BEINGS.

AND THEN YOU JUST POINT IT IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AND HOPE THE SHARP EDGE LANDS TRUE.

AND IF THE WEAPON IS DESTROYED IN THE PROCESS?

A BOMB IS AS BRIEF AS A SOAP BUBBLE.



THE FIRST STONE AXES WERE CREATED TO HELP EARLY HUMANS DISMEMBER THEIR PREY.

DYNAMITE WAS INVENTED TO ASSIST IN LAND CLEARING.

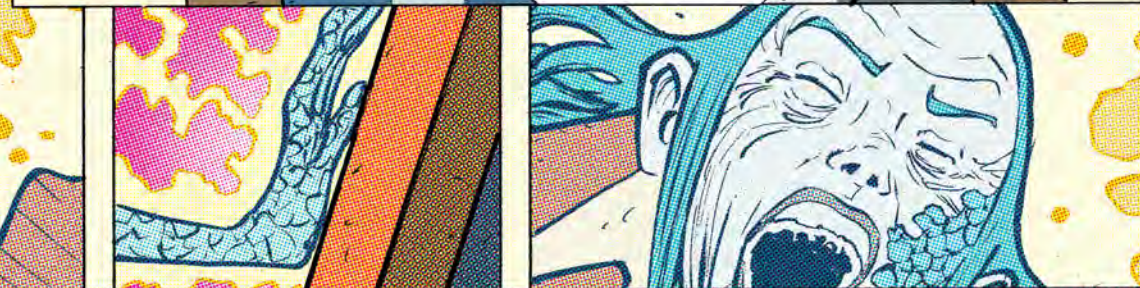
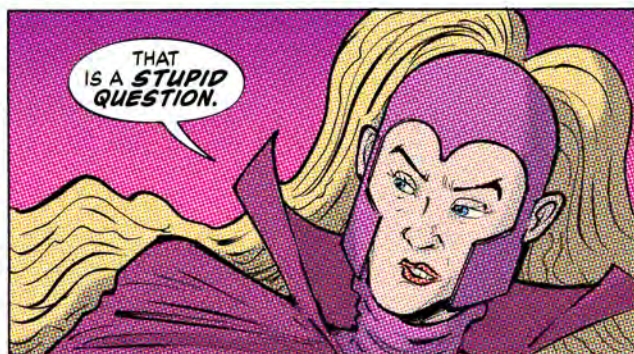
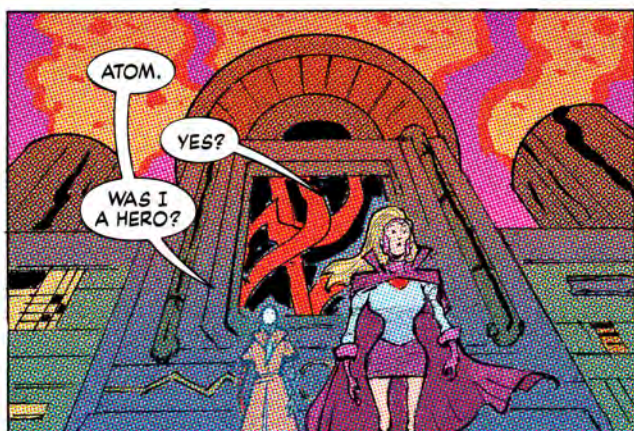
THE ATOMIC BOMB WAS BUILT TO END WAR.

BUT IN THE END, IT'S JUST THREE THINGS.

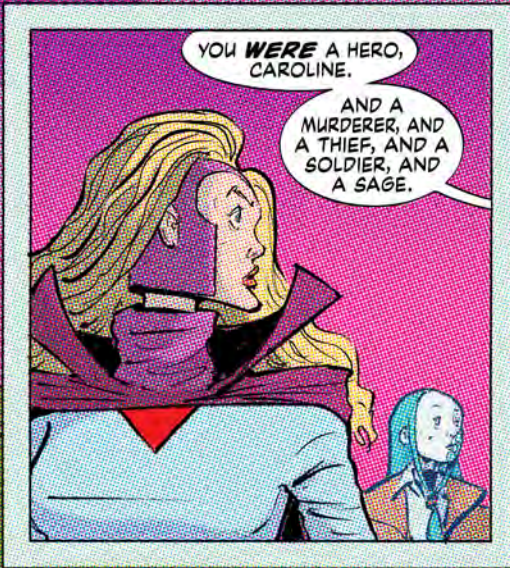


FORCE, SPEED, AND TIMING, JUDICIOUSLY APPLIED.





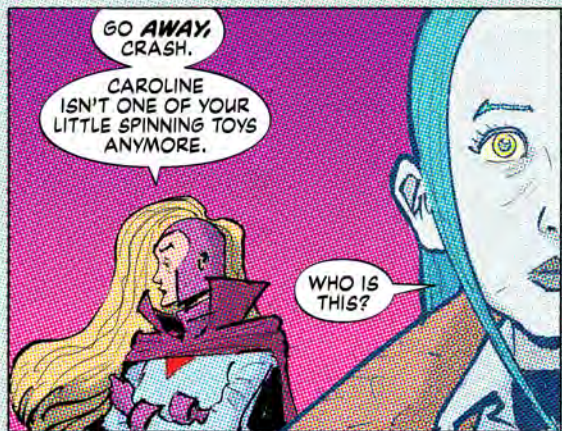




YOU *WERE* A HERO, CAROLINE.

AND A MURDERER, AND A THIEF, AND A SOLDIER, AND A SAGE.

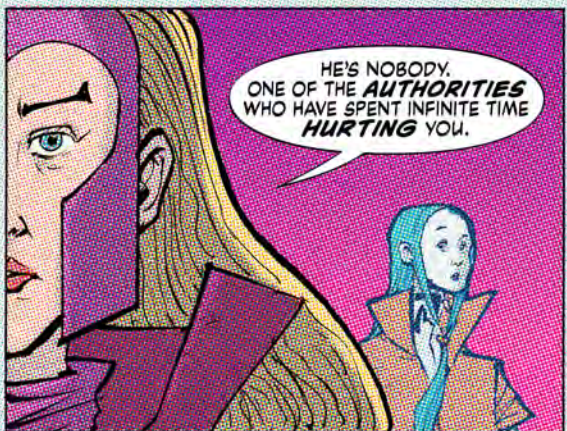
BUT A HERO, TOO.  
THAT'S ALWAYS WHAT FIT YOU *BEST*.



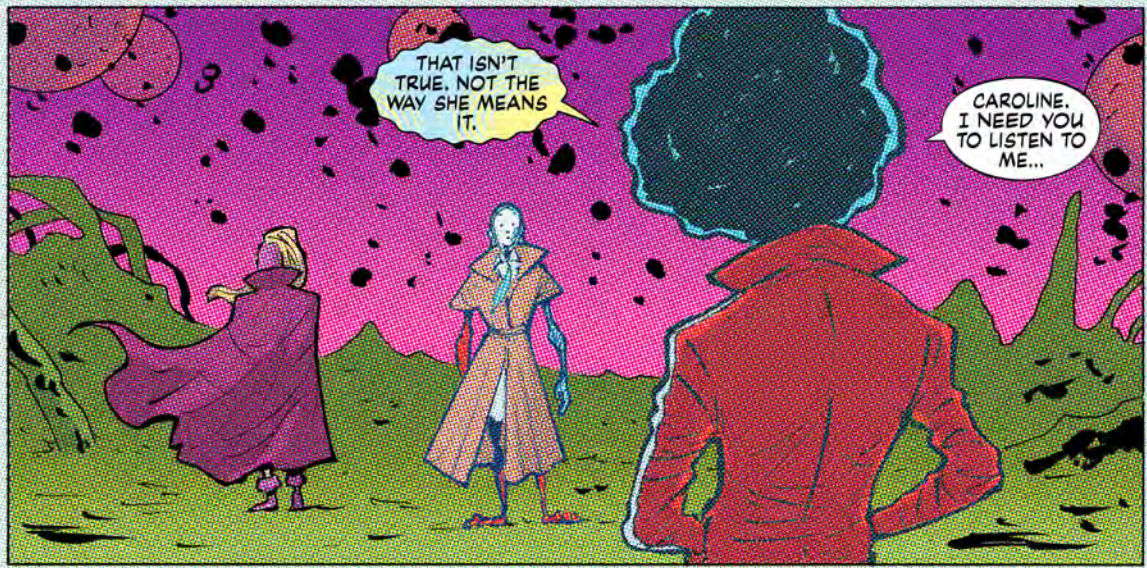
GO AWAY, CRASH.

CAROLINE ISN'T ONE OF YOUR LITTLE SPINNING TOYS ANYMORE.

WHO IS THIS?



HE'S NOBODY. ONE OF THE *AUTHORITIES* WHO HAVE SPENT INFINITE TIME *HURTING* YOU.



THAT ISN'T TRUE. NOT THE WAY SHE MEANS IT.

CAROLINE. I NEED YOU TO LISTEN TO ME...





...BECAUSE THIS IS IMPORTANT.

THAT'S WHAT CRASH SAID.

WHO?

I DON'T KNOW YET. HE HASN'T TOLD ME.

NOBODY TELLS ME ANYTHING.



NOT YOU, NOT SLOAN, NOT MADAME ATOM, AND NOT WHOEVER THIS THROWBACK DEEJAY GUY IS. CRASH, I GUESS. COOL NAME.

EVERYONE IS JUST DRAGGING ME AROUND. USING ME. AT LEAST ATOM ASKS WHAT I WANT INSTEAD OF EXPECTING ME TO DO WHAT EVERYONE ELSE WANTS.



CAROLINE...

...MADAME ATOM IS DEAD. WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?



SHE IS. AND SHE ISN'T. SAME AS ME.

NOBODY STAYS DEAD ANYWAY, SO IT'S NOT EVEN THAT WEIRD. TURNING AND TURNING IN THE WIDENING GYRE, YOU KNOW?

WE ALL COME AROUND AGAIN.



YOU KNOW, I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF TURNING MYSELF INTO A BOMB WOULD HAVE KILLED ME? MAYBE IT JUST WOULD HAVE SCATTERED MY INTRINSIC FIELD ACROSS THE PLANET OR THE UNIVERSE. MAYBE ALL I'D BE IS AN INERT MIND. ALWAYS AWAKE, ALWAYS AWARE.

ALWAYS AND ALWAYS AND ALWAYS. AND THEN ONE DAY, AFTER A TRILLION YEARS, THE UNIVERSE WOULD COLLAPSE, PRESUMABLY TAKING ME WITH IT. BUT THEN?



"THE WHOLE MESS WOULD HAVE STARTED UP AGAIN. ANOTHER ME, ANOTHER YOU, ANOTHER TRILLION YEARS.

"FOREVER AND EVER, AMEN."