

BARBER • ZAMA • BURCHAM

OPTIMUS PRIME

THE FALLING, PART 1



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OPTIMUS PRIME



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"ANTILLA—

"—A RUST WORLD AT THE CENTER OF THE GALAXY. WE'D HAVE NEVER KNOWN OF IT, WERE IT NOT FOR THE BEACON.

"A CYBERTRONIAN HELIOGRAPH, CALLING THROUGH SPACE... CALLING TO US.

"CAMINUS' SUN, BURNED BRIGHT, IN THOSE DAYS.

"OUR FUTURE WAS ONE OF HOPE—SUDDENLY COMPOUNDED BY THE IMPENDING REUNION WITH OUR LOST ANCESTORS.

"THE SCINTILLANCE WAS OUR FASTEST STARSHIP. THE VOYAGE TOOK A MERE CENTURY.

"AS MATRIARCH OF INCAENDIUM, I WAS NEXT IN LINE TO BECOME MISTRESS OF FLAME...

"...THUS WAS I CHOSEN TO BE THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE WAY OF FLAME.

"PRAESIDIA PILOTTED, POISED TO DEFEND US SHOULD—PRIMUS FORBID—ANYTHING GO WRONG.

"MAGRADA WAS OUR MOST SKILLED LINGUIST. IT HAD BEEN LONG SINCE WE HAD SPOKEN WITH CYBERTRONIANS, OTHER THAN OURSELVES.

"IT WAS FITTING SHE SAW IT FIRST...



"...THOUGH I SUPPOSE THAT *DOOMED* HER.

"THE MOUNTAIN WAS... *UNNATURAL*.

"*PRAESIDIA* WARNED ME.

"BUT I WAS NOT ON A MISSION—I WAS ON A *CRUSADE*.



"A HOLY QUEST TO WALK THE PATH OF *PRIMUS*.



"THOUGH... PERHAPS THE ROAD TO *ANTILLA*...



"...WAS THE DOMAIN OF HIS *OPPOSITE*.



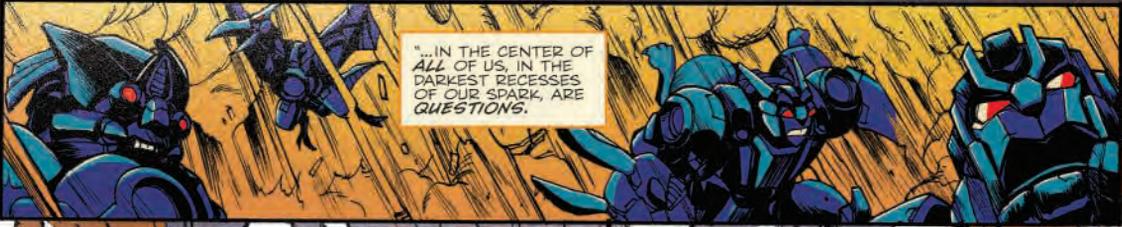
"MAGRADA TRIED TO STOP ME, BUT I..."

"...I WAS LOOKING AT A GOD.

"ONE WAY OR ANOTHER... THIS WAS A PRIME.



"I HAD DEDICATED MY LIFE TO THEIR TEACHINGS, BUT..."

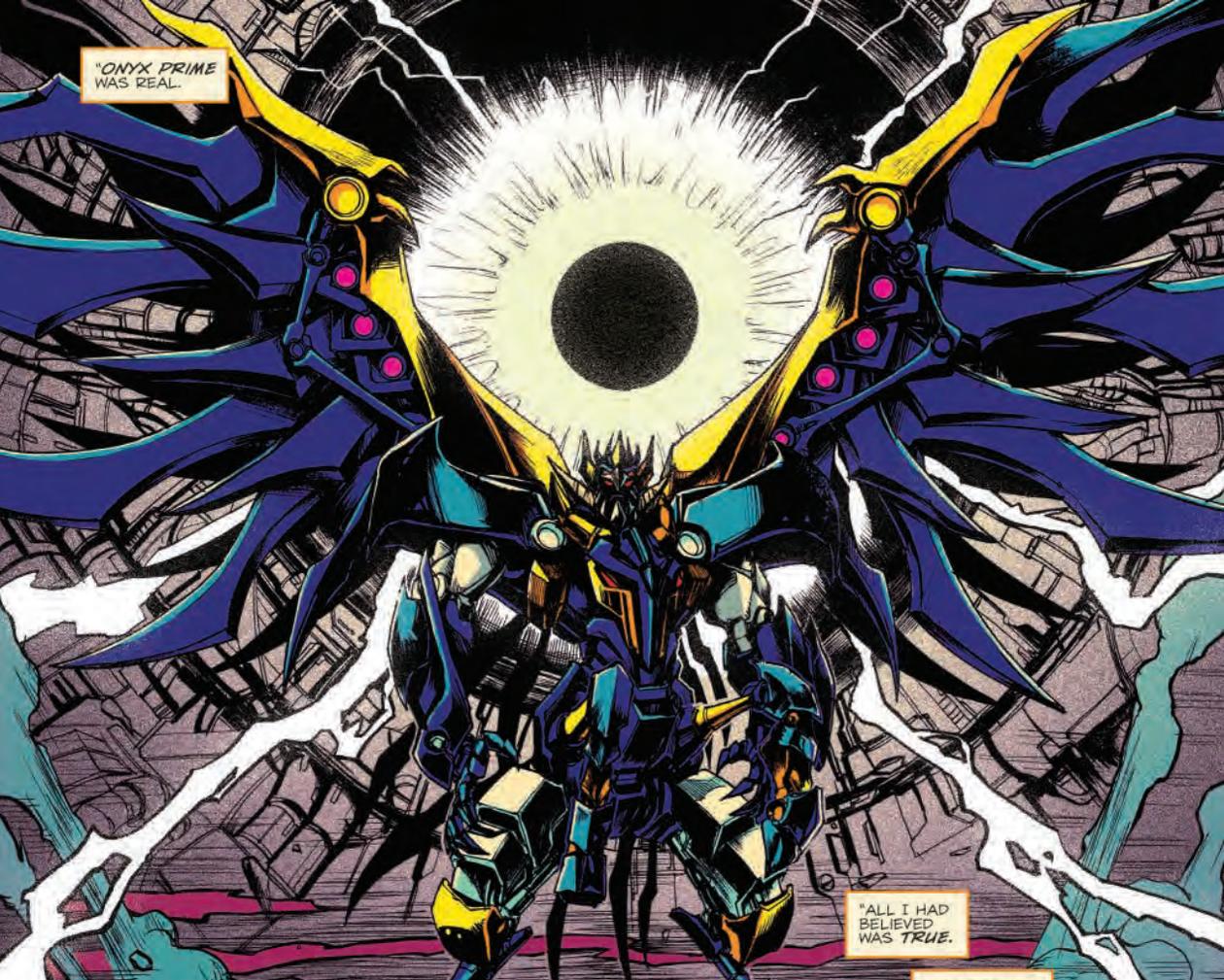


"...IN THE CENTER OF ALL OF US, IN THE DARKEST RECESSES OF OUR SPARK, ARE QUESTIONS.



"THE PRIME ANSWERED MINE.

"ONYX PRIME
WAS REAL.



"ALL I HAD
BELIEVED
WAS TRUE.

"YET I NEVER
EXPECTED THE
LIGHT OF MY
QUESTIONS...



"...TO BE EXTINGUISHED
BY THE DARKNESS OF
THE ANSWERS.



"PRAESIDIA NEVER
LOOKED BACK.



"BUT I..."



...I HAVE DONE **LITTLE ELSE.**

BY THE TIME WE RETURNED HOME, OUR SUN HAD GONE DARK. THE MISTRESS WAS DEAD.

LONG LIVE THE MISTRESS OF FLAME.

MISTRESS OF FLAME. CAMIEN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE COUNCIL OF WORLDS.

CYBERTRON, TODAY.



'PFET! "A GOD."

AND THIS... THIS DROVE YOU ONWARDS?

SCOOP. A CONSTRUCTION.

ALPHA TRION. A PRIME.



HOW COULD IT NOT, ALPHA TRION?

LIT BY THE FIRE OF MY EXPERIENCE, I BEGAN TO ILLUMINATE OUR WORLD.

MY FIRST ACT AS MISTRESS WAS TO DECLARE PRAESIDIA TORCH-BEARER—

—DEDICATED TO PROTECTING CAMIENS WHO COULD NOT PROTECT THEMSELVES.



EVENTUALLY ONYX FOUND PRAESIDIA—ON CAMINUS ITSELF—AND TOOK HER LIFE.

THEN, WHEN WE FINALLY DISCOVERED CYBERTRON... WE CAME UPON A SURFEIT OF PRIMES.

I HAD NOT EXPECTED PRIMES TO ACT WITH SUCH... RESOLUTENESS.



THE STORYTELLER ALPHA TRION. THE ARISEN—OPTIMUS. THEN STRUCK LIEGE MAXIMO.

PRIMES AS FAR AS ONE CAN SEE, YET WE CONTINUE OUR LIVES AS IF—

THERE'S NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT PRIMES MISTRESS. THEY'RE JUST PEOPLE.



SPOKEN LIKE ONE WHO HAD FAITH AND LOST IT.

WHO ARE YOU TO TALK TO ME LIKE THIS? I CAME TO SEE THE TRION.