

ROBERTS • MILNE • SHEARER • LAFUENTE

TRANSFORMERS

THAN MEETS THE EYE



IDW
#45

Previously, in **TRANSFORMERS SCAVENGERS**





THE WEAK ANTHROPIC PRINCIPLE.

I WISH I COULD SAY I WAS SURPRISED, BUT...



...IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE WE TURNED ON EACH OTHER.



WE'RE DECEPTICONS. WAR OR NO WAR, BETRAYAL'S WHAT WE DO BEST.

THAT SAID, I DIDN'T THINK THINGS WOULD FALL APART AS QUICKLY AS THEY DID...



...OR AS VIOLENTLY.



WHATEVER BONDS WE'D FORGED OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS WERE BURNT THE MOMENT THE FIRST SHOT WAS FIRED.

...

(CAN YOU BURN BONDS?)



KROK AT LEAST TRIED TO RESTORE ORDER. WHEN HE WAS KILLED—AND, GOD, THAT WAS MESSY—ALL HELL BROKE LOSE. AND I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL—

(OF COURSE YOU CAN! "BURN BONDS." IT'S A SAYING! PEOPLE SAY IT!)



FOCUS. MISFIRE!
YOU'RE FIGHTING
FOR YOUR LIFE!

"MISFIRE." 'S WEIRD
WHEN YOU SAY
YOUR OWN NAME
IN YOUR HEAD.

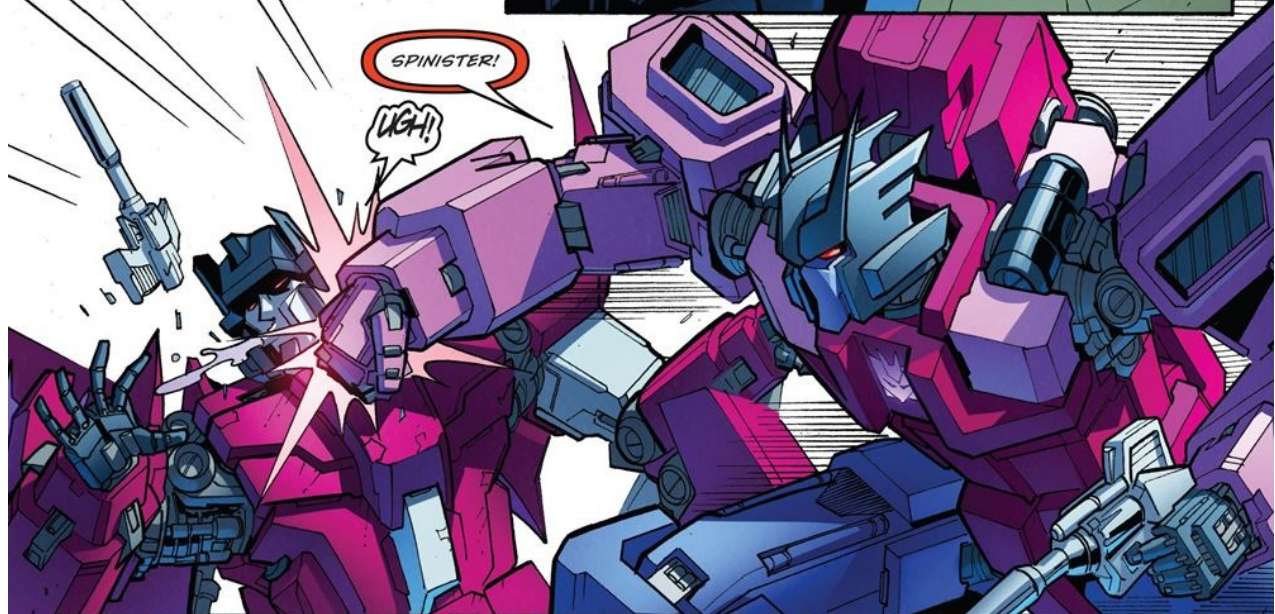
"MISFIRE."

"MISFIRE."

(GHATTER! YOU
SHATTER BONDS.
YOU DON'T
BURN BONDS.
WHO THE HELL
BURNS BONDS?)

GRIMLOCK,
THE FIRST TO
FALL. STILL
CAN'T BELIEVE
HE DIDN'T GET
BACK UP.

ALL OF
WHICH MEANS
THERE'S JUST
THE TWO
OF US LEFT:
ME AND—



SPINISTER!

UGH!



YOU JUST
SHOUTED OUT
YOUR OWN
NAME, YOU
PINHEAD.

YES! TO
CONFUSE
YOU!

YEAH?



WELL,
CONFUSE
THIS!



THAT
DOESN'T—

HFF!

—MAKE
ANY SENSE,
EITHER!



ENOUGH!

OW!
CAREFUL!



I WOULD'VE WAITED AN
ETERNITY FOR THIS.

IT'S OVER,
MISFIRE.



SNIFF

YEAH, FAIR
ENOUGH.



BANG

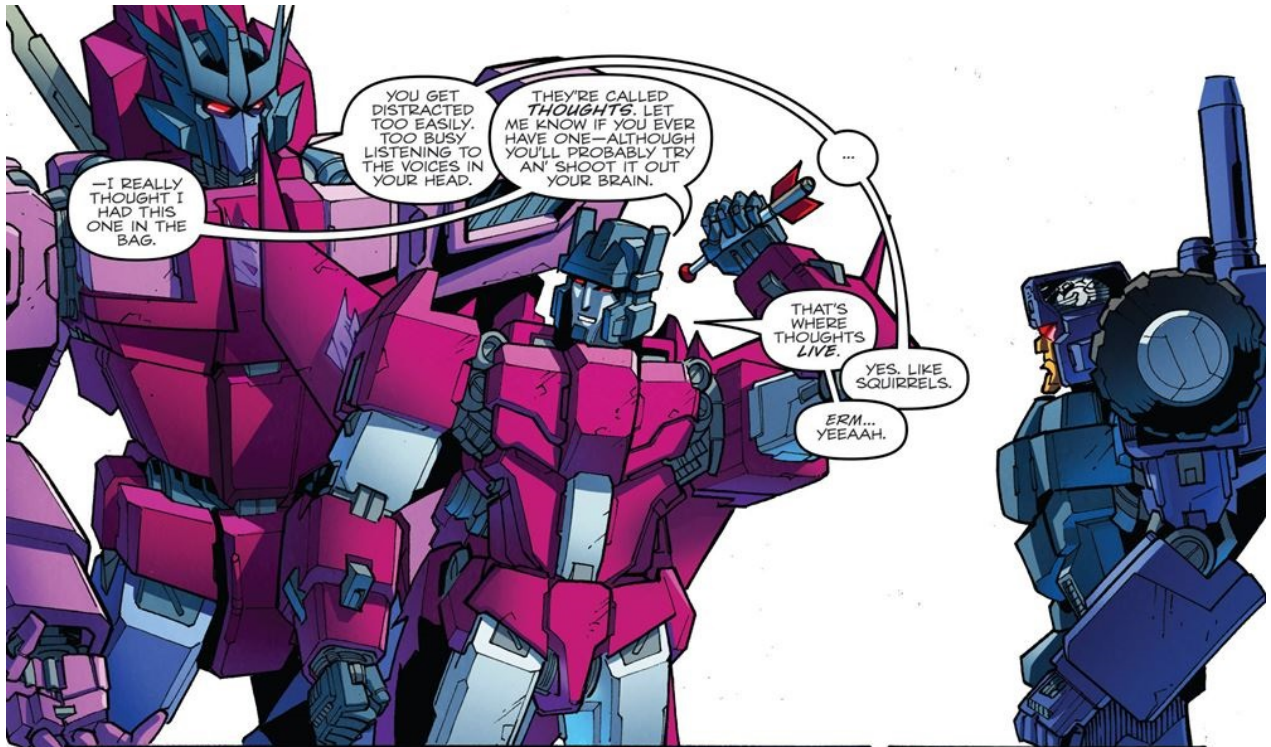


WHAT THE--?
CRANKCASE!
THAT WAS MY
SHOT! YOU'RE
NOT EVEN
PLAYING!

TRUE, BUT
I CAN'T LISTEN
TO SOMEONE
ELSE'S PARTY
WITHOUT WANTING
TO POP THEIR
BALLOON.



IF ANYONE'S
HACKED OFF
IT SHOULD
BE ME--



—I REALLY THOUGHT I HAD THIS ONE IN THE BAG.

YOU GET DISTRACTED TOO EASILY. TOO BUSY LISTENING TO THE VOICES IN YOUR HEAD.

THEY'RE CALLED THOUGHTS. LET ME KNOW IF YOU EVER HAVE ONE—ALTHOUGH YOU'LL PROBABLY TRY AN' SHOOT IT OUT YOUR BRAIN.

THAT'S WHERE THOUGHTS LIVE.

YES, LIKE SQUIRRELS.

ERM... YEEAAH.



I THINK SPINISTER'S REFERRING TO THE INTERNAL MONOLOGUES. WHENEVER WE PLAY SHOOT SHOOT BANG BANG YOU—

HEY, I'VE COPYRIGHTED THE NAME! YOU HAVE TO PAY ME WHENEVER YOU SAY IT OR INVENT YOUR OWN!

WHENEVER WE PLAY CRANKCASE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND HOW TRADEMARKS WORK YOU GO ALL QUIET AND GAZE INTO THE DISTANCE.



FULCRUM WAS RIGHT. I DID HAVE A PECULIAR HABIT OF—

SEE! YOU'RE DOING IT NOW!



CRANKCASE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!

A QUESTION I ASK MYSELF EVERY DAY.

WE'RE ABOUT TO CRASH INTO TEBRIS VII! WHY AREN'T YOU PILOTING?!

OH, CHILL THE HELL OUT...

"...THIS CRATE LANDS ITSELF."







*SEE ISSUE #7.



THE T.V. ROOM.



LET ME TELL YOU, THE INFILTRATION PROTOCOL IS THE GREATEST MYSTERY OF OUR TIME. PHASE 1 IS INFILTRATION, OBVIOUSLY. PHASE 2 IS...?

"STIRRING THINGS UP," YES, I'LL ACCEPT THAT. PHASE 2 IS DESTABILIZATION. OKAY, SO PHASE 3. WHO CAN TELL ME WHAT PHASE 3 IS? ANYONE...?

NO, BECAUSE NO ONE KNOWS. LITERALLY NO ONE—

WHAT'S THAT? SOMEONE SHOUTED "PAPERWORK."

YEAH, YEAH, NO, YOU CAN'T—I LIKE HOW THAT WOULD WORK. YOU CAN'T INFILTRATE—

"PHASE 3: ADMINISTRATION."

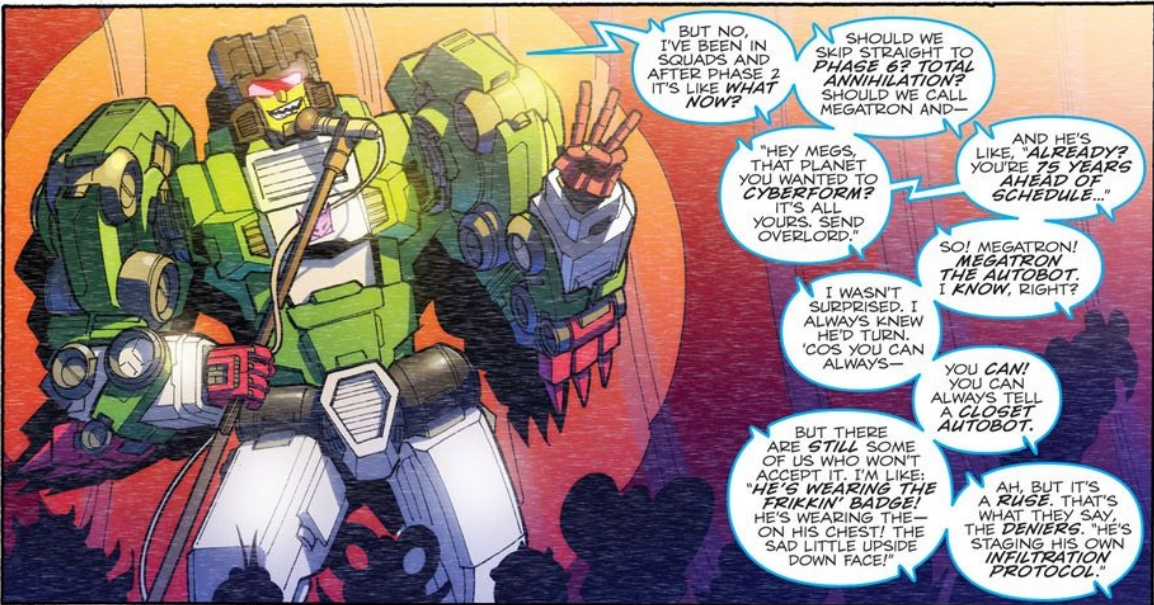
I LIKED WHEN HE—

SHH! I'M TRYING TO WATCH!

—YOU CAN'T INFILTRATE AN ALIEN CIVILIZATION AND STEER IT TOWARDS EXTINCTION WITHOUT WRITING LOTS OF REPORTS.

SO ANYWAY, I'VE BEEN PART OF INFILTRATION SQUADS AND—

OOH, BIT OF A BIT OF A TEMPERATURE DROP IN THE ROOM THERE. DON'T WORRY, THEY WEREN'T PLANETS THAT YOU CARED ABOUT...



BUT NO, I'VE BEEN IN SQUADS AND AFTER PHASE 2 IT'S LIKE WHAT NOW?

SHOULD WE SKIP STRAIGHT TO PHASE 6? TOTAL ANNIHILATION? SHOULD WE CALL MEGATRON AND—

"HEY MEGS, THAT PLANET YOU WANTED TO CYBERFORM? IT'S ALL YOURS. SEND OVERLORD."

AND HE'S LIKE "ALREADY? YOU'RE 75 YEARS AHEAD OF SCHEDULE..."

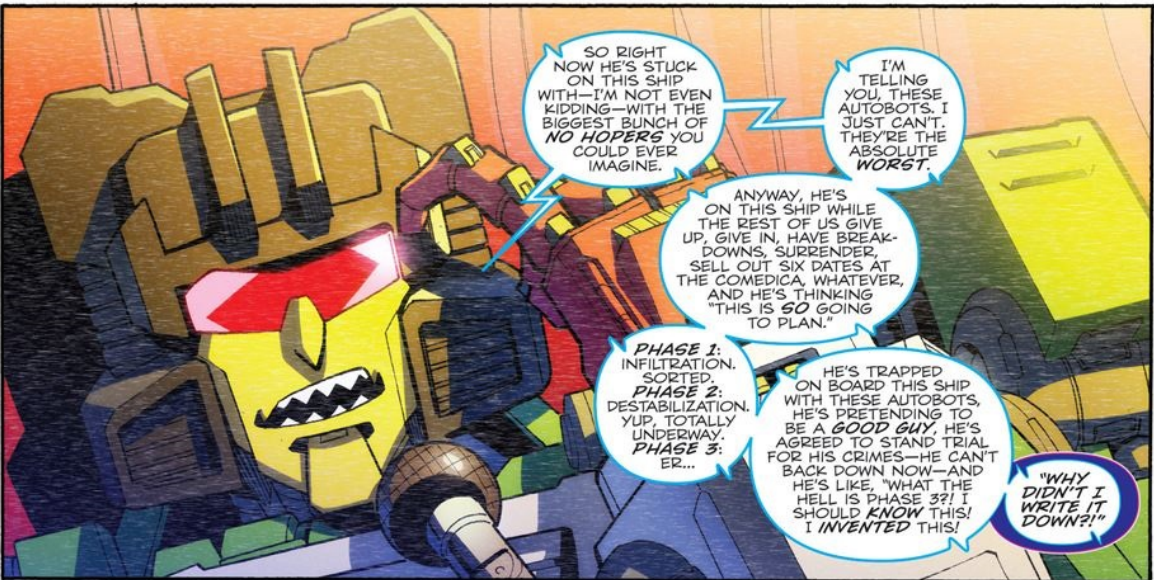
SO! MEGATRON! MEGATRON THE AUTOBOT. I KNOW, RIGHT?

I WASN'T SURPRISED. I ALWAYS KNEW HE'D TURN. 'COS YOU CAN ALWAYS—

YOU CAN! YOU CAN ALWAYS TELL A CLOSET AUTOBOT.

BUT THERE ARE STILL SOME OF US WHO WON'T ACCEPT IT. I'M LIKE: "HE'S WEARING THE FRIKKIN' BADGE! HE'S WEARING THE— ON HIS CHEST! THE SAD LITTLE UPSIDE DOWN FACE!"

AH, BUT IT'S A RUSE. THAT'S WHAT THEY SAY, THE DENIERS. "HE'S STAGING HIS OWN INFILTRATION PROTOCOL."



SO RIGHT NOW HE'S STUCK ON THIS SHIP WITH—I'M NOT EVEN KIDDING—WITH THE BIGGEST BUNCH OF NO HOPERS YOU COULD EVER IMAGINE.

I'M TELLING YOU, THESE AUTOBOTS. I JUST CAN'T. THEY'RE THE ABSOLUTE WORST.

ANYWAY, HE'S ON THIS SHIP WHILE THE REST OF US GIVE UP, GIVE IN, HAVE BREAK-DOWNS, SURRENDER, SELL OUT SIX DATES AT THE COMEDICA, WHATEVER, AND HE'S THINKING "THIS IS SO GOING TO PLAN."

PHASE 1: INFILTRATION. SORTED. PHASE 2: DESTABILIZATION. YUP, TOTALLY UNDERWAY. PHASE 3: ER....

HE'S TRAPPED ON BOARD THIS SHIP WITH THESE AUTOBOTS. HE'S PRETENDING TO BE A GOOD GUY, HE'S AGREED TO STAND TRIAL FOR HIS CRIMES—HE CAN'T BACK DOWN NOW—AND HE'S LIKE, "WHAT THE HELL IS PHASE 3?! I SHOULD KNOW THIS! I INVENTED THIS!"

"WHY DIDN'T I WRITE IT DOWN?!"



KLIK

UHRRR...

+++ REPAIR PROGRAM INITIATED +++70% COMPLETE +++

HELLO?

EVERYONE OKAY? EVERYONE ALRIGHT?

"WE'RE FINE THANKS. KICK, ARE YOU OKAY? WE WERE SO WORRIED WE BUGGERED OFF AND LEFT YOU LYING ON THE FLOOR."

KLIK KLIK

THE BRIDGE



WHERE'S MY--?

MISFIRE! WHO'S TAKEN MY ENGEX?

IT WAS LABELLED.

MISFIRE!

I LABELLED IT. I PUT A LABEL ON IT.



"--AND WE USED TO SAY TO HIM 'MEGATRON, MATE. WHY NOT GET ALL THE PHASE SIXERS AND THROW 'EM AT THE AUTOBOTS?'"

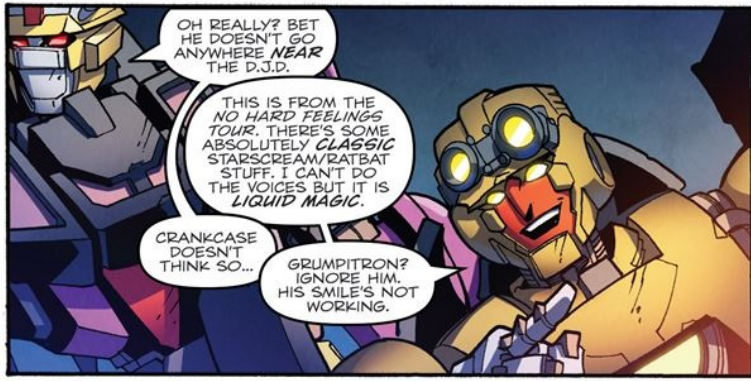
LIKE, "FORGET THE PLANETS! YOU CAN CYBERFORM AS MANY PLANETS AS YOU LIKE ONCE YOU'VE KILLED ALL OUR ENEMIES!"



"YOU'RE NOT MAKING THE BEST USE OF YOUR ASSETS."

WHAT ARE YOU WATCHING? IT'S VERY LOUD.

THAT NEW POSTWAR COMEDIAN. "THE SELF-HATING DECEPTION." BIT OBSERVATIONAL. BIT EDGY. SAYS THE UNSAYABLE.



OH REALLY? BET HE DOESN'T GO ANYWHERE NEAR THE D.J.D.

THIS IS FROM THE NO HARD FEELINGS TOUR. THERE'S SOME ABSOLUTELY CLASSIC STARSCREAM/RATBAT STUFF. I CAN'T DO THE VOICES BUT IT IS LIQUID MAGIC.

CRANKCASE DOESN'T THINK SO...

GRUMPITRON? IGNORE HIM. HIS SMILE'S NOT WORKING.



FACIAL PARALYSIS AGAIN? ARE YOU SURE YOU WON'T LET SPINISTER FIX YOUR HEAD? HE'S A BRILLIANT SURGEON.

HE'S A BRILLIANT SURGEON WHO CLASSIFIES RANDOM OBJECTS AS "GOODIES" OR "BADIES" DEPENDING ON THE SOUND THEY MAKE WHEN HE PUNCHES THEM.

I DON'T WANT HIM ANYWHERE NEAR MY BRAIN.

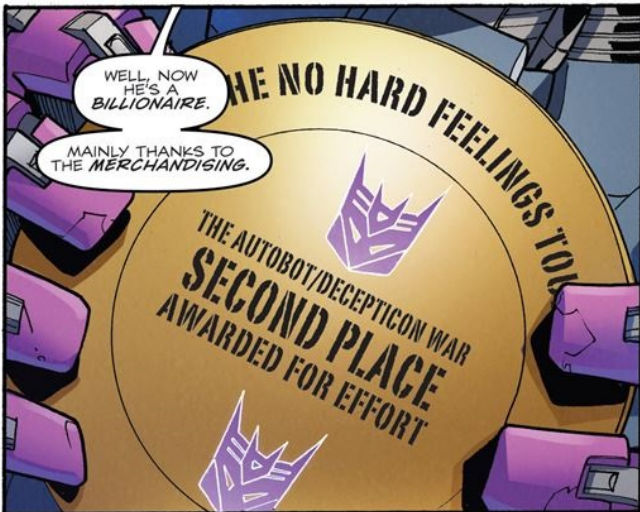


WAIT A MINUTE, THAT'S SKULLCRUNCHER! I KNOW HIM!

OH MY GOD— YOU'RE THE MONOFORMER! HA! BRILLIANT!

SERIOUSLY, HE DOES THIS WHOLE ROUTINE ABOUT YOU— THE INCOMPETENT STRATEGIST WHO NAMED HIMSELF AFTER HIS DEAD PET. YOU SERVED ON A WARWORLD TOGETHER...

YES! AND HE WAS A JOKE!



WELL, NOW HE'S A BILLIONAIRE.

MAINLY THANKS TO THE MERCHANDISING.

WE NO HARD FEELINGS TOU
THE AUTOBOT/DECEPTICON WAR
SECOND PLACE
AWARDED FOR EFFORT



TAKE IT. I GOT ONE FOR EACH OF US.



WHAT THE HELL?!

THAT'S THE NEW T.V.!

BOOM!



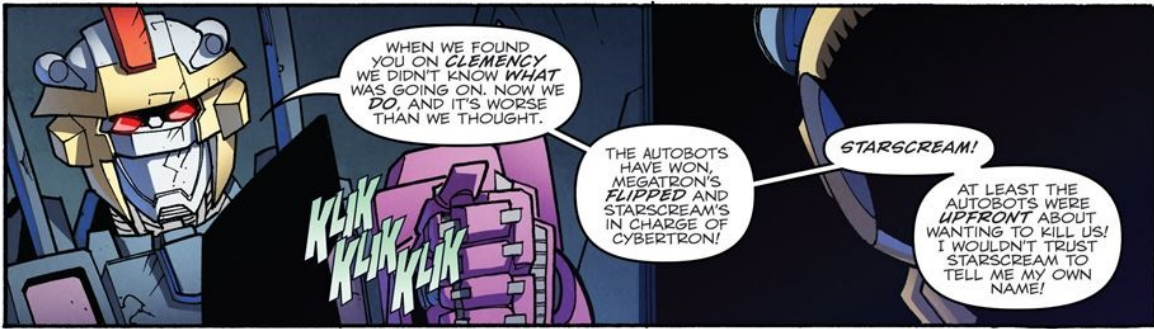
LOOK AT US! WHAT ARE WE DOING WITH OUR LIVES?!

THE W.A.P.'S FALLING TO BITS, WE'VE NEVER GOT ANY MONEY, AND WHEN WE'RE NOT PLAYING SHOOT SHOOT BANG BANG, VANDALIZING AUTOPEDEIA, OR TROLLING THE BIG CONVERSATION*, WE'RE DISMANTLING OUR DEAD COMRADES!

WE NEED TO GET A GRIP, AND YOU KNOW WHY? BECAUSE THE WAR'S OVER—AND ALL THE WISHFUL THINKING IN THE WORLD AIN'T GONNA BRING IT BACK.

SO MUCH FOR THIS BEING "A BLIP." NUH-UH. I'M SORRY, FOLKS, BUT THIS IS IT: EVERY LAZY DECEPTICON'S WORST NIGHTMARE: LASTING PEACE.

*A DECEPTICON SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE.



WHEN WE FOUND YOU ON CLEMENCY WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WAS GOING ON. NOW WE DO, AND IT'S WORSE THAN WE THOUGHT.

KLIK
KLIK
KLIK

THE AUTOBOTS HAVE WON, MEGATRON'S **FLIPPED** AND STARSCREAM'S IN CHARGE OF CYBERTRON!

STARSCREAM!

AT LEAST THE AUTOBOTS WERE **UPFRONT** ABOUT WANTING TO KILL US! I WOULDN'T TRUST STARSCREAM TO TELL ME MY OWN NAME!



WHAT'S THE MATTER? IT'S NOT LIKE YOU TO RANT.

AND YOU'VE STARTED **CLICKING** AGAIN. IS THIS ABOUT—

IT'S ABOUT SKULLCRUNCHER! IT'S ABOUT YET ANOTHER EX-CON WHO'S **MADE GOOD!**

EVERYONE ELSE IS BUSY **BECOMING SUCCESSFUL** WHILE I'M WRITING MY NAME ON CANS OF CHEAP ENXG!

RANDOM EXAMPLE: **AGONIZER!** HE AND I WERE BUILT SIDE BY SIDE. WE TRAINED TOGETHER.

HE USED TO GO OUT EVERY NIGHT, DECAPITATING AUTOBOTS; NOW HE'S AN **ANTIQUARIAN** ON **TROJA MAJOR**. HE'S SETTLED DOWN—HE'S **HAPPY**—AND FAIR PLAY TO HIM!

AND **BITEBACK**—AN **M.T.O.***, FOR PITY'S SAKE! TOTAL NONENTITY, AND HE ENDS UP LAUNCHING **THE BIG CONVERSATION!** HE'S **RAKING** IT IN!

*A MADE TO ORDER SOLDIER.



WHADDYA MEAN "EVERY LAZY DECEPTICON'S WORST NIGHTMARE"? WE HAVE ADVENTURES! WE DO STUFF!

NO, CRANKCASE. STUFF DOES US.

WE SHOULD BE TAKING CONTROL OF OUR LIVES! DECIDING WHAT WE WANT AND **MAKING IT HAPPEN!** NO MORE SURPRI—



—SES!

THUD



RAAARPGGH!

I'VE GOT THIS!

I'VE GOT THIS!

NO ONE PANIC!

WHO'S PANICKING?



CHOOOM
CHOOOM



HEY! NOT NECESSARY! TEN MORE SECONDS AND HE'D HAVE PASSED OUT! YOU KNOW WHAT HE'S LIKE WHEN HE FITS!



LOCK HIM IN HIS ROOM.

FINE. WHATEV.

I'M SORRY, MISFIRE, BUT I DON'T THINK YOUR PET CAN BE HOUSE-TRAINED. AND HE'S GETTING STRONGER—WE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO CONTAIN HIM NEXT TIME.



NOT TO WORRY, BECAUSE NEXT TIME YOU CAN GET YOUR OLD SQUAD TO COME HELP US OUT, RIGHT?

GIVE THE OLD COMMUNICATOR A CLICKETY-CLICK?

HEY.

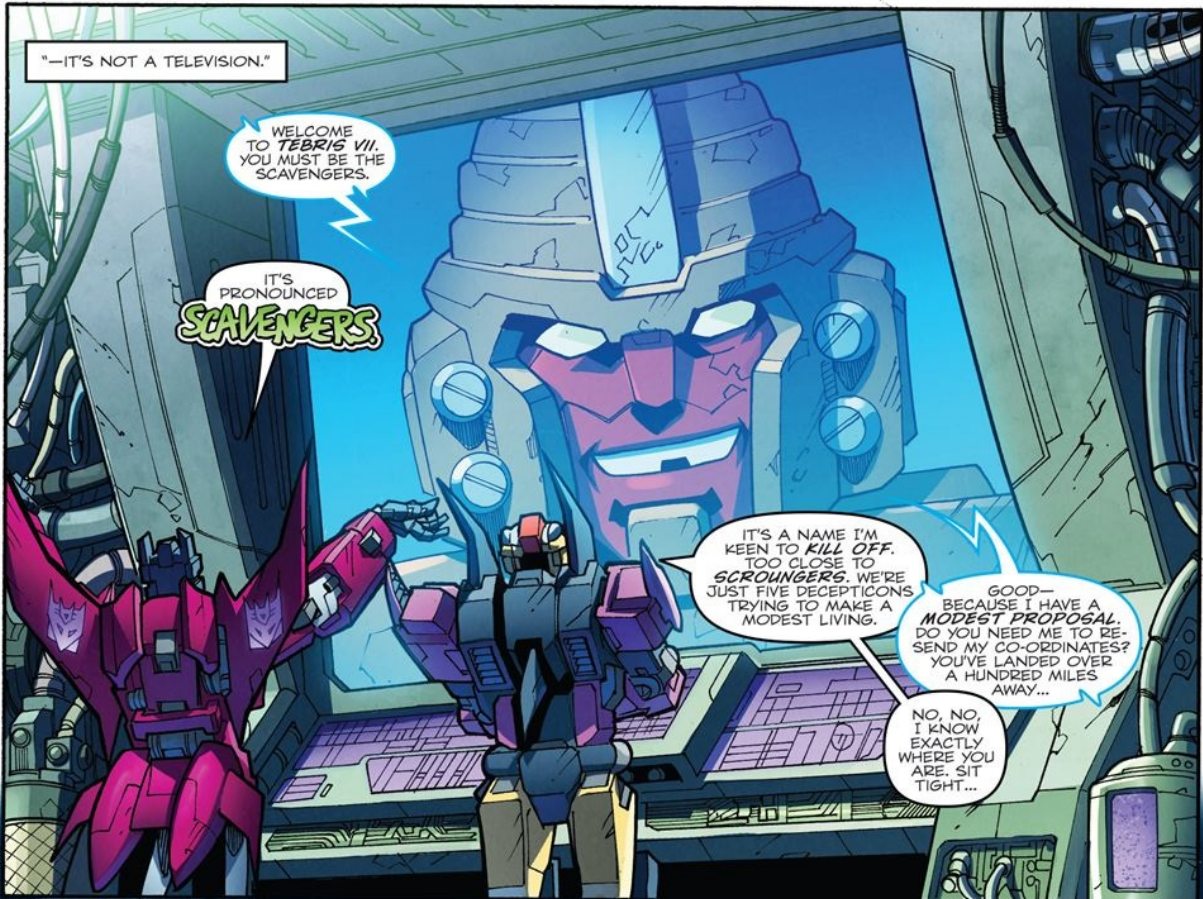
NOT COOL.

OH GOD OFF, FULCRUM. WE'VE BEEN WALKING ON EGGHELLS FOR YEARS! MAYBE A GOOD STAMP WILL CLEAR THE AIR!



GUYS! THE GIANT TV IS TALKING TO ME AGAIN, AND IT'S CHANGED ITS FACE! IT SAYS ITS NAME IS DEMUS!

FOR THE LAST TIME—



"—IT'S NOT A TELEVISION."

WELCOME TO **TEBRIS VII**. YOU MUST BE THE **SCAVENGERS**.

IT'S PRONOUNCED **SCAVENGERS**.

IT'S A NAME I'M KEEN TO **KILL OFF**. TOO CLOSE TO **SCROUNGER**. WE'RE JUST FIVE **DECEPTICONS** TRYING TO MAKE A **MODEST LIVING**.

GOOD— BECAUSE I HAVE A **MODEST PROPOSAL**. DO YOU NEED ME TO RE-SEND MY CO-ORDINATES? YOU'VE LANDED OVER A HUNDRED MILES AWAY...

NO, NO, I KNOW EXACTLY WHERE YOU ARE. SIT TIGHT...



"...WE'RE ON OUR WAY."

SO COME ON, THEN— THIS **DEMUS** GUY...

DEATHSAURUS GAVE HIM AN HONORABLE DISCHARGE AFTER THE WAR ENDED. HE CAME OUT HERE AND SET UP HIS OWN **SCRAP METAL BUSINESS**. VERY SUCCESSFUL.

ARE WE GONNA KILL HIM AND STEAL HIS MONEY?

HA!

JOKING.

BUT SERIOUSLY, ARE WE GONNA KILL HIM AND STEAL HIS MONEY?

CRANKCASE! THAT'S **KROK'S FRIEND** YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT!



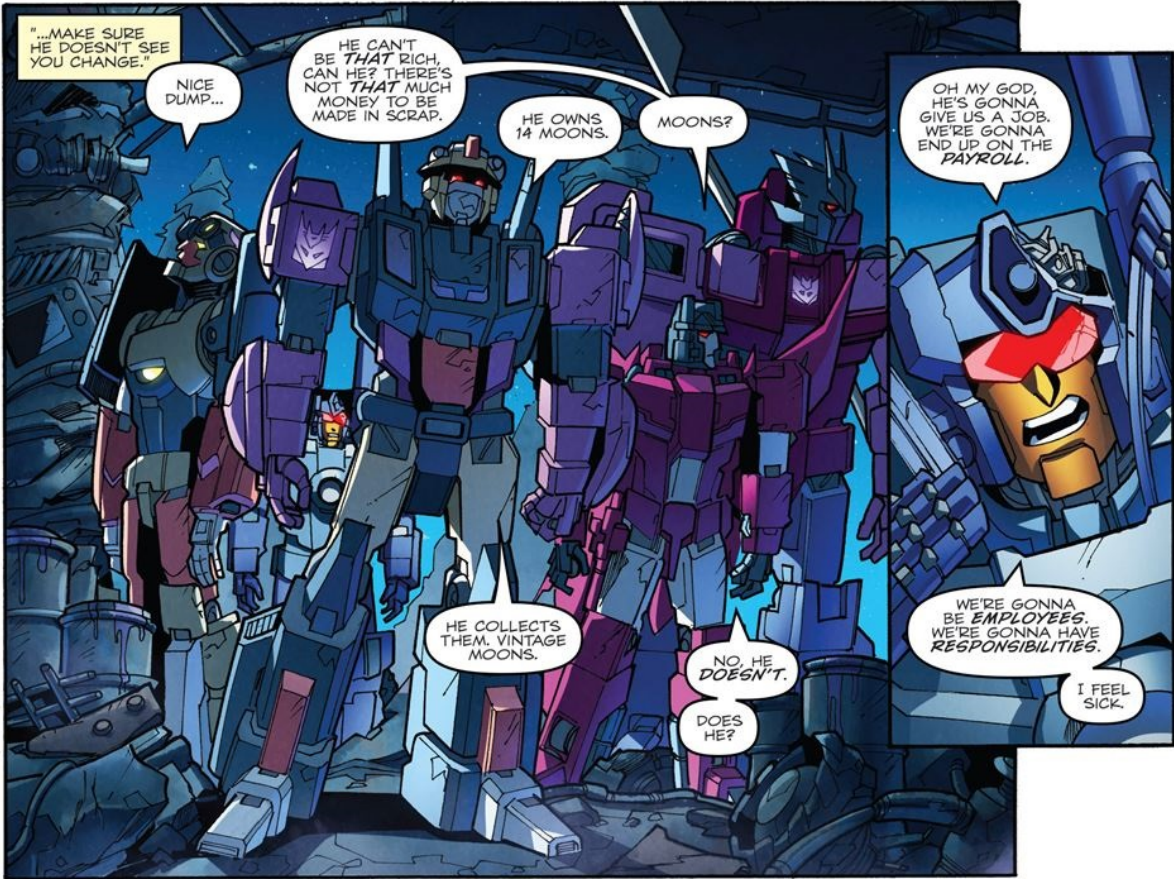
I DON'T KNOW HIM **PERSONALLY**— ALTHOUGH WE WERE BOTH MEMBERS OF **TRIPLE M**.*

AMAZING— HE WAS SO **ANTI-ALT MODE** HE COULDN'T WATCH SOMEONE CHANGE SHAPE WITHOUT BECOMING **PHYSICALLY ILL**. HE HAD ALL HIS **KIBBLE** SURGICALLY REMOVED. COULDN'T LOOK AT HIMSELF IN THE MIRROR.

ANYWAY, THAT'S HOW HE GOT IN TOUCH— THROUGH THE **TRIPLE M SUBGROUP ON THE B.C.****

THE **SCRAPYARD'S** JUST UP AHEAD, **SPINSTER**...

*THE MILITANT MONOFORM MOVEMENT. ** THE BIG CONVERSATION.



"...MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T SEE YOU CHANGE."

NICE DUMP...

HE CAN'T BE *THAT* RICH, CAN HE? THERE'S NOT *THAT* MUCH MONEY TO BE MADE IN SCRAP.

HE OWNS 14 MOONS.

MOONS?

OH MY GOD, HE'S GONNA GIVE US A JOB. WE'RE GONNA END UP ON THE PAYROLL.

HE COLLECTS THEM. VINTAGE MOONS.

NO, HE DOESN'T.

DOES HE?

WE'RE GONNA BE *EMPLOYEES*. WE'RE GONNA HAVE *RESPONSIBILITIES*.

I FEEL SICK.



LOOK AT YOUR FEET.

DEMUS?

THE INHIBITOR CHIPS WILL STOP YOUR FRIENDS FROM USING THEIR TRANSFORMATION COGS.

DON'T WORRY—THE CHIPS'LL BURN OUT AFTER AN HOUR. NO HARM DONE.



I'M SORRY. I HAVE A CONDICTION.





WE WANT TRIPLE THE DECEPTICON STIPEND, A COMPANY SPEEDSTER EACH—NEW, NOT SECOND-HAND!—AND FIFTEEN RECHARGE BREAKS A DAY! THAT'S FIF-TEEN.

OH! YOU THINK I'M GOING TO OFFER YOU JOBS!

WHY WOULD I OFFER ANY OF YOU JOBS?

...TO BUSINESS.



I WANT YOUR PRISONER.

PRISONER?

YOU MEAN GRIMLOCK?

THE DINOBOT, YES.

I'D LIKE TO BUY HIM OFF YOU.



YOU WHAT?



BUY HIM?



BIZARRE.



WHAT AM I REACTING TO AND IS ANGER APPROPRIATE?!

WAIT, EVERYONE. SHHH.

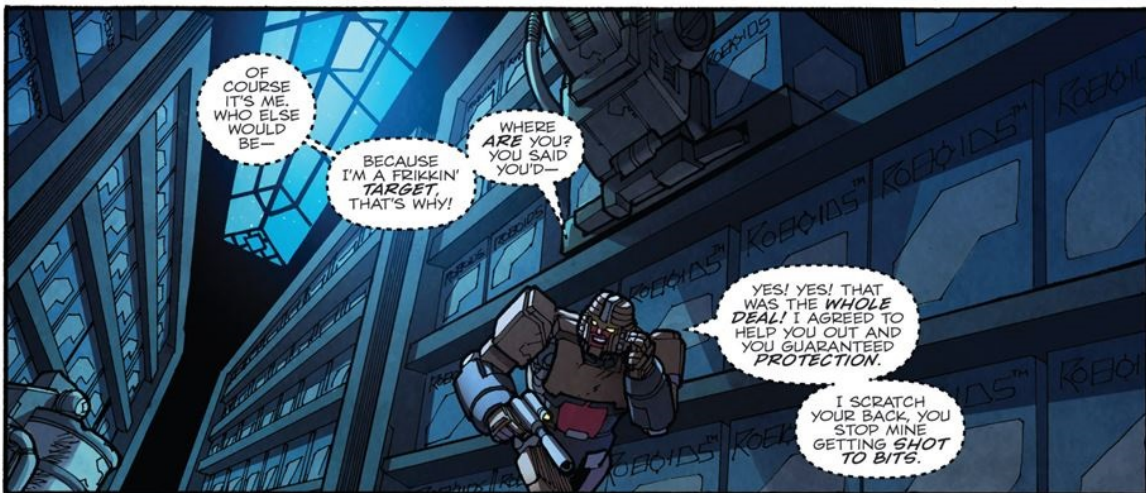
TELL THEM HOW MUCH.



I'LL GIVE YOU HALF A BILLION.



EACH.



NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME FOR A MOMENT...

...I CAN SEE MY OFFER'S TAKEN *SOME* OF YOU BY SURPRISE. BY ALL MEANS TALK IT THROUGH.

OKAY, SO HEAR ME OUT...

OF COURSE IT'S ME, WHO ELSE WOULD BE—

BECAUSE I'M A FRIKKIN' TARGET, THAT'S WHY!

WHERE ARE YOU? YOU SAID YOU'D—

YES! YES! THAT WAS THE *WHOLE DEAL!* I AGREED TO HELP YOU OUT AND YOU GUARANTEED PROTECTION.

I SCRATCH YOUR BACK, YOU STOP MINE GETTING SHOT TO BITS.

CRANKCASE, WITH HALF A BILLION YOU COULD BUY YOUR OWN STARSHIP. YOU COULD GET YOUR HEAD FIXED BY THE BEST NEUROSURGEONS IN THE GALAXY!

AND SPINSTER! YOU COULD GO HUNTING ALL THE TIME!

IMAGINE! ALL THOSE LITTLE FLESHINGS, RUNNING FOR THEIR LIVES!

ARE YOU REALLY OKAY WITH THIS?

OF COURSE I AM! AREN'T YOU? HALF A BILLION! YOU COULD USE IT TO—TO—

... WHAT IS IT YOU WANT TO DO AGAIN?

I'M *DOING* WHAT I WANT TO DO! AND YOU'RE CLEARLY *NOT* OR WE WOULDN'T BE HERE...



THERE'S A LIST AND I'M ON— I KNOW I AM! YOU CAN'T DO WHAT I DO AND EXPECT IT TO GO UNNOTICED!

SO PLEASE, JUST SEND A SQUAD AND—



FORGET IT.

I'M DEAD.



MISFIRE...

OH, YOU'VE REMEMBERED I'M HERE.

YOU WERE REHABILITATING GRIMLOCK AND WE WERE GOING TO TAKE HIM HOME. I KNOW THAT WAS THE PLAN. BUT THINGS CHANGE.

YOU THINK STARScream WOULD THANK US FOR DUMPING A DINOBOT ON HIS DOORSTEP? HE'D SEE IT AS A THREAT. HE'D SEE US A THREAT.

AND PAWNING HIM OFF TO A STRANGER IS A GUARANTEED BETTER OUTCOME FOR HIM?

AND ANYWAY— I THOUGHT WE WEREN'T EVEN GOING HOME ANYMORE!



I HAVE TO SAY, I'M UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT THIS. WHY WOULD A SCRAP METAL MERCHANT PAY 2.5 BILLION SHANIX FOR A BRAIN-DAMAGED AUTOBOT?

WE SHOULD AT LEAST PUT IT TO THE VOTE. C'MON, KROK...



"...WHEN THE D.J.D.* WERE GONNA KILL US, WE VOTED: FIGHT OR FLIGHT."

GAH!

"OKAY, BUT YOU NEED TO LEARN TO READ THE ROOM."

*DECEPTICON JUSTICE DIVISION.



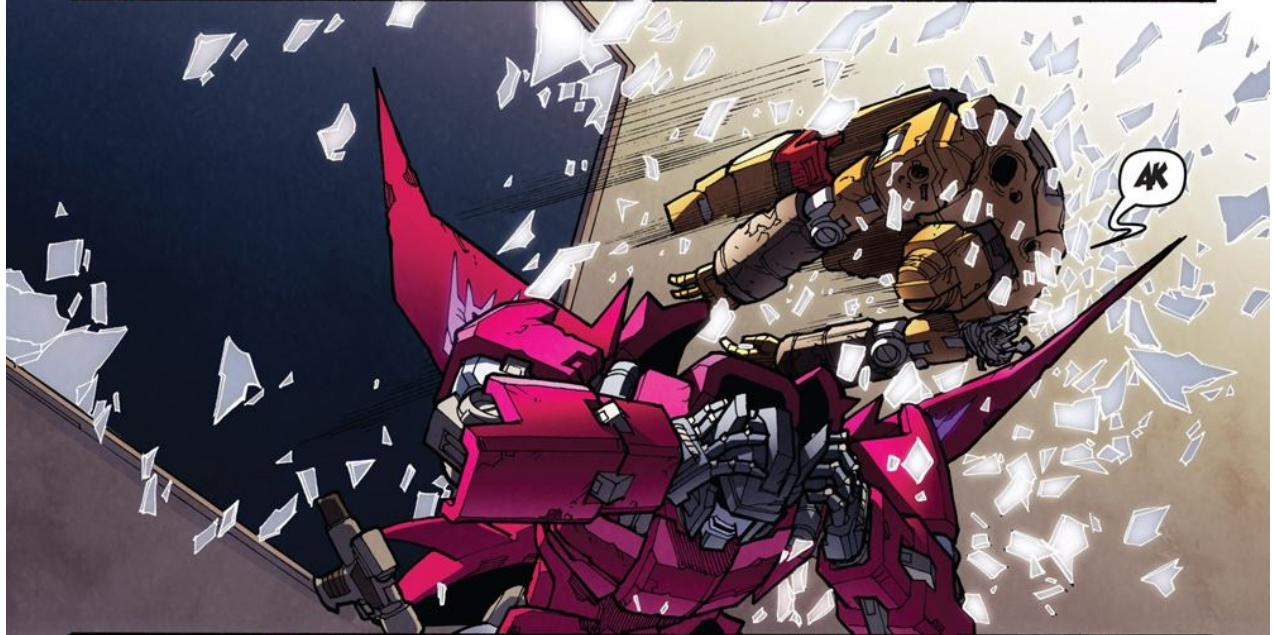
VOTE TO SELL.

BECAUSE...?

BECAUSE HALF A BILLION.

THAT'S YOUR ARGUMENT. THREE WORDS.

YOUR TURN. STATE YOUR CASE.





...WHO'S NEXT?

SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE AUTOBOTS

NEXT ISSUE:
MAXIMUM JUSTICE