PROTOPLANET

ATTACK OF THE BORLOTH

#1

BY LUKE PORTER

What do you need in a PLANET?

Paradise

Industry

Resources

Habitation

Introducing:

PROTOPLANET

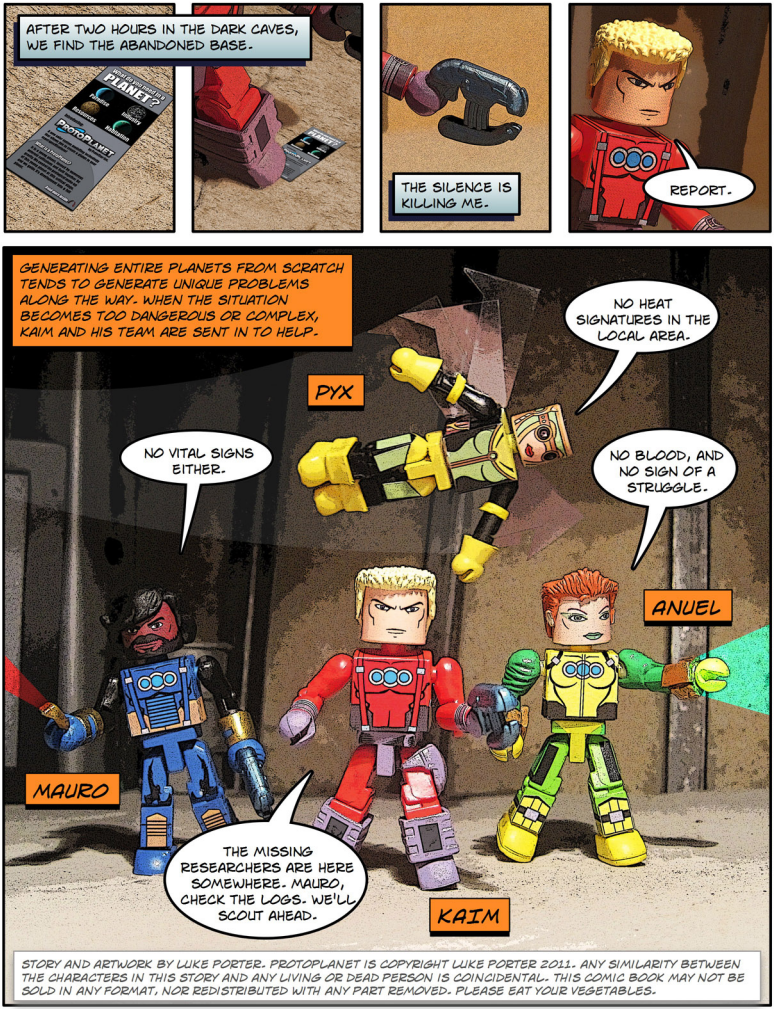
by ProtoStar Inc.

A new solar system modelling technology that allows you to create a planet to your exact specifications!

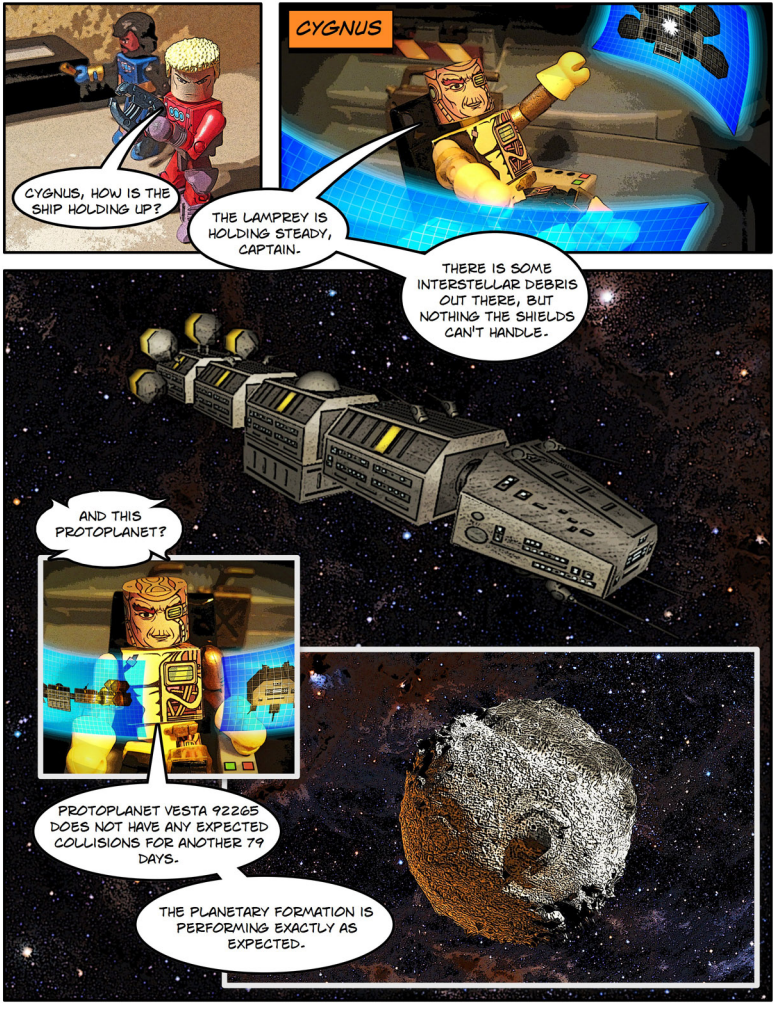
What is a ProtoPlanet?

It is a young planet, formed by numerous asteroid collisions and held together by gravity. We control the geological make-up of this young planet at this critical stage, and we guide it's development into a full planet.

Read more inside

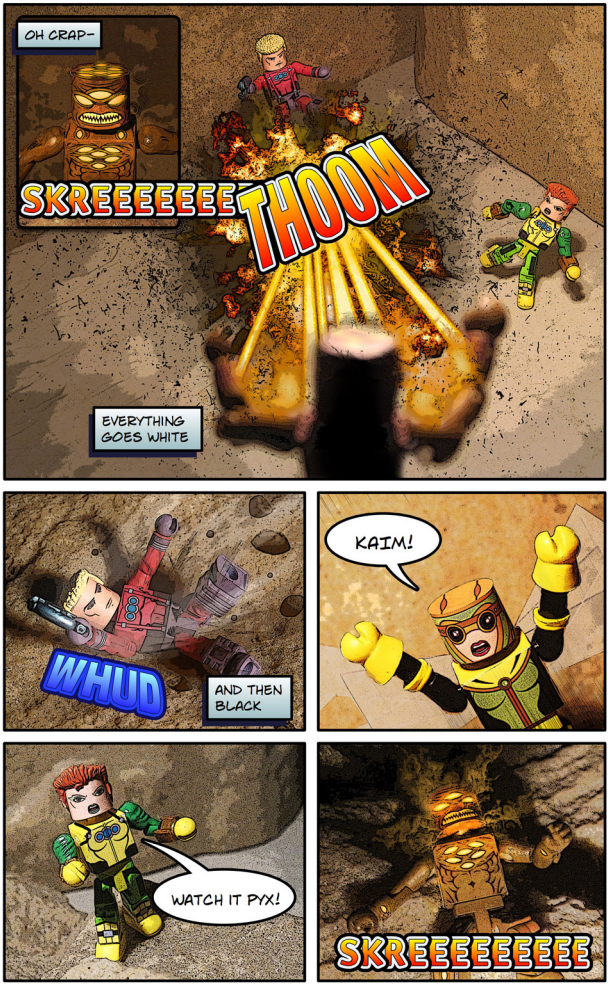


STORY AND ARTWORK BY LUKE PORTER. PROTOPLANET IS COPYRIGHT LUKE PORTER 2011. ANY SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE CHARACTERS IN THIS STORY AND ANY LIVING OR DEAD PERSON IS COINCIDENTAL. THIS COMIC BOOK MAY NOT BE SOLD IN ANY FORMAT, NOR REDISTRIBUTED WITH ANY PART REMOVED. PLEASE EAT YOUR VEGETABLES.


CYGNUS
CYGNUS, HOW IS THE SHIP HOLDING UP?
THE LAMPREY IS HOLDING STEADY, CAPTAIN.
THERE IS SOME INTERSTELLAR DEBRIS OUT THERE, BUT NOTHING THE SHIELDS CAN'T HANDLE.
AND THIS PROTOPLANET?
PROTOPLANET VESTA 92265 DOES NOT HAVE ANY EXPECTED COLLISIONS FOR ANOTHER 79 DAYS.
THE PLANETARY FORMATION IS PERFORMING EXACTLY AS EXPECTED.

WITHIN THE NEXT SEVEN YEARS, ALL OF THE PROTOPLANETS IN THIS SYSTEM WILL EVOLVE OR MERGE INTO SEVEN LARGER PLANETS.
EACH ONE HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO HAVE THE ABILITY TO SUPPORT LIFE.
IT WILL BE THE FASTEST PLANETARY GENERATION IN HISTORY.
THAT'S GREAT CYGNUS, BUT I'M HOPING WE CAN BE OFF THIS ROCK IN THE NEXT SEVEN HOURS.
CAN YOU TELL WHAT LIES FURTHER DOWN THIS TUNNEL FROM THE BASE?
I AM SHOWING A LARGE ATRIUM ABOUT TWO KILOMETERS AHEAD OF YOUR POSITION.
I'D BET MY BOTTOM DOLLAR THAT'S WHERE THE RESEARCHERS ARE.
SOMEHOW I DOUBT IT WILL BE THAT EASY.

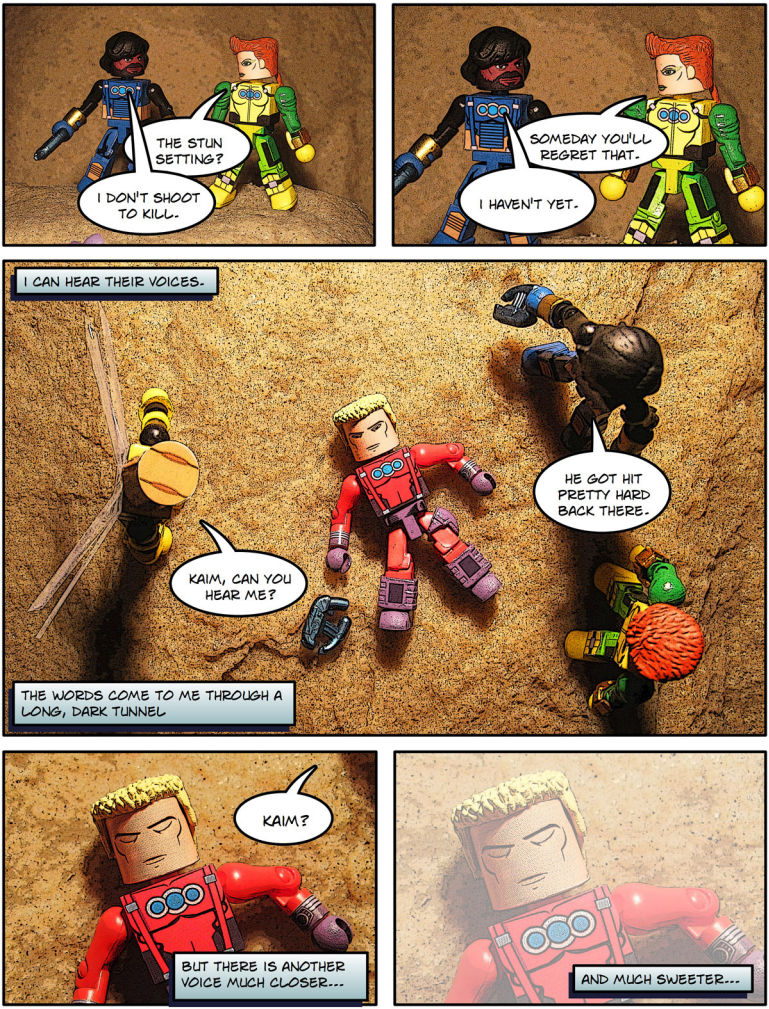
MAURO DIGS DEEPER INTO THE COMPUTER SYSTEM WHILE WE VENTURE FURTHER INTO THE CAVE.
THIS IS OUR FOURTH JOB IN A ROW RESCUING RESEARCHERS.
I SWEAR THEY ARE LIKE CHILDREN. THEY SEE SOMETHING SHINY AND THEY RUN AFTER IT WITHOUT THINKING.
I SUPPOSE YOU CAN'T REALLY BLAME THEM. TWENTY YEARS AGO, CREATING AN ENTIRE PLANET WAS CRAZY TALK.
AND IT WOULD STILL JUST BE TALK IF IT WASN'T SO PROFITABLE.
YOU'RE EVEN MORE CYNICAL THAN USUAL TODAY, ANUEL.
FEELS LIKE LESS TO ME.
I DON'T FEEL LIKE CHOKING HER YET.
DO YOU EVEN HAVE FEELINGS IN THAT JACKED UP CYBORG BRAIN?
LISTEN YOU- WAIT-
MOVEMENT DETECTED AHEAD!
IT'S COMING FROM THE TOP OF THAT RIDGE!
SOMETHING SMELLS METALLIC...

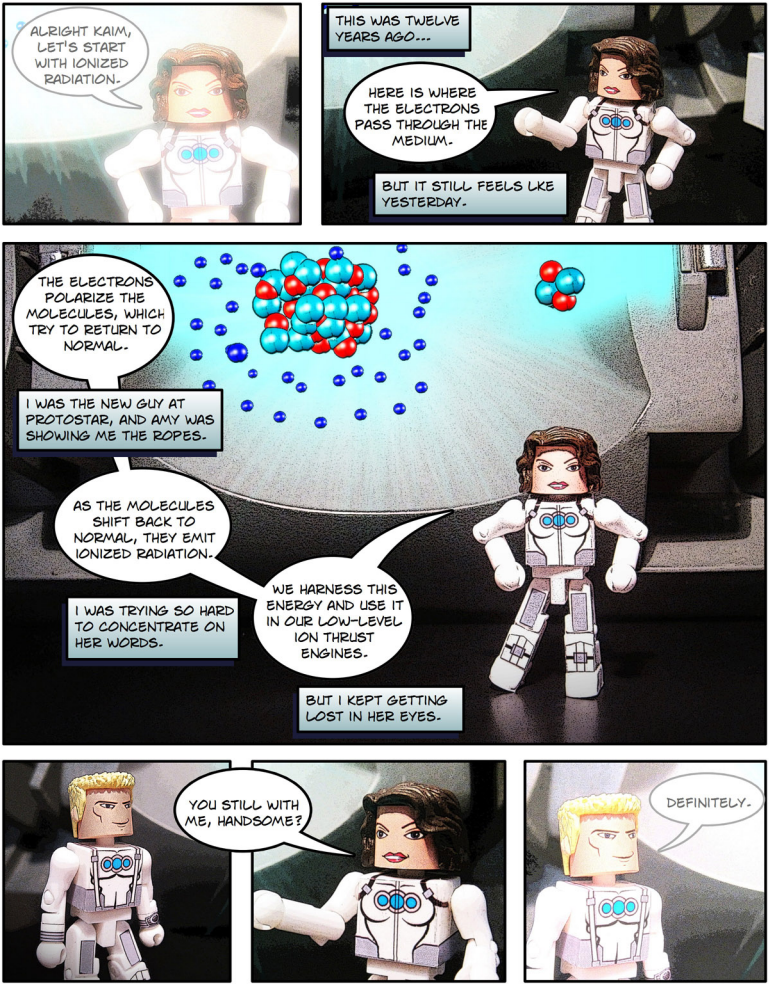

OH CRAP-
SKREEEEEEE
THOOM
EVERYTHING GOES WHITE
WHUD
AND THEN BLACK
KAIM!
WATCH IT PYX!
SKREEEEEEEEE

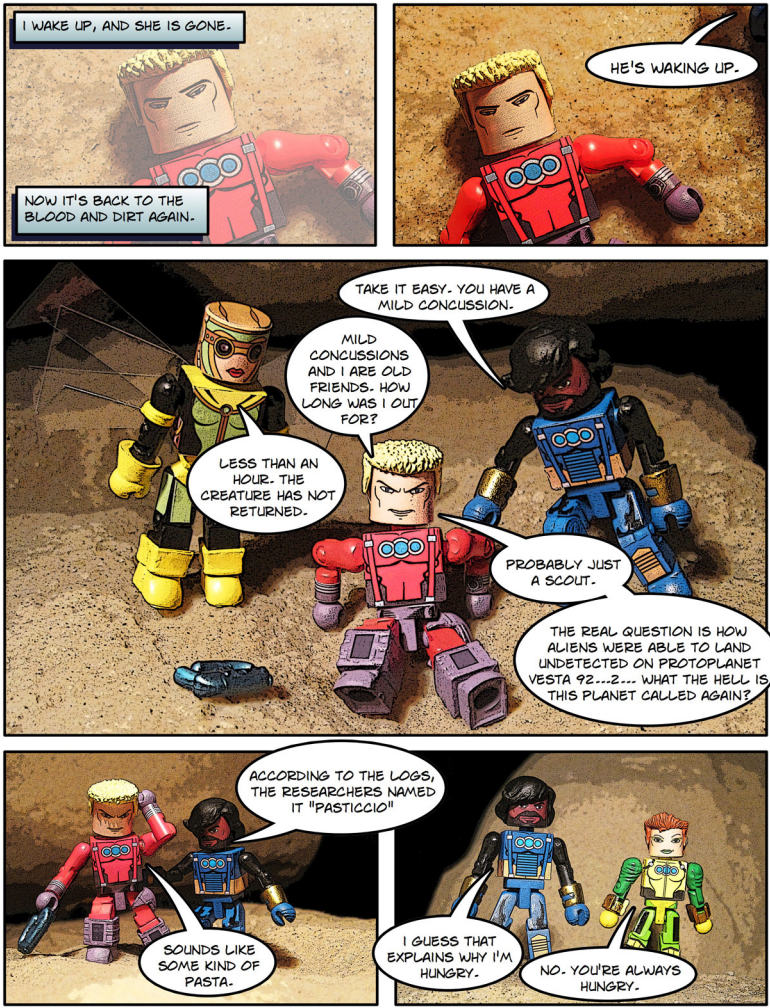
BOOM
BEEP
YOU PUT ON A GOOD LIGHT SHOW, UGLY.
CAN I PLAY TOO?
SSSSSSSSSSS
SKREEEEEEEEEEEEEE
FIRE DOESN'T BOTHER YOU? NO WORRIES.

I'M JUST GETTING STARTED.
HOW ABOUT PLASMA?
SKREEEEEEE
FREEZE RAY?
SKREEEEE
WELL THEN HOW ABOUT-
A LITTLE THING I LIKE TO CALL-

THE BAD ASS BUFFET!
SKREEEEEE
DAMN!
IT'S LIKE A CHRISTMAS TREE FROM HELL!
STAY DOWN. I GOT THIS.
ZZZUUUMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM


THE STUN SETTING?
I DON'T SHOOT TO KILL.
SOMEDAY YOU'LL REGRET THAT.
I HAVEN'T YET.
I CAN HEAR THEIR VOICES.
KAIM, CAN YOU HEAR ME?
HE GOT HIT PRETTY HARD BACK THERE.
THE WORDS COME TO ME THROUGH A LONG, DARK TUNNEL
KAIM?
BUT THERE IS ANOTHER VOICE MUCH CLOSER...
AND MUCH SWEETER...


ALRIGHT KAIM, LET'S START WITH IONIZED RADIATION.
THIS WAS TWELVE YEARS AGO...
HERE IS WHERE THE ELECTRONS PASS THROUGH THE MEDIUM.
BUT IT STILL FEELS LKE YESTERDAY.
THE ELECTRONS POLARIZE THE MOLECULES, WHICH TRY TO RETURN TO NORMAL.
I WAS THE NEW GUY AT PROTOSTAR, AND AMY WAS SHOWING ME THE ROPES.
AS THE MOLECULES SHIFT BACK TO NORMAL, THEY EMIT IONIZED RADIATION.
I WAS TRYING SO HARD TO CONCENTRATE ON HER WORDS.
WE HARNESS THIS ENERGY AND USE IT IN OUR LOW-LEVEL ION THRUST ENGINES.
BUT I KEPT GETTING LOST IN HER EYES.
YOU STILL WITH ME, HANDSOME?
DEFINITELY.


I WAKE UP, AND SHE IS GONE.
NOW IT'S BACK TO THE BLOOD AND DIRT AGAIN.
HE'S WAKING UP.
TAKE IT EASY. YOU HAVE A MILD CONCUSSION.
MILD CONCUSSIONS AND I ARE OLD FRIENDS. HOW LONG WAS I OUT FOR?
LESS THAN AN HOUR. THE CREATURE HAS NOT RETURNED.
PROBABLY JUST A SCOUT.
THE REAL QUESTION IS HOW ALIENS WERE ABLE TO LAND UNDETECTED ON PROTOPLANET VESTA 92...2... WHAT THE HELL IS THIS PLANET CALLED AGAIN?
ACCORDING TO THE LOGS, THE RESEARCHERS NAMED IT "PASTICCIO"
SOUNDS LIKE SOME KIND OF PASTA.
I GUESS THAT EXPLAINS WHY I'M HUNGRY.
NO. YOU'RE ALWAYS HUNGRY.

AS THE ONLY PERSON HERE WHO HAS BEEN TO OLD EARTH, I CAN TELL YOU IT'S DEFINITELY ITALIAN, AND IT MEANS A BLEND OF DIFFERENT MATERIALS THAT CREATE A WORK OF ART.

WELL THERE IS A CREATURE ON THIS "WORK OF ART" THAT WANTS TO KILL US.

WE PROBABLY JUST SCARED IT.

IT WAS PROBABLY YOU WITH YOUR BIG BUG EYES, PYX.

CYGNUS, DID THE CREATURE SHOW UP ON OUR SCANNERS?

NOT EVEN A BLIP.

I AM HAVING THE OXYGEN GENERATORS AT THE CAVE ENTRANCE MONITOR THE AIR FOR ANY SUSPICIOUS READINGS.

IF WE RUN INTO THIS THING AGAIN, WE'LL LEARN A WHOLE LOT MORE ABOUT IT.

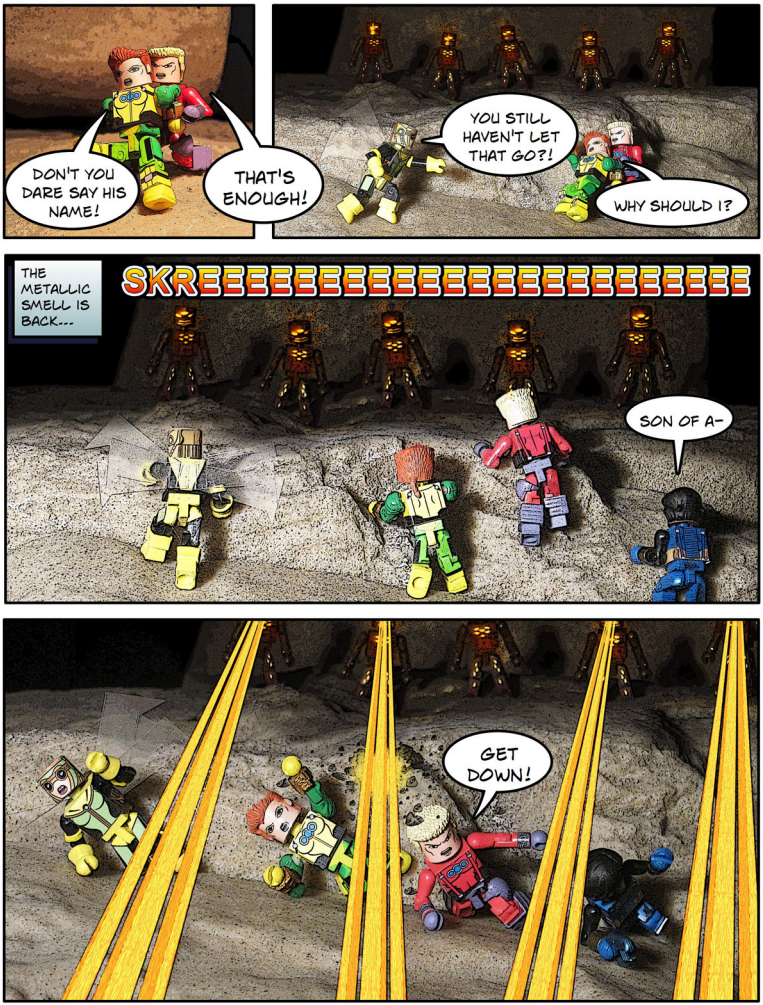
IN THAT CASE, LET'S GO FIND OUR LITTLE FRIEND RIGHT NOW.

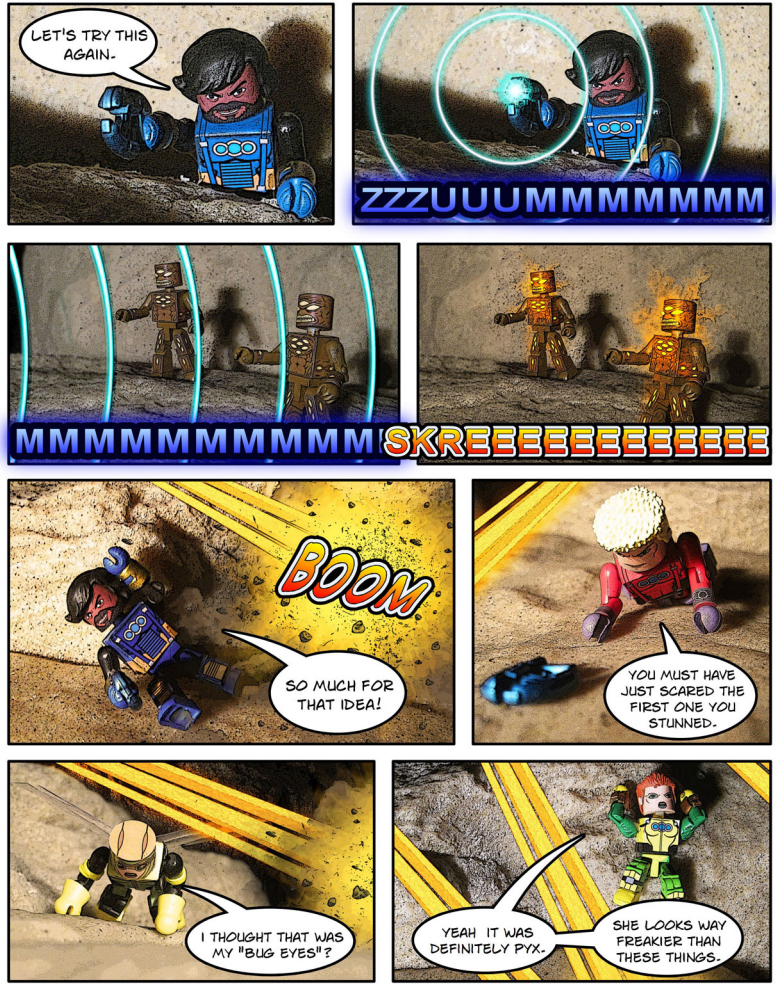
WITH ANY LUCK, WE'LL FIND THE RESEARCHERS AT THE SAME TIME.

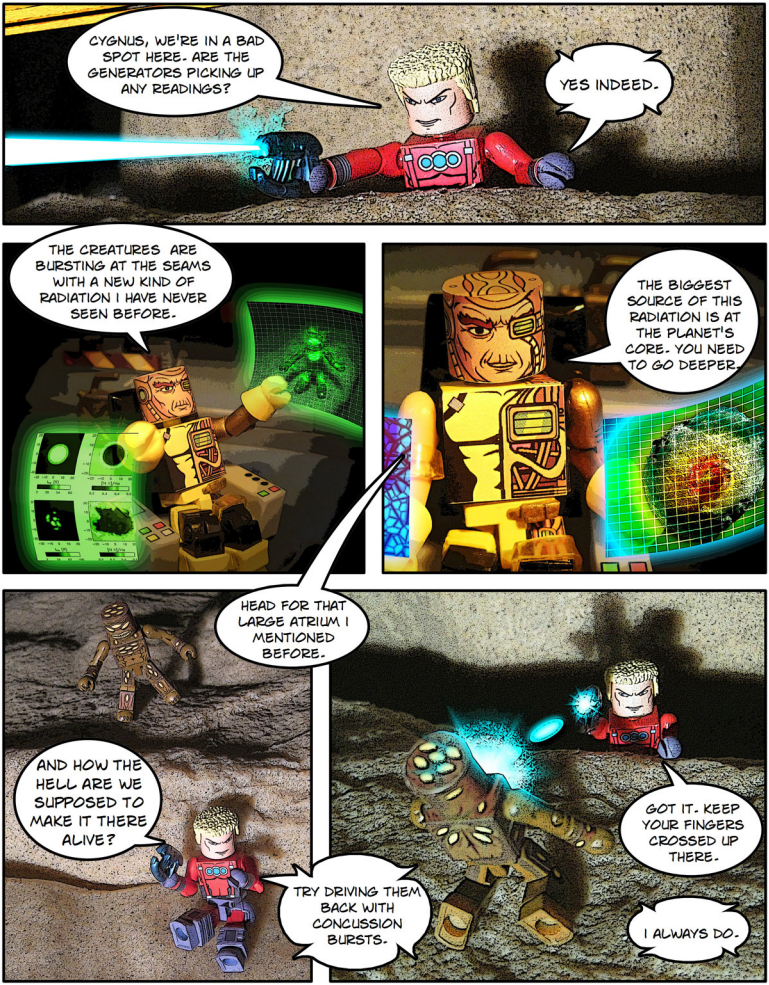
IF THEY'RE STILL ALIVE...

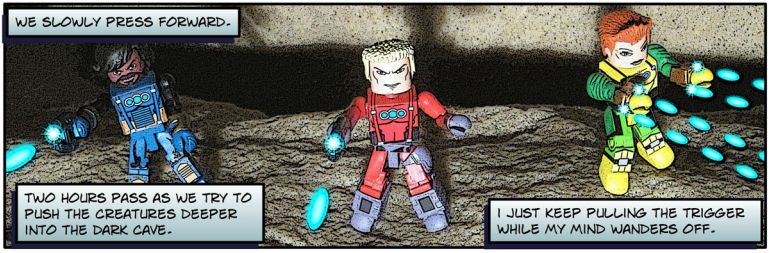
TEN MINUTES OF WALKING AND MY HEAD IS POUNDING.
CAPTAIN, YOU REALLY SHOULD BE RESTING.
YOU KNOW ME BETTER THAN THAT, MAURO.
YEAH AND THAT'S WHAT WORRIES ME.
I'VE BEEN THINKING -
WHAT IF ALIENS DIDN'T ACTUALLY LAND ON THIS PLANET?
WHAT IF THEY EVOLVED HERE DURING THE CREATION OF THIS PROTOPLANET?
THAT WOULD EXPLAIN WHY NONE OF THE OUTER RIM SENSORS SET OFF AN ALARM.
THIS PLANET DIDN'T EVEN EXIST THREE YEARS AGO. NOTHING COULD EVOLVE THAT QUICKLY.
HOW DO WE KNOW?
TWENTY YEARS AGO WE COULD BARELY TRIGGER A SUPERNOVA.
NOW WE BUILD ENTIRE PLANETS FROM SCRATCH.
WE ARE GAINING KNOWLEDGE FASTER THAN WE CAN UNDERSTAND IT.
BIG FREAKING ROCKS SLAMMED INTO EACH OTHER FOR THREE YEARS TO CREATE THIS PLANET.
NOTHING COULD SURVIVE THAT. FACE IT - YOU'RE WRONG.
YOU THINK YOU KNOW SO MUCH, ANUEL.
HERE IT COMES. BEST TO LET THEM VENT A LITTLE.

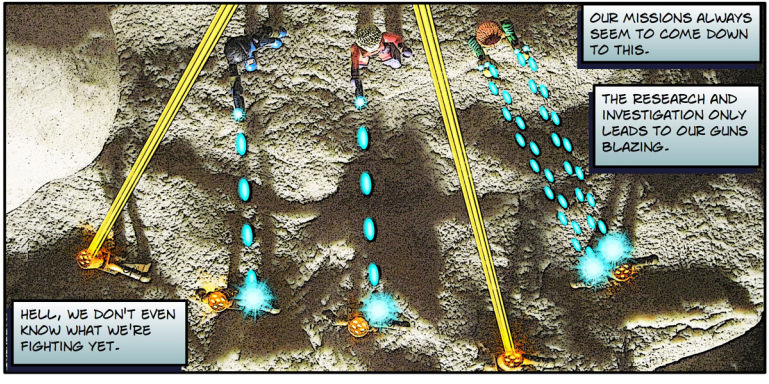
AND YOU THINK YOU'RE SOMETHING SPECIAL JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE TWO CAMERAS JAMMED IN YOUR HEAD.
WHAT IS YOUR PROBLEM WITH ME?
I WOULDN'T EVEN KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN.
THIS IS ABOUT DANIEL, ISN'T IT?
WHAM!
SO MUCH FOR LETTING THEM VENT...

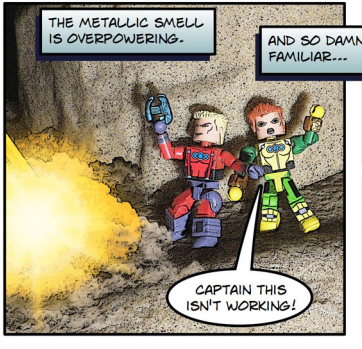

DON'T YOU DARE SAY HIS NAME!
THAT'S ENOUGH!
YOU STILL HAVEN'T LET THAT GO?!
WHY SHOULD I?
THE METALLIC SMELL IS BACK---
SKREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
SON OF A-
GET DOWN!

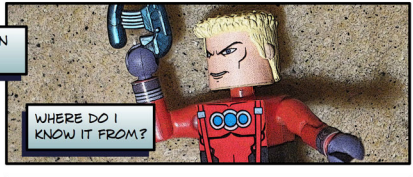

LET'S TRY THIS AGAIN.
ZZZUUUMMMMMMM
MMMMMMMMMMM
SKREEEEEEEEEEE
BOOM
SO MUCH FOR THAT IDEA!
YOU MUST HAVE JUST SCARED THE FIRST ONE YOU STUNNED.
I THOUGHT THAT WAS MY "BUG EYES"?
YEAH IT WAS DEFINITELY PYX.
SHE LOOKS WAY FREAKIER THAN THESE THINGS.

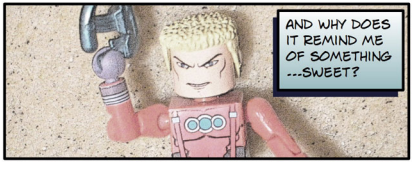

CYGNUS, WE'RE IN A BAD SPOT HERE. ARE THE GENERATORS PICKING UP ANY READINGS?
YES INDEED.
THE CREATURES ARE BURSTING AT THE SEAMS WITH A NEW KIND OF RADIATION I HAVE NEVER SEEN BEFORE.
THE BIGGEST SOURCE OF THIS RADIATION IS AT THE PLANET'S CORE. YOU NEED TO GO DEEPER.
HEAD FOR THAT LARGE ATRIUM I MENTIONED BEFORE.
AND HOW THE HELL ARE WE SUPPOSED TO MAKE IT THERE ALIVE?
TRY DRIVING THEM BACK WITH CONCUSSION BURSTS.
GOT IT. KEEP YOUR FINGERS CROSSED UP THERE.
I ALWAYS DO.

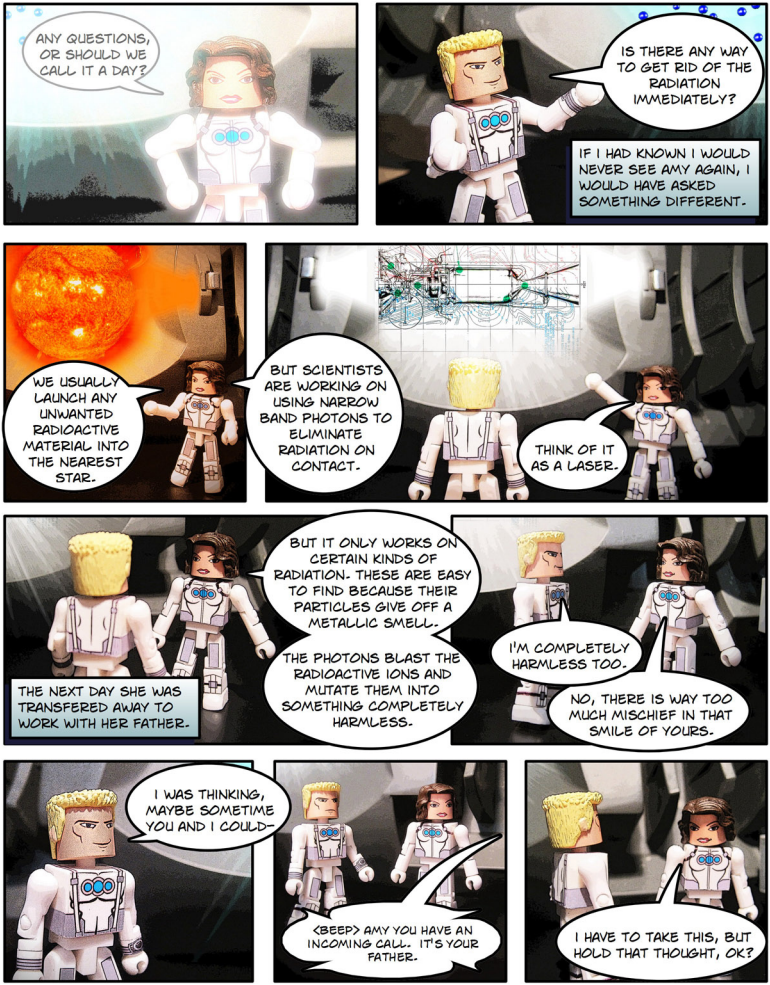

WE SLOWLY PRESS FORWARD.
TWO HOURS PASS AS WE TRY TO PUSH THE CREATURES DEEPER INTO THE DARK CAVE.
I JUST KEEP PULLING THE TRIGGER WHILE MY MIND WANDERS OFF.


OUR MISSIONS ALWAYS SEEM TO COME DOWN TO THIS.
THE RESEARCH AND INVESTIGATION ONLY LEADS TO OUR GUNS BLAZING.
HELL, WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING YET.

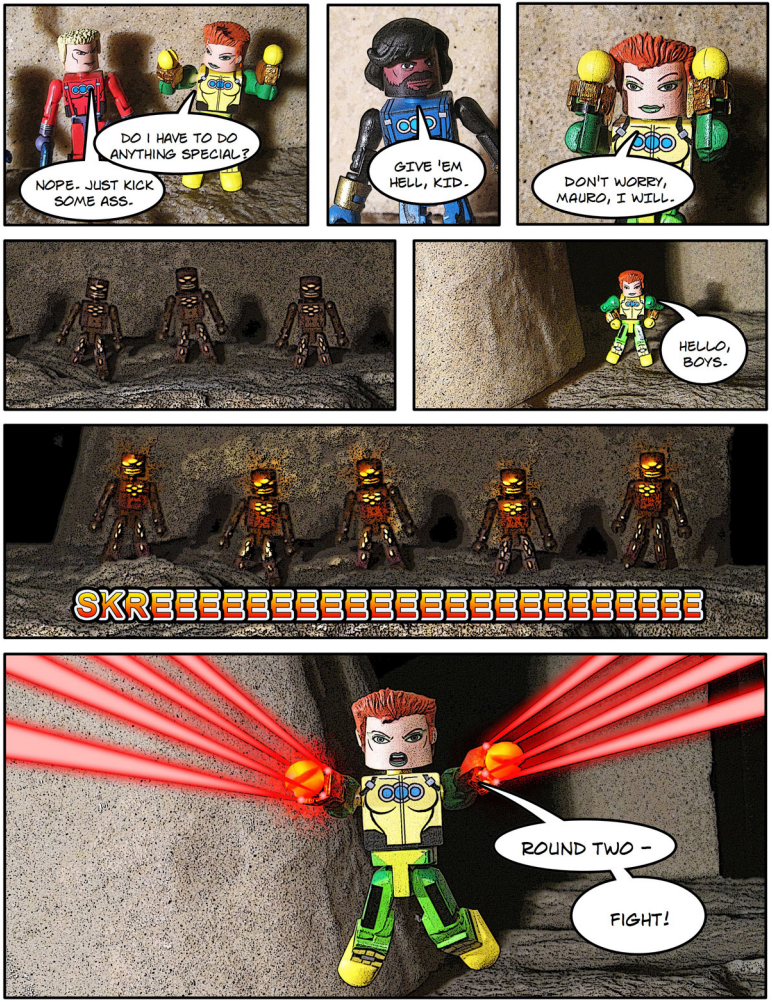

THE METALLIC SMELL IS OVERPOWERING.
AND SO DAMN FAMILIAR...
CAPTAIN THIS ISN'T WORKING!

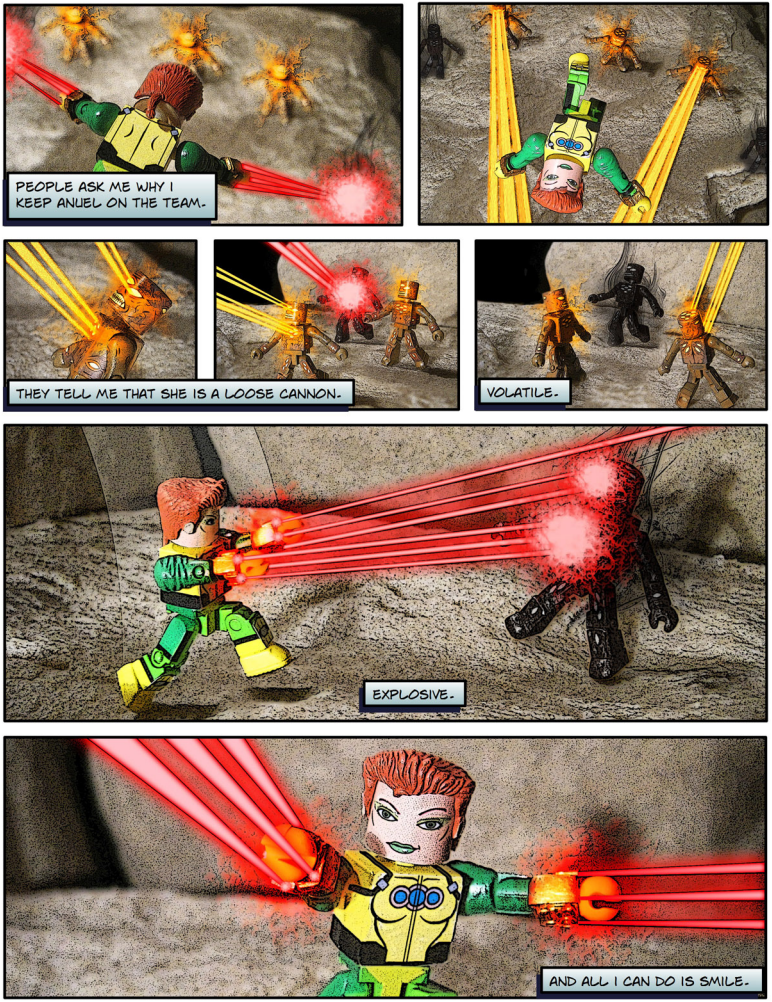

WHERE DO I KNOW IT FROM?


AND WHY DOES IT REMIND ME OF SOMETHING ---SWEET?

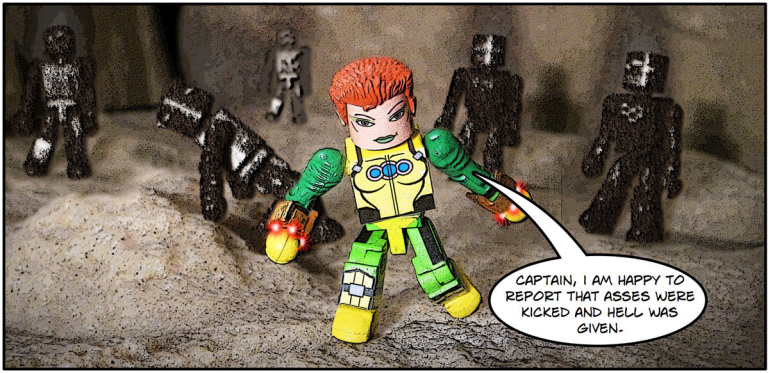

ANY QUESTIONS, OR SHOULD WE CALL IT A DAY?
IS THERE ANY WAY TO GET RID OF THE RADIATION IMMEDIATELY?
IF I HAD KNOWN I WOULD NEVER SEE AMY AGAIN, I WOULD HAVE ASKED SOMETHING DIFFERENT.
WE USUALLY LAUNCH ANY UNWANTED RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL INTO THE NEAREST STAR.
BUT SCIENTISTS ARE WORKING ON USING NARROW BAND PHOTONS TO ELIMINATE RADIATION ON CONTACT.
THINK OF IT AS A LASER.
THE NEXT DAY SHE WAS TRANSFERED AWAY TO WORK WITH HER FATHER.
BUT IT ONLY WORKS ON CERTAIN KINDS OF RADIATION. THESE ARE EASY TO FIND BECAUSE THEIR PARTICLES GIVE OFF A METALLIC SMELL.
THE PHOTONS BLAST THE RADIOACTIVE IONS AND MUTATE THEM INTO SOMETHING COMPLETELY HARMLESS.
I'M COMPLETELY HARMLESS TOO.
NO, THERE IS WAY TOO MUCH MISCHIEF IN THAT SMILE OF YOURS.
I WAS THINKING, MAYBE SOMETIME YOU AND I COULD-
<BEEP> AMY YOU HAVE AN INCOMING CALL. IT'S YOUR FATHER.
I HAVE TO TAKE THIS, BUT HOLD THAT THOUGHT, OK?

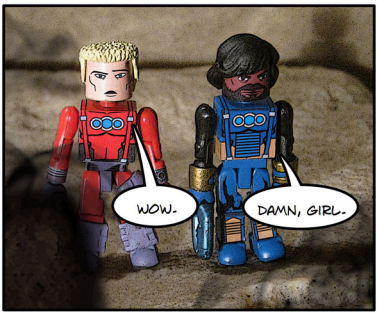
I HAVE, AMY. I HAVE.
CYGNUS, HAVE THERE BEEN ANY INNOVATIONS IN USING NARROWBAND PHOTONS TO DESTROY RADIATION?
HMM... I THOUGHT THEY GAVE UP ON THAT YEARS AGO. LET ME SEE...
WELL I'LL BE DAMNED, THEY FINALLY FIGURED IT OUT!
YES, IT WILL WORK, IF YOU HAVE THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT.
AND DO WE?
ANUEL DOES, BUT HER GAUNTLETS WILL NBED A FEW MODIFICATIONS.
PYX WILL BE ABLE TO DO IT. I AM SENDING HER THE SPECS NOW.
GOOD.
NOW I JUST NEED TO KEEP THOSE TWO FROM KILLING EACH OTHER LONG ENOUGH TO SAVE OUR LIVES.
20 MINUTES LATER:
DONE.
FINE.
WELL THAT WAS EASY...

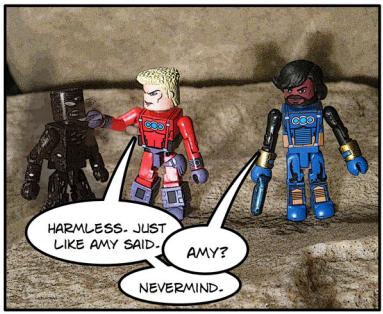

DO I HAVE TO DO ANYTHING SPECIAL?
NOPE. JUST KICK SOME ASS.
GIVE 'EM HELL, KID.
DON'T WORRY, MAURO, I WILL.
HELLO, BOYS.
SKREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
ROUND TWO –
FIGHT!


PEOPLE ASK ME WHY I KEEP ANUEL ON THE TEAM.
THEY TELL ME THAT SHE IS A LOOSE CANNON.
VOLATILE.
EXPLOSIVE.
AND ALL I CAN DO IS SMILE.

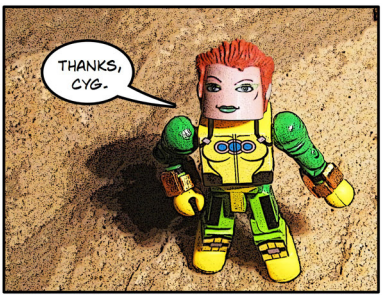
THEY SEE IT AS A WEAKNESS.
BUT I CALL IT AN ASSET.
BECAUSE WHEN ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE,
ANUEL CAN GO TOE-TO-TOE WITH THE DEVIL,
AND COME OUT ON TOP.


CAPTAIN, I AM HAPPY TO REPORT THAT ASSES WERE KICKED AND HELL WAS GIVEN.


WOW.
DAMN, GIRL.


HARMLESS. JUST LIKE AMY SAID.
AMY?
NEVERMIND.

THAT WAS SOME FINE SHOOTING, LASS.


THANKS, CYG.

NICE WORK.
THANKS.
THIS DOESN'T CHANGE ANYTHING.
NO. IT DOESN'T.
THE METALLIC SMELL IS BACK...
AGAIN...
YES, NICE WORK, HUMANS.
YOU JUST KILLED THE RESEARCHERS THAT YOU CAME HERE TO FIND.
OF COURSE, THEY COULD NEVER BE HUMAN AGAIN. THE BORLOTH RADIATION CHANGED THEM FOREVER.
BUT I NEEDED THOSE BORLOTH ALIVE.
NOW YOU SHALL REPLACE THEM.
FOR A MOMENT, ALL MY TRAINING AND STRENGTH MELTS AWAY, AND ALL I CAN THINK IS –
"WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE HERE."
TO BE CONTINUED...

Character Sketch

BORLOTH

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

This realistic depiction of the Borloth was created by Dylan Cook. It was commissioned by Luke's Toy Store, with all proceeds supporting the relief efforts in Japan by Oxfarm International. It was created in association with Draw the World Together, an organization created to unite arts communities in providing possibilities for children who do not have the opportunity for basic healthcare and education. These are both wonderful organizations, and we strongly urge you to support them if you are able.