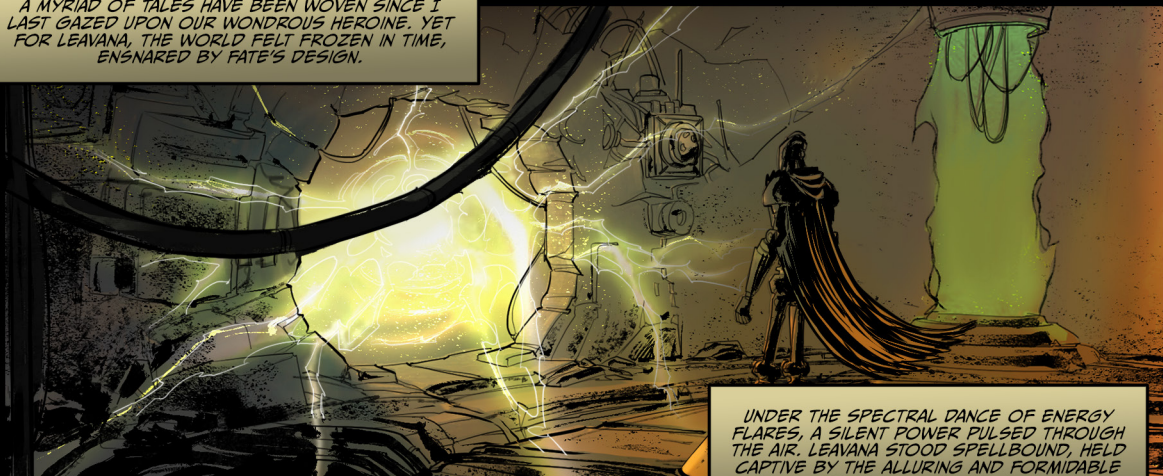
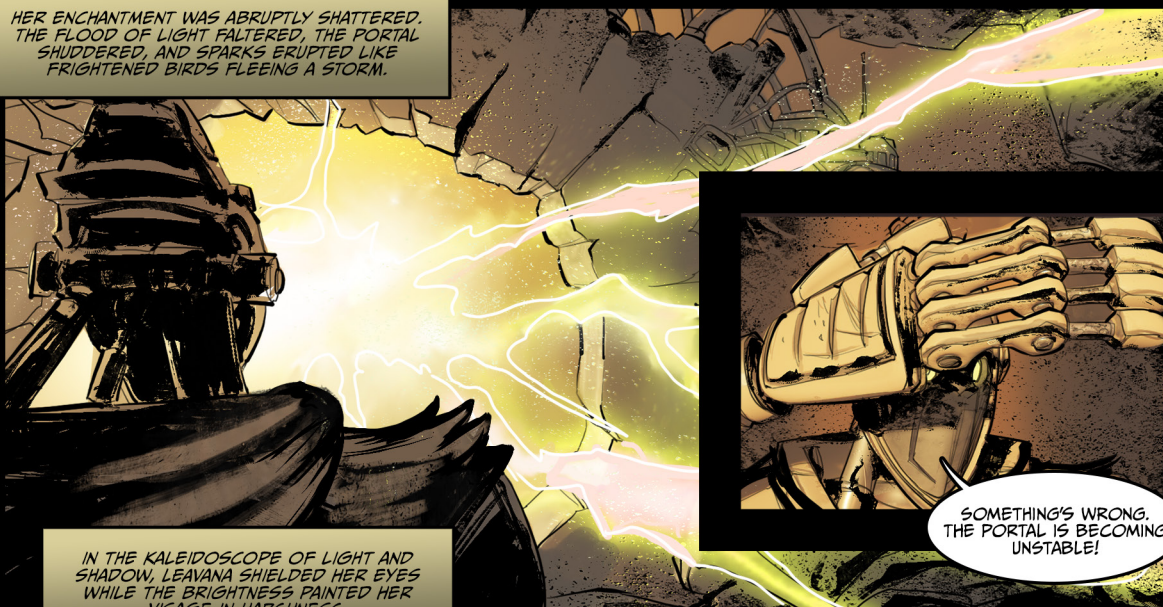


A MYRIAD OF TALES HAVE BEEN WOVEN SINCE I LAST GAZED UPON OUR WONDROUS HEROINE. YET FOR LEAVANA, THE WORLD FELT FROZEN IN TIME, ENSNARED BY FATE'S DESIGN.



UNDER THE SPECTRAL DANCE OF ENERGY FLARES, A SILENT POWER PULSED THROUGH THE AIR. LEAVANA STOOD SPELLBOUND, HELD CAPTIVE BY THE ALLURING AND FORMIDABLE SPECTACLE BEFORE HER.

HER ENCHANTMENT WAS ABRUPTLY SHATTERED. THE FLOOD OF LIGHT FALTERED, THE PORTAL SHUDDERED, AND SPARKS ERUPTED LIKE FRIGHTENED BIRDS FLEEING A STORM.

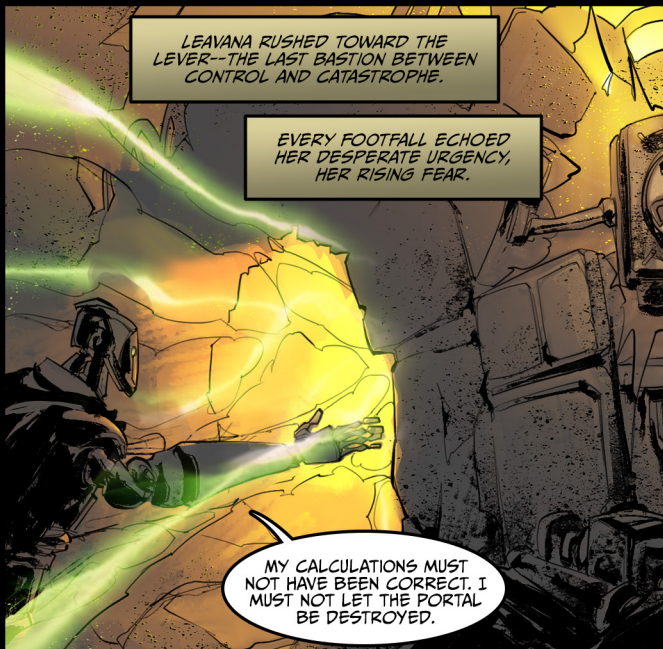


IN THE KALEIDOSCOPE OF LIGHT AND SHADOW, LEAVANA SHIELDED HER EYES WHILE THE BRIGHTNESS PAINTED HER VISAGE IN HARSHNESS.

SOMETHING'S WRONG. THE PORTAL IS BECOMING UNSTABLE!

LEAVANA RUSHED TOWARD THE LEVER--THE LAST BASTION BETWEEN CONTROL AND CATASTROPHE.

EVERY FOOTFALL ECHOED HER DESPERATE URGENCY, HER RISING FEAR.

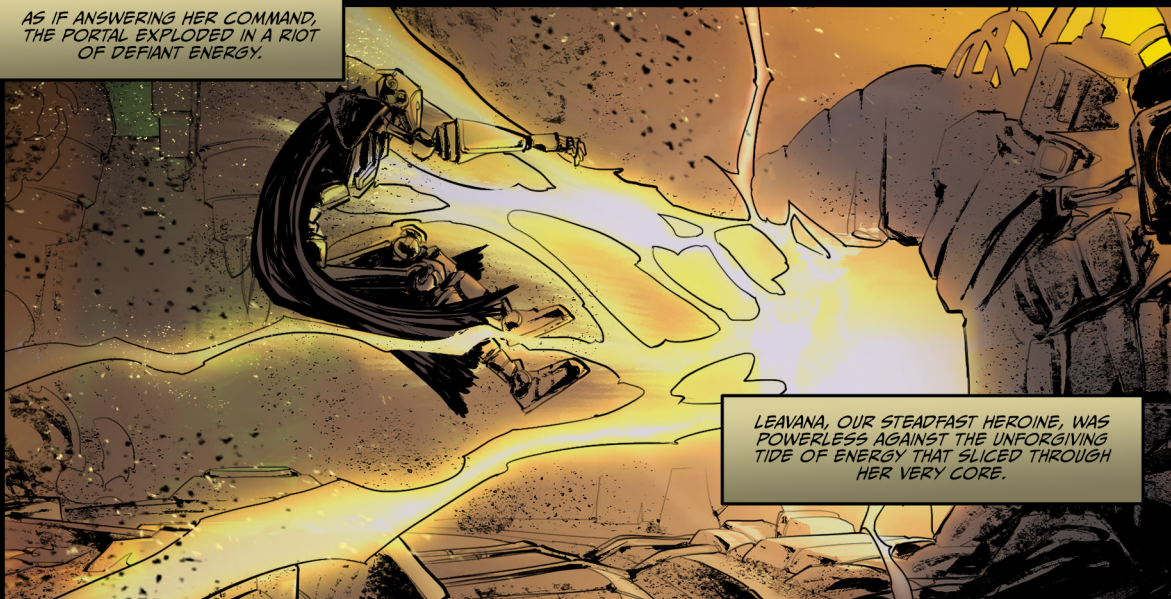


MY CALCULATIONS MUST NOT HAVE BEEN CORRECT. I MUST NOT LET THE PORTAL BE DESTROYED.



I MUST TURN IT OFF.

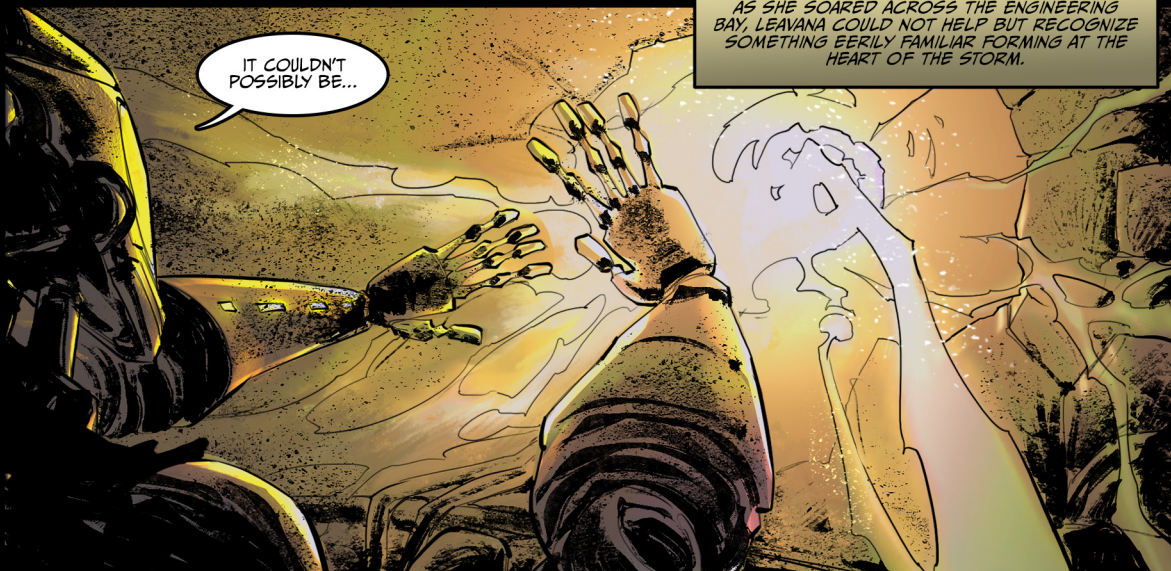
AS IF ANSWERING HER COMMAND,
THE PORTAL EXPLODED IN A RIOT
OF DEFIANT ENERGY.



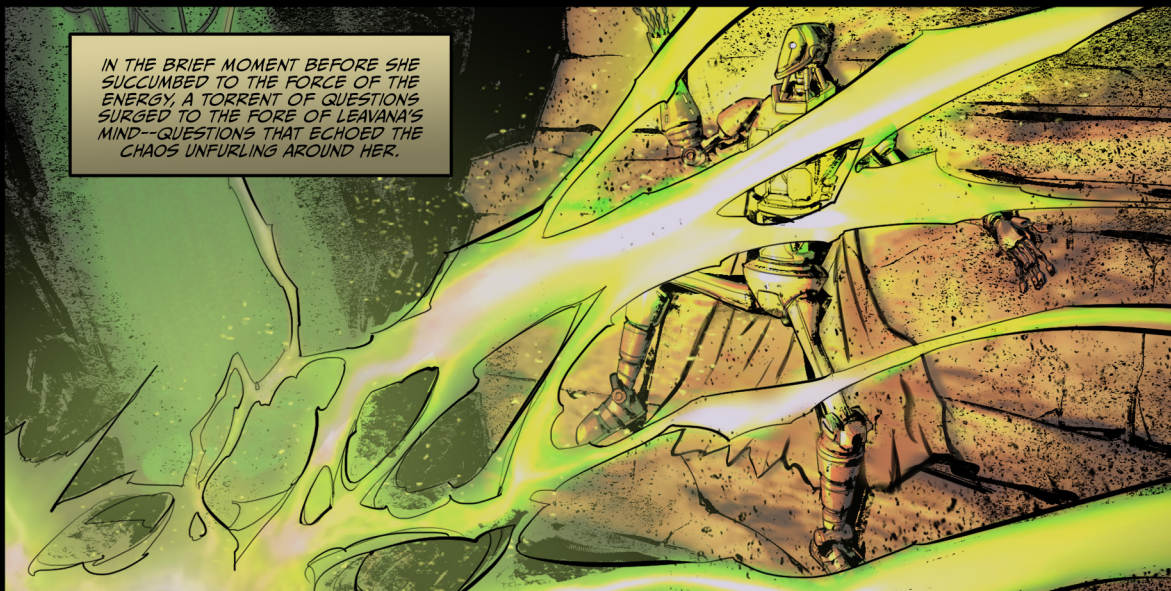
LEAVANA, OUR STEADFAST HEROINE, WAS
POWERLESS AGAINST THE UNFORGIVING
TIDE OF ENERGY THAT SLICED THROUGH
HER VERY CORE.

IT COULDN'T
POSSIBLY BE...

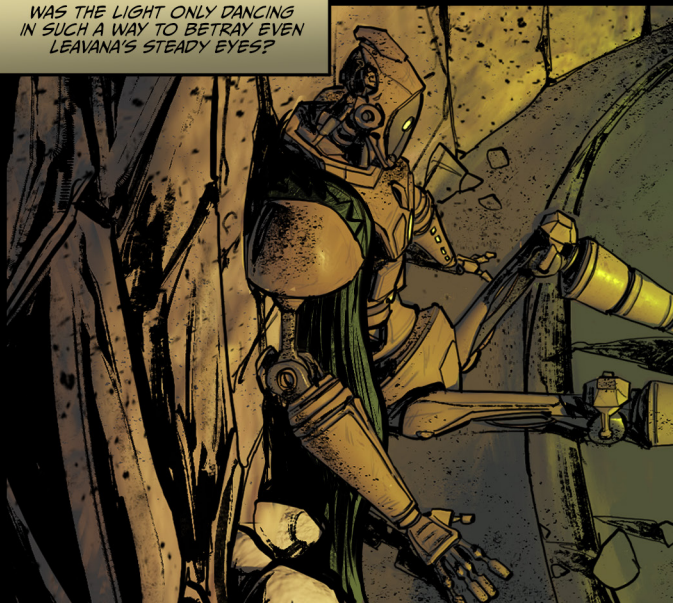
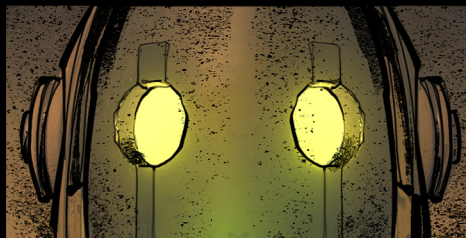
AS SHE SOARED ACROSS THE ENGINEERING
BAY, LEAVANA COULD NOT HELP BUT RECOGNIZE
SOMETHING EERILY FAMILIAR FORMING AT THE
HEART OF THE STORM.



IN THE BRIEF MOMENT BEFORE SHE
SUCCEEDED TO THE FORCE OF THE
ENERGY, A TORRENT OF QUESTIONS
SURGED TO THE FORE OF LEAVANA'S
MIND--QUESTIONS THAT ECHOED THE
CHAOS UNFURLING AROUND HER.

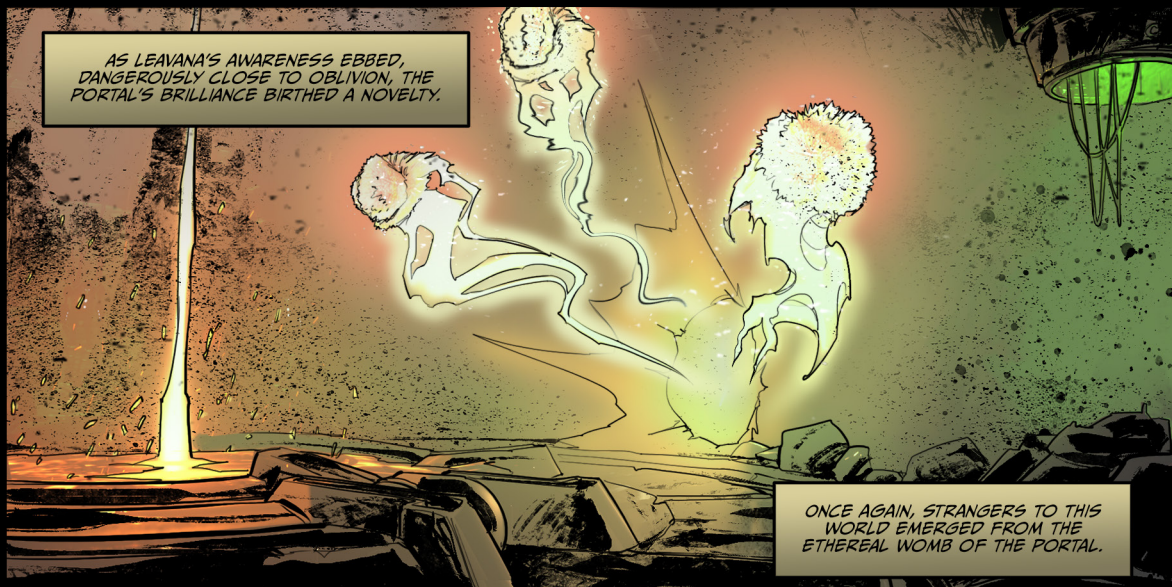


WAS THE LIGHT ONLY DANCING
IN SUCH A WAY TO BETRAY EVEN
LEAVANA'S STEADY EYES?



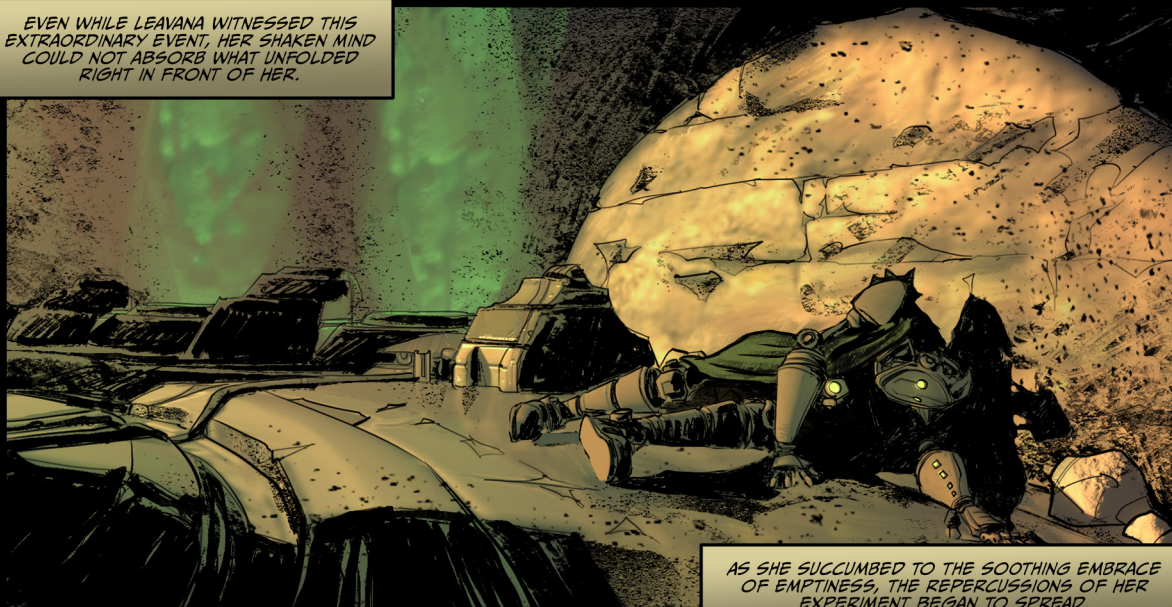
WAS THE EXPLOSION'S IMPACT
SO FIERCE THAT IT HAD RATTLED
THE VERY FOUNDATION OF HER
THOUGHTS, SHAKEN LOOSE THE
FORTRESS OF HER MIND?

AS LEAVANA'S AWARENESS EBBED,
DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO OBLIVION, THE
PORTAL'S BRILLIANCE BIRTHED A NOVELTY.



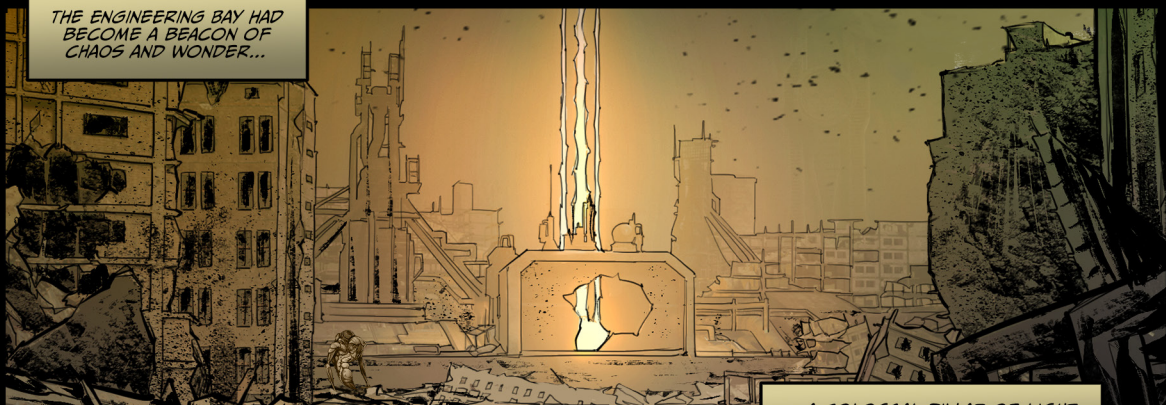
ONCE AGAIN, STRANGERS TO THIS
WORLD EMERGED FROM THE
ETHEREAL WOMB OF THE PORTAL.

EVEN WHILE LEAVANA WITNESSED THIS
EXTRAORDINARY EVENT, HER SHAKEN MIND
COULD NOT ABSORB WHAT UNFOLDED
RIGHT IN FRONT OF HER.

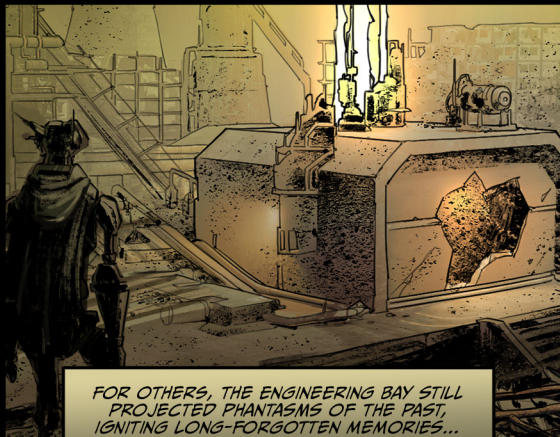


AS SHE SUCCEMBED TO THE SOOTHING EMBRACE
OF EMPTINESS, THE REPERCUSSIONS OF HER
EXPERIMENT BEGAN TO SPREAD.

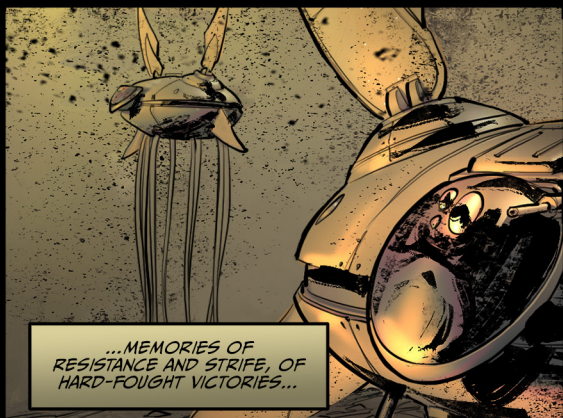
THE ENGINEERING BAY HAD
BECOME A BEACON OF
CHAOS AND WONDER...



...A COLOSSAL PILLAR OF LIGHT
THAT PORTRAYED PROGRESS.

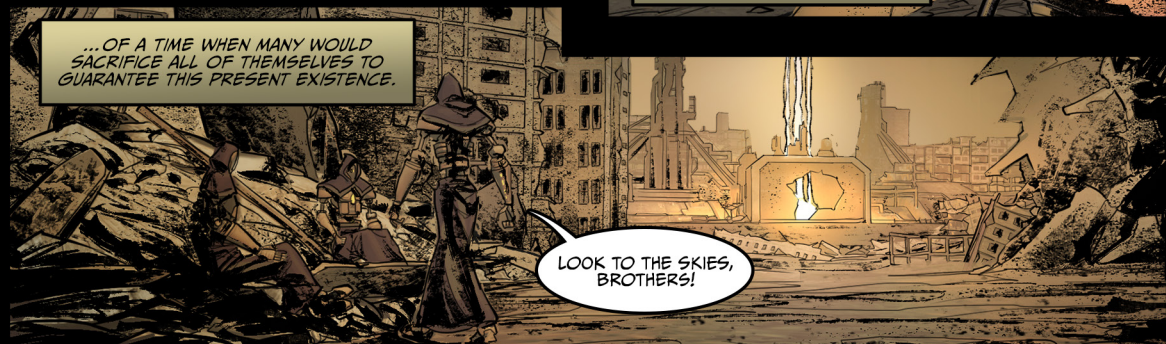


FOR OTHERS, THE ENGINEERING BAY STILL
PROJECTED PHANTASMS OF THE PAST,
IGNITING LONG-FORGOTTEN MEMORIES...



...MEMORIES OF
RESISTANCE AND STRIFE, OF
HARD-FOUGHT VICTORIES...

...OF A TIME WHEN MANY WOULD
SACRIFICE ALL OF THEMSELVES TO
GUARANTEE THIS PRESENT EXISTENCE.



LOOK TO THE SKIES,
BROTHERS!



THE SPARK ESCAPED THE CONFINES
OF THE ENGINEERING BAY, PROPELLING
ITSELF ONWARD IN DESPERATION.

WHILE THE SPARK, RESTLESS IN ITS CURIOSITY, YEARNED TO EXPLORE THIS NEW REALM AND ITS UNSEEN WONDERS, ITS ARRIVAL WAS FAR FROM SILENT.

WHISPERS OF ITS EMERGENCE SWEEPED ACROSS THE VAST EXPANSE, CARVING A TALE OF CHANGE THAT RIPPLED LIKE WAVES LAPPING ON THE SHORE.

THESE WHISPERS PIERCED THROUGH THE SINISTER SMOG THAT SURROUNDED TUNTEVA, AND SOMETHING WICKED BEGAN TO WAKE.

FROM THE HIGHEST FLOORS OF ITS OMINOUS OUTPOST, A DARK FIGURE WATCHED.

PATIENTLY ITS EYES WANDERED OVER THE DOMINION IT CONTROLLED, WAITING FOR THE DAY THAT SOMEONE DARED RISE UP AGAINST IT.

FOR YOU SEE, THIS BEING WAS FUELED BY A DESPERATE HUNGER, QUENCHED ONLY BY WORTHY COMPETITION.

AND IN THIS CASE, THAT VERY COMPETITION CARELESSLY REVEALED ITSELF THROUGH ITS OWN FOOLHARDY ACTIONS.



NOW WHAT DO WE
HAVE HERE?



THROUGHOUT HER JOURNEY, LEAVANA HAD
CROSSED PATHS WITH MONSTROUS
MUTATIONS AND CREATURES FUELED BY
CRUELTY, YET THE TRUE ARCHITECT OF THIS
WORLD REMAINED HIDDEN FROM HER.



AFTER ALL OF
THESE YEARS...

...THE TURNING GEARS
OF TIME HAVE ALIGNED
IN MY FAVOR.

ONE SUCH AS MYSELF
HAS FINALLY AWOKEN.

I MUST DISCOVER WHAT
SEEDS OF INSIGHT THEY
HAVE GATHERED.

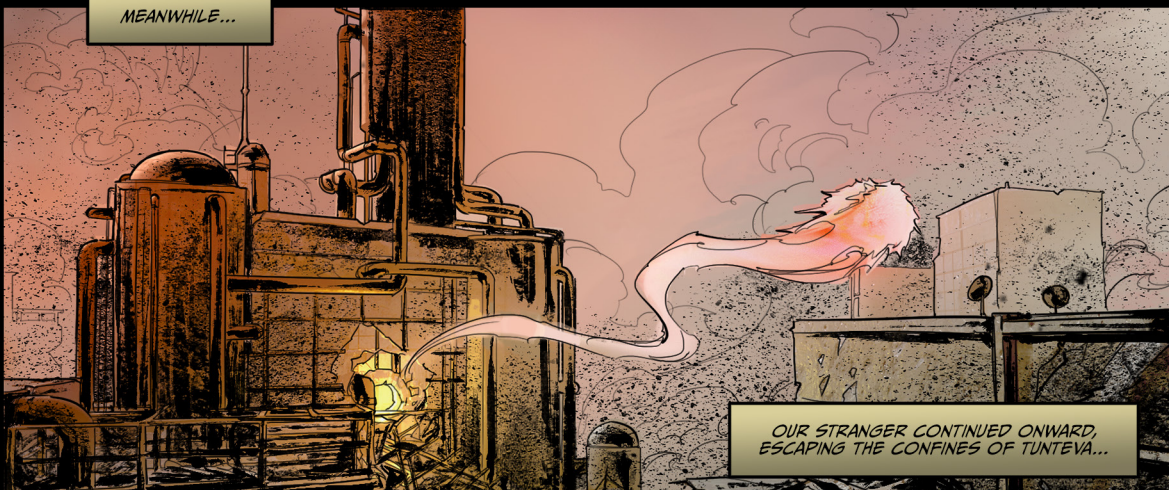


I MUST FIND THEM.

I MUST SHOW
THEM THE LIGHT.

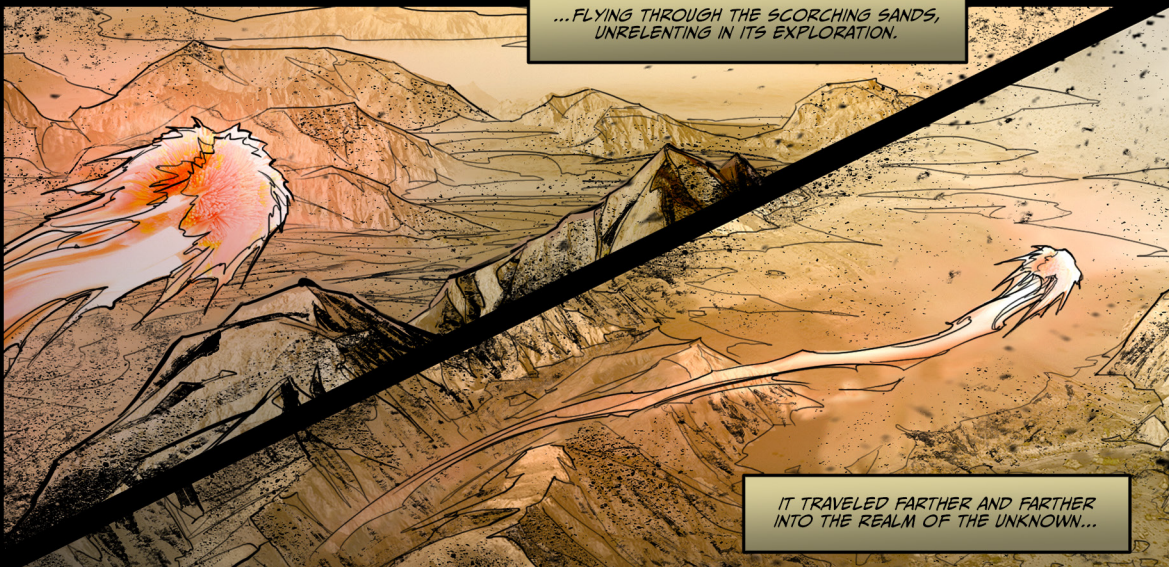
MY LIGHT.

MEANWHILE...



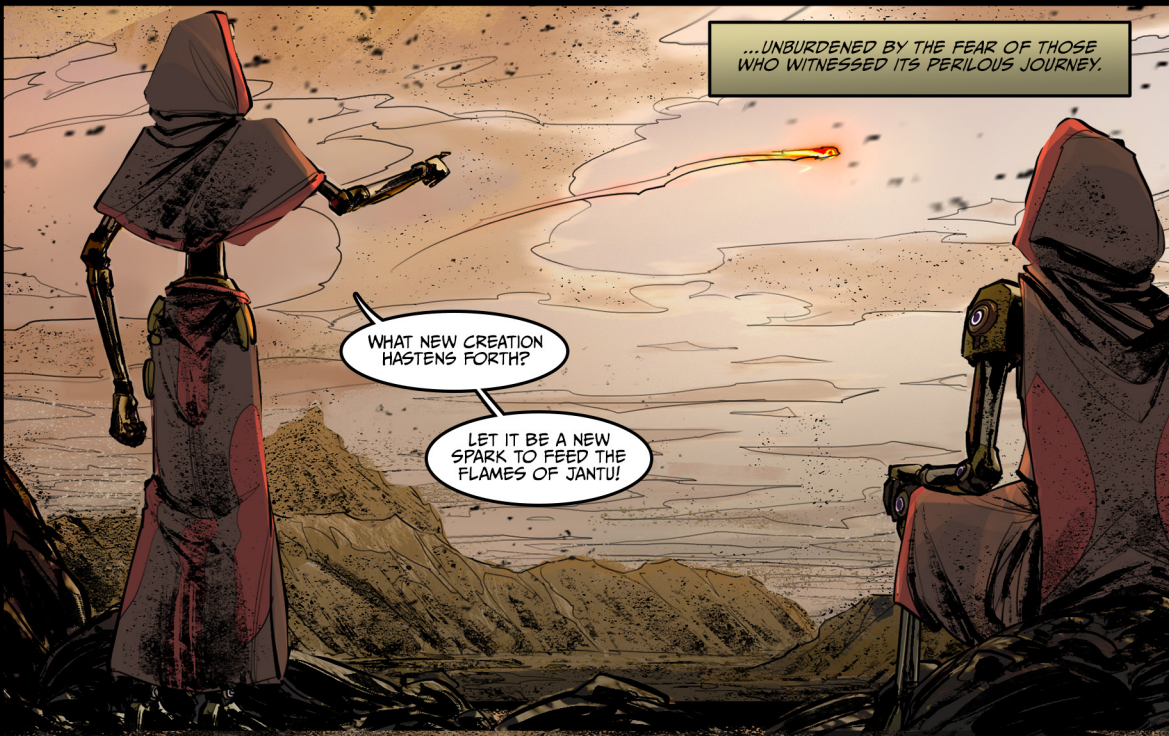
OUR STRANGER CONTINUED ONWARD,
ESCAPING THE CONFINES OF TUNTEVA...

...FLYING THROUGH THE SCORCHING SANDS,
UNRELENTING IN ITS EXPLORATION.



IT TRAVELED FARTHER AND FARTHER
INTO THE REALM OF THE UNKNOWN...

...UNBURDENED BY THE FEAR OF THOSE
WHO WITNESSED ITS PERILOUS JOURNEY.



WHAT NEW CREATION
HASTENS FORTH?

LET IT BE A NEW
SPARK TO FEED THE
FLAMES OF JANTU!

