CHAPTERHOUSE

ANDRASOFSZKY CHARALAMPIDIS

SEASON I ISSUE 1

CAPTAIN CANUCK®

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DIGITAL EDITION
COVER A

CAPTAIN CANUCK®

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CAPTAIN CANUCK
(TOM EVANS)

MICHAEL EVANS
FOUNDER OF
EQUILIBRIUM

REDCOAT
(OLIVIA WALLACE-YEATES)
EQUILIBRIUM HEAD OF SECURITY

KEBEC
(YVETTE ARSENAULT)

PARMINDER

CHAPTER ONE: **BLACK GOLD**

Born of the true north and tested in war, Captain Canuck is a soldier granted the choice of how to use incredible power that could alter the fate of the world. Thrust into battle at the head of the global crisis intervention agency called Equilibrium, Canuck must find his way as warrior, leader, and, ultimately, hero to save humanity ...

CHAPTERHOUSE

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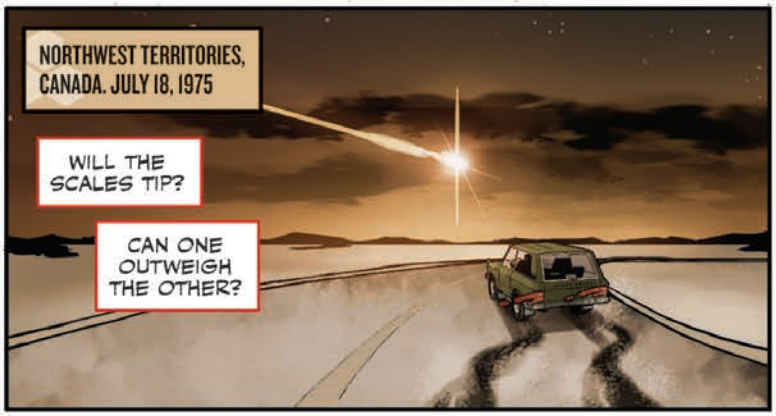
TRINITY TEST SITE. ALAMOGORDO, NEW MEXICO, USA. JULY 16, 1945
WE'VE DESTROYED SO MUCH.

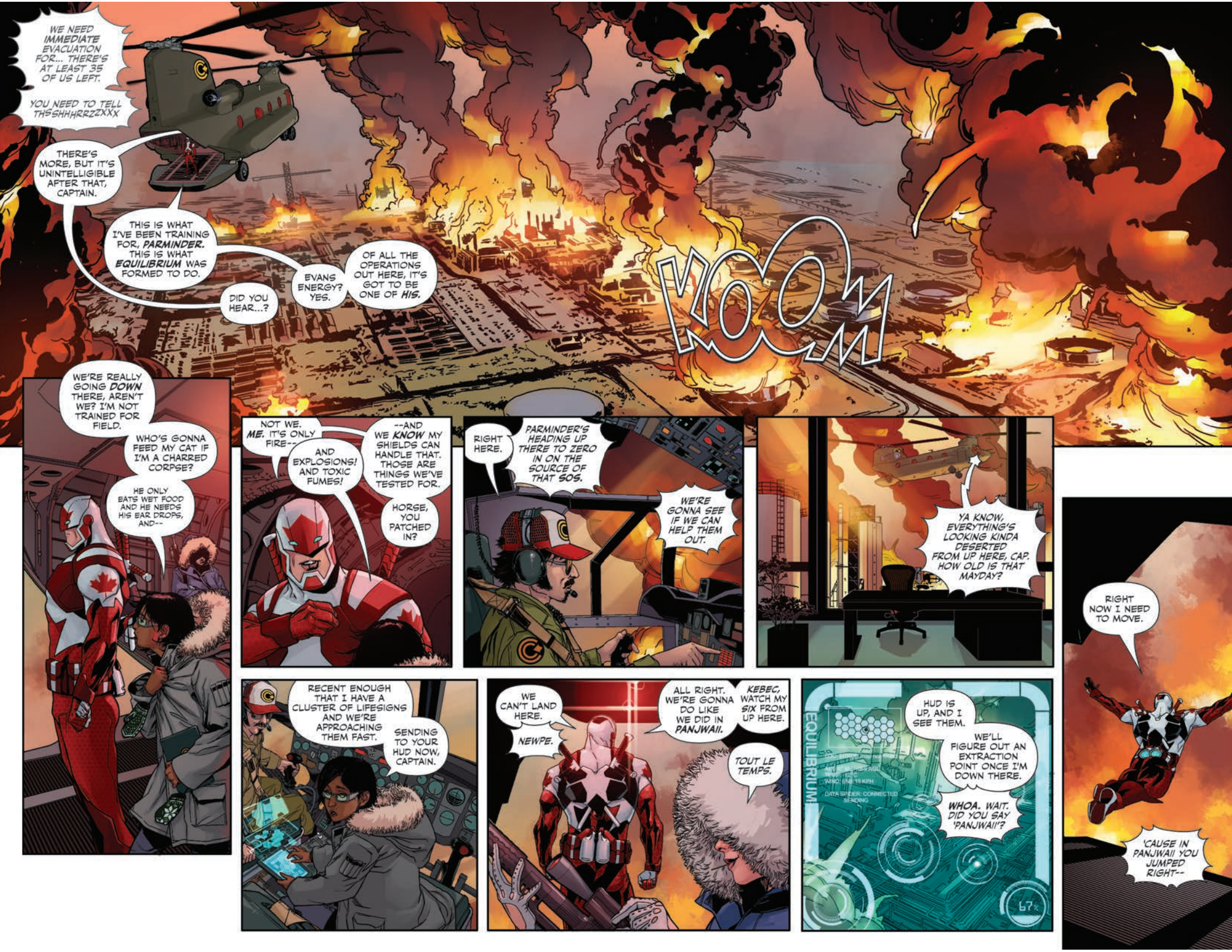
VOSTOK I. LOW EARTH ORBIT. APRIL 12, 1961
BUT WE'VE ALSO STOOD TALL AND REACHED TO THE STARS.

WHEN THE TIME COMES FOR US ALL TO BE LAID BARE, STRIPPED OF OUR JUSTIFICATIONS AND JUDGED.

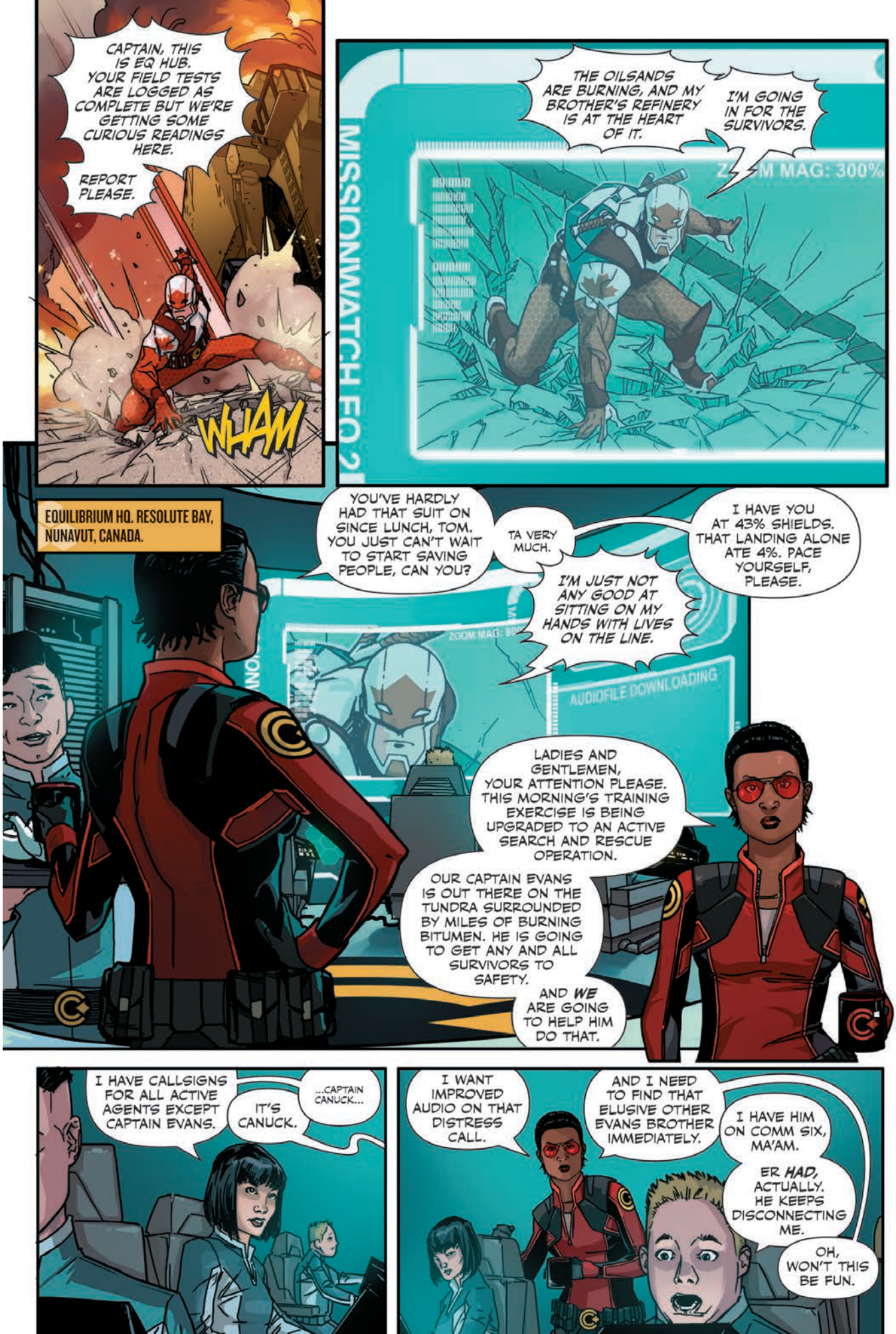

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, CANADA. JULY 18, 1975
WILL THE SCALES TIP?
CAN ONE OUTWEIGH THE OTHER?

HOLY...
AND WHICH TRULY DEFINES US?

COLD LAKE OIL SANDS, ALBERTA, CANADA. NOW.
MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY. ANYONE RECEIVING? THIS IS EVANS ENERGY IN-SITU OILSANDS REFINERY 1136.


WE NEED IMMEDIATE EVACUATION FOR... THERE'S AT LEAST 35 OF US LEFT.
YOU NEED TO TELL THSSHHHRRZZXXX
THERE'S MORE, BUT IT'S UNINTELLIGIBLE AFTER THAT, CAPTAIN.
THIS IS WHAT I'VE BEEN TRAINING FOR, PARMINDER. THIS IS WHAT EQUILIBRIUM WAS FORMED TO DO.
DID YOU HEAR...?
EVANS ENERGY? YES.
OF ALL THE OPERATIONS OUT HERE, IT'S GOT TO BE ONE OF HIS.
KOOM
WE'RE REALLY GOING DOWN THERE, AREN'T WE? I'M NOT TRAINED FOR FIELD.
WHO'S GONNA FEED MY CAT IF I'M A CHARRED CORPSE?
HE ONLY EATS WET FOOD AND HE NEEDS HIS EAR DROPS, AND--
NOT WE. ME. IT'S ONLY FIRE--
AND EXPLOSIONS! AND TOXIC FUMES!
--AND WE KNOW MY SHIELDS CAN HANDLE THAT. THOSE ARE THINGS WE'VE TESTED FOR.
HORSE, YOU PATCHED IN?
RIGHT HERE.
PARMINDER'S HEADING UP THERE TO ZERO IN ON THE SOURCE OF THAT SOS.
WE'RE GONNA SEE IF WE CAN HELP THEM OUT.
YA KNOW, EVERYTHING'S LOOKING KINDA DESERTED FROM UP HERE, CAP. HOW OLD IS THAT MAYDAY?
RIGHT NOW I NEED TO MOVE.
'CAUSE IN PANJWAII YOU JUMPED RIGHT--
RECENT ENOUGH THAT I HAVE A CLUSTER OF LIFESIGNS AND WE'RE APPROACHING THEM FAST.
SENDING TO YOUR HUD NOW, CAPTAIN.
WE CAN'T LAND HERE.
NEWPE.
ALL RIGHT. WE'RE GONNA DO LIKE WE DID IN PANJWAII.
KEBEC, WATCH MY SIX FROM UP HERE.
TOUT LE TEMPS.
EQUILIBRIUM
HUD IS UP, AND I SEE THEM.
WE'LL FIGURE OUT AN EXTRACTION POINT ONCE I'M DOWN THERE.
WHOA. WAIT. DID YOU SAY 'PANJWAII'?
DATA SPIDER: CONNECTED
SENDING
67%

ALEPH CHAPTER I: BLACK GOLD
OH.
WOW...!
IS IT OKAY THAT I SAID THAT?
EVERYONE IS ALWAYS WITH "WOW" UNTIL--


CAPTAIN, THIS IS EQ HUB. YOUR FIELD TESTS ARE LOGGED AS COMPLETE BUT WE'RE GETTING SOME CURIOUS READINGS HERE.
REPORT PLEASE.
WHAM
MISSIONWATCH EQ 2
THE OILSANDS ARE BURNING, AND MY BROTHER'S REFINERY IS AT THE HEART OF IT.
I'M GOING IN FOR THE SURVIVORS.
M MAG: 300%
EQUILIBRIUM HQ. RESOLUTE BAY, NUNAVUT, CANADA.
YOU'VE HARDLY HAD THAT SUIT ON SINCE LUNCH, TOM. YOU JUST CAN'T WAIT TO START SAVING PEOPLE, CAN YOU?
TA VERY MUCH.
I'M JUST NOT ANY GOOD AT SITTING ON MY HANDS WITH LIVES ON THE LINE.
I HAVE YOU AT 43% SHIELDS. THAT LANDING ALONE ATE 4%. PACE YOURSELF, PLEASE.
AUDIOFILE DOWNLOADING
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE. THIS MORNING'S TRAINING EXERCISE IS BEING UPGRADED TO AN ACTIVE SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATION.
OUR CAPTAIN EVANS IS OUT THERE ON THE TUNDRA SURROUNDED BY MILES OF BURNING BITUMEN. HE IS GOING TO GET ANY AND ALL SURVIVORS TO SAFETY.
AND WE ARE GOING TO HELP HIM DO THAT.
I HAVE CALLSIGNS FOR ALL ACTIVE AGENTS EXCEPT CAPTAIN EVANS.
IT'S CANUCK.
...CAPTAIN CANUCK...
I WANT IMPROVED AUDIO ON THAT DISTRESS CALL.
AND I NEED TO FIND THAT ELUSIVE OTHER EVANS BROTHER IMMEDIATELY.
I HAVE HIM ON COMM SIX, MA'AM.
ER HAD, ACTUALLY. HE KEEPS DISCONNECTING ME.
OH, WON'T THIS BE FUN.

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA.
MR. EVANS?
REALLY NOT A GOOD TIME, OLIVIA.
IT SEEMS IT NEVER IS, SIR.
Evans Energy International CEO missing as Arctic survey site goes dark.
0 Michael Evans removed in absentia EEI stock plunges 38 percent in Q2
Argus Heavy Industries acquires EEI holdings recommits to fossil fuel extraction, oil sands
Former EEI CEO Michael Evans unveils endeavor 'Equilibrium'
I PAY YOU TO RUN EQUILIBRIUM AND KEEP THE DAY TO DAY OUT OF MY HAIR.
BE THAT AS IT MAY, WE REQUIRE YOUR EXPERTISE. YOUR COLD LAKE REFINERY. IT'S--
I DON'T HAVE A REFINERY AT COLD LAKE, OLIVIA. I DON'T HAVE AN ANYTHING AT COLD LAKE. NOT ANYMORE.
I DON'T HAVE THE REFINERY IN ATHABASCA EITHER, NOR THE DENVER OFFICE, NOR THE MINES IN FLIN FLON.
I NO LONGER HAVE ANY OF MY PLANES OR MY COLLINGWOOD ESTATE OR MY DELIGHTFUL NIAGARA ESCARPMENT VINEYARD.
THEY EVEN TOOK MY PLATINUM ASTRONAUT PEN. AND THANK YOU FOR BRINGING UP SUCH PAINFUL MEMORIES.
YOUR FORMER FACILITY IS ON FIRE, SIR.
AND YOUR FOOL BROTHER HAS JUST JUMPED HEAD-FIRST INTO IT.
I SAID IT'S NOT--
WHO GETS BLAMED? ARGUS KHAN, THE NEW BOSS, WHO'S BEEN THERE FOR TWENTY MINUTES? OR YOU, THE MAN WHO BUILT IT FROM THE GROUND UP?
I KNOW YOU KEEP FILES ON ALL ASSETS, PAST AND PRESENT. I NEED EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT. NOW SHARE.
HELP ME DO EXACTLY WHAT EQUILIBRIUM IS INTENDED FOR.
UPLOADING
YOU'RE WELCOME, YOU HARPY.

HEY, I HAVE A VISUAL ON A SURVIVOR.
THAT'S WEIRD, I HAVE A READ ON YOU, BUT I'M NOT SHOWING ANY OTHER LIFESIGNS NEARBY. ARE YOU SURE?
SURE I'M SURE. MORE THAN ONE, ACTUALLY.
I GUESS WE'VE FOUND OUR FIRST BUG...
I'M CAPTAIN TOM EVANS. I'M HERE TO ASSIST WITH THE EVACUATION OF THIS FACILITY.
DO YOU NEED MEDICAL ATTENTION? DO YOU HAVE ANY INJURED?
I NEED TO FIND A WAY DOWN TO--
HEY!

SLOW YOUR ROLL, PAL.
SUNH!
CAP?
I HAVE A VISUAL. FIVE HOSTILE.
PERMISSION TO FIRE.
WHOA WHOA... WHAT??
EQ1, HOLD. CAN YOU MAKE IT--
I CAN MAKE IT.
NON-LETHAL. CAN YOU--
NEGATIVE! HOLD!
ZUT.
THESE AREN'T ENEMY COMBATANTS.
STANDING DOWN.
THESE ARE THE PEOPLE WE'RE HERE TO RESC--
KRAK
PARMINDER'S READING IS ABOUT 70 METERS BELOW YOUR POSITION. NO IDEA WHO THESE TOSSERS ARE.
HOW DO I GET DOWN TO THEM, RED?
THERE'S A CATWALK ABOUT 12 METRES DOWN THAT LEADS TO A CARGO LIFT, BUT IT MAY BE A TRICKY JUMP.
WATCH_EQ.2
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO PACE YOURSELF?
JUST GO, YOU GIT.

IT TAKES A PAIR DOESN'T IT?
SIR?
ERECTING AN IVORY TOWER TO PRESIDE OVER THE CITY EVERYONE HATES.
HAVE YOU EVER WANTED A THING SO BADLY, DWYER, YOU'D SACRIFICE EVERYTHING ELSE THAT EVER MATTERED TO YOU?
THEN YOU FINALLY GET IT, ONLY TO REALISE IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THOUGHT IT WOULD BE AT ALL?
IT'S JUST ANOTHER SLAP IN THE FACE.
THIS ROOK IS JUST A TINY IVORY TOWER...
SIR?
YOUR ANKLE PISTOL, PLEASE, DWYER.
ARE YOU LICENSED TO CARRY, SIR?
THEY'RE BURNING DOWN MY LEGACY.
I ONLY BROUGHT THE TWO-SHOT, SIR.
SIR, WE NEED YOU BACK ON-SITE. THE SITUATION IS ESCALATING AND WE CAN'T HAVE YOU AWOL.
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO BE AWOL WHEN YOU'RE THE ONE SIGNING THE CHEQUES.
IT'S POSSIBLE WHEN YOU'VE BEEN PRATTING ABOUT WITH YOUR COMM CHANNEL AND YOU'VE SWITCHED OFF YOUR ONBOARD GPS, SIR.
NOW, WHERE ARE YOU?
I'M NOWHERE, MY DEAR OLIVIA.
I SIMPLY DISAPPEARED.
ABRA KADABRA.

THEY'RE NOT PURSUING. THEY'RE...
WHAT THE HELL ARE THEY DOING UP THERE?
36%. KEEP MOVING CAPTAIN. THAT CARGO LIFT SHOULD BE IN SIGHT.
I CAN'T JUST LEAVE THEM TO BURN, RED.
IT'S NOT SMOKE INHALATION... SOMETHING'S BEEN DONE TO THESE PEOPLE
CAP, THIS IS REALLY FREAKING ME OUT.
I DON'T LIKE IT EITHER, PARMINDER. THEY'RE LIKE ZOMBIES.
OKAY, SERIOUSLY? STOP IT.
WHEN WE GET BACK I'M GOING TO--
KRAKOOM
HOLD ON HOLD ON HOLD ON...
AAGH!
KRASH
PARMINDER! HORSE! DO YOU COPY!
HUP!
EQ1! ACKNOWLEDGE!
RED! THE HELO JUST TOOK A HIT!

WE JUST LOST--
bloop
I'M AFRAID I'M GOING TO NEED SOME PRIVACY FOR THIS NEXT PART, OLIVIA.
OH NO. THAT IS DEFINITELY NOT HOW THIS WORKS.
WE HAVE THE RESTORED AUDIO READY, MA'AM.
PLAY IT.
MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY. ANYONE RECEIVING. THIS IS EVANS ENERGY IN-SITU OILSANDS REFINERY 1136 AT COLD LAKE...
NO GNAL
MR. EVANS. SO LOVELY TO SEE YOU.
SURE IT IS.
TONIGHT'S EVENT IS ALREADY UNDERWAY.
I'M AFRAID WE WEREN'T EXPECTING YOU THIS EVENING.
SOMEONE WAS.

MISSION ABORT. I REPEAT: MISSION ABORT. ACKNOWLEDGE.

THIS WAY, PLEASE. YOU'RE JUST IN TIME FOR THE FLEDGLINGS' OATH.

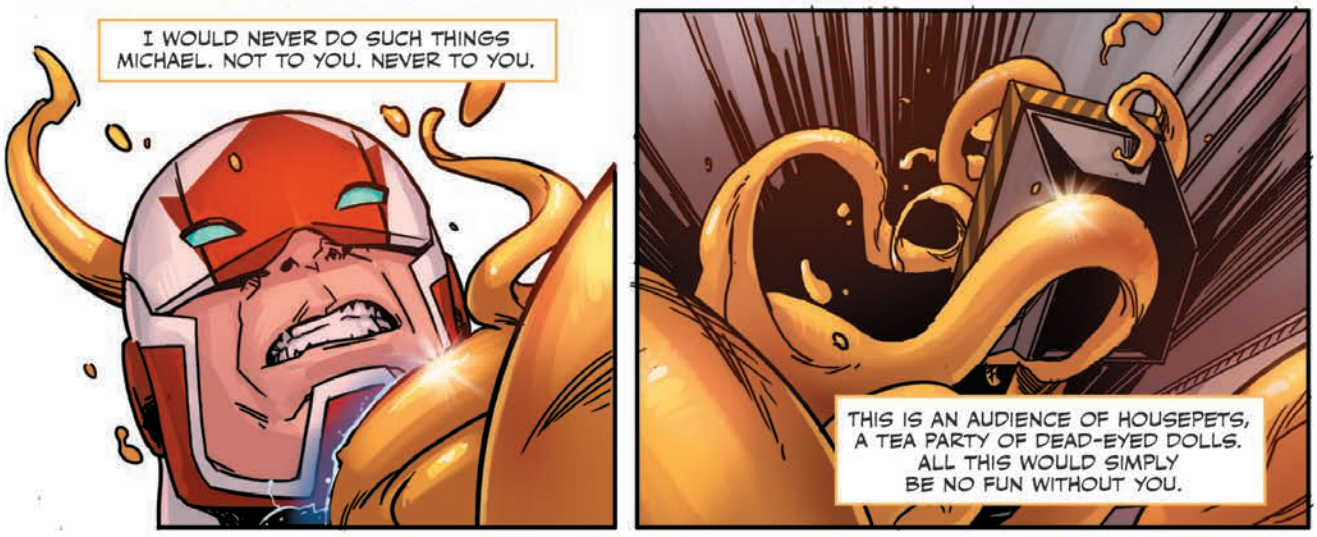
UH, HEY HANDSOME.
DID YOU COPY THAT, CAPTAIN?
THIS IS A MISSION ABORT. ACKNOWLEDGE.
=COMMPF=
TOM?
YOUR SHIELDS ARE DANGEROUSLY LOW.
PANG
DO YOU HAVE VISUAL ON EQ 1? ACKNOWLEDGE.
SEC.
LITTLE =UNGH= BUSY...
CHAK
YOU NEED TO HEAR THIS.
GIMME... JUST...
ONE...
WWWWWWOP

ENJOY YOUR EVENING, SIR.
I SUBMIT MY EVERYTHING. ALL THAT I KNOW, ALL THAT I MAKE, ALL THAT I HAVE...
...TO THOSE WHO SIT ABOVE.
ARGUS KHAN!
I AM NOW AN ASSET. EVERYTHING I WAS, AM, OR WILL BE. BELONGS TO THOSE WHO SIT ABOVE.
SO THAT I TOO MAY ONE DAY SIT ABOVE, BEHIND THE WALL, AND ABOVE IT ALL.
AH AM NOT SEEING THIS.
WELL WELL, THINGS JUST GOT INTERESTING.
WHO LET YOU IN HERE?
REALLY, BILL. MICHAEL WAS ONE OF US.
MICHAEL, WE'RE DELIGHTED TO SEE YOU BACK ON YOUR FEET.
WE ALL FEARED THE WORST.
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS, KHAN?! WHO SENT ME THIS? WHO'S MESSING WITH ME?
YOU CARRY OUR TOKEN, SO WE MUST ALLOW YOU ENTRY.
ARE YOU PREPARED TO TAKE YOUR SEAT AS A CONTRIBUTING MEMBER OF THIS ORGANIZATION, WITH ALL THAT ENTAILS?
NOW WAIT A--
QUIET, BILL.
I JUMP THROUGH EVERY HOOP FOR ALMOST A DECADE, BUILD AN EMPIRE TO PROVE MYSELF. NOTHING.
NOW, AFTER YOU STRIPMINE MY LIFE, NOW YOU THROW THIS AT ME?
MICHAEL, LISTEN. MAYBE... MAYBE MISTAKES WERE MADE.
DAMN RIGHT. WE WERE SOFT ON YOU FOR TOO LONG.
NO. IT'S MORE COMPLEX THAN THAT.
AH CAN'T BELIEVE THIS. WE WERE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT TO CHASTISE YOU MISTAH EVANS. YOU HAD A MANDATE, WHICH YOU IGNORED!
...CHASTISE ME?
YOU TOOK EVERYTHING FROM ME!
YOU ONCE STOOD HERE, AND PLEDGED LIKE WE ALL DID. BUT THEN YOU VANISHED INTO THE ARCTIC. SO YES, WE TOOK YOUR ASSETS AND WE USED THEM.
BURNING THEM TO THE GROUND ISN'T USING THEM!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
OF ALL THE MOVES YOU COULD BE MAKING RIGHT NOW, THIS IS THE WRONG... NNNG... ONE.
BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? IT'S OKAY.
NNNGH! OH GOD NO NO. YES! I-I'M A MALIGNANT PARASITE. NNNO... I DESERVE TO DIE.
I KNOW YOU ALL THINK SO. I SEE... I CAN SEE IT IN YOUR EYES.
EACH MORNING I... LOOK IN THE MIRROR AND THINK...
WHY DON'T I JUST KILL MYSELF?
BANG

I SHOT HIM, RED. POINT BLANK. I THINK I KILLED HIM.
YOUR STUN GUNS ARE NON-LETHAL, EVEN AT CLOSE RANGE.
I KNOW THAT. AND YET.
HE WAS ALREADY DEAD, TOM. ALL THE WORKERS YOU'VE ENCOUNTERED HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY SOME SORT OF PATHOGEN.
SAY AGAIN?
JUST LISTEN.
THIS IS EVANS ENERGY IN-SITU OILSANDS REFINERY 1136 AT COLD LAKE.
WE HAVE RAPIDLY SPREADING FIRES AND OUR ON-SITE FIREFIGHTING RESOURCES ARE EXHAUSTED.
WE NEED IMMEDIATE EVACUATION FOR...
THERE'S AT LEAST 35 OF US LEFT.
YOU NEED TO TELL THEM.
SHUT UP! THEY'RE NOT GOING TO COME IF--
WE HAVE AN UNKNOWN CONTAGION ON-SITE! SYMPTOMS INCLUDE: LOSS OF MOTOR CONTROL, VERBAL FUNCTION, DEATH, AND IRRATIONAL AGGRESSION.
AND IT'S SPREADING.
TAKE APPROPRIATE PRECAUTIONS.
IT SPREADS THROUGH THE GOLD--
WE'RE DONE.
THAT'S ALL. THIS PART IS IMPORTANT, TOM...
HAVE YOU SEEN OR BEEN EXPOSED TO ANY OF THIS 'GOLD'?

clap clap clap clap clap clap
I DIDN'T... HE MADE ME... HE...
clap clap clap
HE WAS MERELY A DEMONSTRATION.
clap clap
A RATHER OSTENTATIOUS ONE, I'LL ADMIT...
HELLO, MICHAEL.
GOLD? WHAT THE HELL? YOU MADE HIM DO THAT?
MR. GOLD.
YOU COULD SAY, I GOT UNDER HIS SKIN...
THAT WAS FUNNY, YOU BRUTES.
SNAP
SNAP
I'M DELIGHTED YOU ACCEPTED MY INVITATION.
YOU SENT ME THIS ROOK...YOU SET ALL THIS UP?
WELL, I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO GET A GUN IN HERE. I'D PLANNED ON MAKING HIM JUMP, BUT THE GRAND GROTESQUERIE OF THIS IS SO MUCH BETTER.
AND THE COLD LAKE REFINERY?
I'M HELPING YOU LET GO.
WE'RE NOT LIKE THESE CRASS GLUTTONS, MINDLESSLY CONSUMING EVERY SCRAP, PISSING OUR LIVES AWAY BICKERING OVER WOMEN, OVER LAND, OVER OIL.
WHAT DO THOSE THINGS MATTER TO US WHEN WE HAVE THE STARS AT OUR FINGERTIPS?
THE STARS... WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE STARS?
I KNOW I WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO BELIEVED YOU, THE ONLY ONE WHO WOULD HELP YOU. AND YET ONCE YOU FOUND ALEPH, YOU VANISHED.
BUT I FORGIVE YOU.
AND WHAT IF I DON'T FORGIVE YOU?
YOU WILL.

AND NOT BECAUSE YOU KNOW I COULD MAKE ALL OF THE BODIES IN THIS ROOM POUNCE ON YOU AND TEAR YOU LIMB FROM LIMB.
AND NOT BECAUSE I'VE MADE YOU QUESTION YOUR OWN *INTENTIONS*. IS IT POSSIBLE I'M PULLING YOUR STRINGS AS EASILY AS POOR OLD ARGUS KHAN'S?


I WOULD NEVER DO SUCH THINGS MICHAEL. NOT TO YOU. NEVER TO YOU.
THIS IS AN AUDIENCE OF HOUSEPETS, A TEA PARTY OF DEAD-EYED DOLLS. ALL THIS WOULD SIMPLY BE NO FUN WITHOUT YOU.

YOU'LL FORGIVE ME ONCE YOU SEE JUST WHAT A DELIGHTFUL SURPRISE I HAVE IN STORE FOR YOU.
NO SIGNAL
NO SIGNAL

ADMIT IT. YOU'RE CURIOUS.
YOU WERE ALWAYS MORE THAN A PROTÉGÉ TO ME, AND I WAS ***SO MUCH MORE*** OF A BROTHER TO YOU THAN YOUR ACTUAL BROTHER ***EVER*** WAS.
COME WITH ME, MICHAEL. YOUR WORLD IS ABOUT TO CHANGE.