



PARDON?

SORRY, MAINFRAME, I WAS READING. ALL I HEARD WAS "WARD GATES."

BLUESTREAK WAS ASKING ABOUT THE SKY, AND I WAS SAYING THERE WAS THIS HUGE BATTLE—UP THERE, IN ORBIT, AND DOWN HERE.

SOMETHING TO DO WITH A DERELICT SHIP.

IT'S ALL OVER THE LOCAL NEWSFEED—THIS MASSIVE THREE-WAY BETWEEN THE GALACTIC COUNCIL, THE BLACK BLOCK CONSORTIA, AND A BUNCHA MECHS.

WARD GATES EVERYWHERE—AND THEY TAKE FOREVER TO FADE.

WHAT ARE YOU LIKE, TRAILCUTTER? A SUNRISE AS EPIC AS THAT AND YOU'VE GOT YOUR HEAD STUCK IN A BOOK!

IT'S TOWARDS PEACE, MEGATRON'S OPUS. IT'S BEEN ON MY READ LIST FOR AGES. THE OLD ME NEVER FOUND THE TIME—TOO THIRSTY.

I'M STILL HOLDING OUT FOR THE FILM VERSION: "PART AUTOBIOGRAPHY... PART POLITICAL TREATISE... ALL MEGATRON."

"CONTAINS SCENES OF MILD GENOCIDE."

GIVE US A LOOK.



"POSTWAR EDITION"? DON'T TELL ME—THERE'S A NEW CHAPTER AT THE END: "IGNORE EVERYTHING I JUST SAID."

KIND OF...! THEY'VE ADDED SOME FOOTAGE OF HIM ON LUNA 2, TELLING THE 'CONS TO STAND DOWN."

I'VE JUST GOT TO THE END OF THE MESSAGINE YEARS. VERY UNIDENTICAL—LOTS OF DIGGING FOR NUCLEON, BASICALLY.



THIS'LL BE THE GOOD DOCTOR. I BET HE'S LOST.

"WHY DID YOU LET ME GO EXPLORING?"



HI, FIRST AID.

BEFORE YOU ASK, STILL NO SIGN OF RODIMUS.

HE'S PROBABLY TIED UP DEALING WITH THE SAME PROBLEMS WE HAD: PEOPLE DISAPPEARING, SHUTTLES DISAPPEARING, PEOPLE FLOATING IN SPACE...

WHERE ARE YOU, ANYWAY?

**THE TAMIZDAT LECTURE THEATER.
10 MINUTES LATER.**



SO WHO IS HE?

HE'S CYBERTRONIAN HE'S BEEN SCORCHED AND HE'S FADING FAST. BEYOND THAT, YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS MINE...

HIS BADGE MUST'VE BEEN BURNED OFF. MAN, HE'S REALLY MESSED UP.



YOU KNOW WHO DID THIS? THE COUNCIL.

THE COUNCIL OR THE CONSORTIA.

SMASHED UP THIS THEATER— SMASHED UP THIS WHOLE CAMPUS.

MONSTERS.



MAYBE HE DOESN'T EVEN HAVE A BADGE. MAYBE HE'S NON-AFFILIATED.

MAYBE IT'S IRRELEVANT. HE'S HURT; WE HELP. DID YOU BRING THE SUPPLIES?

THEY'RE OUTSIDE, WITH TRAILCUTTER. WE LOADED HIM UP WITH EVERYTHING THAT LOOKED VAGUELY MEDICAL.



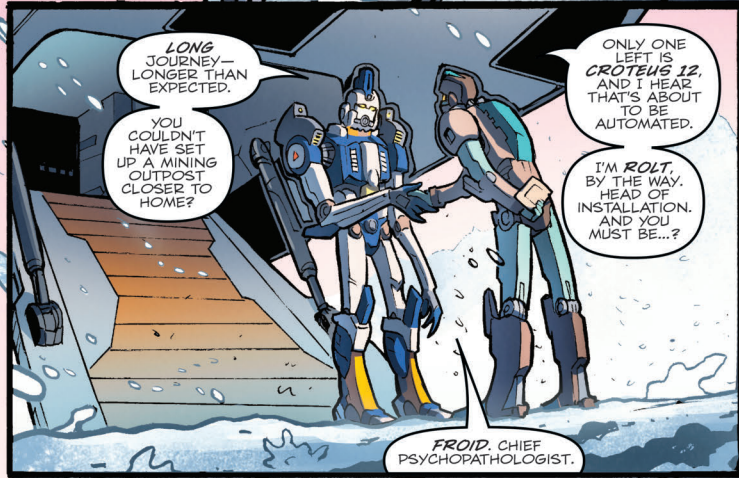
ARE YOU GETTING AN AUTOBOT VIBE OR A DECEPTICON VIBE?

I DUNNO. IT'D HELP IF WE KNEW WHAT HE TURNS INTO, BUT I CAN'T EVEN WORK OUT WHICH BITS ARE AIT MODE SPECIFIC.

I'VE GOT AN IDEA.

**MESSATINE,
LONG AGO.**

"SAFE JOURNEY?"



LONG JOURNEY—
LONGER THAN
EXPECTED.

YOU COULDN'T
HAVE SET
UP A MINING
OUTPOST
CLOSER TO
HOME?

ONLY ONE
LEFT IS
CROTEUS 12,
AND I HEAR
THAT'S ABOUT
TO BE
AUTOMATED.

I'M **ROLT**,
BY THE WAY.
HE'D OF
INSTALLATION.
AND YOU
MUST BE...?

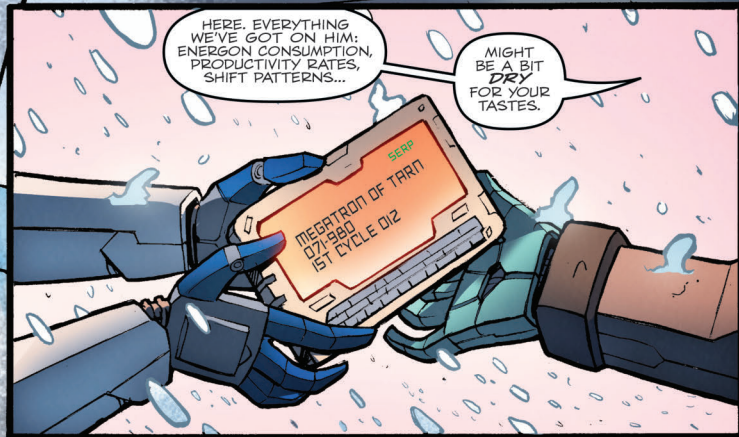
FROID, CHIEF
PSYCHOPATHOLOGIST.



CHIEF,
EH?

WHEN THE
SENATE CALLED
TO SAY THEY
WERE SENDING
SOMEONE, I DIDN'T
REALIZE IT WAS
THEIR **NUMBER
ONE GUY**.

THEY WANT THIS
HANDLED
PROPERLY.
NOW, DID YOU
PREPARE
THE...?



HERE, EVERYTHING
WE'VE GOT ON HIM:
ENERGON CONSUMPTION,
PRODUCTIVITY RATES,
SHIFT PATTERNS...

MIGHT
BE A BIT
DRY
FOR YOUR
TASTES.



HMM.

HE WORKS HARD,
IF THAT MAKES
A DIFFERENCE.

INCREDIBLY
HARD, AND
HE'S **QUIET**.

A SOCIETY BE... AND A GRAND... THAT NEVER...
 BSESSIVELY RE... AND INTERPRETED-THE ONE THING THAT NEVER...
 HANGES-THE... THAT MUST NEVER CHANGE-IS THE SYSTEM ITSELF...
 VERY REVIS... INTERPRET... TAKES PLACE WITHIN A RIGID...
 RPTIEWORK... STRATIF... MUST THREATEN THE...
 UP... PHILOSOPHY... PRINCIPLE.

"HE'S WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL A THINKER."



GUESS THAT'S WHY I'M, AH, KINDA SURPRISED THAT YOU'RE HERE. I'D NEVER HAVE GUESSED HE WAS ILL.

MALDIES OF THE MIND ARE EASILY HIDDEN.

WE DON'T WANT TO SEE THEM. THEY REMIND US OF OUR FRAGILITY.

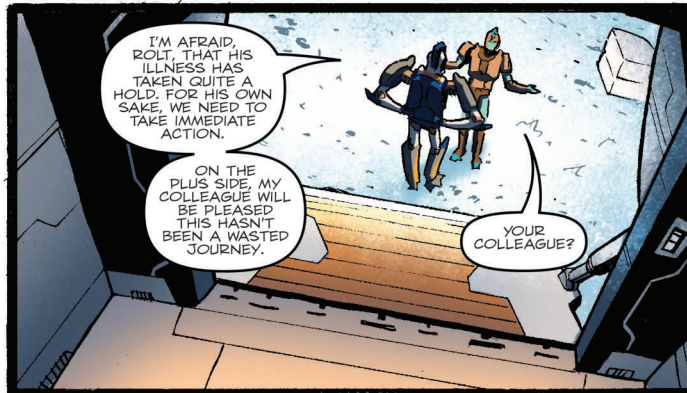


WELL, YOU'RE THE EXPERT. I'LL HAVE HIM BROUGHT TO MY OFFICE SO YOU CAN SPEAK TO HIM.

OH NO, I DON'T THINK A MEETING IS NECESSARY.

BUT YOUR ASSESSMENT...?

IS OVER. YOUR DOSSIER WAS VERY COMPREHENSIVE. THANK YOU.



I'M AFRAID, ROLT, THAT HIS ILLNESS HAS TAKEN QUITE A HOLD. FOR HIS OWN SAKE, WE NEED TO TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION.

ON THE PLUS SIDE, MY COLLEAGUE WILL BE PLEASED THIS HASN'T BEEN A WASTED JOURNEY.

YOUR COLLEAGUE?



ROLT, MEET TREPAN. ANOTHER EXPERT.

OH, IN PATHOPSYCHOLOGY?

ER... NO. NOTHING AS GRAND AS THAT. I SPECIALIZE IN WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL CHANGE MANAGEMENT.



WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!

YOU MOVED HIM!

WHY DID YOU MOVE HIM?

YOU SHOULD NEVER MOVE A LEAKER! NOT WITHOUT A DOCTOR PRESENT!

UM... YEAH. HE DOES SEEM TO BE IN SOME DISCOMFORT.

HHHHHH

AW GUYS, I KNOW YOU MEANT WELL, BUT YOU'VE MADE IT WORSE.

HE HAD HOURS, NOW HE'S GOT MINUTES!

WHY DID YOU MOVE HIM...?



I DON'T KNOW, I—

THOUGHT I MIGHT FIND HIS BADGE...?

BUT WHY? THE WAR'S OVER. IT DOESN'T MATTER IF HE'S A DECEPTION, DOES IT?

S'POSE NOT.

AND EVEN IF HE WAS A 'CON, WHAT WOULD YOU DO, WITHHOLD TREATMENT? BECAUSE C'MON, BLUE— THAT'S NEVER BEEN AN OPTION, NOT EVEN IN WARTIME.



HE NEEDS AN EMERGENCY TRANSFUSION.

ENERGON?

AH, THE HARD STUFF.

ACTIVE ENERGON, READY-CIRCULATED— DIRECT FROM THE DONOR.

EIGHT FLUID DRAMS SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO SAVE HIM. WE'LL DONATE TWO EACH.

