

ASPEN
Vol. 1
COLLECTED

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM™



THERE ARE TWO WORLDS.
THE ONE WE KNOW...

...AND THE ONE BELOW.

MICHAEL TURNER'S
FATHOM

Fathom began in 1998 with the publication of the Fathom Preview, but the full color world premiere was in Fathom 0. Released in May of that year, it introduced the world to Aspen Matthews and gave a glimpse into her life moments before it would be changed forever by the events to come. Chronologically, it was tied to 'our' world. It was two months before Aspen would leave for her assignment to the DMD facility, and issue 0 was released two months before issue 1.

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colors: Jonathan D. Smith, Steve Firchow, Richard Isanove, Peter Steigerwald

letters: Dennis Heisler - *additional colors:* Matt Nelson - *ink assists:* Marco Galli

FATHOM ZERO

FATHOM TRADING CARD SET

"Aspen"



pencils: MICHAEL TURNER

inks: JON SIBAL - *colors:* PETER STEIGERWALD

*T*WO WORLDS
EXIST ON THIS
PLANET.



THE ONE
WE KNOW...



AND THE
ONE BELOW

THE ONE
WE KNOW IS
FAMILIAR AND
COMFORTABLE.

BELOW THAT
PLACE LIES THE
UNFAMILIAR AND
DEFINITELY
UNCOMFORTABLE
DEPTHS THAT HIDE
UNSPEAKABLE
DANGERS.

MOST PEOPLE LIVE WITH
A MYOPIC VIEW OF THEIR
EXISTENCE. THEY'RE CONTENT
WITH THEIR HOUSE, CAR, 2.5
KIDS, DOG, TV, DINNERS, AND
OCCASIONALLY GETTING OUT
TO SEE A MOVIE. THE RULES
WERE LAID OUT CENTURIES
AGO, AND THERE IS NO NEED
FOR THEM TO EXPLORE WHAT
LIES BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES
OF THIS COMFORTABLE
PLACE.

I, ON THE OTHER HAND,
AM FASCINATED BY WHAT
LIES BEYOND "NORMAL"
BOUNDARIES--WHAT'S
BENEATH THE SURFACE...



...THE
MYSTERIOUS
DEPTHS...



...THE
WORLD
BELOW

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a blue one-piece swimsuit, stands on a sandy beach. She is holding a blue surfboard with a red and white design on its top surface. The background features a palm tree on the left, a bright sun setting over the ocean, and gentle waves washing onto the shore. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and light blue.

ELEVEN YEARS AGO,
MY LIFE BEGAN.

I ARRIVED ON A SHIP
WITH NO MEMORY OF
WHO I WAS OR HOW
I GOT THERE.

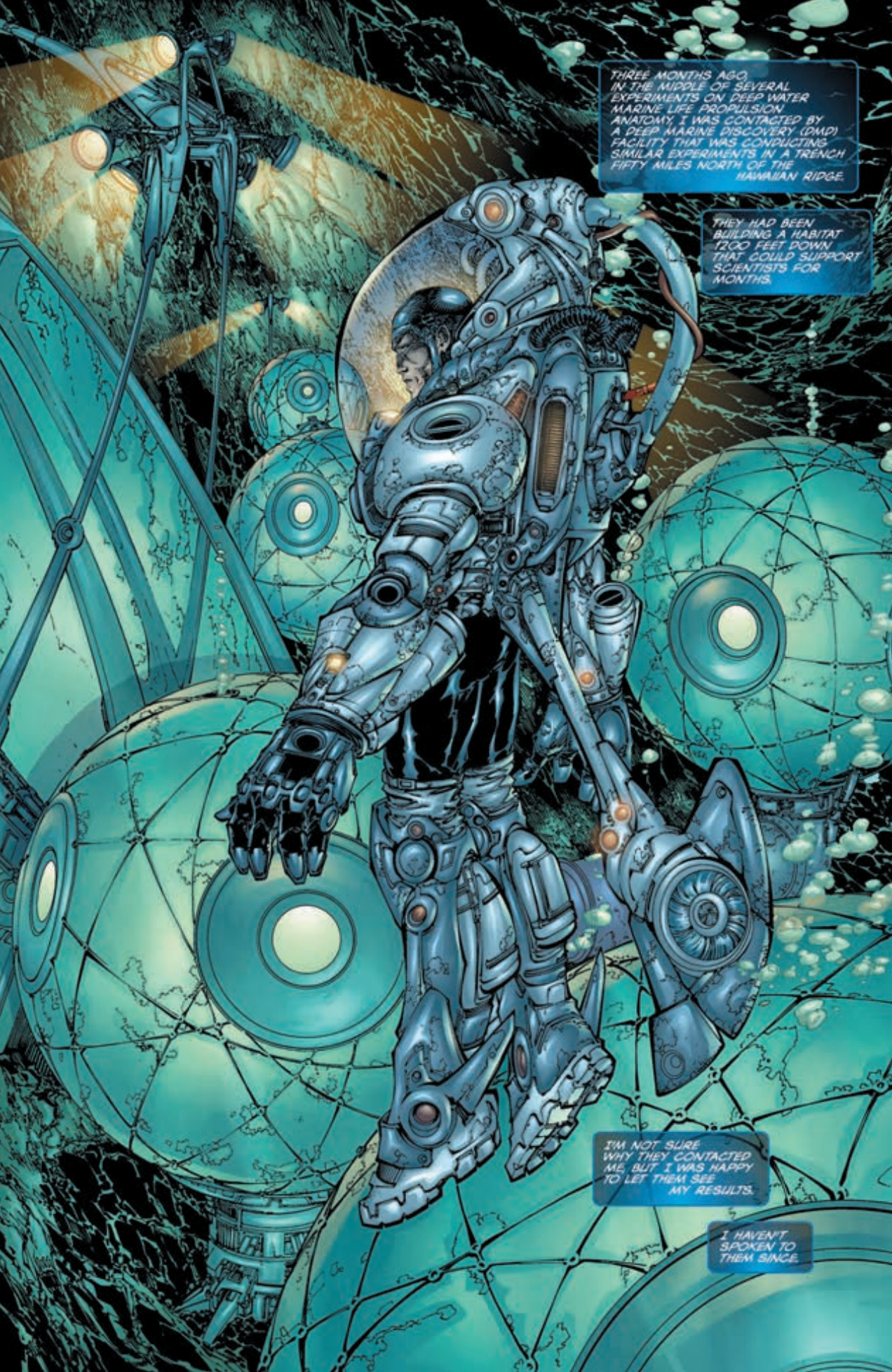
I BECAME
ASPEN MATTHEWS,
FOSTER CHILD NUMBER
421-6.

FOR YEARS
I STRUGGLED TO PIECE
MY LIFE TOGETHER
WITH FRAGMENTS OF
DREAMS AND VISIONS
OF MY LIFE AS
A CHILD.

FROM MY TEENAGE
YEARS OF SNORKELING
AND SCUBA DIVING,
TO MY HIGH SCHOOL
SWIM TEAM, TO
OLYMPIC FREESTYLE
SWIMMER, TO MARINE
BIOLOGIST...

THROUGH IT ALL,
ONE ASPECT OF
MY LIFE WAS
CONSTANT...

...I WAS
FASCINATED
BY WATER.



THREE MONTHS AGO,
IN THE MIDDLE OF SEVERAL
EXPERIMENTS ON DEEP WATER
MARINE LIFE PROPULSION
ANATOMY, I WAS CONTACTED BY
A DEEP MARINE DISCOVERY (DMD)
FACILITY THAT WAS CONDUCTING
SIMILAR EXPERIMENTS IN A TRENCH
FIFTY MILES NORTH OF THE
HAWAIIAN RIDGE.

THEY HAD BEEN
BUILDING A HABITAT
1200 FEET DOWN
THAT COULD SUPPORT
SCIENTISTS FOR
MONTHS.

I'M NOT SURE
WHY THEY CONTACTED
ME, BUT I WAS HAPPY
TO LET THEM SEE
MY RESULTS.

I HAVEN'T
SPOKEN TO
THEM SINCE.

I HAVE NEVER BEEN DOWN 1200 FEET BEFORE. THE FURTHEST DOWN I'VE ACTUALLY BEEN IS 300, AND THAT WAS ON AN OBSERVATION SUBMARINE THAT WENT DOWN AROUND THE COAST OF SAN DIEGO.



BUT TO BE IN AN ACTUAL HABITAT...

...WHERE I COULD OBSERVE FOR WEEKS, WITHOUT HAVING TO PUT ON MY SCUBA GEAR DAY AFTER DAY.



I CAN ONLY IMAGINE HOW INCREDIBLE IT WOULD BE TO SEE WHAT EXISTS AT THAT DEPTH.



I DO KNOW THAT SOME OF THE MOST DEADLY SPECIES OF MARINE LIFE LIVE THERE, ALL WITH UNIQUE ADAPTATIONS UNSEEN IN SHALLOW WATERS...

MANY OF THEM HAVE VERY SPECIAL TACTICS FOR ATTACKING PREY OR DEFENDING AGAINST PREDATORS.

SOME HUNTERS HAVE POISONOUS BITES THAT WILL INCAPACITATE PREY FOR THEIR LEISURELY CONSUMPTION. SOME OCTOPI, SQUID OR ANEMONES DISAPPEAR IN A CLOUD OF INK TO EVADE A PREDATOR.

THE MOST VICIOUS KILLERS ALERT THEIR ENEMIES WITH DISTINCTIVE MARKINGS OR VENOMOUS SPINES, AS IF TO SHOW THE VICTIMS THAT IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE.



AN AMBUSH HAS BEGUN!



HERE THE MOST DEADLY ATTACKS OCCUR IN NUMBERS.

