

ULTIMA SPES

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ISSUE #0

22-page issue

PAGE #1 (FIVE PANELS)

This is a standard 6-panel grid, with Panel 1 covering the whole of the top tier.

Panel 1. High-angle long shot of a large courtroom, crowded with people. It is very futuristic: no windows, shining metal walls, high-tech furniture and three giant holo screens – one above the judge’s bench and the others on the walls on each side of it.

Scott stands between the judge’s bench and the public, back turned on us and head bent down, blue lasers linking his wrists together like handcuffs behind his back. He is wearing simple yet formal clothes – a pair of long pants and a shirt with a tie.

The judge – a fat man in his late fifties, sporting a ridiculous white wig and a black tunic – stares him down with disdain.

1. CAPTION: Earth, 2190

2. JUDGE: Airman Franks, you not only showed disrespect for the safety and property of others, you also turned your back on the core principles of freedom and democracy and everything our Corp stands for.

Panel 2. A medium shot of the people behind Scott, talking to each other in hushed whispers and shooting glares at the man, with bailiffs lined up at the front to monitor the situation.

A woman in the front looks particularly murderous, her eyes swollen and the tears streaming down her reddened cheeks, her make-up ruined. A bailiff is right next to her just in case, arms crossed over his chest, a stern expression on his face.

1. JUDGE (OFF PANEL): For the crimes of failing to obey regulations, non compliance, willful destruction of property, and reckless operation of a spacecraft...

2. JUDGE (OFF PANEL – SMALLER): ... and because, frankly, I don’t like you...

Panel 3. Close-up on Scott’s face. His eyes are lowered to the ground, dark and intense, his lips pressed into a hard, thin line. Over his left shoulder we can catch a glimpse of the woman glaring at him with fierce hatred.

1. JUDGE (OFF PANEL): I hereby sentence you to a period of no less than twenty years of forced labor at the McKinsey Orbital Correctional Center to begin immediately.

2. SCOTT: ...

Panel 4. Another medium shot of the public, zooming on the woman. She tries to throw herself at Scott in a fit of rage, bursting into tears and shaking her closed fist in his general direction,

but the bailiff blocks her readily and forces her to stay put.

1. WOMAN: BURN IN HELL!

2. BAILIFF (SMALLER): Please calm down, ma'am...

Panel 5. Canted medium shot of the judge. He hits the anvil repeatedly with too small a gavel for his sausage fingers and hammers his podgy fist on the desk at the same time. Calling for attention with his mouth wide open and beads of sweat spurting in the air around him, he looks like a pig in a suit and wig.

1. JUDGE: Quiet, please!

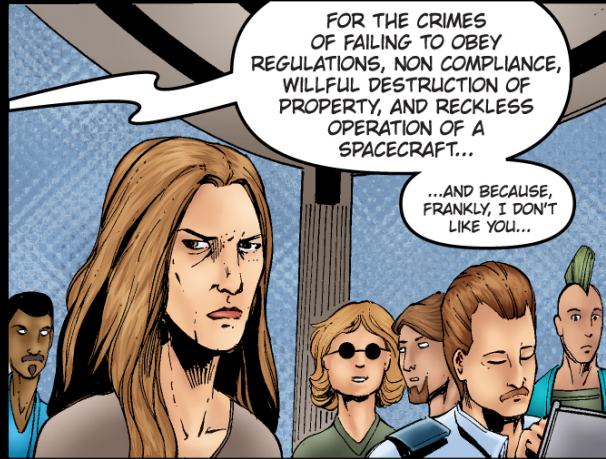
2. JUDGE: Bailiff, take this man out of here!

AIRMAN FRANKS, YOU NOT ONLY SHOWED DISRESPECT FOR THE SAFETY AND PROPERTY OF OTHERS, YOU ALSO TURNED YOUR BACK ON THE CORE PRINCIPLES OF FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY AND EVERYTHING OUR CORP STANDS FOR.

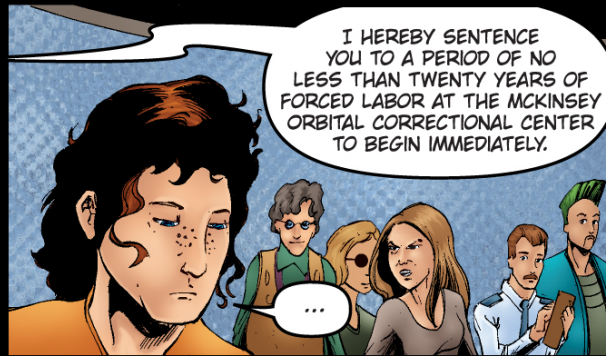


FOR THE CRIMES OF FAILING TO OBEY REGULATIONS, NON COMPLIANCE, WILLFUL DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY, AND RECKLESS OPERATION OF A SPACECRAFT...

...AND BECAUSE, FRANKLY, I DON'T LIKE YOU...



I HEREBY SENTENCE YOU TO A PERIOD OF NO LESS THAN TWENTY YEARS OF FORCED LABOR AT THE MCKINSEY ORBITAL CORRECTIONAL CENTER TO BEGIN IMMEDIATELY.



BURN IN HELL!

PLEASE CALM DOWN, MA'AM...



QUIET, PLEASE!

BAILIFF, TAKE THIS MAN OUT OF HERE!



PAGE #2 (FOUR PANELS)

A 6-panel grid, with Panel 1 and 2 taking the space of two panels each. Panel 3 and 4 make a sequence.

Panel 1. Another long shot of the courtroom. At eye-level, we see Scott being escorted towards us by a bailiff, with the judge's bench and the fuming judge in the background. The two men are walking in the passage between the attorneys' desks. The prosecution attorney sits back in his chair with a smug expression, while Frank's lawyer – a forty-year-old man with distinct baldness on the crown of his hair and a pair of rectangular, thick glasses – is standing on the side of his desk that is closest to his client. Scott just stares blankly at the floor.

1. JUDGE: I don't want to see him anywhere near a spaceship again!
2. ATTORNEY: We'll get through this, Franks...
3. ATTORNEY: I'm sure I can get this reduced...

Panel 2. Cut to another scene, different setting. High-angle long shot of a prison transport ship, grey and stifling.

Up close we have Scott in profile and in deep focus a group of Iroquois, all jammed into small and uncomfortable seats lined against a wall. They have the same laser constraints as Scott around their wrists.

Opposite to them, the guards are on their feet, clad in nasty black uniforms with helmets and sci-fi gas masks covering their faces, the lenses glowing an eerie blue. Even nastier-looking electric batons hang from their belts and they also have futuristic machine guns strapped to their backs for good measure.

Whispering to each other conspiratorially, the Indians resemble a gang of street thugs, what with their colorful baggy pants, the hoods pulled up over their rap caps and their long, wild dreadlocks.

Isolated from them, Scott is hunched over, his elbows on his knees and his eyes fixated on the ground.

1. IROQUOIS: *Unintelligible chant*

Panel 3. Medium shot focusing on Scott and Mack, the Native sitting next to him, seen in profile at eye-level. Scott is in the immediate foreground, but we want to focus on the Indian – think of it as an over-the-shoulder shot in profile. Mack is looking up at a guard in front of him, pictured from the waist down.

1. MACK: ?

1. GUARD 1 (OFF PANEL): You'd better knock that off, Mack...
2. GUARD 1 (OFF PANEL): You're not on the reservation anymore.

Panel 4.

1. MACK: The white man doesn't give me orders.
2. GUARD 1 (OFF PANEL): What did you just say, asshole?!

PAGE #3 (SIX PANELS)

A basic 6-panel grid, where Panel 1 to 4 make a shot/reverse shot sequence. Panel 5 and 6 show the same setting; we want to focus on dialogue and characters in those two.

Panel 1. Move to the side so we have an establishing shot of the three of them in $\frac{3}{4}$ view at eye-level. Guard 1's hand hovers over the baton handle, though he hasn't unholstered it yet. Mack holds his gaze defiantly. Scott stares right in front of himself as if he isn't paying attention. The other Natives follow the scene, looking wary.

1. MACK: I said...
2. SCOTT: E-excuse hi-hi-him...
3. SCOTT: I-it's... It's flying, s-sir...
4. GUARD 1 & MACK: !

Panel 2. Go back to Scott for a medium shot where he's looking up at Guard 1, an apologetic frown on his face. Mack's and Guard 1's heads pivot in his direction abruptly. The Indian parts his lips slightly, surprised and thoughtful. Guard 1's face is completely hidden behind the helmet, but those creepy masks make the guards look like they're constantly scowling anyway. The man's stance is aggressive, he still wants to lash out at Mack. In the background, Guard 2 is approaching Guard 1 from behind, having picked up on their conversation.

1. SCOTT: Ma-makes him ner-nervous.
2. MACK: ...
3. GUARD 1: Who are you?
4. GUARD 1: His mother or something?

Panel 3. Reverse shot of Guard 1. Guard 2 is at his side now, a hand on his shoulder in order to make him turn around. The prisoners are looking at them cautiously.

1. SCOTT: W-we don't... we don't w-want tro-trouble, sir.
2. GUARD 2: C'me on, Joe...
3. GUARD 2: Let them talk. It's all they can do anyway.
4. GUARD 1: ...

Panel 4. Same as Panel 3, but now Guard 1 and 2 have turned towards us to leave the panel, away from Mack and Scott.

1. GUARD 1: It's your lucky day, Indian.
2. GUARD 1: Thank your mom that I don't teach you a good lesson.

Panel 5. Front view at eye-level of Scott and Mack, sitting together in a similar position: their shoulders are bare inches away, hunched forward, elbows on their knees, both of them casting meditative glances at the ground as they pretend not to be talking.

1. MACK: I don't need your help.
2. SCOTT: S-stay qu-quiet... th-they'll just ignore u-us...
3. MACK: Why would I stay quiet?

Panel 6.

1. MACK: The white man has taken everything from us...
2. MACK: Now he's the minority...
3. MACK (SMALLER): ... and he can't stand it.
4. SCOTT: Y-you're one of those, aren't you?
5. MACK: Those?



I SAID...

E-EXCUSE
HI-HI-HIM...

I-IT'S...
IT'S FLYING,
S-SIR...

!



MA-MAKES HIM
NER-NERVOUS.

...

WHO ARE
YOU?

HIS MOTHER OR
SOMETHING?



W-WE DON'T...
WE DON'T W-WANT
TRO-TROUBLE,
SIR.

C'ME ON,
JOE... LET THEM
TALK. IT'S ALL
THEY CAN DO
ANYWAY.

...



IT'S YOUR
LUCKY DAY,
INDIAN.

THANK
YOUR MOM THAT I
DON'T TEACH YOU A
GOOD LESSON.



I DON'T
NEED YOUR
HELP.

S-STAY
QU-QUIET...
TH-THEY'LL
JUST IGNORE
U-US...

WHY
WOULD I STAY
QUIET?



THE WHITE
MAN HAS TAKEN
EVERYTHING FROM
US...

NOW HE'S THE
MINORITY...

...AND
HE CAN'T
STAND IT.

Y-YOU'RE
ONE OF THOSE,
AREN'T YOU?

THOSE?

PAGE #4 (FIVE PANELS)

6-panel grid where Panel 3 takes up the whole middle tier. When we get to Scott's flashback, let's have different captions for present Scott and past Scott (e.g. present Scott's caption is rectangular, past Scott's is a thought balloon), so we don't get confused.

Panel 1. Cut to a new scene, medium shot. Backed up by some bulky men in dark suits with a tag saying 'Globalreach' and their big arms crossed over their chests, a sheriff extends an eviction notice to a frowning Native American, the other hand resting on his hip. The Indian stands in the doorway of his house, with a woman and two children peeking out from behind him.

1. CAPTION (SCOTT): O-one of those Indians tr-trying to... to reclaim your reservations?

Panel 2. Go back to the present. We have Scott and Mack in $\frac{3}{4}$ view, Scott being the closest to us. The other Indians are in deep focus behind them and the guards stand in the back of the panel, chattering and disregarding the prisoners completely. Mack lowers his eyes to his hands, clenched into fists, mimicking Scott's position from Page 2 Panel 2. Scott turns his head away from us to look directly at him for the first time.

1. MACK: Globalreach took our land and resources...
2. MACK: And gave us camps and prisons in return...
3. MACK: 'Lack of supplies'... their fucking excuse.

Panel 3. This is an extreme long shot from Mack's flashback. We are in space, looking right at Planet Earth. There is a battle going on between a large squadron of Globalreach spaceships and a smaller group controlled by the Indians. All the spacecrafts have the company's name plastered on one side.

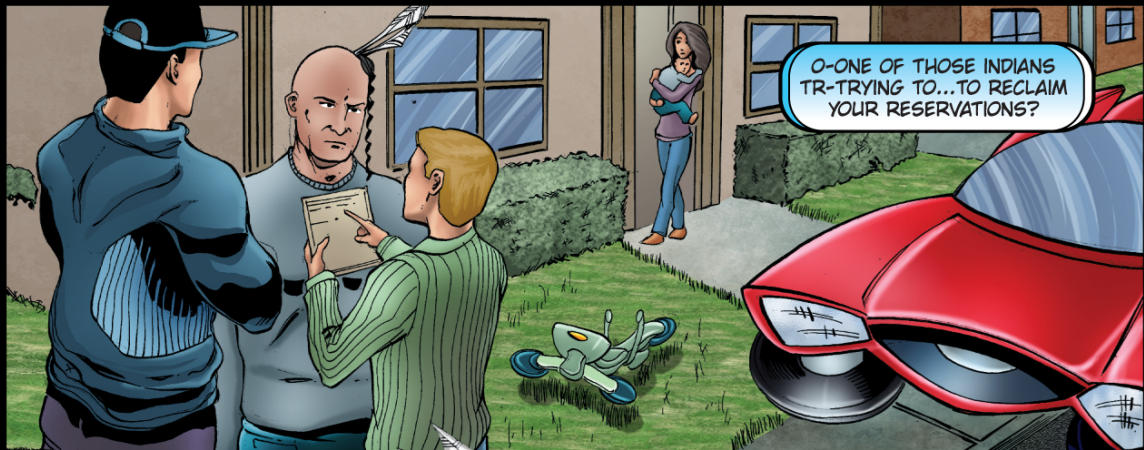
1. CAPTION (SCOTT): H-heard you s-stole Gl-Gl-Globalreach ships.
2. CAPTION (SCOTT): You really can fly. Took all they had to stop...
3. CAPTION (MACK): What do you care, white boy?

Panel 4. Present again. Close-up on Scott and Mack from their waist up. Scott is turning away from Mack all of a sudden. Now it's the Indian who looks at him, his eyes widened in shock. Scott sighs an I-know-I-can't-escape-this sigh.

1. SCOTT: B-because I w-went to Per-Pershing Flight School.
2. SCOTT: B-before... you know... this.

Panel 5. Scott's past. Long shot of a classroom at Flight School. In $\frac{3}{4}$ view, each student is sitting behind a control panel, a holo screen floating in front of them, displaying a flight simulation. They have headsets with microphones and AR glasses. The glasses are made up of a single rectangular lens, its extremities connected to the headphones. Scott is sitting among his classmates, concentrated on the screen and the readings on his glasses, his eyebrows knitting together.

1. CAPTION (MACK): Woah, that school's top rated! Only the best of the best get in!
2. CAPTION (MACK): What the hell happened to you?



O-ONE OF THOSE INDIANS TR-TRYING TO...TO RECLAIM YOUR RESERVATIONS?



GLOBALREACH TOOK OUR LAND AND RESOURCES... AND GAVE US CAMPS AND PRISONS IN RETURN...

'LACK OF SUPPLIES'... THEIR FUCKING EXCUSE.



H-HEARD YOU S-STOLE GL-GL-GLOBALREACH SHIPS.

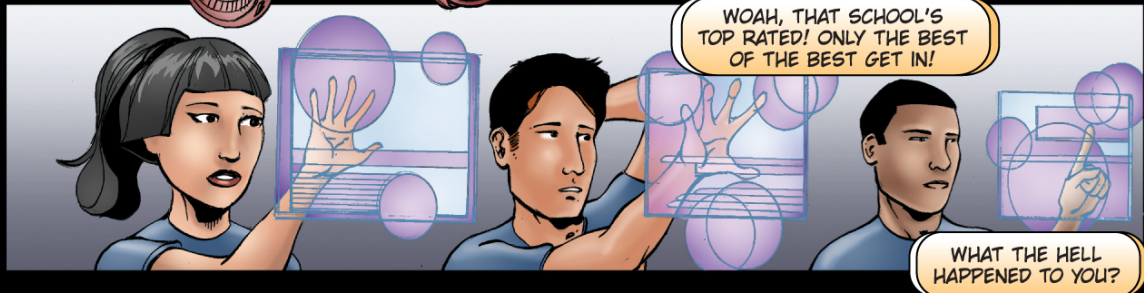
YOU REALLY CAN FLY. TOOK ALL THEY HAD TO STOP...

WHAT DO YOU CARE, WHITE BOY?



B-BECAUSE I W-WENTTO PER-PERSHING FLIGHT SCHOOL.

B-BEFORE... YOU KNOW...THIS.



WOAH, THAT SCHOOL'S TOP RATED! ONLY THE BEST OF THE BEST GET IN!

WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED TO YOU?

PAGE #5 (FOUR PANELS)

In this 6-panel grid, we have a horizontal tier on top (Panel 1 and 2) and a left vertical tier (Panel 3 and 5), both with regular panels. On the right, taking up the space of the other vertical tier, we have Scott's teacher in full figure without framing.

Panel 1. We're looking at the holo screen through Scott's eyes. The readings from his AR glasses run down the right side of the panel, glowing a bright red. On the screen his spaceship is making complicated manoeuvres to dodge the blasts from the enemy.

1. READINGS: ERROR!
2. CAPTION (SCOTT – PRESENT): ... A mistake.

Panel 2. The holo screen is shutting down, Scott's glasses go all red, the readings pulsing a shade darker than the lenses.

1. READINGS (BIGGER): ERROR! ERROR! ERROR!
2. TEACHER (OFF PANEL): FRANKS!

Panel 3. Low-angle medium shot in $\frac{3}{4}$ view from the teacher's perspective. Make it a kinetic panel – Scott turns abruptly to his right, facing us.

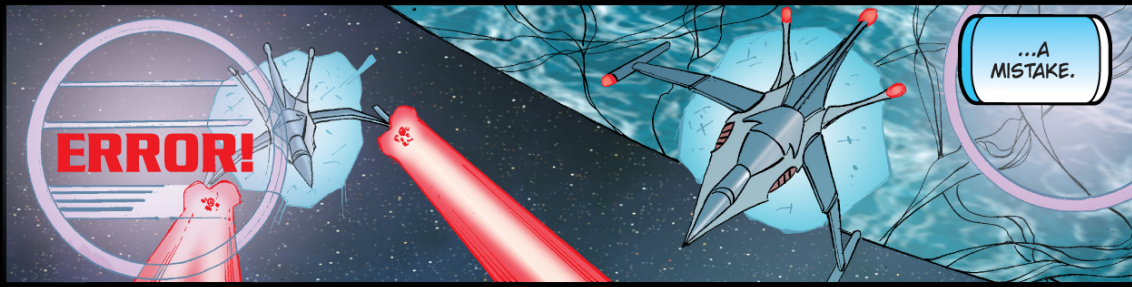
1. SCOTT: !

Panels 4-6 (no framing). The teacher is a tall, imposing man in his forties wearing Pershing Flight School uniform – think of it as a futuristic version of a regular pilot uniform, made of a skintight material similar to spandex that adapts easily to its owner's body. He has greying hair styled in a short, military haircut, and crosses his muscular arms over his chest. He is yanking Scott's headset out of his ears, shouting at him, mouth wide open and eyes flashing with anger.

1. TEACHER: What the hell are you trying to do?! You know your ship isn't designed for those pressures! If that'd been real, you'd have killed your entire crew!

Panel 5. Move past Scott to the other pupils staring at the two of them in amusement. In the far background, barely noticeable, Astra is the only one not laughing. She looks sorry instead.

4. TEACHER: What are you all staring at?! Go back to your goddamn simulation!



**ERROR! ERROR!
ERROR!**

FRANKS!

