

STARSTRUCK

"OLD PROLDIERS NEVER DIE"



M. KALUTA
& LEE
MOYER
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ELAINE LEE MW KALUTA LEE MOYER

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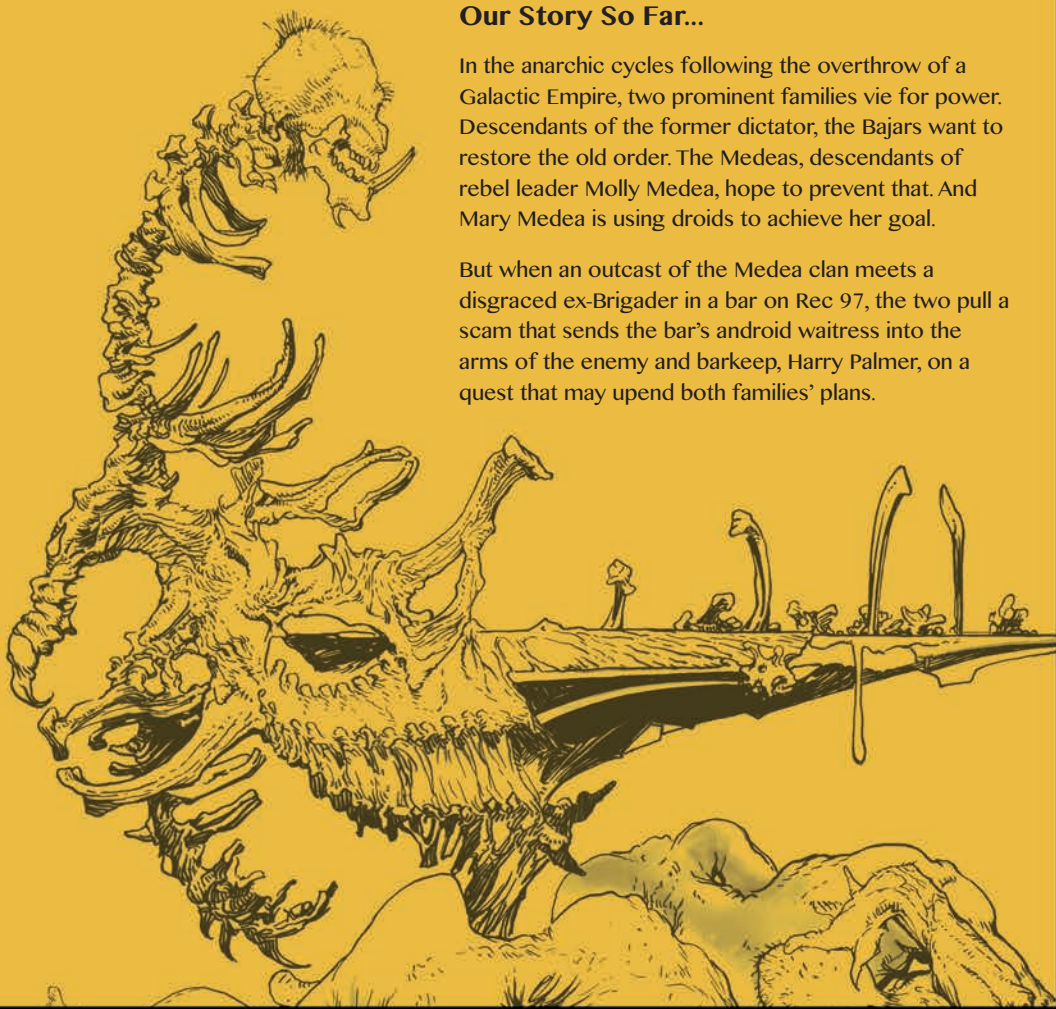
"OLD PROLDIERS NEVER DIE"

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Our Story So Far...

In the anarchic cycles following the overthrow of a Galactic Empire, two prominent families vie for power. Descendants of the former dictator, the Bajars want to restore the old order. The Medeas, descendants of rebel leader Molly Medea, hope to prevent that. And Mary Medea is using droids to achieve her goal.

But when an outcast of the Medea clan meets a disgraced ex-Brigadier in a bar on Rec 97, the two pull a scam that sends the bar's android waitress into the arms of the enemy and barkeep, Harry Palmer, on a quest that may upend both families' plans.



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GOLIGHTS BLINKED DANGER FROM THE G-GATES, AND THE GUTS OF THE DOCKING PROWL RUMBLLED LIKE A BAD LUNCH. AN OHNAN BARGE ERASED THE STARS FROM THE FACE OF THE VOID AS SHE DRIFTED SOUNDLESSLY INTO THE ENDLESS NIGHT.

THE BARGE WAS BLACK...
BLACKER THAN TEOMAN
DAGGERS...BLACKER THAN
MY MOOD.

I WAS WALKING THE
VOIDFRONT.

ANNIE WAS GONE.

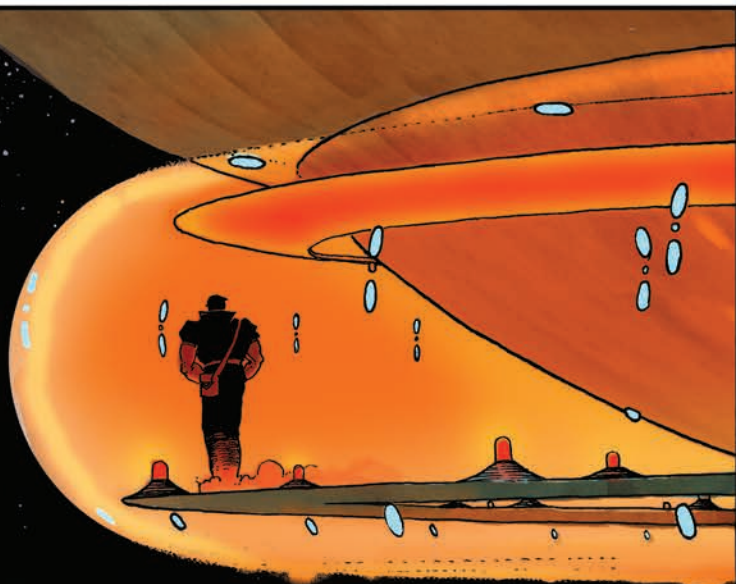
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Harry Palmer in
"CONSPICUOUS BY THEIR ABSENCE"

THE CARD HAD COME...
THEN THE NOTE...THEN
THAT SINKING FEELING.

THE CARD TOLD ME THAT
GALATIA 9, BEING FORCED
TO BEAT A HASTY RETREAT,
HAD LEFT ANNIE ON "BLUE
HEAVEN" BEFORE BLASTING
INTO THE GREAT UNKNOWN.
"SORRY," SHE SAID.

THE NOTE WAS FROM RANDALL
FACTOR, EX-RIVAL, EX-REBEL,
EX-BUDDY. SOME GUY UP AT
"THE DOME" HAD BEEN ASKING
QUESTIONS ABOUT **EROTICA
ANN-DROIDS**. "COME ON
UP," HE SAID.





COME ON UP! RANDALL RAN "THE DOME," THE POSHEST JOINT ON BLUE HEAVEN, ABOUT 12 LEVELS AND 50 LIGHT-YEARS AWAY FROM THE GRAVE. I HADN'T SEEN HIM IN TEN CYCLES.

GALATIA 9 I KNEW I'D SEE AGAIN. SHE'D LEFT ME A KRYSTAL AS BIG AS THE RITZ WHEN SHE BORROWED ANNIE. "INSURANCE," SHE SAID. RIGHT.

WHY WERE MY FRIENDS ALWAYS MAKING A CHUMP OUT OF ME? MAYBE I WAS A CHUMP.. THE KINDA CHUMP THAT THINKS IF HE LEAVES HIS HAT OR HIS DROID AT THE BAR, THEY'LL BE THERE WHEN HE GETS BACK.

SO, WHAT WAS THAT GNAWING IN MY GUT?

FEAR. FEAR DUE TO THE NO LONGER DENIABLE FACT THAT I HAD BECOME MORE ATTACHED TO ANNIE THAN I HAD INTENDED.

I DON'T KNOW IF I WAS MORE AFRAID OF LOSING HER, OR FINDING HER, OR FINDING THAT I'D LOST HER FOR THE SECOND TIME. I ONLY KNEW I HAD TO LOOK.

MAYBE I WAS JUST AFRAID OF ROUNDING THAT FAMILIAR CORNER AND RUNNING INTO MYSELF..

...INTO HARRY PALMER, REBEL. OUR ASSIGNMENT HAD BEEN TO TAKE OUT KRYSTAL BASE VAIKUNTHA.

A COUPLA CHUB-SPROUTS FLYING HOVER BUDDEEZ THROUGH A FLOCK OF IER-CO ANGELS.

IT WAS A SUICIDE MISSION AND WE KNEW IT.

TONKA TONKA

FIRST, WE WERE TO CLEAR OUR PERIMETER.

THEN AT VERY PRECISE CO-ORDINATES, PLANT A HIGH-FREQUENCY QUAKING DEVICE...

...THAT WOULD SEND A VIBRATION DEEP INTO VAIKUNTHA'S KRYSTALINE CORE, SHATTERING THE PLANET AND KILLING US.

IT DIDN'T HAPPEN THAT WAY.

I LOVED THE REBELLION. I LOVED MARY MEDEA. I DIDN'T KNOW DICK ABOUT ANDROIDS.

HOW LONG WE GOT?

ZEKE

BUT THAT WAS BEFORE RANDALL STEPPED IN.



I FOUND HIM BEHIND THE DOME'S IDEA OF A DOUBLE DEATH COMMANDO.

WELL, WELL, WELL, AS THE SAILOR SAID, LONG TIME NO SEA,



GOT YOUR NOTE SHORTLY AFTER MY DROID DISAPPEARED.

THAT'S THE WAY WITH THAT TYPE, HARRY. THEY WALK OUT BEFORE YOU WEAR 'EM OUT. AT LEAST YOURS DO.

YOU MUST BE A HARD MAN TO PLEASE.

ALL THESE CYCLES AND HE STILL HELD IT AGAINST ME THAT I'D HELD IT AGAINST HER.



STILL STUCK IN YOUR GULLET, HUH, RANDALL?

HEY, I SLEEP WITH A TEDDY BEAR.

AND I SLEEP ALONE.



LISTEN, BUDDY, I DIDN'T SHOOT ALL THE WAY UP HERE, RISKING MY NECK AND THE BENDS, JUST TO JOUST WITH YOU. WHERE'S THIS GUY?



AT THE CIRCLE, BUT HE HASN'T SEEN YOUR FRIEND-AT LEAST NOT LATELY.

TAKE A LOOK AT THE ONE GAL HAREM.