

MY PARTY WAS ABOARD THE XENOTECH SHIP WHEN A...

...WHAT DID YOU CALL THEM?

ENGINEERS.

WHEN ONE OF THOSE WOKE UP, AND BROUGHT THE SHIP HERE.

OUR VESSEL WILL BE IN PURSUIT. CAPTAIN PAGET WON'T GIVE UP ON US. THAT'S WHY GETTING THE BEACON OPERATIONAL IS SO DAMN --



ARE YOU SAYING THERE COULD BE A USCM SHIP ON ITS WAY HERE, AND WE COULD SIGNAL IT?

THAT'S WHAT I'M SAYING. IT'S WHAT I'M COUNTING ON.

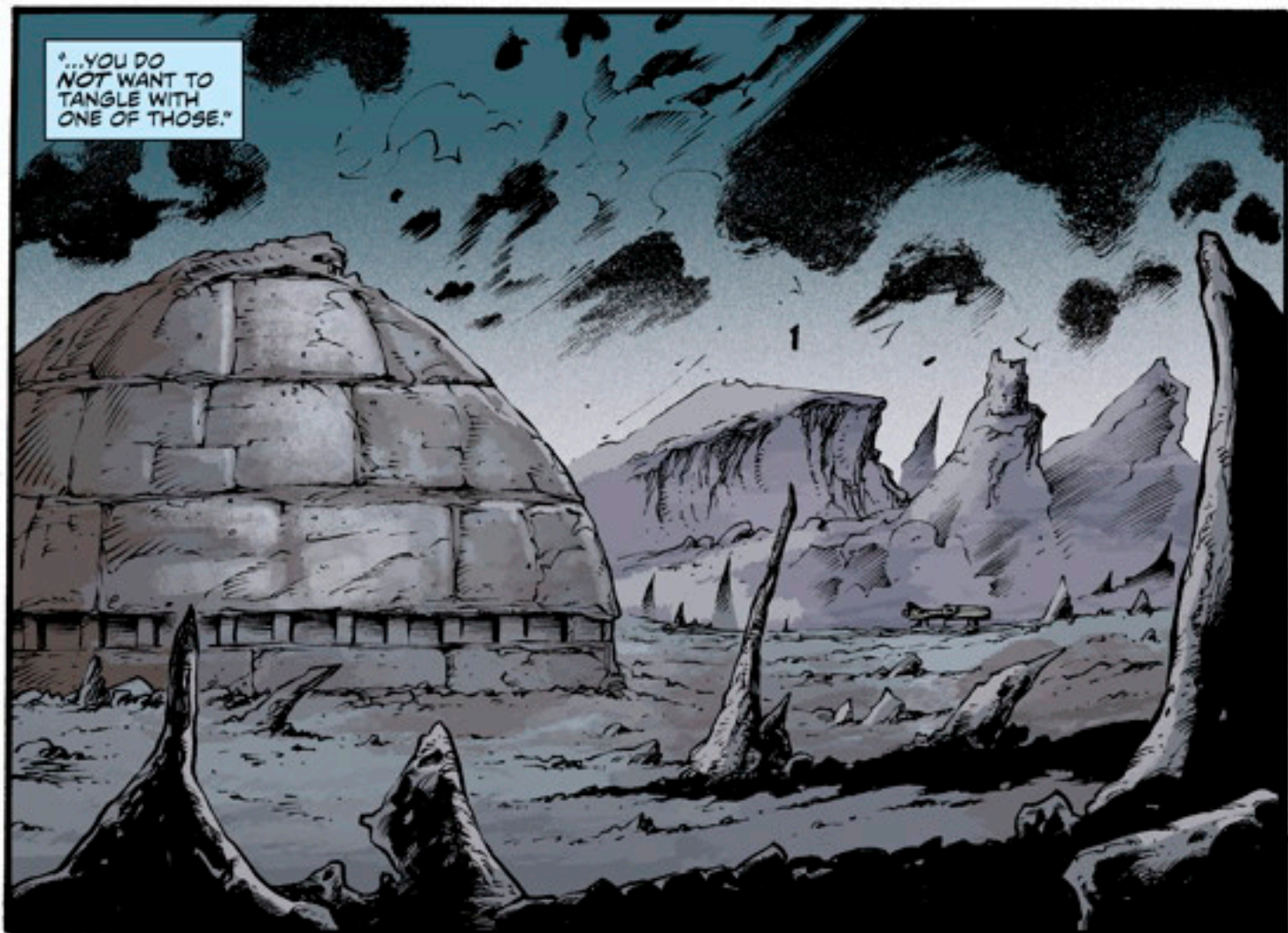
OH, GOD, CHRIS, WE COULD GET OUT OF THIS.

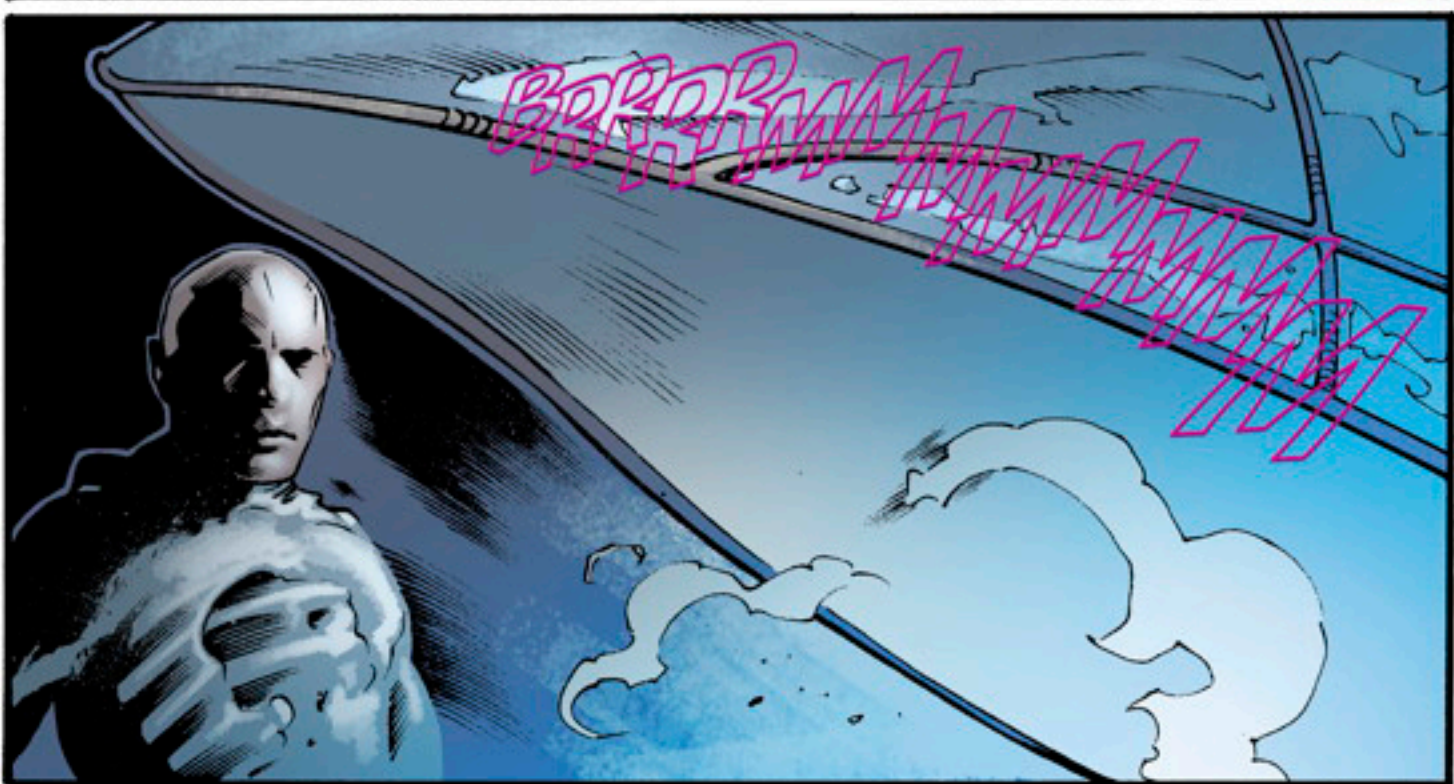


WELL, A BEACON COULD BE A REAL BAD IDEA.

THE BUGS ARE THE IMMEDIATE THREAT -- BUT THE ENGINEER...

...YOU DO NOT WANT TO TANGLE WITH ONE OF THOSE.





"WE KILLED
AN ENGINEER."



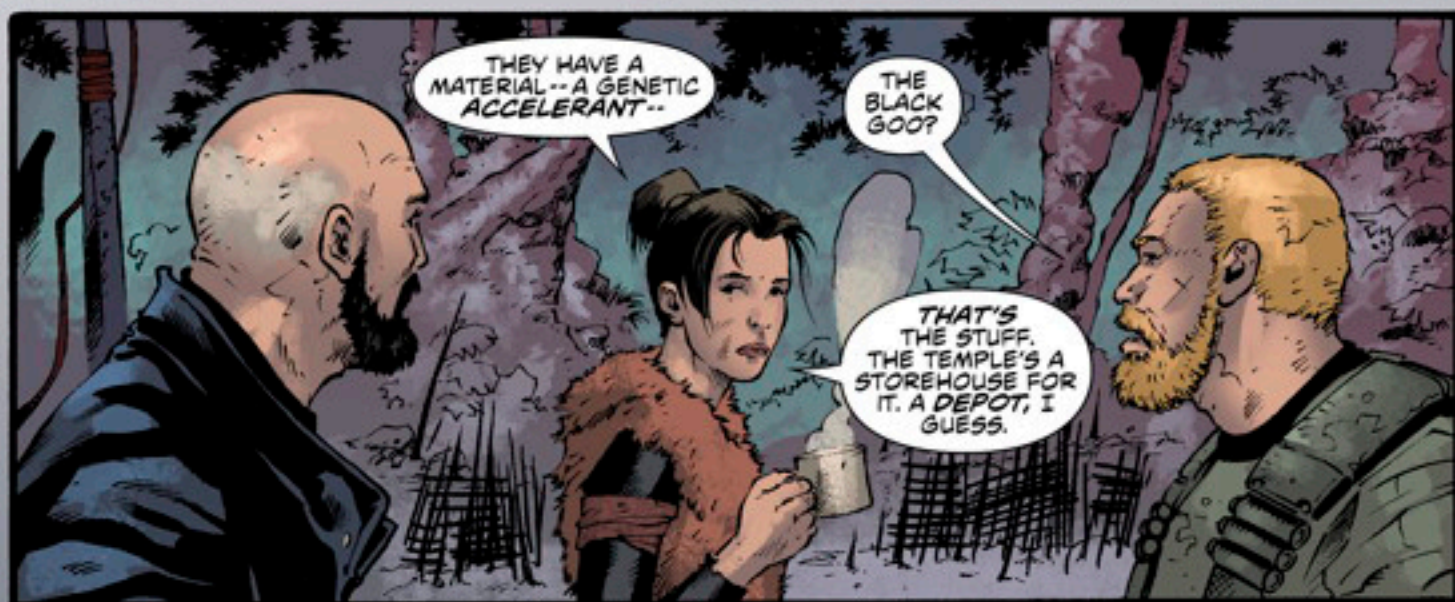


WELL, AHAH DID.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THEM, CAPTAIN?

NOT MUCH, MR. MELVILLE.

ANCIENT, HIGHLY ADVANCED. GOOD CHANCE THEY HAVE PRACTICED MAJOR *BIOFORMING* OPERATIONS DOWN THE AGES.



THEY HAVE A MATERIAL -- A GENETIC ACCELERANT --

THE BLACK GOO?

THAT'S THE STUFF. THE TEMPLE'S A STOREHOUSE FOR IT. A DEPOT, I GUESS.



I BELIEVE THEY ENGINEER ECOSYSTEMS, BIOMES, PLANETS, SPECIES.



THE XENOMORPH BUGS MAY EVEN BE A PRODUCT OF THAT ENGINEERING.

HELL, WE COULD BE TOO.

ARE YOU SERIOUS?



IT'S ALL SPECULATION. BUT THERE'S ABSOLUTELY NO POSSIBILITY OF CONTACT OR NEGOTIATION WITH THE ENGINEERS. THEY ARE HOSTILE ON SIGHT.