

**NECROWORLD
SEVEN HOURS UNTIL SUNSET.**

UM, RATCHET...?

THE FLOWERS
ARE GOING OUT.

WHAT DO
YOU THINK
THAT
MEANS?

IT MEANS
THE STORMSHIELD'S
WORKING. IT MEANS
THE D.J.D. WILL HAVE
TO MAKE SLIGHTLY
MORE OF AN EFFORT
TO KILL US.

THE DYING OF THE LIGHT

PART 4: AT CLOSE OF DAY

!AHM!:

READING
WHILE
OPERATING?

IS THAT
ALLOWED?

THE OPERATION'S
OVER—THIS IS JUST
PATCHING. I COULD
DO THIS WITH
MY HANDS CLOSED
AND MY EYES TIED
BEHIND MY BACK.

ANYWAY,
YOU'RE THE
ONE WHO
GAVE ME THE
DATAPAD.

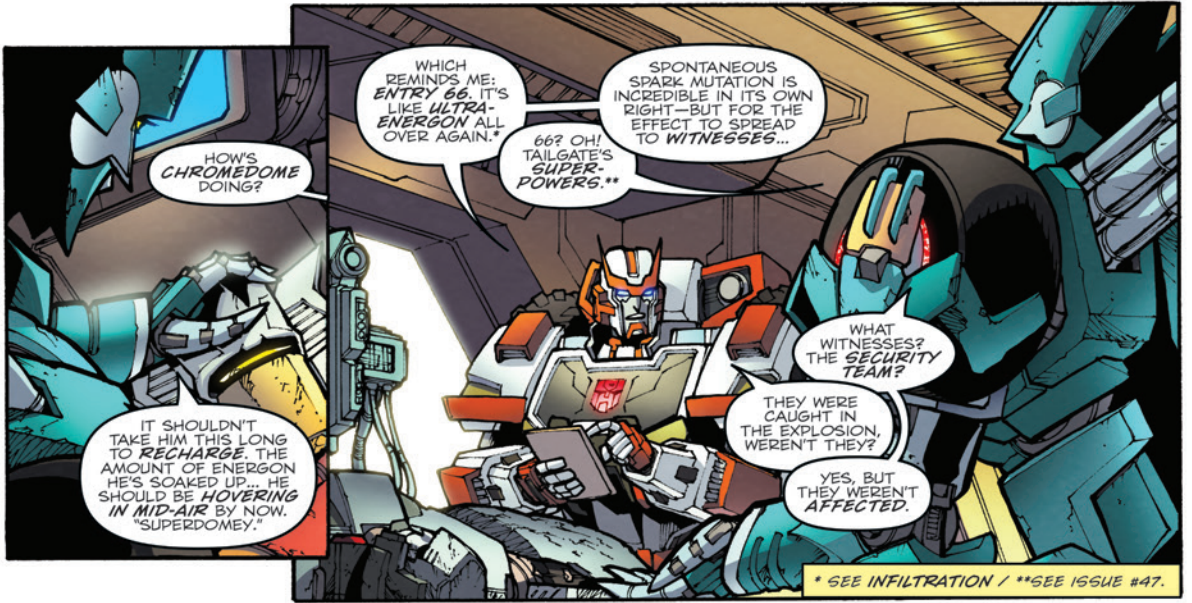
ER,
RECAP:

STERN
RATCHET:
"TELL ME
WHAT I
MISSED."

HELPFUL
VELOCITY:
"SURE! HERE
ARE MY CASE
NOTES—"

—PAUSE FOR
EMPHASIS—

—FOR YOU
TO LOOK AT
WHEN YOU'RE
FINISHED."



HOW'S CHROMEDOME DOING?

WHICH REMINDS ME: ENTRY 66. IT'S LIKE ULTRA-ENERGON ALL OVER AGAIN.*

66? OH! TAILGATE'S SUPER-POWERS.**

SPONTANEOUS SPARK MUTATION IS INCREDIBLE IN ITS OWN RIGHT—BUT FOR THE EFFECT TO SPREAD TO WITNESSES...

IT SHOULDN'T TAKE HIM THIS LONG TO RECHARGE. THE AMOUNT OF ENERGN HE'S SOAKED UP... HE SHOULD BE HOVERING IN MID-AIR BY NOW. "SUPERDOMEY."

WHAT WITNESSES? THE SECURITY TEAM?

THEY WERE CAUGHT IN THE EXPLOSION, WEREN'T THEY?

YES, BUT THEY WEREN'T AFFECTED.

* SEE INFILTRATION / **SEE ISSUE #47.



ENTRIES 70 AND 73—POWERFLASH AND STRAFE BOTH CAME TO SEE YOU. BOTH COMPLAINED OF SUDDEN BURNOUT. YOU DESCRIBE THEM AS STRUGGLING TO WALK.

YES, BUT I DIDN'T—

I PUT IT DOWN TO BAD ENGN. IT HAPPENS.

IT DOES. BUT IT ALSO HAPPENS WHEN YOUR SYSTEMS CRASH AFTER RECEIVING AN ARTIFICIAL BOOST.



DO YOU THINK TAILGATE'S AT RISK?



SLUGGER! MY FAVORITE TOUGH NUT. D'YOU KNOW WHAT HE'S DOING RIGHT NOW?

GIVING ULTRA MAGNUS A PIGGYBACK?

NOPE—



"—DEMOLISHING LEVEL 4."



FOR FUN?

FOR BRAINSTORM.

SHIP'S GENIUS SAYS HE CAN'T MAKE WEAPONS OUT OF THIN AIR—WELL HE SAYS HE CAN, BUT NOT IN THE SIX AND A HALF HOURS BETWEEN NOW AND SUNSET.

TAILGATE'S PROVIDING THE RAW MATERIAL.



IT'S ALL HAPPENING, FOLKS. OPERATION: FORTIFICATION.

WHIRL AND CYCLONUS ARE SORTING THE PERIMETER, NAUTICA'S CHECKING ON THE ORGANICS, REWIND'S DOING A SOUND CHECK, AND SWERVE...



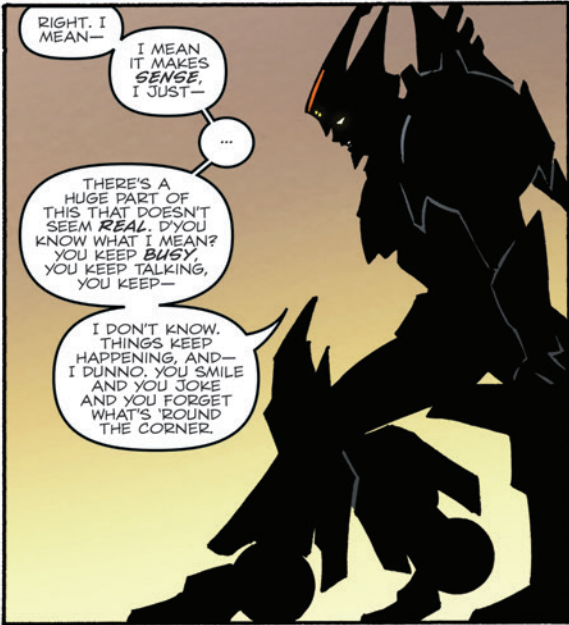
"ACTUALLY, SWERVE'S TAKING SOME TIME OUT."

"I THINK THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION HAS FINALLY CAUGHT UP WITH HIM."



WAIT—REWIND'S DOING A SOUND CHECK?

I THOUGHT PEOPLE MIGHT WANT TO LEAVE A MESSAGE. YOU KNOW—LAST WORDS, INSTRUCTIONS FOR BURIAL... SAYING GOODBYE CAN BE A CATHARTIC EXPERIENCE.



RIGHT. I MEAN—

I MEAN IT MAKES SENSE, I JUST—

THERE'S A HUGE PART OF THIS THAT DOESN'T SEEM REAL. DO YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN? YOU KEEP BUSY, YOU KEEP TALKING, YOU KEEP—

I DON'T KNOW. THINGS KEEP HAPPENING, AND—I DUNNO. YOU SMILE AND YOU JOKE AND YOU FORGET WHAT'S 'ROUND THE CORNER.



ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT IS WHAT'S AROUND THE CORNER, WHICH IS WHY I NEED TO SPEAK TO THE SPARKEATER.

HE'S NOT ACTUALLY A SPARKEATER. THE D.J.D. WANT EVERYONE TO THINK HE IS SO—

YEP, DON'T REALLY CARE. JUST WAKE HIM UP SO WE CAN HAVE A LITTLE CHAT.

HE CAN'T TALK. HE'S GOT A VOCAL SYNTHESIZER— HE CAN GROWL— BUT HE CAN'T FORM WORDS.

GREAT. I WANTED HIM TO TELL ME WHERE THE D.J.D. HAVE STASHED THEIR SHIP.

MAYBE HE STILL CAN...



I GET THAT WE'RE IN TROUBLE. I GET THAT.

WE'RE BURIED UNDER AN **AVALANCHE** OF TROUBLE. WE'RE MASHINATING IN A **RICH GRAY** OF TROUBLE.

YOU'RE DOING THAT THING AGAIN.

THE POINT IS I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT THIS **STUPID HOLLOW PLANET**.

PLEASE, MINIMUS—I KNOW THE D.J.D. ARE THE PRIORITY, BUT I HAVE AN **ACUTE PHYSICAL NEED** TO FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON.



I RESPECT YOU, NIGHTBEAT. YOU KNOW I DO.

ACTUALLY YOU KEPT THAT VERY HIDDEN.

AND AS A MARK OF MY RESPECT I'M GOING TO BE ENTIRELY **STRAIGHT** WITH YOU: WE'LL ALL BE DEAD BY SUNRISE, THAT BEING THE CASE, I DON'T SEE WHY THIS LATEST MYSTERY IS SO IMPORTANT.



BECAUSE SOLVING IT COULD SAVE US.

LET ME **DIG**. LET ME FIND THE **INNER SURFACE**. I MIGHT BE ABLE TO FIND A WAY FOR US TO **ESCAPE**—AND IF NOT THAT, THEN A PLACE TO HIDE. FOR US **AND** THE ORGANICS.

BUT LISTEN: WHATEVER HAPPENS—



"—I'LL SEE YOU BEFORE SUNSET."

AND MINIMUS IS OKAY WITH THIS...

YES, PROVIDED I DON'T GO ALONE.

I SAID I'D TAKE SOMEONE HE COULD DO WITHOUT.

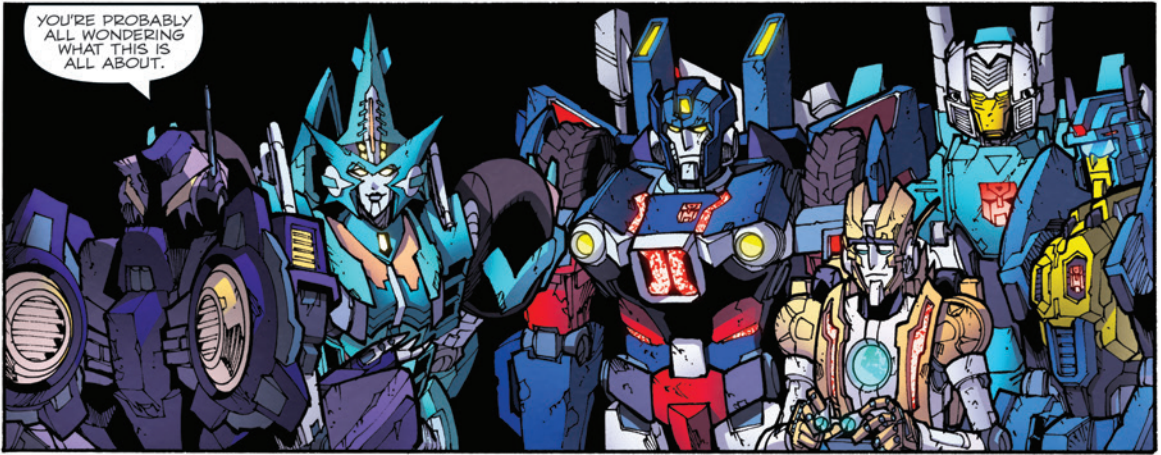


I'M JOKING.

YOU'RE NOT THOUGH, ARE YOU?

NO.

PSST! YOU TWO! IN HERE!



YOU'RE PROBABLY ALL WONDERING WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT.



LET'S SEE...

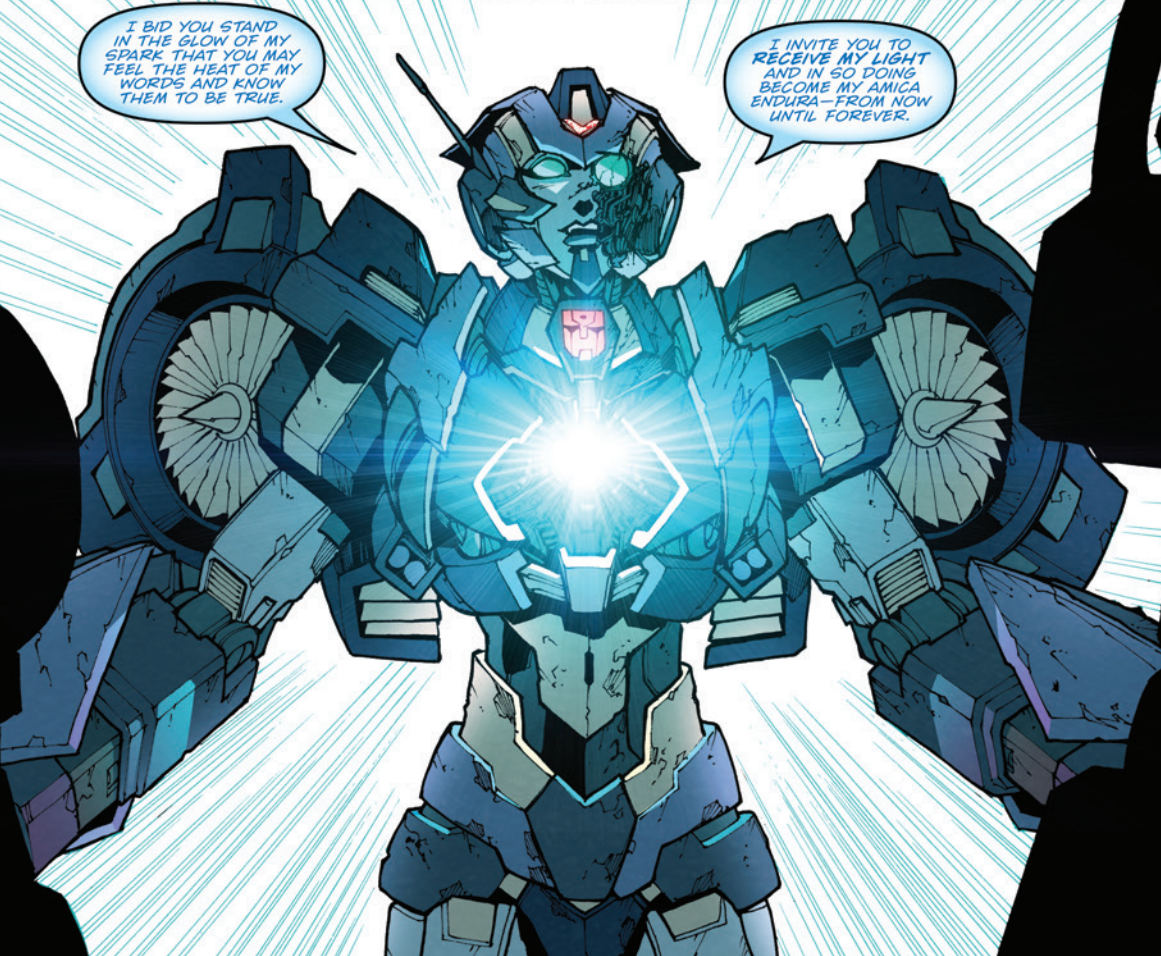
THIS IS CLEARLY A PRIVATE MEETING... YOU'RE AVOIDING EYE CONTACT... YOU'VE DIMMED THE LIGHTS... AND YOU'RE NOTICEABLY LESS TACTILE THAN NORMAL.

SORRY, I'M STUMPED. HOLLOW PLANET IS MONOPOLIZING MY BRAIN.



SKIDS. LOTTY. RUNG. BRAINSTORM. NIGHTBEAT.

FORGIVE THE FORMALITY, BUT—



I BID YOU STAND IN THE GLOW OF MY SPARK THAT YOU MAY FEEL THE HEAT OF MY WORDS AND KNOW THEM TO BE TRUE.

I INVITE YOU TO RECEIVE MY LIGHT AND IN SO DOING BECOME MY AMICA ENDURA—FROM NOW UNTIL FOREVER.