A stylized illustration of the solar system. At the top left is a large blue planet with a smaller moon. Below it is a smaller grey planet. In the center is a large reddish-brown planet with a ringed planet in front of it. At the bottom right is the Earth, surrounded by several comets with long tails. A bright sun is visible in the bottom right corner. The background is a dark space filled with stars.

THEY SAY THAT THE
COLONIZATION OF
THE SOLAR SYSTEM
BEGAN *EIGHT*
CENTURIES AGO.

MANKIND LUNGED FOR
EVERY WORLD IT COULD
REACH, DETERMINED
TO MAKE EACH ONE
HABITABLE.

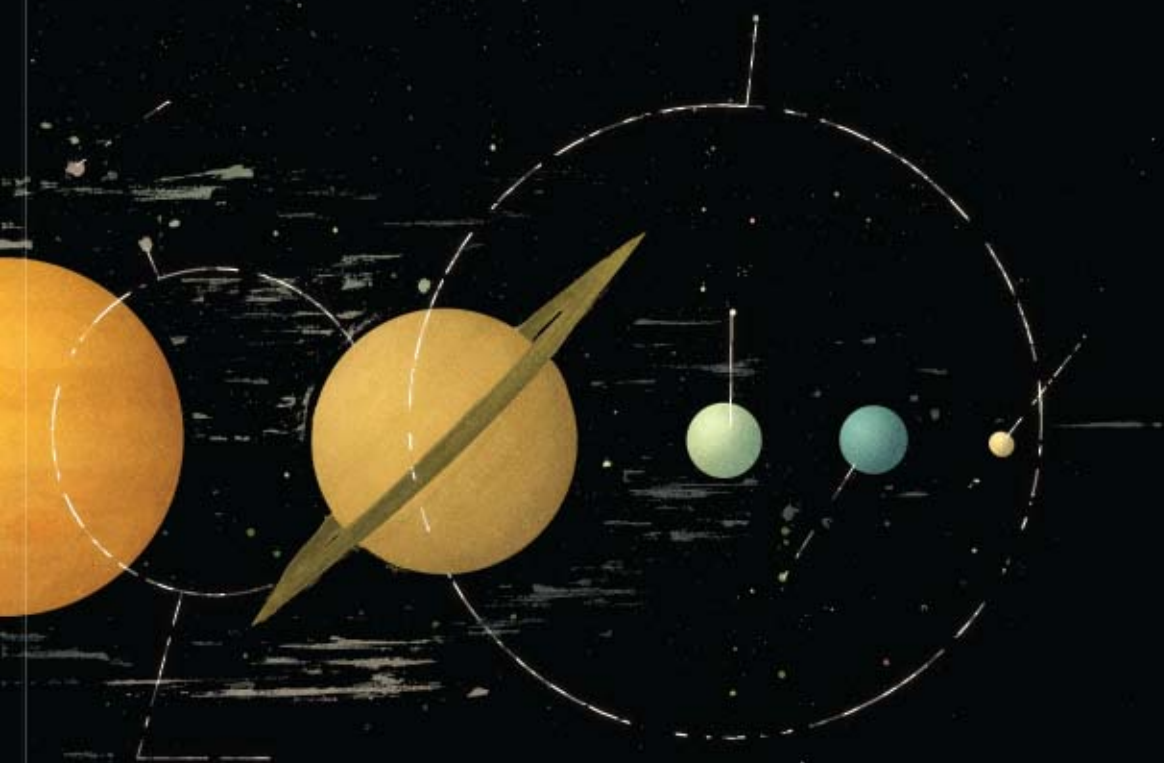
CHANGES WERE
NEEDED FOR MANKIND
TO SUCCEED IN THESE
NEW ENVIRONMENTS.

PEOPLE WERE ALTERED
BEYOND RECOGNITION. DECADES
OF GENETIC MODIFICATIONS
AND SPECIALIZED BREEDING
PROGRAMS CREATED THE
PERFECT ADAPTATIONS.

WITH THESE
CHANGES, SOCIETY
BECAME STRATIFIED,
EACH TASK STRICTLY
ASSIGNED TO A
SPECIFIC GROUP.

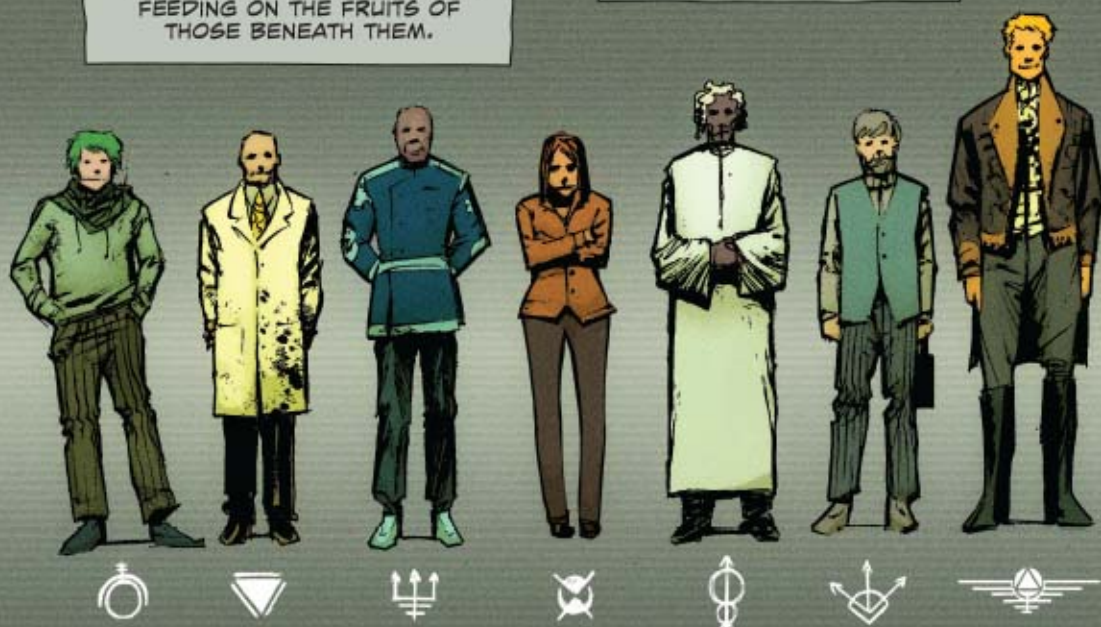
THE REDS WERE
AT THE VERY BASE
OF SOCIETY; MANUAL
LABORERS WHO TOILED
TO CARVE THE PLANETS
INTO SHAPE AND CREATE
THE PLACES WHERE THE
OTHER COLORS COULD
LIVE AND THRIVE.






ABOVE THEM, THE PINKS,
THE BLUES, THE YELLOWS, THE
GREENS; OTHER COLORS, EACH
LOCKED WITHIN THEIR SEPARATE
SPHERES OF INFLUENCE, EACH
FEEDING ON THE FRUITS OF
THOSE BENEATH THEM.

AT THE TOP, THE WHITES,
THE SILVERS AND, ABOVE
ALL OTHERS, THE GOLDS,
WHO RULED THE RICH NEW
COLONIES OF MARS AND
VENUS, AND THE MOONS OF
JUPITER AND NEPTUNE.





UNTIL THE DAY CAME
WHEN THOSE COLONISTS,
WEARY OF EARTH'S DOMINION,
RETURNED TO THE CRADLE
OF MAN NOT TO HELP, BUT
TO CONQUER. LED BY
THE GOLDS, THEY FELL
IN AN IRON RAIN.

THE CHILD ON THE ROCK

THE OUTLYING
PLANETS HAD
BEEN COLONIZED
OVER CENTURIES.

MARS
ITSELF TOOK
AN EON TO
MAKE STABLE.



ITS ATMOSPHERE
STILL WRITHED
WHEN THE FIRST
BUILDINGS
WENT UP.



BUT THE
CONQUERORS
SHAPED THE
WORLDS INTO THEIR
PLAYGROUNDS.
THEIR RESOURCES
LIMITLESS.

THEIR
LOW-COLOR
SLAVES
ENDLESS...



IN TIME THE
GOLDS RULED
EACH OF THE
WORLDS, AND
MARS, LIKE THE
OTHER PLANETS
IN THE SOLAR
SYSTEM...

...LEARNED
WHAT IT WAS
LIKE TO HAVE
MAN BURROWING
BENEATH ITS SKIN
AND DANCING ON
ITS SURFACE.

AGEA MARS



DON'T
LEAVE SO
SOON, BRIGHT
STAR OF THE
HEAVENS--LET
US DANCE TO
YOUR RHYTHM
AGAIN!

I'LL
BE BACK
SOON, SWEET
CHILDREN.



HE'S
WAKE.

YOU
SURE? HE
LOOKS LIKE HE'S
STILL OUT OF IT
TO ME, AND I HIT
HIM PRETTY
HARD.

NO, HE'S
AWAKE ALL
RIGHT--

--AREN'T
YOU,
DOMINUS?

PRIME
MASK.

HIDES
YOUR
FEATURES
WELL.

BUT I
CAN SMELL
THE *SACCHARINE*
REEK OF CAFFEINE
STICKS, AND THE *OIL*
FOR YOUR NERVE
IMPLANTS. YOU'RE
A *GREEN*.

A
SCARED,
GORYDAMN
GREEN.

≈GASP≈

HAH-HAH-
HAH-HAH-
HAH!

IF YOUR
STENCH WASN'T
SO OBVIOUS I'D
HAVE PEGGED YOU
FOR *VIOLETS*, WITH
SUCH A DRAMATIC
PERFORMANCE!
HAH-HAH-
HAH!



HAH-
HAH-
HAH!



AND
WHAT
ABOUT
ME?



WHAT
DO I
SMELL
LIKE?



YOU?
SNIFF?



ENOUGH
OF THIS. JUST
GET THE
BLOODYDAMN
PASSCODE,
ALREADY!

"BLOODYDAMN",
IS IT? THAT'S A RUSTER
CURSE. SO WE'VE GOT
A RED TOO.



...BUT YOU SEEM
BETTER THAN
THAT, MY MASKED
FRIEND.

INDULGE
ME--ARE YOU
FRATERNIZING WITH
LOWCOLORS? ARE
YOU A COPPER
PERHAPS? A
SILVER--?

I'LL
REQUIRE THE
PASSCODE FOR
YOUR DATAPAD,
VARUS. THAT'S
ALL WE NEED TO
DISCUSS.



YOU'RE NOT A GOLD, SURELY.

THE PASSCODE, IF YOU PLEASE.



...
ARE YOU A GOLD?

I SEE THAT I AM NOT MAKING MYSELF CLEAR.



I REQUIRE THE PASSCODE. A LIFE DEPENDS ON IT.

HEH-HAH-HAH! A LIFE DEPENDS ON IT? REALLY? HEH-HEH! WHOSE?



YOURS!



THUNK

WEEEEE



HE'S FAINTED.

FITCHNER, YOU BLOODYDAMN BASTARD! WHAT THE HELL DID YOU DO?! WHAT DID HE--?

NOT
NOW,
DORAN.

BUT,
RY--

LET
HIM WORK
THROUGH IT, HE
DOESN'T NEED
US RIGHT
NOW.

"LET HIM WORK
THROUGH IT."

"NO DOUBT, THAT'S
WHAT THE **BOARD OF
QUALITY CONTROL**
SAID WHEN THEY CHOSE
TO LEAVE ME ON
THAT ROCK **THIRTY
YEARS AGO.**"

THE
CHILD'S
FRIGHTENED.

HOW
UNSEEMLY.
FEAR DOES NOT
BECOME A
GOLD.

WAH-
WAH-WAH-
WAH!

PROOF THEN THAT HE IS
NOT A **TRUE GOLD**. JUST
AN **ABERRATION**, AS
SUSPECTED. A WEAK
ABERRATION.

WHAT
HAPPENS
TO MY SON
NEXT?

WAH-
WAH-WAH-
WAH!

HE WILL DIE.
UNLESS FATE
SPARES
HIM.

FATE IS A FICTION.
THE CHILD ALONE
DECIDES. THREE
DAYS. THREE
NIGHTS.

WAH-
WAH-WAH-
WAH!

WAAAAAH!

DOES IT
WANT LIFE
ENOUGH
TO LIVE?

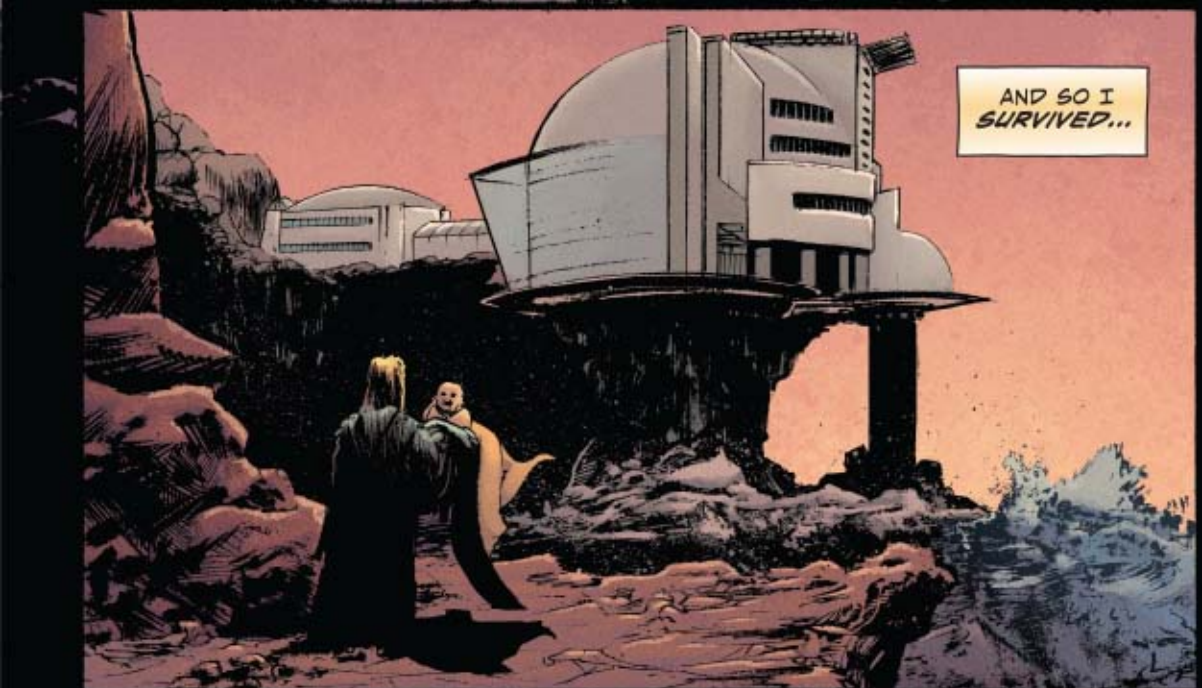


TO A PERFECT RACE, I
WAS BORN IMPERFECT.
FOR THIS, THE BOARD
WILLED ME TO DIE.



HOWEVER,
THEY WERE TO BE
DISAPPOINTED.

FATE, IT SEEMS,
IS NOT ENTIRELY
FICTION.



AND SO I
SURVIVED...



...I SURVIVED
TO *SPITE*
THEM ALL.

THE
ABERRATION
LIVES.

THEN
HE IS
LUCKY.

LET US SEE
HOW WELL HIS
LUCK SERVES
HIM.

WAAHH-
WAH!

WAAHH-
WAH!

I WAS RAISED IN
A SOCIETY THAT
JUDGED ME BY
MY WEAKNESSES.

ALL MEN
ARE *NOT*
CREATED
EQUAL.

THE WEAK
HAVE *DECEIVED*
YOU. THEY WOULD
SAY THE MEEK
SHOULD INHERIT
THE EARTH--

--THIS IS
THE *NOBLE LIE*
OF DEMOCRACY.
THE *CANCER* THAT
POISONED MANKIND.
YOU AND I ARE *GOLD*.
WE TOWER ABOVE
THE FLESH HEAP
OF MAN.

BUT POWER
IS NOT FREE. IT
MUST BE CLAIMED.
WON. RULE, DOMINION,
AND EMPIRE
PURCHASED WITH
BLOOD!

HERE WE
WILL TEACH YOU
WHY GOLD RULES
MANKIND. AND I
PROMISE: ONLY
THOSE FIT FOR
POWER WILL
SURVIVE.

I'M
READY!

MY CONTEMPORARIES,
AS ALWAYS, NOTICED MY
FLAWS AT FIRST SIGHT.

HEY,
BRONZIE--
WHAT'S YOUR
NAME?

FITCHNER
AU BARCA.

BY JOVE,
YOU'RE SCRAWNY
AS A RAT. HOW'D
THEY LET A *LITTLE*
CREATURE
LIKE YOU IN
HERE?

HE'S
JUST A *LITTLE*
WHELP, ISN'T
HE?

IF YOU'RE
QUITE CERTAIN
HE'S EVEN A
GOLD.

I'M
AS GOLD
AS YOU
ARE...