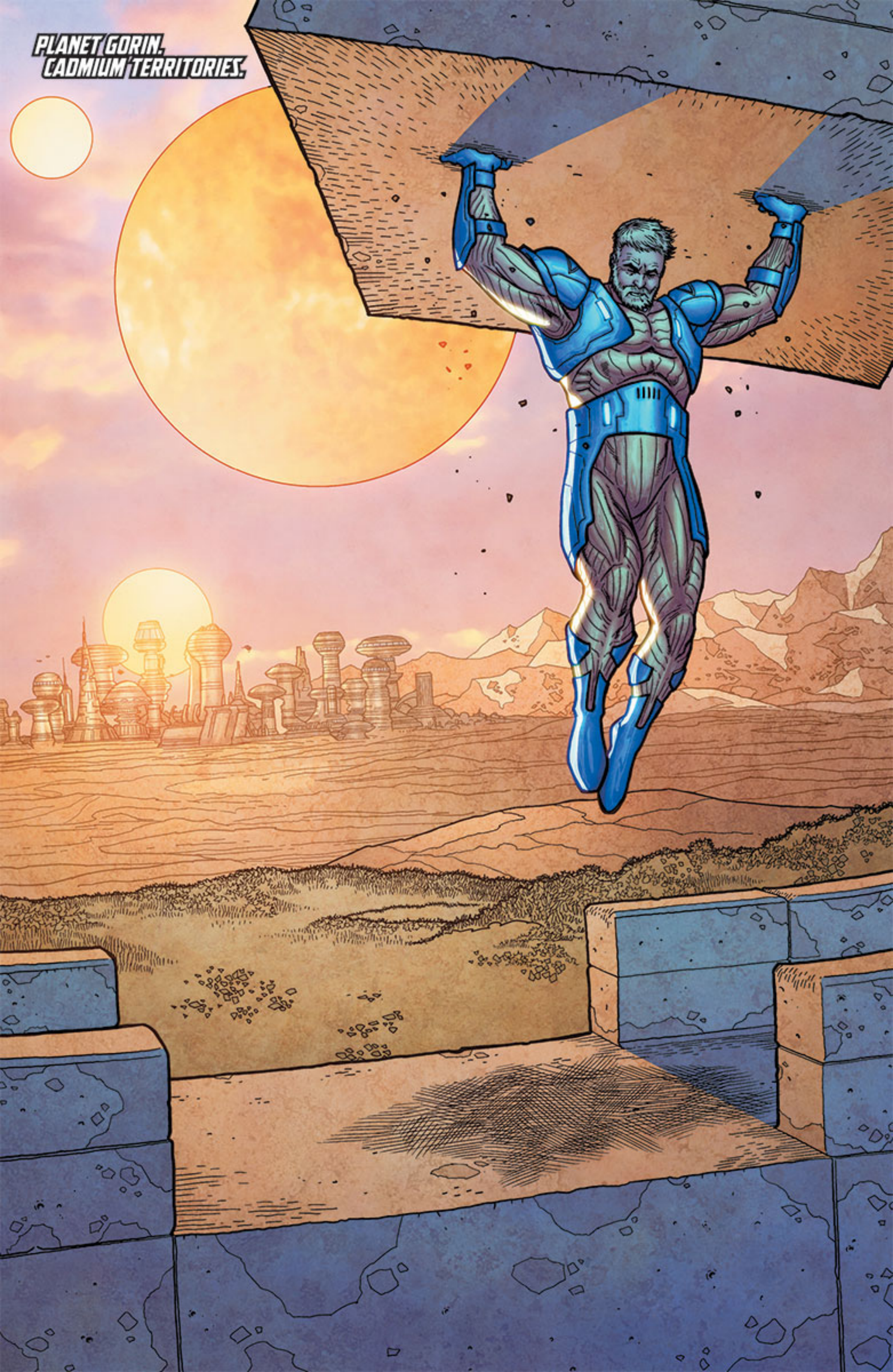
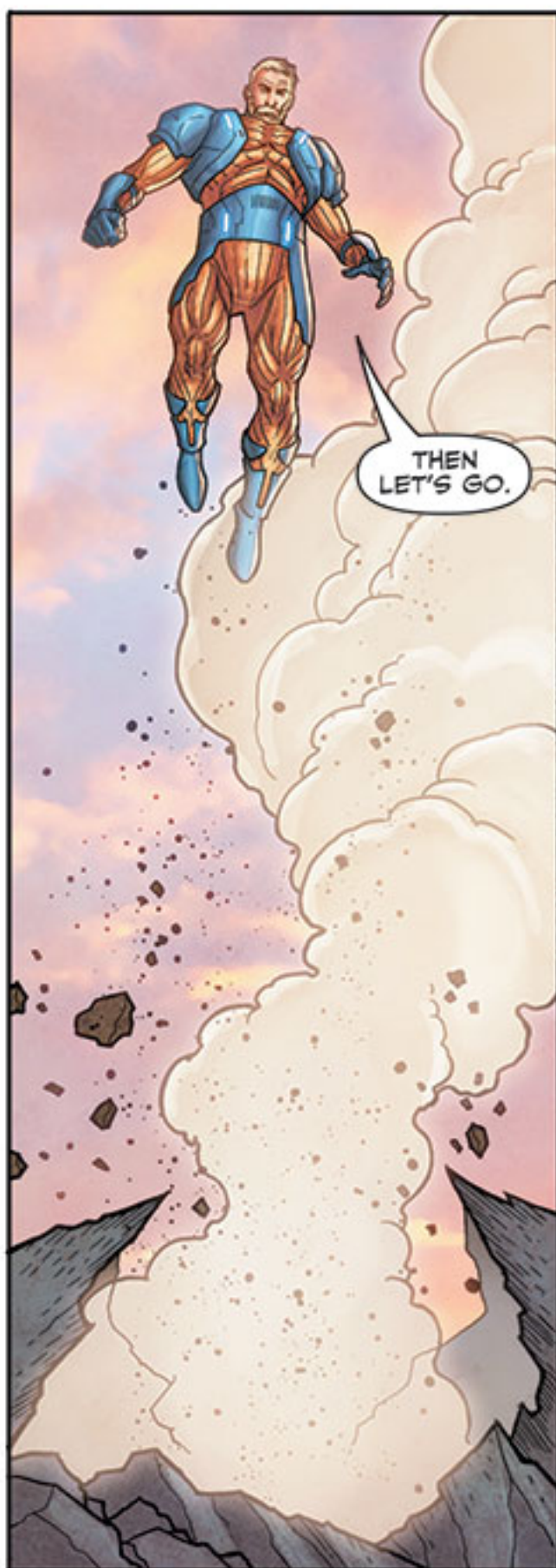
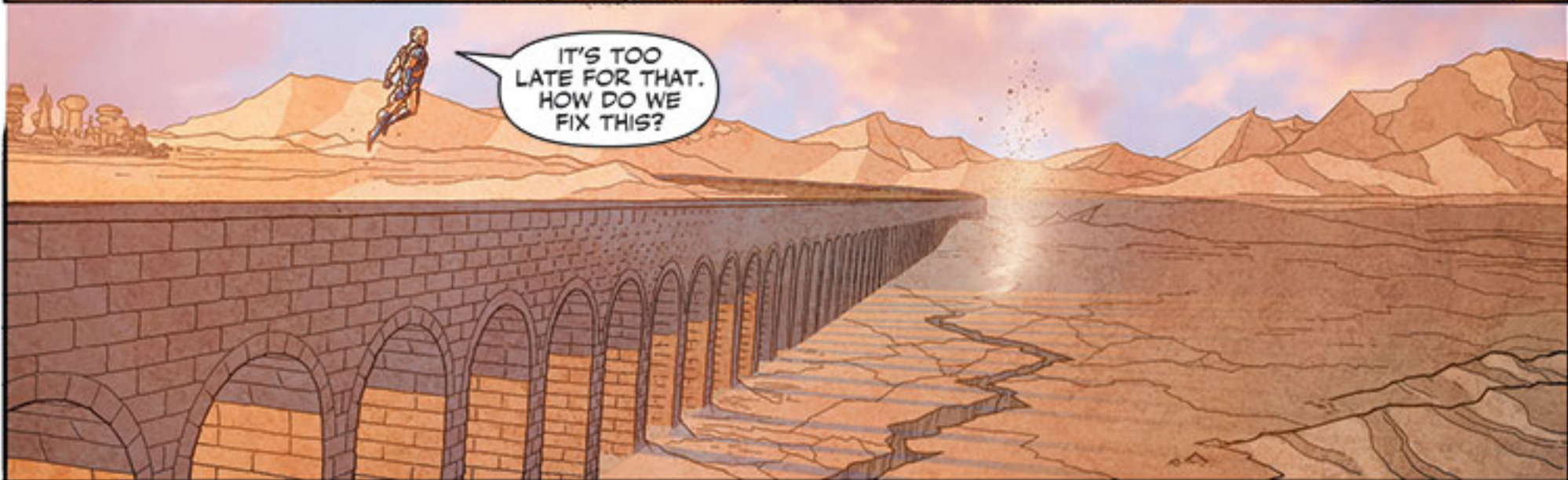
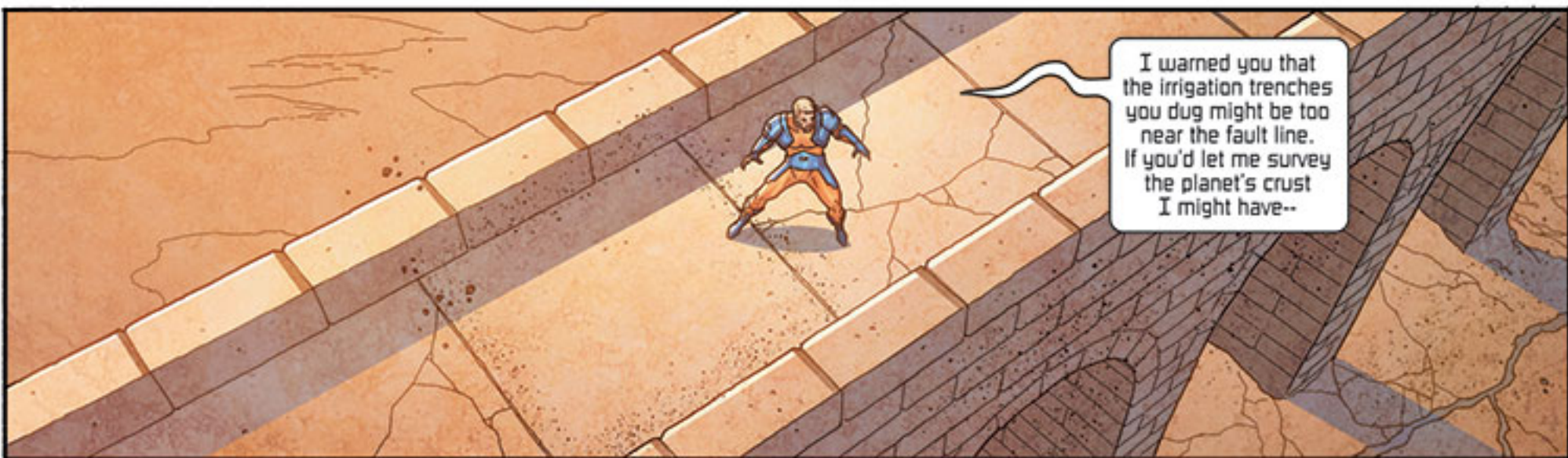
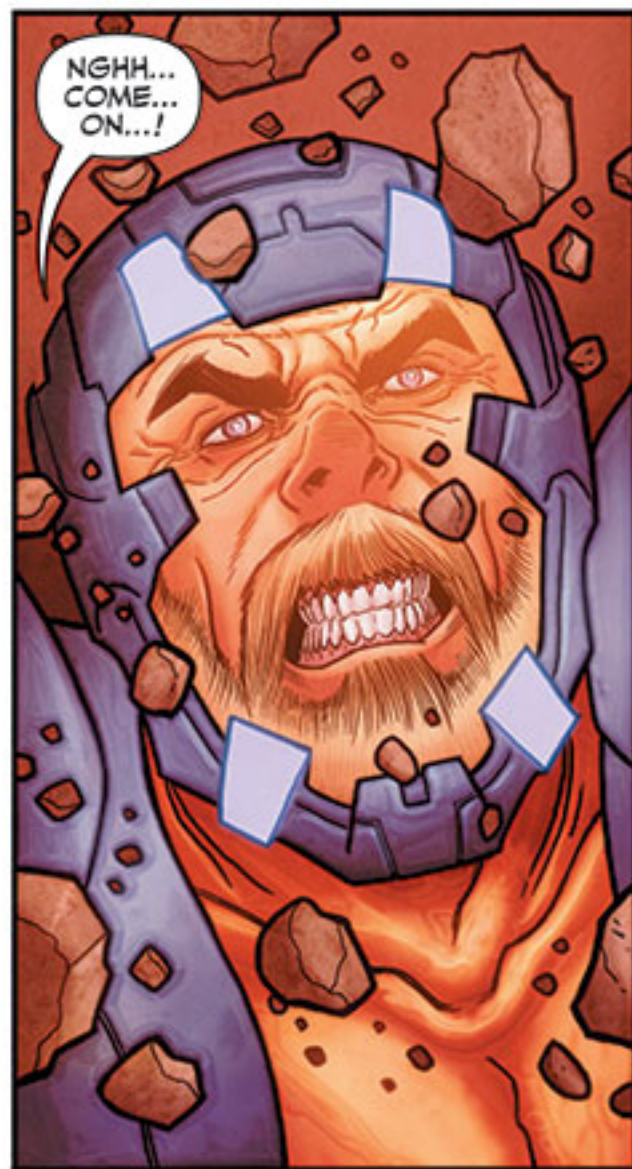
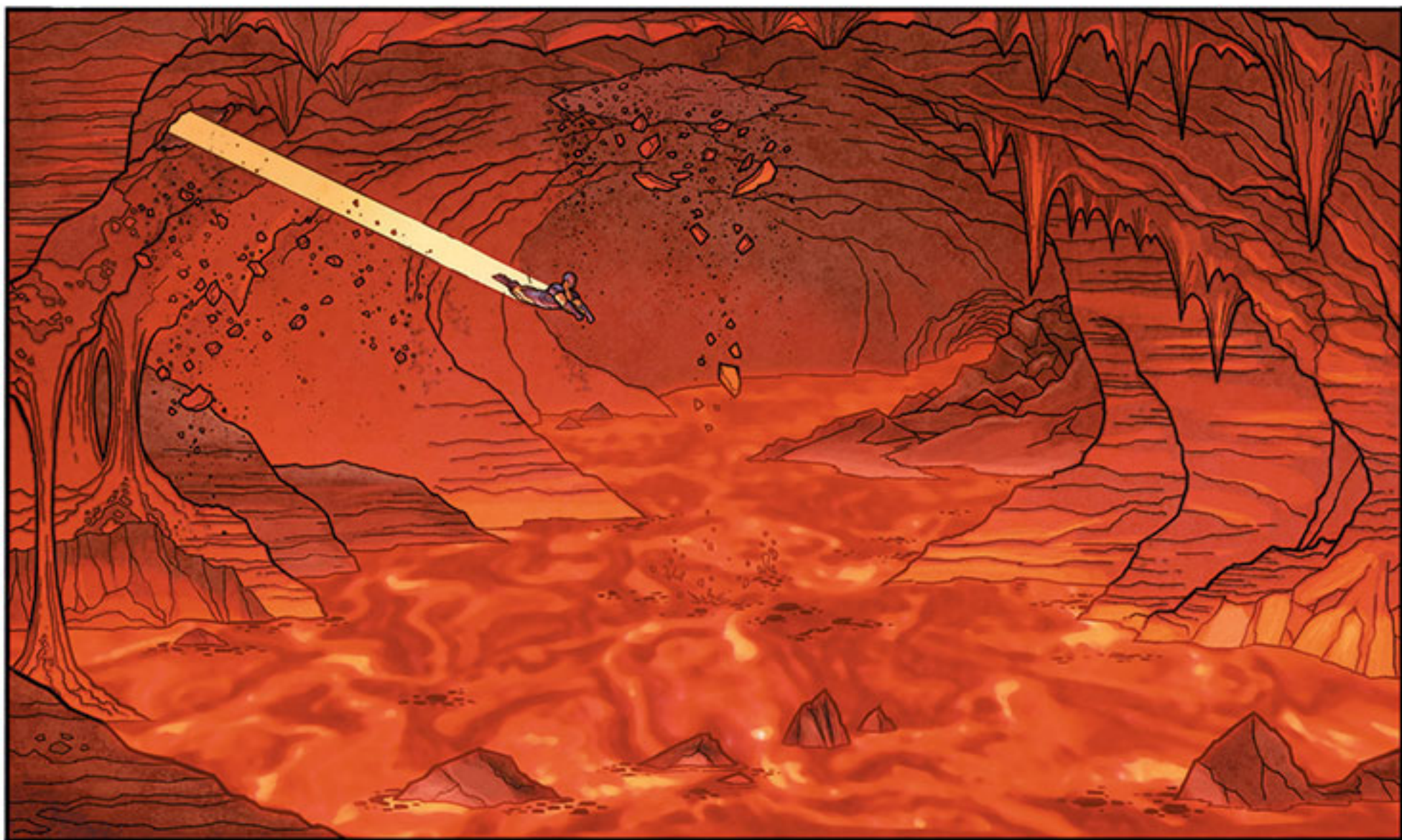
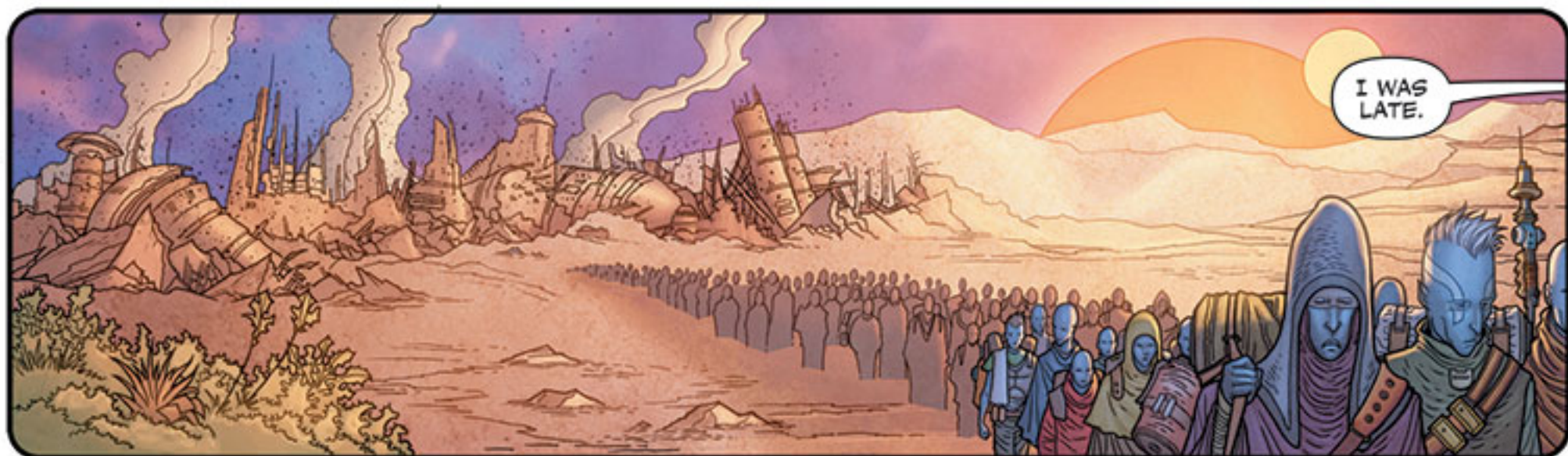


**PLANET GORIN.
CADMIUM TERRITORIES.**

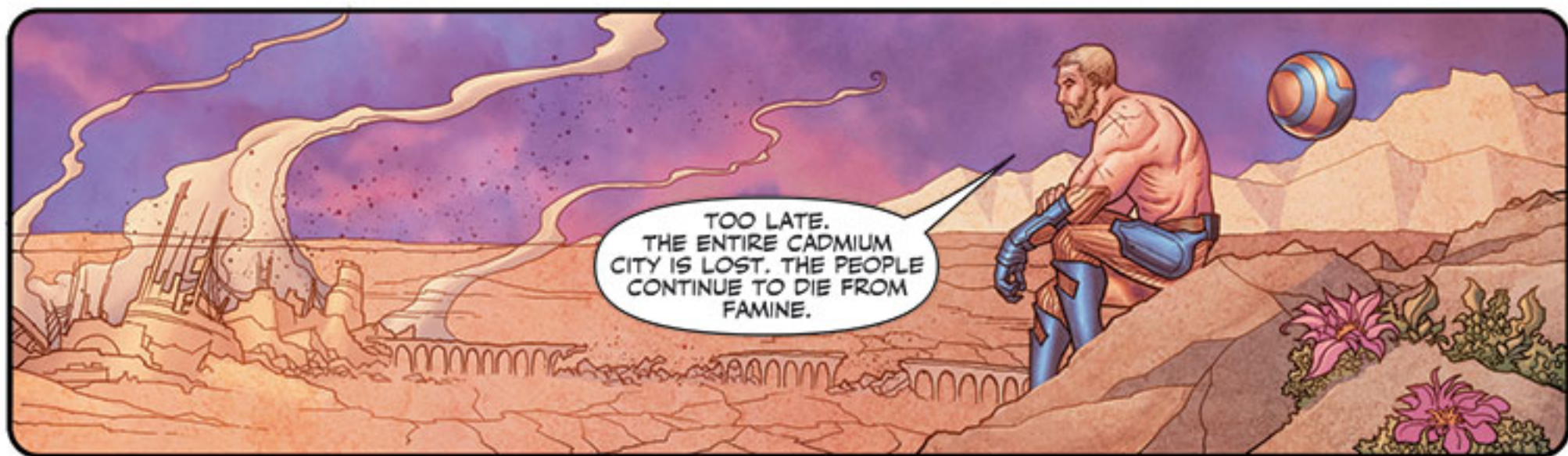








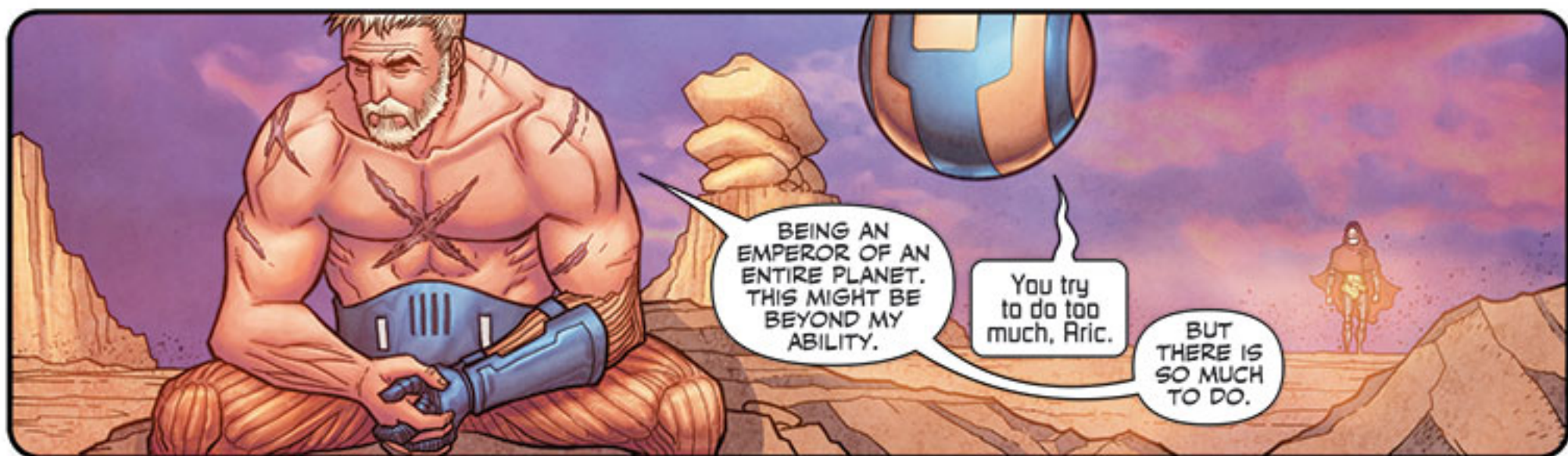
I WAS LATE.



TOO LATE. THE ENTIRE CADMIUM CITY IS LOST. THE PEOPLE CONTINUE TO DIE FROM FAMINE.



THE RACES ARE AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS. THE ENTIRE PLANET...IT'S...BIGGER THAN I THOUGHT. I USED TO RULE. I WAS ABLE TO RULE OVER MY VISIGOTHS. BUT THEY NUMBERED IN THE HUNDREDS.



BEING AN EMPEROR OF AN ENTIRE PLANET. THIS MIGHT BE BEYOND MY ABILITY.

You try to do too much, Aric.

BUT THERE IS SO MUCH TO DO.



No. What I mean is that you must delegate. You must lead by having vision. But let the many hands make light work.

DELEGATION LEADS TO CORRUPTION, ARMOR. HUMAN NATURE IS PREDICTABLE. POWER CORRUPTS. THAT IS THE TRUTH. NO ONE MAY BE TRUSTED.

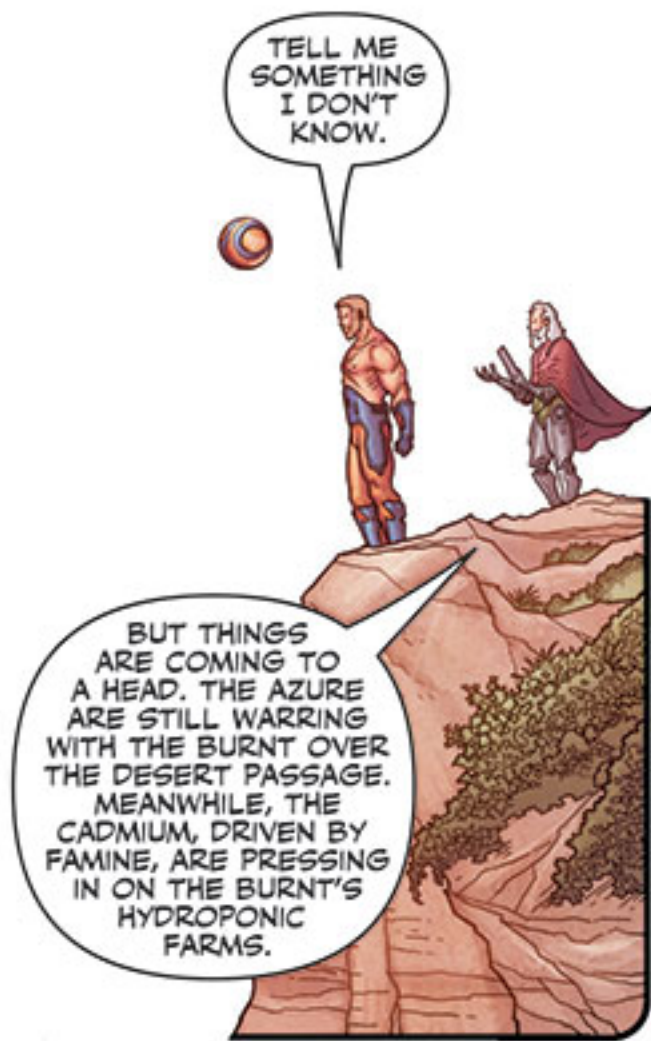
It is a truth, Aric. But the greatest leaders were not made by trusting others but by having the vision to choose those worthy of trust.



EMPEROR?
ARIC...A WORD?

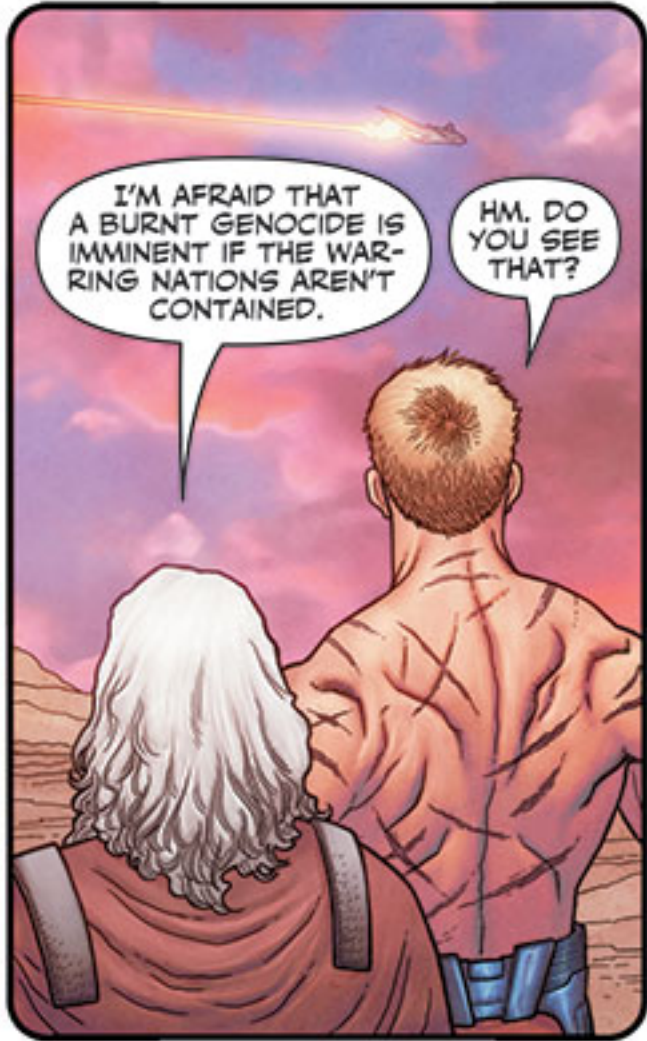
WHAT
IS IT
IRONSIDE?
SPEAK
PLAINLY.

AS I ALWAYS HAVE,
ARIC. I HATE TO BRING
YOU THIS NEWS BUT
I THOUGHT YOU SHOULD
KNOW THAT THE THREE
NATIONS ARE IN UTTER
TURMOIL.



TELL ME
SOMETHING
I DON'T
KNOW.

BUT THINGS
ARE COMING
TO A HEAD. THE AZURE
ARE STILL WARRING
WITH THE BURNT OVER
THE DESERT PASSAGE.
MEANWHILE, THE
CADMIUM, DRIVEN BY
FAMINE, ARE PRESSING
IN ON THE BURNT'S
HYDROPONIC
FARMS.



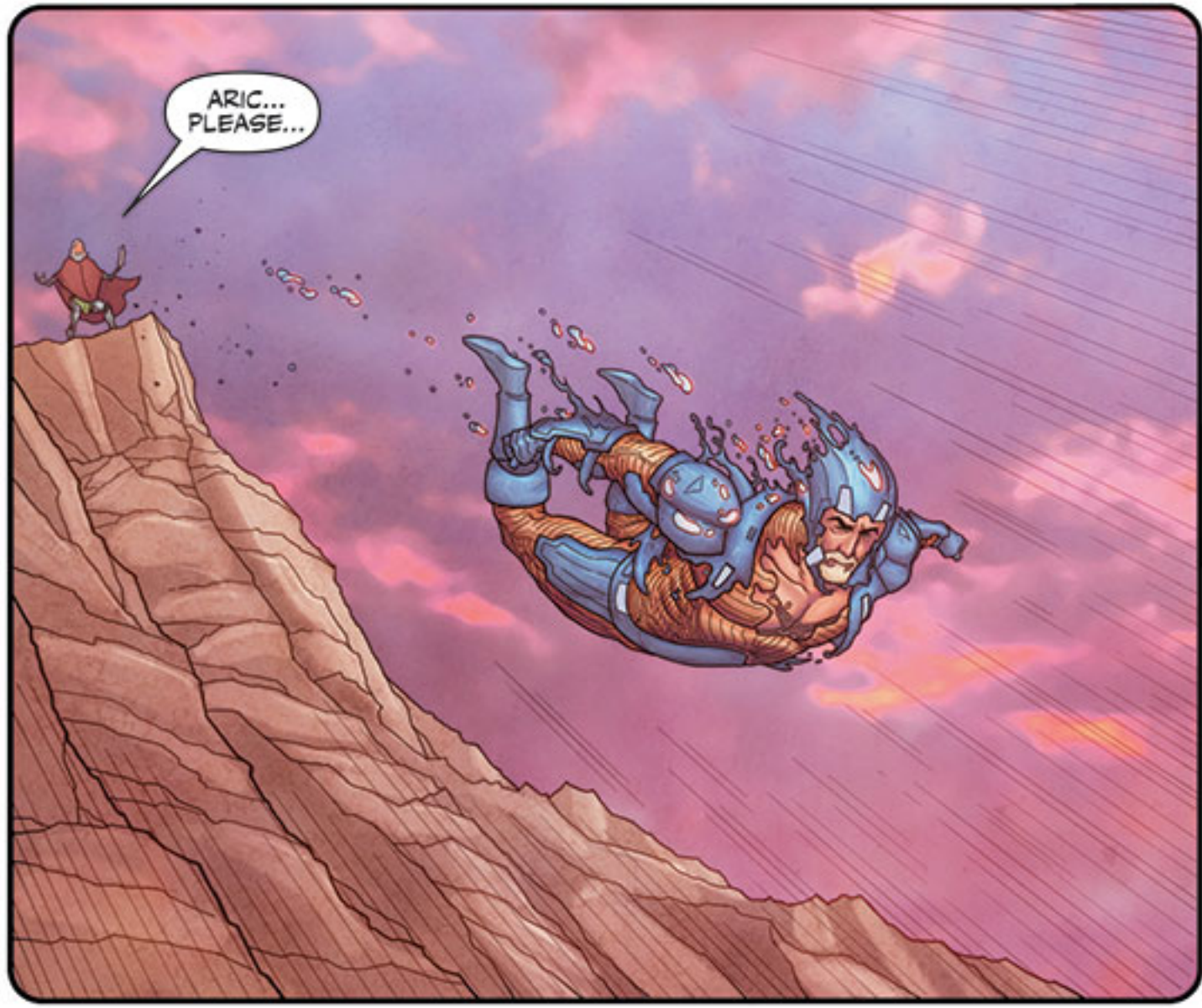
I'M AFRAID THAT
A BURNT GENOCIDE IS
IMMINENT IF THE WAR-
RING NATIONS AREN'T
CONTAINED.

HM. DO
YOU SEE
THAT?



THAT SHIP IN
THE DISTANCE.
SOMETHING
ABOUT IT. IT
ISN'T RIGHT.

ARIC?



ARIC...
PLEASE...



FORGIVE
US...