

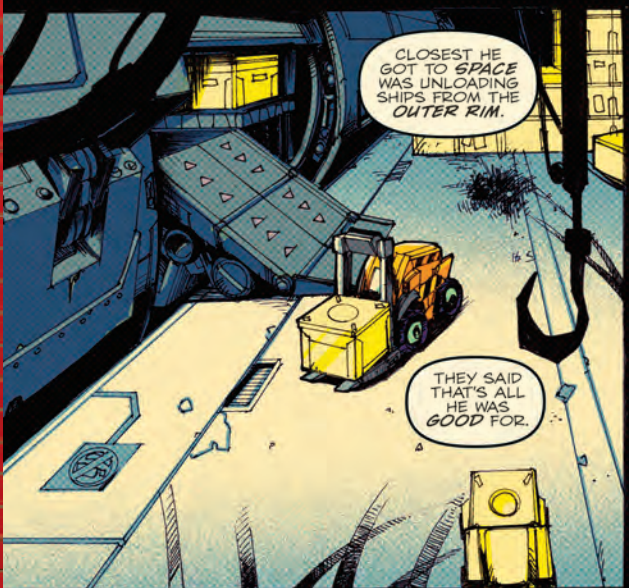


THAT'S HIM.

HEFTER.

HE LOVED THE STARS—WANTED TO BE AN ASTRO-PHYSICIST.

BUT THAT WASN'T CONDUCTIVE TO HIS ALT-MODE.



CLOSEST HE GOT TO SPACE WAS UNLOADING SHIPS FROM THE OUTER RIM.

THEY SAID THAT'S ALL HE WAS GOOD FOR.



I DON'T HAVE TO SPELL OUT WHY THE DECEPTICON MESSAGE WAS APPEALING.

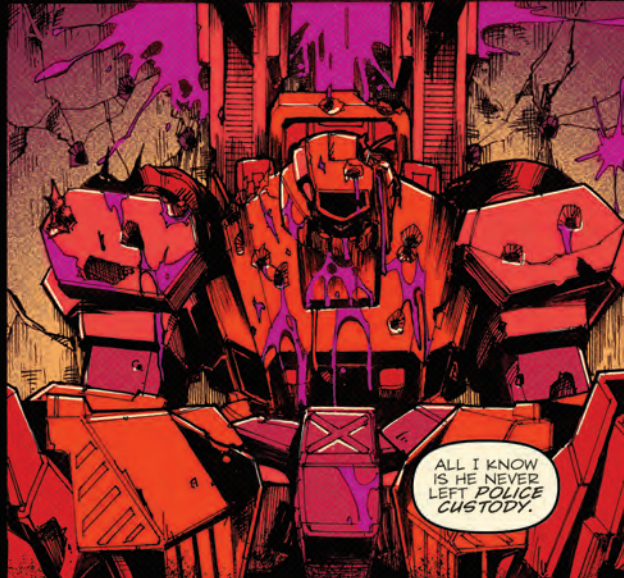
AND YOU CAN'T BLAME HIM FOR WANTING TO SPREAD IT.



WELL, I GUESS YOU CAN, YOU DID.

THEY SAY HEFTER WENT AFTER A COP. THEY SAY HE WAS ARMED.

AND NOW THEY SAY HE WAS RUNNING GUNS INTO THE CITY?



ALL I KNOW IS HE NEVER LEFT POLICE CUSTODY.

**CYBERTRON, BEFORE THE WAR.
FOUR MILLION YEARS AGO.**



WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THAT...

...OFFICER?

PLEASE. MY NAME IS ORION PAX.

I'M SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS...

...AND I PROMISE YOU I'LL FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO HEFTER.

HEH.



BEFORE I WAS OPTIMUS PRIME...



...I WAS PART OF THE PROBLEM.

I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM!

EVERYBODY KNOWS!

THEY KILLED HIM FOR BEING A DECEPTICON!



CALM DOWN... TAPPET? IS THAT YOUR NAME?

WERE YOU HIS CONJUNK ENDURA?

IT'S OKAY. WE'RE NOT HERE TO JUDGE—WE'RE NOT THE OLD SENATE.



I DON'T NEED A COP TELLING ME—

THIS GUY KILLED HIM! THIS GUY KILLED HEFTER, AND YOU ASK PERSONAL QUESTIONS?!

THINGS WERE CHANGING ON CYBERTRON... TOO FAST FOR SOME...



...AND FAR TOO SLOWLY FOR THE REST.

YOU'RE AS GUILTY AS HE IS, PAX!

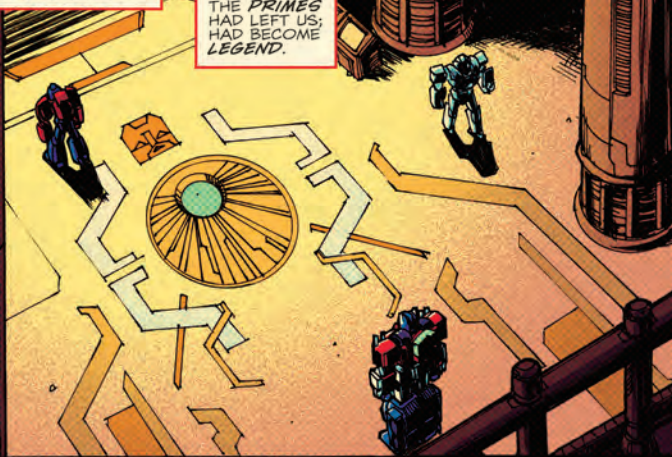
GOOD LUCK, HERO COP.

CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU SAVE CYBERTRON.

OUR PLANET HAD BEEN UNITED, AGES AGO, BY THE **THIRTEEN PRIMES**.

OVER THE MILLENNIA, THE **PRIMES** HAD LEFT US; HAD BECOME **LEGEND**.

IN THEIR PLACE, A **NEW SYSTEM** TOOK OVER.



ORION,
MY LAD.



ZETA!

PLEASE. THE WALLS HAVE **EARS**, AND **APPEARANCES** MUST BE KEPT.

THE NAME IS **ZETA PRIME**, OLD FRIEND.

WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THIS CASE? **DREADFUL** BUSINESS, I'M AFRAID.

THEY CALLED THEMSELVES **PRIMES**, THESE NEW LEADERS OF CYBERTRON.

I THOUGHT ZETA WAS DIFFERENT.

MAY I ASK YOU A QUESTION, ORION?

IF IT'S ABOUT THE **MATRIX**, WE BOTH KNOW IT'S A **FORGERY**.

THE WALLS, ORION.

ANYWAY... REAL OR NOT, PERHAPS SOMEDAY, THE **MATRIX OF LEADERSHIP** SHALL BE YOURS...

I'M... **SURE** THE OFFICERS HAD JUSTIFICATION.

GOOD, GOOD. THAT'S WHAT WE WANT FROM ORION PAX—**SAVIOR OF THE PRIMAL BASILICA!**

DON'T FORGET I SAVED **YOUR LIFE**, AS WELL.

I THINK **PRIMUS** EVERY MORNING.



BUT THEY **WEREN'T** LEGENDS. THEY WERE **DESPOTS**.



I'M JUST A COP.

YOU'RE MORE THAN THAT, YOU'RE RESPECTED.

LIKE THE MATRIX, YOU ARE A SYMBOL.

AND PEOPLE NEED SYMBOLS, JUST AS THEY NEED ORDER. OFTEN... THE TWO ARE THE SAME.



LOOK AT THEM, FIGHTING OVER WHAT?

OVER WHETHER THE POLICE EXECUTED AN INNOCENT MAN.

SIR.

YOU NEVER BELIEVED IN THE MATRIX, DID YOU?

EVEN BEFORE THE BAGUICA, BEFORE YOU LEARNED THE ORIGINAL WAS GONE.

JUSTICE



DO I BELIEVE A CRYSTAL WAS CREATED BY SOLOMUS THE WISE FROM HIS PRISON, THEN FORGED INTO THE HILT OF A MAGIC SWORD?

THAT SEEMS... UNLIKELY.

I RESPECT YOUR DEDICATION TO THE TRUTH, ORION...



...THE PEOPLE DESERVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH THAT LIFTER WAS A DECEPTION AND A TRAITOR, WHO GOT WHAT WAS COMING TO HIM.

THEY DESERVE TO HAVE ANARCHY STAVED OFF FOR ONE MORE DAY.



AND THAT, MY FRIEND... IS THE PRECISE VALUE OF TRUTH.

HEFTER...



...HIS NAME WAS HEFTER.

I TOLD MYSELF ZETA WAS DIFFERENT.

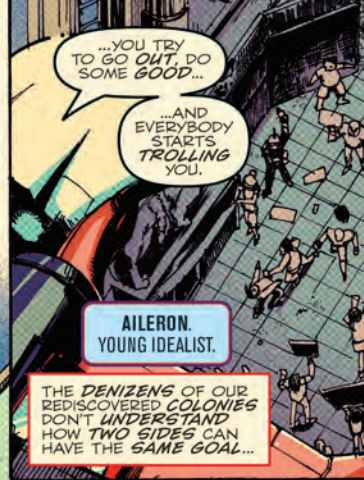


MEXICO CITY, EARTH. TODAY.

SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE...

AFUERA ROBOTS

LA TIERRA PARA HUMANOS



...YOU TRY TO GO OUT, DO SOME GOOD...

...AND EVERYBODY STARTS TROLLING YOU.

AILERON. YOUNG IDEALIST.

THE DENIZENS OF OUR REDISCOVERED COLONIES DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW TWO SIDES CAN HAVE THE SAME GOAL...



...AND STILL FIGHT A WAR FOR MILLIONS OF YEARS.

TO BE HONEST, NEITHER DO I.

PLEASE REPEAT, AILERON?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT MEANT.

DISREGARD. WHERE ARE YOU GUYS?

INCOMING.



THEY TELL ME MY SIDE WON.

SIGH.

OKAY, JUST BE CAREFUL.

I KNOW PRIME TRUSTS YOU, BUT...



...JUST DON'T SQUISH ANYBODY.

THAT IS OUR HIGHEST PRIORITY.

AND LOCATING THE WEAPONS CACHE.

AND THAT, YES.

THE COLONISTS DON'T UNDERSTAND IT, EITHER...

...BUT THANKS TO A HUNK OF ROCK IN MY CHEST, THEY BELIEVE IN ME.

MAYBE TRY TO STOP THE FLESHIES FROM HURTING EACH OTHER, TOO?

I DON'T WANT TO LET THEM DOWN...