MORE THAN HUMAN

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JOHN ARCUDI

PENCILS
ZACH HOWARD
with GABRIEL ANDRADE (pages 44-51)

INKS
MARK IRWIN AND
ZACH HOWARD
with MARCELO MUELLE (pages 44-51)

COLORS
WES DZIOBA

LETTERING
BLAMBOT!

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Special thanks to DEBBIE OLISHAN at Twentieth Century Fox Licensing

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This volume collects issues one through four of the Dark Horse comic-book series Aliens (2009) and a story from Free Comic Book Day 2009: Aliens/Predator.

Dark Horse Books
A division of Dark Horse Comics, Inc.
10356 SE Main Street
Milwaukie, OR 97222

darkhorse.com

To find a comics shop in your area, call the Comic Shop Locator Service toll-free at 1-888-266-4226

First print edition: April 2010
Digital ISBN 978-1-62115-554-6

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In the bowels of the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry, cultural biology has reached a crossroads.

It was once a field that straddled the paths of biology and sociology, and a way to combine the two.

By comparing divergent cultural views of a biological reality—such as aging—a more complete understanding can be realized—resulting in better Alzheimer's treatments, for instance.
But as our understanding of intelligence has changed, so must cultural biology. Or must it?

Is it now a field of study that should also walk the dual roads of ethology and ethology?

If non-human creatures can be said to employ complex reason, and even emotion, can they then be said to have cultures?

However, it's a changing world, a changing universe.

This is not a new argument, at least not among Earth's species.
It was not too long ago that a xenomorphic species of apparent extraterrestrial origin appeared on Earth.

As with most invasive species, it thrived.

In some spots, its proliferation led many to believe that the human race itself would go extinct.
Now that the exact inverse has proven true—which is to say the extermination of the xenomorphs—

---the luxury of distance from their rampage against our world offers an opportunity for objective study.
We've observed more of these creatures, by far, than any other superplanetary life forms.

If there is intelligence elsewhere in the galaxy, statistically speaking, they are our best candidates.

It seems unfortunate, then, that they parallel Earth insects more than anything else.

An interesting analogy, though, when one considers that leafcutter ants use plant matter for mulch to grow fungus gardens from which their colonies feed.

Termites do the same thing, but as far as we know, they do not build tools.

While the chimpanzee does, stripping down a twig so that it will fit into small openings to retrieve food.

On more than one occasion, they have incapacitated electrical systems, leaving humans in the dark and vulnerable to attack.

The xenomorphs have not been known to tend crops, of course, or fashion tools, but they seem to understand something about human utilities.
Such limited data are insufficient to arrive at any conclusions about actual reasoning power.

And nobody would ever propose breeding xenomorphs to satisfy that curiosity.
So the cosmos beckons.

And we find ourselves back at that crossroads.

As cultural biologists gain access to the stars, the temptation will be to broaden the definition of sentience to validate their presence there.

But, will anything be overlooked as a consequence?

If, in haste, we settle for finding a species that may have a culture--
—it's hard to say what we could miss.
SSEREDA, M’MAN! HOW’S IT HANGIN’?

SHUT UP, TOMMY.

HI, DAVID. WE TRIED CALLING——

THERE’S NO PHONE RECEPTION IN THE SUB-BASEMENTS. IT MAKES THEM IDEAL FOR RESEARCH.

YES, YOUR ARTICLE. BUT OUR CRYOSLEEP ORIENTATION IS IN LESS THAN AN HOUR. YOU NEED TO BE THERE.

I KNOW. OKAY, LET’S GO.

IT’S NOT REAL, TOM. IT’S A MANNEQUIN.

SEREDA, THAT THING MUST WEIGH THREE, FOUR HUNDRED ROUNDS, HANGING RIGHT OVER YOUR HEAD. EVER THINK ABOUT THAT?

MAN, I CAN SEE WHY THEY TOOK THAT OFF PUBLIC DISPLAY. CUN-REEPY.

HOW CAN YOU WORK RIGHT UNDER IT?

IT’S NOT REALLY.

I GUESS I’M JUST TOO STUPID TO BE SCARED.
...Hello?

You still there?

No, you're right. You should be quiet.

Maybe... maybe you want to break radio contact?

Yes, Andrea. I'm still here.

I thought I saw something moving. Didn't want to announce myself.

No.

I don't think that's necessary, do you?

Actually, I've been meaning to ask you--

All right, so we won't.
SORRY ABOUT THAT. JUST HAD A LITTLE RUN-IN--

SXREEEEE

SSXREEEEE

KRAAKK
HEY! HEY, WHAT WAS THAT?

HELLO?

ARE YOU OKAY?

PLEASE BE OKAY....
Okay, what've we got?

Pretty much normal, Cap'n. We entered the CHIONE system a week ago. Exposure levels have been low, but from here on out it looks a little trickier.

One problem, our auto-com sent out almost ninety hailing prompts over the last week.

I mean, I knew there was some reason for us to wake up.

I even tried verbal contact. Nothing.

Yeah, I see that.

What do you think's up, Cap'n?

Who knows? Could be a million things.

And cut out that 'Cap'n' crap!
A long, long and dark night. Looking forward to walking in the sunshine again.

Actually, Chione has an extreme population one star. Not quite like our Sun.

It'll do, Terese. Trust me.

Wow! You already mapped out the terrain?

I couldn't wait. I mean, there's just the one road to the site...

But then, why not? It's still hard to believe, after all.

Other brains out there. Building things.

I know. I know. Silly, right?

No, no. Not at all.

Crazy? Maybe.
YOU KNOW, THE HONITO CREW AREN'T THE FIRST TO REPORT A NON-HUMAN ARTIFACT.

THE PROBLEM WITH TRAVELING WITH SCIENTISTS IS, THEY ALL WANT TO PROVE HOW MUCH SMARTER THEY ARE THAN YOU.

HEY, I'M A LITTLE FUZZY ON THE DETAILS HERE. WHAT'S THE HONITO CREW?

AND HOW DID WE FIND THAT EXACTLY?

"HONITO CREW?"

MAYBE NOT ALL OF THEM.

HEY, COME ON. I WAS IN THAT POD FOR WHAT? EIGHTEEN MONTHS?

MESSES WITH YOUR MEMORY, YOU KNOW?
Uh-huh. That’s what the post-hyper sleep reorientation video is for. Go watch it.

Yeah, yeah. Then they lease out mining rights to the highest bidder. It’s coming back to me.

Okay, Monito Enterprises is kind of a wildcat operation that just stumbled on our site.

Sure, I could. Or, you could just tell me in like, thirty seconds.

For years, they’ve hunted up habitable planets in every local system. When they find one, they file a claim—

They’re enforcing a universal mining moratorium to protect the site’s integrity—

For a fee.

On top of that, they auctioned off excavation privileges. Fortunately, our academic consortium won.

Great. Thanks. See? That wasn’t so hard.

No, I guess not.

Sucks always having to be the nice guy, doesn’t it? Sometimes.
“Uh-oh, looks like some high ion density on our flight path.”

We either make early entry, or pull another orbit.

Another orbit, we don’t land till midnight.

Okay, listen up, people!

We’re going to have to make an early entry. It’ll be a bit rough, so get strapped in.

Still no contact with the surface. Doesn’t that worry you?

What do you want to do, Brian? Turn around and go home?
Move it, Peck. What's the hold up?

Forget how to fasten a seatbelt?

Funny, hilarious. Next time you jokers need my help and I say "no," remember this moment, okay?

We'll keep that in mind.

Right here.

Hello, Nobel prize!

And good-bye endless night, eh, David?

And good riddance!
WELCOME TO CHIONE. THIS IS GARY LOWENGER, AND I’M CHESTER ADNOUR—but call me RED.

DR. TERESA FANTE. THE CREW WILL INTRODUCE THEMSELVES.

WE’RE SURE GLAD TO SEE YOU. WE COULDN’T MAKE RADIO CONTACT ON OUR APPROACH.

KIND OF EXPECTED A BIGGER GREETING, THOUGH, YOU KNOW? NOTHING PERSONAL.

GOOD. GOOD. I HAVE SOME PAPERWORK HERE THAT WE CAN SETTLE UP THEN.

PAPERWORK?

UHHH, YES. PAPERWORK.

YOU...YOU DO KNOW WHAT WE ARE, RIGHT? AND WHY WE’RE HERE? I MEAN, THIS WAS SETTLED MONTHS AGO WHEN--

I THINK MAYBE WE BETTER GET THAT LEASE AGREEMENT OUT OF THE WAY NOW.

THERE’S JUST A LOT OF WORK TO BE DONE HERE. YOU’LL MEET FOLKS AT DINNER.

HOLD ON. GARY’S JUST NOT UP TO DATE, IS ALL.
WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT THE RADIO? WE'VE HAD SOME COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS AROUND HERE.

COME ON--

--I'M SURE YOU'RE ALL TIRED. WE'LL GET YOU SETTLED IN YOUR QUARTERS.

ACTUALLY, WE'D RATHER HEAD TO OUR SITE, FIRST.

JUST FOR A LOOK.

YES, YOUR SITE.

YOU WANT TO SEE YOUR SITE.

Ummmm...

MR. ADNOUR, I REALLY SENSE THAT THERE'S A PROBLEM HERE.
DOING A LITTLE CONSTRUCTION?
LIKE RED SAID, ALWAYS WORK NEEDS DOING ROUND HERE.

NO, NOT A PROBLEM, REALLY.
ATV'S ARE THIS WAY.

OKAY, BUT WHAT ARE YOU BUILDING WAY OUT HERE?

IT KINDA HAD TO BE HERE.
THAT'S RIGHT, HAD TO BE.

BECAUSE OF THE SMELL.

HEY.
HEY, WAIT!!!
Well, you dug the hole, so I'll bury them.
Not yet.
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM

"...they're ours alone now."

We're free now, Gary. Free and Katherine is coming. You'll see.

The city, the spirit, and the blessings..."
I still can’t raise Katherine. Etain says he can’t either.

Don’t worry.

Katherine’s team had to hide the blessings before the warship came.

That’s an important mission, that’s her focus, not the radio. She’ll be back.

But if something happened...

The worst thing that could happen, we just prevented. We’re all awake now, alive.

Our home has been only good to us. You know that.

Now come on, let’s get going.
Stark said, "We should meet him down at the first camp." "In a second, come here." He said, "We're safe here. I have to remember that." "Yes, Gary. You do. After everything we've seen, and all that's been given to us--"
"...how can you still worry?"
File “BMNC-24 engine actuation sequence” has been identified. Estimated download time is less than seven minutes.

File “BMNC-24 launch procedure” has been identified. Estimated download time is approximately twelve minutes.

File “BMNC-24 shield engagement procedure” has been identified. Estimated download time is less than nine minutes.
File "BMNC-24 escape velocity procedure" has been identified. Adjustments for current gravitational conditions are required.

MAKE ADJUSTMENTS.

Adjustments have been made. Estimated download time is approximately eighteen minutes.

Download initiated.
FLIK

TOWER, THIS IS VIDAR SEEKING CLEARANCE FOR TAKEOFF.

...WAIT A.... "TOWER? WHAT THE HELL....?"

HELP!

OF COURSE.

CAN'T EXPECT A LOT OF FLEXIBILITY WHEN YOUR "FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR" IS A SOFTWARE PROGRAM, CAN YOU?
I heard somebody on this frequency. Please, help me... hello?

Klik

This is the Vidar on frequency four-six-nine-four. Please identify yourself.

Oh, thank God, thank God!!

This is Andrea Keats!!

Andrea Keats from Horito Inc. You gotta help me. They're going to kill me!
WHO?! ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT RED AND GARY?

RED AND —? NO, THEY'RE DEAD. EVERYBODY'S DEAD.

I DON'T KNOW. THEY KILLED A LOT OF PEOPLE. A LOT.

They just haven't found me yet, but they will.

SO WHO ARE YOU, ANYWAY AND WHAT'S "VEE DAR"?

I'M DAVID SEREDA, AND THE VIDAR IS MY SHIP. LISTEN, ANDREA--

That's right. You're the ship we were supposed to hide from.

HIDE FROM? WHY?

I... I don't remember...
I'm in the Canyon City. Do you know where that is?

We'll figure that out in a second, but Andrea, tell me.

Who's trying to kill you?

What do you mean "who"?

"The monsters."
Are you sure you can find it?

I'm almost there, Andrea.

You just saw the canyon for the first time, didn't you?

I can tell, you're breathing hard.
IT DOES THAT TO YOU. YOU HAVE TO BE CAREFUL.

IT'LL DRIVE YOU CRAZY. SAME WAY IT DID ALL OF US. TOOK SEEING MY BROTHER GETTING KILLED TO SHOCK ME OUT OF IT.

NO. THAT'S NOT...

...I WAS... INJURED BEFORE.

DROVE YOU ALL CRAZY? GARY AND RED--

YOU MENTIONED THEM BEFORE. HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT RED AND GARY?

--BUT CALL ME RED.

WE MET HIM-- THEM.

RIGHT AFTER WE LANDED.
“We?”
You didn’t mention a crew.

How many of you?

David? How many?
ONE. ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN FIND ME? YOU’VE SEEN THE CANYON.

I’M ALONE. BUT DON’T WORRY. I’M COMING.

I TOLD YOU, I’VE GOT A FIX ON YOUR POSITION FROM YOUR SIGNAL. JUST KEEP THIS FREQUENCY OPEN, AND I WON’T LOSE YOU.

SO WHAT’S ALL THIS ABOUT YOU AND THE OTHERS GOING CRAZY?

YEAH. THAT. IT’S KIND OF EMBARRASSING.

"WE WERE FINE THE FIRST FEW MONTHS ON CHIONE. A NICE LITTLE COMMUNITY, AND WE ALREADY HAD A FEW MINING BIDS IN."

"BUT THEN SOME SCOUTS FOUND IT. THE CANYON."
“IT DIDN’T HAPPEN ALL AT ONCE, BUT GRADUALLY, FOLKS STOPPED WORKING ON THE CAMP, OR ON BUSINESS, OR ANYTHING.”

“WE JUST STARTED SPENDING ALL OF OUR TIME IN THE CANYON.”

“SOMETHING WAS JUST DRAWING US HERE. KEEPING US HERE.”

HELLO? YOU STILL THERE?

YOU’RE RIGHT. YOU SHOULD BE QUIET. MAYBE YOU WANT TO BREAK RADIO CONTACT?

YES, ANDREA. I’M STILL HERE. I THOUGHT I SAW SOMETHING MOVING, DIDN’T WANT TO ANNOUNCE MYSELF.

I DON’T THINK THAT’S NECESSARY. ACTUALLY, I’VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK YOU--
Sreeek
Blam
Blam

Sorry about that. I just had a little run-in—
Aaykk

Zzzmm...

BLAM

BLAM

Hhhs...s s s

DAMMIT...
“WELL, AT LEAST I'M STILL RECEIVING HER SIGNAL.”

TEMPERATURE’S DROPPING RAPIDLY THAN EXPECTED. AND THESE LUMINESCENT FORMATIONS—

MORE.

JUST LIKE THE OTHERS, PHYSIOGNOMICALLY DISCRETE FROM KNOWN XENOMORPH POPULATIONS. A SUBSPECIES, OR A PHENOTYPE, PERHAPS.
Yaahhh!

Hey!

That sounded human!

Blam!

Careful. Don't want their blood hitting anybody in there.

Blam Blam Blam Blam

Spat Spat Spat

That's right. Come this way.

Heeheehee
BLAM BLAM

SKREEEEEEE

YOU’VE GOT TO BE KIDDING!

THEY’RE TRYING TO OUTFLANK ME!

BLAM BLAM
CHRIST!
EMPTY!

hlik hlik

SPLINK
That... that was close.

KREEEEE

SHUT UP!
Don't worry, I'll have you out—uhnfe--

Tougher'n it looks, huh? Well, it was hard enough getting it wedged in.

Little team work'll do it, though.

Mister, I don't know who you are--

--but we ain't particular around here!
Do not kill by act of omission allow to kill.

Self-preservation protocol override with primary and secondary behavioral inhibitors.

Do not harm kill allow to kill omission kill.
Hey! Hey, Fella!

Maybe he's in shock.

Hey, can you hear me? What's the matter...

...Fella?

You shot me!

I... what?

Oh, God! Oh, God, it was real.

That's right, you were there, too.

Jesus, no, no, no.

Red, you said it wasn't real.
GARY, I didn't think it was.
HOW COULD I BELIEVE THAT WE...

HOLY CHRIST IN HEAVEN.
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

THESE MEN KILLED MY CREW. SHOT THEM ALL.

BLAGGH!
EWWW!

NO, MAN! I DON'T WANT ANY OF THIS!

BUT HOW DID YOU... YOU'RE ALIVE.

I'M AN ANDROID.

SCIENCE MODEL 210D4, HIGH IRON AND COPPER HYDRATION AND CONDUCTOR FLUID. RED. LIKE BLOOD.
RED'S A GOOD MAN, HE IS. THOSE THINGS KILLED ALMOST FORTY OF US, BUT WE'RE ALIVE BECAUSE OF HIM.

IT'S THIS PLACE. IT DROVE US ALL CRAZY. IT MADE US DO INSANE THINGS, EVERYONE. ALL ANY OF US EVER THOUGHT ABOUT WAS PROTECTING THIS PLACE. WE WERE SCARED TO LOSE IT. I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT WE WERE.

I'M SORRY. I'M SORRY.

GOD, I MUST SOUND CRAZY NOW, IF I WERE YOU, I'D WANT REVENGE, TOO. HE DOESN'T WANT REVENGE, DONIA. ANDROIDS ARE INCAPABLE OF HURTING HUMANS.

I'M NOT SURE THAT'S TRUE ANYMORE.
THE SHOTS YOU FIRED HAVE DAMAGED MY SYSTEMS.

MY PROGRAMMING IS LESS PREDICTABLE, AND I HAVE BEEN HAVING ANOMALOUS...

...THOUGHTS.

LOOK.

LOOK, MISTE--

DO IT.

KILL ME.

DO IT. MAN, I DESERVE IT. I DO.
WE GOT MORE!!

HHSSSSS

BLAM BLAM

64
A GUN! GIVE ME A GUN!

YOU! TAKE OUT THE ONES TO THE LEFT.

THE REST OF YOU, BACK IN THE CAVE.
I CAN'T-- THEY KEEP JUMPING!

BLAMM
BLAMM

YES!
JUST KEEP FIRING!

BOOM  BOOM

Oh, $$@%! Oh, $$@%!

I SAID KEEP FIRING!
RASHAARD!

DAMMIT....

WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY?!!!!
Goddammit, I wish you'd given me that gun.

Rashard was no kind of shot.

Give you a gun?!

Anyway, you have a gun!

I ran outta ammo three days ago!

Fump

Listen, mister--mister... I don't even know your damn name.

I'm sorry about what happened. I am, but we need to know something right now.

Are you going to kill me, or are you going to help us get out of here?

I'll help you.

I'm going to help all of you.

These should work in your gun.

Come on, we've got a woman to find.
"And you can just call me Sereda."

"I don't blame Rashard on you."

"I wouldn't have given Red a gun either, in your shoes."

"We've all lost so much, but if maybe we can save Andrea from wherever she is..."

"...it'll be worth it."

"Mr. Sereda, the last time you talked to Andrea, before your radio broke—when was that?"

"Not too long ago, and I only lost voice contact. My radio can still pick up her radio's locator frequency."

"That's all my systems need to home in on her position."
“Systems,” you hear? His systems.

“Systems” he said we damaged when we shot him up.

You shot him, Red. When you shot him.

Yeah, that’s right. I did—and you helped me. But we were crazy, Gary. We were outta our minds!

But we aren’t anymore, right?

So then why are we all following this broken-down synth to our deaths, huh?

WHY?!!

‘Cause the only goddamned reason he came down here was that girl he’s looking for!

The only reason he found us—and saved our asses—is ‘cause she called him in the first place!

Get it through your head, man! Nobody wants to hear what you got to say!

‘Specially me.
DID EITHER ONE OF YOU KNOW ANDREA?

NOT WELL. SHE HAD A BROTHER, I THINK.

SHE TOLD ME A LITTLE ABOUT THE--ABOUT HOW YOU ALL SEEMED TO LOSE YOURSELVES, BUT NO DETAILS.

SHE DID. I WORKED WITH HIM ON A SANITATION DETAIL.

EXACTLY? WHO KNOWS?

"BUT AS SOON AS WE GOT TO THE CANYON CITY, IT STARTED."

"I MEAN, AT FIRST, YOU WROTE IT OFF AS EXCITEMENT, BUT AFTER A FEW DAYS, WHEN YOUR HEART WAS STILL POUNDING, AND YOU WERE STILL GETTING DIZZY, YOU KNEW IT WAS SOMETHING MORE."
"You knew the city was in your head, but you knew... you thought it was okay.

"It was okay, because it meant the city wasn’t dead after all. It was just sick, and sad, and you wanted to protect it.

"Everything outside the city was gone from your head. The city was everything. Your child and mother. It needed to be saved, and it made you feel safe.

"From everything.

"It’s hard to explain, but after a bit, the city got better, not so sad.

"And slowly, the city opened up to us."
“WE THOUGHT THEY WERE OUR REWARD, THAT THE CITY HAD GIVEN THEM TO US.

“WE CALLED THEM BLESSINGS.”

“CAN YOU IMAGINE?”

“DOWN, DEEP INTO THE CANYON, WE TOOK THEM. TO HIDE THEM, AND GUARD THEM.”

“ONE MORNING, THERE WAS THIS CREATURE, BUT IT WAS DEAD. NOBODY HAD SEEN IT HATCH. NOBODY KNEW ANYTHING.”

“BUT WE WERE GOING TO LEARN.”
"Suddenly, I remembered all the things in my life I had forgotten. All the smells of earth, the joys of friendships."

"All the reasons I wanted to live."

"The city wasn't so nice, or needy anymore. It was a horrible, bizarre maze that I couldn't escape."

"It was almost a week before the others found me."
WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT THE EGGS DESCRIBES THE LIFE CYCLE OF THE CREATURES THAT ATTACKED EARTH, DIDN’T YOU RECOGNIZE THAT?

WE HEARD ABOUT THE INVASION, BUT WE HAVEN’T BEEN ON EARTH IN YEARS.

THE FEW OF US LEFT, IT’S THE FEAR, I THINK. NOT WEIRD, VAGUE PARANOIA, BUT REAL LIFE-AND-DEATH FEAR.

ADRENALINE, MAYBE I DON’T KNOW, BUT AS LONG AS WE’RE AFRAID, WE’RE LUCID.

YOU’RE NOT AFRAID, ARE YOU? YOU’RE MARCHING RIGHT DOWN AFTER ANDREA. YOU SHOULD BE CAREFUL.

NO, I’M NOT AFRAID, BUT I’M NOT HUMAN, EITHER.

LOSING LIGHT, YOU KNOW HOW THEY GET AFTER DARK.

HE’S RIGHT. WE’D BETTER HOLE UP FOR THE NIGHT.

EVEN IF WE’D KNOWN, IT WOULDN’T HAVE MATTERED. WE WERE CRAZY. WE THOUGHT WE WERE HELPING THE CITY.

BUT YOU’RE OKAY NOW, YOU CAME TO YOUR SENSES WHEN THE CREATURES ATTACKED, ALL OF YOU?
Need to concentrate on the other aliens. Ilene said they found only six eggs, but I've killed more than six myself.

Could have been other eggs.

Or maybe they reproduce differently from the xenomorphs on Earth.

Their appearance varies, and if Ilene's account is accurate, they infect hosts more quickly.

Help!

Andrea!
YOU SAVED ME.

HEY! HEY, MAN.

I CAN STAND WATCH IF YOU NEED SOME SLEEP.

BUT I DON'T...

I WAS SLEEPING?

HEY, HEY, YOU OKAY?

I DON'T... THINK SO.
HOW?! HOW CAN YOU STILL WANT TO FOLLOW HIM?! HE SAVED OUR LIVES!

 WHICH IS GREAT! IT IS. SO LET'S RETURN THE FAVOR AND GET HIM BACK TO HIS SHIP FOR REPAIRS.

 MAYBE THAT'S NOT WHAT HE WANTS.

 OKAY, IF THAT'S NOT WHAT HE WANTS, WE LEAVE HIM TO HIS BUSINESS, AND WE HEAD OUT. I'M GOOD WITH THAT.

 YOU KEEP FORGETTING, THIS CANYON'S A MAZE. YOU MIGHT NEVER GET US OUT, BUT HE CAN FIND THE WAY JUST BY HOMING HIS SYSTEMS IN ON HIS SHIP'S SIGNAL.

 AGAIN WITH HIS "SYSTEM!"

 HE'S #99%ING BROKEN, MAN!!
I’m going after Andrea. I don’t expect anybody to come with me.

Oh, Hi.

No sign of ’em.

That’s good.

You think he’s being nice, but he’s programmed to save lives. He doesn’t have a choice.

Well, we do!

But I can’t leave without her.

Mr. Sereda! Wait up!

Hey, Synth!
I'm not gonna let you just walk off and get my people killed.

That so, Red? Really? And how exactly is it you plan to stop him?
THANK YOU, GARY.

I'M NOT HAPPY THAT THINGS HAD TO GO THAT WAY, BUT THANK YOU.

HELL, MR. SEREDA, WHAT ELSE COULD I DO? I MEAN, YOU KNOW, AFTER...

...AFTER WHAT HAPPENED.

"AFTER WHAT HAPPENED."
NO. THAT'S NOT WHAT HAPPENED.

NOT EXACTLY. TERESE WAS NOWHERE NEAR ME.

TERESE? WHO'S TERESE?

OH, GOD!! WAS SHE---?

DID WE KILL HER?
IT DOESN'T MATTER.

THAT MEANS "YES"!

CHRIST, NOW I KNOW THE NAME OF ONE OF THEM!

CALM DOWN, GARY.

EASY FOR YOU TO SAY... EASY FOR YOU...

YOU'RE WRONG. I JUST WANT TO FIND ANDREA.

LET IT GO, GARY. I HAVE.

doesn't sound like it.

"I JUST WANT TO GET HER OUT OF HERE."
All right. Yeah, I remember this place. Passed it on the way down.

I'll find my way outta here. Not so hard.

Don't need a haywire tour guide to get me home.

Gary's one thing, friggin' half-wit that he is, but Donia and Ilene? That's something else.

--And with these creatures around--

---HUFF--

Sure the honitos--

---GASP--reasonable enough.--HUFF--

Sell 'nother lease--

---HUNH---and I get my percentage--

---HUFF--

---HUFF--One down...---GASP--

Pass it 'round--

---ERFF--forty-eight BUNH-bottles--

---UHHHHNGH--

---SSSHHH--It, not one--

---OOF--One big leave--
B-BUT... BUT...

...I'VE BEEN CLIMBING FOR HOURS.

WHAT AM I GONNA...?
C’MON, DONIA. IF I CAN DO IT, YOU CAN DO IT.

IT’S JUST SO—SO STEEP!

MR. SERE DA, ARE YOU SURE THIS IS THE WAY?

THE SIGNAL IS VERY STRONG. IT’S ONLY A MATTER OF HOURS NOW.

GARY, DO YOU THINK HE’S RIGHT? I MEAN, DO YOU THINK HE COULD BE WRONG?

DOESN’T MUCH MATTER, DONIA. EITHER WAY, YOU’D BETTER HURRY.
Yeah.

I don't get it. Their behavior varies so much from the Xenomorphs seen on Earth.

Figured that was too easy.

This group never hides, never retreats.

They only seem to have one mode...

Attack!
THANK GOD THEY'RE NOT SNEAKY! WE WOULDN'T STAND A CHANCE!
**** WE'RE DEAD! WE'RE ALL $#&ING DEAD!

WEREN'T YOU LISTENING? NEVER HIDE. NEVER RETREAT!

NOW FIRE YOUR WEAPON!
I'm out! I'm out of ammo!

Hah!! Almost done here!

Nobody's dyin' today!
OH, GOD. GARY, GARY, I DIDN'T MEAN--

NO, ILENE. DON'T.

S'OKAY.

REALLY, IT'S OKAY.
I'm sorry.

I stopped listening. I shouldn't've done that.

But I'm here now.

I'm here. I hear. Hearing it all again. Hear--
--AND SEE.

BEAUTIFUL. YOU NEED... I NEED...

YEAH, YEAH, THAT’S RIGHT. I REMEMBER.

I DO. I DO. I DO...
"I know what you're thinking.

"You're thinking about what Red said.

"And about Gary.

"You're thinking you were wrong."
But you weren't wrong. You were right.

Actually, I'm not thinking about any of that.

A few days ago, I couldn't wait to get off this planet, and then Andrea's voice came over my ship's radio.

I would have left all of you here to die--

—but she wouldn't let me.

I'm sorry.
Vidar C-24 medium shields engaged and prepared for take off.

Altitude thirty-five thousand feet and holding for one-two-two. Escape velocity to be calculated and transmitted.

Course set for final destination of Sol III. Program controls initiated and timed out at five-seven-five days.

Vidar C-24 heavy underway.
A group of wildcat planetary prospectors plant their flag on a distant new world, rich in land, resources . . . and mystery. Within this seemingly uninhabited planet lies the greatest archaeological discovery in history, an ancient, abandoned complex of impossible proportions carved deep within the living rock, a mind-numbing labyrinth of passages, ramps, bridges, and galleries that seems to extend limitlessly. But as the exploration of the leviathan dead city proceeds deeper and deeper, the members of the team slowly begin to lose their grip on reality. But madness gives way to fear as the explorers begin to disappear. Something else lives within the necropolis, a faceless horror as deadly and merciless as space itself, a lethal terror that has waited centuries to awake . . . and destroy.

“Dark Horse’s ALIENS might just be back on top of the science-fiction-action-horror genre.”—FANGORIA ONLINE

From the bleeding edge of terror, Aliens returns to comics featuring the talented creative team of writer John Arcudi (The Mask, B.P.R.D., Doom Patrol), penciller Zach Howard (Shaun of the Dead, Outer Orbit), and inker Mark Irwin (X-Men: Age of Apocalypse, Batman). Aliens: More Than Human is but the first stage in the Aliens/Predator/Aliens vs. Predator relaunch.