

THUNDERSAURS™



Imagine: Dramatically colorful dinosaurs soaring past clouds in an old-fashioned hot-air balloon right out of Jules Verne's era, brandishing weapons weirdly out of time and place. Add two young, smart siblings separated by a decade of experience; a territorial war with a burgeoning Troll army bent on leading those dinosaurs to extinction; and the secrets of a frightening, powerful, mysteriously magic third race called The Encrustors which has kept itself hidden beneath the sea for centuries...until now.

THUNDERSAURS™





Welcome to Thunderworld! This rollicking action-adventure introduces Billy and Melanie Masterson to dinosaurs Master Don, Rektor, Truporr, Mervynn, Scrappor, Stunnar, plus a cast of Trolls with a "hive mind" intelligence, and an underwater race that bears magic and many secrets. Their parents' scientific accident sends Billy and Melanie to Thunderworld where translator shell necklaces enable them to interact with their benefactors...armed with plenty of smarts, plenty of sass, and a backpack of techno-wonders.

Their ticket to Thunderworld admits them into the thrills of a lifetime: Escape from extinction. Creatures of a single mind. Magic from the depths. The race that fell from grace. The eggs of Easter Island. Mirrors of the soul. Stonehinge. An invitation to below. The mistress of Master Don. My girlfriend is a shape-shifter. Even what Mom and Dad did on their summer vacation, to pierce the barrier and reach Thunderworld themselves.

The saga of the THUNDERSAURS!

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THUNDERSAURS™

A PROPOSAL BY
DAVID CAMPITI & TINA FRANCISCO

The Pitch

It all starts with a clever visual: Four-foot-high dinosaurs of various types, soaring past clouds in an old-fashioned hot-air balloon, with fanciful weapons and other out-of-place technology strapped on, right out of Jules Verne's era.

Add two smart siblings separated by 15 years of experience, a territorial war with the burgeoning Troll army bent on hunting the dinosaurs to extinction, and the secrets of a frightening, powerful, mysterious third race which has kept to itself for centuries...until now.

Dinosaurs Ruled The Earth -- Till Trolls Had A Better Idea

The Thundersaurs had tried to live their lives co-existing with the Troll lords and a frightening, mysterious race called the The Encrustors, which had kept to itself for many years; but given the Trolls' penchant for using and abusing their land, the Trolls needed to expand. So: They began a war against the Thundersaurs to take over their domain. "Soon," the Trolls intone, "you dinosaurs will be extinct!"

Before long, the Trolls were on the offensive, forcing the Thundersaurs out of their own homeland. It took the combined efforts of the inventive old dinosaur Rektor, and a battle troop organized by Master Don, to put up a defense. The war reached a stalemate, for a moment. But the Trolls tried the unthinkable: They seemed to befriend the hideous, terrifying Encrustors, only to find that looks can be deceiving. The Encrustors were sea-spawned possessors of magic, a talent to be used for good and with care and caution. But the Trolls stole the sources of magic, and they began to use those powers against the Thundersaurs.

Their doom was certain....

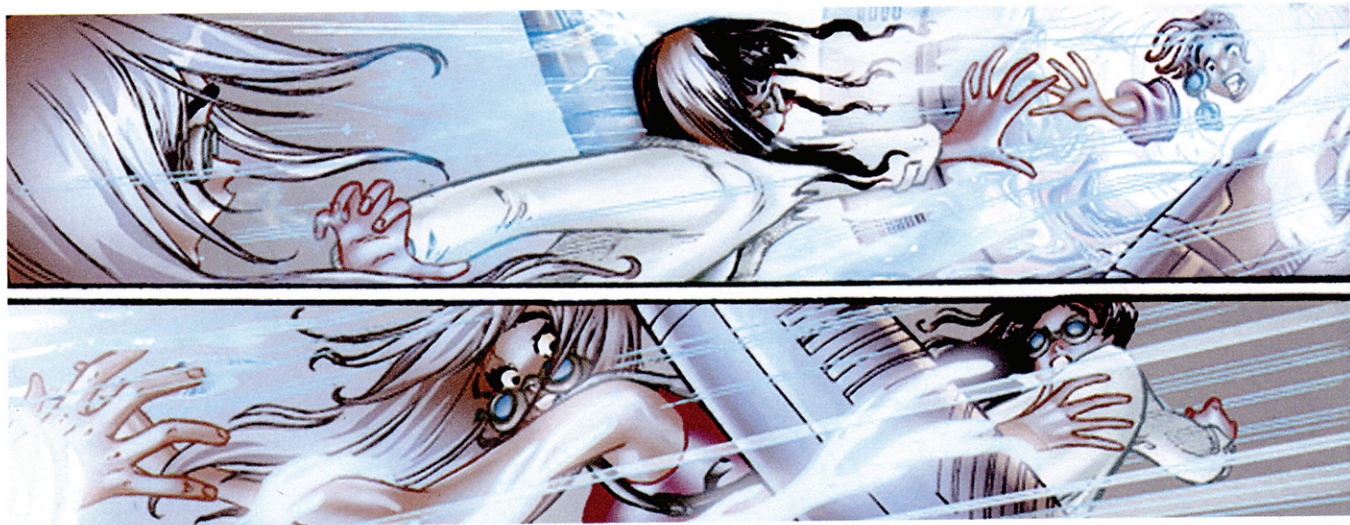


Ticket To ThunderWorld

Twelve years old, very bright, and full of attitude, Billy Masterson shows up at his Dad's research lab office with a backpack and a T-shirt reading "You don't have to be a rocket scientist to work here, but it helps." In truth, his Dad IS a rocket scientist -- or, more accurately, a bio-physics specialist studying sub-atomic particles and what secrets they might unlock. Byron Masterson is practically the best at what he does -- and his wife Clarissa, also his boss, is even better! They're about to launch into another phase of an experiment, and it's going to be something worth seeing.

Billy's sassy older sister, Melanie, is here already. She's twenty-something, and it's her brother's birthday. They joke with each other but, unlike many families' siblings, they've grown up as the best of friends. In fact, she's sporting her backpack as well, planning to take Billy on a camping adventure she's been promising for months.

"Wanna stay for this first?" asks Mom. "Sure!" Soon, they're all ready. Goggles are on. The micro-particle beam blasts down toward a vial, there's a flash of light, and something goes terribly wrong.



WHOOM! Billy and Melanie are on the ground. They pull themselves to their feet, yank off their goggles, dust themselves off -- and find themselves in a different world, surrounded by five compact, incredible dinosaurs!

Where are they? What are these dinosaurs surrounding them? How do they get back? And did their parents suffer a similar fate?

The Characters

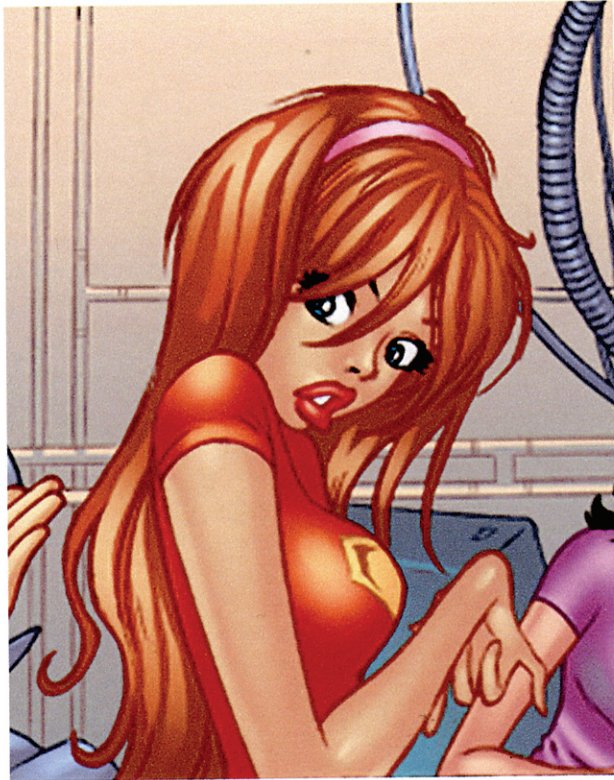
(The Humans)

* **BILLY MASTERSON** -- Son of a pair of genius scientists.

Twelve years old, fully five feet tall (not the undersized three-foot-tall cartoon kid), well-toned, hair parted in the middle, wears glasses but looks cute rather than dorky.

Very contemporary clothes [several choices pulled from his backpack]. Smart as a whip and has quite an attitude. But unlike a lot of almost-teen boys who fight with their older siblings, he and his sister





Melanie have a great respect for each other's smarts and abilities. That will come in handy in their new life surviving -- and helping the Thundersaurs.

* MELANIE MASTERSON -- Billy's sister, twenty-ish, about 5'4", and the oldest of three. (NOTE: The middle child George is often talked about but never seen, at times taking on humorously mythic proportions [much like Norm's never-seen wife Vera on *Cheers*].)

She's a bright, sassy girl with plenty of edgy attitude of her own. She doesn't sweat the small stuff: When her brother's friends would peek into her bedroom window, she never freaked; she just waved and continued what she was doing. That go-with-the-flow attitude helps her to survive.

She favors 2007-contemporary styles -- shorts, Tiny T's that show her navel, and has brown hair that starts long but gets cropped short and messy in a sweet sort of way. She and her brother befriend the Thundersaurs, particularly Rektor the inventor.

NOTE: Stories about new situations and events need a "point of entry" for the viewers, a surrogate for the people tuning in to the show and vicariously experiencing the world for the first time. The benefit of a young boy and an older sister add the dynamic of characters old enough for the youngest viewers to look up to, and the differences in age between Billy and Melanie add essentially a surrogate parent element to the mix, as needed.

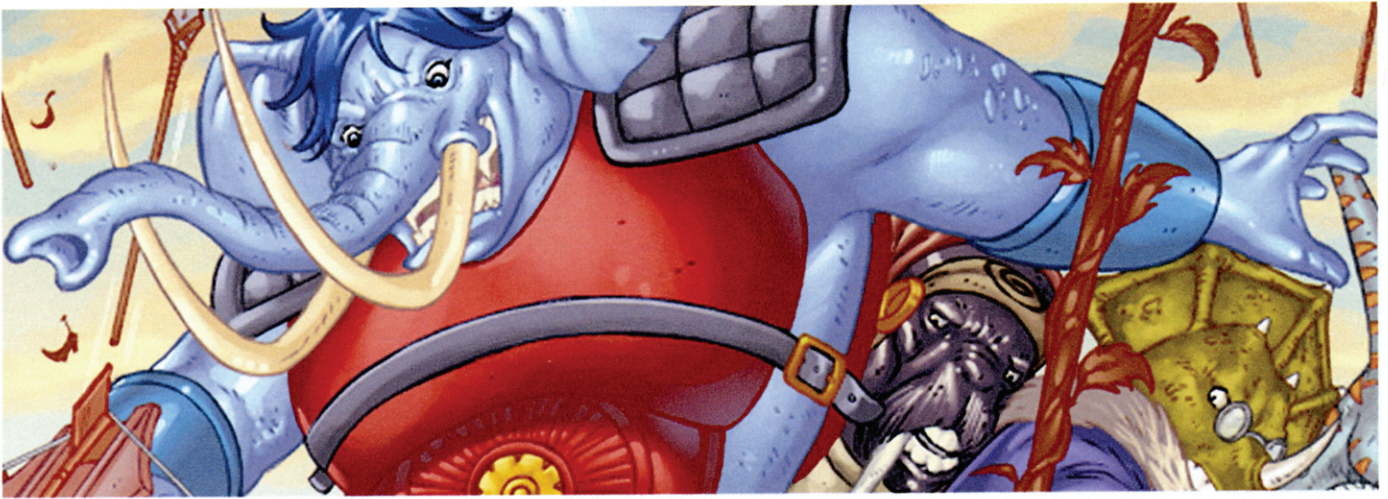
(The Dinosaurs)

* TRUEPORR -- Imagine a Wilfred Brimley type -- a tusky, heavy, old type of dinosaur, who thinks himself leader of the Thundersaurs troop. He says "everything twice, everything twice..." and when someone asks a question he prepares to wax eloquent, often to be interrupted by someone who knows better.

* REKTOR -- Imagine a "Benjamin Franklin" inventor type, complete with glasses, as a small triceratops. Speaks in a very apologetic, helpful voice. Usually is a very good mood, even humming to himself. Has a crush on Melanie and will do anything for her. The two kids see Rektor's inventions -- hot air balloons, simple but clever weapons -- and bring to the mix their own knowledge and skills. The result: Everything from wild laser blasters to sticky-glue paintball-type shooters, a clever visual mess of Rube Goldberg-type creations.



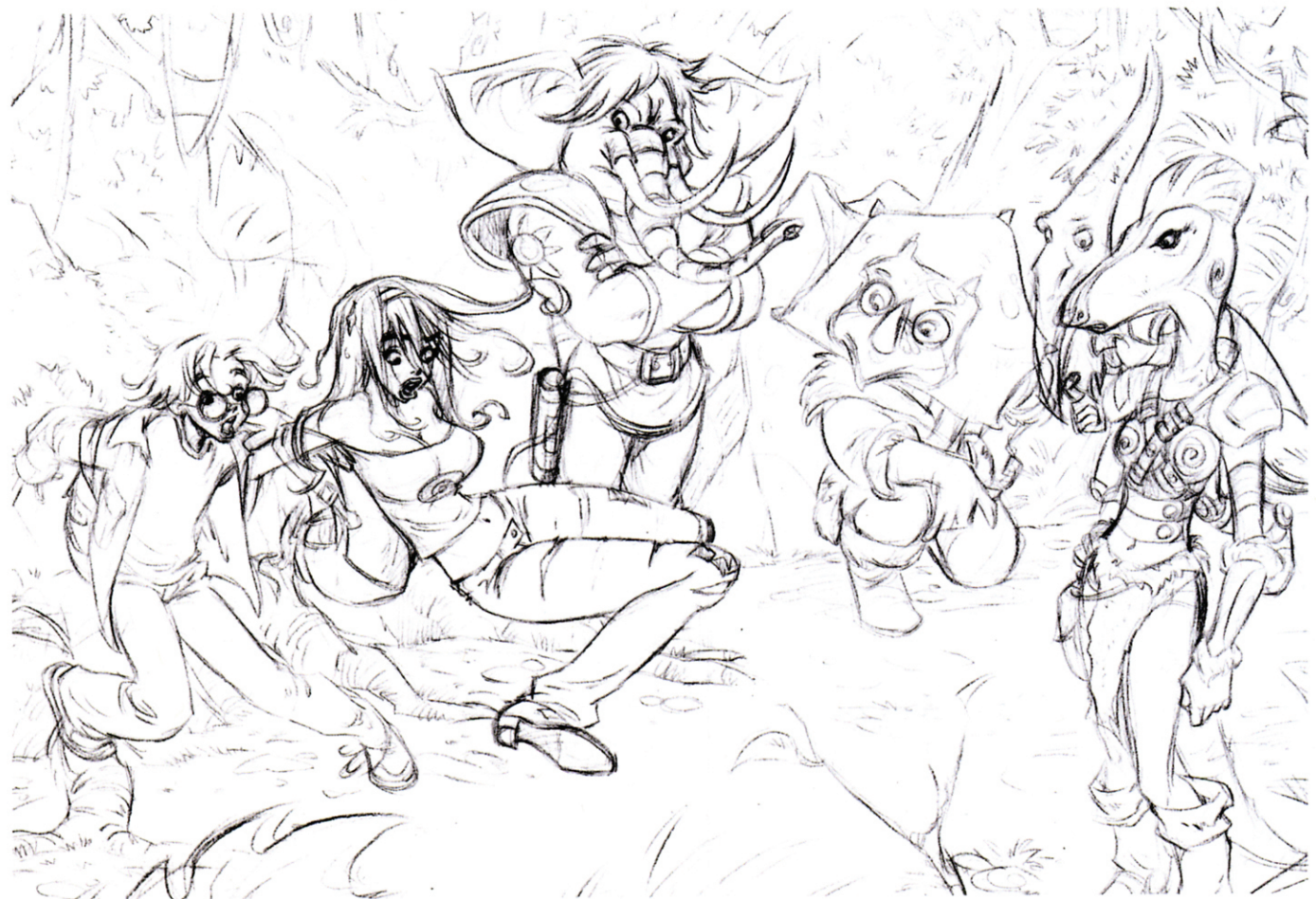
* **MASTER DON** -- Only seen occasionally, Master Don is the sole **BIG** dinosaur-era creature -- a massive mastodon to whom the others come for strategy and advice.



* **MERVYNN** -- Definitely the most under-appreciated dino of the bunch, Mervynn speaks in a wimpy, often-picked-on voice. Always stuck with the gruntwork, Mervynn nevertheless is often the one who gets the job done, even if the others rarely notice till after the fact.

* **SCRAPPOR** -- A small, young, driven, go-for-it cadet type, always talking fast, often to himself, as he zips around to accomplish whatever tasks he's been set out to do.

* **STUNNAR** -- The female dinosaur warrior who impresses everyone with her skill and savvy. If Ripley in the movie *Aliens* were a dinosaur, this would be her!





FLYORR

I AM SO
READY TO START
RUNNING NOW.

MERVYNN

TRUPORR

REKTOR

STUNNAR

I'LL JOIN
YOU AS SOON AS
MY LEGS STOP
SHAKING!

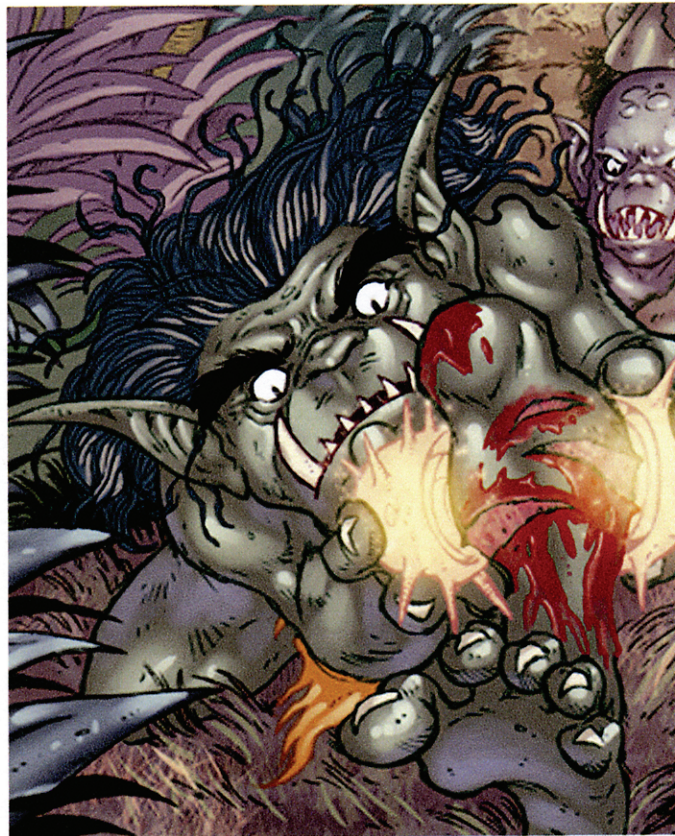
(The Trolls)

- * BLOWARD
- * RANKORR
- * LIEYORR
- * RASSH

Essentially, the Trolls have an edge over the dinosaurs in one impressive sense -- they operate from a group mind. What one learns, they all learn. What one sees, they all see. Although each has a personality of his or her own (delineated over the course of episodes), once one Troll knows a secret or a strategy, it can't be hidden from the rest.

What's more, the Trolls have learned the essence of magic from The Encrustors, and are squandering away its powers in their war to own the lands. It gives them the edge they need to win -- until the human kids come along to help the Thundersaur.

Like the Trolls of legend, this misuse of magic has a price which they (and the Thundersaur) eventually discover -- the trolls turn to stone in daylight...which is fine by them, given that they attack usually at night and they sleep in the day, anyway.



(The Encrustors)

* THE ENCRUSTORS -- This is the visually terrifying race, which has co-existed with the Thundersaur and the Trolls without any crossing the other's path. For ages, the Thundersaur stayed away, frightened of the stories and legends and the bizarrely frightening appearance of these creatures. The Trolls also stayed away, until they decided they had nothing to lose by contacting them.

Surprisingly, The Encrustors were pleased by contact. "We wondered which of you would come to see us first." Looks can be deceiving -- that's the moral here, because this horrifying race is also beneficent, happy to share its knowledge of magic, gathered from naturally-growing coral-type elements from the depths of the sea, from whence the Encrustors came. In fact, this race is indeed sea-based -- their "look" combining the scariest elements of a crab or crayfish, and other sea creatures,

yet they stand twice the height of a Thundersaur, are surrounded by mist and steam (necessary to keep them moist), and they wear cloaks that seem to swirl and billow as if alive. (And, indeed, they are.) They live in a wild, beautiful, organic city created from colorful, fast-growing sea coral, thanks to the magic they possess and willingly shared. We learn that when used properly, the magical sea corals bestow Elemental-based magical powers on the individual who uses it, tempered by the personality of the user.

The four Encrustors whom we meet are: Earth (KRATOR), Air (WYNSWEL), Fire (BLAYZE), and Water (TORRENT).

The Adventures

* EPISODE #1 -- "TICKET TO THUNDER-WORLD!" -- This is the "pilot episode" that sets up the storyline, beginning with the Masterson kids, the experiment, the WOOSH! and their appearance on ThunderWorld. No, the dinos don't speak English. When the kids first arrive, surrounded by the Thundersaur, they don't know what to expect.

They can't comprehend the language. Rektor carefully -- so as not to startle the kids into thinking they're being attacked -- puts necklaces around them (sea coral) that translate their words. In fact, the kids end up wearing these coral necklaces as their translators as part of their clothing throughout the series. (It's later revealed that the Thundersaur knew the coral could translate, but never understood it was magic or that its source was The Encrusters.)

When introduced as "Billy and Melanie Masterson," their last name causes confusion. "Masterson? Mastodon? Master Don?" And they are taken to Master Don, their massive military advisor, for a proper introduction.



Each new character is introduced with his/her "star moment," The Encrusters as glimpsed as the frightening creatures they seem to be, and the kids are put in the middle of an attack from the Trolls that puts them into action. They build the first of the wild weapons, and the story ends possibly with them essentially dropping balloon full of glue down onto the Troll forces to slow them down.

Character bits that come to mind (for future issues)... in his backpack Billy has some ferocious-looking toy dinosaurs which can swallow other action figures. The Thundersaur find this portrayal somewhat disgusting as they prefer salad. Billy informs them that is not as cool as flesh eating, bone crunching behemoths, but from where he's standing it works out pretty well. "More lettuce, anyone?"

There are also overtones of real concern: How to return to their world, will they survive until then, did their parents similarly get transported here or elsewhere, is anyone attempting to locate them, and so on.

The result: Grand fun, lots of adventure, and really cool art.

See for yourself: Here is the entire FIRST ISSUE...

TICKET TO THUNDER WORLD!

Consider the law $x^m \cdot x^n = x^{m+n}$

$$x^m \cdot x^0 = x^{m+0} = x^m$$

$= 1$, then

is the proof to an 'exp

BILLY MASTERSON!
YOU'RE SO BUSY WHILE I'M TEACHING--

$$\frac{x^m \cdot x^0}{x^m} = \frac{x^m}{x^m}$$

not equal to 0 is equal to 1.

$$x^m \cdot x^n = x^{m+n}$$

--CARE TO SHARE WHAT YOU'RE DOODLING WITH YOUR CLASS?

NOPE.

NOT A BIT.

•TINA• '07





THEN PERHAPS YOU CAN EXPLAIN TO US: WHAT IS A JAPANESE HAIKU?

TO START WITH, CALLING IT A "JAPANESE" HAIKU IS **REDUNDANT**--

--LIKE SAYING "I'M WALKING DOWN A STREET ROAD."



IF YOU THINK YOU **KNOW** SO MUCH--

--PERHAPS YOU SHOULD TEACH THIS CLASS!



O.K. SURE!



A HAIKU IS FREEVERSE POEM--

--OF THREE LINES, FIVE SYLLABLES/ SEVEN SYLLABLES/ FIVE SYLLABLES, AND A SINGLE IDEA.



HOW DO I MANAGE IN SEVENTEEN SYLLABLES SHORT-LONG-SHORT, ONE THOUGHT?

THIS HARRIED HAIKU IS MY TRICKY WAY OF REMEMBERING THE **STRUCTURE**--

--AND IS **FAR** MORE CONCISE THAN THE FORTY-SIX PAGES OUR TEXTBOOK AND TEACHER TAKE--



--TO EXPLAIN THE SAME THING!

SNAPP!

THAT DOES IT...

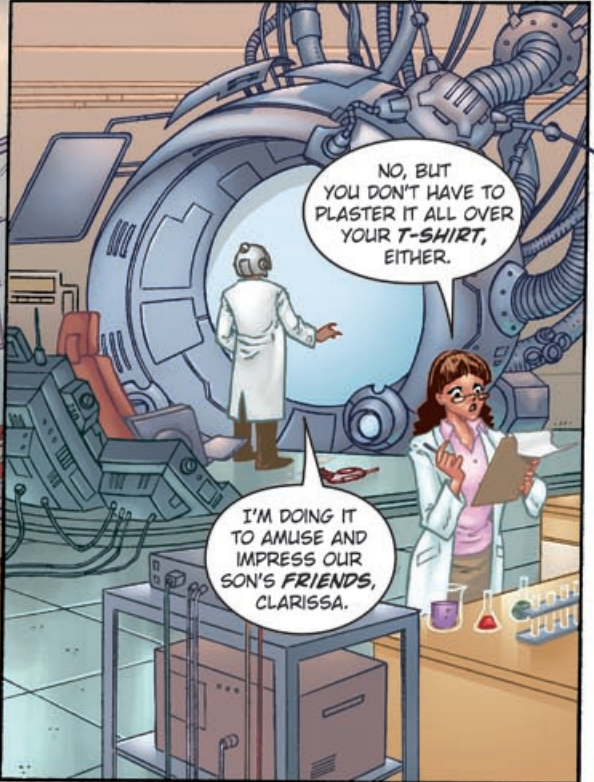
SLAM!

...WAS IT SOMETHING I SAID--?

MIDLAND CITY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX: WORKPLACE AND HOME TO DR. MYRON MASTERSON AND DR. CLARISSA MASTERSON:

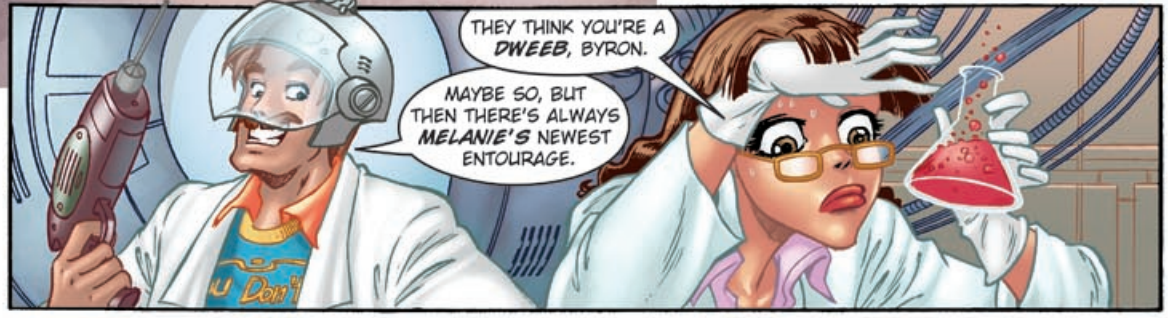
"YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A ROCKET SCIENTIST TO WORK HERE -- BUT IT HELPS."

AM I WRONG?



NO, BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO PLASTER IT ALL OVER YOUR T-SHIRT, EITHER.

I'M DOING IT TO AMUSE AND IMPRESS OUR SON'S FRIENDS, CLARISSA.



THEY THINK YOU'RE A DWEBB, BYRON.

MAYBE SO, BUT THEN THERE'S ALWAYS MELANIE'S NEWEST ENTOURAGE.



THEY KNOW I'M A GENIUS.

AND THEY THINK I'M HOT!



HA HA! IF THIS LAB WERE ON FIRE YOU WOULDN'T BE HOT!

WHUNNK!

You Don't Have To Be a Normal Scientist To Work Here BUT IT HELPS!



I SWEAR, I CAN'T LEAVE YOU PARENTS FOR A FEW HOURS ON YOUR OWN--

-- WITHOUT SOME KIND OF TROUBLE BREWING!



HERE, THE PRINCIPAL WANTS YOU GUYS TO SIGN THIS.

OH...?

WHAT IS IT?

APPARENTLY, MISS MICHELLE CAN SUGGEST IN JEST THAT I TEACH OUR CLASS--

-- BUT WHEN I TAKE HER AT HER WORD, SHE GETS HONKED OFF.



GRAB!

OH, REALLY?



I SHOULD GIVE HER A PIECE OF MY MIND...

...AND YOU'D STILL BE A HUNDRED TIMES SMARTER THAN ANYONE ELSE IS THIS BURG, MOM!

HELLO, GIRLS. IT WOULD BE RUDE OF ME TO DISPUTE YOU, MELANIE.

FRIENDS, THIS IS MOM, DAD, AND CRITTER!

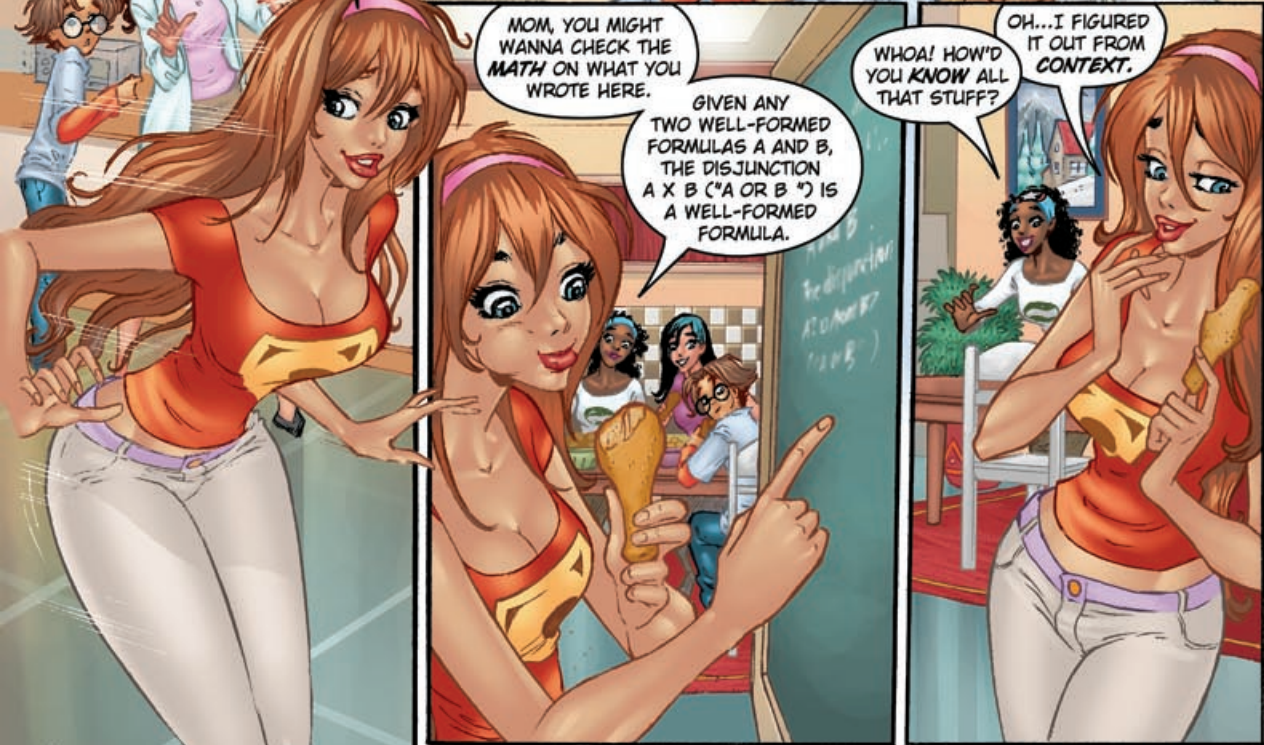
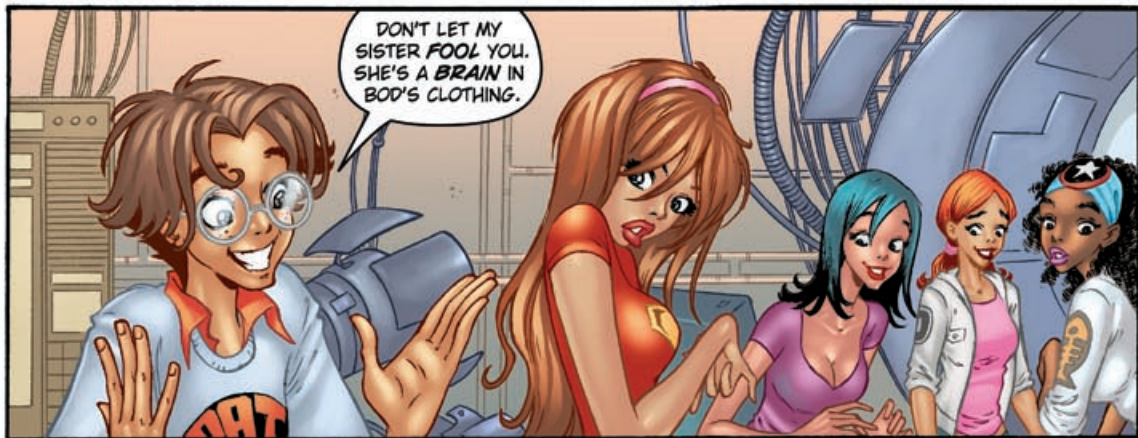
WOW, MELANIE!

WHAT GOES ON AROUND HERE?

HUH? YOU THINK I'VE ANY IDEA WHAT MY PARENTS ARE UP TO?

I'M JUST AFTER SOME CASH AND A SNACK.

THEN -- THE MALL!





DELICIOUS!

MALL TIME.

YOU'RE BLOCKIN' PROGRESS, CRITTER!

FORGETTING SOMETHING, DEAR?

YOU GOT TWO SPEEDING TICKETS--

--AND AGREED TO WORK OFF THE COST OF THE FINES.

YUP. I GOT RID OF YOUR SHALLOW FRIENDS JUST THE WAY YOU TOLD ME TO.

NOW I CAN FINISH INSTALLING THESE FLUX CAPACITORS IN PEACE.

I LIKE BEING LEADER OF THE PACK, BUT ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

GREAT. NOW DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DONE?



DAD, WHAT IF I--

NO.

HOW ABOUT IF--

NO.

THEN MAYBE I CAN--

NO!

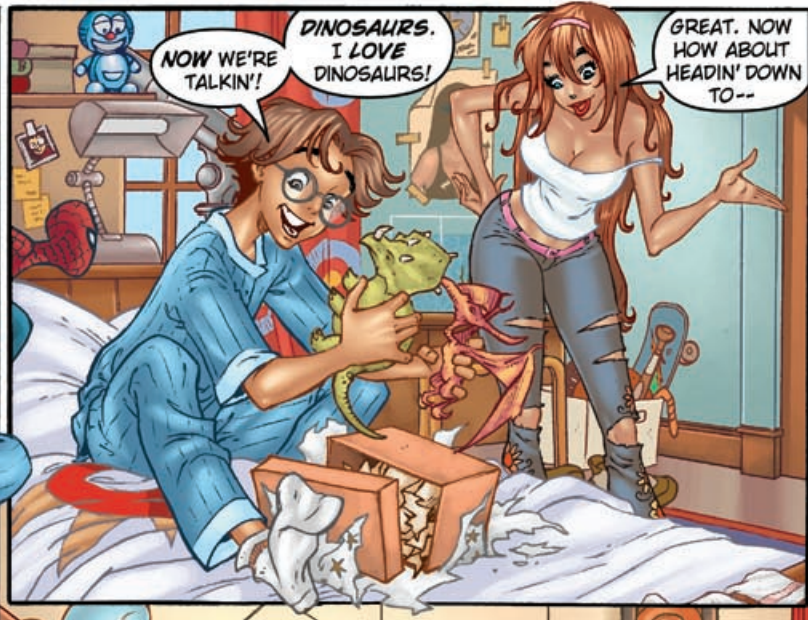
LATER, MEL. WE GOTTA GO!





WHAT IS IT?
IS IT TICKING?

RRIP
RRIP



NOW WE'RE TALKIN!
DINOSAURS. I LOVE DINOSAURS!

GREAT. NOW HOW ABOUT HEADIN' DOWN TO--

"--YOUR PARTY!"

WHOOPIEEE!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY BILLY



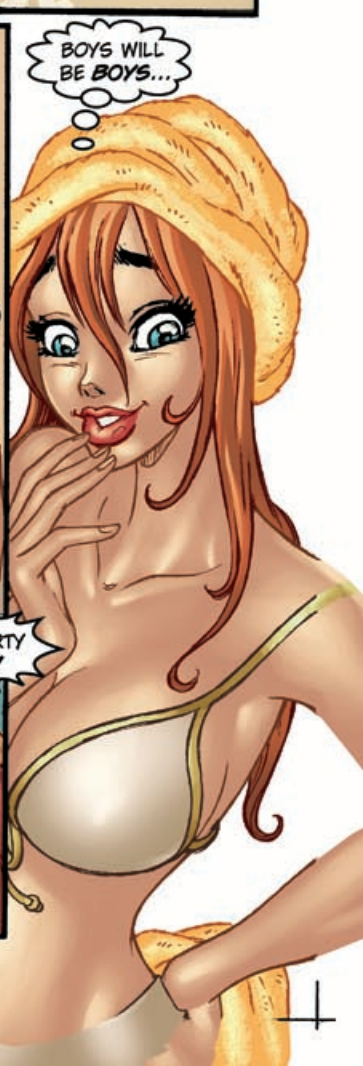
SPLORRT

SPLORRTCH

THE MAID IS COMING TODAY, RIGHT?

YUP. HAZARD PAY.

THEY'RE THE HAZARD. AND YOU'RE PAYING.



AFTER THE PARTY.

CRITTER AND I'LL BE BACK BY NINE ON SUNDAY NIGHT.

HE HAS HOMEWORK. MAKE IT EIGHT.

I'M ABOUT TO FIRE UP THE SUB-ATOMIC PARTICLE RESONATOR.

WANNA STAY FOR THE FIREWORKS?

YOU BETCHA!

WE'RE MAKING STRIDES IN REAL SCIENCE HERE.

KNOCK WOOD.

CROSS YOUR FINGERS.

BZZZT ZZZZT

"BZZZT-ZZZZT"---?

IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO DO THAT...

...IS IT?

NO. IT'S--

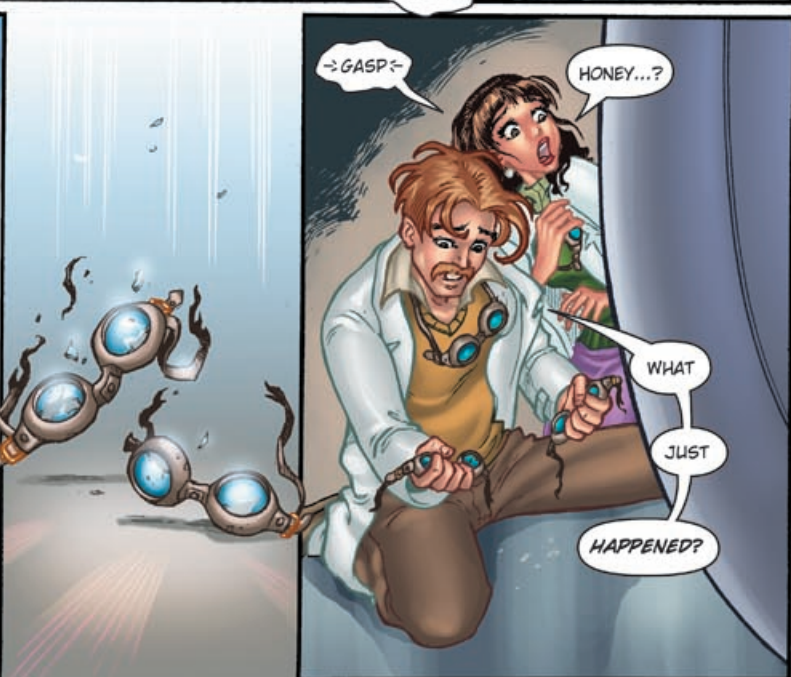
WAIT A SEC-- WHAT'S THIS STICKY--?

CAKE FROSTING--? DID YOUR FRIENDS...?

SORRY!

I'LL CLEAN IT, DAD.

THEN I'LL CHECK THE CONNECTORS, AND--







FLYORR

I AM SO READY TO START RUNNING NOW.

MERVYNN

TRUPORR

REKTOR

STUNNAR

I'LL JOIN YOU AS SOON AS MY LEGS STOP SHAKING!



<WE'LL NEED THE SHELLS.>

OH, NONONONONO!

GET AWAY FROM US!

<AFRAID? BUT-->



BACK OFF!

HANDS OFF MY SISTER!

THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.

<DON'T UNDERSTAND...>

<...DON'T UNDERSTAND.>



HEY--!

<BE STILL.>



<NOW: WHO ARE YOU??>



HUH? WOW--

I'M BILLY...



...BILLY MASTERSON.

THAT'S MY SISTER MELANIE MASTERSON!



MASTERSON? MASTEDON? MASTER DON!

WE NEED TO TAKE THEM TO MASTER DON!



WHAT? YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THEM NOW?

YEAH-- AND IT'S WEIRD!

IT'S LIKE THESE SHELLS ARE TRANSLATING!



<BEWARE-->

<--INCOMING!>



WHSSSS

YIPE!

EEEP!

<DOWN-- NOW!>

=>WHOA!<=

<TROLLS! MAKE FOR COVER!>

C'MON!



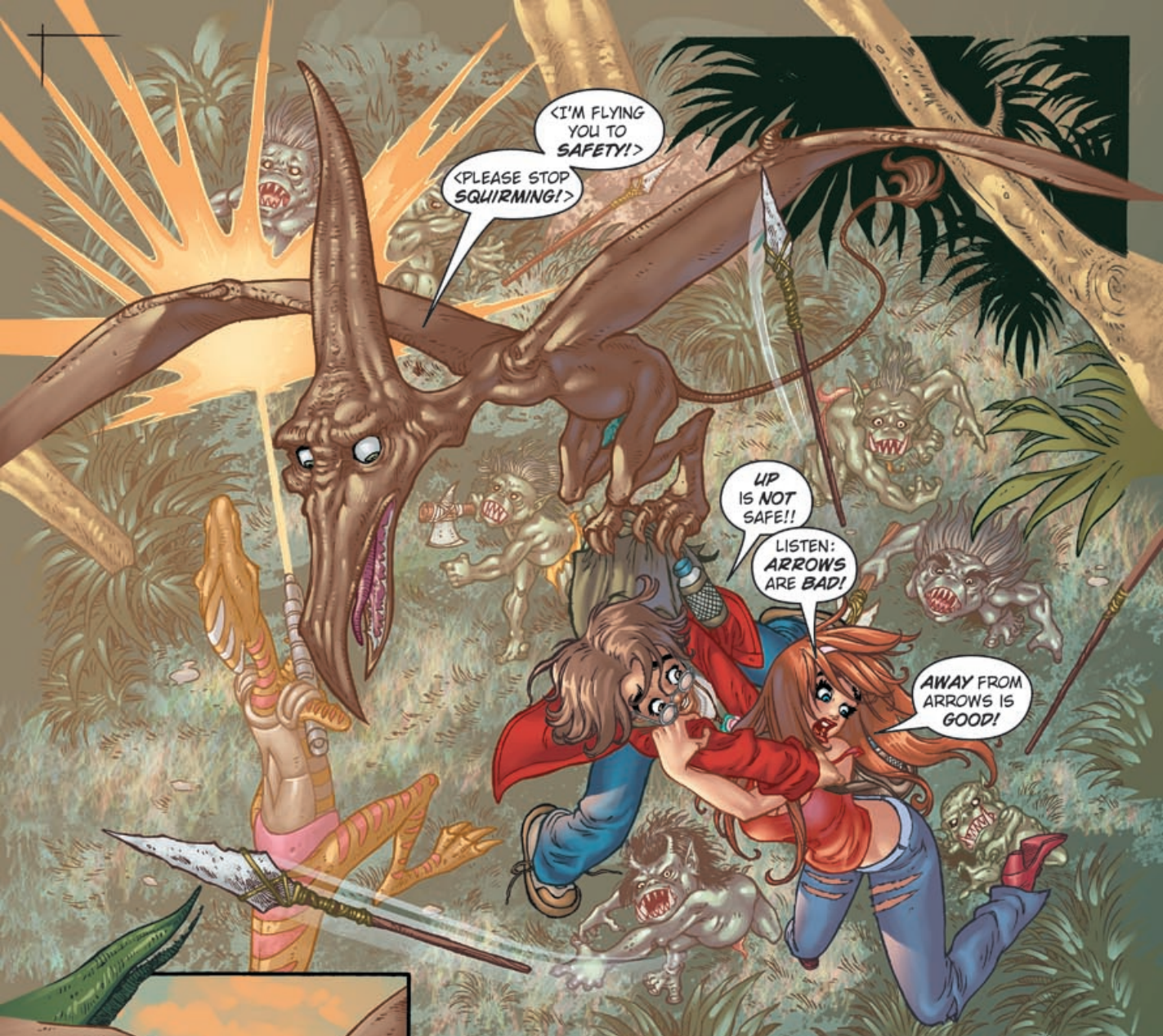
WHY'D YOU SHOVE--

LIMMM... LIMMM...

...UGLY THING!!



FWOOSH!



<I'M FLYING YOU TO SAFETY!>

<PLEASE STOP SQUIRMING!>

UP IS NOT SAFE!!

LISTEN: ARROWS ARE BAD!

AWAY FROM ARROWS IS GOOD!



FWIPP!
FWIPP!
FWIPP!

<SORRY!>

<I'M HIT!>

BOMBS AWAY!



<MOVE FAST. ALSO FAR.>

<OR YOU'LL BE SUPPER FOR THE TROLLS.>

FWAKK!

SPILL IT, BILLY--

HUH--?



--WHAT'S HE SAYING?

->GULP!-<

TRUST ME, SIS--

"--YOU DON'T WANNA KNOW."

CHOMP!

RIP!

SHRED!



BILLY!



BILLY!!



I DON'T THINK THESE 'SAURS ARE TRYING TO HURT US.

YA THINK?



SOMEBODY SHOULD TEACH THAT TO THOSE UGLY THINGS!!

OMIGOSH--

--WHAT'S THAT??



"OFFHAND, SIS, I'D SAY THAT'S A MASTEDON IN A HOT AIR BALLOON!"

<BOARD QUICKLY! I CAN SMELL THEM COMING!>

<MASTER DON--WE'VE GOT GUESTS!>



<WHO ARE THEY?>



<GOOD FOLK!>



<I VOUCH FOR THEM!>

VOUCH FASTER!

RIPPP!



HEY!!

SNAPP!



KRAKK!

WHUNNK!



THOSE JEANS COST ME NINETY BUCKS!

SSRRRIIP!



I HOPE YOU CHOKE ON IT!

GLUMMPH--



FORGET THE JEANS--



---COME ON!

<HURRY, PLEASE!>



CUT THE MOORINGS!

PREPARE TO RISE!

FTAKKK!



OWWW!
LEGGO!



WHOA!
HEY!
ENOUGH WITH THE ARROWS, ALREADY!



<PULL IN THE STRAGGLER. WE ARE UNBALANCED.>

<PLEASE -- STOP! DON'T DIE!>

FWONNKK!

HER? DIE?

I'M THE ONE SLIPPING...

GRAB JACKET, NOT SKIN. OWWWW!

GOTCHA, CRITTER!



<RETURN
FIRE!>

<THEN RISE!
RISE!!>

<WE'RE
ON IT!>

YOU
ALL RIGHT,
BILLY?

TIRED
O' HANGIN'
'ROUND!

PERMISSION
TO COME
ABOARD?





YOU'RE HEAVIER THAN YOU LOOK--

--AND YOU BROUGHT FRIENDS!

SKRAK!



MUST BE ALL THAT BIRTHDAY CAKE.

->OOMPH!<-



FWIPP!

FSSSSSS



<STUNNAR!>

<MAKE WAY!>



<WE'RE HIT! TOO HEAVY.>

<FALLING FAST.>

<I THOUGHT OUR NEW GUESTS MIGHT NEED THESE.>



<TOO MUCH WEIGHT.>

WAIT! I KNOW YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND ME NOW --



->ULP!<-

--BUT PLEASE, A CHANCE!



THESE ARE MY DAD'S PORTABLE LABS WITH POWER SUPPLY.
A THOUSAND-AND-ONE USES.



A LITTLE MICRO-SEAL--
--A LITTLE HEAT--



--AND PRESTO!
NO MORE HOLE!

SPLAT!!!



<INTERESTING.>
<REKTOR, GRAB TWO SHELLS.>
<MERYVYN, ATTEND TO STUNNAR'S WOUNDS.>



<LET'S LEARN EXACTLY WHAT WE HAVE, HERE.>

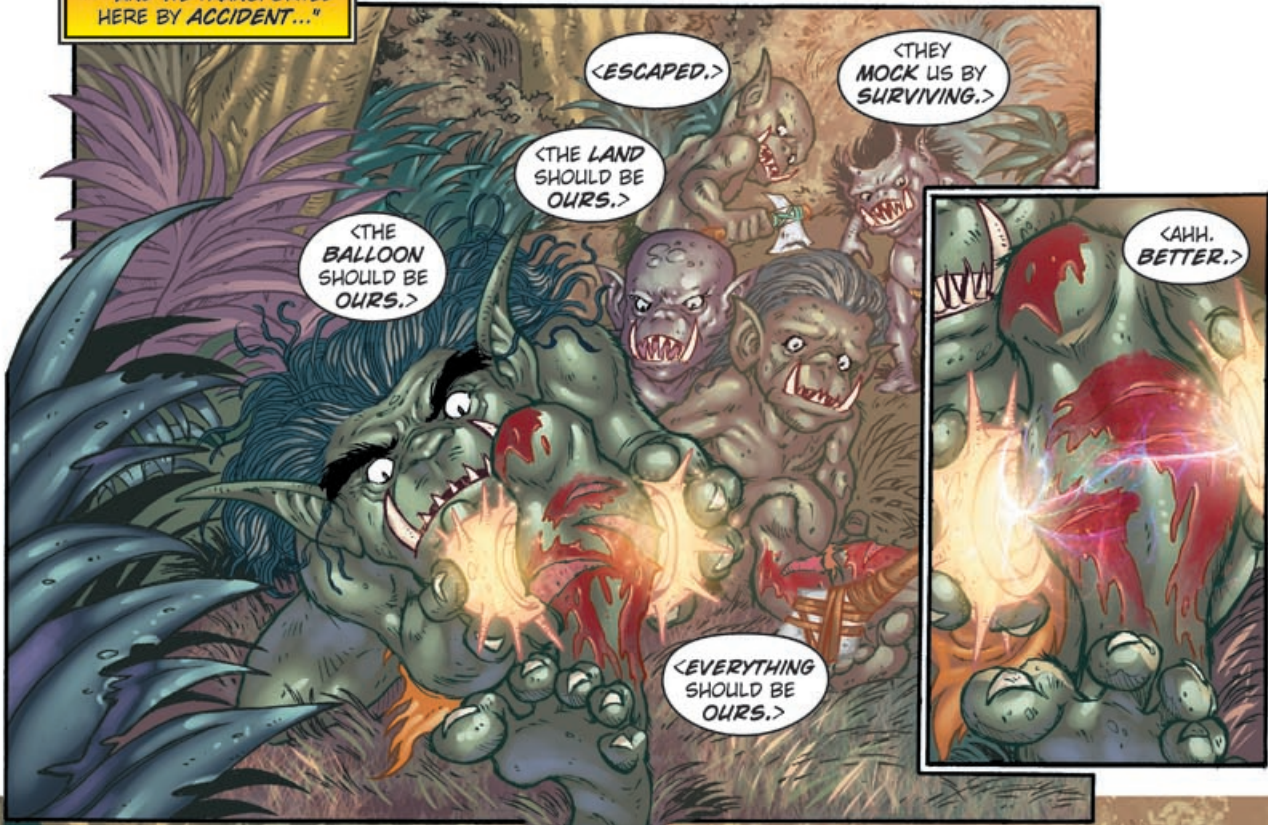


<NOW, HOW ABOUT YOU TELL ME HOW YOU ARRIVED.>



YES, SIR.
MY NAME IS BILLY MASTERSON --

"-- AND WE TRANSPORTED
HERE BY ACCIDENT..."



<ESCAPED.>

<THEY
MOCK US BY
SURVIVING.>

<THE LAND
SHOULD BE
OURS.>

<THE
BALLOON
SHOULD BE
OURS.>

<AHH.
BETTER.>

<EVERYTHING
SHOULD BE
OURS.>



<SPOILS
OF WAR!>

<TAKE
THE MAGIC
SHELL. HEAL
YOURSELF.>

<SMELLS
DELICIOUS.>

<NEW INTRUDERS
ARE STRANGERS
OF US! FRIENDS
TO THE
THUNDERSAURS
ARE ENEMIES
OF US!>



<LOOK AT THIS.
THUNDERSAURS
POSSESS MAGIC
SHELLS.>

<THEY HAVE
ENCROACHED UPON
OUR ALLIES. THEY
MAY SEEK TO
POISON
OUR PATH-->

<SO WE MUST SPEAK TO
THOSE FROM THE DEEP...>

<...THE ENCRUSTORS!>

NEXT:
**MAGIC
FROM THE
DEPTHS!**



Beyond The First Adventure...

Billy and Melanie's adventures continue in shorter stories -- often two or more per issue -- or interwoven story structures, such as:

* "OF A SINGLE MIND" -- In this adventure, we learn that the Trolls operate off the "hive mind" -- what one learns, the others learn. This episode also sets up specific personalities to some of the Trolls who will appear as the series unfolds, and a lot about how the Trolls' culture operates, to make the Trolls far more than one-dimensional "bad guys." We also learn that the Trolls have only recently acquired a source of magic, plus we see hints of why the Thundersaurs and Trolls have long been frightened of the powerful, mysterious Encrustors. Billy and Melanie begin to experiment with inventions and to build a working relationship with the Thundersaurs, particularly with Rektor -- who, it turns out, has developed an incredible crush on Melanie.

* "MAGIC FROM THE DEPTHS" -- This episode fully introduces The Encrustors, and we viewers realize that they are NOT the terrible creatures legend has made them out to be. In flashback, we even see the Trolls approaching them and The Encrustors welcoming them with open arms and sharing their sea-spawned magic with them. But we also learn of the Trolls stealing the source of magic to use in their war against the Thundersaurs, as well as trying to poison The Encrustors of the idea of ever befriending the Thundersaurs. The Thundersaurs learn of the source of magic (but not the entire backstory of how nice The Encrustors actually are), and the kids have a feeling of hope -- perhaps The Encrustors could use their magic to return them home?

* "THE RACE THAT FELL FROM GRACE" -- In the midst of clever inventions and battles with the Trolls, we introduce a handsome young male, who is actually a mutant troll. He is hated, but feared by his brethren. He is much more skilled and a natural fighter. He does not possess the cruelty of the others, but does participate because this is the only way he knows. Obviously he and Melanie will develop a romantic situation (and the sad jealousy of Rektor, of course). Talk about a boy from the wrong side of the tracks. There are hints that The Trolls were once like this young man, and perhaps could be again, but the Trolls' own headstrong vileness evolved them down a different path. There are hints that the world still has some untransformed Trolls -- and they are known as Gnomes...and the handsome young male might be one.

* "EGGS OF EASTER ISLAND" -- Billy discovers giant heads very similar to the Easter Island heads back on Earth and unlocks their secret -- they are buried giants that have been dormant in the ground for



hundreds of years -- and the terrible ways of the Trolls led these offworld giants to turn the Trolls into the type of creatures they are now! We also introduce a young Thundersaur that would have the approximate personality of an eight year old kid brother to tag along and annoy Billy -- the little Thundersaur is the offspring of Master Don. By the end of the story, the kid Thundersaur pals up with the handsome Troll.

* "MIRRORS OF THE SOUL" -- Billy and Melanie discover that their parents were not transported to the Thundersaur world, or anywhere else; but they did determine where their kids were. So: They build an interdimensional viewer which allows them to observe and communicate with the kids until they can find a way to bring them home. This creates some dramatic tension for the adults and leaves the children to star. Humor in the form of the parents still being able to tell Billy it's past his bedtime and such. Also the exchange of information between the two worlds can lead to some interesting co-inventing. When the Trolls discover that there is this other Earth where the kids came from, they use the magic to get across and wreak havoc. This causes both trouble and yet hope, because if they can coerce the Trolls into revealing their secret, the kids can also get home.

In each episode, each Thundersaur will get his or her own "star turn," and opportunity to become some viewer's favorite character. Personality character bits are integral to the series.

Other episodes could include:

- * "THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE GNOME" -- A story revealing that the gnomes and trolls were actually one race, eventually split apart...
- * "WHAT MOM & DAD DID ON THEIR SUMMER VACATION" -- The Masterson parents make it to Thunderworld, bringing lots of materials with them to help in the battle. But their unstable transport won't keep them on ThunderWorld for long, and they can't take anything back...
- * "CONTINENTAL DIVIDE" -- Much like our Earth once was, the ThunderWorld is one huge continent. Massive earthquakes are erupting, and from high in the sky in their hot air balloon, the kids and Thundersaurs watch the continents split apart.
- * "THE INVITATION TO BELOW" -- The Encrustors take Billy and Melanie into the ocean depths, to learn about the source of magic.
- * "MY GIRLFRIEND IS A SHAPESHIFTER" -- A lovely girl befriends Billy...but turns out she's not from Earth like she claims, but a shapeshifting gnome.



* "THE MISTRESS OF MASTER DON" -- We finally have a Master Don story and are introduced to his wife, who was the true leader of the Thundersaur until war broke out. She has no taste for war but is Master Don's equal in strategy. Billy notices how much they are like his own Mom and Dad in temperament.

* "GNARLY THE THUNDER SLAYER" -- More than a Troll warrior, Gnarly is an assassin trained to dispose of the core Thundersaur, plus Billy and Melanie.

* "RU'UDE AWAKENING" -- Ru'ude is one of the original bad Gnomes whom the Easter giants transformed. He's been buried in the lava pits for centuries. Now he's back and ready to party -- on the buried remains of his enemies. The handsome Troll and Melanie team up to fight this one.

* "STONEHINGE" -- Our Stonehenge is a broken gateway. But the similar gateway on the Thundersaur world belongs to The Encrustors, who have visited our world before...

* "ESCAPE FROM EXTINCTION" -- The kids escape back to their home on Earth, and the main Thundersaur gets to follow, in a "We're Back!" kind of story adventure.

Merchandising Potential

The key to success for THUNDERSAURS is a smart synergy of concept and merchandising. Much in the manner of such phenomena as Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, THUNDERSAURS offers massive potential for licensed goods and related items -- the movie or TV show or CGI cartoon, the plush toys, action figures, games, comic books, coloring books, picture books, novels, board game, role-playing game, CD-Rom, video games, Halloween costumes, apparel, posters, and much, much more.

Although the concept is kid friendly, including human characters the kids can relate to and look up to, it has enough of an edge and a Lord of the Rings adventure feel to capture fans of more sophisticated Japanese anime adventures and fans of episodic fantasy novels.

The Wrap-Up

THUNDERSAURS offers something strong for animation and for merchandise -- a concept with a lot of story, a lot of personality, and a bit of an edge so it's not a "kiddy" cartoon.

It's a story about legends, about people, about adapting -- and, quite frankly, it's a way to make a lot of money, too.



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TALENT LINE-UP

Writer DAVID CAMPITI has scripted comics professionally since the early '80s, having penned projects as diverse as Superman for DC Comics, Lost in Space, Dark Shadows, Forbidden Planet, Beauty and the Beast, Hero Alliance, Exposure, Jade Warriors, Legends of the Stargazers, Piers Anthony's On a Pale Horse, and many more. He has worked both sides of the desk, as writer, designer editor, publisher, even agent over the past 25 years in comics.

Artist TINA FRANCISCO hails from the animation business, working as a storyboard artist on syndicated cartoons and feature films. She has been teaching storytelling and style for comics in Christopher Hart's series of How-to-Draw books for Watson-Guption. Tina has also been storyboarding hundreds of pages of manga and adventure comics for other artists and has been drawing children's books and youth-oriented comics in her native Philippines.

Letterer MATT THOMPSON began as a comics artist and letterer in the late '80s, on such varied projects as Quantum Leap, Lost in Space, Teen Titans, Death Race 3000, Headman, and even a Stephen King adaptation. In recent years, he has lettered many projects, for Image Comics, Sirius, Arcana, and Galaxy Graphix.

Colorist JAY DAVID RAMOS began as assistant to top colorist Rainier Beredo, before taking on his own projects, including Star Wars for Dark Horse Comics and Vampirella for Harris Comics, and cover colors for a variety of publishers.





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