

Panel 1:

A shot of a speck in the depths of space (this is Cybertron at a distance).

CAPTION: The Universe is vast and empty. In some ways, it's a miracle life ever started anywhere.

CAPTION: But it did... and once it started, the fire could not easily be extinguished.

Panel 2:

Close-up of Cybertron's surface from space. We should see details of a city and mechanical landscape. Try to avoid the typical "enormous buildings from space" thing that so many artists do (remember that this world is huge so we shouldn't be able to see buildings from this perspective).

CAPTION: Life rose many places. Giving birth to ideas, civilizations, awareness...

CAPTION: Humanity...

Panel 3:

A close-up of a Cybertronian city. We see a cityscape and a roadway with many vehicles driving and flying past (no Transformers are directly evident in this panel, only vehicles).

CAPTION: For whatever reason, life was manifest in the cosmos predominantly as the organic variety. Male and female, living, breathing... fragile but earnest in its struggle to survive.

CAPTION: But not everywhere.

Panel 4:

CAPTION: Not here.

Optimus Prime watches the city beyond from the shadows of some kind of metallic tunnel.

Panel 1:

Overhead shot as Optimus Prime walks down a shadowy corridor. The corridor is machine-like as well, fitting the Cybertronian aesthetic.

CAPTION: We call this place Cybertron. It is our home... A metal planet full of living machine life.

Panel 2:

CAPTION: Are we truly alive, like the organics around us or are we merely machines fulfilling some long lost directive to act alive?

Close-up of Optimus Prime's face and his clear red optics (no irises. Their lack of being there helps add to his alien-ness)..

CAPTION: It never used to matter to me. We were here, we were alive. The rest was academic. But things have changed lately and I find the questions of my existence now gnawing at my core on a regular basis.

Panel 3:

CAPTION: Our origins are murky, lost to the mists of time. We know what we are and we exist—but how and why we originally came into being is long gone.

Optimus walks down a catwalk above a vast machine system far below. This should be quite impressive shot, showing off how large this chamber is (whatever it's for). An Autobot symbol can be displayed on a wall somewhere as well, indicating that this is Autobot property.

CAPTION: In the grand scheme, though, I never felt that it really mattered. Life is now, life is what we are and what we do with what we're given not the circumstances of our creation.

Panel 1:

CAPTION: We have existed on this world for millennia, learning, building and slowly growing as a people.

Montage shot of robot form Transformers looking off, vehicles going somewhere and some buildings being built in the background by a crane with some TFs guiding its work.

Panel 2:

CAPTION: But like with any species, there have been bumps along the way...

A scene of warfare. Several generic TFs are fighting between each other and the city landscape in the background is burning.

Panel 3:

A shot of the Decepticons in a long line, some familiar ones and some generics. All are charging forward towards the reader. In the background is Megatron's face looming large, with a evil grin on his face. Somewhere in the crowd are a couple of Decepticon banners clearly displayed. In the foreground, maybe a couple of Autobots with wary expressions on their faces. Maybe some flames in the background as well, to make the scene look cooler.

CAPTION: The Decepticons rose from nowhere, proclaiming their New Order and demanding submission to their principals. No one saw it coming and they very nearly won the war in very little time...

Panel 4:

Nova Prime stands among some ruins, surrounded by various Autobots. Their weapons drawn and their faces with determined expressions. In the background, maybe a ruined Autobot symbol on a wrecked building.

CAPTION: If it hadn't been for our greatest leader, Nova Prime, we wouldn't have stood a chance against the Decepticons. But he got us organized, kept us from losing hope.

SPLASH:

Major battle between the Autobots and Decepticons. There is a ruined landscape in the background and the Autobots and Decepticons engage in combat. Some are in robot form and some are in vehicles. In the foreground, Nova Prime and Megatron face off.

CAPTION: The War lasted a long time and it was intense. We lost a lot of good people over the years...

Panel 1:

The Autobots stand around a monument to Nova Prime. They are remorseful looking. Optimus is among them.

CAPTION: We lost Nova Prime during those years and even his successor, Sentinel Prime, before the war was finally over.

Panel 2:

CAPTION: I was promoted to Prime finally and under my leadership, the conflict finally ended. Although I do not take the credit for our success—it was a combination of the efforts of many dedicated Autobots that made our victory a possibility.

Prime and some other Autobots watch as Megatron is lead away in cuffs along with several other Decepticons. Armed guards in some kind of armor escort them.

Panel 3:

A shot of Cybertron and it's two moons from space. Megatron's face is montaged along with them.

CAPTION: It was Megatron's mad dream to spread his New Order to the stars themselves and subjugate the organics under his heel. Thanks to Nova's swift response, those aspirations were crushed and the Great War was kept confined mostly to Cybertron and it's moons.

Panel 4:

A shot of Earth and it's moon from space. Several dozen specs float in the foreground, representing a space fleet.

CAPTION: We were largely unaware of the threats out there in the great celestial expanse. We had no reason to believe we were anything less then safe in our comfortable little lives.

Panel 5:

CAPTION: That was our first mistake...

Three Autobots look skyward as a large shadow is cast upon them (they are on a street). We can see them approximately from the chest up. Perhaps one is shielding his optics.

SPLASH:

A fleet of flying saucers occupy Cybertron's skies. These should be saucers but stylistic (like how *Independence Day* had high tech looking saucer ships in it). These are saucers but cool looking saucer ships, with splits in the design and lots of technical detail to them. Beyond the ships is a cityscape and our three Autobots, as well as others clustered about gazing upward at the ships. All are shocked by what they see.

CAPTION: We don't know who they are or what they want with us. There was no introduction, no attempt at peaceful interaction. No negotiation.

Panel 1:

CAPTION: They just came—

Three gold spheres crash into the surface.

Panel 2:

Three large mechanical tri-pods emerge from the craters the spheres made.

CAPTION: —and started to conquer.

Panel 3:

A large mechanical tri-pod grasps an Autobot menacingly with a claw. It has two other attachments: one is a sharp saw blade and another is some kind of extracting mechanism.

Panel 4:

CAPTION: They wanted us.

A silhouette of the walker slicing into its helpless prey with the saw blade.

Panel 5:

The Autobot's lifeless body parts are dropped into a basket on the back of the walker, like one would drop some fruit they picked. Other bodies are already strewn in a pile below that.

Panel 1:

Three tri-pods guard a large machine as it tears up the surface of Cybertron.

CAPTION: In fact, they wanted all of it.

CAPTION: The planet, our people, our resources...

Panel 2:

CAPTION: All of it.

A machine pumps energon up out of a pool deep in the ground. Several gun emplacements and mecha guard it.

Panel 3:

The Autobots run out and attack the tri-pods with their weapons.

CAPTION: of course, we tried to fight back.

Panel 4:

CAPTION: But we've had limited success...

A gun emplacement strikes one of the Autobots dead while the tri-pod gathers another one in its claws.

Panel 5:

CAPTION: During the Great War, we were able to beat the Decepticons. It was a war of strategy, ferocity and most importantly, attrition.

The human forces stand firm. Some are in body armor with their rifles raised while some mecha are present and some tri-pods in the background (a group shot/montage of the Enemy).

CAPTION: But this is different. These Humans, as they call themselves, fight differently. They aren't here to conquer Cybertron and the Universe.

Panel 1:

CAPTION: They want to take our home and strip it clean from top to bottom. To take our metals, our energon, our resources—and even our bodies—and use them to fuel their war machine.

Close-up of Optimus Prime's face as he walks to his destination.

CAPTION: How do you fight that? How do you beat somebody that sees you, not as an equal, but as a resource to be exploited?

CAPTION: I wish I had an answer to that question...

Panel 2:

In a flashback, Prowl yells at Optimus, angrily pointing downward while Sideswipe and Jazz look onward in the background. Optimus is to the left of the panel, in front of Prowl.

CAPTION: Some of the others have started to lose patience with me. They think I've lost my edge as a warrior and leader in the years since the war with the Decepticons.

CAPTION: They may be right... I never wanted to be a warrior and after Megatron, I assumed I would never be one again. Have my own selfish desires for peace doomed my people?

Panel 3:

Optimus taps in a code on a keypad. Beside him is a large steel door. He is in a metallic corridor.

CAPTION: If so, there is still time, I hope, to correct my mistakes and make amends. But my solutions are radical—dangerous, even. Will the cure be worse than the disease?

Panel 4:

CAPTION: I can't let such concerns cloud my judgement now. I have made my decision and must abide by the consequences—or change my mind. But to do so, will be to admit defeat.

Optimus' silhouette in the doorway of a darkened chamber. Only the light in the corridor behind him makes him see-able.

Panel 5:

Three large warships in space, surrounded by a smaller fleet of flying saucers.

CAPTION: I wish I knew what brought the Humans here. Why did they fixate on our world? Were

we just convenient to them? Another world in their path? Or did something in particular bring their pestilence to us?

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Panel 1:

CAPTION: I guess it doesn't matter in the long run. They've come to us and we—I—have to take decisive action. To do anything less is to admit defeat for my people.

Optimus walks down a catwalk. Around him are dozens of large cylinders with wires going to them. We cannot see the contents of the tubes.

Panel 2:

CAPTION: Desperate times face my people. I must be the one to guide us on our path and do whatever it takes to ensure our survival.

Optimus looks up at a large cylinder containing a dormant Megatron inside. As with the others, this cylinder has wires running to it, providing power/life support.

CAPTION: Whatever it takes...

Panel 1:

CAPTION: This has got to be the most truly “alien” world I’ve ever set foot on.

A man in body armor watches as a tri-pod besieges two Transformers. One is in it’s claws already while the other is trying to flee.

CAPTION: Not that I’ve set foot on *that* many worlds, but still...

Panel 2:

The man turns around where several mecha and gun emplacements are set up. Other humans are moving about as well, doing their various duties.

CAPTION: Imagine an entire world of machines, built for some unknown reason and then abandoned—for possibly millennia, allowed to follow their programming to it’s inevitable end with nothing there to intercede and disrupt it.

CAPTION: It truly is fascinating.

Panel 3:

CAPTION: Somebody let all of this go to waste for a long time. It’s fortunate that we found the coordinates for this world—the way things are now, we can always use more resources and energy to keep our society running.

A close-up of the man. He has brown curly hair, blue eyes and a goatee.

CAPTION: I’m General Samuel Ronald Witwicky, one of several commanders of the occupation forces deployed here.

CAPTION: My friends call me “Spike”.

CAPTION: Don’t ask.

Panel 4:

Three Autobots attack his position nearby.

CAPTION: The indigenous robotic life forms here seem to be hostile to our presence. It’s understandable, though. They were likely programmed by their progenitors to protect the world from outsiders.

Panel 1:

The guns and mecha make short work of the attacking force, cutting them down as they move.

CAPTION: They're just doing what they were designed to do. They couldn't understand that their creators are long dead—or gone, at any rate—and that they're protecting nothing and nobody at all.

CAPTION: This world is a treasure trove of resources, just ripe for the taking. A godsend for our people—too plum to just pass up.

Panel 2:

Shockwave sits at a console, trying to control something. He is facing the reader's direction.

CAPTION: It happened years ago now...

Panel 3:

CAPTION: A visitor from the stars crashed on our world...

A streak of light in the Earth's atmosphere as Shockwave's ship crashes.

Panel 4:

A group of humans in bio-hazard suits enter the wreckage. The ship is old and covered in moss and debris now.

CAPTION: We wouldn't find the ship for centuries, but when we did, we were pleased to discover that it's data tracks had survived enough to provide us with its point of origin.

Panel 5:

Sam look up at the vast alien cityscape beyond him. In the foreground, the other humans, gun emplacements, etc. are also present (for continuity, but they are not the focus of the frame). Should evoke a sense of wonder

CAPTION: Here.

Panel 1:

A shot of humans in exo suits near a lander of some kind as they investigate a new world for the first time (I was thinking of something like astronauts near the lunar lander type of thing).

CAPTION: Our society has survived a long time. But we've outgrown our home world of Earth, expanded into the cosmos and used what resources we've scavenged on the worlds we've settled.

Panel 2:

CAPTION: This world is different than others. Not only does it have mechanical life on it but we've detected massive amounts of substance XPR-2819, what many of us call "Energon". It's a super energy substance that's ten times more powerful and efficient than anything we've encountered.

A massive machine as it taps a pool of Energon on Cybertron.

CAPTION: Many worlds, Earth included, have Energon deposits—but we've never found such an abundance of it on a world before. This changes *everything*...

Panel 3:

CAPTION: My superiors are ecstatic...

Cargo trucks carry tanks of Energon to a waiting saucer drop ship. Armed guards and gun emplacements are everywhere.

Panel 4:

Sam looks at the destroyed Autobots nearby.

CAPTION: For my part, I'm just glad no one's truly getting hurt...

Panel #1:

A young blonde haired woman approaches him.

SAM: Report.

Panel #2:

The two talk.

CARLY: Our exploration units report that local resistance seems to be easing up some.

SAM: You wouldn't know it from the action we've been seeing here.

CAPTION: Her name is Carly Wilkinson, one of my I.E.L lieutenants. A capable woman and easily one of the loveliest looking I've ever encountered.

Panel #3:

She looks off at the destroyed Autobots as does Sam. Focus should be more on them, side by side though.

CARLY: Maybe their spirits are broken...

SAM: They're machines, Carly. They don't have spirits to break, only programming to follow.

Panel #4:

Close-up of Carly.

CARLY: Can we be so certain? It's not like we asked them when we showed up. We just assumed they were like the machines we build back home.

Panel #5:

Close-up of Sam.

SAM: I think we can be. Recall subject XR-7011. It's a simple, inanimate machine from this world. If it's incapable of independent thought, why should we assume these robots are any different?

Panel #1:

CAPTION: Subject XR-7011. What appeared to be the pilot of the downed craft my ancestors located on Earth. It took some time to get it to a functional level but once we did, it answered our questions willing as any machine programmed to do so would.

A picture of Shockwave's severed head and some cables hanging out the bottom of it. Several wires go to the head to give it power. The head is suspended above some kind of pedestal in a high tech looking room of some kind. In the foreground, two men armed with big rifles and wearing armor guard the head.

CAPTION: Never once did it hint it was capable of independent thought. Never once did it act as if it possessed any real kind of intelligence.

Panel #2:

CAPTION: That's because it doesn't. End of story.

Carly gazing at him.

CARLY: Are we certain it wasn't damaged too much in the crash? We have no way of knowing if it truly represents the life forms as they are here.

Panel #3:

Sam looks at her.

SAM: I haven't heard any of these robots get up and complain about our treatment of them. Come on, Carly... this is ridiculous.

Panel #4:

Carly shrugs. Sam is in the panel too. Perhaps a side shot of them.

CARLY: I'm just giving you something think about, Sam. It's dangerous to make assumptions about things when you don't have all the information. You of all people should know that.

SAM: Point taken.

Panel #1:

Sam close-up.

SAM: Tell you what, if these machines start suddenly trying to appeal for a cease-fire then I'll be the first one to consider it, okay?

Panel #2:

Carly smiles.

CARLY: Deal.

Panel #3:

Sam and Carly walk along some of the human armaments (including gun emplacements and mecha. Also some kind of futuristic tanks).

CAPTION: She can be tempestuous, thoughtful, funny...

SAM: Lunch?

Panel #4:

Side shot as Sam regards Carly. She is focussed on their destination, not on his gaze.

CAPTION: In every way, a Yin to my Yang.

CAPTION: I've known her for two years now and there is nobody closer to me. I want to marry her someday soon but this damned invasion put those plans on hold. At least until we can get a real foothold here.

CAPTION: Good thing she's so patient...

Panel #1:

The two go inside a portable style building (I'm thinking some kind of portable buildings for the invaders to use for things like eating, sleeping, etc. But conventional tents seem a bit too low tech to me).

CAPTION: However did I get so lucky?

Panel #2:

The two approach an empty table with their two trays of food.

CARLY: –projections of eighteen months for the completion of the phase.

SAM: Um-huh.

Panel #3:

The two sit facing each other. In the background there are some people sitting and/or milling about.

SAM: That's still a long time, though. And we don't know how long we'll continue encountering resistance.

CARLY: At least it's something to aim for.

Panel #4:

Sam takes her hand in his.

SAM: Eighteen months is a long time to wait for our nuptials. I wish we could go get married right away.

Panel #5:

Carly smiles.

CARLY: Did you have something in mind, dear?

Panel #1:

Sam close-up. He is also smiling now.

SAM: We could go up to the *Artemis* tomorrow and...

Panel #2:

Side shot of them at the table. He is still holding her hand.

CARLY: We could, couldn't we? But you wouldn't dare...

Panel #3:

Sam close-up.

SAM: Nah. I'd rather wait and do this right then a quickie marriage. I owe you that much, at least...

Panel #4:

Carly perspective.

CARLY: As long as you're happy, baby, I'm happy. You know that.

Panel #1:

Sam perspective.

SAM: It's got to be memorable, Carly. Something we can tell the grandchildren about. I want everything to be right and perfect for us.

SAM: Besides, we've waited this long... we can wait a little longer, right?

Panel #2:

Both of them at the table. Both are smiling.

CARLY: I'd wait forever for you, Sam.

SAM: That's the girl I love.

Panel #3:

The two of them look up at a noise.

SFX: KRA-KOOM!

SAM: What the?

Panel #4:

Sam rises to leave. Carly is still at the table.

SAM: Stay here. I'll be right back...

CARLY: Be careful, Sam!

Panel #1:

Sam rushes out and looks shocked at what he sees.

CAPTION: It can't be!

Panel 2 (splash):

Megatron, flanked by Starscream, Soundwave, Skywarp and Blitzwing attack! Laying waste to the humans beyond them. A bunch of fire and debris are present in the foreground where they've already struck.

Panel #1:

Megatron strikes a mecha, tearing it's head away. A pilot is seen falling from the debris.

Panel #2:

Starscream and Skywarp shoot some tanks, destroying them instantly.

Panel #3:

Blitzwing takes out two mecha. One with his electro sword while simultaneously blasting another one in the head.

Panel #4:

Megatron tosses a tank over his shoulder like it was nothing. Soundwave is in the background attacking something off panel as well.

MEGATRON: Fools! This world is *mine*!

Panel #5:

Sam gazes about him in horror, seeing the ruin and debris. Nearby, slightly off panel is a bloodied human arm and hand (the rest of the body is off panel).

Panel #1 (inset): Sam looks up in shock.

Panel #2 (splash):

Megatron's hand is rushing at him, about to crush him!

Panel #1:

CAPTION: A thousand things flash through my mind in an instant...

Sam looks upward at the left corner. There is a shadow of something darkening him. His mouth is open and his expression is one of terror

CAPTION: Life. Love. Hope. Pain. My childhood. My fears. All of it one jumbled mess as my mind tries futilely to react.

Panel #2:

(Should be the bigger panel of the two).

Sam stands looking at the background (a full shot of his back, in other words). Beyond him, a vast hand is open and about to crush him. The hand dominates the frame, looming over him menacingly. If there's room, put Megatron in the background beyond it (it is his hand).

CAPTION: But it's all too late...

Panel #1:

Carly tackles him full body, forcing both of them out of the way at the last instant.

CAPTION: Too late...

Panel #2:

Megatron's hand slams into the ground. In front of it, Sam and Carly are thrown wildly through the air by the impact.

Panel #3:

CAPTION: And then, somebody somewhere smiled at me.

Sam raises his head up and sees Carly's big eyes gazing into his. She is smiling. She is beside him on the ground.

CAPTION: And suddenly I wasn't out of time anymore...

Panel #4:

Carly grabs his hand and pulls him behind her, both running away. Behind them, Megatron looks on. Starscream and Soundwave are behind him.

CARLY: Come on!

Panel #5:

Soundwave looks to Megatron (head shot).

SOUNDWAVE: Incoming signals detected.

Panel #1:

Close-up of Sam and Carly as they move away.

SAM: Where the hell are our reinforcements?

Panel #2:

Carly looks up, shielding her eyes from the sunlight.

CARLY: I think—

Panel #3:

(Should be a bit larger frame).

CAPTION (V.O.): —they're here.

Several high-tech fighters soar toward the camera. One is in the lead while about five others follow suite.

Panel #4:

Megatron watches them come. He is flanked by the others (Soundwave, Starscream, Blitzwing and Skwarp).

STARSCREAM: Perhaps now is the time for a strategic retreat?

MEGATRON: Indeed. We are done here.

Panel #1:

Somewhere nearby (but removed from immediate danger. I was thinking some higher up vantage point maybe) Optimus Prime observes events (it is only him—it doesn't matter if we see what he sees).

CAPTION: And so it begins...

PROWL (off panel): Optimus?

Panel #2:

Optimus turns to see Prowl behind him. Ultra Magnus is also there.

OPTIMUS: You came to see it as well?

Panel #3:

Prowl joins Optimus and the two gaze downward at the retreating Decepticons and the arriving humans. Ultra Magnus stands behind them silently.

PROWL: I have to admit, as desperate ideas go, this one is up there.

OPTIMUS: I had no choice. This was the only way...

CAPTION: Even as I say that, a small part of me wonders if it's really true...

Panel #4:

Prowl looks at Optimus.

PROWL: Really? I can think of some other ways.

OPTIMUS: Prowl, we've already discussed this—

Panel #5:

Prowl reacts. Optimus is in the foreground and maybe slightly off panel (the emphasis here should be on Prowl).

PROWL: Then maybe you weren't listening, Prime. I said we needed to change our strategy—come up with a better way to fight these invaders. I never said we should unleash Cybertron's greatest monster on them!

Panel #6:

Prime responds. Behind him, Ultra Magnus is pensive, unsure whether or not he should intervene.

PRIME: Megatron is Cybertron's greatest tactician--a mind unlike no other. If we cannot deal with this threat, rest assured that *he* can.

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Panel #1:

Prowl reacts, his fist clenched passionately.

PROWL: And if he succeeds, then what? We'll have another Civil War on our hands! We were fortunate last time, but what if we're not this time?

Panel #2:

Optimus reacts. Prowl is in the foreground, facing him while Optimus gazes off to their left (i.e. the battle ground), his mind unsettled by the realities he is forced to face. Behind them (Prime's right), Ultra Magnus is also present.

PROWL: How many more will have to die?

CAPTION: Part of me knows he's right...

Panel #3:

Close-up of Prime gazing off.

CAPTION: When we defeated them, we were determined. Resolute. Something has happened to me over the years though. I've grown weaker, uncertain...

CAPTION: I could not find another way to stop the Invaders. Megatron's strength seemed the only real option available to me.

Panel #4:

CAPTION: Have I failed myself? And more importantly, my people?

Prime responds to Prowl.

PRIME: Things haven't played out yet, Prowl. Rest assured, once we are done with the

Decepticons, they will either cooperate or be put back in stasis. I will *not* allow them to start the War all over again.

PROWL: I hope you're right, Prime. I really do.

Panel #5:

Prowl turns and leaves, leaving Optimus and Ultra Magnus.

CAPTION: I sound confident to him. I know my words have appeased his tensions—if only momentarily. But it is enough for him and for them, for now...

CAPTION: I wish I could be so certain of my own words. Yet I feel an apprehension in my core because I do not know how this will all end or, if and when the time comes, whether or not I will be able to honor my word.

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Panel #1:

Ultra Magnus approaches Optimus Prime.

ULTRA MAGNUS: The Decepticons performed admirably, Optimus. It's hard not to be proud of what they accomplished.

PRIME: Hmh...

Panel #2:

Close-up of Ultra Magnus.

ULTRA MAGNUS: We have to assume their odds of defeating these humans is high. Did you have a definite plan for what to do after that eventuality?

Panel #3:

Prime turns to look at Ultra Magnus, who is in the foreground (back/shoulder to us).

PRIME: As I've said, I promised them they could have relocate to our second moon—on the condition they relinquish their goals of domination and cease productions of weapons and troops.

Panel #4:

Ultra Magnus talks to Optimus Prime (upper body shot, perhaps?)

ULTRA MAGNUS: Do you actually believe Megatron will settle for amnesty, considering his past behavior?

PRIME: I believe people can change, if given the right circumstances to do so. Perhaps... this time will be different.

Panel #5:

Ultra Magnus gazes at the battlefield below.

ULTRA MAGNUS: Perhaps...

ULTRA MAGNUS: Perhaps not.

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Panel #1:

Ultra Magnus turns back to Optimus.

ULTRA MAGNUS: I'm no leader, Optimus. Only a soldier. I take orders and do my best to follow them. Certainly, I'm in no position to judge your decisions.

ULTRA MAGNUS: But consider this: It's very likely that Megatron will play by your rules only until this conflict is resolved. Once he's got what he wanted, he may very well choose to defy you—we have to be prepared for that possibility.

Panel #2:

Optimus and Ultra Magnus talk some more.

PRIME: Do you any thoughts on how we might do so?

Panel #3:

Ultra Magnus close-up.

ULTRA MAGNUS: Honestly? No. But we'd better come up with something soon—we can't let the war start again. There might be no stopping Megatron this time if he's allowed to get going.

Panel #4:

Prime pats Ultra Magnus on the shoulder.

PRIME: Then we'd best get to work...

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Panel #1

Several humans in body armor sit around a large circular table. Sam stands at the center addressing them. Behind him on the wall is a screen with some kind of technical readout. The room is futuristic looking.

SAM: Clearly this latest attack by the robots was the most brutal since we landed here two months ago.

HUMAN #1: And the most successful too.

Panel #2:

One of the humans addresses Sam. The human has brown hair and blue eyes. His body armor has some kind of markings on it, akin to military medal/decorations.

GENERAL ABERNATHY: Do you have any specific strategy in mind to address this apparent upturn in the robots strategy?

Panel #3:

Sam close-up.

SAM: Not at this time, sir, no.

SAM: The best recommendation I can make is that we move to double our security on all the extraction sites. Make sure they don't have any openings to exploit.

Panel #4:

A woman on the council speaks up.

HUMAN #2: Are we certain this change in strategy isn't an indication of some kind of rudimentary intelligence on the machines part?

Panel #5:

Gen. Abernathy replies to her.

GENERAL ABERNATHY: Grace, we've had this discussion before...

Panel #6:

Human #2 (aka GRACE): I just think we need to examine all the possibilities in this situation. We don't know for certain the robots aren't self aware after some fashion.

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Panel #1:

Sam looks to General Abernathy.

SAM: If I may... There are several animals native to Earth that act out of complex instinct when their survival is threatened. This is likely no different.

Panel #2:

Gen. Abernathy looks to Grace.

GENERAL ABERNATHY: I concur. There are several possibilities here and this one change in tactics is no clear indication one way or the other. Unless we are presented with further conclusive evidence, I move that we continue as planned.

Panel #3:

Sam looks to the rest of the war council at the table.

SAM: All in favor?

EVERYONE: Aye.

Panel #4:

Sam addresses them.

SAM: Very well, then. We shall double our security measures. Let us hope this was an isolated incident and not the beginning of some wide spread insurgency among these machines. We don't need more trouble...

Panel #5:

Gen. Abernathy speaks.

GENERAL ABERNATHY: Either way, we'll deal with it. Surviving trouble seems to be what we do best.

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Panel #1:

(A bit larger panel).

A crowded room of Autobots and Decepticons. All of the characters introduced so far are present (i.e. Ultra Magnus, Prowl, Skywarp, Starscream, etc.) Megatron is in the center of the room near a larger computer screen (maybe with a grid on it). Soundwave and Starscream are near to him. Optimus Prime is also nearby. Megatron is addressing the crowd.

MEGATRON: As you all know, our initial attack on the Humans was a success. Their forces were taken by surprise and forced to scatter.

Panel #2:

Megatron close-up.

MEGATRON: However, we cannot grow overconfident. It's inevitable that the humans will strengthen their defenses and now that they know we are out there, the element of surprise will be lost to us.

Panel #3:

A shot of the crowd. Megatron can be the foreground looking out at them, gauging their reactions.

MEGATRON: We need an advantage over them—and I believe I have it.

Panel #4:

Megatron turns to his left where Soundwave stands.

MEGATRON: Soundwave!

Panel #1:

Soundwave transforms before the startled audience into an armored human vehicle.

Panel #2:

Megatron gestures to the screen behind him which shows a technical schematic with a picture of a robot form and a vehicle beside it. Added some lines pointing to parts on the two forms to make it seem more technical (like the schematic is emphasizing certain systems).

MEGATRON: Transformation! We have developed a way to reconfigure our machine bodies into alternate vehicle forms.

Panel #3:

Megatron close-up.

MEGATRON: This new technology will allow us to disguise ourselves as the humans vehicles, hiding in plain sight. We can move into their bases undetected and strike before it's too late. The Decepticons will have the ultimate advantage over the humans!

Panel #4:

Prime off to the right side of Megatron.

PRIME: You mean it will give *all of us* an advantage over the humans don't you, Megatron?

Panel #5:

Close-up of Megatron.

MEGATRON: Of course, Prime. I'm... not used to think in the plural yet. Forgive me.

Panel #1:

Prime close-up.

PRIME: Of course, Megatron.

Panel #2:

Megatron addresses the crowd. Behind him, Optimus Prime and Ultra Magnus exchange worried glances.

MEGATRON: Now, this is my plan...

Panel #3:

Sam and Carly sit atop a hill side and take in the sunset over the Cybertronian horizon. There is a brilliant display of color in the sky.

CAPTION: There really are some beautiful things on this world...

Panel #4:

Carly gazes at Sam.

CARLY: What's on your mind?

SAM: Not much, really.

Panel #5:

Sam replies to Carly.

SAM: Just thinking about the new security measures we've been implementing. I hope they're enough.

CARLY: Don't worry about it, Sam. Your people know what they're doing...

Panel #1:

Carly moves up beside him.

SAM: I'm just worried something else is going to go wrong... I can't help it.

Panel #2:

Carly goes to kiss him.

CARLY: Maybe you need something else on your mind, hmm?

Panel #3:

The two are embraced from their kiss when they see an object in the sky, heading away from them. The shot can be a silhouette from a distance.

CARLY: What's that?

SAM: It... looks like a bird.

CARLY: I didn't think this world had any indigeneous wildlife.

Panel #4:

Sam close-up, looking skyward. Carly is near to his side, also looking up.

SAM: Neither did I.

Panel #5:

A shot of Laserbeak as he soars away from them, his destination unknown.

Panel #1:

The humans begin to harvest Energon at a site. The large machine (from issue #1) is siphoning Energon from a deposit just below the surface. Beyond the machine, many armored guards hold large rifles. Additional mecha, gun emplacements and other vehicles protect the site. (Emphasize the security more than the machine in this panel).

Panel #2:

An explosion catches the guards attention, putting them on alert.

Panel #3:

Suddenly, a gun emplacement turns and opens fire on the humans nearby.

Panel #4:

Other vehicles open fire on the humans and their regular vehicles, destroying them in fiery succession.

Panel #5:

A human looks up in shock.

HUMAN: Holy--

Panel #1:
(SPLASH)

Amidst the chaos, several vehicles change into robots and begin to attack en masse. The background is one of fire, destruction and madness.

Panel #1:

Two humans react in shock as Megatron converts from the gun emplacement into his large robot form.

Panel #2:

Megatron's twin cannons incinerate the pair.

MEGATRON: Kill them all! Leave *nothing* behind!

Panel #3:

A scene of carnage as the Decepticons and Autobots cut loose on the humans, destroying both them and their equipment.

Panel #4:

Optimus Prime transforms from an armored convoy (a transport truck with guns basically, but more futuristic looking) and fires off panel at some unseen enemy.

Panel #5

Optimus Prime observes Megatron, Soundwave and Starscream as they slaughter the humans.

CAPTION: They revel in this.

Panel #6:

CAPTION: While we fight for survival, the Decepticons fight because they *enjoy* it.

Megatron bashes his hands into a futuristic tank, destroying in one great strike. His expression is one of glee.

Panel #1:

Optimus close-up. His expression seems thoughtful (okay, it's not an easy one to do with Prime, but you know what I mean).

CAPTION: Can we ever hope to live together in peace—or have I just been a fool of the highest order?

Panel #2:

Prime dodges a mecha attack and strikes back simultaneously.

CAPTION: I'm afraid I already know the answer...

Panel #3:

The various Transformers gather up a group of about a dozen human survivors together in the middle of the frame. Megatron, Soundwave and Starscream are front and center. Optimus Prime is nearby as well.

MEGATRON: It seems we have won a victory here today...

STARSCREAM: What about these human germs?

Panel #4:

Megatron looks him in the optic.

MEGATRON: Kill them all!

Panel #5:

Optimus Prime steps up to Megatron.

PRIME: Wait! Is that really necessary? We've already won!

Panel #6:

Megatron gestures at the humans.

MEGATRON: It is, Prime. We need to send these invaders a message—that we are willing to return their brutality to them--tenfold, if need be.

MEGATRON: Only when they understand that we will undertake any means necessary will they reconsider their ways.

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Panel #1:

Prime looks resigned.

PRIME: Very well, then.

Panel #2:

Megatron looks to Starscream. Megatron's expression is one of triumph (Starscream also seems happy).

Panel #3:

Starscream shoots with his cannons (the blast goes off-panel, where the humans would be).

Panel #4:

Sam in full body armor leads other armored personnel (with helmets). There are several mecha and other mobile weapons with them. He is kneeling on the ground, putting his hand on it, as if feeling for something.

CAPTION: This isn't good...

Panel #5:

CAPTION: Three days and six attacks on our sites. Each time, everything is demolished and all personnel are executed. Not one single survivor in *any* instance.

Sam has risen and gazes at the battlefield. There are numerous pockmarks and ruined equipment about. Several charred bodies line the field randomly as well.

Panel #1:

CAPTION: Something has definitely changed with the robots—but what? And why now?

Close-up on Sam.

CAPTION: It's like they've adapted their tactics—becoming more brutal to better eliminate us and terrorize the remaining populace.

CAPTION: Adaption is an aspect of intelligence, isn't it? Have we made a critical mistake here and misjudged our enemy?

Panel #2:

Starscream flies through space, a part of a force of fighters heading back to the *Athena*, the humans command ship.

CAPTION (V.O.): How long must we continue tolerating these Autobots, Megatron?

Panel #3:

Flashback to Megatron and Starscream walking down a darkened Cybertronian corridor.

MEGATRON: Patience, Starscream, patience.

MEGATRON: We are strong but even we cannot hope to fight a war on two fronts.

Panel #4:

Starscream looks at Megatron.

STARSCREAM: I'm just tired of their weak minded foolishness. Optimus Prime sought to protect those fleshlings from their just fate—even after all they've done to his own people! What a fool!

Panel #1:

Megatron close-up.

MEGATRON: We need Prime's forces—for now. But it will not always be that way, Starscream. Once this conflict with the humans is over, so is our truce!

Panel #2:

Starscream addresses Megatron.

STARSCREAM: They are weak, but even Prime is no fool. Once the humans are defeated, he will certainly expect treachery from us. Perhaps he has already even planned some way to put us down.

Panel #3:

Megatron talks to Starscream.

MEGATRON: Agreed. But we will need an advantage when the time comes, Starscream.

STARSCREAM: What's on your mind, Mighty one?

Panel #4:

Megatron close-up.

MEGATRON: The humans ships. They must be big and powerful to have traveled so far...

MEGATRON: I want you to go up there in your disguise and investigate. If they seem suitable, then perhaps we can commandeer one for our own ends.

Panel #5:

Starscream agrees.

STARSCREAM: As you command, Megatron.

Panel #1:

Starscream veers off slightly from the other fighters in his squadron.

Panel #2:

He soars aboard some kind of docking bay on the mothership.

Panel #3:

Once a couple of docking crew have departed, he transforms into his robot mode.

Panel #4:

Cautiously, Starscream stalks down a silent corridor.

Panel #5:

He hides down a small nook as three mecha go down another corridor.

Panel #6:

He rounds another corridor and comes across two large sealed doors.

Panel #7:

He opens the doors and find two dead humans guards on the deck below (cables have snuck around their necks, apparently strangling them).

Panel #8:

He gazes up in shock.

STARSCREAM: YOU!

Panel #1

(SPLASH):

Starscream gazes up at Shockwave's severed head (as mentioned in the first issue). The head looks the same as before—wires going to and from it, providing power, etc. The head is suspended in air a bit, perhaps held up by a forcefield of some kind.

STARSCREAM: Shockwave!

SHOCKWAVE: Greetings, Starscream. I have been looking forward to getting reacquainted with you for a very, very long time...

SPLASH:

A wrecked Cybertronian room of some sort. Megatron is beaten and damaged. He lies in some debris (like a broken wall). Optimus Prime's foot is on his chest. Prime's rifle barrel is trained on Megatron's head. Megatron's expression is one of contempt and defeat. Prime's optics glow brilliantly. Prime's pose is one of energy and determination while Megatron's posture suggests defeat.

PRIME: It is over, Megatron. Finished! Your tyrannical plans to conquer the Galaxy end here and now!

MEGATRON:erh...

Panel #1:

A close-up of Optimus Prime's red optics (wide frame shot).

CAPTION: That was a very long time ago... I was a different person back then.

Panel #2:

CAPTION: Maybe a better person...

Optimus stands on a battlefield with various Autobots and Decepticons. All around the Cybertronian landscape are wrecked human mecha and vehicles. Sporadic fires also dot the landscape.

CAPTION: I used to think all of this was necessary. The humans are our enemies after all. They show us no regard as life forms, why should we be any better?

Panel #3:

Soundwave trains a weapon on a small group of humans below him (he is behind them and they are in the foreground).

CAPTION: Now, I begin to wonder...

Panel #4:

Same shot but this time Soundwave's rifle is discharging, the energy blast is annihilating the humans.

CAPTION: Was resurrecting Megatron the right thing to do? Is fighting fire with fire the correct solution?

Panel #5:

A shot of charred skeletons littering the ground.

CAPTION: Or should we have tried something different? Perhaps tried harder to reach out to the humans and open a line of communication rather than resorting to retaliation.

Panel #1:

CAPTION: I know what Megatron's choice is...

Megatron stands surrounded by Soundwave and Skywarp. He is elated at their success at this latest battle site.

CAPTION: ...but I am no longer certain it is mine.

Panel #2:

Prime gazes off at the horizon.

CAPTION: I fear that one day soon there will be a reckoning...

Panel #3:

Starscream gazes off at the disembodied head of Shockwave.

STARSCREAM: H-how is this possible?

SHOCKWAVE: You never were one for pleasantries, were you?

Panel #4:

Close-up of Shockwave.

SHOCKWAVE: Very well, then. Doubtlessly, you wish to know how I ended up here and not in stasis on Cybertron with the rest of our brethren.

Panel #5:

A ship rockets away from the surface of Cybertron.

CAPTION: Before the Great War reached its inevitable burn-out, I was performing off-world missions...

Panel #6:

CAPTION: Or so Megatron believed. Truthfully, I had foreseen our side running out of Energon supplies at some point in the future.

Shockwave holding up an Energon cube in his hand. It sparkles alluringly.

Panel #1:

CAPTION: Megatron was not interested in such trivialities. He had commissioned off-world missions for several scouts such as myself to locate new worlds to tap for energy.

Shockwave walks among a primitive world full of dinosaurs.

CAPTION: I decided instead to gather as much Energon as I could and hide deposits of it on various worlds.

CAPTION: For the future...

Panel #2:

Starscream listens intently as Shockwave speaks.

SHOCKWAVE: Over the millennia, the deposits seeped into those worlds resources, mixing with the native energy sources. Augmenting them and increasing their size tenfold.

Panel #3:

CAPTION: Before the Great War ended, I escaped Cybertron a final time. Unfortunately, my vessel was damaged before it could clear the war zone.

Above Cybertron, Shockwave's ship is attacked by an Autobot one and damaged.

Panel #4:

CAPTION: I set course for the furthest seed world I had created. A world where I had stored an abundance of Energon. The life forms that now inhabit this world call it "Earth".

Shockwave's damaged ship soars through Hyperspace.

Panel #5:

Shockwave's ship burns through the atmosphere of Earth, about to crash.

CAPTION: Of course, I was unable to control my descent when I arrived and ended up crashing my vessel there instead.

Panel #1:

CAPTION: I was badly injured and forced to go into stasis-lock to avoid an even worse fate.

A group of humans in bio-hazard suits enter the wreckage. The ship is old and covered in moss and debris now.

CAPTION: Centuries passed before the humans would stumble upon my vessel.

Panel #2:

Shockwave's tattered body on an examination table. Around him, some technicians work, connecting cables, etc. Beyond them, a room of scientists ready computer schematics, detecting information in his cerebral circuitry.

CAPTION: Once my higher functions were brought back online, they scanned my memory banks and discovered that I had been to other worlds with Energon.

CAPTION: They had discovered the reserves on their own world and tapped them years before, utilizing them to enhance their own society.

Panel #3:

CAPTION: Of course, their reserves were in danger of running low and their race was now too dependent on the Energon to turn to alternate fuel sources and still gain the same energy output. My discovery was a blessing to them...

A scene of a futuristic human society. Perhaps some hover cars and a cityscape of some kind. All the people pictured are happy and content.

Panel #4:

The humans inspect Shockwave's severed head in a high tech room of some kind. They are checking his readings, etc.

CAPTION: They believed I was like the machines of their world. Inert and inanimate. A device built by an organic being and not self aware. I permitted them their ignorance as it suited my own

plans.

Panel #5:

The human fleet hover over a world with a ring and maybe a couple of moons in the background.

CAPTION: I even allowed them to find two more of my reserve worlds and tap them before finally being able to direct them back here.

CAPTION: They were enticed by the thought of much more Energon as well the ability to study my people and perhaps devise a method of constructing their own slave machines.

Panel #1:

Shockwave's head talks to Starscream.

SHOCKWAVE: I used my down time to study their primitive computer systems and learn how to assert my own control. Once they had invaded Cybertron, I determined the Autobots were the dominant faction now and that Megatron and the other Decepticons must have been defeated or destroyed.

Panel #2:

Starscream close-up.

STARSCREAM: Thanks to that fool Optimus Prime, we're back now! And once these humans have been dealt with, we'll take what is ours!

SHOCKWAVE (off panel): Indeed...

Panel #3:

Shockwave close-up.

SHOCKWAVE: With my control over the humans ships and systems, they won't be able to resist us. The Autobots will be at the mercy of our superior firepower and numbers.

Panel #4:

Shockwave speaks to Starscream (side shot maybe).

SHOCKWAVE: Tell me something, Starscream. Are you still completely loyal to our beloved

Megatron?

STARSCREAM: That depends...

Panel #5:

Shockwave's perspective. He is visible and so is Starscream in the background.

SHOCKWAVE: On what?

Panel #6:

Starscream close-up.

STARSCREAM: On whether or not there's a better deal to be had out there.

Panel #7:

Shockwave close-up.

SHOCKWAVE: In that case, I have a proposition for you...

Panel #1:

A video image of a battle field and several vehicles.

ABERNATHY (o.p): There! Watch the center closely.

Panel #2:

The same image but this time two of the vehicles are shifting into robots.

ABERNATHY (o.p): That's how they did it.

Panel #3:

General Abernathy addresses a table full of his comrades. They are all listening intently to him. Behind him on the wall is a large display with the Transformers we saw in the previous panels on screen. Abernathy is the main focus of this image (obviously).

ABERNATHY: Somehow our enemy has found a way to reconfigure themselves so that they can

be disguised as our own vehicles and equipment.

ABERNATHY: That means they can effectively be anywhere at any time.

Panel #4:

Sam Witwicky as well as a woman (in her 40s) and another man (also middle aged) sit at the table in this frame. The background is some kind of high tech looking wall (which is not terribly important to the image, but...)

WOMAN: How is this possible? Does this mean the robots are self aware after all?

MAN: Nonsense!

CAPTION: Is it, I wonder...

Panel #5:

The man addresses the woman while Sam looks thoughtfully at him.

MAN: This is simply advanced programming routines. Of course they're programmed for self preservation. Their creators would've imparted some sort of sampling of their own beliefs and fears on these automatons. In the end, it means nothing!

CAPTION: And that's the crux of it, isn't it? Are they alive or merely programmed to act alive? And, ultimately, does such a distinction make any real difference?

Panel #1:

The woman responds as Sam listens nearby.

CAPTION: One *could* make the same argument about us...

WOMAN: Semantics! They *are* alive! This is the proof we've been looking for—right here!

Panel #2:

The man goes to reply.

MAN: I don't think—

ABERNATHY (off panel): ENOUGH!

Panel #3:

General Abernathy addresses the table. His hands both down on the table top. His expression is a serious one.

ABERNATHY: This isn't getting us anywhere. Whether they're sentient or not is immaterial at this point. We're in too deep now. Either way, they are a threat and our enemy. We've called this meeting to discuss our next move, not philosophy.

Panel #4:

Sam sitting at the table.

SAM: No argument here, Clayton. But I do have to wonder what we can do against something like this. This tactic is totally out of left field.

Panel #5:

Abernathy addresses Sam. The others can be visible in the frame as well (there should be more than just four people at the table. It's just that only the four have spoken in this scene.)

ABERNATHY: We've had some ideas on how to combat this. If the robots have switched to stealth methods to infiltrate our encampments then perhaps we should utilize a similar tactic against them.

Panel #1:

Sam responds.

SAM: But how can we hope to do that? We're not exactly transformable robots...

Panel #2:

Abernathy smiles and explains.

ABERNATHY: No, of course not. But we do have *other* options open to us. I'll call up the files and show you all for yourselves...

Panel #3:

Elsewhere, Starscream and Megatron walk alone in a corridor somewhere and talk. No one else is around.

STARSCREAM: And that's everything, mighty one.

MEGATRON: This is very good news, Starscream. With Shockwave up there and able to disable the humans war machine, we no longer need fear their power.

Panel #4:

Starscream close-up.

STARSCREAM: I assume we have no more need of the Autobots then?

Panel #5:

Megatron smiles wickedly.

MEGATRON: You assume correctly, old friend. We will soon cast off this burden we've been forced to bear since Optimus reactivated us. We shall soon be truly free...

Panel #1:

Starscream talks to Megatron. Megatron is visible in the forefront of frame while Starscream talks.

STARSCREAM: Why not kill the Autobots now and be done with it?

Panel #2:

Megatron close-up.

MEGATRON: Patience, Starscream, patience. To simply up and kill them now would be a mercy.

MEGATRON: No, I want to wait and strike at the appropriate moment. I want Optimus Prime to watch as all his carefully laid plans fall apart. To have built his hopes for peace up and then, in one definite moment, to crush them utterly. Our victory will be so much sweeter when our enemy is shattered and broken, knowing that he can do nothing as we triumph. I want Prime to welcome oblivion—to crave it, knowing the alternative is far worse.

Panel #3:

Starscream smiles at Megatron.

STARSCREAM: You always did have a way with words, Megatron. I'd missed that...

Panel #4:

Megatron beside Starscream. He is turned to Starscream.

MEGATRON: There will be time for many more speeches once the Autobots and humans are destroyed for good. The time when we truly spread out in the cosmos and seize what is ours!

Panel #5:

Megatron gazes up at tattered Autobot symbol on the wall nearby.

MEGATRON: This Optimus Prime we now serve is a pale shadow of what he once was. A pathetic fool and a coward... a true warrior would've trusted his instincts, not sought out the Decepticons to do his dirty work for him.

Panel #1:

Megatron close-up. His optics are aglow.

MEGATRON: It would be a mercy to put him out of his misery now.

MEGATRON: A mercy that I will gladly provide him!

Panel #2:

Hot Rod gazes out a crack in a door (he's looking through the crack, we can't see the other side).

HOT ROD: All clear.

Panel #3:

Hot Rod closes the door tight as a gathering of Autobots convenes. Optimus Prime leads it while Ultra Magnus, Prowl, Grapple, Jazz, Blaster, Hound and Springer are scattered about the room. They are all fixated on Prime.

OPTIMUS: Very good, Hot Rod. Let us convene then.

Panel #4:

Prowl speaks to Optimus.

PROWL: I want to know what you plan to do about the Decepticons violent tactics against the humans. Killing helpless prisoners goes against everything we stand for!

Panel #5:

Ultra Magnus replies. Hot Rod is seated nearby to him.

ULTRA MAGNUS: I think they're just doing what is most prudent in this case. We can't allow the humans to survive and retaliate against us.

HOT ROD: He's got a point, Prowl...

Panel #6

Jazz jumps in to the debate.

JAZZ: Doesn't make it any less wrong, Hot Rod.

Panel #1:

Optimus Prime tries to address the group.

OPTIMUS PRIME: Please, my fellow Autobots! This is getting us nowhere!

Panel #2:

Springer speaks. Ultra Magnus and Hot Rod are nearby.

SPRINGER: Why aren't you being more fervent in opposing Megatron's tactics, Prime? You are our leader, aren't you? Why don't you *act* like one!

ULTRA MAGNUS: That's uncalled for, Springer!

Panel #3:

CAPTION: He's not wrong. Neither is Prowl or Jazz...

Optimus watches the debate unfold.

CAPTION: I'm not the leader I once was. Perhaps I have lost my drive to protect my values allowing others to assert their own in their place.

CAPTION: I keep telling the others I can contain Megatron's ambitions. Is that true or am I just lying to myself to justify my decision to reactivate the Decepticons?

Panel #4:

CAPTION: Am I the only one able to contain Megatron? Or would another be better suited to the task? And if so, why do I feel the need to hamper their attempts at doing so?

Optimus puts his hand out to get the others attention. The others are visible in the foreground.

OPTIMUS: We have tolerated the Decepticons brutal tactics to this point—some of us even believe they are justified in their actions.

Panel #5:

Optimus Prime close-up.

OPTIMUS: Others among us do not. But we do need the Decepticons—at least for now. Once the situation with the humans is dealt with, Megatron *will* agree to live by our laws or we will force the Decepticons back into stasis. They have no other option.

Panel #1:

Prowl speaks up.

PROWL: What if the Decepticons won't go? Are you going to be up to forcing them, even if it means more violence?

Panel #2:

Optimus replies to him. Prowl is visible in the background while Prime is in the foreground.

OPTIMUS: We will do what we must to ensure their compliance, no matter the means.

Panel #3:

Prowl, Grapple, Jazz and Blaster react to Prime's words. All seem worried or aggravated.

CAPTION: They have their doubts even as I have mine. But, like it or not, I have unleashed the

Decepticons back into our society and now I find I must deal with the consequences

Panel #4:

Prime close-up.

CAPTION: The Decepticons must comply with our law—and I must be the one to make certain they don't resist or our entire way of life may be jeopardized.

Panel #5:

Sam and Carly watch through a plate glass style observation window as something happens down below them. Shot should be of them reacting (we can't see what's going on below at all).

CARLY: I still don't know about this, Sam...

Panel #1:

Sam talks to Carly (profile/side shot).

SAM: What do you mean?

CARLY: This just seems... cruel somehow.

Panel #2:

Close-up of Carly gazing below into the area.

CARLY: Especially if they're truly sentient after all.

Panel #3:

Sam reaches out to put his hand on her shoulder.

SAM: We still don't have conclusive proof of that, one way or the other.

PANEL #4:

SAM close-up.

SAM: We're just doing what's best for our people here. Earth needs the Energon and resources on this world badly. We're teetering on the brink of collapse without them. You know that.

Panel #5:

Carly close-up (talking to Sam now).

CARLY: I know, I know...

CARLY: But if there's any small hope for peace or understanding between our two species, what will this act accomplish? I just hope it's not the final nail...

Panel #6:

Sam embraces her.

SAM: Don't worry, love. Things will be better soon. You'll see.

CAPTION: I just hope I'm right...

Panel #1:

CAPTION: LATER.

A battle rages full-on between the Transformers and the humans. Laser blasts light up the sky as they fight. Several TFs and mecha fight in the foreground while misc. TF jets and human jets tussle beyond in the sky. Some on both sides are killed as well.

Panel #2:

Megatron leads a charge in his robot form. Around him, other TFs rush forward, cutting into the humans forces.

MEGATRON: Destroy them all! Don't let up!

Panel #3:

Optimus Prime slams his truck form into a human mecha, tumbling it over. Nearby him, Jazz and Ultra Magnus also attack human targets (the others are either beside or behind him).

Panel #4:

Springer crouches in a cool action pose, his gun raised up (think something like a Spiderman pose--but with a gun).

SPRINGER: We did it! They're retreating!

Panel #5:

Megatron watches as his Decepticon Seekers follow after some fleeing human mecha jets.

MEGATRON: Destroy as many as you can! Let their deaths send a message to their masters!

Panel #1:

Soundwave approaches Megatron, Optimus Prime and Ultra Magnus.

MEGATRON: Report.

Panel #2:

Soundwave speaks to Megatron.

SOUNDWAVE: Cybertronian life signs detected within the compound.

Panel #3:

Optimus Prime, Megatron, Soundwave, Ultra Magnus and Starscream enter a large warehouse where they find several Transformers captive (these would be the Autobot and Decepticon Headmaster characters. They don't *all* have to be shown, but a decent representation should be there).

MEGATRON: They had taken prisoners! An unusual tactic for the fleshlings...

OPTIMUS: Indeed. Perhaps they were trying to extract information from our comrades..?

Panel #4:

Brainstorm and Mindwipe look up to see the new arrivals.

BRAINSTORM: Finally! We are certainly glad to see you here.

OPTIMUS: Are you hurt?

Panel #5:

Mindwipe answers as the Transformers prisoners are set loose.

MINDWIPE: They experimented on us earlier. We don't know why but we seem to be none the worse for wear.

Panel #1:

Optimus addresses them. Mindwipe, Brainstorm and Hardhead should be visible too.

OPTIMUS: Perhaps they didn't have time to fulfill whatever they'd planned. At any rate, we're glad you're all right.

HARDHEAD: Thanks!

Panel #2:

A human in a high tech suit sits in a red lit technologically advanced area watches patiently.
(The headmaster pilot inside one of their heads).

HARDHEAD (o.p.): We're glad you got to us in time.

Panel #3:

CAPTION: Later. Subterranean Autobase.

Prowl and Ultra Magnus speak to Optimus Prime in a small control room of some sort. Blaster is seated at a console, doing things beyond them.

PROWL: There's three more human bases in this sector. Once it's cleared, only two are left before we're totally clear.

ULTRA MAGNUS: As far as we know anyway.

Panel #4:

Prowl turns to Ultra Magnus as Prime looks on.

PROWL: My agents are quite reliable. Combine that with—

SFX: KRA-THOOM!

OPTIMUS: What was that?!

Panel #5:

Blaster points to a monitor with human mecha on it.

BLASTER: Optimus, they've found us!

OPTIMUS: NO!

Panel #1:

Optimus Prime, Ultra Magnus and Prowl run down a corridor to battle.

OPTIMUS: How did they manage to find us down here? We've avoided detection for months!

ULTRA MAGNUS: Perhaps they hid some kind of tracking device on the prisoners. It would explain why they left them alive and unharmed.

PROWL: I'd bet on it.

Panel #2:

Optimus and the others emerge in a main hanger area where Megatron, Starscream, Soundwave and others already are. Beyond them, several human mecha have arrived and have their weapons trained on the Transformers. Also in the group are the Headmaster Transformers, off to one side.

Panel #3:

The Headmasters are in pain. One grips at his mouth, as if trying to pull his entire head apart (should evoke a terrifying response from reader).

HARDHEAD: PRIME!

MINDWIPE: H-HELP USSS!

Panel #4:

The Headmasters heads transform into armoured human beings. In the background, Optimus and the others react in horror.

Panel #1:

Sam and Carly are among several human soldiers that come in with the mecha.

SAM: Surrender now! We have all of you surrounded! There is no escape!

Panel #2:

Megatron and Starscream exchange glances.

Panel #3:

Megatron talks to Soundwave.

MEGATRON: Soundwave! Tell Shockwave—*now!*

SOUNDWAVE: As you command.

Panel #4:

Megatron points to the human force. Behind him, the Decepticons rally and attack.

MEGATRON: Enough! Terminate them all!

Panel #5:

The Decepticons tear into the humans mecha and tanks. Beyond them, Sam, Carly and other humans flee.

HUMAN: Our comm is down!

CARLY (to Sam, in the foreground): Nothing's working! Our technology's just gone dead!

Panel #1:

Sam gazes skyward.

SAM: No! Subject XR-7011! It tricked us somehow!

Panel #2:

Prime looks to his Autobots.

OPTIMUS: Come on! Lets finish this!

Panel #3:

(larger panel).

Together, the Autobots and Decepticons make quick work of the mecha, tanks and cannons present. (Action scene with several things going on at once. The TFs have the upper hand over the humans).

Panel #4:

Optimus Prime stands triumphantly over some smouldering debris.

OPTIMUS: Finally. It is over and finished!

Panel #1:

Megatron trains his cannons on the surviving humans (Sam and Carly are among them).

MEGATRON: Not yet. Not while some of them still live!

Panel #2:

Optimus puts his hand on Megatron's shoulder.

OPTIMUS: No! This is pointless, Megatron.

Panel #3:

Megatron grips his hand tightly.

MEGATRON: Who are you to tell me what I can and cannot do?

Panel #4:

He throws Optimus across the cavern.

MEGATRON: I'm afraid our truce is at an end, Prime.

Panel #5:

The Decepticons train their weapons on the Autobots. The Autobots seem shocked and betrayed while the Decepticons seem elated.

Panel #6:

Megatron slams his fist ferociously into Optimus' head.

MEGATRON: You didn't really think this would end well for you, did you?

SPLASH:

Megatron stands triumphantly over Optimus Prime. Megatron's foot is on his chest. Megatron's cannon barrel is trained on Prime's head. Prime's expression is one of loss and defeat (hard to do with Prime, but...) Megatron's optics glow brilliantly. Megatron's pose is one of energy and determination while Prime's posture suggests defeat. (Yes, this is exactly reverse of the opening panel of this issue. It's intentional). Perhaps in the background, we see Starscream and a couple others watching on triumphantly.

MEGATRON: The time of the Autobots is over, Optimus Prime! It's *time* all of you *die!*

MEGATRON: DECEPTICONS FOREVER!

Panel #1:

Close-up of Optimus Prime's face.

CAPTION: My worst fears have come to pass...

Panel #2:

CAPTION: The humans have been defeated but the Decepticons have gotten the upper hand on all of us.

Panel #3:

(Larger panel).

CAPTION: And I let it all happen!

Megatron stands triumphantly over Optimus Prime. Megatron's foot is on his chest. Megatron's cannon barrel is trained on Prime's head (similar to the last panel of last issue). Megatron's optics glow brilliantly.

MEGATRON: Any last words before you feel the cold dark grasp of oblivion?

Panel #1:

Optimus lays on the ground, beneath Megatron's foot (Megatron's foot is in the shot but Prime is the focus).

CAPTION: I deserve what's coming next. I have failed my people and myself. Death would be an absolution, a sweet release from my problems.

Panel #2:

Optimus notes the nearby Autobots and humans. The Decepticons have their weapons trained on them. Sam and Carly cling to one another in fear.

CAPTION: But what about my Autobots? The humans? Do *they* deserve to pay for the mistakes I've made? Will no one be left to oppose the Decepticons ascendancy to the stars?

Panel #3:

CAPTION: And then, realization dawns.

Close-up of Optimus red optics. Megatron is reflected in them, his face and evil smile are the main point of that.

CAPTION: It's not about what I want or I feel. It never has been. It's about accepting life as it is and doing what must be done.

Panel #4:

Optimus rolls out from under Megatron's foot and leaps up.

CAPTION: For far too long I have lost sight of that.

Panel #1:
(larger panel).

CAPTION: But no longer.

Optimus slams his fists into Megatron, toppling him (double-punch like in TF:TM). Beyond them, the Decepticons are shocked by this new event as are the Autobots/humans.

Panel #2:

CAPTION: It is time to do what must be done.

Optimus shoots Megatron, the other wincing with pain at the strike.

Panel #3:

Optimus upper cuts Megatron.

CAPTION: Time to end this: once and for all.

OPTIMUS: It's over all right, Megatron.

Panel #4:

Ultra Magnus and Prowl exchange a glance.

Panel #1:

The Autobots attack the Decepticons in a messy brawl, hand to hand mostly. A few stray laser blasts shoot off into the sky, as the Decepticons try too late to react.

Panel #2:

Megatron moves to escape into the city beyond.

Panel #3:

Optimus is right behind him in pursuit. I think Megatron should be in the foreground with Prime coming behind him some distance.

Panel #4:

Sam, Carly and several humans watch the Transformers fight from a distance (they've escaped during the distraction obviously).

CARLY: The comm system's still dead. We're cut off from the fleet.

Panel #1:

Sam talks to Carly.

SAM: I think this is Subject XR-7011's doing somehow. We let it have access to our ships without fully realizing it's potential for sabotage.

CARLY: Agreed. But now what?

Panel #2:

Sam close-up.

SAM: Get back to one of the drop ships and see if we can counteract the interference somehow. If not--

Panel #3:

CAPTION: "We're all as good as dead."

Starscream watches the battle with the Autobots from nearby.

Panel #4:

Starscream taps the side of his head, activating his internal comm circuits.

STARSCREAM: Shockwave, this is Starscream. Are you there?

Panel #5:

A shot of the *Athena* from the outside. There are several human bodies floating dead in the vacuum beyond it. One is the body of General Abernathy from last issue.

CAPTION: Shockwave? Come in!

Panel #1:

Shockwave's head is surrounded by two purple hands.(I'm thinking here that he can replace his gun hand with a regular one when needed).

Panel #2:

Shockwave puts his head back onto his body (it's a brand new one he constructed in secret recently while being on the ship).

Panel #3:

Shockwave speaks to the empty chamber.

STARSCREAM (comm signal): Shockwave?

SHOCKWAVE: I am here, Starscream. Report.

Panel #4:

Starscream watches as two Autobots gang up on a Decepticon Seeker (it doesn't matter if it's a known character or not).

STARSCREAM: The Autobots haven't given up as easily as we'd hoped. I think we're going to need a distraction.

SHOCKWAVE (o.p.): What did you have in mind?

Panel #5:

Starscream close-up.

STARSCREAM: Target the surface with the ship's weapons and bombard it. We'll lose a few stragglers probably but at least it'll keep the Autobots off our backs long enough to escape.

SHOCKWAVE (o.p.): Very well. I will transmit the coordinates for my vessel as well. It is long past time the Decepticons took their destiny to the stars.

Panel #6:

Starscream leaps into battle (should be a cool shot of him jumping forward into the fray, a la Wolverine).

STARSCREAM: Decepticons forever!

Panel #1: (larger panel).

Megatron punches Optimus Prime. Around them is a ruined Cybertronian landscape. Both warriors should likely have a bit of wear and tear on their armor.

Panel #2:

Optimus Prime drop kicks Megatron.

Panel #3:

Megatron fires his cannons at Prime, who narrowly avoids the blasts.

Panel #4:

Prime fires back, tearing a hole through Megatron's lower right side.

Panel #5:

Megatron tackles Prime.

Panel #1:

Megatron flees from Prime (who is now on the ground).

Panel #2:

Megatron hides from Prime, who is searching not too far away with his guns drawn.

Panel #3:

Megatron looks the other direction and sees as energy blasts strike from the heavens and decimate something on the surface.

Panel #4:

Megatron activates his comlink (touches his helmet on the side with his finger).

MEGATRON: Shockwave, come in! This is Megatron. Do you read me?

Panel #5:

Shockwave close-up.

SHOCKWAVE: I hear you, Megatron. What do you require?

Panel #6:

Megatron peers at Prime, who does not yet see him.

MEGATRON: I saw your attack on the Autobots. Good work. But now, I need your aid against Optimus Prime. Can you target his position?

SHOCKWAVE (o.p): Of course, Mighty Megatron.

Panel #1:

Megatron emerges from the cover at a run (remember his damaged side in the pic).

MEGATRON: When I give the word, strike!

Panel #2:

Megatron strikes Prime, tackling him again. Prime is taken by surprise.

Panel #3:

Megatron rushes away. Beyond him in the distance is a gorge of some sort.

MEGATRON: Shockwave, now! Destroy Prime!

Panel #4:

Megatron watches a moment but nothing happens.

Panel #5:

Megatron gazes skyward, believing he has been betrayed.

Panel #1:

Prime transforms and charges Megatron.

Panel #2:

Megatron falls to the ground. The gorge is just behind him.

Panel #3:

Prime transforms to robot form and trains his weapon on his enemy.

OPTIMUS: Forgive me, Megatron. But this must end for good.

Panel #4:

Megatron sees a rifle hidden by a nearby rock...

MEGATRON: No more, Optimus Prime. Grant me mercy! I beg of you!

Panel #5:

He grabs it and turns to blast Prime.

Panel #6:

Prime shoots first, the blast tearing through Megatron's head module and out the back of it.

Panel #1:

Megatron's lifeless body falls into the chasm behind him...

Panel #2:

Similar shot but Megatron's body is even farther down now.

Panel #3:
(larger panel)

Prime kneels in a really cool shot, his rifle head up in the air as he does. Behind him is the torn Cybertronian landscape of recent times (perhaps a wrecked skeleton of a tower is present there too).

CAPTION: I had hopes that I could find a way some day to reform the Decepticons. That killing them all wasn't the answer...

CAPTION: But Megatron was a malignant evil. Once out of stasis, he was merely biding his time to strike. I see that now... he had to be destroyed—and so do the rest of the Decepticons, so that our people and all the other races of the Galaxy can rest assured that their evil will never rise again, never be given a chance to take hold elsewhere.

Panel #4:

Prime notices the energy blasts from the sky on the horizon.

CAPTION: I must return to the others and find out what's going on.

Panel #5:

Optimus Prime transforms into his transport mode and zooms off.

CAPTION: I just hope my actions won't have been for naught.

Panel #1:

Optimus Prime returns in time to see the aerial Decepticons escape into the sky. The battlefield has several dead Decepticons (and Autobots) littering it as well as Prowl dragging a wounded Bluestreak along with him (trying to get him up into a place where he can be treated for his injuries). Other Autobots stand around looking beaten while one or two watch the Decepticons escape. Ultra Magnus is among the survivors.

OPTIMUS: Report!

Panel #2:

Ultra Magnus talks to Optimus Prime (who is now in robot form).

ULTRA MAGNUS: The Decepticons must have had help in orbit. One of the ships attacked the battlefield and nearly leveled us in the process!

PRIME: Slag it!

Panel #3:

Optimus talks to Ultra Magnus.

OPTIMUS: Megatron is dead. But if the Decepticons escape Cybertron then that won't mean anything.

OPTIMUS: We've got to ensure that doesn't happen.

Panel #3:

Hot Rod joins them. Nearby some Autobots carry their wounded off.

HOT ROD: How can we do anything about it, Prime? Any ships we did have were destroyed when the humans invaded!

Panel #4:

Prime spots a damaged Mecha in the debris nearby.

CAPTION: The Humans...

Panel #5:

Prime turns to his two comrades.

OPTIMUS: Come on! I have an idea...

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Panel #1:

Sam works feverishly on a panel inside the humans drop ship, trying to get some circuitry working.

SAM: Come on, you damned thing!

Panel #2:

Carly approaches him

CARLY: Sam!

SAM: Just a moment...

CARLY: Sam...? We've got company!

Panel #3:

Sam glances up to see Optimus Prime gazing in at them through the viewport.

SAM: Oh!

Panel #4:

The two come outside where Optimus Prime and Hot Rod stand, surrounded by several humans with small arms (guns).

SAM: What's going on?

Panel #5:

Optimus speaks to Sam. The other humans and Hot Rod can be visible too.

OPTIMUS: Human! We have need of your help.

Panel #6:

Sam close-up. His expression is incredulous (i.e. shocked). He can't believe his ears.

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Panel #1:

Optimus Prime speaks to him, wasting no time.

OPTIMUS: Our enemies, the Decepticons, have escaped into space. Likely aboard your ships—we must pursue them or they will spread their evil everywhere!

OPTIMUS: We need your help to get up there and help us determine where they are so we can stop this before it begins!

Panel #2:

Carly looks to Sam, who is still gazing up in shock.

CARLY: The command ships!

SAM: Why should we help *you*? You just murdered dozens—maybe hundreds—of our people!

Panel #3:

Prime close-up.

OPTIMUS: That was the Decepticons, human. We did not participate in the most recent strike that rendered your people helpless.

Panel #4:

Hot Rod speaks beside Optimus.

HOT ROD: How many of our people did *you* murder, *human*? How many did you chop into pieces without a second thought? Is your human life more precious than ours?

OPTIMUS: Hot Rod, please!

Panel #5:

Sam gazes up at him. Carly is beside him. Prime looms over them.

SAM: I—I... We didn't know...

Panel #6:

Prime replies. Hot Rod is visible beside him.

OPTIMUS: If the Decepticons get control of your ships, they'll likely turn and finish us off. After that, they'll spread everywhere in the Galaxy like a plague.

HOT ROD: Maybe they'll even track down the rest of your kind and finish them off out of spite! Do you really want to risk that?

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Panel #1:

Sam considers their words...

Panel #2:

Starscream comes in to Shockwave's chamber. Shockwave reads over some holo schematics in the foreground.

STARSCREAM: Your new crew is in position. We're just making last minute adjustments for our journey.

SHOCKWAVE: Excellent. All is proceeding as planned.

Panel #3:

Starscream addresses him. Shockwave is unconcerned and continues to read his holo data screens.

STARSCREAM: I see you've fashioned a new body for yourself.

SHOCKWAVE: Indeed. All those years without movement were irritating. Once I initiated our plans, I knew the time had come to rectify that.

Panel #4:

Starscream close-up.

STARSCREAM: And do we know Megatron's ultimate fate...?

Panel #5:

Shockwave gazes at the reader (where his schematics are). Starscream watches him intently behind.

SHOCKWAVE: He requested help in his battle against Optimus Prime. I opted to leave him to his fate. It was a simple solution to the problem of his leadership...

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Panel #1:

Starscream raises his shoulder cannon.

STARSCREAM: Then we are truly free....

SHOCKWAVE: Indeed.

Panel #2:

Starscream shoots at him, but Shockwave dodges at the last second and tags him with his hand cannon.

Panel #3:

Shockwave stands over him, his hand gun aimed at the other.

SHOCKWAVE: Fool! Did you not realize that I can still monitor the ship's systems like this? Your deception was a logical outcome of your participation in my plan.

Panel #4:

Starscream foot sweeps him, tripping Shockwave.

Panel #5:

Starscream shoots Shockwave through the head, killing him.

Panel #6:

Starscream looks at the fallen form of his former partner.

STARSCREAM: Its good for me that I figured you'd talk too much instead of just killing me.

STARSCREAM: Why should I be the second to a new tyrant when I can just run the entire show myself?

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Panel #1:

Starscream activates his comlink.

STARSCREAM: This is Starscream. Lock on to the other ships and take them out. We don't need any more trouble.

Panel #2:

A drop ship lands in one of the other ships (the Artemis) docking bay.

Panel #3:

The humans and Autobots disembark from it...

Panel #4:

The drop ship converts into Cosmos behind them.

Panel #5:

Carly speaks to Sam. Optimus Prime and Ultra Magnus are nearby. Carly has a headset (something like a bluetooth one).

CARLY: Sam! The bridge reports that the *Apollo* is under attack from the *Athena*.

SAM: That's it! The Decepticons must be on the *Athena* then.

Panel #6:

Sam talks to Carly. Carly speaks into her headset.

SAM: Tell the bridge to raise shields and attack the *Athena*!

CARLY: On it.

Panel #1:

Space scene. The *Athena* takes out the *Apollo* in a volley of energy blasts and missiles.

Panel #2:

The *Artemis* (humans/Autobots ship) and *Athena* (Decepticons) engage each other up close (think of that scene in *Revenge of the Sith*, near the beginning with the ships fighting).

Panel #3:

Humans on the bridge. Tactical officer speaks to the Captain.

TACTICAL: The *Athena* has suffered damage to its weapons array.

TACTICAL: We've taken engine damage, however. The hyperdrive is off-line.

Panel #4:

Starscream orders his crew. Skywarp and Thundercracker are seated beyond him at a console (a la *Star Trek*).

STARSCREAM: Get us out of here!

SKYWARP: Setting course.

Panel #5:

The ship jumps to hyperspace (some kind of blurring effect on the ship as it leaves).

Panel #6:

Sam is angry. Carly is nearby as are Prime and Ultra Magnus.

SAM: Damn it! They've escaped.

CARLY: The bridge says the *Athena's* hyperspatial coordinates were for Earth.

Panel #1:

Optimus speaks.

OPTIMUS: In that case, we must hope the Decepticons weapons were severely damaged so any actions they take are delayed until we can reach them first.

Panel #2:

The *Athena* reaches Earth. On the bridge, Starscream and Skywarp view the world beyond.

SKYWARP: We've arrived at Earth.

STARSCREAM: There it is. The home world of our hated enemies, the humans.

Panel #3:

Thundercracker speaks to Starscream.

THUNDERCRACKER: Is this really necessary, Commander? We've escaped Cybertron and we have the power to go anywhere, to do anything. Why waste time on petty revenge?

Panel #4:

Starscream responds. Thundercracker is also present in the panel. Soundwave is doing something in the background.

STARSCREAM: The humans proved strong enough. If we give them time, they might team up with the Autobots and hunt us down wherever we go.

Panel #5:

Starscream view Earth.

STARSCREAM: It's best to make sure.

STARSCREAM: Let me know when weapons are online again...

Panel #1:

CAPTION: Later...

The *Artemis* emerges from hyperspace (some kind of blue/electrical disturbance that the ship comes out of).

SAM (o.p): We're here! Home!

Panel #2:

The humans and Autobots are on the bridge (which is big enough for all of them somehow). All are looking forward at the view screen.

SAM: NO! We're too late!

Panel #3:

The *Athena* attacks the surface beyond them, laying waste to the Earth.

Panel #4:

TACTICAL OFFICER: Estimate that seventy percent of the surface has been destroyed in the volley!

SAM: Target that ship and hit it with *everything* we've got! NOW!

Panel #5:

Skywarp turns to Starscream.

SKYWARP: Commander! We've got company!

Panel #1:

The *Artemis* attacks the *Athena* with everything it's got, damaging it severely.

Panel #2:

The humans and Autobots watch the view screen beyond. The tactical officer looks up.

TACTICAL OFFICER: Incoming message from the *Athena*. They request terms for surrender.

OPTIMUS: Ignore it and finish them off!

SAM: You heard him!

Panel #3:

The *Artemis* shoots the *Athena* more and it erupts in a large explosion.

Panel #4:

Sam and Carly talk. Behind them, Optimus and Ultra Magnus are also visible.

SAM: It's over. The Decepticons are finished—but at what cost? Our home world is ruined! Millions are dead!

CARLY: We did what we could, Sam. Nobody expects more of you than that...

Panel #5:

Sam looks accusingly at Optimus.

SAM: This is all *your* fault! Your kind *murdered* our people!

OPTIMUS: You did the same to us—and didn't even think twice about it. How is that any different, human?

Panel #6:

Sam looks at Optimus.

CAPTION: He's right. As loathe as I am to admit it. I want—I need somebody to blame here. But, try as I might, I can only find myself to point the finger at.

Panel #1:

Optimus speaks.

OPTIMUS: We've all made mistakes here, Sam. And both of our people have paid a terrible price for that. There is no going back; nothing we can say or do can change that.

Panel #2:

(Large panel).

Optimus Prime and Sam face each other. Ultra Magnus stands behind Optimus while Carly and the other humans cluster near Sam's side.

OPTIMUS: Perhaps we can put aside our differences and strive to work together for a better tomorrow.

Panel #3:

Close-up of Sam with Carly beside him. Her hand is on his shoulder sympathetically.

CAPTION (Sam's thoughts): Our people are ruined, beaten by a machine race. We wanted—and needed energon at any cost and this is the price we've paid for it. And even after all we've been through, they want to talk and make peace. Who are the real monsters here, I wonder?

SAM: I think... I think that would be a good idea, Optimus.

Panel #4:

Close-up of Optimus Prime.

CAPTION (Prime's thoughts): I lost sight of what's important in life—doing anything necessary to protect the innocent. After the Great War, I retreated inside myself and selfishly neglected my responsibilities. We—I—have great power and it must never be abused, never allowed to dominate lesser beings as the Decepticons tried to do. I vow to fight on and protect the innocent at all cost, even if it means my life in the process.

THE END.