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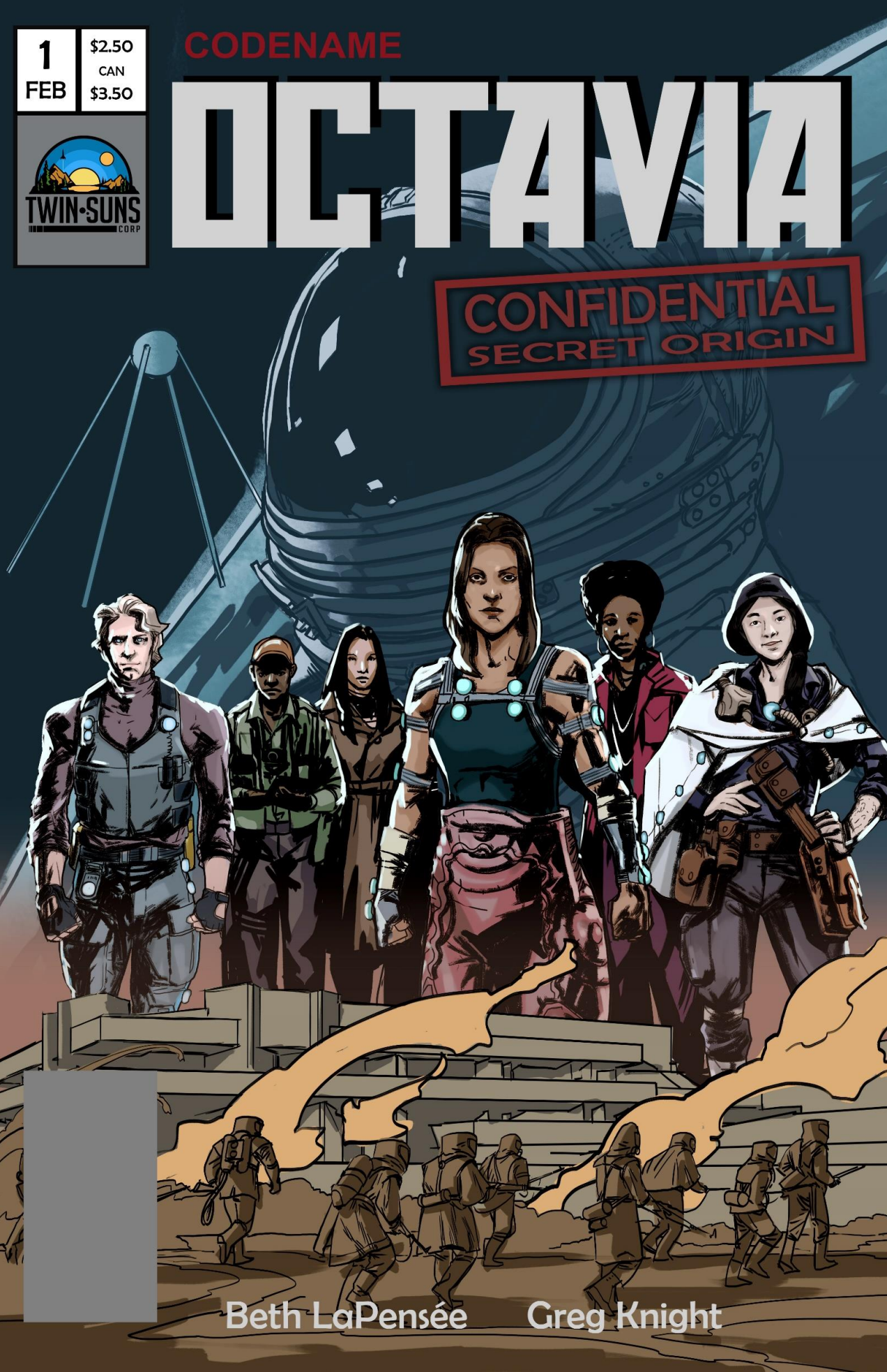
\$2.50
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CODENAME

OCTAVIA

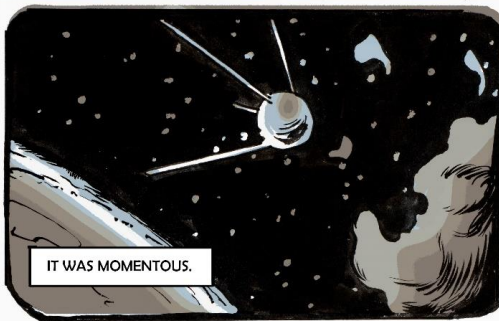
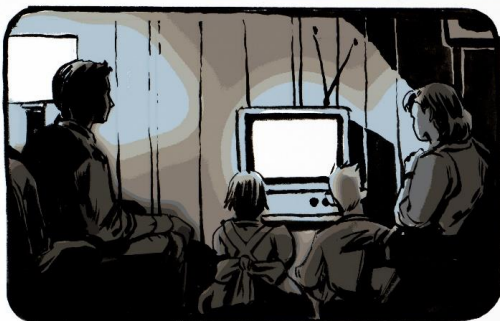
CONFIDENTIAL
SECRET ORIGIN



Beth LaPensée Greg Knight

1957
COSMODROME, KAZAKHSTAN

THE SOVIET UNION SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHES THE FIRST HUMAN-MADE OBJECT TO ENTER EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE.



IT WAS MOMENTOUS.



MORE THAN ANYONE KNEW.



WE MUST REPORT
THESE FINDINGS
IMMEDIATELY.



THIS "ANOMALY"
IS A THREAT TO OUR
PROGRESS IN SPACE.



FOLLOWING UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS TO REACH THE SATELLITE KNOWN WIDELY AS SPUTNIK, COSMONAUT NADEZHDA BOCHAROV ANSWERED THE CALL OF THE SOVIET UNION.

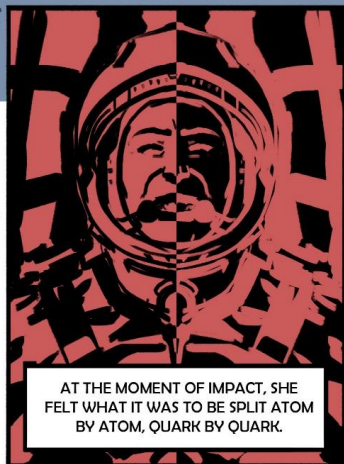
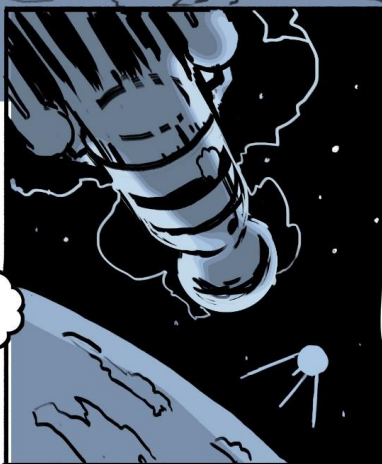
KNOWING IT WAS UNLIKELY SHE WOULD RETURN FROM HER MISSION, JUST AS THE MANY COSMONAUTS BEFORE HER, SHE CONSIDERED HER OPTIONS.



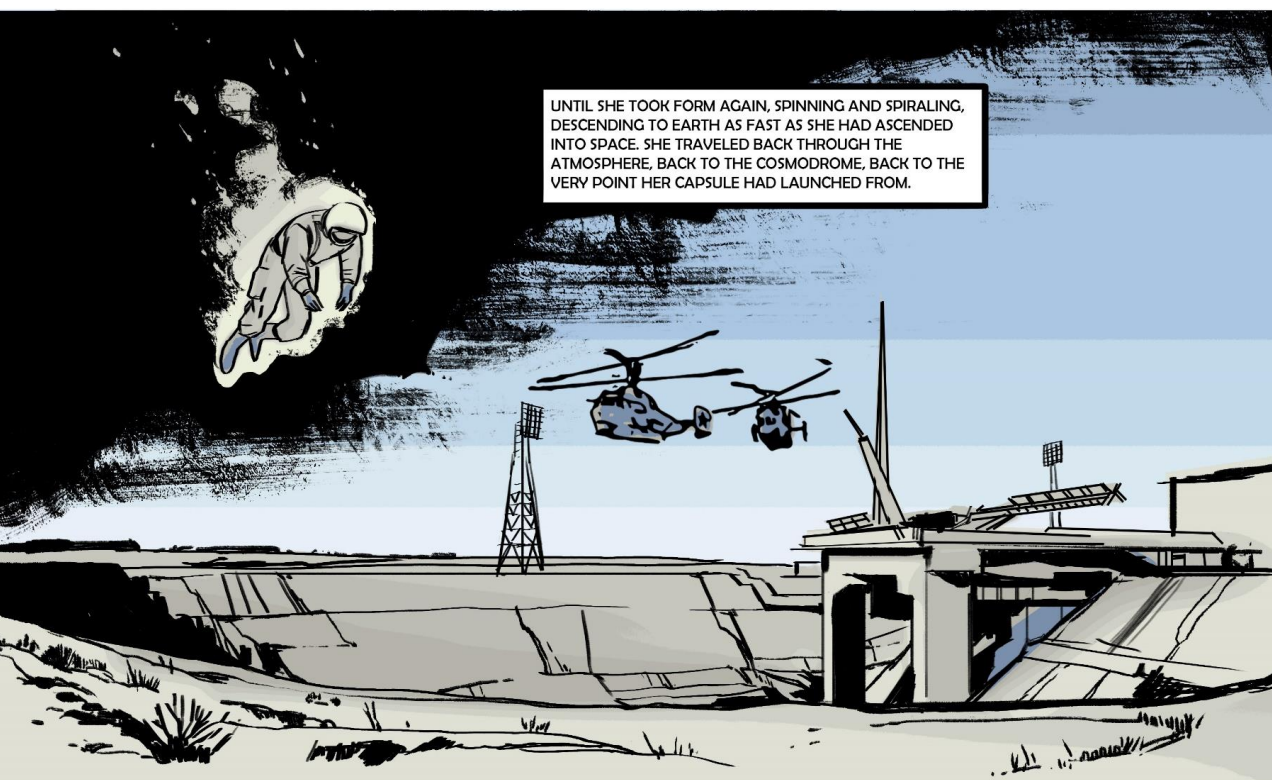
GIVE UP HER LIFE TO BRING DOWN SPUTNIK FOR RETRIEVAL BY HER COMRADES TO STUDY... OR BE LEFT IN SPACE WITH NO HOPE OF BEING REMEMBERED.



THIS IS MY ONLY CHANCE TO HONOR THOSE WE'VE LOST.



AT THE MOMENT OF IMPACT, SHE FELT WHAT IT WAS TO BE SPLIT ATOM BY ATOM, QUARK BY QUARK.

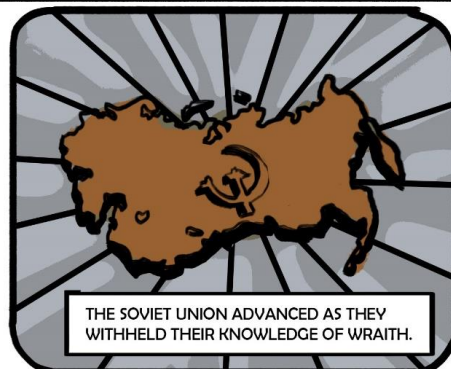


UNTIL SHE TOOK FORM AGAIN, SPINNING AND SPIRALING, DESCENDING TO EARTH AS FAST AS SHE HAD ASCENDED INTO SPACE. SHE TRAVELED BACK THROUGH THE ATMOSPHERE, BACK TO THE COSMODROME, BACK TO THE VERY POINT HER CAPSULE HAD LAUNCHED FROM.



ALTHOUGH OTHERWISE UNAFFECTED, NADEZHDA RETURNED EMANATING WITH THE ANOMALY SUBSTANCE. SHE WAS HELD BY THE SOVIET UNION FOR STUDY, WHERE SHE WAS DEEMED "THE RED COMET."

WHILE THE SUBSTANCE BECAME KNOWN AS PRIZRAK—WRAITH.



THE SOVIET UNION ADVANCED AS THEY WITHHELD THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF WRAITH.

UNTIL SPUTNIK CAME TO AN END...



... FALLING TO THE EARTH...



... AND SPARKING CATACLYSMIC CHANGE.



