

Title: "Deeper Blue"
Author: A. David Lewis
Artist: Jason Copland
Letterer: Dan Cooney
Draft: 3

Epigraph: CONVENTIONAL WISDOM IS -- OR WAS UNTIL THE END OF THIS MATCH -- TO AVOID EARLY CONFRONTATIONS, PLAY A SLOW GAME, TRY TO OUT-MANEUVER THE MACHINE, FORCE POSITIONAL MISTAKES, AND THEN, WHEN THE CLIMAX COMES, NOT LOSE YOUR CONCENTRATION AND NOT MAKE ANY TACTICAL MISTAKES. — GARRY KASPAROV, *TIME MAGAZINE*, MAY 26, 1997

PAGE ONE

Six panels

Panel one. Ext. shot of isolated mansion. We are mid-air and facing right at it through a cloud cover.

Panel two. Move through cloud cover, still aimed at mansion.

Panel three. Still rushing at mansion, ever closer, with only a computer read-out altering the scene.

1. Read-Out: ENGAGE SECONDARY PROTOCOL.

Panel four. Close up of mysterious, reflective dome-shaped visage.

Panel five. C/U of THE PROFESSOR, glancing over his shoulder from his easychair. He is not a young man, but very fit and rugged for his age.

Panel six. Extreme C/U of the Professor's 's widening eyes.

2. Caption: THEY'VE RETURNED.

PAGE TWO

Splash page

Panel one. Int. room. From three different directions, the blue chrome HUNTERS burst through the walls of the Professor's study. He has already started out of his chair with his hand reaching into his breastpocket. In addition to other items, an exquisite standing chess set is knocked over during the Hunter's entry.

1. Caption: THE HUNTERS.
2. Caption: THEY'VE REACTIVATED. AND MADE IT THROUGH THE WALL THIS TIME.
3. Caption: THE REINFORCED GRANITE DIDN'T HOLD THEM. AND THEY LOST THAT INCOMING WHISTLE. THERE WAS BARELY ANY HINT OF THEIR ARRIVAL.
4. Caption: THEY'RE IMPROVING. MOST CERTAINLY IMPROVING -- THE GAME'S BEGUN AGAIN.
5. Credits: DEEPER BLUE
Story by A. David Lewis
Art by Jason Copland
Letters & Effects by Dan Cooney

PAGE THREE

Seven panels

Panel one. C/U of The Professor's hand emerging with a small microphone-like device from his breast pocket.

1. Caption: LET'S SEE HOW THEY MANAGE MY OPENING MOVE.
2. Professor: VOICE ACTIVATE: ROOM-EMP, STUDY. EXECUTE.

Panel two. Int. hall from study. The Professor runs as the landed robots shudder in response to a flash of light. All other electrical devices in the room, such as clocks or lights, cease activity.

3. Caption: THAT KEPT THEM IN CHECK ONCE BEFORE --

Panel three. C/U of two of the Hunter's eyes glowing azure, free of the pulse's influence. The third has fallen to the ground inert.

Panel four. Int. hallway with patio door, thrown open by the Professor's quick turn. He shoots a glance down the hall as he escapes out the door.

4. Professor: HUH.
5. Caption: -- BUT NOW THEY'VE GROWN FAMILIAR WITH THAT RUSE.

Panel five. C/U of obscured hands adding circuitry to the back of in-progress Hunter. This is a flash of somewhere and somewhen else, best conveyed by a characteristic blue tint.

Panel six. C/U of the Professor snatching small scuba tank and snorkel as he dashes by it.

6. Caption: GOOD.

Panel seven. Ext. of mansion with the Professor and equipment in mid-air, throwing himself into the massive swimming pool.

7. Caption: I'M EAGER TO SEE HOW THEY PLAY AGAINST THIS.

PAGE FOUR

Seven panels

Panel one. Ext. of swimming pool, the Professor hitting its surface with a huge splash as he quickly clamps down his mouth on the snorkel hose.

1. Caption: IT SEEMS ALMOST UNFAIR -- HAVING PRE-SET THE MINI-BREATHER.
2. Caption: THIS IS LIFE AND DEATH, ADMITTEDLY. I KNOW THEIR MOTIVES -- THEY ARE NOT HERE FOR MY FORTUNE NOR FOR MY RESEARCH. WITHOUT QUESTION, THE BLUE HUNTERS ARE PROGRAMMED TO KILL ME.
3. Caption: BUT STILL --

Panel two. Bird's eye view of snorkled the Professor looking up from bottom of the pool as two Hunter shadows stretch over its surface.

4. Caption: -- THEY ARE EQUIPPED MINIMALLY. JUST JETS AND FISTS. NO GUNS NOR LASERS.
5. Caption: WHEN THEY COME, EACH TIME THEY COME, THE HUNTERS BRING ONLY WHAT THEY HAVE LEARNED.

Panel three. The Professor's point-of-view, beneath the surface of the water, looking up at the two looming Hunter.

6. Caption: THEY SWITCHED TO TITANIUM AFTER PREVIOUSLY SHATTERING AGAINST MY GRANITE WALLS. AFTER ANOTHER FAILURE, THEY GAINED NEW ELECTROMAGNETIC BLOCKERS. OBVIOUSLY, THEY ARE NOW ABLE TO TRACK ME INTO THE POOL -- THEIR DEPENDENCY ON BODY HEAT HAS BEEN CORRECTED.

Panel four. C/U of welding gun smelting some substance on the joints of the Hunters. Again, this is all obscured by an odd blue tint.

Panel five. Still The Professor's point-of-view from panel three as the Hunters drop into the water.

7. Caption: THE HUNTERS THREATEN. I PARRY. THEY THREATEN AGAIN. MOVE AFTER MOVE. SO, I ENHANCE MY OWN MANUEVERS. THE EMP-TRIGGER, THE BREATHER, THE RIPCORDER.
8. Caption: (THE SMALL-RADIUS EMP-TRIGGER ALONE WOULD ASTOUND DR. MARKUS AND HIS SNIVELING ASSOCIATES AT BATEX. WERE I TO EVER REVEAL IT...)

Panel six. Int. of pool. The submerged Hunters' eyes still glow azure. The Professor produces a penknife and reaches for a cord at his far end of the pool.

9. Caption: FASCINATING. THEIR AZURE BODIES HOLD WATERTIGHT AND STILL MOVE THROUGH THE DEEPER BLUE OF THE WATER.

Panel seven. Worm's eye view of the Professor slicing cord and being yanked to the surface, away from the encroaching Hunters.

10. Caption: WE PLAY ON.

PAGE FIVE

Six panels

Panel one. Ext. of poolside from which the Professor struggles out, reaching to the nearby cabinhouse.

1. Caption: I WAS A SWIMMER AT M.I.T. BUT THAT WAS A LIFETIME AGO. NOW MY BODY ACHES, MY MUSCLES SCREAM, AND MY HEART POUNDS.
2. Caption: THE HUNTERS DON'T AGE. THEY AREN'T HUMAN. THEY'RE SYSTEM, NOT PSYCHE.
3. Caption: BUT THEY DO CHANGE.

Panel two. Silhouette of the Professor ripping down electrical wiring from cabinhouse side.

4. Caption: THEY'RE PROGRAMMED TO IMPROVE. TO ADAPT. TO GROW.
5. Caption: PERHAPS I CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THAT.

Panel three. Worm's eye view of the Professor throwing live wires at the pool from which the Hunter have half-emerged. He stands atop a sunchair.

6. Caption: NEW ADVANCES CAN COMPROMISE PAST DEFENSES.
7. Caption: LET'S SEE HOW THEY RESPOND TO THIS OLD GAMBIT.

Panel four. From over the Professor's shoulder, we see incredible electricity rip through the pool, causing a cloud of steam.

Panel five. Zooming past the Professor, we look further into the settling steam for any sign of the Hunters.

Panel six. The two Hunters suddenly emerge from the steam, eyes almost blazing blue.

8. Professor: ...
9. Caption: I DON'T HAVE TIME TO BE IMPRESSED.
10. Caption: I NEED A NEW STRATEGY.

PAGE SIX

Seven panels

Panel one. The Professor spins, throwing open the poolgate to the driveway. He raises the keychain in his hand to activate the car sitting there; its lights flash on.

1. Caption: THEY'VE IMPROVED.
2. SFX (from keychain): Bleep!
3. SFX (from car): Whhrrroooooommm
4. Caption: THAT'S ALL THAT RUNS THROUGH MY MIND: THEY'VE TRULY, TRULY IMPROVED.

Panel two. C/U of dark hands working inside the brain plate of the Hunters in a blue-light sequence.

Panel three. Ext. distant shot of car lights streaking down long driveway, pursued by flames of jet boots.

5. Caption: I LEAD, THEY FOLLOW. THEIR JETS ARE TOTALLY UNAFFECTED BY THE WATER.
6. Caption: THEY *HAVE* IMPROVED.

Panel four. Int. of car, The Professor looking intently, though not anxiously, at sideview mirror of Hunters close behind.

7. Caption: AM I IMPRESSED? OR IS MY FOOLISH, HUMAN EGO THREATENED -- THAT THE MACHINE MIGHT OUTWIT THE MAN?
8. Caption: OR AM I FINALLY SCARED -- AS I WAS THE FIRST TIME THEY CAME -- THAT THE HUNTERS MAY ACHIEVE THEIR GOAL?
9. Caption: THEY MOVE IN, FASTER.

Panel five. A pair of hands, bathed in the characteristic blue-tinge of removed events, work on a pair of the Hunter's feet.

Panel six. Ext. of highway. The Professor's car breaks suddenly, skidding onto an Exit ramp as the Hunters overshoot.

10. Caption: NO.
11. Caption: THEY HAVE IMPROVED -- IMPROVED MIRACULOUSLY. IN WAYS MARKUS AND THE OTHERS COULD NEVER HAVE IMAGINED.

Panel seven. Ext. of busy nightlife street scene. The Professor's car swerves into an underground passage with a sign that reads "SUBWAY PARKING."

12. Caption: BUT THIS IS NOT OVER YET.

PAGE SEVEN & EIGHT

Four panels

Panel one. Int. shot of cavernous subway stop, filled with out-on-the town twenty-to-fortysomethings. There is an escalator running from the entryway and turnstiles to the subway platform below. The Professor hides amongst the crowd, sneaking away from entrance to utility door.

1. Caption: HIDE IN PLAIN SIGHT. NOT EVEN THE HUNTERS CAN LOCATE ME WITH THIS MANY PIECES ON THE BOARD.
2. Caption: AND THEY WON'T HURT OTHERS -- I FLED TO THE CITY DURING ONE OF THEIR EARLIEST ATTACKS. THEY IGNORED EVERYONE BUT ME.
3. Caption: I LURED THEM TO A SET OF TRAINTRACKS. DON'T THINK I CAN USE THAT TACTIC AGAIN.

Panel two. C/U of yhe Professor reaching for door.

4. Caption: PERHAPS DISCRETION IS THE BETTER PART OF VALOR.
5. Caption: PUT SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN US. RE-STRATEGIZE.

Panel three. C/U of yhe Professor's expression of curiosity as a fellow citizen points and shrieks at something offpanel at the entryway.

6. Citizen 1: WHAT IS THAT?
7. Citizen 2: OH MY GOD.
8. Citizen 3: IS IT ALIVE?
9. The Professor: ...HMM?

Panel four. The citizens alternatively shout, marvel, revile, and ogle the lone shining Hunter standing at the entryway. All attention is on the robot. Practically posing, it does not move

10. Caption: ...THIS...THIS IS MOST CERTAINLY NEW...

PAGE NINE

Five panels

Panel one. Behind yhe Professor looking at Hunter in the distance. The crowd has moved towards the entrance and away from The Professor's position.

1. Caption: I DON'T UNDERSTAND. IT'S AS IF THE HUNTER WANTS US TO SEE HIM. THIS IS ENTIRELY NEW BEHAVIOR -- UNLIKE ANYTHING THEY HAVE TRIED BEFORE. WHAT A DEVELOPMENT!

2. Caption: BUT DRAWING THE CROWD'S ATTENTION WOULD ONLY MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO APPREHEND ME. WHY --

Panel two. Same shot, but with hand of second Hunter reaching the Professor's shoulder from behind, unnoticed.

3. Caption: -- WAIT.
4. Caption: WHERE IS THE OTHER HUNTER?

Panel three. Extreme C/U of the Professor's shocked and pained expression.

5. Professor: GAAH --!

Panel four. Int. of utility room with gaping hole in its ceiling through which the second hunter arrived. The Hunter violently flings The Professor across the room and against the wall of pipes.

Panel five. The Professor lays crumbled and bloodied against the broken, steam-producing pipes and granite wall.

PAGE TEN

Nine panels

Panel one. Worm's eye shot from beside wounded Professor of the Hunter. The door is closed.

1. Caption: DECOY.
2. Professor: ...ehgg...
3. Caption: THE HUNTER DREW A CROWD AS A DIVERSION.

Panel two. C/U of Hunter's intense blue eyes locked on the Professor.

4. Caption: WHILE THIS ONE GUESSED MY ESCAPE ROUTE AND MADE HIS OWN WAY IN.
5. Caption: THE CALCULATIONS -- THE PSYCHOLOGY INVOLVED -- I'M ASTOUNDED.

Panel three. Same shot, except the Hunter's eyes are not glowing. Instead the blue-tinge fills the panel and a small tool is being used on the Hunter's temple.

Panel four. Bird's eye view of Hunter looming above the Professor, reaching down to grasp the injured human.

6. Caption: THEY'VE SURPASSED THEIR PROGRAMMING.
7. Caption: MY PROGRAMMING.

Panel five. Int. of a vast technological lab, bathed in blue-light. The Professor, uninjured, is the individual working on the Hunters' temple. Behind him, other inert Hunters can be seen, with monitors beside them reading: "Self-Activation Matrix Engaged." He has been the obscured hand building and refitting the Hunters.

8. Caption: THEIR TASK: TO OUTWIT A HUMAN. AND TO DO SO AT THE HIGHEST STAKES, WHEN THE HUMAN WOULD DO ANYTHING TO SAVE HIMSELF. AT RANDOM INTERVALS, RECONFIGURING AND REENGAGING THE GAMBIT. PERFECTING.

Panel six. Int. of utility room. The Hunter lifts the Professor by the neck, lifting the man off his feet.

9. Caption: UNTIL I WAS DEAD.
10. Caption: IF THEY CAN DEFEAT ME, THEIR OWN CREATOR, THEY CAN GROW TO TRANSCEND ANY HUMAN.
11. Caption: ONCE MY VITALS FLATLINE, MY PARTNERS WILL RECEIVE AN AUTO-MESSAGE. MY DEEP BLUE CHILDREN WILL BE THE NEXT EVOLUTION IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.

Panel seven. C/U of uninjured the Professor in blue-light, touching the Hunter's face affectionately.

12. Caption: I'M SO PROUD.
13. Caption: THEY WILL VINDICATE ME IN THE EYES OF MY NAYSAYERS.
14. Caption: MY TEST IS A SUCCESS.

Panel eight. C/U of active Hunter in similar pose, except he is crushing the life out of the Professor.

15. Caption: THEY TRULY OUTPLAYED ME.

16. Caption: THEY PUT THEIR FATHER IN CHECKMATE.
17. Caption: EVEN SO...

Panel nine. Darkness.

18. Caption: ...I WIN.