

DHARK'S HERO STORIES

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VOLUME 1: PUYON

...SO I WAS SITTING IN TREE SO I COULD WATCH THE ACTION HAPPEN THROUGH THE WINDOW. THE NERD FINALLY WAKES UP AND SEES THE CUPS OF WATER ALL OVER THE FLOOR.

I THOUGHT HE'D MAYBE, I DUNNO, DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT, BUT THEN HE JUST FELL BACK ASLEEP, PROBABLY THINKING 'THIS IS A PROBLEM FOR LATER.'

BUT THE REAL PARTY STARTED WHEN HIS ROOMMATE WOKE UP, AND APPARENTLY WHEN HE WAKES UP, HE SWINGS HIMSELF OFF THE TOP BUNK AND ONTO THE FLOOR, SO HE DOES THAT LIKE IT'S ANY OTHER MORNING AND THEN, BOOM! HE LANDS RIGHT ON THE WATER AND IT STARTS SPILLING EVERYWHERE!

HAHAHA! MAN, HE WAS FREAKING OUT, I WISH SOMEONE ELSE WAS AROUND TO WITNESS MY GENIUS.

HAHAHAHA! SO THIS IS WHAT TRICKSTERS DO ALL THE TIME?

IF BY THAT YOU MEAN PULL PRANKS AND ACT COOLER THAN EVERYONE, YES?

...WHAT DID YOU THINK WE DO?

HEHEH... WELL...

GENERALLY... WE WERE BEING TAUGHT YOU GUYS WERE JUST... SUPER EVIL JERKS?

DID THINGS LIKE... SACRIFICE BABIES? ...HATED HAPPINESS?

AW, WHAT? DO YA REALLY THINK THAT ABOUT ME?

I MEAN, ANNA AND I ALWAYS FOUND IT ABSURD SO WE... NEVER BOUGHT INTO IT, BUT HEY, WE NEVER MET A TRICKSTER BEFORE EITHER.

EVEN IF ANY OF THAT IS TRUE ABOUT TRICKSTERS... YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY NOT LIKE THAT.

...BUT AT THE SAME TIME, YOU DON'T REALLY SEEM LIKE THE KIND OF PERSON WHO WOULD WANT TO BE A HERO.

ANNA! RUDE!!

HEY, I'M JUST SAYING... I JUST GOTTA WONDER. WHAT MADE YOU COME HERE, ANYWAYS?

UH...

YES. YOU ARE TRAINING TO BECOME A HERO AFTER ALL... IF YOU WERE SUPER EVIL OR SOMETHING, YOU WOULDN'T BE HERE.



.....I DON'T THINK I SHOULD TELL YOU GUYS ABOUT THAT.



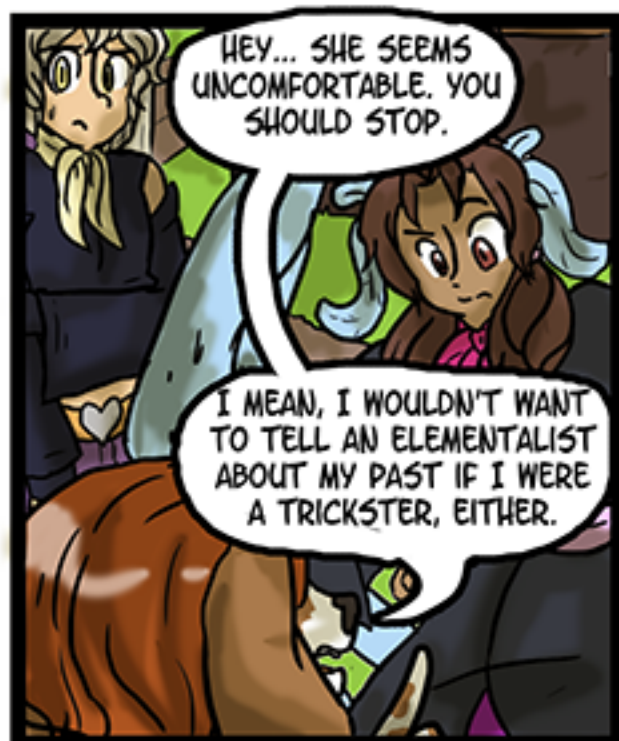
WHY? IS IT AN EMBARRASSING STORY?

THAT'S NOT WHY.



COME ON! I PROMISE WE WON'T LAUGH!

MMMM....



HEY... SHE SEEMS UNCOMFORTABLE. YOU SHOULD STOP.

I MEAN, I WOULDN'T WANT TO TELL AN ELEMENTALIST ABOUT MY PAST IF I WERE A TRICKSTER, EITHER.



FINE. SHOULD A MAKE A DEAL LIKE A TRICKSTER WOULD? OKAY. YOU CAN COPY OFF OF EMBER'S HISTORY HOMEWORK.

THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT!

Y'KNOW WHAT? MAKE THAT MARIAM'S MATHS NOTES TOO.



YOU CAN'T JUST VOLUNTEER US LIKE THAT!!

TOO LATE, SIS. I ALREADY HAVE. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

ARGH... JUST FORGET IT THEN!



IGNORE MY SISTER... THOUGH, I WOULD LIKE TO GET TO KNOW YOU BETTER.

EVEN IF THAT MEANS LETTING YOU COPY MY HOMEWORK FOR A WEEK.



IT'S UP TO YOU, THOUGH.



...ALLLLRIGHT. I ACCEPT YOUR BRIBES.

HISTORY NOTES FROM EMBER,
MATHS NOTES FROM MARIAM...

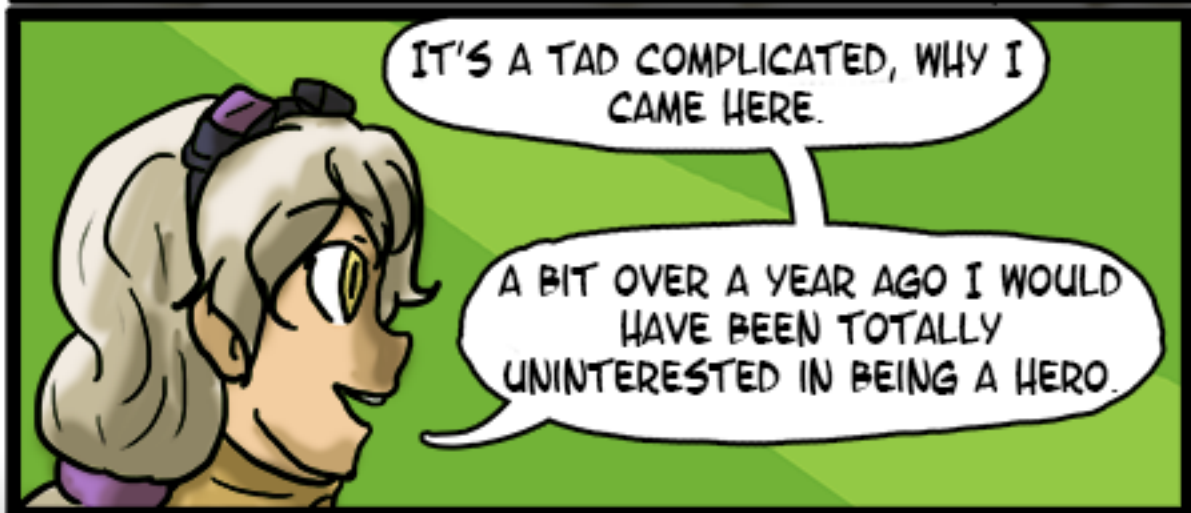
HEY I NEVER AGREED TO
THAT.

...AND SOMETHING FROM ANNALIESE LATER,
I'LL FIGURE IT OUT.



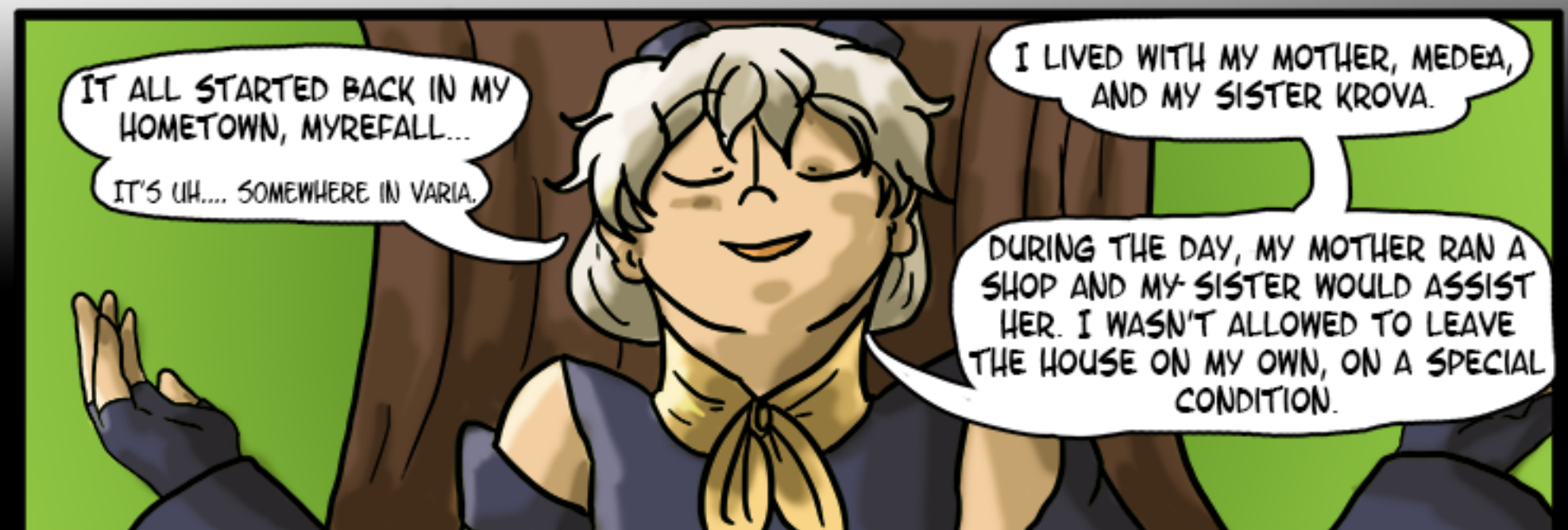
SO! SIT DOWN, GET COMFY.

THIS MIGHT GET A
LITTLE LONG.



IT'S A TAD COMPLICATED, WHY I
CAME HERE.

A BIT OVER A YEAR AGO I WOULD
HAVE BEEN TOTALLY
UNINTERESTED IN BEING A HERO.



IT ALL STARTED BACK IN MY
HOMETOWN, MYREFALL...

IT'S UH.... SOMEWHERE IN VARIA.

I LIVED WITH MY MOTHER, MEDEA,
AND MY SISTER KROVA.

DURING THE DAY, MY MOTHER RAN A
SHOP AND MY SISTER WOULD ASSIST
HER. I WASN'T ALLOWED TO LEAVE
THE HOUSE ON MY OWN, ON A SPECIAL
CONDITION.



I WOULD HAVE TO BECOME LIKE A
'REAL' TRICKSTER. I WOULD HAVE TO
PULL A GOOD TRICK ON MY MOTHER.

SO DURING THE DAY I WAS LEFT TO
PLOT AND SCHEME ON HOW TO DO
JUST THAT.




I COULD TAKE CARE OF MYSELF WELL ENOUGH DURING THE DAY, BUT I WAS USUALLY FOCUSED ON PULLING TRICKS ON MY MOTHER.




IT WAS A REQUIREMENT SHE PUT ON ME WHEN I WAS 12.

SO I WAS TRYING AT IT FOR A FEW YEARS...



...IS SHE REALLY DOING THIS? I CAN'T BELIEVE IT.

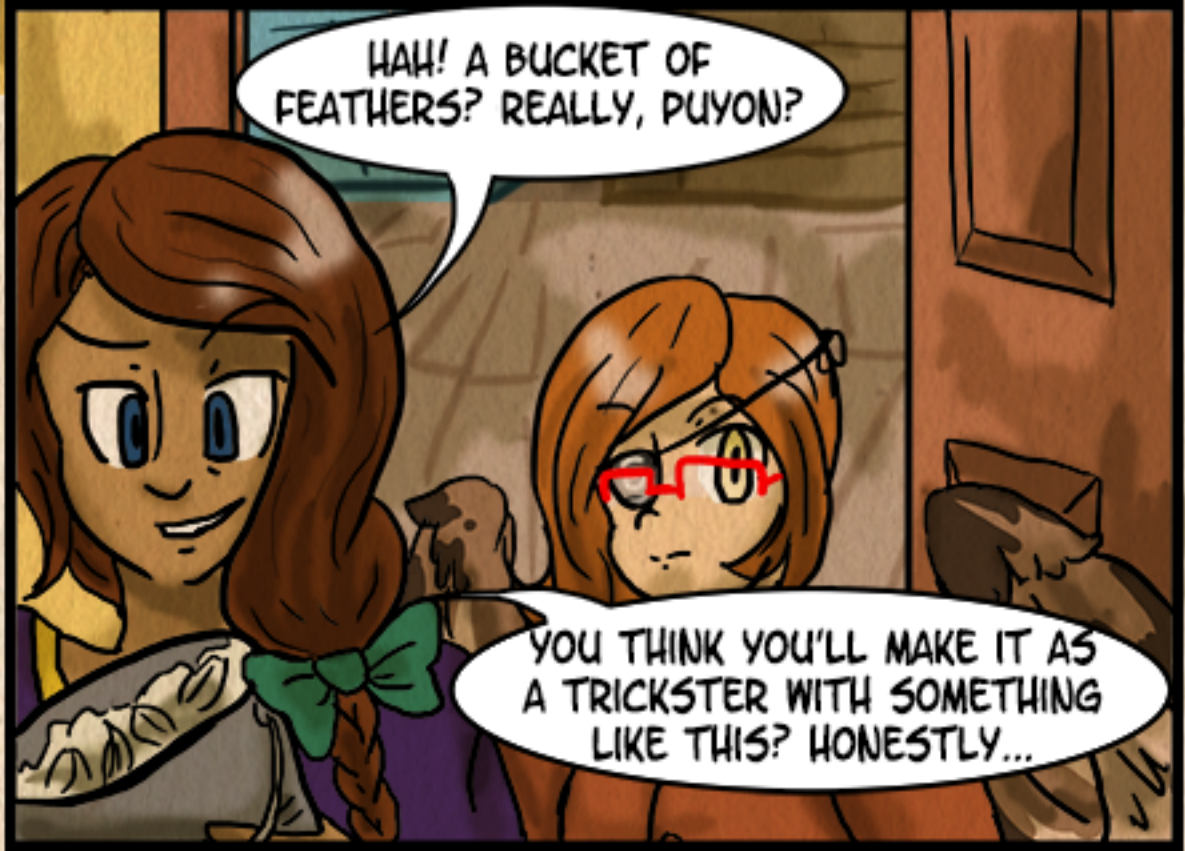
AT THE START, IT SEEMED LIKE A FUN CHALLENGE, BUT DANG, LET ME TELL YOU...



...WHEN YOU TRY FOR YEARS TO SUCCEED...




...AND ARE ONLY MET WITH FAILURE...



HAAH! A BUCKET OF FEATHERS? REALLY, PUYON?

YOU THINK YOU'LL MAKE IT AS A TRICKSTER WITH SOMETHING LIKE THIS? HONESTLY...



YOU START FEELING REALLY... BURNT OUT.

YOUR LITTLE ATTEMPTS AT TRICKS
ARE STARTING TO GET STUPIDER BY
THE DAY.

PUYON, DEAR, HAVE YOU STOPPED
TRYING?

ALL YOU'RE SHOWING
ME...

IS THAT YOU'LL NEVER
BE READY TO BE OUT
THERE ON YOUR OWN.

I... I...

I, UH...

IS THAT
RIGHT?

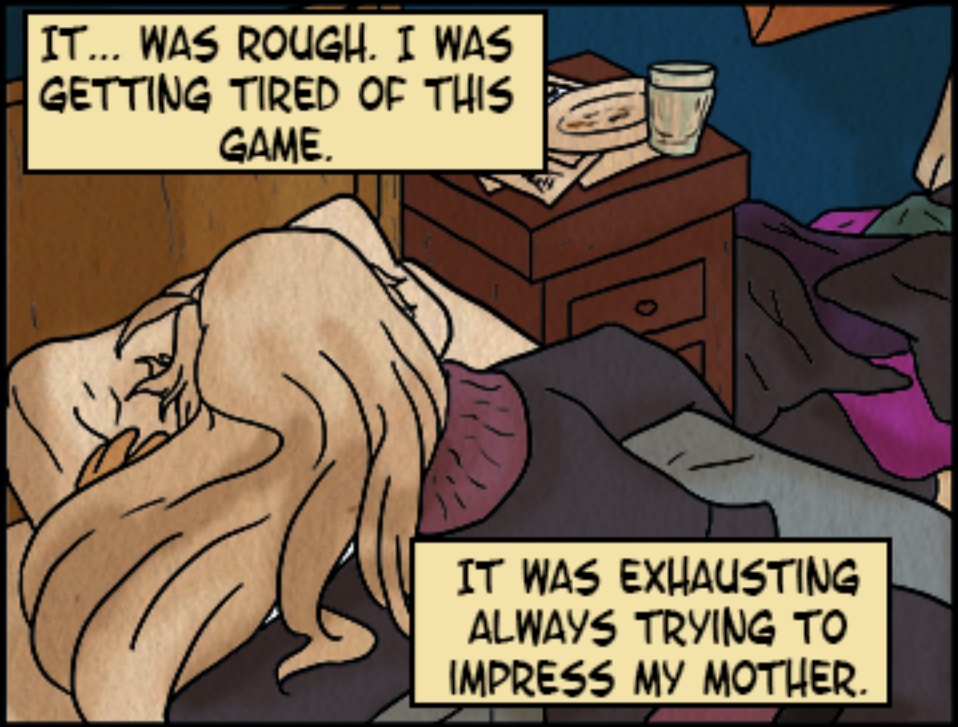
DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO
SAY, KROVA, HONEY?

YOU'RE BEING
STUPID.

KROVA! BACK
ME UP, I'M
NOT THAT
STUPID!

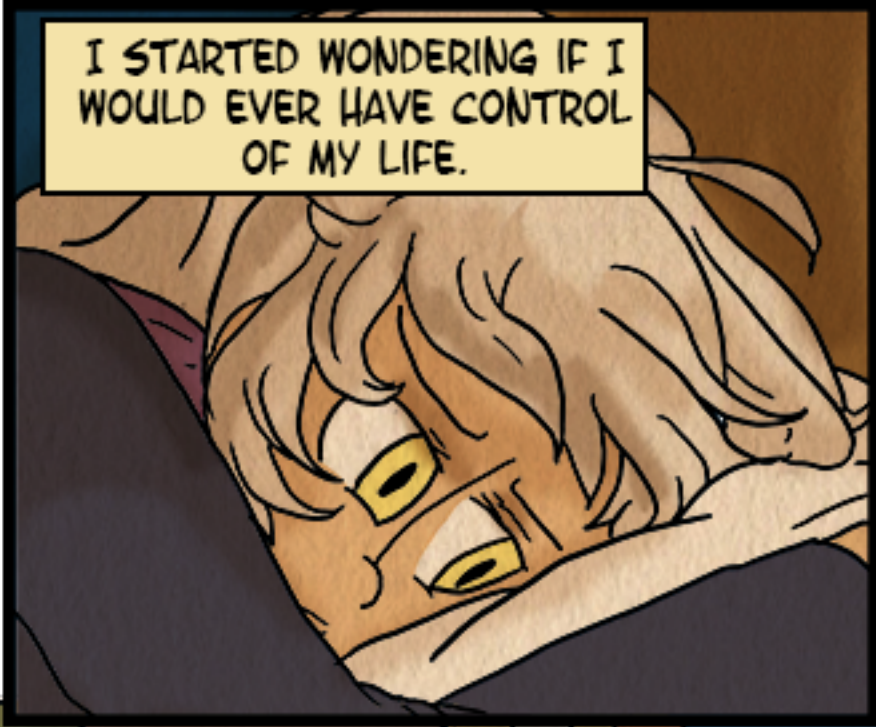
FINE!
FORGET YOU!

I'M... I'M GOING UPSTAIRS...



IT... WAS ROUGH. I WAS GETTING TIRED OF THIS GAME.

IT WAS EXHAUSTING ALWAYS TRYING TO IMPRESS MY MOTHER.

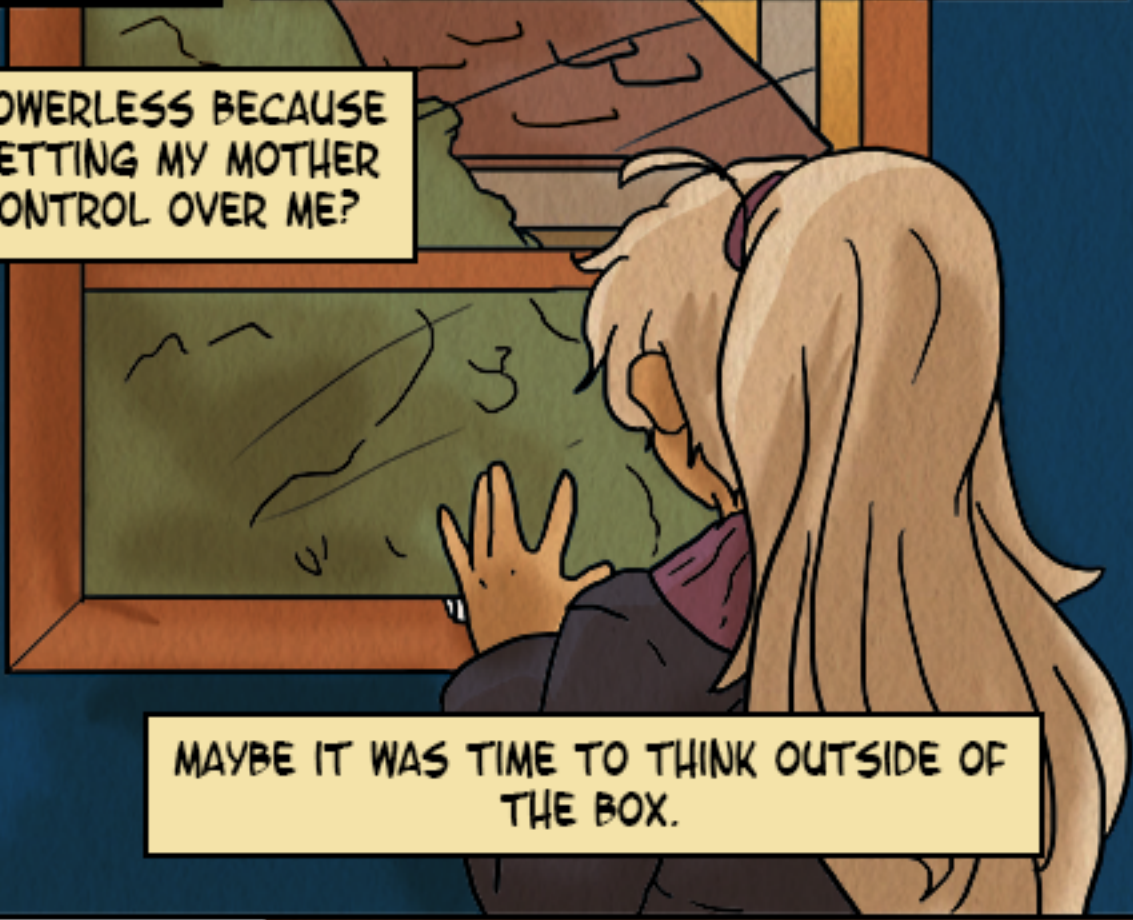


I STARTED WONDERING IF I WOULD EVER HAVE CONTROL OF MY LIFE.




WAS I POWERLESS BECAUSE I WAS LETTING MY MOTHER HAVE CONTROL OVER ME?

BUT THEN I REALIZED...




MAYBE IT WAS TIME TO THINK OUTSIDE OF THE BOX.



PUYON...? ARE YOU DONE SULKING UP HERE?


DINNER'S READY...

...OH.



SLEEPING OFF YOUR FRUSTRATION AGAIN?

I SUPPOSE YOU WON'T BE JOINING US FOR DINNER THEN.



IN THIS CASE, THAT INVOLVED LEAVING THE BOX ALTOGETHER.

IT WORKED...!

I WAS SO EXCITED THAT I FINALLY
MANAGED TO TRICK MY MOTHER.

BUT I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE DUMB TO
TELL HER UPFRONT HOW I DID IT SINCE
I DID GO DIRECTLY AGAINST HER
RULES...



IT WAS FINALLY MY TIME. I
COULD FINALLY START CAUSING
TROUBLE ON MY OWN.

I WAS SO EXCITED
THAT... THAT I UH...

I... WASN'T VERY AWARE
OF MY SURROUNDINGS--

SNRRK
WAHAHAHAHA!!

BWAHAHAHAHA
HA!!!!

...ARE YOU DONE.

HAAAA... SORRY, JUST PICTURING
YOU FLOPPING OUT OF A TREE...
HEHEHEEEHHH...

ESPECIALLY AFTER YOU
SOMEHOW GOT INTO THE
TREE FROM YOUR WINDOW...

PRETTY BAD LUCK
THERE...

...OKAY FINE, IT'S
FUNNY IN HINDSIGHT

BUT THAT'S NOT EVEN
THE WORST PART.

...BECAUSE I WAS ABOUT
TO MAKE A SERIES OF
DUMB DECISIONS.

DID YOU GUYS ALSO HEAR
GIGGLING?

DON'T TRY TO DISTRACT
FROM THE PROBLEM, CIAR.




LOOK, I CAN'T KEEP SNEAKING OUT LIKE THIS.

I CAN'T KEEP LYING TO TAIMA. SHE'LL CATCH ME EVENTUALLY.



I'M RUNNING OUT OF IDEAS!

AIN'T LIKE THE PERFECT EXCUSE'LL FALL OUTTA THE--



SKYYYYY...?



ANND... YOU GOT A CUTE GIRL. THINK SHE'LL WORK?

FELS, I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS.



WHY DON'T WE ASK?

WHAT...?

ASK HER IF SHE WANTS TO HELP YOU. OR IF SHE CAN.



EHEH... HEY, SORRY IF I CAUGHT YOU AT A BAD TIME...

BUT THINK YOU CAN DO A ME A FAVOR?



THINK YOU CAN HELP ME TRICK SOMEONE?

I PROMISE WE'LL DO YOU A GOOD TURN LATER...

WAIT! I DON'T MEAN LIKE A TRICKSTER
SORT OF TRICK JUST... EHH... I SNUCK
OUT BEHIND MY AUNT'S BACK, AND I
NEED A REALLY GOOD EXCUSE.

HM. O... KAY. I GUESS
I CAN HELP.

GREAT LET'S BE OFF NOW!

IF WE'RE GOING, CAN YOU
MAYBE PUT ME DOWN
FIRST?

EEEEEEEEEEK!!!

WHAT'S WRONG, KID?
NEVER BEEN FLOWN
BEFORE?

P-PLEASE! STOP FOR A
SECOND!! WE GOTTA TALK
ABOUT THIS!!

ALRIGHT, ALRIGHT,
I'LL STOP FOR A
SEC.

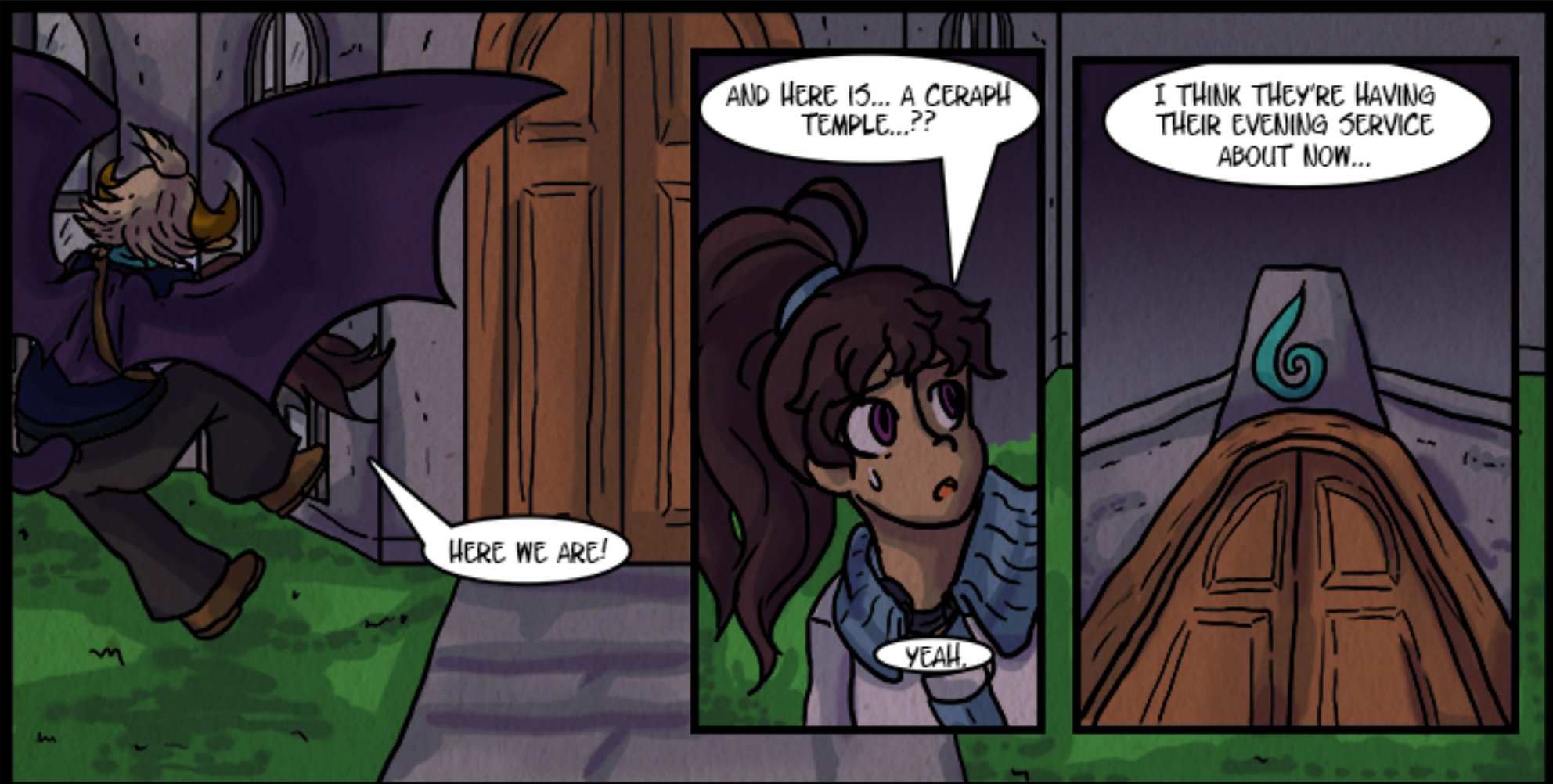
GUESS YOU WANNA TALK ABOUT A PLAN, HUH? I DON'T HAVE MUCH
OF ONE, SO I FIGURED WE'LL JUST PLAY A 'FOLLOW MY LEAD'
SORTA THING. I'LL TELL MY AUNT A LITTLE ANECDOTE AND YOU
PLAY ALONG TO 'CONFIRM THE STORY'. IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT I'M
EXPECTED HOME SOON, SO WE HAVE TO GET GOING.

OH... OK. SOUNDS LIKE
A GREAT PLAN I,
GUESS.

SORRY I GOT CARRIED AWAY
THERE.

UHHHH.....

IT WAS AN AWFUL PLAN AND, LOOKING
BACK, WAS ONE OF THE MOST
TRICKSTER-LIKE PLANS I'VE EVER HEARD.



AND HERE IS... A CERAPH TEMPLE...??

I THINK THEY'RE HAVING THEIR EVENING SERVICE ABOUT NOW...

HERE WE ARE!

YEAH.

HEH... I HAVEN'T ALWAYS BEEN A FOLLOWER OF LORD CERAPH, BUT MY AUNT'S A PRIESTESS SO WHEN I WAS PUT IN HER CARE SHE HAD ME CONVERT.

...WHICH IS WHY SOMETIMES I SKIP OUT ON THEM. JUST... UGH, HEARING THE SAME STORIES ABOUT LORD CERAPH AND THE OTHER GODS GET'S REAL FRIGGN' ANNOYING OVER TIME.

MY AUNT'S BEEN ON MY ARSE ABOUT NOT BEING PIOUS ENOUGH.

ALWAYS "WEHHH, IF YOU KEEP THIS UP, YOU WON'T EVER BE A PRIEST."

IT'S NOT TOO SHABBY. CERAPH MAGIC IS CRAZY STRONG... THOUGH I WISH THE SERVICES WEREN'T SO BORING.

...YOU MEAN 'PRIESTESS', RIGHT?

BUT THAT'S A WHOLE DIFFERENT CASE--

THERE YOU ARE!!

IT'S ONE THING TO SNEAK OUT BEHIND MY BACK, BUT TO SPEAK ILL OF OUR WORSHIP RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE TEMPLE?

HAVE YOU NO SHAME?!

OOO... BUSTED.

OH GOD OH GOD OH
OH GOD OH GOD
OH GOD I'M
IT'S A
SS AND
ME IF
RES ME
H LORD
I BEG
FOR YOUR
ECTION
T



ZEKE, YOU--

COUGH NOT MY NAME.

...RIGHT, ZAP. THIS IS THE FOURTH TIME YOU'VE RUN OFF ON ME IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS!

I UNDERSTAND YOU MIGHT NOT BE ACCUSTOMED TO OUR WORSHIP, EVEN AFTER ALL THIS TIME...



...BUT YOU SHOULDN'T JUST RUN OFF THE WAY YOU DO. IT SCARES ME, DEAR.

...I'M SORRY.

HUH. CAN'T SAY THIS IS WHAT I EXPECTED...



...LOOK, I DON'T WANT YOU TO FEEL LIKE I'M HOLDING YOU BACK...

AUNTIE TAIMA, THAT'S NOT IT.

THEN CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT IT IS? IS THERE SOMETHING MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU THAN OUR RELIGION?



IS IT YOUR FRIENDS... UHM...

HELLO DEAR, YOU'RE A NEW FACE. WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

PUYON MANNULA.



...THAT'S MY REAL NAME.



I SUPPOSE WE SHOULD TALK, BUT I WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF A SERVICE WHEN I HEARD YOU OUTSIDE. I SUPPOSE I SHOULD GET BACK TO IT.

YOU CAN COME INSIDE IF YOU PLEASE, BUT I ANTICIPATE YOU HAVE THINGS YOU'D RATHER BE DOING.

AUNTIE, WAIT! PLEASE, HEAR ME OUT ON THIS ONE, I SWEAR IT'S NOT LIKE THAT!

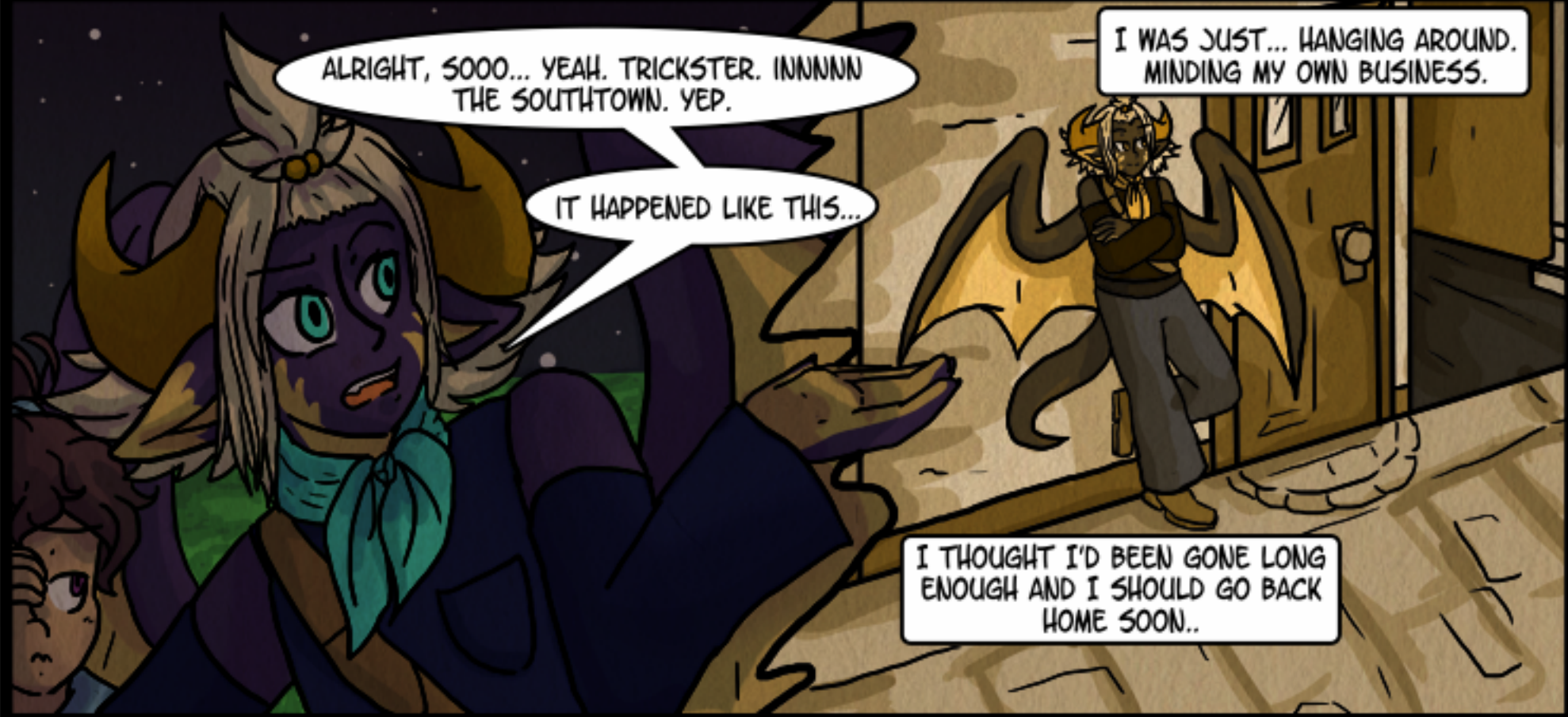


THERE WAS A TRICKSTER IN THE SOUTH TOWN...



CLICK!

....I'M LISTENING.

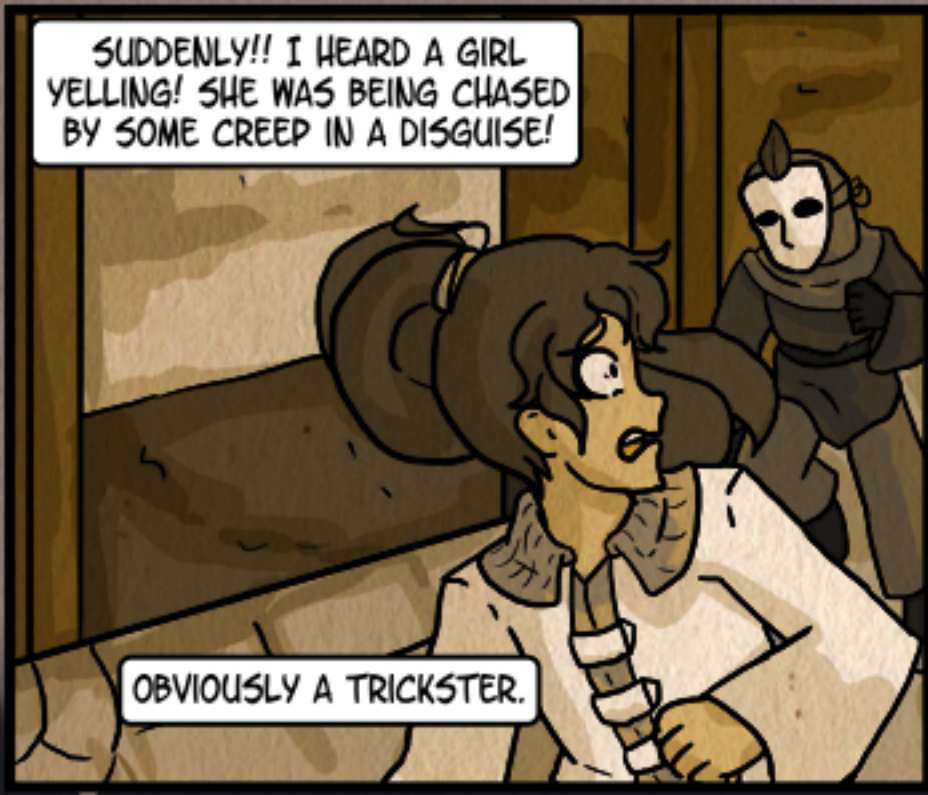


ALRIGHT, SOOO... YEAH. TRICKSTER. INNNNN THE SOUTHTOWN. YEP.

IT HAPPENED LIKE THIS...

I WAS JUST... HANGING AROUND. MINDING MY OWN BUSINESS.

I THOUGHT I'D BEEN GONE LONG ENOUGH AND I SHOULD GO BACK HOME SOON..



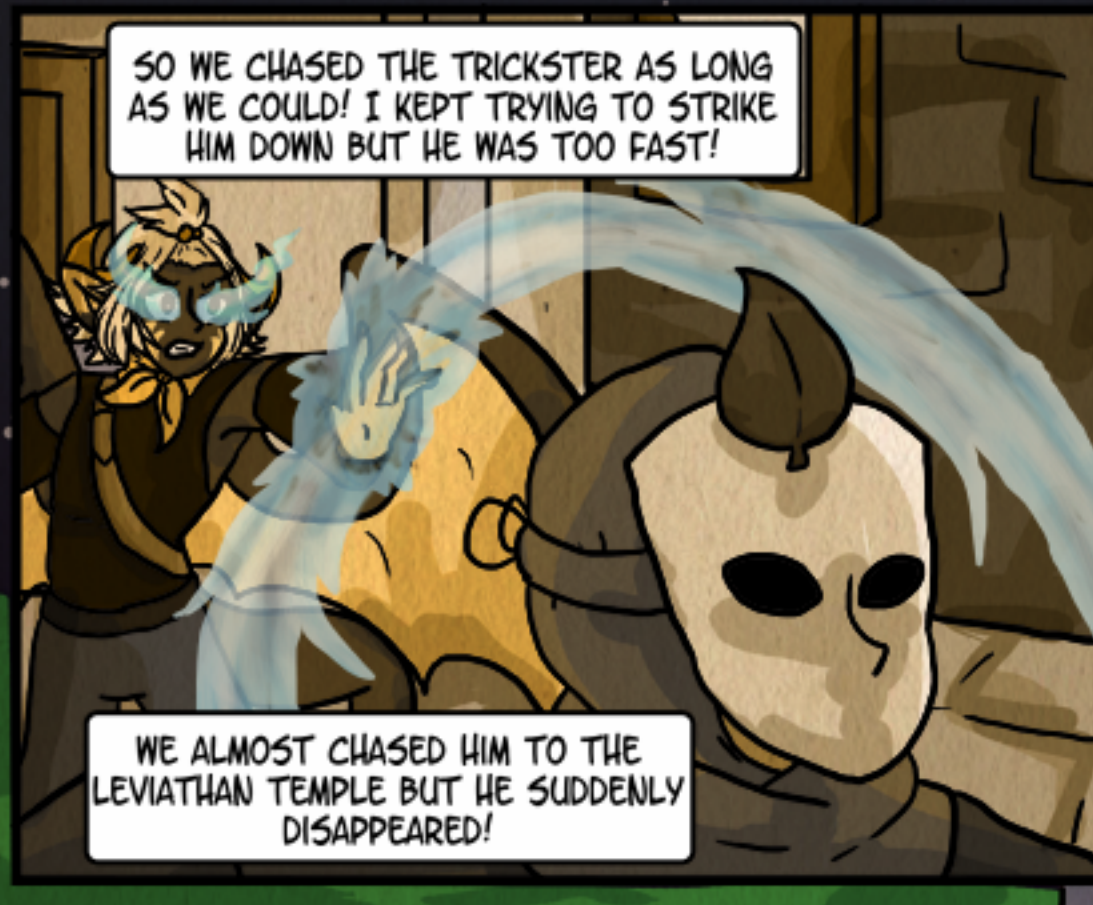
SUDDENLY!! I HEARD A GIRL YELLING! SHE WAS BEING CHASED BY SOME CREEP IN A DISGUISE!

OBVIOUSLY A TRICKSTER.



IT WAS PUYON HERE BEING CHASED, SHE WAS SO SCARED

SHE RAN TO ME BEGGING FOR HELP.



SO WE CHASED THE TRICKSTER AS LONG AS WE COULD! I KEPT TRYING TO STRIKE HIM DOWN BUT HE WAS TOO FAST!

WE ALMOST CHASED HIM TO THE LEVIATHAN TEMPLE BUT HE SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED!



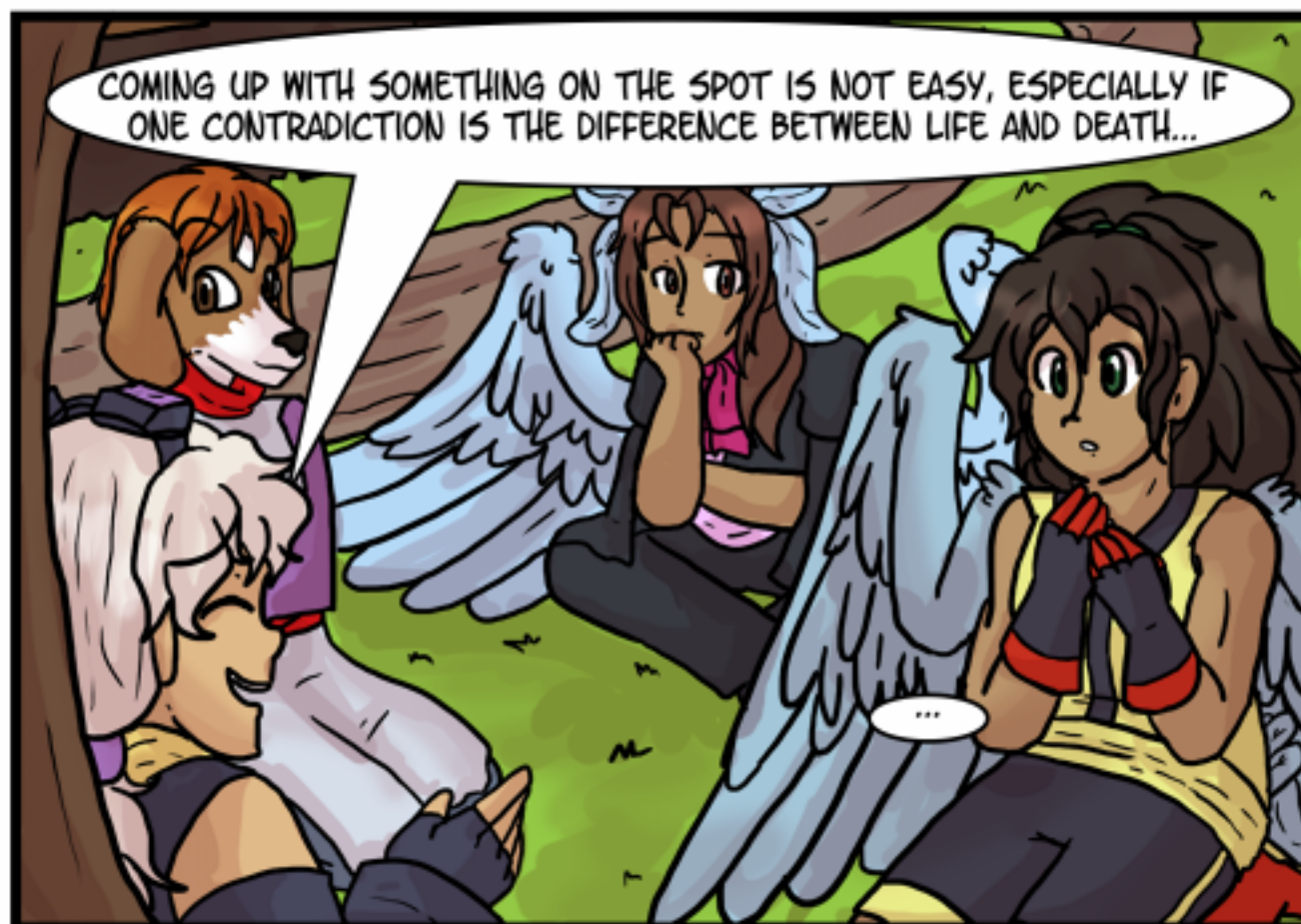
OH DEAR, THAT IS QUITE A CHASE! YOU MUST BE EXHAUSTED!

MIHMM.

NOD
NOD

WHY EVER WAS HE CHASING YOU DOWN FOR, DEAR?

GOD, WHY CAN A PRIESTESS BE THIS GULLIBLE...



COMING UP WITH SOMETHING ON THE SPOT IS NOT EASY, ESPECIALLY IF ONE CONTRADICTION IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH...



...THIS IS STARTING TO SEEM REALLY... MADE-UP.



I GUESS I SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISED... I GUESS TRICKSTERS REALLY ARE AS CAGEY AS MOM SAID THEY WERE.

SORRY, EM, YOU CAN BUY INTO THIS TALE AS MUCH AS YOU WANT BUT I AIN'T FALLING FOR IT.



I GUESS I'LL JUST PLAY ALONG ANYWAYS---

...???



EM. WHAT IS IT.

MARIAM SAID YOU LOOKED LIKE YOU WERE SPACING OUT.

...SAYS ONE SPACE CASE TO ANOTHER.

RUDE.

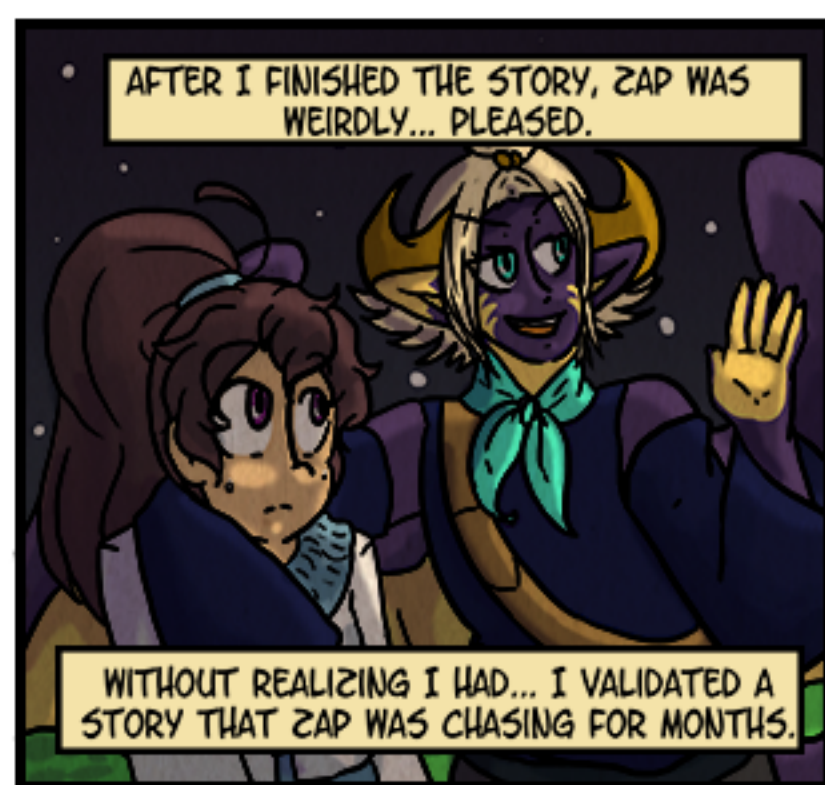
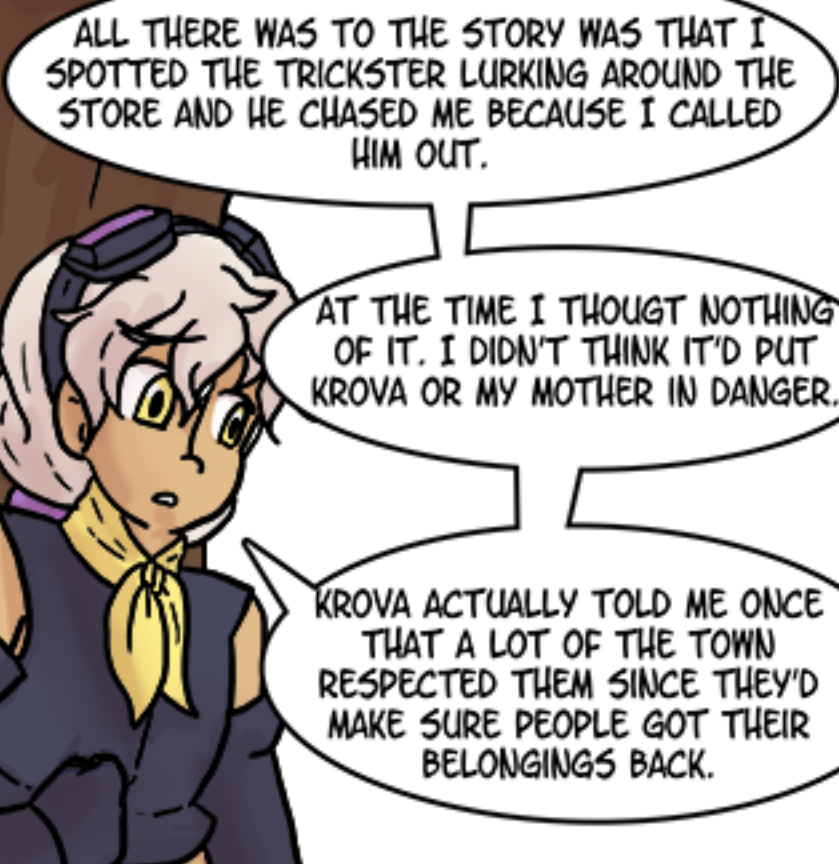


H-HEY, IT'S OK. YOU DIDN'T MISS MUCH IN THE STORY, I'LL JUST PICK UP WHERE I LEFT OFF.

SO ANYWAYS...



I UH... HAD TO TELL TAIMA ABOUT THE ONLY THING IN TOWN I REALLY KNEW.



SO UH... WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

TAIMA EXCUSED US AND ASKED ZAP TO ESCORT ME HOME.

WHOSE BRIGHT IDEA WAS IT TO PUT A TEMPLE UP ON A HILL WITH SO MANY STAIRS??

IT'S THE HIGHEST POINT IN TOWN, THUS CLOSEST TO THE SKY, THUS CLOSEST TO LORD SKY GOD. KINDA MAKES SENSE.

SO UH... CAN I JUST... GET FILLED IN ON A FEW THINGS?

SURE, WHAT ABOUT?

OH, IS IT ABOUT THE TRICKSTERS I'VE BEEN CHASING? WELL IT'S A--

HEY, YOU TWO!!

HEY GUYS! YOU IN THE CLEAR NOW, ZEE?

CHAR! TEAR! HEYA GUYS! I'M IN THE CLEAR ALRIGHT, PUYON HERE HANDLED HERSELF BEAUTIFULLY!

WHO ARE THESE GUYS AGAIN?

...AND YEAH, THEY WERE IN ON THE WHOLE 'TRICKSTER INVESTIGATION' THING TOO.

THEY WERE ZAP'S FRIENDS. THEY WERE THERE WHEN I FELL DOWN. THEY WALKED WITH US FOR A BIT AS ZAP EXPLAINED WHAT HAPPENED.

TURNS OUT THEY WERE ACTUALLY AT MY HOUSE TO DO MORE INVESTIGATING.

CREEPY.

I'M GONNA HAVE TO LOSE THEM SOME PLACE BEFORE I GET HOME BEFORE THEY CAN CONNECT ME TO MOM AND KROVA...

BUT WHERE...? I DON'T REALLY KNOW MY WAY HOME--

HEY! PUYON!! WE GOT A QUESTION!

EEP!

OOPS, SORRY IF I SPOOKED YA.

WE'RE JUST CONFUSED ABOUT SOMETHING.

WHEN WE WERE INVESTIGATING THE HOUSE EARLIER... YOU FELL ON ZAP FROM THE TREE NEXT TO THAT HOUSE.

WE JUST WANTED TO KNOW WHAT YOU WERE DOING THERE...

AHEHEH... YEAH, I WAS THERE. UMM...

AFTER ALL, WE ARE QUITE SUSPICIOUS OF THAT PLACE.

WELL... I GUESS IT'S TIME FOR THE TRUTH.

YOU KNOW THAT MOMENT WHEN YOU PANIC AND START THINKING OF WORDS TO SAY... AND START SAYING THEM BEFORE YOU THINK WHY YOU SHOULDN'T SAY THEM?

THAT'S UH... THAT'S MY HOUSE. CURRENTLY! I JUST... JUST MOVED IN WITH THEM. KROVA AND MEDEA. YEAH.

THEY'RE MY... COUSINS. WELL... MEDEA'S MY AUNT. Y'KNOW. AHAAH... ANYWAYS.

I WAS SNEAKING OUT OF MY ROOM. I DON'T REALLY LIKE MY AUNT VERY MUCH. SHE'S... KINDA... SHE'S... UMMM...

SUSPICIOUS.

OH FELS.

I GUESS WE WERE GOING TO GET TANGLED UP IN YOUR BUSINESS ONE WAY OR THE OTHER.

THIS COULD BE A PROBLEM. WE DON'T WANT TO GET A GOOD PERSON LIKE YOU IN TROUBLE.

HEY... I'M SURE WE CAN FIND ANOTHER WAY AROUND THIS.

WHILE I PROBABLY WOULDN'T BE IN DANGER, I COULDN'T STOP WHILE KNOWING THESE GUYS WERE AFTER MY FAMILY.

SO ONCE AGAIN...

WAIT.

I'LL HELP YOU.

I ACTED BEFORE THINKING.



AND SO....

I'VE GOT A FEW QUESTIONS...



WHY COULDN'T YOU GO TO THE STORE TO... INVESTIGATE?

WE'RE BANNED. IF ANY OF US WERE CAUGHT THERE, SHE'D ALERT THE COPS, AND THEY'D HAVE US IN A SECOND.



IF THEY TRUST HER, THEN THIS MUST BE REALLY TOUGH. IS THAT WHY THIS TAKING SO MUCH TIME?

BASICALLY, YEAH.



HUH. WOULDN'T IT BE EASIER TO KILL HER SINCE YOU'RE SO SURE SHE'S A TRICKSTER? ISN'T THAT WHAT MOST ELEMENTALISTS WOULD DO?



MOST WOULD.

BUT WE WON'T.



BUT MEDEA ISN'T JUST A TRICKSTER. SHE'S A THIEF AND A CON-ARTIST. IF WE JUST KILLED HER AND USED 'TRICKSTER' AS OUR EXCUSE, WELL....

WHAT IF THE THIEVERIES KEPT HAPPENING AFTER SHE WAS GONE? YOU CAN'T FIX A MISTAKE LIKE THAT.



NOBODY ELSE HAS BELIEVED ME ABOUT HER SO I HAVE TO PROVE I'M RIGHT AND MAKE THEM BELIEVE!



...THANK YOU FOR TRUSTING ME BY THE WAY.

....YEAH. SURE.



THERE'S AN ILLUSION ON THE WINDOW, BUT WHATEVER'S KEEPING THIS LADDER UP IS HIDDEN.



IS... ANYONE HERE?



WHISTLE



OH... OH. H-HEY, KROVA. UH... WERE YOU DISGUISED AS ME...? SLEEPING IN MY BED?



...WHAT HAPPENED TO MY DOLL?

SO YOU FINALLY SNUCK OUT. I KNEW THIS DAY WOULD COME. GOOD FOR YOU, I GUESS.



WHAT I DIDN'T EXPECT WAS YOU FLYING OFF WITH OUR WEIRD STALKERS.



I...! I'M SO SORRY! K-KROVA, THEY KNOW WHERE WE LIVE A-AND I THINK THEY WANT TO HURT YOU AND MOM! I TRIED TO MAKE A PLAN TO DISTRACT THEM BUT I D-DON'T KNOW IF IT'LL WORK! I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN ON MY OWN! WHAT'LL I DO??



H....HEY. IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.





IT'S MOTHER'S FAULT.



...WAIT, WHAT? WHY WOULD IT BE HER FAULT?



IF WE'RE HONEST HERE, IT'S... PROBABLY NOT HER FAULT.

KROVA AND I TALKED A LOT THAT NIGHT. SHE TOLD ME THAT MOM TRICKED ME INTO 'PROVING I'M A TRICKSTER' RATHER THAN ACTUALLY TEACHING ME AND TRAINING ME. SHE SAID IT WAS MOM'S FAULT I WASN'T PREPARED FOR EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED.



I-I MEAN... IT'S... STILL MY FAULT. I FELL FOR HER TRICK. I SNUCK OUT. I RUINED EVERYTHING.

BUT WHY DID SHE DO IT?

KROVA THOUGHT IT WAS BECAUSE MOM THOUGHT I WOULD RUIN HER WHOLE SCHEME. APPARENTLY MYREFALL WASN'T THE FIRST TOWN MOM TRIED HER IDEA.



SHE AND KROVA'S DAD HAD TRIED IT BACK IN KROVA'S HOME TOWN. BUT THEY FAILED AND KROVA'S DAD DIDN'T.. GET AWAY.



AND APPARENTLY SINCE THEN... MOM CHANGED. HARsher, STRICTER, SCARED.... 'IRRATIONALLY', KROVA SAID. BUT...

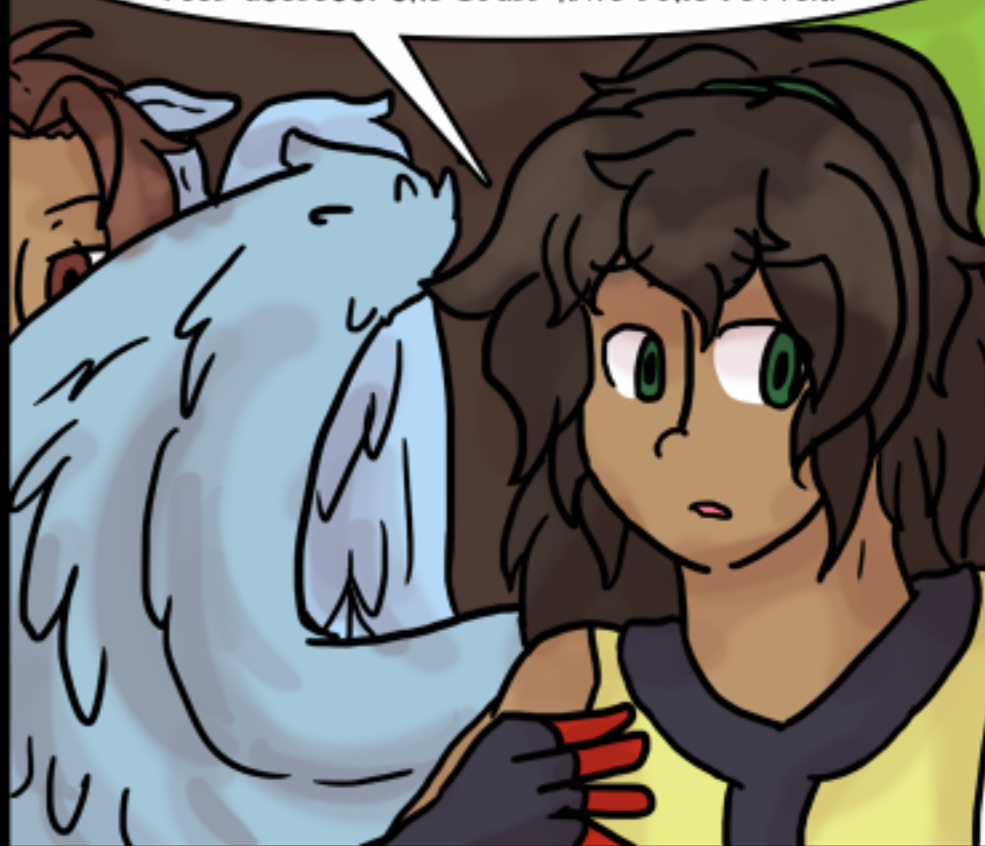
...MOM ALWAYS TOLD ME SHE WAS DOING WHAT WAS BEST FOR ME. AND IF SHE HAD BEEN THROUGH SO MUCH, THEN IT MAKES SENSE WHY SHE HAD SUCH A HARD TIME RAISING ME?



I GUESS IT WAS HARD FOR ME BUT IT MUST'VE BEEN HARDER FOR HER, RIGHT...? SHE WAS JUST TRYING TO PROTECT US, I'M SURE.



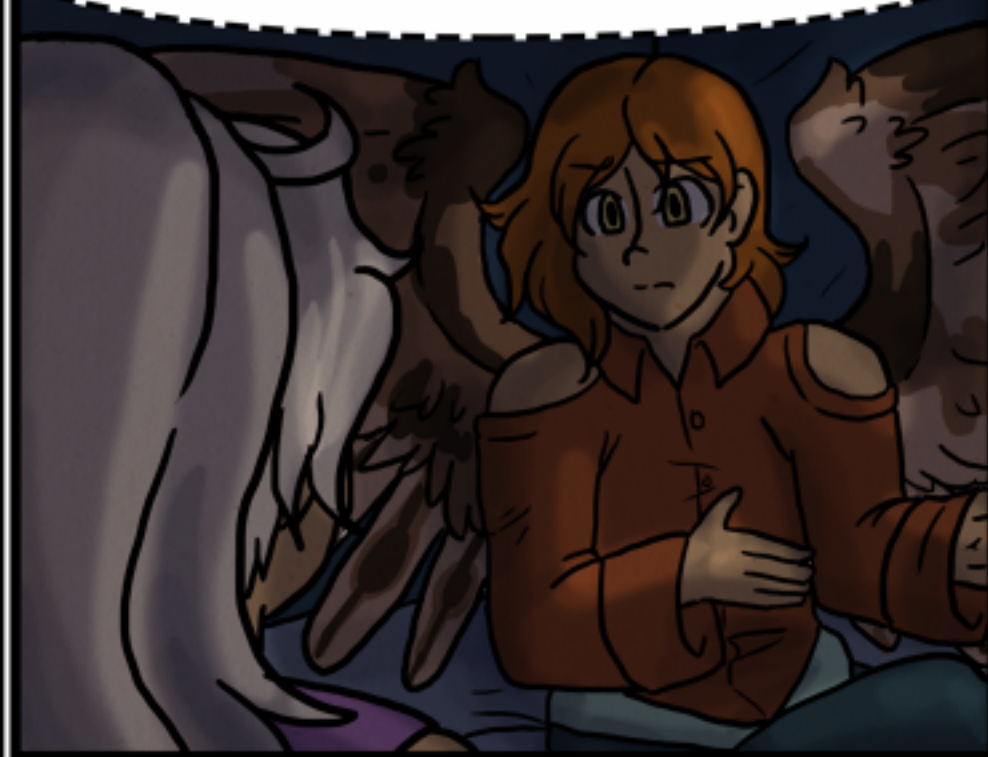
I MEAN, I GUESS ANY OF THAT COULD BE TRUE, BUT DOES THAT REALLY EXCUSE HER? SHE LIED TO YOU AND MADE YOU FEEL USELESS. SHE COULD HAVE DONE BETTER.



...KROVA THOUGHT THE SAME THING.



WE CAN'T STAY HERE WITH HER. SHE'S GOING TO DRIVE US BOTH INTO THE GROUND. AND I HAVE A PLAN. WE CAN BOTH GET AWAY.



I MET SOMEONE AWHILE BACK AND SHE SAID SHE'LL TRAVEL HERE AND TAKE US SOMEWHERE SAFE AWAY FROM MOM. IT'LL TAKE SOME TIME, MAYBE A MONTH OR SO, BUT IT'LL WORK. WHAT DO YOU SAY?



UHHH.... THIS IS KIND OF A LOT TO TAKE IN. I... DON'T KNOW. WHAT ABOUT ZAP AND HER FRIENDS?

I GUESS THEY'RE A PROBLEM NOW. BEFORE THEY WEREN'T MUCH OF A THREAT. JUST A BUNCH OF KIDS PLAYING AT BEING INQUISITORS.



BUT NOW THEY KNOW FOR SURE THAT WE LIVE HERE. THEY EXPECT TO SEE ME REGULARLY, AND WE DON'T KNOW WHAT THEIR INTENT IS WHEN THEY GET THE INFORMATION THEY WANT. TURN US IN? KILL US ON SIGHT? EITHER WAY, WE CAN'T PLAY AROUND.



HMMMM...



I'LL COME UP WITH STORIES YOU CAN TELL THEM. JUST BE CAREFUL TO NEVER CONTRADICT THEM.



WHAT IF THAT'S NOT ENOUGH?



GUESS YOU'LL NEED SOMETHING MORE... SUBSTANTIAL TO LEAD ON THE WHOLE THING. MAYBE IF WE...



WE SPENT HOURS AND HOURS PLOTTING TOGETHER AND DISCUSSING OUR ESCAPE PLAN. SHE SEEMED SO EXCITED ABOUT THAT PART. I WAS STILL ON THE FENCE BUT... I GUESS IT'S WHAT WE HAD TO DO.



UH HEY, NOT TO BE RUDE BUT...

LOOK, I KNOW YOU SAID IT WOULD GET LONG, BUT I ASKED YOU ONE QUESTION AND REALLY DIDN'T EXPECT... ALL THIS.

ANNA, HOW MANY TIMES TODAY DO YOU HAVE TO BE TOLD YOU'RE BEING REALLY RUDE?

I'M NOT BEING RUDE, I'M JUST SAYING I WANTED TO KNOW WHY SHE WANTED TO BE A HERO, AND SO FAR WE REALLY HAVEN'T GOTTEN ANY ANSWERS!

....UHH. OK.

GUESS I CAN JUST... SKIP AHEAD SOME. DIDN'T KNOW I WAS BORING YOU SO MUCH. I'LL BE MORE CONSIDERATE NEXT TIME I SHARE AN INCREDIBLY PERSONAL STORY WITH YOU.

WHY, THANK YOU!

THREE MONTHS LATER, I BECAME CLOSE FRIENDS WITH ZEPHYRA, CHARLOTTE, AND TYRONNE.

...WAIT, WHO?

THAT'S ZAP, CHAR, AND TEAR'S REAL NAMES. WHILE WE WERE MOSTLY FOCUSED ON OUR 'MISSION' I GOT TO KNOW THEM PERSONALLY. IT STARTED BECOMING HARDER AND HARDER FOR ME TO ACCEPT THAT I HAD TO LEAVE. THEY LISTENED TO ME, THEY CARED FOR ME. THEY TAUGHT ME SOME SELF-DEFENSE, AND DIDN'T PUSH ME TO FOLLOW THEIR RELIGIONS. THEY WERE SO KIND... AND ALL I COULD GIVE THEM WAS A BUNCH OF LIES.

I CONFIDED IN KROVA ABOUT THESE FEELINGS, AND ASKED HER HOW SOON HER FRIEND WOULD BE COMING BUT SHE WOULD JUST SAY 'SOON' AND TELL ME TO BE READY FOR WHENEVER. BUT THE LONGER IT TOOK, THE MORE CONFLICTED I FELT ABOUT MANIPULATING MY FRIENDS.

I STARTED HOPING THAT MAYBE WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO LEAVE AT ALL. THAT KROVA'S FRIEND WOULD JUST... NEVER COME. BUT THEN ONE DAY... MY TOWER OF MISTAKES CAME CRASHING DOWN.

THEY'RE WAITING FOR ME. I SHOULD GO NOW.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING, HONEY?

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!

AND JUST WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING, PUYON? WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO MY RULES?

I-I... I..!

I DID TRICK YOU!! I... I.. I'VE BEEN SNEAKING OUT FOR MONTHS!!

YOU REALLY ARE AN IDIOT. DID YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THAT? DID YOU REALLY THINK I DIDN'T FIND IT OUT THE DAY YOU FIRST SNUCK OUT?

Y...YOU'RE LYING. IF YOU KNEW, WHY DIDN'T YOU CONFRONT ME ABOUT IT EARLIER...?

SIMPLE. I THOUGHT THE PROBLEM WOULD SOLVE ITSELF. EITHER YOU WOULD SMARTEN UP, OR--



W.... WHY?? WHY DID YOU DO THAT?!

....

...THOSE ELEMENTALISTS YOU CALL YOUR FRIENDS... THE ONES WHO'VE BEEN STALKING ME FOR NEARLY A YEAR... WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING WITH THEM?



DO YOU THINK YOU CAN PERSUADE THEM? DO YOU THINK THEY WON'T KILL ME THE MOMENT THEY GET WHAT THEY WANT? HOW SELFISH COULD YOU BE, RISKING MY LIFE FOR YOUR STUPID FANTASIES?



DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT THEY'RE YOUR FRIENDS?

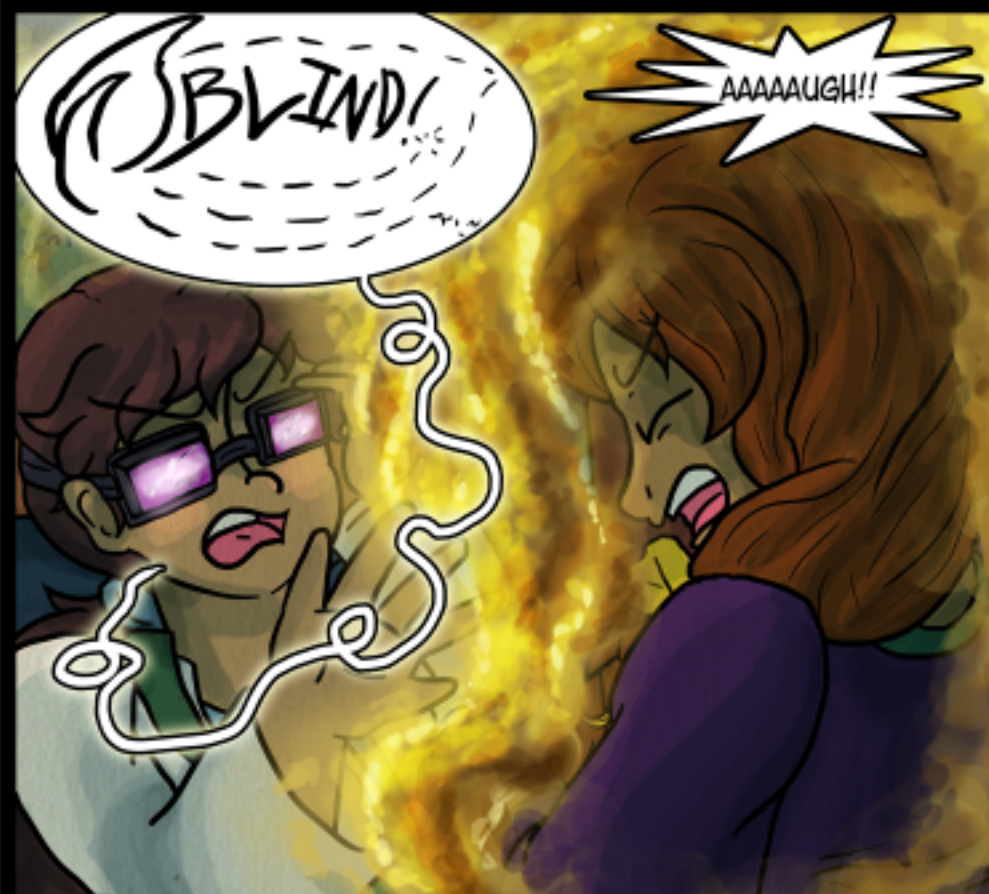


THEY ARE MY FRIENDS!!!



THEN TELL THEM WHAT YOU REALLY ARE.





I RAN AS FAST AS I COULD. I WANTED TO BELIEVE MORE THAN ANYTHING THAT MOM WAS WRONG.



I TRUSTED THEM. THEY'D NEVER... NEVER....

I... WHEN I SAW THEM, I TRIED MY BEST TO PRETEND NOTHING HAD JUST HAPPENED.



PUYON...! GOOD THING YOU MADE IT. THERE'S SOMETHING WE WANNA GIVE YOU.



TA-DA! YOUR VERY OWN SCARF! NOW YOU'RE OFFICIALLY ONE OF US!!



I-I--... Y... YOU GUYS, I...



WOAH, HEY, IS SOMETHING WRONG, BUDDY?





WH-WHAT IS... WHAT IS THIS? Y... YOU CAN'T BE...

I G-G-GUESS... IT'S... IT'S T-TIME TO T-TELL YOU TH... THE TRUTH.



I'M... I'M A T-TRICKSTER. MEDEA IS M-MY MOTHER AN... AND KROVA IS MY HALF-SISTER. B-BUT, EVERYTHING I'VE BEEN TELLING YOU IS TRUE, IT'S JUST-- IT'S JUST...



...OH NO...



I... I JUST RAN OUT HERE!! WHAT WAS I THINKING?! MOM'S GOING TO BE FURIOUS WITH ME! I.. I HAVE TO GO BACK, OR ELSE...!!



HEY, I... I UNDERSTAND. WOULDN'T WANNA GET YOU IN TROUBLE.



THANK YOU...

MOM WAS RIGHT ABOUT ME...



I REALLY AM AN IDIOT.



I DIDN'T REALIZE WHAT HAPPENED... IT... IT MIGHT SOUND CRAZY, BUT I COULDN'T... REALLY FEEL IT AT FIRST.



HEHEH... B-B-BUT NOW, I REMEMBER IT... HAHA... GOD, IT HURT LIKE HELL. I WAS SO SHOCKED I DIDN'T EVEN...

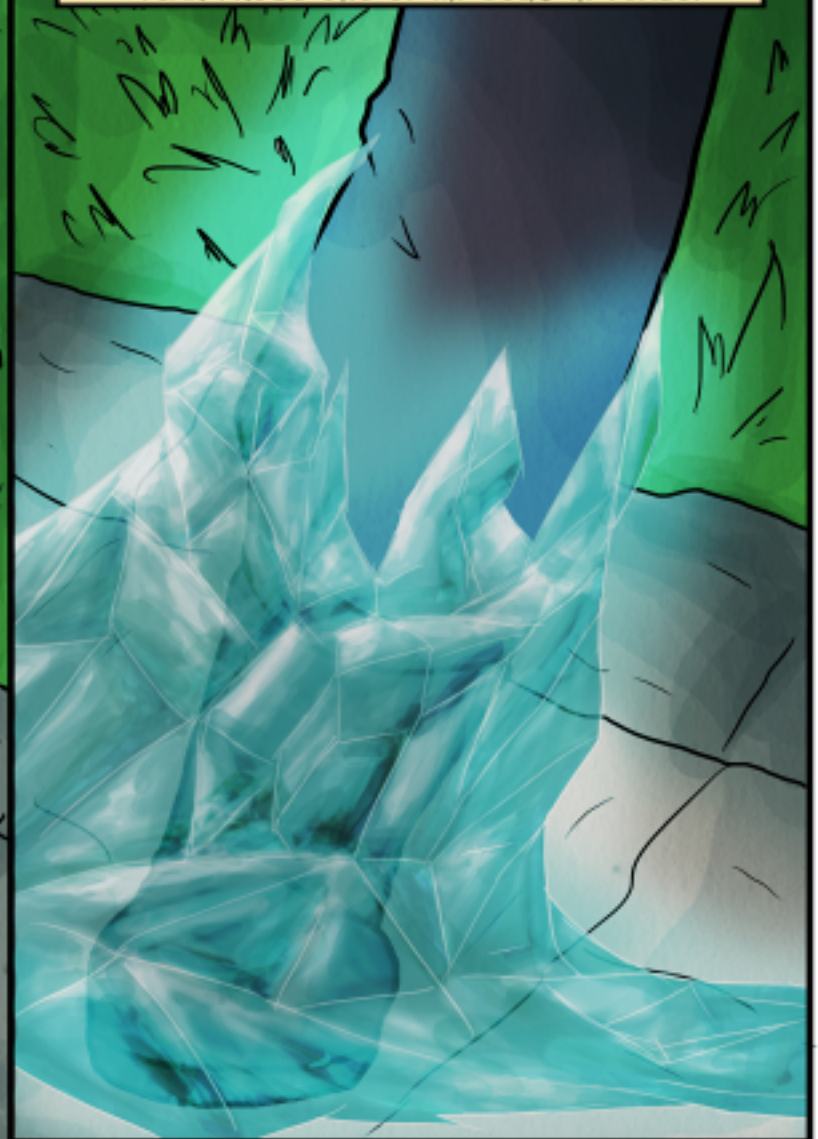


I MANAGED TO STAND BACK UP AND TURN AROUND. I SAW CHAR AND TEAR, READY TO MAGIC THE HELL OUTTA ME.



I... GOD, I WAS SO STUPID. I CAN'T BELIEVE I R-REALY THOUGHT THEY WOULD TRUST ME AFTER I TOLD THEM THE TRUTH. EVEN... EVEN THOUGH EVERYTHING I DID TO 'HELP' THEM WAS A LIE, MY DUMB ASS THOUGHT... THOUGHT THEY'D FORGIVE ME AND STILL WANT TO COUNT ON ME.

THEY TRIED TO MAKE SURE I WOULDN'T ESCAPE. TEAR FROZE ONE OF MY LEGS IN PLACE.





Z...ZAP....



HOW COULD YOU...?



HUH?



HOW COULD YOU?!?



WHAT KIND OF SICK AMUSEMENT DID YOU GET FROM PRETENDING TO BE OUR FRIEND?! FROM LEADING US IN CIRCLES?!

P-PLEASE, THAT'S NOT WHAT I WANTED TO--



DON'T PLAY STUPID WITH ME DAMMIT!!! YOU KNEW WHAT YOU WERE DOING!!!

EYAAAAAUGH!!!

N-NO!!! NO! I NEVER DID!! I NEVER KNEW WHAT I WAS DOING, EVER, PLEASE LISTEN, PLEASE!!



IN THAT MOMENT I REALLY THOUGHT SHE WAS GOING TO KILL ME.

A PART OF ME WAS READY TO ACCEPT IT.



BUT APPARENTLY THERE WAS A BIG ENOUGH PART OF ME...

...THAT THOUGHT I STILL HAD A CHANCE.

EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED NEXT IS A BLUR. I CAST A CONFUSION SPELL LARGE ENOUGH TO AFFECT THE WHOLE GROUP. BUT I NEVER CAST A SPELL THAT BIG BEFORE, I WAS... EXHAUSTED. FROM THE MAGIC AND EVERYTHING ELSE THAT JUST HAPPENED. IF I WANTED TO PLAY IT ALL OFF AS A BIG MISUNDERSTANDING, I HAD TO PUT MY DISGUISE BACK ON BUT I JUST DIDN'T HAVE THE ENERGY.



I ONLY REALLY PRACTICED ILLUSION MAGIC UP UNTIL THAT POINT, SO WHAT I DID WAS A REAL GAMBIT. EVEN CASTING THE BLIND SPELL EARLIER WAS A BAD IDEA...

BUT SEE, EVEN IF THE SPELL WORKED OR FAILED, I STILL WOULD HAVE BEEN AT THEIR MERCY... AND I HAVE A FEELING I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN SPARED THEN... SO I COUNT MYSELF EXTREMELY LUCKY.

BECAUSE, LITTLE DID I KNOW, MY USELESS STUNT ACTUALLY BOUGHT ME ENOUGH TIME THAT REALLY SAVED ME.

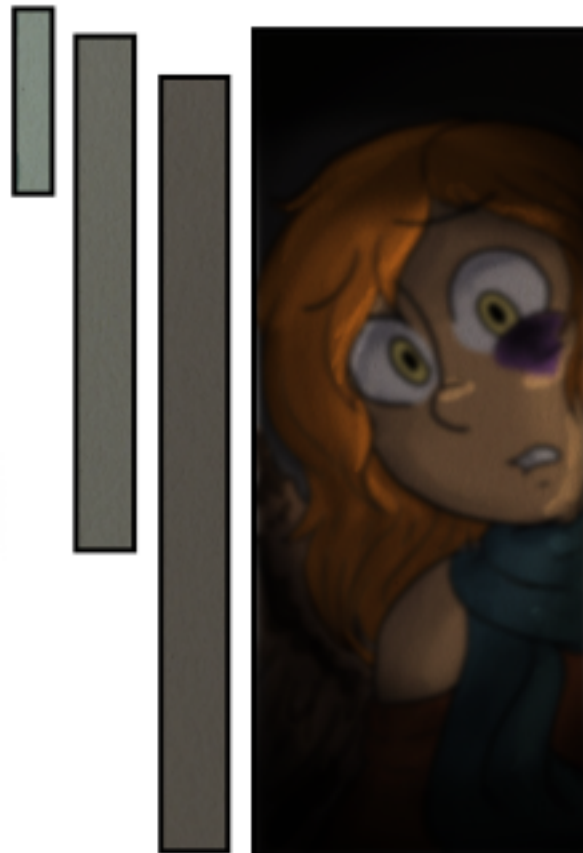
EVERYONE ELSE WAS DISORIENTED AND CONFUSED AT FIRST, BUT THEN THEY SEEMED ALERT, READY TO FIGHT AGAIN. THEY WERE STARING AT ME, LOOKING READY TO FIGHT AGAIN, BUT THEN I NOTICED THEY WERE STARING... PAST ME.



KROVA AND A FEATHRY I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE HIT THE OTHERS WITH SLEEP SPELLS...



I MUST HAVE PASSED OUT WHILE THEY WERE DOING IT. BECAUSE NEXT THING YOU KNOW...



...I WAS SAFE AND SOUND.

SNIFF P-P-P....

P-PUYON! Y-YOU ARE O-OKAY....!!

YOOOOWWWCH!!!

SQUEEEEEEEZE

CAREFUL, ANGEL. THAT HEALING POTION WASN'T ENOUGH TO FULLY HEAL THAT BURN.

W...WHO ARE YOU?

VAERA MOORE. A FEW MONTHS AGO I MET KROVA AT YOUR MOTHER'S SHOP. WE WERE UH... PEN PALS FOR AWHILE. SHE TOLD ME WHAT WAS HAPPENING SO...

I WANTED TO HELP. IT TOOK LONGER THAN I THOUGHT IT WOULD TO GET TO YOU, I'M SO SORRY! I WAS LOW ON MONEY SO I TOOK A COMMISSION FOR A REALLY COMPLEX ILLUSION PENDANT. PAID QUITE NICELY. 3 BAGS OF SIL AND A DARK ENCHANTED DAGGER.

IT TOOK AWHILE BUT...! WE'RE HERE AND WE'RE SAFE AS WE BE CAN UNTIL WE MAKE IT TO MYLENOR!!

WE AREN'T DEAD, SO THAT'S THE BEST. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR GOING OUT OF YOUR WAY TO HELP US.

...NICE RING. WHERE DID YOU SAY WE'RE GOING?

MYLENOR. IT'S A SMALLISH TOWN IN GARDENIA. IT'S NOT EXPLICITLY ILLEGAL TO BE A TRICKSTER THERE BUT IT'S ALSO NOT EXPLICITLY ILLEGAL TO KILL TRICKSTERS. WE'LL GET THERE FAST IN MY WAGON HERE.

ANOTHER THING I HAD TO DO WAS MAKE SURE YOU HAD SOMEWHERE TO GO AFTER YOU TWO LEFT. I HAVE SOME FRIENDS THERE WHO WILL BE HAPPY TO TAKE CARE OF YOU AND TEACH YOU PROPERLY ABOUT BEING A TRICKSTER.

SO THAT'S WHERE KROVA AND I ARE GOING TO BE.

....
YOU DIDN'T TELL HER???

I MAAAAY HAVE FORGOTTEN?? ...LISTEN, A LOT OF STUPID STRESSFUL STUFF WAS GOING ON, OKAY??

WHAT AM I MISSING HERE?!

I'M NOT STAYING WITH YOU. VAERA AND I WILL BE TRAVELLING TOGETHER.

WAIT... WHAT? WHY WOULD YOU... THAT'S... NO... NO.

I JUST... I JUST LOST EVERYTHING TODAY!! I DON'T-- I DON'T CARE IF M-MY FRIENDS TRIED TO KILL ME AND MOM D-DIDN'T CARE, B-BECAUSE THAT JUST MEANS...

YOU'RE ONE OF THE ONLY GOOD THINGS IN MY LIFE AND I HAVE TO LOSE YOU TOO?!

THIS IS!! JUST NO FAIR!!!

THAT MEANS I NEVER REALLY HAD ANYTHING EXCEPT FOR YOU!!



SIGH



WHY DO YOU HAVE TO LEAVE...?

I DON'T HAVE TO. I JUST WANT TO.



TO LEAVE ME??

NO! I WILL KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOU AND I WILL VISIT YOU WHENEVER WE ARE NEARBY.



...IT PROBABLY DOESN'T SEEM LIKE THE IDEAL CHOICE TO YOU, AND SHE WAS VERY APPREHENSIVE ABOUT LEAVING YOU IN SOMEONE ELSE'S CARE BUT... I KNOW THESE GUYS WILL TREAT YOU WELL. AND IF THEY DON'T I WILL PROBABLY KILL THEM.



YOU AND KROVA HAVE HAD VERY LITTLE CONTROL OVER YOUR LIFE. YOU HAVEN'T HAD AN OPTION TO ACTUALLY DO WHAT YOU WANT.



YOUR MOTHER FORCED YOU AND YOUR SISTER INTO AN INCREDIBLY DANGEROUS LIFE. KROVA DECIDED TO COME WITH ME BECAUSE SHE WANTS TO HELP OTHER INEXPERIENCED TRICKSTER BEFORE THEY GET THEMSELVES KILLED.



BUT YOU ALL DECIDED THIS FOR ME.

NOT OF OUR DISRESPECT. WE WANTED TO MAKE THE BEST CHOICE FOR AN INEXPERIENCED TRICKSTER, AND OUR BEST SOLUTION FOR YOU WAS A STABLE ENVIRONMENT WITH PEOPLE EAGER TO TEACH YOU.

I KNOW IT SEEMS UNFAIR, BUT...

THAT'S THE CHOICE SHE MADE FOR HERSELF AND I RESPECT IT.

I LOVE YOU AND I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU GET HURT AGAIN. COMING WITH US COULD BE DANGEROUS FOR YOU BUT... I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE VAERA'S SIDE AFTER SHE SAVED OUR LIVES.



AND... AFTER WE LEAVE MYLENOR, YOU CAN MAKE WHATEVER DECISIONS YOU WANT FOR YOURSELF. YOU COULD EVEN STOP BEING A TRICKSTER.



BUT THAT'S UP TO YOU. WHAT DO YOU REALLY WANT?



I DON'T... WANT TO STOP BEING A TRICKSTER. I KNOW I'D BE SAFER CONVERTING TO SOMETHING ELSE, BUT IT FEELS LIKE A PART OF WHO I AM.



AND... I GUESS NOW'S MY CHANCE TO ACTUALLY HAVE FUN BEING WHO I AM RATHER THAN BEING SCARED OF IT?



YEAH... I'LL MEET NEW PEOPLE WHO I CAN JUST BE MYSELF AROUND.



WHEN I LEARN BETTER I'LL FIND A WAY TO REALLY HELP PEOPLE TOO. AND MAYBE I'LL BE ABLE TO MAKE REALY FRIENDS WHO WON'T MIND THAT I'M A TRICKSTER.



AND DESPITE THE FACT THAT I'M A TRICKSTER, I'LL BE SOMEONE OTHERS CAN RELY ON... SOMEONE THEY CAN TRUST. THAT'S WHAT I WANT.

I DON'T KNOW FOR SURE WHAT I'LL DO... BUT I KNOW WHO I WANT TO BE I'M SURE I'LL FIND A WAY



SOUNDS AWESOME. PROMISE YOU'LL MAKE IT HAPPEN, GOT IT?

YOU BET. I'LL DO WHATEVER I CAN TO MAKE IT HAPPEN.



WHEW... THIS IS IT, PUYON. THIS IS YOUR CHANCE.

A PROMISE IS A PROMISE... THIS IS IT, KROVA. I'M GONNA BECOME A TRICKSTER PEOPLE WILL DEPEND ON.

AND I'M GONNA DO IT MY WAY.

...THERE YA HAVE IT. DUG THROUGH A LOT OF EMOTIONAL BAGGAGE TO FIND THE ANSWER, BUT THERE IT IS.

I'M HERE TO SEE IF SOMEONE LIKE ME... I-IF A TRICKSTER CAN BE... SOMEONE OTHERS RELY ON... LOOK UP TO. THAT'S ALSO WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO ME THAT PEOPLE KNOW WHAT I AM.

PUYON... ARE YOU OK--

IT'S NOT WORTH BEING ADMIRERD IF I GOTTA LOSE A PART OF MYSELF TO BE LIKED, Y'KNOW?

AGH. HOW LONG HAVE WE BEEN SITTING HERE FOR? HOURS? DAYS? A YEAR? WHATEVER, I'M GOING TO MY DORM. I THINK KROVA SENT ME A LETTER TODAY ANYWAYS. BRING ME YOUR NOTES AND STUFF LATER.

...I'M WORRIED FOR HER.

I DON'T THINK SHE REALIZES HOW BAD SHE REALLY WAS TREATED.

EH, I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT HER TOO MUCH. SHE SEEMS FINE. MAKES YOU WONDER HOW MUCH OF THAT STORY WAS REALLY MADE UP.

ANNALIESE---!!

YOU'RE BEING RUDE'. ALRIGHT. I GET IT. BUT YOU HAVE TO ADMIT SOMETHING DIDN'T FEEL QUITE RIGHT ABOUT THAT STORY...

ARE YOU JUST SAYING THIS BECAUSE SHE'S A TRICKSTER?

UH... NO.

LOOK... SOME THINGS JUST FELT TOO... FORCED TO BE REAL. I THINK SHE'S EITHER HIDING SOME THINGS OR SHE MADE UP THE WHOLE STORY SO SHE CAN KEEP BEING A MYSTERIOUS TRICKSTER.

I'M NOT GOING TO FALL FOR SOME TRICKSTER SOB STORY! NOT AFTER---

COUGH

UUUUUUUUUU

I CAME BACK SO I COULD CHANGE THE DEAL FROM HISTORY NOTES TO LINGO NOTES INSTEAD... I ACTUALLY LIKE HISTORY. BUT NOW I GET TO REMIND YOU, DEAREST ANNALIESE, THAT JUST BECAUSE ONE IS OUT OF SIGHT DOESN'T MEAN THEY'RE OUT OF EARSHOT.

IN OTHER WORDS, CHECK BEHIND YOUR BACK BEFORE YOU TRY TO TALK BEHIND MINE, ASSHOLE.

IF I REALLY WANTED TO GET YOU UP IN A TIZZY, I'D HAVE MADE YOUR WINGS PLAID. MAYBE TARTAN, OR GINGHAM. ALL SORTS OF FUN PATTERNS IN CLASHING COLORS.

MAKING UP A CONVOLUTED BACKSTORY LIKE THAT WOULD MAKE THINGS TOO AWKWARD OR COMPLICATED.

FINE, WHATEVER. DON'T TRUST ME. CALL ME A LIAR. PRETEND IT'S NOT ABOUT ME BEING A TRICKSTER. BEING A STUBBORN JERK IS UP TO YOU. I CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT HOW YOU CHOOSE TO REACT.

BUT BEFORE YOU CAST YOUR CRUMBY JUDGEMENT, JUST REMEMBER, I NEVER LIED ABOUT THE ONE THING EVERY TRICKSTER WOULD HIDE FROM YOU.

...ARE YOU HAPPY?

EMBER, COME ON.

NO, ANNA, YOU COME ON! THAT WAS REALLY HARD FOR HER TO TELL! IT'S NOT EVERY DAY A TRICKSTER TRUSTS SOMETHING THAT PERSONAL WITH PEOPLE LIKE US!!

YOU FELT THAT WAY ABOUT JAYCE, TOO, AND LOOK AT HOW WELL HE TREATED YOU.

A-ANNA!! H... HOW COULD YOU SAY THAT?! HOW COULD YOU COMPARE THEM?! PUYON IS NOTHING LIKE HIM! S-SHE WOULD NEVER...

AH... AH SHOOT, I DIDN'T MEAN THAT! I DIDN'T MEAN FOR IT TO COME OUT LIKE THAT, EM, I'M SO SORRY!

I DIDN'T KNOW HE WOULD... HE WOULD HAVE... ANNA, PLEASE WHY DID YOU HAVE TO SAY THAT...

NO, EMBER, PLEASE, NO. DON'T CRY, NO NO NO. I SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID THAT, I SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID ANYTHING.

A-ANNA, DID... DID HE REALLY MAKE YOU HATE TRICKSTERS THAT MUCH? THAT YOU WOULD ACCUSE ANYONE AS BEING AS EVIL AS HE WAS...?

DUDE, NO, I'M SORRY. I... IT'S REALLY HARD TO SHAKE OFF WHAT HAPPENED. I'M SORRY. PUYON ISN'T LIKE HIM.

EVEN IF SHE WAS, SHE COULDN'T DO ANYTHING. WE'RE SAFE HERE AND SHE'S HARMLESS... BUT REALLY, I... DON'T THINK IT'S FAIR TO ASSUME THAT SHE WOULD LIE TO US JUST BECAUSE, YOU KNOW?

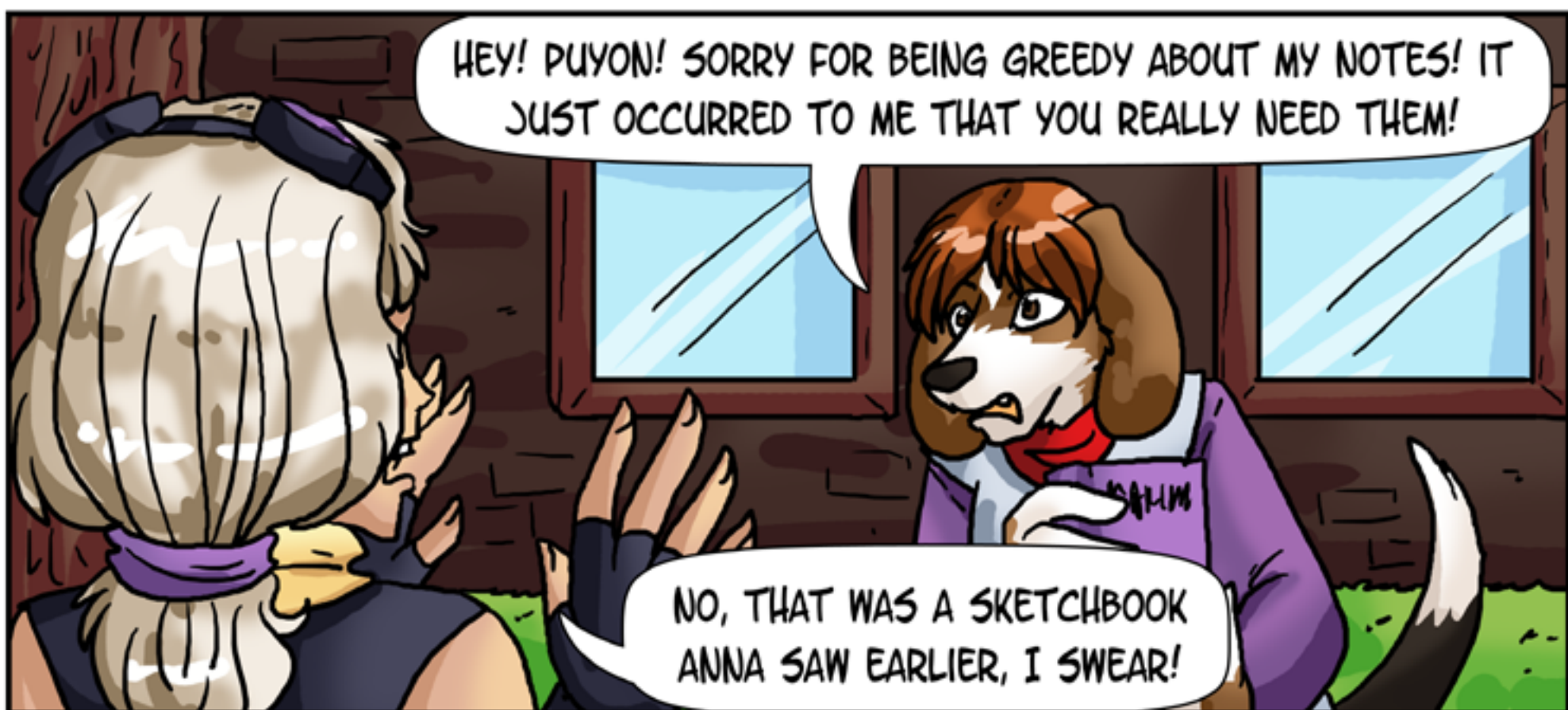
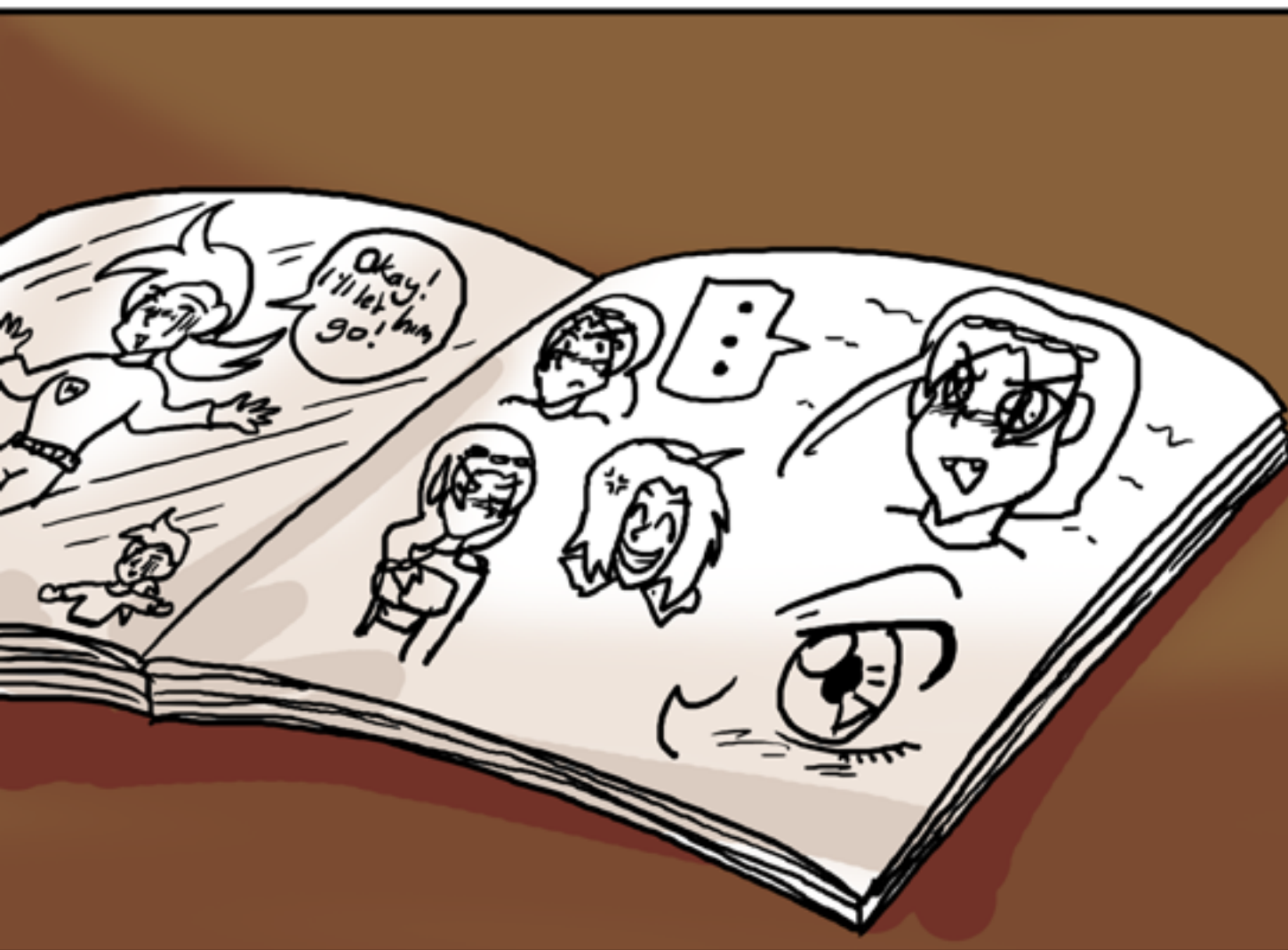
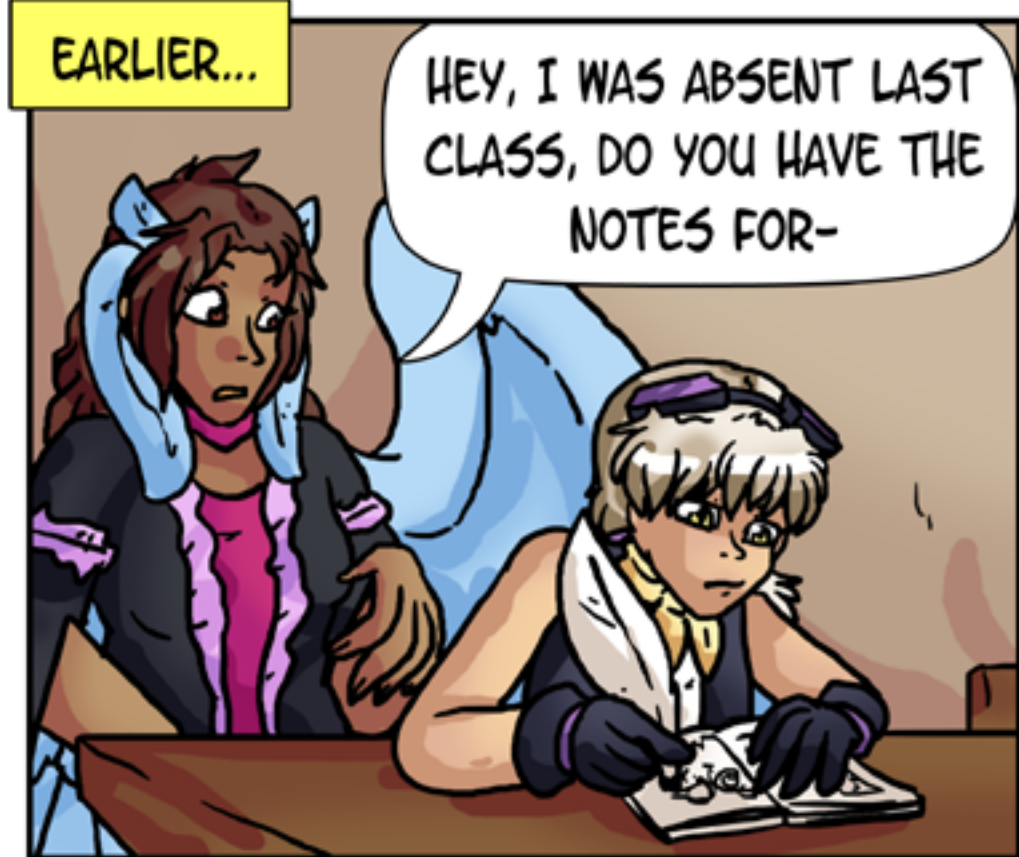
GOOD GODS ABOVE, THIS IS AWKWARD.

I'M NOT GONNA PRETEND I KNOW WHAT YOU TWO ARE TALKING ABOUT, BUT... MAYBE SOMEONE ELSE WOULD LIKE AN APOLOGY?

EHHN... I... I DUNNO. I...

ANNA, I KNOW WHY YOU SAID ALL THAT BUT PUYON DOESN'T. LET'S GIVE HER SOME SPACE. WE CAN TALK LATER, APOLOGIZE, MAYBE EXPLAIN A FEW THINGS?

UH... YEAH. OKAY.



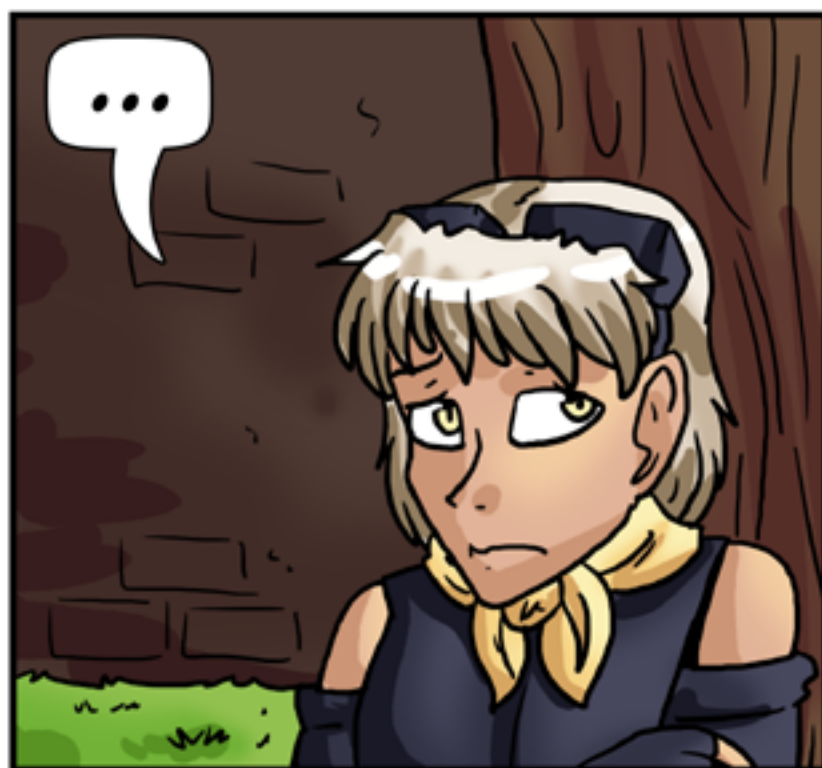
WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY'RE EVEN TALKING ABOUT-?

DUNNO. I JUST WANNA STEAL THEIR HISTORY HOMEWORK, I THINK IT'S DUE TODAY.

URGH, THAT SOUNDS LIKE AN AWFUL LOT OF EFFORT.

WHY DON'T WE JUST STEAL XAN'S STUFF?

HUH-??



AND SO-

