

WAY BACK HOME



7. END OF THE LINE

ZAMIL, WHA' ARE Y' DOIN'? THA'S YER BROTHER, AIN' IT?
GET IN THERE AN' BEAT 'IM DOWN!

MY WIFE... SHE'S... DEAD?

BUT YOUR SON-

WITHOUT ME OR ELLE, MAYBE YASIR'S IS THE RIGHT PLACE FOR HIM TO GO...
HE'S MY ONLY FAMILY, AND ELLE'S FAMILY ARE HUGE RACISTS.

OH DANG, ZAMIL...

I'M SORRY.

OH GODS, ELLE... WHAT IF I MISSED HER IN PURGATORY? WHAT IF SHE
WAS THERE, JUST AS WORRIED ABOUT MANA AS ME?
...WHAT IF I NEVER SEE HER AGAIN?





YOU'RE ALIVE?!



BUT- BUT HE SAID-



YOU CAN'T BE ALIVE! I SAW YOU- I HAD TO IDENTIFY YOUR BODY!



ELLE... I'M SO SORRY.



YOU'RE SORRY?!

MANA'S GONE, YOU'VE FAKED YOUR OWN
DEATH SOMEHOW AND-

OH GOD... THERE WAS A BODY... I SAW...
WHAT DID YOU DO?!

ELLE-

HEY, LET GO OF-

DON'T YOU TOUCH HER.

AND- AND-!!

EXPLAIN WHY YOU AND YOUR FRIEND OVER THERE
ARE COVERED IN BLOOD!

MICHELLE, I...
I DIDN'T FAKE MY
DEATH.



ZAMIL...?



UM, ZAMIL, YOU MIGHT LIKE TO LOOK LESS UH, Y'KNOW.



...S-SORRY.



ZAMIL?!

I'M SO SORRY, ELLE.



I... DIDN'T SURVIVE THAT MONSTER ATTACK. THIS IS... I GUESS YOU COULD CALL ME A "GHOST". I CAME BACK FOR MANA...



I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN YOU'D HAVE IT COVERED.

I DON'T BELIEVE THIS... SO YOUR
PALS THERE- GHOSTS TOO?

THEY ARE, I AIN'. I GOT KILL'D BY TH' SAME MONST'R
WH' GOT ZAMIL, BUT I AIN' MORTAL, SO...

H-HUH?

I'M AN ELEMENT'L CLANN'R.

BUT IF YOU'RE HERE- OH HELL!!

WHAT-?

YASIR HAS MANA IN THERE! HE TOLD HIM WE'RE
BOTH DEAD! HE THINKS... OH MANA...!

WHAT?!

YASIR- YOUR
BROTHER?! THE
TRICKSTER!

ELLE- HE'S-... YES, A TRICKSTER, BUT-
I-I'M NOT...

IT'S OKAY. I ALWAYS
KNEW.

R-RIGHT... GHOSTS...
OK I'LL DEAL WITH THAT
LATER. THE KID'S IN
THERE? WE NEED TO
MOVE QUICKLY.

THIS PLACE GOT A BACK DOOR?

OH, YES...

ANY OTHER EXITS?

YEAH, A SIDE DOOR.

RIGHT. CLANNER, YOU'RE WITH
ME UP BACK.

PURPLE, GO WITH FOXFACE
DOWN THE SIDE.

YOU TWO LOVERS TAKE THE
FRONT ENTRANCE.

UM, WHAT ABOUT US--?

YOU WATCH
THE ROAD.

KEEP MYRA AND THAT KID OUT OF
TROUBLE, OKAY?

HMM. YOU KNOW, I BELIEVE HE DID THAT JUST TO LOSE US.

HEH, YEAH.

BUT THAT'S FAIR. YOU'RE JUST A LITTLE KID. ME AND DONOVAN HERE CAN KEEP YOU OUT OF TROUBLE, AND THERE'S GOING TO BE PLENTY OF IT IN THAT HOUSE...

UM, THAT'S NICE OF YOU, BUT UH... I AM ALREADY DEAD, YOU KNOW.

UH, ST-STILL. IF, GOD FORBID, ANYTHING WERE TO HAPPEN IN THERE... BETTER YOU NOT SEE IT.

I DIED RATHER A LONG TIME AGO, I'VE SEEN QUITE A LOT ALREADY.

BEST STAY PUT, AND KEEP AN EYE ON THE ROAD. ZEED MIGHT TRY RUNNING.

~SIGH~

I WONDER IF I COULD...
HMM, IT IS SAID THAT GHOSTS CAN WALK THROUGH WALLS...

MANA AND YASIR WERE RIGHT HERE! NGH!



I CAN'T BREAK IT DOWN...

STEP ASIDE.



WHOA.



HE'S GONE. AS EXPECTED...

STILL, HE HAS TO BE IN HERE SOMEWHERE, WE CAN-

SNIFF



ELLE-? WHAT'S WRONG?



N-NOTHING...
..EVERYTHING....

IT'S JUST... IT'S REALLY HARD, YOU BEING HERE.

I-...

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M GOING
TO DO WHEN YOU'RE GONE.

ANY SIGN OF 'EM?!

TH-THERE'S NOBODY AT
THE FRONT!

NOTHING OUR END!

RIGHT, START A SWEEP
OF THE GROUND FLOOR!

YOU GUYS GOOD? GUESS THEY'RE NOT ON THE
GROUND FLOOR, THEN.

SO IT'S EITHER UP OR DOWN.
ZAMIL, THOUGHTS?

WE'VE GOT THE SECOND FLOOR AND A LARGE
ATTIC UP, BUT THE BASEMENT IS EXTENSIVE.
EITHER'S A POSSIBILITY...

KEEP MOVING, THEN. ZAMIL, PURPLE,
UPSTAIRS WITH ME. CLANNER, ELLE, FOX-

WAIT!

PLEASE, LET
ME-

AH. OF
COURSE.

ELLE, ZAMIL, CLANNER ARE DOWNSTAIRS. COME ON,
PURPLE AND BLUE.



IS SHE GONNA BE OKAY?

PROBABLY.



AS LONG AS WE FIND HER SON...



YOU
SURE?



IF MY WIFE CAME BACK TO SAVE OUR SON AFTER SHE
WAS KILLED I PROBABLY WOULD HAVE LOST IT.



WELL MAYBE MICHELLE'S MADE
OF STRONGER STUFF THAN YOU,
MISTER GHOST.

LET'S JUST HOPE
HER SON'S OKAY...



HE'S FINE. OR AT
LEAST, HE'S ALIVE.



HOW DO YOU KNOW
THAT?



IF THE REAPER WAS HERE, SHE'D HAVE TAKEN
ME WITH HER WHEN SHE LEFT, I BET.

SO IF YOU'RE STILL HERE, THE REAPER CAN'T HAVE COME, AND MANA'S ALIVE!

THAT'S WHAT I THINK...

TH' REAP'R C'N APPEAR WHERE THERE AIN' DEATH TOO, SO DON'T JUMP T' CONCLUSIONS IF HE DO VANISH....

WHAT KIND OF MAN IS YOUR BROTHER, ZAMMIE?

YEAH.. AT ANY TIME, I COULD JUST...

...I SHOULDN'T EVEN BE HERE.

HUH?

I KNOW HE'S A TRICKSTER, BUT WOULD HE... IS HE LIKELY TO HURT MANA?

WHEN I WAS ALIVE, I WOULD HAVE SAID NO, BUT...

I DIDN'T THINK HE'D HAVE IT IN HIM TO HAVE SOMEBODY KILL ME, EITHER... I-

TAL, STOP!!



HUH-?



LOOK OUT-!!

THERE'S A TRIPWIRE!



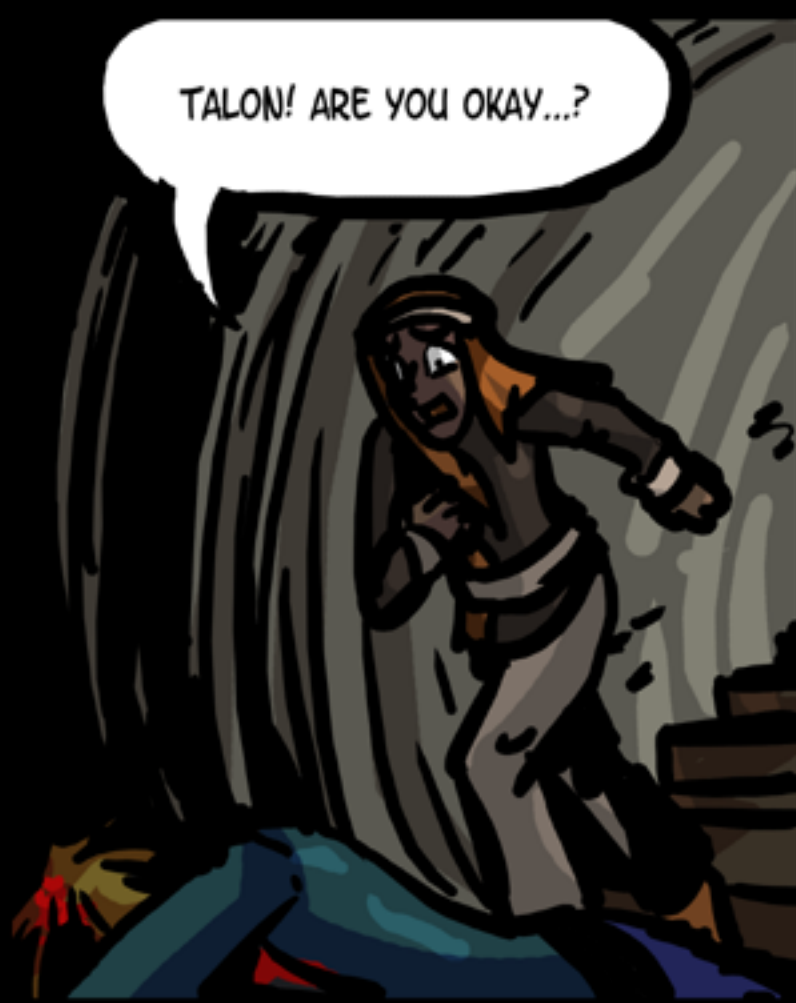
OH- FELS!!



AAAAAAAAH!!!

TALON!!

CAREFUL, ZAMIL!



TALON! ARE YOU OKAY...?



N-NO...



URGH... I TH-
THINK I HATE YER
BROTHER, ZAMIL...

H-HOLD ON TAL! THIS LOOKS BAD...

THAT TRIP COULD HAVE KILLED SOMEONE!
YOUR BROTHER IS A MONSTER...

COULD 'AVE... I THINK IT
WILL 'AVE... NGH...

TAL, NO! YOU CAN'T DIE! YOU'LL
BRING THE REAPER! PLEASE--!

PHOENIX
CLANNER,
HEAL YOUR-
SELF!

HEH... N-NO, I DON' THINK I'LL
BE A-ABLE T'...

CERAPH MAGIC DOESN'T HEAL WOUNDS, I CAN'T HELP
YOU, I... ZAMIL, CAN'T YOU USE PHOENIX MAGIC?

THE DEAD CAN'T USE
MAGIC...



THIS DOESN'T LOOK GOOD.

IT'S LIKE A BLOODY MAZE!



THIS PLACE MAKES NO SENSE! ALL THESE DEAD ENDS, FAKE STAIRS LEADING NOWHERE... WHAT THE HELL?!

THEY COULD BE ANYWHERE! AND-



...???? WHAT THE- WHERE'D BEN GO?!

BEN?



THE FOX! THE ONE WHO'S NOT HERE!

OH FELS.



FOXFACE! WHERE ARE YOU?!

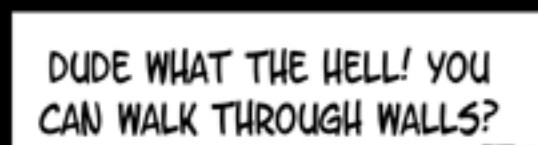
BEN! BEN!!



OH TO HELL WITH THIS!







OH YEAH... NICE TRAP, HUH?
CAN YOU CLIMB UP? I MIGHT BE
ABLE TO OPEN THE HATCH.



NAH, I'M BARELY HOLDING ON... THERE'S NO ROOM TO SPREAD
MY WINGS. I REALLY DON'T WANT TO FALL! CAN YOU PULL
ME UP? IT LOOKS LIKE A LONG DROP...



NO, I REALLY... I'M NOT STRONG ENOUGH.
SORRY, BEN. I'LL GET ARC! HANG IN THERE!



LIKE I HAVE A
CHOICE...



UH.....



WHICH WAY DID I COME IN, AGAIN?



IS HE...?

HE'S STILL BREATHING... JUST.

CAN YOU STAY HERE AND KEEP AN EYE ON HIM?
I'LL KEEP SEARCHING...

NO WAY. I'M LOOKING TOO.

PLEASE, ELLE. IT COULD BE
DANGEROUS. I DON'T WANT YOU
TO GET HURT...

NOTHING BAD CAN
HAPPEN TO ME, BUT-

ZAMIL...


BUT SOMETHING COULD HAPPEN TO YOUR SON.




YASIR-!!



ZAMIL.



THAT'S.... MANA....




YES. YOU MIGHT LIKE TO CONTROL YOUR WIFE, ZAMIL. WE WOULDN'T WANT ANYTHING TO HAPPEN TO THE POOR BOY.



YOU BLOODY-!


ELLE.



DON'T DO ANYTHING STUPID NOW, WILL YOU?



YASIR... WHY?



STAY BACK, ZAMIL.

YASIR! WHY DID YOU
KILL ME?!

I THOUGHT YOU DIED,
THAT MATTHIAS DID
HIS DAMN JOB, BUT-

OBVIOUSLY I WAS WRONG. SO.
I DIDN'T KILL YOU.

DON'T WIGGLE OUT OF IT! ANSWER ME!
WHY DID YOU KILL ME? I KNOW YOU HIRED
THAT MONSTER SUMMONER!

WHY DID YOU TAKE MY SON?! YOU'RE MY BROTHER!

TRICKSTER, WHY ARE YOU
DOING THIS TO US?!

YOU SHUT UP! CERAPH CRONIES HAVE NO RIGHT TO SPEAK TO ME!



DON'T TALK TO HER LIKE-
YOU.



WHY DID I WANT YOU DEAD? ZAMIL.
YOU DON'T DESERVE HAPPINESS.



YOU BETRAYED YOUR FAMILY.



OUR PARENTS WERE KILLED BY
ELEMENTALISTS AND YOU HOOK UP WITH ONE?!



WHUH- HOW CAN YOU
PREACH ABOUT FAMILY
WHEN YOU'RE DOING
THIS?! I'M YOUR
BROTHER!



PUT MANA DOWN. LET'S SETTLE THIS. YOU, AND ME.

I DON'T THINK SO.

I PUT THE KID DOWN, YOUR CERAPH DOG WILL ATTACK ME.
NEVER TRUST AN ELEMENTALIST...

HOW DO YOU THINK THIS IS
GOING TO END, TRICKSTER?

I'M NOT LEAVING WITHOUT MY SON. YOU DO ANYTHING TO HIM
AND I'LL KILL YOU. SO JUST RETURN HIM SAFELY, AND MAYBE
I'LL SEE ABOUT SOME CLEMENCY FOR YOU.

CLEMENCY...? YOU REALLY THINK I'LL
BELIEVE THAT? HAH!

IF YOU WANT YOUR SON TO LIVE, THEN LEAVE.

THAT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.



FOX! ARE YOU OKAY?

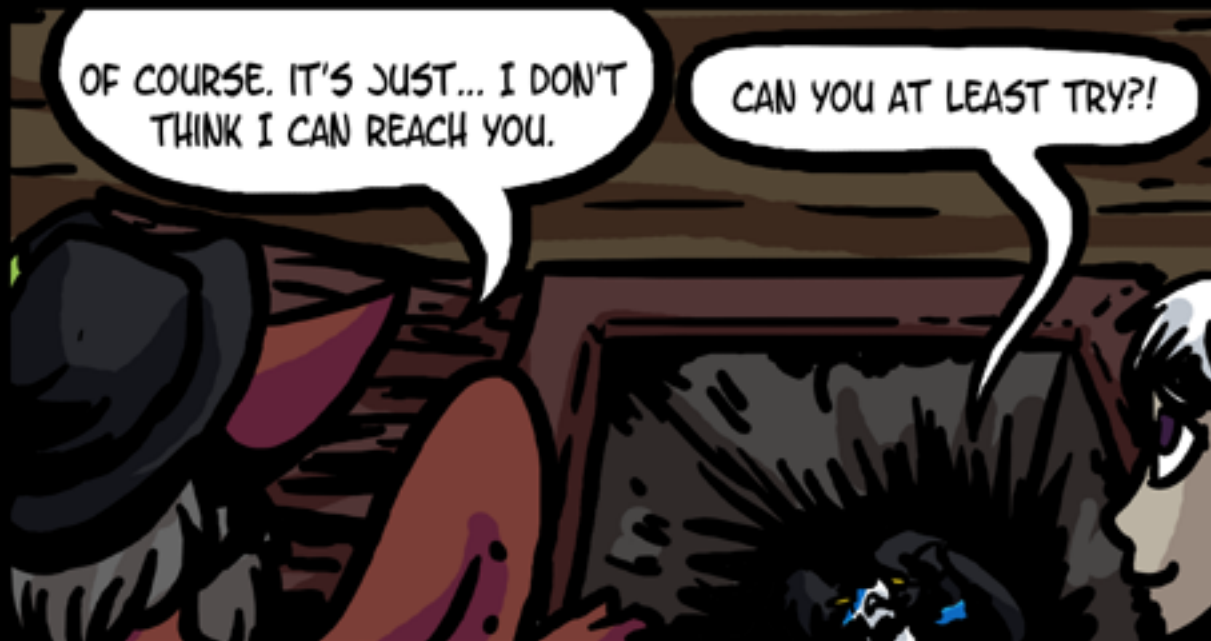
FOR NOW.. BUT I REALLY WANT TO GET OUT!



HAVE YOU TRIED CASTING A LIGHT SPELL TO SEE HOW LONG THAT DROP IS?



NO, I DON'T WANT TO SLIP AND FALL.



OF COURSE. IT'S JUST... I DON'T THINK I CAN REACH YOU.

CAN YOU AT LEAST TRY?!



DON'T LOSE YOUR GRIP-!

BENNNNNN!

ACK-!!

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!

OOOF!

OH. HEH. THAT WASN'T A
VERY LONG-

click

DROOOOOOOOOOOOOOP!

THAT YELLING MEANS HE'S OKAY, RIGHT?

UH... PROBABLY. HE SEEMS
...RESILIENT.

WONDER WHERE HE'LL END UP-?

BASEMENT. GOTTA BE.

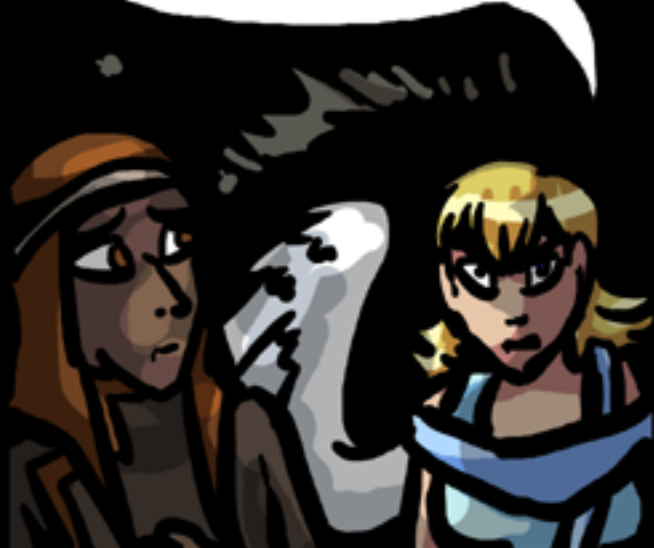
I'LL GO AFTER HIM!

OKAY...

I'M NOT GOING DOWN THAT HOLE. IT REALLY
DOESN'T LOOK SAFE. WHICH I'M SURE IS FINE FOR YOU,
MR GHOST. BUT I'LL FIND ANOTHER WAY AROUND.

SEE YA DOWN
THERE, THEN!

SO A STANDOFF, IS IT?



YASIR, THERE'S NO NEED FOR THIS. JUST BACK DOWN. PLEASE DON'T HURT MY SON. WE CAN END THE BLOODSHED HERE, JUST... PLEASE.



NO, WE DO THIS MY WAY. YOU BACK OFF, AND I-...



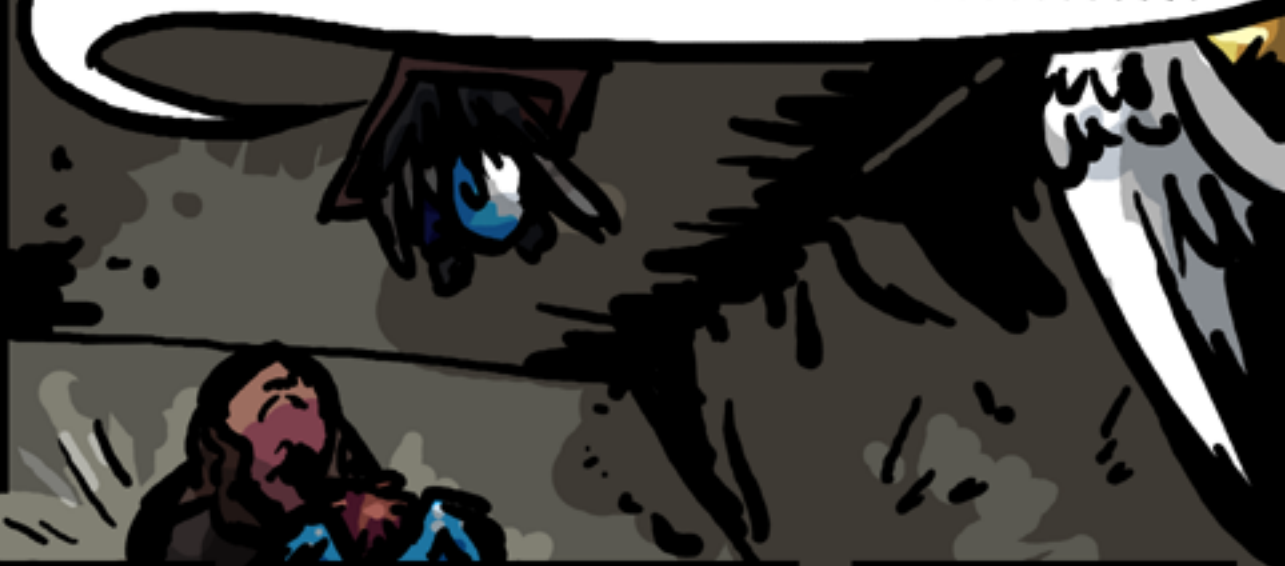
DO YOU HEAR SOMETHING?



IS THIS A TRICK?



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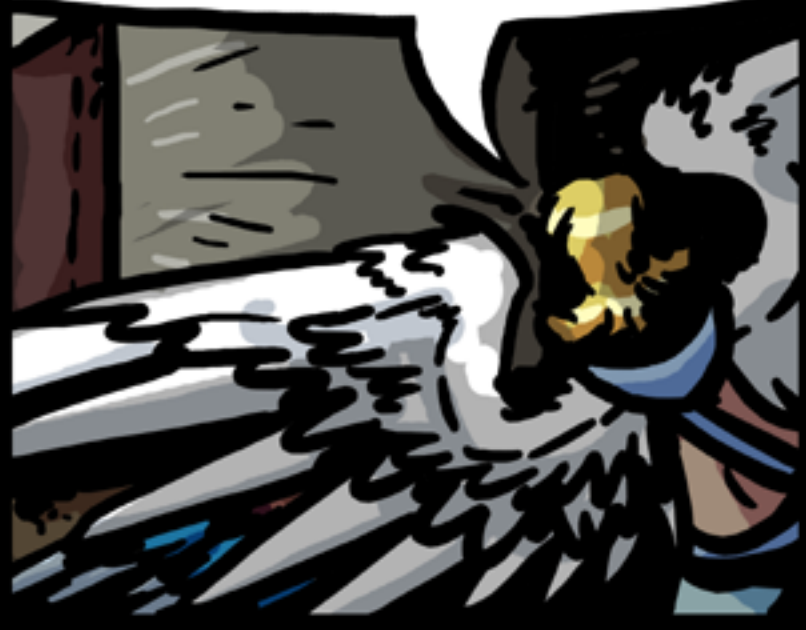
GAH-!

OOF!





FELS- NO! MANA!! WHY ISN'T HE MOVING-



HE'S NOT BREATHING ZAMIL  
HE'S NOT BREATHING!



YASIR

NO- WAIT-!

I'LL KILL YOU, TRICKSTER!



DON'T SULLY  
YOURSELF, HE'S MY  
BROTHER.

I'M SORRY....



NO NO NO NO NO IT'S AN ILLU....



S...SION...







AN ILLUSION?!



A-AA...



WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?



WH-WHAT'S GOING ON...?



AM I- DID YOU...?  
MY NECK....



MANA- MANA IS ALIVE?!



HOW STUPID ARE YOU?! I APPEAR TO REAP SOULS, IF THERE WAS DEATH HERE EARLIER I'D BE HERE EARLIER!



I....

GYAAAAH-!



OH... MAN. WHAT HAPPENED? ..ZAMIL?



WHAT, INDEED.

YOU'RE DEAD! YOU PASSED JUDGMENT! AND YOU'VE TAKEN A LIFE!

DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DONE?!









IT WAS JUST A DOLL...

DEAD... DUNNO HOW  
WE'LL EXPLAIN THAT.

ZAMIL! IT WAS... OH ZAMIL....

HE'S GONE....

WHOAHHH HEY IS THAT OTHER GUY OKAY? HE DOESN'T  
LOOK OKAY. LEMME HEAL YOU UP, BUDDY.

ELLE?! ELLE IS THAT YOU?

ARC!

HEY WHAT THE- WHAT HAPPENED?!  
FOXFACE, WHAT DID YOU DO?

DON'T BLAME ME,  
I'M HELPING.



IT'S... IT'S FINE. ZAMIL KILLED HIS BROTHER.  
BUT HE'S GONE NOW.... BUT... MANA-



MANA'S ALIVE SOMEWHERE!  
WE NEED TO-

OH, ICK.



THAT IS A LOT OF BLOOD...  
IS HE DEAD? COULD YOU COVER  
THAT UP, PLEASE?



YOU? YOU SHOULD BE OUTSIDE...



HERE, I'VE FOUND THEM.



M-MUM?



MANA!







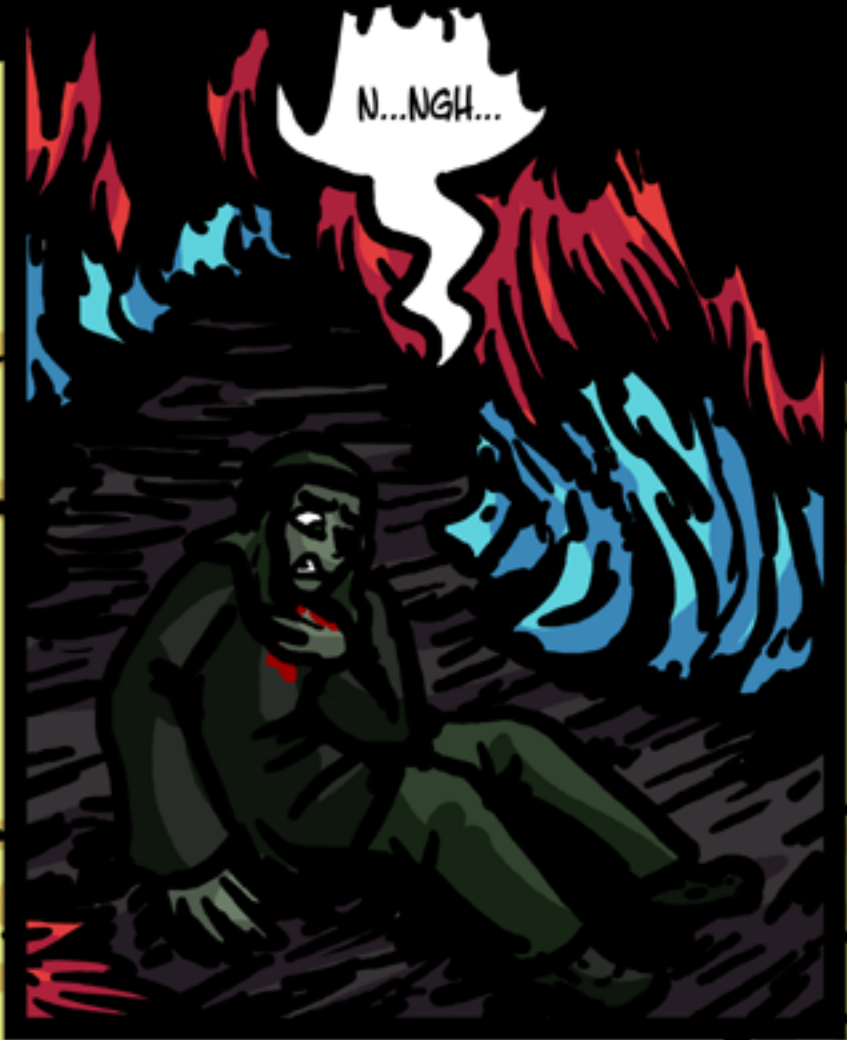
WELL THEN...



FRIENDS... FAMILY...

YOU'LL NEVER SEE ANY OF THEM AGAIN

I'LL MAKE SURE OF IT





YOU.

YOU'VE RUINED EVERYTHING. I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU KEPT ESCAPING...



BUT TO KILL A PERSON AFTER  
YOU FACED JUDGMENT? YOU'VE  
REALLY DONE IT. DO YOU KNOW  
WHAT THAT MEANS?



NOPE.



I CAN'T IMAGINE IT COMES UP  
TOO OFTEN.



ALTAIR'S GOING TO BE  
ANGRY! AT ME!



AND IT'S ALL YOUR DOING!!



...OKAY.





OKAY?!

SUCH FLIPPANCY SHALL BE WELL REWARDED...  
THERE'S ONE WAY FOR ME TO ENSURE YOU  
DON'T DO THIS AGAIN.

DO YOU SEE  
WHERE YOU ARE?



IT... IT'S DARK. I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING.



THERE'S NOTHING TO SEE.  
YOU ARE NOWHERE.



AND HERE YOU WILL STAY.



FOREVER.





WELL THAT'S A HELLUVA MESS, ISN'T IT?



SEEMED TO WORK OUT IN THE END, AS BEST AS COULD BE HOPED FOR. MANA AND MRS AHMAD LOOKED SO HAPPY TO BE REUNITED.



ARC WAS HAPPY TO TAKE THEM AND MYRA HOME. HAPPY TO LEAVE US WITH THE CLEAN UP...



HA, YEAH! HAVE FUN WITH THA'!



WHAT? YOU TWO AIN'T LEAVING, WE'VE GOT QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED!



HAH, I'M IMMORT'L, I DO WHA' I WANT.



AND YOU CAN'T CORRAL THE DEAD, I'M AFRAID.





ZAMIL...

I DIDN'T GET TO SAY GOODBYE  
THIS TIME EITHER...

I WISH YOU WERE STILL HERE.

THANK YOU, ZAMIL. MAYBE WE'LL MEET AGAIN SOMEDAY.



ELLE....

EVEN IF I'M STUCK HERE FOREVER, AT LEAST I GOT TO SEE YOU ONE LAST TIME.

OHO YES, DON'T BE SAD MY FRIEND!  
EVERYTHING TURNED OUT JUST FINE!

WHA- YOU'RE THAT JERK FROM  
JUDGMENT! YOU TRICKED ME!

YES, I GET THAT A LOT!

BUT I'LL CONSIDER THAT  
SOME PAYMENT FOR YOU GOING ALL  
REVERSE-HERETIC ON ME.

...HUH?!





YOU... YOU'RE A LACKEY OF LORD TRICKY?



HAH!



NO.



SURPRISE!

I- WHAT- ....YOU....

I AM THE TRICKSTER GOD.



WH-....



...OKAY.

I SUPPOSE YOU GOT YOUR PAYBACK FOR ME DROPPING THE FAITH. I'M DEAD. I'M STUCK... NOWHERE. THE GOD OF DEATH HAS GIVEN ME THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE PENANCE. THERE'S NOT MUCH MORE YOU CAN DO TO PUNISH ME.



AHHHH, THAT'S NOT WHY I'M HERE, MR AHMAD.





I'M HERE TO LET YOU OUT OF THIS HOLE.

WHAT?! WHY?



WELL, BIRDBRAINS HAS NO CALL KEEPING YOU HERE. ALTAIR'LL BE PISSED, HE'D NEVER ALLOW THIS. BUT FAR MORE IMPORTANTLY... EVERYTHING WENT TO PLAN, MY HERETICAL GHOST! YOU PLAYED YOUR PART PERFECTLY.

WHAT PLAN?



WHY, YOU FOUND AND SHARED THE SECRET OF HOW TO RETURN TO THE LAND OF THE LIVING, THAT KNOWLEDGE'S BEEN FORGOTTEN FOR AGES. YOU KILLED YOUR BROTHER. YOU SAVED YOUR SON.



FAR AS I CAN SEE, IT'S ALL GOOD!



...MY BROTHER WAS A TRICKSTER. HOW WOULD YOU CONSIDER HIS END BEING "GOOD"?



OH PSH. WORSHIP DOESN'T BLIND ME TO MORALS. YOUR BROTHER WAS NOT A NICE MAN, NO LOSS THERE.



....BUT YOU'RE NOT A VERY NICE MA-... ER, GOD.

HAH. AT ANY RATE, MY MAIN GOAL WAS TO ANNOY THAT IDIOT REAPER! NOW HOW'D THAT GO?

HEH... SHE WAS VERY ANGRY.



WELL... FIGURE THE EXTRA  
PENANCE MADE US EVEN.  
YOU HAD A CHANCE TO  
GET BACK HOME, AND YOU  
DID. SO-

HERE YOU ARE AGAIN.

ZAMIL! THERE  
YOU ARE!

WHAT THE HELL! WHERE WERE YOU?  
YOU HAD ME WORRIED YA JERK!

WHERE'S YASIR?

GONE TO HELL TO REPAY HIS DEBT'S  
ALREADY. JUST AS WELL, EH? ...DO YOU  
WANNA HIT THE VIEWING POOL AGAIN, MAKE  
SURE ELLE AND MANA ARE OKAY?

...NAH. I'M SURE THEY'RE FINE.