



GOLD DIGGER

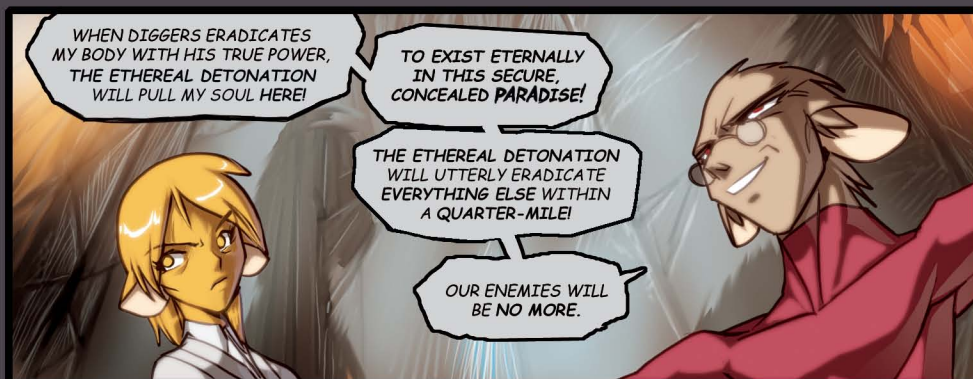
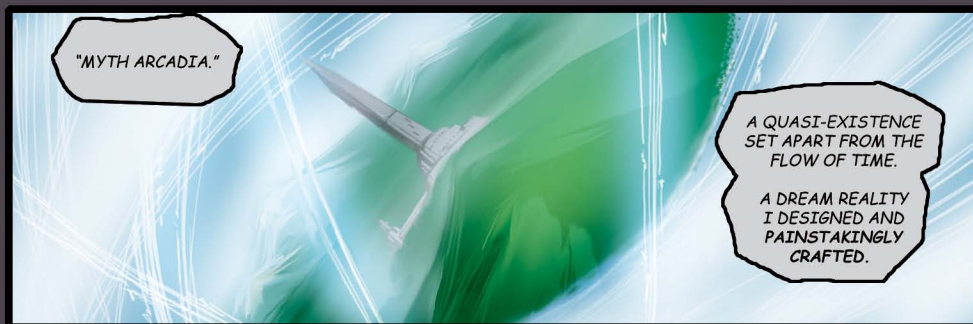
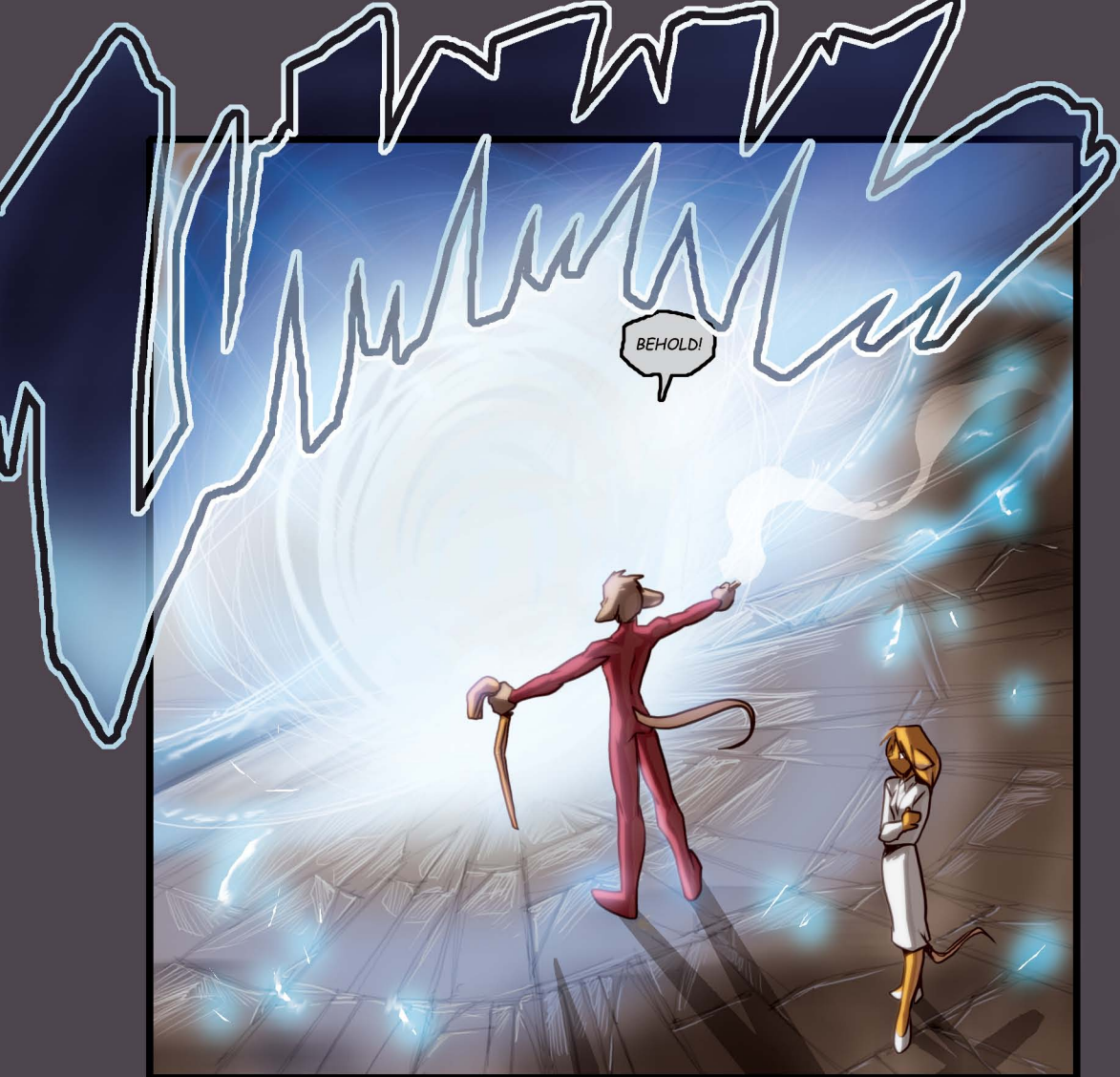
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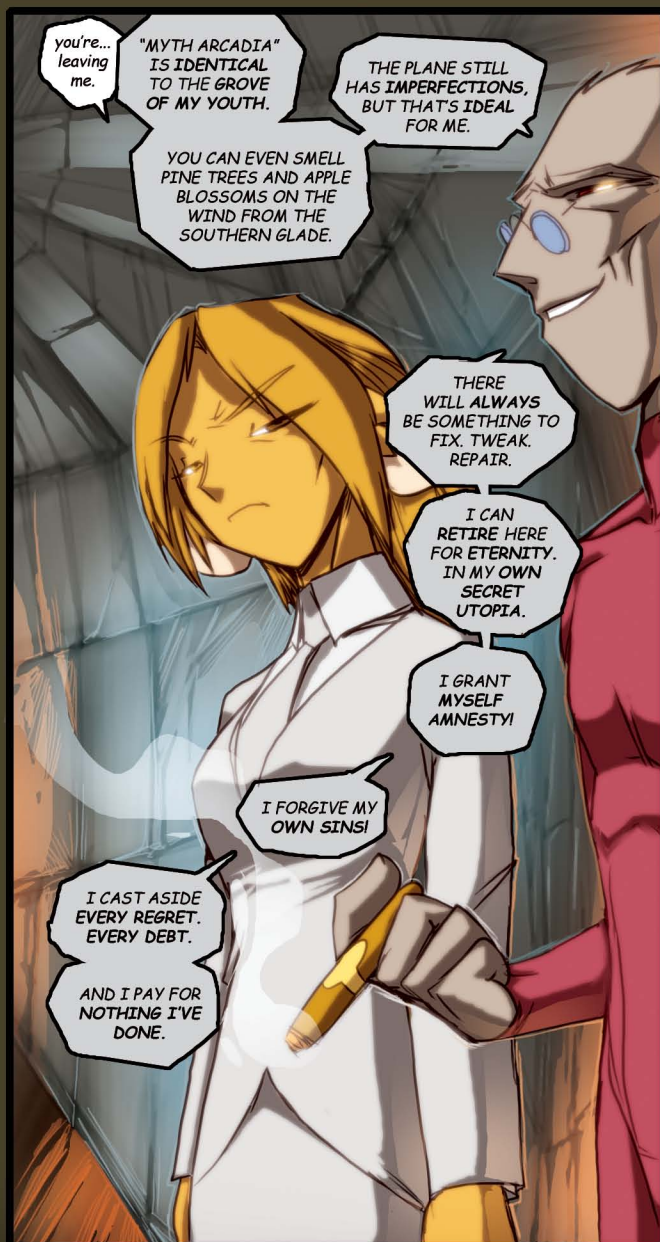
FRED
PERRY

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20 YEARS









you're...
leaving
me.

"MYTH ARCADIA"
IS IDENTICAL
TO THE GROVE
OF MY YOUTH.

THE PLANE STILL
HAS IMPERFECTIONS,
BUT THAT'S IDEAL
FOR ME.

YOU CAN EVEN SMELL
PINE TREES AND APPLE
BLOSSOMS ON THE
WIND FROM THE
SOUTHERN GLADE.

THERE
WILL ALWAYS
BE SOMETHING TO
FIX. TWEAK.
REPAIR.

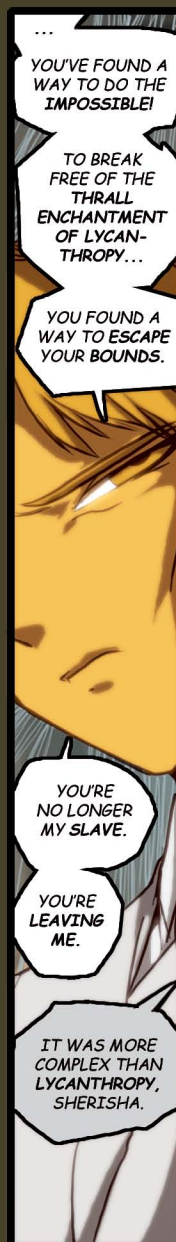
I CAN
RETIRE HERE
FOR ETERNITY.
IN MY OWN
SECRET
UTOPIA.

I GRANT
MYSELF
AMNESTY!

I FORGIVE MY
OWN SINS!

I CAST ASIDE
EVERY REGRET.
EVERY DEBT.

AND I PAY FOR
NOTHING I'VE
DONE.



...
YOU'VE FOUND A
WAY TO DO THE
IMPOSSIBLE!

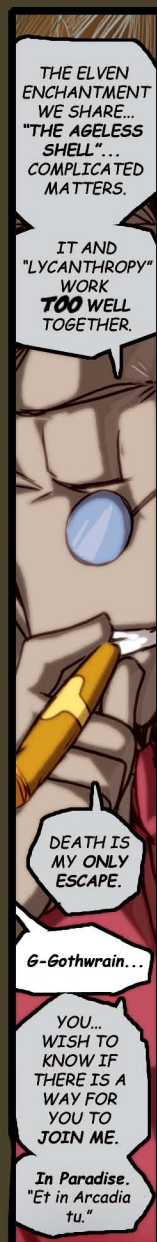
TO BREAK
FREE OF THE
THRALL
ENCHANTMENT
OF LYCAN-
THROPY...

YOU FOUND A
WAY TO ESCAPE
YOUR BOUNDS.

YOU'RE
NO LONGER
MY SLAVE.

YOU'RE
LEAVING
ME.

IT WAS MORE
COMPLEX THAN
LYCANTHROPY,
SHERISHA.



THE ELVEN
ENCHANTMENT
WE SHARE...
"THE AGELESS
SHELL"...
COMPLICATED
MATTERS.

IT AND
"LYCANTHROPY"
WORK
TOO WELL
TOGETHER.

DEATH IS
MY ONLY
ESCAPE.

G-Gothwrain...

YOU...
WISH TO
KNOW IF
THERE IS A
WAY FOR
YOU TO
JOIN ME.

In Paradise.
"Et in Arcadia
tu."



.....
yes.

WITH
THIS SCROLL...

...THE ONE I KEPT
FROM JONATHAN
LEONARD DIGGERS...

... "THE SCROLL
OF THE MARTYR."

IT WILL LINK
OUR FATES IN THE
FINAL BATTLE.

WHERE MY SOUL
GOES, SO WILL
YOURS.



I KNOW OF THIS ENCHANTMENT.

THE "MARTYR" RECEIVES ALL OF THE PAIN AND SUFFERING OF THE "PROTECTED."

WE'LL BOTH BE KILLED, BUT YOU WILL FEEL NO PAIN, WHILE I MUST ENDURE BOTH OF OUR TORMENTS.



....

I LOVE YOU SHERISHA...

BUT...



...MY SOUL STILL BURNS FOR VENGEANCE.

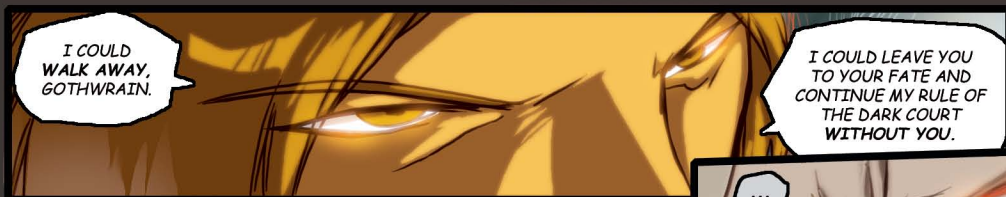
VENGEANCE FOR INFLECTING ME WITH LYCANTHROPY AND ENSLAVING ME.

VENGEANCE FOR WHAT YOU DID ONE THOUSAND YEARS AGO.

VENGEANCE FOR YOUR BETRAYAL!

MY SCHEMES. MY PLANS.

ALL FOR LOVE... AND REVENGE.



I COULD WALK AWAY, GOTHWRAIN.

I COULD LEAVE YOU TO YOUR FATE AND CONTINUE MY RULE OF THE DARK COURT WITHOUT YOU.





You've paid...
for what you
did to ME.

I'll pay...
for what
i did to
YOU.

....
Sherisha.



AS YOU KNOW,
I'M NOT AN
ANGEL.

TO CREATE
THE DARK COURT,
OUR UNDERWORLD
EMPIRE...

...I'VE TAKEN
A **THOUSAND**
INNOCENT
LIVES.

A LITTLE
PAIN NOW IS
BETTER THAN
AN ETERNITY IN
HELL LATER.



OUR FOES, CRUSHED. OUR
DAUGHTER, HEIRESS TO
OUR EMPIRE. AN ETERNITY
IN UTOPIA WITH MY
TWISTED BELOVED.
HOW COULD I SAY NO?

....

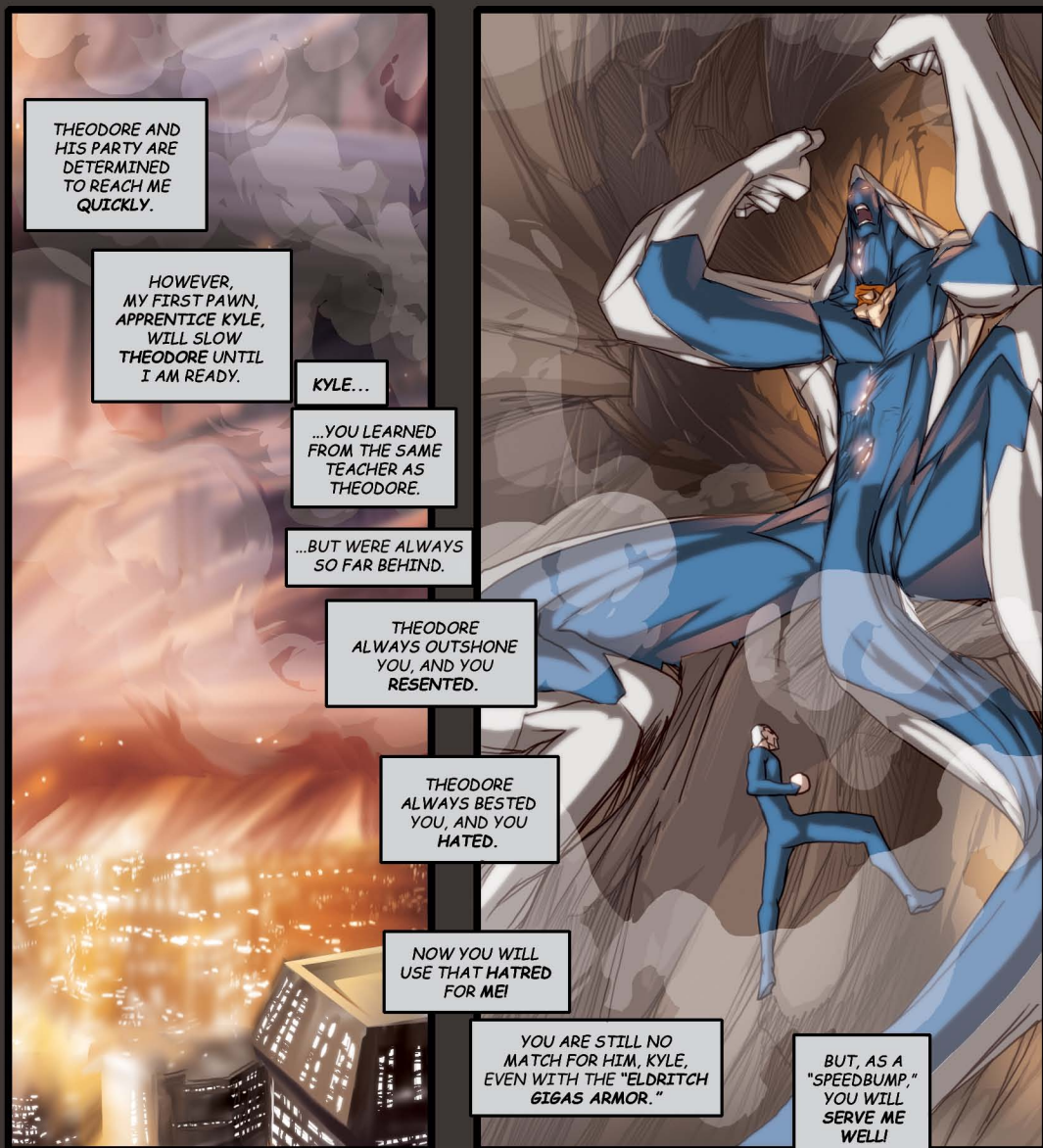
THAT'S
MY GIRL.



ALL WE NEED
NOW IS FOR
MY PAWNS
TO CONTINUE
TO PLAY THEIR
ROLES...

MYTH ARCADIA
IS A "DREAM
COSM" AND
CAN ONLY BE
REACHED DURING
THE HOUR AFTER
MIDNIGHT: THE
"WITCHING
HOUR"...

...SO
TIMING IS
CRITICAL.



THEODORE AND HIS PARTY ARE DETERMINED TO REACH ME QUICKLY.

HOWEVER, MY FIRST PAWN, APPRENTICE KYLE, WILL SLOW THEODORE UNTIL I AM READY.

KYLE...

...YOU LEARNED FROM THE SAME TEACHER AS THEODORE.

...BUT WERE ALWAYS SO FAR BEHIND.

THEODORE ALWAYS OUTSHONE YOU, AND YOU RESENTED.

THEODORE ALWAYS BESTED YOU, AND YOU HATED.

NOW YOU WILL USE THAT HATRED FOR ME!

YOU ARE STILL NO MATCH FOR HIM, KYLE, EVEN WITH THE "ELDRITCH GIGAS ARMOR."

BUT, AS A "SPEEDBUMP," YOU WILL SERVE ME WELL!



MY SECOND PAWN, ZERO, WILL SEE TO THEODORE'S WIFE, JULIA.

UNLIKE THEODORE, SIMPLY THROWING "SOMETHING POWERFUL" IN THE WAY WON'T SLOW HER PROGRESS.

JULIA CAN SLIP PAST ANYTHING!



A MAJOR DISTRACTION WAS CALLED FOR.

THE LIFE OF JULIA'S FIRST STUDENT.

HER CHERISHED WARD, GAR.

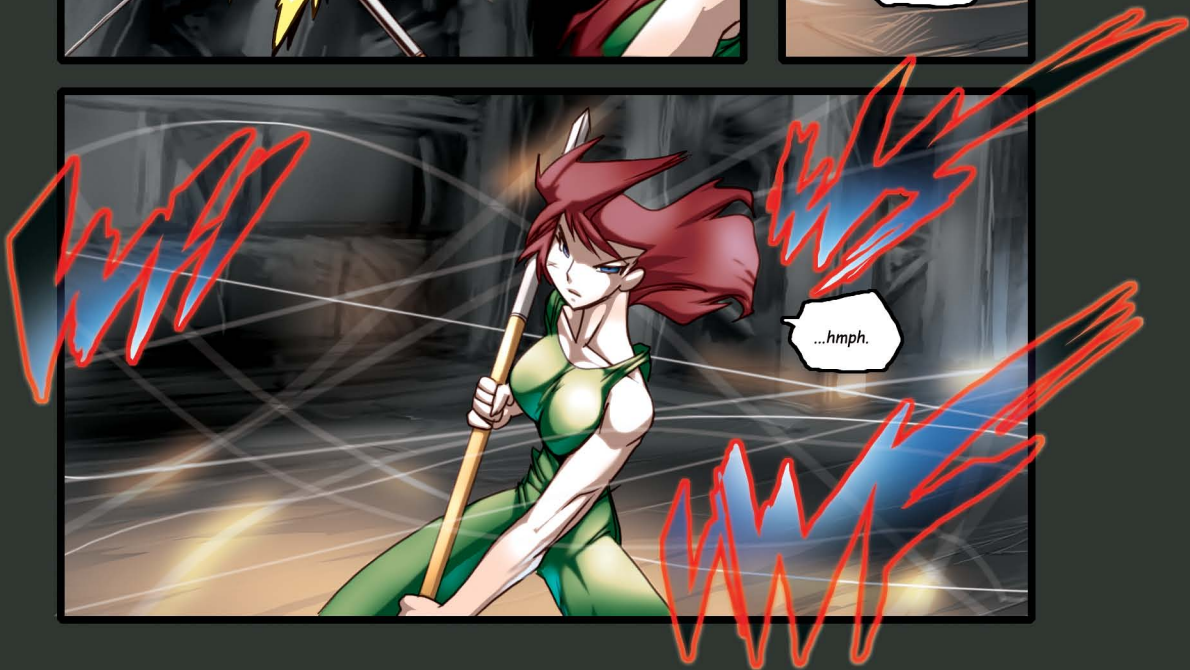
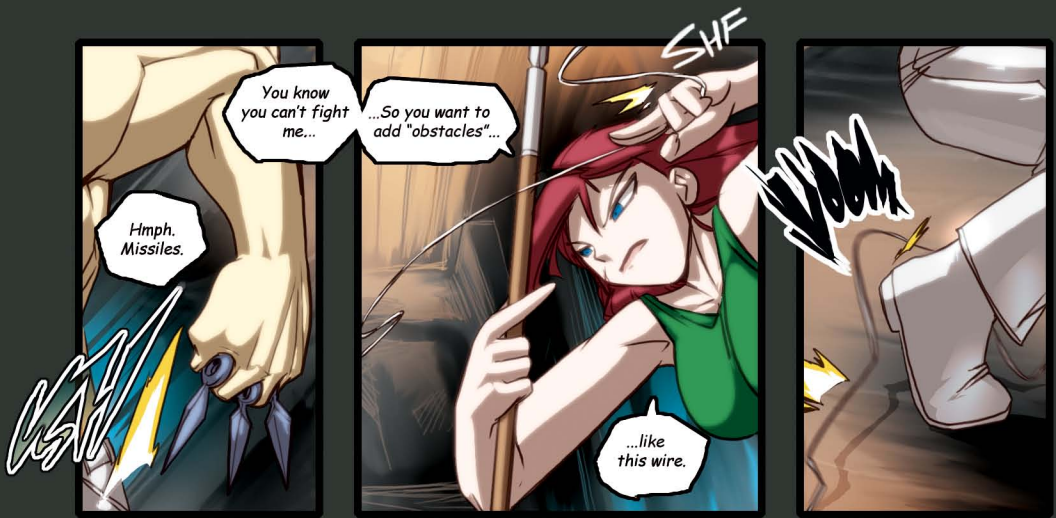
ZERO...

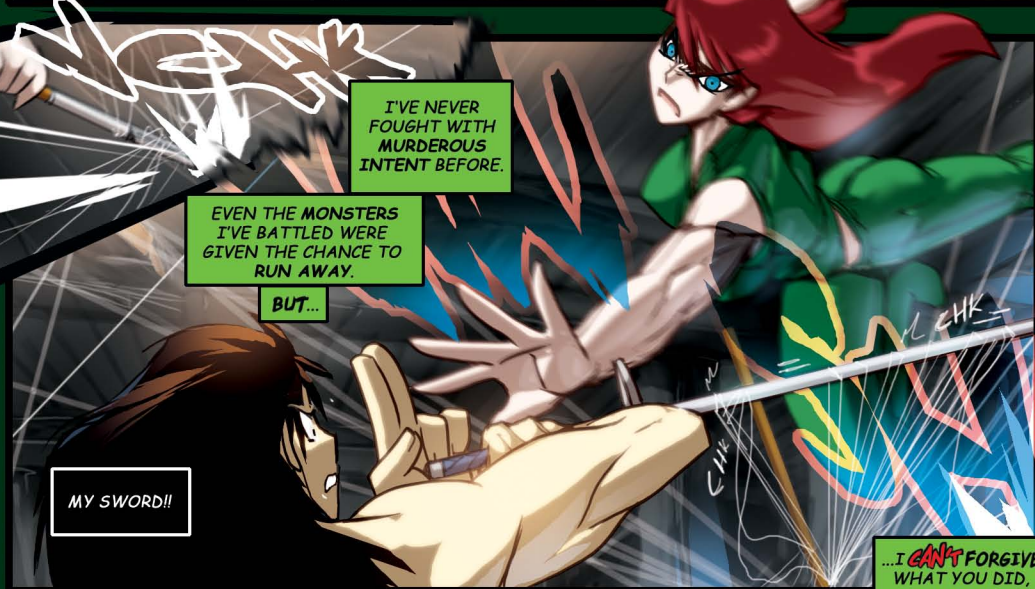
...YOU'RE NO MATCH FOR JULIA IN A NORMAL CONTEST.

HER STRENGTH IS BOLSTERED BY RAGE, BUT THAT SAME RAGE CAN BLIND HER!

AND "BLIND" OPPONENTS ARE YOUR SPECIALITY!









YOU BASTARD!

MY PROMISE
IS BROKEN!

Gar...

...you took him from me!

OH, THANK THE
MAKER YOU'RE OPEN!
I'VE BEEN ON THE
ROAD FOR SIX
DAYS!

oh...OH, I'M SORRY,
MA'AM, BUT THE INN
HAS NO VACANCIES
AT THIS TIME...

THE SUMMER
FESTIVAL HAS
JUST BEGUN,
AND--

I...I
JUST NEED A
PLACE TO REST...A
TABLE, A FLOOR--
ANYTHING!

I'M SORRY, MA'AM,
BUT--

PLEASE...
ANYTHING!

AH, WELL...
PERHAPS THE STORAGE
ROOM HAS SPACE.

WAIT HERE
A MOMENT.



...

But
THAT
booth...

...is
free...

....

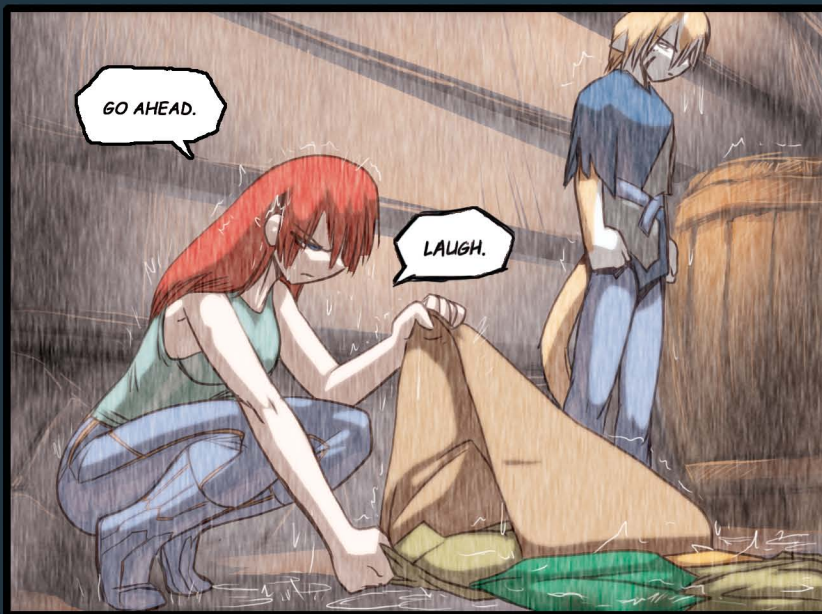


Soo good
to get off
my fee--
AHHHH!

YOU
THERE!!!

THAT'S MY
BOOTH YOU'RE
SITTING IN!

SHHHHHHHH





"ADVENTURER FOR HIRE?"

MY HIRING SIGN!

I WAS TRYING TO FIND CLIENTS WHEN YOU SQUATTED ON IT!

IT... WAS... Y-YOUR BOOTH.



BUT... WHY IS A LITTLE BOY LIKE YOU LOOKING FOR THAT KIND OF WORK?

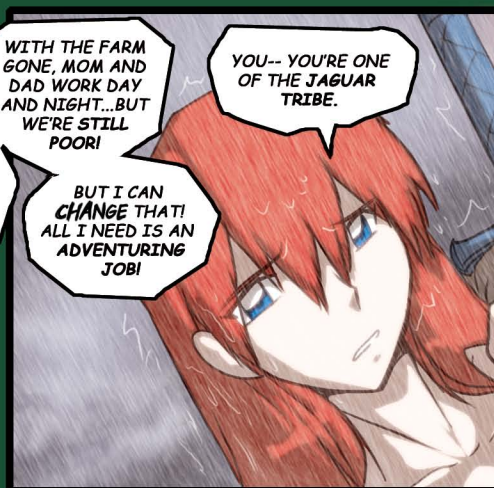
I'M NOT A "LITTLE BOY"!

I'M AN ADVENTURER!



ADVENTURERS ARE RICH. AN ADVENTURER CAN BUY ANYTHING.

EVEN MEDICINE FOR HIS LITTLE SISTER.



WITH THE FARM GONE, MOM AND DAD WORK DAY AND NIGHT... BUT WE'RE STILL POOR!

BUT I CAN CHANGE THAT! ALL I NEED IS AN ADVENTURING JOB!

YOU-- YOU'RE ONE OF THE JAGUAR TRIBE.



YOU WERE ATTACKED BY THE ENTIRE ORKRIST HORDE LAST WINTER...

...decimated. HEY!!!

†-THAT SWORD!

Y-YOU'RE AN ADVENTURER!!!



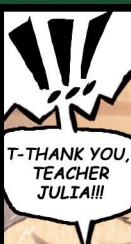
I-I-I'M GARI!

HIRE ME!

PLEASE!!!



ALL RIGHT!



T-THANK YOU, TEACHER JULIA!!!



YOU'RE HIRED AS MY GUARD AND APPRENTICE!

FOUR GOLD A DAY!

FROM NOW ON, YOU WILL ADDRESS ME AS "TEACHER JULIA"!



WE'LL NEED TO SEE YOUR PARENTS.

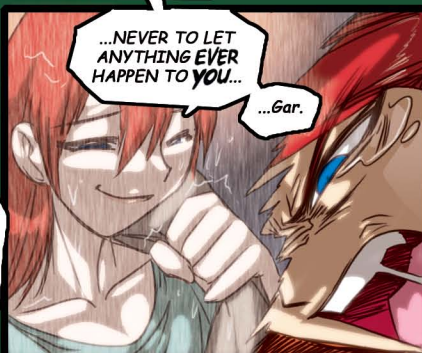
INFORM THEM YOU HAVE A NEW TEACHER!



Y-YES, TEACHER! OUR HOUSE IS THIS WAY!

AND DON'T WORRY! AS YOUR GUARD, I SWEAR NEVER TO LET ANYTHING EVER HAPPEN TO YOU!

EVER!!!



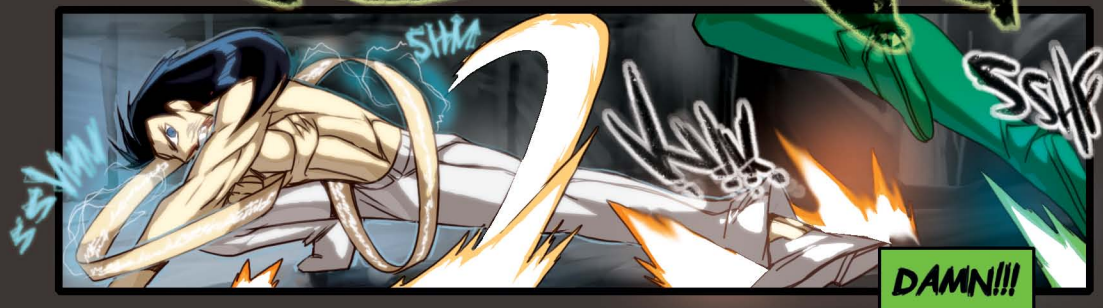
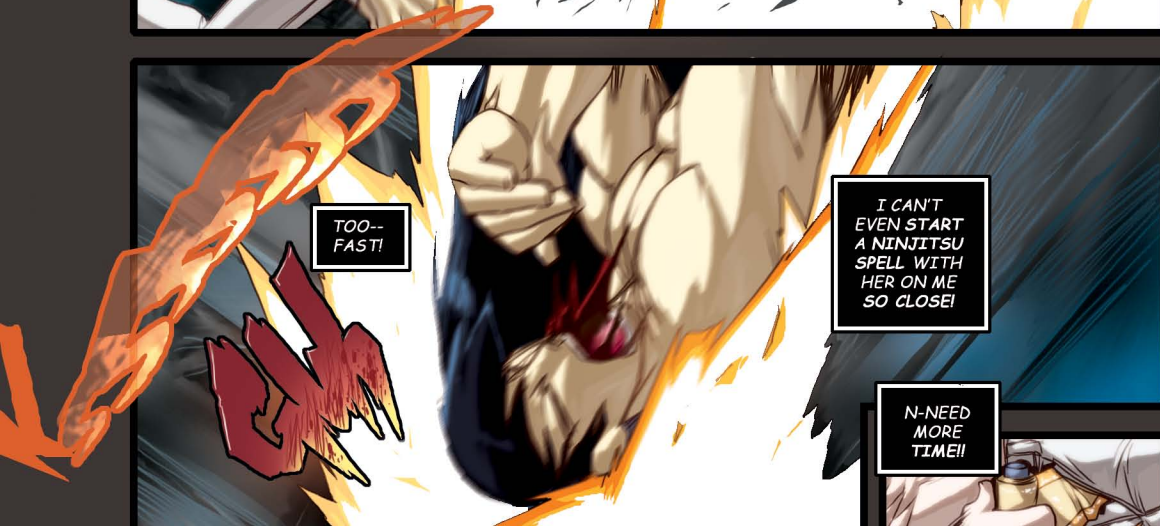
AND I SWEAR...

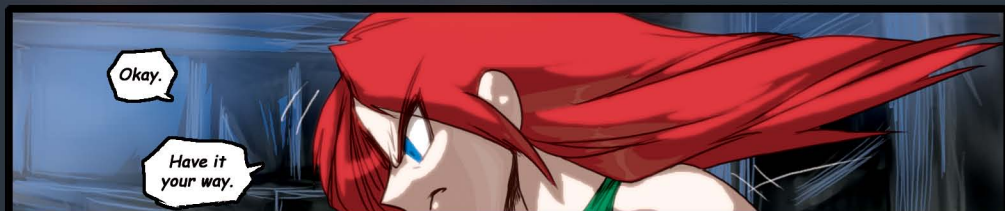
...NEVER TO LET ANYTHING EVER HAPPEN TO YOU...

...Gar.

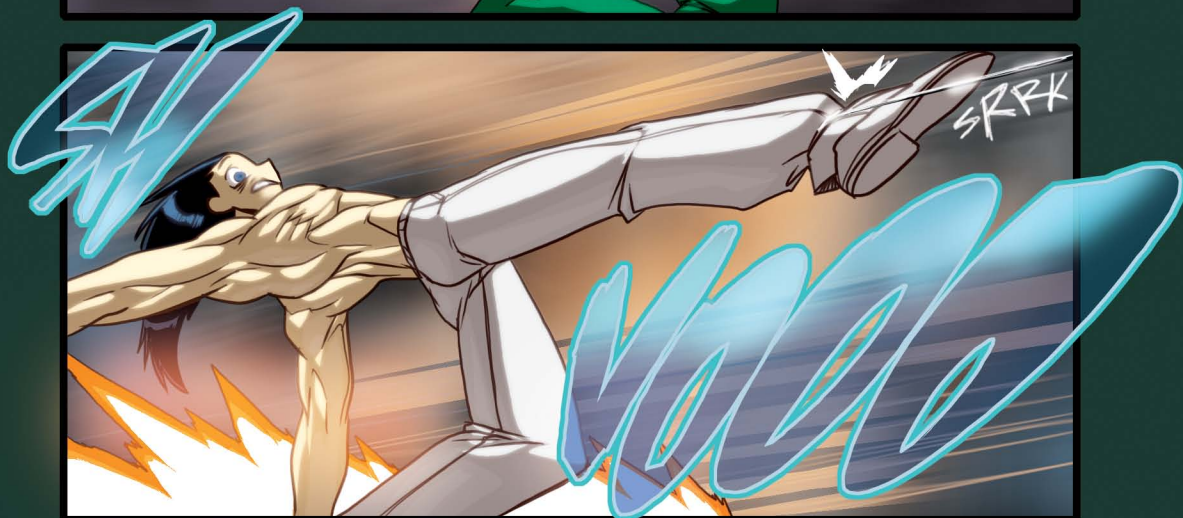
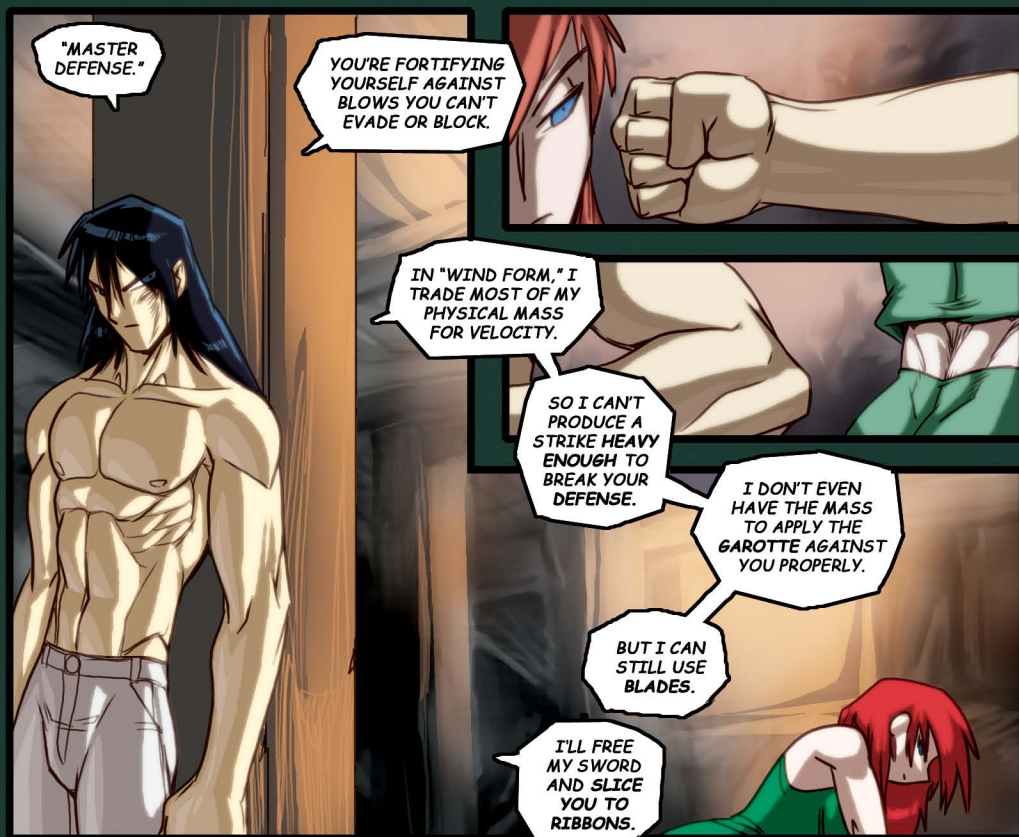
"...EVER!!"

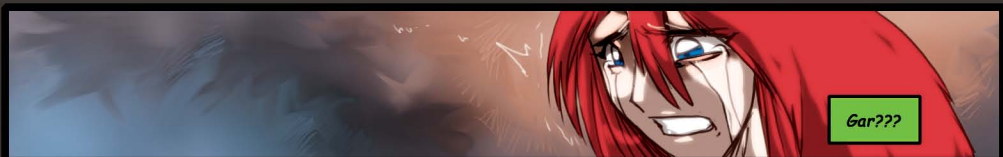
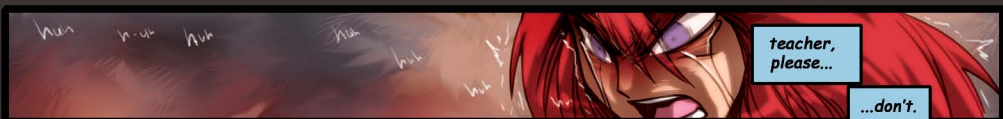
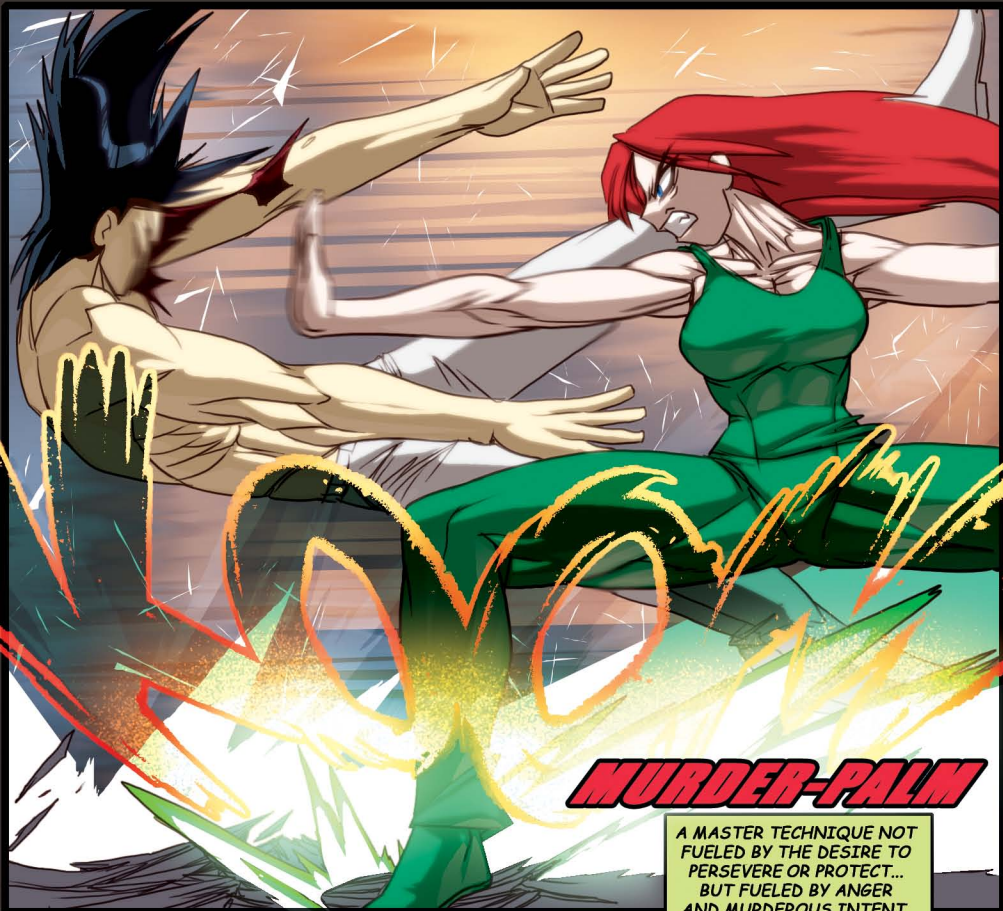


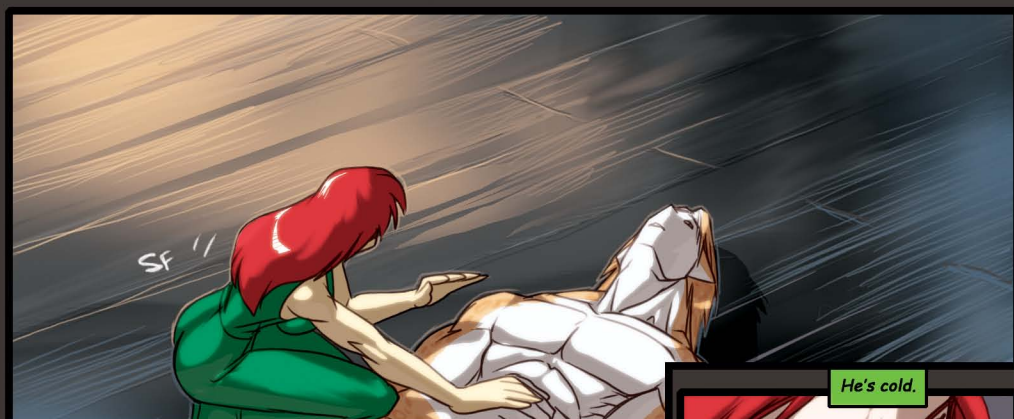




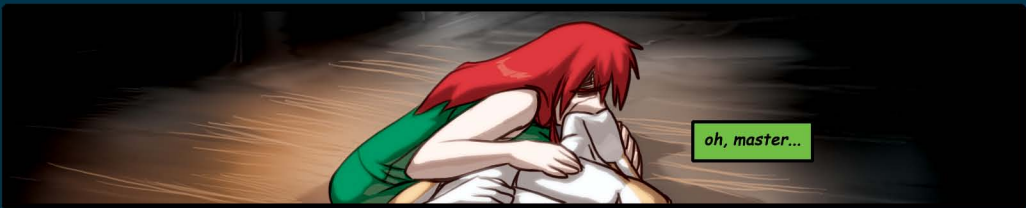


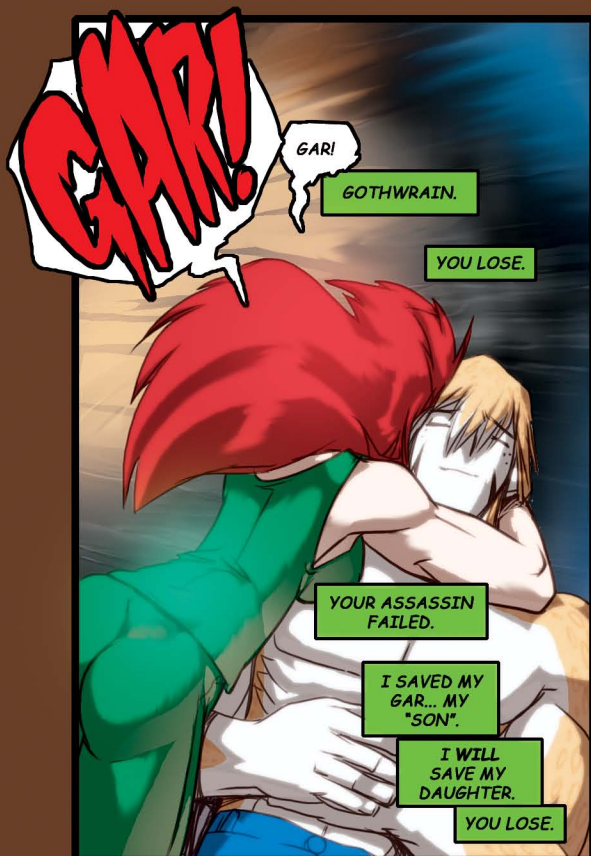
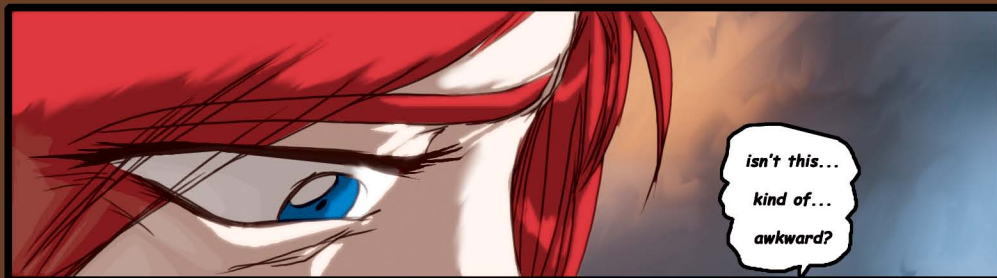
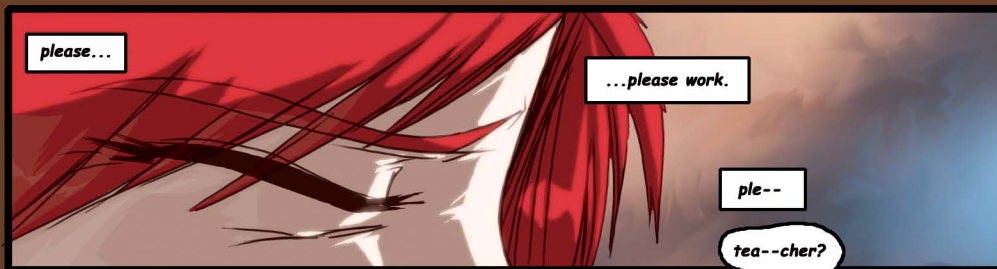












NEXT... THE BLACK GATE: CONCLUSION.