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FRED
PERRY

GOLD DIGGER

15th Anniversary
1991-2006



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MARCH 2006

I... am Gina Diggers.
Scientist. Archaeologist.
Explorer.

BRIANNA AND MY EXPEDITION
ACROSS JADE-REALM HAS LED
US ACROSS THE CONTINENT OF
QUARIA AND ITS MOST
DIFFICULT-TO-REACH
LOCATIONS.

FROM THE SEER'S
DESERT TO THE DENSE
DRAWS AND WADIS OF
THE BARBARI WETLANDS.

ALL IN SEARCH OF
OF THE ORIGINS
OF DRACONIC
HISTORY.

RECENTLY,
OUR TREK
LED US TO
THE FERRY AT
TEMUEL AND
OVER THE
OCEAN TOWARDS
PORT ARN...

THERE, WE DISCOVERED
A SUBMERGED RUIN THAT
VERY WELL MAY HOLD ALL
OF THE ANSWERS.

UNFORTUNATELY,
THE FERRY WAS SUNK
BY PIRATES WHO
INHABITED THE
RUINS.

FORTUNATELY,
OUR FRIENDS, THE
VAULTRON FORCE,
WERE ABLE TO
DEFEAT THE
PIRATES AND
SECURE THE
RUINS FOR
EXPLORATION.

RIGHT NOW, WE'RE TAKING
A BREAK IN PORT ARN.

IN THE MORNING,
SEANCE CAN WARP
US BACK TO THE
RUINS.

AND THEN THE
REAL EXCAVATION
CAN BEGI--

HUH?

MOM?

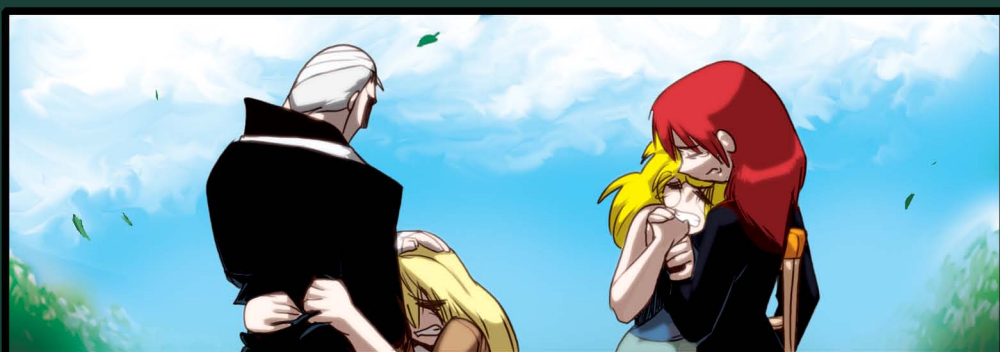
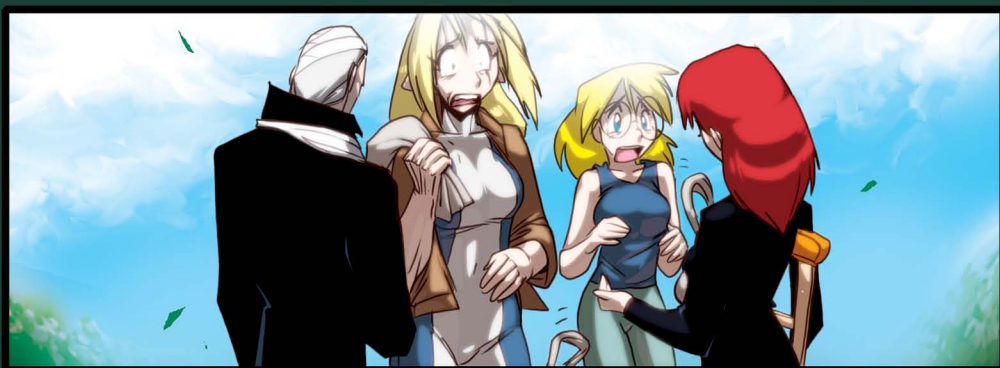
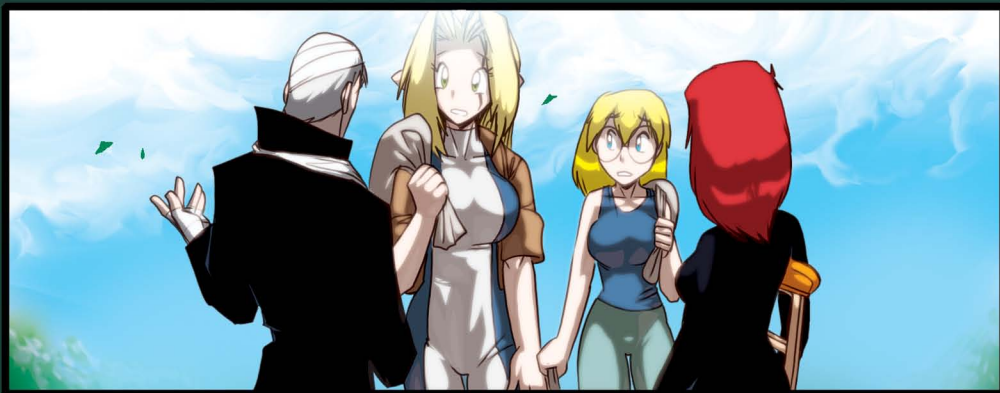
DAD?

WHAT HAPPENED
TO THEM?

OH, MAN...
LOOKING AT
THEIR... THEIR
I-INJURIES...
I--I DON'T
WANT TO
KNOW...

...oh, man...

looking at
their faces...
I REALLY
don't want
to know.



MY LITTLE SISTER, BRITANNY, IS LOST.... AND THERE'S NO WAY TO SAVE HER.

GRAMMY... is gone. And she isn't coming back.

MOM AND DAD CAME
TO PICK US UP...

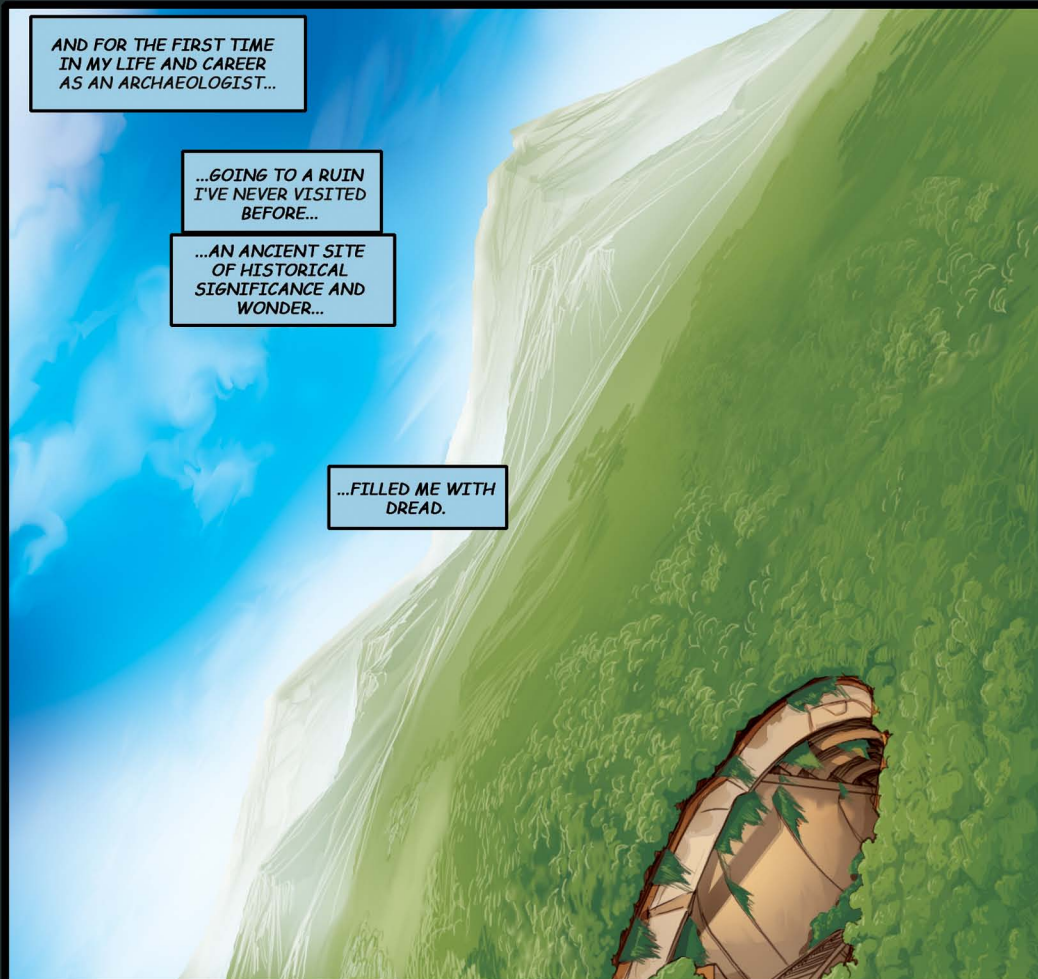
...FOR THE FUNERAL.

AND FOR THE FIRST TIME
IN MY LIFE AND CAREER
AS AN ARCHAEOLOGIST...

...GOING TO A RUIN
I'VE NEVER VISITED
BEFORE...

...AN ANCIENT SITE
OF HISTORICAL
SIGNIFICANCE AND
WONDER...

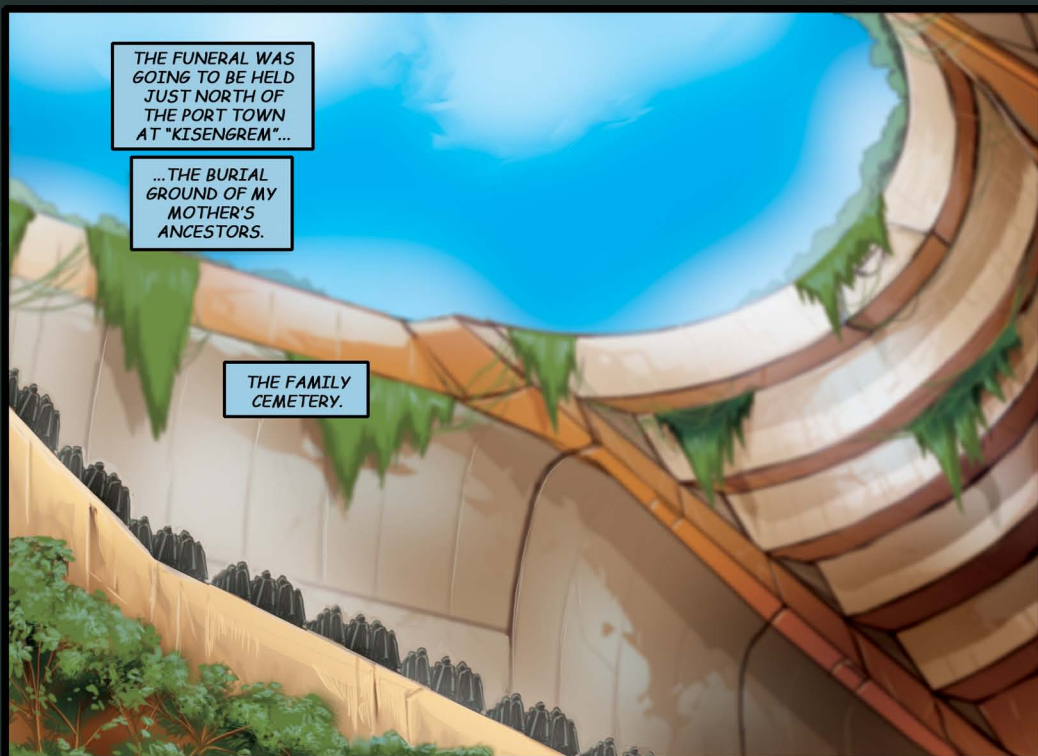
...FILLED ME WITH
DREAD.



THE FUNERAL WAS
GOING TO BE HELD
JUST NORTH OF
THE PORT TOWN
AT "KISENGREM"...

...THE BURIAL
GROUND OF MY
MOTHER'S
ANCESTORS.

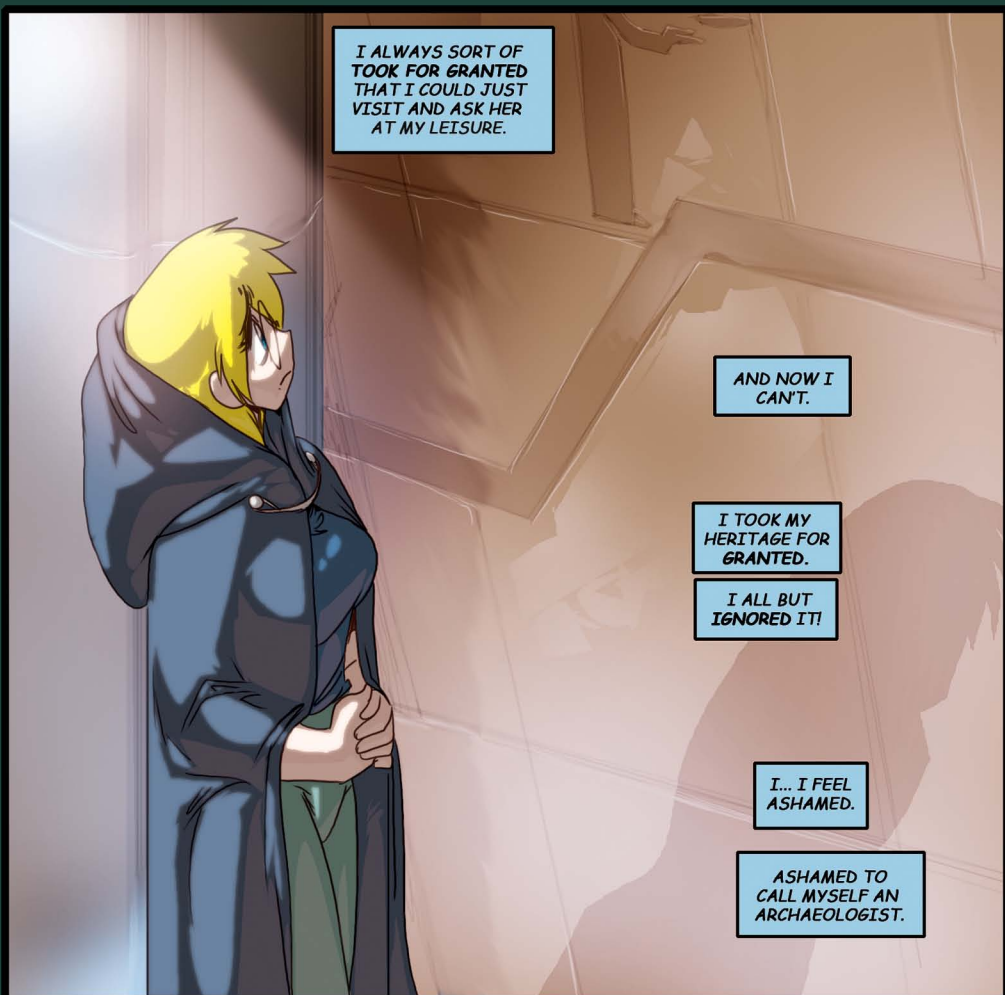
THE FAMILY
CEMETERY.





...i...

I NEVER ASKED
GRAMMY ABOUT
MY FAMILY'S
HISTORY.



I ALWAYS SORT OF
TOOK FOR GRANTED
THAT I COULD JUST
VISIT AND ASK HER
AT MY LEISURE.

AND NOW I
CAN'T.

I TOOK MY
HERITAGE FOR
GRANTED.

I ALL BUT
IGNORED IT!

I... I FEEL
ASHAMED.

ASHAMED TO
CALL MYSELF AN
ARCHAEOLOGIST.



ASHAMED AS HER
GRANDDAUGH--

THIS HALL
IS WHERE OUR
CLAN ON JADE
WAS BORN.

OUR ANCESTORS
REST HERE AND, AS
ALWAYS, WELCOME US,
THEIR DESCENDANTS,
HOME.

BATTLECK!
MOM'S OLD
TEACHER.

How did he
know I was
puzzled
about this
temple?

THE WONDER
AND MAJESTY
OF THIS HOLY
PLACE...

...IS SOMETHING EVERY
LAST MEMBER OF OUR
CLAN QUESTIONS
UPON THEIR FIRST
VISIT.

FROM THE VERY FIRST
MOMENT OUR ANCESTORS
ARRIVED ON JADE.

YOU SEE, CHILD... YOUR
PEOPLE WERE NOT ALWAYS
STEWARDS OF NATURE
AND AGENTS OF ITS
LAWS.

AT ONE TIME,
WE WERE TRUE...
BARBARIANS.

CHAOTIC.

FIERCE.

THE SPOILED
BRATS OF MOTHER
NATURE.

BUT OUR TIME ON
EARTH WAS ENDING
WITH THE AGE OF
MAGIC...

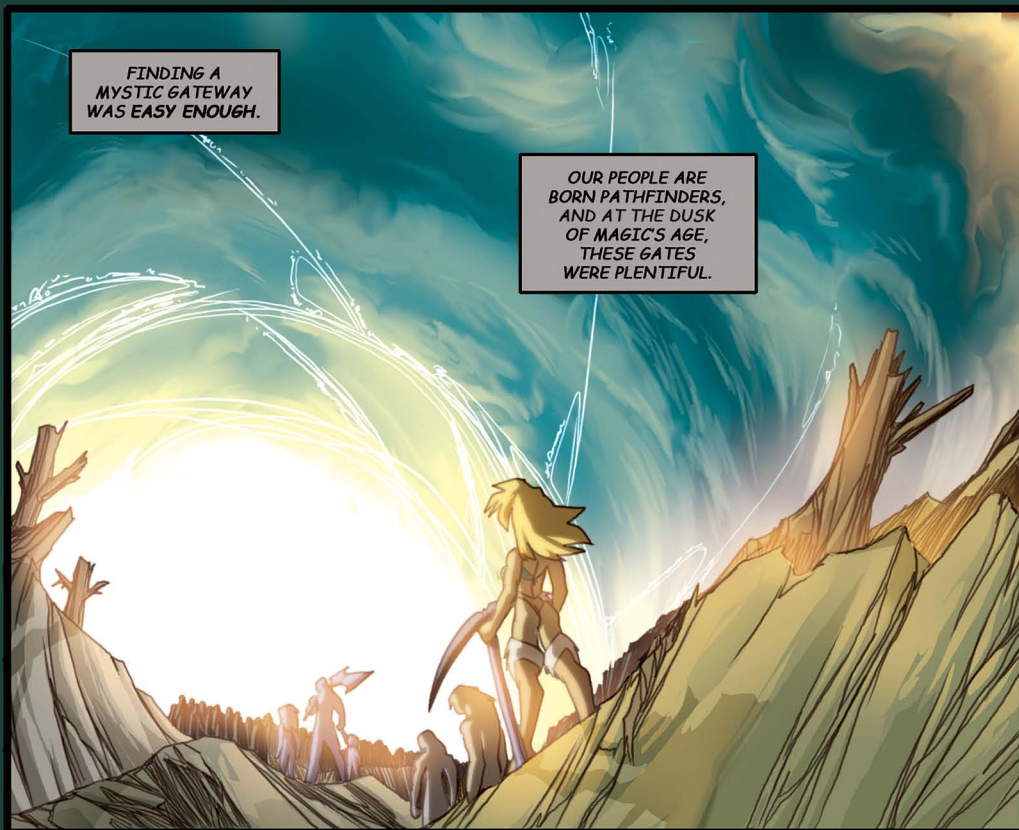
...AND THE DAWN
OF TECHNOLOGY.

EVEN THE LIMITED
WISDOM OF OUR
ELDERS COULD SENSE
THE WINDS OF CHANGE
WERE NOT AT OUR
BACKS.

"MOVING DAY" HAD COME.

FINDING A
MYSTIC GATEWAY
WAS EASY ENOUGH.

OUR PEOPLE ARE
BORN PATHFINDERS,
AND AT THE DUSK
OF MAGIC'S AGE,
THESE GATES
WERE PLENTIFUL.



OUR ANCESTORS
CROSSED INTO
JADE-REALM
AT THIS VERY
SPOT.

HOWEVER,
THEY FOUND
THE CAVERN
ALREADY
OCCUPIED.

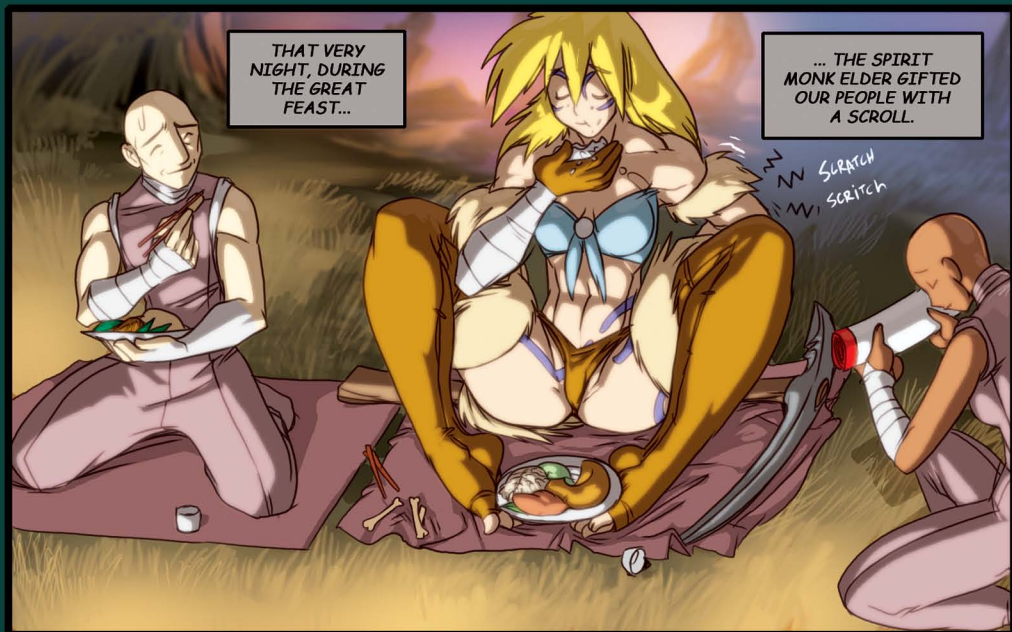


THE SPIRIT MONKS OF
EARTH, WHO HAD BEGUN
THEIR MIGRATION TWENTY
YEARS EARLIER, WERE
USING THE CAVERN
AS A TEMPORARY
OUTPOST.

THE MONKS INVITED
OUR ANCESTORS TO
STAY AND SHARE A
FEAST IN HONOR OF
THEIR LAST NIGHT
IN "KISENGREM"...

...WHICH MEANS
"FIRST STEP" IN
THE TONGUE OF
THE SPIRITS.

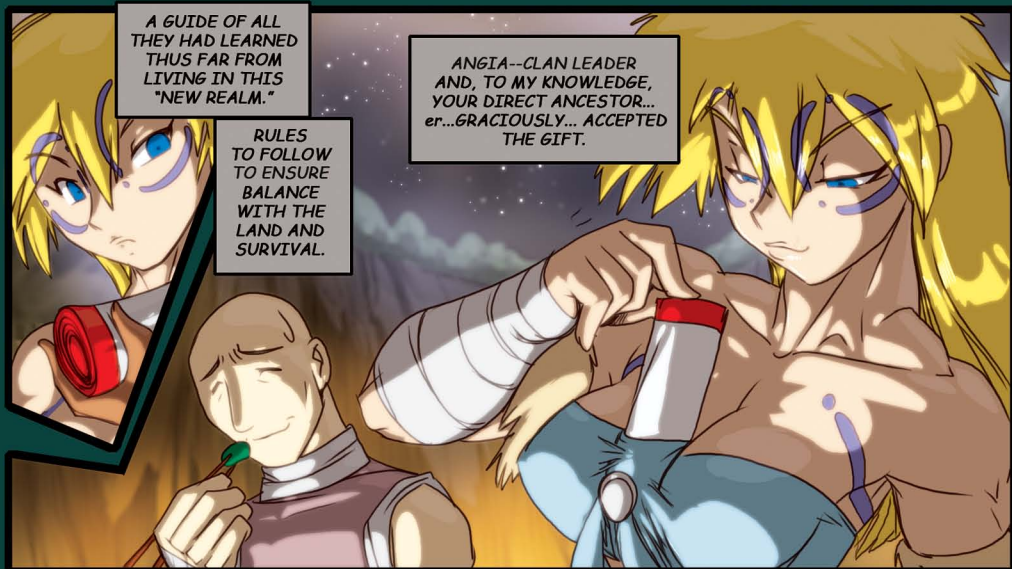




THAT VERY
NIGHT, DURING
THE GREAT
FEAST...

... THE SPIRIT
MONK ELDER GIFTED
OUR PEOPLE WITH
A SCROLL.

SCRATCH
SCRATCH



A GUIDE OF ALL
THEY HAD LEARNED
THUS FAR FROM
LIVING IN THIS
"NEW REALM."

RULES
TO FOLLOW
TO ENSURE
BALANCE
WITH THE
LAND AND
SURVIVAL.

ANGIA--CLAN LEADER
AND, TO MY KNOWLEDGE,
YOUR DIRECT ANCESTOR...
er...GRACIOUSLY... ACCEPTED
THE GIFT.



BUT PRIVATELY,
THE CLAN SCOFFED.

THEY NEEDED
NO GUIDE.
THEY OBEYED
NO RULES.

OUR ANCESTORS
DEPARTED KISENGREM
THE NIGHT AFTER
THE MONKS'
FAREWELL FEAST.

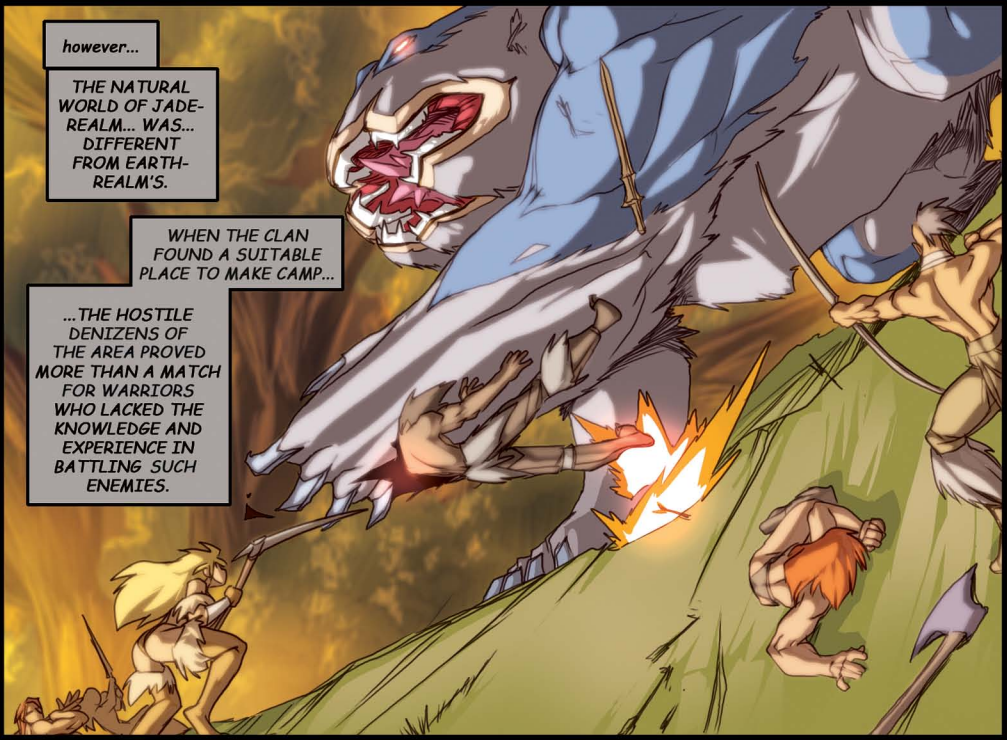
THEY SET OUT
TO SUBJUGATE THE
NATURAL WORLD
OF JADE, AS THEY
HAD MASTERED
THE NATURAL
WORLD OF EARTH.

however...

THE NATURAL
WORLD OF JADE-
REALM... WAS...
DIFFERENT
FROM EARTH-
REALM'S.

WHEN THE CLAN
FOUND A SUITABLE
PLACE TO MAKE CAMP...

...THE HOSTILE
DENIZENS OF
THE AREA PROVED
MORE THAN A MATCH
FOR WARRIORS
WHO LACKED THE
KNOWLEDGE AND
EXPERIENCE IN
BATTLING SUCH
ENEMIES.



OTHER SETTLEMENTS
WERE ABANDONED
BECAUSE THEY LACKED
THE KNOWLEDGE TO
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF
THE EBB AND FLOW
OF JADE'S NATURAL
RESOURCES.

FOR THREE YEARS, OUR
CLAN SUFFERED HARDSHIP
AND FAILURE AND PAIN.



FINALLY, OUR CLAN'S
ELDERS DECIDED TO
RETURN TO KISENGREM...
AND TO EARTH...
IN DEFEAT.



THEN...BY CHANCE...
ANGIA REDISCOVERED
THE OLD SCROLL SHE
HAD TOSSED ASIDE.



THE SCROLLS
WERE EASILY READ
BY OUR ANCESTORS'
SCRIBES AND BARDS.

EACH TENET IN
EACH PASSAGE
WAS TESTED...

...WITH SPECTACULAR
RESULTS.

OUR PEOPLE HAD
FOUND STRENGTH
AND A NEW
RESPECT...

...FOR THE
WISDOM
OF OTHERS.

FOR GUIDES.
AND RULES...
LAWS.

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JADE'S NATURE, UNLIKE EARTH'S NATURE... SEEMS TO FAVOR "ORDER" INSTEAD OF "CHAOS."

JADE'S SIXTEEN SEASONS AND GEMINI MOONS MOVE THE FLOW OF NATURE IN STRANGE YET PREDICTABLE WAYS.

UNDERSTANDING THESE LAWS OF NATURE DID NOT GUARANTEE PROSPERITY... BUT IT DID GUARANTEE A CHANCE AT IT.

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ONCE PREPARED, OUR ANCESTORS
STRUCK OUT INTO THE REALM
A SECOND TIME, AND OUR
PEOPLE HAVE PERSEVERED
EVER SINCE.

BUT KISENGREM WILL
FOREVER REMAIN THE
SYMBOL OF OUR REBIRTH
INTO JADE-REALM...

...AND, FOR THOSE WE
BRING HERE FOR THEIR
SOULS' FINAL REST...

...A SYMBOL OF
THE "FIRST STEP" INTO
THE AFTERLIFE.



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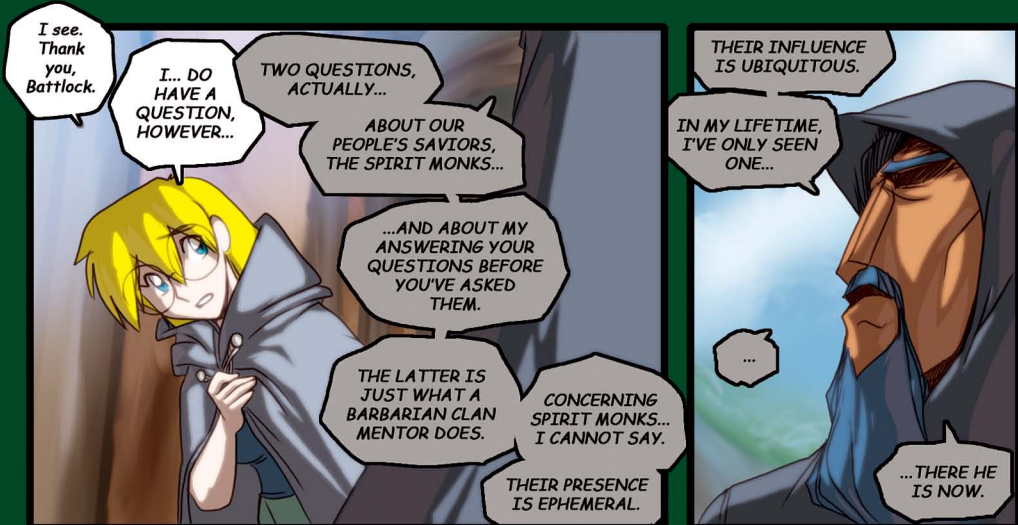
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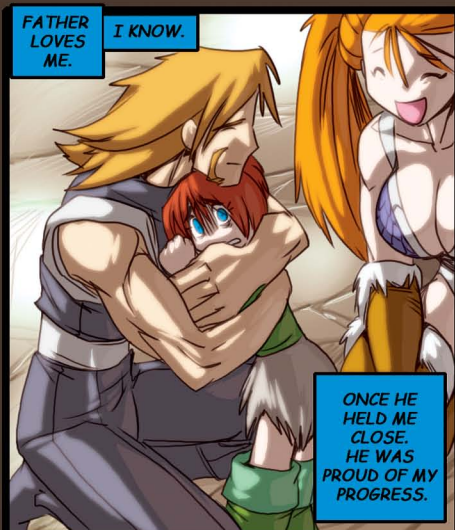
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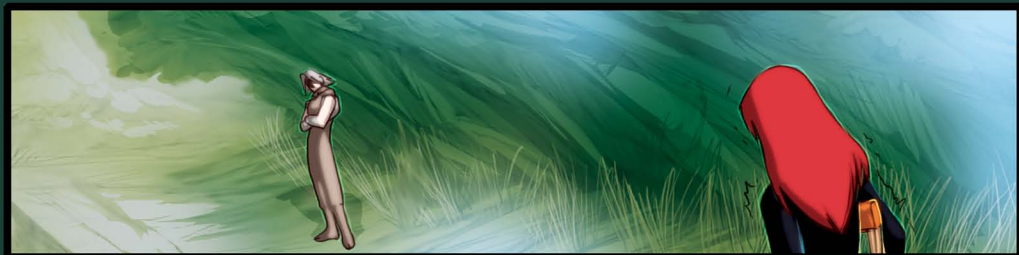


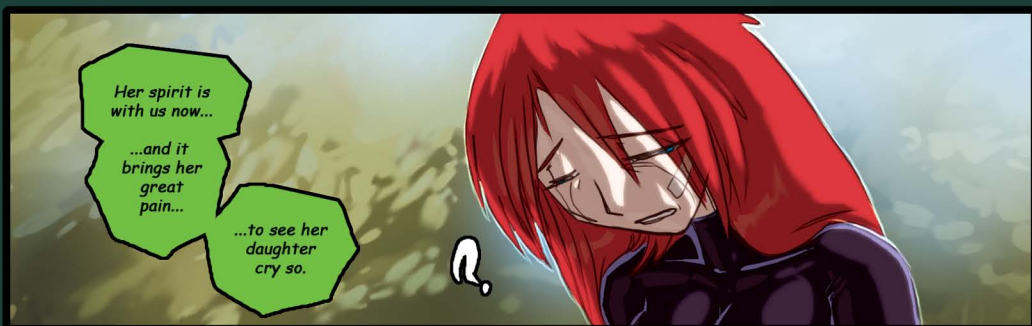


HE WANTS
TO TALK TO
ME, THEO.











You...

You heard
my voice?



...



Yes.

Of course
you heard
my voice.

You're
my daughter.



I... remember
the first time
your mother...

...heard my
voice.

As a Spirit
Monk...

...my presence
must exist in the
astral, material
and ethereal...
...all at once.

To exist in
all states allows
us to guide
wayward spirits...

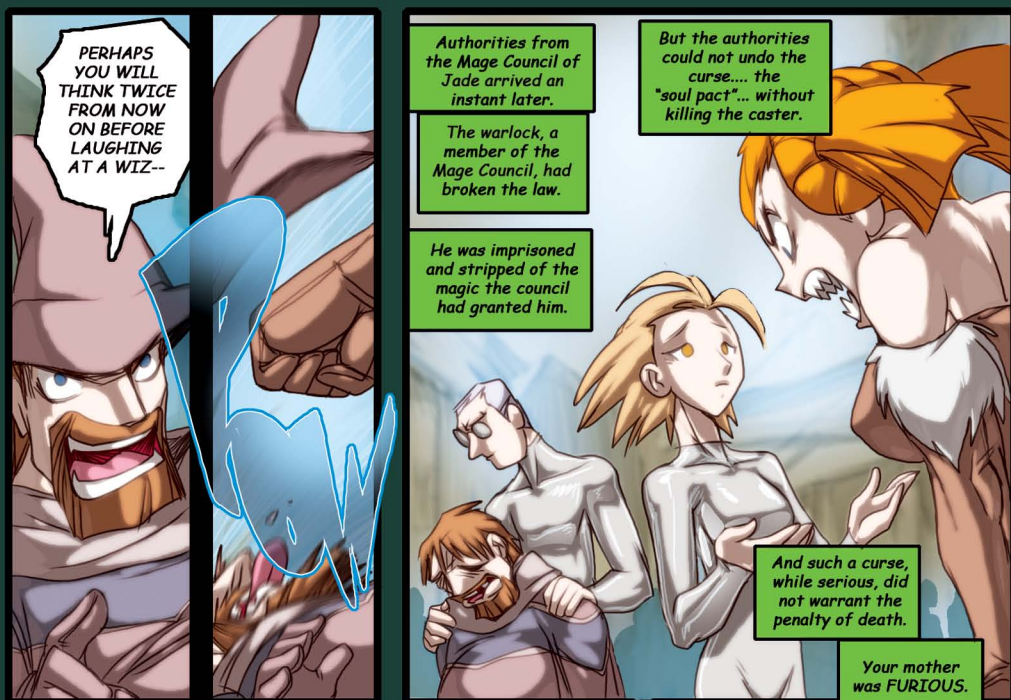
...through unseen
dangers to
their rest.

I was still
learning
then...

...but my vision quest
was nearly complete.

It was morning
in the hills to
the north of
here.

I was practicing...
"breathing."





My instincts
took hold, and
my body moved
without
thought.



I wanted to
apologize.

But I could not.

Though I had
already mastered
"Spirit Voice" and
"Spirit Ear"...

...I was born
deaf.

I cannot hear
sound.

I cannot speak
words.



Your mother
attacked...

...but could not
overcome me.

She
suffered
an utter
defeat.



Brunhilda was
exhausted after
our contest.

But her eyes
burned with a
bright yet
strangely
beautiful
fury.

I could
sense anger...
but also
amazement...
excitement.

The look of a
champion who
had tasted her
first loss.

hfff-hff
THIS ...hff
ISN'T OVER--
hff-hff

THIS IS --hff--
JUST--hff--THE
BEGINNING!



From that moment on...

...every step I took along my "vision quest"...

...my quest for spiritual mastery...

...every single step...



...was shadowed.



And so, for the next two years...

...I was watched.

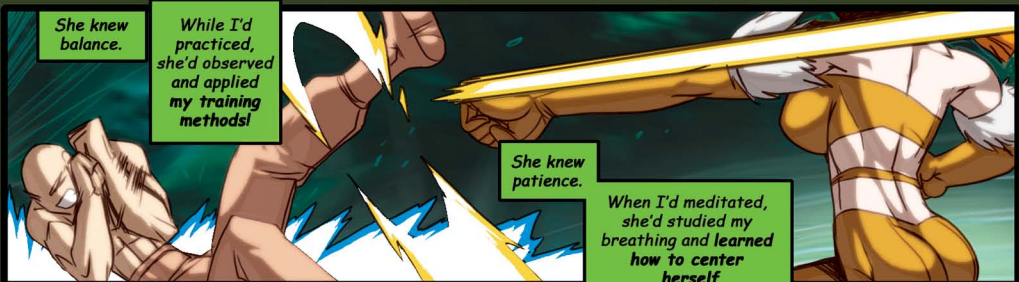


Until that fateful day on the hill.

The quiet, still afternoon... stirred by our second battle.

But the Brunhilda I fought THAT time...

...was different.



She knew balance.

While I'd practiced, she'd observed and applied my training methods!

She knew patience.

When I'd meditated, she'd studied my breathing and learned how to center herself.



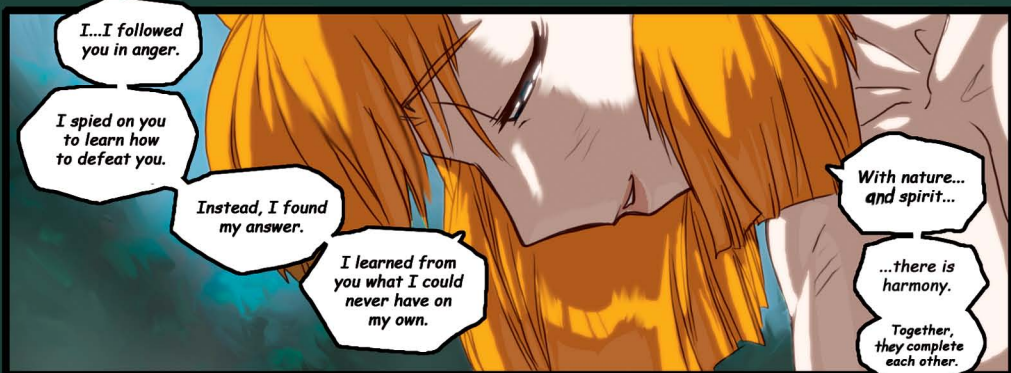
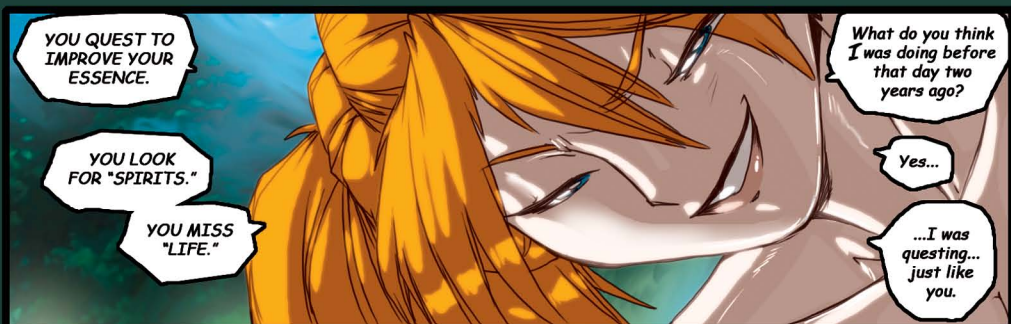
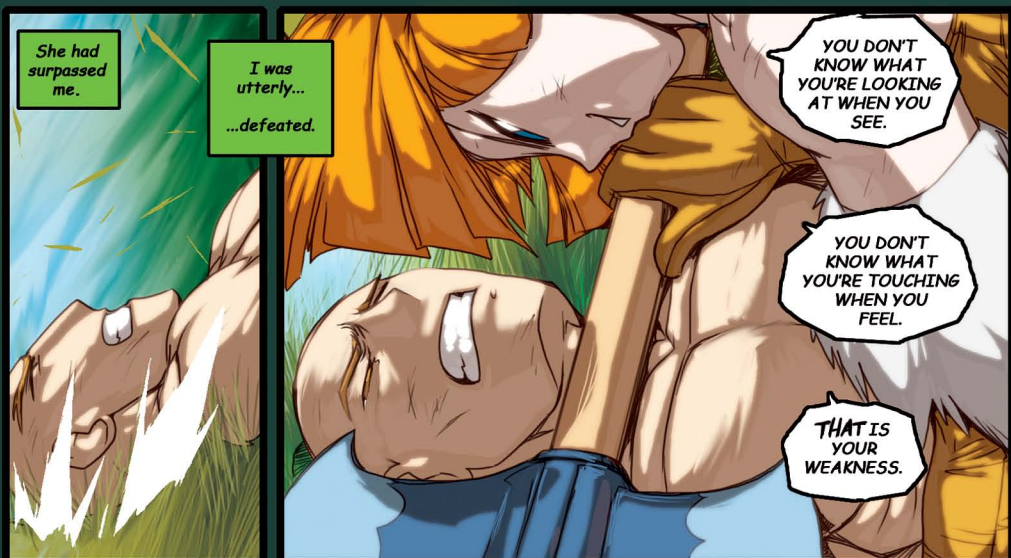
She knew me.

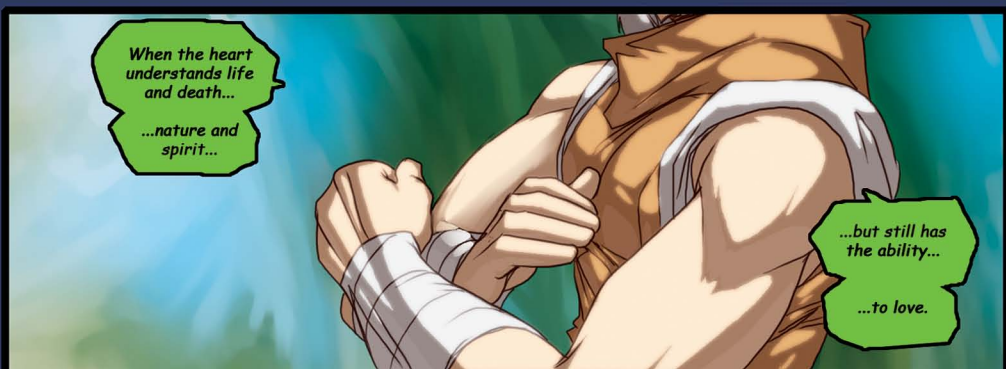
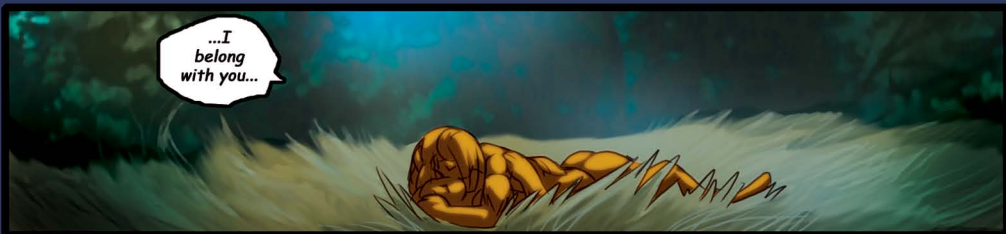
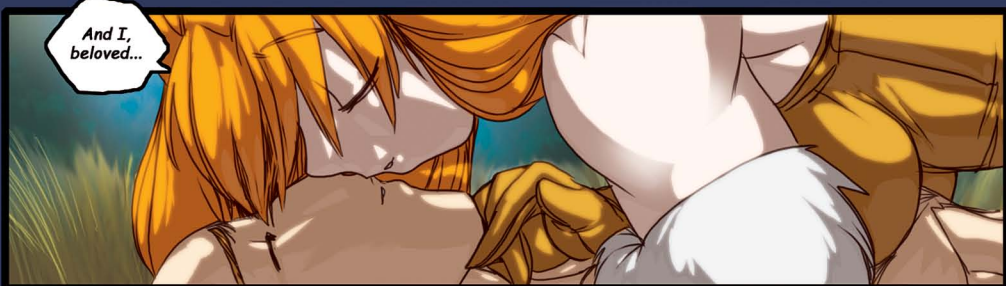
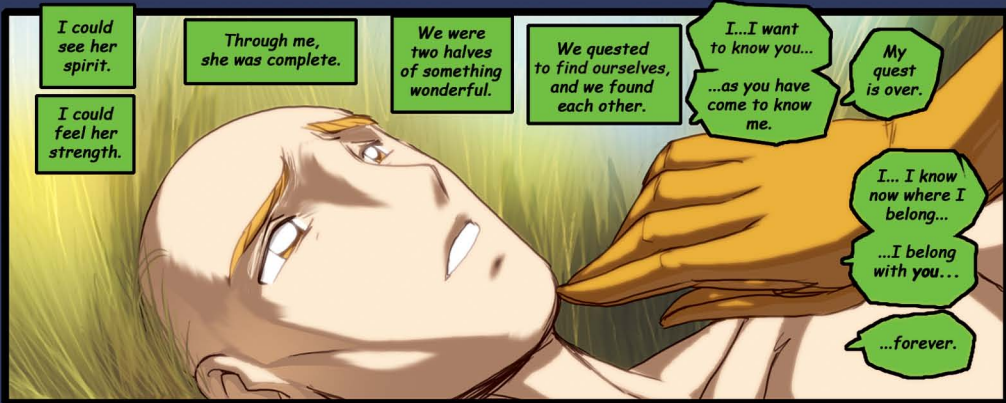
My habits, the way I moved and ate and ran and walked...

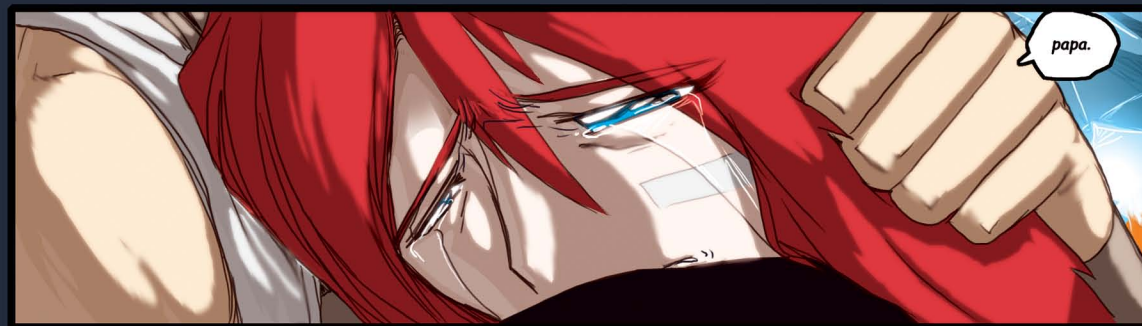
...even the way I stood perfectly still.

My actions were ALL her spies.

She KNEW me.









The end.