



GOLD DIGGER

JUL 09 #109
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JULY 2009



JULIA!
COME ON!

IT'S OVER
HERE!

I DISCOVERED
THIS HIDDEN
AREA WHILE
DOING A LITTLE
PRIVATE
EXPLORATION
LAST NIGHT.

THOUGH I
HAD TO FEEL
AROUND BEFORE
I FOUND THIS
OPENING.

SECLUDED...
TRANQUIL...
SPACIOUS.



SO...WHAT
DO YOU
THINK?

WELL...

WE'LL NEED
TO CARVE OUT
SOME STEPS
HERE.

AND I SEE
AN EXCELLENT
SPOT FOR A
MEDITATION
COURT.

LOTS OF
MOISTURE, SO
WE CAN'T USE
WOOD FOR ANY
CONSTRUCTION.

BUT THIS
CAVE IS AN
EXCELLENT
FIND!



HEHEH. NOW THAT
I HAVE JULIA IN MY
SECRET SPOT, I'M
GOING TO TAKE
ADVANTAGE!

SOME ONE-
ON-ONE TO
BREAK IN OUR
NEW PRIVATE
AREA
PROPERLY!

HAHA!

WHAT'S
SO FUNNY?

YOU ARE.

YOU'RE STILL
THE QUEEN OF
OBLIVIOUS
INNUEENDO!

GUH...WHY
DOES EVERYONE
KEEP CALLING
ME THAT?



OKAY.
ENOUGH
JOKING.

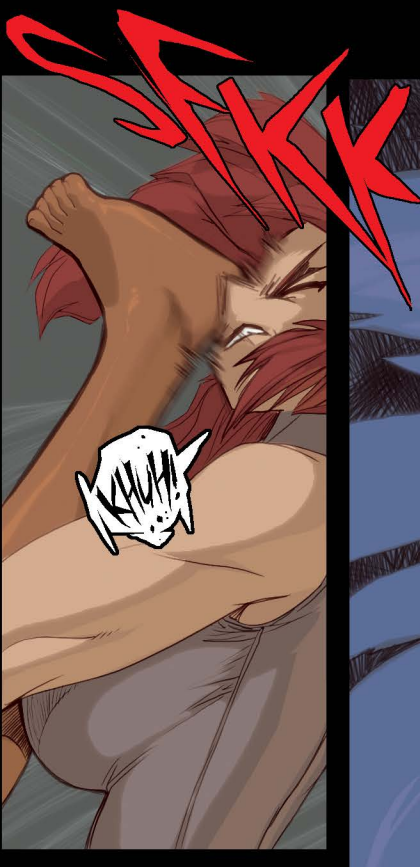
THIS WATER WILL CUSHION
FALLS SO DON'T BE AFRAID
TO GO DOWN ON ME--
IF YOU SUCCEED IN
A TRIP ATTACK!

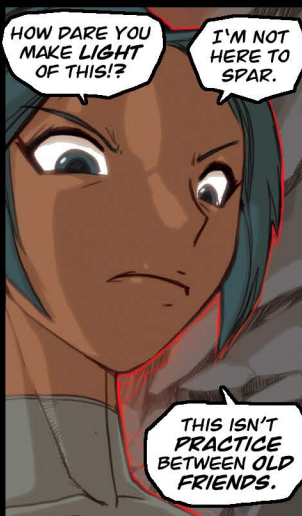
JULIA!

SORRY.

GET READY!
I'M COMING
HARD!









IT'S BEEN THREE YEARS SINCE OUR TEACHER'S FUNERAL.

IN ALL THAT TIME, YOU'VE NEVER EVEN SPOKEN TO ME, KARIA.

NOT A WORD IN ALL THAT TIME!



SO WHEN I BROUGHT MY STUDENTS WITH ME FOR OUR ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE...

...TO THE TOMB OF MASTER LEEP...



...AND FOUND YOU WAITING... PREPARED FOR BATTLE...

...I ASSUMED YOU WERE READY TO PUNISH ME FOR THE MISTAKES I HAD MADE.

TO AVENGE THE DEATH OF OUR BELOVED TEACHER.



...
MOM DIED IN BATTLE
AS A WAR MAGE IN
THE GREAT ORKRIST
HORDE RAID THIRTY
YEARS AGO.

BUT ALL I
COULD DO WITH
THE TRAINING SHE
GAVE ME...



...WAS RUN A
MARAUDING
GANG OF
THUGS.

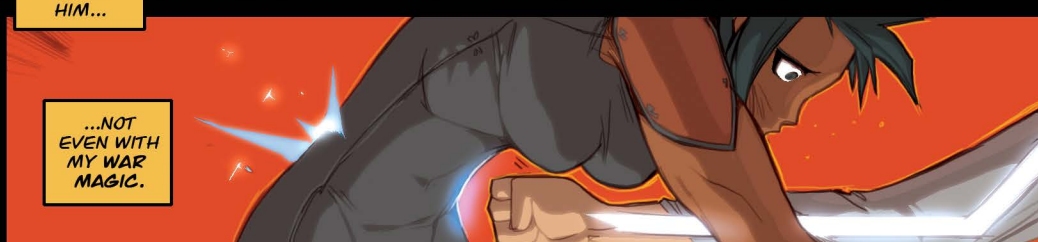
I--I HATED
WHAT I'D
LET MYSELF
BECOME.

"THE UNARMED
BANDIT."

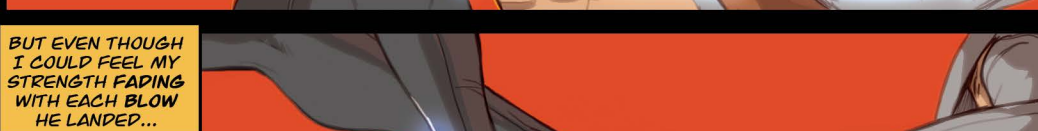
A LOWLIFE.
A THUG.



I COULDN'T
TOUCH
HIM...



...NOT
EVEN WITH
MY WAR
MAGIC.



BUT EVEN THOUGH
I COULD FEEL MY
STRENGTH FADING
WITH EACH BLOW
HE LANDED...



...THERE WAS
NO PAIN.

I FELT NO
PAIN, NO
ANGER...

...NO FEAR.

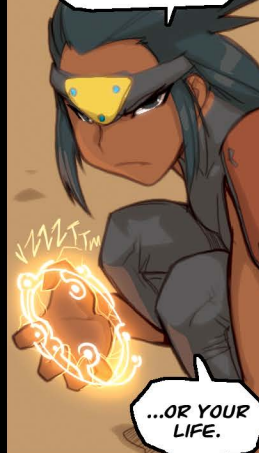
ONLY REMORSE.
EXCRUCIATING
REMORSE FOR
EVERYTHING
I'D DONE.



A BULLY.

BUT TIMES WERE
SO HARD BACK
THEN, AND I
WAS AN IDIOT.

THE BAGS
AND ALL OF YOUR
VALUABLES...



...OR YOUR
LIFE.



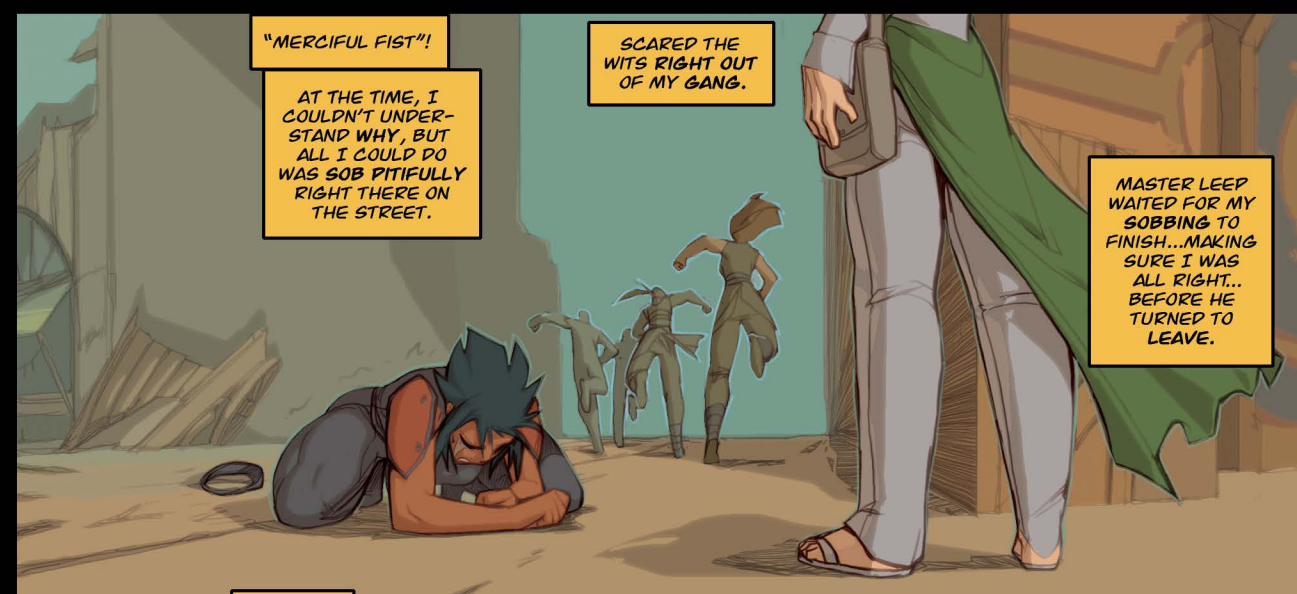
LUCKILY, ON
MY VERY LAST
ROBBERY...

SU.

YOU...
POOR
SOUL.

...I GOT THE
BEATING OF
A LIFETIME!

THE PILGRIM
I ATTACKED...
TURNED OUT
TO BE YOUNG
MASTER
LEEP.

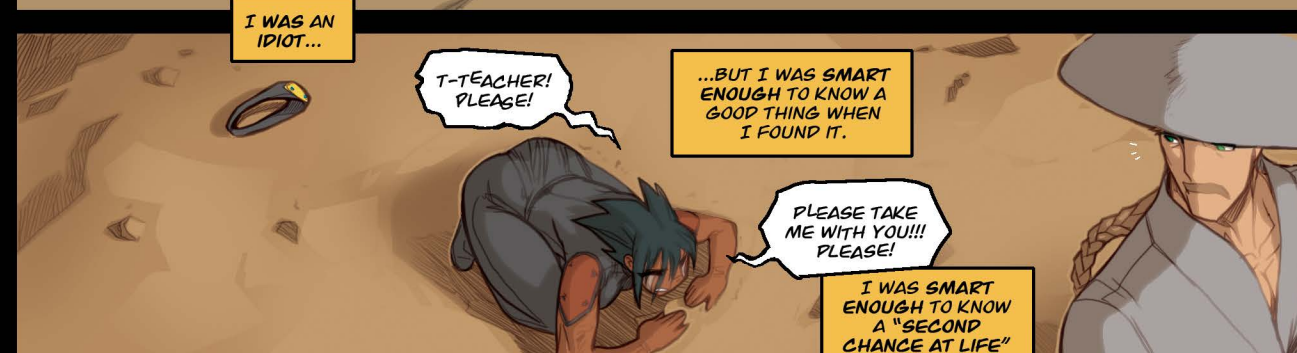


"MERCIFUL FIST"!

AT THE TIME, I
COULDN'T UNDER-
STAND WHY, BUT
ALL I COULD DO
WAS SOB PITIFULLY
RIGHT THERE ON
THE STREET.

SCARED THE
WITS RIGHT OUT
OF MY GANG.

MASTER LEEP
WAITED FOR MY
SOBBING TO
FINISH...MAKING
SURE I WAS
ALL RIGHT...
BEFORE HE
TURNED TO
LEAVE.



I WAS AN
IDIOT...

T-TEACHER!
PLEASE!

...BUT I WAS SMART
ENOUGH TO KNOW A
GOOD THING WHEN
I FOUND IT.

PLEASE TAKE
ME WITH YOU!!!
PLEASE!

I WAS SMART
ENOUGH TO KNOW
A "SECOND
CHANCE AT LIFE"
WHEN I SAW IT.

TEACHER WAS PURCHASING SUPPLIES FOR REPAIRING THE ANCIENT DOJO NORTH OF TRINSIC WHEN HE FOUND ME.

WITH THAT CART, IT WAS AN EXHAUSTING TRIP!

I WAS PANTING AND SWEATING, BUT MASTER LEEP LOOKED AS THOUGH HE COULD GO ON FOR DAYS!

SNICKS

...

--IF I MAY CONTINUE... THAT'S WHEN I SPOTTED SOMEONE WATCHING US APPROACH THE DOJO.

TEACHER SAID IT WAS HIS FORMER MASTER... SENZU!

GRAND MASTER SENZU OF THE SHUN SENZU SCHOOL WAS VERY OLD AND VERY STRICT.

AND ADAMANT ABOUT ONLY TEACHING MEN!

SEVERAL OF JADE-REALM'S FINEST FEMALE MARTIAL ARTISTS WERE REFUSED ADMISSION TO THE SCHOOL.

MY MOTHER INCLUDED.



TEACHER KEPT REFERRING TO GRAND MASTER SENZU AS "HE"...

...WHICH AT THE TIME I THOUGHT WAS REALLY OPP...

...BECAUSE I COULD TELL... I COULD FEEL...

...THAT GRAND MASTER SENZU WAS FEMALE!





W-WAIT...
WHAT!?!

AS ONE BORN OF
THE BARBARIAN CLAN,
YOU HAVE INNATE SURVIVAL
INSTINCTS, WANDERLUST,
AND TALENTED
MUSCULATURE.

MY MOTHER,
WAS BORN AN
AMAZON.

AND IF THERE'S
ONE THING AN
AMAZON KNOWS...
IT'S HOW TO TELL
A GIRL FROM A
BOY.

EVEN
ONE WHO HAS
CONCEALED THAT
INFORMATION FROM
THE WHOLE OF
JADE REALM
ALL HER
LIFE.

BUT WHY
WOULD HE--
~~SHE~~... DO
THAT?



THIS IS
ALL LEADING
SOMEWHERE.

AND IT HAS
SOMETHING TO DO
WITH THE RENEWING
BREATH TECHNIQUE,
DOESN'T IT?

OUT WITH
IT, KARIA!



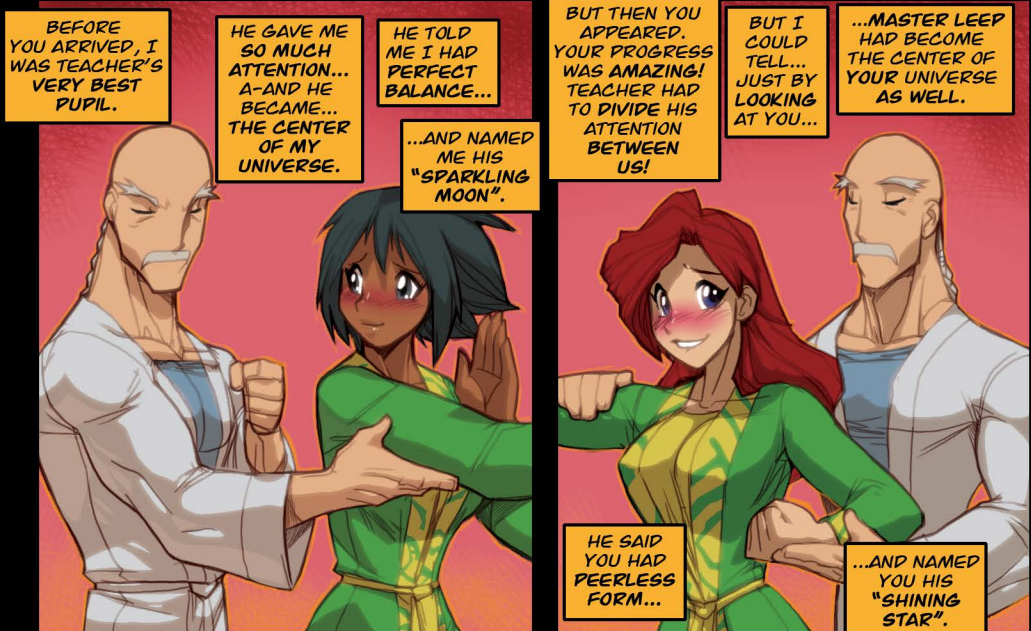
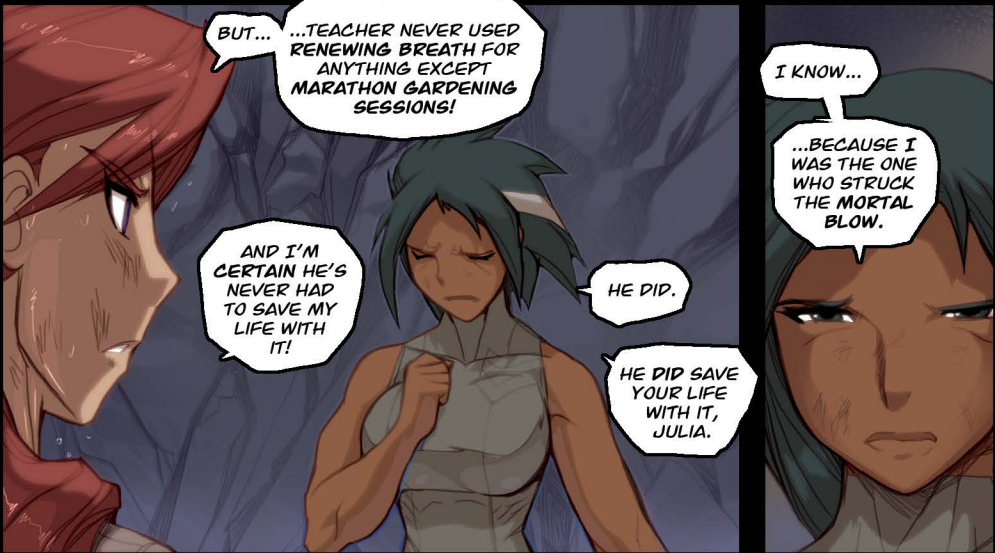
THAT TECHNIQUE... WAS
SUPPOSED TO HAVE
BEEN FORGOTTEN,
JULIA.

YOU SHOULDN'T
HAVE BEEN ABLE
TO USE IT TO SAVE
YOUR STUDENT,
GARFIELD
SILVEAR...

...AT THE
COST OF
TEACHER'S
LIFE.

JUST AS TEACHER
SHOULDN'T HAVE
BEEN ABLE TO
USE IT TO SAVE
YOU...

...AT THE COST
OF GRAND
MASTER
SENZU'S
LIFE.



I DECIDED
THAT NIGHT...
THE NIGHT
BEFORE
"AUTUMN
BREAK"...

...TO REVEAL
MYSELF...
MY HEART...
MY THOUGHTS...
MY BODY...
TO TEACHER.

I IMAGINED HIS
STRONG HANDS
OF HEALING.

THE SEXIEST
OUTFIT SHE
COULD PUT
TOGETHER
AT THE
TIME...

AND
THOUGHTS OF
TEACHER FILLING
ME WITH HIS
WISDOM UNTIL
DAWN'S FIRST
LIGHT URGED
ME ON.

~SMH~



I SHOULD HAVE LEFT.

I SHOULD HAVE COME TO MY SENSES, LAUGHED AT MYSELF AND TURNED BACK.

INSTEAD, I CAST "AURORA OF SILENCE" ON THE AREA.

A BLUFF TO SHOW THAT I WAS WILLING TO FIGHT OFF ANYONE WHO GOT BETWEEN ME AND TEACHER...

...AND I WAS READY TO FIGHT WITHOUT HIM EVER KNOWING.

HOWEVER... MY SISTER STUDENTS... WEREN'T BLUFFING.

A FORCEFUL SHOVE.

A PURPOSELY WIFFED KICK.

AN ENRAGED PALM TO THE TEMPLE.

A FURIOUS BRAWL.

HAD WE ALL WISHED FOR TEACHER FOR SO LONG?

HAD WE ALL SUCH PENT UP FRUSTRATION?

SUDDENLY... THE DOOR TO TEACHER'S PRIVATE CHAMBER STIRRED.

WE FROZE AS A SUDDEN REALIZATION SEIZED US ALL SIMULTANEOUSLY.

OF TEACHER'S FIRST EIGHT STUDENTS... ONE OF US WAS MISSING!

...JULIA!!!

Sigh

YOU HAD JUST FINISHED CONFESSING TO TEACHER THAT YOU WERE IN LOVE.

THAT YOU'D MET SOMEONE THE YEAR BEFORE AND YOU WERE PLANNING TO SPEND AUTUMN BREAK WITH HIM.

BUT SEEING YOU EMERGE FROM TEACHER'S PRIVATE CHAMBERS WITH THAT LOVE-SICK SMILE...

...CAUSED ME TO JUMP TO A DIFFERENT CONCLUSION!

Murder Palm

A MASTER TECHNIQUE OF THE SHUN MARTIAL ART FUELED BY ANGER AND MURDEROUS INTENT.

N-NO...

OH--NO...

WH-WHAT HAVE I DONE!?



WE--

WE WERE TOLD
TO WAIT OUTSIDE...
WHILE TEACHER
ATTEMPTED TO
USE A TECHNIQUE
HE'D NEVER TRIED
BEFORE...

...TO SAVE
JULIA.



BUT WITH
MY WAR MAGE
EYES, I SAW
EVERYTHING.

I SAW MASTER
LEEP'S AURA
TRYING AGAIN
AND AGAIN TO
BREATHE LIFE
INTO YOUR
FADING
LIGHT.

BUT THEN I
SENSED A THIRD
AURA ENTER
THAT ROOM...



...THE GRAND
MASTER'S SOUL.

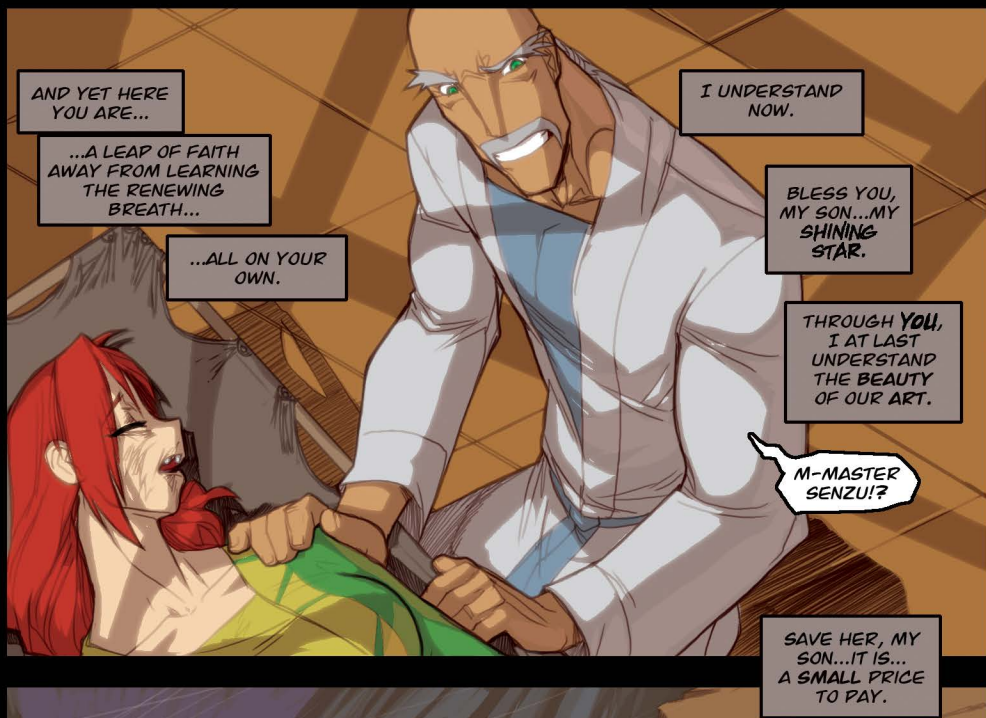
I UNDERSTAND
NOW MY, SON.

T-TEACHER!?

HITHER
TO NOW...

...ONLY FEMALE
MASTERS OF
OUR ART...

...HAVE BEEN
ABLE TO RECEIVE
THE GIFT OF THIS
TECHNIQUE.



AND YET HERE YOU ARE...

...A LEAP OF FAITH AWAY FROM LEARNING THE RENEWING BREATH...

...ALL ON YOUR OWN.

I UNDERSTAND NOW.

BLESS YOU, MY SON...MY SHINING STAR.

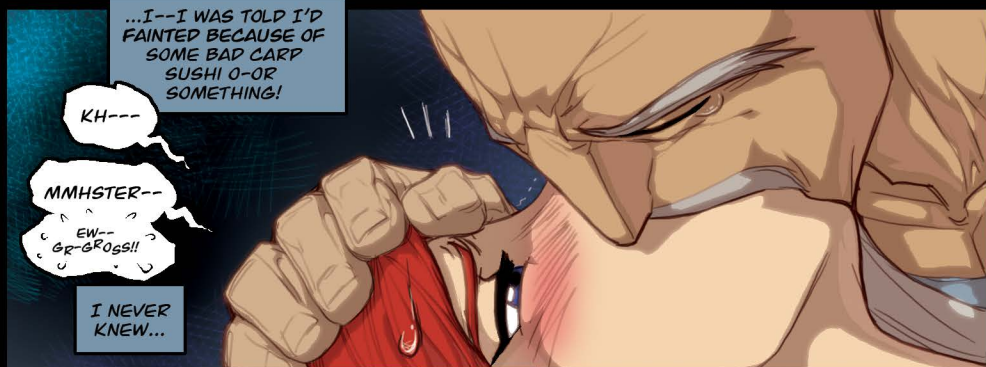
THROUGH YOU, I AT LAST UNDERSTAND THE BEAUTY OF OUR ART.

M-MASTER SENZU!?

SAVE HER, MY SON...IT IS... A SMALL PRICE TO PAY.



WHEN...WHEN MASTER LEEP REVIVED ME...



...I--I WAS TOLD I'D FAINTED BECAUSE OF SOME BAD CARP SUSHI O-OR SOMETHING!

KH---

MMHSTER--

EW--GR-GROGS!!

I NEVER KNEW...



NONE OF US WANTED TO TALK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED THAT NIGHT...

...ESPECIALLY TO YOU, JULIA.

A-AND... I--I'LL NEVER FORGET HOW... MASTER LEEP LOOKED AT US.

AS IF HE WAS THE ONE WHO'D FAILED.



HOWEVER...

...IF IT WEREN'T FOR MY MISTAKE...
TEACHER WOULDN'T HAVE NEEDED TO USE THAT TECHNIQUE.

"RENEWING BREATH" WOULD HAVE BEEN LOST FOREVER...
JUST AS GRAND MASTER SENZU ORIGINALLY INTENDED.



IT'S...

IT'S TIME FOR ME TO RIGHT WHAT I MADE WRONG THAT AUTUMN NIGHT LONG AGO.

WRONG?

THAT TECHNIQUE WAS THE ONLY THING THAT COULD HAVE POSSIBLY SAVED MY STUDENT, KARIA.

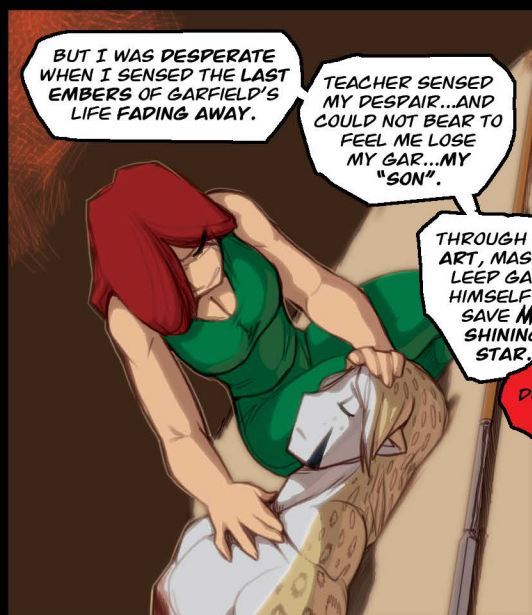


WHAT TEACHER ENTRUSTED TO ME WAS SOMETHING SACRED.

THE ABILITY TO STAY THE GRIP OF DEATH...EVEN ONCE... IS PRECIOUS AND PURE.

MY UNDERESTIMATION OF THE ENEMIES I HAVE WAS WRONG.

MY WEAKNESS AND INADEQUACY IN PREPARING MY STUDENT FOR THE BATTLE THAT NEARLY TOOK HIS LIFE... WAS WRONG.



BUT I WAS DESPERATE WHEN I SENSED THE LAST EMBERS OF GARFIELD'S LIFE FADING AWAY.

TEACHER SENSED MY DESPAIR...AND COULD NOT BEAR TO FEEL ME LOSE MY GAR...MY "SON".

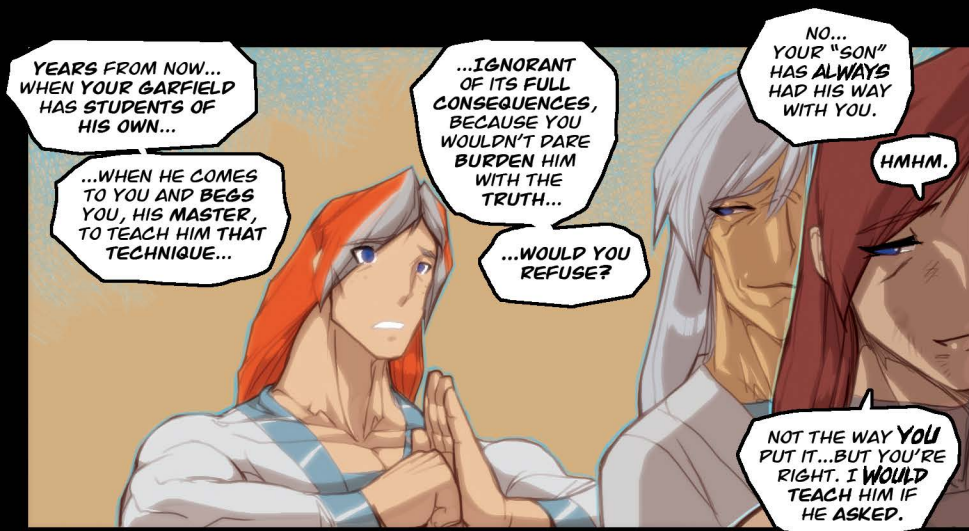
THROUGH OUR ART, MASTER LEEP GAVE HIMSELF TO SAVE MY SHINING STAR.

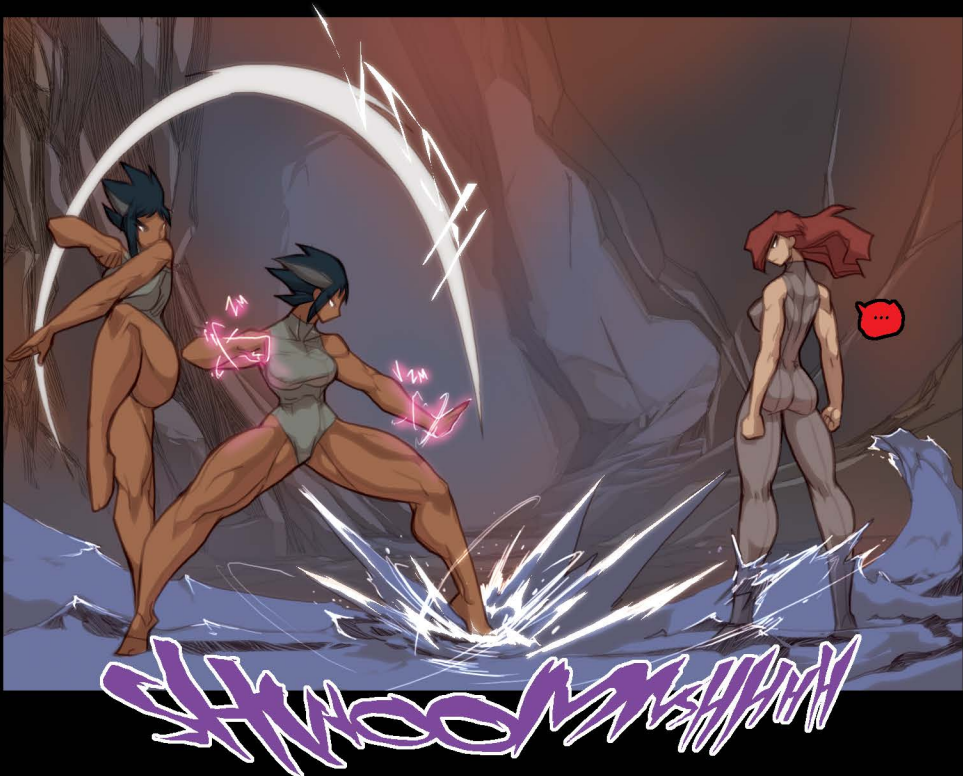
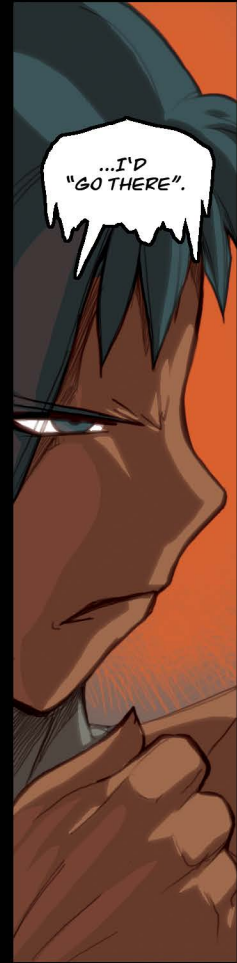


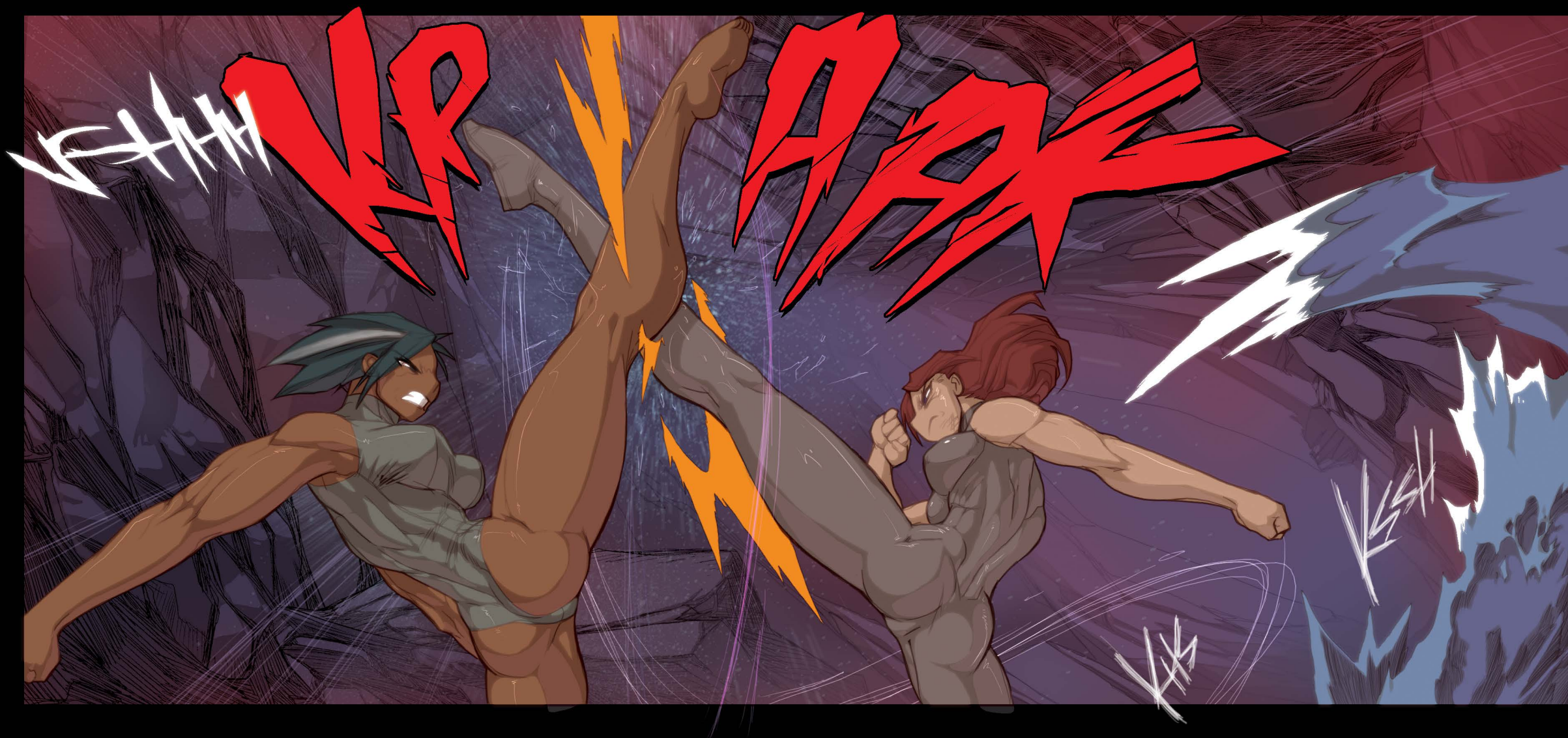
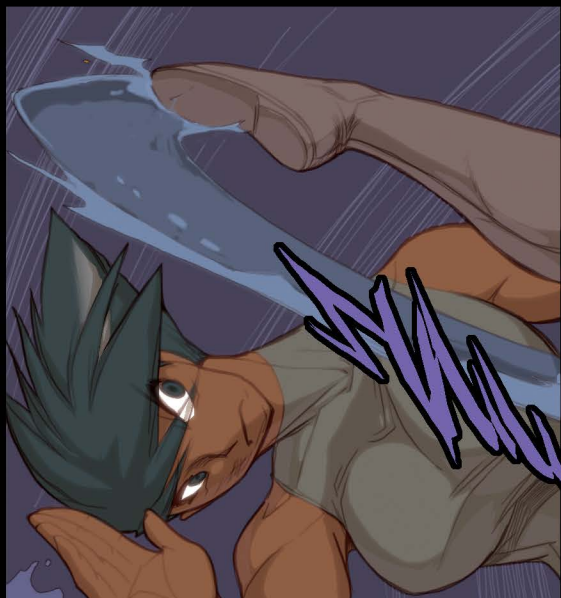
YOU STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND?!

YOU'RE DOOMED, JULIA!!!

A-AND IT'S ALL MY FAULT.







I FORGIVE
YOU, KARIA.

YOU'RE
MY FRIEND,
AND I FORGIVE
YOU FOR
EVERYTHING.



BUT, DON'T
YOU EVER...



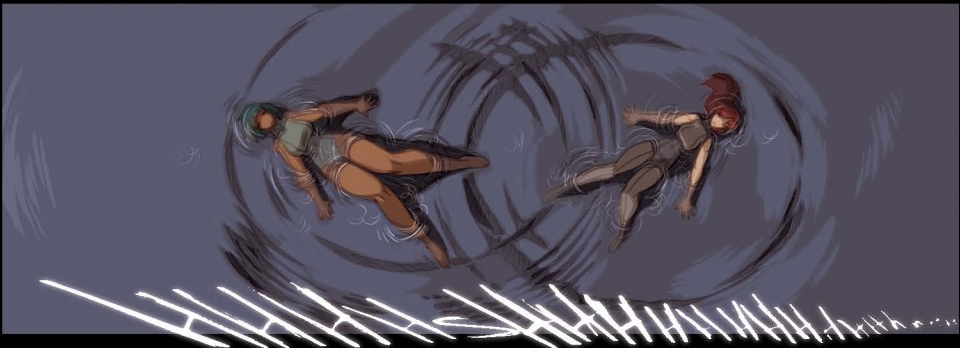
...EVER...



...THREATEN MY
"SON" AGAI--









KARIA.

I'D DIE
FOR HIM,
KARIA.

I LOVE GARFIELD AS
MUCH AS I LOVE MY
OWN DAUGHTERS.

AS THOUGH HE
WERE MY OWN
SON.



AND I'D GIVE
MY LIFE TO
SAVE HIS.

BUT I COULDN'T
THAT TIME.

EVEN THOUGH I
WANTED TO.

I WAS HELPLESS.
I HAD NO HOPE.

BUT WHEN TEACHER
SAVED HIM, TEACHER
SAVED ME.



I HOPE GAR
NEVER HAS TO
GO THROUGH
THAT.

BUT IT WOULD
BREAK MY HEART
TO SENSE HIS
SOUL BEING
CRUSHED...

...TO FEEL HIM
HELPLESS TO
SAVE THE ONE
WHOM HE NURTURES
AS HIS BELOVED
STUDENT.

TO SAVE MY
DAUGHTERS
AND MY "SON"
AND ANYONE
THEY CHERISHED...



...I'D
GLADLY
GIVE MY
LIFE FOR
THAT.

HOW BEAUTIFUL
OUR ART IS TO
GRANT ME
THAT BOON.

J-JULIA.

WHILE WE
FOUGHT...
DID--DID
YOU SAY
YOU...
FORGAVE
ME?

FOR BRINGING
THE BURDEN OF THE
"RENEWING BREATH"
TECHNIQUE
TO YOU?

FOR FAILING
TO HEAR YOU
CLEARLY?

FOR FORCING MYSELF
UPON YOU AND GETTING
YOU ALL WET?

FOR THREATENING?

≥SNRFL≤

FOR-- JULIA...



OHHH, "QUEEN
OF OBLIVIOUS
INNUENDO"...

...WE'VE BEEN COMING
HERE TO WEAR EACH
OTHER OUT IN OUR SECRET
SPOT SINCE WE WERE
TEENAGERS!

IF I CAN'T
FORGIVE YOU,
WHO CAN I
FORGIVE?

≥SNICKER≤

HAHA...

DAMN YOU,
JULIA!

