



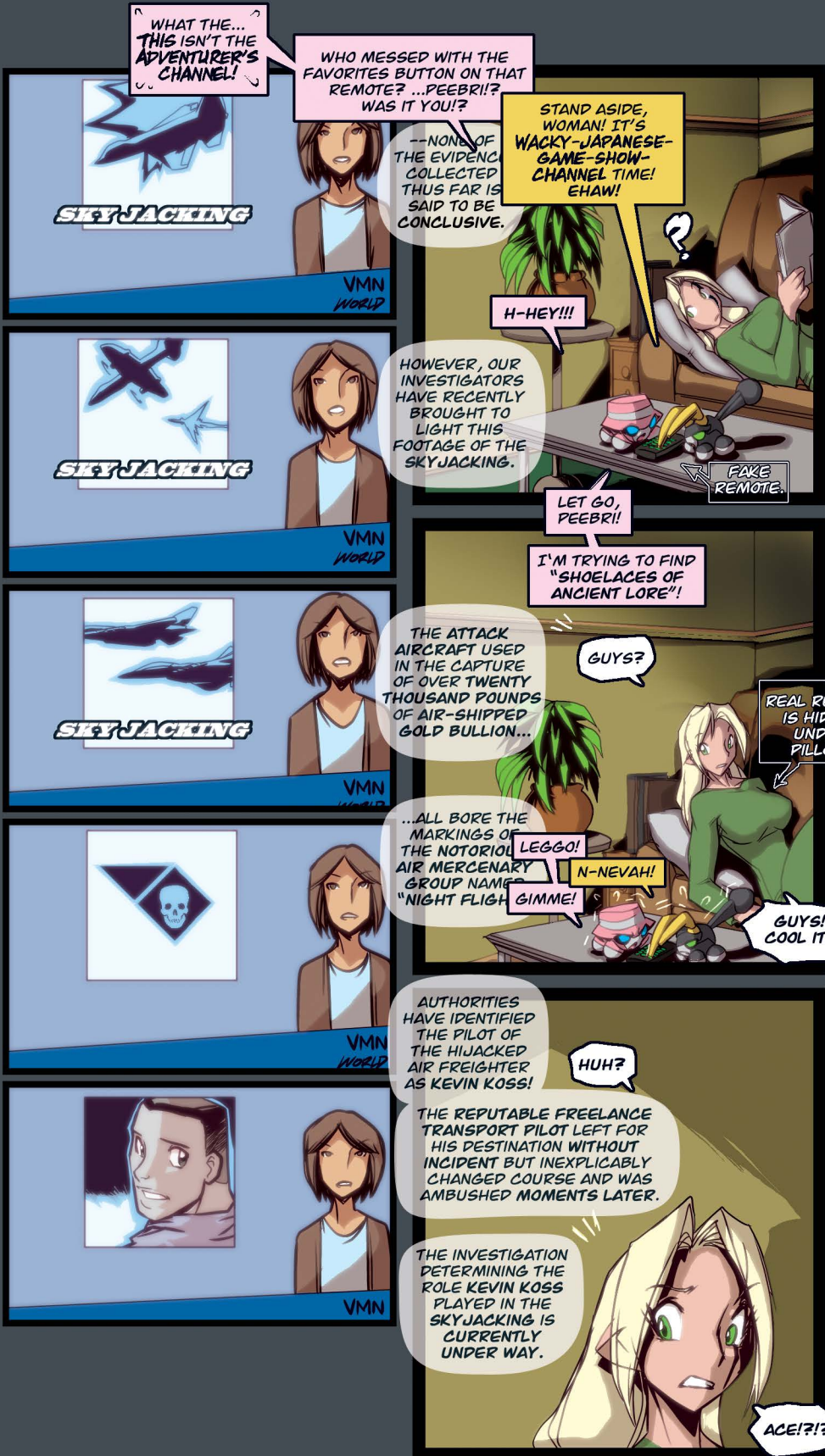
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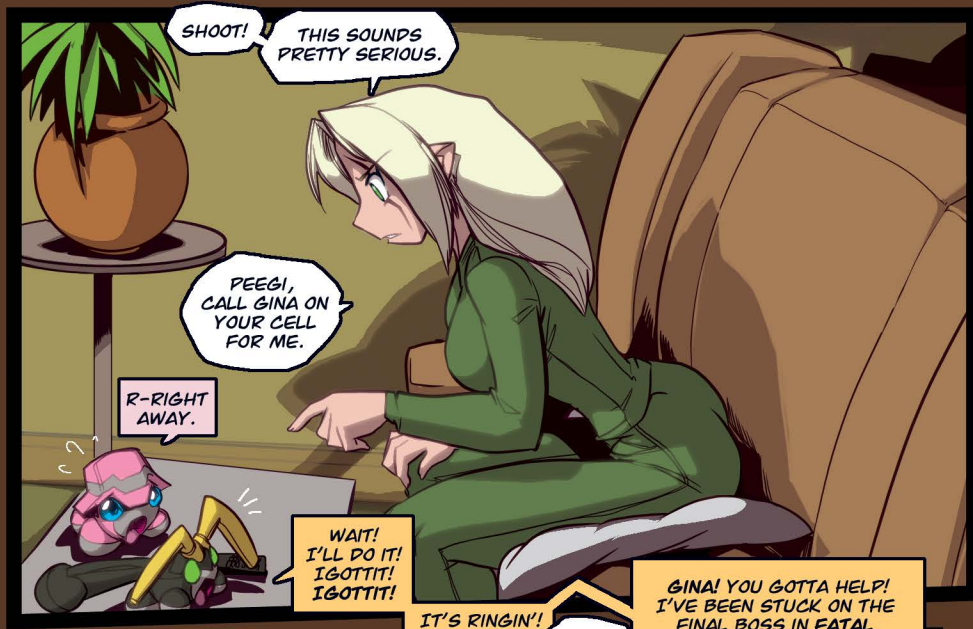
FRED PERRY

GOLD DIGGER



DECEMBER 2009





SHOOT!

THIS SOUNDS
PRETTY SERIOUS.

PEEGI,
CALL GINA ON
YOUR CELL
FOR ME.

R-RIGHT
AWAY.

WAIT!
I'LL DO IT!
IGOTTIT!
IGOTTIT!

IT'S RINGIN'!

HELLO?

GINA! YOU GOTTA HELP!
I'VE BEEN STUCK ON THE
FINAL BOSS IN FATAL
FANTASY THIRTEEN FOR
THREE DAYS!!!
DESPERATELY...
NEED...CHEAT...CODES...!

OH YEAH...
ALSO, SUM'N
'BOUT ACE BEIN'
IN TROUBLE.

PEEBRI, PUT
BRIANNA ON
THE HORN!

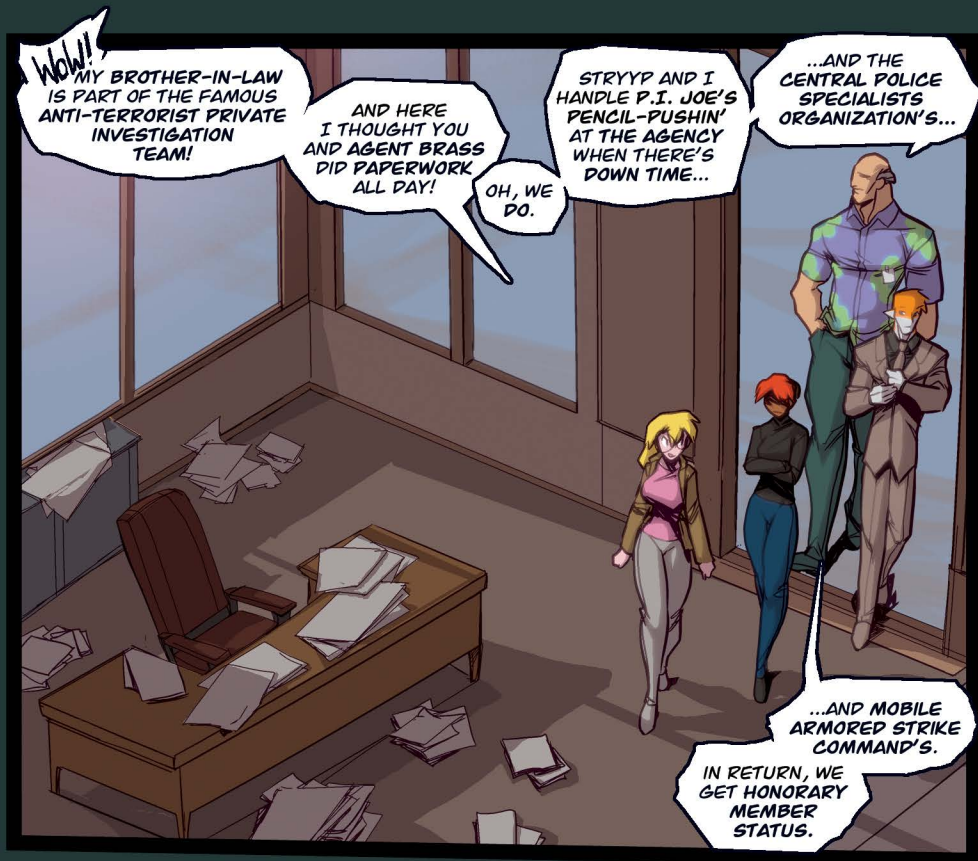
I NEED HER
TO FETCH ME
MY TRICORDER
PRONTO!!!



PENNY AND I
ARE ALREADY
ON THE CASE!

BUT THE COPS
HAVE ACE'S OFFICE
HANGAR
TAPED OFF!





Wow!
MY BROTHER-IN-LAW
IS PART OF THE FAMOUS
ANTI-TERRORIST PRIVATE
INVESTIGATION
TEAM!

AND HERE
I THOUGHT YOU
AND AGENT BRASS
DID PAPERWORK
ALL DAY!

OH, WE
DO.

STRYPY AND I
HANDLE P.I. JOE'S
PENCIL-PUSHIN'
AT THE AGENCY
WHEN THERE'S
DOWN TIME...

...AND THE
CENTRAL POLICE
SPECIALISTS
ORGANIZATION'S...

...AND MOBILE
ARMORED STRIKE
COMMAND'S.

IN RETURN, WE
GET HONORARY
MEMBER
STATUS.



SO, STRYPY...

WHAT DOES
"THE AGENCY"
WANT WITH MY
BOYFRIEND?

IF YOU'RE TRYING TO
GET ME TO HELP YOU
FIND EVIDENCE TO USE
AGAINST KEVIN...

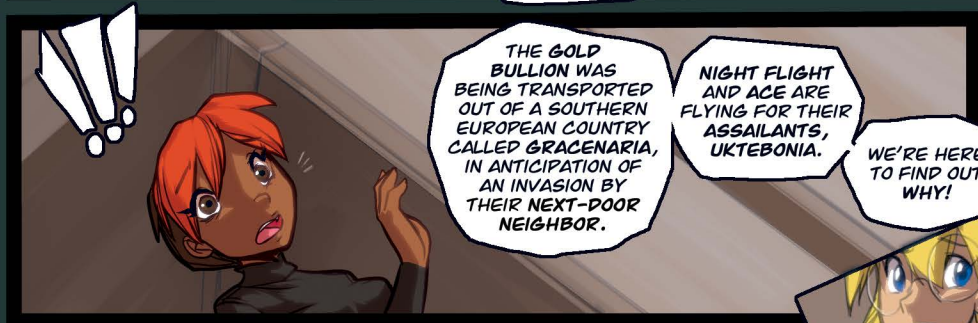
...INSTEAD OF HELPING
ME LOOK FOR CLUES TO
WHERE HIS ENEMIES
KIDNAPPED HIM...



PENNY, WE **KNOW**
WHAT ACE HAS DONE.

WE **KNOW** THAT
HE'S JOINED
FORCES WITH HIS
FORMER ENEMIES....

...NIGHT FLIGHT.



THE GOLD
BULLION WAS
BEING TRANSPORTED
OUT OF A SOUTHERN
EUROPEAN COUNTRY
CALLED GRACENARIA,
IN ANTICIPATION OF
AN INVASION BY
THEIR NEXT-DOOR
NEIGHBOR.

NIGHT FLIGHT
AND ACE ARE
FLYING FOR THEIR
ASSAILANTS,
UKTEBONIA.

WE'RE HERE
TO FIND OUT
WHY!

WAIT A
SECOND...

"THERE'S A HUGE BUZZ IN THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY ABOUT SOME OF THE STUFF ARCHEOLOGISTS ARE FINDING IN SOUTHERN EUROPE THESE DAYS."

"STUFF THAT MIGHT HAVE USED IN A CATASTROPHIC WORLD WAR DURING THE AGE OF WONDERS!"

"THE PRIME MINISTER OF GRACENARIA IS AN ARCHAEOLOGY BUFF, SO THAT COUNTRY IS GROUND ZERO FOR ALL EXCAVATIONS!"

"JINKIES! THERE'S GOING TO BE A BATTLE DIRECTLY OVER SOME OF THE NUCLEAR-CLASS MAGICAL WEAPONRY THAT DOOMED THE WORLD SEVEN THOUSAND YEARS AGO, AND POOR ACE IS KNEE DEEP IN THAT HOOPLA!!!"



BETA FLIGHT LEADER,
WE'RE FORMING UP
ON YOU NOW!

COMMAND SAYS THEY'VE
BLOWN THE DAM AND
ARE ON THEIR WAY
INLAND!

WHO'S
"THEY"?!

CUT THE
CHATTER!

BETA FLIGHT
LEADERS, THIS IS
GRACENARIA
INTERCEPTER
COMMAND!

WE'RE PLACING
YOU UNDER THE
JURISDICTION OF
THE AIRBORNE
WARNING AND
CONTROL SYSTEM,
CALL SIGN:
"SAURON".



"SAURON", THIS IS
BETA FLIGHT LEADER,
"METHODMAN"!
WHAT'S GOING
ON?

YOU'VE GOT
US HEADING
DOWNTOWN!

IS THIS
AN ATTACK
APPROACH
VECTOR?

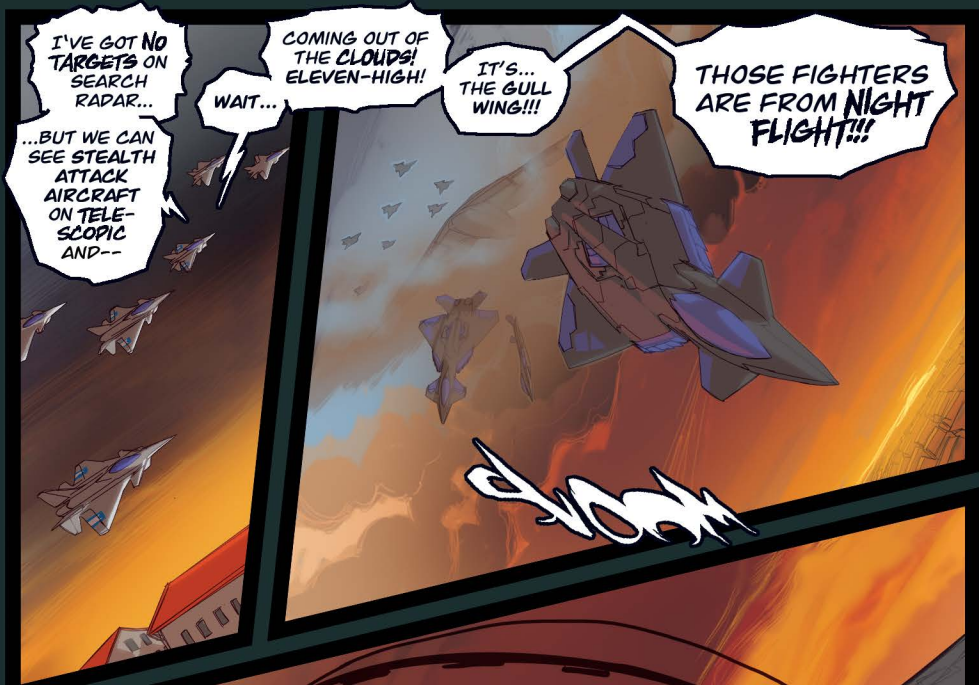
AFFIRMATIVE,
"METHODMAN"!



THE SITUATION HAS NOT YET
BEEN FULLY ASCERTAINED, BUT
YOU'VE BEEN AUTHORIZED
TO ENGAGE ANY HOSTILE
AIRCRAFT ABOVE THE
CITY!

WHAT!?
WE'VE
BEEN
INVAPED?





I'VE GOT NO
TARGETS ON
SEARCH
RADAR...

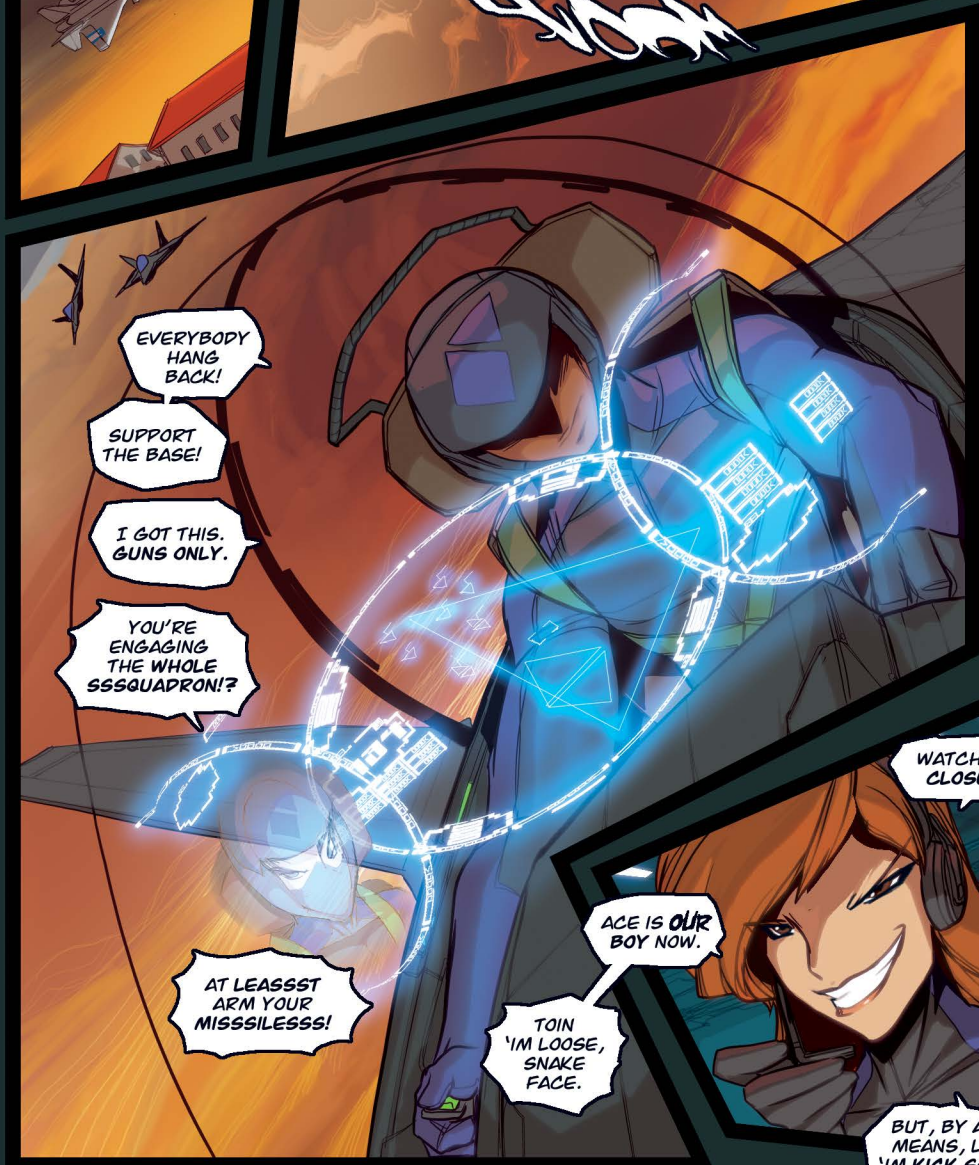
...BUT WE CAN
SEE STEALTH
ATTACK
AIRCRAFT
ON TELE-
SCOPIC
AND--

WAIT...

COMING OUT OF
THE CLOUDS!
ELEVEN-HIGH!

IT'S...
THE GULL
WING!!!

THOSE FIGHTERS
ARE FROM NIGHT
FLIGHT!!!



EVERYBODY
HANG
BACK!

SUPPORT
THE BASE!

I GOT THIS.
GUNS ONLY.

YOU'RE
ENGAGING
THE WHOLE
SSSQUADRON!?

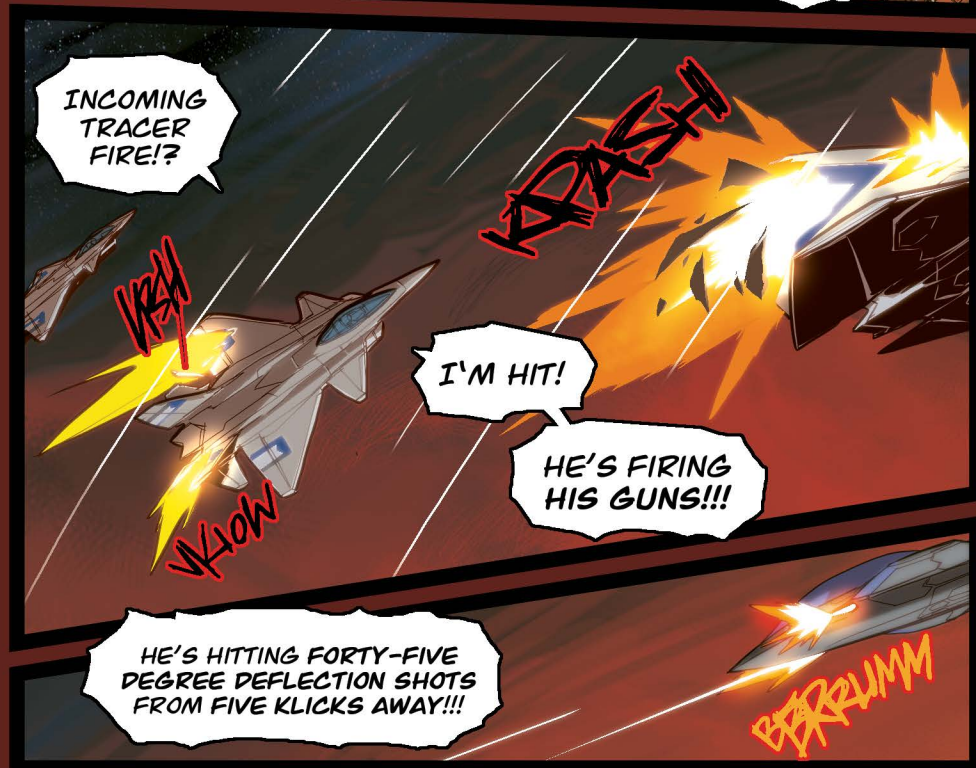
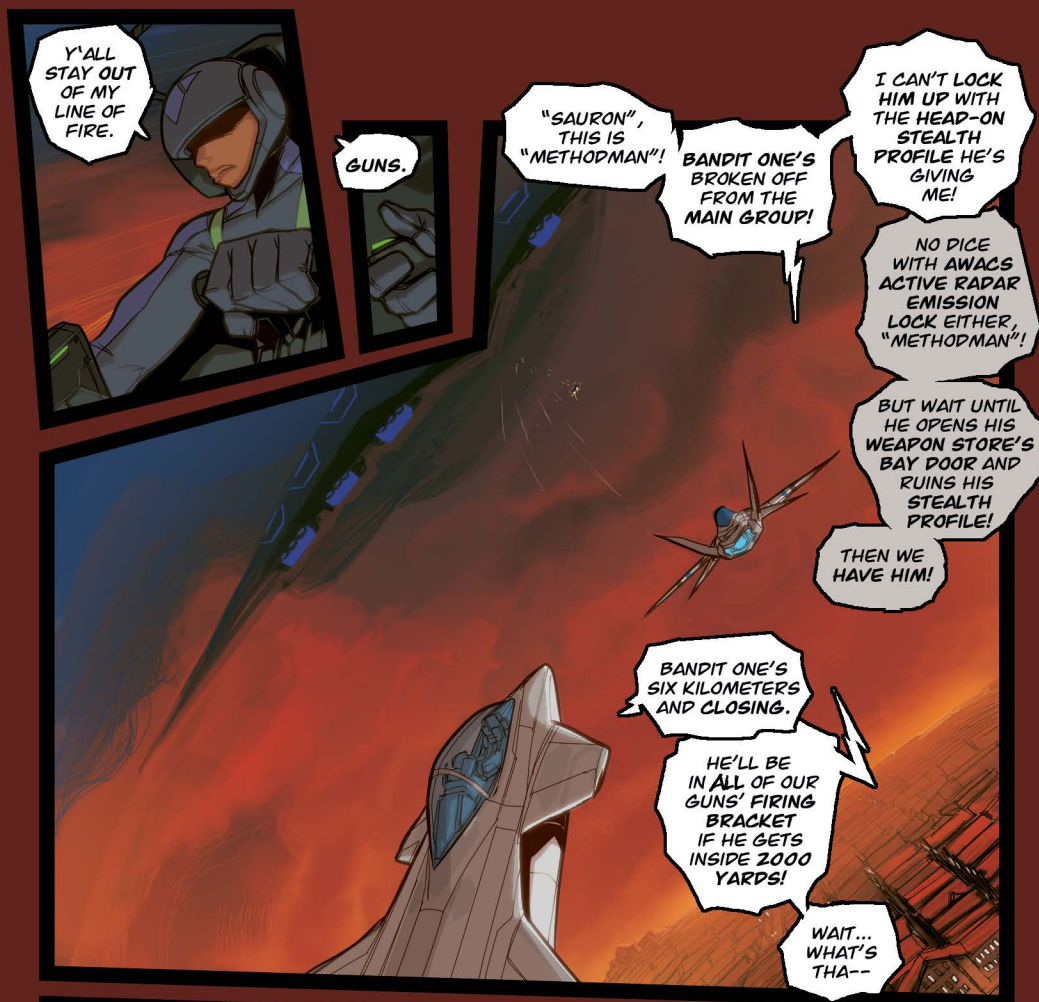
AT LEASSST
ARM YOUR
MISSILESSS!

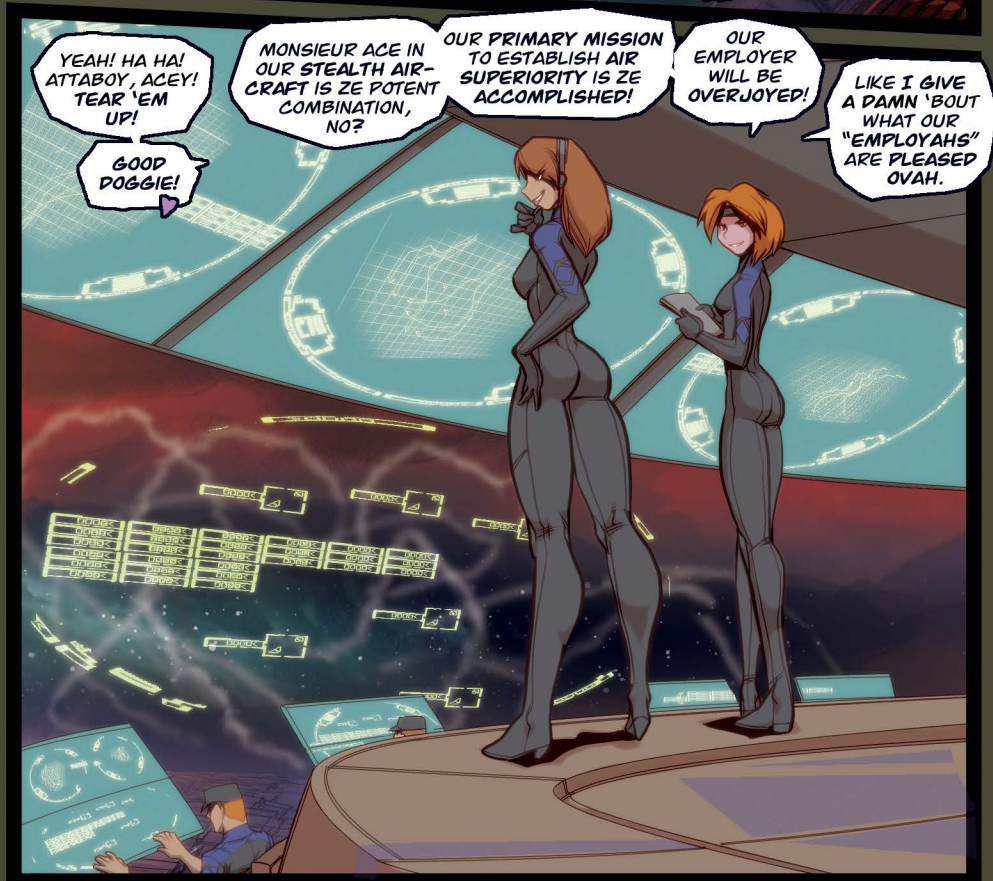
ACE IS OUR
BOY NOW.

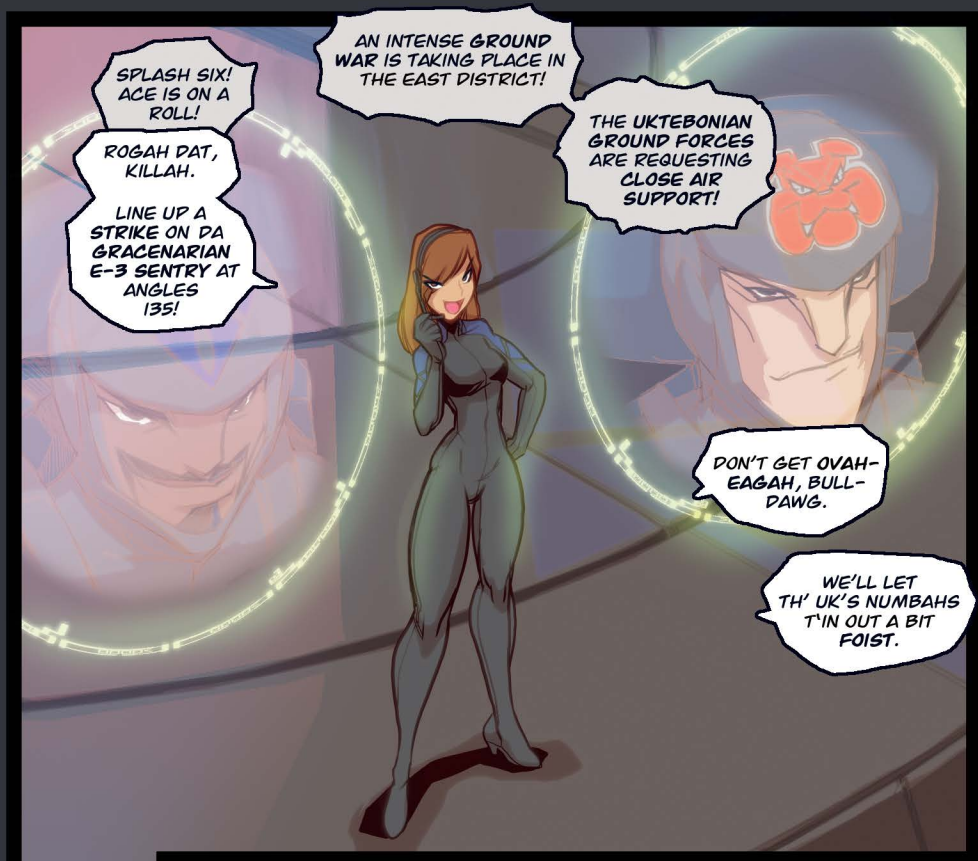
TOIN
'IM LOOSE,
SNAKE
FACE.

WATCH 'IM
CLOSE...

BUT, BY ALL
MEANS, LET
'IM KICK SOME
@@@ UNDAH
BUDGET! ♥







SPLASH SIX!
ACE IS ON A
ROLL!

ROGAH DAT,
KILLAH.

LINE UP A
STRIKE ON DA
GRACENARIAN
E-3 SENTRY AT
ANGLES
135!

AN INTENSE GROUND
WAR IS TAKING PLACE IN
THE EAST DISTRICT!

THE UKTEBONIAN
GROUND FORCES
ARE REQUESTING
CLOSE AIR
SUPPORT!

DON'T GET OVAH-
EAGAH, BULL-
PAWS.

WE'LL LET
TH' UK'S NUMBAHS
T'IN OUT A BIT
FOIST.



I NEED
BOTH SIDES
NICE AND
WEAK...

...AND DEN...

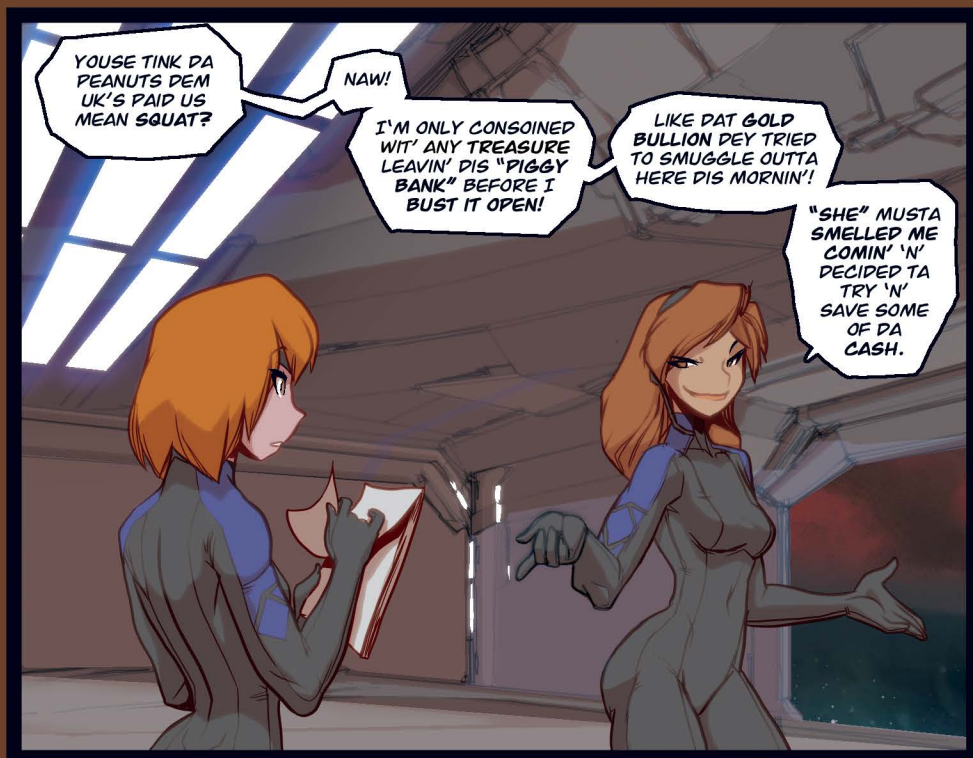
Splash



B-BUT I DO NOT
UNDERSTAND, MON
CAPITAINE.

NIGHT FLIGHT IS ZE
WORLD'S MOST FEROCIOUS
AIRBORNE MERCENARY
FORCE, NO?

ARE WE NOT
DESIRING ZE
HEALTH OF OUR
CLIENT SO ZAT
WE MAY GET OUR
PAYMENT!?



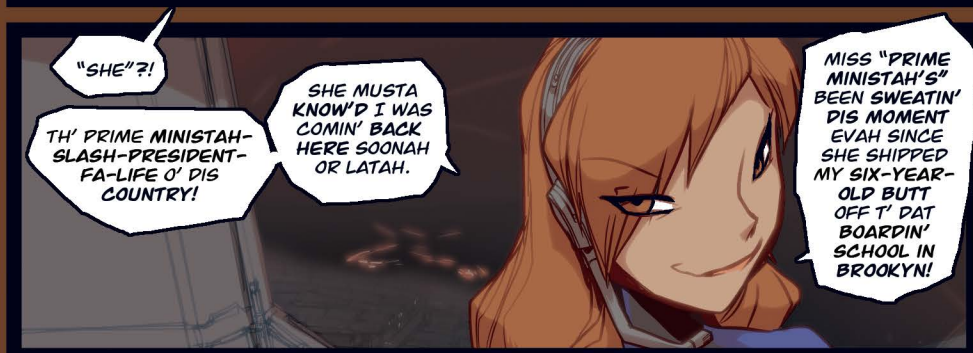
YOUSE TINK DA
PEANUTS DEM
UK'S PAID US
MEAN SQUAT?

NAW!

I'M ONLY CONSOINED
WIT' ANY TREASURE
LEAVIN' DIS "PIGGY
BANK" BEFORE I
BUST IT OPEN!

LIKE DAT GOLD
BULLION DEY TRIED
TO SMUGGLE OUTTA
HERE DIS MORNIN'!

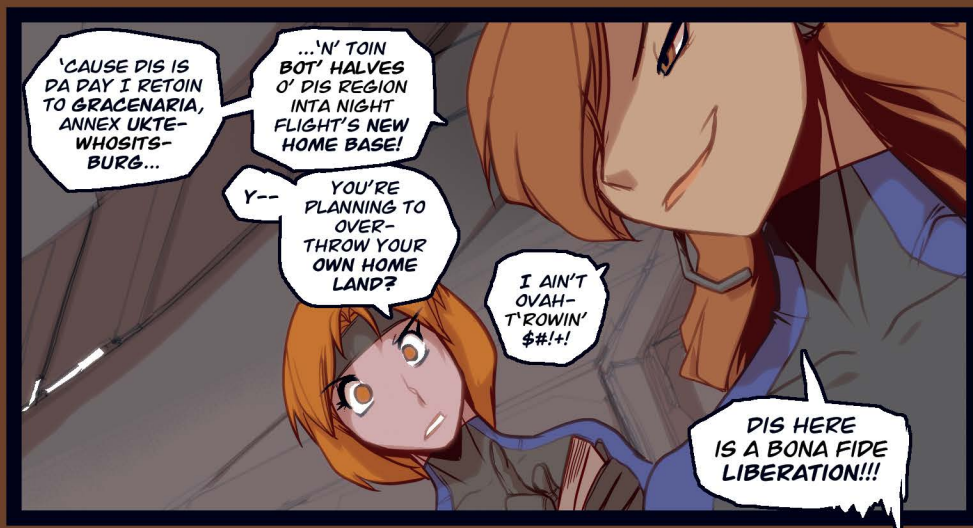
"SHE" MUSTA
SMELLED ME
COMIN' 'N'
DECIDED TA
TRY 'N'
SAVE SOME
OF DA
CASH.



"SHE"?!
TH' PRIME MINISTAH-
SLASH-PRESIDENT-
FA-LIFE O' DIS
COUNTRY!

SHE MUSTA
KNOW'D I WAS
COMIN' BACK
HERE SOONAH
OR LATAH.

MISS "PRIME
MINISTAH'S"
BEEN SWEATIN'
DIS MOMENT
EVAH SINCE
SHE SHIPPED
MY SIX-YEAR-
OLD BUTT
OFF T' DAT
BOARDIN'
SCHOOL IN
BROOKLYN!



'CAUSE DIS IS
PA DAY I RETOIN
TO GRACENARIA,
ANNEX UKTE-
WHOSITS-
BURG...

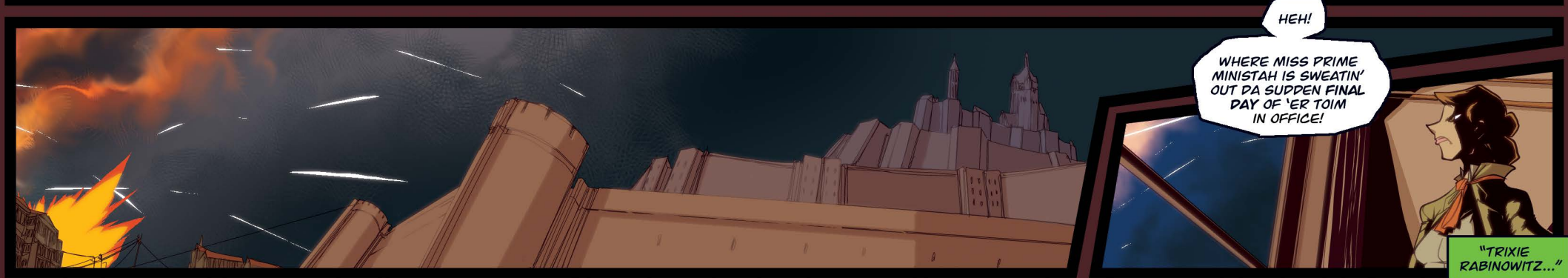
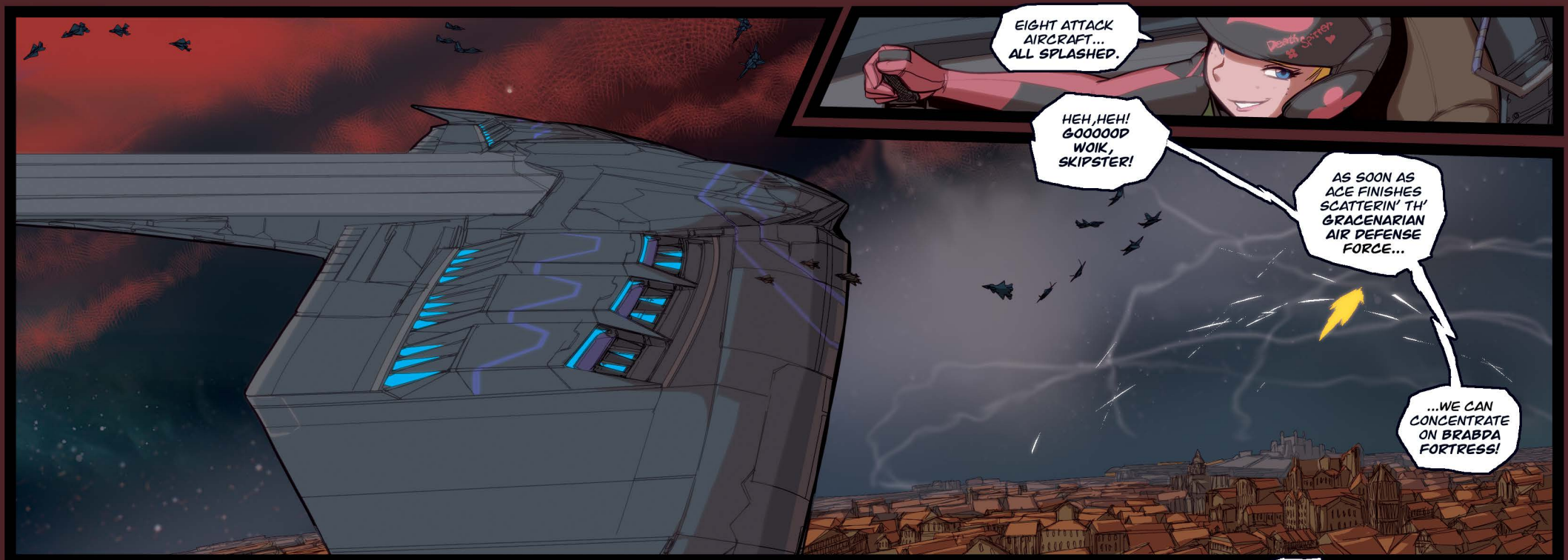
... 'N' TOIN
BOT' HALVES
O' DIS REGION
INTA NIGHT
FLIGHT'S NEW
HOME BASE!

Y--

YOU'RE
PLANNING TO
OVER-
THROW YOUR
OWN HOME
LAND?

I AIN'T
OVAH-
T'ROWIN'
\$#!+!

DIS HERE
IS A BONA FIDE
LIBERATION!!!



BORN TO A PAIR OF WEALTHY SOCIALITES WITH INSATIABLE APPETITES FOR ADVENTURE AND AERIAL ACROBATICS, ROBIN AND HENRY RABINOWITZ!



ROBIN PERISHED IN AN AIR SHOW ACCIDENT WHEN TRIxie WAS SIXTEEN.



ROBIN'S FUNERAL WAS ATTENDED BY THOUSANDS OF HER FANS, INCLUDING A LONGTIME FRIEND OF THE FAMILY, THE DUCHESS LUDMILLA PUCKETTE OF GRACENARIA.



WHILE COMFORTING HENRY DURING HIS PERIOD OF GRIEF, LUDMILLA BECAME ROMANTICALLY INVOLVED.



LUDMILLA URGED HENRY TO CONTINUE HIS AERIAL ESCAPADES...

...AND HENRY TAUGHT LUDMILLA TO FLY A STUNT FIGHTER.

THEIR WEDDING WAS HELD ON THE WING OF A CESNA 172.



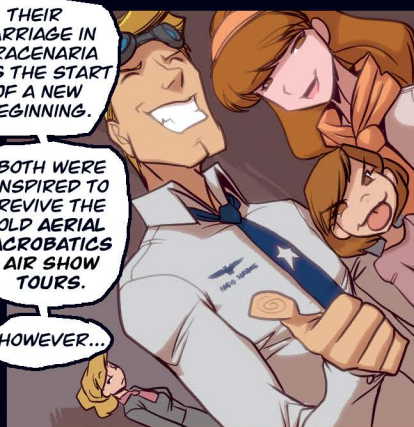
ONE YEAR LATER, ROXY RABINOWITZ WAS BORN.



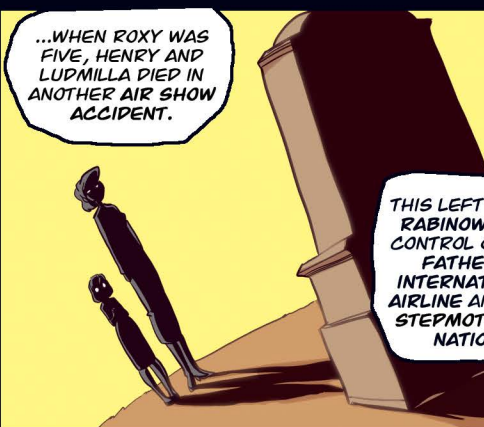
THEIR MARRIAGE IN GRACENARIA WAS THE START OF A NEW BEGINNING.

BOTH WERE INSPIRED TO REVIVE THE OLD AERIAL ACROBATICS AIR SHOW TOURS.

HOWEVER...



...WHEN ROXY WAS FIVE, HENRY AND LUDMILLA DIED IN ANOTHER AIR SHOW ACCIDENT.



THIS LEFT TRIxie RABINOWITZ IN CONTROL OF HER FATHER'S INTERNATIONAL AIRLINE AND HER STEPMOTHER'S NATION.

I SUPPOSE BOTH PARENTS EXPECTED TRIxie TO LOOK AFTER HER LITTLE SISTER, ROXY...

INSTEAD, TRIxie SHIPPED HER TO A BOARDING SCHOOL IN NEW YORK.

ONE WITH A REPUTATION FOR BEING A SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS!

BY THE TIME ROXY GRADUATED, HER OLDER SISTER HAD SUCCEEDED IN COMPLETELY DRAINING ROXY'S HALF OF THE TRUST FUND.

ROXY WAS PENNILESS, BUT MANAGED TO GAIN TWO ITEMS FROM THAT SCHOOL'S EXPENSIVE YET EXTENSIVE VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM.

A DIPLOMA...

...AND A PILOT'S LICENSE.

ROXY'S FIRST JOB WAS FLYING TOURISTS ALONG THE FLORIDA KEYS...

...UNTIL SHE FELL IN WITH "BULLDOG", AN EX-TOP GUN INSTRUCTOR...

...WHO INTRODUCED HER TO THE WORLD OF INTERNATIONAL SMUGGLING!

THIS BROUGHT HER INTO CONTACT WITH A DISGRUNTLED ACE FIGHTER PILOT FROM PARIS NAMED "FRENCHIE"...

...WHO HELPED ROXY USE THE POLITICAL CLOUT OF HER FAMILY NAME TO PULL OFF HISTORY'S BIGGEST HIJACKING...

...THE THEFT OF FRANCE'S FIRST AND ONLY SKY-CARRIER, "GULL-BASE"!

AS IT WAS FULLY LADEN WITH ARMED ATTACK AIRCRAFT AND CREWED WITH "FRENCHIE'S" LOYAL SUBORDINATES, ROXY OPTED NOT TO SELL THE BEHEMOTH TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER...

...BUT TO KEEP IT AS A BASE FOR HER NEW BRAINSTORM, AN AIRBORNE MERCENARY TEAM.

FROM THAT MOMENT, ROXY TOOK ON THE CALL SIGN "DARK BIRD", COMMANDER OF "NIGHT FLIGHT".



WHILE BUILDING NIGHT-FLIGHT'S STRENGTH, ROXY'S SKILL, LEADERSHIP AND FEROCITY GAINED POPULARITY AMONG THOSE WHO NORMALLY HIRE RUTHLESS MERCENARIES...

...SHE WAS DRAWING NEARER TO HER ULTIMATE GOAL...

...OBTAINING THE MEANS TO TAKE GRACENARIA FROM THE AIR!

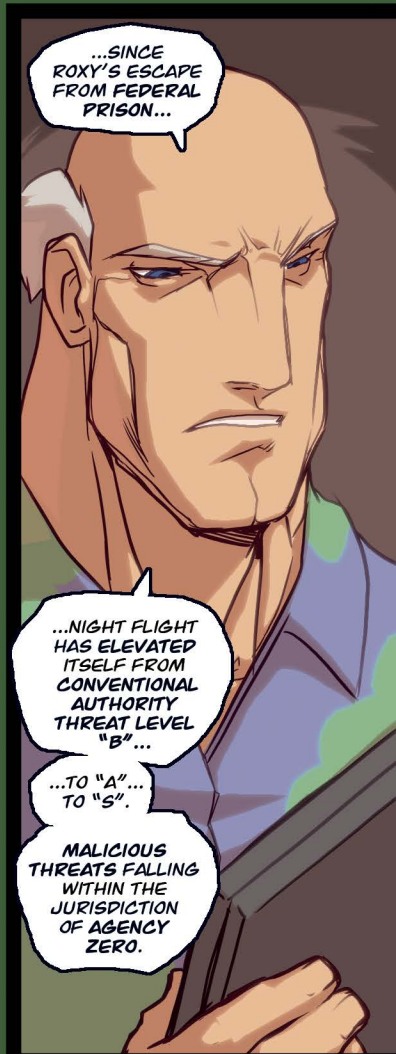


THAT IS... UNTIL SHE RAN INTO KEVIN "ACE" KOSS.



"DARK BIRD" AND "ACE'S" GRUDGE MATCHES EVENTUALLY LED TO ROXY'S ARREST.

HOWEVER...

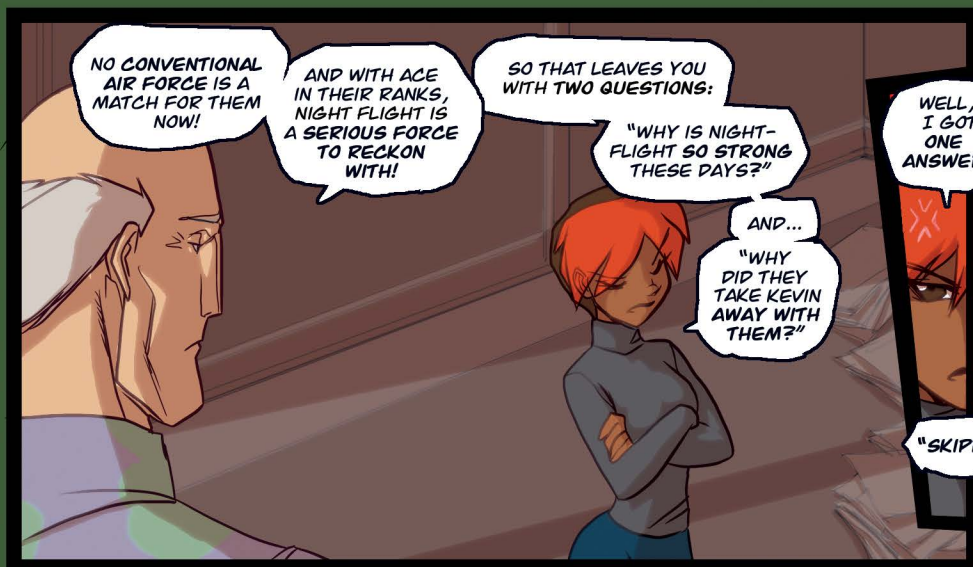


...SINCE ROXY'S ESCAPE FROM FEDERAL PRISON...

...NIGHT FLIGHT HAS ELEVATED ITSELF FROM CONVENTIONAL AUTHORITY THREAT LEVEL "B"...

...TO "A" ... TO "S".

MALICIOUS THREATS FALLING WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF AGENCY ZERO.



NO CONVENTIONAL AIR FORCE IS A MATCH FOR THEM NOW!

AND WITH ACE IN THEIR RANKS, NIGHT FLIGHT IS A SERIOUS FORCE TO RECKON WITH!

SO THAT LEAVES YOU WITH TWO QUESTIONS:

"WHY IS NIGHT-FLIGHT SO STRONG THESE DAYS?"

AND...

"WHY DID THEY TAKE KEVIN AWAY WITH THEM?"

WELL, I GOT ONE ANSWER.

"SKIPPY"!

SKIPPER.
VON.
RICHTHOFEN.

ONE OF THE WORLD'S
DEADLIEST COMBAT
AVIATORS, SPEAKS
FOUR LANGUAGES
FLUENTLY AND
IS AN EXPERT
AIRCRAFT
MECHANIC.

SKIPPER
GRADUATED FROM
THE GERMAN NAVAL
ACADAMY AT THE
EARLY, EARLY
AGE OF SIXTEEN
WITH THE HIGHEST
HONORS...

...BUT WHEN SHE ATTEMPTED
TO ENTER THE COMBAT AIRCRAFT
TRAINING PROGRAM, SHE
WAS DECLINED.

THOUGH RECOGNIZED
AS A MILITARY GENIUS
WITH A TREMENDOUS
APTITUDE FOR
AVIATION...

...SHE WAS TOO
LITTLE TO REACH
THE FOOT
PEDALS.

BY THE TIME
SKIPPY GREW INTO
THAT COCKPIT,
SHE WAS ALREADY
BEING GROOMED
FOR A CAREER
BEHIND A DESK
AT GERMAN
HIGH COMMAND.

SO, SHE
WENT A.W.O.L.
AND SIGNED UP
WITH NIGHT FLIGHT
ON HER TWENTIETH
BIRTHDAY.

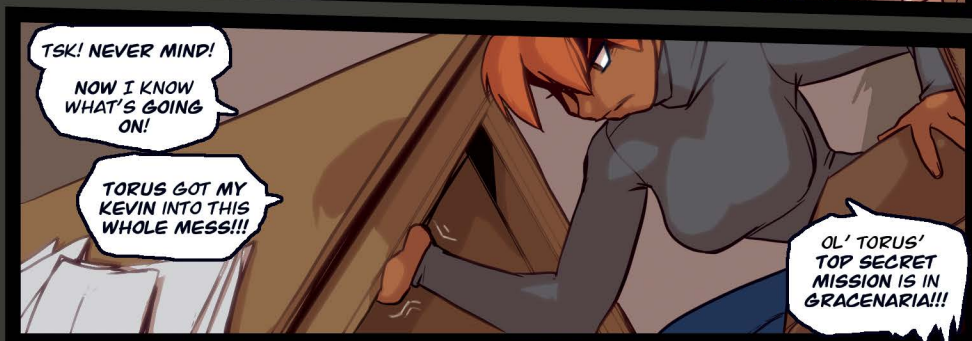
NOW, NIGHT FLIGHT
HAS A SUPER-PILOT...
WHO'S GOT A CRUSH
ON THE ONLY MAN
EVER TO MATCH
HER IN A DUEL...
MY BOYFRIEND.

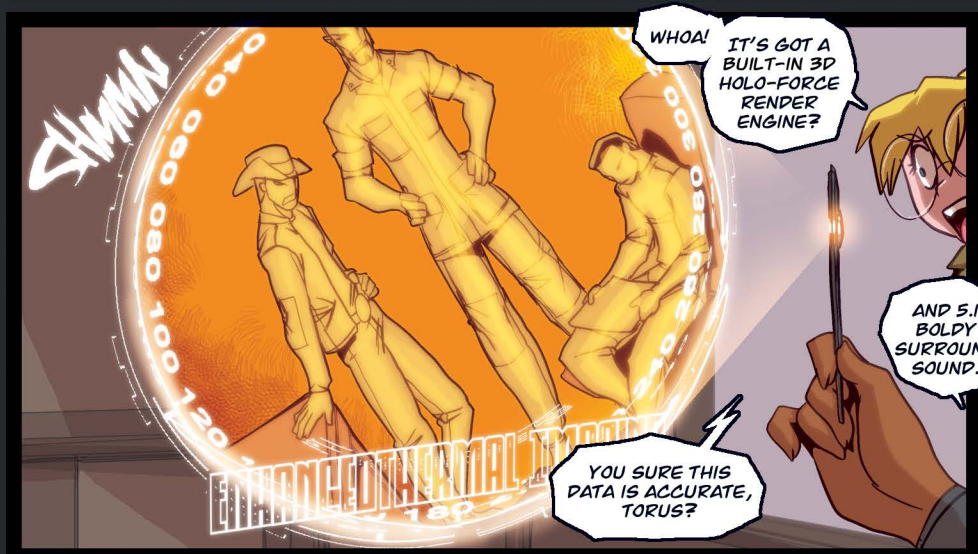
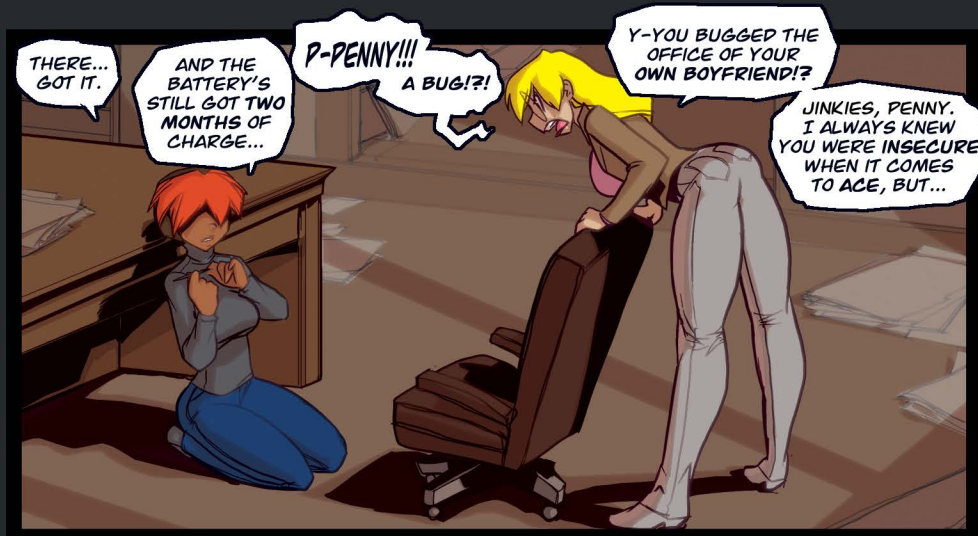
WHOA!
YOU REALLY DID
YOUR HOMEWORK ON
SKIPPY, DIDN'T
YOU!

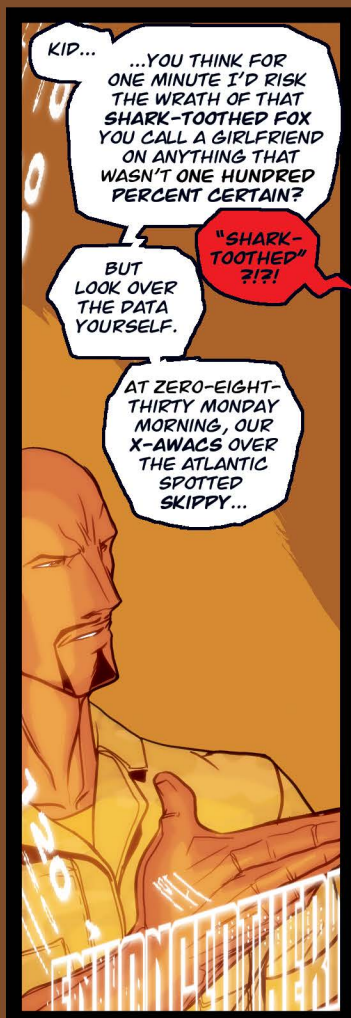
HEY...

ANYONE WHO MESSES
WITH MY MAN GETS
INVESTIGATED
BIG TIME!!!

KAPEESH?







KID...

...YOU THINK FOR ONE MINUTE I'D RISK THE WRATH OF THAT SHARK-TOOTHED FOX YOU CALL A GIRLFRIEND ON ANYTHING THAT WASN'T ONE HUNDRED PERCENT CERTAIN?

BUT LOOK OVER THE DATA YOURSELF.

"SHARK-TOOTHED" ?!?!

AT ZERO-EIGHT-THIRTY MONDAY MORNING, OUR X-AWACS OVER THE ATLANTIC SPOTTED SKIPPY...



...LINING UP A A LONG-RANGE PHOENIX MISSILE SHOT ON YOUR GIRL'S VEHICLE... BEFORE SILENTLY BACKING OFF.

SKIPPY WAS THAT CLOSE FROM KILLING HER, ACE.

DARK BIRD'S SUPER-PILOT WANTS YOU ALL TO HERSELF, AND SHE'S GETTING IMPATIENT.

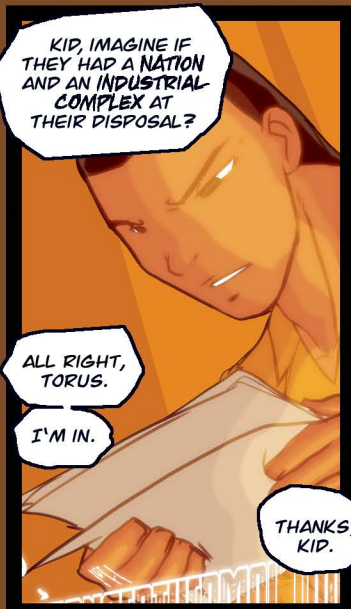


PENNY! THAT WAS DURING OUR LAST EXPEDITION!

Y--

YEAH.

SKIPPY AND DARK BIRD ARE SERIOUS BUSINESS WITH THE RESOURCES THEY HAVE.



KID, IMAGINE IF THEY HAD A NATION AND AN INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX AT THEIR DISPOSAL?

ALL RIGHT, TORUS.

I'M IN.

THANKS, KID.



I'LL SET EVERYTHING UP WITH THE P.M. OF GRACENARIA!

HERE'S THE PLAN...

DARK BIRD
KNOWS YOU'RE
CHIVALROUS,
KID...

IF YOU AGREE TO
FLY IN A CAMPAIGN
FOR HER, SHE
KNOWS YOU'LL
HONOR YOUR
WORD!

SO YOUR BEST CHANCE
FOR SUCCESS IS IF YOU
CAN CONVINCE ROXY TO
LEAVE YOU ALONE WITH
SKIPPY DURING YOUR
OFF ROTATION!

HEH!
I KNOW'D YOUSE
WOULD SEE TINGS
OUR WAY EVENTUALLY,
ACEY-BOY!

GEE
HEE
HEE
HEE!



THE FLIGHT CAN
HANDLE FORT
BRABDA FROM
HERE ON,
SKIPPY.

SO HAVE
YASELF
A BALL....
'R TWO.

'N' IF YOUSE
AIN'T GOT A
BRIGHT, SMILIN'
FACE BY SUN-
UP, ACEY'LL
ANSAH TA ME
POISONALLY!

FIRST,
SLIP INTO
THE BATHROOM
ALONE AND
TAKE OUT THE
SPECIAL RADIO
TRANSMITTER
STRIP WE'LL
SEW INTO
YOUR
BRIEFS!

B--B--

UP!

BE GENTLE?
♥

ATTACH THE STRIP TO THE SHOWER HEAD... THAT SHOULD BOOST THE SIGNAL AND BYPASS THE GULL WING'S ELECTRONIC COUNTER-MEASURES!

DAMMIT!

I COULDN'T GET THE TRANSMITTER STRIP OUT!

SPIKING THAT TRANSMITTER STRIP WILL KICK ON THE REMOTE ELECTRO-MAGNETIC PULSE EMITTER WE'LL HIPE IN A FEW OF THE FAKE GOLD BARS.

AN EMP PULSE FROM INSIDE THAT SHIP WILL BLACK OUT MAIN POWER AND DISRUPT COMMAND AND CONTROL FOR FIVE WHOLE MINUTES!

ME AND THE BOYS WILL BE SHADOWING THE GULL WING FROM ITS SEARCH RADAR BLIND SPOT... WAITING FOR THAT EMP SIGNATURE!

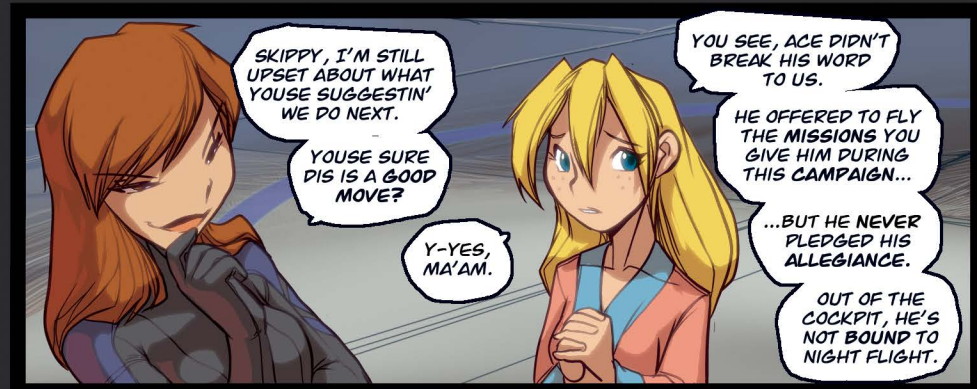
FIVE MINUTES IS ALL WE NEED TO BOARD THE GULL WING, CRIPPLE ITS ENGINES FROM THE INSIDE AND FORCE AN EMERGENCY LANDING INTO THE SEA!

SO YOU GOTTA USE THAT TIME TO MAKE IT TO THE HANGAR IN THE CONFUSION!

ACE...

S-SORRY.

WE LET YOU DOWN, KID...





INSTEAD, HE'S
BOUND TO A
WOMAN...

PENELOPE
PINCER.

A RICH, SPOILED
WOMAN WHO BOSSES
MY POOR ACE
AROUND!

SHE USES
HIM AND DEMANDS
HIS AFFECTION
ONLY ON HER
TERMS.

PENELOPE
DOESN'T LOVE
YOU, ACE.



THE WAY SHE
TREATS YOU...
I COULDN'T
STAND IT ANY
LONGER!

TH--

THAT'S WHY I
THREATENED HER
AIRCRAFT WITH
A MISSILE IN
FRONT OF THAT
X-AWACS
"EA-3 SENTRY".

I HAD TO
TRICK YOU.

I HAD TO
FORCE
YOUR
HAND!

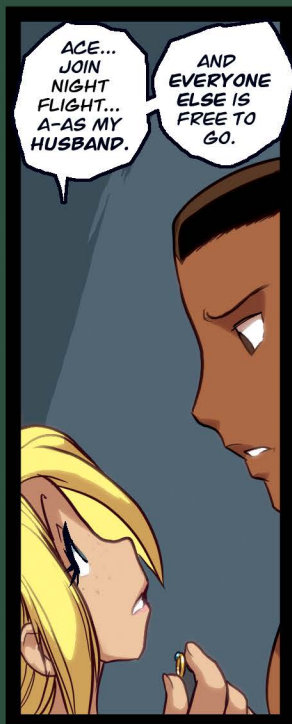


PLEASE...
OH, PLEASE
UNDERSTAND
WHAT I HAVE
TO DO, ACE.

I LOVE YOU.
I KNOW YOU
CAN LOVE
ME TOO.

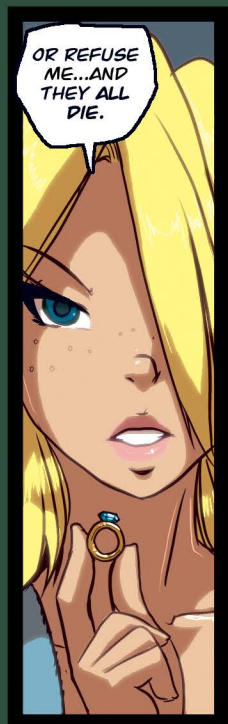
BUT TO FREE
YOU FROM
PENELOPE'S
HOLD...

...I'LL HAVE
TO BE CRUEL.



ACE...
JOIN
NIGHT
FLIGHT...
A-A-S MY
HUSBAND.

AND
EVERYONE
ELSE IS
FREE TO
GO.



OR REFUSE
ME...AND
THEY ALL
DIE.



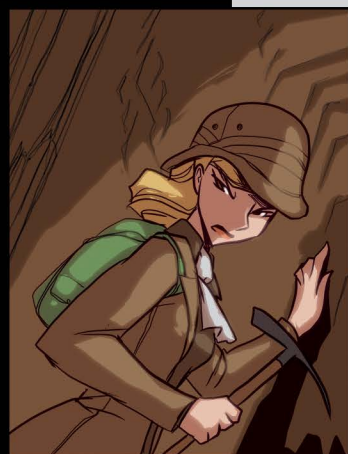
ROXY...

I REMEMBER
HOW YOU USED
TO TEASE ME
ABOUT MY FEAR
OF HEIGHTS.

BUT IT SEEMS
YOU'VE FORGOTTEN
HOW I USED TO
BURY YOUR HEAD
IN YOUR SANDBOX...

...TO LET THE FIRE
ANTS I PUT IN
THERE BITE AT
YOUR FACE.

YOU'VE
FORGOTTEN
TO BE AFRAID
OF WHAT YOUR
OLDER SISTER'S
PREPARED FOR
YOU JUST
UNDERGROUND.



THAT'S ALL
RIGHT, LITTLE
ROXY.

BIG
SISTER
AND THIS
SEVEN-
THOUSAND-
YEAR-OLD
BOZO ARE
HERE TO
REMIND
YOU!

Quinn

me...
no...

B~OZO...

me...

king!

TO BE CONCLUDED...