"Supernaturally charming."
—CAREY PIETSCH, coauthor of the *New York Times* bestselling graphic novel series THE ADVENTURE ZONE

ANOTHER KIND

CAIT MAY & TREVOR BREAM

ANOTHER KIND OF MONSTER STORY

Tucked away in a government facility nicknamed the Playroom, six not-quite-human kids learn to control their strange and unpredictable abilities. Life is good—or safe, at least—hidden from the prying eyes of a judgmental world.

That is, until a security breach forces them out of their home and into the path of the Collector, a mysterious being with leech-like powers.

Can the group band together to thwart the Collector's devious plan, or will they wind up the newest addition to his collection?

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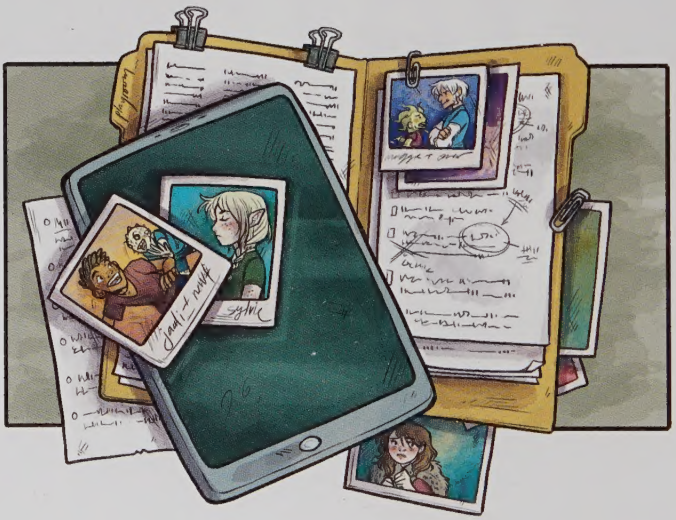
ANOTHER KIND

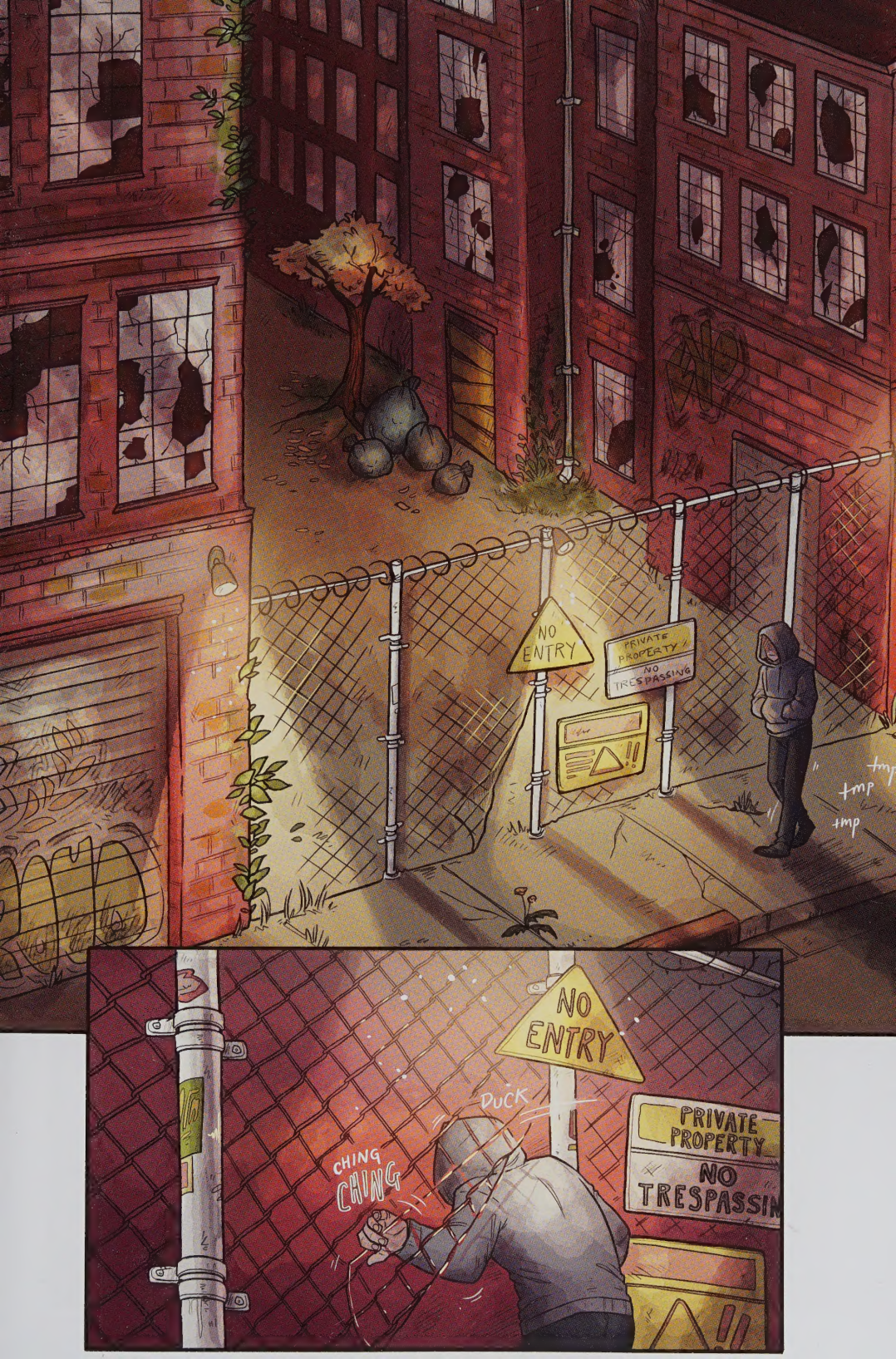
CAIT MAY & TREVOR BREAM

An Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers

CHAPTER ONE

WE KNOW WHAT YOU ARE

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CHING
PRIVATE PROPERTY
NO TRESPASSIN

tmp tmp

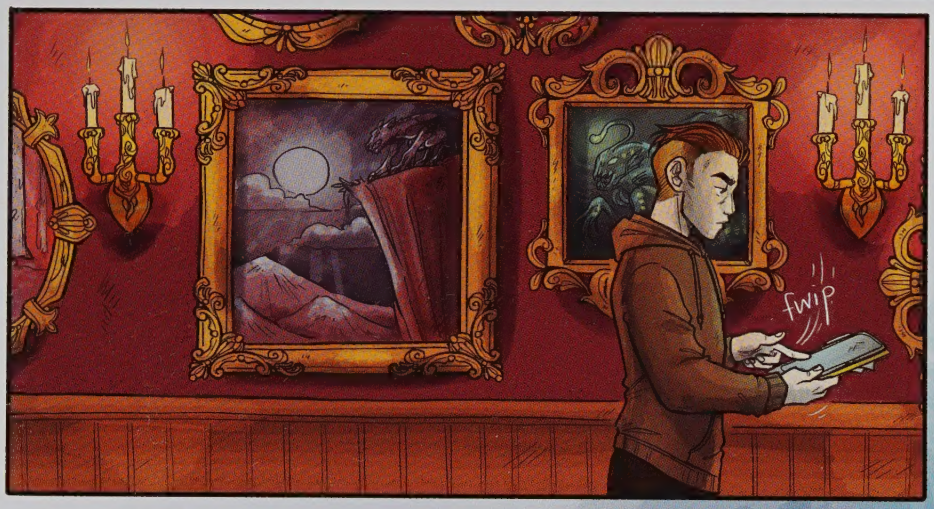
SLIDE

CLICK

WELCOME, SIR.

THE MASTER IS EXPECTING YOU.
WILL YOU TAKE TEA OR COFFEE?

NEITHER, THANK YOU. I'M FINE.
VERY WELL, SIR. ONE MOMENT, I'LL LET HIM KNOW YOU'VE ARRIVED.
nod

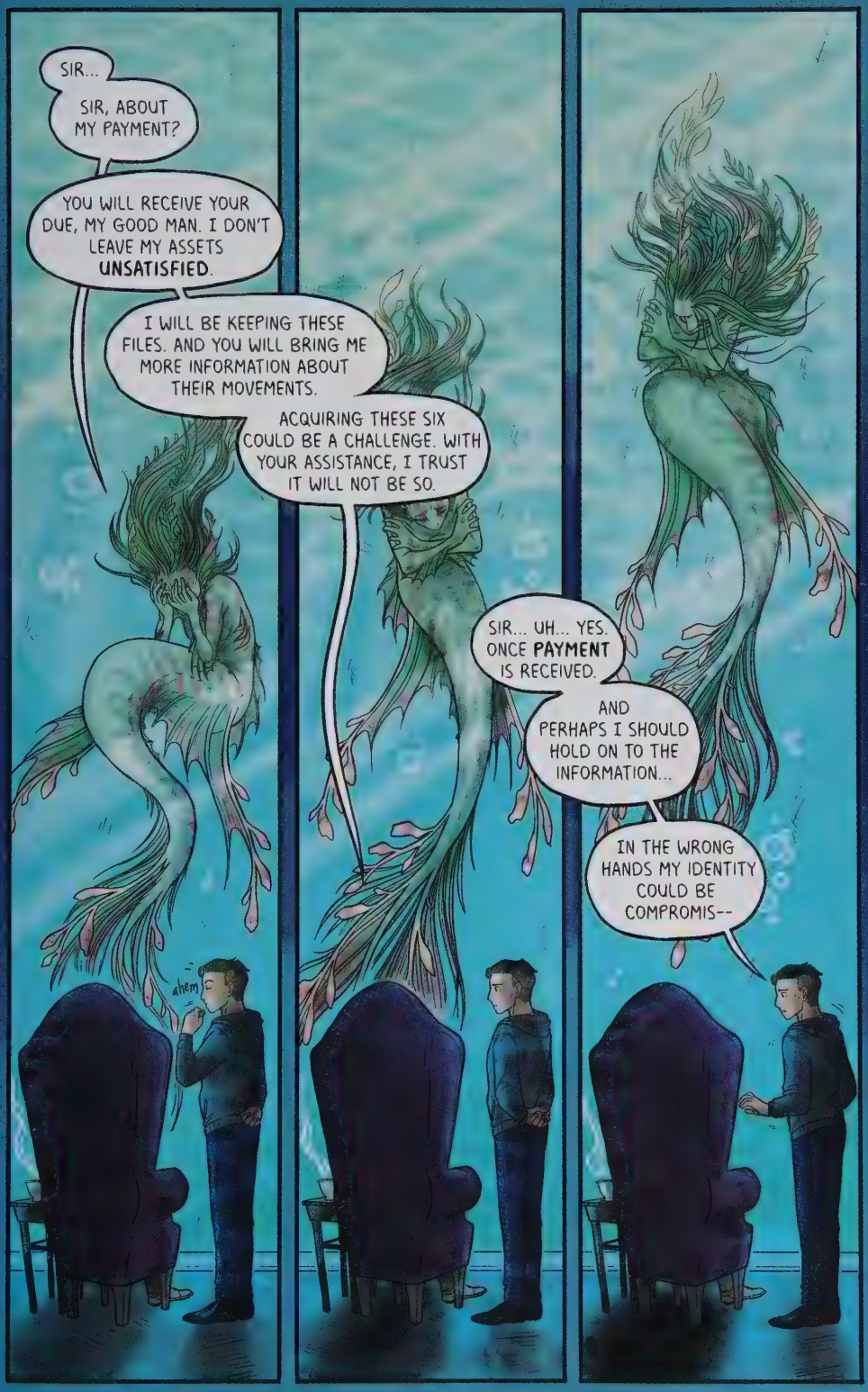

fwip

HERE YOU ARE, SIR.

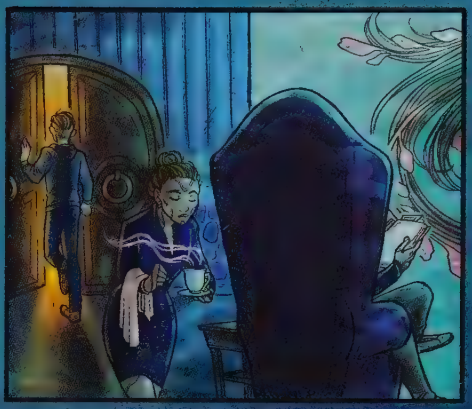
...WELL?

I HAVE AS MUCH AS I FELT SAFE LEAVING WITH.
I DON'T WANT THE OTHER AGENTS TO GET SUSPICIOUS.
THAT WOULD BE RATHER COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE.
...YES.
AS YOU SEE, THESE ARE THE **IRREGULARITIES** WE SPOKE ABOUT.
SIX OF THEM?
YES, SIR. THE YOUNGEST IS SIX YEARS OLD, AND THE ELDEST IS SIXTEEN.
I HAVE COPIES OF THEIR DOSSIERS AND SOME PHOTOS.
TELL ME MORE.

THE FACILITY WAS OPENED YEARS AGO AS A WAYPOINT FOR IRREGULARITIES FLEEING HUMAN CONTACT OR RELOCATING TO NEW HOMES. BUT IT WAS ALWAYS ADULTS, OCCASIONALLY FAMILIES.
SIX YEARS AGO, THEY RECEIVED AN **ABANDONED** IRREGULARITY, THE YOUNGEST ONE THERE. SHE HAS LIVED THERE SINCE INFANCY.
IN THE PAST SIX YEARS, THEY HAVE ACCUMULATED **FIVE OTHER** ORPHANED OR ABANDONED CREATURES.
IT'S LED TO A NICKNAME FOR THE PLACE – **THE PLAYROOM**
I'M INTERESTED IN **COLLECTING** THESE IRREGULARITIES.
WE HAVE DISCUSSED YOUR THOUGHTS ON EXTRACTING THEM. I TRUST YOU WILL BE **EFFICIENT** IN THEIR DELIVERY.


SIR...
SIR, ABOUT MY PAYMENT?
YOU WILL RECEIVE YOUR DUE, MY GOOD MAN. I DON'T LEAVE MY ASSETS **UNSATISFIED**.
I WILL BE KEEPING THESE FILES. AND YOU WILL BRING ME MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR MOVEMENTS.
ACQUIRING THESE SIX COULD BE A CHALLENGE. WITH YOUR ASSISTANCE, I TRUST IT WILL NOT BE SO.
ahem
SIR... UH... YES. ONCE **PAYMENT** IS RECEIVED.
AND PERHAPS I SHOULD HOLD ON TO THE INFORMATION...
IN THE WRONG HANDS MY IDENTITY COULD BE COMPROMIS--

SLAM
SHATTER
DO NOT MISUNDERSTAND ME, SIR!
YOU ARE EXPENDABLE. IF YOU ARE COMPROMISED I WILL FIND MYSELF ANOTHER DECEITFUL WORM TO DO YOUR JOB.
QUESTION ME AGAIN AND YOU WILL BE WORRYING ABOUT MUCH MORE THAN PAYMENT.
DO I MAKE MYSELF ABUNDANTLY CLEAR?
drip
drip
shff
shff

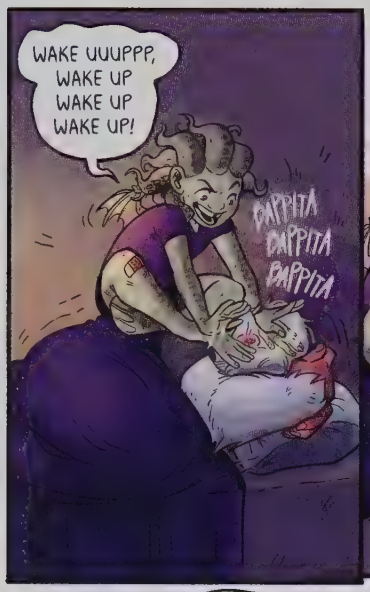


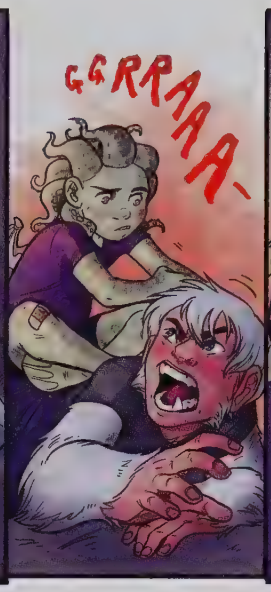
HMM.

CHILD IRREGULARITIES.

THIS SHOULD PROVE INTERESTING.

GASP!
GOOD MORNING, SLEEPYHEAD!
GGRRMPH...
OW OW OW OW
FLOP


WAKE UUUPPP, WAKE UP WAKE UP WAKE UP!
PAPPITA PAPPITA PAPPITA


GGRRAAA-

DUDE, YOU'VE GOT MORNING BREATH.
bafff

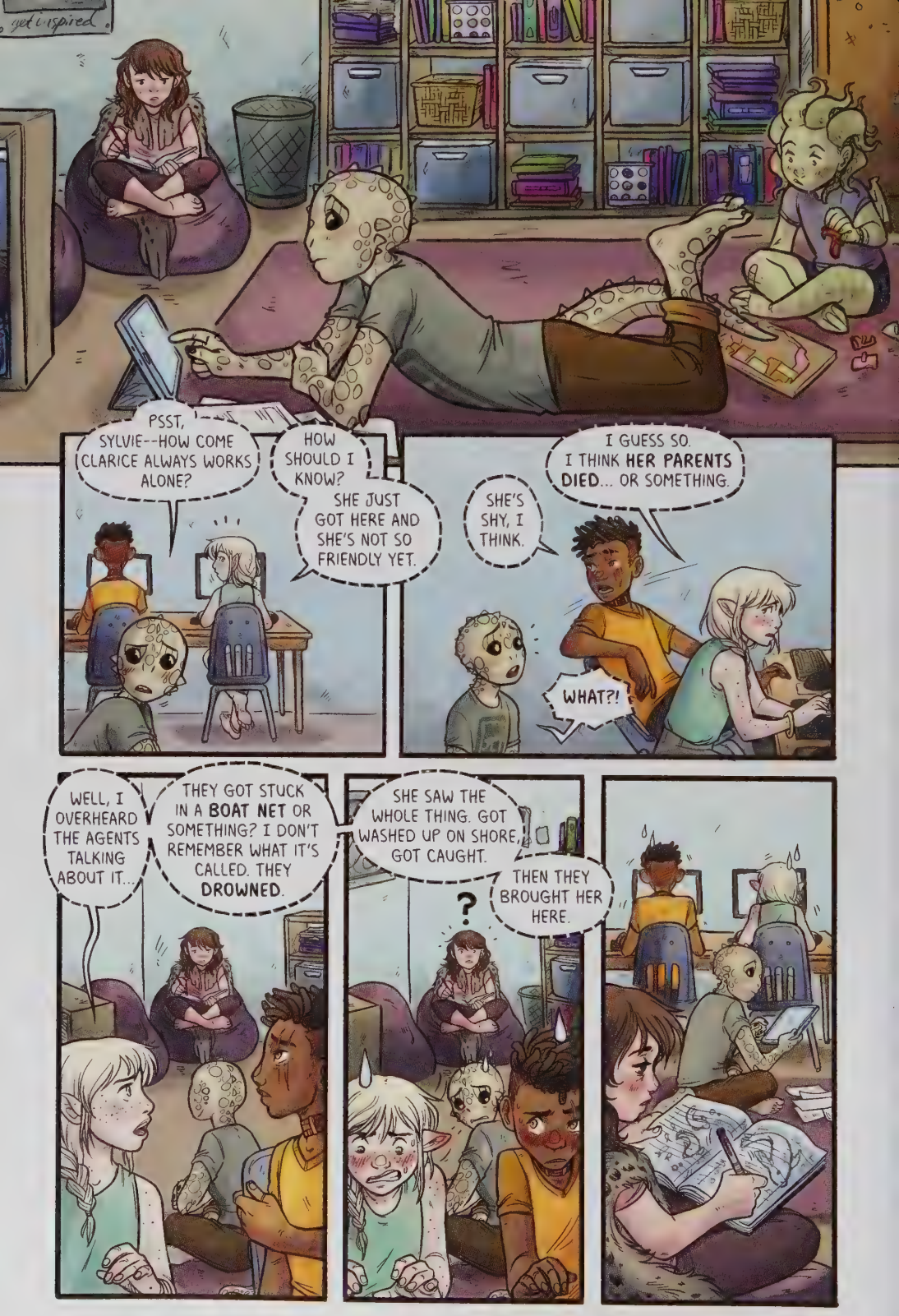
ALL RIGHT, PIPSQUEAK. I'M UP.
GET OFF.
GOOD! I THOUGHT YOU WERE GONNA SLEEP **FOREVER**.

♫BREAKFAST ♪ TIIIME! ♫

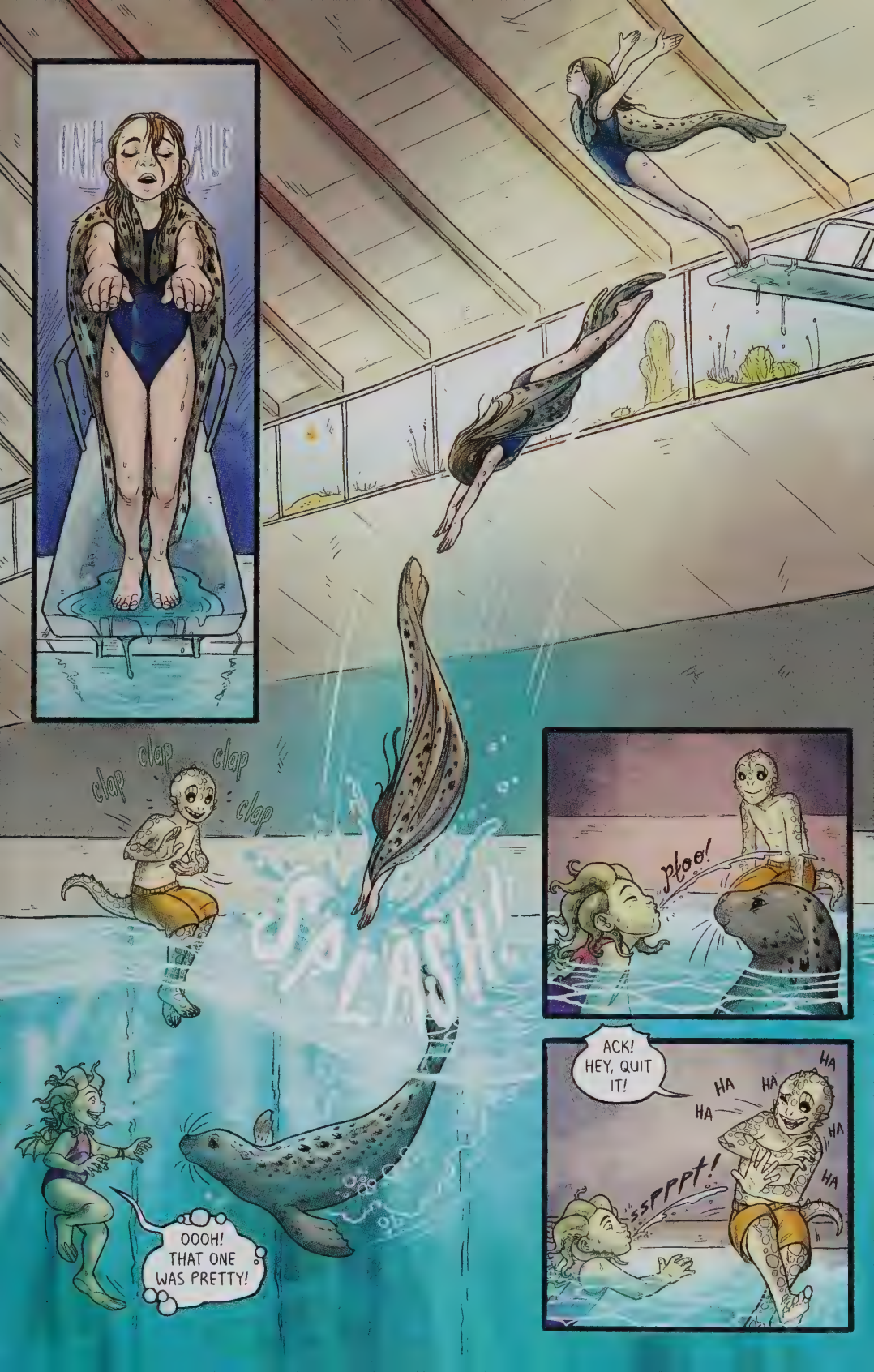
J
N
YAAAAHN
M
EVERYBODY **WAKE UP**!!!!

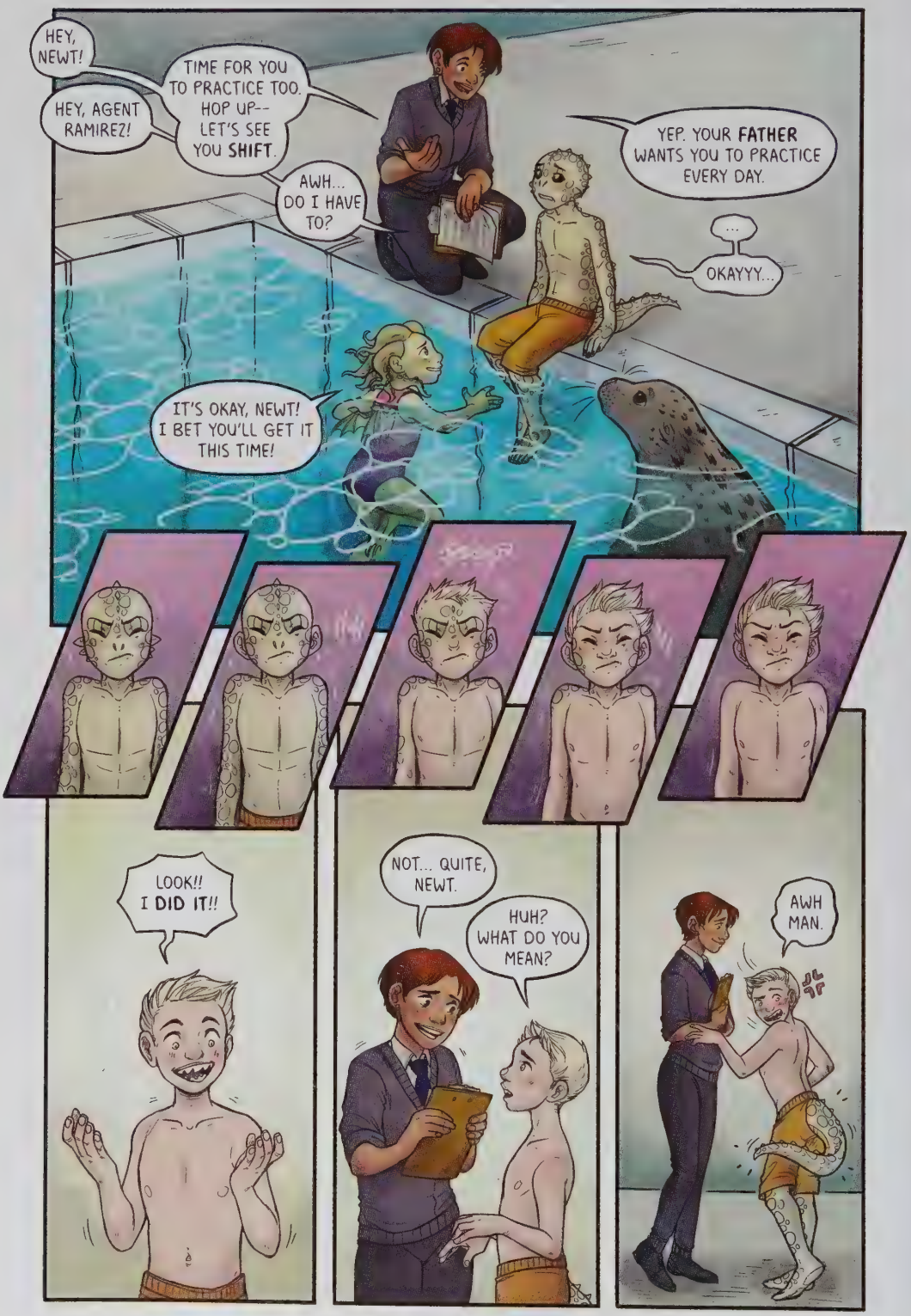
NEWT! JAAL! BREAKFAST TIME! THINK OF THE COCOA PUFFS!
bang
bang
OOH! COCOA PUFFS!
COME ON!
EVERY... SINGLE... DAY...
I HAVEN'T HAD TO SET AN ALARM CLOCK IN SIX YEARS.
YAAAAWN
HECK YEAH, COCOA PUFFS!

PLEASE TELL ME THERE'S SOMETHING NEW ON THE SCHEDULE TODAY?
NOPE, SAME AS USUAL. LESSONS IN THE MORNING, PRACTICE THIS AFTERNOON.
THEN YOU HAVE SOME STUDY TIME TONIGHT, AND DINNER.
SUCH VARIETY! I CAN HARDLY CONTAIN MYSELF!
WELL, I LIKE PRACTICE.
Y'KNOW, IF I COULD TURN INTO A BEAR I WOULD PROBABLY LIKE PRACTICE TOO.
PFF. YOU CAN FLY! WHAT'S MORE FUN THAN THAT?
IT'S NOT AS EASY AS IT LOOKS, ALL RIGHT?
WELL, I'M GLAD WE HAVE SOME FREE TIME TO STUDY! WE HAVE TO GET READY FOR MIDTERMS!
...WHAT?


get inspired
PSST, SYLVIE--HOW COME CLARICE ALWAYS WORKS ALONE?
HOW SHOULD I KNOW?
SHE JUST GOT HERE AND SHE'S NOT SO FRIENDLY YET.
SHE'S SHY, I THINK.
I GUESS SO. I THINK **HER PARENTS DIED**... OR SOMETHING.
WHAT?!
WELL, I OVERHEARD THE AGENTS TALKING ABOUT IT...
THEY GOT STUCK IN A **BOAT NET** OR SOMETHING? I DON'T REMEMBER WHAT IT'S CALLED. THEY **DROWNED**.
SHE SAW THE WHOLE THING. GOT WASHED UP ON SHORE, GOT CAUGHT.
?
THEN THEY BROUGHT HER HERE.

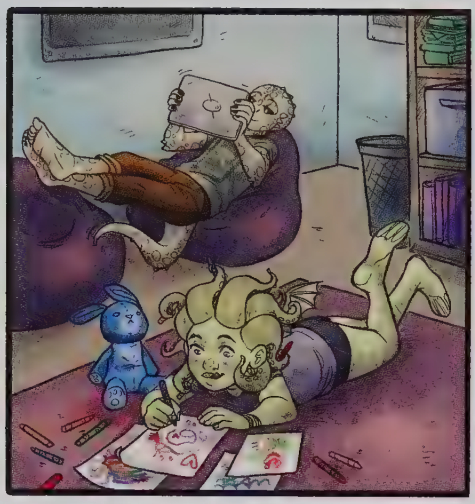
UGH!
OMAR--WHERE DOES WISCONSIN GO?
OMAR.
OMAR?!
OMAR OMAR
WHAT?
WHERE DOES WISCONSIN GO??
I DON'T KNOW, NORTH SOMEWHERE?
YOU'RE NOT HELPING.

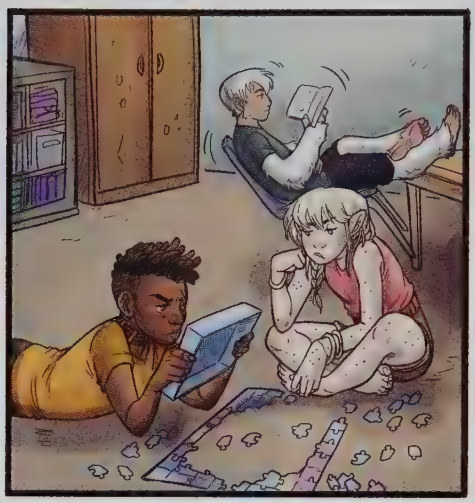

INH
ALE
clap
clap
clap
clap
SPLASH
OOOH! THAT ONE WAS PRETTY!
ploo!
ACK! HEY, QUIT IT!
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
ssPPPt!

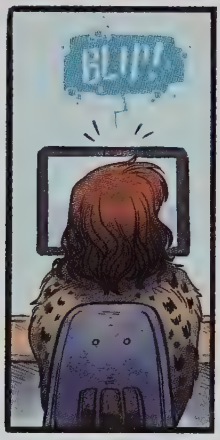

HEY, NEWT!
HEY, AGENT RAMIREZ!
TIME FOR YOU TO PRACTICE TOO. HOP UP-- LET'S SEE YOU **SHIFT**.
AWH... DO I HAVE TO?
YEP. YOUR **FATHER** WANTS YOU TO PRACTICE EVERY DAY.
...
OKAYYY...
IT'S OKAY, NEWT! I BET YOU'LL GET IT THIS TIME!
LOOK!! I **DID IT**!!
NOT... QUITE, NEWT.
HUH? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
AWH MAN.

...10...11....12...
GOOD ENOUGH?
WE DONE HERE?
huff, huff
YEP, GO COOL OFF.
YES!!
WHUMP!
WHOOOAAA!
WOOOOow!
KA-SPLOOSH!
JAALI, NO RUNNING BY THE POOL. YOU KNOW BETTER.

EWW! WET BEAR SMELL!
BOO!
MADE YA JUMP
NO YOU DIDN'T
HOW'S IT HANGIN'?
OH, Y'KNOW. JUST PULLING MYSELF UP BY SHEER WILL HERE.
NOT LIKE I NEED TO CONCENTRATE OR ANYTHING
DON'T BE SO DRAMATIC.
I JUST FINISHED FLIGHT PRACTICE NOW THAT'S DANGEROUS
BOO!
DROP
MADE YA JUMP
HEY! NO ROUGHHOUSING!

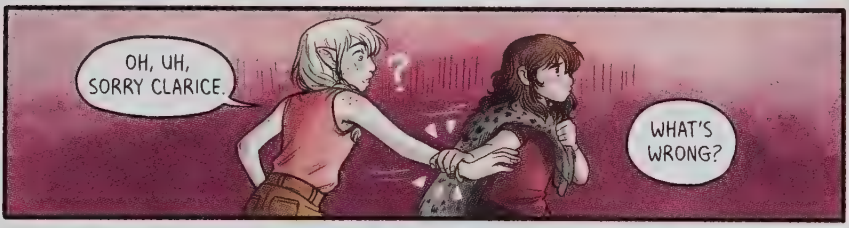




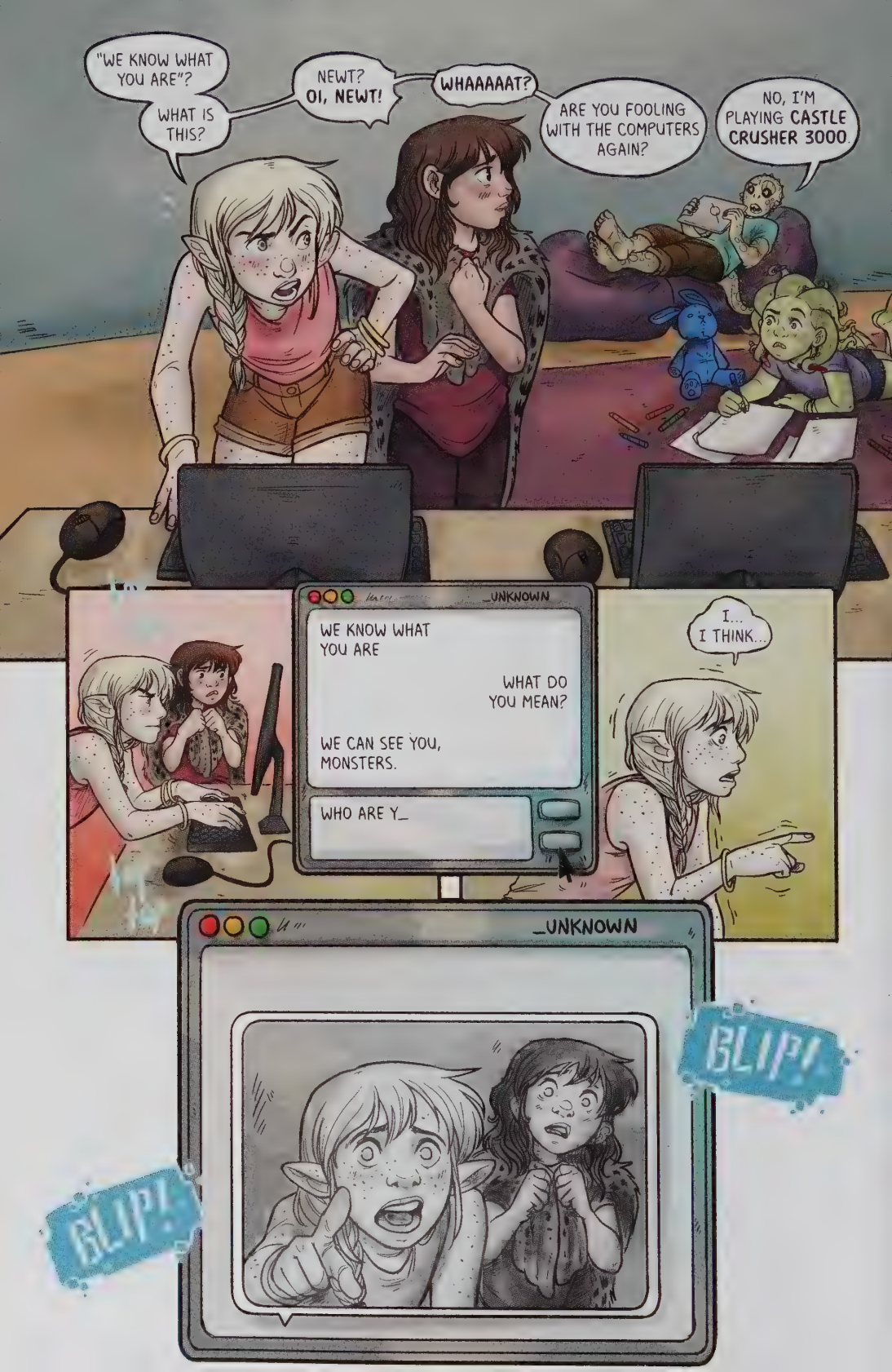

BLIP!

?

WHAAAAAAT DO YOU WANT, MAGGIE? I'M BUSY.

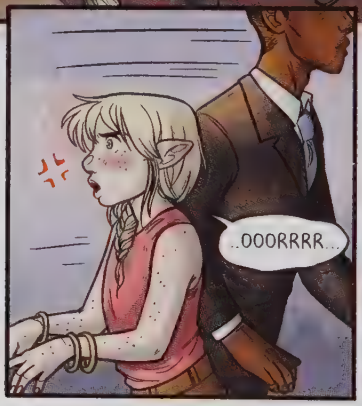

OH, UH, SORRY CLARICE.
?
WHAT'S WRONG?

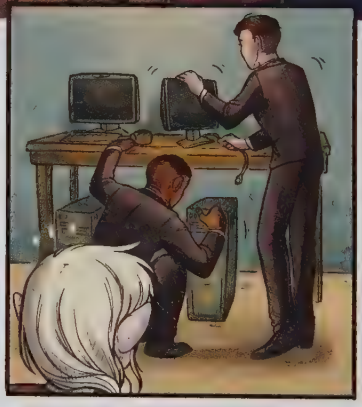
WE KNOW WHAT YOU ARE

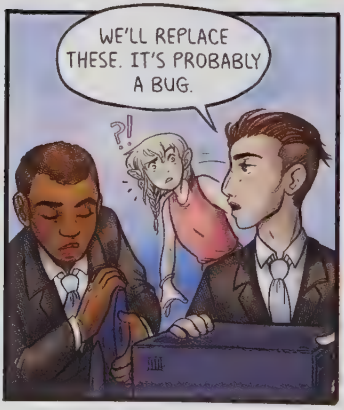

"WE KNOW WHAT YOU ARE"?
WHAT IS THIS?
NEWT? OI, NEWT!
WHAAAAAT?
ARE YOU FOOLING WITH THE COMPUTERS AGAIN?
NO, I'M PLAYING CASTLE CRUSHER 3000.
_UNKNOWN
WE KNOW WHAT YOU ARE
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
WE CAN SEE YOU, MONSTERS.
WHO ARE Y_
I... I THINK...
_UNKNOWN
BLIP!
BLIP!

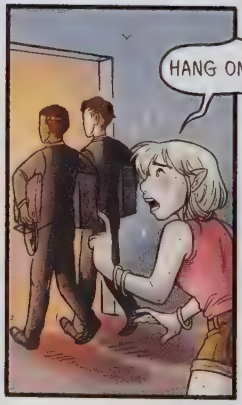
OMAR!!
SOMEONE CAN SEE US!
SLAP!
WHAT?!
SOMEONE IS TAKING PICTURES OF US WITH THE WEBCAM!
MAGGIE, GO GET AN AGENT, NOW.
O-OKAY!
SCAMPER
STAY CALM--
THEY'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO.
FWIP

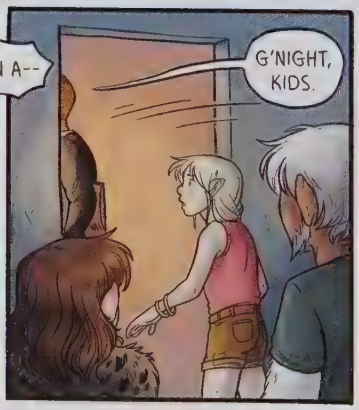
WHAT HAPPENED?
WE GOT A MESSAGE ON THE COMPUTER? LIKE A CHAT PROGRAM OR SOMETHING.
THEY SAID "WE KNOW WHAT YOU ARE." AND SAID THEY COULD SEE US!
I THOUGHT IT WAS NEWT HACKING THE SYSTEM AGAIN--
IT WASN'T ME THIS TIME!
I DON'T KNOW IF THEY CAN HEAR US...


..OOORRRR...

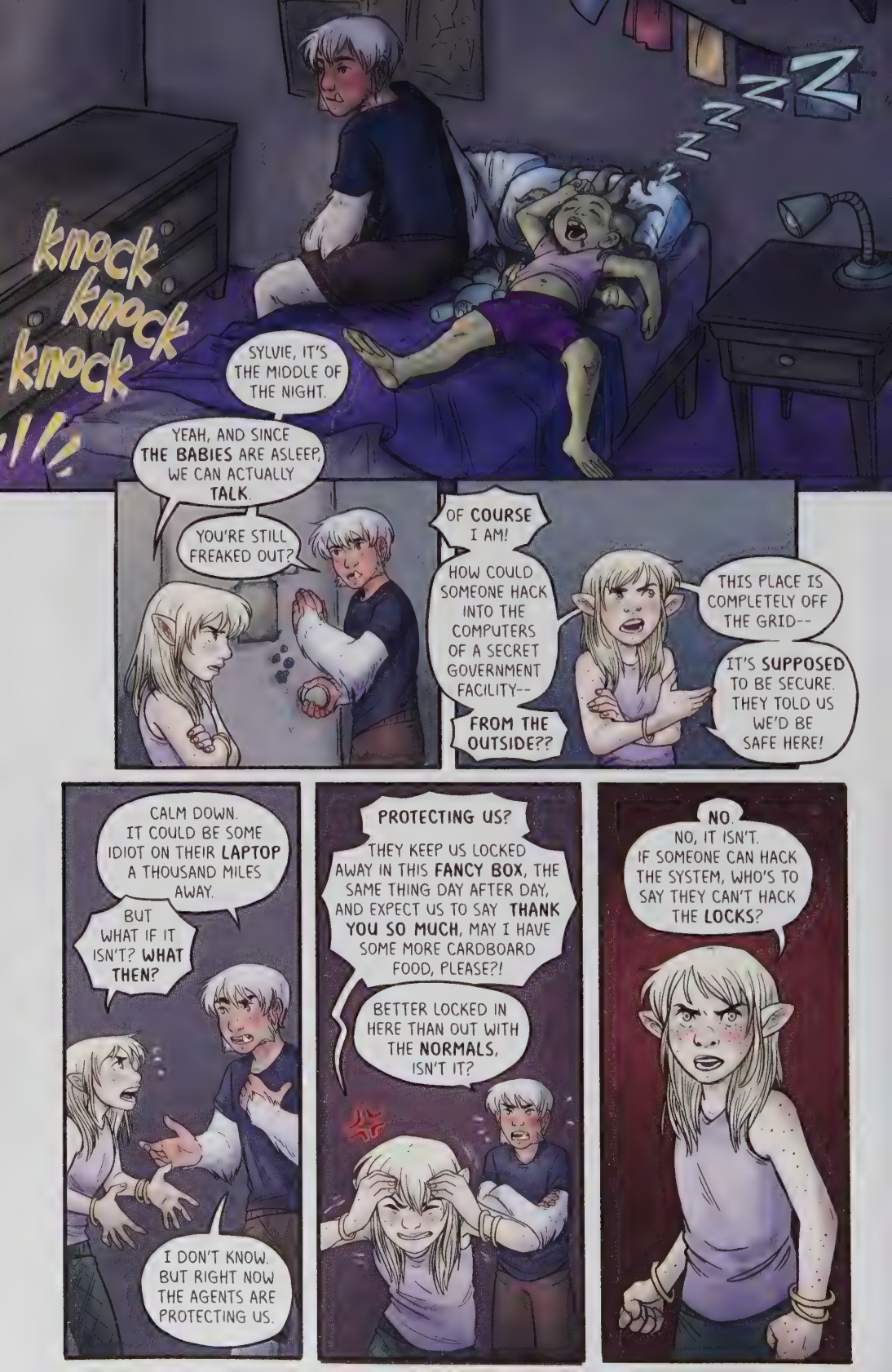



WE'LL REPLACE THESE. IT'S PROBABLY A BUG.
?!


HANG ON A--


G'NIGHT, KIDS.

THAT WAS NO BUG! THAT WAS SOMEONE WHO **KNOWS!**
NO ONE'S SUPPOSED TO KNOW WE **EXIST!**
WHAT'LL THEY DO IF THEY CAN HACK IN LIKE THAT?!
WHAT IF THEY--
STOP.
YOU'RE SCARING THE OTHERS.
IT'LL BE OKAY.
THE AGENTS WILL GET IT FIXED AND THINGS WILL GO BACK TO NORMAL...
BUT MAYBE WE SHOULD ALL GET TO BED.
...
CAN I SLEEP IN **YOUR ROOM** TONIGHT?


knock knock knock!!!
SYLVIE, IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.
YEAH, AND SINCE THE BABIES ARE ASLEEP, WE CAN ACTUALLY TALK.
YOU'RE STILL FREAKED OUT?
OF COURSE I AM!
HOW COULD SOMEONE HACK INTO THE COMPUTERS OF A SECRET GOVERNMENT FACILITY--
FROM THE OUTSIDE??
THIS PLACE IS COMPLETELY OFF THE GRID--
IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE SECURE. THEY TOLD US WE'D BE SAFE HERE!
CALM DOWN. IT COULD BE SOME IDIOT ON THEIR LAPTOP A THOUSAND MILES AWAY.
BUT WHAT IF IT ISN'T? WHAT THEN?
I DON'T KNOW. BUT RIGHT NOW THE AGENTS ARE PROTECTING US.
PROTECTING US?
THEY KEEP US LOCKED AWAY IN THIS FANCY BOX, THE SAME THING DAY AFTER DAY, AND EXPECT US TO SAY THANK YOU SO MUCH, MAY I HAVE SOME MORE CARDBOARD FOOD, PLEASE?!
BETTER LOCKED IN HERE THAN OUT WITH THE NORMALS, ISN'T IT?
NO.
NO, IT ISN'T. IF SOMEONE CAN HACK THE SYSTEM, WHO'S TO SAY THEY CAN'T HACK THE LOCKS?

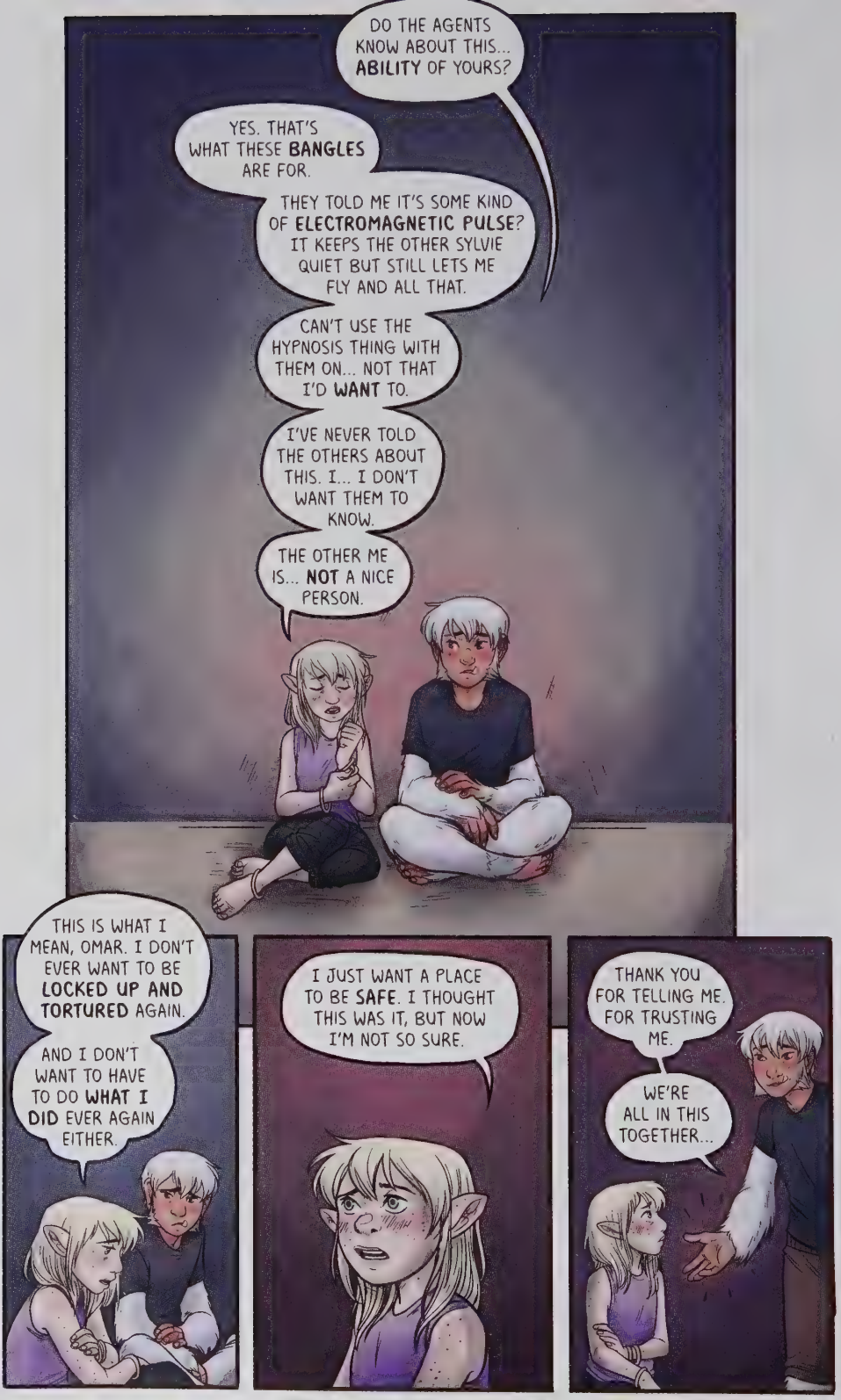
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF **CAGES.** YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND.
SYLVIE...
WANT TO MEET SOME OF THE MOST SUPERSTITIOUS FOLKS ON THE PLANET? GO TALK TO THE **IRISH**.
I WAS A FOUNDLING, RIGHT? A COUPLE OF DAYS OLD, THEY FIND ME WAILING MY HEAD OFF OUT IN SOME FARMER'S FIELD.
MY EARS ARE A DEAD GIVEAWAY, OF COURSE, BUT THEY SUSPECTED RIGHT FROM THE START WHAT I WAS.
YOU DON'T EXACTLY FIND **HUMAN** BABIES IN THE MIDDLE OF A **FAIRY RING**.
THEY GAVE ME TO THIS HOME FOR OTHER ORPHANED OR ABANDONED KIDS. IT WAS FINE, AT THE **START.**
THEY'D ALWAYS PICK ON ME, THE POINTY-EARED GIRL. CALL ME **ELF** OR **TROLL BABY** AND SUCH.
I ALWAYS THOUGHT IT WAS LIKE MY FRECKLES. JUST SOMETHING I WAS BORN WITH AND COULDN'T HELP.
BUT THE MATRONS ALWAYS LOOKED LIKE THEY WERE WAITING... WAITING FOR ME TO **GROW FANGS** OR **START EATING MICE** OR SOME OTHER NONSENSE.

WHEN I WAS AROUND NINE, WE WERE OUT PLAYING BY A CREEK.
JOHN, THE ELDEST BOY, DECIDED IT'D BE FUNNY TO "SEE IF THE FAIRY BABY COULD FLY."
TURNS OUT, I **COULD**.
SPLASH!
GASP!
THEY DRAGGED ME BACK AND TOLD THE MATRONS I WAS A **DEMON,** SOME DEVIL OF THE TAIGA WHO WOULD CURSE US ALL.
I TRIED TO TELL THEM IT WAS AN ACCIDENT-- THAT I COULDN'T HELP IT.
THE MATRONS LOCKED ME IN THE CELLAR EACH TIME I SHOWED MY TRUE SELF.
THEY TOLD ME IT WAS FOR MY OWN GOOD, THAT I NEEDED THE DEMON SHUT OUT OF ME.
RICE
IT WAS SO DARK IN THERE.

WHEN THEY DID LET ME OUT, THE OTHER KIDS ACTED TERRIFIED OF ME.
ALL I'D DONE WAS HOVER THREE FEET OFF THE GROUND AND GLOW A LITTLE!
BUT WHEN THE MATRONS WEREN'T LOOKING, THEY CHANGED.
THEY BECAME THE DEMONS. AND I COULDN'T GET AWAY. WHERE WAS I SUPPOSED TO GO?
I HAD TO FIGHT BACK JUST TO MAKE IT STOP. BUT EVERY TIME I DID, IT WAS BACK TO THE CELLAR.
JOHN WAS THE WORST OF THEM. HE WOULD CATCH RATS AND TOSS THEM THROUGH THE CELLAR WINDOW. WATCH ME RUN AWAY.
ONE DAY... HE STOLE THE KEYS AND CAME TO FIND ME.

SYLVIE... I'M SO SORRY.
..THANKS.
UNTIL THEN I THOUGHT MY POWERS WERE JUST FLYING AND GLOWING.
LIKE I WAS SOME PRETTY PAPER LANTERN.
BUT WHEN HE TRIED TO TOUCH ME... I FOUND OUT I HAD SOMETHING ELSE TOO.
YOU WANT TO LET GO OF ME.
YOU ARE FOUL.
YOU ARE NOTHING!
YOU WILL NEVER TOUCH ME AGAIN!

WHAT DID YOU DO TO HIM?
I... I HAVE A SORT OF... HYPNOSIS ABILITY? I CAN MAKE PEOPLE SEE THINGS... BELIEVE THEM COMPLETELY.
I CONVINCED HIM THAT THE WORLD WOULDN'T MISS HIM. IT... KIND OF BROKE HIS HEAD.
I DIDN'T MEAN TO--I WAS DEFENDING MYSELF! BUT THIS... OTHER SYLVIE SORT OF TOOK OVER.
BUT THEN THE MATRONS CAME AND SAW ME STANDING OVER HIM LIKE THAT...
IT WAS LIKE EVERYTHING THEY HAD ALWAYS FEARED ABOUT ME HAD SUDDENLY COME TRUE.
THEY CALLED THE GARDA--
THE WHAT?
OH, THE POLICE.
I SUPPOSE THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT ELSE TO DO. AFTER I TRIED TO EXPLAIN MY POWERS, THEY REALIZED THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THEY WERE DEALING WITH.
SO THEY CALLED THE AMERICANS...
...AND I WAS BROUGHT HERE.

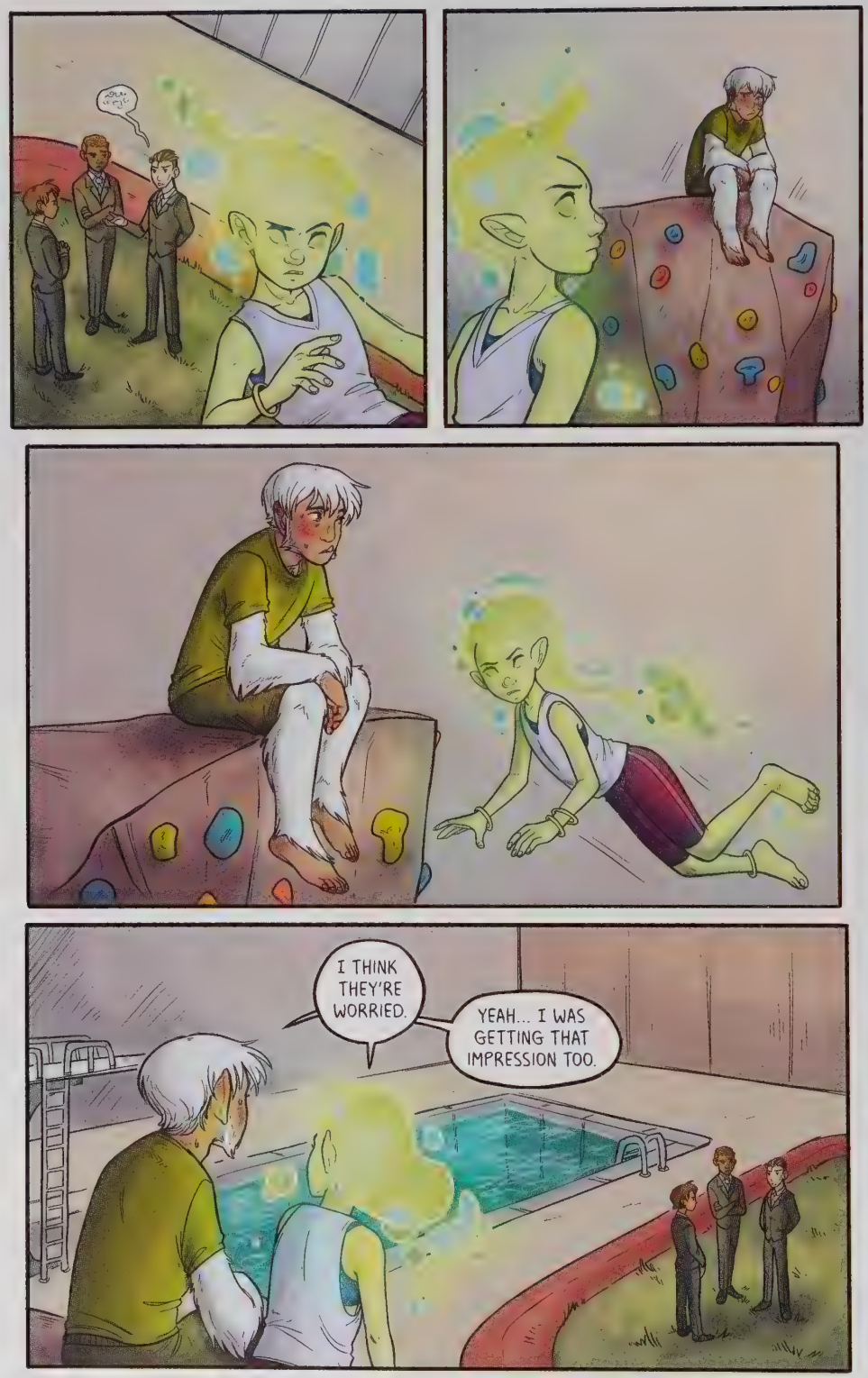

DO THE AGENTS KNOW ABOUT THIS... **ABILITY** OF YOURS?
YES. THAT'S WHAT THESE **BANGLES** ARE FOR.
THEY TOLD ME IT'S SOME KIND OF **ELECTROMAGNETIC PULSE**? IT KEEPS THE OTHER SYLVIE QUIET BUT STILL LETS ME FLY AND ALL THAT.
CAN'T USE THE HYPNOSIS THING WITH THEM ON... NOT THAT I'D **WANT** TO.
I'VE NEVER TOLD THE OTHERS ABOUT THIS. I... I DON'T WANT THEM TO KNOW.
THE OTHER ME IS... **NOT** A NICE PERSON.
THIS IS WHAT I MEAN, OMAR. I DON'T EVER WANT TO BE **LOCKED UP AND TORTURED** AGAIN.
AND I DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO DO **WHAT I DID** EVER AGAIN EITHER.
I JUST WANT A PLACE TO BE **SAFE**. I THOUGHT THIS WAS IT, BUT NOW I'M NOT SO SURE.
THANK YOU FOR TELLING ME. FOR TRUSTING ME.
WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER...

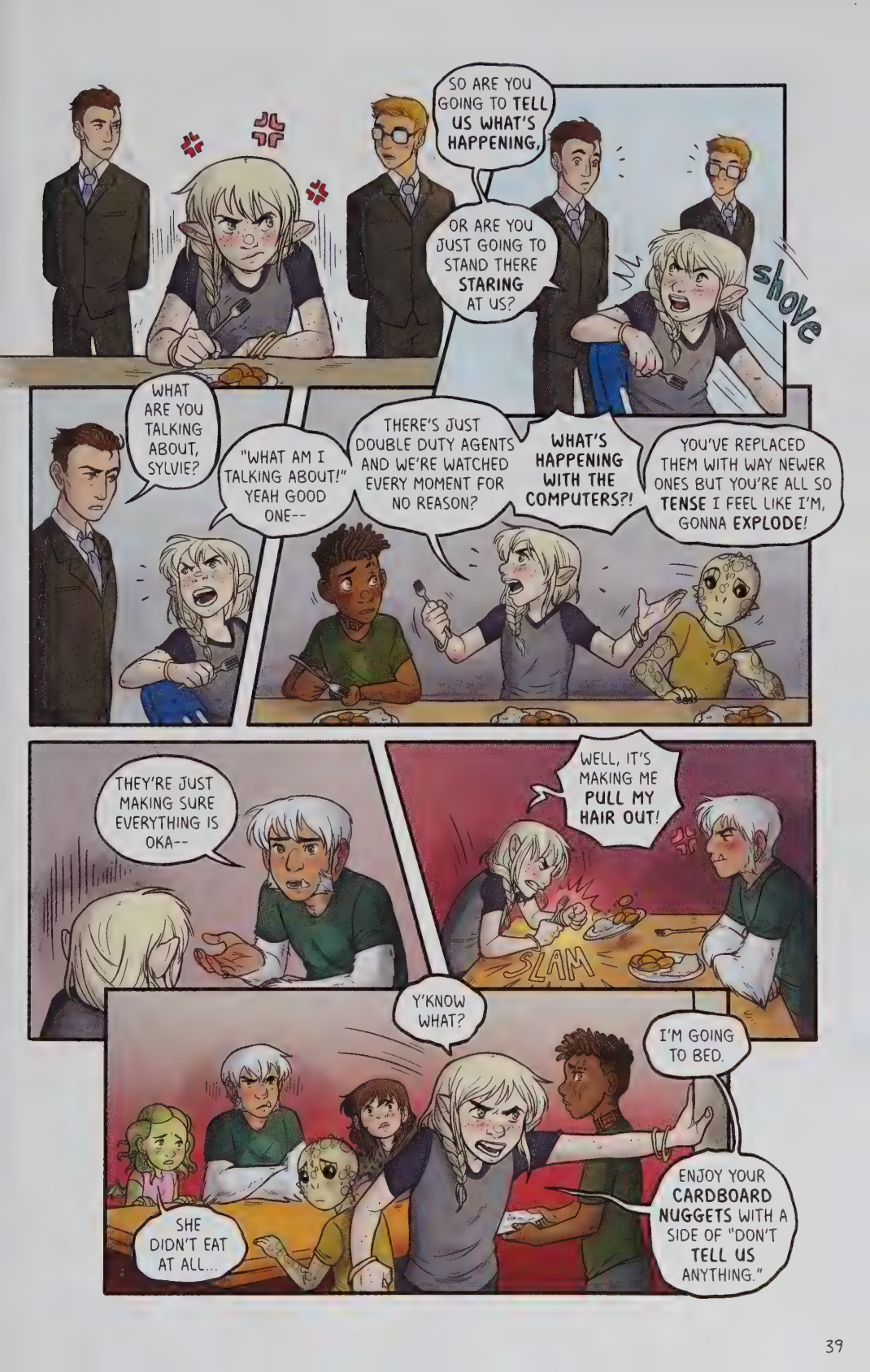
AND BESIDES...
THERE'S NO WAY THEY COULD BE WATCHING US RIGHT NOW,
RIGHT?

CHAPTER TWO

YOU CAN RUN BUT YOU CAN'T HIDE

MONDAY
TUESDAY
WEDNESDAY
THURSDAY
nudge
? ? ?
SHRUG


I THINK THEY'RE WORRIED.
YEAH... I WAS GETTING THAT IMPRESSION TOO.


SO ARE YOU GOING TO TELL US WHAT'S HAPPENING,
OR ARE YOU JUST GOING TO STAND THERE STARING AT US?
shove
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, SYLVIE?
"WHAT AM I TALKING ABOUT!" YEAH GOOD ONE--
THERE'S JUST DOUBLE DUTY AGENTS AND WE'RE WATCHED EVERY MOMENT FOR NO REASON?
WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH THE COMPUTERS?!
YOU'VE REPLACED THEM WITH WAY NEWER ONES BUT YOU'RE ALL SO TENSE I FEEL LIKE I'M, GONNA EXPLODE!
THEY'RE JUST MAKING SURE EVERYTHING IS OKA--
WELL, IT'S MAKING ME PULL MY HAIR OUT!
SLAM
Y'KNOW WHAT?
I'M GOING TO BED.
SHE DIDN'T EAT AT ALL...
ENJOY YOUR CARDBOARD NUGGETS WITH A SIDE OF "DON'T TELL US ANYTHING."

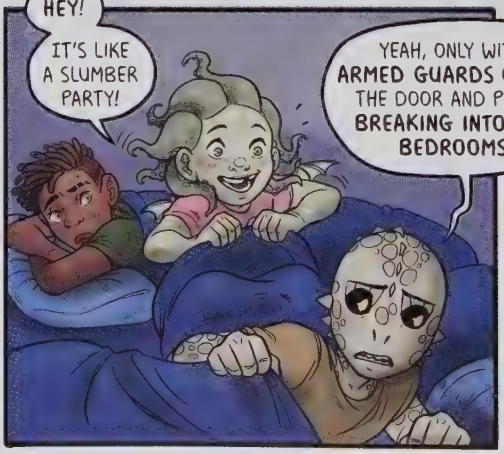
SLAM!
BLOODY RIDICULOUS
KEEPING US IN THE DARK
WHISPERING BEHIND OUR BACKS LIKE THIS
MAKING A FUSS

twish
SYLVIE ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? WE'RE ALL REALLY WORRIED ABOUT Y--
PHOTOS!
WHAT?!
THERE WERE PHOTOS IN MY BED!
CHECK YOUR ROOMS!

WE'VE CORDONED OFF YOUR BEDROOMS AND ARE MAKING A **FULL INVESTIGATION.**
YOU'RE GOING TO BE SLEEPING HERE FOR THE NIGHT, SO GET COMFORTABLE.
LIGHTS OUT IN TEN MINUTES.
...AGENT RAMIREZ?

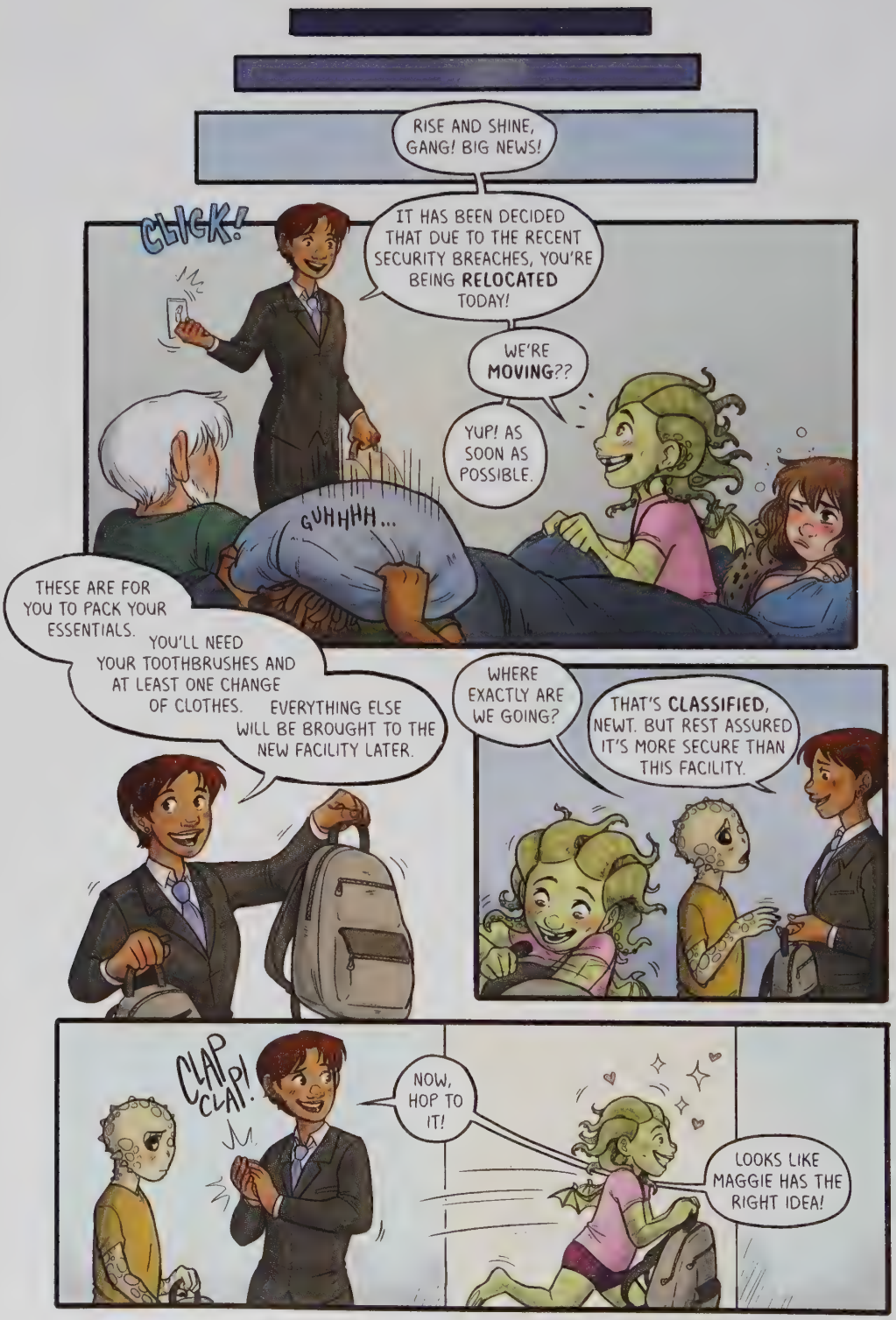
ARE WE... ARE WE SAFE HERE?

LIGHTS OUT IN TEN, SYLVIE.

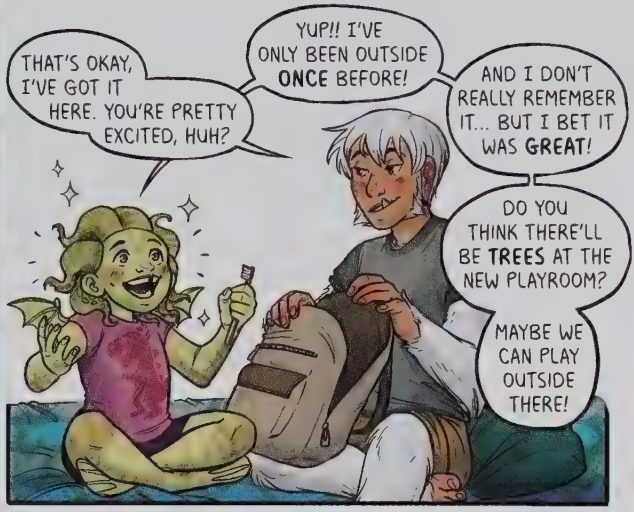

HEY!
IT'S LIKE A SLUMBER PARTY!
YEAH, ONLY WITH **ARMED GUARDS** OUTSIDE THE DOOR AND PEOPLE **BREAKING INTO OUR BEDROOMS.**

LIGHTS OUT, KIDS!
YEAH... ONLY WITH THAT...

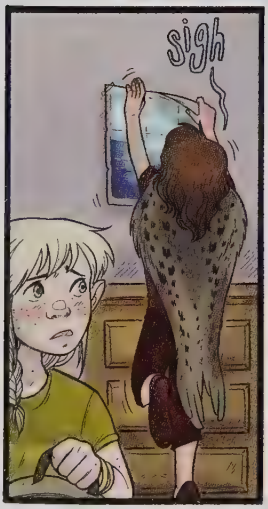
ANYONE AWAKE?
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE SLEEPING.
I KNOW BUT I CAN'T SLEEP...
ME NEITHER.
IT'S **FREAKY**, ISN'T IT? SOMEONE BREAKING INTO THE FACILITY... GETTING IN OUR ROOMS, AND NONE OF THE AGENTS **NOTICED**?
YEAH...
OH MY GOOD GOD, CAN WE NOT TALK ABOUT IT WHILE THERE ARE **NO LIGHTS ON**??
TURN ON A LIGHT IF YOU'RE SCARED, SYLVIE.
I AM **NOT** GETTING IN TROUBLE WHILE THE AGENTS ARE THIS ON EDGE, THANKYOUVERYMUCH!
THEN QUIT **COMPLAINING**!
SHH!
YOU SHHH!
DON'T TELL US WHAT TO DO!
IF YOU ALL WAKE MAGGIE UP SHE'S GOING TO KEEP US AWAKE ALL NIGHT. EVERYONE **GO TO SLEEP**.
..FINE.
FINE.
...GOD, MAGGIE SNORES SO LOUD.
GO TO BED!


RISE AND SHINE, GANG! BIG NEWS!
CLICK!
IT HAS BEEN DECIDED THAT DUE TO THE RECENT SECURITY BREACHES, YOU'RE BEING **RELOCATED** TODAY!
WE'RE **MOVING**??
YUP! AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
GUHHHH...
THESE ARE FOR YOU TO PACK YOUR ESSENTIALS. YOU'LL NEED YOUR TOOTHBRUSHES AND AT LEAST ONE CHANGE OF CLOTHES. EVERYTHING ELSE WILL BE BROUGHT TO THE NEW FACILITY LATER.
WHERE EXACTLY ARE WE GOING?
THAT'S **CLASSIFIED**, NEWT. BUT REST ASSURED IT'S MORE SECURE THAN THIS FACILITY.
CLAP CLAP!
NOW, HOP TO IT!
LOOKS LIKE MAGGIE HAS THE RIGHT IDEA!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
DID YOU PACK YOUR TOOTHBRUSH?
GOTTA MAKE SURE ALL MY STUFFIES FIT!
OH... OOPS.


THAT'S OKAY, I'VE GOT IT HERE. YOU'RE PRETTY EXCITED, HUH?
YUP!! I'VE ONLY BEEN OUTSIDE **ONCE** BEFORE!
AND I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER IT... BUT I BET IT WAS **GREAT**!
DO YOU THINK THERE'LL BE **TREES** AT THE NEW PLAYROOM?
MAYBE WE CAN PLAY OUTSIDE THERE!

DO YOU THINK THERE'LL BE **OTHER KIDS** AT THE NEW PLACE?
MAYBE WE'LL GET OUR OWN ROOMS!
THIS ROOM SMELLS TOO MUCH LIKE LIZARD.
HEYYY!


sigh

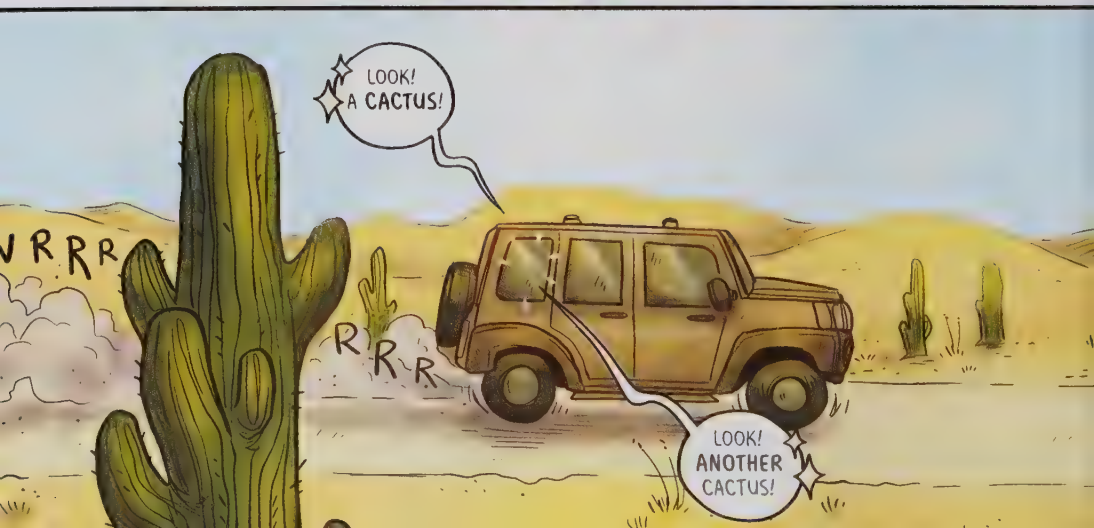
YOU'VE ONLY BEEN HERE A MONTH AND WE'RE MOVING ALREADY, HUH?
tuck
zzzziiip!

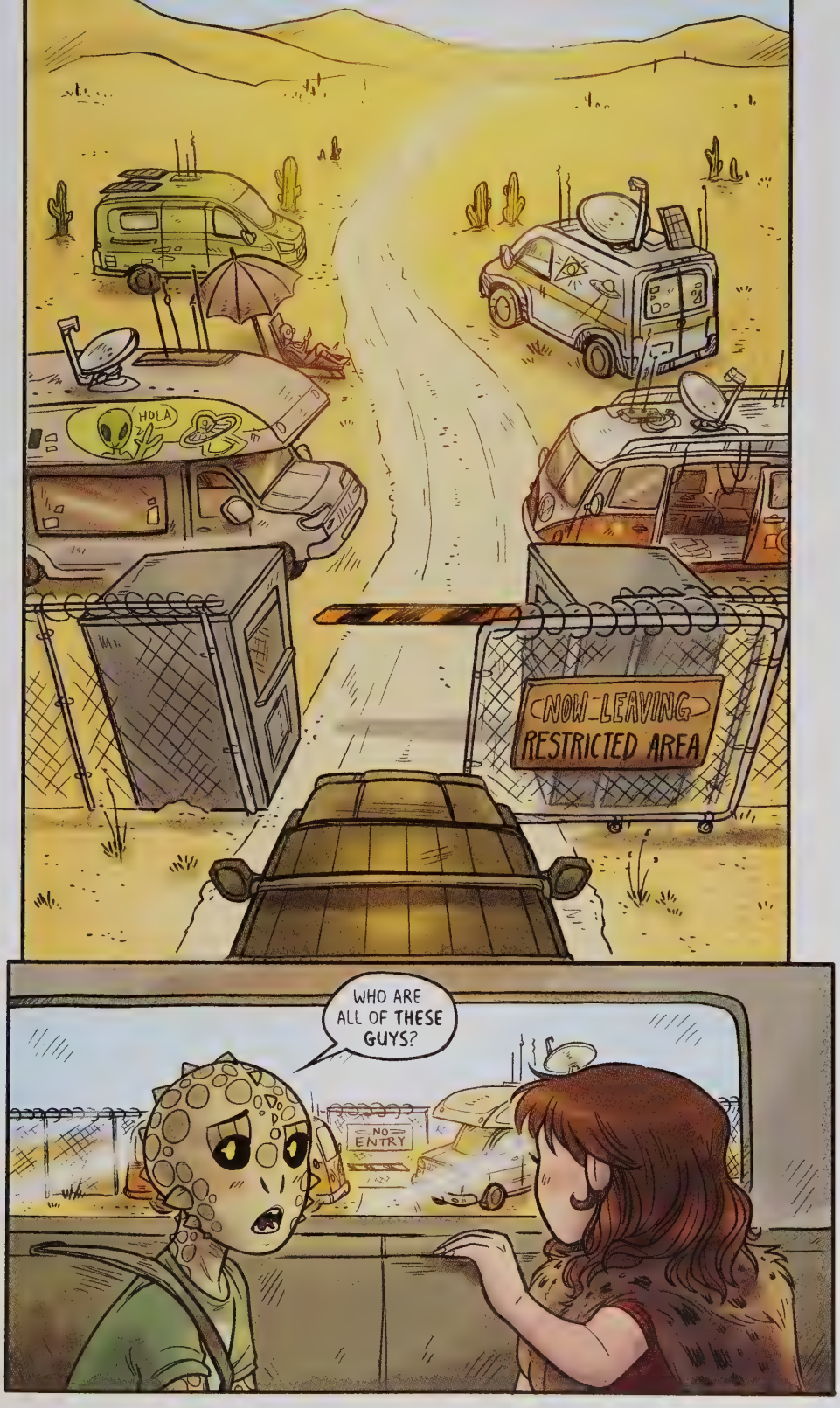
WELL...
THE NEW PLACE WILL SURE BE BETTER THAN THIS ONE.

I AM NOT GETTING SUNBURNED ON MY FIRST DAY OUT.
NICE HAT.
-SNERK-
THESE ARE FOR YOU.
WHAT ARE THOSE?
EVERYONE PACKED?
YEEEES!
SHOES.
SHOES?!
YOU HAVE TO WEAR THEM.
I'M NOT WEARING ANY SHOES!
THE TARMAC IS HOT. YOU'LL BURN YOUR FEET.
YOU'LL BURN YOUR FEET!
MAGGIE, PUT ON THE SHOES.
I DON'T WANNA!
GLARE
FINE!

STOMP
STOMP
PFF
THIS WAY, KIDS!
WHOA!! WE'RE RIDING IN **THAT**?!
WAY BETTER THAN WALKING!
EVERYONE ALL SET? SEAT BELTS, PLEASE!
THIS IS SO COOL!
MOVE OVER.
WOW!

VRRRRRRRRR
WHERE'S THE CONVOY?
THEY'LL CATCH UP.
SHOULDN'T WE WAIT FOR THEM?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. NO ONE'S OUT HERE.
?
I FORGOT THE DESERT WAS SO PRETTY.
YEAH, IT'S PRETTY BECAUSE WE HAVE **AIR CONDITIONING**!


LOOK! A **CACTUS**!
VRRR
RRR
LOOK! **ANOTHER** CACTUS!


HOLA
NOW LEAVING
RESTRICTED AREA
WHO ARE ALL OF THESE GUYS?
NO ENTRY

F.R.E.A.K.S.H
OH, THEY'RE JUST A BUNCH OF WEIRDOS.
THEY THINK THE GOVERNMENT IS HIDING **ALIENS** AND **MONSTERS** OUT HERE!
BUT...
DO YOU THINK THEY COULD HAVE BEEN THE ONES WHO HACKED INTO THE FACILITY?
THERE'S NO WAY.
THE FIREWALLS AND SECURITIES ARE TOO STRONG FOR PEOPLE LIKE THIS. THEY WOULD HAVE NEEDED **INSIDE** HELP.
BYE, BUNCH OF WEIRDOS!!
I HOPE YOU FIND THE **ALIENS**!!
HEY!!
WHOOPS-- SORRY, NEWT, I **FORGOT**.
YOU **FORGOT** THAT I'M AN **ALIEN**?!
?
?

♫SOOO...♪
ARE WE THERE YET?
...HOW BOUT NOW?
MAGGIE, SHUT UP!!
WHY ARE WE TURNING OFF THE ROAD?

WHERE ARE YOU HEADING? I DIDN'T GET ANY ORDERS THAT WE WERE LEAVING THE ROAD.
I WAS BRIEFED RIGHT BEFORE WE LEFT.
ADDITIONAL SECURITY MEASURE.

Z
Z
Z
Z

I THINK I WOULD HAVE HEARD SOMETHING ABOUT THIS.
IF YOU WEREN'T INFORMED, THEY MUST HAVE HAD A REASON TO **MISTRUST** YOU.
MISTRUST **ME**??

I'M NOT THE ONE TAKING A CAR FULL OF **CHILDREN** AWAY FROM THE SAFE ROAD--
THEY ARE **IRREGULARITIES.**
NOT CHILDREN.
NEWT. NEWT, YOU NEED TO WAKE UP.
RIGHT NOW.
HUH... WHA?

AGENT CLARK, **WHO** BRIEFED YOU ON THIS DETOUR?
THE **COMMANDER**, OBVIOUSLY.
THEN **THE COMMANDER** SHOULD BE ABLE TO **CONFIRM** AND SEND ME OUR NEXT COORDINATES,
SHOULDN'T HE?
CLICK
LUNGE!
GASP!
ACK!
swerve

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING??
AGENT CLARK, PULL OVER THE VEHICLE.
NO.
PULL OVER THIS CAR, NOW!!!
WHERE ARE YOU TAKING US, AGENT CLARK?
WHO ARE YOU?!
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?!
WHAT'S GOING ON??

PULL OVER THE CAR, OR I WILL DO IT FOR YOU.
NO. I HAVE TO DO THIS.
I HAVE TO DO THIS... OR HE'LL KILL ME.
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO HACKED INTO THE FACILITY, AREN'T YOU?
YOU SAID IT YOURSELF, THE SECURITIES WERE TOO POWERFUL FOR SOMEONE ON THE OUTSIDE. YOU WERE THE ONE WHO SUGGESTED MOVING THEM-- THE COMMANDER DIDN'T SEND YOU ORDERS, DID HE.
CLICK
WHO ARE YOU WORKING FOR?!
SLAM

WHAT NOW, CLARK? WHERE ARE YOU TAKING US?
YOU'LL KNOW WHEN WE GET THERE.
IS HE GOING TO KILL US??
hhnng...
NO. WE'RE TOO VALUABLE.
BUT WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE.
OH MY GOD, OH MY GOD, OH MY GOD.
SYLVIE, YOU HAVE TO SAVE US.
W-WHAT??
NO TALKING!!
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DO IT. I CAN'T REACH HIM FROM BACK HERE.
OMAR, I C-CAN'T.
YOU HAVE TO USE YOUR POWER.
SAVE US, SYLVIE...
PLEASE.

slip
tremble
gasp
haaaaaaoooohhh finally!

agent clarrdark
I SAID NO TALK--
SSSshhhhh
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?!
OH, SHUSH NOW.
YOU REALLY NEED TO KEEP A BETTER EYE ON THE ROAD, AGENT CLARK.
CAN'T YOU SEE IT??

...you're driving us right off the
edge of a cliff... aren't you?

ha ha!
ha ha ha ha ha ha
SWERV
ahhha ha ha ha ha ha
screeeeeec
SLAM
KA

ahhh ha ha ha ha!
ha ha ha!
tck tck tck tck
RUNG!!!

CHAPTER THREE

WHITEOUT

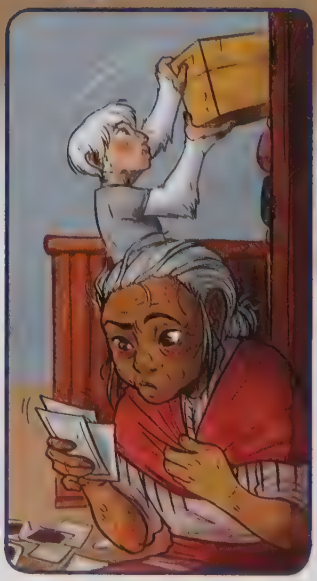
KA-KRASH!!!
NANI?? YOU OKAY?
I'M ALL RIGHT!

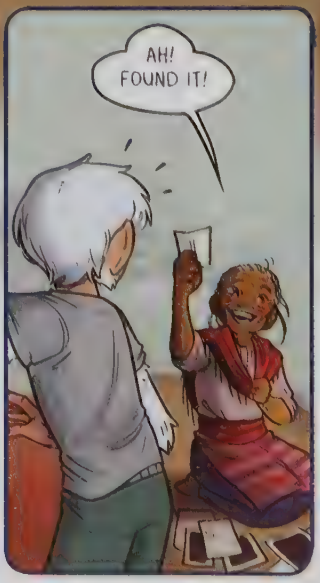
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

I WAS LOOKING FOR AN OLD PHOTO OF YOUR PARENTS.

BUT MY **KNEES** WERE ACTING UP AGAIN AND I DROPPED THE DAMN THING.

GIVE ME A HAND, WOULD YOU?





OH, I HAVEN'T SEEN THAT ONE.
THEY LOOK SO HAPPY.
THEY WERE HAPPY PEOPLE.
HERE, LOVE, WHY DON'T YOU PUT IT WITH THE OTHERS?
ALL RIGHT.

X02-914
WEISZ, REBECCA
DENVER, COL
UNITED STATES
KATHMANDU
NEPAL
PASSPORT
PASSEPORT
PASAPORTE
USA
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
WEISZ
REBECCA
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
USA
AGH, WHAT A MESS... I'LL CLEAN IT UP AFTER BREAKFAST.
I'LL DO IT FOR YOU IF YOU WANT TO START COOKING.

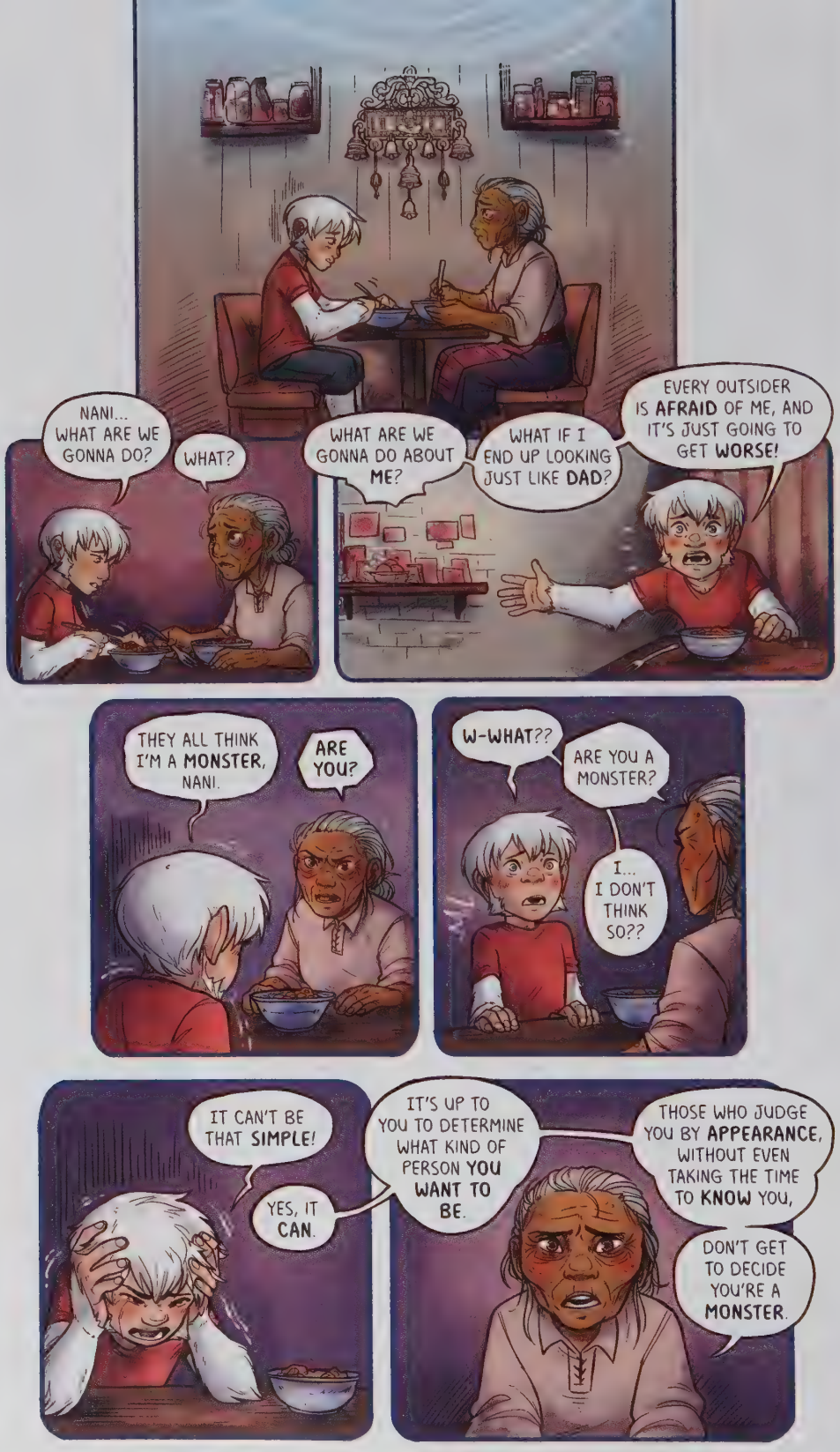
LOCAL CLIMBERS
MISSING
स्थानीय आरोहीहरू हराइर
OH, THANK YOU, OMAR. WHAT DO YOU WANT TO EAT?
I COULD BOTHER THE NEIGHBOR FOR SOME EGGS IF YOU LIKE.
AND WE ALWAYS HAVE RICE.
COULD PUT TOGETHER SOME LEFTOVER CURRY MAYBE?
...OMAR?

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, DEAR?
OH, YEAH I'M OKAY JUST...
THINKING ABOUT THEM.
THINKING ABOUT WHAT THEY WERE LIKE. I BARELY REMEMBER THEM.
SOMETIMES I WONDER WHAT THEY WOULD DO IF THEY WERE HERE.
THEY WERE WONDERFUL, OMAR.
JUST LIKE YOU.

OOF!
WATCH IT, KID!
S-SORRY!!
OMAR! HIDE YOUR TEETH!
HEY, WHAT'S UP WITH YOUR--
OH, SO SORRY, SIR! YOU ARE MIKARU, YES?
WE'RE WHAT?
SHE MEANS CLIMBERS.
OH YEAH.
MIKARU NEVER COME INTO THE VILLAGE. WHAT A SURPRISE! SHOULDN'T YOU BE AT BASE CAMP, IF THE CLIMB STARTS TOMORROW?
WE WANTED TO SEE THE SIGHTS BEFORE WE SET OUT.

WELL, ENJOY THE SIGHTS, BUT YOU SHOULD HEAD BACK SOON BAD WEATHER TONIGHT!
PUSH
PUSH
HEY! WAIT!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SOMETHING'S **WEIRD** ABOUT THAT KID!
HURRY, OMAR LET'S GO!
HEY! HEY, LADY. **STOP!**
LEAVE US ALONE!!
LET ME LOOK AT-
HEY!
HOLY SH-- **I KNEW IT!**
WHAT IS THAT **THING**?!

THAT'S A YETI!
THAT'S A BABY YETI, AND SHE'S KEEPING IT AS A PET!
WE HAVE TO CALL SOMEONE!
HOW DARE YOU!
HOW DARE YOU ASSAULT MY GRANDSON!
GET OUT OF OUR VILLAGE!
NEVER COME BACK!
UFF!
shove
SLAM!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT JUST HAPPENED. A YETI!
WE HAVE TO TELL THE AUTHORITIES-- THAT MONSTER COULD HURT SOMEONE!

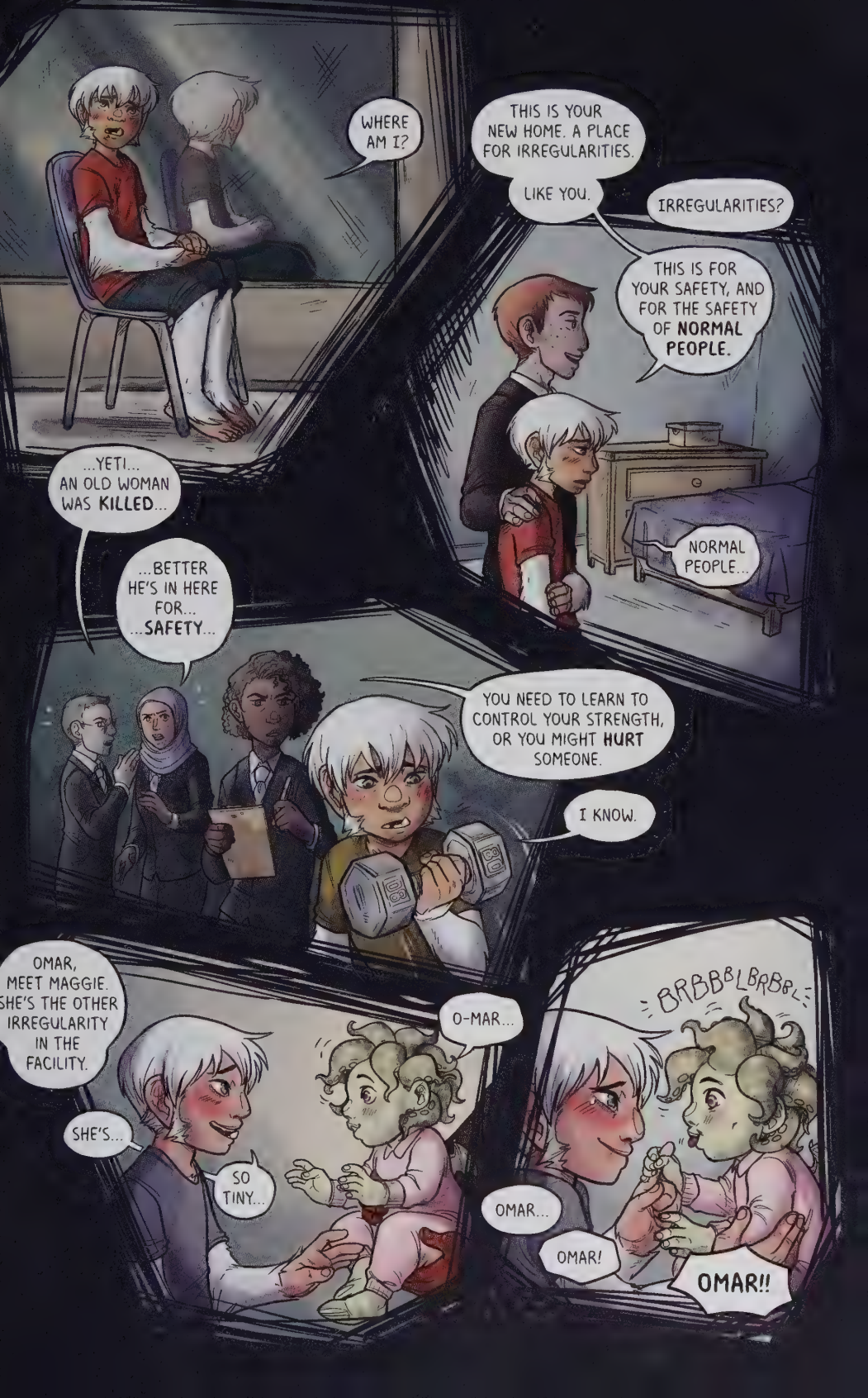

NANI... WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO?
WHAT?
WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO ABOUT ME?
WHAT IF I END UP LOOKING JUST LIKE DAD?
EVERY OUTSIDER IS AFRAID OF ME, AND IT'S JUST GOING TO GET WORSE!
THEY ALL THINK I'M A MONSTER, NANI.
ARE YOU?
W-WHAT??
ARE YOU A MONSTER?
I... I DON'T THINK SO??
IT CAN'T BE THAT SIMPLE!
YES, IT CAN.
IT'S UP TO YOU TO DETERMINE WHAT KIND OF PERSON YOU WANT TO BE.
THOSE WHO JUDGE YOU BY APPEARANCE, WITHOUT EVEN TAKING THE TIME TO KNOW YOU,
DON'T GET TO DECIDE YOU'RE A MONSTER.

BUT...
BUT...
I'M HALF YETI, NAN! I'M BARELY EVEN HUMAN!
DOES THAT MATTER??
YES!
NO??
I DON'T KNOW!
OMAR.
LISTEN TO ME.
WE MAY NOT SHARE THE SAME BLOOD, BUT WE ARE FAMILY. YOU ARE MY GRANDSON.
I LOVED YOUR PARENTS LIKE THEY WERE MY OWN, AND THEY LOVED YOU MORE THAN ANYTHING IN THE WORLD.
FOOLISH PEOPLE WILL ALWAYS BE AFRAID OF THOSE WHO ARE DIFFERENT, BUT YOUR DIFFERENCES DON'T MAKE YOU WRONG.
THEIR OPINIONS BE DAMNED. I LOVE YOU. EVERYONE IN THIS VILLAGE LOVES YOU.
AND NOTHING THOSE IDIOTS SAY WILL EVER CHANGE THAT.
I LOVE YOU TOO.
THANK YOU.

BUT... NANI, WHAT IF THEY COME BA--
KNOCK KNOCK
WHO ON EARTH??
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
THERE!
THERE IT IS!
OUT OF THE WAY!
CRACK
HEY!!
GET YOUR HANDS OFF HER!
OMAR, NO!

strike strike
STOP, WOMAN!
NO!! NOT MY OMAR! LET ME GO! LET ME GO!
WHAM
NO!
GRAAAAAGHH!

ARGH
SLAM
CATCH HIM!!
NANI--
MY OMAR
CRACK!
AH!
NO--NANI, WAIT!


WHERE AM I?
THIS IS YOUR NEW HOME. A PLACE FOR IRREGULARITIES.
LIKE YOU.
IRREGULARITIES?
THIS IS FOR YOUR SAFETY, AND FOR THE SAFETY OF **NORMAL PEOPLE.**
NORMAL PEOPLE...
...YETI... AN OLD WOMAN WAS **KILLED**...
...BETTER HE'S IN HERE FOR... ...**SAFETY**...
YOU NEED TO LEARN TO CONTROL YOUR STRENGTH, OR YOU MIGHT **HURT** SOMEONE.
I KNOW.
OMAR, MEET MAGGIE. SHE'S THE OTHER IRREGULARITY IN THE FACILITY.
SHE'S...
SO TINY...
O-MAR...
BRBBBLBRBBL
OMAR...
OMAR!
OMAR!!

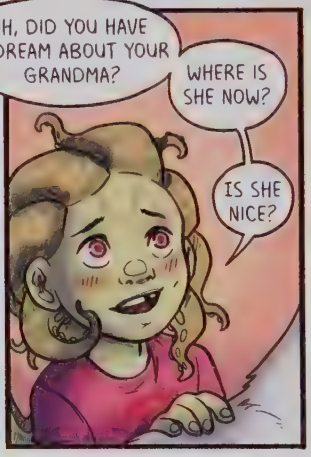
OMAR! ARE YOU OKAY??
AHH... MY HEAD...
M...MAGGIE?
SNIFF.
I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE OKAY!!
I WAS SO WORRIED ABOUT YOU--ALSO WE CRASHED THE CAR.
WHICH WAS KINDA COOL BUT ALSO SO SCARY. ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE OKAY?!
I'M FINE, PIPSQUEAK, I'M FINE.

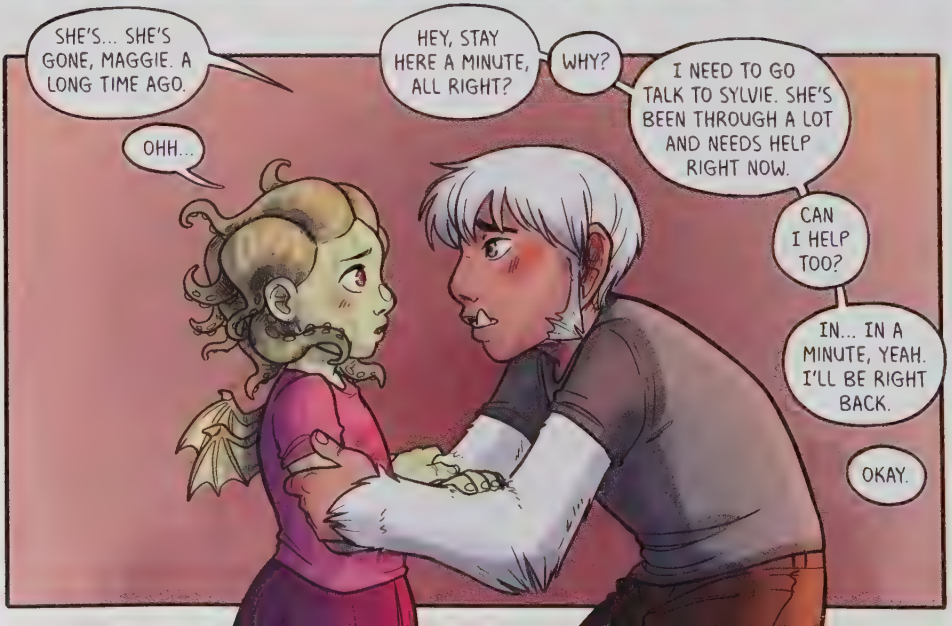
HOW LONG WAS I OUT?
IS EVERYONE ALL RIGHT?
NOT LONG. MAYBE TEN MINUTES? YOU HIT YOUR HEAD PRETTY GOOD.
YEAH, I REALLY DID.
WE'RE ALL OKAY. THE CRASH COULD HAVE BEEN A LOT WORSE.
JAALI HAS A SKINNED KNEE.
AND I THINK CLARICE TWISTED HER WRIST.
AND SYLVIE...
SYLVIE DOESN'T WANT TO TALK TO ANYONE RIGHT NOW.

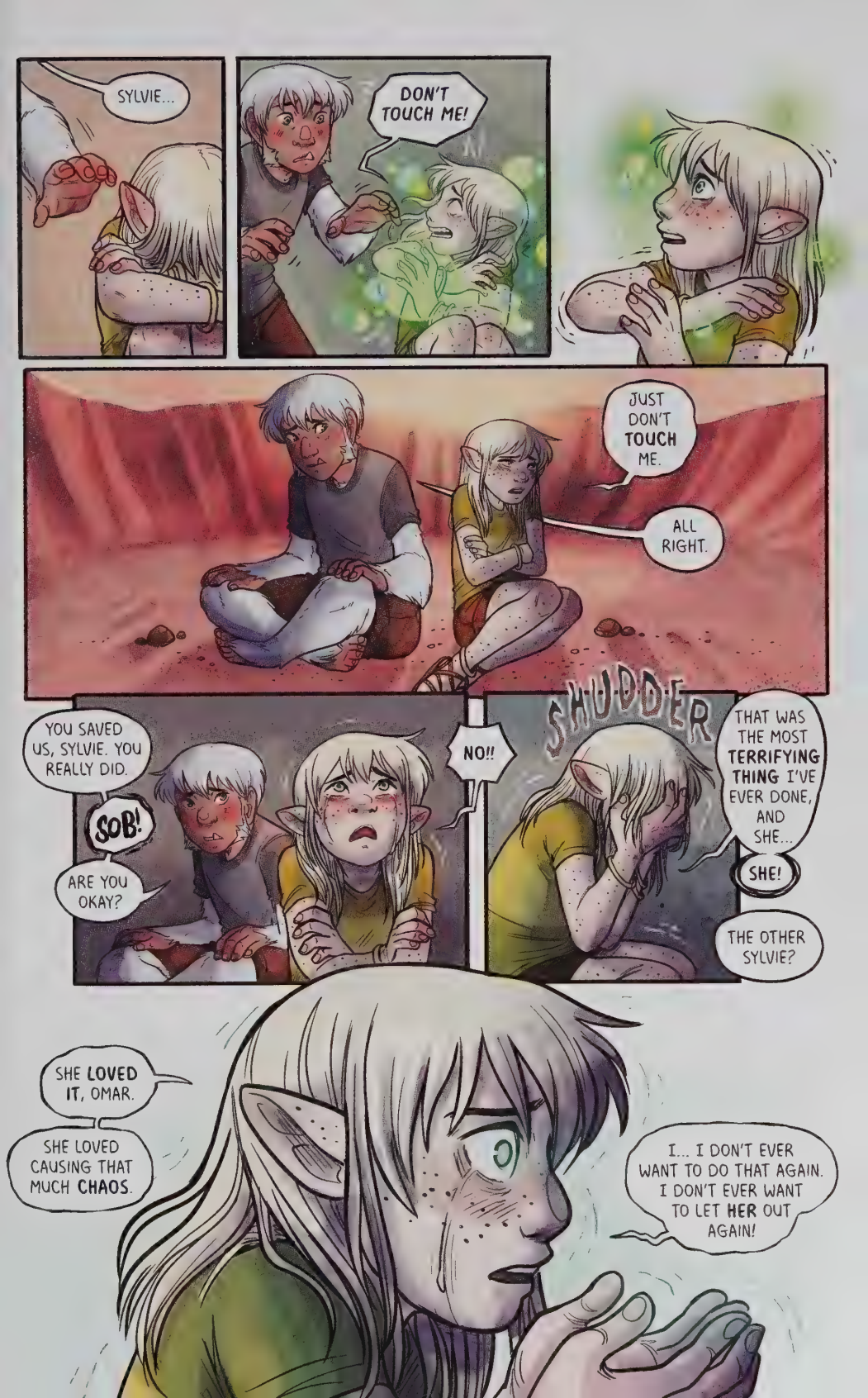
I'M GONNA TRY TO TALK TO HER.
OMAR?
HM?

...WHO IS **NANI**?

W-WHAT?
WHEN YOU WERE KNOCKED OUT, YOU KEPT SAYING NANI, NANI. WHO'S THAT?
NANI IS... A SHERPA WORD FOR **GRANDMA**.


OH, DID YOU HAVE A DREAM ABOUT YOUR GRANDMA?
WHERE IS SHE NOW?
IS SHE NICE?


SHE'S... SHE'S GONE, MAGGIE. A LONG TIME AGO.
OHH...
HEY, STAY HERE A MINUTE, ALL RIGHT?
WHY?
I NEED TO GO TALK TO SYLVIE. SHE'S BEEN THROUGH A LOT AND NEEDS HELP RIGHT NOW.
CAN I HELP TOO?
IN... IN A MINUTE, YEAH. I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.
OKAY.


SYLVIE...
DON'T TOUCH ME!
JUST DON'T TOUCH ME.
ALL RIGHT.
YOU SAVED US, SYLVIE. YOU REALLY DID.
SOB!
ARE YOU OKAY?
NO!!
SHUDDER
THAT WAS THE MOST TERRIFYING THING I'VE EVER DONE, AND SHE...
SHE!
THE OTHER SYLVIE?
SHE LOVED IT, OMAR.
SHE LOVED CAUSING THAT MUCH CHAOS.
I... I DON'T EVER WANT TO DO THAT AGAIN. I DON'T EVER WANT TO LET HER OUT AGAIN!

I THINK... YOU MIGHT **HAVE TO** SOMEDAY.

TCH! THAT'S RUBBISH ADVICE, THANKS A LOT!

I MEAN...

ALL OF US HAVE **SOME** KIND OF **MONSTER** IN US, SYLVIE.

YOU'VE JUST GOT... A PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT ONE.

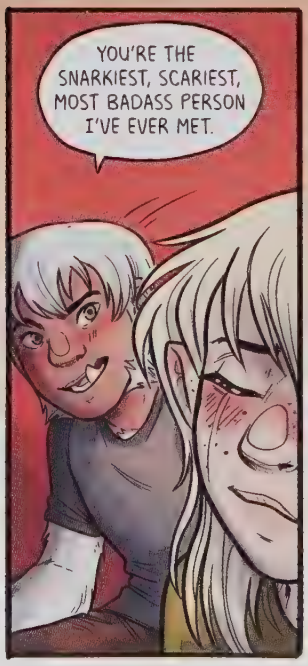
AND WE DON'T KNOW WHAT'S AHEAD OF US.

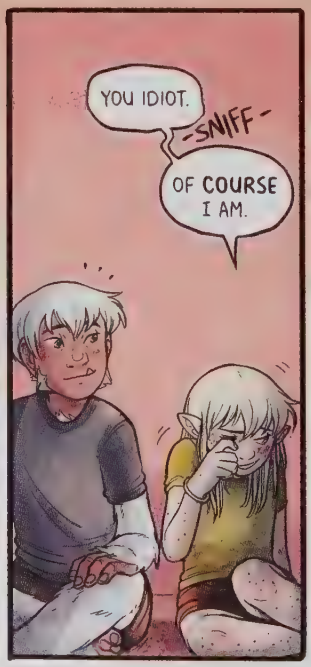
YOUR ABILITIES ARE **INCREDIBLE**, EVEN IF THEY'RE SCARY.

AND IF I'M BEING HONEST--

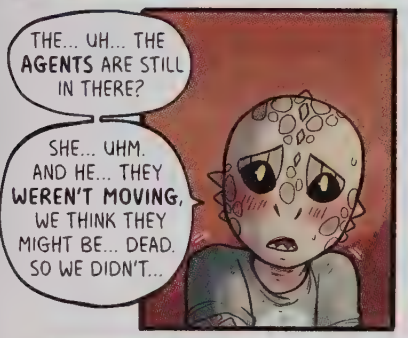
IF ANYONE CAN CONTROL A MONSTER LIKE THAT--

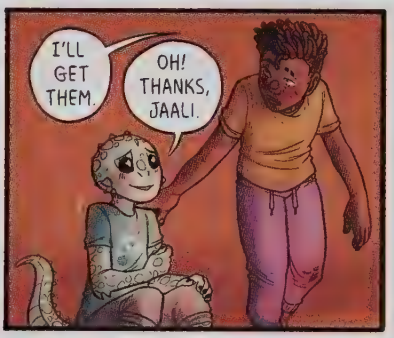
IT'S **YOU.**





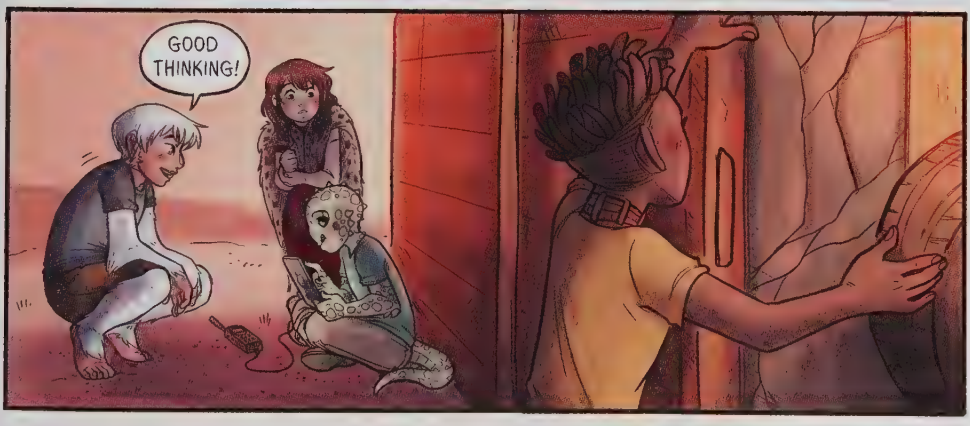
NEWT--COULD YOU GET OUR BAGS OUT OF THE TRUCK?
WE NEED TO FIGURE OUT WHERE WE'RE GOING AND WHAT WE'RE GONNA DO NOW.
OH... UHH.
HEY, TINY.


THE... UH... THE **AGENTS** ARE STILL IN THERE?
SHE... UHM. AND HE... THEY **WEREN'T MOVING**, WE THINK THEY MIGHT BE... DEAD. SO WE DIDN'T...


I'LL GET THEM.
OH! THANKS, JAALI.

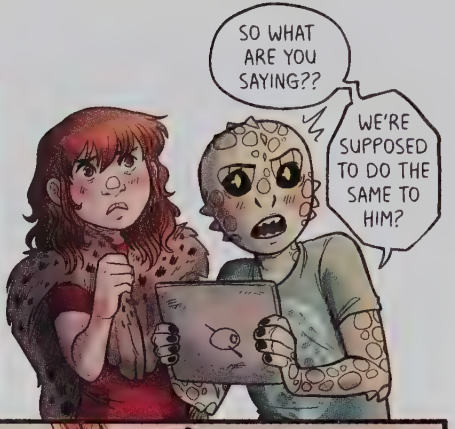
ANYWAY...
I FOUND THIS!

IT'S AGENT RAMIREZ'S **SATELLITE PHONE.**
I THINK I CAN GET SOME KIND OF **INTERNET CONNECTION** WITH IT.
HOOK IT UP TO MY O-PAD AND TRY TO FIND A WAY **OUT** OF THIS **DESERT!**

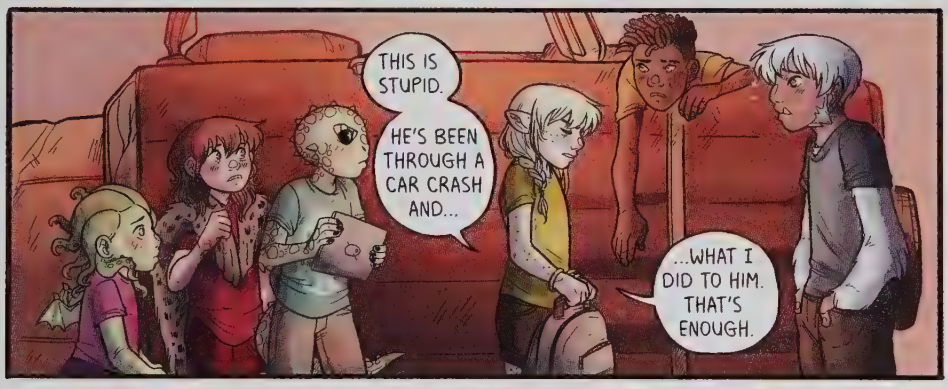

GOOD THINKING!

OKAY... IT LOOKS LIKE THERE'S A TOWN ABOUT FOURTEEN MILES AWAY.
FOURTEEN MILES?
WELL YEAH, SYLVIE, WE'RE PRACTICALLY IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE.
I KNOW. THAT'S JUST... A LONG WAY TO WALK.
UNLESS YOU WANT TO GO BACK TO THE PLAYROOM, THIS IS OUR ONLY OPTION.
MAYBE FROM THIS TOWN WE COULD CATCH A BU--
GROAN
CLARK!! HE JUST MOVED!
WHAT?!
HE'S ALIVE?? AFTER ALL THAT?
YES!! WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO??

HE TRIED TO KILL US.


SO WHAT ARE YOU SAYING??
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO DO THE SAME TO HIM?

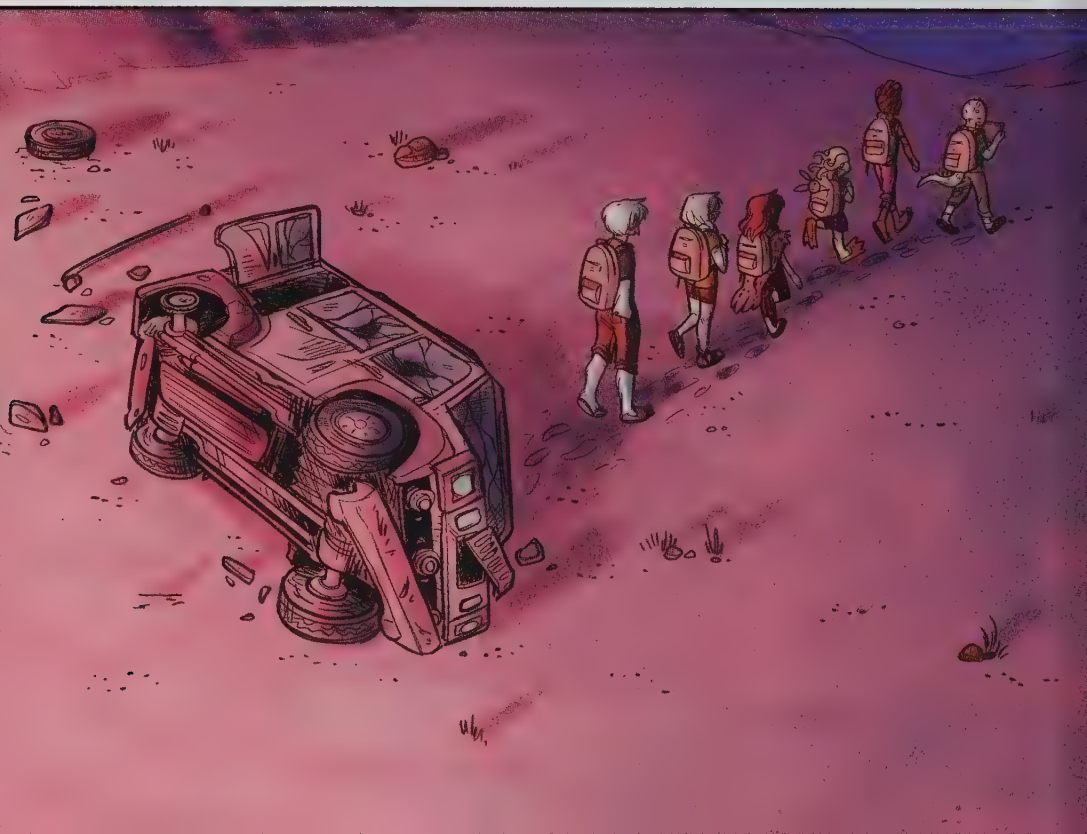
HE'D **DESERVE** IT.
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT? WE CAN'T--WE COULDN'T... DO **THAT!**
STOP.


THIS IS STUPID.
HE'S BEEN THROUGH A CAR CRASH AND...
...WHAT I DID TO HIM. THAT'S ENOUGH.

THERE'S NO WAY HE'LL BE ABLE TO FOLLOW US, SO WE'RE JUST GOING TO LEAVE HIM HERE.
WITH AGENT RAMIREZ...GONE... I JUST DON'T WANT TO HURT ANYONE ELSE.
WE'RE NOT **THOSE KINDS** OF **MONSTERS,** RIGHT?

...

ALL RIGHT THEN.
BUT AT LEAST...
HOP
FLING
...I'M GETTING RID OF THIS!



OKAY... THE R-ROAD SHOULD BE J-JUST UP AHEAD.
S-S-SEE! I KNEW WE'D FIND THE R-ROAD EVENTUALLY!
GOOD JOB, NEWT!
G-GOD, IT'S COLD. DID ANYONE BRING A B-BLANKET OR SOMETHING?
HEH.
W-W-WHAT??
NOTHING, IT'S JUST... YOU WOULD DIE IN NEPAL. THIS IS LIKE... EARLY SPRING THERE.

OH, R-RIGHT, I FORGOT WE'RE T-TRAVELING WITH THE ABOMINABLE SNOW BOY HERE--
VVVRRR
HIDE!!
RRR
VVRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR
FREAKISH
SQUATCHING -YOU-
AREA 51 SURVIVOR
ILUMNATI
LOCH YES
WHY CAN'T WE GET A RIDE WITH THEM?
snerk

ARE YOU KIDDING ME?? THOSE ARE THE GUYS WHO WERE STALKING THE GATE--
THEY'D DO EXPERIMENTS ON US OR SOMETHING!
snort
WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU LAUGHING AT? THEY ALMOST SAW US!
I'M SORRY, I CAN'T HELP IT!
WHAT IS SO FUNNY?!
THEIR BUMPER STICKER SAID "I'M SQUATCHING YOU"!
HA
HA HA
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU MADE ANY NOISE!! YOU CAN LAUGH! WOW!

WE ARE IN DANGER,
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DESERT, AND YOU'RE LAUGHING?!
HA

SIFF

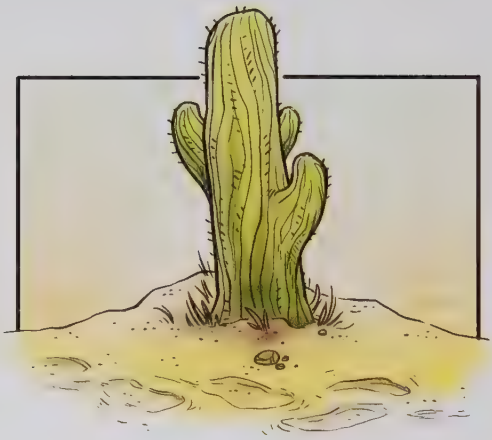
HA

LOOK AT THE STARS.

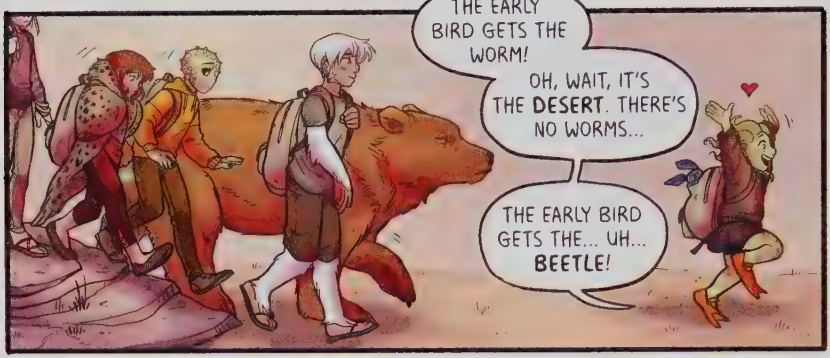
I NEVER KNEW THERE WERE SO MANY.

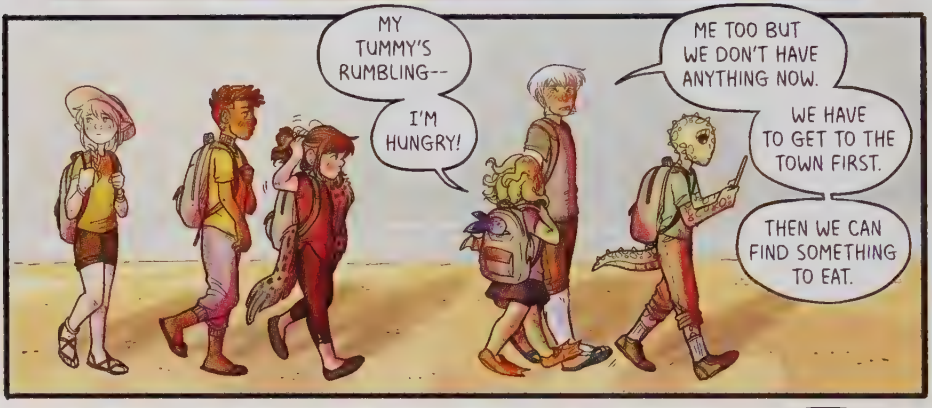
CHAPTER FOUR

HEAT WAVES



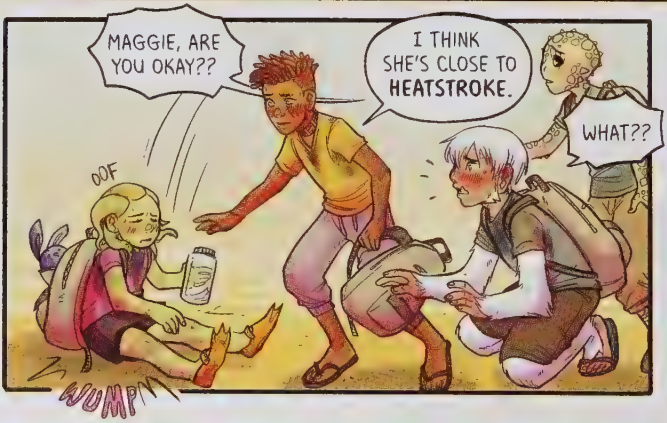
RISE AND SHINE!
UGHHHHH...

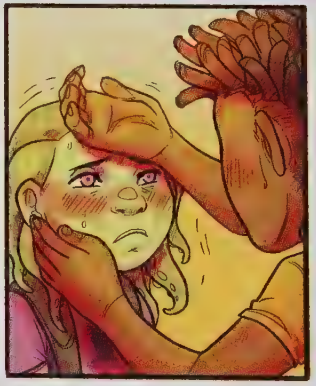

THE EARLY BIRD GETS THE WORM!
OH, WAIT, IT'S THE **DESERT**. THERE'S NO WORMS...
THE EARLY BIRD GETS THE... UH... **BEETLE!**


MY TUMMY'S RUMBLING--
I'M HUNGRY!
ME TOO BUT WE DON'T HAVE ANYTHING NOW.
WE HAVE TO GET TO THE TOWN FIRST.
THEN WE CAN FIND SOMETHING TO EAT.

O...OMAR?

PIPSQUEAK? YOU OKAY?
I DON'T...
I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD.

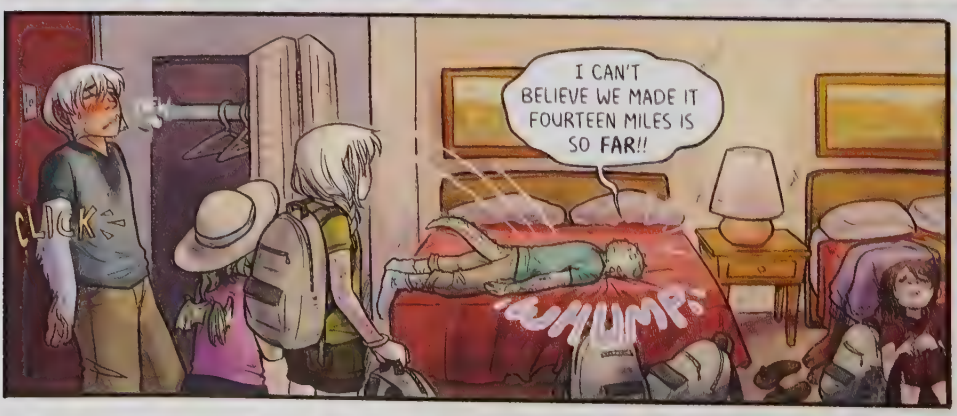

MAGGIE, ARE YOU OKAY??
I THINK SHE'S CLOSE TO **HEATSTROKE.**
WHAT??
OOF
WUMP



WELL... SHE'S AMPHIBIOUS, RIGHT? HER BODY CAN'T PROCESS THE HEAT LIKE OURS.
SOMEONE SHOULD CARRY HER, AND WE SHOULD TRY TO GET HER OUT OF THE SUN.
HERE YOU GO, RUNT. SOME SHADE.
HEY, TINY.
MM?
DON'T FALL ASLEEP, OKAY?
I CAN'T.
WHY'S THAT?
YOU'RE ALL SWEATY AND GROSS.
HAH, SORRY.
KEEP TALKING TO ME, ALL RIGHT?
...YOU'RE STINKY TOO.
SWEATY YETI. HA HA.
MHMM.
GOOD ONE, TELL ME ANOTHER.
...IF IT WAS YOUR BIRTHDAY...
YOU'D BE A CONFETTI YETI.
GOOD, GOOD.
...IF YOU WANTED DINNER YOU'D HAVE SPAGHETTI YETI.
I LIKE SPAGHETTI.
THAT ONE WASN'T AS GOOD.
...IF YOU HAD BROWN HAIR YOU'D BE A BRUNETTE-Y YETI.
I KNOW.

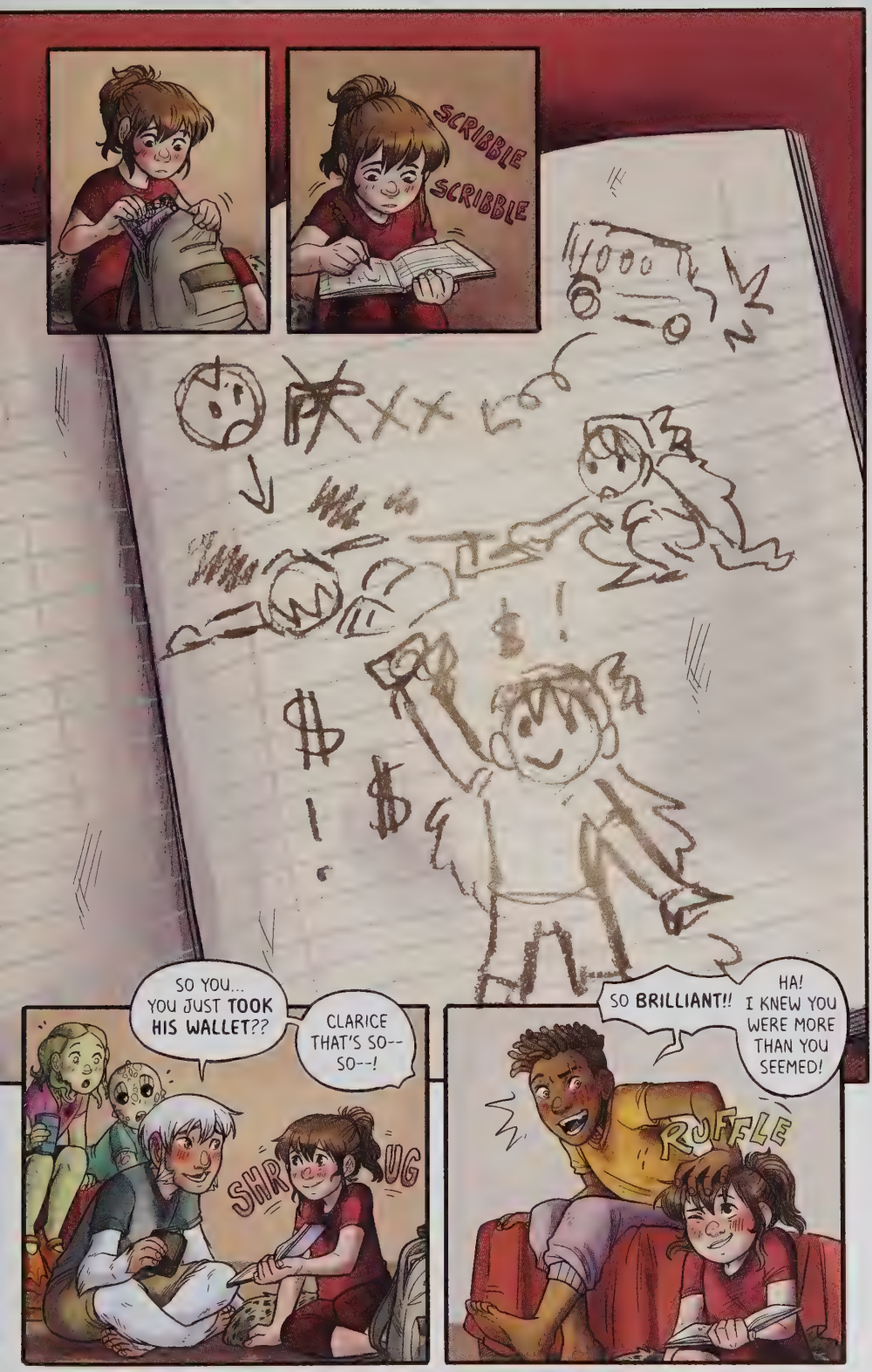
CATCH!

SHH! GO GO GO, QUICK!

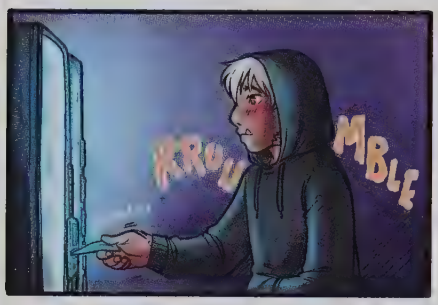

CLICK
I CAN'T BELIEVE WE MADE IT FOURTEEN MILES IS SO FAR!!
UHUMP!

SH
HERE, TINY
DON'T DRINK TOO FAST, OKAY?
MHM
HEY ANYONE NEED THE BATHROOM OR CAN I GO?
NAH
GO FOR IT
SO
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO NOW?

WE COULD ORDER ROOM SERVICE!
HAHA, YEAH RIGHT
I AM HUNGRY THOUGH
WE ALL ARE
I THINK I SAW SOME VENDING MACHINES OUTSIDE
BUT WE DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY
OH, UH WHAT, CLARICE?
RUMMAGE
WHERE DID YOU GET THAT?!


SCRIBBLE
SCRIBBLE
SO YOU... YOU JUST TOOK HIS WALLET??
CLARICE THAT'S SO-- SO--!
SHRUG
SO BRILLIANT!!
HA! I KNEW YOU WERE MORE THAN YOU SEEMED!
RUFFLE

CLARICE YOU'RE AMAZING!
CAN I HAVE CHIPS, PLEASE??
HOW MUCH MONEY IS IT??
sure was fun
...wasn't it?
ha ha ha ha
ha ha ha ha

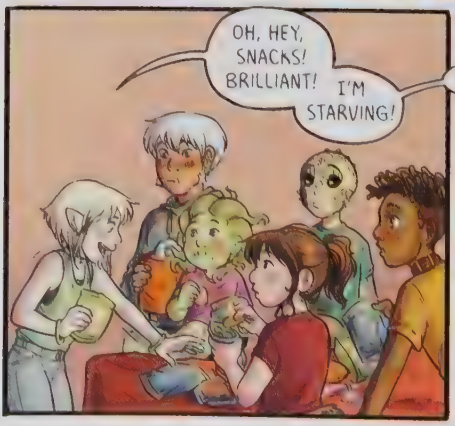


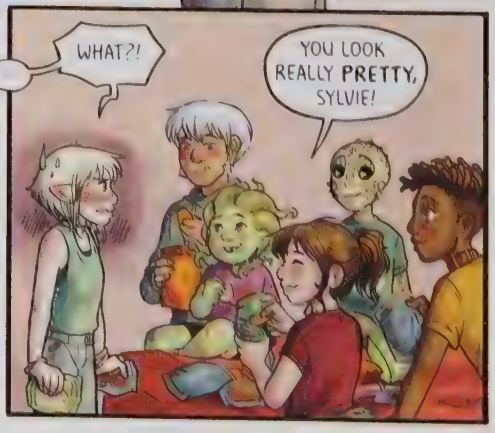
GAS
RRUUMMM

I'M BACK
FOOD!
OH MY GOSH, I LOVE THESE!!
CAN I HAVE THESE CAKES?
CLARICE, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE?
DON'T HOG THE CHIPS!

HEY SAVE SOME FOR **SYLVIE**, OKAY?

SAVE SOME WHAT FOR ME?


OH, HEY, SNACKS! BRILLIANT!
I'M STARVING!


WHAT?!
YOU LOOK REALLY **PRETTY**, SYLVIE!

HEY, CAN I TALK TO YOU BOTH FOR A SECOND?
WE NEED TO GURE OUT WHERE TO GO NEXT.
I SAW SOME AGENTS OUTSIDE.
MONCH MONCH
WHAT?!
SHH!!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT OVER THERE??
NOTHING! EVERYTHING'S FINE--
YUP! ALL GOOD HERE!
WE'VE GOT A PERFECT PLAN AND THERE ARE DEFINITELY NO AGENTS OUTSIDE, NONE AT ALL!
THERE ARE AGENTS OUTSIDE, AND NOW YOU'RE LYING TO US?!
HOW LONG HAVE YOU KNOWN ABOUT THIS??
heh heh

OKAY, OKAY, LISTEN— I JUST NOW SAW THEM WHILE I WAS GETTING FOOD, ALL RIGHT? CALM DOWN.

WERE YOU PLANNING TO **TELL** EVERYONE, OMAR??

ME AND SYLVIE AND JAALI WERE GONNA FIGURE IT OUT. I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO **PANIC**--

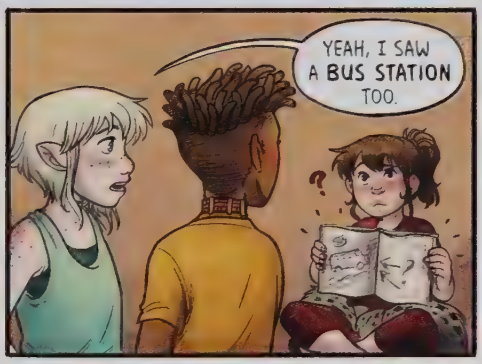
YOU CAN'T MAKE DECISIONS FOR THE WHOLE GROUP!

I'M THE OLDEST AND YOU ALL HAVE **ALWAYS** MADE ME DECIDE THINGS FOR YOU--

SO SYLVIE AND JAALI CAN KNOW BUT NOT THE REST OF US??

WE'RE **OLDER**! WE'RE SUPPOSED TO **PROTECT YOU**!

WHY CAN'T WE GO TALK TO THE AGENTS? THEY CAN TAKE US BACK TO THE PLAYROOM AND FIGURE ALL OF THIS OUT.
NO. WE CAN'T TRUST THE LOT OF THEM. WE TRUSTED **CLARK**, AND YOU SAW WHAT HE DID.
ANY OF THEM COULD TURN ON US.
I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK TO THE **DESERT!**
WE WON'T GO BACK TO THE DESERT. WE HAVE TO FIND SOMEWHERE ELSE.


YEAH, I SAW A **BUS STATION** TOO.

I DON'T THINK WE HAVE ENOUGH MONEY FOR BUS TICKETS...
...I COULD CALL **MY DAD.**
WHAT CAN YOUR DAD DO?

WELL... HE'S A BIG POLITICIAN AND STUFF. AND HE HAS A LOT OF MONEY.
SO HE COULD GET US TICKETS TO...
TO...?
WASHINGTON, D.C. THAT'S WHERE HE LIVES.
THAT'S A GREAT IDEA. CAN YOU CALL HIM?

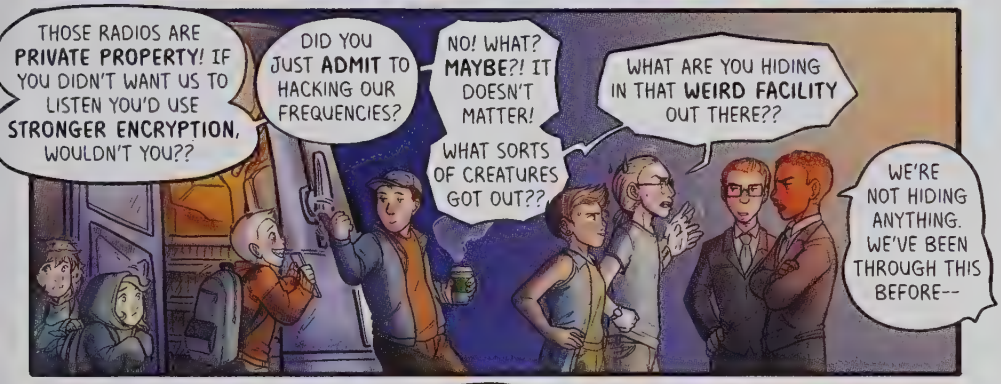
YEAH...
YEAH. I'LL CALL HIM.
GIVE ME A MINUTE.

SOOO...
SYLVIE, I REALLY LIKE YOUR HAIR!
WHY'D YOU CUT IT?
CAN YOU CUT MINE?
OH, UH...
...THE BRAID WAS GETTING IN THE WAY. AND I NEEDED A **CHANGE**, Y'KNOW?
I DON'T THINK WE CAN CUT THROUGH YOURS, PIPSQUEAK.
AWW!
HE'S GONNA HELP! AND HE SAID HE'D--
BING!
THERE! HE JUST SENT OVER HIS **CREDIT CARD**. I CAN BUY THE TICKETS ONLINE!
GREAT JOB, NEWT!
THERE'S A BUS IN A HALF HOUR...
BUT WE'RE GONNA NEED SOME **DISGUISES**.

THE BUS STATION IS JUST ACROSS THE STREET THERE.
BUS DEPOT
EVERYONE READY?
CLARICE, THE FUR IS A DEAD GIVEAWAY.
fwipp
flap
YOU WON'T NEED TO BE A SEAL ON THE BUS!!
YANK
CAN'T YOU PUT IT IN YOUR BAG??
HERE--WEAR THIS ON TOP! IT'LL LOOK LIKE A FUR HOOD.
VERY FASHIONABLE!
LET'S GO!

SNEAK SNEAK
BUS
GAS
BUS
DEPOT
DASH
THERE'S THE BUS! LET'S GO!
WAIT!
YOINK
HOW ARE WE GONNA GET ON BOARD??
LOOK! IT'S THOSE SQUATCH GUYS!

HEY! YOU! WE'VE BEEN HEARING A LOT OF CHATTER ON YOUR RADIOS ABOUT "MISSING ASSETS!"
WHAT DID YOU LET OUT? WHAT ARE YOU HIDING?
FOLKS, WE'VE WARNED YOU BEFORE ABOUT TAPPING INTO OUR FREQUENCIES.
IF WE HAVE TO SEIZE YOUR RADIOS AGAIN WE WILL.


THOSE RADIOS ARE PRIVATE PROPERTY! IF YOU DIDN'T WANT US TO LISTEN YOU'D USE STRONGER ENCRYPTION, WOULDN'T YOU??
DID YOU JUST ADMIT TO HACKING OUR FREQUENCIES?
NO! WHAT? MAYBE?! IT DOESN'T MATTER!
WHAT SORTS OF CREATURES GOT OUT??
WHAT ARE YOU HIDING IN THAT WEIRD FACILITY OUT THERE??
WE'RE NOT HIDING ANYTHING. WE'VE BEEN THROUGH THIS BEFORE--

WE HAVE SOLID EVIDENCE THAT YOU'RE KEEPING ALIENS...
AND CRYPTOZOOLOGICAL ENTITIES OUT THERE, AND IT SURE SOUNDS LIKE SOME OF THEM ESCAPED!
YOU'RE CRAZY.
ARE YOU CALLING US CRAZY?!
YEP. GOT SOME ALIENS IN YOUR EARS? OR DID YOU JUST NOT HEAR ME?

MOVE ALONG, Y'ALL. I'M HEADING OUT AND I DON'T WANNA RUN YA OVER.

WE KNOW YOU'RE HIDING **SOMETHING** AND WE'RE GONNA FIND OUT WHAT IT IS!

WE'RE THE FRATERNITY OF RESEARCHERS TO THE EXISTENCE OF ALL KNOWN INTELLIGENT SUPERNATURAL HUMANOIDS

VVHGGRRROOOM!

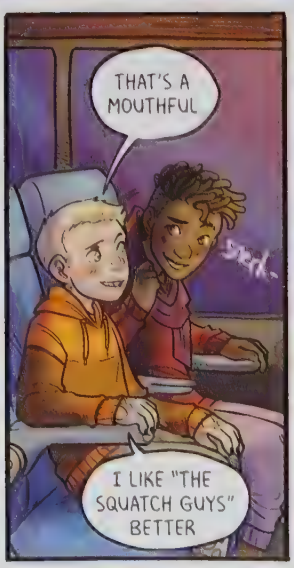
RRMM

RRMM

AND WE WILL **NOT STOP** UNTIL THE TRUTH IS **REVEALED!!**

STUART, STOP BEING SO DRAMATIC, DUDE!

WE'RE GONNA GET **ARRESTED** AGAIN!

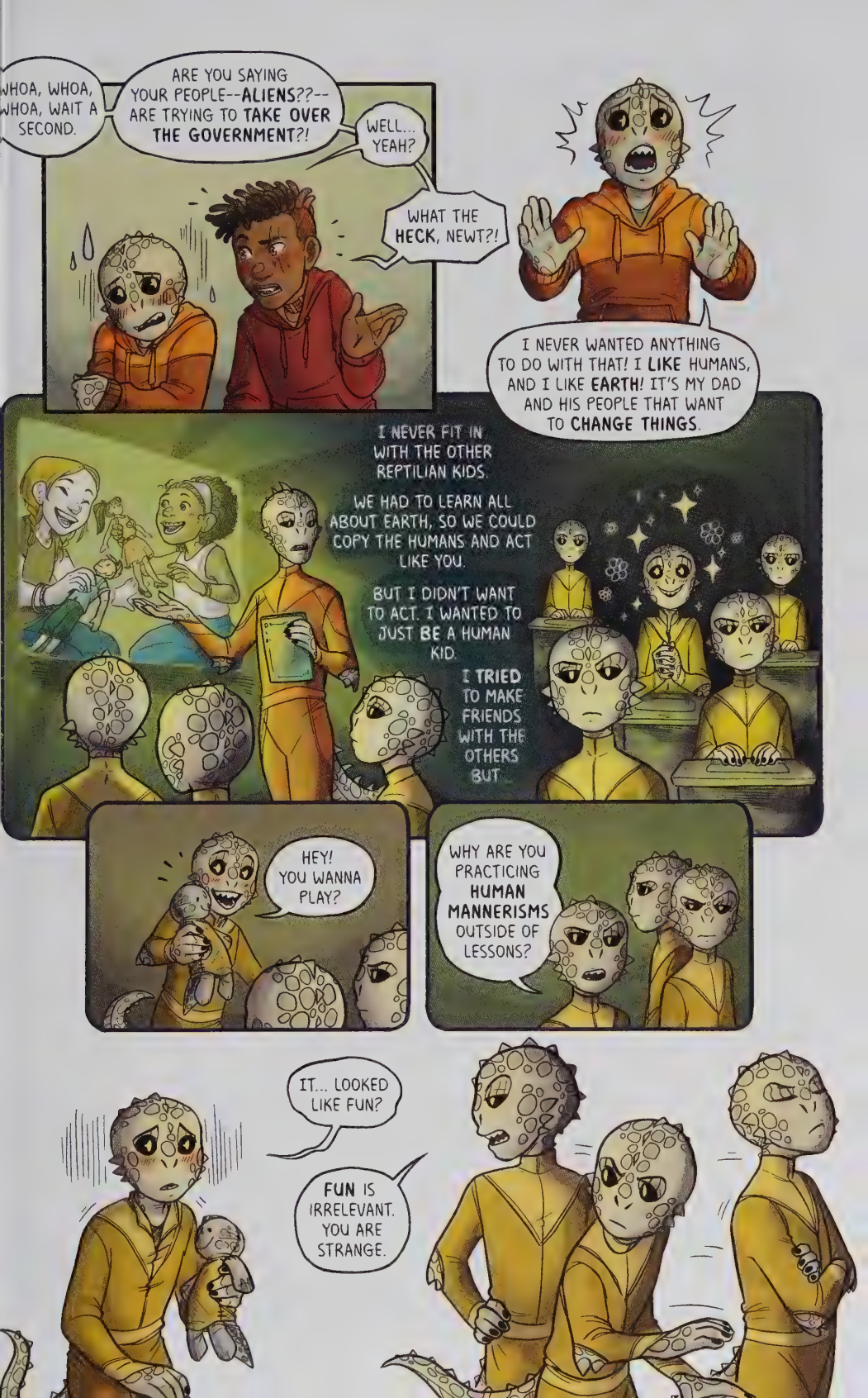


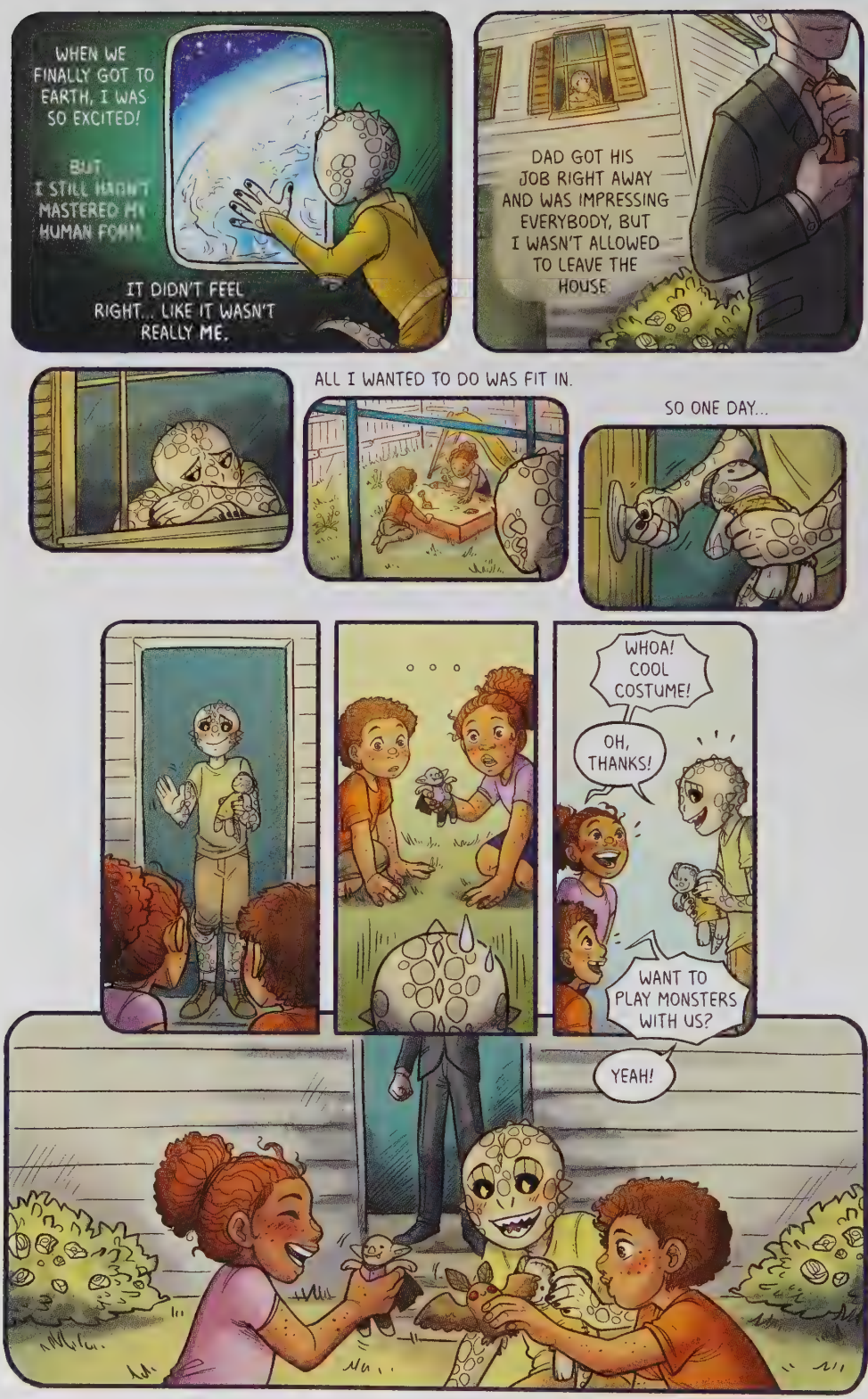
CHAPTER FIVE

HIGHLY IRREGULAR

THEY EVEN HAVE A **BATHROOM** ON THIS THING!
DID YOU WASH YOUR HANDS?
. . .
. . .
DUCK
SHRUG
SO! TELL US ABOUT THIS POLITICIAN DAD OF YOURS.
UMMM...

WELL, I DUNNO IF YOU KNOW THIS BUT I'M NOT EXACTLY FROM **AROUND HERE**.
MY HOME PLANET IS CALLED **PHRYNOS**.
BUT I'VE NEVER ACTUALLY BEEN THERE. I WAS **CREATED IN A LAB** ON BOARD ONE OF MY PEOPLES' TRANSPORT VESSELS--I HATCHED ABOUT HALFWAY TO EARTH.
I'M TECHNICALLY A **CLONE**? I DON'T REALLY KNOW HOW THE TECH WORKS BUT THAT'S HOW **REPTILIANS** HAVE KIDS. IT'S BEEN LIKE THAT FOR A LONG TIME.
MY DAD'S MISSION WAS TO COME TO EARTH AND INTEGRATE INTO SOCIETY AND THE **HUMAN GOVERNMENT**.
MY PEOPLE ALREADY HAVE A LOT OF POWER, ESPECIALLY IN **AMERICA**.
AND SINCE WE CAN MAKE OURSELVES LOOK HUMAN, IT'S PRETTY EASY FOR US... WELL.
I'M NOT AS GOOD AT IT YET, BUT Y'KNOW.


WHOA, WHOA, WHOA, WAIT A SECOND.
ARE YOU SAYING YOUR PEOPLE--ALIENS??--ARE TRYING TO TAKE OVER THE GOVERNMENT?!
WELL... YEAH?
WHAT THE HECK, NEWT?!
I NEVER WANTED ANYTHING TO DO WITH THAT! I LIKE HUMANS, AND I LIKE EARTH! IT'S MY DAD AND HIS PEOPLE THAT WANT TO CHANGE THINGS.
I NEVER FIT IN WITH THE OTHER REPTILIAN KIDS.
WE HAD TO LEARN ALL ABOUT EARTH, SO WE COULD COPY THE HUMANS AND ACT LIKE YOU.
BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO ACT. I WANTED TO JUST BE A HUMAN KID.
I TRIED TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH THE OTHERS BUT...
HEY! YOU WANNA PLAY?
WHY ARE YOU PRACTICING HUMAN MANNERISMS OUTSIDE OF LESSONS?
IT... LOOKED LIKE FUN?
FUN IS IRRELEVANT. YOU ARE STRANGE.


WHEN WE FINALLY GOT TO EARTH, I WAS SO EXCITED!
BUT I STILL HADN'T MASTERED MY HUMAN FORM.
IT DIDN'T FEEL RIGHT... LIKE IT WASN'T REALLY ME.
DAD GOT HIS JOB RIGHT AWAY AND WAS IMPRESSING EVERYBODY, BUT I WASN'T ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE HOUSE.
ALL I WANTED TO DO WAS FIT IN.
SO ONE DAY...
WHOA! COOL COSTUME!
OH, THANKS!
WANT TO PLAY MONSTERS WITH US?
YEAH!

NEWTON!
UH, HI, DAD--
GET BACK INSIDE **THIS INSTANT!**
I GOT... I WAS **REALLY** IN TROUBLE. MY DAD SAID I HAD JEOPARDIZED THE MISSION.
AND I HAD TO **GO AWAY** UNTIL I COULD MASTER MY HUMAN FORM. SO HE SENT ME TO THE PLAYROOM.
YOUR DAD SOUNDS... **INTENSE.**
YEAH... BUT HE'S HELPING ME--**U-US** OUT NOW, ISN'T HE?
THAT HAS TO COUNT FOR **SOMETHING**, RIGHT?

WELL, MY DAD IS THE KING OF THE OCEAN!
WHAT?
Once upon a time
WAIT, IS THIS REAL OR ONE OF YOUR FAIRY TALES?
SHH!! DON'T INTERRUPT!
ONCE UPON A TIME...
...THERE WAS A LOVELY MAIDEN. THAT'S MY MOM!
THERE WAS ALSO A BIG AND SCARY KING (BUT ONLY ON THE OUTSIDE!). THAT'S MY DAD!
THEY MET BY THE SEASIDE AND FELL IN LOVE, SPENDING THEIR DREAMS TOGETHER EVERY NIGHT.

SOON, A LITTLE PRINCESS WAS BORN!
THAT'S ME!
BUT MY MOM HAD TO LEAVE ME WITH THE PLAYROOM BECAUSE SHE HAD TO GO AWAY...
PROBABLY TO DO SOMETHING SUPER DANGEROUS LIKE FIGHT A DINOSAUR!
BUT THAT'S OKAY, 'CUZ OMAR WAS THERE, AND NOW I GET TO PLAY WITH YOU GUYS EVERY DAY.
AND ONE DAY DADDY'S GONNA COME GET ME...
AND WE'LL RULE THE WHOLE OCEAN!!
THAT... SURE IS A DRAMATIC STORY, MAGGIE.
I KNOW!
TWO HOURS OUT FROM D.C., Y'ALL.

GREETINGS, NEWTON
UH, HI?
NEWTON?
SHUT UP!
YOUR FATHER SENT US TO ESCORT YOU
WHO ARE THEY?
OH, THEY'RE, UH... THE OTHER KIDS KEPT IN THE FACILITY. THEY'RE COMING TOO.
VERY WELL. WE HAVE A CAR WAITING. COME ALONG

GRAB
WRONG POCKET, KID.
HEH... UH... MY BAD?
SCRAM.

THIS WAY. KEEP UP
CONFERENCE ROOM 1
GREETINGS, NEWTON.
...HI, DAD

WHO ARE YOUR... COMPANIONS?
I DIDN'T REALIZE I WOULD BE ENTERTAINING OTHER GUESTS.
YOU DIDN'T TELL HIM WE WERE CO--
THESE ARE THE OTHER IRREGULARITIES FROM THE PLAYROOM! WE ESCAPED TOGETHER.
THIS IS JAALI,
SYLVIE,
OMAR,
CLARICE,
AND--
WHERE'D SHE GO??
HI, MR. NEWT'S DAD!
I'M MAGGIE!
...GREETINGS, ALL. NEWTON, PLEASE EXPLAIN YOUR MESSAGE FROM YESTERDAY.

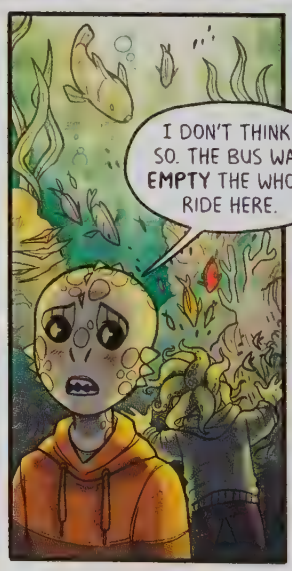
THERE WAS A BREACH OF SECURITY AT THE PLAYROOM. ONE OF THE AGENTS DOUBLE-CROSSED THEM.

WE STARTED GETTING **THREATENING MESSAGES** AND **BREAK-INS** TO OUR ROOMS, SO THE OTHER AGENTS THOUGHT THEY SHOULD MOVE US FOR SAFETY.

BUT THE DOUBLE-AGENT, **AGENT CLARK,** ENDED UP DRIVING OUR TRANSPORT...

THERE WAS AN INCIDENT AND ANOTHER AGENT WAS... KILLED. **SYLVIE** SAVED US ALL BY FORCING AGENT CLARK TO CRASH THE CAR, AND WE WALKED THROUGH THE DESERT TO FIND A BUS TO...

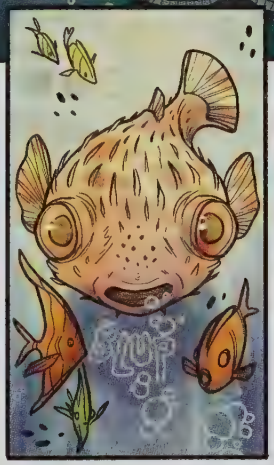
TO BRING US TO **YOU.**



OH, HI, CLARICE! ARE YOU HERE TO TALK TO THE FISH TOO?

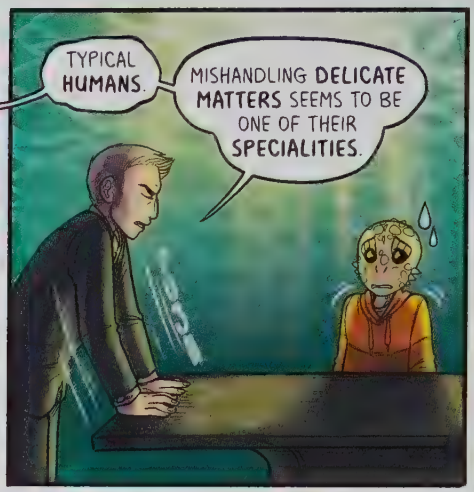
THEY **REALLY** LIKE ME!
LOOK!
CLAP CLAP

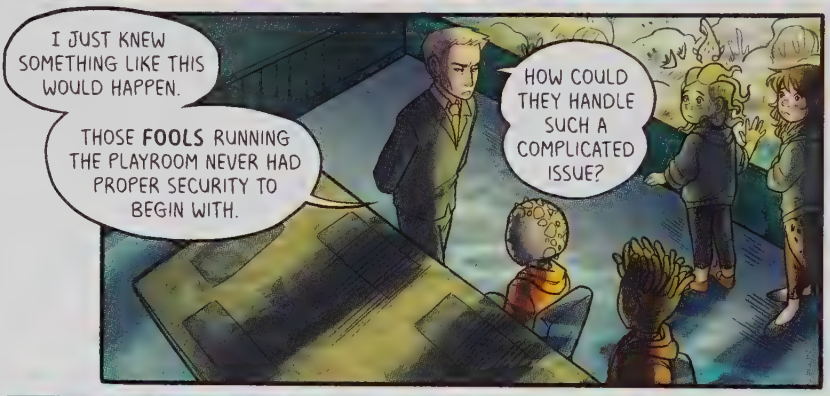
WHAT'S YOUR **NAME**? WHAT DO THEY FEED YOU HERE? IS IT **NICE** IN THE TANK? ARE YOU FRIENDS WITH THE **OTHER** FISH? ARE THEY NICE TOO?

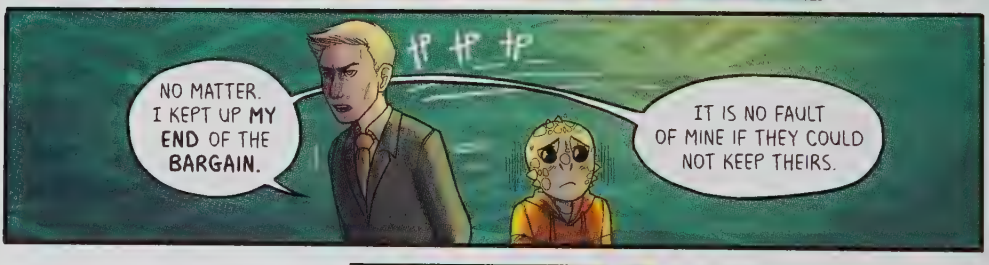


DID YOU HEAR THAT?? HE SAYS THEY EAT **FISH FLAKES**! WHAT THE HECK IS A **FISH FLAKE**??
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

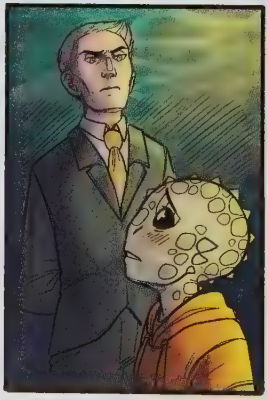
IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU HAVE BEEN THROUGH QUITE THE ORDEAL.


TYPICAL HUMANS.
MISHANDLING DELICATE MATTERS SEEMS TO BE ONE OF THEIR SPECIALITIES.


I JUST KNEW SOMETHING LIKE THIS WOULD HAPPEN.
THOSE FOOLS RUNNING THE PLAYROOM NEVER HAD PROPER SECURITY TO BEGIN WITH.
HOW COULD THEY HANDLE SUCH A COMPLICATED ISSUE?


NO MATTER. I KEPT UP MY END OF THE BARGAIN.
IT IS NO FAULT OF MINE IF THEY COULD NOT KEEP THEIRS.

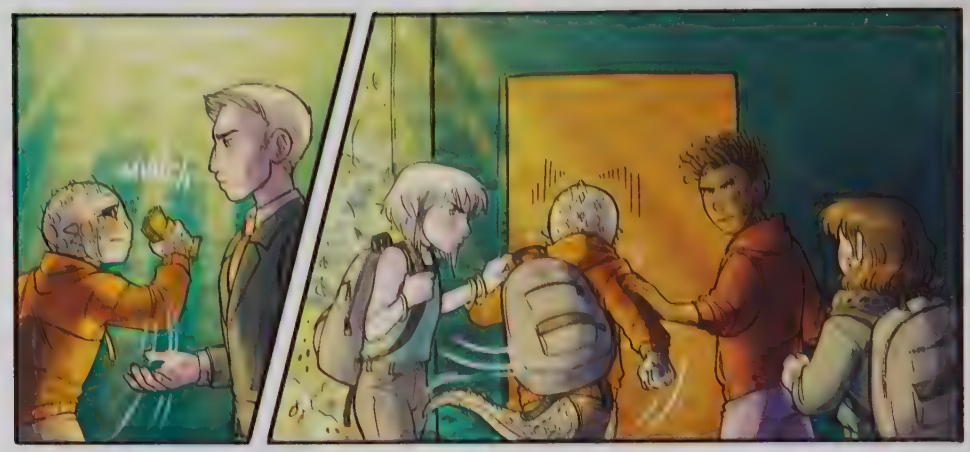
B...BARGAIN?

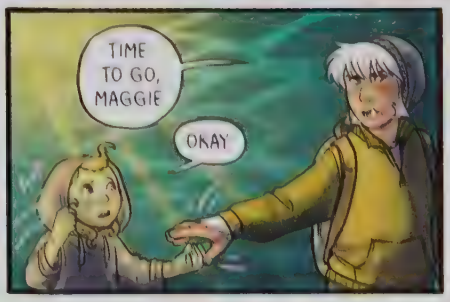


NEWTON, YOU GAVE ME NO CHOICE. YOUR **INEPTITUDE** EXPOSED ME.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND...
THE GOVERNMENT WAS SUSPICIOUS OF ME FOR A LONG TIME, AND WERE LOOKING FOR ANY EVIDENCE THEY COULD GET.
YOUR **LITTLE STUNT** WAS JUST WHAT THEY HAD BEEN WAITING FOR. ONE OF THEIR PEOPLE TOOK THAT PHOTO THROUGH THE FENCE.
SO I HAD TO MAKE A **DEAL**, NEWTON.
THEY PROMISED NOT TO EXPOSE ME AND TO LET ME KEEP MY POSITION...
IF THEY COULD TAKE **CUSTODY** OF **YOU**.
FOR STUDY, I ASSUMED.
YOU... YOU **GAVE ME UP**??
IT WASN'T A DIFFICULT DECISION TO MAKE. I HAD TO PROTECT EVERYTHING I'D BUILT. PROTECT THE SECURITY OF THE MISSION.
OUR MISSION.

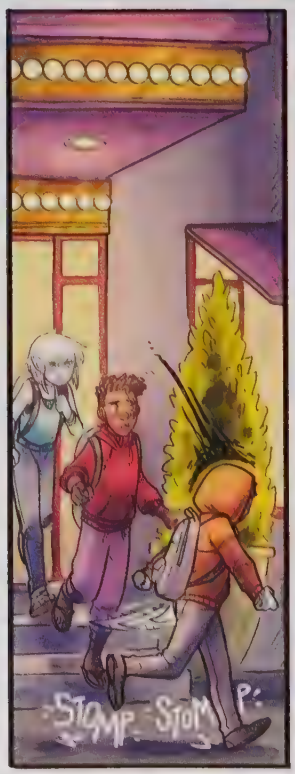
YOU CHOSE TO PROTECT THE MISSION OVER ME? I'M YOUR SON!!
THE MISSION IS THE ULTIMATE PRIORITY, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT.
YOU ARE NOT HUMAN, NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU WISH TO BE ONE!
I NEVER HAD A CHOICE IN THIS!
THIS BEHAVIOR IS HIGHLY IRREGULAR. EMOTIONS LIKE THIS ARE NOT REQUIRED. I'M BEGINNING TO SUSPECT THERE WAS A DEFECT IN YOUR CLONING POD.
I'M NOT A DEFECT!
OBVIOUSLY SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH YOU.
YOU HAVE FORMED ATTACHMENTS TO THIS GROUP.
THIS IS YOUR FINAL CHANCE, NEWTON. COME WITH ME.
COME HOME.
WE WILL TRAVEL TO PHRYNOS TO CORRECT YOUR... ISSUES. YOU WILL FINALLY BE A PROPER REPTILIAN.
YOU WILL FINALLY MAKE ME PROUD.

tremble
...NO.
WHAT DID YOU SAY TO ME?!
I SAID NO!
I WANT NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU OR... OR THE STUPID MISSION! THESE ARE MY FRIENDS! THE PLAYROOM WAS MORE HOME THAN IT EVER WAS WITH YOU!
WE'RE STAYING TOGETHER, AND YOU CAN'T CHANGE ME!
FINE.
SINCE YOUR MIND IS MADE UP.
YOU WILL HAVE NO FURTHER CONTACT WITH ME.
BEST OF LUCK.




TIME TO GO, MAGGIE
OKAY

BYE!


STOMP STOMP

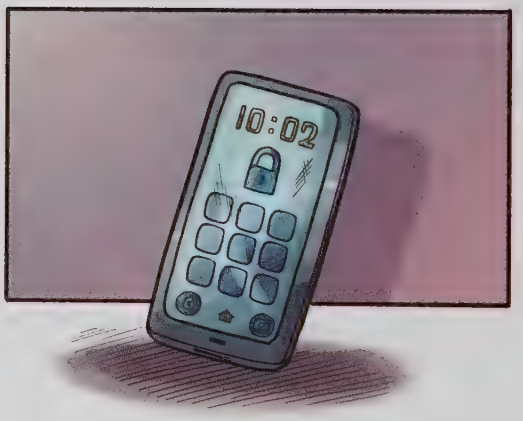
NEWT?

I'M SO SORRY.
I'M SO SORRY I DRAGGED YOU INTO THIS--AND NOW WE HAVE **NOWHERE TO GO!**
IT'S OKAY, WE'LL FIGURE SOMETHING OUT

ARE YOU OKAY?
I'M... I DON'T KNOW.
I HADN'T SEEN HIM IN SO LONG... I HOPED HE'D BE DIFFERENT. BUT HE HASN'T CHANGED AT ALL.
...AND APPARENTLY I'VE CHANGED TOO MUCH.
WHAT HE SAID BACK THERE, ABOUT YOU BEING DEFECTIVE? YOU KNOW NONE OF US...
THINK THAT ABOUT YOU, RIGHT? THAT WAS COLD AND MEAN AND CRUEL.
WELL, OF COURSE IT WAS COLD, HE'S COLD-BLOODED!
HE'S A REPTILE!
HA
HA...HA... HEH
SNIFF...
SOB

CHAPTER SIX

TWO HOUSES



SO WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO?
I'M NOT SURE...
NO WAY.
IS THAT--
IT IS!
IT'S THE SQUATCH GUYS!
F.R.E.A.K.S.H.
VVVRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR
QUICK! THIS WAY!

tmp
YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY THIS TIME, KID!
WHERE'D THEY GO?!
CAN'T HAVE GONE FAR--KEEP LOOKING!
HEH!
OOF!
HEY! WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GO--
shhhh!

VRRRRRRRRRRMM

HOW DID THEY FOLLOW US ALL THE WAY HERE??
I HAVE NO IDEA!
WHO ARE YOU?
I COULD ASK YOU THE SAME THING!
BRUSH
BRUSH

WAIT A SECOND--
YOU'RE THE KID WITH THE BODYGUARDS!

THEY WEREN'T MY BODYGUARDS!
WELL, I DIDN'T TAKE THE STUPID WALLET, ALL RIGHT?
YOU GONNA TURN INTO SOME KIND OF LIZARD DUDE TOO??

YO!
OKAY, THAT'S PRETTY COOL, ACTUALLY MY BAD
WELL, IT'S A PLEASURE MEETING YOU ALL. GOOD TO KNOW WE'RE NOT THE ONLY MONSTERS AROUND
"WE"?
THERE!
DOWN THERE! YOU CAN'T RUN, SNEAK THIEF!
CRAP
UNFORTUNATELY I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR PLEASANTRIES
I AM CURRENTLY BEING CHASED.
AND I ABSOLUTELY MUST KEEP MOVING
YOU SHOULD TOO. YOU DON'T WANT TO GET CAUGHT BY THE DUDES THAT ARE CHASING ME
I'M OFF TO THE HIDEOUT!
SPIN
SHWOOP!
YOU COMING OR WHAT?

WHO'S CHASING YOU??
twip!
twip!
twip!
WHO'S CHASING YOU?!
THEY WENT THIS WAY!
OVER HERE!
GAH!
HERE-- GET IN!
shffff
COME OUT, KITTY CAT!
YOU CAN'T HIDE FOREVER!
WHERE'D THEY GO?!
THAT VAN WITH ALL THE STICKERS HAS BEEN CHASING US FOR DAYS BECAUSE WE'RE IRREGULARITIES.
YOU?
I MAAAAY HAVE LIBERATED SOME OF THESE DUDES' WALLETS?
-SNORT-
HA
HA
HEE
HA
HA
HEE
HA

COAST IS CLEAR-- C'MON!
WAIT A MINUTE! YOU STILL HAVEN'T TOLD US WHO YOU ARE!
I'M TIBBS!
CLOSED
WELCOME, FRIENDS--
TO THE LAIR OF THE MALKINS!

HOME SWEET HOME!
WHO YOU GOT THERE, TIBBS?
PICKED UP A COUPLE OF STRAYS ON MY WAY BACK!

YOU JUST BROUGHT THEM HERE? TIBBS, YOU KNOW--
I KNOW I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO SHOW **OUTSIDERS**.
BUT LOOK! THEY'RE IRREGULARITIES LIKE **US**!
HI!
PULL
ARE YOU SURE THEY'RE NOT WORKING FOR THE **JACKALS**?
THE WHO?
SEE! THEY'RE NEW IN TOWN! JUST ARRIVED THIS MORNING.
THEY WERE BEING CHASED-- I THOUGHT MAYBE **THE BOSS** COULD HELP THEM.
...FINE.
COME ON THIS WAY!
ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?
I HONESTLY HAVE NO IDEA.
COME IN, CHILDREN.

TIBBS, DEAR, INTRODUCE ME TO YOUR FRIENDS.

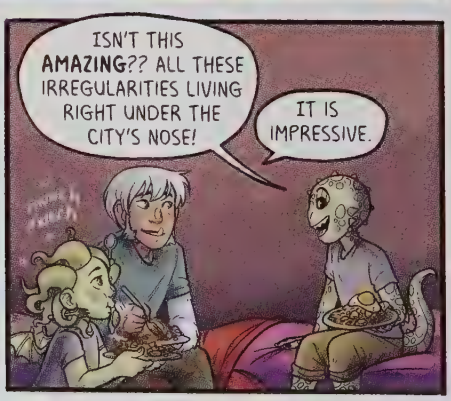
IT'S... A BIT BETTER, YES.
EVERYONE, THIS IS **CAT SITH.**
THE CAT SITH??
LIKE FROM THE **FAIRY TALES**??
THE VERY SAME. DON'T BE ALARMED, IT'S NOT OFTEN I'M HOST TO A **WISP.**
BUT REST ASSURED, YOU ARE SAFE HERE AS MY GUESTS.
SO... WHAT BRINGS YOU TO OUR HUMBLE ABODE?
WE'VE... BEEN TRAVELING FOR A WHILE. WE JUST ARRIVED IN D.C. TODAY.
OUR ORIGINAL PLAN... DIDN'T WORK OUT, AND WE HAVE NO PLACE TO STAY. TIBBS FOUND US BY ACCIDENT--
THOSE **F.R.E.A.K.I.S.H. GUYS** HAD US PINNED IN AN ALLEYWAY.
OH, **THOSE** IDIOTS. I DIDN'T REALIZE THEY WERE BACK IN TOWN.
YOU KNOW OF THEM?
SURE DO.
flop

THEY'RE A GROUP OF **CONSPIRACY THEORISTS** WHO'VE GOTTEN A BIT TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT TO OUR VARIOUS COMMUNITIES. WE'VE LED THEM ON MORE WILD-GOOSE CHASES THAN I WANT TO REMEMBER. THEY'RE NOT **DANGEROUS,** JUST **UTTERLY ANNOYING.**
LAST I HEARD THEY WERE HEADED FOR NEVADA. SOMETHING ABOUT **ALIENS** AND **AREA 51.**
COUGH
Glance
DON'T WORRY, YOU'RE SAFE FROM THEM HERE.
YOU'RE WELCOME TO STAY THE NIGHT, BUT IN RETURN I HAVE A **FAVOR** TO ASK.
AS I'M SURE YOU'VE GATHERED, THESE ARE THE **MALKINS**.
BUT WE'RE NOT ALONE IN THIS CITY. UNFORTUNATELY, WE OFTEN CLASH WITH A GROUP THAT CALLS THEMSELVES THE **JACKALS.**
AS PETTY AS OUR SQUABBLES HAVE BEEN, THE JACKALS RECENTLY **CROSSED THE LINE**.
THEY ACCUSED US OF **CAPTURING** ONE OF THEIR MEMBERS.

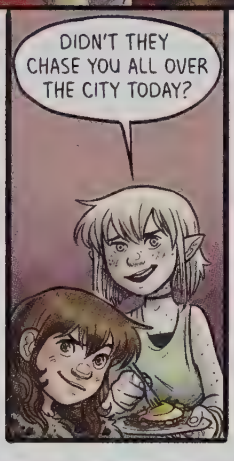
AND AS **REVENGE**, THEY'VE TAKEN ONE OF OURS. **JAYLA**.

BUT YOU **DIDN'T** KIDNAP THEIR FRIEND?
OF COURSE NOT!
WHAT REASON WOULD WE HAVE?

BESIDES, OUR METHODS ARE MUCH **QUIETER** AND **MORE SUBTLE**.
IN RETURN FOR ROOM AND BOARD HERE, I WOULD ASK THAT YOU RESCUE OUR MISSING MALKIN.
TOSS
CATCH
THE JACKALS KNOW TO WATCH OUT FOR US, BUT THEY WILL NEVER SEE YOU COMING.
TIBBS CAN GIVE YOU MORE INFORMATION AND LEAD YOU TO THE JACKAL HIDEOUT TOMORROW.
THEY KNOW THIS CITY LIKE THE BACK OF THEIR HAND.
FOR TONIGHT, EAT, SLEEP, REST.
THANK YOU, SIR.
THANKS, MR. KITTY!
YOU'RE WELCOME, MY DEAR.

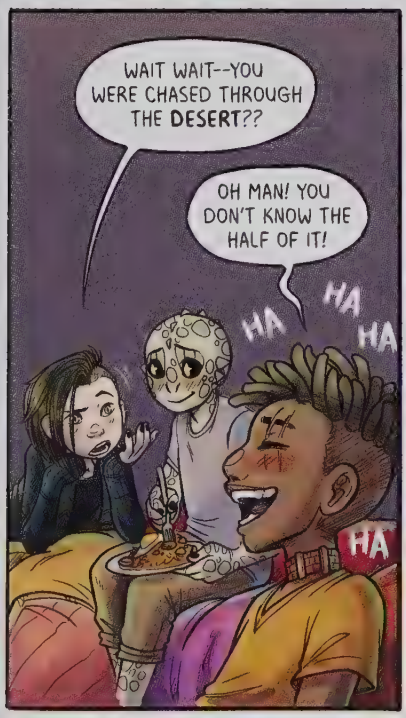

ISN'T THIS **AMAZING**?? ALL THESE IRREGULARITIES LIVING RIGHT UNDER THE CITY'S NOSE!
IT IS IMPRESSIVE.

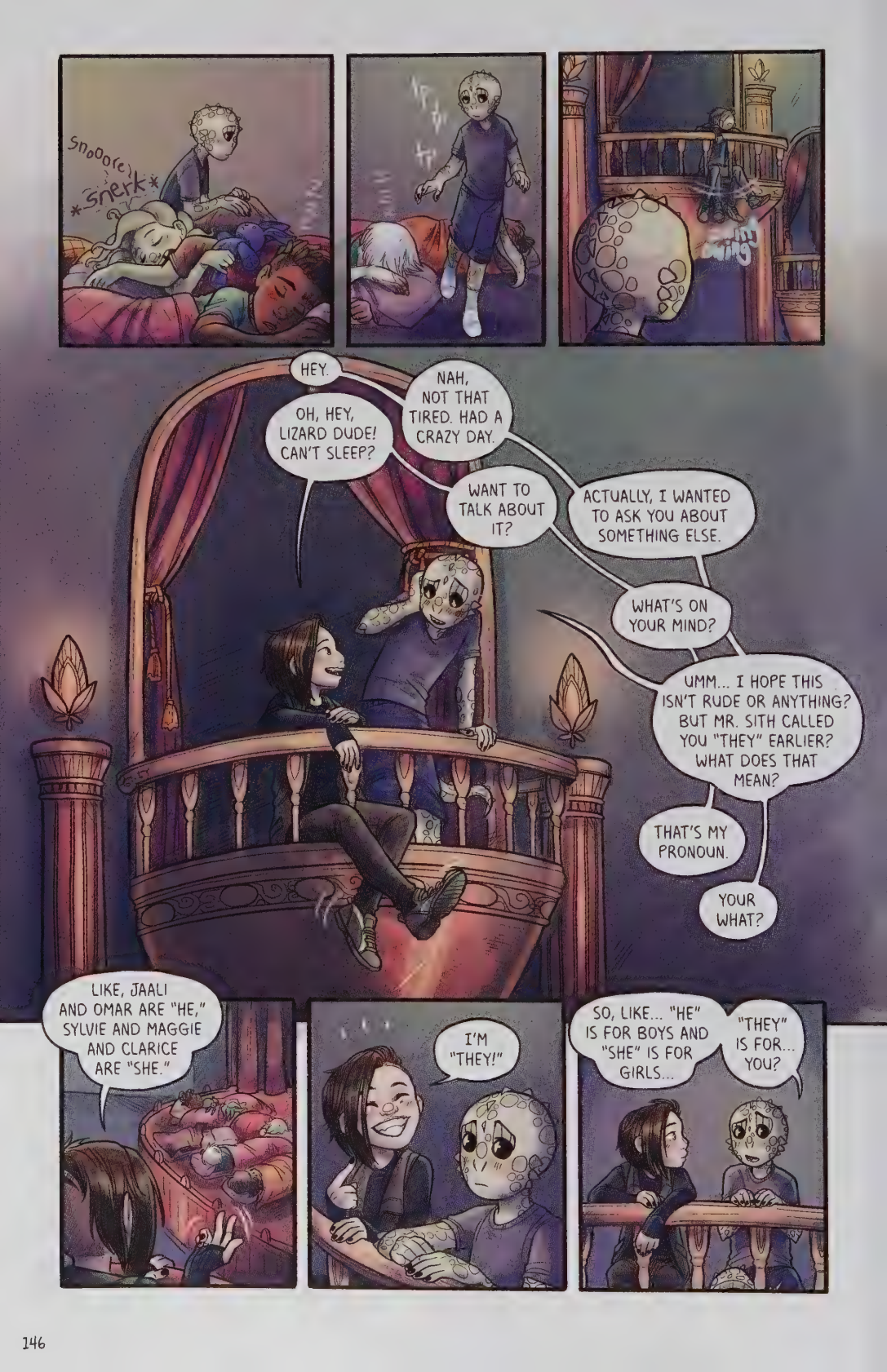
ARE WE GONNA LIVE HERE NOW?
I DON'T KNOW... WE HAVE TO TRY TO RESCUE THEIR FRIEND, AND IT COULD BE DANGEROUS.
bomp!
AHHH, IT'LL BE FINE-- YOU'RE WITH ME! THEY'RE A BUNCH OF PUSHOVERS ANYWAY.


DIDN'T THEY CHASE YOU ALL OVER THE CITY TODAY?

AHEM. WELL.
IT'LL BE FINE. JUST GOTTA BE SNEAKY, Y'KNOW? GET IN, GRAB JAYLA, GET OUT.
wiggle

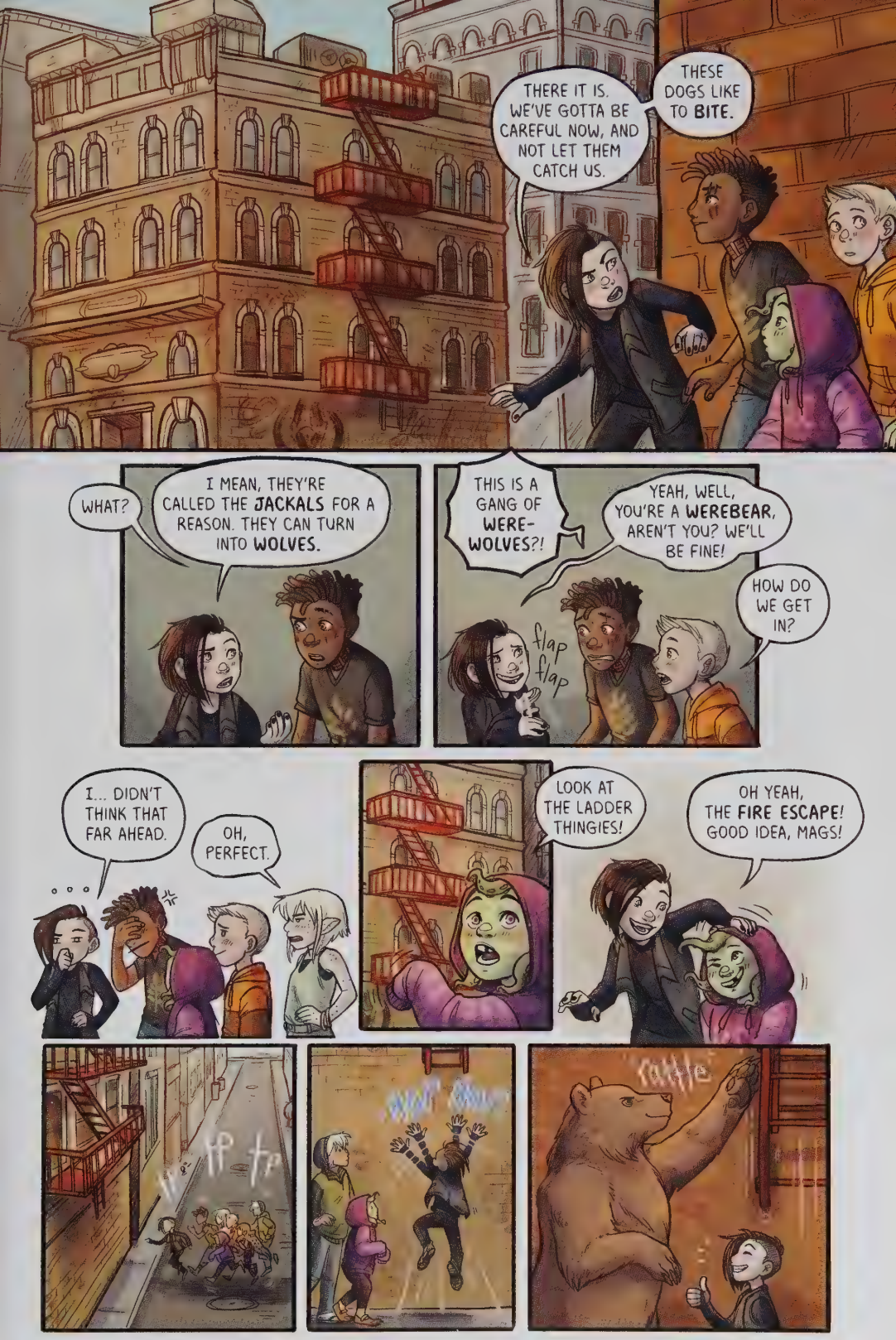
WORKS FOR ME! I COULD GET USED TO LIVING WITHOUT A SCHEDULE.
WITHOUT GETTING CHASED THROUGH THE DESERT.


WAIT WAIT--YOU WERE CHASED THROUGH THE DESERT??
OH MAN! YOU DON'T KNOW THE HALF OF IT!
HA
HA
HA
HA


Snooore
snerk
HEY.
OH, HEY, LIZARD DUDE! CAN'T SLEEP?
NAH, NOT THAT TIRED. HAD A CRAZY DAY.
WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT?
ACTUALLY, I WANTED TO ASK YOU ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE.
WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?
UMM... I HOPE THIS ISN'T RUDE OR ANYTHING? BUT MR. SITH CALLED YOU "THEY" EARLIER? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
THAT'S MY PRONOUN.
YOUR WHAT?
LIKE, JAALI AND OMAR ARE "HE," SYLVIE AND MAGGIE AND CLARICE ARE "SHE."
I'M "THEY!"
SO, LIKE... "HE" IS FOR BOYS AND "SHE" IS FOR GIRLS...
"THEY" IS FOR... YOU?

I MEAN, SORT OF?
THERE ARE LOTS MORE THAN TWO GENDERS THOUGH. IT'S DIFFERENT FOR EVERY PERSON.
SOME PEOPLE USE "HE/THEY" OR "HE/SHE," OR "HE/SHE/THEY," EVEN "XE/XER"!
BUT, YEAH, I'M **NONBINARY**, AND MINE'S "THEM."
YOU'RE NOT GONNA BE **WEIRD** ABOUT IT, ARE YOU?
BAP!
NO--NO! I JUST... DIDN'T KNOW THAT WAS... AN OPTION?
CAN A PERSON...
SOMEONE LIKE ME... CHANGE? THEIR PRONOUN?
HA HA HA
OH YEAH! PEOPLE CHANGE ALL THE TIME. THEY LEARN AND GROW AND MIGHT DISCOVER SOME THINGS ABOUT THEMSELVES AND REALIZE THEY WANT TO USE A DIFFERENT PRONOUN TO DESCRIBE WHO THEY ARE.
WOW. THAT'S SO COOL.
YEAH.

ALL RIGHT, SO! THE MISSING MALKIN'S NAME IS **JAYLA**.
WE THINK THE JACKALS TOOK HER ABOUT A WEEK AGO.
YOU **THINK**?
WELL, WE SAW THOSE DOGS SKULKING AROUND OUR HIDEOUT AND COULDN'T FIND JAYLA ANYWHERE. WHO ELSE COULD IT BE?
HMM...
ANYWAY, I'M GONNA LEAD YOU TO THEIR HIDEOUT. I KNOW YOU'RE NEW TO THE **SNEAK-THIEF LIFE**, SO YOU HAVE TO FOLLOW ALL MY ORDERS AND DO **EXACTLY** WHAT I SAY.
YOU'RE THE LEADER? WHO PUT YOU IN CHARGE??
CAT SITH! AND I'M THE BEST AT STEALING AND SNEAKING AND STUFF!
OH, REALLY? THEN WHERE'S YOUR **WALLET**?
PAT PAT PAT PAT
?
!
PFFF!
FINE, YOU GOT ME THAT TIME. BUT SERIOUSLY, FOLLOW MY LEAD.
HEE HEE!


THERE IT IS. WE'VE GOTTA BE CAREFUL NOW, AND NOT LET THEM CATCH US.
THESE DOGS LIKE TO BITE.
WHAT?
I MEAN, THEY'RE CALLED THE JACKALS FOR A REASON. THEY CAN TURN INTO WOLVES.
THIS IS A GANG OF WERE-WOLVES?!
YEAH, WELL, YOU'RE A WEREBEAR, AREN'T YOU? WE'LL BE FINE!
HOW DO WE GET IN?
flap flap
I... DIDN'T THINK THAT FAR AHEAD.
OH, PERFECT.
LOOK AT THE LADDER THINGIES!
OH YEAH, THE FIRE ESCAPE! GOOD IDEA, MAGS!
tap tap
rattle

DO YOU SEE JAYLA?
NOT YET. KEEP LOOKING!
THAT'S THEIR LEADER, DINAH.
snag
PULL
TUG TUG
YANK
QUIET!
CLATTER

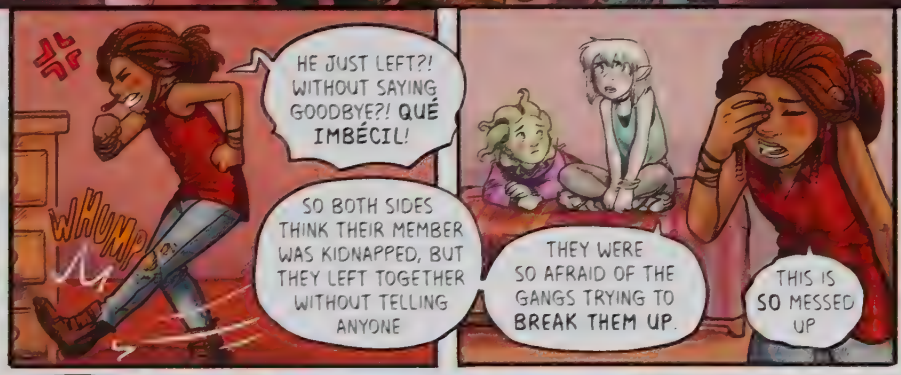
WHAT WAS THAT??
IS SOMEONE OUTSIDE?
GO LOOK!
UM, MISS DINAH? HARRIS SAID HE NEEDS YOUR HELP DOWNSTAIRS?
HMPH. ALL RIGHT. I'LL HEAD DOWN.
OKAY, GOTTA KEEP LOOKIN--
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
ACK!
SHE'S ONE OF THE JACKALS!
GET READY FOR A FIGHT!

hisssssss
WHOA, WHOA, WHOA! I JUST WANNA TALK!
YOU CAN'T TRUST A JACKAL!
I JUST SAVED YOUR BUTTS FROM GETTING SPOTTED! I TOLD DINAH TO GO DOWNSTAIRS.
YOU'RE HERE LOOKING FOR THE MISSING MALKIN, AREN'T YOU? WE DON'T HAVE HER. AND WE'RE STILL MISSING ONE OF OURS TOO--
MY BROTHER RAY. I'M TRYING TO FIND HIM, BUT THE REST OF THE JACKALS ARE TOO CAUGHT UP IN FIGHTING THE MALKINS TO HELP ME.
SOUNDS LIKE SHE'S TELLING THE TRUTH, TIBBS.
FINE. LET'S TALK. BUT THE FIRST SIGN OF A TRAP, WE'RE BUSTING OUR WAY OUTTA HERE!
FINE BY ME, SCAREDY-CAT.
AM NOT!
SHHH!

I'M ADDIE. MY BROTHER WENT MISSING ABOUT A WEEK AGO.
THAT'S WHEN JAYLA WENT MISSING TOO, RIGHT?
YEAH.
I DON'T THINK THE MALKINS TOOK RAY--HE WAS ACTING WEIRD IN THE DAYS BEFORE HE DISAPPEARED.
HE WAS DISTANT, WOULDN'T TALK TO ANYONE.
NOT EVEN ME.
ALL THE REST OF THE JACKALS THOUGHT YOU MALKINS TOOK HIM--
WE DIDN'T!
I KNOW, I KNOW! BUT EVERYONE THINKS IT!
AND ALL THE MALKINS THINK WE TOOK ONE OF YOURS FOR REVENGE! IT'S ALL TWISTED UP, AND WE HAVE TO FIX IT.
AND I WANT TO KNOW WHERE MY BROTHER IS.
CAN'T YOU JUST WOLF IT UP AND FOLLOW HIS SCENT TRAIL?
OH NO, I'M NOT A WOLF.
YOU'RE NOT??
NO, BUT MY BROTHER IS. HE JOINED THE JACKALS WHEN WE WERE YOUNGER, AND THEY TOOK US BOTH IN.
EVEN THOUGH I'M JUST A HUMAN.
THEY'RE REALLY NOT AS BAD AS YOU MALKINS SEEM TO THINK.
THE WOLVES FOLLOWED HIS SCENT AS FAR AS THEY COULD, BUT IT ENDS RIGHT NEAR THE MALKIN HIDEOUT. THAT'S WHY THEY THINK YOU'VE GOT RAY.

BUT IT SEEMED OFF TO ME...
I SEARCHED ON MY OWN AND THE ONLY THING I FOUND WAS HIS **PHONE.**
BUT IT'S **LOCKED**--I CAN'T GET IT OPEN. I'M STUCK.
10:02
NO PROBLEM. NEWT?
I'M ON IT!
CRACK
SO HOW LONG DOES THIS NORMALLY TA--
tap
tap
tap
DONE!
HOLY **CRAP**, THAT WAS FAST! I'VE BEEN TRYING FOR A **WEEK!**
YOU'RE THE BEST!
CAN YOU FIND HIS LAST LOCATION? OR, LIKE, TEXTS OR CALLS OR SOMETHING?
YEAH, LET ME JUST...
WAIT.
HEY, TIBBS? WHAT DOES JAYLA **LOOK LIKE?**
UH, BLACK HAIR IN BRAIDS, YELLOW EYES LIKE MINE, KINDA SHORT?
WITH **PINK STREAKS** IN HER HAIR?
YEAH! WHAT? **HOW??**
LOOK.

W-WHAT??
HE NEVER TOLD ME ABOUT--
THEY WERE TOGETHER??
YEAH
DO THE TEXTS SAY WHERE THEY WENT?
THEY KEEP TALKING ABOUT "THE SANCTUARY"?
IT COMES UP A BUNCH OF TIMES AND... HERE! THEY PLANNED TO RUN AWAY!
THEY LEFT A WEEK AGO. HE MUST HAVE FORGOTTEN HIS PHONE.
WHAT'S THE SANCTUARY?
IT SOUNDS LIKE IT'S A SAFE HAVEN FOR IRREGULARITIES. . OUT WEST IN WASHINGTON STATE



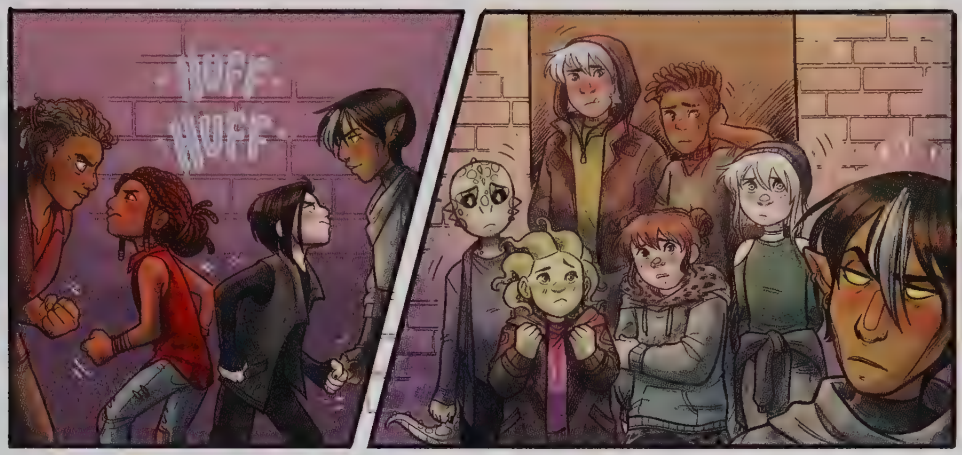
HELP!
THE MALKINS ARE KIDNAPPING ME NOW TOO!
AFTER THEM, HURRY!
THEY WON'T GET AWAY WITH IT THIS TIME!

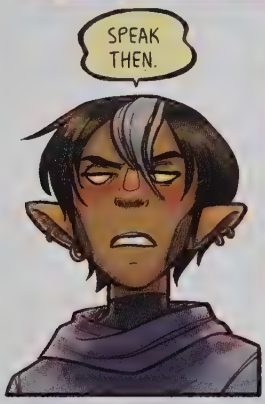
AIIEEEEEE!
MALKINS, HELP! THE DESPICABLE JACKALS ARE DRAGGING ME AWAY!
WAIT, WAS THAT A BEAR?
DON'T BE DUMB! THEY'RE WEREWOLVES, NOT WEREBEARS!
YOU'RE OVER-SELLING IT!

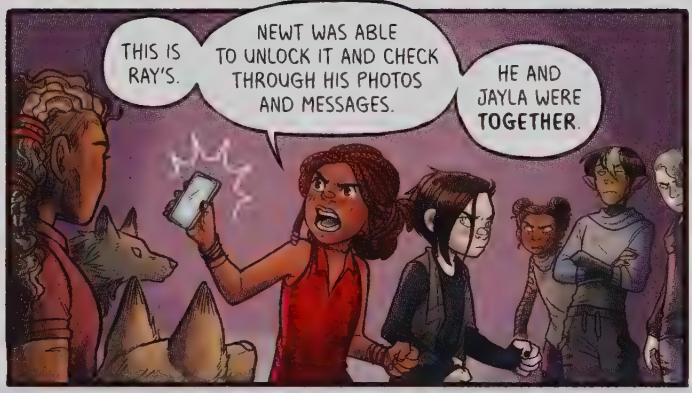
YOU! GIVE ADDIE BACK! SHE'S DONE NOTHING TO YOU!
CEASE YOUR BARKING, DOG. WE DON'T HAVE ADDIE. RETURN TIBBS TO US.
TIBBS? THAT STREETCAT? WE DON'T HAVE THEM!
HIISS
SSS
LIAR.
SNEAK!
BRUTE.
COWARD!
SNAARL
shwoop!

WE'RE HERE!
WAIT!
SORRY WE HAD TO TRICK YOU--
ADDIE, WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?!
TIBBS, WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

WE HAD TO!
YOU WON'T STOP FIGHTING LONG ENOUGH TO HEAR THE TRUTH!
WE KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO RAY AND JAYLA!







WHAT?!

THEY FELL IN LOVE! LOOK AT THEM--LOOK AT HOW **HAPPY** THEY ARE!

BUT YOU FOUGHT SO MUCH AND WERE SO DIVIDED, THEY KNEW THAT YOU WOULD TRY TO END THEIR RELATIONSHIP.

SO THEY RAN AWAY TOGETHER.

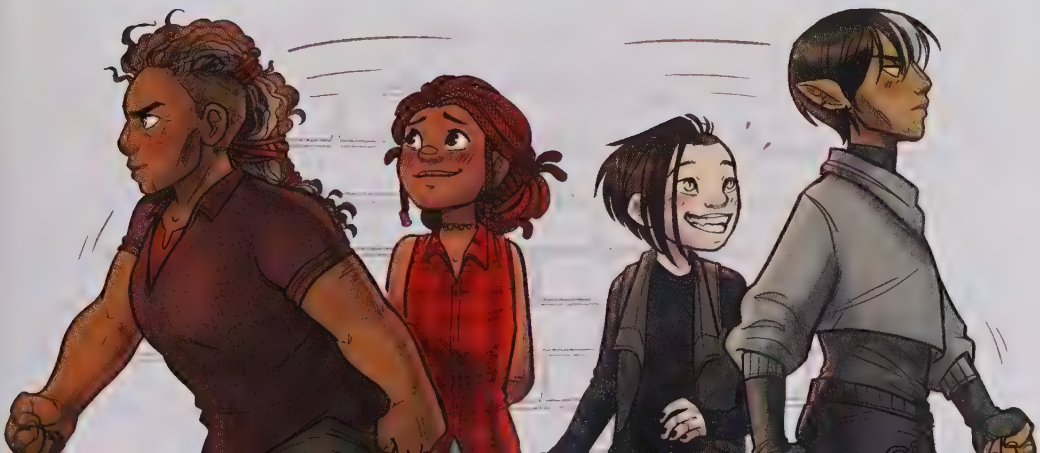
YOU **DROVE THEM AWAY**.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE?
I'M SO SORRY, BABY. WE GOT SO CARRIED AWAY...
WE NEVER MEANT TO DRIVE AWAY OUR FAMILY.
WE WERE WRONG IN THIS INSTANCE.
BUT I STILL DO NOT TRUST **YOU** OR YOUR **DOGS**.
SAME TO YOU, **CAT**!
YOU'RE DOING IT AGAIN!!
YOU WERE WRONG THIS TIME, WHO'S TO SAY YOU HAVEN'T BEEN WRONG **BEFORE**?!
YOU HAVE TO **TALK** TO EACH OTHER!

...VERY WELL. FOR THE GOOD OF BOTH OUR HOUSES, WE SHOULD WORK TOWARD **EASING THE TENSION.**
I'LL **PLAY NICE** IF YOU DO, SITH.

I LOOK FORWARD TO... FUTURE... COOPERATION.

...
...DITTO.



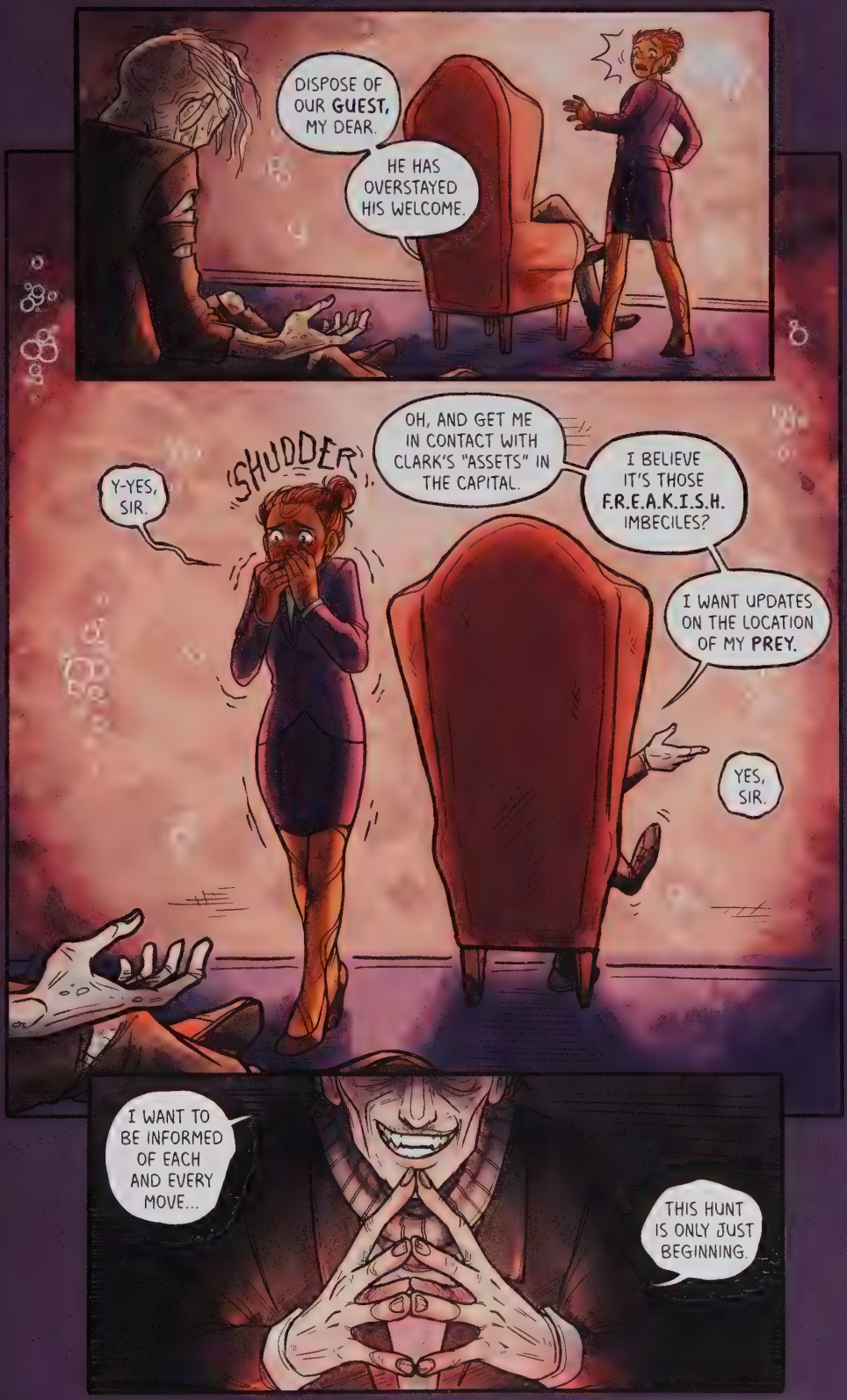
WE DID IT!!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT WORKED!
ARE YOU TWO GONNA BE OKAY HANDLING THIS ALLIANCE?
SEEMS LIKE IT'LL BE TOUGH...
OF COURSE WE WILL!
WE'LL KEEP THEM ON THEIR TOES--
MAKE SURE THEY DON'T KILL EACH OTHER.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO NOW?
SITH SAID YOU CAN STAY A WHILE, IF YOU WANT TO.

WE CAN'T REALLY STICK AROUND... NOT WITH F.R.E.A.K.I.S.H. ON OUR HEELS.
WE WOULDN'T WANT TO RISK EXPOSING THE JACKALS OR MALKINS.
MAYBE YOU CAN FOLLOW BEHIND RAY AND JAYLA? FIND THAT SANCTUARY THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT?
THAT'S WHAT WE WERE THINKING TOO.
HERE, TAKE RAY'S PHONE.
ONCE YOU GET THERE, TELL HIM TO CALL ME, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE.
-SNIFF-
THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH!
I'M GLAD I TRIED TO PICKPOCKET YOUR BODYGUARD.
I TOLD YOU! HE WASN'T MY BODYGUARD--

SIR... SIR, I...
YOU LOST THEM.
BUT I'M ON THEIR TRAIL! I HAVE ASSETS FOLLOWING THEM--THEY'RE IN D.C.! I'LL GET THEM BACK I SWEAR--

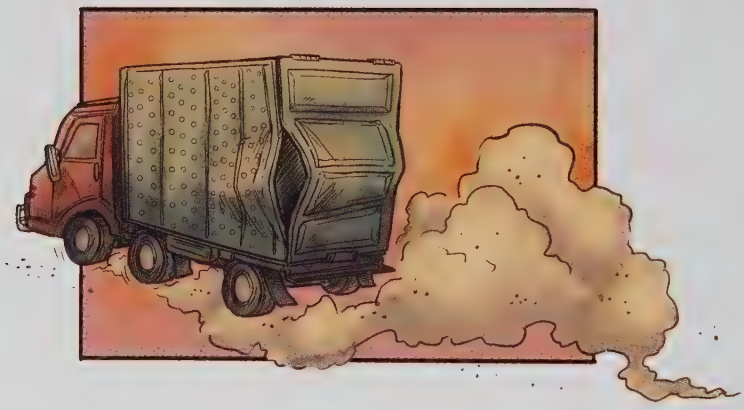
YOU'VE FAILED ME, AND YOU KNOW THE CONSEQUENCES.
NO! NO, WAIT-- I KNOW WHERE THEY ARE!
YOU NEED ME!
A CLEVER GAMBIT, BUT YOU'VE ALREADY LOST, CLARK. I KNOW WHERE THEY ARE, AND THEY'LL FIND THEIR WAY TO ME WITHOUT YOUR ASSISTANCE. MY TRAP IS SET. ALL I NEED NOW IS PATIENCE.
SLAM
NO! NO, PLEASE!
NO! NO! AAAAAGH!

squelch
SIR?
WAVE
...SIR?


DISPOSE OF OUR GUEST, MY DEAR.
HE HAS OVERSTAYED HIS WELCOME.
SHUDDER
Y-YES, SIR.
OH, AND GET ME IN CONTACT WITH CLARK'S "ASSETS" IN THE CAPITAL.
I BELIEVE IT'S THOSE F.R.E.A.K.I.S.H. IMBECILES?
I WANT UPDATES ON THE LOCATION OF MY PREY.
YES, SIR.
I WANT TO BE INFORMED OF EACH AND EVERY MOVE...
THIS HUNT IS ONLY JUST BEGINNING.

CHAPTER SEVEN

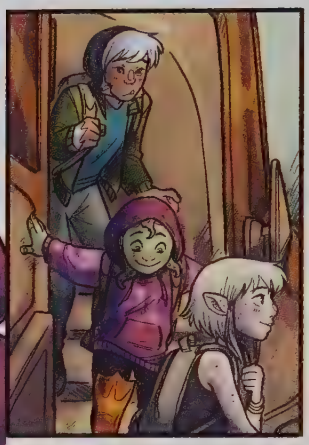
CROSS COUNTRY



-chatter-
-mumble-
-chatter-
-chatter-
SO I KNOW IT'S IN WASHINGTON STATE-- THAT'S WHERE RAY AND JAYLA WERE HEADED.
THEY HAVE A COUPLE OF MESSAGES BACK AND FORTH ABOUT BUS TICKETS AND STUFF...
BUT NO ADDRESSES.
CAN'T YOU JUST... LIKE... GOOGLE IT?
OH SURE, JUST SEARCH "HI, WHERE CAN A GROUP OF SIX MONSTERS THAT MAY OR MAY NOT INCLUDE...
A BEAR, A SELKIE, A YETI, AN ALIEN, A WILL-O-THE-WISP, AND WHATEVER MAGGIE IS, GO HIDE BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT IS AFTER THEM?"
I'M SURE THAT WOULD WORK OUT PERFECTLY.

STOPPIN' IN WEST VIRGINIA FOR A MOMENT. NEED TO REFUEL. FEEL FREE TO STRETCH YOUR LEGS AND GET SOMETHING TO EAT.

SNACKS!!
YEAH, MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA.



LAST CALL, BUS 48939 LEAVING FOR SEATTLE. PLEASE BOARD NOW.
THAT'S US, COME ON, EVERYONE.

WAIT-- WHERE'S MAGGIE??

STROOMS
MAGGIE!
MAGGIE, STOP!! NO ONE CAN SEE YOUR HAIR!
JUST ONE SECOND. I NEED THAT DINOSAUR!
MAGGIE, NO!
THE BUS IS ABOUT TO LEAVE!
NOOOO, I WANT THE DINOSAUR!
YANK!

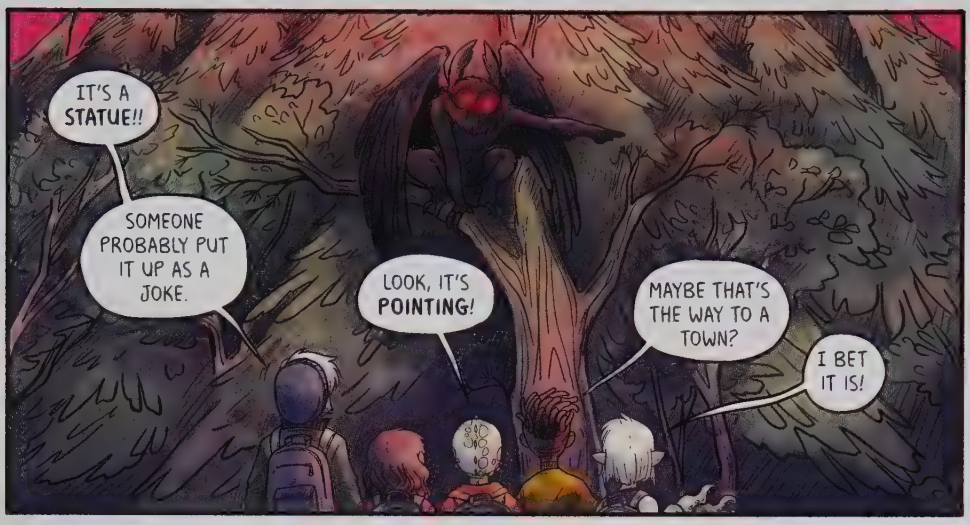
NO! NO! NO! I WANT THE STUFFIE!!!
WHICH BUS--
THERE!
WAVE
WAVE
...WE'RE TOO LATE.
WE MISSED IT.
MAGGIE, WHAT DID YOU HAVE TO DO THAT FOR?!
WE MISSED THE BUS BECAUSE OF YOU!
AH CRAP.
BUH... BUH...
WAAAHAHAAA
I JUST! I JUST! WANTED! SOB! THE STUFFIE! AND--AND--AND--
NGGK!

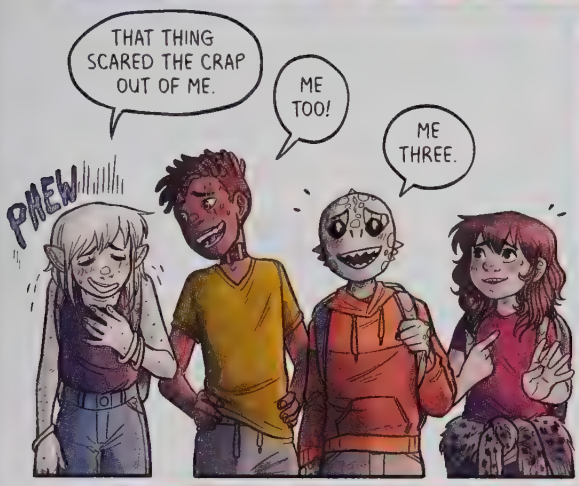
BUH HUH
I MISS MY ROOM!
SOB!
I MISS THE POOL! AND I-- I--
THIS ISN'T ABOUT THE STUFFIE, IS IT?
-SNRK-
AND WE--CRASHED THE C-CAR AND NOW--SOB-- WE MISSED THE BUS--AND IT'S ALL MY F-F-FAULT AND I JUST I'M SO--SO--SO-- SCARED!
WE CAN'T STICK AROUND. THOSE F.R.E.A.K.I.S.H. GUYS MIGHT SHOW UP BEFORE ANOTHER BUS DOES.
WAAHHAAA BUH HUH.. HUH HUH...
WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO WALK NOW.
HEY, TINY, IT'S ALL RIGHT.
WE'RE ALL SCARED.
WE'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT THESE PAST FEW DAYS.
sniff
IT'S OKAY. WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES, BUT WE'RE GONNA BE ALL RIGHT AS LONG AS WE'RE TOGETHER.
WELL... MIGHT AS WELL GET MOVING.
COME ON.
sniffle

HOW FAR HAVE WE WALKED NOW?
I DON'T KNOW--THERE'S NO SIGNAL!
I CAN'T EVEN OPEN A MAP. THIS IS--
OH GREAT!
WHAT?
MY O-PAD DIED!
SO NOW NOT ONLY ARE WE LOST, WE WON'T HAVE ANY DIRECTIONS UNTIL WE CAN FIND SOME PLACE TO CHARGE IT!
WHICH COULD BE HUNDREDS OF MILES FROM HERE!
NEWT, KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN!
SHH!
KEEP MY VOICE DOWN?? THIS IS THE WORST!!
YOU SHH! I DON'T SEE YOU HELPING, OR DO YOU MAGICALLY HAVE A PORTABLE CHARGER HIDDEN IN YOUR FUR?!
QUIET!

LOOK!

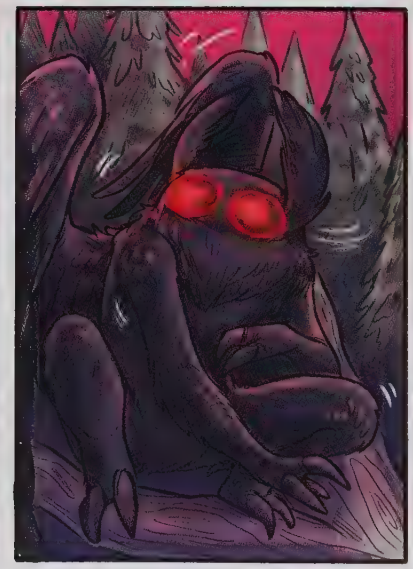
WH...WHAT IS THAT??
DO YOU THINK IT'S DANGEROUS?
I DON'T KNOW!
IT'S NOT MOVING... IS IT A **BIRD**?
IT'S TOO **BIG** TO BE A BIRD...
STAY BEHIND ME!
GGGRRROOOAAR!
HAH!
WHAT IS IT??
COME LOOK!


IT'S A STATUE!!
SOMEONE PROBABLY PUT IT UP AS A JOKE.
LOOK, IT'S POINTING!
MAYBE THAT'S THE WAY TO A TOWN?
I BET IT IS!

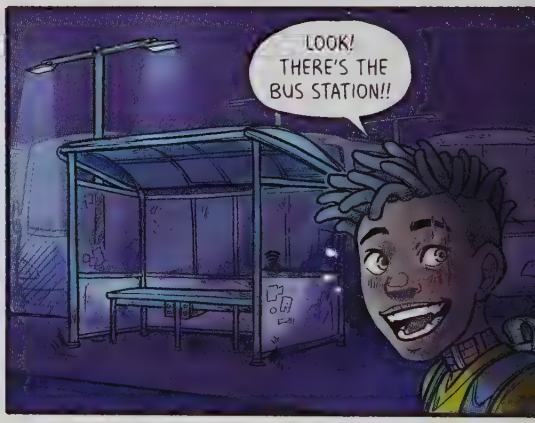

THAT THING SCARED THE CRAP OUT OF ME.
ME TOO!
ME THREE.
PHEW

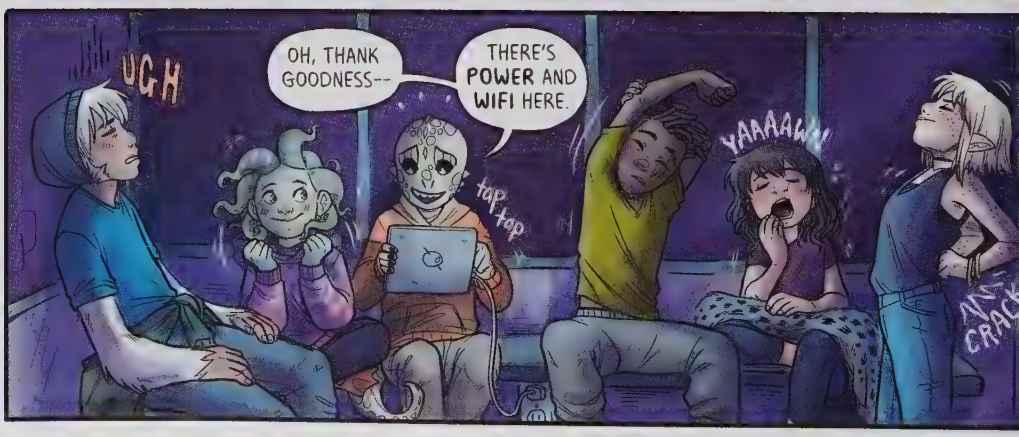
MIGHT AS WELL FOLLOW ITS DIRECTIONS. FIND SOMEPLACE TO CHARGE YOUR O-PAD, NEWT.
YEAH.
LET'S GO!

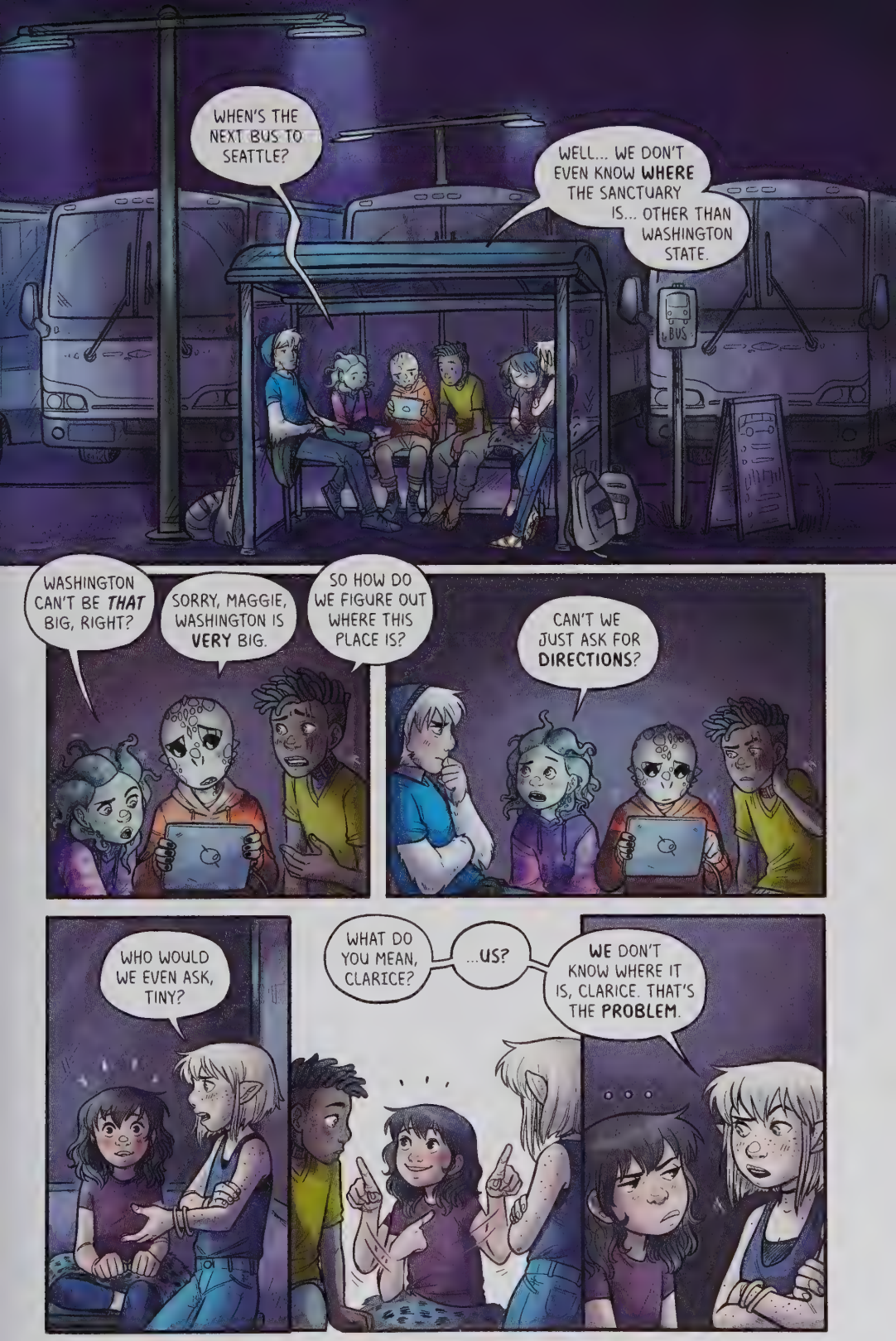
BUS
3 MILES



WHAT'S THAT LIGHT UP AHEAD?


LOOK! THERE'S THE BUS STATION!!


UGH
OH, THANK GOODNESS--
THERE'S POWER AND WIFI HERE.
tap tap
YAAAAAW
CRACK


WHEN'S THE NEXT BUS TO SEATTLE?
WELL... WE DON'T EVEN KNOW **WHERE** THE SANCTUARY IS... OTHER THAN WASHINGTON STATE.
BUS
WASHINGTON CAN'T BE ***THAT*** BIG, RIGHT?
SORRY, MAGGIE, WASHINGTON IS **VERY** BIG.
SO HOW DO WE FIGURE OUT WHERE THIS PLACE IS?
CAN'T WE JUST ASK FOR **DIRECTIONS**?
WHO WOULD WE EVEN ASK, TINY?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, CLARICE?
...**US**?
WE DON'T KNOW WHERE IT IS, CLARICE. THAT'S THE **PROBLEM**.

?
OH!
OTHER IRREGULARITIES!
RAY AND JAYLA HAD TO LEARN ABOUT IT FROM SOMEONE, RIGHT?
SO WE JUST HAVE TO FIND SOME MORE CREATURES LIKE US TO ASK!
BUT HOW ARE WE GONNA FIND THEM?
STUMBLE ON THEM IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT AGAIN?
nod nod
HANG ON A SECOND!
tap tappa
tap tap
THE SQUATCH GUYS MAPPED IT OUT FOR US ALREADY!
OH YEAH!
F.R.E.A.K.I.S.H
INTELLIGENT

F.R.E.A.K.I.S.H.
FRATERNITY of RESEARCHERS to the EXISTENCE of ALL KNOWN INTELLIGENT SUPERNATURAL HUMANOIDS
HOME
THEORIES
TRUTHS
BLOG
MERCH
LOVELAND FROGMAN
Loveland, OH
Seems to enjoy scaring tourists. Likely a hoax.
?
THE MOMO
Mississippi River, LA, MO
Short for "Missouri Monster, it has a terrible odor. Super creepy.
N
W
E
S
?
POPE LICK MONSTER
Pope Lick Creek, KY
Half-man half-goat. Very dangerous rumors from various victims!

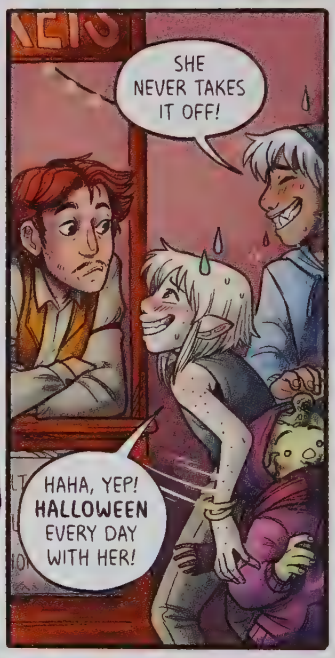
CHUPACABRA
SW United States and Mexico
Spanish for "Goat Sucker." Known to attack livestock and drink its blood.
?
WA
VISIT AREA 51
clack
clack
NEXT EXIT
ALKALI LAKE MONSTER
Walgren Lake, NE
Known to harass swimmers and fishermen. Hasn't been sighted in many years.
?

FRESNO NIGHTCRAWLERS
Fresno, CA
Only seen through pixelated film, these Ghost Pants are thought to be alien life-forms.
LOOK!
WHAT IF THEY REALLY HAVE IRREGULARITIES HERE?
MUSEUM OF CRYPTIDS
LIVE SPECIMENS
IT WOULD BE A PERFECT COVER STORY, HONESTLY.
CRYPTID MUSEUM
TICKETS
ENTRANCE
LET'S CHECK IT OUT!

WELCOME, TRAVELERS!
COME TO SEE THE TERRIFYING AND BEWILDERING CREATURES FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE?
UH... YEAH.
SIX TICKETS, PLEASE!
TICKETS
ADULT.....$6
CHILD....$2

SIX TICKETS! COMIN' RIGHT UP!

NICE COSTUME, SWEETHEART! YOU'D FIT RIGHT IN WITH THE EXHIBITS!


SHE NEVER TAKES IT OFF!
HAHA, YEP! HALLOWEEN EVERY DAY WITH HER!

WELL, ENJOY THE SHOW, LIL' LADY!
DON'T GET TOO SCARED, NOW!
ADULT.....$6
CHILD.....$2

OCEAN DEPTHS

SELKIES?

FIJI MERMAID

HOAX!

EVIDENCE

REPTILIAN LIZARD-MEN

PROOF!

THIS SAYS REPTILIANS EAT **HUMAN FLESH!** GROSS!

SWSH

SWSH

WHY ARE THEY ALL NAKED??
fairies
WHY ARE WHO ALL WHA--
HEY!
YETI
I THINK... I THINK I'M OFFENDED.
SQUEEPLE
YUCK!
LIVE NANDI BEAR

JAALI?
IS THAT REALLY A NANDI BEAR?
NO, I'M A NANDI BEAR. THAT'S JUST... A BEAR.
A SICK AND OLD BEAR WHO SHOULDN'T BE IN A CAGE!
CLANG
snff snff
whuff
I'M SORRY.
EXIT
GIFT SHOP
THAT WAS... A BAD SHOW.
YEAH.
ARE YOU OKAY?
SNIFF

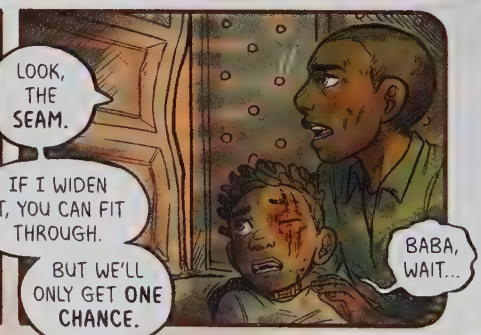
I THOUGHT... FOR A SECOND...
I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE MY DAD.
YOUR DAD??
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR DAD?
IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN JUST BABA AND ME. MAMA DIED WHEN I WAS LITTLE. I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER HER.
BABA WORKED FOR THE NATURE PRESERVE-- OFFICIALLY AS A RANGER...
BUT WHEN YOU'RE SCARING OFF POACHERS...
...IT DOESN'T HURT TO BE ABLE TO TURN INTO A SEVEN-FOOT BEAR.

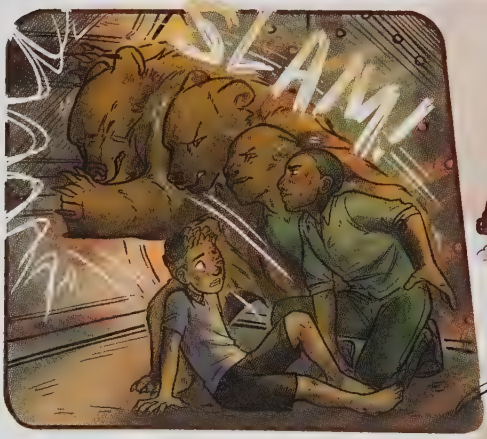
BUT THAT DAY...
RAAAAARRGHH!!!
IT'S THEM!
ssssshhffff
BLAM!
BAM
BAM
BAM
mwwhuuf?!

GGGRRR
RRRRRR
SWIPE
GGRAAAR!
AGH!
SLASH!
YELP!
huff huff huff
BAM
BAM
HEH, STUPID LITTLE CUB.
huff huff

YOU SHOULD HAVE RUN WHEN YOU HAD THE **CHANCE**.
LET **THE COLLECTOR** KNOW--WE'VE CAPTURED THE **NANDI BEARS**.
JAALI... JAALI, WAKE UP.
WAKE UP!!
B... BABA...

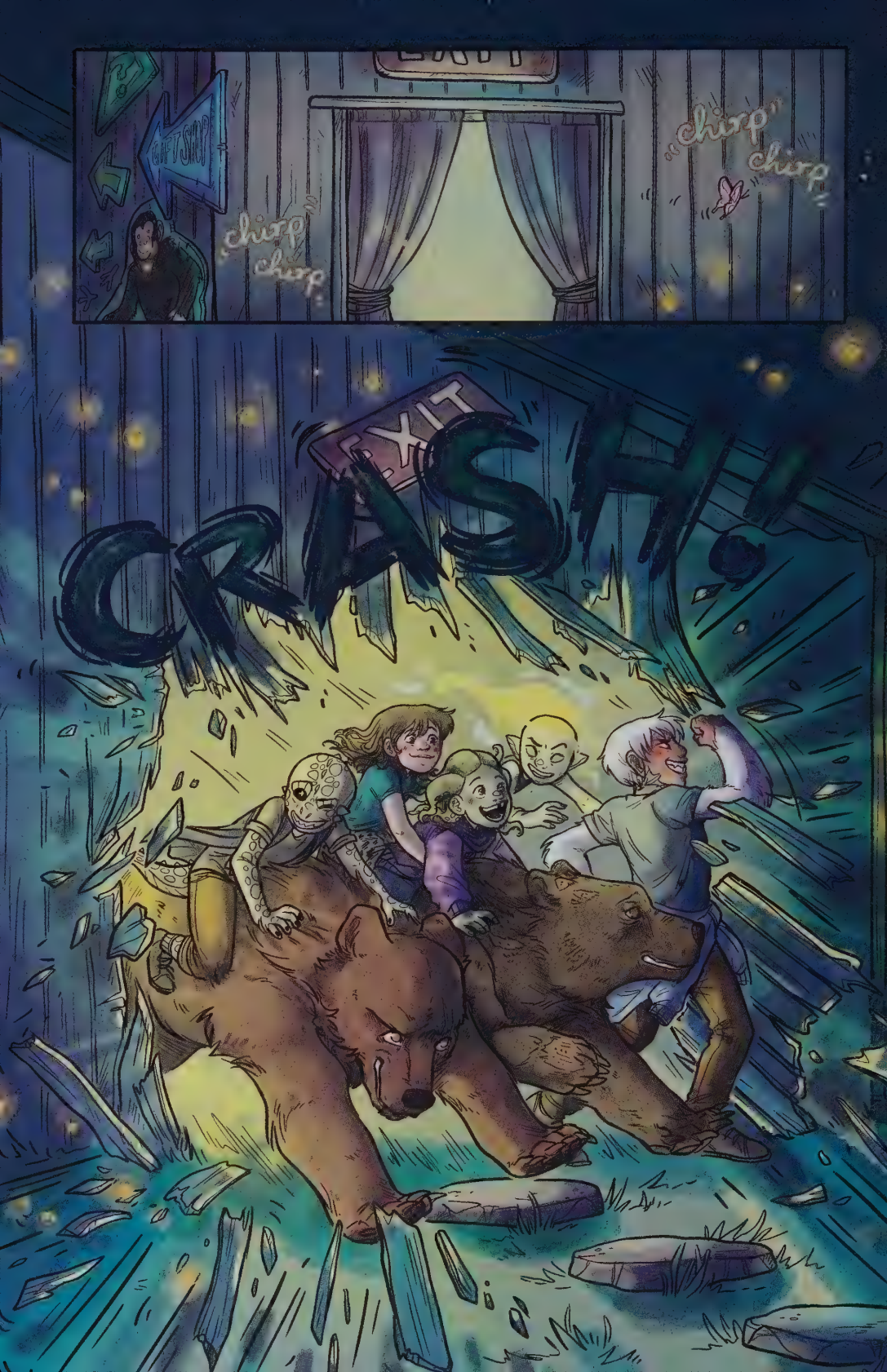
JAALI, YOU HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE.
hss


LOOK, THE **SEAM**.
IF I WIDEN IT, YOU CAN FIT THROUGH.
BUT WE'LL ONLY GET **ONE CHANCE**.
BABA, WAIT...

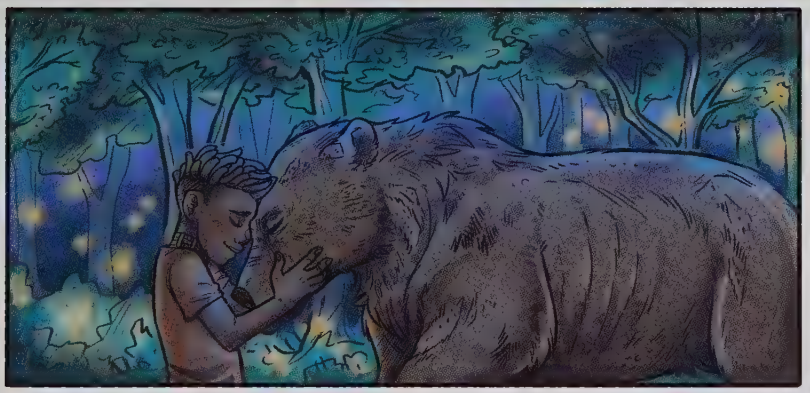

SLAM

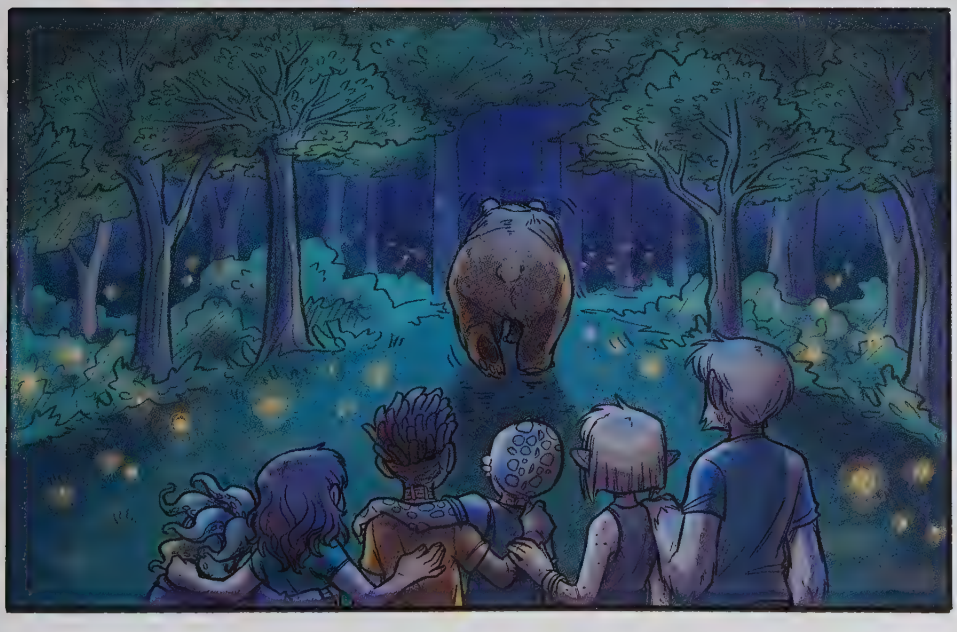
I LOVE YOU. NEVER STOP FIGHTING!
UPHERVE

GO, JAALI!
NO-- NO--DAD!
THE PLAYROOM PICKED ME UP PRETTY QUICK AFTER THAT.
I'M SO SORRY.
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL US ABOUT THIS?
BECAUSE HE'S GONE!
IT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE. I GOT OUT AND HE DIDN'T.
BUT JUST FOR A SECOND I THOUGHT...
I HAVE AN IDEA THAT MIGHT MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER!


GIFT SHOP
chirp chirp
"chirp" chirp
EXIT
CRASH!!

WHAT THE--?!
MY BEAR!!
OR... UM... NOT? MY BEAR? ANYMORE?
GGGRRRRRRRR



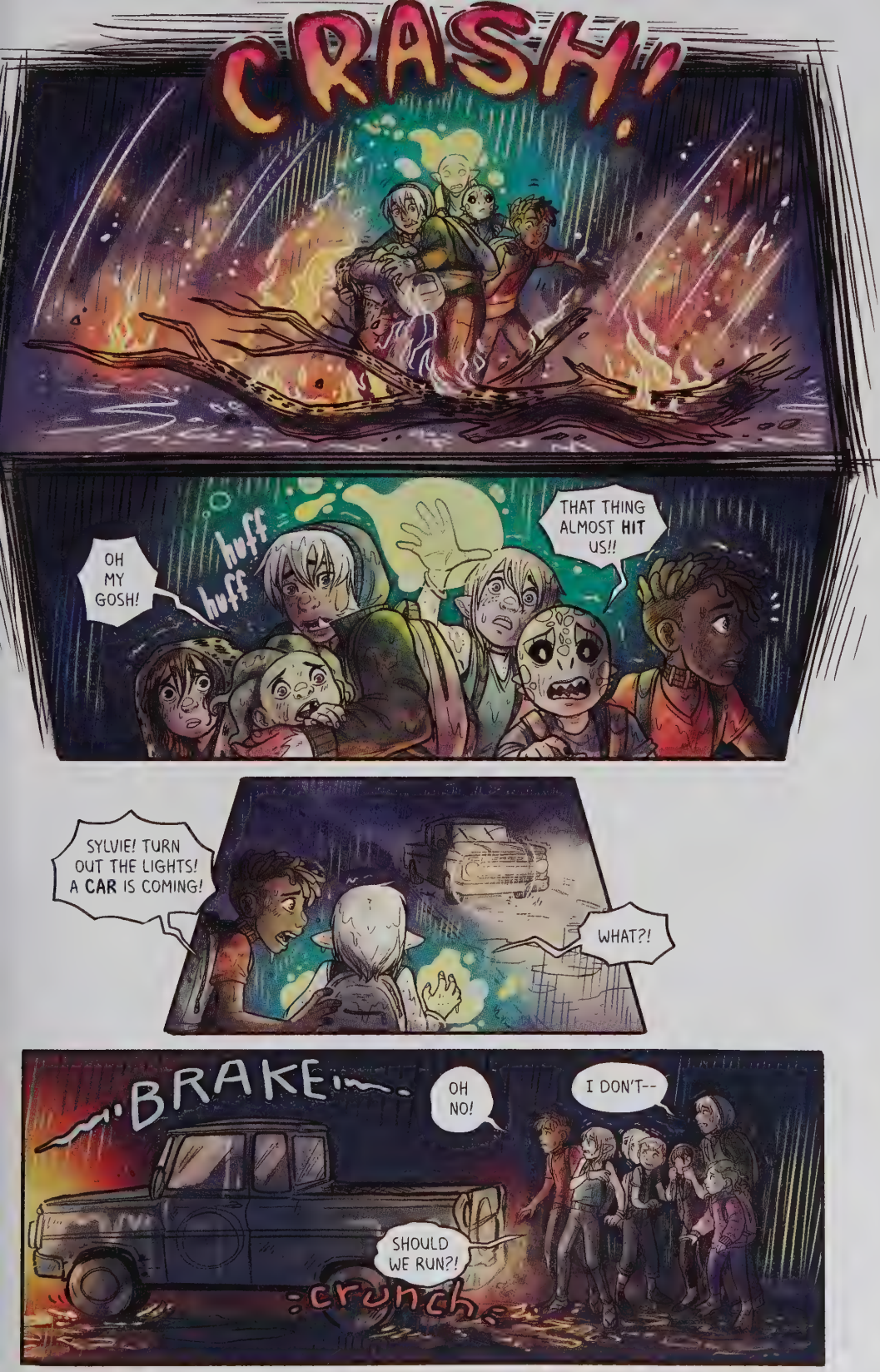


CHAPTER EIGHT

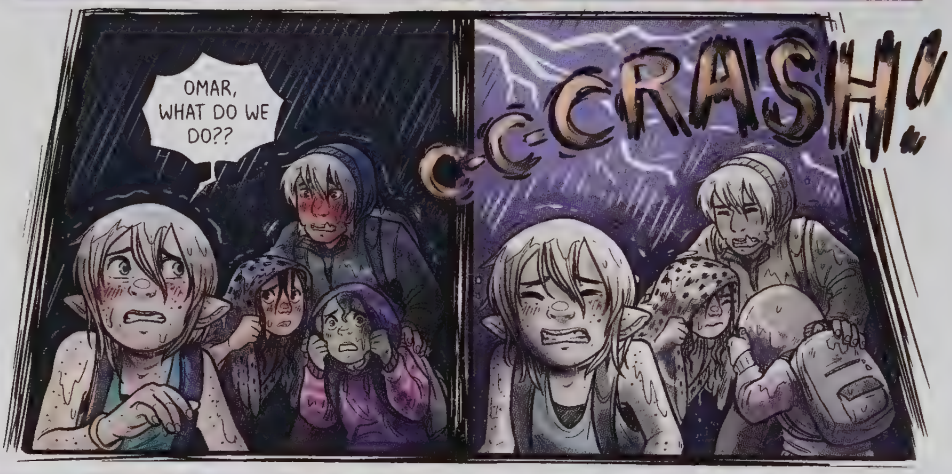
BRIEF RESPITE

WE'VE BEEN WALKING FOREVER--WHY CAN'T WE TAKE ANOTHER BUS??
WE ONLY HAVE ENOUGH MONEY FOR FOOD NOW. CAN'T BUY BUS TICKETS.
RRRUUMBLLLE
OH NO!
FFFFFFSSSSSHHHHH!!
WHAT DO WE DO?!
WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE--THERE'S NO PLACE TO GO!
AHH!

K-K-KRASH!
QUICK--GET UNDER THE TREE COVER!
ISN'T THAT EXACTLY WHERE YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO GO DURING A THUNDERSTORM??
JUST GO!!!
K-KRA-KOOM!
AHH!
RUN!


CRASH!
OH MY GOSH!
huff huff
THAT THING ALMOST HIT US!!
SYLVIE! TURN OUT THE LIGHTS! A CAR IS COMING!
WHAT?!
BRAKE
OH NO!
I DON'T--
SHOULD WE RUN?!
crunch

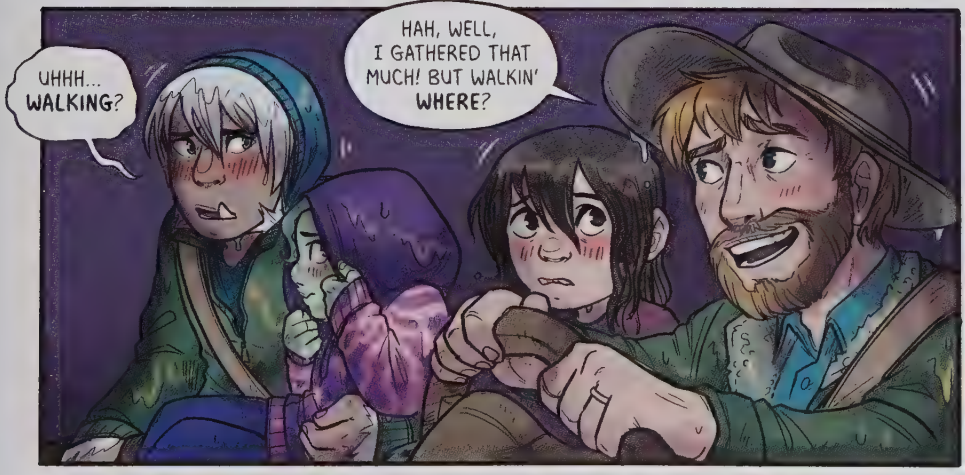
YOU KIDS ALL RIGHT?!
QUICK--GET IN! THIS STORM IS **DANGEROUS**--NO ONE SHOULD BE OUT IN THIS!


OMAR, WHAT DO WE DO??
CRASH!

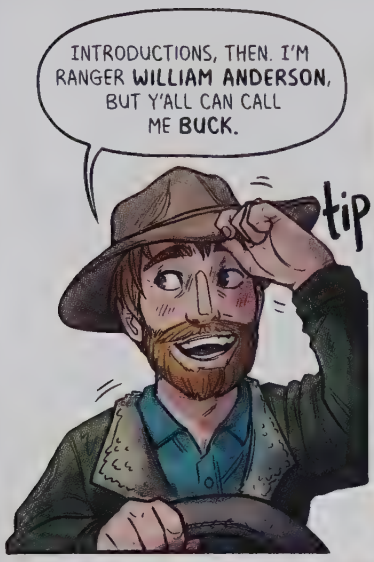
ANYTHING'S BETTER THAN BEING OUT IN **THIS**!!
JUST GET IN!

drip
drip
drip
drip

UH... THANKS FOR THE RIDE.
AIN'T NO PROBLEM--WHAT WERE Y'ALL DOIN' OUT HERE ANYWAY??

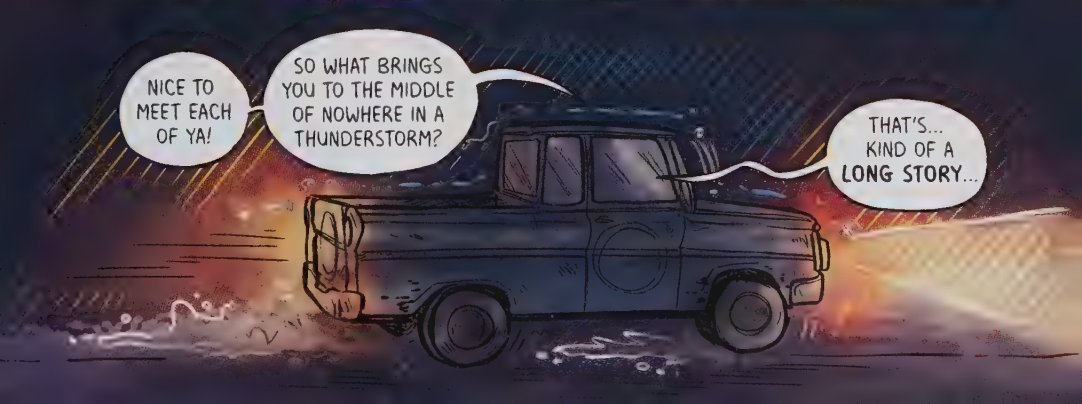

UHHH... WALKING?
HAH, WELL, I GATHERED THAT MUCH! BUT WALKIN' WHERE?

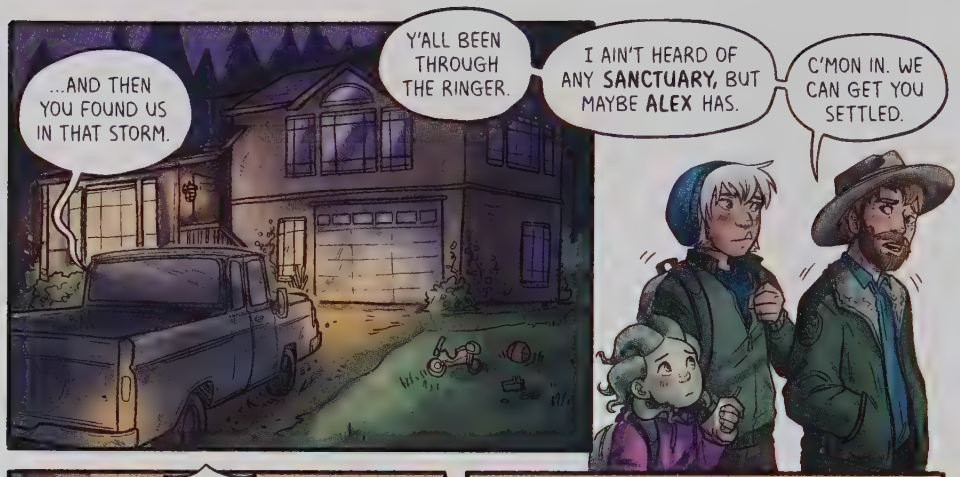
AH... I SEE.
NO PLACE TO GO, HUH?
WHY DON'T Y'ALL COME HOME WITH ME? **IRREGULARITIES** SUCH AS YOURSELVES WILL **FIT RIGHT IN.**
I CAN SPOT Y'ALL A MILE AWAY, SEEIN' AS I'M **MARRIED** TO ONE.
HOW DID YOU--??
SINCE YOU GOT NO PLACE ELSE TO GO, MIGHT AS WELL COME TO OUR HOUSE.
I'M SURE MY FAMILY WOULD LOVE TO MEET'CHA.
OR AT LEAST MY WIFE CAN GET Y'ALL SOME DRY CLOTHES AND A HOT MEAL.
WHAD'YA SAY?
SIR...
NO OFFENSE, BUT WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO YOU ARE.


INTRODUCTIONS, THEN. I'M RANGER **WILLIAM ANDERSON**, BUT Y'ALL CAN CALL ME **BUCK**.
tip

THAT'S A FUNNY NAME!
SURE IS, HONEY. WHAT'S YOURS?
I'M MAGGIE!
NICE TO MEET'CHA, MAGGIE. Y'ALL GOT NAMES TOO?

I'M OMAR.
JAALI.
NEWT.
I'M SYLVIE.
THIS IS CLARICE.


NICE TO MEET EACH OF YA!
SO WHAT BRINGS YOU TO THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE IN A THUNDERSTORM?
THAT'S... KIND OF A **LONG STORY**...


...AND THEN YOU FOUND US IN THAT STORM.
Y'ALL BEEN THROUGH THE RINGER.
I AIN'T HEARD OF ANY **SANCTUARY,** BUT MAYBE **ALEX** HAS.
C'MON IN. WE CAN GET YOU SETTLED.

DADDY!
DAD!!
ba ba ba

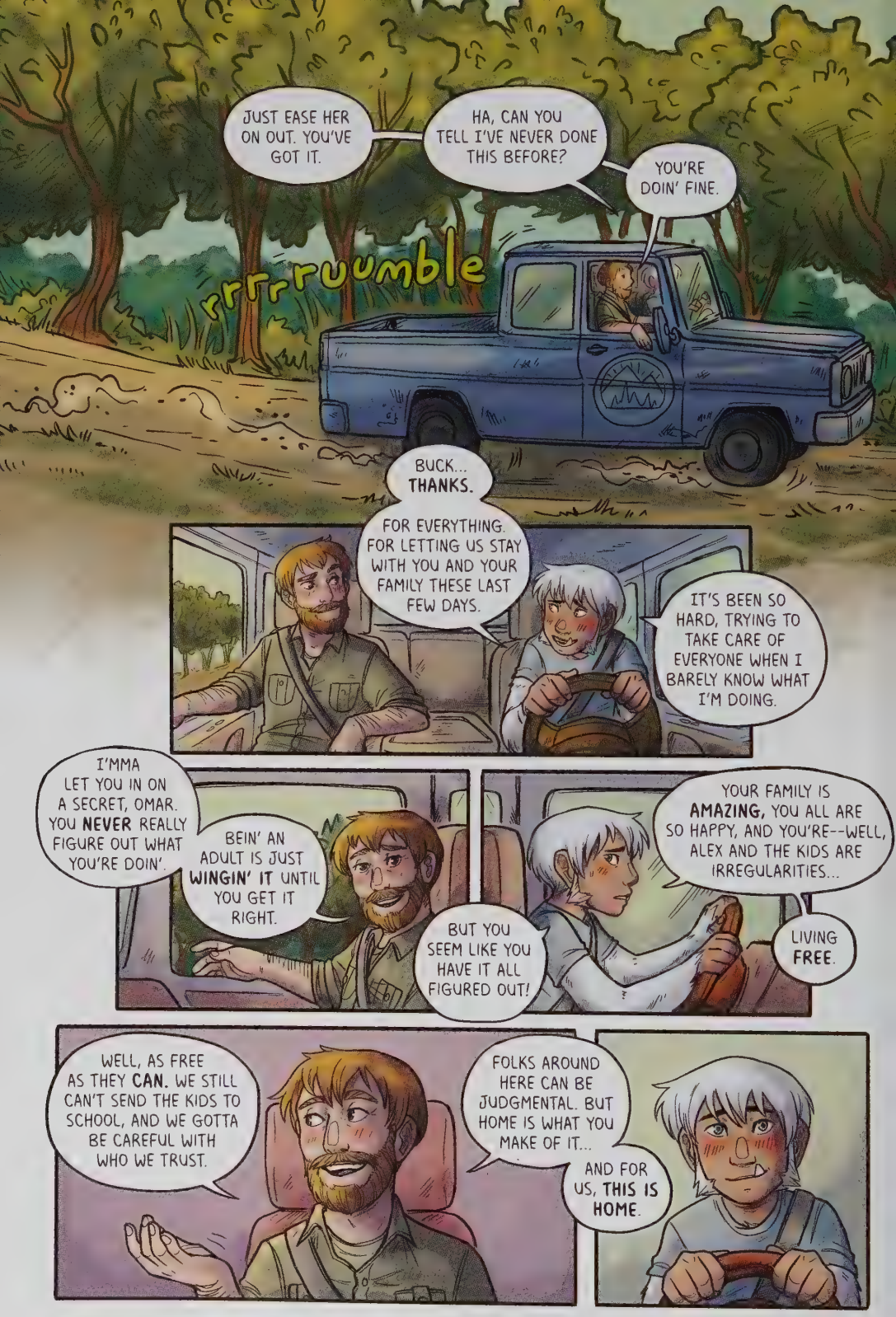
PICK US UP, DAD!
RUNNING LATE TONIGHT, HON?
WELL...

I FOUND A FEW **FRIENDS** AND THOUGHT YOU'D LIKE T'MEET 'EM.
AHH, NIÑOS, YOU LOOK **EXHAUSTED!**
LET ME GET SOME LEFTOVERS HEATED UP.
ISABELLA, MOVE YOUR BLANKETS INTO SAMUEL AND LUCA'S ROOM--WE HAVE **GUESTS!**

MOOOOM, WHY DO I HAVE TO SHARE??
LISTEN TO YOUR MOTHER.
FIIINE.
AY, I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS. YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH SO MUCH.
WELL, IF YOU'RE REALLY HEADING THAT FAR,
MIGHT AS WELL REST UP HERE A FEW DAYS. GET SOME SUPPLIES 'N' SUCH.
IT'S BEEN... A LOT.
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO WALK ALL THE WAY THERE, ARE YOU?
WE'RE HOPING TO TAKE AS MANY BUSES AS POSSIBLE,
BUT THEY GET VERY EXPENSIVE.
IF WE HAVE TO WALK, WE WILL.
YOU ARE SO BRAVE.
ENOUGH TALK FOR TONIGHT--LET'S GET YOU ALL TO BED.
DROOP...
PLAP!

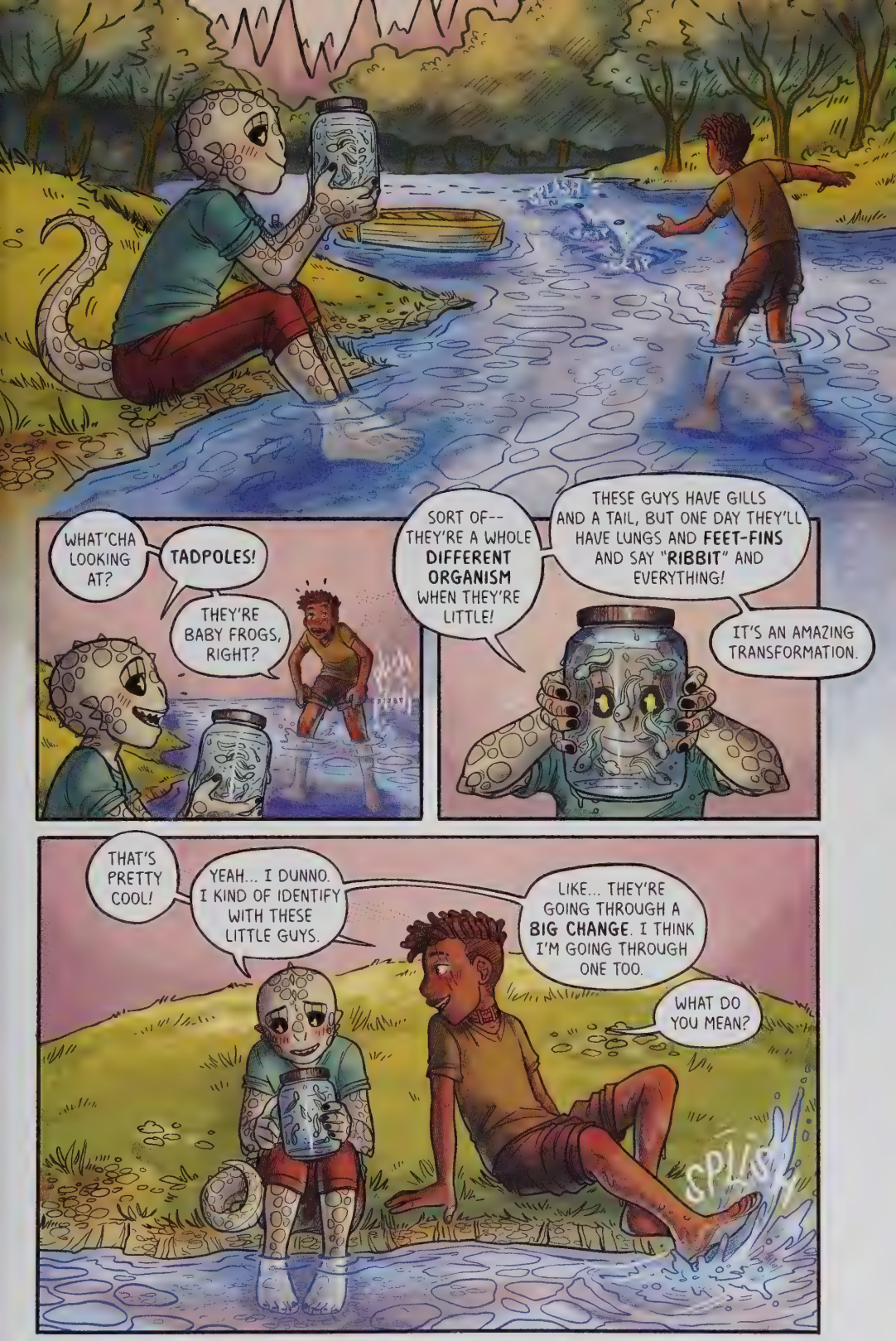
WE CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH...
HUSH NOW-- SLEEP. WE CAN TALK MORE IN THE MORNING.
PBTTHHH
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

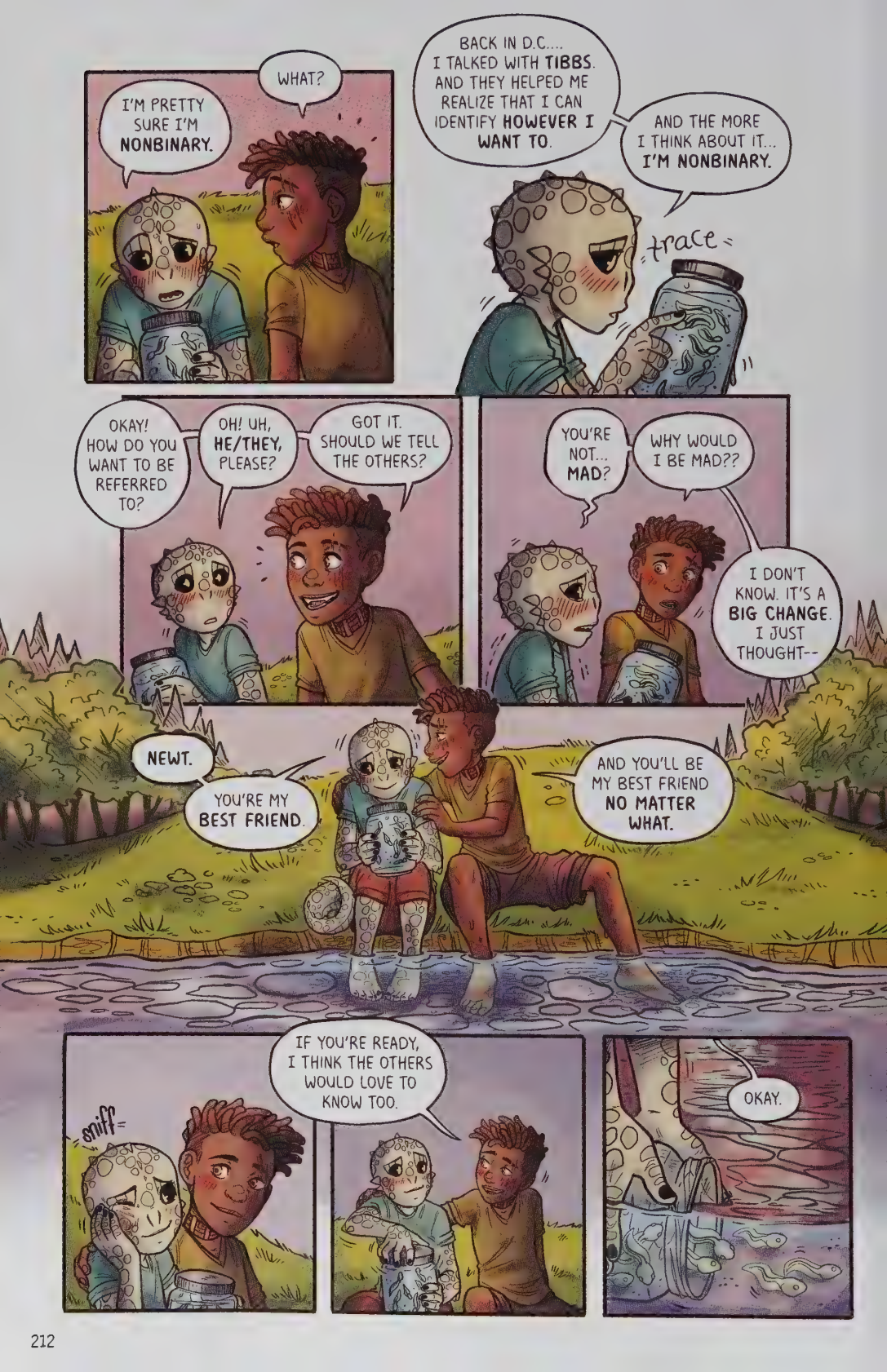
GOTCHA!
EEEEEE!!!


JUST EASE HER ON OUT. YOU'VE GOT IT.
HA, CAN YOU TELL I'VE NEVER DONE THIS BEFORE?
YOU'RE DOIN' FINE.
rrrruumble
BUCK... THANKS.
FOR EVERYTHING. FOR LETTING US STAY WITH YOU AND YOUR FAMILY THESE LAST FEW DAYS.
IT'S BEEN SO HARD, TRYING TO TAKE CARE OF EVERYONE WHEN I BARELY KNOW WHAT I'M DOING.
I'MMA LET YOU IN ON A SECRET, OMAR. YOU NEVER REALLY FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU'RE DOIN'.
BEIN' AN ADULT IS JUST WINGIN' IT UNTIL YOU GET IT RIGHT.
YOUR FAMILY IS AMAZING, YOU ALL ARE SO HAPPY, AND YOU'RE--WELL, ALEX AND THE KIDS ARE IRREGULARITIES...
BUT YOU SEEM LIKE YOU HAVE IT ALL FIGURED OUT!
LIVING FREE.
WELL, AS FREE AS THEY CAN. WE STILL CAN'T SEND THE KIDS TO SCHOOL, AND WE GOTTA BE CAREFUL WITH WHO WE TRUST.
FOLKS AROUND HERE CAN BE JUDGMENTAL. BUT HOME IS WHAT YOU MAKE OF IT...
AND FOR US, THIS IS HOME.

HEY, ALEX, I HAVE A COUPLE QUESTIONS I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK... DO YOU HAVE A MINUTE?
I HAVE SEVERAL! GRAB A BASKET AND GET IN THE DIRT WITH ME.
HAHA, OKAY.
WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?
YOU AND BUCK AND THE KIDS HAVE BEEN SO WONDERFUL TO US THIS PAST WEEK.
IT'S MEANT A LOT.
BUT WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO KEEP MOVING SOON, SO I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK YOU...
DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE SANCTUARY IS?
SYLVIE... DO YOU REALLY HAVE TO GO? BUCK AND I HAVE BEEN TALKING...
YOU ARE MORE THAN WELCOME TO STAY HERE WITH US. IT'LL BE A TIGHT SQUEEZE FOR A WHILE,
BUT WE'D LOVE TO HAVE YOU ALL AS PART OF OUR FAMILY.

AND WE CAN ALWAYS USE MORE HELP AROUND THE HOUSE!
HA HA HA HA HA
TOSS
THIS COULD REALLY BE A **HOME** FOR YOU ALL.
BUT... IT'S **YOUR** HOME. WE... WE HAVE TO FIND **OUR OWN.**
YOU REALLY THINK THE SANCTUARY IS WHERE YOU BELONG?
WE'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR IT FOR SO LONG,
AND WE PROMISED TO FIND RAY AND JAYLA.
AND WE WOULD NEVER WANT TO PUT YOUR FAMILY IN **DANGER**.
I UNDERSTAND, SYLVIE, I DO. WE LOVE HAVING YOU HERE, BUT... IF YOU DO DECIDE TO GO, WE HAVE AN OLD FAMILY FRIEND WHO MIGHT BE ABLE TO POINT YOU IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.
THINK ON IT, ALL RIGHT?


SPLASH
WHAT'CHA LOOKING AT?
TADPOLES!
THEY'RE BABY FROGS, RIGHT?
SORT OF-- THEY'RE A WHOLE DIFFERENT ORGANISM WHEN THEY'RE LITTLE!
THESE GUYS HAVE GILLS AND A TAIL, BUT ONE DAY THEY'LL HAVE LUNGS AND FEET-FINS AND SAY "RIBBIT" AND EVERYTHING!
IT'S AN AMAZING TRANSFORMATION.
THAT'S PRETTY COOL!
YEAH... I DUNNO. I KIND OF IDENTIFY WITH THESE LITTLE GUYS.
LIKE... THEY'RE GOING THROUGH A BIG CHANGE. I THINK I'M GOING THROUGH ONE TOO.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
SPLASH


I'M PRETTY SURE I'M NONBINARY.
WHAT?
BACK IN D.C.... I TALKED WITH TIBBS. AND THEY HELPED ME REALIZE THAT I CAN IDENTIFY HOWEVER I WANT TO.
AND THE MORE I THINK ABOUT IT... I'M NONBINARY.
trace
OKAY! HOW DO YOU WANT TO BE REFERRED TO?
OH! UH, HE/THEY, PLEASE?
GOT IT. SHOULD WE TELL THE OTHERS?
YOU'RE NOT... MAD?
WHY WOULD I BE MAD??
I DON'T KNOW. IT'S A BIG CHANGE. I JUST THOUGHT--
NEWT.
YOU'RE MY BEST FRIEND.
AND YOU'LL BE MY BEST FRIEND NO MATTER WHAT.
sniff
IF YOU'RE READY, I THINK THE OTHERS WOULD LOVE TO KNOW TOO.
OKAY.

BOO.
AHH!
MADE YA JUMP.
IT'S BEEN A CRAZY COUPLE OF WEEKS, HUH?
YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN.
IT'S BEEN NICE HERE THOUGH... PEACEFUL.
YEAH... IT'LL BE SAD WHEN WE LEAVE.
...DO WE HAVE TO LEAVE?
DID BUCK OR ALEX GET TO YOU FIRST?
BUCK. YOU?
ALEX. THEY'RE SO NICE.

THEY ARE... AND I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THEIR OFFER.
THIS COULD BE **HOME,** SYLVIE.
YOU KNOW WE CAN'T DO THAT.

WHY NOT? IT'S PRIVATE AND PEACEFUL HERE, AND THE FAMILY IS WONDERFUL.
IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE MAGGIE PLAYING WITH KIDS HER OWN AGE. WHY NOT JUST **STAY?**

HOW LONG BEFORE **F.R.E.A.K.I.S.H.** FINDS US AGAIN? OR ONE OF US GETS SPOTTED AND SOMEONE CALLS THE COPS?
WE MADE A PROMISE TO **TIBBS AND ADDIE,** REMEMBER? WE HAVE TO SEE THIS THROUGH.
WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE THE SANCTUARY **IS**...
OR IF THEY'D HAVE SPACE FOR US.
ISN'T IT MORE DANGEROUS TO SEARCH FOR IT THAN TO STAY?

I JUST WANT US ALL TO BE SAFE.
I CARE **SO MUCH** ABOUT THEM, EVEN IF I'M BAD AT SHOWING IT.

AND I WANT TO FIND A PLACE WHERE WE **BELONG.**
IF WE GO AND CAN'T FIND IT, WE CAN ALWAYS COME BACK HERE.

...OKAY. AS LONG AS WE ALL MAKE THE DECISION TOGETHER.
HOME... HOME IS WHAT WE MAKE OF IT.
WE SHOULD TALK TO EVERYONE IN THE MORNING.
SYLVIE... I...
I'VE BEEN THINKING...
MAYBE WHEN THIS IS ALL OVER, WE COULD--
SLAM!
WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING?
NOTHING!
NEWT'S FINALLY GOT THEIR O-PAD CONNECTED--WE'RE GONNA WATCH A MOVIE!
COME IN! LET'S MAKE POPCORN!!

KNOCK KNOCK!
WHO THE--
IT'S SO LATE!
BE CAREFUL, CARIÑO.
CAN I HELP YOU?
GREETINGS. WE ARE THE FRATERNITY OF RESEARCHERS TO THE EXISTENCE OF ALL KNOWN INTELLIGENT SUPERNATURAL HUMANOIDS.
WELL, THAT'S A MOUTHFUL.
ALSO KNOWN AS F.R.E.A.K.I.S.H.
WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THERE MAY BE SEVERAL CRYPTIDS NEARBY. HAVE YOU NOTICED ANY STRANGE ACTIVITY?
HOW DID THEY FIND US AGAIN??
GASP!

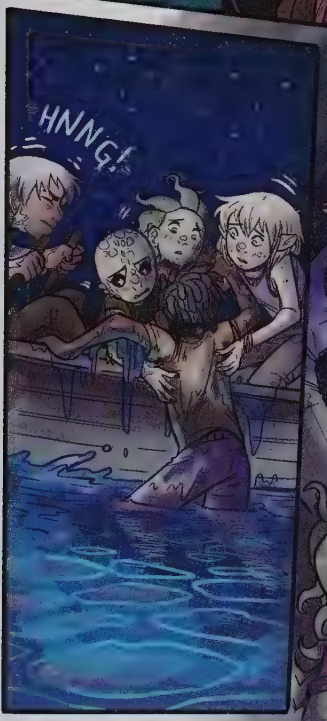
AIN'T SEEN NOTHIN' AROUND HERE. HAVE A GOOD NIGHT.
WAIT!
IT'S TIME FOR US TO GO.
nod
nod
HERE, USE OUR BOAT.
TAKE THE RIVER UNTIL YOU FIND AN OLD FOOTPATH.
FOLLOW THAT AND YOU'LL FIND OUR FRIEND. HE CAN TELL YOU WHERE THE SANCTUARY IS.
I'M SORRY WE COULDN'T KEEP YOU LONGER...
IT'S BEEN SO NICE HAVING YOU ALL HERE.
BUT BE CAREFUL, MY LOVES!
ALEX, THANK YOU. THANK YOU SO--
SEARCH THE BACKYARD! HE'S DEFINITELY HIDING SOMETHING!
HEY NOW! THIS IS PRIVATE PROPERTY. WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?!
THERE'S NO TIME, MIS QUERIDOS, HURRY!

GET GOING! I CAN MEET YOU DOWNRIVER!
I'LL DISTRACT THEM!
JAALI--!
ANDERSON
RRAAAAGH!
I SHOULDA WARNED Y'ALL. THIS IS BEAR COUNTRY!
ROAAAR
THAT'S A FREAKING BEAR!
THAT'S A BEAR!

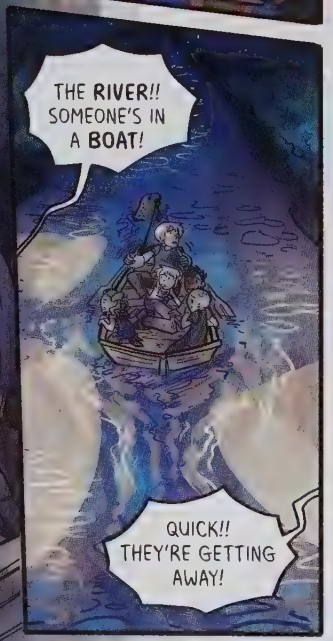
ROCK
ROCK
I KNOW IT'S A **BEAR.** WHAT ARE WE GONNA **DO**?!
THERE'S NO MOTOR!
YOU HAVE TO PADDLE-- I'M SORRY!
DON'T APOLOGIZE. YOU'VE DONE SO MUCH FOR US.
STAND
CLARICE?
YOU WANT TO HELP TOW THE BOAT??
nod

YOU'VE GOT THIS.
nod nod
SPLASH
YANK

CLUNK

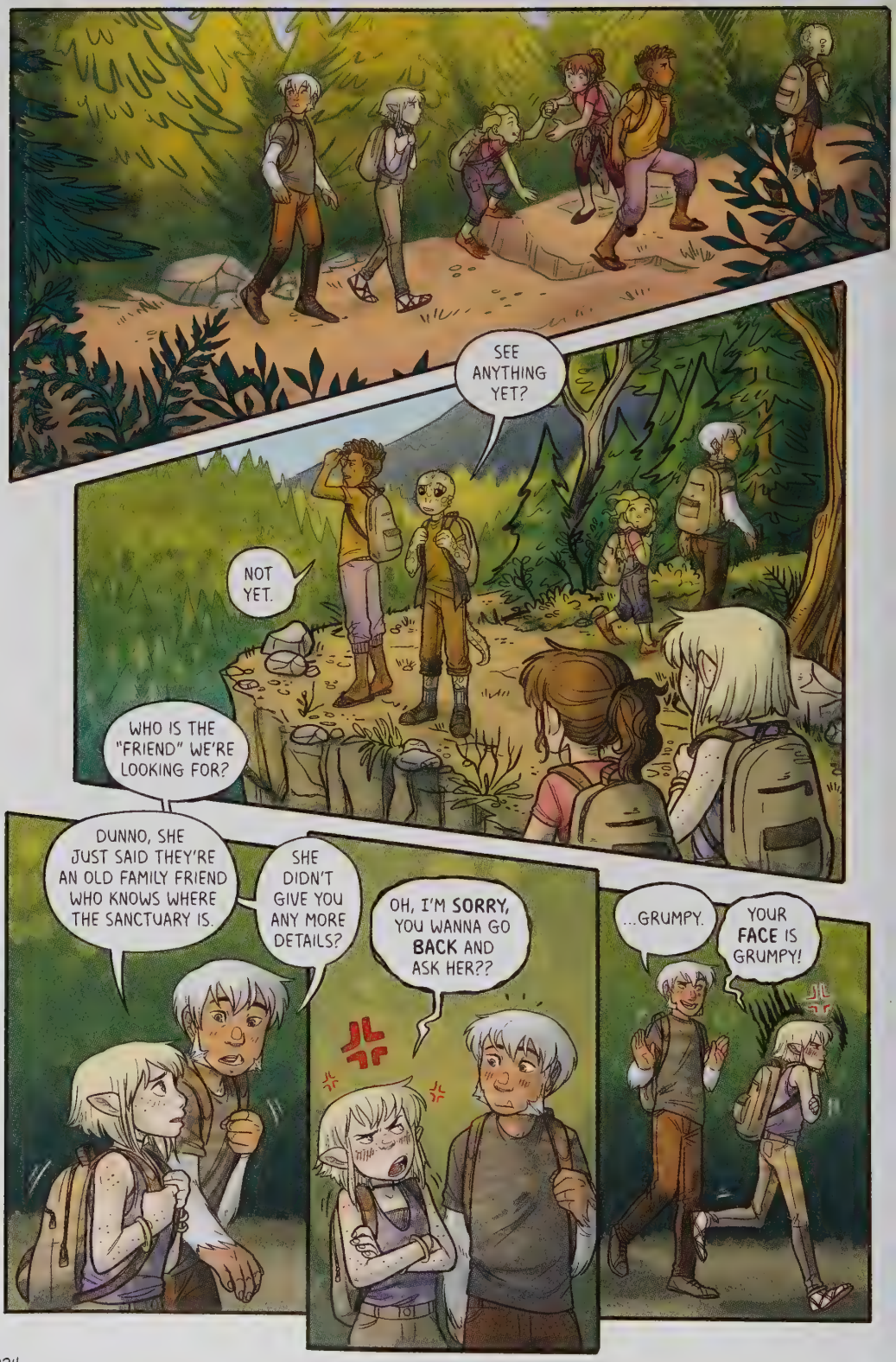

HNNG!

HUFF HUFF
ARE WE GASP GONNA MAKE IT?


THE RIVER!! SOMEONE'S IN A BOAT!
QUICK!! THEY'RE GETTING AWAY!

PLISH!
HEY, FISHIES!!
WE NEED HELP! COME PUSH THE BOAT!
ANDERSON
sshooOoOOOm!
sshoo
THANK YOU, FISHIES! WHOA!
THANK YOU, BIG FISHIE!

ARE THEY GONNA BE OKAY?
BUCK AND ALEX AND THE KIDS?
THEY'LL BE FINE. THEY KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOING.
ANDERSON
WHERE'S THE PATH ALEX TALKED ABOUT?
LOOK-- THAT HAS TO BE IT!
ANDERSON


SEE ANYTHING YET?
NOT YET.
WHO IS THE "FRIEND" WE'RE LOOKING FOR?
DUNNO, SHE JUST SAID THEY'RE AN OLD FAMILY FRIEND WHO KNOWS WHERE THE SANCTUARY IS.
SHE DIDN'T GIVE YOU ANY MORE DETAILS?
OH, I'M **SORRY**, YOU WANNA GO **BACK** AND ASK HER??
...GRUMPY.
YOUR **FACE** IS GRUMPY!

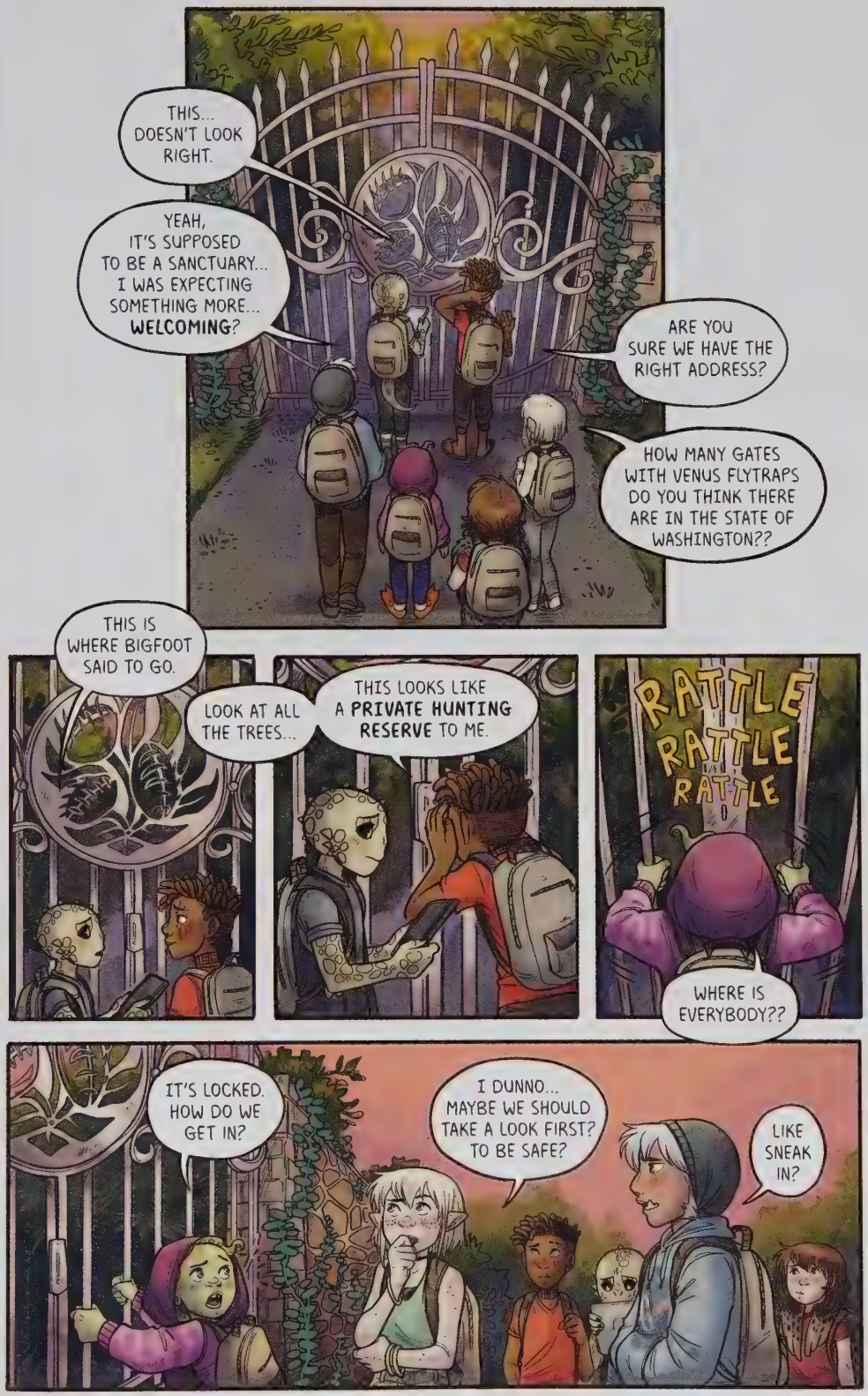
THIS IS THE WOOOORST!
WORSE THAN WALKING FOURTEEN MILES IN THE DESERT?
OKAY, NOT WORSE THAN THAT, BUT IT'S PRETTY DARN CLOSE. WE'RE **NEVER** GONNA FIND THIS GUY!!
FIND WHO??
OH MY GOD.
rustle rustle
UH... ACTUALLY, SIR,
I THINK WE WERE LOOKING FOR **YOU**.
B-**BIGFOOT**??
YOU LOOK... **FAMILIAR.** HAVE WE MET?
I DON'T BELIEVE SO, BUT IN A WEIRD WAY WE... MIGHT BE **RELATED**?
WELL, I'LL BE DARNED! A **YETI**, HERE IN MY WOODS!
COME ON BACK TO MY PLACE, KIDS.
I'LL GET A KETTLE ON.

SIX IRREGULARITIES, ALL IN MY HOUSE AT ONCE! WHO'DA THUNK, EH?
SO TO WHAT DO I OWE THE PLEASURE?
WELL UH, MR. BIGFOOT, SIR,
ALEX ANDERSON SENT US. SHE SAID YOU MIGHT KNOW ABOUT THE SANCTUARY?
BAH, MORE OF THIS **SANCTUARY** BUSINESS.
EVERYONE COMING THROUGH MY WOODS SEEMS TO WANT TO GET THERE.
YOU KNOW WHERE IT IS?
OH, I KNOW WHERE IT IS, BUT I DON'T TRUST IT FARTHER THAN I COULD THROW IT!
WHY NOT?
IRREGULARITIES GO IN, **NO ONE** EVER COMES OUT!
COULD THAT BE... BECAUSE THEY **LIVE THERE** NOW?
DON'T YOU **SASS** ME, MISSY!
DON'T WORRY, MR. BIGFOOT,
SHE SASSES **EVERYBODY.**

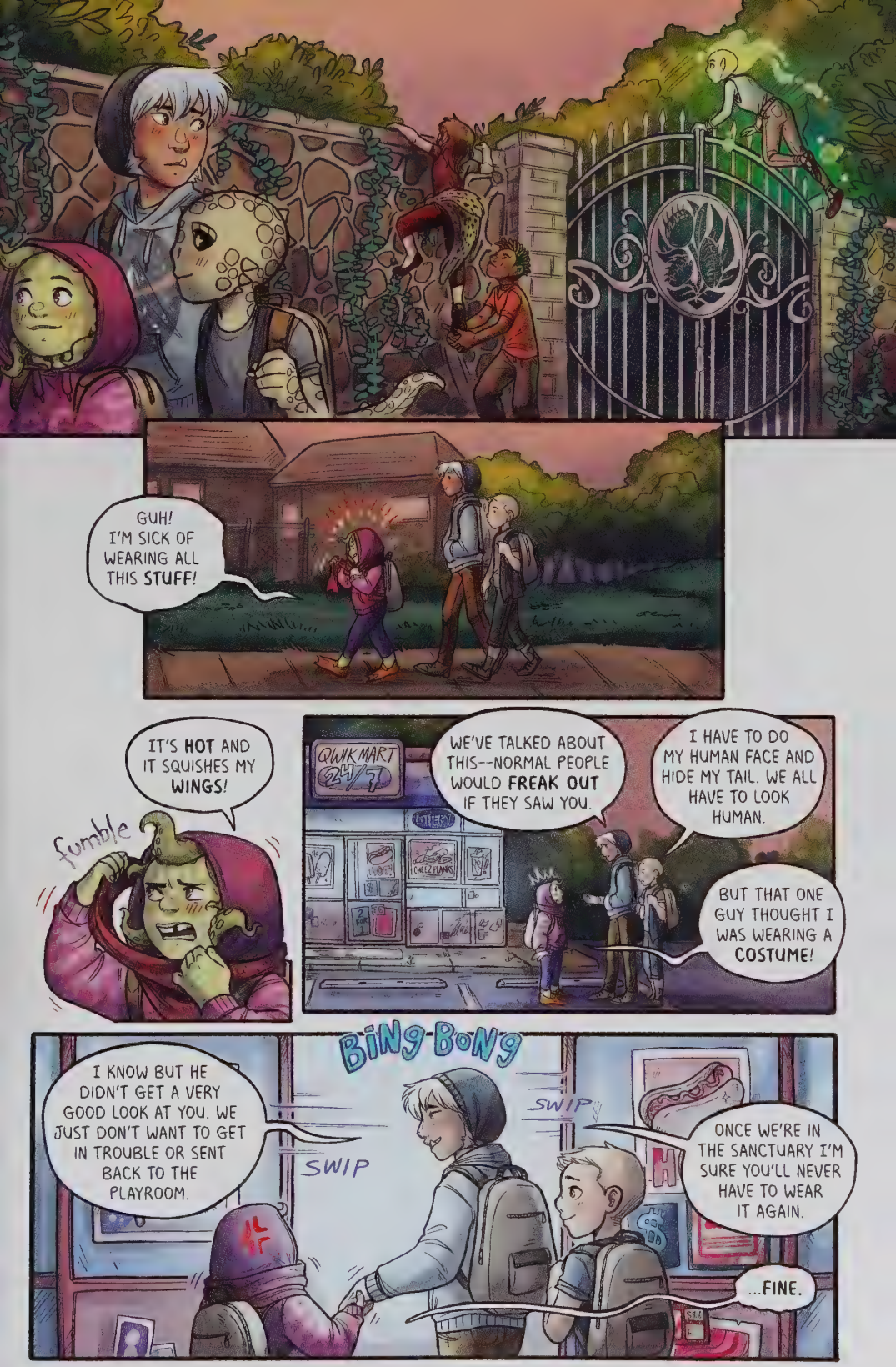
MAYBE IT'S ALL **FAIRY TALES** AND **RAINBOWS**, A BUNCH OF IRREGULARITIES ALL SAFE AND SOUND, TUCKED INTO THAT ESTATE.
BUT I DON'T BELIEVE IT! TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE IF YOU ASK ME.
wiggle wiggle
BUT... WE'VE COME ALL THIS WAY...
PLEASE, SIR, CAN'T YOU JUST TELL US WHERE IT IS?
WE'LL BE CAREFUL.
ALL RIGHT. IT'S AN ESTATE TO THE NORTH. I CAN WRITE DOWN AN ADDRESS.
SOME **RICH OLD MAN** OWNS THE PLACE. NOBODY KNOWS NOTHIN' ABOUT HIM.
YOU'LL KNOW IT WHEN YOU FIND A GATE WITH A **VENUS FLYTRAP** ON IT.
BUT IF EVERYTHING GOES **WRONG**...
...I WON'T SAY I TOLD YOU SO!

CHAPTER NINE

UNRAVELING


THIS... DOESN'T LOOK RIGHT.
YEAH, IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE A SANCTUARY... I WAS EXPECTING SOMETHING MORE... **WELCOMING**?
ARE YOU SURE WE HAVE THE RIGHT ADDRESS?
HOW MANY GATES WITH VENUS FLYTRAPS DO YOU THINK THERE ARE IN THE STATE OF WASHINGTON??
THIS IS WHERE BIGFOOT SAID TO GO.
LOOK AT ALL THE TREES...
THIS LOOKS LIKE A **PRIVATE HUNTING RESERVE** TO ME.
RATTLE RATTLE RATTLE
WHERE IS EVERYBODY??
IT'S LOCKED. HOW DO WE GET IN?
I DUNNO... MAYBE WE SHOULD TAKE A LOOK FIRST? TO BE SAFE?
LIKE SNEAK IN?

YEAH, SCOUT IT OUT A BIT, Y'KNOW? TAKE A LOOK, IF WE THINK IT'S BAD, WE'LL LEAVE.
I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF SPLITTING UP. WHY DON'T WE **ALL** GO?
OH SURE, MR. SIX FOOT TALL. YOU WANT TO TAKE MAGGIE IN THERE TOO?
I CAN BE **SNEAKY**!
SHHHHHHHHH!
...I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN.
HERE-- WHY DON'T CLARICE, JAALI, AND I GO CHECK THINGS OUT AND TAKE RAY'S PHONE.
YOU THREE HANG BACK--MAYBE FIND... SUPPLIES OR SOMETHING? IN TOWN?
LIKE **SNACKS**!!
AND IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG WE CAN SEND A MESSAGE TO NEWT'S O-PAD.
OKAY.
BE CAREFUL, ALL RIGHT???
WE WILL! STOP **WORRYING** SO MUCH!


GUH! I'M SICK OF WEARING ALL THIS STUFF!
IT'S HOT AND IT SQUISHES MY WINGS!
fumble
QUIK MART 24/7
WE'VE TALKED ABOUT THIS--NORMAL PEOPLE WOULD FREAK OUT IF THEY SAW YOU.
I HAVE TO DO MY HUMAN FACE AND HIDE MY TAIL. WE ALL HAVE TO LOOK HUMAN.
BUT THAT ONE GUY THOUGHT I WAS WEARING A COSTUME!
BING-BONG
I KNOW BUT HE DIDN'T GET A VERY GOOD LOOK AT YOU. WE JUST DON'T WANT TO GET IN TROUBLE OR SENT BACK TO THE PLAYROOM.
SWIP
SWIP
ONCE WE'RE IN THE SANCTUARY I'M SURE YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO WEAR IT AGAIN.
...FINE.

I MISS ALEX'S COOKING SO MUCH.
I'M TIRED OF FROZEN BURRITOS.
NEWS
YEAH, ME TOO... LET'S HOPE THIS PLACE HAS SOME REAL FOOD.

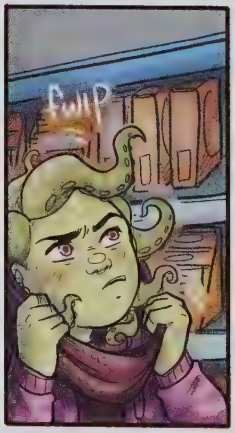
SOUR CREAM & ONION

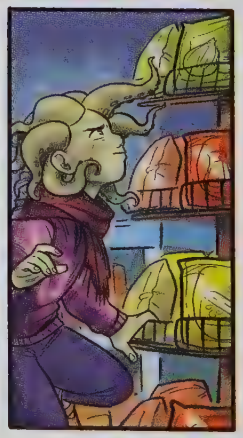
CHIPS!
HOP
HOP
HOP

HNNNNNNNG!

ICE

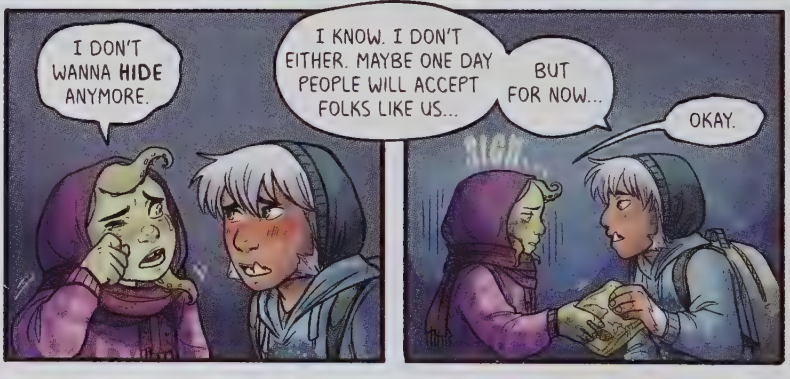
ICE

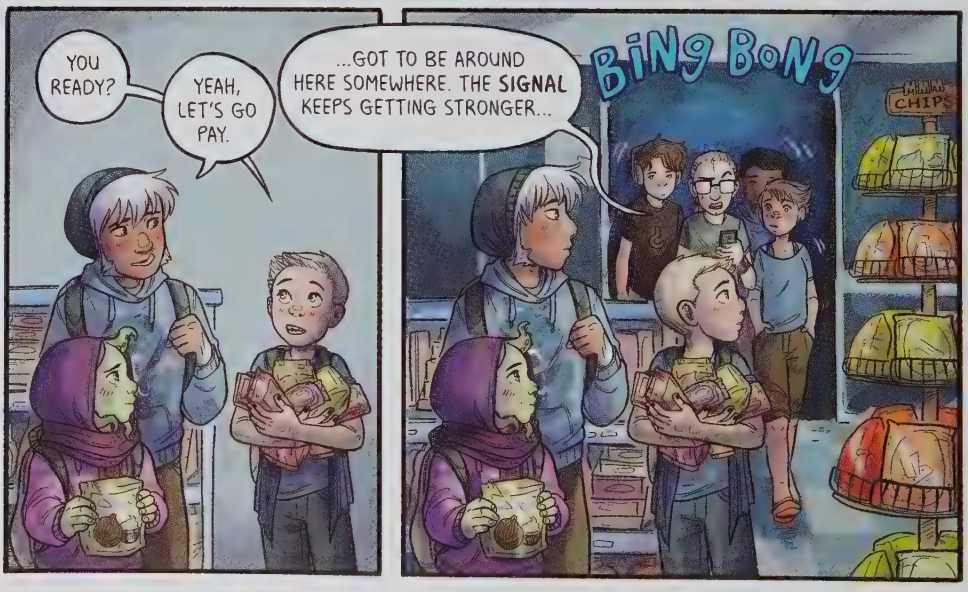

PUMP



MAGGIE!!
WHAT DID I JUST SAY??
IT'S JUST A BAG OF CHIPS!!
SNATCH
WE CAN'T LET ANYONE SEE YOU! AND THAT INCLUDES YOUR TENTACLES!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH MY TENTACLES?!
NORMAL PEOPLE DON'T HAVE TENTACLE HAIR!
SO... SO I'M NOT NORMAL? IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME?

I'M SORRY, THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT.
YOUR HAIR IS **WONDERFUL**. EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU IS WONDERFUL.
IT'S **OTHER PEOPLE** I'M WORRIED ABOUT. PEOPLE ARE... AFRAID OF WHAT THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND.
AND THEY'RE AFRAID OF THOSE WHO LOOK **DIFFERENT.**
CHIPS!





IT'S THEM!
DUCK
QUICK, HIDE!
CLATTER
WHAT THE--?!
IRREGULARITIES!

THAT HAS TO BE THE PLACE.
LET'S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK.

I DON'T SEE ANY OTHER PEOPLE... THIS IS **WEIRD.**
I DON'T TRUST THIS. MAYBE BIGFOOT WAS RIGHT?
YEAH, WHAT WOULD A **SANCTUARY** NEED ***CAGES*** FOR??
MAYBE WE SHOULD GET OUT OF HERE--
...SEEMS EXCITED ABOUT SOMETHING. THOSE **F.R.E.A.K.I.S.H.** GUYS MUST BE GETTING **CLOSE.**

TAKEN THEM LONG ENOUGH. IT'S BEEN MONTHS!
INEFFICIENT, IF YOU ASK ME. BOSS SHOULD HAVE SENT US OUT INSTEAD.
HE HASN'T SENT US OUT SINCE THAT KID GOT AWAY.
SLAM
YOU WOULD THINK AFTER THREE YEARS HE WOULD HAVE FORGIVEN US...
HAVE YOU EVER KNOWN HIM TO BE A FORGIVING MAN? LOOK WHAT HAPPENED TO CLARK.
GOOD POINT...

C'MON, LET'S GET THE REST OF THESE CAGES LOADED UP.
BOSS WANTS THEM MOVED TO THE SOUTHERN FOREST.
SOUNDS LIKE HE'S GOT PLANS FOR THAT WEREWOLF KID.
RAY!
YEAH, DON'T WANT TO KEEP HIM WAITING.
AGH.
THAT OLD BITE ACTING UP AGAIN?
YEAH, HAVING A CHUNK BITTEN OUT OF YOUR ARM'LL DO THAT.
ALMOST IMPRESSIVE FOR A LITTLE BEAR CUB.
SHAKE
EHH, YOU'VE HAD WORSE. REMEMBER THAT SKUNK APE??
OOF, YEAH, THAT WAS A WILD ONE.
NEVER A DULL MOMENT WHEN YOU'RE WORKIN' FOR THE COLLECTOR!

HOW COULD YOU JUST LET THEM CATCH US, OMAR?!
I DON'T KNOW. I JUST PANICKED! I DIDN'T WANT TO HURT ANYONE!
THEY TOOK OUR BACKPACKS!
IF YOU DO ANYTHING TO MRS. BLUEBERRY YOU'RE GONNA BE IN BIG TROUBLE!!
BANG!
BANG
BANG!
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! WE CAUGHT THEM!
...I CAN'T BELIEVE WE CAUGHT THEM.
STUART... I THOUGHT THESE WERE LIKE... CRYPTOZOOLOGICAL ENTITIES, Y'KNOW?
THE MISSING LINK, SCIENTIFIC MARVELS.
BUT I THINK THEY'RE JUST... KIDS.
Homework
Hewit's Book

WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO, DOYLE? JUST **LET THEM GO**??

WE'VE ALREADY CALLED THEM IN-- THAT COLLECTOR GUY IS **EXPECTING** US!

WE'VE BEEN PAID, WE'VE FOLLOWED THEM ACROSS THE COUNTRY!

WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE CRYPTOZOOLOGISTS, NOT **KIDNAPPERS**.

UHH... WE'RE **KIDS**, YOU'VE **NAPPED US**. BY DEFINITION YOU'RE **DEFINITELY** KIDNAPPERS.

AND YOU TOOK OUR **SNACKS**! WHAT'S THE POINT OF BEING KIDNAPPED IF WE CAN'T HAVE ANY **SNACKS**?!

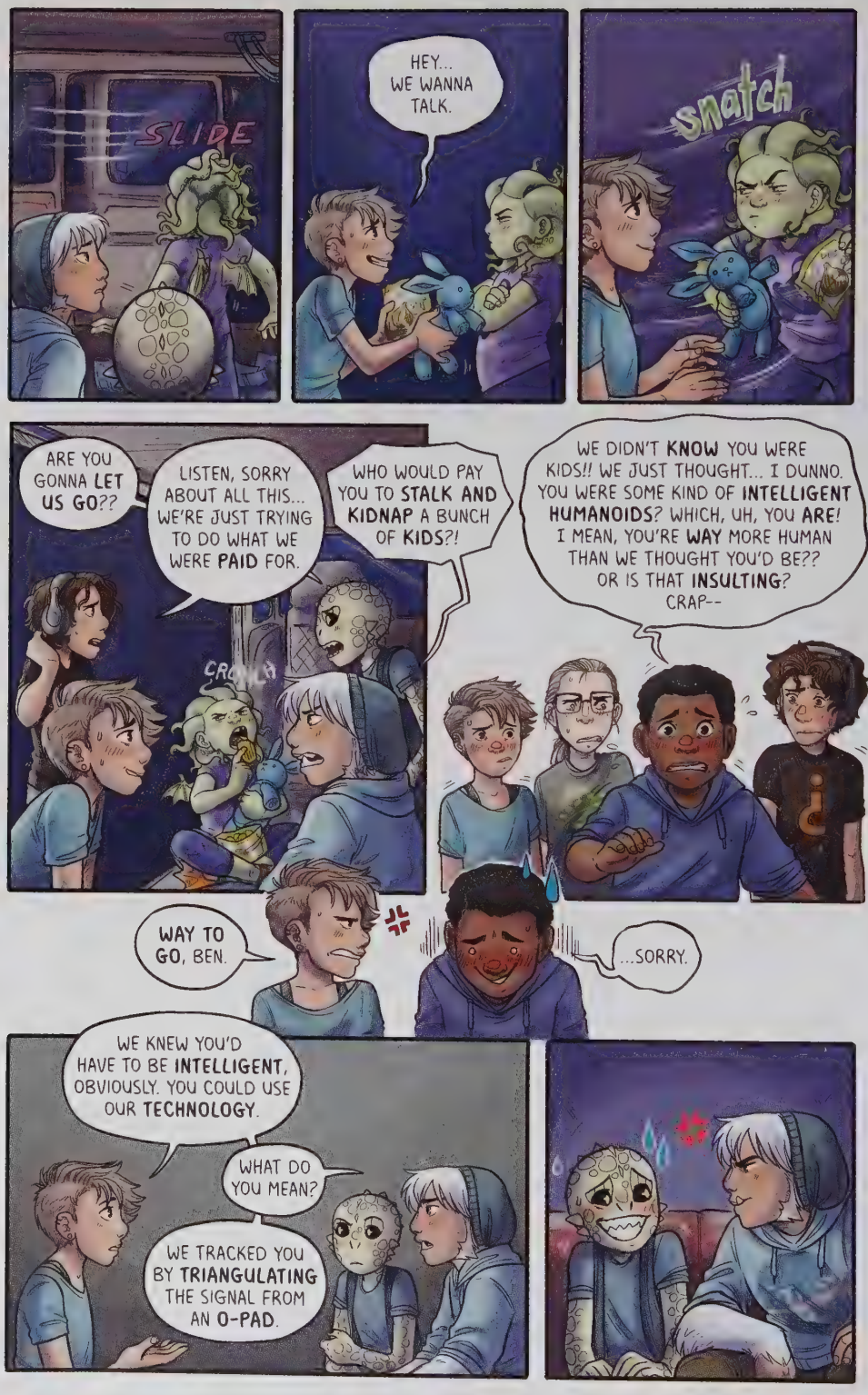
KNOCK KNOCK

LET'S PUT IT TO A VOTE. WHO WANTS TO TURN THEM IN?

. . .

YEAH... I THOUGHT SO.

THEY'RE JUST KIDS, MAN. MONSTER KIDS, BUT KIDS...


SLIDE
HEY... WE WANNA TALK.
snatch
ARE YOU GONNA LET US GO??
LISTEN, SORRY ABOUT ALL THIS... WE'RE JUST TRYING TO DO WHAT WE WERE PAID FOR.
WHO WOULD PAY YOU TO STALK AND KIDNAP A BUNCH OF KIDS?!
WE DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE KIDS!! WE JUST THOUGHT... I DUNNO. YOU WERE SOME KIND OF INTELLIGENT HUMANOIDS? WHICH, UH, YOU ARE! I MEAN, YOU'RE WAY MORE HUMAN THAN WE THOUGHT YOU'D BE?? OR IS THAT INSULTING? CRAP--
WAY TO GO, BEN.
...SORRY.
WE KNEW YOU'D HAVE TO BE INTELLIGENT, OBVIOUSLY. YOU COULD USE OUR TECHNOLOGY.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
WE TRACKED YOU BY TRIANGULATING THE SIGNAL FROM AN O-PAD.

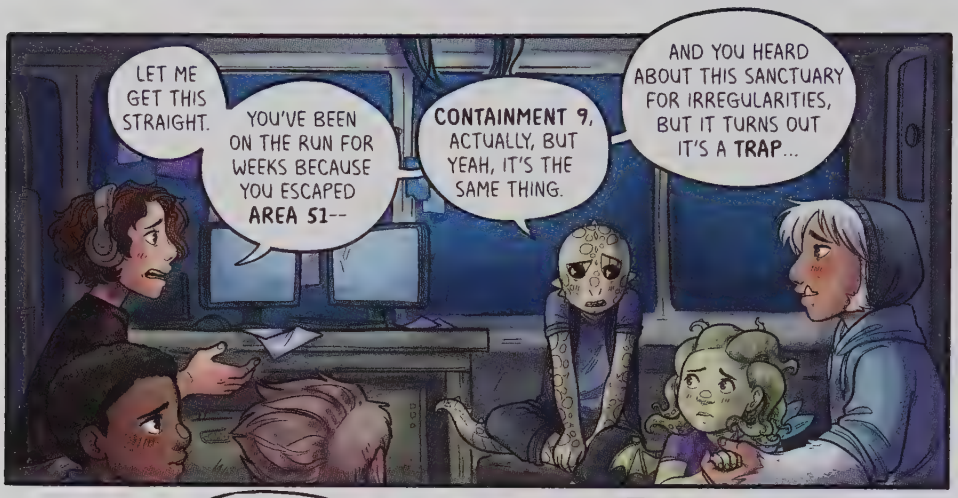
NOT TO SOUND EVEN MORE LIKE A BUNCH OF STALKERS, BUT WEREN'T THERE SUPPOSED TO BE SIX OF YOU?
DOES IT MATTER?? ARE YOU LETTING US GO OR NOT?
WE'RE DEFINITELY LETTING YOU GO. I HAVE A MILLION QUESTIONS TO ASK A REAL LIVE YETI, REPTILIAN, AND...
OCTOPUS... GIRL?
BUT... YEAH.
WE JUST HAVE TO FIGURE OUT WHAT TO TELL THE COLLECTOR.
THE COLLECTOR?!
WELL... YEAH, HE'S THE ONE WHO HIRED US.
WE DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT HIM, BUT HIS ESTATE IS A LITTLE NORTH OF HERE.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BRING YOU TO HIM. HE'S A COLLECTOR, WE FIGURED HE'S GOT LOTS OF CRYPTIDS.
PLUS HE... --AHEM-- PAID IN CASH.
OMAR, OH MY GOD--
IT'S A TRAP.

THAT WAS ME--I'M THE ONE WHO BIT HIM!
THEY'RE THE ONES WHO TOOK MY DAD!
SHH-- WE HAVE TO KEEP QUIET!
THE ESTATE IS WHERE THE COLLECTOR LIVES!
THE SANCTUARY IS A COVER--
HE'S LURING PEOPLE LIKE US HERE, PRETENDING THAT IT'S SAFE--
BUT INSTEAD HE'S COLLECTING THEM--
FOR WHAT?

WE HAVE TO GET IN THERE!
NO, JAALI, WE HAVE TO GET BACK TO THE OTHERS!
SYLVIE, MY DAD COULD BE IN THERE!
ALL THE MORE REASON TO GET HELP! WE KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THIS PLACE!
nod nod
THIS COULD BE OUR ONLY CHANCE TO SNEAK IN UNDETECTED!
OR WE COULD GET OURSELVES KILLED!
tug! tug!
I'LL GO IN WITHOUT YOU IF I HAVE TO--
GET OFF ME, CLARICE!
AH!
WELL, WELL, WELL.
LOOKS LIKE THE DELIVERY CAME EARLY!

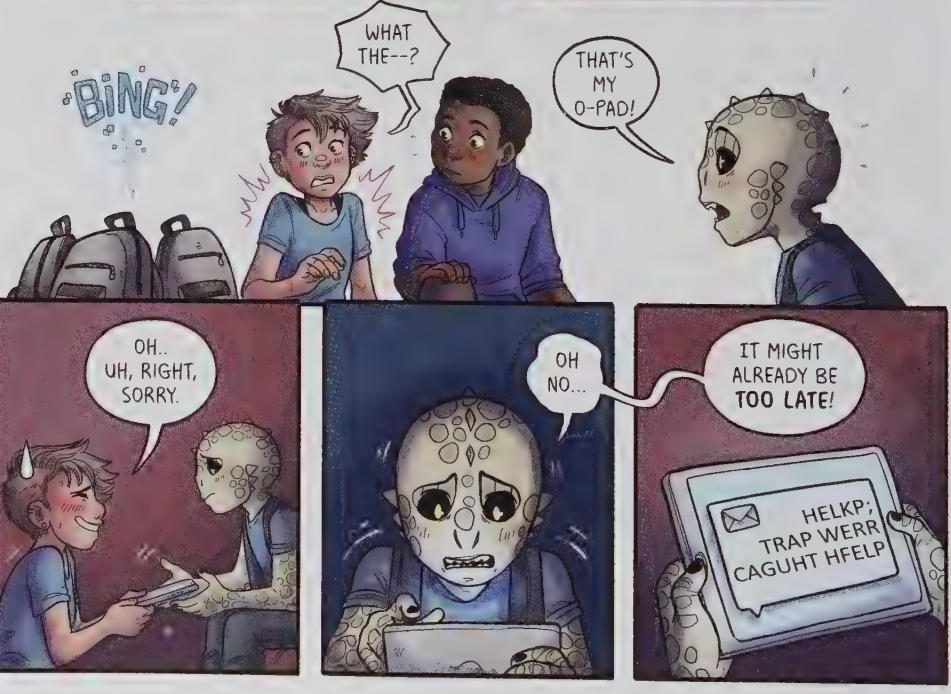
GG
GGGGGRRAAAAA!
NOT THIS TIME!
DODGE
SWIPT
SLAM!
JAALI!
RUN, CLARICE!
DIVE

LET HIM GO!!
SHE'S A WISP!
DON'T LET HER GET HER HANDS ON YOU!
SNATCH
GET THE ONE IN THE BUSHES!
GOOOAHA...
WHAM
HNN
SENT
GIMME THAT!
AAH!
NUH-UH, MISSY. DON'T WANT YOU SLIPPING AWAY!
HAVK


LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT.
YOU'VE BEEN ON THE RUN FOR WEEKS BECAUSE YOU ESCAPED **AREA 51**--
CONTAINMENT 9, ACTUALLY, BUT YEAH, IT'S THE SAME THING.
AND YOU HEARD ABOUT THIS SANCTUARY FOR IRREGULARITIES, BUT IT TURNS OUT IT'S A **TRAP**...

...SET BY THE COLLECTOR--**OUR BOSS**--WHO IS ACTUALLY CAPTURING CREATURES LIKE YOU AGAINST THEIR WILL??

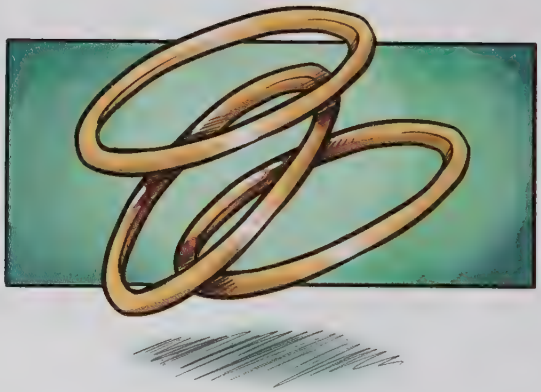
AND NOW OUR FRIENDS ARE IN DANGER. THEY LEFT TO SCOUT OUT THE ESTATE.


BING!
WHAT THE--?
THAT'S MY O-PAD!
OH.. UH, RIGHT, SORRY.
OH NO...
IT MIGHT ALREADY BE **TOO LATE!**
HELKP; TRAP WERR CAGUHT HFELP

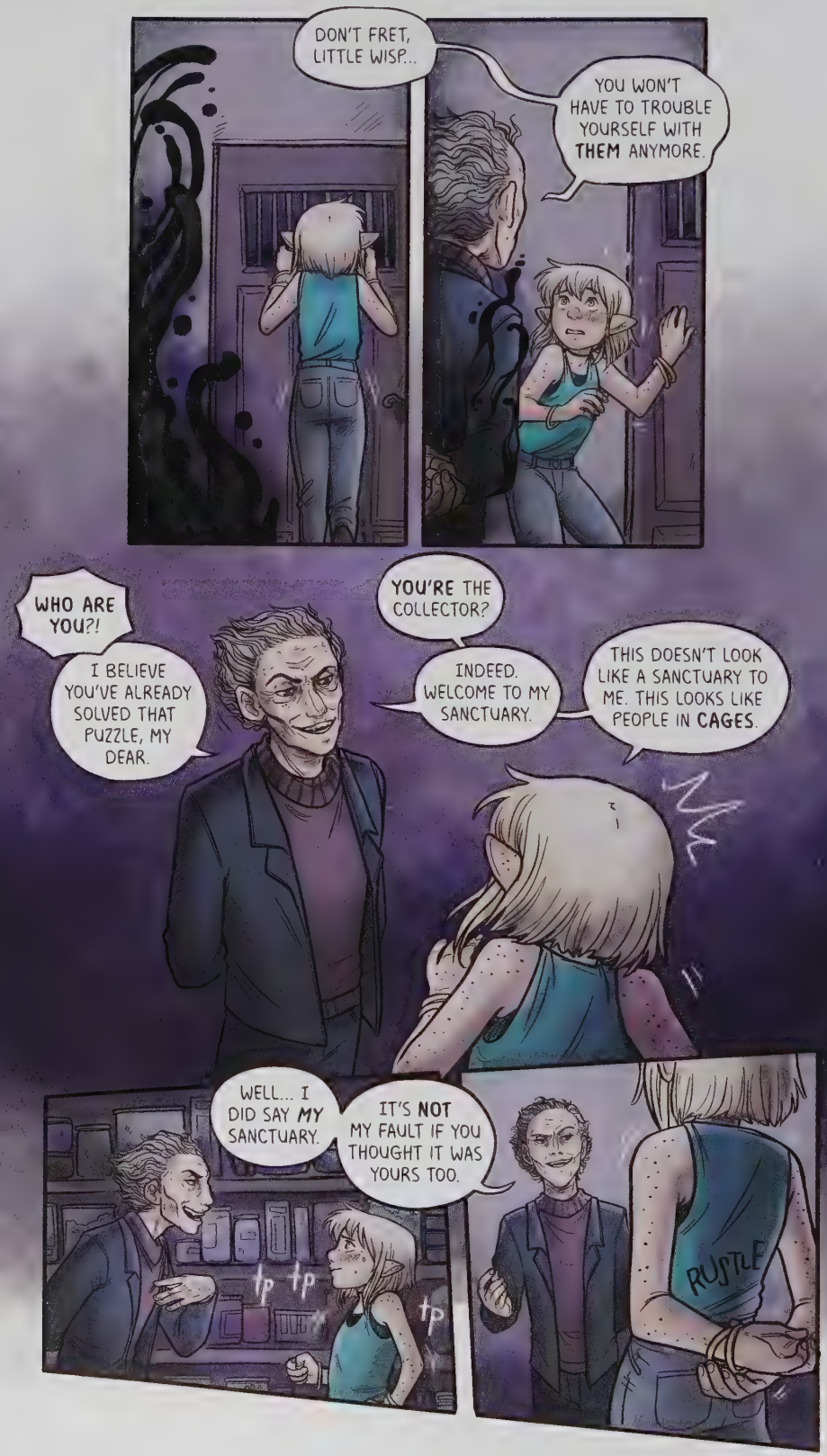
WE HAVE TO GO HELP THEM!
I KNEW WE NEVER SHOULD HAVE SPLIT UP!
I'M SO STUPID!!
NO, YOU'RE NOT! IF WE WERE THERE WE'D PROBABLY BE CAPTURED TOO.
AT LEAST FROM OUT HERE WE CAN MAKE A PLAN!
WE HAVE TO FIND A WAY IN THERE!
BUT HOW?! THEY'RE IN TROUBLE. WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING!!
I THINK WE CAN HELP YOU THERE!
WHAT?? HOW?!
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO DELIVER YOU, RIGHT?
THEY ALREADY KNOW WE'RE COMING...
THEY'LL LET US DRIVE RIGHT IN THE FRONT GATE.

CHAPTER TEN

HOME



AGHH
HHH
CLARICE??
JAALI?


DON'T FRET, LITTLE WISP...
YOU WON'T HAVE TO TROUBLE YOURSELF WITH **THEM** ANYMORE.
WHO ARE YOU?!
I BELIEVE YOU'VE ALREADY SOLVED THAT PUZZLE, MY DEAR.
YOU'RE THE COLLECTOR?
INDEED. WELCOME TO MY SANCTUARY.
THIS DOESN'T LOOK LIKE A SANCTUARY TO ME. THIS LOOKS LIKE PEOPLE IN **CAGES**.
WELL... I DID SAY **MY** SANCTUARY.
IT'S **NOT** MY FAULT IF YOU THOUGHT IT WAS YOURS TOO.
tp
tp
tp
RUSTLE

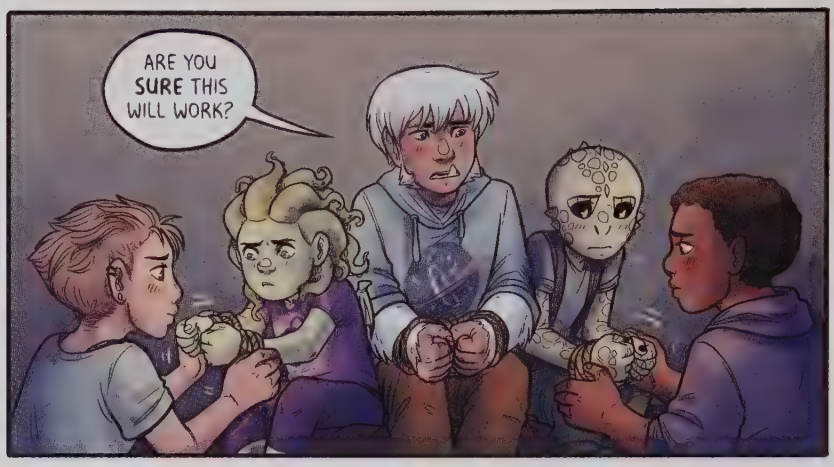
YOU WANT TO LET ME OUT OF HERE.
YOU WANT TO LET ME AND MY FRIENDS GO!
LUNGE
DROP
THAT'S NOT GOING TO WORK ON ME...
DEAR!
AHH!
SLAM

WHAT?! HOW DID YOU--?
I'VE BEEN AROUND FOR A VERY LONG TIME, WISP. SUCH WEAK EFFORTS OF PERSUASION WON'T CONVINCE ME.
HA HA HA HA HA HA
WHAT ARE YOU?
HA HA HA
I WAS MUCH LIKE YOU ONCE. A CREATURE TORN BETWEEN WHAT MADE ME HUMAN AND WHAT MADE ME SUPERIOR.
ONE DAY, A HUMAN FOUND ME. DISCOVERED WHAT I WAS.
I'M SURE YOU'RE WELL AWARE OF WHAT HUMANS CAN DO WHEN FACED WITH SOMETHING THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND.
THE IGNORANT BEAST TRIED TO KILL ME, THINKING ME A DEMON OR A MONSTER.
SHE WAS RIGHT.

I LEARNED THAT DAY WHAT I WAS TRULY CAPABLE OF. I COULD ABSORB THE LIFE FORCE OF OTHER CREATURES.
WITH THEIR ENERGY, I DIDN'T NEED FOOD OR WATER.
I AGED SO MUCH SLOWER THAN NORMAL HUMANS.
WHEN I UNLEASHED MY TRUE NATURE
I WAS UNSTOPPABLE.
I GAINED WEALTH, I GATHERED POWER. I FOUND CREATURES TO COMMAND, TO HELP ME EXPAND MY COLLECTION
BUT OVER THE YEARS, MY PALETTE GREW TIRED OF THE MUNDANE. YOU CAN ONLY ENJOY THE SAME DISH SO MANY TIMES BEFORE IT GROWS TIRESOME.
MY TASTES GREW MORE GOURMET
IRREGULARITIES HAVE SUCH FLAVOR AND VARIETY, YOU KNOW.

AND THEY MAKE FOR SUCH LONG-LASTING MEALS.
I CAN DRAIN THEM SLOWLY OVER TIME,
WHILE HUMANS MAKE FOR ONLY A QUICK BITE.
IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO TO US?
WELL.
NOT YOU.
WHAT?
YOU'RE SPECIAL, SYLVIE: DIFFERENT. YOU'RE A WILL-O-THE-WISP.
YOU'RE A LOT LIKE ME.
NO!
DOES YOUR INNER SELF NOT CRAVE CHAOS? DON'T YOU WANT TO LEAD OTHERS INTO A TRAP, BEWITCHING INNOCENTS TO THEIR DEATHS??
IS THAT NOT WHAT WISPS ARE?
IMAGINE YOUR POTENTIAL, SHOULD YOU ABANDON YOUR HUMAN WEAKNESS AND REVEL IN THE CHAOS!!
YES!
YESSS!
N-NO..

WE COULD WORK TOGETHER, SYLVIE.
YOU LURE MY PREY TO THIS PLACE, I HUNT THEM.
I'VE ALREADY WRITTEN THE STORY FOR YOU--TELL THOSE WAYWARD CREATURES THAT A SAFE PLACE AWAITS THEM, A SANCTUARY.
THEN LEAD THEM HERE, WHERE THEY WILL FALL RIGHT INTO MY HANDS.
WHAT HAS YOUR HUMANITY EVER DONE FOR YOU?
WHAT HAS HOLDING BACK GIVEN YOU OTHER THAN SUFFERING?
YOU DON'T NEED THESE SHACKLES.
YOU HAVE THE POWER--
SO USE IT!
WELL
I'VE MADE MY OFFER. REFUSE ME AND I'LL ADD YOU TO THE MENU. THINK ON IT, LITTLE WISP.
BETRAY THE OTHERS. WHO NEEDS THEM?
THEY DON'T NEED YOU...
THIS IS WHAT YOU WERE MADE TO DO...
YOU KNOW YOU WANT TO...
BECOME A FULL WISP.
LET ME OUT!
HEE
HEE
HEE
HEE
HEE
SMASH!

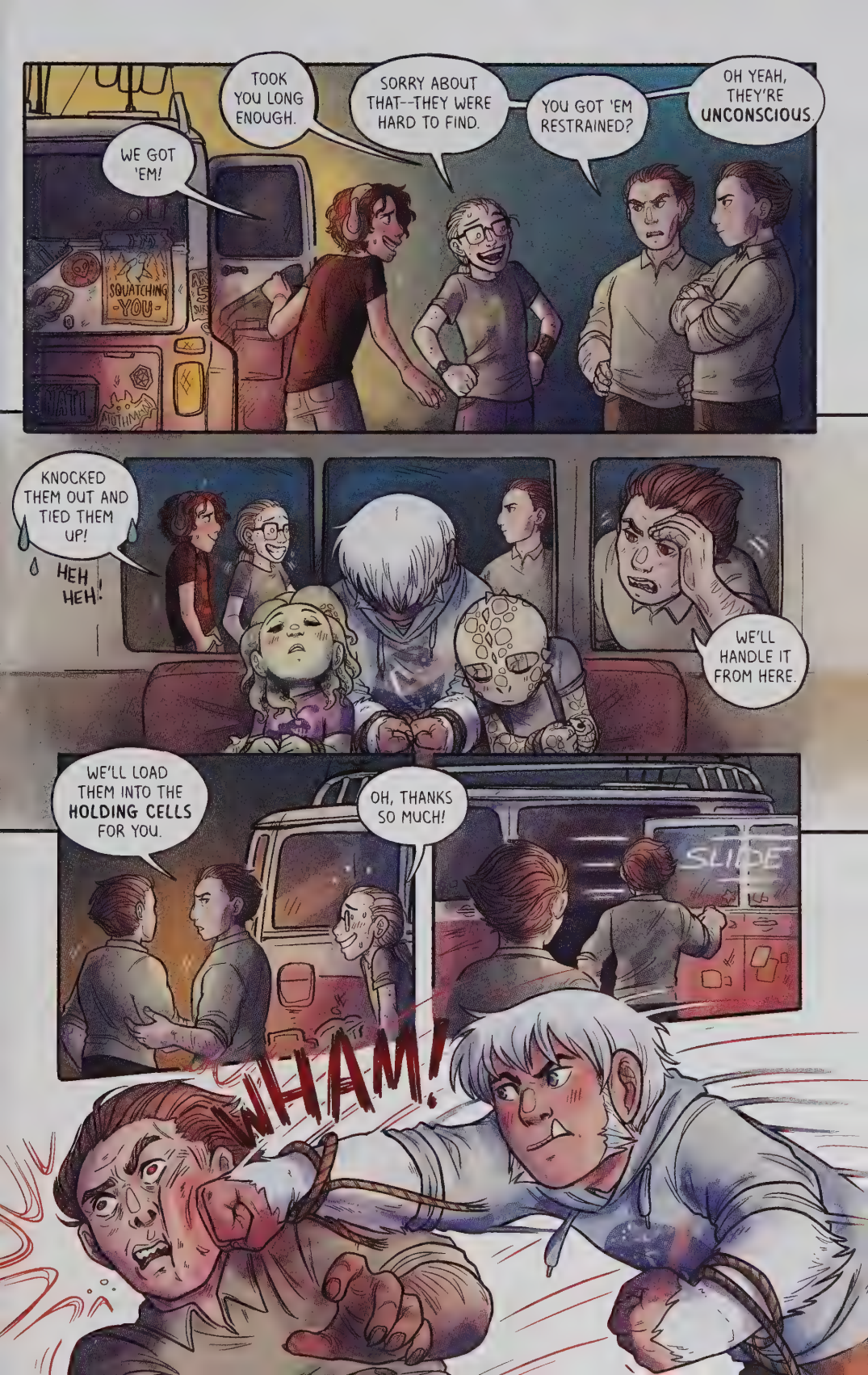

ARE YOU SURE THIS WILL WORK?

OH YEAH, IT'S THE OLD "CAPTURED BY THE GUARDS" PLOY! IT WORKS ALL THE TIME IN D&D!

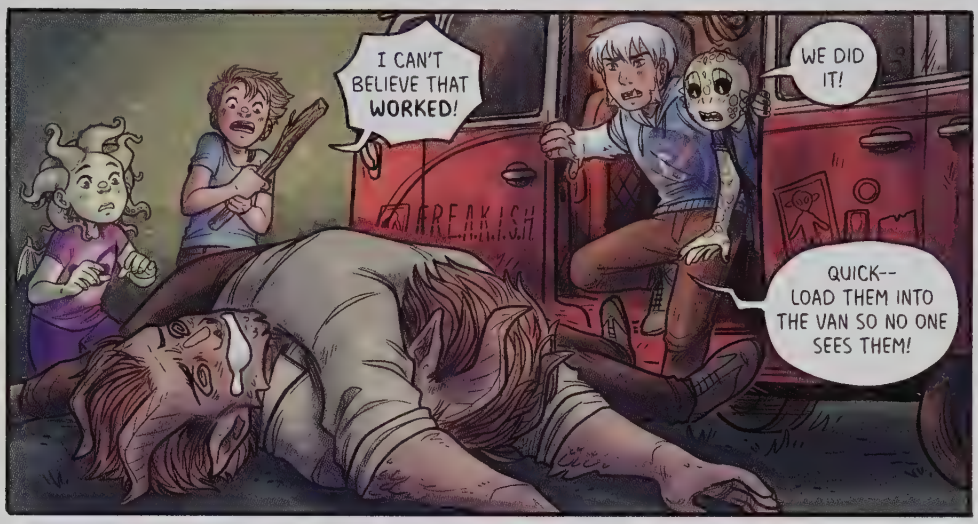
OWWWWW
PUNCH

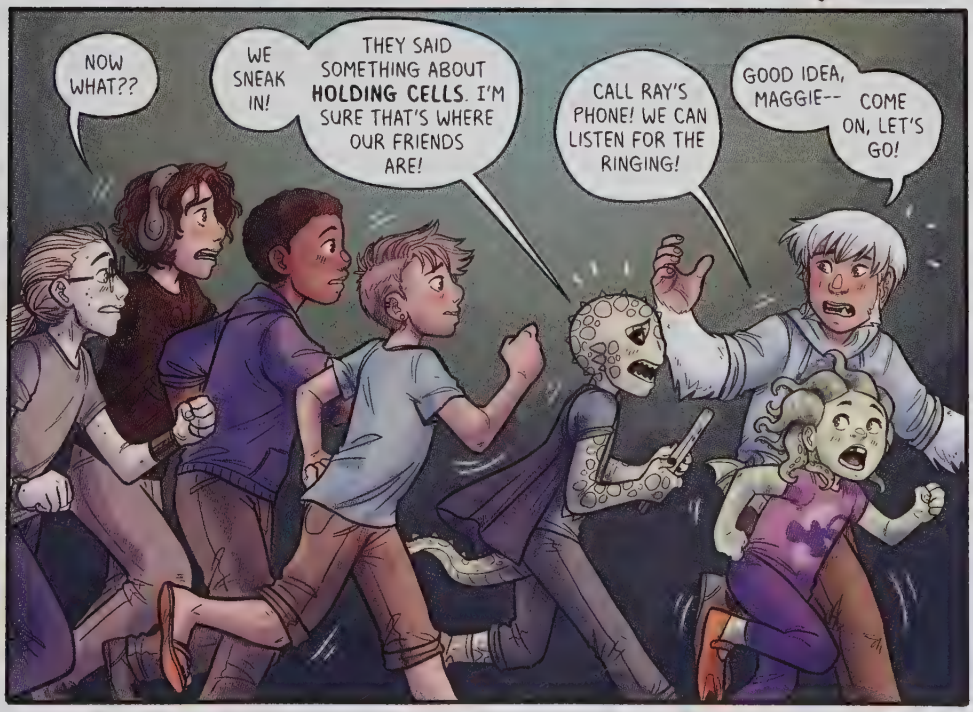
IT'S THE BEST PLAN WE HAVE. JUST BE READY THE SECOND THE DOOR OPENS.
OKAY!
nod

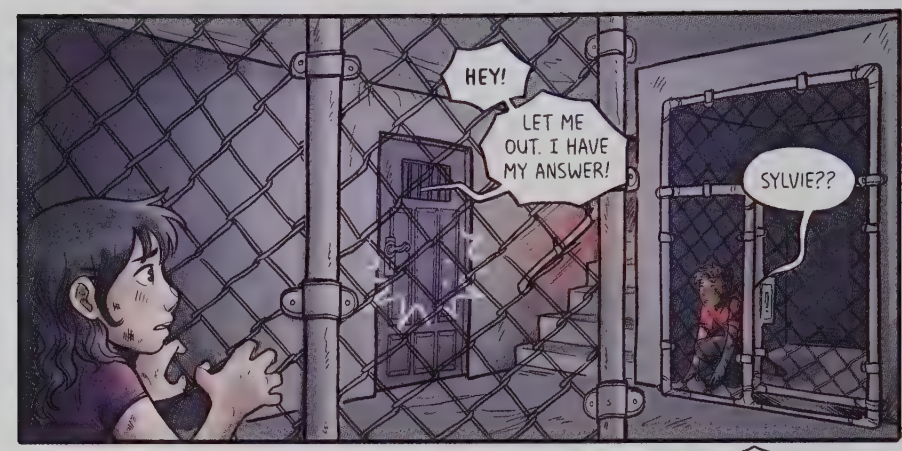
BEEP BEEP!

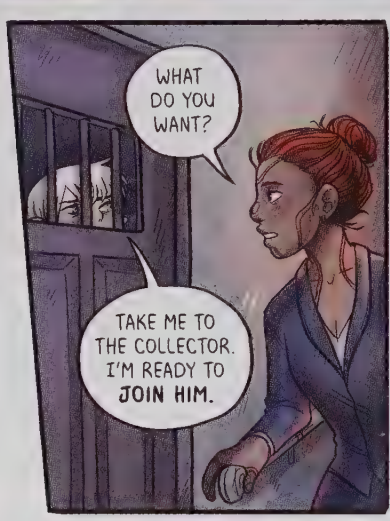

WE GOT 'EM!
TOOK YOU LONG ENOUGH.
SORRY ABOUT THAT--THEY WERE HARD TO FIND.
YOU GOT 'EM RESTRAINED?
OH YEAH, THEY'RE UNCONSCIOUS.
SQUATCHING YOU
NATO
KNOCKED THEM OUT AND TIED THEM UP!
HEH HEH!
WE'LL HANDLE IT FROM HERE.
WE'LL LOAD THEM INTO THE HOLDING CELLS FOR YOU.
OH, THANKS SO MUCH!
SLIDE
WHAM!

WHUMP!
IT'S AN AMBU--
SCHLORP
GERROFF!
HNNG!
MMPH!
CRACK!


I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT WORKED!
WE DID IT!
FREAKISH
QUICK-- LOAD THEM INTO THE VAN SO NO ONE SEES THEM!


NOW WHAT??
WE SNEAK IN!
THEY SAID SOMETHING ABOUT HOLDING CELLS. I'M SURE THAT'S WHERE OUR FRIENDS ARE!
CALL RAY'S PHONE! WE CAN LISTEN FOR THE RINGING!
GOOD IDEA, MAGGIE--
COME ON, LET'S GO!


HEY!
LET ME OUT. I HAVE MY ANSWER!
SYLVIE??


WHAT DO YOU WANT?
TAKE ME TO THE COLLECTOR. I'M READY TO **JOIN HIM.**

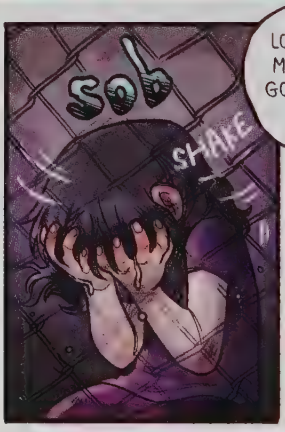
WHAT?!
TRAITOR!!

HOW COULD YOU **DO** THIS?!

AFTER ALL THIS TIME.
WE--WE'RE **FAMILY!!**

I HAVE TO.
IT'S MY NATURE.
SYLVIE, DON'T DO THIS!
RATTLE
RATTLE
DON'T LEAVE US IN CAGES--
SYLVIE, PLEASE!!!
SOB
GRRAAAAGH!

CLARICE--CLARICE, ARE YOU OKAY?
shudder


sob
SHAKE

LOOK AT ME--IT'S GONNA BE OKAY.

IT'S JUST **YOU** AND **ME** NOW, AND WE'RE GONNA GET OUT OF THIS.

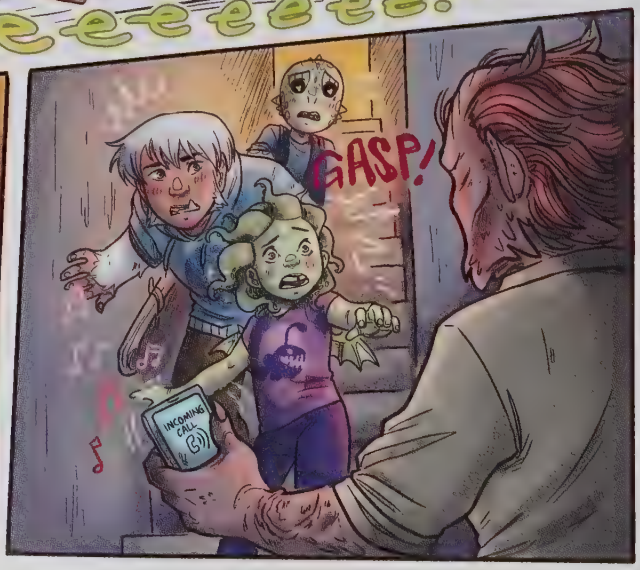
SYLVIE'S GONE, BUT WE STILL HAVE THE OTHERS--WE JUST HAVE TO GET TO THEM. WE **CAN'T STOP FIGHTING.**
WE'RE GONNA FIND MY DAD AND ESCAPE, OKAY?
STEP ONE--GETTING OUT OF THESE CAGES.

SO...
READY TO JOIN ME, LITTLE WISP?
...YES.
I KNEW YOU'D SEE THINGS MY WAY. WHY DON'T WE GET STARTED?
ch-tink!
GOTCHA.

DO YOU HEAR IT??
HOW DO WE EVEN KNOW THEY STILL HAVE IT?!

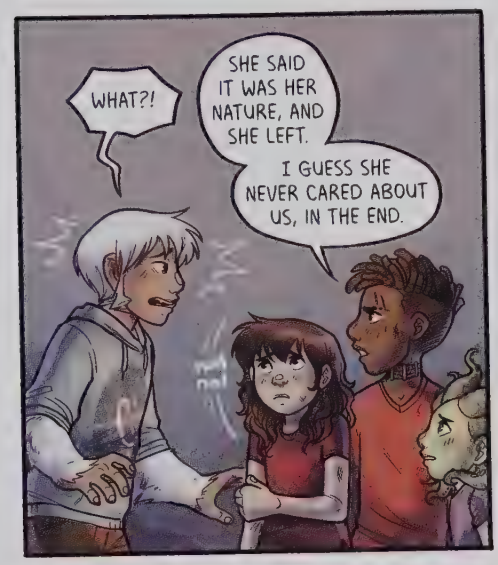
WHOMP
WAIT--
LISTEN!!
screeeeeeee!

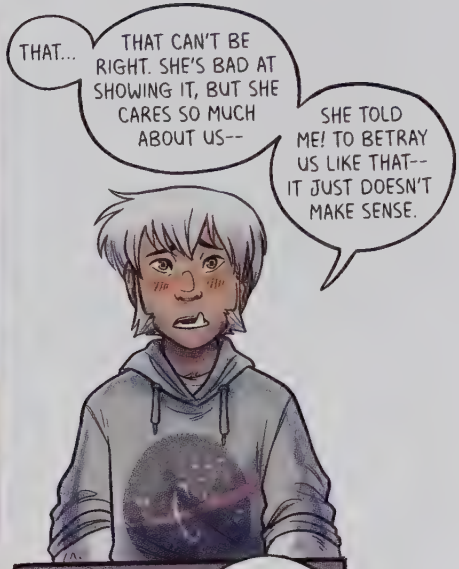
THAT WAY!!


GASP!
INCOMING CALL

NOT WHO YOU EXPECTED, HUH??
HMPH!
tap tap
JAALI!!
HOW DID YOU GET OUT?!
CLARICE PICKED THE LOCKS!
WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE ALL RIGHT!

HOW DID YOU GUYS GET IN??
WE HAD SOME HELP FROM OUR NEW FRIENDS.
IT'S THE SQUATCH GUYS!!
IT'S OKAY! THEY'RE OUR FRIENDS NOW!
SORRY ABOUT THE WHOLE... STALKING... THING...
WAIT, WHERE'S SYLVIE?
SHE'S BETRAYED US.
SHE LEFT TO JOIN THE COLLECTOR.


WHAT?!
SHE SAID IT WAS HER NATURE, AND SHE LEFT.
I GUESS SHE NEVER CARED ABOUT US, IN THE END.


THAT...
THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT. SHE'S BAD AT SHOWING IT, BUT SHE CARES SO MUCH ABOUT US--
SHE TOLD ME! TO BETRAY US LIKE THAT-- IT JUST DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.

I DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT EITHER...
SHE COULDN'T EVEN **LOOK** AT US WHEN SHE SAID IT.

SHE'S STILL SYLVIE--SHE'S PROBABLY IN TROUBLE!
WE SHOULD HELP HER!

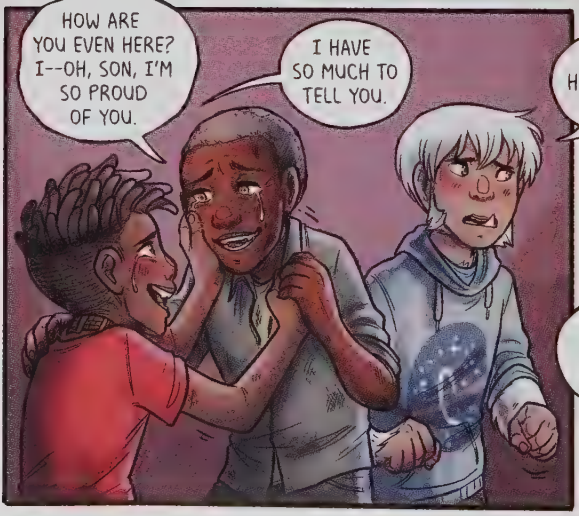
YOU'RE RIGHT--SHE NEEDS OUR HELP.
THIS HOUSE IS MASSIVE. WHERE DO WE EVEN LOOK?!
AND HOW ARE WE GONNA FIGHT THE COLLECTOR?
WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT HE CAN DO!

HE'S A SHADOW BEING--HE CAN SUCK THE LIFE OUT OF YOU.
RAY! JAYLA!
DO WE... KNOW YOU?
HERE--GIMME SOME OF THOSE BOBBY PINS! I'LL HELP UNLOCK THE CAGES.
YOU CAN PICK LOCKS TOO??
OF COURSE I CAN! HOW DO YOU THINK WE KEEP GETTING INTO SECRET FACILITIES?
wink!
WE'RE FRIENDS OF TIBBS AND ADDIE!
THEY'VE BEEN SO WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
AND I THINK...
...THIS BELONGS TO YOU!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND, BUT THANK YOU.

WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE COLLECTOR?
HE'S STRONG, BUT HE CAN'T HANDLE **LARGE GROUPS**.
THAT'S WHY HE HAS TO GO AFTER HIS PREY ONE BY ONE AND HAS HIS HENCHMEN LOCK US IN THESE CAGES.
DID YOU EVER TRY TO MAKE A BREAK FOR IT?
WE DID, BUT HE'S BEEN **DRAINING US** FOR WEEKS.
WE BARELY HAVE THE STRENGTH TO **USE** OUR POWERS NOW.
SOME PEOPLE LAST FOR MONTHS, EVEN **YEARS**, BUT MOST WASTE AWAY INTO HUSKS AFTER HE DRAINS THEM.
I THINK IF WE ALL WORK **TOGETHER**, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO BEAT HIM.
HEY, GUYS? SOME OF THESE PEOPLE ARE REALLY WEAK...
DAD!!!

JAAL!!
I THOUGHT I'D NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN.

BABA...
I'VE MISSED YOU SO MUCH!


HOW ARE YOU EVEN HERE? I--OH, SON, I'M SO PROUD OF YOU.
I HAVE SO MUCH TO TELL YOU.

WE STILL HAVE TO FIND SYLVIE!
I CAN TAKE YOU TO THEM.

YOU MONSTER-- YOU REALLY THOUGHT I WOULD JOIN YOU?!
TREACHEROUS LITTLE IMP, I'LL END YOU HERE AND NOW!
YOU HIDE BEHIND YOUR POWER, FATTENING YOURSELF UP WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S LIVES!
I AM UNSTOPPABLE. I HAVE LIVED LONGER THAN ANY BEING IN THIS WORLD!
BUT YOU LIVE BY KILLING OTHERS!
LOOK AT ALL THE LIVES YOU HAVE DESTROYED!
STOP IT! THIS ISN'T REAL-- I KNOW YOUR TRICKS, WISP!

LOOK AT THE FAMILIES YOU'VE RIPPED APART—
LIKE YOU'RE TRYING TO RIP APART MINE!
THIS ISN'T REAL--THEY ARE MINE! I REGRET NOTHING!
YOU REGRET EVERYTHING.
YOU'RE A COWARD.
WILLING TO SACRIFICE ANYTHING TO PROLONG YOUR OWN LIFE.
YOU ARE TRULY ALONE!!
YOUR TIME IS OVER, COLLECTOR!
ENOUGH!

LITTLE FOOL. WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?!
I HAVE LIVED COUNTLESS LIFETIMES, CONSUMED THOUSANDS, AND YOU THINK SOME PRETTY ILLUSIONS WILL BEST ME?!
YOU ARE PATHETIC.
PROTECTING OTHERS BY SACRIFICING YOURSELF--
DENYING WHAT YOU ARE TO THE VERY END!
YOU COULD HAVE BEEN LIKE ME. POWERFUL, STRONG, IMMORTAL!
HNNGK
I... AM... NOTHING... LIKE YOU!
hiSSSSSSSSS

SYLVIE!!
HOW DID YOU--?!
NO!
GASP!
GUARDS!

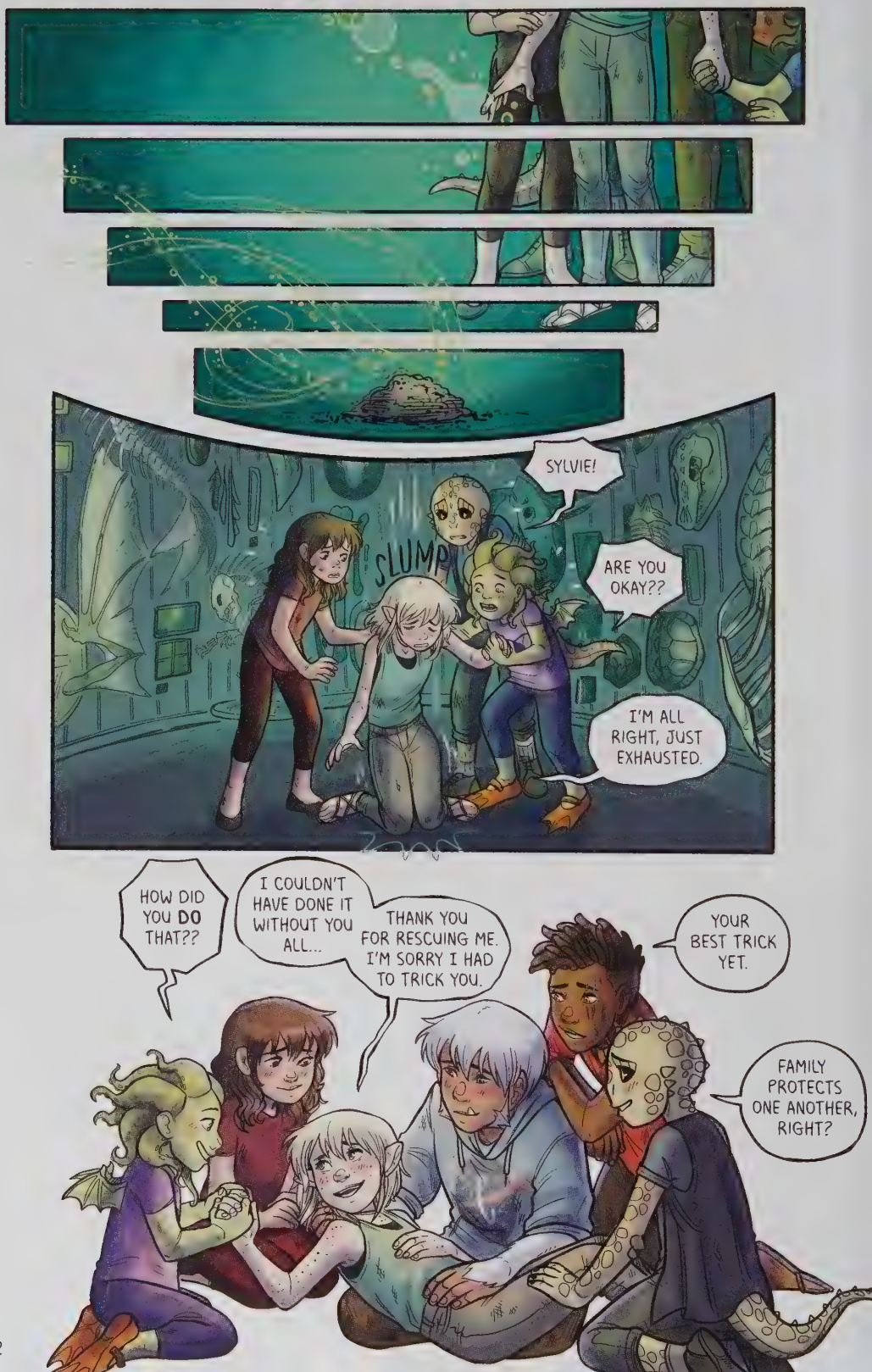
GRAB YOUR FRIEND--
WE'LL TAKE THE GUARDS!
fwip!
fwip!
fwip
SLAM

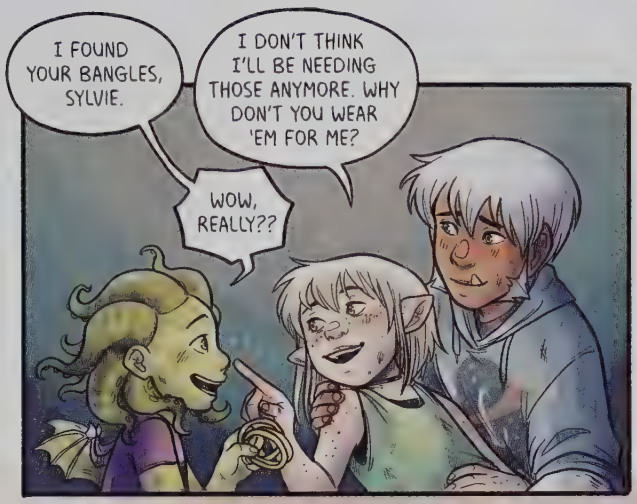
GRAH!
DODGE
SEIZE HIM!
YANK!
CLING

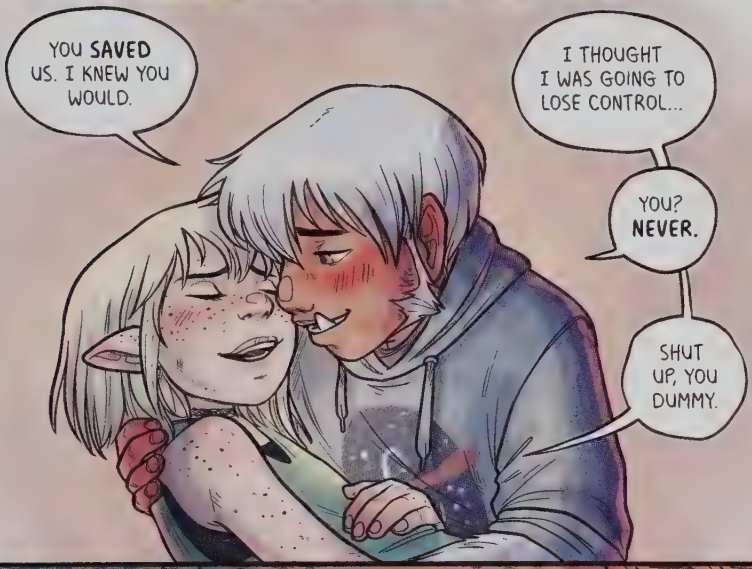
YOU FOOLS! I WILL DRAIN YOU ALL!
AGH!
shoom
RRRAAAGH
YOU'LL NEVER HURT ANYONE EVER AGAIN!!
HOLD HIM DOWN!
NO!
OMAR!
I'M OKAY-- GO GET SYLVIE!

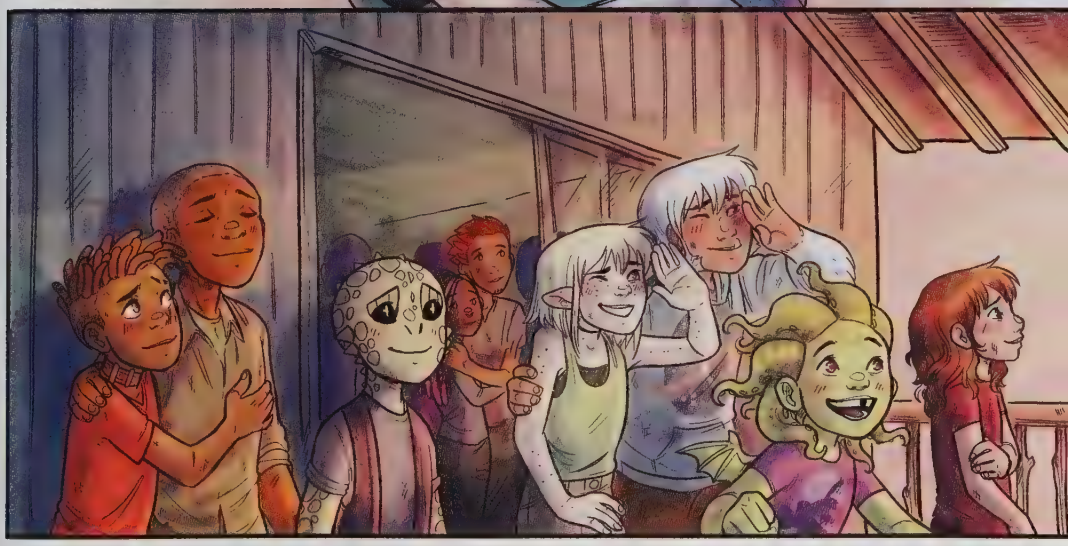
I TRIED...
SYLVIE--
I TRIED...
IT'S NO USE...
SYLVIE, GET UP!
...HE'S TOO STRONG...
GET UP, SYLVIE!
WE NEED YOU!
...HELP ME UP.
RELEASE ME!
I WILL NOT BE DEFEATED BY MERE CHILDREN!
I AM IMMORTAL!
I AM UNSTOPPABLE!
THIS IS WHAT YOU'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND, OLD MAN.
FAMILY PROTECTS ONE ANOTHER...

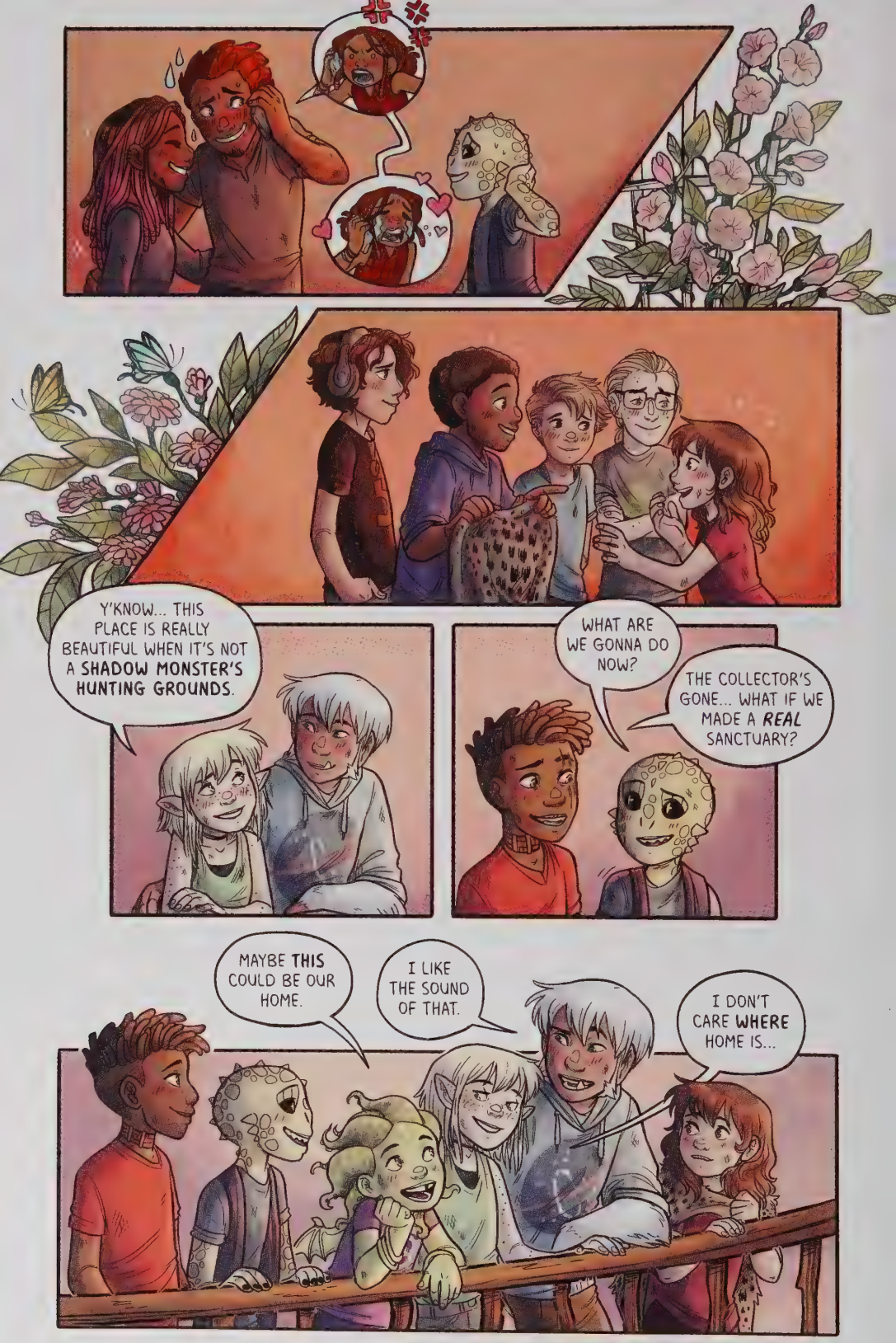
...AND LOVE IS STRONGER THAN ANY SHADOW.
NO!
NO!
NO!
NOOOOOO!!!


SLUMP!
SYLVIE!
ARE YOU OKAY??
I'M ALL RIGHT, JUST EXHAUSTED.
HOW DID YOU **DO** THAT??
I COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU ALL...
THANK YOU FOR RESCUING ME. I'M SORRY I HAD TO TRICK YOU.
YOUR BEST TRICK YET.
FAMILY PROTECTS ONE ANOTHER, RIGHT?


I FOUND YOUR BANGLES, SYLVIE.
I DON'T THINK I'LL BE NEEDING THOSE ANYMORE. WHY DON'T YOU WEAR 'EM FOR ME?
WOW, REALLY??


YOU **SAVED** US. I KNEW YOU WOULD.
I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO LOSE CONTROL...
YOU? **NEVER.**
SHUT UP, YOU DUMMY.



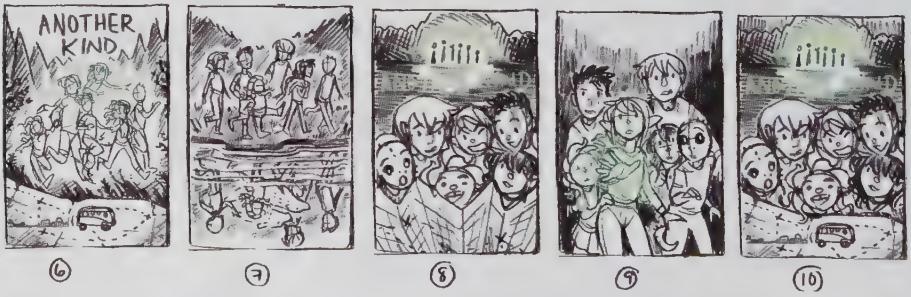

Y'KNOW... THIS PLACE IS REALLY BEAUTIFUL WHEN IT'S NOT A **SHADOW MONSTER'S HUNTING GROUNDS**.
WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO NOW?
THE COLLECTOR'S GONE... WHAT IF WE MADE A ***REAL*** SANCTUARY?
MAYBE **THIS** COULD BE OUR HOME.
I LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT.
I DON'T CARE **WHERE** HOME IS...

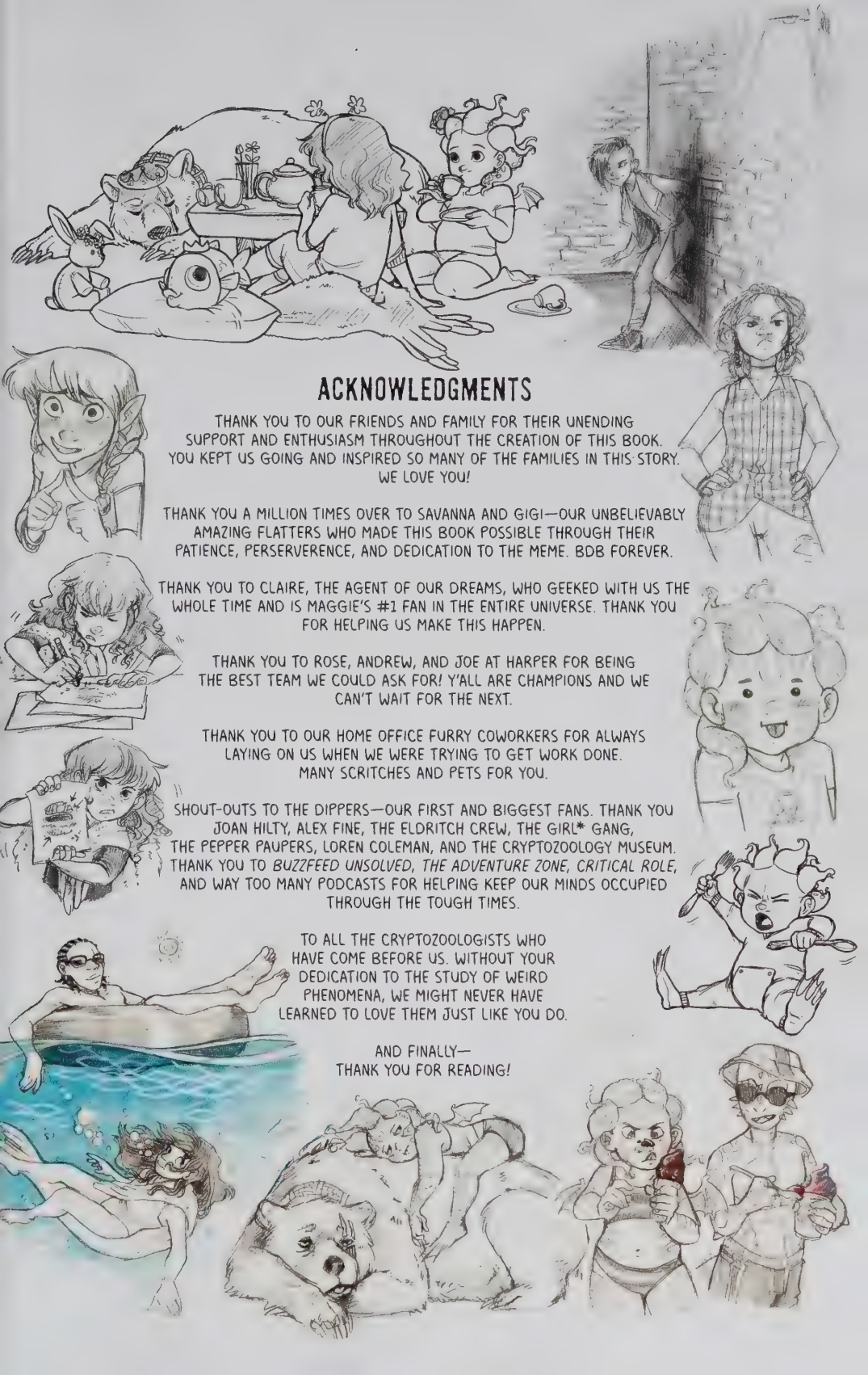
...AS LONG AS WE'RE TOGETHER.

THE VERY FIRST DRAWINGS OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS.

THIS IS RETCH! ONE OF THE ORIGINAL CONCEPT CHARACTERS, BUT HE DIDN'T MAKE IT TO THE FINAL VERSION.

COVER SKETCHES





ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THANK YOU TO OUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY FOR THEIR UNENDING SUPPORT AND ENTHUSIASM THROUGHOUT THE CREATION OF THIS BOOK. YOU KEPT US GOING AND INSPIRED SO MANY OF THE FAMILIES IN THIS STORY. WE LOVE YOU!

THANK YOU A MILLION TIMES OVER TO SAVANNA AND GIGI—OUR UNBELIEVABLY AMAZING FLATTERS WHO MADE THIS BOOK POSSIBLE THROUGH THEIR PATIENCE, PERSERVERENCE, AND DEDICATION TO THE MEME. BDB FOREVER.

THANK YOU TO CLAIRE, THE AGENT OF OUR DREAMS, WHO GEEKED WITH US THE WHOLE TIME AND IS MAGGIE'S #1 FAN IN THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE. THANK YOU FOR HELPING US MAKE THIS HAPPEN.

THANK YOU TO ROSE, ANDREW, AND JOE AT HARPER FOR BEING THE BEST TEAM WE COULD ASK FOR! Y'ALL ARE CHAMPIONS AND WE CAN'T WAIT FOR THE NEXT.

THANK YOU TO OUR HOME OFFICE FURRY COWORKERS FOR ALWAYS LAYING ON US WHEN WE WERE TRYING TO GET WORK DONE. MANY SCRITCHES AND PETS FOR YOU.

SHOUT-OUTS TO THE DIPPERS—OUR FIRST AND BIGGEST FANS. THANK YOU JOAN HILTY, ALEX FINE, THE ELDRITCH CREW, THE GIRL* GANG, THE PEPPER PAUPERS, LOREN COLEMAN, AND THE CRYPTOZOOLOGY MUSEUM. THANK YOU TO *BUZZFEED UNSOLVED*, *THE ADVENTURE ZONE*, *CRITICAL ROLE*, AND WAY TOO MANY PODCASTS FOR HELPING KEEP OUR MINDS OCCUPIED THROUGH THE TOUGH TIMES.

TO ALL THE CRYPTOZOOLOGISTS WHO HAVE COME BEFORE US. WITHOUT YOUR DEDICATION TO THE STUDY OF WEIRD PHENOMENA, WE MIGHT NEVER HAVE LEARNED TO LOVE THEM JUST LIKE YOU DO.

AND FINALLY—
THANK YOU FOR READING!

FOR DOYLE
AND FOR OUR FAMILIES,
OF ONE KIND OR
ANOTHER

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WWW.HARPERALLEY.COM

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CONTROL NUMBER: 2021939648
ISBN 978-0-06-304353-4 (PBK.) — ISBN 978-0-06-304354-1

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Courtesy Cait May and Trevor Bream

CAIT MAY is an illustrator, sea witch, purveyor of poisonous plants, and absolute supernerd. She is obsessed with cryptozoology, D&D, ghost stories, and all things that go bump in the night. She has worked with the McElroy family and *Critical Role*, and has been published in the *Atlantic*, *Vengeful Ghost*, and *Cryptid Culture* magazine. She wants to make comics that appeal to all ages and help readers face the crazy world we live in using their personal superpowers.

TREVOR BREAM is an author, Dungeon Master, cat dad, and is secretly a tadpole in human form. They want to tell stories that appeal to all, especially the queer community. *Another Kind* is their debut into the world of comics writing.

The two of them live in Baltimore with their two cats and way too many polyhedral dice.

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