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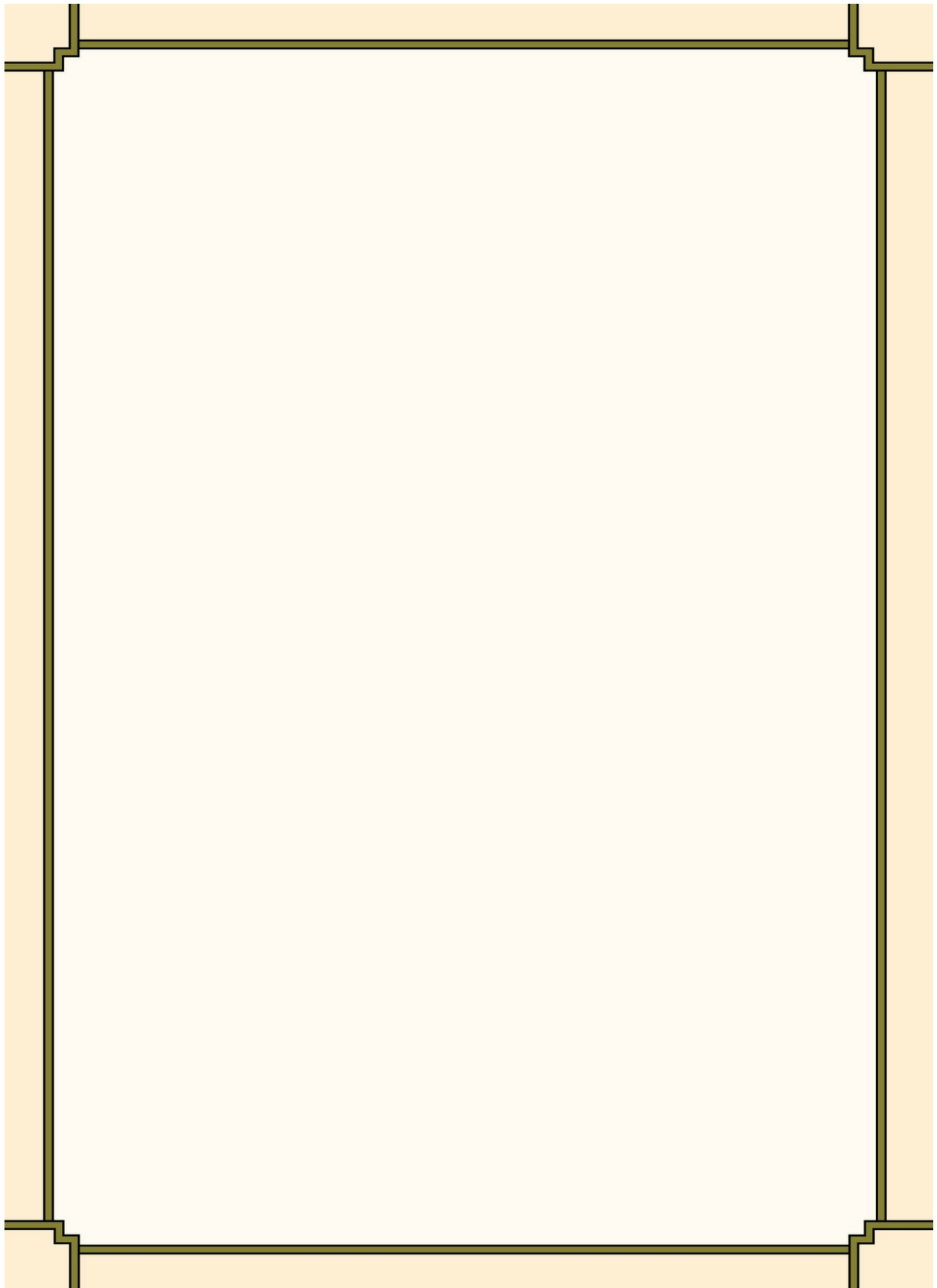
AVATAR

THE LAST AIRBENDER™



GURI
HIRU

THE SEARCH · PART TWO



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AVATAR

THE LAST AIRBENDER™

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AVATAR

THE LAST AIRBENDER

THE SEARCH • PART TWO

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I CAN'T BELIEVE IT.



IT MAKES SENSE OF SO MUCH OF MY LIFE! THAT'S WHY OZAI WAS ABLE TO BANISH ME WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT!

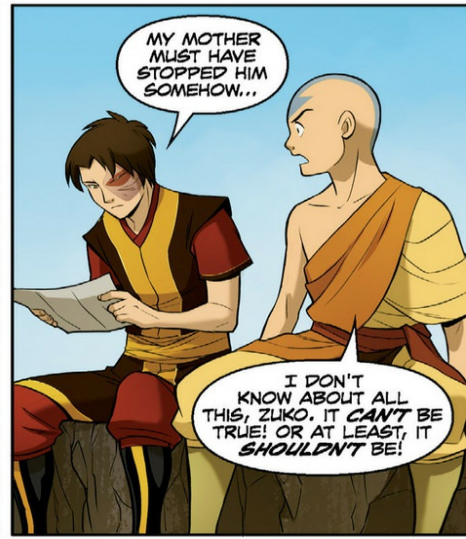
I'M NOT HIS SON.

THEN WHY DIDN'T HE JUST GET RID OF YOU PERMANENTLY?



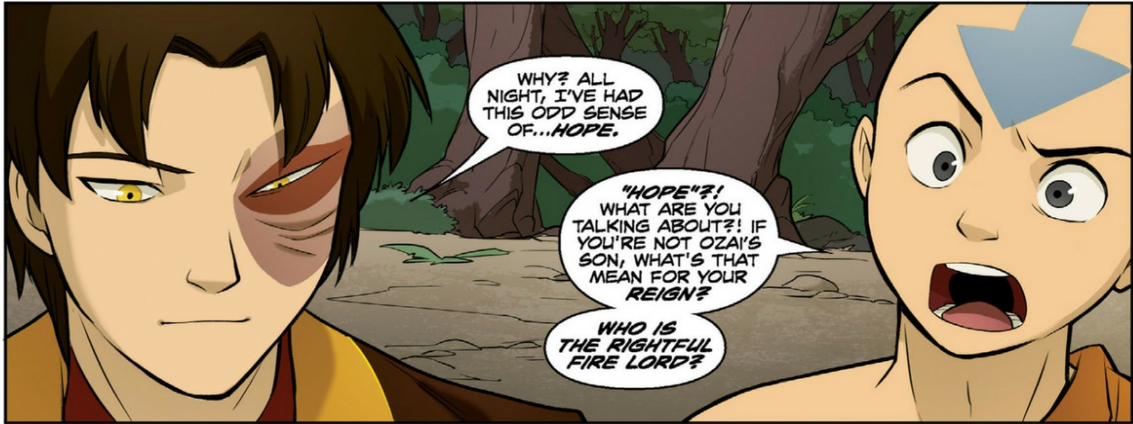
HE WAS ABOUT TO! THE NIGHT BEFORE MY MOTHER LEFT, MY GRANDFATHER COMMANDED OZAI TO TAKE MY LIFE AS PUNISHMENT FOR ASKING FOR IROH'S BIRTHRIGHT. OZAI DIDN'T EVEN ARGUE. HE WAS JUST GOING TO DO IT.

BUT HE DIDN'T! YOU'RE STILL HERE!

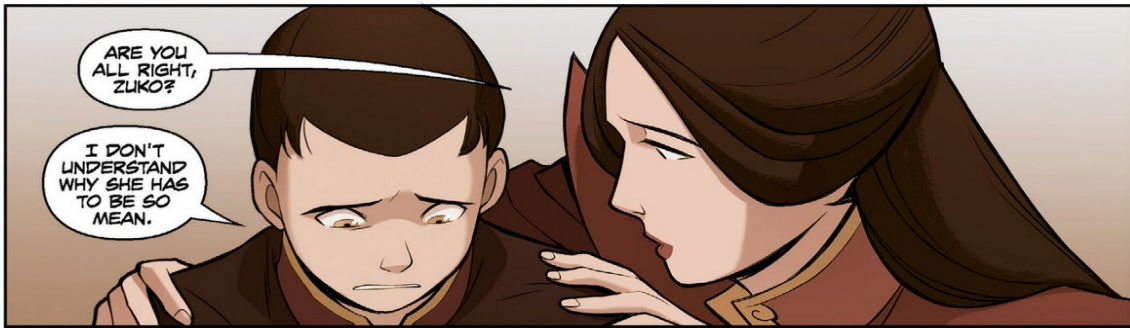


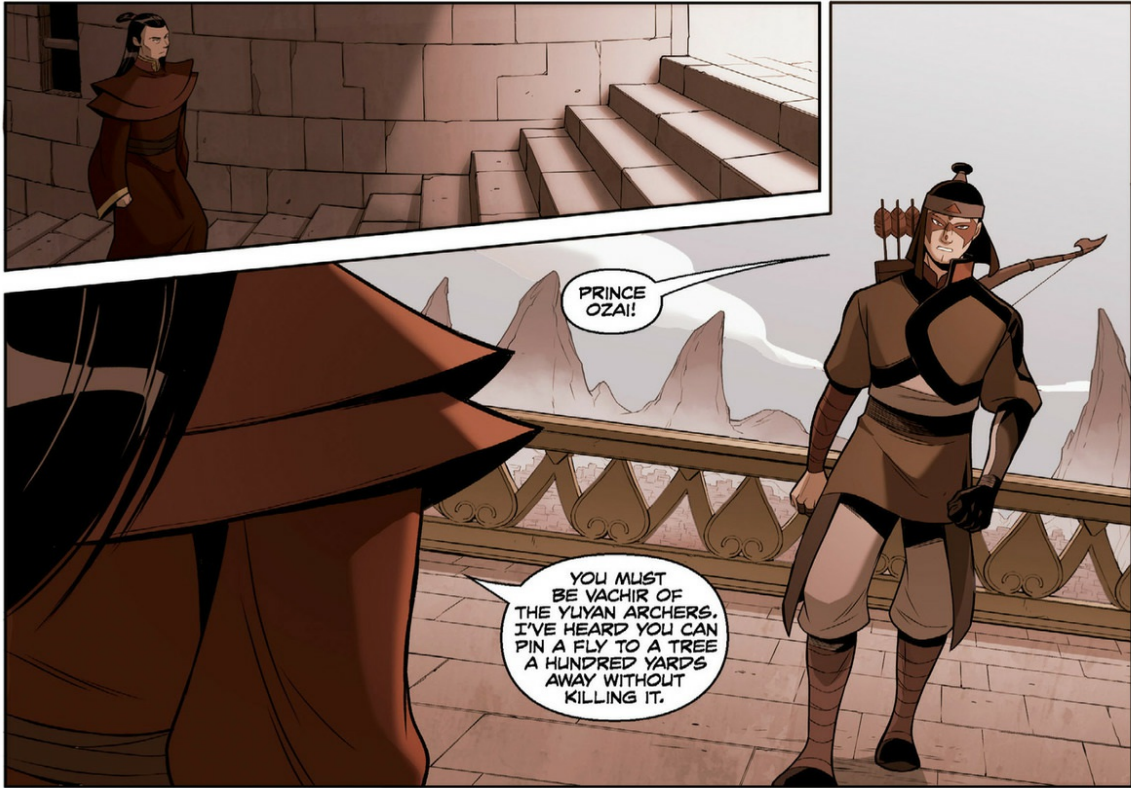
MY MOTHER MUST HAVE STOPPED HIM SOMEHOW...

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT ALL THIS, ZUKO. IT *CAN'T* BE TRUE! OR AT LEAST, IT *SHOULDN'T* BE!









PRINCE OZAI!

YOU MUST BE VACHIR OF THE YUYAN ARCHERS. I'VE HEARD YOU CAN PIN A FLY TO A TREE A HUNDRED YARDS AWAY WITHOUT KILLING IT.



ANY ARCHER WHO WEARS THE YUYAN TATTOO CAN DO THAT, YOUR HIGHNESS.

I CAN PIN THAT FLY TO THAT TREE A HUNDRED YARDS AWAY WITHOUT KILLING IT...AND I CAN DO IT **BLINDFOLDED**.

HM.

I HAVE A MISSION FOR YOU, VACHIR.



IN A SMALL VILLAGE CALLED HIRA'A ON THE FAR EDGE OF THE FIRE NATION THERE LIVES A MAN NAMED **IKEM**.

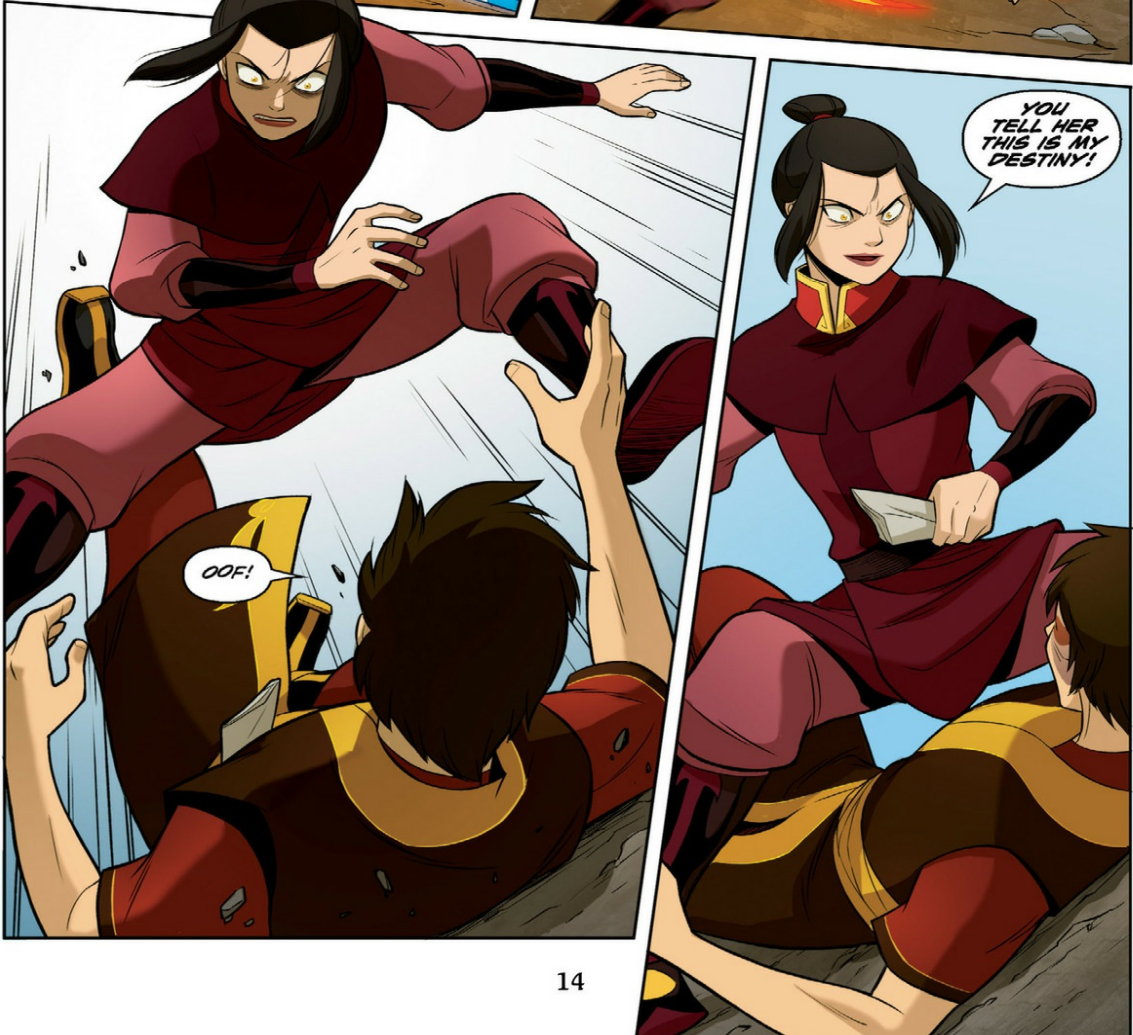
FIND HIM. RID THE WORLD OF HIM.



AT ONCE, MY PRINCE. AND YOU HAVE MY WORD THAT NO ONE WILL EVER CONNECT MY ACTIONS TO YOU.

NO. DON'T BOTHER WITH SECRECY. YOU TELL THAT DIRT-STAINED COMMONER HIS DEMISE WAS PERSONALLY ORDERED BY **PRINCE OZAI OF THE FIRE NATION**.









WAS THIS HER PLAN ALL ALONG? IS SHE WHISPERING IN YOUR EAR RIGHT NOW TO THROW ME OVER THE CLIFF?!



YOU'RE NOT MAKING ANY SENSE!

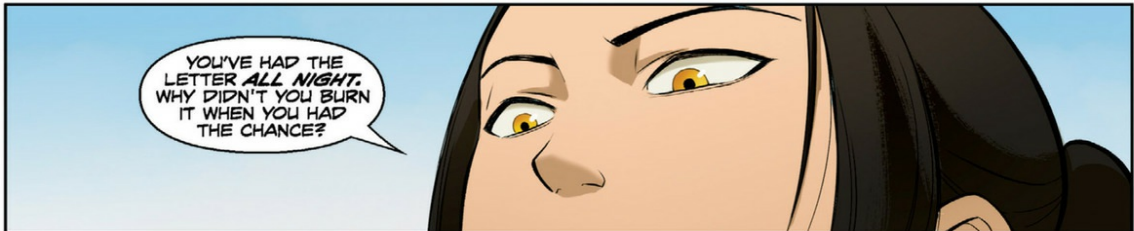
ALL MY LIFE, SHE'S KEPT ME FROM MY TRUE DESTINY!



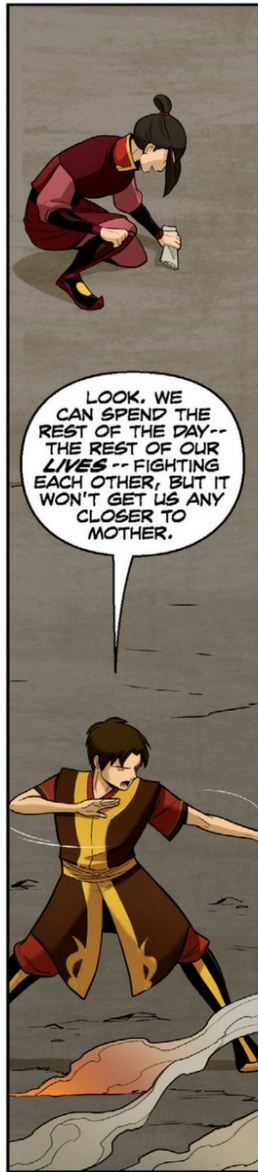
DON'T DENY IT, ZUKO! SHE TOLD YOU I HAD THE LETTER HIDDEN IN MY BOOT! SHE TOLD YOU TO WAIT UNTIL I WAS ASLEEP TO--



WAIT A MINUTE.



YOU'VE HAD THE LETTER ALL NIGHT. WHY DIDN'T YOU BURN IT WHEN YOU HAD THE CHANCE?





AANG! ARE WE READY TO LEAVE?

YOUR SISTER SET FIRE TO HALF THE LANDSCAPE!

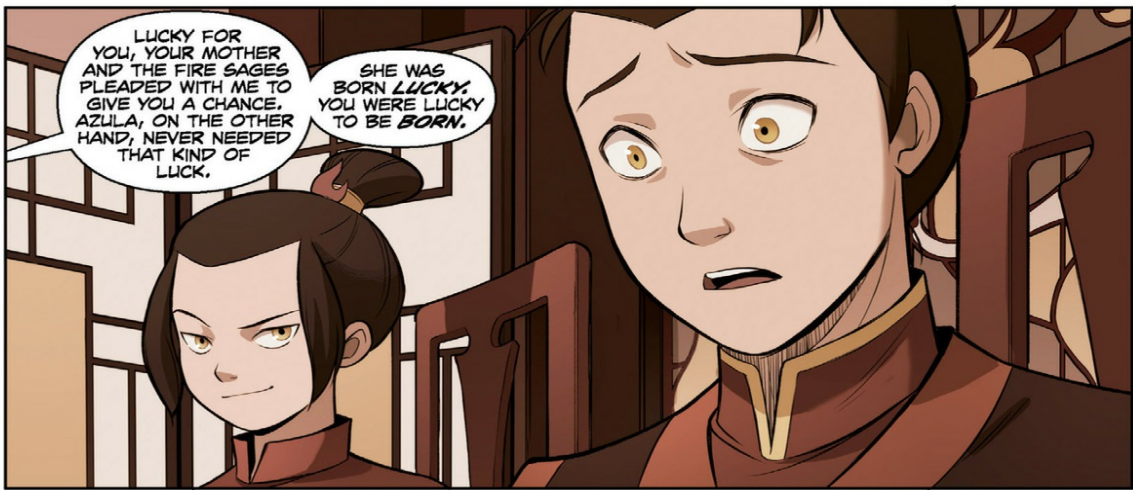
EVEN WITH AANG'S HELP, IT TOOK US UNTIL NOW TO PUT EVERYTHING OUT!

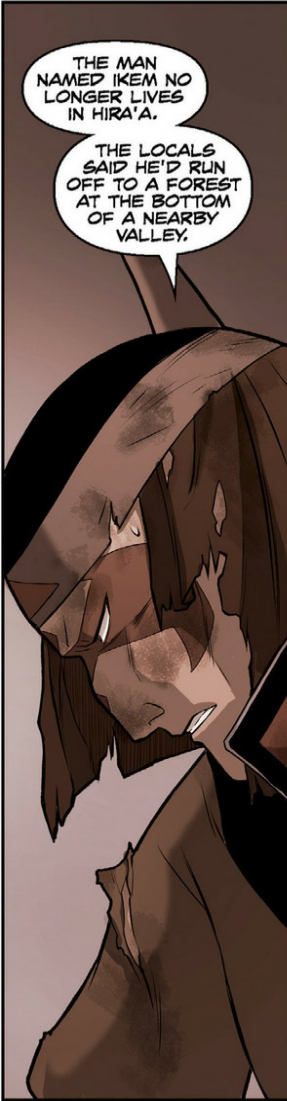


NATURE HATES YOU!







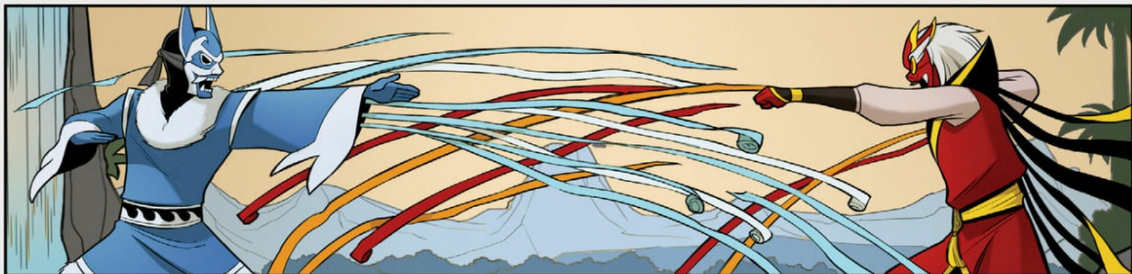
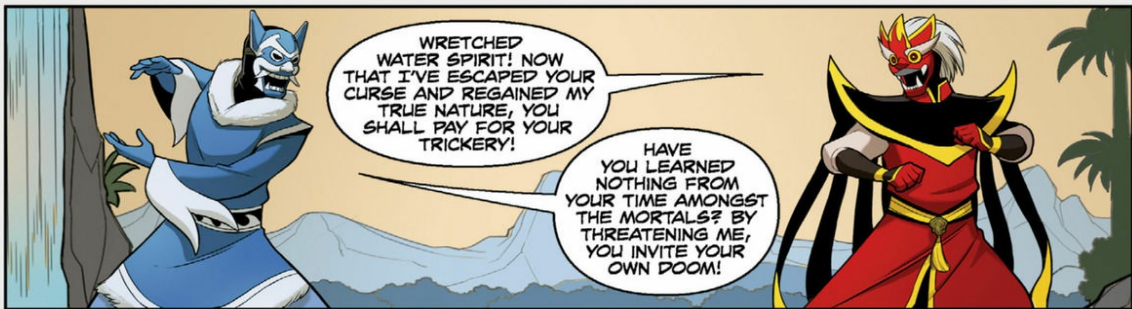




















YOU AND NOREN HAVE A BEAUTIFUL HOME, NORIKO!

HOW LONG HAVE YOU TWO BEEN MARRIED?

ALMOST FIVE YEARS NOW.

IT MUST BE NICE.

IT IS, BUT YOU TWO ARE A LITTLE YOUNG TO BE THINKING ABOUT MARRIAGE, AREN'T YOU?

OH-- WE'RE--!

WELL-- UH...!

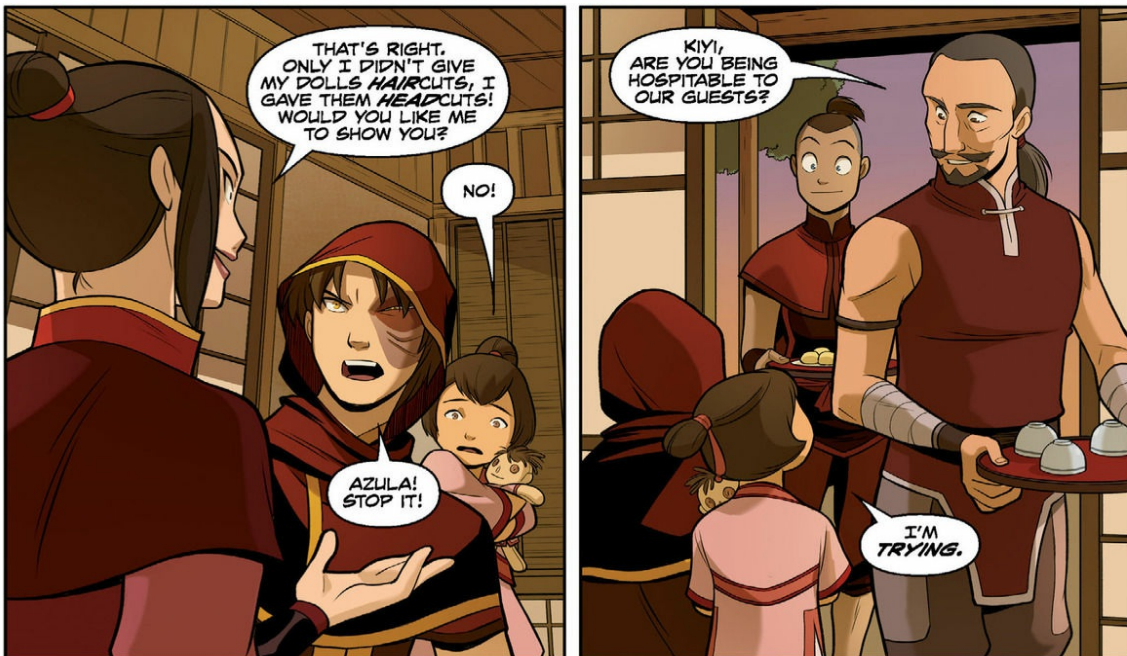
YOU KNOW WHAT? I TAKE THAT BACK. LOVE LEADS WHERE LOVE LEADS, REGARDLESS OF AGE.

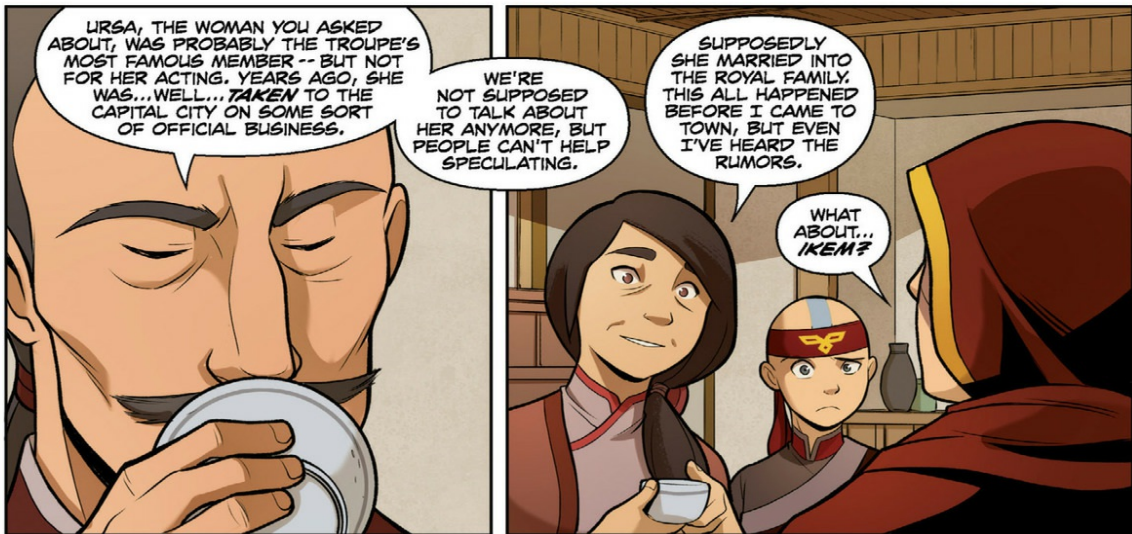
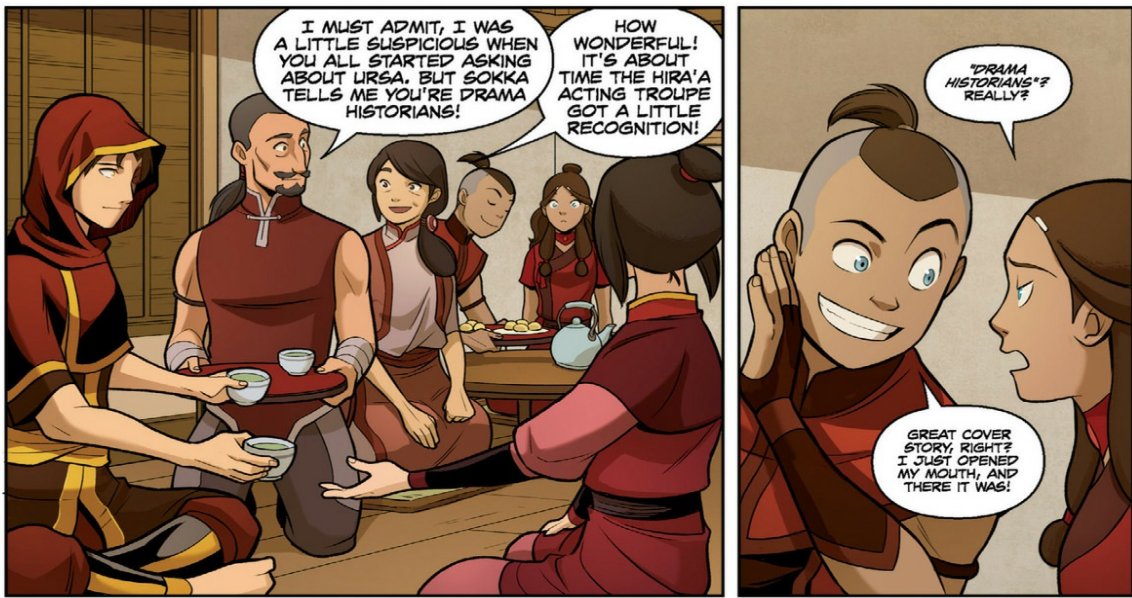
NOREN AND I FOUND EACH OTHER PRETTY LATE IN LIFE. YOUNG LOVERS LIKE YOU ARE LUCKY.

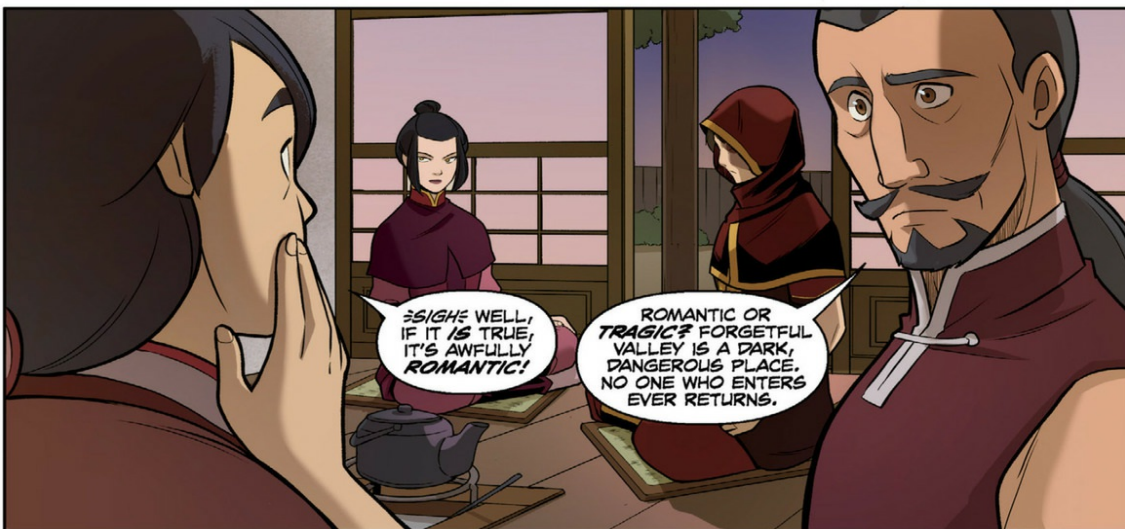
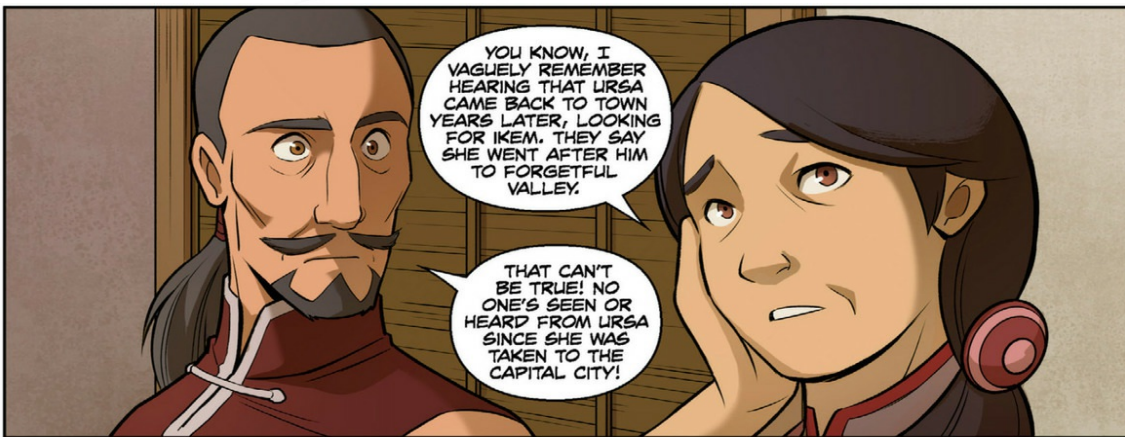
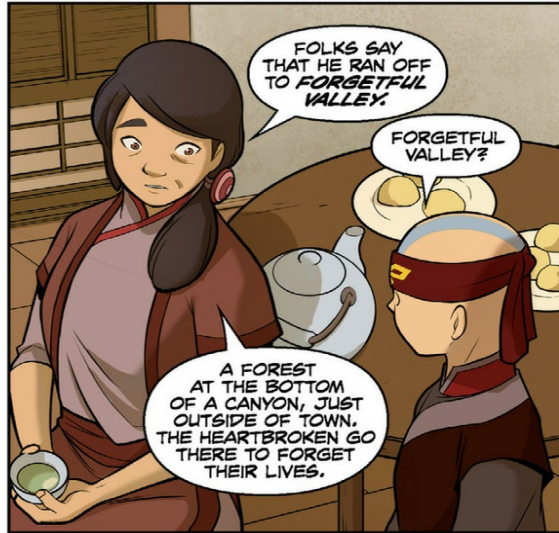
WANNA MEET MY DOLL?

NO.

OF COURSE.









NOREN AND NORIKO, YOU'VE BEEN MORE THAN GENEROUS. THANK YOU FOR THE INFORMATION.

AND FOR SHARING YOUR HOME WITH US!



YOU'LL COME AGAIN? PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE?

I REALLY HOPE SO, KIYI.



HOW COULD YOU EVEN *THINK* THAT ABOUT SUCH A LOVELY FAMILY?!

UGH. MORE THAN ONCE TONIGHT I WAS TEMPTED TO BURN THAT WHOLE PLACE DOWN! BUT I RESISTED FOR *YOU*, ZUZU. I HOPE YOU APPRECIATE IT.



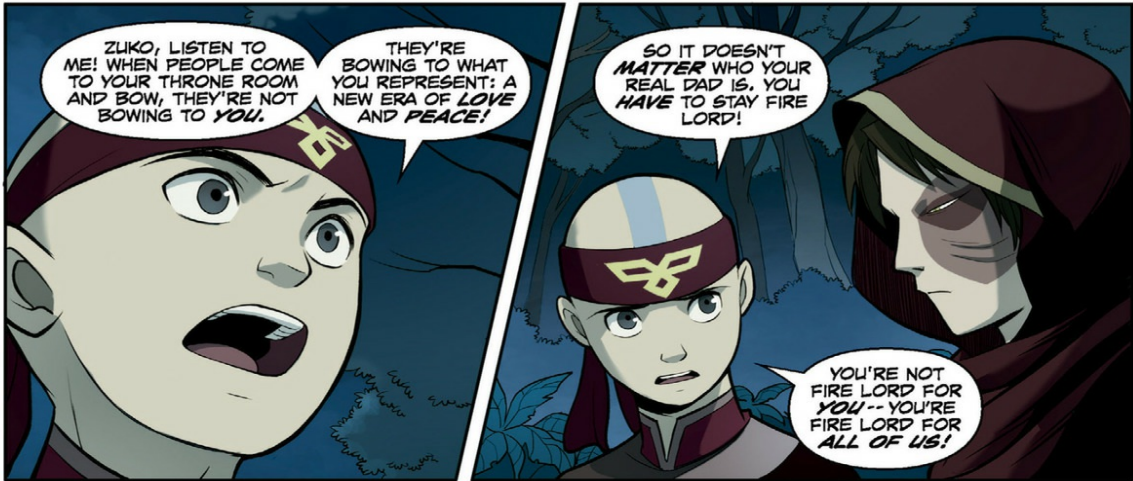
OH, PLEASE. THEIR CHARADE DISGUSTED ME. NOBODY'S THAT HAPPY!

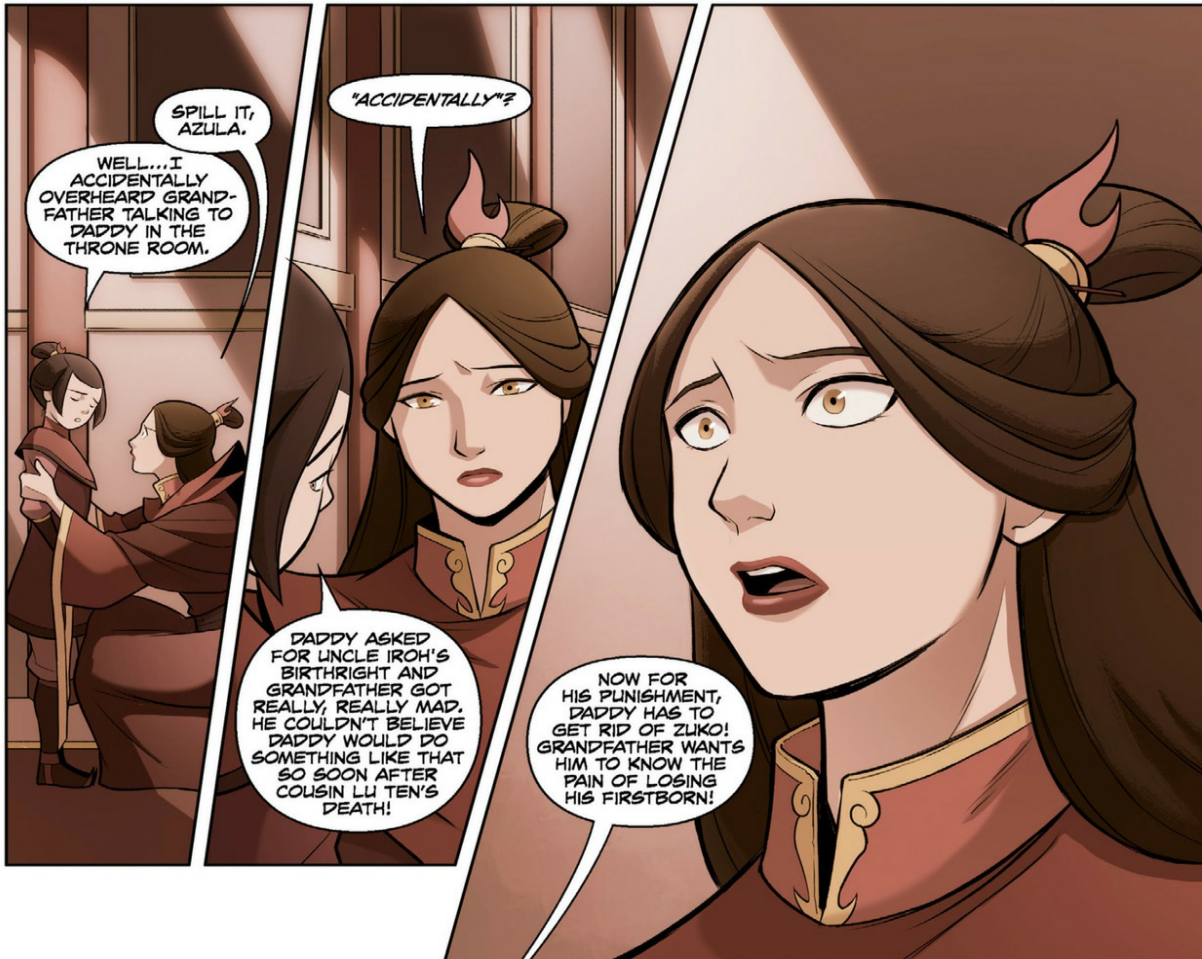
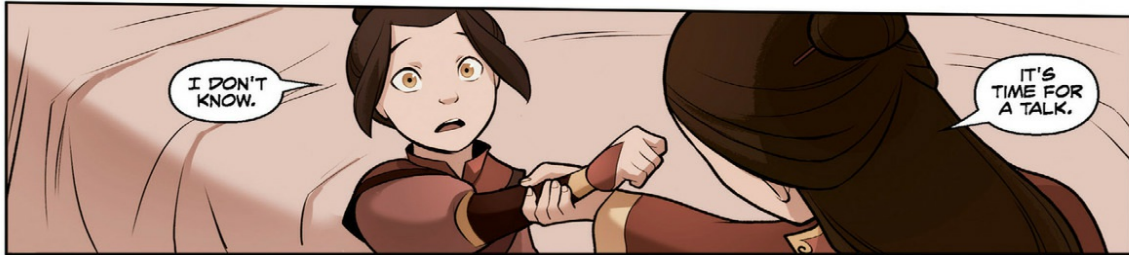
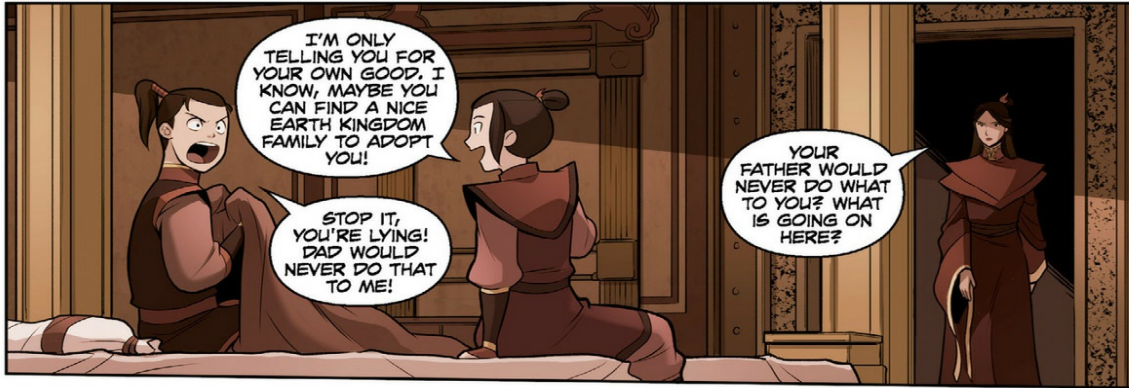
AANG AND I ARE THAT HAPPY!

BECAUSE YOU TWO ARE IDIOTS.

HEY, ZUKO?



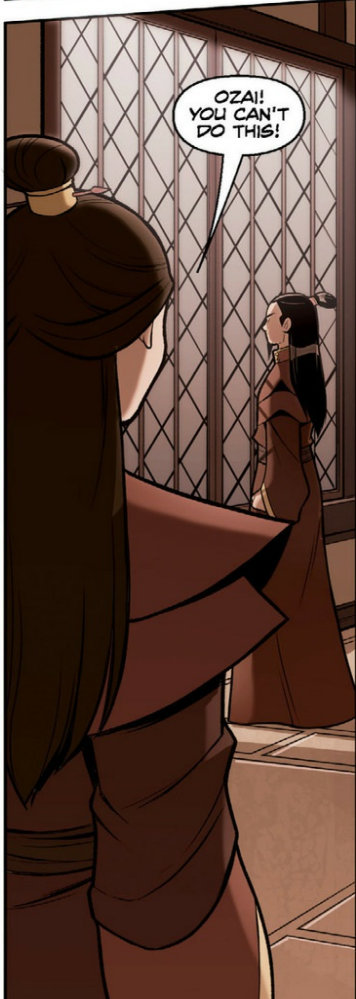
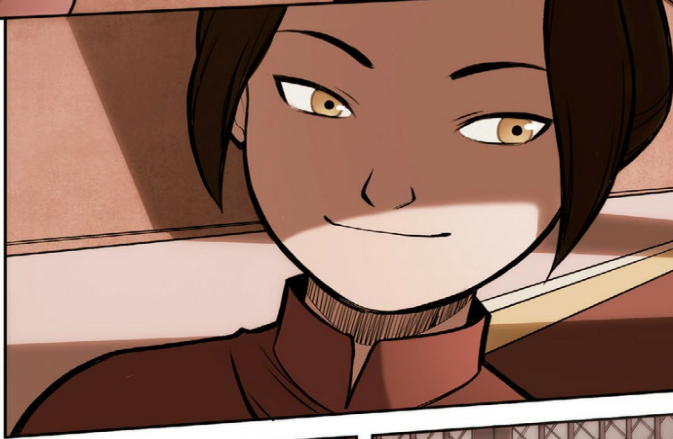






OH, MOMMY!
I'M SO SCARED
FOR ZUKO! YOU
DON'T THINK DADDY
WOULD REALLY DO
SOMETHING LIKE
THAT, DO YOU?

GO TO
BED, YOUNG
LADY. *NOW.*



OZAI!
YOU CAN'T
DO THIS!

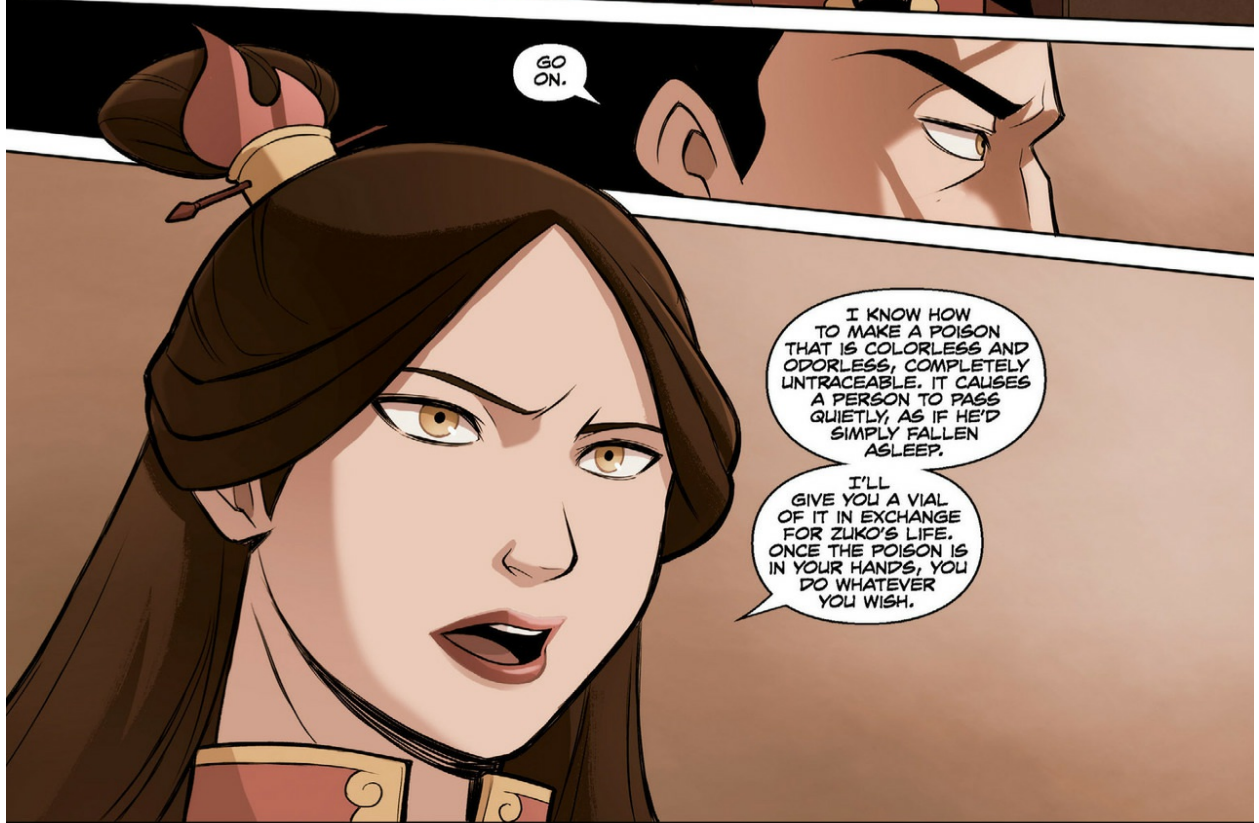
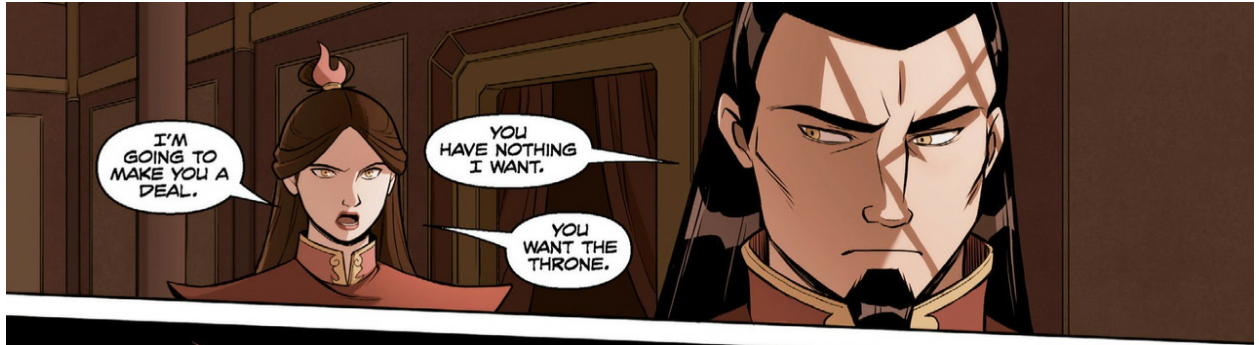


I HAVE NO
CHOICE. REFUSING
THE FIRE LORD'S
COMMAND IS
TREASON.

BUT I AM A
MERCIFUL MAN.
I'M WAITING UNTIL
HE'S ASLEEP. HE
WON'T FEEL A
THING.



YOU LISTEN
CAREFULLY.





ONCE WE'VE MADE OUR EXCHANGE, YOU MUST LEAVE THE CAPITAL CITY AND NEVER SHOW YOUR FACE AGAIN.

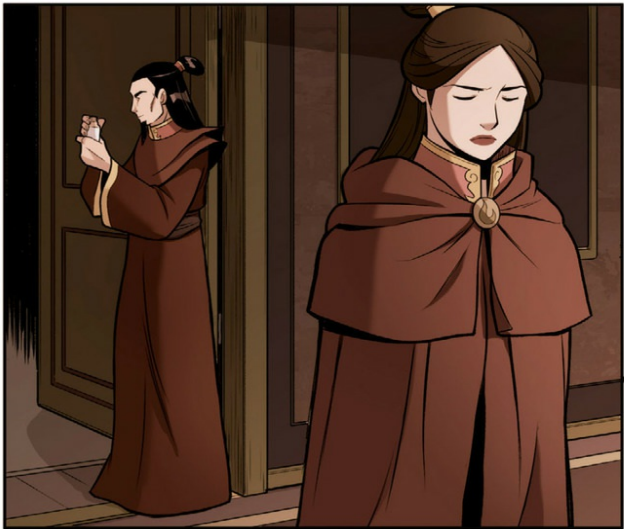
WITH YOU AROUND, IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE A COLORLESS, ODORLESS POISON IS USED AGAINST THE *NEW FIRE LORD*.

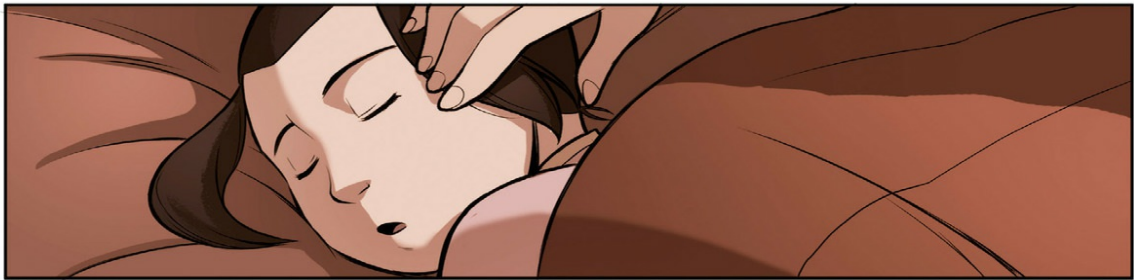
FINE. BUT I TAKE MY CHILDREN WITH ME.

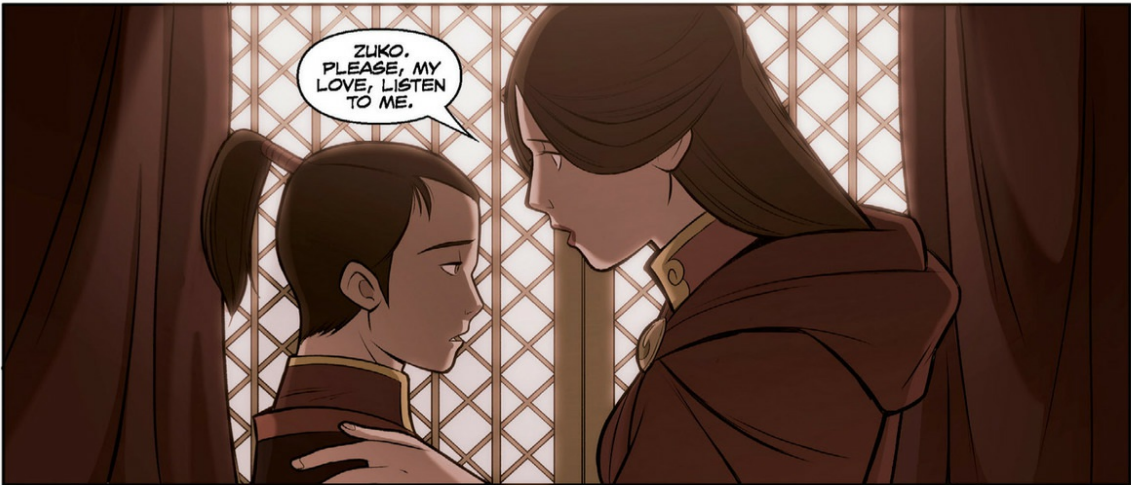
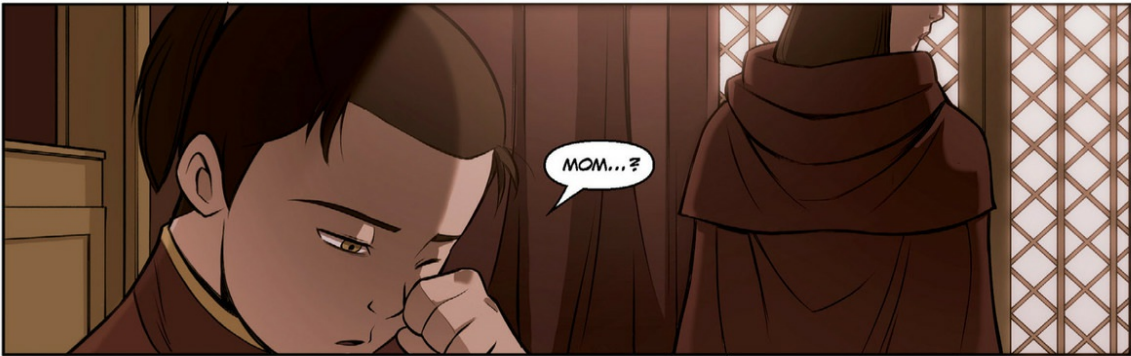
NO. THE CHILDREN ARE MY COLLATERAL. AS LONG AS YOU KEEP YOUR WORD, NO HARM WILL COME TO EITHER OF THEM.

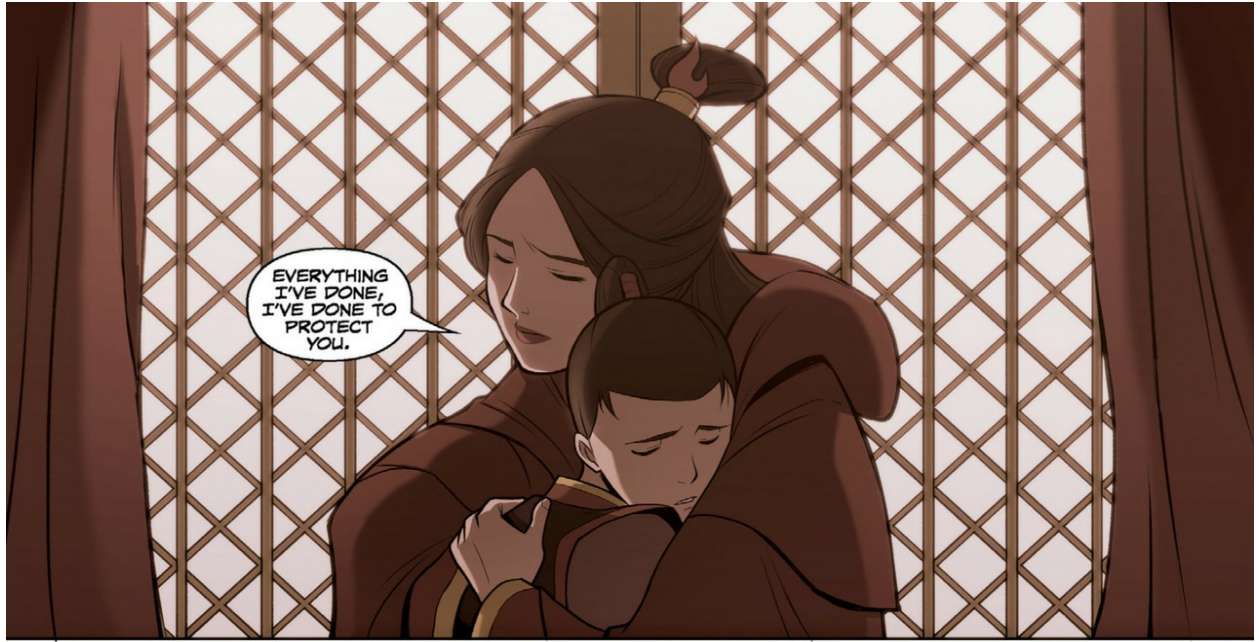
SHOULD YOU TRY TO STAY OR TAKE YOUR CHILDREN WITH YOU, HOWEVER, I WILL HUNT YOU ALL DOWN.

JUST LIKE I DID YOUR PRECIOUS BOYFRIEND.





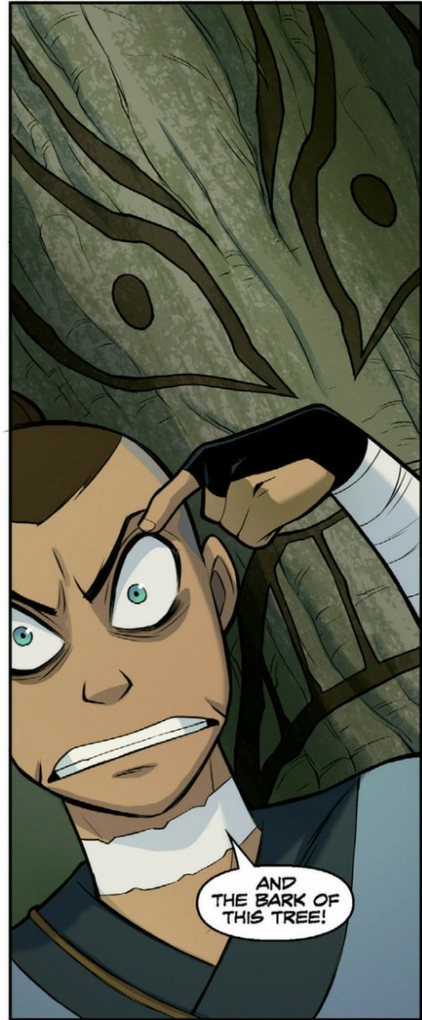
















WHOA.



IS THIS WHAT YOU WERE LEADING ME TO? IT'S BEAUTIFUL.



AANG?!

I'M OVER HERE!



CHECK THIS OUT!

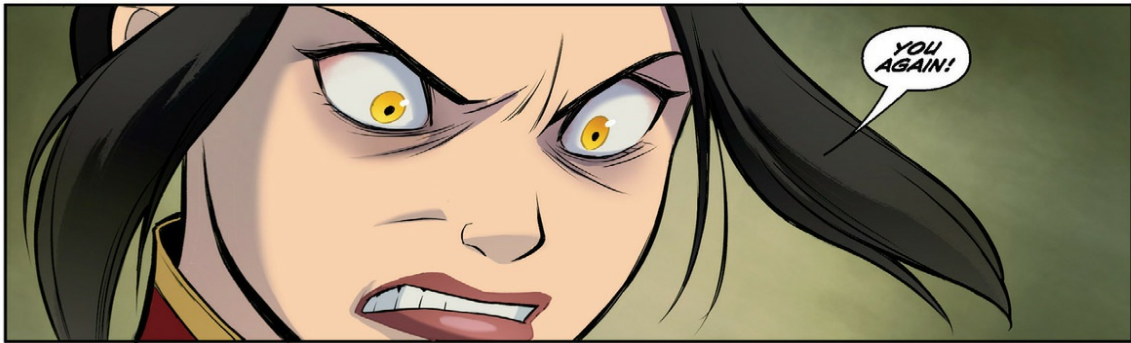
I'VE NEVER SEEN WATER SO CLEAR AND SO STILL.

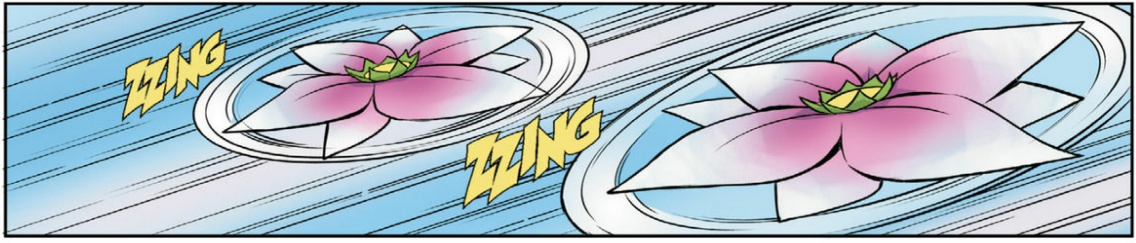
LIKE A PERFECT PANE OF GLASS.



THIS FEELS FAMILIAR...SO... TRANQUIL...

IT REMINDS ME OF TUI AND LA'S POOL IN THE NORTHERN WATER TRIBE.





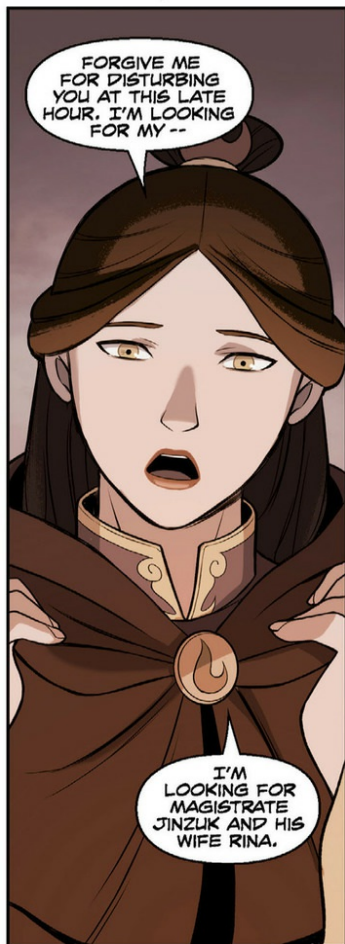


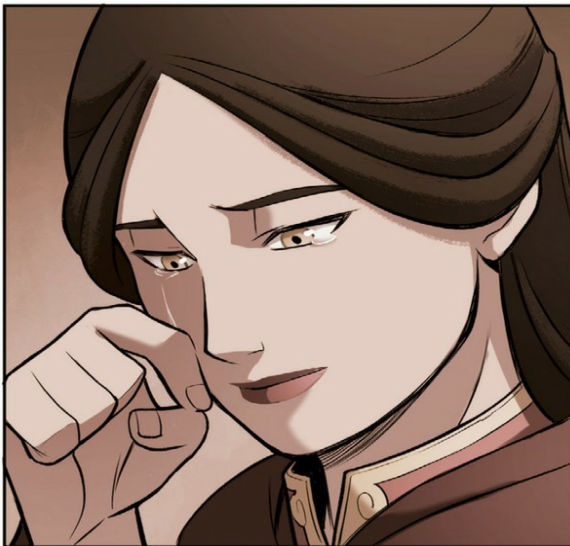














MY NAME IS NOREN. I'M THE DIRECTOR OF THE HIRA'A ACTING TROUPE.

SO GRANDMA GUCHI...?

I TOOK OVER WHEN SHE RETIRED.



IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU, NOREN.



YOU KNOW, OLD MEMORIES DON'T ALWAYS HAVE TO BE UNPLEASANT.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?



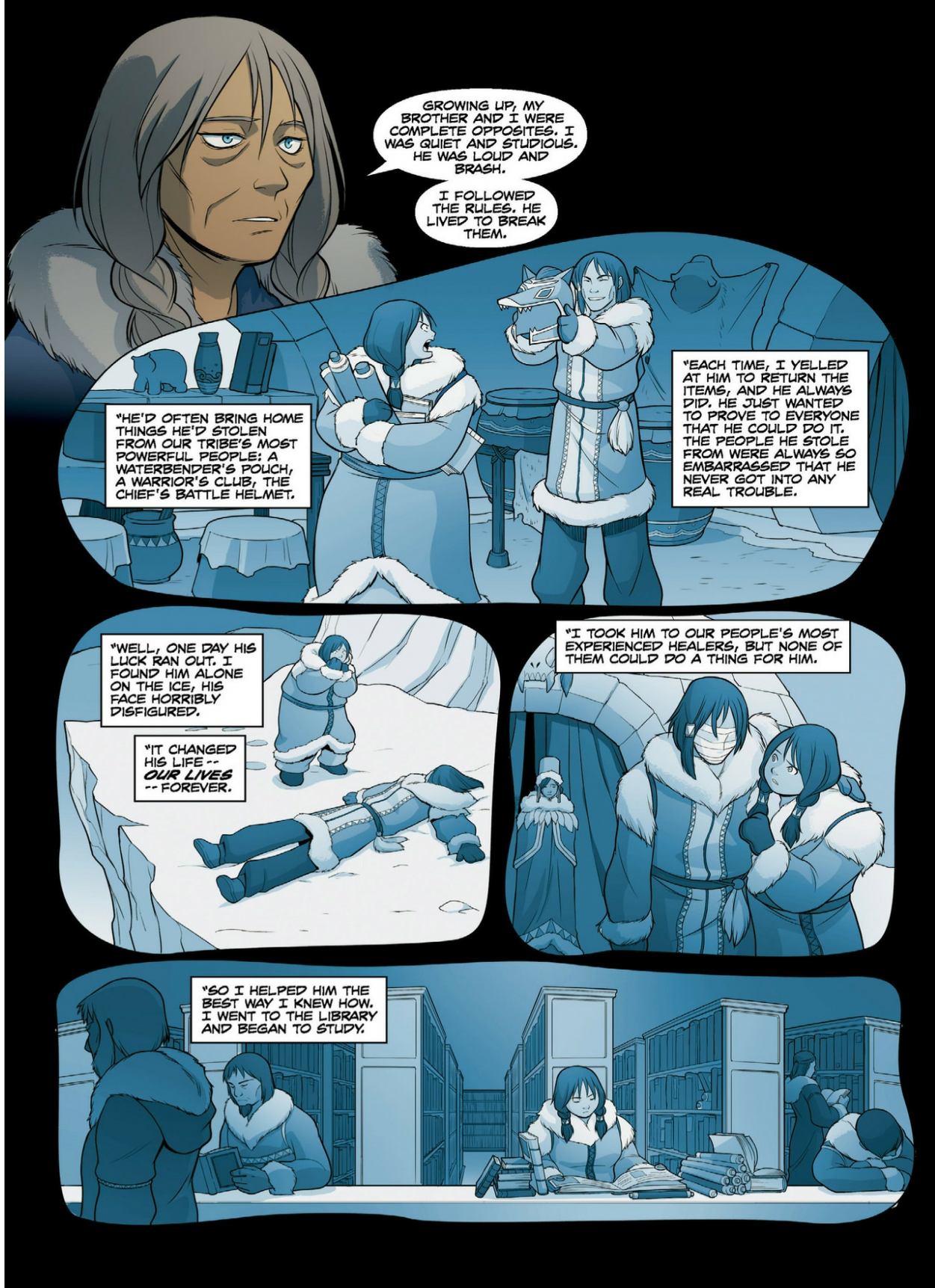
IT'S ALMOST SUNRISE. SITTING BY YOURSELF IN FRONT OF AN EMPTY STAGE SEEMS LIKE A TERRIBLE WAY TO START THE DAY.

PERHAPS I COULD BUY YOU BREAKFAST?



THAT'S VERY KIND OF YOU. THANK YOU.





GROWING UP, MY BROTHER AND I WERE COMPLETE OPPOSITES. I WAS QUIET AND STUPIDOUS. HE WAS LOUD AND BRASH.

I FOLLOWED THE RULES. HE LIVED TO BREAK THEM.

"HE'D OFTEN BRING HOME THINGS HE'D STOLEN FROM OUR TRIBE'S MOST POWERFUL PEOPLE: A WATERBENDER'S POUCH, A WARRIOR'S CLUB, THE CHIEF'S BATTLE HELMET.

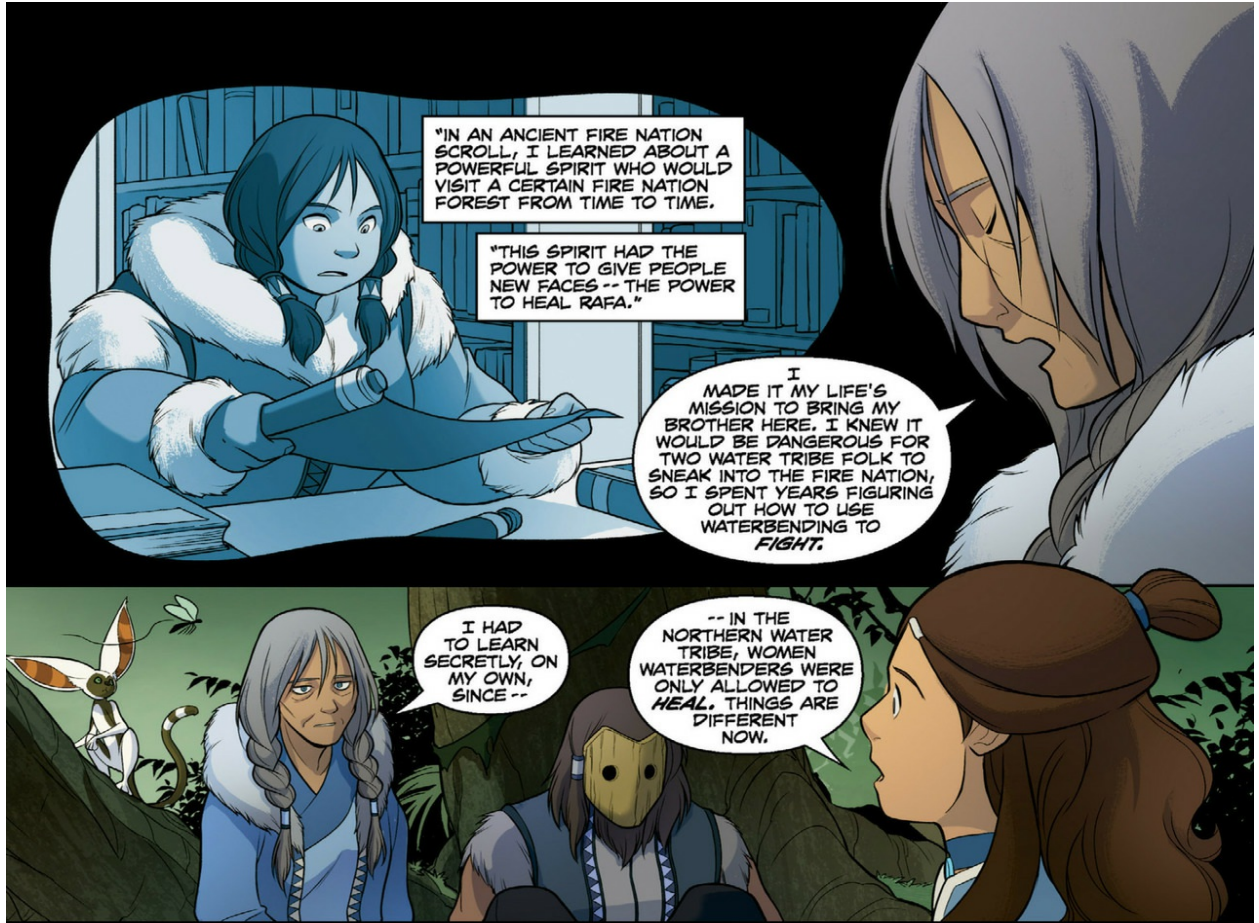
"EACH TIME, I YELLED AT HIM TO RETURN THE ITEMS, AND HE ALWAYS DID. HE JUST WANTED TO PROVE TO EVERYONE THAT HE COULD DO IT. THE PEOPLE HE STOLE FROM WERE ALWAYS SO EMBARRASSED THAT HE NEVER GOT INTO ANY REAL TROUBLE.

"WELL, ONE DAY HIS LUCK RAN OUT. I FOUND HIM ALONE ON THE ICE, HIS FACE HORRIBLY DISFIGURED.

"IT CHANGED HIS LIFE -- **OUR LIVES** -- FOREVER.

"I TOOK HIM TO OUR PEOPLE'S MOST EXPERIENCED HEALERS, BUT NONE OF THEM COULD DO A THING FOR HIM.

"SO I HELPED HIM THE BEST WAY I KNEW HOW. I WENT TO THE LIBRARY AND BEGAN TO STUDY.



"IN AN ANCIENT FIRE NATION SCROLL, I LEARNED ABOUT A POWERFUL SPIRIT WHO WOULD VISIT A CERTAIN FIRE NATION FOREST FROM TIME TO TIME.

"THIS SPIRIT HAD THE POWER TO GIVE PEOPLE NEW FACES -- THE POWER TO HEAL RAFA."

I MADE IT MY LIFE'S MISSION TO BRING MY BROTHER HERE. I KNEW IT WOULD BE DANGEROUS FOR TWO WATER TRIBE FOLK TO SNEAK INTO THE FIRE NATION, SO I SPENT YEARS FIGURING OUT HOW TO USE WATERBENDING TO FIGHT.

I HAD TO LEARN SECRETLY, ON MY OWN, SINCE --

-- IN THE NORTHERN WATER TRIBE, WOMEN WATERBENDERS WERE ONLY ALLOWED TO HEAL. THINGS ARE DIFFERENT NOW.

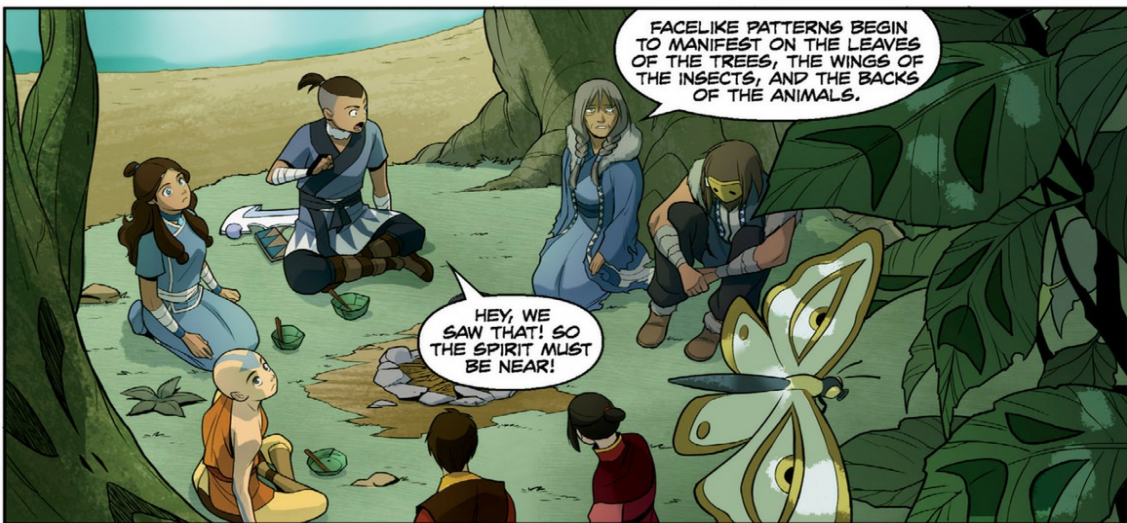
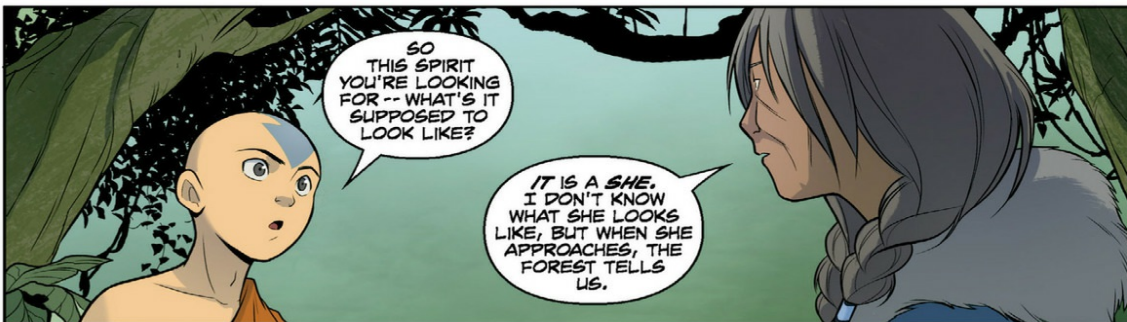


AFTER MANY FAILED ATTEMPTS, WE FINALLY MADE IT TO FORGETFUL VALLEY. WE'VE LIVED HERE EVER SINCE, HOPING TO ENCOUNTER THE SPIRIT.



HOW COME RAFA HASN'T EATEN ANYTHING?

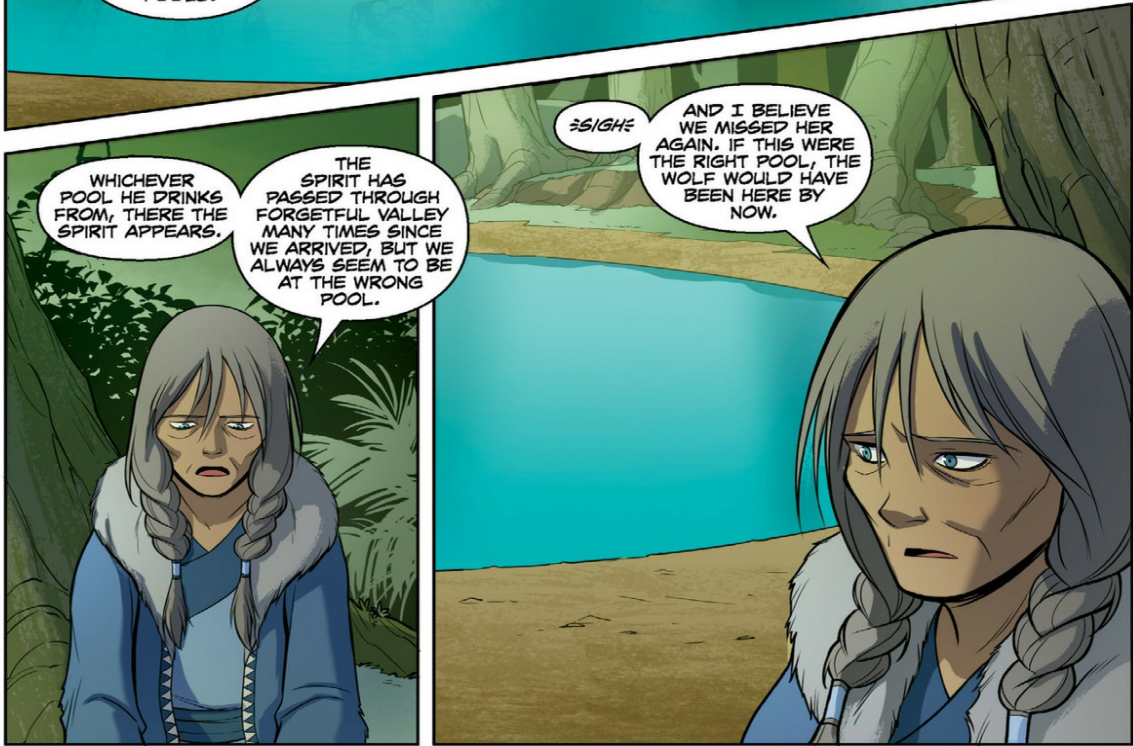






THEN ON A NIGHT LIKE TONIGHT, A **GIANT WOLF** BEARING THE MARKINGS OF A FACE TRAVELS FROM FAR AWAY TO DRINK FROM ONE OF THE FOREST'S FOUR POOLS.

THAT'S THE WOLF SPIRIT WHO PUKED MOTH-WASPS AT US!



WHICHEVER POOL HE DRINKS FROM, THERE THE SPIRIT APPEARS.

THE SPIRIT HAS PASSED THROUGH FORGETFUL VALLEY MANY TIMES SINCE WE ARRIVED, BUT WE ALWAYS SEEM TO BE AT THE WRONG POOL.

SIGH

AND I BELIEVE WE MISSED HER AGAIN. IF THIS WERE THE RIGHT POOL, THE WOLF WOULD HAVE BEEN HERE BY NOW.



I'M SORRY, BROTHER. WE'LL KEEP TRYING.





AANG IS THE AVATAR. HELPING PEOPLE IS WHAT HE DOES.

AND WE'RE HIS FRIENDS... HIS TEAM. SO HELPING PEOPLE IS WHAT WE DO, TOO.



NO WONDER YOU DON'T WANT TO BE FIRE LORD ANYMORE, ZUKU! YOU'D RATHER GALLIVANT AROUND THE WORLD WITH YOUR LITTLE FRIENDS, SAVING POOR PEOPLE!

I NEVER SAID--



!GASP!
HOLD ON-- DID SHE ORCHESTRATE ALL THIS?!

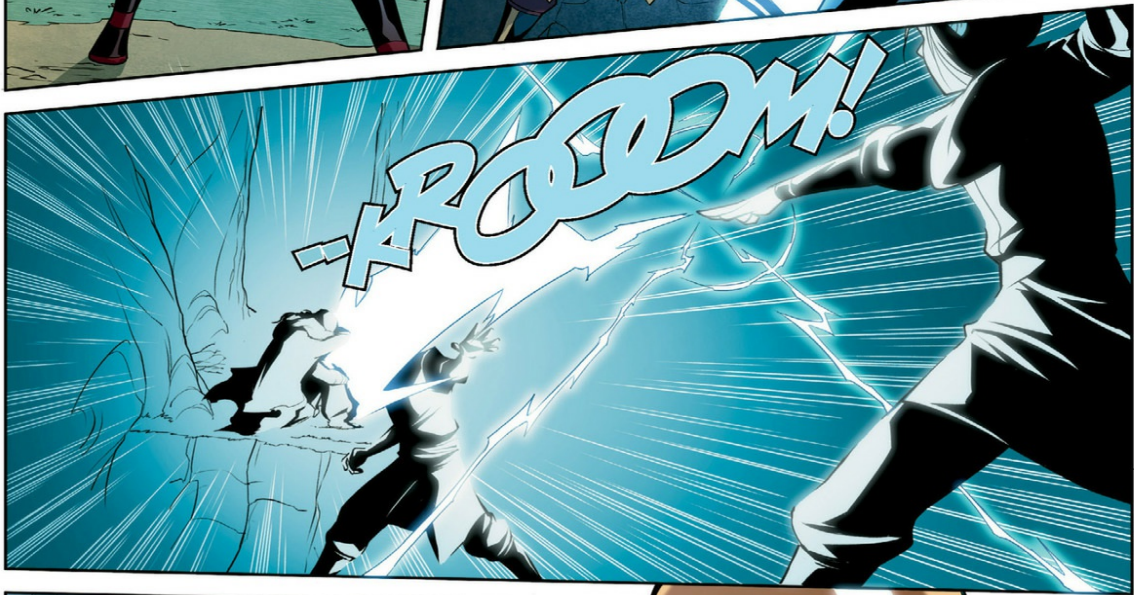


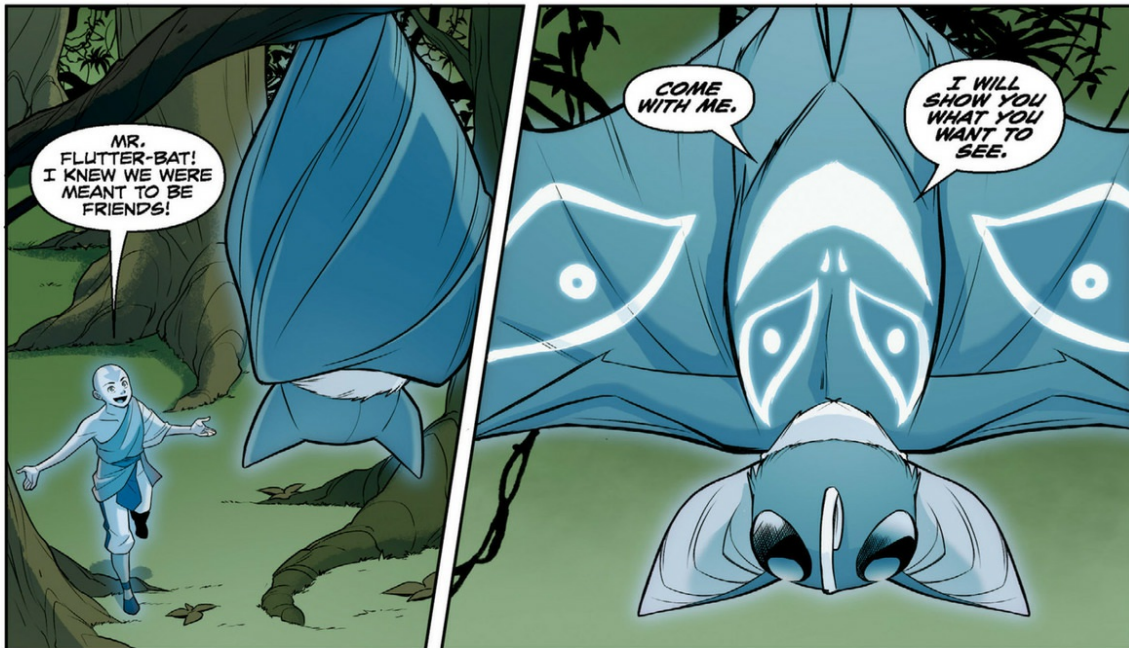
I'M GETTING CLOSE, AREN'T I, MOTHER?! IS THAT WHY YOU SENT THOSE TWO VAGRANTS?! TO SLOW ME DOWN?!

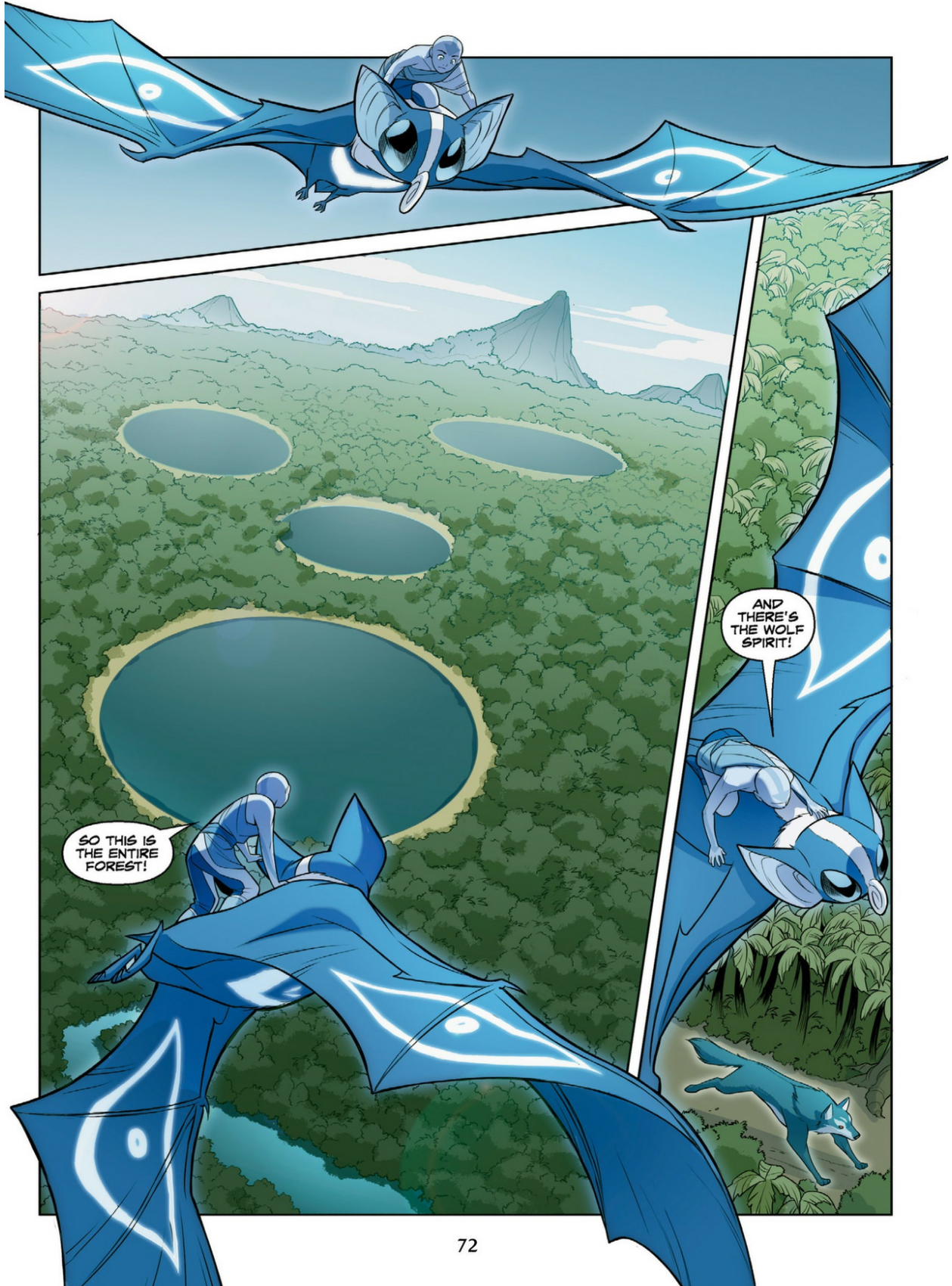


STOP!

IT'S NOT GOING TO WORK!



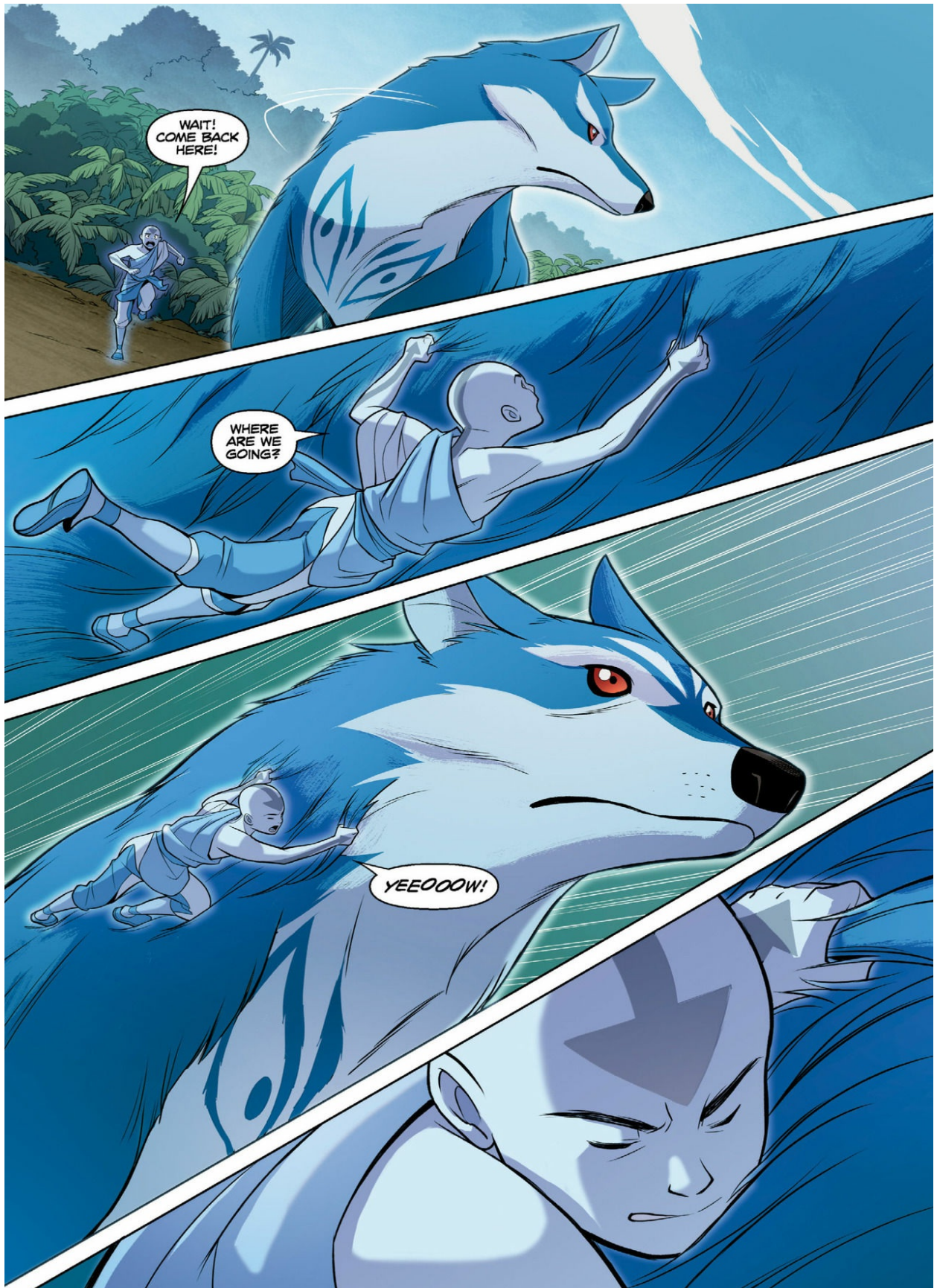




SO THIS IS THE ENTIRE FOREST!

AND THERE'S THE WOLF SPIRIT!





WAIT!
COME BACK
HERE!

WHERE
ARE WE
GOING?

YEEEOOW!





I AM THE MOTHER OF FACES!

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As Fire Lord Zuko continues his quest to uncover his mother's fate, a shocking revelation causes him to question everything he knows. It's an opportunity that his sister, the deadly and insane Azula, will not fail to take advantage of as she joins Zuko and his friends Aang, Katara, and Sokka on their journey into a mysterious forest from which some people never reemerge . . .

Written by Eisner winner and National Book Award nominee Gene Luen Yang (*American Born Chinese*) in close collaboration with *Avatar* creators Bryan Konietzko and Michael Dante DiMartino, this adventure is a must-read for every *Avatar* fan!



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