

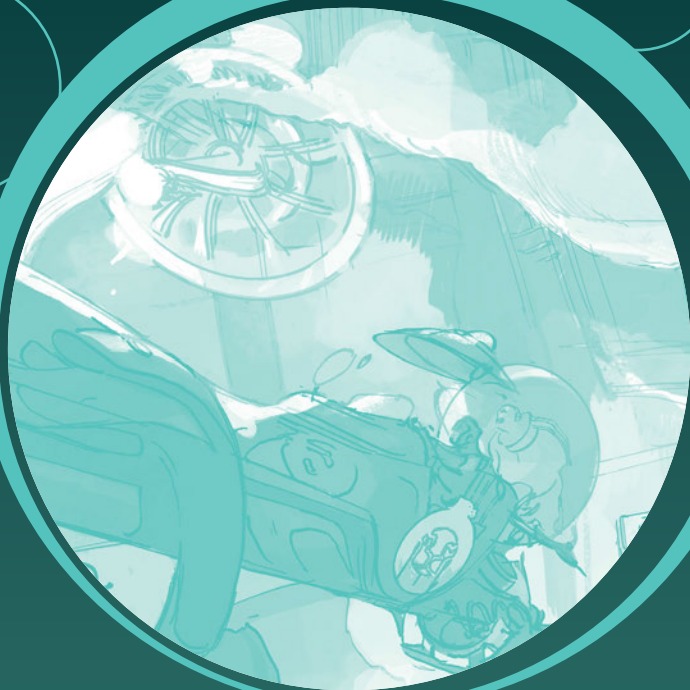


REMEMBER - TOCCHINI

# LOW™

VOLUME 1: THE DELIRIUM OF HOPE





# VOLUME 1: THE DELIRIUM OF HOPE

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# W

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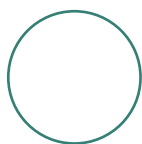
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editor

Created by Rick Remender & Greg Tocchini



ONE DAY THE SUN WILL EXPAND on its way to going supernova and engulf the entire world. If you're anything like me, then the first time you learned this it sat with you for a bit. No matter how far off into the future it is, its finality is heavy duty.

It's true. I was 7 or 8 years old when I got my first true taste of nihilism.


I remember thinking, "Jesus, what a ...waste of time this all is then. It's all so futile. No matter what we build, no matter what we create, no matter what we accomplish, the sun's going to eat it all up."

I had just, sort of, processed the concept of dying not too many years before, but this was too much. It was hard enough to get my head around my own mortality, but the whole planet? Fuck.

Fast-forward to 2010, when Greg Tocchini and I had just finished *Last Days of American Crime*, and we started looking for our next project together. We both wanted to do something Sci-Fi, but it had to be unique. Had to be different than anything either of us had ever done or ever seen. I spent months writing ideas, but nothing really excited me. I was already doing science fiction in *Fear Agent* and hadn't found that big hook. Something that was different enough to be worthy of Greg's superpower and jive-ass skills.

Then, one fateful afternoon, while reading *National Geographic*, I hit on an article about the timeline of when the sun is actually expected to expand and consume our solar system. It reminded me of my youthful fascination with the concept and got me thinking: that's a great ticking time bomb. That's THE ticking time bomb. It was interesting on a universal level, this affected everyone, all of us, which is usually the first ingredient of "home run material upon which to build a story."

I filled a notebook with ideas: how would mankind survive? What would we do? I guess we could move to the bottom of the ocean to escape radiation while looking for a new planet. But what if we were down there for too long? What



if no probe ever found an inhabitable world? Tens of thousands of years pass and now there's just these few cities left. My world-building brain kicked into gear and we began creating the setting for *Low*.

During the developing years of this book, I began therapy, and the biggest hurdle for me to overcome was learning to develop positive thinking habits. Being pessimistic by nature, this was a challenge. The workbook my therapist had me doing was all about optimism and reminded me of a book an old friend gave me: *Illusions* by Richard Bach. When I was about 25 years old, and thinking of leaving my job at 20th Century Fox Animation to go do comics, this book's ideas about how optimism and conscious thought can shape reality compelled me to just quit my job and give it a try.

Now I realize that in fifteen years I've never once written an optimistic character.

This led me to develop Stel Caine, the eternal optimist who holds out hope against all odds. A perfect fit for this far-future tale of humanity at its lowest point. A perfect character to examine the notion that it's not what happens in life that defines us, but how we choose to deal with it.

And it was perfect timing as during the production of *Low* I began to find my way to a more optimistic state of mind, which has made my life better in almost every regard. I've been more productive, found time to exercise, more time for my family, and increased my workload considerably. Writing Stel's adventures and what she endures, how she endures it, became incredibly cathartic.

*Low* is a story of one woman's eternal optimism, to burden the sorrows and the crushing weight of a world without hope.

It's a story I finally feel ready to tell.

Rick Remender



REMENDER · TOCCHINI

# LOW

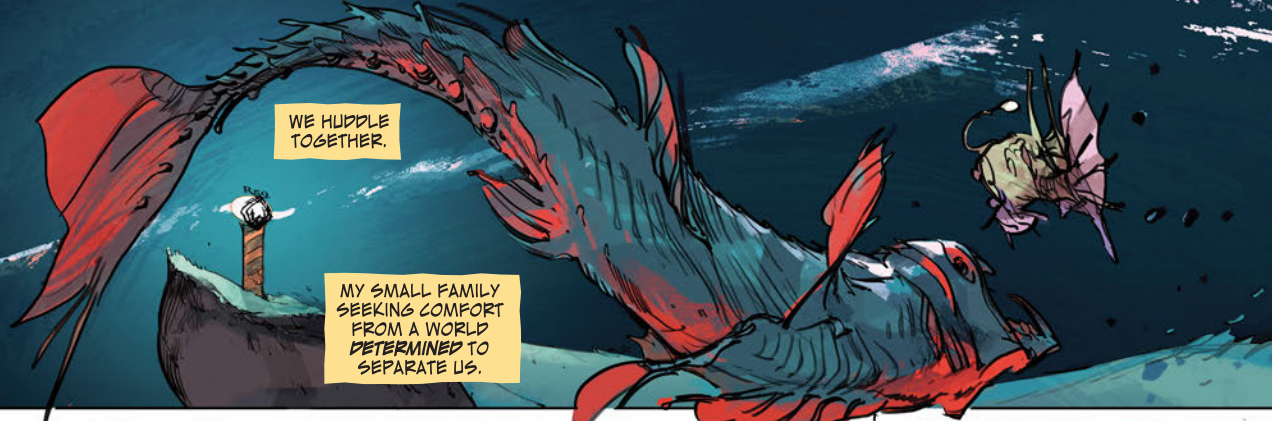
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WE HUDDLE TOGETHER.

MY SMALL FAMILY SEEKING COMFORT FROM A WORLD DETERMINED TO SEPARATE US.



A FIERY END IS INESCAPABLE.

EVERYONE KNOWS THIS.

EVERYONE EXCEPT MY WIFE.



STEL WON'T HEAR IT.

OUR CHILDREN THRIVE AMID HER IRRATIONAL OPTIMISM.

SO DO I.



STEL KNOWS WHAT NO ONE ELSE DARES TRUST.

THAT THERE IS HOPE.

PF SHHH



SHHHHHH

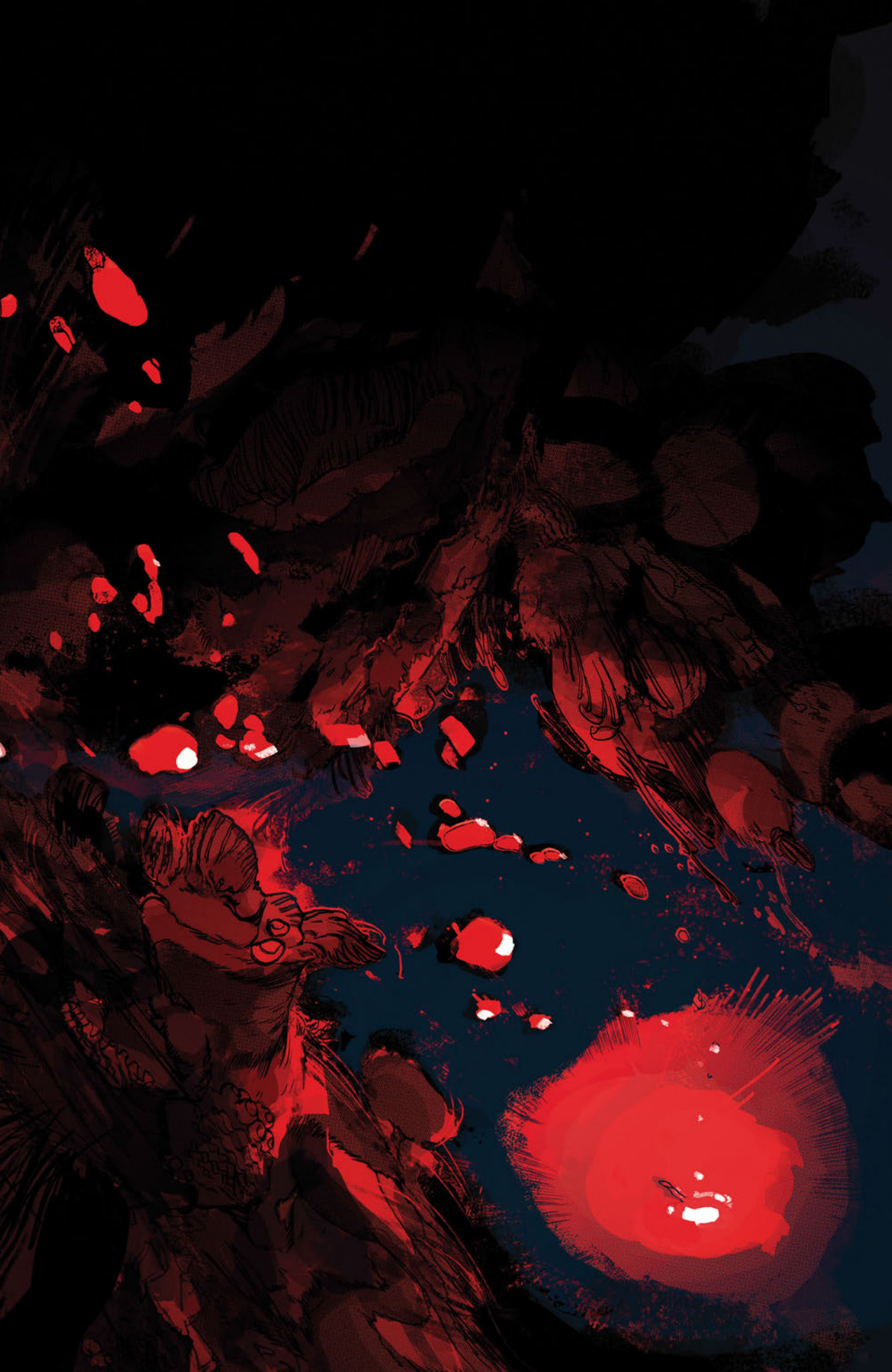
THAT, PROVIDED WE BELIEVE IT...

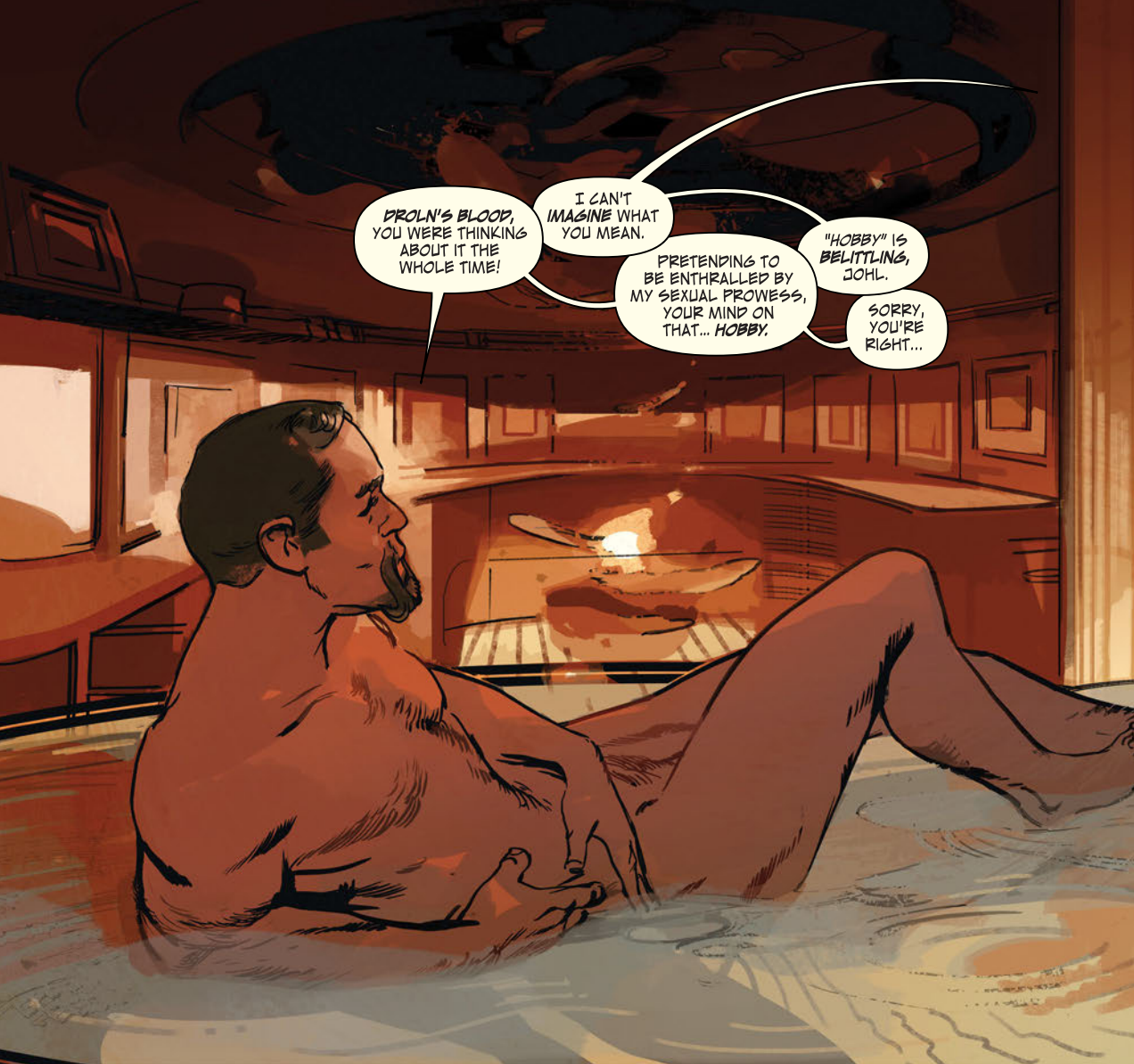
...WE WILL  
RISE AGAIN.

REMEMBER • TOCCHINI • WOOSTON • GRIFFIN

# LOW

CHAPTER ONE  
THE DELIRIUM OF HOPE





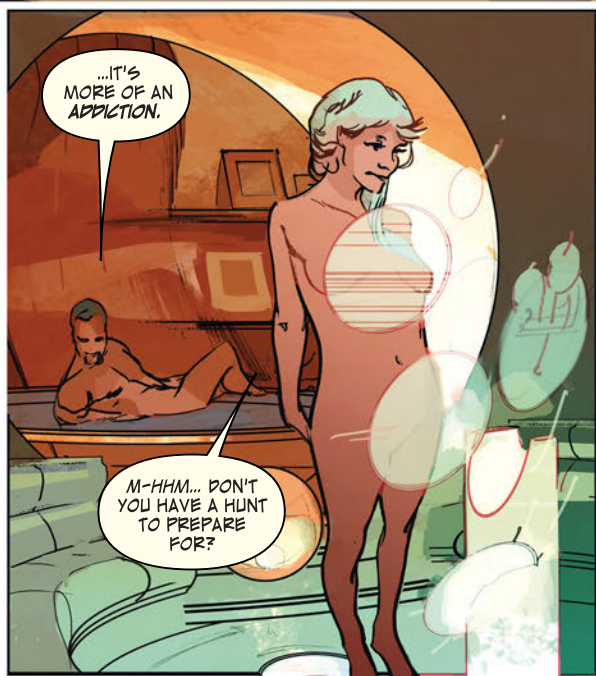
DROLN'S BLOOD,  
YOU WERE THINKING  
ABOUT IT THE  
WHOLE TIME!

I CAN'T  
IMAGINE WHAT  
YOU MEAN.

PRETENDING TO  
BE ENTHRALLED BY  
MY SEXUAL PROWESS,  
YOUR MIND ON  
THAT... HOBBY.

"HOBBY" IS  
BELITTLING,  
JOHL.

SORRY,  
YOU'RE  
RIGHT...



...IT'S  
MORE OF AN  
ADDICTION.

M-HHM... DON'T  
YOU HAVE A HUNT  
TO PREPARE  
FOR?



YES.

A REAL  
HUNT.

ONE  
THAT BEARS  
FRUIT.

UNLIKE HUNTING ANCIENT  
RATTLETRAPS WHEN YOU  
SHOULD BE FOCUSED  
ON THE TASK  
AT HAND.

THE TASK  
AT HAND IS  
YOUR JOB, MY  
DEAR.



PERHAPS THE LAST GREAT HELMSMAN OF SALUS IS SIMPLY DISTRAUGHT TO SEE HIS WIFE MANAGE TO STAND AFTER A BOUGHT OF HIS FAMOUSLY POTENT LOVEMAKING...

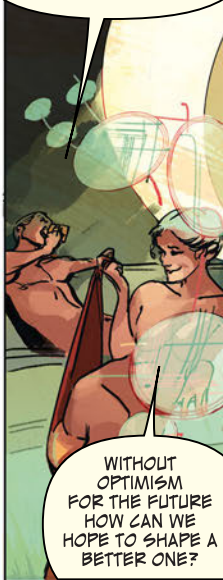
WELL, NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...



IT WOULDN'T KILL YOU TO PRETEND.

HELP BUILD MY CONFIDENCE BEFORE THE WORK.

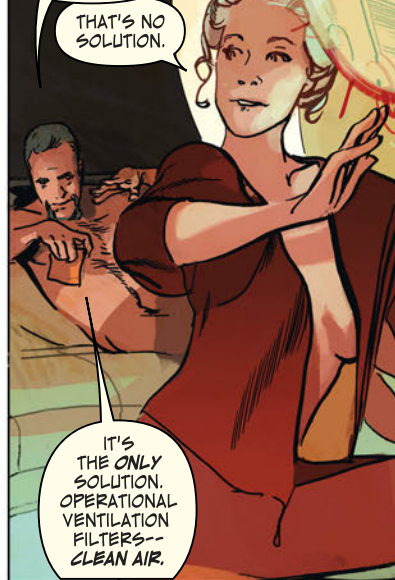
HOW MANY MILLENNIA HAVE WE GONE WITH NO RESPONSE FROM A PROBE?



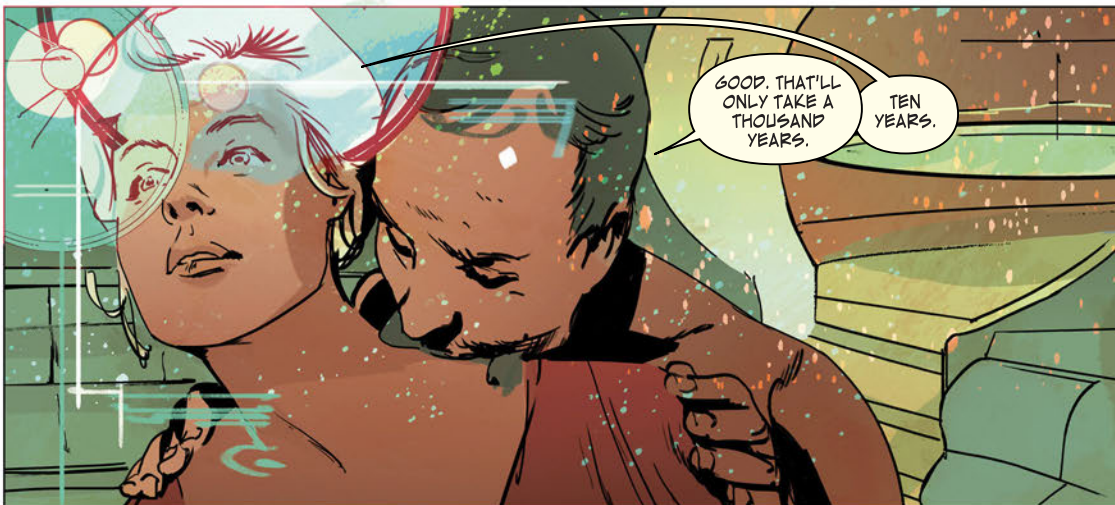
WITHOUT OPTIMISM FOR THE FUTURE HOW CAN WE HOPE TO SHAPE A BETTER ONE?

YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR THE THIRD CITY.

THAT'S NO SOLUTION.



IT'S THE ONLY SOLUTION. OPERATIONAL VENTILATION FILTERS-- CLEAN AIR.

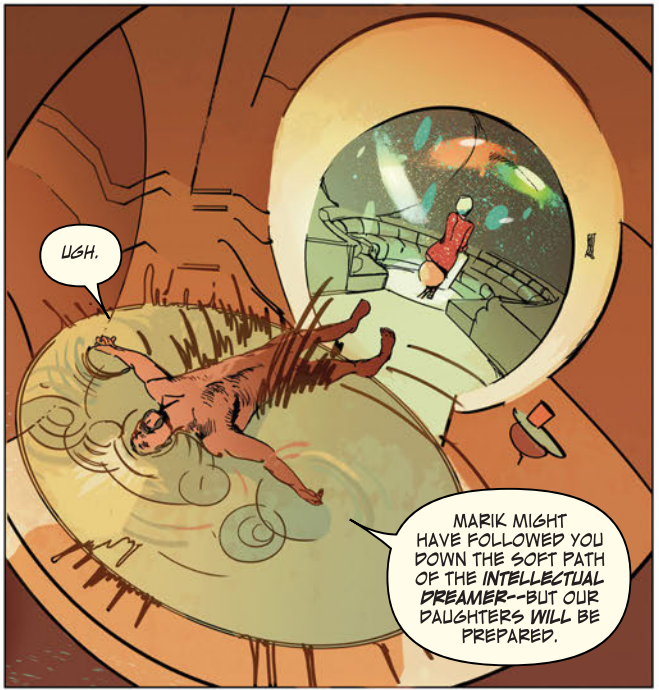




ENOUGH DAYDREAMING.

TODAY I TEACH OUR GIRLS TO SURVIVE WHAT'S COMING, TEACH THEM TO PILOT THE HELM.

THEY'RE TOO YOUNG.



USH.

MARIK MIGHT HAVE FOLLOWED YOU DOWN THE SOFT PATH OF THE INTELLECTUAL DREAMER--BUT OUR DAUGHTERS WILL BE PREPARED.



NO.

THEY ARE TOO YOUNG TO LEAVE THE CITY LIMITS.

TOO YOUNG TO BOND WITH A HELM.



THEY WILL ALWAYS BE TOO YOUNG IN YOUR EYES!

I WAS ALSO TEN WHEN I BEGAN TRAINING--



AND IT LEFT YOU INFLEXIBLE IN YOUR THINKING.

WHILE YOU FOCUS ON PREPARING OUR CHILDREN TO FLEE THE CITY, WHAT OF YOUR OATH AND DUTY?

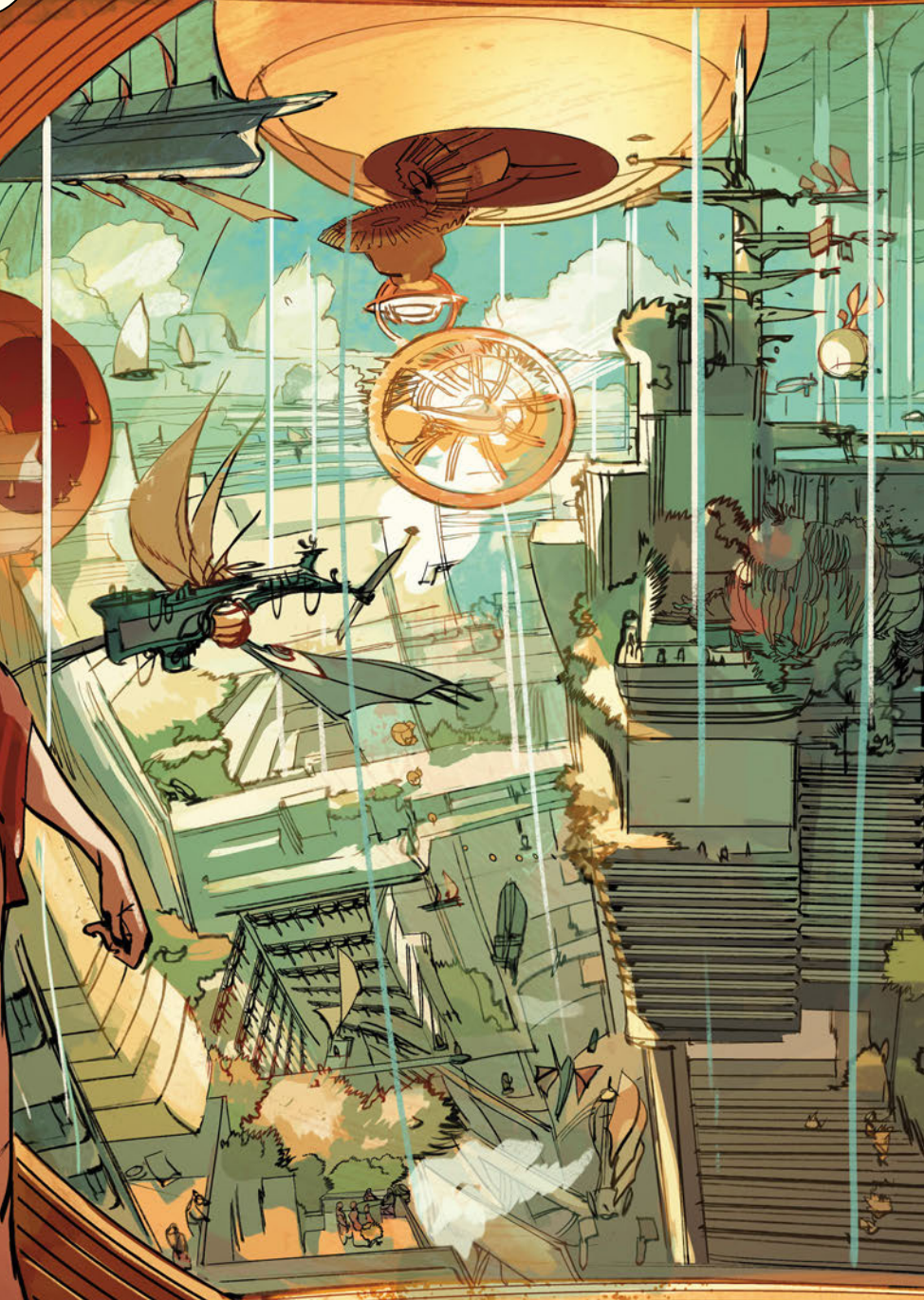


EVEN TRAINED WITH THE HELM SUIT.

EVEN IF, THROUGH YOUR PREPARATIONS, SOMEHOW OUR CHILDREN SURVIVE AN EXODUS--

-DEEP-

...WHAT OF THE  
OTHER TWO  
MILLION CITIZENS  
WITHIN THE DOME  
OF SALUS?





I'VE ALREADY PROMISED THEM WE'D BEGIN TRAINING TODAY.

YOU DON'T WANT TO MAKE A LIAR OUT OF ME, DO YOU?

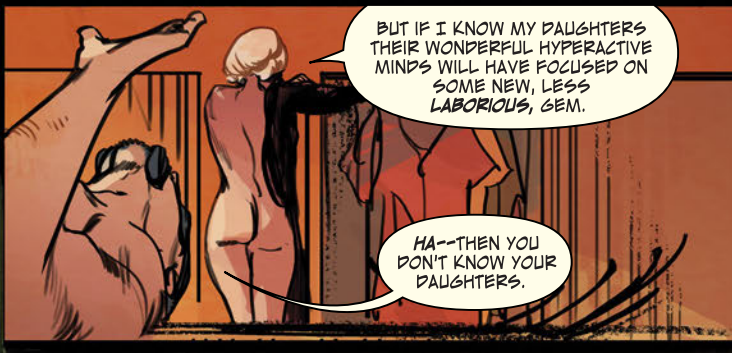
I'LL MAKE YOU A DEAL.



IF THEY REMEMBER, IF THEY WANT TO GO--I'LL ALLOW IT.

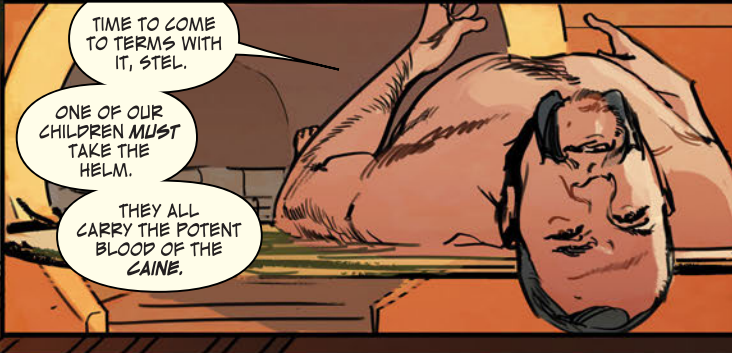
REALLY?

OKAY, FINE.



BUT IF I KNOW MY DAUGHTERS THEIR WONDERFUL HYPERACTIVE MINDS WILL HAVE FOCUSED ON SOME NEW, LESS LABORIOUS, GEM.

HA--THEN YOU DON'T KNOW YOUR DAUGHTERS.



TIME TO COME TO TERMS WITH IT, STEL.

ONE OF OUR CHILDREN MUST TAKE THE HELM.

THEY ALL CARRY THE POTENT BLOOD OF THE CAINE.



NOT SO POTENT THIS MORNING.

OH, THAT'S LOW.



QUOTA JUST CAME IN. IT'S BEYOND IMPOSSIBLE.

THE NEEDS OF SO MANY ON MY SHOULDERS--THE ANXIETY OF NOT BEING ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH IT ALL--

WE CAN ONLY DO OUR BEST.

CATCH WHAT WE CAN.

WE'LL MORE THAN FILL THE CITY'S NEEDS-- PROVIDED YOU LOSE THE PESSIMISM.



ALL WHILE TRAINING PELLA AND TAJO.

WHO WON'T BE THERE.

THEY AREN'T HUNTERS.

THEY HAVE THE BLUE BLOOD OF THEIR MOTHER--

-DEEP-



IS IT TIME? I'M RUNNING THE MIND RIFLES! I CALLED IT!

WE STAYED UP ALL NIGHT REREADING THE REGULATIONS. WELL, I DID ANYWAY.



PERHAPS TAJO WOULD RATHER STAY HERE AND WORK ON HER GARDEN.

NO! I READ IT! I'M COMING WITH!

CAINED BLOOD, POTENT.



SO BE IT.

ALL RIGHT YOU LITTLE SHIP RATS, TODAY'S YOUR FIRST DAY OF BECOMING TRUE CAINES! A LONG LINE OF HUNTERS THAT HAVE PROVIDED--

USH.

PLEASE TELL ME WE'RE NOT DOING THE WHOLE HISTORY LESSON.



"HEAVENS NO!"

--AND OVER THERE, THE TOWER OF DROLN!

BUILT BY YOUR ANCESTOR DROLN CAINE, A HELMSWOMAN WHO LEAD THE BRIGADE WITH...

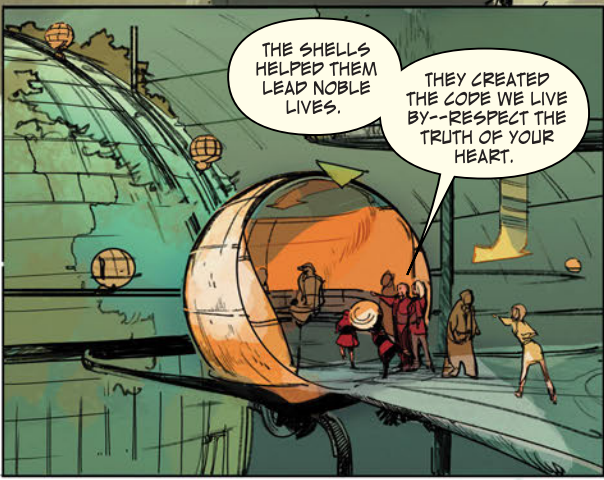
...TWO SHELLS THAT COULD READ THE TRUTH OF A PERSON'S HEART.

WE KNOW, DAD.



THAT'S RIGHT, DELLA.

TWO SHELLS THAT DROLN DISCOVERED IN THE GREAT DEN OF THE MESASQUID AFTER SHE BESTED THE SIGANTIC CREATURE.



THE SHELLS HELPED THEM LEAD NOBLE LIVES.

THEY CREATED THE CODE WE LIVE BY--RESPECT THE TRUTH OF YOUR HEART.



AND JUST AS DROLN PASSED THE SHELLS DOWN TO HER DAUGHTERS ON THEIR FIRST HUNT...



SO TOO WILL I.

AS LONG AS THEY GLOW YOU ARE BEING TRUE TO YOURSELF.



IF THEY SHOULD EVER GO DARK--


THAT'S BAD.

WE GOT IT, DAD.



ARE YOU SURE, JOHL...?

I HAVE A MUCH MORE BEAUTIFUL MORAL COMPASS.

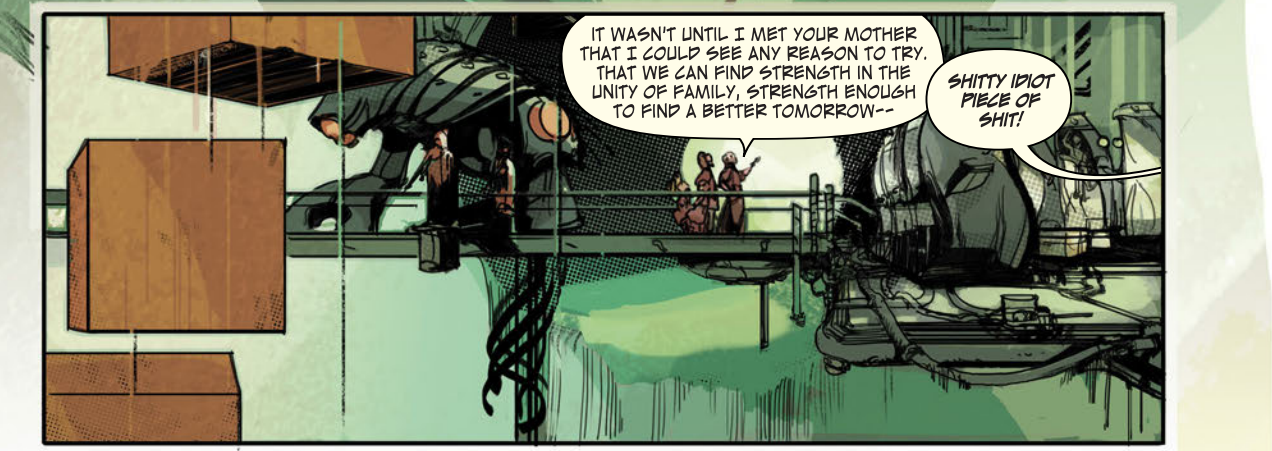


I REMEMBER WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE, FINDING OUT THAT OUR WORLD WILL ONE DAY BE CONSUMED BY THE SUN.

WHAT A WASTE OF TIME THIS ALL IS, IT SEEMED TO ME.

NO MATTER WHAT WE BUILD, NO MATTER WHAT WE DO, NO MATTER WHAT, THE SUN WILL CONTINUE TO EXPAND, AND EVENTUALLY CONSUME IT ALL.

I FELT LIKE A POWERLESS OBSERVER OF THE END OF MY SPECIES.



IT WASN'T UNTIL I MET YOUR MOTHER THAT I COULD SEE ANY REASON TO TRY. THAT WE CAN FIND STRENGTH IN THE UNITY OF FAMILY, STRENGTH ENOUGH TO FIND A BETTER TOMORROW--

SHITTY IDIOT PIECE OF SHIT!



STUPID FUCKING  
PRESSURE  
INVERTER!

NICE  
LANGUAGE,  
MARK.

WELL, HE  
GOT AT LEAST  
ONE THING  
FROM ME.



GRAVITY  
SPONGES IN  
THE SUB WERE  
SHOT, DAD.

HOW MANY  
YEARS SINCE  
YOU CHANGED  
THEM?



MANUAL SAYS THEY HAVE  
TO BE SWAPPED EVERY  
THREE WEEKS.

THANK YOU,  
MARK.

HE IS  
ORDERLY.



JUST FOLLOWING  
THE BOOK--TO  
THE LETTER--JUST LIKE  
YOU ALWAYS SAY.

TELL ME, GIRLS,  
DID DAD LECTURE  
YOU ABOUT FOLLOWING  
THE RULES?

CAREFUL  
NOW--



OR I MIGHT RECONSIDER  
ALLOWING YOU TO STAY  
BEHIND!

HA--



I'M SO EXCITED  
FOR YOU. I WANT  
TO HEAR WHAT  
IT'S LIKE OUT  
THERE.

I WISH  
YOU WERE  
COMING,  
MARK.



HUNTING,  
KILLING--NOT  
MY THING.

LISTEN  
TO DAD.



BETWEEN ALL  
HIS LONGWINDED  
STORIES HE CAN  
SAY SOME SMART  
STUFF.

I'LL TAKE  
YOUR WORD  
FOR IT.



HERE IT IS--  
THE LAST  
HELM SUIT OF  
SALUS.

WOW.  
IT'S SO  
BIG.

W-WE'RE NOT  
GOING TO HAVE  
TO GET INSIDE OF  
THAT TODAY,  
ARE WE?

HEAVENS  
NO, BUT ONE  
DAY ONE OF  
YOU WILL,  
TAJO.

ONLY A CAINE  
CAN USE IT, AND  
YOU ARE THE LAST  
OF THE CAINES.

WHICH OF  
US WILL  
WEAR IT?

WHICHEVER ONE  
OF YOU SURVIVES  
TODAY'S JOURNEY INTO  
THE RAZOR PEN OF  
THE PARASITE  
EELS!

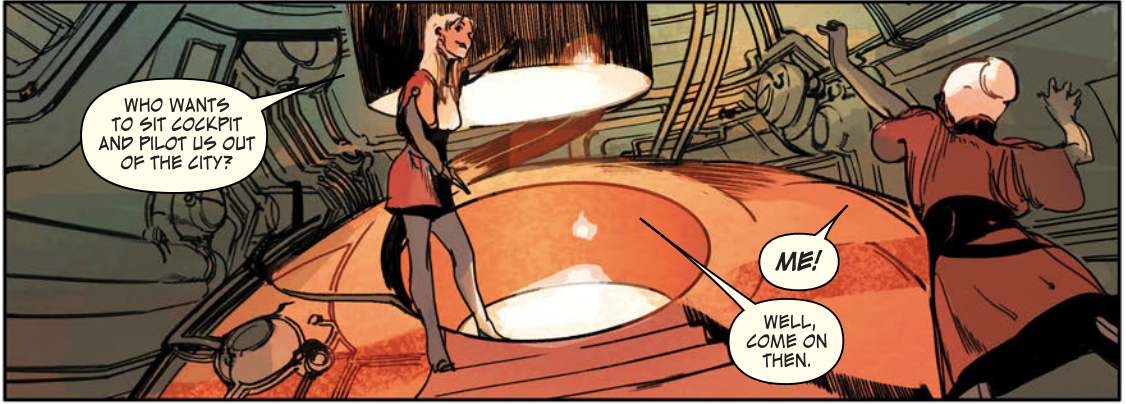
W-WHAT?!



HE'S KIDDING, SCAREY SHRIMP.

I'LL WEAR IT, DADDY. I'LL BE THE BEST HELMSWOMAN SALUS HAS EVER SEEN!

YOU'LL DO GREAT AS WELL, TAJO. I KNOW IT.



WHO WANTS TO SIT COCKPIT AND PILOT US OUT OF THE CITY?

ME!

WELL, COME ON THEN.



THIS IS TREMENDOUS, MOM!

COME, SIT. PILOT US OUT, BELLA.

SONAR REPORTS ZONE IS CLEAR OF ANY TRESPASSERS.

LOOKS TO BE A NICE DAY OUT.



OKAY, SET THE PIT LOG FORWARD STERN 25 KNOTS.

WATCH THE DOPPLER SHIFT.

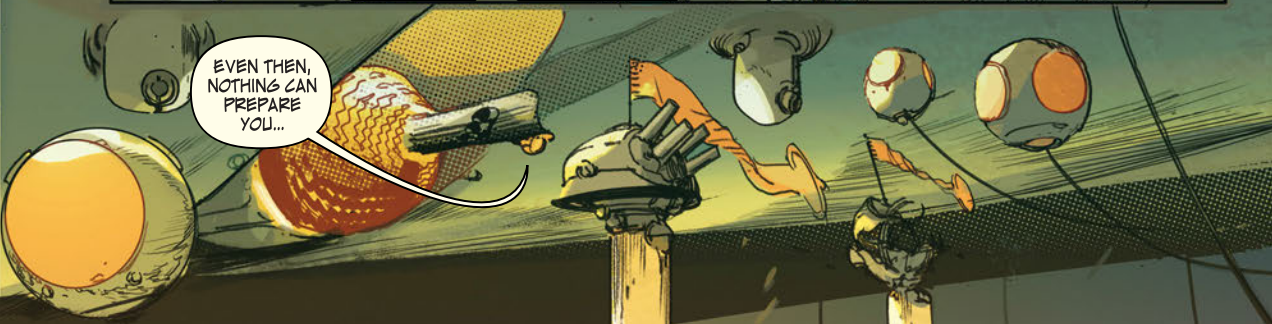
MONARCH SUBMARCH, OKAYED TO LAUNCH.



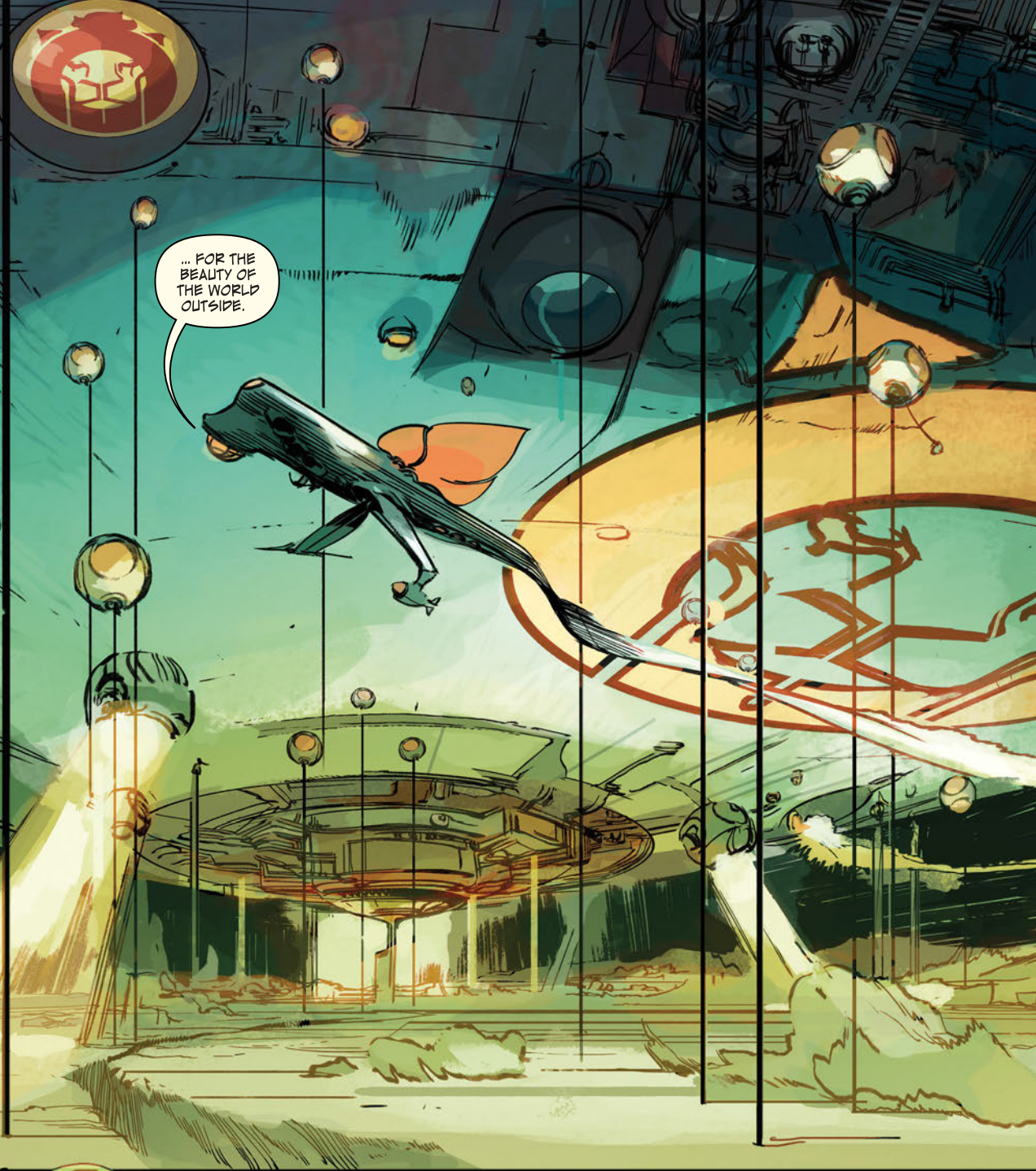
GOOD LUCK.

I REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME I LEFT THE CITY LIMITS.

THOUGHT I KNEW WHAT TO EXPECT. I'D READ ALL THERE WAS ABOUT IT.



EVEN THEN, NOTHING CAN PREPARE YOU...



... FOR THE BEAUTY OF THE WORLD OUTSIDE.



WOW.

HOLD TIGHT, SWEETHEART. IT GETS BETTER.

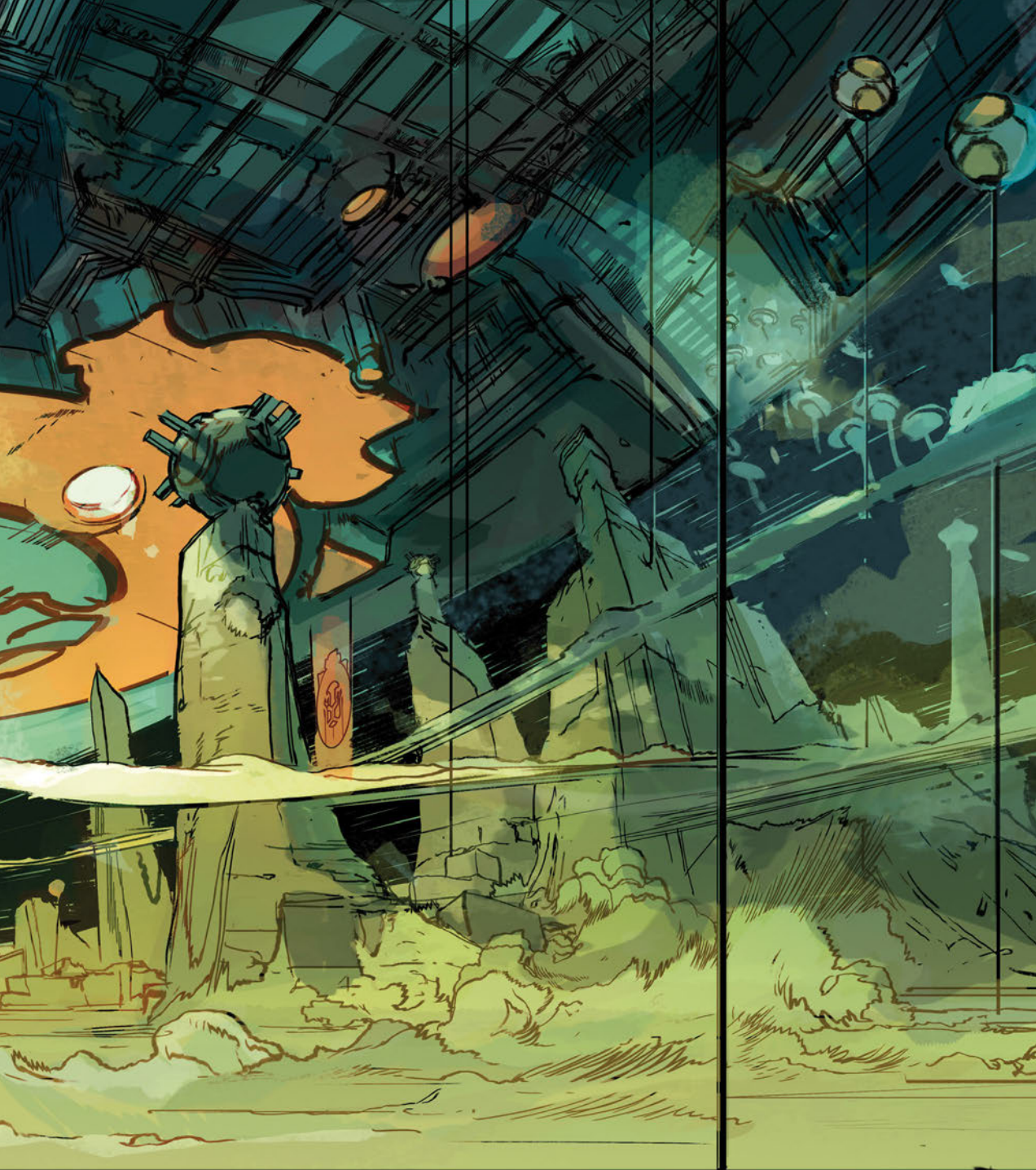
YOUR FIRST GREAT ADVENTURE IS ABOUT TO BEGIN!



WHAT ARE THOSE ORBS, DADDY?

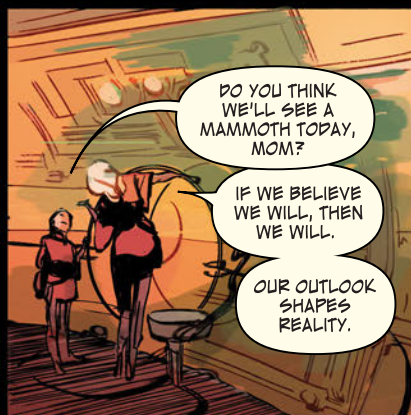
DEPTH CHARGES.

THEY KEEP THE SCURVIES AWAY.



WERE YOU AFRAID  
THE FIRST TIME  
YOU CAME OUT?

I STILL  
AM.



DO YOU THINK  
WE'LL SEE A  
MAMMOTH TODAY,  
MOM?

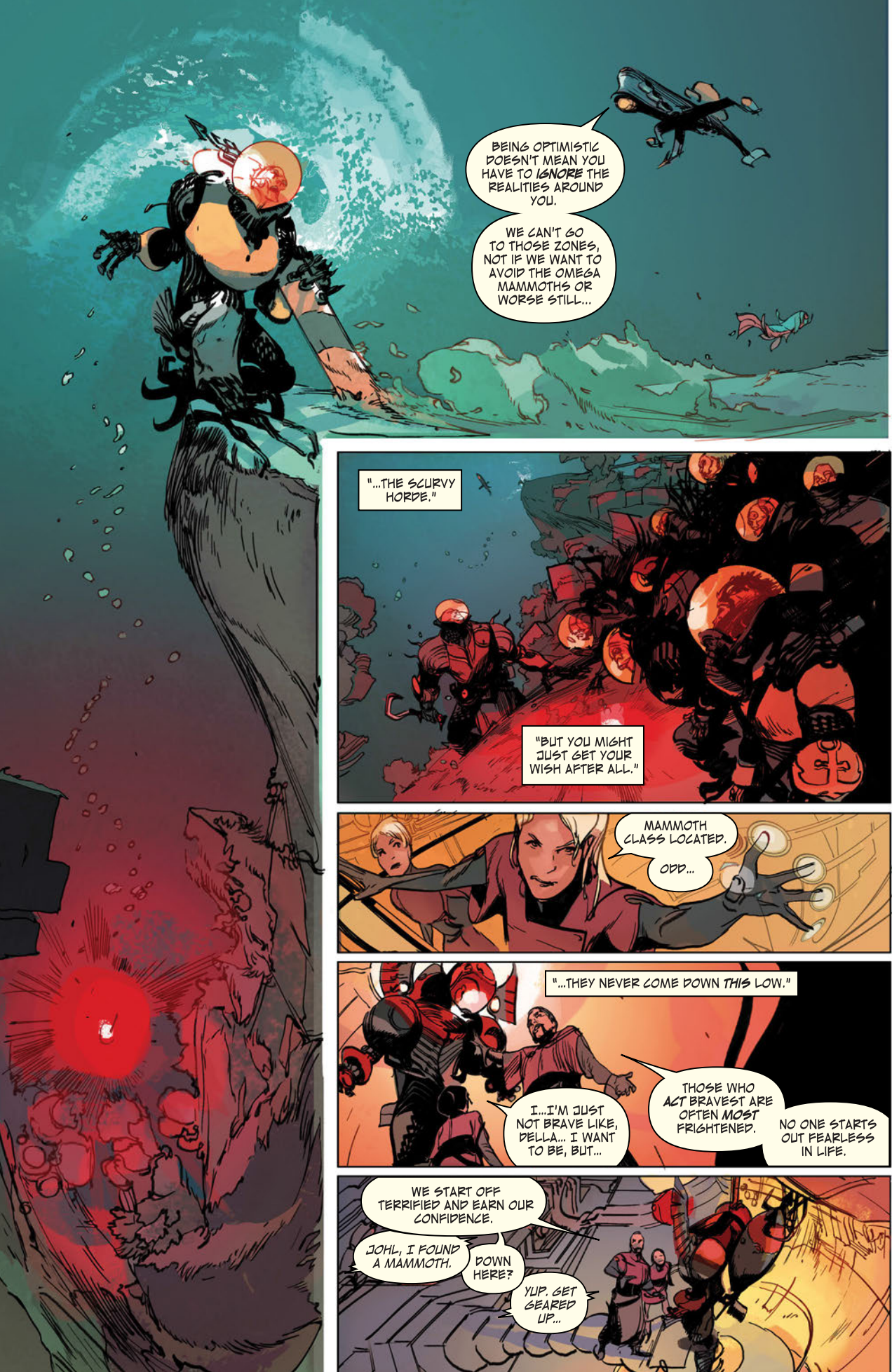
IF WE BELIEVE  
WE WILL, THEN  
WE WILL.

OUR OUTLOOK  
SHAPES  
REALITY.



THEN WE  
SHOULD RISE  
TOWARDS THE  
MIDNIGHT ZONES,  
THAT'S WHERE  
THE BIGGEST  
ONES ARE.

THE OUTER  
MARKERS.



BEING OPTIMISTIC DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE TO IGNORE THE REALITIES AROUND YOU.

WE CAN'T GO TO THOSE ZONES, NOT IF WE WANT TO AVOID THE OMEGA MAMMOTHS OR WORSE STILL...

"...THE SCURVY HORDE."

"BUT YOU MIGHT JUST GET YOUR WISH AFTER ALL."

MAMMOTH CLASS LOCATED.  
ODD...

"...THEY NEVER COME DOWN THIS LOW."  
I...I'M JUST NOT BRAVE LIKE, DELLA... I WANT TO BE, BUT...  
THOSE WHO ACT BRAVEST ARE OFTEN MOST FRIGHTENED.  
NO ONE STARTS OUT FEARLESS IN LIFE.

WE START OFF TERRIFIED AND EARN OUR CONFIDENCE.  
JOHL, I FOUND A MAMMOTH.  
DOWN HERE?  
YUP. GET GEARED UP...



...THIS BABY IS THE BIGGEST ONE I'VE EVER SEEN.

BIG ENOUGH TO FILL OUR IMPOSSIBLE QUOTA.



IT'S MOVING, MOM!

JOHL, WE'RE IN PURSUIT BUT IT'S SPOOKED. GET IN THAT SUIT...



...BE READY TO LAUNCH!



HOLD ON-- IT INKED!



I'M LOST, REAPOLTS ARE DEAD--NEVER SEEN INK LIKE THIS--

BIO-MAGNETIC CLOAKING!



NEVER SEEN ONE SO DELIBERATE.

SO CALCULATED.

WHY ARE WE STOPPING?



HANG ONTO SOMETHING, JOHL. WE'RE MAKING A HARD REVERSE--



WHY?! STEL, WHAT'S GOING ON UP THERE?

WHAT IS IT?!

LIGHTS PRESERVE US...

"...IT'S A TRAP."



YOU'VE DONE WELL, MY BEAUTIFUL SISTER.



THE HUNTERS OF SALUS WILL PAY FOR THE SLAUGHTER OF YOUR KIN.

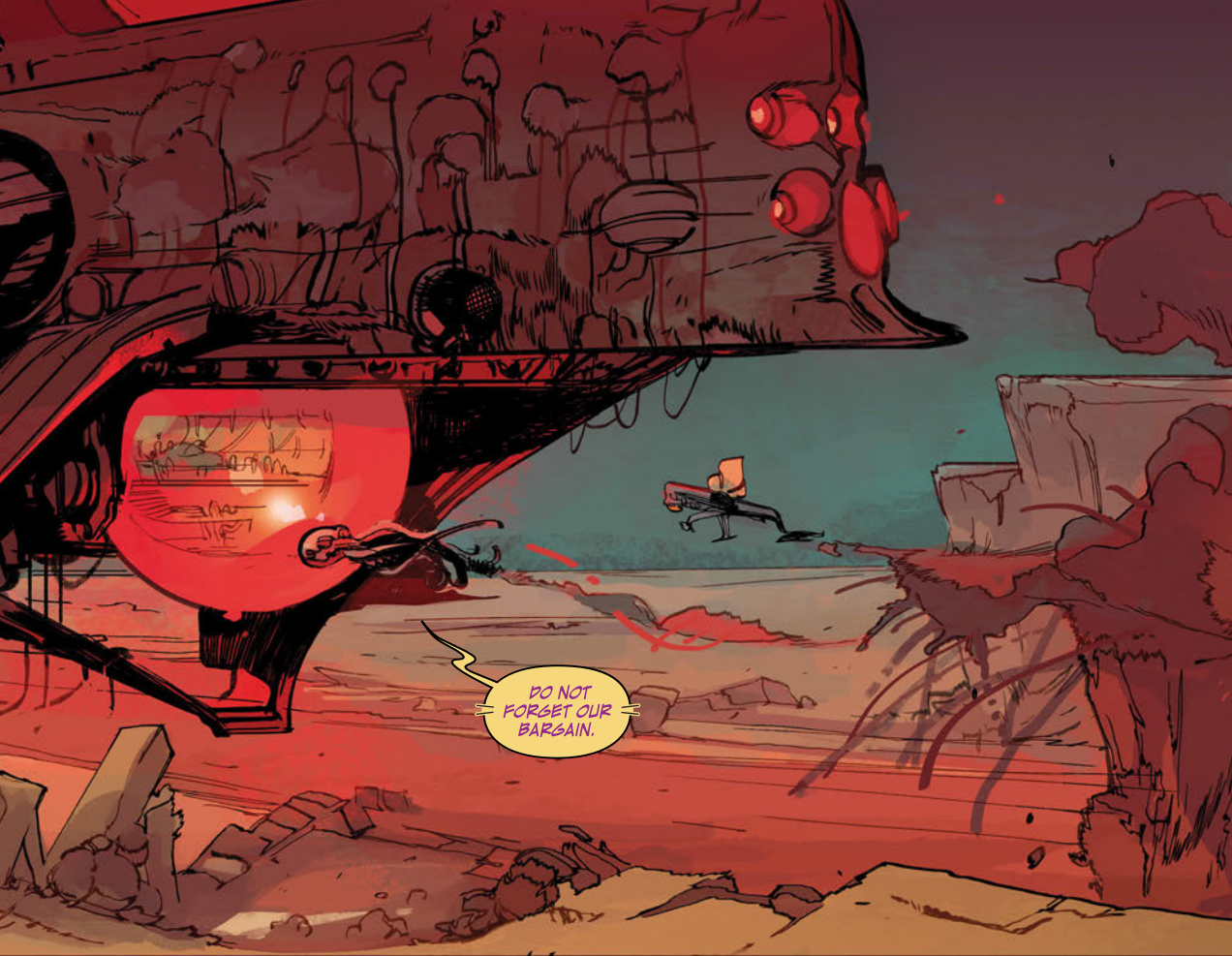
THE MAMMOTH HAS DONE HER END, NOW TO THE DEADLIGHTS!



THOM  
THOM  
THOM



BRACE FOR IMPACT--!



DO NOT FORGET OUR BARGAIN.



FIRE THE FUCKIN' COFFINS!



"--WE'RE BEING BOARDED!"

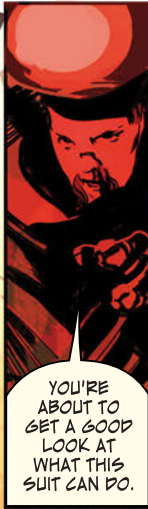


KUNG KUNG

KUNG



OOF--!



TOO BAD THERE WASN'T A SECOND ONE FOR THE GIRL.

SINGLE TWITCH, SHE FUCKING DIE!

SINGLE TWITCH!

THERE IS NO HOPE, SALSUSIAN PIG...



"...YOUR SHIP IS SURROUNDED."

ROLN! THEY'RE NOT SLOWING DOWN...

MOVE--!



SHRASHH--!

THEY'RE RAMMING!

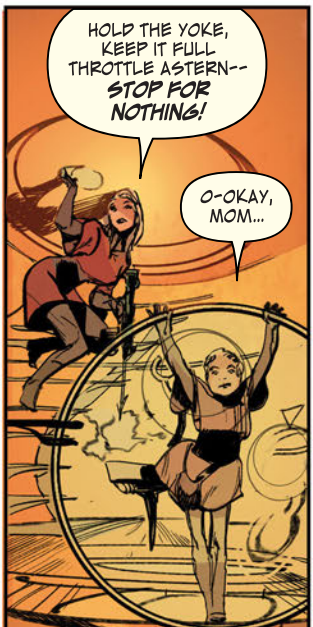
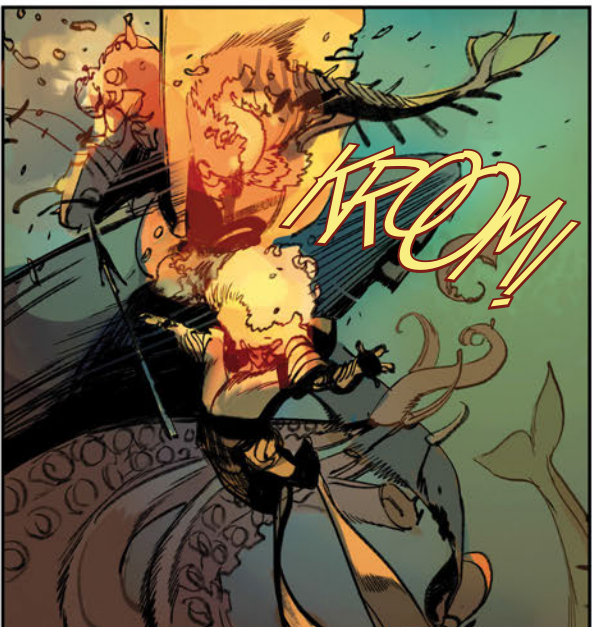


KROOM!

HOLD THE YOKE, KEEP IT FULL THROTTLE ASTERN-- STOP FOR NOTHING!

O-O-KAY, MOM...

OPEN THIS HATCH FOR NO ONE!





DON'T MOVE, YOU SAVAGE BASTARD.



SAVAGE PERHAPS, BUT MY PARENTS WERE WED.

DEEPLY IN LOVE UNTIL THE DAY YOUR HELMSMAN KILLED THEM, PRETTY PIE.



HELMSDOGS WE HUNTED--



HELMSDOG WE KILL!

OOF--!



IT'S TRUE. WE'VE KILLED SO MANY. AND WHILE IT MAKES ME FEEL HAPPY...

DESTROYING SUCH SPECTACULAR WEAPONS DOES NOT.

SO MANY SLEEPLESS NIGHTS PONDERING, IF ONLY I COULD TAKE ONE FOR MY OWN.



Y-YOU CAN'T USE IT... ONLY MY FAMILY CAN!

QUIET, TAZO!



SIGH

NO SHIT, KID. DNA CLOPED BY THE MAKERS.

BLOODLINE PROTECTION, THE GREAT EGOTISM OF THE MAKERS.

THAT'S ALL I WANT TO DO IS PROTECT MY FAMILY--THE HELM IS OF NO USE TO YOU!

I'LL COME WITH YOU--



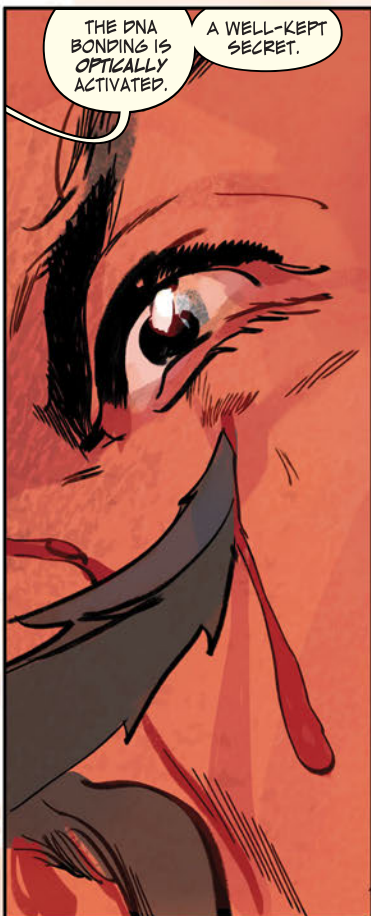
SIMPLY BECAUSE WE WERE BORN OUTSIDE OF THE CITY WALLS, DO NOT PRESUME WE ARE ALL PULL.

I AM A LITERATE MAN.



IN FACT I RECENTLY READ AN ANCIENT BOOK, WRITTEN ON THE SIEGE ON DRESSAROLUS.

THE INVADING LOLINITES FOUND SOMETHING QUITE OUTSTANDING ABOUT HELM SUITS.



THE DNA BONDING IS OPTICALLY ACTIVATED.

A WELL-KEPT SECRET.



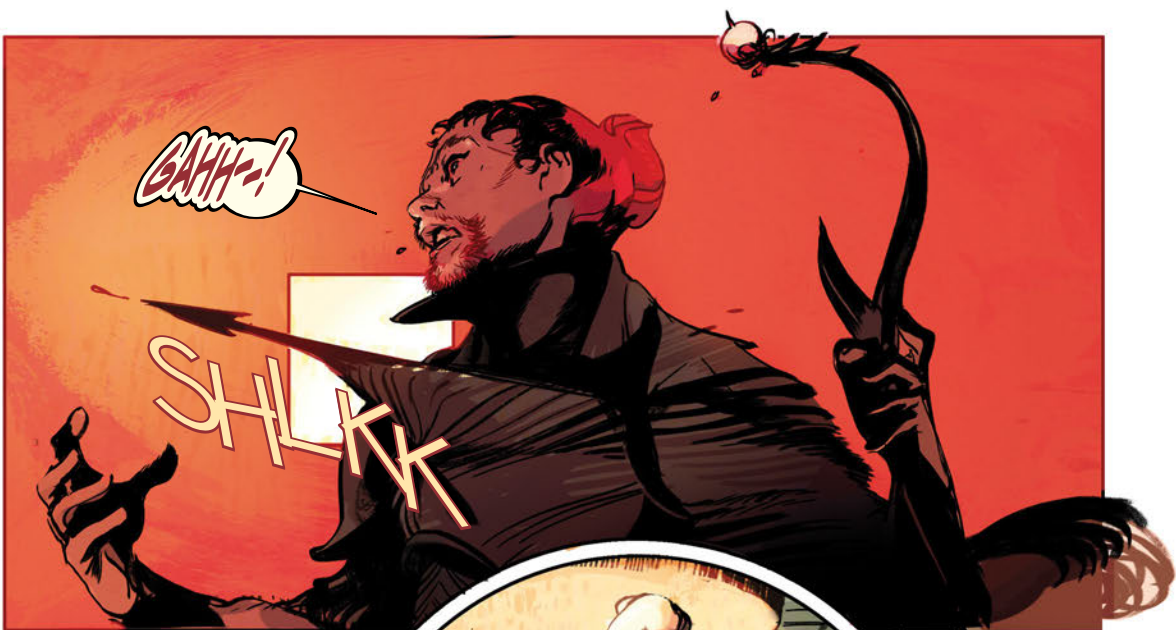
STOP-- STOP HURTING HIM!

BUT SECRETS CAN BE UNCOVERED.

GHRAGAAA!!



YOU JUST HAVE TO KNOW WHERE TO LOOK.



GAHH!

SHLAKK



GET THE HELL AWAY FROM MY FAMILY!



SIBBY RAT!

AIEEE!

DELLA--!

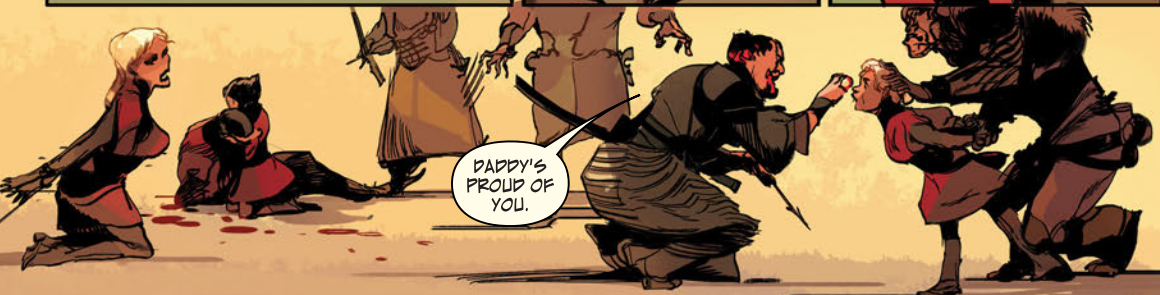
NO! D-DON'T HURT HER!



DADDY CAN SEE YOU, LITTLE GIRL.



HE CAN SEE HOW BRAVE YOU WERE WHEN FACED WITH THE COLD CURRENTS.

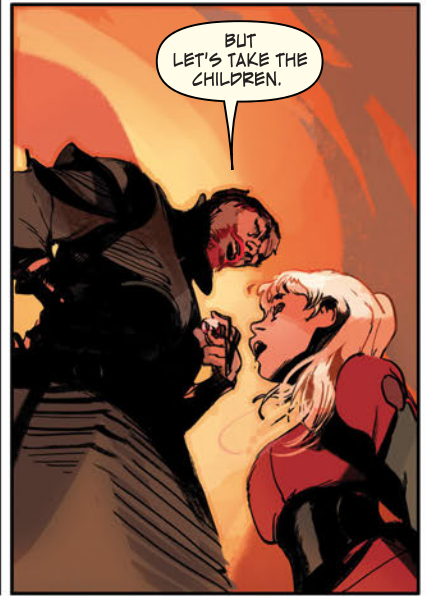


DADDY'S PROUD OF YOU.



ALL RIGHT, ME SCURVIES,  
BACK TO THE DREADED GALLEON  
WITH MY NEW HELM.

LEAVE THESE  
GOOD PEOPLE TO  
GO ABOUT THEIR  
BUSINESS.



BUT  
LET'S TAKE THE  
CHILDREN.



**NO!**

**MOMMY--!**



SON OF A  
BITCH, I'LL  
KILL--



**OOP!**

**KLUK**

**JOHL--!**



IT'S HARD.  
I GET IT.

BUT THIS  
CHANGES  
EVERYTHING  
FOR US.

PLEASE  
PONT--!

**DON'T  
TAKE MY  
BABIES!**



YOU NEEDN'T WORRY  
FOR THEIR SAFETY,  
MOMMY.

A HELMSMAN'S  
BLOOD IS QUITE  
PRECIOUS.

**-DOLLEEP-**

ACTIVATED.

AND YOUR CHILDREN'S BLOOD WILL ENSURE I KEEP THIS SUIT PILOTED LONG ENOUGH TO TAKE SALUS FOR MY PEOPLE.



MOMMY--!

I'LL FIND YOU! BOTH OF YOU--



I PROMISE.

NEVER LOSE HOPE. MOMMY WILL FIND YOU!



IT HURTS SO BADLY, DEARY. I FEEL EMPATHY, I CAN IMAGINE.

BUT LOOK AT THE UPSIDE--



**SPLASH**

--NOT FOR MUCH LONGER NOW.






A FIERY END IS  
INESCAPABLE.

EVERYONE  
KNOWS THIS.



EVERYONE  
EXCEPT MY  
WIFE.

STEL WON'T  
HEAR IT.



OUR CHILDREN  
THRIVE AMID HER  
IRRATIONAL  
OPTIMISM.

SO DO I.



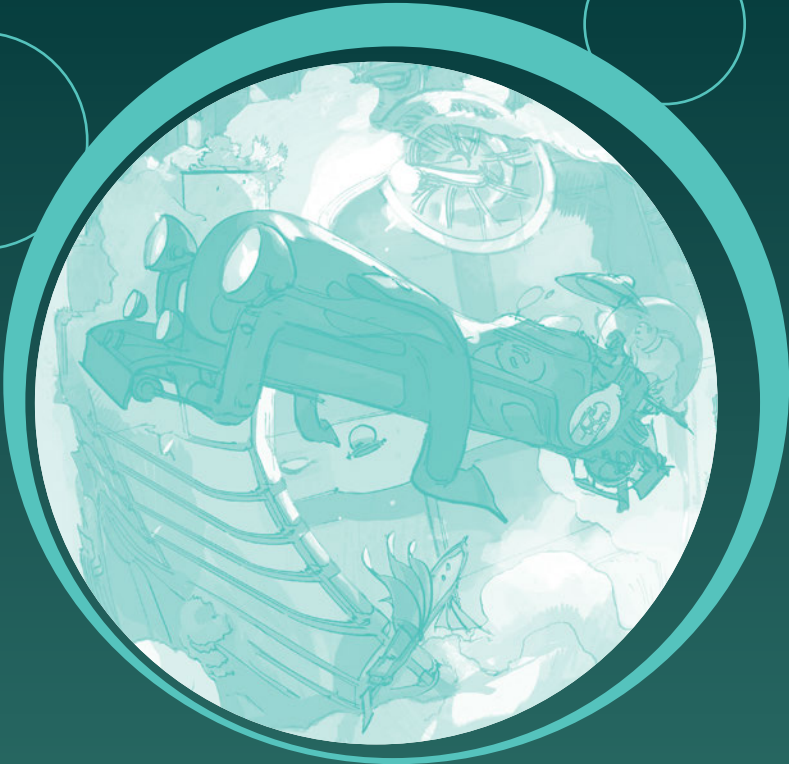
STEL KNOWS WHAT NO  
ONE ELSE DARES TRUST.

THAT THERE  
IS HOPE.



THAT, PROVIDED  
WE BELIEVE IT...

...WE WILL RISE AGAIN.





THE ENDLESS INSOMNIA BROKE TONIGHT, ALBEIT ONLY BRIEFLY.

I ROSE IN THAT OTHER PLACE, ADRIPT ON A SHORE UNDER A PERFECT-BLUE SKY.

THE WAVES BEGAN CRASHING DOWN ON ME, THROWING ME HELPLESSLY INTO THE ROCKY COAST.

I WAS HOLDING THE CHILDREN AGAINST ME, AS TIGHTLY AS I COULD... BUT THE WAVES WERE MORE THAN WATER.

LITTERED WITH ARMS, LEGS, AND TORSOS... BLOODLESS AND LONG DEAD.

I WAS DRUG LOW, CHURNING WITHOUT AIR, IN TOTAL PANIC.

WHEN I CAME TO THE CHILDREN WERE GONE.

ONLY A SEA OF DISMEMBERED CORPSES REMAINING...

I SHOULD LEAVE THE HOUSE. HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN?

LEFT HERE ALONE, SEALED WITHIN THIS GRAVE MEMORIAL, LIVING WITH GHOSTS.

SHIPWRECKED BY THE PALE COMFORT OF ANCIENT MEMORIES.

PICKING AT SCABS UNTIL THEY REFORM.

THEN PICKING AT THEM AGAIN.

ADDICTED TO THE STING OF THEIR MEMORY, THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EACH CAPTURED IMAGE, A COLD COMFORT...



...THE ONLY THING I CAN FEEL ANYMORE.

PERFECT MOMENTS. SMILING FACES.



MARIK... MY POOR BOY.

WATCHING YOU FALL HAS BEEN THE HARDEST.



I HOPE IT'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED IT TO BE, THIS LIFE YOU'VE CHOSEN.

I HOPE IT'S NOT TOO LONELY FOR YOU...

...AS YOU SET OUT TO  
DESTROY YOURSELF.

OH--!

HARDER--  
OH, GOD!

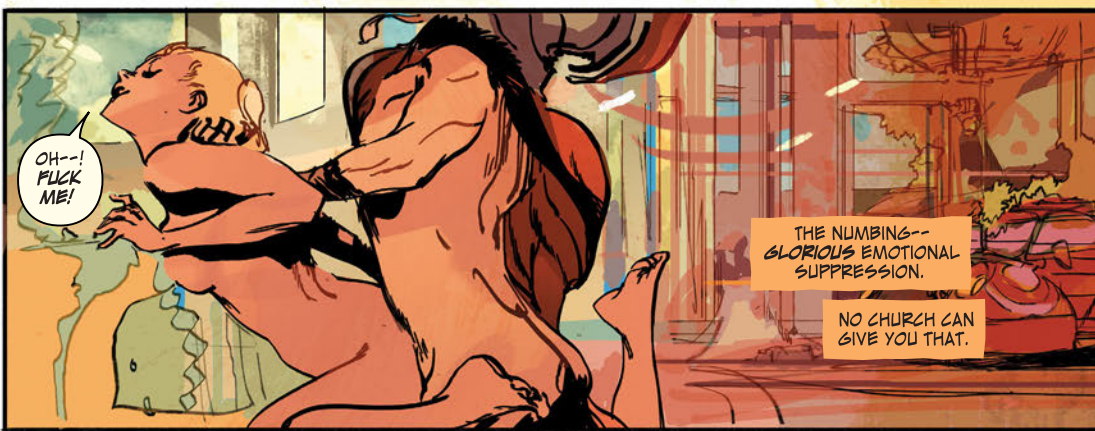




FUCK ME,  
BABY...  
BE ROUGH  
WITH ME...

QUIET.

THE HEAVY CREAM  
TWISTS THINGS UP.  
MAKES IT RIGHT.



OH--!  
FUCK  
ME!

THE NUMBING--  
GLORIOUS EMOTIONAL  
SUPPRESSION.

NO CHURCH CAN  
GIVE YOU THAT.



BUT EVEN THIS DEEP IN--  
SOME PART OF ME KNOWS.

KNOWS I'M NO  
ROMAN CENTURION--

KNOWS THIS IS NO  
VOLUPTUOUS VIRGIN.



IT'S THE DRUG.

AND LIKE ALL DRUGS...

...IT FADES AWAY.

PULLING BACK THE VEIL...

...DRAGGING ME BACK  
DOWN TO REALITY.

THE  
FUCK--??

DAMNIT--

GIVE ME  
ANOTHER  
PULL!

HURRY!

BRUTUS  
WANNA GO  
BYE-BYE?



DON'T TALK.  
SERIOUSLY.

NOT EVEN A  
BLAST OF THIS HEAVY  
CREAM CAN TRANSFORM  
THAT VOICE INTO  
SOMETHING DESIRABLE.



BETTER.



GODDAMN, YOU HAD SOME MEAN POISON TO GET OUT, BABY.



YOU WERE TALKIN' CRAZY AGAIN.

ROMAN GLADIATOR SHIT ABOUT MY GREEK ASS AN' SHIT.

DIRTY BABY. THAT WAS GOOD CREAM, RIGHT? GOOD ASS?

HMMH.



GOOD ENOUGH YOU MAYBE THROW IN SOMETHIN' EXTRA?

BABY?



MAYBE NEXT TIME.

NEXT TIME?! YOU STILL AIN'T PAID ME FOR THE LAST TIME!

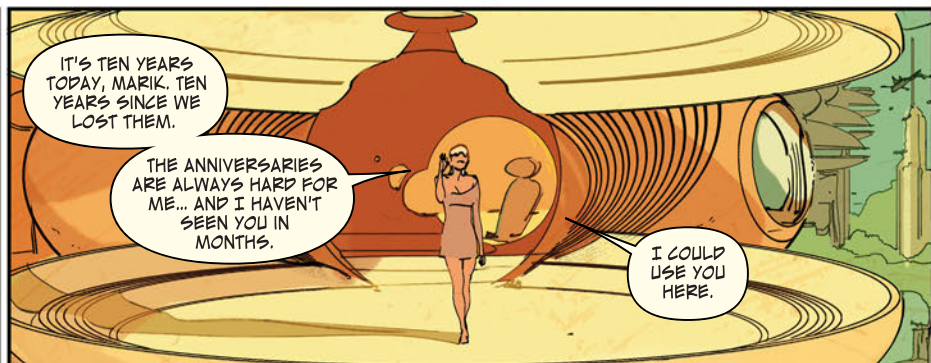
IT DON'T WORK LIKE THAT, I DON'T RUN NO "FLUCK TAB"!

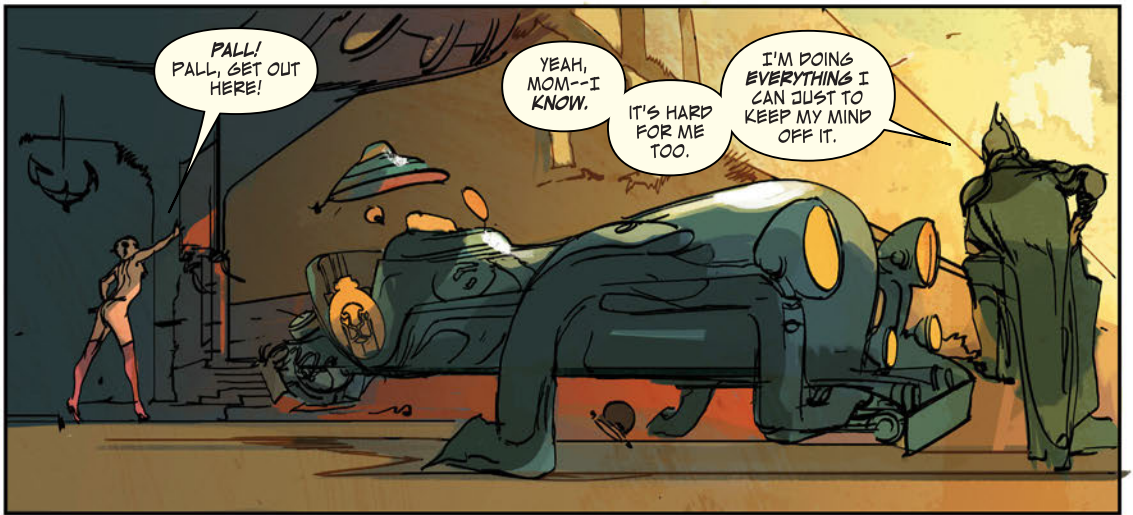


I DON'T CARE IF YOU'RE A COP OR NOT-- I GET PAID!

**BREEP BREEP**

QUIET, I'M GETTING A CALL.



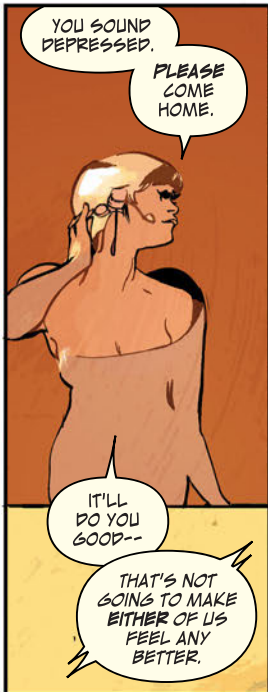


PALL!  
PALL, GET OUT  
HERE!

YEAH,  
MOM--I  
KNOW.

IT'S HARD  
FOR ME  
TOO.

I'M DOING  
EVERYTHING I  
CAN JUST TO  
KEEP MY MIND  
OFF IT.



YOU SOUND  
DEPRESSED.

PLEASE  
COME  
HOME.

IT'LL  
DO YOU  
GOOD--

THAT'S NOT  
GOING TO MAKE  
EITHER OF US  
FEEL ANY  
BETTER.



I HAVEN'T SLEPT  
IN DAYS--WORKING  
A STRING OF  
MURDERS.

HOW AM I  
SUPPOSED TO  
HOLD THIS ROTTING  
CITY TOGETHER  
LOST IN THE PAST  
WITH YOU?

WHAT  
YOU GOT FOR  
ME?



NOTHIN'!

THAT SAME  
PIS DIDN'T  
FUCKIN' PAY!



YOU'RE ALL  
I HAVE LEFT, MARIK.  
PLEASE COME HOME,  
YOU NEED YOUR  
FAMILY.

I NEED YOU  
TO BELIEVE THAT  
THINGS WILL  
GET BETTER.

I HAD A  
THOUGHT, A  
WAY TO GET  
A SUB...



...TO GO  
LOOKING  
FOR YOUR  
SISTERS.

IT'S BEEN  
TEN YEARS,  
MOM.

IF THEY'RE  
NOT DEAD... IT'S  
BETTER NOT TO  
THINK ABOUT  
IT.

IT'S BETTER  
IF THEY ARE  
DEAD...



AND YOU  
KNOW WHAT--  
THIS--THIS  
MISGUIDED  
HOPE ISN'T  
HELPING!

YOU'RE  
ONLY MAKING  
THIS WORSE!



THIS PLACE IS  
ROTTING BENEATH  
OUR FEET!

FAMINE, SICKNESS  
AND CRIME -- THAT'S  
ALL WE HAVE TO LOOK  
FORWARD TO.

YOU NEED  
GOOD NEWS?  
HERE'S THE ONLY  
GOOD NEWS I HAVE--



--WITHIN A YEAR THIS  
FESTERING GODDAMN  
AIR WILL FINALLY BE  
TOO TOXIC TO  
SUSTAIN LIFE.

NO AMOUNT OF  
WISHEFUL THINKING IS  
GOING TO CHANGE  
THAT.

I CAN'T  
BE AROUND  
YOU.



I CAN'T HEAR  
YOUR INSANE  
OPTIMISM  
ANymore.

I JUST  
CAN'T  
HEAR--



**BLAMM**

MARI--

**KRESHH**



BLAMM

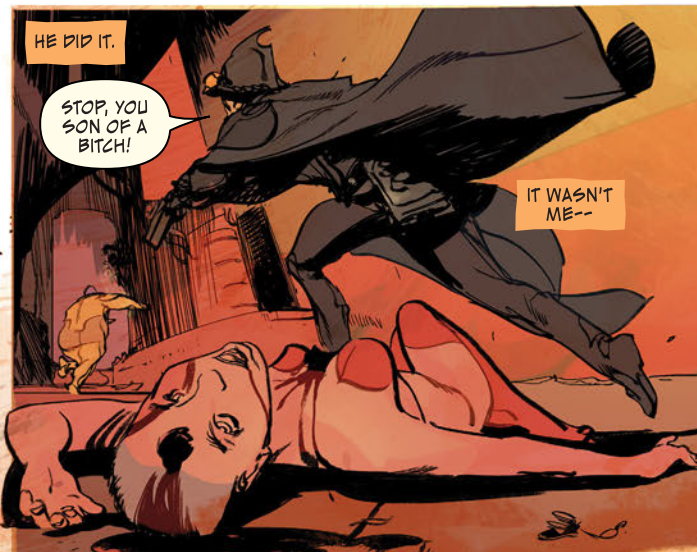
ROUND PASSES THROUGH THE CAPE--MISSES BY AN INCH--

--WON'T RISK A SECOND.

BLAMM  
BLAMM



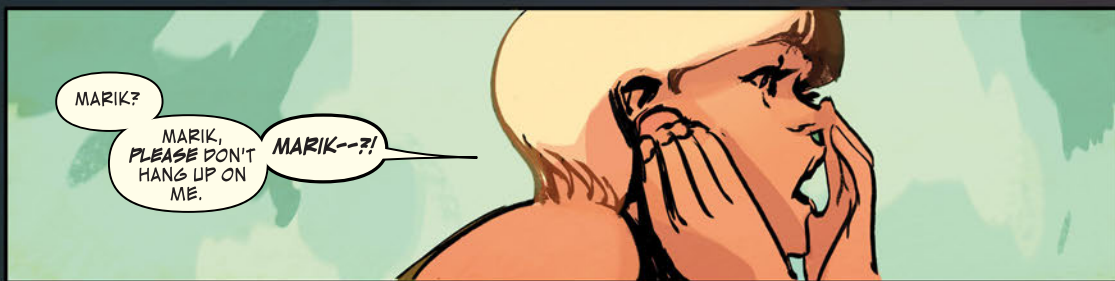
--USED HER AS A GODDAMNED SHIELD--



HE DID IT.

STOP, YOU SON OF A BITCH!

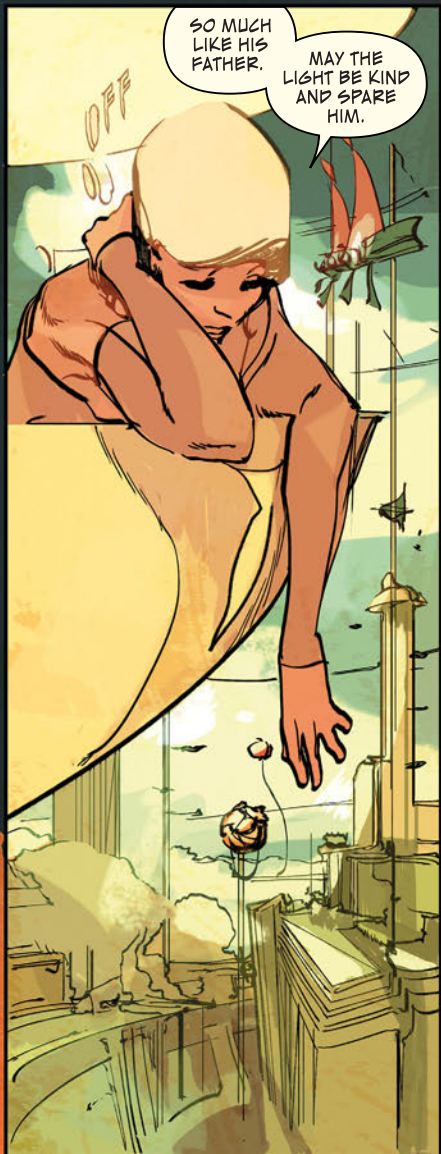
IT WASN'T ME--



MARIK?

MARIK, PLEASE DON'T HANG UP ON ME.

MARIK--?!



SO MUCH LIKE HIS FATHER.

MAY THE LIGHT BE KIND AND SPARE HIM.



IT CAN'T HAVE ALL OF BEEN FOR NOTHING, JOHL.

I CAN'T HAVE SURVIVED FOR NOTHING...

"BUT YOU NEED TO EAT..."

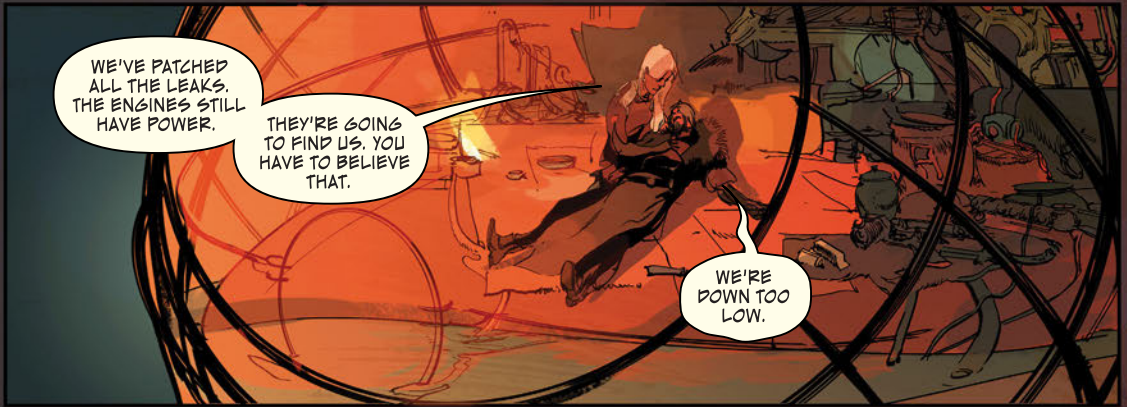


...I FOUND SOME MORE RATIONS.

I DON'T WANT THE RATIONS...



I DON'T WANT TO PROLONG THIS ANYMORE.



WE'VE PATCHED ALL THE LEAKS. THE ENGINES STILL HAVE POWER.

THEY'RE GOING TO FIND US. YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE THAT.

WE'RE DOWN TOO LOW.



THEY WON'T RISK SEARCHING MARIANA TRENCH THIS DEEP.

YOUR QUANTUMOLOGY, IT'S ALWAYS BEEN AN ENDEARING QUALITY...



...IT KEPT OUR FAMILY STRONG FOR MANY YEARS.

I TRULY BELIEVE IT DID.

AS NICE AS IT ALL SOUNDS...



...THERE IS NO AMOUNT OF POSITIVE THINKING THAT'S GOING TO CHANGE OUR SITUATION.



EVEN IF I WANTED TO... I CAN'T HOLD ON ANYMORE.

LOST TOO MUCH BLOOD... AND THE PAIN...



I'M DYING, STEL.

YOU HAVE TO COME TO TERMS WITH THIS.



COME WITH ME, MY BRIGHTNESS.

TURN OFF THE OXYGEN... COME WITH ME.

TOGETHER...



MARIK IS BACK HOME, WAITING FOR US...

THOSE MONSTERS HAVE OUR GIRLS, JOHL.

OUR GIRLS...



I CAN'T THINK ABOUT THEM... I JUST CAN'T.

I CAN'T BEAR THE THOUGHT THAT I'M GOING TO LEAVE YOU TOO...



...ALONE DOWN HERE FOR GOD KNOWS HOW LONG.

COME WITH ME... PLEASE...



I'M GOING TO GET OUT OF HERE--I'M GOING TO GET OUR GIRLS.

PLEASE HOLD ON.



IT'S NOT UP TO ME ANYMORE...

IT'S JUST NOT.

I LOVE YOU SO MUCH...

I DO HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT. HOPE YOU CAN FIND THEM...



BELIEVE IT FOR ME.

WITH ALL OF YOUR HEART BELIEVE IT.

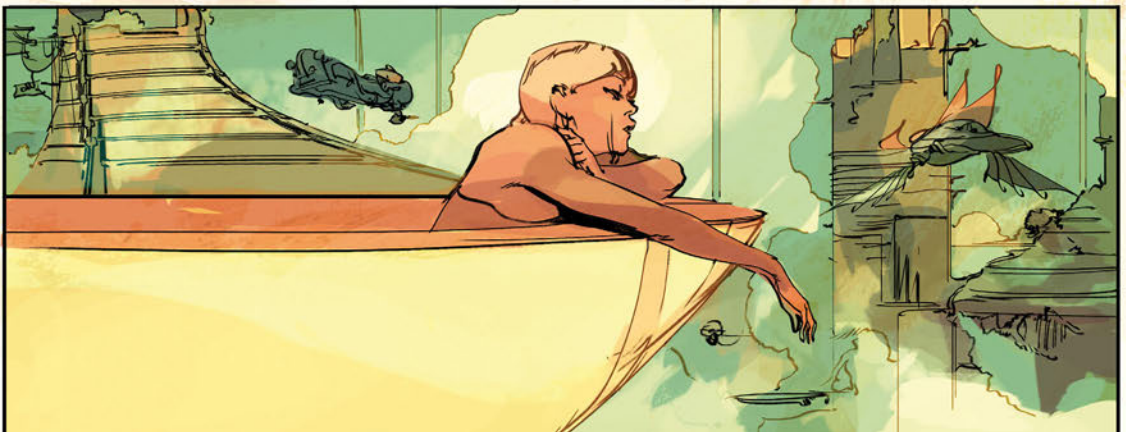
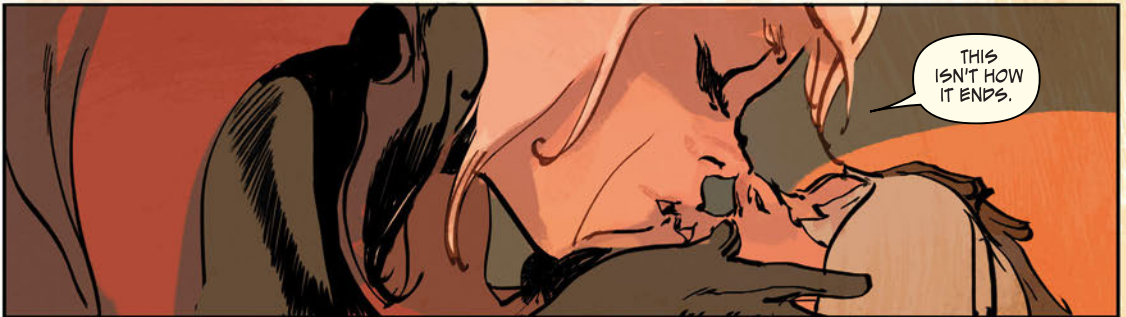


THERE...

THERE WILL BE A RESCUE PARTY...

THEY'LL FIND YOU...

...AND YOU...





LET ME  
THE FUCK  
OUTTA  
HERE!

I KNOW  
ALL ABOUT  
YOU, OFFICER  
CAINE!



JUST MAKING  
SURE THE PEOPLE  
OF THOSE  
TOWERS 'RE  
SAFE!

DON'T GIVE A  
MAMMOTH'S SHIT  
'BOUT US LOW  
FOLK!



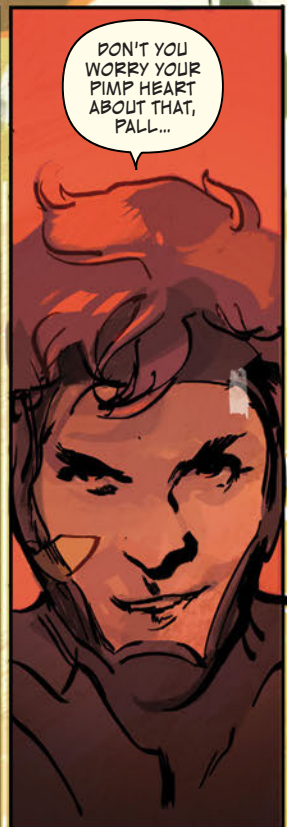
OUGHTA THINK GOOD  
'FORE YOU TAKE  
ME IN!

THIS IS  
THE WORST  
MISTAKE  
YOU EVER  
MADE.



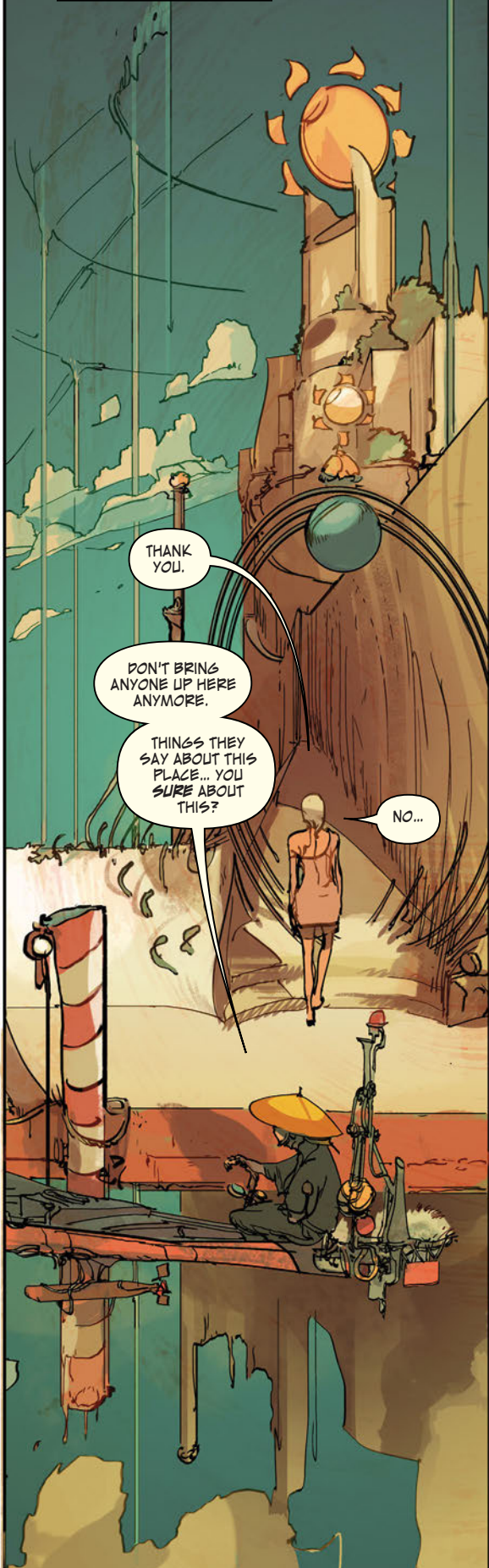
YOU TAKE  
ME IN AN' I'M  
GONNA TELL  
EVERY FUCKER IN  
THERE WHAT I  
KNOW ON  
YOU!

THIS--  
WORST  
MISTAKE  
YOU EVER  
MADE.



DON'T YOU  
WORRY YOUR  
PIMP HEART  
ABOUT THAT,  
PALL...

"...I'M NOT TAKING YOU IN."



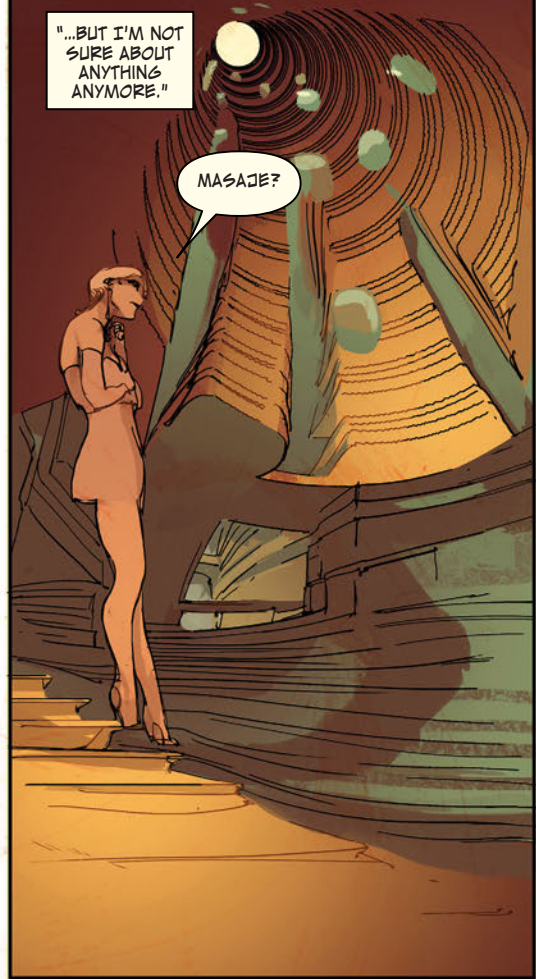
THANK YOU.

DON'T BRING ANYONE UP HERE ANYMORE.

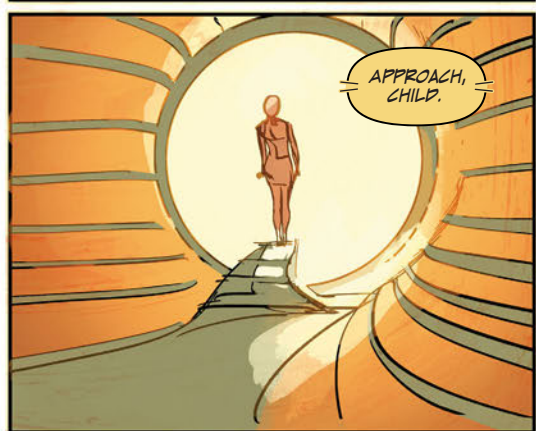
THINGS THEY SAY ABOUT THIS PLACE... YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?

NO...

"...BUT I'M NOT SURE ABOUT ANYTHING ANYMORE."



MASAJE?



APPROACH, CHILD.

ENTER THE MIND.



I WAS GLAD TO SEE THAT YOU WOULD VISIT.

I AM DEEPLY TROUBLED, MASAJE.

WHAT IS THE BURDEN?



I SPENT MY LIFE BELIEVING THAT BY CHANGING THE INNER ATTITUDES OF MY MIND I COULD CHANGE THE OUTER ASPECTS OF MY LIFE.

BUT IF THAT WERE TRUE...

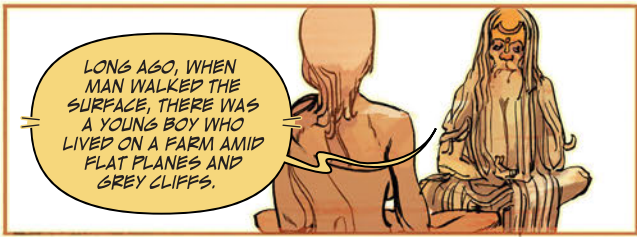


...WHY AM I HERE NOW?

WHY AM I LEFT HERE ALONE AMIDST SUCH RUIN?

THIS YOU KNOW. THOUGH YOU DO NOT WANT TO.

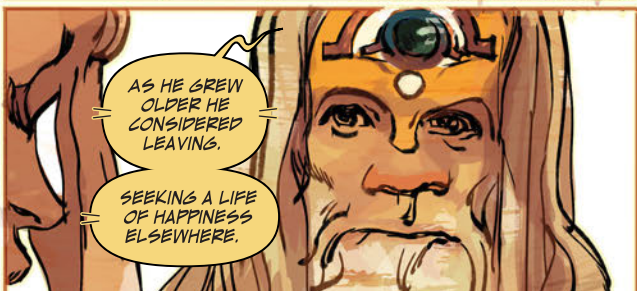
I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND.



LONG AGO, WHEN MAN WALKED THE SURFACE, THERE WAS A YOUNG BOY WHO LIVED ON A FARM AMID FLAT PLANES AND GREY CLIFFS.



THE BOY HATED THE VILLAGE HE LIVED IN.



AS HE GREW OLDER HE CONSIDERED LEAVING.

SEEKING A LIFE OF HAPPINESS ELSEWHERE.



BUT FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN FROZE HIM.



HE DARED NOT TEST THE WATERS!

HE REMAINED UNHAPPY, COCOONED IN THE FAMILIAR.



FOR NO MATTER HOW UNHAPPY HE WAS--HE WAS SAFE.



AS TIME PASSED HE GREW DEEP ROOTS.

HE MARRIED, RAISED CHILDREN AND EVENTUALLY GREW OLD; AMID THOSE FLAT PLAINS AND GREY CLIFFS HE DESPISED SO.



HE KNEW THE YEARS THAT HAD PASSED WERE WASTED CLINGING TO HIS SAFETY!

CLINGING TO HIS FEAR!



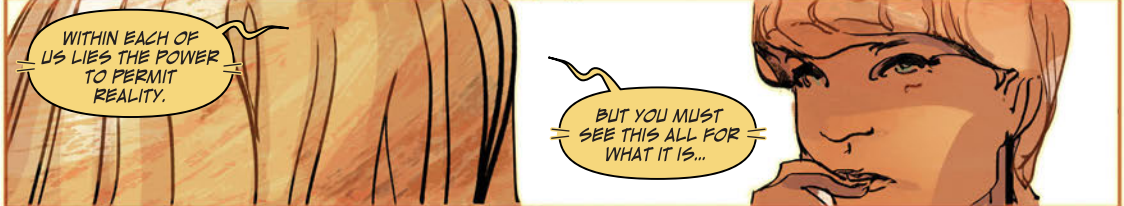
HOW DIFFERENT HIS LIFE WOULD HAVE BEEN HAD HE TAKEN THE JOURNEY.

HOW DIFFERENT HAD HE GIVEN AWAY HIS FEAR.



GOD IS IN YOU AND HE WILL GRANT YOU WISDOM.

BUT IT TAKES TRUE ACTION TO HEAR.



WITHIN EACH OF US LIES THE POWER TO PERMIT REALITY.

BUT YOU MUST SEE THIS ALL FOR WHAT IT IS...



"...A FANTASY."

"A PROJECTION OF THAT WHICH LIVES WITHIN US."



"IT IS WHAT WE THINK WE DESERVE."


"YOU CLING TO THIS TOMB, FOR FEAR OF TRYING."



"YET EVERYTHING YOU SEE AROUND YOU EXISTS BECAUSE YOU WILL IT."

DON'T-- PLEASE!

PLEASE DON'T DO THIS!



THEY SAY TO DIE IN THE SLUDGE IS LIKE BURNING TO DEATH AND DROWNING AT THE SAME TIME.

PAINFUL IS THE POINT. WORST POSSIBLE WAY TO DIE.

NO-- PLEASE--!

"IF YOU FALL TO DESPAIR NOW, THE DOORS WILL CLOSE..."

"...AND GOD WILL FALL SILENT."

**BIP  
BIP  
BIP**

**BIP  
BIP  
BIP**

**BIP  
BIP  
BIP**

BY THE LIGHT...



SAY IT! YOU DID IT!

KILLED THAT GIRL-- USED HER!

O-O-KAY, I DID IT, MAN-- I DID IT!



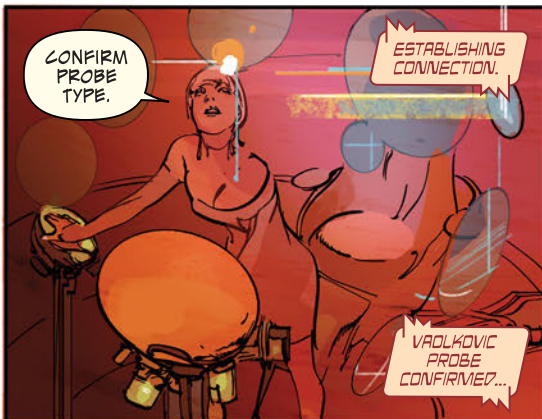
OKAY, I SAID IT!

NOW SHOOT ME! JUST SHOOT ME, MAN!

PLEASE--



"--ANYTHING BUT THIS!"



CONFIRM PROBE TYPE.

ESTABLISHING CONNECTION.

VOLKOVIC PROBE CONFIRMED...



UPLINK OFFLINE.



POSITIVE LOCATION OF INHABITABLE WORLD CONFIRMED.

"MUST ACCESS PROBE MANUALLY TO ACQUIRE."

YOU-YOU SAY I USED HER--

--WHAT ABOUT YOU, OFFICER?

YOU DIDN'T? DIDN'T PAY 'ER. DIDN'T SHOOT 'ER--

YOU'VE REACHED MARIK KANE, I'M NOT AVAILABLE, LEAVE A MESSAGE.

DEEP

--IT'S A PROBE, MARIK!"

YOU NEED TO TELL YOURSELF I SHOT HER, YOU GO AHEAD.

BUT YOU DON'T GET TO FEEL BETTER THAN ME--

MARIK! IT'S MOM--

I-I HAVE AMAZING NEWS--

IT'S A SEEKER PROBE, ENTERING EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE!

IT FOUND ONE MARIK--

--IT FOUND AN INHABITABLE WORLD!"

DROP THE WEAPON, SHITHEEL!



I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN DOWN, MARIK--



MOVE AN INCH AND YOU'RE DEAD, CAINE.

YOU ARE UNDER ARREST FOR MURDER.

"--I KNOW HOW HARD IT'S BEEN--"



"--BUT, PLEASE, DON'T GIVE UP, ANGEL."

**DREEP DREEP**

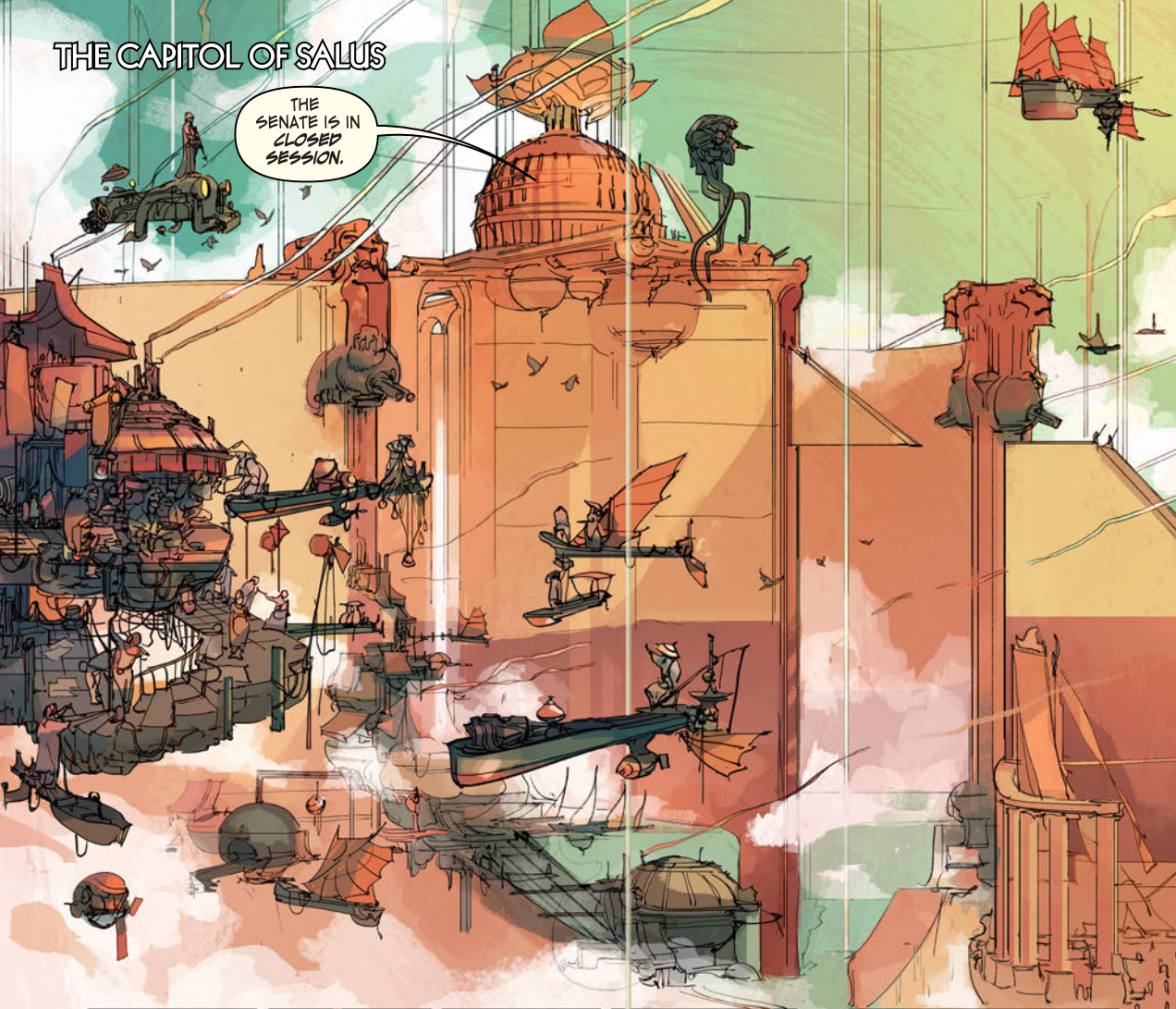


**DREEP DREEP**

"THERE IS HOPE."



# THE CAPITOL OF SALUS



THE SENATE IS IN CLOSED SESSION.



I HAVE CLEARANCE.



MRS. CAINE-- HE'S NOT SEEING ANYONE.

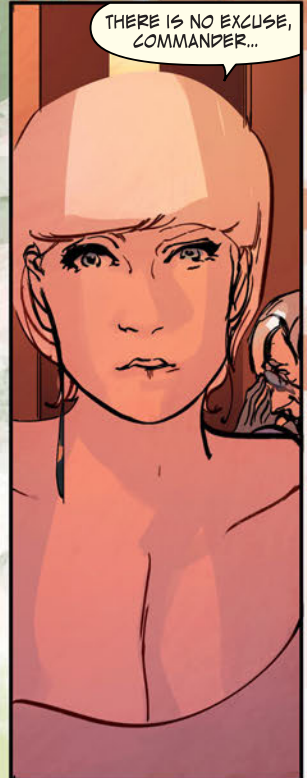


THE SENATOR IS INDIPOSED.  
GO HOME, MRS. CAINE PLEASE... HE WON'T SEE YOU.



HE'LL SEE ME.

EXCUSE ME!



THERE IS NO EXCUSE, COMMANDER...

...FOR ANY OF YOU.

LISTLESS GHOSTS HUMPING ANXIOUSLY FOR THE SLIGHTEST REMINDER OF LIFE.

THEIR GRIEF BARELY MASKED BY HOLLOW MOANS.

WINE AND HALF-SPOILED FOOD LITTERS THE FLOOR.

PROVISIONS NEEDED BY A STARVING POPULATION.

PERMISSION TO STOP CARING.

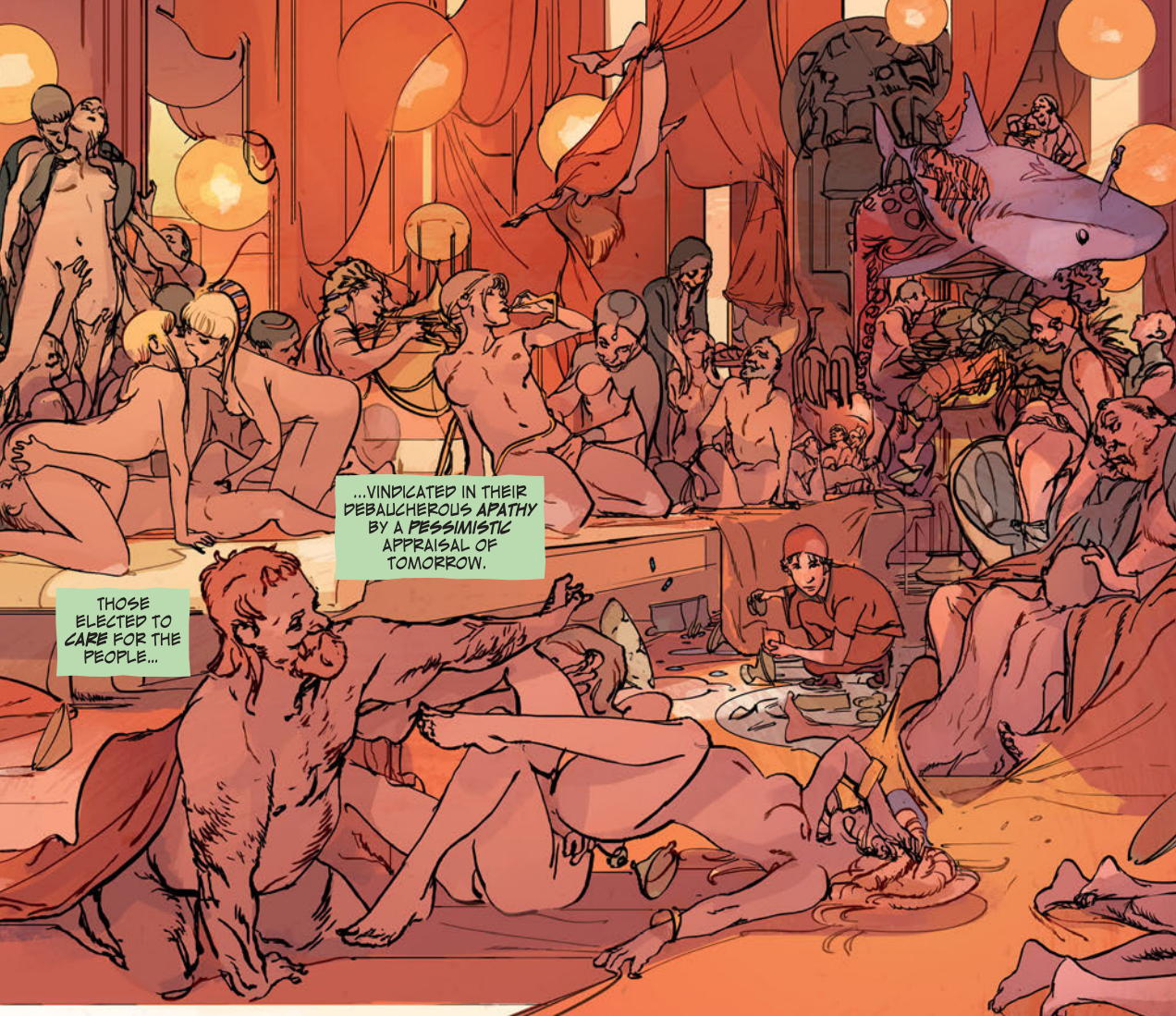
SENATOR GREEME...

YOU'VE CAUGHT ME AT A RATHER AWKWARD MOMENT, MRS. CAINE.

ASSUMING YOU'RE NOT JUST ANOTHER HALLUCINATION.

NO, THE CREAM WOULDN'T CONJURE SUCH A PAIN IN THE ASS TO DISRUPT MY MERRIMENT.

I'M TERRIBLY SORRY, BUT IT'S URGENT.



...VINDICATED IN THEIR DEBAUCHEROUS APATHY BY A PESSIMISTIC APPRAISAL OF TOMORROW.

THOSE ELECTED TO CARE FOR THE PEOPLE...

A PROBE HAS RETURNED, SENATOR.

ON THE SURFACE.

IS THAT RIGHT?

I BELIEVE IT FOUND AN INHABITABLE WORLD.

IT'S THE ONLY REASON IT WOULD HAVE COME BACK.

I WANT TO GO FIND IT.

SIGH-- MRS. CAINE-- IN CASE YOU DIDN'T NOTICE-- I'M TRYING TO ENJOY A SUCK-OFF HERE.

IF THERE'S A CHANCE--

THERE ISN'T.

NO ONE'S SET FOOT ON THE SURFACE IN MILLENNIA.

NO ONE WHO'S TRIED HAS EVER RETURNED.

IT MIGHT AS WELL HAVE LANDED ON MARS.



FACE REALITY.

ALL OF OUR GREATEST AND MOST INFORMED MINDS HAVE GIVEN UP, WHY DON'T YOU?

IN A FEW SHORT MONTHS THERE WILL BE NO MORE AIR.

WE'VE RECYCLED IT FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS--IT'S STALE--TOXIC.



THAT MAN OVER THERE, LEN PELLM, HE'S THE HEAD OF THE HOMELAND RELOCATION COMMITTEE, AS UP-TO-DATE AS A PERSON CAN BE ABOUT OUR SITUATION.

HE'S HIGH OFF OF HIS ASS, LOST IN CARNAL DELIGHTS.

HE'S SEEN THE TRUTH AND ACCEPTED IT.



COME-- JOIN THE PARTY.



OUR AIR WILL MAINTAIN HALF A YEAR LONGER THAN THE REST.

THERE'S FOOD, THERE'S DRINK, THERE'S CREAM...



WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU WERE TOUCHED BY A MAN, STEL?

SNIFF

A LONG TIME I'D WAGER FROM YOUR Demeanor.

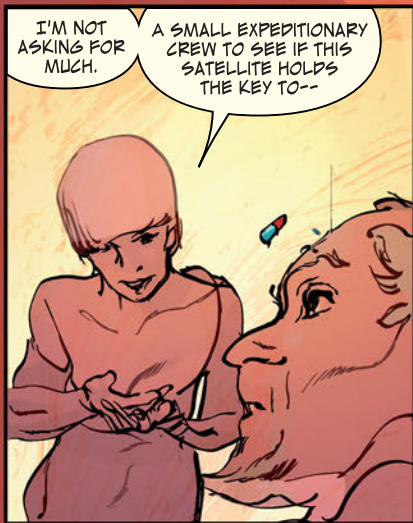


WE'VE BEEN GIVEN THE COLD MIDDLE FINGER BY THE UNIVERSE--

THE HUMAN RACE HAS RUN ITS COURSE.



HAVE A LITTLE FUN BEFORE IT'S OVER?



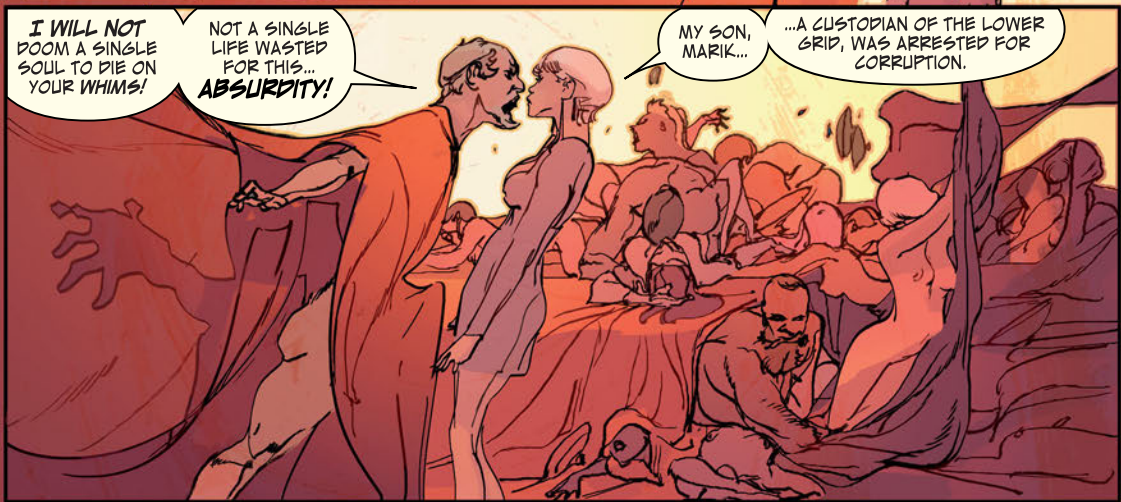
I'M NOT ASKING FOR MUCH.

A SMALL EXPEDITIONARY CREW TO SEE IF THIS SATELLITE HOLDS THE KEY TO--



ENOUGH!

HEY--?!



I WILL NOT DOOM A SINGLE SOUL TO DIE ON YOUR WHIMS!

NOT A SINGLE LIFE WASTED FOR THIS... ABSURDITY!

MY SON, MARIK...

...A CUSTODIAN OF THE LOWER GRID, WAS ARRESTED FOR CORRUPTION.



WHAT OF HIM?

RELEASE HIM INTO MY CUSTODY, GIVE US A LIFT POD, TWO SUITS AND PROVISIONS--

WE'LL GO ALONE.



HMMH.

THAT'S QUITE A FAVOR.



BUT, SO BE IT.

YOU CAN HAVE YOUR SON AND THE EQUIPMENT FOR YOUR SUICIDE MISSION.

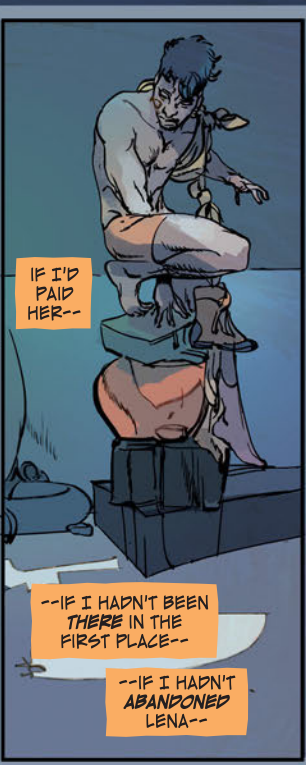
BUT IN EXCHANGE...

"...YOU'LL HAVE TO SERVE YOUR SENATOR."

DONE FOOLING MYSELF.  
FUCK IT. DO IT.

ALL THE CLEVER EXCUSES FOR EVERY SHITTY THING I'VE EVER DONE.

IF I WAS SOBER I WOULDN'T HAVE MISSED.



IF I'D PAID HER--

--IF I HADN'T BEEN THERE IN THE FIRST PLACE--

--IF I HADN'T ABANDONED LENA--



--HADN'T JOINED THE FORCE FOR MY OWN SELFISH BULLSHIT--

--IF I'D MADE ONE SINGLE MORAL CHOICE--



--SHE'D BE ALIVE.

BUT SHE'S NOT.

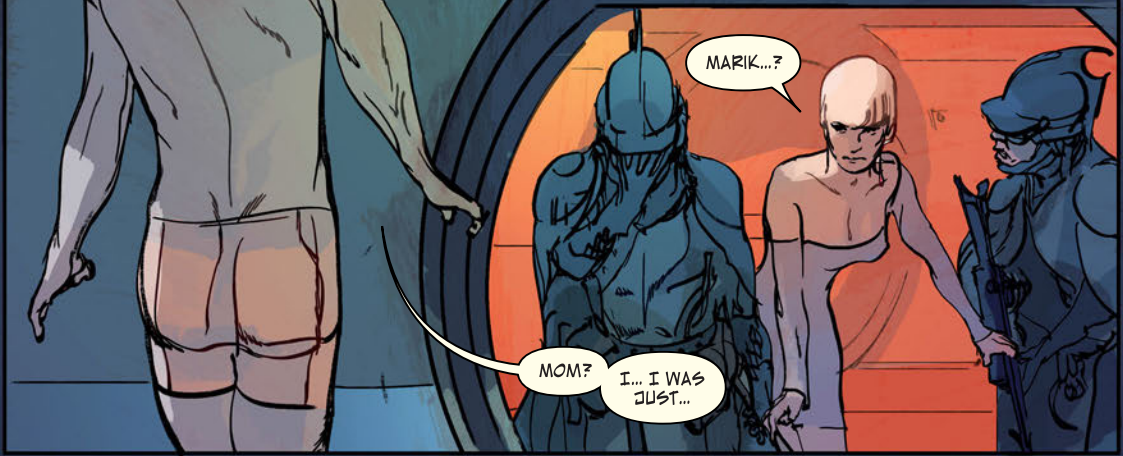


AND I JUST DON'T DESERVE TO BE.

YOU GOT A VISITOR, CAINE.



SORT OF BUSY HERE, GUYS.



MARIK...?

MOM?  
I... I WAS JUST...



FUCK IT.



→BAKK--←

I'M SORRY YOU HAD TO SEE IT--  
BUT IT'S WHAT I DESERVE.

MARIK!



GET HIM DOWN!

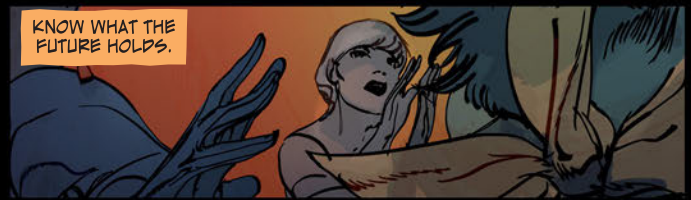
→SHARK←

AFTER WHAT I DID--

IT HURTS TOO MUCH.



DONE FOOLING MYSELF.



KNOW WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS.

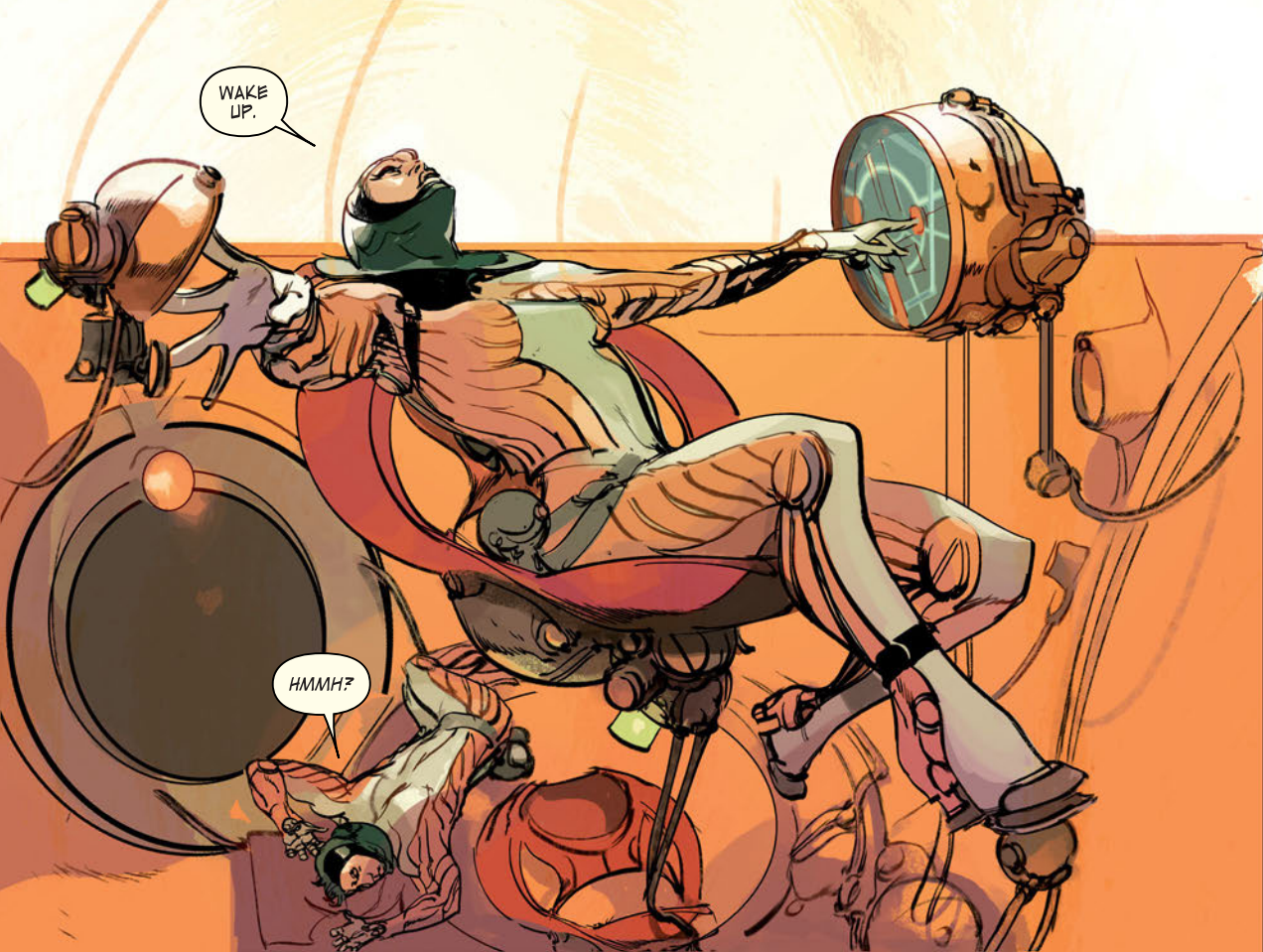


WHY STICK AROUND WAITING FOR IT?

WAITING FOR FATE TO TAKE WHAT'S LEFT?



I WON'T GIVE  
THAT FLCKER THE  
SATISFACTION.



WAKE UP.

HMMH?



...OH, FOR FUCK'S SAKE...

WHY?!



WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO ME?!



A PROBE CRASHED ON THE SURFACE.

AND?

AND WE'RE GOING TO GET IT.

IT'S LOCATED AN INHABITABLE WORLD--I'M CERTAIN.



YOU'RE CERTAIN? WELL, I'M CERTAIN THAT IS **SO MUCH BULLSHIT!**

HOW THIS **DAYDREAM OPTIMISM** BECOMES **CRUELTY** TO THOSE AROUND YOU?

DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE HOW MUCH HARDER YOU MAKE EVERYTHING?



IT'S THAT  
CLOCK ALL  
OVER!

THE  
ONE DAD  
MADE?

THE ONE YOU  
BEGGED TO GET  
RID OF? SAID IT WAS  
MORBI'D MAKING US  
STARE AT THE  
DWINGLING TIME.

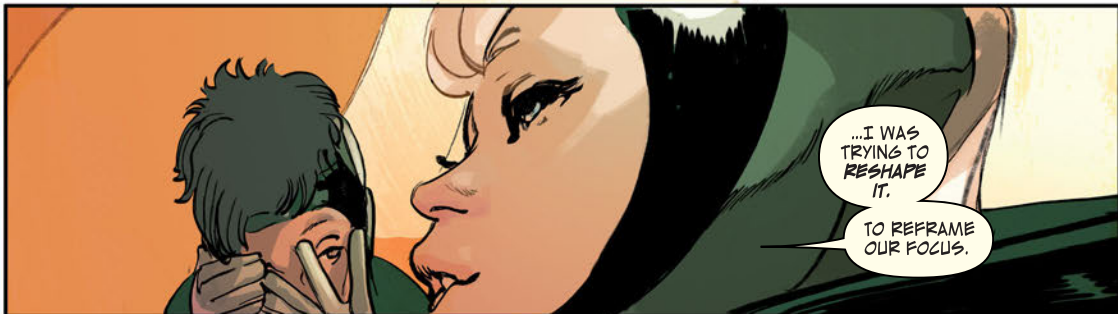
YOU'D BREAK  
IT AND HE'D  
FIX IT.  
OVER AND  
OVER.



YOUR WHOLE  
LIFE IS JUST  
HIDING FROM  
REALITY!

THE CLOCK  
MADE IT FEEL  
AS IF FAILURE  
WAS INEVITABLE,  
MARIK.

I WASN'T  
TRYING TO HIDE  
FROM REALITY...



...I WAS  
TRYING TO  
RESHAPE  
IT.

TO REFRAME  
OUR FOCUS.



I'M NOT GOING  
TO THE SURFACE  
WITH YOU.

LET ME  
OUT.

SO YOU  
CAN GET  
A FIX?



SO THAT YOU  
CAN SINK LOW AND  
DISAPPEAR?

YOU'RE NOT LAUNCHING  
THIS SUB WITH ME  
IN IT, MOM.

BUT MY DEAR  
BOY...



I  
ALREADY  
HAVE.



HOW DID  
YOU GET  
THIS?

LET'S JUST  
SAY A CERTAIN  
SENATOR  
LEARN'T TO NOT  
EXPOSE HIS  
WEAKNESS  
TO ME.

I KNOW  
HOW TO APPLY  
PRESSURE  
WHERE  
I NEED TO.



SO YOU'VE  
KIDNAPPED  
ME.

YOU'VE  
KIDNAPPED YOUR  
SON AND FORCED  
HIM ON A SUICIDE  
MISSION.



YOU WERE  
READY TO DIE,  
WHAT DOES IT  
MATTER?

HELP YOUR  
MOTHER, ISN'T THAT  
BETTER THAN A PRISON  
CELL... OR A LARGE  
PRISON MATE?



I DON'T  
DESERVE  
BETTER.

I KNOW THEY  
DIDN'T RELEASE  
MY CRIME, DIDN'T  
TELL YOU WHAT  
I DID--BUT IT'S  
BAD.

I'M A PIECE  
OF SHIT!



I DON'T  
KNOW WHAT  
YOU DID.

I DON'T  
CARE WHAT  
YOU DID.

I ONLY  
CARE WHAT  
YOU DO.



THE UNIVERSE IS RESPONSIVE TO OUR HEARTS.

WE CAN FIND A SOLUTION TO THIS.



ALL I'M ASKING IS THAT YOU TRY.



SOMETHING IN YOUR DNA THAT REFUSES TO ACKNOWLEDGE WHEN SHIT IS HOPELESS.

THE SAME INSTINCT THAT LEAD YOU TO THAT IDIOTIC QUANTOMOLOGY RELIGION...



...TO IMAGINE SOME MEANING IN THIS CHAOS.

IT DIDN'T STOP THEM FROM TAKING PELLA AND TAJO.



NONE OF THAT OPTIMISM SAVED DAD.

HOPE-- SAME AS RELIGION--

--IT'S ALL JUST MENTAL ILLNESS.



OOF--!

BOOOOOM



WE'VE BEEN  
SNAGGED BY A  
MAMMOTH  
CARCASS!

MUST HAVE  
JUST BROKEN  
FREE FOR THE  
SONAR TO HAVE  
MISSED IT.



IT'S  
DRAGGING  
US DOWN!



IF YOU CAN'T GET  
IT TOGETHER, IF  
YOU CAN'T AT LEAST  
TRY--YOU'RE  
GOING TO GET US  
BOTH KILLED!

I'M GOING  
TO WHAT?!



YOU CAN'T  
POSSIBLY  
BE BLAMING  
THIS ON  
ME!

IF YOUR  
OPTIMISM IS  
SO FUCKING  
ALL-POWERFUL  
THEN WHY IS  
EVERYTHING  
AROUND YOU  
CONSTANTLY  
TURNING TO  
SHIT?



WHY DOES EVERYONE  
AROUND US DIE?

WHY DID  
WE JUST GET  
STRANDED  
HERE?

IS THAT  
ALL MY  
FAULT?



OR COULD IT BE  
THAT MY ATTITUDE  
IS THE RESULT OF  
THIS TERRIBLE  
SHIT THAT KEEPS  
FUCKING  
HAPPENING?!



IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, MARIK--BUT HOW YOU REACT TO IT IS.

WHAT YOU FOCUS ON IS, IT COLORS REALITY.

THERE'S A PROBE UP THERE.

THERE'S HOPE.

FUCKING HELL WITH THE HOPE TALK!



IS HOPE GOING TO GET US TO THE SURFACE?

IT'S A WEEKLONG JOURNEY THROUGH THE MIDNIGHT ZONE--OUR SUITS ONLY HAVE TWO HOURS OF OXYGEN AND NO PROPELLANT SYSTEM!



WE'RE GOING TO SWIM TO THE DOME OF POLUMA.

RIGHT HERE.

THERE WILL BE OXYGEN TANKS--ANOTHER OPERATIONAL RISE CAPSULE.



WE HAVEN'T HEARD ANYTHING FROM POLUMA IN TWENTY YEARS.

EVEN IF THE GHOST CITY HAS ALL OF THE THINGS YOU'RE DREAMING OF--



--WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH AIR TO GET THERE.

SSSSST

WE'LL FIND A WAY.



YOU'LL FIND A WAY--I'M STAYING HERE!



HURRY.

WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME.

WE DON'T HAVE ANY FUCKING TIME! WE'RE GOING TO FUCKING DROWN BECAUSE OF YOU!



YOU COULDN'T LET ME DIE IN PEACE?!

ON MY TERMS?!

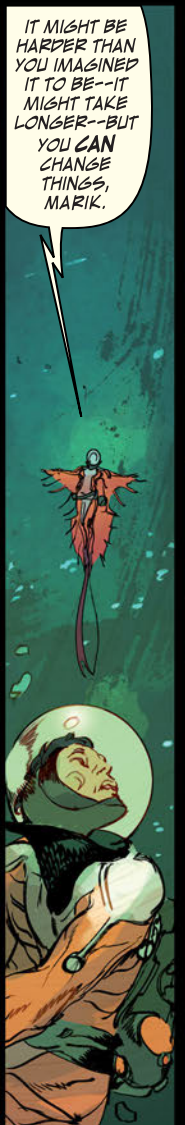
I DON'T WANT TO SUFFOCATE OUT HERE!

THEN DON'T.

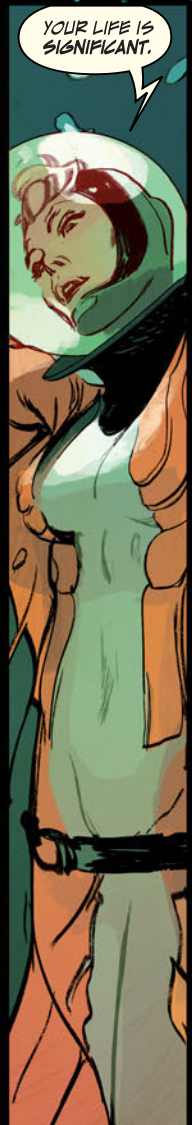


BUT IF YOU STAY-- YOU WILL.

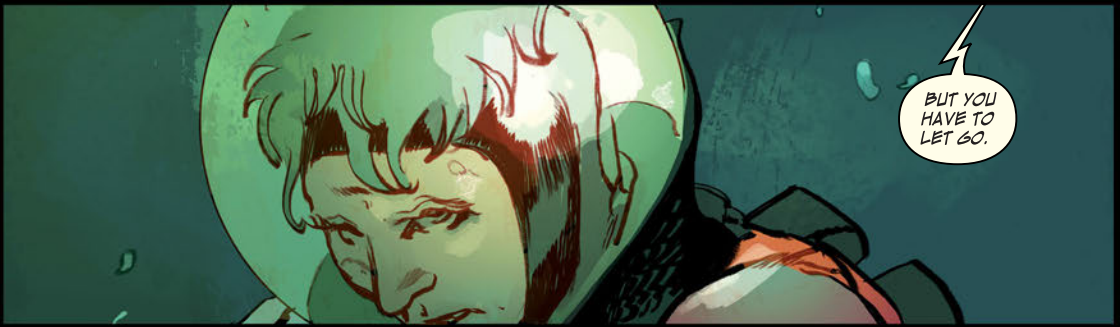
AND WITHOUT YOUR HELP, SO WILL I.



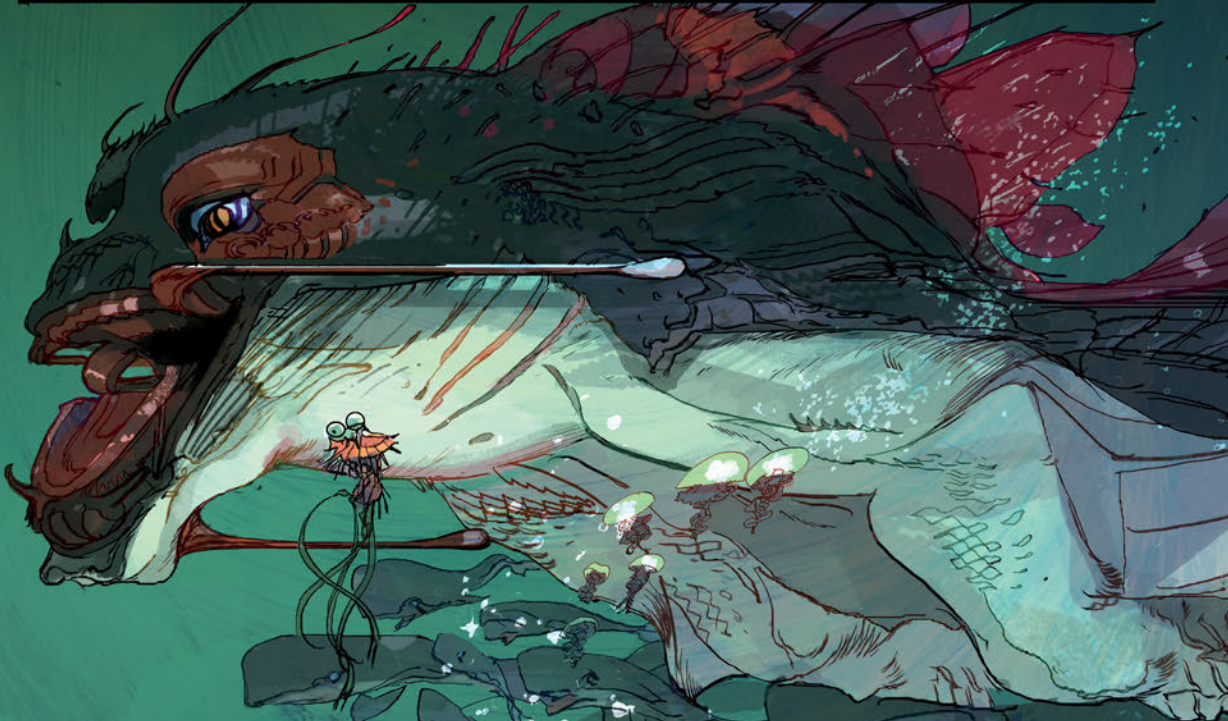
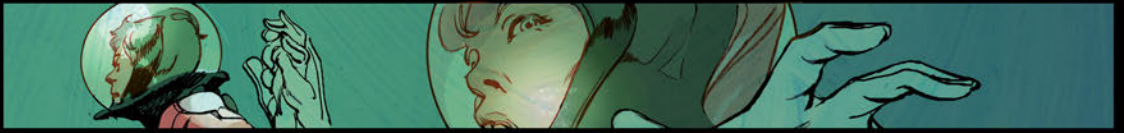
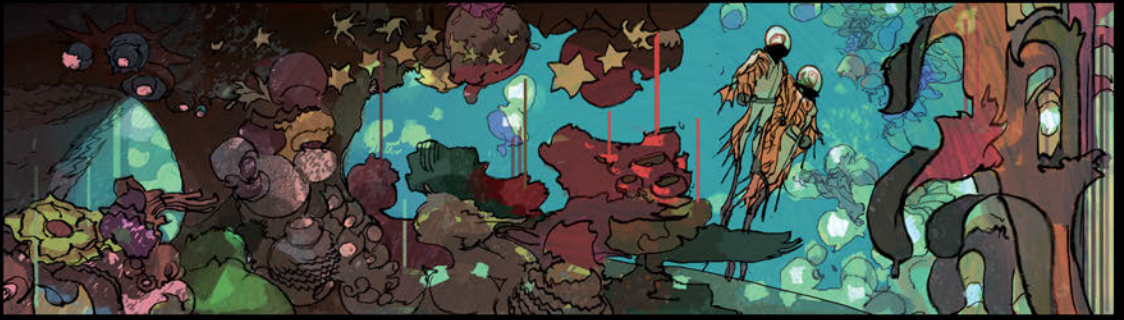
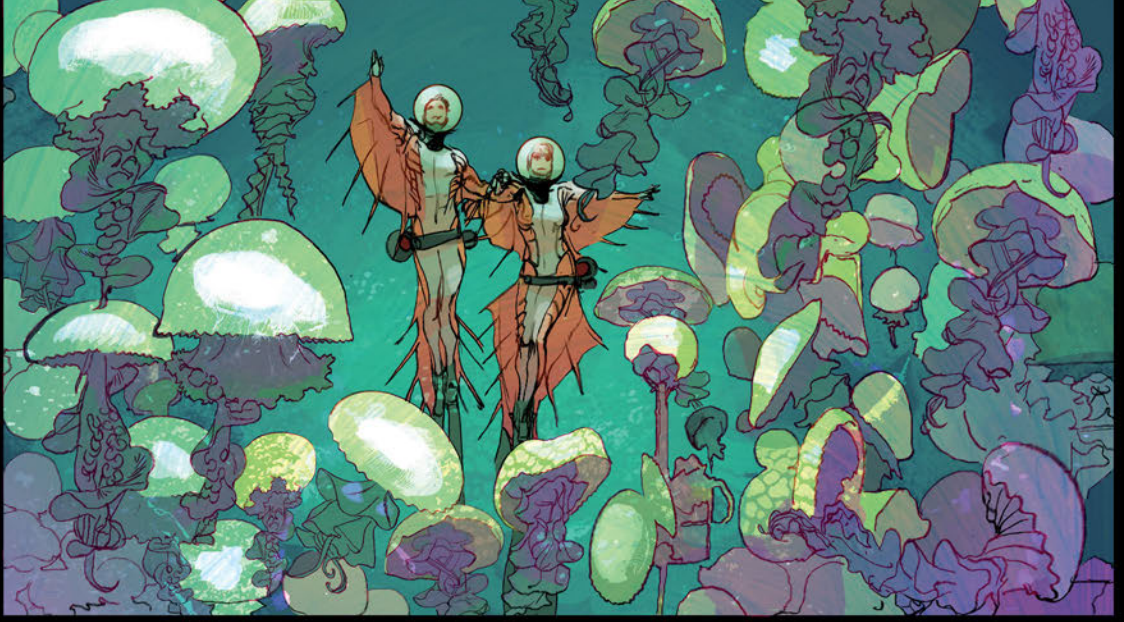
IT MIGHT BE HARDER THAN YOU IMAGINED IT TO BE--IT MIGHT TAKE LONGER--BUT YOU CAN CHANGE THINGS, MARIK.

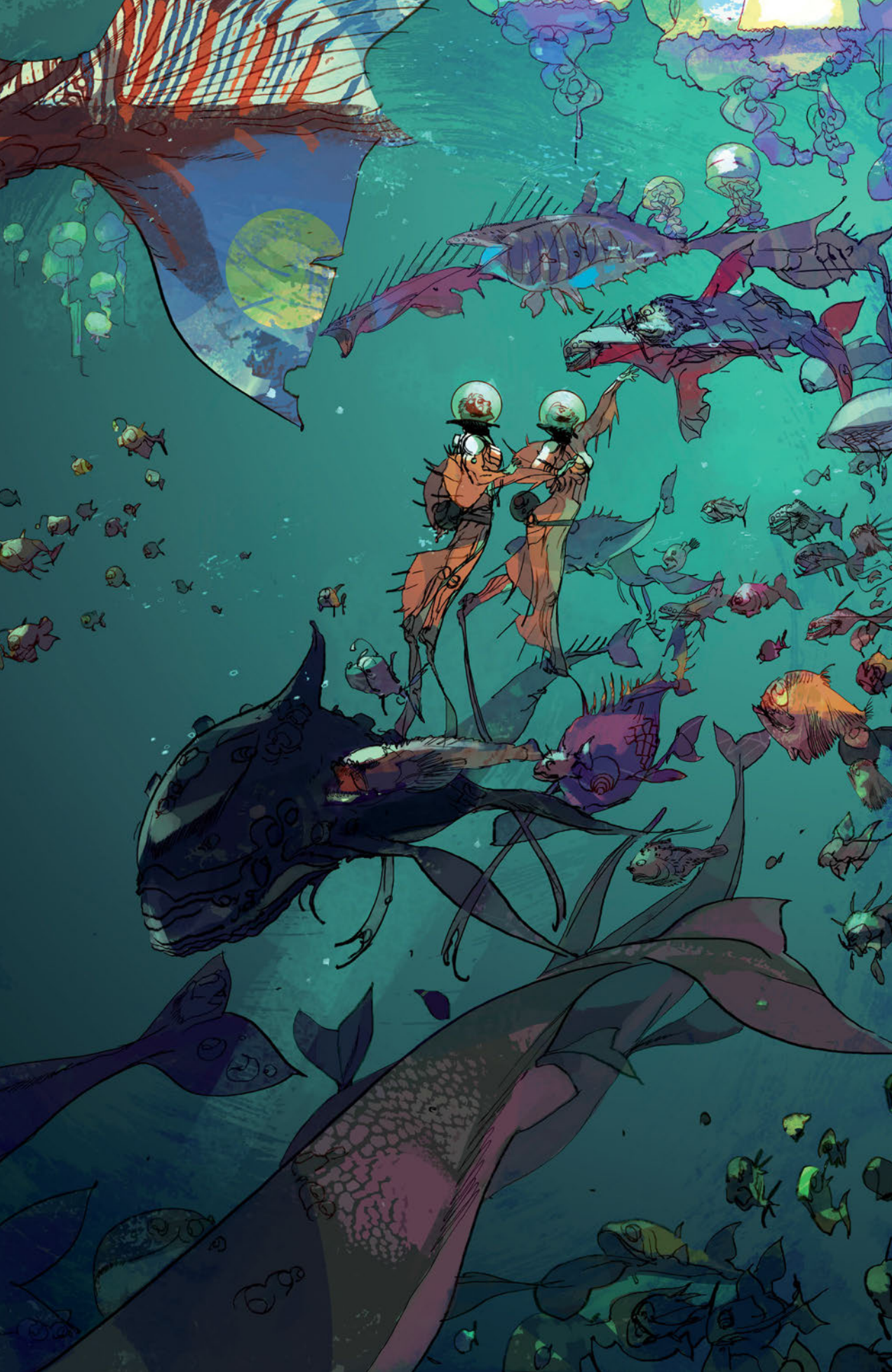


YOUR LIFE IS SIGNIFICANT.







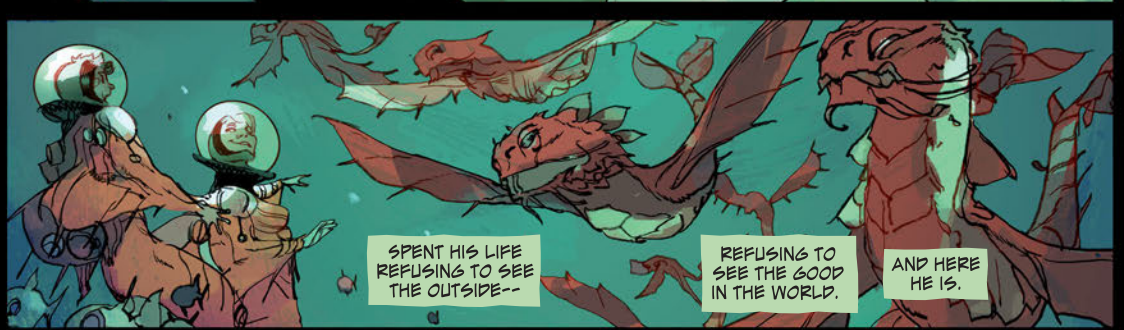




THAT GLIMMER  
IN HIS EYES--

JOHL'S EYES.

ALL HE'S EVER KNOWN IS  
SALUS-- A RUSTING TOMB.



SPENT HIS LIFE  
REFUSING TO SEE  
THE OUTSIDE--

REFUSING TO  
SEE THE GOOD  
IN THE WORLD.

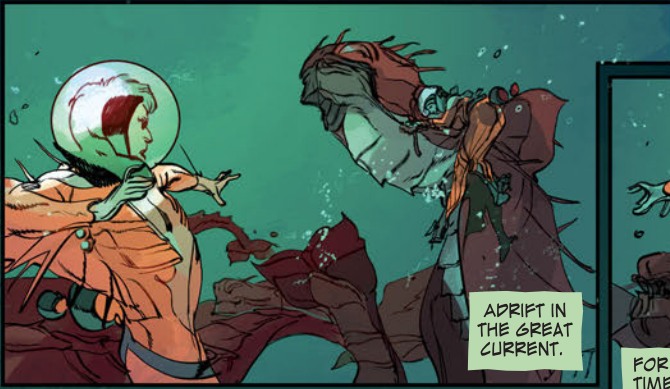
AND HERE  
HE IS.



ALIVE.

EYES  
FINALLY  
OPEN.

I THINK WE  
HAVE FOUND OUR  
PROPULSION.



ADRIFT IN  
THE GREAT  
CURRENT.

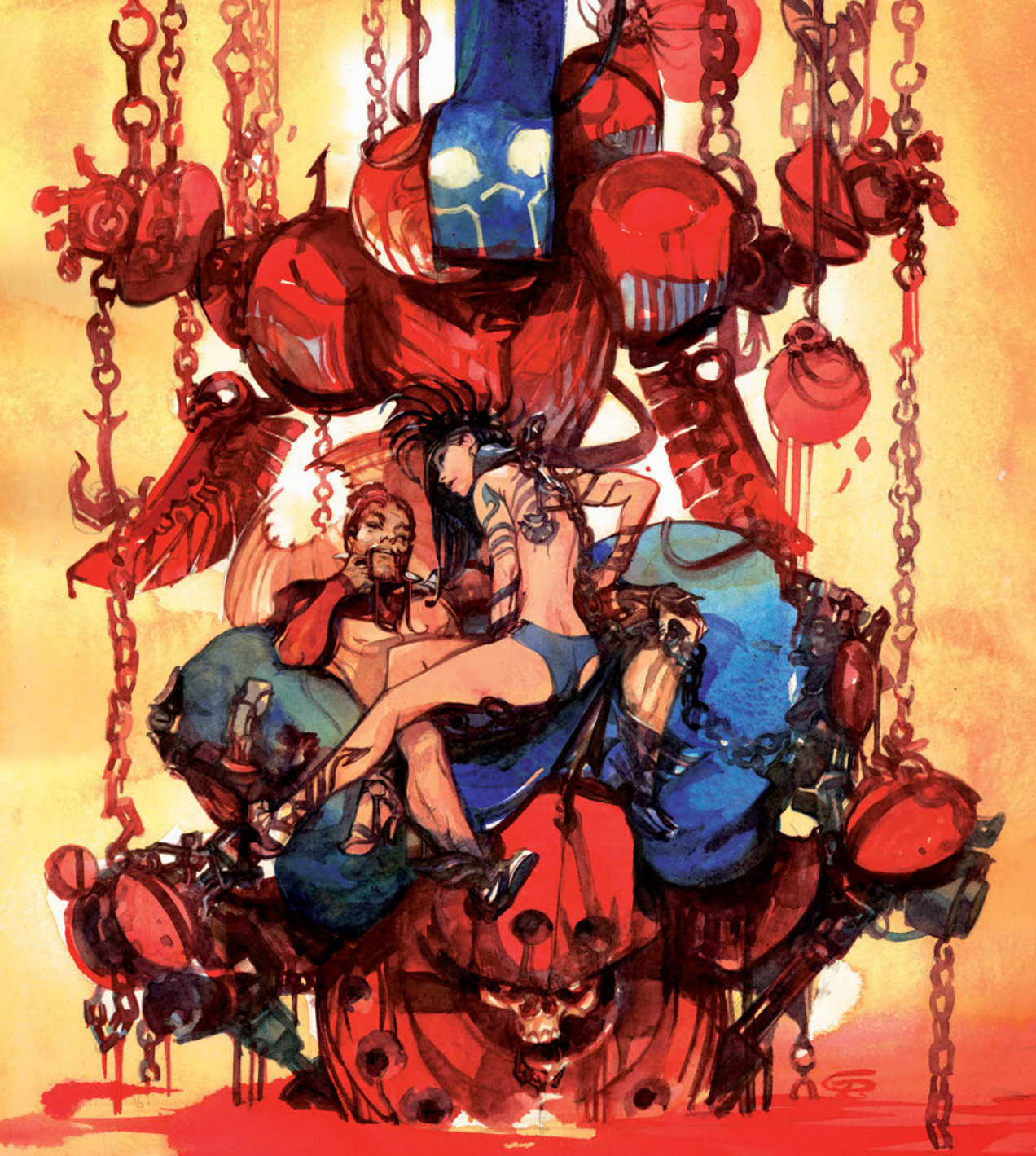


FOR THE FIRST  
TIME IN YEARS--

I SEE MY SON.







THE HOUSE IS INFESTED.

DILAPIDATED AND RUSTED, IT CREAKS AND GROANS WITH THE CURRENTS.

I DON'T WANT TO LIVE IN IT ANY LONGER.

RESERVES AT 14%.

I SLEEP ON PILES OF OLD FURNITURE TO KEEP MY FEET OFF OF THE FLOOR AND AWAY FROM BEELS.

IT'S THEIR HOUSE NOW.

AND THEY ARE BIDDING THEIR TIME UNTIL WE ARE GONE.

RESERVES AT 13%.

JOHL VISITS ME OCCASIONALLY.

HE TELLS ME STORIES FROM HIS CHILDHOOD.

HIS STAYS ARE BRIEF.

CUT SHORT BY THE OTHER CREATURES WITH WHOM I SHARE THE OLD HOUSE.

RESERVES AT 12%.

MONSTROUS THINGS BORN IN THE DARK.

THEIR FACES COVERED IN ACNE AND POX, INFECTIONS BORN OF SELF-INFLICTED POISON.

A BYPRODUCT OF THEIR LAZY AND USELESS LIVES.

THEY MAKE EXCUSES.

RESERVES AT 11%.

LOW OXYGEN

AND THEY HATE ME FOR TRYING.

THEY QUIVER WITH RAGE AT THE THOUGHT OF IT.

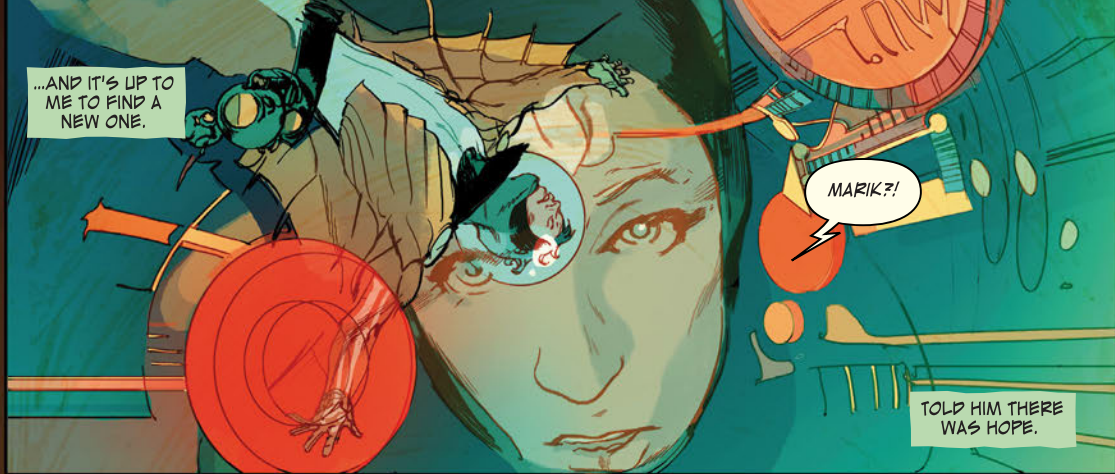
MARIK...?

THEY HATE ME FOR HOPING.

AND THE HOUSE IS INFESTED...

RESERVES AT 10%.

ANGER



...AND IT'S UP TO ME TO FIND A NEW ONE.

MARIK?!

TOLD HIM THERE WAS HOPE.



TOLD HIM THINGS WOULD GET BETTER, PROVIDED WE BELIEVE.

MARIK-- STAY AWAKE.



OXYGEN... GONE...

NO THIRD CITY.

IT'S HERE, MY BRIGHT BOY.

IT IS. SAY IT.



MARIK?!

STAY WITH ME!



IT'S HERE.

IT HAS TO BE.

WHAT HAVE I DONE?



COME ON-- USELESS OLD MAP! SHOW ME SOMETHING!

JOHL'S STORIES ALWAYS POINTED TO THE VENTS--

DRUG MY SON OUT HERE...

...INTO THIS NIGHTMARE.



NO. THAT'S POLARIZED THINKING--

--NO ONE SAID THE JOURNEY WOULD BE EASY.



AND NOTHING IS SO BLACK OR WHITE.

SEE IT FOR WHAT IT IS.



A TEST.

THE VENTS...



CONSCIOUSNESS DETERMINES THE DESIGN OF THE UNIVERSE.



SKROOM

YAH!



IT FALLS ON US TO SAVE THOSE WRETCHED QUITTERS--

--NOT FOR THEIR SAKE--

--BUT FOR THE GENERATIONS THAT FOLLOW.



OUR GOAL IS VIRTUOUS.

HOLD ON, MY BRIGHT BOY.

NO MATTER HOW PREDETERMINED IT SEEMS--

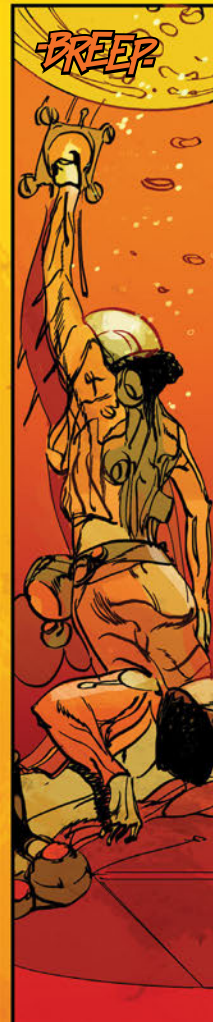
--REALITY IS OUR PROJECTION--

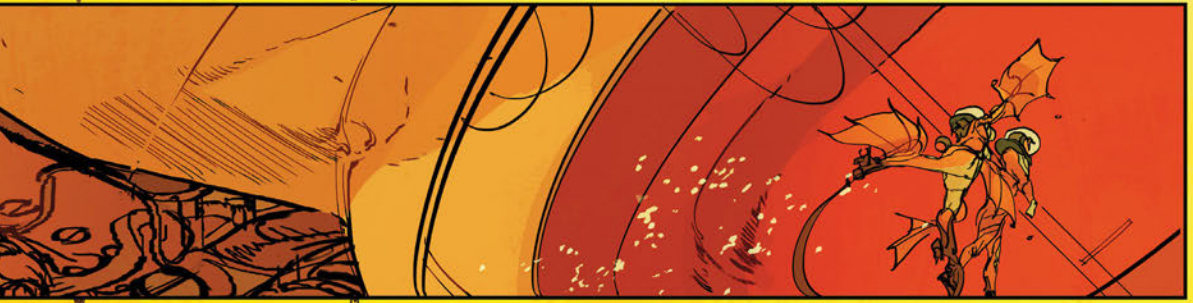


--EVERYTHING  
IS A CHOICE.

AND THE THIRD  
CITY IS HERE.







MARIK!  
WAKE UP!  
BREATHE, BABY--  
BREATHE FOR  
ME!



OKAY...  
THIS IS  
GOING TO  
HURT.

BREEEE-



YERAGHHH!

GZAAK



OH, BY  
THE LIGHT,  
I DID IT.  
I DID IT.

WHA--  
WHERE THE  
HELL ARE  
WE?  
WHAT  
IS THIS?



THIS IS  
THE THIRD  
CITY...

"...JUST AS I PROMISED YOU."

C'MON, LEMME MAKE YOU SMILE, SWEET TAIL.

FACE IS A FACE, IF YA FOLLOW.

YOU WOULDN'T EVEN KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN.

HANDS OFF O' THE MERCH, YA MECHANOID SPIV!

I HEAR THE FUCKIN' GAMES ARE SONNA BE FANTASTIC TODAY, HUH?

AIN'T HAD A PROPER FUCKIN' GLADIATOR LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER.

SROK THE BLOODFLUCKER?! MAN WAS AN ARTIST!

SROK THE MANKY PERVERT WHO DIED PLAYING HIDE-THE-HEEL WITH THE WRONG END OF A IMP CRAB?

WHO 'RE YOU TA JUDGE A MAN BY HIS PLEASURES?

AS A MERMAN I FIND THEM'S FOUL UNION REPUGNANT.

'PUGNANT? YOU THINK YER FISH DICK DON'T STINK? I MIGHT SHOULD MAKE YA TAKE A HUFF T'SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT."

SHASHH--!

FORTUNATE FER ME I AIN'T GOT A NOSE.

EXPLAINS WHY POLLUMA WENT SILENT TWENTY YEARS AGO.

FILTHY DEGENERATES DON'T DESERVE THE AIR.



WE SHOULD TURN BACK, TELL THE PEOPLE OF SALUS THE THIRD CITY HAS CLEAN AIR.

ONCE WE'VE RETURNED WITH THE PROBE IT WON'T MATTER. LET THEM ROT HERE.

ONE BLOODY SECOND! I'M PISSIN' ON SOME WEE DEVIL!

OOH-OOH!

ERR... OUTTA ME BUM, YA NAFF MONKEY...

LOCKSUCK!



I REMEMBER THE WAY DAD USED TO DREAM ABOUT THIS PLACE.

SAID IT WAS A PARADISE, THE CITY WHERE THE SCHOLARS HID THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE OLD WORLD.

GRRAK! FISHIN' IN FILTH! FISHIN' IN FILTH!

AYE.



AFTER THE MIGRATION DOWN THIS WAS TO BE THE HUB OF ALL CULTURE AND SCIENCE.

HERE THE HIGH LORDS CREATED THE HELM SUITS TO PROTECT THEIR PROGENY...

LOOK WHAT THESE HOPELESS ANIMALS HAVE DONE TO IT.



I'M ALMOST GLAD JOHL DIDN'T LIVE TO SEE WHAT IT BECAME.

YOU CAN ALWAYS COUNT ON THE LAZY AND STUPID DESTROYING THE WORK OF INDUSTRIOUS.



YOUR BLUE BLOOD IS SHOWING, MOM.

C'MON, TASK AT HAND--WE NEED TO FIND THE DOCKS, STEAL A SUB AND GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE...

"...WE GET IN TROUBLE."

YOU THIRST FOR THE GAME, AND I BRING IT, ME SCURVY HORDES!

THE TANK HAS GIVEN BIRTH TO MANY SNARLED GLADIATORS--A DAY O' GLORY TA PROVE THEIR WORTH, TA EARN FREEDOM, AN' TO EARN THEIR NAMES!

--NOT A BET I'D TAKE.

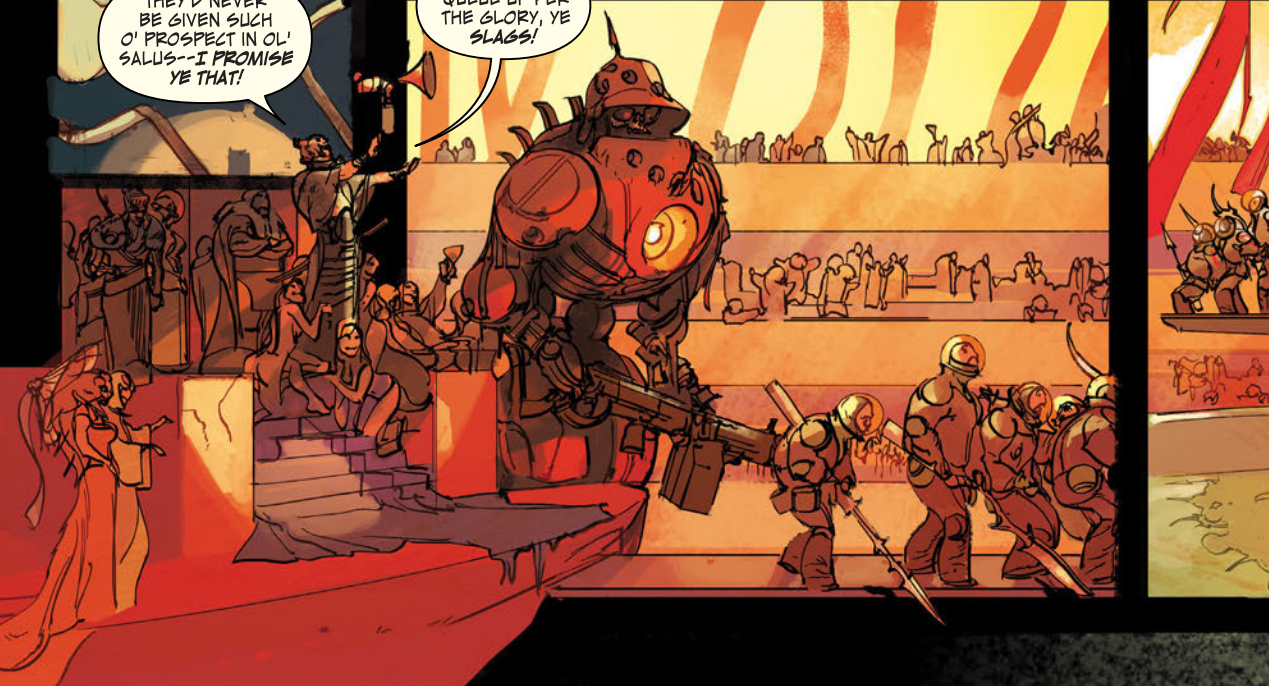
BY THE GREAT DEVIL--SCREW THE CUNTS!



WHAT A GREAT PEOPLE WE ARE TO GIVE SUCH OPPORTUNITY TO THE LOWLY!

THEY'D NEVER BE GIVEN SUCH O' PROSPECT IN OL' SALUS--I PROMISE YE THAT!

COME NOW! QUEUE UP FER THE GLORY, YE SLASS!





DROP THE WIDGERS IN!

TOSS OFF, YA GASSER--

--BLEED 'EM!  
TA THE DEADLIGHTS  
WITH 'EM!

--TAKEN FLUTTER  
ON THE PECKER HENS--  
EVEN MONEY--



I'VE PRATTLED LONG ENOUGH--

--LET THEIR ASCENSION BEGIN!



NO--!

RHAA--!



GRAGHAA--!



HIM!



WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

ROLN!

THE SON OF A BITCH THAT KILLED YOUR FATHER AND TOOK MY BABIES.

IT'S HIM!



THEY COULD BE ALIVE! YOUR SISTERS COULD BE HERE!

WHAT ARE THE ODDS OF THAT?

WHAT WERE THE ODDS THAT WE WOULD FIND THIS PLACE?!



WE'RE SURROUNDED BY THOUSANDS OF CUTTHROATS.

WE CAN'T GET DISTRACTED.

WE'RE GETTING OUT OF HERE.



WE'LL COME BACK.



BRING A FLEET FROM SALUS.

NO.



DAMNIT-- STOP!



GROLM,  
LINK WITH THE  
BEASTS.

ENSURE THAT  
AT LEAST ONE  
OF THE SLAVES  
REMAINS.

YERAGHHH-!



THE CROWDS  
ARE GROWING  
RESTLESS WITH  
THE OUTRIGHT  
SLAUGHTERS.

WHICH  
ONE SHOULD  
SURVIVE?



WELL, THAT'S  
A SIMPLE  
QUESTION...



"...WHICHEVER WE  
WAGERED THE  
MOST COIN ON."

WHAT IS  
THIS?!

WHAT ARE  
YOU DOING WITH  
THAT BOOK,  
MY LOVELY  
GIRL?

READING ABOUT THE EARLY DOMES.



DURING THE XRADIAN FALL, THEY ALSO BANNED EDUCATION IN FAVOR OF RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS.



THEIR DOME ONLY SURVIVED ONE MORE GENERATION.

AND ANOTHER KINGDOM--

YES--YES, ALL GONE NOW, I'M AFRAID.



FALLEN, AS OURS WILL IF WE DO NOT TAKE ACTION SOON.

HERE, LET ME RELIEVE YOU OF THIS BURDEN.

PERHAPS THINGS WOULD BE BETTER IF WE ALLOWED THE PEOPLE TO LEARN TO READ--ACCESS TO THIS VAST LIBRARY.

I WOULD LOVE NOTHING MORE, MY DEARY.

IF IT WERE WITHIN MY POWER TO CHANGE THE OLD LAWS, I WOULD.

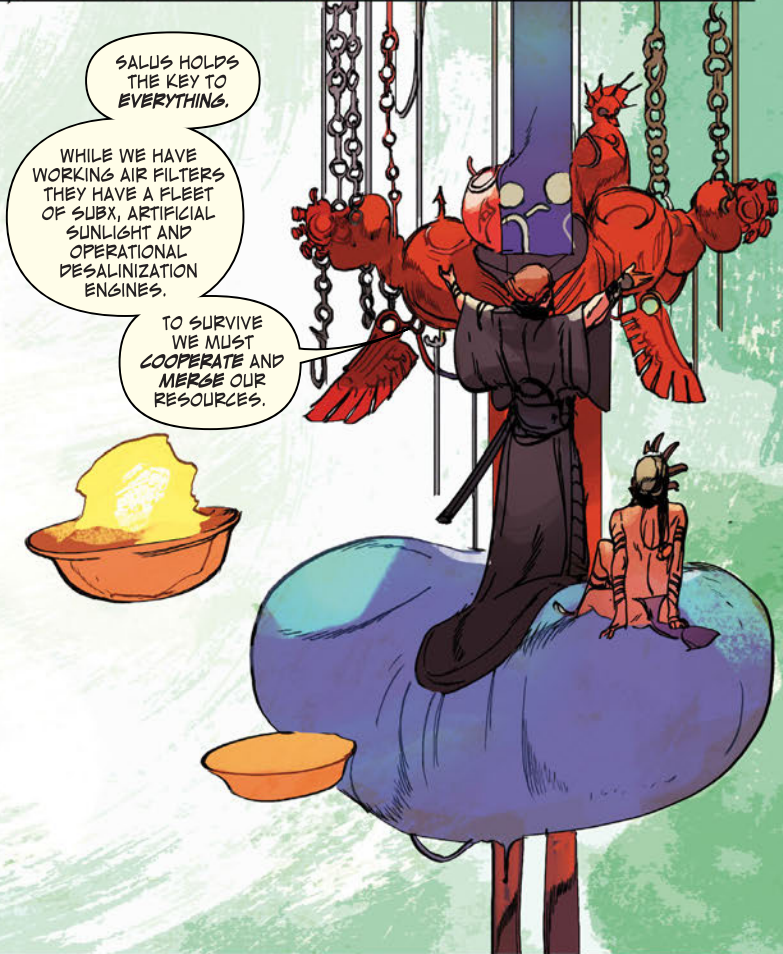
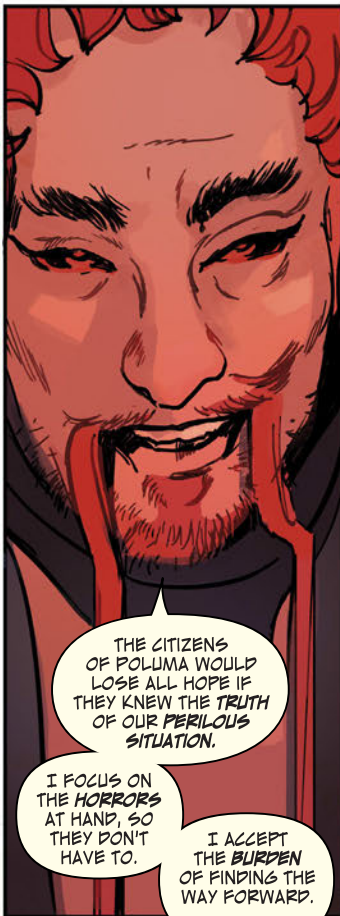
BUT THE DECREE AGAINST LITERACY IS THERE FOR A REASON--

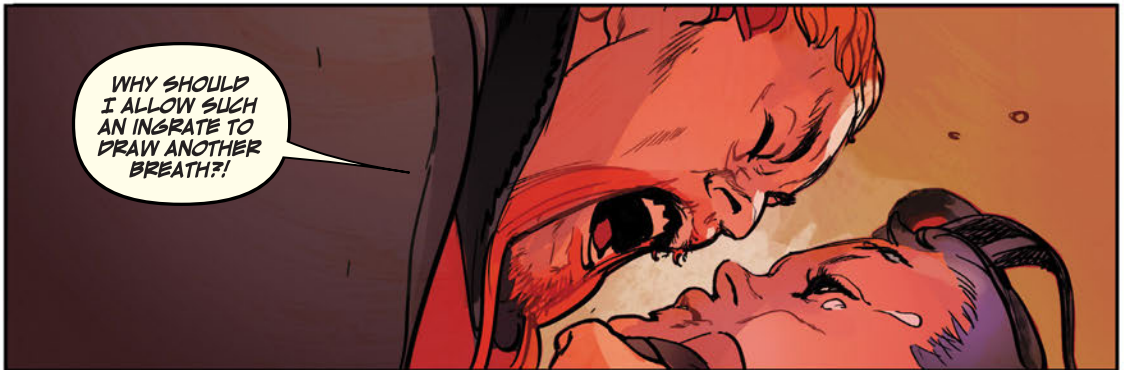
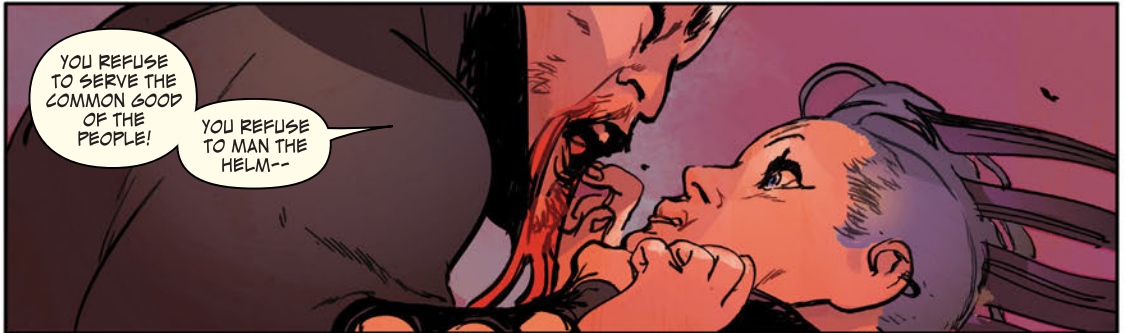
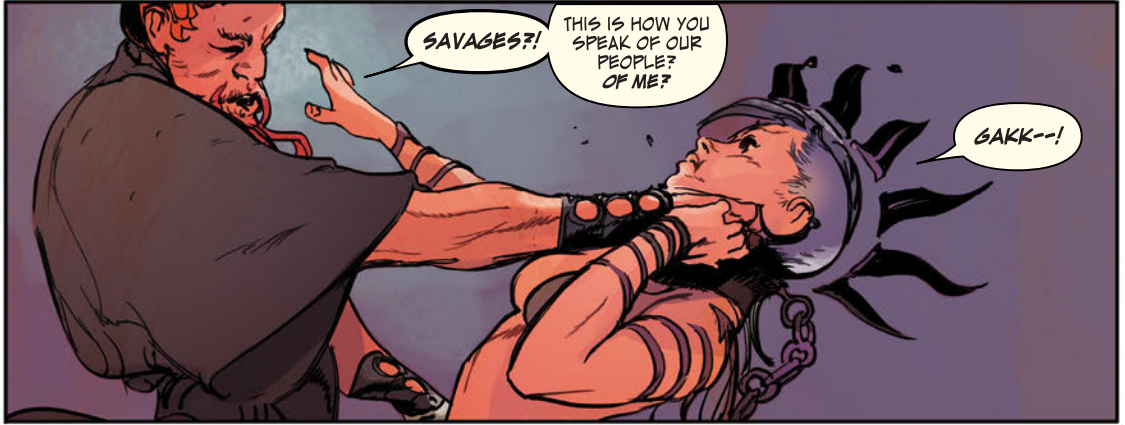
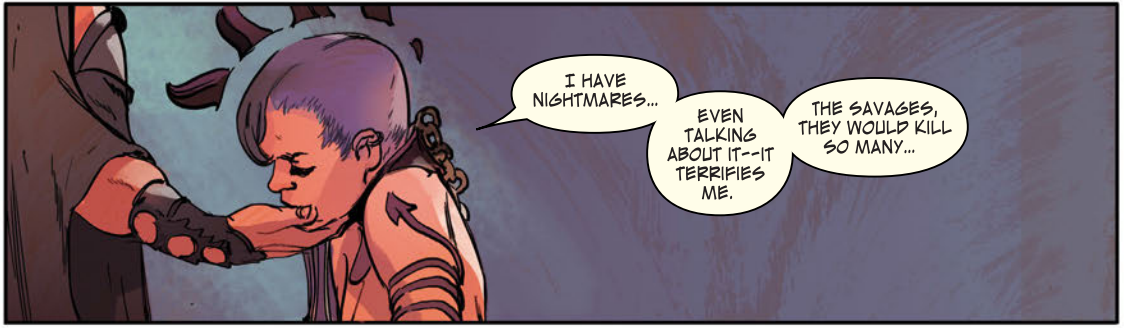
--TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE.

FROM THINGS THAT WOULD CONFUSE AND FRIGHTEN THEM, THINGS THAT WOULD LEAD TO UNREST.

THE XRADIANS DID IT TO KEEP THE PEOPLE IGNORANT AND EASILY MANIPULATED SO THAT--

IS THAT WHAT YOU THINK OF ME?!





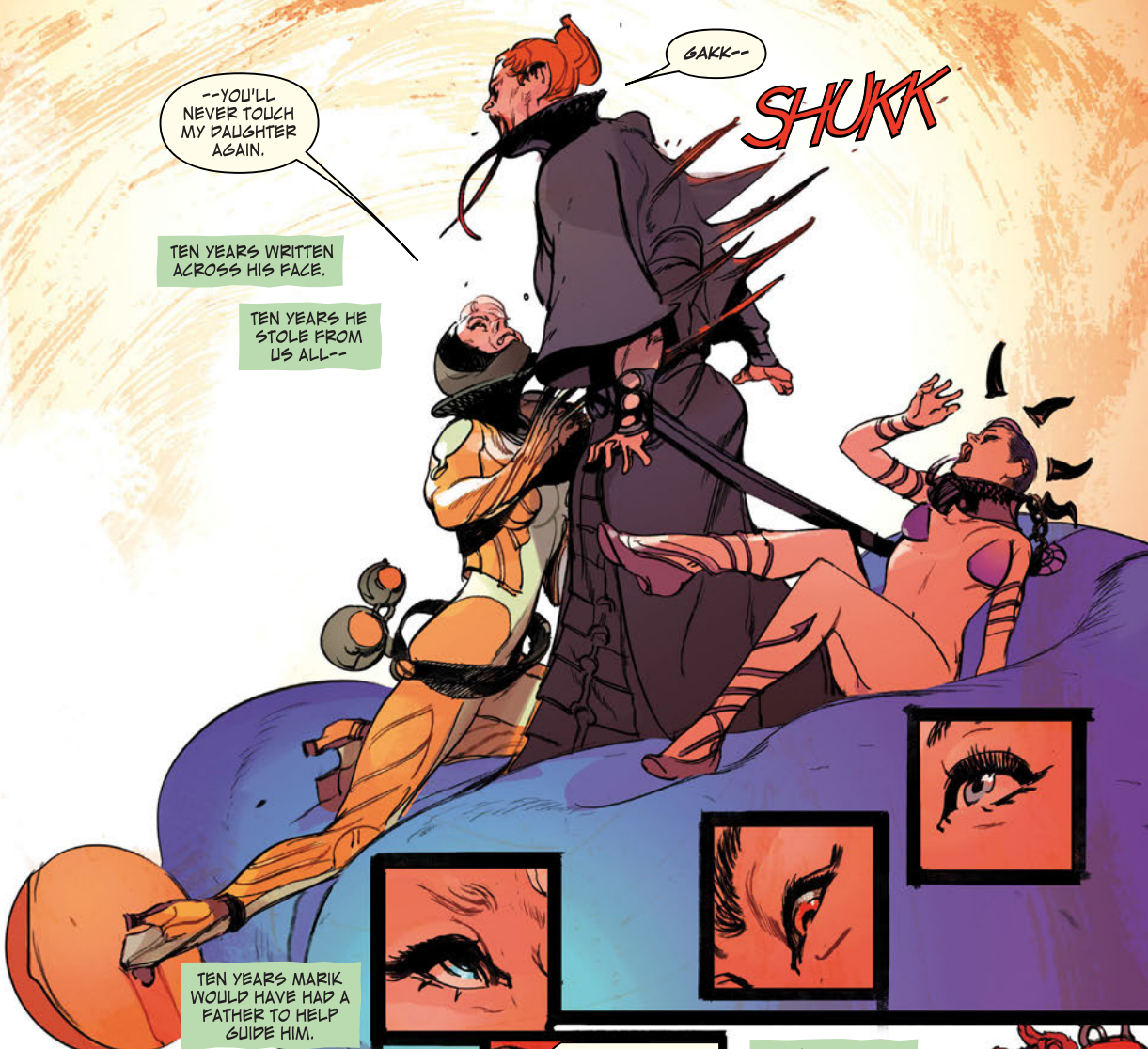
--YOU'LL NEVER TOUCH MY DAUGHTER AGAIN.

GAKK--

SHUKK

TEN YEARS WRITTEN ACROSS HIS FACE.

TEN YEARS HE STOLE FROM US ALL--



TEN YEARS MARK WOULD HAVE HAD A FATHER TO HELP GUIDE HIM.

HOW YOU MUST HAVE DREAMED OF THIS MOMENT.

--AND STILL THE FUCKER DOESN'T HAVE THE DECENCY TO DIE.

AND HERE YOU ARE... YOUR BLADE FINALLY IN MY BELLY.

HELLO, MOTHER.

I'M AFRAID YOU'VE COME CALLING AT AN AWKWARD MOMENT.

TEN YEARS WONDERING IF THEY WERE SAFE.

TEN YEARS IN DESPERATE UNCERTAINTY.

TEN YEARS OF HIS TERRIBLE FACE IN MY SLEEP--



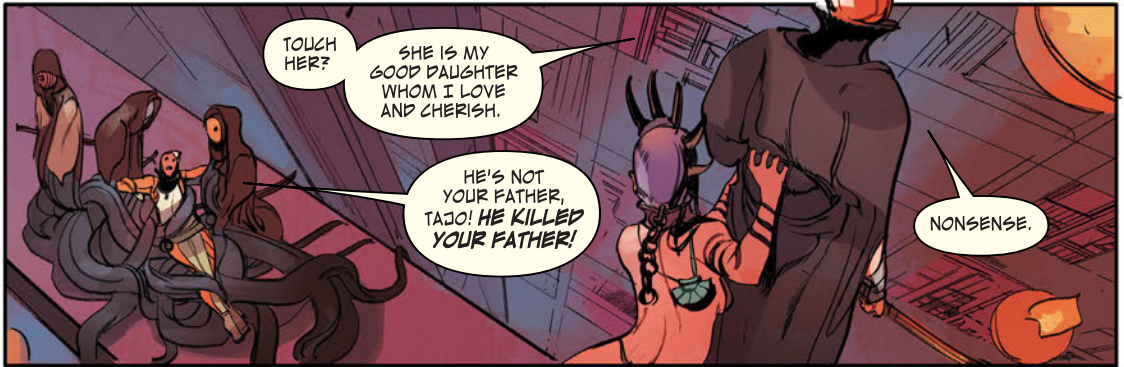




BIND HER, MY SISTERS.

LET GO OF ME--

DON'T YOU TOUCH HER!



TOUCH HER?

SHE IS MY GOOD DAUGHTER WHOM I LOVE AND CHERISH.

HE'S NOT YOUR FATHER, TAJO! HE KILLED YOUR FATHER!

NONSENSE.



TAKE THIS DELUSIONAL WRETCH TO BLAIN PITS.



PAMN IT, MOM...

DON'T LISTEN TO HIS LIES--



"HE'S NOT YOUR FATHER!"

COME, ME SWEET MORSELS!

VERMIN 'ROUND THE KING'S TAVERN ALWAYS SO SWEET AND PLUMP.

NOT SIX HOURS AGO THE GREAT LEVIATHAN SAW FIT TO SMILE UPON US, ME SCURVY BROTHERS!



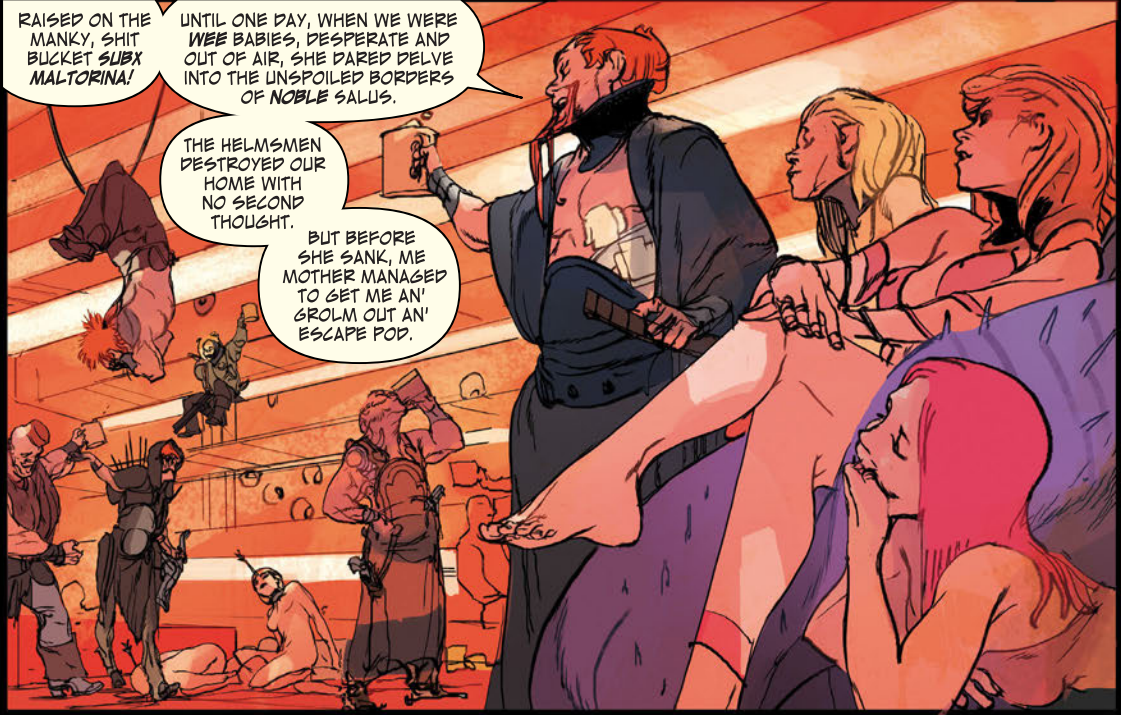
BROUGHT US A GREAT GIFT FROM SALUS TO MOTIVATE MY DEARY DAUGHTER TO ACTION!

YA SURE DO 'ATE DEM GEEZERS IN SALUS, YER WORSHIP.

AHH, THERE'S TALE BEHIND IT, MY BEAUTY.



MY DEAR BROTHER AN' I WERE BORN PIRATES-- IT'S TRUE!

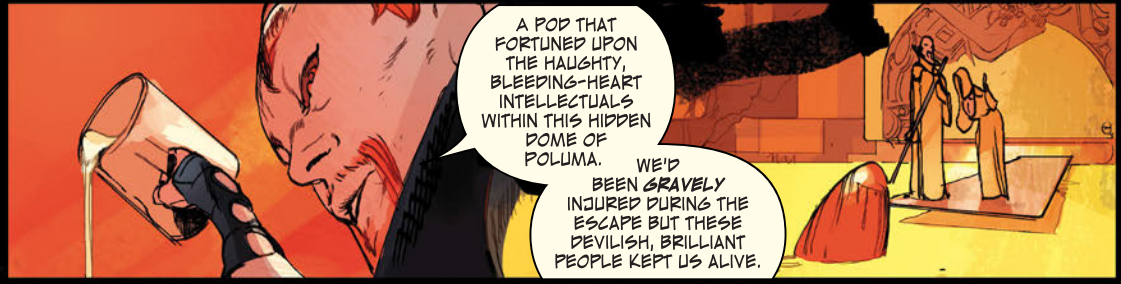


RAISED ON THE MANKY, SHIT BUCKET SUBX MALTORINA!

UNTIL ONE DAY, WHEN WE WERE WEE BABIES, DESPERATE AND OUT OF AIR, SHE DARED DELVE INTO THE UNSPOILED BORDERS OF NOBLE SALUS.

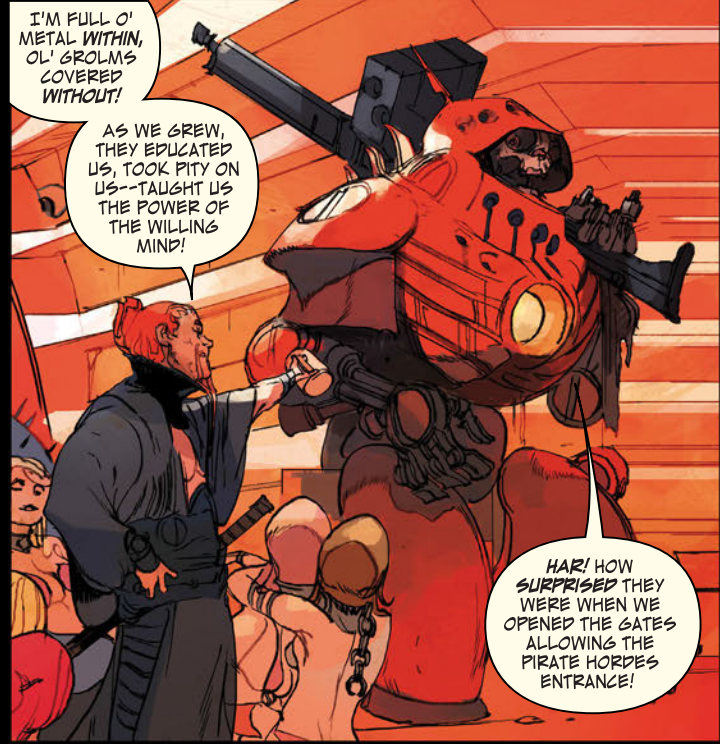
THE HELMSMEN DESTROYED OUR HOME WITH NO SECOND THOUGHT.

BUT BEFORE SHE SANK, ME MOTHER MANAGED TO GET ME AN' GROM OUT AN' ESCAPE POD.



A POD THAT FORTUNED UPON THE HAUGHTY, BLEEDING-HEART INTELLECTUALS WITHIN THIS HIDDEN DOME OF POLUMA.

WE'D BEEN GRAVELY INJURED DURING THE ESCAPE BUT THESE DEVILISH, BRILLIANT PEOPLE KEPT US ALIVE.



I'M FULL O' METAL WITHIN, OL' GROMS COVERED WITHOUT!

AS WE GREW, THEY EDUCATED US, TOOK PITY ON US--TAUGHT US THE POWER OF THE WILLING MIND!

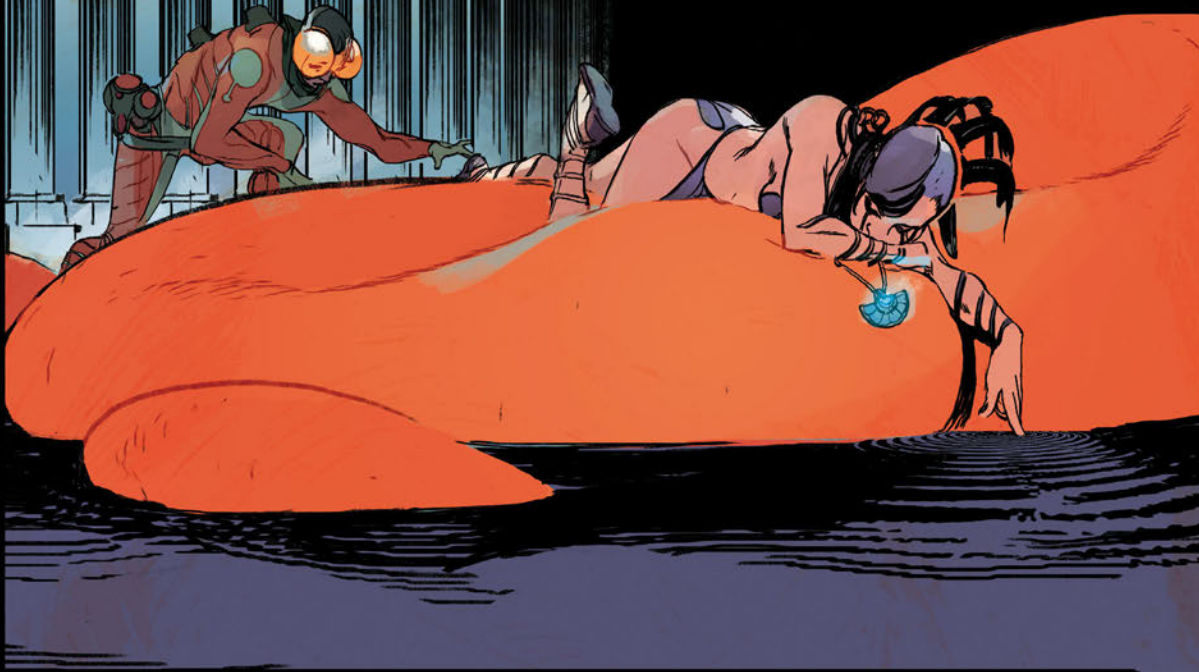
HAR! HOW SURPRISED THEY WERE WHEN WE OPENED THE GATES ALLOWING THE PIRATE HORDES ENTRANCE!



AND HOW SURPRISED THE PIGS OF SALUS WILL BE AS OUR SCURVY HORDE BREACHES THEIR DOME...

HOW SURPRISED AS WE LED THE BLOODY UPRISING THAT CREATED THE LAST FREE CITY OF MEN!

"...BRINGING THE FURY  
OF PROPER VENGEANCE  
UPON THEM!"



SHH



M-MARIK?



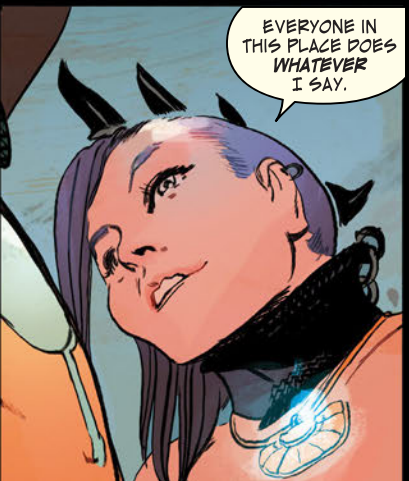
WE HAVE  
TO GET OUT  
OF HERE.

GET MOM--  
STEAL A  
SUBX.

NO NEED  
TO STEAL  
ANYTHING--



EVERYONE IN  
THIS PLACE DOES  
WHATEVER  
I SAY.





HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT I WAS HERE?

HOW DID YOU FIND POLUMA?

WE DIDN'T, WE THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD...


...OR AT LEAST I DID.



MOM NEVER GAVE UP HOPE, BUT...

...WE WEREN'T LOOKING FOR YOU.

MOM FOUND A PROBE ON THE SURFACE.



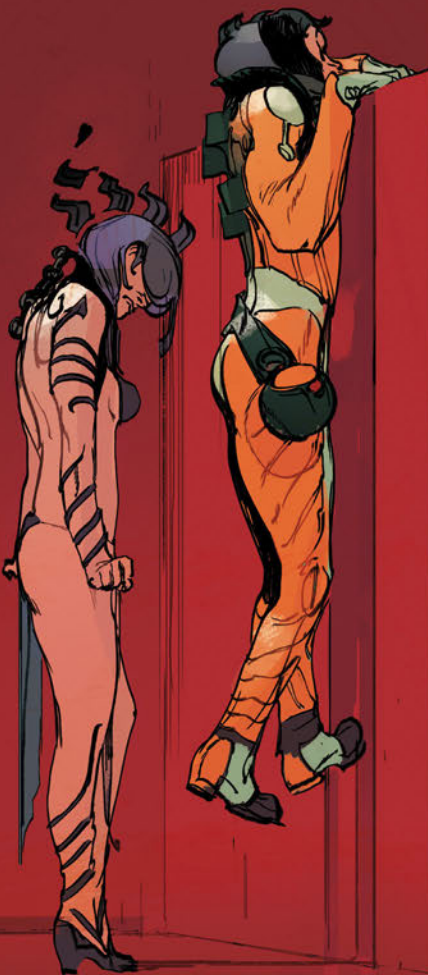
SHE THINKS IT HOLDS THE KEY TO AN INHABITABLE WORLD.

WE'RE GOING TO RETRIEVE IT.

THAT'S  
WHERE  
WE WERE  
HEADED.

THIS WAS ALL...  
THIS WAS ALL  
FATE LIKE MOM  
ALWAYS SAYS.

ISN'T THAT  
INCREDIBLE?



SHH--  
I'LL TAKE  
CARE OF THE  
GUARD.



SALLISIAN  
PIG!

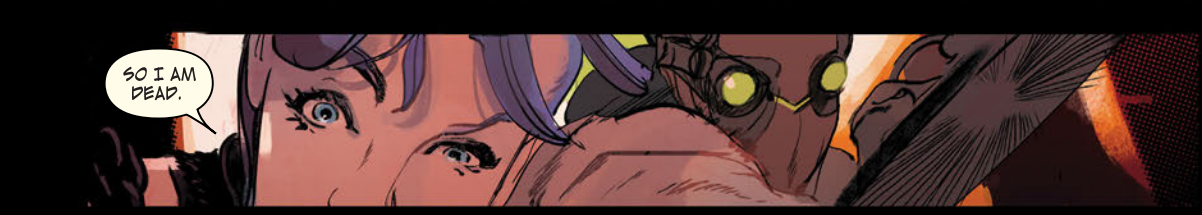


KRASH

HooF--!



YOU THOUGHT ME DEAD?



SO I AM DEAD.



AS DEAD AS MY FAMILY IS TO ME.





4 MONTHS LATER...

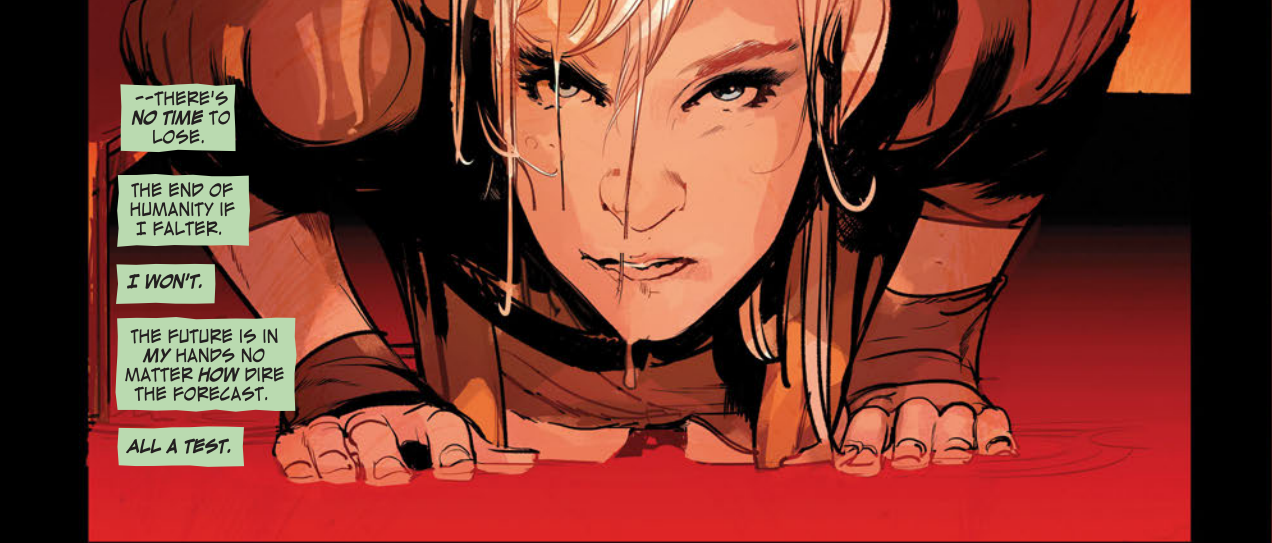
THE PAST FEW YEARS IN SALUS--  
LIKE BEING SLOWLY DROWNED IN  
A POOL OF POISON.

I LEFT IT BEHIND--  
CLEANSED MYSELF.

REDISCOVERED  
MY TRUTH.

FOUR MONTHS IN THIS  
PIT. A COLD REMINDER--





--THERE'S  
NO TIME TO  
LOSE.

THE END OF  
HUMANITY IF  
I FALTER.

I WON'T.

THE FUTURE IS IN  
MY HANDS NO  
MATTER HOW DIRE  
THE FORECAST.

ALL A TEST.



A TEST I  
MEAN TO  
PASS.

NO MATTER WHAT  
EVIL STANDS IN  
MY WAY.

FOUR MONTHS IN HERE--  
ONLY STRENGTHENED  
MY RESOLVE.

ANOTHER GIFT  
FROM ROLN.

VISITOR,  
STEL.



ROLN WHO  
KILLED JOHL.

ROLN WHO  
KIDNAPPED  
MY GIRLS.

ROLN WHO BROKE TAJO--  
TWISTED HER MIND.

ERASED HER  
MEMORY.



ROLN WHO I  
WILL SEE DEAD.

MORE  
EXERCISE?

SUCH RAW  
DETERMINATION,  
MOTHER.

MINDLESSLY  
PUSHING FORWARD  
TO SOME BETTER  
DAY.

BUT THE TRUTH IS--  
THE THING NO ONE  
EVER TELLS YOU--YOUR  
PAIN AND LOSS--

--IT DOESN'T  
EVER HEAL.

YOU  
JUST LIVE  
WITH IT.

DO YOU  
WONDER WHY IT'S  
SO IMPORTANT TO  
YOU TO BREAK  
MY FAITH?

YOU  
MISUNDERSTAND--  
I LOVE YOUR  
OPTIMISM.

I GET TO  
TAKE IT AWAY,  
LASS.



AH, YOU  
RECOGNIZE THE  
BLADE?

IT'S  
BEAUTIFUL BARBS  
ETCHED INTO YOUR  
CONSCIOUSNESS.



HOW MANY NIGHTS HAVE YOU AWOKEN,  
RECALLIN' AS IT PLUCKED YOUR BELOVED  
HELMSMAN'S EYE, HMMH?



YOU'LL BE GIVIN' ME  
THE LOCATION OF THAT  
PROBE TODAY.

WHAT'S SO  
DIFFERENT  
ABOUT  
TODAY?

YOU'VE HEARD  
WHISPERS OF  
MARIK'S HEROISM  
IN THE ARENA?

I KNOW  
YOU HAVE--  
I'VE SEEN  
TO IT.

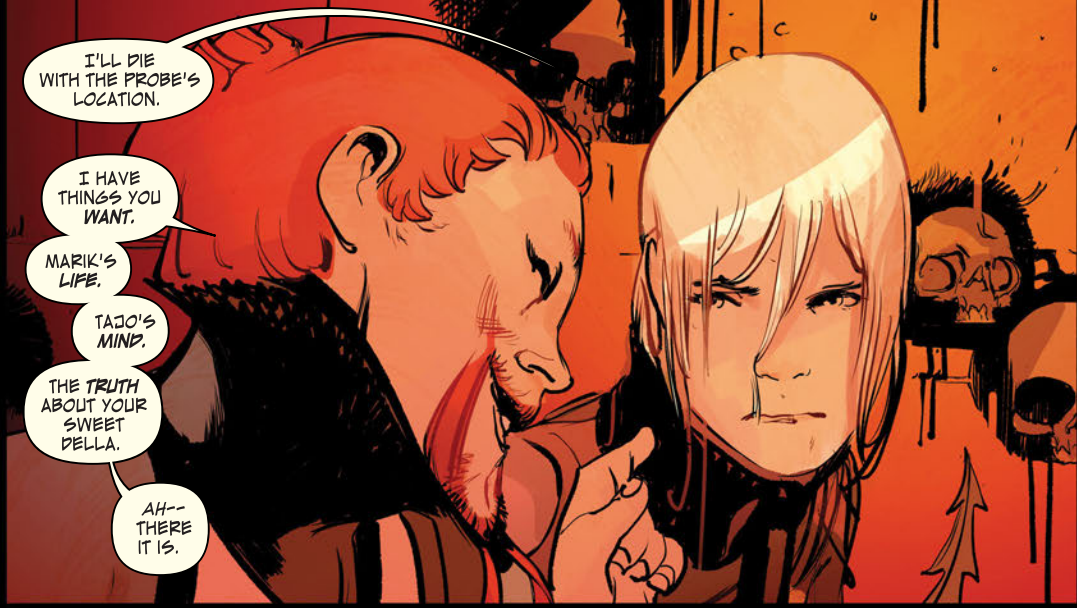


YOU IMAGINED  
HIS SUCCESS A  
BYPRODUCT OF  
YOUR TEACHING.

YOUR BRIGHT  
BOY FINALLY  
RISEN.

DID IT OCCUR  
TO YOU I'D  
RISSED THE  
GAME?

HIS SURVIVAL  
GIVES YOU HOPE--  
HOPE CAN CRUSH  
A PERSON WHEN  
TAKEN.



I'LL DIE WITH THE PROBE'S LOCATION.

I HAVE THINGS YOU WANT.

MARIK'S LIFE.

TAJO'S MIND.

THE TRUTH ABOUT YOUR SWEET PELLA.

AH-- THERE IT IS.



THE BUTTON.

ONCE YOU HAVE THE BUTTON...

...ALL YOU NEED IS THE PRESSURE TO PUSH IT, WHICH I DO, AND SOON, RIGHT BEFORE YOUR EYES-- I WILL.

YOUR OPTIMISM IS SIMPLY A DESPERATE FOOL'S DELUSION...

"--YOU HAVE NO CONTROL OVER ANYTHING, STEL."

DID SHE TELL YOU?

WILL SHE GIVE YOU THE LOCATION OF THE PROBE?

SOON, BROTHER. TRUST ME.

IF THIS PROBE HAS THE COORDINATES OF A BLUE PLANET...

...WE COULD WALK THE SURFACE? SMELL REAL AIR?

COULD IT BE TRUE?

SHE BELIEVES IT.

ENOUGH TO RISK HER LIFE AND HER SON'S.

IT WAS BEAUTIFUL, ABOVE, WASN'T IT?

I WONDER IF THEY EVER APPRECIATED IT.

THE VOICES, THE SEA LIFE, ENDLESSLY BUZZING AND CHIRPING IN MY HEAD...

I BELIEVE SO.

YOU'VE SUFFERED GREATLY, GROLM.

WE WILL WALK THE SURFACE, BREATHE CRISP AIR, SLEEP UNDER STAR-LIGHT.

IF WE WERE ON THE SURFACE WOULD I STOP HEARING THEM?

HOLD ON A BIT LONGER.

"I WILL BUY YOU RESPIRE,  
DEAR BROTHER."

MAKE  
WAY!

THE MANGY  
MUTINEERS' BRIGADE  
MAKIN' THEIR LAST  
MARCH, YE CUNTS!

OPEN THE  
GATES!

PREPARE  
THE MAW!

HOLD UP--  
GOT A LUCKY NEW  
CONTESTANT.

MOVER  
YOUR ASS,  
FLUCKNARD!

ASH--!  
P-PLEASE--  
I'M NO  
GLADIATOR!

NAH, YER  
A GEEZER,  
WHO RUNS  
BAMBOOZLES  
AN' SCREW  
JOBS.

YOU WILL IF  
YOU BELIEVE  
IT.

MARK  
CAINE!

WOW.  
GUESS I  
GOT A LITTLE  
FAMOUS.

I'M T-TOO  
OLD--I WON'T LAST  
A SECOND IN THE TANK!

Y-YOU...  
YOU'RE...





THERE IS NO "I" IN "TEAM".

THERE IS AN "M" THOUGH.

MY MUTINEERS HAVE SURVIVED...

EIGHTY-NINE.

EIGHTY-NINE BATTLES IN THIS ARENA.

I'VE SEEN THEM-- YOU WERE AMAZING!



STAY CLOSE TO ME AND NEVER FOR ONE SECOND CONSIDER FAILURE.

YOU DO THAT--YOU'LL SURVIVE.



I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO.

YOU THINK THIS EMPTY FAITH IS GOING TO SAVE ME?

YOU'RE A QUANTUM-LOGICIST--



I DON'T KNOW WHAT I AM, BUT I KNOW I'M ALIVE.

AS IS EVERYONE WHO'S STOOD WITH US.

SURVIVED AGAINST ALL ODDS, AGAINST ANY BEAST THEY'VE SENT.

I CAN'T MAKE YOU BELIEVE...

"...BUT I CAN HELP YOU IF YOU DO."

HERE YE HAVE IT, YA BARMY RAGS!

SET YER PEEPERS TO THE MAIN ATTRACTION--  
MARK CAIN AND HIS DOOMED BRIGADE OF MUTINEERS!

HAVING WON EIGHTY-NINE BOLTS IN A ROW WITH ZERO FATALITIES!



A STREAK THAT ENDS TODAY AMIDST THE TOXIC TEETH OF THE DREADED VIRUS EEL!



YOU'RE CERTAIN YOU CAN TELEPATHICALLY CONTROL THIS BEAST, GROLM?

WE'VE BET THE CHEST ON TODAY'S BOUT.



SHE TRUSTS ME.

UNDERSTANDS THAT WE WILL LIBERATE HER AND HER OFFSPRING ONLY ONCE SHE HAS CONSUMED THE GLADIATORS.



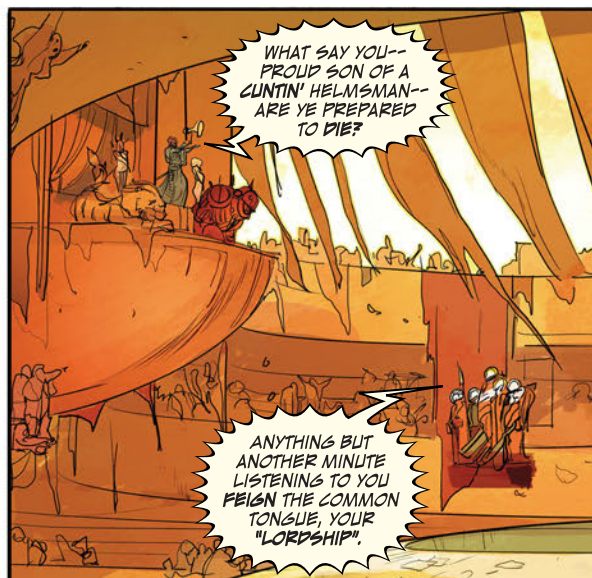
MARKI'S BELOVED STATUS AMONG THE PEOPLE ENSURES THEY WILL WAGER ON HIS SURVIVAL.

BUNG THIS FOR HIM AN' WE'LL BE MINTED.



GOOD PEOPLE OF POLUMA!

WE HAVE BEFORE US A NOBLE, BLUE-BLOODED SON OF SALUS, COME TA PERISH SPECTACULARLY FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT!



WHAT SAY YOU-- PROUR SON OF A CUNTIN' HELMSMAN-- ARE YE PREPARED TO DIE?

ANYTHING BUT ANOTHER MINUTE LISTENING TO YOU FEIGN THE COMMON TONGUE, YOUR "LORDSHIP".

SUCH CRUEL WORDS FROM A SOFT MOUTH FED BY SILVER SPOONS!

ARSE WIPED WITH SILKEN CLOTH!

AN' FOR SUCH A OCCASION I'VE SEEN FIT TO ALLOW YOU A SPECIAL GUEST--

A SALUSIAN ARISTOCRAT, WHOSE DIGNIFIED FAMILY HAS HUNTED OUR LOWLY PEOPLE FOR CENTURIES!

ANY FINAL WORDS TO YOUR YOUNG PRINCE, M'LADY?



KILL THEM ALL, MARK.



TARMS WELT!

WHO'S THAT BEAUTY?



MY MOTHER.



SUDDENLY VERY AWKWARD.

PEOPLE OF POLUMA!

YOU NEED NOT BEND KNEE TO THIS GREAT TYRANT, THIS MAJESTIC PIRATE EMINENCE-- RISE UP!



BE FREE!

ENOUGH  
PLEADING,  
BOY.

LET THE GREAT  
DISAPPOINTMENT  
BEGIN!



I'M TEN  
YEARS OLD.

TINKERING  
ON SOME  
OLD ENGINE.

MY SISTERS COLOR  
AT THE KITCHEN TABLE.

MOM QUIETLY  
MEDITATES IN  
THE GARDEN.

FATHER LAUGHS AS  
HE CHIDES ME TO  
JOIN THE HELMSMEN.

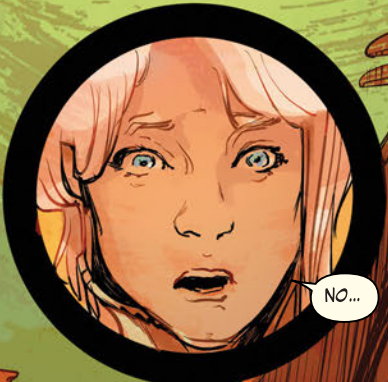


REMEMBER.

ALL WE HAD  
IN THE WORLD  
WAS OUR FAMILY--

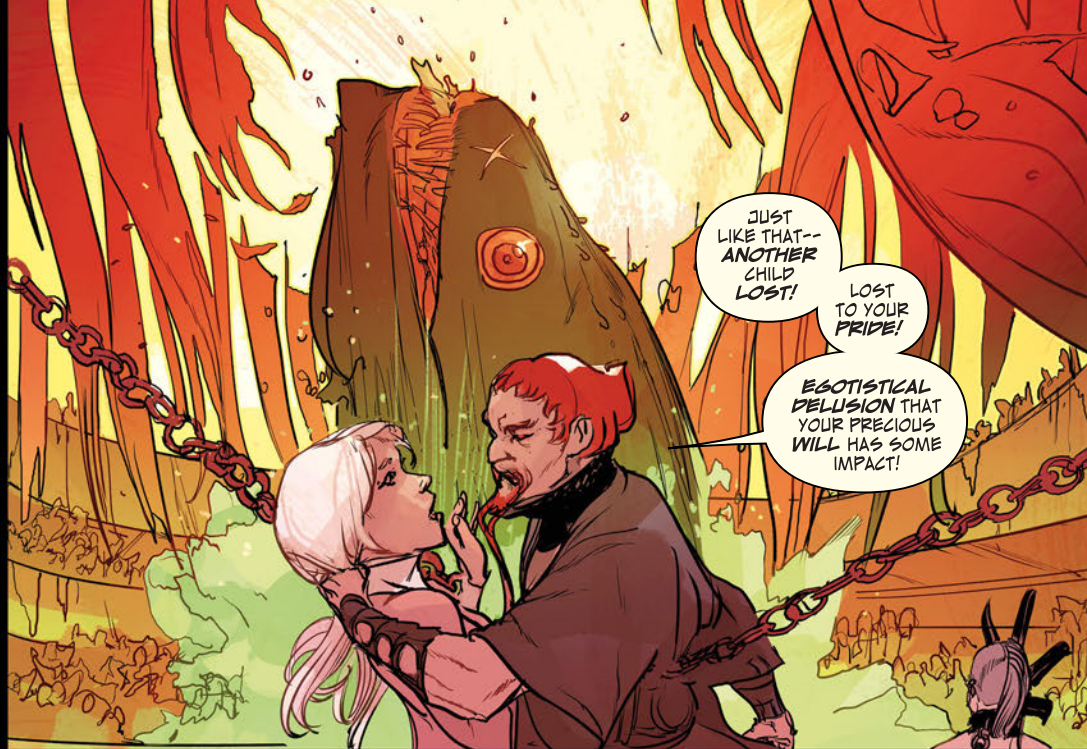


--AND HE TOOK IT.



NO...





JUST LIKE THAT--  
ANOTHER  
CHILD  
LOST!

LOST  
TO YOUR  
PRIDE!

ESOTERICAL  
DELUSION THAT  
YOUR PRECIOUS  
WILL HAS SOME  
IMPACT!



THE  
PROBE'S  
LOCATION,  
STEL.

OR TAJO  
IS NEXT...

"...AND YOU NEVER LEARN  
WHAT BECAME OF YOUR  
SWEET DELLA."



HELP  
ME! IT'S  
COMING!

STOP!  
PANICKING  
MAKES YOU THE  
BEAST'S TARGET,  
OLD MA--



OOF--!

**GHRAHHH--**

SOMEONE  
HELP ME!



NO--  
I-IT WON'T HAPPEN--  
YOU WON'T EAT ME--



THAT'S THE SPIRIT!  
FORGIVE MY LATE ARRIVAL--  
DELAYED BY A BELLY FULL OF POISONOUS DEVILS!

YOUR DREADED VIRUS EEL SEEMS TO HAVE DIED, EMINENCE ROLN, HIGH DICTATOR OF THESE "FREE" PIRATES!



DEADLY FUCKIN' CLASS!  
KING MARK!

WAGED ALL MY COIN--

--WOULD SUCK HIM OFF FILTHY--



A SHORT REPRIEVE, ONE LAST GAMBLE FOR YOU, MOTHER.

THE PROBE'S LOCATION AND I FREE HIM--OR WILL YOU RISK HIS LIFE ON YOUR WHIM?



I BET ON MARK.



SO BE IT. GROM-- TO THE MAIN EVENT!

GOOD BOY. ENJOYING WATCHING THIS SCUMBAG MEET HIS JUST END AS MUCH AS I AM?

PURRR



HEAR ME, OMNI-MAMMOTH OF THE BRINY DEPTHS.

DELIVER TO ME YOUR GREAT STRENGTH. VANQUISH THESE SURFACE INTRUDERS--



"--EARN YOUR FREEDOM!"

TAJO, MY SWEET GIRL-- PLEASE.

THAT'S YOUR BROTHER. YOU WERE SO CLOSE.

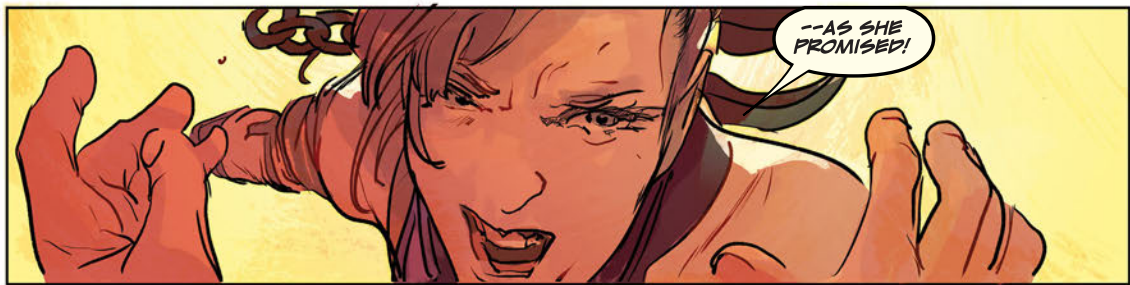
HE LOVES YOU SO MUCH, TAJO...



...WE BOTH DO.

MY BROTHER WOULD HAVE COME FOR ME.

MY MOTHER WOULD NEVER HAVE STOPPED LOOKING FOR ME--AS SHE--



--AS SHE PROMISED!

ALL MY LIFE EVERYONE EXPECTED ME TO BECOME SOME GREAT WARRIOR ASSHOLE.

IN DAD'S EYES THERE WERE NO OTHER OPTIONS.

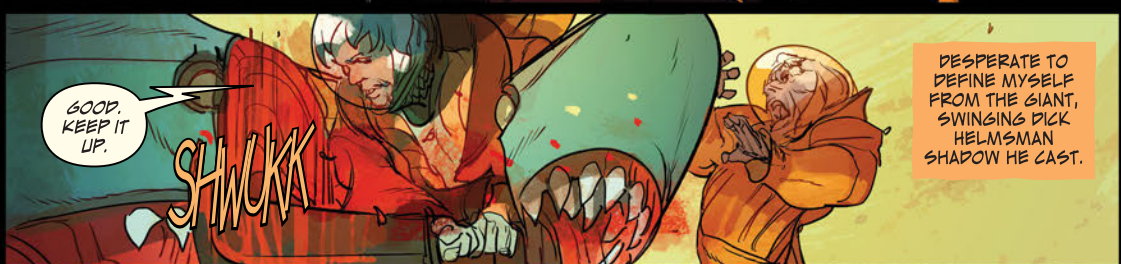
I WASN'T INTERESTED-- DIDN'T MATTER.

HE PUSHED--

--I PULLED AWAY.

TO FIND MY OWN PATH.

I WON'T DIE--I WON'T DIE--



GOOD. KEEP IT UP.

SHWCKK

DESPERATE TO DEFINE MYSELF FROM THE GIANT, SWINGING DICK HELMSMAN SHADOW HE CAST.



TURNED TO MY ENGINES.

HE SAW IT AS BENEATH ME.

THE SON OF JOHL CAINE WOULD NOT BE A LOWLY MECHANIC--

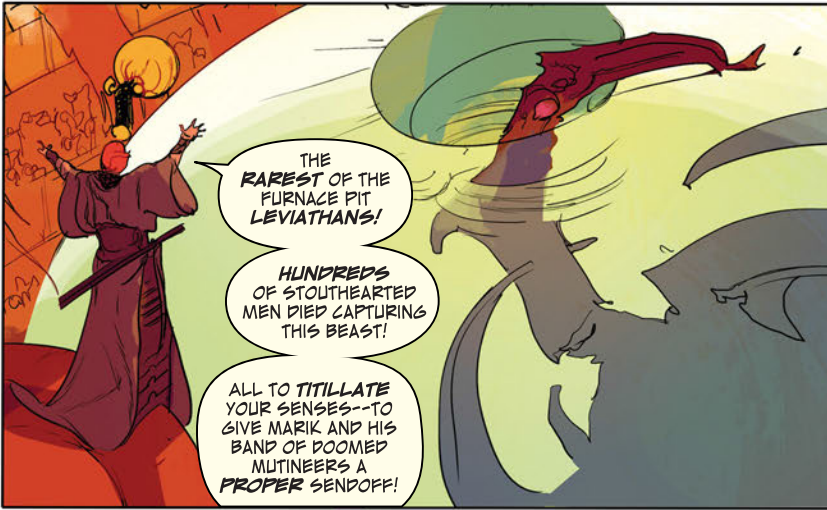
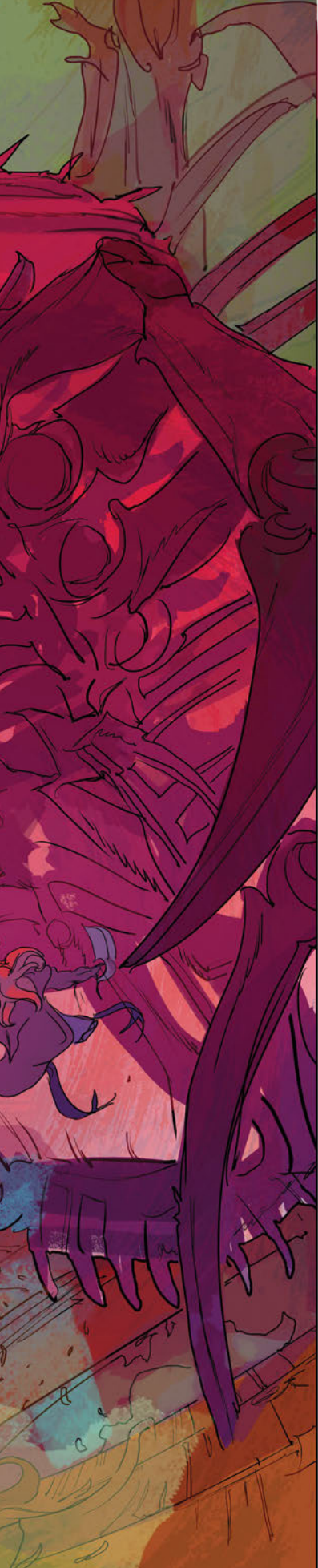
STAY CLOSE-- KEEP YOUR HOPE.

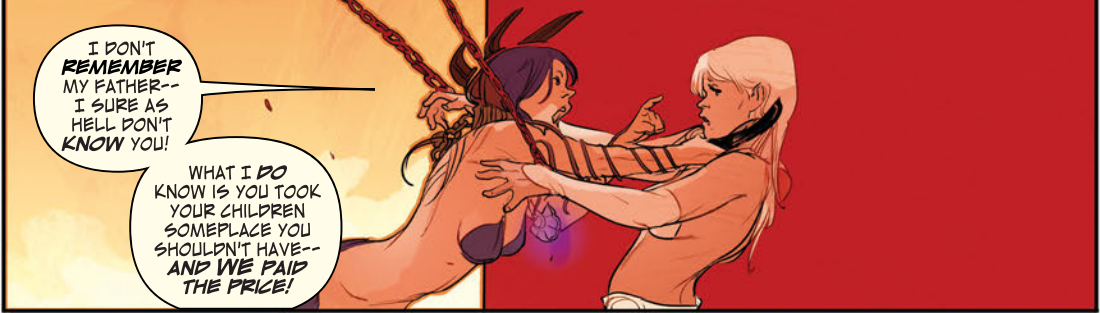


H-HOW CAN ANYONE HAVE HOPE AGAINST THAT?!

FAIR QUESTION.

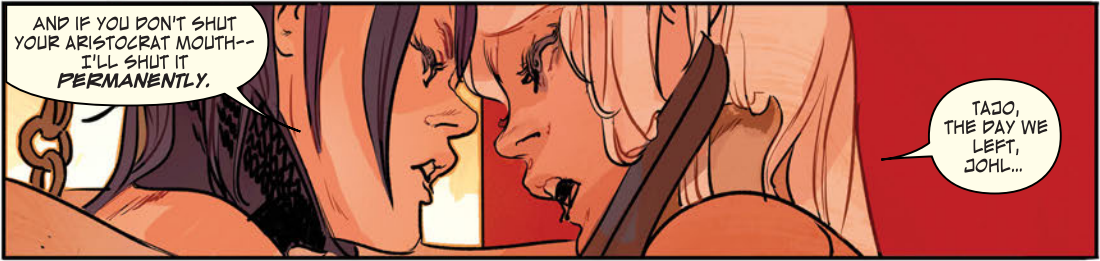






I DON'T REMEMBER MY FATHER-- I SURE AS HELL DON'T KNOW YOU!

WHAT I DO KNOW IS YOU TOOK YOUR CHILDREN SOMEPLACE YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE-- AND WE PAID THE PRICE!



AND IF YOU DON'T SHUT YOUR ARISTOCRAT MOUTH-- I'LL SHUT IT PERMANENTLY.

TAJO, THE DAY WE LEFT, JOHL...



... YOUR FATHER GAVE YOU THAT SHELL.

IT READS THE TRUTH OF YOUR HEART.



LOOK AT IT.



YOU MUST REMEMBER HIM.



I DON'T REMEMBER--!




--AND I DON'T CARE!!



AND YOU DON'T HEED WARNINGSS VERY WELL--

POPPET-- COME, YOU'RE MISSING THE GREAT EVENT!



"LEAVE YOUR 'MOTHER'  
ALIVE TO SEE THE BOUNTY  
OF HER HUBRIS!"

AFTER DAD DIED I  
SPIRALED INTO A  
BLACK PLACE--

BECAME A CONSTABLE--  
TOLD MYSELF I DID IT  
TO HONOR HIM--

--TO BE  
LIKE HIM.



BUT IN TRUTH--  
I WAS NOTHING  
LIKE HIM.

ZEM! WE HAVE TO  
GET AT ONE OF ITS  
EYES--THAT'LL BE  
THE SOFTEST  
POINT!

HAR--  
SLICE AN EYE,  
CLIMB IN AND  
PIERCE THE  
BRAIN!



I AM A  
DEGENERATE.  
A CROOK.  
A MURDERER.

NOT MUCH  
TIME LEFT  
NOW, STEL.  
STILL  
NO?



DO IT.  
HAVE OUR  
MAN DELIVER  
THE MESSAGE.



I RUINED THE  
LIVES OF  
EVERYONE  
AROUND ME.  
BUT I ALWAYS  
KNEW IN MY  
HEART--

IT IS  
IMPOSSIBLE,  
MARKI!  
MY SARALA  
WILL SINK NO  
FURTHER!



--I'D GET WHAT  
I DESERVED  
IN THE END.  
ROLN  
SENDS COLD  
REGARDS.

USHNG--

SHUKA



WANTS YE  
TA KNOW--  
YOUR  
SISTER'S  
NEXT.

DOESN'T EVEN HURT--  
--LIGHTS POP--  
--ROLN'S VOICE--

"WHAT DID YOU  
THINK I WAS  
GOING TO DO WITH  
YOU, BOY?!"

RAUNCH--!

LOWARD!

MARK--  
HOLD ON!

TRY TO YELL  
TO ZEM--GO--

--SAVE MOM!

ONLY WATER AND  
BLOOD COME OUT--

--FILLING  
THE HELMET.

MOVE YOUR LEGS!

SWIM UP--  
SAVE HER!

KLUNK

OOP!

NO RESPONSE--

NO RETURNING  
FROM THIS--

AFTER A LIFE OF FAILING  
AT EVERY THING I EVER DID--



--IN THE END--



--THE ONE THING I  
SUCCEEDED AT--

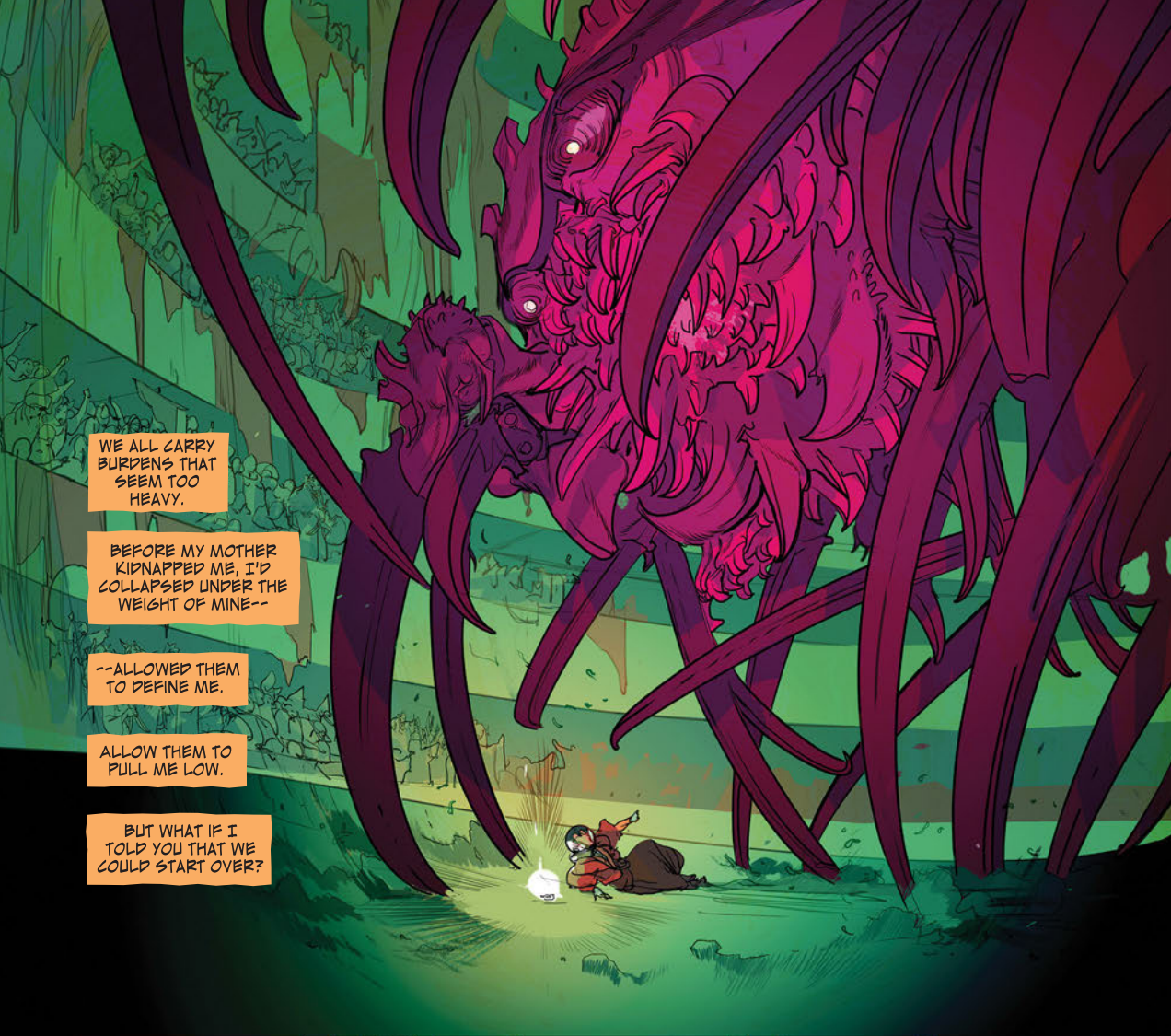


--WAS FOLLOWING  
IN DAD'S FOOTSTEPS  
AFTER ALL.

TO BE CONTINUED!







WE ALL CARRY BURPENS THAT SEEM TOO HEAVY.

BEFORE MY MOTHER KIDNAPPED ME, I'D COLLAPSED UNDER THE WEIGHT OF MINE--

--ALLOWED THEM TO DEFINE ME.

ALLOW THEM TO PULL ME LOW.

BUT WHAT IF I TOLD YOU THAT WE COULD START OVER?

WHAT IF I TOLD YOU THERE WAS HOPE?

HOW ARE THE SHELLS COMING, MARK?

HEAVY RUST BUT THEY'RE ALMOST CLEANED.

HAVE TO SAY, GIVING ONE TO EACH OF THE GIRLS AND NOT TO ME--SORT OF A PICK MOVE, DAD.

THINK ABOUT FOOD AND SALIVATE.

THINK ABOUT NEGASITIVITY AND FALL TO DESPAIR.

"YOUR SISTERS ARE TO BE HELMSMEN."

THE SHELLS SHINE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TRUTH OF ONE'S HEART. A GUIDEPOST THEY WILL BOTH NEED.

I SEE YOU HERE, AT YOUR MACHINISTS' BENCH, AND THEY GLOW BRILLIANTLY.

YOU'VE ALREADY FOUND YOUR PATH, MY BOY.

"YOUR CHALLENGE IS TO STAY ON IT."

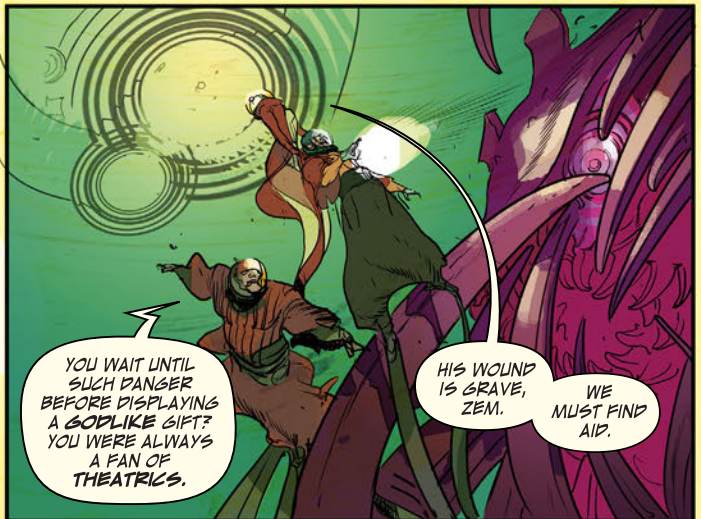
SO WHAT IF I TOLD YOU ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE?

THAT CONQUERING THE FEAR YOU HOLD IN YOUR HEART COULD CHANGE EVERYTHING?

WOULD YOU TRY?

I WILL.

WOOOOOOOSH





W-WHAT WAS THAT?

MARIK'S HEART REFLECTED THROUGH YOUR FATHER'S SHELL...

PLEASE TELL ME THE CUNT ISN'T GOING TO WIN THIS MATCH WITH A BRIGHT GLOWING SEASHELL.

THE MAMMOTH-- HER EYES ARE NOT ATTUNED TO SUCH LIGHT--



MUST I REMIND YOU WHAT IS AT STAKE SHOULD THAT SLAG EMERGE, GROLM?!

CALL THE EELS AND KILL HIM BEFORE--

POLUMANS! HAVE YOU HAD ENOUGH OF THIS FARCE?



HAVE YOU HAD ENOUGH OF THIS PICTATOR, SITTING IN HIS TOWER, KEEPING YOU UNEDUCATED, DESPERATE, AND MALNOURISHED?!

THIS COWARD, HE WHO KEEPS YOU DISTRACTED WITH FIXED BLOOD SPORTS-- DESIGNED TO TAKE WHAT LITTLE WEALTH YOU HOLD?



HAVE YOU HAD ENOUGH OF THIS MIGHTY PIRATE WARRIOR WHO SENT A SULKING ASSASSIN TO STAB ME IN THE BACK?!

I THINK YOU HAVE!



WE HAVE ALL INHERITED A GIANT BAG OF SHIT.

THE SUN EXPANDS-- THE OCEANS GROW TOXIC-- AND WE HIDE WITHIN THE LAST REMAINING DOMES, WAITING OUT THE CLOCK.



WE SATE OUR FEARS WITH SEX, DRINK AND VIOLENCE--DISTRACTIONS FROM THE TRUTHS WE DARE NOT FACE.

TRUTHS WE ACCEPT BECAUSE PEOPLE LIKE LORD ROLN TELL US THERE IS NO HOPE. NO SOLUTION.

YET, STILL, WE DREAM OF MORE FOR OUR LIVES--

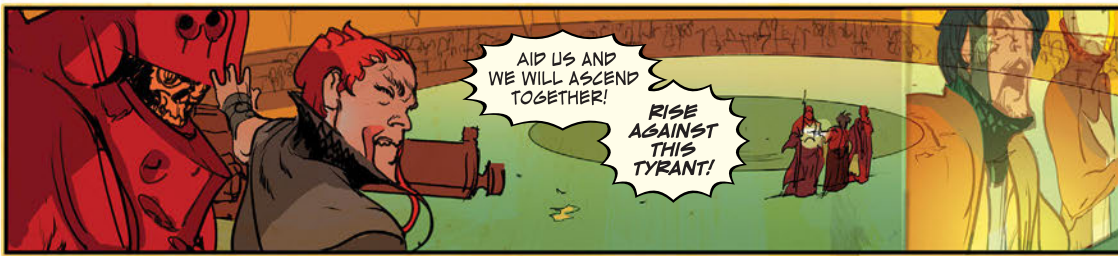


WE ARE NOT SPIES FROM SALUS, AS ROLN WOULD HAVE YOU BELIEVE.

WE WERE ON A MISSION TO FIND A NEW WORLD--A GREEN WORLD WITH FRESH AIR, CLEAN WATER, AND A LIVING SUN!



BUT INSTEAD OF AIDING US IN LIFTING OUR PEOPLE FROM THESE DEPTHS YOUR EMPEROR HAS TOYED WITH US FOR HIS AMUSEMENT!



AID US AND WE WILL ASCEND TOGETHER!

RISE AGAINST THIS TYRANT!



COMRADES, PLEASE, DO NOT LISTEN TO THIS SALUSIAN BLUEBLOOD'S LIES--

--RIGGED THE FOOKIN' MATCH!

MANGY PRICK TOOK MY COIN--

DOESN'T HAVE THE BALLS--



--OFF O' YER LOFTY PERCH, YE MANGY CLUNT!

--SO FOOKIN' BRUTAL, HE HYPES FROM--

HAIL, KING MARIK--



SO BE IT.



LET'S SEE IF YE FAIR BETTER THAN YER DEAR OLD DAD.

YOU ARE IN NO CONDITION FOR BATTLE, MARIK! HE WILL SLAUGHTER YOU.

YOU KEEP THAT BEAST FROM ME--



--I'LL KILL ROLN.



--COMIN' RIGHT AT--

OH, SHIT--

--HOLD ON--



FUCK!

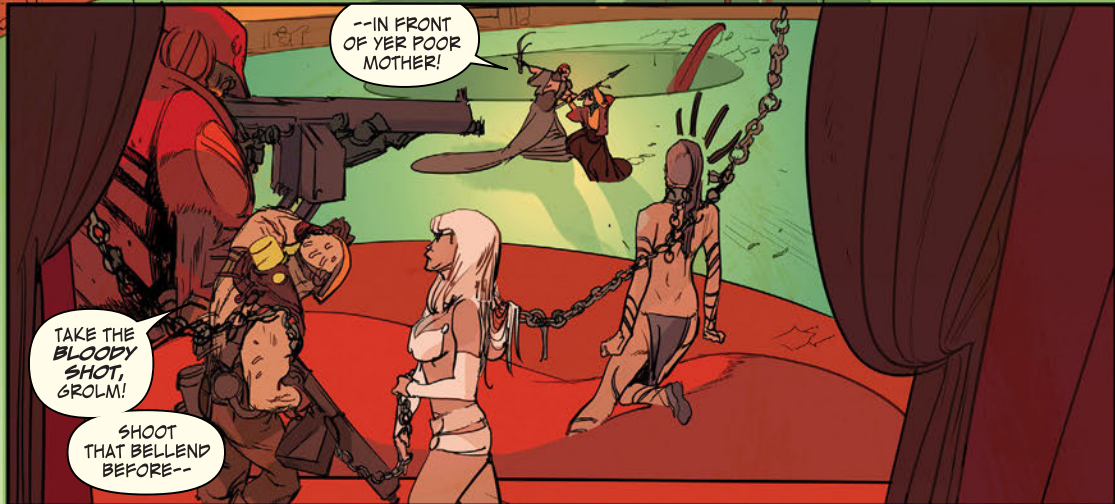


ALL I HAD IN THE WORLD WAS MY FAMILY--

--AND YOU TOOK IT FROM ME!

NAY, YER FATHER GAVE IT OVER WITH NO NOISE.

HANDED ME HIS HELMSUIT AND TWO BRIGHT DAUGHTERS, ON HIS KNEES--



--IN FRONT OF YER POOR MOTHER!

TAKE THE BLOODY SHOT, GROM!

SHOOT THAT BELLEND BEFORE--



**BRAK-  
BRAK-  
BRAK**

=CHOKK=



WHAT IS THIS--?!

**BLAKK**



REVENGE.

**BRAK-  
BRAK-  
BRAK**

**BLAKK**



THE  
PRETENDER'S  
DAUGHTER--  
SWEET  
MEAT--!

**BOOM**

TAJO--  
THEY'VE GONE  
MAD--DEFEND  
YOURSELF!

**BRAK-  
BRAK-  
BRAK**



GRIMTO HAVE  
IT WITH THE COLD  
FLESH, YE  
ROYAL SKAS!

I... I...



YOUR RIOT  
HAS LANDED  
SISTER IN THE  
COLD CURRENTS!



**TAJO!**



YURKK--!

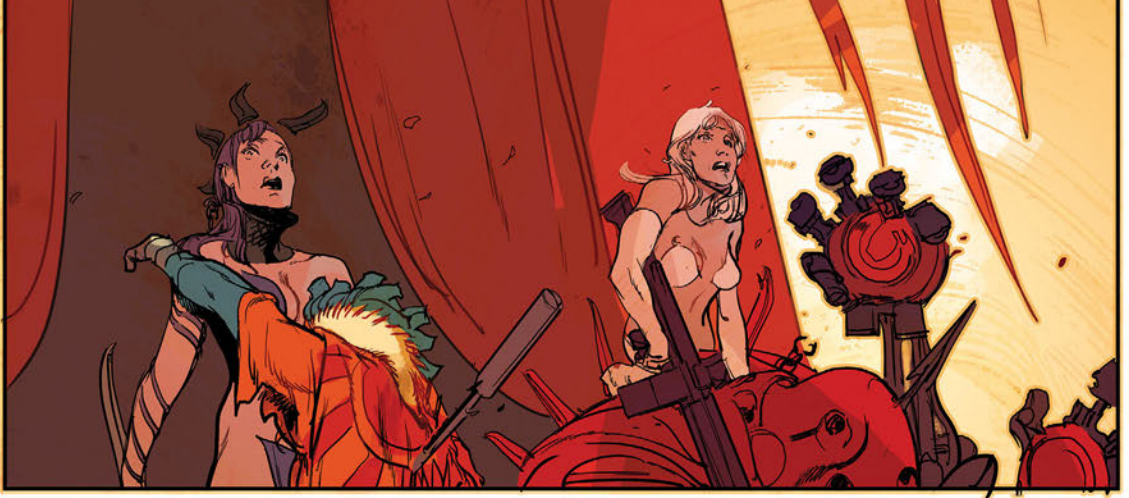
**SHWK**

AH, SO  
SELFLESS.



GAKK

NOW,  
FOR THE  
PRICE!



HOPE IS JUST THE BODY RELEASING A CHEMICAL TO KEEP IT MOVING FORWARD.

A TRICK THE MIND PLAYS ON ITSELF.

NO MATTER HOW CRUEL IT IS TO THE DOOMED BASTARD--

--SURVIVAL IS JOB ONE.



EVEN NOW-- LIFE SEEPING OUT OF HIM--

SOMETHING IN MARIK'S DNA REFUSES TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE END IS HERE.

REFUSES TO STOP FIGHTING.

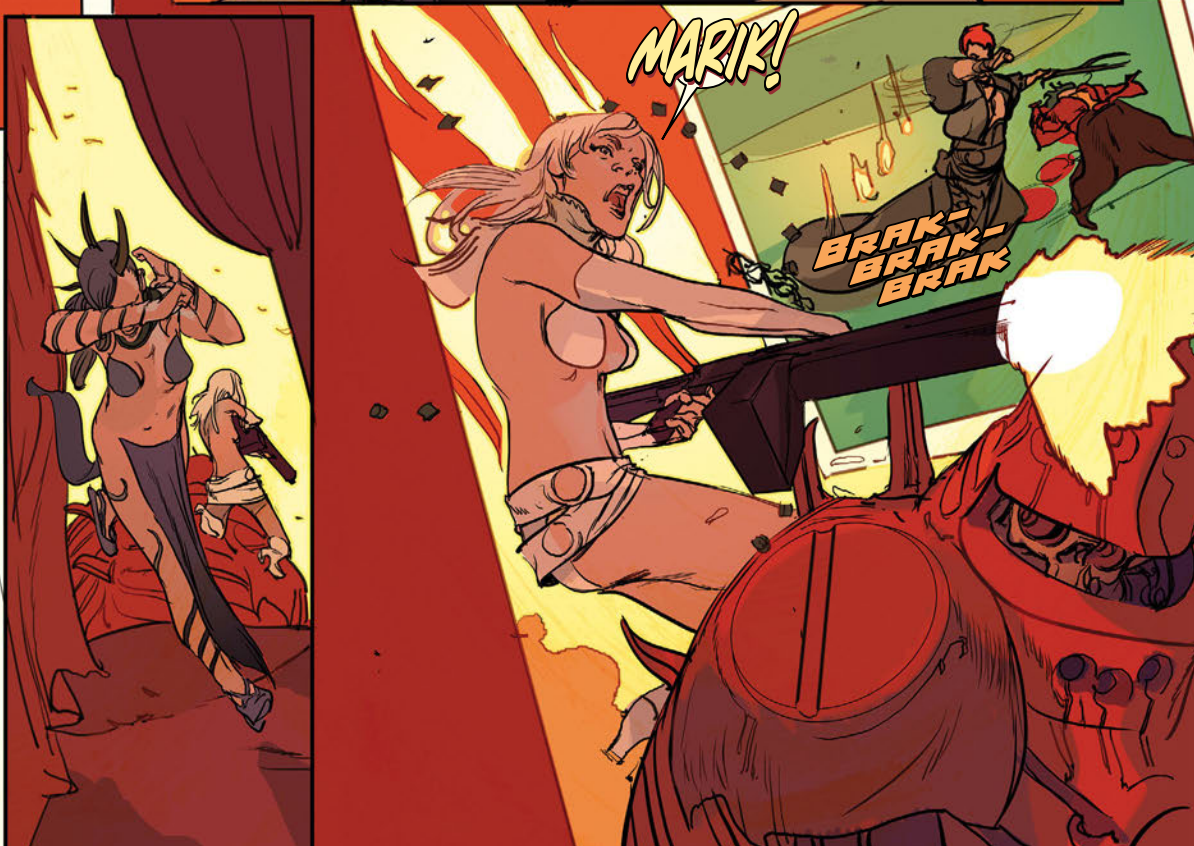


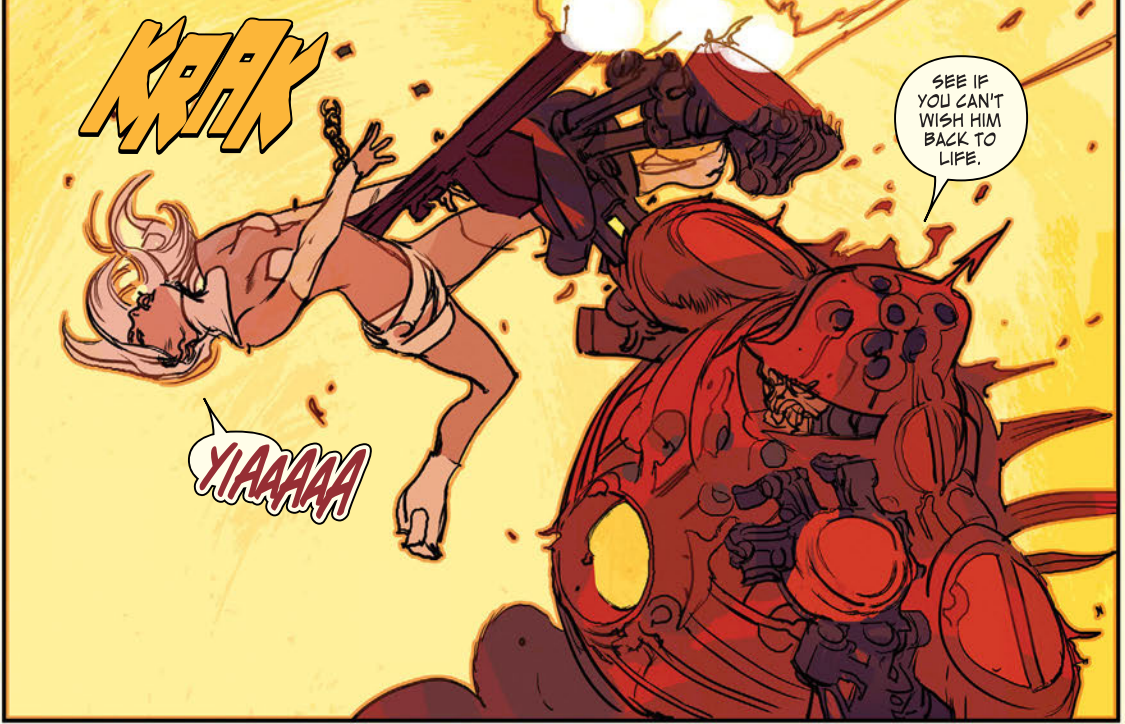
AND SEEING THAT DIVINE PREROGATIVE SHATTERED--



--WATCHING THE HOPE DRAIN FROM THE EYE--

--GIVES ME THE VERY MOST PLEASURE.

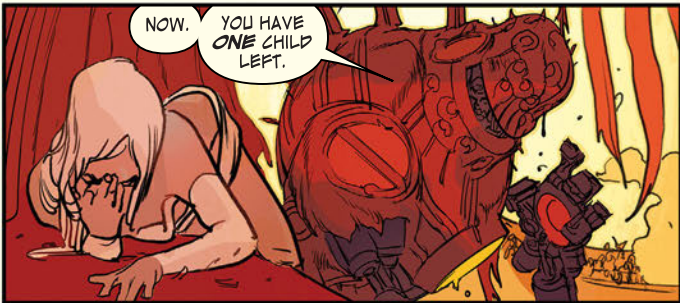




**KRAK**

**YIAAAAA**

SEE IF YOU CAN'T WISH HIM BACK TO LIFE.



NOW. YOU HAVE ONE CHILD LEFT.



GIVE ME THE PROBE'S LOCATION...



"...OR THAT GOES DOWN TO NONE."

WHO SACKED THIS CITY?

YOU, ROLN.

WHO GAVE THE REFUGEES OF THE DEEP A HOME?

YOU, ROLN.



THIS RIOT--IT REALLY HURTS MY FEELINGS!



THERE WILL BE ORDER IN MY CITY.

PEACE AND TRANQUILITY.

MARK'S FINAL GIFT.



THE DNA STRAND NEEDED TO PILOT MY...







ISN'T THIS WHAT YOU WANTED?



ISN'T THIS WHAT YOU DESTROYED MY FAMILY FOR?

MY POPPET, YOU'RE CONFUSED--



KILLED MY BROTHER AND FATHER.

SOLD MY SISTER.

TORTURED MY MOTHER.



PLEASE, COME TO YOUR SENSES-- I SAVED YOU!

STOP THIS SELF-PITY!

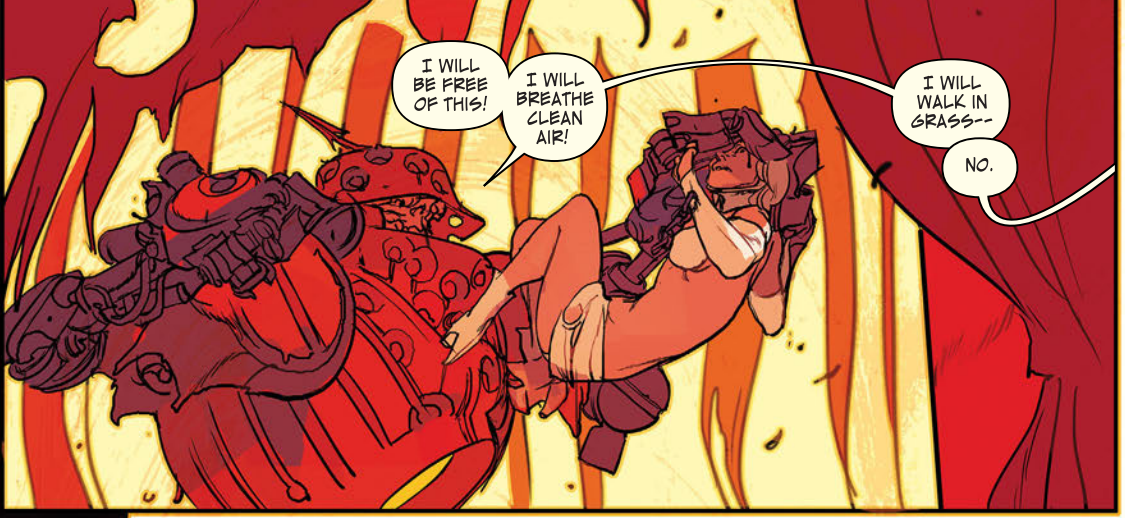


HELP ME PUT DOWN THIS RIOT AND SAVE OUR CITY...

BEFORE...





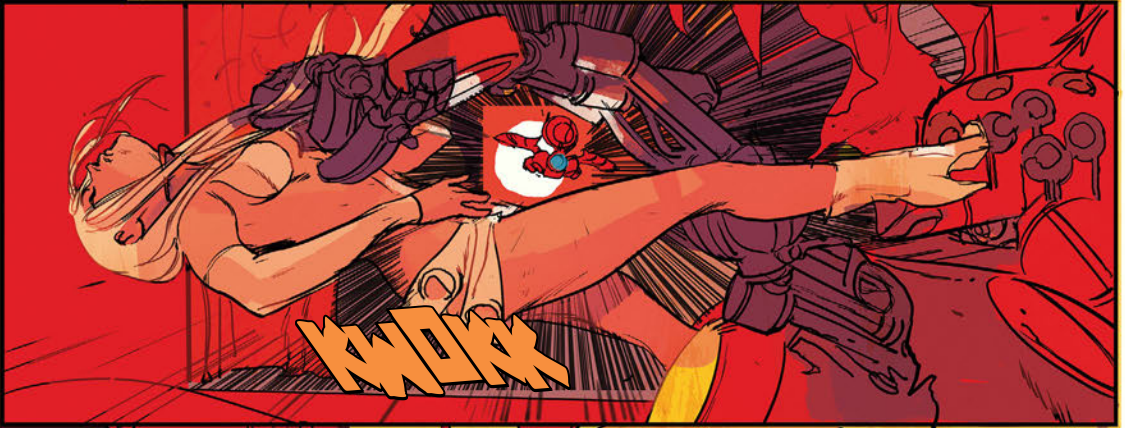


I WILL BE FREE OF THIS!

I WILL BREATHE CLEAN AIR!

I WILL WALK IN GRASS--

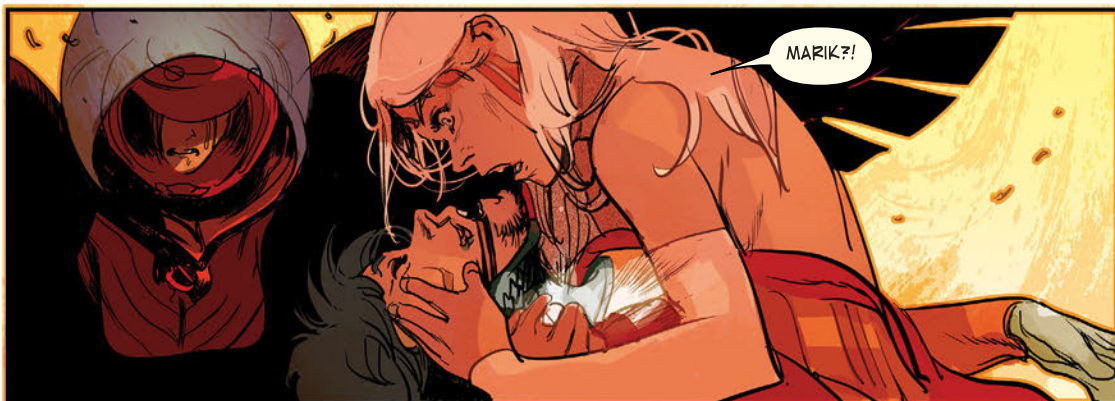
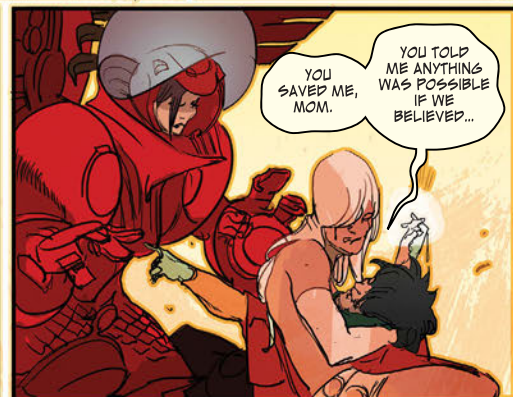
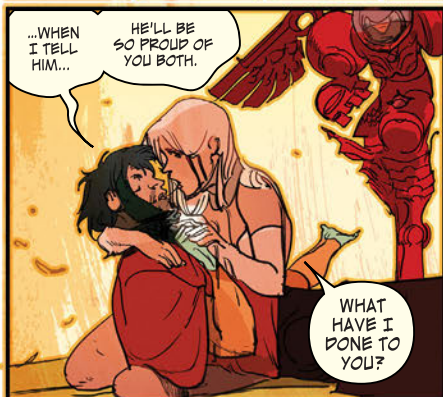
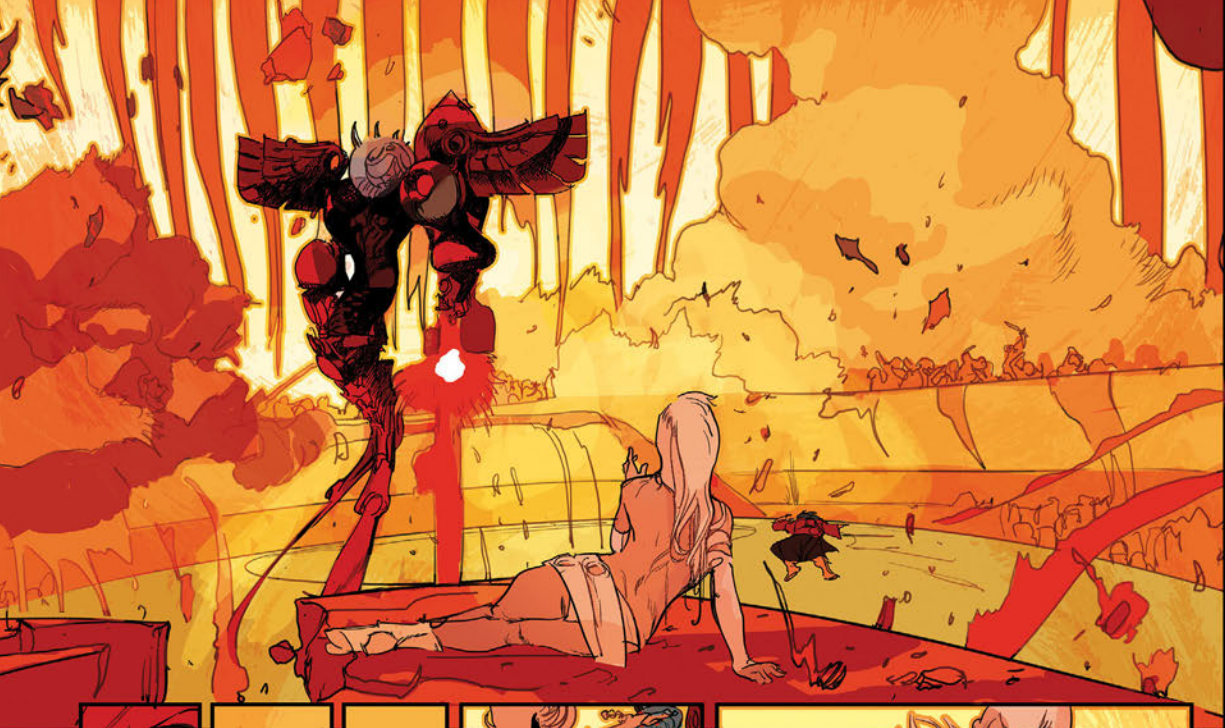
NO.



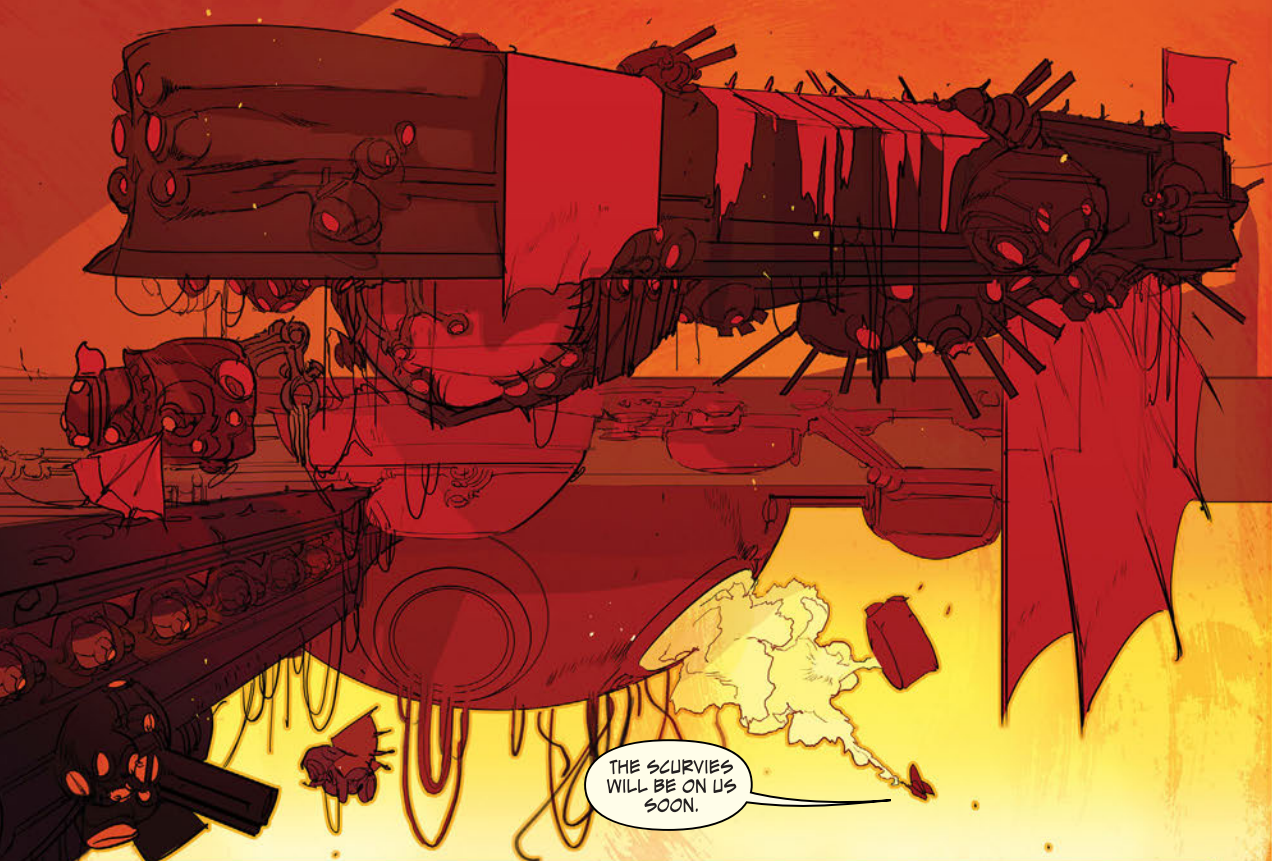
KNOCK



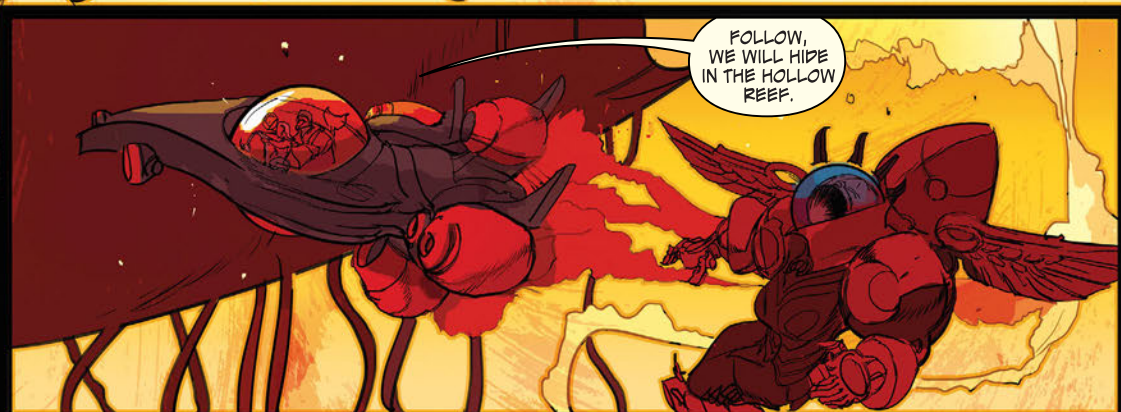
YOU'LL BURN IN HELL.







THE SCURVIES  
WILL BE ON US  
SOON.



FOLLOW,  
WE WILL HIDE  
IN THE HOLLOW  
REEF.



THERE ARE  
DEAD CITIES,  
THEIR SCANS WILL  
NOT DETECT  
US.



NO.



TADJO?  
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!



BEFORE MARK ENTERED THE ARENA.

ZREEEEEE

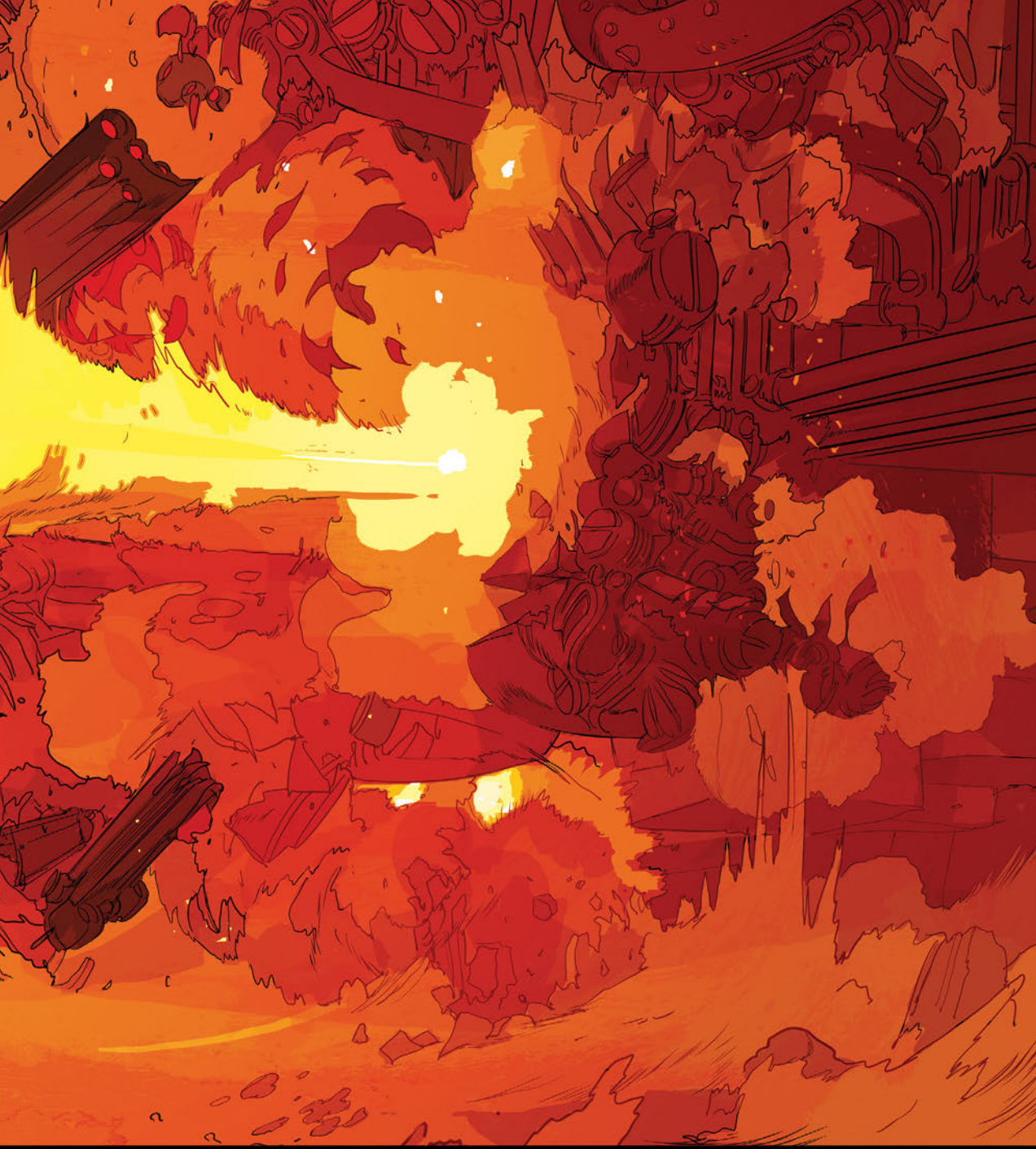


YOU SAID, "KILL THEM ALL."



SO--

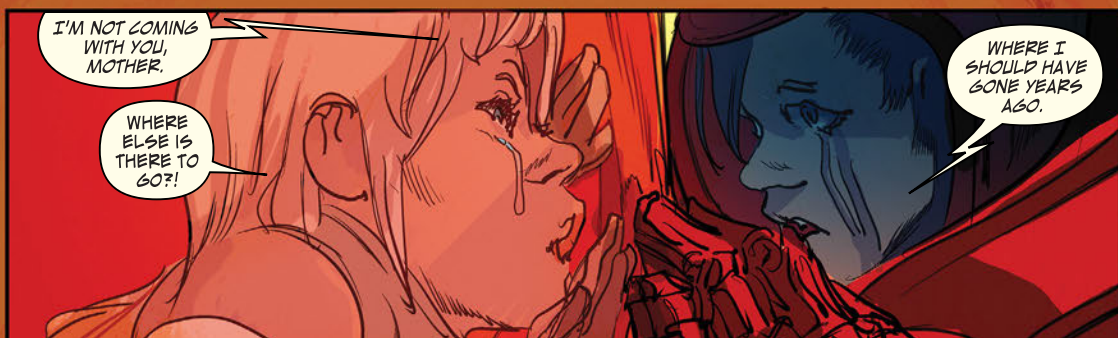






WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

WHAT I HAD TO.



I'M NOT COMING WITH YOU, MOTHER.

WHERE ELSE IS THERE TO GO?!

WHERE I SHOULD HAVE GONE YEARS AGO.



TO FIND MY  
SISTER.

TAZO!



PLEASE  
DON'T  
LEAVE  
ME...

NOT YOU  
TOO...



NOT YOU  
TOO...



"TO RESIST THE DEPTHS  
OF THE WORLD'S SORROW,  
THE TRUTH OF ONE'S HEART  
MUST BE HONORED."



EVEN WHEN  
WHAT WE ARE  
ISN'T WHAT WE WISH  
WE WERE... OR  
WHAT OTHERS WANT  
US TO BE.

EVEN WHEN  
WE WANT TO TURN  
AWAY FROM IT,  
WHEN IT BECOMES  
A BURDEN.



A COMPROMISED  
SOUL DIES A MILLION  
DEATHS IN THAT FINAL  
CLAUSTROPHOBIC  
MOMENT OF  
REALIZATION.

ALWAYS  
SERVE YOUR  
OWN TRUTH,  
MARK.

NEVER  
COMPROMISE  
YOURSELF.



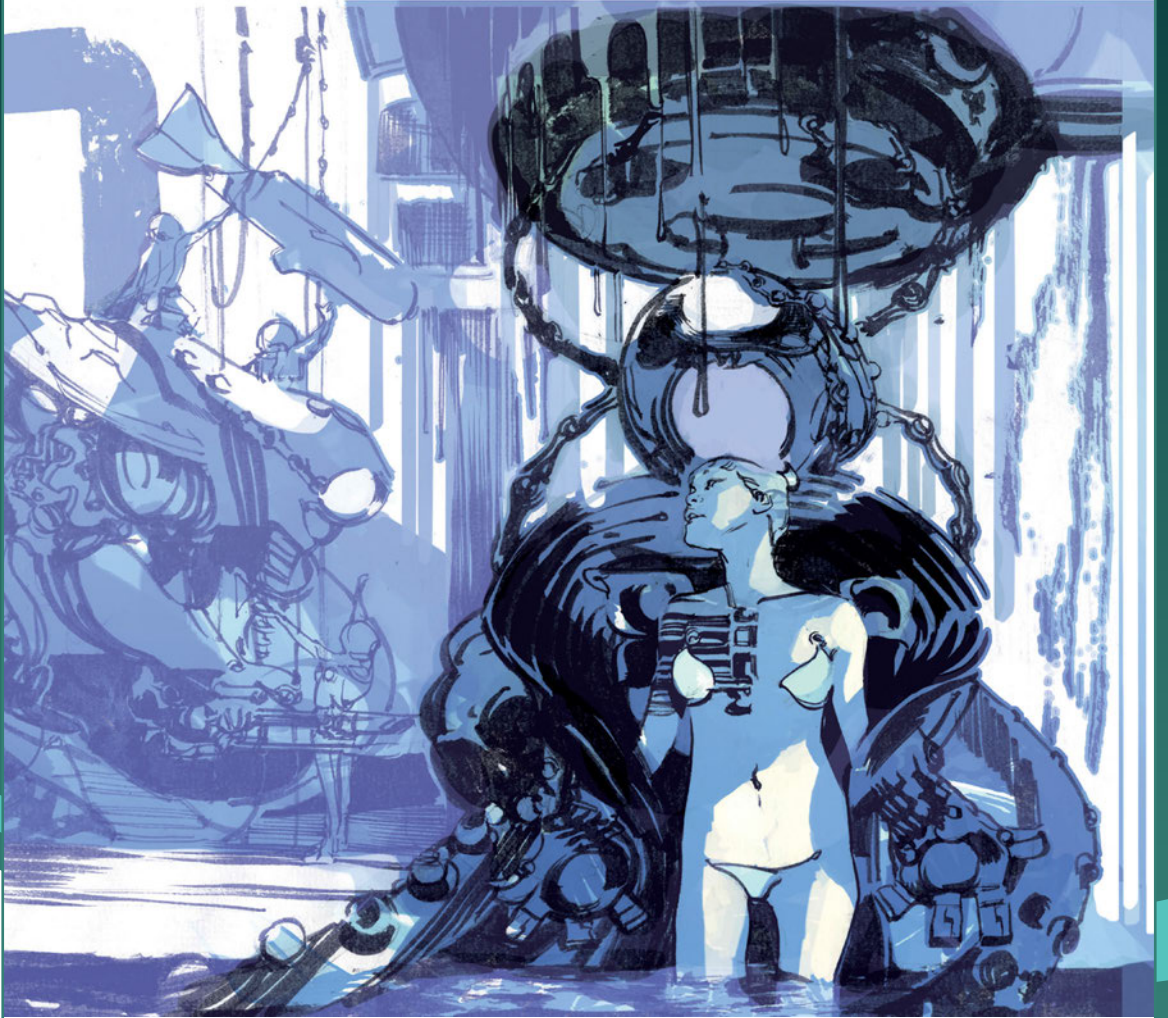
DO WHAT IS RIGHT  
TILL THAT LAST SECOND,  
EVEN IF THE WORLD  
COLLAPSES AROUND YOU.



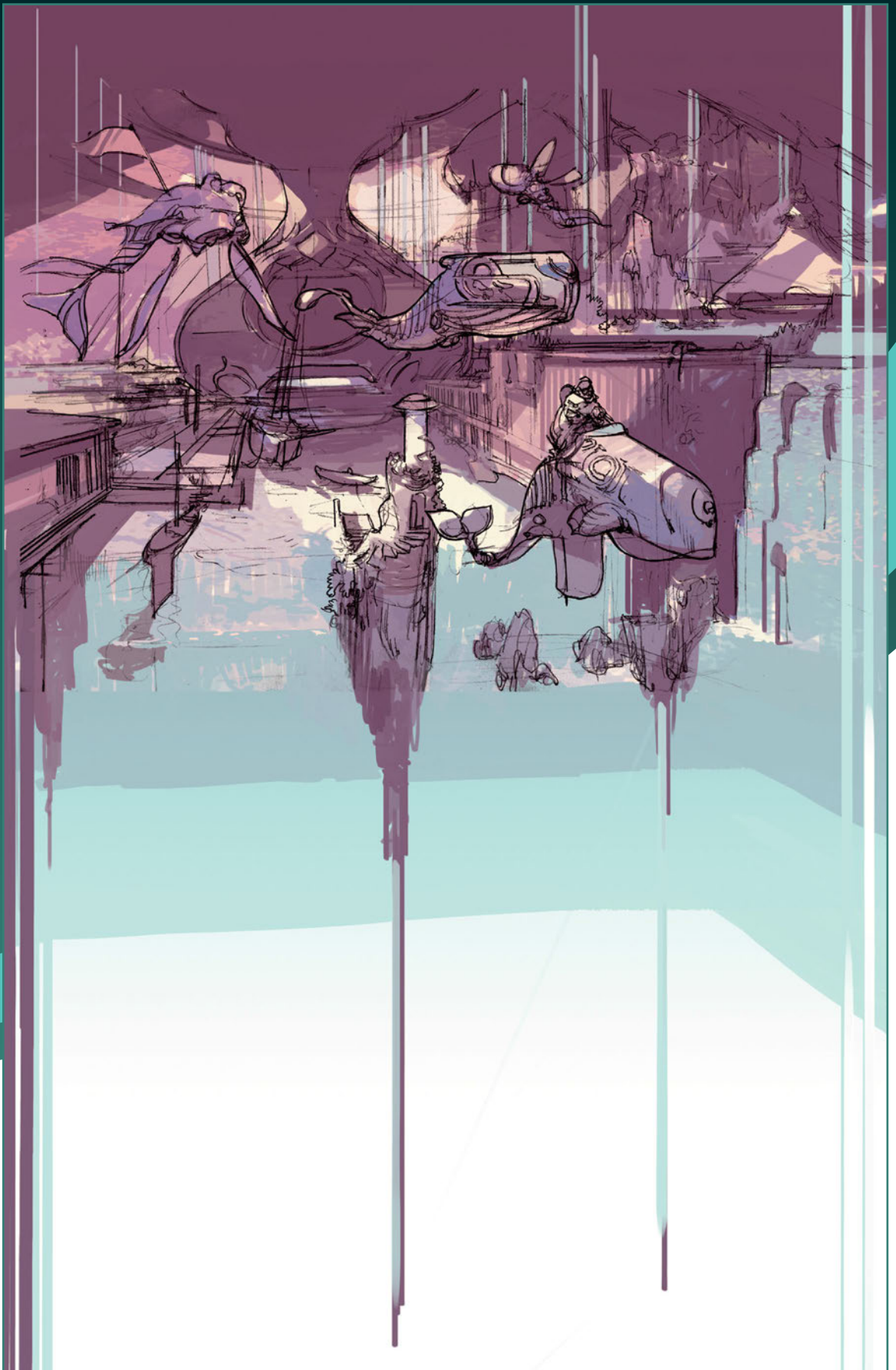
AND IF YOU  
CAN DO THAT  
ONE THING,  
MY BOY...



...YOU'LL AT  
LEAST HAVE MADE  
YOUR OLD MAN  
PROUD.



#1 VARIANT BY GREG TOCCHINI



#1 VARIANT BY GREG TOCCHINI



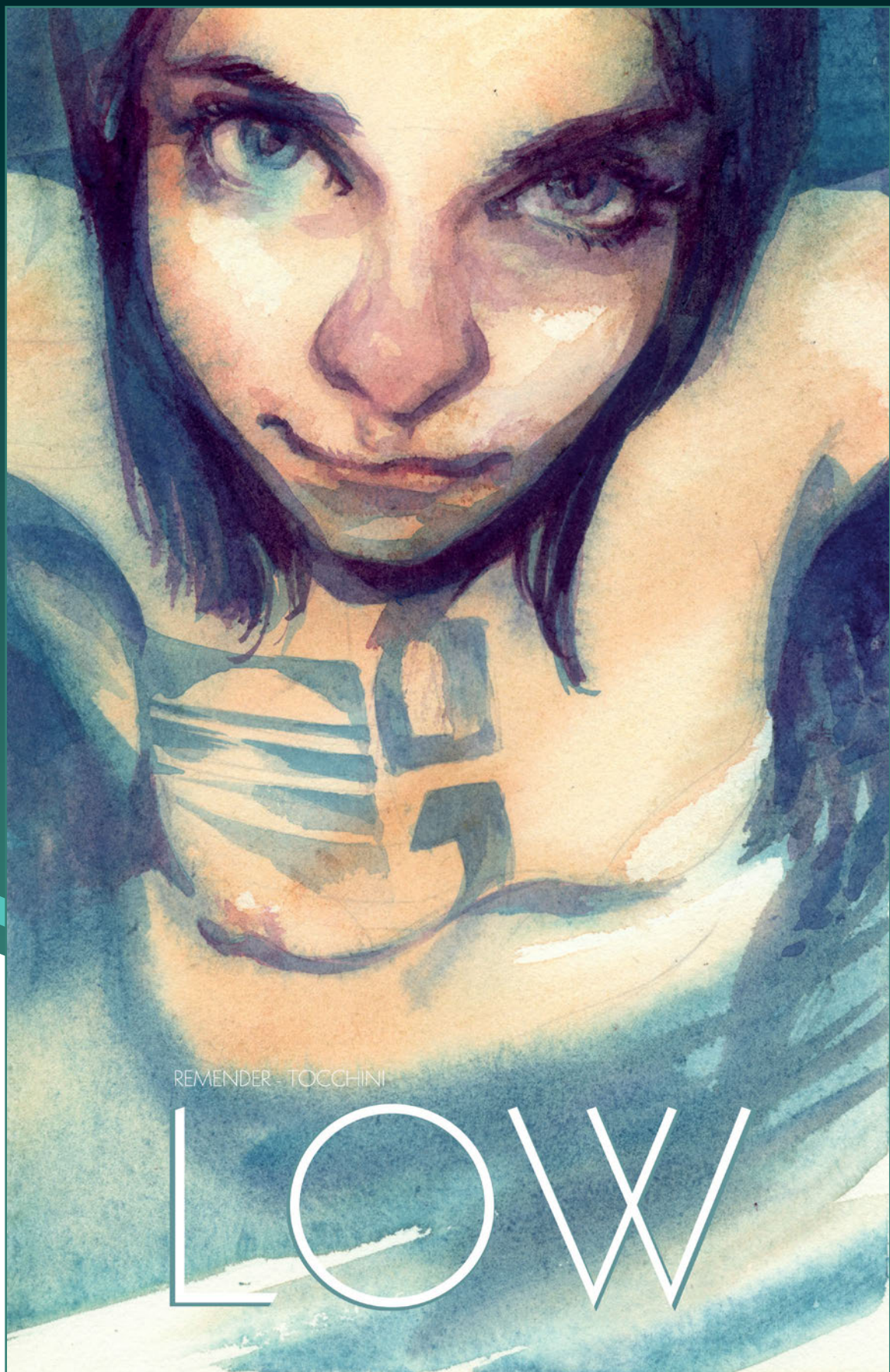
#1 VARIANT BY GREG TOCCHINI



REMEMBER - TOCCHINI

# LOW

#1 VARIANT BY GREG TOCCHINI



REMEMBER - TOCCHINI

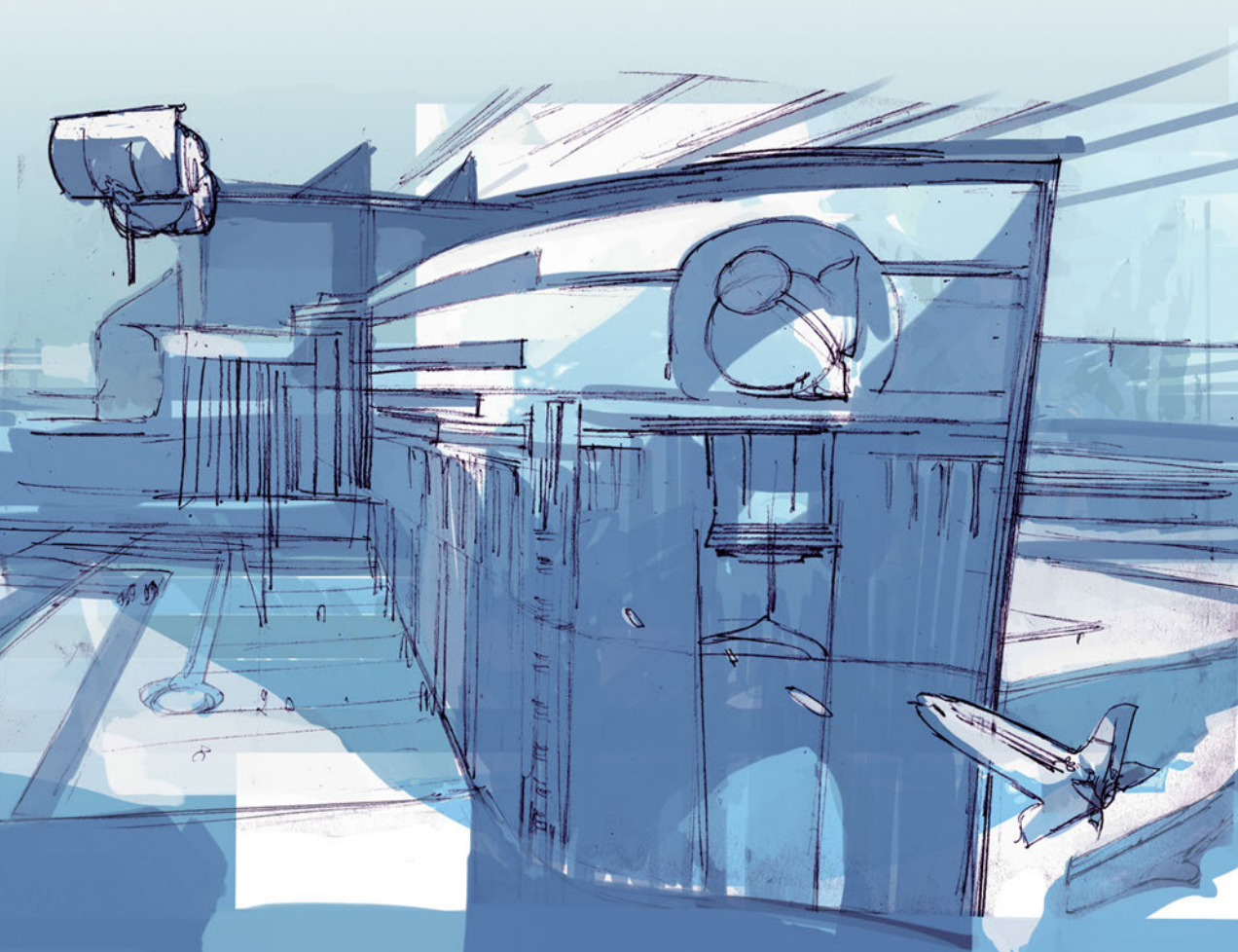
LOW

#1 VARIANT BY GREG TOCCHINI



# LOW

SKETCHBOOK



LOW



LOW





REMENDER - TOCCHINI

LOW







Links

Cain's Submarine



The Uskongs

Cain Family



JOHL



STEL



DELLA & TAJO



MICHAEL



Link



Helm



The Helm Suits

Warrior Mode



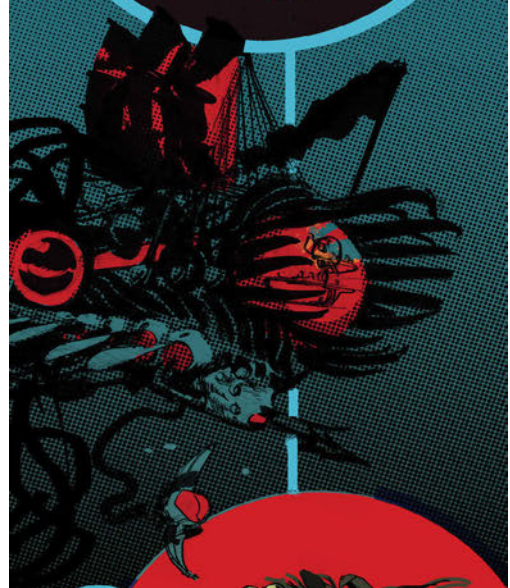
Standard mode



Links



ROLN

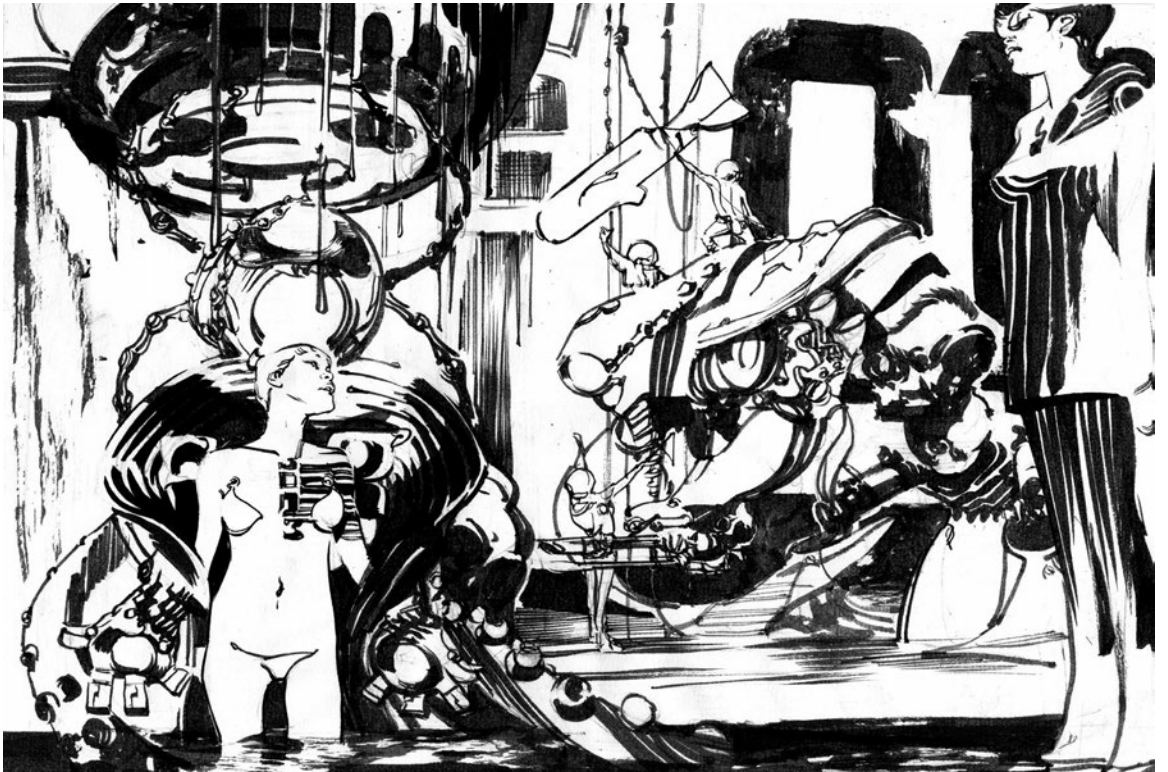


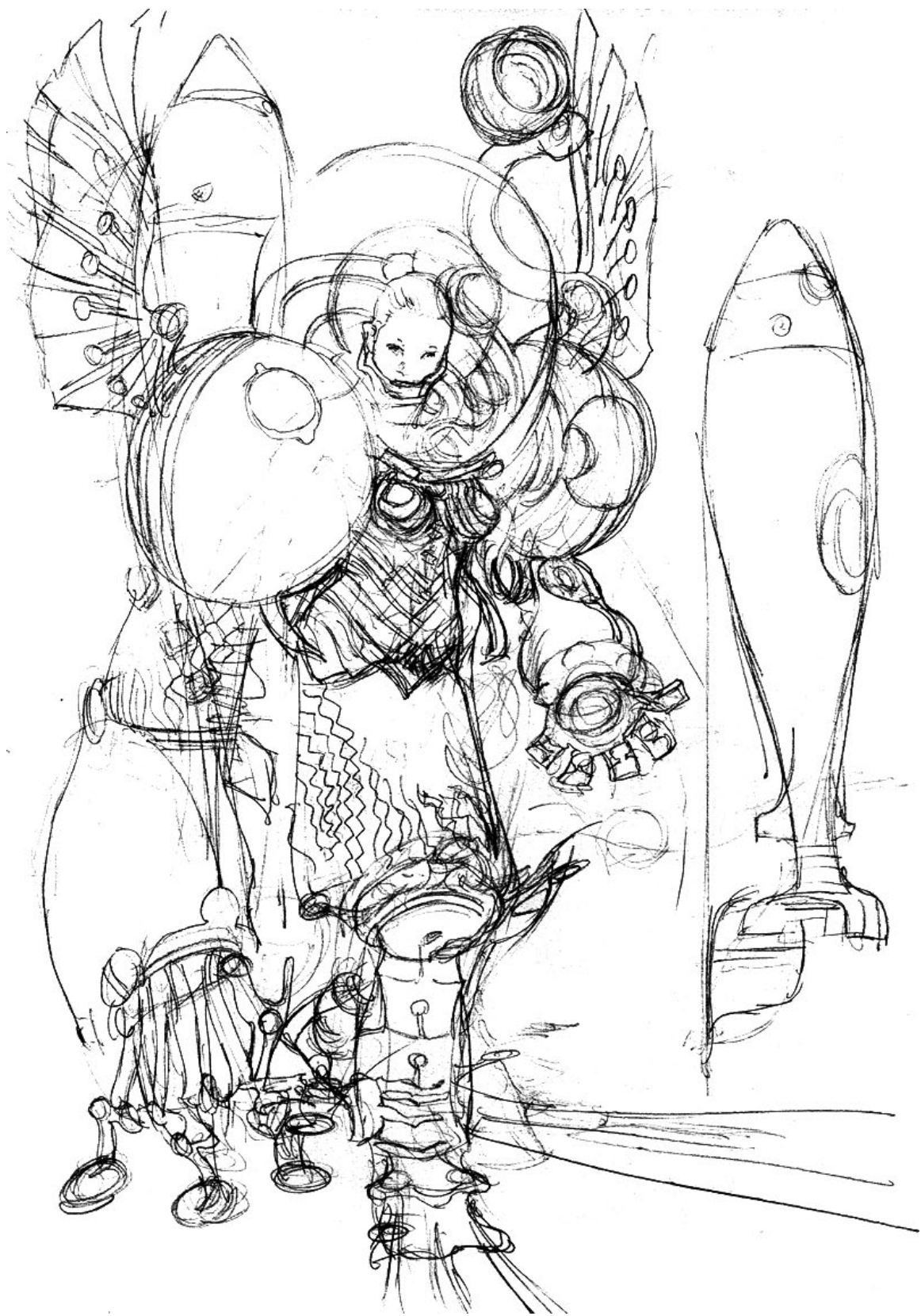
Pirate King



PIRATES









"Enough cannot be said about Tocchini's wild, eccentric art that simultaneously draws on the best of classic manga and Milo Manara. His colors are lush, vibrant, and nothing short of beautiful. Paired with Remender's confident scripting and pacing, *LOW* is nothing short of wonderful."

—TRES DEAN, *IGN*

"Tocchini's dreamy renderings, and Remender's confessional tone equips readers to explore the depths of epic grief in this heroine's tale."

—CASSANDRA CLARK, *MULTIVERSITY COMICS*

"Remender and Tocchini have crafted a rich world, loaded with its own deep history, societal norms, and resentments."

—ROBERT TUTTON, *PASTE MAGAZINE*

"*LOW* is so rich with beauty, yet depressing as hell. I love every page of it."

—NICK COUTURE, *COMICOSITY*



In the far distant future, the sun's premature expansion has irradiated Earth, sending humanity to the lowest depths of the seas, hidden within radiation-shielded cities, while probes scour the universe for inhabitable worlds. After tens of thousands of years, a single probe returns, crashing on Earth's surface, a now-alien place no human has seen for millennia. Now Stel Caine and her husband Joel, the last Helmsmen of the once-great city of Salus, must rise from the depths of mankind's despair, and journey to the surface in search of salvation.

Frequent collaborators RICK REMENDER (*Black Science*, *Deadly Class*) and GREG TOCCHINI (*Last Days of American Crime*, *Uncanny X-Force*) dive into an aquatic sci-fi/fantasy tale of one family's struggle to rekindle the flame of hope in a dark and dying world.

RATED M / MATURE  
SCI-FI / ADVENTURE



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