

BOOM!
STUDIOS

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#3

SEVEN SECRETS™

The cover art features a large, intense close-up of a character's face at the top, with glowing yellow eyes and a determined expression. Below this, three smaller characters are shown in a dynamic, action-oriented pose. The character on the left has orange hair and is looking back over their shoulder. The middle character has dark skin and curly hair, looking forward with a determined expression. The character on the right has dark hair and is holding a black folder or book. The background is filled with dark, angular shapes and bright yellow light streaks, creating a sense of high energy and conflict.

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SEVEN SECRETS™

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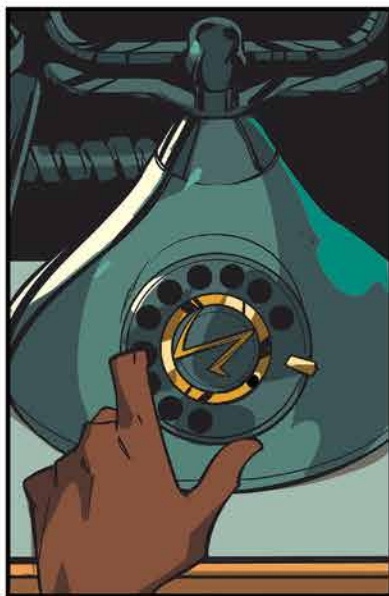
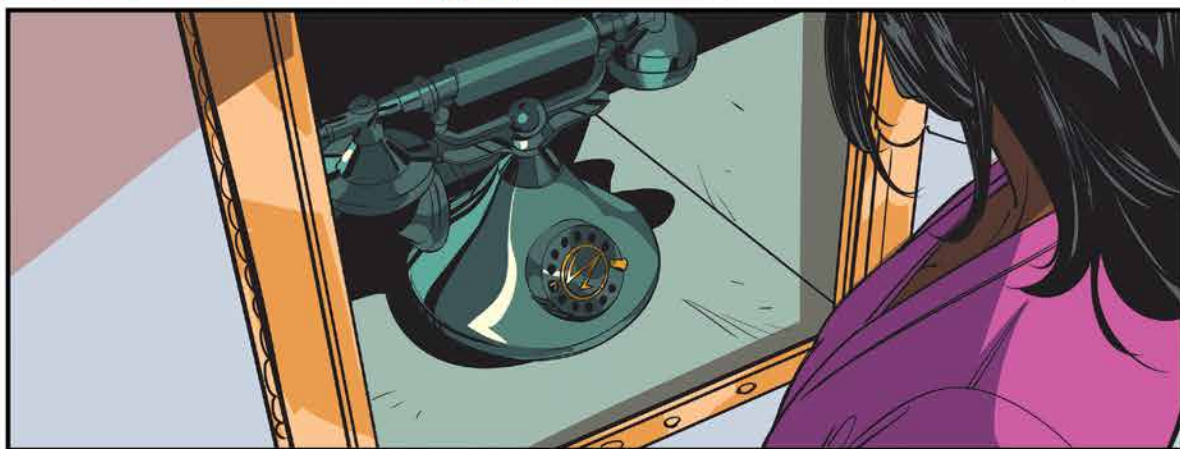
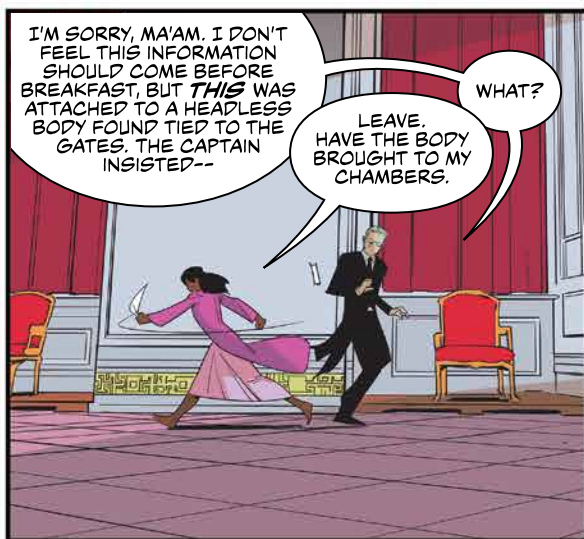
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**BUCKINGHAM PALACE.
LONDON.**











MY MOTHER ARRIVED IN VENICE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, AFTER MY FATHER HAD BEEN KILLED.

I'D BEEN WAITING FOR HER.



TAJANA.

EVA.
I'M SO SORRY.



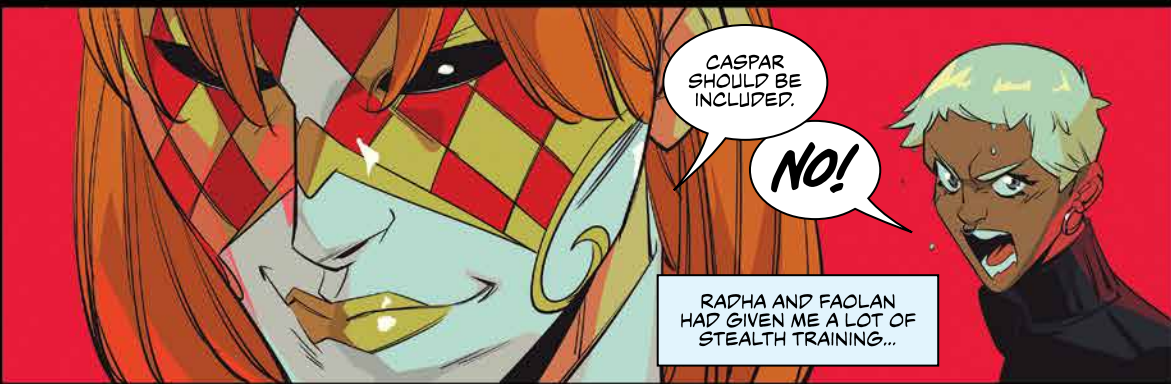
YOU WILL BE ELEVATED TO KEEPER. TRIALS WILL BE HELD FOR A NEW HOLDER.



MY CLASS HAS MANY FINE CAPETS WHO I BELIEVE ARE READY FOR THE TRIALS.

MANY?

OKAY. MAYBE THREE. FEL. TITUS. DION.



CASPAR SHOULD BE INCLUDED.

NO!

RAPHA AND FAOLAN HAD GIVEN ME A LOT OF STEALTH TRAINING...

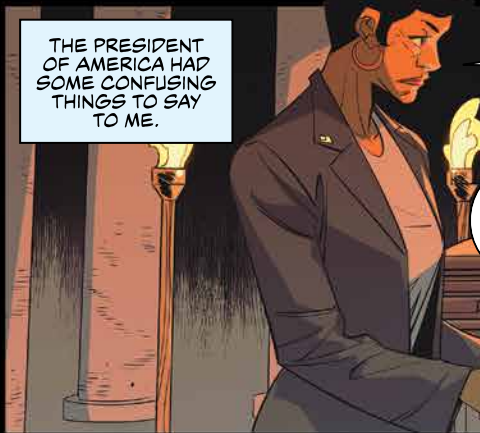




...WE HAD
TO *BURY*
MY DAD.



NINE WORLD LEADERS
ATTENDED. THREE PRIME
MINISTERS, AN EMPEROR,
A KING, A QUEEN AND
THREE PRESIDENTS.



THE PRESIDENT
OF AMERICA HAD
SOME CONFUSING
THINGS TO SAY
TO ME.



YOU'RE
CASPAR?

YES.

I UNDERSTAND
THINGS WERE...
COMPLICATED. BUT HE
WAS A GREAT MAN
AND I'M SORRY FOR
YOUR LOSS.



CANTO
SAID IT
WAS...

A GREAT
HONOR SO MANY
IMPORTANT
PEOPLE CAME
FOR SIGURD.

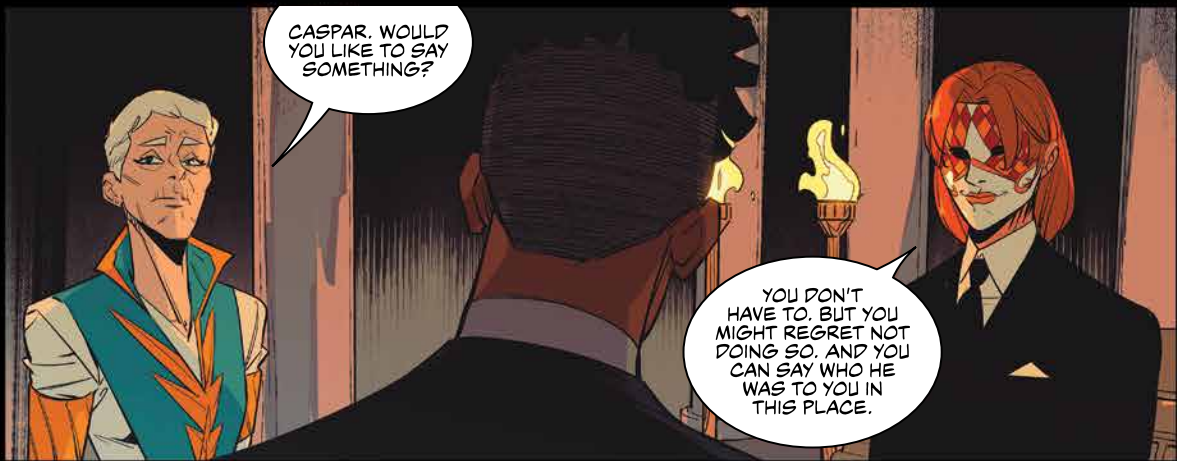
I COULDN'T SEE WHY
THAT WOULD MATTER TO
A DEAD PERSON.



THEY ALL TOLD
STORIES ABOUT
SIGURD.

THE STORIES WERE
BROKEN, LIKE THEY'D
BEEN REDACTED.
LIKE ALL THEIR
SENTENCES HAD
BLACK LINES RULED
THROUGH THEM.

WHAT I HEARD WAS
AMAZING, BUT I DIDN'T
RECOGNIZE THE
PERSON THEY TALKED
ABOUT AT ALL.



CASPAR. WOULD
YOU LIKE TO SAY
SOMETHING?

YOU DON'T
HAVE TO, BUT YOU
MIGHT REGRET NOT
DOING SO. AND YOU
CAN SAY WHO HE
WAS TO YOU IN
THIS PLACE.



I DIDN'T WANT
TO SPEAK AT
ALL. BUT I
TRIED, BECAUSE
I THOUGHT IT
WAS EXPECTED
OF ME.

UM...
SIGURD WAS
MY FATHER. BUT
WE WEREN'T
REALLY ALLOWED
TO TALK ABOUT
THAT. I ONCE
GAVE HIM A BIRD.
HE TAUGHT ME
TO FIGHT.



I DON'T
KNOW IF
HE LIKED
ME.





BIRDS?

SIGURD CARVED ME BIRDS.

THERE'S MORE.



HOW OLD DID HE THINK I WAS?

I DON'T THINK HE BOUGHT THAT **RECENTLY**.

HOW MANY THINGS ARE THERE?



THERE WERE FIFTEEN GIFTS.

ONE FOR EVERY YEAR I'D BEEN ALIVE.

BIRTHDAY PRESENTS SIGURD COULDN'T GIVE ME.



I TOLD HIM I LIKED HIS JACKET...

I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HE HEARD ME.

MY FATHER TOOK THE FINAL GIFT OFF HIS OWN BACK.



IT'S A LITTLE BIG.

YOU'LL GROW. IT'S KIND OF WHAT HAPPENS.



CASPAR.
CAN YOU
KEEP A
SECRET?

AFTER ALL
THE TRAINING
I'VE HAD, I'D
HOPE SO.



I MEAN IT. I NEED
YOU TO PROMISE
ME.

I
PROMISE.



I HAVE TO TELL
YOU WHAT SIGURD...
I NEED TO SAY WHAT
HE NEVER HAD THE
CHANCE TO.

BUT IT'S
DANGEROUS.

YOU CAN
TRUST ME.
IT'S OKAY.



CASPAR...

I LOVE
YOU WITH
MY WHOLE
HEART.



IT WAS THE
FIRST TIME IN
MY LIFE ANYONE
HAD KISSED
ME.

AND IT IS STILL
THE GREATEST
SECRET I'VE
EVER HEARD.



ARMED WITH
MY FATHER'S
JACKET...



...AND A LOVE
I NEVER KNEW
EXISTED...



...I
BEGAN
THE
TRIALS.

THESE
ARE YOUR
CASES.

YOU **LOSE** YOUR CASE, YOU
WILL NOT BE THE **HOLDER**
OF THE SEVENTH
SECRET.



THERE WERE
FOUR OF US.
TITUS, DION,
AND FEL.



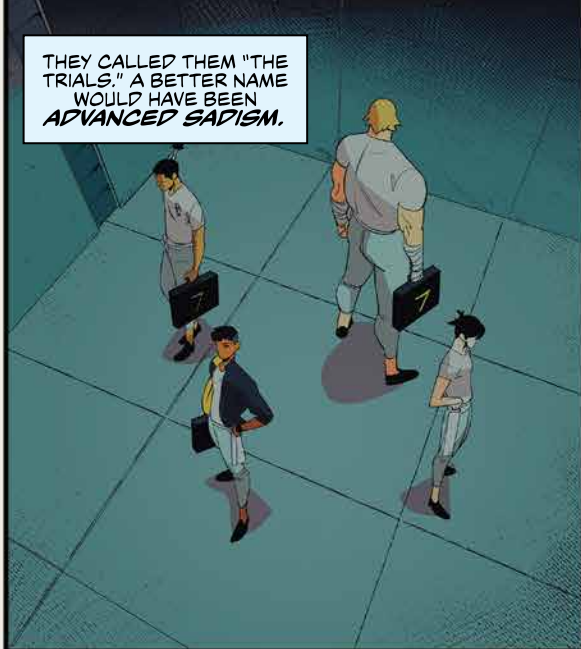
THIS IS ALL I'VE
EVER WANTED.
DON'T GET IN
MY WAY.



I DIDN'T
CARE WHAT
WAS
COMING.

I WAS
NEVER
LETTING
GO.

THEY CALLED THEM "THE TRIALS." A BETTER NAME WOULD HAVE BEEN *ADVANCED SADISM*.

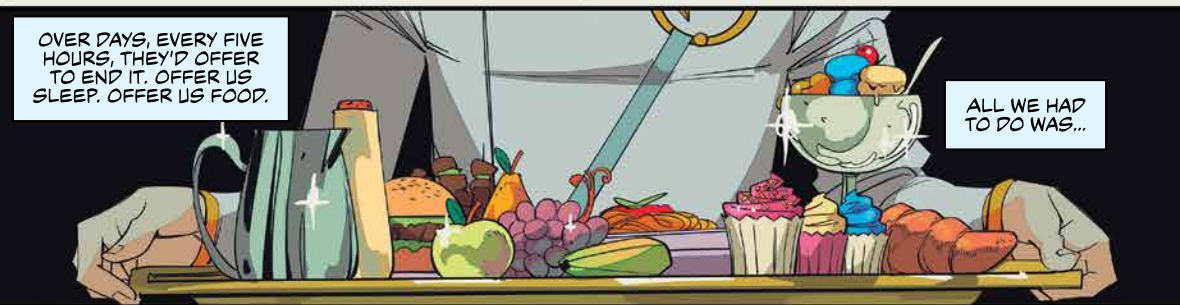


THEY BEGAN WITH SLEEP DEPRIVATION.



AND THEY STARVED US.

OVER DAYS, EVERY FIVE HOURS, THEY'D OFFER TO END IT. OFFER US SLEEP. OFFER US FOOD.



ALL WE HAD TO DO WAS...

GIVE US YOUR CASE.



NO.



NO.



NO.



@#% OFF.



ON THE THIRD NIGHT, THEY DROVE US TO MONTE BELDONE.



AND THEY LEFT US.



HUDDLE TOGETHER.

I DON'T NEED TO.



BUT THEY WEREN'T JUST TRYING TO BREAK US.

TITUS. DON'T BE YOU. GET IN HERE.



STAY CLOSE. STAY WARM.

WE CAN GET THROUGH THIS.



THEY WERE ALSO TRYING TO PUSH US TOGETHER FOR WHAT CAME NEXT...



...THE
TORTURE.



TO TEST OUR
LOYALTY, THEY HAD
ONE OF US WATCH
WHILE ANOTHER
WAS TORTURED.

BOTH
TRIALISTS HAD
THE POWER TO
STOP IT WITH A
WORD.

HNING!



APPARENTLY,
TITUS DIDN'T
BLINK WHEN
THEY WORKED
ON DION.

NAAARGH!!!

GIVE ME
THE SECRET.

NAH.



DION WAS
THE FIRST TO
BUCKLE.

STOP!

BUT NOT
BECAUSE OF
HIS PAIN...



...HE DID IT
FOR ME.

LEAVE
HIM ALONE.
YOU CAN
HAVE IT.

DION...?



YOU DIDN'T HAVE
TO DO THAT, MAN.
I COULD HAVE
HANDLED--

JUST
DON'T LET
TITUS WIN.



EITHER
ONE OF YOU
CAN STOP THIS
AT ANY TIME.
JUST GIVE UP
YOUR CASE.

NEXT,
IT WAS MY
TURN TO
SIT AND
WATCH.



BUT I...

CRK

...I DIDN'T AGREE
WITH THE
PARAMETERS.

HEY!

THD

WHOOOSH

CRNCH





I'M NOT SURE YOU WERE ALLOWED TO DO THAT.

WELL, THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE SPECIFIC.



WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED IN THERE?

A TRIAL.



HE CAN'T JUST--

WHY NOT? BEING OVERPROTECTIVE IS HARDLY A BAD THING HERE, AND IT HAS BEEN DONE BEFORE.



BUT THAT'S THE FIRST TIME FOR--

2,342 YEARS.



HERE. I'M DONE.

WHY?



I'M NOT BEATEN. I'M JUST HONESTLY NOT SURE I'M UP FOR SPENDING MY LIFE IN SERVITUDE, PROTECTING AN INANIMATE OBJECT.

AND BEING TORTURED REALLY DOESN'T INSPIRE THE LOYALTY YOU MIGHT THINK IT DOES.



AND THEN
THERE
WERE TWO.

THEY'D TESTED OUR
BREAKING POINT. NOW IT
WAS TIME TO TEST US
AGAINST EACH OTHER.



ARGHH!!



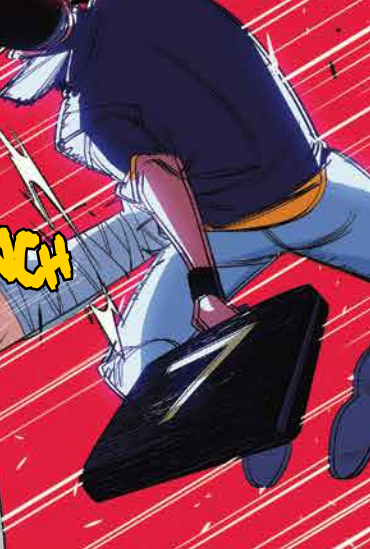
THD



I HONESTLY
THOUGHT IT
WOULD GO
BETTER.

HNF!

CRUNCH



IT DID NOT
GO WELL.





AM I
OUT?

BECAUSE...
YOU FELL
OFF A
BEAM?



NO.

YOU'VE SHOWN
US, IN THE HIGHLY
UNLIKELY EVENT OF YOU
NEEDING TO FIGHT FOR
YOUR SECRET ON A
PLANK OF WOOD, YOU
COULD DO WITH SOME
MORE PRACTICE.

BUT WE'RE
LOOKING FOR
A BIT **MORE**
THAN THAT.



ALSO,
DESPITE BEING
KNOCKED
DOWN, YOU ARE
STILL HOLDING
YOUR CASE.

WHILE
TITUS--



YES!



OUT!



DOES THAT MEAN...?

IT DOES. IT'S OVER. YOU CAN GIVE ME THE CASE.

NO.



GOOD MAN.

IT'S YOURS. IT WILL ALWAYS BE YOURS.

TO HOLD, AND ONE DAY, PERHAPS, TO **KEEP**.



WHEN DO I GET THE REAL THING?

YOU HAVE IT. YOU WERE HOLDING THE ACTUAL SECRET THE WHOLE TIME.

WHAT?

TAJANA HAD A LOT OF FAITH IN YOU.



I...I LEFT IT OUTSIDE WHEN I WENT TO THE BATHROOM.

I WOULDN'T REPEAT THAT.



ARE YOU PROUD OF ME?

I AM. AND I'M ALSO A LITTLE SAD. THIS IS A GREAT HONOR, BUT ALSO A GREAT BURDEN.

THE SECRET AND I WERE INTRINSICALLY LINKED FROM THAT DAY. TWO THINGS MY MOTHER WOULD FIGHT TO THE DEATH FOR IN ONE HANDY PACKAGE.



HER FIGHTING FOR ME STARTED THE SAME DAY I WAS MADE **HOLDER**.

FIRST KEEPER! THERE'S SOMETHING--



NEXT:
**ABSOLUTE
CARNAGE**