

TWOKINDS

Chapter Fourteen



MUTINY



What do you mean 'no'?!



I'm sorry, Flora. I told you, I'm not willing to release them.

Why not?!



They stuck their neck out for you!



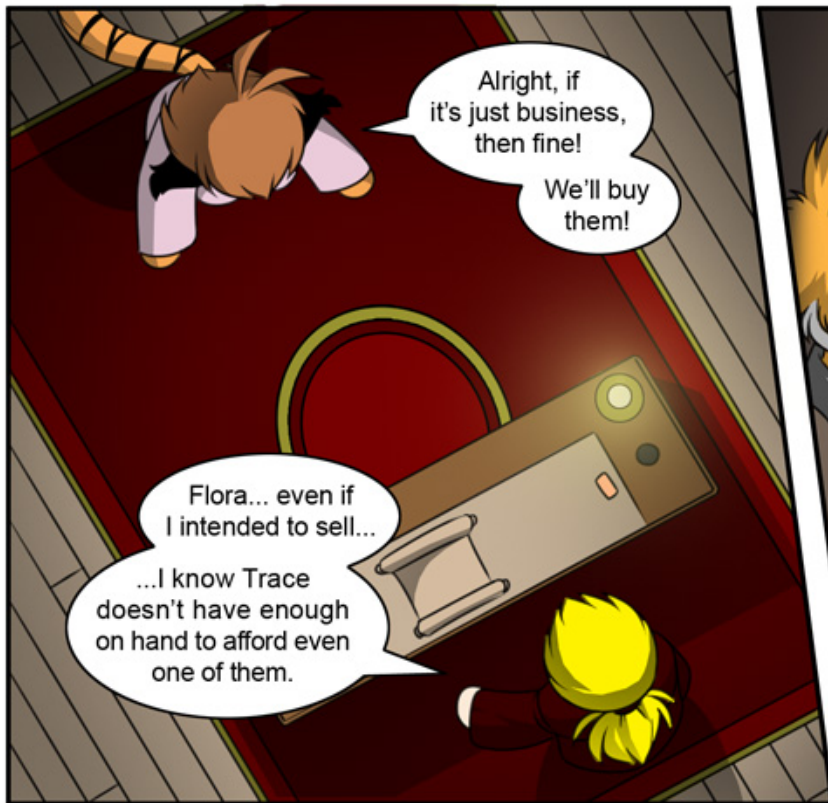
They could have easily taken this ship for themselves and ran when the Basitins said so.

But they didn't. They risked their freedom for you and the others!



Flora, I can't just release a slave every time he does what he's supposed to do.

Again, I apologize, but you knew what business I was in when you agreed to come aboard.



Alright, if it's just business, then fine!
We'll buy them!

Flora... even if I intended to sell...
...I know Trace doesn't have enough on hand to afford even one of them.



My answer has to still be no.



Tsaw!
I'm out of here...

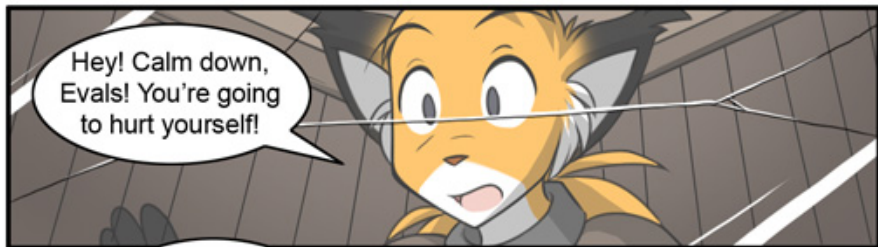
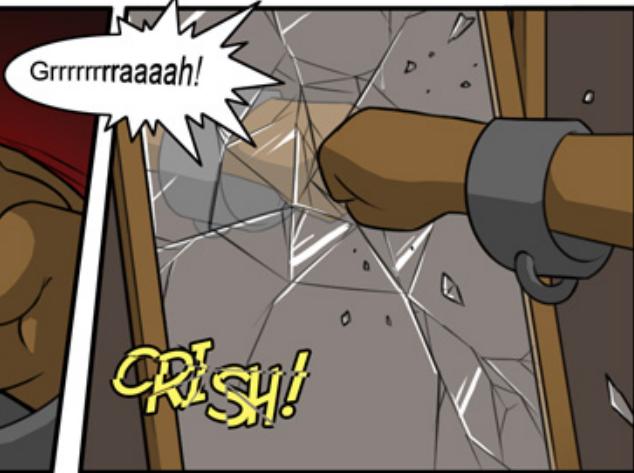
Oh, alright. Wait up!



I can't believe you!
You actually had me fooled for a while into thinking you really did care for Keidran in your own weird way.

But you really are just a perverted hypocrite!





Hey! Calm down, Evals! You're going to hurt yourself!



Calm down?! Why should I?

For the first time in four years I can finally think for myself again!

There's no magic constantly controlling my every action!

But any day now Eric's going to figure it out and put it back, and we'll lose our chance for freedom forever!

So how can you be so calm?!



'Oy!



Evals, it's different for me!

I was born into slavery. Unlike you, I don't have any place to go back to!



What? So are you saying you enjoy being a slave?

No! You know I don't. It's just... it's more complicated.

It's not complicated at all! You'd just come back with me!



You don't understand!

It's not that simple for me!



I've lived my whole life among humans. Human cities... human music... human foods... it's all I've ever known.

The life of a Keidran... living on the land in a tribe... it's entirely foreign to me!



I can't just run out into the wilderness to live among wild Keidran. I have no survival skills. I don't know Keidran customs or traditions. I can't even speak the Keidran language very well!

I would not survive!



I am a Keidran, but my culture is human.

I want to be free, but... I also want to continue working and living in the human cities I've always called home.



Well, I'm sorry to burst your bubble, Mike, but your dream's a fantasy.

Humans and keidran living together will never happen. They'll never accept us as equals.

So you'd better make up your mind who's side you're on, and soon...



Because I'm not going to wait around for Eric to remove my will again!

Meanwhile...

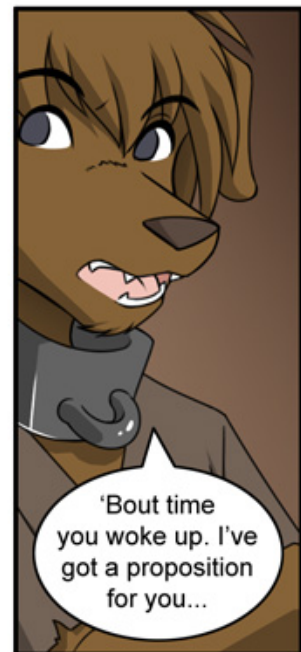


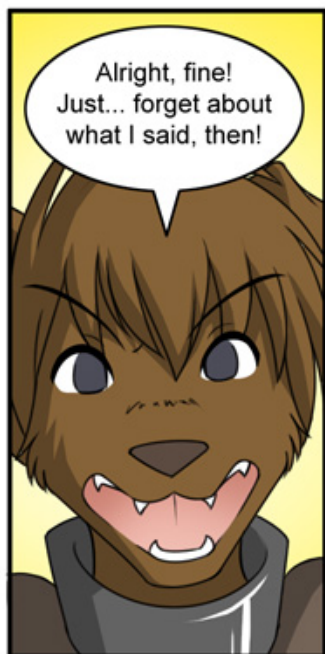
It's not fair!



Flora, relax. We'll think of something.

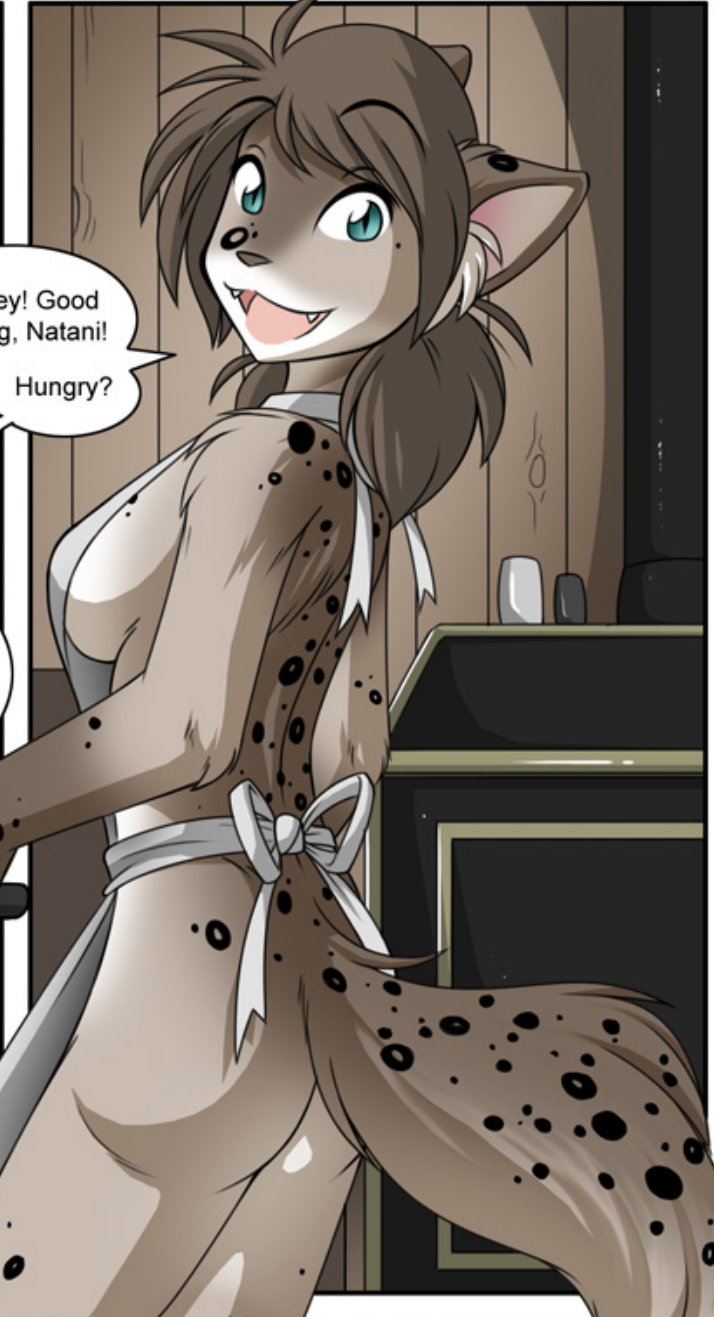








I really should do something about that, but- Mrrf? I smell food... coffee...

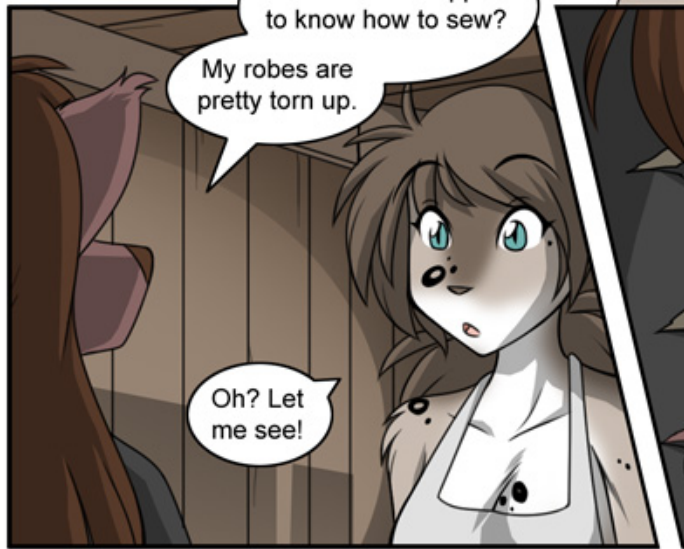


Oh, Hey! Good morning, Natani! Hungry?

You're just in time for second breakfast, if you want some!



Uh, yeah, sure. That'd be great.
...
Say...



You wouldn't happen to know how to sew?
My robes are pretty torn up.
Oh? Let me see!



But, if you give me some time to clean up, I'll see what I can do!
Hm... yeah, it's pretty bad...



Here's the laundry room!

Alright, I'm set! Now, take off your robes!

Just need a few things... needle, cloth, thread...



W-wait!
T-take them off?
Right now?



Well, of course, silly! I can't fix them if you don't give them to me!
Here, let me help you out!

No-no-no stop!



Huh? I don't understand, I thought you wanted me to fix them?



Well, yeah, but...

C-can't you just sew it while I still have it on?

Well, I suppose I could try. But it'd be easier if you took them off. Plus you wouldn't have to stay the whole time.

I don't mind waiting! Really, I'd prefer it this way.




Hm... these bandages...




H-hey! What do you think you're doing?! Don't mess with that!





So... you're both a cook and a seamstress.


Do you really know medicine, too?



Well... sort of.

I've read up on it, anyway. That's how I've learned a lot of what I can do.

Reading?




Oh yeah!

Ever since Eric taught me how to read, I've loved learning about all sorts of interesting things.


Cook books, apothecary journals, magic scrolls... it's all fascinating!

Really... huh.




I... never learned how. To read, that is. Not much, anyway.

It wasn't exactly a priority growing up.



Oh, you should!

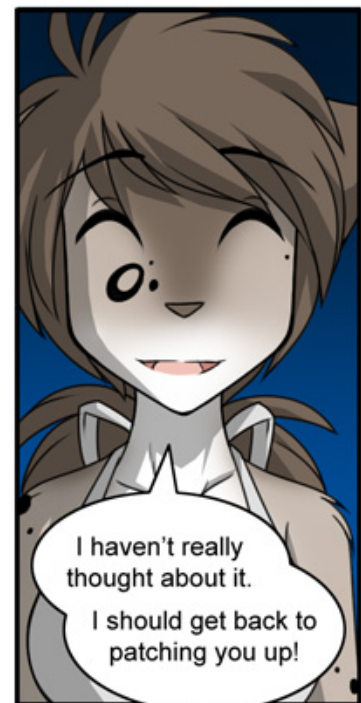
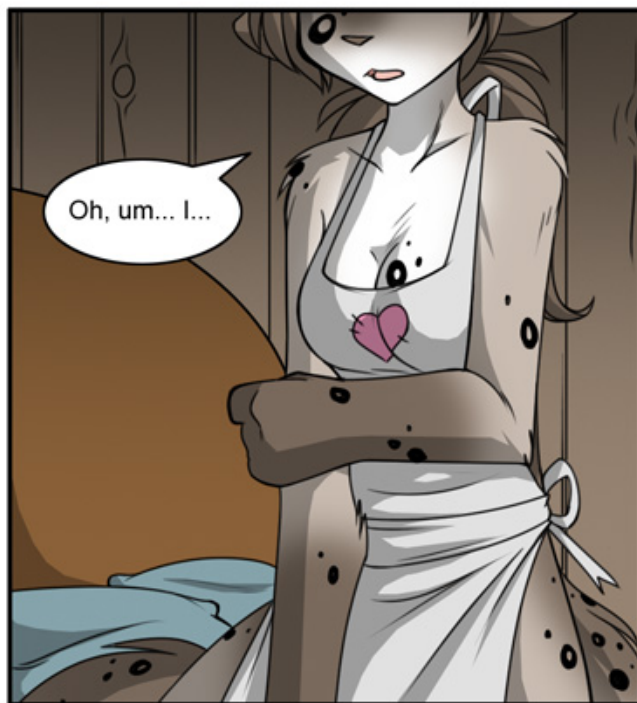
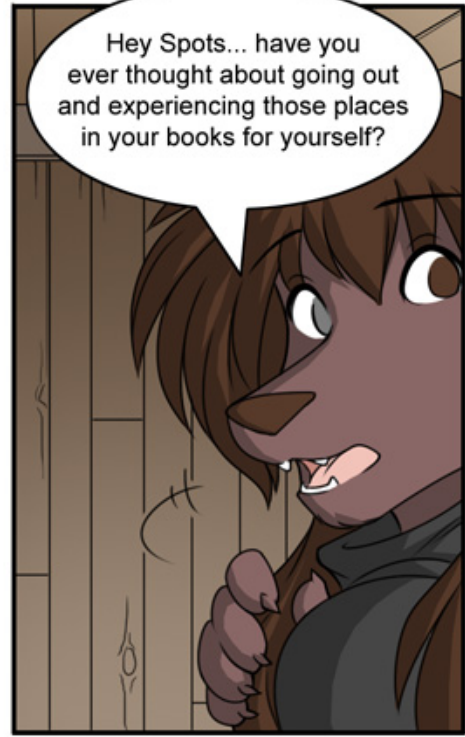
Would you like me to help teach you? There's so much to be gained from them.



And they aren't all educational, you know!

There's also so many books on people and places from all over the world!

It's great to be able to experience it all, if only through stories.





Meanwhile...

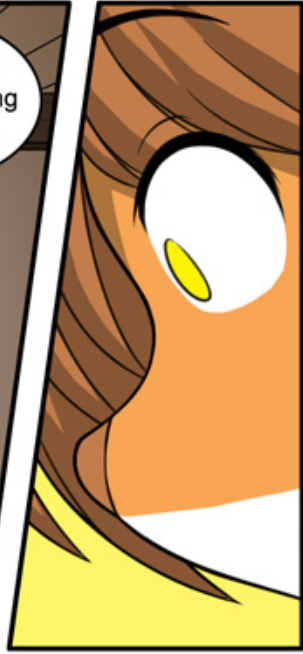
Flora, please don't be upset.

I'm going to go talk to Eric.



I promise I'll work something out with him.

Thank you, Trace.



Ah! Well...

I... I hope you can talk some sense into him.



Flora, is there something wrong?



Ever since we left, you've been distant.

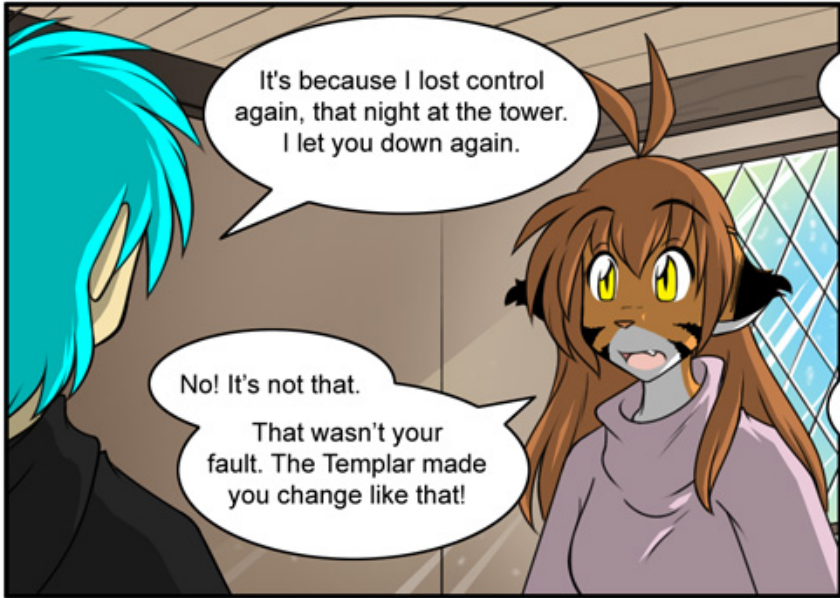
You know you can tell me anything.

It... it's nothing... I'm just concerned.



...it's me, isn't it?

Huh?





I mean I'm done trying to chase down my past.

The Templar, black magic... there's no point in dwelling on it anymore.

It's time I started thinking about the present, and doing what I can to put things right. Starting with the slaves.



I'm headed to talk with Eric.

Don't worry, Flora. One way or another, I'll make him see reason.

They'll leave this ship as free men, and we can all head to Lyn'knoll together.

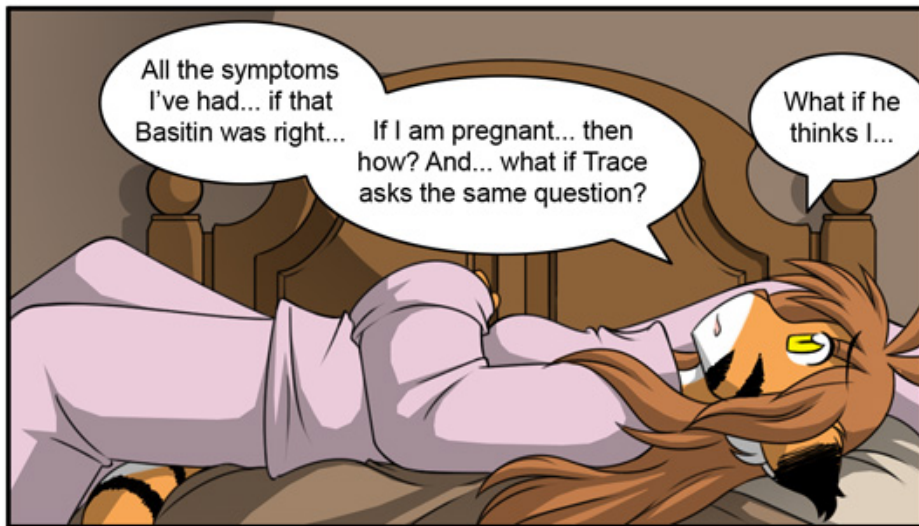
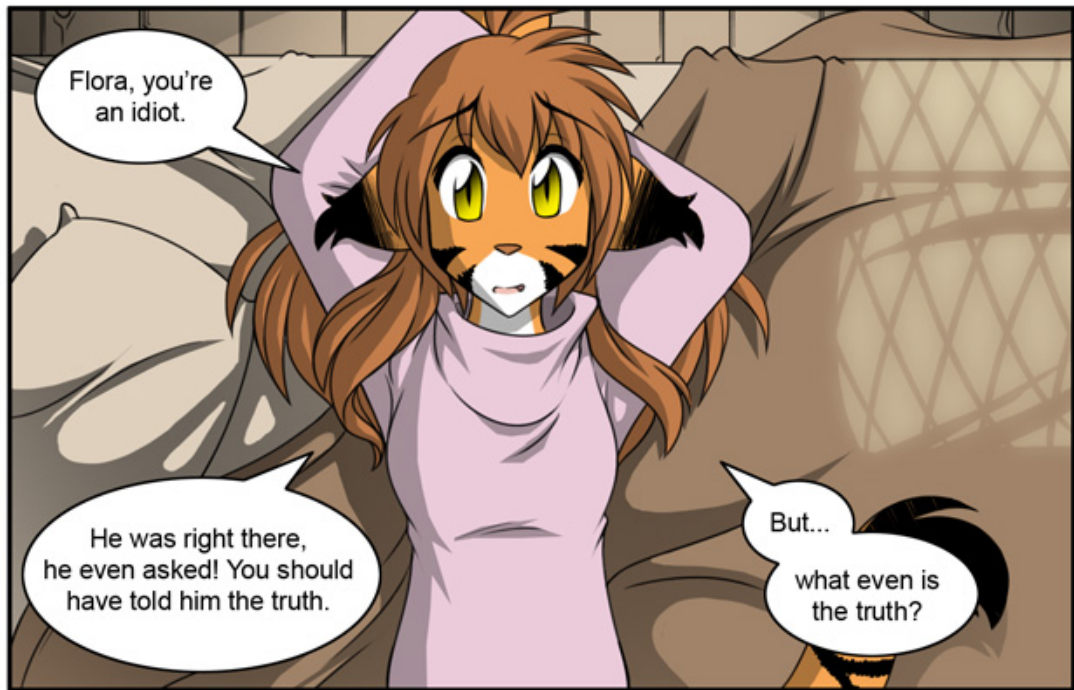
How does that sound?



...Thank you, Trace. I'd like that.

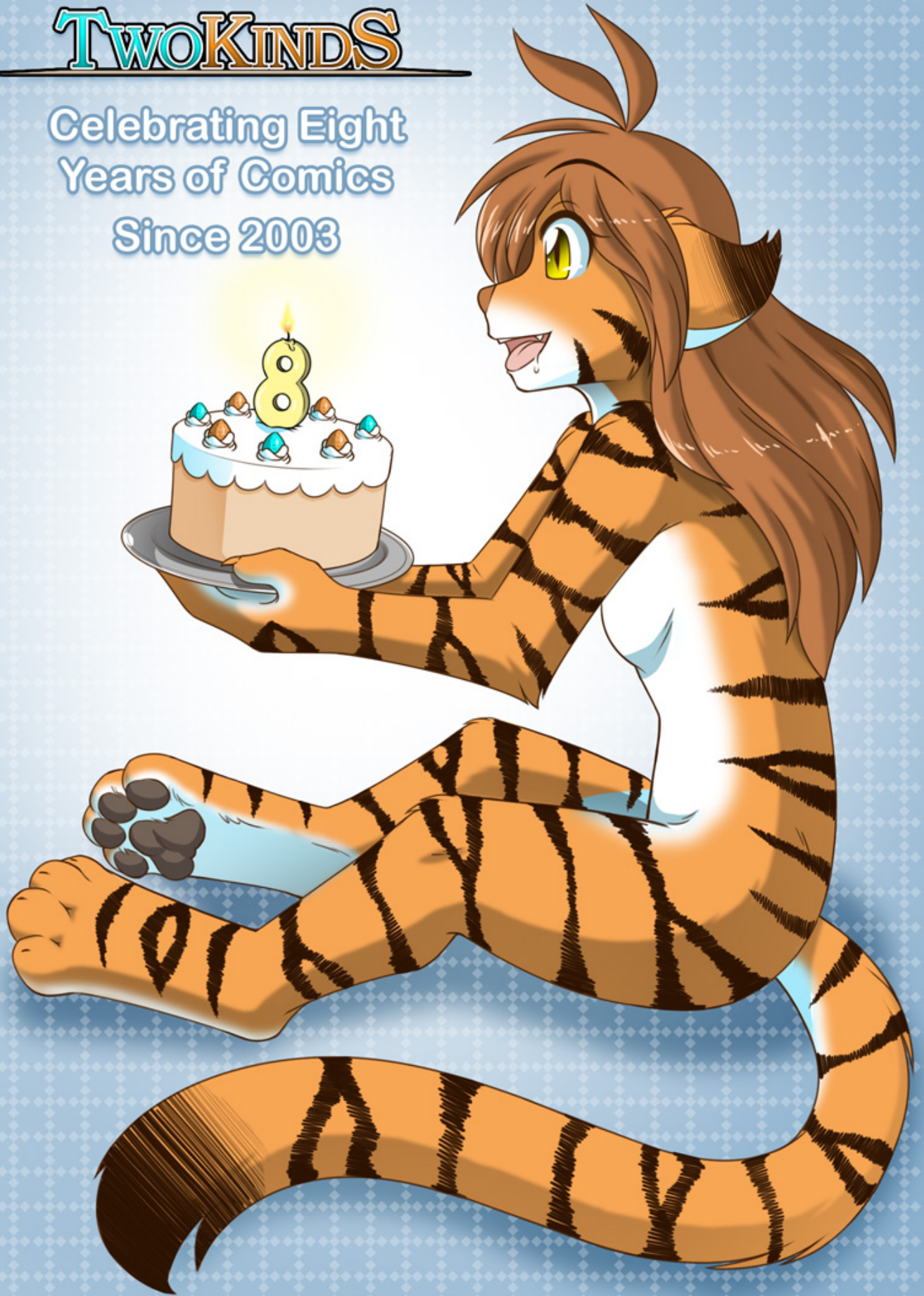


...There's just one thing I have to take care of first, Flora.



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Oh...! You weren't supposed to hear that!
Please don't tell anyone!



Oh, heh...
Don't worry about it. It's already forgotten.

Thank you!



Actually, it's kind of a relief to let it out.

You see, I don't even know if I'm really pregnant or not.

I've only been with Trace! And... Keidran can't have children with Humans, right?

I... I wouldn't know.

Humans and Keidran have lived together for **hundreds** of years!

If it could have happened, it would've at *some point*, right?

I really just want to get back to

But I've been having all these symptoms lately!

Getting sick, eating more...

And look! Do I seem pregnant to you?

I - I don't know!

Look, I really have to

I thought I was just gaining weight at first.

But then I felt something... Maybe it was my imagination.

It's hard to tell. What if you feel it and—



Aaaaah!!
I don't want to be involved!



Hey, wait!
I need you to feel my belly!





Trace... as I told Ms. Flora, there's nothing I can do.

Even if I could sell them to you, you wouldn't have the funds for it.

But that's just it. I think I might have a solution.



This book is a journal of mine.

It details, among other things, my old finances.



It turns out, there's a small human village very near the tiger's forest.

I apparently own an estate there. It would only take a small detour for us to get in an out with the gold.

Then I can pay you, and everyone can be happy.

Please, be reasonable. The slaves seem insistant on becoming free...



Wait... what do you mean by "insistant"?

I thought this was all Flora's idea. The slaves shouldn't be able to...

Not unless the control spells were-



FIRE!!!



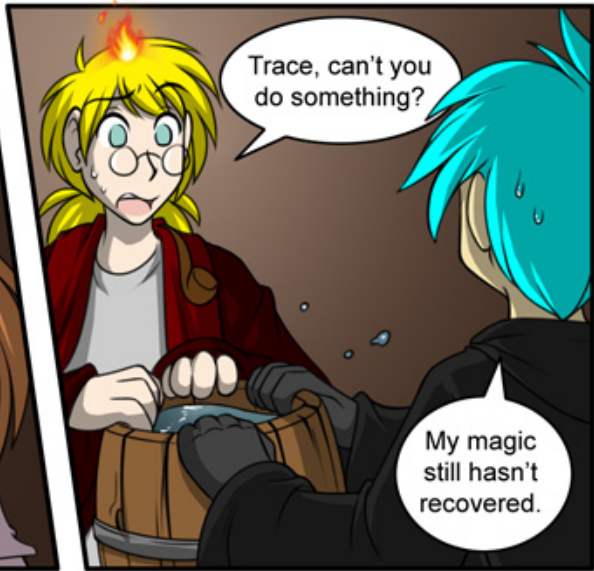
Meanwhile...





It just keeps spreading!

Don't stop!



Trace, can't you do something?

My magic still hasn't recovered.



Out of the way, Human!

splooosh!



Aquamentis!



SPLASH!

I-it's working!
We're saved!



You're the man, Natani!

Why yes...
yes I am.



SPUTTER...



POP!



Dammit! I knew this would happen!

I spent all night trying to charge these, but it's no good!

Don't you have more?



Yeah, one other. But it's not going to be enough.

Better than nothing!



What's wrong with them? Why did they stop?

He's trying to reuse his old crystals.

But it's not enough to keep up the spell.



Natani! I have an idea!

What you need to do is—



...eh? What's he saying?

Huh? Oh! Um...

Something about... "air."



Yeah! He says...

"conjuring water is hard."

"It would be easier just to remove all the air."

But what does that mean? What good would that do?



Okay, everyone stand back!

Hope you're right about this, Human!

One more time!

Aerismentis!

BWOOSH!

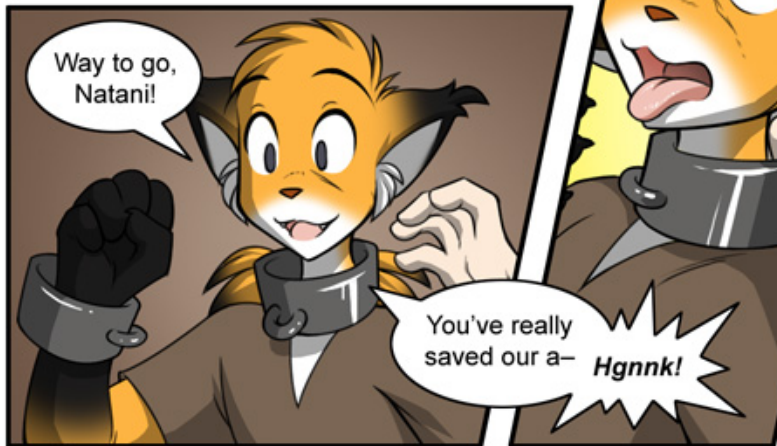
FWUSH!

It worked!

Don't let up yet!

Quick, we should douse the embers.







Snnrrrk!



Aha!
Caught in
the act!



Ah! E-Eric!

I... I wasn't
sleeping! I was
just... sweep-



Okay, okay!
I was sleeping
on the job!
It's not a
big deal!

You tried to burn
down the ship and kill
everyone on board!



Erk!



Admit it!

Okay, I...
wait... what?!



Where did everyone go?

There's a lot of embers here that could still catch fire.



Mike, are you okay? I've never seen Eric act like that before!

Yeah, I-I'm fine.



You... don't think Evals might have...?

No, he wouldn't!

He was desperate, but he'd never sacrifice us all to get away!



Hang on... I think I still smell burning. I think something is still on fire!



Everything in this whole room smells like something burned. What is it?

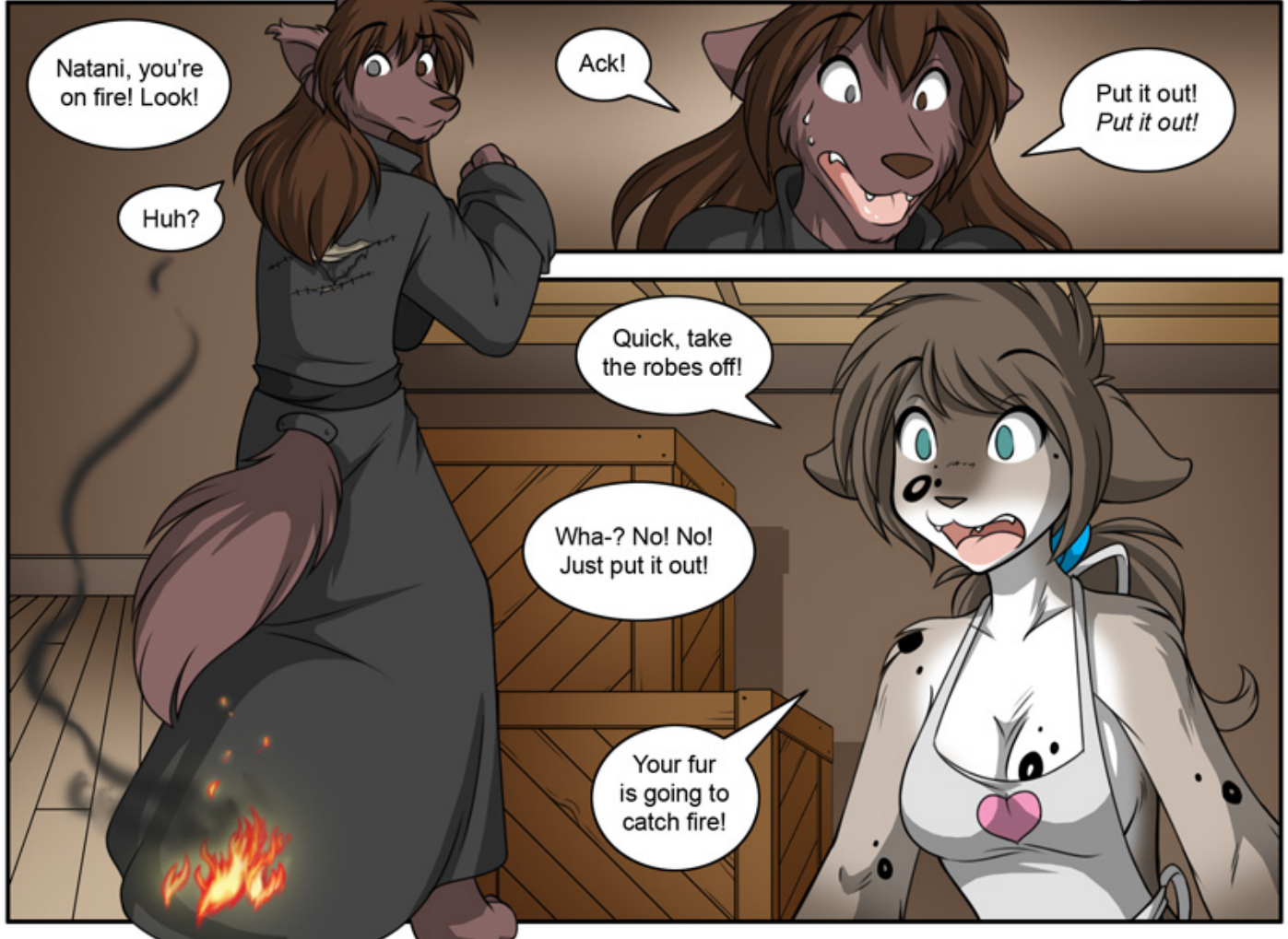


He wouldn't just leave me to die...

Would he?



Natani, it's you!



Natani, you're on fire! Look!

Ack!

Put it out!
Put it out!

Huh?

Quick, take the robes off!

Wha-? No! No!
Just put it out!

Your fur is going to catch fire!



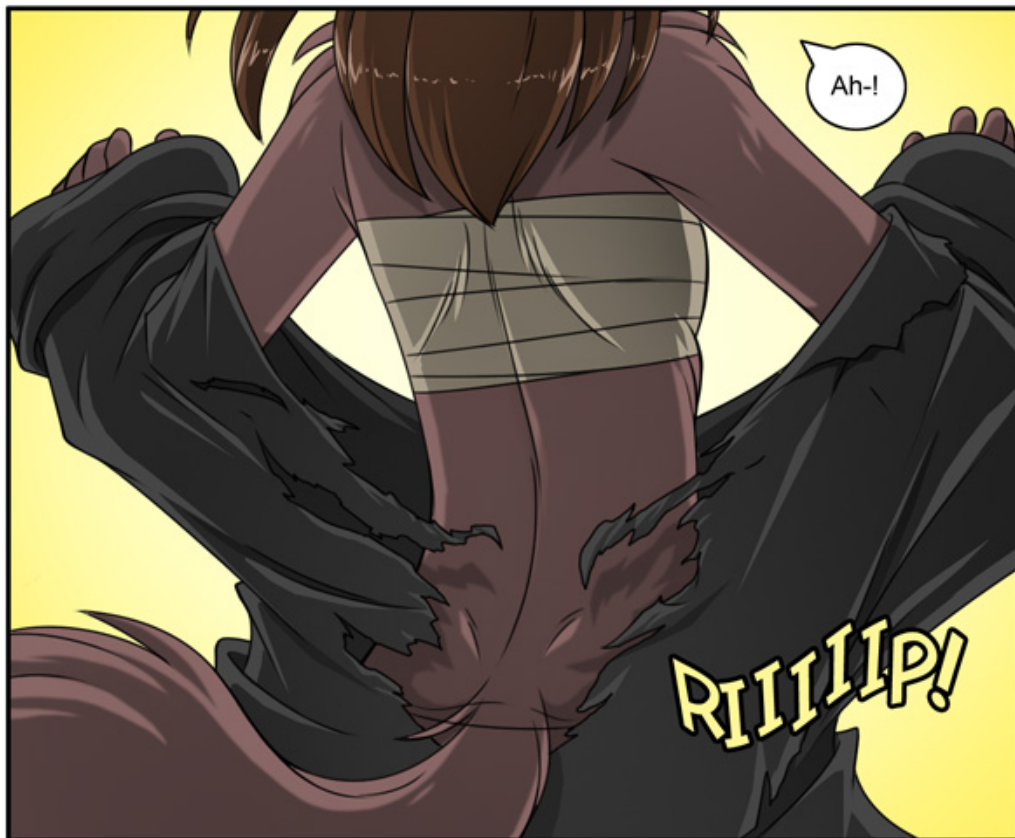
Oy oy! I've got some water!
H-hold still!



Stop struggling, Natani!
Take 'em off!
It's spreading!



No! Let go!
Stop!





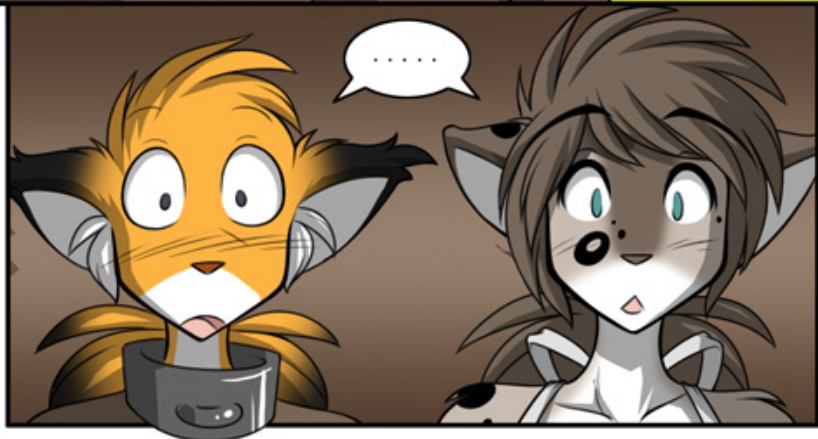
Wow! I've never seen you out in the open without those baggy robes on!
You must work out a lot. You're really buff!



O-oh...?
Oh, yeah, I do!
Ya know, gotta stay fit... heheh...



Well, I'm just gunna... go now.
Nothing to see here...



This... this isn't what it looks like!
I can explain!
You see, I... um...

Natani... you've been a girl this whole time?!

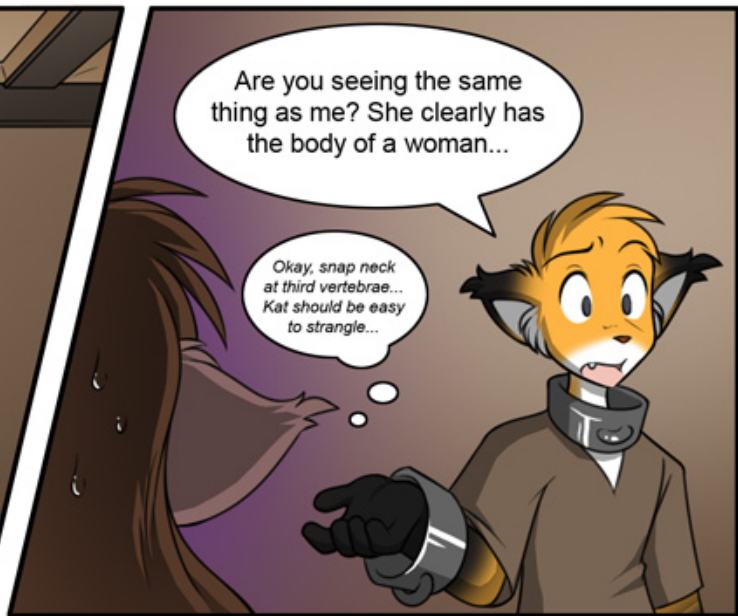




Mike! Don't be so insensitive!

You shouldn't call Natani a girl!

Huh?



Are you seeing the same thing as me? She clearly has the body of a woman...

Okay, snap neck at third vertebrae... Kat should be easy to strangle...



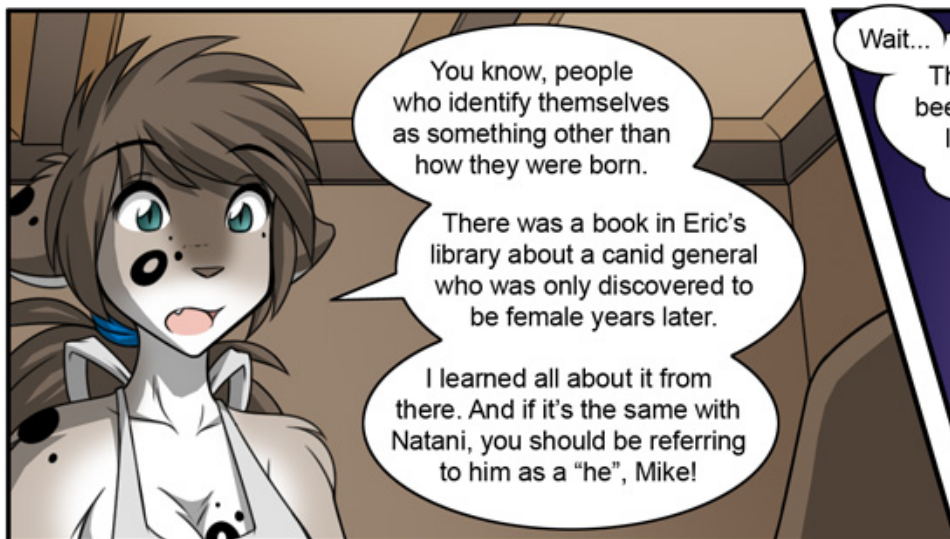
Natani, you're a man, right?

Huh? **Y-yes!** Like I said, it's not how it looks!



Don't worry, I understand, Natani! I've read about those like you before.

Those... like me?



You know, people who identify themselves as something other than how they were born.

There was a book in Eric's library about a canid general who was only discovered to be female years later.

I learned all about it from there. And if it's the same with Natani, you should be referring to him as a "he", Mike!



Wait...

There have been... others like me?







Erm, Eric...
um, sir, did you
call me?

Yes, come
over here.

CLICK!

Eh-?

My neck
thingy...



As I thought,
both of you have
had your control
spells disabled.

And of course with
the first chance of freedom,
you sabotaged the ship.

Then tried to flee
on the lifeboat.

I told you, we had
nothing to do with it!

I was taking
a nap for crying
out loud!

A likely story.
I think your plan
was just discovered
early, so you tried
to feign sleep.

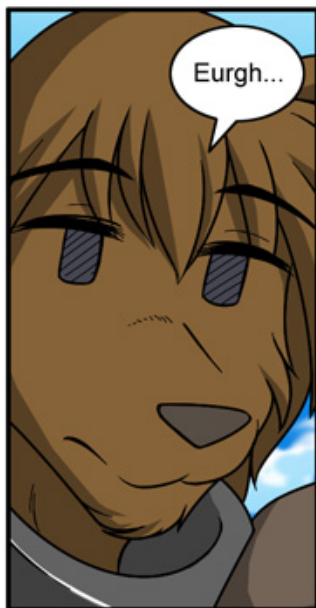
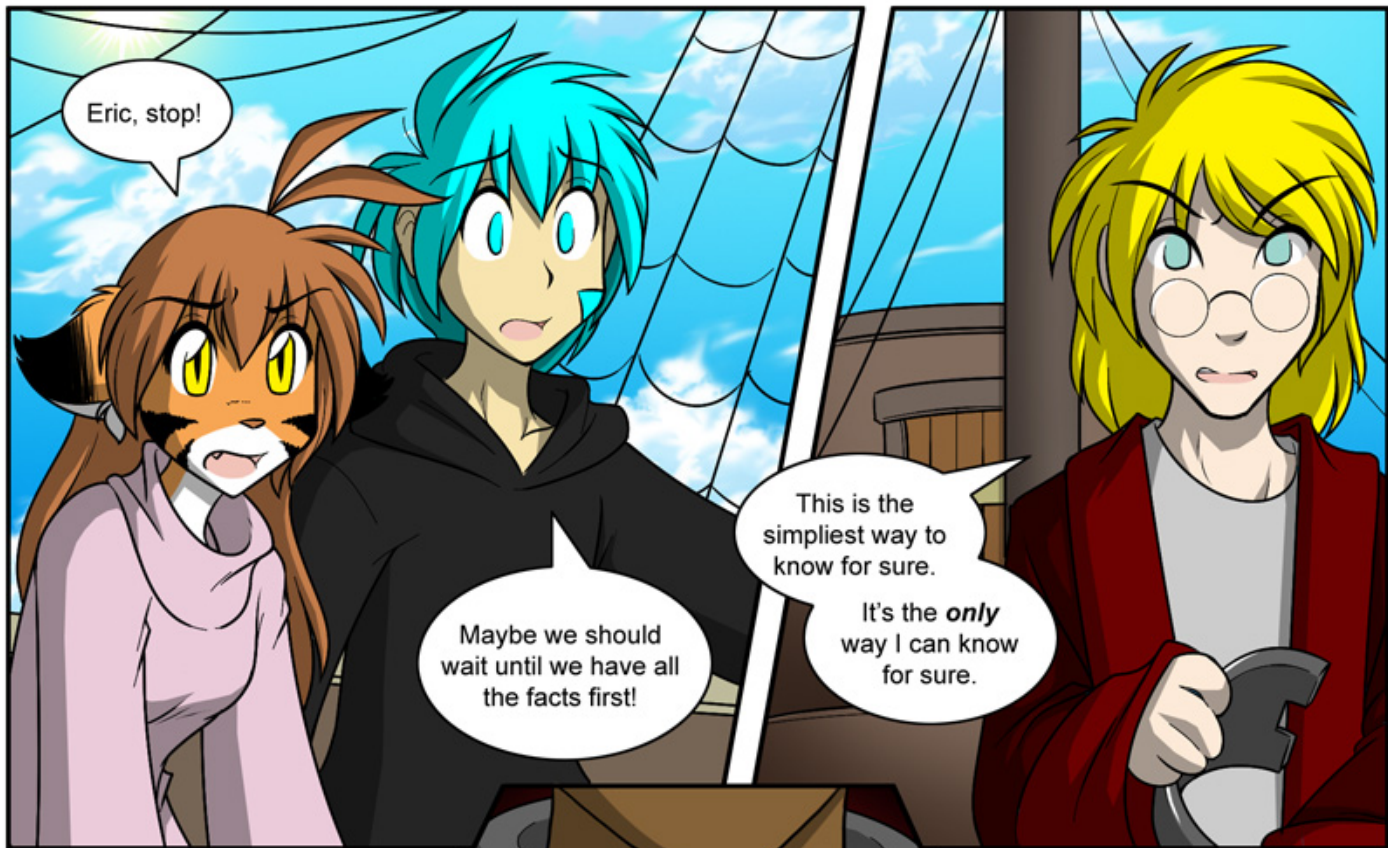
Doesn't matter.



I've had enough
time now to restore
the control spells.

Soon you
two will be back
to normal.

**No! Not again!
I didn't do it, I swear!
Please, don't put me
under it again!**





Grrr...



What?!



You see, Eric!
Stop jumping to conclusions!



No, I didn't!



Evals, answer truthfully:
Have you conspired against me or anyone else on this ship in any way since we left the island?



Grrgh!
Y-yes!

I attempted to gain support... for a mutiny.



Ah! Ah ha!
You see?
I was right!

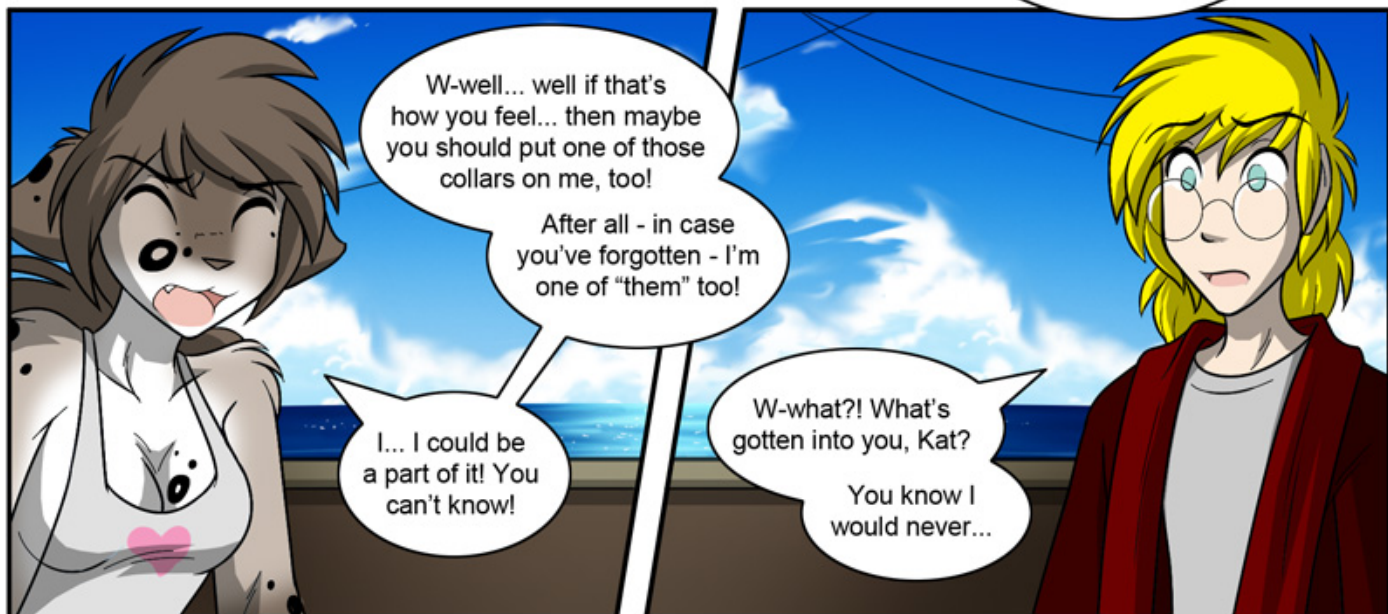


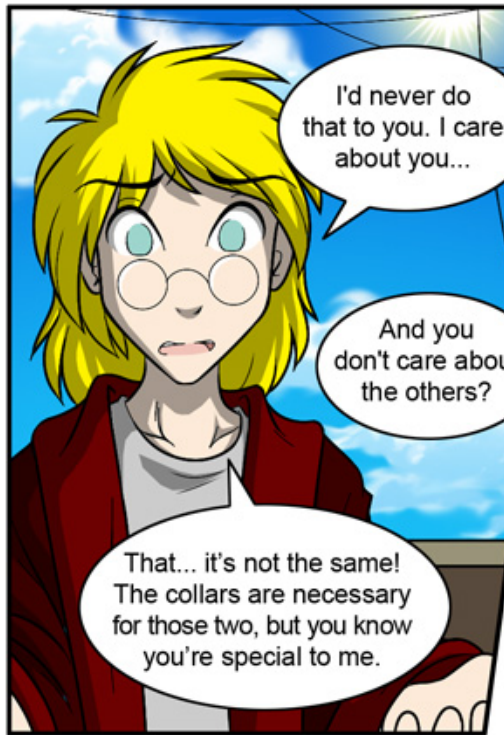
No! You don't understand!
His actions were not malicious!
He was just scared! Scared of what's happening right now!



So you're saying you knew about the conspiracy too!

Get over here, Mike, you're next!





I'd never do that to you. I care about you...

And you don't care about the others?

That... it's not the same! The collars are necessary for those two, but you know you're special to me.



Well obviously not special enough to change the fact that I'm still your slave, just like them!



W-what?!
Kat, what are you saying? You've never expressed any unhappiness with me before. Where is this coming from?



I'm not unhappy with you, Eric! I didn't want to bring it up like this...

Ever since you rescued me from your brother, I've been grateful to you.

You've always been so kind to me, but... I want to be more than just your servant.

Kathrin... I never thought... why haven't you ever talked to me about this before?

I- I don't know...



Maybe I've been foolish. I think a part of me has always hoped one day... you'd care enough...

That I wouldn't have to ask.





I never realized...

I mean, I never even considered that you might want...

Oh, Kat...

This is something I need to... think about.

But of course... if freedom is what you want... I guess I can work something out.



R-really?!

And the others? What about them?



I... I don't know.

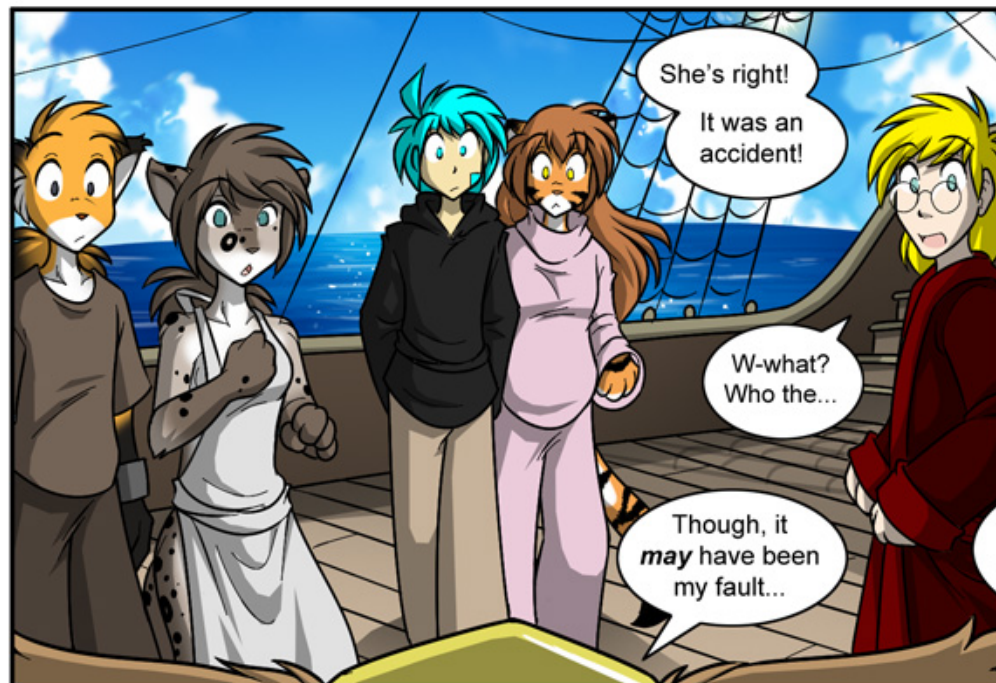
This is too much! I need... time to think!

And I can't think while the ship might still be in danger!



Eric! Haven't you ever considered that maybe the fire was just an accident all along?

That it was no one's fault?



She's right!

It was an accident!

W-what? Who the...

Though, it *may* have been my fault...



Oh, but first, allow me to introduce myself!

The name's Madelyn Adelaide, but my friends call me Maddie Addie!

Nice to meet 'cha!



...What?!

Oh, it wasn't very hard!
I'm small, and there weren't many people around.

Where the hell did you come from?
How did you get on my ship?

We- I mean I just walked right on board before you left and hid in a barrel.
You know, for a ship this size, you sure don't have a lot of crew...

So it was **you** who set my ship on fire?!



I-It wasn't on purpose!

Someone left a lantern on top of my barrel. When I lifted the lid to leave, it came crashing down!
I was putting it out when I heard running and, well... panicked.



But now you know it was all just an accident! No one needs to be blamed, and there's no hard feelings!
Right?

...R-right?

The Brig

CLANK!

Aw...



Well...

I suppose that settles that.

The saboteur has been caught.



Arrru...



Eric, you're not just gunna keep her locked up forever, are you?

She's just a kid.



Even a young Basitin can be dangerous.

She stays as long as necessary, until we know why she's here.

But questioning comes later. One problem at a time...

Mike, Evals, I suppose I was wrong. You two didn't have anything to do with the fire.

And... maybe I over-reacted... just a little.



Though I'm sure you can see why what I did was necessary.

Please, for now, return to your rooms until things can be sorted out.

I... will allow your collars to stay off for now.



Trace, can you meet me in my cabin? I think it's time to negotiate.

Uh, alright.



Well? Well?!

What did he say?

He... agreed. He said I could buy them and set them free.

Really?!

Yeah, he even gave me the keys to their cuffs.



ERK!

Trace, I knew you could do it!

Oh! Can I be the one to tell them? Pleeasee?

O-of course! Though, I didn't really do anything. I think what Kathrin said is what got to him.



Oh, speaking of Kat! I can't wait to tell her, too!

I mean sure, it's not going to be much different for her, but still, I'm sure she-



Flora, wait!

Huh?

Eric... Eric didn't agree to sell Kathrin.

W-what? You mean he's not going to set her free?

No, no! It's not that.

He just told me it was something he had to do himself.

