

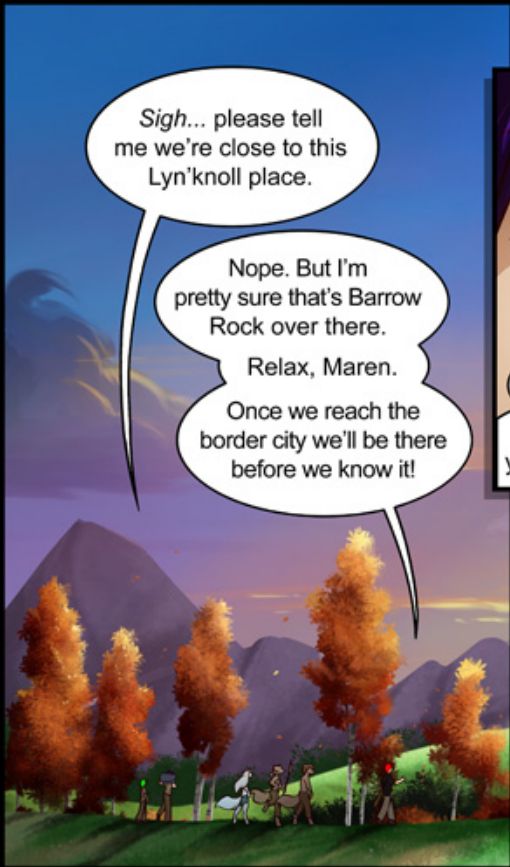
# TWOKENDS

BEWARE  
OF  
WOLVES!



Chapter 19  
**REUNIONS**





Sigh... please tell me we're close to this Lyn'knoll place.

Nope. But I'm pretty sure that's Barrow Rock over there.

Relax, Maren.

Once we reach the border city we'll be there before we know it!



You're not the one lugging around all the camping supplies!

Ngh...  
Easy for you to say...



Hey! Keep your voice down! Soldiers sometimes patrol these roads.

Need I remind you, our group is currently 50% wolf right now!



'Sides, Sythe and I already had a turn, it's too heavy for Karen, and Raine's still injured.

Don't worry. We're going to rest in... three more miles!

Grrr...

One more!



Say, Raine. I wanted to ask about your shape shifting...

Hm?

That cut on your stomach... would it still be there if you were to turn human again?

Er, yes, I think any changes remain.

Oh... okay.



... So say you got with Sythe and then changed back. Would you have humans or puppies?

THUD!

Karen! Don't ask stuff like that!









Ow!  
I wish my shoes still fit. How do Keidran stand walking barefoot all the time?



You get used to it.  
Aaah~!  
But I must admit, it's nice to take a load off.



Ugh. I don't know if I'll ever get used to it.  
It's still so strange to see you this way, with all that... fur.



Sorry. I know it bothers you.  
But believe me, if you think that's awkward, try being the one who has to wear the f—



**BRUSH!**  
Eep!



Maren! W-what are you doing?  
Brushing you.  
Your fur is tangled and matted all over. You clearly don't know how to care for it.  
Don't take this the wrong way, but I used to have a dog I groomed all the time.

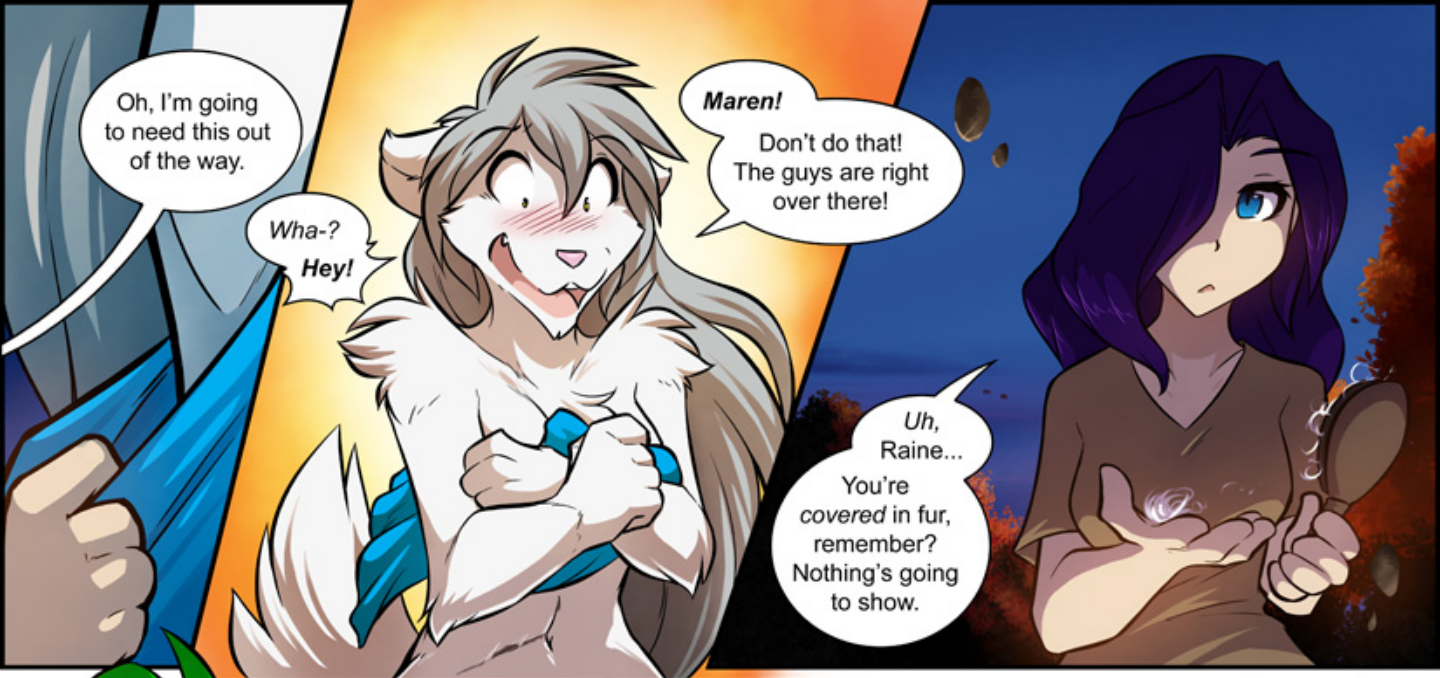


Dishevelled fur is kind of a pet-peeve of mine.  
It's why I try to avoid looking at Sythe.  
You know you love it!



So hold still and let me know if this hurts.  
N-no...  
This... this is nice.





Oh, I'm going to need this out of the way.

Wha-?  
Hey!

Maren!

Don't do that!  
The guys are right over there!

Uh,  
Raine...  
You're covered in fur, remember?  
Nothing's going to show.



Yeah! Besides, how are you going to get in the spring otherwise?

Relax, we're all friends here!

Well, except the moody wolf over there.

I... I know. Modesty's kind of silly at this point.

Especially with all the time we've spent camping together.

I'd just... prefer to keep it on for now. It helps me feel a little more... human.



Hey, don't sweat it, Raine.

It's fine.

Whatever makes you comfortable.

Although, even with the top...

You know there are also rows going down her stomach under that fur, right?

On me too, technically.

I know you're lying just to mess with me!

Hey, I just figured if you're still interested in Raine, you should know all the... perks.

Shut up!





So what's the deal with these floating rocks anyway?

Eh. Stuff's always floating around volcanoes. This is nothing.

You should see the boulders floating around Pike's Pass.

Yeah, I know! But why?

Oh. Well, they just do. I dunno.



It's because the magic is coming up from the earth.

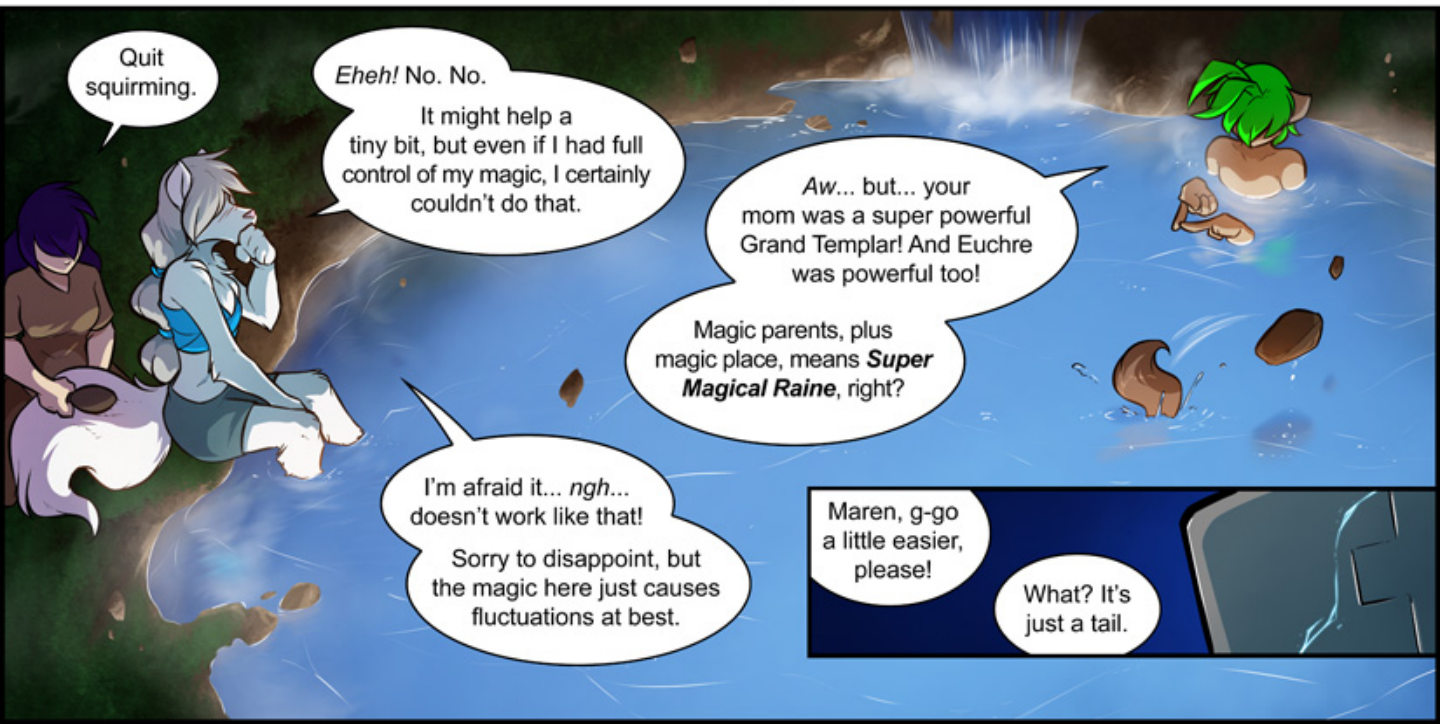
Places like these are where it's finding a way out and being released.

Ah! Maren!



Oh! Oh! Does that mean your magic is all super-charged here?

Maybe you can teleport us all to Edinmire!



Quit squirming.

Eheh! No. No. It might help a tiny bit, but even if I had full control of my magic, I certainly couldn't do that.

Aw... but... your mom was a super powerful Grand Templar! And Euchre was powerful too!

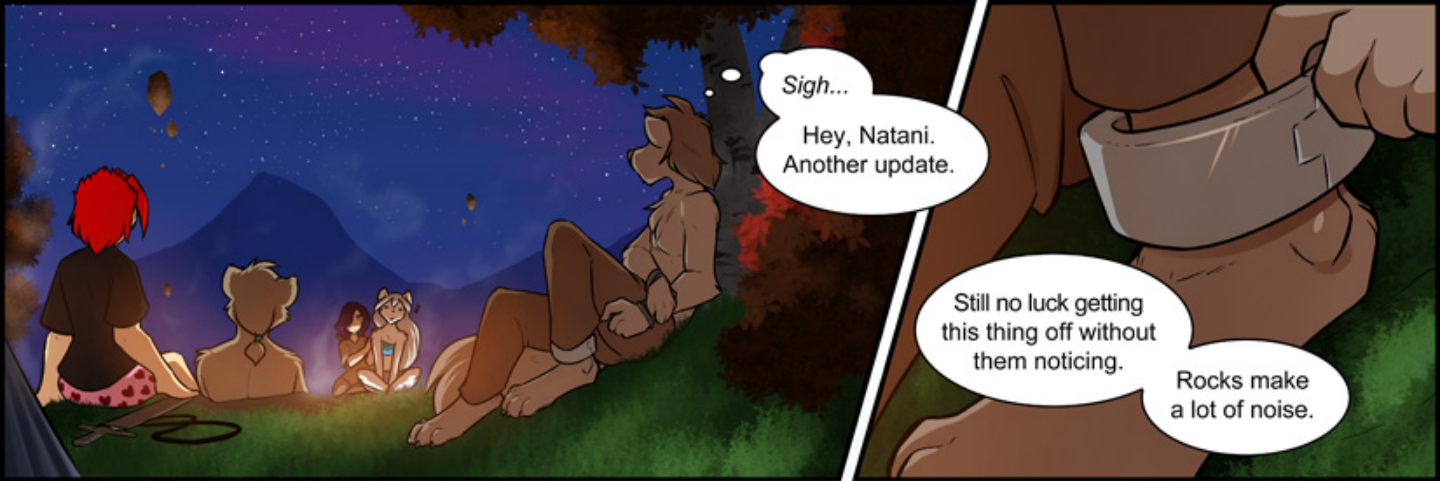
Magic parents, plus magic place, means **Super Magical Raine**, right?

I'm afraid it... ngh... doesn't work like that! Sorry to disappoint, but the magic here just causes fluctuations at best.

Maren, g-go a little easier, please!

What? It's just a tail.





Sigh...

Hey, Natani.  
Another update.

Still no luck getting  
this thing off without  
them noticing.

Rocks make  
a lot of noise.



Thought again  
about running for it, but as  
much as it pains me to admit,  
I do need these guys.

They have my map  
and supplies. They know  
the way and they know  
Trace and Flora.

They can get me  
to you if I can just keep  
being patient.

I just wish I knew  
what was happening on  
your end.

I keep telling  
myself this stupid thing is  
just blocking your thoughts  
from getting through...

But...



But... what  
if I'm wrong?

What if I'm talking  
to no one? What if I can't  
hear you because this thing  
severed the link?

What if I get  
it off just to find  
out you're...

That you're...

**Rrrraah!**  
«Natani! Please!  
Just say something!»



Zen?

Hey! I don't  
know what you just  
said, but pipe down  
over there!





<Natani?  
What is it?>

<I... I just  
heard Zen!

He's still blocked  
for some reason,  
but maybe...>

Zen?



Zen, if you can hear me,  
**do not go to Edinmire!**

**Do not go!**

It's not safe for  
wolves right now. I mean,  
more so than usual.

I'm not there, anyway.  
I'm in a carriage headed  
to the... uh, Legacy...

I'm headed to the  
**Grand Templar's place!**  
It's outside the city, north,  
in the mountains.

Go there! Just **do  
not enter Edinmire!**



<What... did I  
imagine that?

No, no! It was  
Natani! I felt it, just  
for a second!>



**Natani's okay!  
Oh, thank you!  
Gods, masks,  
whatever!**



Don't worry, Nat. Your  
big bro will be there soon.  
I'm almost to Edinmire!





SIGH...

I can't believe I'm stuck here on babysitting duty.

I know someone had to, but Edinmire's still burning. I should be down there!

Besides, there's something weird going on with these two...

If I didn't know better, I'd think they were... no, no, stop imagining things.



Trace, that Brahn guy has me worried.

The Templar know we're here now. They might be tied up with the wolves at the moment, but...

You know he's going to try something.

I know, Flora. But the guard still seems to recognize my authority.

Them keeping an eye on Natani means them also watching out for us.



Just be careful, Trace.

I'm not going to let them take you away from me again.

Heh. Don't worry.

I have no intention of leaving your side.



Ah, jeez! Uh...

O-oh! Looks like we're coming up on the estate! Thank the gods....



We are? But I don't see any—...woah.



The Legacy Estate

That's the estate?!

Yes? I mean, technically the land is part of it too, but that's the main house.

House? That thing is a castle!

Why in the world did I need a place that big just for me?

I... wouldn't presume to know, sir. Though, I have heard you would often host guests of... unusual size.

Oh! Speaking of, there's Reni now. I suppose she must have flown ahead to meet... with...

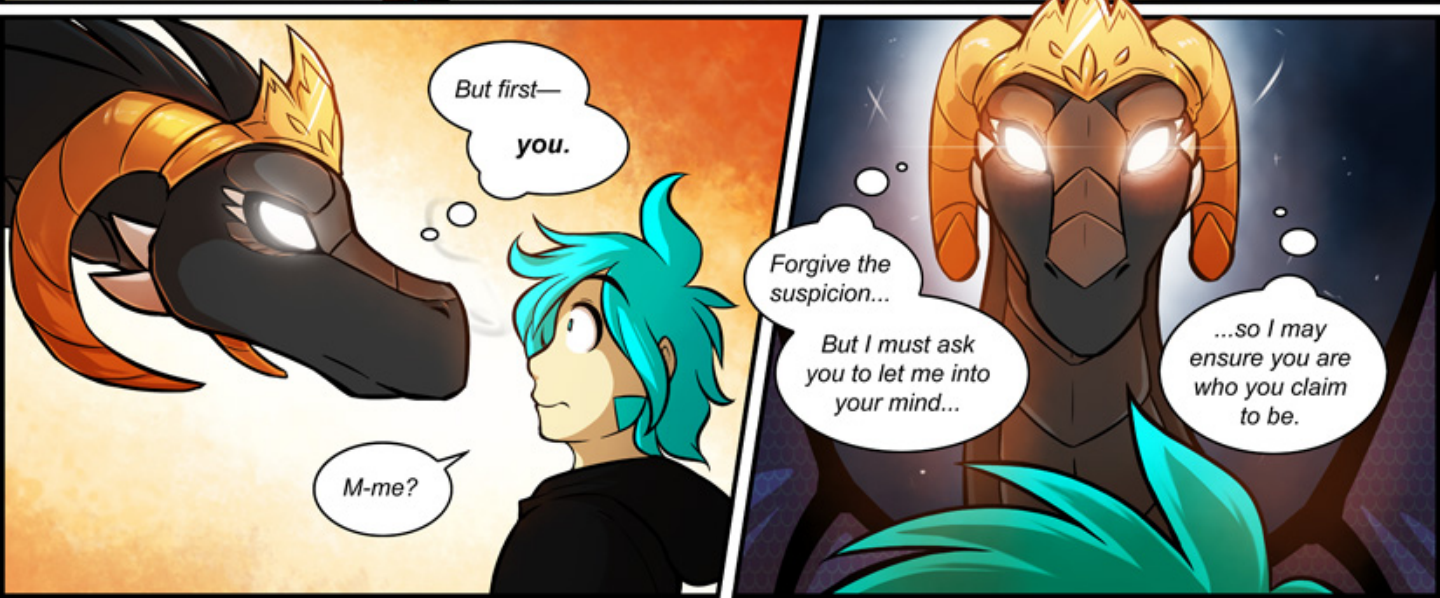
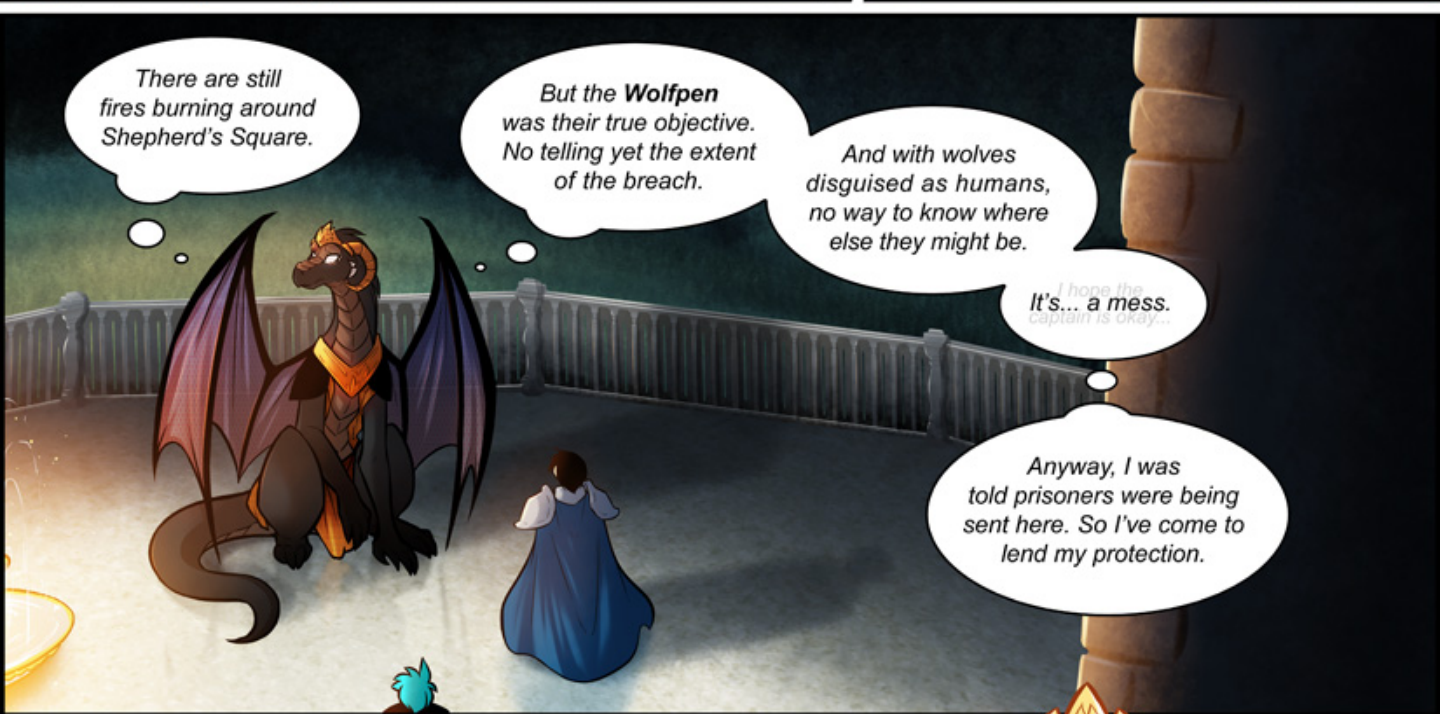
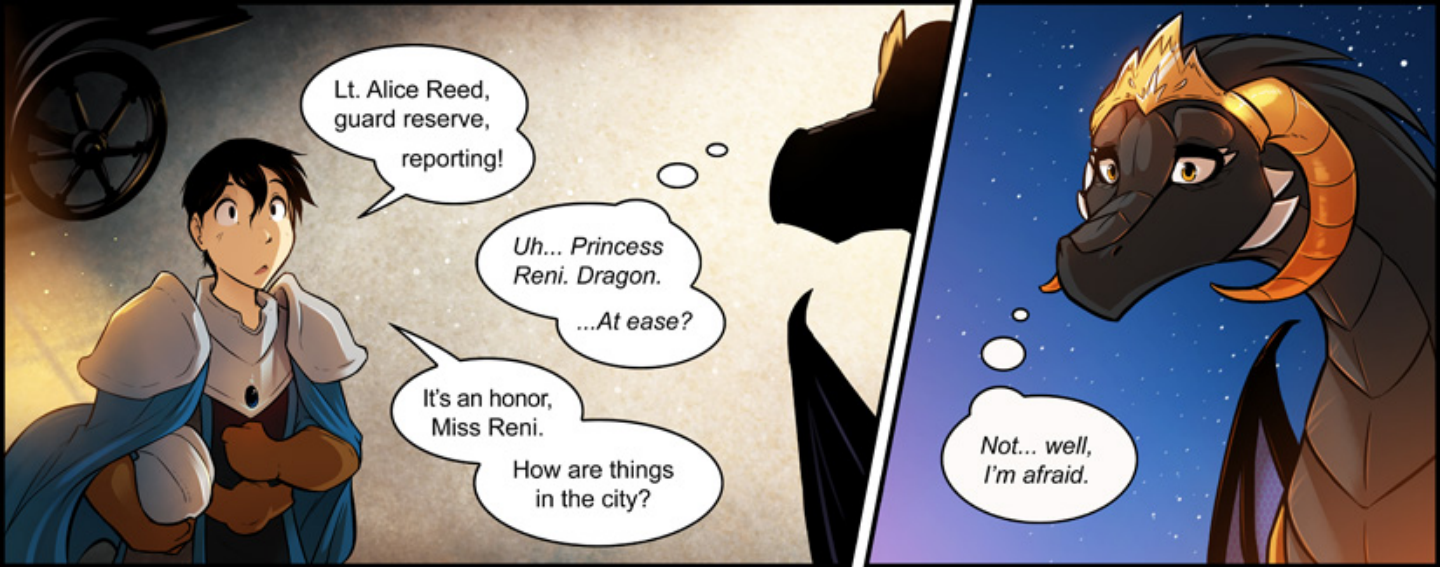
SLURP

...uh...

Sir Templar, Guardswoman! Greetings!

I - I was just... waiting for you!







Wait, this isn't right. Why is...? Oh. I see. Your memories were lost! This explains a great deal.



Where... am I?



I'm a Basitin!  
She's Keidran



You've been through a lot.

Still, I sense there's something you're trying to hide. Whatever it is, I ask you **show me!**



Mrreow~! Trace!

...Oh.  
Oh dear!

Ah!



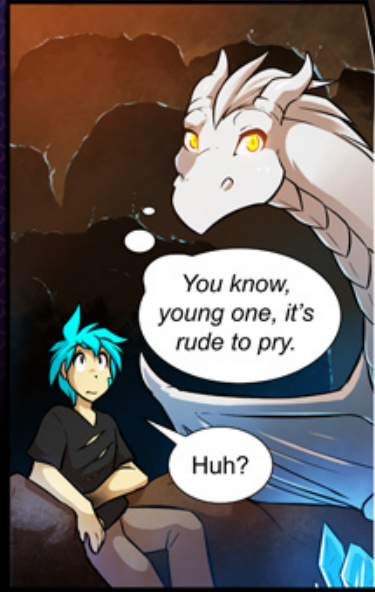
No no no! Nevermind! Next!

Sorry! That... I-I didn't think you... with a Keidran?! Oh, my...



O-okay, now-wait! ...Nora?

I cannot say for certain how long this sleep of mine will-



You know, young one, it's rude to pry.

Huh?



Grraaalr!

Ma'am? Are you alright?





Ehem.  
I apologize.

Grrarg...



It seems you  
are indeed who you  
claim to be.

Though the  
circumstances are not  
quite expected.

Nevertheless, if  
Lady Nora vouches for  
you, then that is good  
enough for me.



If you wish, I can  
try to fill you in later on  
anything you need.

But for now...

May I please have  
your permission to rest  
here in your home for  
the time being?

Oh, uh...  
sure, I guess.



Thank you.

It's been a long  
day. I suspect you  
and your... uh...

...companions  
feel the same.



Ah, speaking  
of which...

It looks like the  
rest of them have  
finally arrived.

I suggest  
we take this  
inside.

Well, this place  
sure beats the pants  
off my manor.

Erg... kinda  
regret saving this  
stuff now.



<Guess  
this is it. Hm.

Not a bad place to  
get imprisoned.>

<Oh, great,  
another giant  
lizard.>





So, uh...

Do we...  
knock, or...?

CLUNK!  
CREEEEEEK!



Ah, master. I see  
you've finally returned...  
quite a lot later than  
scheduled.  
I'd heard you'd died.  
What a shame.

It's a  
wolf!



Guardswoman, if  
you find *me* threatening,  
I **weep** for Edinmire.

Ah'm Rose- er, I am  
Roselyn, the seneschal  
of this residence.

All domestic  
wolves were  
relocated!

How is it you  
were not taken with  
the other wolves?!

If your guards  
think they could take me  
from *this* place, I would be  
very impressed.



Well, come in,  
it's cold out there.  
I'll make tea.





This entrance is huge!

As I said, dragon-sized.

It's been a fad among nobles to be able to host such guests, no matter how unlikely that is.

...Though in your case, I suppose it's more legitimate.



It's one fad I actually **do** appreciate.

I can't even count the number of times I've hit my head on a door frame.



...Seven.

Well, should be plenty of guest rooms. After today, I'm exhausted.



Woah, hey now! That wasn't part of the deal.

The arrangement was: we allow you to stay here, if you and your *wolf friend* stay in the dungeons.

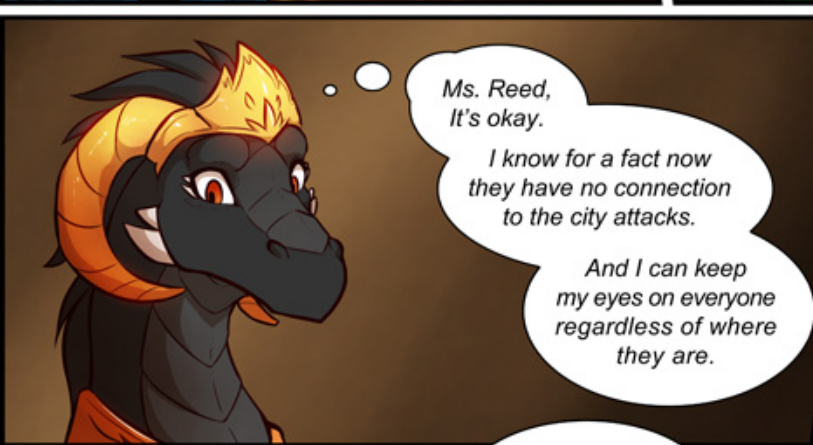
Remember?



No one is going in the dungeons.

This is my house (apparently) and therefore they are my guests.

But Captain Keiren said—!



Ms. Reed, it's okay.

I know for a fact now they have no connection to the city attacks.

And I can keep my eyes on everyone regardless of where they are.



Though you are mistaken, Trace.

The dungeons here will still see use.



*plop!*

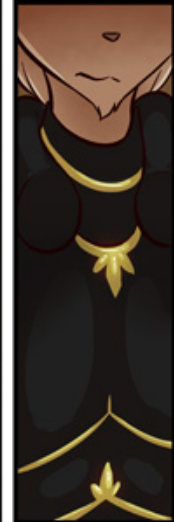
The wolf from before!

It's alive?

Yes, I made sure of it.

Once he is secured, I hope to learn more about what's behind this attack.





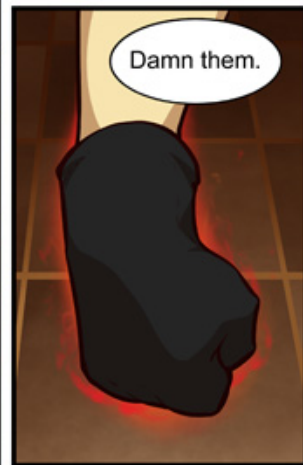




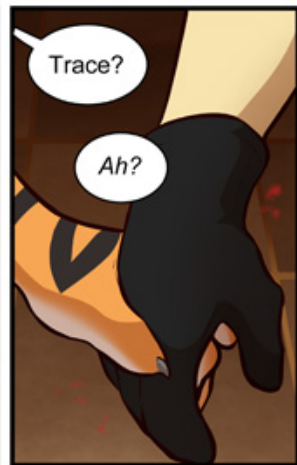




Ngh...



Damn them.



Trace?

Ah?



Are you okay?  
More memories?

Eh, no, just...  
emotions this time.  
I'm alright.

Are you  
sure?



Yeah. With  
you I am, Flora.

Though, maybe  
we should skip the tea.  
I'd like to lie down.

Uh... very  
well, master.

Your bedroom  
is prepared as  
always.



<Man... so  
much gold.

I'm really  
tempted to pocket  
some of this stuff.>

<...Huh. Snow  
wolves usually all look  
the same to me, but the  
one in this painting looks  
oddly... familiar.>



On second  
thought, maybe  
I shouldn't.

<You two  
know each  
other?>

Uh, erm...  
<It's nothing.

Snow wolves and  
forest wolves just don't  
get along, is all.>





The Legacy Estate has never hosted quite such a... **diverse** group of guests before.

I am aware Basitins in particular have requirements when it comes to sleeping arrangements.

But I assure you, there's plenty of space.

We have two wings on this floor, so male Basitins may take one separately if they so desire.



Distribute yourselves as you see fit.

Please note, the third floor is off limits.



<Hey! Hear that?

Looks like we're **finally** staying somewhere where you two won't have to share the same room!>



<Or even the same wing!>

<Oh... Great.>

<Y-yeah. Good. Finally.>



<B-but you know, after what happened with Natani...>

<Oh, yeah! I'm not nearly 100% yet...>

<Just to be safe, I should *prooobably* be nearby...>

<Yes! Safety!>

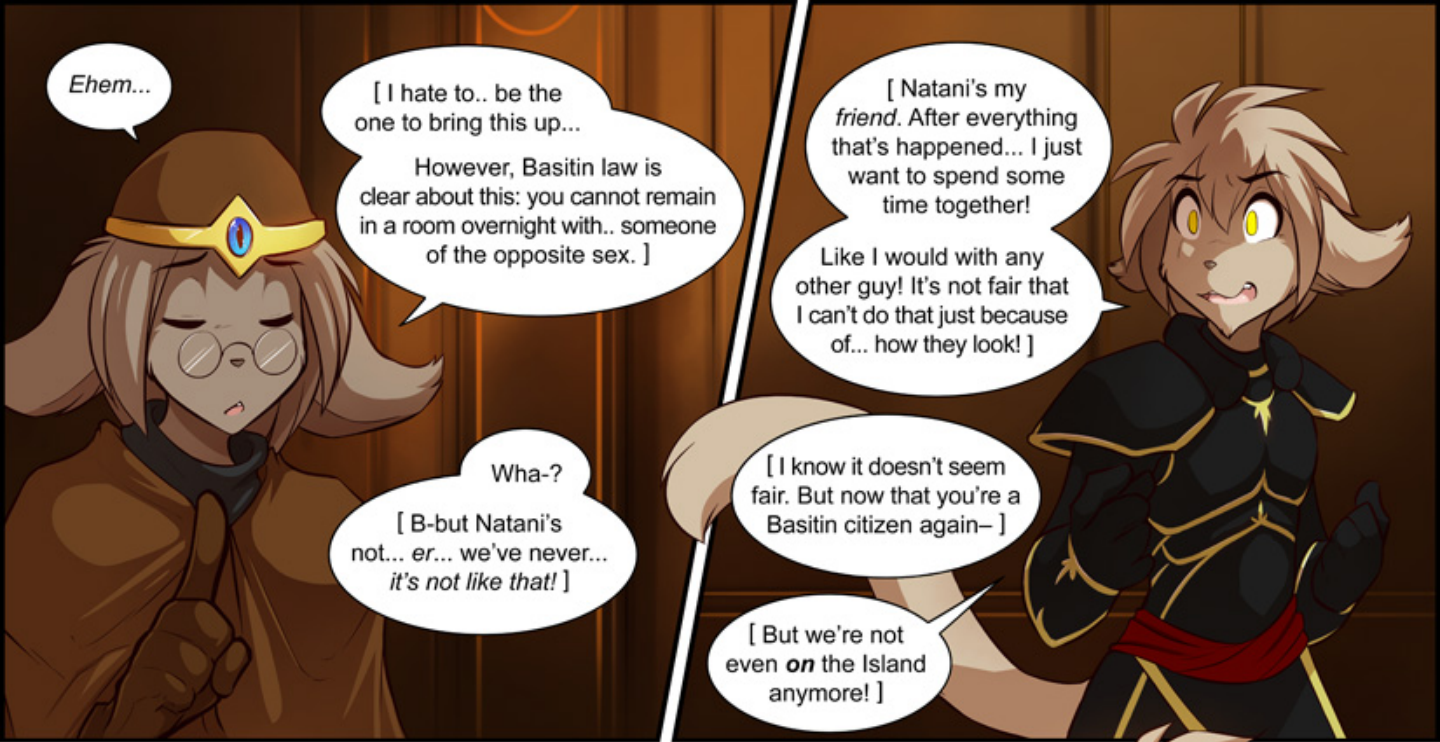


...Okay.

<We have adjoining rooms in the east wing, if... that's what you desire.

Feel free to call for me if you need anything else. Otherwise, good night.>





Ehem...

[ I hate to.. be the one to bring this up...

However, Basitin law is clear about this: you cannot remain in a room overnight with.. someone of the opposite sex. ]

Wha-?

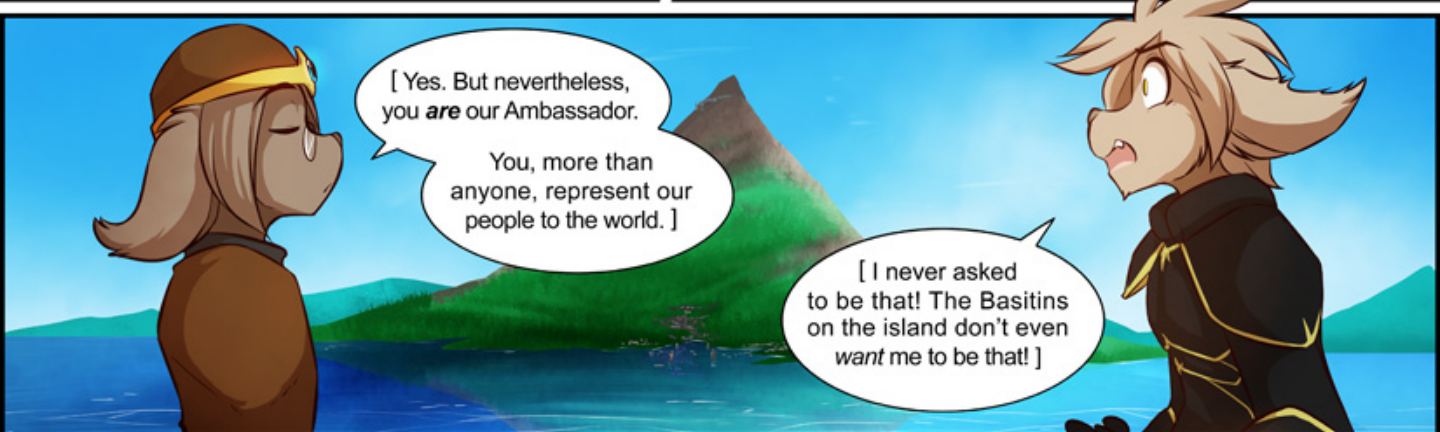
[ B-but Natani's not... er... we've never... it's not like that! ]

[ Natani's my friend. After everything that's happened... I just want to spend some time together!

Like I would with any other guy! It's not fair that I can't do that just because of... how they look! ]

[ I know it doesn't seem fair. But now that you're a Basitin citizen again-- ]

[ But we're not even **on** the Island anymore! ]



[ Yes. But nevertheless, you **are** our Ambassador.

You, more than anyone, represent our people to the world. ]

[ I never asked to be that! The Basitins on the island don't even *want* me to be that! ]



[ Unfortunately, for many, what we are is not a choice we make.

We're stuck with the cards life has dealt us. ]

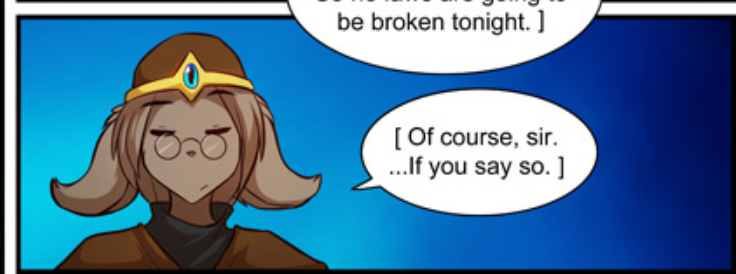


[ Well I'm sticking with **Natani**. ]

?

[ Besides, like Roselyn said, it's an *adjoining* room.

*Technically* two rooms. So no laws are going to be broken tonight. ]



[ Of course, sir. ...If you say so. ]





Meanwhile...

Mwahaha...

S-squee?



Eek!

Ah! Sythe!  
Your pet squirrel  
is so cute!

I could just  
eat her up!

Eek!!



Ew! Karen,  
put that thing down!  
You don't know where  
it's been!

Honestly, where  
did that thing even come  
from, anyway?

No normal squirrel  
hangs around a bunch  
of predators. It **must**  
be diseased.

Right,  
Raine?



Snnrx-!  
Huh? Wha-?

Oh. I dunno.  
I think we'd notice  
by now if it was.

~~YAWN!~~

She was probably  
someone's pet, maybe.

Although... hm... I've read  
that baby dragons shapeshift  
into other creatures in order to  
experience the world.



PADDLE!  
PADDLE!

Dragon?



Is that it, Nibs?  
Are you actually a fierce,  
fire-breathing dragon  
under that fur?!



BOOP!



Well, if it's true,  
at least she's a  
friendly dragon!

Euck!  
Whatever it is,  
just keep it away  
from me.





Aaand...  
done.

I wish I had the rest of my old grooming kit. I'd like to be able to do your nails too.

I have to admit, this was... fun.

It brings me back to the days when I wanted to be a groomer.



At least until... well, with a name like Taverndatter, I didn't have much ch- h-hey!

Ngh...

Raine!

Aw, poor girl.

Us wolves need less sleep than humans, but once we're out, we're out.

I think she's got the right idea.

I'm headed to bed too. Later, sis.

As am I. Looks like you've been volunteered first watch, Maren.



Wha- hey, wait! Give me a hand with her, I'm pinned here! She weighs a ton!



Guys?! This isn't funny!

Eep-! Raine!  
No nuzzling!







Natani!

<Before you go, I wanted to give your new robes back.>

Thank you again for... saving my life.>

<Ah. No problem.>

<One more thing!

Remember the smallclothes I told you about earlier today?>

<...No?>

<Oh. I mentioned them after you first woke up, but...>

I suppose the ship **was** on fire at the time.>



<You see, while you were out, the robes were finished, and then...>

W-well, there was extra fabric, and I already had all of your measurements...

So...

To pass the time I kinda made... a few different things. J-just as experiments!

After working so hard on them, I didn't want them to burn up.>



<So... here they are.>

Grrnk!

<T-these are...>



<W-why would you think I'd want something like these?!>

<No no no! I swear, it was just for practice!

I know you're not-!>



<I'm sorry! I only made them because I was sad when you said you'd never had clothes that fit.>

I didn't mean to offend you. I...

I'll go take them apart right n—>

<No!

Don't! I'll take them!>



<N-not to wear! Just... you know, as a memento!

I've never had things made for me. And I...>

<...I appreciate it. Thank you.>

<Y... you're welcome.>





<What was that all about with Kat?

I heard yelling.>

<Nothing!

Forget it. Is... this our room here?>



<Yeah, I think so. And that's the second room over there.>

<Seriously? A chandelier? Gah!

That human... I'd kill to have this kind of money.>



<Oh, so you'd start being a *competent* assassin then?>

<Hey, quiet, or you're back on the list.>

<Sure.>



<Huh. When they said "adjoining rooms" I expected a dividing door, not a curtain.

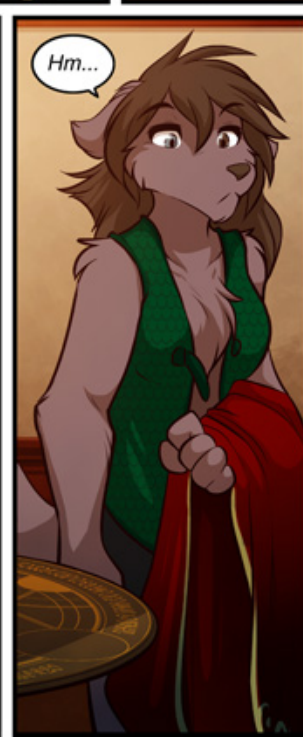
Not that I'm *really* concerned about Basitin laws here.

Though don't tell Lynn I said that, or he might schedule himself to have a heart attack.>



<I'm going to go get out of this armor. Are you sure you're...?>

<Keith, I'm not going to collapse again the moment you leave. Relax. Go.>



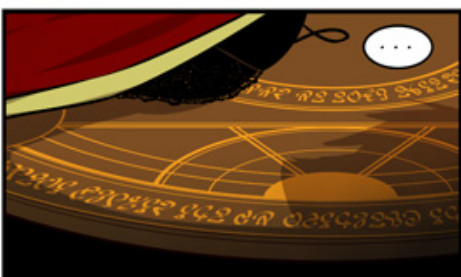
Hm...



I'll have to see about making new bindings later.

I'm sure the human has a stash of crystals around somewhere.

Don't wanna sleep in my only clothes. Guess it's just fur for now. Well, that or...



Tch! Yeah right...





Keith!

<Natani!  
Don't do  
that!>

Ack!!

<Done yet?>



<What? Why  
so shy all of the  
sudden?

We were in  
the baths just  
yesterday!>

<Natani, that...  
was a week ago.>

<Hm? Oh... right.  
Coma. Well, whatever.  
I need your help with  
something.>



<Here! Read  
this for me.>



<Huh?  
O...kay.

This is... well, it sorta  
looks like a menu. There's a  
long list of random items:

Toiletries, food,  
clothing, drinks...

Where'd you  
find this?>



<Wow, there's some  
crazy stuff in here!

*Basitin vintage 221!*  
King Ravlen had the  
throne back then.

Let's see... *dragon  
whiskey, vixen spirits,  
white wolf wine*->



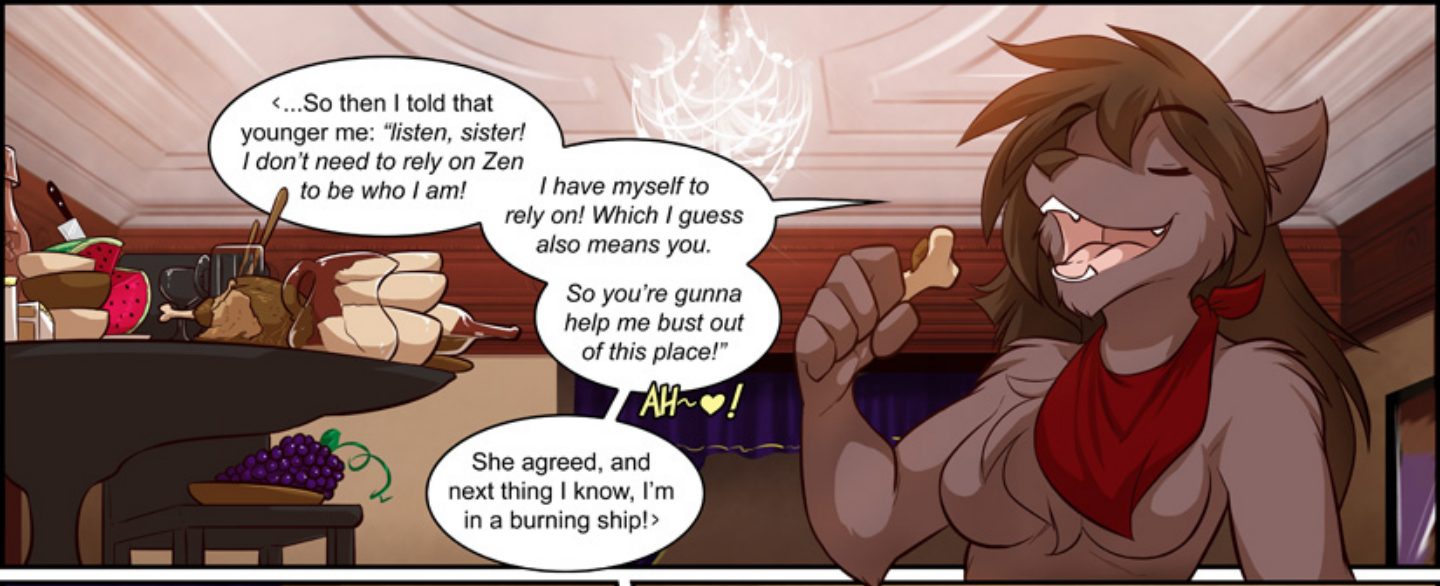
<"White  
wolf wine?">



Ah! What-?







<...So then I told that younger me: "listen, sister! I don't need to rely on Zen to be who I am!"

I have myself to rely on! Which I guess also means you.

So you're gunna help me bust out of this place!"

AH~♥!

She agreed, and next thing I know, I'm in a burning ship!>



<Wow! That's how it really happened?>

<Er... well... yeah! That's exactly how it went down! More or less.

Might have been a little more her convincing me...>

<I see...>



<So then... everything's fixed?>

<Well... no. The link is suppressed, but it's still there.

And even if it wasn't, no mental pep-talk is going to reverse black magic, or undo years of experience.>



<And I wouldn't want it to. Pleasant or not, those years made me who I am.

plop!  
A-ah...

But I'm learning to... accept the other side of myself a little bit more.

This body is mine. And my past is a part of me.>

<I get you. I can't pretend to fully understand all this mind stuff...>



<But I'm glad it means you're back.>



<Yeah... me too.>





<So, that other you, is she... still in there?>

Uh...



Tell Keith he's cute.



<Well, like I said, mind's still fractured.>



<Still, it actually feels pretty freeing.

Ya know, having a guy's mind and being stuck in a girl's body isn't the worst thing in the world...

It's certainly not the worst body to be saddled with.>



<I mean... you like it, don't you ♥?>

<Wha- Natani?! No! I-I mean yes! That is, I...>



Ahahahahaha!!

<You oughta see the look on your face! You're so easily flustered.

I should have taken advantage of this ages ago!>

Hey, **shut up!** Don't ever do that girly voice again! It's weird coming from you!>



<Haha... Oh man.>

<Shouldn't laugh after eating so much. Sorry... so...>



<Wanna touch 'em?>





<Alright, alright! Now I know you're pulling my tail! Cut it out!>

<No, really! It's not that big of a deal!>

<They are!>

<Pff! Hey! I just figured I'd offer, ya know, from one guy to another.>

But fine, suit yourself!>



<...Wait, were you really being serious?>



<Eh... maybe?>

I mean, if they were on you, I'd hope you'd be willing to do the same for me.

Anyway, whatever. I'm gunna get the lights and rest my eyes for a bit, if you don't mind.>

<Now, for my excellent Human...  
Ehem!>

Ruum!  
Laights aut!



<Hah! It worked!>



<Oh, okay. Well...>

I haven't slept much this last week, so I'm pretty beat too.>



<I guess it's about time I - erk!>



<Keith, I wasn't saying "get out".>

Let's be honest. We both know we were lying about the twin-bedroom thing.

Come on. How about for once we actually share a bed on purpose?>



<Alright, if you insist.>

...  
<Also you're cute.>

<Huh?>

<N-nothing!>





Here.  
For the two  
of you.

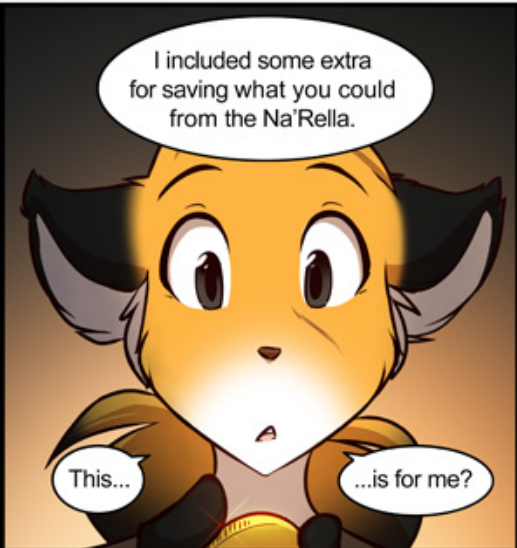
Huh?  
W-what's  
this?

Payment for  
services rendered.

You two officially no longer  
belong to me. I filed your initial  
paperwork this morning, before  
all the... fireworks.

I've also confirmed the  
sale with Ms. Roselyn.

So, presuming the  
filing office in the city hasn't  
burned down, you're now as  
free as I can make you.



I included some extra  
for saving what you could  
from the Na'Rella.

This...

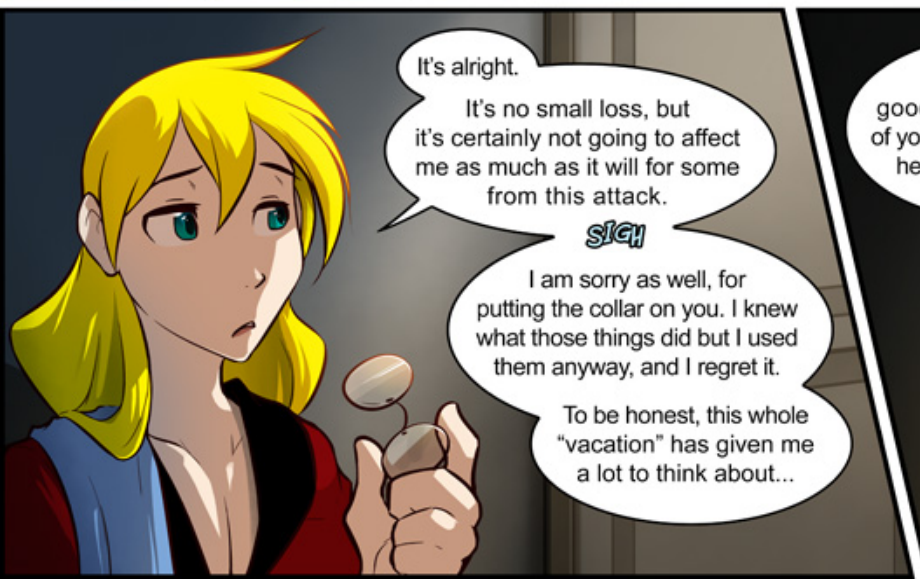
...is for me?



Well... wow, uh...  
thanks, I guess.

And... thanks for  
defending us on the  
docks, as well.

For what it's  
worth, I'm sorry your ship  
went down like that.



It's alright.

It's no small loss, but  
it's certainly not going to affect  
me as much as it will for some  
from this attack.

*SIGH*

I am sorry as well, for  
putting the collar on you. I knew  
what those things did but I used  
them anyway, and I regret it.

To be honest, this whole  
"vacation" has given me  
a lot to think about...



In any case,  
good luck to the two  
of you, wherever you're  
headed from here.



Meanwhile...

...This must be where we're staying.

I guess this used to be my bedroom? It's actually more... normal than I imagined.

Yeah! Knowing how you used to be, I half expected... I dunno, Keidran-skinned rugs or something?

I guess even evil-you liked to sleep in comfort.  
Still, feels weird being here.

I know. Like invading someone else's bedroom.

Not only that, I think I recognize this place now.

Yeah, I can see the lights of Edinmire way down there.

If it were daytime, I bet I could see the hill on my old farm, too.

My owner had me on a loose leash, so it's where I spent a lot of my time.

At night, I would see the lights on the mountainside and wonder who lived up there.

It's weird to think that was only a couple summers ago.

I was just a little farm cat.

And back then, to me you were just this nebulous thing... the scary guy other Keidran would sometimes whisper about.

And now here I am, just casually resting in the master bedroom like I own the place... on what turned out to be your estate. It's crazy!

You mean *our* estate.

Yeah, our-- wait... my...?

Gah! Not helping, Trace!









Man, I can't see anything from here.  
Do you think that really was Trace?

Dunno.



It had to be, right? They let him in.

But the rumors were he died! And Seer Brahn was heard calling himself Grand Templar.

What gives? Do you think it's a coup?

Maybe.



Heh, sorry.

Thanks for indulging me with this, Landen. I know I can get a little Templar-crazy sometimes.

Yup.

Say, in all the commotion, we never did get paid by those Basitin guys.

You think they were serious about hiring us?

Probably not.



Yeah, I guess we did kinda mug them first.

It's a shame. One of them was kinda cute.



Hey, Landy?

If Trace has come back to reclaim his position, what does that mean for the rest of the Templar order?

If it came down to it, who would everyone side with?



...Whoever won.



The next morning...

Ngh...

Mmph...

Wow, I haven't slept that well in ages...

Huh?  
Maren?

What are you doing in my tent?

Yiiiiip!!

Maren! I-I'm so sorry!  
I don't even remember falling asleep!

Why didn't you just push me off?

You were very heavy.

And she wouldn't let us wake you up.

She cares more than she lets on.

Shut it, fleabag!

Whatever you say, ice queen.





Alright, everyone packed and ready? We need to get moving.

Hang on, I gotta go!

Well hurry up! We're burning daylight.

Hey, has anyone seen Mrs. Nibby this morning?



It's a wild squirrel. Maybe it finally decided to go back home.

Nah, she's probably just sleeping in one of these trees.  
*Nibs!*

♪



Uh... guys? I think there's something wrong with the outside...





It's over here, too!

It goes all the way around the hot spring!

What the hell's going on?



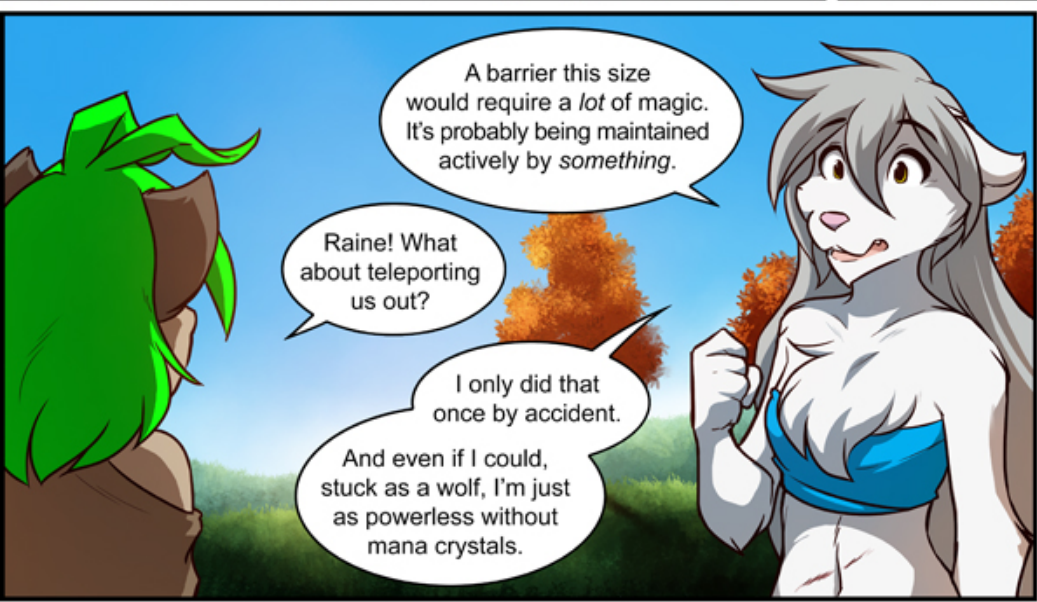
Are you trying something, wolf?!

What?! Come on!

<I'm a Keidran with no mana crystals and wearing a magic suppressor.>

Get real.

...What?



A barrier this size would require a lot of magic. It's probably being maintained actively by something.

Raine! What about teleporting us out?

I only did that once by accident.

And even if I could, stuck as a wolf, I'm just as powerless without mana crystals.



Hey! You're all forgetting someone!

Alright, stand back!



I may have flunked out of the Templar, but I still know how to blow stuff up!

Wait, you moron! Maybe we should think about thi-



Okay... maybe I should have stood back a little too. :Cough!:





Hahaha!

clap!  
clap!  
clap!



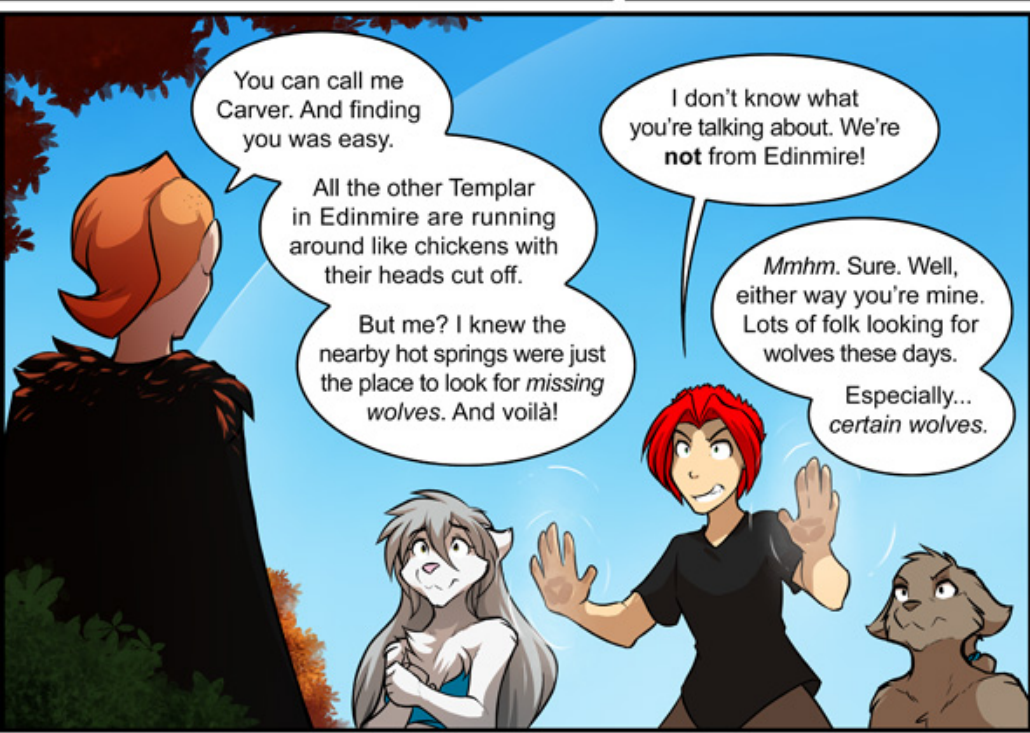
Bravo!  
Well done!

It's no wonder  
you flunked out of  
the Templar.



Not that many of  
my, er... *colleagues*  
are much better.

Who the hell  
are you?! How did  
you find us?



You can call me  
Carver. And finding  
you was easy.

All the other Templar  
in Edinmire are running  
around like chickens with  
their heads cut off.

But me? I knew the  
nearby hot springs were just  
the place to look for *missing*  
wolves. And voilà!

I don't know what  
you're talking about. We're  
**not** from Edinmire!

*Mhmm.* Sure. Well,  
either way you're mine.  
Lots of folk looking for  
wolves these days.

Especially...  
*certain* wolves.



You can't  
keep us in here  
forever!

You'll have to let  
us out eventually if you  
intend to capture us!



*Nah!* I'm just  
going to wait until all  
your air runs out!



*Why you little—!*

Honestly, at first  
I was hoping that you  
wouldn't find the barrier  
until it was too late.

But seeing the  
looks on your faces is  
so much more fun!

...Huh...





When I get out of here, I'm going to wipe that smirk off your face, you little twerp!

Hey! Quit yelling! We'll be out of air even faster!

I don't think that's likely...

Huh? What do you mean, Raine?



Something doesn't add up here... why is the bubble so big?

It would take ages for the six of us to run out of air, even without the trees.

If he really wanted to suffocate us, he could have put it *just* around our camp. But it's not.

Maybe he's just an idiot?

YAAAAAHH!!

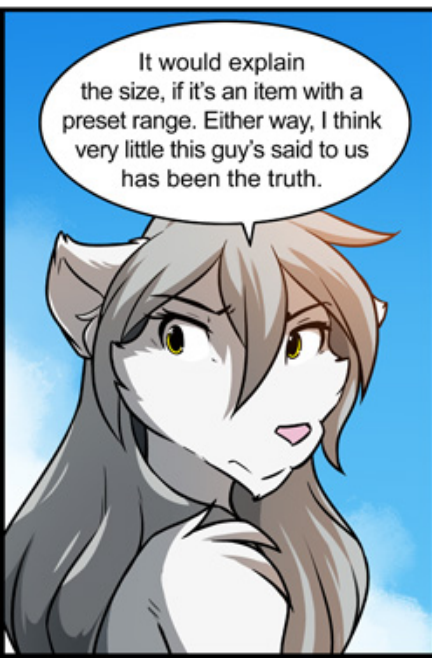


Maybe. But I think it's more likely he's trying to keep us distracted.

Like I said, a barrier this large should be a **huge** strain. But he seems fine.

So someone else is making it then?

That, or Something.



It would explain the size, if it's an item with a preset range. Either way, I think very little this guy's said to us has been the truth.



You know, you guys should really be more concerned about saving your breath.

What are you saying over there, Snowball?



I'm saying you're a liar!

Hm?!





You've been lying to us this whole time.

In fact, I know you're not a real Templar at all!



Oh? Now **that's** a bold claim. Why would you say that?



Because I've been able to see the **real** you since you first appeared!

Huh?!



It's a trick I've seen before – an illusion spell.

Isn't that right... **fox**?

Which makes me think you didn't just find us by coincidence.

Huh...



Well, shoot. To see through *my* magic... *hm*. What an unusual girl. The boss might be interested in you.



Wolves like... **you**.

Wha-?! Why me?



So you were a Keidran all along? Damn it, again! I should have known!

Why are you really after us?!

Pfff!

I don't care about **you** at all. Like I said, I'm hunting for wolves. Certain wolves.



Let's just say, you left a lot of loose ends back at the guild.

And the person I work for has been very eager to get their hands on **you** again.



Back at the Legacy Estate...



**YAWN!**

Ah~ It's nice to have some fresh clothes again. Ones that don't smell like seawater.

...And aren't **completely covered in tiger fur!**

**Thttbt!**

Love you too, Trace. I'll make sure it spreads to those soon enough!



Though I admit I have been shedding quite a lot lately.

Not sure if it's stress, the baby, or just my winter coat coming in.

Either way, I could use a bath. And maybe a nice grooming.



I'm sure both of those things can be arranged.

We can ask that seneschal wolf.

After breakfast, of course!



Oh, speaking of Roselyn, are we still going to try and keep... *us* a secret?

I don't think there's much point. The dragon knows.

And if Roselyn hasn't guessed already, I'm sure she will soon enough.



True. We spent the night in the same room and we're covered in each other's scents.

It's pretty obvious. Still, probably shouldn't mention the *baby*.

I doubt she'd even believe it, but just in case, it's best if Rose doesn't end up putting it together.



Putting what together?

**MRRREOW!!!**





Alright, who's yelling now?

Things better not be on fire again, or I swear—



Hm?



...Huh...

Guess he isn't quite as shy when he's asleep.



I'm usually the *last* person to wake up in the morning.

Keith must have really exhausted himself this past week.

Tch, idiot... getting so worked up over someone like me.

Weird to think that even a week ago I'd be freaking out over this.

But now... well...



I guess we're both a couple of idiots.

...And I'm okay with that.



...  
Is something poking me...?



Alright, nope! Not quite *that* okay with it yet! Time to get up!





...Zen?



<Zen? Hey, can you hear me?

Is anything getting through?  
Hello?>



Hrm...



<Back to male again, I see.>

<Huh? Oh, hey!>



<Morning. It's about time you were up!

...Or at least the rest of you is now up...

Yeah, turns out the table even spits out magic crystals if you ask it nicely.

So the girls are back in the bindings again for now.>



<Why? Disappointed?>

<Eh, honestly, I'd find it weirder if you didn't.>



<Yeah, well, I have a feeling it's going to be pretty weird either way once we leave for breakfast, now that the secret's out.

But... I guess I can't just hide in this room forever.>



Eugh... "breakfast?"

<How can you even still think about food after last night?>

<I'm a wolf.

Now hurry up, I smell bacon!>





M-Mmm~♥!

Flora!  
Use your silverware!  
And don't make sounds like  
that! We're not animals!

Oh, wait...

'Ey!  
Mr'at's  
ra'shist!

Nom!

Snrk!



What a charming  
young woman...

What's  
your game here,  
Trace...?



Hey, aren't you going  
to join us too, Roselyn?

W-wha? Me?  
Eat with you?

Yeah?

I... can't.  
I must attend  
to the other guests.  
There's much work  
to be done. Sir.



Speaking of guests,  
I saw the dragoness,  
Miss Reni, earlier.

Although she  
seemed a bit—

**SLAM!**



Grraawr~!  
Lowsy sun... Lowsy  
wolves... Lowsy war...  
All a bunch of...

**Hiiiiissss!**



...Oh. Hello.  
P-please excuse  
my language!





What's the matter, Reni?



Oh... I'm not much of a morning dragon.

Since dawn, I've been in the dungeon trying to get information out of the wolf we captured.

Is that coffee? Oh, bless you, ma'am!



Why don't you just read his mind like you did me?



That's what I've been doing. It's all I can do, since he's still yet to regain consciousness.

I've managed to see how they infiltrated the city, and when they planned their attack.

So far, from what I can tell, the wolf we have now was just a pawn in all this.

What's been so aggravating is trying to find who his boss is. Who's really behind the attack?



The wolf didn't know?

W-well... that's just it, I'm not sure. I can see anything he's experienced, but the problem is...

Well... it's a little embarrassing to admit, but...

I, uh...

I don't understand Keidran.





<Hey, hang on!>

Oh, hello. You are the other wolf... uh...

<N-Natani. And what do you mean you can't speak Keidran? I can understand you right now!>



Oh, right. Yes. We dragons "speak" telepathically.

It's universal. You hear my intentions, and as you speak words, I can hear yours.



I **have** learned human. But even for me, speaking **this** way is a necessity.

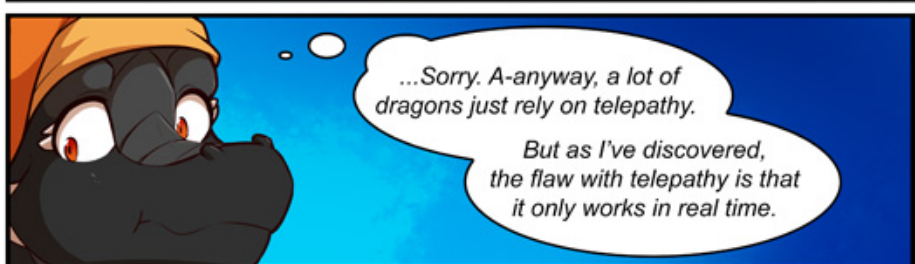
I am limited by my biology just as any creature. If I were to try and speak human out loud in this form, it'd be... well...

Ehem...



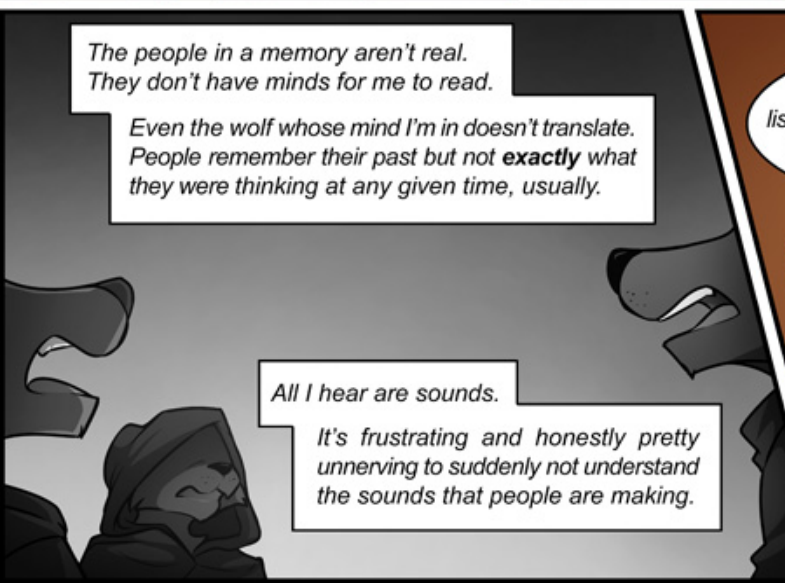
**Grash itsh griah! Rwar arrr rawrrarar!**

Okay, we get it!



...Sorry. A-anyway, a lot of dragons just rely on telepathy.

But as I've discovered, the flaw with telepathy is that it only works in real time.



The people in a memory aren't real. They don't have minds for me to read.

Even the wolf whose mind I'm in doesn't translate. People remember their past but not **exactly** what they were thinking at any given time, usually.

All I hear are sounds.

It's frustrating and honestly pretty unnerving to suddenly not understand the sounds that people are making.



That being said, after listening for a while, one name does come up repeatedly.

A name I believe may be of importance in all of this...



**Clovis.**





"Clovis"?

Who the hell is that?  
Another assassin?



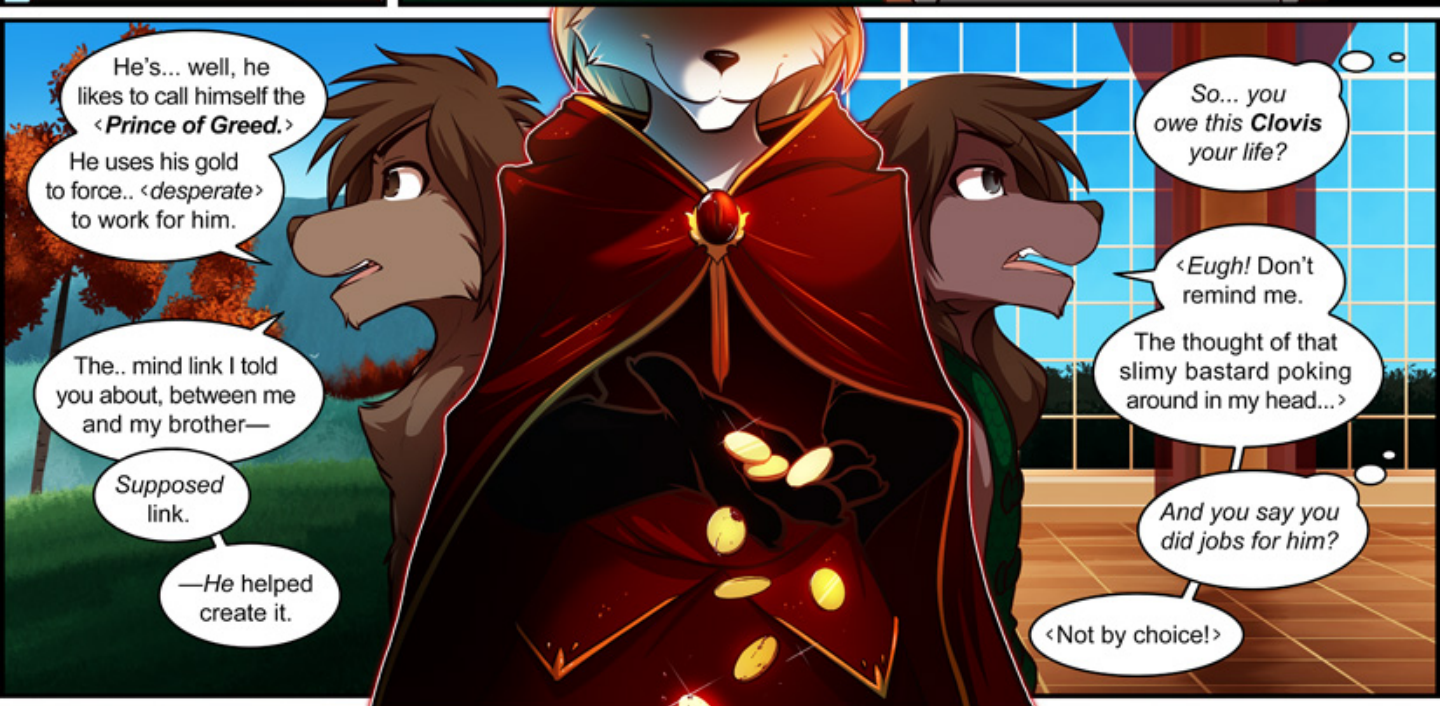
<He's the only guy I can think of who might have sent this little twit after me.

But no. Clovis isn't an assassin. He's worse.>

Worse than an assassin? What's worse than that?

In *human*, please!

A rich asshole!  
One I ..erm.. used to  
<owe money> to.



He's... well, he likes to call himself the  
<Prince of Greed.>

He uses his gold to force.. <desperate> to work for him.

The.. mind link I told you about, between me and my brother—

Supposed link.

—He helped create it.

So... you owe this Clovis your life?

<Eugh! Don't remind me.

The thought of that slimy bastard poking around in my head...>

And you say you did jobs for him?

<Not by choice!>



<And before you ask, no, I don't work for him anymore, or know what he's up to now. We haven't crossed paths in years.

In fact, last I heard, he pretty much up and disappeared. Odd, considering how much of a playboy he was. I'd hoped he'd been offed by somebody.

But I can tell you if he is here, it's only because he has something to gain.>



And that means trouble...





<Aw, I'm sure Clovey will be pleased you still remember him!>

<I am disappointed that your little sibling isn't here with you.

Don't worry, though, we'll catch that one too. And believe me...>

<Clovis has special plans for *her*.>



<I won't let any of you lay a hand on Natani, you son of a bitch!>



BZZZT!

CRACKLE!



<What the-?>



The shackle!

I... I think it's trying to nullify the magic!



<A magic suppressor? Well isn't that just bloody inconvenient.

Still, it'll take you ages to get through like that. And I could just keep refreshing this barrier all day...>



<But I think it's time to stop fooling around and wrap this up already!>









<The Rod!>



Eurgh!

<It's right there!  
Just... gotta get to it!>



<If I could just reach...>



VVVVVV!

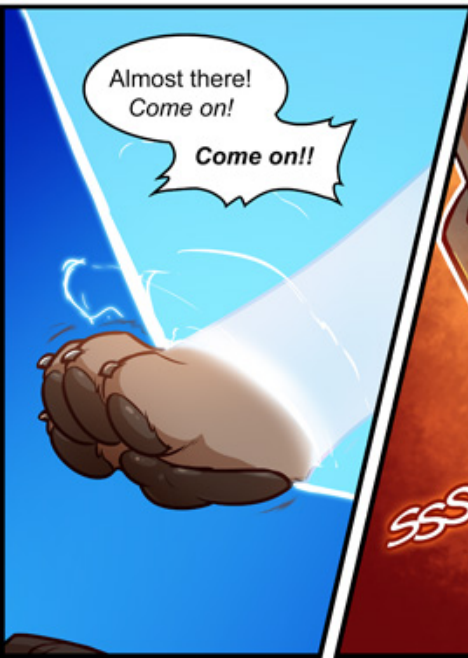
SSHHFT!



<Shackle's getting hot, but it's working!>

Get off me you bloody tree rat!

<Come on!>



Almost there!  
Come on!  
Come on!!



SSSSSSSHHH!



RAAAHH!!

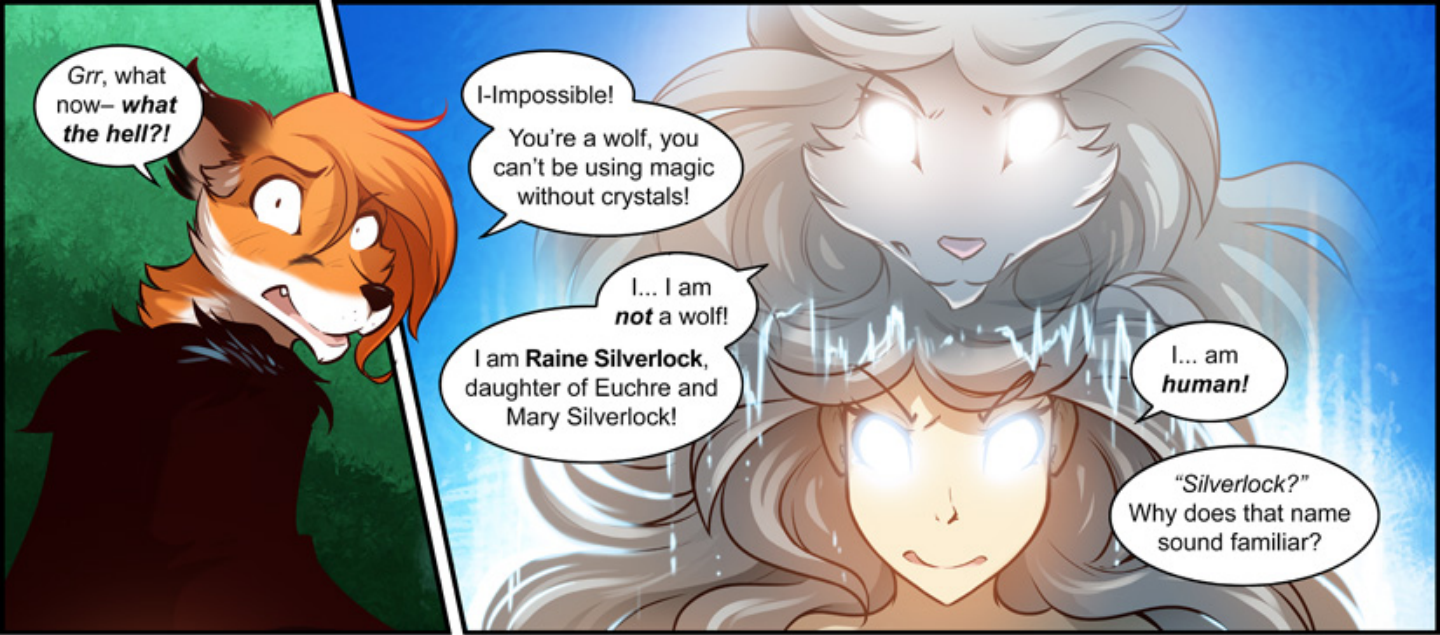


SMASH!!









Grr, what now— **what the hell?!**

I-Impossible!

You're a wolf, you can't be using magic without crystals!

I... I am **not** a wolf!

I am **Raine Silverlock**, daughter of Euchre and Mary Silverlock!

I... am **human!**

"Silverlock?" Why does that name sound familiar?



Wait... *Oh crap!*

Welp, this fox knows when it's time to bail...

See ya, girly! I-I'll be back for you all later!



No.

You won't.



Hey, what—

-Gah!

POP!



Raine! You're human again! You alright?

Jeez, you straight up **disintegrated** that guy! That was awesome!

Ow...

I didn't *disintegrate* him! Urgh... I couldn't stop him teleporting, so instead I gave him a little push... with all of my magic.

I don't think he's going to end up where he intended.

So where is he going to end up?

Somewhere a lot farther than **ten meters** this time.









Raine! You need to come quick!  
It's bad...



Oh, gods...

He passed out. What do we do?



Uh... Maren, get my bag. I've got herbs that might help.

Alright.

Karen, get as much water from the spring as you can carry.

O-okay.



Look, I don't mean to always be the callous one here, but...

You all *do* remember who this guy was right?

**He's the one—**



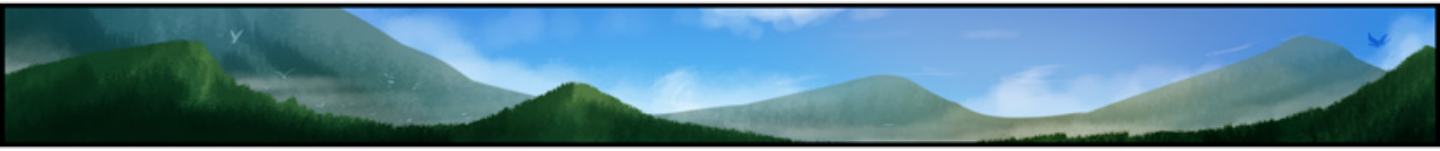
—Who **saved all of our lives** taking down the barrier.

And we're not going to stand around and let him die.

Could you help me by tearing up some bandages? *Please.*



...Yeah. Alright.



There.

That's all I can do.



But unless he gets some proper care I don't know what his chances are.

U-uh, guys? I think there's a bigger problem headed our way!



Earlier, at the estate...

I need to know as much as you can tell me about this Clovis.

My duty here is to protect Edinmire, and if he's the one responsible for these attacks, I must find him.

<Well... as much as he pretends otherwise, he's half fox.

Yellow-ish fur, red eyes...

He's got a ton of properties and lackies in the wolf kingdom.>

<Rich prick.>

<But as much as I'd love to see that pompus git get roasted by a dragon, I'm afraid there's not a lot else I can tell you.

He kept me in the dark more so than even my brother.>

<In fact, he took every opportunity to make it clear he thought of me as the lesser of the two of us. For... various reasons.>

<I had the link of course, but frankly I didn't care to listen to him any more than I had to, anyway.

Zen could probably tell you more—>

**Aaaugh!!**

**CRASH!**

<Natani? What's wrong?!>

<My leg... it... felt like it was on fire—

**Aaugh!**

Something's wrong! M-my head! I...>

**No! Not again!**





Going to shake me, huh?

Lots of folk looking for wolves these days.

I'm almost to Edinnire.

A day or two more walking.

You can call me Carvar.

This lake looks cool! There's floating rocks!

It's some kind of magic barrier.

It's bad.

What do we do?

I won't let any of you lay a hand on Natani!

Ah!



<Natani?! Natani, talk to me! What's wrong?!>

<I'm okay! I'm still here. Still... me.>

<The link... Zen and I... our minds are open again.

It was just... intense.>



<I... I thought for a second...>

<Keith, I'm okay. Zen's mind doesn't have the influence over me that it did before.>

<I'm more... myself now.

What happened last time won't happen again, I promise.>



stet  
<Good. I don't know if I could go through that again.>



<So why did it come back now?>

<Not sure. Give me a minute. It was a lot all at once.

Zen passed out right when the link was restored.>

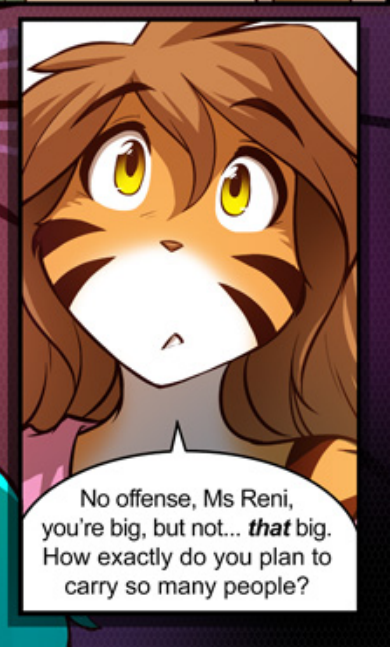
<That might have been because of the link, but... no...>

Something's wrong...!>

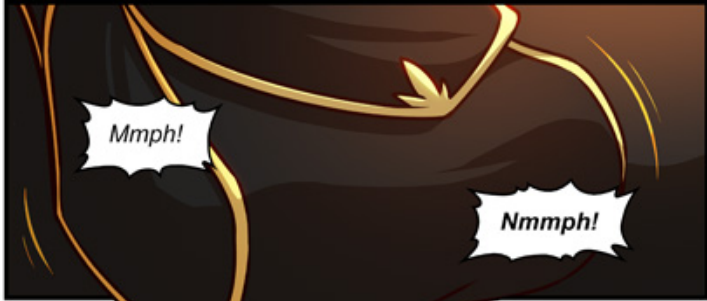
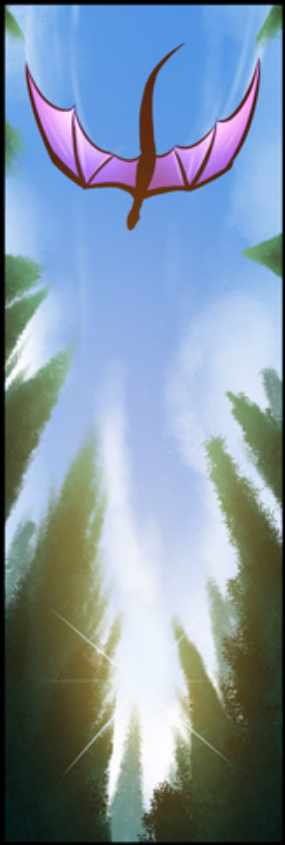


<Zen! He's in trouble!>









Mmph!

Nmmph!



**Gah!**

<Why did I have to agree to this?!>

<Dragon, I thought you said these things were bigger on the inside?>



**PANT!**

No...

I... said the inside becomes... as large as it needs to be.

Though...haah... I may have overestimated how much weight they reduce.



<I think it's kinda cozy.>

<You would!

*Urg...* either I suffocate inside or see just how high up I am outside.>

<Who could enjoy this?>



This is amazing!

Flora, be careful!

I still think in your condition you should have stayed behind.

And miss out on *this*?!>



*I'm making an approach.*

*You all... may want to hold on to something. This landing could get a little rough!*





Look!

I told you!  
There it is again!  
A dragon!

Do you think  
it's after *us*?

Maybe it's just here  
for the hot spring?



Karen!

Get out of  
the open before  
it spots you!

I can't believe  
this. First an assassin,  
now a **dragon**?

I think it's wearing  
armor too. It **must** be  
from the Templar!

Fates! How are  
we going to get out  
of this one?



M-maybe we can  
try... talking our way out?  
Dragons are usually pretty  
reasonable creatures.

...A-at least  
from the stories  
I've read.

Wait... is it just me or does  
that thing look like it's coming  
in a little... too fast?

Get down!

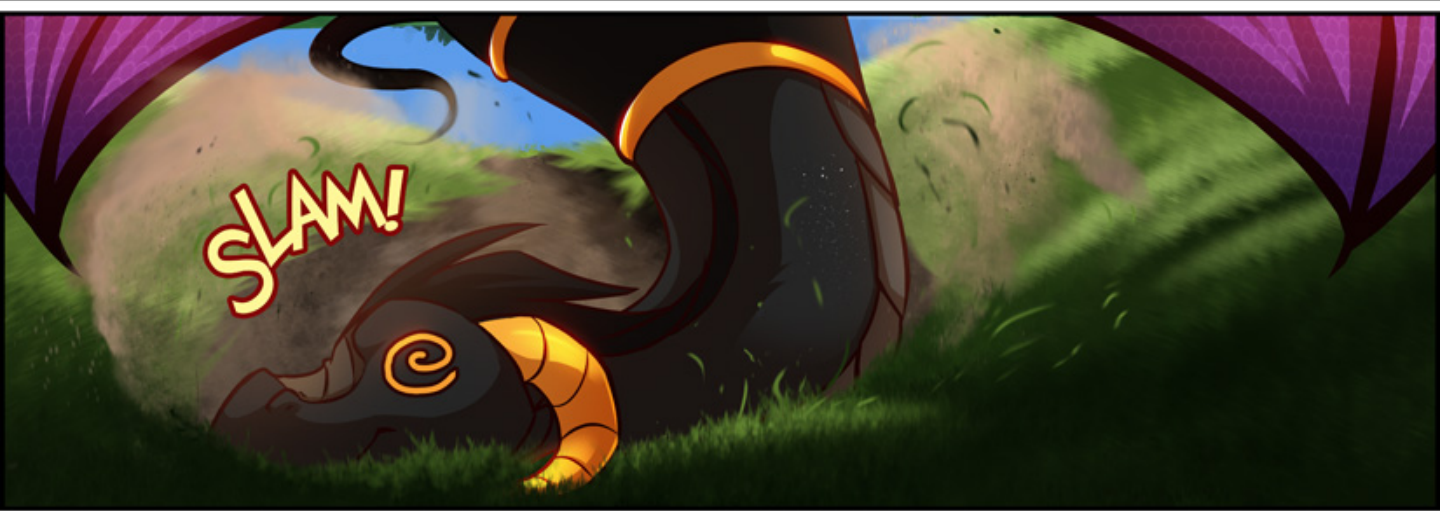
WOOSH!



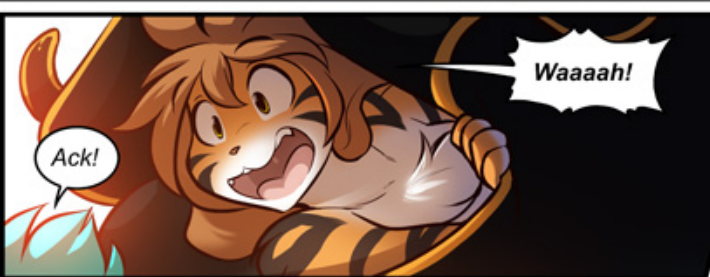


R-rregh!

Graurgle!



SLAM!



Waaaah!

Ack!



YAAAAHHH!



THUD

Oof!

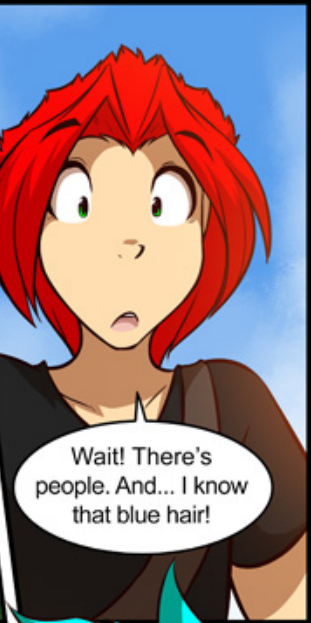


Uuurgh...



WUMP!







Meanwhile...

THUD!  
THUD!  
THUD!

SHHHHFT

Yes? May I help you?

You! Servant Keidran, open this door!

We have orders from Master Templar Seer Brahn.

The wolf terrorist you are holding is to be moved to the tower, where it can be closer guarded.

I'm sorry.

Your timing is... conveniently unfortunate.

Master Trace is not available right now.

I'm afraid you will not be able to enter the manor without his permission.

Did you not hear us?!

We are under orders from **Brahn!** We will not be denied entry by a filthy beast!

And don't think we can't tell **you're** also a wolf! Trace's pet or not, technically, you're illegal too! We could take you as well.

And we shall, if you don't take us to—

CLUNK!

You misunderstood me just now. You **cannot** enter the manor without permission. *Physically.*

It's built into the stone. I'm giving you fair warn—

We'll just see about—!

FWUMPH!!

Sigh... They never listen.

Thanks, Nora.

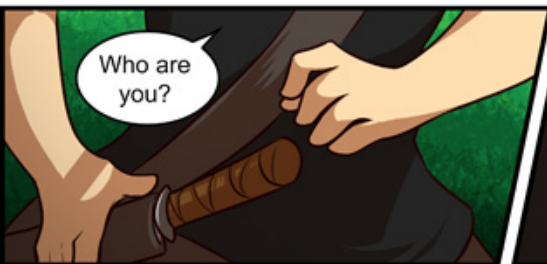
Well, better check the fields and see what's become of them.

I hope it's hens this time. We could use the eggs.





...



Who are you?



SHING!



Don't even think about it.



Hey, hey, hey! Let's not start this here, alright?

We're all allies. Let's just make it back to the estate in one piece.

Please.



Alright, sorry.

I wasn't going to attack. Just being cautious, is all. It's... been a really stressful morning, you know?

Hey!



Hi! Oops, Erm...

<Hello! You must be the sibling Zen spoke of.

He's okay, for the moment. I can take you to him.>

<Oh... good. Thank you.>

<Follow me.>



...So... First a tiger and a basitin, now a wolf. Jeez, you're really trying to collect them all, huh?

Well, I'm just glad to see you're still alive, buddy.

Oh! Yeah, I'm glad you're still alive too, er... uuuh...



...You don't even remember my name, do you?

Sorry.





I saw a stream nearby. I'll get a bag and be back.

Are... you okay, Ms. Reni?  
Yes. I'm fine. Only a little winded.  
*And a little embarrassed about that landing.*  
I'm just going to lie here for a while.

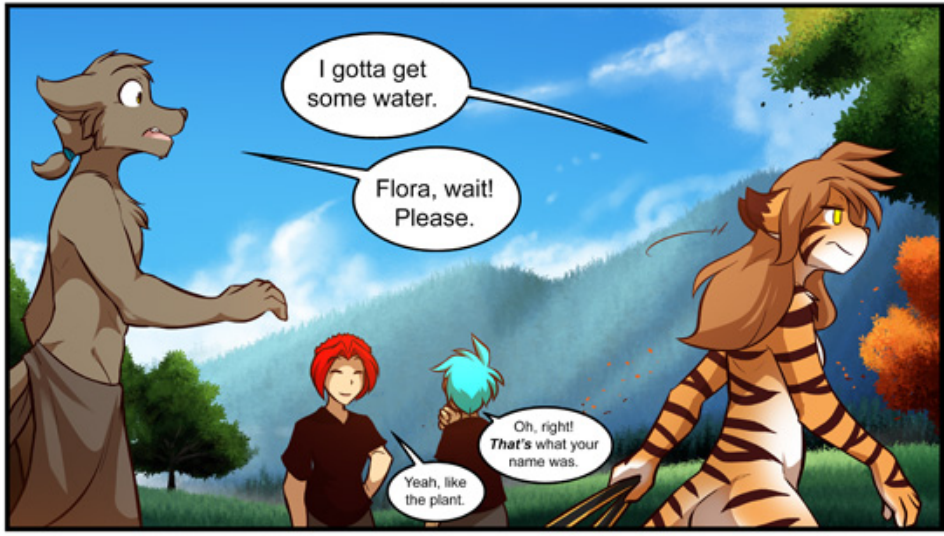


**Flora!** Huh?



Oh... it's you. Hey.

Y-yeah, hey! How's it going? Been a while.



I gotta get some water.

Flora, wait! Please.

Yeah, like the plant.

Oh, right! That's what your name was.



I'm sorry.

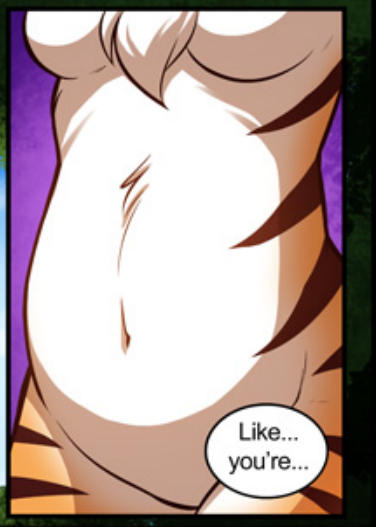
I know we didn't part on the best of terms—

You caused assassins to come after us.

That... was my uncle's fault.

Look, I just wanted to tell you I understand now. Our marriage wasn't meant to be, and you weren't wrong to run away from it.

I'm glad to see you're okay. It looks like you're—



Like... you're...







Flora... are you pregnant?

...Yes. Yes, I am.



Is it mine?!

What?! **No!**

Of course it's not yours! How could it be?!

Oh. Right.

But then who... how...

How far along are you?

I... I don't know. Two months? Maybe a little more?



Two months ago? That's around the time I last saw her.

She was only with the human and basitin, though! There was no one else who could have done it!

But... hang on, two months ago was also around when the assassins were sent out to—

...No... it couldn't be...



Well, you know chicks dig bad boys.

Besides, look at this hair. Can you blame them?



**Him?!** The wolf that was sent to **kill you?!** Why? What did he have that I didn't?!

It's the hair, isn't it?!

You're an idiot.





It's *not* Natani's!  
Or anyone else's.

I've only been  
with one other person  
since I was with you.  
And that's Trace.

It's his.



...What?

You... and  
the human?

But you're...  
he's not... *that's*  
*not possible!*

You know  
that, right?



I know you  
aren't going to  
believe me.

You can  
think what you  
want, but it's  
the truth.



Now if you  
don't mind, I've got  
water to fetch.

I'd rather not  
stay here any longer  
than I have to.

But...

It just  
**can't be!**



Then again...  
Raine claims *her* father  
was a wolf.

That was only possible because  
he could shapeshift, but... I suppose  
if anyone else could learn to do that,  
it'd be a Grand Templar. Still...

The tyrant Trace... with  
a *keidran* child! Is it possible?  
If the world found out...



Wait, hang on!  
You said two months?

Flora! If you're in your  
second trimester you shouldn't  
be lifting heavy things!

Just because  
I'm pregnant doesn't  
mean I'm helpless!

But if you  
wanna carry it,  
be my guest!



<Natani, was it?  
Over here.>



<We brought him  
into the shade.>

<Zen...>





<Zen's condition is stable. But he's not out of the woods yet.>

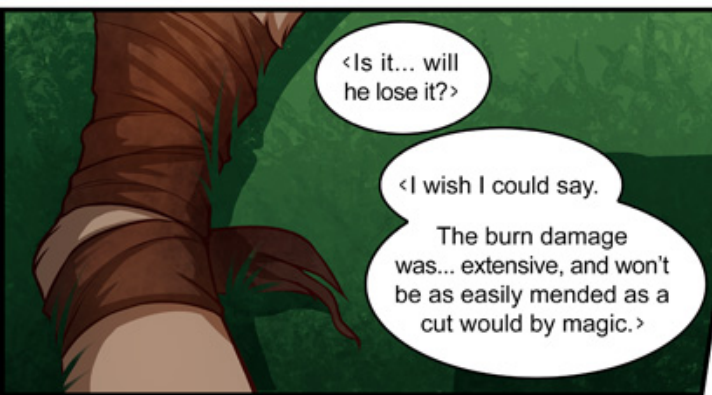
<Infection is the biggest danger now.

He'll need to rest, and be closely monitored for at least a few weeks.>



<I see... Thank you for helping him.

What about his leg?>



<Is it... will he lose it?>

<I wish I could say.

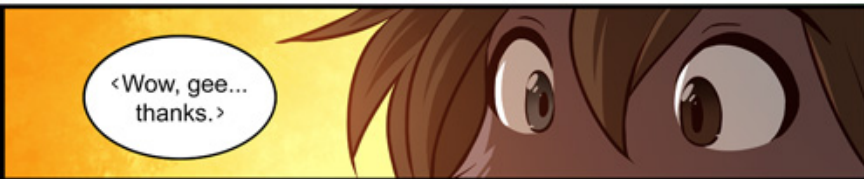
The burn damage was... extensive, and won't be as easily mended as a cut would by magic.>



<Even with a healer, I'm not sure the nerves will be the same.>

<Zen's strong. He's survived worse.

Still... he looks worse than I thought.>



<Wow, gee... thanks.>



**Zen!**

<Gone for months... and the first thing you do when you get back is... insult how I look.

I see. You're just jealous. I was always the pretty one, and now you're afraid a pegleg will just make me sexier.>



<Are you really cracking jokes at a time like this?!

I had to hitch a ride on a giant lizard to save your ass, you know! You could at least be more serious about it!>

**Hahaha! Ow! Heh...**

<Glad to see you too, Nat.>





<Seriously, Zen. How are you feeling?>

<I'm fine...>

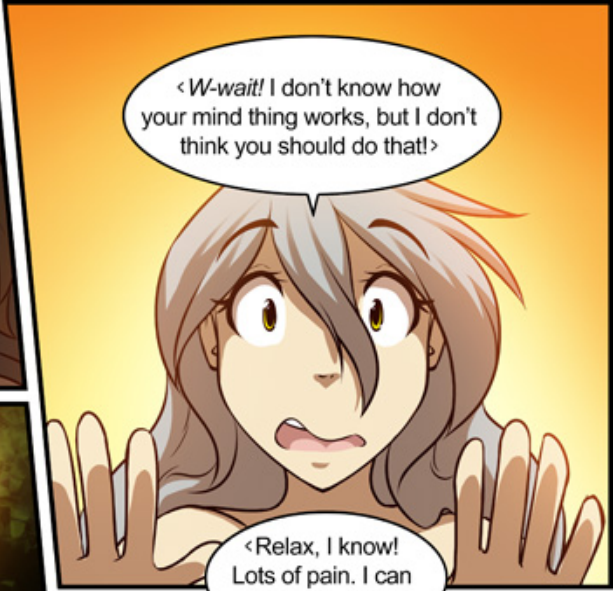
What about you? Look at your hair. There's a... chunk missing. When did that happen?

Looks funny.>



<Zen?>

You seem a bit...off. I had to block out the link earlier, hang on...>



<W-wait! I don't know how your mind thing works, but I don't think you should do that!>

<Relax, I know! Lots of pain. I can avoid tha-> Eh?>



Woah...



<Why is everything suddenly... floating... Uuurgh~ah!>

**THUD!**

**Natani!**



<Stop collapsing constantly! You're going to give me a heart attack!>

**Eugh!**

<I didn't mean to. Yeesh! What was that?!>



<Sorry, sorry! I tried to warn you.>

I didn't know what else to do for his pain, so... I just gave him all the herbs I could.>

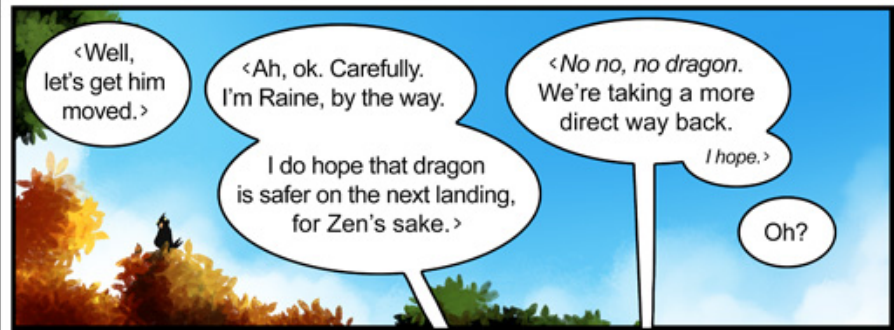
It... was a lot.



<Honestly, I'm surprised he managed to be lucid after>

**SNNXRRK!!**

Oh. There he goes. Again.>



<Well, let's get him moved.>

<Ah, ok. Carefully. I'm Raine, by the way.>

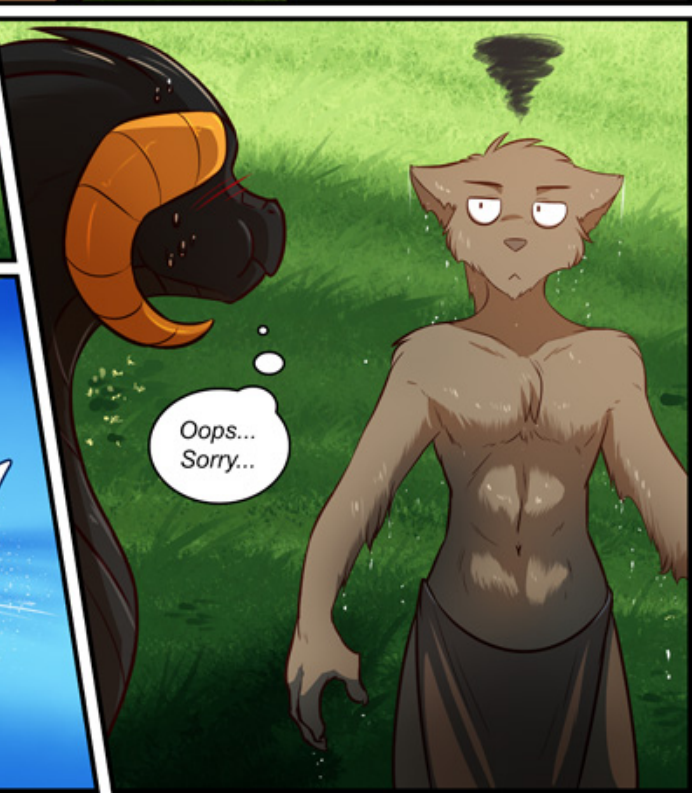
I do hope that dragon is safer on the next landing, for Zen's sake.>

<No no, no dragon. We're taking a more direct way back.>

*I hope.>*

Oh?









So... you don't have authority over her?

Merciful Nora! No!

Wah!

"Dragon princess" is **not** a dragon title.

It's a title given to me by humans.

You were correct earlier.

There is no formal dragon government.



I can't speak for all dragons, but most I've met prefer to live by their own rules.  
  
So, no, I do not have any power over Nora, or most other dragon for that matter.



In fact, if there were any dragon who could demand authority over others, it would be **her**.

The one thing almost all dragons respect is **seniority**. Unlike humans, dragons only grow stronger with age.

And Nana Nora is... **very** old.



Even if she doesn't exactly **act** her age half the time.



Don't tell her I said that!



Huh... Nora always seemed to act very casual around me.

You're lucky, then. She can be intense.

You called her "Nana."

Are you two related?



Oh, well... er, yes, technically. I think she's my... great great grandmother?

Though... that's not saying very much. Most dragons claim to trace their lineage back to her, one way or another.

But suffice it to say, when it comes to rank, I am near the very bottom. At least, by dragon standards.





Ms Reni!  
You're the first dragon  
I've ever been able to  
meet up close!

I'm Karen!  
I think dragons  
are so cool!

Oh! Uh...  
thank you?

Those are  
some strange  
ears...

What's it  
like?!

What's...  
what like?

**Being  
a dragon!**

It must be  
awesome!



Uh...  
Yeah, it's-

Boop!

-nice,  
I suppose?

I've... only ever  
been a dragon, so  
I don't know...



And honestly,  
I'm probably not  
the best dragon  
to ask.

I was raised  
almost exclusively  
among humans.

The only other  
dragon I know well is  
my mother, the former  
"dragon princess".

We're both  
considered anomalies  
among dragons.

So why is that?  
What started the whole  
royal dragon thing?



Erm... well...  
you see... many, many  
human generations ago,  
my grandfather...

He... uh... met  
a human woman. And...  
she happened to be the  
daughter of the human  
king at the time.

And... well...  
one thing led to  
another...

Wait... are  
you saying dragons  
and humans can...  
reproduce?



Y-yeah, I know!  
Weird, right? Haha!

But... how?

W-well, when it comes to  
partners, dragons are pretty flexible,  
and they don't care what the masks  
have to say about it.

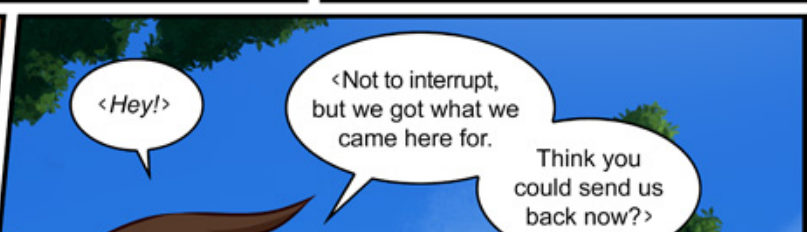
It's definitely not  
common, though!

No, I mean  
physically, how?

If she was a human  
and he was a dragon, how  
would she even...

I don't know! I assume  
magic was involved, but she  
was my grandmother, I don't  
want to think about it!









Oh! Right, let's see...

...Which compartment was it...

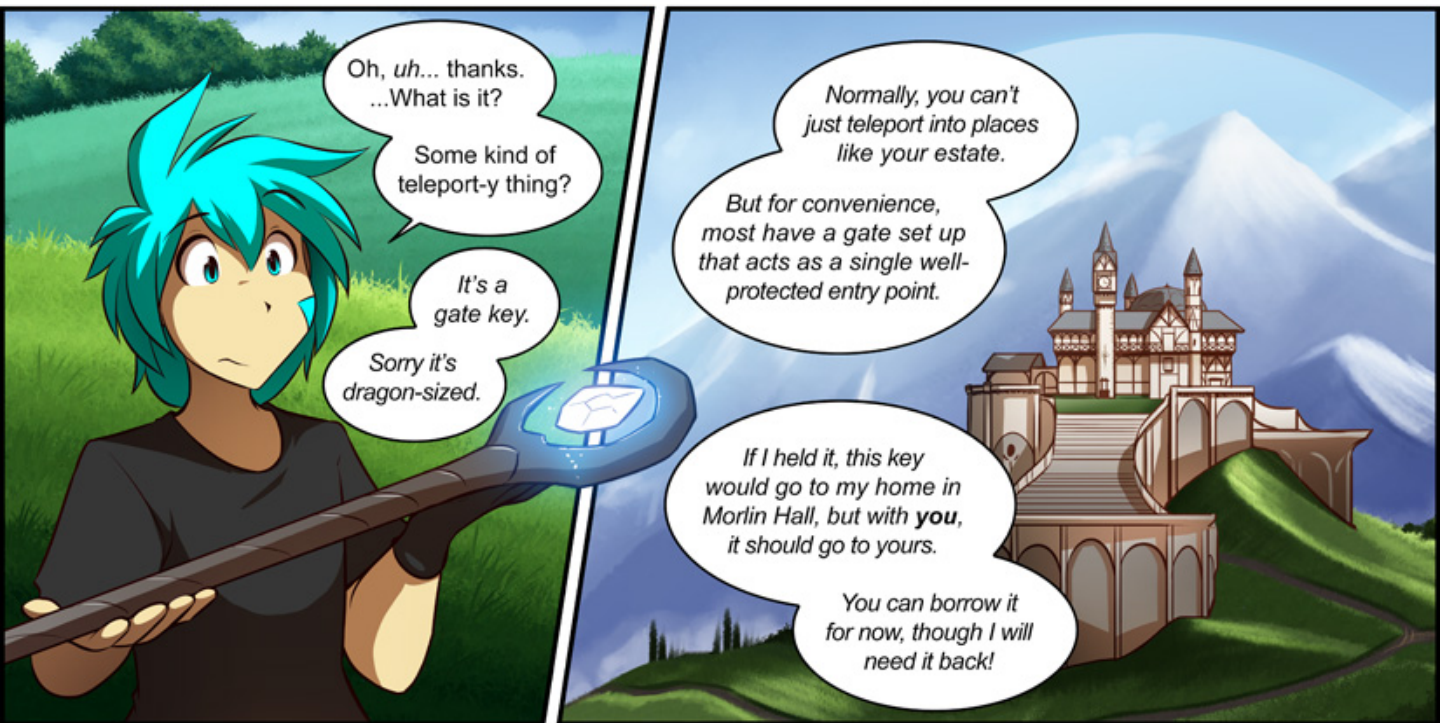
Everything's mixed up from the crash...

Here? No. Oh! Wait...

Got it!

While I might not know much magic yet, I do come prepared!

Here, Trace. This should work.



Oh, uh... thanks. ...What is it?

Some kind of teleport-y thing?

It's a gate key.

Sorry it's dragon-sized.

Normally, you can't just teleport into places like your estate.

But for convenience, most have a gate set up that acts as a single well-protected entry point.

If I held it, this key would go to my home in Morlin Hall, but with **you**, it should go to yours.

You can borrow it for now, though I will need it back!



I... actually collect magic stuff like this as a hobby. I think they're neat.



**Hang on!** Does that mean we aren't going to get to ride on a dragon?!

Er... It'd be very hard to carry so many people. Sorry.

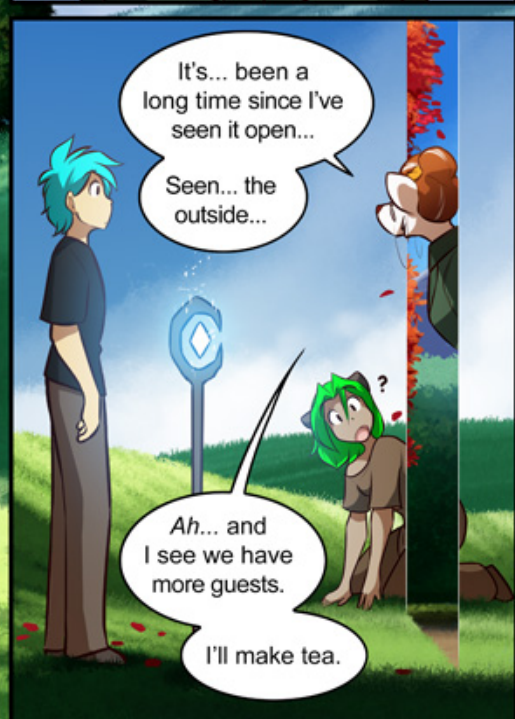
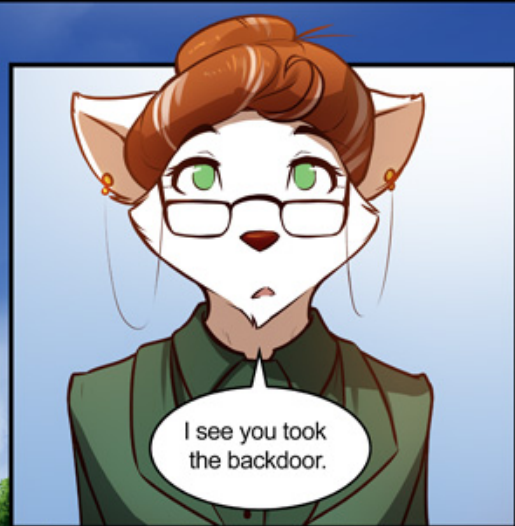
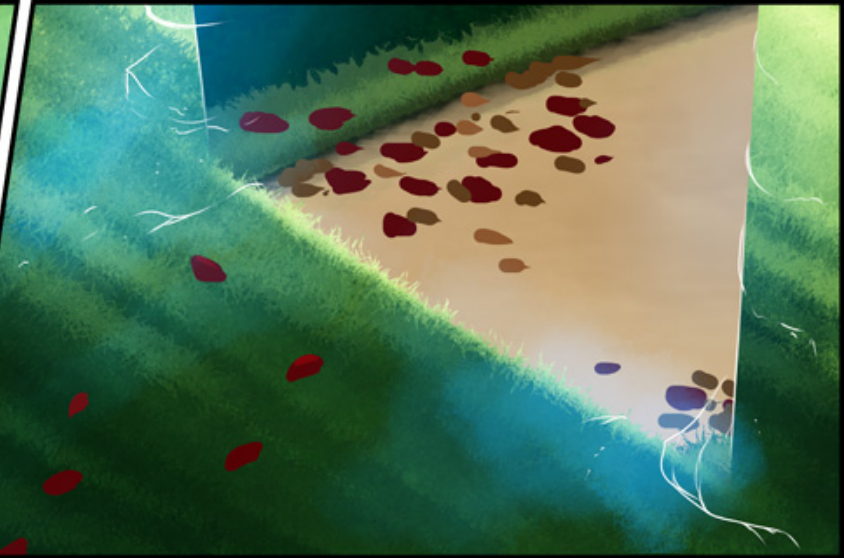
Aaaww~!



Okay, so how do I—

**CRICK!**









Hey hey hey!  
Back off!

Natani!  
<Help!>

Snrk!



Miss Reni? Are you going to be able to fit through here?



I'm not coming. The gatekey can't go through itself.

I will take the long way back. Now that this is done, there's other things I need to check up on, anyway.

I'll return again in the evening to see if either wolf has regained consciousness.

Oh, okay. Well, thanks for your help.



Huh? Oh! Shoot, I wanted to ask her about Mrs. Nibbly!

Where'd she go?

"Mrs... Nibbly?"



That white wolf servant... I wonder who she- eh?

Oh, hello, Nibs. Why are you on me?

Poor thing. She's shaking like a leaf.

Probably got spooked by the dragon. I don't blame it.

Strange, though. It never seemed frightened by anything else.

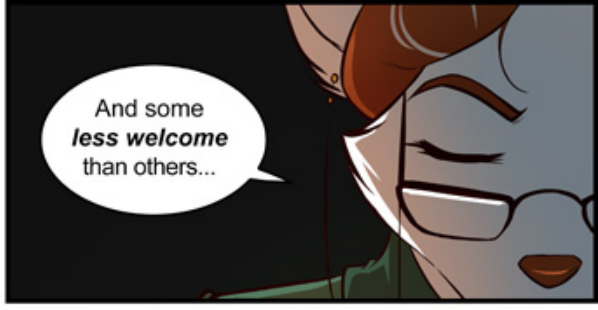




What a strange group of people Trace has collected.

The estate hasn't been this crowded in years.

So many guests...



And some *less welcome* than others...



Come out. I can sense you lurking.

You're worse than Brahn's pet.



Hello, Rose.

Nice to see you again after so long, cousin.

Spying, are we, Euchre?

Just watching over family. That's my daughter down there, you know.



Really? How thoughtful.

You should come visit in person then! Instead of projecting yourself like that.

I'd be interested to know if that "*perfect transformation*" of yours can fix being cursed into a barnyard animal.



I think I'll keep my distance, thank you.



Why are you *really* here, Euchre?





<You know, it's very odd to hear you speak without your drawl.>

<Just get on with it!>

<Alright...

I'm sure by now you've noticed that Trace is not the man he once was.

I've been working to keep it that way, and I'd like your help.>

<Oh? Do the other Master Templars know you're doing that?>

<Only Sirus. He knows my true nature, but he's an ally... for now.>

**Brahn**, on the other hand, is doing everything he can to draw Trace out.

He's taken to calling himself the **new Grand Templar** now, but so long as Trace still lives, the order remains divided.>



<So Trace is a game of keep-away between the two of you, hm?>

What exactly do you want me to do about that?>

<Nothing. Brahn may find a way to bypass the manor defenses eventually, but for now this place is as safe as any other.>

I'm more concerned about you.>

<Me?>



<You, and this place. For my work to succeed, I need Trace to remain as he is - happy and ignorant, for now.>

I don't want him to keep prying into his past.

I'm sure you know secrets buried here. Keep them buried, please. For the good of everyone.>



And whatever's in that room on the third floor, *don't let him see it.*>

End.