

TWO KINDS

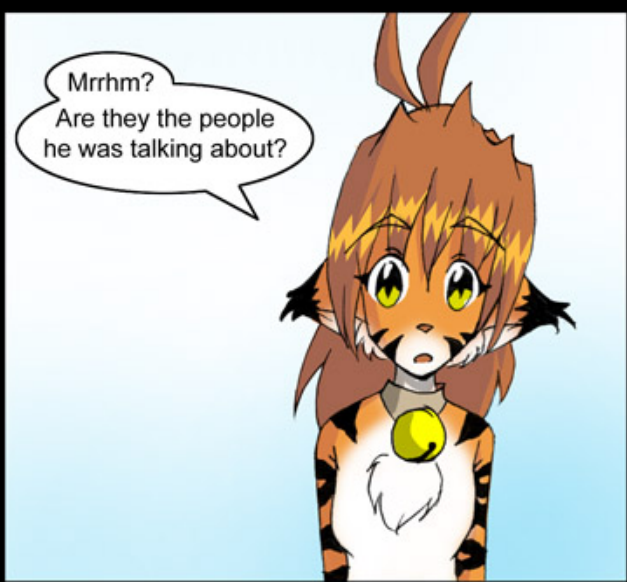
Chapter Four





Come on, Flora!
The new Grand Templar
is supposed to be going through
the village about now!

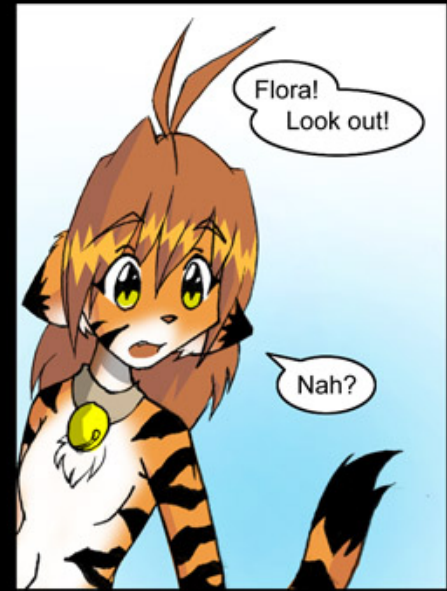
Wait...
...for me!



Mrrhm?
Are they the people
he was talking about?



I wonder which one
is the Grand Templar?



Flora!
Look out!

Nah?



Move out of
the way!

Ah!



Arg, gotcha!

Mra?!



Euchre, you saved me!

Of course, Miss Flora.
I could never allow anything
to bring you to harm.

Thank you!



Well, now that the humans are distracted, tell me, Flora...

How have you been doing lately? Have your masters been treating you alright?

Um, yes, I think they have...

They're all very nice to me. And Kei always lets me play with him.

Is that so? You are truly blessed to have such kind human masters.

You think so?

I do... say, what's that around your neck?

Oh, this? It was a present from Kei's father...

A collar, huh?

Well, I'd better be going before my masters notice I'm missing.

Take care, Miss Flora. And remember.

I'll always be here for you if you ever need my help.

I promise you.



Ah, it's morning!
It feels good to not
wake up to a nightmare
for once!



I wonder why I
didn't have- urk!



Flora... lying
on top of me...
So soft...
So warm...



Aaaack! What is
she doing in my bed!?
What have we done?



Meeerr?



Trace, what's wrong?
Are we under attack?
Did something happen?



In bed... you...
I... we didn't... we
couldn't have...

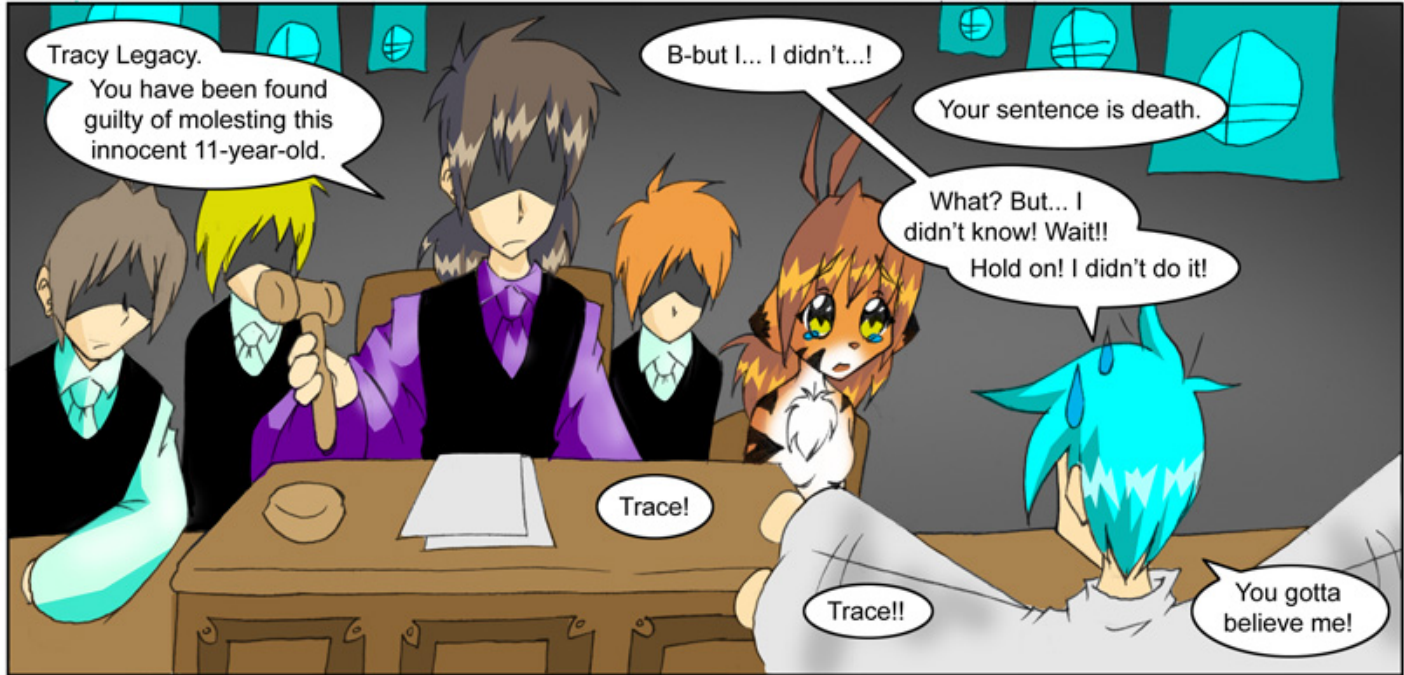


Yeah, we did!
It was really nice!

What!? You
mean we...?!

Yup!





Tracy Legacy.

You have been found guilty of molesting this innocent 11-year-old.

B-but I... I didn't...!

Your sentence is death.

What? But... I didn't know! Wait!!

Hold on! I didn't do it!

Trace!

Trace!!

You gotta believe me!



Trace! Snap out of it!

Gah!



A few stitches later...

So Keidran don't live as long as humans?

Right, in Keidran years, I'm an adult. Honest!

So how long do Keidran live?



Oh, no! Trace! I'm so sorry!

I forgot about my claws!



Well...



Er... no time for that right now! We need to get packed and out of this human city!

Heh. You're going to be the death of me, Flora.





I'm back!

Oh, hey, Trace!
What do you think? I finally got a chance to brush my fur after being in those woods.

Wow, you look great, Flora!

Aww, thank you!



Hey, Flora.

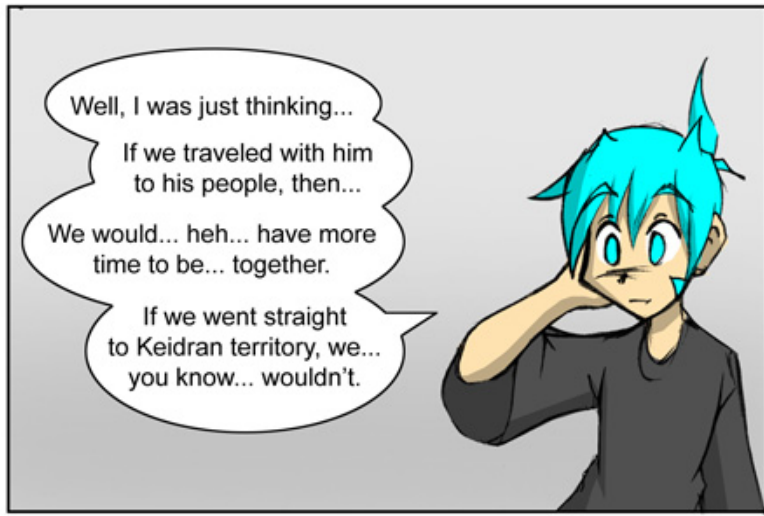
I just talked with Keith.
He says he wants to travel with us again.

Should we let him?



Keith? The Basitin?
B-but I was hoping we'd be traveling.. um.. just the two of us.

Plus, he's mean!



Well, I was just thinking...
If we traveled with him to his people, then...
We would... heh... have more time to be... together.
If we went straight to Keidran territory, we... you know... wouldn't.



Nya!



Well then, let's get packing!
Don't want to keep Keith waiting too long!

Eheh...



I think it was then that I realized...

I didn't really intend on ever leaving her.





So, you're a carnivore?

Well, I guess so. We only eat meat. When I was a slave, I got really sick once when they fed me some bread.

I guess that's out, then...



Oh, but I know what I'd really like...



Human flesh!

Aaah!



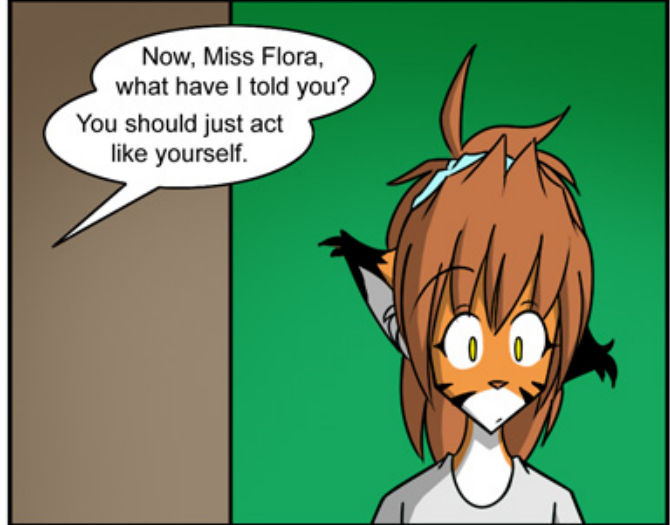
W-well... I-I'm going to go... see what I can find.



Eh?

I was just... kidding... Oh, shoot. I did it again. I let my Keidran get the best of me.

Now Trace is scared of me again. Why can't I just act normal?



Now, Miss Flora, what have I told you? You should just act like yourself.

Euchre?!

Greetings, Flora.

It's been quite a while, hasn't it? Amazing, of all the places, we meet up here.

So, how have you been since the escape?

Flora? What's wrong?

It's... been so long... E-Euchre... I've missed you so much!

But why are you in that cage?

Oh, this? Funny story, actually...

I was out for a morning walk the other day.

And these generous humans offered me a lift.

I politely refused...

But they were very insistent.





B-but Euchre!
This is horrible!
I can't stand to see
you in chains again! I have
to get you out of here!



Splendid idea!

I was just thinking
about leaving, myself!



I have to say, of all the
people I've met, you're the one I've
always hoped to see again.
I'd be honored to
travel with you.



There is one
problem, though.
You see, I've already
been sold, and apparently it's
to someone of royalty.

So even if you were
a human, you still wouldn't
be able to buy me.

I'd imagine the only one
capable of getting me out now would
be the Grand Templar himself!



...



So you need my help to gain support from the rest of the humans?

Yes, basically.



But there's more. You need to know th-

Trace!

Eh, Flora?

Stupid Keidran.



Flora? What's wrong? Did something happen to you?

Huff... no, no! Huff. I just saw a friend of mine- another Keidran! I need your help! You're the only one who can get him out!



Trace, this is a really bad idea! One Keidran is bad enough, but two?

There is no way I'm going to travel around with two Keidran!



Wait, Trace!

Can I talk to you in private?



Besides, if it's a male, then you know you'll never get any sleep at night with the noise they'll be making.



Guys?

Knock!
Knock!

Hey, still asleep?

I thought you'd want to be up by now to catch that Templar.

Huh?

Oh, no!
What time is it?

Everyone wake up!
We overslept!

Hurry up!
Hurry up!

Hey, aren't you forgetting something there?

Nope! Got my sword right here!

Mindless dolt.

Karen? What are you doing hanging off the balcony?

Just having fun!

Oh, whatever. Did you see where Trace went?

Yeah, he walked out and went left down the road.

Thanks. Guys!
Head out to your left!

Oh, wait, which way is left again?

So who is this "friend" of your's, exactly?

Well, his name is Euchre, and I've known him since I was a kitten.

He always seemed very cheerful, even as a slave.

He helped me out, even-e-even when m-my masters locked me up and sold me.

He was always there, even when my human friends betrayed me.

He helped me escape, and I learned never to trust another human again!

....

Trace!

Aguah?!



<Euchre! I'm back!
<I brought some friends!>

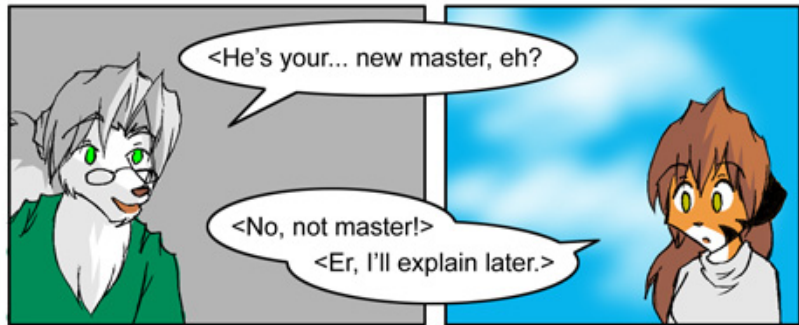


<Oh, good!>
<I knew I could
count on you, Flora!>



<So, this is the
Templar, huh?>

Jeez, that's
one big Keidran.



<He's your... new master, eh?>

<No, not master!>
<Er, I'll explain later.>



Trace, could you...?

Yeah, sure. I'll go talk
to that guy up there and
see what I can do.

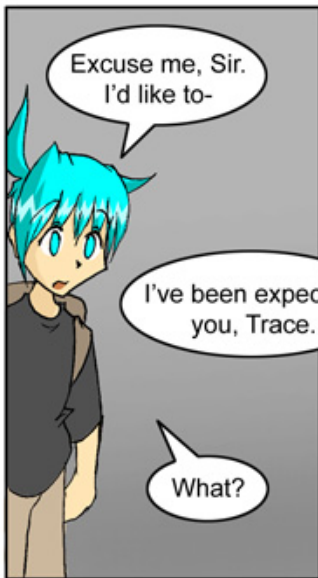
Thanks, Trace.

Of course!



<Hm, a Basitin, too? You're
hanging around with an interesting
crowd nowadays, Flora.>

What are you
looking at, Keidran?



Excuse me, Sir.
I'd like to-

I've been expecting
you, Trace.

What?



The Templar Masters
have a bounty on you that
I intend to collect.



Thank you again, Flora.
I am forever in your debt for this.

Aww, I didn't really do anything...



Huh? What was that feeling?

Interesting...



Aaaaagh!

Hah! They told me your powers were crippled, but this is too easy!

You're even weaker than a Templar's apprentice!

Now I know why they wanted to get rid of you!



Hey! Leave him alone!



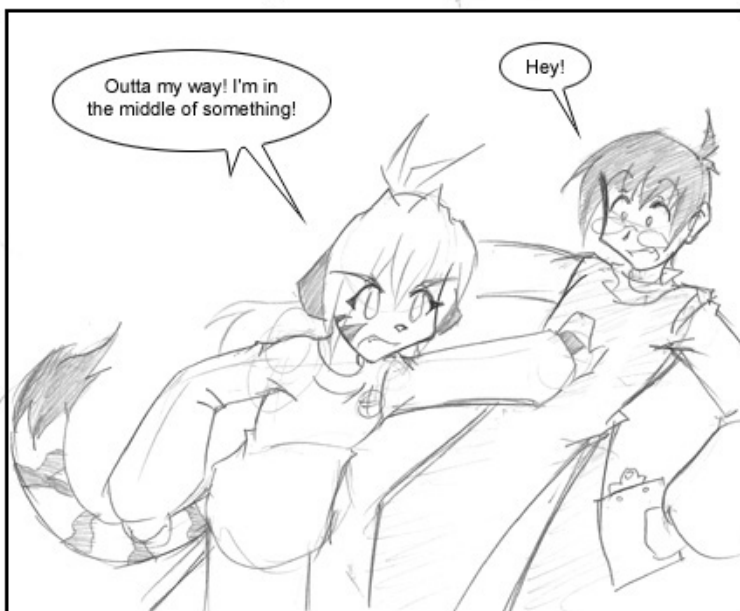
Aw, isn't that cute?
A loyal slave.




Stay out of this, Keidran!



Flora!





No, Flora! I have to do something!

Ah! What.. what is this?

What are these images?

Dreams? No, not dreams....

Memories...?

They can... they can't do this to me. No! They...

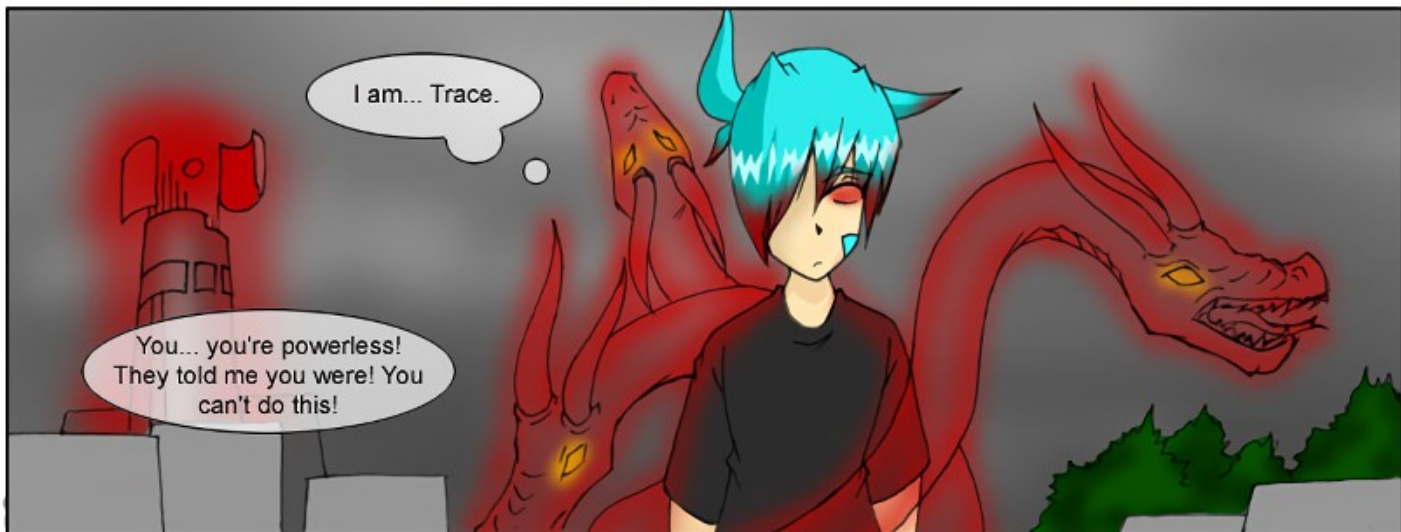
No one controls me!

I won't be controlled!

Master Templar..?

I'm sensing an energy fluctuation. Someone is trying to access the tower's energies.





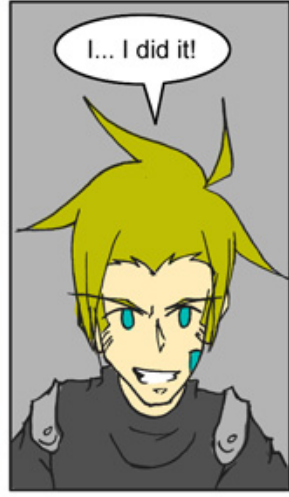




You sent my family to their graves!
It's time I did the same...



...to you!



I... I did it!



W-what?!



It was... an illusion...?

No...



Nooooooooo!



No, it can't be... has he really returned to his former self?



T-Trace?
Are... a-are
you okay?

Trace?



Flora? I'm so glad
you're not hurt...



You're... okay now?



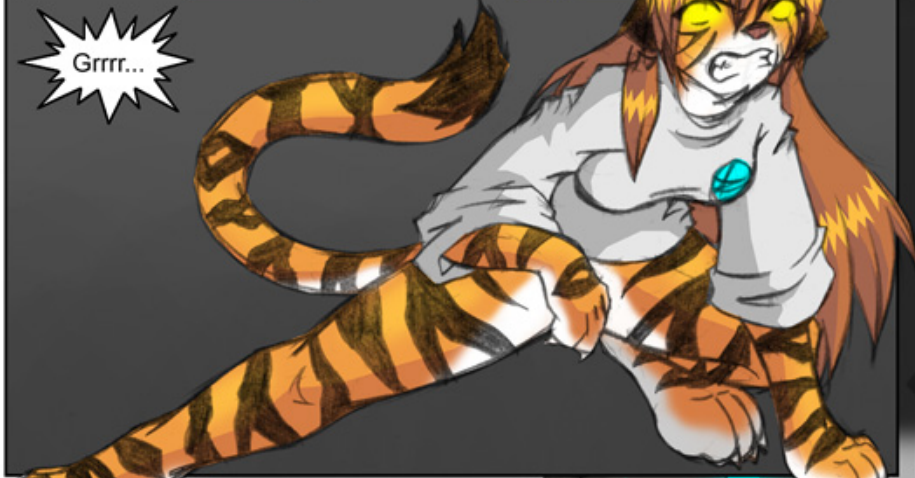
I'm just fine.
What's wrong?

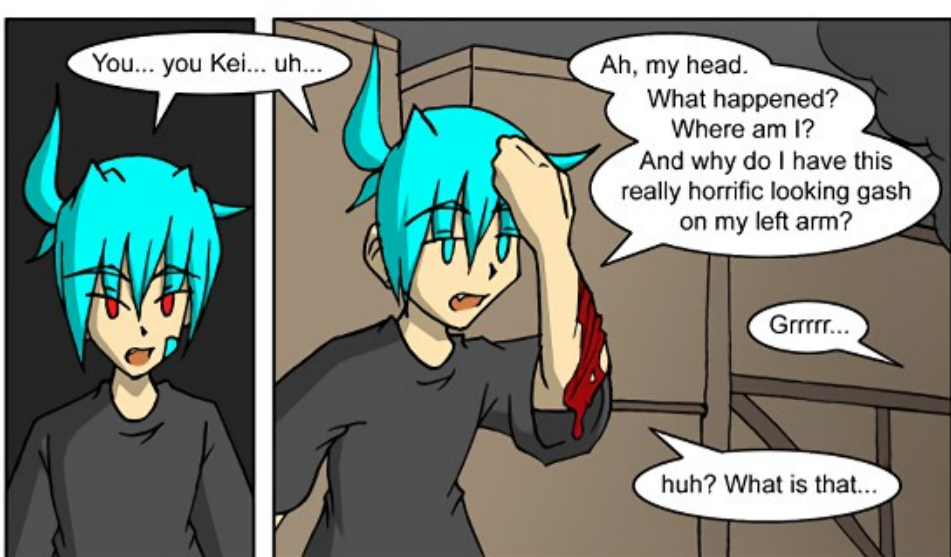
You're not scared
of me, are you?



Nyaaa!

Keidran!





You... you Kei... uh...

Ah, my head.
What happened?
Where am I?
And why do I have this
really horrific looking gash
on my left arm?

Grrrrr...

huh? What is that...



Ah! Flora? What happened?
What's going on?



I think I can
answer that.



Euchre! You're alive!
But I thought... I saw you
get hit by the fireball!



Oh, I'm tougher
than I look.

But I'm not important
right now. Are you okay?

I guess so... but...



But we don't
have time!

CRACK!

Gah!



Trace... he...
he attacked me...



Why would he do
something like that?

Flora, you're going to have to
trust me when I tell you, Trace wasn't
in control of himself.

Someone was using the Tower
to make Trace go berserk and act
out his old emotions.

How do you know this?

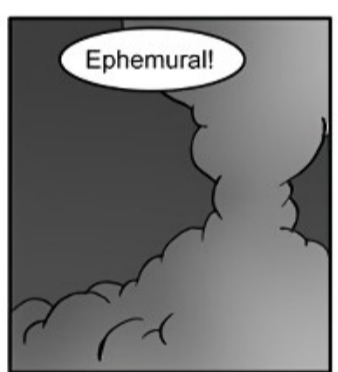
Well... just trust me for now, Flora.



Why would
they want him to
remember?



Trace was very important
to the Templars, even if some of them
might want him out of the way...
But there's someone I know who
I suspect is behind this...
Someone who cares
nothing for the fate of neither
Human nor Keidran.



Ephemural!



Look what you've done!
You've destroyed everything!



Oh? You don't
like my plan?



Plan? You've destroyed
my Tower and nearly killed
everyone *but* Trace!
You're plan is a failure.



Wrong!
I do not involve myself with the petty
quarrels of you Templar mortals.
I care not for Trace's fate!

There's only one thing I seek:
balance! I am Neutrality.



I'm after... her.



Her? But she's just
an ordinary Keidran...



I have foreseen that she
will one day bring balance to
the races of this world.

And betrayal is the
key to spark the hatred to
make it happen.



Ah, look at you, your fur is in knots!

Euchre, I'm fine-

I know, I know.

Look, why don't you go and take a bath in that river we found and then get off to bed.

Oh, okay.

I'll be in my tent if you need me.

Keidran...

My plans were almost ruined yesterday.

Just about lost my ticket home.

And Flora risked her life to try and snap Trace out of it.

Eh, I shouldn't even care if she died or not.

So why do I feel so guilty about not helping her!?

This is insane.

I am a basitin warrior!

And she's getting in the way of my plans.

What I really need is to get rid of her.

But I gave Trace my word I wouldn't even touch her.

... Then again, all's fair, as the saying goes.

Eh.. Uhm..?

Wha- What?
Where am I!

No... it can't be!

This.. isn't possible.
This is my island!

Keith!

Huh?
Vehra?

I'm... back home?

It's just like I remember!

Of course, kiddo!
What are you
doing out here?

Sleeping on the
beach again?

Well, gotta go.

Wait! Vehra!

Keith!

Uh..?

See ya around,
Keith Keiser.

Don't leave!
Y...you...

You're alive....

Dad..?

What are you doing out here?
You lazy, pathetic excuse for a Keiser!

Keith Keiser. For your actions against the basitin people; for the murder of your own two parents;

No, please...

Not again.. don't make me see this again..



...unless honor is restored..

For bringing shame not only on yourself but on your family name:

...I hearby banish you from these islands...

I didn't do it!

...Forever.

End.