



We don't have a lot of info on the second pair...

But it turns out the blue-haired one is Trace Legacy, the former Grand Templar himself.



It's strange, I never knew what he looked like before now. For the last four years he's generally been working in the shadows.

we suspect he's been captured and brainwashed by the striped Keidran.

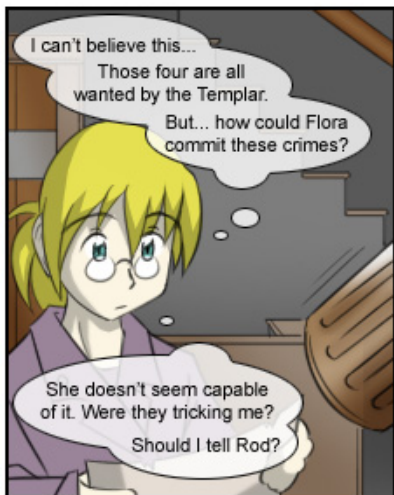


Here's your drink, Sir.



Heh, thanks kid.

N-no problem.



I can't believe this...

Those four are all wanted by the Templar.

But... how could Flora commit these crimes?

She doesn't seem capable of it. Were they tricking me?

Should I tell Rod?



Bleh!

What the heck is this?

It's piss warm!

I-I'm sorry... We have no ice or magic to cool it.

.....



Sorry, Roderick.

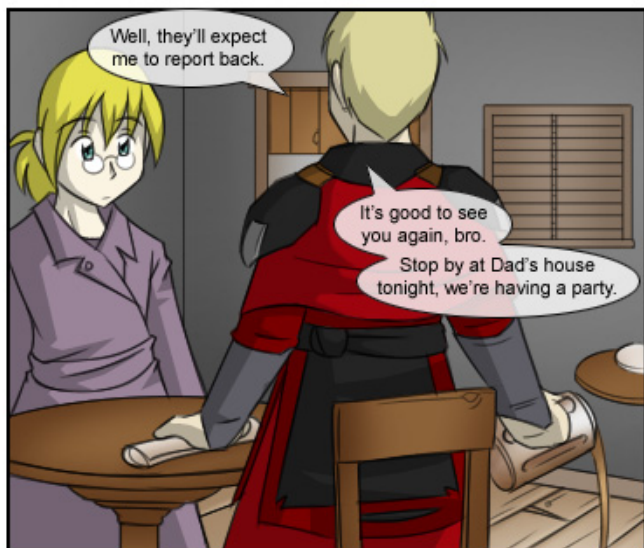
I didn't see any of these guys at the festival yesterday or this night.



Aw dang.

Well, thanks anyways.

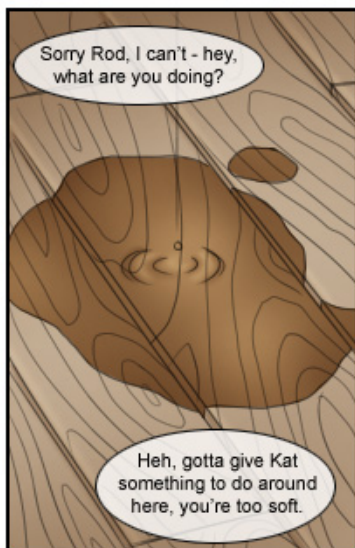
Just means they'll probably send me out some more today.



Well, they'll expect me to report back.

It's good to see you again, bro.

Stop by at Dad's house tonight, we're having a party.



Sorry Rod, I can't - hey, what are you doing?

Heh, gotta give Kat something to do around here, you're too soft.



Right Furball? Hey, I'm talking to you. Get over here.

.....no...



Wha... no?!

Kathrin!



"No," huh....



Eric, you're a slave trader.
You're obviously aware
of the Templar laws.

So what is this?



You know that it's against
the law to own any slave not
bound by a control spell.

She shouldn't be
able to say "no."

I'm aware of the
laws, Roderick.

I also know what
they do to Keidran!



It kills them inside!

I do use it for my slaves, but...

I couldn't do it to Kat.
She's been in our family
since we were kids.



Since you were a kid.
-sigh- I'm not going
to argue with you. Run your
business how you want.
...I've got to get going.

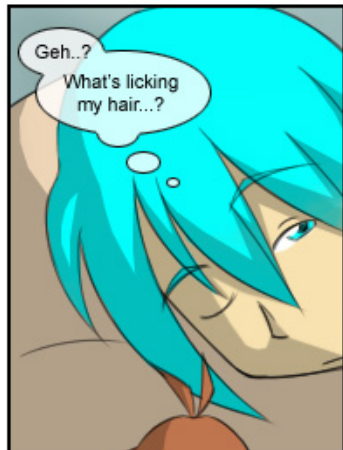
Just be careful Eric,
other Templar won't let
you off if they notice.



Oh, and Kat...

I've known you for 9 years,
and that's the first time I've heard
you speak up for yourself.

I'd hate to admit it, but
I'm honestly impressed.



-knock-
-knock-

Hey Keith, Natani.
I know it's early, but
we need to get going.
We want to get on
the boat before 10.

<Natani, Trace is just
saying to wake up. Don't worry,
we're not in a hurry.>

Meh...

<M'kay, I-I'm up...>

<Hey... guy...>
<wake up...>

<Hey, wake up.>

<Neh, I hate mornings...>

Huh? Hey!
Get off me!

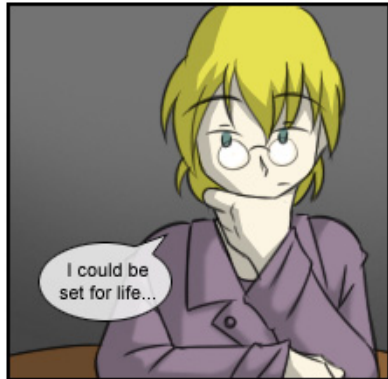
Ah great...

This is going to end
up my fault somehow.



Hm, what should I do?
It would be crazy to get on a boat with four wanted criminals.

There's an awful lot of gold on Trace's head...

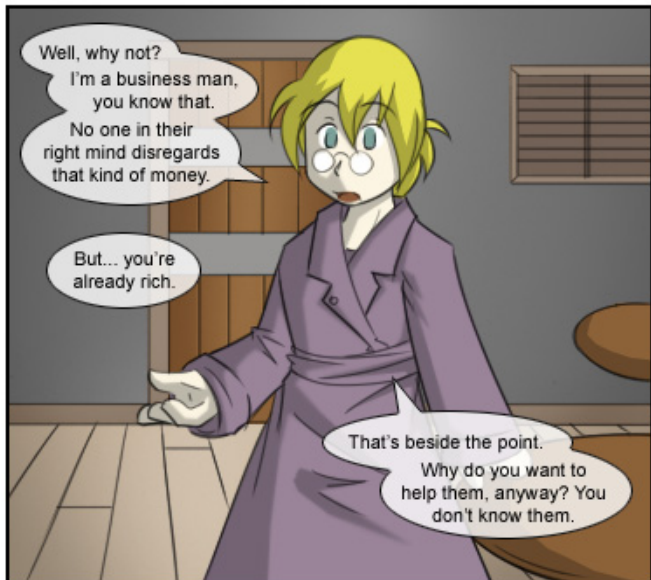


I could be set for life...



Eric!
...er, Master...

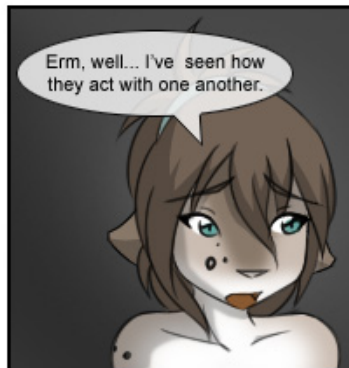
You aren't going to turn them in, are you?



Well, why not?
I'm a business man, you know that.
No one in their right mind disregards that kind of money.

But... you're already rich.

That's beside the point.
Why do you want to help them, anyway? You don't know them.

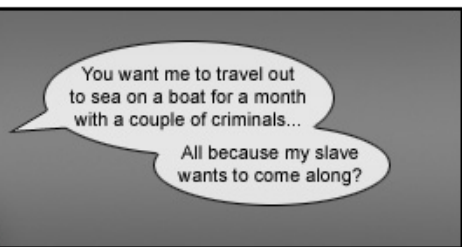


Erm, well... I've seen how they act with one another.



I don't think any of them are capable of being criminals.
And um... I've seen how Flora looks at Trace.
It kinda reminds me of... erm... of myself, sorta...

Hm? Yourself...?











-sniff-
Where are they?

Mommy, Daddy,
where are you?

Please, come back...



They can't be gone...
where did they go?
Mommy, come back...

Would you just
shut up, Natani!



Don't you get it?!
Mom and Dad are dead!

And they're never
coming back!

Stop being such a
girl about everything!

C-crying about it isn't
going to get us anywhere!

We've only got each other now,
and we have to keep moving.



sniff...
I don't want to cry...
I just want the
pain to go away...

I wish I was like
you, Big Brother...



Don't worry Zen. I won't
let my emotions control me.

Everyone ready?

Give me a minute to
put a seal on the house.

Aw man, I hate robes!

They really mess up my fur...

<Hm... crystals?>

<Ah, finally! I've been feeling
naked without my magic.>

<Excuse me.>

<How much are your crystals?
Do they contain pure mana?>

<I... have a few pieces,
of, uh, silver here...>

.....

<You have no idea
what I'm saying, do you?>

No Keidran.

-sigh-

<I understood that.>

<Come on Natani, we don't
want to attract attention!>







It'll be another hour or so until my crew's ready.

Feel free to have a look around meanwhile.

Thanks a lot, Eric.
We really appreciate you taking us along.



Eh, no problem.

I was going to be sailing out anyways.

The Basidian Islands are as good a place as any.

Just don't forget that deal we had. I get Flora to pose for my artwork on the way there.



Speaking of Flora...
I have to ask...

This trip is going to take nearly a month.

Flora's not in any danger of.. you know, going into heat during the trip?

What?! Eh...
no, she's not.

She was in heat...
a few weeks ago.



Ah, good. Kathrin's safe too. That rules out all female Keidran.

Yup, all females here.

Indeed. Just the two.

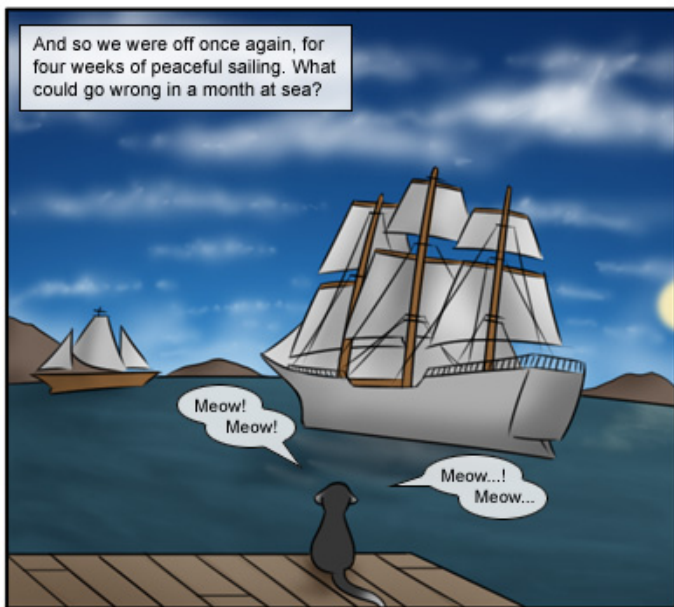


But why does it matter...?

Trust me, it's just not a good idea.

In an small area like this boat, it effects everyone.





1 week later....

Everything seems to be going well.

It's been smooth sailing so far. If we keep this up...

I think this will be a very uneventful trip.

So tell me, Trace, how is Flora doing?

Oh, she's alright.

The first few days were a little tough on her.

But she hasn't gotten sick lately.

Ah, good, good!

I'm glad. I've been waiting for a chance to paint her image.

Do you think, perhaps, she could be available this evening?

Oh, right, the paintings...

I'd almost forgotten about that deal.


I suppose... um, tell me...

You're not going to have her pose... lewdly, are you?

Aw come on...

Do I seem like a pervert to you?

Just have her stop by my cabin in an hour, and I'll have everything set up.




Erm, Eric?
I'm here for the,
uh, paintings...




Ah, Flora!

Good to see you!
Come in, come in. Close
the door behind you.


How are you feeling?



I'm... good...




There's no reason
to be nervous, Flora.
I know we haven't talked much
in the last week, but we're all friends
here, right? You can trust me.




Now here, put this on.

You... want me to
change.. right here?



Why not...?

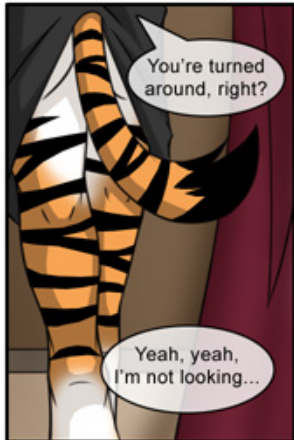
Well, ah... I don't know...
it's just embarrassing!



Embarrassing? Aw,
don't be ridiculous!

I've never heard of
a modest Keidran.

Come on, just take it off.
I'll turn around if it
makes you feel better.



You're turned around, right?

Yeah, yeah, I'm not looking...



Directly, anyways...

...eh?



Hey!!

Kidding, kidding! Ow, ow, hey!



Already, let's get this over with.

Flora, what's the big deal, anyways? I've seen you naked many times in the last week.

-sigh- It's not the nude thing, I don't care.

It's just... it makes me nervous when you're watching me undress.

You really come across as a creepy pervert sometimes.

Especially with that... sex slave of yours.



What are you talking about? Kathrin? She's not like that... I've never taken advantage of her.



Wait, you've... never...

No, not at all.

But... you sleep in the same cabin!



Now, don't get me wrong, Flora. I have spent...
"quality time" with several of the slaves I own.



But... when our family aquired Kathrin, she was just a kitten. I was only ten at the time.



At first she was almost like a pet. But we got older... I wont deny that we fooled around occassionally, we were kids after all. We were curious.



But...



I guess I just respect her too much to do that. She really means a lot to me...

...I usually spend our nights teaching her how to read.

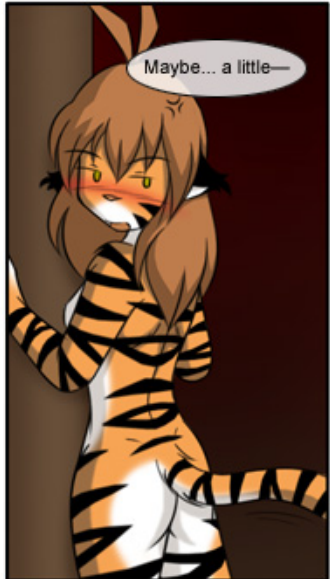
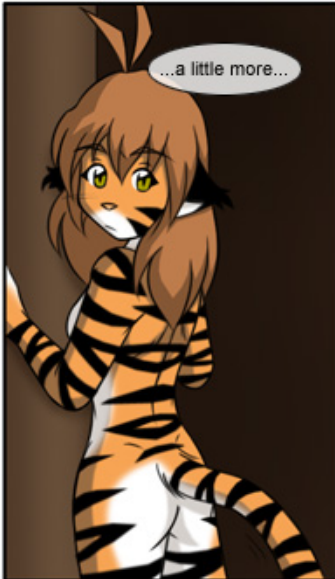


Huh... maybe I had this guy all wrong. Maybe he isn't such a pervert after all...

Well, enough about my past...
Hm... I think this is a good enough warmup...



Now please take off your robes and bend over against that pole there.





Meanwhile...

<Alright, no magic
or weapons, just hand-
to-hand combat.>
<You ready?>

<Ready when you are.>

<And don't even think about
holding back against me.>

<After this is over you're
going to wish I did!>

<Hey, check it out.>

<Hm? Oh,yeah, they've
been training down here for
the last couple days.>

<Never seen 'em fight though...>

<Is that right...>

<...my next meal says
the wolf guy wins.>


<You're on.>



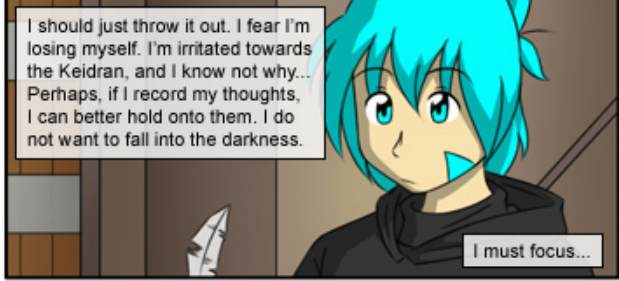









I know I shouldn't be writing in this journal.




I should just throw it out. I fear I'm losing myself. I'm irritated towards the Keidran, and I know not why... Perhaps, if I record my thoughts, I can better hold onto them. I do not want to fall into the darkness.

I must focus...




Trace, I'm back...
Oh, am I... interrupting?



Flora, of course not.
How did it go?

It... was interesting.


He acted as I expected.
But it wasn't that bad.
He's... a polite pervert. I'm just glad to be back.




So, you don't feel sick?

Nope! I still feel fine.

That's great!
After all you've been through, I'm happy you're finally feeling well.



'Cause you know...
You haven't been "in the mood" all week!



FWOOMP!



Oh, I see!

You only care if I'm
feeling well so you can
get into my pants!
...er, so to speak.



No no no, Flora!
I didn't mean
it like that!

I just misspoke. I'm
happy you're well.



Hmph!



Aw, come on,
don't be that way!

We can just
sleep, it's fi-



Rawr!

Ack!



Gotcha!

Yup... back
to normal...

One week later...

<I can't stand this...>

<I feel like I've been on this wretched boat for two eternities.>

Natani...?

Wrong? What do you think?!

<What are you doing up here?>
<Please tell me you're not howling at the moon.>

<No, I'm not howling!>

<I thought we were going to practice tonight. Anything wrong?>

<I'm wet, I'm cold, and I'm hungry! We're in the middle of an endless sea of water!>
<Just get away from me and leave me alone!>


<I... er, wait, I'm sorry.>

<I didn't really mean that. I've just been frustrated lately and I'm not sure why.>

<It's alright.>


<I'm staying up for a few more hours.>

<If you change your mind, come to my cabin and we can go at it.>




Is that your third serving?

Yeah, I've been very hungry recently. I'm not really sure why.




You've also been very quiet. Anything wrong?

mmm, nope...




Well, actually...

I've been thinking... We've known each other for a long time now, right?




Heh, it seems like it. It's only been about 6 months though...



Well, that's a long time for us Keidran... and well... I've been wondering...

I mean, even though it would be impossible to do...

Have you ever thought about... well... um...




...marriage?

-clink-



Trace...?






Alright, so Flora's starting to talk about marriage, huh?

It's not impossible. You can hold an unofficial ceremony if you like.


So what's the problem?



We're not the same species!

Even if it's unofficial, marriage is still a serious commitment, right?


And we could never have children... I just don't know...




It's just.. she's not human, you know?

She's.. well, an animal! Would it even be right to do?

How is it going to work out with her the way she is...?



What would people— ah!




Hey, what the—?

Are you even listening to what you're saying?


What makes you any less animal than us, huh?

What makes you humans so high and mighty?




I have no right to tell you what to do with your relationship.

But I hope, for Flora's sake, that you base your decision on *who* Flora is, and not just *what* she is.




Get off me!
You're overreacting... I— I didn't mean it like that!




Oh, I think you meant it exactly as you said, whether you realize it or not.

To be honest, I don't trust Keidran any more than the next guy.
But Flora... she's different. I don't want her hurt.



I... don't want her hurt either.
I guess... you're right. I was wrong to say such things.




Well, like I said, I can't tell you what to do.

But if you want my advice, I suggest you wait until you figure out who you really are.


But I don't know what to do...




Nya!



Hey Flora, I'm back.



Hey, that was quick.
Did you get that fresh air you wanted?



No... I didn't get what I wanted.
But... I think I got what I needed.



Third week...

Hurry up, you idiots!
The storm's upon us. Take
everything down, now!

Flora, maybe you
should keep resting—

I rested all yesterday.
My stomach stopped
hurting hours ago.

It was probably
just all that food—

Hey, guys. Have you seen
Natani around lately?

Oh yeah, I think he's
sick or something.

He locked himself in
his room two days ago.

I tried to bring him some
food from the kitchen...

But he didn't
open the door.

Just told me to
leave it there.

It's been a while
since I've gotten him
any more, though.

Eh, I guess I'll get
it for... um... him.



Jeez, what am I, a butler?



<Hey Natani, are you alright?>
<I brought you some dinner...>



<Keith? Ah... don't come in!>
<Just... -huff- leave it by the door. I... I'm ill!>
<Please, go away. It's... contagious!>



<Don't be ridiculous.>
<We Basitin don't get sick. I'm not in danger of catching anything.>



<I'm coming in...>

<What?! No..!>



<Ah! My lock spell failed! I couldn't concentrate...>
<Grah, why do all Eric's doors come without manual locks?>



Uh... Natani?



What the—? There's a strong scent in here.

Strange, I can't tell what it is, though. I swear I recognize it from somewhere...



Thank goodness, it worked. I can mask the scent magically.

But I don't know how long I can hold it...

<His scent is... ah, no, don't think about it!>



<Keith, haven't you ever heard of 'privacy'?>

<I told you I don't want anyone in my room!>

<Why did you barge in here?>



<Wait... you were really concerned about me?>

<Well yeah, I guess. Why not?>

<I... don't know. I'm an assassin. Only my brother's ever cared about me>



<I just wanted to make sure you were okay!>

<Believe it or not, I usually enjoy talking with you.>

<But if you don't want my help, then fine, I'll leave.>



Aw, jeez, now I'm getting emotional.

I despise this body...



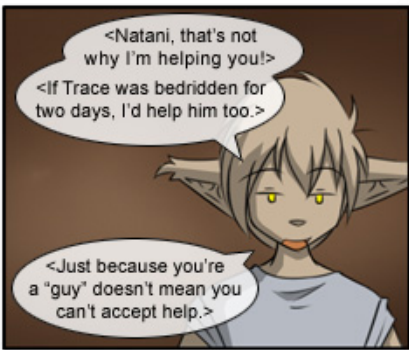
<Nat, why are you so insistent on dealing with this by yourself?>



<Well I... um...>

<I know you're just helping me because you know I'm a girl.>

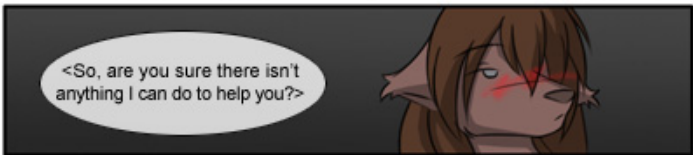
<You wouldn't be so eager if I was still a guy to you.>



<Natani, that's not why I'm helping you!>

<If Trace was bedridden for two days, I'd help him too.>

<Just because you're a "guy" doesn't mean you can't accept help.>



<So, are you sure there isn't anything I can do to help you?>



<Yes, Keith, I know how you can heal me!>

<Come over here and be a miracle-worker!>



<Urgh, okay Keith, if you want to help me...>

<Get me something for my headache...>





<Here ya go, it's ready.>



<Oh, thanks. Um, what does it do, again?>

<Well, it should just help you relax. Might make you a little tired, too.>



<Bleh! It tastes terrible!>

<Heh, I told you.>



<How do you feel? It should work quickly.>

<Eh, I feel a little better I guess. Not by much...>

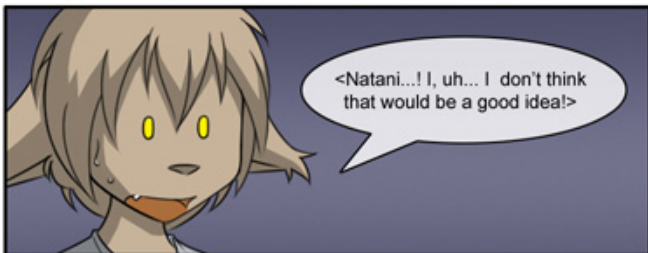


<Ah, well, I guess I should be going now. Take care of yourself, Nat. Call for me if you need—>




<...eh? Natani?>
<Hey, you okay?>


Nehm...








The storm's getting rough. Will it slow us down?



Only a little. But we've made good time.

Winds have been at our back for most of the trip.




Ah, that's good...

Hey, Eric, I had a question for you.

Ask away.

You know that me and Flora are... kinda a couple, right?


Is that.. strange?



Hah, I think you're asking the wrong guy.

You know that I have a certain affinity for Keidran.


But yes, it is rather unusual to find someone who appreciates Keidran in the way I do.



But, I don't! It's just Flora I care about.

You mean like, a serious relationship? I've never heard of such a thing work out.

What? Why?



Well, don't you know about their life span?

Keidran only live to be about 20 years old.

By the time you're in your 30's, she'll probably die of old age...




Ornaments

Fragile

Merry Christmas!









You can't read?
That's not good!

I thought Mr. Trace
seemed nice...



Oh, no, it wasn't Trace.
It was my... former owners
who didn't teach me.



Ah, I know what you mean!

I used to be owned
by Master Eric's brother.


He never let me learn
anything, but Eric saved
me from that place!




Huh, that must be why
she likes Eric so much...
...jeez... I wonder if
Kat has back problems...

Anyway, I can't read
well, but I can show you
what I know...

I usually read the ones
with pictures, they're easier.



Wait, pictures?
Let me see this...



What the-? This book
is just filled with perverted
Keidran artwork!

Grah! Eric, you perv!!



Hi, Keith,
How's Natani?

Oh, hi, Flora. He's
fine, just resting.

That's good.



I'm going to give Eric
a piece of my mi—

...that's strange...



S-something
wrong, Flora?

Uh, no, no...
nothing wrong.

I thought I smelled... no, I
must be imagining things...



Ugh, this storm
isn't letting up.

Thank the
gods for breaks.



Ye gods! It's
that Basitin again!

What now...?

Wait... that scent
on you... a wolf...



Aaaah!

W-what have you done
to that poor guy now?!

aliiieeee!!

Wait, stop, I
didn't... oh, great.



Later...

R-r-reh...



Jeez that water's cold.

At least I've finally gotten Natani's scent out of my fur.
...and stopped being perpetually excited...



Kat, bring the iodine—
Oh, sorry, Keith.

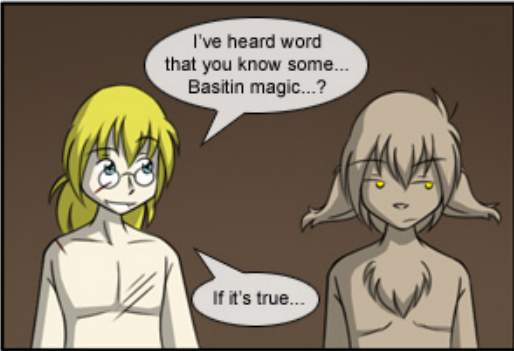
It's alright, I was leaving....
what happened to you?



Honestly I'm not sure.
One minute I'm drinking tea, the next Flora's telling me not to corrupt Kathrin.
Then I reassure her with a *harmless* pat, and... this happened.



Oh, while you're here...



I've heard word that you know some...
Basitin magic...?


If it's true...



Hey, wait...
where are ya going?
Change Mike! I need a new fox girl!









Natani...
Natani...




Zen...?




You... you're
not Zen...



No, I'm not your brother.
I am speaking through him
on behalf of your king.




Zen should have told
you weeks ago I can't—




We know. Your objective
has changed. We want you to
continue following Trace.

We believe he is still
important to the humans.

He's been disappointed
in your failures. You have yet
to kill your targets...



Don't let him get into
human hands, but only
kill him if you must.
He may be useful now
that we are at war.



That's not important
We will inform you further
if it is necessary.

What, war? When
did that happen?

Until then, do not
forget where your true
loyalties lie.

4 days later...

Land on the horizon!

Mike, let the others know we've spotted the island.
We'll likely locate the harbor by evening.

And by 'others' I mean all of them, the Bastin included.
He's been complaining that you're all avoiding him.

Aye, Master...

Meanwhile...

Zen, I'm fine. I'm almost over with this... problem.
Quit changing the subject on me. What is this war...?

Relax, Little Brother.

The king knows what he's doing. The humans are not as strong as we believed.

Five days ago, their king was assassinated.

Assassinated by our tribe? Is he crazy?!

We can't hope to fight the humans by ourselves!

Natani, Natani, you overestimate the humans' power.

Assassinating their king was almost too easy.

And without a king to control them, the Templar cannot hope to function.



Oh, Keith, I wanted to thank you for... ya know, helping me out...

Eh, no problem...



Look... uh, I know I may have said some things these last few days that...

...that I really didn't mean...

Two days prior...



Keeeeeith!

Please, I need you...

Sproing!

I can't take it anymore, I'll do anything you want...!

Keith...!



Don't worry, I know you weren't yourself.

Instinct gets the best of us all.

You're just lucky no one heard you.

And I'm just glad I never have to do guard duty again...



Um, actually... I *really* need a bath, and I was hoping...

Alright, alright...

One last time, but that's it! I'm not your personal bodyguard.

