

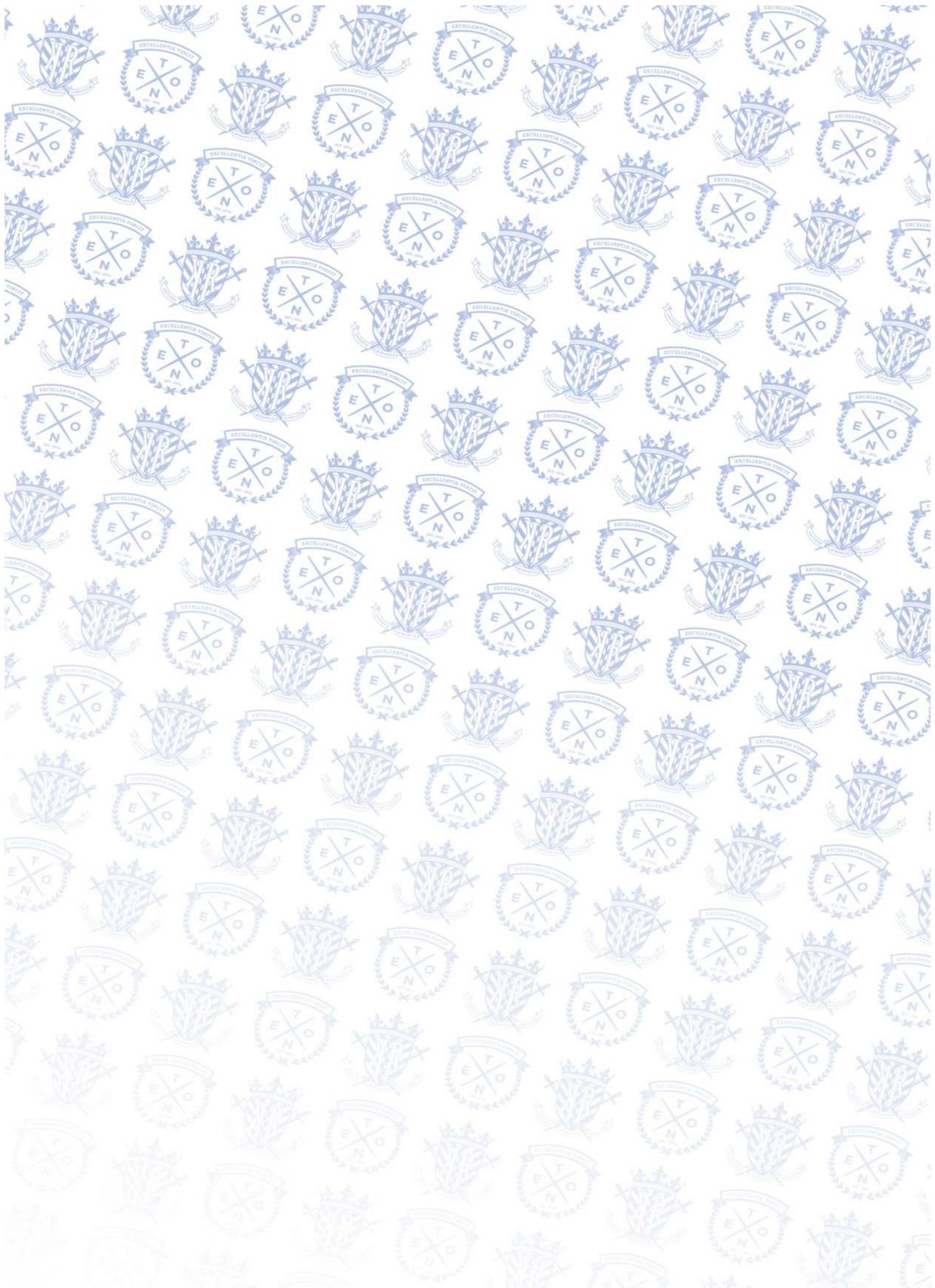
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C.S.PACAT JOHANNA THE MAD JOANA LAFUENTE

FENCE™

RISE VOLUME FIVE





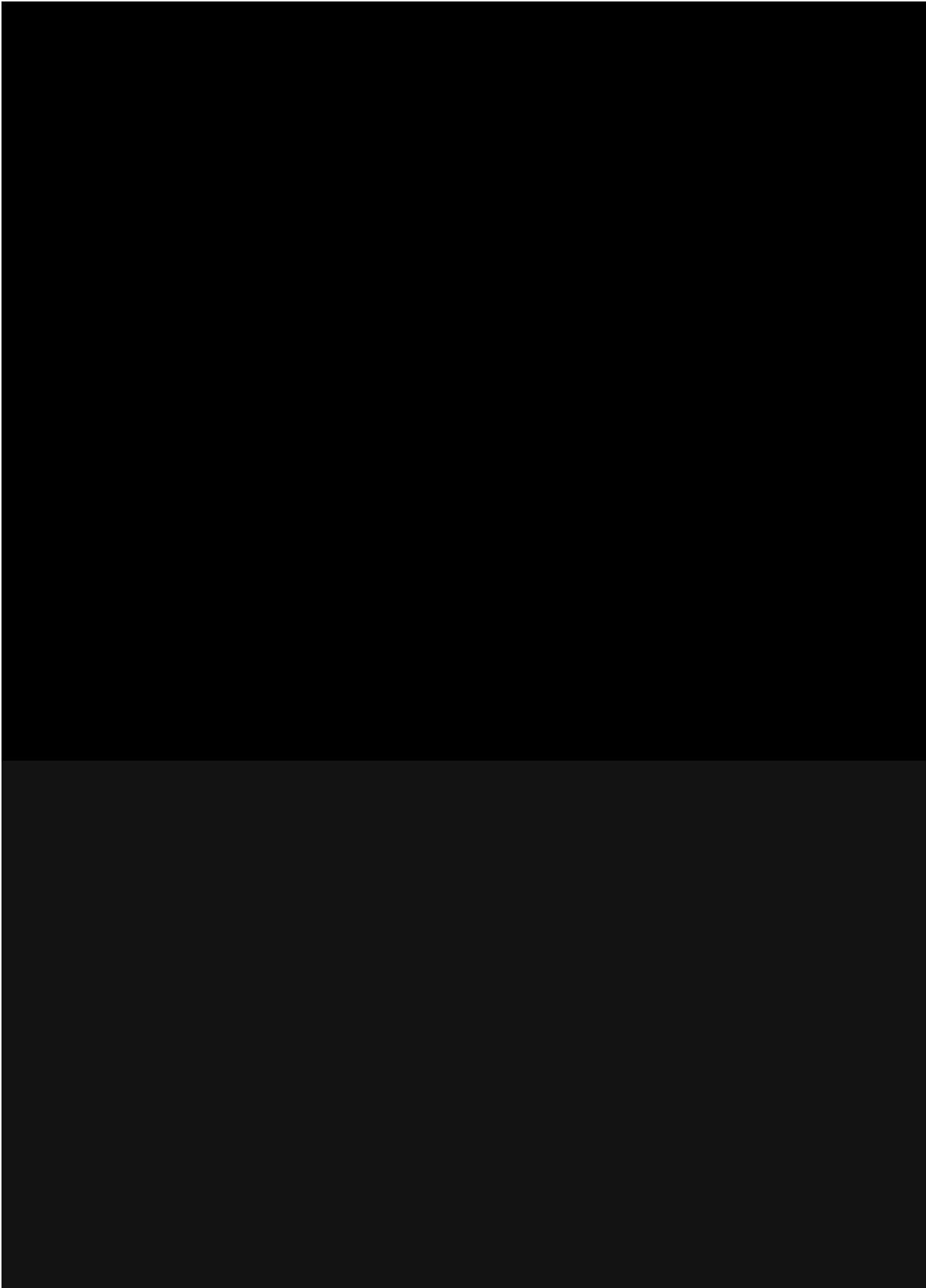
C.S. PACAT JOHANNA THE MAD JOANA LAFUENTE

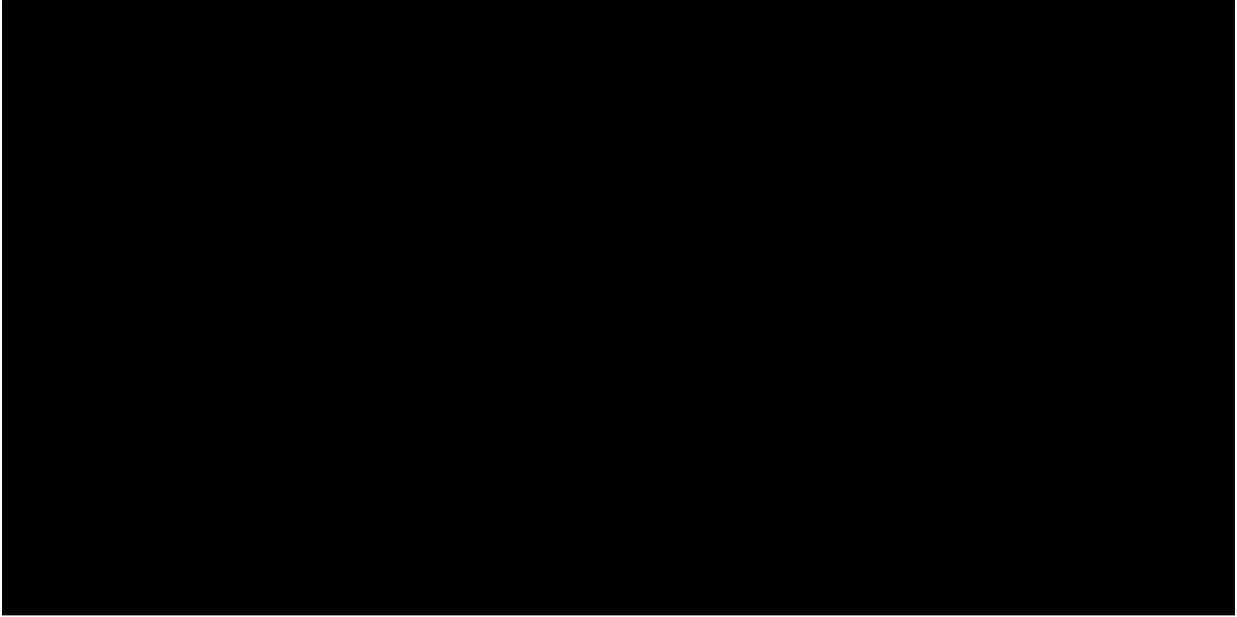
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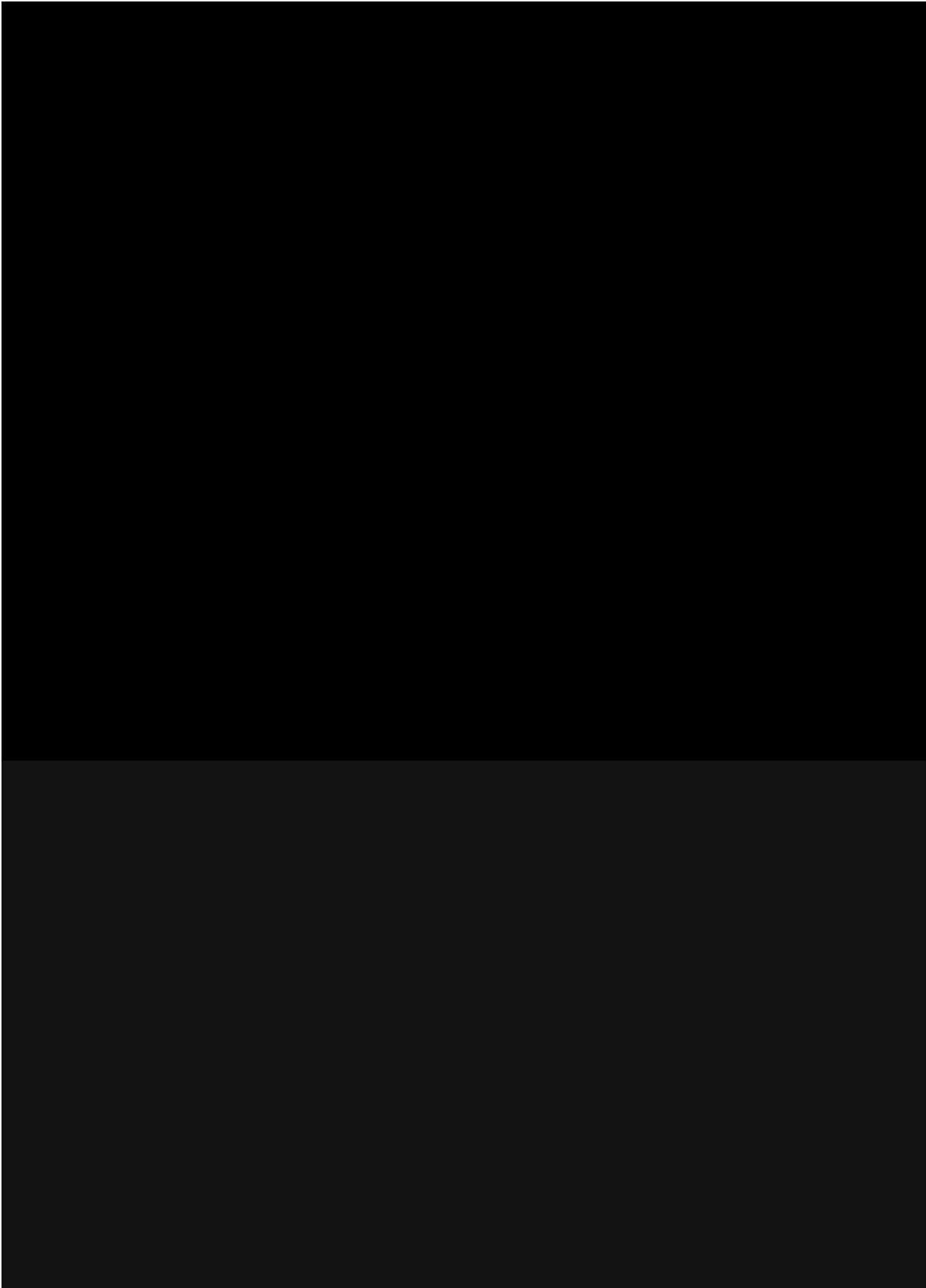
RISE

Published by

BOOM! BOX™









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FAWN LAU

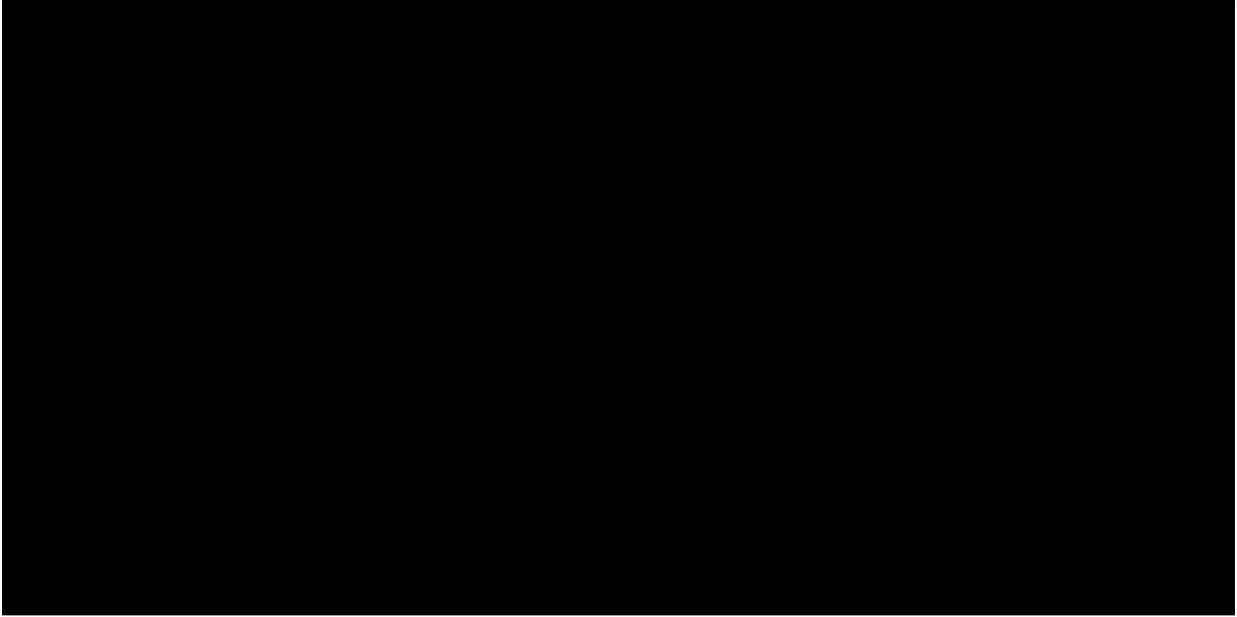
MAIN COVER AND BOOM! EXCLUSIVE COVER BY
JOHANNA THE MAD

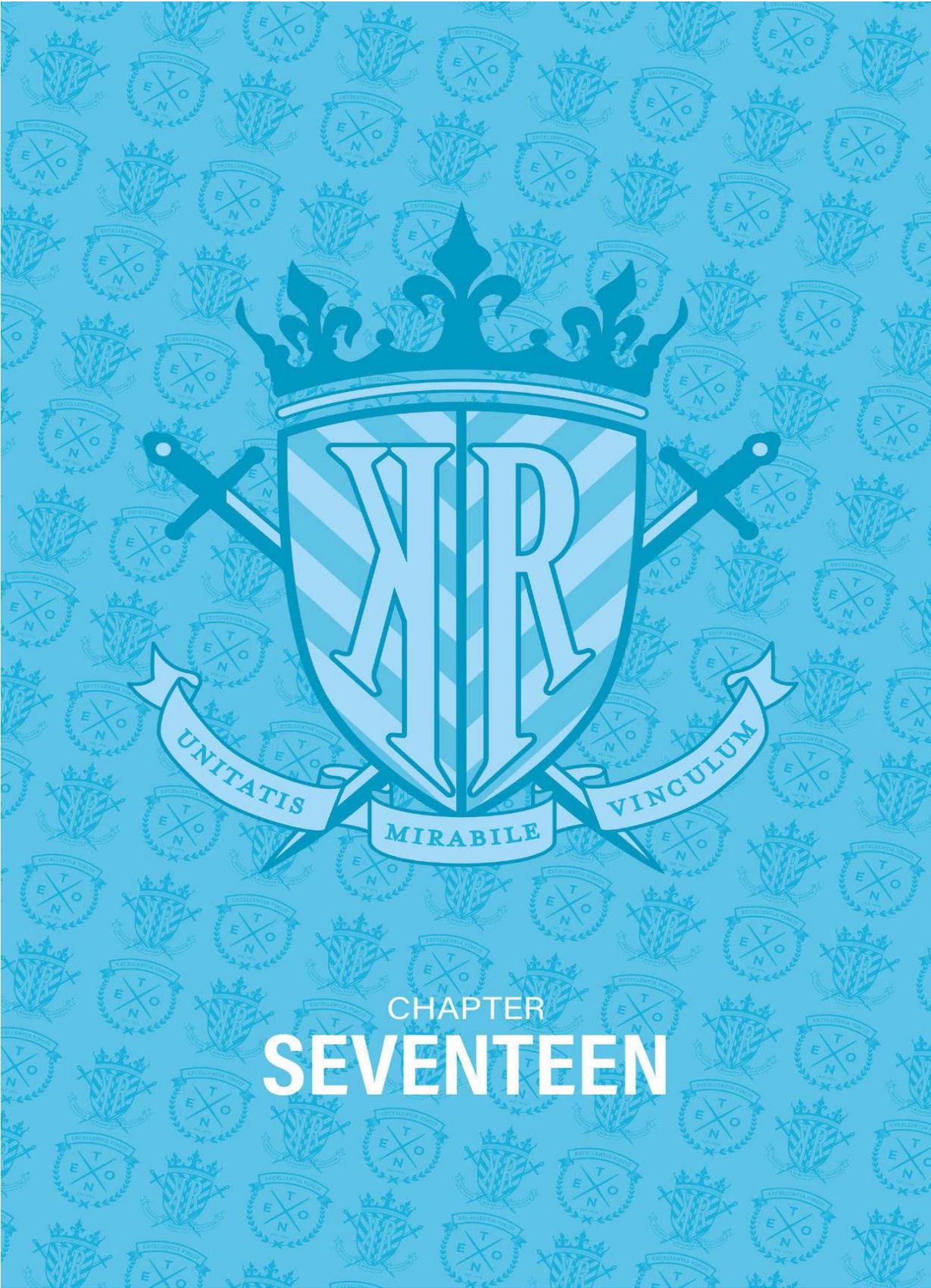
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CREATED BY
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CHAPTER
SEVENTEEN









I USED TO WORK CLEANING JOBS BACK HOME. THAT'S HOW I FIRST GOT FENCING LESSONS.

I HELPED COACH JOE CLEAN UP HIS SALLE D'ARMES.



BACK THEN, FENCING AT A PLACE LIKE KINGS ROW WAS JUST A DREAM. BUT AFTER WE WON THAT MATCH AGAINST MLC, IT FELT LIKE--



--I MIGHT HAVE A REAL SHOT.

I WANT TO WORK HARD SO THAT THIS TEAM--OUR TEAM--CAN GO ALL THE WAY TO THE STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS, AND WIN.

AND AFTER THAT, IF WE WIN THE STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS, WE CAN--

YOU TALK A LOT.



OH, YEAH, SORRY. I GET CARRIED AWAY.

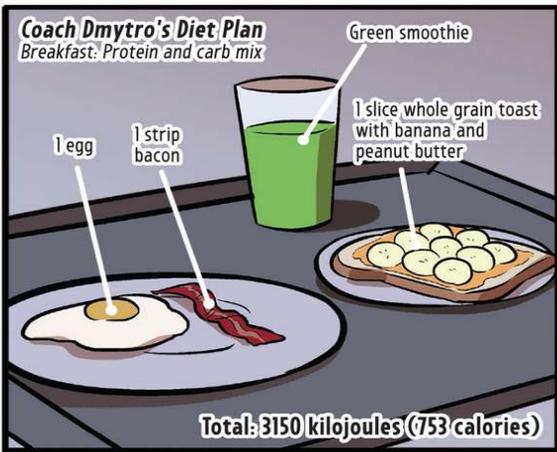
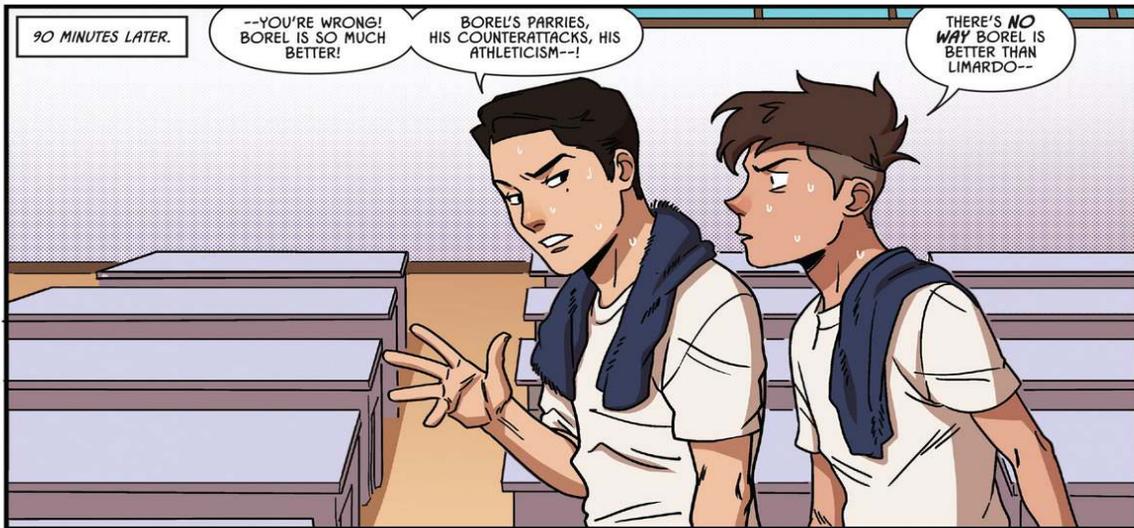
YOU, UH, PROBABLY PREFER TO TRAIN IN SILENCE.

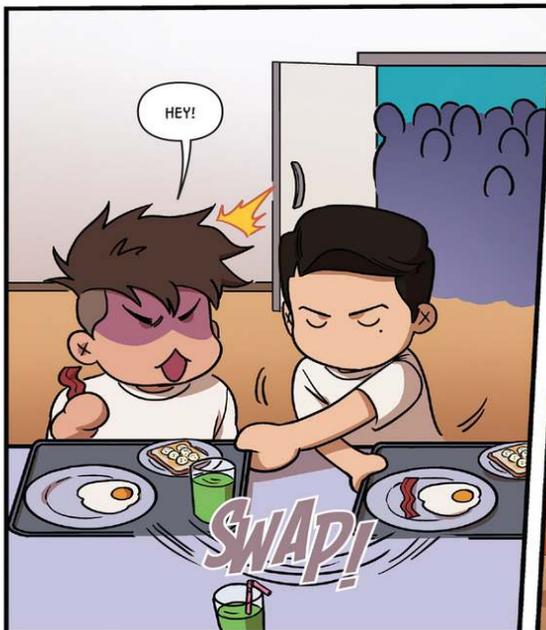


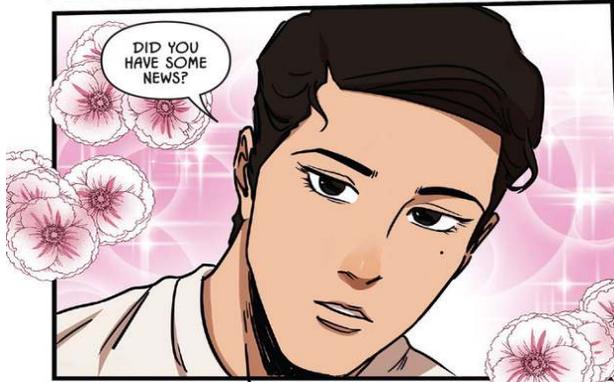
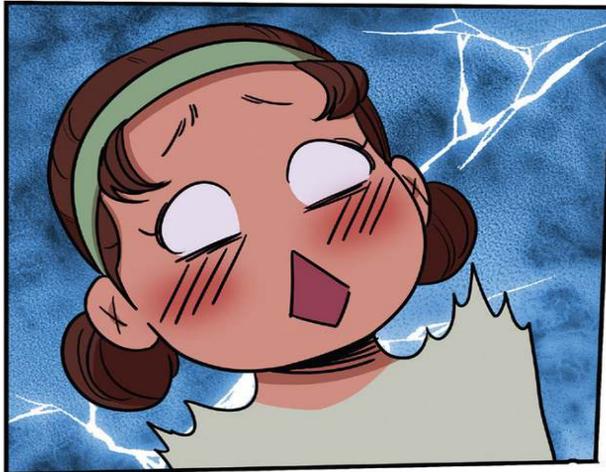
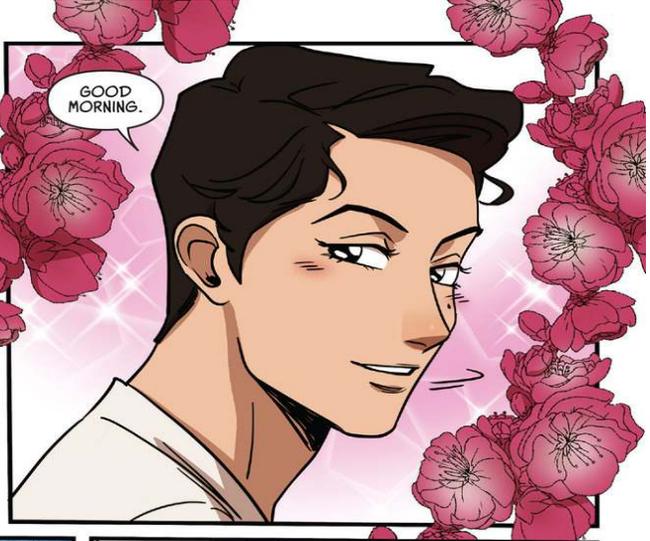
NO, I--

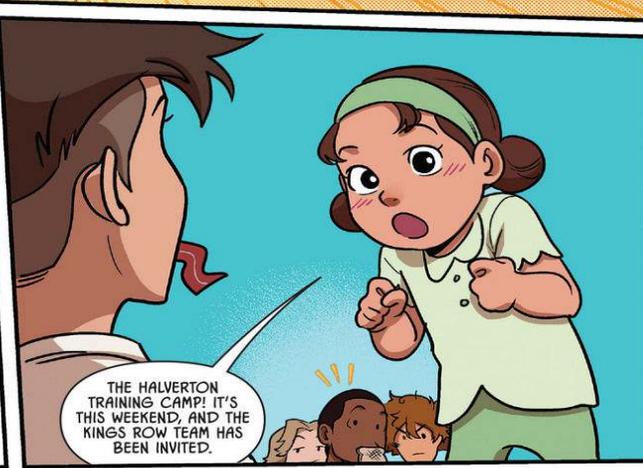
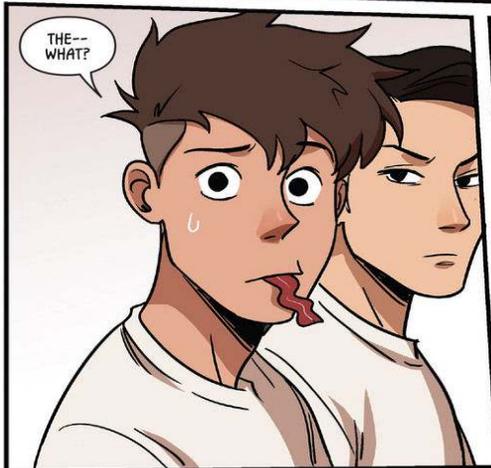


I JUST DON'T HAVE THAT MUCH TO SAY.

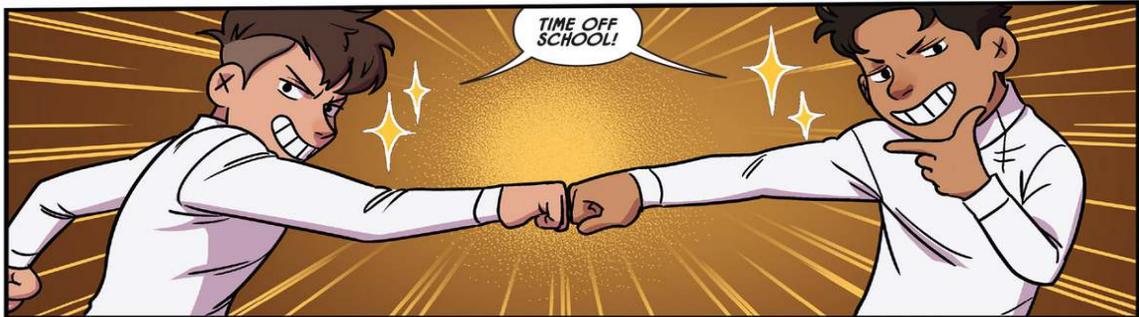
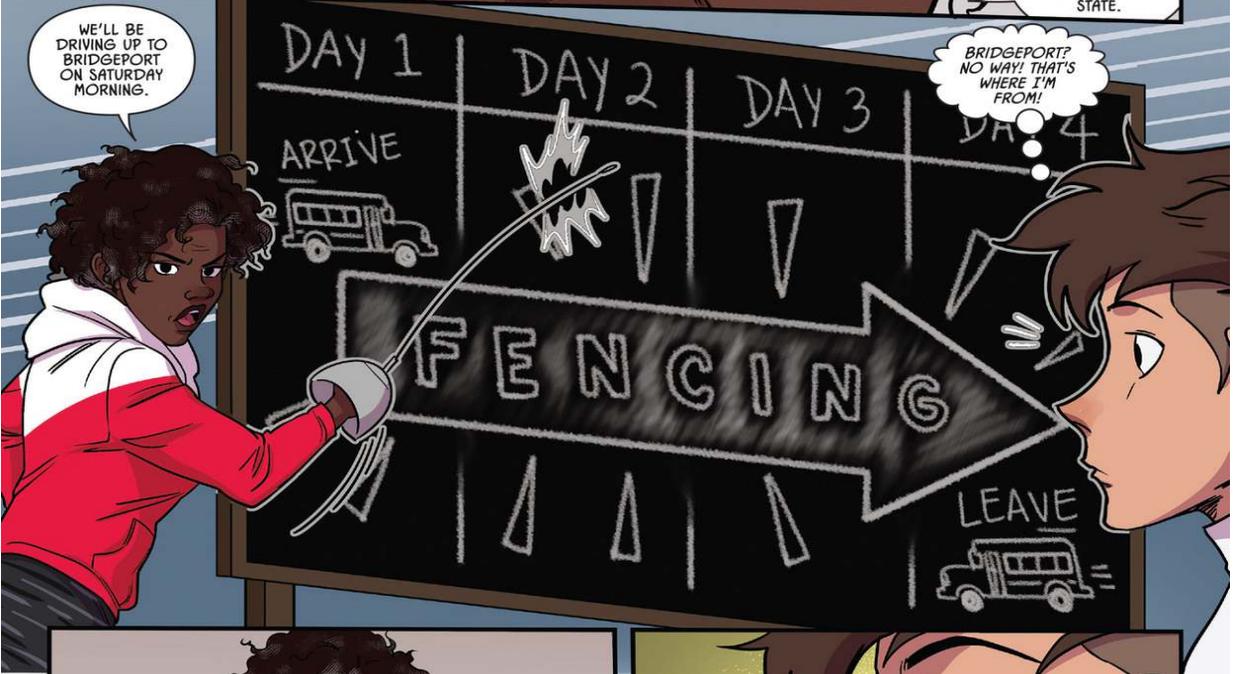


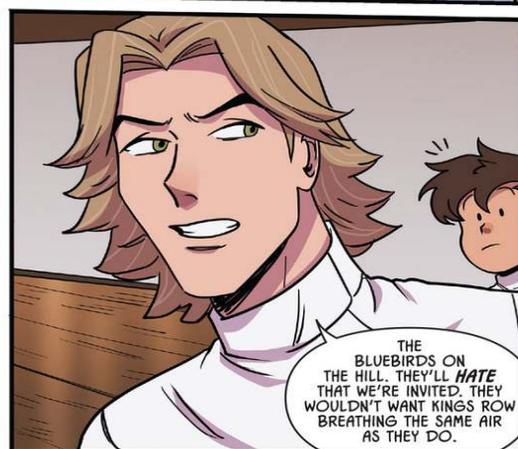
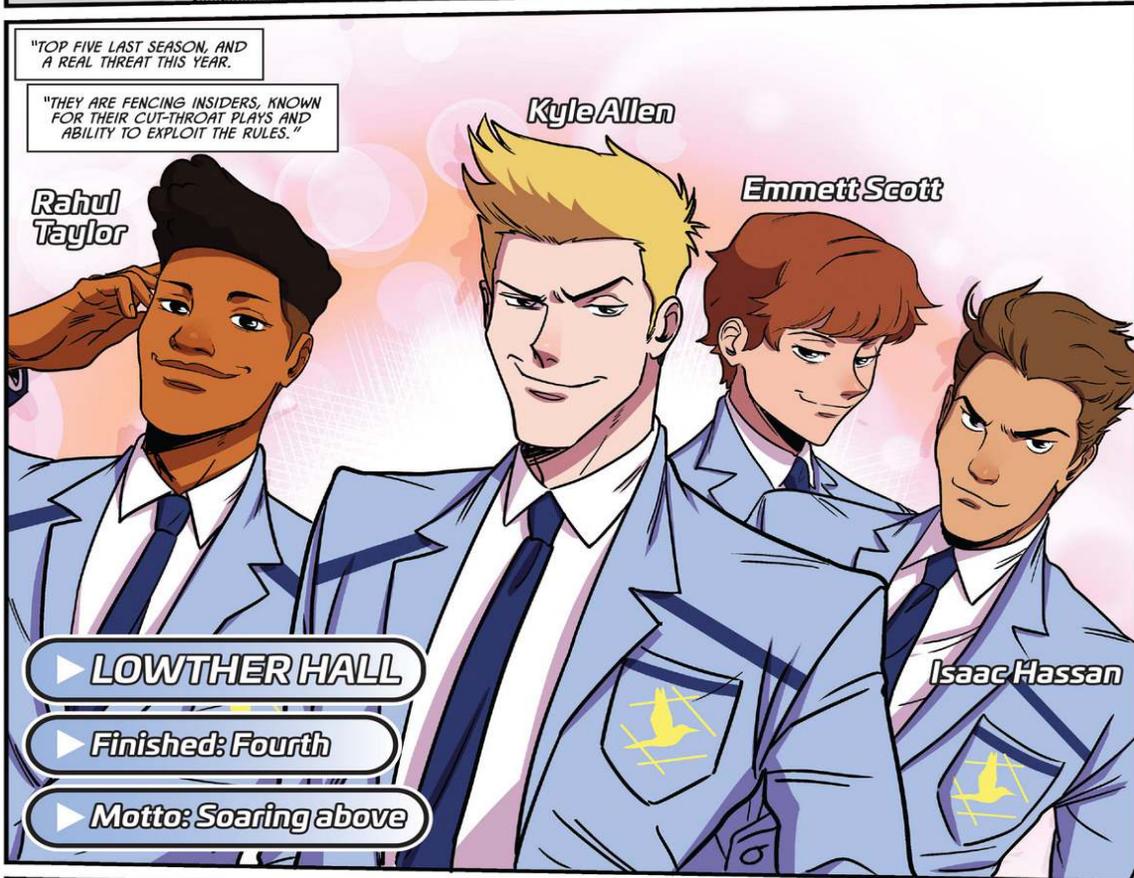












"NEXT IS MACROB. THEY TOOK THIRD LAST SEASON, BUT THEIR TWO BEST FENCERS HAVE GRADUATED SINCE THEN."

"THEY'RE AN UNKNOWN QUANTITY, AND THEY HAVEN'T RELEASED A FULL ROSTER. I'VE GOT THREE NAMES HERE, BUT THEIR FOURTH FENCER IS A MYSTERY."

Terrell Holmes

Hector Ramirez

Nate Spencer

???

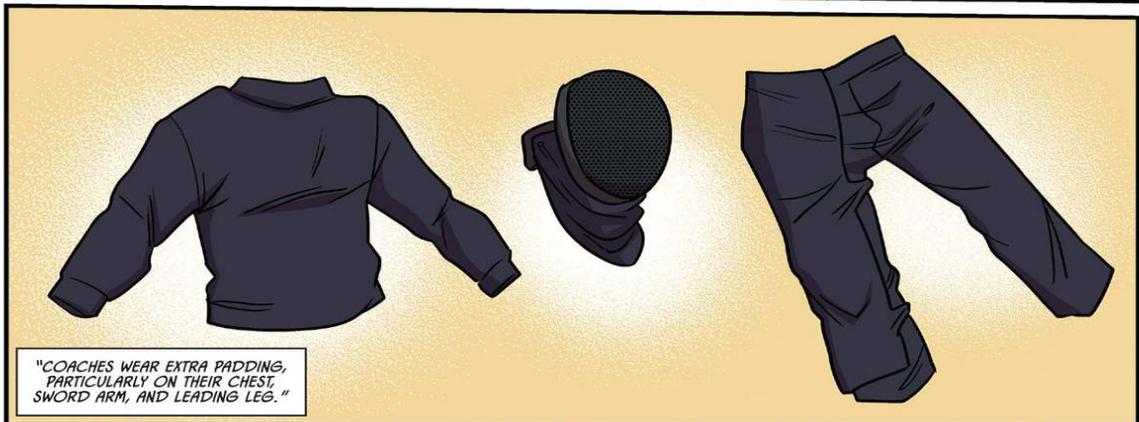
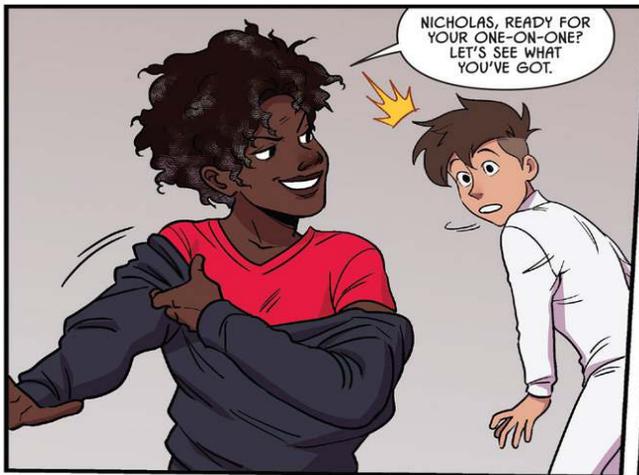
▶ **MACROBERTSON BOYS SCHOOL ("MACROB")**

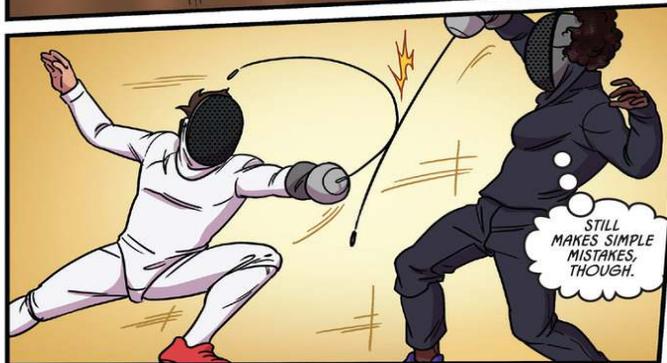
▶ **Finished: Third**

▶ **Motto: Non progredi regredi est**



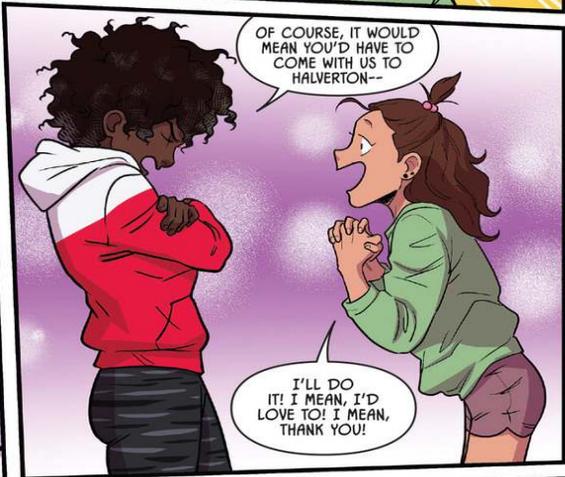


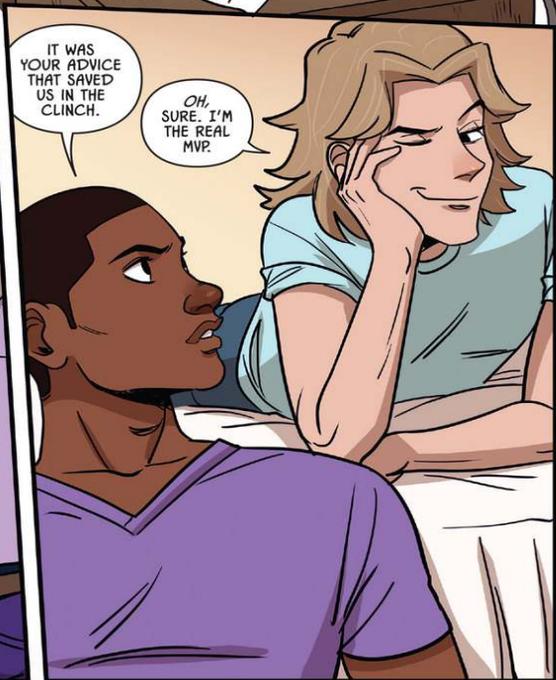


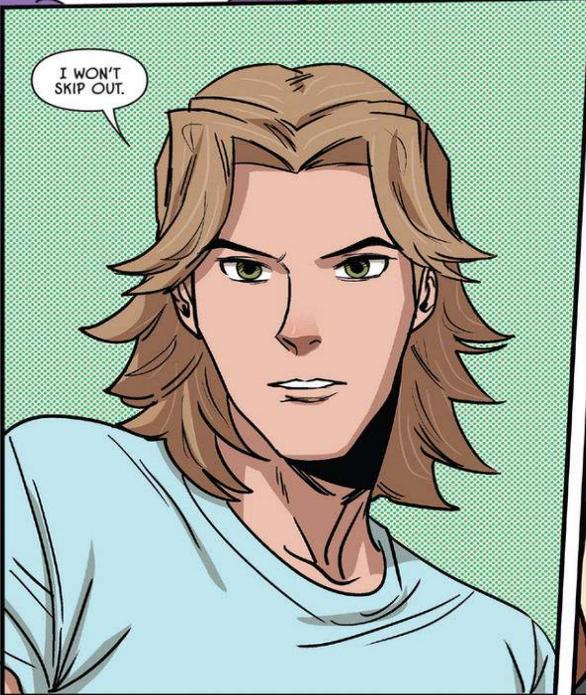


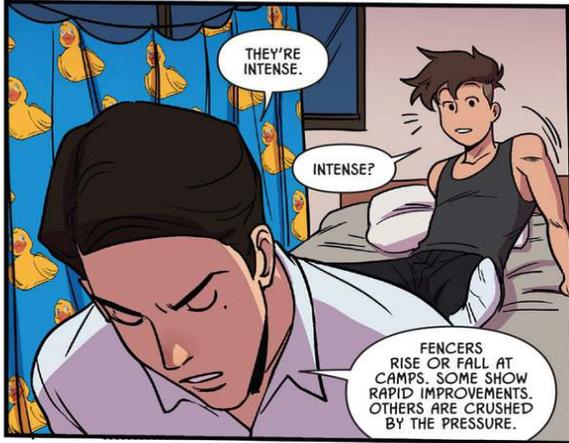












GOING BACK TO
MY HOMETOWN...

MEETING THE
BEST FENCERS IN
THE STATE...

RISE OR
FALL...

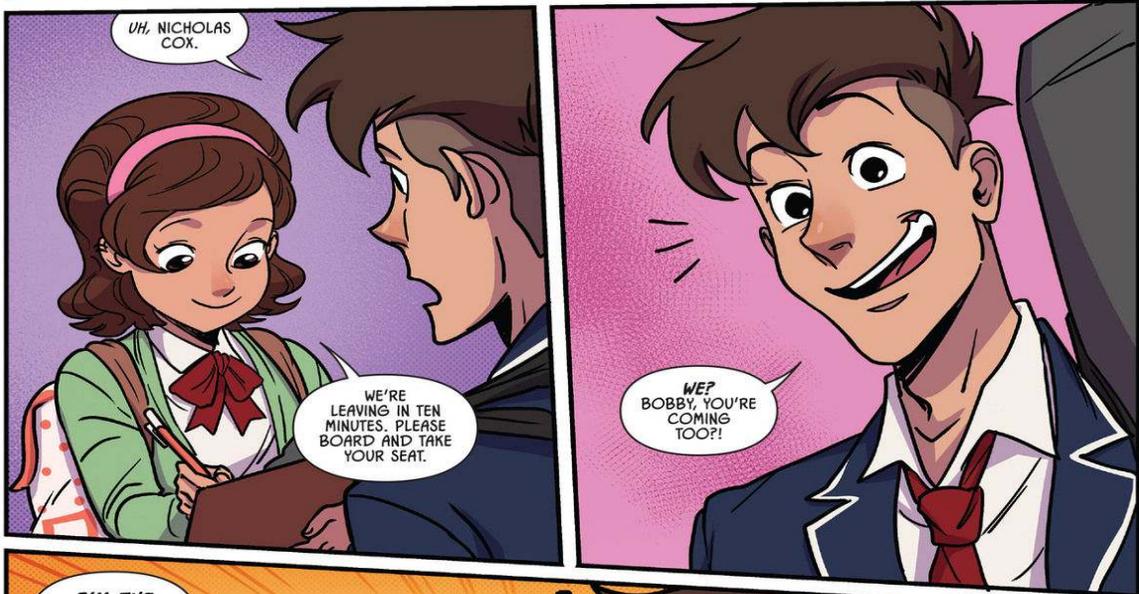






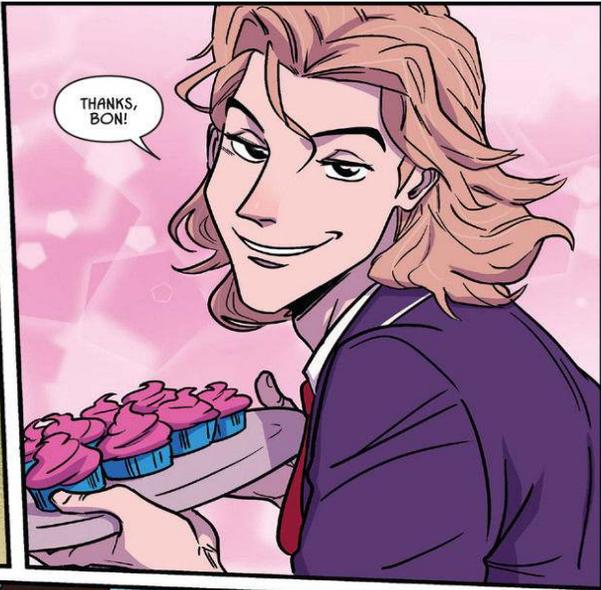
CHAPTER
EIGHTEEN







G-GOOD LUCK AT THE CAMP!



THANKS, BON!



"BON" ...!

I'M GOING TO CHANGE MY NAME TO BON!

ME TOO!



YOU KNOW BON VOYAGE IS NOT HIS NAME, RIGHT?

THAT SIGN WAS NOT A MEMORY AID.



I'VE BROUGHT YOU THIS BUCKET IN CASE YOU THROW UP AGAIN.

AS TEAM MANAGER, IT'S MY JOB TO ANTICIPATE!

THAT ONLY HAPPENED ONCE!

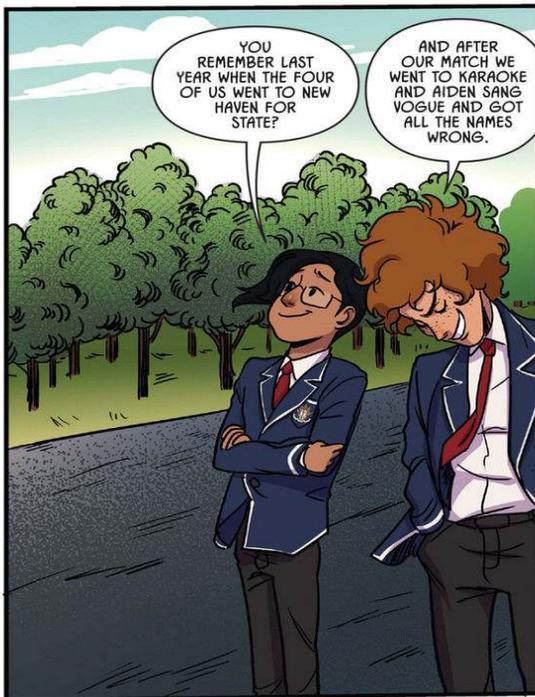


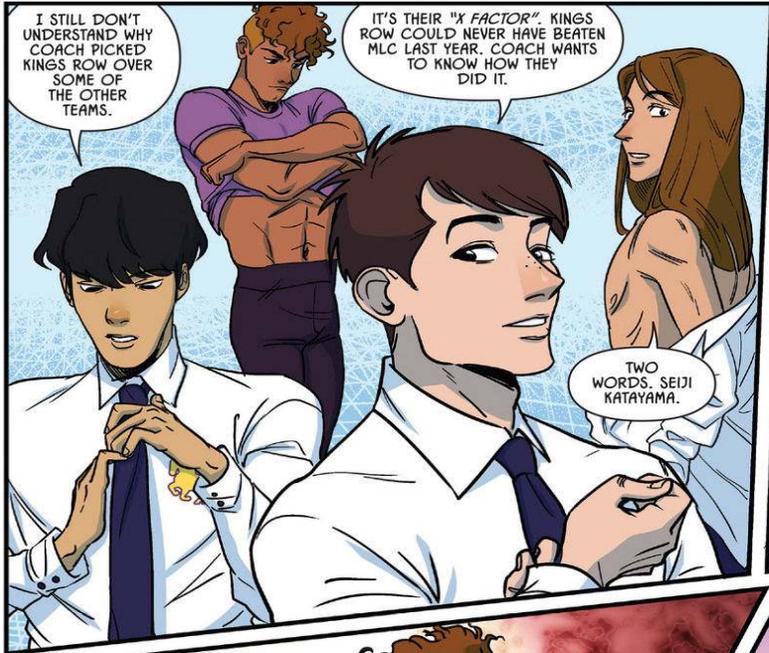
TAKE ONE AND PASS IT ON.

BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS.



I KNOW YOU'RE GOING TO SIT NEXT TO ME, SO JUST DO IT.





I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY COACH PICKED KINGS ROW OVER SOME OF THE OTHER TEAMS.

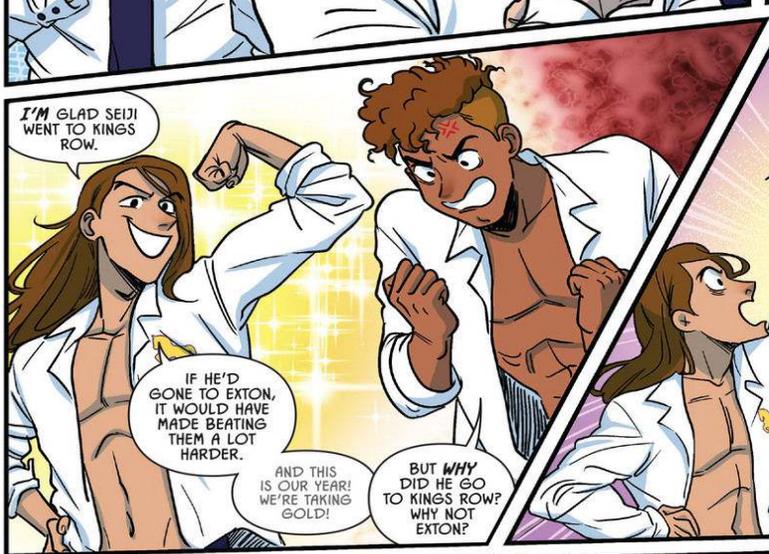
IT'S THEIR "X FACTOR". KINGS ROW COULD NEVER HAVE BEATEN MLC LAST YEAR. COACH WANTS TO KNOW HOW THEY DID IT.

TWO WORDS. SEIJI KATAYAMA.



IT'S NOT JUST SEIJI. ARUNE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT A LEFT HANDER.

A RESERVE WITH AMAZING SPEED.

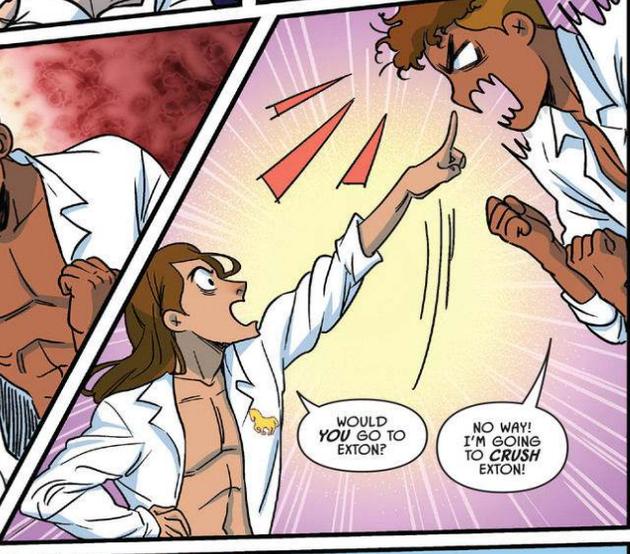


I'M GLAD SEIJI WENT TO KINGS ROW.

IF HE'D GONE TO EXTON, IT WOULD HAVE MADE BEATING THEM A LOT HARDER.

AND THIS IS OUR YEAR! WE'RE TAKING GOLD!

BUT WHY DID HE GO TO KINGS ROW? WHY NOT EXTON?

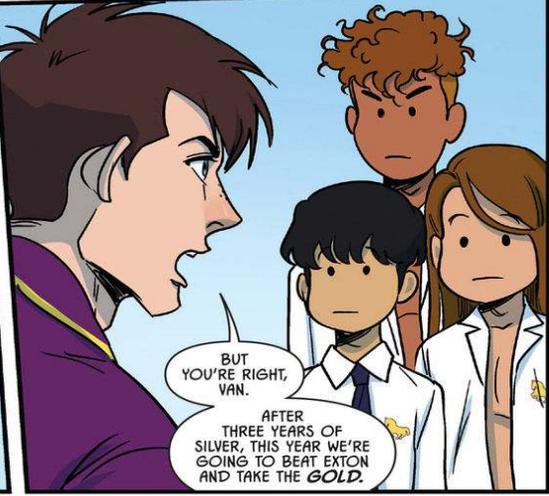


WOULD YOU GO TO EXTON?

NO WAY! I'M GOING TO CRUSH EXTON!

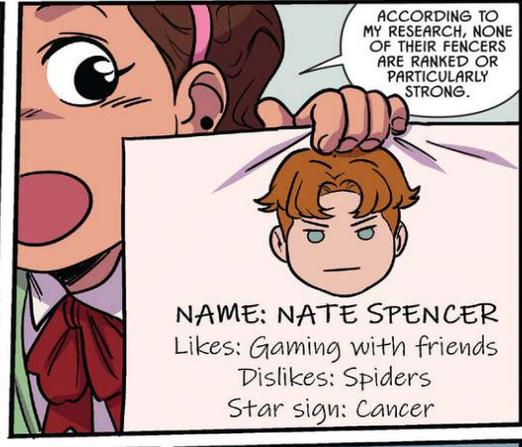
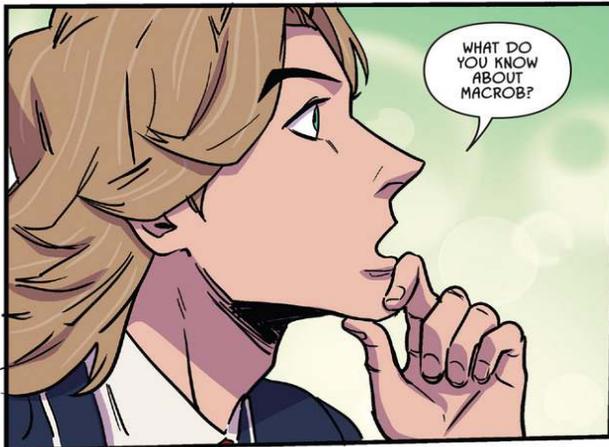


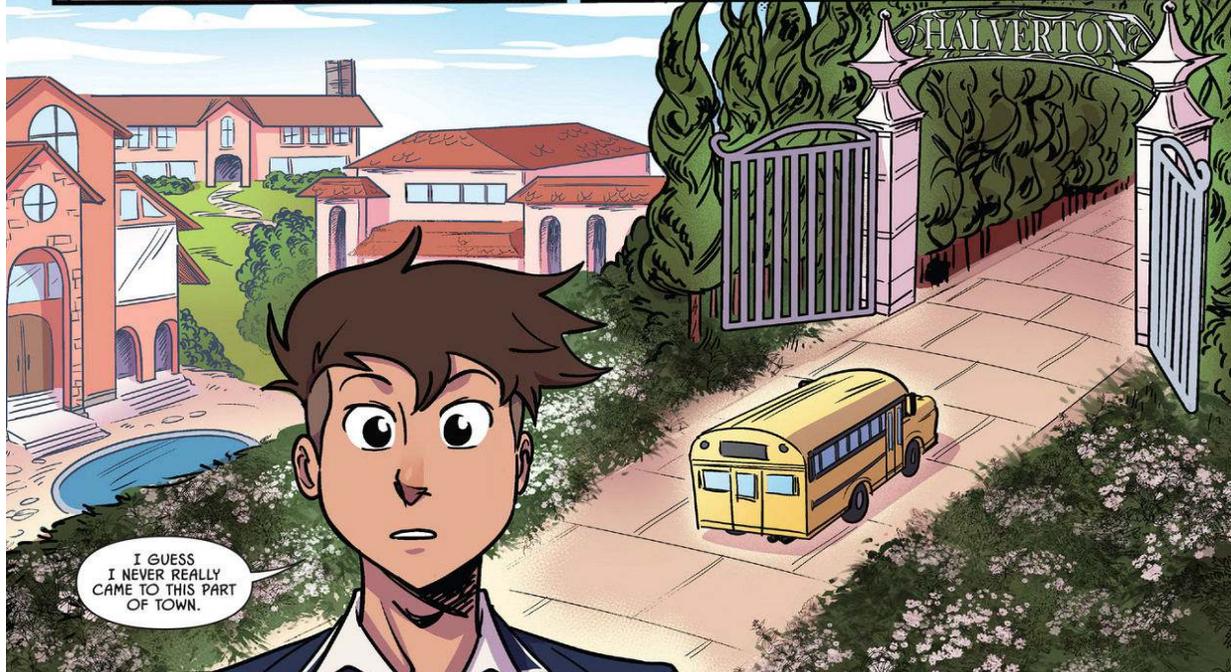
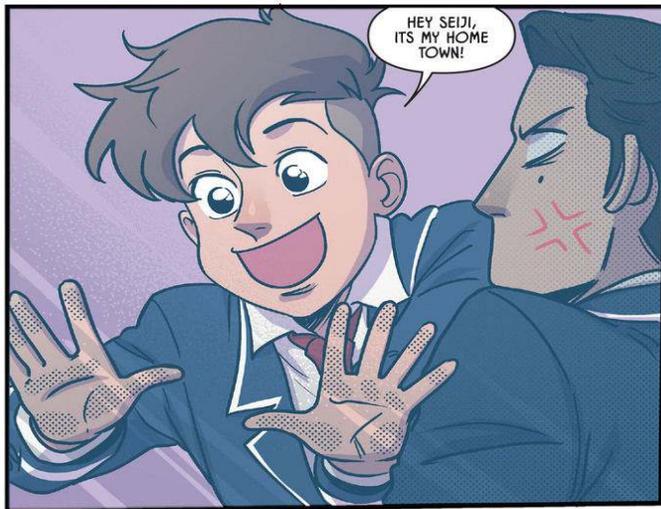
THAT'S ENOUGH, YOU TWO.

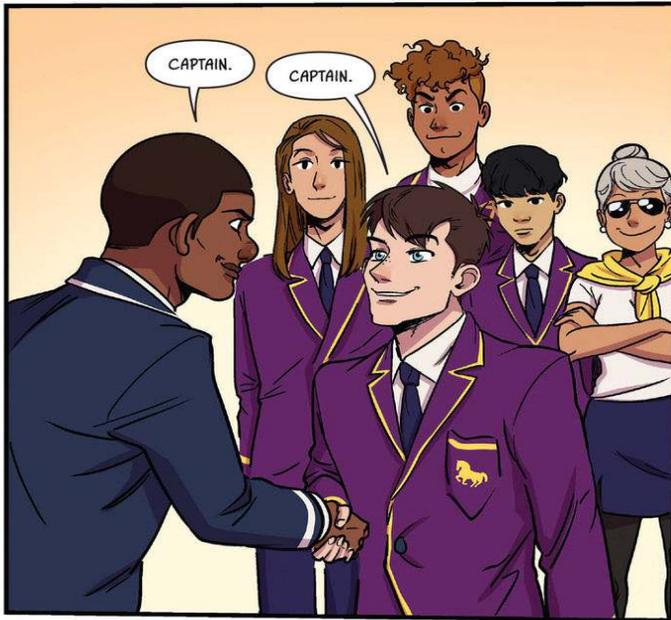
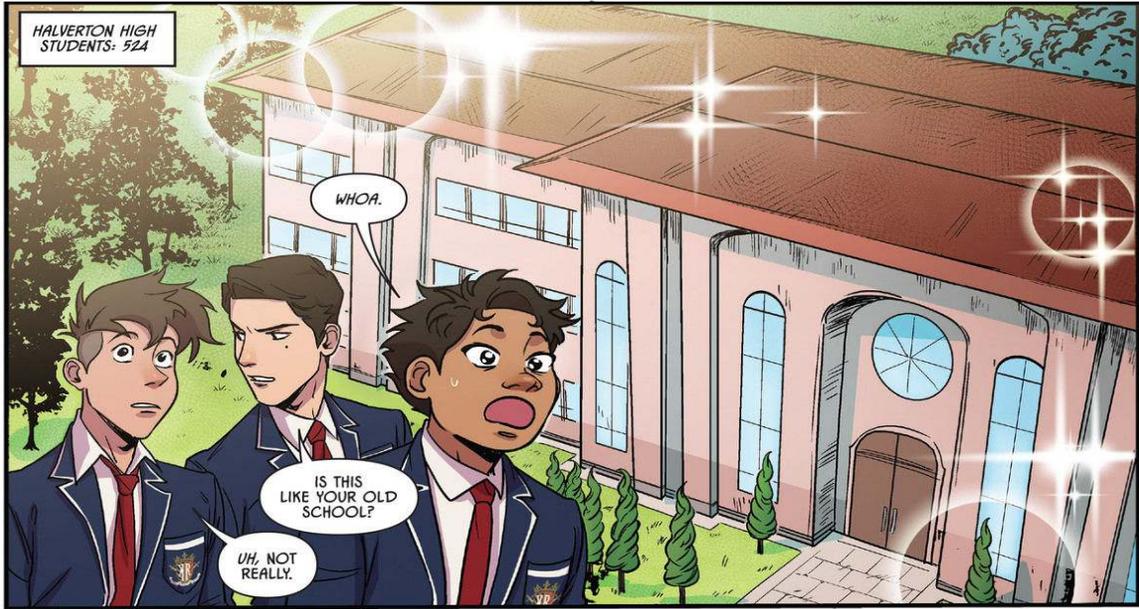


BUT YOU'RE RIGHT, VAN.

AFTER THREE YEARS OF SILVER, THIS YEAR WE'RE GOING TO BEAT EXTON AND TAKE THE GOLD.









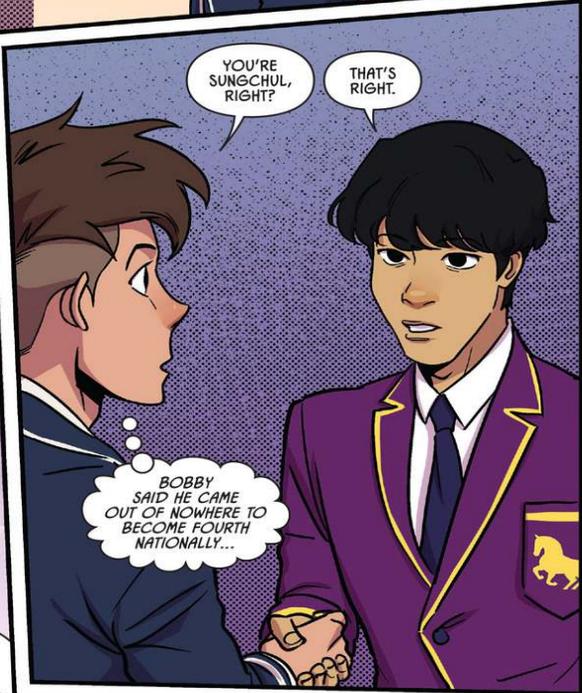
YOU DON'T REMEMBER ME, DO YOU?

NO. DID WE FENCE?



FOUR YEARS AGO.

OF COURSE, YOU WOULDN'T REMEMBER. I'M SCOTT LANGTREE, THE HALVERTON CAPTAIN.



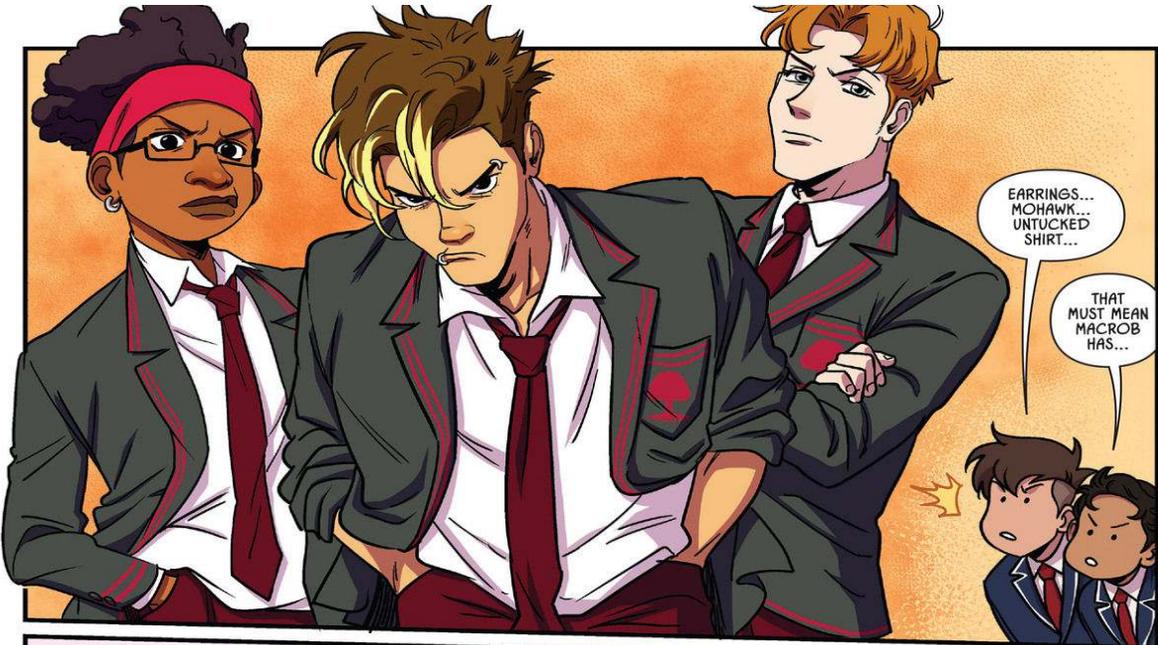
YOU'RE SUNGCHUL, RIGHT?

THAT'S RIGHT.

BOBBY SAID HE CAME OUT OF NOWHERE TO BECOME FOURTH NATIONALLY...

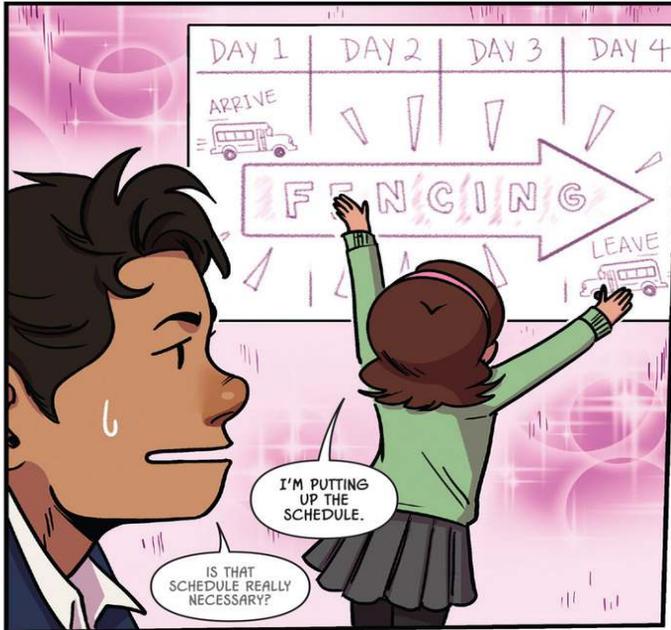


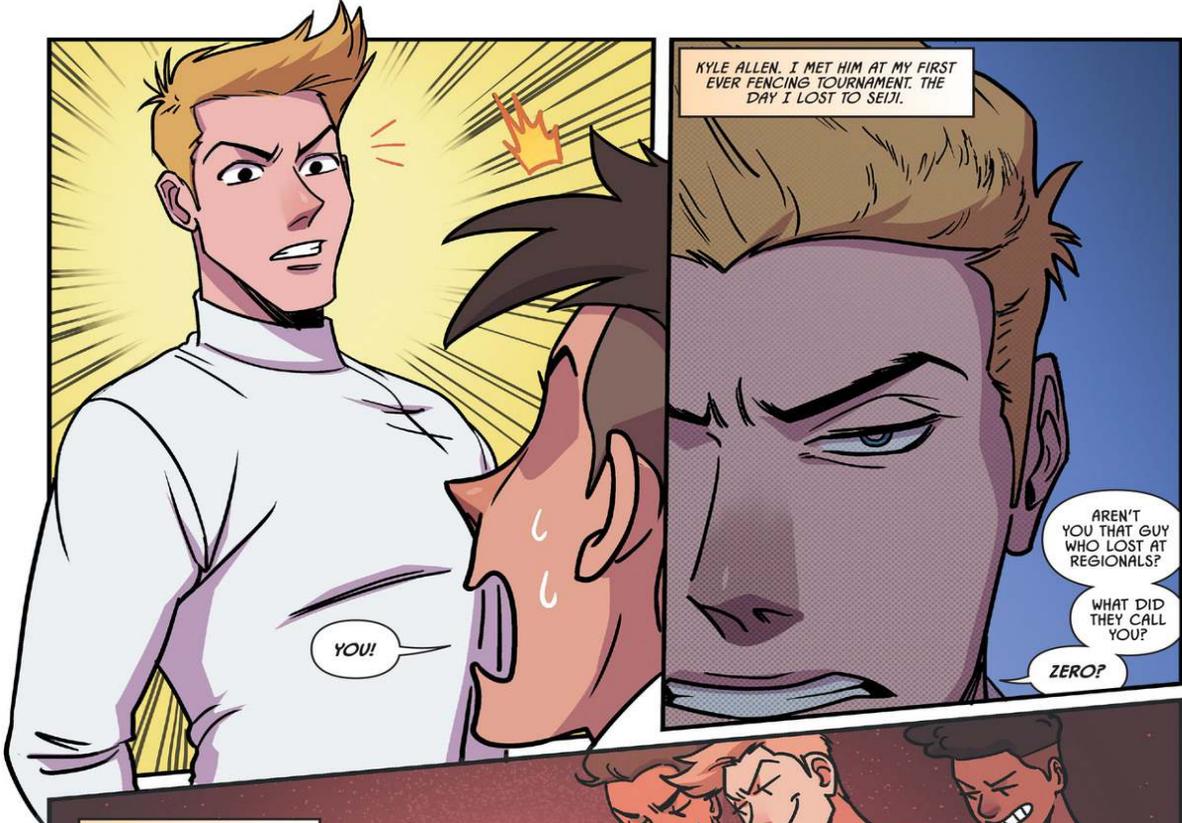
LOOK, IT'S MACROB!











KYLE ALLEN. I MET HIM AT MY FIRST EVER FENCING TOURNAMENT. THE DAY I LOST TO SEIJI.

YOU!

AREN'T YOU THAT GUY WHO LOST AT REGIONALS?

WHAT DID THEY CALL YOU?

ZERO?



AT REGIONALS, HE AND HIS FRIENDS ACTED LIKE THEY OWNED THE PLACE.

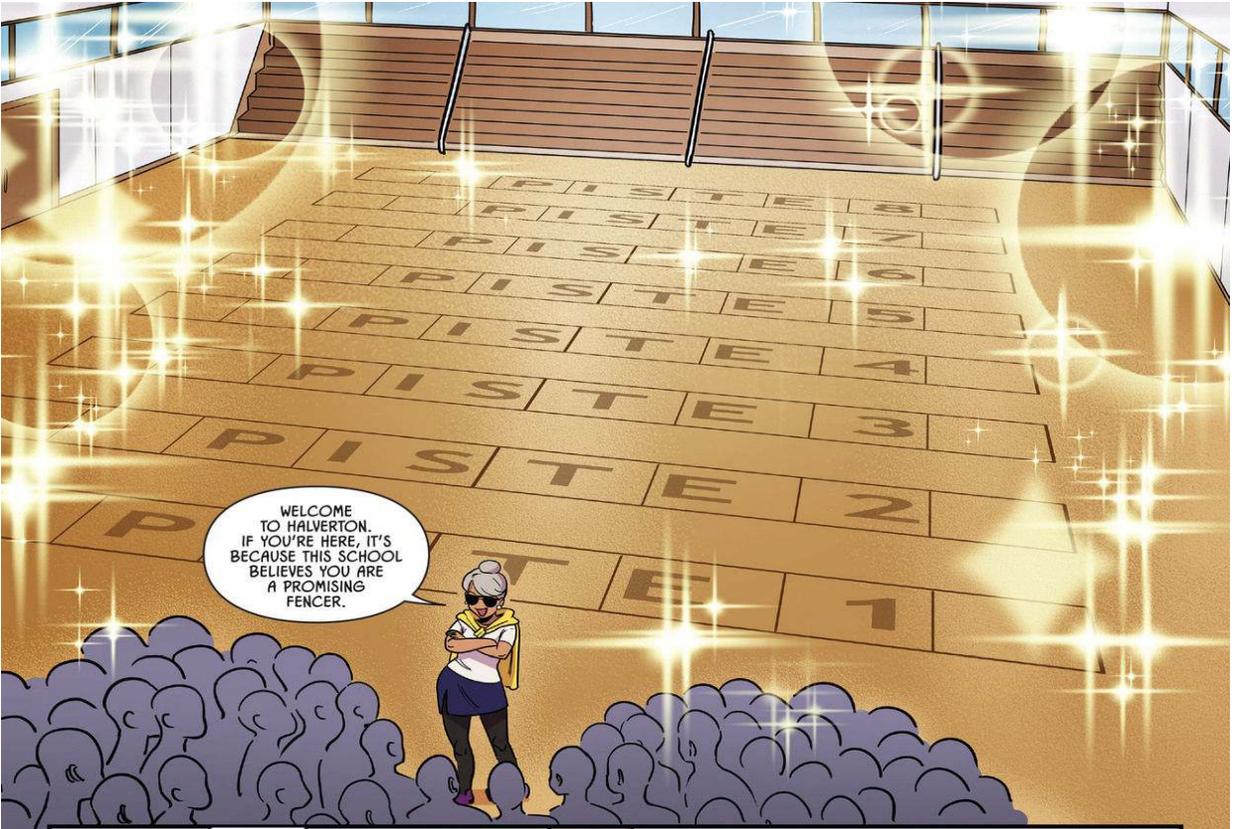


I KNEW KINGS ROW WERE BAD, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW THEY WERE THIS BAD.

WE WILL BEAT YOU ON THE PISTE ANY TIME!

YOU REALLY WON'T.





WELCOME TO HALVERTON. IF YOU'RE HERE, IT'S BECAUSE THIS SCHOOL BELIEVES YOU ARE A PROMISING FENCER.



FIRST, THE RULES.

THIS CAMP WILL BE STRUCTURED USING THE LADDER SYSTEM.



TOP--

--TO BOTTOM.



YOUR FIRST OPPONENT WILL BE ASSIGNED AT RANDOM.



"YOU'LL FENCE SHORT MATCHES. FIRST TO FIVE HITS."

"IF YOU WIN, YOU MOVE UP THE LADDER TO THE NEXT PISTE."

"BUT IF YOU LOSE, YOU MOVE DOWN."

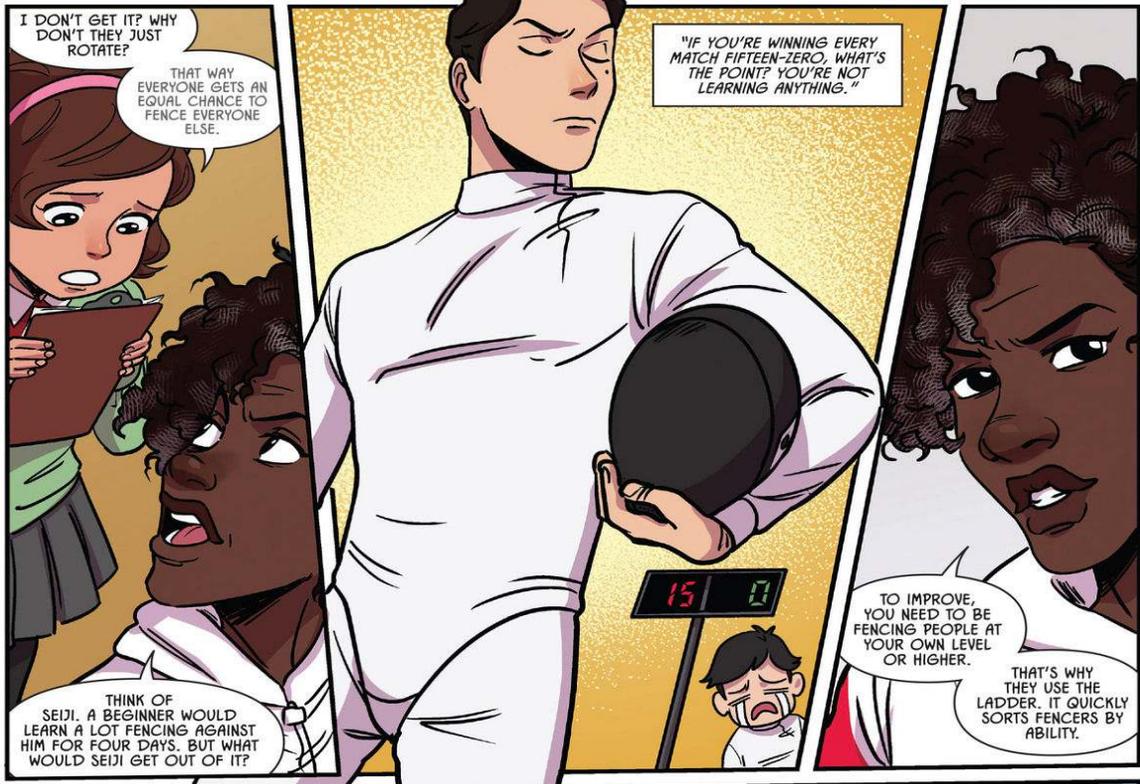


THAT WAY, FENCERS OF THE SAME LEVEL ARE FENCING TOGETHER--



THAT SOUNDS TERRIBLE. WHAT IF YOU'RE STUCK ON THE BOTTOM?

IF YOU'RE STUCK ON THE BOTTOM, WORK HARDER.



I DON'T GET IT? WHY DON'T THEY JUST ROTATE?

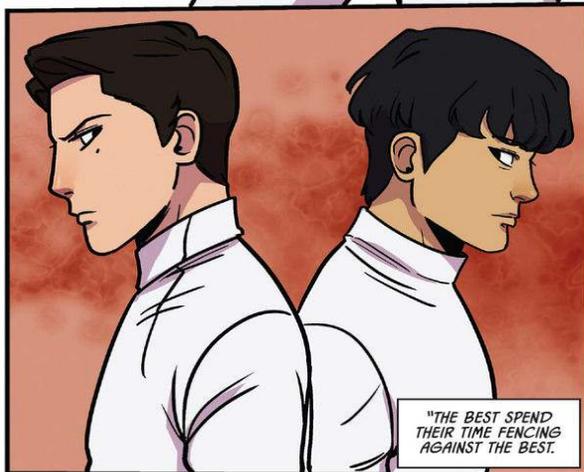
THAT WAY EVERYONE GETS AN EQUAL CHANCE TO FENCE EVERYONE ELSE.

"IF YOU'RE WINNING EVERY MATCH FIFTEEN-ZERO, WHAT'S THE POINT? YOU'RE NOT LEARNING ANYTHING."

THINK OF SEIJI. A BEGINNER WOULD LEARN A LOT FENCING AGAINST HIM FOR FOUR DAYS. BUT WHAT WOULD SEIJI GET OUT OF IT?

TO IMPROVE, YOU NEED TO BE FENCING PEOPLE AT YOUR OWN LEVEL OR HIGHER.

THAT'S WHY THEY USE THE LADDER. IT QUICKLY SORTS FENCERS BY ABILITY.



"THE BEST SPEND THEIR TIME FENCING AGAINST THE BEST."



"THOSE IN THE MIDDLE FENCE THOSE IN THE MIDDLE."



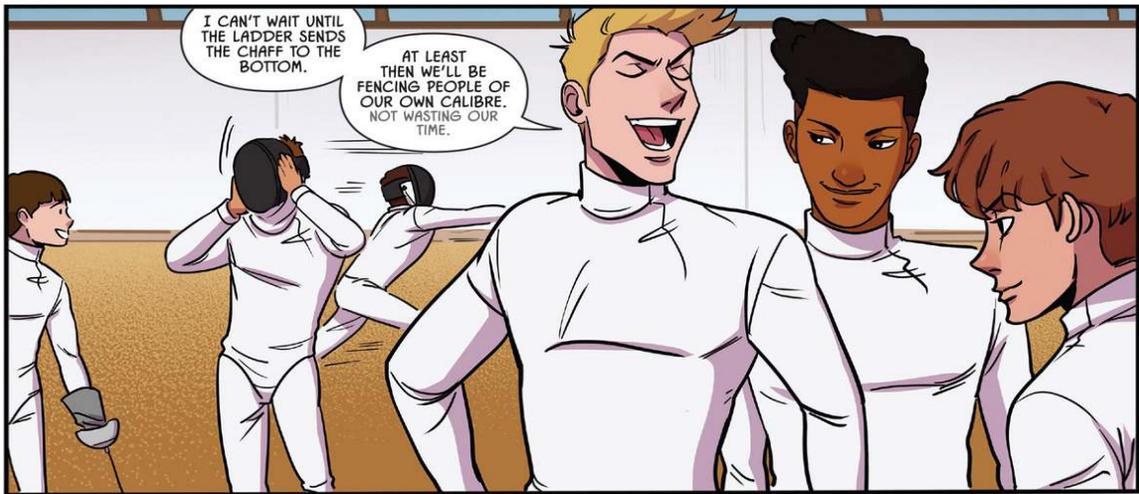
AND SO ON.

WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME WHEN YOU SAY "AND SO ON"?



SO THAT EVERYONE GETS THE MOST OUT OF THEIR TIME HERE.

ALL RIGHT, BOYS. WE'LL START WITH A WARM UP!





OH MY GOD. IS THAT--?!

MARCUS WASHINGTON?!

NO WAY. I DON'T BELIEVE IT.

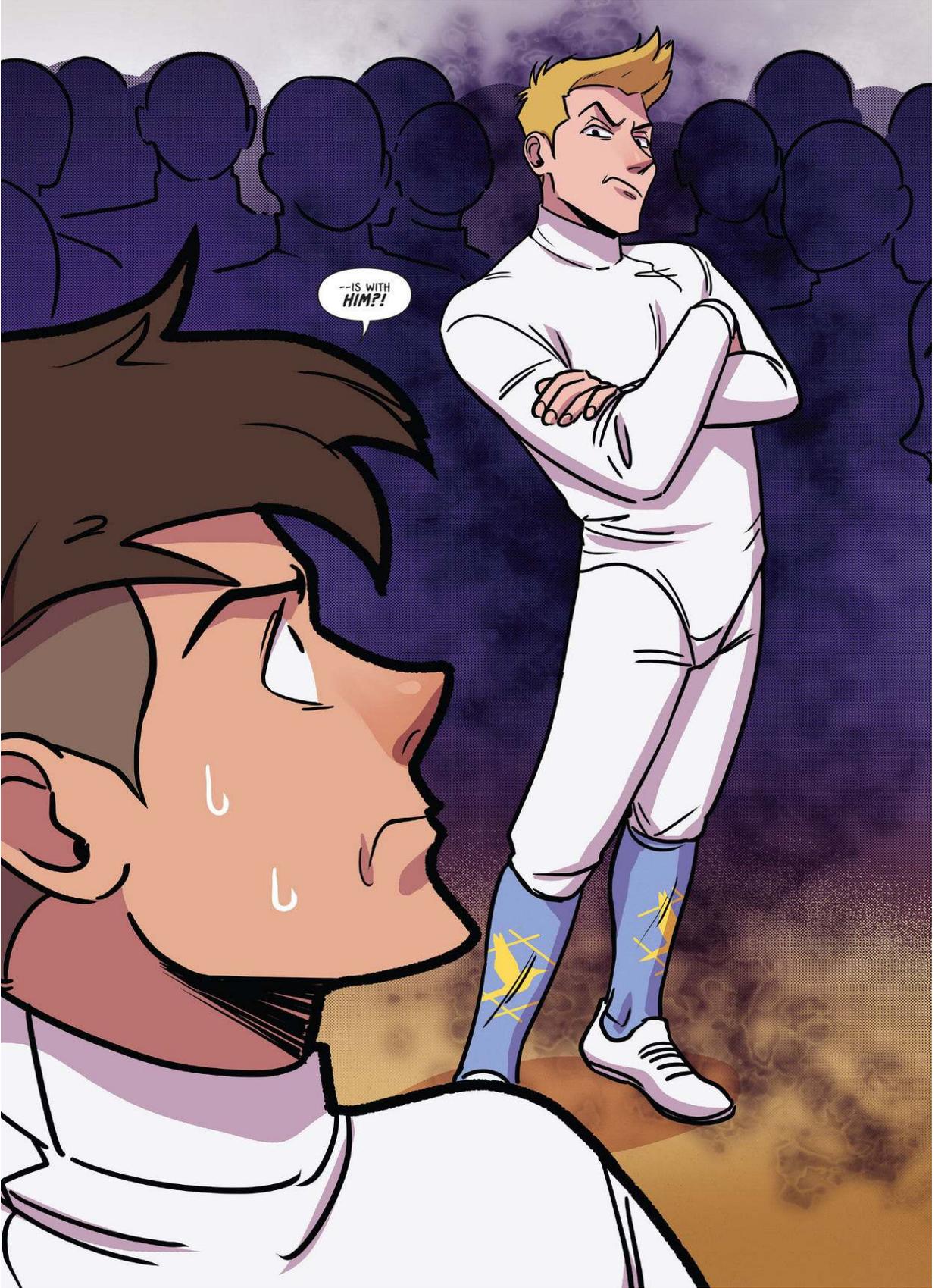
WHO'S MARCUS WASHINGTON?

HE'S A LEGEND.
HE WAS THE TOP RANKED FENCER IN THE UNDER SIXTEENS WHEN HARVARD AND I WERE STARTING OUT.

HE DROPPED OUT OF FENCING FOR TWO YEARS. I THOUGHT HE'D QUIT THE SPORT.

WHOA, EVEN SEIJI'S IMPRESSED?



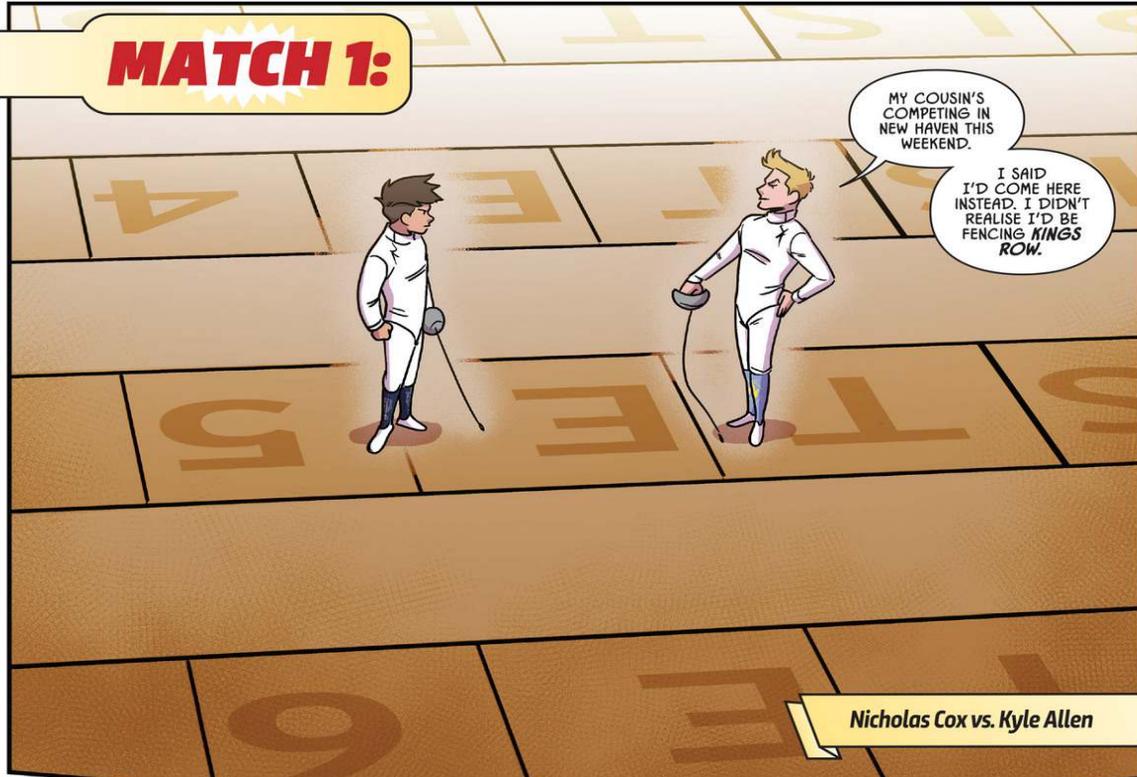






CHAPTER
NINETEEN

MATCH 1:



MY COUSIN'S COMPETING IN NEW HAVEN THIS WEEKEND.

I SAID I'D COME HERE INSTEAD. I DIDN'T REALISE I'D BE FENCING **KING'S ROW**.

Nicholas Cox vs. Kyle Allen



AND YOU'RE GOING TO GET **BEATEN** BY KING'S ROW.



BEATEN? BY KING'S ROW?



YOU'RE ONLY HERE BECAUSE OF SEIJI.

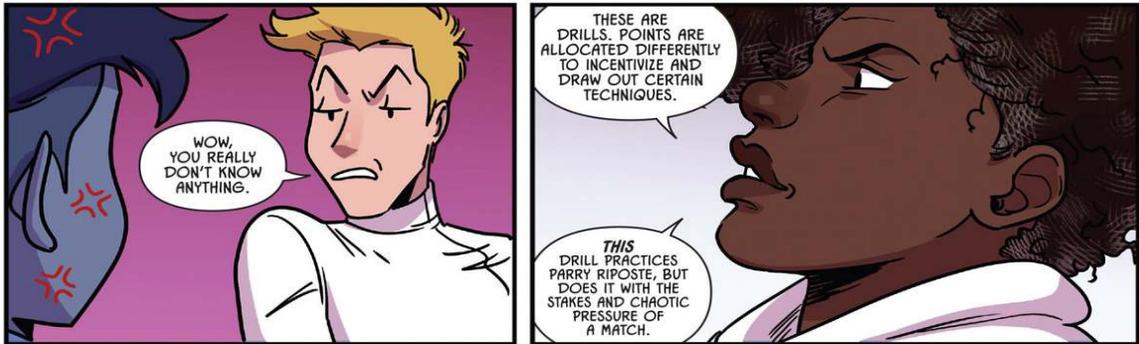
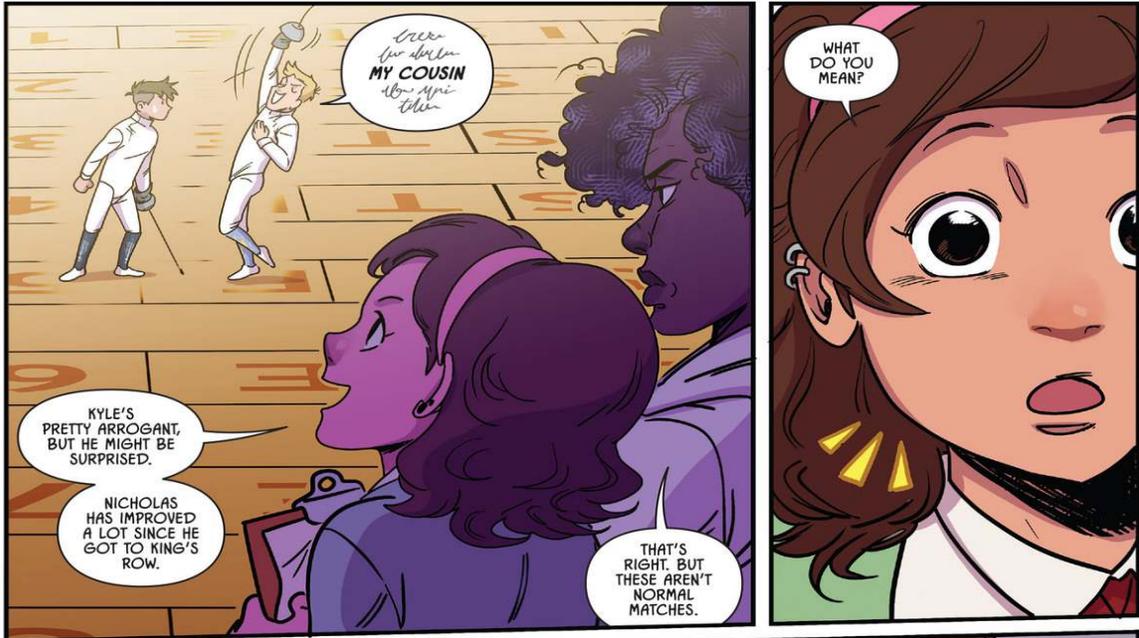
YOUR SCHOOL HAS NEVER BEEN INVITED BEFORE.

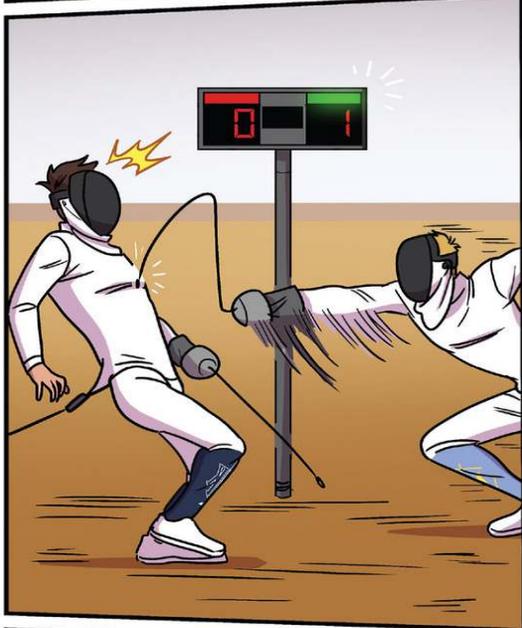
AND YOU **WON'T** BE INVITED AGAIN.

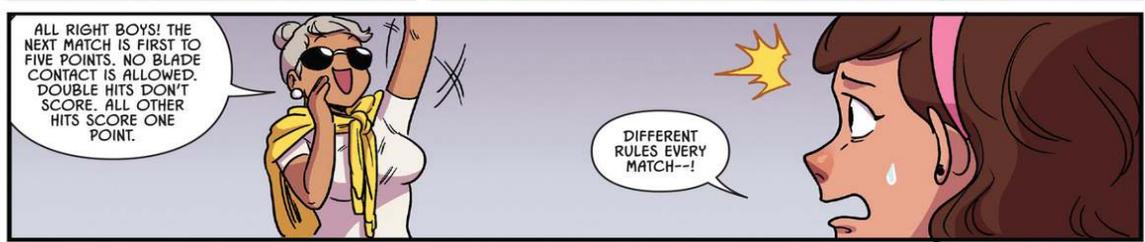
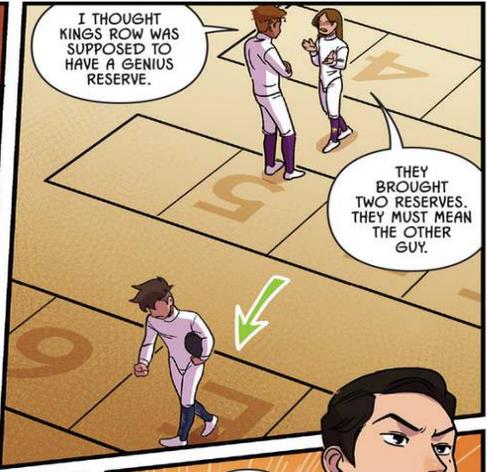
TCH!

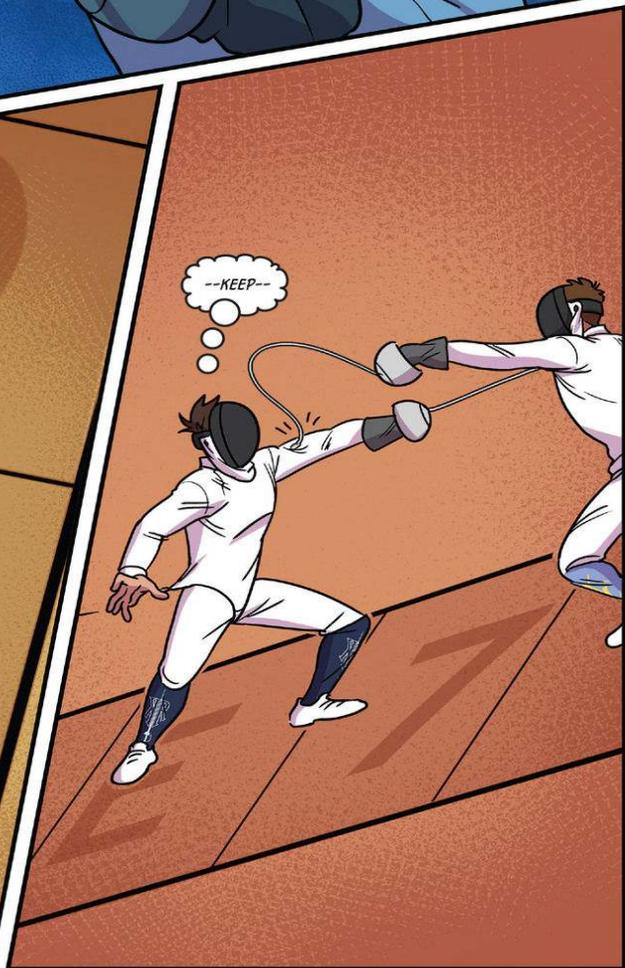


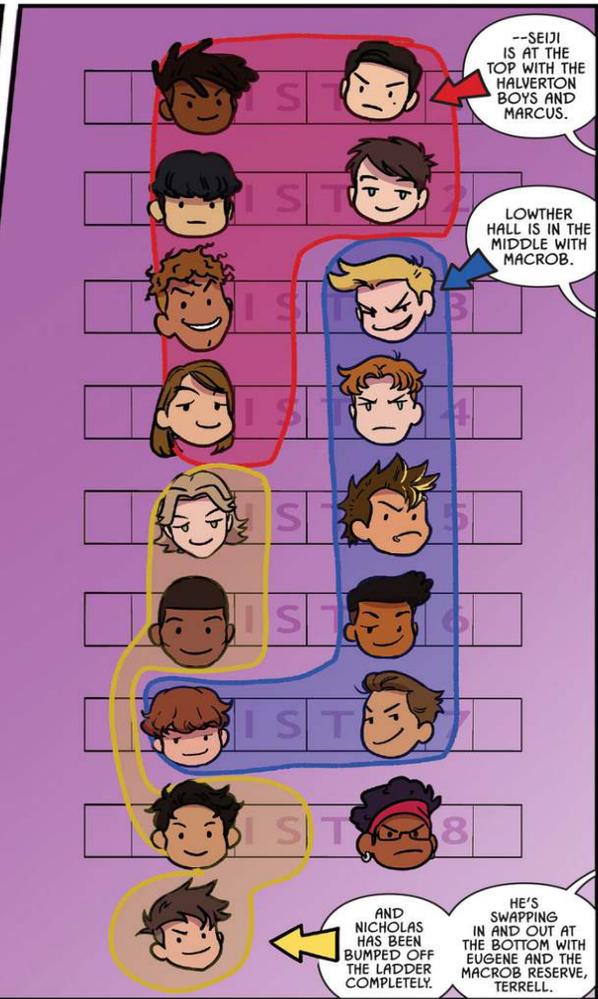
MY **COUSIN** SAYS--

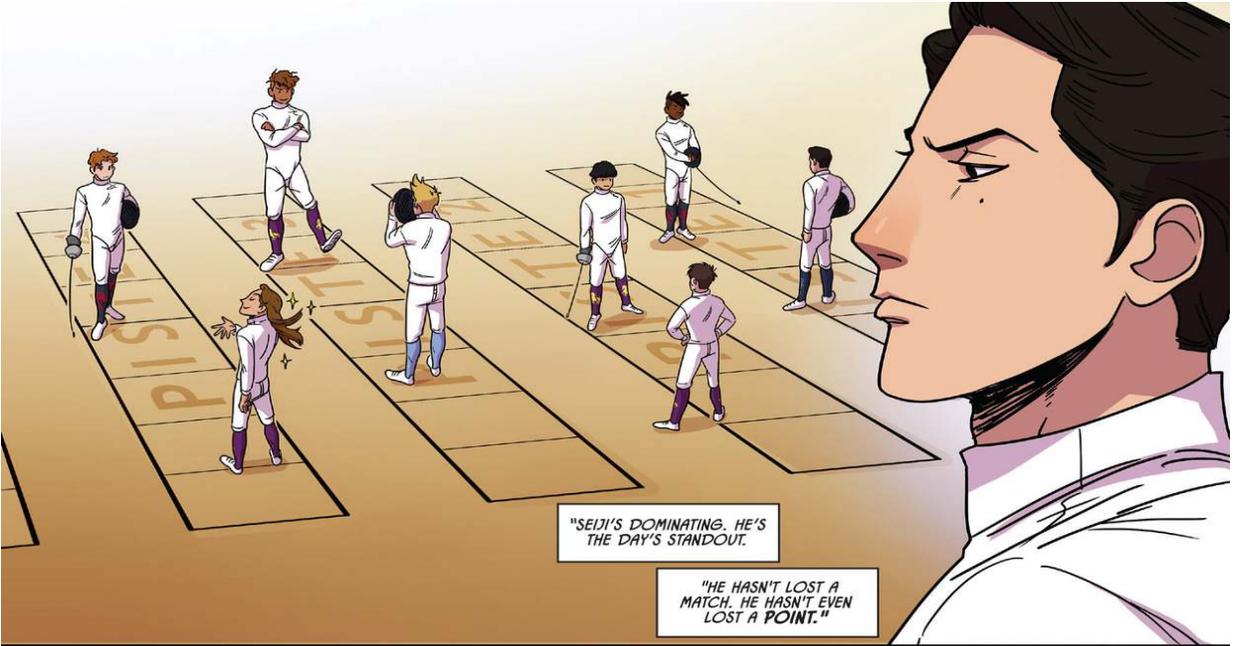










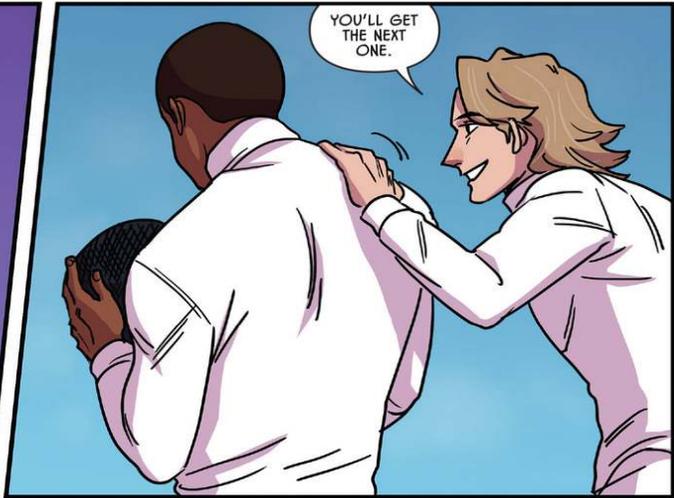


"SEIZI'S DOMINATING. HE'S THE DAY'S STANDOUT."

"HE HASN'T LOST A MATCH. HE HASN'T EVEN LOST A POINT."



THE OTHER STORY IS HARVARD. HE'S STUCK IN THE MIDDLE BECAUSE OF HIS PROBLEMS WITH THE LOW LINES.

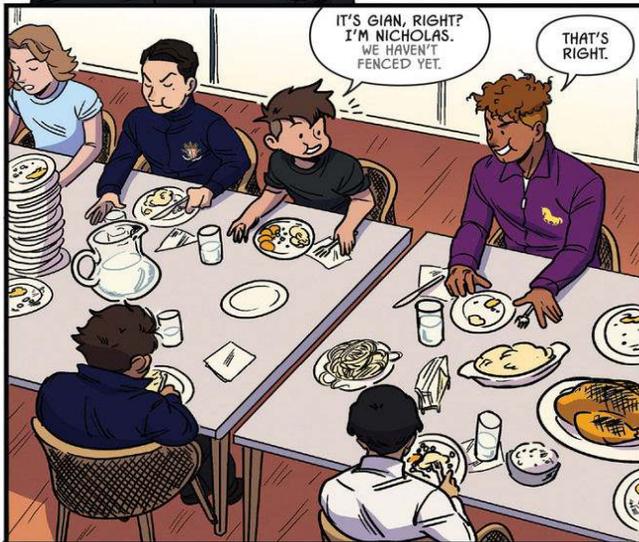


YOU'LL GET THE NEXT ONE.



THANKS, AIDEN.

ALL RIGHT! BREAK FOR LUNCH!





HOW ABOUT YOU, NICHOLAS?

UH, I MOSTLY JUST FENCED EUGENE AND TERRELL.



DID YOU FENCE GIAN, YET? HIS FLICK IS AMAZING.

YOU LIKE FLICKS?!



SCOTT AND SUNGCHUL ARE THE ONES TO WATCH FROM HALVERTON.

AND SEIJI FROM KINGS ROW. EVEN IF LOWTHER HALL HAVE DISCOUNTED THEM.



WHY DID YOU INVITE KINGS ROW? THEY WEREN'T EVEN TOP FIVE LAST YEAR.



RELAX, KYLE.

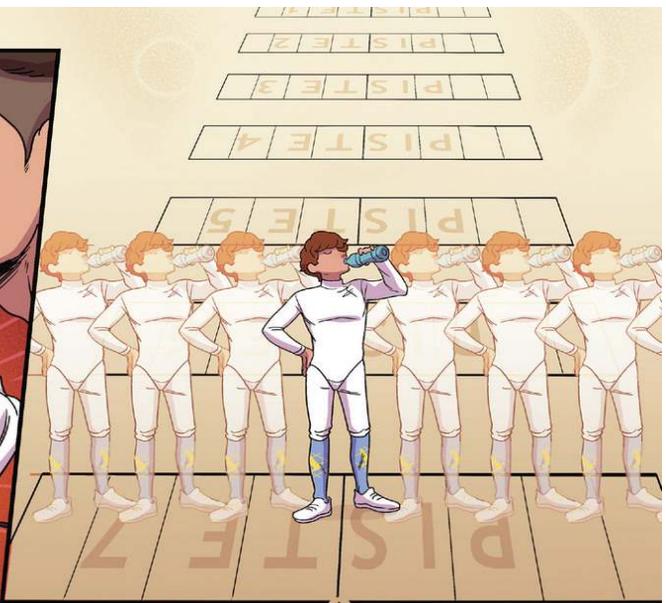
ISAAC'S RIGHT.



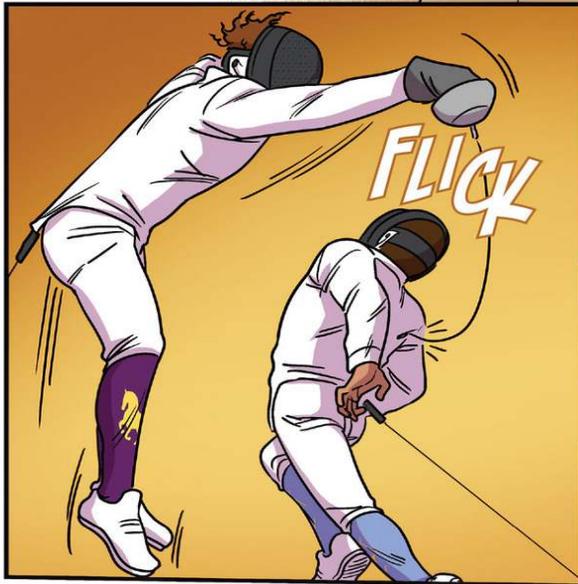
AFTER ALL, *SOMEONE* HAS TO BE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE LADDER.



EVERY TIME I MAKE IT TO PISTE 7 I LOSE TO EMMETT.



I CAN'T GET PAST HIM.



THAT FLICK IS AMAZING, GIAN.

THANKS!

IT'S LIKE COACH SAID. EVERYONE HERE HAS SOMETHING THEY'RE GOOD AT.



FLICK

PARRY

TAKING THE BLADE



KYLE'S RIGHT...THESE TEAMS ARE WAY ABOVE KING'S ROW IN LEVEL.

IF WE FENCED THEM NOW AT THE STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS, THERE'S NO WAY WE'D WIN.



YOU'LL GET THE NEXT ONE.

WHO CARES? IT'S ONLY A PRACTICE MATCH.



DO YOU EVER GET THE FEELING AIDEN ISN'T REALLY TRYING?

HE ISN'T. HE SWITCHES OFF THE SECOND THE MATCH STOPS GOING HIS WAY.



THE NEXT MATCH IS FIRST TO FIVE POINTS. NO BLADE CONTACT IS ALLOWED. ALL OTHER HITS--

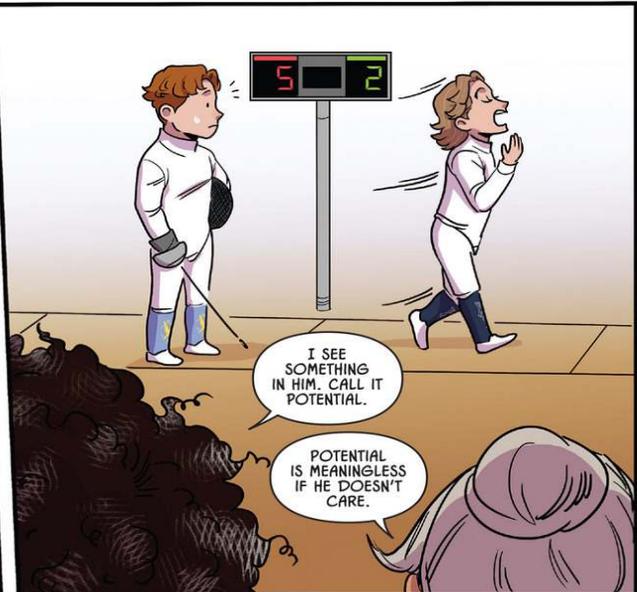
yawn

WHATEVER. I HATE FENCING WITHOUT BLADE CONTACT.



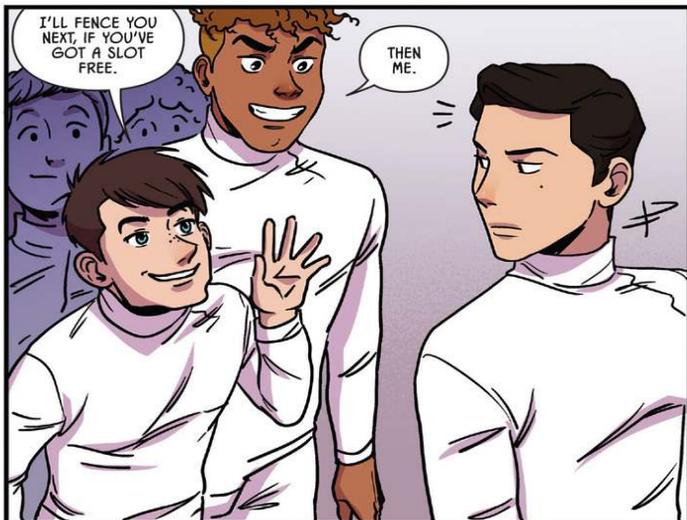
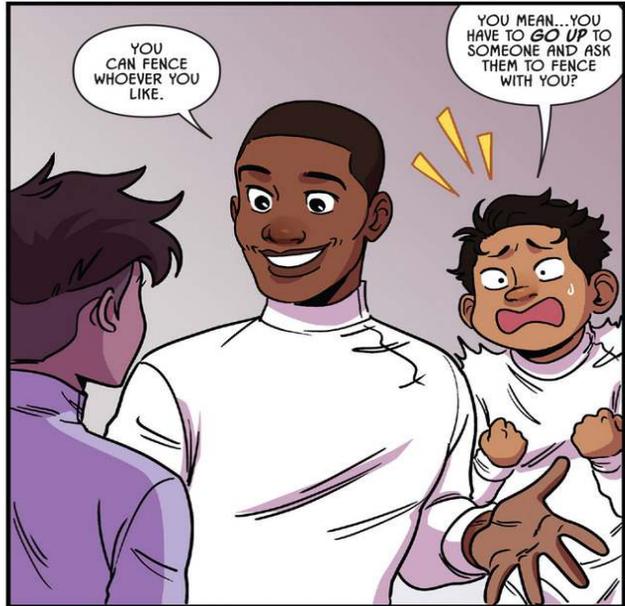
I ALWAYS WONDERED WHY YOU KEEP HIM ON THE TEAM.

DIDN'T HE SKIP HALF YOUR MATCHES LAST YEAR?



I SEE SOMETHING IN HIM. CALL IT POTENTIAL.

POTENTIAL IS MEANINGLESS IF HE DOESN'T CARE.





LOOK--
VAN'S COMING
OVER.



NICHOLAS, RIGHT?
YOU WANT TO FENCE
A MATCH?

UH,
OKAY.



HOW COME
HE ASKED
NICHOLAS?!



IT IS A LITTLE
UNEXPECTED.



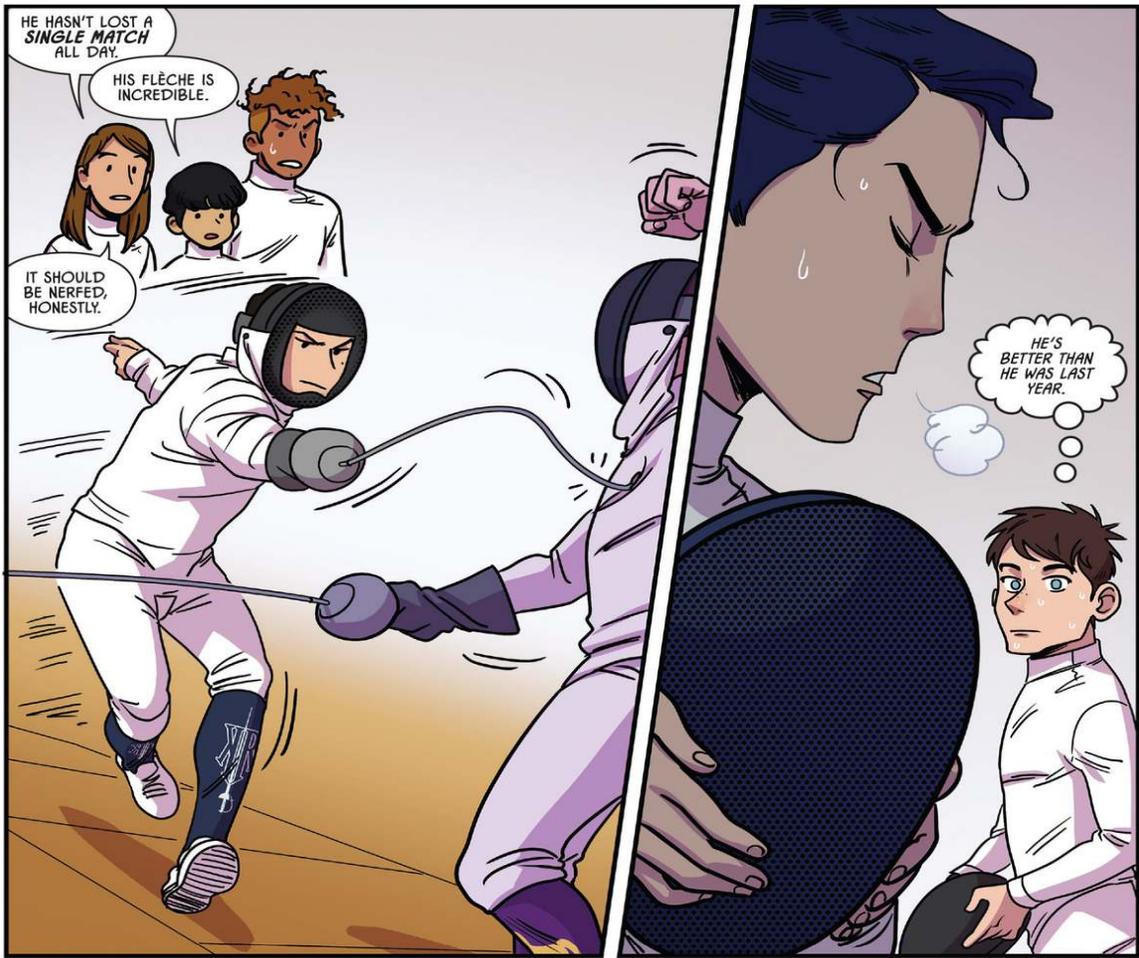
HALVERTON HEARD
FROM MLC THAT WE
HAD AN AMAZING
RESERVE. THEY
THINK NICHOLAS
IS HIDING HIS
TALENT.

HE'S
NOT.



HEY,
AIDEN, DO
YOU WANT
TO--

FORGET
IT. I JUST FENCED
FOR SIX HOURS. I'M
NOT GOING TO FENCE
IN MY FREE TIME TOO.

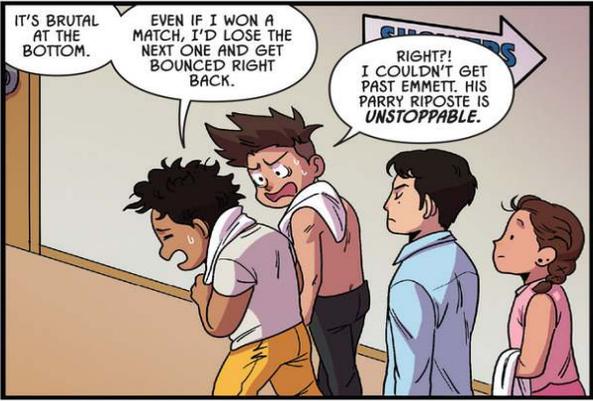








IT'S PRETTY NICE TO HAVE A SHOWER CURTAIN AGAIN.



IT'S BRUTAL AT THE BOTTOM.

EVEN IF I WON A MATCH, I'D LOSE THE NEXT ONE AND GET BOUNCED RIGHT BACK.

RIGHT?! I COULDN'T GET PAST EMMETT. HIS PARRY RIPOSTE IS UNSTOPPABLE.



IT'S OBVIOUSLY STOPPABLE IF HE WAS THIRD LAST ON THE LADDER.



DON'T GET DISCOURAGED! REMEMBER, THESE ARE THE BEST TEAMS IN THE STATE. IF YOU--

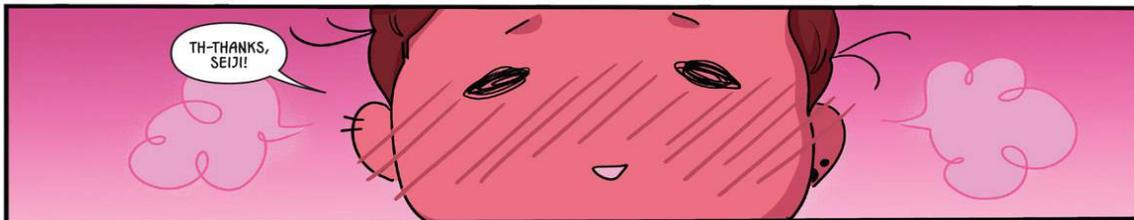


UH, BOBBY, DON'T GO IN YET.

HUH? WHY NOT?









HEY SEIJI.



SEIJI.

YOU SAID YOU DIDN'T TALK IN YOUR SLEEP.



I'M NOT ASLEEP!

DON'T TALK IN MY SLEEP EITHER.



I JUST HAD A TOUGH DAY.

THE ONLY WINS I GOT WERE AGAINST TERRELL AND EUGENE.



YOU'RE NOT HERE TO WIN. YOU'RE HERE TO LEARN.



EASY FOR YOU TO SAY. YOU WON EVERY MATCH.

IT MUST FEEL AMAZING TO SPEND THE WHOLE CAMP AT THE TOP OF THE LADDER.



BUT I'M NOT--



WHAT?



I'M NOT CHALLENGED HERE. THERE'S NO OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH.

I'D RATHER BE AT A CAMP WHERE EVERYONE WAS BETTER THAN ME. LIKE I WAS IN FRANCE.



I'M WORRIED I'M WASTING FOUR DAYS WITH HIGH SCHOOL TEAMS, WHEN I SHOULD BE PREPARING FOR NATIONALS.



THAT IS THE KIND OF COMMENT THAT MAKES EVERYONE THINK YOU'RE ARROGANT!



BUT IT'S NOT ARROGANCE. YOU'RE JUST TELLING THE TRUTH, AREN'T YOU?



HE JUST EVOLVES SO FAST, I DON'T WANT TO GET LEFT BEHIND--

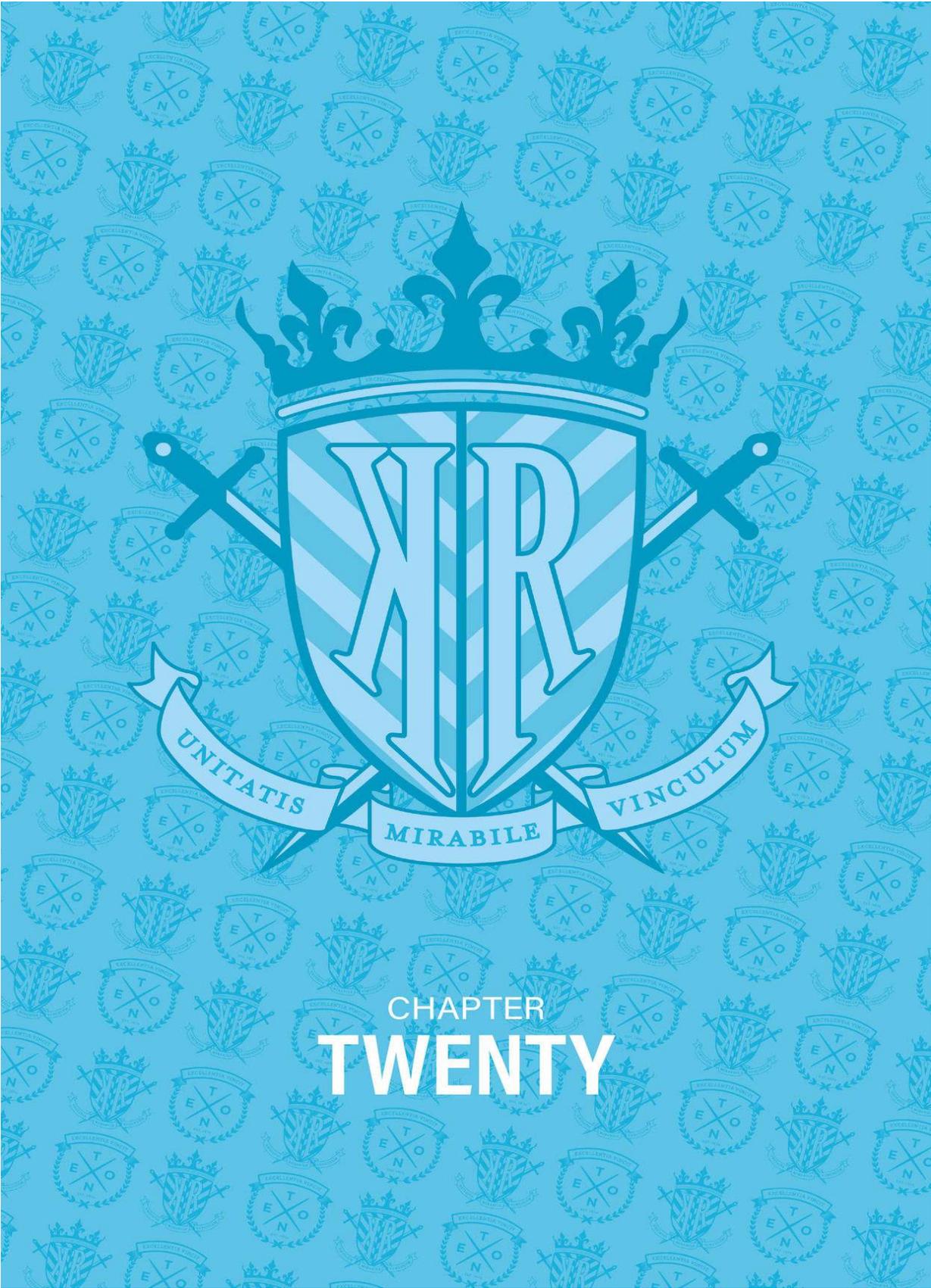


JESSE. HE'S TALKING ABOUT JESSE.

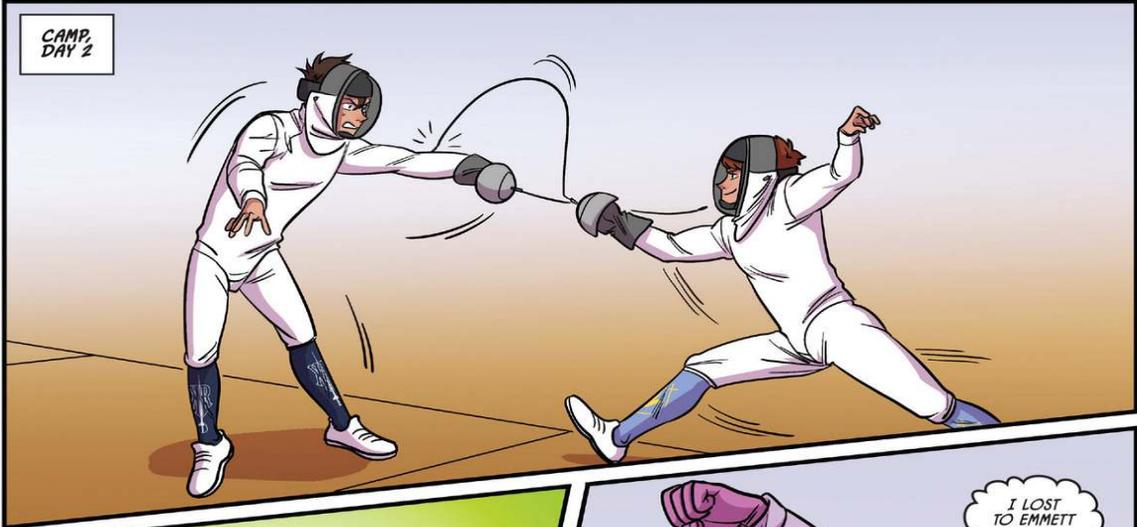
COACH SAID THE SAME THING. THAT FENCERS NEED TO BE FENCING HIGH LEVEL OPPONENTS TO IMPROVE.

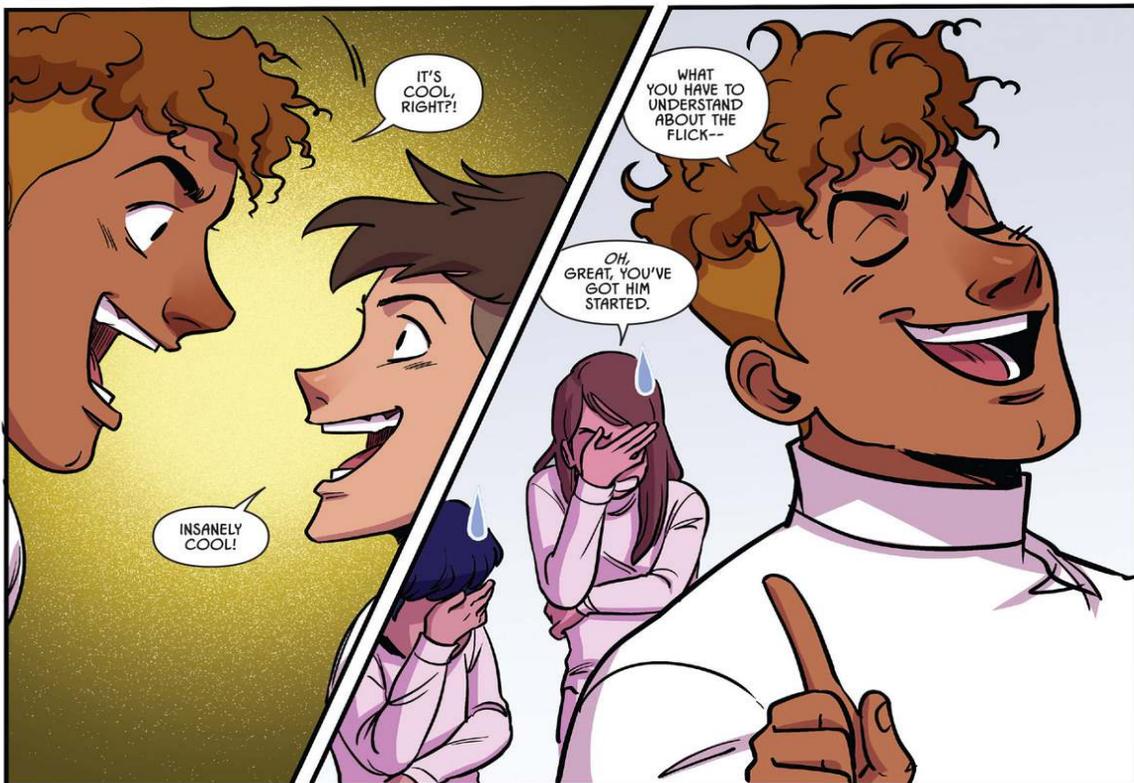
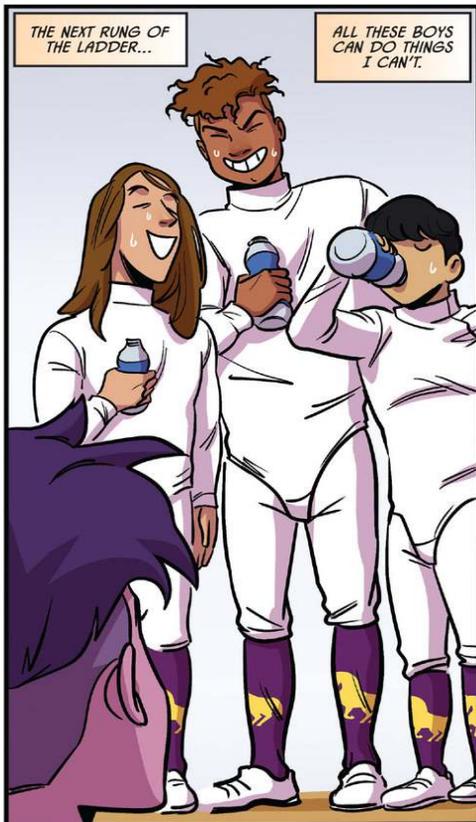


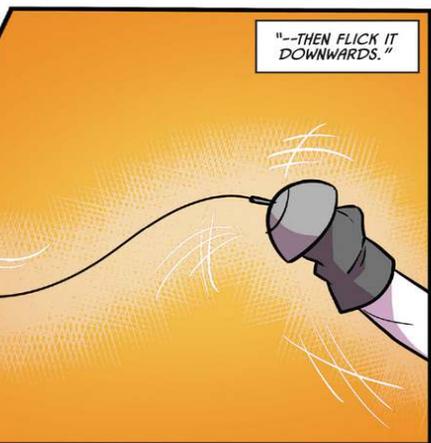
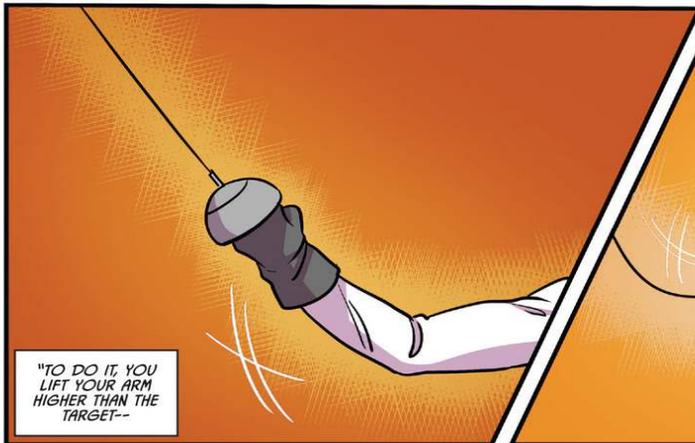




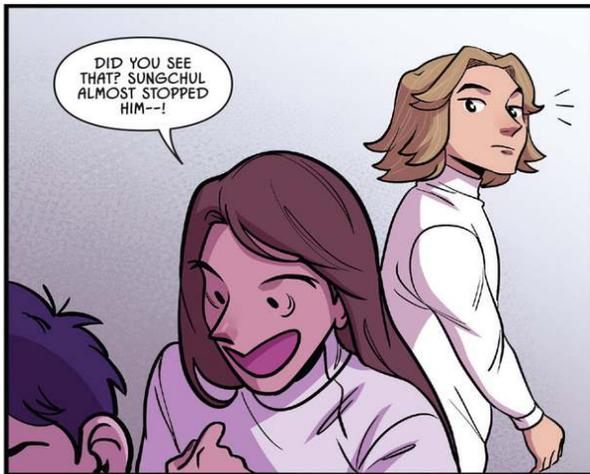
CHAPTER
TWENTY

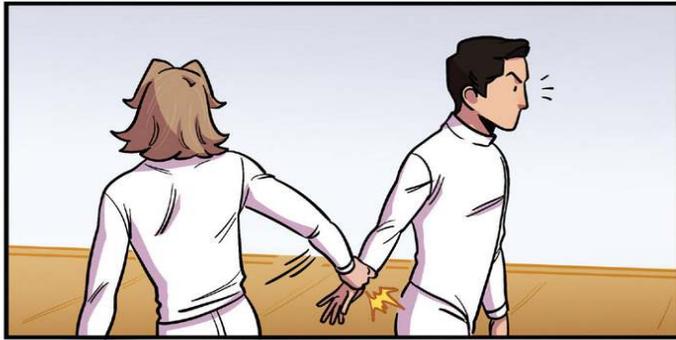


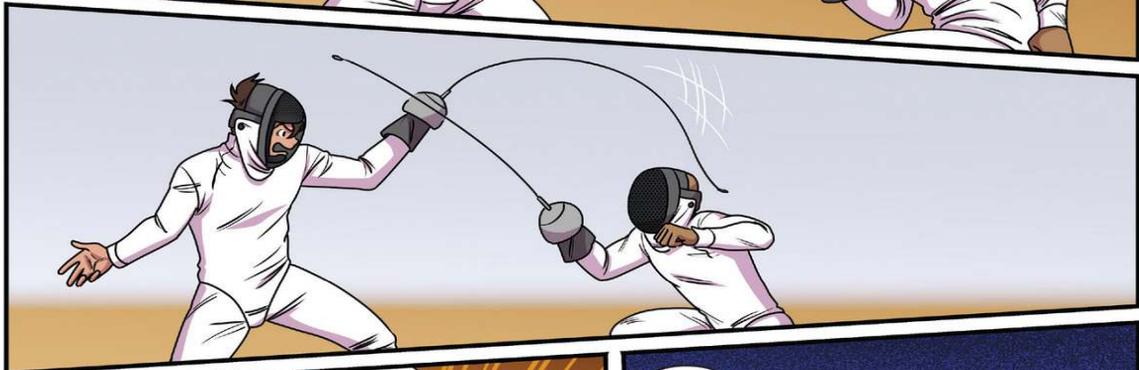
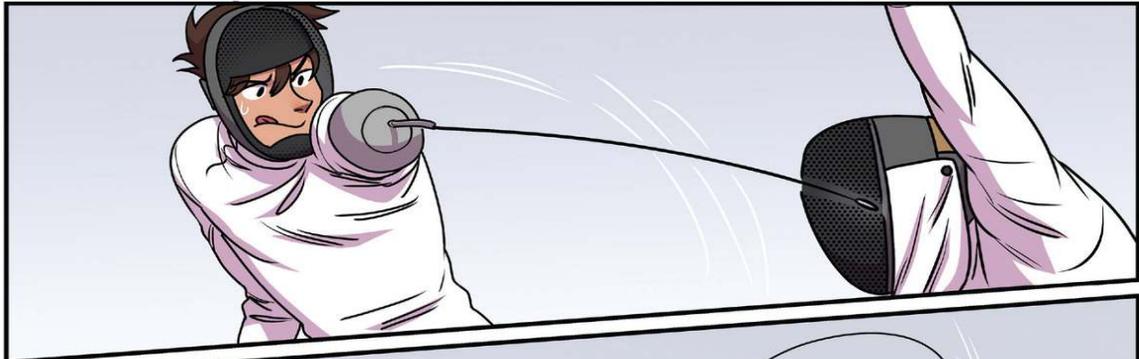










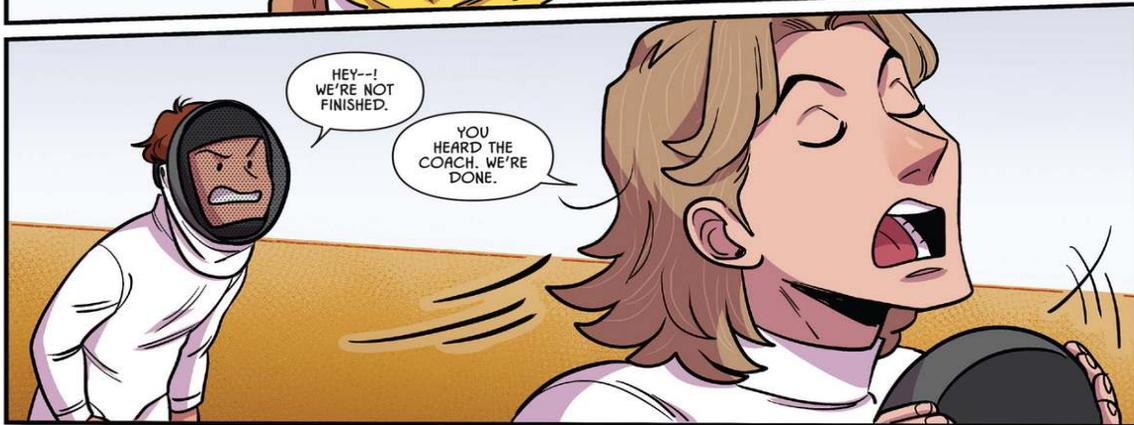
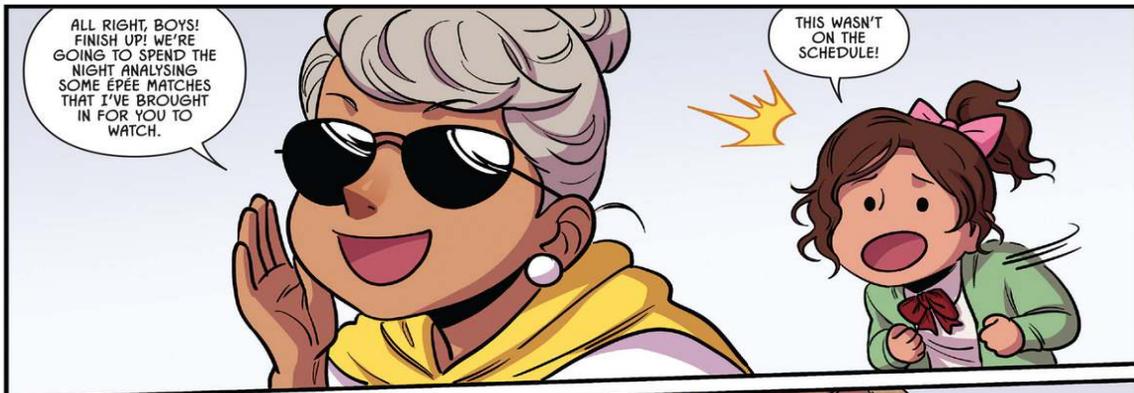


I HAVE BEEN THERE.

IT'S TOUGH ON THE TEAMMATES WHEN YOU'RE LEARNING A FLICK.

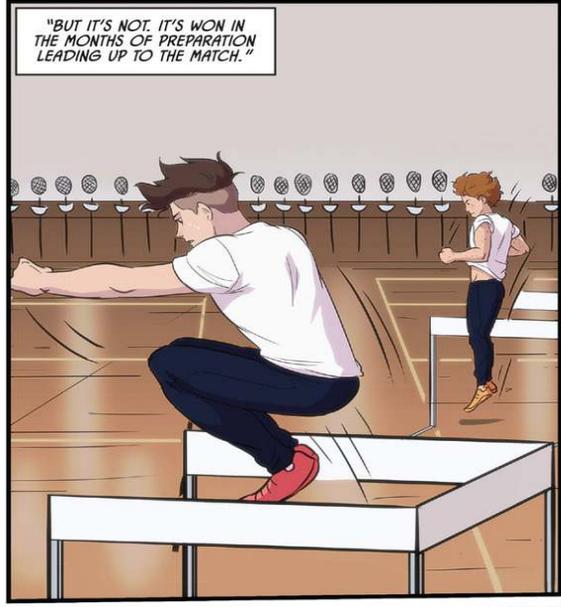
I DIDN'T MENTION THAT A FLICK IS EXTREMELY PAINFUL.







"A LOT OF PEOPLE MAKE THE MISTAKE OF THINKING THAT A MATCH IS WON ON THE DAY."



"BUT IT'S NOT. IT'S WON IN THE MONTHS OF PREPARATION LEADING UP TO THE MATCH."

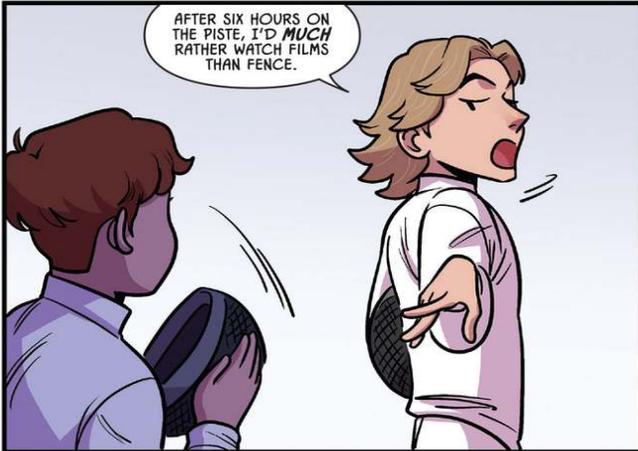


AIDEN WATCHED SEIJI'S MATCHES BEFORE HE FENCED HIM.

IN FACT, HE WATCHED ALL THE MATCHES AT NATIONALS.



"HE EVEN CAME WITH ME WHEN I SCOUTED NICHOLAS."



AFTER SIX HOURS ON THE PISTE, I'D MUCH RATHER WATCH FILMS THAN FENCE.



IF THAT'S TRUE, THEN WHY DOESN'T PUT IN ANY EFFORT WHEN HE'S FENCING?

YES, THAT'S THE REAL QUESTION. WHY DOESN'T HE?

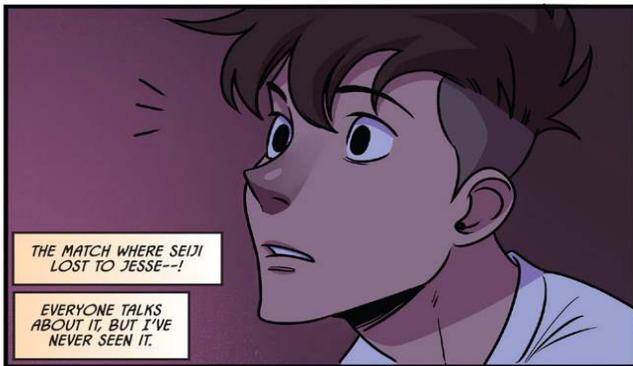




"LAST YEAR'S UNDER-16 FINALS AT NATIONALS."

KATAYAMA!

COSTE!



THE MATCH WHERE SEIJI LOST TO JESSE--!

EVERYONE TALKS ABOUT IT, BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN IT.



OH, THIS MATCH IS INCREDIBLE. I'VE WATCHED IT ON YOUTUBE A HUNDRED TIMES.

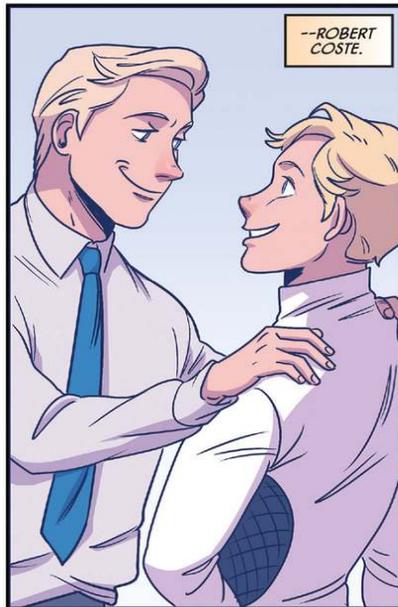


NOW AS THE MATCH STARTS, YOU WILL SEE IMMEDIATELY THAT BOTH BOYS--

THAT'S SEIJI, AND DMITRI, HIS COACH.



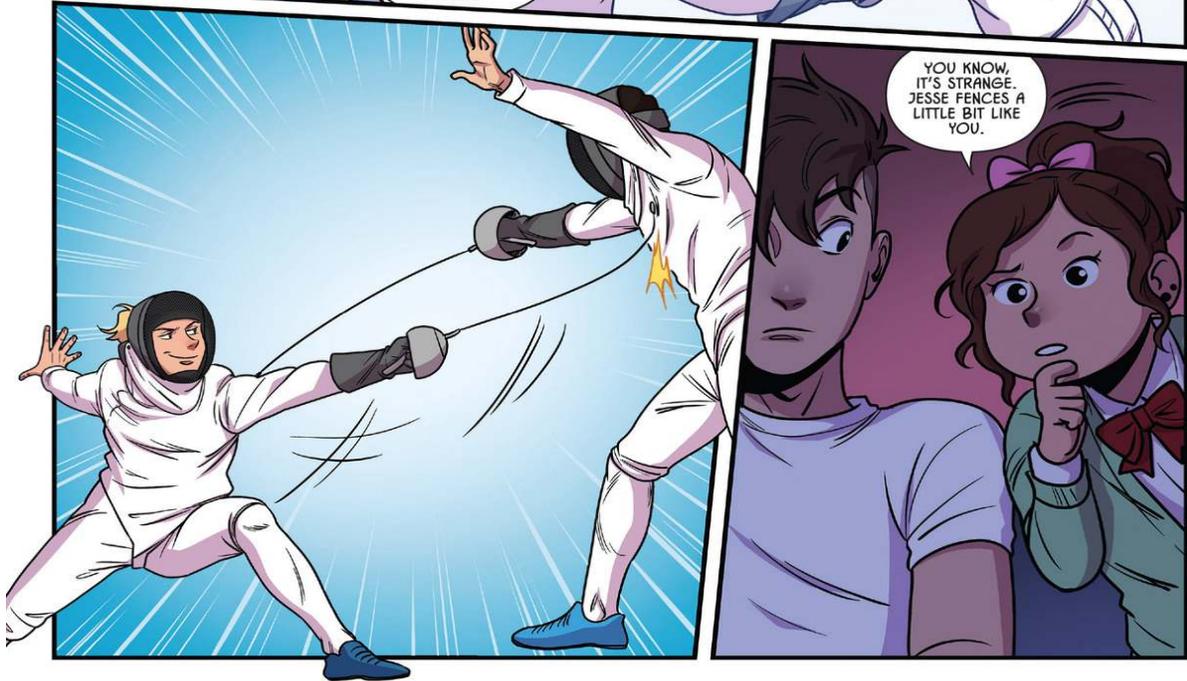
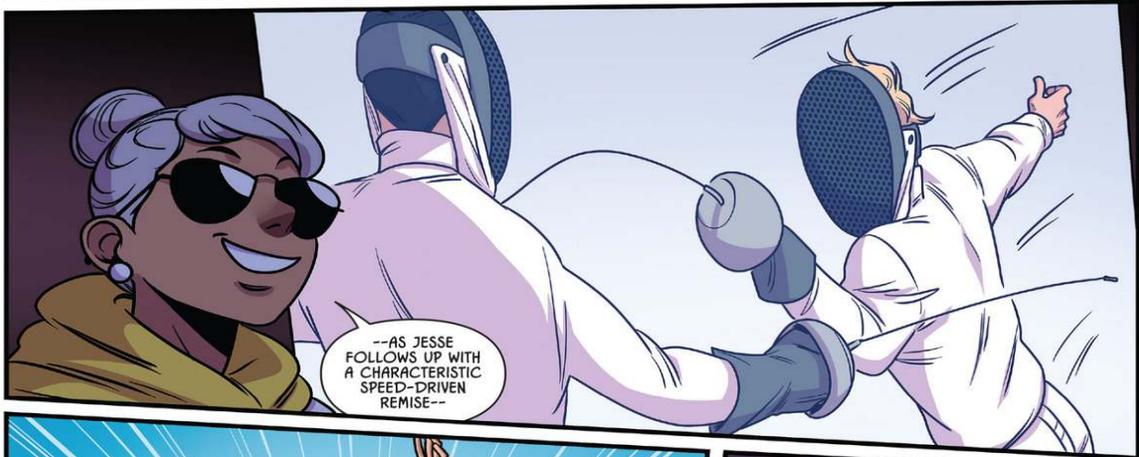
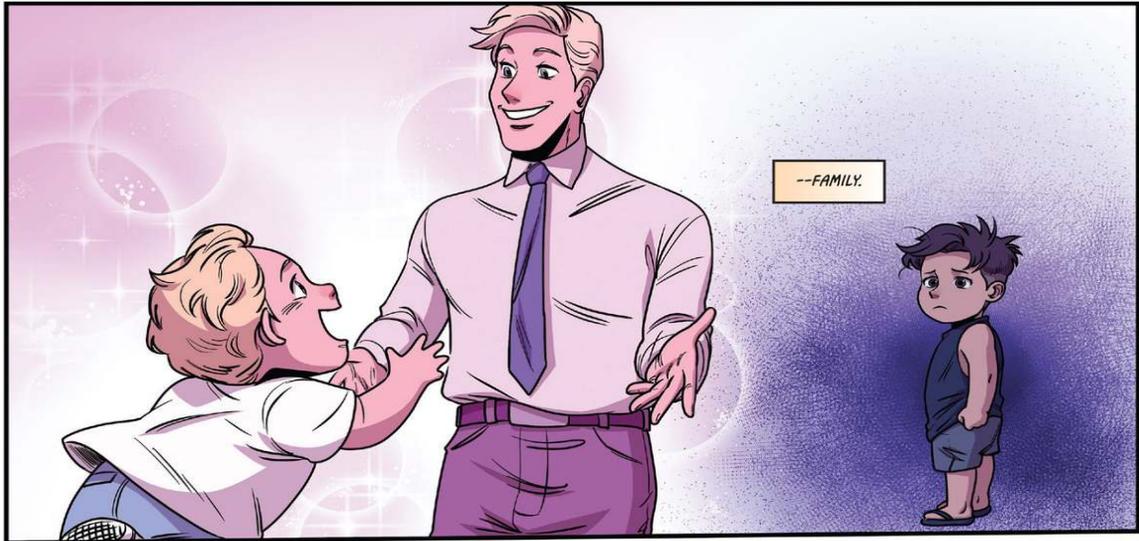
AND THAT'S JESSE, AND--



--ROBERT COSTE.



I'VE NEVER SEEN THEM TOGETHER BEFORE, BUT IT LOOKS KIND OF LIKE--





MY COUSIN DOESN'T FENCE ANYTHING LIKE **THIS** GUY.

I TRAIN WITH HIM ALL THE TIME. I WOULD KNOW.



JESSE IS THE BEST IN THE COUNTRY. THIS GUY'S AN UNRANKED **NOBODY**.

THEY DON'T HAVE ANYTHING IN COMMON.

YOU'RE RIGHT. I'M **NOTHING** LIKE HIM.



"--BUT OF COURSE, IT'S THE FINAL POINT THAT REALLY DETERMINED THIS MATCH.



"JESSE STARTS TO ATTACK. YOU CAN SEE SEIDI'S PARRY QUATRE IS LATE.

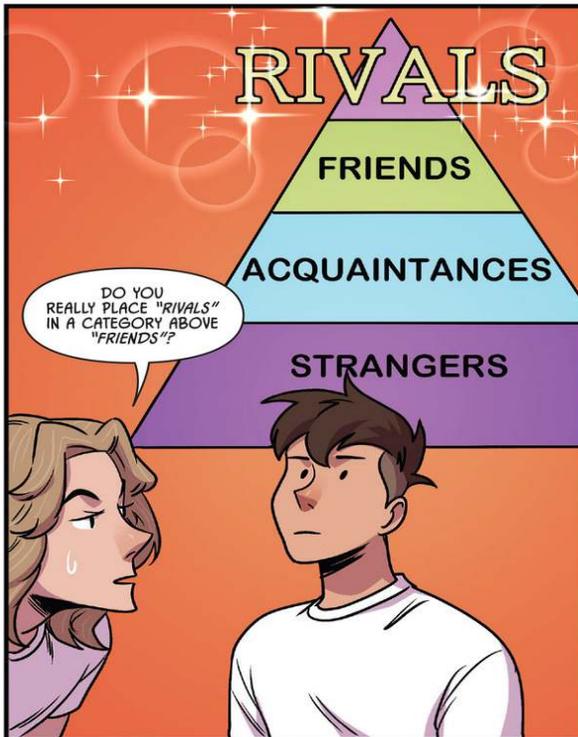
"AND THEN--"



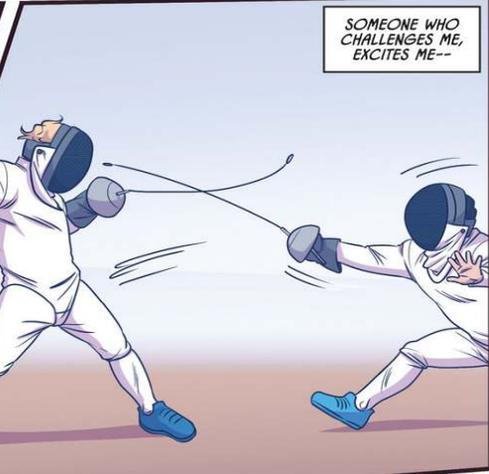
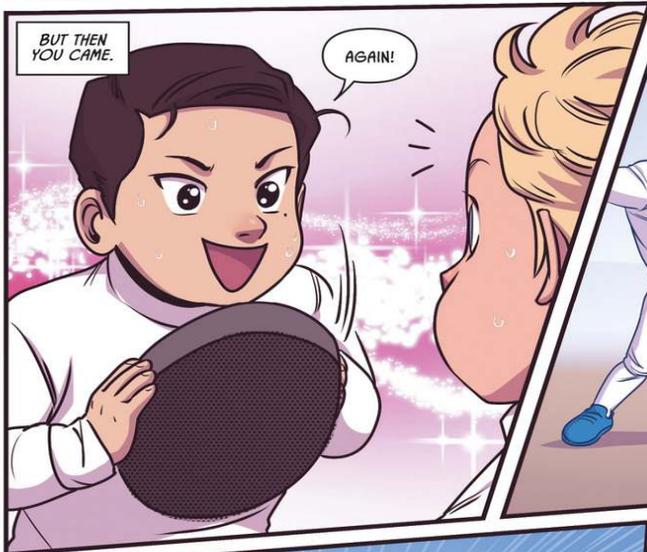
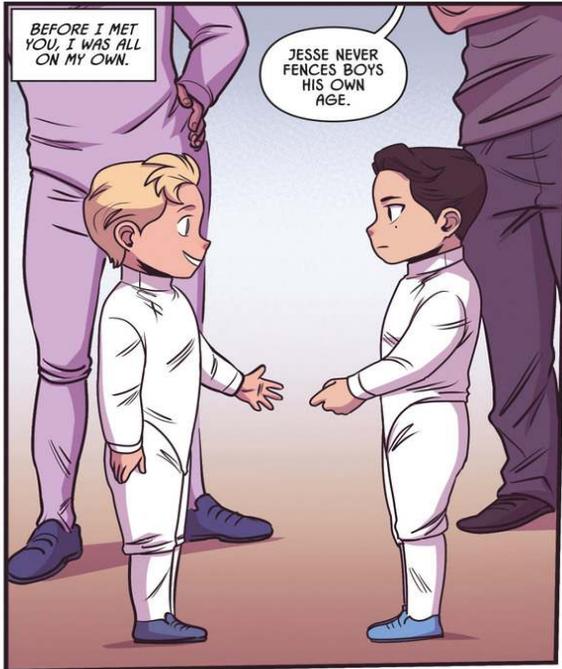
COACH, I'D LIKE TO BE EXCUSED.



ALL RIGHT.

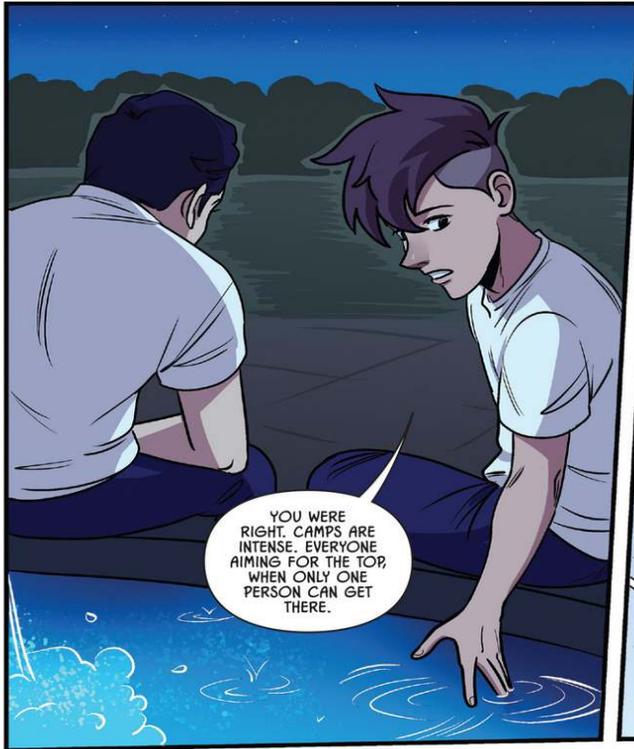














I KEPT THINKING THAT IF I COULD JUST BEAT HIM, I--



I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL. IF I COULD JUST BEAT EMMETT, MY WHOLE LIFE WOULD CHANGE.

EMMETT?



OH RIGHT, THE "UNSTOPPABLE" GUY THIRD FROM THE BOTTOM.

YOU CAN MAKE JOKES, BUT HE'S A SERIOUS OPPONENT!



SHOULD I BE JEALOUS THAT HE'S YOUR NEW RIVAL?



UH...



YOU KNOW, KYLE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT YOU AND JESSE--

WHAT?



UM, IT DOESN'T MATTER.

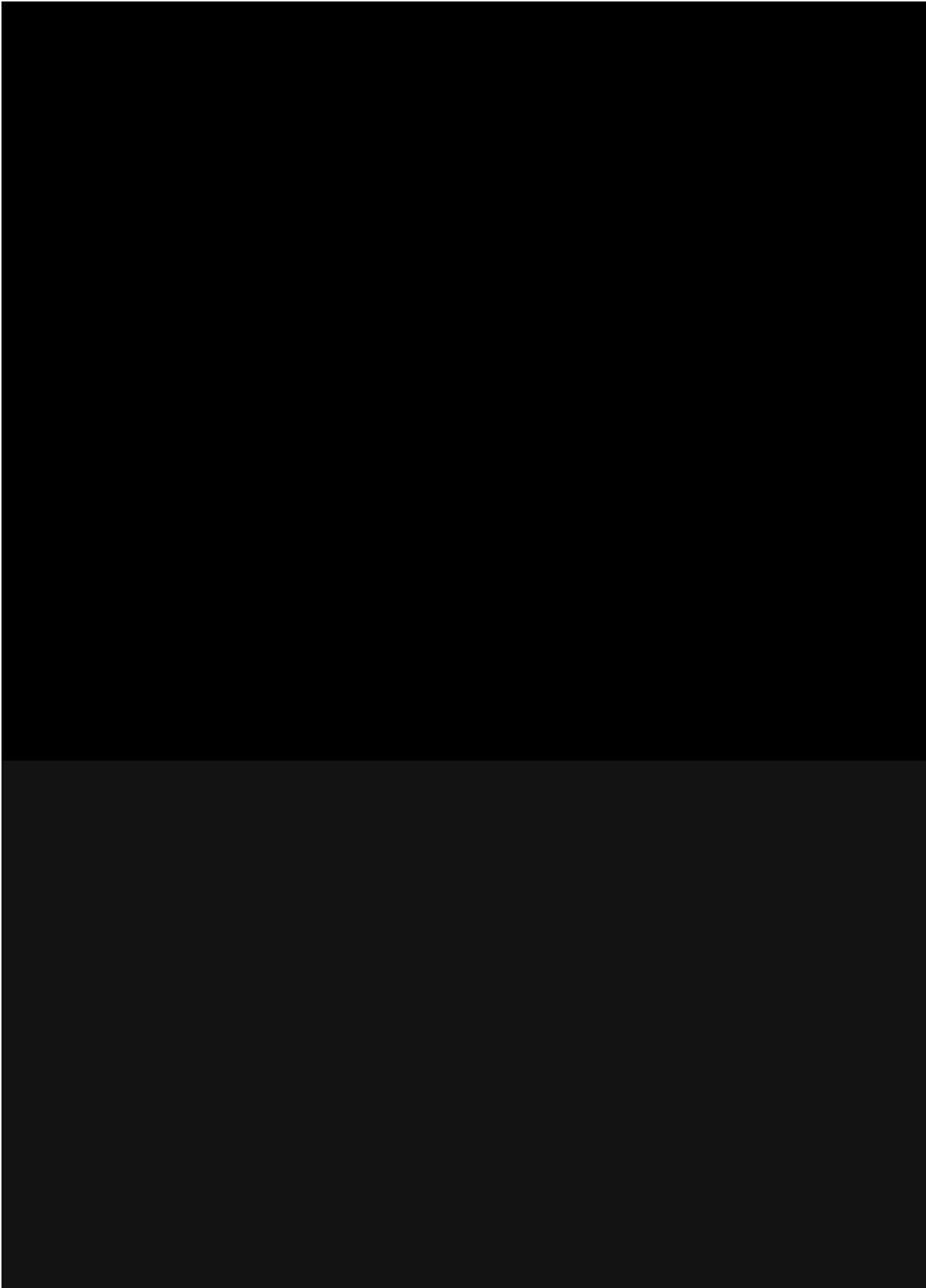


HEY, I'VE ALMOST LEARNED A FLICK. WANT TO SEE IT?

ALL RIGHT.



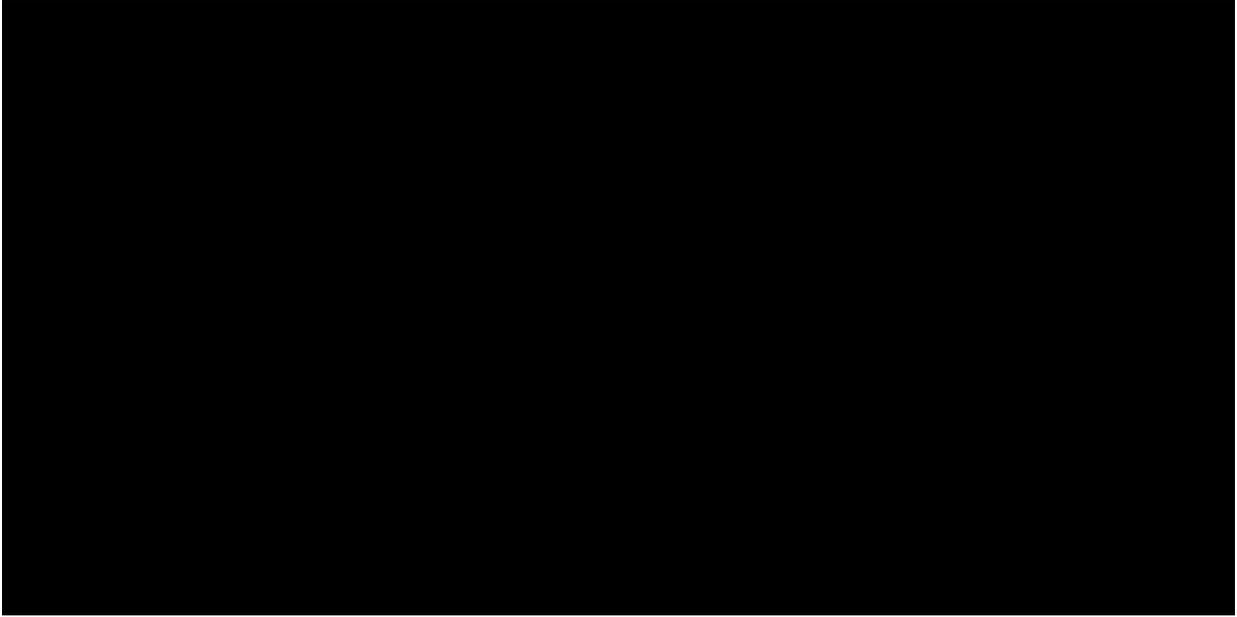


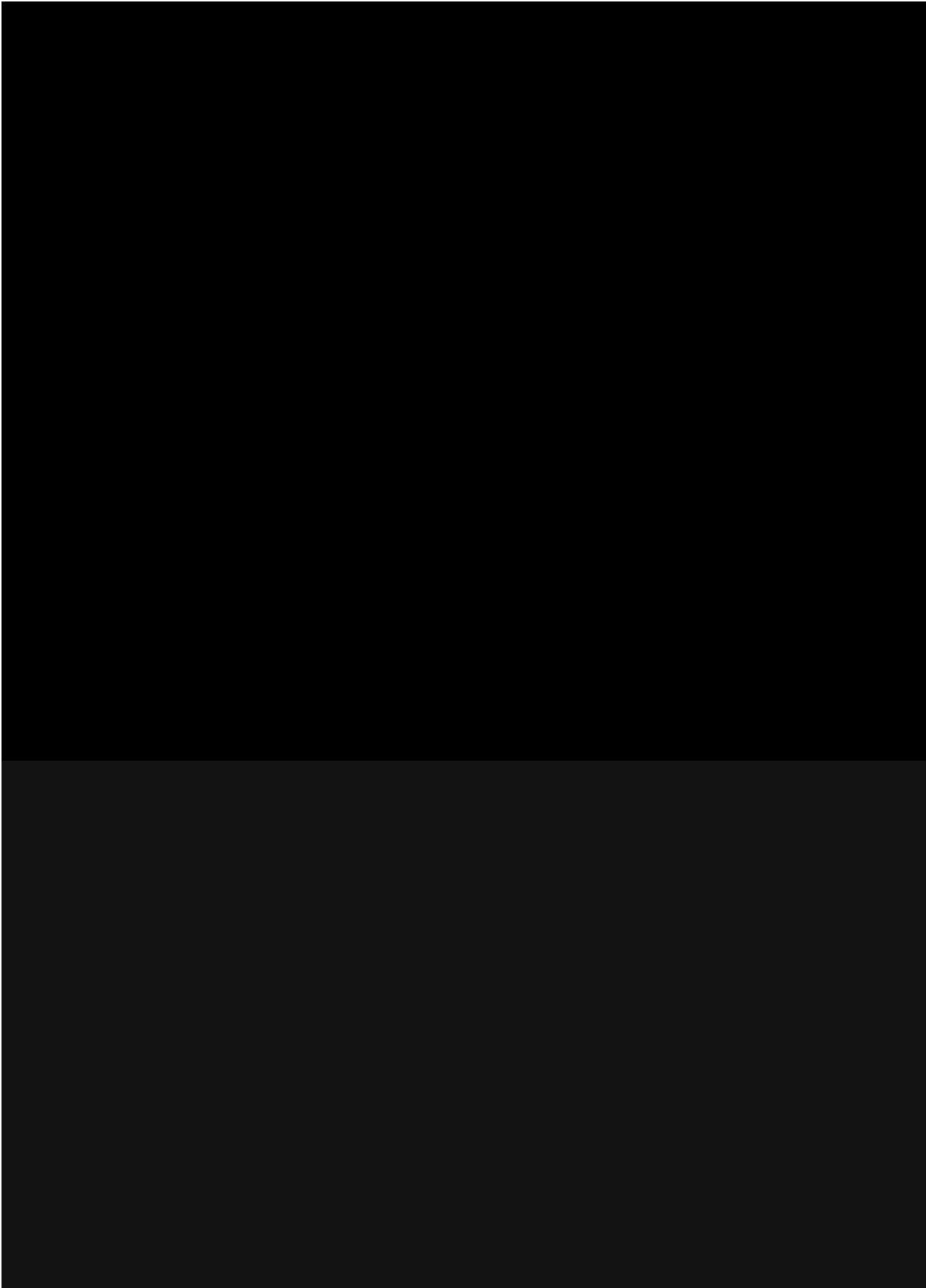


LOWTHER HALL



CHARACTER DESIGNS BY JOHANNA THE MAD

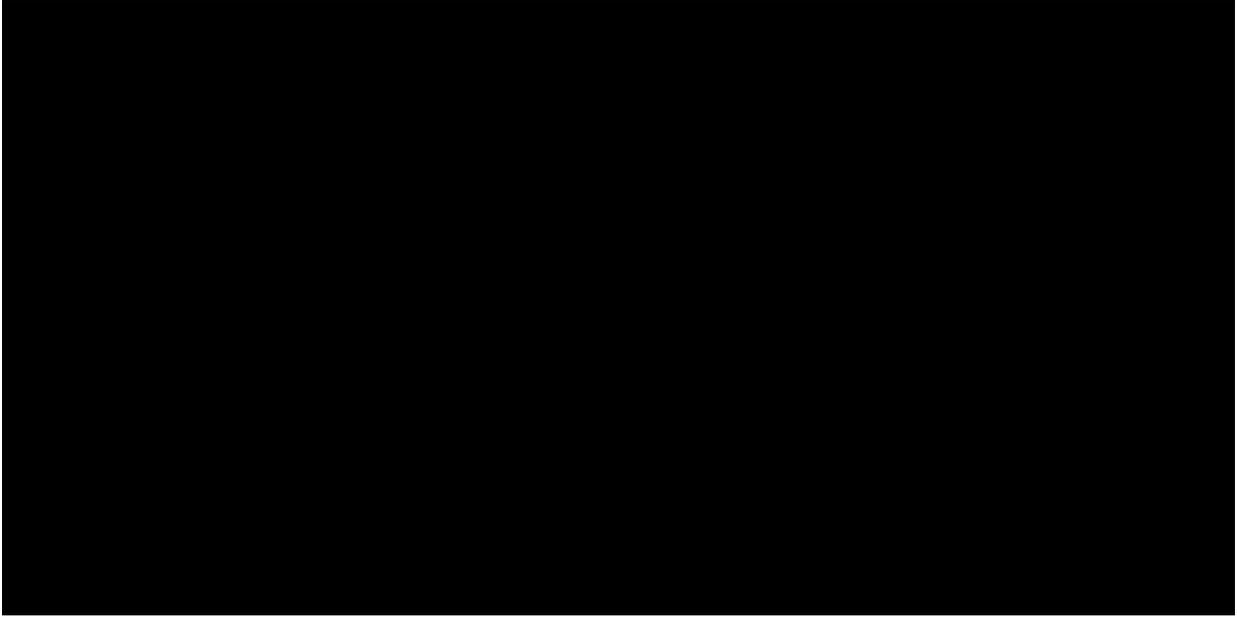


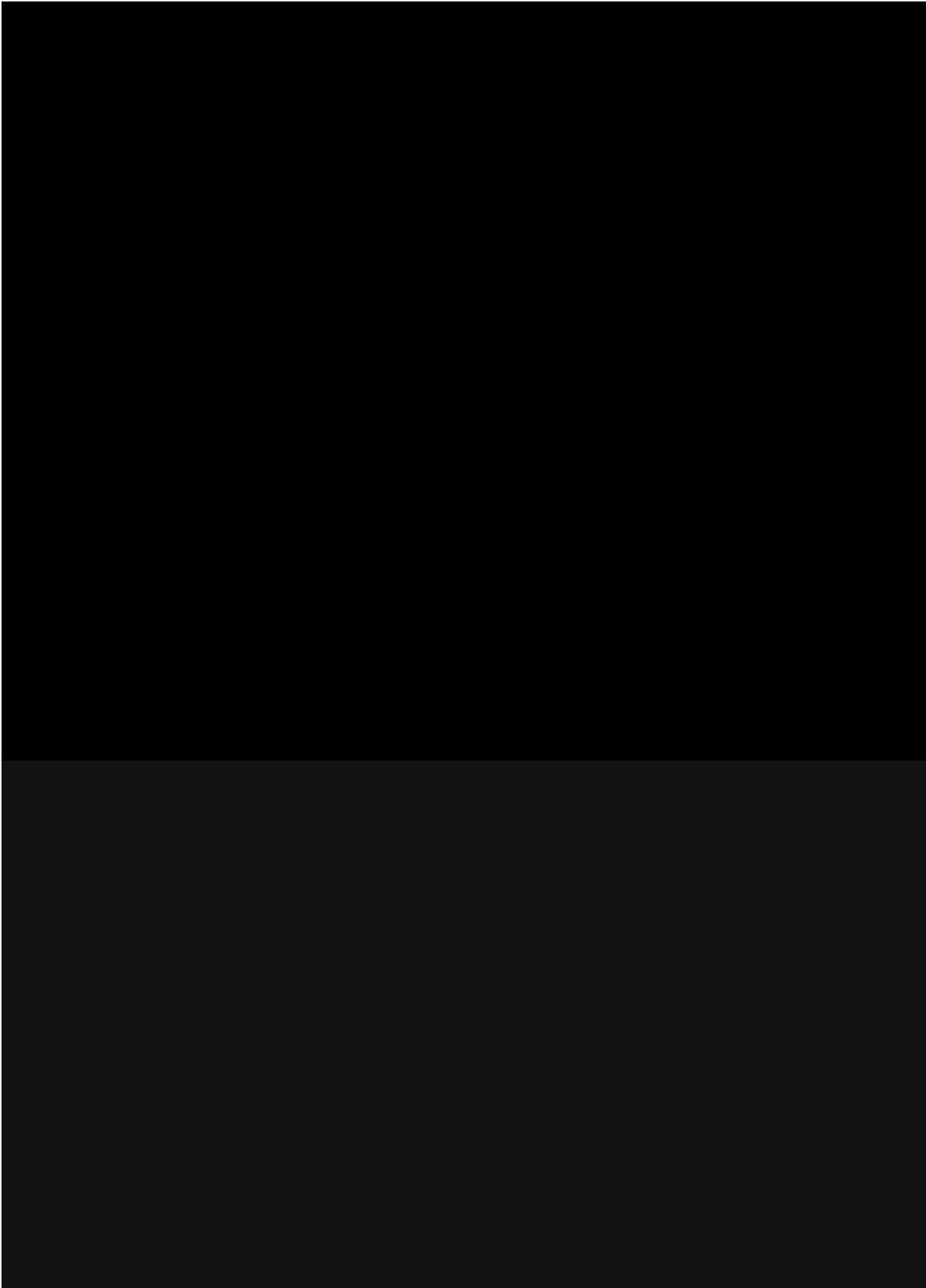


MACROBERTSON



CHARACTER DESIGNS BY JOHANNA THE MAD

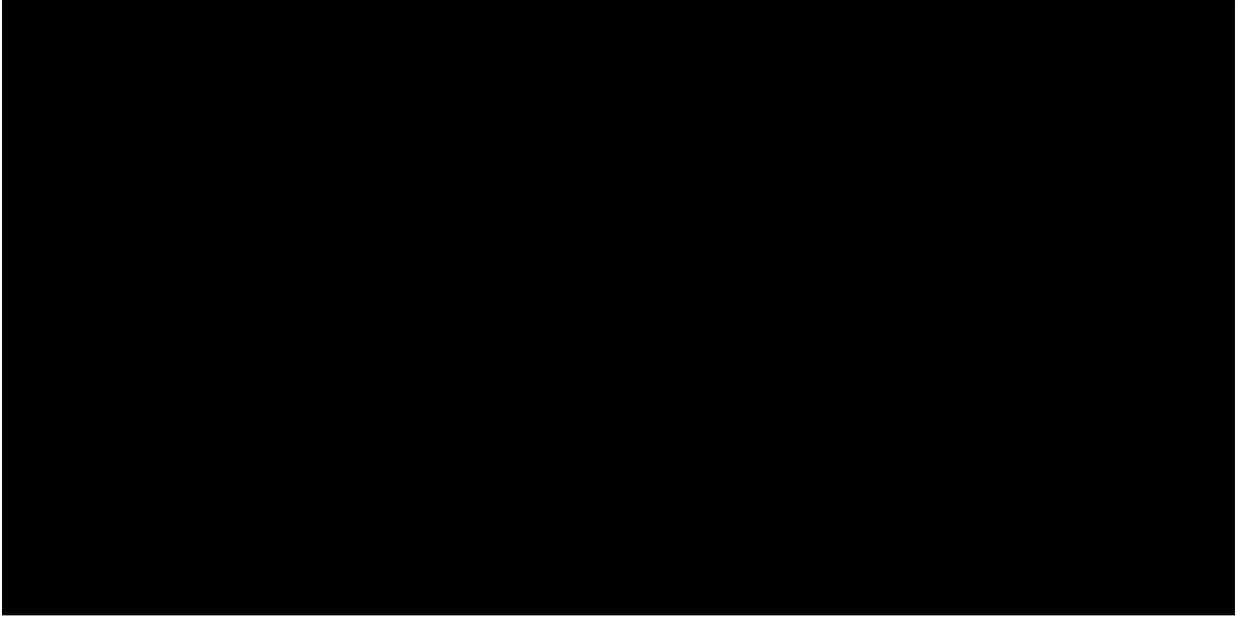




HALVERTON



CHARACTER DESIGNS BY JOHANNA THE MAD







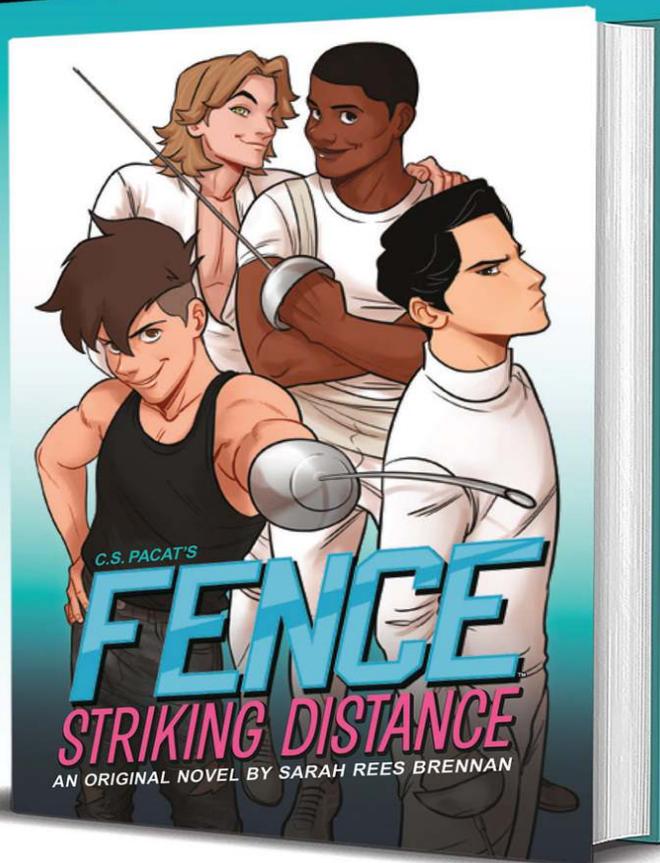
FENCE vol. 5



PENCILS BY JOHANNA THE MAD



**FAKE DATING.
REAL SWORDS.**

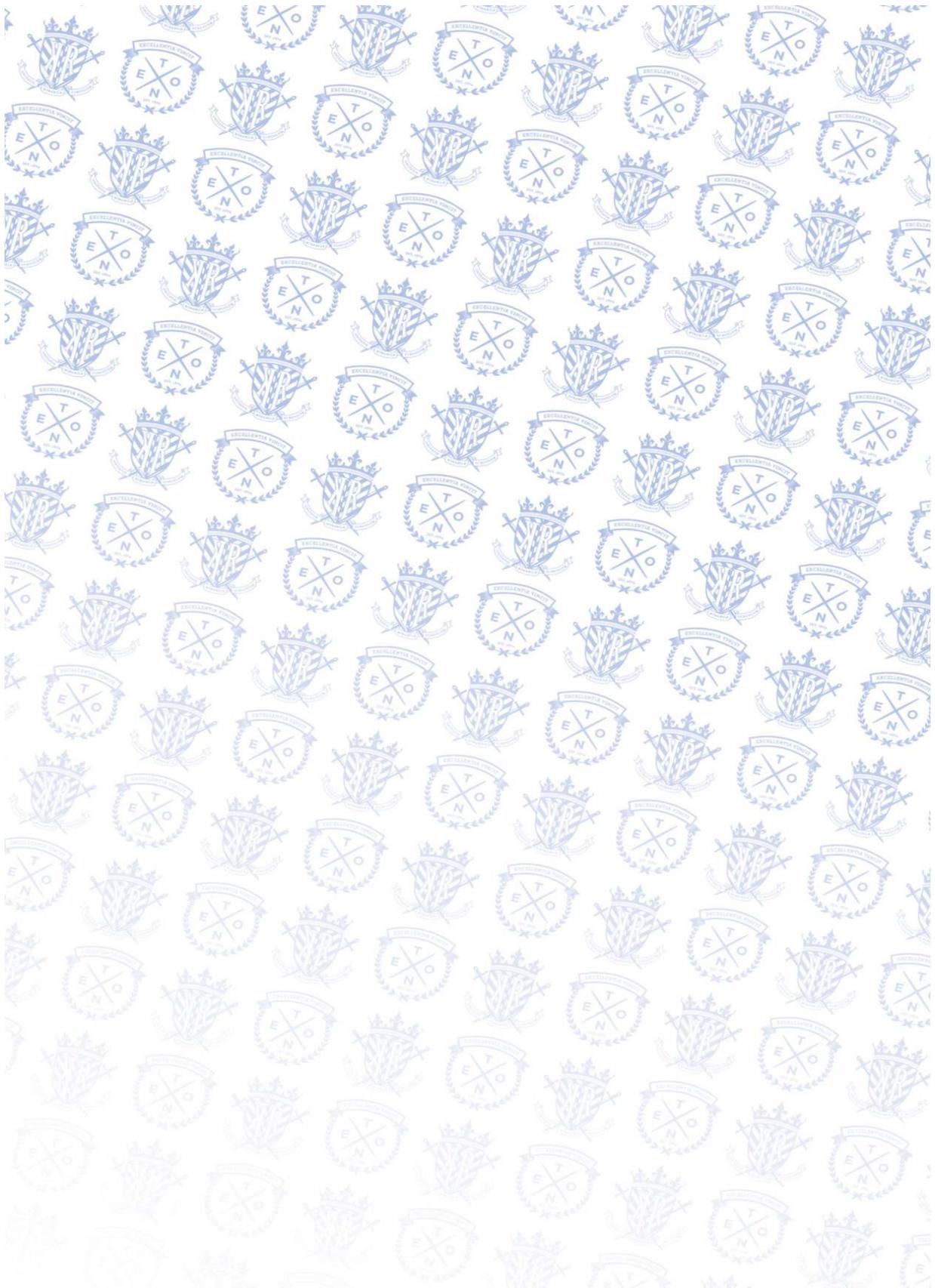


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Excitement is in the air as Nicholas and his friends celebrate receiving a coveted invitation to the Halverton Training Camp. They immediately come face-to-face with the best fencing teams in the country, and Nicholas struggles as he suffers defeat after defeat by an old enemy. Will a new addition to the team bring Nicholas closer to the rest of his teammates and awaken the resilience within he needs to prevail?

Meanwhile Seiji, in contrast to Nicholas, remains unchallenged and let down by the camp. With Seiji's goal to learn (instead of win) stuck in his head, will Nicholas be able to step up to pose a real challenge to Seiji, growing their friendship as a result?



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