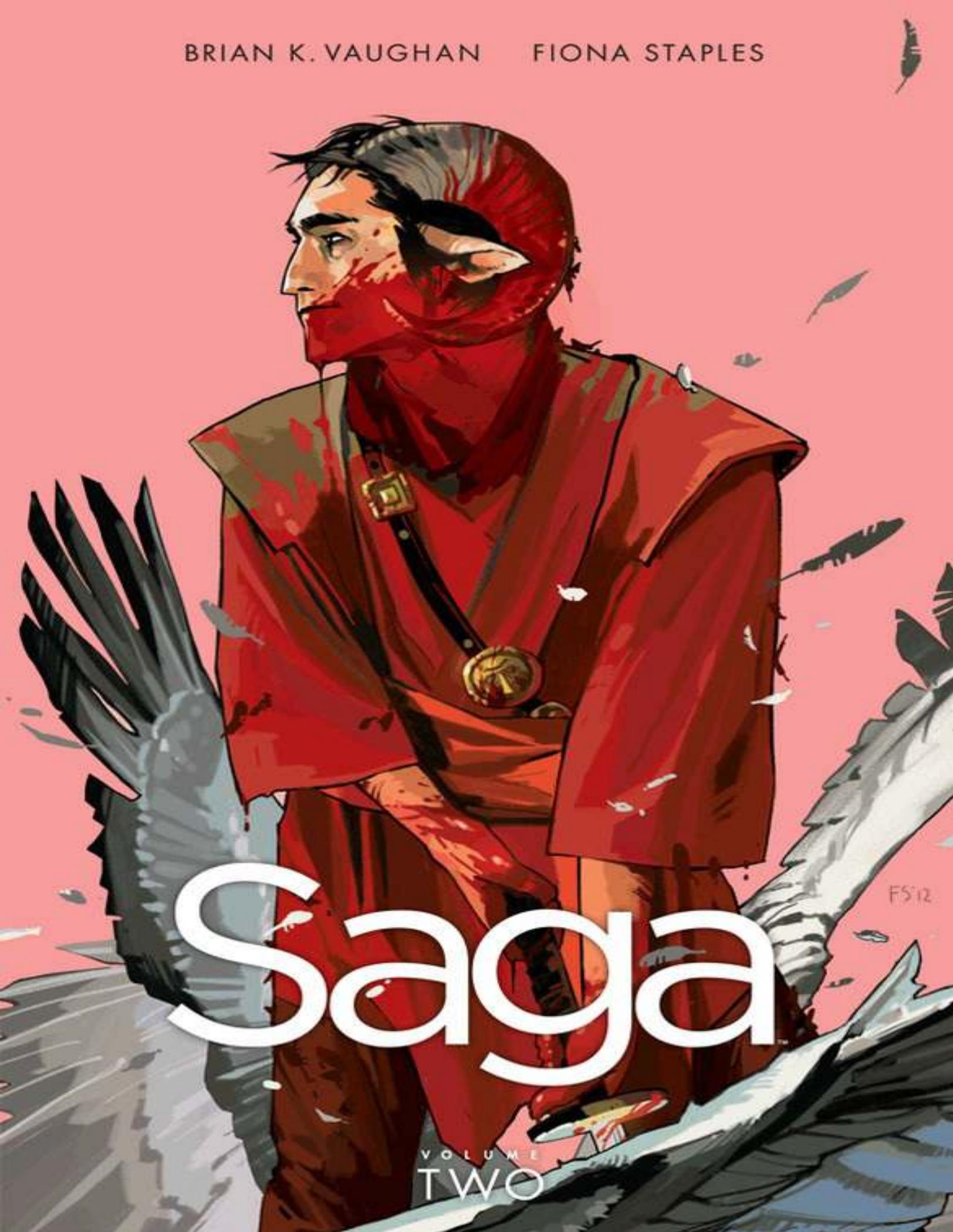


BRIAN K. VAUGHAN

FIONA STAPLES

The cover art features a central illustration of a character with a red hood and a red tunic, looking to the left. The character has a dark, pointed ear and a gold medallion on a black strap around their neck. The background is a light pinkish-red with several dark feathers floating in the air. The title 'Saga' is written in a large, white, sans-serif font across the bottom half of the image. Below the title, the words 'VOLUME TWO' are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. The artist's signature 'FS12' is visible in the bottom right corner of the illustration.

# Saga

VOLUME  
TWO

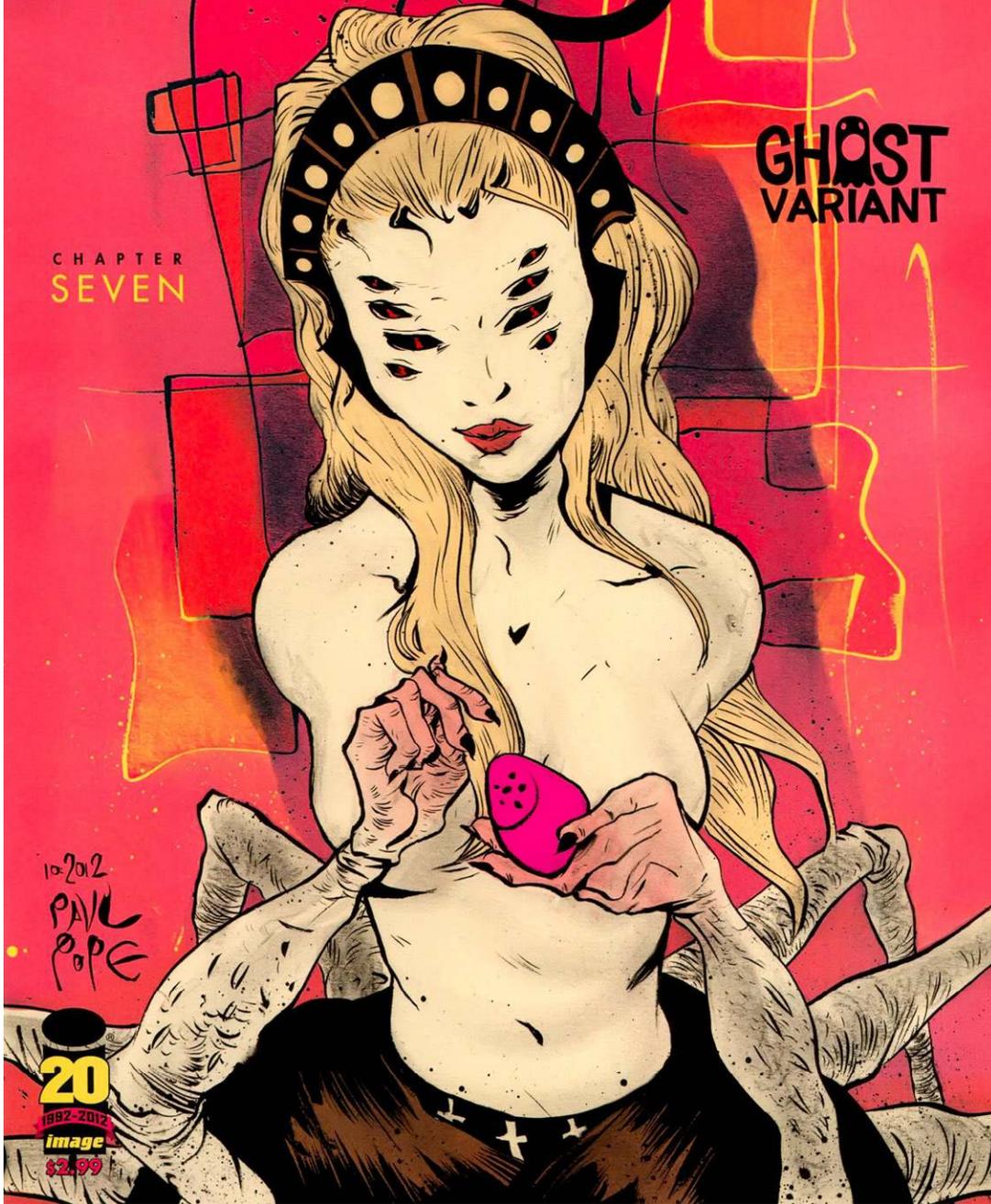
FS12

BRIAN K. VAUGHAN FIONA STAPLES

# Saga™

GHÖST  
VARIANT

CHAPTER  
SEVEN



CHAPTER  
SEVEN

# Saga

WRITTEN BY  
BRIAN K. VAUGHAN

ART BY  
FIONA STAPLES

LETTERS + DESIGN BY  
FONOGRAFIKS

COORDINATED BY  
ERIC STEPHENSON



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I should rewind for a second.

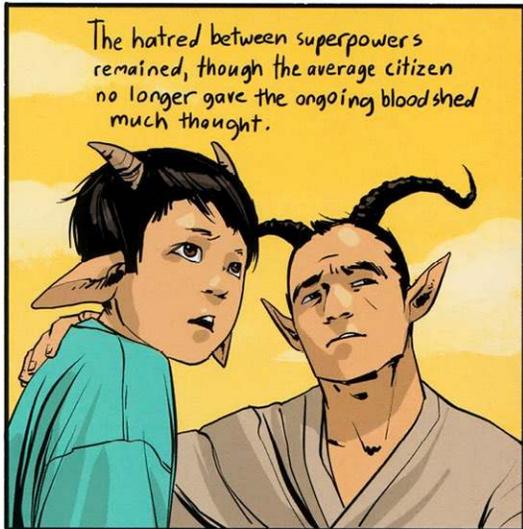




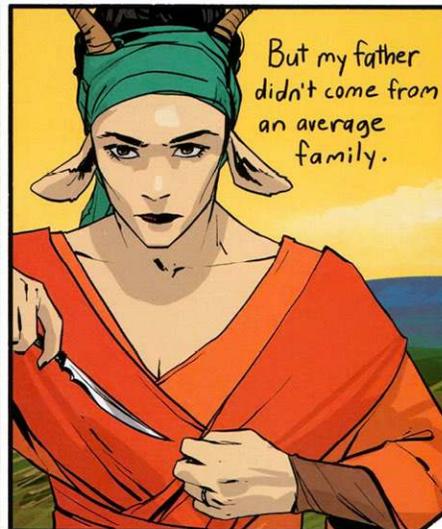
See, by the time my father was born, Wreath and Landfall had already taken their fight elsewhere in the galaxy.



The front lines had moved to distant PROXY WARS, waged mostly by unlucky draftees or conscripts from other worlds.



The hatred between superpowers remained, though the average citizen no longer gave the ongoing bloodshed much thought.



But my father didn't come from an average family.



Apparently, this  
is his first memory.



When dad was just a boy,  
his mother and father took him  
to the site of the final battle  
fought on Wreath.



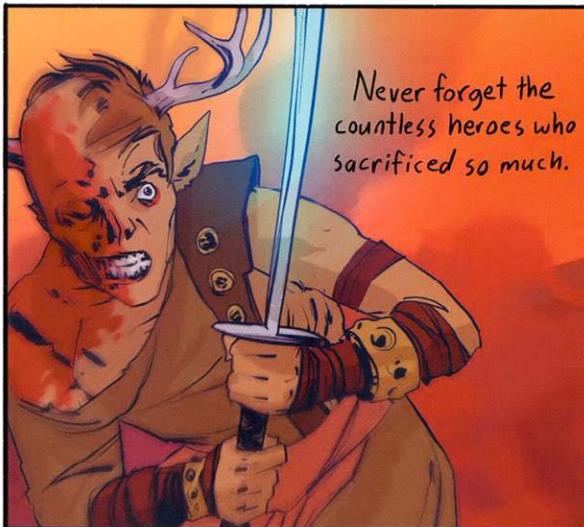
Even the moon's soil still  
remembered the massacre that  
took place that day.



His parents didn't say a word, but the point of their lesson was clear.



Never forget.



Never forget the countless heroes who sacrificed so much.



And more importantly, never forget those evil fucks with the wings.

So yeah, that was then.



Guys,  
I'd like you  
to meet  
Alana.

My  
wife.



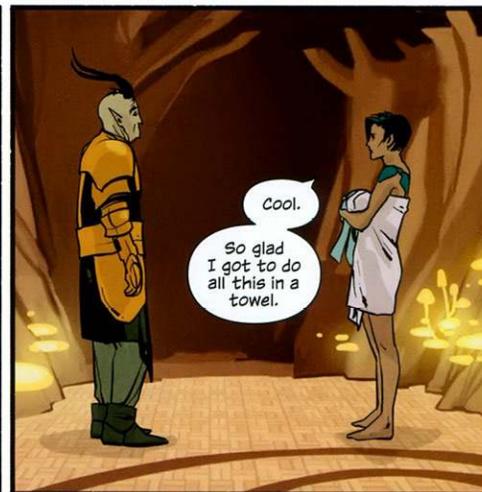
Sankta  
fek.

I just wanted to  
make sure everyone  
was on the same  
page before this  
next part.















IZABEL!

Hush.

You're liable to wake whatever did a number on this place.



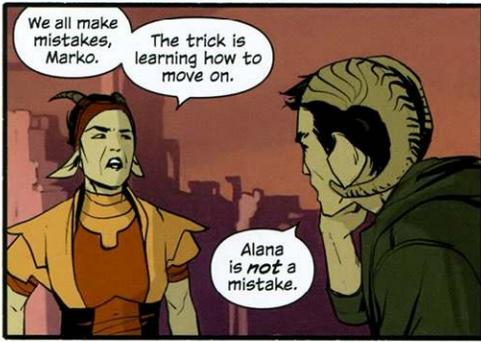
You left Alana *alone* with him?!

Relax, your father is harmless.

I doubt he's going to damage your little wartime concubine.

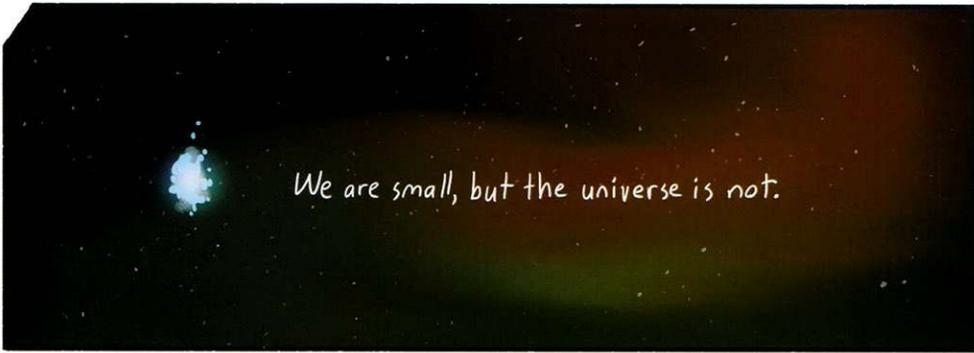








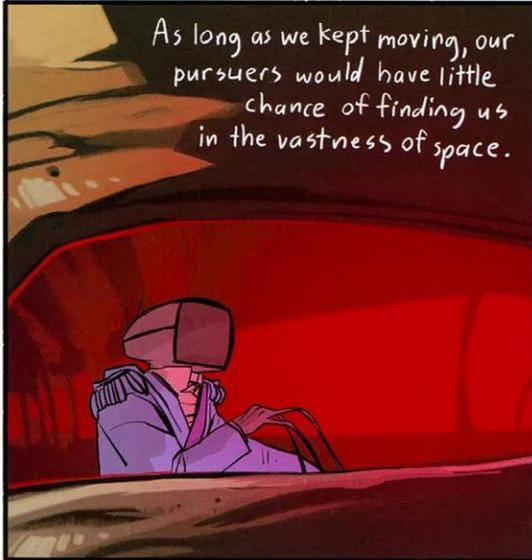
Mother,  
please.



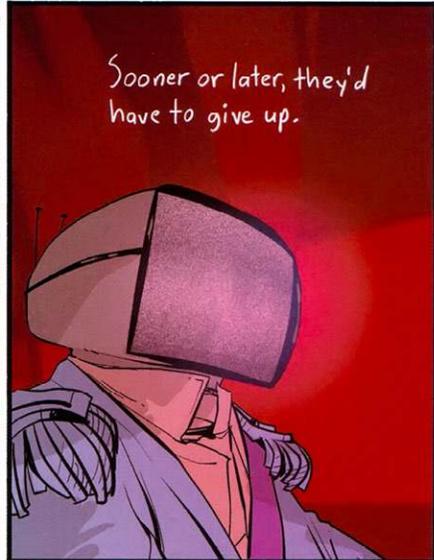
We are small, but the universe is not.



That's how my family hoped to survive the many diverse entities who wanted us dead or worse.



As long as we kept moving, our pursuers would have little chance of finding us in the vastness of space.



Sooner or later, they'd have to give up.

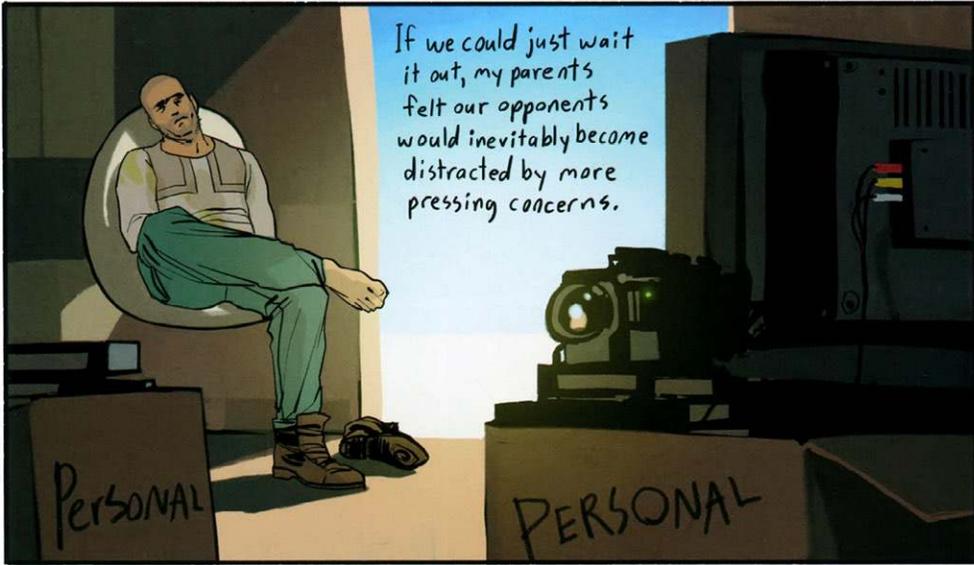


That was the hope, at least.



The powers that be were outraged that I'd been born...

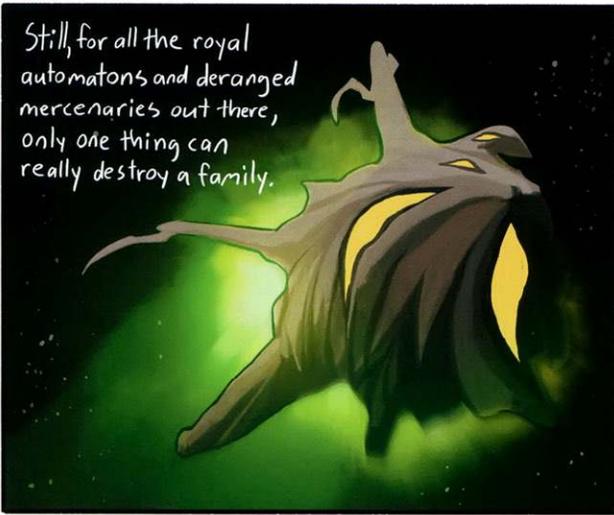
...but outrageous things happen all the time during a war.



If we could just wait it out, my parents felt our opponents would inevitably become distracted by more pressing concerns.



We'd never be forgiven, but maybe we'd be forgotten.



Still, for all the royal automatons and deranged mercenaries out there, only one thing can really destroy a family.



And we all know what that is, right?

Mmmf!



You know, at first, I thought this was the engine room... but maybe it's more like a kitchen?

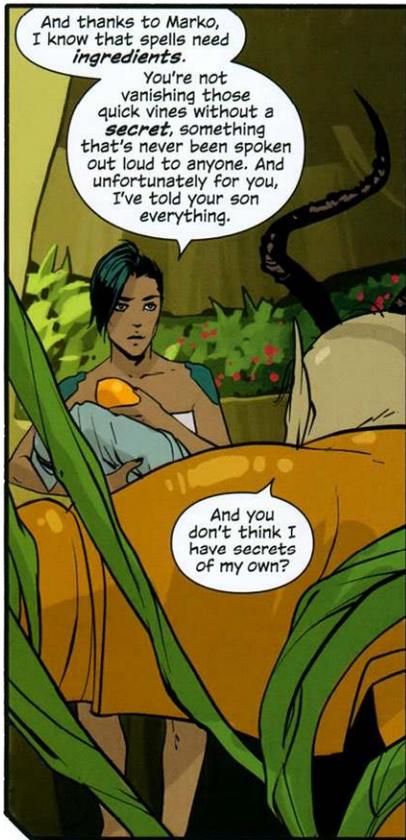
Look, I realize we got off on the wrong foot, but you can't leave me trussed up here forever.

I won't. Just until our better halves get back.



Don't make me do this.

I'm warning you, I know spells.







Beautiful  
goddamn  
name.

BRIAN K. VAUGHAN FIONA STAPLES

# Saga

CHAPTER  
EIGHT



\$2.99

# Saga

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A NIGHT TIME SMOKE

with matching indifference, they watched the purple stain's relentless march across the helpless rug.

"Will you judge me if I open another bottle?"

"I will, though I think you'll approve of the verdict," Eames said.

Contessa went to uncork something with a duck on the label, while Eames fisted couch cushions in search of the remote.

"Hey, did you tape *Cake Haters*?"

"Shit," she yelled from the kitchen. "Sorry, I spaced."

Eames just shrugged, as Contessa returned to refill their glasses.

"It's fine. This season has kind of sucked anyway."

"I know, right? Hey, should we go to your brother's opening instead?"

"Definitely not," he smiled.

Eames then patted the beaten seat next to him, and a grinning Contessa took her place to his right.

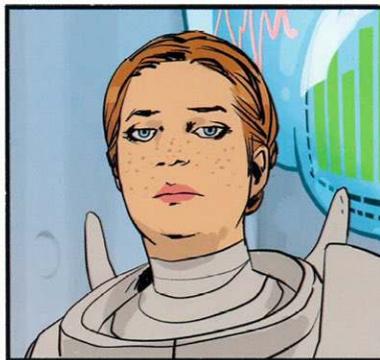
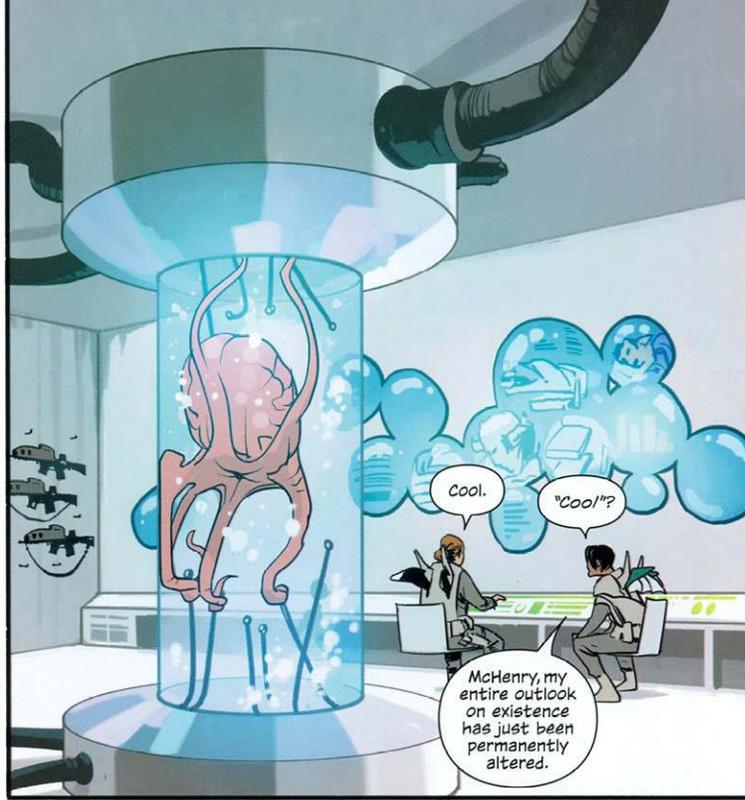
Always the right.

-FINO-

Holy.

Fucking.

Shit.









I sometimes forget, but mom and dad had lives long before I ever came into the picture.

No talking after sunset.



They had dreams that had nothing to do with whether or not I'd grow up to be an acrobat or a brain surgeon.

Peas. Peas!

Mess is closed for the night, moonny.

Not my fault you didn't eat your dinner.



Peas... be unto us.

They had their own hopes.



I and you. Not as alone... as we feel.

They had their own desires.



And then, against all odds, they found the perfect person to share everything with.



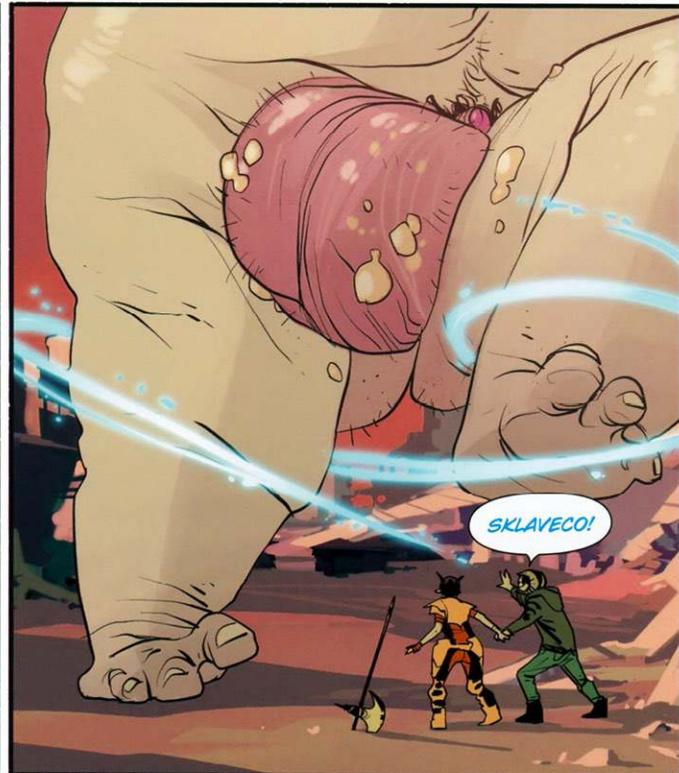
I said no talking.

In romantic comedies, this is called the "meet-cute."





















My father once told me that your first grandchild is nature's reminder that your warranty's about to run out.

He died less than a year after Marko was born.



There's no cure for my illness, Alana. One day very soon, my heart will just stop working. It's not something I'm looking forward to, but I've made my peace with it.

But how can you keep it a secret from Marko?

From your wife?



Because I don't want my final days in this universe to be filled with pity and sorrow.

I want to spend this time doing what I like best for the people I care about most.

But... you don't even know me.



Maybe not, but lord do you ever talk in your sleep.

It's clear you love my boy very much.



I haven't always.



Oh?

At first, he annoyed the shit out of me.

Marko can be a self-righteous ass, he has no idea how to sit still, and worst of all, he laughs at his own jokes.

Then why did you risk everything to be with him?



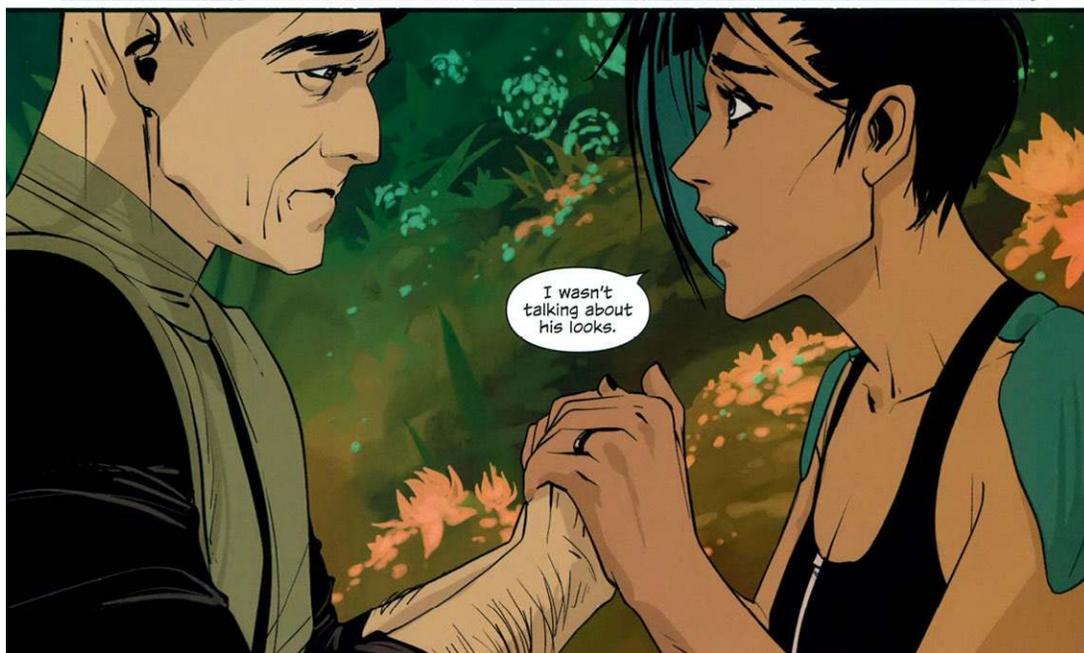
Because your son is so goddamn beautiful.



Ha.

I assure you, looks aren't forever.

Oh, I know.



I wasn't talking about his looks.







I mean, how can you be haunted by something that never really dies?



That's bullshit, Erving! I killed their target in good faith, and these a-holes haven't even paid me my commencement fee yet, much less delivery.

I hear you loud and clear, big guy.

But if we make a big stink about it, I promise they're just gonna be less likely to contract out their next hit to you.



See, this is why Freelancers are always getting screwed over in this war.

Our own reps refuse to fight for--

**BRRRING**

Hold that thought, The March.



I got someone on the hotline.



Brio Talent Agency, how may I--

Your "talent" has been a grave disappointment so far.

Come again?



I'm calling on behalf of Wreath High Command.

Oh, this is about that twisted couple with the baby, right?

Yeah, unfortunately, we've been having some issues with that job.



I was told The Stalk was killed in action, but what of the other assassin we hired?

Look, The Will is dealing with some... personal issues. But I guarantee that his replacement will be even more--

My superiors have no interest in a replacement. They want the man they hired to complete his task. Where is The Will now?



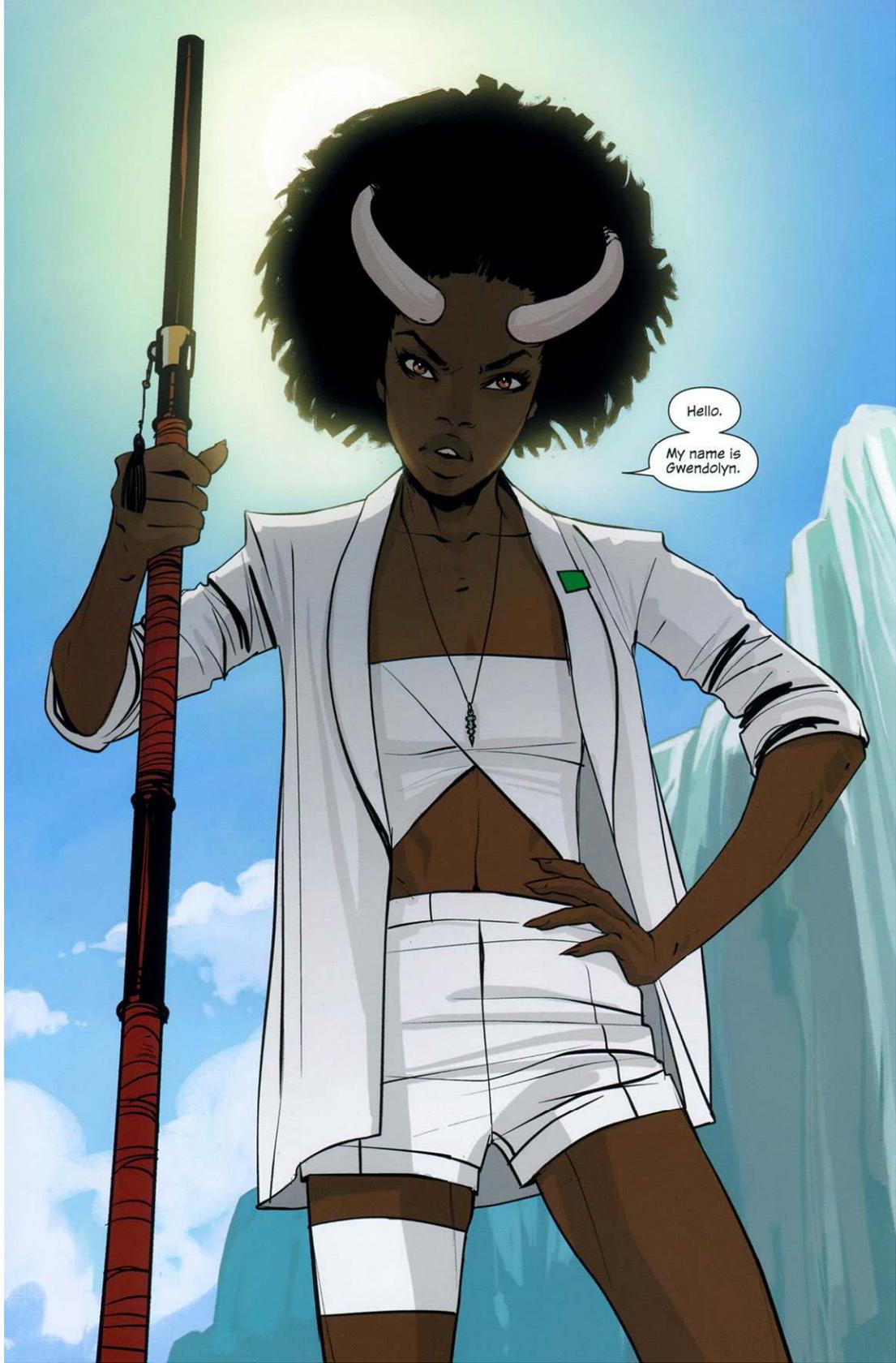
Lady, I don't give out my guys' private information over the phone.

Then you can tell me to my face.



Fah!

What... what the hell is this?



BRIAN K. VAUGHAN FIONA STAPLES

# Saga

CHAPTER  
NINE



**image**  
\$2.99

FS

CHAPTER  
NINE

# Saga

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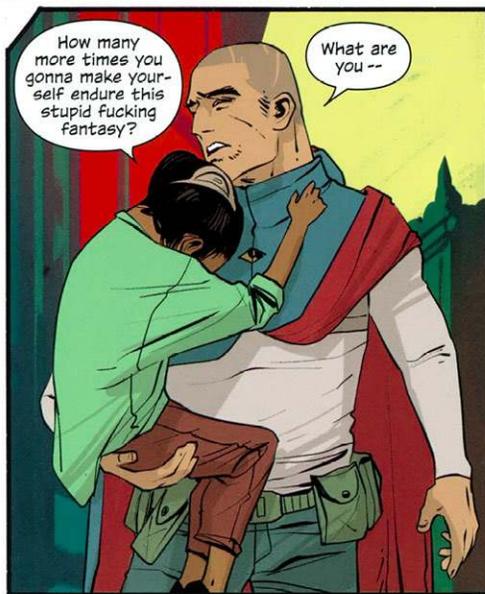
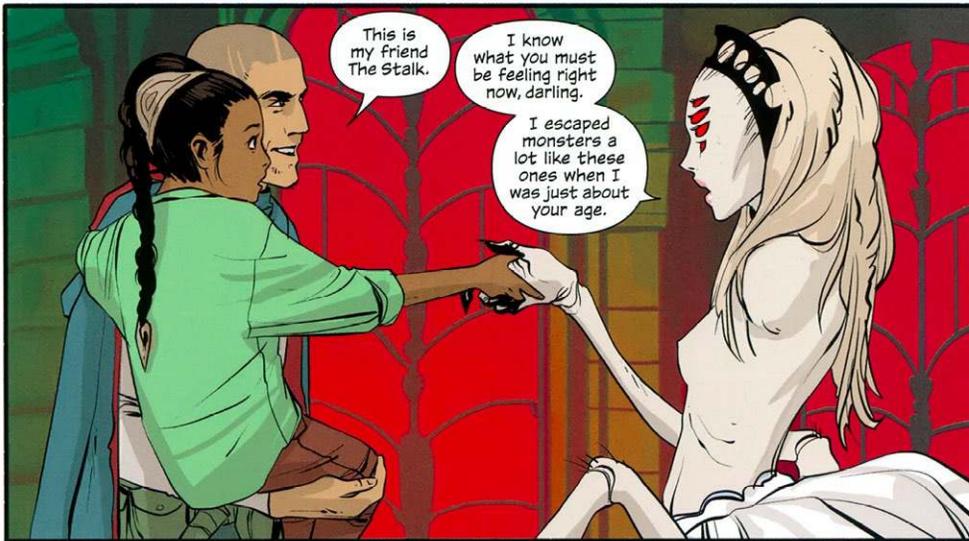
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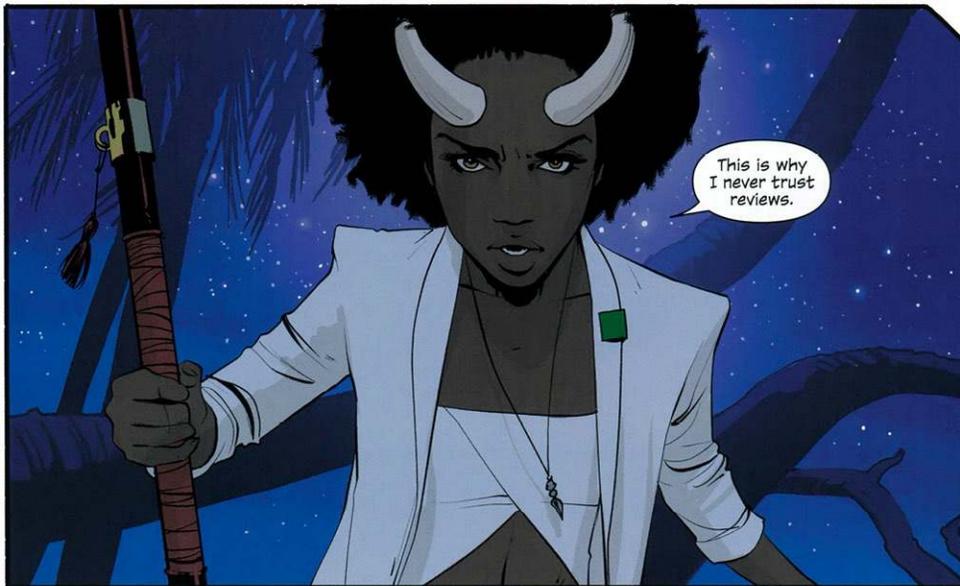














My name is Gwendolyn.

I work for the Secretary General of Wrath High Command, who's very curious to hear why you've failed to deliver on your promised services.

Speak pretty good language for a lunar type.



Family heirloom.

My grand-parents' translation pendant.



Used to be part of a set, actually...



Send your bosses my regrets.

I hate to bow out in the middle of an assignment, but I been forced to move on to personal matters.

Like killing Prince Robot IV?



What do you know about the drone?

That he killed your colleague The Stalk in cold blood.

A crime you're apparently in no great hurry to avenge...







Look, the cash isn't for me, it's for a little girl, trapped inside Sextillion.

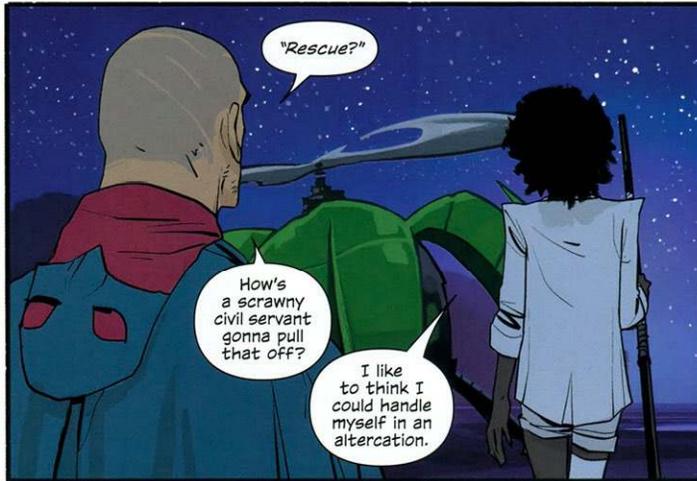
You want to purchase some trollop's freedom? **Why?**

It's just... something I gotta do.



=sigh=

And if I rescued this damsel in distress for you, would you swear to quit moping and get back to work?



"Rescue?"

How's a scrawny civil servant gonna pull that off?

I like to think I could handle myself in an altercation.



You wouldn't make it past the front door!

Sextillion is smack in the middle of wing-controlled territory, and there's no way we're hiding those horns.

If my plan works, we won't even have to leave the beach. Just get me an open line from an unlisted number.



And tell your animal to stay **outside** until I'm through.





Slave Girl.

*Her parents aren't looking for trouble, just the safe return of their daughter. If you help us, no further action will be taken against you or your parent company.*



And if I refuse?

We leak your quality-control issues to the press.

I'm sure every Landfallian veteran who's ever had a bachelor party on Sextillion will be thrilled to learn he may have accidentally stuck it in a "filthy moony."



...I'll have the girl's security elixir neutralized at once.



Your cooperation is noted. How soon can we retrieve her?

No, there's no way I'm letting another one of you set foot here.

My people will drop off Slave Girl outside the old refueling station on Indica. You can pick her up in an hour.

Call ended.



Grab your cat.

Let's get this nonsense over with.





Sextillion Loss Prevention.

Mama Sun told us you were probably behind all this.



You hurt that civilian, you're declaring an act of war against Wreath.

We tested the bitch, so spare us your bluffing.

The kid clearly isn't a moony, but she's obviously valuable to you Freaks for some reason, so Ownership is willing to make a revised deal: *thirty million.*



Here's our counter: Leave the girl with us and walk away alive.

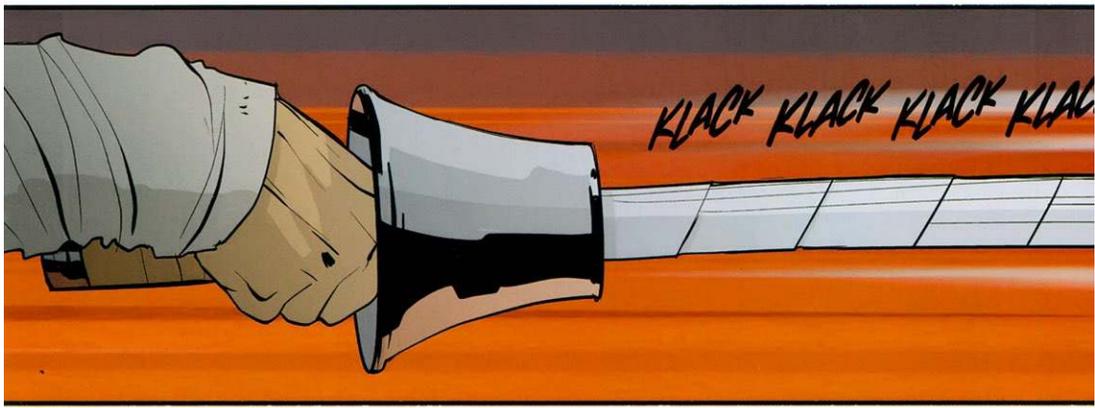


Ooh, you Freelancers are so scary.

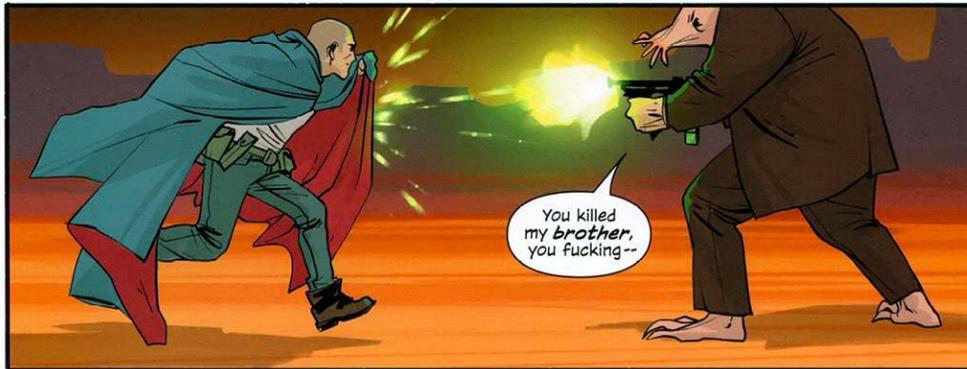
You gonna kill us all with your faggy laser sword?



Ain't a sword.















Excuse me, but your necklace sounds *sad*.



Go back to sleep, child.

Hold up.

What did you hear?



Her necklace misses its old friends.

It can finally **hear** them again, both of them, not far from here.



That mean anything to you?

Before Marko was deployed, I... I gave him the **engagement rings** that were forged with this pendant.

But, there's no chance he would have held onto them... is there?



The necklace's friends.

You have any idea where they are now?



# SAGA

CHAPTER  
TEN

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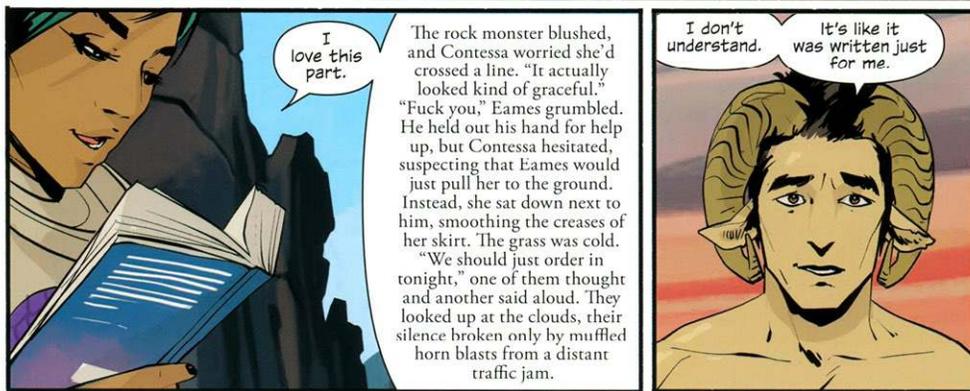
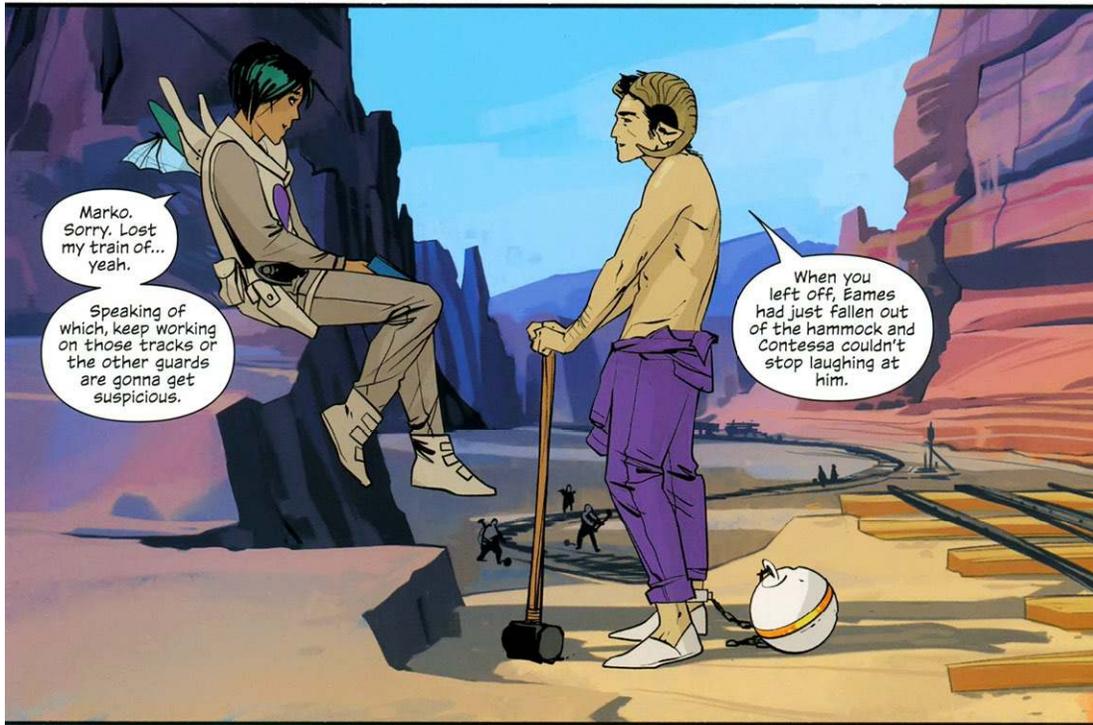
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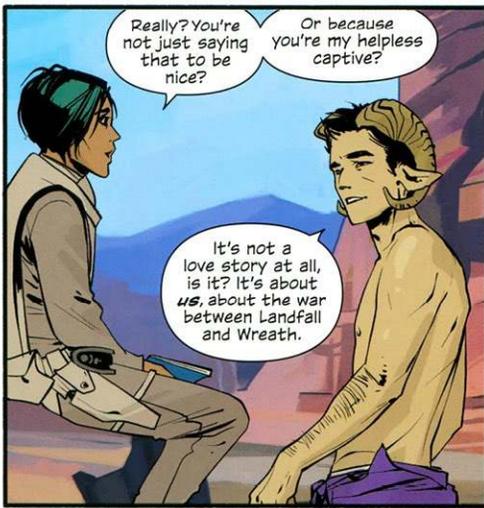


I love this part.

The rock monster blushed, and Contessa worried she'd crossed a line. "It actually looked kind of graceful." "Fuck you," Eames grumbled. He held out his hand for help up, but Contessa hesitated, suspecting that Eames would just pull her to the ground. Instead, she sat down next to him, smoothing the creases of her skirt. The grass was cold. "We should just order in tonight," one of them thought and another said aloud. They looked up at the clouds, their silence broken only by muffled horn blasts from a distant traffic jam.

I don't understand.

It's like it was written just for me.



Really? You're not just saying that to be nice?

Or because you're my helpless captive?

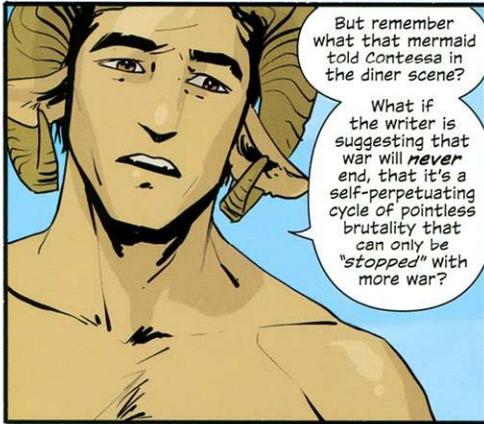
It's not a love story at all, is it? It's about *us*, about the war between Landfall and Wreath.



But why speak in code? Why doesn't the author just say what he means?

Because it's too dangerous.

He's saying that this war between our people has gone on too long, that it has to be *stopped*.



But remember what that mermaid told Contessa in the diner scene?

What if the writer is suggesting that war will *never* end, that it's a self-perpetuating cycle of pointless brutality that can only be "*stopped*" with more war?



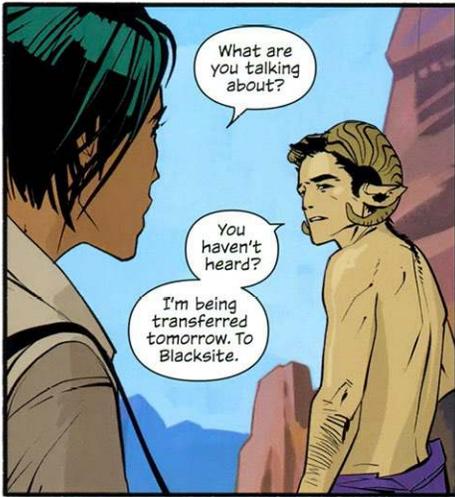
Okay, now you're just reading too much into things.



Seriously, thank you for this.

Secret Book Club has been the highlight of my career.

I'm just sorry we'll never have another.







Most of them,  
anyway.

How is  
this inane  
quest not  
over yet?



Izabel has  
to be around here  
somewhere. That  
giant clearly said  
he saw a *ghost* in  
Shadow City.

He also said  
this planetoid was  
about to *hatch*. And  
I shouldn't have to  
remind you of this,  
but newborns tend to  
come out *hungry*, so  
perhaps we should  
leave before--

Who!



Who dares  
disturb our  
final hour?



Who dares  
disturb the  
Midwives?











But...?

Looks like the last of her umbilical stump.

Perfectly normal. All children start off with one, wings and horns alike.



You're sure?

I'm only surprised it took this long to detach.

Your girl clearly wants to hold onto every part of you as long as she can.



I swear, Barr.

I'm not as awful at this as I look.



Don't be so hard on yourself. It takes a lifetime to learn how to be a parent.

And by the time you finally start to figure things out...



Sir, please. When your wife and son get back, you have to tell them.

You have to tell them you don't have much time left.

Do any of us...?

FWASH









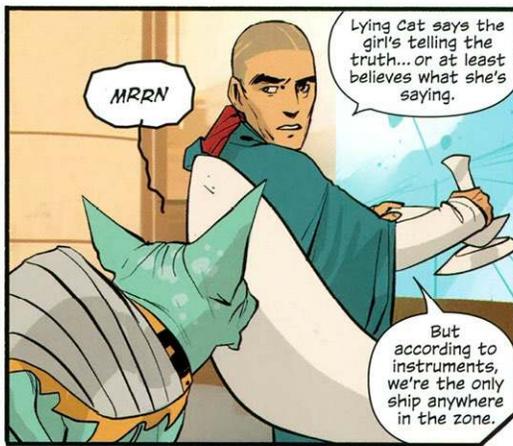




But not all of them.

You're certain this is it?

I can hear your rings out there, Miss Gwendolyn, floating in space.



MRRN

Lying Cat says the girl's telling the truth... or at least believes what she's saying.

But according to instruments, we're the only ship anywhere in the zone.



Because my ex is smart enough to steal a ship that would never show up on your hot-shit "instruments."

Trust me, Will, rescuing this Slave Girl was nothing less than divine providence. Someone out there wanted us to--

Oh, no.



It's a Timesuck.





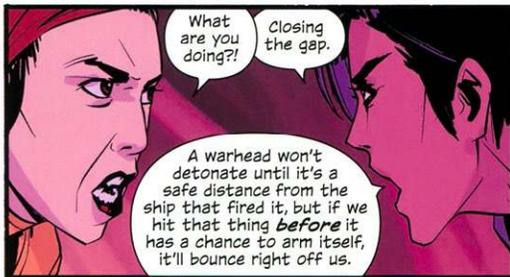
INCOMING!



Tee, evasive maneuvers!

Belay that fucking order!

Full speed ahead!



What are you doing?!

Closing the gap.

A warhead won't detonate until it's a safe distance from the ship that fired it, but if we hit that thing *before* it has a chance to arm itself, it'll bounce right off us.



You're going to *ram* a missile?

With a *plant*?

It's all right, Klara.



Alana knows what she's doing.



FUCK YEAH!



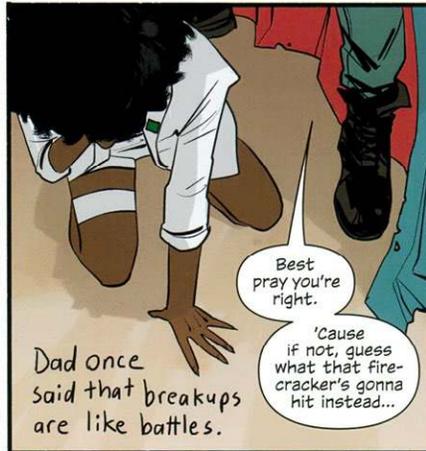
Are you simple?!



You don't even know your targets are out there!

Like... hell.

I can... feel Marko.



Best pray you're right.

Dad once said that breakups are like battles.

'Cause if not, guess what that firecracker's gonna hit instead...



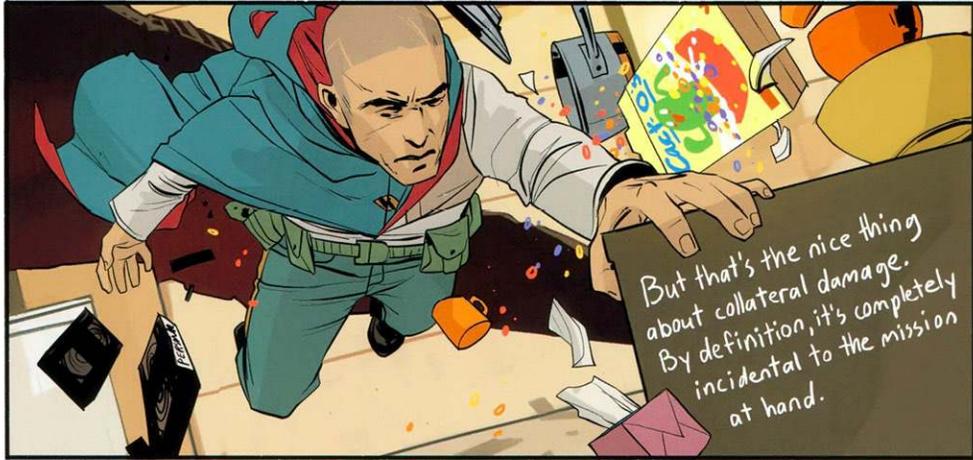
They usually involve collateral damage.



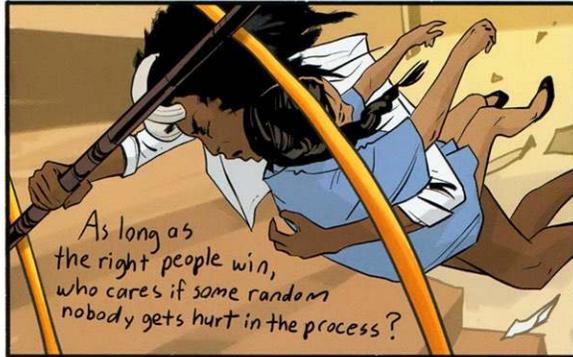
When former lovers fight, innocents get caught in the crossfire.



The end of a long-term relationship is so destructive, it can impact friends, colleagues, people you've never even met.



But that's the nice thing about collateral damage. By definition, it's completely incidental to the mission at hand.



As long as the right people win, who cares if some random nobody gets hurt in the process?



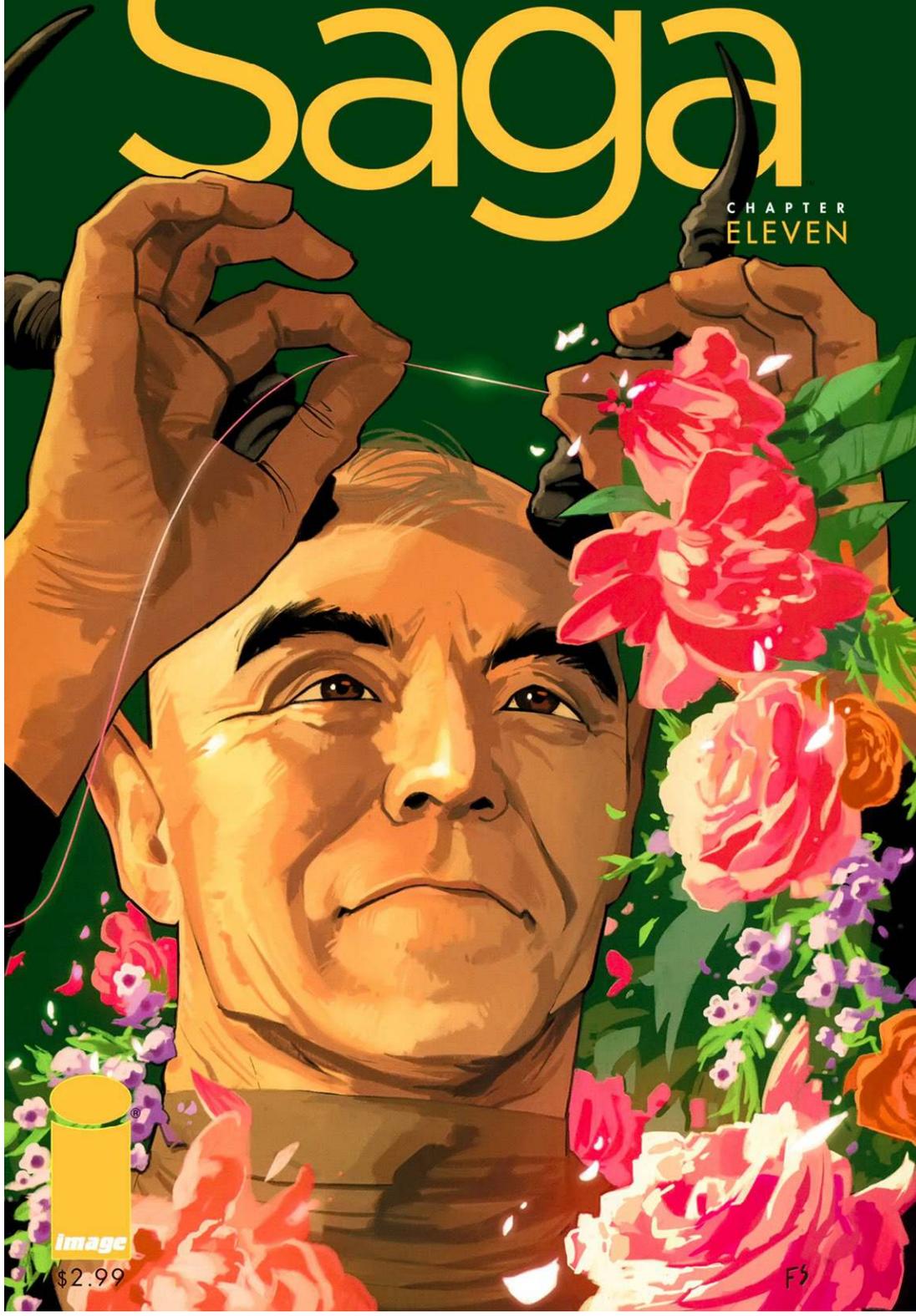
Acceptable losses, etc.



# Saga

BRIAN K. VAUGHAN FIONA STAPLES

CHAPTER  
ELEVEN



Image

\$2.99

F3

# Saga

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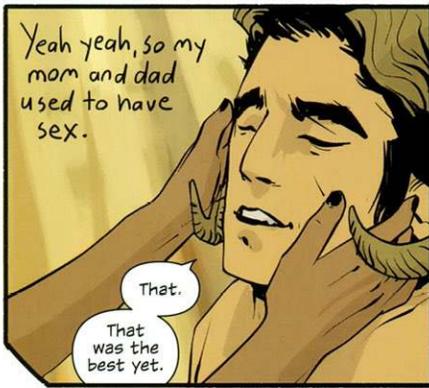
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Yeah yeah, so my mom and dad used to have sex.

That.

That was the best yet.



What, like your parents just WILLED you into existence...

Did. Did you finish inside me?



Are you kidding? I thought you *told* me to finish inside you.

That was Sexy Alana! She's a crazy person!

Sexy Alana is obsessed with her nipples and uses the word "dick" unironically! She's not to be trusted!



So you're telling me you didn't enjoy that?

I came like a dump truck, Marko. It's just, we should probably be more careful.



Why?



Lim,  
because we're  
**fugitives**,  
wanted dead  
or extra dead  
by at least  
two different  
armies?

Thanks  
to you,  
we're finally  
**free**.

What good  
is freedom  
if we can't  
do what we  
want?



First of all,  
we're not free,  
we're hiding on a  
fucking rooftop  
on fucking  
Cleave.

And second, are  
you seriously talking  
about knocking me up?  
Because I don't even  
know if that's  
**possible** between  
our teams.



Did you  
ever think what  
just happened in  
**there** would be  
possible?

I know it  
wouldn't be easy,  
but is there a better  
symbol for this  
terrifying new peace  
that you and I  
have forged than  
a child?



A child isn't  
a symbol, it's  
a **child!**

It needs  
applesauce and,  
and, and playpens  
and an ass-load of  
other things we  
can't provide while  
we're on the  
goddamn lam!



Just to  
be clear.

Your exact  
words to me  
were: "Please  
shoot it in  
my twat."



Yeah.  
I know.



Look, when the two of us are making love, starting a family with you seems like the smartest, sanest idea in the universe... but it's not!

For everything we have in common, I'm still from Landfall, and you're still from Wreath. I mean, if the two of us had a kid, what would we even call it?

Well, I've always wanted to call my son Barr.



Like a tavern?  
Like a *SOAP*?  
My *FATHER'S* name is Barr.



Oh.  
And I love it!

In that moment, my mother prayed with all of her might that their firstborn would be a GIRL.

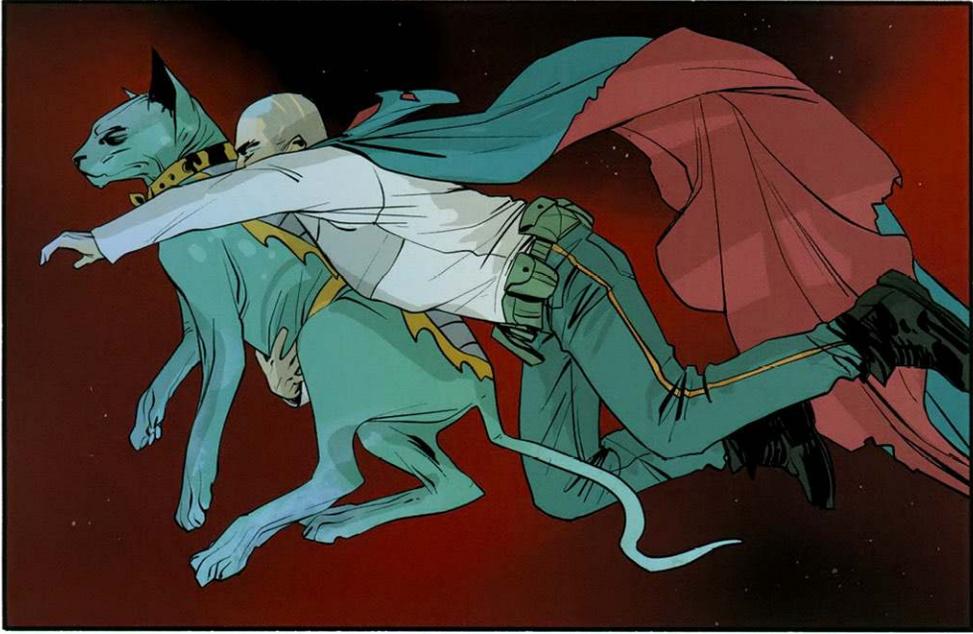


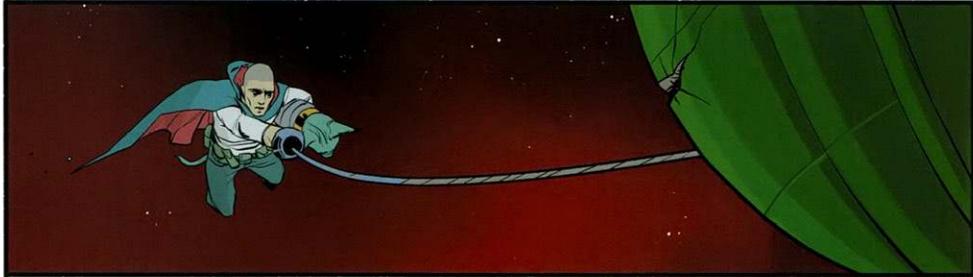
Some dreams really do come true.

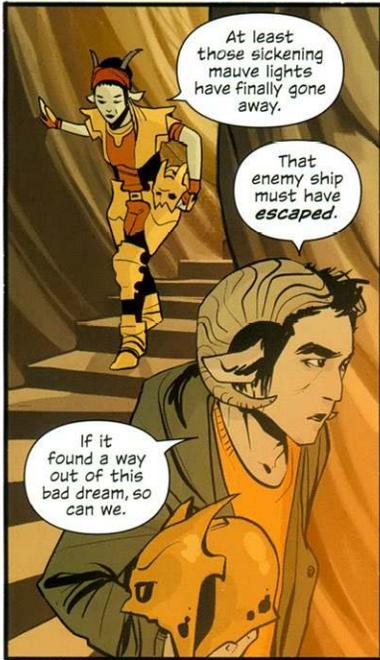
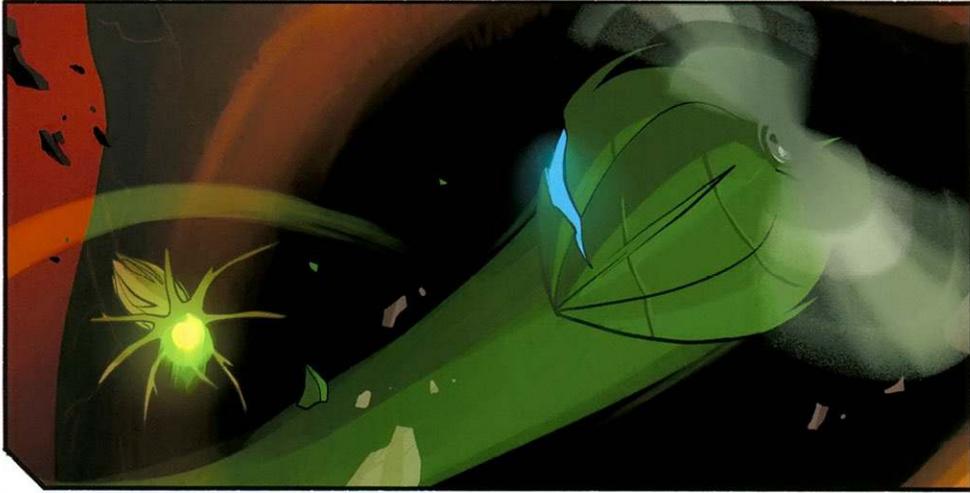












At least those sickening mauve lights have finally gone away.

That enemy ship must have *escaped*.

If it found a way out of this bad dream, so can we.



Not in a nightmare like this.

What does it burn for fuel, pieces of *itself*?

Just help me stoke the fire. We have to increase our thrust if we're going to--



We both know that will never work.

You need to take your daughter and *abandon ship*.







Barr, be careful!

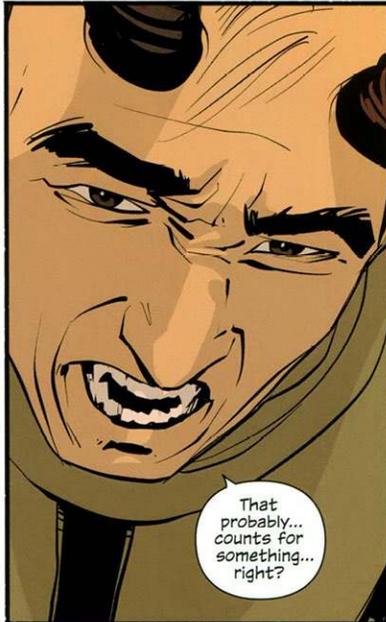
Your heart--

--is down in the engine room.



I was never a great father to that boy...

...but I was always loyal to his mother.



That probably... counts for something... right?



We're stabilizing!

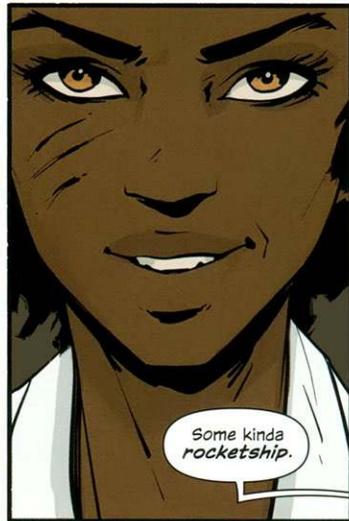
The old dude's stunt is totally working and/or not actively harming us. Either way...



...we're home free.

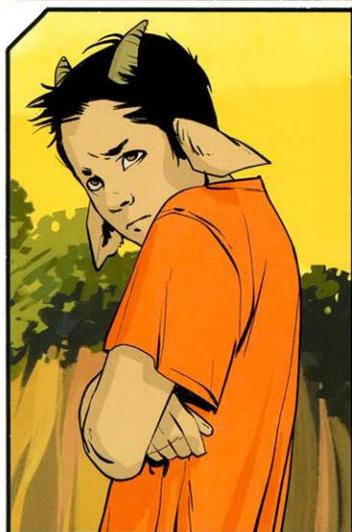


















These days, I use it as a bookmark.

BRIAN K. VAUGHAN FIONA STAPLES

# Saga

CHAPTER  
TWELVE



  
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CHAPTER  
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Apologies, your majesty.

Your *highness*... actually.

Majesty... is my dad.



Cute, bet you use that line on every girl you meet.

You're... not a native, are you?

Why risk your life... for Landfall?



So I can get my degree there?

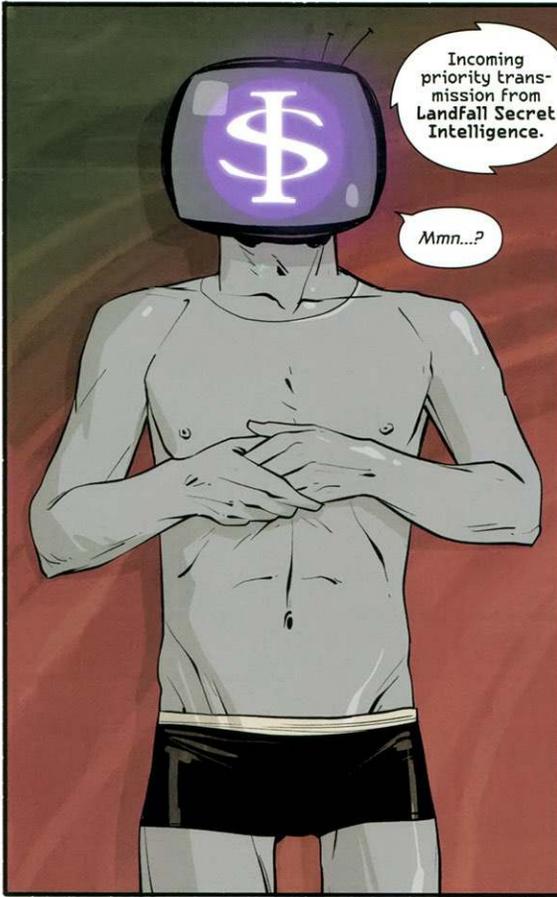
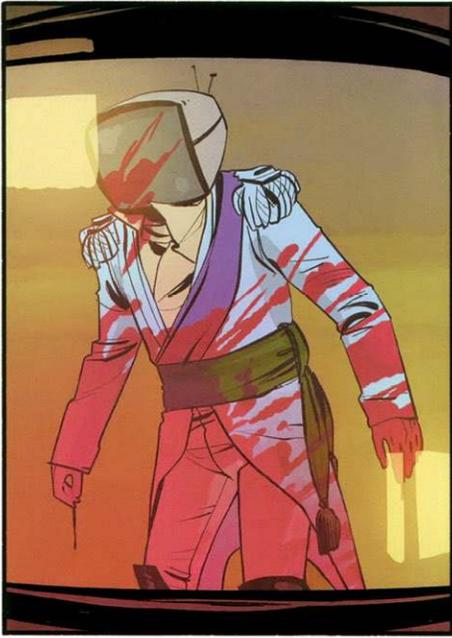
And I support the wings, of course. They saved my planet from these horned asses during the Catastrophe, so I--

**Masks!**



Get your masks on now!







Um, to know why the fuck you're **sleeping** when PFC Alana is still running around with a Wreath terrorist and their failed abortion?

Where **are** you?



In the dragon skull vehicle I acquisitioned from that Freelancer.

But I've almost reached my final destination on Quietus.

Why the hell are you wasting your time in the Great Fog?!

I'm looking for a novelist named D. Oswald Heist.

I have reason to believe that our war criminals may have been inspired in part by his work.



That's all you've got? A hunch about a writer?



Do you have any idea how stupid that will look on a report I have to type?

Just a moment... is that the **Royal Anthem** I hear in the background?



Yeah, I'm visiting your home turf, god help me.

We're here in advance of the **President**, who's beginning to question how seriously the Robot Kingdom really supports the war effort.



Then kindly tell your boss I hope she gets breast cancer.

Hey, unlike your lot, our leaders actually have to survive elections.

And Madame President thinks a Landfallian soldier literally sleeping with the enemy will make for pretty shitty optics as voters head to the polls.



Now if you'll excuse me, there's someone I've been dying to meet.

A royal princess with a most distinct... *glow* about her.



Special Agent, are you seriously threatening my wife?

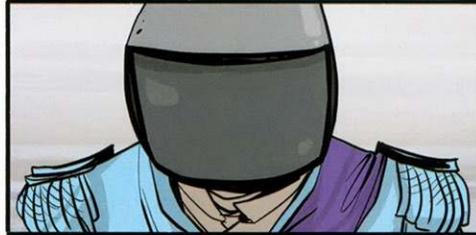
Just reminding you of the stakes, IV.

A kid needs a father, so why don't you quit dicking around, close out this account and get home to your family.



Call ended.









Might as well come in.

I know you're just gonna camp outside my door until I scribble on your damn cover.

So I'm not the first to seek you out?



Hah, "the first."

There used to be lines down to the quarry.

Mr. Heist, have you ever been visited by someone from the moon Wreath?



...what's this all about?



He may have been accompanied by a woman, a new mother from Landfall.

Why the hell would a nice planetary girl be running with some satellite thug?



Because she read this?



Wait, you're here about *that* piece of shit?



Excuse me?

I figured you were an *In Lieu of Flowers* groupie, like everyone else.

*A Nighttime Smoke* is long out of print, and rightfully so.



Spare me the false modesty.

While I may disagree with your message, I can still appreciate that it was delivered in a highly sophisticated manner.



Message...?

You're being coy, Heist.

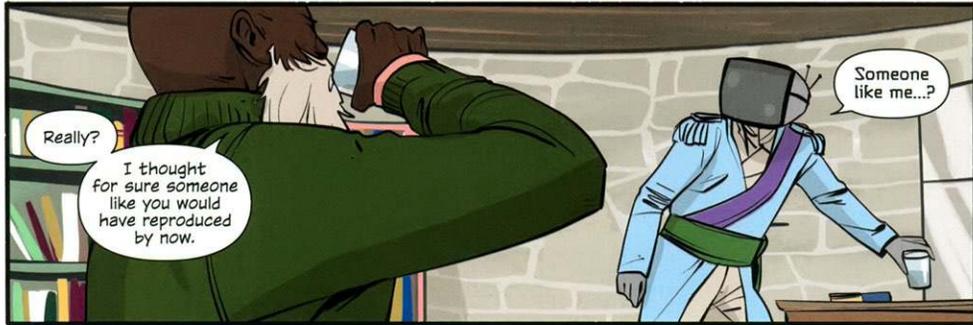
This work is obviously a thinly veiled treatise on radical pacifism, a compelling -- if not entirely persuasive -- call to *inaction*



Kiddo, I hate disabusing anyone of the notion I'm a genius, but I swear to you, that story was about one thing and one thing only:

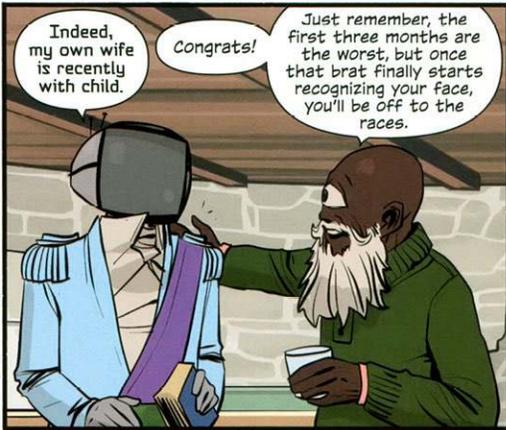
A quick fucking paycheck.







You know, *royalty*.  
Don't they pressure you guys to start making little heirs to the throne fast?



Indeed, my own wife is recently with child.  
Congrats!  
Just remember, the first three months are the worst, but once that brat finally starts recognizing your face, you'll be off to the races.



Thank you, but the only way I'm ever going to make it home for the delivery is if I somehow find this mental patient who loves your work.  
No offense, of course.  
Well, I promise to drop a line in the off chance this girl ever shows her terrible taste here.



I can't thank you enough, Mr. Heist.  
And my sincere condolences again about your son. Which battle did you say he was killed at?



I didn't.

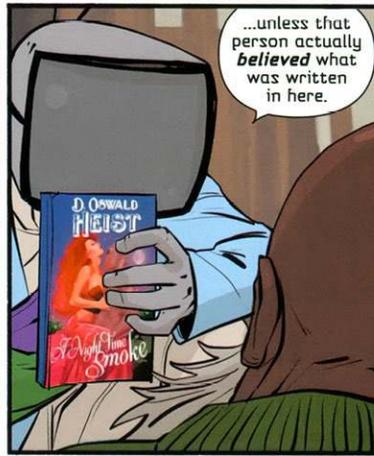






Of course, you now have every right to defend yourself.

Any rational person would...



...unless that person actually **believed** what was written in here.



You psychotic dullard!

The only reason I haven't shot you is because this is a prop! A terrible prop from a terrible adaptation of one of my best--

Shh, no more fiction.



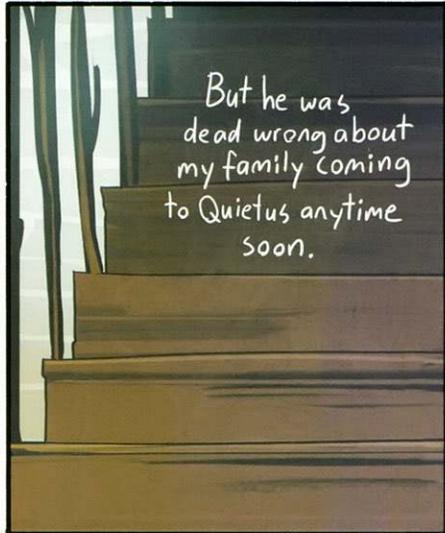
I want you to use your **real** weapon.



I want you to stab me in the neck with it.







*We'd already been there a week.*



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