

BRIAN K. VAUGHAN

FIONA STAPLES



# Saga™

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VOLUME  
ONE

BRIAN K. VAUGHAN FIONA STAPLES

# Saga™

CHAPTER  
ONE



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CHAPTER

ONE

# Saga

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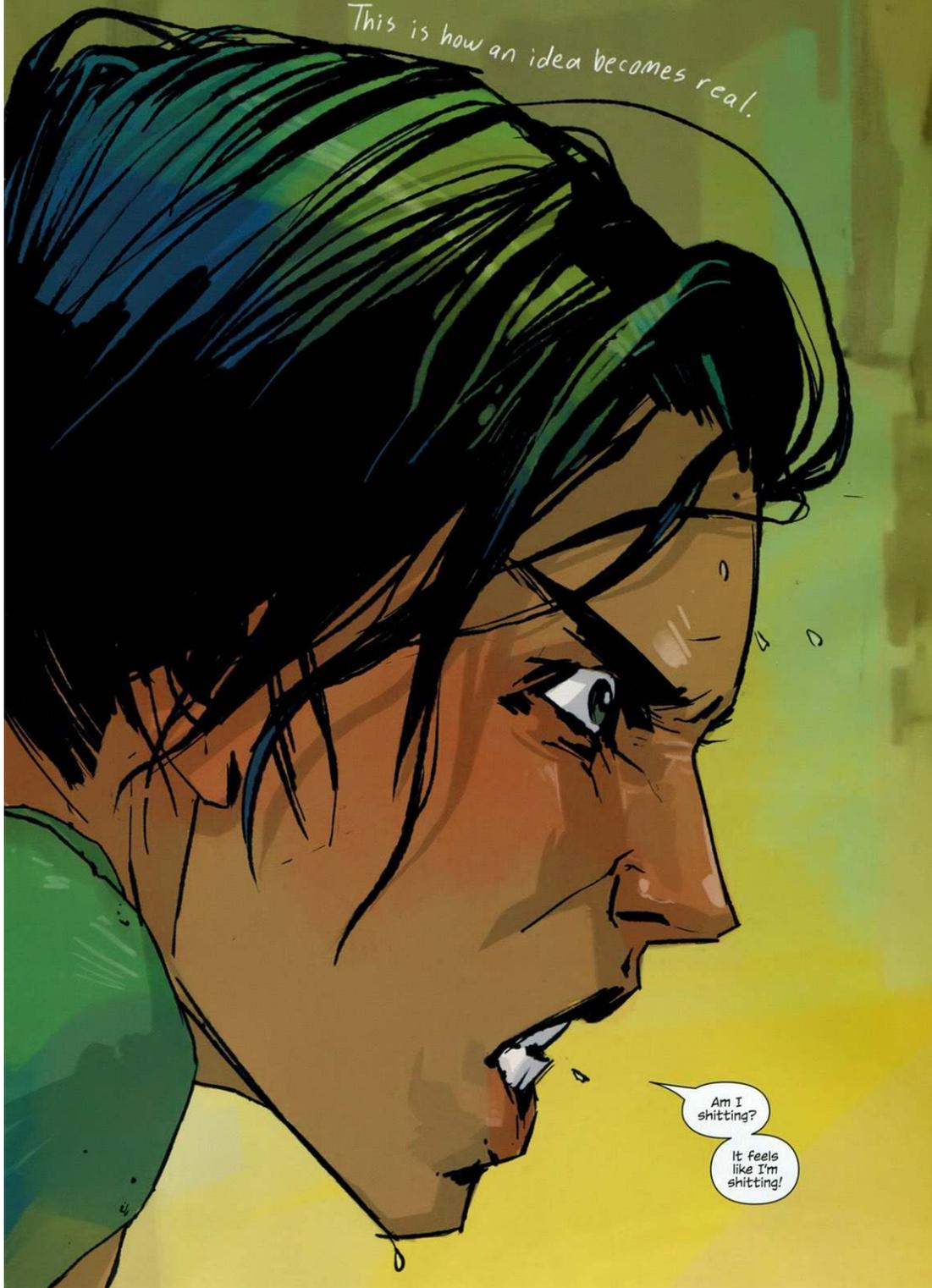
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*This is how an idea becomes real.*



Am I  
shitting?

It feels  
like I'm  
shitting!





Right, because nothing's more lovely than a fat woman spread-eagle in the back of an old body shop. It's like something out of a fairy tale or...

That's why people create with someone else.



**AHHH  
HOLY  
FUCK!**

Do you need a healing spell? We agreed, Alana! No shame in managing pain!

Two minds can sometimes improve the odds of an idea's survival...



It -ehh- doesn't hurt at all. It... it feels good.

Is it sick that it -ehh- feels so good?



... but there are no guarantees.



You're crying. You never cry.

What's wrong? Marko, what is it...?

It's a girl.

Anyway, this is the day I was born.







They're not the same green as mine. Not quite your shade of brown either.

They kinda change depending how you...



Marko! What the hell are you doing?!

Cuhhing thu mbilical?

You have a sword! You are *wearing* a sword!



I made a vow, Alana.

I'm a father now, not a soldier, and that blade is never again leaving its scabbard.



Rnnf.

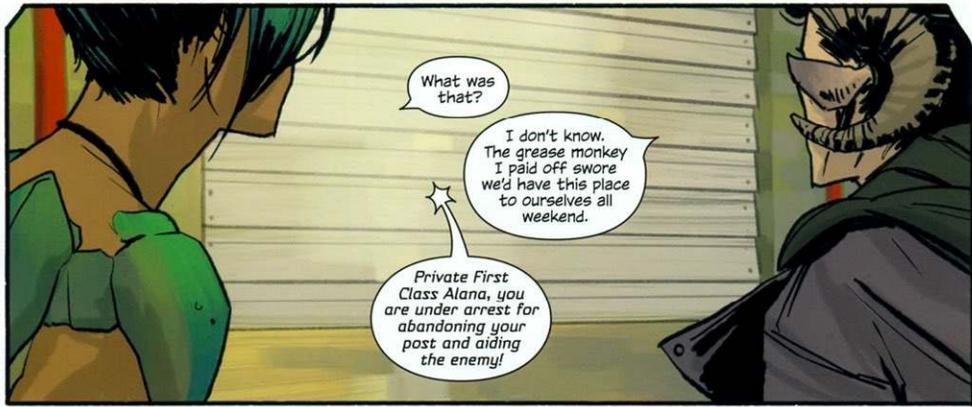
Wasn't expecting... this much gristle.



Well, Pico.

That's your daddy.









Drop whatever you're holding and put your hands in the air.



Suck my hemorrhoids!

You don't have to do this.

We just want to live our lives.



Is that moony speaking Language?

We should cut its fuckin' tongue out.



You can't do this. We're on civilian territory, not a sanctioned battlefield!

We are duly licensed military police officers on an approved law enforcement mission. Now step away from the prisoner and--

Your excellency!



D-meter's picking up exotic matter.

We've got magic incoming.



You greedy shit.

Who else did you tell about this?!



*Alta Soldato Marko!*



No.

*Haltu!*  
*Mi avertas vir, ne tuŝu min!*









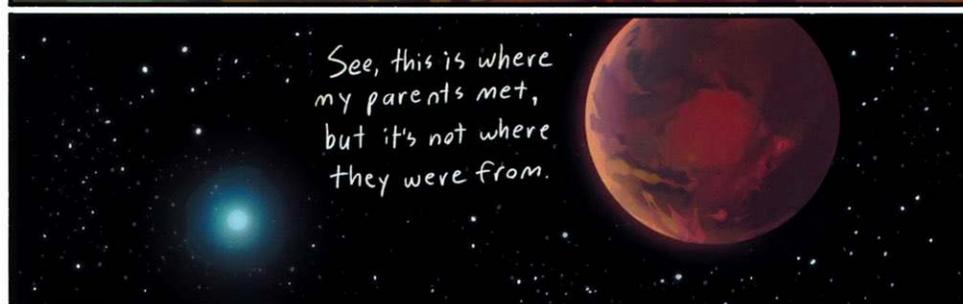




I was born on a planet called CLEAVE,  
an ancient ball of mud circling a  
faded old star.



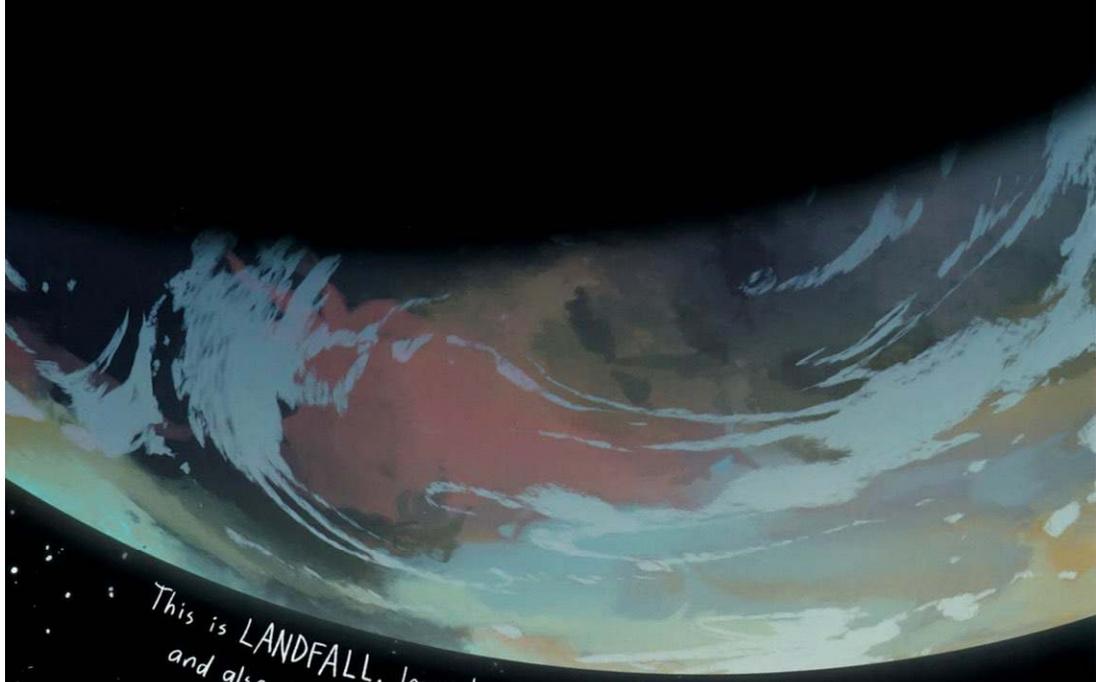
It never had much strategic value, but  
the place still mattered. To me, anyway.



See, this is where  
my parents met,  
but it's not where  
they were from.



They grew up way over here, back where the war began. ↗



This is LANDFALL, largest planet in the galaxy,  
and also my mother's home.

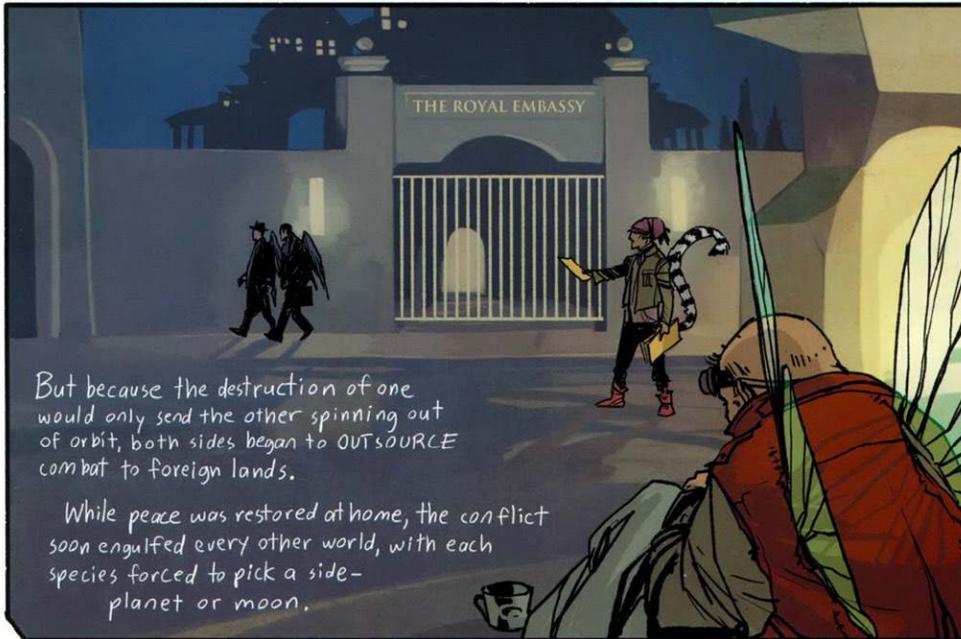


Its one and only satellite is WREATH,  
my father's native moon.

If there was ever a time  
these two got along, nobody  
remembers it.



When the war with Wreath started, it was fought amidst the general population, in cities like this one, Landfall's capital.



But because the destruction of one would only send the other spinning out of orbit, both sides began to OUTSOURCE combat to foreign lands.

While peace was restored at home, the conflict soon engulfed every other world, with each species forced to pick a side—planet or moon.

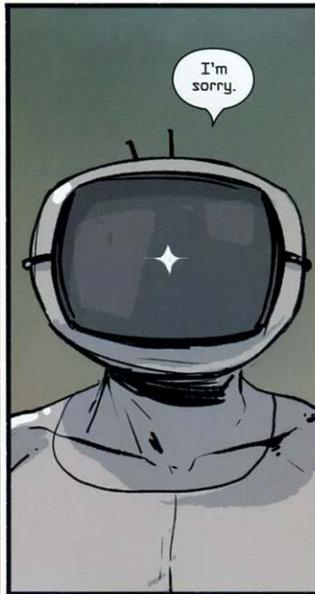
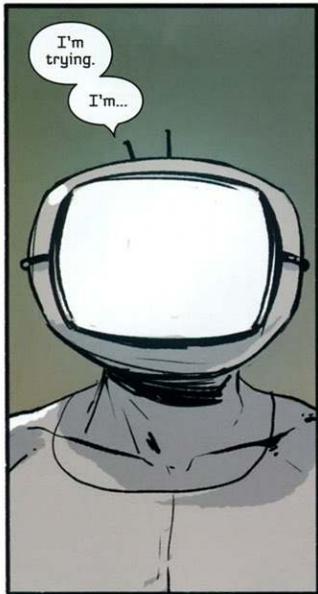
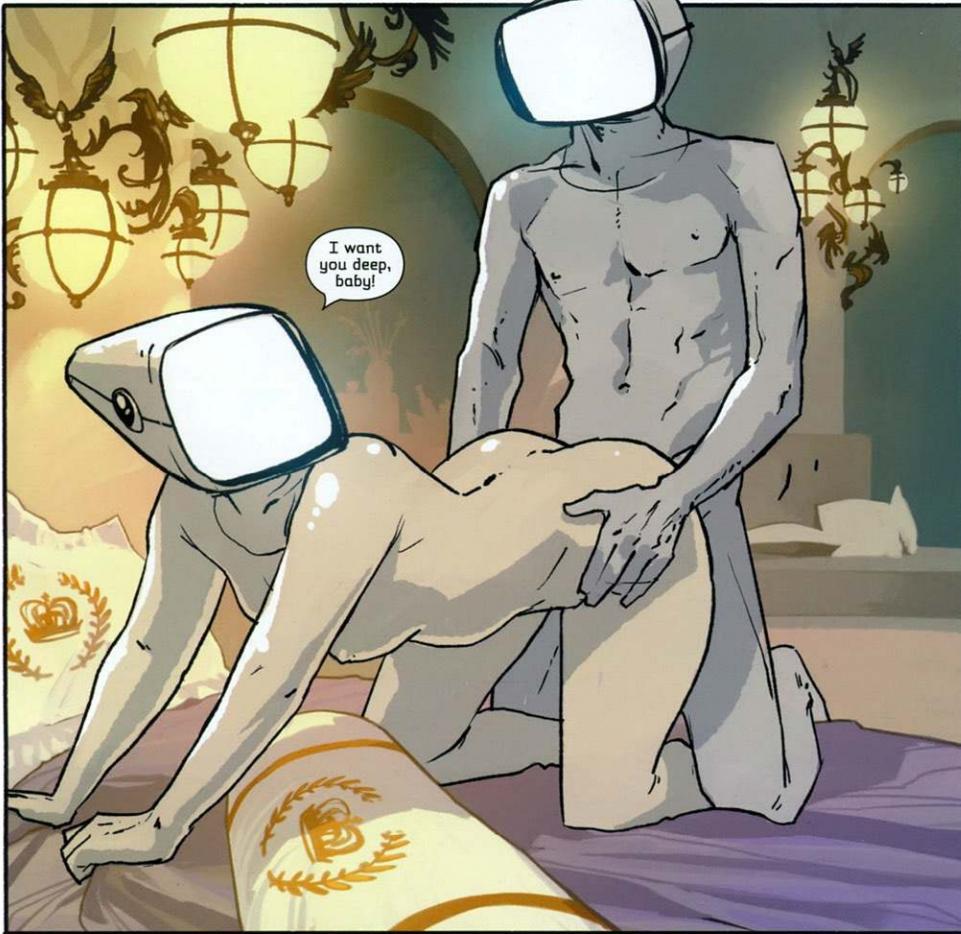


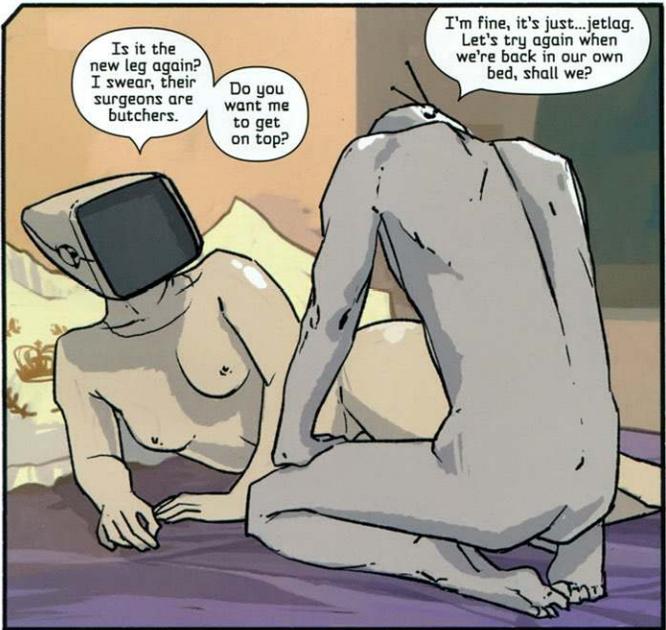
Some of the locals never stopped thinking about the battles being waged in their names on distant soil.



Most didn't really give a shit.

Deeper!





Is it the new leg again? I swear, their surgeons are butchers.

Do you want me to get on top?

I'm fine, it's just...jetlag. Let's try again when we're back in our own bed, shall we?



Of course, IV.

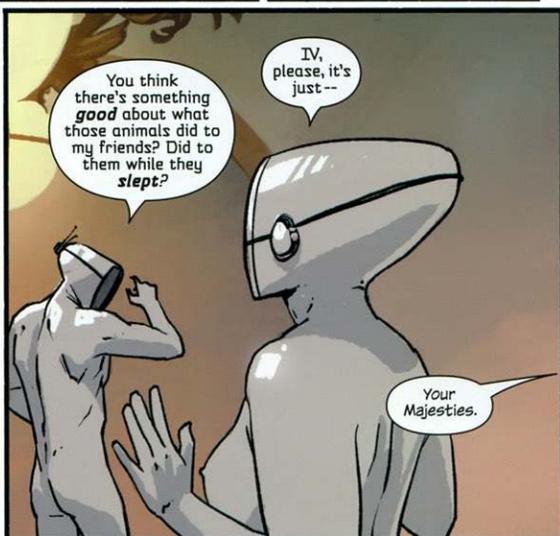
Things will be better once we're away from this godforsaken flock.



Don't talk about them like that. They're our allies.

No, they're our *customers*.

Highest bidders in The War of Good Versus Good.



You think there's something *good* about what those animals did to my friends? Did to them while they *slept*?

IV, please, it's just--

Your Majesties.



I'm so sorry to intrude, but Prince Robot IV has a gentleman caller.

He said his business was... *sensitive*.



May I help you?



Hold on, this app was trying to auto-update and now my whole thing is frozen. Are you even getting a signal in here?

I'm not sure if you were briefed on this, but I've just returned from a two-year tour of hell, so--

Yeah, I was at your big medal ceremony yesterday. Marching band sounded like shit.



Special Agent Gale, Secret Intelligence.

Sorry, am I supposed to genuflect or something? I'm not up on my royalist protocols.

Look, what is this all about?



Her.



Should I know who that is?

Probably not. Name's Alana, drafted after she flunked out of State. I overlapped with her for six months of Basic. Struck me as dim, impulsive, kind of a slut.

She was reprimanded for "abject cowardice" her first time seeing action and later redeployed to the planet Cleave.



Holy shit, we're still posting people to Cleave?

I thought that was just an urban legend they used to scare new recruits.

We control the vast majority of its gunpowder fields, but the moonies are threatening another land grab to the south and blah, blah, blah.



Anyway, this ugly fuck is a Wreath foot soldier we know only as Prisoner #9763572. Eighteen months ago, he surrendered to coalition forces on a Cleave battlefield.

Claimed to be a "conscientious objector."

Doesn't sound like a moony. Spy?



That was our thinking, so we transferred him to a detention facility... where he was guarded by none other than Private First Class Alana.

Twelve hours later, they had both disappeared.



So the moony kidnapped her?

We hoped.

But then three months ago, an ATM camera on civilian turf caught this image.



Pregnant? I didn't even know your people could *mate* with their kind, much less reproduce.

Yeah, I've heard about female soldiers of ours being forced to give birth to half-breeds in the rape camps on Wreath, but those things usually died within a year.

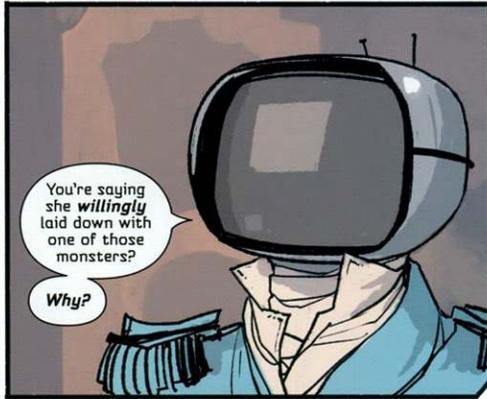
Can't imagine our turncoat's love child will live much longer in the wild.

Love child? Surely, he forced himself on her.



Take a look at their hands. Matching rings. Apparently, it's a tradition on Wreath.

A wedding tradition.



You're saying she *willingly* laid down with one of those monsters?

Why?



We don't know, but your father would like *you* to deal with the situation before anyone finds out.



The King sent you?

But... I've already served my time! I just survived one of the worst sneak attacks in military history!

And yet, surviving isn't exactly winning.



I imagine His Highness wants to show the current administration that the Robot Kingdom can still pull its weight and deliver some righteous vengeance when the need arises.

Vengeance for what?

Alana and her beau apparently *slaughtered* a team of our best MPs earlier tonight, including one of your Barons.



I don't understand.

I told my parents I wanted to start a family this year.



Yes, well. None of my business, of course.

The HMS Skyscraper departs for Cleave in the morning. Happy hunting.



From my very first day, I was pursued by men. All of them tried to hurt me, but only one managed to break my heart.



Sorry, getting ahead of myself.



I thought she'd never quit crying.

Can you blame her?

So far, her life has been comprised primarily of firefights.



Well, mama will be ready for the next one.



You took a firearm?! Are you insane?! Do you have any idea what the statistics are for parents who keep one of those in--

Easy, it's just a Heartbreaker. They're nonlethal.

Have you ever been shot with one? Because I have, and it hurt like the day my dog died...



Wait, you had a dog?

I didn't know you had a dog!

Rumfer. He was run over by my school bus when I was twelve.



You called your dog Rumfer?

We're never gonna agree on a name for this kid, are we?



Let's just keep moving.

To where, exactly? That mechanic didn't leave us a deed to a new safehouse, did he? A safehouse with a soaking tub?



Surprising no one, he died for nothing.

It's just a worthless old map.

Wait, a map? Like, to treasure?



I told you, it's nothing.

the Woods

River Tranquility

Murder Valley

the fort & Mountain

Rocketship forest

the Uncanny Bridge

the Swamps



"The Rocketship Forest?"

Are you kidding me?



This is exactly what we've been waiting for!

Alana, it's not real.

Says who? Most of this planet is still uncharted, even by the natives. And we've both seen weirder shit out here!



Even if spaceships *did* grow on trees, where would we take one?

There's no escaping this war. It's poisoned every last inch of the galaxy.



Then we find *another* galaxy. I've heard about draft dodgers getting offered sanctuary...

We're not draft dodgers, we're *deserters*. There's a difference.

Face it, our only choice is to lay low and stay out of trouble. We have a family to think about n--



Don't!

Don't you ever say those words to me!



Sorry.

But "we have a family to think about now" is the rallying cry of losers.



My old man threw his life away working a job he hated so he could "take care of his family."

In the end, it just turned him into a monster who treated us like crap the few times he was actually around.

So what is it that you want, Alana?



I want to show our girl the universe.



He just couldn't say no to her.



But if he'd known what wheels  
had started spinning over  
on Wreath, my father  
never would have  
left those  
tunnels.











You're  
the man  
they call  
*The Will?*



I'm  
Vez.

You're  
hired.







One last thing. If our intelligence is accurate, your targets may have already sired *offspring* together.

And?  
You want me to drown the mongrel after I do its folks?



Of course not.

Regardless of the parentage, we're talking about an *infant*. In order to collect your completion payment in full, you'll need to deliver us their orphan *alive and unharmed*.



Good luck, The Will.



What kind of assholes bring a kid into worlds like these?



Boom.



Looks like a regular old forest to me.

That's because it is. But if I'm reading this thing right, the Rocketship Forest should be just beyond the next valley, on the other side of something called the Uncanny Bridge.

Excellent, so we're trusting our future to the map a disreputable snitch likely tore out of the back of some overdue library book.



Honestly, we shouldn't be traveling after dark.

This is when the *Horrors* come out.







Thought I heard something.

It's not fair. The frontline was on the other side of the planet last year.

How are both of our armies already fighting *here*?



Alana...

I know, okay?

I was stupid to think we could ever outrun this retarded fucking war!



Alana, you were *right*.

That bridge might be down... but it's exactly where the map said it would be.



Maybe that means our rocketship is, too. All we have to do is find an alternate route.

It's not a traffic jam, Marko.

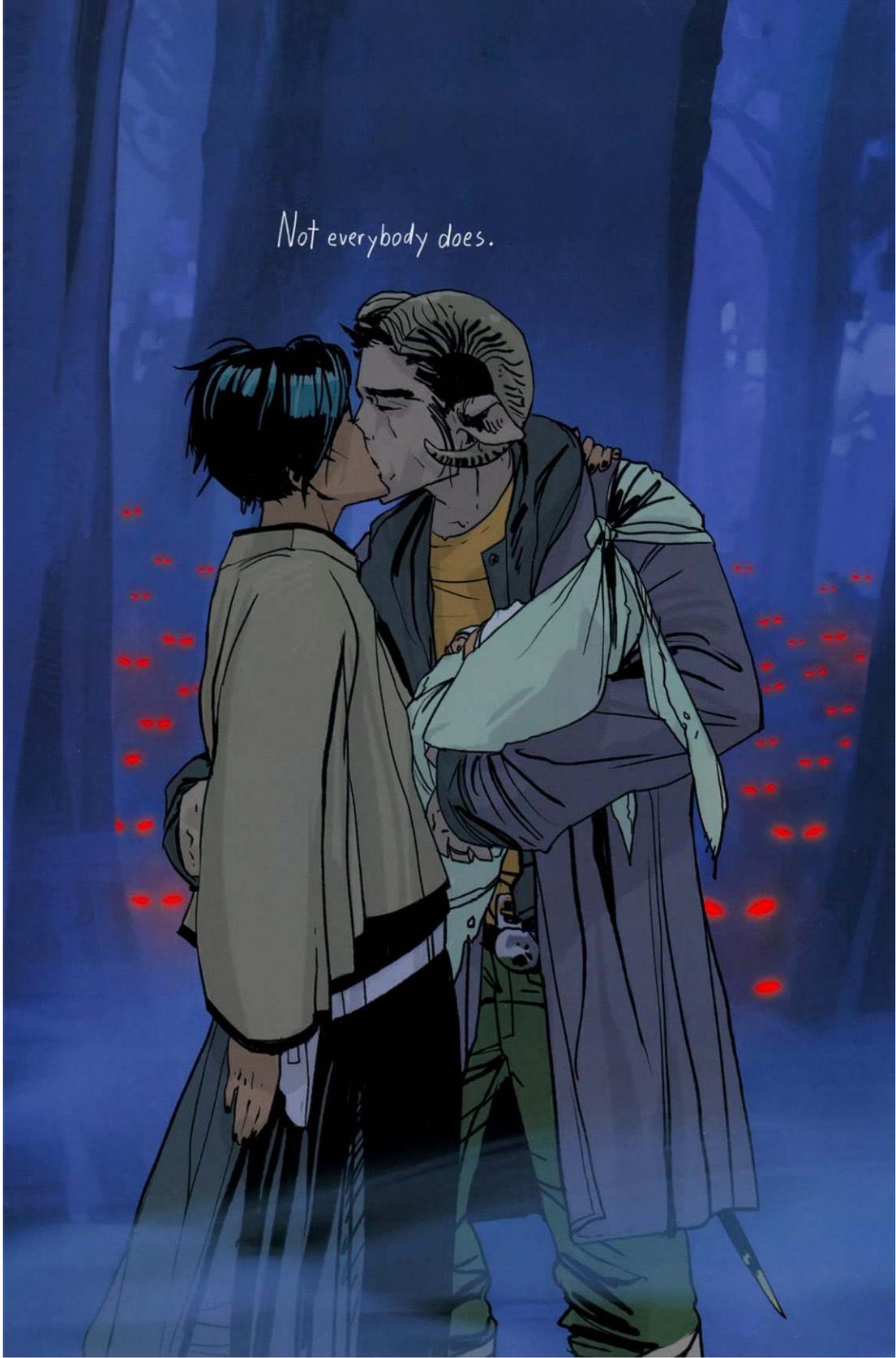
No, but you and I have survived worse scrapes together. And this time, we have something else on our side.



We have Hope.



*Not everybody does.*



CHAPTER  
TWO

# Saga

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Phone:  
call my  
agent.





Actually, against all odds, I'd been alive three whole days.

This is what I get for marrying a vegetarian!

Even the goddamn plants want us dead!

My family's quest for Cleave's mythical Rocketship Forest had sent us doubling back into its all-too-real Endless Woods.





Alana!  
Are you  
all right?  
Is Hazel  
okay?!

Dad had been awake  
for sixty-five of the  
seventy-two hours  
since I was born.



Mom hadn't closed  
her eyes once.

She's fucking  
snoring! Meanwhile,  
I've got quick vines  
trying to get  
inside me!

Use  
your sword  
already!



I can't  
reach it!  
Also, sacred  
vow!

Just  
tell me a  
secret!

What?  
Why?



Because  
spells require  
ingredients, and  
this one needs  
a secret!

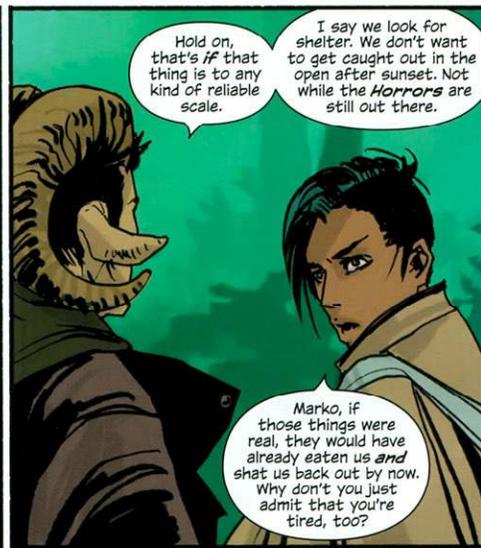
Something  
you've never  
shared with  
anyone!

I'm...  
not as tall  
as I tell  
people?



Do you  
seriously need  
me to define  
what a secret  
is?!









*From far and wide they  
come to inspect the  
hapless new parents.*

Welcome  
to Cleave,  
Your  
Majesty!



Lance Corporal  
McHenry, 372nd  
Company, at your  
disposal.

How  
was the  
trip in from  
Landfall,  
sir?

*The nice ones  
bring food.*

Dreadful.  
I'd rather  
fly commercial  
than another  
one of those  
godforsaken  
things.

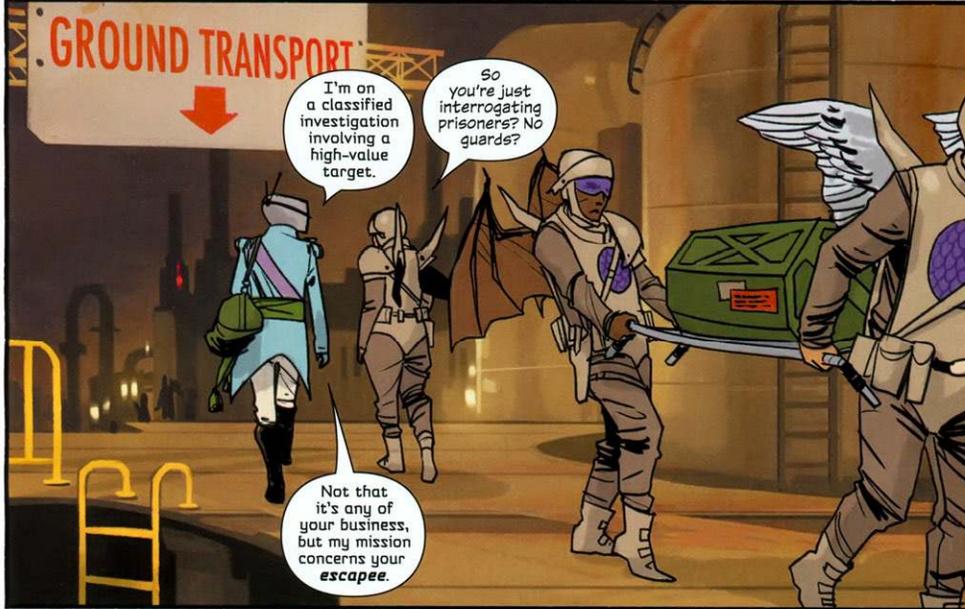


Well, ah, Central said you needed a lift to our main detention facility?

Will that be a problem?

Not at all, we "acquisitioned" the moonies' railway system last week.

It's just, we don't get many princes down in lock-up. Some of the other MPs were wondering if this is, like, an inspection or...?



GROUND TRANSPORT  
↓

I'm on a classified investigation involving a high-value target.

So you're just interrogating prisoners? No guards?

Not that it's any of your business, but my mission concerns your **escapee**.



The moonie that took Alana?



You *knew* Private First Class Alana?

Um, not well. Saw her in the mess and stuff.

She mostly kept to herself. Read books.



What kind of books?







Something's here.  
Then we *run*.



Too late for that.  
We have to count on our *rings* to make whatever's out there understand.



If you can hear my voice, we mean you no harm, and... and we apologize if we have trespassed on your land or done anything to offend you.  
My wife and I may *look* like the armies that have invaded this world, but we are *not* like them. We have renounced violence in every form.

Most forms.



I lay down my weapon as a gesture of good faith.  
Please, may my family pass in peace?









**MARKO!**

kk

Get away from him!

I mean it!  
I'll fucking kill you!



Not with a *stun gun*, you won't.

Sorry, sister.



I know a thing or two about this game.



Then shut up and, and kill me already!

I will.

But you'll be relieved to know my employers have requested that I bring them your creepy mutt *unharm*ed.



Sorry about doing your baby daddy in front of you like that.

For what it's worth, sounds like he was quite the vicious piece of shit back in the day.



You're lying.

I told you, if you want to scare me, you'll have to do better than a Heartbreaker.

That thing would barely break my skin.



Maybe.

But it'd be more than enough to kill *her*.





What?  
They're  
real?!

I once saw  
a pack of them  
rip a man's spine  
out through his  
urethra. That's not  
an exaggeration.  
I *saw* that.

Fuck  
it.  
If they  
take their time  
digesting you  
three, I might  
still have a  
shot.



You're  
running  
away?  
What am  
I supposed  
to do?

If you  
really love  
your kid?

Pull that  
trigger.

Red scribbles



Looks like you could use a hand.





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CHAPTER  
THREE

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My mom once said  
the hardest part of  
parenting is knowing  
when to ask  
for help.

Please...  
please don't  
kill me.

Please  
don't orphan  
my girl.



Even the most independent of new parents will need backup weathering the occasional shitstorm.



Relax, your husband's not dead.

Not yet, anyway.

It doesn't take a village to raise children, it takes a whole galaxy—former friends, random acquaintances, complete strangers...



How do you know?

How do you think, lady?

... even other children.



We're fucking ghosts.



No, you're... you're **Horrors**.

Is that seriously what you guys call indigenous peoples?

That's kind of racist, don't you think?



You're monsters.  
Marko said you **slaughter** innocent men and women.

Nah, we can **project** some nasty stuff into outsiders' heads, but that's just an illusion.



After us locals die, we get to live on as "**spiritual defenders of Cleave**."

But clearly, that's a suck-ass evolutionary plan, since your two armies had no problem wiping our people off the map.



I swear to you, we have nothing to do with this war.

We just want to take care of our--

hzi...



...how's... **hazel**...?



She's fine.  
She's got the only decent man in the universe for a daddy.



He looks like the ones who burned our village.

Just 'cause we can understand these two doesn't mean they're good guys.

But he's not. You heard how sweet he was with his kid, right?

Whatever, I don't wanna be here when the horned one kicks.



They can't hurt us, you big babies! We're *intangible!*

Why are you guys acting like you just died yesterday?

so... sorry...



Shut up with that. What about a spell? You said you knew *healing spells*, right?

...no... only one ingredient... for wounds this bad...

What? What do you need me to get?



...show...



Marko, it's sweltering out.  
I, I don't even know where to find water.

I can get you what you need.



For a price.



Talk fast.

You two are trying to find a way off my stupid planet, right?

Take me with you.



Yeah, sure, welcome to the family... now give me my snow.

It's not that simple. I'm connected to Cleave, so I can only leave if I'm bonded to the soul of a living native.

So? I wasn't born here.



Wasn't talking about you.

Despite what you may have heard, good help isn't all that hard to find...



... it's just hard to find cheap.

I've come a long way to speak with you, so listen carefully.



My name is Prince Robot IV, and I can make life in here at least somewhat more tolerable for you.

Can you understand Language?

*Fiku vin mem!*



Good enough.

I'd like to ask you some questions about a *guard* who used to bring you your meals.

What do you remember about this woman?



I'll take that to mean she provided the kind of humane treatment you barbarians have never afforded **your** prisoners of war.



Now then, one of Alana's colleagues here at the detention facility said that the Private First Class was often seen reading a particular **novel**.

Haven't had a chance to peruse it myself, but it looks relatively harmless.



Tell me, does this mean anything to you?









=mf=



This is so stupid.

No ~mf~ it's not. My map says there's something called the **Fort and Mountain** ~mf~ on our way to the Rocketship Forest.

At that elevation, there's bound to be ~mf~ snowfall.



Yeah, but your husband will **bleed out** by the time you lug him there.

I know a **shortcut**. All you have to do is let me hitch a ride with your kid!

Forget it, I'm not about to share my newborn with some anonymous spook from--



LHNF!



I'm not anonymous.

My name is Izabel.





I appreciate what you're trying to do, but I can't trust my only child to someone I just met.

I'd have to discuss it with my husband before--

Dude, your husband is gonna die!



Then I'll find him--~~mf~~ a resurrection spell.

There's no such thing.

Trust me, dead is dead, and it blows.



...I've been burned before.

How do I know your shortcut is even real?



I'll show you.

Come on, follow me!

Into the ominous cave of doom?



Or you can take your chances out here.

But fair warning, not all the locals are as awesome as me.





Incoming call from...  
The Stalk.



No.  
No way.

I'm never picking up for that bitch again.



LYING





What do you want?

Nice to hear you, too, Will.

How's my favorite duo these days?



We're busy, real busy.

So you're calling to gloat?

I bet. Look, I found those two deserters and their gross kid, the ones Wreath High Command is offering a boat-load for?



I found them, but I haven't captured them...yet.

This planet is trickier than I thought. I could use a partner.

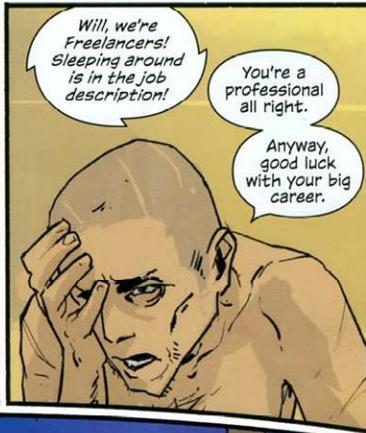
Actually, maybe it'd be best if you and I just kept our distance.



What...?



This isn't about the Dortminster assignment, is it?



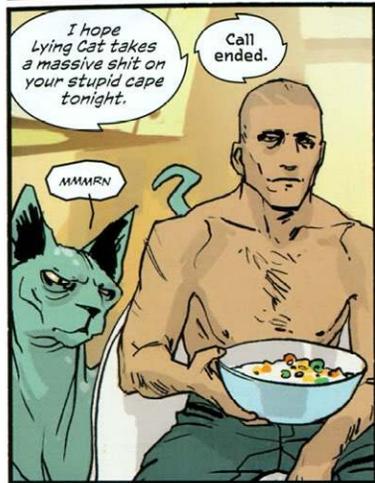
Will, we're Freelancers! Sleeping around is in the job description!

You're a professional all right.

Anyway, good luck with your big career.



Oh, fuck you, you self-righteous piece of... bald!



I hope Lying Cat takes a massive shit on your stupid cape tonight.

Call ended.

MMWRN



Women.



Right this way, ladies.



You do realize you're the only one here who's no longer flammable, right?

Chill, this inferno is just another *mental mirage* we use to mess with trespassers.



But if you let me tag along, I can help you navigate these Hopscotch Tunnels.

My parents built them to hide the resistance from invaders like you guys.



Back up, your family were *terrorists*?





Rich kids get nannies, but  
the rest of us have babysitters.

Fine.  
Just  
make it fast,  
please.



Sweet.

Izabel was my first.



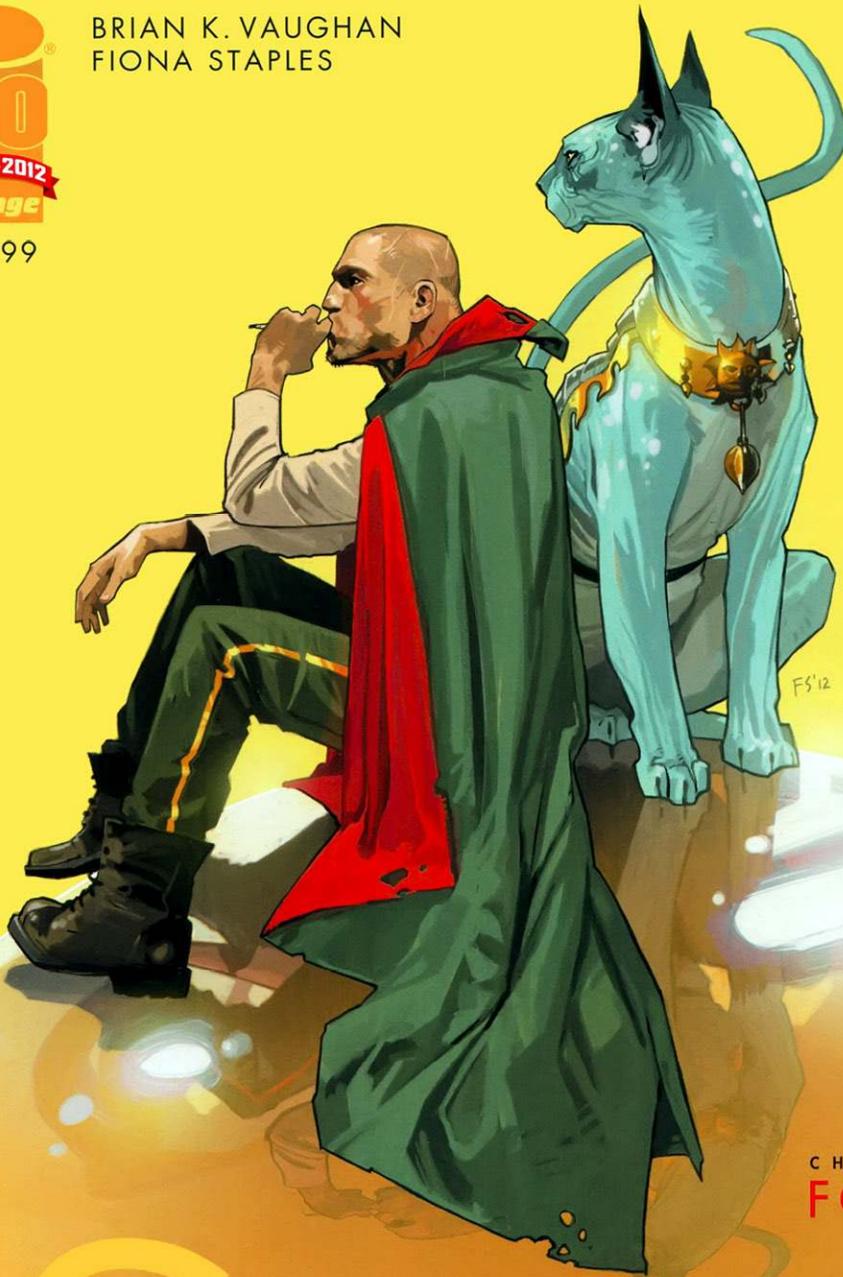


Who the fuck is Gwendolyn?



BRIAN K. VAUGHAN  
FIONA STAPLES

\$2.99



FS'12

CHAPTER  
FOUR

# Saga

TM

CHAPTER  
FOUR

# Saga

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COORDINATED BY  
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WELCOME TO  
SEXTILLION!





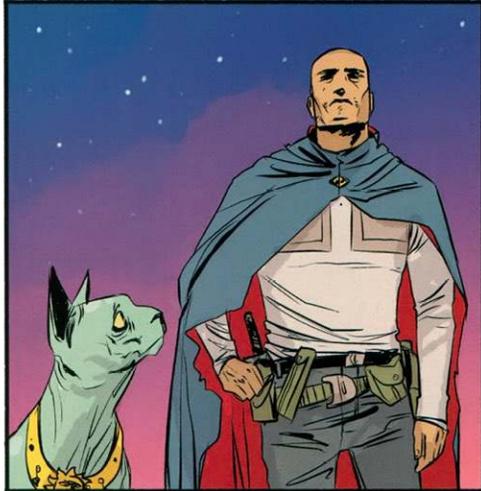
Nah, see, Lying Cat's my *Sidekick*.

The law says she has just as much right--

Also, we'll have to ask you to remove any and all *weapons* before you're allowed to come inside.



You want to *come*, don't you?



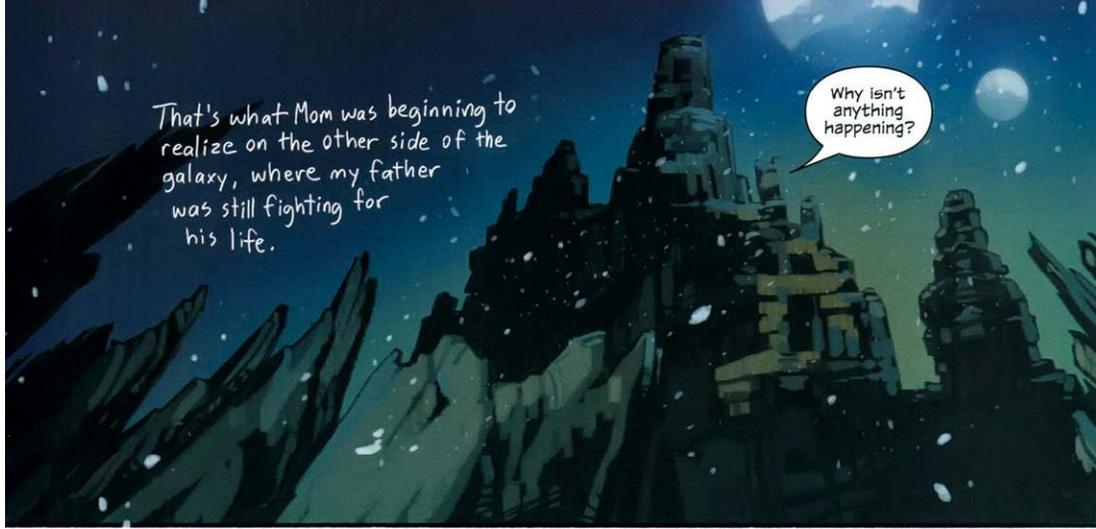
Long as you're headed back to the ship, you mind taking my gear with you?



Don't be like that! You woulda had a lousy time anyway!

LYING

Doesn't matter if it's personal or professional, a good partnership takes work.



That's what Mom was beginning to realize on the other side of the galaxy, where my father was still fighting for his life.

Why isn't anything happening?



With the help of our new sitter, my parents and I had traveled halfway across the planet Cleave in search of a miracle.

Hrr.

This magic crap takes time, Alana.

But as long as the snow keeps up, I think your husband's gonna pull through.



Not if I cut his heart out first.

The trip had not been without complications.



You're still pissed he was rambling about some other girl?

It wasn't some other girl, it was his *bride*.

He never told me he used to be *married*.



So what?

He's good to you and Hazel now, isn't he? Who cares if he's got history with some other broad?

If Marko could hide this from me, what else is he hiding?



Trust me, this whole freakout is probably just hormonal. You only gave birth, what, a *week* ago? Your body's still, like, a wasteland of chemical imbalance.

Forgive me if I don't take relationship advice from a dead teenager missing her vagina.



Fine, you're the boss.

And you were supposed to switch boobs ten minutes ago.

**AHHH!**



**WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?!**



Ow.  
Where...?

The Fort and Mountain. What's left of it, anyway. Izabel helped us hopscotch here.



I have no idea what anything you just said means.  
How did you--

I'll explain everything... after you tell me about *Gwendolyn*.



Ah.  
Fuck.









Not quite what you were expecting?

I thought Sextillion was supposed to have everything.

This all feels a little... safe.



Spoken like a man who just got hurt.

Come again?

No offense, but I can see what your last bitch did to you. It's all over your face, my brother. Let me guess, was she a "strong woman?"



...

Yes, what you need is a few hours with a real lover, a lady who will do anything and everything you say.

What you need is a Slave Girl.



Come on, let's me and you go a little deeper.



Blarga  
blarga  
bloo!



Who's my smushiest bundle of joy? Who's my weird little gooberoo?

So she's with us... forever?

Only for the night shifts. Izabel disappears every sunrise.



Which sun? There are billions of stars out there.

I mean, if our map is right, we're almost at the Rocketship Forest. What happens when we finally blast off from--

Honey, I'm as interested in the arcane rules of ghost-hood as you, but maybe we could stop stalling and start discussing your *other wife*?



Technically, Gwendolyn's still just my fiancée.



So far, we are not off to a great start.



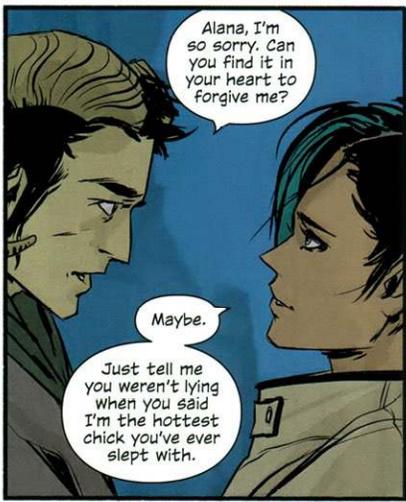




Actually, they belonged to Gwen's **grandparents**. They spoke two different dialects of Wreath's native tongue, so they had their rings enchanted with a **translator spell**.

I thought you and I might be able to put them to better use.

Great, so we can add "**scorned woman with missing family jewels**" to the long list of people who want us dead?



Alana, I'm so sorry. Can you find it in your heart to forgive me?

Maybe.

Just tell me you weren't lying when you said I'm the hottest chick you've ever slept with.



I swear!

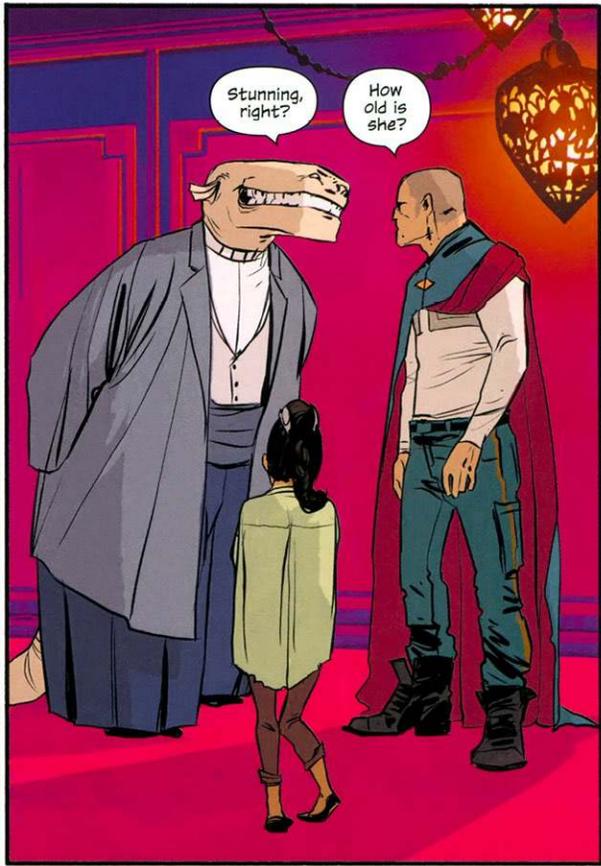
Gwendolyn may have been tall, but her hips were boyish, not womanly like yours.

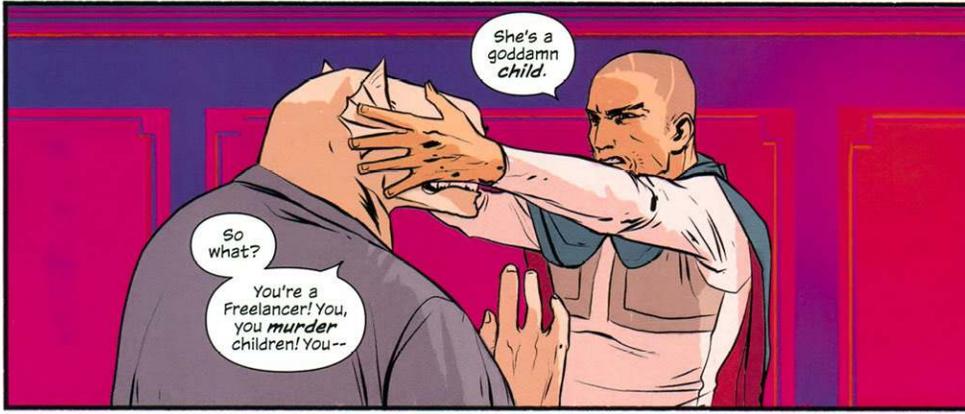


You know, for a pacifist, you sure beg to get stabbed a lot.



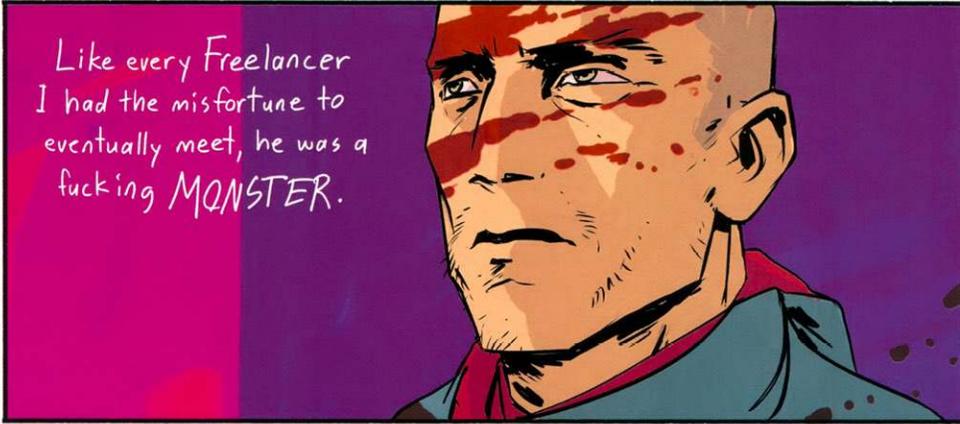








The Will wasn't the first bounty hunter to come after my parents, and he wasn't the last.



Like every Freelancer I had the misfortune to eventually meet, he was a fucking **MONSTER**.



But as my family was about to learn, some monsters are worse than others...

Thank you.





Royal Vondertank. I used to man a turret on one. Probably a half dozen guys from my side in there.

Maybe... maybe I can convince them you're a **prisoner** I captured in--

No, talking almost got us all **killed** last time.



Marko, we'll never make it back to the tunnels in time!

What other choice do we have?



The last one.

SHA-TINK



BRIAN K. VAUGHAN FIONA STAPLES

# Saga

CHAPTER  
FIVE



\$2.99

CHAPTER  
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Incoming priority transmission from the Robot Kingdom.

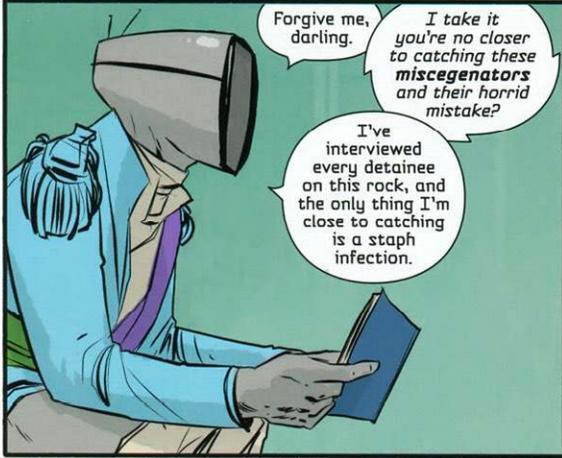
Hm. I'll accept.



IV, sweetheart, can you hear me?

Lovely to hear your voice, as well.

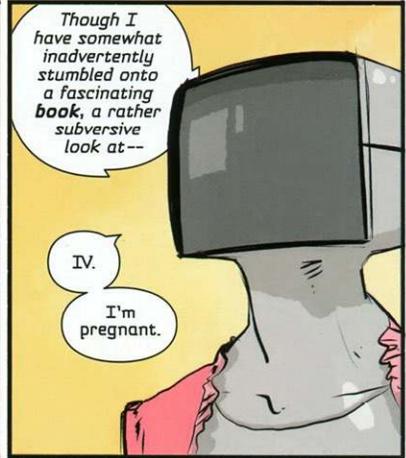
Princess? They don't really like us using the royal channel for personal conversations.



Forgive me, darling.

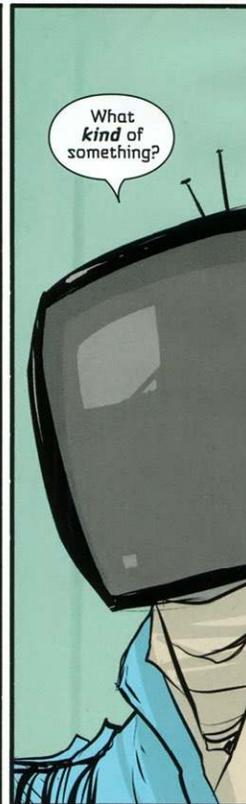
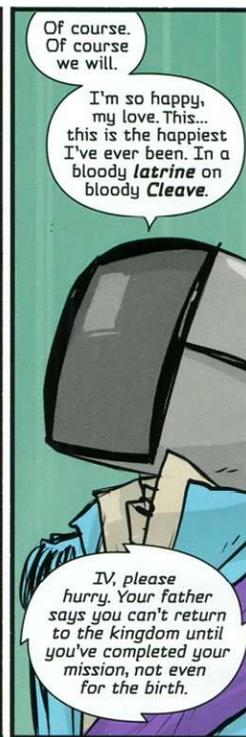
I take it you're no closer to catching these **miscegenators** and their horrid mistake?

I've interviewed every detainee on this rock, and the only thing I'm close to catching is a staph infection.



Though I have somewhat inadvertently stumbled onto a fascinating **book**, a rather subversive look at--

IV.  
I'm pregnant.







Repeat, Heavy Company has made contact with a lone Wreath soldier and a possible friendly, a Landfallian female with...



Roger that.



Listen up, Central confirms these are enemy.

All of them? Sarge, the mom looks like one of ours.

Probably just a moony wearing falsies. For all we know, her "kid" is a suicide bomb. Whatever, orders are to *pacify*.



That means kill, Marko. Pacify means *kill*.

This is your only warning.

Lay down your weapons now or be grievously--



Light 'em up.











Dear.  
That's  
enough.



What  
would I do  
without  
you?





What planet you from, anyhow?

Not a planet, a comet. *Phang.*

Any kin there?



Just my uncle.

He's the one who sold me to this place.



The hell would your own *blood* do something like that?

The horns arrested my brother 'cause they said he was helping the wings, even though he wasn't.

My uncle had to pay a fine to get him out, but we didn't have enough money, and since I was too little to work the mines...



They said this job would just be cleaning, like a maid.

I woulda liked that better. I don't mind cleaning so much.

Stop right there, Slave Girl!



I don't remember giving you permission to go on *outcalls*.



And this is...?

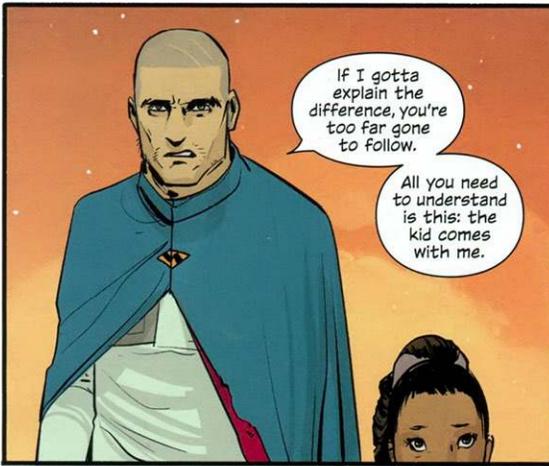
Mama Sun.  
She's my owner.



You must be The Will. I'm told you're the Freelancer who *murdered* my finest groomer.

You mean her pimp? Pederast had it coming.

So it's morally acceptable to *execute* people of any age, but only to *make love* to a select few?





It's all right, The Will.  
I'll be all right.



No. No, this is *bullshit*. I'll call the constables!

You mean my best customers?

The authorities know what you clearly don't, that Slave Girl would be *dead* if it weren't for us. Here she gets food, shelter, a steady income...



If it's about money, let me *buy* her.

Now *that* could be arranged.

You'd just need to pay the balance of her contract... roughly six hundred and fifty thousand.

That's more than my ship cost!



I've also confiscated the White Card you left with us for incidentals.

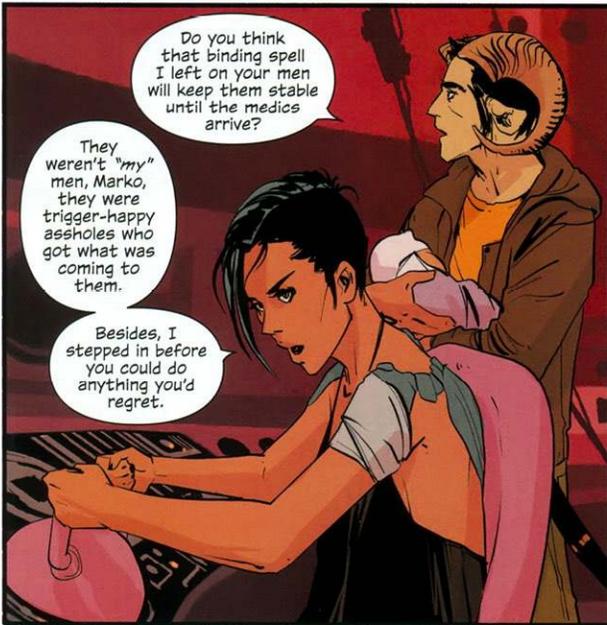
We'll call it even for the damages.



Think.



Think think think.





Why, because you violated some personal pledge against hurting awful people?

My reluctance to use force isn't ideological, it's practical.

Violence is *stupid*. Even as a last resort, it only ever begets more of the same.



Conflict always has consequences. Always.

Sooner or later, our family will pay for what happened today.



Eh, so the guy whose hand you lopped off comes after us with a *hook* in twenty years. Add him to the list.

At least we lived to fight again.



I thought that's the kind of life we were trying to *escape*.

You're the one who always said this war is just--

hee



aha



Did Hazel just...?



She hasn't made a peep all day, and then... that was definitely a *laugh*, right?

I didn't even know newborns could *do* that.



Well, the spoiled brat's got a lot to be happy about.

We're alive, we've got each other, and the Rocketship Forest is right around the corner.



Face it, today was a good day.





Too late, I got a hot lead on my own, thanks.

Looks like my targets just turned *proactive*, which is another word for "about to get caught."



Stalk, please. Something came up, and I need cash fast.

So? Last time I reached out to you, all you did was talk shit.

Idiot, I only said those things because I'm still in *love* with you!



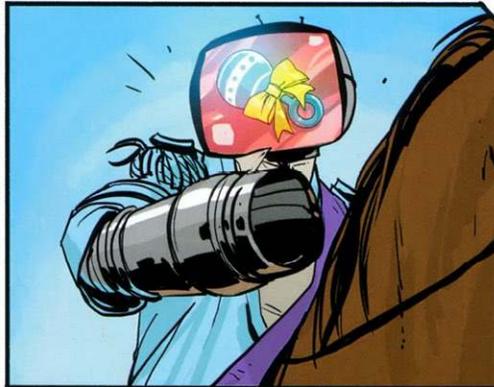
Yeah, right.

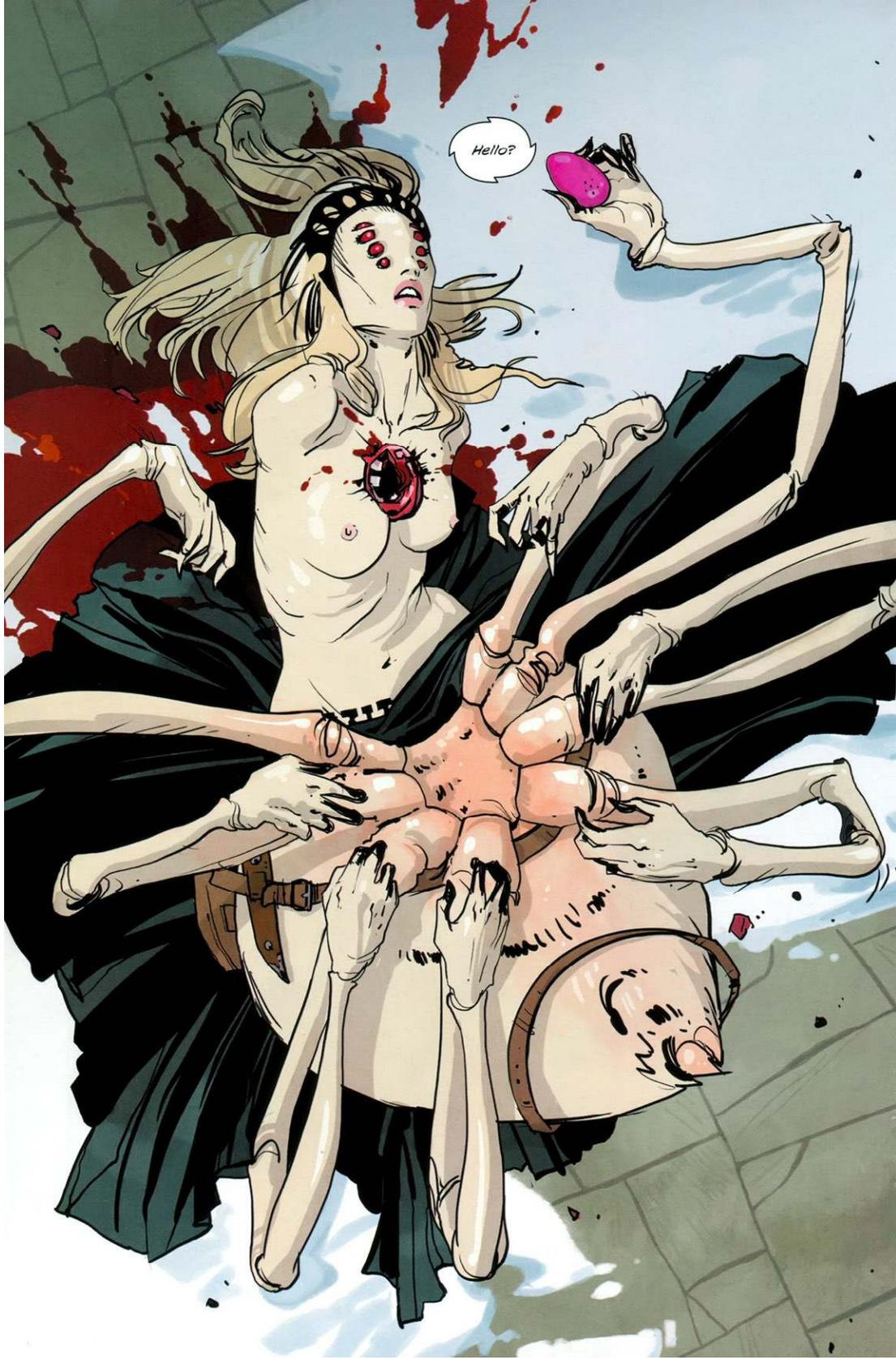
What's the real story? Somebody trying to repo Lying Cat's litter box?

You there!



Don't move a muscle.





Hello?

BRIAN K. VAUGHAN FIONA STAPLES

# Saga

CHAPTER  
SIX



\$2.99

CHAPTER

SIX

# Saga

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Once upon a time,  
each of us was somebody's kid.

Ow.  
Ow ow  
Ow.

She's  
obsessed  
with  
my neck  
flesh.

I know,  
her fingernails  
are like little  
hypodermics.







Evening, boss.

What I miss?



It's over, Izabel. We're fucked.

What are you talking about? You two wanted to find the Rocketship Forest, right?

Well, here you go.



This isn't a forest, it's a graveyard.

Depends on how you look at it, really.

Are you on drugs? Whatever used to grow here was all slashed and burned ages ago!



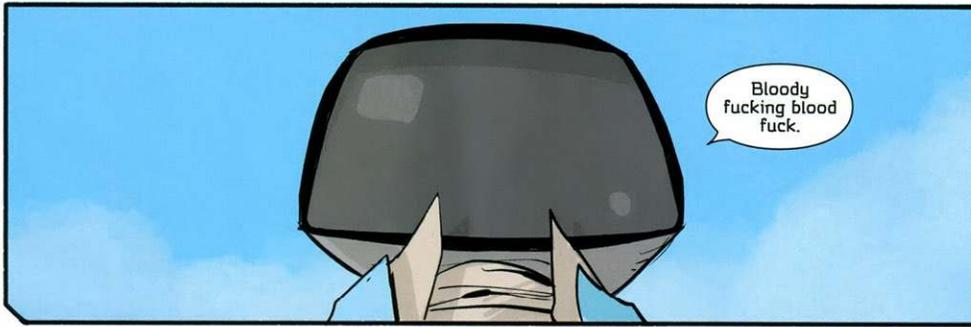
Shit, you lifers believe everything you see.

Us floaty types are masters of *misdirection*, remember? You really think we wouldn't hide a few saplings?



Your girl has no idea how lucky she is.





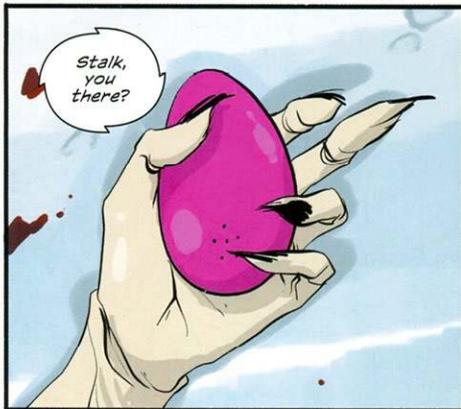
Bloody fucking blood fuck.



It... it was a good shoot, your majesty. That Freelancer drew down on you first.

I'll back you up in the after-action a hundred percent.

Yes. Yes, thank you, McHenry. You behaved commendably under fire.



Stalk, you there?



I know you're pissed, but hear me out.

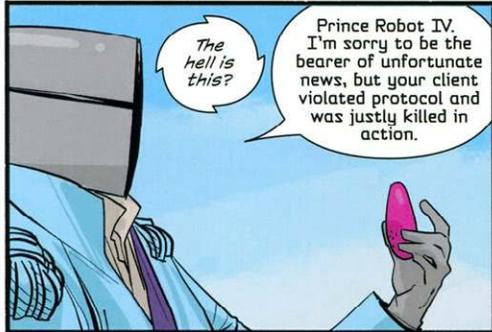
I need your help with a girl.



RRRM

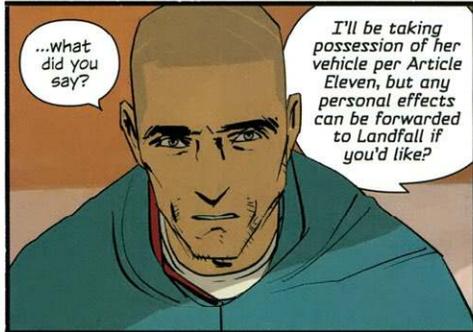
Not like that. This is a Slave Girl. A young one. *Too* young, I mean. Anyway, I thought maybe I could, you know, help her. I thought me and you could *both*--

Hello? Are you this creature's representative?



The hell is this?

Prince Robot IV. I'm sorry to be the bearer of unfortunate news, but your client violated protocol and was justly killed in action.



...what did you say?

I'll be taking possession of her vehicle per Article Eleven, but any personal effects can be forwarded to Landfall if you'd like?



Listen to my voice, boy.

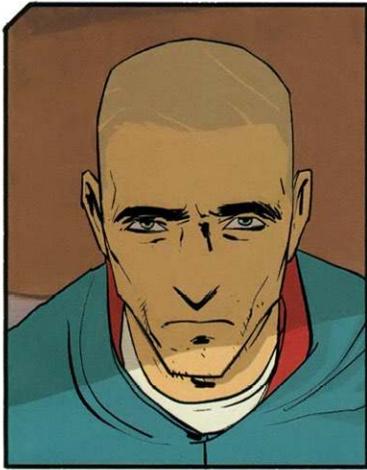
I aim to murder you...right after I murder everything you ever loved.



Call ended.

Good lord.

Psychotics, the lot of them.





So we're taking our infant child to outer space.

In something made of wood.



Don't judge, dear. Some of the greatest ships in Wrath's armada use lumber, makes them almost completely invisible to modern instruments.

Come on, let's check out her insides.

Whoa, not so fast, horndog.



You don't get to blast off without making a sacrifice.



Izabel, what more do you want from us?

It's not for me, it's for the rocketship.

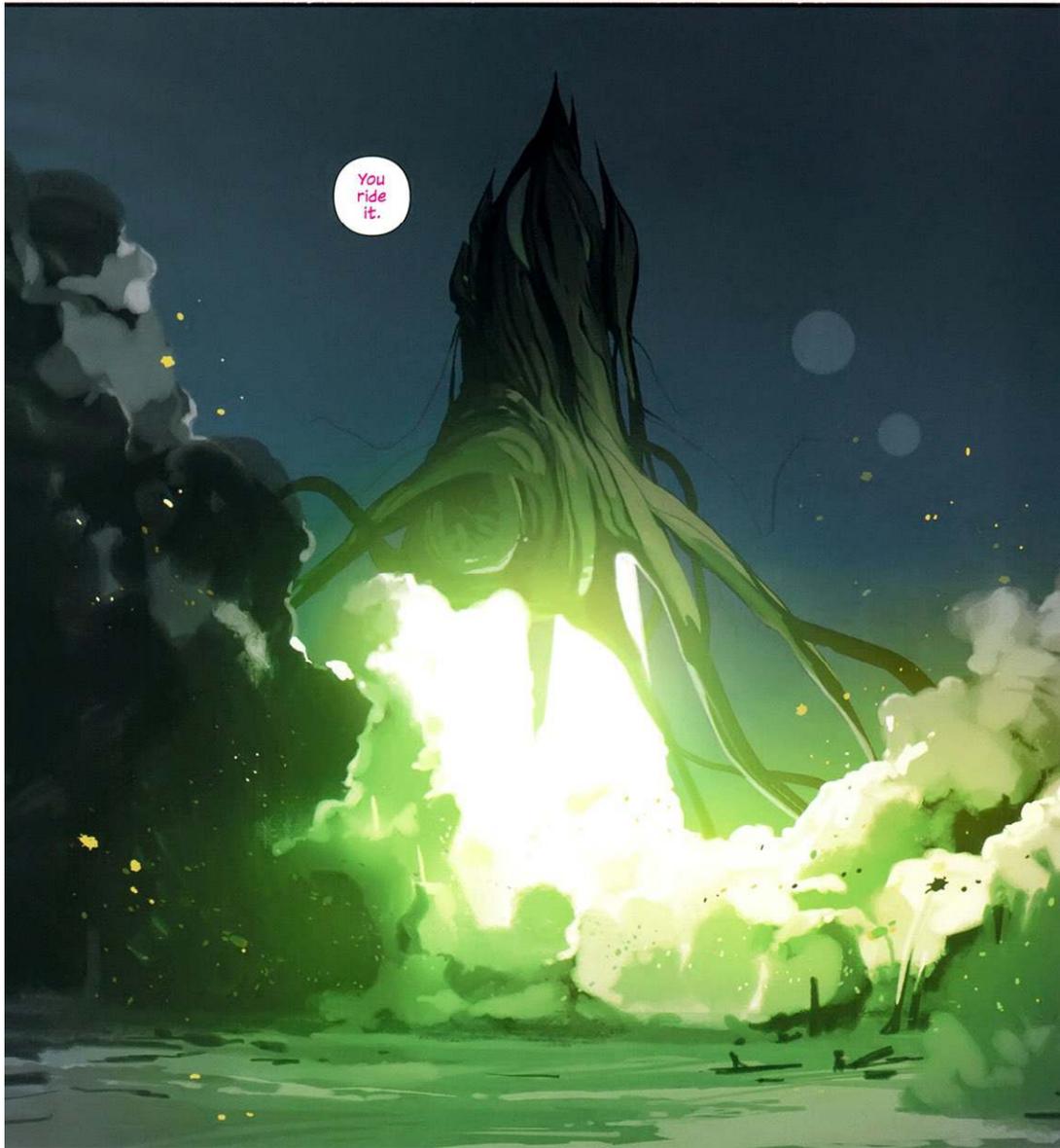
You want to go someplace new, you have to show it you're willing to leave something of real value behind.



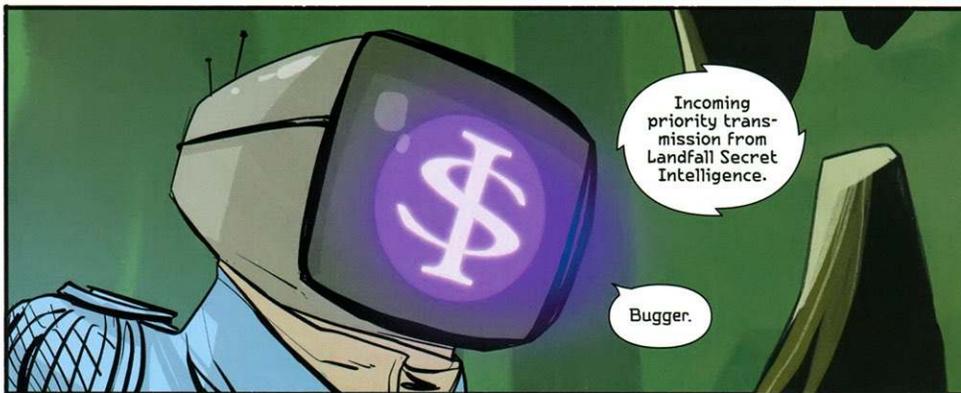
Then I offer up this.











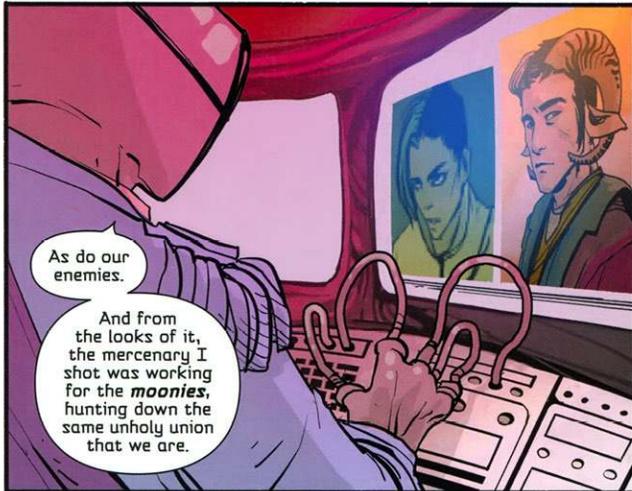


Prince IV, it's Special Agent Gale.

Look, I know I told you to pull out all the stops, but what's this I hear about a dead Freelancer?

If her people are looking for restitution, they're welcome to try billing my father.

I don't like these assholes any more than you, but we can't just off them indiscriminately. Even the Coalition relies on them for the occasional odd job.



As do our enemies.

And from the looks of it, the mercenary I shot was working for the *moonies*, hunting down the same unholy union that we are.



Wreath High Command knows about the baby?

How?



I have no idea, but its parents are vastly more capable than your initial analysis suggested. Marko, the father, is a force of fucking nature.



But it's the mother who really frightens me.



And if this were just a fact-finding expedition, maybe I'd give two shits. But it's not.

So if you want to be home in time for a certain *Joyous occasion*, you'd better make goddamn sure your targets never get off Cleave alive, understood?



Threaten all you want, it doesn't change the fact that your lovebirds have likely already flown the coop.

If I was able to secure passage off this world, I have no doubt Alana and her brood did, as well. They could be literally anywhere in the...

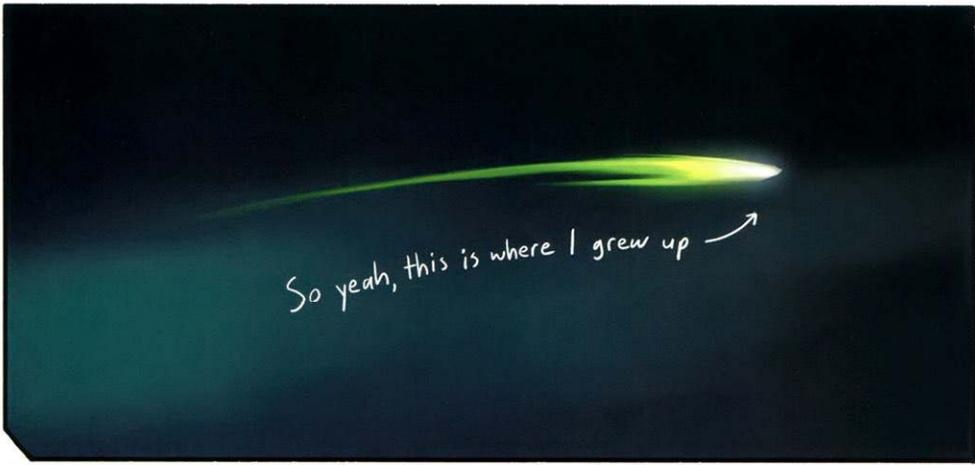


Prince? You still online?

D. OSWALD HEIST is the Louper-nominated author of over forty novels. He resides on Quietus.



Where the hell did you go?

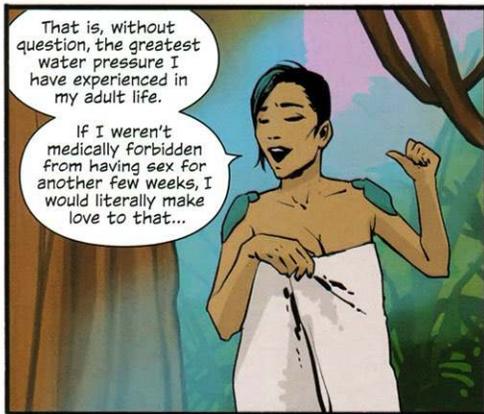




Izabel, you want to say your farewells, too?

Yeah, no offense, but nothing is more boring than people who are obsessed with their hometowns. On to the next one, I say...

Okay, wow.



That is, without question, the greatest water pressure I have experienced in my adult life.

If I weren't medically forbidden from having sex for another few weeks, I would literally make love to that...



...shower?



What is this?

Reverse photosynthesis. It's how rocketships communicate.

So, what is it trying to tell us?

Something about... detecting exotic matter.



We've got magic incoming.



What?!

I thought you said these ships were undetectable!

They are! There's no way anyone could...



No.

My sword.



What'd you do this time?!

Breaking the blade must have **summoned** her. She's probably using its hilt to follow us. God, she's going to **kill** me.

Who? Is this that **Gwendolyn** bitch? Marko, if your **ex** wants her stupid rings back, just--

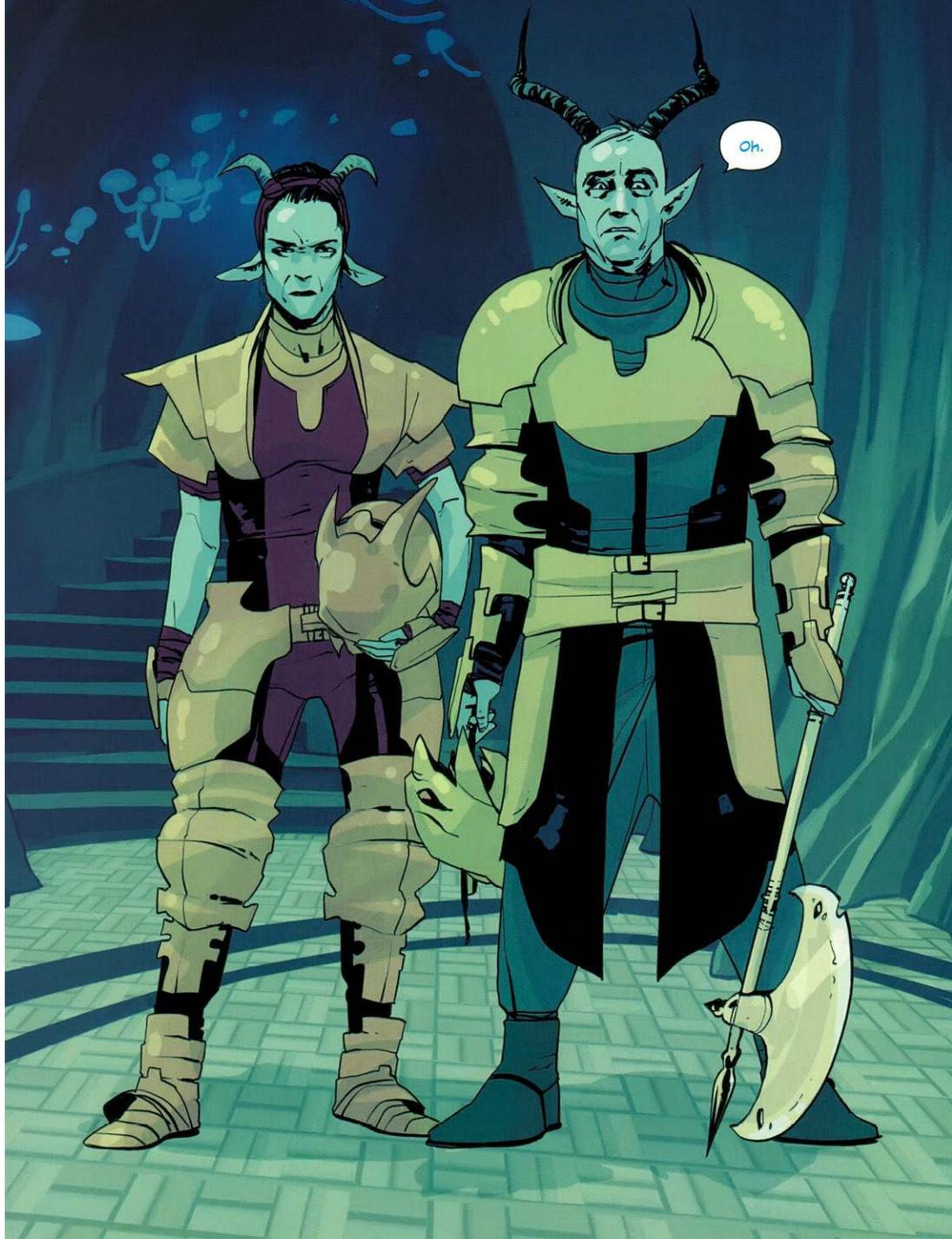


**KIE ESTAS MIA KNABO!**





And then my grandparents came to live with us.



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