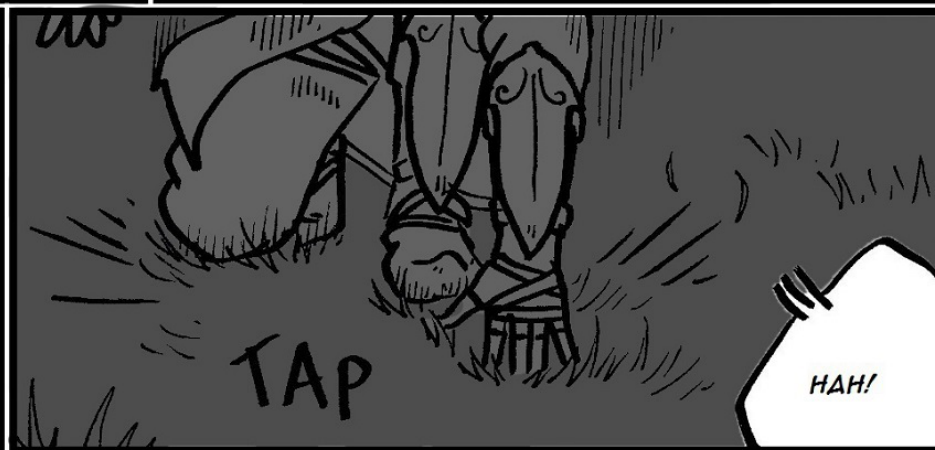
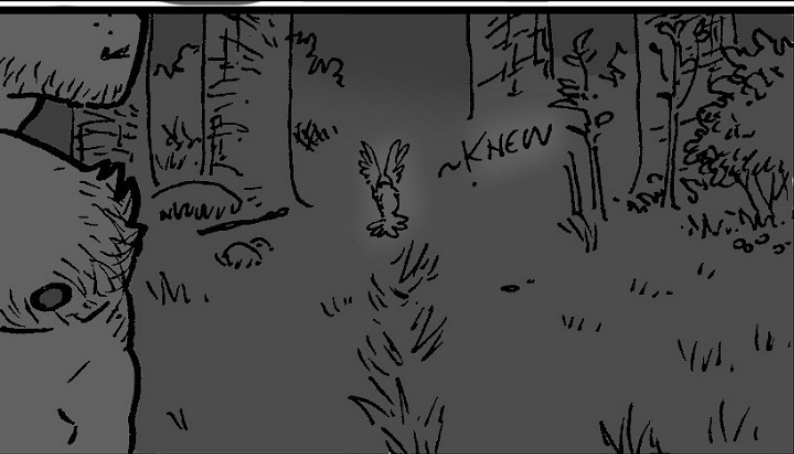
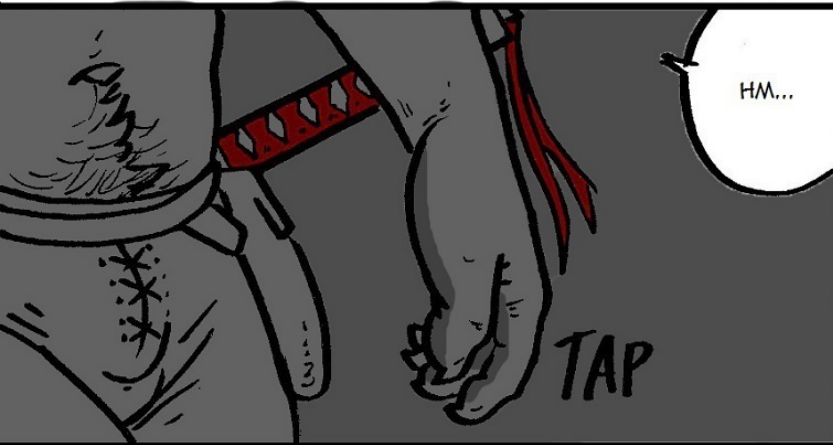
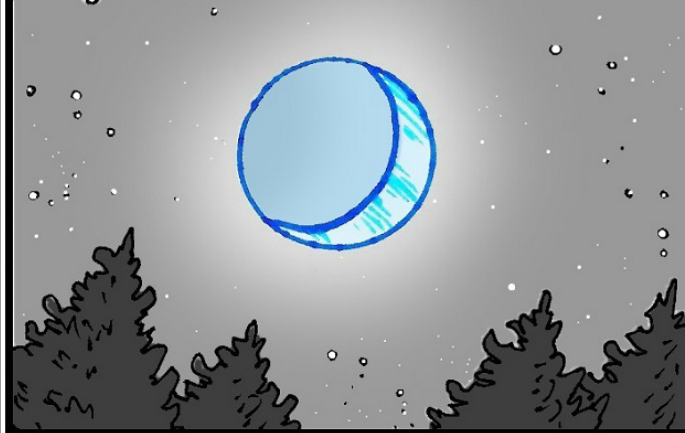


swords and fangs

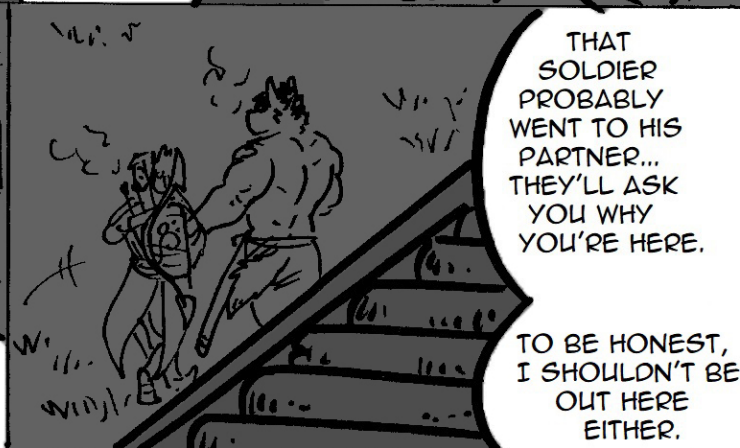
Chapter 4



MORI FOREST









SORRY, I COULDN'T HELP
BUT NOTICE YOUR TENSION...
IS IT MY FAULT?

...DO I LOOK TENSE?



WORRIED...
APPREHENSIVE...

HEH, ONLY BY A
LOOK? OR... A
SNIFF?



SHALL I GUESS? ...YOU
NEVER TALKED TO A WOLF
BEFORE. THIS PLACE IS
NEW FOR YOU, JUST LIKE
IT IS FOR ME. BUT...

LOOKS LIKE YOU WERE
SEARCHING FOR
SOMETHING... YOUR
LOOK...

MY LOOK?

YES...



YOU HAVE A
KEEN EYE...

HEH... WELL...
THANKS!
HOW DID YOU...?

YOU WERE REALLY
SEARCHING FOR
SOMETHING, THEN...

HEH... HM... MAYBE?
HAVE ON, AKIO...
WHAT ELSE CAN YOU SEE?



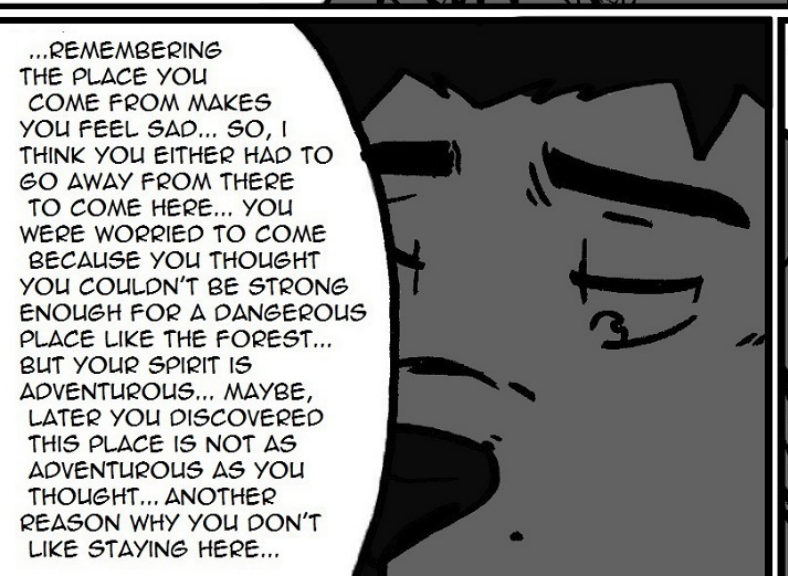
WELL... YOUR SMELL
IS DIFFERENT FROM
THE ONE OF THE
OTHER ELVES UP
THERE... SO YOU
CAME FROM ANOTHER
PLACE! A PLACE
FAR AWAY FROM
HERE...

YOUR UNIFORM
IS THAT OF A
RANGER, BUT
YOUR HAIR AND
YOUR MANNERS
ARE NOT... YOU
DON'T BELONG IN
THIS PLACE...



...YOU DON'T LIKE
IT... YET... YOU
CAME DOWN FROM
THE TREES TO THE
GROUND! YOU HAVE
AN ADVENTUROUS
SPIRIT... YOU DON'T
EVEN LIKE THE
PLACE YOU CAME
FROM, WHEN I
MENTIONED IT YOUR
SMELL CHANGED!

YOUR HEART IS TORN
BETWEEN THESE
TWO PLACES!
I CAN FEEL
IT...

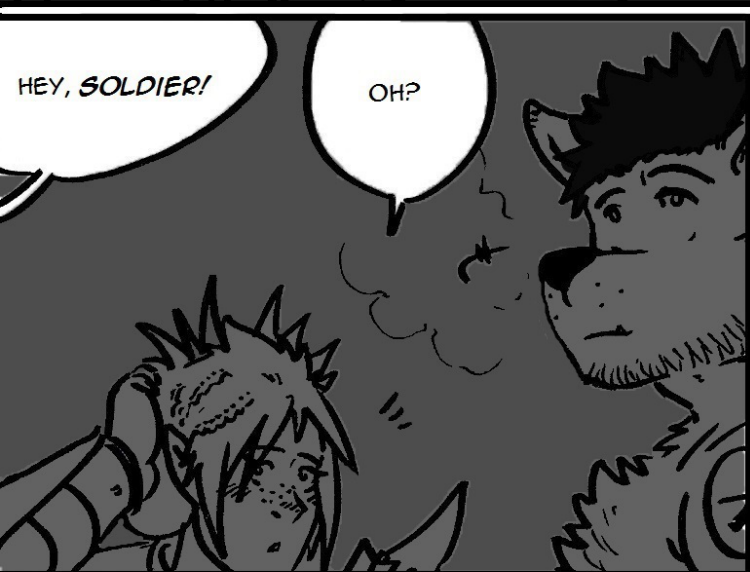


...REMEMBERING
THE PLACE YOU
COME FROM MAKES
YOU FEEL SAD... SO, I
THINK YOU EITHER HAD TO
GO AWAY FROM THERE
TO COME HERE... YOU
WERE WORRIED TO COME
BECAUSE YOU THOUGHT
YOU COULDN'T BE STRONG
ENOUGH FOR A DANGEROUS
PLACE LIKE THE FOREST...
BUT YOUR SPIRIT IS
ADVENTUROUS... MAYBE,
LATER YOU DISCOVERED
THIS PLACE IS NOT AS
ADVENTUROUS AS YOU
THOUGHT... ANOTHER
REASON WHY YOU DON'T
LIKE STAYING HERE...



R-RIGHT...

THIS SQUAD OF
RANGERS CAME HERE
YESTERDAY... AND
YOU WERE SKEPTICAL
BECAUSE YOU THOUGHT
THIS WAS GOING TO BE
JUST ANOTHER BORING
NIGHT IN THE FOREST...
BUT NOW YOU'RE
NOT SO SURE...



HE'S WITH ME!
I NEED HIS HELP
TO DO A THING...

MA'AM... HE'S JUST
A COMMON SOLDIER.
IF YOU OR ANOTHER
ELF NEED SOMETHING,
YOU CAN ASK THE
GUARDS.

WE'RE CROSSING
YOUR LAND SO
YOU CAN ASK
WHAT YOU WANT,
BUT HE'S JUST...

HE'LL BE BACK
BEFORE THE
SUNRISE, I
PROMISE!

COULD I TALK TO YOUR
SUPERIOR, MA'AM?

I'M THE HEAD
RANGER OF THIS
SQUAD, SO...

DON'T WORRY!
HE'LL BE BACK
SAFE AND SOUND
BEFORE THE
SUNRISE, AS
I SAID...

YES, MA'AM!

HEAD RANGERS
HAVE GREEN ARROWS,
YOURS ARE WHITE...
I READ IT IN A BOOK!

OH, HEH,
WELL...

DON'T WORRY,
HE DIDN'T
SMELL YOUR
LIE.

GREAT!

EHEHE!

MY FRIEND, THE
REAL HEAD
RANGER OF MY
SQUAD, SHE
SAID THAT SINCE
YOU'RE
CROSSING OUR
LAND WE CAN
ASK YOU
WHATEVER WE
WANT... WOLVES
NEVER SAY NO
BECAUSE THEY
DON'T WANT
PROBLEMS WITH
US, YOU'RE
ALWAYS
HELPFUL... IS
THAT TRUE?



DEPENDS BY THE WAY YOU ASK SOMETHING.

OH!

HEH, WELL...

TAP



CAN YOU HELP ME FIND SOMETHING I LOST? YOUR NOSE CAN BE VERY HELPFUL.



WHAT DID YOU LOSE?

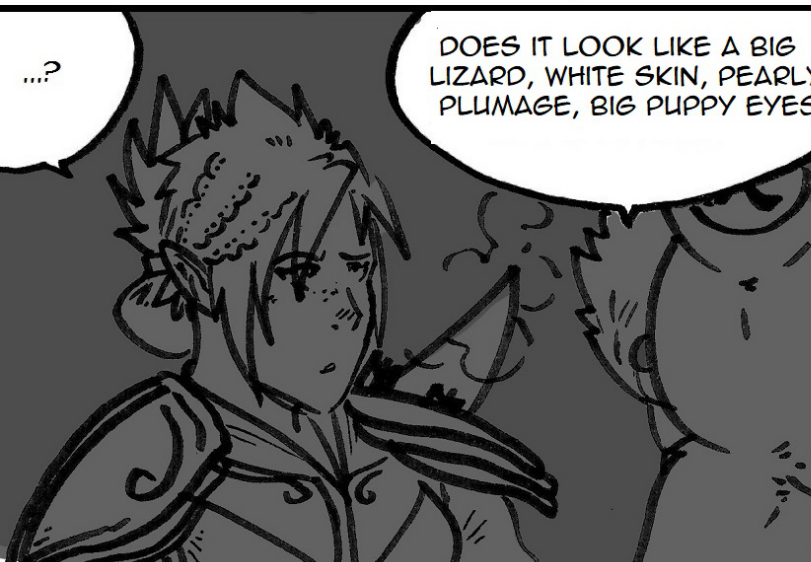
WELL...



SOMETHING... NOT PERMITTED. A BLUE EGG...A SYLVAN DRACONID'S EGG...



HM...



...?

DOES IT LOOK LIKE A BIG LIZARD, WHITE SKIN, PEARLY PLUMAGE, BIG PUPPY EYES?



HAH!



IS THAT THE WINDOW?

YEAH, THEN HE JUMPED DOWN HERE...



...AND RAN AWAY IN THAT DIRECTION.

AH... IT'S TOO SOON. ...STARS, HELP HIM!

TOO SOON?



IT SHOULD'VE
HATCHED
NEXT TENTH!



TIME TO USE MY
NOSE, THEN!



I FOUND ITS NEST
LAST MONTH,
IT WAS THE ONLY EGG
THAT REMAINED...
I FELT SORRY FOR IT.

WHY'D YOU GIVE
HIM A HUMAN NAME?



...I'M SORRY, AKIO.
I KNOW THAT WOLVES
DON'T LIKE BREAKING
RULES... I HOPE IT
DOESN'T BOTHER
YOU... HELPING ME.



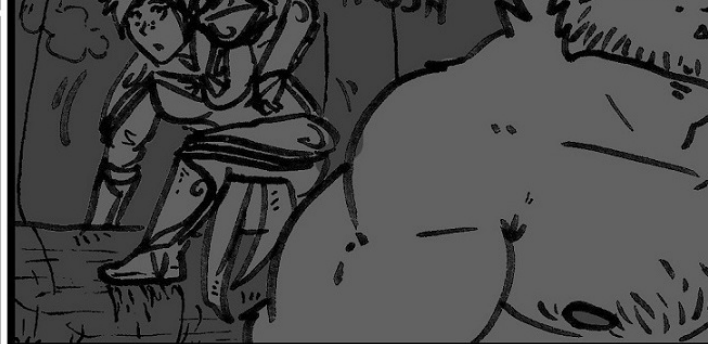
NOT AT ALL...
*SNIFF



OH,
RIGHT,
CAN YOU
SEE? I
MEAN...
IT'S
DARK.



TYRION? ...I DON'T KNOW,
I LIKED IT! NOW I HOPE
HE'S A MALE, AND NOT
A FEMALE, EHEH... AH...
TAMING ANIMALS IS ILLEGAL
FOR ELVES, MAYBE YOU
DIDN'T KNOW... I JUST
WANNA TAKE CARE OF THE
LITTLE DRACONID! AND SINCE
MY FRIEND IS THE HEAD
RANGER OF THIS SQUAD
SHE SAID IT WAS FINE...



WE'RE NOT
NOCTURNAL LIKE
ELVES BUT... WE
USE OUR NOSE,
MORE THAN OUR
EYES... SO IT
DOESN'T MATTER.
DON'T WORRY,
AISLINN.

CAN YOU
SMELL IT?

...IS HE
VERY FAR?



... I DON'T LIKE
STAYING HERE
ON THE GROUND...



NO, HE'S NOT FAR...
HE'S MOVING. I CAN
SMELL HIM,
THIS WAY.



AH, THANK
THE STARS,
HE'S FINE.



SNIFF
SNIFF

IF IT'S NOT PERMITTED, WHY DO YOU WANT TO TAME THAT DRACONID?

WELL... IT'S VERY USEFUL! LIKE A SENTINEL, I CAN TRAIN HIM TO WARN ME IF SOMEONE COMES CLOSER... AN ANIMAL OR A ENEMY! I COULD TRAIN HIM TO BRING ME OBJECTS OR TAKE ME TO SOMEONE IF I GIVE HIM A TRACK TO SMELL.

...LIKE ME!

EHEH!

MY SKILLS HERE... IN THE FOREST... I'M NOT A RANGER, IT COULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE SOME HELP.

GOT IT! GOOD IDEA, ALSO, A SYLVAN DRACONID LOOKS PRETTY CUTE.

EHEHE! YES, IT IS.

I WAS WONDERING...

HM?

WHY DID YOU ASK FOR MY HELP, AND LIE TO THAT GUARD?

YOU SHOULD'VE ASKED HIM... IT WOULD'VE BEEN EASIER.

WELL...

AH...

YOU... APPROACHED ME... DIFFERENTLY! ALSO... SINCE IT'S AGAINST THE RULES, I... I DON'T KNOW.

...I THOUGHT IT WAS BETTER ASKING YOU. AND I WAS RIGHT!

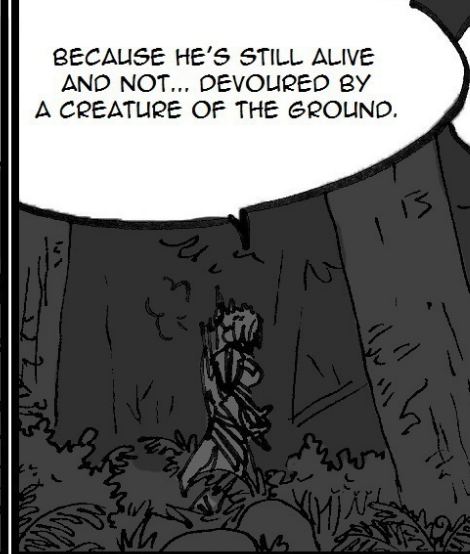
THE EGG FELL ON YOUR WINDOW, IT WAS DESTINY!

A GOOD WAY TO SEE THAT.

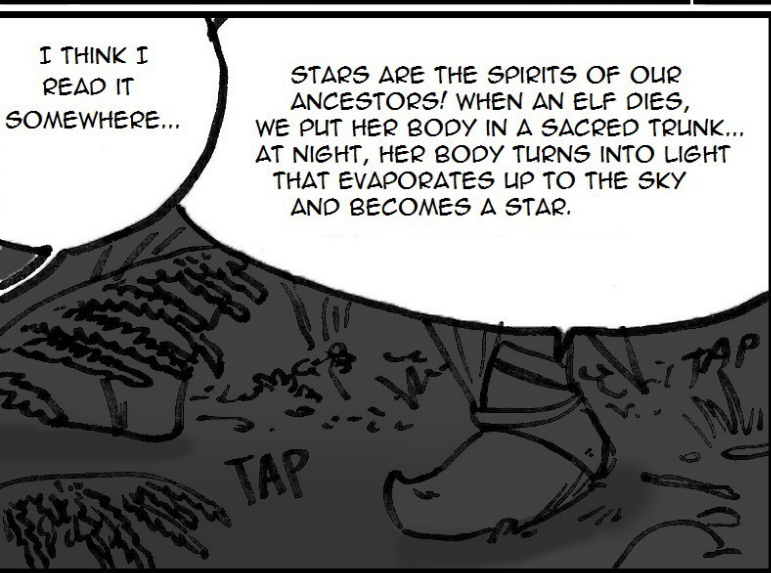
EHEH!



UH... WELL...



OH, RIGHT, I'M SORRY, I FORGOT THAT ELVES WORSHIP THE STARS.



STARS ARE THE SPIRITS OF OUR ANCESTORS! WHEN AN ELF DIES, WE PUT HER BODY IN A SACRED TRUNK... AT NIGHT, HER BODY TURNS INTO LIGHT THAT EVAPORATES UP TO THE SKY AND BECOMES A STAR.



I HEARD YOU REMEMBER YOUR DEAD TOO, WITH THEIR WEAPONS. IS THAT WHY YOU DON'T REFORGE KATANAS?

YES. EVERY WOLF HAS ITS OWN UNIQUE KATANA. THAT'S WHY WE PERSONALIZE THEM. WARRIORS WRITE THEIR NAMES ON THEM IN OUR ANCIENT LANGUAGE...



THIS WAY.





THIS IS A PIECE OF HIS EGGSHELL.

HE MUST BE CLOSE...

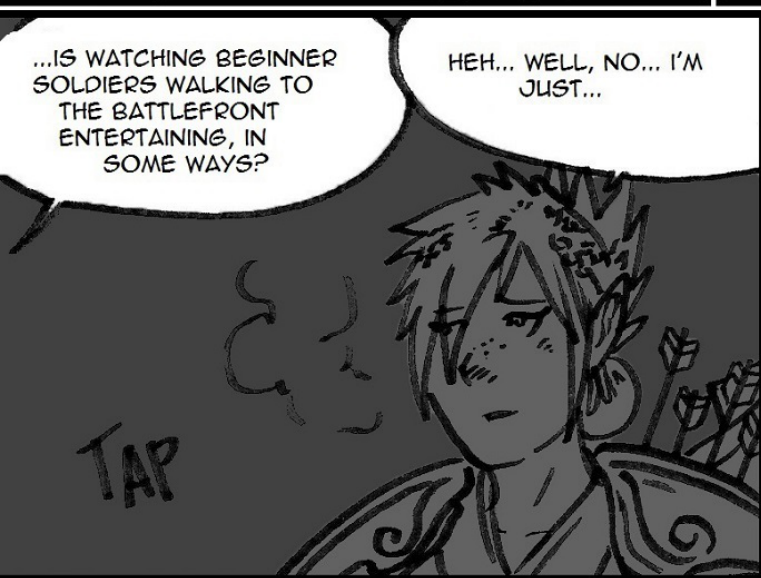
YEP!



...YOU SAID YOU'RE NOT A RANGER, AM I RIGHT?

YES...

CAN I ASK YOU WHY YOU'RE WITH THE SQUAD THAT IS "ESCORTING" US?



...IS WATCHING BEGINNER SOLDIERS WALKING TO THE BATTLEFRONT ENTERTAINING, IN SOME WAYS?

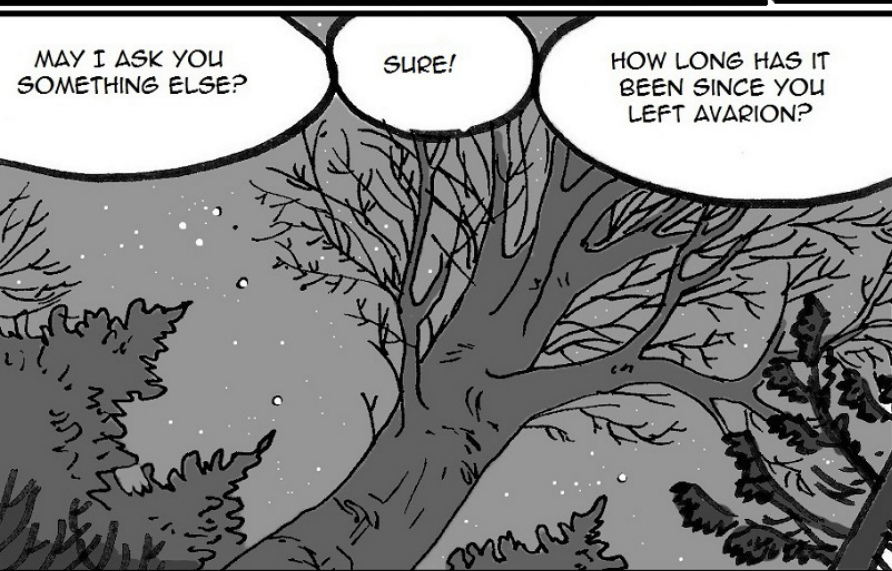
HEH... WELL, NO... I'M JUST...



...AS I SAID, MY FRIEND IS THE HEAD RANGER, THAT'S WHY I'M WITH THIS SQUAD...

...

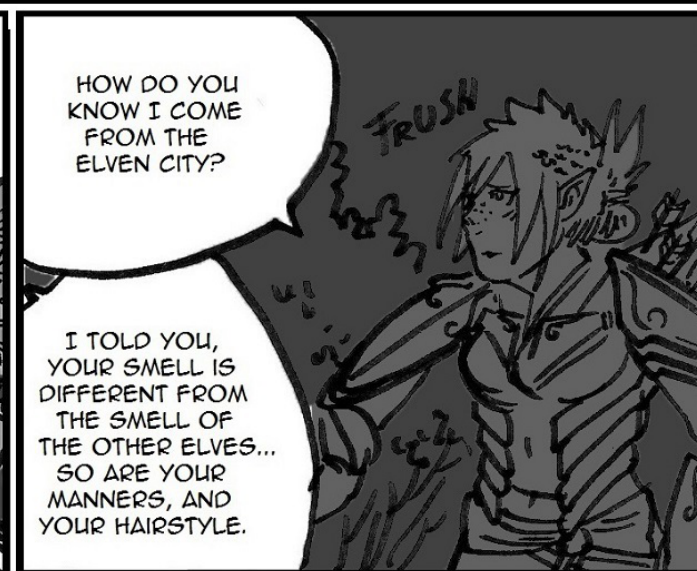
...OK!



MAY I ASK YOU SOMETHING ELSE?

SURE!

HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE YOU LEFT AVARION?



HOW DO YOU KNOW I COME FROM THE ELVEN CITY?

I TOLD YOU, YOUR SMELL IS DIFFERENT FROM THE SMELL OF THE OTHER ELVES... SO ARE YOUR MANNERS, AND YOUR HAIRSTYLE.



IT'S... AH... IT IS A LONG STORY...

SORRY, AKIO! NOT NOW!

OF COURSE! DON'T WORRY, AISLINN.



HE'S CLOSE...

HEY!
THERE!

AH! THERE
HE IS.



THANK THE
STARS! HE'S
FINE... AND...
HE'S A MALE!
EHEH...
AND CUTE.

AND ON THE
OTHER SIDE OF
THIS CANYON...

TAP

HOW DID HE GET THERE?
IT'S LIKE... 6, 7 METERS FAR!

HE'S TOO YOUNG TO FLY, SO...
HE GLIDED, I SUPPOSE.

CRAP!



WE HAVE TO BE
QUICK! HE COULD
SCARE, AND RUN
AWAY IF HE SEES US.

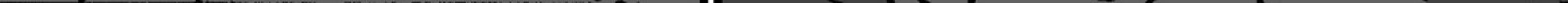
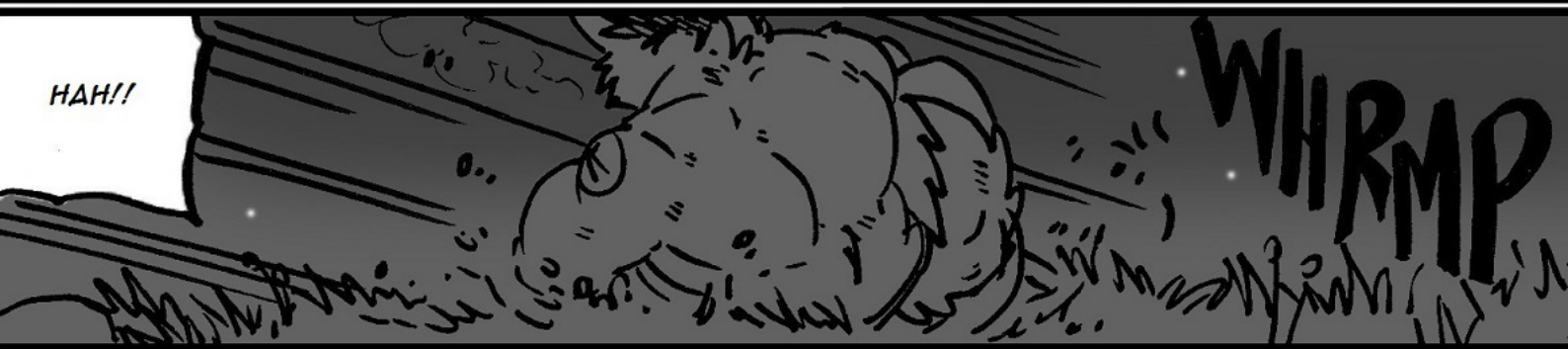
OK.
GOT IT!

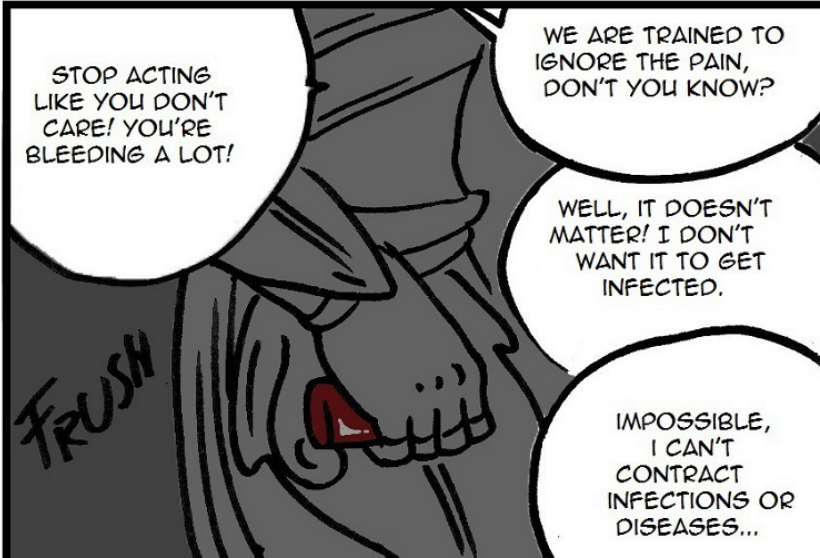
MAYBE I CAN
CLIMB ON THESE
TREES HERE, AND...

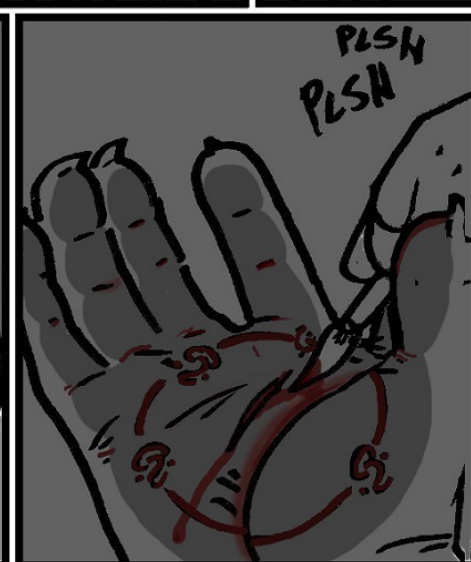
...AKIO?

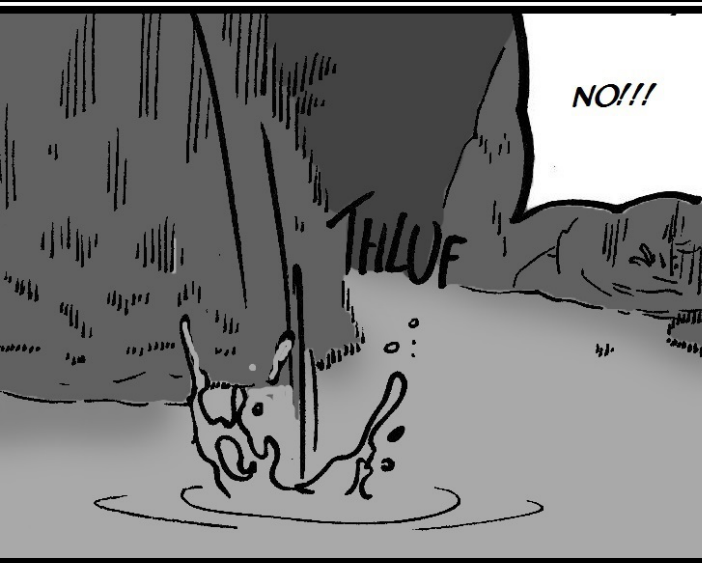
WHAT
ARE YO-

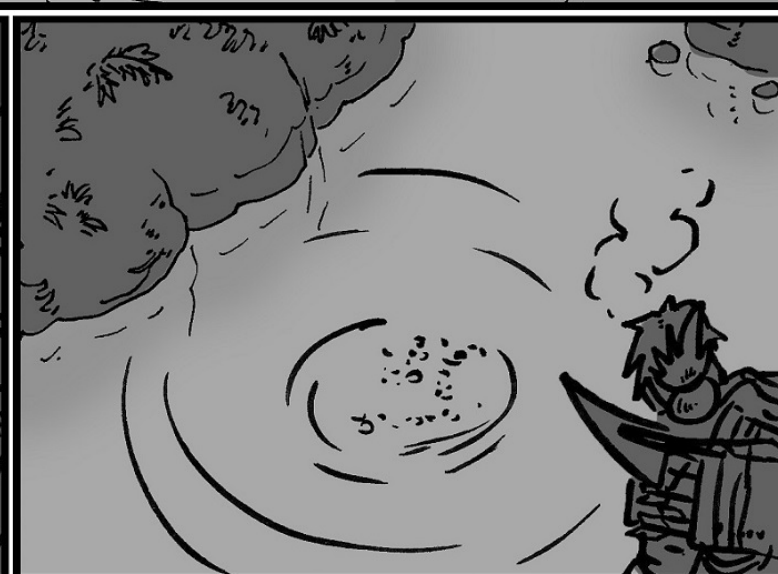










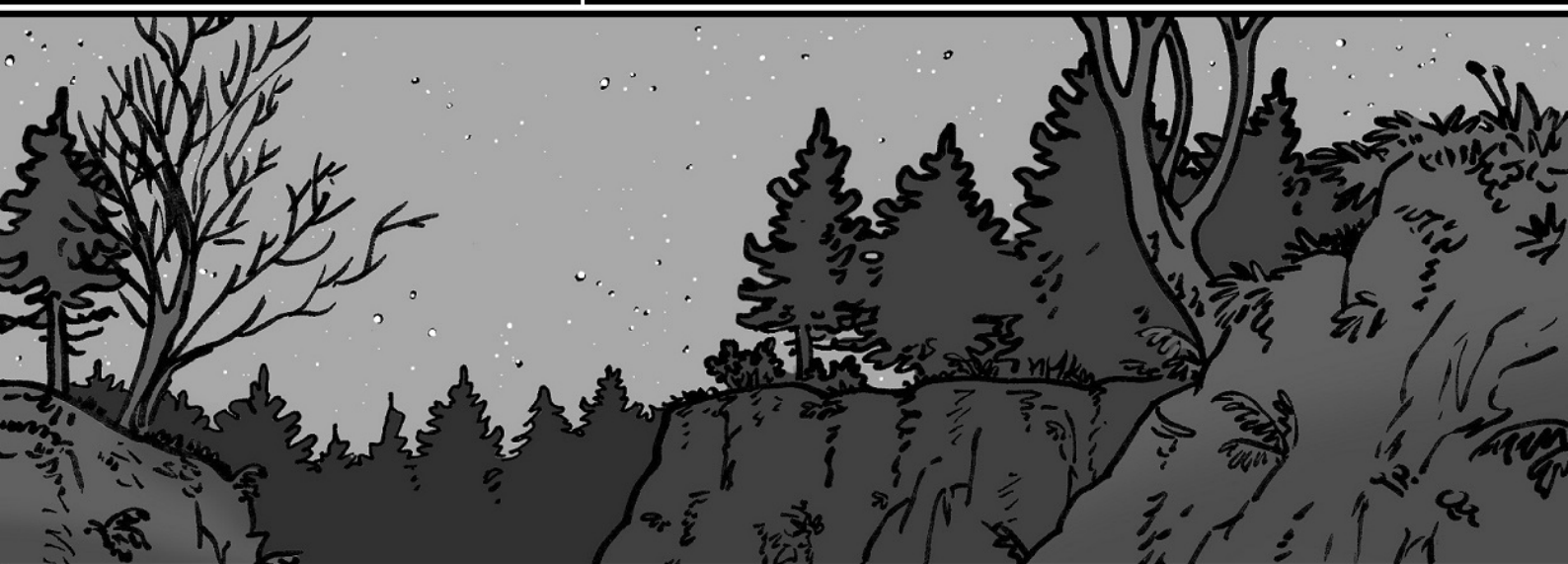




HEH...



...YOU LITTLE RECKLESS
TROUBLEMAKER!



GOOD BOY,
STAY THERE,
TYRION!

KNHH



HAH! HEROIC!
AHAH! AMAZING!



AH... HOW DID YOU
KNOW THAT THE
WATER WAS DEEP
ENOUGH? YOU
COULD'VE HURT
YOURSELF!

OH, WELL...
THERE WAS
A LOVELY
HEALER
NEARBY,
SO...



AREN'T YOU
CHARMING?

EHEH

GRW

C'MERE YOU
LITTLE ROMP!



OOOK!
YOU'RE
SAFE,
NOW.

HEH...



...AND YOU'RE
SOAKED.

I WOULD NEVER
SHAKE CLOSE TO
YOU. PAROLE! I
SWEAR ON THE
5 SAGES.

AHAHA!
THANK YOU.



PHEW!
I IMAGINED
MY FIRST
DAY WITH
TYRION...
MORE
CALM.

A MOTHER'S
JOB NEVER
ENDS.



...DO YOU
CONSIDER
YOURSELF
HIS...

OH, IT'S JUST...
A DICTUM.

OH!

A WAY OF
SAYING.

I THOUGHT
IT WAS
COMMON
IN THE 5
CLANS
TOO.



MIDWIVES RAISE
PUPPIES IN THE
5 CLANS, NOT
PARENTS.

WHA... REALLY?

YES.



SENSEIS CHOOSE
20 OR MORE
PUPPIES OF THEIR
OWN SEX...

WHEN WE REACH
OUR FOURTH
YEAR OF AGE THE
SENSEI BECOMES
OUR FATHER...

...THE MEMBERS
OF OUR TROOP
ARE BROTHERS!
...THE CLAN IS
OUR FAMILY.



AH!



SO... YOU WILL
NEVER KNOW
WHO YOUR
MOTHER
WAS.

NO.
MAYBE...



HMBBRR

SHAKE SHAKE SHAKE

HOW
COULD YOU
RECOGNIZE
HER? I
MEAN...



BY THE
SMELL,
OF
COURSE!

FLUFFY

FLUFFY



HAH!

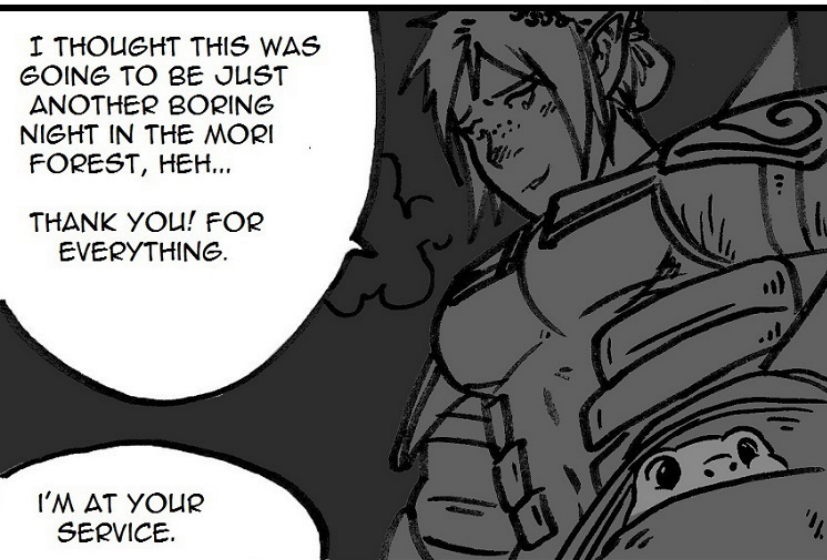
TAP



HHN

YOU WERE
RIGHT...

ABOUT
WHAT?



I THOUGHT THIS WAS
GOING TO BE JUST
ANOTHER BORING
NIGHT IN THE MORI
FOREST, HEH...

THANK YOU! FOR
EVERYTHING.

I'M AT YOUR
SERVICE.



YA KNOW, MOST PEOPLE
THINK THAT EVERY WOLF IN
THE FIVE CLANS IS JUST A
BRAINLESS SOLDIER.

WHEN I WAS A CHILD,
I READ ABOUT OOKAMI,
THE FIRST WOLF WARRIOR.
I COULDN'T BELIEVE ALL
THE THINGS THAT
PEOPLE SAID...

AH, YES! READING CAN
SERIOUSLY DAMAGE
IGNORANCE.



HAH... I'M
DELIGHTED TO
HAVE PROVEN YOU
WERE RIGHT THIS
WHOLE TIME.
EHEHEH!

OKAY, OKAY! BUT DON'T WAG
YOUR TAIL LIKE THAT. ...UHH?

...WHAT'S WRONG TYRION?
WHA...OH RIGHT!
YOU'RE HUNGRY.

TAP



HOW IRONIC...

WHAT?



...ME, A
MOTHER...
SO TO SPEAK...

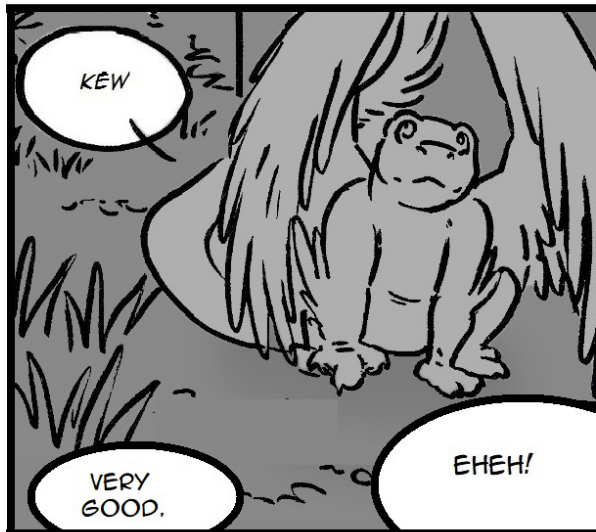


KHRR

HERE,
TYRION.
DELICIOUS
MUSH!



OH! HEH,
GOOD
BOY:



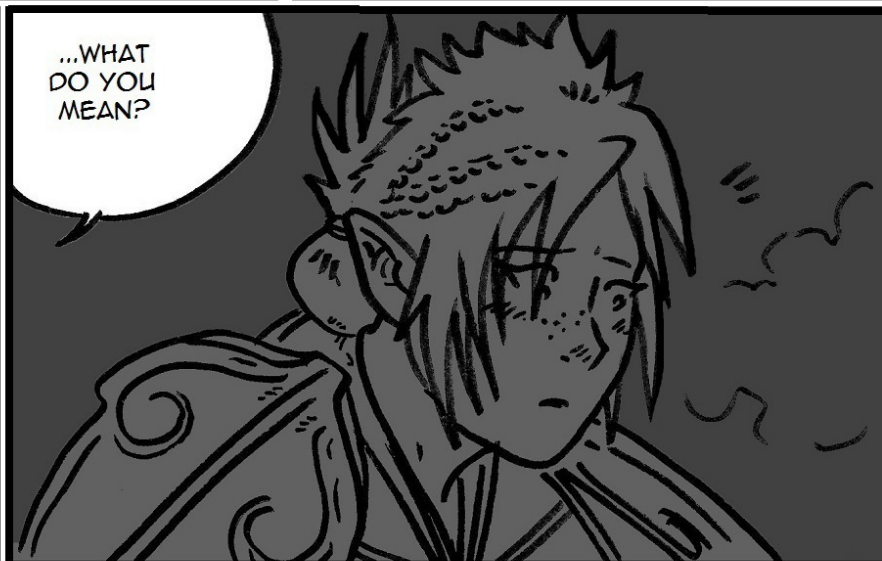
KEW

VERY
GOOD.

EHEH!



GULP MUNCH
CHOMP



...WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?



I'M NOT A RANGER,
AND I COME FROM
THE ELVEN CITY OF
AVARION, YES... BUT..

AH... I ACTUALLY
RAN AWAY FROM
THERE... MONTHS
AGO... MY FRIEND,
KEIRA, THE HEAD
RANGER OF THIS
SQUAD, HELPED
ME TO ESCAPE.



TAP



I SHOULDN'T HAVE TOLD YOU THIS... SORRY!

I... DON'T KNOW WHY I... AH, DAMN.

ARE YOU A FUGITIVE?

WHAT?



NO, NOT EXACTLY. HAH...

IT'S COMPLICATED. SEE, SOMETIMES RULES ARE... LIKE CHAINS! AND YOU...

I HAD TO GO AWAY! I COULDN'T STAY.

P-PLEASE, I KNOW IT'S NOT FAIR FROM ME TO ASK YOU BUT...



...DON'T TELL THE GUARDS... DON'T TELL ANYONE!

AI SLINN, I...

PLEASE!



AH...



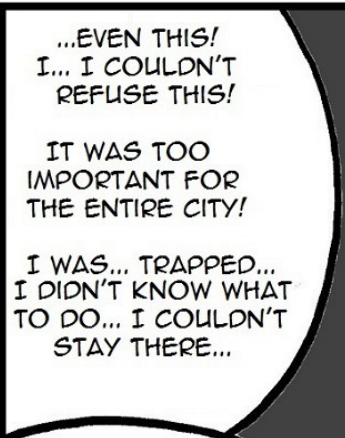
WHAT DID YOU DO?

TYRION? COME HERE!



I AM... HAH... BETROTHED... TO THE SON OF A SAGE OF AVARION! A PRE-DEFINED WEDDING, TO UNITE THE FAMILIES OF 2 SAGES... OUR MOTHERS...

ROYAL BLOOD FLOWS THROUGH MY VEINS, THEY SAY... EVERY DECISION OF MY LIFE WAS MADE BY MY MOTHER...



...EVEN THIS! I... I COULDN'T REFUSE THIS!

IT WAS TOO IMPORTANT FOR THE ENTIRE CITY!

I WAS... TRAPPED... I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO... I COULDN'T STAY THERE...

SO YOU ESCAPED...

MY ENTIRE LIFE WAS...
MANIPULATED TO TURN
ME INTO... INTO MY
MOTHER! ANOTHER
SAGE! I NEVER
WANTED THAT!

I UNDERSTAND...
EVERYONE HAS A
PLACE IN THIS WORLD, A
PURPOSE... EVEN IF
WE DO NOT LIKE IT,
SOMETIMES WE HAVE
TO SACRIFICE
OURSELVES FOR IT.

I... SACRIFICED MYSELF
ALL MY LIFE FOR MY
MOTHER'S WILL...
NOT THIS TIME, NOT
MY FUTURE.

BUT... AISLINN,
WE ALL HAVE A
ROLE TO PLAY
IN THIS WORLD!
MAYBE YOU...

YES, OF COURSE!
I'VE HEARD THAT A
MILLION TIMES. BUT...

IT'S UP TO ME TO
CHOOSE MINE, NOT
ANY ONE ELSE.

YOU'VE BEEN A SOLIDER
SINCE THE DAY YOU WERE
BORN, SO... I... DON'T
KNOW IF YOU CAN
UNDERSTAND MY
REASONS, BUT...

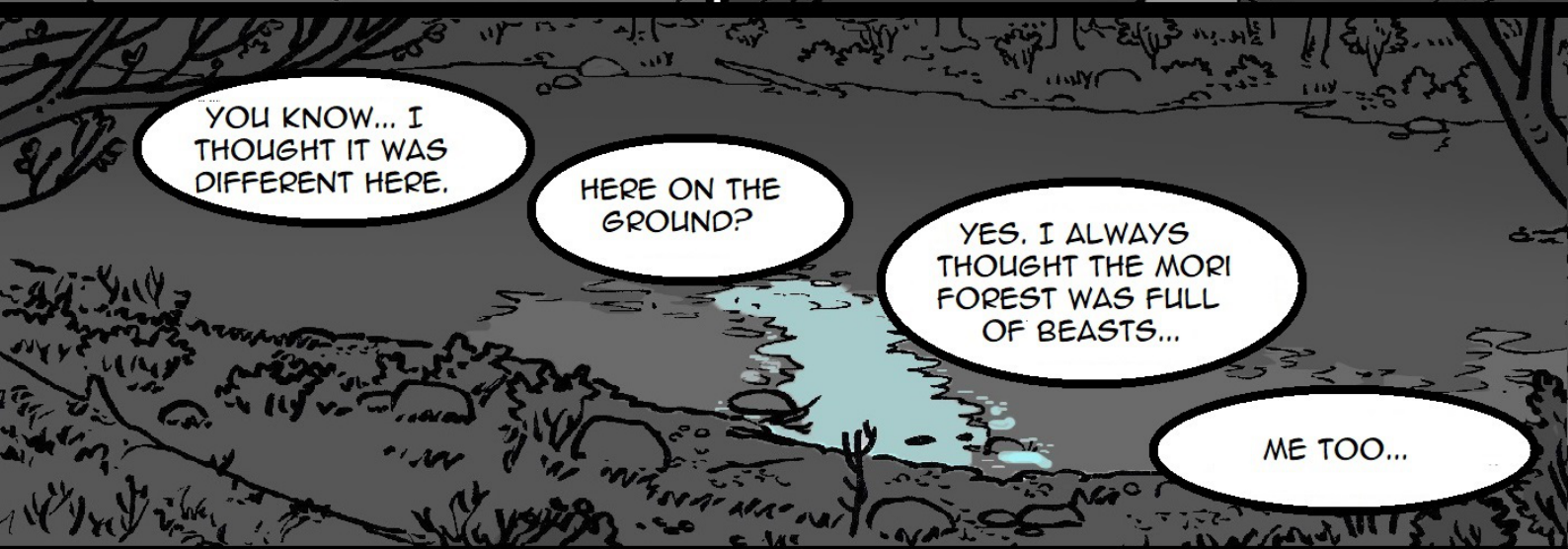
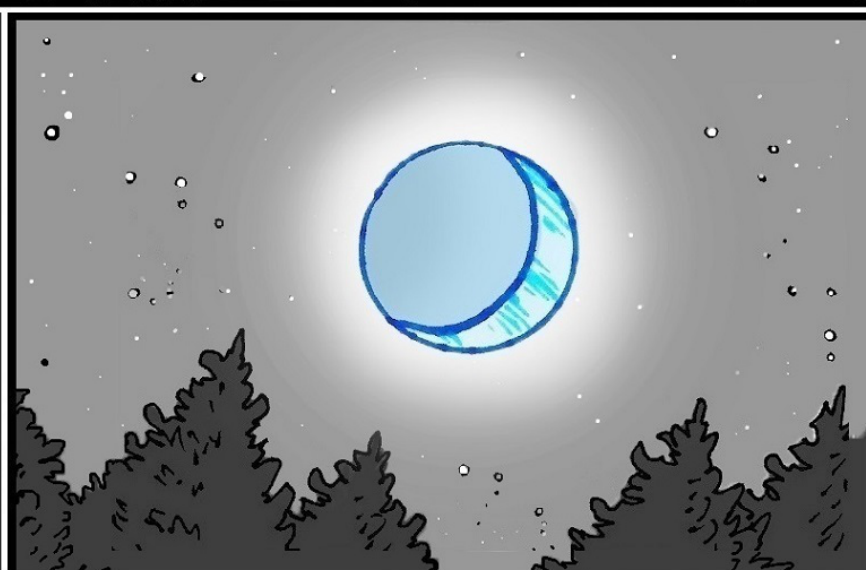
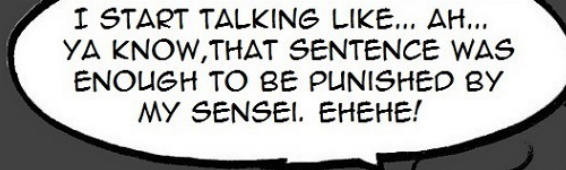
I UNDERSTAND.

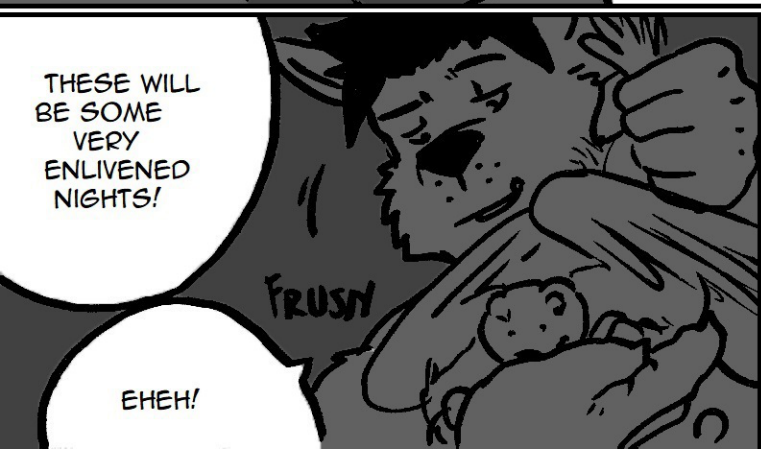
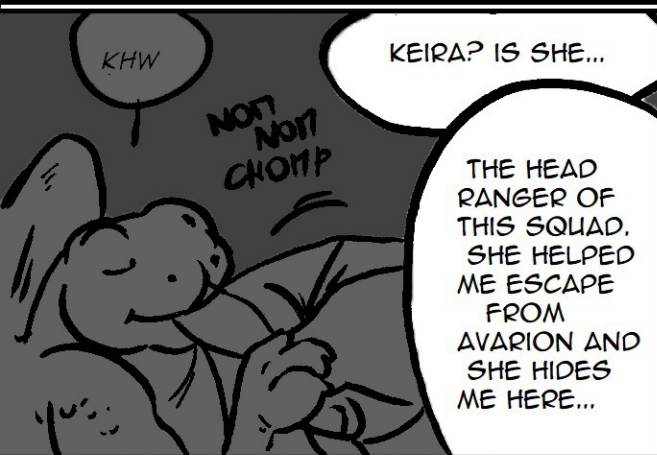
AH...

YES, I'VE ALWAYS
BEEN A SOLDIER.
MY LIFE WAS PUT
ON A PATH BEFORE
I COULD EVEN
CHOOSE... I HAD NO
WAY TO MAKE A
DIFFERENT CHOICE
FROM THE ONES
THEY... SHOWED ME.
SO, YES...
I KNOW WHAT
YOU FEEL.

BUT I AM A SOLDIER,
A WARRIOR OF THE 5
CLANS! MY WAY
LEADS ME TO FIGHT
THE GOLDEN LEGIONS.
TO PROTECT THE
FREEDOM OF THIS
WORLD FROM THE
TYRANT... SO...

IT IS MY CHOICE.
YES... I CHOOSE
THIS! AND NOT
BECAUSE THIS IS
WHAT THE CLAN
WANTS ME TO
CHOOSE.



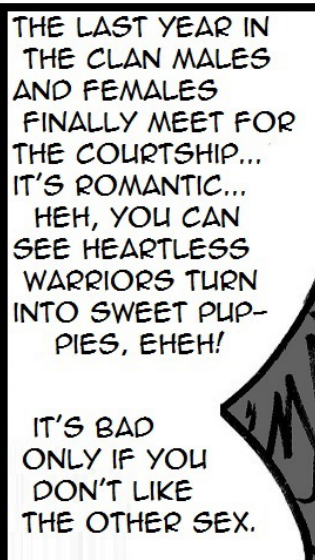




T-THIRTY TWO
MATES?!

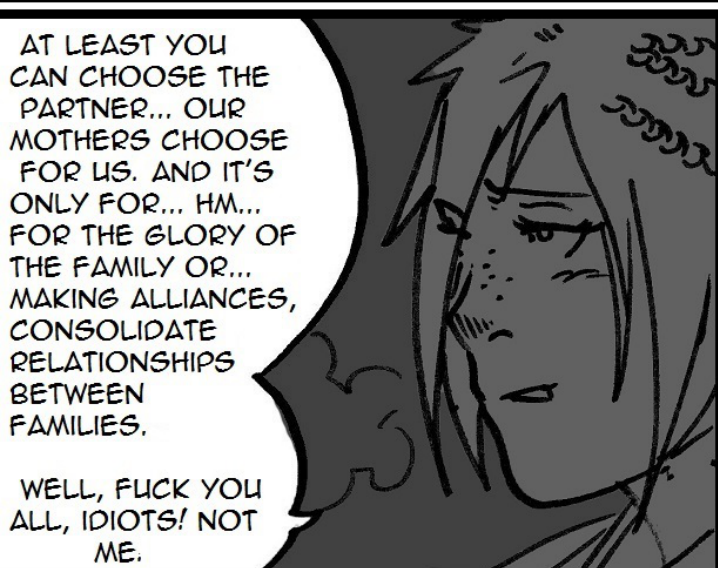
YES, BUT ONLY FEW
OF THEM WERE...
LOVERS, YA
KNOW?

...BY
THE
STARS!



THE LAST YEAR IN
THE CLAN MALES
AND FEMALES
FINALLY MEET FOR
THE COURTSHIP...
IT'S ROMANTIC...
HEH, YOU CAN
SEE HEARTLESS
WARRIORS TURN
INTO SWEET PUP-
PIES, EHEH!

IT'S BAD
ONLY IF YOU
DON'T LIKE
THE OTHER SEX.



AT LEAST YOU
CAN CHOOSE THE
PARTNER... OUR
MOTHERS CHOOSE
FOR US. AND IT'S
ONLY FOR... HM...
FOR THE GLORY OF
THE FAMILY OR...
MAKING ALLIANCES,
CONSOLIDATE
RELATIONSHIPS
BETWEEN
FAMILIES.

WELL, FUCK YOU
ALL, IDIOTS! NOT
ME.



AH... ONE OF THE
THINGS I WILL NOT
MISS HERE IN
THE FOREST.

AHAHA! FUCK YES! SEE THE
POSITIVE SIDES OF THIS
RANGER LIFE. EHEHE



WILL YOUR SQUAD
ESCORT US UNTIL
WE'LL REACH THE
BATTLEFRONT?

YES, THAT'S
THE PLAN.

IT WILL NOT BE
SOON, YA' KNOW?

WELL... HEH...
NOT BAD, HUH?

YEAH!



IT MEANS WE
WILL MEET
AGAIN... IF
I CAN CONVINCE
THE GUARDS I
NEED YOUR
HELP AGAIN.

EHEH!
WOULD
BE GREAT,
AISLINN.



HAH...

HERE WE ARE!

AH, THE GUARDS ARE
STILL HERE, OF COURSE!
I SHOULD GO BEFORE
THEY SEE US HERE
LIKE THIS, EHEH!

RIGHT! LET ME COME BACK
TO THE TREES. AH... HEY!
IF... IF YOU WERE SERIOUS...

I MEAN, ABOUT...
SEEING EACHOTHER
AGAIN. AH...

IT'S FINE.



...



HEY, AISLINN?



YES?

TAP



AH...

JUST IN CASE
WE'LL NEVER...
MEET AGAIN...

I WISH YOU
GOOD LUCK.

WE BOTH DIDN'T
HAVE THE LIFE
WE WANTED, BUT
AT LEAST YOU
HAVE THE CHANCE
TO CHANGE IT
NOW...

I
REALLY
HOPE
YOU'LL BE
HAPPY.

TAP

THANKS,
AKIO.

AND TAKE
CARE OF THAT
RASCAL.

IF ANYONE TRIES TO
TAKE HIM AWAY FROM
YOU BECAUSE IT'S
FORBIDDEN, JUST TELL
THEM THAT YOU KNOW
A BIG SAIZU WOLF WHO
WILL MAKE THEM
CHANGE THEIR MIND!

THAT WILL
CERTAINLY PUT
YOU IN TROUBLE,
EHEH!

I'D BE FORCED TO
ESCAPE, AHHA! A
WOLF AND AN
ELVEN PRINCESS...
SOUNDS GOOD.

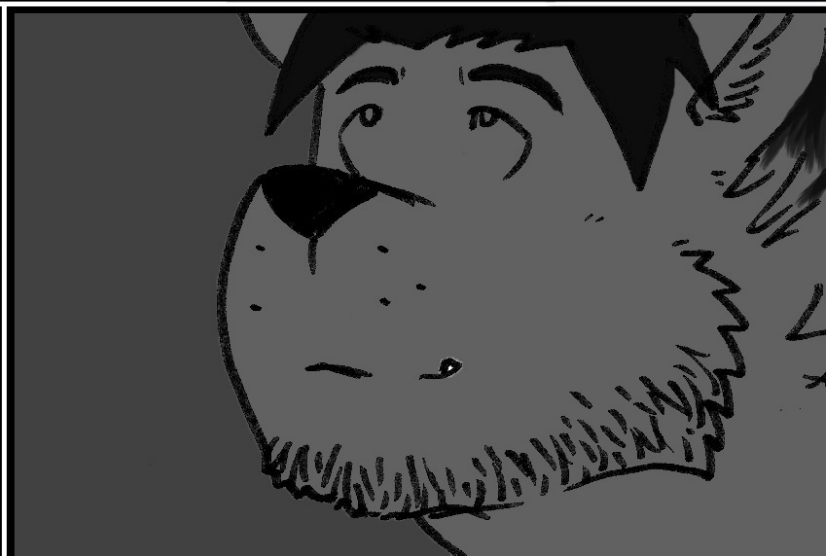
RIGHT?

AH... WELL
THEN... I...

FUSH

WAIT...

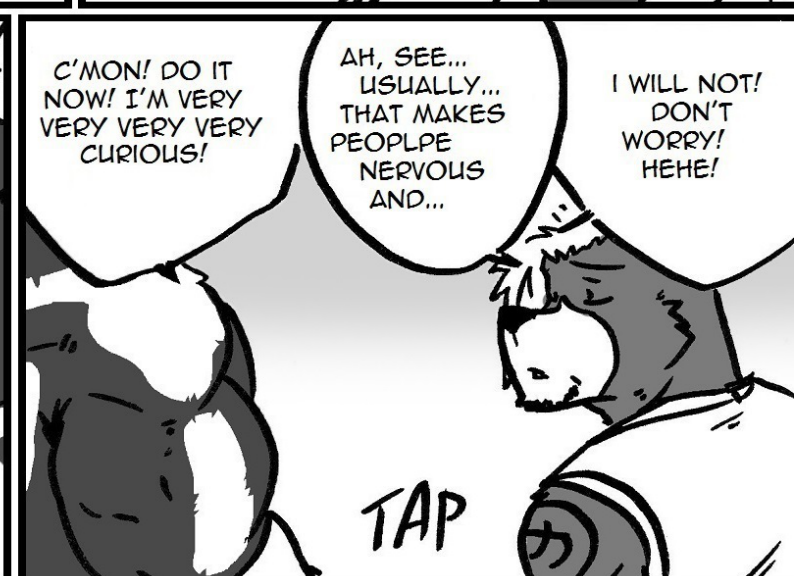
ONE
LAST
THING...



3 years Later

The Battlefront







YOU'RE 31 YEARS OLD, NO, 30! YOU HAD A BROTHER... A TWIN, MOST PROBABLY!

YOU LOST HIM, RECENTLY! EVEN IF YOU ARE TRAINED TO IGNORE THESE FEELINGS YOU ARE STILL SAD, NO, ANGRY ABOUT THAT... ISN'T IT?

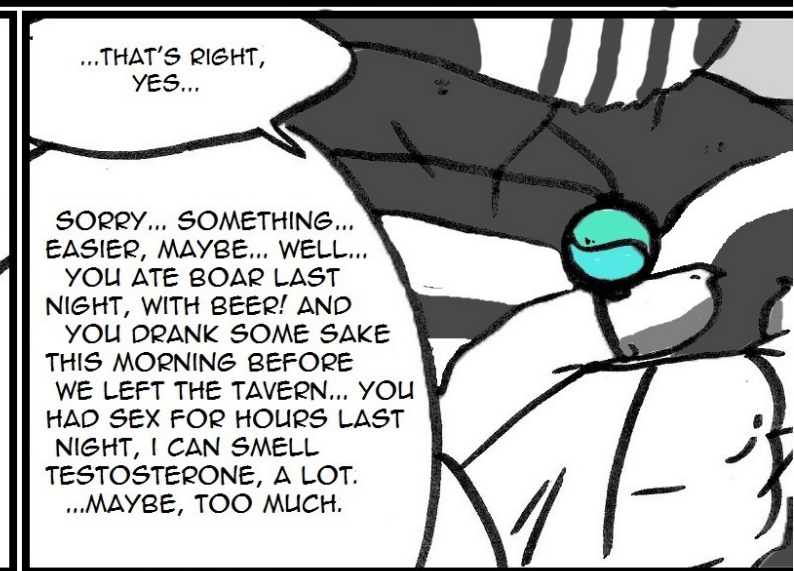


YES! HOW DO YOU...
YOUR NECKLACE, THE RINKU YOU HAVE. YOU KEEP LOOKING AT IT, EVERYTIME YOU GET SAD... IT HAS A DIFFERENT SMELL, EVEN IF WEAK I CAN SMELL A DIFFERENT TRACK ON IT, SIMILIAR TO YOURS BUT STILL DIFFERENT. A RINKU HAS TO BE SPLITTED IN TWO PARTS, ONE FOR EACH BROTHER, IT MEANS BROTHERLY LOVE... SO...



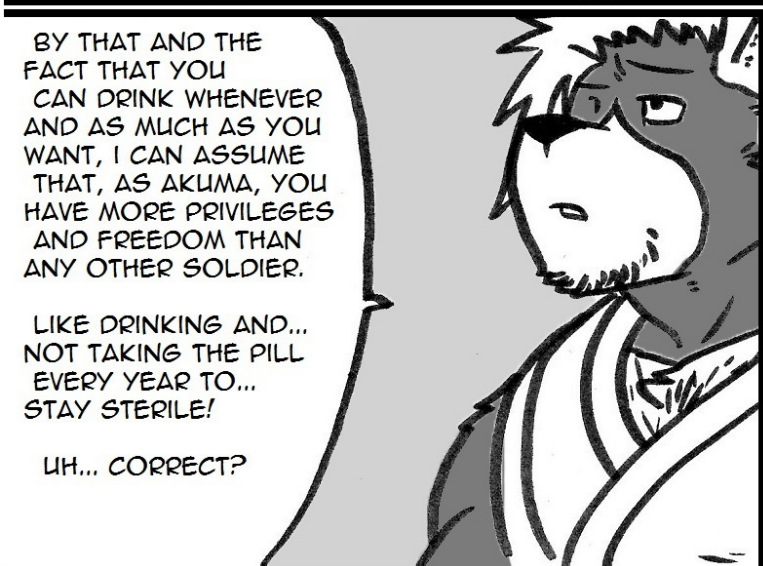
I KNOW HE DIED AND DID NOT JUST LEFT HIS PART OF IT TO YOU BECAUSE YOU KEEP LOOK AT IT AND BECOME SAD... YOU'RE EMOTIONALLY ATTACHED TO IT.

DON'T WORRY, IT WAS HARD TO SMELL YOUR FEELINGS, EVEN FOR ME! AND SINCE YOU DID NOT MENTIONED ANYTHING AND STOPPED TOUCHING IT WHENEVER I WAS LOOKING AT YOU I SUPPOSE YOU DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT...



...THAT'S RIGHT, YES...

SORRY... SOMETHING... EASIER, MAYBE... WELL... YOU ATE BOAR LAST NIGHT, WITH BEER! AND YOU DRANK SOME SAKE THIS MORNING BEFORE WE LEFT THE TAVERN... YOU HAD SEX FOR HOURS LAST NIGHT, I CAN SMELL TESTOSTERONE, A LOT. ...MAYBE, TOO MUCH.



BY THAT AND THE FACT THAT YOU CAN DRINK WHENEVER AND AS MUCH AS YOU WANT, I CAN ASSUME THAT, AS AKUMA, YOU HAVE MORE PRIVILEGES AND FREEDOM THAN ANY OTHER SOLDIER.

LIKE DRINKING AND... NOT TAKING THE PILL EVERY YEAR TO... STAY STERILE!

UH... CORRECT?



...CORRECT.



I'M SORRY, SUJI, I DIDN'T WANT TO BE...

NO, NO! THAT WAS... WOW! HEHE! WELL... IS THAT ALL YOU CAN SEE?

WOFF... NO...



YOU... WELL...

YOU'RE EXTROVERT. SELF ASSURED, OUTGOING AND... EFFUSIVE.

THAT'S WHY PEOPLE LIKE YOU..



YOU ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THAT, AND NOBODY EVER TRIED TO MAKE YOU ANGRY OR REFUSE YOU... BECAUSE ANYONE CAN SMELL IT ON YOU... YOU ARE STRONGER THAN THEM... YOU'RE DANGEROUS! NOBODY MAKES YOU ANGRY OR BOTHERS YOU... WELL... THAT WARPAINT HELPS TO CONFIRM THEIR DOUBTS.



WOW...

...AHM ...D-DID YOU DO THIS TO SOMEONE ELSE BEFORE?

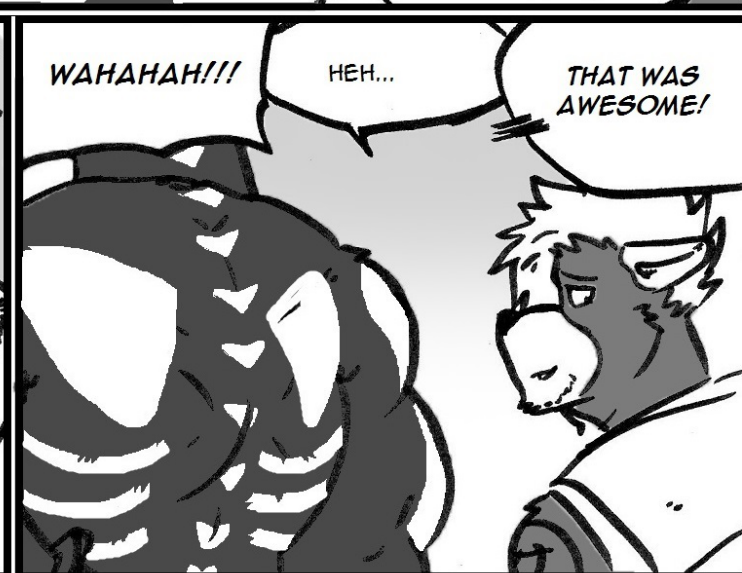
YES SIR, I TOLD YOU!



...YOUR REACTION IS SURPRISINGLY... CALM! COMPARED TO THE ONE OF EVERYBODY ELSE.

WHY? WHAT DID THEY SAY WHEN YOU...?

ALWAYS THE SAME THINGS: "STAY AWAY FROM ME, YOU WEIRDO" OR: "FUCK YOU!"



WAHAHAH!!!

HEH...

THAT WAS AWESOME!



ALL TRUE! HEH! INCREDIBLE! ...WE JUST MET YESTERDAY AND YOU SMELLED ALL OF IT!

EHEH, YES.

COOL! HAHA!



HEY... HEH, IT'S TRUE... I AM... STRONG! VERY STRONG! AND... SKILLFULL! THE REASON WHY THEY CHOSE ME AS AKUMA! BUT... I'M NOT DANGEROUS FOR YOU. WE'RE ALLIED!

YES, I KNOW THAT, SUJI!



CAN YOU DO THIS TO EVERYONE? KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT HIM OR HER BY A SINGLE WHIFF?

YES! I ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THAT! ...WHEN I CAME HERE 7 YEARS AGO I KNEW I WANTED TO BE A TRACKER! MY ABILITIES WERE VERY USEFUL AS SPY.



THEN I DISCOVERED I WAS THE BEST TRACKER OF THE 5 CLANS.

THE BEST?

IN THE ENTIRE ARMY, YES!

WOFF... AND THAT'S... WELL...

I-IT'S A GREAT HONOR!
IT REALLY IS, BUT...
I'M VERY REQUIRED
ALL OVER THE
BATTLEFRONT BECAUSE
OF THAT! I ALWAYS
HAVE TO TRAVEL.

WELL...I CAN'T TALK
ABOUT THE AKUMA
TO YOU BUT... I
CAN SAY IT'S THE
SAME FOR MANY
OF US!

A LIFE ON
THE ROAD!
EHEH! I
KNOW HOW
IT FEELS.

DO YOU REALLY
NEED ME FOR THIS
MISSION? I MEAN...
WITH YOUR
ABILITIES YOU
CAN FIND AKIO
WITHOUT MY
HELP. EHEHE!

WELL... I HAVE
THAT PROBLEM,
REMEMBER?

RIGHT... I KNOW VERY
LITTLE ABOUT IT! THE
SPYMASTER JUST
MENTIONED THE FACT
THAT YOU CAN'T FIGHT
BUT... I DON'T KNOW
WHY.

OH...

HE MENTIONED
AN ACCIDENT...
WHAT HAPPENED?

I CAN'T SEE SCARS
ON YER BODY.

WOFF...
WELL...

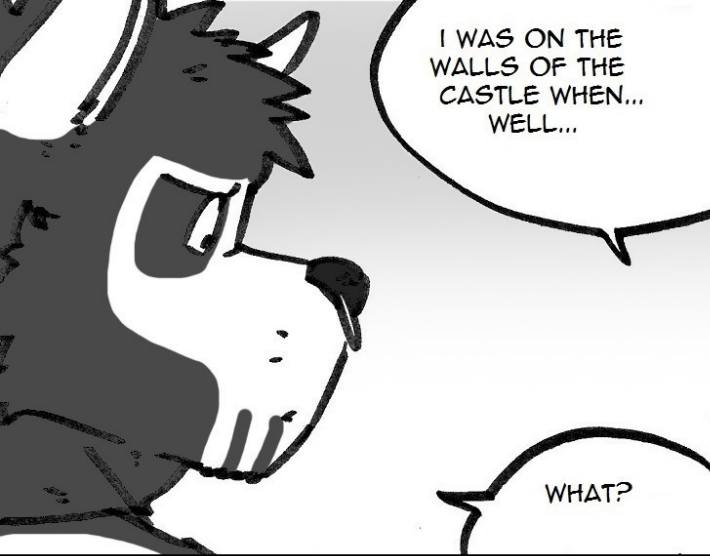
LAST YEAR... THE NIGHT
OF THE GREAT BATTLE.

I WAS
INVESTIGATING
SOME RECENT
SIGHTINGS OF
ENEMY SPIES NEAR
THE CASTLE OF THE
ALPHA MALE. THERE
WAS A BEGINNER
WITH ME...
TAKADA.
A SPY.

THE ALPHA MALE WAS
PARANOID, HE FEARED
FOR HIS LIFE EVERYDAY.
AND FOR GOOD REASON.

THESE SPIES ATTACKED THE
CASTLE. EVEN IF THEY COVERED
THEIR SMELL I FOUND THEM...
THEY WERE HUMANS. THEY
CLIMBED THE WALLS OF
THE CASTLE WHEN I
ARRIVED THERE.

THE ALPHA MALE WAS
THEIR TARGET, BUT HE WAS
LEADING THE ARMY... THEY
MISSED THEIR CHANCE.
SO, INSTEAD, THEY KILLED
HIS RIGHT-HAND
MAN. AH...



I WAS ON THE
WALLS OF THE
CASTLE WHEN...
WELL...

WHAT?



...SOMEONE
...SOMETHING,
PUSHED ME
DOWN...

YOU MEAN...
ONE OF THESE
SPIES?



... THE TRUTH IS... THAT IT'S THE
ONLY EXPLANATION FOR THAT.

SO... YES! I DIDN'T SEE IT! I
SAW HIS FOOTPRINTS ON THE
SNOW, COMING AT ME, BUT...

I DIDN'T SEE IT! AND...

IT PUSHED ME DOWN OFF
THE WALLS.

...I DIDN'T SEE IT.



I FELL FROM 8
METERS... AND...
I WOKE UP THE
NEXT DAY...



MY SKULL AND MY SPINE
WERE BROKEN: THEY
THOUGHT I WAS DEAD,
BUT A HEALER FOUND
ME AND SAVED MY LIFE.

HEALING MAGIC
WORKS ON VERY
NEW WOUNDS,
MINE WERE ONE
DAY OLD...
IT WAS TOO LATE
TO COMPLETELY
HEAL ME.



THE REASON WHY
I CAN'T FIGHT IS
BECAUSE WHENEVER
I FEEL PAIN, I...
I FREEZE BRIEFLY.

IT'S LIKE MY HEAD IS
GOING TO EXPLODE,
I CAN'T SEE AND
CAN BARELY MOVE.
SO... WELL...



FUCK!

IT ONLY LASTS FOR A
FEW SECONDS, NOTHING
MORE... BUT IT'S A BIG
PROBLEM! I THOUGHT THEY
WOULD'VE CLASSIFIED ME
AS UNSUITABLE, AND SEND
ME AWAY FROM THE
BATTLEFRONT, BACK TO
CLAN CHIKARA...

FORTUNATELY,
MY PROBLEM
DID NOT
COMPROMISE
MY NOSE, SO...

HERE I AM.



THEY LET
YOU STAY!

YEAH, THANK THE GREAT OOKAMI!
AND... FORTUNATELY TRACKERS
DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT OFTEN,
SO... IT'S OK.

WE'RE ALMOST THERE, AKARU!

YEAH, I CAN SMELL IT.

WHERE SHOULD WE START?

LET'S SEE THE PLACE WHERE THE FIRE STARTED: AKIO'S TENT.

SECTOR 23

STOP FLAUNTING JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE NEW ARMOR! YOU DIDN'T DESERVE THIS PROMOTION.

YOU'RE JUST JEALOUS, ARIMA!

GRRR...

I DIDN'T ASK FOR IT, THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARDS IN THIS SECTOR DIED IN THE FIRE, AND SOMEONE HAD TO REPLACE HER.

FRUSH

EXACTLY!

C'MON, DON'T BLAME ME! I THINK IT WAS A CASUAL CHOICE BETWEEN ALL THE GUARDS.

YEAH, AND BECAUSE OF THAT, THEY PROMOTED YOU — WHO CAME HERE JUST 2 YEARS AGO — WHILE I'VE BEEN A GUARD FOR 10 YEARS...

OH, BY THE GREAT OOKAMI...

SORRY. WHAT REALLY BOTHERS ME IS THE FACT THAT A GUARD DIED, AND NO ONE KNOWS WHAT REALLY HAPPENED THAT NIGHT!

PEOPLE DIED, THERE WAS A FIRE, THAT HUMAN CORPSE... AND NO ONE KNOWS ANYTHING!

WELL, NOW THAT I'M THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARDS OF THIS SECTOR I COULD START ASKING SOME QUESTIONS.





EXACTLY AS
I REMEMBERED IT...

THEY ORDERED TO LEAVE
IT EXACTLY LIKE IT WAS
TO HELP THE TRACKERS...
HM... TO HELP ME.

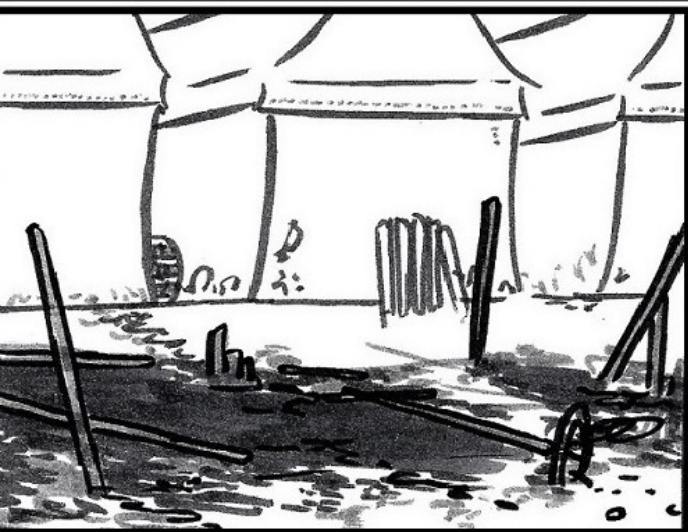


HOW DO
YOU KNOW?

IT'S THE STANDARD
PRACTICE.

WOFF...
OK.

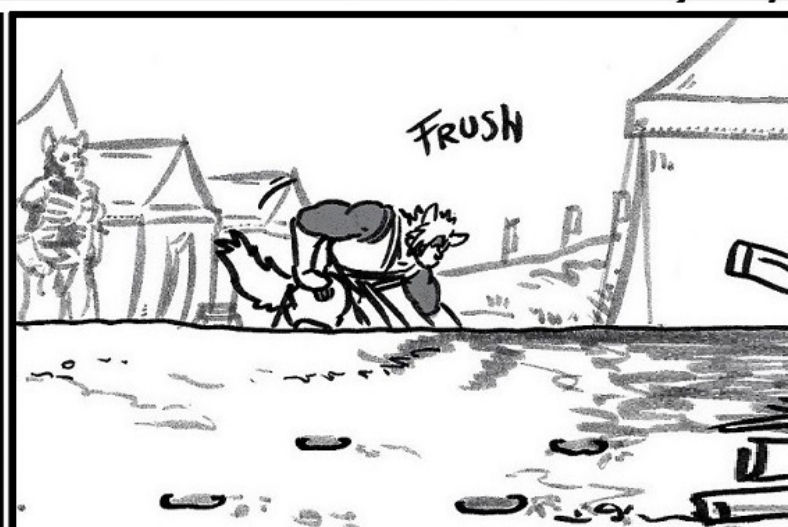
TAP



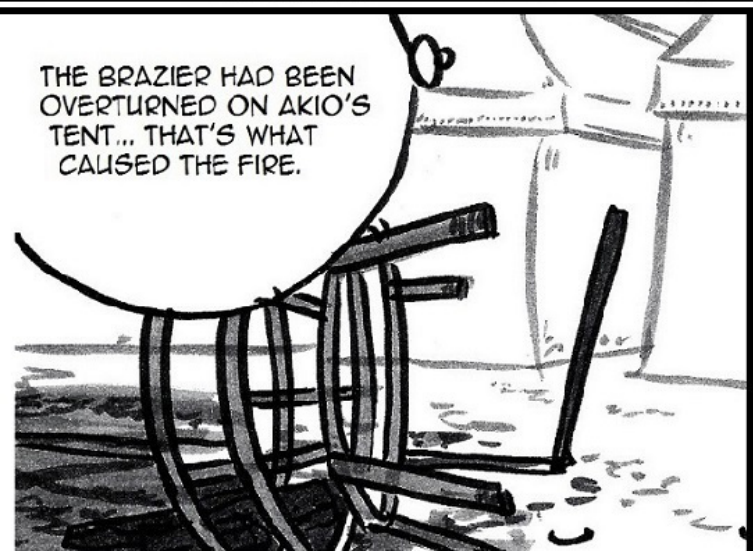
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF



SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF



FRUSH



THE BRAZIER HAD BEEN
OVERTURNED ON AKIO'S
TENT... THAT'S WHAT
CAUSED THE FIRE.



SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF

EVERYTHING HE
HAD WAS IN THIS
TENT... LOOKS
LIKE HE HAD
MANY BOOKS
AND A BED...
HIS DIARY
WAS FOUND
IN THE MUD.

HE TRIED TO SAVE
IT FROM THE FIRE.

THERE ARE NO
SIGNS OF
BURNING ON IT,
IT FELL IN THE
MUD HERE AND
HE LEFT IT...

THERE ARE
FIGHTING SIGNS
ALL OVER THE
PLACE, AND
BLOOD, OF
COURSE...

THAT LITTLE
BLOOD STAIN
HAS NOT AKIO'S
SMELL.

THE HUMAN
DIED HERE, THE
GROUND
ABSORBED THE
BLOOD...

THE FIRE BURNED
HIS TENT AND THE
ONE NEXT TO IT!
THE GUARDS PUT
OUT THE FIRE
AFTER THAT...

SNIFF SNIFF

UNFORTUNATELY
FOR THE WOLF WHO
WAS SLEEPING HERE.
THEY REMOVED
THE BODY.

BONES... HE... NO,
SHE BURNED IN
HER BED. SHE
DIDN'T WAKE UP.

HOW? SHE COULDN'T
DIE BECAUSE OF THE
SMOKE, THE FIRE
BROKE OUT VERY
QUICKLY. AND...

WHAT'S THIS WEIRD
SMELL ALL OVER
THIS PLACE?



WHAT
NOW?



THERE'S A
WEIRD SMELL
HERE,
SOMETHING..
AROMATIC!
CAN'T YOU
FEEL IT?



NOT MUCH, WHEN I
CAME HERE THE
DAY AFTER THE
FIRE IT WAS
PRETTY STRONG!
COULD IT BE AKIO
USED IT TO COVER
HIS SMELL?

HM... PROBABLY.



C'MON, FIND
HIS TRACKS!
I WANNA
KNOW WHERE
HE WENT!

WOFF...

FIGHTING SIGNS ALL
OVER THE PLACE...

FORTUNATELY, THEY
DIDN'T CONTAMINATE
THE SCENE...

BUT I CAN'T USE
JUST THESE FEW
SIGNS...

I NEED MORE
INFORMATIONS.

Fush

SNIFF
SNIFF

WOLF'S BLOOD,
THE TRACK IS WEAK!

AKIO'S BLOOD...

HIS
BLOOD?

NOT MUCH.

CAN'T YOU USE ITS SMELL
TO FOLLOW THE TRACKS?

OF
COURSE
I CAN.

GIVE ME A
MOMENT...

SURE!

Fush

BLOOD... FROM THE HUMAN
THEY FOUND DEAD...

I WONDER IF...

HM...

I WONDER IF IT'S
THE SAME SPY...
FROM THAT NIGHT...

THE NIGHT OF
MY... ACCIDENT.

HAH...
ALRIGHT...

HE WENT
THAT WAY.

WOW! SO YOU
REALLY ARE THE
BEST TRACKER
IN THE ARMY!

WHEN I CAME HERE THE
DAY AFTER THE FIRE,
THEY COULDN'T EVEN
FIND HIS TRACKS, AND
YOU FOUND THEM IN A
COUPLE OF MINUTES!

TAP

YOU SAID THIS
AROMATIC SMELL WAS
STRONGER THE DAY
AFTER THE FIRE,
MAYBE THAT'S WHY.

I CAN BARELY SMELL IT RIGHT
NOW, BUT, YEAH! MAYBE SOME
OF THE MEDIC'S HERBS WERE
HERE IN A BARREL AND BURNED,
HM... I HAVE NO IDEA! AREN'T
YOU THE SMART ONE?
EHEHE!

WE'RE NOT HERE
TO INVESTIGATE
THOUGH, I'M
SURE THE ONES
WHO DID IT
ALREADY KNOW
WHAT THIS IS.

HM... RIGHT.

SOLDIERS!

TAP

HM?

OH!
CAPTAIN.

I'M CAPTAIN TAKESHI. SORRY, I COULD'VE
APPROACHED YOU SOONER, BUT THEN I
SAW THAT YOU WERE ALREADY AT WORK.
ARE YOU HERE TO INVESTIGATE
ABOUT THE FIRE?

FUSH

TAP



WELL...

NO, I'M
SORRY,
CAPTAIN!



I'M AKARU, AND HE'S SUJI.
I'M HERE AS TRACKER, SIR.
WE CAME TO FIND THE
WOLF WHO DISAPPEARED:
AKIO. THIS IS OUR WARRANT.

A MISSION OF LEVEL
2! I WONDER IF...
WELL... OF COURSE IT
HAS SOMETHING TO
DO WITH THE
DEAD HUMAN.
RIGHT?



NOBODY HAS TOLD
ANYONE ANYTHING ABOUT
THAT NIGHT.
I CAN'T EVEN TELL MY
SOLDIERS WHAT HAPPENED,
THEY WANNA KNOW WHY
PEOPLE DIED.

THEY'LL BE
REMEMBERED.

OH...



I'M SURE SOMEONE
ELSE IS INVESTIGATING
ALREADY.

THEY'LL BE
REMEMBERED, YEAH...
BUT IT'S BEEN 13 DAYS
AND NOBODY HAS
MOVED A FINGER!
THEY JUST TOLD US TO
STAY AWAY FROM THAT
ZONE 'TIL SOMEONE CAME...



DID YOU KNOW AKIO?

OF COURSE, EVERYONE
KNEW HIM HERE.



HE WAS...
WELL...
INCREDIBLE!

EVERYONE
LOVED HIM.



I CAN'T BELIEVE HE DID
WHAT HE DID... EVERYONE
IN THIS SECTOR IS
SHOCKED! BUT I'M SURE
YOU'RE GOING TO
FIND HIM AND BRING HIM
TO JUSTICE FOR
THAT.

OF COURSE, CAPTAIN.



THAT'S
WHY WE'RE
HERE.



YOU SAID NOBODY
CAME TO
INVESTIGATE.

YOU ARE
THE FIRST
ONES.

THEY WERE HERE THAT
NIGHT, TOOK THE BODIES
AWAY, AND SAID TO WAIT
BECAUSE SOMEONE
WOULD COME...

'TIL THEN THE AREA
IN FRONT OF AKIO'S
TENT WAS OFF LIMITS.

IT WAS AN ORDER
FROM A SPY, SO...



WOFF... I
UNDERSTAND.



I'M SURE THEY'LL
SEND SOMEONE
ELSE SOON,
CAPTAIN.



YEAH...
WELL, THANKS FOR
YOUR TIME,
CAPTAIN TAKESHI.

YES, OH! IF YOU WANT TO
TALK WITH SOMEONE WHO
KNEW AKIO VERY WELL,
TALK TO THE MEDIC OF
THIS SECTOR.



RIGHT,
THE MEDIC.

...SHURUI. THE SANITARIUM IS UNDER THE
RIDGE, FOLLOW THE ROAD TO THE NORTH.
THE SPIES CARRIED THE HUMAN BODY
THERE THAT NIGHT, BUT THEY TOLD SHURUI
TO NOT TELL ANYONE ABOUT IT.



ALSO, HE AND AKIO WERE
RECRUITS IN THE SAME
TROOP, SO IF YOU NEED
TO KNOW SOMETHING,
I'M SURE HE WILL
ANSWER TO A SPY.

AH, AS WE SAID... WE'RE
NOT HERE TO INVESTIGATE.

...UNFORTUNATELY.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR
TIME, SIR.

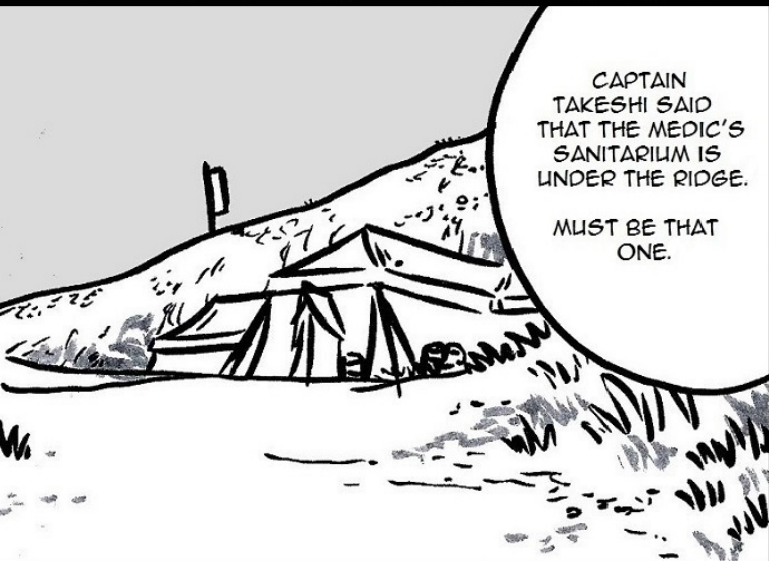


GOOD LUCK.

TAP









THEY TOLD ME YOU'RE THE BEST TRACKER IN THE WHOLE BATTLEFRONT BUT... TO BE HONEST... I THINK YOUR ABILITY TO EXECUTE ORDERS LEAVES MUCH TO BE DESIRED!

WOFF...



WE'RE ON A MISSION OF LEVEL 2, WE ALREADY KNOW WHERE AKIO WENT, HE CAN ESCAPE IF WE DON'T CATCH HIM! AND YOU WANNA STOP AND ASK A MEDIC... HM...

WHAT EXACTLY? SOMETHING THAT'S NOT EVEN RELATED TO OUR MISSION.

SORRY, SIR. YOU'RE RIGHT, BUT...



I KNOW I'M WITH YOU JUST AS AN ESCORT IN CASE WE'LL HAVE TO FIGHT BUT... AT LEAST LET ME KNOW!

LET'S SAY THAT THIS THING...



...IT COULD BE RELATED TO THIS MISSION... THE... HUMAN THEY FOUND, THE ONE WITH THE TATTOOS. GOLDEN TATTOOS...

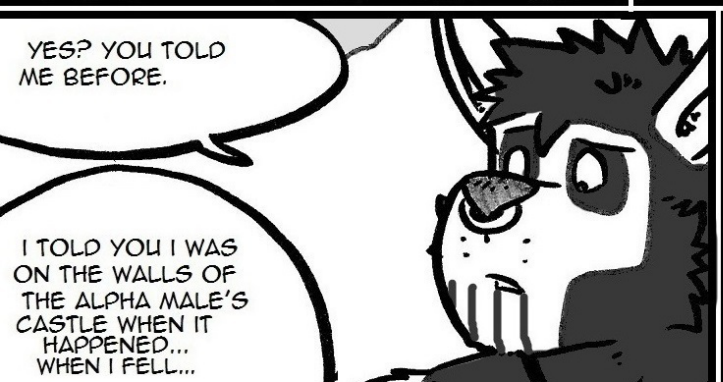
BUT... HOW?



WOFF... I'M...



AH... YOU KNOW ABOUT THE TRAUMA! IT FREEZES ME WHENEVER I FEEL PAIN...



YES? YOU TOLD ME BEFORE.

I TOLD YOU I WAS ON THE WALLS OF THE ALPHA MALE'S CASTLE WHEN IT HAPPENED... WHEN I FELL...



...AH ... I KNOW YOU WON'T BELIEVE ME.

BUT... I'M SURE SOMEONE PUSHED ME DOWN. I KNOW IT... I REMEMBER, THE MOMENT BEFORE I FELL... I SAW...



WHO? THE SPY?

... NO ... BUT ... I SAW ...THE FOOTPRINTS THAT APPROACHED ME, AND THEN ...IT PUSHED ME DOWN AND ...WOFF ...THE MEDIC SAID IT COULD'VE BEEN A FAKE MEMORY CAUSED BY THE TRAUMA...



BUT I'M SURE IT WAS NOT A DREAM OR A HALLUCINATION! THE ENEMY SPIES WHO WERE THERE THAT DAY, I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO SAW THEM!

I INVESTIGATED, AND OTHER WOLVES SAW THEM TOO! HUMANS, COVERED IN GOLDEN TATTOOS.



IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO SAY? DO YOU THINK IT COULD BE THE SAME INVISIBLE PERSON WHO PUSHED YOU DOWN FROM THE WALLS 2 YEARS AGO? MEGALOS NOW HAS MAGIC SPIES? WHAT DO YOU THINK SHE WAS DOING HERE THAT NIGHT? YOU...

SUJI, I...



...I HAVE TO BE SURE ABOUT IT. IT'S OK IF YOU WON'T BELIEVE ME ABOUT THE FACT THAT THE SPY WAS INVISIBLE, BUT BELIEVE ME WHEN I TELL YOU THAT IT COULD BE THE SAME ONE.



WOFF...PLEASE, DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT...

SORRY, AKARI, BUT...



REALLY? AN INVISIBLE PERSON?

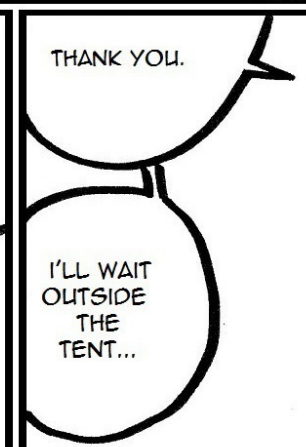
AFTER THAT MISSION I TRIED TO INVESTIGATE BUT THEY DIDN'T LET ME DO IT. THEY SAID I WAS EMOTIONALLY INVESTED BECAUSE... AH, NEVERMIND. I...



AH, GREAT OOKAMI... OK! ASK THE MEDIC ABOUT THE HUMAN CORPSE, MAYBE IT'S THE SAME SPY YOU WERE FOLLOWING THAT DAY.

TIME CLINGS. REMEMBER THAT!

IF THAT WILL MAKE YOU FOCUS MORE ON THIS MISSION, GET RID OF THIS WEIGHT!



THANK YOU.

I'LL WAIT OUTSIDE THE TENT...



NOW, WHERE DID I PUT THAT DAMN THING? I'M SURE IT WAS HERE!

AH, THERE YOU ARE!



HEY! IS ANYONE HERE?
MEDIC?

FUSH



YES, SURE, COME IN!

TAP





HM... NOON. AH, I JUST NEED A MINUTE, PLEASE.

W-WHAT DID YOU MEAN BEFORE? WITH "SOMETHING SHADY"?

TAP



AS I SAID, I NEED TO KNOW SOMETHING.

OK, BUT...



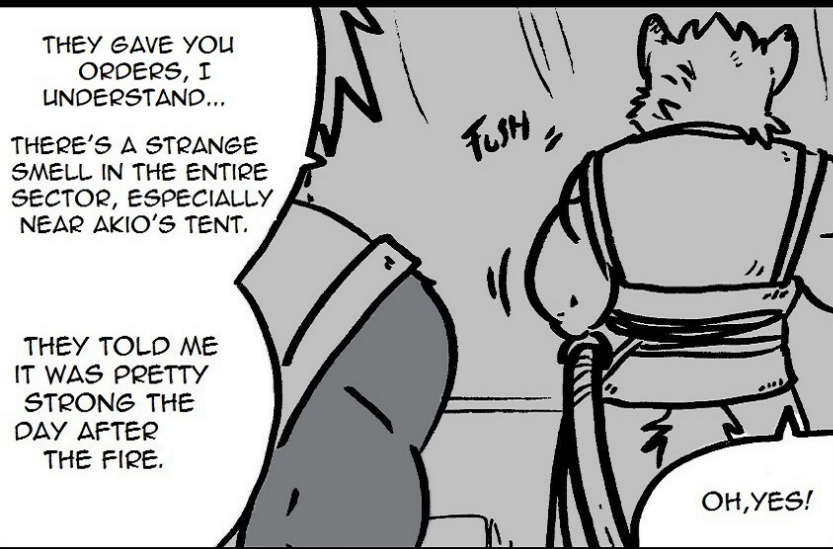
TOLD YOU, I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THAT HUMAN, I WISH I COULD HELP, BUT...

YOU SAW IT, RIGHT?



THE CORPSE.

AH... I SHOULDN'T TALK ABOUT IT.



THEY GAVE YOU ORDERS, I UNDERSTAND...

THERE'S A STRANGE SMELL IN THE ENTIRE SECTOR, ESPECIALLY NEAR AKIO'S TENT.

THEY TOLD ME IT WAS PRETTY STRONG THE DAY AFTER THE FIRE.

FUSH

OH, YES!



DARK STARDUST.

WHAT IS IT?

A SLEEPING DRUG.



SOME PEOPLE USE IT TO HELP SLEEP. ITS SMELL HAS BEEN VERY STRONG SINCE THAT NIGHT.



DO YOU KNOW WHY?

I DON'T. I HAVE SOME DOSES HERE TO GIVE TO THE SOLDIERS, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHY THERE WAS SO MUCH AROUND THIS SECTOR...



... BUT I'VE GIVEN IT TO PLENTY OF SOLDIERS SINCE THE GREAT BATTLE, INCLUDING THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARDS OF THIS SECTOR, WHO WAS SLEEPING IN THE TENT NEXT TO AKIO'S... SHE'LL BE REMEMBERED.

SHE'LL BE REMEMBERED.



LOOK, I REALLY AM IN A HURRY! I HAVE TO MEET THIS MERCHANT AT NOON AND I NEED SOME HERBS. SO, IF YOU'VE ANOTHER QUESTION...

FRUP



I WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THAT HUMAN!

THEY DRAGGED THE CORPSE HERE, YOU SAW IT!

Y-YES.



WHEN THE GUARDS BROUGHT THE BODIES HERE, I HAD TO TAKE CARE OF A WOLF WITH SERIOUS BURNS. I REALLY HAD NO TIME FOR THE HUMAN'S...

WOFF... I KNOW, I KNOW, JUST... TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW.



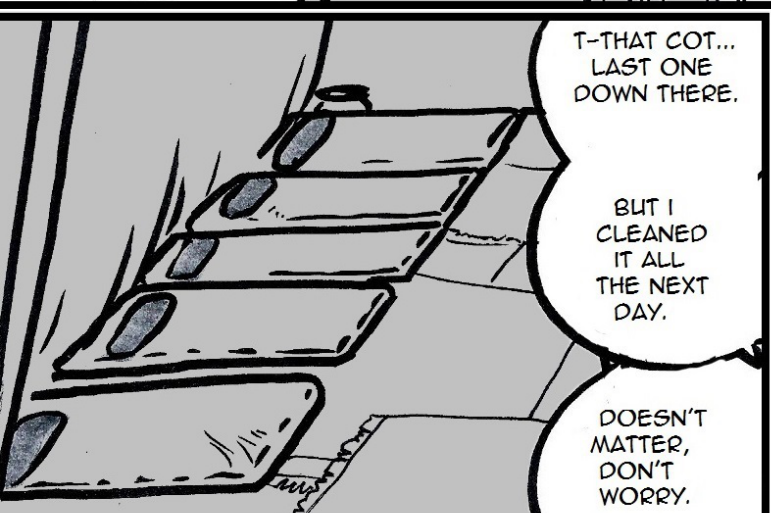
SHE WAS NAKED, AND... COVERED IN BLACK TATTOOS ALL OVER HER BODY. BEFORE I COULD EVEN APPROACH HER CORPSE, SOME SPIES CAME TO TAKE IT AWAY...

THE SAME NIGHT, I ASKED THE GUARDS ABOUT IT, AND THEY SAID THE SPIES ORDERED US TO STAY AWAY FROM THAT ZONE.



WHERE WAS THE BODY?

WHERE WAS IT?



T-THAT COT... LAST ONE DOWN THERE.

BUT I CLEANED IT ALL THE NEXT DAY.

DOESN'T MATTER, DON'T WORRY.



TAP



Fwsh



I NEVER FORGET A SMELL.



THIS IS NOT THE SAME.



WOFF...

OK, STOP LYING TO ME.



S-SORRY, I...

I AM THE BEST
TRACKER OF
THIS ARMY...

I CAN SMELL
WHEN SOMEONE
LIES BETTER
THAN ANYONE,
AND YOU'RE NOT
EVEN A GOOD
LIAR, MEDIC.



I-I-I AM NOT...
S-S-SURE
WHA...

YOU ARE STUTTERING AGAIN,
ARE YOU UNDER STRESS?

WHAT HAVE YOU
LIED ABOUT?

WHAT ARE YOU TRYING
TO HIDE?



UH!

WHAT DO YOU KNOW
ABOUT THIS?



I...

WHAT MORE DO YOU
KNOW ABOUT THAT HUMAN?

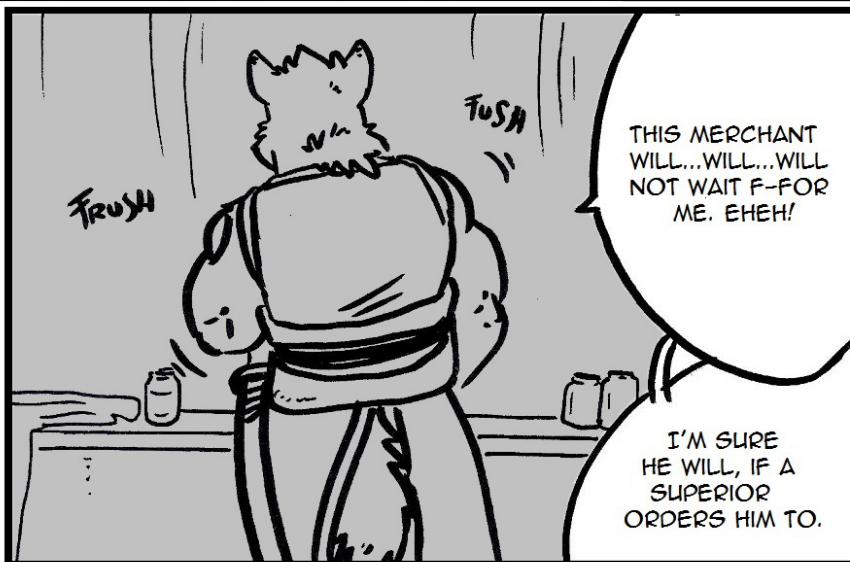


DO YOU
KNOW
WHERE
AKIO WENT?



R-R-REALLY,
I HAVE TO GO.

S-S-S-S...
SORRY!



THIS MERCHANT
WILL...WILL...WILL
NOT WAIT F-FOR
ME. EHEH!

I'M SURE
HE WILL, IF A
SUPERIOR
ORDERS HIM TO.



R-REALLY, I KNOW
N-N-NOTHING, SIR!
YOUR SPIES ALREADY
INTERROGATED ME
THE DAY AFTER THE
FIRE LIKE YOU ARE
NOW, AND EVERYONE
ELSE, AS WELL!

NO ONE KNOWS
ANYTHING ABOUT THIS.



HEY, WAIT!







ALL RIGHT!



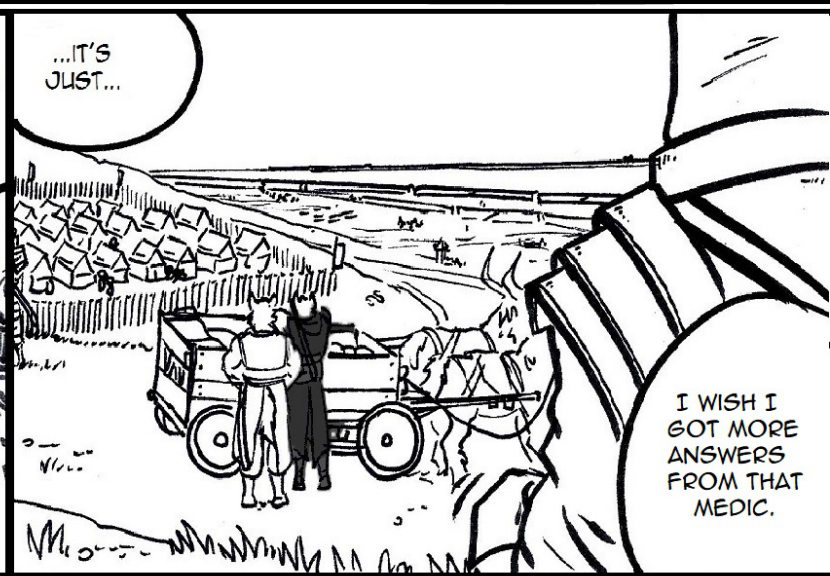
I'M SURE THERE'S MORE BEHIND THIS STORY.

THE MEDIC KNOWS SOMETHING...



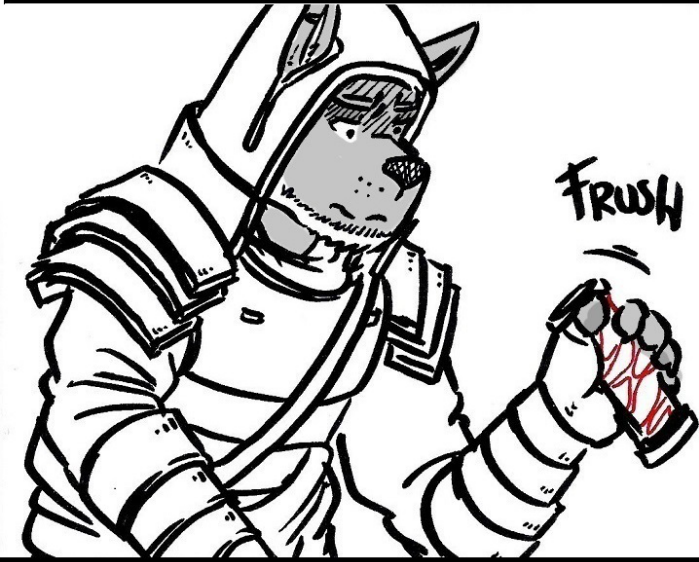
MAYBE THE SPIES WHO TOOK THE BODY TOLD HIM TO SAY NOTHING ABOUT THIS STORY.

THEY PROBABLY DID, YEAH... AND I CAN UNDERSTAND, IF A SPY FROM MEGALOS WAS HERE, THEY ARE SURELY INVESTIGATING.

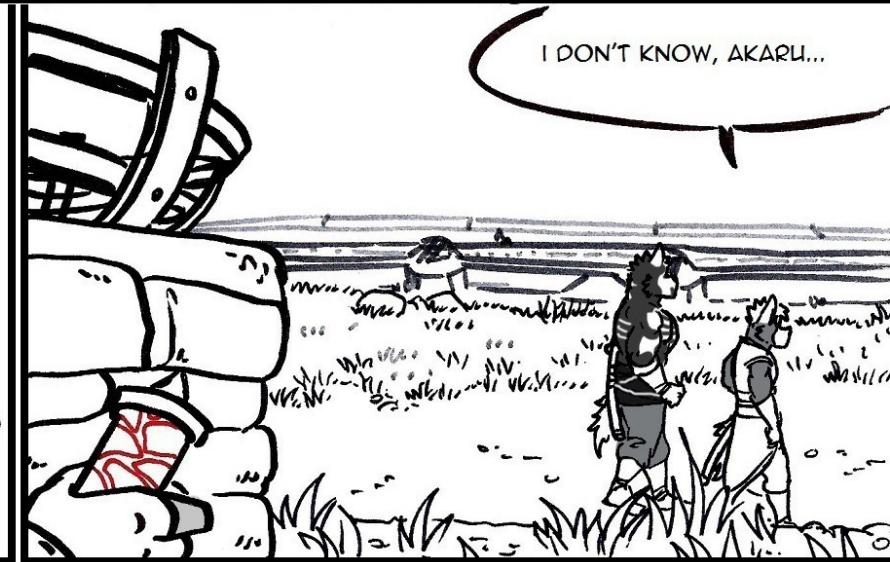


...IT'S JUST...

I WISH I GOT MORE ANSWERS FROM THAT MEDIC.



FRUSH



I DON'T KNOW, AKARU...



WHAT?

TAP

WELL...



WHEN YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO INVESTIGATE, I REPLIED SAYING THAT IT WAS OK, AS LONG AS IT WAS NOT A PROBLEM FOR THIS MISSION.

WOFF... I KNOW, SUJI! BUT IT WAS JUST A FEW MINUTES.

FOLLOWING AKIO'S TRACK,
FINDING HIM, BRINGING HIM
BACK HERE! THAT'S ALL WE
HAVE TO DO. THIS...
HM... INVESTIGATING,
SNOOPING AROUND...
WE DON'T HAVE THE
PERMISSION FOR THAT.

I'M AN AKUMA, AND
OUR DUTY IS ALSO TO
MAKE SURE THAT
EVERYONE IN THE 5
CLANS RESPECTS THE
RULES AND THE LAWS.

SO...HEH, THIS SITUATION
MAKES ME FEEL A BIT
NERVOUS, TO BE HONEST!

I'M NOT REALLY AT EASE
DOING THIS KIND OF STUFF...
SO... D-DON'T INVOLVE ME
IF YOU WANNA SNOOP!
OK?

I...

UH?

HAH!
HEY!

C'MERE!

TAP

TWHUMP

AHAH!
HELLO,
LIL'
GIRL!

W-WHAT
IS
THAT?

SHE'S YAJIRUSHI!
MY SYLVAN
DRACONID!

SHE'S BEAUTIFUL!

SCRATCH
SCRATCH ♡

...FALCONRY?
LIKE HUMANS?

THE PRIVILEGES OF BEING
A WOLF OF MY RANK!

FRESH

I MISSED YOU
SO MUCH, CUTIE! ♡

DOES EVERY AKUMA HAVE
ONE OF THESE?

SWIFF
SNFF
SNIFF

WE DON'T RELY ON
NORMAL DOVECOTES
AND MESSENGERS
LIKE ANY OTHER
SOLDIER, YES!



BY THE
GREAT
OOKAMI...
HEH!

HEY, LIL' GIRL!

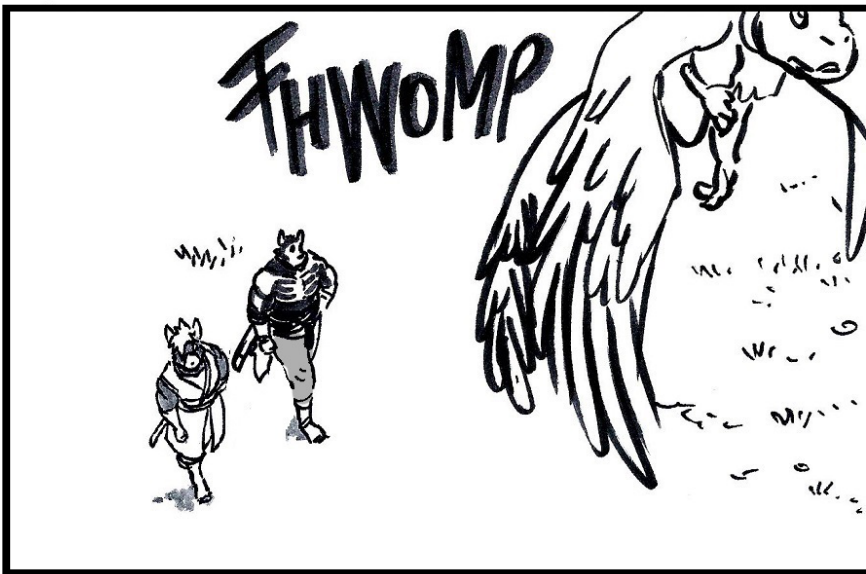
AH, OK YAJIRUSHI!



GO!!

KEWRR

FWHUP



FWHOMP



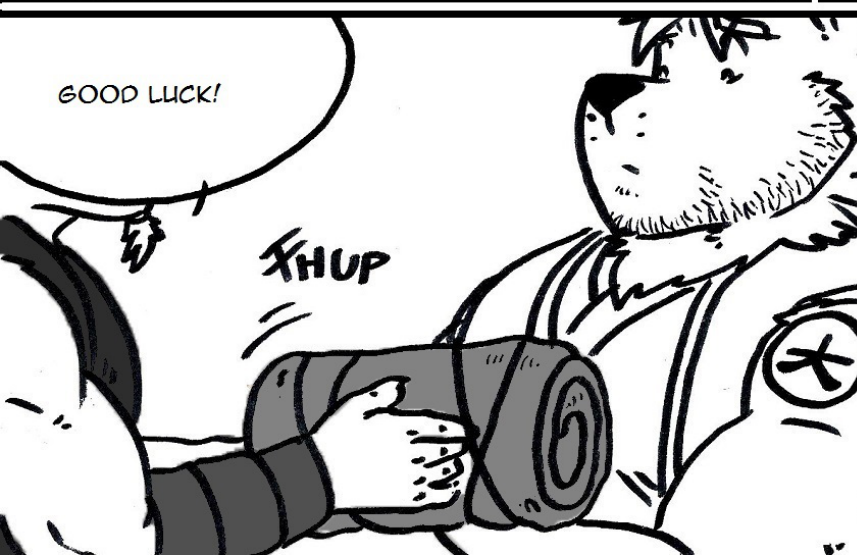
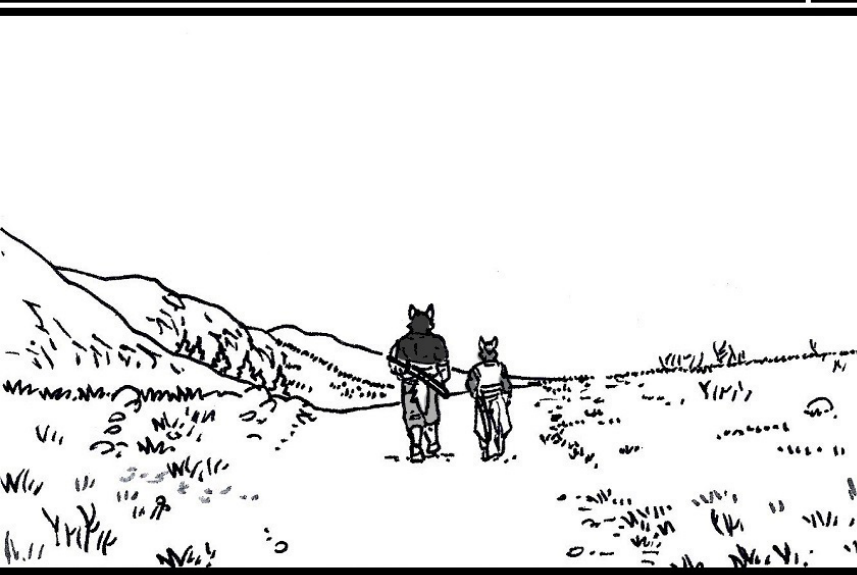
HEH!

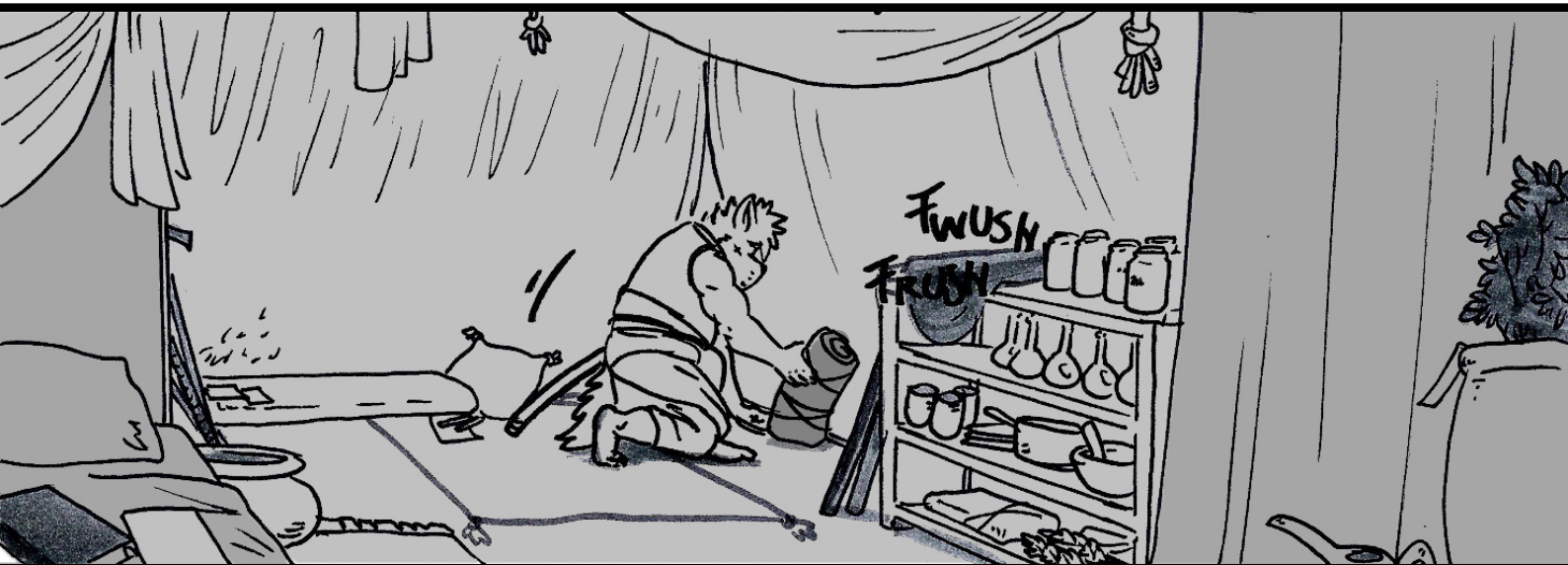
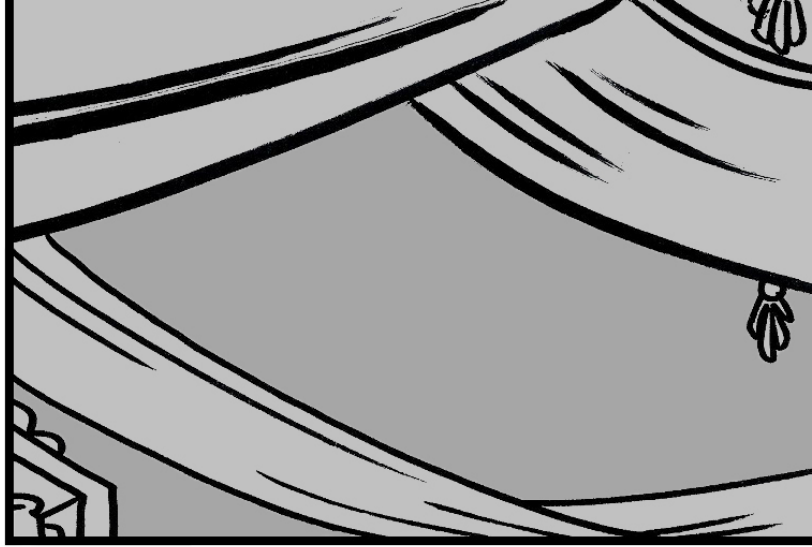
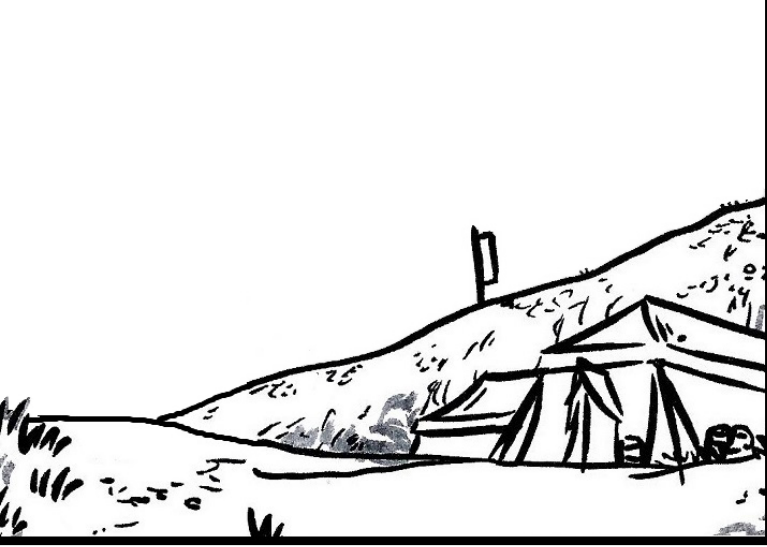
TAP



...OK ...THE
TRACK IS
WEAK...

GRAB





TO BE CONTINUED...