



Title
Author



Witch

Will Irma Taranea Cornelia Hay Lin

Part III.
A Crisis on Both Worlds
Volume 2



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Will Irma Terance Cornelia Hay Lin

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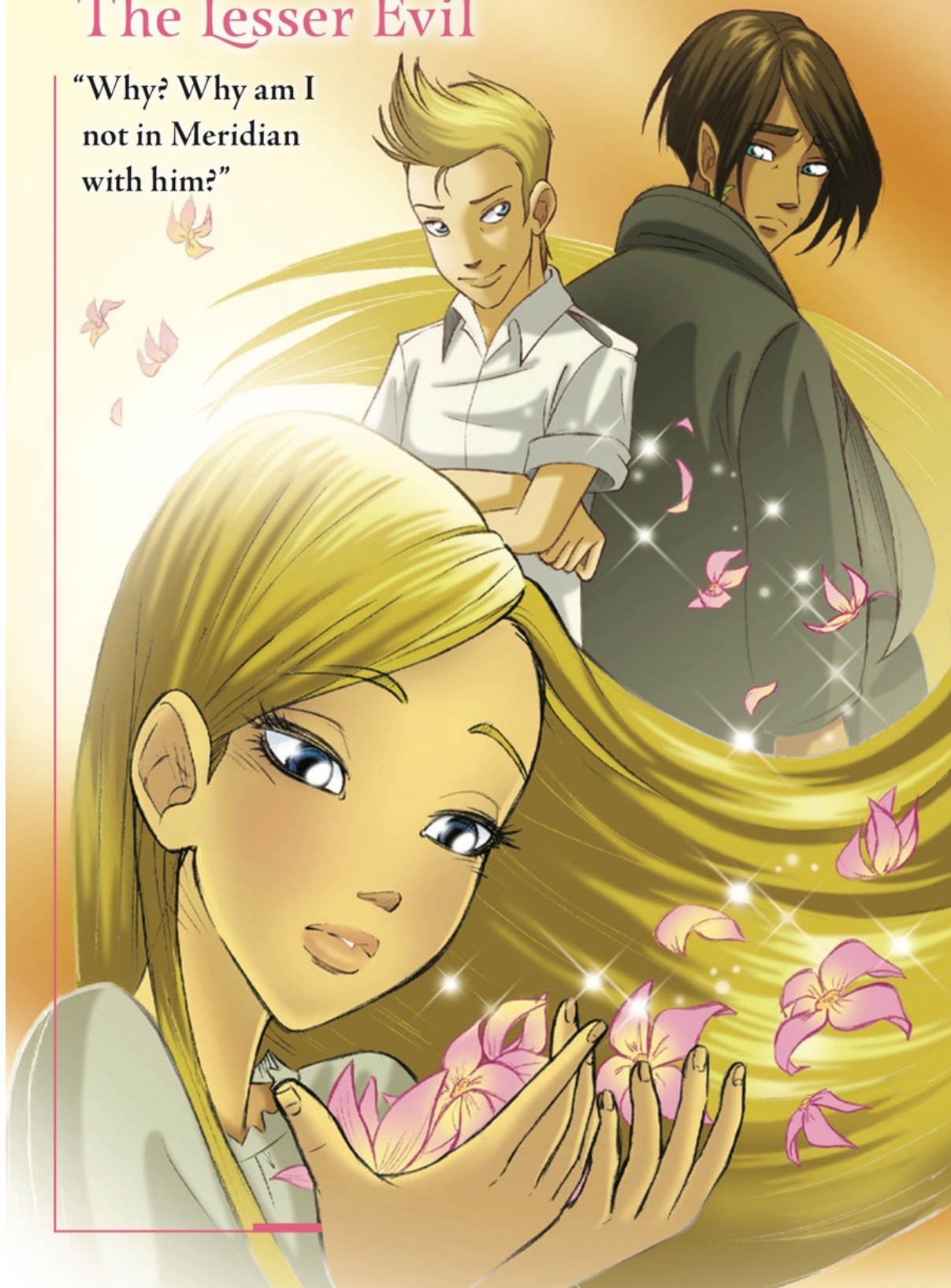
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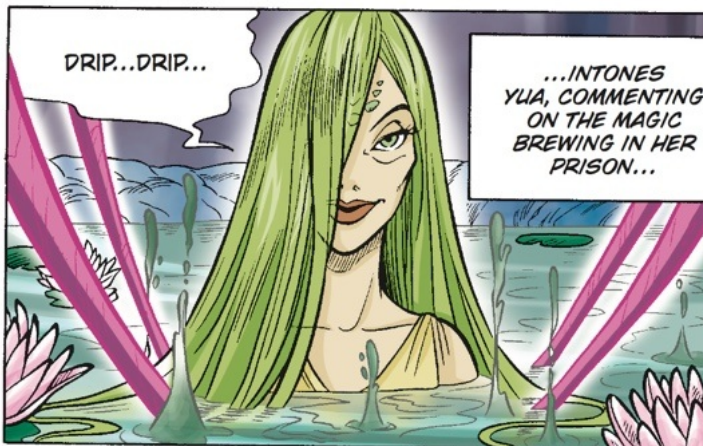
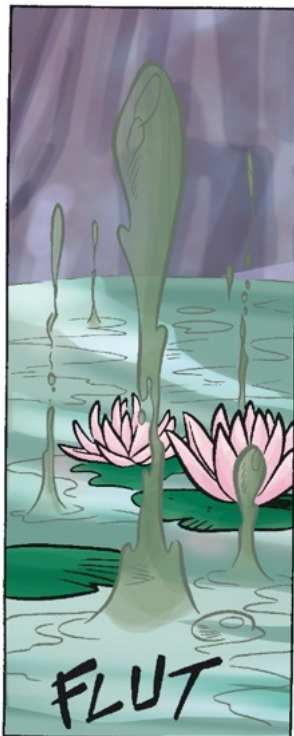




The Lesser Evil

“Why? Why am I
not in Meridian
with him?”





...INTONES
YUA, COMMENTING
ON THE MAGIC
BREWING IN HER
PRISON...



...THE BANSHEE RECITES,
AS THE DROPS TRICKLE UPWARD...





THEY'RE CHANGING THE
GUARD AT THE ONLY DOOR...



THE NEWCOMER'S
BEEN WARNED
NOT TO GET TOO
CLOSE TO THE
ARTIFICIAL POND...



THEY SAY BANSHEES LOVE TO
FEED ON MORTALS, FOR FUN
RATHER THAN HUNGER...



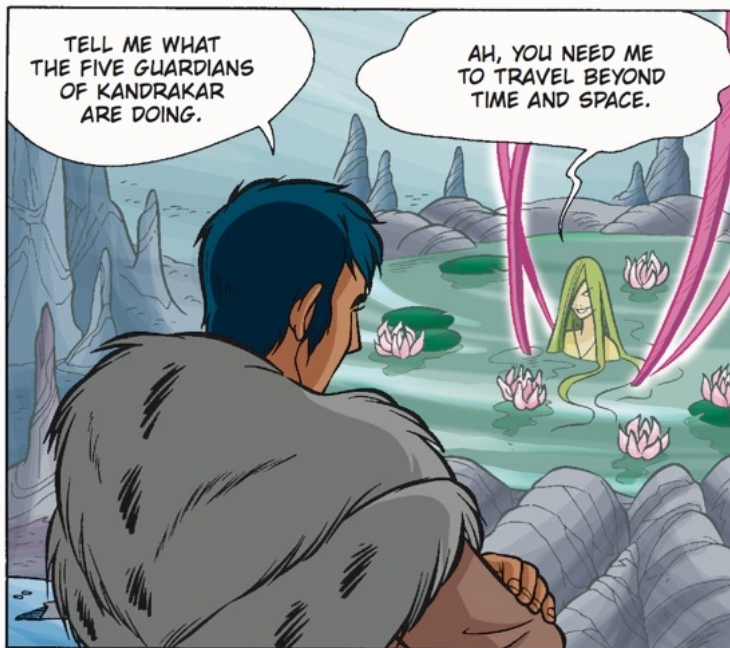
BE QUIET,
CREATURE!

BUT NO SNACKING
TODAY!



ARI! LORD OF ARKHANTA.
WHAT BRINGS YOU TO THE
DEPTHS OF THE SCARLET
STRONGHOLD?

I WANT
INFORMATION,
YUA, AND YOU
KNOW YOU CAN'T
DENY ME.



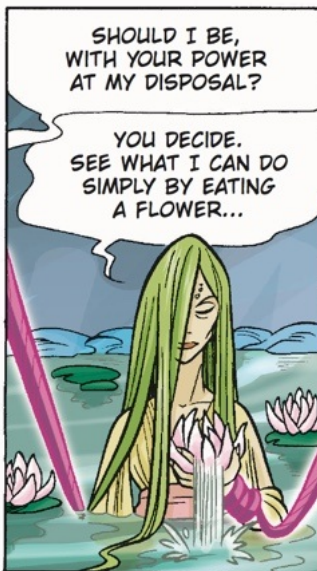
TELL ME WHAT
THE FIVE GUARDIANS
OF KANDRAKAR
ARE DOING.

AH, YOU NEED ME
TO TRAVEL BEYOND
TIME AND SPACE.



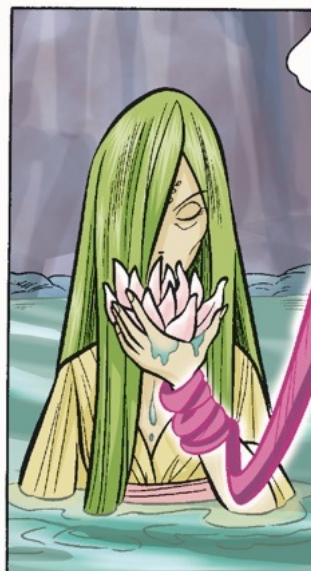
THERE'S NO TIME
TO LOSE. I'M SURE
THE ORACLE WILL
SEND THEM BACK
TO MY KINGDOM.

AND YOU WANT
TO BE PREPARED.
ARE YOU AFRAID
OF THEM?

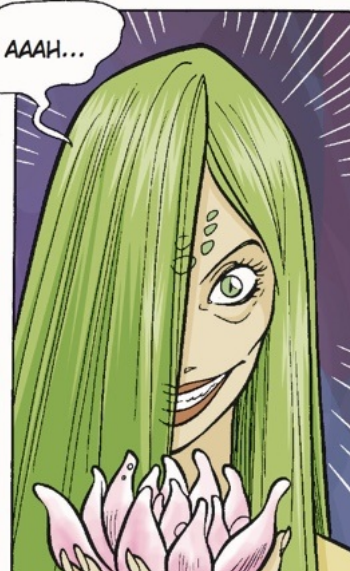


SHOULD I BE,
WITH YOUR POWER
AT MY DISPOSAL?

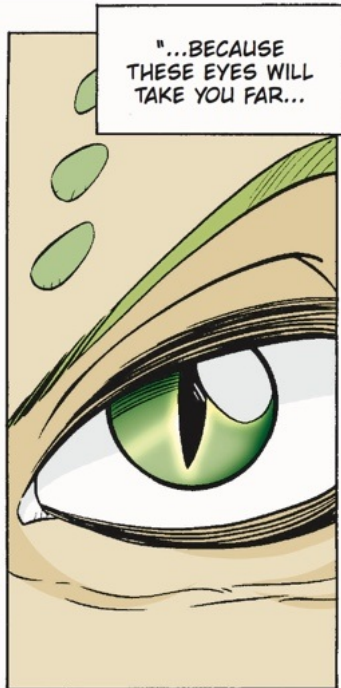
YOU DECIDE.
SEE WHAT I CAN DO
SIMPLY BY EATING
A FLOWER...



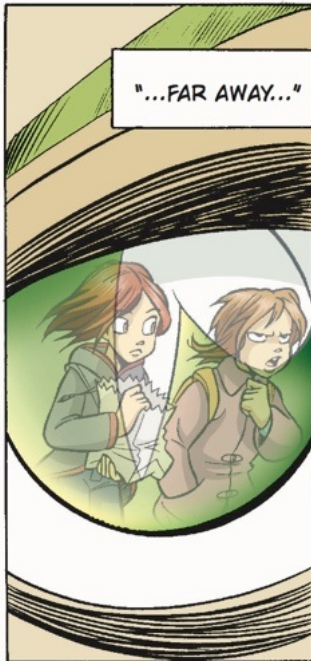
AAAAH...



NOW LOOK
INTO THE ABYSS
OF MY EYES, BUT
MIND YOU DON'T GET
LOST, MY LORD.



"...BECAUSE
THESE EYES WILL
TAKE YOU FAR...



"...FAR AWAY..."

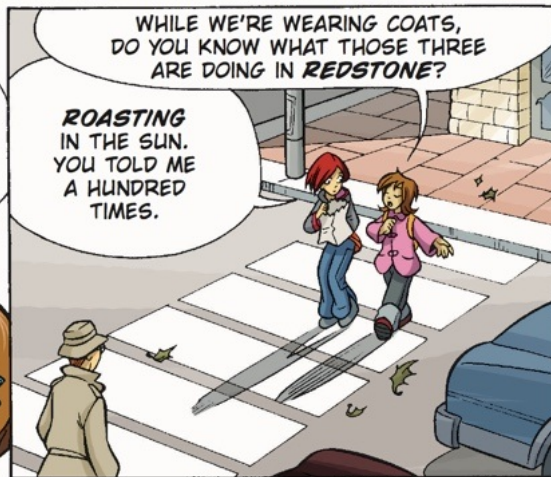


HERE WE
ARE IN FREEZING
HEATHERFIELD.



DON'T BE DRAMATIC,
IRMA. IT'S JUST
A BIT OF WIND.

LOOK, WILL.
LOOK AT MY NAILS!
I BIT THEM TO
NOTHING OUT
OF ENVY.



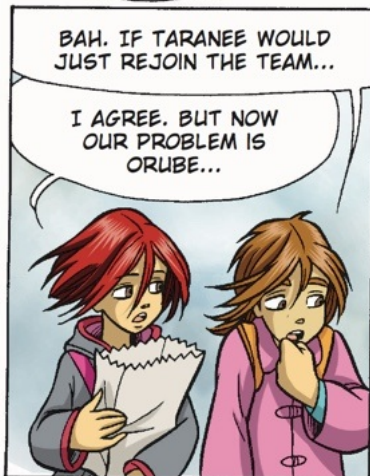
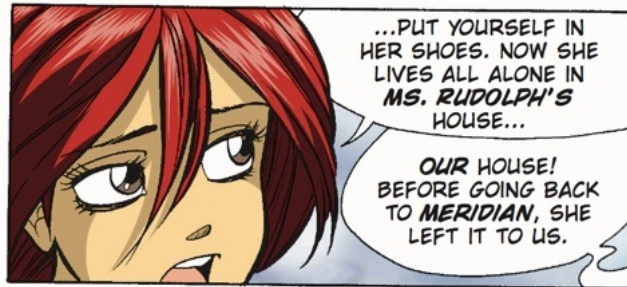
WHILE WE'RE WEARING COATS,
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THOSE THREE
ARE DOING IN **REDSTONE**?

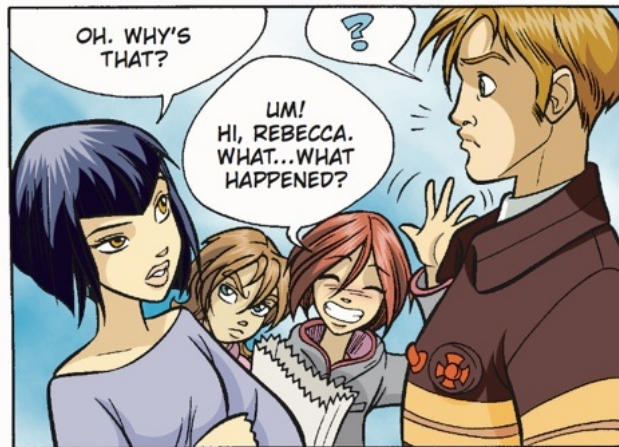
ROASTING
IN THE SUN.
YOU TOLD ME
A HUNDRED
TIMES.

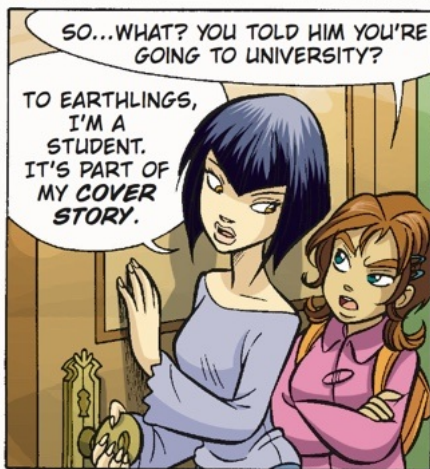


AS IF THAT WASN'T
ENOUGH, WE HAVE TO
BABYSIT THAT...
THAT...

STOP!
THAT'S
ENOUGH.
YOU KNOW
ORUBE IS
A GUARDIAN
OF
KANDRAKAR
TOO.









ACTUALLY, I THINK
YOU HAVE TO—
RIGHT NOW!

?



WHAT'S THIS?

A LOAN FROM
MY MOM. YOU'RE
MORE OR LESS
THE SAME SIZE.
RED OR
BLACK?



I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU I'M NOT
GOING OUT. I DON'T LIKE
YOUR WORLD.

IF YOU WANT
TO CONNECT WITH US,
YOU HAVE TO MAKE AN
EFFORT.



I DON'T LIKE
YOU EITHER!

DO I NEED TO
REMIND YOU WHAT
THE ORACLE SAID,
ORUBE?

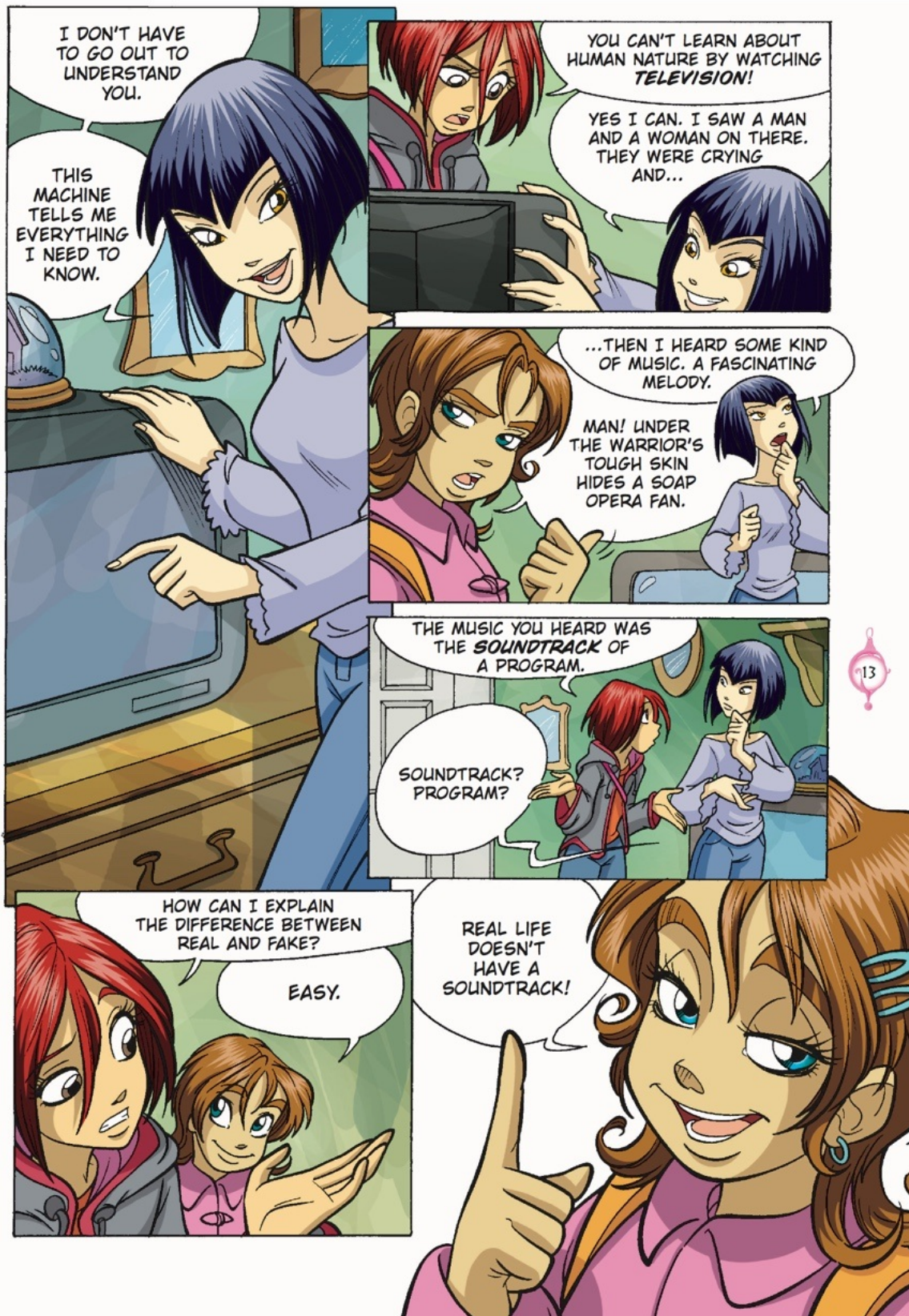


LIVING ON THE WORLD CALLED
EARTH WILL HELP YOU UNDERSTAND
HUMANS BETTER.



AND YOU CAN'T UNDERSTAND
ANYTHING LOCKED AWAY
IN HERE. GET IT?

HMM...



I DON'T HAVE TO GO OUT TO UNDERSTAND YOU.

THIS MACHINE TELLS ME EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW.

YOU CAN'T LEARN ABOUT HUMAN NATURE BY WATCHING TELEVISION!

YES I CAN. I SAW A MAN AND A WOMAN ON THERE. THEY WERE CRYING AND...

...THEN I HEARD SOME KIND OF MUSIC. A FASCINATING MELODY.

MAN! UNDER THE WARRIOR'S TOUGH SKIN HIDES A SOAP OPERA FAN.

THE MUSIC YOU HEARD WAS THE **SOUNDTRACK** OF A PROGRAM.

SOUNDTRACK? PROGRAM?

HOW CAN I EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REAL AND FAKE?

EASY.

REAL LIFE DOESN'T HAVE A SOUNDTRACK!

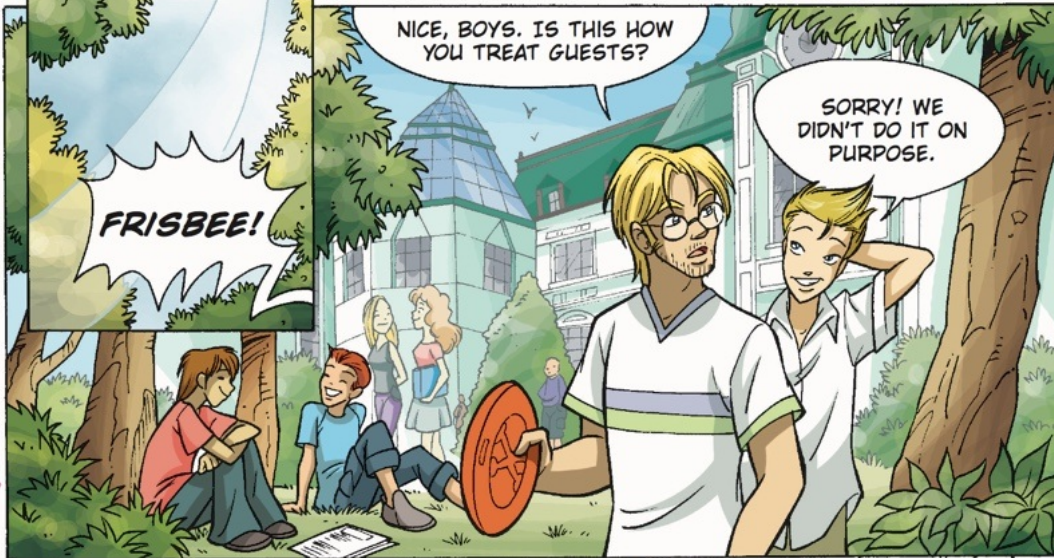
MEANWHILE AT
REDSTONE COLLEGE,
ON THE OTHER SIDE
OF THE WORLD...



NICE, BOYS. IS THIS HOW
YOU TREAT GUESTS?

SORRY! WE
DIDN'T DO IT ON
PURPOSE.

FRISBEE!

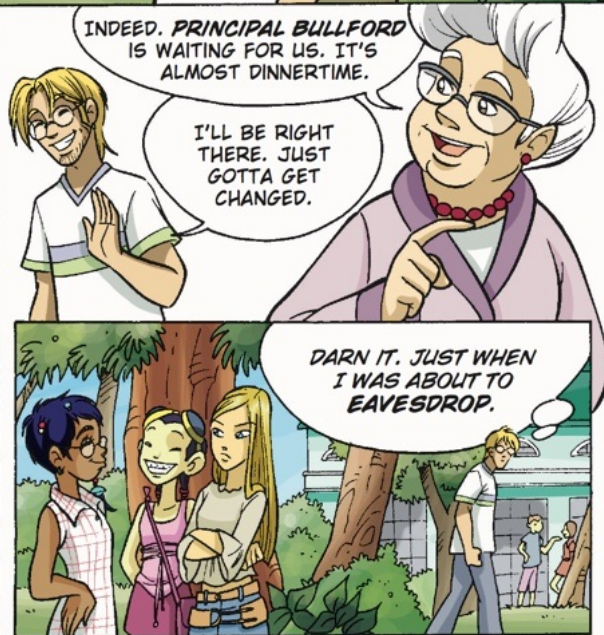


EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT,
MR. SYLLA?

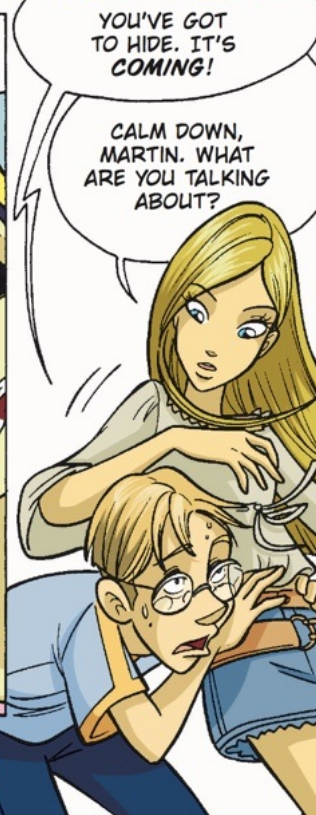
YES, MS. KNICKERBOCHER.
IT'S A BEAUTIFUL EVENING,
DON'T YOU
THINK?

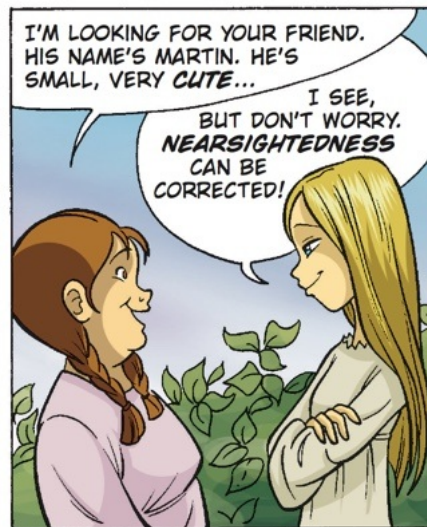
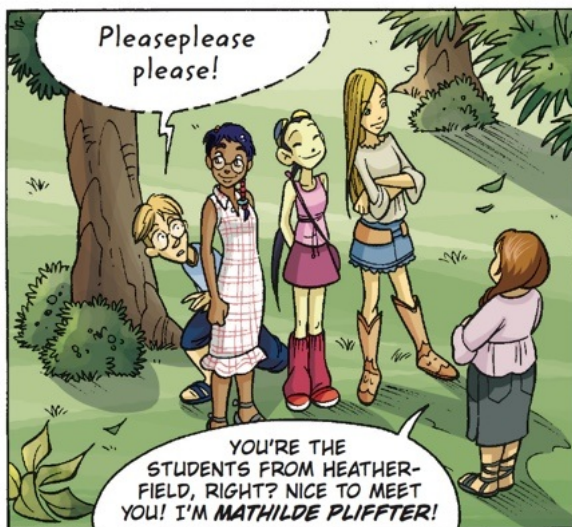
INDEED. **PRINCIPAL BULLFORD**
IS WAITING FOR US. IT'S
ALMOST DINNERTIME.

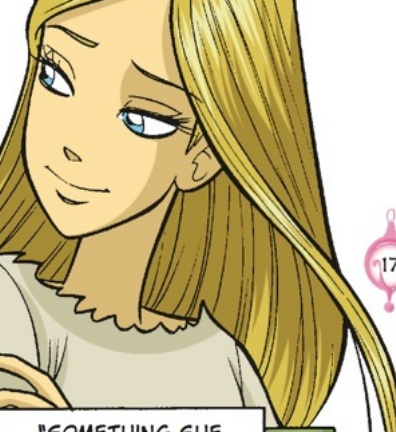
I'LL BE RIGHT
THERE. JUST
GOTTA GET
CHANGED.

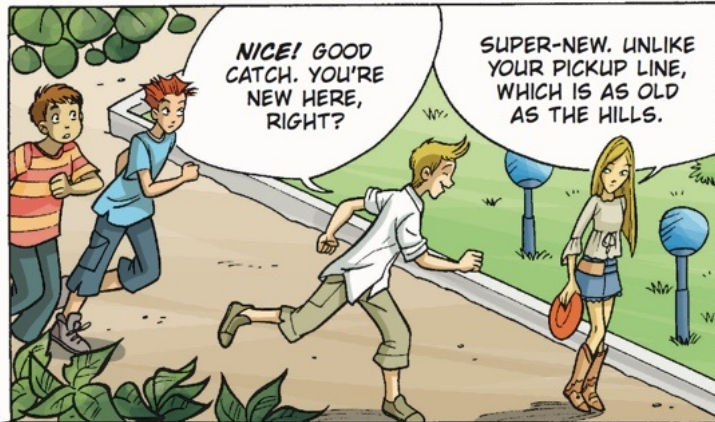


DARN IT. JUST WHEN
I WAS ABOUT TO
EAVESDROP.



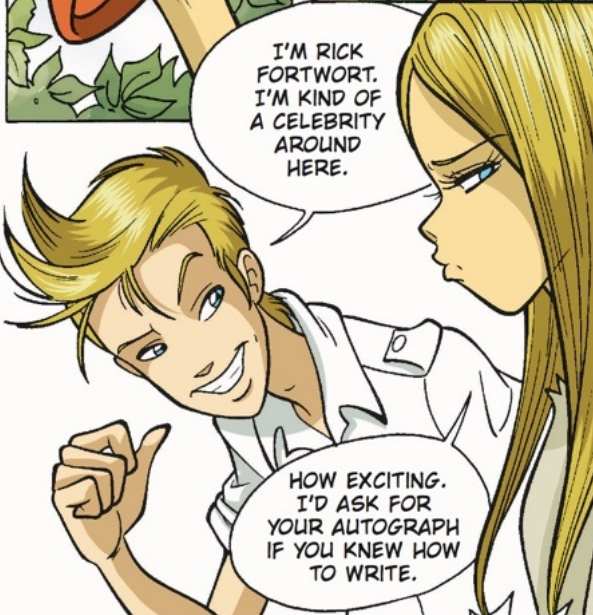






NICE! GOOD CATCH. YOU'RE NEW HERE, RIGHT?

SUPER-NEW. UNLIKE YOUR PICKUP LINE, WHICH IS AS OLD AS THE HILLS.



I'M RICK FORTWORT. I'M KIND OF A CELEBRITY AROUND HERE.

HOW EXCITING. I'D ASK FOR YOUR AUTOGRAPH IF YOU KNEW HOW TO WRITE.



WELL...UM...JOKES ASIDE, I...

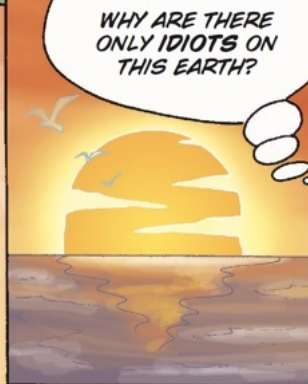
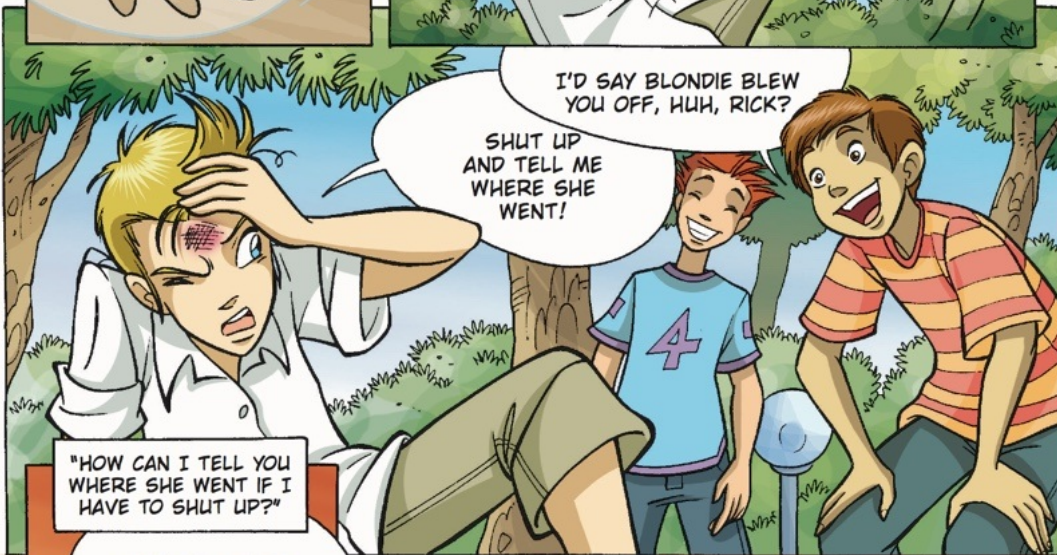
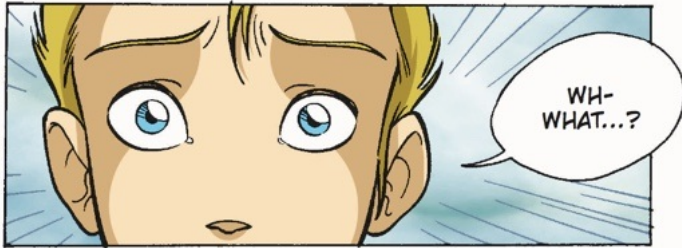
BUZZ OFF. THE GUY WHO LENT YOU HIS BRAIN MUST BE GETTING WORRIED.



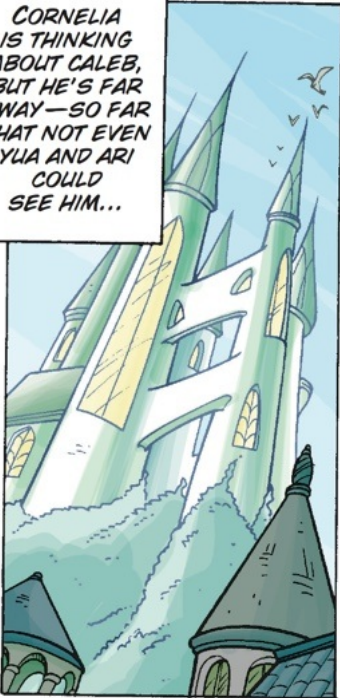
M-MAYBE WE STARTED OFF ON THE WRONG FOOT.

NO, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO HASN'T STARTED USING HIS FEET YET, SO...READY...





CORNELIA
IS THINKING
ABOUT CALEB,
BUT HE'S FAR
AWAY—SO FAR
THAT NOT EVEN
YUA AND ARI
COULD
SEE HIM...



NOW CALEB IS IN
THE SERVICE OF
ELYON, LIGHT OF
MERIDIAN, QUEEN
OF METAMOOR...



...AND TODAY THE
QUEEN MUST MAKE AN
IMPORTANT DECISION.



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I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO
DO, CALEB. THE PEOPLE IN A
VILLAGE NEAR THE BORDER
ARE ASKING FOR MY HELP.



THEIR VILLAGE WAS
BUILT ON A **FAULT LINE**
THAT HAS BEEN
DORMANT FOR
CENTURIES.



I KNOW
EVERYTHING,
MY QUEEN.
SADLY, THE
GROUND IS
SHAKING
AGAIN.

WITH YOUR ENERGY
YOU CAN SEAL
THE FAULT, BUT AN
UNWRITTEN RULE
SAYS THAT...



...THE POWER
OF MAGIC
MUST NEVER
CHALLENGE
NATURE!



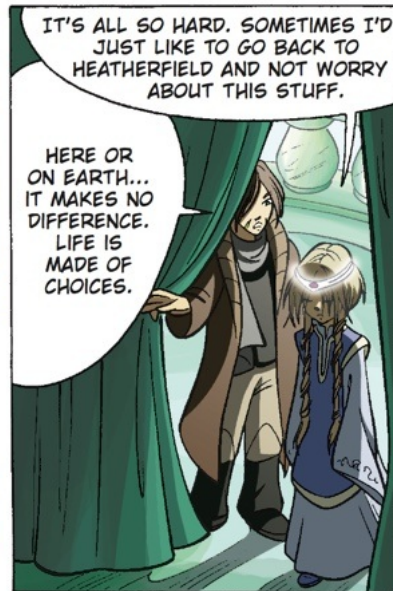


THEN ALL YOU CAN DO IS TELL THE PEOPLE TO LEAVE THEIR HOMES.

BUT IS THAT THE RIGHT DECISION? THEY'VE BEEN LIVING THERE FOREVER!

THERE ALWAYS COMES A TIME TO WONDER WHICH IS THE **LESSER EVIL**.

I'M SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE.



IT'S ALL SO HARD. SOMETIMES I'D JUST LIKE TO GO BACK TO HEATHERFIELD AND NOT WORRY ABOUT THIS STUFF.

HERE OR ON EARTH... IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE. LIFE IS MADE OF CHOICES.



WHY DON'T YOU GIVE YOUR PEOPLE NEW LAND TO FARM?

YOU'RE RIGHT. I'LL HELP THEM BUILD A NEW VILLAGE FARTHER EAST.



THANKS. YOU WERE VERY HELPFUL, AND... CALEB...

YES, YOUR HIGHNESS?



...YOU USED TO CALL ME ELYON. PLEASE DO SO AGAIN.

SPEAKING OF IMPORTANT DECISIONS...MEANWHILE, IN HEATHERFIELD...



LET'S START AGAIN. RED OUTFIT...

...OR BLACK?

I STILL DON'T GET WHY I HAVE TO CHANGE CLOTHES.



BECAUSE THE ORACLE MAY BE A WISE MAN, BUT HE'S A TERRIBLE STYLIST!

TAKE THESE RAGS BACK TO YOUR MOTHER WITH MY THANKS.

FORGET IT. I NICKED THEM FROM HER WARDROBE!

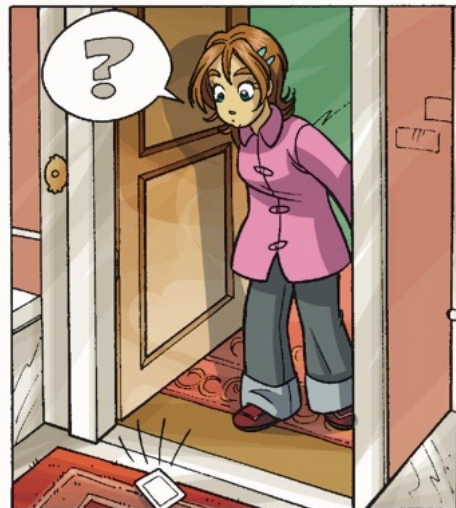
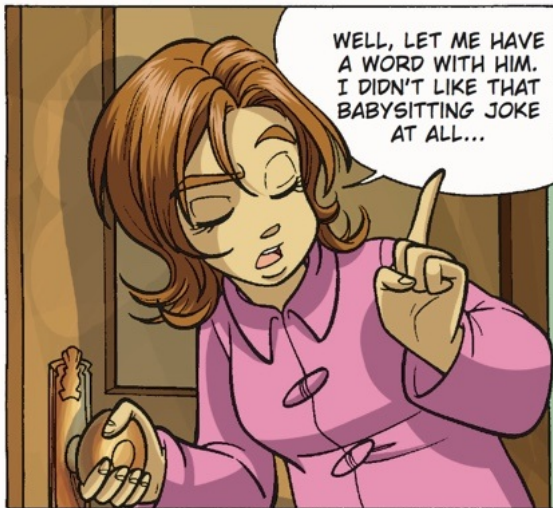
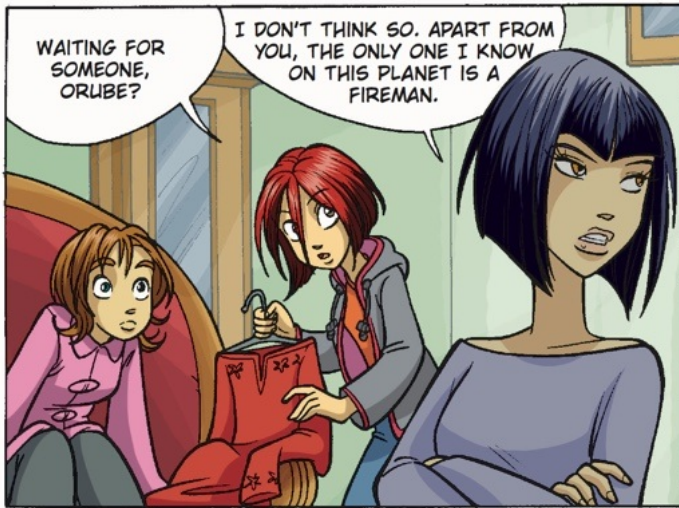


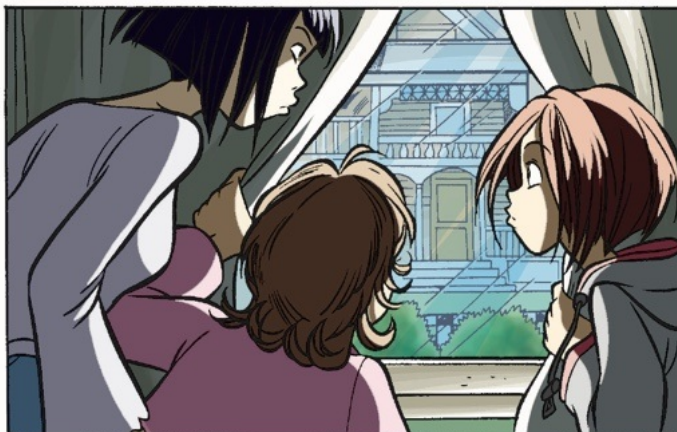
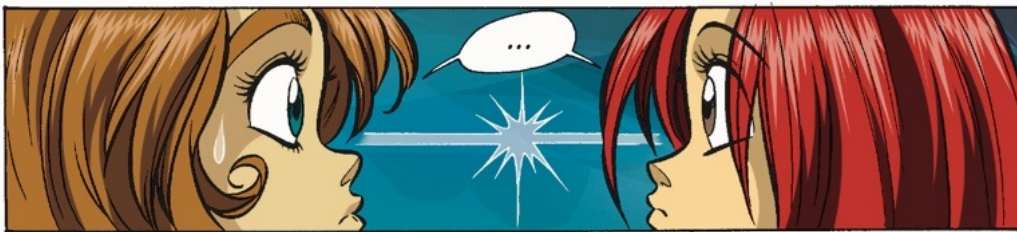
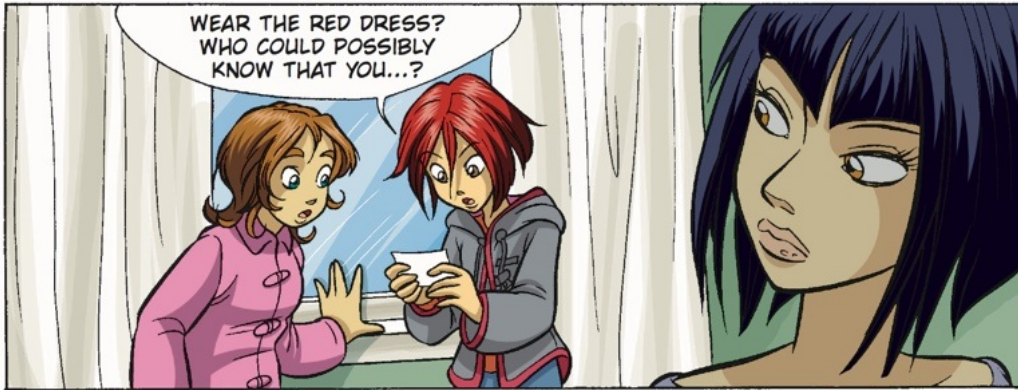
WON'T SUSAN BE MAD WHEN SHE FINDS OUT THEY'RE GONE?

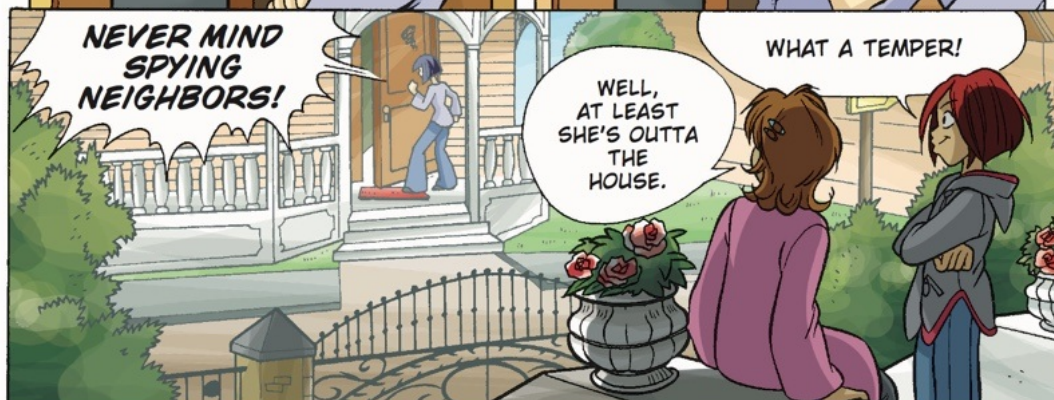
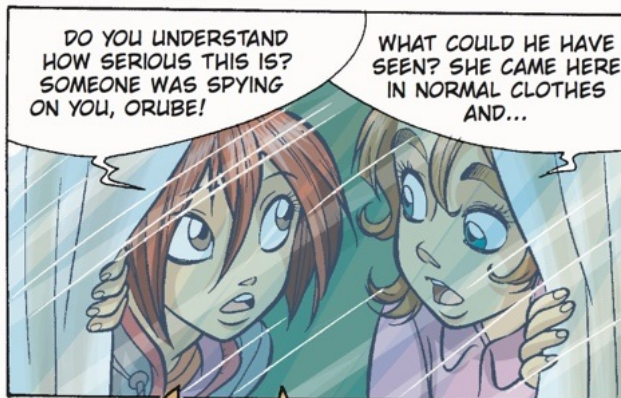
IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE SHE WORE THEM, SHE'S FORGOTTEN ABOUT THEM.



DRILL



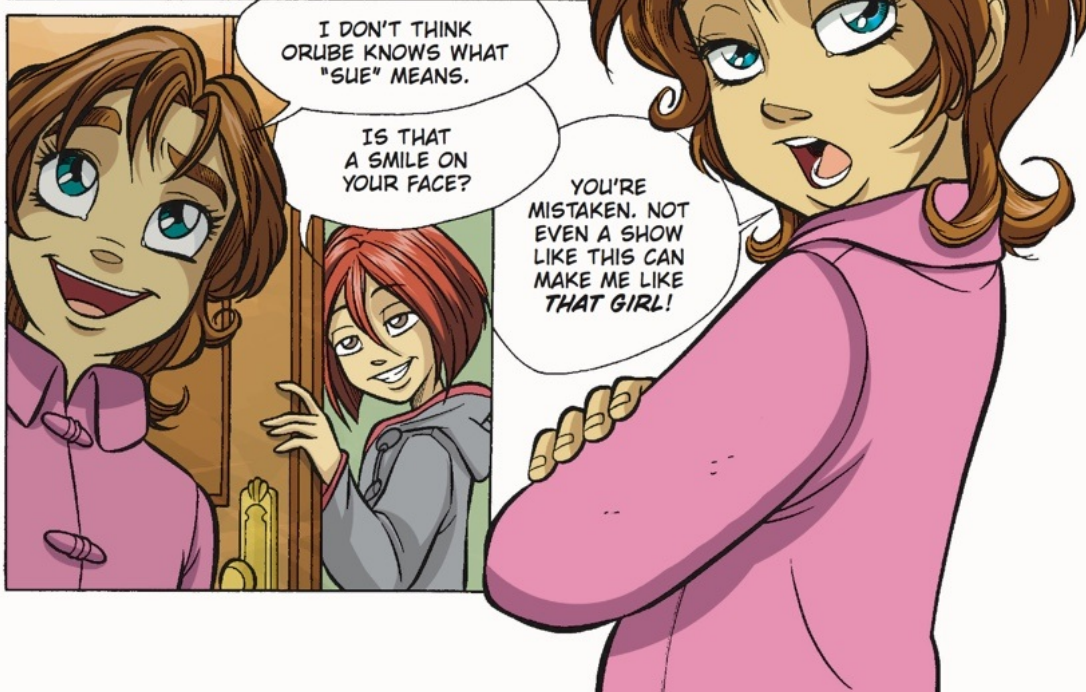
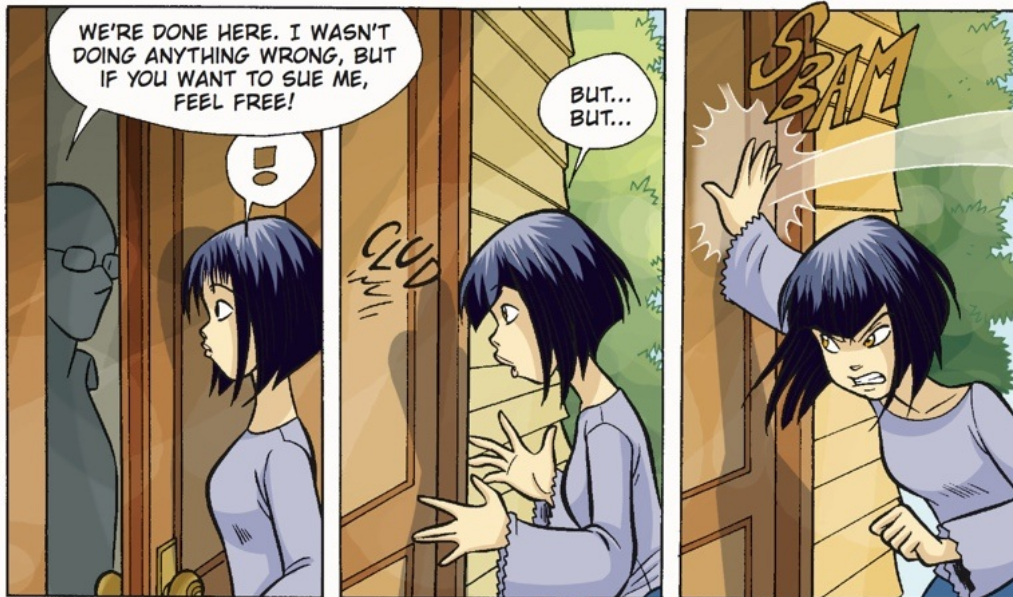






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MEANWHILE,
IN REDSTONE...

GUYS!

GUYS, THERE
YOU ARE.

CORNELIA, WE WERE
LOOKING FOR YOU
TOO. WHERE DID YOU
DISAPPEAR TO?

YOU MISSED OUT ON A
GREAT PIZZA. AROUND
HERE, THEY COOK IT
WITH THEIR WHOLE...

...HEART!

WELL, YEAH, I GUESS
THEY PUT A LOTTA
EFFORT IN IT, BUT...

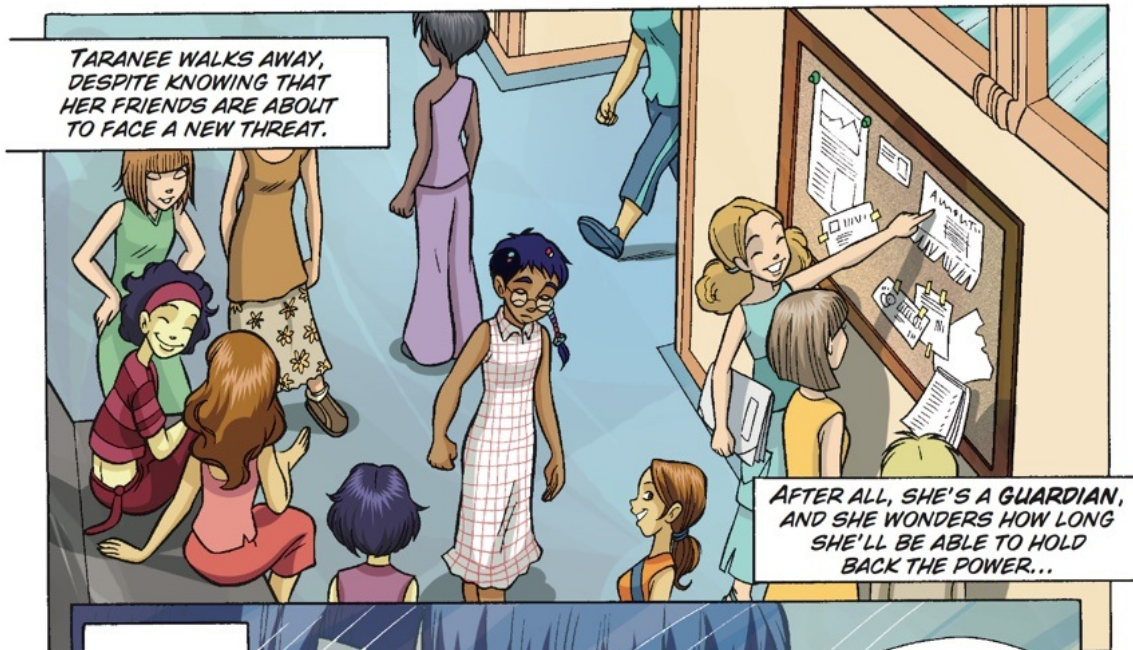
I WAS TALKING
ABOUT THE HEART
OF KANDRAKAR.
IT APPEARED OUT
OF NOWHERE!

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I WAS ON THE CLIFFS
BEHIND THE SCHOOL. I
WAS LOOKING AT THE
WATER WHEN...

"...THE HEART LIT
UP AT THE BOTTOM
OF THE SEA!"





TARANEE WALKS AWAY, DESPITE KNOWING THAT HER FRIENDS ARE ABOUT TO FACE A NEW THREAT.

AFTER ALL, SHE'S A GUARDIAN, AND SHE WONDERS HOW LONG SHE'LL BE ABLE TO HOLD BACK THE POWER...



...BURNING INSIDE HER.

I'M ABOUT TO EXPLODE!



THAT GUY...THAT NEIGHBOR... I DON'T KNOW WHAT STOPPED ME FROM CRUSHING HIM!

I KNOW!



YOU! STOP BEING SO DISRESPECTFUL WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT THE ORACLE!

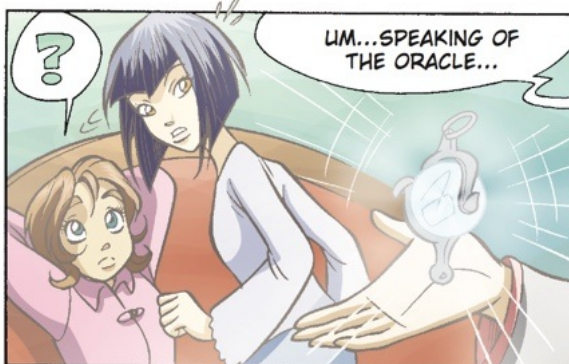
IT WAS OUR DEAR **BALDY** ORDERING YOU **NOT** TO USE YOUR POWERS ON EARTH.



TSK! I'LL TALK ABOUT THE **BIG BOSS** ANY WAY I PLEASE.



AND IF HE DOESN'T LIKE IT, HE CAN COME TELL ME IN PERSON.

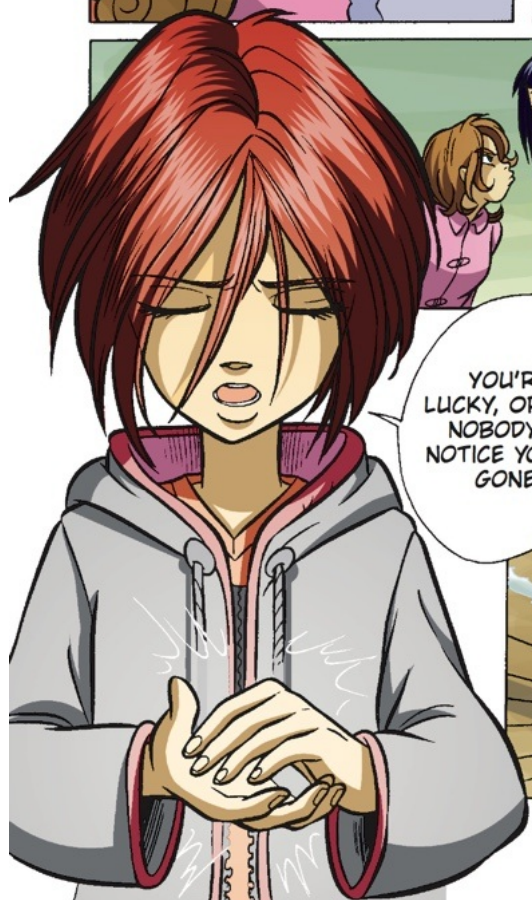


UM...SPEAKING OF THE ORACLE...



...I THINK HE'S CALLING US.

HA! THAT SHUT YOU RIGHT UP, HUH?



YOU'RE LUCKY, ORUBE. NOBODY'LL NOTICE YOU'RE GONE.

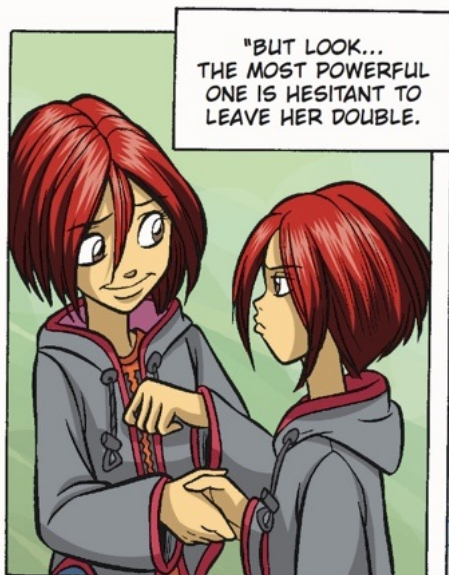


THERE'S NO TIME TO WASTE. WE HAVE TO CREATE OUR ASTRAL DROPS.

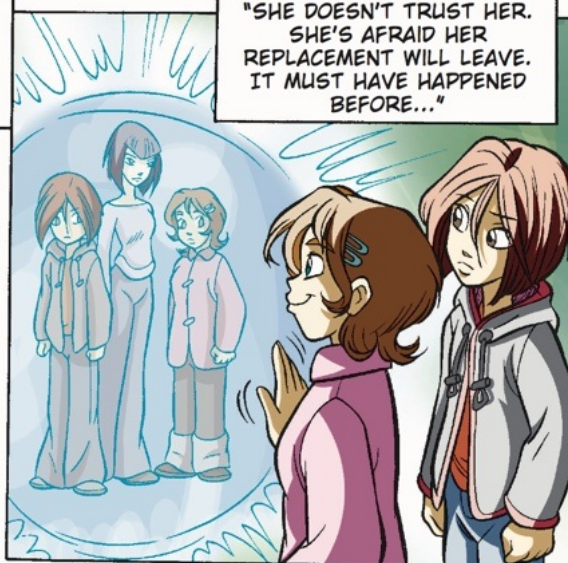
GO AHEAD. I DON'T REQUIRE SUCH MAGIC TRICKS.



"SO THE GUARDIANS CREATE TWINS TO REPLACE THEM AND PROTECT THEIR SECRET IDENTITIES..."



"BUT LOOK...
THE MOST POWERFUL
ONE IS HESITANT TO
LEAVE HER DOUBLE.



"SHE DOESN'T TRUST HER.
SHE'S AFRAID HER
REPLACEMENT WILL LEAVE.
IT MUST HAVE HAPPENED
BEFORE..."



LACK OF FAITH IN
THEIR OWN ABILITIES...
QUESTIONING THEIR
LOYALTY TO THE
ORACLE...

THAT'S THE
WEAKNESS
OF
YOUR ENEMIES,
ARI OF
ARKHANTA.

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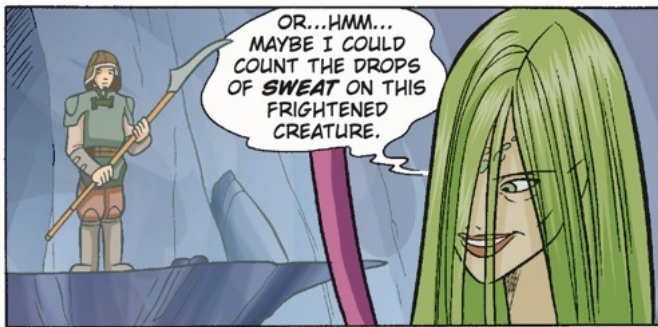


I ASKED
YOU TO SHOW
ME THE
GUARDIANS,
YUA, NOT
ADVISE ME
ON HOW TO
DEFEAT THEM.

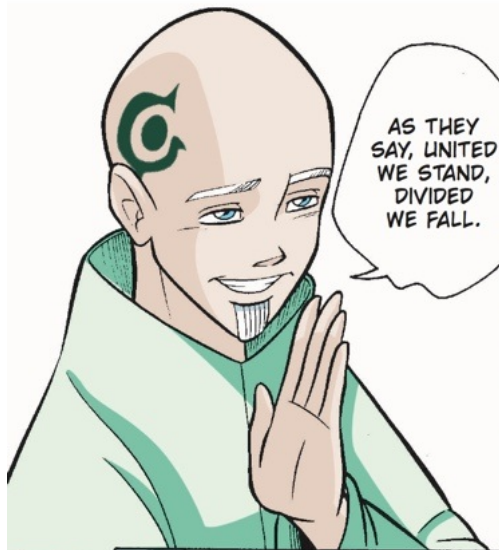


THEY MUST BE ABOUT TO
RETURN. GO BACK TO YOUR PIT
AND AWAIT MY ORDERS.

AS YOU WISH,
MY LORD.



YUA'S GUARD SHUDDERS AS SHE RESUMES HER CHANT...



AS THEY SAY, UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL.



HEAR THAT, IRMA? THAT'S WISDOM. NOT MAKING FUN OF THE ORACLE ANYMORE, HUH?

WELL, I KNOW A FEW OLD PROVERBS TOO...



FOR EXAMPLE, CURIOSITY KILLED THE CAT!



YOU GOT SOMETHING AGAINST MY FELINE NATURE? YOU LOOKING FOR A FIGHT?

DO YOU REALLY WANT TO PUT A CAT AMONG THE PIGEONS?



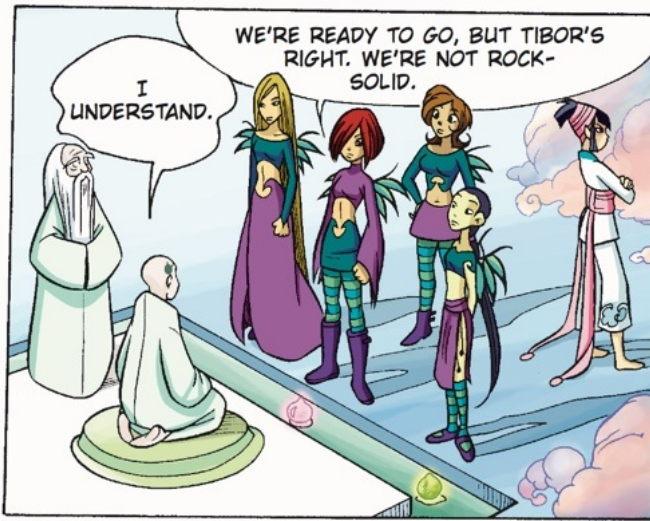
THAT'S ENOUGH!

STOP!





IF YOU DO NOT STOP HIM, ARI MIGHT EVEN BREACH THE GATES OF KANDRAKAR.



I UNDERSTAND.

WE'RE READY TO GO, BUT TIBOR'S RIGHT. WE'RE NOT ROCK-SOLID.

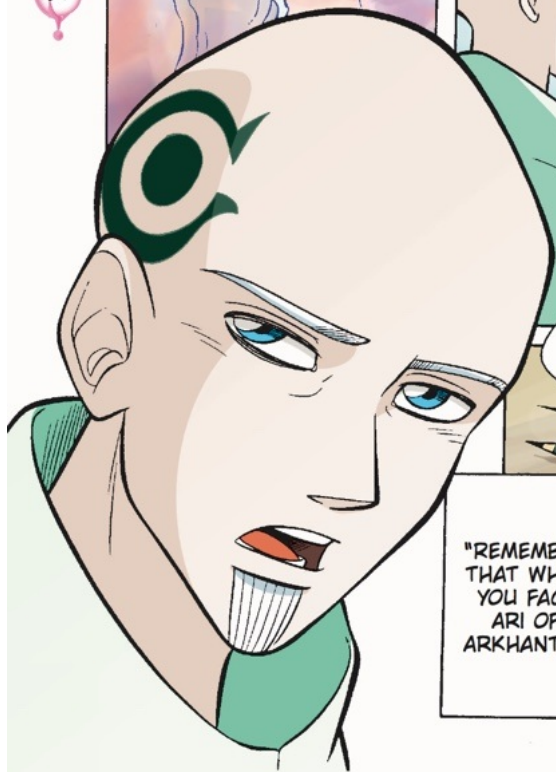


YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN AS DIVIDED AS YOU ARE NOW, BUT I CAN SENSE THE POWER WITHIN YOU.



WHEN I SAID "UNITED WE STAND," I WAS NOT MERELY REPEATING AN OLD EARTHLING PROVERB.

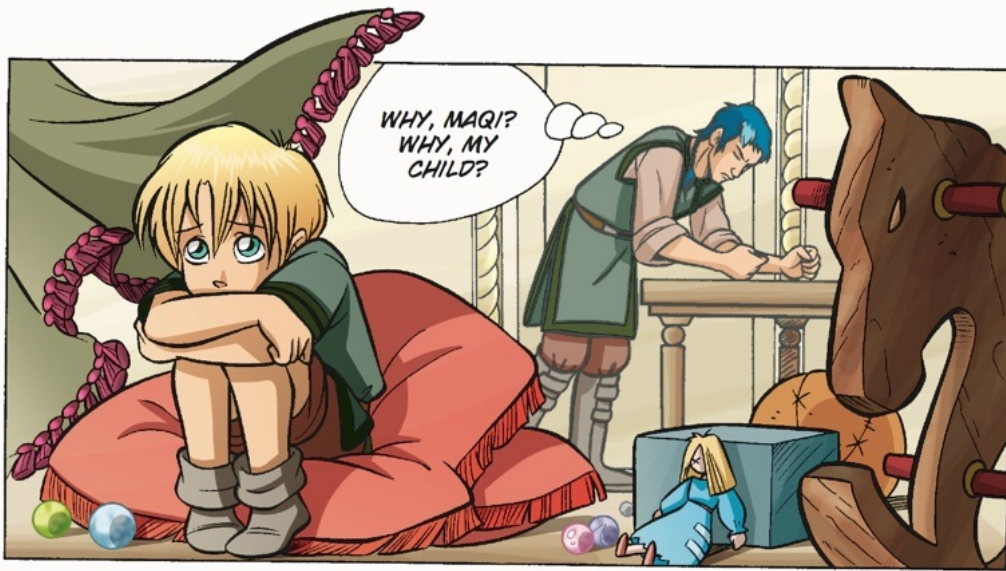
HEH!



I WAS GIVING YOU HONEST ADVICE.

"REMEMBER THAT WHEN YOU FACE ARI OF ARKHANTA."





WHY, MAQI?
WHY, MY
CHILD?

EVERYTHING YOU SEE
WITH THAT DISTANT
GAZE...EVERYTHING
YOU TOUCH WITH
YOUR LISTLESS
FINGERS...



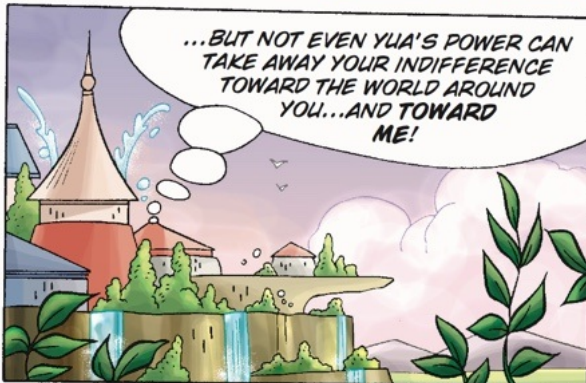
EVERYTHING AROUND
YOU COMES FROM MY
ENDLESS LOVE, MY
INFINITE PAIN.



I'VE TRAPPED EVIL ITSELF
TO GIVE YOU EVERYTHING
I CAN...

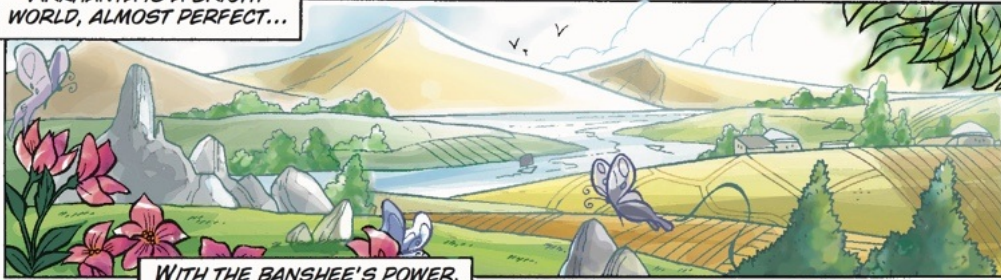


...BUT NOT EVEN YUA'S POWER CAN
TAKE AWAY YOUR INDIFFERENCE
TOWARD THE WORLD AROUND
YOU...AND TOWARD
ME!





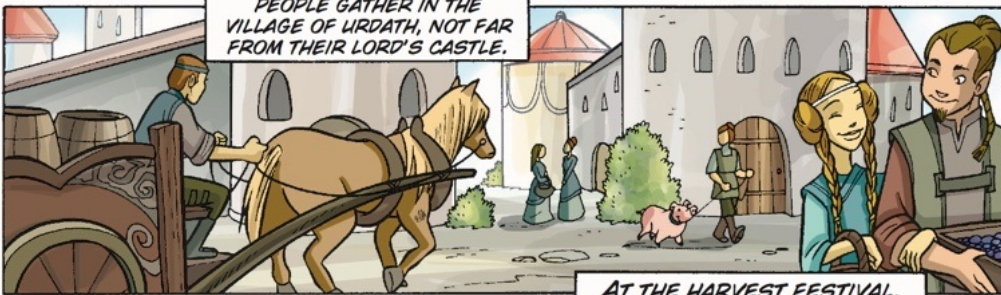
ARKHANTA IS A BRIGHT
WORLD, ALMOST PERFECT...



WITH THE BANSHEE'S POWER,
ARI TRANSFORMED THE LAND,
GIVING HIS PEOPLE A RICH,
PRODUCTIVE EXISTENCE.



TODAY, SOME OF THOSE
PEOPLE GATHER IN THE
VILLAGE OF URDATH, NOT FAR
FROM THEIR LORD'S CASTLE.

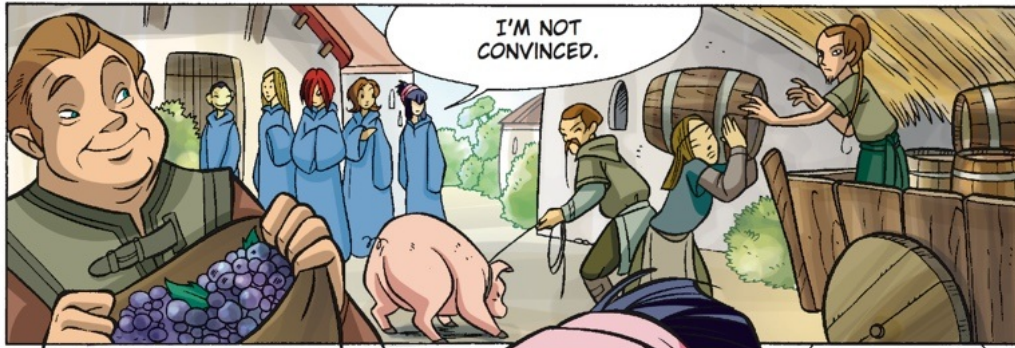


AT THE HARVEST FESTIVAL,
FARMERS MEET TO
PREPARE GIFTS...



...TO GIVE TO THEIR
MASTER AS A SIGN
OF GRATITUDE AND
RESPECT.





I'M NOT CONVINCED.



SOMETHING YOU DON'T GET ABOUT OUR PLAN, ORUBE?

NO! IT'S TOO SIMPLE.

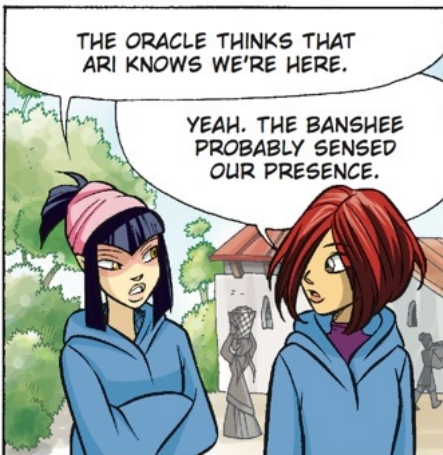


WE MINGLE WITH THE PEOPLE OF URDATH TO GET TO THE SCARLET STRONGHOLD AND TALK TO ARI.



HE DOESN'T WANNA TALK TO US, SO IT'S THE ONLY WAY WE CAN GET TO HIM.

ONCE WE'RE IN THE CASTLE, WE'LL TRY TO MAKE HIM SEE REASON.

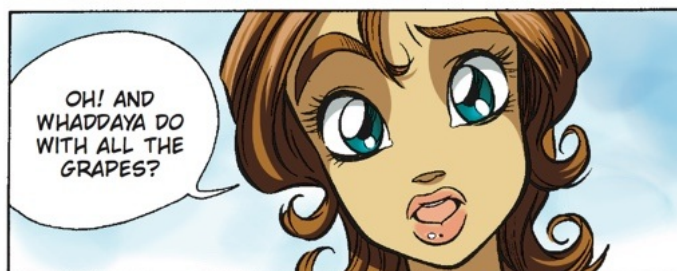


THE ORACLE THINKS THAT ARI KNOWS WE'RE HERE.

YEAH. THE BANSHEE PROBABLY SENSED OUR PRESENCE.



BUT TO USE ANOTHER OLD SAYING...THERE'S NO HARM IN TRYING!





C'MON, IRMA. IT'S A BIT SQUISHY, BUT IT'S NOT SO BAD. I'M HAVING FUN!

ME TOO. I'VE NEVER CRUSHED GRAPES BEFORE.



GROSS! GROSS, GROSS, SUPER-GROSS!

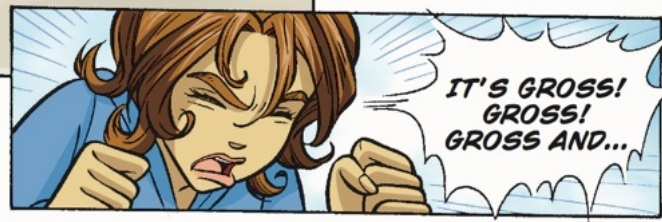
SPOSH

SPOSH



IT'S RELAXING AND PUTS ME IN TOUCH WITH THE EARTH, MY ELEMENT.

THAT'S RIDICULOUS. WHY DON'T YOU TELL IT LIKE IT IS?

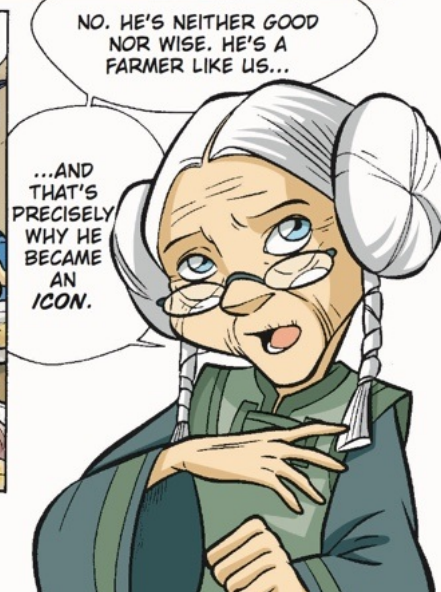
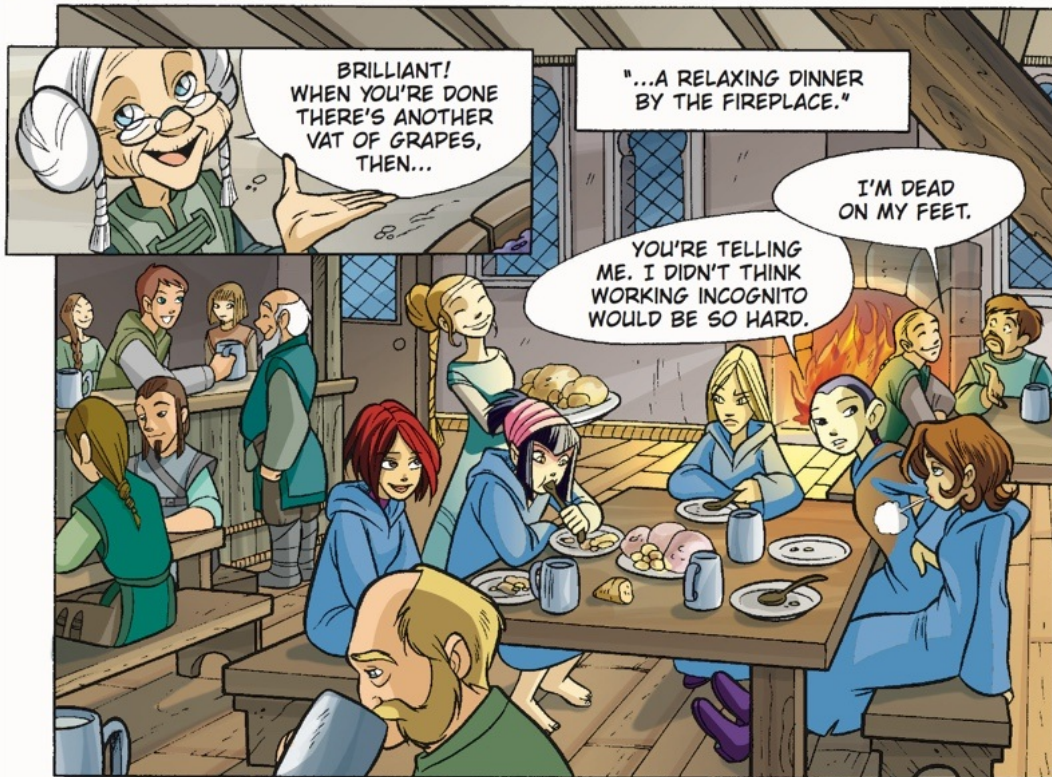


IT'S GROSS! GROSS! GROSS AND...



EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT HERE?

ER... Y-YEAH, SURE.

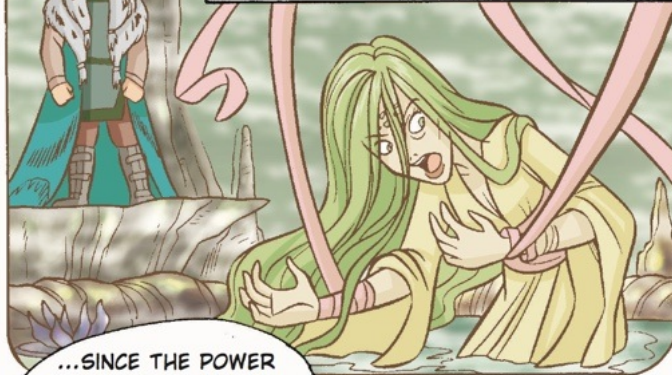




"...AND YUA WAS THE MOST EVIL AND POWERFUL OF THEM ALL. BUT ARI TRAPPED HER.



"HE DOESN'T NEED CHAINS TO KEEP THAT CREATURE PRISONER..."

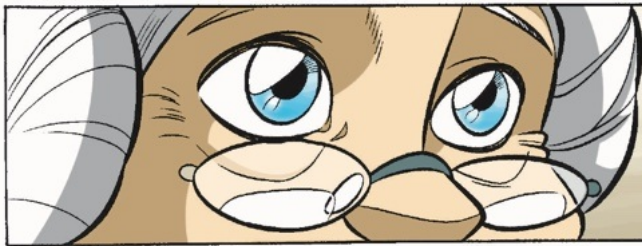




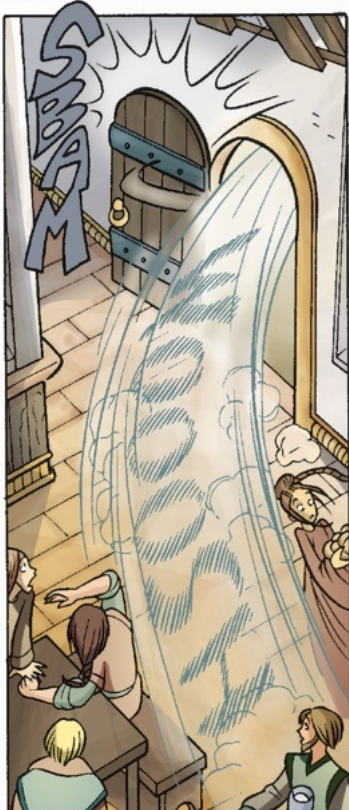
WHAT IF SOMEONE FREED THE BANSHEE?



NO! HOW CAN YOU SPEAK SUCH MADNESS? IT WOULD BE A **CATAS-TROPHE**.



THE BANSHEE MUST REMAIN IMPRISONED BECAUSE, ONCE FREED, SHE'D UNLEASH HER **WRATH**.



SPAM



HAY LIN! WHAT'S GOING ON?

DON'T ASK ME! I'M NOT DOING IT!



BY THE CLOUDS OF KANDRAKAR! LOOK OVER THERE. WHAT'S THAT?



A TORNADO'S
ABOUT TO HIT
THE VILLAGE!

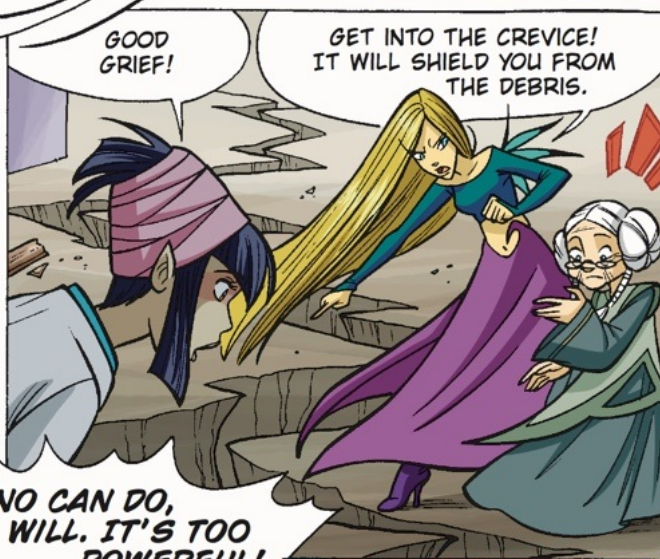
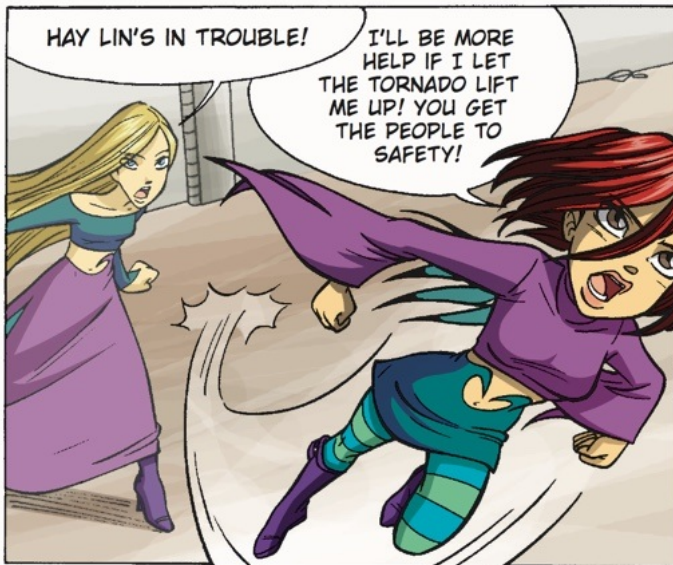
I BET
MY WINGS
IT'S YUA'S
DOING!

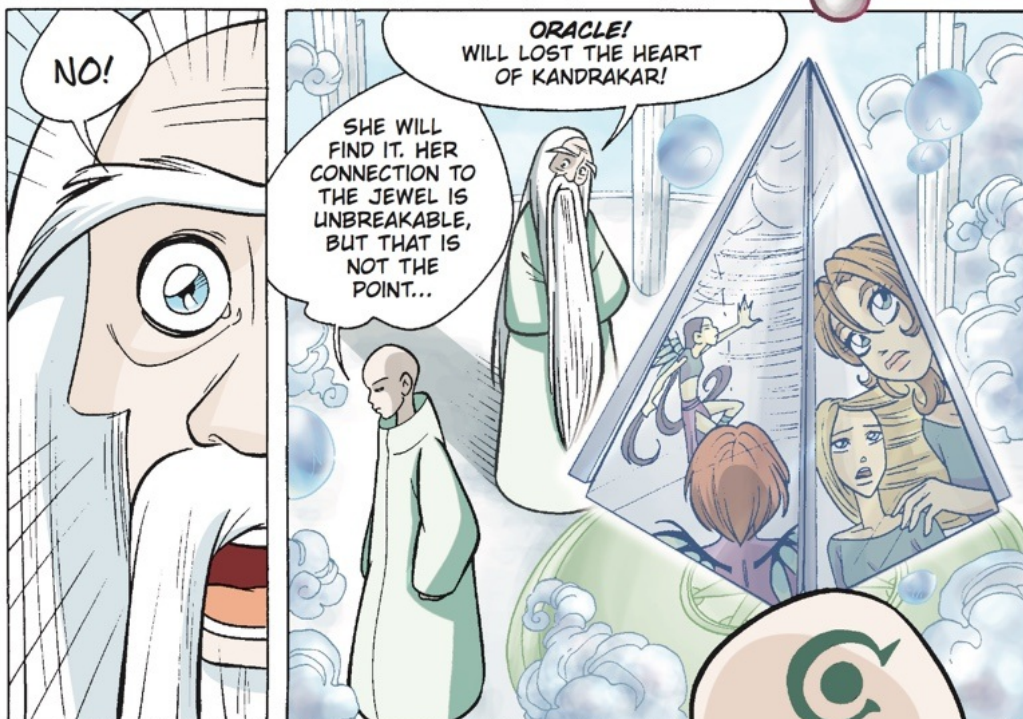
LET'S SEE
WHAT THE
POWER OF
AIR CAN
DO.

YOU'RE...
YOU'RE FAIRIES!

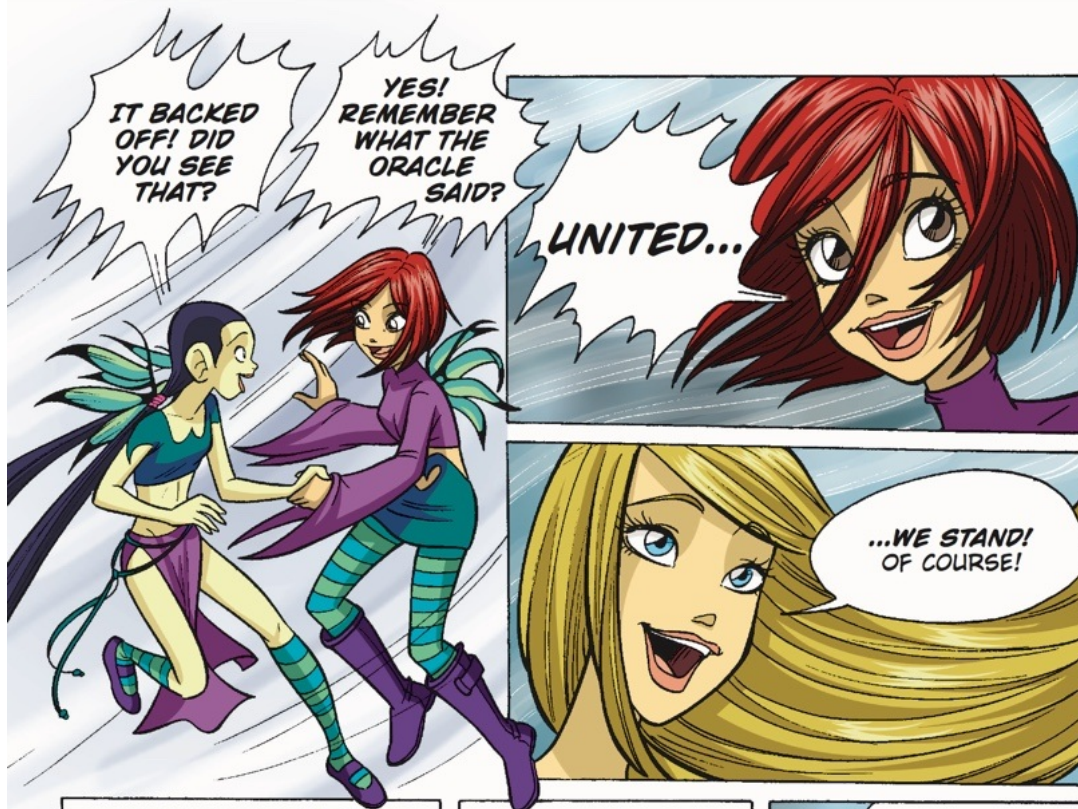
MORE OR LESS!
NOW MOVE ALONG,
NOTHING TO SEE
HERE!

I
C-CAN'T
STOP IT!









IT BACKED
OFF! DID
YOU SEE
THAT?

YES!
REMEMBER
WHAT THE
ORACLE
SAID?

UNITED...

...WE STAND!
OF COURSE!

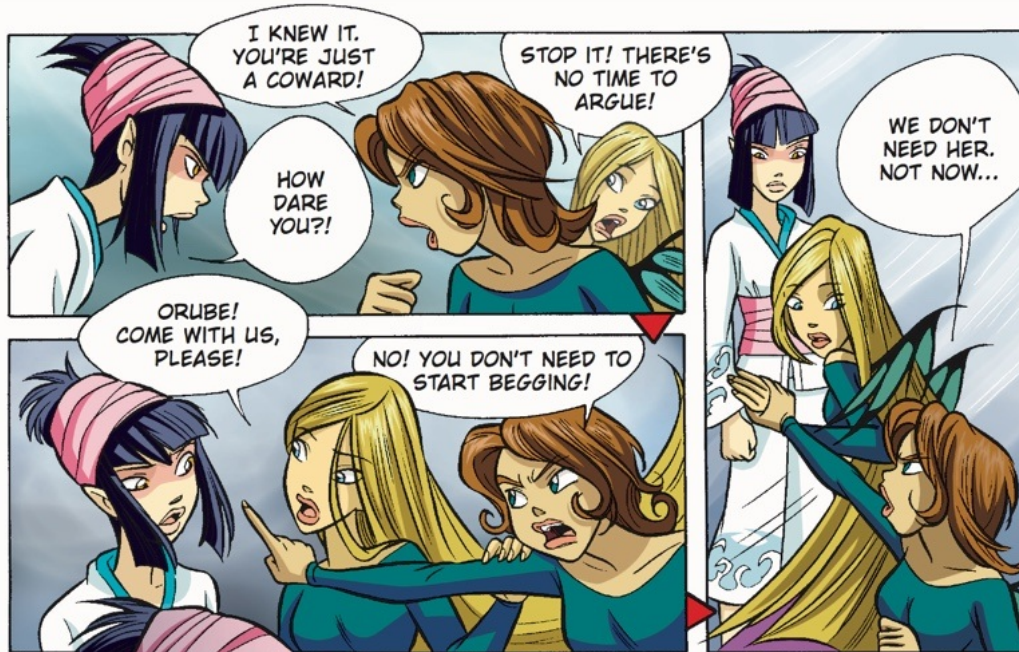
QUICK! WE GOTTA REACH
THE OTHERS AND FORM
A CHAIN!

YOU'RE RIGHT!
MAYBE
TOGETHER
WE CAN
AMPLIFY
HAY LIN'S
POWER!

THAT'S JUST GUESS-
WORK! WE COULD ALL
GET CAUGHT IN THE
TWISTER!

WE GOTTA
TRY. AT LEAST
WE'LL HELP OUR
FRIENDS!

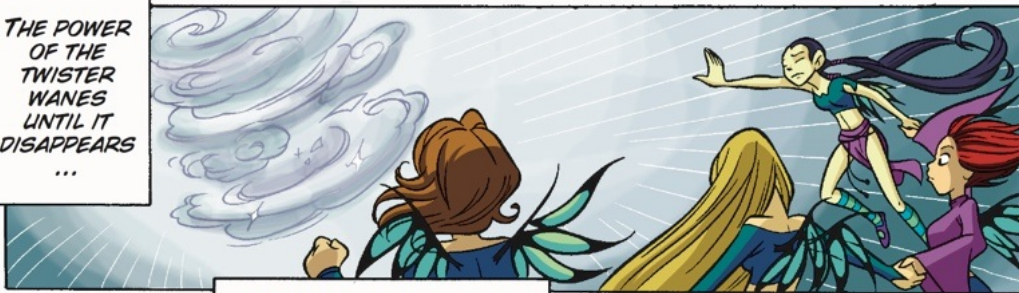
I HAVE NO
FRIENDS!



...AND, WITH GREAT PERSEVERANCE, MANAGE TO PUSH IT BACK.



THE POWER
OF THE
TWISTER
WANES
UNTIL IT
DISAPPEARS
...



...LEAVING BEHIND A TRAIL
OF DESTRUCTION.



OUR HOMES!
OUR HARVEST!
ALL GONE...

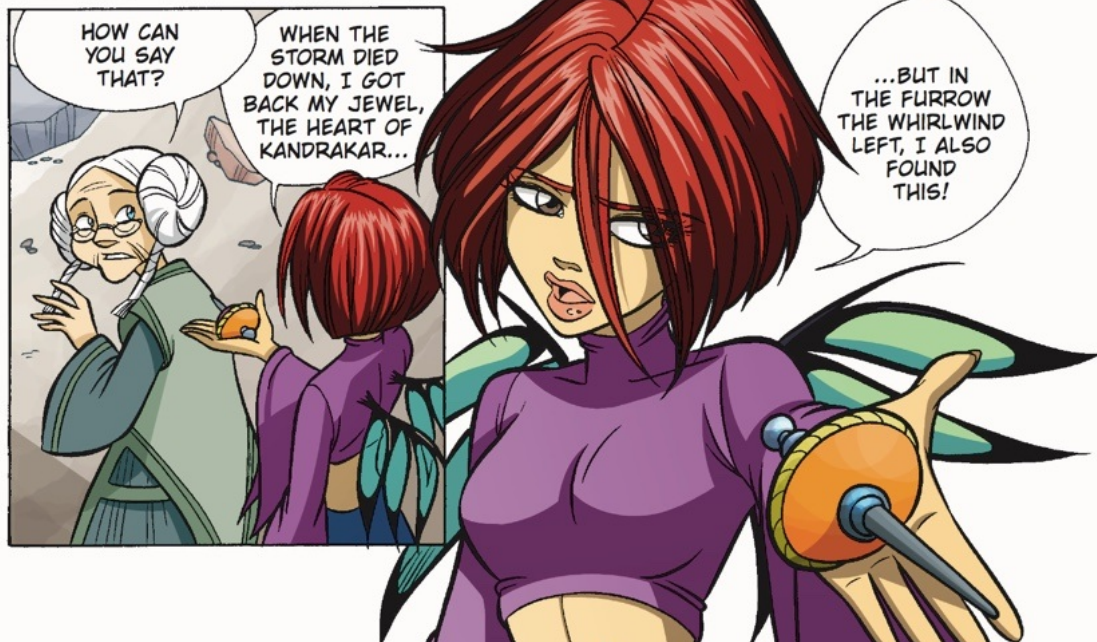
IT WAS
ARI!

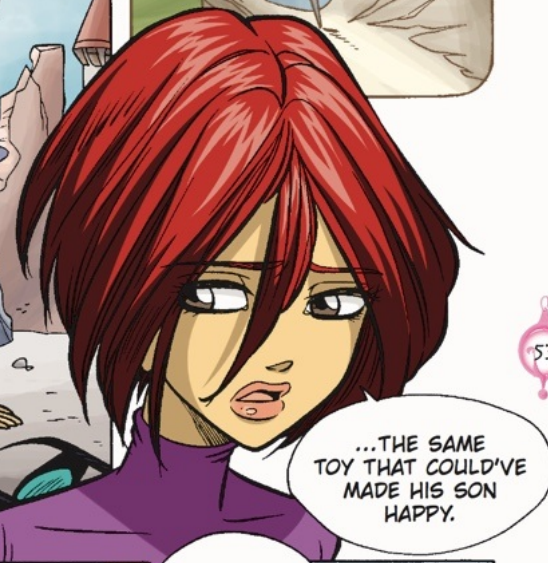
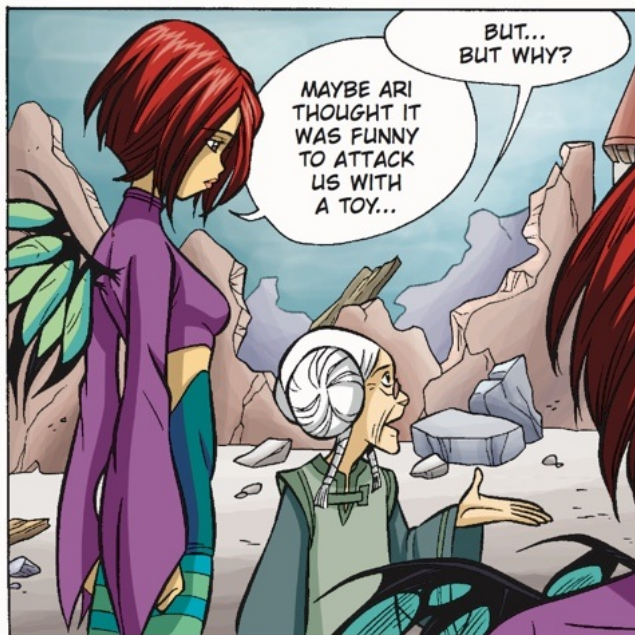
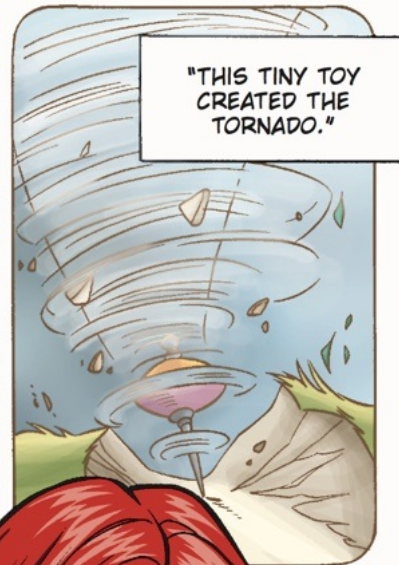


HOW CAN
YOU SAY
THAT?

WHEN THE
STORM DIED
DOWN, I GOT
BACK MY JEWEL,
THE HEART OF
KANDRAKAR...

...BUT IN
THE FURROW
THE WHIRLWIND
LEFT, I ALSO
FOUND
THIS!







SHAW!!
ARE YOU
STILL SURE
THE BANSHEE
SHOULD
REMAIN HIS
PRISONER?

I...I...

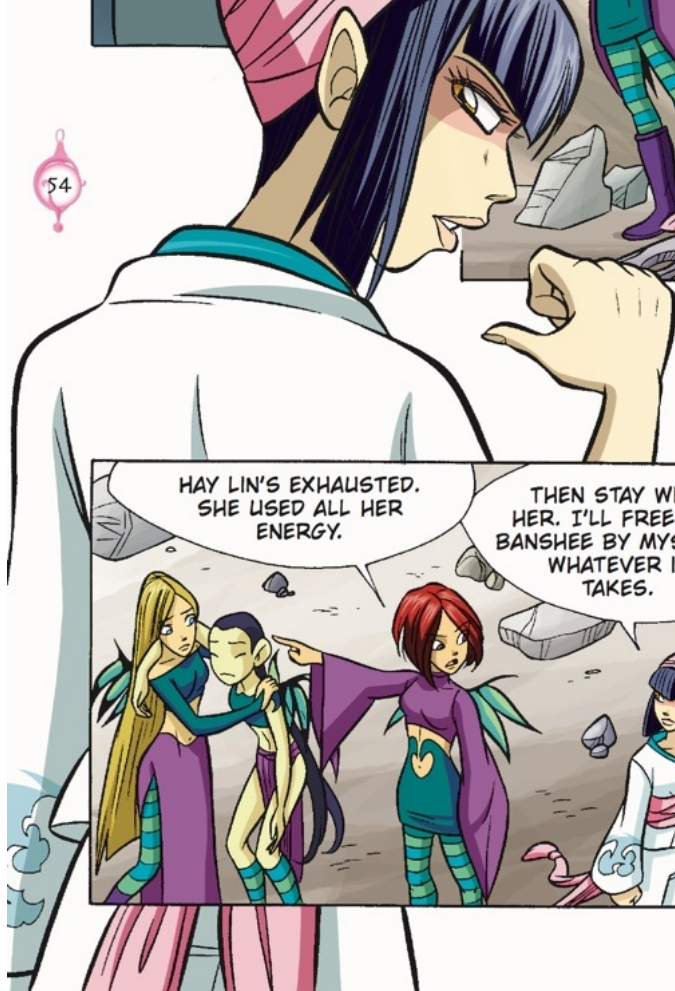


FREEING YUA OR LETTING ARI
USE HER POWER? WHICH IS
THE LESSER EVIL NOW?



I PICK THE FIRST.

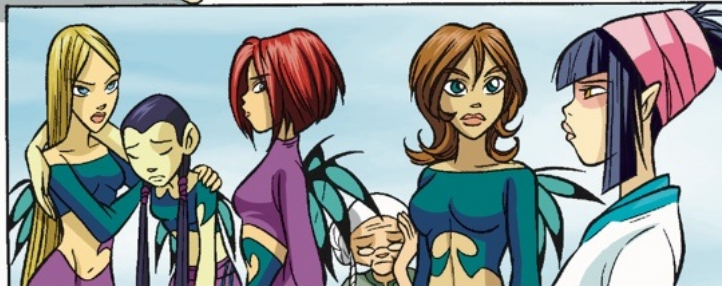
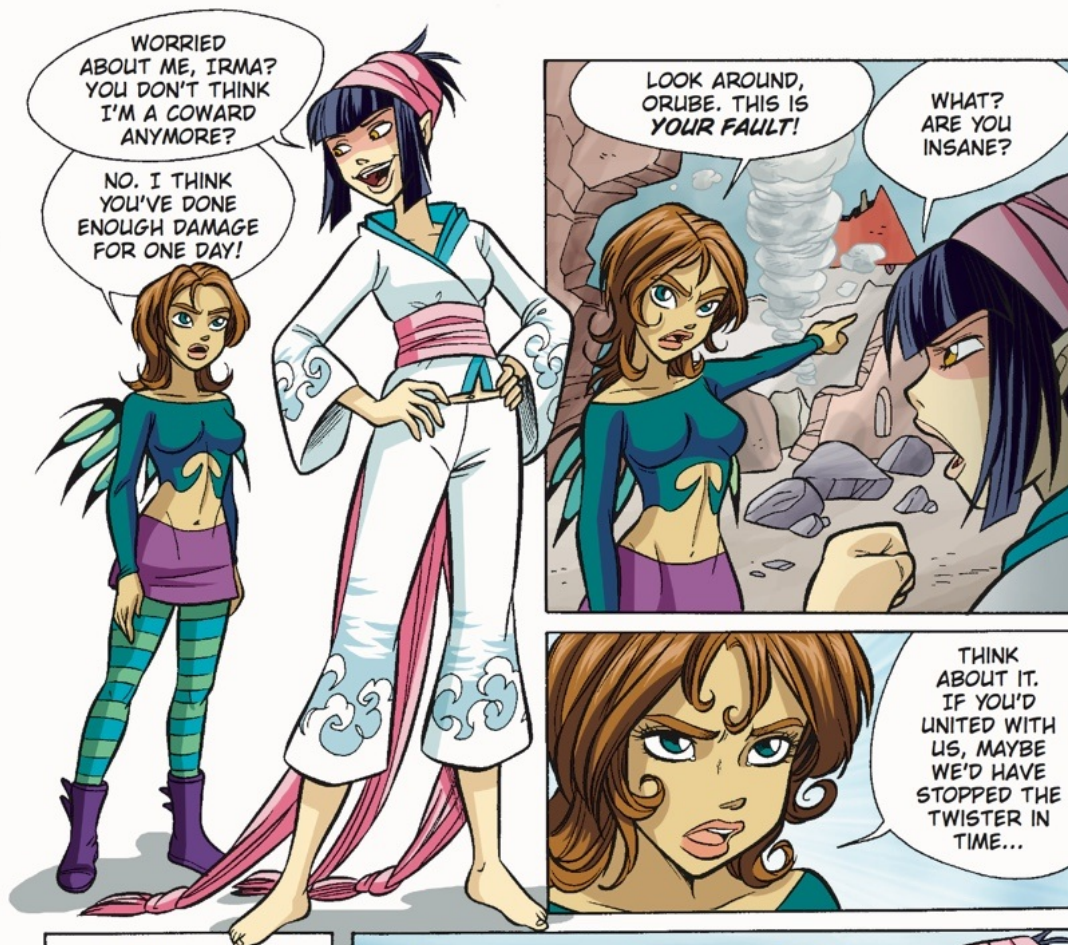
WHERE DO
YOU THINK
YOU'RE
GOING?

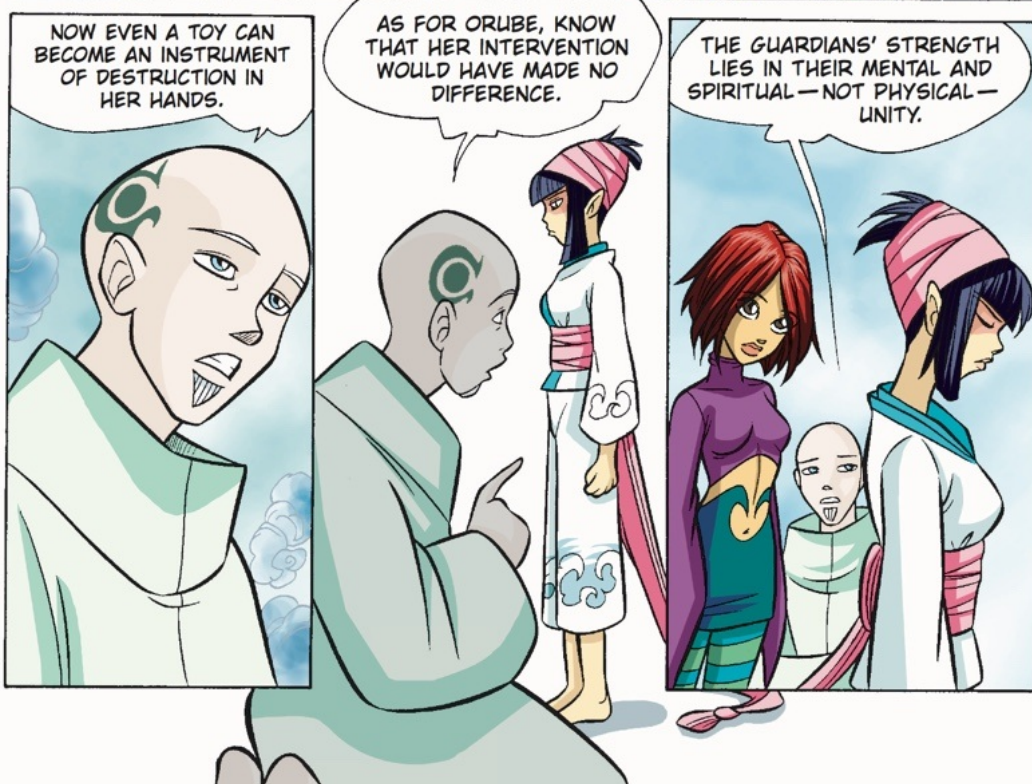


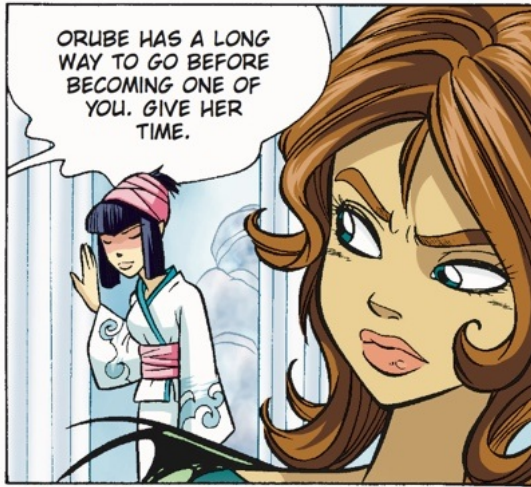
HAY LIN'S EXHAUSTED.
SHE USED ALL HER
ENERGY.

THEN STAY WITH
HER. I'LL FREE THE
BANSHEE BY MYSELF...
WHATEVER IT
TAKES.

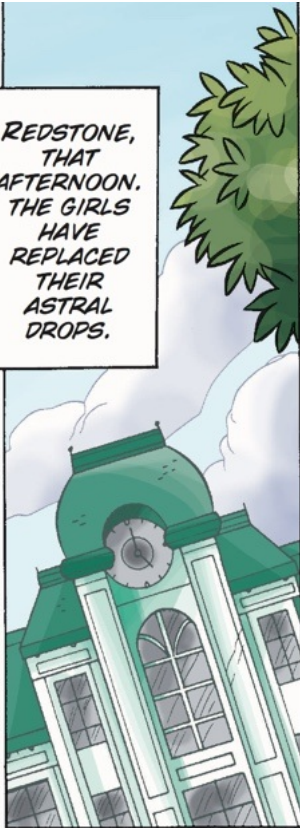
NO WAY.
YOU'RE COMING
WITH US BACK TO
KANDRAKAR.



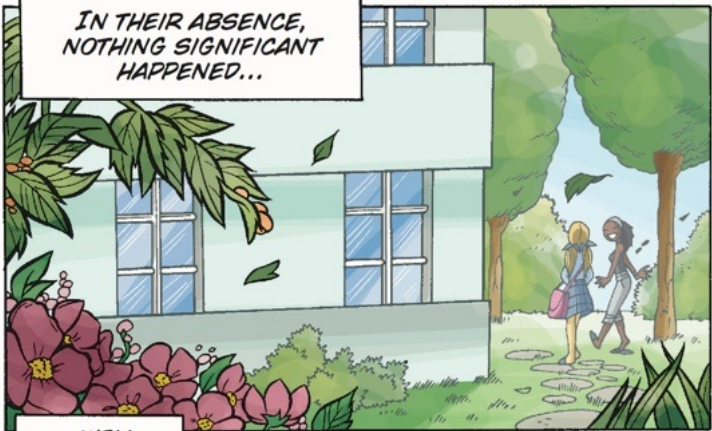




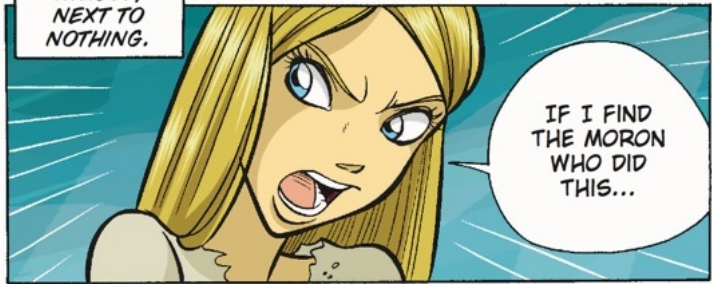
REDSTONE,
THAT
AFTERNOON.
THE GIRLS
HAVE
REPLACED
THEIR
ASTRAL
DROPS.



IN THEIR ABSENCE,
NOTHING SIGNIFICANT
HAPPENED...



...WELL,
NEXT TO
NOTHING.



IF I FIND
THE MORON
WHO DID
THIS...



YOU MEAN
THE ONE WHO
FILLED YOUR
ROOM WITH
FLOWERS?



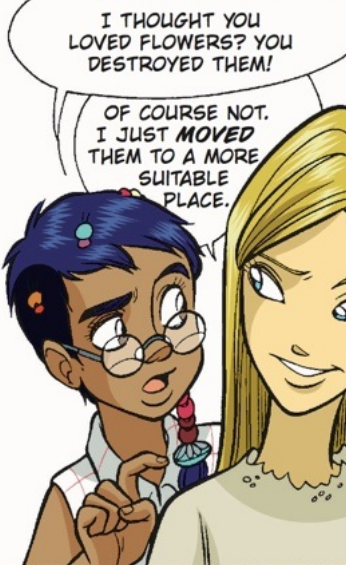
GIVING A FLOWER IS ONE
THING...BUT *WIPING OUT*
AN ENTIRE FIELD IS
A CRIME!
I THINK IT'S
ROMANTIC!



MOVE, HAY LIN.
DESPITE THE RULES,
I HAVE TO USE
MAGIC...

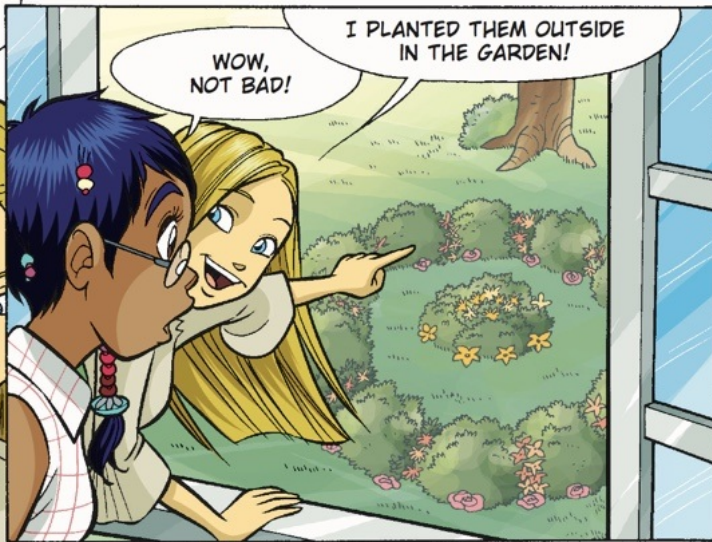


...TO FIX THIS
DISASTER!



I THOUGHT YOU
LOVED FLOWERS? YOU
DESTROYED THEM!

OF COURSE NOT.
I JUST **MOVED**
THEM TO A MORE
SUITABLE
PLACE.



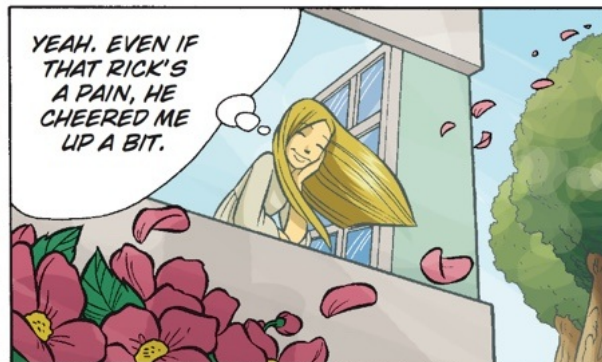
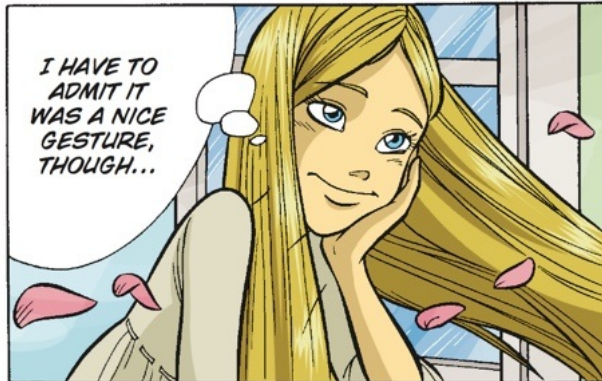
WOW,
NOT BAD!

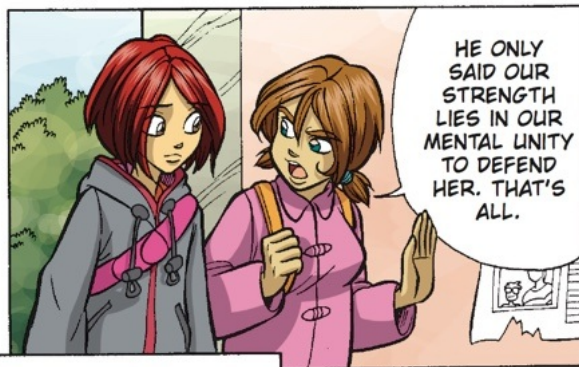
I PLANTED THEM
OUTSIDE
IN THE GARDEN!



ANY IDEA WHO
SENT THEM?

I THINK IT'S THAT
RICK FORTWORT. SOME
LOCAL MORON WHO
ALWAYS OVER-
DOES IT.





HE ONLY SAID OUR STRENGTH LIES IN OUR MENTAL UNITY TO DEFEND HER. THAT'S ALL.



ORUBE PUT US ALL IN DANGER. SHE'LL NEVER CHANGE!

I THINK SHE KNOWS SHE MADE A MISTAKE. BELIEVE ME, IRMA...

"...SHE KNOWS SHE MESSED UP."

I DISAPPOINTED EVERYONE. EVERYONE!



EVEN THE ORACLE FELT SORRY FOR ME. I COULD TELL FROM HIS VOICE.



WHAT'S THIS?







END OF
CHAPTER 29





The Path of the Wind

"We're people with feelings!
That means something!"





LIFE IN
HEATHERFIELD
IS HARD...

DON'T MAKE THAT FACE.
ORUBE WILL ENJOY
HER FIRST OUTING
ON EARTH.

SUUUUURE.
LIKE I ENJOY
BROCCOLI.



MEANWHILE,
IN REDSTONE...

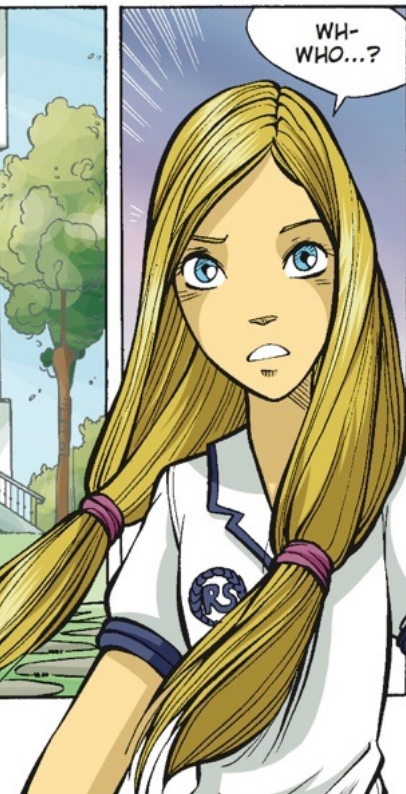
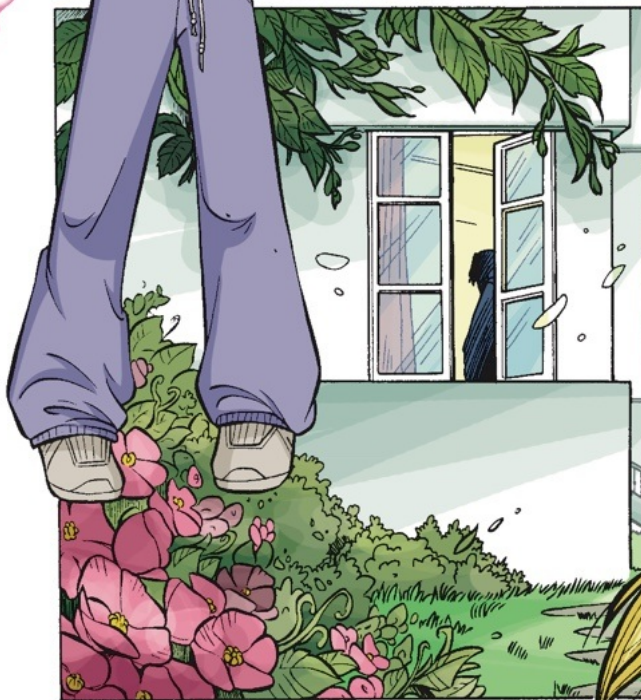
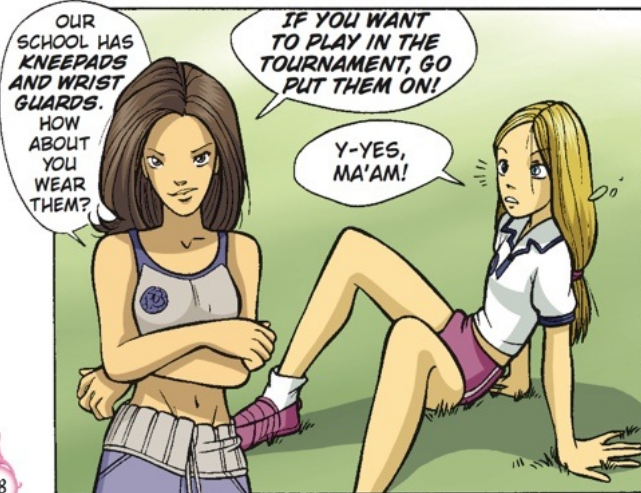
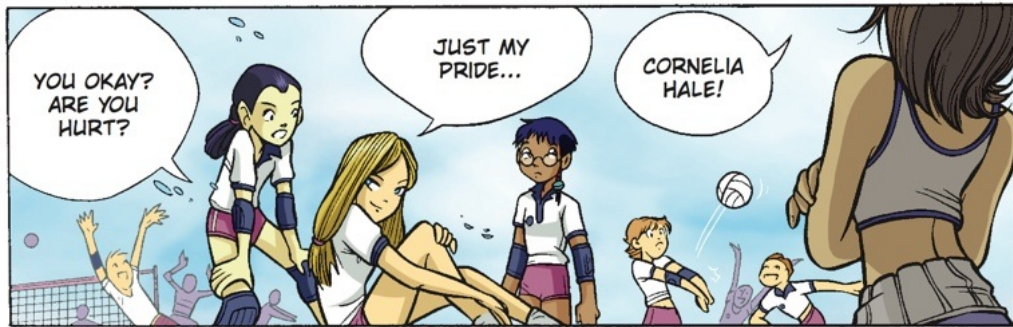


UUURGH!

WHAT A
SMASH!

OUCH...

TUNG

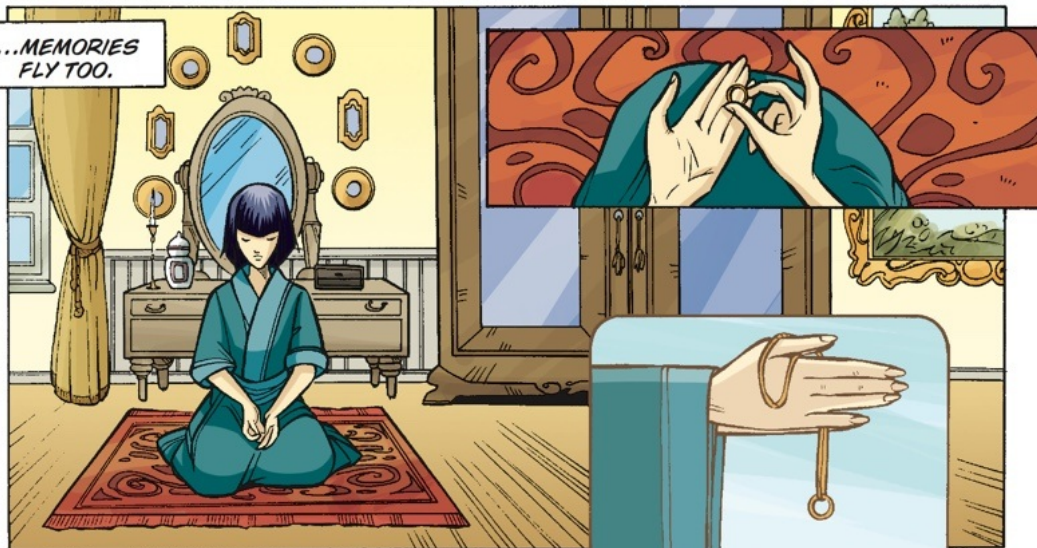




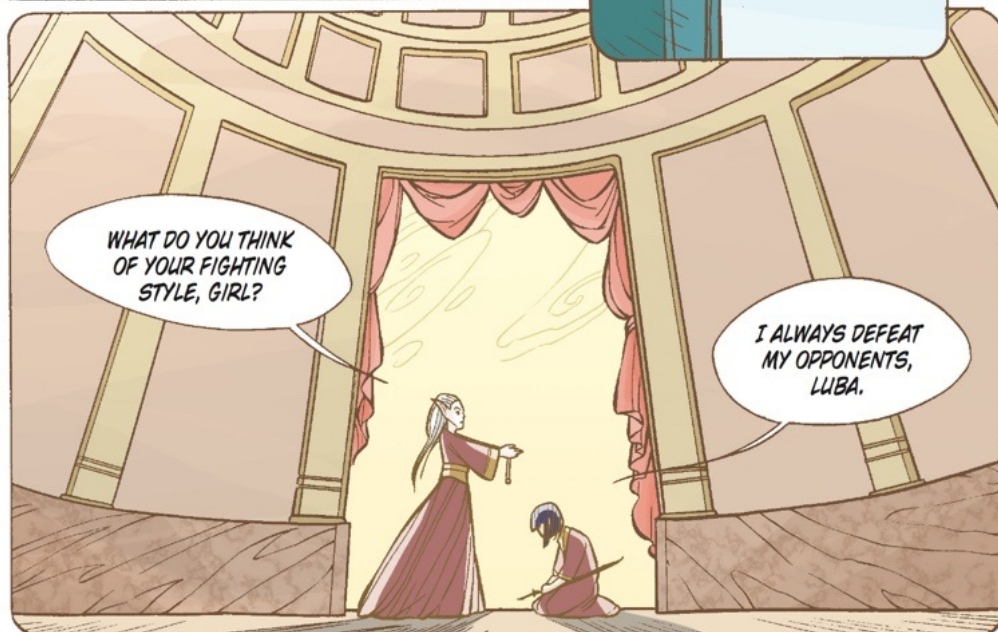


THE WIND IS BLOWING
IN HEATHERFIELD.
LEAVES FLY BY AND...

...MEMORIES
FLY TOO.



70



WHAT DO YOU THINK
OF YOUR FIGHTING
STYLE, GIRL?

I ALWAYS DEFEAT
MY OPPONENTS,
LUBA.



THAT'S NOT THE
WAY TO WIN. YOU USE
THE STRENGTH OF
YOUR ANGER.





ARKHANTA, WHERE
MAQI, ARI'S SON, LIVES,
IS QUITE DIFFERENT.

SILENCE IS HIS
WHOLE WORLD.

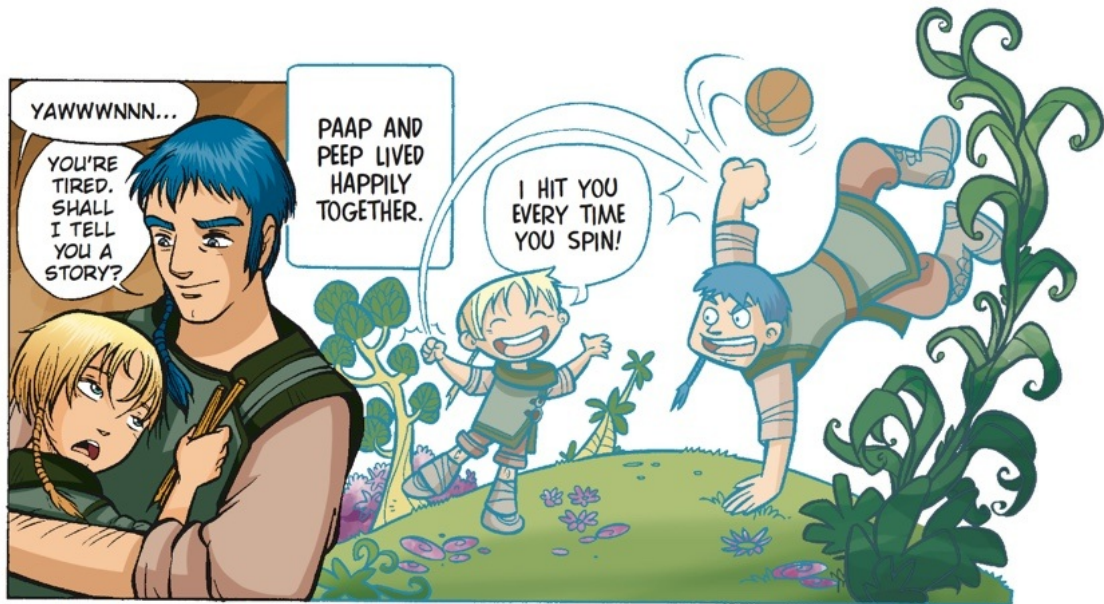
I BUILT THIS
PLACE TO
BE YOUR
HAVEN, MY
CHILD...

...A GIFT TO REPAY
THE JOY YOUR
BIRTH GAVE ME.

I WANTED A PLACE
THAT WOULD
BRING SUNSHINE
INTO YOUR
HEART.

THIS IS YOUR
KINGDOM. SAFE,
WELCOMING, AND
SWEET LIKE
A FAIRY
TALE.

AND EVERY
FAIRY TALE
HAS A
VILLAIN!

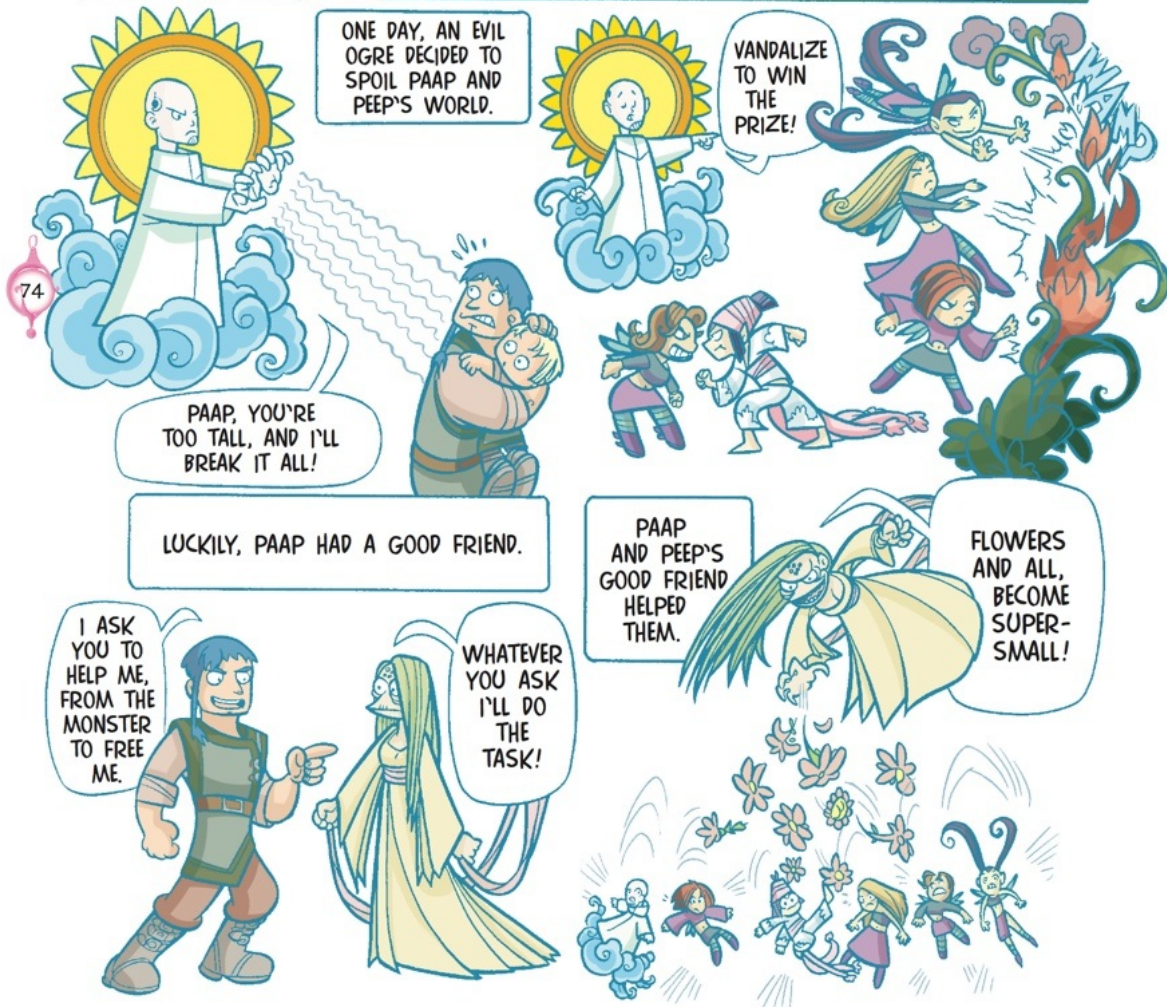


YAWWWNNN...

YOU'RE
TIRED.
SHALL
I TELL
YOU A
STORY?

PAAP AND
PEEP LIVED
HAPPILY
TOGETHER.

I HIT YOU
EVERY TIME
YOU SPIN!



ONE DAY, AN EVIL
OGRE DECIDED TO
SPOIL PAAP AND
PEEP'S WORLD.

VANDALIZE
TO WIN
THE
PRIZE!

PAAP, YOU'RE
TOO TALL, AND I'LL
BREAK IT ALL!

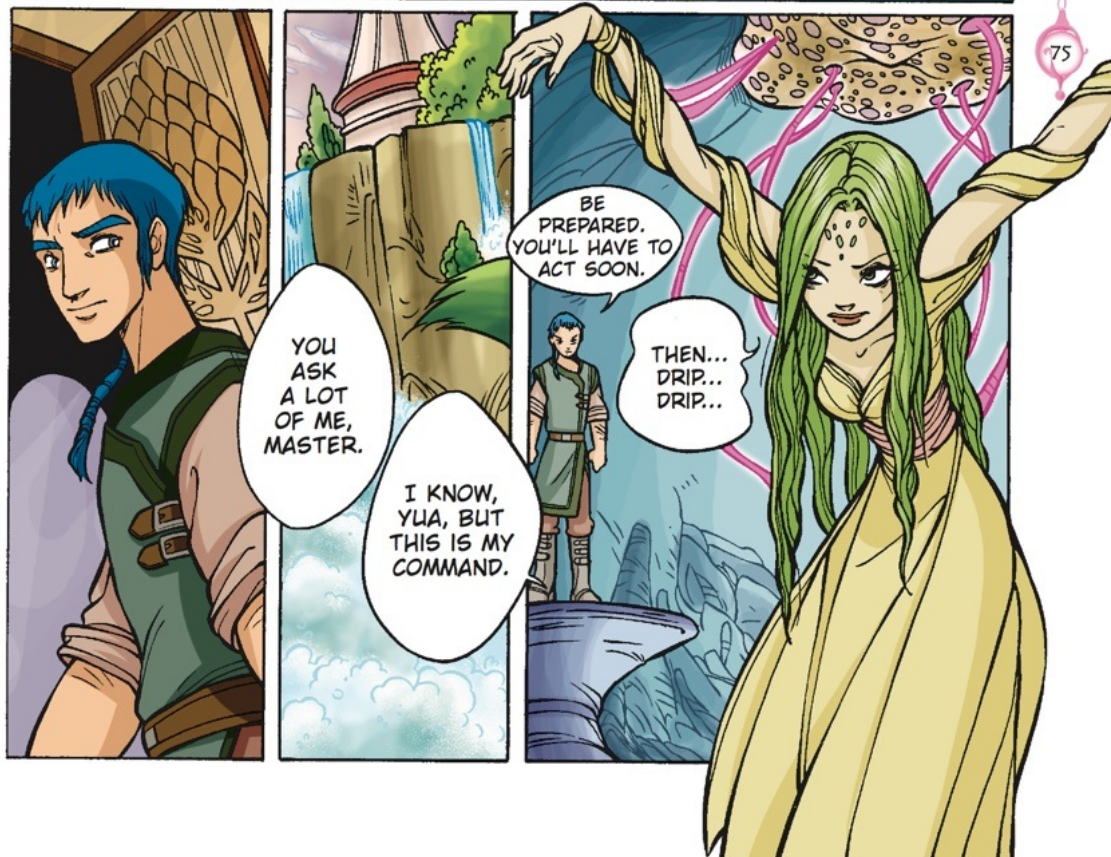
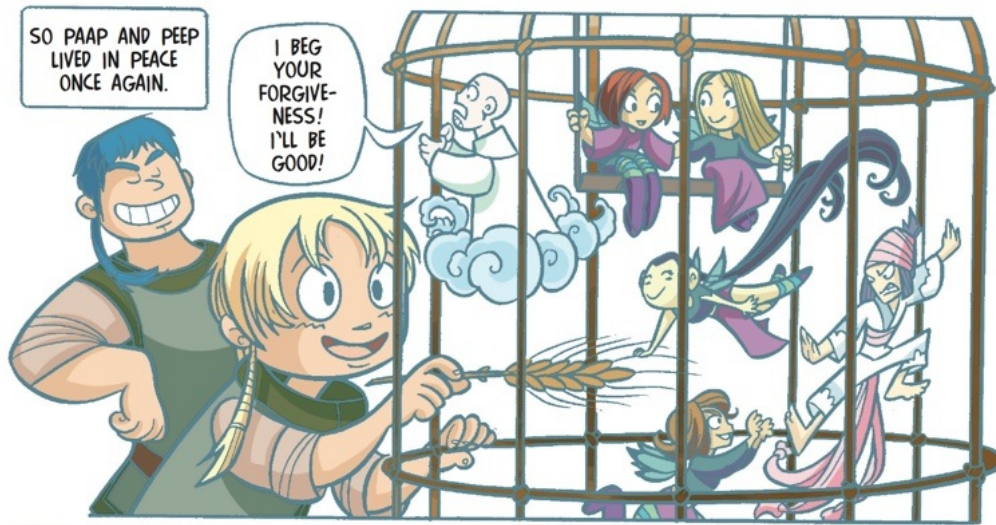
LUCKILY, PAAP HAD A GOOD FRIEND.

PAAP
AND PEEP'S
GOOD FRIEND
HELPED
THEM.

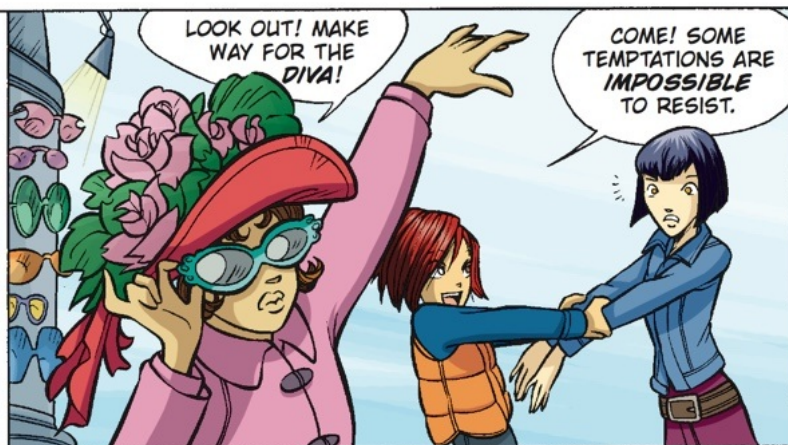
FLOWERS
AND ALL,
BECOME
SUPER-
SMALL!

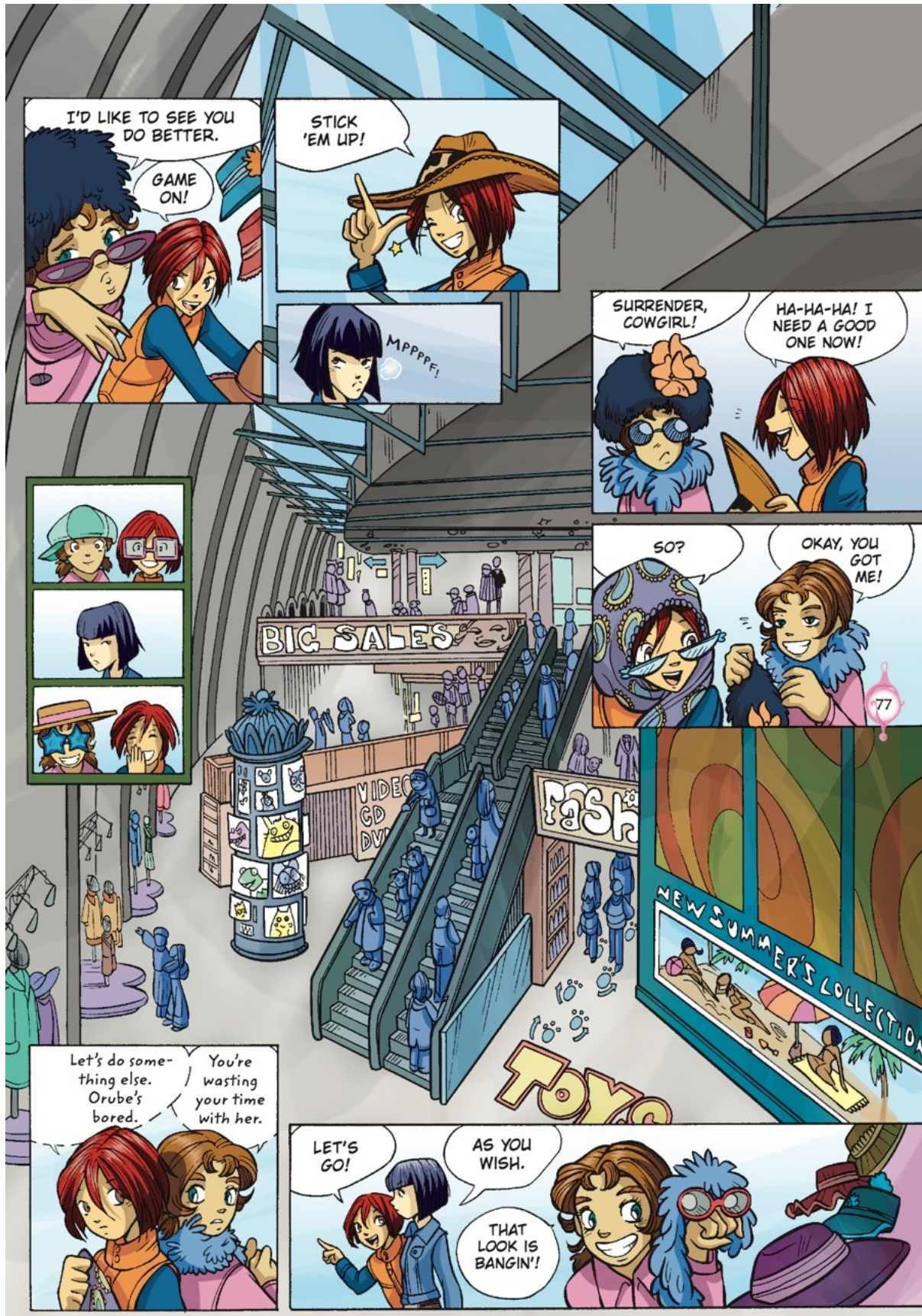
I ASK
YOU TO
HELP ME,
FROM THE
MONSTER
TO FREE
ME.

WHATEVER
YOU ASK
I'LL DO
THE
TASK!

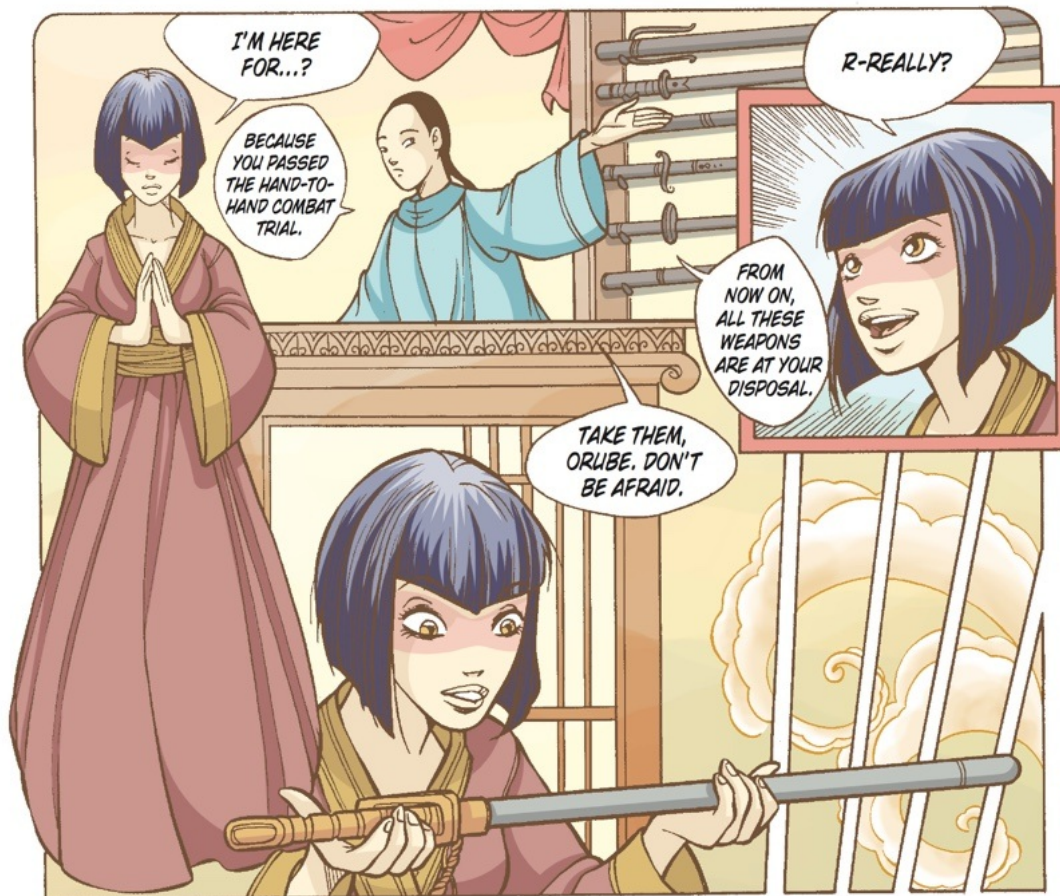


"THE ORACLE AND
HIS FIVE SERVANTS
WILL PAY..."











THINGS MAY HAVE TURNED OUT WELL AT THE MALL, BUT...



...THINGS ARE GETTING TENSE BETWEEN THE GIRLS.

WELL DONE! YOU MADE US LOOK LIKE IDIOTS!



IF YOU'RE GONNA LIVE HERE, YOU BETTER LEARN HOW TO BEHAVE— AND FAST!



AND SINCE WE'RE THE ONLY ONES WHO CAN TEACH YOU, YOU'D BETTER ASK US BEFORE YOU DO ANYTHING.

BUT I DID!

YOU NEVER ANSWER ME PROPERLY! WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME ABOUT THE CUSTOM OF PAYING FOR THINGS?



WHAAAAAT?

WHAT HAPPENED IN THERE IS ALL YOUR FAULT!

YOU...YOU NEED TO LEARN ABOUT GRATITUDE!



I'M NOT WASTING MY HARD-EARNED POCKET MONEY TO BAIL YOU OUT EVER AGAIN!

YOU'RE IMPOSSIBLE!



JUST STOP. THERE'S NO POINT GOING OFF ON EACH OTHER.

IF IRMA APOLOGIZES, THEN I WILL TOO.



APOLOGIZE
FOR WHAT?

I
KNEW YOU
WOULDN'T
BEHAVE
HONOR-
ABLY.

I CAN'T EXPECT
LITTLE GIRLS TO
BEHAVE LIKE **TRUE**
WARRIORS.

ENOUGH!
WE'RE ON THE
SAME **TEAM** NOW,
REMEMBER?

YOU'RE WRONG.
WE'LL NEVER BE A
TEAM, NEVER MIND
FRIENDS.

I DON'T WANT ANYTHING
TO DO WITH THOSE
RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT
HAPPENED TO LUBA. I'LL
DO AS I'M ORDERED BUT
NO MORE.

LUBA'S FATE
WASN'T OUR
FAULT.

HOW
PREDICT-
ABLE.

MAYBE YOU'RE
RIGHT. MAYBE WE
ARE PREDICTABLE
LITTLE GIRLS AND
WILL NEVER BE
WARRIORS...

...BUT WE'RE
PEOPLE WITH
FEELINGS!
THAT MEANS
SOMETHING!

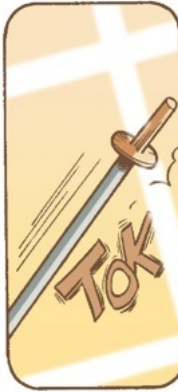
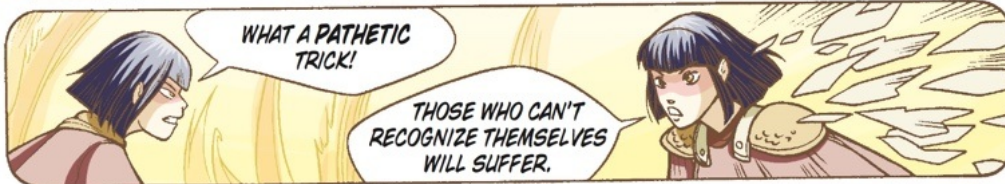
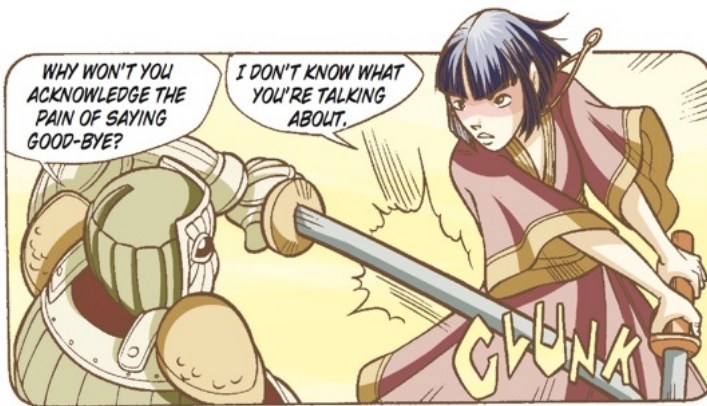


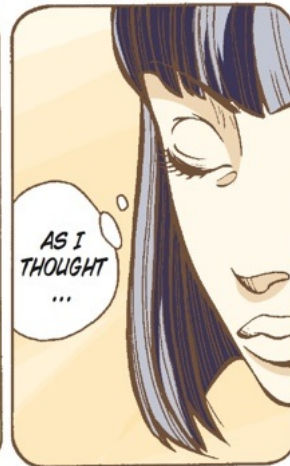
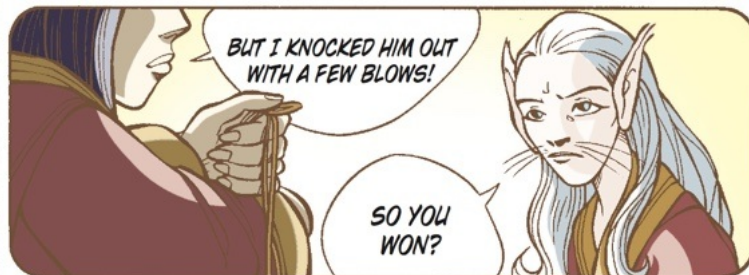
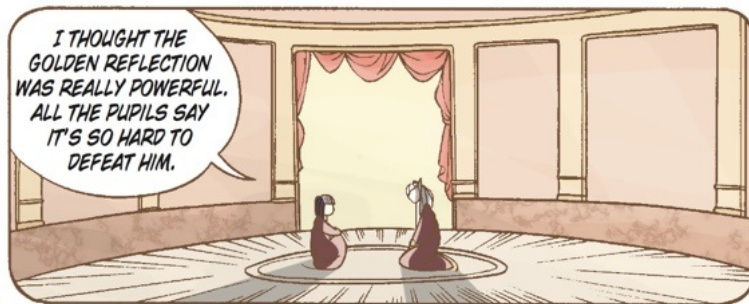
THE MEMORY OF THE FIGHT WITH THE GOLDEN REFLECTION SURFACES...

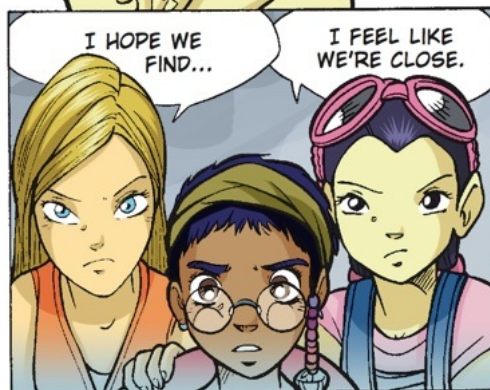
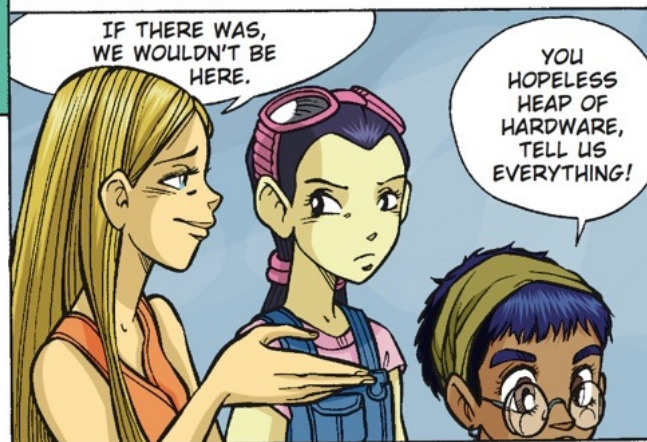
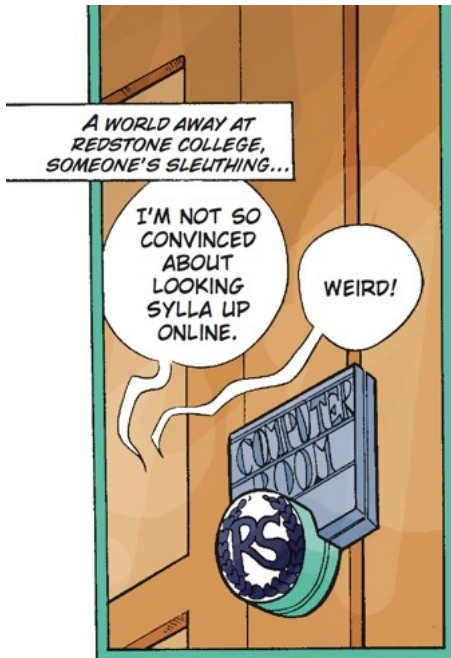
AAAAH...

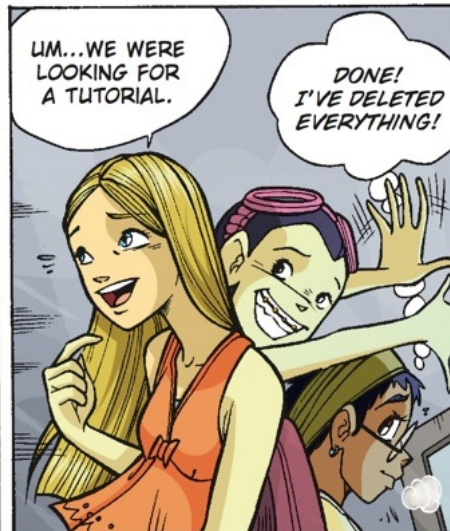
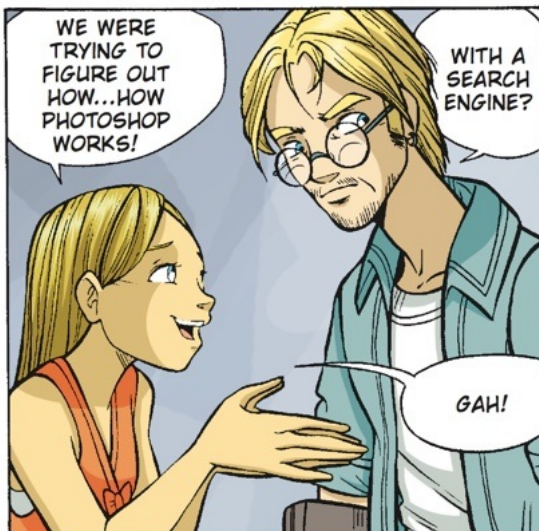
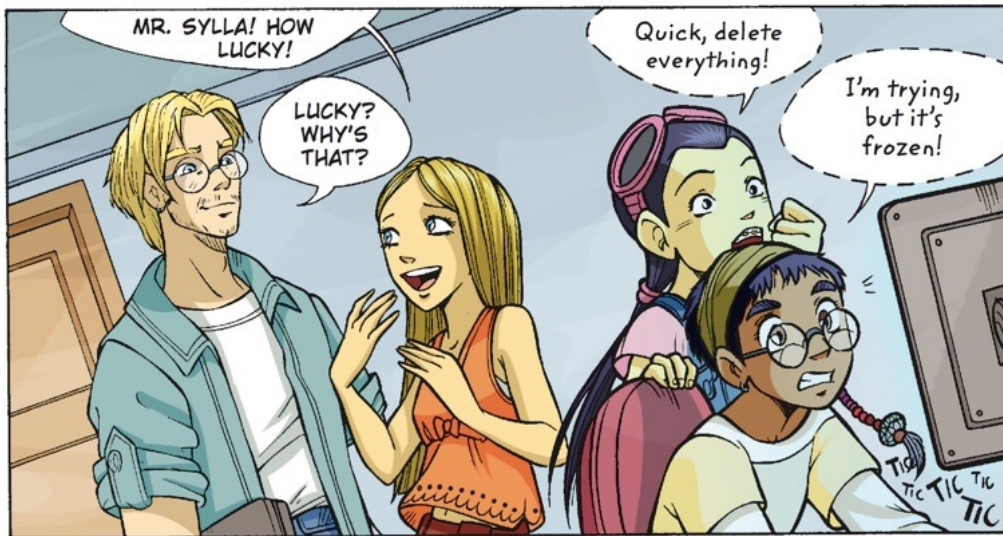
NO!
WAIT!

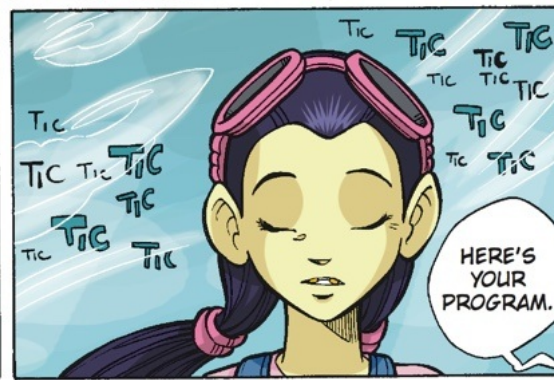






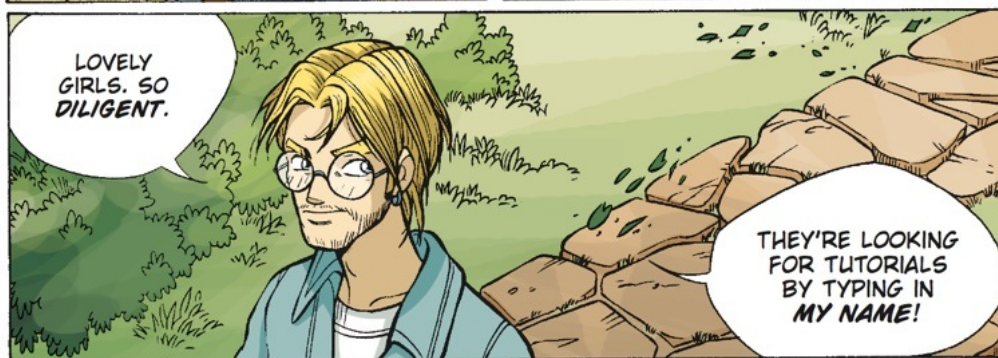
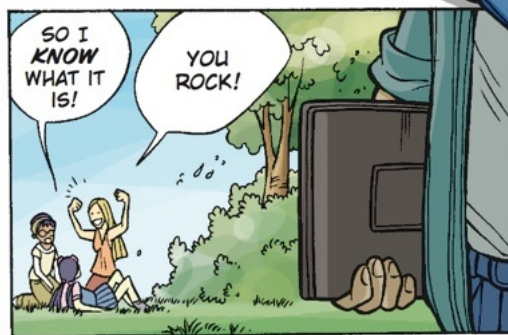
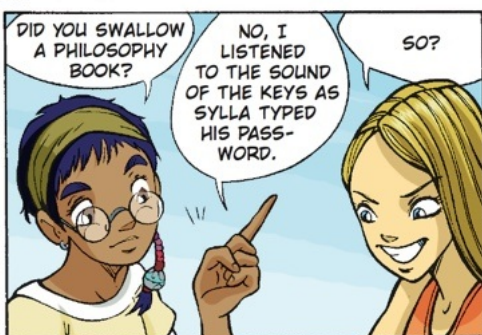








90



"PAIN. REVENGE.
HATRED."



SOMEONE IS
VIOLATING THIS
IMPENETRABLE
PLACE,
YAN LIN.

OUTRAGEOUS!



WHO DARES?

LOOK.



ARI OF
ARKHANTA!

WHAT AN UNEXPECTED
HONOR. THE ORACLE
HIMSELF PAYING ME
A VISIT.

DID YOU
ENJOY YOUR
SURPRISE?

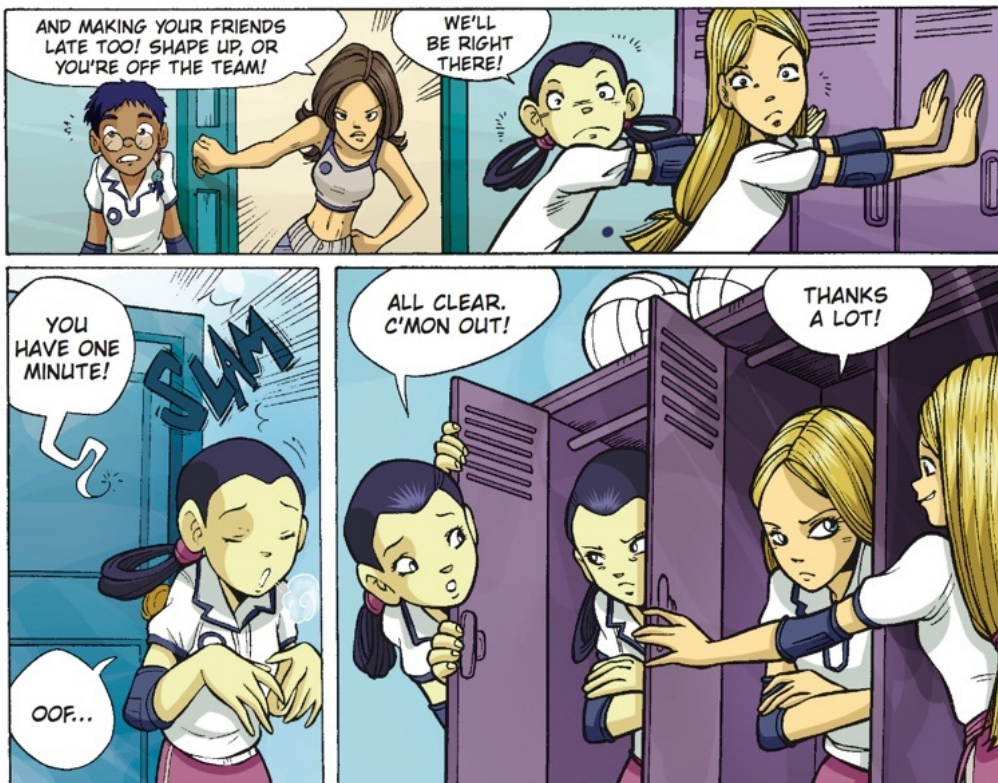
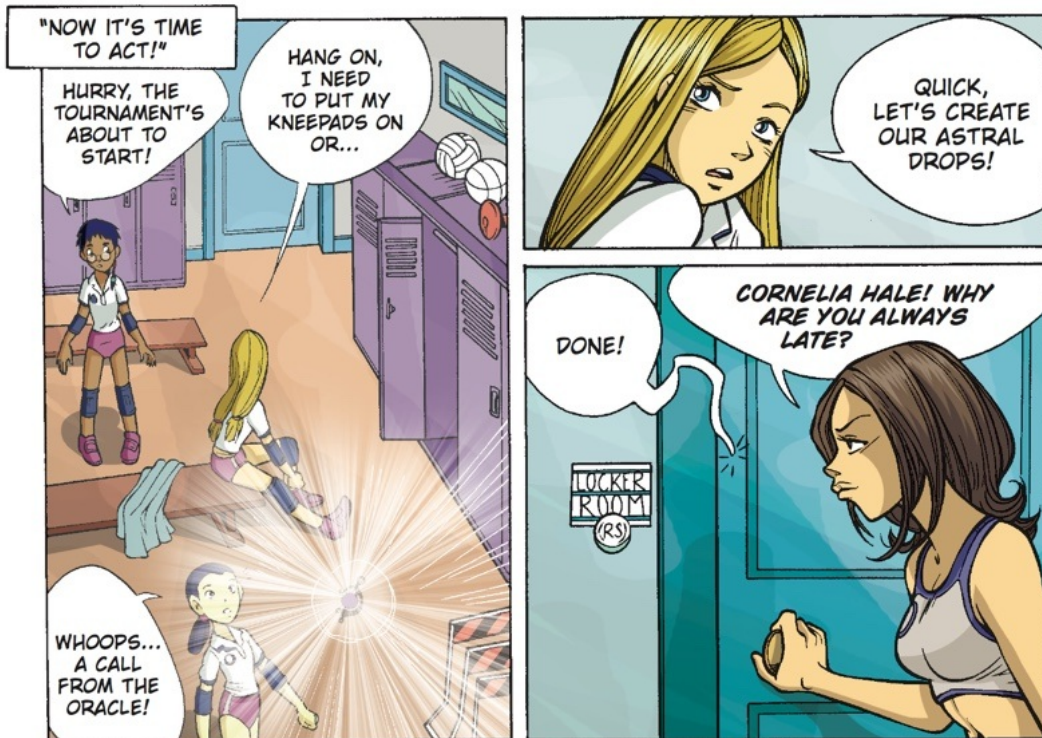


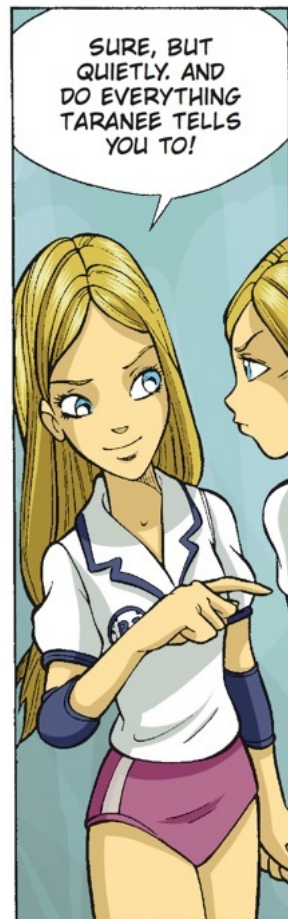
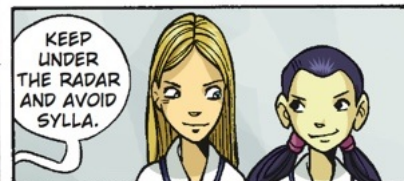
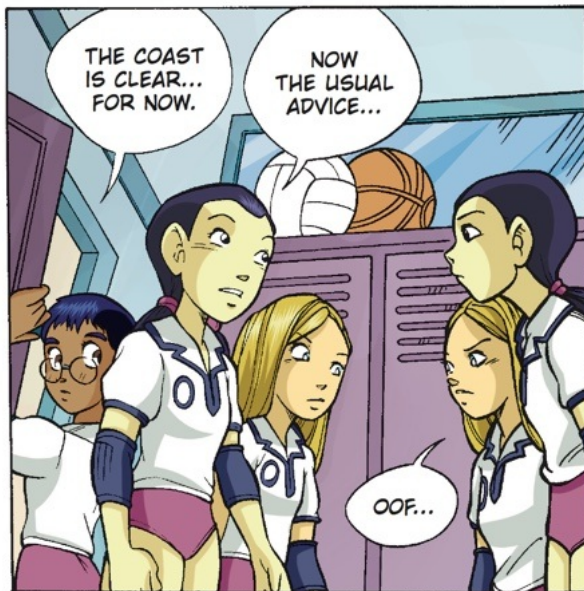
YOUR
IMPUDENCE
IS EQUAL ONLY
TO YOUR
ARROGANCE!

BUT FROM NOW ON, AN
IMPASSIBLE BARRIER WILL
PREVENT ANY CONTACT
BETWEEN OUR
WORLDS.



"WE WAITED TOO LONG."





"WE CAN'T WAIT ANY LONGER."



ARI'S POWER GROWS EVER MORE DANGEROUS.



THIS JOURNEY TO ARKHANTA WON'T END IN ANOTHER DEFEAT.



YOU MUST STAND UNITED.

DEPART AT ONCE...



"...FOR THE SCARLET STRONGHOLD."

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WOW! THAT WAS QUICK!

THE FLOOR'S SHAKING!

CORNELIA, DO SOMETHING!

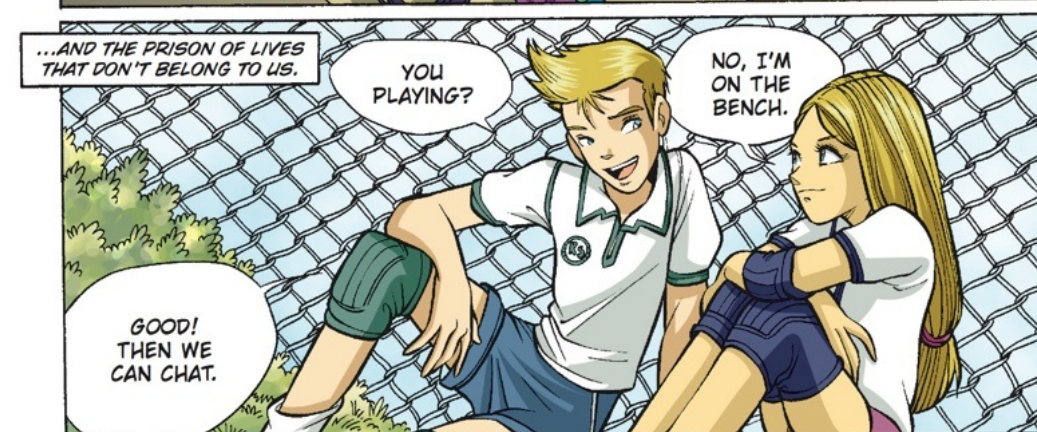
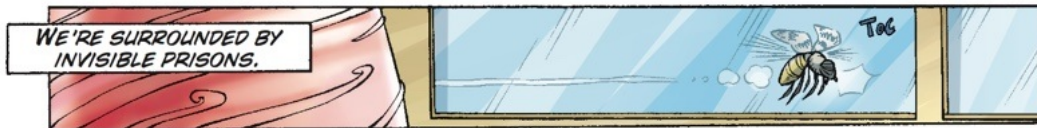


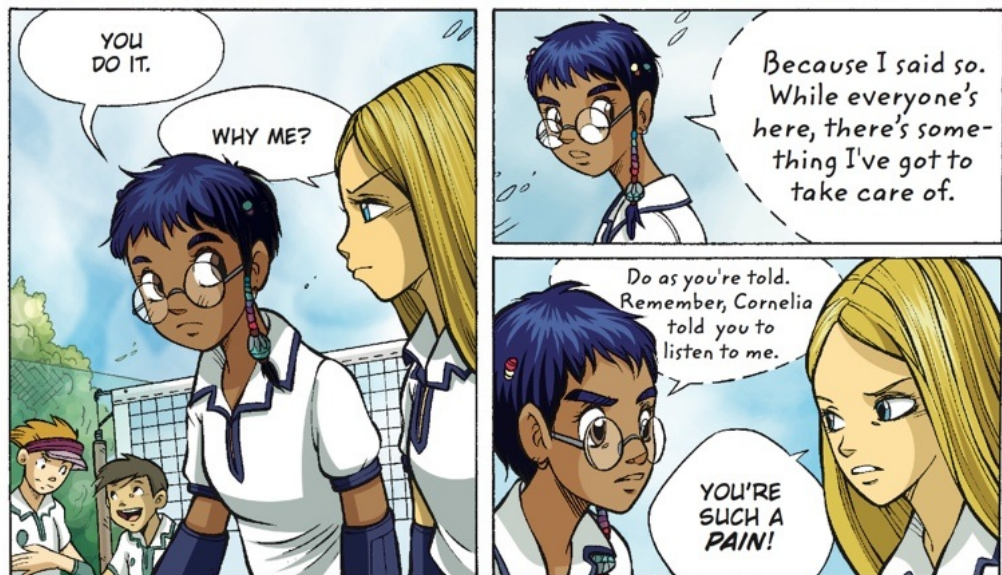
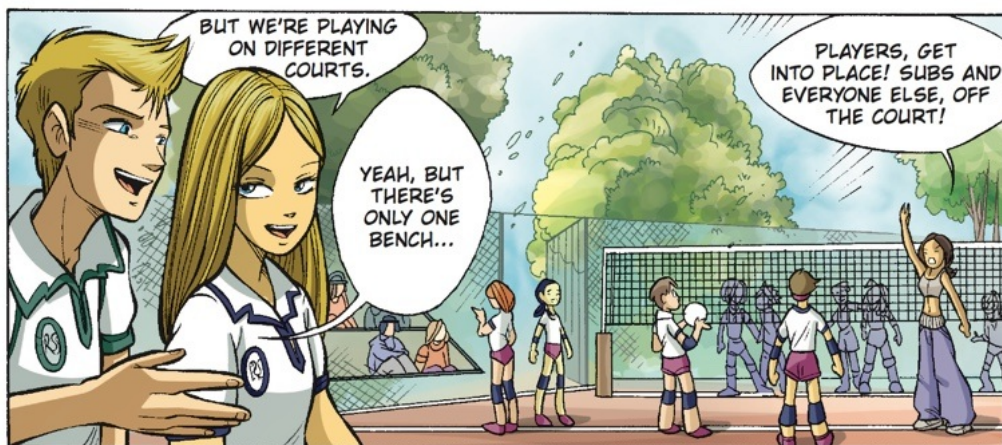
POWERS OF THE EARTH!





NOT THE WARMEST WELCOME TO ARKHANTA...







ARKHANTA.

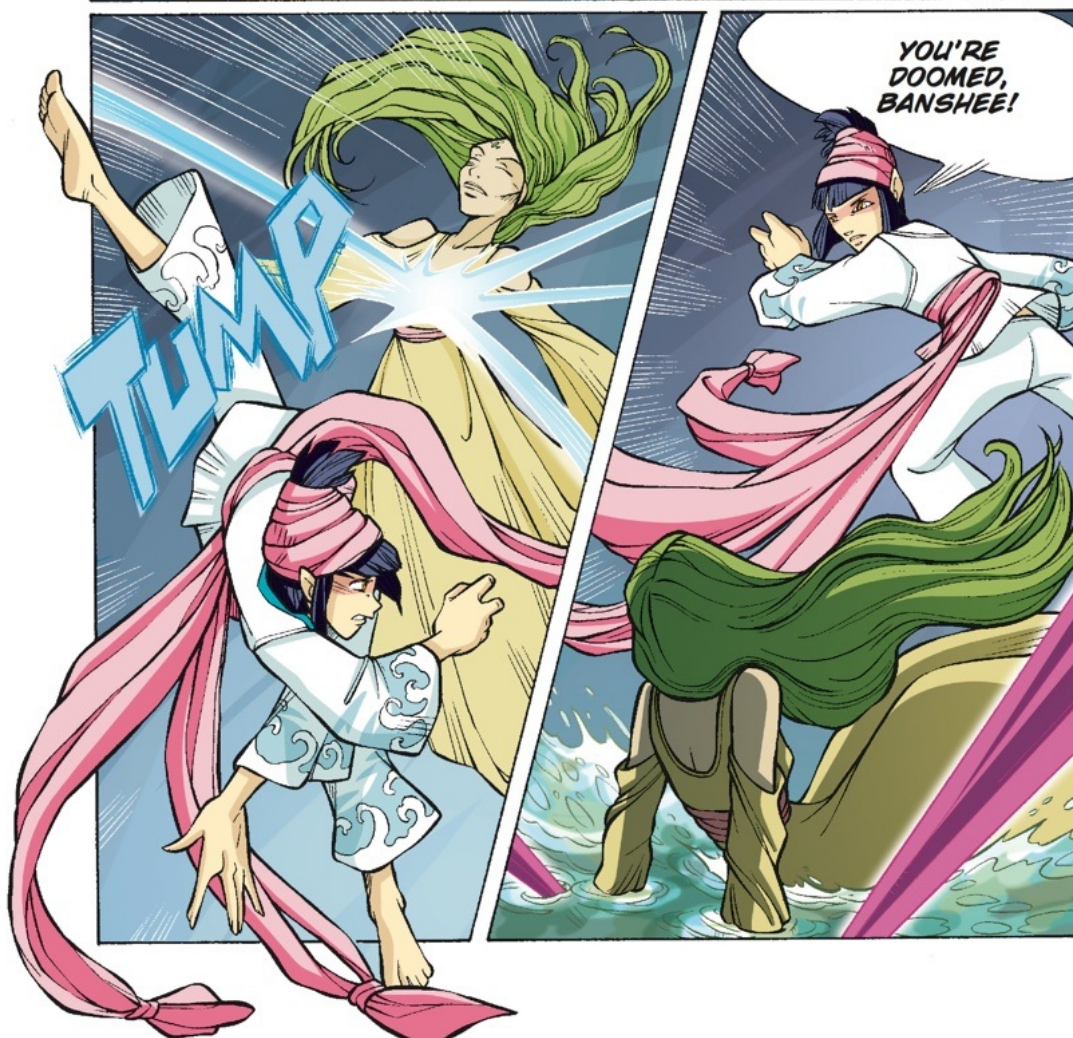
PROCEED,
YUA.

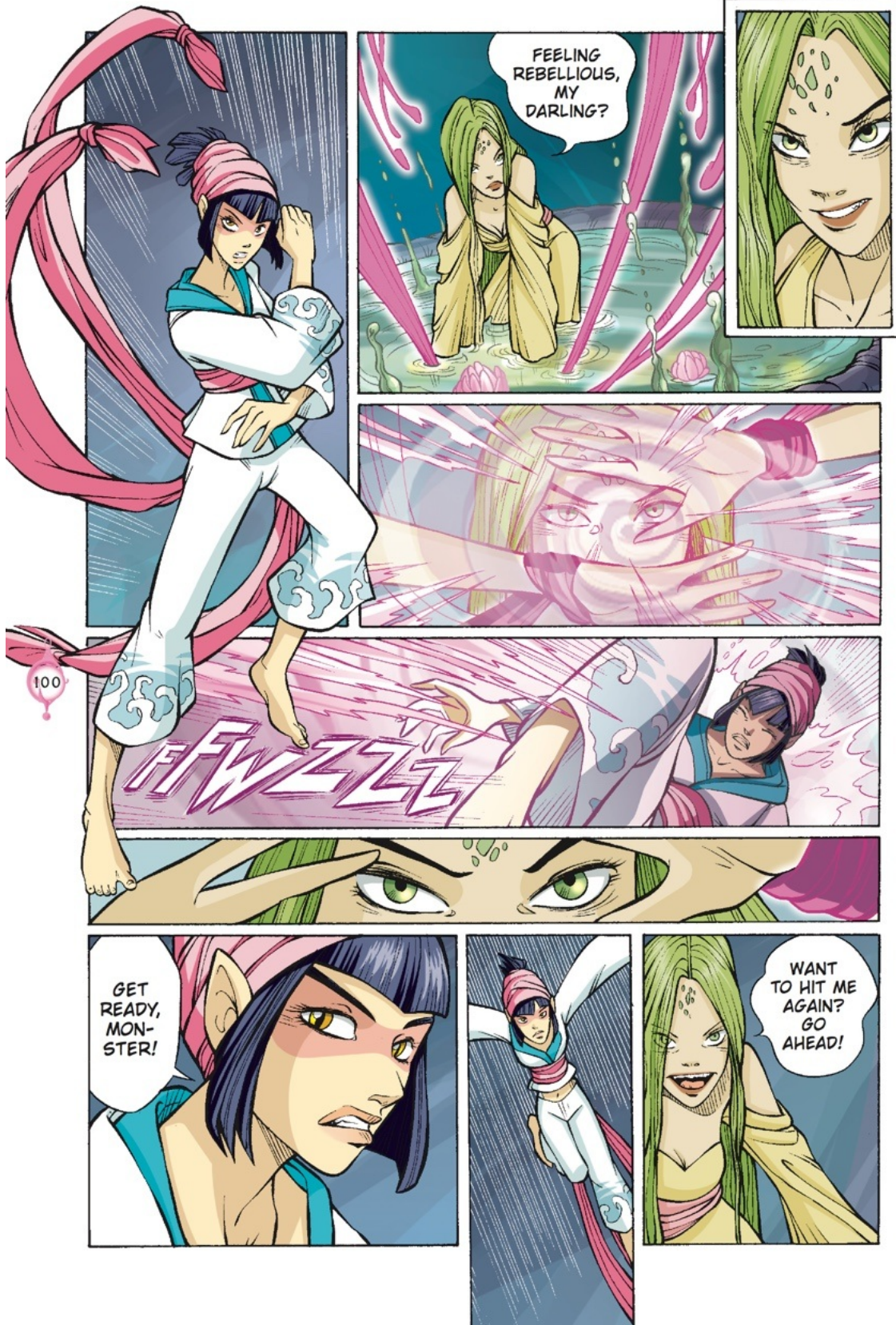


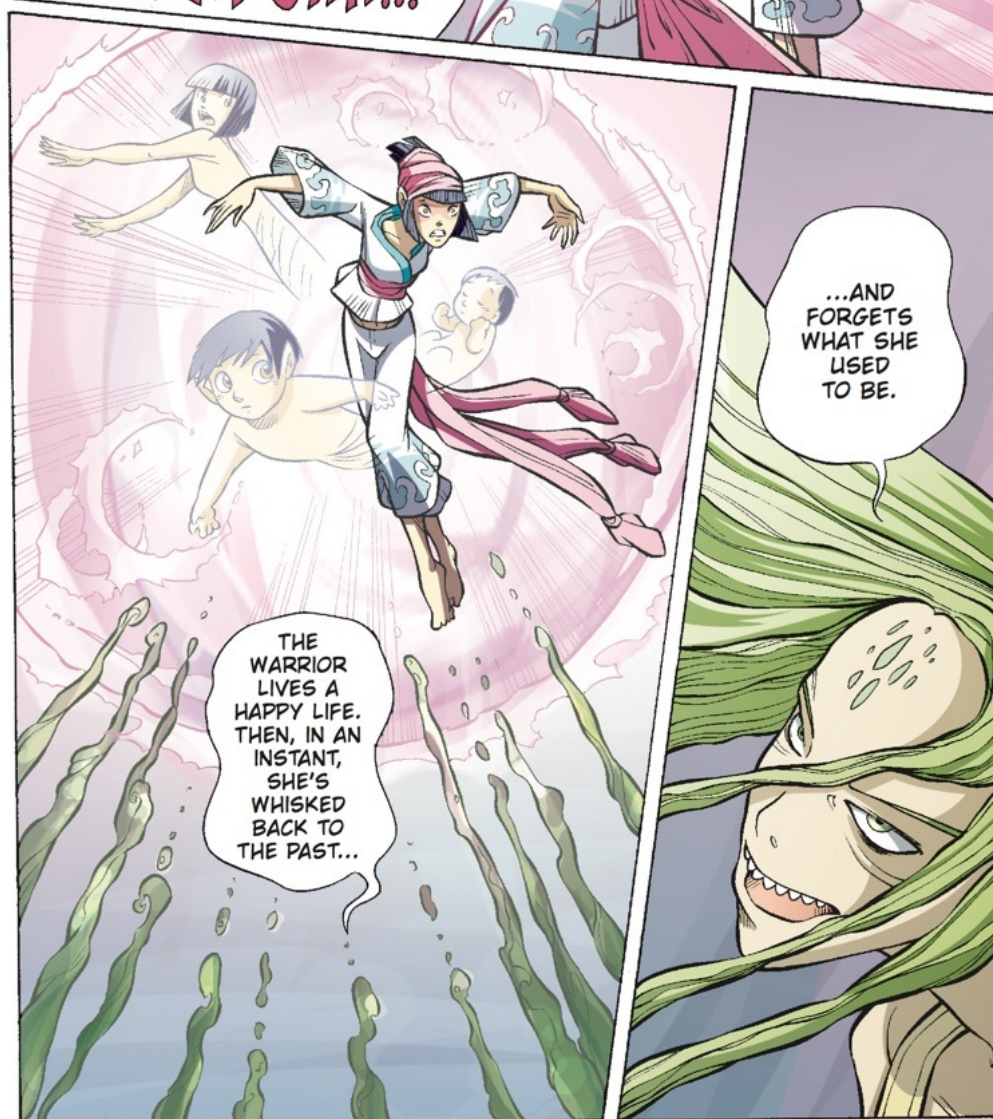
KSSSHH....



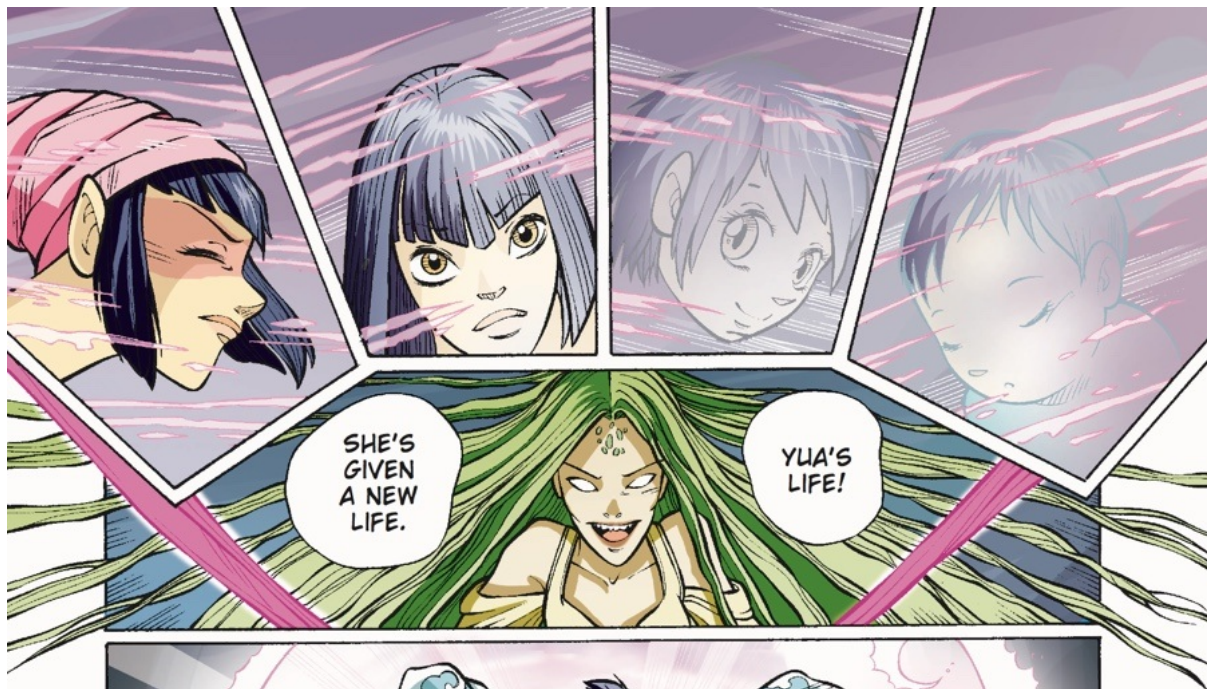
YOU'RE
DOOMED,
BANSHEE!



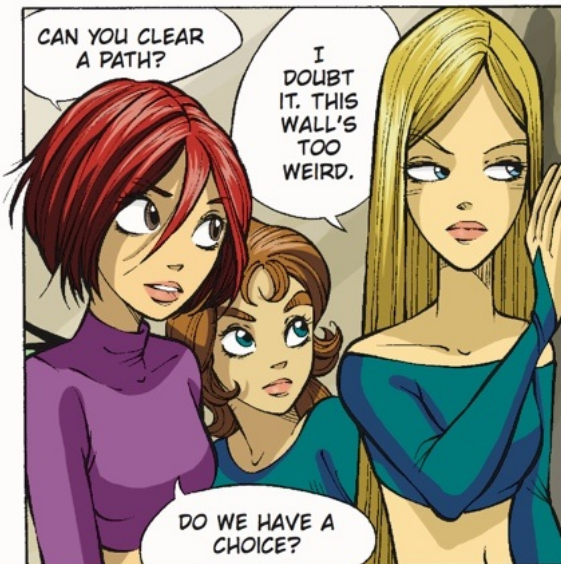
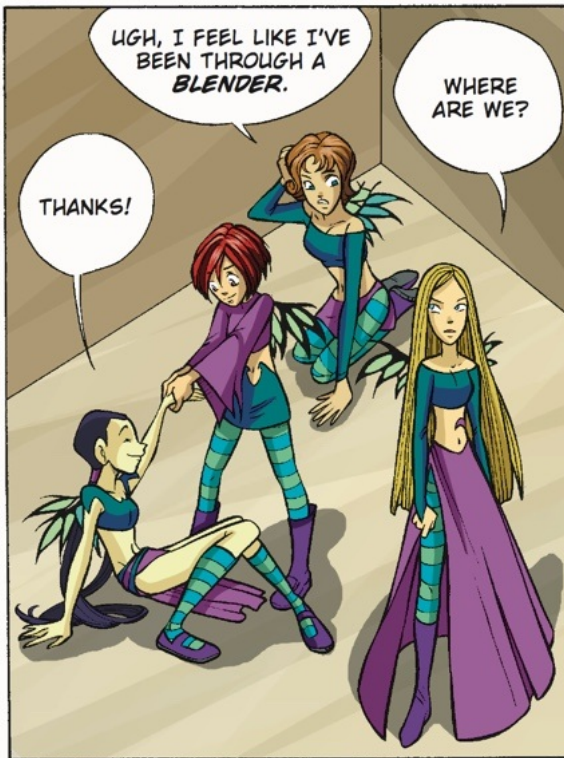




THE
WARRIOR
LIVES A
HAPPY LIFE.
THEN, IN AN
INSTANT,
SHE'S
WHISKED
BACK TO
THE PAST...



"WELL DONE, BANSHEE."





THE WALLS
AREN'T
STOPPING!

TELEPORT,
QUICK!
BETTER
LATE THAN
NEVER.

RIGHT!

OH NO!

THE
ROOM'S
GETTING
SMALLER!



BROOUMBLEEMBRON

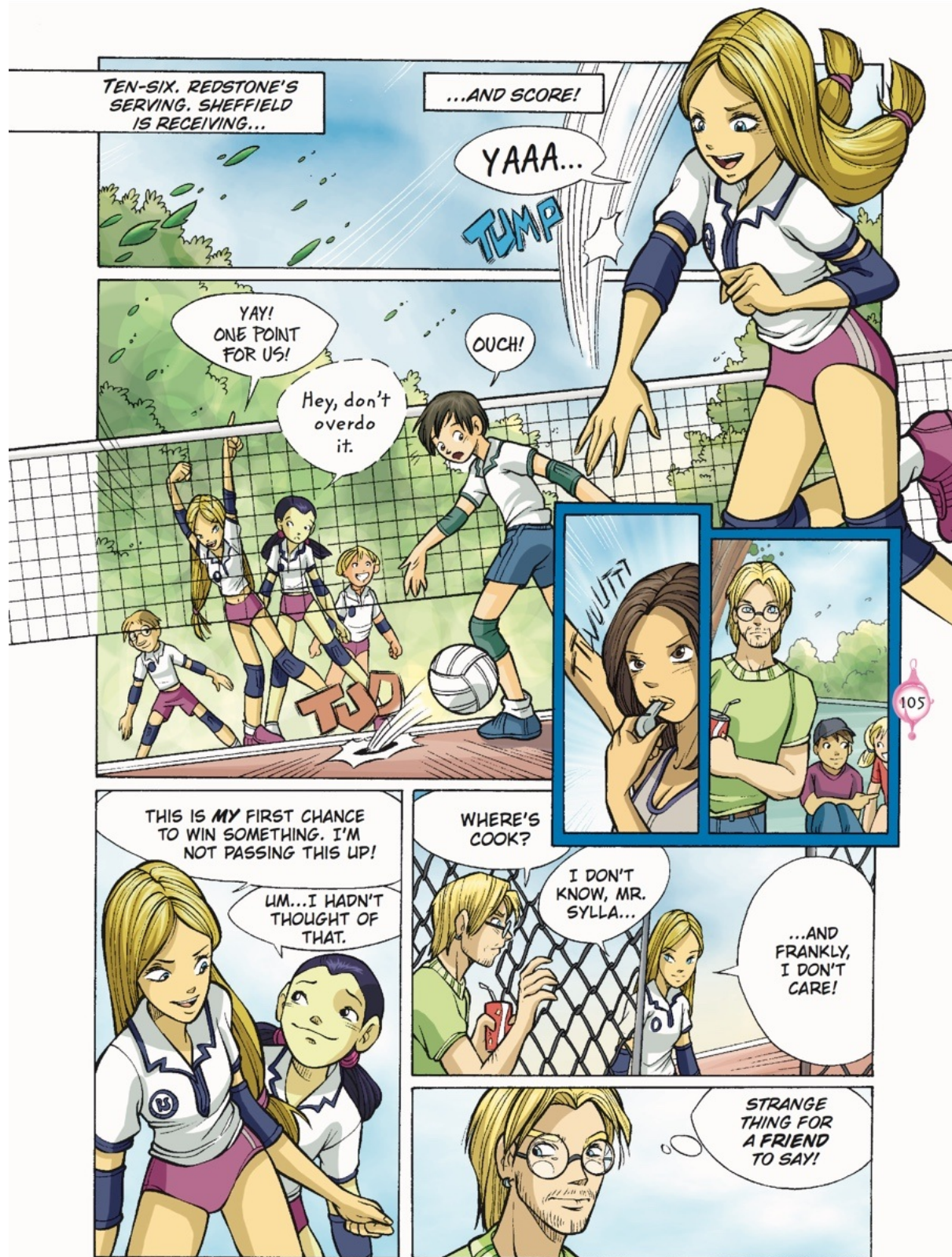
CRIPES! IT'S NOT
WORKING!

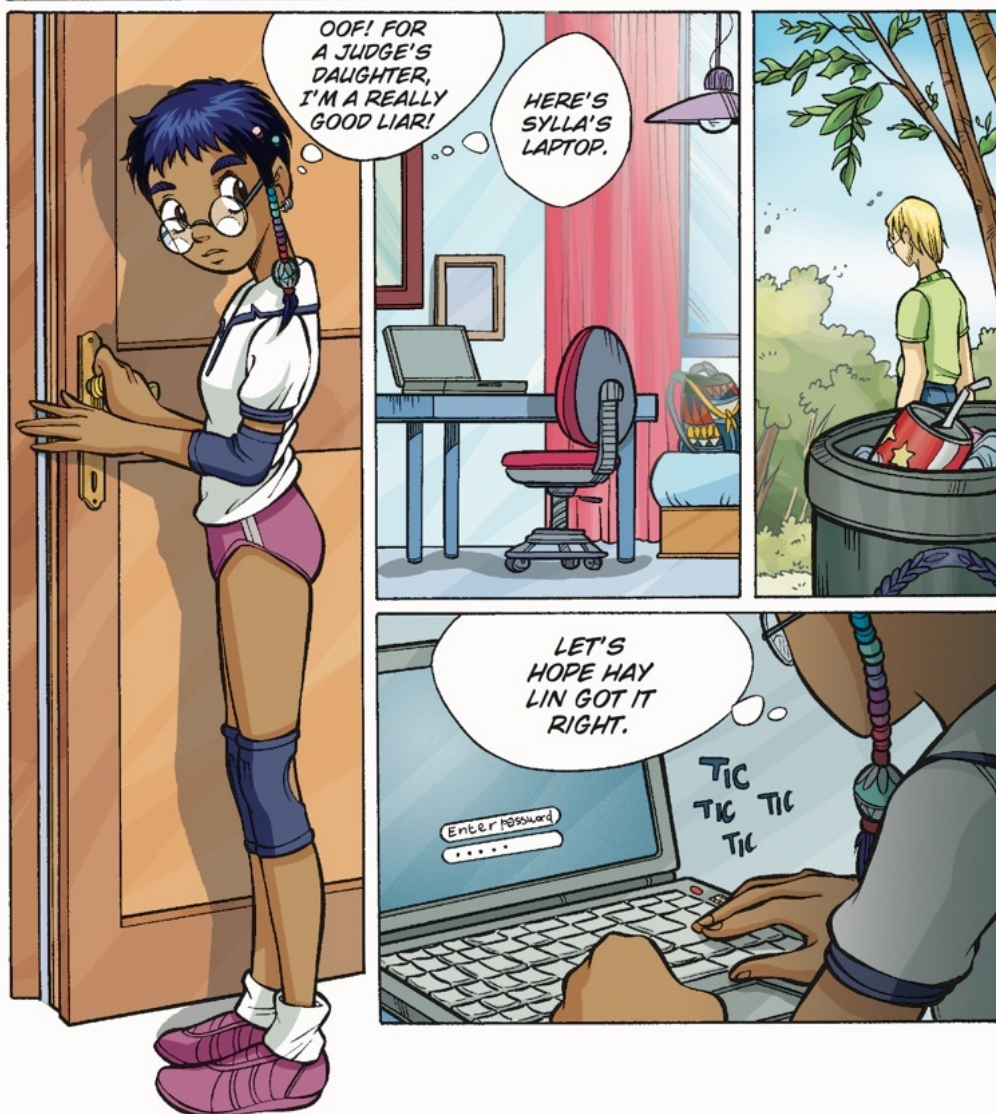
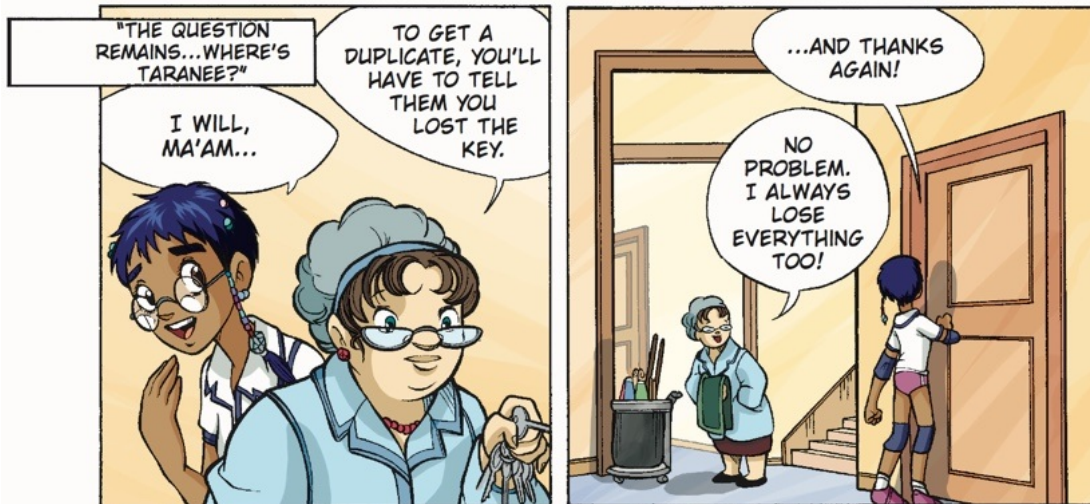


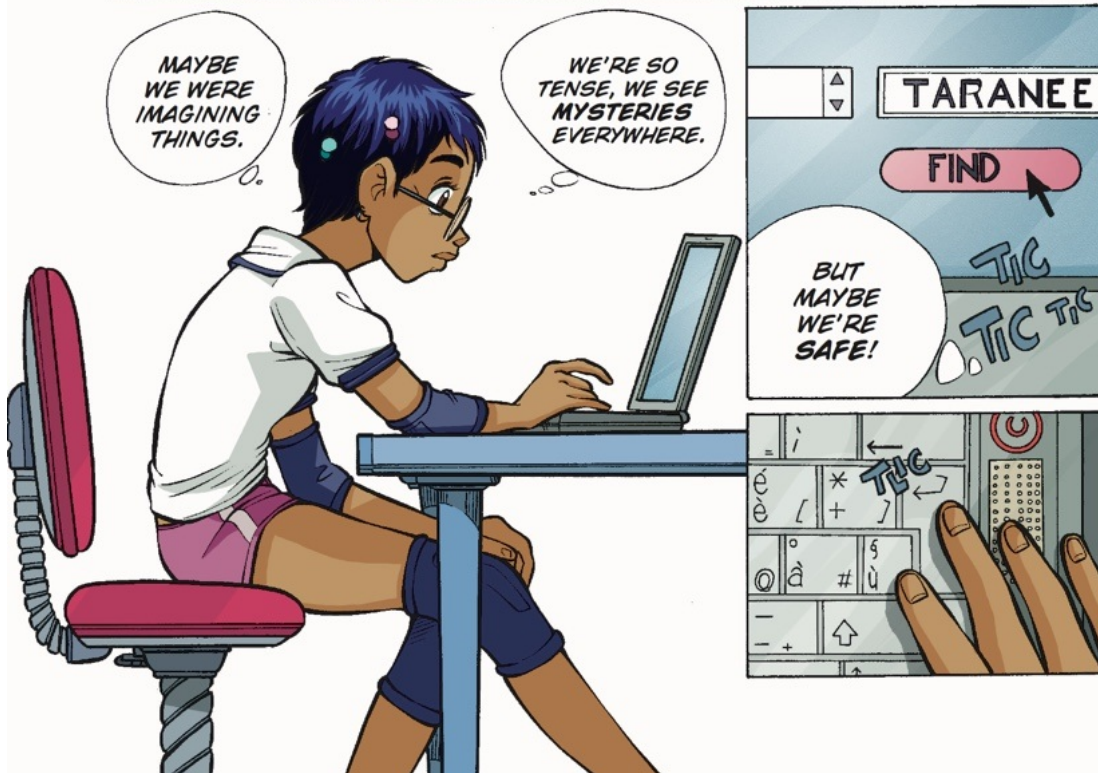
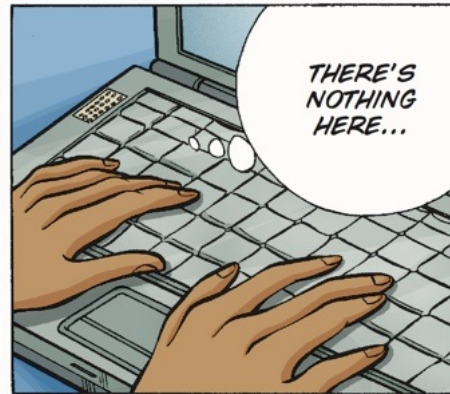
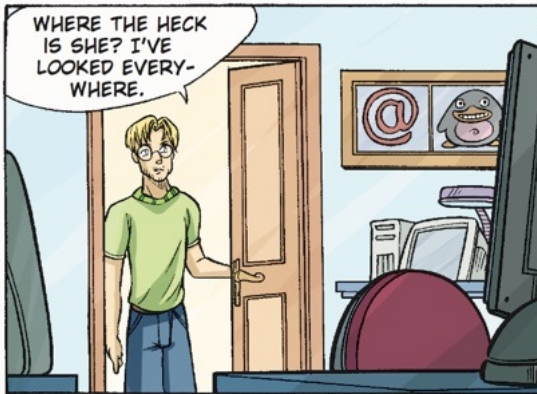
HEART OF
KANDRAKAR!

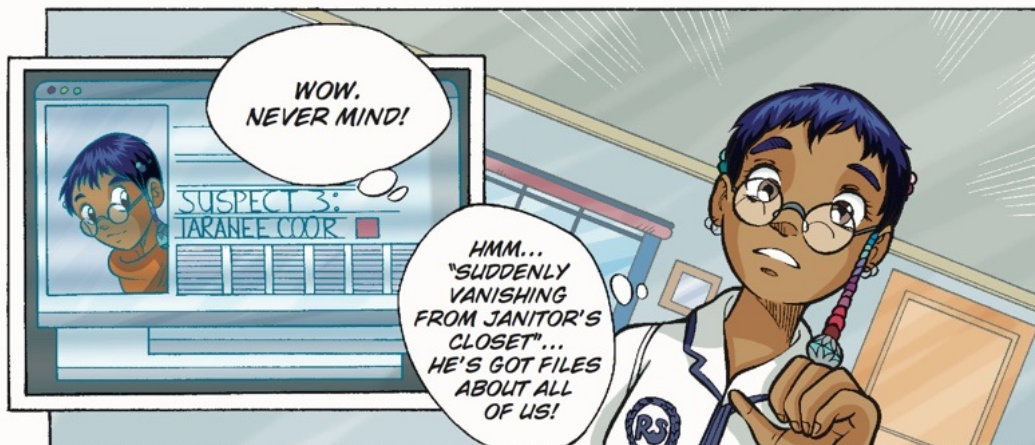


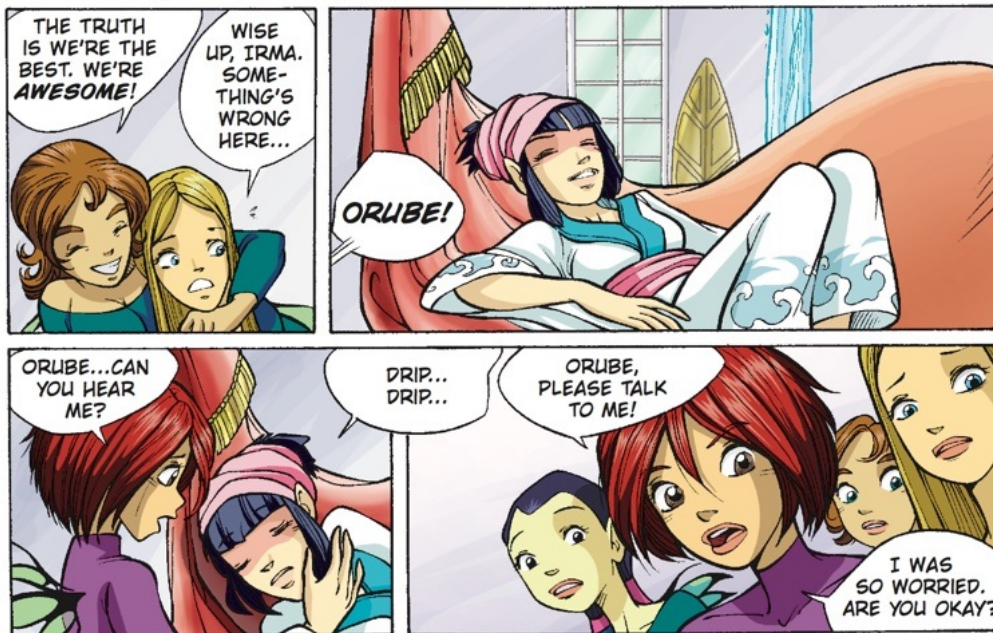
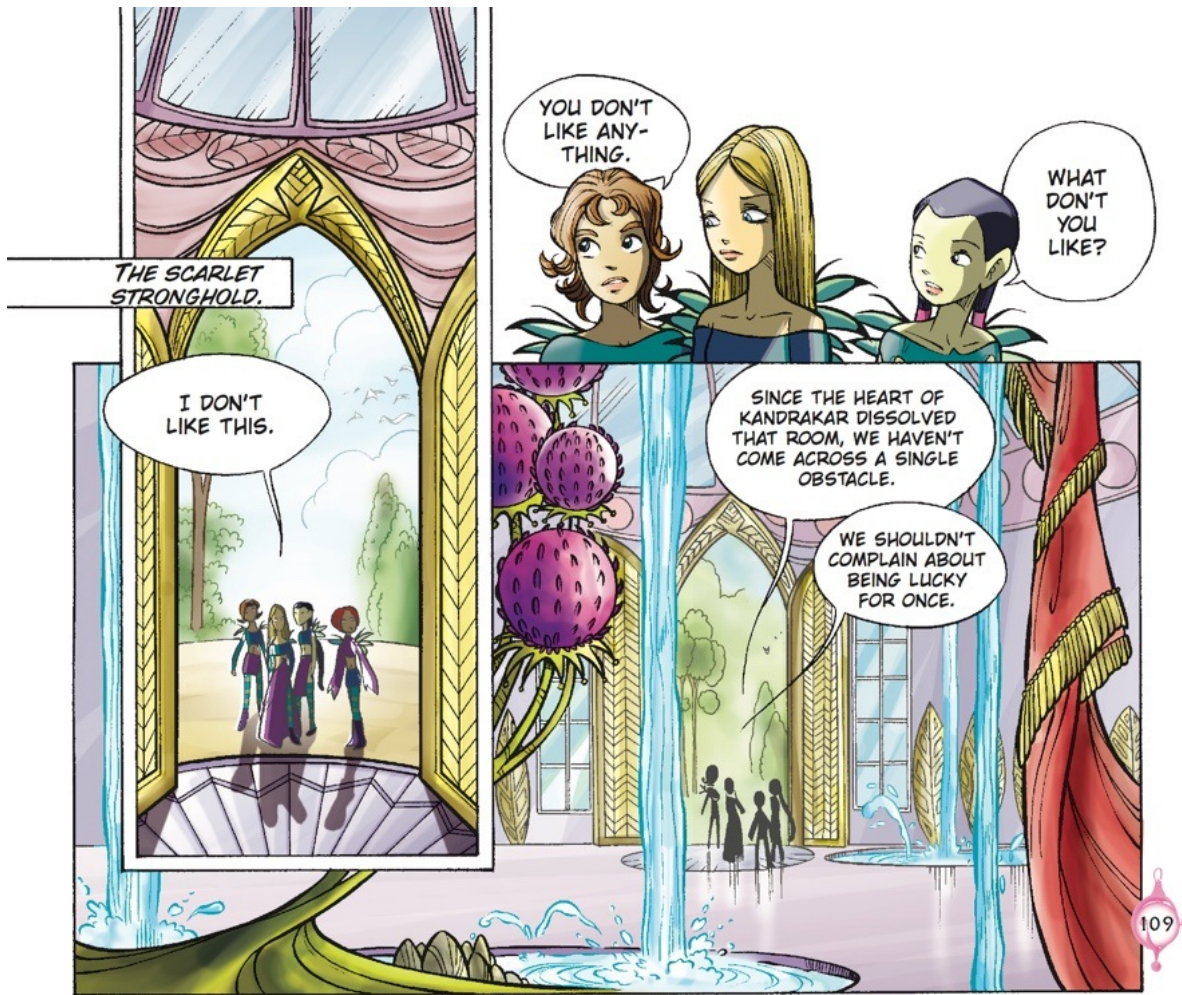
WIZZING

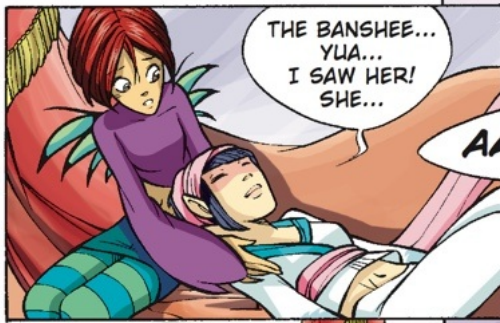












THE BANSHEE...
YUA...
I SAW HER!
SHE...

AAAAHHH...



CALM
DOWN!
WE'RE
HERE!



WHAT'S
WRONG
WITH
HER?

WE NEED TO
TAKE HER BACK
TO KANDRAKAR
NOW.

NO!
STOP THE
BANSHEE!



THERE'S
PLENTY
OF TIME
FOR THAT.
YOU COME
FIRST.



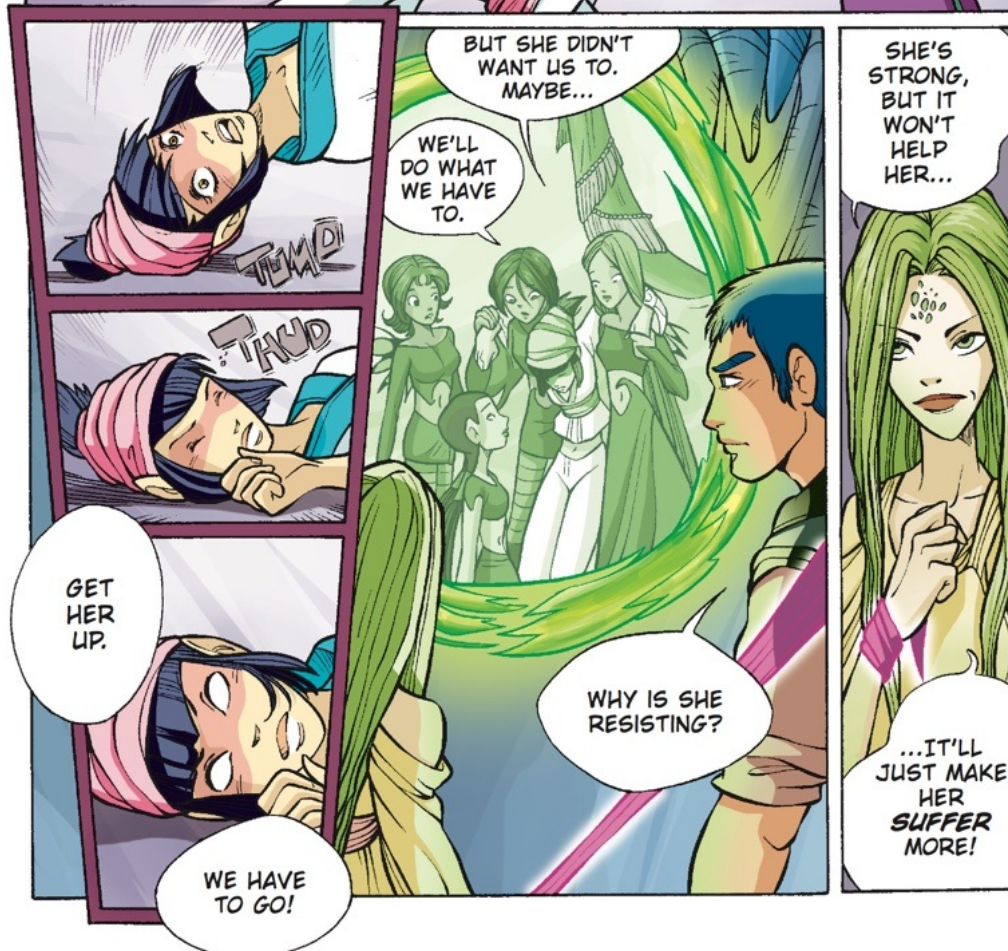
I'M A WARRIOR,
AND...UNNNNGH...
I LOST! I KN-
KNEW IT WAS
DANGEROUS...

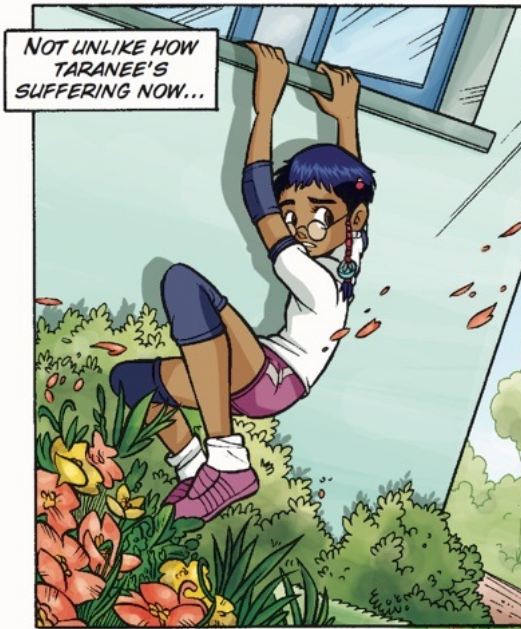


AND WE KNOW
THE ORACLE
CAN CURE
YOU!



NOOO!
DON'T
TAKE
ME TO
KANDRA-
KAR!

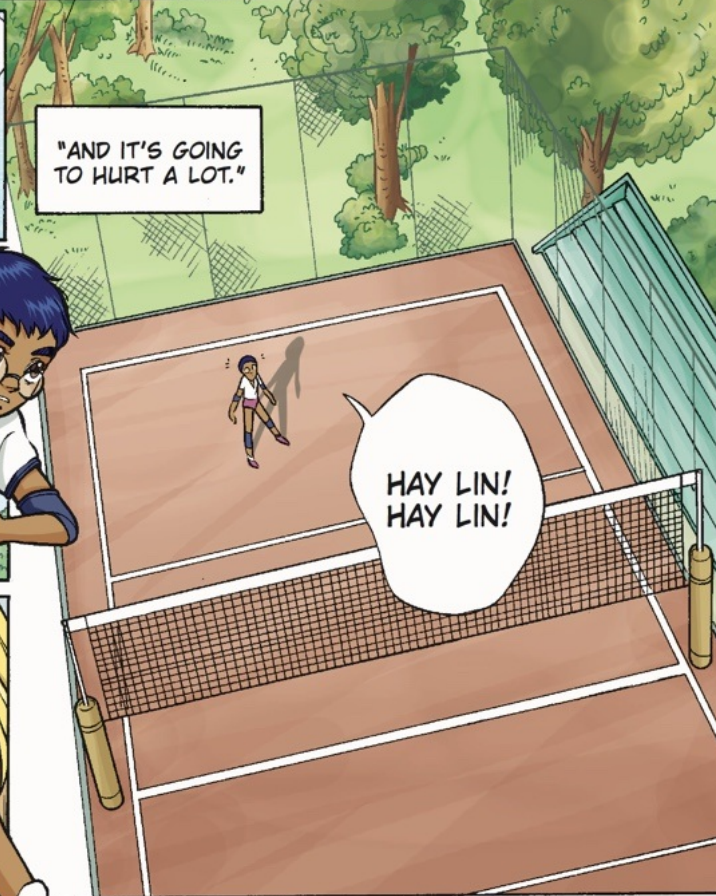
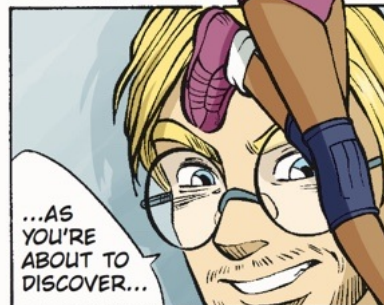




"AND IT'S GOING
TO HURT A LOT."



HAY LIN!
HAY LIN!





WHERE IS EVERYONE?
MOST IMPORTANTLY,
WHERE'S CORNELIA'S
ASTRAL DROP?

THE
GAME'S OVER.
SHEFFIELD
LOST...

...AND
PLEASE
DON'T CALL
ME HAY LIN.
I'M NOT
HER.



GOTTA THINK
ABOUT THAT...ANYWAY
CORNELIA'S DROP
WENT TO CELEBRATE
WITH RICK AND
HIS FRIENDS.
SHE TOLD ME
TO GIVE YOU
THIS.



IN PUBLIC,
I HAVE TO...
PRIVATELY, I
WOULDN'T KNOW
WHAT ELSE TO
CALL YOU.



THAT'S ALL I
KNOW, SO DON'T
BOTHER ASKING...
HEY!



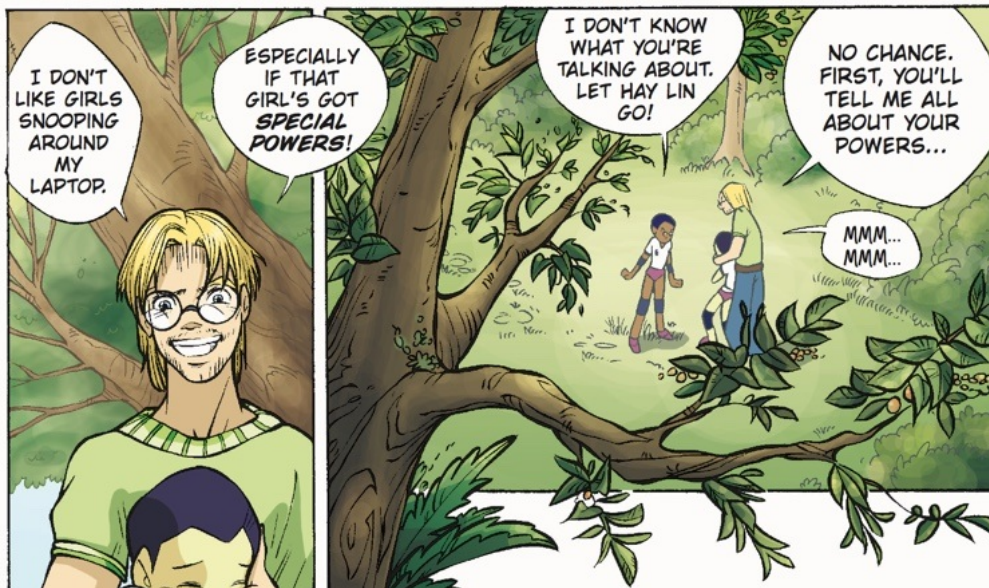
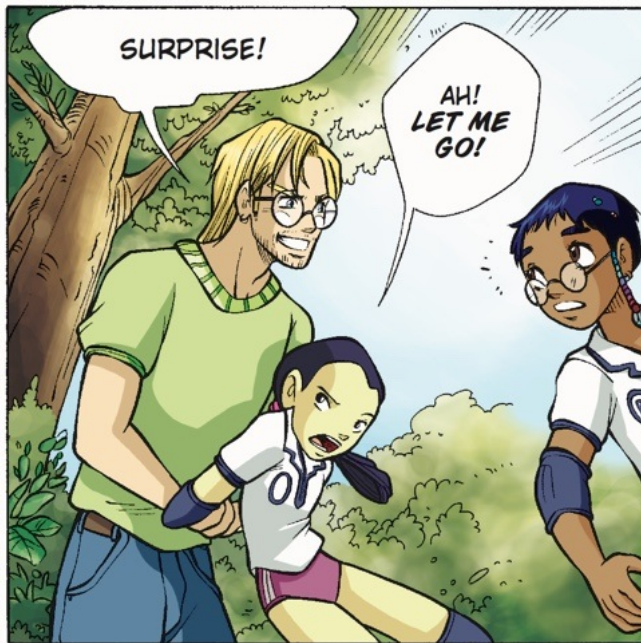
WE'VE GOT TO FIND
HER. WHICH WAY DID
THEY GO?

"TOWARD THE WOODS."



CAN'T
YOU BE MORE
SPECIFIC?

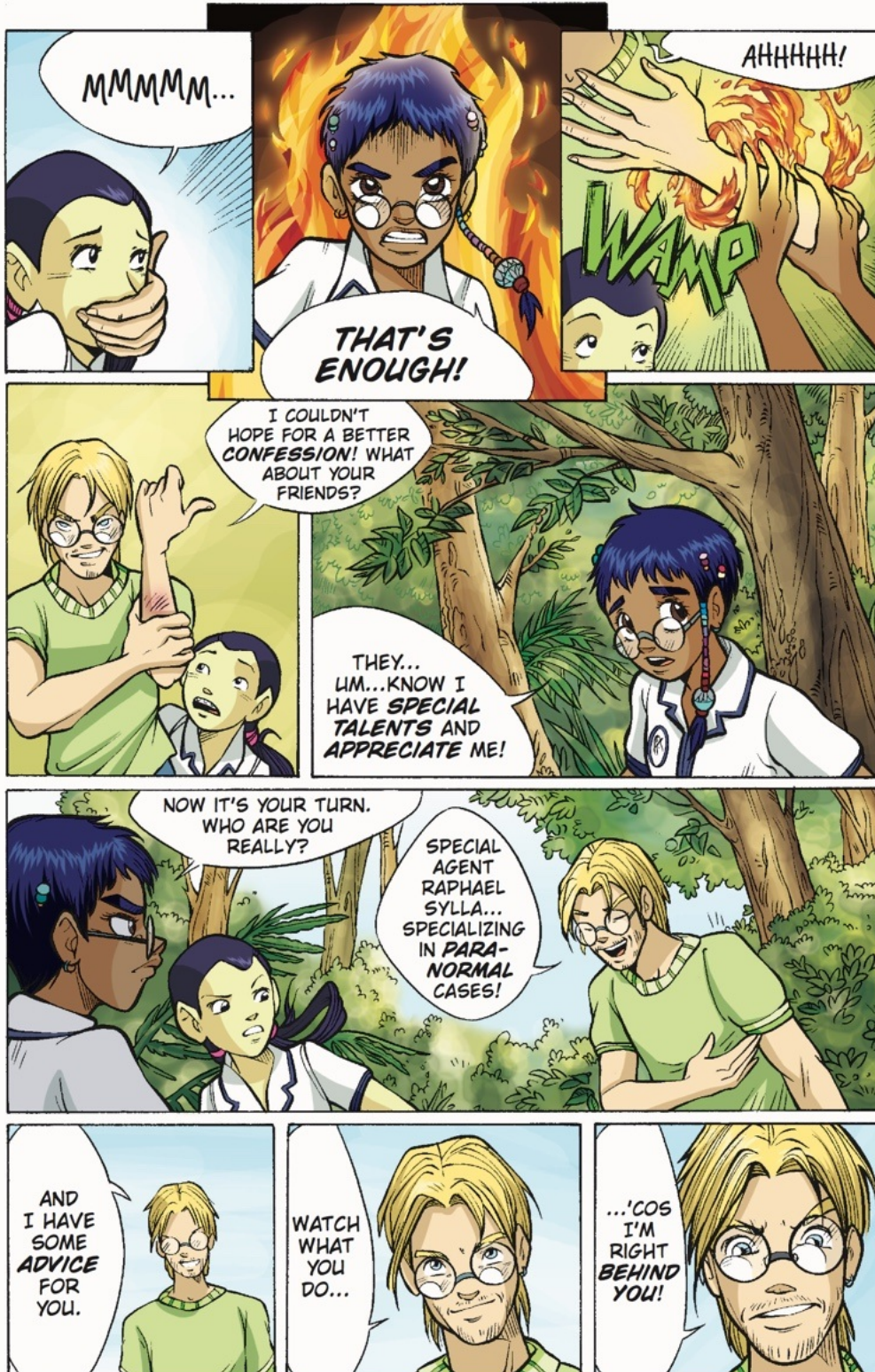
NO! BUT
YOU COULD CALL
ME MAY HO.
LIKE IT?



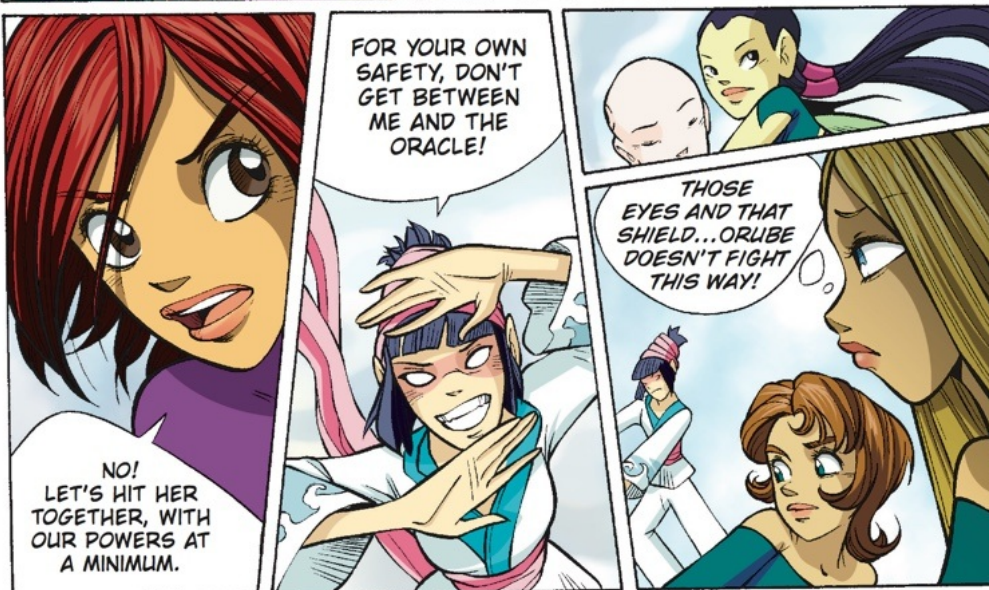
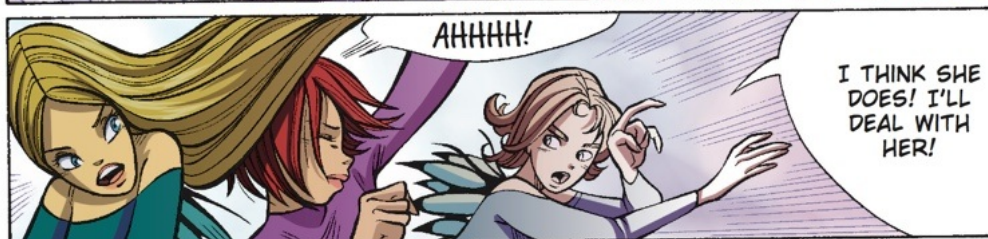
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT. LET HAY LIN GO!

NO CHANCE. FIRST, YOU'LL TELL ME ALL ABOUT YOUR POWERS...

MMM...
MMM...









HELP!

SHATZ

SAY HI
TO YOUR
FRIENDS!



NOOO!



CAN YOU
STAND?

MAYBE...

NOW
LET'S KICK
SOME...

NO!



WAKE UP, WILL!
THAT'S **NOT**
ORUBE!



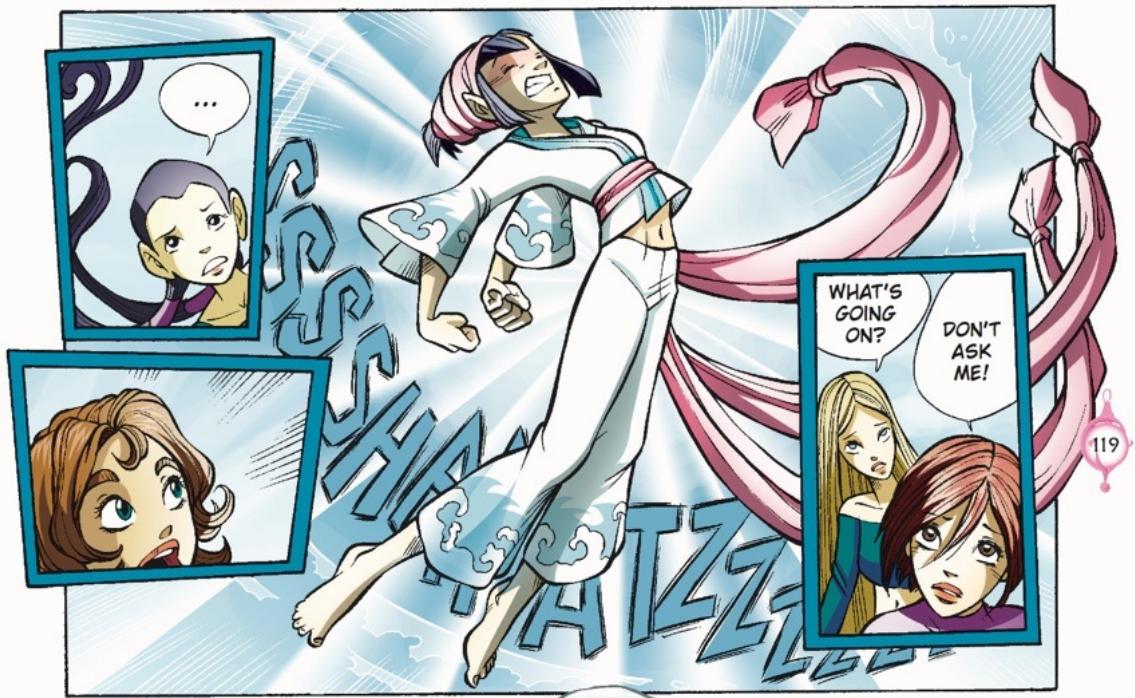
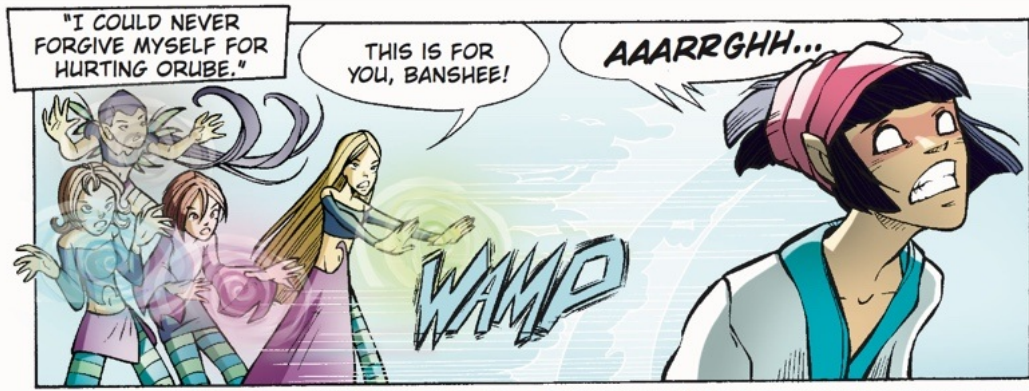
WE'RE
FINALLY
ALONE,
ORACLE!

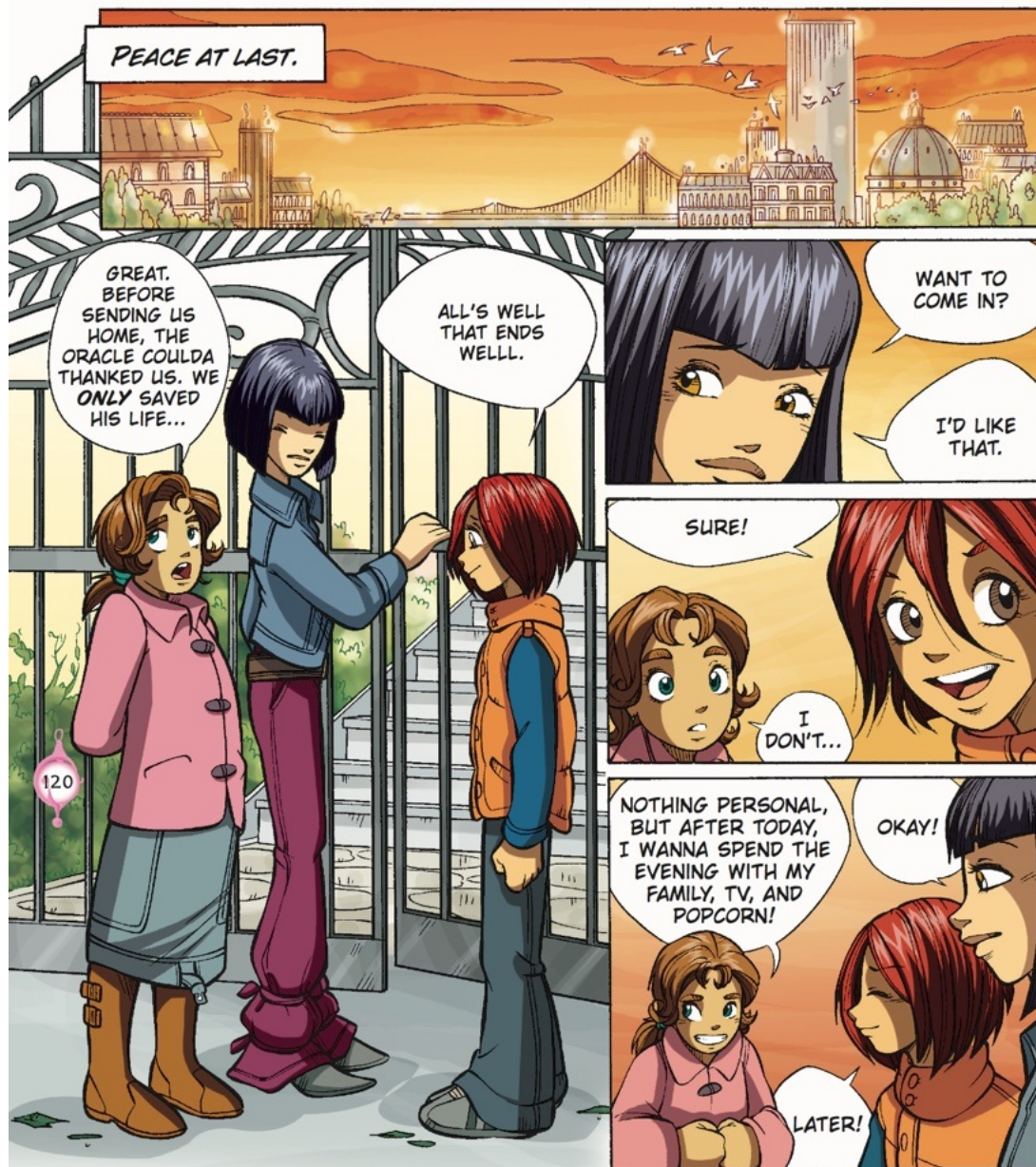


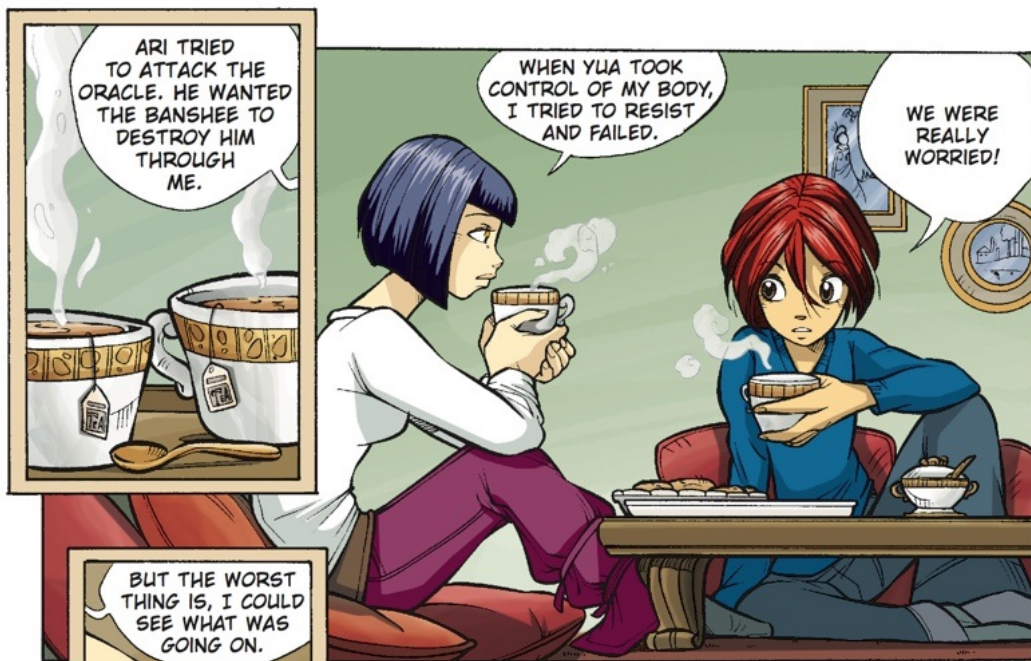
THAT'S
ORUBE'S
BODY...
BUT THE
BANSHEE'S
THE
ONE IN
CONTROL!

LET'S
ATTACK
TOGETHER
AS IF WE'RE
STRIKING
YUA!

I HOPE
YOU'RE
RIGHT!







ARI TRIED TO ATTACK THE ORACLE. HE WANTED THE BANSHEE TO DESTROY HIM THROUGH ME.

WHEN YUA TOOK CONTROL OF MY BODY, I TRIED TO RESIST AND FAILED.

WE WERE REALLY WORRIED!

BUT THE WORST THING IS, I COULD SEE WHAT WAS GOING ON.

WE WOULD HAVE DONE THE SAME FOR ANY ONE OF US.

SO I KNOW THAT IF I'M STILL HERE, IT'S THANKS TO YOU.

LIKE I SAID, WE'RE A TEAM!

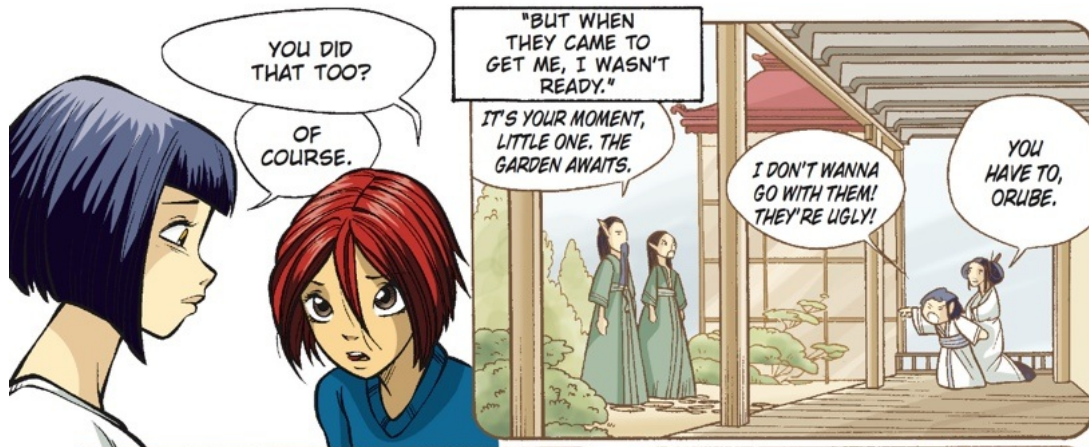
BUT I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND THAT, WILL. IN BASILIADE, MY WORLD, KIDS LEAVE THEIR PARENTS VERY YOUNG.

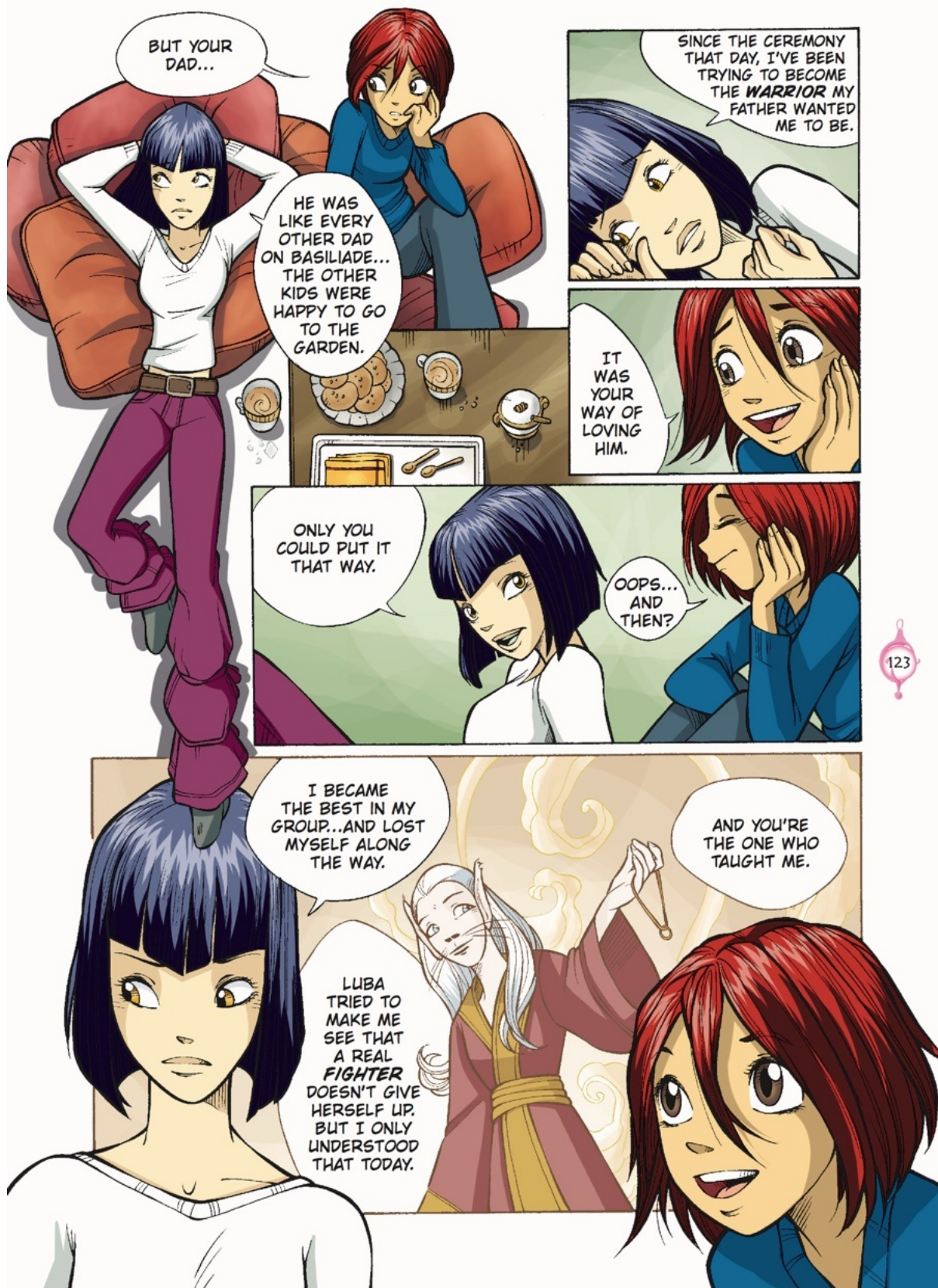


"DURING THE GREAT LIGHT CEREMONY, KIDS ENTER THE TWO SUNS GARDEN AND LEARN THE ART OF COMBAT."

ME FIRST!

IF YOU LET ME THROUGH, YOU GET FIRST PICK FOR BEDS!



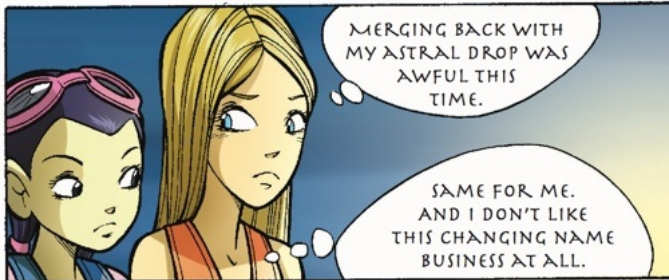






SORRY FOR THE DELAY, BUT...

LET'S TALK TELEPATHICALLY, CORNELIA. SYLLA'S WATCHING US.



MERGING BACK WITH MY ASTRAL DROP WAS AWFUL THIS TIME.

SAME FOR ME. AND I DON'T LIKE THIS CHANGING NAME BUSINESS AT ALL.



MY ASTRAL DROP WOULD'VE DONE ANYTHING NOT TO MERGE AGAIN.

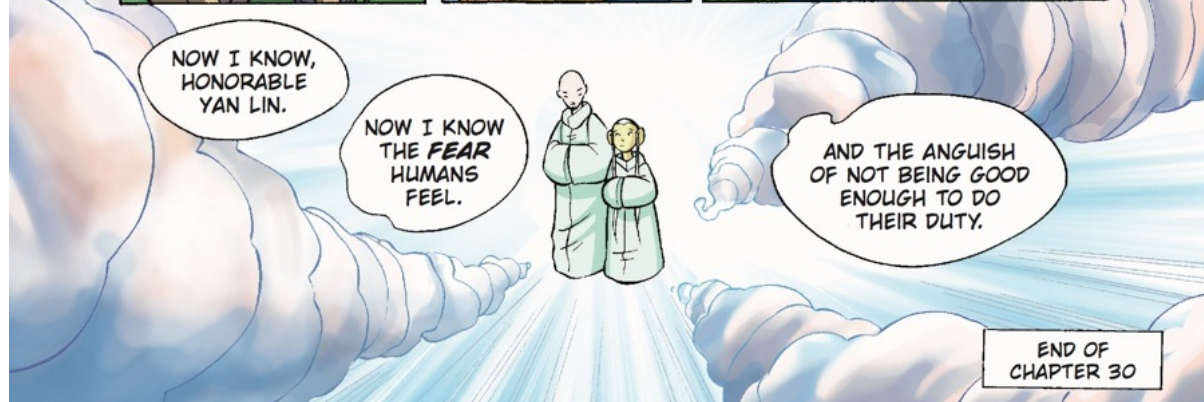
WELCOME BACK, GIRLS!



MAKE SURE YOUR FRIEND DOESN'T DO ANYTHING STUPID.

SHE NEVER DOES!

OF COURSE, BUT I'M COUNTING ON YOU.



NOW I KNOW, HONORABLE YAN LIN.

NOW I KNOW THE **FEAR** HUMANS FEEL.

AND THE ANGUISH OF NOT BEING GOOD ENOUGH TO DO THEIR DUTY.

END OF CHAPTER 30

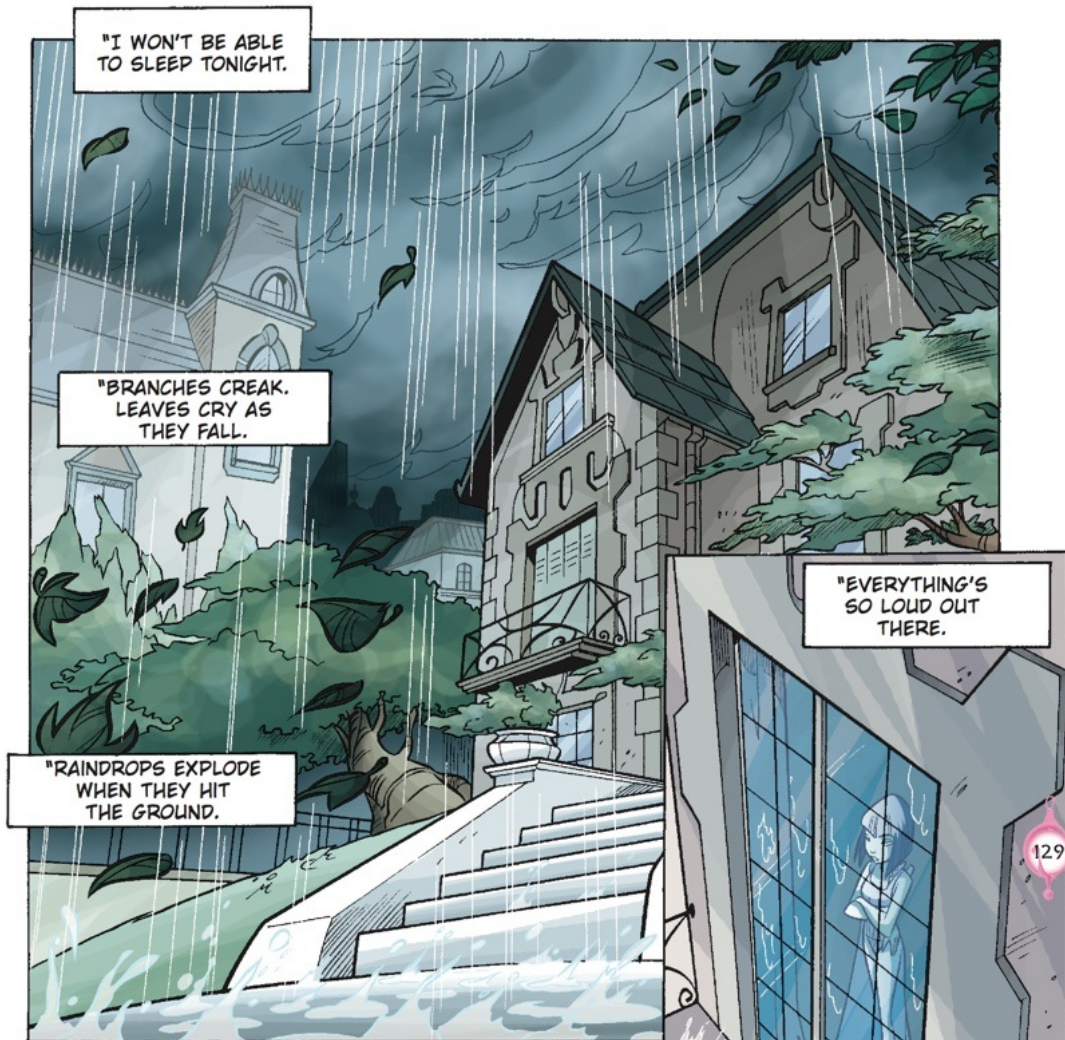




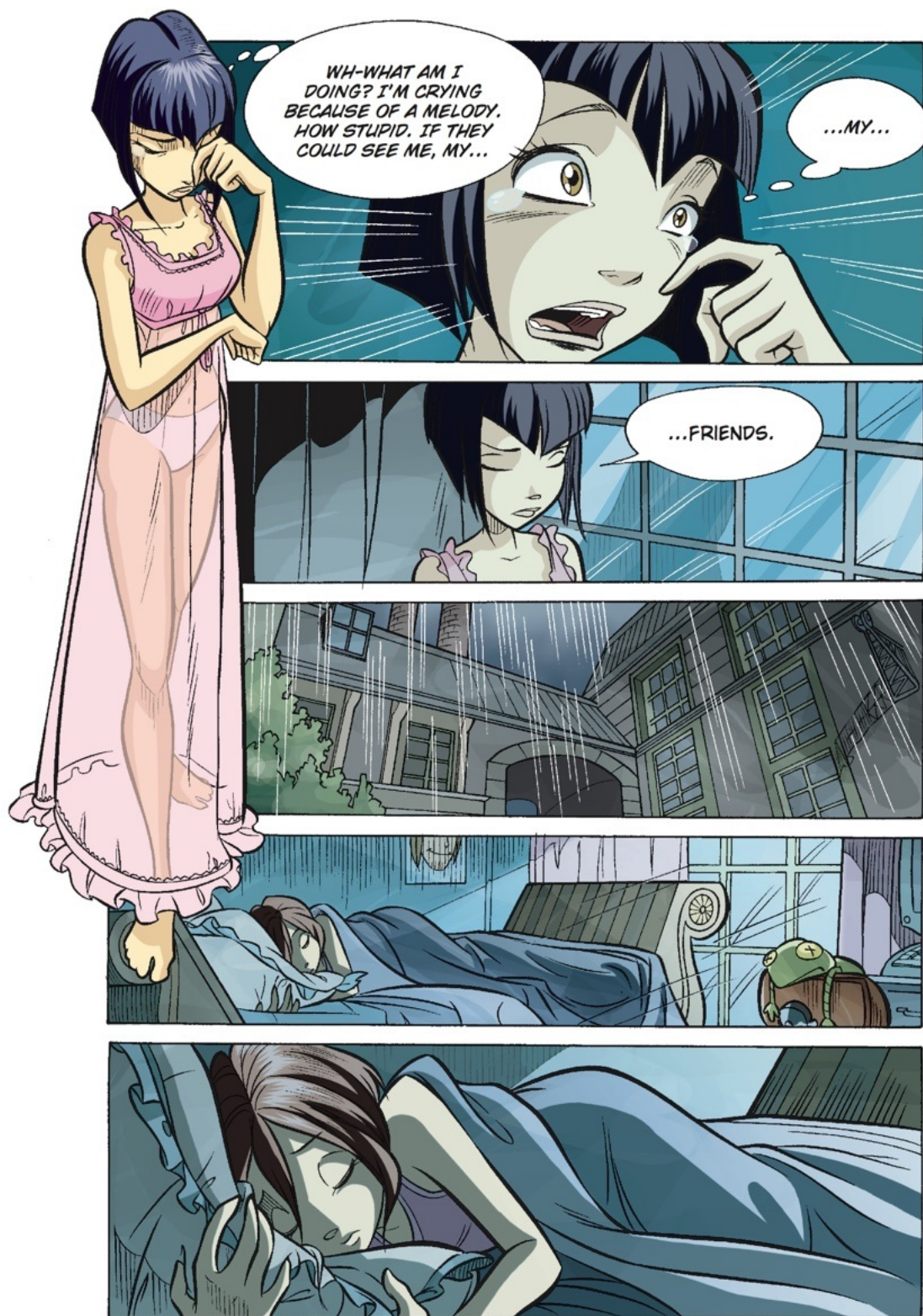
The Voice of Silence

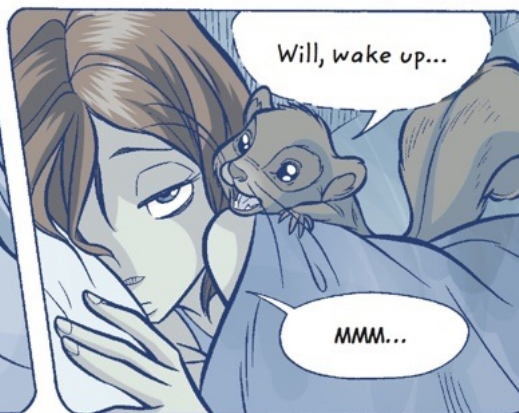
“Her warrior mask
hides a generous soul.”



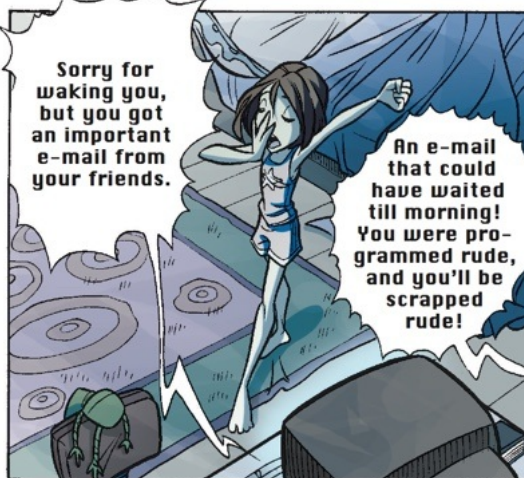


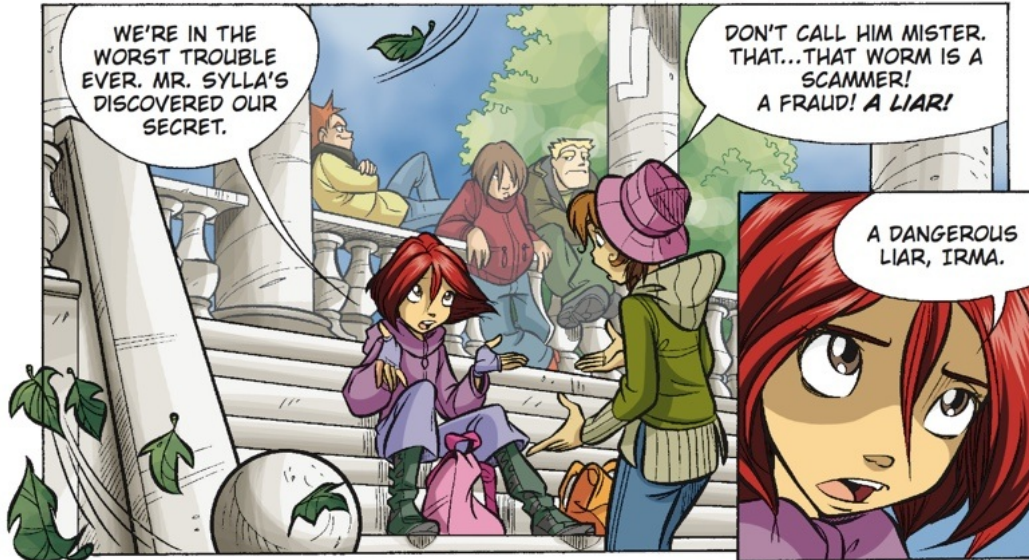






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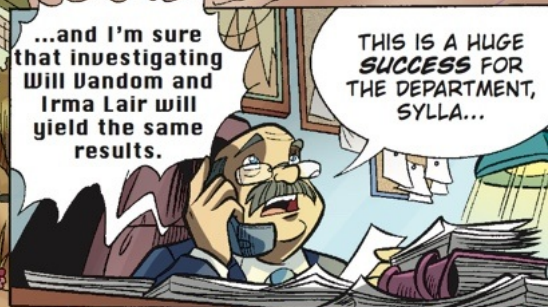


...AND WHILE ONE THING
BEGINS, ANOTHER ENDS IN
REDSTONE, ON THE OTHER
SIDE OF THE WORLD.

I'M GLAD
YOU'RE PLEASED,
SIR...



MY FINDINGS WENT
BEYOND MY EXPECT-
ATIONS. COOK, HALE
AND LIN TURNED
OUT TO HAVE
**PARANORMAL
ABILITIES...**



...and I'm sure
that investigating
Will Vandom and
Irma Lair will
yield the same
results.

THIS IS A HUGE
SUCCESS FOR
THE DEPARTMENT,
SYLLA...



...BUT IT
WILL BE A
TRIUMPH
ONCE THE
GIRLS ARE
IN **OUR**
HANDS!



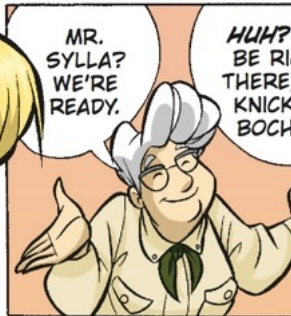
What are
my orders
now?

DON'T LET
THEM OUT OF YOUR
SIGHT. NOW THAT
THEY'VE BEEN FOUND
OUT, THEY COULD
TRY SOMETHING
FUNNY.

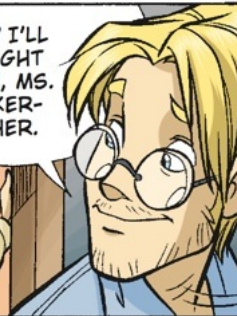
AS SOON AS
YOU'RE BACK,
WE'LL PROCEED
WITH **OPERATION
RECOVERY.**



THE FARCE
IS OVER,
LITTLE
WITCHES!



MR.
SYLLA?
WE'RE
READY.



HUH? I'LL
BE RIGHT
THERE, MS.
KNICKER-
BOCHER.



COME ON...
SMILE!



EVERYBODY READY?
REDSTONE PARK AWAITS...
LET'S NOT KEEP IT
WAITING
TOO LONG!



IT'S ALMOST DARK.
THE **SHOOTING
STARS**
WILL BE
FANTASTIC...



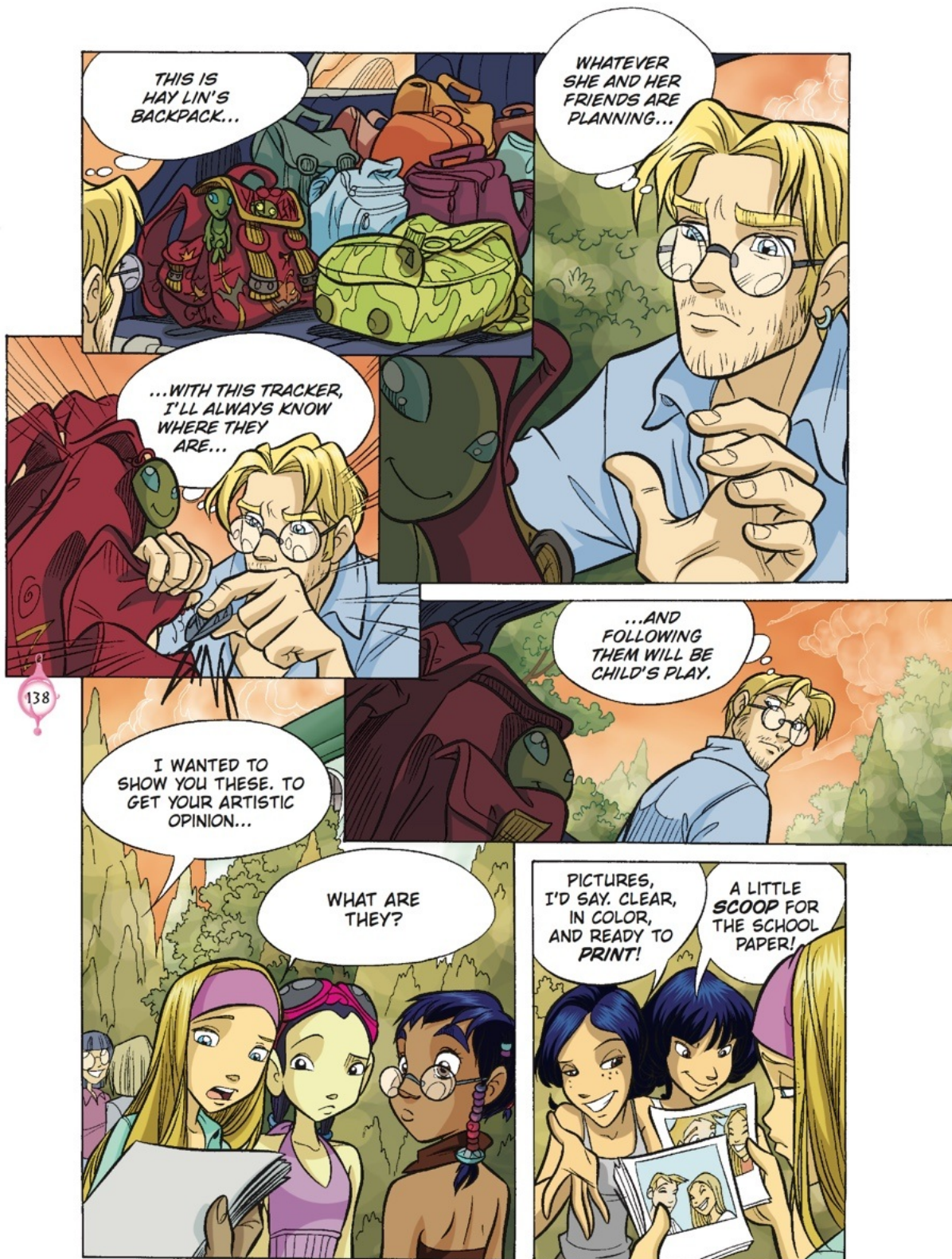
LOOKS LIKE OUR LAST
NIGHT IN REDSTONE
WILL BE AN
UNFORGETTABLE
ONE.



WHAT WILL YOU WISH
FOR IF YOU SEE A
SHOOTING STAR?

FOR IT TO
HIT YOU IN
THE FACE,
SIR.











TO YOUR ASTRAL DROP, RICK'S JUST A FRIEND. MAYBE THAT'S WHAT YOU NEED TOO.

I'VE GOT YOU! I DON'T NEED ANYTHING ELSE.

DON'T PLAY DUMB. THIS CORNELIA IS HAPPY AND CHEERFUL. SHE'S A NORMAL GIRL WHO CAN LAUGH AND JOKE...



AND WHAT ABOUT *THIS* CORNELIA?



I DON'T KNOW. MAYBE SHE'D LIKE TO BE DIFFERENT FROM HOW SHE SEEMS.

RIDICULOUS. *DIFFERENT?* HOW SHOULD I BEHAVE, THEN?

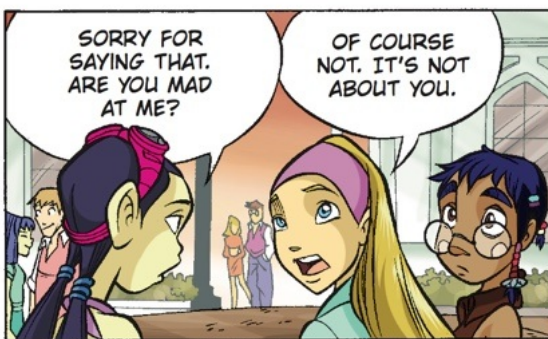


YOU USED TO SMILE MORE BEFORE.

BEFORE WHAT?



BEFORE CALEB.



SORRY FOR SAYING THAT. ARE YOU MAD AT ME?

OF COURSE NOT. IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU.



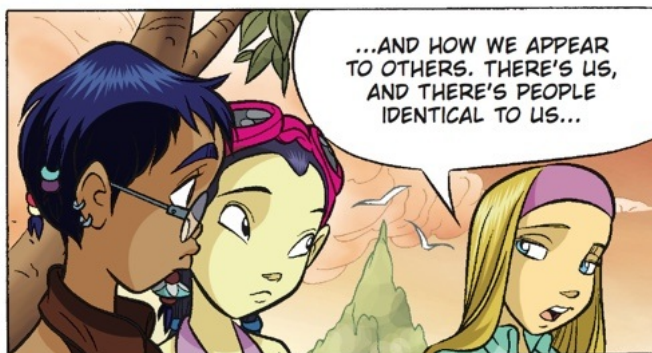
I'M NOT MAD AT ANYONE! I WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT HOW *WEIRD* OUR LIVES ARE.

THEN YOU'RE MAD AT YOUR DOUBLE?

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OUR POWERS HAVE CHANGED US MORE THAN WE THOUGHT. THERE'S WHAT WE ARE... WHAT WE'D LIKE TO BE...

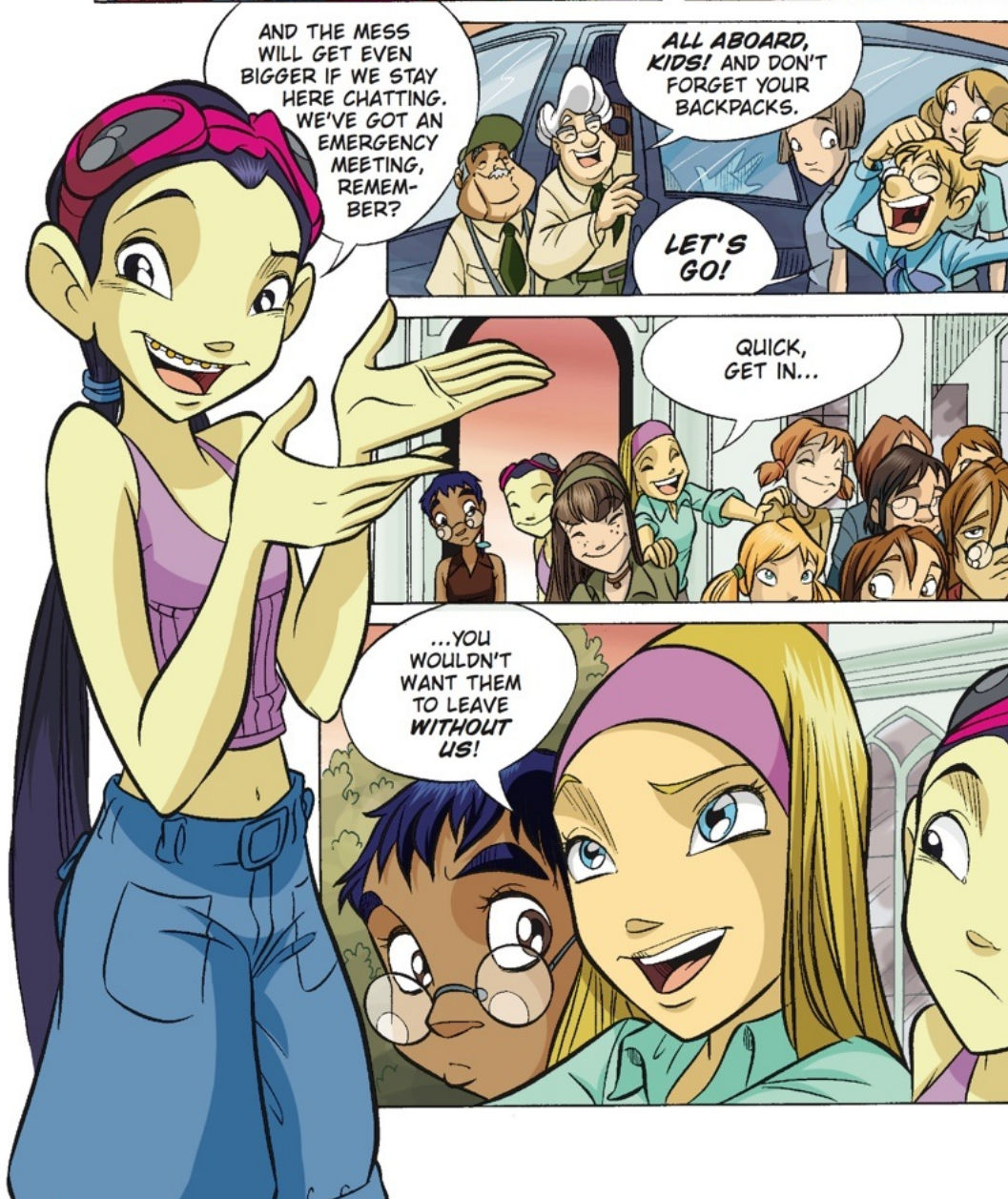


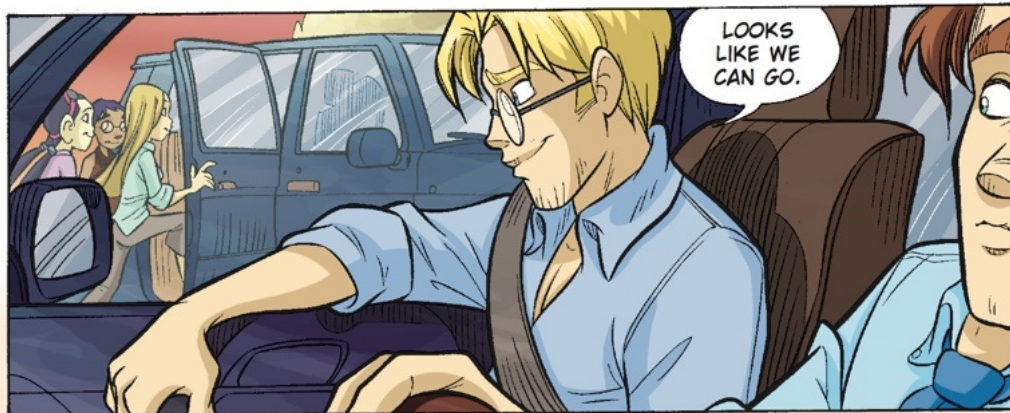
...AND HOW WE APPEAR TO OTHERS. THERE'S US, AND THERE'S PEOPLE IDENTICAL TO US...

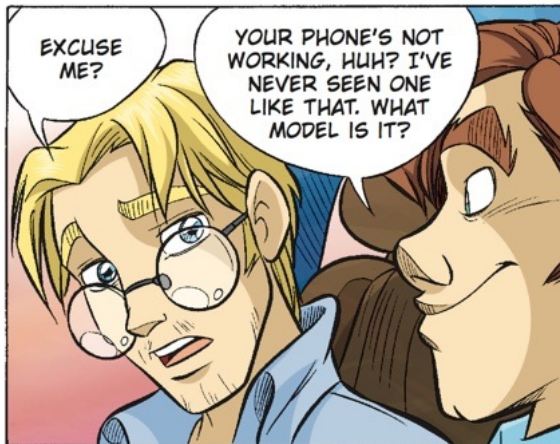
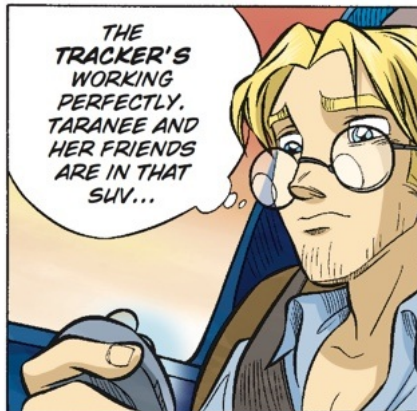


THEN THERE'S US AGAIN...BUT WHEN WE TRANSFORM, WE BECOME *SOMETHING ELSE*...

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? WE'RE *W.I.T.C.H.*! ALL SUPERHEROES HAVE A *DUAL IDENTITY*!





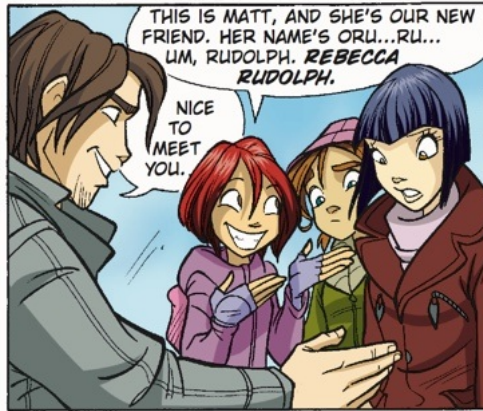




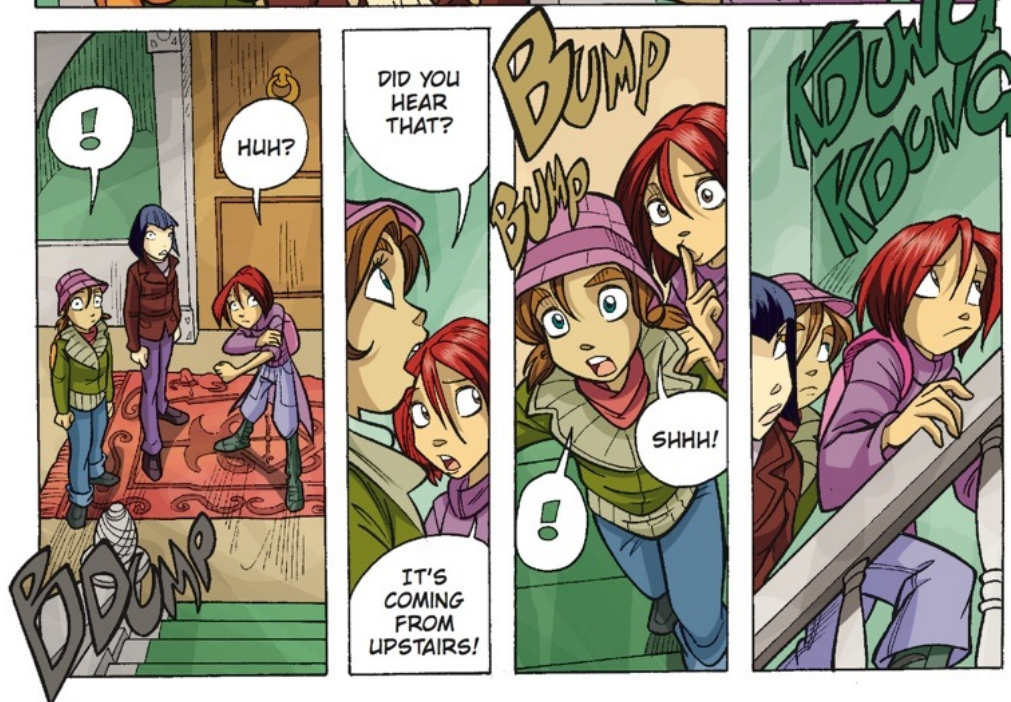
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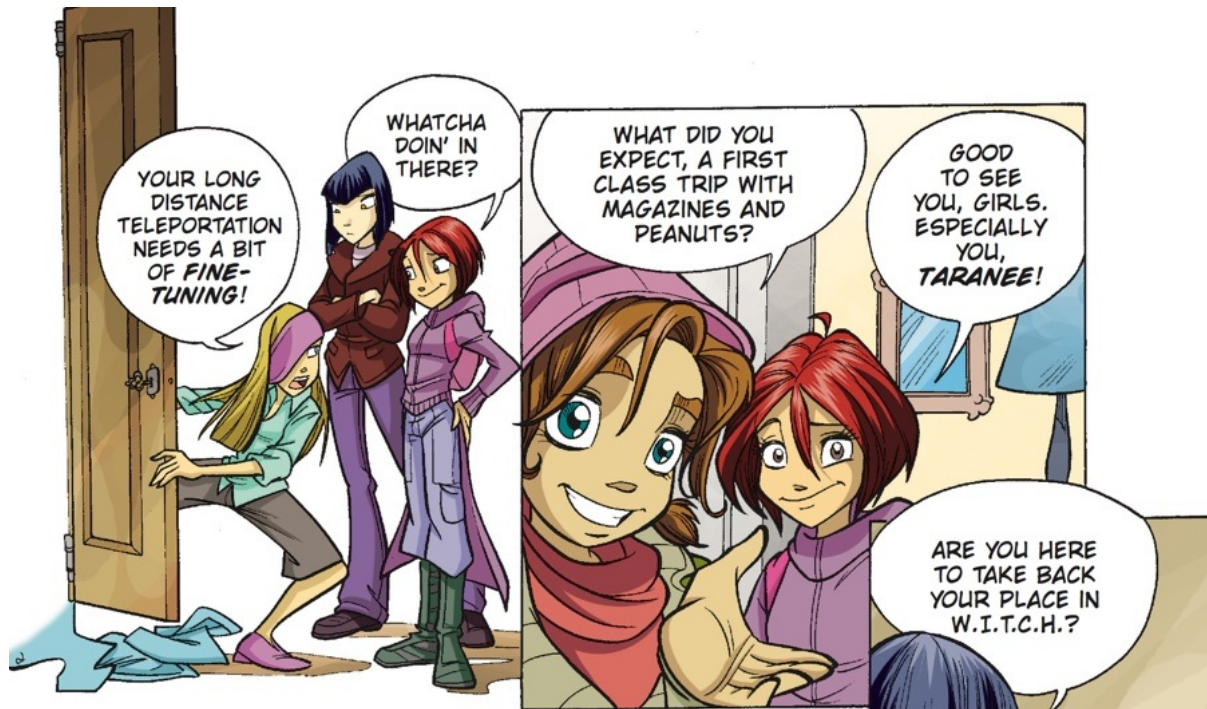








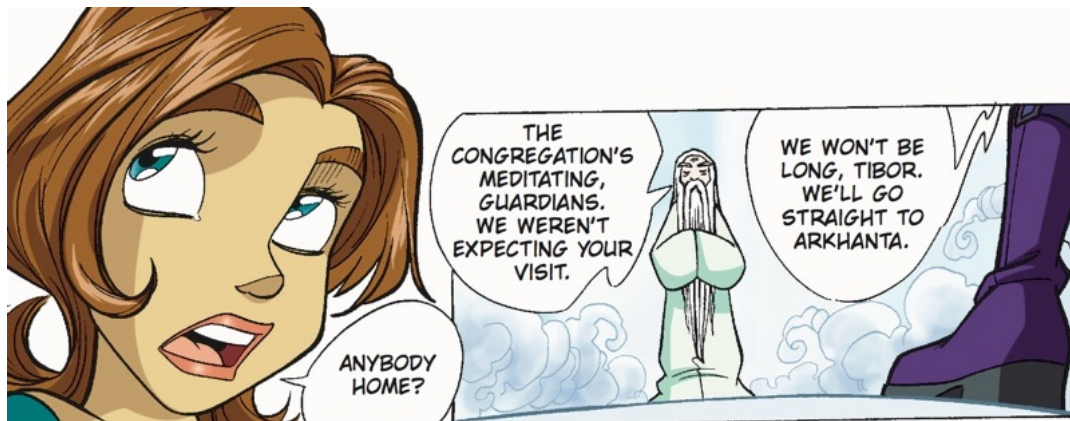




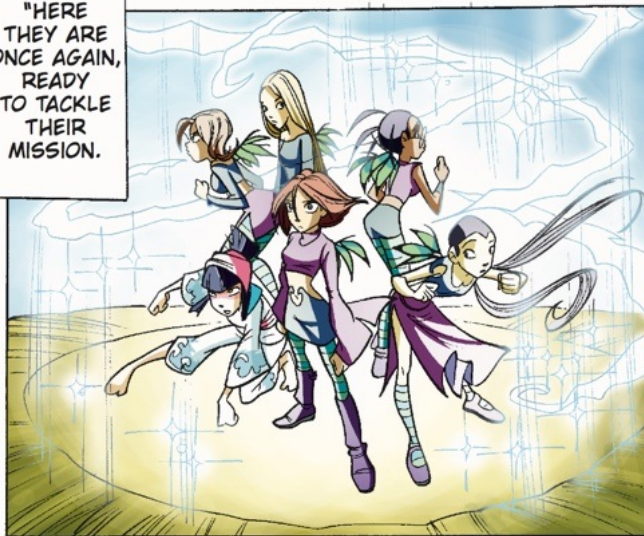








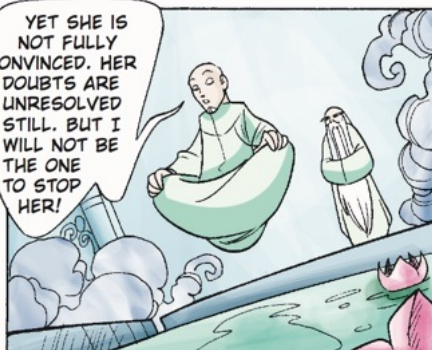
"HERE
THEY ARE
ONCE AGAIN,
READY
TO TACKLE
THEIR
MISSION."



"FIVE PLUS ONE.
THE GUARDIAN OF FIRE
IS WITH THEM. THAT
SHOULD MAKE ME GLAD."



YET SHE IS
NOT FULLY
CONVINCED. HER
DOUBTS ARE
UNRESOLVED
STILL. BUT I
WILL NOT BE
THE ONE
TO STOP
HER!



WITH HER,
W.I.T.C.H.'S MAGIC
IS MORE POWERFUL,
AND PERHAPS
THINGS WILL BE
DIFFERENT.



OUR LITTLE
SQUABBLES
CAN WAIT...



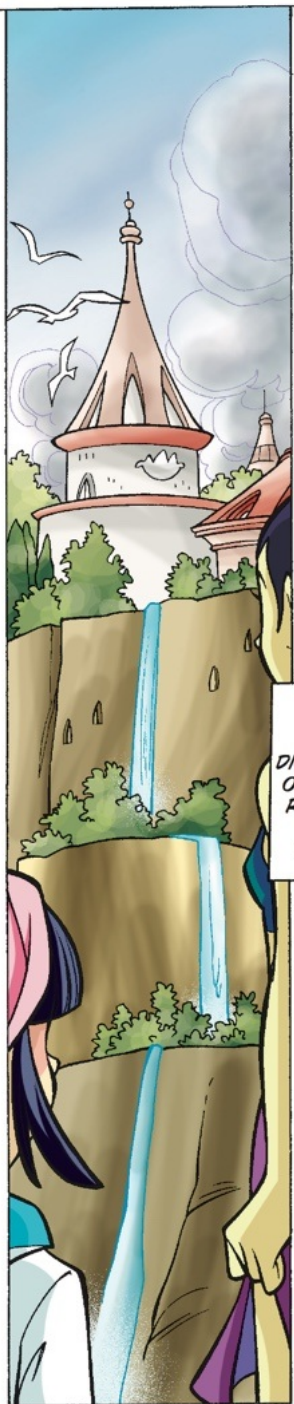
"...UNTIL THE TIME FOR
FIGHTING IS OVER."



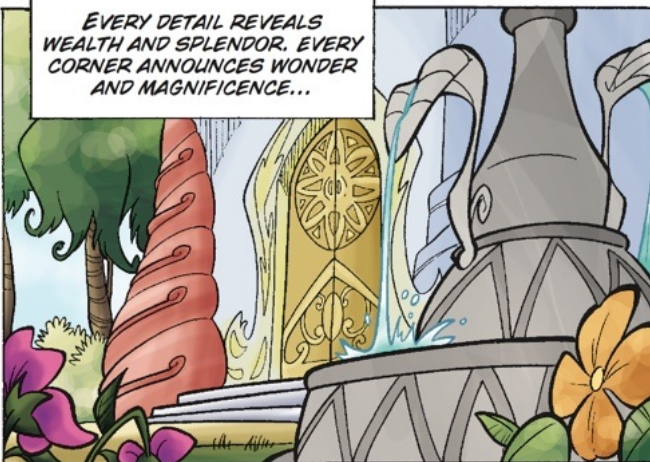
ONCE MORE INTO
ARKHANTA...!



DISTANT AND MAJESTIC,
THE SCARLET STRONGHOLD IS
A HOME WORTHY OF A KING.



EVERY DETAIL REVEALS
WEALTH AND SPLENDOR. EVERY
CORNER ANNOUNCES WONDER
AND MAGNIFICENCE...



...BUT IF THESE WALLS
COULD TALK, THEY'D TELL
A DIFFERENT STORY.



A STORY OF
PAIN AND
DISAPPOINTMENT,
OF LONELINESS,
RESENTMENT...
AND MORE
LONELINESS.

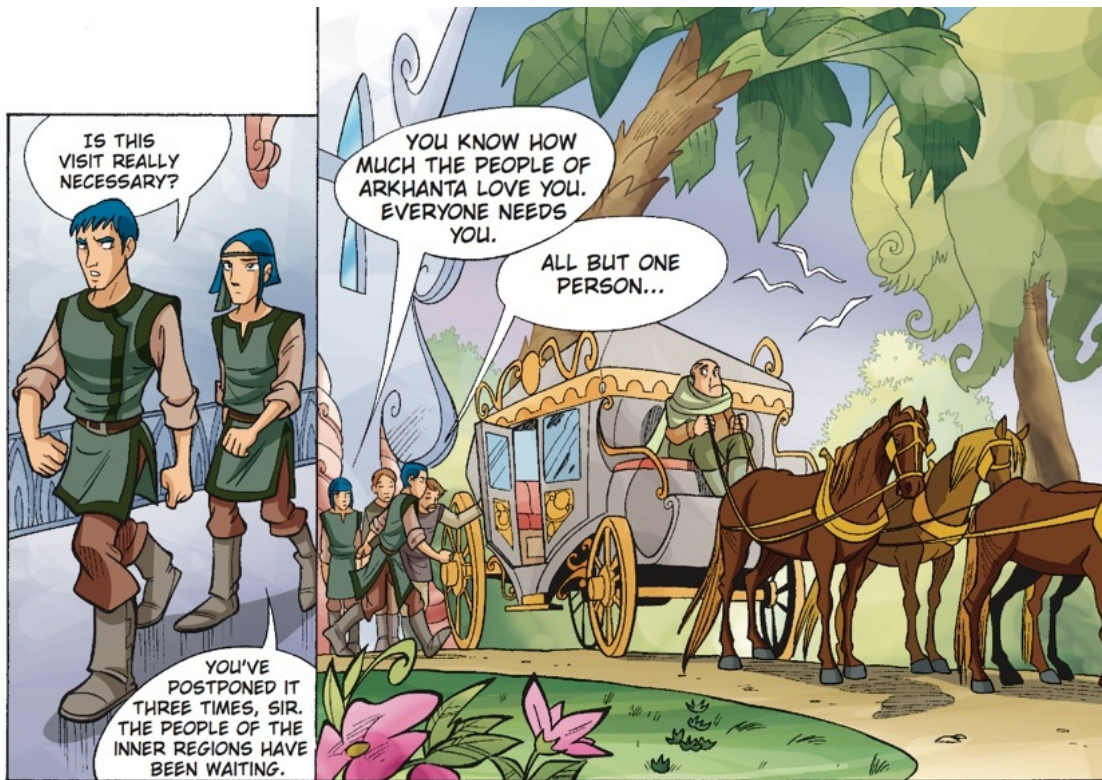


I MUST GO, SON, BUT
I'LL BE BACK TONIGHT
AND WILL BRING YOU A
SURPRISE. WILL THAT
MAKE YOU HAPPY?



I LOVE
YOU, MAQI.







BUT THIS TIME IT WILL.

WE SAY THAT EVERY TIME TOO. WE NEED A PROPER PLAN. I'M TIRED OF BEING DEFEATED.



I'LL GIVE YOU A PROPER PLAN. YOU STAY HERE, AND WE'LL GO SORT THINGS OUT.



NO, IRMA. NOW MORE THAN EVER, WE NEED **EVERYONE'S** ENERGY...



...BECAUSE BREAKING THE BANSHEE'S TIES WON'T BE EASY.

IS THAT YOUR PLAN TO FREE YUA?



EXACTLY. WITHOUT HER, ARI WILL BE POWERLESS.

BUT HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN BREAK THE SPELL. WHAT MAKES YOU THINK WE CAN?



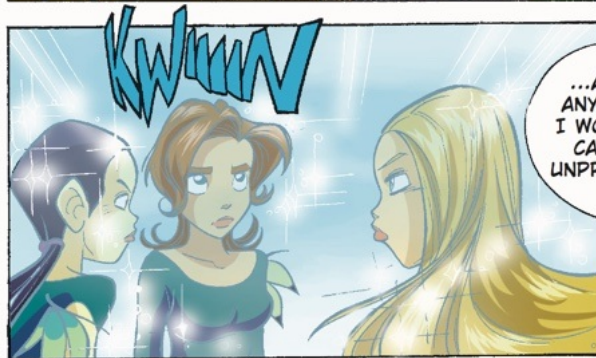
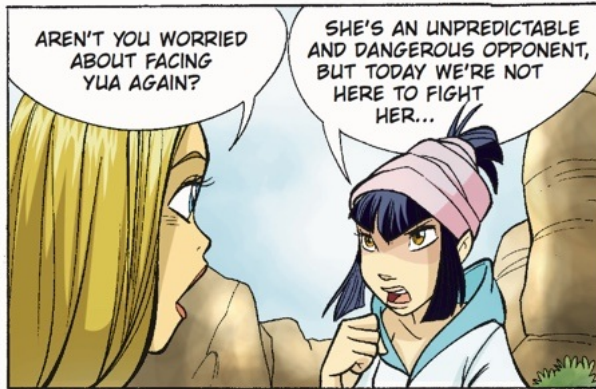
'COS WE'RE STRONGER NOW. 'COS WE'VE GOT TO STAY POSITIVE, AND... 'COS IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE.

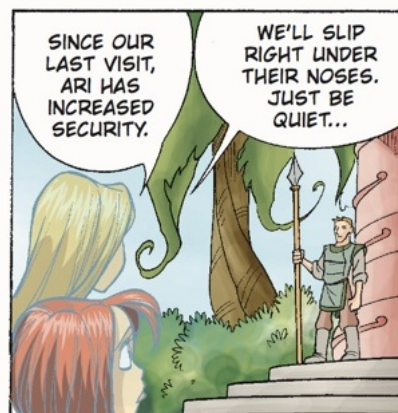
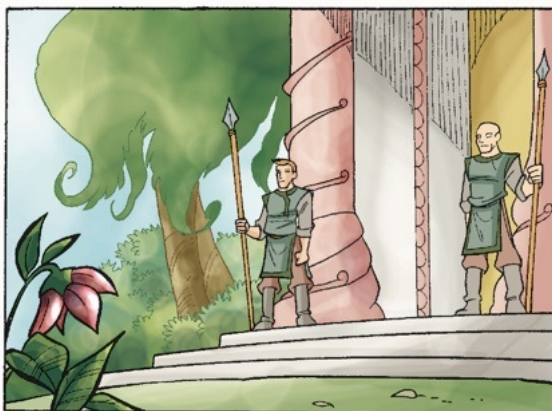
YOUR PLAN'S INSANE.



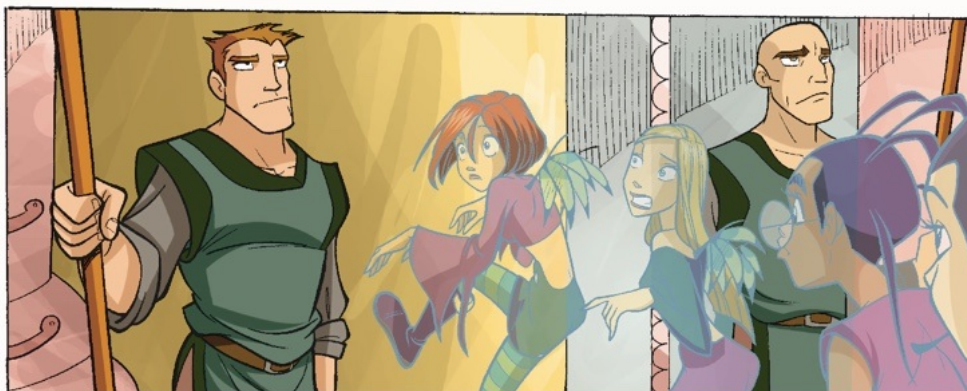
I LIKE IT!

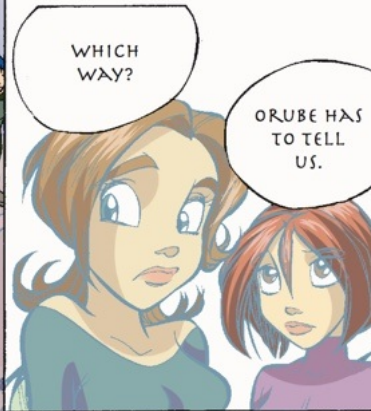






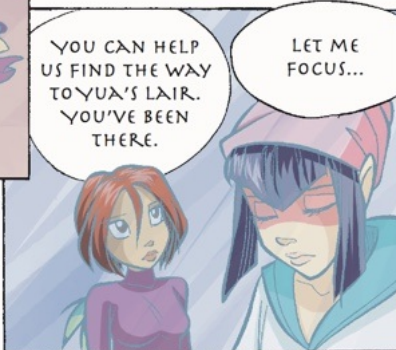
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WHICH WAY?

ORUBE HAS TO TELL US.



YOU CAN HELP US FIND THE WAY TO YUA'S LAIR. YOU'VE BEEN THERE.

LET ME FOCUS...



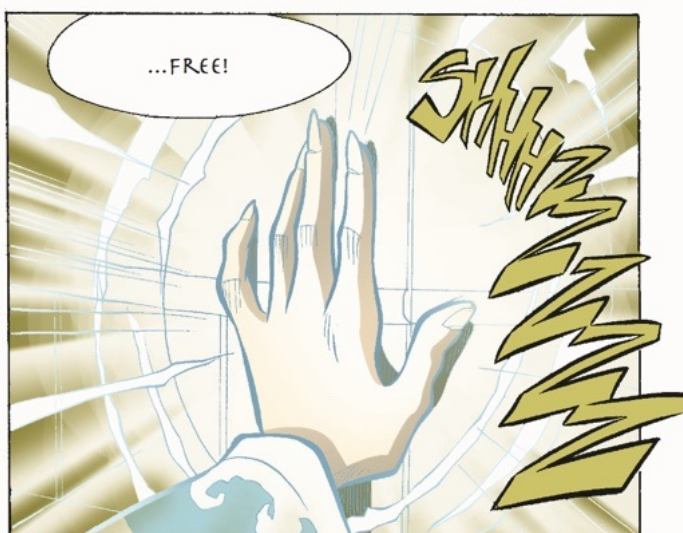
..IF I USE ALL MY SENSES, I CAN REMEMBER...

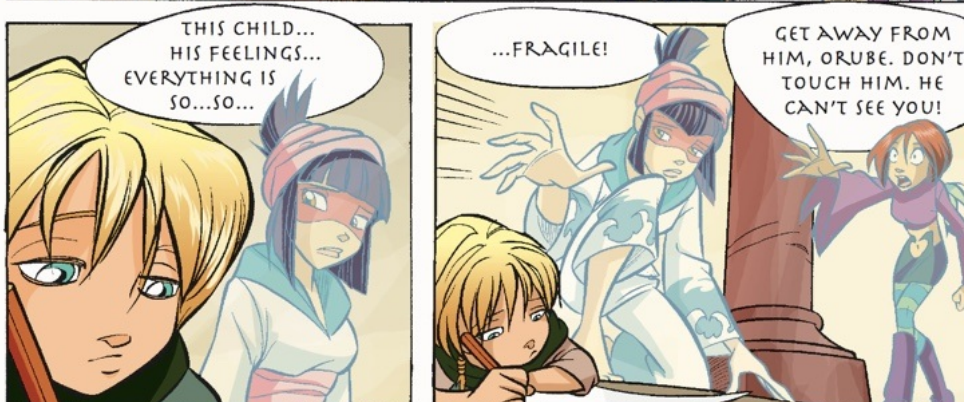
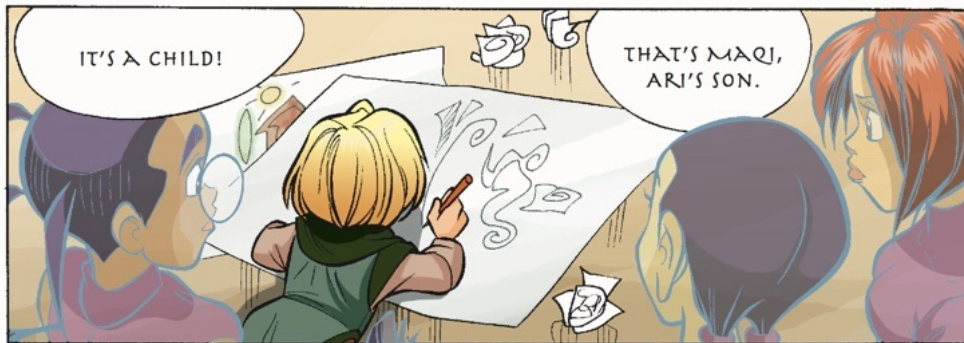
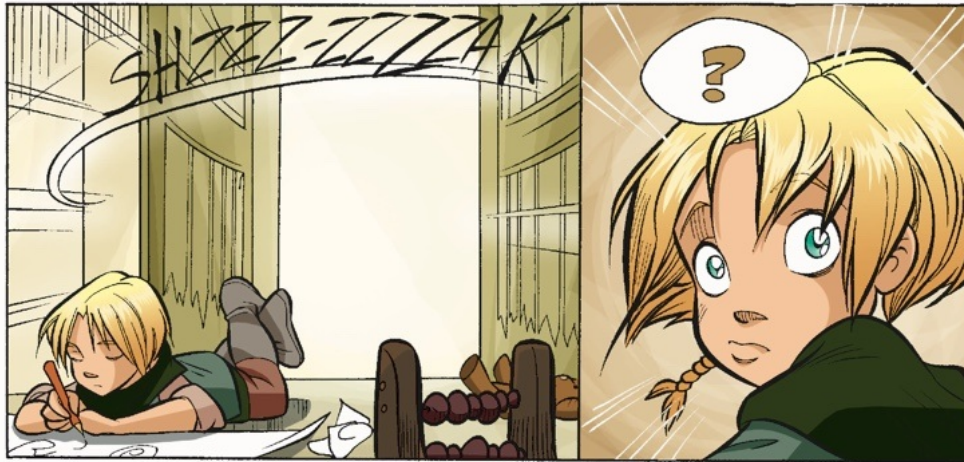
EVERYONE KNOWS CATS CAN ALWAYS FIND THEIR WAY HOME!



IRMA!

OOPS! DID YOU HEAR ME?







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DARN!
I DON'T KNOW
HOW, BUT HE'S
SEEN US!

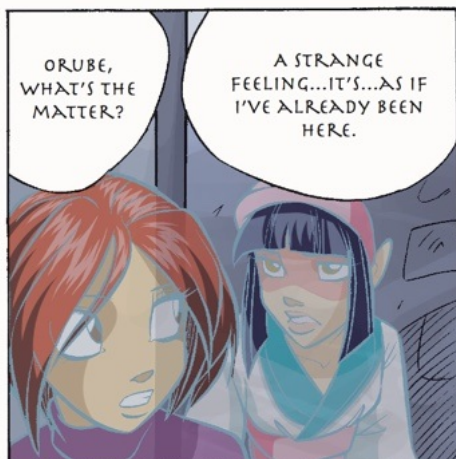
THE DAMAGE
IS DONE NOW.
STOP HIM BEFORE
HE WARNS
SOMEONE!

GET HIM,
HAY LIN!

ON MY
WAY!













HELLO, MAQI...



GET AWAY FROM HIM, YUA!

YOU! WHAT A NICE SURPRISE.



LOTS OF VISITS TODAY.
AND IT'S NOT EVEN YOUR BIRTHDAY.
YOU SHOULD FEEL HONORED!



I'LL GET THE KID...

No!



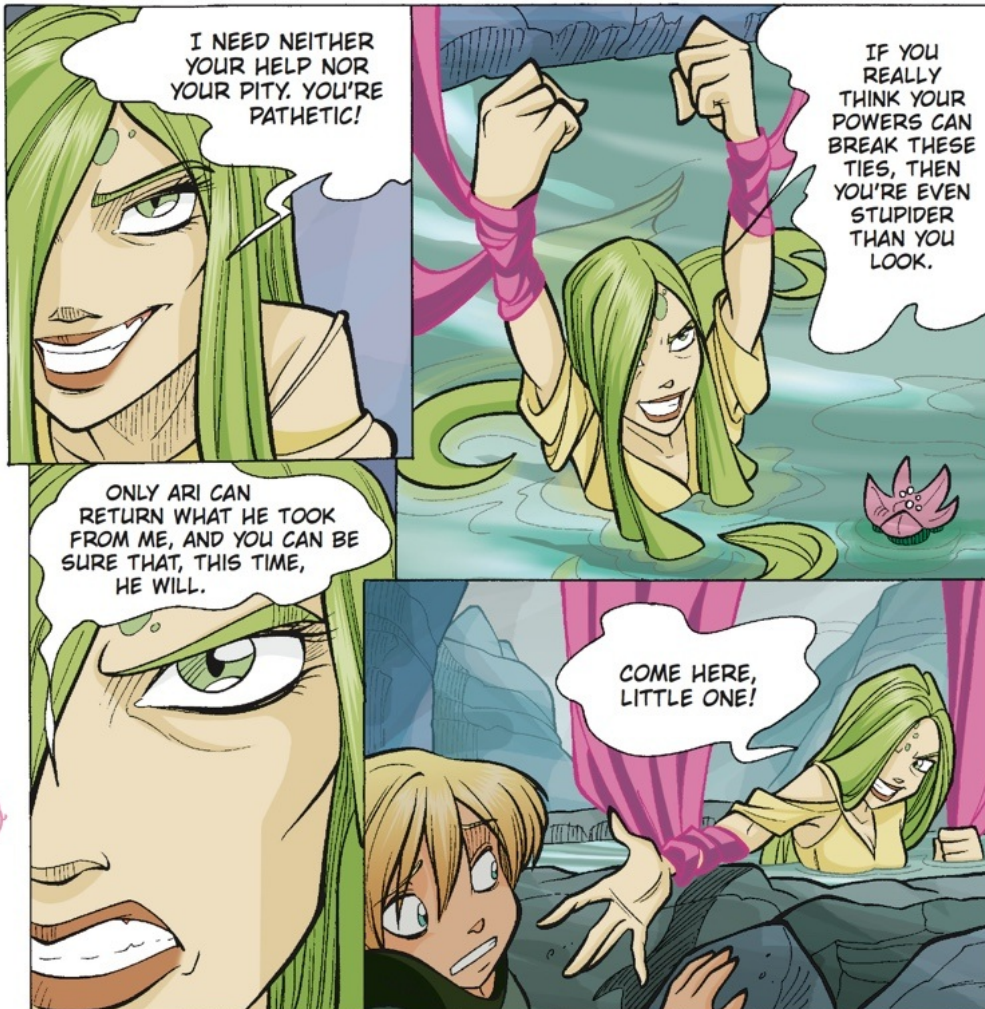
THE CHILD STAYS HERE!

DON'T DO ANYTHING FOOLISH, YUA.
WE'RE NOT HERE TO FIGHT YOU. WE COME IN PEACE!



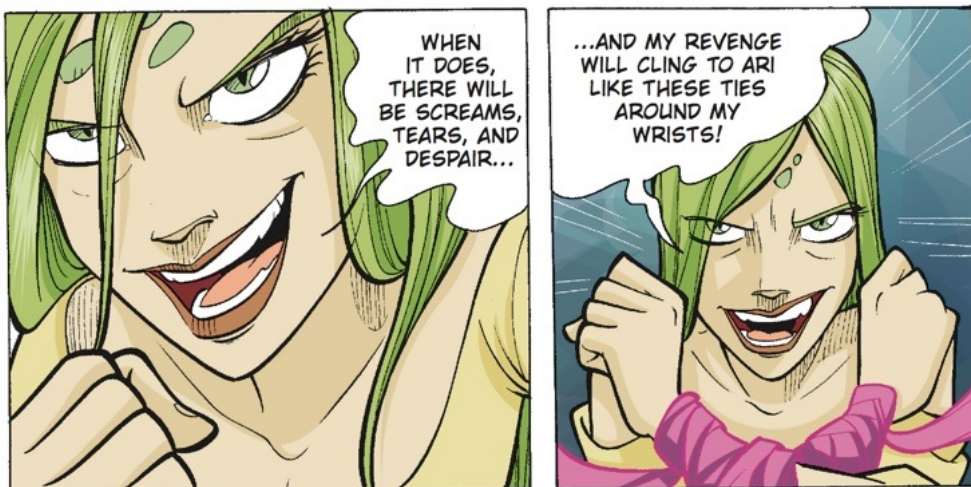
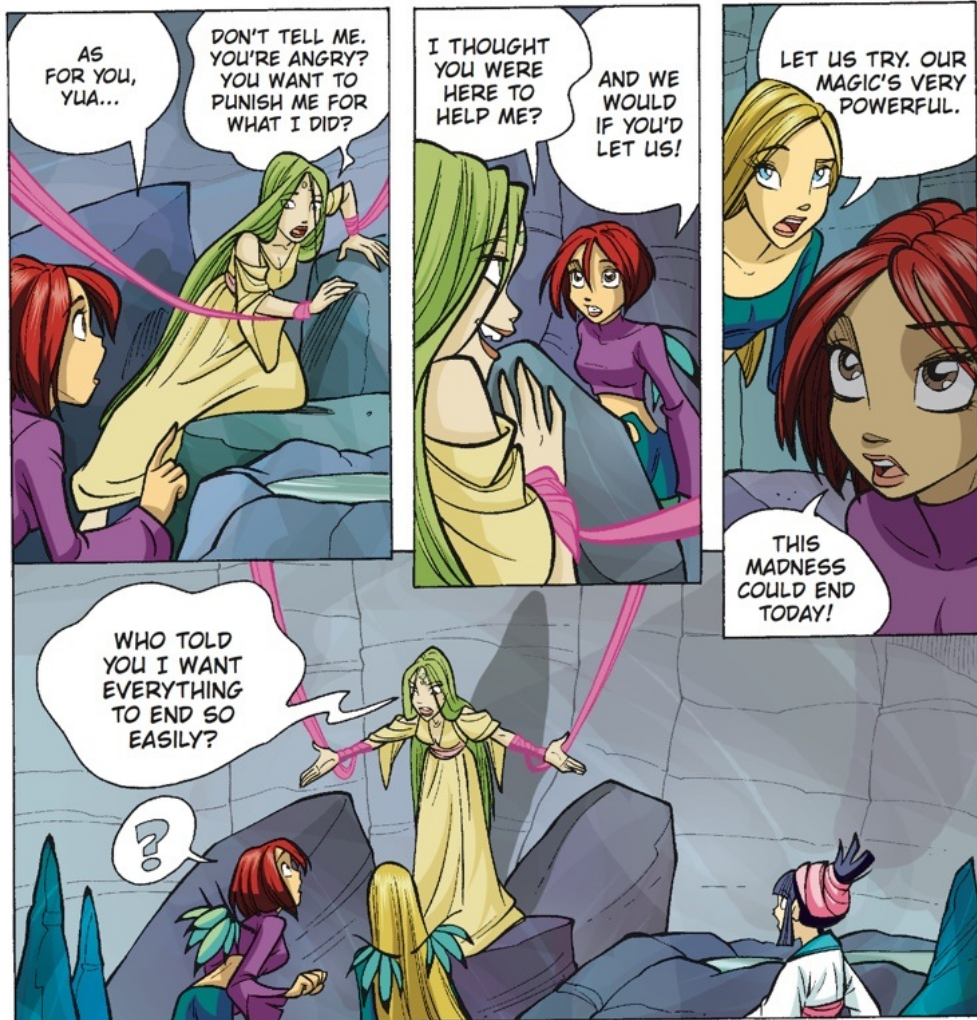
WE KNOW YOUR STORY, AND WE WANNA HELP YOU.
WE WANNA FREE YOU SO IT'LL ALL BE OVER.

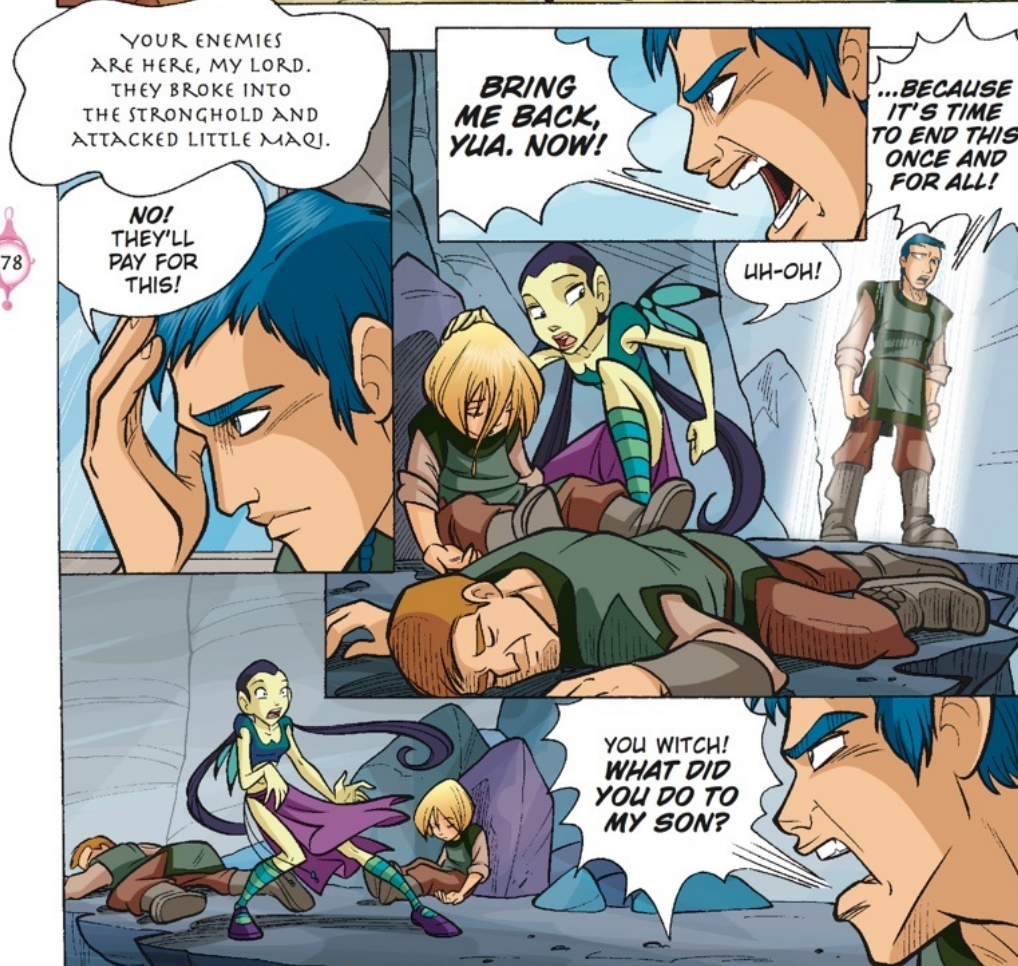
FREE ME?
HA-HA-HA!

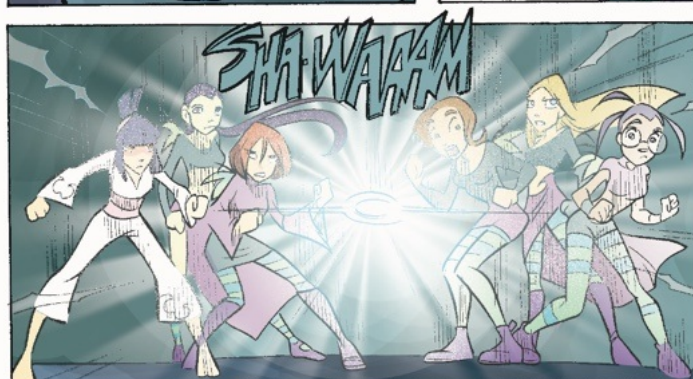
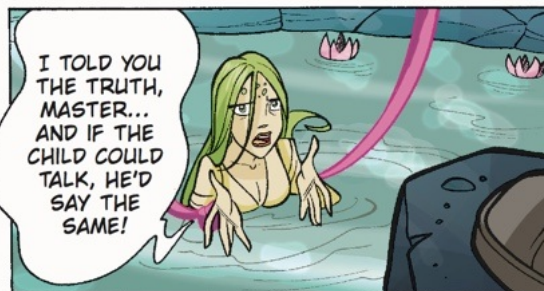




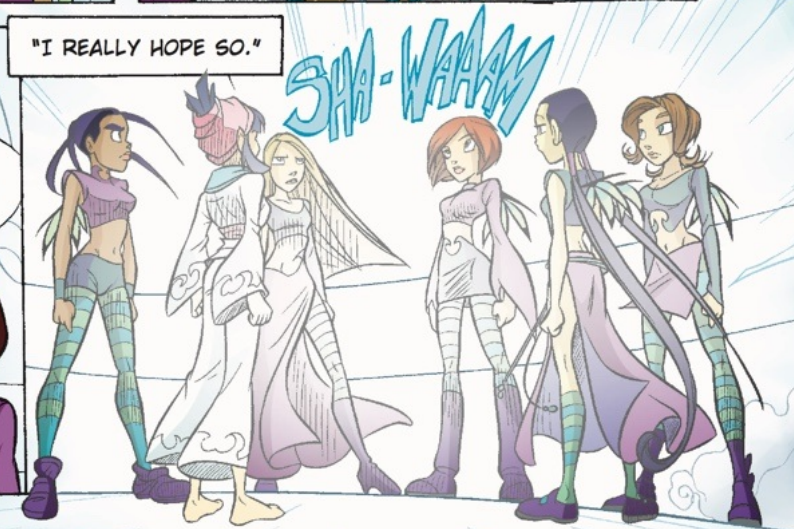
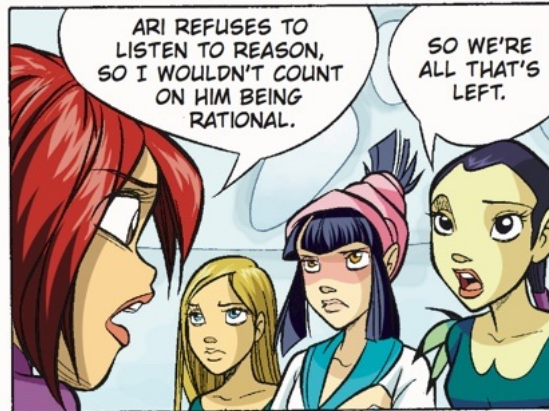


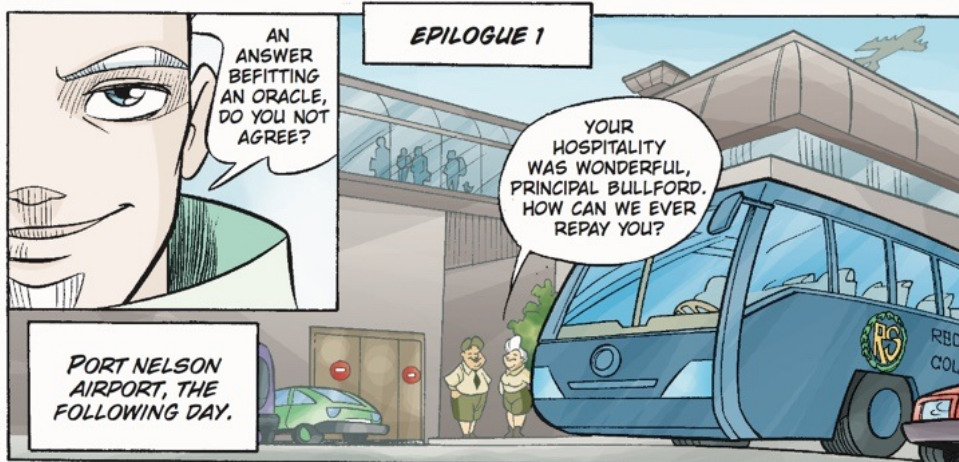
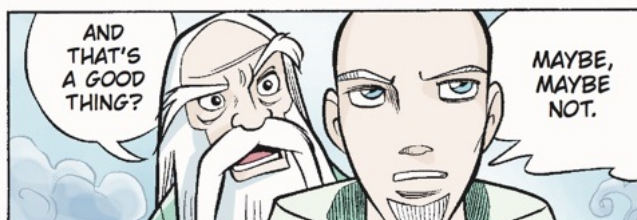
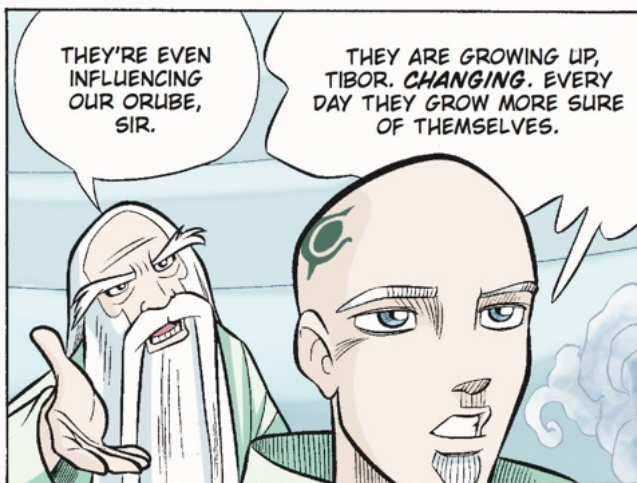


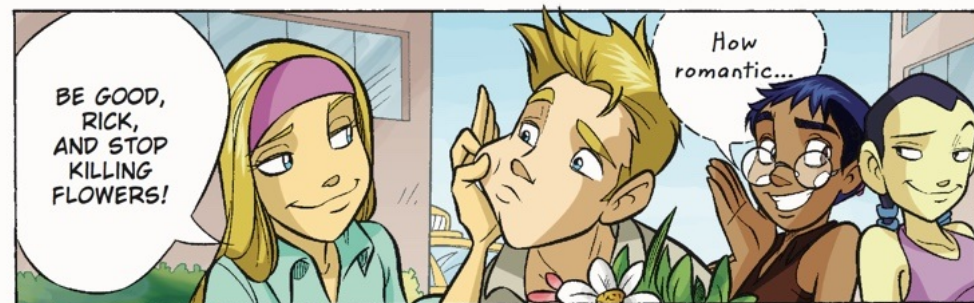
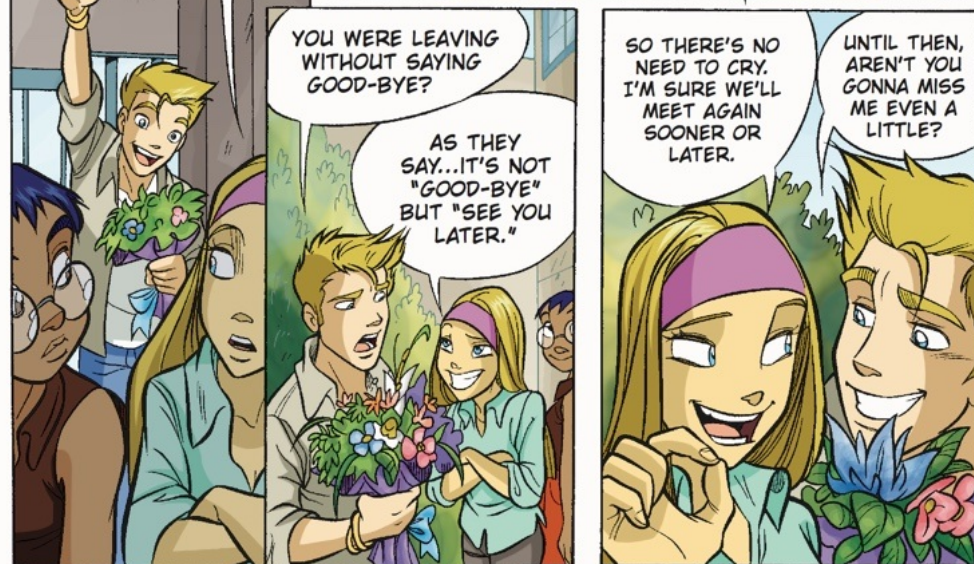










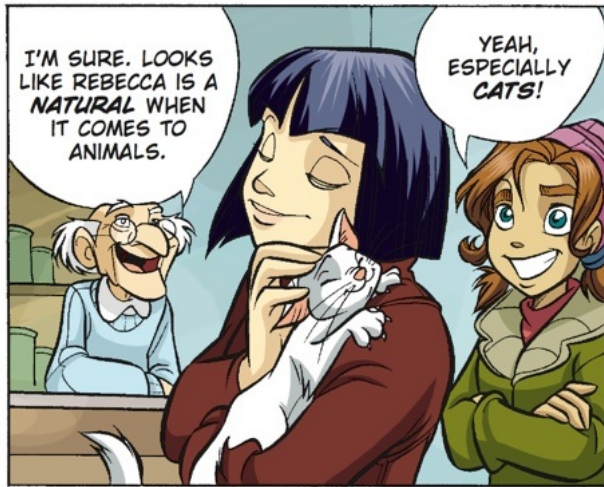


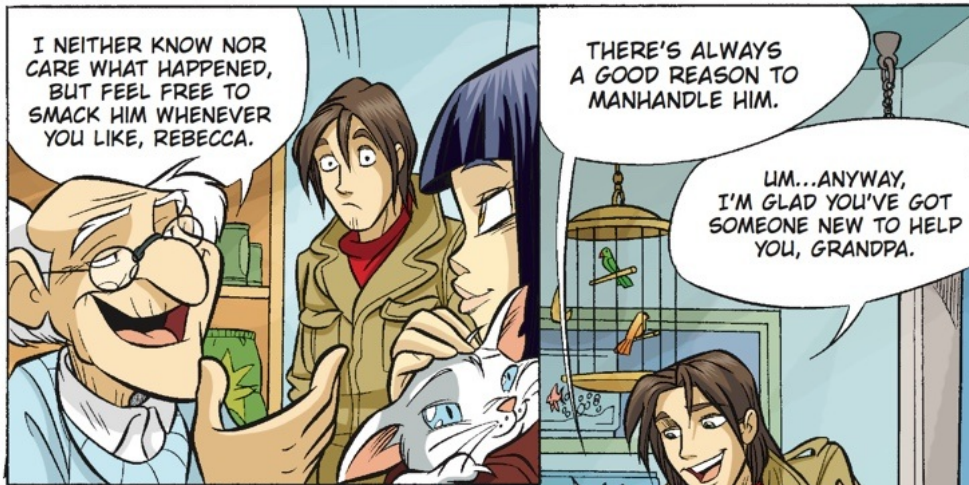




EPILOGUE 2







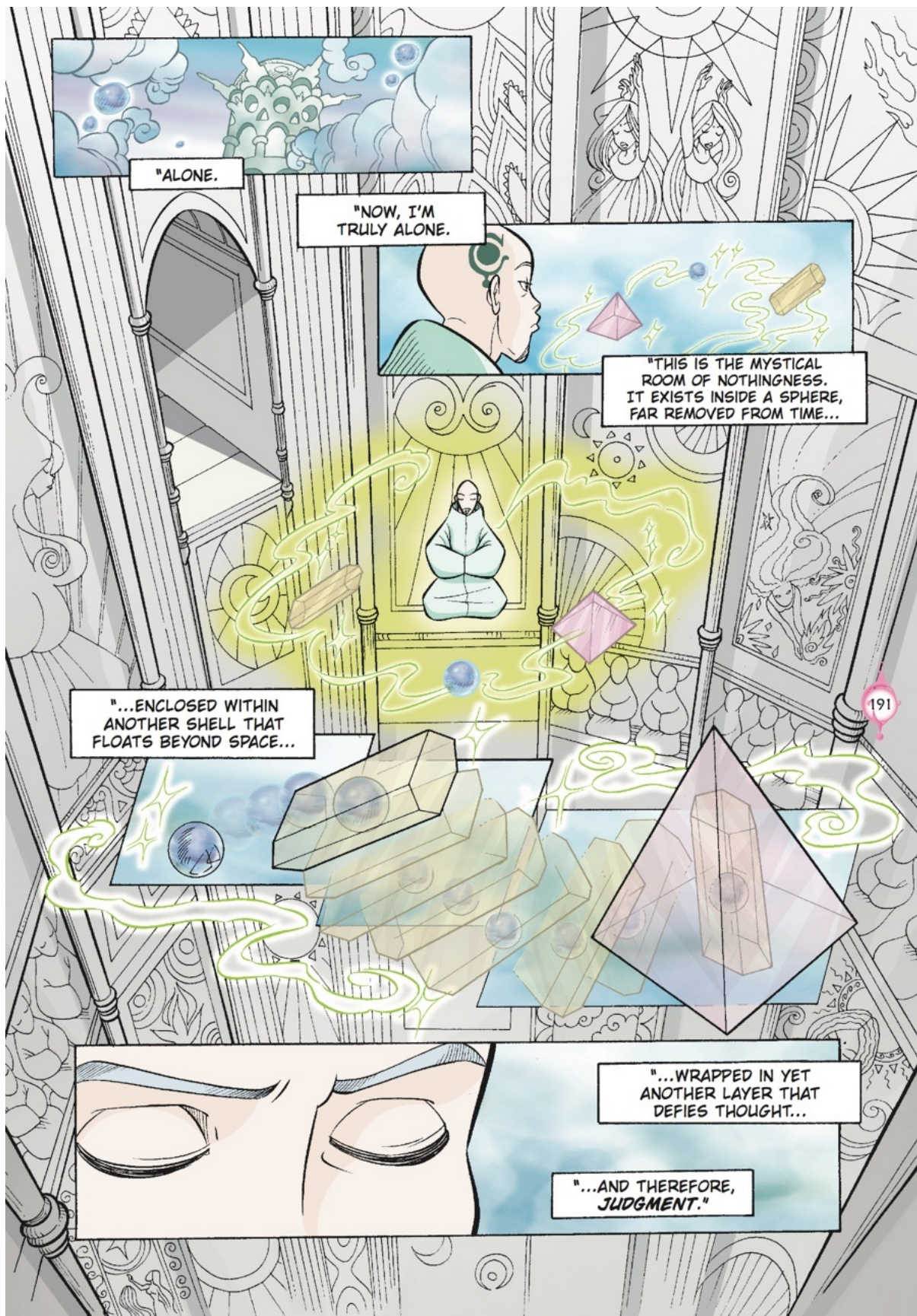
END OF
CHAPTER 31



A Play of Many Parts

"They have light souls."





"ALONE."

"NOW, I'M
TRULY ALONE."

"THIS IS THE MYSTICAL
ROOM OF NOTHINGNESS.
IT EXISTS INSIDE A SPHERE,
FAR REMOVED FROM TIME..."

"...ENCLOSED WITHIN
ANOTHER SHELL THAT
FLOATS BEYOND SPACE..."

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"...WRAPPED IN YET
ANOTHER LAYER THAT
DEFIES THOUGHT..."

"...AND THEREFORE,
JUDGMENT."

"FROM HERE, I CAN SEE
ARKHANTA AND VENTURE
INSIDE THE SCARLET
STRONGHOLD.

"HERE'S MAQI'S ROOM. TODAY,
A PLAY HAS BEEN ARRANGED
FOR ARI'S SON.

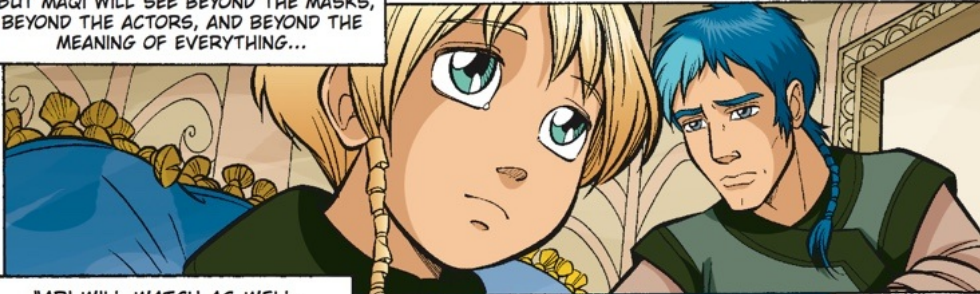
"IT IS MAQI'S BIRTHDAY, AND
HIS FATHER HAS SUMMONED THE
BEST ACTORS IN ARKHANTA.

"THE PLAY IS CALLED A PLAY
OF MANY PARTS. IT IS A
COMEDY WITH A MORAL.

"IT IS A COMPLEX STORY, FULL
OF LIES AND SECRETS. THE
CHARACTERS ALL BETRAY
ONE ANOTHER.

"EVERY ACTOR WEARS A MASK,
WHICH HIDES ANOTHER MASK,
AND SO ON...

"BUT MAQI WILL SEE BEYOND THE MASKS, BEYOND THE ACTORS, AND BEYOND THE MEANING OF EVERYTHING..."



"ARI WILL WATCH AS WELL, PREOCCUPIED. TODAY IS A DAY OF JOY AND SORROW FOR HIM."



"HE WILL RECALL THE BIRTH OF HIS ONLY SON BUT ALSO THE LOSS OF HIS WIFE..."

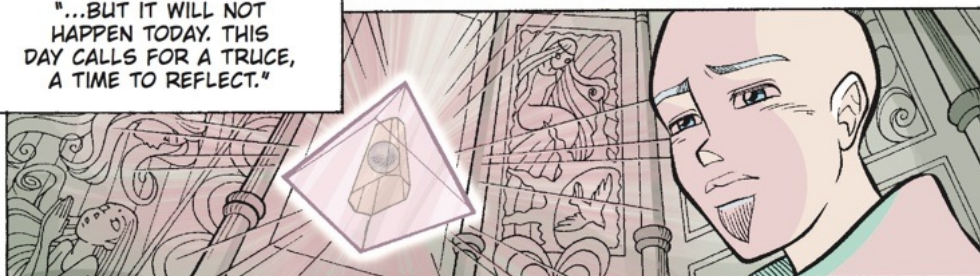


"...AND THINK THAT I, THE ORACLE, AM TO BLAME FOR HIS UNHAPPINESS."

"HE WILL SEEK A WAY TO DESTROY ME AND MY **GUARDIANS** WITH THE BANSHEE'S POWER..."



"...BUT IT WILL NOT HAPPEN TODAY. THIS DAY CALLS FOR A TRUCE, A TIME TO REFLECT."



"FOR TODAY, THE FARCE WILL CONTINUE. IN THIS WORLD AND THAT OTHER."



"EVERYBODY QUIET, AND THEN..."



"...THE CURTAIN RISES."



WILL VANDOM!
CORNELIA HALE!
TARANEE COOK!
HAY LIN!
IRMA LAIR!

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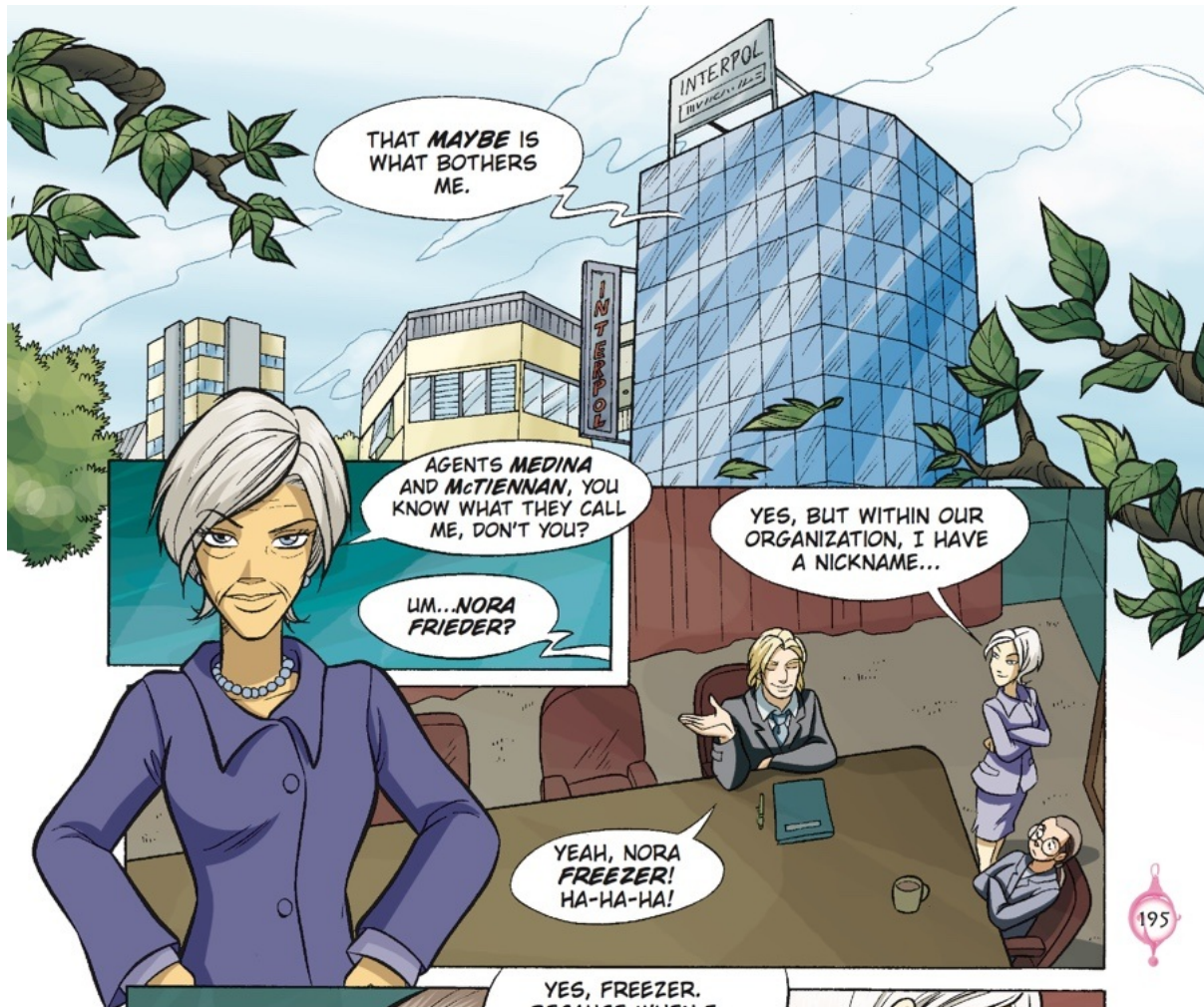
YOU'VE MET THESE GIRLS.

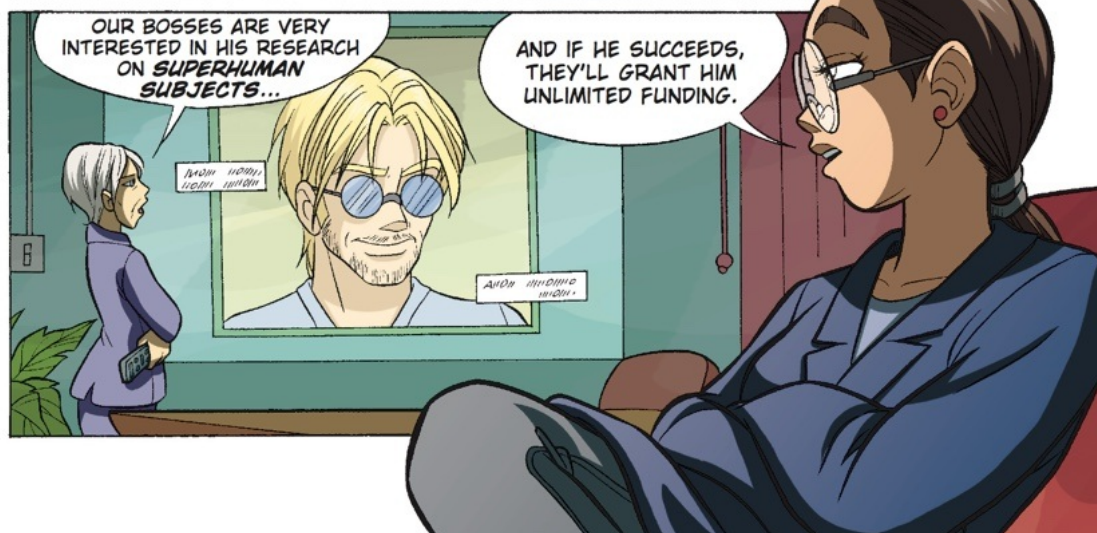
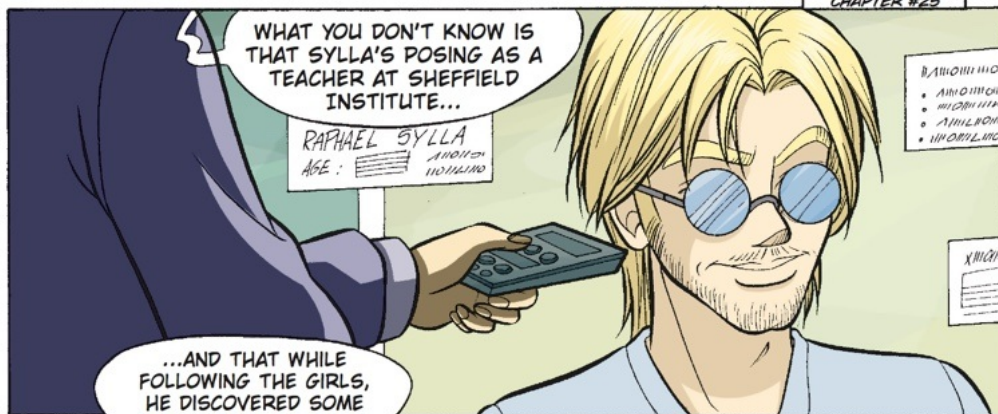
IS IT TRUE THEY HAVE PARANORMAL POWERS?

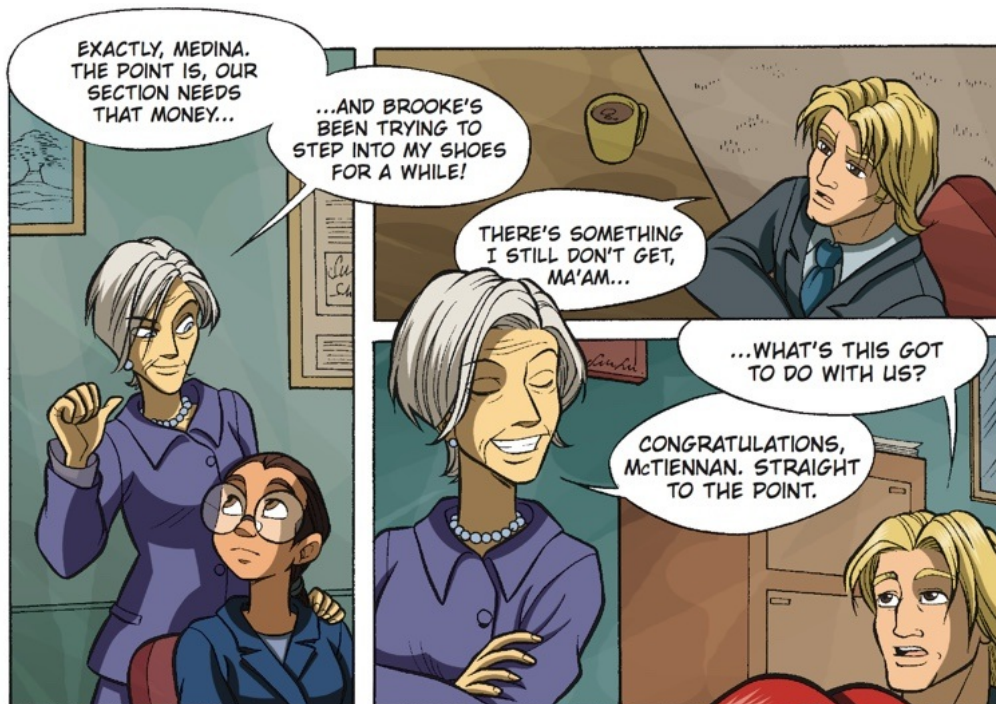


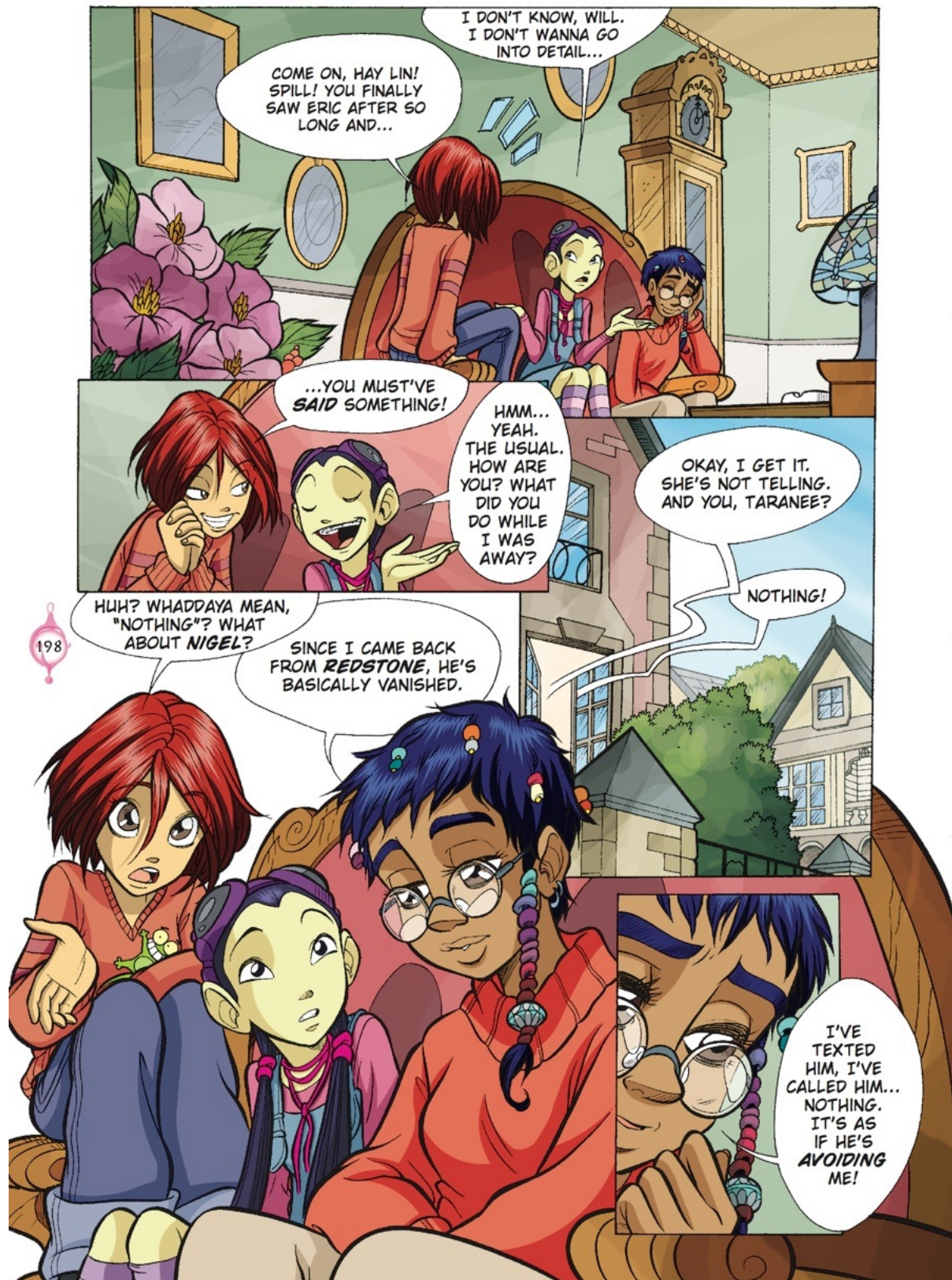
N-NO!

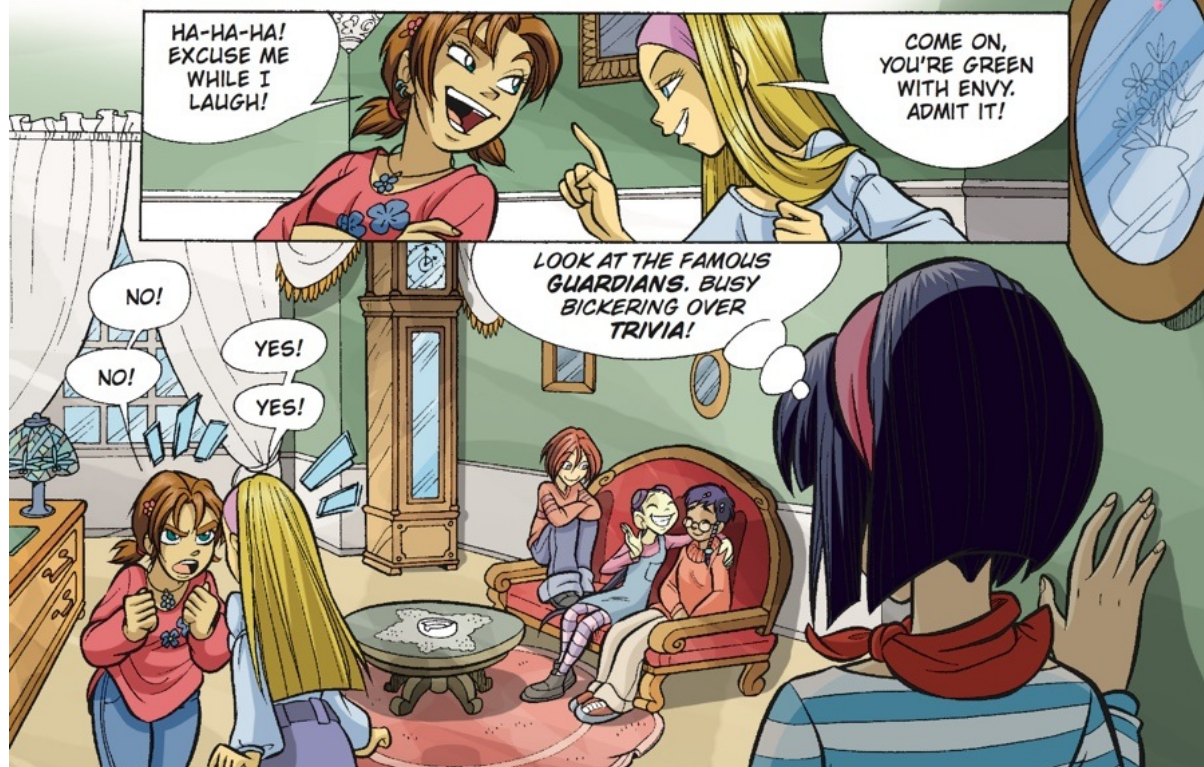
MAYBE...

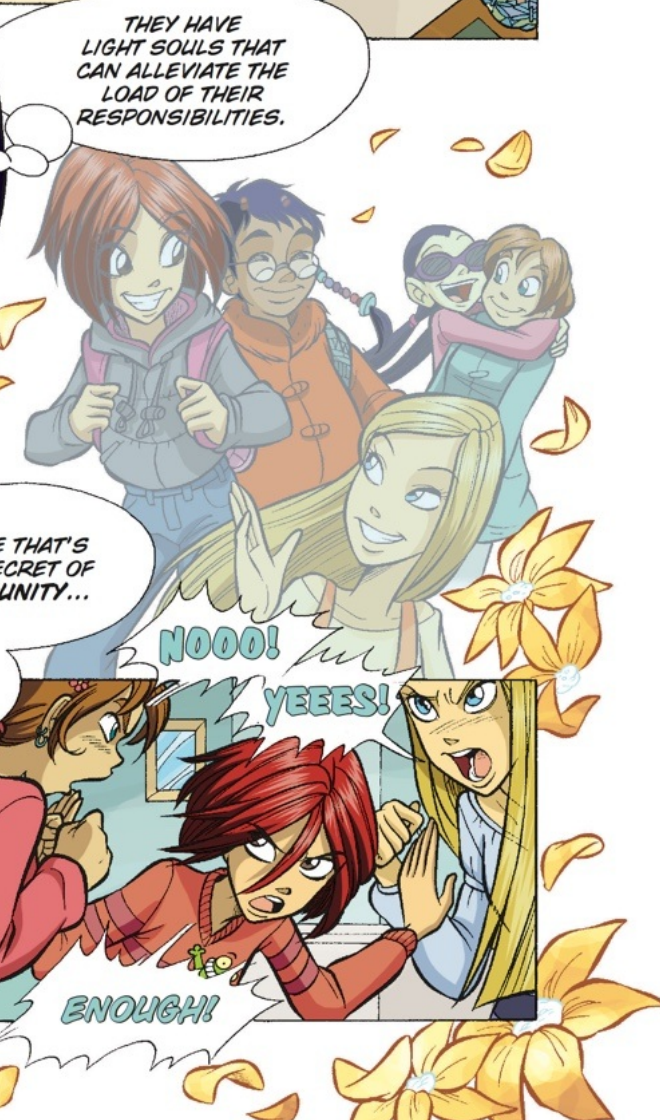
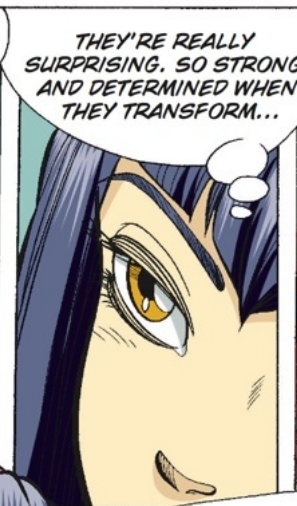


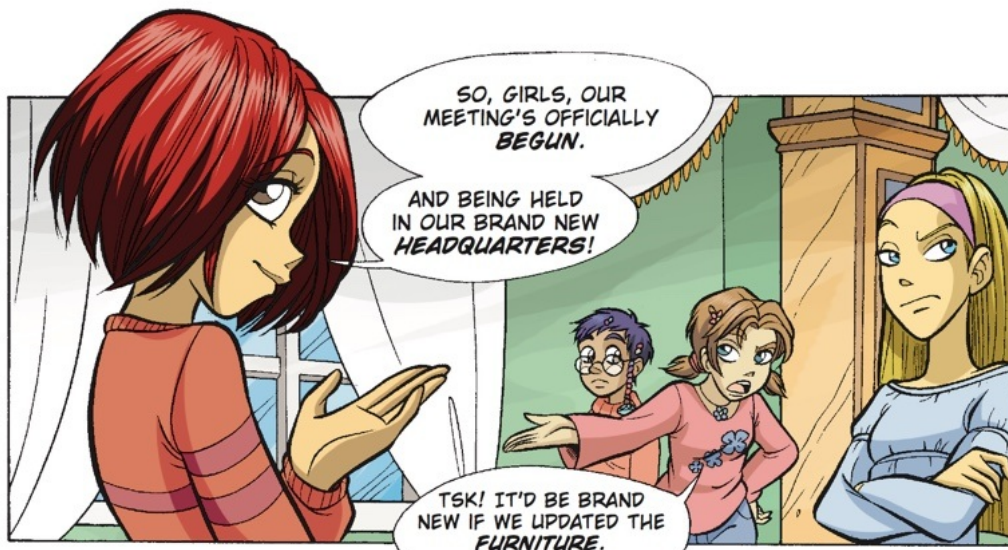








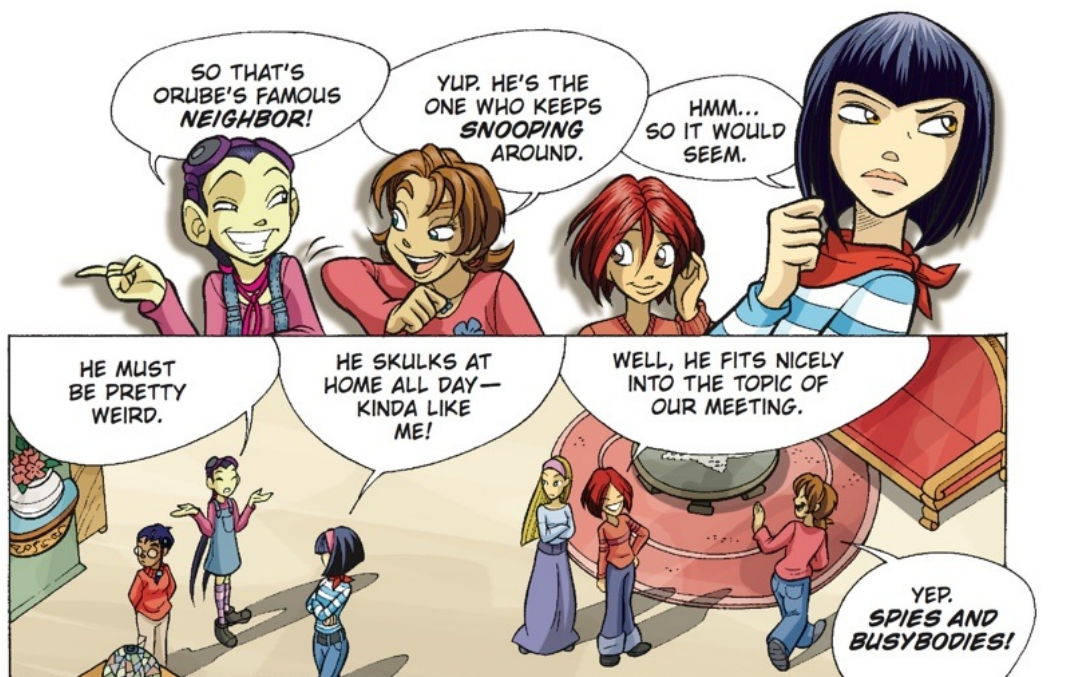


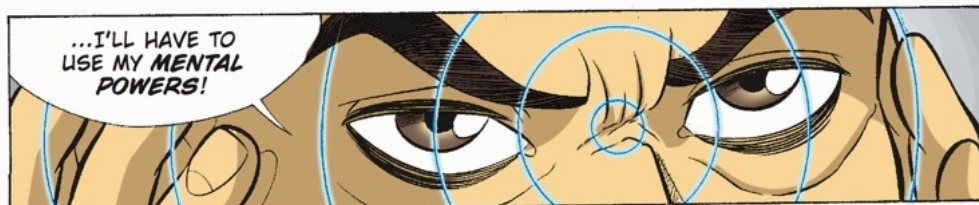




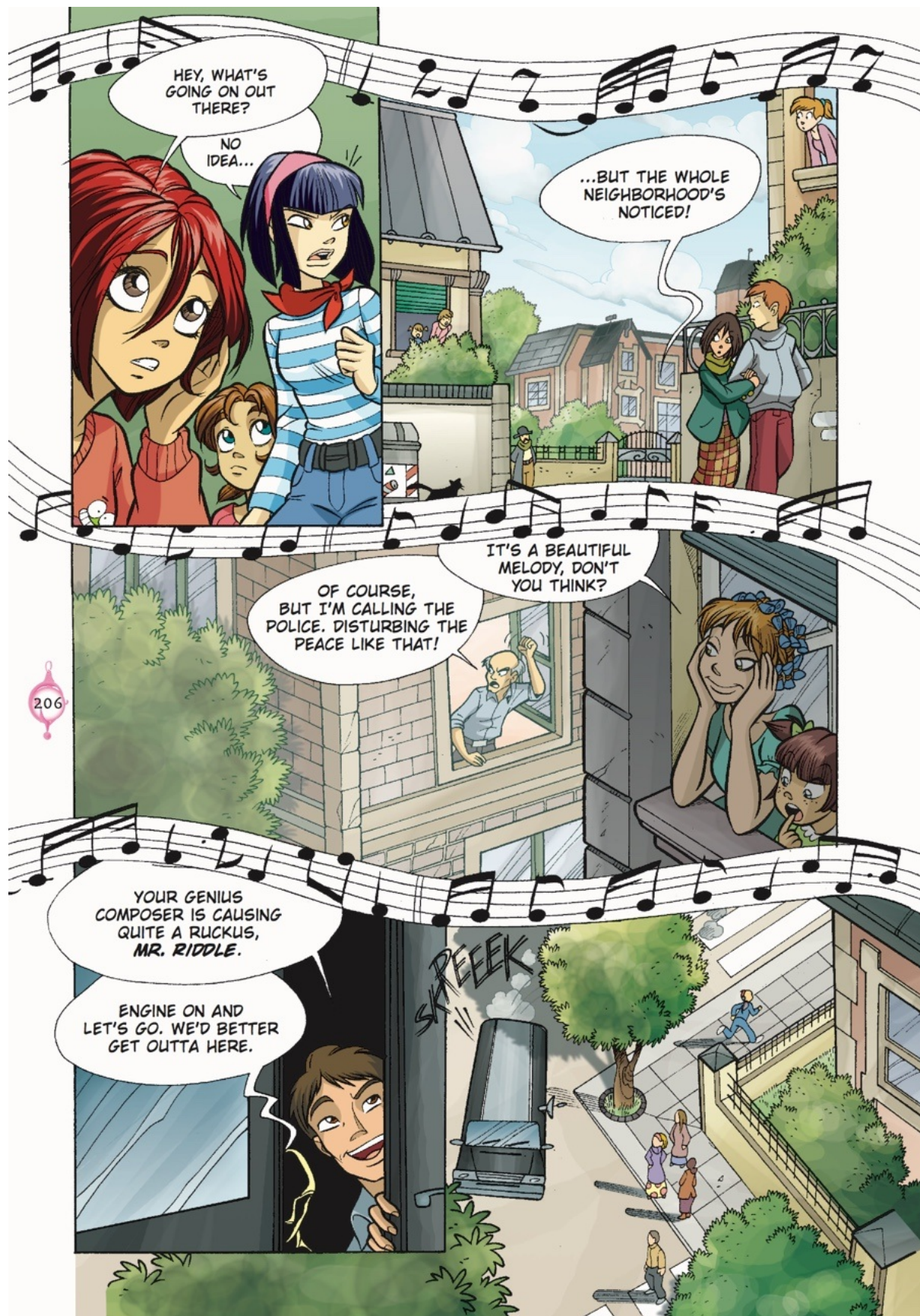
202













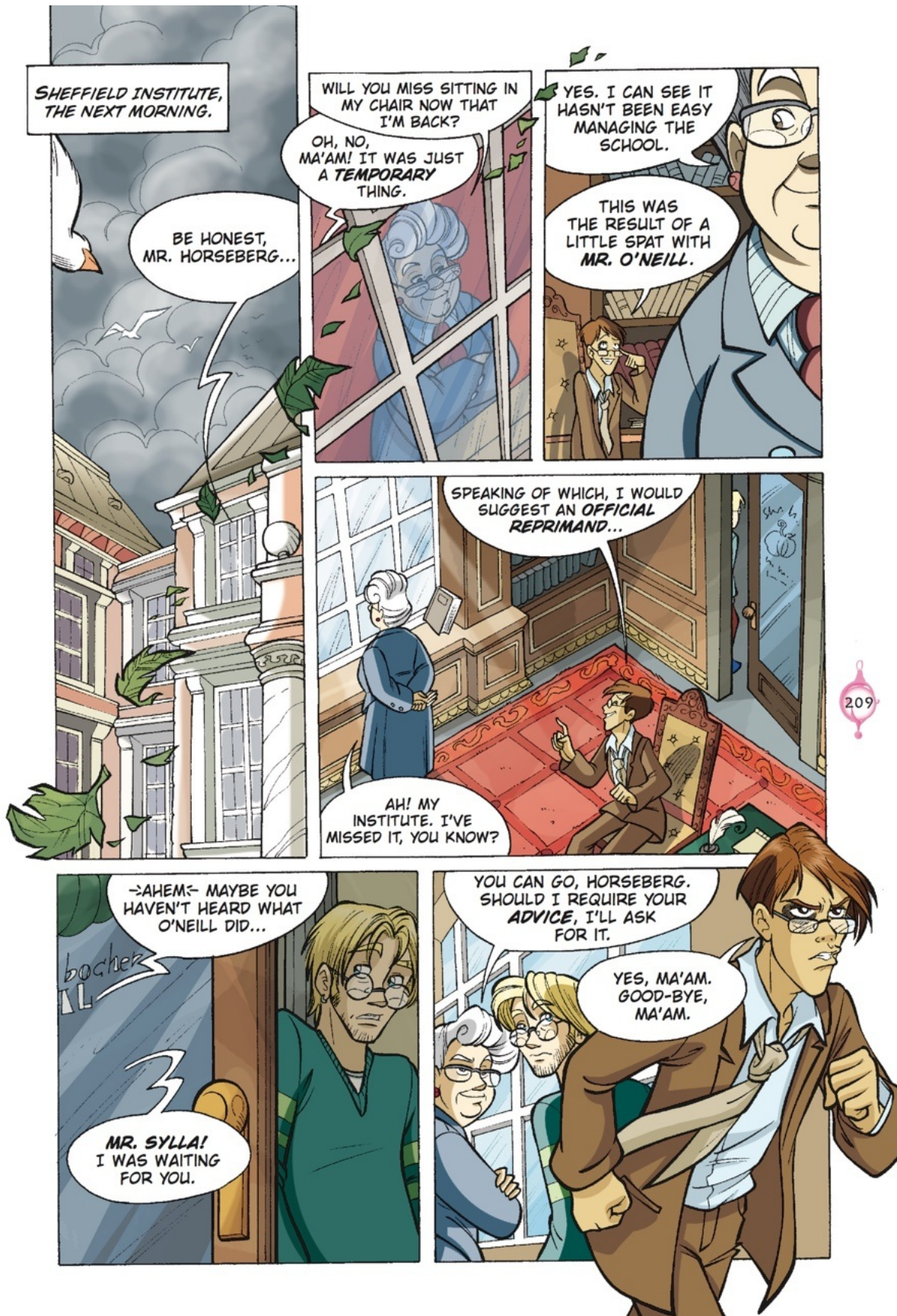
THAT TRUCK! MAYBE MY HUNCH WAS RIGHT. THEY WERE WATCHING US FROM THERE.

AND THIS MUSIC... I KNOW IT...

USUALLY, I HEAR IT FROM FAR AWAY, BUT TODAY...

"TODAY, MY MYSTERIOUS NEIGHBOR MUST HAVE DECIDED TO SHARE IT WITH EVERYONE."

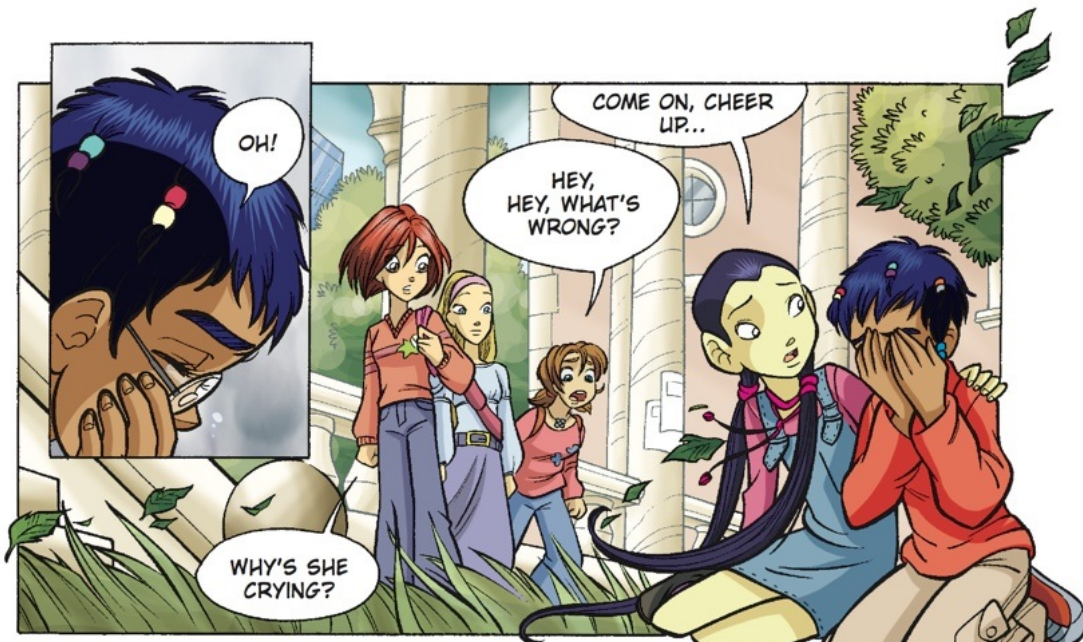




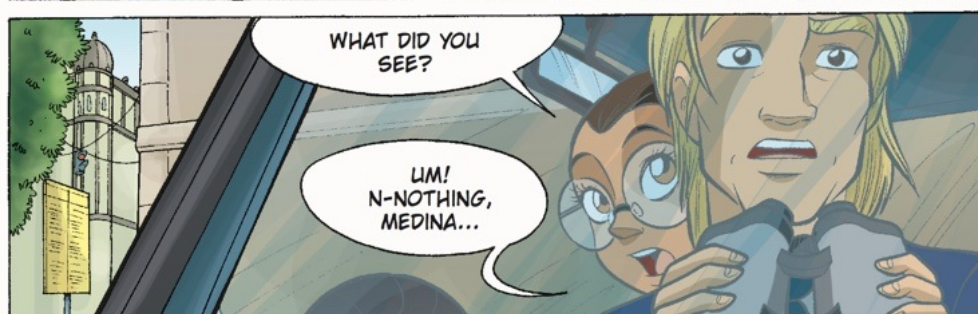
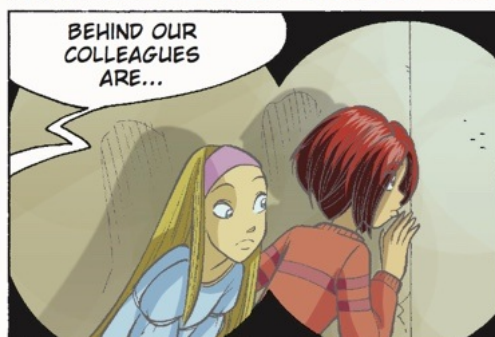
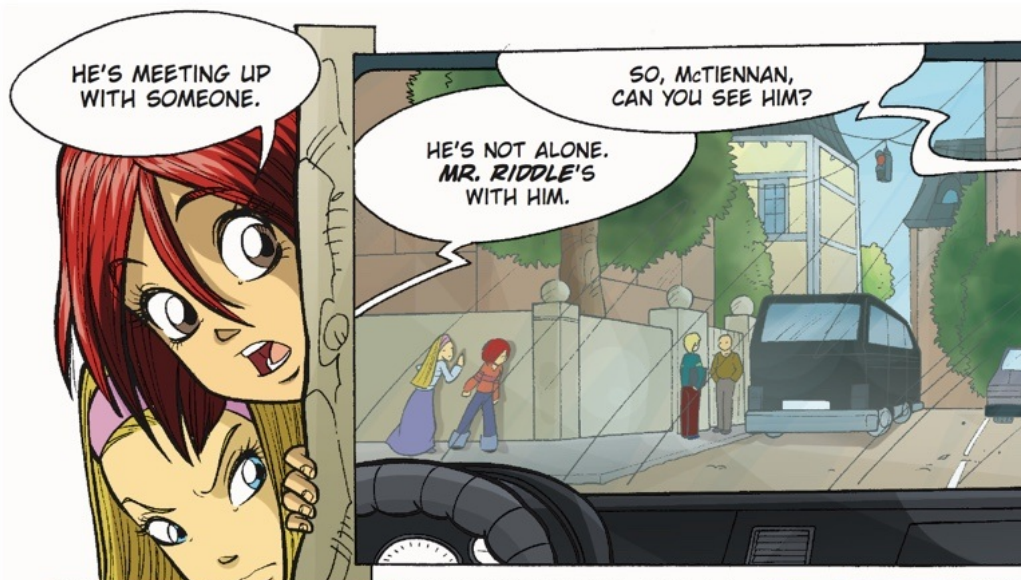


...AND IT WAS GREAT HAVING YOU IN REDSTONE. HOWEVER...









"...ABSOLUTELY NOTHING!"

DID I BLOW YOUR COVER COMING HERE?
COME ON, RIDDLE. I'M SURE YOU'VE HEARD ALREADY. PROFESSOR SYLLA'S BEEN FIRED.



THEN AGENT SYLLA SHOULD GET BACK TO WORK.

SOUNDS LIKE AN INVITATION. WHAT'S UP?



MR. BROOKE WANTS TO SEE YOU. HE WANTS TO TALK ABOUT THE GIRLS.

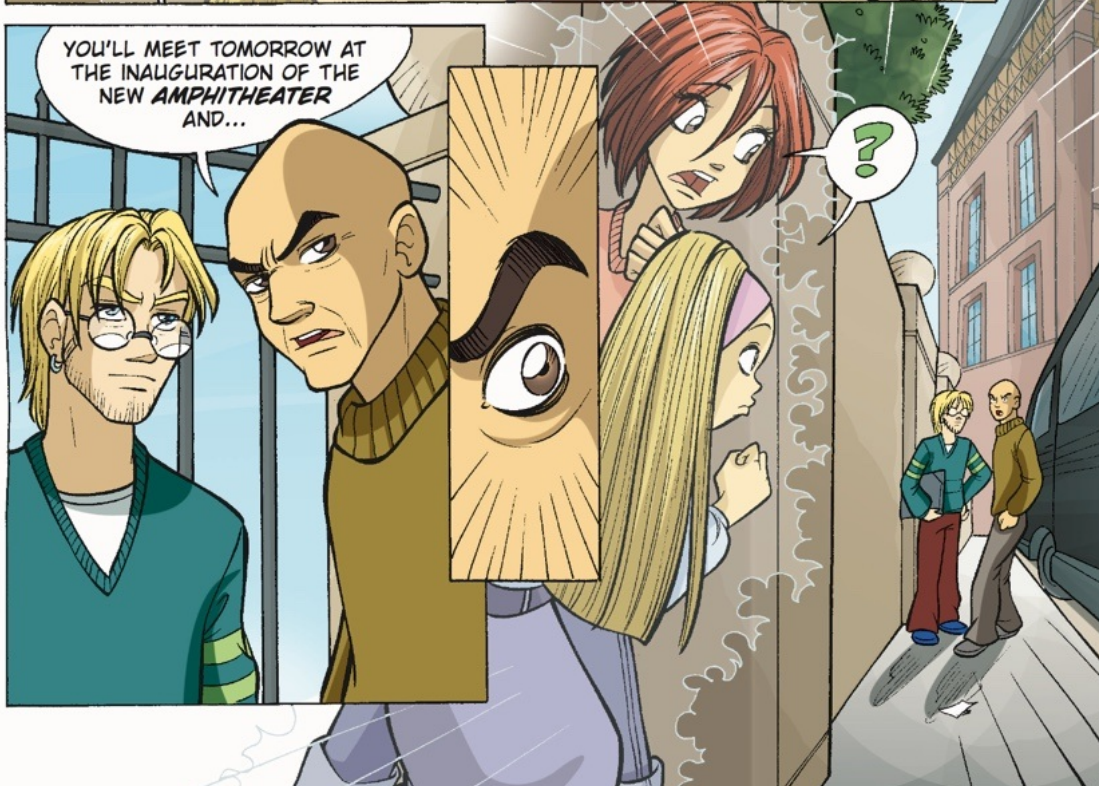
CAN WE DISCUSS IT AT THE OFFICE?

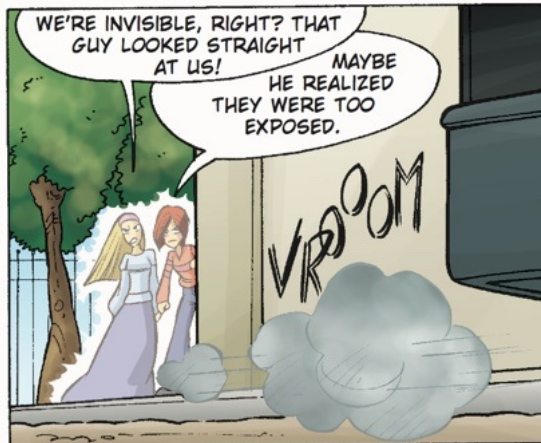


NO! NORA FREEZER HAS EYES AND EARS EVERYWHERE. BETTER TO PICK A CROWDED PLACE.



YOU'LL MEET TOMORROW AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE NEW AMPHITHEATER AND...



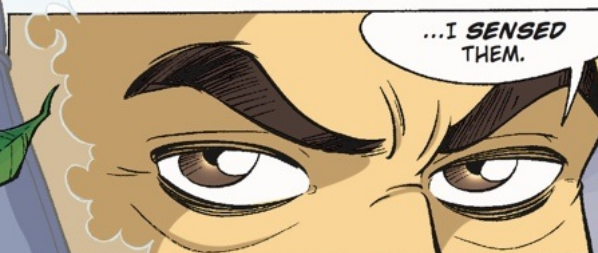
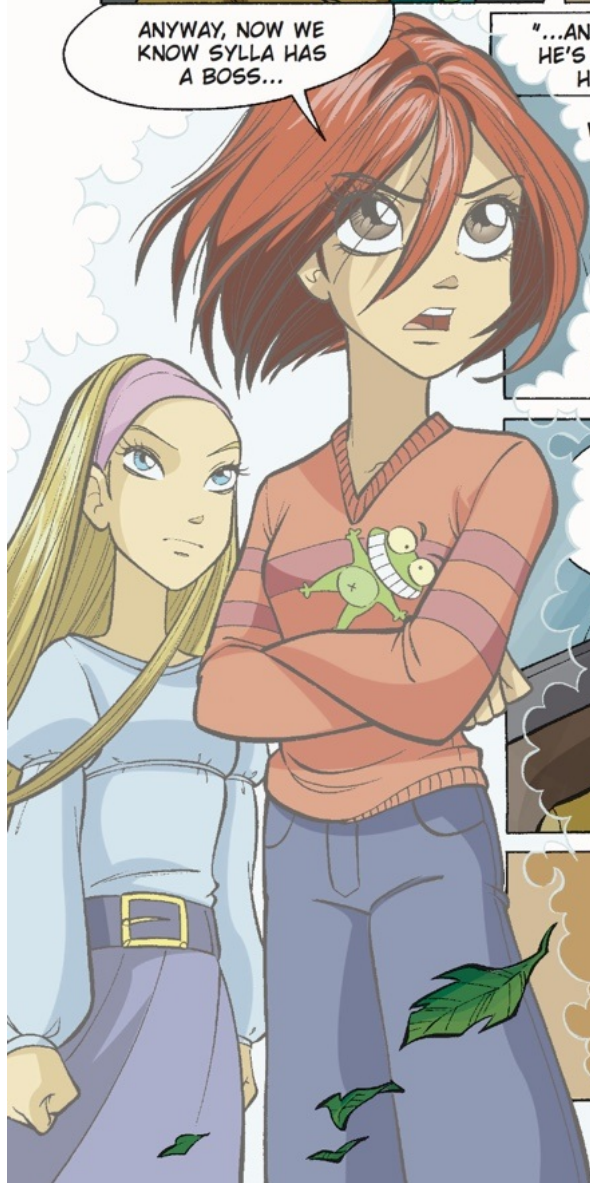


ANYWAY, NOW WE KNOW SYLLA HAS A BOSS...

"...AND THAT TOMORROW HE'S GOING TO TALK TO HIM ABOUT US."

WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING?

WE GOT LUCKY. YOUR STUDENTS WERE EAVESDROPPING.



COMING BACK FROM A
HOLIDAY IS ALWAYS SAD...



EVEN SADDER
WITHOUT THE LIGHT
OF HAPPY MEMORIES
BRIGHTENING THE
WAY HOME...



TARANEE,
HONEY...



THEN THE DARKNESS
COMES, AND THE
THOUGHTS ARE LOST...

DINNER'S
READY.



I'M N-NOT
HUNGRY, MOM, IF
THAT'S ALL RIGHT.



SURE. AS LONG AS WE
CAN HAVE A CHAT
LATER, OKAY?



OKAY. SEE
YOU LATER.



THERESA?

OH, LIONEL. SHE'S INCONSOLABLE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.



BEFORE SHE LEFT FOR REDSTONE, OUR RELATIONSHIP WASN'T PERFECT. BUT NOW...



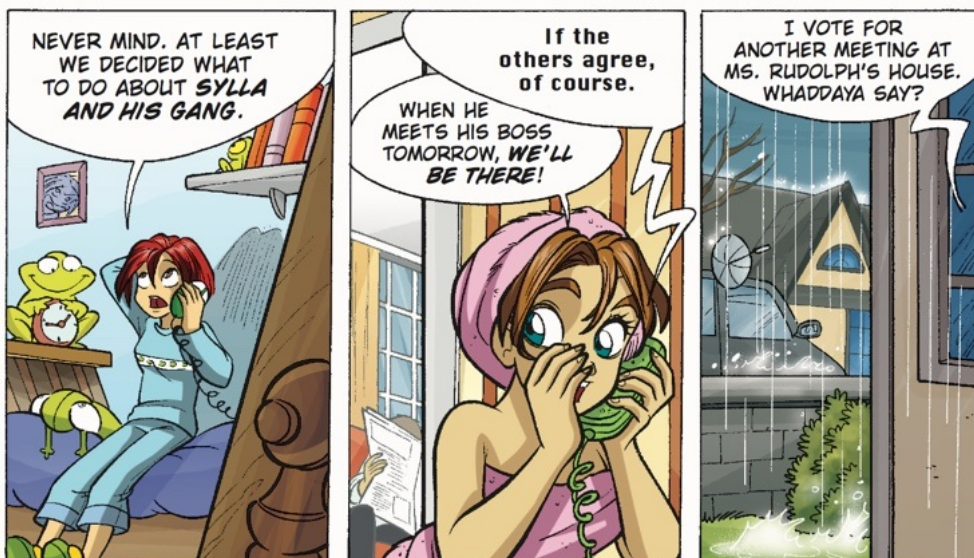
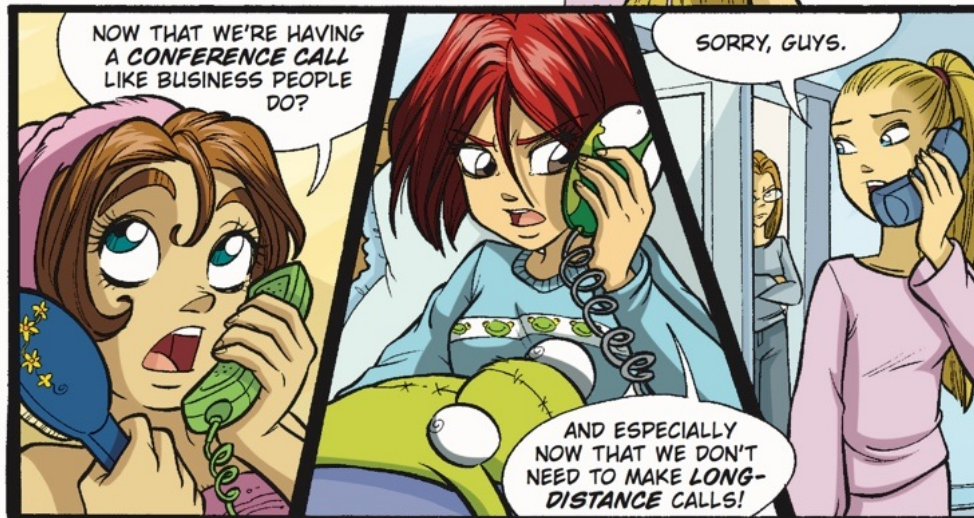
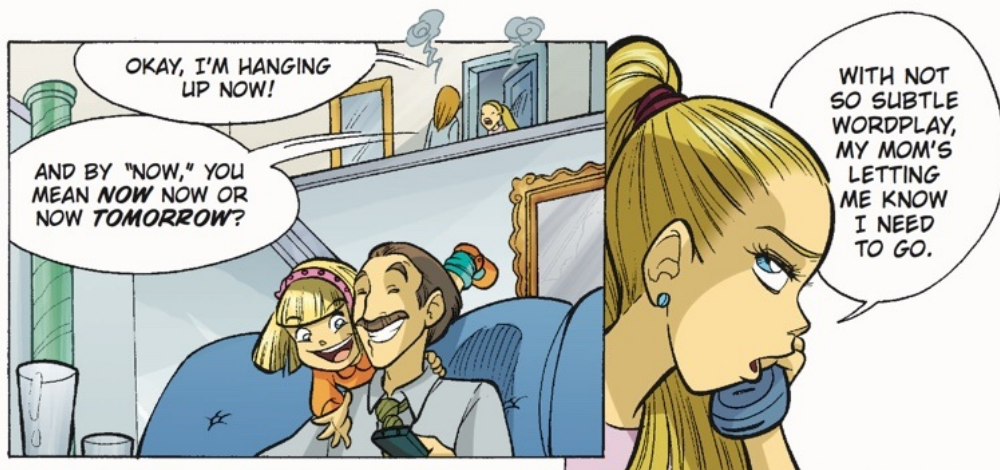
...NOW, WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN IF I TELL HER THE TRUTH ABOUT NIGEL?

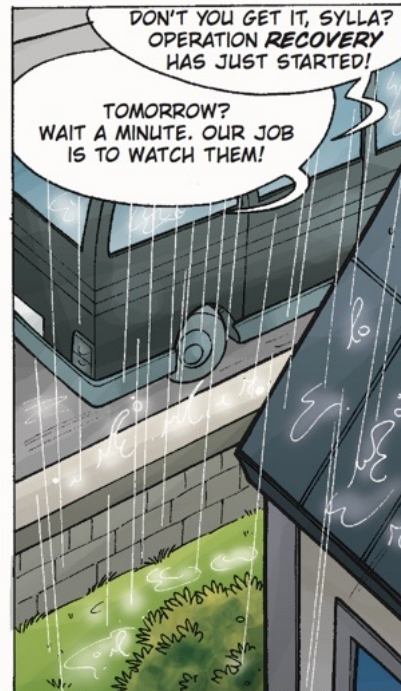
FOR SOME, COMING BACK TO HEATHERFIELD IS AN EMOTIONAL TIME...

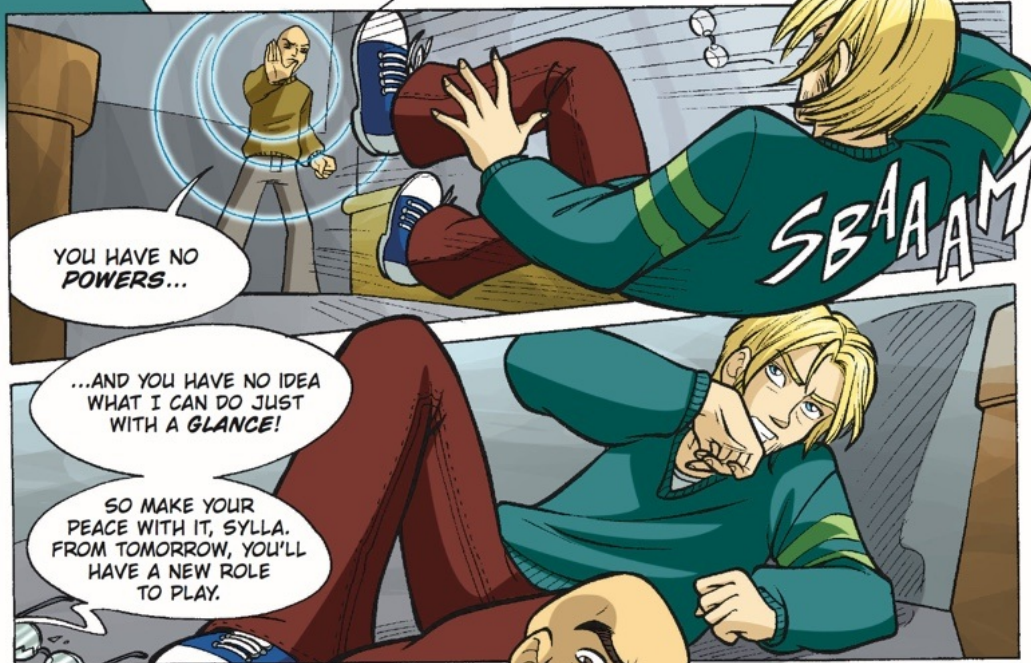
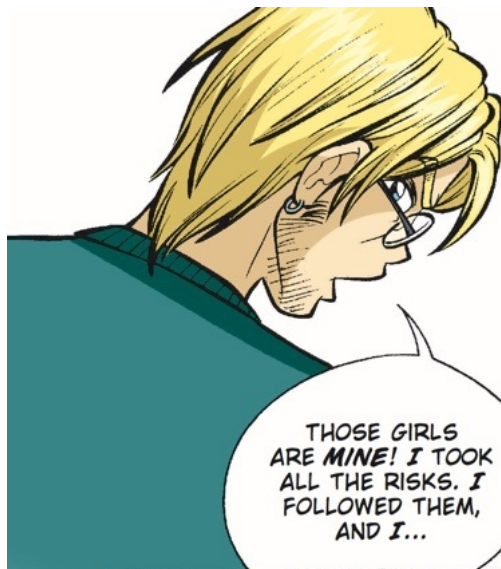
...FOR OTHERS, IT'S THE SAME OLD ROUTINE...



**CORNELIA!
I NEED THE PHONE!**







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YOU'LL BE THE **BAIT**!

THAT'S TWO JOBS SYLLA'S LOST...



"IT HAPPENED THIS MORNING
AT THE INSTITUTE!"

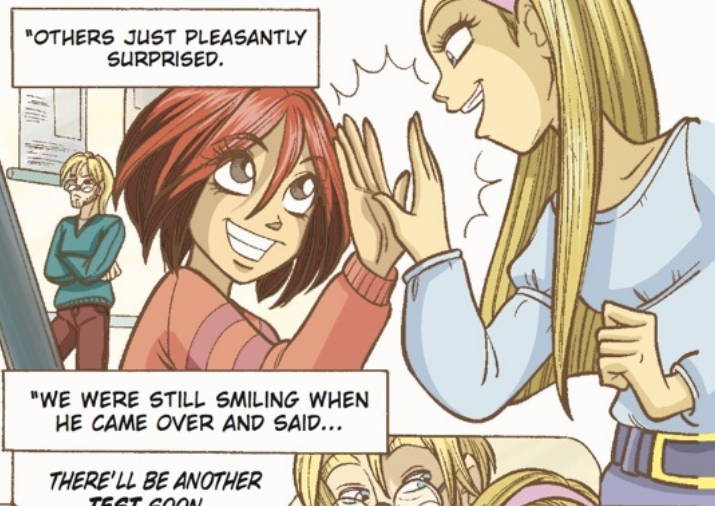


"DURING CLASS, SYLLA
ANNOUNCED HE'S LEAVING."

"SOME GIRLS WERE
ABSOLUTELY DEVASTATED..."

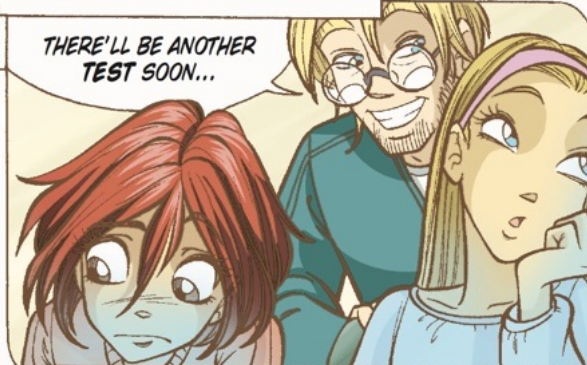


"OTHERS JUST PLEASANTLY
SURPRISED."

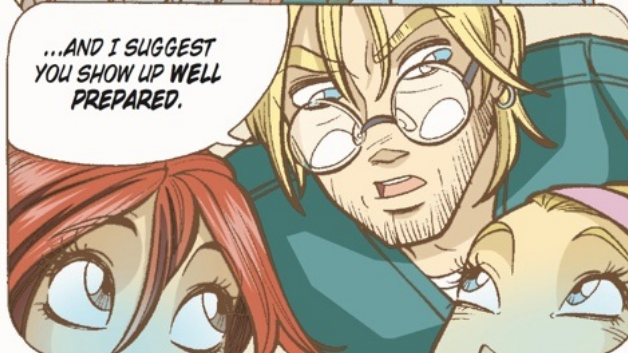


"WE WERE STILL SMILING WHEN
HE CAME OVER AND SAID..."

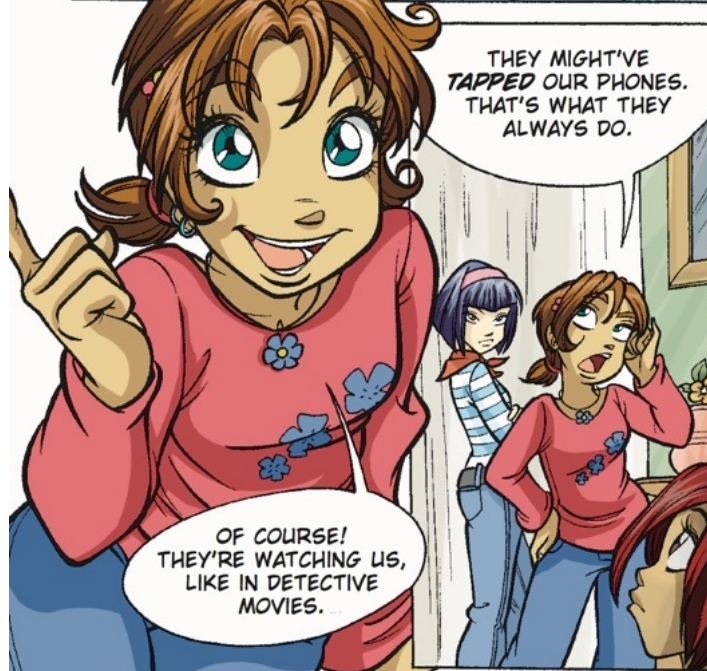
THERE'LL BE ANOTHER
TEST SOON...

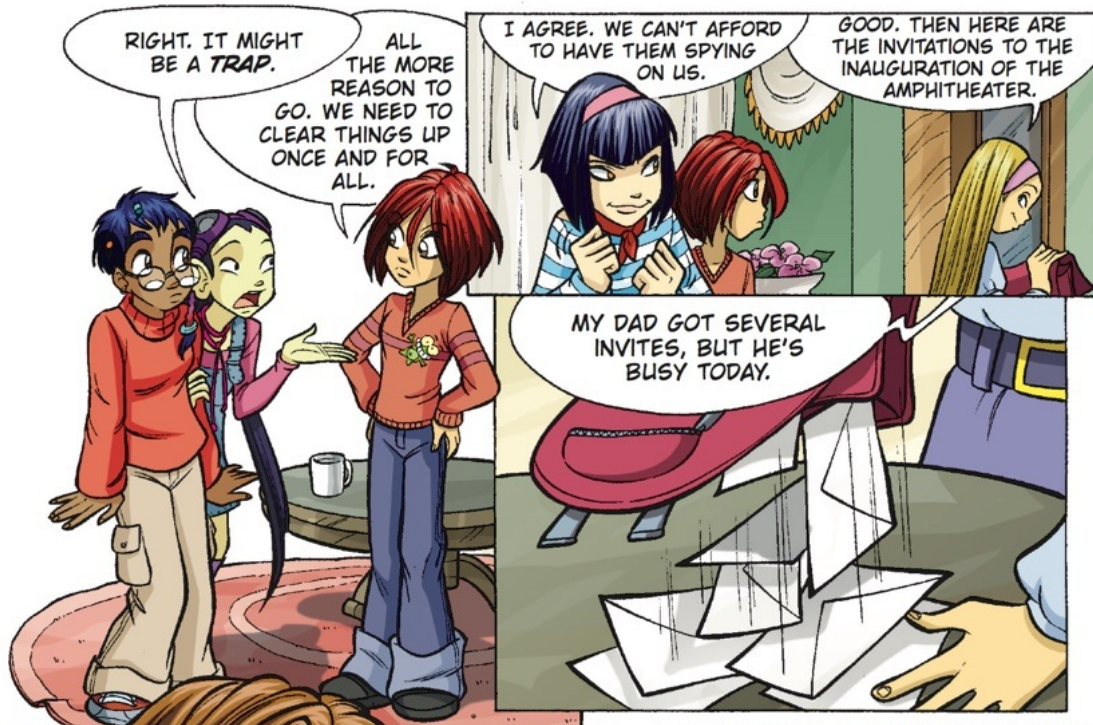


...AND I SUGGEST
YOU SHOW UP WELL
PREPARED.









"WHY DO YOU ASK?"

FRUSH
FRUSH

STOP SCRATCHING
YOURSELF LIKE A CAT
WITH FLEAS!

WHAT'D YOU CALL
ME, YOU PEST?

CALM DOWN, ORUBE.
WE'RE GETTING NEAR
THE ENTRANCE.

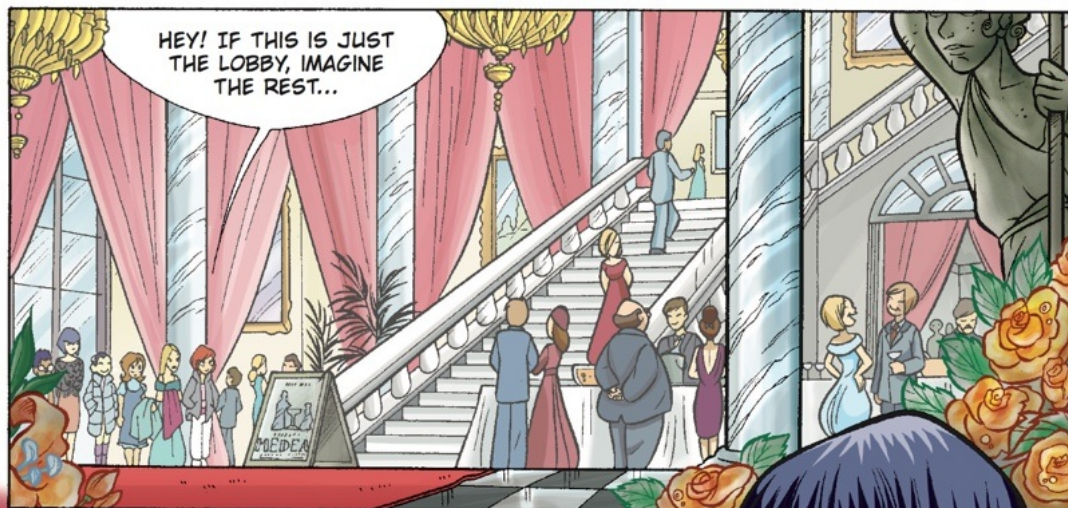
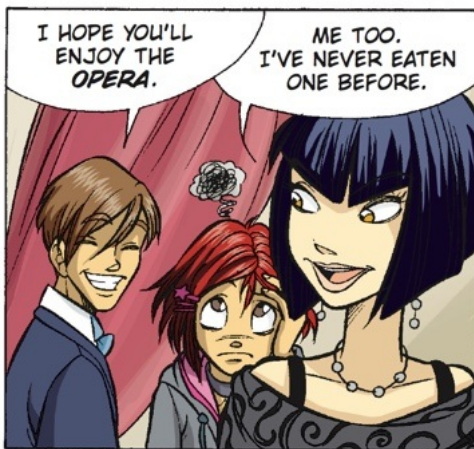
I CAN'T STAND NEW
CLOTHES. ESPECIALLY
ELEGANT ONES.
THEY ITCH!

GOOD AFTERNOON.
ARE THE GIRLS
WITH YOU?

OF COURSE.
I'M THEIR...
UM...**ACTING**
TEACHER.

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SO MANY BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE!

IF YOU SAY SO... ANYWAY, EVEN THE MAYOR'S HERE!



WE'RE LOOKING FOR SYLLA. HE'S GOTTA BE HERE WITH BROOKE.

"SO KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED..."



I GOT A VISUAL! SUBJECTS ARE AT TWELVE O'CLOCK, BY THE TABLES.



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GOT IT. AGENTS, GET TO WORK! YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO. BE DISCREET.



THE GIRLS ARE HERE, MR. BROOKE.

GOOD, RIDDLE. VERY GOOD.



THANK GOODNESS SYLLA'S NOWHERE TO BE FOUND. I WAS WORRIED HE'D RUIN EVERYTHING.

WILL! ISN'T THAT THE GUY
WHO WAS WITH SYLLA AT
THE PARK?

THAT'S HIM. LET'S GO
ASK HIM WHERE
HIS BOSS IS.

HANG ON. HE'S
NOT ALONE.

I SENSE SOME
RADIO WAVES.

THEY MUST HAVE
WALKIE-TALKIES. HOW
MANY AGENTS ARE
THERE?

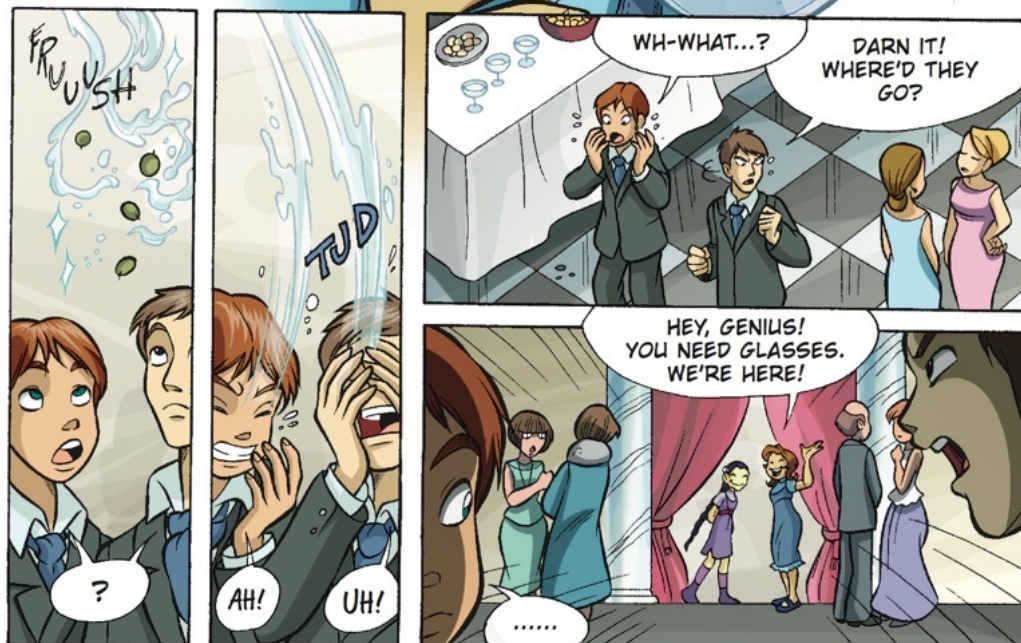
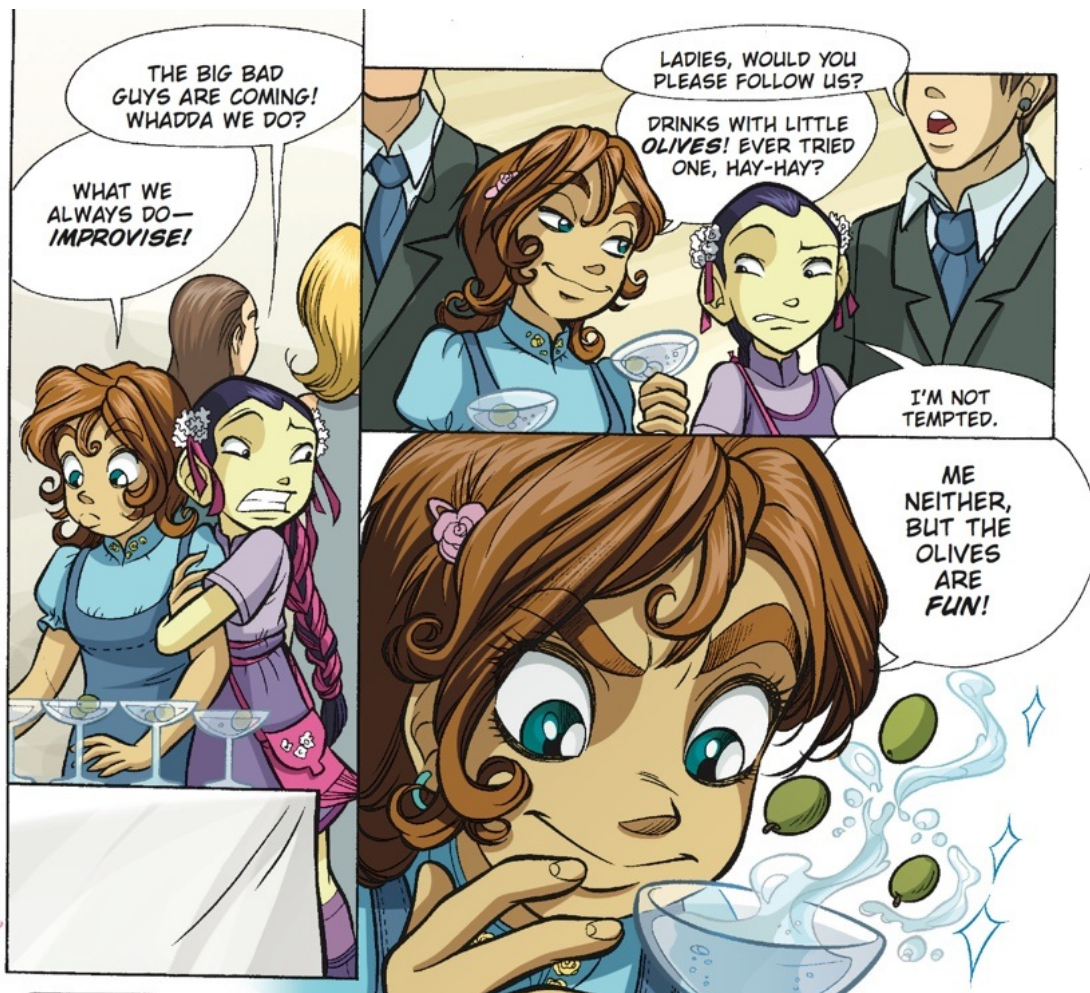
BUT THEY DON'T
KNOW WHO THEY'RE
UP AGAINST...

WAIT, ORUBE. I EXPECT
THEY'RE ARMED, AND
THERE ARE A LOT OF
INNOCENT PEOPLE
HERE.

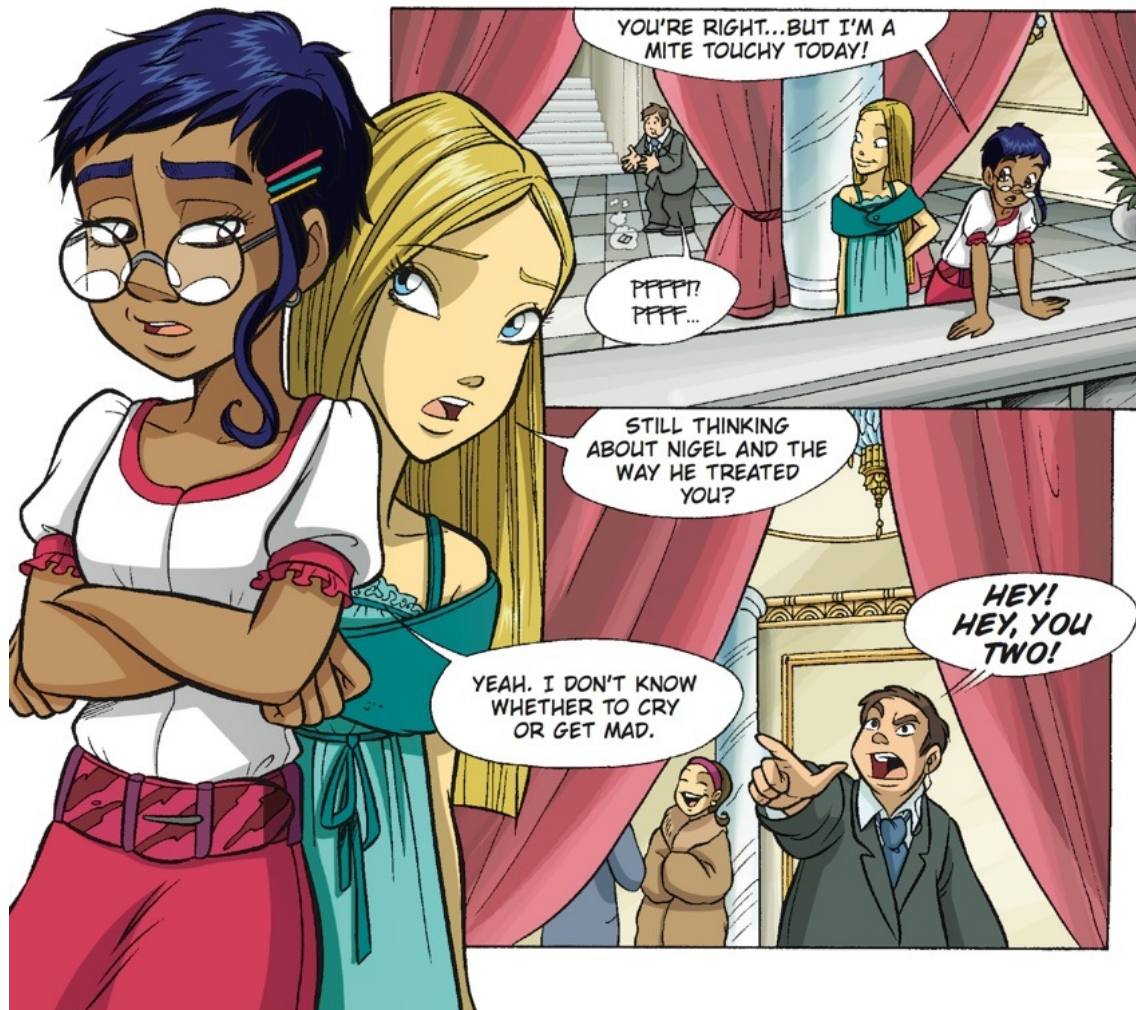
TOO MANY.
AND THEY'RE
COMING FOR US.

LET'S SPLIT UP
AND LEAD THEM
OUT BACK.

OKAY!

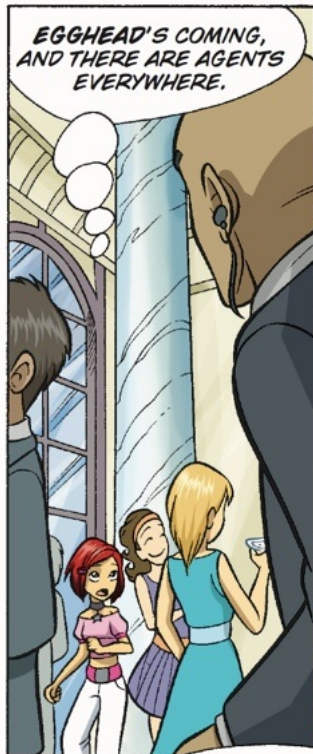








I GOT MYSELF TRAPPED!



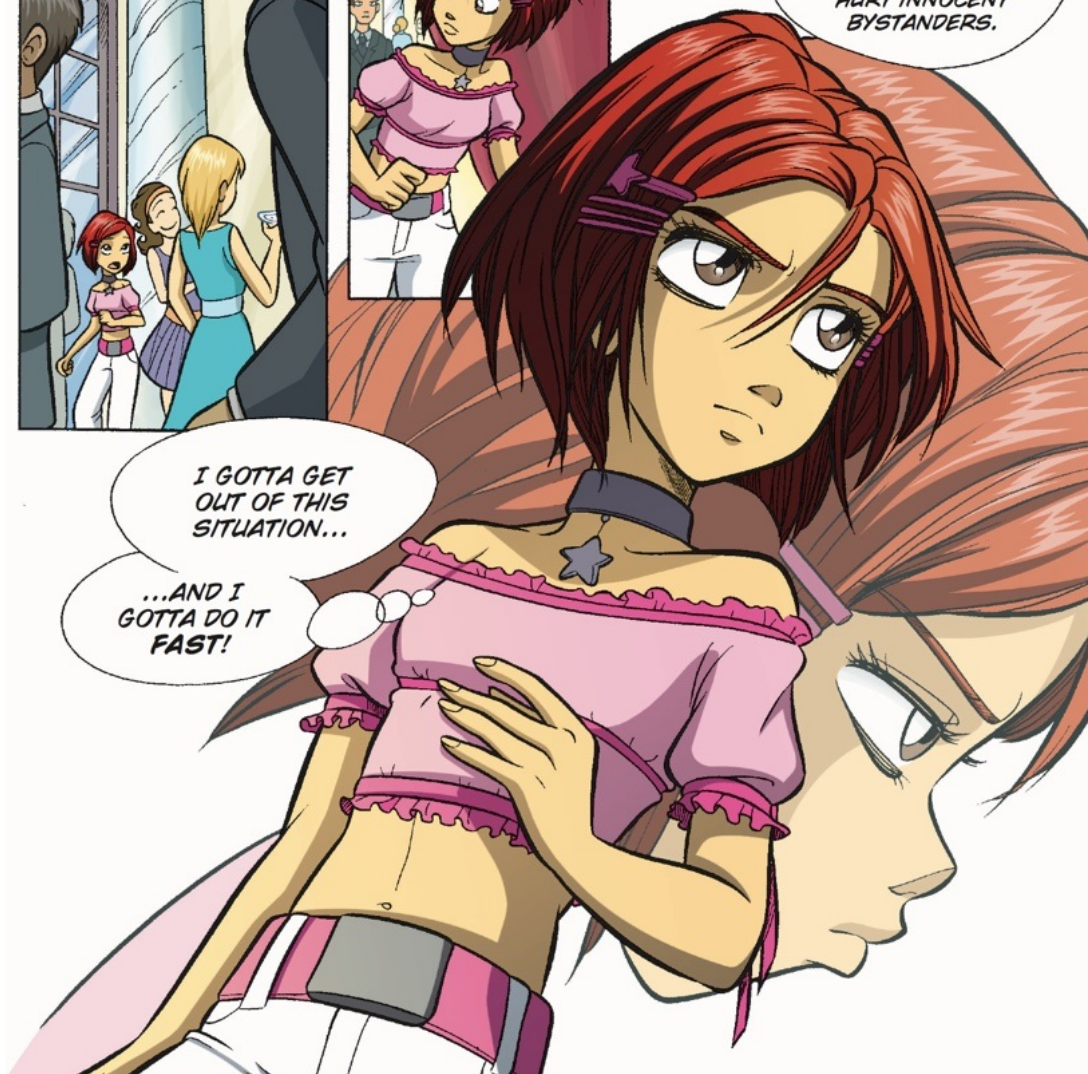
EGGHEAD'S COMING, AND THERE ARE AGENTS EVERYWHERE.



I CAN'T TURN INVISIBLE...SOMEONE WOULD NOTICE ME! I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM!

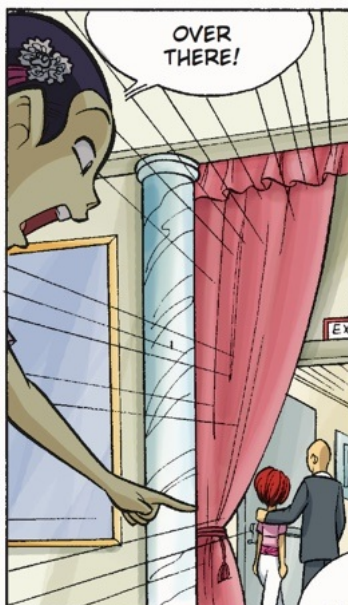


I CAN'T EVEN FIGHT THE AGENTS. I COULD HURT INNOCENT BYSTANDERS.



I GOTTA GET OUT OF THIS SITUATION...

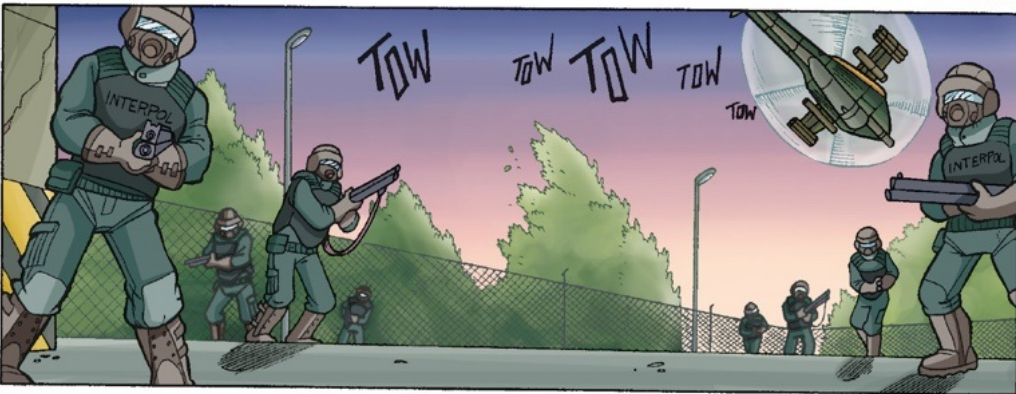
...AND I GOTTA DO IT FAST!



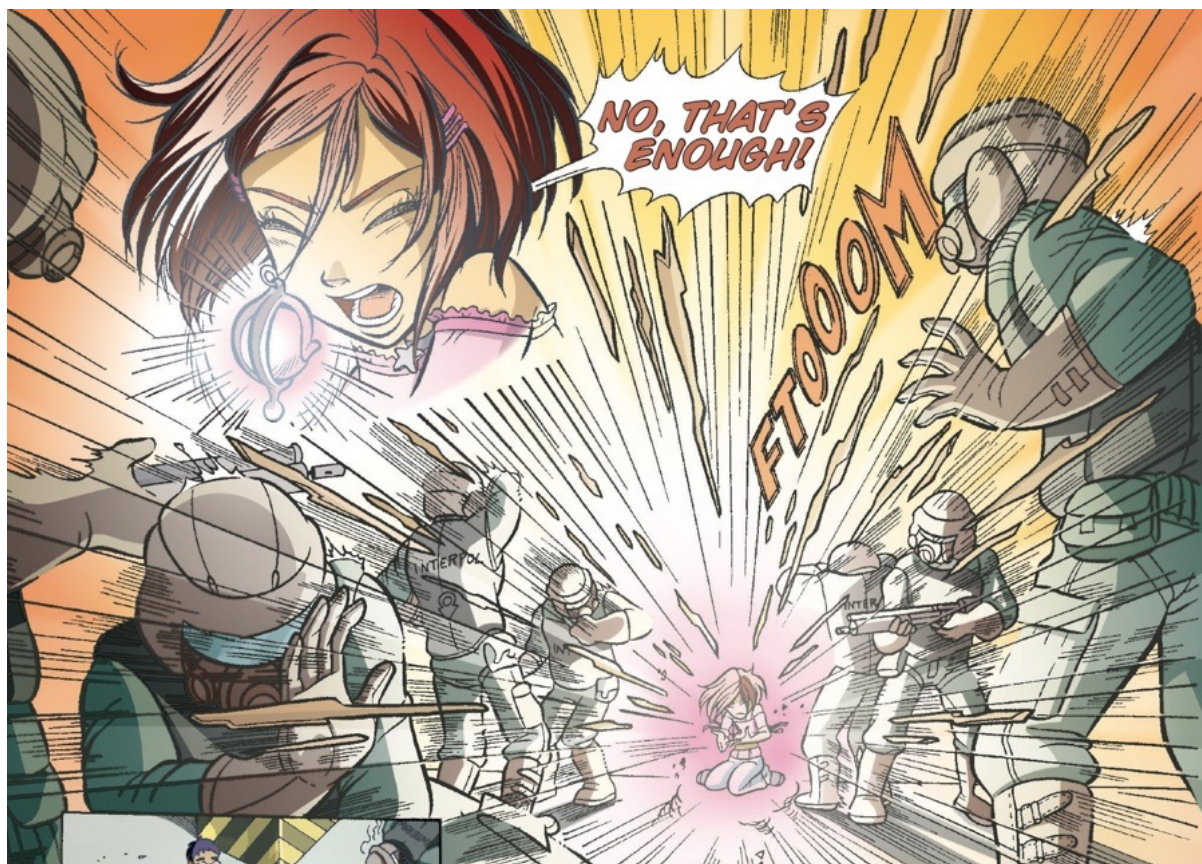




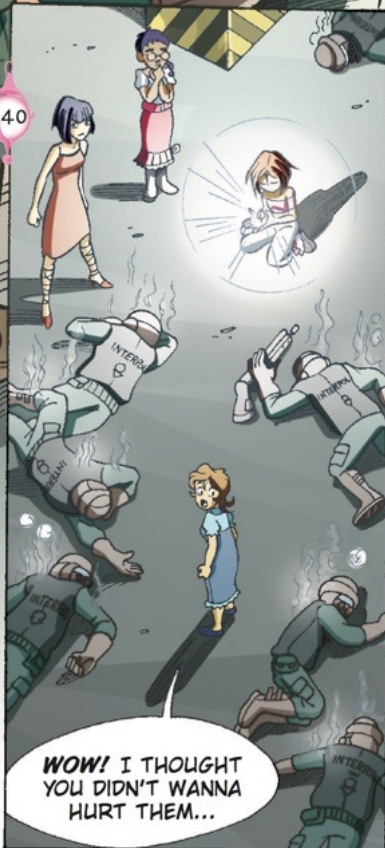








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I ASKED
THE HEART OF
KANDRAKAR TO
STUN THEM...
NOW WE'VE
GOT TO TAKE
CARE OF THE
CHOPPER.

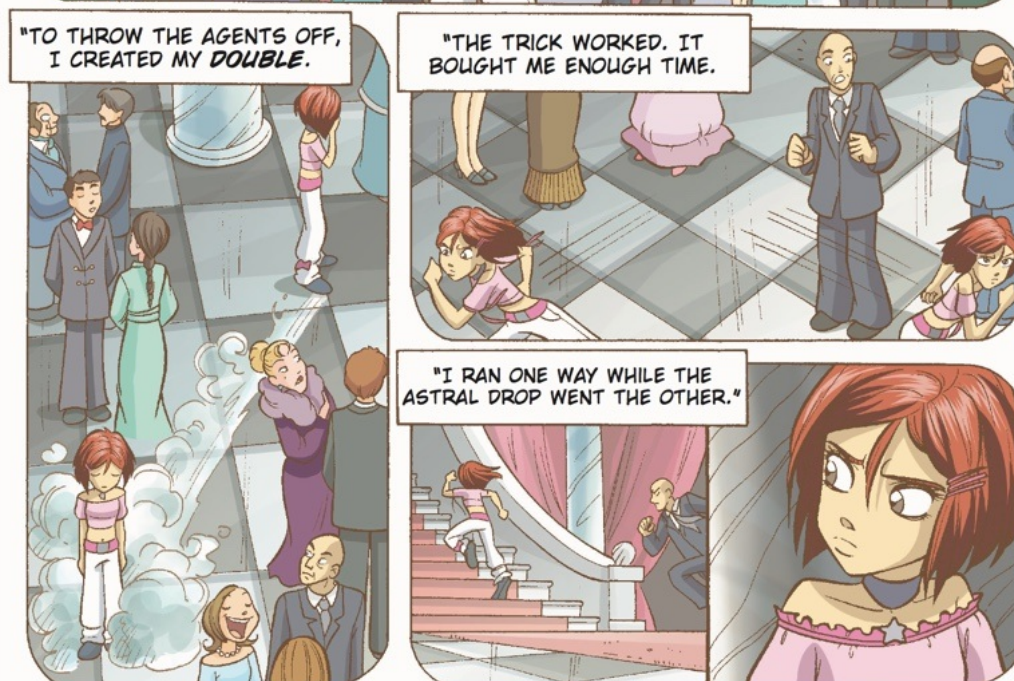
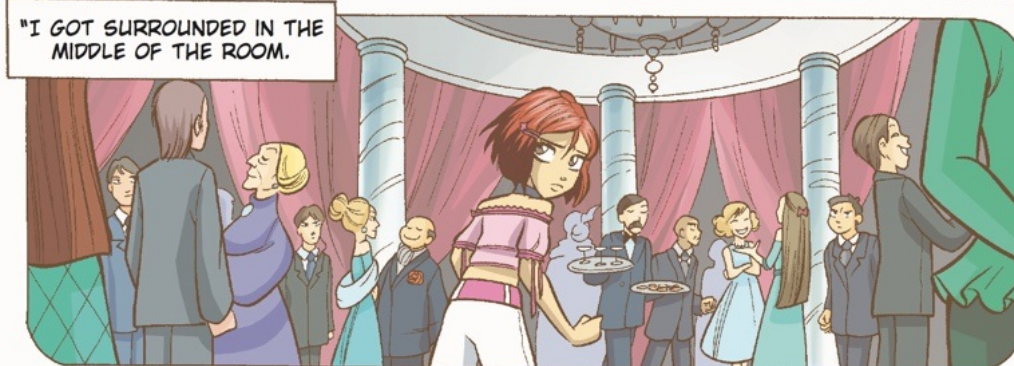
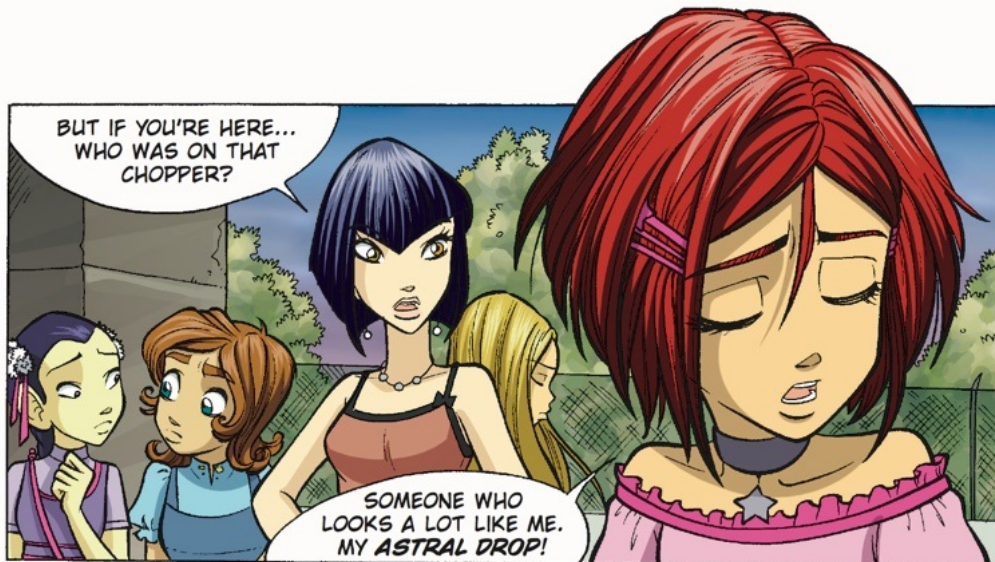


YOU CAN FLY, HAY LIN.
LET'S TRANSFORM.
MAYBE WE CAN STILL
STOP THEM. WE'LL
CATCH UP TO
THEM AND...



NO, WILL. IT'S GONE.
YOU KNOW THAT.







RIDDLE MUST HAVE
FOUND HER AND...
AND...

I DIDN'T KNOW HE HAD
MENTAL POWERS!

NONE
OF US DID.
DON'T BEAT
YOURSELF
UP.

BUT THOSE GUYS
WANTED TO CAPTURE US.
MAYBE EVEN STUDY US!
EXAMINE US!

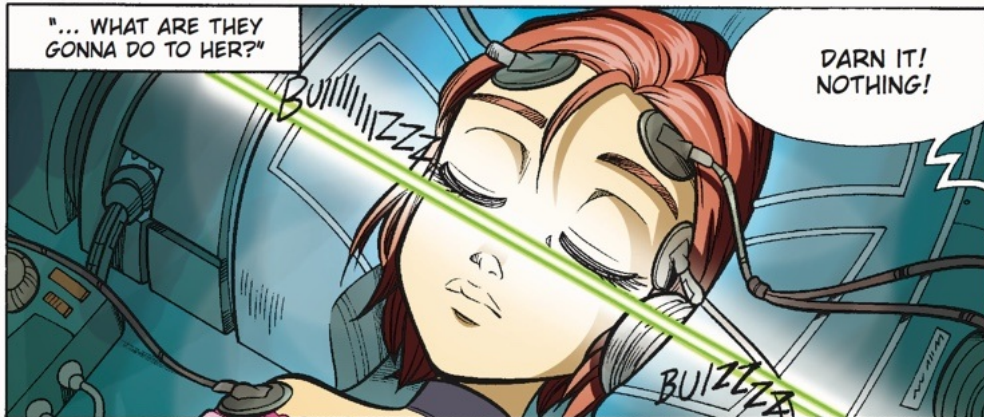
SO? OUR
ASTRAL DROPS
DON'T HAVE ANY
POWERS, SO
THEY WON'T FIND
ANYTHING.

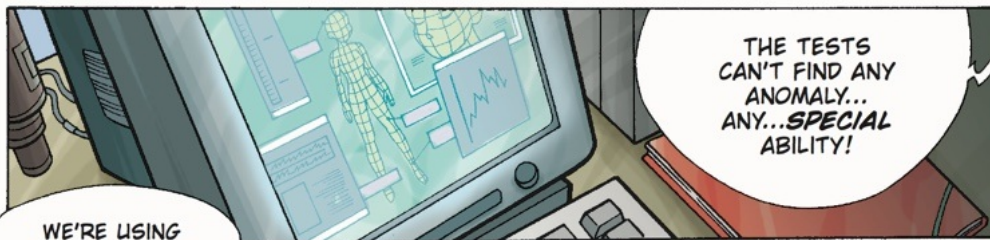
TRUE. WHEN THEY DISCOVER
SHE'S A **NORMAL GIRL**,
THEY'LL LET HER GO.

I HOPE SO. BUT
IN THE MEANTIME...

"... WHAT ARE THEY
GONNA DO TO HER?"

DARN IT!
NOTHING!





WE'RE USING THE WRONG METHODS. HER POWERS AREN'T NATURAL.

THE TESTS CAN'T FIND ANY ANOMALY... ANY... **SPECIAL ABILITY!**



HOW CAN YOU BE SO SURE?

BECAUSE I'VE SEEN THE **FIRE** IN THE EYES OF THAT GIRL, TARANEE. IT HAD SOMETHING... SOMETHING...

...**MAGICAL!**



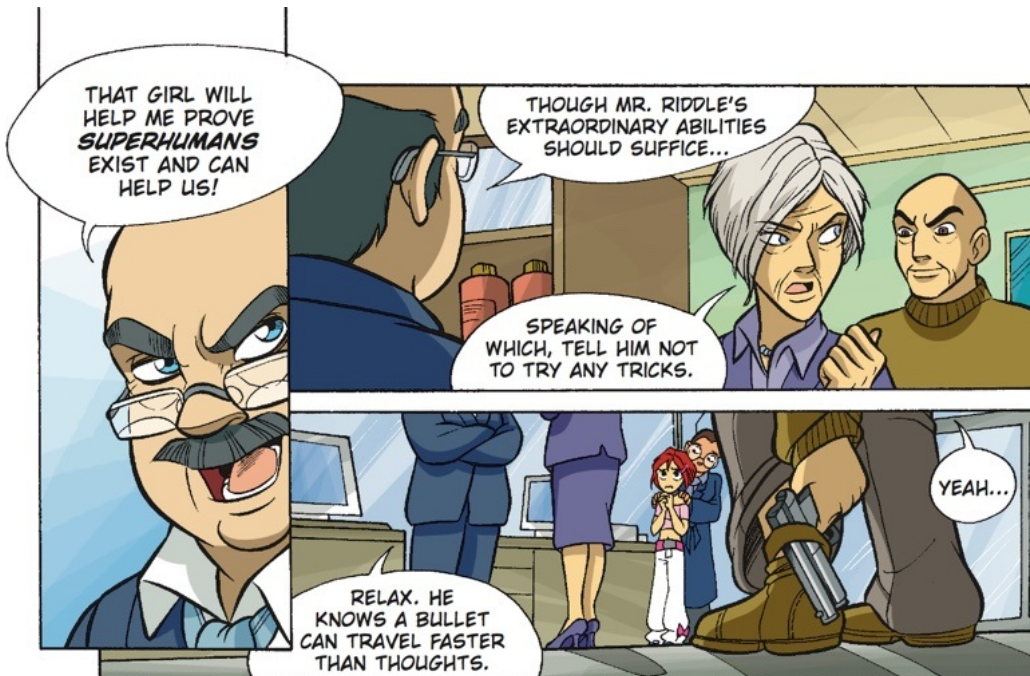
SYLLA! YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED HERE. HOW DID YOU GET IN?



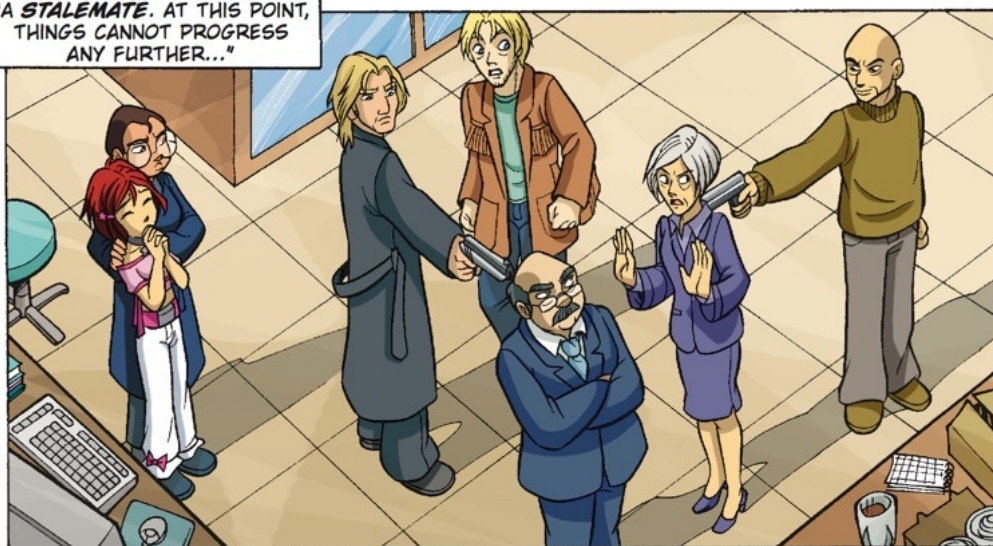
YOU FORGET. I'M ONE OF YOUR AGENTS, MR. BROOKE.

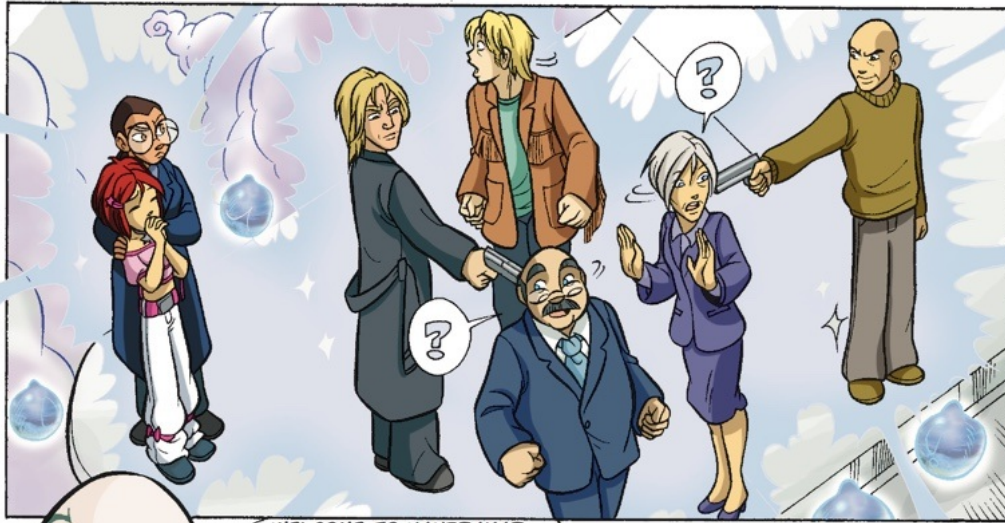
WELL, **EX-AGENT!**





"A **STALEMATE**. AT THIS POINT, THINGS CANNOT PROGRESS ANY FURTHER..."





WELCOME TO KANDRAKAR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. THIS IS THE ROOM OF NOTHINGNESS. YOU ARE NOT DREAMING...

...AND IN THIS PLACE OF PEACE AND HARMONY, *THOSE* ARE USELESS.

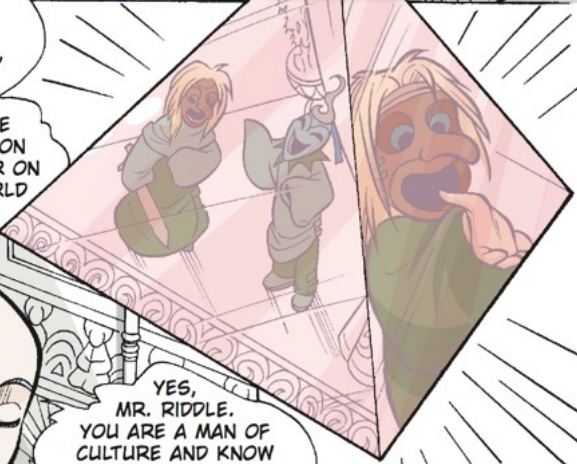


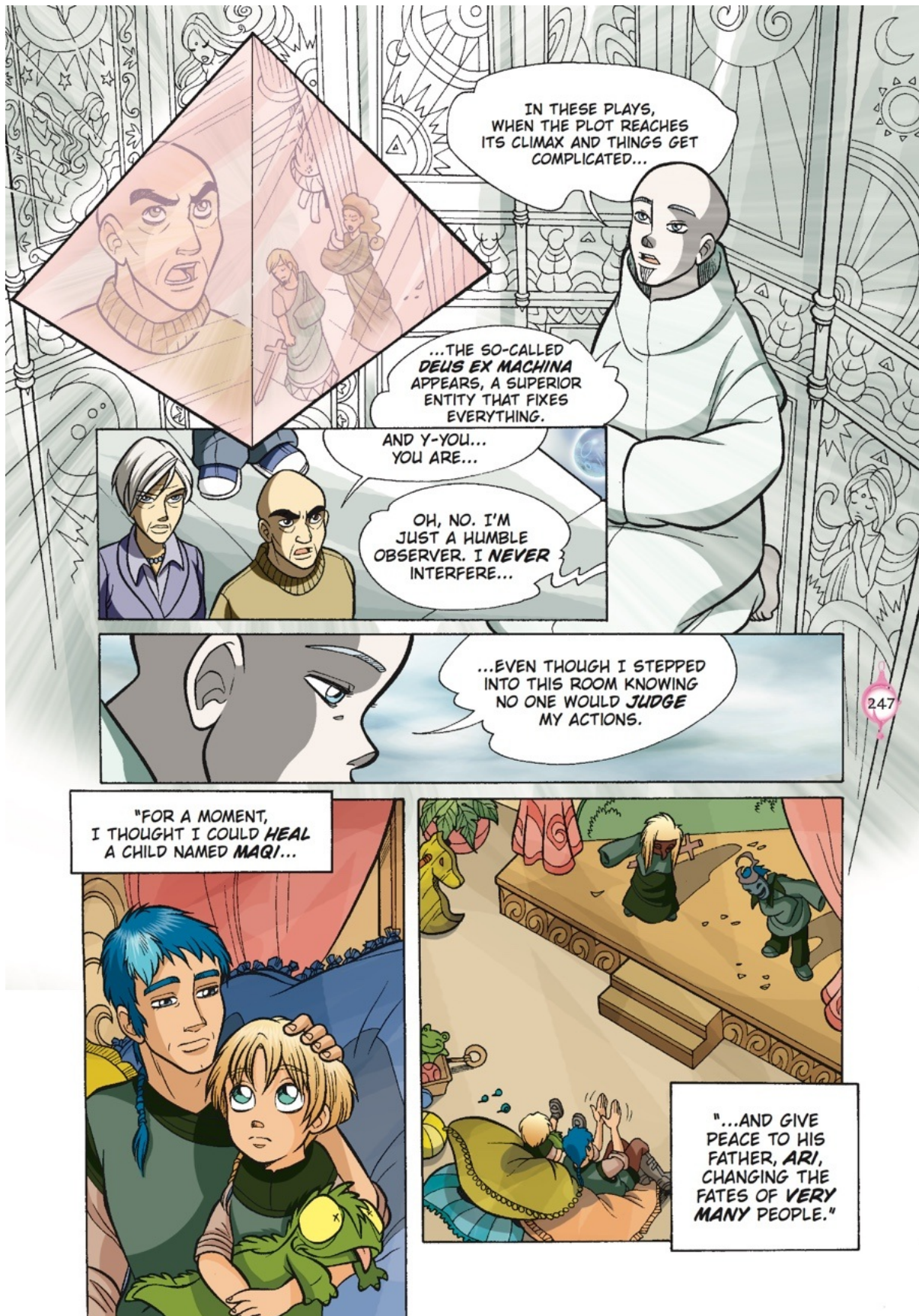
DON'T ASK TOO MANY QUESTIONS. OPEN YOUR MINDS, CALM YOUR SPIRITS, AND OBSERVE.

TWO PLAYS. ONE IS TAKING PLACE ON EARTH, THE OTHER ON THE DISTANT WORLD OF ARKHANTA.

TH-THAT'S...THE OPENING SHOW OF THE HEATHERFIELD AMPHITHEATER!

YES, MR. RIDDLE. YOU ARE A MAN OF CULTURE AND KNOW IT IS AN ANCIENT *GREEK TRAGEDY*.





IN THESE PLAYS,
WHEN THE PLOT REACHES
ITS CLIMAX AND THINGS GET
COMPLICATED...

...THE SO-CALLED
DEUS EX MACHINA
APPEARS, A SUPERIOR
ENTITY THAT FIXES
EVERYTHING.

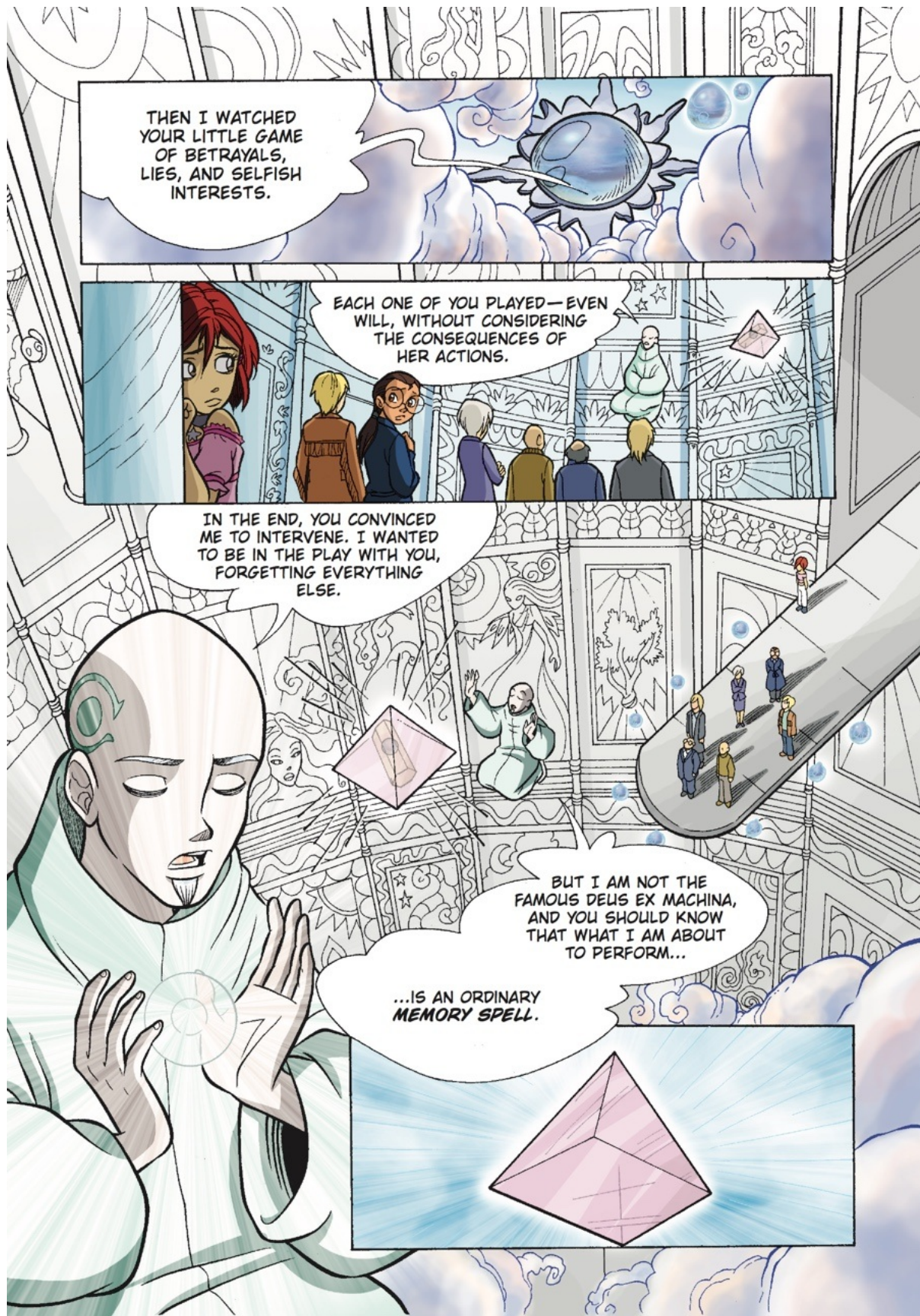
AND Y-YOU...
YOU ARE...

OH, NO. I'M
JUST A HUMBLE
OBSERVER. I **NEVER**
INTERFERE...

...EVEN THOUGH I STEPPED
INTO THIS ROOM KNOWING
NO ONE WOULD **JUDGE**
MY ACTIONS.

"FOR A MOMENT,
I THOUGHT I COULD **HEAL**
A CHILD NAMED **MAQI**...

"...AND GIVE
PEACE TO HIS
FATHER, **ARI**,
CHANGING THE
FATES OF **VERY**
MANY PEOPLE."



THEN I WATCHED
YOUR LITTLE GAME
OF BETRAYALS,
LIES, AND SELFISH
INTERESTS.

EACH ONE OF YOU PLAYED—EVEN
WILL, WITHOUT CONSIDERING
THE CONSEQUENCES OF
HER ACTIONS.

IN THE END, YOU CONVINCED
ME TO INTERVENE. I WANTED
TO BE IN THE PLAY WITH YOU,
FORGETTING EVERYTHING
ELSE.

BUT I AM NOT THE
FAMOUS DEUS EX MACHINA,
AND YOU SHOULD KNOW
THAT WHAT I AM ABOUT
TO PERFORM...

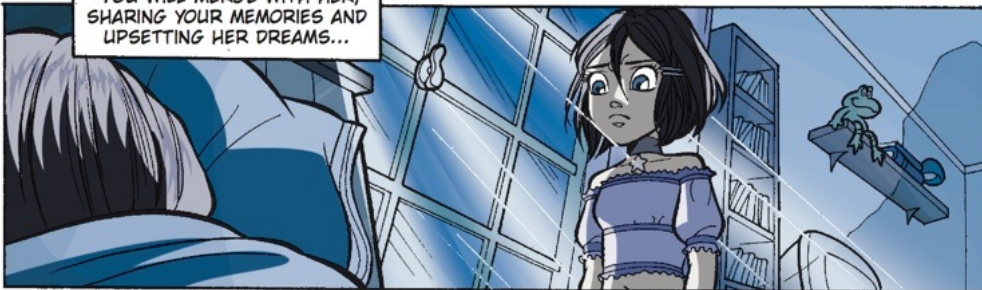
...IS AN ORDINARY
MEMORY SPELL.



"YOU WILL REAPPEAR IN
WILL'S ROOM. SHE IS
ALREADY ASLEEP."



"YOU WILL MERGE WITH HER,
SHARING YOUR MEMORIES AND
UPSETTING HER DREAMS..."



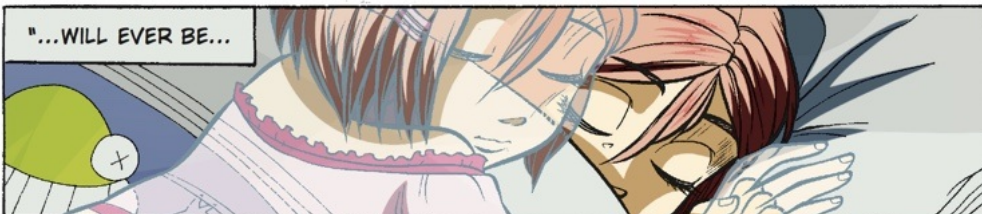
"...AND HER
CONSCIENCE!"



"NOTHING, EITHER FOR
YOU OR FOR HER..."



"...WILL EVER BE..."



"...THE SAME."



THE END



Read on in Volume 9!



Maqi

Ari's Son

Ten years old, Maqi is the only child of Ari, Lord of Arkhanta, and his wife, Jamayedra, who passed away during childbirth. Quiet and distant, Maqi is a special boy who keeps to himself and lives in his own little world, detached from everything else.

Drawing

Maqi loves to draw. In his pictures, he shows his private universe and reveals his feelings. Maqi doesn't laugh or cry, but he's not absent. He pays a lot of attention to details and can spot things other people don't notice.

The Dream

The bond between Maqi and his father is strong, made of silence and a lot of love. His child's happiness is the Lord of Arkhanta's sole purpose in life — a dream that, thus far, has yet to become a reality.



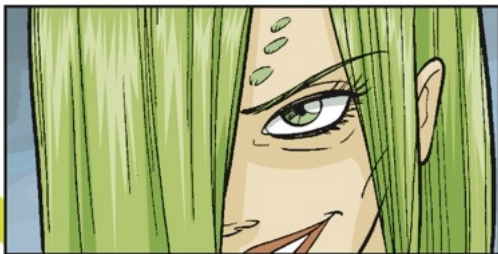


Yua



The Legend

They say legends always have a kernel of truth, and Yua is living proof of that. The banshee embodies the myth of the evil spirit chained and forced to make wishes come true. Feared and hated, her origins are lost in the mists of Arkhanta's history. Before being imprisoned by Ari, Yua lived in the swamps, a desolate place that might swallow anyone who dares venture there forever.



The Banshees

The banshees are evil creatures who enjoy playing with men and use their charm to lure their prey into deadly traps. Looks can be deceiving, and behind their almost elegant appearance, the banshees hide claws and terrible powers. The bond between an imprisoned banshee and her master can be broken only by the latter. That's why no one but Ari can ever set Yua free.



Will's Secret World

1 The wardrobe door tells us about Will. There are photos from the past year.

2 A photo she nicked from Corny: blackmail ammunition. Better not to mention who she's hugging (aside from Hay Lin)!

3 Padded vest. A present from Mr. Collins, who's also her mom's boyfriend! Go figure!

4 The only skirt she bought in the last three years. She made her mom happy—and hopefully Matt too!

5 Photo album. It contains the photos she took off the door (see #1).

6 That's where Auntie Rina's frog ended up! It smells of mothballs, just like her, and Will hates it. (The smell, of course!)

7 A souvenir from Camp Cormoran. What a nightmare of a vacation!





- 8 Swimming corner. Her towel for the pool and a pair of goggles.
- 9 Will has just two dresses. This is the only one she loves. She wore it for Halloween (when she saw Matt and Cobalt Blue playing for the first time).
- 10 Will's favorite bikini bottom. It's from Pixel City.
- 11 Will calls them "fancy boots" because they're pretty colorful. We all know she likes darker tones.
- 12 These boots are awesome. They make her feel like she's got wings...on her feet! For a real W.I.T.C.H. girl!
- 13 The maxi-scarf Taranee gave her—warm and colorful, just like their friendship!



Part III. A Crisis on Both Worlds • Volume 2



Series Created by Elisabetta Gnone
Comic Art Direction: Alessandro Barbucci, Barbara Canepa

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