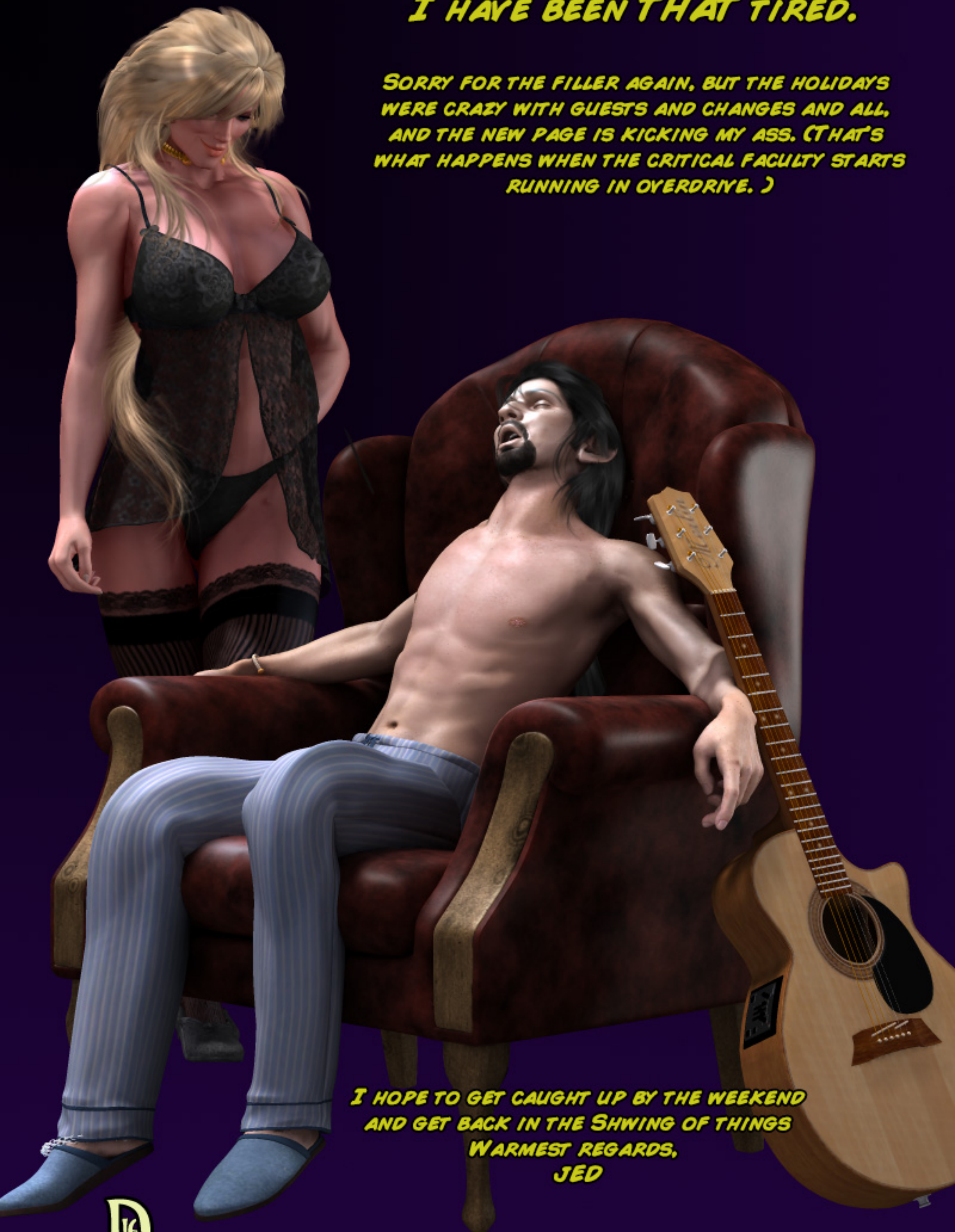


**YES.
I HAVE BEEN THAT TIRED.**

**SORRY FOR THE FILLER AGAIN, BUT THE HOLIDAYS
WERE CRAZY WITH GUESTS AND CHANGES AND ALL,
AND THE NEW PAGE IS KICKING MY ASS. (THAT'S
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE CRITICAL FACULTY STARTS
RUNNING IN OVERDRIVE.)**

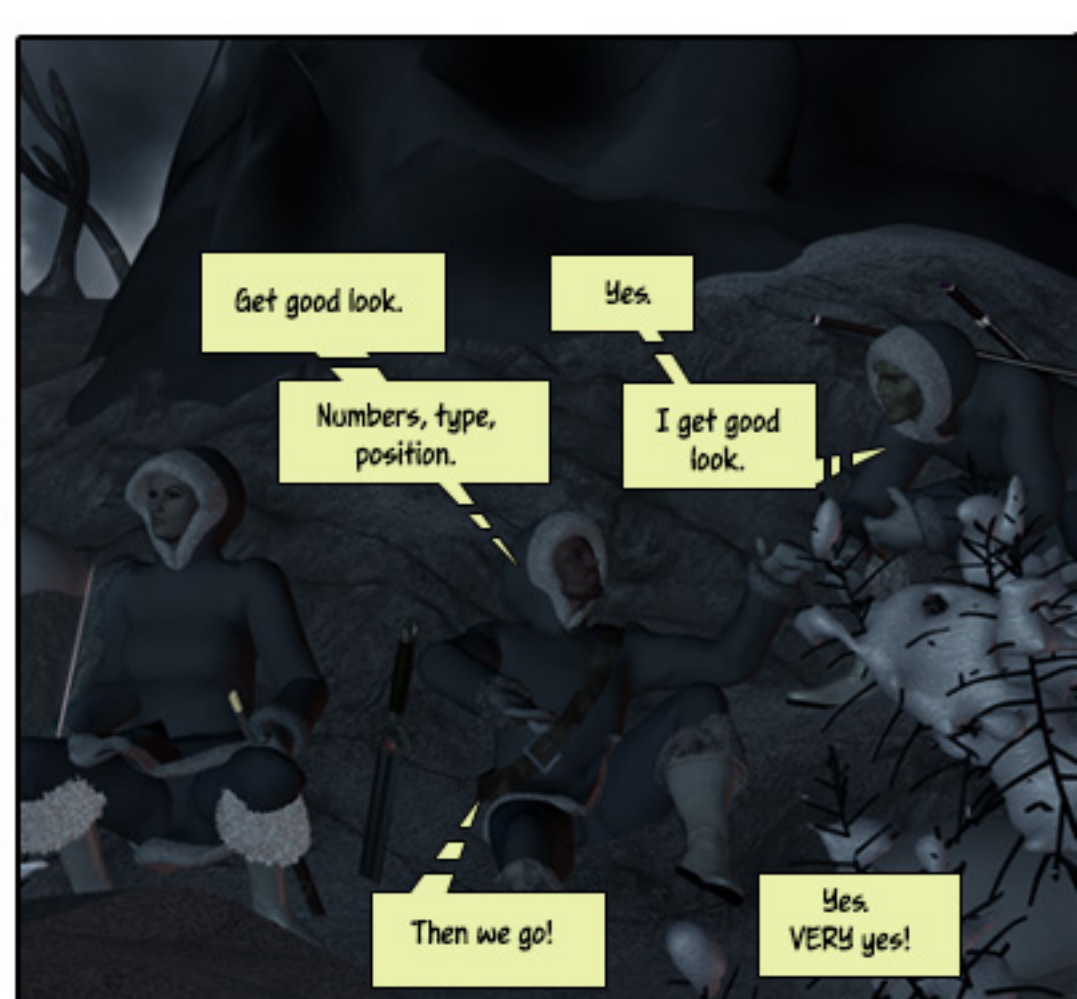


**I HOPE TO GET CAUGHT UP BY THE WEEKEND
AND GET BACK IN THE SHWING OF THINGS
WARMEST REGARDS,
JED**





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Get good look.

Yes.

Numbers, type,
position.

I get good
look.

Then we go!

Yes.
VERY yes!



What?!

"SOMETIMES EVIL FINDS A SHAPE PURELY OUT OF LOVE OF SPREADING HORROR" - GAMLIN OF DELL



Look.
Everyone.



Merciful God ...



Nice van. What, is it a '72?

I, uh, I don't know.

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Oh yeah. Takes me back. I had a religious experience with a pair of Pan Am stewardesses in a Dodge Van like this back in '76 at Pismo Beach.

They still have nice camping there.

Yeah, I ... I know.

Red hair, both of them. Irish girls. Aaaaaazing what they could do together and separately.



See, kiddo? Lifelong weakness for redheads.



And afterlife weakness as well, apparently.

AND IT ONLY GETS WEIRDER FROM HERE.



Ha! Yeah.

Oh, God, those girls had NO inhibitions once the doors were locked. They were absolutely firm on no pictures, though. Not that I blamed 'em, mind you. Like Gene Simmons - what an asshole. I mean, not everybody wants to be a polaroid on the wall of shame ...

We don't look at sex as a game with winners and losers and points, Vito.

Well, yeah, right?



Ah, look. Are you going to be talking ... to ... yourselves like this the whole trip?

'Fraid so, boychik.



Yes, Mentl.
I am sorry if it's a little
uncomfortable for you.

Really, though,
you're so cute, sometimes.
As much as you know about us,
having been with us for months
in Erogenia and now here, but
talking about sex out loud
still seems to embarrass
you.



He's American, what
do you expect? We have the most
fucked-up schizoid culture about
sex on the planet.

Well, I
think he's
sweet.

And I'm just
trying not to be too ...
blown mind ... about this.
It is disturbing, you
have to admit.

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I know.
But I'm fine,
I'm all here.

Not to mention that
Vito's presence seems to be helping
me adapt. I'm thinking clearly.

I can
distinguish the magick energy
from the microwaves, satellites
and cell signals, now.

This world is ...
I'm more in tune
with it now.



Happy to help.
Besides, it's just 'til we get
to Carlos' shack.

Where's that?

The center of the universe.

"I'LL EXPLAIN LATER." - THE DOCTOR



Uh ...

What?



Well, one of the centers of the universe,, anyway.

"One of" them? How can there be more than one center of anything?

Well, there's more than one Guitar Center, isn't there?

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Vito, stop.

Yes, there's more than one center because there really is no center.

Huh?



Babe, universes are being created all the time, like foam on the top of a beer. They expand like a bubble, touching each other at points, forming weak areas, affecting each other in subtle ways - which is how we got here, basically.

Anyway the universe you're from, and the one we're in now that I'm from - they all come from a point where everything is together at one infinitely small place.

When they expand, that point just gets bigger - but there's no center - not like we understand it. It all stays the same universe and the structure just gets bigger - but it's all still the center, in that sense.

I -- wha --

Okay - think of a balloon, and I have a sharpie -

Huh?!

"WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS TO SPREAD CONFUSION, NOT ELIMINATE IT." - SALVADOR DALI



What we're really talking about, as far as "center" is concerned is the center of our universe of actions and decisions coming together with the center of the actions, decisions and histories of the entities who are all trying to break the barriers to both universes.

What does that have to do with balloons and sharpies?



Well, it's about the physical universe with all its histories expanding and intersecting with -

You know what? Just forget it for now.

We're going to this shack. That I get. What happens there?

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That's a weak point between universes. We all need to be there to keep Big Bad from actually coming through in person.

And then we kill him?

If only. Nope, best we can hope is make sure that the door gets shut in his face.

And we can do that? Menti can do that?



Ummm ... well, we just have to be there. Can't say more than that

With two entire worlds at stake, you still can't say anything?!

There's rules. Sorry.

Look, The only reason I can sit here in your van and drive to the shack in the first place is because the dimensions are shifting, huge multiversal reversed wave function collapses are happening, all centered, at least for the moment, around Earth and Teria.



I ...

Did not understand any of that.

"I SHALL TAKE THE HEART. FOR BRAINS DO NOT MAKE ONE HAPPY. ..."



It -

My love.

Just for the moment, let us not pretend that I am going to understand your cosmic gobbledegook.

Just tell me: Am I going to get something to hit?



That, dear sister -

Is pretty much guaranteed.

Far to the east of the Urit River, across the mountains and in the desert.
once called simply "Iesta," or "Eastern" Desert. Now called "Thurut:"

"Death."



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<Very near, now.
Dost thou feel it, Priest
Gorshash?>

<I do, Master.
It is ... familiar. But
also strange.>



<Ah, and in the time to come
t shall be oh, so familiar to thee,
Priest Gorshash. >

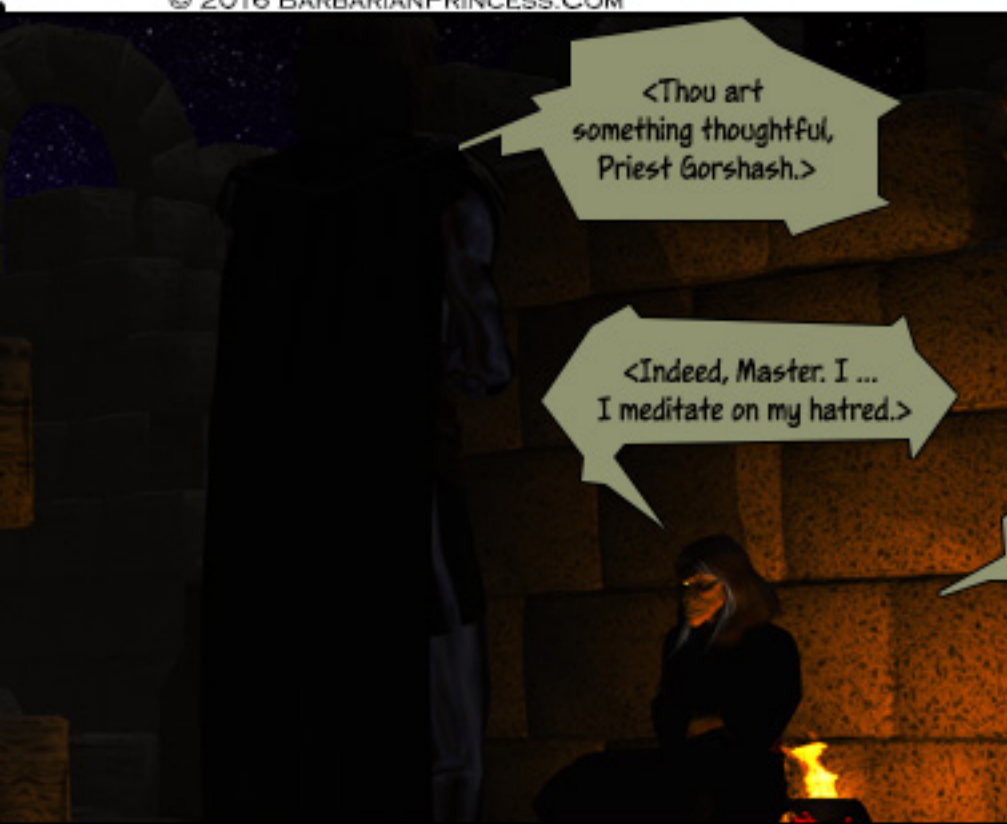


< One night
yet more, and
we shall have
reached our
goal. >

AND IS THAT GOING TO BE A GOOD THING OR A BAD THING?



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<Thou art something thoughtful, Priest Gorshash.>

<Indeed, Master. I ... I meditate on my hatred.>



<Excellent. Thou hast said it is perfect. >

<Yes, Master, at least after my own poor understanding.>

<And thou hast described it as being for knowing that thee and thy kind are our creatures, yes?>

HATRED IS GAINED AS MUCH BY GOOD WORKS AS BY EVIL.



<Yes, Master.>



<That would make a very great hatred indeed, my son, but not a perfect one.>

<For that -- for that, I know requires blood. It requires something very ... personal. >



<You say truth, Master..
Long ago, it was, and very ...
personal.>

<You have been
spared and brought you here
to carry a message that this war is now ended.
We will release you to say thus to
Owner Of All Owners:>

<Ipola Queen and Kendrik King,
who speak for all the kings and queens
and all the people of Erogenia and Kivalia, say
the war is now ended with the Urts if only
you will live as you like on the East
side of the River Yuritt.
Only on the East side, forever. >



WELL, IT WAS FUN WHILE IT LASTED.



<Why ...
do you say the war
is over?>

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<It is enough for you
that we say it. >

<It is true, so long as
you live only on the eastern side of the river
as you have since the Great Fall, and
do not cross it again for
any reason. >



<Owner Of All Owners
does not think so.>

<Owner Ganthakk ...
I think that it is not wise
at this ti ->



<SILENCE!

Novice Gorshash!
Speak only when Owner
says you may speak!>

CHUFF!

WELL, IT'S ALWAYS THE SAME, THEY NEVER LISTEN TO ME ...



<Yes,
Owner.>

< Owner Of All Owners
thinks that you of Erozenia
and Kivalia are *weak* and *tired*,
and that is why you want to
stop the war.>



<Oh -

Is
that what he
thinks?>



<Yes.
So, if you wish no more
killing from the Urtts,
then hear what we
demand of you - >



HAAA-HAHAAH!!!

<You make demands?
You?!>

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<You have hunted
our people, enslaved our children,
and you will make demands? >

<You turn us
into chattel and food
for your table and you will
make demands? >



<You have preyed
on our kind and destroyed our
families for a hundred suffering
generations and you make
DEMANDS?!>

YET ANOTHER GUY WHO'LL NEVER GET AHEAD.



PAIO!!

KRACK!!



<Who - YOU- >

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ΡΑΙΟ ΔΑΝ.

SNAP!



IT'S GOOD TO SHUT UP, SOMETIMES. - MARCEL MARCEAU



Now, then -

<Do you
have anything
to say?>



<N-no ...>



<Are you quite sure? No question?
No comment about how weak and
tired we are?>

<No, Ipola Queen. >



<No demands?>



<NO!>

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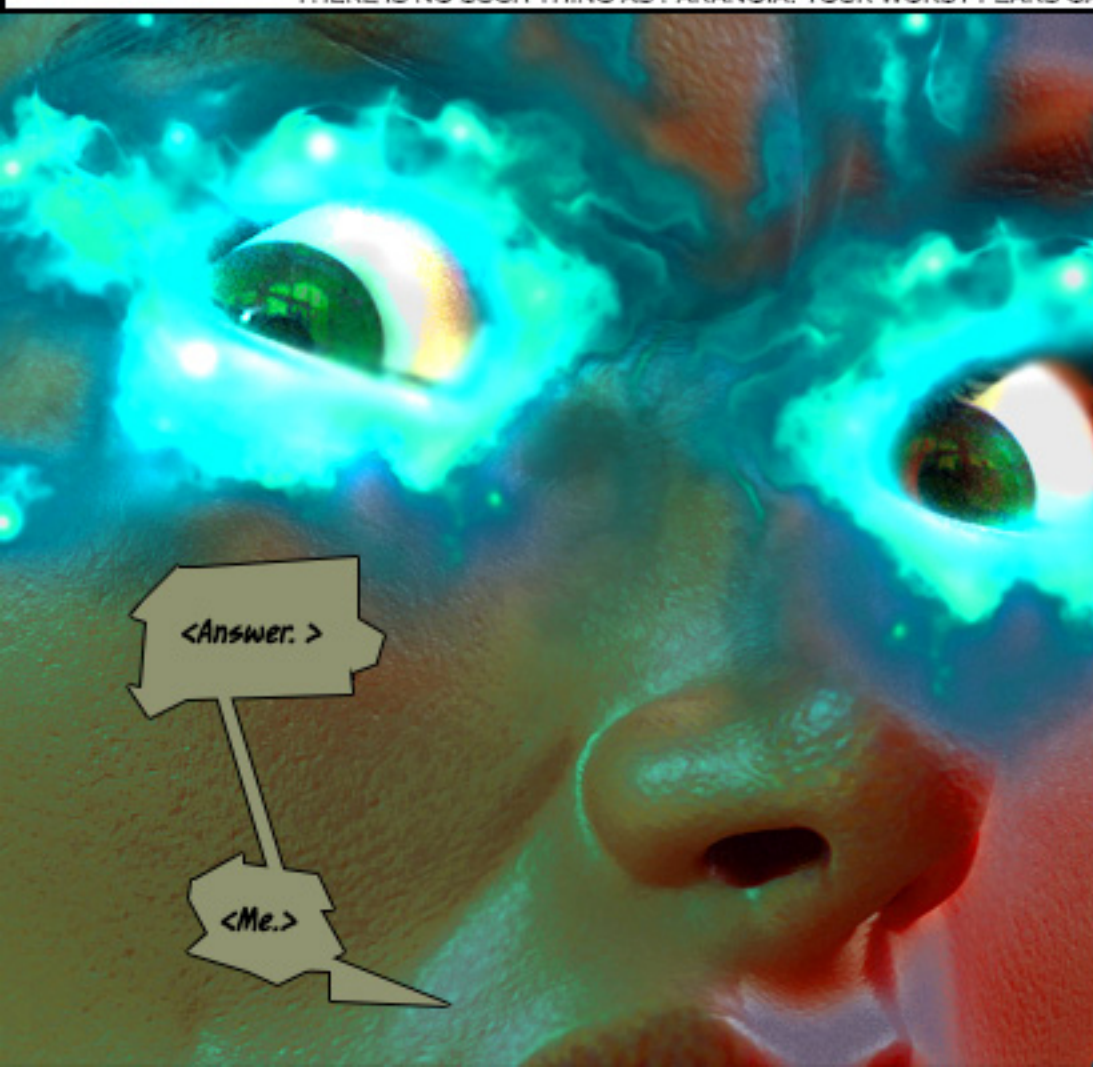
<Is that fear
I see in your eye, Urtt?
Is it?>

< At last?
At long last? >



...

"THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS PARANOIA. YOUR WORST FEARS CAN COME TRUE AT ANY MOMENT." - H. S. THOMPSON



<Answer. >

<Me.>



<Yes. Yes ... I ...

I fear
Ipola Queen.>

<I think perhaps
you do not fear enough.>

Now take heed: This is NOT a NEGOTIATION!
You make NO demands. You have NO say.
We have destroyed your hunters and war beasts
and machines. We have annihilated your armies
and taken back our land. >

<We have broken your power
here and shown you what awaits you
on our side of the river.>

<For now, this is enough for us.
Live on your side of the river. Keep *only*
what you have. Any Urtht we see on our
side of the river will be killed on sight.
Any raiding party will be sent back
as blackened bones. >

<And if your nation ever *dares*
to make war on us again or tries
to take one *finger* of land on
the west side of the river as
your own, we will come down on you
in fire and thunder and we will kill
EVERY Urtht! >

<Every single
Urtht wherever they are in all the world!
We will make it as though you had *never been*.
Just as I did now to these fools so will I do
again and again to all of you until there is
NOTHING LEFT!>

**<TELL
THAT
TO OWNER OF
ALL
OWNERS! >**

<And on the riverbank they found me the next day. My body seemingly protected from harm by spells, yet unable to speak any words but the ones that came from Ipola Queen until I spoke them to Owner Of Owners. >

< So I brought my fear - my bottomless fear - to all the Urtt nation, >

<... and humiliation was complete, for both Gorshash and all Urtts. >

<Complete subjugation - complete pain and humiliation. How *marvellous*! What a creature must this Moon Queen be. I long to meet her myself. >

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U MAD, BRO?

< And so, to satisfy this perfect hatred, thou wishest to requite thy pain and humiliation suffered at her hands.>

<Yes.>

<To kill her slowly after much deliberation.>

<YES, Maszter>





<... it is why I have sometimes acted too cautiously against the Erogenians. To know them, know their weaknesses, their wants and desires, their way of thinking. >

<How else could I hurt them perfectly? >

<When the spawn of the Moon queen was in my hands, I ... I was foolish and did not reckon her strength properly. >



<In the fullness of time, if it be Shuach's will, I shall know all the ways to hurt them as they have me. >



<I shall take all their power, all that they own and desire, all that they cling to - >

<- and only when all they know is pain and fear, then shall they beg for death! *Only then!* >

WHEN THE PAIN COMES, YOU KNOW WHAT I DO? I SMILE. - C. MCCORMACK



<Very ... very good, indeed. Use the hate well, my son. Let it empower thee, but never let it blind thee as it did at first. >



<Also, do not too much regret thy mistakes. For thy failures are filled with pain - and all pain is a *delight* unto God, even as it is an instruction to thee. >



<Here it is.>

<What will
be found here, Master?>

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"IT TAKES ALL SORTS OF PEOPLE TO MAKE THE UNDERWORLD." - DON MARCUS



<Thou art more canny
than that, Owner Of All Owners Gorshash.
Already I deem thou hast guessed
what it is we seek.>

<That which has slept long -
longer e'en than I myself slept. And as I
returned, so indeed now is
the time -- >



<See how She
stirs in in Her sleep at our approach!
The time of awakening
is at hand. >

THUNDER



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THE ONLY THING WRONG WITH IMMORTALITY IS THAT IT TENDS TO GO ON FOREVER.



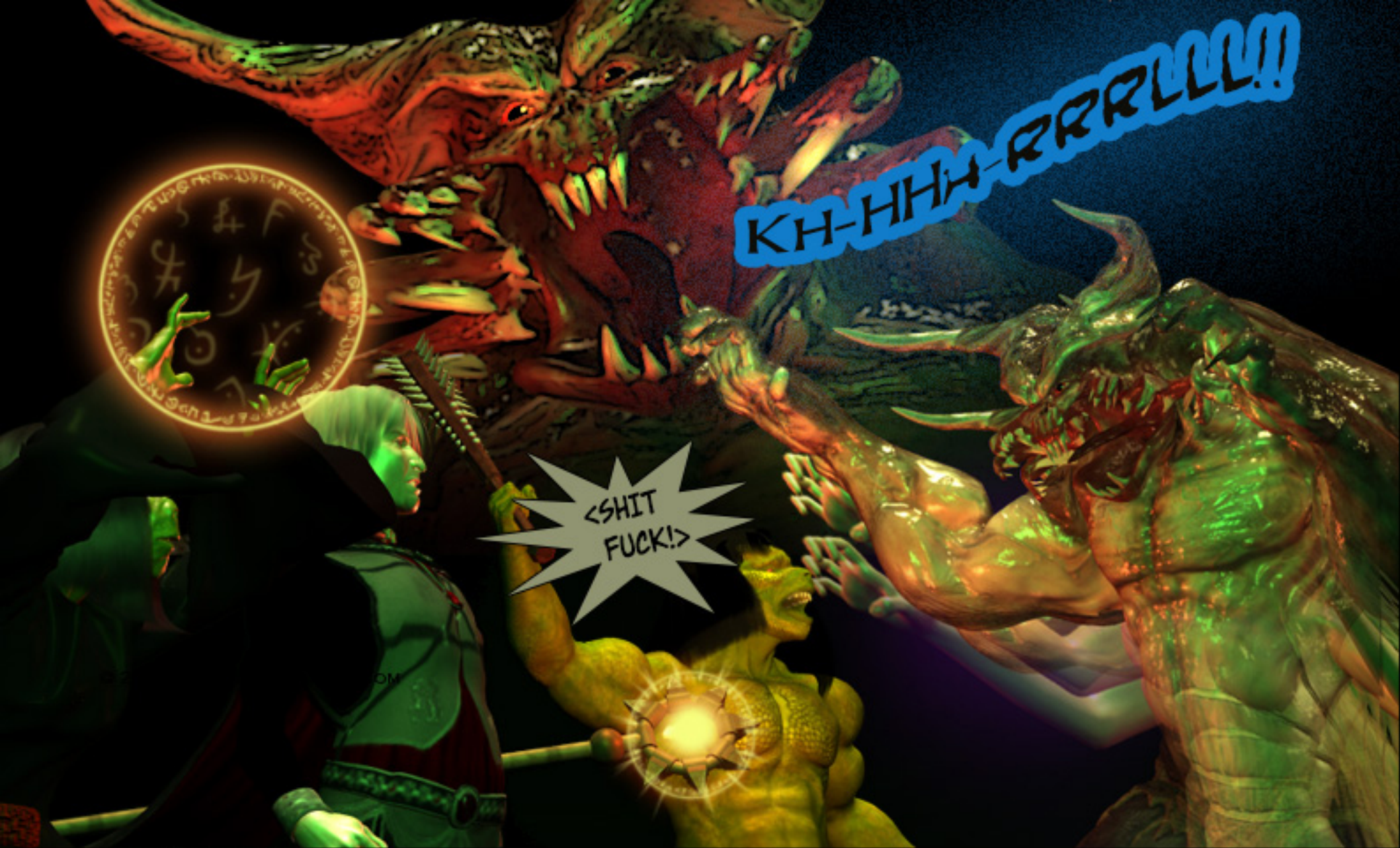


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"IF YOU CANNOT GET RID OF THE FAMILY SKELETON, YOU MAY AS WELL MAKE IT DANCE." - G.B. SHAW





KH-HHH-RRRLLL!!

<SHIT
FUCK!>

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AAAAGGGHH!!



KAN!



GRRRAHH!!

KAN,
KEDORA!,
DUJAN!



NGNNN ...

<Ahhh, Kedora, my sweet.
How amusing to see you again. >



<O Kedora, my one, my dear..
After all this timeless time. >

<I never dreamed
that our experiments on you
would succeed at all, much less
yield this manner of
immortality. >

<- and yet here you are,
after thousands of years, still guarding
the entrance, like a faithful hound. >

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<What have the long
centuries done to you - eh?>

<Clothing yourself
in empty memories?
Is that all the magic
you have left? >



<Pitiful. >

<What part
of your mind remains?
What madness gives your
tormented existence
meaning?>

< Have you now,
at long last, learned the meaning
of hatred? >

" THE HOTTEST LOVE HAS THE COLDEST END." - SOCRATES



<How cruel I was, after all,
to doom you to this..>

<But then you
made that fatal mistake,
didn't you, of falling in love
with me..>

<Childish fool!>



<And now you
know how perverse love truly is.
How God despises it above all other
abominations in the
universe.>

<You see now how
He punishes it!>



<O, you are so very, very hungry and thirsty, aren't you, after all this time in a dry empty cave? >

Nnnkhhraaaa ...

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< Very well. You may have your kill. But no more. >

Gnra ... Gnra ...



< After today there will no longer be a need for you, Kedora, my sweet. If you are a good dog and guard our back, I will end your life for you.>

<Would you like that?>

"HUNGER KNOWS NO FRIEND BUT ITS FEEDER" . ARISTOPHANES



GAH!



<I thought you might.>

EHNNE POR
BANACH NI CHORG!

EHNE!!

DARAK SHUACHIR



INARA RU
URR-THRACHANIM!





DESHNA YESHTA
URR HTHRACHAN DE
FHORG!

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FORGHU
UN, URR
THRACHAN!!!



FORGHU!!

RRRRUMMBLLEE



YES, SHE'S A DRAGON. YOU'RE VERY SMART. NOW SHUT UP.



-See!
See how she rises, my son!
Is she not even more magnificent than your
old scrolls could tell?>

<The sheer
power ... the ...
Master... >



<Master!
How .. how can we hope to make
such a one serve us?>

<Serve us?
Nay she will not. She is far above service
to the likes of thee or I, Owner Of Owners Gorshash.
Nay, she and her children will not
serve us. But -

<THEY WILL SERVE
GOD!!!>



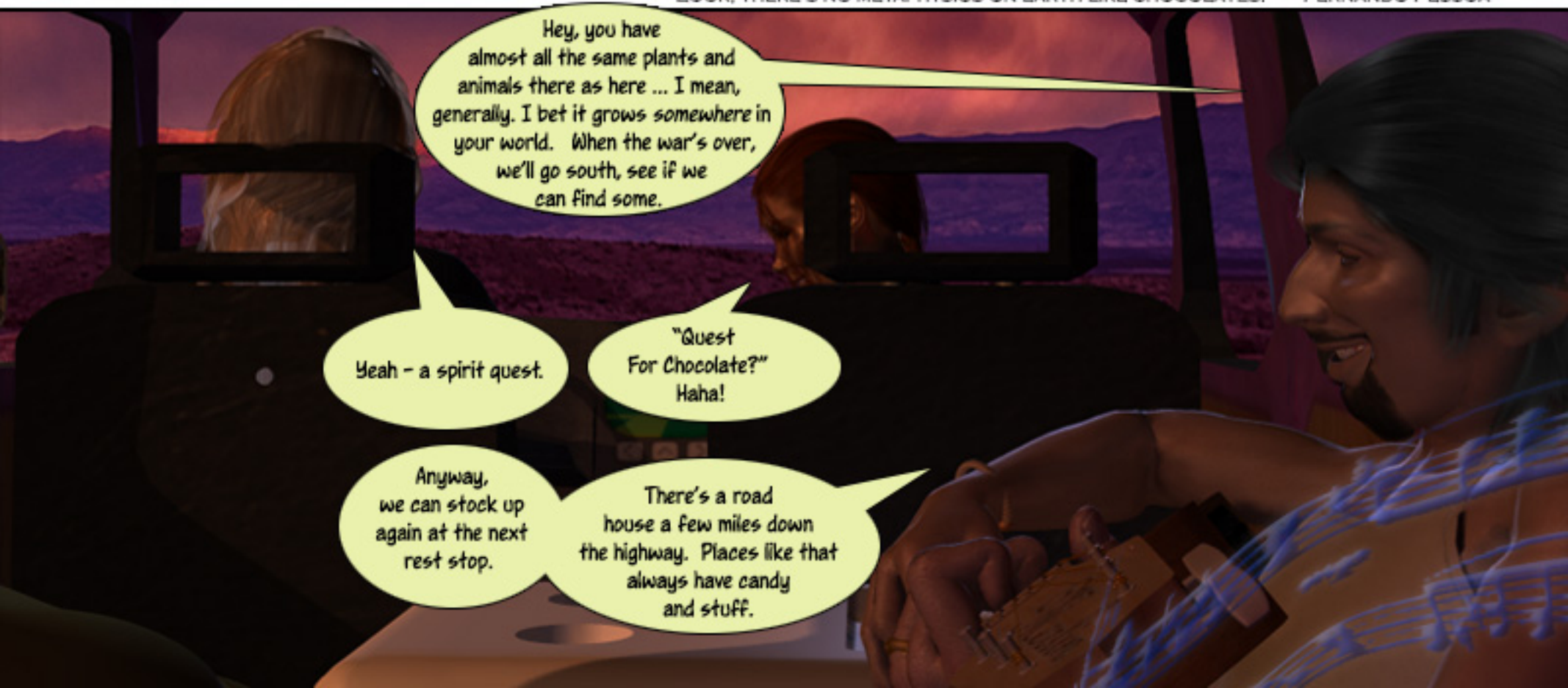
NNNNNNNGHHHH



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"LOOK, THERE'S NO METAPHYSICS ON EARTH LIKE CHOCOLATES." - FERNANDO PESSOA





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LESS SQUEAKY, MORE SNEAKY. - NICOLE WEBER



Ah. I seem to remember this place being more "family-friendly" back in the day.

Just -- don't let's go making trouble. We'll be fine.

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Hey, pretty thing.

Hello.

How 'bout you get up on the stage and show us what's under that sweet purple top?

Hey - don't fuck with me, Clyde.

Wha - ?

DON'T WANT ANYTHING LOST IN TRANSLATION.

I will rip your balls off with my teeth and put 'em in my martini, capisce?

Now Fuck. Off.

Okay, okay!

Jesus ...

Bit over the top, Vito, don'tcha think?

Weren't you the one who was supposed to be my wise mentor at one point?

Way to go, Obi-Wan.

Ehh. Sometimes you got to speak to people in their native tongue.

Hey - can I have a cigar?

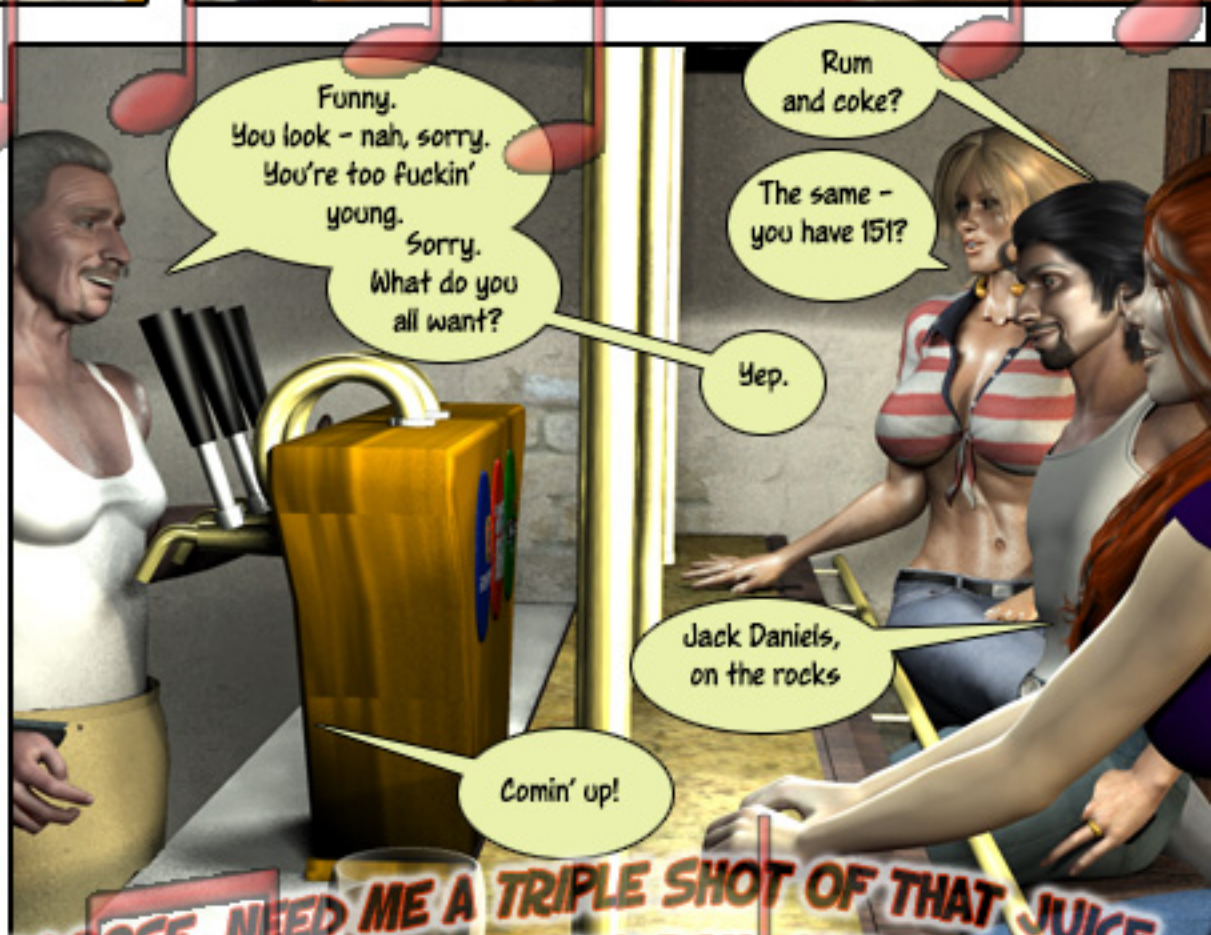
No.

Aw, C'mon ...

Vito, I am in charge of what goes into my body.



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**GONNA GET HIGH MAN I'M GONNA GET LOOSE, NEED ME A TRIPLE SHOT OF THAT JUICE
GONNA GET DRUNK DON'T YOU HAVE NO FEAR I WANT ONE BOURBON, ONE SCOTCH
AND ONE BEER ...**





The guy!
The guy you look like.
Jake Levy.

Back in the day,
there was this guy who used to ride -
Lone Wolf, no club, but he
played a mean axe!

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Whenever he was
out here he, like, would own the
bar, and the guys all seriously
liked his stuff.

He was
real popular. He'd pack
`em in for as long as
he stuck around.



So what
happened to
him?

Ehh - what
happens to anybody? He had
a girlfriend he wanted to marry.
I think he got all respectable,
went to L.A.

Menti?

Jake Levy.

"COINCIDENCE IS THE WORD WE USE WHEN WE CAN'T SEE THE LEVERS AND PULLEYS." - EMMA BULL



Yeah.
It's been, like, like,
twenty-five, thirty
years.

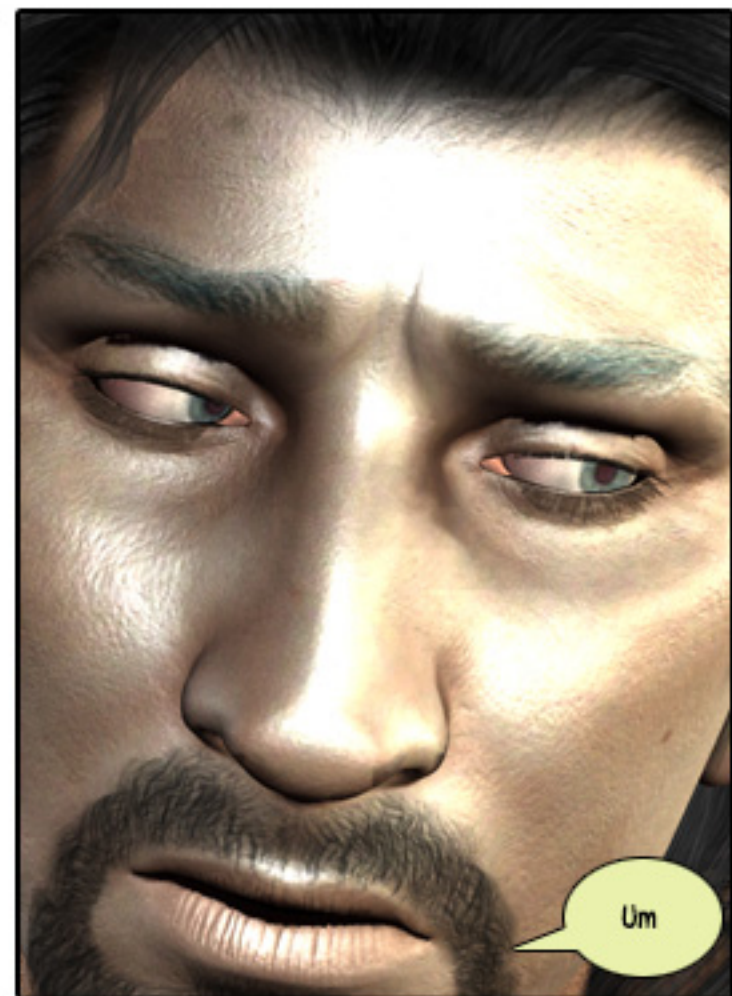
Still have
a Gibson he left
here to pay
his bill.

Never
saw him after that.
But he's just one of
those guys you don't
forget.



True.

He was my Dad.



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I DABBLE.





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"I BELIEVE IN LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT AND HINDSIGHT". RICHARD MADDEN





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YOU CAN TELL PEOPLE, BUT DO THEY EVER LISTEN?



* RUNT OF THE LITTER



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NEVER GET INTO FIGHTS WITH UGLY PEOPLE. THEY HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE.

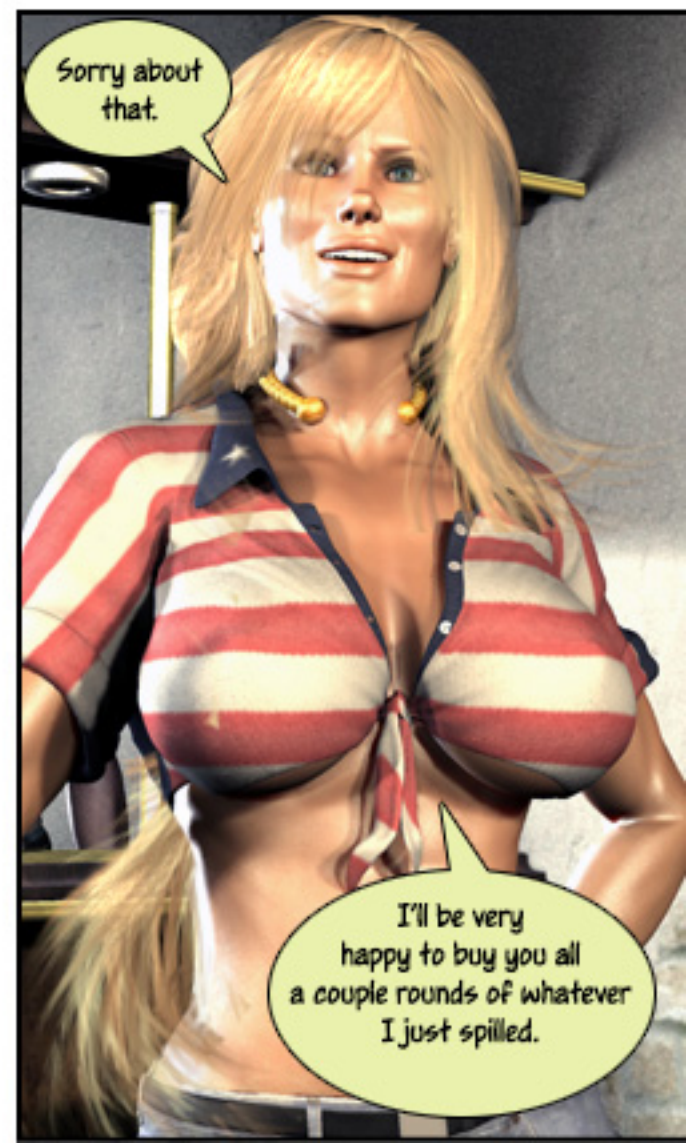




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KIDS, THIS IS WHAT MY DAD USED TO CALL "A SHLOP IN THE CHOPS."





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WHAM!!

YEAH I LOVE MY BABY. SHE'S LONG AND LEAN
YOU MESS WITH HER, YOU'LL SEE A MAN GETTIN' MEAN



NO BLASTERS! NO BLASTERS!



SHE'S MY SWEET LITTLE THANG. SHE'S MY PRIDE AND JOY
SHE'S MY SWEET LITTLE BABY. I'M HER LITTLE LOVER BOY



No! No cigars!

Sure, I got some in the back. But you just -

I changed his mind.

So - I'm rilly rilly rilly sorry ...

I accept your apology. All balanced.

So - how 'bout it?

No.

-- C'mon! Jus' ... jus' one time.

No, Barry.

I'll ... I'll be good! I'll ... I'll give ta orphans an' shit. I'll ... I'll vote Green Party! An' thing ya want!

For the last time, Barry, I am married - I am NOT gonna blow you!

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Oh, LUNA!

Awww ... Please! pleeeeeeease ...

HEY! CAN SOMEBODY DO ME A FAVOR AND GIVE THIS SHMUCK A BLOWJOB? JUST TO SHUT HIM UP?



Guess it's time to hand this back ...

Aw, baby! You need me to take care of Lil' Barry?

SNF!! Not g-gonna be the same!

Naw. You keep it. I judge it's time. Just stop in and play it again sometime, okay?

Might be awhile, but if I can, it's a promise.

THE TIME IS OUT OF JOINT



We had a great time!

Yeah. Yeah, you did. An' you paid top dollar for it, too. You got some class, kids. You be safe.



So - Carlos' shack - when do we get there? Where is it?

A time that's not a time- a place the's not really a place.

Fine. You know what? I'm gonna just stop asking.



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LOVE SHACK, BABY!





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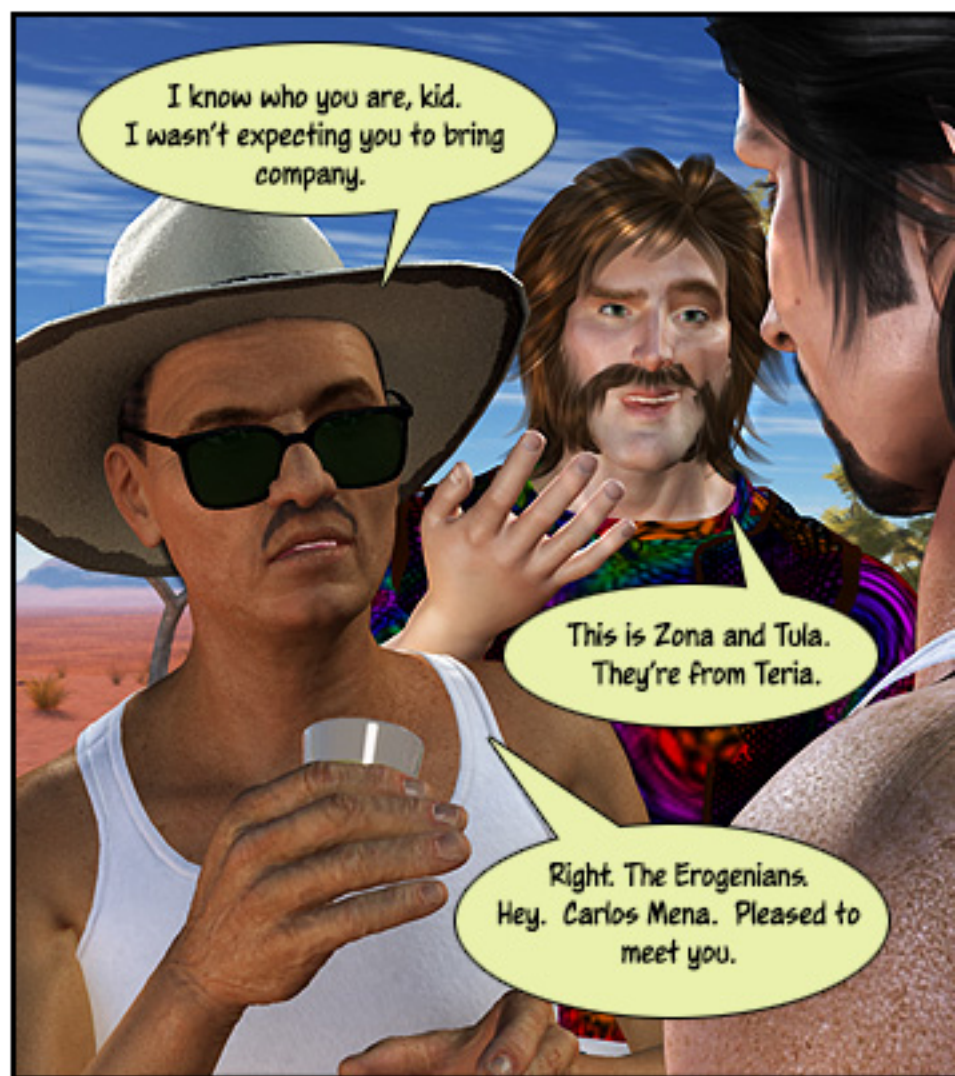


SOMETHIN FUNKY GOIN ON

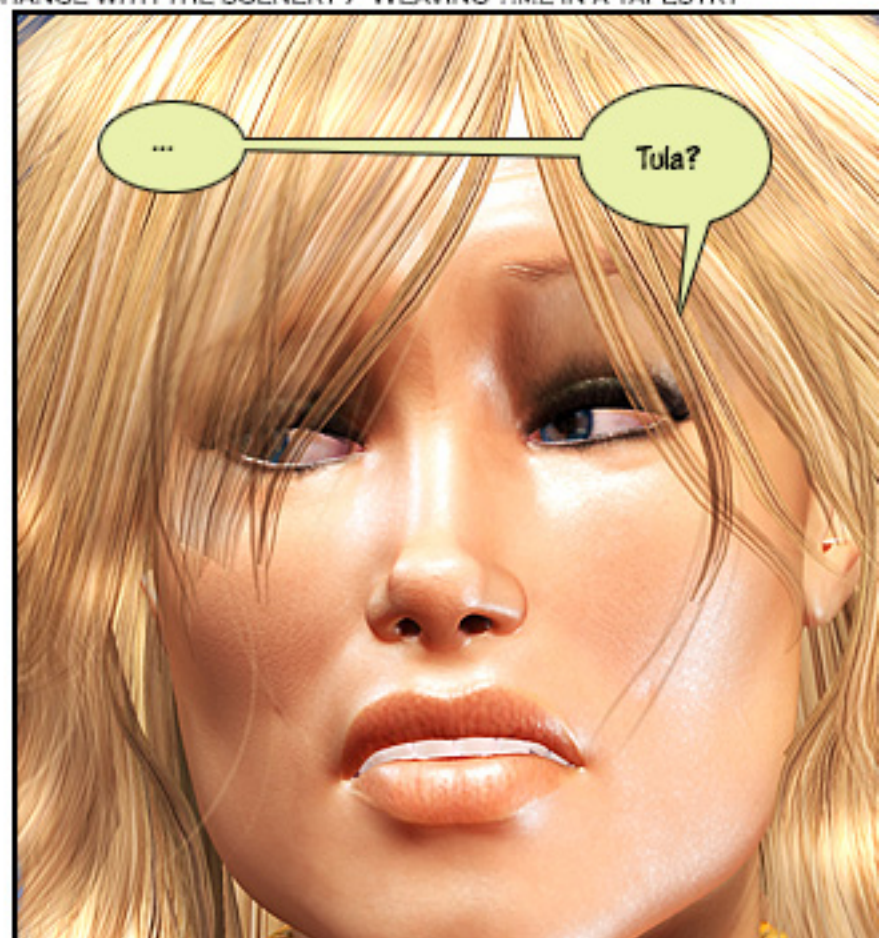




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SEASONS CHANGE WITH THE SCENERY / WEAVING TIME IN A TAPESTRY





We're not in time, babe. I mean ... we're kind of *outside* it, here. Right? Guys?

We're slippin' around between it. Between the points.

Remember what Vito said? "A place that's not exactly a place. A time that isn't a time."

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Think of it this way, kid: We're at an ... *almost-time*.

A weak point of the All That Is where your normal ideas of what is real, what's now and what's then no longer exactly apply.

'scuse me, I been dyin' to light up.



Wait.

HOW FAR AWAY THE STARS SEEM, AND HOW FAR IS OUR FIRST KISS, AND AH, HOW OLD MY HEART. - YEATS



There. I just don't think some things should remain unfinished.

So who needs a cigar?



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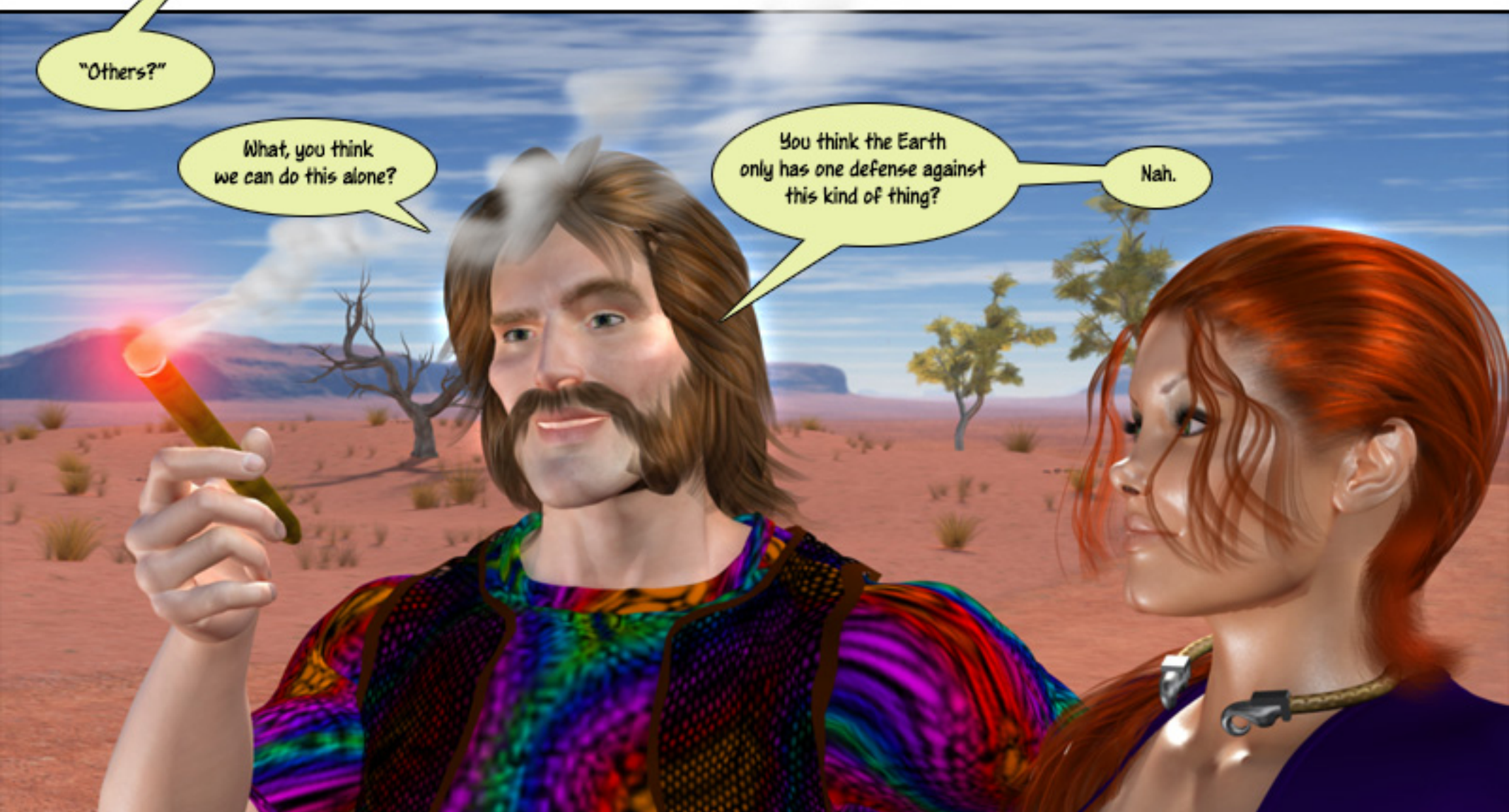
SOME ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS COMING UP.







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I GET BY WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS.



Kevin -

Nan. How is she?

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Not good.

She's alive.
But - paralyzed.
Can't ... walk or anything
right now.

Oh, Goddess
Nan ...

She said ...
she said she's sorry
she couldn't finish ...
the wedding
dress.

She sent
back the clothes you were in
when you got here. Got 'em in my car.
I guess you might need
'em.



Why ...
why would we
need them?

'Cause the
portal goes both
ways.

This is our
chance to go
home.

But I ... I
thought we needed the Book!
I thought our ... our strings
or threads were cut?

Or something?

IT'S ABOUT TO HIT THE FAN.



I ... I don't understand!

You really want the
technical explanation,
sweetie?



Uhhh - No.

Good.

Just remember
there's gonna be a moment in this
that I point and tell you to jump -
Grab your sister and the kid
and jump.

Jump hard.

That -
I can do.



Okay, what --

What's
happening NOW?

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I LOVE A GOOD CLICHE, DON'T YOU?



We're coming up on it.

So the others
are arriving.

El manojo de águilas -
the gathering of eagles.

The big rumble's
almost here.

We better
suit up.



Kevin -

Nan. How is she?

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Or something?

IT'S ABOUT TO HIT THE FAN.



I ... I don't understand!

You really want the
technical explanation,
sweetie?



Uhhh - No.

Good.

Just remember
there's gonna be a moment in this
that I point and tell you to jump -
Grab your sister and the kid
and jump.

Jump hard.

That -
I can do.

I thought I'd gotten used to strange things.
The world seems to move around me, the landscape changes,
as if it's all carrying me along, and rushing toward me
while I'm still standing in the same place.

I'm trying hard not to throw up.

Suddenly there's a high place that wasn't
there before, and a shadow with a spear.

And these people -

I knew them .

I know them .

I will sometime know ...
All of them.

These must be the "others" ... the .. the gathering of eagles.

At last.
I hear thee now.
I feel thy thoughts, O sister
Goddess of my Goddess.

At last I know thee,
O Gaia, sister of my Teria.
I know also thee, Luna, sister
of my Goddess whose name
also is Luna.

We answer thy call to
battle, we who are thy
kindred souls, and allies.

We dance 'round the Flame, and
raise the power with thy children who
shall be our brothers and sisters in
this, in time and beyond all time

We shall bar the gate
against the evil that seeks to enter
this thy sacred realm.

We shall conquer -

-or we, thy defenders, shall
be ended together.

No third choice is possible.

Praise thee with all thy names,
and all thanks for the honor to
serve thee and thy children with
life or with death.

