

LIFELINE #5

APRIL 1985



SIMON M.

SCRIPT
PANEL LAYOUT
COVER

TRANSLATION
(SORRY, ENGLISH SPEAKERS)

ATANA S.

PENCILS
INK

EMAIL: UPSURGECOMICS@GMAIL.COM

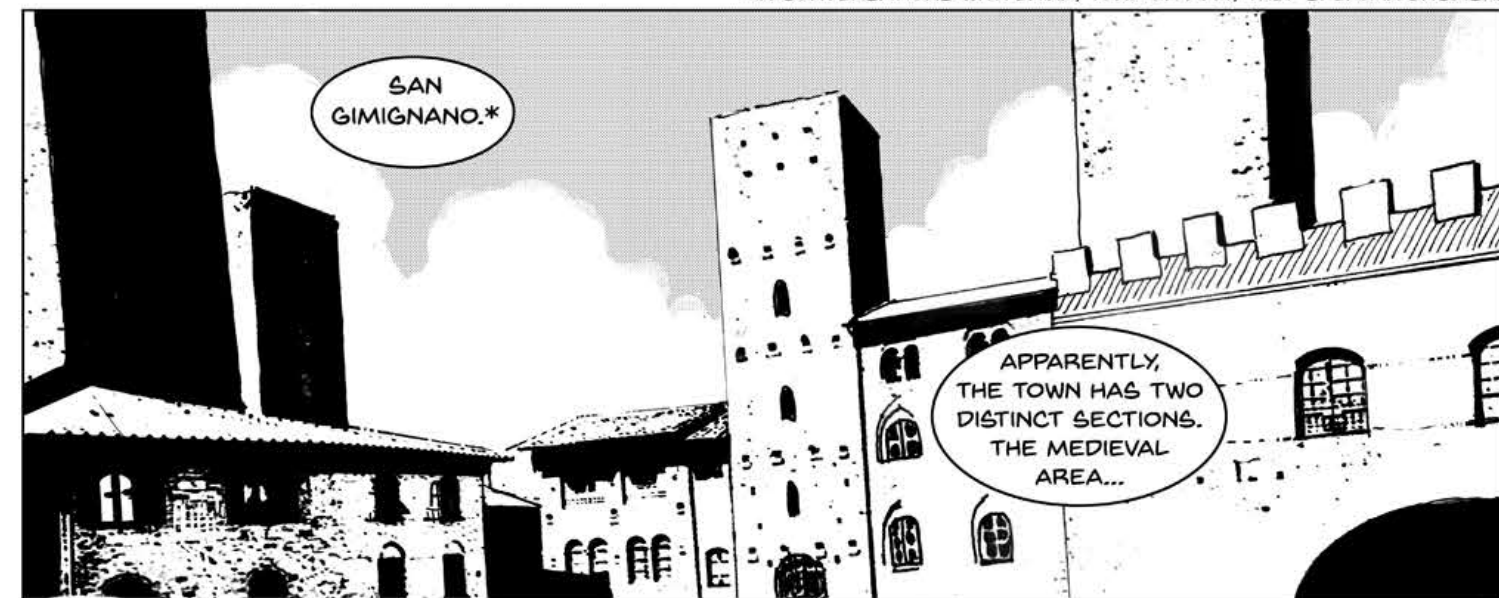
WEBPAGE: WWW.UPSURGE.ES/ENGLISH

UPSURGE © 2015 BY SÉRGIO RODRÍGUEZ FUNGUEIRO (SIMON M.) AND
CRISTINA ERRÁEZ CASTELLTORT (ATANA SUMI), LICENSED UNDER THE
CREATIVE COMMONS ATTRIBUTION-NONCOMMERCIAL-NODERIVATIVES 4.0
INTERNATIONAL LICENSE (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).

TO VIEW A COPY OF THIS LICENSE, VISIT:
[HTTPS://CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG/LICENSES/BY-NC-ND/4.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)

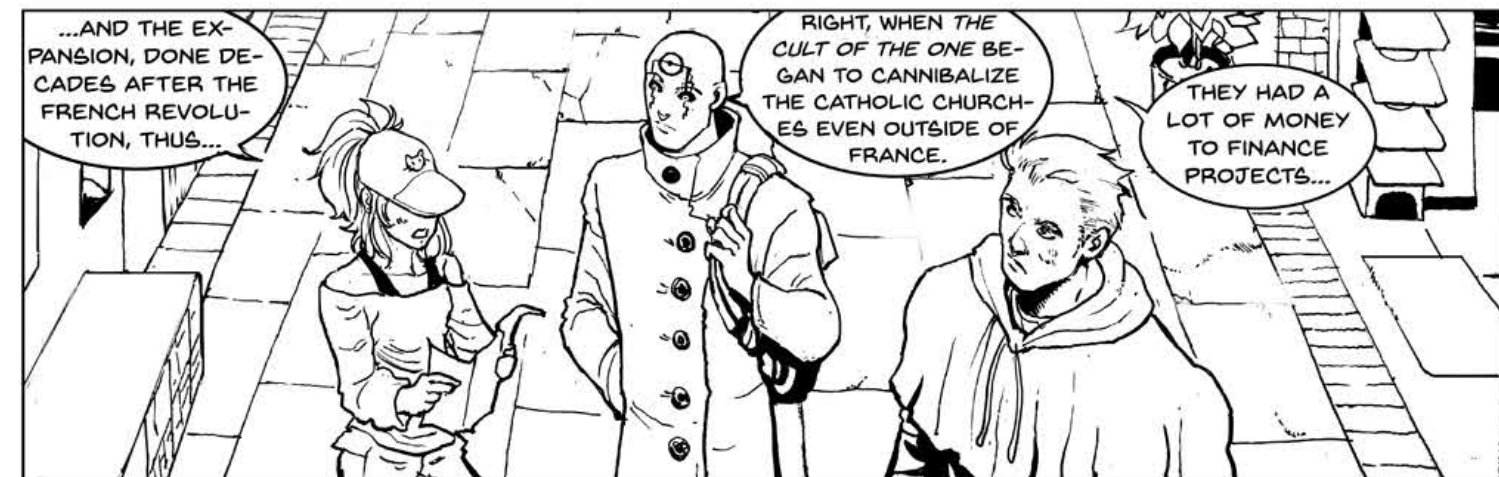


*IN CONVERSATIONS WITH IRINA, TONY OR ALLY, THEY SPEAK IN ENGLISH.



SAN
GIMIGNANO.*

APPARENTLY,
THE TOWN HAS TWO
DISTINCT SECTIONS.
THE MEDIEVAL
AREA...



...AND THE EX-
PANSION, DONE DE-
CADES AFTER THE
FRENCH REVOLU-
TION, THUS...

RIGHT, WHEN THE
CULT OF THE ONE BE-
GAN TO CANNIBALIZE
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH-
ES EVEN OUTSIDE OF
FRANCE.

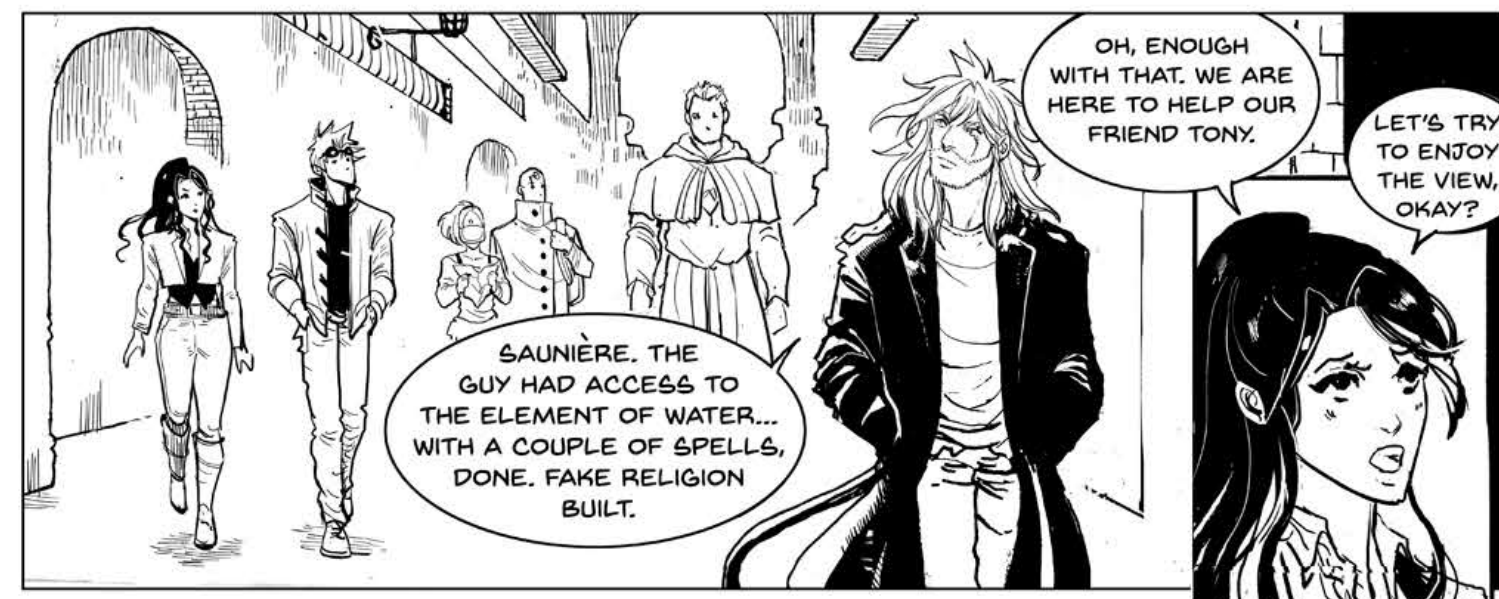
THEY HAD A
LOT OF MONEY
TO FINANCE
PROJECTS...



STRANGE, EH.
IN ANOTHER
REALITY, ITALY
WOULD BE THE
CENTER OF CA-
THOLICISM.
THERE'S THE
VATICAN,
BUT...

I WONDER WHAT
HAPPENED. HOW COULD
ONE CHURCH LOSE SO
MUCH POWER AND AN-
OTHER GAIN...?

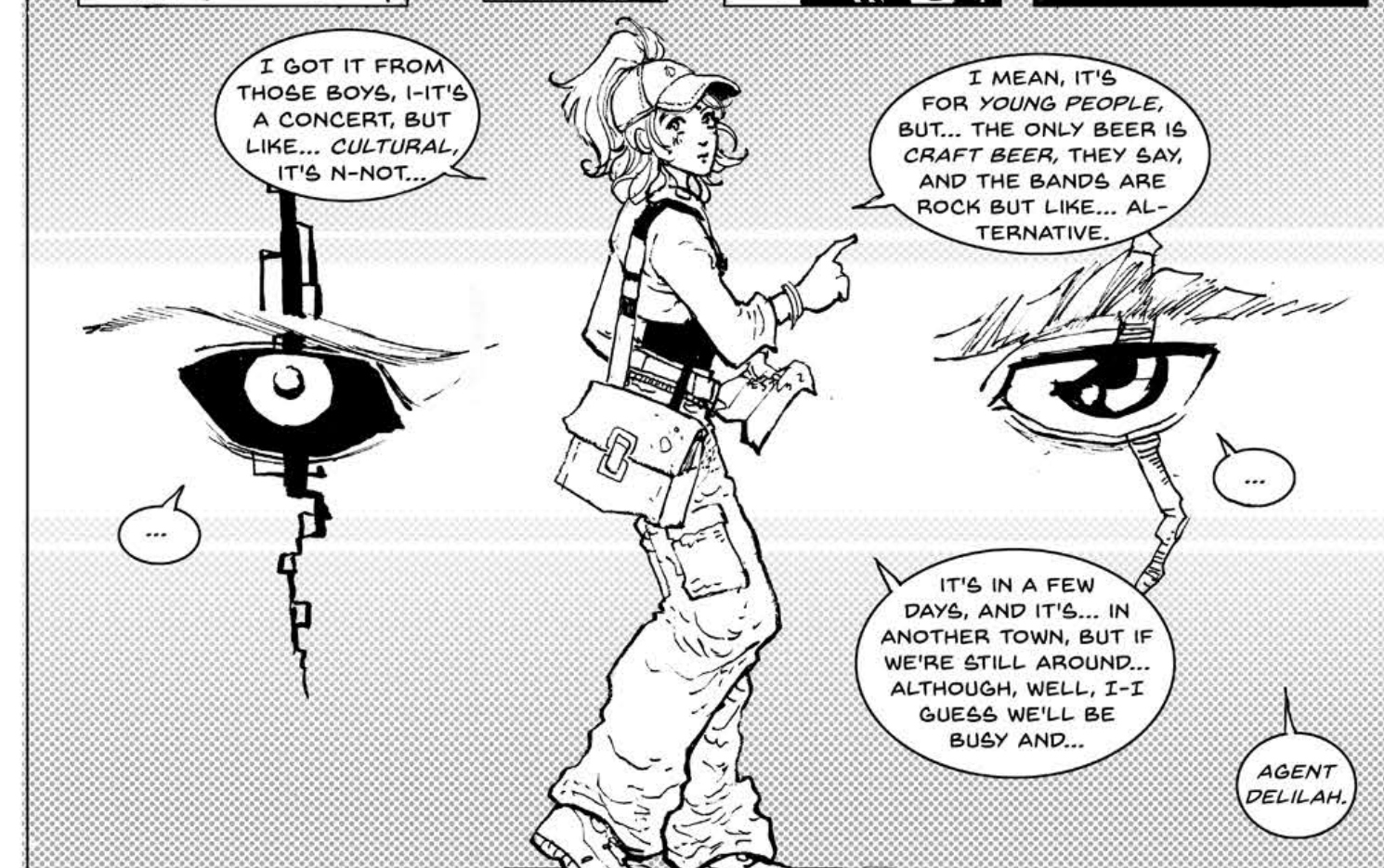
PFFT.
YOU KNOW
HOW.

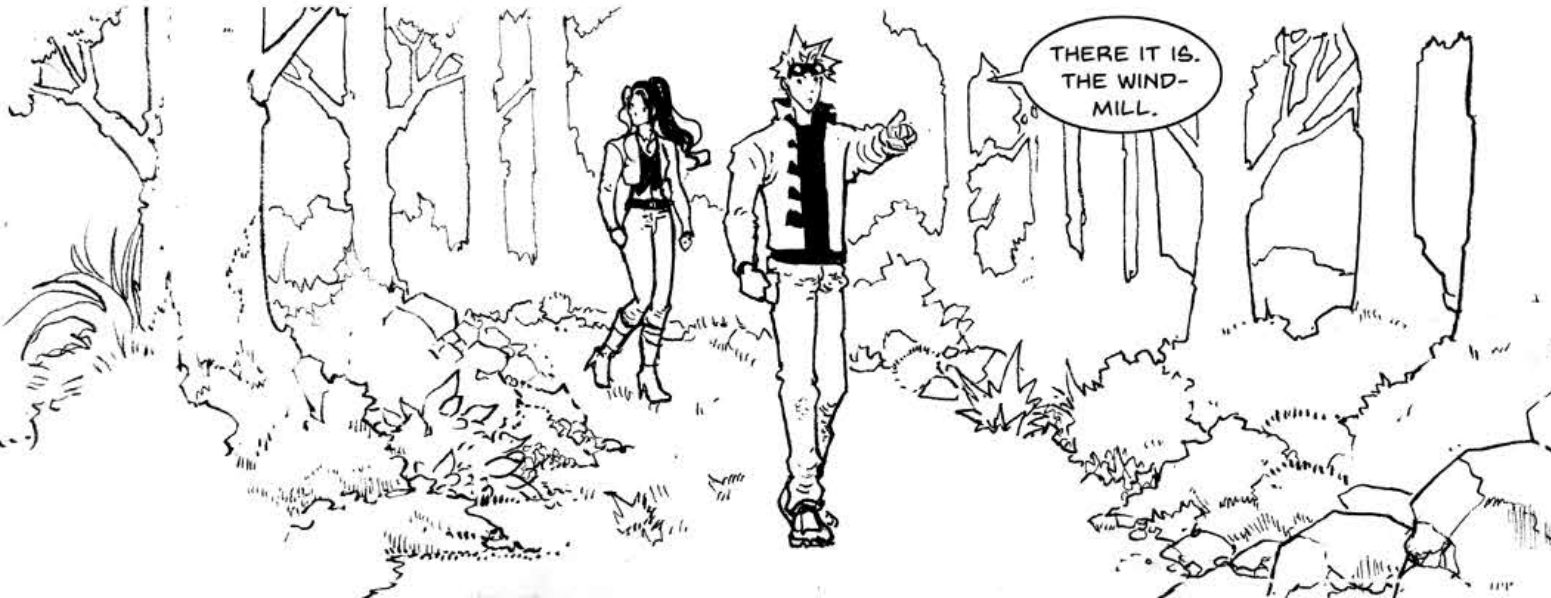


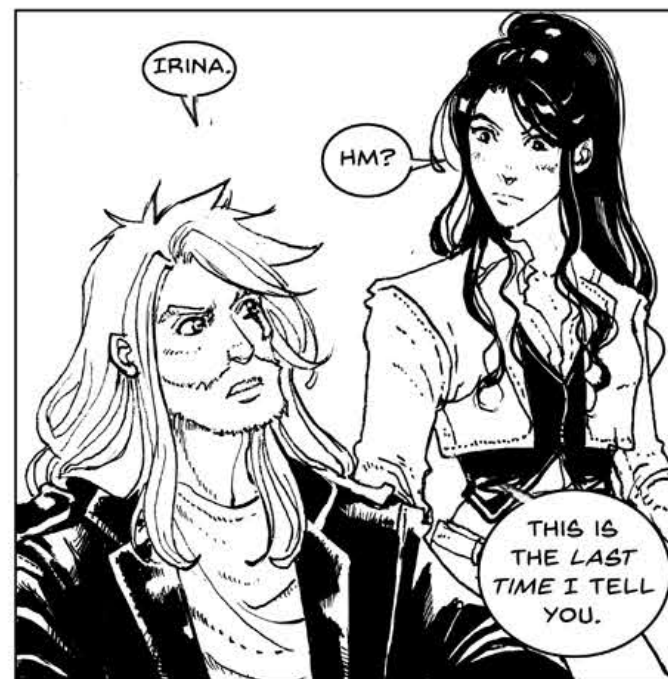
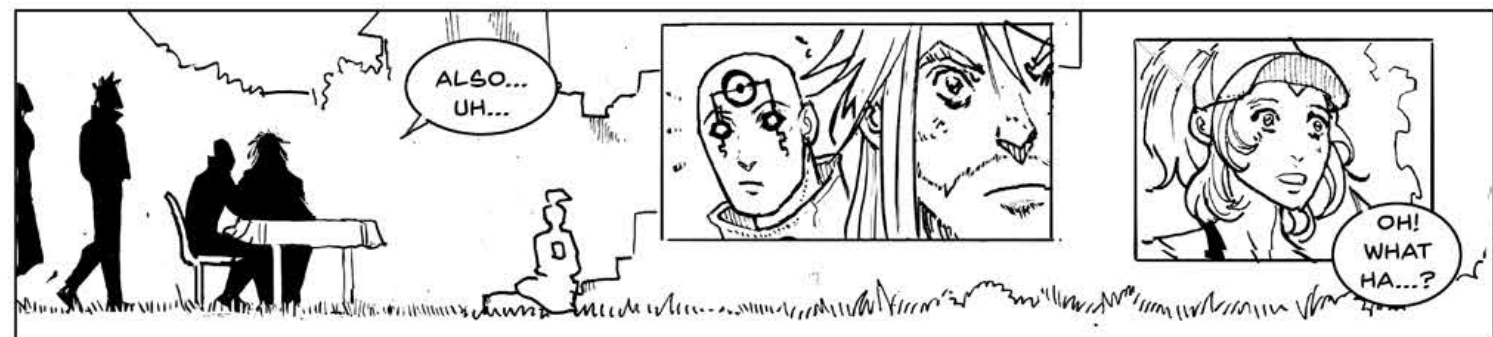
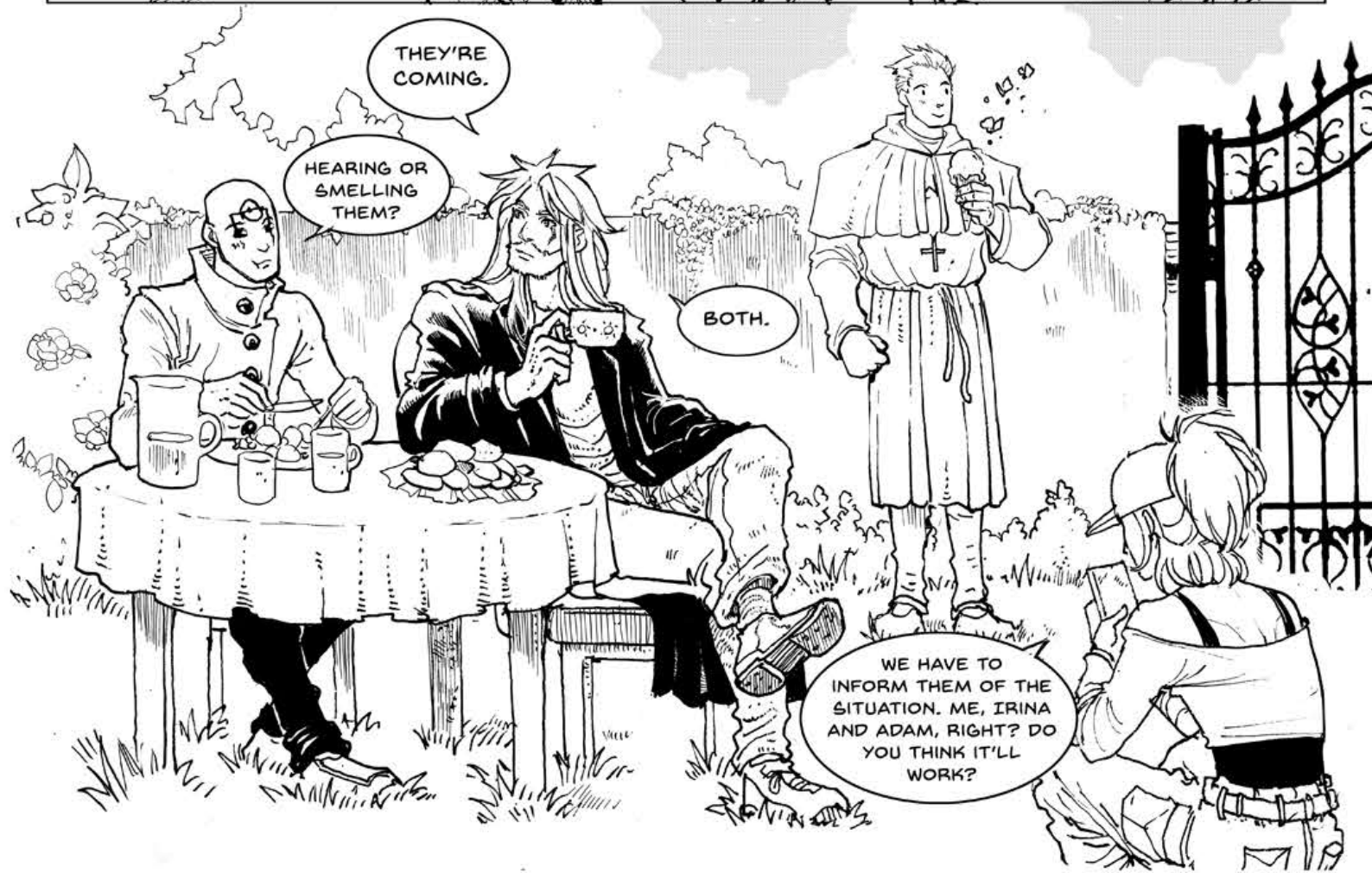
SAUNIÈRE. THE
GUY HAD ACCESS TO
THE ELEMENT OF WATER...
WITH A COUPLE OF SPELLS,
DONE. FAKE RELIGION
BUILT.

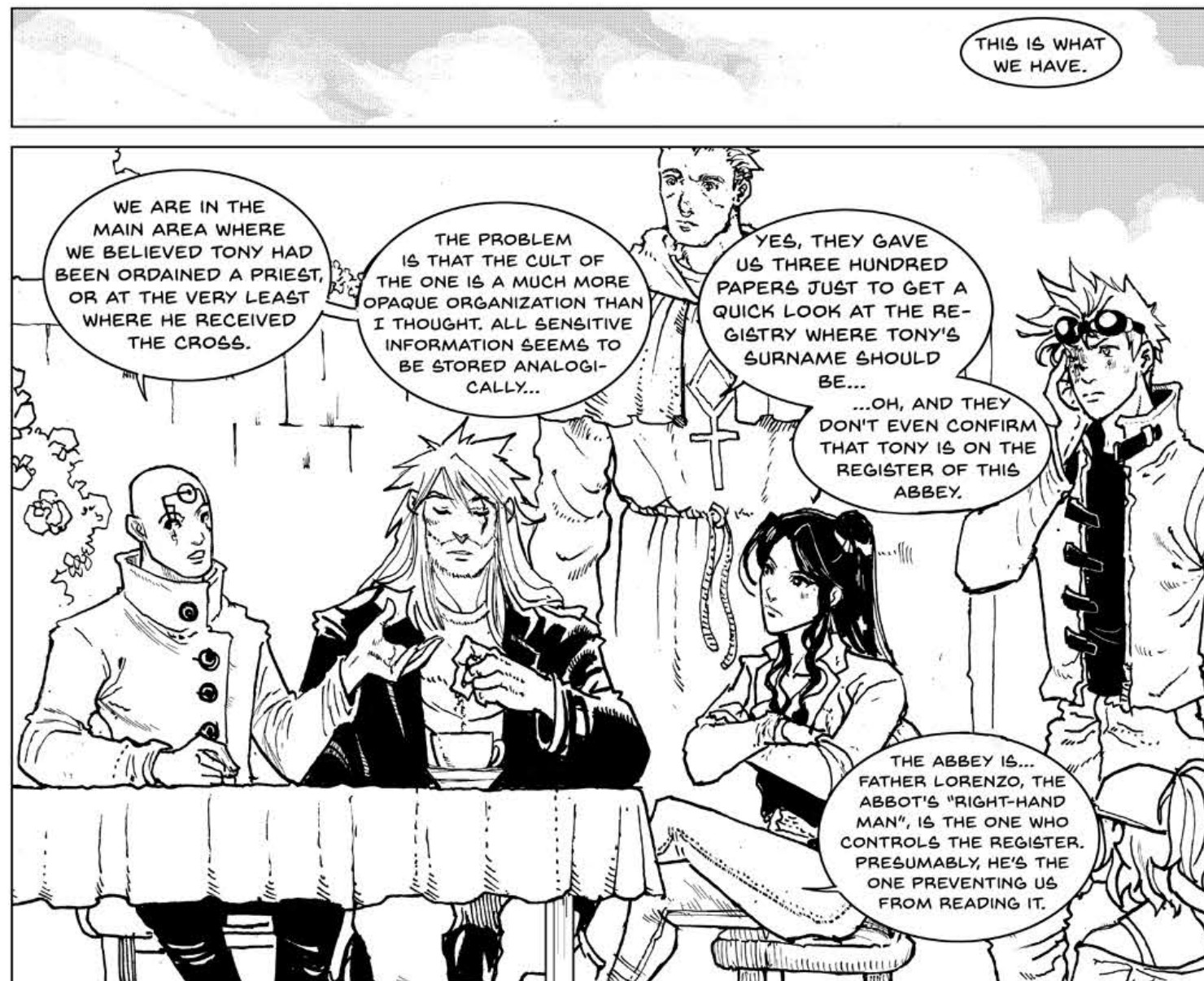
OH, ENOUGH
WITH THAT. WE ARE
HERE TO HELP OUR
FRIEND TONY.

LET'S TRY
TO ENJOY
THE VIEW,
OKAY?









THIS IS WHAT WE HAVE.

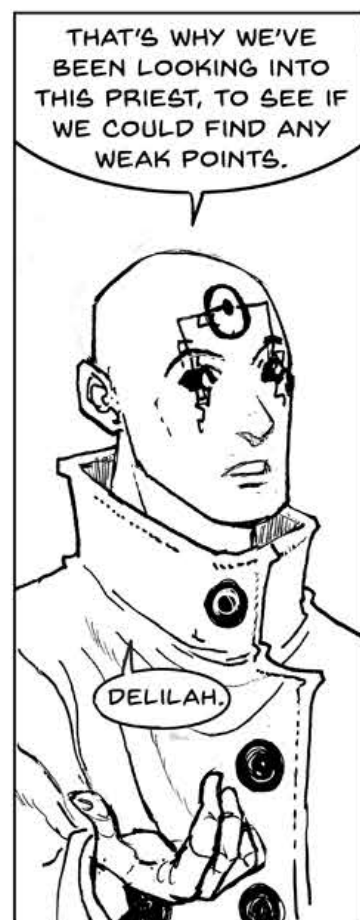
WE ARE IN THE MAIN AREA WHERE WE BELIEVED TONY HAD BEEN ORDAINED A PRIEST, OR AT THE VERY LEAST WHERE HE RECEIVED THE CROSS.

THE PROBLEM IS THAT THE CULT OF THE ONE IS A MUCH MORE OPAQUE ORGANIZATION THAN I THOUGHT. ALL SENSITIVE INFORMATION SEEMS TO BE STORED ANALOGICALLY...

YES, THEY GAVE US THREE HUNDRED PAPERS JUST TO GET A QUICK LOOK AT THE REGISTRY WHERE TONY'S SURNAME SHOULD BE...

...OH, AND THEY DON'T EVEN CONFIRM THAT TONY IS ON THE REGISTER OF THIS ABBEY.

THE ABBEY IS... FATHER LORENZO, THE ABBOT'S "RIGHT-HAND MAN", IS THE ONE WHO CONTROLS THE REGISTER. PRESUMABLY, HE'S THE ONE PREVENTING US FROM READING IT.



THAT'S WHY WE'VE BEEN LOOKING INTO THIS PRIEST, TO SEE IF WE COULD FIND ANY WEAK POINTS.

DELILAH.

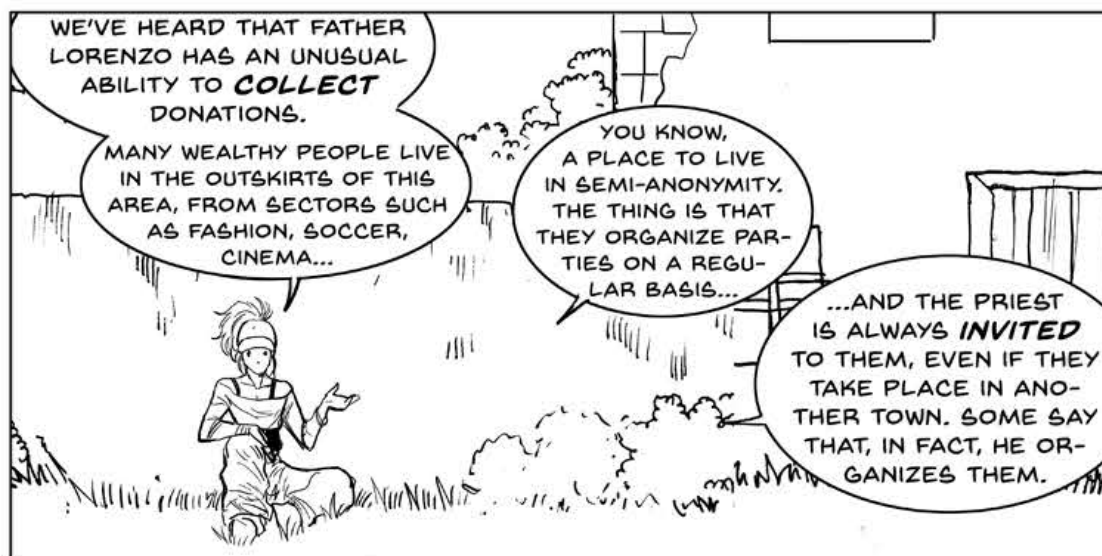


WAIT, WHAT... WHO...?



PEOPLE TALK ABOUT FATHER LORENZO IN A VERY POSITIVE WAY: CHARISMATIC, APPROACHABLE, HANDSOME... NO ONE SAID A BAD WORD TO US.

WE ASSUME THIS IS PARTLY BECAUSE THE ABBEY HAS RUN MANY **PRO-GRAMS** TO HELP FARMERS, LOCAL CULTURE...

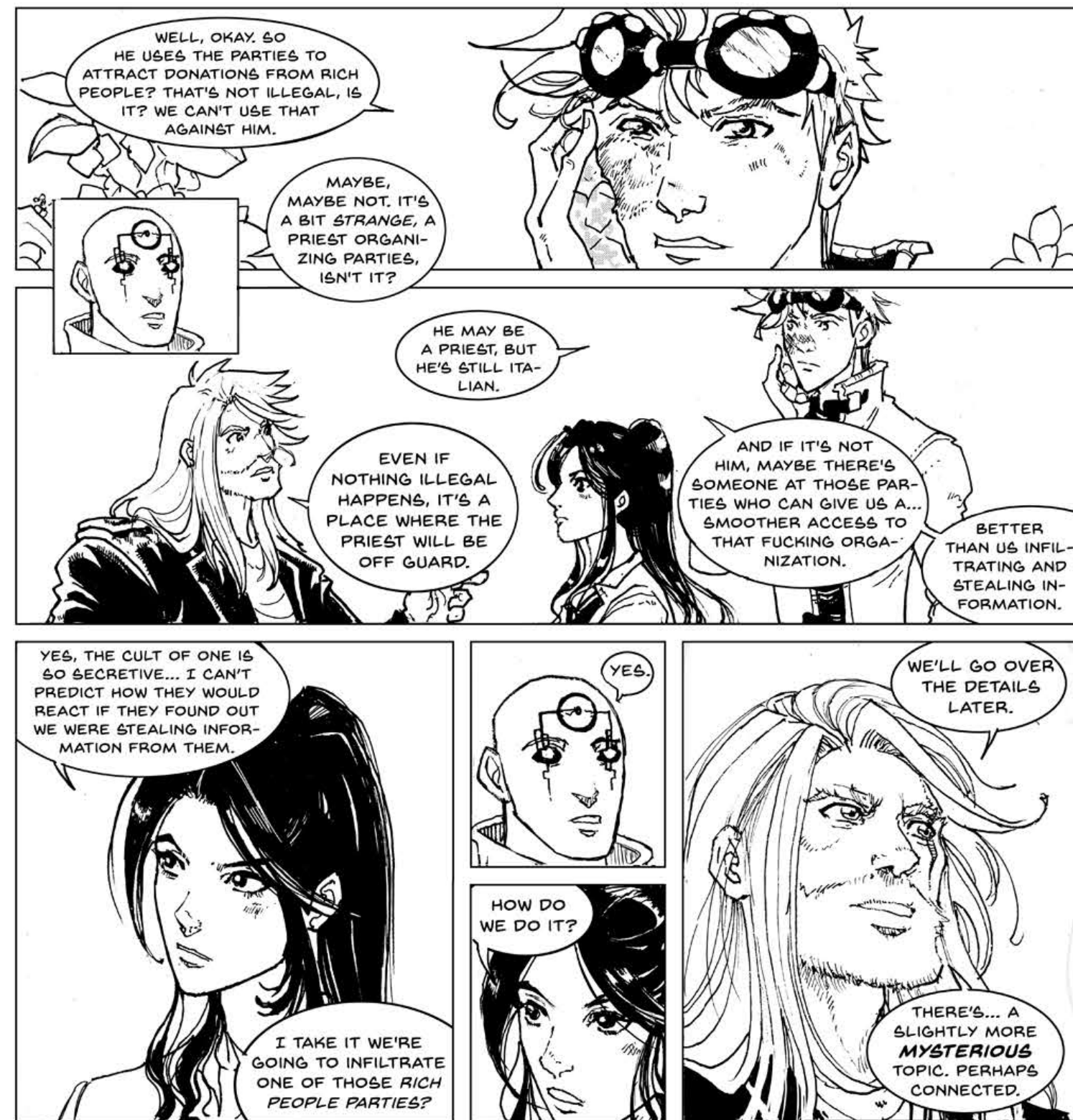


WE'VE HEARD THAT FATHER LORENZO HAS AN UNUSUAL ABILITY TO **COLLECT** DONATIONS.

MANY WEALTHY PEOPLE LIVE IN THE OUTSKIRTS OF THIS AREA, FROM SECTORS SUCH AS FASHION, SOCCER, CINEMA...

YOU KNOW, A PLACE TO LIVE IN SEMI-ANONYMITY. THE THING IS THAT THEY ORGANIZE PARTIES ON A REGULAR BASIS...

...AND THE PRIEST IS ALWAYS **INVITED** TO THEM, EVEN IF THEY TAKE PLACE IN ANOTHER TOWN. SOME SAY THAT, IN FACT, HE ORGANIZES THEM.



WELL, OKAY. SO HE USES THE PARTIES TO ATTRACT DONATIONS FROM RICH PEOPLE? THAT'S NOT ILLEGAL, IS IT? WE CAN'T USE THAT AGAINST HIM.

MAYBE, MAYBE NOT. IT'S A BIT **STRANGE**, A PRIEST ORGANIZING PARTIES, ISN'T IT?

HE MAY BE A PRIEST, BUT HE'S STILL ITALIAN.

EVEN IF NOTHING ILLEGAL HAPPENS, IT'S A PLACE WHERE THE PRIEST WILL BE OFF GUARD.

AND IF IT'S NOT HIM, MAYBE THERE'S SOMEONE AT THOSE PARTIES WHO CAN GIVE US A... SMOOTHER ACCESS TO THAT **FUCKING** ORGANIZATION.

BETTER THAN US INFILTRATING AND STEALING INFORMATION.



YES, THE CULT OF ONE IS SO SECRETIVE... I CAN'T PREDICT HOW THEY WOULD REACT IF THEY FOUND OUT WE WERE STEALING INFORMATION FROM THEM.

I TAKE IT WE'RE GOING TO INFILTRATE ONE OF THOSE RICH PEOPLE PARTIES?



YES.



HOW DO WE DO IT?



WE'LL GO OVER THE DETAILS LATER.

THERE'S... A SLIGHTLY MORE **MYSTERIOUS** TOPIC. PERHAPS CONNECTED.



AGENT DELILAH.

YES, UH... WELL, WE'VE ALSO HEARD...

MANY PEOPLE HAVE TALKED ABOUT... STRANGE SIGHTINGS IN THE WOODS, AT VARIOUS SPECIFIC POINTS. THERE ARE RUMORS OF TUNNELS... I DON'T KNOW IF IT HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE CHURCH, BUT...



"WELL, WE'LL LOOK INTO IT. IT'S A BIT OF AN ODD COINCIDENCE".



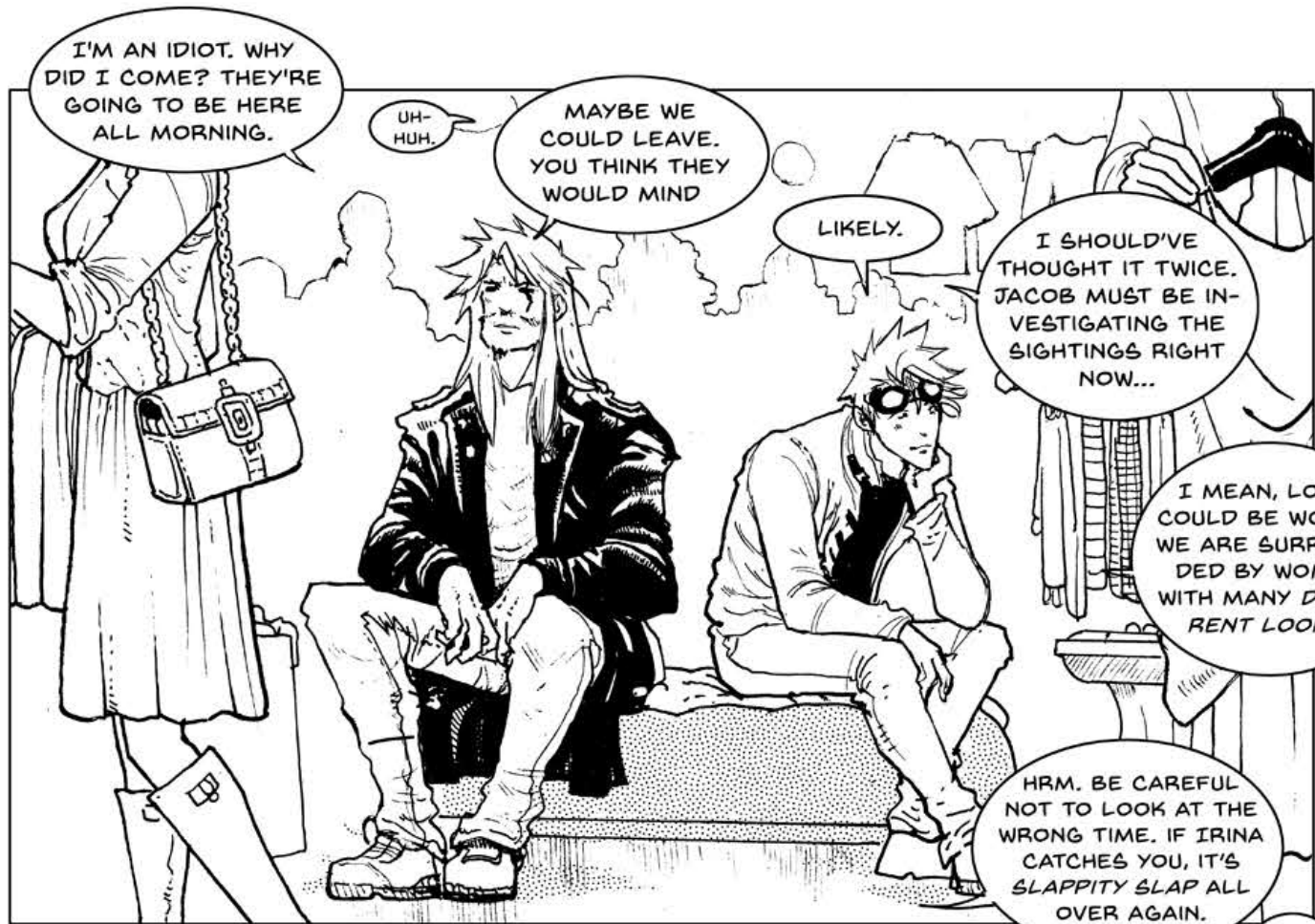
SO, HOW ABOUT THIS? I DON'T KNOW IF THIS WOULD BE, LIKE, ACCEPTABLE FOR THAT KIND OF PARTY.



-TT-

HORRIBLE.

I GUESS WITH THE RIGHT ACCESSORIES... HONESTLY, I'M JUST AS LOST AS YOU, I HAVE NO IDEA...



I'M AN IDIOT. WHY DID I COME? THEY'RE GOING TO BE HERE ALL MORNING.

UH-HUH.

MAYBE WE COULD LEAVE. YOU THINK THEY WOULD MIND

LIKELY.

I SHOULD'VE THOUGHT IT TWICE. JACOB MUST BE INVESTIGATING THE SIGHTINGS RIGHT NOW...

I MEAN, LOOK. COULD BE WORSE. WE ARE SURROUNDED BY WOMEN WITH MANY DIFFERENT LOOKS.

HRM. BE CAREFUL NOT TO LOOK AT THE WRONG TIME. IF IRINA CATCHES YOU, IT'S SLAPPITY SLAP ALL OVER AGAIN.

-HHT-HAHA!



WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT EVOKING GOD?

HM?

THE GOD. THE MANUALS SAY IT IS BASICALLY IMPOSSIBLE.

YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THE ABSOLUTE CREATOR, AREN'T YOU? NOT GODS OF SPECIFIC FIELDS...

YAHWEH, ATEN... GODS OF MONOTHEISTIC CULTS.

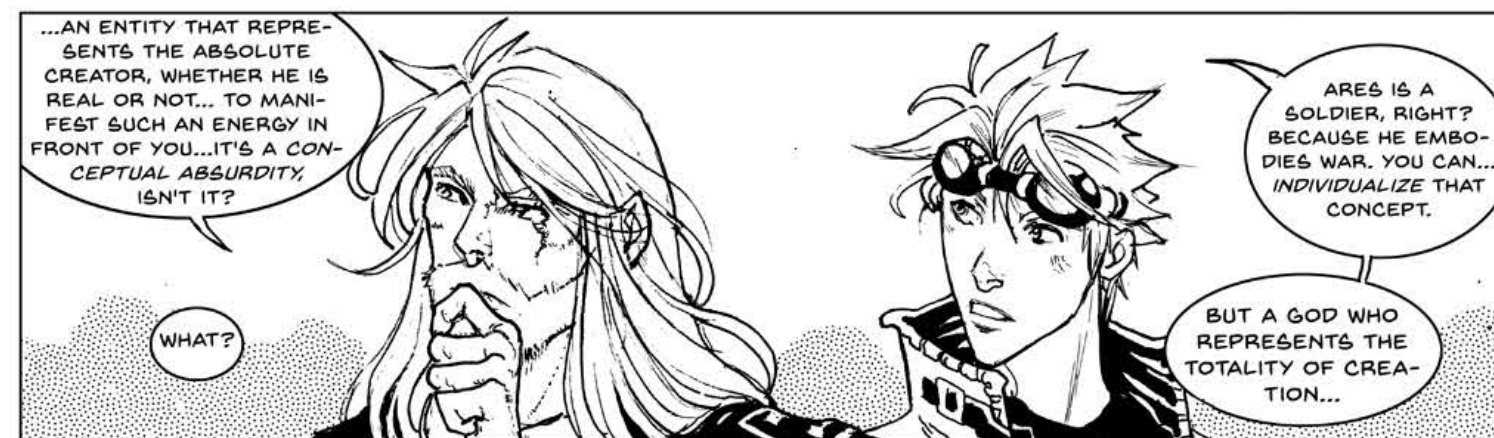


EXACTLY, YES. THE MANUALS SAY TO USE GODS FROM SPECIFIC AREAS...

WHY NOT THE ONE THAT REPRESENTS THE WHOLE?

WELL, THERE'S YOUR CLUE, RIGHT?

THESE ASTRAL ENTITIES... I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY REALLY ARE, BUT I KNOW THAT WE CAN ONLY CALL THEM IF WE'RE ABLE TO... CONCEPTUALIZE THEM.



...AN ENTITY THAT REPRESENTS THE ABSOLUTE CREATOR, WHETHER HE IS REAL OR NOT... TO MANIFEST SUCH AN ENERGY IN FRONT OF YOU...IT'S A CONCEPTUAL ABSURDITY, ISN'T IT?

WHAT?

ARES IS A SOLDIER, RIGHT? BECAUSE HE EMBODIES WAR. YOU CAN... INDIVIDUALIZE THAT CONCEPT.

BUT A GOD WHO REPRESENTS THE TOTALITY OF CREATION...



OBVIOUSLY PEOPLE THINK THEY CAN REPRESENT IT, BUT HOW DO YOU SUMMON IT IN A RITUAL? HOW DO YOU MAKE THE WHOLE APPEAR IN A PART?

RIGHT. THE WHOLE IS THE WHOLE.

AND DON'T EVEN THINK OF TRYING.

THE MANUALS DECLARE IT AN IMPOSSIBLE RITUAL, AND I'M NOT INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT WHY.

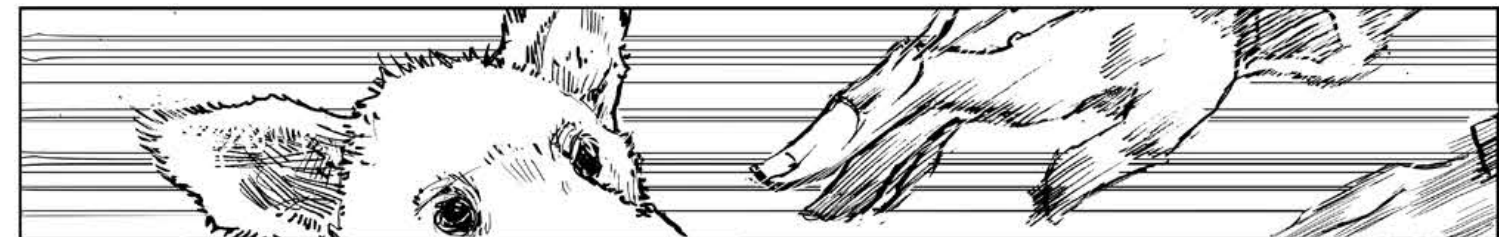
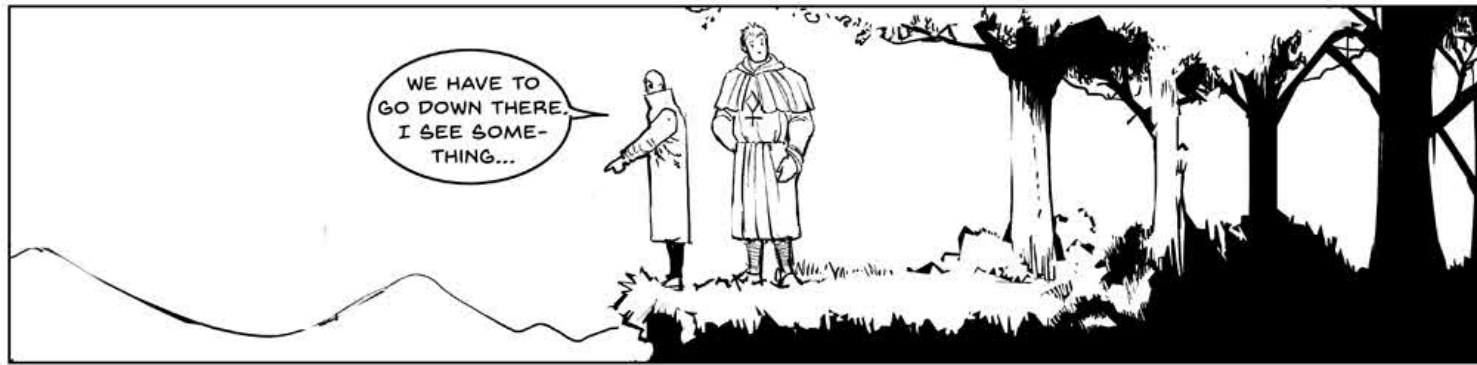


LOOK AT THAT WOMAN IN THE LEATHER TRENCH COAT.

SO MUCH TALK ABOUT GOD, WE'VE INVOKED ONE OF HIS ANGELS.

LEATHER...?

I SAY THAT PUTS HER MORE IN SATAN'S LEAGUE, NO?





DON'T WEAR OUT THE MIRROR, CINDERELLA.

YOU'RE THE PRETTIEST OF THEM ALL.

THANK YOU, BUT... MIRROR? CINDERELLA?

YOU MEAN SNOW WHITE. AND THAT'S NOT THE POINT; I DON'T KNOW IF THIS... I MEAN, THE RICH...?

WHO CARES.

YOU'RE HOT. DO YOU THINK ANYONE WILL OBJECT BECAUSE THE DRESS ISN'T MADE OF SUPER EXCLUSIVE SILK OR SOMETHING?

THIS IS SERIOUS! WE HAVE TO INFILTRATE...!

HMM

YES, YES, VERY SERIOUS.

HOPE THERE'S SOMEONE HOME.

QUITE AN EXCURSION, HMM.

HELLO!

IS ANYBODY HOME?

SHIT!

THE DOOR! NO, WAIT...! THE PANTIES!

HIDE THE PANTIES FIRST JUST IN...!

YES, THAT'S...!

OWOWOW

GOT'EM! NOW...

DOESN'T... MATTER. TOO LATE.

OH MY GOD OH MY GOD WHY DO I EVEN GET SURPRISED THAT THOSE TWO DON'T RESPECT ME?

HEY, HEY. IT'S NOT THAT BAD. PLUS, THOSE WERE THE SEXY PANTIES, SO...

HOW THE FUCK DOES THAT MAKE IT BETTER?!!

OKAY, NOW THAT WE ARE ALL HERE, YES, I WAS ATTACKED BY THE BOAR. TONY... THREW IT AND... ANYWAY.

INDEED, THERE'S A NETWORK OF TUNNELS. WE DISCOVERED THE ENTRANCE. I SAW THE MECHANISMS TO OPEN THE DOOR, BUT DIDN'T GO IN.

I IDENTIFIED TRACES OF HUMAN FOOTPRINTS AND, LET'S SAY, WHEELPRINTS. THE CAR TRACKS MATCHED THE FIRE DEPARTMENT'S MOBILE UNIT...

HOWEVER, THERE HAVEN'T BEEN ANY RECENT CALLS IN THE AREA, ACCORDING TO PEOPLE. IT WAS A BIT DIFFICULT TO INTERROGATE THEM BECAUSE MANY DON'T SPEAK ENGLISH, BUT, WITH MY SPANISH AND FRENCH...

SO THEN... WHAT? WE WERE JUST HERE FOR TONY.

NO, BUT IT'S RELEVANT. ESSEX MET ANOTHER PRIEST BEFORE, BROUGHT HIM TO A BASEMENT THAT WAS A BIT STRANGE FOR A CHURCH...

WELL, YES, THAT'S... I HADN'T THOUGHT ABOUT IT, BUT YES, THERE MAY BE AN ENTRANCE TO THE ABBEY. THE PARTY COULD BE A DISTRACTION...

AT LEAST TWO PRIESTS WILL BE AT THE PARTY...

I THINK THEY LIKE SUBTERRANEAN CONSTRUCTIONS. THEY ARE LIKE MOLE MEN.

YEAH, COULD BE OUR FAIL-SAFE. IF YOU GUYS CAN'T FIND A WAY TO COMPROMISE LORENZO...

...MAYBE WE COULD FIND A SECRET ACCESS ROUTE OR FIND THE FILES OR INCRIMINATING INFORMATION TO USE AGAINST HIM...

YES. THE ONLY THING... WE'LL HAVE TO LEAVE TONY HERE, BUT HOPEFULLY...

IN ANY CASE, WITH ALL THIS NEW INFORMATION, THE PLAN WOULD LOOK LIKE THIS:

TOMORROW, AT 2:00 A.M., ADAM AND ALLY HAVE TO GO TO THE CATALANO'S HOUSE; THEY'RE A COUPLE WHO GOT AN INVITATION. INFILTRATE THEIR HOUSE AND LOOK FOR THE INVITATION; IF IT'S NOT STILL IN THE MAILBOX, THEN INSIDE THE HOUSE. ALLY WILL RUN HERE AND GIVE IT TO ME. THEN I WILL MAKE A COPY WITH A FORGED ADDRESS; AT THE SAME TIME, PLANT THESE MICROCHIPS INSIDE THEIR SMARTPHONE CASES. THIS WILL ALLOW ME TO ACTIVATE A DISRUPTION SO THAT THEY CAN'T USE THEM THE MOMENT THEY REALIZE THEY'RE IN THE WRONG PLACE. THEN I WILL SEND A LETTER TO THE PARTY ORGANIZER, TELLING HIM THAT, OF THE CATALANOS, ONLY SOME AMERICAN COUSINS, ADAM AND ALLY, WHO WILL PRETEND TO BE BROTHERS, ALONGSIDE ADAM'S RUSSIAN PARTNER, IRINA, WILL BE ABLE TO ATTEND. IN THE MEANTIME, ESSEX AND I WILL INFILTRATE THE TUNNELS. THEN, AT THE PARTY, YOU WILL HAVE TO...

OKAY, GIRLS. **MOMENT OF TRUTH.** WE'VE PASSED THE FIRST HURDLE. I IMAGINE THE HOUSE WILL LET US IN, TOO.

WASN'T THERE A STRANGE PAUSE? THE GUARD. I THINK HE HAD A LOOK...

YES, I NOTICED. HE PROBABLY HESITATED, AND DECIDED THAT SINCE YOU ARE PRETTY GIRLS, IT'S WORTH THE RISK.

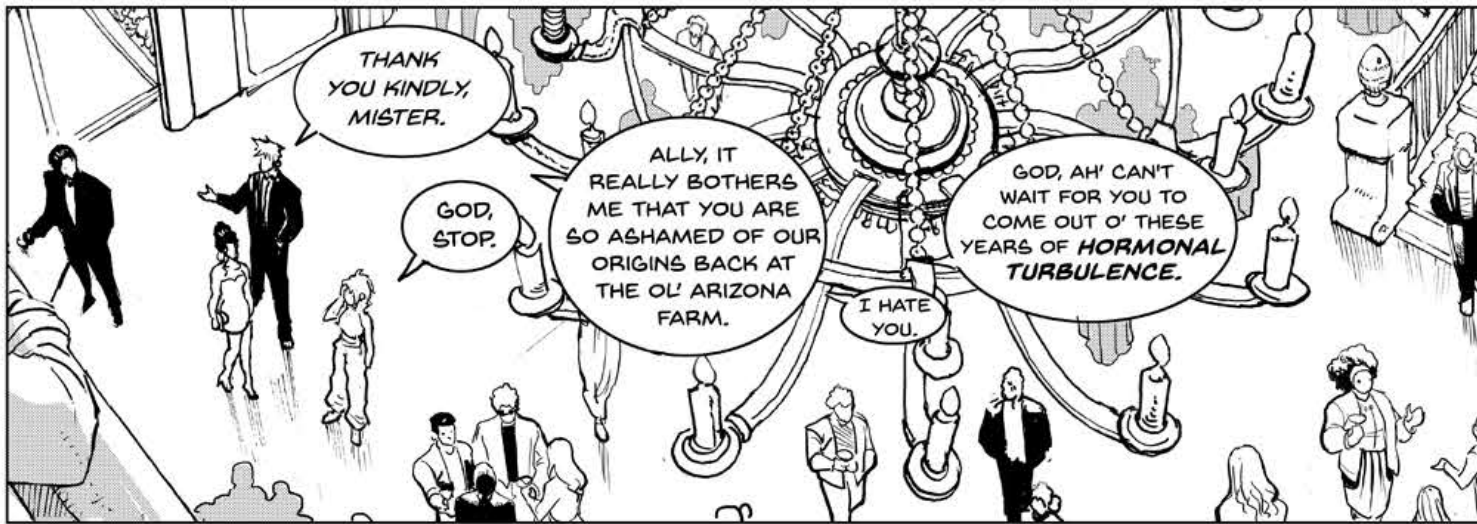
I THINK IT'S THE ACCENT. YOUR AMERICAN ACCENT IS... VERY BAD.

DARLIN', AH' LIVED ALL MY LIFE ON THE ARIZONA PLAINS, RIDIN' COWS. HOW CAN YOU, MA' BELOVED SISTER, QUESTION THE LEGITIMACY OF THIS HOMELY ACCENT?

WHAT... WE'RE NOT ALL COWBOYS! ...YOU SOUND LIKE A DRUNK BRIT TRYING TO IMITATE US...!

DRUNK BRIT IS REDUNDANT. SEE HOW I SUFFER WITH THIS SISTER O' MINE, MA' DEAR? THIS YOUTH, SO DISCONNECTED FROM THEIR ROOTS.

HMM-HMM. DA.



THANK YOU KINDLY, MISTER.

GOD, STOP.

ALLY, IT REALLY BOTHERS ME THAT YOU ARE SO ASHAMED OF OUR ORIGINS BACK AT THE OL' ARIZONA FARM.

I HATE YOU.

GOD, AH! CAN'T WAIT FOR YOU TO COME OUT O' THESE YEARS OF *HORMONAL TURBULENCE*.



OH, YOU HAVE TO BE CATALANO'S COUSINS, RIGHT? THEY DIDN'T TELL US HOW HANDSOME YOU WERE!

COME, I'LL INTRODUCE YOU... ALTHOUGH, MOST PEOPLE HERE DON'T SPEAK DECENT ENGLISH. MY NAME IS JULIA, NICE TO MEET YOU.

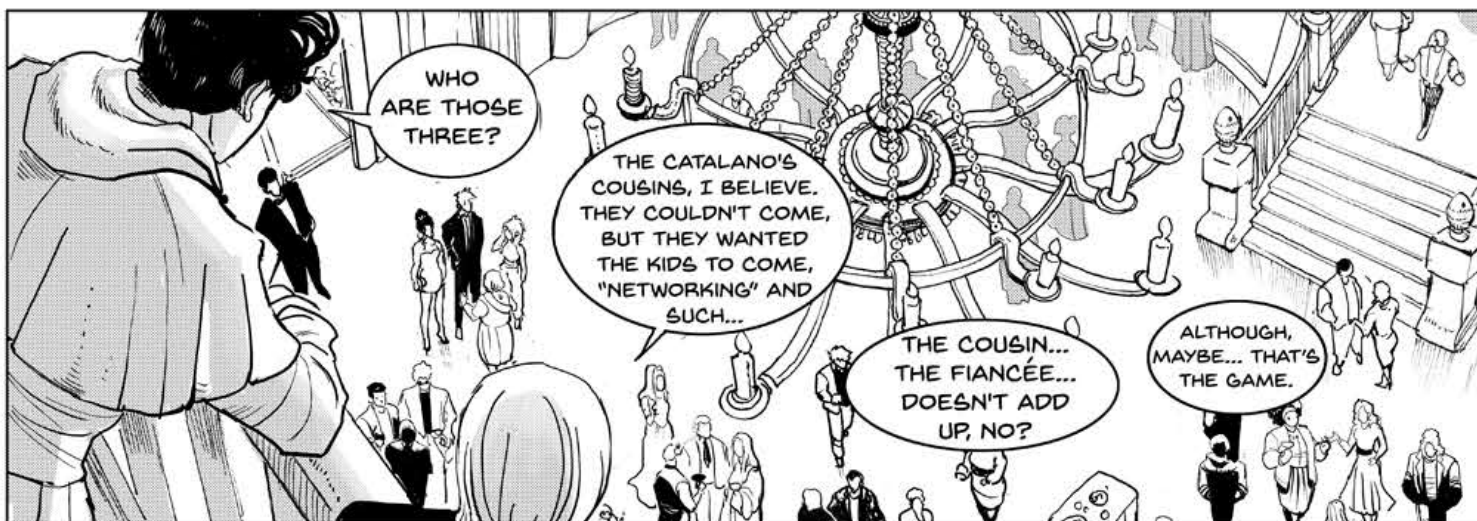
THANK YOU KINDLY. I'M ADAM. AND THIS STATUESQUE ANGEL FROM THE RUSSIAN STEPPES IS MY FIANCEE, IRINA.

AND HERE'S ALLISON, MY LOVELY SISTER. SHE'S SUFFERING THE VICISSITUDES OF PUBERTY.

WHAT?!

SEE?

LET HER BE, MY LOVE.



WHO ARE THOSE THREE?

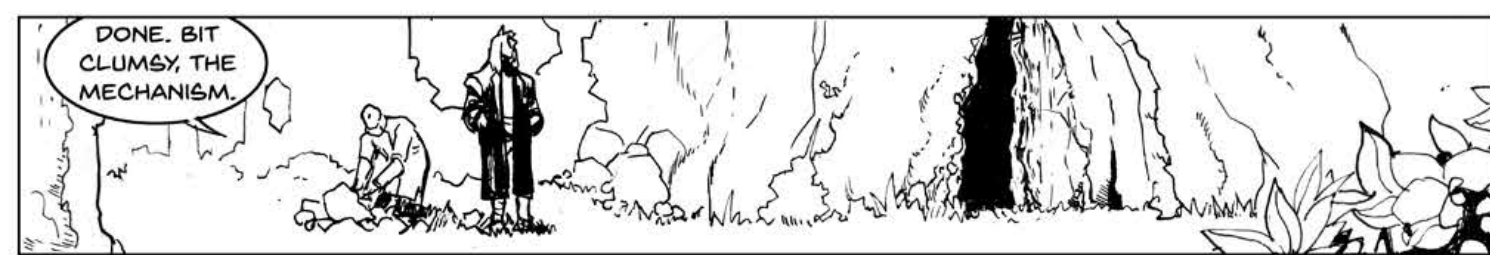
THE CATALANO'S COUSINS, I BELIEVE. THEY COULDN'T COME, BUT THEY WANTED THE KIDS TO COME, 'NETWORKING' AND SUCH...

THE COUSIN... THE FIANCEE... DOESN'T ADD UP, NO?

ALTHOUGH, MAYBE... THAT'S THE GAME.



FRESH MEAT, HUH?



DONE. BIT CLUMSY, THE MECHANISM.



GOD, IT'S DARK. I DON'T DETECT CIRCUITRY...

NO. TORCHES AND CANDLES. I SMELL TRACES. FAR AWAY.

ANYTHING ELSE?



YES. FAR AWAY. BUT THE TUNNELS CONNECT TO SOME SEPTIC TANK OR SOMETHING, THE SMELL THROWS ME OFF.

THIS TUNNEL COMPLEX IS MUCH LARGER THAN WE THOUGHT.



ANYWAY, DO YOU THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO LEAVE TONY AT HOME?

I'M CONCERNED, LEAVING HIM ON HIS OWN.



WHAT OTHER OPTION DO WE... GET DOWN!



...TO BE CONTINUED

SEE YOU IN ABOUT ~~40~~⁵⁰ DAYS (IDEALLY; SOME ISSUES IT'S 60 OR, UHM, MORE). WE KEEP THE RELEASE DATE UPDATED ON THE FACEBOOK FIXED POST. IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING US SO WE CAN GET ISSUES OUT FASTER AND GET **DRAWINGS/SKETCHES** OF FUTURE ISSUES, **EARLY ACCESS** TO A WORK-IN-PROGRESS VERSION OF THE NEXT ISSUE, OR **VIDEOS** SHOWING HOW WE DRAW A PAGE, PLEASE CONSIDER HELPING US THROUGH PATREON (LINK BELOW). IF WE GET ENOUGH HELP, WE MAY BE ABLE TO MAKE UPSURGE A MONTHLY SERIES. THANKS!

→ ah I wish...

LINKS:

OUR PATREON -> **PATREON.COM/UPSURGE**

OUR FACEBOOK ->
FACEBOOK.COM/UPSURGECOMIC

OUR INSTAGRAM ->
INSTAGRAM.COM/UPSURGECOMIC

BLUESKY ->
@ATANA-S.BSKY.SOCIAL
@SIMONOGATARI.BSKY.SOCIAL